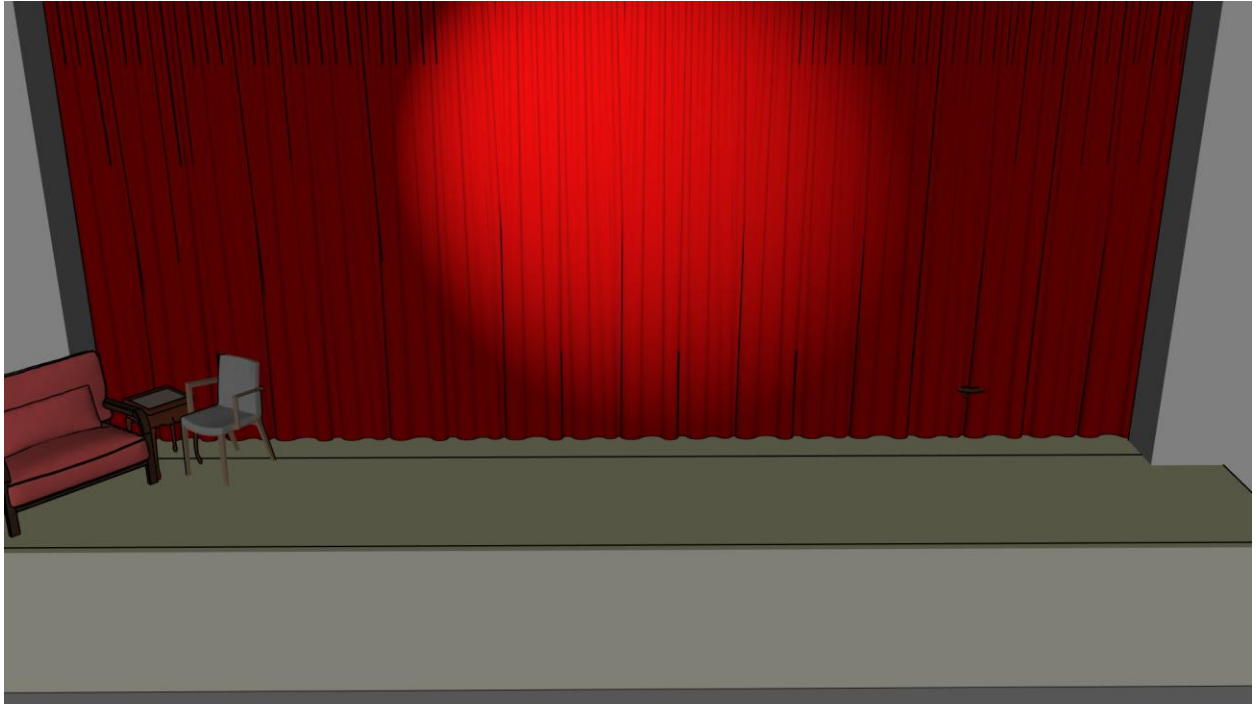


Too Darn Hot – FEATS 2025 (v7)

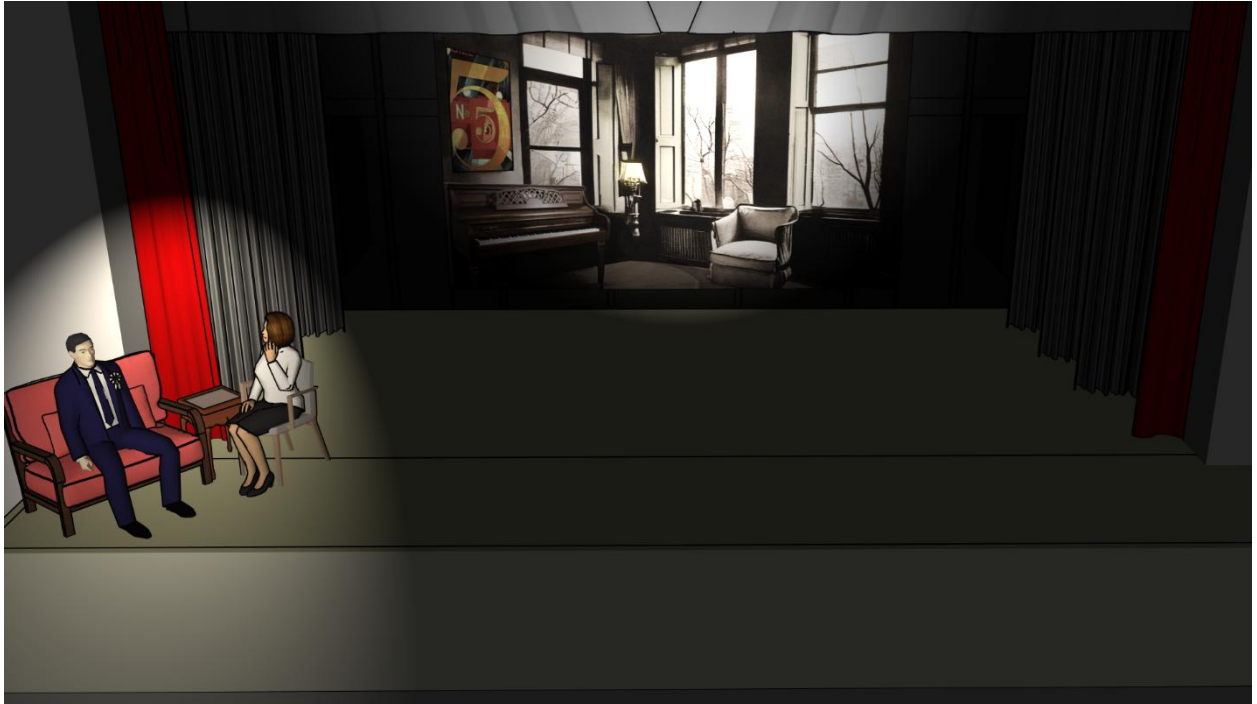
Prologue



Offstage

Entire cast: Like the beat, beat, beat of the tom-tom
When the jungle shadows fall
Like the tick, tick-tock of the stately clock
As it stands against the wall
Like the drip, drip, drip of the raindrops
When the summer shower is through
So a voice within me keeps repeating you, you, you

Scene 1



Projection : Cole Porter's apartment living room in Manhattan.

Lighting: Apron SR

A sofa, armchair & coffee table on stage. The valet enters SL, followed by Miss Otis, a young female journalist, late 20's

Valet: This way please ...

Miss Otis: Yes thank you, I remember the way *(he gestures for her to take a seat at the sofa)* Tell me, how long have you worked for Mr. Porter?

Valet: Since just after his wife, Mrs. Porter, passed . Some 8 years now. Mr. Porter will be with you shortly. In the meantime, may I offer you some refreshment? Tea , coffee A martini, perhaps??

Miss Otis: It's a little early in the day for

Valet: It's a quarter after 11, Ms. Otis. Your appointment was for 11 ...sharp. If anything... it (or rather you) are perhaps a little..... late in the day

Miss Otis: A tea, perhaps

Valet: Very well... *(he turns to leave but turns back to look at her)* There's something....different about youif you don't mind me saying?

Miss Otis: Really?

Valet: You're ... glowing ... yes, positivelyglowing *(he notices her reaction)*. Oh I see. Well, congratulations to you & to Mr.Otis

Miss Otis: There is noMr.Otis *He exits. She takes out a notepad and pen and looks around the room.)*

Miss Otis: *(muttering)* Jeez, for someone who hasn't had a hit show.... Strike that, any show... in 5 years, he's sure not short on the little comforts of life! *(she looks at her notes, the Valet enters, helping an aged Cole Porter using a cane & guides him to the sofa)*

Cole Porter: Thank you, Smythe

Valet: For you, Sir?

Cole Porter: *(impatiently)* My usual, of course.

Valet: Extra dry?

Cole Porter: No, extra wet! Of course extra dry! *(he exits)* Miss Otis, how delightful to see you again. I must say I wasn't sure you'd come back for this second interview After the unfortunate events of last time

Miss Otis: That's quite all right Mr. Porter I understand that you're ... not a well man ... these things Happen *(looking at her notes)* Now, where did we get to, last time I was here?

Cole Porter: *(watching her rifle through her papers)* August 1932, I think you'll find. I was just about to start rehearsals of "Gay Divorce" with Astaire ...

Miss Otis: Oh, that's right. Here we are. Erm "Gay Divorce" was a major hit, was it not?

(the valet enters with tea and a martini on a tray)

Valet: Your tea, Miss ... and your "extra dry", Sir.

Miss Otis: Thank you

Cole Porter: It was Despite everything ... *(she looks puzzled)* despite the Hollywood interest and especially despite Mister Louis B Mayer

Valet: that charmless son of a bitch!

Cole Porter: Please forgive Smythe. He was quite the looker in his youth and was popular, as they say, all over town. He can count several Hollywood actresses as conquestsHepburn, Bankhead ... Ethel Merman, if you can believe that! He even insists he fucked Marlene Dietrich once, (or she fucked him ...) I forget. Either way, he was never the same man again.....

Valet: I'm sure Miss Otis has no interest in my life story. I have work to do. Try not to choke on your Martini ... *(he exits)*

Cole Porter: Charming as ever! Where was I?

Miss Otis: "Gay Divorce?"

Lights fade SR

Scene 2



Projection : Inside of a Broadway theatre

Lighting: General bright cover

Lights up on centre stage

the stage of a Broadway theatre. Various actors/dancers/backstage crew are taking a break. The band is setting up BSL. It is late Summer and incredibly hot. Young Cole is stood UPR talking to the director.

- Actor 1:** My God! It must be 95 degrees outside!
- Actor 2:** Yeah and it's 105 inside!
- Actor 5:** Say, why are the band dressed up to the nines?
- Actor 1:** They're musicians ... they have no homes to go to. They've probably been playing in some Gin Palace till like 5am. After this, they'll probably play a gig at some seedy joint in Hell's Kitchen Poor, underpaid, mentally disturbed bastards!
- Musician 1:** You got it, babe!
- Musician 2:** Hey! I resemble that remark! Hic....
- Musician 3:** Soused already *(he laughs)*
- Musician 2:** *(thinking about it, at first outraged, then agreeing)* Fair enough....
- Actor 3:** *(ignoring them)* You know, having big breasts is *(admiring them)* all fun and games until it's summer and you're sweatin' in your bra!
- Actor 4:** Tell me about it! And can I just ask why are we here on a Goddam Sunday anyway?

Actor 1: Did you not get the memo? Mr. Porter wants us to do the Act II opener for Mister Louis B Mayer! Himself!..... you knowMister Hollywood!
(*whispering*) Apparently, there's a shot at a movie deal ...

All: Oooooo

Actor 4: What memo? Anyhowz, I don't read so well.... I'm shortsighted

Actor 6: That's near-sighted, dumb-ass!

Actor 4: Hey! My ass might be a lot of things but dumb it most certainly 'aint!

Musician 1: That ain't what it says on the toilet door, honey!

Actor 4: Oh yeah, well you can just kiss my ...

(*the cast descend into giggles as Cole Porter enters*)

Cole: OK OK everyone, can I just have your attention! Thanks so much for giving up your Sunday to do this favor for me ... I'm so, so grateful

Actor 3: (*under her breath*) The Actor's Union is sure gonna hear about this

Cole: Mr. Mayer will be here any minute so it's really important that you all really make an effort & show him your very best.....

Louis B Mayer enters and approaches Cole. He is sweating profusely & becoming increasingly agitated

LBM: Hey Porter! What's the holdup? I'm dying here!!

(*he steals a glass of water from a passing stagehand and drinks it down in one*)

Cole: I'm sorry Mr Mayer. The heat has frazzled some of the electrics. We're sorting it. Anytime now By the way, I think you're really going to like this number and It's kinda appropriate (*LBM gives him a withering look*)

Director: OK OK everyone, the lights are fixed. 2 minutes and we're good to go!
(turning to Ant McCarthy in the tech booth) Please fucking say we're good to go!

Ant: (*shouting*) We're good to go! (*under his breath*) You fuckin' fascist bastard!

Director: What's that?

Ant: Err ... I said, err, call the actors

Director: Everyone on stage! Act 2 scene 1. POSITIONS!!!!

(*the remaining cast assemble on stage. Music starts for "TOO DARN HOT"*)

It's too darn hot

It's too darn hot

I'd like to sup with my baby tonight

Refill the cup with my baby tonight

I'd like to sup with my baby tonight

Refill the cup with my baby tonight

*But I ain't up to my baby tonight
'Cause it's too darn hot
It's too darn hot
It's too darn hot
I'd like to coo with my baby tonight
And pitch the woo with my baby tonight
I'd like to coo with my baby tonight
And pitch the woo with my baby tonight
But brother, you fight my baby tonight
'Cause it's too darn hot*

*According to the Kinsey Report, ev'ry average man you know
Much prefers his lovey-dovey to court
When the temperature is low
But when the thermometer goes 'way up
And the weather is sizzling hot
Mister Adam, for his Madam not*

*It's too darn hot
It's too darn hot
It's too darn hot
It's too darn hot
It's too darn hot*

(LBM stands there silently sweating)

Cole: So?

LBM: Listen Porter, I like you! You're a talented guy and at least you ain't a fag! Not like that Noel Coward and his gang! But you gotta realise..... Broadway ain't Hollywood. We do things different out West!

Cole: *(confused)* Yes and so what exactly is the problem?

LBM: Get rid of the lead singer. We need a name! Ditch the fag dancers in tight pants. More girls with bigger tits! *(Actor 3 checks her breasts, looking puzzled/down-hearted)*

Cole: But Mr. Mayer ... this is the show! How I wrote it! It's been a huge success here on Broadway!

LBM: My point exactly! On Broadway! I'll get my script people to send you a revised version. OK? Right I'm outta here. See ya Porter. You coming to my little soirée at the Waldorf next month, right? Bring that delightful wife of yours, Linda. *(he exits, eyeing one of the chorus girls who winks at him)*

Sara enter SR

Director: *(approaching Cole)* So? Whad he say?

Cole: that at least I'm not a homosexual!

Director: Well, thank Heavens for small mercies! And did you ask him if I can direct the movie?

Cole: I wouldn't count on it! *Director exits*

Sara approaches Cole

Sara: I heard most of that. You OK? *(Cole shakes his head, looks downcast)* It's a shame Linda isn't here. Maybe she would have charmed him!

(Cole looks pained)

Cole: Oh Sara, you're Linda's best friend in the world, You know that but I'm.... I'm just not sure that she'll be coming back anytime soon..... She needs..... more time, apparently

Sara: Well, she might be back in New York sooner than think

Cole: What do you mean?

Sara: She wrote me. I got a telegram not 2 hours ago. She's coming back to New York! She arrives on the Normandie a week Friday. *(Cole looks confused, Sara takes him by the arm)* Maybe Paris has lost its charms....

Or she just wants to see you ... The two of you just don't seem to "work" when you're apart. And look on the bright side, she'll be here to accompany you to Mayer's "soirée". She'll be able to charm him there

Listen, I'm meeting Dorothy later for cocktails. Why don't we all have dinner & drinks together at the Back Bar? I hate to think of you all alone in your apartment...

Cole: Why, Ms. Sara Elisabeth Fuller, if I didn't know better I'd swear you're trying to keep me out of trouble!

Sara: I'm trying to keep you out of Central Park!

Cole: Exactly!

(Sara kisses him on the cheek),

Sara: We'll see you for dinner ... & it won't be a late night I want you on top form for Linda when she does arrive *(she exits SR)* By everyone

The Cast: Bye Mrs. Fuller, see ya, have a nice evening*adlib*

Actor 1: Well, I'm drier than a camel's crotch! Who wants to join me at the Back Bar for a drink?

Actor 2 : Sure, why not! But no hooch! I already told myself I should stop drinking...

Actor 6: Why are you paying attention to a drunk who talks to herself

(they all laugh & exit, except Armando. Cole is gathering up some papers, then notices him hanging about

Cole: Oh ... I didn't see you there.... You not leaving with the rest of the gang?

Armando: Oh ... yes ... but I just have a couple of questions If you don't mind?

Cole: Sure ... err .. Arturo, isn't it?

Armando: It's Armando, actually. Well, in scene 3 When I speak to Mina I'm not sure what I should do there ...

Cole: Well, you like her ... so ... you mightflirt a little?

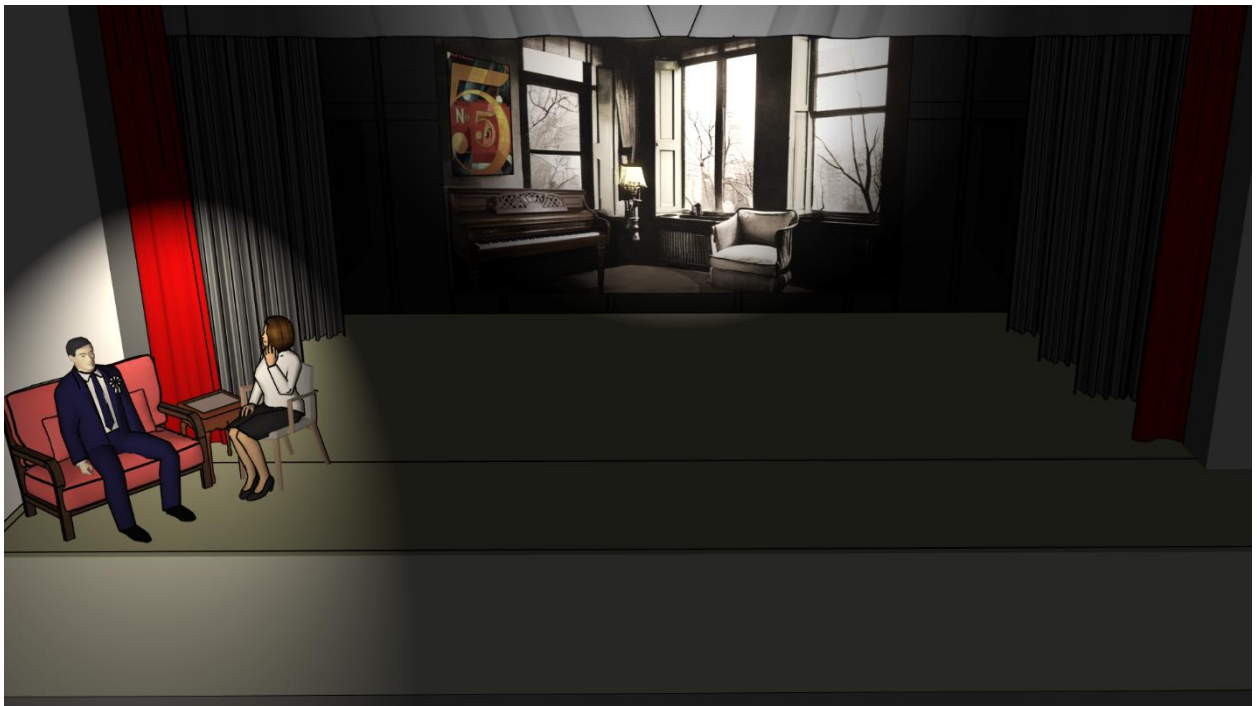
Armando: No, I get that It's just Flirt How? I mean ... do I come on full strength Or am I a bit ... nervous? Like now *(he smiles bashfully)*

Cole: Erm ... I think quite bashful ... at first ... I always find that more attractive

Armando: I'm gladI mean ... it's how I imagined the role too *(they exchange a look that lingers a bit too long)* I guess I should be going. Thanks Mr. Porter *(he exits jauntily)*

Lights fade

Scene 3



Projection : Cole Porter's apartment living room in Manhattan.

Lighting: Apron SR

Lights come up FSR

Cole Porter's apartment living room in Manhatten apartment (projection)

Cole: *(sipping his Martini)* And from little acorns grow....

Miss Otis: And so that's when you first ... I mean ... that you...and he ?

Cole: Yes, later that evening at the Back Barfunny how the most innocent encounters can change one's life around so completely *(valet enters to start clearing the table)*

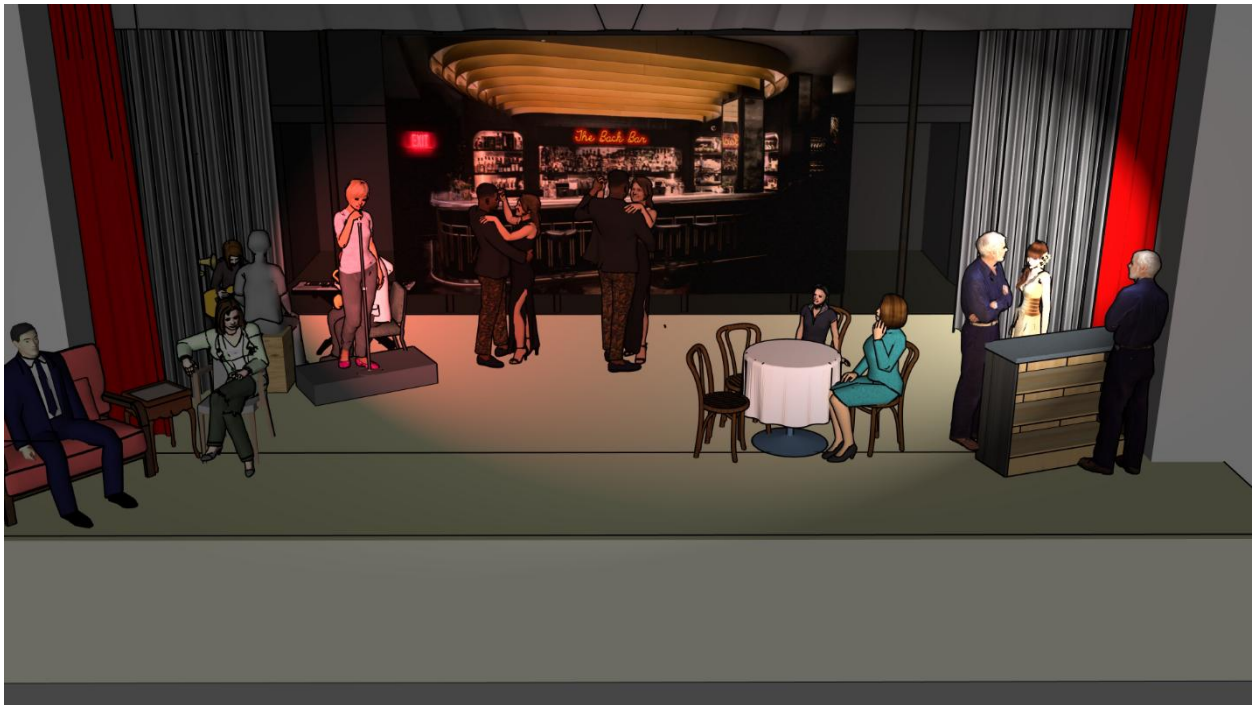
Miss Otis: But you said at our last meeting that your wife, Linda, was fully aware, right from the time you first met... of.... well, of your ... proclivities

(Valet laughs with a snort, then coughs to cover it up)

Cole: Yes thank you Smythe! (*valet exits*) My proclivities ? My dear, we're not talking about my preference for bourbon over scotch! This was the early 1930's remember. It's one thing to be aware of something that remains hidden... discreet. It's quite another thing to have it pushed right in front of your face To the point where you can not "un-see" it. At the time, my wife Linda was in Paris with friends She did that sometimes Quite often, actually. Ran off with her entourage of upper class, Upper East side cronies. It suited me though ... I could be myself Almost myself.....

Lights fade FSR

Scene 4



Projection : The Back bar

Lighting: subdued, spot on band Band BSR, spot on table USL

A New York bar, late at night. Cole, Sara, & Louis B Mayer are sat drinking "nightcaps". Cole stares into his near empty glass. Several others stand drinking & smoking at the bar, including Armando. The female owner of the bar enters SL and heads to the table.

Dorothy sings in front of band. The following dialogue happens during the number:

"What is this Thing called Love" and an animated conversation ensues)

*I was a humdrum person
Leading a life apart
When love flew in through my window wide
And quickened my humdrum heart
Love flew in through my window
I was so happy then
But after love had stayed a little while
Love flew out again*

*This funny thing
Called love
Just who can solve its mystery
Why should it make
A fool of me?
I saw you there
One wonderful day
You took my heart
And threw it away
That's why I ask the lord
In heaven above
What is this thing
Called love?*

- Vivien:** Good evening Cole, Sara Mr. Mayer? How are we this evening?
- Sara:** Good evening Ms. Lake. We're fine, and you?
- Vivien:** Well, to be brutally frank, I've seen more animated people at a wake! Let me get you more drinks? Cole, you need a pick-me-up?
- Cole:** Sure, I need something to lighten my mood *(she heads to the bar)*
- Sara :** Cole *(grabbing his hand)*
- Cole:** I'm fine *(withdrawing his hand)*
- Sara:** *(looking around)* seems like most of your cast & backstage crew are here ...who's the young fella at the bar? He's in the show, right?
- Cole :** *(looking & smiling)* Yes, in the chorus ...Arturo ... no, Armando Smith, I think. Would you excuse me a moment *(he gets up, heads to the bar and starts chatting to Armando)*
- Sara:** Oh Cole Never could resist a pretty face

*What is this thing called love?
This funny thing
Called love
Just who can solve its mystery
Why should it make
A fool of me?
I saw you there
One wonderful day
You took my heart
And threw it away
That's why I ask the lord
In heaven above
What is this thing
Called love?
(instrumental)*

(Cole heads back to the table with Armando)

Cole : Sara May I present Mr. Armando Smith, recently arrived in New York from Lisbon, who brings his considerable talents to my new show.

Sara: *(under her breath)* I'll bet he will

Armando: A pleasure to meet you *(shaking their hands. Cole gesture for him to sit)*

Sara: So Armando, how do you find life in The Big Apple?

Armando: Ha, well it's a whole different world to Madrid, that's for sure but I'm finding my feet.

(Vivien arrives with a tray of drinks which she starts to place on the table)

Vivien: On the house dear friends And *(moving round to Cole & slipping something in his jacket pocket)* that pick-me up..... Lou, care to join me at the bar? Lou!

LBM: Sur honey *(he gets up and pats her tush)*

Cole : Huh? Those two, really?

Sara: Don't ask! What she thinks she's doing , Christ knows! *(looking pointedly at Cole)* Would you excuse me for a moment? *(she gets up & exits to "powder her nose")*

"Love for Sale" (played over the following dialogue.)

*When the only sound in the empty street
Is the heavy tread of the heavy feet
That belongs to a lonesome cop
I open shop
When the moon so long has been gazing down
On the wayward ways of this wayward town
That her smile becomes a smirk
I go to work*

(applause from the everyone at the bar. Dorothy moves to the table. the song segues into "Love for Sale")

Cole : So, it seems it's just you & I Hope you won't get too bored?

Armando: I could never find this evening boring

Dorothy moves over to Cole & Armando's table

Dorothy: Bonsoir messieurs

Armando: Bonsoir. May I say, that was wonderful. You were heavenly!

Dorothy: Young man, only good girls go to Heaven but bad boys go everywhere!
(taking a seat) Cole, aren't you going to introduce us?

Cole: Of course, where are my manners Dorothy this is Armando Smith, a member of my cast.

Armando: How do you do.

Dorothy: Oh, I manage. You seem familiar Mr.Smith. Have we met?

Armando: Err ... I dont believe so. I must have one of those faces

Dorothy: Mmmm Quite. How goes it with your Hollywood mogul, Cole? What's the story? *(nodding in the direction of Vivien & LBM who are having a heated discussion at the bar)*

Cole: I have no idea.... I'm not sure what's going on there!

Dorothy: *(glancing at Armando)* I hear Linda is returning from Paris next week? How nice for you. I'm sure you'll have lots to do before she gets back Cole *(looking at Armando)*

(Sara returns and sits. There's a somewhat awkward silence)

Sara: Did I miss something? I must say the ambience is very McBeth-ish What has or is about to happen?

Dorothy: Nothing my dear ... yet. Come, tell me all the gossip about Vivien and that terrible manlet's leave these two to it.) *they get up and head SR the bar)*

Cole: Pay no attention to Dorothy. She likes her little games.

Armando: Don't worry, I can play games as good as the next one

Lighting: *subdued red cover, spot on Band BSR, spot on table USL*

Lighting: *spot on couple dancing*

Love for sale

Appetizing young love for sale

Love that's fresh and still unspoiled

Love that's only slightly soiled

Love for sale

Who will buy?

Who would like to sample her supply?

Who's prepared to pay the price

For a trip to paradise?

Love for sale

Let the poets pipe of love

In their childish way

I know every type of love

Better far than they

If you want the thrill of love

She's been through the mill of love

Old love, new love

Every love, but true love for sale

Armando: Thank you for helping me with my character in the show this afternoon It was a great help.

Cole: You're welcome. Just don't tell "Eric von Stroheim" These Austrian directors are very sensitive (*Armando smiles, Cole looks at him, admiringly/longingly*)..... You seem like a sensitive young man yourself, Armando. If you don't mind me saying so?

Armando: Is that a good thing? And, for the record, I don't mind at all....

Cole: (*smiling/completely entranced*) It's a quality I've appreciated since I was oh younger than you are now. Ever since I can remember, in fact. Since I was a boy.

Armando: Well, I'm not a boy, Mr. Porter I'm man enough.

Cole: (*Cole stares at Armando, transfixed, then regaining his composure & clearing his throat*) I know, and please, call me Cole..... Can I get you another martini? Or something else? A glass of wine or a brandy perhaps? I think I might have a scotch on the rocks... I've had more than enough martinis!

Armando: I'm Spanish, Mr. Porter.... I only drink brandy, preferably Spanish brandy ... whiskey disagrees with me. I've tried to like it ...but ...it gives me a headache. Brandy is Smoother on the palate, don't you agree?

Cole: (*realizing where this is going*)..... I do agree...but ... (*hesitantly*) you should know that I I'm partial to both brandy **and** scotch depending on the circumstances....depending on.... my moodand some people might be ... shocked ... if they knew I like both

Armando: Some people like **Mrs.** Porter?

Cole: Linda has always been aware of my preferences ... regarding... nightcaps. No, people like... (*he glances over his shoulder, looking at LBM*) !

Armando: I understand completely, Cole. Perhaps then, we could "share" a bottle of ...brandy ? Given the circumstances... somewhere else? It is rather noisy here!

Cole: I'd like that, Armando

Armando: (*leaning back & smiling, satisfied*) (*he leans in*) What do you suggest?

Cole: I have a bottle of very fine Luis Felipe Gran Reserva 1902 back at my apartment. Shall we?

(they both smile, Cole signals to the barman who comes over and Cole pays the check)

*Appetizing young love for sale
If you want to buy his wares
Follow me and climb the stairs
Love for sale*

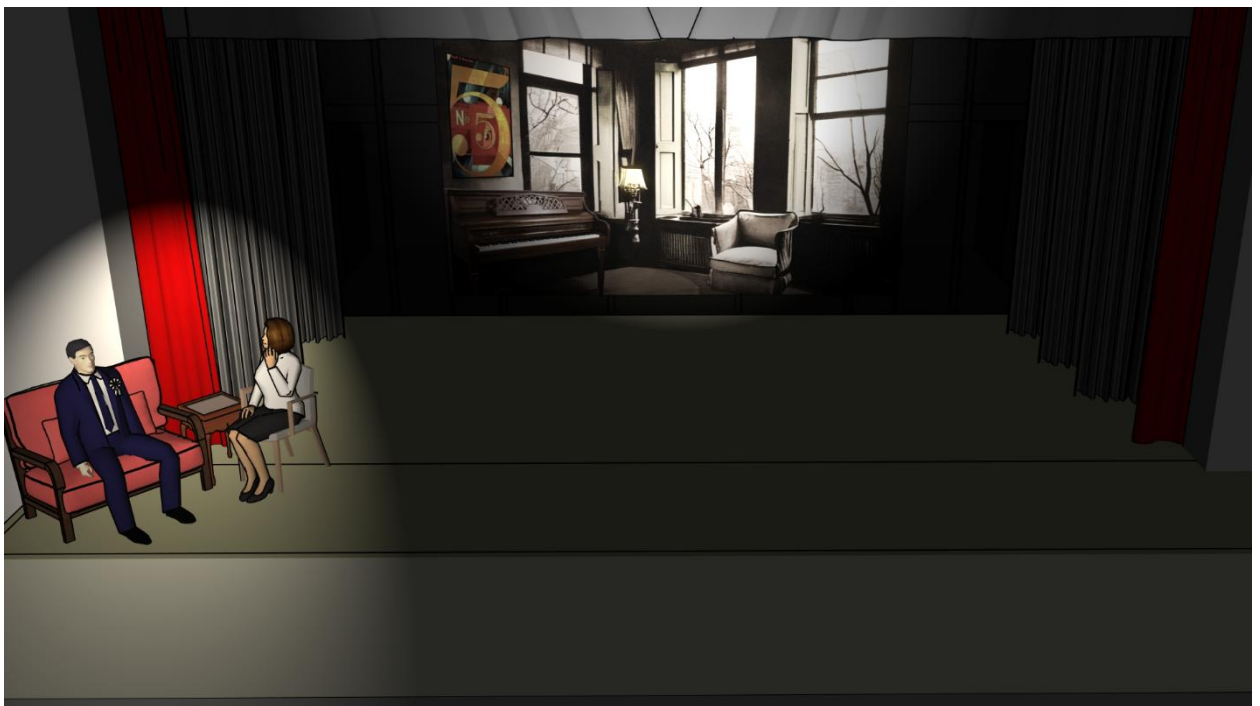
*Let the poets pipe of love
In their childish way
I know every type of love
Better far than they
If you want the thrill of love
He's been through the mill of love
Old love, new love
Every love, but true love for sale*

*Appetizing young love for sale
Love for sale, honey
If you want to buy his wares
Follow me and climb the stairs
Love for sale*

(they stand. Rest of cast remove table & chairs, leaving Cole facing Armando, who begins to undress him as other cast members remove the rest of the Back Bar set & bring on the bed. Cole & Armando move to the bed.

FADE TO ALMOST TO BLACK

Scene 5



Projection : Cole Porter's apartment living room in Manhattan.

Lighting: Apron SR

Lights come up FSR

Cole Porter's apartment living room in Manhattan apartment (projection)

Cole: You're really not bad looking, you know

Miss Otis: *(ignoring him)* And so you embarked on an affair with Armando

Cole: Affair! The only "affair" I ever had was with music, with the writing of it, the shaping of it, the satisfaction of hearing it interpreted the way I intended. Armando was no affair I fell in love with him that night, of course Hook, line & sinker ... I was like some moonstruck kid... in love with the idea of being in love.... But Armando was something else ... something *(he cuts himself short as the valet enters with more tea & martini)*

Miss Otis: But earlier you said you weren't sure of the true nature of love

(Cole laughs out loud, then coughs profusely)

Valet: Is anyone? Are you, Miss Otis?

Miss Otis: I

Cole: Smythe, that's enough!

Valet: Just trying to be helpful. Well? Have you experienced the true nature of love, Miss? Don't be bashful ... spill it. We're dying to know

Miss Otis: I believe that I'm the one supposed to be asking the questions here

Valet: *(smiling wryly)* I think you'll find you'll get more out of Mr. Porter, if he knows a little more about you. *(valet exits)*

Miss Otis: You were saying?

Cole: I used to think love was a kind of temporary insanity, curable only by marriage. And I was about to discover a completely different kind of insanity

Scene 6



Projection : Cole Porter's apartment living room in Manhattan.

Lighting: Spot on bed CS

Cole is in bed. Armando appears silhouetted against the back projection. He approaches the bed, undressing.

FADE TO BLACK – they are in bed together

Lighting: Dim LIGHTS UP on the bed

Cole: My God, you're so beautiful (*stroking his hair*)

Armando: (*he rolls over, looks at Cole, gives him the briefest of peck on the cheek*)
Well, aren't you sweet!

Cole: Err ... I mean it. That was De-licious de-lectable ... de-lovely !

Armando: (*confusedhe snorts, laughing, almost choking*) Honey, are you still high?
(*reproachfully*) Too much cocaine makes Cole a dull daddy, you know! (*He snorts a line of coke, offers it to Cole, who refuses*)

Cole: Hey! I'm serious! I had the most wonderful time

Armando: (*on a coke hit*) Sure, we both did. And you won't forget what you promised me? A Hollywood audition for the movie? Imagine what we could achieve together! You'll write great roles for me great songs..... that only I can interpret And I'll make them even greater!! There'll be no stopping me us!

(Cole looks slightly baffled)

That's what you promised, right? *(he ruffles Cole's hair, kisses him in a perfunctory, dismissive way)*

Cole: For sure. But you haven't forgotten what you promised me?

(Armando looks puzzled for a brief moment, tries to wing it)

Armando: Err ... of course not, Daddy Cole. How could I? *(another brief peck, Cole tries to pull him in for an embrace, Armando pulls away)I have to go (getting out of bed, grabbing his clothes)*

Cole: Wait!

(Armando looks directly at Cole, a moment passes, he exhales slowly and prepares to sing)

Night & Day music starts

*Like the beat, beat, beat of the tom-tom
When the jungle shadows fall
Like the tick, tick-tock of the stately clock
As it stands against the wall
Like the drip, drip, drip of the raindrops
When the summer shower is through
So a voice within me keeps repeating you, you, you*

*Night and day, you are the one
Only you beneath the moon and under the sun
Whether near to me or far
It's no matter darling where you are
I think of you
Night and say, day and night, why is it so
That this longing for you follows wherever I go?
In the roaring traffic's boom
In the silence of my lonely room
I think of you*

*Night and day, night and day
Under the hide of me
There's an oh, such a hungry yearning, burning inside of me
And its torment won't be through
'Til you let me spend my life making love to you
Day and night, night and day*

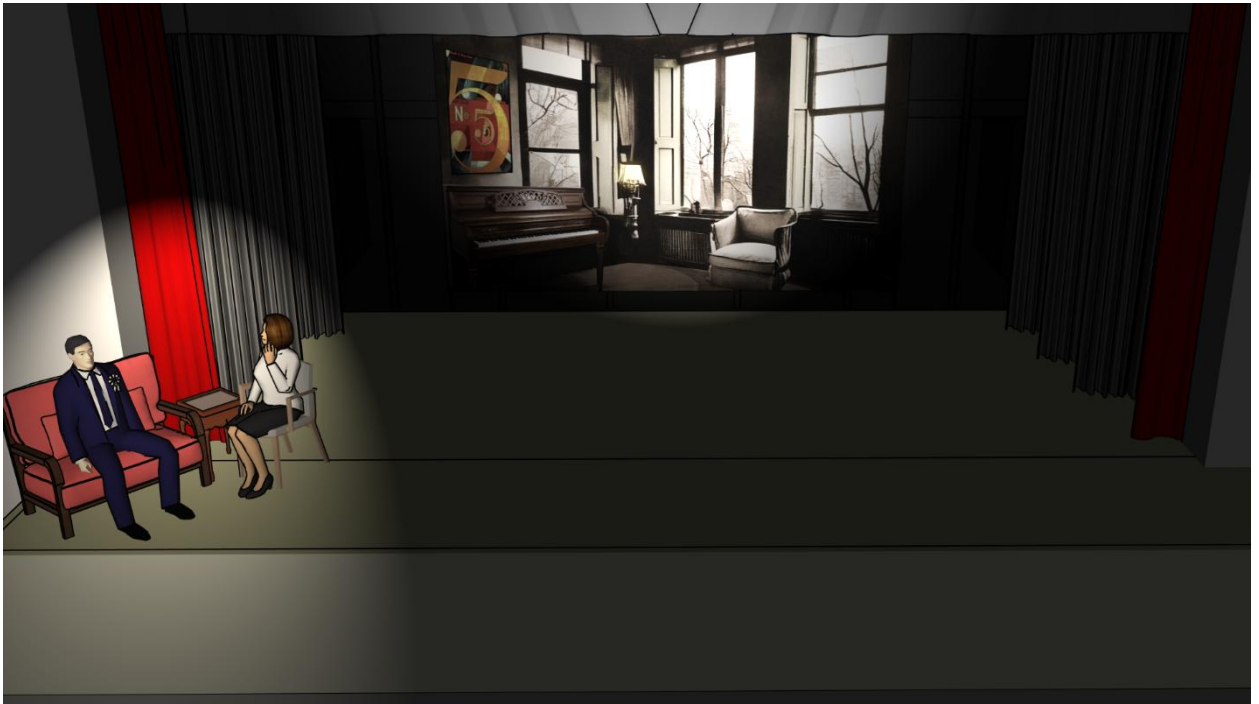
Armando kisses Cole puts on his jacket

Cole: Stay, why don't you?

Armando: Huh? Fraid not Mr. Porter. Rehearsal at 9 am, remember? And I have to look my best!Maybe next time *(he squeezes Cole's cheeks with his hand, as though with a young child)* See you at rehearsal! *(exits jauntily, swinging his jacket over his shoulder... Cole looks downcast)*

FADE TO BLACK

Scene 7:



Projection : Cole Porter's apartment living room in Manhattan.

Lighting: Apron SR

Cole Porter's apartment living room in Manhattan apartment (projection)

Miss Otis: So your relationship with Armando, that was more than just ...
"infatuation"?

Cole: What is it they say? No fool like an old fool?

Cole rings a little bell, the valet enters

Valet: I'm your "valet" Sir, not a cow ready for milking

Cole: Bring me "red, hot & blue" (*Smythe roles his eyes & exits*) I'm sorry, you
were saying?

Miss Otis: Infatuation, your relationship with Armando?

(Smythe re-enters with a small red & blue jeweled box, about 10cm sq., placing it on the table)

Valet: Just one Sir, this time

Cole: Don't nanny me! This.... is "red, hot & blue" She's been my constant
companion for over 40 years, perhaps my dearest, most consistent friend
*(he takes out a qualude pill and pops it into his mouth, followed by a glug of
martini)* Do you know why she's called "red, hot & blue"? Blue for sadness of
course and red forlove? Red is such an interesting color to correlate with
emotion, because it's on both ends of the spectrum. On one end you have
love, passion, sex ...all that. On the other end, you've got obsession, fear,
anger and frustration. Same colour ... at both ends of the spectrum

Valet: And danger. Let's not forget danger!

Lights SFR fade

Scene 8:



Projection : The deck of the Normandie

Lighting: Bright general cover

Lights come up CS - The deck of the Normandie – a sunny late afternoon. Linda is lounging with 3 other female friends

Friend 1: And I bet you can't wait to get home to New York, Linda?

Linda: Well, it's been almost 2 months. I do miss the city but Paris does have a certain quality

Friend 2: (*smirking*) French men certainly have a certain "quality" too

Linda: That they do, my dear

(a waiter offers drinks)

Waiter: Compliments of the Normandie, Madame.

Linda: Je vous remercie

Mother: My God, a French man could read the telephone directory and make it sexy!

Daughter: (*who is reading a book, suddenly looks up*) Mother!

(they all giggle)

Friend 1: And you must also be looking forward to seeing your husband again Mrs. Porter?

Friend 2: You've barely talked about anything else! I think it's so romantic.... arriving home one week early to surprise him. And you're sure he has no idea?

Linda: I'm sure!

Mother: I'm sure he'll sweep you off your feet when he sees you.

Linda: Or faint from the shock! *(they all giggle again)*

(A handsome Normandie sailor strolls by He smiles seductively at Friend 3, nodding)

Mother: *(flushed)* Mon Dieu! *(her daughter looks aghast)*

Linda: Live dangerously, my dear. There's a lot to be said for sinning. We are 20th century women. We're independent and strong!

Music starts for 1.8 "Anything Goes"

*Times have changed
And we've often rewound the clock
Since the Puritans got a shock
When they landed on Plymouth Rock.
If today
Any shock they should try to stem
'Stead of landing on Plymouth Rock,
Plymouth Rock would land on them.*

*In olden days, a glimpse of stocking
Was looked on as something shocking.
But now, God knows,
Anything goes.
Good authors too who once knew better words
Now only use four-letter words
Writing prose.
Anything goes.
The world has gone mad today
14
And good's bad today,
And black's white today,
And day's night today,
When most guys today
Tat women prize today
Are just silly giglos
And though I'm not a great romancer
I know that you're bound to answer
When I propose,
Anything goes !*

Linda: If you will excuse me ladies, I'm going to change for dinner. See you in the cocktail bar at 7 for a martini Or two? *(she exits)*

After a pause :

Friend 1: Anything goes? Really?

Friend 2: She's obviously blind and deaf to all the rumours about him

Daughter: About who? What rumours?

Mother: Her husband, Cole, of course!

Friend 2: Not rumours Facts! *(Linda re-enters SR having obviously forgotten something, but pauses when she overhears the conversation)* All of New York knows that heerr swings both ways..... and I'm not just talking musically ... and... I suspect she knows exactly what's going on!

Daughter: Oh ... Mrs. Porter...

Linda: I forgot my compact...*(she picks it up and exits again. Daughter casts a disapproving glance at the other ladies & gets up to join Linda)*

Daughter: Honestly Mother! Sometimes you can be such a a Ugh! Mrs. Porter? I ... I'm so sorry if you overheard any ... unpleasantness ... back there?

Linda: My dear, it's sweet of you to apologize ... but there's really no need. It's nothing I haven't heard before.

Daughter: Oh, I ...

Linda: Don't fret, I'm ... used to it ... almost *(she turns to leave)*

Daughter: But aren't you ? How do you? ... I mean ...

Linda: *(smiling kindly)* you're very young, my dear .. may I ask ... have you ever been in love?

Daughter: Well, I ... I'm not sure I ...I

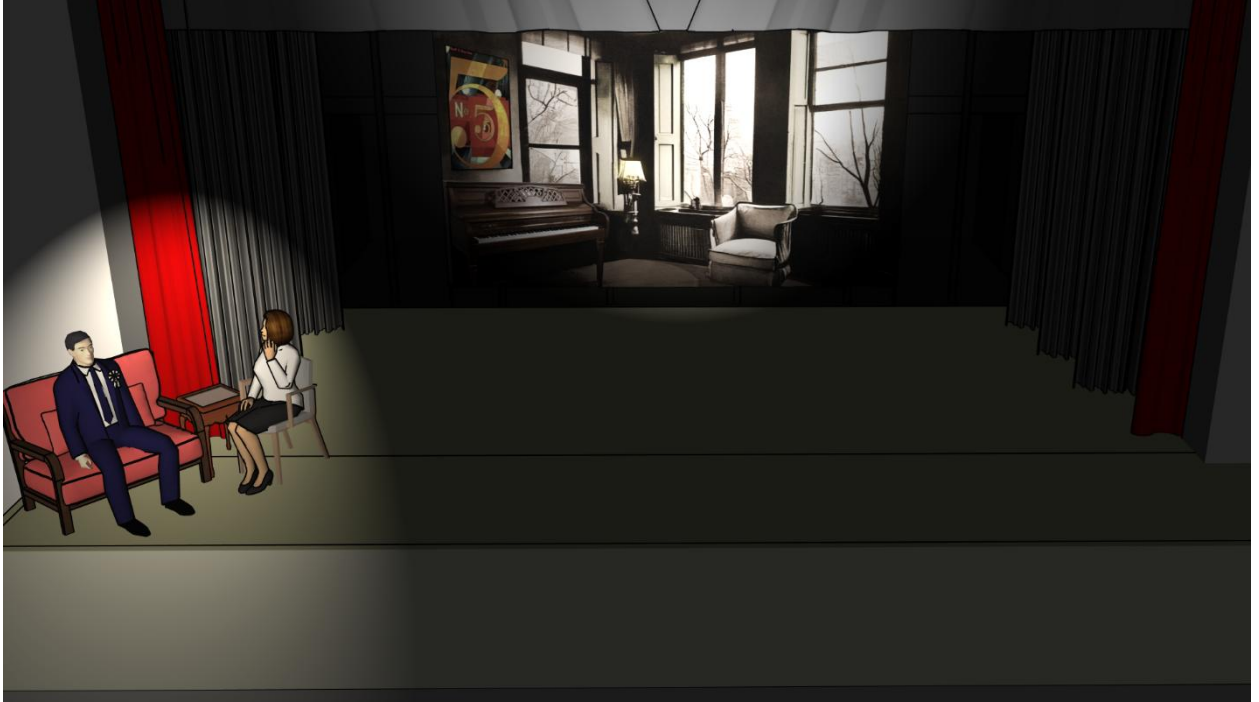
Friend 1: Shall we?

(they get up and exit)

(musical play out as they "disembarque" from the Normandie SR. The 3 friends exit.

FADE TO BLACK

Scene 9:



Projection : Cole Porter's apartment living room in Manhattan.

Lighting: Apron SR

Cole Porter's apartment living room in Manhattan apartment (projection)

Miss Otis: Mr. Porter? Mr. Porter? *(she gets up from her chair and tries to wake him. He comes round slowly, a bit groggy Valet enters looking worried but seeing Porter is OK, just shakes his head & exits)*

Cole: Oh my dear, I must apologize . Did I nod off?

Miss Otis: *Err ...* Just for a moment. Are you OK? Shall we stop for today? I can come back tomorrow?

Cole: That's quite all right. **I'm fine!**

Miss Otis: You were telling me about the evening of Mayer's party?

Cole: That's right. Well, as I was saying, Linda arrived back from Europe... but she could tell immediately something was Different....not quiet right ... with me. Women are like cats in that regard, don't you agree? Watching everything. Taking it all in. Biding their time. Anyway, I had spent 2 wonderful weeks with Armando.... Feeling young again, in love again. Naturally, we didn't discuss it

Fade

Scene 10:



Projection : Waldorf Astoria

Lighting: General cover

Lights come up CS

Louis B Mayer's apartment living room in the Waldorf Astoria (projection)

The "chorus" are stood around chatting, clearly thrilled to be in such a swanky place

Linda, & Cole enter and move CS, greeting various guests

Linda: I see most of your cast are here honestly Cole, I sometimes think you prefer their company to mine

Cole: Please don't start that again, my dear. You know I'm under a lot of pressure

Linda: It's just that, I've hardly seen you since I got back. You're always ... "in rehearsals"

Cole: The show needs "tweaking" You read the reviews! *(Armando enters SL, Linda glances at him)*

Linda: Perhaps you should consider replacing the male lead? *(Cole notices Armando and heads towards him. Linda moves SR to Dorothy and Vivien)*

Vivien: I know, I know I'm not that naive as to think he'll ever leave his wife It's just that *(LBM approaches)*

LBM: Good evening ladies, welcome, welcome. Cole not with you?

Linda: Oh he's over there at the bar Chatting to his latest protégé ...

LBM: Err, fine Vivien ... may I have a word? *(he leads her away)*

Dorothy: What is she thinking? You know, I once said, and I quote, that I require three things in a man: he must be rich, ruthless, and only moderately intelligent. Well, I guess two outta three ain't bad ! Still, I fail to see the attraction

Linda: I'm famished. Will dinner be long?

Dorothy Parker: *(she swills her martini)* Interminable.

Linda: *(sighing)* Cole and I have to be up early tomorrow morning a church service in New Haven.

Dorothy Parker : I stopped going to church years ago. The priest talking endlessly about the evils of sin and looking directly at me.

Linda: Tell me honestly, what do you think of the new show? Cole is so very proud of it.

Dorothy Parker: Honestly? My, we are being brave tonight. I'd go easy on the martinis. It's a fine show, really it is.

Linda: Thank you so much. And of course, he's been so lucky with the cast. Cole tells me it was really hard to get Armando.

Dorothy Parker: From what I hear, Armando is incapable of playing "hard to get"

Linda: I'm sorry?

Dorothy Parker: My dear, that boy is the original "good time, had by all" Why, your priest in New Haven, has probably had him. He's been on his back so often, he's seen more ceilings than Michelangelo!!

(Linda looks downcast & sips at her martini)

Linda: He's from Madrid originally, no?

Dorothy Parker: And I'm the Queen of Sheba! That boy is no more from Madrid than you are. A Latino from Brooklyn, I'd say.

LBM: So Armando, Cole tells me you're from Spain originally?

Armando: From Madrid Mr. Mayer. I moved to the US when I was 16 & attended "Notre Dame School" in the West Village for a number of years

LBM: *(puzzled)* Oh Really! My wife's sister is a teacher there, has been for years. You must know her. Alicia Mountford. Err ... although you no doubt knew her as Miss Mountford?

Armando: Would you excuse me?

Dorothy Parker: And here's the prodigious, young talent himself!

Armando: Ms. Parker. Ms. Porter.

Linda: That's **Mrs.** Porter

Armando: Of course. How silly of me.

Dorothy Parker: I was just telling Linda here that you hail from Madrid originally, if I'm not mistaken?

Armando: That's right. Although, I'm a graduate of the "Notre Dame School", here in New York, as I was just telling your husband and Mr. Mayer. Would you excuse me (*he heads to talk to Cole*)

Dorothy Parker: That boy reminds me of my grandfather's old farmhouse – all pretty as a picture on the front side, a nice swing on the backside, and absolutely nothing whatsoever in the attic.

(*Linda hears her but stares icily at Armando*)

LBM: I never said that! Why do you broads always twist everything?

Vivien; Oh you're a piece of work, Mister Mayer. And for the record, I'm not one of your "broads"!

LBM: Sugarcakes, get real! You knew the score from the get go – come on! (*he taps a glass*) Excuse me everyone, dinner is served! (they all exit SL except Linda and Vivien who hang back. Linda approaches her)

Linda: You ok?

Vivien: I guess I'll live. It's not like it's the first time (*Linda exits*)

Waiter: Ladies, dinner is served

LBM: You comin', or what? You know, you could stay tonight?

Vivien: No... yes ... maybe...it's fine ... I'll be there in a minute

Lights fade to black leaving spot on Vivien

*Ev'ry time we say goodbye
I die a little
Ev'ry time we say goodbye
I wonder why a little
Why the Gods above me
Who must be in the know
Think so little of me
They allow you to go
When you're near
There's such an air of spring about it
I can hear a lark somewhere
Begin to sing about it
There's no love song finer
But how strange the change
From major to minor
Ev'ry time we say goodbye*

Fade to black (Vivien exits)

Scene 11

Projection : Waldorf Astoria

Lighting: General bright cover

Lights up on centre stage

Ladies enter SL as song starts, followed by men SR

*It was just one of those things
Just one of those crazy flings
One of those bells that now and then rings
Just one of those things
It was just one of those nights
Just one of those fabulous flights
A trip to the moon on gossamer wings
Just one of those things
If we'd thought a bit 'bout the end of it
When we started painting the town
We'd have been aware that our love affair
Was too hot not to cool down*

*So good-bye, dear, and amen
Here's hoping we meet now and then
It was great fun
But it was just one of those things*

(everyone laughing, joking – they prepare to leave, embracing shaking hands etc. Cole chats to Armando, then to others. Linda approaches Armando)

Armando: What a great evening Mrs. Porter. I so enjoyed chatting to so many interesting people. It was “De-Lovely”, as Cole ..err ...Mr. Porter, might say ...

Linda: A word? *(she takes him to one side)*

Armando: Everything all right, Mrs. Porter?
(she hands him a brown envelope, he opens it and takes out a cheque for \$ 5,000. He stares at it incredulously)

Armando: What’s this?

Linda: It’s a cheque for \$ 5 000. I just wrote it. I enjoyed chatting to different people over dinner too. It seems not all of your fellow cast members have the same high opinion of you as Cole!

Armando: I’m sorry?

Linda: First of all, your real name is not Armando Smith. It’s Mateo Lopez.

Armando: *(bristling)* What of it?

Linda: You were not born & raised in Madrid but in San Juan, Puerto Rico.

Armando: *(offended)* What of it?

Linda: *(she sighs)* You immigrated to the States when you were 10, not 16. You never attended Notre Dame School here in New York. That was a stupid mistake. An easy lie to find out. You’ve spent most of your life in the Bronx

where, apparently, you were well known for selling your ass to any guy with 5 bucks.

Armando: That's a lie!

Linda: Really? I can easily hire someone to find ... proof... witnesses. *(she lets him "digest" this)* So, all things considered, I think \$ 5000 is more than enough to start a new life, as far away from New York ...and Cole as possible. And for me not to inform Cole or the police. Do I make myself clear?

Armando: Perra!

Linda: Yes, I think I probably am. But I'm a bitch who loves her husband and I will not let him be hurt by a money-grabbing, gold-digger like you!

Armando: I love Cole and he loves me!

Linda: *(she snorts with derision)* Loves you? Do you think you're the first? You're just the latest in a long line of pretty boys he's had a temporary infatuation with. Tomorrow morning, you cash that check, pack your bags and get on the first train out of this city. If you do love Cole, as you say, you'll do thisfor him!

(She heads over to Cole, all smiles and they head to exit SL. Cole turns to see Armando pocket the envelope. Dorothy looks at Armando, smiles & exits)

fade to black

Scene 12:



Projection : Cole Porter's apartment living room in Manhattan.

Lighting: Apron SR

Lights come up FSR

Miss Otis: Mr. Porter? Mr. Porter? *(she gets up from her chair and tries to wake him.)* Mr. Smythe! Mr. Smythe! *(Smythe enters and tries to rouse Cole)*

Valet: For Christ's sake! I keep telling him he does too many of these Goddam pills.
(Cole comes round slowly)

Cole: Leave me alone! Get off me!

Valet: Sit up straight, you cranky old coot! You must stop doing this! It's really becoming very boring ...

Miss Otis: I should go perhaps. I'm nearly finished anyway. Thank you Mr. Smythe. I hope Mr. Porter will be OK?

Valet: He'll be fine *(she heads to the door, followed by Smythe)* and, by the way, my name is actually pronounced "Smith"

Cole: Armando, where are my glasses? Armando?

Valet: Armando Smith, in fact. *(it dawns on Miss Otis that this person is actually Cole's former lover from 30 years previously)* Goodbye Miss Otis and good luck With everything

Miss Otis: Thank you. Goodbye..... Armando. *(she exits)*

Lighting: Spot on apron fades slightly. Rest of stage in darkness.

Armando picks up Cole's glasses and places them tenderly on his face.

Valet: There you go, baby. *(he helps him up)*

Cole: Thank you. She's a nice girl, that Miss Otis. She's changed since last time she was here, don't you think?

Valet: She's pregnant

Cole: I thought soshe'll be fine. After all, you changed..... didn't you?

Valet: You sentimental old fool ... *(he kisses him gently on the cheek)*

*Armando: Strange dear, but true dear
When I'm close to you, dear
The stars fill the sky
So in love with you am I*

*Cole: Even without you
My arms fold about you
You know, darling, why
So in love with you am I*

Lighting: Spot on "young" Cole & Armando slow-dancing CS

Young Cole and young Armando appear CS, slow dancing together

*Armando: In love with the night mysterious
The night when you first were there*

*Cole: In love with my joy delirious
When I knew that you could care*
*Both: So taunt me, and hurt me
Deceive me, desert me
I'm yours 'til I die
So in love, so in love
So in love with you, my love, am I*

Fade to black

Entire cast: Like the beat, beat, beat of the tom-tom
When the jungle shadows fall
Like the tick, tick-tock of the stately clock
As it stands against the wall
Like the drip, drip, drip of the raindrops
When the summer shower is through
So a voice within me keeps repeating you, you, you

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