

*(She starts off as ADO ANNIE enters with lunch hamper.)*

**ADO ANNIE.** Hi, Aunt Eller!

**AUNT ELLER.** Hi, yourself.

*(She exits.)*

**ADO ANNIE.** Hello, Laurey.

**LAUREY.** Hello. Will Parker's back from Kansas City. He's lookin' feryer.

*(ADO ANNIE's brows knit to meet a sudden problem.)*

**ADO ANNIE.** Will Parker! I didn't count on him bein' back so soon!

**LAUREY.** I can see that! Been ridin' a piece?

**ADO ANNIE.** The Peddler-man's gonna drive me to the Box Social. I got up sort of a tasty lunch.

**LAUREY.** Ado Annie! Have you tuck up with that Peddler-man?

**ADO ANNIE.** N-not yit.

**LAUREY.** But yer promised to Will Parker, ain't yer?

**ADO ANNIE.** Not what you might say *promised*. I jist told him mebbe.

**LAUREY.** Don't y' like him no more?

**ADO ANNIE.** Course I do. They won't never be nobody like Will.

**LAUREY.** Then whut about this Peddler-man?

**ADO ANNIE.** *(Looking off wistfully.)* They won't never be nobody like *him*, neither.

**LAUREY.** Well, which one d'you like the best?

**ADO ANNIE.** Whutever one I'm with!

**LAUREY.** Well, you air a silly!

**ADO ANNIE.** Now, Laurey, you know they didn't nobody pay me no mind up to this year, count of I was scrawny and flat as a beanpole. Nen I kind of rounded up a little and now the boys act diff'rent to me.

**LAUREY.** Well, whut's wrong with that?

**ADO ANNIE.** Nuthin' wrong. I like it. I like it so much when a feller talks purty to me I git all shaky from horn to hoof! Don't you?

**LAUREY.** Cain't think whut yer talkin' about.

**ADO ANNIE.** Don't you feel kind of sorry fer a feller when he looks like he wants to kiss ya?

**LAUREY.** Well, you jist cain't go around kissin' every man that asts you! Didn't anybody ever tell you that?

**ADO ANNIE.** Yeow, they *told* me...

**[MUSIC NO. 06 "I CAIN'T SAY NO"]**

IT AIN'T SO MUCH A QUESTION OF NOT KNOWIN' WHUT  
TO DO,

I KNOWED WHUT'S RIGHT AND WRONG SINCE I BEEN TEN.  
I HEARD A LOT OF STORIES - AND I RECKON THEY ARE  
TRUE -

ABOUT HOW GIRLS'RE PUT UPON BY MEN.  
I KNOW I MUSTN'T FALL INTO THE PIT,  
BUT WHEN I'M WITH A FELLER -

*(Parlando.)*

I FERGIT!

*(Sung.)*

I'M JIST A GIRL WHO CAIN'T SAY NO,  
I'M IN A TURRIBLE FIX.  
I ALWAYS SAY, "COME ON, LE'S GO!"  
JIST WHEN I ORTA SAY NIX!

WHEN A PERSON TRIES TO KISS A GIRL  
I KNOW SHE ORTA GIVE HIS FACE A SMACK.  
BUT AS SOON AS SOMEONE KISSES ME  
I SOMEHOW SORTA WANTA KISS HIM BACK!

I'M JIST A FOOL WHEN LIGHTS ARE LOW.  
I CAIN'T BE PRISSY AND QUAIN'T -  
I AIN'T THE TYPE THET C'N FAINT -  
HOW C'N I BE WHUT I AIN'T?  
I CAIN'T SAY NO!

(**ALI HAKIM** enters with **ADO ANNIE**.)

**ALI HAKIM.** I'll say good-bye here, baby.

**ADO ANNIE.** Cain't y'even stay to drink to Curly and Laurey?

**ALI HAKIM.** (*Shaking his head.*) Time for the lonely gypsy to go back to the open road.

**ADO ANNIE.** Wisht I was goin' - nen you wouldn't be so lonely.

**ALI HAKIM.** Look, Ado Annie, there is a man I know who loves you like nothing ever loved nobody.

**ADO ANNIE.** *Ali!*

**ALI HAKIM.** A man who will stick to you all your life. And that's the man for you - Will Parker.

**ADO ANNIE.** (*Recovering from surprise.*) Oh....yeah...well, I like Will a lot.

**ALI HAKIM.** He is a fine fellow. Strong like an ox. Young and handsome.

**ADO ANNIE.** I love him. all right. I guess.

**ALI HAKIM.** Of course you do! And you love those clear blue eyes of his, and the way his mouth wrinkles up when he smiles –

**ADO ANNIE.** Do you love him too?

**ALI HAKIM.** I love him because he will make my Ado Annie happy.

*(He kisses ADO ANNIE's hand.)*

Good-bye, my baby.

*(He starts to leave toward stage left, then turns.)*

I will show you how we say good-bye in Persia.

*(He takes her hand, extending her arm palm up, pushes back her sleeve, and kisses her upturned wrist. He progresses up her arm, accelerating his kisses. He continues kissing her neck as he crosses behind her. He then twirls her around into a low embrace with her head stage left and plants a kiss on her lips. He then sets her on her feet in her original position.)*

**ADO ANNIE.** *(Wistfully as he releases her.)* That was good-bye?

**ALI HAKIM.** We have an old song in Persia. It says

“ONE GOODBYE...  
...is never enough.”

*(He twirls her and gives her a long kiss. WILL enters from left and stands still and stunned. He slowly awakes to action and starts moving toward them, but then ALI starts to talk and WILL stops again, surprised even more by what he hears than by what he saw.)*

I am glad you will marry such a wonderful man as this Will Parker. You deserve a fine man and you got one.

*(WILL is about to grab ALI by the scruff of the neck.)*

**ADO ANNIE.** *(Still in ALI's embrace, she looks up and sees WILL above her.)* Hello, Will. Ali is sayin' good-bye.

**ALI HAKIM.** *(Immediately setting ADO ANNIE back on her feet.)* Ah, Will! I want to say good-bye to you, too.

*(Starting to embrace him.)*

**WILL.** No, you don't. I just saw the last one.

**ALI HAKIM.** *(Patting WILL on the cheek.)* Ah, you were made for each other!

*(He pulls ADO ANNIE close to him with one arm and puts the other hand affectionately on WILL's shoulder.)*

Be good to her, Will.

*(Giving ADO ANNIE a squeeze.)*

And you be good to him!

*(Smiling disarmingly at WILL.)*

You don't mind? I am a friend of the family now?

*(He gives ADO ANNIE a little kiss on the cheek.)*

**WILL.** Did you say you was goin'?

**ALI HAKIM.** Yes. I must. Back to the open road. A poor gypsy. Good-bye, my baby -

*(Smiling back at WILL before he kisses ADO ANNIE, pointing to himself.)*

Friend of the family.

*(Pushing WILL aside.)*

I'll show you how we say good-bye in my country.

*(ADO ANNIE prepares for another Persian good-bye. ALI moves toward her, but WILL grabs him by the back of his collar. ALI smiles ingratiatingly.)*

Persian good-bye.

*(WILL tosses ALI stage left, away from ANNIE.)*

Lucky fellow! I wish it was me she was marrying

**WILL.** It don't seem to make an awful lot of difference.

**ALI.** Well, back on the open road, the lonely gypsy.

*(He sings a snatch of the Persian song as he exits, improvising on the words, "Oh, the open road!" As he disappears, ADO ANNIE runs after him, waving good-bye.)*

**WILL.** You ain't goin' to think of that ole peddler anymore, air you?

**ADO ANNIE.** Course not. Never think of no one less'n he's with me.

**WILL.** Then I'm never goin' to leave yer side.

**ADO ANNIE.** Even if you don't, even if you never go away on a trip er nuthin', cain't you - onct in a while - give me one of them Persian good-byes?

**WILL.** Persian good-bye? Why that ain't nuthin' like a Oklahoma hello!

*(He places her hands so that she is holding on to his neck, grabs her by the waist, and slides her legs between his, giving her a long kiss. After the kiss, she looks up at him, supreme contentment in her voice.)*

**ADO ANNIE.** Hello, Will!

*(Blackout.)*

**[MUSIC NO. 26 "CHANGE OF SCENE"]**