ACT I

Scene 1

NEW YORK CITY.
THE STAGE OF THE FORTY-SECOND STREET THEATRE where an AUDITION is in progress for the CHORUS of the new musical, "PRETTY LADY." OSCAR, the rehearsal pianist, plays as ANDY LEE, the dance director, leads THE KIDS in their steps and barks out directions--"All right, pick 'em up!", "Change places!", etc. BILLY LAWLOR, the show's juvenile, watches from behind the piano. AUDITION NUMBER ends with KIDS shouting numbers for the last dance combination, applause, as KIDS chatter to one another and ANDY says)

ANDY
(As MAGGIE JONES and BERT BARRY start On from Right)
Okay, kids, hold it down! Quiet, here come the writers!
(To MAGGIE)
Well, Miss Jones, whadda ya think?

MAGGIE
Not a bad bunch, Andy.
(To ONE GIRL)
Gladys, you're improving.
(To ANOTHER GIRL)
Winnie, keep those knees up. Boys, ya gotta' pick 'em up and lay 'em down.
(Pointing into auditorium)
They're paying four-forty a seat out there!
(Turning to MAC, the stage manager)
Mac, get these names and addresses, I want everything set when Julian Marsh gets here!
(As SHE starts off Right)
Come on, Bert, we still have four songs to write!

BERT
(As HE follows MAGGIE off Right)
We got the whole weekend!

MAC
All right, let's have those names and addresses!

FIRST GIRL
Phyllis Dale, 156 West 47th Street.

BILLY
At least give me your name!

(PEGGY starts off Right as JULIAN MARSH starts on Right. SHE bumps into BERT, says "I'm sorry" then bumps into JULIAN who staggers back as PEGGY exits Right)

JULIAN
(Looking after her)
What the hell was that?

ANDY
She wanted to get into the line, Boss.

JULIAN
Ours or Notre Dame's?
(HE crosses Left and stands on piano stool to address the KIDS)
All right, everybody gather around and listen to me. Today we start work on a new show. You're going to rehearse four weeks, then try out in Atlantic City. You're going to work twelve hours a day, seven days a week. You're going to dance til your feet fall off and you aren't able to stand up, but five weeks from now, "Pretty Lady"'s going to be the best damn show this town's ever seen! You're on your way to glory and thirty-two bucks a week so anybody who doesn't think he can take it better quit right now! Nobody? Good. Take a half-hour to get measured for wigs and costumes and then let's get to work.

(General shouts of joy and excitement as the KIDS realize THEY'VE been hired. THEY exit at MAC's direction. JULIAN clears piano stool and crosses to Center as)

MAC
Okay, kids, wigs in dressing room A, costumes downstairs. Come on, get a move on!

MAGGIE
Hey, someone left a purse on the piano!

BILLY
It must be hers, the kid Andy threw out! Is there anything in it?

MAGGIE
Yeah, forty cents and a card.
(Reading card)
"Peggy Sawyer, 125 Elm Street, Allentown, P.A." Look, you go to your fitting and I'll see that she gets it.
(As BILLY exits, crossing to JULIAN Center)
Julian, that was a great speech and you won't regret a word of it! "Pretty Lady"'s the best show we've ever written.

BERT
And now with the greatest director on Broadway....

JULIAN
Never mind the soft soap, Bert, I need this show as much as you do.

BERT
Wall Street got you too?

JULIAN
You know the old saying: There's a horse's ass for every light on Broadway. I've given all I had to that glittering gulch out there and it's been a hell of a ride. Okay, so the crash got me down for the count, but I'm still Julian Marsh, dammit, and "Pretty Lady"'s gonna put me back on top! Let's talk about the cast.

MAGGIE
Best in town! Billy Lawlor for the juvenile.

BERT
Me and Maggie for the character parts.

MAGGIE
And Dorothy Brock in the lead!

JULIAN
It's Brock I'm worried about. Her last hit was ten years ago.

MAGGIE
We have to use her, Julian. She's got Abner Dillon in her back pocket.

BERT
You know, Dillon's Kiddie Kars--and he's agreed to put up the whole hundred thousand if she's the star.

JULIAN
But she can't dance.

MAGGIE
Put a lot of girls around her, let her wave her arms a lot, the public'll never know the difference.

JULIAN
I don't know, Maggie.

BERT
Easy, Marsh, here she comes! Dorothy, may I....

DOROTHY
(Sweeping on Right, followed by ABNER DILLON)
Don't say a word, I want to do this myself! Mr. Marsh, ever since I was a tiny little girl and saw my first Julian Marsh show I've dreamed of the day when I might work with the King of Broadway. At last that day has come, and I am filled with pride, joy, and humility.

(SHE bows)

JULIAN
Thanks, Miss Brock. I'm feeling a little full myself. Now before we go any further, I'd like to try you out on one of the numbers.

ABNER
Hold on, Mr. Marsh, Dorothy don't have to try out. She's already got her contract!

DOROTHY
(Taking contract out of her purse)
Mr. Dillon, what would I do without you? By the way, there were a few items you forgot to mention, so I wrote them in. Limousine, redecorated dressing room, private maid--no problem about the salary, I just added another zero.

BERT
Now see here, Dorothy....

DOROTHY
Of course, if there's any objection, I won't insist. We'll just peddle our Kiddie Kars, and you go peddle your fish.

JULIAN
You're not hearing me, Miss Brock. I'd like to try you on one of the songs to see if you can handle the role.

DOROTHY
(Angrily)
If you're asking me to "audition," Mr. Marsh, I'm afraid the answer is <u>no</u>!

(SHE starts to exit)

BERT
It's not an audition, Dorothy! Julian just wants to find out if it's in the right key!

MAGGIE
Try that new one we went over yeserday, Dorothy, you are going to love it! Now Bert and I see you in this low-down dive....
(Signalling to OSCAR who starts playing)
The piano pounds out a hot jazz beat as you enter, and sing!
(And in a jazz rhythm, with all the growls and bumps, SHE sings)

/3/ IN FOUR: "SHADOW WALTZ"

MAGGIE
SHADOWS ON THE WALL
I CAN SEE THEM FALL
HERE AND THERE
EV'RYWHERE!
SILHOUETTES IN BLUE
DANCING IN THE DEW
HERE AM I, BABY
WHERE ARE YOU?
IN THE SHADOWS LET ME COME AND...(SING TO YOU.)

JULIAN
(Calming down MAGGIE who has gotten carried away)
Thank you, Maggie, Maggie! That was fine. Oscar, try it in three-quarter time for Miss Brock.

MAGGIE
Now wait a minute, Julian, we wrote that song in....

JULIAN
And down a tone. From the top, Miss Brock.

DOROTHY
I'm sorry, Mr. Marsh, but....

JULIAN
From the top, Miss Brock!

"Shadow Waltz"
© 1933 (Renewed), Warner Bros., Inc.