

ALI HAKIM. All right! All right! If the egg-beater don't work
I give you something just as good!

AUNT ELLER. Just as good! It's got to be a thousand million
times better!

*(ALI puts down his bulging suitcase. He
rushes over and, to LAUREY's alarm, kisses her
hand.)*

ALI HAKIM. My, oh, my! Miss Laurey! Jippety crickets, how
high you have growed up! Last time I come through
here, you was tiny like a shrimp, with freckles. Now
look at you – a great big beautiful lady!

LAUREY. Quit it a-bitin' me! If you ain't had no breakfast go

ALI HAKIM. Now, Aunt Eller, just lissen –

AUNT ELLER. (*Shouting.*) I ain't yer Aunt Eller! Don't you call me Aunt Eller, you little wart. I'm mad at you.

ALI HAKIM. Don't you go and be mad at me. Ain't I said I'd give you a present?

(Getting his bag.)

Something to wear.

AUNT ELLER. Foot! Got things fer to wear. Wouldn't have it. Whut is it?

ALI HAKIM. (*Holding up garter.*) Real silk. Made in Persia!

AUNT ELLER. Whut'd I want with a ole Persian garter?

ADO ANNIE. They look awful purty, Aunt Eller, with bows onto 'em and all.

AUNT ELLER. I'll try 'em on.

ALI HAKIM. Hold out your foot.

(AUNT ELLER obeys mechanically. But when ALI gets the garter over her ankle, she kicks him down.)

AUNT ELLER. Did you have any idy I was goin' ter let you slide that garter up my limb?

(She stoops over and starts to pull the garter up.)

Grab onto my petticoats, Laurey.

(Noticing ALI looking at her, she turns her back on him pointedly and goes on with the operation. ALI turns to ADO ANNIE.)

ALI HAKIM. Funny woman. Would be much worse if I tried to take your garters off.

ADO ANNIE. Yeh, cuz that ud make her stockin's fall down, wouldn't it?

(A slow take, all three looking at ADO ANNIE.)

AUNT ELLER. Now give me the other one.

ALI HAKIM. Which one?

(Picking it out of his case.)

Oh, you want to buy this one to match the other one?

AUNT ELLER. Whut do you mean do I want to *buy* it?

ALI HAKIM. I can let you have it for fifty cents – four bits.

AUNT ELLER. Do you want me to get that egg-beater and ram it down yer windpipe!

(She snatches the second one away.)

ALI HAKIM. All right – all right. Don't anybody want to buy something? How about you, Miss Laurey? Must be wanting something – a pretty young girl like you.

LAUREY. Me? Course I want sumpin. *(Working up to a kind of abstracted ecstasy.)* Want a buckle made outa shiny silver to fasten onto my shoes! Want a dress with lace. Want perfume, wanta be purty, wanta smell like a honeysuckle vine!

AUNT ELLER. Give her a cake of soap.

LAUREY. Want things I've heard of and never had before – a rubber-t'ard buggy, a cut-glass sugar bowl. Want things I cain't tell you about – not only to look at and hold in yer hands. Things to happen to you. Things so nice, if they ever did happen to you, yer heart ud quit beatin'. You'd fall down dead!

ALI HAKIM. I've got just the thing!

(He fishes into his satchel and pulls out a bottle.)

The Elixir of Egypt!

(He holds the bottle high.)

LAUREY. What's 'at?

ALI HAKIM. It's a secret formula, belonged to Pharaoh's daughter!

AUNT ELLER. *(Leaning over and putting her nose to it.)* Smellin' salts!

ALI HAKIM. *(Snatching it away.)* But a special kind of smelling salts. Read what it says on the label: "Take a deep breath and you see everything clear." That's what

(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"]