



Josephine and I

JOSEPHINE is a performer; she is working with the Jones Family Band when she is spotted by Red, the Stage Manager of the Booker T Washington Theatre. He needs a replacement dancer for the chorus act.

JOSEPHINE: Red is looking at me.

Red says, 'You',

I say, 'Yes'.

Red says, 'What's your name?'

I say, Josephine'.

Red says, 'You know the chorus girl routine I seen you do?'

I say, 'Uh-huh',

Reds says, 'You reckon you can do that routine now?'

I say, 'Uh-huh'.

Red says, 'You reckon you could do that routine now on the stage of the Booker T?'

I say, 'I gotta think about it',

Red says, 'Well, if you're gonna be like that...'

I say, 'Outta my way! Which way to the stage?!'

I'm standing in the wings of the Booker T watching the same chorus girls up close! But up close, they look different. They look ...old,

And they dance like they just aren't there ..

.

Why would they do that?

They're living my dream!

(A costume gets thrown at JOSEPHINE)

Somebody throws a costume at me —

(She puts on the costume as she speaks)

I'm all fired up,

I'm chomping at the bit,

I'm straining at the start,

I'm, I'm, I'm - I'm wearing the ugliest costume I've ever seen in my life. It's eight sizes too big!

But I don't care!

I know the routines inside out and I'm ready.

I'm ready! I'm ready! I'm coming! I'm ready!

(The Song 'Cake Walkin' Babies' is playing)

And now I'm on with the chorus girls and I'm dancing.

I can't believe this, I'm dancing up here!

And check me out, I'm on the Booker T stage.

And check me out, check me out, check me -

What the hell?

(She hears jeering, heckling sounds)

The crowd is jeering, wolf-whistling, cat-calling and heckling.

No wonder the girls look miserable.

No respect, no appreciation, this wasn't glamorous at all,

Is this what I have to look forward to?

No. I want more. I want bigger. I'm getting out. I'm dancing out.

And now I'm leaving St Louis, I'm outta here!

I'm touring with the Booker T Show.

I'm travelling all the time.

'Cause I'm a show person now and we are always on the move!

By Cush Jumbo