

Charlie/Mary  
w/songs

ACT II

(SIGN change: PARKS & FINLAY IN  
THE BOOK AGENT)

Scene 1  
THE VENUE

(CHARLIE enters, carrying traveling bag:)

CHARLIE (sings)

*Start*  
"Any New Yorker who's travelled at all  
will tell you how well he's been treated.  
For if you're a New Yorker, you get the first call  
With smiles everywhere you are greeted.  
A welcome you get and a hip hip hurrah  
If ever you sail o'er the foam.  
And with all the New Yorkers you meet on Broadway  
You'll find them abroad and at home."

(spoken:) But I rather be a street sweeper in New York City  
than to be the Mayor of one of these rube towns. Fifteen  
years ago I ran away from home to get in touch with the  
world and I've touched and been touched ever since. And at  
last I've reached the high pinnacle of fame. I'm a book  
agent. As welcome in every home as small pox. I wonder  
what the name of this jay town is. I haven't seen a live  
one since I've been here.

MARY

Excuse me. Are you from the board?

CHARLIE

Yes, I'm a long way from it. I haven't made my board for  
two weeks.

MARY

Did you bring my diploma?

CHARLIE

Diploma?

MARY

Yes.

CHARLIE

No, but here's something just as good. It's Havana (hands  
her a cigar).

MARY

No, no. My literary degree. I start teaching in the fall.  
You knew that didn't you?

CHARLIE

Yes, I didn't know that.

MARY

They said you would bring it and give me my final  
instructions.

CHARLIE

Quite right. Now what you want is a book.

MARY

Do I really have to have a book?

CHARLIE

Oh my yes. You should have two, but you can read this  
twice and I'll only charge you half rate for the second  
reading.

MARY

Is it a dictionary?

CHARLIE

No, this is called "The helping hand." It tells you what  
to do at the wrong time, and what you should have done  
after it's too late. Just the thing for people that don't  
know anything. If they knew anything they wouldn't buy it.

MARY

Well, maybe after you've instructed me, you'll find I don't  
need it.

CHARLIE

No, you find that out after you get home with the book.

MARY

I'm really a beginner, myself. How many terms have you put  
in?

CHARLIE

They gave me three years, the last time.

MARY

What were you teaching?

CHARLIE

Shoe making.

MARY

Oh?

CHARLIE  
Sometimes I had charge of the quarry class.

MARY  
Quarry class!?

CHARLIE  
Yes. They taught rock breaking for a side-line.

MARY  
Did you like school?

CHARLIE  
No, it was too confining.

MARY  
Did you have any trouble with French?

CHARLIE  
Not a bit.

MARY  
You speak it well?

CHARLIE  
I don't speak it at all, that's why I don't have any trouble.

MARY  
Do you like Latin?

CHARLIE  
I don't know. I never ate any.

MARY  
Which language to you enjoy the best, of the foreign tongues?

CHARLIE  
Scotch. And I'd like to put my tongue to a little right now. But what of the book. Do you want to buy it?

MARY  
Buy it? Why, don't the school board furnish that?

CHARLIE  
School board?

MARY

Aren't you one of the trustees?

CHARLIE

Are you kidding? I'm C.O.D. I don't believe in trust.

MARY

But you look familiar.

CHARLIE

I used to live in this town. Been away 15 years.

MARY

You're not little Charlie Parks, are you?

CHARLIE

Yes, but not so loud. The cops might hear you, and I want to surprise them.

MARY

Surprise them?

CHARLIE

I want to be in Chicago when they find out I was here.

MARY

I remember you! You used to steal your father's cigars.

CHARLIE

And you used to smoke them.

MARY

I did not. I'd give them to my father.

CHARLIE

And he used to sell them back to my father.

MARY

Do you remember how I used to come over to your house for supper?

CHARLIE

Yes, and you used to eat my share of the cake.

MARY

Then you would come over to our house for supper.

CHARLIE

Then go home and get something to eat.

MARY

You used to ride me on your sled. I could do it all over again.

CHARLIE

And you used to swim with the boys. I could do it all over again.

MARY

Why haven't you been home before?

CHARLIE

I couldn't think of the name of this town.

MARY

Do you notice any change?

CHARLIE

Yes, but I can't get a hold of any.

MARY

And now you're come home!

CHARLIE

Home? What is home?

MARY

Why it's the place of contentment, where we are surrounded by those we hold dear, where our friends are. Where we are loved and respected.

CHARLIE

Right. When's the next train to New York?

MARY

Why, you're not going to leave without seeing your mother?

CHARLIE

No. I'm going to take her back to the city with me to keep my wife from being homesick.

MARY

Wife! When did you get married.

CHARLIE

Tomorrow morning at ten o'clock.

MARY

Well! Aren't you going to invite me?

CHARLIE

Yes, I think you'll be there.

MARY

Do I know her?

CHARLIE

You might. She's going to be a teacher.

MARY

Why Charlie, you're joking. You couldn't expect a teacher to marry a book agent, could you?

CHARLIE

A book agent sells books doesn't he?

MARY

Yes.

CHARLIE

Well, there you go. I never sell any.

MARY

Do I know her? Is it Carrie White?

CHARLIE

No.

MARY

Minnie Green?

CHARLIE

No.

MARY

Kitty Black?

CHARLIE

She isn't a colored girl.

MARY

Well, what's her name?

CHARLIE

Mary Finlay. Isn't that her name?

(Music.)

MARY

"My mother's name was Mary  
She was so good and true  
Because her name was Mary

She called me Mary, too  
She wasn't gay or airy  
But plain as she could be  
I'd hate to be contrary  
And call myself Marie"

CHARLIE

"For it is Mary, Mary  
Plain as any name can be  
But with propriety, society will say Marie  
But it was Mary, Mary  
Long before the fashions came  
And there is something there that sounds so fair  
It's a grand old name"

(They dance a soft-shoe)

MARY

But Charlie, what will my mother say?

CHARLIE

I don't care. I don't want to marry her mother.  
(Kisses MARY). There now. What do you think?

MARY

I think you're a very good kisser, for a book agent.  
(Musical button.)

(SIGN change: CAIT BEHIND  
THE WHEEL)

Scene 2

CAIT

(to audience) The year Sheila died, Mom wanted to take a trip to Cape Cod. Me and her and Uncle Ray. I'm not doing it, I says. I had plans, see, to move to New York, finally, and start focusing on my writing and my acting career without, you know, without this other situation. No car required...hello. No relationship. No...other stuff now. And so I got on a plane, finally, but I actually didn't have the heart to tell her I wasn't coming back. Well, I did tell her I was moving, but she didn't really seem to hear it so I said I'll be back this summer. And when summer came, I just said what the hell and I took the bus up to Mass and met her at Logan. And rented a car. And we take this trip, this mother-daughter-uncle-niece trip.

RAY

Cait, pull over at the package store, there. I'll just be a minute.