

MAGNOLIA

[...]

He kin come home as late as kin be,
Home widout him ain't no home to me,
Can't help lovin' dat man of mine!

(There is a pause)

FRANK

Whaddaya say, boss?

JIM

Lousy! What kind of a coon song do you call that?
(to MAGNOLIA)

You don't sing bad - but that song -

MAGNOLIA

(her temper aroused)

That song is the most beautiful song I know. And if
you don't like it, I'm sorry for you.

JIM

You're sorry for me? Say!

FRANK

Say, Mr. Greene, this little girl ain't so bad.

Can't you use her?

JIM

I can't afford to take chances on amachooors with a two thousand
dollar production. Now wait a minute, will ya, lemme think!

(He stands pondering the problem and running his fingers
through his hair. He looks MAGNOLIA over appraisingly)

Her poisenality is all right - if we could only teach
her some up-to date numbers.

JAKE

Well, that song she sang ain't so bad, boss. Ya know,
we could trick that - like this -

(He plays and sings in ragtime tempo)

Da da da de dum dum dum

Dum dum dum de dum dum dum!

FRANK (eagerly)

Oh, you mean rag it!

JAKE

Yeah! 'Course, we gotta change the words too, see, and then,
near the finish, put in a couple o' gags, like this...

Dum dum dum de dum dum dum - catch line!

Dum dum dum de dum dum dum - 'nother catch line!

See what I mean?

JIM

Say, that's all right!

FRANK

Come on, Nolie, try it this way.

MAGNOLIA

(bewildered)

How do you mean?

FRANK

Follow Jake.

(JAKE and MAGNOLIA start the song together -
but he soon leaves her far behind)

JIM

(interrupting)

No - no!!! Rag it, he means.

FRANK

Rag it, honey, look...

(He sings to show her)

Fish gotta swim, birds gotta fly,

Fish gotta swim, birds gotta fly!

MAGNOLIA

(willing to try)

Oh, I know! Alright, go ahead.

(JAKE plays. As MAGNOLIA sings in ragtime, FRANK
starts to dance like mad)

FRANK

(dancing frantically)

What do you say, Boss, what do you say?

JIM

All right! FRANK

Does she get the job?

JIM

Sure!

FRANK

Great!

(FRANK falls to the stage dancing so fast and continues
twitching his head, body and legs with the music until
the curtain falls)