

IT HAPPENED IN HOLLYWOOD

By Eddie Cope & Jim Bain

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IT HAPPENED IN HOLLYWOOD A TEN-MINUTE COMEDY

by
Eddie Cope & Jim Bain

CHARACTERS

ROXY ROCKPORT: Wheeler-dealer song publisher
JEREMIAH SULLIVAN: Small-town banker
(AKA: JERRY)
TELEPHONE MAN: Offstage voice

SCENE

Shabby office of the *Hollywood International Music Company*

TIME

The present

SETTING: A shabby office in Hollywood. Door to unseen hall. Mismatched desk and chairs. File cabinet. Phone on desk. Several full ashtrays.

AT RISE: *ROXY is behind desk, scowling at phone. He puts receiver to his ear and jiggles phone button, shakes his head angrily, then slams phone down. A knock is heard at the door.*

ROXY: (to door) Who are you?

MAN: (O.S.) I'm the telephone man.

ROXY: To fix my phone?

MAN: (O.S.) No . . .to disconnect it.

ROXY: Why?

MAN: (O.S.) Non-payment of bill, sir.

ROXY: The check's in the mail.

MAN: (O.S.) Your last three bounced. Please let me in.

ROXY: I'll let you in when I'm good and ready. Get lost . . .scram!

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MAN: (O.S) I've had enough. I'm leaving.

ROXY: For good?

MAN: (O.S.) No, for a cop.

(ROXY looks at watch . . .pats HIMSELF down . . .pokes around in full ashtrays . . .picks up a butt . . .looks at it and throws it back into ashtray. Knocking on door.)

ROXY: (yelling) I told you to scram.

JERRY: (O.S.) Scram? I just got here.

ROXY: You're not getting my phone.

JERRY: (O.S.) I don't want your phone. I want to talk to you.

ROXY: Is this a gag? Are you that idiot from the phone company?

JERRY: (O.S.) No, sir. I'm from a bank.

ROXY: Bank, you say? Well come right on in, sir.

(ROXY hurriedly begins talking into phone, in a warm and chatty manner as JERRY enters.)

Yes, yes, so great talking with you too, Andy. My best to the family. Bye. (hangs up; to JERRY) That was Sir Andrew Lloyd Webber in London. I want him to renounce his British citizenship and move to Hollywood.

JERRY: Sir Andrew who?

ROXY: Webber. The composer. My London office just signed to record his new musical.

JERRY: That's nice. I'm Jeremiah Sullivan from Junction, North Dakota.

(THEY shake hands.)

ROXY: Of course. You're with the Junction bank.

JERRY: That's me, the president.

ROXY: And it helps being the *only* bank in town.

JERRY: But we try not to act like it. (laughs fatuously)

ROXY: (excited) Please have a seat, Mr. Sullivan.

JERRY: Aw, in Junction everybody calls me Jerry . . .excepting the yokels, of course.

ROXY: That's understandable . . .Jerry . . .Just call me Roxy.

JERRY: Thanks, Roxy.

ROXY: So what, exactly, can I do for you?

JERRY: After I saw your ad in that *Writer's Magazine*, I knew I had to meet you.

ROXY: Liked my ad, did ya?

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JERRY: Loved it. Especially the way it conveyed such professionalism and honesty and integrity.

ROXY: Thank you. Those ideals are engraved on my heart.

JERRY: But, did you get my letter?

ROXY: I did receive your very sincere letter, Jerry, but it came at a most inopportune time.

JERRY: Inopportune?

ROXY: I'm in the midst of important negotiations with Sondheim.

JERRY: Who?

ROXY: The composer. He needs me to pump up his songs for a new Broadway musical.

JERRY: I see. So you won't have time to work on *my* songs?

ROXY: Only if you're willing to make . . .the commitment.

JERRY: (*excited*) I will, I will. I know I have great lyrics.

ROXY: And your great lyrics need *great* award-winning music.

JERRY: (*sheepishly*) Uh, do you mind if I ask what your services will cost?

ROXY: Forget cost . . .let's talk potential.

JERRY: Okay . . .*potentially*, how much will it cost?

ROXY: Jerry-baby, do you have a dream?

JERRY: Yes, I have a dream.

ROXY: Well, without my talents and skills . . .it will *cost you your dream*.

JERRY: Oh, my.

ROXY: Think, Jerry. Irving Berlin wrote *White Christmas* and grossed fifty million bucks.

JERRY: He did?

ROXY: You better believe it. Now let me hear some of your *fifty million dollar lyrics*.

JERRY: (*excited*) Yes, sir. Got 'em right here.

(*JERRY retrieves a badly wrinkled sheet of paper from his coat pocket.*)

ROXY: Take it from the top.

JERRY: The top?

ROXY: That's what we music professionals call "the beginning."

JERRY: (*clears throat*) My lyrics . . .taken from the top. (*clears throat again*)

UNCLE PATTY SAILED A TANKER
BUT MY DADDY WAS A BANKER
AND SO AM I . . .AND SO AM I
COUSIN MATTIE WAS A FLANKER

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(JERRY pauses to explain to ROXY.)

That's a professional football term, you know.

(JERRY clears throat and continues.)

COUSIN MATTIE WAS A FLANKER
BUT MY DADDY WAS A BANKER
AND SO AM I . . .AND SO AM I

ROXY: *(screaming)* Stop . . .enough . . .not another word.

JERRY: You hate it?

ROXY: I love it! It's pure genius.

JERRY: Really?

ROXY: Only sensational!

JERRY: There's another verse.

ROXY: I've heard enough.

JERRY: You really do like it?

ROXY: Are there eight bars to a refrain?

JERRY: So you'll do the music? It'll be a hit?

(ROXY places his arm around JERRY.)

ROXY: Let me tell you something, Jerry-boy. We'll have the biggest song to ever come out of Hollywood.

JERRY: Bigger than *White Christmas*?

ROXY: Can Rudolph fly?

JERRY: When do we start?

ROXY: I'll get my best staff arranger on it right now.

JERRY: Does he work alone?

ROXY: Of course . . .he's a *lone arranger*.

JERRY: Will he work in percussions?

ROXY: No one beats his percussions.

JERRY: And be sure he adds strings.

ROXY: I'll personally see that.

JERRY: But no flugelhorns. I only buy American.

ROXY: Ix-nay the ugelhorn-fay. I admire your patriotism.

JERRY: I want to do in the music industry what I've done in the financial industry.

ROXY: You can bank on it.

JERRY: Speaking of banking . . .let's talk money.

ROXY: My favorite subject.

JERRY: How much is all this gonna cost?

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ROXY: Tell ya what I'm gonna do . . .and this is for *you only*, okay? I want you to write me a deposit check for – say – seven thousand dollars . . .then go home and wait.

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