

SCENE 1: IN THE 'GREEN ROOM'

We open on 2 characters: ANDY and BILL sitting hunched opposite each other on sofas nervously chatting in the hospitality room of a television game show. Between them sits a portable stereo which is off. The room is brightly lit and displays a range of drinks, snacks, and cosmetics. It's decorated with large mirrors and a prominent wall clock. In the background we can hear the muted sounds of a tv host; roars of laughter; music and applause. The 2 characters - BILL and ANDY - pause slightly whenever these onstage sounds intrude.

BILL:

(Looks up at clock)  
Looks like we're on in a few minutes. Are you ready?

ANDY:

As ready as I'll ever be...(Off: Roar of laughter) No. I think I feel sick, Bill. Y'know I think I just want to go home. (Panicking and babbling..) They were right. They said we weren't ready for this. We should've listened to them Bill. We should have practiced more. (Off: Roars of laughter) Bill - I'm not ready. Seriously, I'm not! I'm going to make a fool of myself...I really don't want to make a fool of myself on live national television, Bill...

BILL:

We are going out there to perform, because we are entertainers: We entertain people. We are Show People! And this is going to be our big break. We've never had a chance like this before, and we're going to take it! How long have I known you, Andy?

ANDY:

It certainly feels like a long time.

BILL:

A long time? It's been three years hasn't it Andy? Three years of 'the golden bandoliers': plugging away on stage; on the hard, mean streets; in the pubs and clubs - And you know what we're spent that time doing?

ANDY:

Getting ripped off?... and getting beaten up mostly.

BILL:

No!

ANDY:

Entertaining people?

BILL:

Exactamundo, my friend, Exactamundo. And *this* will be our chance to prove ourselves: if we win this we'll get a contract and we'll be famous too! Our years of trying and failing and trying again were NOT a waste of time! This is where we earn respect from everyone that dissed 'the golden bandoliers' and put us down!

ANDY:

A-and beat us up.

BILL:

Yeah, that too.(a beat)  
Ok. So let's see if we've got what it takes. (Takes out flash cards from pocket and starts flipping through them:) Let's try an easy one as a warm up: Let's sing the a capella number: meee-meee meee...  
laa-laaa laaa..

Andy and Bill sing : they have an elaborate routine to go with the number : It's La vida Loca.

BILL:  
 Razzle dazzle! Now let's practice  
 one of our ad lib numbers.  
 (shuffles through the flash cards)  
 ... ah! here's one for you:  
 "communicate the element of fire  
 through the medium of mime" They  
 had this on a couple of weeks ago  
 so they'll probably not do this  
 one again, but it's good to loosen  
 us up...ready to give it your  
 best? (starts CD player)

Andy jumps around the stage wildly, giving some idea of the  
 element of 'fire' & humming to himself.

BILL:  
 See Andy!? You are HOT! I'm ready,  
 and you, my friend, are READY! You  
 are a GOD of talent! Don't let me  
 down out there, pard. I'll be  
 countin' on you!

ANDY:  
 (still miming, and humming  
 the nature of fire.)  
 Yeah! I'm ready! Burnin' up...

A busy, efficient producer (wearing headphones and carrying  
 a walkie talkie and a clipboard) knocks briefly, and  
 immediately enters, gestures and bustles them out of the  
 green room. The sound increases through the open door and  
 while the door is open we hear the TV ANNOUNCER:

TV ANNOUNCER:  
 (OFF)  
 ..And now please give a warm round  
 of applause to our next  
 contestants to our show: Mister  
 Andy Curtiss and Mister Bill  
 Baxter!

The band plays cliched sixties game show intro music as the  
 applause peaks Bill followed by Andy follow the producer out  
 through the door (Andy still moving as if miming 'fire'),  
 and the stage fades to black.

## SCENE 2: ON STAGE, THE GAMESHOW

The stage lights rise to a bright and even light. It is decorated as in a gaudy 'American Idol' type show: there are big spangly stars, podiums and a central raised stage area. The middle of the stage backcurtain shows a banner with the name of the show: 'StarMaker: it could be you!'. Already on stage is the show's host, DANNY, wearing a blue shiny suit and a grin. He is a an ironic self-parody. ANDY and BILL are standing at a podium side by side. Off to one side of the stage is a STAGE HAND holding a board down in front of himself: we can see the blank back of it, but not the front.

DANNY:

Welcome back star-searchers to 'StarMaker', where we find the stars of tomorrow from the street performers of today. If you've just joined us, Andy and Bill - the 'golden bandoliers'- are our current contestants and our next round is called 'one song to the tune of another'. Let me explain it like this: If a song is a like a bowl of cherries then this game is going to be like making cherry jam.

(Stage Hand raises board: we see the word: 'APPLAUSE' written on it) Okay, now we know how to play "One song to the tune of another" then let's get started! Our contestants will be scored on our audience's appreciation. Let's have a big hand for 'the Golden Bandoliers!' (Gestures: raises arms to provoke a reaction).

I would like you to sing 'Anarchy in the UK' to the tune of 'How much is that doggie in the window'.

(Andy and Bill sing. When they finish, Danny starts applauding, and encouraging the audience to follow suit. The stage hand raises the board showing the word 'APPLAUSE')

Oooh, I'm afraid that was not really good enough to score more than .... three points. But if you can bark like seals to the tune of Beethovens' Fifth Symphony I'll give you a consolation point.

(The music starts and Andy and Bill bark like seals. After a moment..The stage hand raises the board)

Ok, that's enough! You've certainly earned your point.

DANNY:

Our next challenge is for just one of you (Andy points to himself) ..Your challenge is to sing 'while my guitar gently weeps' to the tune of 'daisy daisy'. If you can play air guitar while humming the axe solo, there'll be bonus points!

ANDY SINGS...

So audience! what do you think??  
Do they deserve FOUR points? FIVE points? Is that SIX whole points!?

Gestures: raises arms to encourage participation. The stage hand raises the board on SIX points.

Now we're coming to the part of the show where our contestants perform a piece of their own choosing. What music will you be playing for us Andy and Bill?

ANDY:

We'd like to sing a medley inspired by the work of Frank Sinatra - accompanied by the electric organ, the maracas, and the mouth organ.

BUSINESS: More silly dancing and singing. When it concludes, Andy and Bill bow, and we fade to black. The stage hand raises the APPLAUSE board.

SCENE 3: AFTER THE SHOW

The light increases to show the game show set again, but now more unevenly lit - it's much more natural lighting. The stage has been broken down somewhat: the banner showing 'StarMaker' is on the ground, The podiums have be moved and there are brooms, buckets and mops on the set. ANDY and BILL sit to the front of the stage.

BILL:

I can't understand how we could have lost all those points in the last round! We were doing great, weren't we? You did know that each wrong answer lost us a point, right?

ANDY:

My mind went blank, I told you that. Stop looking at me like that! Okay... so I got stressed out - it happens to everyone.

BILL:

And that's why we lost: we can't be stars if our minds go blank under pressure! You don't see Maria Carey freeze up like that at the MTV awards do you?

ANDY:

But that's all taped - this was live. Oh god, I looked like an idiot!: How humiliating! : everyone's going to laugh at me. I can't go home now: I'll have to change my name and leave town.

BILL:

I'm going to laugh at you Andy! We were in the lead! We could've been winners! This is what you did: (gives a stunned expression looking directly into a spotlight): uh, umm, uh...'I'll have to hurry you'... umm uh, 'what was the question again?'... humm... 'Robert!?' : 'what was Bob Dylan's real name : Robert! ha! Robert!?

ANDY:

Yeah!? Well Mr. Perfect Pitch: I've got news for you - You lost us points too. Loads of points! A-and your singing of Elton John in the style of a howler monkey was lame. It didn't sound *anything* like a monkey.

BILL:

(Ululates)

That's what they sound like. I'm not kidding: I saw it on TeeVee. (Continues to ululate)

ANDY:

Please stop. Can you PLEASE stop now.. I get it! Dammit Bill - you are such a jerk sometimes.

BILL:

(Stops ululating) Hey, ah, (silly italian voice) gettaouttahere!

ANDY:

Bill, I'm fed up with your crap. And I'm especially fed up of your attitude: you thinking that you're oh-so much better than everyone - I told you this show would be a mistake! But you were oh-so confident that we'd win... I didn't lose this competition: we were a team, y'know? We lost.

BILL:

Andy - what are you talking about?  
I look up to your talents... to  
your... talent.. to your stage  
presence... and you blew it. You  
froze during a performance.

ANDY:

(Angry)

Do you really not get it that  
much? D'you know why we never  
booked for any venues twice? Why  
we never make any money busking?  
Do you know why they chase us away  
- why they beat us up?

BILL:

You're exaggerating! We just need  
a good agent. And we've never had  
any good venues anyway! ...And  
nobody understands our music: we  
are aiming for a niche audience.  
I'd rather be appreciated by one  
true music lover that adored - and  
misunderstood- by a million fans.

ANDY:

I wouldn't! (a beat) Bill: let's  
be honest with ourselves: WE  
AREN'T ANY GOOD! They chase us  
away and beat us up because WE ARE  
TERRIBLE MUSICIANS. And y'know  
something else? YOU CANNOT SING!  
You sing out of tune, out of time,  
and in a silly voice. I thought it  
was just me but y'know - it's not!

BILL:

Whoa pardner, this is a lot to  
take in - What exactly are you  
telling me?

ANDY:

Andy! Can't you tell? I don't want  
to be in the band any more! Let's  
face it: We are terrible musicians  
and YOU SHOULD NOT SING EVER  
AGAIN.



BILL:

But you're half the act, Andy! I can't perform without you! *porco de deo*! Don't let my attitude - my ambition for our band- get in the way! Do you have self-belief? You have got to believe in yourself - because nobody else will. Huh Andy? Who's going to tell you that you CAN do it, that you ARE good enough? I don't think you'll ever learn the "winner's attitude!" Do you want to be a loser all your life Andy? (Andy looks impassively)  
Then you should believe in yourself utterly. Just like I do.

ANDY:

You've gone too far, Bill. I can't see the 'golden banderilos' going anywhere any time soon.

BILL:

(Stands, with head held high)  
Then I'll have to be the last Golden Bandoliero left standing. And so, there's only one more thing I can say to you Andy. Or should I say ... SING to you...

ANDY:

Oh no, please god, no...

BILL:

(starts the song by talking the lyrics, but rapidly begins to belt out the song. The band comes in on the chorus.)  
I... will... survive...

Andy flees with his hands on his ears off stage. Bill sings on to the end of the song, where he looks out at the audience thoughtfully, then crumples slightly, and turns to go.

#END#