

- CHARITY
- OSCAR.

2-8-32

ACT TWO

Scene 8

Electric sign appears:

"THE PROPOSAL"

It disappears. When the lights come up, we are in Barney's Chile Hacienda, a small Mexican restaurant on Eighth Avenue. There are two booths against the wall. OSCAR sits alone at a booth, nervously glancing at his watch. BARNEY serves OSCAR coffee and leaves.

CHARITY enters. SHE looks at OSCAR. HE sees her and gets up.

Sign goes off.

Charity, I ----

OSCAR

(But CHARITY walks right past him and sits in the booth behind him so that THEY are directly back to back.)

CHARITY

(Doesn't look at him.)

Sit down, Oscar.

(Pushes him down.)

OSCAR

(Surprised)

Aren't you going to sit with me?

CHARITY

(Tense)

I have some very important things to say to you, Oscar, and if I have to look in your eyes I don't think I'll be able to say them.

(OSCAR wants to protest, but sits, back to back with her.)

BARNEY returns with a cup of coffee, looks quizzically at the way THEY are sitting.)

BARNEY

You alone, Miss?

OSCAR

(Without turning)

She's with me.

(BARNEY looks at them both,
puzzled at first ... then
shrugs, exits.)

CHARITY

Oscar ... I had to see you to tell you ... I can't see you
anymore.

OSCAR

(Starts to turn.)

What?

CHARITY

Don't look at me. Don't look at me.

(HE turns back to back again.)

Aren't you going to ask me why? Aren't you going to ask
me why I can't see you anymore?

OSCAR

Why can't you see me anymore?

CHARITY

Never mind. I'll tell you. Because we're not getting
anywhere, that's why. And we're not going to get anywhere
either because you don't even know where I've been ...
Oscar ... I don't, never have, and probably never will WORK
IN A BANK.

OSCAR

Oh?

CHARITY

I don't even have a bank account. I keep my money in an
empty can of Chase and Sanborn coffee.

OSCAR

Charity --

CHARITY

And do you have any idea of how I earn that money? Do
you? Heh?

OSCAR

You're a dance hall hostess.

CHARITY

I'm a dance hall hostess. I work in a dance hall. I dance with strange men and talk

(Music out)

to them and drink with them and --

(SHE suddenly realizes what HE said.)

That's right. How did you know?

OSCAR

...I've known it for a week now. I was riding a bus one night, saw you, jumped off and before I could catch you I saw you go into this dance hall. I went in and stood in the corner. You were sitting in a booth with some man. You were laughing and giggling. I didn't stay very long -- an hour or so. ... That night when I went home, I tried very, very hard to hate you, Charity ... but I couldn't do it. I just couldn't hate you.

CHARITY

Maybe you'll have better luck tonight. Do you know what other business some of the girls are in?

OSCAR

I'm not interested.

CHARITY

Don't you want to ask me if I am, too?

OSCAR

It's not important.

CHARITY

(Indignant)

Not important? Well, it is to me. I'm in love with you, Oscar, and I'm not going to waste being in love with some jerk who isn't interested enough to find out if I really am what I'm hinting I might be. Don't look at me.

OSCAR

Charity, I don't care what you are or what you did. All I know is I want to marry you.

CHARITY

Let's settle one thing at a time, heh? I am not in any other business. All I sell is my time ... But just to keep the record straight, I am not a poetical virgin! ...

(SHE suddenly bursts into tears using paper napkins as handkerchiefs. She empties the table container.)

