

**PROLOGUE**

*The theatre is dark. A voice from the stage addresses the waiting audience.*

**MAN**

I hate theatre. Well, it's so disappointing, isn't it? You know what I do when I'm sitting in a darkened theatre waiting for the show to begin? I pray. Oh, dear God, please let it be a good show. And let it be short, oh Lord in heaven, please. Two hours is fine, three hours is too much. And keep the actors out of the audience...God. I didn't pay good money to have the fourth wall come crashing down around my ears. I just want a story, and a few good songs that will take me away. I just want to be entertained. I mean, isn't that the point? Amen.

*(pause)*

You know there was a time when people sat in darkened theatres and thought to themselves, "What have George and Ira Gershwin got for us tonight?" Or "Can Cole Porter pull it off again?" Can you imagine? Now it's, "Please, Elton John, must we continue this charade?" It used to be, sitting there in the dark, you knew that when the show began you would be taken to another world, a world full of color and music and glamour. And you thought to yourself, "My God. When are they going to bring up the lights?"

*(lights up)*

Oh, how things have changed. Hello. How are we today? I'm feeling a little blue myself. You know, a little anxious for no particular reason, a little sad that I should feel anxious at this age, you know, a little self-conscious anxiety resulting in nonspecific sadness: a state that I call "blue". Anyway, whenever I'm feeling this way, blue, I like to listen to my music. So, I was going through my records this morning—yes, records—and I was about to put on the sound track recording of Meredith Willson's THE MUSIC MAN. I had a craving for a young Ronny Howard. But then I said "No! Let's have a treat! Let's disappear for a while into the decadent world of the 1920's. When the champagne flowed while the caviar chilled and all the world was a party"—for the wealthy anyway. So, I dug about and what did I find—

*(extracting a record)*

—but one of my favorite shows Gable and Stein's "The Drowsy Chaperone;" Remember? Music by Julie Gable, lyrics by Sidney Stein. It's a two record set, remastered from the original recording made in 1928. It's the full show with the original cast including Beatrice Stockwell as the Chaperone. Isn't she elegant? And this is a full 15 years before she became Dame Beatrice Stockwell. Can you believe it? Let me read to you what it says on the back—it says "Mix-ups, mayhem and a gay wedding!" Of course the phrase gay wedding has a different meaning now, but back then it just meant fun. And that's just what the show is—fun. So. Would you... would you indulge me? Would you let me play the record for you now? I was hoping you would say yes.

*He puts the record on the record player. He places the needle.*

**SCENE 12: COURTYARD—AFTERNOON***(Spoken over intro instrumental.)*

Now, while you're listening to this, try to ignore the lyrics. I know it will be difficult, but block them out. They're not the best, but the tune is beautiful, and it truly communicates the bride's state of mind. Just ignore the lyrics.

*#12 - Bride's Lament***JANET**

I PUT A MONKEY ON A PEDESTAL  
AND TRIED TO MAKE THAT MONKEY STAY  
AND HE DID FOR A TIME  
BUT HE NEEDED TO CLIMB  
AND WITH OTHER MONKEYS PLAY  
FAR AWAY

HE LEFT HIS JACKET ON THAT PEDESTAL  
BESIDE HIS TINY RUSTY CUP  
AND I HAVEN'T GOT THE STRENGTH TO PICK THEM UP  
OH MONKEY, MONKEY, MONKEY  
YOU BROKE MY HEART IN TWO  
BUT I'LL ALWAYS SAVE THAT PEDESTAL  
FOR YOU

**MAN**

I'm just going to pour myself a brandy.

**JANET**

COME MY LITTLE MONKEY  
COME MY LITTLE MONKEY, DO

**MAN**

The melody is so simple, it just floats in the air. And I must confess I always get a little bit misty when I think of that tiny jacket lying on the pedestal, it's long sleeves dangling on the floor.

**JANET & MAN**

OH MONKEY, MONKEY, MONKEY

**JANET**

YOU BROKE MY HEART IN TWO  
BUT I'LL ALWAYS SAVE THAT PEDESTAL

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I say that? I  
to clean. She's  
and in the  
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peror who is  
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ng.

m her balcony  
is because it's

MAN

PEDESTAL

JANET

FOR YOU  
COME MY LITTLE MONKEY  
COME MY LITTLE MONKEY  
DO

MAN

Okay, here we go...

JANET

Wait!

MAN

Who are you?

JANET

I'm Janet Van De Graaff!

MAN

Do you need anyone?

JANET

I don't need anyone!

MAN

*(Speaking quickly)*

What about the love of one man?

JANET

What do I care about the love of one man when I am adored by millions!  
DO I NEED TO BE SO GLOOMY?

JANET & MAN

NO, NO, NO

JANET

I COULD RULE WORLD  
IF SO I CHOSE  
SIGMUND FREUD SENDS FLOWERS TO ME EVERY SHOW  
GERTRUDE STEIN HANDED ME A ROSE

MAN

Now she really lets go.