

## Prologue

A Man describes how musical theatre has changed over the years - from the Gershwins and Cole Porter to Elton John. He speaks about how he enjoys listening to show tunes when he's feeling blue. Today's delight, *The Drowsy Chaperone*, a story of "Mix-ups, mayhem and a gay wedding!" The Man plays a record beginning the **Overture**, and he sets the scene.

## Scene One: Tottendale's Entrance Hall - Morning

Mrs. Tottendale and Underling prepare for a wedding. Perpetually confused, Mrs. Tottendale wonders why she is wearing her **Fancy Dress** as the wedding guests arrive. Included are Robert - the Bridegroom; Janet - the bride; George - the Best Man; Victor Feldzieg - a producer; Kitty - an aspiring leading lady; Aldolpho - a romantic; two Gangsters posing as pastry chefs; Trix - an aviatrix; and Janet's Drowsy Chaperone.

Robert toasts his bride-to-be sans alcohol due to the prohibition. Before the group can properly celebrate, George boisterously enforces that Robert cannot see Janet before the wedding. He insists the now inebriated Chaperone do her job; meanwhile, Robert and Janet sneak off. Kitty attempts to convince Mr. Feldzieg that she could replace Janet as his leading lady. As the Man narrates the real-life inspiration for Kitty and Feldzieg, the two gangsters approach. They inform Feldzieg that their boss, his investor, would not think too kindly of Janet marrying and leaving his show. Feldzieg contemplates how he may stop the wedding.

## Scene Two: Robert's Room - Morning

Robert attempts to talk himself out of his **Cold Feet** as George enters, sharing that the minister has canceled and he has to find a new one for the ceremony. While Robert and George dance, the Man describes Percy Hyman, the original actor who played Robert. George suggests Robert go roller skating to calm his wedding nerves and hands him a blindfold in case he runs into Janet. The Man picks the record needle up as a phone call interrupts George's singing; he returns to the record without answering the phone.

## Scene Three: Tottendale's Pool - Early Afternoon

Janet sits poolside, hounded by reporters. Feldzieg enters, begging her to stay with the Follies, but she declines, saying she no longer wants to **Show Off**. The Man gives a snapshot of Jane Roberts's bio, the woman who originated Janet's role. Meanwhile, Feldzieg tries to parse out how to get Janet to remain in the Follies with the Chaperone, Kitty, and the Gangsters. As Aldolpho enters the plot, we get a brief lowdown from the Man about Roman Bartelli, the actor who played Aldolpho. Feldzieg hatches a plan to turn Aldolpho against Robert by having him seduce Janet.

#### **Scene Four: Entrance Hall - Afternoon**

The Gangsters have supplied alcohol for the party, and Mrs. Tottendale and Underling have to devise a system of code words for drink orders to evade suspicion of alcohol distribution during prohibition. Hilarity sets in as the code word for a Vodka drink gets immediately confused, while the Man describes the use of scenes to move from one musical number to another.

#### **Scene Five: Janet's Bridal Suite - Afternoon**

Janet and the Chaperone discuss the uncertainties of marriage as the Man describes the stage presence of Beatrice Stockwell, the woman embodying the Drowsy Chaperone. Janet, feeling unfulfilled by a lack of advice from the Chaperone, is suddenly subjected to a drunken melee of inspiration from her.. She sings to the dreariness of life we're subjected to **As We Stumble Along**. Unclear if Robert even loves her, Janet sneaks away from the Chaperone in search of him. As the Chaperone waits in the Bridal Suit, Aldolpho rushes in, mistaking her for Janet. Eager to receive love, the Chaperone lets Aldolpho believe she is the bride. Considering she is still in a drunken stupor, he feels he should ensure she knows his name - **Aldolpho**. The two fall into bed together as the Man explains the appeal of theatrical romance.

#### **Scene Six: Tottendale's Garden - Afternoon**

Janet finds Robert in the garden, still blindfolded. While he can't see her, she pretends to be a French woman named Mimi in the hope of eliciting honest answers from him. While sharing how they met on a cruise ship, Robert recounts falling, saying he's been an **Accident Waiting to Happen** since meeting Janet. They kiss, and Janet promptly slaps Robert for kissing someone who wasn't her ... even though it was. The Man shares his prediction that everything will work out just fine.

#### **Scene Eight: Tottendale's Salon - Afternoon**

Feldzieg waits for Aldolpho while Kitty tries again to prove that she is just as talented as Janet - unsuccessfully. The Gangsters arrive, eager to deliver a beating to Feldzieg. Their attempts are curtailed when Feldzieg compliments their pizzazz and prompts a performance of the **Toledo Surprise**, the name of the wailing Feldzieg was about to receive. He offers the Gangsters contracts as Kitty's backup dancers when Aldolpho enters with the Chaperone, announcing that the wedding is off. It is pointed out to Aldolpho that he has not actually seduced the bride but her chaperone - he is crushed. It seems a moot point as Janet enters, calling off the wedding due to Robert's infidelity with Mimi (Janet). The whole group sings and dances to **Toledo Surprise**.

#### **Scene Nine: Intermission Monologue**

In lieu of an intermission, the Man tells us how much he dislikes intermissions. On to act two...

#### **Scene Eleven: Act II Intro Monologue**

The Man sets the scene for us as Janet mourns her wedding day.

### **Scene Twelve: Courtyard - Afternoon**

Janet sits in Tottendale's courtyard, singing her **Bride's Lament** about having to let Robert go until she realizes she doesn't need a man to make her happy. She experiences a minor theatrical breakdown as she debates whether she needs Robert's love or even wants her fans' admiration. As the Man receives another phone call, Janet is overcome by her love for Robert and decides to forgive him.

### **Scene Thirteen: Hallway - Late Afternoon**

Underling plans to move the wedding pews while the Man lifts the record needle so as not to be interrupted by the phone ringing. Tottendale decides to leave the wedding arrangements in place. She is under the impression that you can't trust a bride's emotions on her wedding day. Mrs. Tottendale shares with Underling how difficult it is to share your life with someone but how **Love Is Always Lovely**. Again, the Man receives a phone call; this time, he chooses to tear the phone from the wall before returning to his record.

### **Scene Fourteen: Janet's Bridal Suite - Late Afternoon**

The Man gives his opinion on Mrs. Tottendale and Underling's performance as the Chaperone announces to Janet that she intends to marry Aldolpho. It appears Mrs. Tottendale and Underling had a similar inclination as they announce their intention to marry. Robert comes to Janet, begging her for forgiveness and Janet concedes that she is Mimi. Her uncertainty in marrying Robert is only exacerbated as Feldzieg begs Janet to reconsider her marriage. Janet turns to the Chaperone for guidance. As she gives her advice, however, Aldolpho drops his cane, making her message unclear. This has become a moment in the record that fascinates the Man. He evaluates the possibilities of what she could be saying in the context of his own failed marriage, concluding that it is better to live while you can than leave while you can. Regardless of the Chaperone's true sentiment, Janet agrees to marry Robert. Now that Janet won't be returning to the Follies, the Gangsters return to threaten Feldzieg. He instead offers Kitty as his headliner with a mind-reading act. For her first trick, she "reads" his mind, offering a marriage proposal which she accepts. George encourages the ladies to get themselves ready for what will now be a group wedding.

### **Scene Fifteen: Tottendale's Garden - Sunset**

As **Wedding Bells** chime, the Brides and their Grooms prepare for wedded bliss. George remembers that he forgot to hire a new minister just as Trix, the Aviatix, appears. Now, with a "ship" captain available to perform the ceremonies and a plane to deliver them all to Rio for their honeymoons, the couples are free to say **I Do, I Do In The Sky**. Just as the lovers are about to land in Rio, the power in the Man's apartment goes out, stopping the record in its tracks. The

Man's superintendent comes in to throw his breaker. When the power comes back on, the record picks up where it left off, surprising the super. Before leaving, she shares with the Man that she enjoys musicals, too.

### **Scene Sixteen: Wrap Up**

Due to the power outage, the Man feels robbed of the musical's final moments. Still, the newlyweds and the Man perform their **Finale Ultimo** before bidding us adieu.