

LANDLADY 1

6

SCENE 1B The Kitchen of HARRY'S Boardinghouse, as dreary as the shoe shop.

(HARRY'S LANDLADY, a frumpy woman in curlers, is putting a kettle on for tea, as the doorbell rings.)

Start

LANDLADY

Who is it? I don't want to let the dogs into the kitchen!

VOICE OUTSIDE

Telegram for a Mr. Harry Witherspoon! Is he in?

LANDLADY

Telegram? For him?! Well, he's not home yet. But I'll take it. I'm his landlady. I'll see he gets it.

(SHE opens the door, and DOGS (On tape) outside begin to bark frantically.)

LANDLADY

Smokey! Fluffy! Let go ! Let go of the nice man's leg! Sorry!

(The telegram is thrust through the door and SHE takes it.)

Thank you.

(BOARDER #1, A SPINSTER, with a head cold, enters. Once again, as the door opens, we hear the DOGS.)

SPINSTER (Through the door, to dogs)

Smokey! Fluffy! Let go of that man's leg! (TO LANDLADY) Who was that?

LANDLADY

(sing both
characters
as solo)

MR. WITHERSPOON
GOT A TELEGRAM

SPINSTER

MR. WITHERSPOON
GOT WHAT?

LANDLADY

GOT A TELEGRAM.

SPINSTER

NOT A TELEGRAM?
THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE

LANDLADY

IT'S NOT!
Here. Look here!
NOW A TELEGRAM
MEANS A TRAGEDY

SPINSTER (With great relish)

7

SOMETHING HORRIBLE!

OR GRIM!

LANDLADY

BOTH

WELL, I NEVER THOUGHT
OF A TRAGEDY
OR OF ANYTHING
EVER HAPPENING
TO HIM!

(BOARDER #2, A SURLY LORRY DRIVER, and BOARDER #3, A
VICIOUS PUNK, enter.)

LORRY DRIVER

Evenin'.

PUNK (Fighting off the dogs)

Let go of my bloody leg!

LANDLADY

Boys, now then, look here.

LANDLADY, SPINSTER

You'll never guess!

LANDLADY

SPINSTER

MR. WITHERSPOON
GOT A TELEGRAM
WELL, YOU COULD'VE KNOCKED
ME FLAT!

MR. WITHERSPOON
GOT A TELEGRAM
COULD'VE KNOCKED
ME FLAT

LANDLADY, SPINSTER

LORRY DRIVER, PUNK

WHY WOULD ANYONE
SEND A TELEGRAM

WHY WOULD SOMEONE
SEND A TELEGRAM

(Lights come up on HARRY, who enters crammed
in with a crowd of strap-hanging COMMUTERS.
COMMUTERS face upstage. HARRY faces downstage)

LANDLADY, BOARDERS

TO A NINCOMPOOP LIKE THAT!

HARRY

Stop

I SHOULD BE STROLLING ALONG A SANDY BEACH
SOMEPLACE EXOTIC...AND BRIGHT
I SHOULD BE DANCING