

FLORA ^{the} RED MENACE

WILLY

PROLOGUE

(As the audience enters the theater, an onstage radio plays music, commercials and skits from a 1935 radio show. WILLY comes onstage, turns off the radio and addresses the audience.)

→ WILLY. Good evening. And welcome. We're really glad you made it here tonight.

Well, it's been a tough year — 1935 — I don't have to tell you that. But we're really excited because through the Federal Theater Project, we are able to present this production to you tonight.

I would like to point out that there are nine of us to play twenty-five parts — so — until the economy turns around, we're going to have to ask you to use your imagination.

~~*(Nodding to the stage manager.) I see we're ready to begin. We hope you enjoy FLORA, THE RED MENACE.*~~

~~*(He exits as the lights dim and the opening number begins.)*~~

FLORA, THE RED MENACE

AND I'LL NEVER BE FANNED OUT
GIMME GIMME A LIFT

MAGGIE.

AND REPORTERS WILL STAND OUTSIDE MY DOOR
ALL BEGGING FOR THE CHANCE TO GET AN
EXCLUSIVE.

(Willy enters from outside. He carries his clarinet case. As he takes off his coat, he greets Kenny and Maggie.)

KENNY/MAGGIE.

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

ONE SUBSTANTIAL BREAK IS ALL I NEED

WILLY. (About their dancing.) Hey, pretty good. (To the audience.) My name is Willy. I've been trying to get into a band around town. Times are tough. Which is just my luck. I met Flora one day when I was playing my clarinet in the park. She thought I was . . . great. She told me about a dance team that needed some new material for their act. So I rented space in the studio—wrote them a song—and haven't made a penny. Which is just my luck. (Elsa enters from the outside. She takes off her coat.) But one thing that keeps me going. Women can't get enough of a man who plays the clarinet. (Elsa kisses Willy on the cheek.) Which, thank god, is just my luck.

ELSA. (To the audience.) Hi. I'm Elsa. Flora and I have been best girlfriends since . . . just about forever. (She holds up a dress she has been working on.) Tell me. Do you like this dress? You could get a lot of use out of it—no? You could dress it up, dress it down. I'm very good at putting things together. Flora says I should start showing my designs around town. Maybe I will. Like Eleanor Roosevelt says, "You don't get anywhere by standing still."

ELSA.

GIMME GIMME A CHANCE

WILLY.

GIMME GIMME A CHANCE

ELSA/WILLY.

AND I'M OFF TO THE BIG TIME
GIMME GIMME A BOOST
AND I'LL MAKE IT IN JIG TIME

WILLY 2
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