

MRS. LEVI. Yes, it takes a woman

*DOLLY continues humming melody as she crosses to below center stairs.  
Music continues under dialogue.*

You know, Ephraim, I think I'll have that room done over in blue wallpaper. Yes, in blue! *(Calling)* Ermengarde, Ambrose, come on out here! We've got plans to make!

**\*\*\*START\*\*\***

*AMBROSE and ERMENGARDE enter. Lights down on DOLLY, AMBROSE, and ERMENGARDE seated upstairs. Lights up on the trap door where CORNELIUS and BARNABY appear.*

CORNELIUS. Chief clerk! Promoted from chief clerk to chief clerk! And if I'm good, in ten years I'll be promoted to chief clerk again! Thirty three years old and I still don't get an evening free. When am I going to begin to live?

BARNABY. You can live on holidays, Cornelius!

CORNELIUS. Did you forget what we did last Christmas? All those canned tomatoes went bad and exploded and you and I cleaned up the mess all afternoon. Do you call that living?

BARNABY. No!

CORNELIUS. Barnaby, you and I are going to New York!

BARNABY. You mean close the store?

CORNELIUS. Uh huh.

BARNABY. Cornelius, we can't!

CORNELIUS. We'll have to. Some more rotten tomato cans are going to explode.

BARNABY. Holy cabooses! How do you know?

CORNELIUS. I'm going to light this candle under them, that's how I know. They'll make such a smell customers won't be able to come into the place for twenty four hours. That'll get ups an evening off! We're going to New York, Barnaby, and we're going to live! We're going to have a good meal, we're going to be in danger, we're going to spend our money, we're going to be arrested...

*CORNELIUS falls down the open trap.*

BARNABY. Holy Cabooses!

CORNELIUS. And one more thing! We're not coming back to Yonkers until we've each kissed a girl!

BARNABY. Cornelius, you can't do that! You don't know any girls!

CORNELIUS. I'm thirty three years old! I've got to begin sometime!

BARNABY. I'm only seventeen, Cornelius. It isn't so urgent for me.

CORNELIUS. New York. Barnaby! Elevated trains! The lights of Broadway! The stuffed whale at Barnum's Museum!

BARNABY. A stuffed whale?

CORNELIUS. A stuffed whale! What do you say, Barnaby?

BARNABY. ...Yes, Cornelius! Yes!

**\*\*\*END\*\*\***

*Music in, first fermata. Lights down stage right – lights up on upstairs.*

## No. 4

## Put On Your Sunday Clothes

*See p. 69*

(Cornelius, Barnaby, Dolly, Ermengarde, Ambrose & Chorus)

MRS. LEVI. Now the first thing to do is make you financially independent. I know! I'll find you a job. Can you dance?

AMBROSE. I'm an artist, Mrs. Levi. I paint!

MRS. LEVI. Well, then, my card!

*DOLLY hands AMBROSE a card. Music pauses.*

AMBROSE. Mrs. Dolly Levi — Painters taught how to dance!

MRS. LEVI. Now, there's a man, Rudolph Reisenweber, at the Harmonia Gardens Restaurant on Fourteenth Street, I'll give you a note for him and we'll see if he can't have you both entered in the polka contest tonight. The prize is a week's engagement and a gold cup. Oh, the cups we won, Ephraim and me!

AMBROSE. Hold on, Mrs. Levi! No fiancée of mine is going to set foot in a cafe. (ERMENGARDE *cries once*) And I don't mind saying I'm surprised that you have acquaintances in a place like that.

MRS. LEVI. Not acquaintances, Mr. Kemper, friends. Dear friends from days gone by. My late husband Ephraim Levi believed in life and anyplace you could find it — cafes, ballrooms, yes even theatres! Why, even when times were bad, every Saturday night like clockwork down those stairs at the Harmonia Gardens we came, Ephraim and me.

AMBROSE. It's all very well to come down like clockwork, Mrs. Levi, but you're asking Ermengarde to work there!

*ERMENGARDE cries.*

MRS. LEVI. It's the only way to show Horace Vandergelder we mean business! Now you go to Harmonia Gardens this afternoon and say Mrs. Levi sent you and