

# Deadpan

by  
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PORTER LINES:

PORTR

Mr. Cordell? Hi, I'm a real big fan of your music.

STANLEY

Well thank you, son.

Holzkopf, in his wandering, finds the drum set in the bandstand and takes a seat on the throne, inspecting it.

PORTR

I know I just carry luggage around this place all day -- but someday, it's been my dream, sir, to... ah, it's a silly thing, really.

STANLEY

Go on. What is it?

PORTR

Well, someday I'd really like to carry luggage in and out of coalmines, sir.

STANLEY

Coalmines?

PORTR

Well sure. It's just I don't have the musical talent.

STANLEY

Musical talent? For what, exactly?

PORTR

To be a Coal Porter, sir.

Holzkopf accidentally plays a STING on the drums. Too embarrassed to apologize vocally, he gets up and removes himself from the bandstand.

STANLEY

Well son, we all have to start somewhere.

Stanley turns to go, but a subtle lean from Porter lets him know he's expecting a tip. He pads his pockets, realizes he gave all his money to Maître D'.

STANLEY (cont'd)

Sorry kiddo, just ran out.

Stanley leaves him.

PORTR

...Damn!

BETTY & BLONDIE LINES:

Betty and Blondie take their bows  
and retreat to stage L.

BLONDIE

You gotta watch those top notes. I can't keep  
lifting your pitch for you.

BETTY

Excuse me?

BLONDIE

You were flat. Again.

BETTY

Flat, huh? How do you think you sound when you  
substitute warming up for half a pack of Lucky  
Strikes?

BLONDIE

I've been in this business a lot longer than  
you, kid, so don't get high and mighty with me.

BETTY

Kid?

BLONDIE

Oh that's right... to be a kid you'd have to  
have parents. So what would that make you,  
then?

Sal enters from far house L.

SAL

Ladies! Ladies!

BETTY

Don't you dare.

Betty and Blondie stare each other  
down.

Sal arrives stage R, but stops  
short when he sees there's  
something going on.

BLONDIE

(smirks)

Heh. You're not worth it.

Blondie crosses to stage R.

BETTY

That's funny.

(Blondie stops short)

You... telling me about worth.

BLONDIE

Why you little --

Blondie lunges at Betty, but Sal intervenes and pulls her away.

BENNETT, HOLZKOPF, MAÎTRE D' LINES:

Holzkopf ascends the stage to meet Bennett.

BENNETT

Doctor...?

HOLZKOPF

Holzkopf. And you are?

BENNETT

Special A-- uh, Bennett. Emma Bennett...  
purveyor of...

Bennett's eyes race around the restaurant, looking for something to help trigger an idea for a false identity. She sees someone's dinner plate.

BENNETT (cont'd)

Meat.

HOLZKOPF

Excuse me?

BENNETT

Fine meats and sausages. How do you do?

Bennett and Holzkopf shake hands.

HOLZKOPF

Oh, very well, thank you.

BENNETT

I understand a young lady had an unfortunate accident earlier.

Maître D' walks behind them,  
crossing from L to R.

HOLZKOPF

Well, unfortunate, yes. But I fear it was no accident.

BENNETT

You mean you think someone poisoned Blondie Townsend?

Maître D' stops short.

HOLZKOPF

That is my professional opinion, yes.

BENNETT

Thank you, Doctor.

Holzkopf exits, off L.

MAÎTRE D'

*Au jus!* Excuse me, *Mademoiselle*, but did you say ...poisson?

BENNETT

Poison, yes.

MAÎTRE D'

*Oh! Non, non, non -- les poissons! Les poissons!*

BENNETT

What is it, man?

MAÎTRE D'

Just before miss Blondie went on to perform her... final number... I was instructed to bring her a bottle of champagne.

BENNETT

You were? Who ordered it?

MAÎTRE D'

*Monsieur Magnus. He wanted it to be a surprise.*

Magnus enters abruptly from far house L, trailed hotly by Stanley.

STANLEY

Not so fast, Magnus. I want some answers!

BENNETT

Where is he?

MAGNUS

I've already told you, old boy, I don't know any more than you do!

MAÎTRE D'

There, *Mademoiselle*.