

CHARLIE and WILSON

I - 1 - 4

I - 1 - 5

– you’ll meet her later.

COMPANY

(Chanting)

THERE’S NO BUSINESS LIKE SHOW BUSINESS,
THERE’S NO BUSINESS LIKE SHOW BUSINESS,
THERE’S NO BUSINESS LIKE SHOW BUSINESS
LIKE NO BUSINESS I KNOW!

(Singing)

THERE’S NO BUSINESS LIKE SHOW BUSINESS
LIKE NO BUSINESS I KNOW.
TRAV’LING THROUGH THE COUNTRY IS SO THRILLING,
STANDING OUT IN FRONT ON OP’NING NIGHTS,
SMILING AS YOU WATCH THE BENCHES FILLING
AND THERE’S YOUR BILLING OUT THERE IN LIGHTS.
IN LIGHTS!

THERE’S NO PEOPLE LIKE SHOW PEOPLE,
THEY SMILE WHEN THEY ARE LOW.
EVEN WITH A TURKEY THAT YOU KNOW WILL FOLD,
YOU MAY BE STRANDED OUT IN THE COLD,
STILL YOU WOULDN’T CHANGE IT FOR A SACK OF GOLD.
LET’S GO ON WITH THE SHOW,
LET’S GO ON WITH THE...

(Music holds as CHARLIE calls to the ROUSTABOUTS.)

CHARLIE

Set up Scene One – the Wilson Arms Hotel in Cincinnati, Ohio!

(He turns to the COMPANY who are slow to move.)

And step on it!

(The ROUSTABOUTS go about setting the scenery for:)

Scene 1: The Front Lawn of the Wilson Arms Hotel in Cincinnati, Ohio

(A sign, a porch and a door. The year is 1888. The COMPANY completes the song.)

THE COMPANY

(Exhausted, in rhythm.)

(Inhale!)

(Exhale!)

LET’S GO ON WITH THE SHOW!

(Applause segue into:)

MUSIC 1A: OPENING PLAYOFF

(FOSTER WILSON, the salty, bespectacled proprietor of the hotel appears from inside, breathing fire.)

WILSON

What the hell’s goin’ on out here?

(MAC, the prop man, aided by the COWBOYS and INDIANS, has entered carrying rifles and shooting stands.)

What’re all you people doin’ clutterin’ up my lawn? And what the Sam Hill are all those guns for? You expectin’ an armed uprising or something?

CHARLIE

I’m Charlie Davenport, general manager of Buffalo Bill’s Wild West Show and I haven’t got time to talk to you right now. We’re here to arrange a shooting match.

WILSON

What “shooting match” are you talking about?

CHARLIE

Between Frank Butler and your best local shot.

WILSON

Look here, mister – this is my hotel! See that sign up there? It says “Wilson!” I’m Wilson! This is also my lawn and you ain’t holding no damn shooting match on it!

CHARLIE

This sure is your lucky day, Mr. Wilson, ’cuz we are also gonna be booking ten of your best rooms.

WILSON

Are you out of your head? I just had Pawnee Bill and his Far East Show stayin’ here and all they did was chase women up and down my front stairs. And on horseback!

CHARLIE

Our folks’d never dream of doing that, Mr. Wilson. They’re too refined. They’d do it on your back stairs. C’mon, Mr. Wilson, what’ve you got to lose?

WILSON

Spoons, towels, soap, bath mats, salt shakers – whatever’s not nailed down. For the last time, mister – get offa my lawn!

(He disappears into his hotel.)

CHARLIE

Mr. Wilson – Mr. Wilson – !

(He follows him into the hotel.)

MUSIC 1B: DOLLY’S ENTRANCE

(DOLLY and WINNIE enter, followed by TOMMY who struggles under and is hidden behind the weight of several suitcases. DOLLY, wearing an extravagant hat with a complete stuffed bird on top, stops when she sees the hotel.)

DOLLY

With all the deluxe hotels in Cincinnati, wouldn’t you know we’d end up in something like this?