

AUDITION PIECES

PAGES 29 – 30 : SUSAN MILLER (WITH FRANCIS FRYER)

(He bustles CALAMITY off after MILLER, leaving FRYER & SUSAN)

Susan : You mustn't blame yourself ... It was Uncle's idea.

Fryer : I felt sure those men were going to lynch me! I could see myself hanging out there – all alone – maybe scalped, too! *(He shudders)*

Susan : Anything might have happened – if it hadn't been for Calamity ... The way those men *yelled* ...

Fryer : Wait til they find out there'll be no Adelaide Adams! She's in Chicago – a big star! She wouldn't be seen dead in a town like this! What on earth was Calamity thinking of – promising she'd come to Deadwood?

Susan : She was trying to help Uncle ...

Fryer : Help him?... I don't know what I'm doing here anyway. I certainly don't want to be around when they find out there'll be no Adelaide Adams ... Suppose those men come after me tonight – when I'm asleep? *If I get any sleep?* ... I wouldn't even know where to find the Marshall.

Susan : We don't have a Marshall.

Fryer : *(Weakly)* No Marshall...?

Susan : He was shot last week.

Fryer : Huh ... ?

Susan : They offered the job to Wild Bill Hickock, but he turned it down. I wish he'd take it. He's the one man they respect out here ... *(sudden inspiration)* Can you shoot?

Fryer : (“take”) Me? ... I don't know one end of a gun from the other!

Susan : Too bad ... It helps to know how to use a gun in this wild country. Take Wild Bill. He can shoot to kill two ways at one time – over either shoulder ... If only Uncle had explained the mistake! - I mean about you being “Francis” with an “i” –

Fryer : I never did like the name anyway. My mother was hoping for a girl, and had “Frances” all picked out. It was a big blow to her when I arrived – but there was no changing her mind about the name.

Susan : I like it. At least it's different. For a man, I mean.

Fryer : I guess there's nothing to do now but leave town ... D'you think they'd let me? ... I mean, alive?

Susan : If I were you I'd stay right here and show them how good you really are. You're not a quitter, are you?

Fryer : I don't know ... I'd like to live ...

(Miller comes out of the office – still in a flap.

Calamity and Bill, still in the process of trying to calm him, follow him on stage)

Miller : Why does everything have to happen to me? ... *(Sees Fryer and winces)* Would you mind getting out of my sight?

Fryer : N-n-not at all! G-g-glad to – *(exit)*

Susan : *(Chidingly)* It wasn't Mister Fryer's fault, Uncle! He just didn't have a chance in that get-up. He'd have won them over if you'd let him do his own act! I think you owe him an apology! He's a good performer! *(Exit)*