



THAT'S LIFE
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Extract

A SMITH SCRIPT

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THAT'S LIFE

A Jukebox Musical by Samantha
Cartwright and Emma Houldershaw

Set in New York during the 1920s/1930s era, all speaking parts have an American accent

CHARACTERS

Frank Donati	Star singer in the club, in debt with the Mafia
Maria Giovanni	Mafia boss's daughter and mistress of Frank
Loretta	Don's mistress, she doesn't actually mean anything to him
Dean Davis	Singer in the club, life is pretty good for him, he's smooth
Don Giovanni	Mafia boss and father of Maria
Mama	Club owner, strong female, holds her own with the men
Grace	Shy new dancer at the club
Teresa Donati	Frank's wife
Marty Russo	Compare at the club and story narrator
Freddie the Fox	Side kick of Don
Lucky	Side kick of Don
Dionne Day	Singer in the club
Ava Divine	Singer in the club
Betty	Nice but doesn't want to be seen to be nice, dancer in the club
Ginger	Bitchy dancer in the club
Nora	Bitchy dancer in the club
Waitress	Works at the club
Cigarette Seller	Works at the club
The Sapphires	Three piece girl singing group
Chorus	Customers at the club, dancers, staff at the Club

THAT'S LIFE

ACT 1

SCENE 1

Curtains open onto the Domino club, band stage left, tables stage left, stage is dark, fixed light on centre for compare. Far down stage right is a table, chairs and a telephone, which acts as Dons house and Teresa's house at points.

Compare enters through audience

MARTY Don't cha just hate those shows that use a narrator, yeah to introduce characters, update you on the story, change scenes etc, Me too. Oh wait, hang on (**he is on the stage now, turns to the audience and very cheesily says**) I am that narrator. Hiya folks, the name's Marty Russo, welcome to the Domino Rooms, home of New York's own Frank Donati, but more about him later. I'm here for the night, I'm gonna walk you through the ups and downs, lives and loves of some of the locals in these parts. Let's start with Mama (**spotlight goes to Mama, who is counting money and putting it in her bra**). Mama, she owns this joint, anything that goes down here, Mama, she knows about it, she's been in the business a long, long time, worked her way up from a dancer, at least that's how she tells it. Rumour has it, she's involved with some pretty influential people round here, know what I'm sayin'. But she runs this place well, she looks after her girls, that's them over there (**spotlight goes to group of dancers including Grace, who is slightly apart from the others**). Cute chicks right, too much hassle though, you understand what I'm sayin', ooh, she's new (**seeing Grace and straightening his tie**) I'll chat to her later. Then we have our five main acts at the Domino Rooms, (**spotlight goes to acts without Frank, standing lightly flirting**) The Sapphires, Dionne Day, Ava Divine, Dean Davis and our headline act Frank Donati (**spotlight goes to empty space on stage**). But like I said, more on him later, he's running late as usual. (**Don, Lucky and Freddie enter, lights come up, all cast react, waitress rushes to get a table for them, pulls out a chair, Mama goes straight over to greet them**). This here is Don Giovanni, he owns half of Manhattan and everyone in it. He's the boss, he's numero uno, he's the Don. The two guys with him, that's Freddie the Fox, slyest guy I know and Lucky Lucianno, never loses. Not the sharpest tools in the box, but trust me, you don't want to get on the wrong side of them. That's all you need to know for now folks, let's get the evening started with our very own smooth crooner, Dean Davis

SONG 1 (*fronted by Dean plus backing*)

After song, dancers are all gathered around Dean, everyone applauds, he moves to the side, a waitress appears with a drink for him, he stands drinking it and watching the dancers

GINGER First night on the job and you're already outshining us.

GRACE Thank you, I tried my best, but gee, I was so nervous.

GINGER So you agree? You think you outshine us?

GRACE Um, no, um, that's not what I meant

GINGER Did you hear that girls? Grace here, thinks she's a bit special

NORA I knew it, that's why you're wearing that necklace/hairband, wanted to make sure you got noticed.

BETTY That necklace don't go with the costume, we don't use it til act 3

GRACE oh right, sorry, I thought something wasn't right.

GINGER Whatever. You did that on purpose, we've met girls like you before, you won't last, they never do.

NORA Yeah and you didn't even get the steps right **(Nora and Ginger exit)**

BETTY Hey, don't take it to heart, you did good. **(Betty exits)**

Dean approaches Grace who is looking a bit down hearted.

DEAN You must be the new girl, I'm Dean Davis.

GRACE I know who you are **(she is slightly star struck)**.

DEAN I couldn't help overhearing you and the other girls

GRACE Are they always like that?

DEAN Yeah, pretty much, you'll get used to it. They get a bit territorial when a new broad comes along, especially a sweet patootie like you.

GRACE **(looking shy)** I bet you say that to all the girls

DEAN Only the ones I wanna get to know better

GRACE I should go, there's not long until the next act

DEAN Hey, don't let those broads get to you, you're gonna do just fine here

GRACE Thanks **(goes to leave)**

DEAN Hey Sweetcheeks! I didn't catch your name

GRACE **(turning back to him)** Grace, my name's Grace **(she exits)**

He watches her leave, checking her out, makes it quite obvious that he likes her, Mama approaches

MAMA I see you met my new girl, sweet thing, head full of dreams, come all the way from South Detroit. Frank's still not shown his face, you may have to cover for him again.

DEAN Ab-so-lute-ly, anything for you Mama.

MAMA I knew I could count on you, you wouldn't let me down, wish I could say the same about Frank.

DEAN I've stood in for him three times this week already, don't know why you let him get away with it.

MAMA The crowd love him, he's my star

Conversation switches to Don, Loretta, Lucky and Freddie, Mama goes to them. Dean exits

FREDDIE I kid you not, four aces in a row.

LUCKY what can I say, lucky by name

DON Ya Know, I've only seen that happen once before, back in the day, me and Mama were down at the railway arches, yeah, we were this close to losin' everything, then bam, Mama shows her hand, four aces, you think you're lucky Lucianno, That Broad's the lucky one

MAMA You telling tales on me again Giovanni

He stands up, double kisses her

DOM Always Mama, always. How's tricks?

MAMA so so, picks up at weekends, bit quiet during the week lately

DON have you had any more trouble with that crowd from 42nd street?

MAMA No, not since you asked your boys to have a quiet word with them for me, not seen them since

LUCKY I've seen them, one of them walks with a limp now

Lucky and Freddy look at each other and laugh

LORETTA I'll have a bloody mary when you're ready.

MAMA Oh will you? Do I look like a waitress?

LORETTA This is a bar ain't it?

DON Loretta, play nice.

LORETTA Honey, I just wanna get a drink

MAMA **(summoning a waitress)** Get Don's plaything a drink

LORETTA Excuse me?

MAMA Oh I'm sorry, are you not a plaything, did he marry you? Oh no. he's got a wife

LORETTA Who do you think you're...

DON Ladies, enough

MAMA Sorry Don, but if you're going to have a pet, keep it on a leash

LORETTA You're just a jealous bitch

MAMA And you're just a tramp

SONG 2 – duet Loretta and Mama

FREDDIE I thought Frank was your opening act tonight?

MAMA he is, Dean had to stand in, that's the 3rd time this week, trust me I'll be having words with him

DON funny you mention having words with Frank, that's why I'm here tonight

MAMA oh really, problems?

DON never problems mama, just need, you know, a quiet chat

Marty enters

MARTY How you doing folks? Starting to warm up? Why did the mafia cross the road? Forget about it. Here's another one, what's the difference between the mafia and the government? Only one of them is organised. Up next for your entertainment we have the beautiful sapphires!

SONG 3 – *The Sapphires*

After song, Sapphires are taking their applause, Frank runs in

FRANK Panic over, the talent's arrived

Sapphires turn their noses up, everyone freezes, including Frank, Marty enters

MARTY Now this here, is Frank, he's the man, the headline act, the one everyone's talking about. All the ladies want to be with him, all the men want to be him. He's the shining star round here, but let's just say, behind the façade, things are not so shinny

Marty exits and all unfreeze

SONG 4 – Frank

Dancers approach him after song

GINGER Frank, you ain't called, you said you were going to call

FRANK Yeah, yeah Geri, I meant to

GINGER It's Ginger not Geri

FRANK Ok, I'll get back to you (***he turns to walk away, Mama approaches him***).
Mama, I was just lookin' for you, (***he backs away***)

MAMA C'mon Frank, what is it this time?

FRANK Hey, have you done something different with your hair?

MAMA Don't try and sweet talk me, why are you late?

FRANK I had engine trouble, then I got a flat, then I had to stop to help Mrs Robinson, she needed her pipes checking

MAMA I bet she did. Listen, Dean's already had to cover for you three times this week.

FRANK It won't happen again

MAMA I'm telling you Frank, Dean's getting real popular

FANK Yeah, but let's face it, he ain't me. **(he winks)**

MAMA **(she smiles at him)**

Freddie and Lucky approach them

FREDDIE Donati, The Don wants a word

FRANK Yeah, ab-so-lute-ly, I'm coming **(shows signs of pulling himself together, is nervous about talking with the Don, but goes over acting like they are great friends)** Don! **(Don stands and they do the two kisses greeting)** long time no see. Loretta, stunning as always **(double kisses her too)**. You done something different with your hair? Boys, always a pleasure **(shakes hands with Lucky and Freddie)**.

DON How you been Frank?

FRANK Busy, busy, you know me Don.

DON Yeah, you must be busy, you ain't returned none of my calls.

FRANK Calls? I didn't get no message

DON I've left a few messages with Mama, and at your house with Teresa

FRANK With Teresa? She ain't told me nothing, I'll have to have words with her.

DON Don't pass the buck onto your wife, you knew I'd be looking for you, you missed this month's deadline

Frank looking around, looking embarrassed

FRANK Don. What? We're gonna talk business here?

DON No, you're right, we'll talk later. **(Don, Loretta, Lucky and Freddie exit, Frank looks relieved)**

Dionne and Ava enter having an argument and looking for Mama

AVA Why would I take them?

DIONNE Well that's where I left them and they're not there now

AVA What do you expect when you leave your stuff lying all over the place

MAMA Not again girls, what's the problem this time?

Both speaking at the same time, talking very fast.

DIONNE She's stolen my earrings, I left them on my dressing table and they're gone, she's the only other person that goes in there, it has to be her, I'm sick of her taking my things

AVA What a load of baloney, Why would I want her earrings, she leaves her things everywhere in that dressing room, she literally takes over every spare surface, I don't want to share with her no more.

Mama stopping them

MAMA Enough! You know the situation, there are not enough dressing rooms for you to have one each.

DIONNE Well Frank and Dean have their own.

MAMA When you bring in the punters like they do, then you can have your own, until then, you're going to have to learn to live with it.!

AVA That's easier said than done, her stuff is everywhere, I can't deal with it no more

DIONNE She's driving me crazy, one thing outta place and she goes nuts

MAMA I said enough, that's the end of it. If you don't like it, you know where the door is.

Dionne and Ava walk away and start bitching about Mama

AVA Can you believe that?

DIONNE I know, how are we supposed to bring in more punters when we hardly get any time on the stage

AVA Yeah, it's all about Frank, we don't get a chance

DIONNE We may as well be bashing our heads against a brick wall