

Start HENNESEY! No one can stop the bubble machine. (HENNESEY rushes out. LUCKY looks at watch.) Five minutes. (LUCKY out.)

DICK. (He enters.) Darling!

RUBY. (Without looking at him.) I'm very busy, Dick.

DICK. These are yours. (She doesn't answer.) They're good luck telegrams from all over the world. Here's one from Gertie Lawrence. Maurice Chevalier. Al Jolson.

RUBY. Richard!

DICK. Ruby, all I want to say is, if you forget your lines, and miss your cues and fall flat on your face, just remember I'll be standing in the wings, waiting to take you in my arms, no matter what happens, no matter what! Good luck, darling. Give 'em heck! (He clips her affectionately on jaw, practically dislocating it; exits.) **Stop**

LUCKY. (Rushing across.) Ruby, they changed the flag to stage right. (Exits.)

(JOAN enters.)

RUBY. Oh, Joan, I'm frightened.

(They BOTH hug.)

JOAN. Oh, Ruby, it's only natural. Your first time on a stage with the critics out there ready to tear you to bits. I'd be scared stiff!

RUBY. (Petrieved.) Oh, Joan, I can't go out there, I can't!

JOAN. (Seizing RUBY by shoulders.) Listen, Ruby, you're going out on that poopdeck a chorus girl but you're coming back a star!

LUCKY. (He crosses over with gloves.) Ruby, your gloves! (Hands them to her and exits.)

JOAN. Ruby— (Clinch.) Break a leg! (JOAN socks RUBY encouragingly on arm, bruising it quite badly; exits.)

(MONA, looking deathly ill, enters with the CAPTAIN, whose robe she is wearing. She stands behind RUBY for a moment and sadly observes her.)

MONA. Ruby—

RUBY. (Turning around.) Miss Kent! What are you doing out of bed?

MONA. (Softly and dramatically.) I just wanted to tell you—

LUCKY. (Crossing over again.) Ruby, your hat! (Hands it to her and exits.)

RUBY. (Putting on hat and gloves.) Captain! Why have you let her out of Sick Bay?

CAPTAIN. She insisted, the brave soul, she insisted.