

FLORA, THE RED MENACE

GIMME GIMME A LIFT

ELSA.

AND I'LL WAGER A FIG TIME MAGAZINE
WILL ASK FOR ME TO BE THE FACE ON THE COVER

ELSA/WILLY.

ALL I NEED IS ONE GOOD BREAK
JUST ONE GOOD BREAK THEN MISTER WATCH
MY SPEED

(Willy plays the melody on the clarinet.)

MR. WEISS. *(Mr. Weiss enters. He has been fixing a watch and wears a jeweler's magnifying glass.)* Weiss. Julius Weiss. Perhaps you knew my shop. One-Nine-Eight Sixth Avenue. Fine jewelry. For all occasions. Except a Depression. The shop—it will reopen soon. And in the meantime? I rent space from Flora and I fix watches. Enough to eat. Enough for a cup of coffee with my young friends here. So full of hope. Poor deluded fools you say? I say it's a good sign that this terrible depression has not killed the spirit of the young.

~~KENNY/MAGGIE/WILLY/ELSA.~~

~~GIMME GIMME A CHANCE
AND I KNOW I CAN DO IT
GIMME GIMME A BOOST
AND I'M GOING TO SEE TO IT
GIMME GIMME A LIFT AND~~

~~WILLY.~~

~~I'LL BUY ME SOME NEW ITALIAN CLOTHES~~

~~MAGGIE.~~

~~SOME FRENCH PERFUME~~

~~KENNY.~~

~~AND STRIKE A FANCY POSE~~

~~ELSA.~~

~~AND ELEVATE MY NOSE~~

~~ALL.~~

~~AND MOM AND DAD WOULDN'T KNOW ME~~

~~ALL I NEED IS ONE GOOD BREAK~~

~~JUST ONE GOOD BREAK~~

~~AND MISTER WATCH MY SPEED~~

~~ONE SUBSTANTIAL BREAK IS ALL I NEED~~

~~KENNY/MAGGIE.~~

~~ONE SUBSTANTIAL BREAK IS ALL I NEED~~

Mr. Weiss
Flora

FLORA, THE RED MENACE

79

start

FLORA. (*She quickly shoves the names into a large blue Garret and Mellick envelope. She puts the envelope on her desk.*) Hello

~~Mr. Weiss~~

MR. WEISS. (*Coming over and taking a look at her artwork.*) Whose artwork is this?

FLORA. It's mine.

MR. WEISS. No it's not.

FLORA. For today it is. They don't like my style. So I had — to alter it a little.

MR. WEISS. You? Change your style? (*Looking at it.*) But your style is so — Paris. And this is so — Poughkeepsie.

FLORA. (*She doesn't want to talk about it. Kindly.*) I'm running a little late. (*She puts the artwork into a blue Garret and Mellick envelope as she crosses away from Mr. Weiss, leaving the envelope with the names on the desk.*)

MR. WEISS. Did Comrade Flora find time to sleep last night?

FLORA. Only a little.

MR. WEISS. If you slept "only a little" you should have slept less and used the time to finish. You must MAKE time. Isn't that what the party says?

FLORA. (*She laughs. And then dares to ask.*) Mr. Weiss — you were a Communist, weren't you. (*The two sit down beside one another.*)

MR. WEISS. Me? A Communist? (*Then.*) How could I not have been a Communist — with the world the shape it's in. We were looking for answers just like you. And they have answers. Answers to everything. But you know, Flora — you and I — we're alike. Sure. I say to you, "Your watch will be ready — maybe Thursday." And that's good enough for us. But "Maybe Thursday" wasn't good enough for them. It's Thursday or not at all. Thursday and you better be ready to fight. Thursday with fifty names. But I learned. Flora — there's more than one way to see red.

end

~~(Willy rushes in — out of breath. He carries a large tux box.)~~

~~WILLY. Hi! (*Calling to the other side of the studio.*) Hey — Kenny — I got the dinner jacket! (*He puts the tux box on the table, covering the envelope with the names. He takes out the dinner jacket.*)~~

~~ELSA. (*Entering with Maggie and Kenny.*) It's about time.~~

~~KENNY. Great!~~