

An Excerpt From

RED HOT MAMA

THE NEW SOPHIE TUCKER MUSICAL

BY

KERRY ASHTON

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We are at the LATIN QUARTER, A NIGHTCLUB IN NEW YORK CITY, on October 12, 1953.

ANNOUNCER
(VOICE-OVER)

Ladies and Gentlemen, as you know, this evening, October 12, 1953, marks Sophie Tucker's 50th Anniversary in show business.

(Applause. A beat)

And so this evening as we celebrate her Golden Jubilee and honor her 50 years as the First Lady of Show Business, the Latin Quarter is proud to present The Last of the Red Hot Mamas, the incomparable, the indestructible ... Miss Sophie Tucker!

There is thunderous applause. The band begins playing an upbeat version of SOME OF THESE DAYS as SOPHIE TUCKER, in an elegant red gown and bedecked with jewels and fur, walks into the spotlight center stage. At 65 and hefty, she is nonetheless glamorous and the quintessential star. In her left hand she holds the Tucker trademark -- a chiffon handkerchief. Sitting at the piano is her pianist and lifelong friend, TEDDY SHAPIRO.

SONG:
“I WANNA SAY HELLO”

SOPHIE
(singing)

I wanna say hello. I wanna see you smile.
I wanna hold you in my arms again.
I wanna do the little things we used to do before.

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Honey, I can't live without you anymore.
I won't be satisfied until you're by my side.
I'm yearning for the moment when ... I'll say hello,
I'll see you smile, I'll hold you in my arms again.

(Repeat)

(Applause.)

SOPHIE

Thanks. Boy, are you a great audience!

(Looking at one fellow in particular)

And good-lookin' too!

(A beat)

If you can believe it, I first sang that song back in 1903 when I was no more than 15 -- and just a little bitty thing.

TEDDY

(from the piano bench)

Miss Tucker, from what I hear you were never a little bitty thing.

SOPHIE

Quiet, Teddy. That may be true, but I've always been a Red Hot Mama.

TEDDY

So I hear. There's one thing though I've always been curious about, Miss Tucker.

SOPHIE

What's that, Sheriff Shapiro?

TEDDY

Just how hot is a Red Hot Mama?

SOPHIE

You wanna know how hot I am? Is that it?

TEDDY

Yes, exactly. I think our audience would like to know too.

SOPHIE

Well, I'll tell ya -- to take a Red Hot Mama's temperature you need to have the right kind of thermometer and know exactly where and how to insert it!

TEDDY

Miss Tucker, you make me blush.

SOPHIE

Oh, that's just the mercury in your thermometer heatin' up, gettin' ready to blow. Which is nothin' new for me -- I'm used to havin' that kind of effect on men.

MUSIC UNDER.

SOPHIE
(continuing)

Of course, over the years I will admit I have put a little meat on.

TEDDY

You can say that again.

SOPHIE

So what! So there's a little more schmaltz to sizzle when I turn the heat on! And when I turn it on for the boys, and believe me I still do, they don't leave my apartment for the front door, they go up the chimney flu!

TEDDY

Miss Tucker, you're incorrigible.

SOPHIE

Incorrigible, nothin'! I'm frisky as a newborn lamb, I'm happy as a bee in clover. Girls sing about being young at heart. Hell! I'm young all over.

TEDDY

Miss Tucker, I know you're a Red Hot Mama ... but would you honestly say that you're as hot now as you used to be?

SOPHIE

Hell, Teddy! I'm hotter than I've ever been and I'm gettin' hotter all the time!

SONG:

“I'M THE LAST OF THE RED HOT MAMAS”

Music/Lyrics by Jack Yellen (circa 1929)

SOPHIE

(singing)

Shieks! Neckers! And Jelly-Beans! Lend me your ears.
So you think you've been petted? Don't be silly. Forget it!
Debs, flappers and baby vamps bore me to tears.
What do they know concerning love?
Come to me for your burning love.
'Cause I'm the Last of the Red Hot Mamas.
They've all cooled down but me.
Flapper vamps, say what do they know?
Come get your hot stuff from this volcano!
I'm so overheated, try and beat it! A hotsy-totsy Hottentot.
Now it may be snowing but when I get going, oh Baby, I'm hot!
You can keep your collegiate charmers --
their lovin' isn't worth a dime!
A way up in Alaska where the natives freeze
an Eskimo left my hut in his BVD's!
'Cause I'm the Last of the Red Hot Mamas.
And I'm gettin' hotter all the time.
I said I'm the Last of the Red Hot Mamas.
They've all cooled down but me.
I don't pet and only neck 'em --
No, Sir, I'm one Mama who loves to wreck 'em!
I can make 'em sizzle, make 'em fry and frizzle
and if you wanna know the truth,
Say, I can warm the cold ones and give the old ones
back their flamin' youth.
See, I was born in the hot bahamas.
Right now I'm in lovin' prime.
Others pet and kiss and hug

and don't know what it's all about
Say, when I kiss men they feel they've had their tonsils taken out!
'Cause I'm the Last of the Red Hot Mamas.
I'm gettin' hotter all the time!
 --- I got a kiss like a hungry mosquito! ---
And I'm gettin' hotter all the time!

MUSIC OUT. APPLAUSE.

SOPHIE

You know, Folks, I introduced that song at the Palace Theatre in New York in 1929 -- and it's stuck to me like a label ever since ... which only proves what I've said all along: Red Hot Mamas never die and they never grow old ... they just go up in smoke!