

ACT ONE SCENE 1

Lights up on "The Roxy", an old fashioned cinema, rather seedy and down at heel. A poster advertises a week long Marilyn Monroe Festival.

MAX enters from The Roxy

FX: Thunder and the sound of rain

MAX looks out at the rain.

MAX: Oh, blimey, it's pouring. Suppose I'll have to wait here till it eases off a bit.

He looks at the poster and smiles

MAX: Still, I'm in good company.

Crosses to poster

MAX: You don't mind if I wait here with you a while do you Marilyn? And what did you do last night, Max? Oh, nothing much. Went to the Roxy, saw a film, then stood in the pouring rain talking to Marilyn Monroe.

He chuckles. He is just about to take his chances with the weather when JUDY enters from The Roxy. He changes his mind and stays where he is.

JUDY: *(Peering at the rain)* Oh, God, look at that.

MAX: It's raining.

JUDY: Thanks. I'd never have guessed.

MAX: You're one of the usherettes aren't you?

JUDY: That's right.

MAX: I thought I recognised you. I'm Max, by the way.

JUDY: I'm gonna get drenched if I have to walk home in this.

MAX: Doesn't the management arrange for you to have a taxi or something?

JUDY: In this fleapit? You must be joking.

MAX: It wasn't always a fleapit. It used to be quite special. A proper theatre. All the big names played here. Shirley Bassey. Morecambe and Wise. Even The Beatles played here once.

JUDY: I know. They've got a whole room in the basement filled with old posters,

costumes, photos, all sorts of stuff. I keep telling them they should sort it out, put it on display. They could have a sort of museum.

MAX: What a wonderful idea.

JUDY: And a tea shop. They've got room in the lobby. Just a few chairs and tables. Somewhere for the old dears to put their feet up after doing their shopping. And once they're in, they might decide to stay for the afternoon matinee.

MAX: Sounds marvelous.

JUDY: But they won't do it.

MAX: Why not?

JUDY: Because they're all a bunch of wankers, that's why.

MAX: Oh! Still, even the most dedicated onanist must see that it's not right for a young lady like yourself, to have to walk home at this time of night all alone. No telling what might happen.

MAX moves a step or two closer to JUDY.

JUDY: *(Moving away)* Yea, there's some very funny people about.

MAX: Oh, you don't have to worry about me. Heavens no. I'm not a mugger or a rapist or anything.

JUDY: That's good. Only you'd be sure to tell me if you were wouldn't you? Just so I'd be prepared to end up in a ditch with me skull caved in instead of it coming as a complete surprise.

MAX: I'm sorry. I'm a film fan. Honest. I've been here every night this week for the Marilyn Monroe season. You must have seen me. Third row back, just left of centre.

JUDY: Oh, yes. Now you come to mention it. You were the one who dropped popcorn down that woman's neck.

MAX: The bottom fell out of the carton. They don't make them strong enough. Anyway, there was no need for her to scream like that. It was only a little bit of popcorn, won't do her any harm.

JUDY: Livened the place up anyway.

MAX: Not much of a crowd tonight was there.

JUDY: There never is. They're all over at the Odeon. Twenty seven screens and nothing on. At least the Roxy shows real movies with real stars instead of

computer animated puppets.

MAX: You sound like a girl after my own heart.

JUDY: Do I?

MAX: Yes.

JUDY: I just like the old movies. I know they're not real, but I like to think they could be. It may be a dump, but it's a nice dump. Somewhere you can escape from all the rubbish that clogs up the rest of your life, just for an hour or two anyway. Does that sound daft?

MAX: No, not at all. It's a regular palace of dreams this place. You can't beat the good old Roxy, that's what I say. Every time I see one of them big multiplexes I want to get a big barrel of dynamite and blow the whole festering lot of them to kingdom come. They're ruining the small independents. I'd like to line all of them up against a wall and machine gun the ruddy lot of them, that's what I'd do.

JUDY: But you're keeping well in yourself?

MAX: Mustn't grumble.

JUDY: You're right though. What other cinema these days would put on a week long Marilyn Monroe festival?

MAX: The Seven Year Itch. What a classic.

JUDY: One of her best.

MAX: You know that scene where she stands over that warm air grating and her skirt blows up around her waist?

JUDY: A classic movie moment. What about it?

MAX: After all these years, whenever I see it, I still get trousers like a ridge tent in a force nine gale.

JUDY: Perhaps just a touch more information there than I really needed

MAX: Fair enough. But that's the magic of movies you see.

JUDY: What? Their ability to get randy old goats like you all hot and bothered?

MAX: I don't call that a downside. But what I mean is, movies are timeless. That's their magic. They make everyone immortal. Take Marilyn for instance. The way she looks on screen, that's how she'll look forever. Perfect. Unchanging.

JUDY: Fancy her then do you?

MAX: I wouldn't put it quite like that. I think everyone who sees her, well, the men anyway, fall in love with her, just a little bit.

JUDY: Did you ever meet her?

MAX: Oh, yes. She was always popping in to the Dog and Ferret for a swift half and a game of dominoes before nipping off to have a secret liaison with a high ranking politician.

JUDY: No need to get sarky. I only asked.

MAX: No, I never met her.

JUDY: My dad fancies her. Every time one of her films comes on the box he's right there, can of beer in one hand, cheese sandwich in the other, drooling. *(Shudders)* It's horrible.

MAX: You sound like you have an interesting family.

JUDY: That's one word for it. It's like a circus in our place.

MAX: I'm sure it can't be that bad.

JUDY: That's all you know. Take tonight, before I came to work...

ACT ONE SCENE 2

Lights down on The Roxy. Lights up on the Faulkner's living room. FLORRIE is looking through a pile of vinyl LP's and humming to herself. She finds one she likes and places it on an old Dansette record player. The music begins to play. Loudly. Andy Williams 'Music To Watch Girls By'. FLORRIE begins to dance with an invisible partner. The door opens and FLORRIE's son in law KEVIN enters.

KEVIN: *(Shouts above the noise)* Mother!

FLORRIE: I'm not your mother. If I had been you'd have been bottle fed and like it.

KEVIN: *(Crosses to Dansette and lifts the needle.)* Turn it down can't you.

FLORRIE: That's Andy Williams.

KEVIN: I know it's Andy Williams. The whole street knows it's Andy chuffin' Williams!

FLORRIE: He did some lovely Christmas shows. Used to have those nice

Osmond Brothers on, do you remember?

KEVIN: You never let us forget.

FLORRIE: And his wife used to be on it. Pretty little thing she was. French. Then she left him. The bitch. He was never the same after that.

KEVIN: Are you sure you wouldn't like me to build you a granny annex? We've got the space at the bottom of the garden. You could be in your own little world. Just like you are now.

FLORRIE: And one step closer to the cemetery, that's what you mean isn't it?

KEVIN: You don't have to move into a Granny annex for that.

RITA and SONIA enter

RITA: Kevin!

KEVIN: Well, she winds me up.

SONIA: Hello Gran. Still got your Dansette then?

FLORRIE: *(Kisses SONIA on the cheek)* Hello love.

RITA: We've tried taking the plug off, but she just gets another one from somewhere.

SONIA: Hello Dad.

KEVIN: *(Kisses her on the cheek)* Hello SONIA. To what do we owe this pleasure?

SONIA: Can't I just pop in for a visit if I feel like it?

KEVIN: Not normally, no.

RITA: Sonia's got some news for us.

KEVIN: Oh heck!

RITA: *(Sharply)* KEVIN!

KEVIN: *(Sits on sofa)* Well, every time Sonia has some news I get an ache. In me wallet. Well, go on then. What is it?

RITA: Hang on. Where's Judy? We should all be here for this. *(Goes to door and calls)* Judy! Come in here a second will you.

JUDY: *(Off)* Coming.

JUDY enters dressed in her usherette's uniform and carrying a cup of tea. She sniffs at it.

JUDY: This tea tastes funny. I think the milk's gone off.

RITA: You can thank your Gran for that.

FLORRIE: I had to get a plug for me gramophone somewhere.

RITA: But not off the fridge Mum, for Heaven's sake.

JUDY: *(To SONIA)* Hello pest.

SONIA: Hello ratbag.

RITA: Judy, everyone, our Sonia has some good news.

JUDY: Oh, God, you're not pregnant again are you?

SONIA: *(Beaming)* Yea, I am.

JUDY: Are you sure it's not wind?

SONIA: *(Annoyed)* Of course it's not bloody wind! I do know the difference.

JUDY: You ought to by now. You two make rabbits look celibate.

SONIA: Mum, she's doing it again. She always has to spoil things.

RITA: *(To JUDY)* Stop annoying your sister. *(To SONIA)* It's wonderful news love. We're thrilled, aren't we, Kevin?

KEVIN: Oh, yes. Chuffed to bits.

RITA: You could be a little more enthusiastic.

KEVIN: I am. I suppose there'll be a christening will there?

SONIA: Of course.

KEVIN: And a party to wet the baby's head?

SONIA: Naturally.

KEVIN: And who's going to pay for all that lot? Me, I suppose.

RITA: Don't be such a skinflint!

JUDY: *(To SONIA)* You ought to tell your Darren to tie a knot in it.

SONIA: At least it proves he's a man.

FLORRIE: Let him go through sixteen hours of labour and then see how much of a man he is.

JUDY: *(Laughs)* Nice one Gran.

SONIA: *(Starts to cry)* You all hate me, that's what it is, you do.

RITA: *(Hugs SONIA)* There, there, it's all right, they didn't mean it.

KEVIN: *(Joins the group hug)* No, of course we didn't. I'm really happy for you. I expect you could do with a new pram couldn't you?

SONIA: *(Sniffs)* Yea.

KEVIN: Well, we'll go out on Saturday and raid Mothercare, how about that?

SONIA: Okay.

JUDY: *(Rolls her eyes at FLORRIE, who smiles back)* I'm going to work before I get waterlogged. *(She puts her cup down and picks her coat up from the back of the chair)* Up the revolution, Gran.

FLORRIE: Don't let the bastards grind you down, love.

JUDY exits. FLORRIE moves to the Dansette and puts the record back on. She starts to dance. Music down, lights fade.

ACT ONE SCENE 3

Lights up on The Roxy. JUDY joins MAX once more.

FX: Thunder to underscore the change of location.

MAX: Like I said, interesting.

JUDY: If you're David Attenborough maybe. Gran's lovely. All me Mum does is read sappy romance novels and nag me Dad and all Sonia does is churn out sprogs and they wonder why I'm not queuing up to join her in the maternity ward. I mean, there has to be more to life than that, doesn't there?

MAX: Well...

JUDY: Is it true? What you said about all the men falling in love with her? With Marilyn I mean?

MAX: Oh yes. They all loved Marilyn.

JUDY: Why? I mean, she's not that special, is she?

MAX: Not that special! She was magical. The love goddess. She had oomph.

JUDY: Oomph?

MAX: Yes. Oomph. You can't explain it. You can't put it into words. It was just a quality she had.

JUDY: Do you think I've got oomph?

MAX: Eh?

JUDY: What she had. Do you think I've got it? I'm not as big up top, but my legs aren't bad, maybe if I dyed my hair.

MAX: Hold on, hold on, you've missed the point. We're not talking about just physical attraction. Although that was part of it, I grant you. It was her whole personality, the complete package. It wasn't just lust she attracted, it was real love.

JUDY: What's the difference?

MAX: What, between love and lust?

JUDY: Yes. It all comes down to the same thing in the end anyway, doesn't it?

MAX: Does it?

JUDY: Of course it does. All my boyfriends said they loved me. And they all ended up trying to get me knickers off in the back of a Ford Cortina.

MAX: What, all at the same time?

JUDY: No! And before you ask, it wasn't the same Ford Cortina either.

MAX: Oh. Sort of a metaphorical Ford Cortina, eh?

JUDY: No, I think it was a hatchback.

MAX: No, no, I mean a sort of Ford Cortina of the mind.

JUDY: Something like that I expect, yes.

MAX: So, if you can't tell the difference between lust and love, what was the problem?

JUDY: Cramp mainly. And I don't like being lied to.

MAX: They lied?

JUDY: When they said they loved me.

MAX: So you do think there's a difference?

JUDY: Maybe. They only said it so I'd take my seat belt off. I mean, if you love somebody, you don't ladder their best tights and try to maul them on lumpy upholstery, do you?

MAX: Well, I don't, no.

JUDY: No.

MAX: So, did you love them?

JUDY: Who?

MAX: The metaphorical Ford Cortina maulers.

JUDY: Don't know really. Does it matter?

MAX: Of course it matters. Love has to be two ways you know.

JUDY: I didn't know there was more than one way.

MAX: Now you're sending me up.

JUDY: Sorry. So what is the difference then?

MAX: Well...romance, I suppose.

JUDY: That explains it then.

MAX: Does it?

JUDY: Yes. I mean, romance isn't for ordinary people is it? It's only for famous people like her. (*Points at poster*) The rest of us have to make do with lust and misery.

MAX: She may have been romanced in more style, but that didn't make her happy.

JUDY: No?

MAX: No. It was sad really. The whole world loved her, but she never found real lasting love in her private life.

JUDY: Why not?

MAX: Don't know. I think she went for the wrong sort of bloke. Politicians and playwrights. I think she'd have been better off with someone dead ordinary.

JUDY: Like you, you mean?

MAX: Thanks a lot.

JUDY: I didn't mean it like that.

MAX: It's all right. I know what you mean. She married a baseball player once. Joe Di Maggio his name was. He was a sort of ordinary bloke really.

JUDY: So what happened?

MAX: It didn't last. They split up. But I think of all the men she knew, he loved her the most.

JUDY: What makes you say that?

MAX: Well, after she died, he made sure that there was a red rose on her grave every day. No-one else did that. That's real love.

JUDY: Sounds morbid to me.

MAX: It was a gesture. A symbol of the bond between them even though they were parted.

JUDY: Very romantic, I'm sure.

MAX: Bit like your boyfriend wiping his back seat with a damp cloth.

JUDY: Are you taking the piss?

MAX: Sorry.

JUDY: You're forgiven. I suppose I'm just jealous. No-ones ever done anything romantic for me.

MAX: Give it time. You never know your luck.

JUDY: If it's going to happen it'll have to be in the next four weeks.

MAX: Why?

JUDY: That's when I'm getting married.

MAX: Oh! So, you have found true love?

JUDY: *(Laughs)* I said I was getting married, I didn't say anything about true love.

MAX: That's very cynical.

JUDY: It's the truth. I don't know anyone who got married for love.

MAX: No-one at all?

JUDY: No. Having kids is the main reason round our way.

MAX: Ah, well, the desire to have children is a strong motivator, I admit.

JUDY: I mean having them in the back of the wedding car on the way to the reception usually. The number of services that have to be finished in the Maternity Ward, our Vicar's taken to wearing a surgical gown under his surplus. It saves time.

MAX: You're pulling my leg.

JUDY: Not by much.

MAX: Is that why you're getting married?

JUDY: Bloody cheek! Do I look like that sort of old slapper to you?

MAX: No, no, I didn't mean anything. It's just that you said, you didn't love him, so...

JUDY: I never said I didn't love him.

MAX: So you do love him?

JUDY: Well...I don't know.

MAX: If you don't know, then why are you getting married in the first place?

JUDY: What's it got to do with you?

MAX: Nothing, nothing at all. It's just that you seem like a nice girl. It would be a shame to waste your life that's all.

JUDY: Yea, well...

MAX: What does he do? Your fiancé I mean.

JUDY: Shane? Not a lot really.

MAX: Unemployed?

JUDY: Not exactly. His Dad owns Blackstaffs Butchers in the High Street.

MAX: I've seen it.

JUDY: Shane could work for him, but he won't. Says it's against his principles. He's a vegetarian. But I think that's just an excuse for being bone idle. To be fair, he has tried real jobs but he can't make up his mind up what he wants to be when he grows up. The only thing he's really interested in is sport.

MAX: Does he play?

JUDY: Oh, he plays all right. Let's see. Monday it's bowls, Tuesday it's badminton, Wednesday it's table tennis, Thursday it's darts, Friday it's bowls...

MAX: You already said that.

JUDY: He's in two leagues.

MAX: That's a lot of bowls!

JUDY: You can say that again. And when he's not playing it he's watching it. Take last Saturday. We were supposed to be going out but he insisted on taking me Dad to a football match first.