

**PERUSAL SCRIPT**

# **IRVING BERLIN: IN PERSON**

Written and arranged by  
**CHIP DEFFAA**

Music and lyrics by  
**IRVING BERLIN**



**Salt Lake City**

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**IRVING BERLIN: IN PERSON**

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**With good memories of—and appreciation for—the good people of  
the Charles J. Reilly School/School Nine...**

## **“IRVING BERLIN : IN PERSON” – Musical Numbers**

1. **“After You Get What You Want You Don’t Want It”** (words and music by Irving Berlin)
2. **“Say It With Music”** (words and music by Irving Berlin)
3. **“Everything in America is Ragtime”** (words and music by Irving Berlin)
4. **“Alexander’s Ragtime Band”** (words and music by Irving Berlin)
5. **“Piano Man”** (words by Irving Berlin, music by Ted Snyder)
6. **“I Love a Piano”** (words and music by Irving Berlin)
7. **“The Dying Rag”** (words by Irving Berlin, music by Bernie Adler)
8. **“Homesick”** (words and music by Irving Berlin)
9. **“I Beg Your Pardon, Dear Old Broadway”** (words and music by Irving Berlin)
10. **“The Schoolhouse Blues”** (words and music by Irving Berlin)
11. **“Everybody’s Doin’ It Now”** (words and music by Irving Berlin)
12. **“Stop Stop Stop”** (words and music by Irving Berlin)
13. **“Do Your Duty, Doctor”** (words by Irving Berlin, music by Ted Snyder)
14. **“My Wife’s Gone to the Country”** (words by George Whiting and Irving Berlin, music by Ted Snyder)
15. **“I’m Down in Honolulu Looking Them Over”** (words and music by Irving Berlin)
16. **“Araby”** (words and music by Irving Berlin)
17. **“Tell Me Little Gypsy”** (words and music by Irving Berlin)
18. **“In A Cozy Kitchenette Apartment”** (words and music by Irving Berlin)
19. **“Smile and Show Your Dimple”** (words and music by Irving Berlin)
20. **“Always Treat Her Like a Baby”** (words and music by Irving Berlin)
21. **“When I Lost You”** (words and music by Irving Berlin)
22. **“We’re on Our Way to France”** (words and music by Irving Berlin)
23. **“Bring on the Pepper”** (words and music by Irving Berlin)
24. **“Smile and Show Your Dimple”-reprise** (words and music by Irving Berlin)
25. **“A Pretty Girl is Like a Melody”** (words and music by Irving Berlin)
26. **“Someone Else May be There While I’m Gone”** (words and music by Irving Berlin)
27. **“This is the Life”** (words and music by Irving Berlin)
28. **“Mandy”** (words and music by Irving Berlin)
29. **“Wild Cherries” (“Wild Cherry Rag”)** (words by Irving Berlin, music by Ted Snyder)
30. **“When the Midnight Choo Choo Leaves for Alabam”** (words and music by Irving Berlin)
31. **“You’d be Surprised”** (words and music by Irving Berlin)
32. **“The International Rag”** (words and music by Irving Berlin)
33. **“I’m Gonna Pia a Medal on the Girl I Left Behind”** (words and music by Irving Berlin)
34. **“Oh, How I Hate to Get Up in the Morning”** (words and music by Irving Berlin)
35. **“Lady of the Evening”** (words and music by Irving Berlin)
36. **“Montmartre”** (words and music by Irving Berlin)
37. **“Everybody Step”** (words and music by Irving Berlin)
38. **Bows music: “Say it with Music”** (music by Irving Berlin)
39. **Optional Encore: “Play a Simple Melody/Musical Demon”** (words and music by Irving Berlin)
40. **Exit Music: “Piano Man”** (music by Ted Snyder)

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The music has been arranged primarily by Chip Deffaa. The music has been prepared primarily by Don Brown. Richard Danley, who also made highly valued arranging contributions, did the editing and proofreading of the charts. All music preparation, arranging, and editing on this project has been done as work-for-hire for Chip Deffaa Productions LLC.

## **A BIT OF BACKGROUND ON THIS SHOW....**

Years ago, a prominent New York supper club, Michael's Pub, planned to do a tribute to Irving Berlin, telling his life story via songs and commentary. Berlin was the most successful songwriter of all time; he wrote more hits and made more money than any of his songwriting colleagues; it was only natural that people wanted to celebrate his life and music. Well, Gil Wiest, the owner of Michael's Pub, asked me if I'd write a preview piece for The New York Post. (For many years, I wrote about jazz, cabaret, and theater for The Post.) Berlin—who was then up in his 90s--read my article in The Post, and phoned Gil Wiest, demanding that the club cancel the tribute. Berlin made it clear that he did not want anyone telling his life story while he was alive—not in a cabaret show, not in a musical play, not in a motion picture, not *anywhere*; he zealously guarded his privacy. And just as zealously maintained control, as much as possible, over his music. The club cancelled the tribute.

Berlin got the BBC to cancel a planned television dramatization of his life, too. And repeatedly turned down requests from Hollywood to film his life story. But his story is a fascinating one. I'm glad I'm getting a chance to tell it here. I'm taking--as all writers do—a few artistic liberties; but the key facts are all correct; the opinions expressed are all Berlin's; the songs were all written or co-written by Berlin; I've tried to capture, as best I can, the essence of the character. Berlin has long been (along with George M. Cohan, Cole Porter, the Gershwins, and Jerome Kern) one of my all-time favorite songwriters. He was a small boy when his family fled Russia to escape religious persecution. He never had much formal education. He never learned to read or write music. But gave the world songs that will live forever. I'm very glad to be able to set his life, in this solo show, to his wonderfully infectious music.

This is the first--and only, as of this date--one-man show ever to be written and published about Irving Berlin. For a strong triple-threat performer, it's a wonderful showcase. I've also written a full-scale, full-length musical play, *The Irving Berlin Story* (also available from this publisher), for those who might prefer a show for a large cast.

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Other **Chip Deffaa** shows available from **Leicester Bay Theatricals**

**The Fanny Brice Story** (full cast)

**One Night With Fanny Brice** (one-woman show)

**The Irving Berlin Story** (large cast)

**Song-And-Dance Kids: The Story of the Seven Little Foys** (large cast)

**The Seven Little Foys: A Fable of Vaudeville** (small cast)

**Yankee Doodle Dandy**

## **MANY THANKS...**

My gratitude, always, for their encouragement and wisdom, to the one and only Carol Channing and to master song-and-dance man Tommy Tune. My gratitude, too, to Matthew Nardozzi, a first-rate actor and valued friend; to Matthew Broderick and Sarah Jessica Parker; to the irrepressible Victoria Leacock Hoffman; to the gifted and ever-reliable Max Galassi, Tyler DuBoys, and Peter Charney—I'm glad to have them in my corner--for various kindnesses; to playful playwright/songwriter Lisa Lambert; to that sprightly dancer Nicholas Gray; to my audience-research consultants, Max and Julia Deffaa; to Donnie, Earl, and Lucas Snyder; to Matt and Jessica Snyder; to Ava and Josh Schaller and family; to my Korean producer friend, Hansaem Song; to my British producer friend Edmund Sutton; to Hawkins ("Max") Gardow of AMDA; to director Okey Chenoweth; and to Keith Anderson of Univision.

My gratitude, also, to the late George Burns and Todd Fisher, for the tales they so generously shared with me from their early days in vaudeville, which influence this work; to a much-appreciated latter-day vaudevillian, Michael Kasper; to those inspiring show people Santino Fontana, Brandon R. Pollinger, and Anthony Rapp, who've helped more than they realized; to Matt ("Angel") Buckwald; to ASCAP's unfailingly helpful musical-theatre expert, Michael Kerker, who's always been there to answer any questions; and to that fine actor, set-builder, and general aide-de-camp, Danny Coelho.

Thanks, too, for the help provided in various ways, by John Kander and his late partner Fred Ebb, Jerry Herman, that dapper tapper Jonah Barricklo, Paul Burchett, Michael Townsend Wright, Ted Kurdyla, Bailey Cummings, Kevin Cahoon, Yuri Spindler, Zack Riopelle, Maite Uzal, Bernice Burge, Max Beer, Giuseppe Bausilio, Joe Franklin, Jack "Sprack" Sprance, Cody Green, Chase Brock, Will Conard, Michael Czyn, master song-and-dance man Lee Roy Reams, Howard Cruse, Joe Polsky, Matt Snyder, Chadwick Von Rankin, Anna Holmes, Drew Smith, Colin McLevy, Barrett Foa, Brett Barrett, Jamie DeRoy, Tommaso Di Blasi, Emily Bordonaro, Betty Buckley, Kate Solomon-Tilley, Ben Orlando, Megan Ulan, Alec Bordonaro, Rayna Hirt, Cody Dericks, Deanna Giulietti, Noah Smith, Mike Caizzi, Sandra Nordgren, Jack Saleeby, Ricky Schroeder, Brady Chin, Mike Walker, Nick Keeperman, Kristopher Hayes, Danny Rabbit, Sharon A. Wilcox, Agnes Duggan Dann, Ed Bassett, Foster Evans Reese, and the inspiring folk I've enjoyed at the Warner Theater in Torrington. My deepest gratitude to Jon Peterson, for whom I wrote this script; I hope to see him playing Berlin for many years to come.

Richard Danley has been more than just a music director on this project; he's been a good friend and sounding board. And the thoroughly professional, unflaggingly supportive help of Don Brown, who's overseen music preparation, can't be beat. The show has been developed by Chip Deffaa Productions LLC (Chip and Deb Deffaa, principals). A tip of the hat to my favorite interns, Michael Herwitz and Ian Palmer. An appreciative shout-out to the good people of the Charles J. Riley School; you're a part of all that I do. A special "thank-you" to my faithful publisher, C. Michael Perry of Leicester Bay Theatricals. And more thanks than I can ever really put into words to my very terrific, and very kind, family.

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The first reading of this musical play, under the direction of Chip Deffaa, took place on October 28, 2014, at the 13<sup>th</sup> Street Repertory Theater (Edith O'Hara, founder/artistic director), with Jon Peterson starring as Berlin.

## FOR FURTHER INFORMATION ON IRVING BERLIN AND HIS TIMES...

If you would like to learn more about Irving Berlin and his times, here are some recommended books: *As Thousands Cheer: The Life of Irving Berlin* (by Laurence Bergreen; New York, DaCapo Press, 1996); *The Irving Berlin Reader* (by Benjamin Sears; New York, Oxford University Press, 2012); *The Complete Lyrics of Irving Berlin* (edited by Robert Kimball and Linda Emmet; New York, Borzoi Books, published by Alfred A. Knopf, 2001); *Irving Berlin: American Troubadour* (by Edward Jablonski; New York, Henry Holt and Company, 1999); *Irving Berlin: A Life in Song* (by Philip Furia, with the assistance of Graham Wood; New York, Schirmer Books, 1998); *Irving Berlin: Songs from the Melting Pot: The Formative Years, 1907-1914* (by Charles Hamm; New York, Oxford University Press, 1997); *Irving Berlin* (by Michael Freedland; New York, Stein and Day, 1983); *Irving Berlin and Ragtime America* (by Ian Whitcomb; New York, Limelight, 1988); *Irving Berlin: A Daughter's Memoir* (by Mary Ellen Barrett; New York, Limelight, 1988); *The Story of Irving Berlin* (by Alexander Woolcott; New York; DaCapo, 1983); *Irving Berlin's American Musical Theater* (by Jeffrey Magee; New York, Oxford University Press, 2012),

And these books offer additional valuable information on Berlin and his fellow songwriters: *Funny, It Doesn't Sound Jewish: How Yiddish Songs and Synagogue Melodies Influenced Tin Pan Alley, Broadway, and Hollywood* (by Jack Gottlieb; New York, State University of New York Press, 2004); *American Popular Song: The Great Innovators 1900-1950* (by Alec Wilder, edited and with an introduction by James T. Maher; New York, Oxford University Press, 1972); *A History of Popular Music in America* (by Sigmund Spaeth; New York: Random House, 1948); *They're Playing Our Song* (by Max Wilk; New York, Atheneum, 1973); *The House that George Built* (by Wilfrid Sheed; New York, Random House, 2008); *Word Crazy: Broadway Lyricists from Cohan to Sondheim* (by Thomas S. Hischak; New York, Praeger Publishers, 1991); *The Melody Lingers On* (by Roy Hemming; New York, Newmarket Press, 1986); *Music in the Air* (by Philip K. Eberly; New York, Hastings House, 1982); *Show Biz: From Vaude to Video* (by Abel Green and Joe Laurie, Jr.; New York: Henry Holt & Co., 1951).

## IRVING BERLIN: IN PERSON

A one-man musical play, written and arranged by  
**Chip Deffaa**

*(This first number, cued by the stage manager, opens the show. In this opening scene, the actor who will be portraying IRVING BERLIN in this one-man show is simply being himself—an actor in rehearsal clothes; he is not yet playing the character of IRVING BERLIN. Wearing tap shoes, black trousers, and a black shirt, he strolls onto a darkened stage and begins singing, with a touch of wistfulness. A black suit jacket, white dress shirt, a tie, and black horn-rimmed glasses—which the actor will be putting on shortly, when he gets into character as BERLIN—are preset somewhere, perhaps draped over a chair, or atop a table; also preset somewhere convenient for the actor to use: an actor’s makeup kit.)*

### **(SONG #1. “AFTER YOU GET WHAT YOU WANT, YOU DON’T WANT IT”)**

**ACTOR.** *(Sings:)*

AFTER YOU GET WHAT YOU WANT YOU DON’T WANT IT.  
IF I GAVE YOU THE MOON,  
YOU’D GROW TIRED OF IT SOON.  
YOU’RE LIKE A BABY—  
YOU WANT WHAT YOU WANT WHEN YOU WANT IT,  
BUT AFTER YOU ARE PRESENTED  
WITH WHAT YOU WANT, YOU’RE DISCONTENTED.  
YOU’RE ALWAYS WISHING AND WANTING FOR SOMETHING;  
WHEN YOU GET WHAT YOU WANT,  
YOU DON’T WANT WHAT YOU GET.  
AND THOUGH YOU SIT UPON MY KNEE  
YOU’LL GROW TIRED OF ME,  
‘CAUSE AFTER YOU GET WHAT YOU WANT,  
YOU DON’T WANT WHAT YOU WANTED AT ALL.

*(Speaking over underscoring, as the pianist continues playing the song, gently.)*

My name is ----- [Note: The actor performing the show should say his own name at this point]. And in the show we’re about to present I’ll be portraying Irving Berlin.

I think I first heard this Berlin song when Marilyn Monroe sang it in the movie “There’s No Business Like Show Business.” And in more recent years, it’s also been featured on HBO’s “Boardwalk Empire.”

Like so many people, I first fell in love with Berlin’s songs via the wonderful Hollywood musicals he made, such as “Top Hat,” “Swing Time,” “Blue Skies,” “Holiday Inn,” “Easter Parade,” “White Christmas.” I heard his songs, in films and on records, sung by tremendous stars: Fred Astaire, Bing Crosby, Al Jolson, Ethel Merman, Ella Fitzgerald, Judy Garland....

I kinda like this number: “After You Get What You Want, You Don’t Want It.” Irving Berlin certainly got everything he wanted in life: fame, fortune, a beautiful wife. He was the most successful single songwriter



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in history—he wrote more hits, and made more money, than any of his competitors. He was, however, a far-from-happy man.

**ACTOR.** *(Sings:)*

AFTER YOU GET WHAT YOU WANT YOU DON'T WANT IT.

*(ACTOR tap dances, as we hear the music corresponding to the following lines: IF I GAVE YOU THE MOON, / YOU'D GROW TIRED OF IT SOON. / YOU'RE LIKE A BABY— / YOU WANT WHAT YOU WANT WHEN YOU WANT IT, / BUT AFTER YOU ARE PRESENTED / WITH WHAT YOU WANT, YOU'RE DISCONTENTED.)*

YOU'RE ALWAYS WISHING AND WANTING FOR SOMETHING;  
WHEN YOU GET WHAT YOU WANT,  
YOU DON'T WANT WHAT YOU GET.

*(ACTOR tap dances, as we hear the music corresponding to the following lines: AND THOUGH YOU SIT UPON MY KNEE / YOU'LL GROW TIRED OF ME,)*

'CAUSE AFTER YOU GET WHAT YOU WANT,  
YOU DON'T WANT WHAT YOU WANTED AT ALL.

Now every dramatic work takes some liberties. To tell the truth, I'm much more of a song-and-dance man than Mr. Berlin himself was. And I don't exactly look like him. But if you'll allow us a bit of artistic license, we've tried to make this portrait as *emotionally honest* as possible.

The key points in this show are factual. Every terrific song you'll hear was written or co-written by Mr. Berlin. We're trying to conjure up the essence of the man via his own words and music.

I should add....this isn't a program of his greatest hits. I won't be singing "God Bless America" or "White Christmas." No one could ever sing those numbers better than Kate Smith and Bing Crosby sang them. And Bing's record of "White Christmas" still remains the biggest-selling record in history. So we'll skip some familiar songs that have been done definitively by others. We've selected fine songs by Mr. Berlin—both famous and not-so-famous—that help tell his story.

**(SONG #2. "SAY IT WITH MUSIC")**

**ACTOR.** *(Sings:)*

SAY IT WITH MUSIC,  
BEAUTIFUL MUSIC;

*(ACTOR dances to the music corresponding to the lines: SOMEHOW THEY'D RATHER BE KISSED / TO THE STRAINS OF CHOPIN OR LISZT)*

A MELODY MELLOW  
PLAYED ON A CELLO  
HELPS MISTER CUPID ALONG;  
SO SAY IT WITH A BEAUTIFUL SONG.  
SAY IT WITH MUSIC,  
BEAUTIFUL MUSIC;

*(The music continues as underscoring, fading out towards the end of the next paragraph.)*

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And now, while that music plays, I'm going to apply a bit of stage makeup—adding a few character lines, here and here, to age me a bit....

*(The actor applies stage makeup, gradually transforming himself into the character of IRVING BERLIN, as he speaks. He will get into costume as he describes the process for the audience.)*

Now a touch of gray at the temples... And the black-rimmed glasses that he loved. Let me put on a white shirt, a conservative tie and jacket... Mr. Berlin always liked to dress properly, you know...

All right; let's bring the lights down. And when they come back up, I ask that you accept that you're seeing Mr. Irving Berlin himself, at his home, 17 Beekman Place, New York City. He is quietly enjoying, in his own way, the golden years of his life...

*(The lights go to black, and come up upon a clearly irritated, agitated IRVING BERLIN.)*

**BERLIN.** GODDAM it, Hilda! Get me that kid, Steven Spielberg, on the telephone.

What do you mean, Hilda--it's "after hours," it's "too late" to call him?

You've been my secretary for what—43, 44 years now, Hilda? And you're still giving me an argument? All right, all right, if you insist... we don't have to telephone Steven Spielberg. Send him a good hot letter instead! You know what to write. Tell him he can't use any of my songs in his pictures, not for any amount of money.

Steven Spielberg needs my songs more than I need his money! He says he wants one of my songs for his next movie? Hah! Tell him I have *plans* for that song. At age 98, why shouldn't I have plans? I'm still writing new songs, aren't I? He'll probably be wanting *those* next.

You can't give these guys anything! One day, they're asking to use one of my songs in a picture. The next day, they're wanting to do my whole life story--with 25 of my songs! The BBC wanted to televise my life story! MGM wanted to make a movie of my life. They've all asked. No way! Not while I'm alive! I just want my privacy. And they'd probably get all the facts wrong anyway. They always do.

But here's what I want to do, Hilda—starting tonight, I want to dictate to you some recollections. Maybe someday, after I'm gone, if someone *does* dramatize my life, at least they'll have some of my own remembrances to guide 'em.

Where do we begin? That's easy! The years just before the first World War—they called it the Ragtime Era. And I was being hailed, everywhere, as "The King of Ragtime." I'd come up out of nowhere. I was creating the most popular songs in the world. I was on top of the world, Hilda. And, oh! I remember it all, as if it was yesterday....

**(SONG #3. "EVERYTHING IN AMERICA IS RAGTIME")**

*(Sings:)*

EVERYTHING IN AMERICA IS RAGTIME.  
THEY TALK IN RAGTIME,  
IT SEEMS TO BE THE FASHION;  
THEIR ONLY PASSION  
IS SWAYING TO AND FRO,  
SNAPPING FINGERS SO,

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ACTING AS THOUGH THEY WERE HAVING A JAGTIME.  
THE U.S.A. IS A LAND OF SYNCOPATION;  
IT SEEMS THE NATION  
IS JUST A MILLION ACRES OF SHOULDER SHAKERS.  
COMPOSERS, JUST AS THICK AS BEES,  
WRITING RAGGY MELODIES--  
OH! MISTER BERLIN,  
HE KNOWS HOW TO PLEASE  
WRITING RAGTIME.  
THE U.S.A. IS A LAND OF SYNCOPATION;  
IT SEEMS THE NATION  
IS JUST A MILLION ACRES OF SHOULDER SHAKERS.  
COMPOSERS, JUST AS THICK AS BEES,  
WRITING RAGGY MELODIES--  
OH! IRVING BERLIN,  
HE KNOWS HOW TO PLEASE--

YES! MISTER BERLIN,  
HE KNOWS HOW TO PLEASE--

I SAID, MISTER BERLIN,  
HE KNOWS HOW TO PLEASE  
WRITING RAGTIME.

I can tell you exactly when I broke through to international success--1911, the year I wrote "Alexander's Ragtime Band." I was 23. Oh, I'd had a few little successes before. But nothing like this. George M. Cohan invited me to perform a number in the annual "Friars Frolic" benefit show. So I took a song that I'd previously released as an instrumental. It had been a flop. I wanted to see if adding lyrics might make a difference. And, boy! It sure did. We had some of the biggest stars in show business--both on the bill and in the audience--the night I first sang....

**(SONG # 4. "ALEXANDER'S RAGTIME BAND")**

*(Sings:)*

COME ON AND HEAR, COME ON AND HEAR  
ALEXANDER'S RAGTIME BAND.  
COME ON AND HEAR, COME ON AND HEAR,  
IT'S THE BEST BAND IN THE LAND.

THEY CAN PLAY A BUGLE CALL LIKE YOU NEVER HEARD BEFORE,  
SO NATURAL THAT YOU WANT TO GO TO WAR,

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THAT'S JUST THE BESTEST BAND WHAT AM,  
HONEY LAMB.

COME ON ALONG, COME ON ALONG,  
LET ME TAKE YOU BY THE HAND  
UP TO THE MAN, UP TO THE MAN,  
WHO'S THE LEADER OF THE BAND,  
AND IF YOU CARE TO HEAR THE "SWANEE RIVER" PLAYED IN RAGTIME,  
COME ON AND HEAR, COME ON AND HEAR  
ALEXANDER'S RAGTIME BAND.

OH, MA HONEY, OH, MA HONEY,  
BETTER HURRY AND LET'S MEANDER,  
AIN'T YOU GOIN', AIN'T YOU GOIN',  
TO THE LEADER MAN, RAGGED METER MAN?

OH, MA HONEY, OH, MA HONEY,  
LET ME TAKE YOU TO ALEXANDER'S  
GRAND STAND, BRASS BAND,  
AIN'T YOU COMIN' ALONG?

COME ON ALONG, COME ON ALONG,  
LET ME TAKE YOU BY THE HAND  
UP TO THE MAN, UP TO THE MAN,  
WHO'S THE LEADER OF THE BAND,  
AND IF YOU CARE TO HEAR THE "SWANEE RIVER" PLAYED IN RAGTIME,  
COME ON AND HEAR, COME ON AND HEAR  
ALEXANDER'S RAGTIME BAND.

Well, one star after another began adding "Alexander's Ragtime Band" to their acts—Emma Carus, Ethel Levey, Al Jolson, everybody. We quickly sold two million copies of sheet music. One of the greatest successes in the history of popular music.

Overnight, I was famous. A few more hits followed and I was THE best-known songwriter in the world. Photos of me—invariably seated at my piano—were suddenly everywhere: on the covers of sheet music, in newspapers, in magazines: the boy-wonder who was writing the songs people everywhere were singing.

**(SONG #5. "PIANO MAN")**

*(Sings:)*

PIANO MAN, PIANO MAN,  
HE BRINGS FORTH NOTES LIKE NO ONE CAN.

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OH, WHAT A FEELIN'  
WHEN HIS NOTES COME A-STEALIN',  
WHY, I JUST FEEL LIKE KNEELIN' AND APPEALIN'  
TO MY PIANO MAN, PIANO MAN.  
LAWDY, HOW HIS MUSIC LINGERS,  
MAY THE HEAVEN BLESS HIS FINGERS.  
WHEN HE PLAYS FOR DAYS AND DAYS  
IT SOOTHES ME LIKE A FAN.  
JUST LEND YOUR EAR, DEAR, HERE,  
NEAR TO MY EVER-LOVIN' PIANO MAN.  
JUST LEND YOUR EAR, DEAR, HERE,  
NEAR TO MY EVER-LOVIN' PIANO MAN.

And oh! Everyone soon knew how much I loved my piano. I even has a pet name for her: "The Buick." And I didn't go anywhere without "The Buick." I got invited to perform in London. Photographers in New York snapped me boarding the ocean liner—with a big crane hoisting my piano aboard the ship. And when I reached England, there were more photos—another big crane hoisting my piano off the ship, so we could take it to my hotel....

**(SONG #6. "I LOVE A PIANO")**

*(Sings:)*

I LOVE A PIANO,  
I LOVE A PIANO;  
I LOVE TO HEAR SOMEBODY PLAY  
UPON A PIANO,  
A GRAND PIANO—  
IT SIMPLY CARRIES ME AWAY.  
I KNOW A FINE WAY  
TO TREAT A STEINWAY;  
I LOVE TO RUN MY FINGERS  
O'ER THE KEYS,  
THE IVORIES,  
AND WITH THE PEDAL  
I LOVE TO MEDDLE.  
WHEN PADEREWSKI COMES THIS WAY,  
I'M SO DELIGHTED,  
IF I'M INVITED  
TO HEAR THAT LONGHAIRD GENIUS PLAY.  
SO YOU CAN KEEP YOUR FIDDLE AND YOUR BOW,  
GIVE ME A P-I-A-N-O, OH, OH—

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I LOVE TO STOP RIGHT  
BESIDE AN UPRIGHT  
OR A HIGH-TONED BABY GRAND.

AS A CHILD  
I WENT WILD  
WHEN A BAND PLAYED;  
HOW I RAN  
TO THE MAN  
WHEN HIS HAND SWAYED!  
CLARINETS  
WERE MY PETS,  
AND A SLIDE TROMBONE  
I THOUGHT WAS SIMPLY DIVINE.  
BUT TODAY  
WHEN THEY PLAY,  
I COULD HISS THEM;  
EV'RY BAR  
IS A JAR  
TO MY SYSTEM;  
BUT THERE'S ONE MUSICAL INSTRUMENT  
THAT I CALL MINE:

I LOVE A PIANO,  
I LOVE A PIANO;  
I LOVE TO HEAR SOMEBODY PLAY  
UPON A PIANO,  
A GRAND PIANO—  
IT SIMPLY CARRIES ME AWAY.  
I KNOW A FINE WAY  
TO TREAT A STEINWAY;  
I LOVE TO RUN MY FINGERS  
O'ER THE KEYS,  
THE IVORIES,

*(Dance break. BERLIN tap dances to music corresponding to the following lines: AND WITH THE PEDAL / I LOVE TO MEDDLE. / WHEN PADEREWSKI COMES THIS WAY, / I'M SO DELIGHTED, / IF I'M INVITED / TO HEAR THAT LONGHAired GENIUS PLAY. / SO YOU CAN KEEP YOUR FIDDLE AND YOUR BOW, / GIVE ME A P-I-A-N-O, OH, OH- / I LOVE TO STOP RIGHT / BESIDE AN UPRIGHT / OR A HIGH-TONED BABY GRAND.)*

SO YOU CAN KEEP YOUR FIDDLE AND YOUR BOW,  
GIVE ME A P-I-A-N-O, OH, OH—

**PERUSAL SCRIPT -- IRVING BERLIN: IN PERSON** by *Chip Deffaa*

I LOVE TO STOP RIGHT  
BESIDE AN UPRIGHT  
OR A HIGH-TONED BABY GRAND.

The only problem came when people wanted to see me *play* the piano. One time, someone handed me the sheet music of one of my early songs and asked me to play it.

“But I can’t,” I said. “I can’t read music. I can’t write music.” And I was never much of a piano player. I could only play in one key, F-sharp--and not too great.

This fascinated reporters. Here I was, the most popular songwriter in the world--and I could neither read nor write music. How did I do it?

Well, I invited skeptical reporters in England to watch me create a song. “I can make up songs on any topic, in any style,” I told them. “I can work out a song, phrase by phrase, and play it and sing it--or hum it or whistle it--to a musical secretary, who can set it down on paper properly so it can be published. Give me a topic and I’ll create a song while you watch.”

Someone suggested I try creating a song dealing with dying. I paced, and I sweated, and I came up with bits of words and melody, until--a couple of hours later--I’d created a finished song....

**(SONG #7. “THAT DYING RAG”)**

*(Sings:)*

HONEY, I’M SINKIN’ FAST,  
SOON I WILL BREATHE MY LAST;  
FEVER IS VERY HIGH,  
DOCTOR SAID I WILL DIE.  
‘FORE I TAKE MY LONG, LONG REST,  
GRANT ME, DEAR, ONE REQUEST.  
‘MEMBER THAT AFTERNOON  
WE HEARD THAT DREAMY TUNE,  
WHEN YOU REMARKED TO ME,  
WHO WROTE THAT MELODY;  
THAT’S THE AIR I WANT TO SHARE  
BEFORE I DIE.

HONEY DEAR,  
I MUST BE GOING, I FEAR,  
I FEEL THE FINISH IS NEAR,  
PLEASE BRING YOUR CELLO IN HERE.  
WHILE I SEE  
JUST PLAY THE SWEET MELODY  
AND, HONEY, CALL IT FOR ME  
“THAT DYING RAG.”

**PERUSAL SCRIPT -- IRVING BERLIN: IN PERSON** by *Chip Deffaa*

I scored such a success in England, producers urged me to stay there indefinitely, make it my base. But the truth is—almost from the moment I arrived in England, I wanted to get right back home. I was surprised how strong those feelings were. And I found myself turning out songs with one very clear theme.

**(SONG #8. “HOMESICK.”)**

*(Sings:)*

HOMESICK.  
I KNOW JUST WHAT’S THE MATTER—  
I’M HOMESICK, THAT’S ALL.  
I SEE THAT COZY LITTLE SHACK  
AND THE LITTLE RED SCHOOL,  
DADDY ON THE BACK OF A FUNNY OLD MULE,  
“GOD BLESS OUR HOME” ON THE WALL,  
THE FIELDS OF CLOVER—  
THEY SEEM TO SAY,  
“WHY DON’T YOU COME OVER, PAY US A CALL.”  
I MISS THE COWS AND THE CHICKENS  
AND THE APPLE TREE SHADY,  
AND THERE’S THAT LITTLE OLD LADY—  
DO YOU WONDER WHY I’M HOMESICK?  
I SAID NOW...  
DO YOU WONDER WHY I’M HOMESICK?  
DO YOU WONDER WHY I’M HOMESICK?

Songs of homesickness were always easy for me to create. It didn’t matter if the singer was supposed to be yearning to a home down South or way out West, or anywhere else. I understood so well that longing for the security of home. I’d barely gotten settled in England when I felt I *had* to get back home to New York City. I rented a crane to get my piano out of my ninth-floor hotel room. And took the first ship back to New York

**(SONG #9. “I BEG YOUR PARDON DEAR OLD BROADWAY”)**

*(Sings:)*

I BEG YOUR PARDON, DEAR OLD BROADWAY,  
FOR LIST’NING TO A FOREIGN SONG;  
I THOUGHT I’D FIND A STREET  
WITH YOU COULD COMPETE,  
I ONLY FOUND THAT I WAS WRONG.  
MY HAT’S ALOFT TO YOU, OLD BROADWAY,  
YOU’RE IN A CLASS ALONE TODAY.



**PERUSAL SCRIPT -- IRVING BERLIN: IN PERSON** by *Chip Deffaa*

AND IF I THOUGHT FOR A MINUTE  
THAT THE OTHERS WERE IN IT,  
WON'T YOU PARDON ME, BROADWAY?

BROADWAY, I TOO  
SAID GOODBYE TO ALL THE SIGHTS ACROSS THE SEA.  
JOY! ONCE MORE, FOR SOON I SAW  
THE STATUE OF OLD LIBERTY.  
HAND IN AIR, SHE GREET'S YOU THERE,  
TO DRIVE AWAY ALL CARE AND PAIN;  
JOY SMILES AT YOU, WHILE THE GREAT BIG STATUE  
SEEMS TO SAY, "NEVER AGAIN!"

I BEG YOUR PARDON, DEAR OLD BROADWAY,  
FOR LIST'NING TO A FOREIGN SONG;  
I THOUGHT I'D FIND A STREET  
WITH YOU COULD COMPETE,  
I ONLY FOUND THAT I WAS WRONG.  
MY HAT'S ALOFT TO YOU, OLD BROADWAY,  
YOU'RE IN A CLASS ALONE TODAY.  
AND IF I THOUGHT FOR A MINUTE  
THAT THE OTHERS WERE IN IT,  
WON'T YOU PARDON ME, BROADWAY?

It was the same, years later, when I doing all of those pictures in Hollywood—the moment I finished work on a film, I hurried back to New York. I just needed to be safe and sound in my own home.

You want to know my earliest memories of home? I'm a small boy in Russia, just five years old. And soldiers come and burn down our home—and the homes of friends—because we are Jews. A *pogrom*. I remember being on the side of the road, wrapped in a blanket, watching uncomprehendingly, as these men are burning our house to the ground. And—with nothing except what few possessions we could carry—we trudge out of our village, our little *shtetl*. My father, who'd been a Cantor—a man of respect—is dazed. My father—who was a wonderful singer; my love of music came from him--says we must somehow make it to America.

And somehow we DO make it to America. On the ship, crossing the Atlantic, one of my sisters gets sick. She dies. We arrive in New York City with nothing. My father cannot find work as a cantor; he becomes a housepainter. My parents never learn English; at home, we speak Yiddish. I pick up English on the streets, quickly. I am Israel Beilin. My friends call me "Izzy."

My sisters and brothers find jobs in sweatshops. I sell newspapers. And, when I can, sing for pennies on the street. I sing popular songs of the day. And sometimes I sing songs I make up.

**(SONG #10. "SCHOOLHOUSE BLUES")**

**PERUSAL SCRIPT -- IRVING BERLIN: IN PERSON** by *Chip Deffaa*

*(Sings:)*

I'VE GOT THE SCHOOLHOUSE BLUES,  
I'VE GOT THE SCHOOLHOUSE BLUES.  
TIRED OF READING HISTORY,  
DON'T CARE FOR GEOGRAPHY,  
I'M GETTING OH SO SICK  
OF GRAMMAR AND ARITHMETIC.  
THAT'S WHY I GAVE THE TEACHER THE SACK,  
AND I'M NEVER GONNA GO BACK.  
IF SHE DOESN'T LIKE IT, SHE CAN SIT ON A TACK.  
I'VE GOT THE SCHOOLHOUSE BLUES.

SO THEN IF I DON'T PASS MY EXAM,  
OH, I'M GOING TO BE IN A JAM!  
FATHER'S GOING TO SPANK ME  
BUT I DON'T GIVE A DAMN.  
I'VE GOT THE SCHOOLHOUSE BLUES.

My father grows too weak and ill to work anymore. My mother places him in the poorhouse, where he dies. I am 13. I feel I'm too old to be a burden on my mother. I move out—just another street kid in New York, trying to survive from one day to the next.

I'm singing for my supper, wherever I can. I'm 13, 14, 15 years old. I'm singing for sailors and dockworkers, and prostitutes and johns in rough saloons on the Bowery, with names like "The Morgue." I sleep in flophouses for 15 cents a night.

Did I say "sleep"? No! I learn to stay awake as long as possible. A lifelong habit of insomnia takes root here. I want to hear everyone else snoring before I nod off. Some of these mugs will try to steal your money or your clothes, or take advantage of you.

I'm maybe 16 when I land a job as a singing waiter at Mike Salters' Pelham Café. He's a Russian Jew with a dark, swarthy complexion—everyone calls him "Nigger Mike." And everyone calls the joint simply "Nigger Mike's place." You'll excuse the language, please; it was a rougher era back then.

Mike's a big man in the neighborhood. Word is he's murdered men—maybe 10 in all—and gotten away with it every time. He's the neighborhood "fixer"—he can fix anything. You're in trouble with the law? You go to him. I admire him so much.

One night, while I'm singing, I watch one regular patron of Mike's place kill another one, right in front of me. The man bleeds out on the dance floor, while I keep singing a song of mine....

***(SONG #11. "EVERYBODY'S DOING IT NOW")***

*(Sings:)*

**PERUSAL SCRIPT -- IRVING BERLIN: IN PERSON** by *Chip Deffaa*

EV'RYBODY'S DOIN' IT,  
DOIN' IT, DOIN' IT,  
EV'RYBODY'S DOIN' IT,  
DOIN' IT, DOIN' IT;  
SEE THAT RAGTIME COUPLE OVER THERE,  
WATCH THEM THROW THEIR SHOULDERS IN THE AIR,  
SNAP THEIR FINGERS—HONEY, I DECLARE,  
IT'S A BEAR, IT'S A BEAR, IT'S A BEAR.  
THERE!  
EV'RYBODY'S DOIN' IT,  
DOIN' IT, DOIN' IT,  
EV'RYBODY'S DOIN' IT,  
DOIN' IT, DOIN' IT;  
AIN'T THAT MUSIC TOUCHING YOUR HEART?  
HEAR THAT TROMBONE BUSTIN' APART?  
COME, COME, COME, COME LET US START,  
EVERYBODY'S DOIN' IT NOW.

I don't see anything, I don't say anything. I keep my nose clean. Always.

Mike's the closest thing to a father I've got. He pays me \$7 a week. I get tips on top of that. I'm making more than most factory workers. I can't imagine ever doing better than that.

I work all night, every night, and I can sleep there, too. For a couple of years, Mike's place is "home" for me.

It's a big, popular beer hall, dance hall, with entertainers. Above us, there's a warehouse and an opium den. All kinds of people find their way to Mike's place—not just neighborhood toughs, but rich folk, swells from uptown—curious to see the hookers and dope fiends. They like it when I make up dirty parodies of popular songs of the day.

Mike encourages me to make up my own completely original songs, too, which I sing. I can make up my own tunes or set my words to melodies musicians at the joint come up with.

Now, you have to remember—this is the Victorian era. The era of "I Love You Truly." Professional songwriters are turning out songs in praise of marriage and motherhood, and virtuous young ladies, forever protecting their honor. Not me! I write a song titled "Stop! Stop! Stop!"—but it's not about a girl fending off a wolf. The girl in my song is out for a good time.:

***(SONG #12. STOP! STOP! STOP!)***

*(Sings:)*

CUDDLE AND PLEASE ME, HONEY.  
ANCHOR AT THAT KISSING SHORE;  
MY HONEY, STOP, STOP, STOP, STOP,  
DON'T DARE TO STOP,

**PERUSAL SCRIPT -- IRVING BERLIN: IN PERSON** by *Chip Deffaa*

COME OVER AND LOVE ME SOME MORE.

I write a lot of songs like that—about gals who want some lovin’, who *demand* some lovin.’

MY HONEY, STOP, STOP, STOP, STOP,  
DON’T DARE TO STOP,  
COME OVER AND LOVE ME SOME MORE.

Don’t *dare* to stop—that’s a good line, if I don’t say so, myself. I know what our clientele wants. I come up with one song about a doctor’s unique prescription for good health....

**(SONG #13. “DO YOUR DUTY, DOCTOR”)**

*(Sings:)*

LIZA GREEN FELT AWF’LY SICK,  
SENT OUT FOR THE DOCTOR QUICK.  
THE DOCTOR CALLED AROUND, THESE WORDS TO SAY:  
“YOU’RE SUFF’RING FROM A LOVE ATTACK,  
AND IF YOU WANT TO BRING HEALTH BACK,  
A LOVING MAN MUST LOVE YOU EVERY DAY.”  
THEN HE TURNED TO SAY GOODBYE,  
JUST TO HEAR ELIZA CRY:

“OH, OH, OH, OH, DOCTOR,  
WON’T YOU KINDLY HEAR MY PLEA?  
I KNOW YOU KNOW, DOCTOR,  
EXACTLY WHAT IS BEST FOR ME,  
HEAR ME SIGH, HEAR ME CRY,  
SURELY YOU AIN’T GOIN’ TO LET ME DIE,  
FOR IF SOME LOVE WILL MAKE ME GAIN,  
DO YOUR DUTY, DOCTOR, CURE MY PAIN.”

DOCTOR SAID, “I CAN’T DECLINE,  
CURING PATIENTS IS MY LINE.”  
THEN STARTED LOVIN’ LIZA GOOD AND STRONG.  
SOON SHE WAS FEELING WELL ONCE MORE.  
THE DOCTOR THEN LOOKED T’WARD THE DOOR.  
AND SAID, “I GUESS I’D BEST BE GETTING ALONG.”  
BUT ELIZA HOLLARED QUICK,  
“OH, I FEAR I’M GETTING SICK..”

“OH, OH, OH, OH, DOCTOR,

**PERUSAL SCRIPT -- IRVING BERLIN: IN PERSON** by *Chip Deffaa*

WON'T YOU KINDLY HEAR MY PLEA?  
I KNOW YOU KNOW, DOCTOR,  
EXACTLY WHAT IS BEST FOR ME,  
HEAR ME SIGH, HEAR ME CRY,  
SURELY YOU AIN'T GOIN' TO LET ME DIE,  
FOR IF SOME LOVE WILL MAKE ME GAIN,  
DO YOUR DUTY, DOCTOR, CURE MY PAIN."

One fan of mine—a neighborhood fellow named Joe Schenk—will become a friend of mine for life. He's a clerk at a nearby drug store. And he's the guy to go to, if you want to buy opium. Knows how to hustle, keep those sales going. And he's always coming around our place. A good guy. He's always saving his money. Eventually, he'll manage to get into the motion-picture business, on the ground floor. He and his brother will become top Hollywood producers. Moguls. But right now he's just a neighborhood fellow. We play cards when we have free time—poker, for spare change. Joe likes my singing, and the risqué songs I make up. Vaudevillians come around our joint, too. They see me scoring with the crowd and ask me to write songs for them. "I'm no songwriter," I tell them. "I'm just Izzy Beilin, a singing waiter. I can't read or write music. I just make up little songs, and jot words down on my shirt sleeves and cuffs, so I'll remember them" Sophie Tucker, who's beginning to make a name for herself in vaudeville—and will soon be a top headliner—tells me, "I want your songs, Izzy. I'll buy the shirts off your back, if I have to." Musicians at the club help write out properly the songs I'm making up. And we begin submitting them to song publishers. One of them, Ted Snyder, begins publishing my stuff. Even offers to collaborate with me on songs. But he stresses: "This won't change your life. No one gets rich writing songs, Izzy." My first published songs brings me a grand total of 37 cents in royalties. The printer accidentally misspells my name on the sheet music—instead of printing my last name as "Beilin," he prints "Berlin." I like that, "Berlin" sounds more professional, and more American. I begin calling myself "Irving Berlin." And then one night, Mike Salter fires me. Some people rob the place, he accuses me of being in on it. I try to tell him, "I'd never hurt you, Mike; you're like a father to me." But I'm out! I scramble to write songs. Trying to see if I can make enough to replace the \$7 bucks a week, plus tips, I'd made at Mike's place. I score some successes—and discover it's possible to make thousands of bucks from a single song. Soon everyone is singing this cheeky number of mine...

**(SONG #14. "MY WIFE'S GONE TO THE COUNTRY")**

*(Sings:)*

MY WIFE'S GONE TO THE COUNTRY,  
HURRAY! HURRAY!  
SHE THOUGHT IT BEST,  
"I NEED A REST,"  
THAT'S WHY SHE WENT AWAY.  
SHE TOOK THE CHILDREN WITH HER,  
HURRAY! HURRAY!

**PERUSAL SCRIPT -- IRVING BERLIN: IN PERSON** by *Chip Deffaa*

I LOVE MY WIFE BUT OH! YOU KID,  
MY WIFE'S GONE AWAY.

I wrote countless encore chorus, in which the man is calling up an old girlfriend, or coming on to the maid, or flirting with a stranger... all ending with the words:

HURRAY! HURRAY!  
I LOVE MY WIFE BUT OH! YOU KID,  
MY WIFE'S GONE AWAY.

It sells hundred of thousands of copies of sheet music. Who could have imagined—back then in that supposedly prim, proper, innocent age—that I'd score a bigger success writing about a married man wanting to cheat a bit than others would have writing about the rewards of marriage?

More and more vaudevillians are singing my songs. Ted Snyder tells me: "You're from the gutter, Izzy. That's your strength; that's why you're able to write songs everybody wants. You're from the gutter." I don't write songs as blatant as some of the ones I used to sing at Mike's place. Nothing crude. But I can throw in just a bit of suggestiveness, you know.

Ted Snyder tells me I have to be able to write songs on any imaginable topic. One winter Hawaiian songs are all the rage. I come up with this ditty, which Al Jolson introduces....

**(SONG #15. "I'M DOWN IN HONOLULU")**

*(Sings:)*

I'M DOWN IN HONOLULU LOOKING THEM OVER,  
I'M DOWN IN HONOLULU LIVING IN CLOVER.  
TRY AND GUESS THE WAY THEY DRESS;  
NO MATTER WHAT YOU THINK IT IS, IT'S EVEN LESS.  
THEIR LANGUAGE IS HARD TO UNDERSTAND,  
BECAUSE IT'S SO TRICKY;  
I'VE GOT THEM TEACHING ME  
TO SAY "WICKY WICKY."  
I DON'T KNOW WHAT IT MEANS,  
BUT IT'S THE BEST THAT EVER WAS;  
AND IF IT MEANS JUST WHAT I THINK IT DOES,  
I'LL BE IN HONOLULU LOOKING THEM OVER  
FOR A LONG, LONG TIME.

And then there's a craze for Arabian numbers. Americans are fascinated by the notions of dashing, romantic sheiks; burning desert sands; and love beneath the mellow Arabian moon...As if I know anything about Arabia. But I can imagine. I give 'em....

**(SONG #16. "ARABY")**

**PERUSAL SCRIPT -- IRVING BERLIN: IN PERSON** by *Chip Deffaa*

*(Sings:)*

ARABY, WHEN SHADES OF NIGHT APPEAR  
I SEEM TO HEAR YOU CALLING;  
ARABY, YOU SEEM TO BECKON, AND I RECKON  
I'LL BE HURRYING BACK AGAIN.  
SEEMS TO ME A MAIDEN'S FACE APPEARS;  
I SEE HER TEARS ARE FALLING, FALLING,  
BECAUSE I LEFT HER THERE.  
THAT'S WHY I LONG TO BE  
WHERE ALL THOSE HAPPY FACES WAIT FOR ME  
BESIDE THE FAIR OASIS.  
SOON YOU'LL SEE,  
WITHIN A CARAVAN, AN ARAB MAN WILL TAKE ME  
OVER THE DESSERT BACK TO ARABY.

I could write on any subject. I did well enough to form my own song publishing company. In my office, I put up portraits of George M. Cohan and Stephen Foster—the quintessential American songwriters. And lifelong sources of inspiration.

The enormous success of my songs soon made me a very rich man. I didn't know what to do with the money. My own needs were modest. I rarely left the office. I bought my mother a home in the Bronx, complete with a kosher cook.

My mother worried because I was in 23 years old and still wasn't married. She said I should find a nice Jewish girl, settle down, get married.

But I wasn't that good-looking. And I was quiet. Not interested in going out. It was easier to stay in my office, and write songs about lonely guys wondering if they'd ever find love....

**(SONG # 17. "TELL ME, LITTLE GYPSY.")**

*(Sings:)*

TELL ME, LITTLE GYPSY,  
WHAT THE FUTURE HOLDS FOR ME.  
"KINDLY CROSS MY PALM WITH SILVER,  
AND I'LL TRY AND SEE-EE."  
TELL ME, IS THERE SOMEONE  
IN THE DAYS THAT ARE TO BE?  
THERE'S A GIRL FOR EVERY BOY ON THE WORLD,  
THERE MUST BE SOMEONE FOR ME....  
THERE'S A GIRL FOR EVERY BOY ON THE WORLD,  
THERE MUST BE SOMEONE FOR ME.

Spending my life in my office.... Even my mother would ask me: "What? Do you imagine a prospective bride will someday, somehow simply walk into your office and find you?"

**PERUSAL SCRIPT -- IRVING BERLIN: IN PERSON** by *Chip Deffaa*

In my cozy office of mine, where I spent so damned much time, I could only imagine, and write of, the bliss of married life. In real life, I knew from nothing about marriage. But I could write....

**(SONG #18. "IN A COZY KITCHENETTE APARTMENT")**

*(Sings:)*

IN A COZY KITCHENETTE APARTMENT FOR TWO  
I'LL BE SETTING THE TABLE  
WHILE YOU'RE COOKING A STEW FOR ME AND YOU.  
I'LL BE THERE TO HELP YOU PUT THE DISHES AWAY;  
THEN TOGETHER WE'LL LISTEN  
TO THE PHONOGRAPH PLAY  
THE TUNEFUL "HUMORESQUE"--  
AND OH, WHAT BLISS  
WHEN IT'S TIME TO KISS  
IN A COZY KITCHENETTE APARTMENT FOR TWO!

So I'm in my office, toiling away one cold wintry afternoon on a song. And I'm working on a song, which I know in my heart is pretty dreadful. The melody is all right, but the lyrics are going nowhere....

**(SONG #19. "SMILE AND SHOW YOUR DIMPLE")**

*(Sings:)*

SMILE AND SHOW YOUR DIMPLE;  
YOU'LL FIND IT'S VERY SIMPLE:  
YOU CAN THINK OF SOMETHING COMICAL  
IN A VERY LITTLE WHILE.

And this girl suddenly bursts into my office, and she says, "My name is Dorothy Goetz. I'm 19. I want to be a singer. And it would mean the world to me if I could introduce one of your songs--whatever song you're working on right now."

I tell her, "It's a terrible song, Miss Goetz, believe me." And I'm thinking she's the most beautiful gal I've ever seen.

And just then, another good-looking gal bursts in--rude, pushy--and she's *demanding* my song. "I'm a much better singer." And before I know it, she's fighting with Miss Dorothy Goetz--I mean, they're fighting like prizefighters-- over me and my song.

I tell the newcomer:"Stop! You've won! You can have this new song of mine. You deserve it." And she leaves, happy that she's the winner. The truth is, I just wanted to be alone with Miss Dorothy Goetz. We go out for dinner. Within a couple of weeks, I'm asking her father for Dorothy's hand in marriage. And he's asking me to take good care of his beloved daughter.



**PERUSAL SCRIPT -- IRVING BERLIN: IN PERSON** by *Chip Deffaa*

**(SONG #20. "ALWAYS TREAT HER LIKE A BABY")**

*(Sings:)*

TREAT HER LIKE A BABY,  
FOR SHE'S ONLY A BABY.  
WHEN YOU TAKE HER WITH YOU, LAD,  
YOU ARE TAKING ALL WE HAD.  
I KNOW SHE'LL BE A COMFORT TO YOU  
LIKE SHE'S ALWAYS BEEN TO ME.  
SO DO BE KIND,  
AND KEEP UNHAPPINESS AWAY;  
AND WHEN YOU FIND  
HER GOLDEN HAIR IS TURNING GRAY,  
CONTINUE TO TREAT HER LIKE A BABY.

AND WHEN YOU FIND  
HER GOLDEN HAIR IS TURNING GRAY,  
CONTINUE TO TREAT HER LIKE A BABY.

And I want to give her the best possible honeymoon. It's the dead of winter--freezing cold. I grandly whisk her off to Cuba, so we can enjoy tropical warmth. But there's a deadly strain of typhoid fever going around on Cuba, and she catches it. We go back to New York....and, before too long, my new bride dies. A dozen years will pass before I can so much as look at another gal.

I can't work, I can't sleep, I can't think. Her brother Ray, who will become my lifelong friend, suggests I might want to remember her in song....

**(SONG #21. "WHEN I LOST YOU.")**

*(Sings:)*

I LOST THE SUNSHINE AND ROSES,  
I LOST THE HEAVENS OF BLUE,  
I LOST THE BEAUTIFUL RAINBOW,  
I LOST THE MORNING DEW,  
I LOST THE ANGEL WHO GAVE ME  
SUMMER THE WHOLE WINTER THROUGH,  
I LOST THE GLADNESS  
THAT TURNED INTO SADNESS,  
WHEN I LOST YOU.

*(The music from the verse of this song is used as underscoring. Speaking over the music, BERLIN reflects, then speaking over underscoring.)*

I was devastated by Dorothy's passing. I poured my feelings into this song, in a way I'd never before done

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with any song. Up until then, writing songs was just a task for me. But this time, I was writing from the heart. This is the first good ballad—the first mature ballad—I ever wrote. Al Jolson would call it the greatest of all my songs. George M. Cohan called it the prettiest song he'd ever heard. And the public—almost as soon as I released the song--bought up a million copies of sheet music.

I LOST THE ANGEL WHO GAVE ME  
SUMMER THE WHOLE WINTER THROUGH,  
I LOST THE GLADNESS  
THAT TURNED INTO SADNESS,  
WHEN I LOST YOU.

When America entered the First World War, I decided it was time for me to become an American citizen, so that I could serve my country. I got my US citizenship and I enlisted. I was so scrawny, the government didn't think I'd make much of a fighting man. Instead, they asked me to create and perform in a show, with an all-servicemen cast, to raise funds for the cause and boost morale. The show, which we performed through the war at Camp Upton on Long Island, was called "Yip Yap Yaphank." We closed every show with this stirring anthem.

**(SONG #22. "WE'RE ON OUR WAY TO FRANCE")**

*(Sings:)*

ALL IS READY, SO JUST HOLD STEADY;  
WE'LL SOON BE GOING TO THE PIER.  
NO MORE WAITING OR HESITATING—  
THE TIME TO SAIL IS HERE.  
BYE-BYE, MOTHERS AND ALL THE OTHERS  
WHO'LL COME TO SHED A LITTLE TEAR—  
DON'T CRY,  
BYE-BYE,  
GIVE US A PARTING CHEER.

WE'RE ON OUR WAY TO FRANCE;  
THERE'S NOT A MINUTE TO SPARE—  
THAT'S WHY.  
FOR WHEN THE YANKS ADVANCE,  
YOU BET WE WANNA BE THERE—  
GOODBYE.

OLD HOBOKEN IS BENT AND BROKEN  
FROM SOLDIERS MARCHING ON THE PIER;  
WHILE YOU SLUMBER, A GREAT BIG NUMBER  
OF SOLDIERS DISAPPEAR.

**PERUSAL SCRIPT -- IRVING BERLIN: IN PERSON** by *Chip Deffaa*

TO THE MILLIONS OF BRAVE CIVILIANS  
THAT WE ARE LEAVING OVER HERE  
WE SAY,  
DAY-DAY,  
GIVE US A PARTING CHEER.

WE'RE ON OUR WAY TO FRANCE;  
THERE'S NOT A MINUTE TO SPARE--  
THAT'S WHY.  
FOR WHEN THE YANKS ADVANCE,  
YOU BET WE WANNA BE THERE--  
GOODBYE.

After the war, I focused on writing Broadway shows. George M. Cohan--my idol, my role-model, "the Man Who Owned Broadway"--paid me the ultimate compliment. Cohan--a lone-wolf genius who'd never before collaborated with anyone in writing a show--asked *me* to collaborate on a show with him. We co-wrote a hit revue.

We were both the toasts of New York. He joked that I now had everything worth having in life, with the possible exception of his longtime business partner Sam Harris. They built Broadway theaters together and filled them with shows that Cohan wrote.

And then I teamed up with Sam Harris, to build Broadway's Music Box Theater, which I would fill for years with shows I wrote.

Do you know, all of these many years later, I still own 50% of the Music Box Theater. And every day--even now, in my 90s--I still phone the box-office, to see how ticket sales are going.

But oh! How I delighted in writing shows, year after year, for the Music Box Theater.

**(SONG #23. "BRING ON THE PEPPER")**

*(Sings:)*

BRING ON THE PEPPER;  
WE NEED A LOT OF PEPPER--  
YOU'VE GOT TO BE A STEPPER  
WITH A BARREL OF SPEED.  
MAKE IT GOOD AND SNAPPY  
IF YOU WANT TO GET BY;  
MAKE 'EM THINK YOU'RE HAPPY  
THOUGH YOU'RE READY TO DIE.  
WHEN YOU BEGIN IT,  
PUT LOTS OF GINGER IN IT--  
ABOUT A MILE A MINUTE  
IS THE TEMPO WE NEED;

**PERUSAL SCRIPT -- IRVING BERLIN: IN PERSON** by *Chip Deffaa*

SLOW FOLKS ARE NO FOLKS  
TO TROUBLE WITH, NO INDEED!  
LOTS OF PEP WILL MAKE AN UNDERTAKER  
ROCK WITH JOY AND LAUGHTER;  
IF YOU CAN SPRINKLE A CUTE LITTLE TWINKLE,  
YOU'LL FIND THAT'S THE WRINKLE WE'RE AFTER.  
JUST KEEP A-GOIN'  
AND DON'T FORGET TO THROW IN  
A BIT OF GEORGIE COHAN, THAT WE KNOW;  
LOTS OF TABASCO,  
THAT'S ALL WE ASK, SO  
BRING ON THE PEPPER--LET'S GO!

*(Dance break. BERLIN dances to the music corresponding to these lines of the song: BRING ON THE PEPPER; / WE NEED A LOT OF PEPPER-- / YOU'VE GOT TO BE A STEPPER / WITH A BARREL OF SPEED. / MAKE IT GOOD AND SNAPPY / IF YOU WANT TO GET BY; / MAKE "EM THINK YOU'RE HAPPY / THOUGH YOU'RE READY TO DIE. / WHEN YOU BEGIN IT, / PUT LOTS OF GINGER IN IT-- / ABOUT A MILE A MINUTE / IS THE TEMPO WE NEED; / SLOW FOLKS ARE NO FOLKS / TO TROUBLE WITH, NO INDEED!)*

LOTS OF PEP WILL MAKE AN UNDERTAKER  
ROCK WITH JOY AND LAUGHTER;  
IF YOU CAN SPRINKLE A CUTE LITTLE TWINKLE,  
YOU'LL FIND THAT'S THE WRINKLE WE'RE AFTER.  
JUST KEEP A-GOIN'  
AND DON'T FORGET TO THROW IN  
A BIT OF GEORGIE COHAN, THAT WE KNOW;  
LOTS OF TABASCO,  
THAT'S ALL WE ASK, SO  
BRING ON THE PEPPER--LET'S GO!

Over the years, I wrote the scores for 19 Broadway shows and 18 Hollywood musicals. Don't ask me to name them all. But I want to mention one of my favorite Broadway shows, which premiered at the Music Box in 1933. "As Thousands Cheer." We had a terrific cast--Ethel Waters, Marilyn Miller, Clifton Webb... The score was sprinkled with hits: "Heat Wave," "Harlem on My Mind," "Easter Parade." Oh, let me tell you about "Easter Parade." Remember that terrible song I wrote called "Smile and Show Your Dimple"?

**16 more pages make up the second half of this show.**

## PERUSAL SCRIPT -- IRVING BERLIN: IN PERSON by Chip Deffaa

### About the Playwright....

Chip Deffaa is the author of sixteen published plays and eight published books. An expert on old-time show business, he has been "following his bliss" since he wrote his first report for school—a 10-page essay on George M. Cohan—at the age of nine.

His play *George M. Cohan Tonight!*, which Deffaa wrote and directed Off-Broadway in New York at the Irish Repertory Theatre, was hailed by *The New York Times* as "brash, cocky, and endlessly euphoric" (*The New York Times*, March 11, 2006). It has since been performed everywhere from Seoul, Korea to London, England. Deffaa has written and directed assorted other plays, including *The Seven Little Foys*, *One Night with Fanny Brice*, and *Theater Boys*.

Cast albums are available for such shows of his as *The Seven Little Foys*, *One Night with Fanny Brice*, *Irving Berlin's America*, *The Johnny Mercer Jamboree*, *Theater Boys*, and *George M. Cohan Tonight!*

Deffaa has written eight books, including *Swing Legacy*, *Voices of the Jazz Age*, *In the Mainstream*, *Traditionalists and Revivalists in Jazz*, *Jazz Veterans*, *F. Scott Fitzgerald: The Princeton Years (ed.)*, *Blue Rhythms*, and (with David Cassidy) *C'Mon Get Happy*. He has contributed chapters to the books *Harlem Speaks* and *Roaring at One Hundred*.

For 18 years, Deffaa wrote for *The New York Post*, writing news, feature stories, and reviews dealing with jazz, cabaret, and theater. He was also a longtime writer for *Entertainment Weekly* magazine.

Deffaa has written liner notes for many CD's, including those of such artists as Miles Davis, Benny Goodman, Ray Brown, Diane Schuur, Ruth Brown, Tito Puente, Dick Hyman, Randy Sandke, Scott Hamilton, and the Count Basie Orchestra.

Deffaa has won an ASCAP/Deems Taylor Award, a New Jersey Press Association Award, and an IRNE Award (Independent Reviewers of New England). Deffaa is a member of the Society of Stage Directors & Choreographers, the Dramatists Guild, ASCAP, NARAS, the Jazz Journalists Association, the F. Scott Fitzgerald Society, the Drama Desk, and the American Theatre Critics Association. Deffaa is a trustee of the Princeton *Tiger* magazine.

Deffaa's most recent plays include *The Irving Berlin Story*, *Yankee Doodle Dandy*, *The Fanny Brice Story*, *Song-and-Dance Kids*, and *One Night with Fanny Brice*, which opened Off-Broadway in 2011. All of Deffaa's plays are available for licensing. He is represented by the Fifi Oscar Agency, New York City. For further information, please visit: [www.chipdeffaa.com](http://www.chipdeffaa.com).