

**OUTLINING LAB – STEP #5 – HANDOUT #2
AN OUTLINE OF ACT ONE OF GYPSY**

Gypsy: An Outline of Act One

Scene 1; A tacky vaudeville theatre in the early 1920's. Uncle Jocko tosses the stage moms of some untalented children performers out of rehearsal for his kiddie show. But one of the stage mothers, Rose, coaches her two kids from the back of the theatre, interrupting Jocko and instructing the conductor herself. Rose then threatens to expose the fact that Uncle Jocko has fixed the contest in favor of a young girl whose older sister has most likely done special favors for him.

Scene 2; Later that night in the kitchen of her family's Seattle home. Rose complains to her two kids, Baby June and Louise, how cheap Uncle Jacko is, and shares her dreams for a whole new act, complete with scenery, costumes and chorus boys. Rose's father, Pop, enters, and chides Rose into filling the children's heads with pipe dreams. Rose sends the children to bed, insisting that with a little financial assistance from Pop, she can move to Los Angeles and make those dreams come true, so that they don't end up like Pop, with nothing to show for their lives but a gold retirement plaque. Pop doesn't buy into her dreams and leaves her alone in the kitchen. Rose snatches the plaque, determined to sell it and get her girls to Los Angeles.

Scene 3; On the road to Los Angeles. Rose, June and Louise hitchhike to Los Angeles, picking up some tap-dancing urchins along the way.

Scene 4; A vaudeville theatre in Los Angeles. Rose employs every trick in the book to try to convince theatre manager, Mr. Weber, to book her kids' act in his theatre. It's not until the concession salesman, Herbie, endorses the kids that Mr. Weber says he'll think about it. Left alone with Herbie, Rose wonders why Herbie is being so helpful. When Rose finds out that Herbie was once an agent and that he's not married and that he likes kids, she wonders whether the two of them couldn't help each other in life as well as in the theatre. Mr. Weber returns, having decided to book Rose's act; and Herbie decides he'll act as their agent.

Scene 5; Onstage at the vaudeville theatre. We see June's act, complete with the urchins and Louise playing Newsboys and Baby June in the gaudiest, fanciest richest costume Rose has been able to whip up. They conclude with a patriotic Uncle Sam number starring Baby June as a baton-twirling Statue of Liberty. It tours city after city, and the children performers grow up into young adult performers before our very eyes.

Scene 6; A plaster-cracked hotel room. An incessant alarm clock awakens Louise. Louise resets the alarm to awaken the boys who are all asleep on a mattress on the floor. Louise gets up, bright and chipper; the boys are grumpy. June enters from an adjoining hotel room that Rose is awake. June and the boys complain about Louise waking them on the one day they don't have to travel and can sleep in. Suddenly Rose bursts into the room with a small birthday cake and the

boys leap to their feet, yelling, “Surprise! Happy birthday, Louise!” One of the boys, Yonkers, wonders why there are only ten candles on the cake (same as last year) and Rose says, “As long as we have this act, no one is over twelve!” and leaves them with leftover chow mein for breakfast. Yonkers and the boys give Louise some presents which they have either made or shoplifted. Louise is particularly touched by the books given to her by the best-looking boy, Tulsa. Rose comes back into the room and dismisses her concern that Herbie’s not in his room. But she presents her idea for a new act, which came to her in a dream. It features a dancing cow. The hotel manager, Kringelein, knocks on the door and Rose tries to dismiss him. But while she describes the cow act, Kringelein slips in through the adjoining room, confronts her about cooking on the premises, boarding pets, and too many children. The kids try to hide the pets, but when a lamb pops out of the bathroom, Mr. Kringelein explodes and threatens to evict Rose. But Rose attracts a crowd of hotel guests by shrieking that Kringelein is making passes at her, and Kringelein flees. Herbie comes running to the rescue. He doesn’t buy Rose’s antics for a second, and instead introduces a Mr. Goldstone, who has agreed to book the act on the Orpheum Circuit. Rose explodes with gratitude and excitement, offering Mr. Goldstone eggrolls, footstools and chow mein.

Louise, meanwhile, has been forgotten and consoles herself by singing a wistful birthday song to the lamb and other pets.

Scene 7; A gaudy Chinese restaurant. June, Louise, Rose and Herbie finish dinner. Rose sends the girls back to the hotel room to go to bed early so they’ll be fresh for an audition at the Palace Theatre in the morning. Herbie chastises Rose when she dumps both leftovers and silverware into her purse, then wonders if Rose is ever going to quit stalling and marry him. She says she needs to think first of her girls. Herbie wonders how much longer he can wait, and fears if too much more time passes, he’ll leave. Rose says he’ll never get away from her, even if he tries.

Scene 8; Onstage at the Palace Theatre in New York. A secretary, Miss Cratchitt, tells her boss Mr. Grantziger, via telephone in his office in the back of the theatre, that there’s a little problem with the scenery. Rose and Herbie briefly ingratiate themselves with Grantziger. June, Louise and the boys audition their dancing cow act. Miss Cratchitt informs June that Grantziger has seen enough, but Rose barrels the act onwards into its finale, including a train heading from the farm to Broadway. June’s character has a corny change of heart and decides to stay home on the farm to stay with her friend the cow. Their unrestrained patriotic climax is received well by Grantziger, who tells Miss Cratchitt to send everyone up to his office to sign contracts.

Scene 9; Outside Grantziger’s Office. June and Louise amuse themselves at a piano, waiting for the negotiations with Grantziger to conclude. Miss Cratchitt asks Louise how old she is; Louise says she’s nine years old. Herbie and Rose come out of Grantziger’s office, unhappy that their contract is for the Variety Theatre, way down on Twelfth Street. Miss Cratchitt advises them to sign the contract because Grantziger’s is willing to pay for June to take a year off from the act to get some formal training, provided that Rose stays away. Rose can’t imagine taking a year off from doing the act, and erupts that June doesn’t need anyone else’s help except her own mother’s. She storms out to confront Grantziger for daring to take her baby away from her, trailed by Miss Cratchitt and Herbie. Left alone with Louise, June expresses amazement that Louise is never jealous. Louise says she isn’t jealous because she doesn’t believe she has any of

June's talent. June expresses sadness that Rose's refusal of Grantziger's offer might be robbing her of a true opportunity to be someone. June thinks that the act is terrible, and often wishes that Rose would marry Herbie and leave her alone. Herbie comes back with a disappointing contract, saying he'll get the girls a good booking one day. He leaves the sisters alone as they contemplate how much nicer things would be if their mother would just get married.

Scene 10; A theatre alley in Buffalo. Herbie catches Tulsa practicing a dance routine with a broom for a partner and admires his footwork. Louise joins them and says Tulsa's had time to practice in between all the two-week layoffs they've suffered recently. Herbie tries to keep up Tulsa's spirits, expresses his growing fondness for Rose, then leaves Tulsa and Louise alone together. Louise reveals she's been watching Tulsa rehearse for a team act and coaxes Tulsa into telling her what his dream partner would be like. Tulsa demonstrates his dreams for a debonair dance act with a pretty girl. Louise dances near him, then with him, right up until their call to get into the cow costume. They race into the theatre.

Scene 11; A train terminal in Omaha. Rose is irked that two of the boys have announced their intentions to leave the act simply on the grounds they've grown too old for it. Herbie offers to increase their salary, to which Rose responds, "Increase what salary?" Rose angrily lets them go. But when the boys announce the other two boys are also leaving, and June isn't anywhere to be seen, and Louise enters with a letter from June, Rose puts together all the pieces and is stunned. The boys tell Herbie that June and Tulsa eloped and have taken off on their own. The boys have realized they're washed up without June, and accept Herbie's offer of train tickets. They leave Rose alone with Herbie and Louise. Herbie offers to go back into the concession business and marry Rose. Numbly, she accepts. But then, to Louise's shock and increasing fear, Rose turns all her attention to Louise. She tears June's letter in half and announces her new plans. She is determined more than ever to make her child a star; only it won't be June, it will be Louise, and in the end, everything is going to come up roses.