

(VICKI)

Harold told me you boys are rollers at the mill. That's wonderful. Of course I still don't know what rollers do. I hardly know what Harold does. It's all steel to me.

HAROLD

Look at her. She's a piece of Dresden china. She'd break into a million pieces.

VICKI

GOD, I LOVE THAT MAN.
 BUT LATELY HE'S BEEN WORKING TOO HARD.
 I KEEP TELLING HIM HOW WE
 SHOULD TAKE A FEW WEEKS IN MAUI
 AND WELL FEEL THE BREEZE AND SAMPLE THE POI
 AND GO SEE DON HO AND I'LL SAY
 OH BOY, HOW I LOVE YOU, HAROLD.
 I HIT THE JACKPOT WITH HARRY.
 HE'S A GEM. HE'S A BEAUT.
 HE CUTE IN A SUIT AND HE LOVES ME TO BOOT.
 I'M TELLING YOU -

VICKI

YOU GOTTA LOVE THAT MAN.
 LOVE THAT MAN.
 LOVE THAT MAN
 LOVE THAT MAN

DAVE & MALCOLM

LOVE THAT MAN.
 GOTTA LOVE THAT MAN.
 YOU REALLY GOTTA LOVE THAT MAN.

Dance Hall Underscore #1

Orchestra

JERRY

Malcolm, dance with Mrs. Nichols while we have a word with Mr. Nichols.

MALCOLM

I only know how to follow, Mrs. Nichols.

VICKI

(Always ready for a good time)

That's all right, Malcolm, I only know how to lead.

(NATHAN and VICKI will continue to dance back and forth during the following.)

HAROLD

What is this all about? I know you don't like me but I hope you'll consider my wife's feelings.

START

JERRY

We need your help, Mr. Nichols.

HAROLD

I'm sorry but at this point in my life I'm trying to help myself. It's sink or swim time and I'm drowning. It's every man for himself.

JERRY

We want to learn to dance. We need a teacher.

HAROLD

Dance? Wouldn't you be better off looking for a job like I am?

JERRY

This is a job, sort of. Were gonna strip. We want you teach us.

HAROLD

Strip? Like a Chippendale's thing?

JERRY

More like a Buffalo version. More realistic, more ... masculine! Over at Tony Giordano's place, we figure we can make 50 thou. One night only.

HAROLD

But you can't dance.

JERRY

That's where you come in.

HAROLD

Now I've heard everything!

JERRY

What's so funny?

HAROLD

I can just see you, the Three Stooges, prancing around Buffalo with your willies out. What are you gonna call yourselves? The Dancing Dicks? Peanut size, I'm sure. Bring your own telescope.

JERRY

I knew you wouldn't help us. We'll do it without you.

HAROLD

No, you won't. You won't do it at all!

JERRY

Why not, Mr. Nichols? Just why the hell not?

HAROLD

I'll tell you, Lukowski. 'Cause you're too thin, he's too fat, he's too dumb and you're all too ugly.

JERRY

(Calling to VICKI)

Mrs. Nichols — !

HAROLD

No! It'll kill her. Who am I kidding? It'll kill me.

(He starts to break down.)

JERRY

(Unprepared for this)

Hey!

HAROLD

You don't know what it's like, what I'm going through. I was somebody before this happened.

JERRY

(Gently)

We know, Mr. Nichols. So were we.

HAROLD

I have an MBA from the Wharton School of Business. I can't take the first thing that comes along. But you! You're kids. You think it's all a game. I can't run out and steal a car like you, Lukowski, and go to jail. I've got a standard of living. Responsibilities.

DAVE

So do we. Tell him about Nath.

(To HAROLD)

Mr. Nichols, Jerry'll lose joint custody of his son if he doesn't come up with his share of money. You don't have kids. The way you love your missus is how Jerry loves Nath, maybe only even more.

JERRY

Why'd you have to go telling him that? He doesn't care.

HAROLD

Fifty thousand, you said?

b - Vichi's Cha-Cha

Orchestra

JERRY

(Seizing the opportunity)

Fifty thou, easy.

HAROLD

(Wavering)

It's not my kind of dancing. It's just ass-wiggling. Anybody can ...

(He gives his version of a pelvic thrust.)

JERRY

(Pouncing)

If it was just ass-wiggling we wouldn't need your help.

HAROLD

What if someone finds out? I've got a reputation to protect.

JERRY

You've also got a stack of bills and a wife who likes to go places, Harold.

HAROLD

Harold?

JERRY

(Blithely)

That's all right, you can call me Jerry.

HAROLD

I'm a son of a bitch to take orders from.

JERRY

We know that. You should have heard some of the names we had for you.

DAVE

Horrible Harold. Harold Hitler.

JERRY

Not now, Dave. Now how many other guys you figure we need to put on a good show?

HAROLD

Minimum six, unless you want us looking at your skinny legs all night.

END

(Other MEN are dancing by with their partners. HAROLD is already sizing them up for their potential as performers.)

HAROLD

There's a possibility. Ask him if wants to strip.

JERRY

You ask him.