

Pourquoi  
Chère mad'moiselle [NGANA *curtseys*, JEROME *bows*.]  
Est-ce-que  
Parceque  
Vous m'aimez. [*Music stops*.]

HENRY *the native servant enters from House piece L. crosses to C. level with truck R. he speaks as he enters.*

HENRY. Allez-vous! Vite! Dans la maison!

NGANA. Non! Henri. [*She jumps off table sits on chair L., crosses arms in defiance.*]

JEROME. Moi je reste ici. [*Delivering an ultimatum runs behind truck R.*]

HENRY. Oh oui? Nous verrons bien . . .

HENRY *runs behind truck R. Gets Jerome by the seat of the pants and the scruff of his neck and proceeds to run him off stage L. JEROME manages to grab the ball D.L. as he goes, as soon as he starts to move he yells at the top of his voice. NGANA runs after them protesting, she picks up the doll and parasol as she exits L.*

JEROME [*As he is grabbed by HENRY*]. Ai!!!

HENRY [*As he runs JEROME off*]. Viens, Petit moustique!!!

JEROME. Ai!!!

HENRY. Viens, Petits moustique.

NGANA [*As she runs off*]. Non Henri . . . Non Henri . . . Non . . .

NELLIE [*Off stage L.*]. What's this one.

EMILE [*Off stage L.*]. That is frangipani.

NELLIE [*Off stage L.*]. But what a colour.

EMILE [*Off stage L.*]. You will find many more flowers out here.

NELLIE *appears from behind house piece U.L. crosses down to U.C. turns U.S. and looks around her. HENRY enters from house piece L. simultaneously crossing to small table R. with tray on which are set two Brandy glasses, coffee pot, bottle of brandy, sugar bowl, two demitasse, sugar tongs, this he sets on small table as EMILE DE BECQUE enters from U.L., crosses D.R. to him and says:*

Je servirai le cafe.

HENRY. Oui Monsieur.

EMILE. C'est tout.

HENRY. Oui Monsieur de Becque. [*Crosses L. and exits through house.*]

NELLIE [*Crossing D.C. level with EMILE*]. Well I'm just speechless . . .

EMILE *crosses to her.*

and that lunch! And wild chicken. I didn't know it was ever wild. Gosh I had no idea that people lived like this; right out in the middle of the Pacific Ocean.

NELLIE *turns L. crosses up to fountain as EMILE turns R. sits on chair L. commences to pour coffee. NELLIE places her cap and shoulder bag on fountain ledge U.L. and crosses D.L. to sit on bench.*

EMILE [*When NELLIE is seated*]. Sugar? [*Holding tongs in right hand.*]

NELLIE. Thanks.

EMILE. One?

NELLIE. Three. [*EMILE smiles, puts two lumps of sugar in cup.*] I know it's a big load for a demi tasse to carry . . . [*EMILE puts third lump of sugar in cup.*] all right I'm a hick . . . [*Rises and crosses C.*] . . . you know so many American words . . . Do you know what a hick is?

EMILE. A hick is one who lives in a stick.

NELLIE [*Corrects him*]. Sticks. Plural. The sticks.

EMILE. Pardon. The sticks. [*Picks up coffee cup, rises, crosses to NELLIE.*] I remember now. [*Hands NELLIE coffee cup.*]

NELLIE [*Coffee cup in hand crossing R.*]. How long did it take you to build up a plantation like this?

EMILE [*Ease R. to platform R. foot up on step*]. I came to the Pacific twenty-five years ago when I was a young man.

NELLIE [*Sits in chair R.*]. Emile, is it true that all the planters on these islands—are they all running away from something?

EMILE [*Sits in chair L.*]. Who is not running away from something? There are fugitives everywhere—Paris, New York, even in Small Rock—[*EMILE picks up coffee cup—as there is no response from NELLIE.*] where you come from.

NELLIE. Oh, Little Rock. [*She laughs.*]

EMILE. Little Rock. You know fugitives there?

NELLIE [*Rises, crosses L. to fountain, places her cup on ledge, takes a newspaper clipping from her handbag.*] I'll show you a picture of a Little Rock fugitive. [*Looks back over her shoulder.*] Small Rock. [*Crosses back to C.*]

EMILE rises, crosses to meet her. I got this clipping from my mother today.

EMILE [*Meeting her C., takes clipping*]. Ensign Nellie Forbush, Little Rock's own Florence Nightingale . . .

NELLIE. That was written by Mrs. Leeming, [*Explains to EMILE.*] the Social Editor. [*EMILE does not understand.*] She went to school with my mother. To read her, you'd think I'm practically the most important nurse in the entire navy, and that it's only a matter of time before I'll be a Lady Admiral.

EMILE. In this picture you do not look much like an Admiral.

NELLIE. Oh, that was taken before I knew what rain and heat and mud could do to your disposition. [*EMILE looks fixedly at her, she, embarrassed, cannot meet his gaze, turns and crosses L. level with small bench L.C.*] But it isn't rainy today. Gosh, it's beautiful here.

*Music No. 3.*

(*Music under scene*)

EMILE crosses D.R. NELLIE D.L.

Just look at that yellow sun. You know, I don't think we're at the end of the world like everyone else thinks. I can't work myself up to getting that low.

EMILE D.R. laughs. NELLIE sits on small bench D.L.

Do you think I'm crazy too? They all do over at the fleet hospital. [*Sits*]

*Music No. 4.*

“A COCKEYED OPTIMIST”

You know what they call me? Knucklehead Nellie.

EMILE is seated at the end of this line on R. chair of unit R.

I guess I am, but I just can't help it.

When the sky is a bright canary yellow  
I forget every cloud I've ever seen—  
So they call me a cockeyed optimist,  
Immature and incurably green! [*Rises, crosses R. to above L. chair.*]

I have heard people rant and rave and bellow  
That we're done and we might as well be dead—  
[*Leans on chair.*]

But I'm only a cockeyed optimist  
And I can't get it into my head.

I hear the human race is falling on it's face  
And hasn't very far to go,  
But every whippoorwill  
Is selling me a bill  
And telling me it just ain't so!