

THE DIRECTOR

A musical comedy

LIBRETTO

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THE DIRECTOR

1. Overture

SCENE 1: BOBBY

2. Song - *The Director*

(BOBBY enters with an armload of music.)

BOBBY

I am the director
Point my finger, wave my hand
What you see is what I planned.
What I see is truly grand.
I am the director.

I am the director.
What I say is what you see.
Everything is up to me.
Everything as I decree.
I am the director.

The drama and the art you see
the darkness and the light
I take the work that's on the page
and send it on its flight

I am the director.

but I'm modest, and humane.
True respect I never feign.
All will prosper in my reign.
I am the director.

SCENE 2: TONY enters

3. Dialogue - "Here's my score"

BOBBY

Here's my scores. Let's see if I've got all the parts. First the soprano. The first of two sopranos. That will be SUSIE SILVERTONE. Delightful SUSIE SILVERTONE. I asked her to do the part. She agreed in a flash. SUSIE SILVERTONE. What a joy to work with her again. I promised her top billing, of course. She always has top billing. She'd settle for nothing less.

And then the second soprano. The second of two sopranos. Who can I get for soprano number two. I have no idea, not a clue. I'll have to find a second soprano.

And next the tenor. The tenor will be easy. I'll sing that part myself. The tenor (that's me) will follow my every wish.

And finally the bass. I haven't got a bass. Where can I get a bass. I'll have to find a bass.

(A knock at the door.)

That will be SUSIE SILVERTONE. SUSIE, SUSIE SILVERTONE. Exciting, elegant, exquisite SUSIE SILVERTONE!

(BOBBY opens the door.)

Come in, SUSIE!

(TONY enters, in a telegram delivery boy uniform.)

TONY

Telegram! Telegram for BOBBY BIRDSONG!

BOBBY

Telegram? Telegram for BOBBY BIRDSONG? That's me. Thank you.

TONY

Yes sir. Here it is, sir. Have a nice day, sir.

(BOBBY takes the telegram. TONY starts to leave.)

BOBBY

Wait! Wait! Hold on there! Repeat what you just said!

TONY

What I just said?

BOBBY

What you just said. Repeat it.

TONY

I said "Yes sir. Have a nice day, sir."

BOBBY

No, no. Before that. "Telegram! Telegram for BOBBY BIRDSONG!"

TONY

Telegram! Telegram for BOBBY BIRDSONG!

BOBBY

Now sing it, stretch it.

TONY

Telegram! Telegram for BOBBY BIRDSONG

BOBBY

Make me feel it!

TONY

Telegram! Telegram for BOBBY BIRDSONG

BOBBY

Splendid! Sublime! What's your name?

TONY

TONY. My name is TONY, sir.

BOBBY

Well, TONY, you are a basso. You touch the heart with your voice.

What roles have you performed? Sarastro? Leporello? Don Alphonso?

TONY

I only sing the telegrams. Only the telegrams.

BOBBY

What a waste! What an awful waste! You were born to sing. Born to make the people cry. Don't you want to sing?

TONY

Yes, Yes! I'll sing! I'll sing!

4. Song - *I'll Sing*

TONY

I'll sing! I'll perform!
I'll be a basso op'ra star
and live up on the stage.
I'll be an artist worshipped from afar.

I'll sing! I'll inspire!
I'll make the people laugh and cry,
I'll make the people cheer.
I'll be the basso reaching for the sky.

They say that ladies can't resist a star.
They say that ladies chase us down
no matter where we are.

I'll sing! I'll excite!
I'll be the flame, I'll light the fire,
I'll make the people burn.
I'll be the basso reaching ever higher.

SCENE 3: HELEN enters

5. Dialogue - "Wonderful, Tony"

BOBBY

Wonderful, wonderful, wonderful, TONY, just wonderful. You will be our basso. Go turn in your telegraph uniform and get back here to rehearse.

TONY

Yes sir! Yes sir! I'll be right back in a flash!

(TONY leaves.)

BOBBY

And now the telegram. Let's see the telegram.

(BOBBY opens the telegram and reads aloud.)

From SUSY SILVERTONE. A telegram from SUSIE SILVERTONE. That's no surprise. That's no surprise at all. I can guess. I can guess what it will be. Quote.

Dearest Bobby, I have to weasel out. I hate to let you down. But I must do what I must do. That's what life's all about. Love and kisses, SUSY SILVERTONE.

End quote.

BOBBY

That's no surprise. No surprise. No surprise. No surprise. No surprise. Susie Silvertone is still Susie Silvertone And now I need to find two sopranos. Soprano number one and soprano number two. Where will I find two sopranos.

(A knock at the door.)

The door again. Who could that be? Come in!

(HELEN enters tentatively, looking around.)

HELEN

The audition?

BOBBY

Audition?

HELEN

For the understudy?

BOBBY

Understudy?

HELEN

For Christine?

BOBBY

Christine?

HELEN

In the *Phantom*?

BOBBY

The Phantom? Ah!! The Phantom of the Opera, audition, understudy. Christine. So you are a soprano. Forget about phantom opera. Never understudy when you can star. I'm **BOBBY BIRDSONG**, the director

HELEN

And I'm **HELEN HAPPYHEART**, soprano.

(**BOBBY** hands **HELEN** a score)

BOBBY

Here, **HELEN**, sing this. This song.

HELEN

This song? OK. But first my coat.

(**HELEN** removes her coat)

BOBBY

Your coat?

HELEN

My coat. Hang it up while I sing.

BOBBY

Ah, yes. Your coat. I'll hang it up while you sing.

(HELEN takes a breath to sing, then turns to BOBBIE.)

HELEN

Also...and you said 'Star'?

BOBBY

Star? Yes, of course, you'll be the star of the show.

HELEN

And top billing?

BOBBY

Top billing? Of course. Top billing. The star of the show. Now sing. Sing.

6. Song - Biscayne Bay

HELEN

Sunrise.

Dawn on Biscayne Bay.
 Sea birds.
 Watch them laugh and play.

Children.
 Climbing in the trees.
 Breakfast.
 Pass the sugar please.

All the things we lov'd to do together.
 They remain but you are gone.
 I remember all the joys we knew.
 I remember all my joy in you.

Where are you? Where are you?
 Where are you, my darling.
 Where are you as the days go on.

Where am I? Where am I?
 Where am I, without you.
 How can I, how can I go on.

How can you? How can you?
 How can you not be here?
 How could you leave me on my own.

How can I? How can I?
 How can I be with you?
 As we were, as we were, before? Before?

Sunrise.
 Dawn on Biscayne Bay.

Farewell. Farewell. Farewell.
 Farewell.

SCENE 4: SUSIE, HELEN, and BOBBY

7. Dialogue - "Beautiful, and so much more"

BOBBY

Beautiful. And so much more. You have the part.

HELEN

And top billing? Top billing too?

BOBBY

Top billing? Yes, of course. Top billing.

(A knock at the door.)

BOBBY

Come in.

(SUSIE enters.)

SUSIE

BOBBY!

BOBBY

SUSIE!

SUSIE

BOBBY, BOBBY, BOBBY! I hope that you ignored the silly telegram, The one I sent you by mistake. I know you'd never think that I'd abandon you, especially when I'll have top billing.

(SUSIE picks up a score.)

Ah, the scores. Is this song mine? My song? It better be the best. But never mind. Which ever one I sing will be the best.

BOBBY

SUSIE, this is HELEN.

HELEN

I'm HELEN, the soprano.

SUSIE

Hi HELEN. Pleased to meet the other soprano. BOBBY, my coat?

BOBBY

Your coat?

SUSIE

My coat. Hang it up while I sing.

BOBBY

Ah, yes. Your coat. I'll hang it up while you sing. Now sing. Sing.

8. Song - *Love's a Bother*

SUSIE

Love's a little angel,
flitting round your head.
Love's a fluffy pillow,
there upon your bed.

Love's a tiny kitten,
playing on the floor.
Love's a snuggly bunny,

knocking at your door.

"Love's a snuggly bunny"???

"Knocking at your door"???

Love's a bother.

Love's a bore.

Love's a bother, love's a bore.

Makes me sour, makes me sore.

Takes the wind out of my sails.

Leaves me eating frogs and snails.

Love's a bother, love's a bore.

Makes me glower, makes me snore.

Leaves me walking round and round.

Leaves me talking with no sound.

I grit and grumble.

I grin and glow.

I tell myself

to take it slow.

I wait and wonder.

I watch and wish.

I flop and flounder,

like a fish.

Like a fish.

Love's a bother, love's a bore.

Makes me shower, like a whore.

Makes me belch and burp and wheeze.

Leaves me walking on my knees.

Then the man smiles.

And he grins.

And he laughs like church bells

on a wedding afternoon.

and fireworks pop and flash
and leave me giggling like a loon.

Some day he will smile at me,
some day wait and see.
Some day he will reach for me,
and I will reach for the sky.

Some day he will turn to me
some day that will be.
Some day he will learn to see
and I will learn how to fly.

(Vocalising.)

Ah_____, Ah_____,
Ah_____, Ah_____,
Ah_____, Ah_____.

Some day he may smile at me,
some day....some day...some day.

Like I said so much before,
love's a bother...

Love may cause me awful grief.
I may never find relief.
I'll be wreck'd upon a reef,
like a bun that has no beef.

Love may be an awful bore,
leave me knocking at the door.
But 'til I get that winning score,
I'll be coming, I'll be coming,
I'll be coming back for more.

SCENE 5: TONY returns

9. Dialogue - "Amazing, just amazing"

BOBBY

Amazing, just amazing. The splendid SUSIE SILVERTONE. She always lights the stage. SUSIE SILVERTONE is still SUSIE SILVERTONE.

SUSIE

Thank you, thank you, BOBBY I always sing my best when I have top billing.

HELEN

Yes, BOBBY, I agree. Top billing for the top soprano. Top billing for the very best.

BOBBY

Ah yes, top billing. Let's avoid dispute. Top billing, What does it matter, what does it mean? Let's put aside all argument.

SUSIE

BOBBY! BOBBY! BOBBY! There's no argument.

HELEN

There is no dispute.

10. Song - *Cat Fight*

SUSIE

Sopranos all are famed

for being sweet and kind.

HELEN

for helping one another,
nicer folks you'll never find.

BOBBY

[To audience]
Something's not quite right here,
This all sounds too sweet.
With two sopranos in one room,
there should be sparks and heat.

HELEN

Sopranos just can't help it.
Some are better some are not.

SUSIE

That's just the way that life is.
Simply do with what you've got.

BOBBY

That's it! The competition
Now we'll soon hear fights and screams.
This sort of scene is sure to make

a nightmare of my dreams.

SUSIE

Sopranos know that talent
should be given a salute.

HELEN

The best receive top billing,

SUSIE and HELEN

and the rest get flowers and fruit.

HELEN

Sopranos must acknowledge

SUSIE

when a better one's at hand.

HELEN

Just step aside and curtsey,

SUSIE and HELEN

smile and cheer the truly grand.

BOBBY

Please, ladies, this is opera
not some boxing match
Fight and you'll get chickens
that you didn't want to hatch.

SUSIE

I see we both agree
on protocol and courtesy.
So there is now no room for doubt.
Top billing goes to me.

HELEN

I must correct your thinking.
You're only almost right.
Top billing's for the top, that's me
So let us have no fight.

BOBBY

I've got to find some way
to make some sort of compromise.
But that will not be easy

when there's only one damn prize.

SUSIE

Well, if you think you
are the best, your judgement's fake and flawed.
Top billing is for talent,
not for some ass-wiggling broad

HELEN

The only wiggling here is when
you squeeze into some dress
that you outgrew five years ago
when you weighed ten pounds less.

BOBBY

This will cause me misery,
and agony.
What sin did I commit
to get this wretched destiny

SUSIE

Your voice could make an angel
fall wounded from the sky.

HELEN

If you should ever sing on key,
it's on your seventh try.

SUSIE

You warble and you wobble,
and morticians even laugh.

HELEN

When you attempt to find the notes,
you miss the most by half.

SUSIE

Your high notes sound like sirens,
or a dying dinosaur.

HELEN

Your trills make dogs and horses howl,
make countries go to war.

BOBBY

Ladies, ladies, ladies,
let's say nothing we'll regret.
Burning bridges hasn't helped us
cross the river yet.

Shake a hand and say hello and then
say how are you.

SUSIE

Honking goose!

HELEN

Howling moose!

SUSIE

Groaning cow!

HELEN

Grunting sow!

SUSIE

Screeching cat!

HELEN

Squealing rat!

SUSIE

Shrieking chimp!

HELEN

Squeaking shrimp!

SUSIE

Whining dog!

HELEN

Whimpering frog!

SUSIE

Yowling ox!

HELEN

Yammering fox!

SUSIE

You really are...

HELEN

You're nothing but...

SUSIE

You ought to be

HELEN

You're simply just...

SUSIE and HELEN

An alto!

BOBBY

Disruption! Disaster! Discombobulation! Disestablishmentarianism!

(TONY enters from the the auditorium rear.)

TONY

Meow!_____

SUSIE

What's that?

HELEN

What's that?

BOBBY

What's that?

SUSIE

What is that awful cry?

TONY

MEOW!_____

SUSIE

Who's that?

HELEN

Who's that?

BOBBY

Who's that?

HELEN

That cry could fry a fly!

TONY

Cat fight!
I hear a cat fight!
Soprano cat fight!

SUSIE

Cat fight?

HELEN

Cat fight?

BOBBY

Cat fight?
Nobody sound of mind
would ever use a word like that.
Especially with sopranos here to claw him like a rat.

TONY

Those bickering sopranos
can be heard a mile away.
When they don't sound like cats
they sound like horses when they bray.

BOBBY

Ah, it's TONY.

SUSIE

TONY?

HELEN

TONY?

BOBBY

TONY. TONY the telegraph boy

TONY

TONY the basso.
Just in time to
help you with these
squabbling alley cats.

In olden days sopranos
sometimes got a spanking.
But that was then
and nowadays we'd never...

SUSIE

Where's my jacket.

(SUSIE puts on her jacket.)

HELEN

What did I do with my coat.

(HELEN puts on her coat.)

SUSIE

That basso is insufferable.
I'm walking out of here.

HELEN

Me too. That foul-mouthed jerk
deserves a good kick in the rear.

(HELEN notices the design on SUSIE's coat.)

Your coat! The needle-point design.

Did you do that yourself?

SUSIE

My hobby and my passion.

(SUSIE notices the design on HELEN's jacket.)

Your jacket too came off no shelf.

HELEN

Oh! You've got a little snuggly bunny!
He's so cute!

SUSIE

I just love snuggly little bunnies,

SUSIE and HELEN

They're so cute!

HELEN

Where did you get that pattern?
Is that your own design?

SUSIE

Yes I do my own designs,
that way they're truly mine.

BOBBY

Now, ladies, all your arguments,
top billing and the rest.
I'm sure that I can somehow work it out
so you will both feel blessed.

SUSIE

Bobby, Bobby,

HELEN

Bobby Baby,

SUSIE and HELEN

Worry you no more.

HELEN

We'll work it out in needle-point

SUSIE

and then tell you the score.

BOBBY

I sense a great serenity,

BOBBY and TONY

descending on our stage.

ALL

It's time for the Finale.

Time to turn the page.

11. Song - *Raise the Curtain*

(Opening verse - ensemble)

Singing is our business,

make-up is our face.

Dancing? Yes, we do that, too.

'cause downstage is our place.

(Opening chorus)

ENSEMBLE

Raise the curtain, start the show.
We're not ready, but who's to know.
It's time to see what we can do.
We'll make it if our luck comes through,
so raise the curtain, start the show.

(Partial chorus)

BOBBY and TONY

Raise the curtain.
Raise the curtain.

(Background verses for HELEN and SUSIE's dialogue)

BOBBY and TONY

Want to change the script?
Maybe add a song?
Tweak and twist and try again.
We know that no way's wrong.

Want to tour the towns?
Put us on a bus.
Buggy beds and batty bores,
you'll hear no whine from us.

(HELEN and SUSIE's dialogue)

SUSIE

HELEN you seem a little nervous,
fretful, and unsure.

HELEN

SUSIE it's just a case of jitters,
concentration is the cure.

SUSIE

HELEN you've got a jones for TONY
That's worse than cold or flu.

HELEN

SUSIE he's got me in a flutter,
I don't know what to do.

I hear his basso voice and, oh,
my toes just seem to curl.
He smiles and winks and
I become a giggling little girl.

SUSIE

Well I am no physician,
not even a Confucian.

But if TONY is the problem,
then TONY is the solution.

(Partial chorus)

BOBBY and SUSIE

Raise the curtain.
Raise the curtain.

(Background verses for HELEN and TONY's dialogue)

BOBBY and SUSIE

We have learned our craft.
We stand where we start.
We have done the deal, and so
the head is in the heart.

Some shows are a hit
Some shows are a dud.
We still work for curtain calls
the ham is in the blood.

(HELEN and TONY's dialogue)

HELEN

TONY, I hear that you're from Canada?
it must be cold up there!

TONY

HELEN, the cold is thirty-two below,
the wind could freeze your hair.

HELEN

I guess you don't know many folks,
if you've just moved down here.

TONY

It's hard to get acquainted.
My social life is austere.

HELEN

This Friday night, have you got plans?
It's my sister's birthday dinner.

TONY

The playoff game, my home town team,
they're sure to be a winner.

HELEN

We'll stop off at my sister's,
wish her well, then on our way.
Time to get acquainted
while we watch your home team play.

(Partial chorus)

HELEN and TONY

Raise the curtain.
Raise the curtain.

(Background verses for BOBBY and SUSIE's dialogue)

HELEN and TONY

We may get our paychecks.
Maybe, maybe not.
We still go on anyway
we burn while we are hot.

Sometimes work in rest'rants
or in noisy bars,
serving drinks to tourist drunks
and lighting their cigars.

(BOBBY and SUSIE's dialogue)

SUSIE

BOBBY, that telegram, I'm sorry,
welshing's one of my big crimes.

BOBBY

SUSIE, you show up when you show up
I make do the other times.

SUSIE

So you assume the worst of me
I wish you'd ask for more.

BOBBY

I take the best and skip the rest
and keep an open door.

SUSIE

I like the door, the welcome mat,
suppose I just move in.

BOBBY

We'll have some fun and count no sin
when you move out again.

SUSIE

Now don't you think that this could be
some sort of a romance?

BOBBY

Perhaps, but we better get
our jollies in advance.

(Canon)

ENSEMBLE

Life is unpredictable
We live it with no script
Our fates and fortunes guided by
whatever coin we flipped.

Life is unpredictable,
a twist and then a turn.
No matter how we study,
always something new to learn.

Life is unpredictable
we take it as it comes.
And maybe end up in a corner

sucking on our thumbs.

Life is unpredictable
our fate is in its hands.
We watch the hourglass and know
our lives are in the sands.

(Closing verse)

When the show is over,
and the folks are gone,
our hearts go upon the shelf
til next time we go on.

(Closing chorus)

Raise the curtain, start the show.
We're not ready, but who's to know.
It's time to see what we can do.
We'll make it if our luck comes through,
so raise the curtain,
raise the curtain,
raise the curtain,
start the show.

12. Exit Music (*Raise the Curtain* reprise)