

“Shuffle Off to Buffalo”, lyrics from ‘42nd Street’ Warner Brothers 1933

Backstage musical

Number performed by Ruby Keeler and Clarence Nordstrom with Ginger Rogers and Una Merkel

The couple has just been married, and are going to Niagara Falls (Buffalo) for their honeymoon.

Choreography by Busby Berkeley

Points: Warners musical of early sound era – peppy, erotic, escapist, skeptical about marriage, big production numbers.

Bert and Annie:

Now that we have had the rice and flowers,
The knot is tied;
I can visu'lize such happy hours,
Right by your side.
The honeymoon in store
Is one that you'll adore,
I'm gonna take you for a ride.

Annie, Bert, Maggie and Girls:

I'll (You'll) go home and get my panties,
You (I'll) go home and get your scanties,
And away we'll go.
Mm mm mm...
Off we're gonna shuffle,
Shuffle off to Buffalo.

To Niag'ra in a sleeper,
There's no honeymoon that's cheaper,
And the train goes slow.
Ooh ooh ooh!
Off, we're gonna shuffle,
Shuffle off to Buffalo.

Someday, the stork may pay a visit
And leave a little souvenir.
Just a little cute "what is it,"
But we'll discuss that later, dear.

For a little silver quarter,
We can have the pull man porter

Turn the lights down low.
Ooh!
Off we're gonna shuffle,
Shuffle off to Buffalo.

You'll go home and get your purses,
I'll go get my niece and nurses,
And away we'll go.
Mm mm mm...
Off we're gonna shuffle,
Shuffle off to Buffalo.

(Dance routine)

Matrimony is baloney
She'll be wanting alimony
In a year or so
Still they go and shuffle
Shuffle Off to Buffalo

When she knows as much as we know
She'll be on her way to Reno
While he still has dough
She'll give him the Shuffle
When they're back from Buffalo

I'll bet that she's the farmer's daughter
And he's that well-known traveling man
He won't stop now at the farm house
That's how the whole affair began

He did right by little Nellie
With a shotgun in his belly
How could he say No
He just had to Shuffle
Shuffle off to Buffalo.

(More dance with chorus singing and orchestra)
(Ends with Ruby taking off her shoes behind the curtain; porter falling asleep)