

Willie  
Ben

ACT I            THE SUNSHINE BOYS            23  
phones tapping on tin turtles" . . . tell him . . . Tell  
him.

CURTAIN

ACT ONE

SCENE 2

*The following Monday. A few minutes before eleven.*

*The stage is empty. Suddenly the bathroom door opens and WILLIE emerges. He is still wearing his slippers and the same pajamas, but instead of his bathrobe, he has made a concession to the occasion. He is wearing a double-breasted blue suit jacket, buttoned, and he is putting a handkerchief in his pocket. He looks in the mirror, brushes back his hair. He shuffles over to the window and looks out. There is a knock on the door. WILLIE turns and stares at it. He doesn't move. There is another knock and then we hear BEN'S voice.*

START → BEN'S VOICE. Uncle Willie. It's Ben.

WILLIE. Ben? Is that you?

BEN'S VOICE. Yes. Open up. (WILLIE starts to door, then stops.)

WILLIE. . . . You're alone or he's with you?

BEN. I'm alone.

WILLIE. (Nods.) Wait a minute. (The latch is locked again and again he has trouble getting it open.) Wait a minute.

BEN. Slide it, don't push it.

WILLIE. Wait a minute. I'll push it.

BEN. DON'T PUSH IT! SLIDE IT!

WILLIE. Wait a minute. (He gets it open and opens door. BEN walks in.) You're supposed to slide it.

BEN. I rushed like crazy. I didn't want him getting here before me. Did he call or anything?

WILLIE. Where's the *Variety*?

BEN. (*Taking off his coat.*) It's Monday, not Wednesday . . . Didn't you know it was Monday?

WILLIE. I remembered but I forgot.

BEN. What are you wearing? What is that? You look half-dressed.

WILLIE. Why, for him I should get *all* dressed?

BEN. Are you alright? Are you nervous or anything?

WILLIE. Why should *I* be nervous? *He* should be nervous. I don't get nervous.

BEN. Good.

WILLIE. Listen, I changed my mind. I'm not doing it.

BEN. *What?*

WILLIE. Don't get so upset. Everything is the same as before except I'm not doing it.

BEN. When did you decide this?

WILLIE. I decided it when you asked me.

BEN. No, you didn't. You told me you *would* do it.

WILLIE. Well, it was a bad decision. This time I made a good one.

BEN. Well, I'm sorry, you have to do it. I've already told C.B.S. that you would be rehearsing this week and more important, that man is on his way over here now and I'm not going to tell him that you called it off.

WILLIE. We'll leave him a note outside the door.

BEN. We're not leaving any notes . . . That's why I came here this morning, I was afraid you would try something like this . . . I'm going to stay until I think you're both acting like civilized human beings . . . and then when you're ready to rehearse, I'm going to leave you alone. Is that understood?

STOP → WILLIE. I'm sick. I woke up sick today.

BEN. No, you're not.

WILLIE. What are you, a doctor? You're an agent. I'm telling you I'm sick.

BEN. What's wrong?