

"B U S K E R S"

a musical by
Howard Goldberg

BUSKERS, starring Tony Azito, opened Off-Broadway
April 2, 1986 at the Stagearts Theatre in New York

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CHARACTERS

CHRETIEN, a French vagabond and street performer. In his thirties.

LEONIE, a street dancer. In her twenties.

DIDIER, knapsack on his back... a wanderer. Also in his twenties.

JOHNNY C., a tough street kid. About 15.

HINTON, his brother. About 17.

MRS. C., their mother. In her thirties or forties.

CARMEN, their sister. About 16.

TONY, a street mime. In his twenties or early thirties.

SALLY, his partner. In her twenties.

FRANKIE, a street musician. In his late twenties or early thirties.

SELENA, Carmen's best friend. About 16.

The following characters are to be doubled by the principal actors or played by members of the band:

A Guy
Charlie the Stagehand
The Watch Man
A Trumpet Player
Author
Louie Lipestro
Eugene A. Breitenbacher
Professor Caramalucci
Bob the Cop
Two Stagehands
Man Who's Accosted
Man in Audience

MUSICAL NUMBERS

FIRST ACT

1. "Power in the Air"
2. "I Walk Alone"
3. "Movie Stars/Monday Mornings"
4. "Down to the Foodstore"
5. "All of My Love"
6. "Myrna P."
7. "Pain in My Heart"
8. "Selena"
9. "Born to Love"

SECOND ACT

10. "Love at First Sight"
11. "Hinton Went Down"
12. "My Parents' House"
13. "Alien Love"
14. "Soap is Good for You"
15. "I Know What Love Can Bring"
16. "Etude"
17. "Maybe I'm Lonely"
18. "Ice Cream"

NOTE: Whenever the name of a character is shown in parentheses and underlined this is meant to indicate that the real name of the actor who plays the role should be used. The number which follows tells whether to use both the first and last names or just the first; (1) for first only and (2) for both. EX: (Johnny) (2) would mean to use the first and last names of the actor who plays the role of "Johnny."

In the case of the first character who appears in the play, either the name which is used for him, "Chretien," or the real first name of the actor who plays the part (translated to its French equivalent or, if there is none, pronounced in as French a manner as possible) can be used.

The sets for this play should all be minimal, very often only suggesting the scene and leaving much to the audience's imagination. The different elements that make up each set (whether they are trees, fountains, kitchens or bedrooms) should be represented on many separate panels that can be hauled into and lowered from the flies very quickly in order to effect very rapid scene changes. There should be as few props as possible on the stage at any given time also. Again, to facilitate rapid scene changes.

An asterisk (*) is used to indicate the points in the script where each musical number begins. It will always be followed by the number of the piece.

FIRST ACT

The stage is brightly lit, the houselights are still on and the audience has just finished settling in when we begin to hear loud crashing, banging and scuffling sounds coming from the wings. Voices are heard arguing over the noise.

FIRST VOICE

(heavy sing-song French
accent)

No, no! Higher! Not like that!
Higher!!

SECOND VOICE

I don't know about this...

THIRD VOICE

Yeah, me neither...

FOURTH VOICE

I mean, we could get in a lotta
trouble.

FRENCH VOICE

'Ey, don't be silly! This is *much*
bettair!! Believe me!

SECOND VOICE

I think you oughta just do it the
way you're supposed to.

THIRD VOICE

If the author finds out about this
he'll kill us!

FRENCH VOICE

(very forceful and
clapping his hands)

Alright, that's enough foolishness!
Stop it now! Allez, let's go! Just a
little higher. Oui! That's it! That's
it!!

The house lights gradually dim and go out while the stage remains brightly lit. From the wings stage left four actors appear carrying a makeshift litter. Lying regally on the litter with his head propped on his hand and his legs provocatively crossed is CHRETIEN. He is making the most of the moment and lording it up like the Queen of Sheba. He is in his thirties and dressed like a real street vagabond; a little poor, a little ragged, but a lot of panache. The four actors reluctantly follow his directions as he points them all over the stage.

CHRETIEN

No, no, over that way a little, eh!
(MORE)

CHRETIEN (CONT'D)

No!! Over there. Oui, now back this way a little bit, eh!

The actors are grumbling all the time. They finally arrive downstage center.

AN ACTOR

Alright, enough's enough... last stop, everybody off!

They start to tip the litter, but Chretien, anticipating their move, jumps nimbly to the ground in front of them.

CHRETIEN

Merci!

(He laughs and brushes himself off as the actors, shaking their heads, exit. He then turns to the audience and spreads his arms as if he were about to embrace a long lost friend)

'Allo, bay-bee, how are you!? My name is Chretien and I am French boy! (He laughs and does a cartwheel) Not bad, eh!?

Now, today I am going to tell you a story of love and romance which take place among the street performers of New York. (Sarcastic) Love... a very original subject, eh? Oh là là...is there really anything more to be said about that!?

(He laughs)

But, the authair, a very likable but not so clever guy, is a personal friend of mine and he has ask me to be here today. Chretien, he say to me, you are the world's *greatest* street performer, are you not? Busker number one! Is there anyone who could tell this story bettair than you? You, who know these people bettair than they know themselves! You, who are a Frenchman and heir to the greatest legacy of love in history!!!

(He throws his arms up in resignation)

Alors, how could I refuse!?

Now, this play that you are going to see today is not like any other play

(MORE)

CHRETIEN (CONT'D)

that you have seen before. But, that is not because of what the authair has wrote - some very silly thing which I am suppose to explain to you about a magiqueal bar of soap that make you fall in love when you wash with it - no! This play is different because of what *I* will tell you now. In this show two of the character, Leonie and Didier, up until the time they meet, have wait their whole life to fall in love at first sight.

(He looks around him
and then, conspiring
with the audience,
whispers loudly)

And, in real life it is exactly the same because (Leonie)(2) and (Didier)(2), the actors who play Leonie and Didier, have also fall in love at first sight from the very first rehearsal, and just like the characters they play they, too, have wait all their lives for this moment! Now *that*, you have to admit make this show a little different, eh!

(He looks very pleased
with himself)

Now lastly, I want you to know I can see the disappointment you feel hearing this story is to be about magiqueal soap and not about me, and for this I apologize, yet, I still feel certaine that if you will only relax and make the best of the situation you will surely find much to enjoy! (He cocks his head and puts his hand very theatrically to his ear) But, wait... here come Leonie now!

*(1) POWER IN THE AIR

The stage goes completely dark. At the first notes of "POWER IN THE AIR" lights fill the stage and LEONIE leaps from the wings stage left. She is in Central Park and there are trees, paths, fountains and statues around her. The area in which she is dancing is surrounded by spectators. She dances an energetic and exciting piece. She is so vibrant that the set almost seems to move with her. As the music starts to wind down she spins around and around until she finally sinks to the ground exhausted.

LEONIE

(singing)

Power in the air
Siren forces are everywhere
Feel the power
In the air...

Suddenly the music bursts back again, even louder and more frenetic than before. Leonie looks totally surprised. Then, almost as if she has been seized and uprighted, she is back on her feet and dancing even more frenetically than before. The look of control and confidence that was on her face during the first part of the dance is no longer in evidence. It seems almost as if she's being thrown all over the stage and people are scattering in every direction to avoid being hit by her. As the piece ends she appears to be almost tossed offstage. The people, at first stunned, start to applaud and Leonie reappears with a hat in her hand, takes a deep bow, and makes the rounds collecting money. One of the people in the audience, a nice looking GUY, puts a dollar bill in her hat and tries to make conversation.

GUY

Hey, that was really great!

LEONIE

Thank you.

GUY

You know, I've been coming here everyday for weeks, but I never had the nerve to talk to you before, and...

LEONIE

(cutting him off)

Thank you.

She smiles politely and then continues her rounds. The guy looks disappointed, then puts his hands in his pockets and wanders off. Chretien enters. He looks at Leonie with admiration and digs into his pocket for some money. He holds up a dollar bill and shows it to the audience, and then, nodding his approval, drops it in Leonie's hat. The stage lights dim to black as Chretien continues downstage center where he stands alone lit by a small spot.

CHRETIEN

Phew... (he wipes his brow) This one is crazy, eh! I don't know about you, but I'm exhausted! So, now you have seen one kind of love, because Leonie, she love to dance, and you have seen another kind of love, because the peoples they love to watch her.

(MORE)

CHRETIEN (CONT'D)

Some of them, like this guy we just see, wish she could fall in love as easily as she dance. But, it is very hard for her. The author think she need some magique soap before she can fall in love. He doesn't understand that she is just afraid. So many time she has make a start with the wrong man, and so many time she has been hurt... just like you and me... that now she have decide to be strong until she find *exactly* what she want. But, when she dance she can be free, she can be open. Like a fairy... or a nymph! Oui, there is definitely something magiqueal about the way she dance, and believe me, I know what I talk about, eh! After all, for magique I am no amateur! (He puts his hands on his hips) What!? Why do you look at me like that? Ohhhh... you are skeptical, eh! Alors, I think maybe before we go any further then it would go well for me to provide a small demonstration of the magique which I have at my command. Therefore, I will summon up all of my powers and proceed to change the entire audience into... (pauses)... let me see... a... Gaggle of Geese! No, I do not like that. Too noisy. So, perhaps I will try the Leap of Leopards!! (He shakes his head) No... too dangerous. The damage could be enormous. The regular cats is no good... they have already been use uptown. So, I think I will go for the Litter of Puppies!! Oui, c'est ça. The Litter of Puppies!
 (He yells offstage)
 'Ey, Sharlie! Will you bring me my cape and my wand, please!?

A STAGEHAND, who nervously avoids looking at the audience, brings them out and gives them to Chretien who puts on the cape and tests out the wand. The stagehand whispers something in his ear and points anxiously towards the wings. Chretien smiles reassuringly and yells offstage.

CHRETIEN (CONT'D)

Don't worry, eh! I know what I'm doing!

VOICE (offstage)
 You better cut it out, or I'm gonna
 call the author!

The stagehand just stands there staring at the audience like a rabbit frozen in fear as Chretien turns back to the audience.

CHRETIEN
 Now, of course you, the audience,
 will not be able to tell if I have
 really use magique to turn you into
 one big yapping puppy party or if I
 have only use the mass hypnosis and
 make you *think* that puppies is what
 you are, but this you will have to
 decide on your own! Alors, maintenant
 c'est le moment!

(He pushes up his
 sleeves and runs
 back and forth across
 the front of the
 stage waving his
 wand magically over
 the audience)

Now is the time! OPE LÀ!!!

(He claps his hands
 loudly together and
 then steps back
 stunned)

MON DIEU!! Look at all these
 Puppies!!

Someone in the audience - a plant - starts to bark. He is followed by a second and hopefully others will join in.

CHRETIEN (CONT'D)
 'Ey, Sharlie! Get my poopair scoopair
 quickly! Oh là là, what a mess!!

He starts to laugh loudly as he runs around the stage barking back at the audience and egging them on. Suddenly he looks offstage and puts his finger to his mouth.

CHRETIEN (CONT'D)
 Oooops! Quiet, all you puppies!
 Shhhhh! Here come Didier!!

He calms the audience down and then runs across the stage and exits stage right. The lights come up. The scene is another green and treelined area of the park. DIDIER is walking slowly down a path. He is wearing a backpack and carrying a walking stick. The music begins ("I Walk Alone") and he sings. During the very musical passages of the song he dances slowly and beautifully.

*(2) I WALK ALONE

DIDIER

(singing)

I walk alone
 There's a voice in my head
 It says
 "You're just trying to be free"

I walk alone
 But, I never seem
 To find
 What life means to me

I walk alone
 I walk alone
 I walk alone
 I walk alone

I walk alone
 I'm just trying to be free

And a voice calls
 "Come with me, baby, let's start
 movin' on down the line
 Come with me, baby, we'll travel
 through space and time
 Through space and time
 Through space and time
 Through space and time"

So I walk alone
 That's the choice that I make
 I'm just trying to be free

I'll walk alone
 Though I never seem
 To find
 What life means to me

As the song ends, Didier walks quietly offstage. Chretien passes him as he walks onstage. He looks over his shoulder as Didier exits.

CHRETIEN

(sarcastically)

I think maybe he walk alone, eh.
 What do you think?

(he laughs)

But, let me be serious for one moment.
 You know, this Didier, just like
 Leonie, want very much to fall in
 love. All his life he has heard the
 story and the songs of love at first
 sight and he, too, want to meet that
 special someone and live happily

(MORE)

CHRETIEN (CONT'D)

ever after! Two time he has traveled around the world looking for love, but each time he meet a girl there has always been just a little something which was not quite right, not quite perfect. This one, she was not pretty enough. This one, she was not smart enough, and this one... oh là là... she have a mole right here!

(He taps himself on the cheek . He stares at the audience intensely for a couple of beats and then shakes his head and laughs)

So, here is another kind of love that Didier show us, because he is in love. He is in love with a dream!

(He starts to laugh again , but then a puzzled look crosses his face)

But, wait a minute. All of a sudden I cannot believe what is happening here! Is it *this* Didier and *this* Leonie who are going to fall in love? To me it look like these character that the authair has wrote do not even know the first thing about the many compromise that *real* love demand! No wonder they need this magiquial bar of soap! Oh là là, mais c'est pas vrai! Exactly what is going on here!?

He runs offstage and returns with his script. He pulls out a pair of glasses, puts them on and starts flipping through the pages.

CHRETIEN (CONT'D)

(pensively)

Um-hmm... Um-hmm... Um-hmm... Um-hmmm... I like this next song, but this soap thing! Oh là là. C'est pas possible!

He turns the papers every which way, sorting through them and scratching his head. Finally, in exasperation, he rips some pages out of the script, crumples them into a ball and throws them over his shoulder.

CHRETIEN (CONT'D)

Don't worry.

(MORE)

CHRETIEN (CONT'D)

I take care of everything!
 (He laughs
 mischievously and
 then yells offstage)
 Sharlie! The lights, please!
 (The stage instantly
 goes black)
 Merci!!

In the dark a loud buzzing sound is heard. It continues for quite a few seconds. Suddenly there is a click and a small lamp stage left goes on. Through the light it throws we see a hand pass. It fumbles around until it finds the alarm clock it's looking for. It smacks it two or three times, but it still doesn't go off. Finally, in desperation, it throws it on the ground. A door opens and MRS. C. enters. She turns on a light revealing in a small set stage left a boy's room with bunk beds. The walls are decorated with posters of Muhammad Ali, Bruce Lee, Sugar Ray Leonard and other fighters. HINTON who owns the hand that dealt with the clock is in the top bunk. He is about 17. JOHNNY C., the younger of the two brothers, is in the bottom bunk. He is about 15.

MRS. C.

Alright you brats. 7:15. Time to get ready for school!

Johnny wakes up like a shot and jumps out of bed.

JOHNNY

Alright!

His mother looks amazed by his enthusiasm. She gives Hinton a poke in the side.

MRS. C.

C'mon, get up!

HINTON

Yeah, yeah...

She leaves, closing the door behind her. Johnny starts running around the room getting his stuff together while Hinton, looking ticked off at Johnny's energy, slowly gets out of bed. He has to move quickly to keep out of Johnny's way.

HINTON (CONT'D)

Hey, watch it, willya!

JOHNNY

Well, keep out my way, boy. I'm movin'!

HINTON

Hey, you wanna get decked or what?
 (MORE)

HINTON (CONT'D)
 I'm feelin' dangerous today!
 (he starts to shadow
 box)
 I'm goin' right to the pros!

He continues to shadow box around the room and even throws a karate chop and a kick here and there.

JOHNNY
 (admiringly)
 He float like a butterfly, Sting
 like a BEE...
 (Hinton looks pleased
 and continues his
 dancing)
 I'm gonna go get the "Raid"
 And end this misery!!

HINTON
 Ninja!!

He takes a swing at Johnny who ducks and gets away. There's a knock on a door stage right, where it is still dark.

MRS. C.
 Carmen, are you up? I don't wanta be
 wastin' no time with you neither!

CARMEN
 Yeah, Ma! I'm up!

Mrs. C. opens the door and the lights come on revealing a girl's room stage right. The room is decorated all in pink with posters of movie stars like Marilyn Monroe, Robert Redford and Diane Keaton plastered everywhere. CARMEN is seated at the dressing table looking in a mirror which is ringed with lights. She is playing with her hair. She is very pretty and is dressed and made up to look older than her 16 years. She picks up a bar of soap, but before either she or Mrs. C. has a chance to speak Chretien runs across the stage carrying a bouquet of roses. Carmen looks completely stunned as Chretien gives her the flowers and plucks the bar of soap out of her hand.

CHRETIEN
 'Ey, beautiful... break a leg, eh!

Carmen looks flustered and embarrassed.

CARMEN
 What're you doing!? I need that soap.
 I'm supposed to talk about it!

CHRETIEN
 It's alright. Don't worry, darling.
 Just skip that part!

CARMEN

OhmiGod!

MRS. C.

Is he crazy!?

Mrs. C. looks shocked and covers her mouth with her hand while Carmen tries to recover her composure. Mrs. C. picks up the flowers and throws them back at Chretien.

CARMEN

So, whattaya think?

(She picks up a copy of Screen Digest and flips through the pages. She stops at a picture of a young starlet)

See. I got it from here. Looks just like her, don't it?

MRS. C.

Hey, Carmen, you ain't no movie star! You been hangin' around with that jerky Selena so long, your head's twisted! Why don't you just drop her like Johnny did and come back down to Earth!

CARMEN

Selena's no jerk! You're just jealous, 'cause she's so glamorous, that's all. And anyway, Johnny didn't drop her, it was the other way around.

MRS. C.

Oh yeah? I heard he dropped her so hard she's still bouncin'!

CARMEN

Oh, you just don't understand.

Carmen flips through the pages of her magazine, stops at a picture and then looks at herself in the mirror again.

*(3) MOVIE STARS/MONDAY MORNINGS

CARMEN (CONT'D)

(singing)

Movie Stars, they fascinate me
I want to go to all of their parties
Movie Stars, they drive me crazy
I'm gonna move to Hollywood, it'll
really be amazin'
See, Movie Stars, they know what

(MORE)

CARMEN (CONT'D)

they're doin' They got their own
special way of groovin'
Movie Stars, they are the greatest
I pick up all the papers just to
read about the latest
Movie Stars... Movie Stars...
Movie Stars...
Movie Stars...

Mrs. C. laughs. She teases Carmen, posing like a movie star and playing with her hair. On the other side of the stage Johnny is still running around like a madman while Hinton has given up trying to get him. Johnny faces him and starts to sing right into his face.

JOHNNY

(singing)

I love Monday Mornings
I really, really love to go to school
I love Monday Mornings
They're cool

HINTON

(turning away)

You make me sick, man.

Johnny follows him and sings right at him again.

JOHNNY

(singing)

I love to ride on the crowded subway
With all the people at a quarter to
eight
I love to see what I can find in
their pockets
It's great

Hinton laughs. They slap five and do the secret handshake.

HINTON

Well, alright!

JOHNNY

(singing)

I never pay, I just jump over the
turnstile
All of the cops they are looking for
me
They never catch me, I got wings on
my feet
Look out New York, here comes Johnny
C!

They slap five again and start to dance around the room, throwing things and making a racket. Mrs. C. shakes her head and exits.

CARMEN

(singing)

I was walking along the other day
when I
Bumped into Diane Keaton
She was walking along with Carol
Kane
It looked like this might turn into
a very heavy meetin'

Can I join you, I heard myself say
They looked me up and down with
disdain
Ooooooh, it tore me apart
I didn't think I could ever really
stand the pain

Movie Stars... c'mon I ain't no fake
Movie Stars...

CARMEN AND MRS. C.

(singing together)

...give a poor girl a break!

JOHNNY

(singing)

And when I get on over to the
schoolyard
My two best buddies they are waiting
for me
We split the loot that we got on the
subway
In three

And then we love to go to the bathroom
And cop a joint with all of the kids
We get so high we really enjoy it
And I can even sell a couple of lids!

CARMEN

(singing)

Hey, look at a girl like Suzanne
Somers
Living her life would never be a
bummer
Flash those white teeth and show a
little thigh
And take it from me, girl, she gets
all the guys
See, Movie Stars, they know what
they're doin' They got their own
special way of groovin' Movie Stars,
they're really hip
I wanna hang around with

Movie Stars...

(MORE)

CARMEN (CONT'D)

Movie Stars...
 Movie Stars...
 Movie Stars...

JOHNNY

(singing)

And that's why I love Monday Mornings
 The weekends suck, there's never
 nothin' to do
 I love Monday Mornings
 They're cool...
 They're cool...
 They're cool...

As the two songs end both Carmen and Johnny are heading towards the center of the stage where the lights come up revealing a bathroom in between their two rooms. Carmen gets in first, locks the door and turns on the sink. Johnny bangs on the door loudly as both his room and Carmen's go dark.

JOHNNY (CONT'D)

Hey, c'mon! Get outa there!

CARMEN

Get stuffed!

JOHNNY

Hey, you ain't never gonna look no better, so stop wastin' everybody's time! What the hell are you doin' in there, anyway!?

CARMEN

Swallowin' a bandaid, 'cause my heart's bleedin' for you.

JOHNNY

MAAAAA!!!!

MRS. C.

(loudly from offstage)

Hey, what's all that racket!?

JOHNNY

Carmen's hoggin' the bathroom and she won't get out!

MRS. C.

(offstage)

You wait your turn! Carmen! Get outa there! Breakfast is ready!

Carmen, with a look of sibling anger, turns off the water, opens the door and sticks her tongue out at him. Johnny looks her up and down in disbelief.

JOHNNY

What the hell are you supposed to be anyway? This ain't Halloween! (he turns around) Hey, Hinton, get a loada this!

She pauses a beat and then kicks Johnny squarely in the rump. The stage goes dark and a spotlight comes up downstage center revealing absolutely nothing. Frantically the light moves to the left and right, searching, until it finally comes to rest downstage left on Chretien. He is sitting on a chair writing feverishly in a script he has balanced on his knees. He has a shabby smoking jacket on and is wearing his glasses and smoking a pipe.

CHRETIEN

(muttering to himself
as he takes a drag)

What is this!? Parsley!! I swear, I kill that little brat!

((He looks up, sees
the audience and
exhales sharply,
letting out a huge
cloud of smoke)

Mfff (coughing)... Oh, excusez moi...
is it time for me already?

He hurriedly sticks the pipe in his pocket, takes off his glasses and stands up, hiding the script behind his back. He walks casually towards the center of the stage as he talks.

CHRETIEN (CONT'D)

Well, now you have seen another kind of magique and another kind of love, eh. It is the magique and love of the family! The wondair and the joy of a mother's love for her children! Yes, and the wondair and joy of the love of a brother and a sister! He for she and she for he!

He laughs facetiously and starts to walk towards the wings, but then stops short and looks up at the audience again.

CHRETIEN (CONT'D)

'Ey, by the way, what do you think of this girl who play "Carmen?" One hot ticket, eh!? Her real name is (Carmen)(2) and between you, me and the orchestre I am going to ask her out for after the show tonight! (He pauses for a second) And here you should take careful notice, eh, because what I am talking about now is real love... not something which is part of this soap opera!

He smiles and starts towards the wings again as the stage fades to black.

The lights come up stage right revealing Mrs. C. in the kitchen. She's trying her best to fix up some sort of a breakfast for her crew. Hinton enters stage right and sits down at the table.

HINTON
(chanting musically)
So, what's the de-lay, let's eat to-day!
What's the de-lay, let's eat to-day

MRS. C.
Just hold your horses!

He starts to bang his silverware on the table in time to his chant.

HINTON
What's the de-lay, let's eat to-day!

Johnny and Carmen also enter stage right, see what's happening and sit down at the table. They grab their silverware and join in.

ALL THREE
What's the de-lay, let's eat to-day!

MRS. C.
Holy shit! I'm gonna kill somebody!
I swear I am!

ALL THREE
(louder)
What's the de-lay, let's eat to-day!

MRS. C.
(looking towards heaven)
Good Lord! What kind of life is this!?

The kids "de-lay" chant leads into the intro for the next song. Mrs. C. continues to fix breakfast as she sings while the kids, still using their silverware like maracas, join in.

*(4) DOWN TO THE FOODSTORE

MRS. C. (CONT'D)
(singing)
I go down to the foodstore, buy all
the groceries
Everyone use foodstamps mostly
Pick up some change and go do the
laundry
(MORE)

MRS. C. (CONT'D)

How come they think my life's such a
big spree?

I live one day at a time
And those days hardly shine
I live one day at a time
(sarcastic)
My life is so sublime

By three o'clock I'm back in the
front door
The old man's horny, calls me a big
bore
Food in the oven, out with the vacuum
And he wants a kiss!
What's he think, he's a bridegroom!?

I live one day at a time
Now don't that sound divine?
I live one day at a time
Oh Lord, give me a sign!
Now, my brother Joey he never married
He lives for love alone
He doesn't reap the rewards of
children
(she makes a suggestive
gesture)
He waits until they're grown!

He's such a happy man, don't you
know
He's such a happy man
He's such a happy man, don't you
know
He's such a happy man

Someday they'll all grow up and leave
me
The old man, too and you can believe
me
Never again in this situation
I'm swearing off, no more fornication
I live one day at a time
It's too, too, too divine
I live one day at a time
Oh Lord, where the hell's that sign!?

I'm such a happy girl, don't you
know
I'm such a happy girl
I'm such a happy girl, don't you
know
I'm such a happy girl
(MORE)

MRS. C. (CONT'D)

(She starts to put
away the groceries)

I go down to the foodtstore, buy all
the groceries
Everyone use foodstamps mostly
Down to the foodstore, buy all the
groceries
Everyone use foodstamps mostly

As the song ends Chretien, doing a Carmen Miranda, dances
onstage with castanets.

CHRETIEN

(singing)

Boom chicka boom, boom boom chicka
boom. (To the audience) So you don't
forget me, eh! (He then turns to
Carmen) And that goes especially for
you!

CARMEN

(embarrassed)

OhmiGod!!

The stage goes dark.

The lights come up revealing another area of the park. There
are street vendors all over. They have their goods spread
out on blankets on the ground or makeshift tables. Some are
selling knit caps, some leather ties and belts. Some are
selling food. There are two street mimes in whiteface
performing stage right. Didier enters stage left and crosses
towards them. He joins the small crowd, which even includes
some of the vendors, that is watching the mimes (SALLY and
TONY) who are almost finished with their set.

They get Didier to help them out with their routine and he
awkwardly joins in. The crowd applauds. A few of them,
including Didier, dig into their pockets when Tony passes
the hat.

DIDIER

(putting a coin in
the hat)

That was great. You guys are really
good.

TONY

(bowing grandly)

Thank you!

Didier smiles at Sally. She smiles back. A heavy dose of
flirting. Tony, who has moved along with his hat, doesn't
notice.

SALLY
 (smiling)
 Thanks for helping out.

DIDIER
 (also smiling)
 My pleasure.

SALLY
 You've done mime before.

DIDIER
 (embarrassed)
 No.

SALLY
 (also smiling)
 Oh yeah, I can tell. You're a natural.

Tony finishes his rounds and comes back over.

TONY
 Hey, look what someone stuck in the
 hat.

He pulls a bar of soap out of the hat and holds it up.
 Chretien runs out onstage.

CHRETIEN
 I'll take that!

He plucks the bar of soap out of Tony's hand and runs
 offstage. Tony, Sally and Didier look very surprised but
 continue on anyway.

DIDIER
 See ya... eh...

SALLY
 Sally.

DIDIER
 Didier.

SALLY
 Yeah, so long... Didier.

He starts to walk around looking at the various wares the
 vendors are offering. Every once in awhile he sneaks a peek
 back over his shoulder at Sally and they exchange glances.
 This keeps up for a few moments until he is approached by a
 very nervous MAN.

MAN
 Pssst!

DIDIER

Huh...

MAN

C'mere!

(Didier hesitates)

C'mere!

(He takes something

out of his pocket

and shows it to him)

Genuine Rolex. Check it out!

DIDIER

You mean you wanna sell it?

MAN

Brilliant, Einstein. Of course I
wanna sell it!

DIDIER

Oh, thanks, but I don't need a watch.
When you got nothin' but time, that's
the last thing you need.

MAN

Keep it down, willya! Here, just
take a look at it. It won't bite!

Didier takes it and gives it the once over.

DIDIER

It's beautiful.

MAN

So, what's it worth? What'll you
gimme for it?

DIDIER

Well, I don't really...

MAN

Listen, brother, that watch sells
for seven or eight thousand dollars...

DIDIER

Wow!

MAN

... but, I'll tell you what I'm gonna
do. Ya gimme five hundred bucks and
it's yours. I take the loss.

DIDIER

Five hundred bucks! I haven't got
five hundred bucks!

Didier laughs uncomfortably. Sally, who has been watching this whole exchange, pokes Tony in the side and indicates that he should help out. Tony moseys towards them and tries to look over Didier's shoulder. The watch man keeps turning Didier in different directions trying to cut Tony out.

MAN

Okay, okay, gimme four hundred bucks, take it into any jewelry store in town. If you can't turn it over for five thousand right there I give you double your money back.

DIDIER

So why don't you just take it in yourself?

MAN

I can't do that!!

DIDIER

(laughing)
Why, whadya do, steal it!?

MAN

Shhhhh!! Whattayou stupid!?! Of course I did!!

TONY

Hey, lemme see it.

MAN

Take a hike.

TONY

C'mon, man. Maybe I wanna buy it.
(Didier hands it to him. Tony turns it over and over)
So, how come it's got a battery?
Rolex still makes these things with mechanical movements.

MAN

Will you take a hike.

TONY

(looking the man in the eye)
This thing's a fake.

There's a long pause as they stare at each other. Nobody speaks and the tension mounts. Finally the watch man breaks down and smiles.

MAN

But, it's a good one, right?

TONY
Best I ever saw.

MAN
So, what's a watch like that worth,
huh?
What'll ya gimme for it?

TONY
Well, I don't know...

Suddenly a GUY who has been leaning against a wall on the side watching everything, looks offstage and then smacks the ground with a stick he's holding.

GUY
DT! DT! Pack 'em up!

There's a mad scramble as all the illegal vendors fold up their display blankets and beat it offstage pronto. The watch man grabs his Rolex from Tony.

MAN
Later!

He runs offstage, too.

TONY
(to Didier)
So, you're new in town, huh.

DIDIER
Yeah... how'd you know?

A COP saunters onstage from the direction where the look-out had been. He surveys the area and then exits. The stage goes dark.

A light comes up on Chretien who is downstage center again.

CHRETIEN
(sarcastically)
Phew, that was very exciting, eh?
Very dramatic.
(He then becomes
serious)
But, now I think it is time for a
little change of pace, so I will
sing for you a song which I have
decide to put here to express the
love which I feel.
(The lights become
dim, very romantic)
But, first I need someone to sing
to. 'Ey, (Carmen)(1)! Could you come
out here, please!?
(MORE)

CHRETIEN (CONT'D)

(He warms up his voice
as he waits)

Mmmmmmm... my money, my billing, my
money, my billing, my money, my
billing... 'Ey, (Carmen)(2)! Please!
I need you out here!

(The actress sticks
her head out of the
wings and points to
herself as if to
say, "who me?")

Yes, yes... come here, please.

She doesn't move, so Chretien walks over to the side, takes
her by the hand and leads her back to the center of the stage.

CARMEN

What're you doing!?

CHRETIEN

Have you or have you not tell me
that you do not believe what I have
say to you before?

CARMEN

(looking around
nervously)

Stop it... this is embarrassing!

CHRETIEN

Yes, you have! You have say that you
think I just make all of this up...

CARMEN

Please!

CHRETIEN

...so I have decide to declare myself
in front of all these people so you
will know that I speak the truth!

CARMEN

You can't do that! We're all gonna
get in trouble!

CHRETIEN

Trouble! What care I for this!? I
am a man, am I not!? I must speak my
heart!

CARMEN

(pulling away)

I gotta go...

CHRETIEN

Please...

CARMEN

I don't know what to say to you. I mean I like you very much, but I find it real hard to trust you.

CHRETIEN

What!?

CARMEN

I mean you're always so flip and all. Something tells me to be careful. I'm always afraid you might be putting me on.

CHRETIEN

'Ey, (Carmen)(1), believe me. I am not "putting you on." I mean what I say. For me you are like no one else in the world.

CARMEN

(shrugging)
I don't know...

CHRETIEN

Please... listen to me...

He puts his hands very gently on her shoulders and sings. She is visibly moved throughout the song.

*(5) ALL OF MY LOVE

CHRETIEN (CONT'D)

Incredibly, whenever I'm with you
My fear of love seems to fade
I never knew I could feel so
completely
All of my love goes with you tonight,
my dear

And suddenly, I know where I'm going
Your smile lights my way bright and
clear
Finally, I've found one of life's
meanings
All of my love goes with you tonight,
my dear

In my mind I see your wondrous face
Your awkward, coltish grace
And I know at last I've found a place
Safe in the love and the warmth in
your heart
For me

I've been standing on the sidelines
(MORE)

CHRETIEN (CONT'D)

hiding from love
I never thought this moment could
come
But, through you I found the strength
to stand on my own
And now I will never, never again be
alone

So gratefully, I tell you my feelings
I know that they'll find a home
And tenderly, I tell you I love you
All of my love goes with you tonight
All of my love goes with you tonight,
my dear

CARMEN

(staring at Chretien
as the song ends)
That was very beautiful.

CHRETIEN

Thank you.

CARMEN

You're serious, aren't you? I mean,
you really care.

CHRETIEN

(blushing)
Oui.

He puts his arm around her shoulders and she puts her arm
around his waist as they slowly walk offstage together. The
stage goes dark.

The lights come up abruptly on another area of the park.
There are a number of people around, including strollers,
vendors and people on bikes. A street performer enters stage
right and starts to set up. He is wheeling a beat up old
piano, rigged like a one-man-band, in front of him. He sets
up a mike stand and a portable amplifier. Suddenly we hear a
loud DJ rap as Johnny C. saunters onto the stage with a huge
"ghetto blaster" on his shoulder. He struts over and watches
the performer (FRANKIE) getting ready.

JOHNNY

(yelling offstage)
Yo, Hinton! Check it out! He's here!

FRANKIE

Oh, shit! Not you guys again!

JOHNNY

Just like clockwork, man! We wouldn't
miss your show for nothin'!

Hinton enters and he and Johnny start to dance around in front of Frankie trying to bug him. After a few seconds Carmen enters and stands off to the side.

JOHNNY (CONT'D)

(to Carmen)

Hey, lookit me, man. I'm dancin'...
gimme some money!

HINTON

(to Frankie)

Hey, how come you don't get a real
job, man!?

FRANKIE

I hope you guys are gonna keep it
down when I get started.

CARMEN

Yeah, why don't you guys shut up and
let the man work!

FRANKIE

(bowing)

Well, thank you, ma'am.
(Carmen blushes. She's
smitten)

Just then Leonie enters and Frankie's face lights up.

LEONIE

Hey, Frankie. How's it goin'?

FRANKIE

Leonie! I was wonderin' where you
were.

(He kisses her on the
cheek)

LEONIE

Well, I just finished a set over by
the sheep meadow...

At that point Chretien pops his head onstage and signals to Leonie.

CHRETIEN

Psst! Do it now!!

LEONIE

Now!?

CHRETIEN

Yes, yes!

LEONIE

Alright. (She turns to the others)
Say, are you goin' to the meeting
later?

Frankie looks confused. So do the others.

FRANKIE

Huh?

LEONIE

You really oughta. Everyone'll be
expectin' you.

FRANKIE

(cautiously)

Uh... what meeting?

LEONIE

(as if she's getting
on a soapbox)

Why the organizing meeting for the
Amalgamated Guild of Independent
Street Performers! AGISP. An idea
whose time has come!

Everybody seems confused. They exchange puzzled looks.

FRANKIE

(under his breath)

Are you crazy? This isn't in the
play!

LEONIE

Listen, man, we've been exploited
long enough!

In unity there's strength! (She raises her fist)

FRANKIE

(getting into it)

Who ever heard of organizing street
performers!? We're supposed to be
free spirits. Hey, is tall, blonde
and handsome in on this?

LEONIE

Sour grapes! He's got nothin' to do
with this! C'mon man, we can give
ourselves a voice! AGISP! (Abruptly)
So who're your friends?

FRANKIE

Hey, don't change the subject! I'm
tryin' to...

LEONIE
 (putting her hand
 over Frankie's mouth)
 So, who're your friends? (She pokes
 Johnny) C'mon, that's your cue.

The other actors at this point seem to come out of a fog.

JOHNNY
 Uh... I'm Johnny C. *The Johnny C.*
 and this here's my brother Hinton
 and my sister Carmen.

LEONIE
 (offering her hand)
 I'm Leonie.

They all shake hands. Johnny looks her up and down admiringly.

JOHNNY
 Yeah, you're one fine lookin' lady,
 alright!

She looks him up and down, too.

LEONIE
 And you're one cute *little_boy*.

HINTON
 Listen, Leonie. You don't wanna be
 wastin' your time with no children.
 Not when you got a shot with a real
 man!

LEONIE
 You're right. All I gotta do is find
 one.

JOHNNY
 (pointing at Hinton)
 Burnnnnnn!!

FRANKIE
 (as he finishes with
 his equipment)
 Hey, c'mon, you guys. Help me get an
 audience started.

CARMEN
 Cool!

They all step back and face Frankie's "stage." Frankie puts a hat with a dollar "start-up" money in it in front of his area and then steps back and watches his equipment as if he were part of the audience, too. A crowd starts to form. They are all watching his equipment.

Frankie surveys the crowd to see if it's large enough yet. As they talk a GROUP of performers enters stage left. There are three of them and they are carrying brass instruments. They look like music students. They set up bridge chairs and music stands. They also place a hat in front of their area and put a dollar "start-up" in it.

On the other side of the stage Frankie decides that the audience has become large enough and he jumps out of the crowd and runs over to the piano, plunking himself down. The crowd laughs.

FRANKIE

Hey, folks...(he flashes over the keys in a send-up of cocktail lounge pianists) welcome to Club Central Park! (They laugh) A funny thing happened to me on my way to the Club this afternoon... this bum comes over and asks if I can help him out. He says he lost his job and hasn't had a bite in a week! So I... (he pauses, giving the crowd time to respond)

MAN IN CROWD

So you bit him...

FRANKIE

No way! I gave him a quarter and said, listen, Dad, this is getting embarrassing. Maybe next time you'll listen to me and vote Democratic! (He tinkles away in the cocktail lounge style for emphasis. They laugh) Hey, what a great crowd you are! My name, household word that it is, you all know by heart. But, for those of you who don't have households, like me, it's Frankie, and what you've just seen is *not* an example of my act. So, if you'll stick with me I'd like to play a couple of tunes for you and I think we'll have a great time!

The crowd applauds. Hinton nudges Johnny.

HINTON

Get ready...

FRANKIE

But, before we go any further I just want to let you know that the management of Club Central Park takes no responsibility for your personal

(MORE)

FRANKIE (CONT'D)

belongings. Seriously, folks, there are a lot of pickpockets that work these kinds of crowds here in the park and it's always smart to pay close attention to your valuables. A word to the wise...

As Frankie makes this last remark everyone in the crowd instinctively feels for their wallets and pocketbooks. Hands pat breast pockets, hip pockets and back pockets. Hinton and Johnny, looking like young hawks, note everything. Hinton nudges Johnny and points to a man patting his back pocket. Johnny nods. As the man brings his hands back in front of himself to applaud, Hinton pushes Johnny into him and Johnny lifts the man's wallet.

JOHNNY

(to Hinton)

Hey, watch it, buddy!

(then to man)

Excuse me, mister...

Hinton and Johnny slap five and start to set up the next mark as Frankie begins the intro to a song. Frankie's just about to start singing when the leader of the brass trio gives a count, "One, two, three..." and starts into a Mozart brass piece. The people who are in front of Frankie are getting confused by the cacophony.

One by one they start to wander off. Frankie stops playing.

FRANKIE

Damn! I don't believe this! Wait a minute, folks, don't go away!

The same cop as before strolls onto the stage and watches as Frankie walks over to the other side.

FRANKIE (CONT'D)

(to Trio)

Excuse me...

They ignore him and keep on playing.

FRANKIE (CONT'D)

(impatiently)

Excuse me!

TRUMPET PLAYER

Whattayou want!?

FRANKIE

Well, I guess you didn't notice, but I was here first.

TRUMPET

So?

FRANKIE

So, maybe you guys could find another spot.

Neither one of us is gonna make any money like this.

TRUMPET

So, maybe you could find another spot.

FRANKIE

Hey, this is my spot. I'm here everyday. Who ever saw you before?

The trumpeter gives another count and the trio starts up again, louder than before. Frankie marches off to the other side of the stage, cranks up his amp and starts again. More cacophony.

HINTON

(smacking his hand
with his fist)

Hey, Frankie, you want me to take carea this guy?

JOHNNY

Yeah, he ain't good for business!

FRANKIE

No, that's okay. I'll handle it.

The cop watches as Frankie stomps back over.

FRANKIE (CONT'D)

Hey, listen, man...

TRUMPET

Fuck off...

Frankie turns red and walks angrily back towards his side. The cop stops him.

COP

Hey, Frankie. What's the problem here?

FRANKIE

Hey, Bob. How're you doin'? This guy's giving me a hard time.

COP

Howso?

FRANKIE

Well, I got here first, set up and start giggin'.
The next thing you know along comes this jerk and start blowing the whole deal.

COP

You want me to get 'im outa here?

FRANKIE

Well, I don't know...

COP

All you gotta do is register a complaint and I can tell 'im to move on.

(Frankie shrugs)

The law's the law, Frankie... You wanna register a complaint?

FRANKIE

(after thinking for a second)

Yeah, okay... sure...

COP

Okay.

The cop walks across the stage towards the trio. Frankie goes back to his side and fiddles a bit with his equipment. When the cop gets there the trio stops playing. After a couple of seconds the trio stands up, packs up their instruments and chairs and leaves. The trumpet player gives Frankie the finger.

TRUMPET

I'll be seeing you, man.

The cop walks back over towards Frankie.

FRANKIE

Well alright, Bob. Thanks a lot...

COP

No problem, Frankie... anytime.

Frankie starts to play again but, as always, doesn't get past the intro. This time Bob the Cop stops him.

COP (CONT'D)

Hold it, hold it, Frankie... I'm real sorry, but now you gotta move on...

FRANKIE
 (dumbfounded)
 Huh!?

The cop cracks the gum he's chewing loudly and smiles.

COP
 Well, he registered a complaint,
 too...

FRANKIE
 What!!

COP
 The law's the law, Frankie... let's
 move 'em out!

FRANKIE
 What're you talkin' about?

LEONIE
 Maybe now you see what I mean.
 Organize! That's the name of the
 game!

FRANKIE
 Hey, will you guys cut it out! You're
 walkin' all over my number!

CHRETIEN
 (marching onstage)
 Oh please, (Frankie)(1), don't be so
 stupide. Can't you see I have tell
 this cop to chase you away so we can
 show what life is *really* like for
 the street performer. And anyway,
 what's the big deal, eh? This one
 song is not so important. You have a
bettair one in the next scene!

FRANKIE
 Yeah, but I like this one!

CHRETIEN
 Well, put it in your club act!

Chretien signals to Leonie and Bob the Cop and the three of them start packing up Frankie's gear. Johnny takes advantage of the moment of chaos and grabs a couple of bucks from Frankie's hat. He then joins Carmen and Hinton who, looking very confused, follow Leonie as she pushes Frankie's rig towards the wings.

CHRETIEN (CONT'D)
 (shooing Frankie)
 Allez, go, go...

Frankie, not knowing what else to do, reluctantly walks offstage.

COP
(waving)
Bye, bye, Frankie!

Chretien, coming up behind Bob the Cop, gives him a shove. Bob stumbles offstage.

CHRETIEN
Merci!

Chretien walks downstage center as Bob the Cop exits. The lights dim to black except for a single spotlight on him.

CHRETIEN (CONT'D)
Oh là là... life's a beetch, eh!
There are so many problemes to be a busker. And believe me, this is a topic not to be taken lightly! I know, because most of my life I have been on the streets and I have been chase by many cops... and that is because the performers have no one to speak for them! But, that is a situation that is changing even as I speak!

The stage goes dark.

The lights come up on a new area of the park. Frankie and Carmen, pushing his rig, enter.

CARMEN
So, it must be great bein' in show biz, huh.

FRANKIE
Yeah, it's great. You get to work with some wonderful people. (He looks offstage)

CARMEN
(excited)
Do you know any stars?

FRANKIE
Well, I did some extra work in this flick that Ryan O'Neal was...

CARMEN
Ahhhhh!!!! You know Ryan O'Neal!!!!?

FRANKIE
Well, he was in this flick, see and...

CARMEN
 OhmiGod!! I could die! I can't believe
 you know Ryan O'Neal!!!

FRANKIE
 Yeah, but y'see, I don't really...

CARMEN
 (squealing)
 Eeeeeee...

FRANKIE
 Yeah, but...

CARMEN
 Eeeeeee...

FRANKIE
 (seeing it's no use)
 Well, yeah (he sighs)... Me and
 Ryan... (He locks his two fingers
 together)... like this.

Carmen catches her breath. She's so excited she almost faints.
 She grabs Frankie's arm.

CARMEN
 Frankie... listen, if you were ever
 invited to a party that Ryan O'Neal
 was giving or anything do you think
 you could take me with you?

FRANKIE
 (thinking it over)
 Well...

CARMEN
 I mean, I wouldn't have to be your
 date or anything... I'd kinda just
 go along. So, you wouldn't have to
 worry about me embarrassin' you or
 nothin'.

FRANKIE
 Embarrass me! Are you kiddin'!? As
 we say in the business, you'd make
 one hell of an armpiece!

CARMEN
 Really!?

She throws her arms around Frankie's neck and kisses him.
 Leonie, Johnny and Hinton enter and Carmen turns catty towards
 Leonie.

CARMEN (CONT'D)

So, what're you, his girlfriend or what?

LEONIE

(laughing)

Not any...

FRANKIE

(stepping on her line)

My girlfriend. Ha! Y'see, (Leonie)(1)... I mean, Leonie... is waiting for Mr. Right. Her only problem is she keeps going for these great looking guys who run about as deep as their mirrors. See, you and Chretien aren't the only ones who can improvise around here. (He flashes her a big grin)

Leonie stares darkly at him while the rest just sit there looking uncomfortable.

CARMEN

(trying to get things back on track)

Uh... So, what're you, his girlfriend or what?

(Leonie doesn't respond, so she pokes her)

I said, what're you, his girlfriend or what!?

LEONIE

(while staring daggers at Frankie)

No. Not any more. We're just friends now.

CARMEN, HINTON AND JOHNNY

Alright!

CARMEN

(looking dreamily at Frankie)

My God... me an armpiece. Wait'll I tell Selena!

FRANKIE

Who?

CARMEN

Selena! She's the greatest! She dumped him!

JOHNNY

Hah! That's a laugh. (To Leonie)
 Hey, she's just my sister's stupid
 friend, that's all. So, you don't
 have to worry about her none. I'm
 looking for a real woman. Like you!

Leonie winces.

FRANKIE

So, I guess it looks like everybody's
 in the same boat, huh. Nobody wants
 what they got, only what they ain't
 got, and when they finally get what
 they ain't got, which is what they
 want, they still ain't got what they
 want!

Everybody looks confused and stops for a second to think
 this one over.

LEONIE

Huh?

HINTON

You wanna run that by me again.

FRANKIE

C'mon, listen up, you guys.

He takes the bench off the top of his piano and sits down.

*(6) MYRNA P.

FRANKIE (CONT'D)

(singing)

Are you down, not happy like me?
 That's not the way to be
 Just be thankful for the things that
 you've got
 And don't ever be like Myrna P.

Well, let me tell you 'bout this
 girl that I knew
 She wasn't happy with her lot in
 life
 She wouldn't hang around with all
 the fellas in town
 She only wanted to be a millionaire's
 wife... and she was

Lonely... lonely
 She was lonely as she could be
 She was lonely... sad and lonely
 Lonely Myrna P.

(MORE)

FRANKIE (CONT'D)

She wasn't born too stupid
To be touched by Cupid
She just refused to see
She thought she was so cute
That wasn't her long suit
It was just her fantasy... and she
died

Lonely... old and lonely
She was lonely as she could be
She died lonely... old, broke and
lonely
Take a lesson from Myrna P.

Lonely, she was lonely
She was lonely as she could be
Lonely, she was lonely
She was lonely as she could be
Take a lesson... from Myrna P.

They all dance. When the number is over we start to hear loud arguing coming from backstage. The actors try to ignore it, but it is so loud and obvious that that becomes harder and harder to do.

VOICE

(offstage)

Forget it, man! You just can't keep changing things around whenever you feel like it!

CHRETIEN

(offstage)

I can, I did, and I will!

VOICE

(offstage)

I mean, where do you come off just sticking that song in where you did!? Your love life doesn't happen to be what we're concerned with here! And, what's all this crap about a guild!? I didn't write that!

CHRETIEN

(offstage)

I don't know what you are complaining about. First of all the song, she work. It was beautiful! And the Guild... well, that is an idea whose time has come!!

VOICE

(offstage)

That's not the point!

CHRETIEN

(offstage)

It is for me!

VOICE

(offstage)

Look man, we gotta have a little order around here... otherwise it's anarchy!

CHRETIEN

(offstage)

'Ey, 'Oh-ward, you are the capitaine. Is it my fault if you cannot control your ship!?

VOICE

(offstage)

Alright, look, what's done is done. I'm willing to forget everything that's happened so far. What were talking about now is the "soap" scene.

CHRETIEN

(offstage)

Which I won't do!

VOICE

(offstage)

But, you have to!!

CHRETIEN

(offstage)

I do not, and I will not!!

VOICE

(offstage)

Are you crazy!? You *have* to do it the way I wrote it! This is still my play, y'know!

Chretien, brandishing his script, storms onstage yelling back over his shoulder.

CHRETIEN

'Ey, you are the one who is crazy! If you do not like it, then you get somebody else! Believe me, tomorrow you will thank me, eh!

VOICE

(offstage)

Get back here!

Chretien marches across the stage right towards the front. The rest of the people onstage have, by now, given up all

pretense of not seeing what is going on and stop what they are doing to watch.

CHRETIEN

(to audience)

Now I tell you something! The way I am telling this story may not be exactly the way the authair has wrote it, but believe me, it is much, much bettair! So what is my thanks for this help I am giving!? He yell at me!!

SECOND VOICE

(offstage)

Psssst...

CHRETIEN

(looking in that direction)

Ehh?

SECOND VOICE

(offstage)

Pssssttt...

CHRETIEN

(testily)

Not now! Can't you see I'm busy!?

A hand comes out of the wings and signals for Chretien to come over.

SECOND VOICE

(offstage)

Psst...psst!

CHRETIEN

Go away! Shoo!!

The hand is followed by the body it belongs to, Charlie the stagehand, who sheepishly makes his way across the stage towards Chretien. He grins nervously at the audience. Chretien looks aghast.

CHRETIEN (CONT'D)

But, what is this!? What are you doing here!? Can't you see there is a play going on!?

The stagehand says something inaudible as he approaches Chretien.

CHRETIEN (CONT'D)

What! What!?! Speak up! I cannot hear a thing you say!

The stagehand reaches Chretien's side and starts to whisper in his ear. As he continues Chretien's face begins to drop. Chretien slaps himself in the forehead.

CHRETIEN (CONT'D)

Oh, merde alors! Mais qu'est-ce qu'il est bete! What do you think this is!? You cannot buy me!! (He yells offstage) 'Ey, Goldberg, I do not want your dirty money! I have my pride, eh!!

He mutters loudly to himself for a few beats and then glares icily at the stagehand who has been standing next to him staring in awe at the audience. The stagehand, feeling the withering glance, turns slowly and looks at Chretien.

CHRETIEN (CONT'D)

(tapping his foot)

Well?

The stagehand laughs nervously and makes a beeline for the wings. Chretien finally composes himself enough to go on.

CHRETIEN (CONT'D)

Now, here is the thing. Once upon a time the authair make a cinema which has no plot and everyone say to him, "Oh-ward, the movie is sooo good and sooo funny, but where is the plot!?" So, this time he has stick in too much plot. I think it is, how you call, peer pressure, oui. So, all I have do is take out the things which are stupide and silly...(he taps the script furiously with his finger) even though *he* thinks they are soooo good!

(He makes a face and then becomes solemn and dramatic)

A...MAGIQUEAL...BAR...OF...SOAP... Can you believe that was in this play until I have take it out. And anyone who wash with this bar of soap is suppose to fall in true love with the person who give it to them! Where does this bar of soap come from? I do not know... the authair does not say. Who has make this bar of soap? I do not know... the authair does not say! Oh là là... I am embarrass... but really!

Now, for me, I am sure that the authair think that maybe this bar of

(MORE)

CHRETIEN (CONT'D)

soap is, how you call, a metaphor, oui. Perhaps he think that with this bar of soap he is saying that we must "wash" away all of our misconceptions about love. Oy vey!

But, if he need a metaphor, why soap!? Why not...

(He thinks)

ice cream!? Alors là! Like love it is wet and refreshing and satisfy your immediate need. But, also like love, you always want more! Your hunger is never satisfy, your thirst she is never quench! (Triumphantly) Now, that is my idea of a metaphor! (Pause) But, in this play there is no need for the metaphor. It's a musical! So me, I take out this soap and other things just as stupide, and I make this a *real* story about *real* people who are able to fall in love without magique soap!! So, if the authair does not like it, tomorrow you can come back and see it the way he has wrote it- stupide and silly- because there will be no more Chretien!

He puts his hands on his hips. The other actors on the stage don't seem to know quite what to do. Leonie smacks Chretien on the back.

LEONIE

Well, alright! You did the right thing, man. That soap stuff really had to go. (She raises her clenched fist) AGISP!!

CHRETIEN

(raising his fist, too)

AGISP!! (They slap high five, then Chretien turns back to the audience) Ah, so you see! I am not alone in my opinion, eh!

They all walk offstage together while discussing the situation among themselves. When the stage is empty we begin to hear voices from the wings again.

VOICE

(offstage)

So, now what, big shot!?

CHRETIEN

(offstage)

'Ey, 'Oh-ward, please! I am thinking!
You have take four years, the least
you can do is give me two secondes!

GIRL'S VOICE

(offstage)

Oh, let me go on! I can do it! Please!
I know the whole next song!

A very pretty GIRL starts to run onstage. Chretien steps out of the wings and catches her by the arm.

CHRETIEN

Not now!

GIRL

You owe me at least *that* much!

VOICE

(offstage, pleading)

Please. I put so much work into this.
Why can't you just do it the way I
wrote it!?

Chretien, with Leonie hot on his heels, starts pacing on and off stage.

CHRETIEN

(defiantly)

Nevair!!! Look, 'Oh-ward, you have
wrote a very nice play. Really you
have. But, you must understand that
it is dated! This sort of magiqueal
fairy tale that you tell is old,
old, old, old, old! (Sarcastic) "Siren
forces are everywhere!" (He laughs)
Nobody want to hear these lies
anymore!

LEONIE

He's right, Howard. I mean, the way
you wrote it with that magic soap
and all, it's like almost just for
kids. It should be much more important
than that. More relevant!

CHRETIEN

What are you, anyway? Anti-union!

VOICE

(offstage, defensively)

No, I'm not anti-union, but...

LEONIE

Howard, you have a chance to make history here. You could be the Samuel Gompers of street performing!

VOICE

(offstage)

Oh, I don't know. Maybe you're right. I mean, I never thought it was "Gone With the Wind" or anything, but I always thought it at least had some interesting insights into love.

(Leonie and Chretien

both shake their heads slowly from side to side)

Well, everyone seemed to like it before!

(They shake their heads again)

I'm so confused!

CHRETIEN

'Ey, 'Oh-ward, don't worry. Just leave it up to me. I take care of everything. I will make this a great play!

VOICE

(offstage, reluctantly)

Well, I guess... I mean, if you really think...

CHRETIEN

Ah, bravo! Now you are talking!

(Pause)

'Ey, by the way, 'Oh-ward, give me the key to the office, please.

VOICE

(offstage)

What for!?

CHRETIEN

(reprovingly)

'Oh-ward...

VOICE

(offstage, whining)

Aw, c'mon, man. Why can't I keep the key?

CHRETIEN

(firmly)

'Oh-ward...

There's a long pause.

VOICE
 (finally giving in)
 Oh, alright.

CHRETIEN
 (patronizingly)
 Merci.

Chretien walks onstage rapidly and pulls the pretty girl into a huddle. As he whispers to her furiously she keeps touching him. Each time, he pushes her hand away and looks nervously offstage. She pulls away from him.

GIRL
 Don't you care at all!? You sure did before!

CHRETIEN
 Please! Now is not the time!

He pulls her back into a huddle, gesticulating wildly as he continues to whisper in her ear. She pulls away again.

GIRL
 So, what does she have that I don't have?

CHRETIEN
 Will you please!

He pulls her back into their huddle for a few seconds. They finally break and she starts to walk away. Chretien, having second thoughts, stops her and they huddle again.

CHRETIEN (CONT'D)
 (breaking away)
 Allez! Go, go...

He gives her a little push and she walks confidently across the stage carrying a microphone. Chretien disappears offstage and comes back with four of the other actresses. He huddles with them for a few seconds, too, and they then position themselves in a group near the first actress. They all face the audience. As the girl talks the set changes. Park scenes are hauled into the flies and exchanged for scenery which looks more like a rock concert.

GIRL
 (hardly pausing for a breath)
 Hi, my name is (Selena)(2), and I'm the girl who plays Selena. Now, in the play the way it was originally written there was this other character who was like some kinda magical person who had something or other to do
 (MORE)

GIRL (CONT'D)

with all that soap stuff that Chretien took out, so now there's a hole 'cause she was supposed to sing this song "Pain in my Heart" at the end of the scene which was originally here, so while Chretien finishes thinking he wants me to sing it 'cause in the play I just broke up with Johnny C. who used to be my boyfriend and I'm like really going through a bad time.

(She pauses. It looks like she can't make up her mind about something, but then plunges ahead)

And anyway, it's even more interesting when you know that I really used to go out with (Johnny)(2), the guy who plays Johnny C., but I stopped seeing him so I could have this thing with this other guy that didn't work out all that well, so I'm going through the same kinda thing as the character I play 'cause I'm still crazy about this other guy. So, maybe if a certain French boy would listen to this song then that certain French boy would know how I feel.

The lights dim on the stage leaving the actress beautifully spotlit.

*(7) PAIN IN MY HEART

SELENA

(Singing; the other four actresses sing back-up)

I feel pain in my heart for all the old faces
Pain in my heart for all the old traces of
Our love
Our love

I feel pain in my heart for all the shared places
Pain in my heart for all the shared grace of
Our love
Our love

And I wonder if I'm ever gonna fall in love again
If I'm ever gonna feel this way again

(MORE)

SELENA (CONT'D)

If I'm ever gonna find a love again

I feel pain in my heart for our lost
embraces

Pain in my heart 'cause nothing
replaces

Our love
Our love

And I wonder if I'm ever gonna fall
in love again

If I'm ever gonna feel this way again

If I'm ever gonna find a love again

You're mine, I know you are

You're mine, and we'll go far

You're mine, I know you are

You're mine, we'll reach the stars

The stars

The stars

Reach the stars

And I wonder if I'm ever gonna fall
in love again

If I'm ever gonna feel this way again

If I'm ever gonna find a love again

I feel pain in my heart for all the
old faces

Pain in my heart for all the old
traces of

Our love
Our love

As she finishes the song the lights come up and she walks towards the wings. Chretien steps out a couple of feet to usher her quickly offstage. He is wearing his glasses and carrying his script. He is completely distracted and making endless notes.

CHRETIEN

Merci, chere ami...

Selena puts the minor moves on him, but Chretien rebuffs her.

CHRETIEN (CONT'D)

(clucking his tongue
and wagging his finger
at her)

Ts, ts, ts, ts... please! We must
move along. Now is not the time, eh.

He hustles her offstage and the lights go out.

The lights come up on an area of the park that is set up almost like a staging area for street performers. There are all sorts of them around. In one corner some jugglers are practicing. Next to them two tap dancers are warming up on a folding piece of wood that they use as a stage. Next to them is a violinist doing scales and arpeggios. There is much interaction between the different groups as they try to get ready. Didier, Sally and Tony are center stage right. Sally is putting mime make-up on Didier while Tony is talking. Tony is so wrapped up in what he is saying that he doesn't notice the rather obvious flirting going on between Sally and Didier.

TONY

So, the first coupla times we'd just go out there, y'know and she'd do the robot, I'd do the robot.
(He demonstrates and Didier laughs)
We didn't pass the hat or nothin'.
Then we decided to try that and pretty soon we're makin' forty, fifty dollars a day and I say, hey, we got a job!

DIDIER

That's great.

TONY

Yeah, so now on a typical day we hit Sixth Avenue first and do the Time and Life Building from twelve-thirty to one. Then we walk down the block to Forty-eighth Street and do a set there from one to one-thirty. Then it's back to the Time and Life from one-thirty to two. Two o'clock we're on our way to the Rockefeller Center. Then the park. Then home.

Didier nods. Sally steps back a foot and takes a look at the "mask" she's creating for Didier.

SALLY

Hey, you're gonna be great!

DIDIER

Really?

SALLY

Oh yeah, you're a natural.

Didier starts to move around a bit, practicing some of the moves his two new friends have shown him. He's good and they both look pleased.

DIDIER

Like this?

TONY

Yeah, that's it. Go, baby, go!

Didier slides up behind one of the jugglers and mimics him beautifully. Most of the other people onstage notice and laugh.

Just then Selena enters from the other side of the stage.

SELENA

(waving)

Yoo hoo... Didier... Hello!

(She walks directly
over to him and gets
a dreamy look on her
face)

Hello, Didier. You look wonderful.

DIDIER

(smiling)

Thanks. Sally did it.

SALLY

(peevd)

I can see we'll never get anything
done around here.

(She grabs Didier's
hand and, picking up
her make-up kit,
starts to lead him
offstage)

C'mon, let's find someplace we can
finish this up... alone.

SELENA

(confused)

But, wait a minute! I'm supposed to
talk to you!

Didier smiles at Selena and shrugs as if to say, "what can I do?" He also smiles at Sally, who returns his smile... and how. They exit arm in arm as Frankie, Leonie, Johnny, Hinton and Carmen enter from the opposite side pushing Frankie's rig in front of them.

TONY

Hey, Frankie! Just the man I wanted
to see!

CARMEN

Ahhh!! Selena!!

SELENA

OhmiGod! Carmen!!

JOHNNY

Oh no, not her!

Selena gives him an icy stare.

CARMEN

I can't believe it! What're you doing here!?

Selena stops dead in her tracks. She looks completely lost.

SELENA

Uh... I don't know.

There's a long pause.

CARMEN

Huh?

SELENA

I don't know. I mean I *really* don't know. (Under her breath) Chretien just told me to come out and talk to Didier... he didn't tell me why!

CARMEN

But, he told me to ask you what you were doing here!

FRANKIE

(shaking his head)

Beautiful! He's off to a great start.

CHRETIEN

(sticking his head
out of the wings
stage left)

Psst...psst!

Selena runs over to him and he hands her a piece of paper which she reads while he talks at top speed in her ear. He writes something on the paper and points at Johnny. Selena nods and runs back over to the other actors. She jerks her head at Carmen who doesn't understand what she wants. She jerks her head at her again and grimaces.

SELENA

(under her breath)

Ask me again.

CARMEN

Huh?

SELENA

(still whispering)

Go ahead! Ask me again what I'm doing here.

CARMEN

Oh!! (She pauses for a second and gets back into character) Selena! What're you doing here!?

SELENA

(in one breath)

Well, I ran away from home this morning to become a street performer and I met these guys, Tony and Sally and Didier and they said I should come join them and help organize AGISP, the Amalgamated Guild of Independent Street Performers, because it's an idea whose time has come! And... (she pauses and thinks. She looks at the paper in her hand) Oh yeah... and the reason I ran away was because of Johnny C. who broke my heart when he dumped me... dumped me!!? (she looks angrily offstage)

FRANKIE

That's it?

SELENA

Yeah... except I'm also supposed to say that now I have a crush on Didier.

FRANKIE

Oh, brother. You gotta be kiddin'. He's got everything but the kitchen sink thrown in there. (He pauses) So, now what?

Selena shows the piece of paper she's holding to Johnny. Everybody else looks over their shoulders.

SELENA

So, all of this gets cut out and you're supposed to say this. Then we go down to here and sing the song and then everything just goes on the way it was supposed to until here. Okay?

She hands him the paper.

JOHNNY

Good news, man! I been waitin' all day to sing this song, 'cause it really tells it like it is!

CARMEN

(making a face)

Oh, you are sooo gross!

(MORE)

CARMEN (CONT'D)

(to Selena) He's just jealous 'cause
you're so sophisticated and all he
ever did was look pathetic in
comparison.

JOHNNY

Dream on!

SELENA

Oh, Carmen, don't even waste your
breath. He's such a little person.
Just ignore him. Maybe he'll go away.

JOHNNY

(to Leonie)

See. I told you she was a dope.

*(8) SELENA

CARMEN

(singing)

Selena, she's so slick She is really
cool

JOHNNY

(singing)

Selena, what a jerk
She is such a tool

Everybody laughs.

CARMEN

(singing, defensively)

Selena's known all the finest people
Since she was born

JOHNNY

(singing)

So how come every time she speaks
All I can do is yawn

SELENA

(singing, grandly)

Oh, give the boy a wide, wide berth
To be seen with him's bizarre
One must maintain one's image
When one is a star

Johnny imitates Selena's "grand" manner.

CARMEN

(singing)

Selena wears all the latest fashions
Straight from Saks

JOHNNY

(singing and modeling)
 Hey, whattaya thinka my new Dior
 Off the rack and on my back

SELENA

(singing,
 condescendingly)
 How wonderful to be so smart
 It really must be great
 Someday I hope to be like him
 (she clasps her hands
 dramatically towards
 heaven)
 Oh, please don't make me wait!

Selena whispers something in Carmen's ear and they both giggle.

CARMEN

(singing)
 Selena's sorry she dumped you but
 High School sex is
 Passé, declassé

JOHNNY

(singing)
 That's a crummy excuse, 'cause it
 ain't no use
 She couldn't even give it away

SELENA

(singing)
 Oh, it is so difficult
 It really is a pain
 Dealing with this "element" When one
 has a brain!

She and Carmen both fold their arms angrily across their chests and turn their backs on Johnny. He and Hinton laugh and slap five.

As the song ends Didier and Sally enter and walk across the stage hand in hand. They're both smiling. Didier's make-up is almost completely worn off and he's wiping the remainder off with a hand towel.

SALLY

(a little too quickly)
 We couldn't get it exactly the way
 we wanted, so we'll have to try again
 later.

She wipes a smudge of make-up off her face and giggles. Didier laughs. Tony starts to catch on a little.

Leonie turns towards them just as they arrive and she and Didier wind up staring right into each others eyes. They both look stunned. Their eyes lock and they stay that way for quite some time. Everybody looks at them.

They're so obvious that it's almost embarrassing. Sally and Selena try to insinuate themselves between them as do Johnny, Hinton and Frankie.

SALLY (CONT'D)

Y'know, I think maybe we oughta try
and finish that now!

JOHNNY

Yeah, you wanna be sure you get it
right!

SELENA

(nodding her head
furiously)

Good idea, very good idea! I'll help!

Selena and Sally start to pull Didier in one direction while Hinton, Johnny and Frankie try to cut Leonie in the other. But, Leonie and Didier both spin away from the others and wind up facing each other again.

LEONIE

Hi.

DIDIER

Hi.

LEONIE

I'm Leonie.

DIDIER

I'm Didier.

They take a step towards each other and shake hands. Neither one of them lets go as they continue to stare into each others eyes. The others try to get them apart as FIREWORKS EXPLODE behind their heads. Ignoring everything, Leonie and Didier move closer to each other

DIDIER (CONT'D)

I've been looking for you...

They're just about to kiss when the house lights suddenly come up and a burly looking MAN with a clipboard barrels onstage heading straight for the middle of the crowd.

MAN

Hey, which one of youse is Leonie?
(He mispronounces it)

LEONIE
 (correcting him)
 Leonie. I am.

MAN
 Yeah, Leonie (again wrong). Chretien told me to talk to you. (Leonie looks confused) I'm Louie Lipestro. (She still looks confused) From AGISP. I'm the organizer.

LEONIE
 (snapping to attention)
 Oh, yeah! Louie! How ya doin'! We were waitin' for you!

She grabs his hand and shakes it heartily.

LOUIE
 Boy, I never done nothin' like this before.
 (He looks at the audience, shielding his eyes from the lights so he can see better. He shrugs)
 Somethin' new everyday.

LEONIE
 Hey, listen up everybody! I want you to meet Louie Lipestro from AGISP. He's gonna tell us all about the Guild.

One by one the different performers wander over. They form a small group around Louie. Frankie stands off to one side leaning against his piano. Carmen sticks close to him.

LOUIE
 First off, lemme give you one of these. (He passes around sheets of paper) That's somethin' you can take home and read later. It'll tell ya about somea the protection AGISP is gonna give ya.

Frankie hands his paper back to Louie.

FRANKIE
 Here. I don't need this.

LOUIE
 What's a matter, you're special? You don't need no protection?

FRANKIE

Not that I'm aware of. I mean, I don't know what the hell you guys are sellin'. This ain't the docks, y'know. What're you gonna do? Set up minimum amounts you'll let people throw in your hat! Gimme a break!

LOUIE

(laughing)

Boy, I'll tell ya, there's always one in every bunch.

LEONIE

Hey, why don't you shut up already.

FRANKIE

Alright! Frankie says, relax!

He makes a graceful bow to Louie indicating that the floor is all his. He then leans against his piano again.

LOUIE

Well, okay... now, first off I'm gonna talk about conflicts a interest.

(Everybody listens carefully. Louie checks to make sure that Frankie's paying attention)

Now, let's say for argument's sake that you got two acts which are the same. Well, we don't stand for that, see. So, if you wanna get in, but we already got someone doin' what you do, well, then you gotta change your act or forget it. See, that's protection!

FRANKIE

(unable to resist)

What's a matter. Didn't you ever hear of competition?

LOUIE

Sure, I heard of it. But, we don't need it.

SALLY

Yeah, but how about someone like Didier? I mean, here we are training him to be a mime like us. With your rules he wouldn't be able to work.

LOUIE

Well, your friend here is a special case, see. It wouldn't matter whether his act was like yours or not, 'cause he still wouldn't be allowed to work.

DIDIER

Whattaya mean?

LOUIE

Well, we gotta keep amateurs out, see. So, in order to join up you gotta have experience performing on the streets.

SALLY

So, how about if he gets some experience? Then he could join, right?

LOUIE

Well, that's right, except that he can't get no experience, 'cause if he ain't a member he don't work the streets of New York. We'll be policin' that kinda stuff. Just like the big unions. That's what you call a closed shop!

SALLY

But that's crazy! How will he be able to get in?

LOUIE

Well, I'm not sure. We ain't figured that out yet.
Maybe he could join as a mover.

DIDIER

A mover?

LOUIE

Yeah. You know. People who just move equipment. Like roadies.

FRANKIE

Roadies! Hey, I think you're all crazy! I don't even understand why all this is happening! Everybody sure liked the play the way it was back when we were auditioning.

Chretien, still holding his script and wearing his glasses, half steps out of the wings.

CHRETIEN

'Ey, (Frankie)(1), please! You must not be so disruptive!

LOUIE

Yeah, especially when I'm just gettin'
to the best part.

FRANKIE

The best part?

LOUIE

Yeah, I wanna tell ya about the
pension plan!

FRANKIE

Pension plan!! Hey, I don't know
what the hell you guys think you're
doing, but this is all wrong!

CHRETIEN

(sarcastically)

Oh, is that so!? You must tell us
why... we are all holding our breaths!
(He laughs)

FRANKIE

Well, I can't put it into words,
man. I just know it's wrong!

MAN IN AUDIENCE

(loudly)

I can.

CHRETIEN

(shocked)

I beg your pardon!?

The MAN, who is wearing a tweed suit and a bow tie, stands
up.

MAN

I can put it into words.

CHRETIEN

(laughing)

Well, I am sure we would all be
fascinated with your opinion, but
this does not happen to be your show,
so I will thank you to keep your
comments to yourself.

MAN

I'd rather not. I've sat here watching
you make a mockery of everything
good that unions stand for, and I
think I've had just about enough!

CHRETIEN

(sarcastic)

Ohhhhhh... a mockery! Well, I did not know this! I was not aware that we had such an authority in the audience, Monsieur...?

MAN

Breitenbacher. Eugene A.
Breitenbacher. Adjunct Professor at
New York University...

CHRETIEN

(nervously)

Ohh...

MAN

...where I specialize in the study
of union organizing.

CHRETIEN

(hurriedly)

Well, thank you so very much for
your thoughts, but now, moving right
along...

MAN

(lecturing)

And I just want to say that what
this man instinctively senses is
true. The type of system that you
are developing here completely
overlooks all of the elements which
are positive and exciting in the
birth of a new union and skips
directly to the bloated bureaucracy
normally the result of years of abuse
and neglect of the democratic process.

CHRETIEN

But, who really care?

MAN

So, I say to you bravo, sir, for
your achievement is truly remarkable,
but I, for one, am not interested in
aiding you further! Movers indeed!

He starts to leave.

CHRETIEN

(yelling after him)

Capitalist pig!!

MAN

(turning back)

Commie pinko!!

He exits the back of the theatre.

FRANKIE

Yeah, and that goes for me, too,
man! I couldn't've said it better
myself!

LEONIE

Better!? You couldn't've even said
it yourself, period!

FRANKIE

Yeah? Well, you can count me out,
too!

He storms off the stage, breezing past Chretien.

CHRETIEN

Deserter!!

CARMEN

Frankie! (She looks like she's not
sure whether to go or stay)

LEONIE

(to Chretien)
So, now what?

CHRETIEN

Never mind, never mind! We just
continue on without him, that is
all! I write him out of the script
just like that! (He snaps his fingers)

VOICE

(offstage)
Psst. Hey, Chretien.

CHRETIEN

'Oh-ward, please! I don't need any
trouble from you too, eh! (Didier)(1),
please take this (prop) backstage.
Shlep! Shlep!

(He walks across the
stage towards Louie)
Ah, mon ami. I must apologize.

LOUIE

Hey, that's okay.

CHRETIEN

Some overeducated people just cannot
understand. Grass roots movements
like this are beyond them.

LOUIE

That's okay. I seen plenty like them before.

CHRETIEN

(to the audience)

Alors, please! Can I have a round of applause for this selfless man who has take so much time out of his busy schedule to come down here and talk with us today! (He starts the applause himself. Some of the other actors join in) Merci, Louie. You are too kind!

LOUIE

(modestly)

Hey, what can I say. It's the least I can do.

Chretien applauds him all the way offstage. The other actors start to leave too, as Chretien makes his way back towards the front of the stage. Leonie and Didier, who are again holding hands and staring into each others eyes, are the last to leave as the stage and the house lights gradually dim to black leaving Chretien alone lit by a single spotlight. As he talks, dim lights begin to appear behind him until, by the time he is almost finished, the atmosphere on the now empty stage is smoky and lush and beautiful.

CHRETIEN

So, now I think you will agree that even though there are still a few wrinkles for the ironing, we start to see the beginnings of a play with a real cohesive social structure, eh! A play with a message. And, for this, I take credit. We begin to organize something here which can make a difference in the world! And, at the same time, we still have not lost sight of our main theme, which is love!

Oui, I know that also need a little ironing. I confess that even I am a little confuse over this big mish-mosh of love that we have here. (He looks at his notes and shakes his head) Everybody is in love with everybody else! Both in the show and outside the show!

BUT!!

(MORE)

CHRETIEN (CONT'D)

(He looks up from his notes) Even with all this mix-up and hullabaloo there is still one love that shine through all the others, one love which does not look for the grass which is greener, and that love is the love we are most concern with... our love at first sight... without magiqueal soap!

So, now Leonie has gone home and she sleep... and what you will see behind me will be her dream and it will be beautiful? That is because a dream is the only real magique. A dream is where all things can happen, and do. So, now you watch Leonie's dream with me?

*(9) BORN TO LOVE

He walks offstage and after a few moments Leonie and Didier enter from opposite sides and walk towards each other. They meet in the center. The music begins and they dance a very beautiful and evocative lovers' *pas_de_deux*. When the dance ends the lights gradually dim until the stage is black.

After a few moments a spotlight comes up downstage center on Chretien.

CHRETIEN (CONT'D)

Alors, now we have seen how Leonie feel about all this, and after the intermission I will show you what Didier think also. So, now go get something to drink, if they serve these things here, or have a cigarette if you must, although it will probably kill you. That is why I always skip the cigarette and have the drink instead. And this time, believe me, I need the drink! (He fans the pages of the script he's holding) I have much work to do! (He starts to leave and then stops short) Oh! And for those of you who are still under my spell, there is Puppy Chow on sale in the lobby!

He laughs and runs offstage as the houselights come up.

END OF FIRST ACT

INTERMISSION

During the intermission Johnny and Hinton make their way through the audience who are in their seats and in the lobby (where Puppy Chow is being sold) handing out union flyers to everyone.

THE FLYERS READ:

* * *

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THE AMALGAMATED GUILD FOR INDEPENDENT STREET PERFORMERS

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* * *

Towards the end of the intermission while the houselights are still on, a couple of stagehands are busy finishing some last minute business on the stage and talking to some of the cast members who keep wandering on and offstage. The audience is given the signal to return to their seats. Just as they finally settle down, Chretien and Carmen enter (right) and walk slowly across the stage. They are lost in conversation and are completely unaware of the stagehands and the audience. Chretien is agitated and using his hands a great deal. Carmen is trying to calm him down. The stagehands finish what they are doing and leave while Chretien and Carmen are talking.

CHRETIEN

I just do not understand what you see in him!

CARMEN

Stop it! Don't be silly! I hardly even know the man!

CHRETIEN

But, you are like a little baby girl with him!

CARMEN

I'm supposed to be! It's part of the play!

CHRETIEN

(sighing loudly)

Well, perhaps you are too convincing because to me it look like something is really happen! Maybe you enjoy your work too much! I think it's a good thing I have take this (Frankie)(1) out of the show!

CARMEN

Oh! Now you're being ridiculous, and I don't like it one bit! And that's another thing. I'm getting sick and tired of the way you keep changing everything around. I happen to have liked the play the way it was before!

CHRETIEN

Mais, c'est pas possible! This Goldberg does not know the first thing about love!

CARMEN

And you do!?! All I've heard so far is a bunch of stuff about unions!

CHRETIEN

But, the things *he* has say were all lies! He did not tell the truth!

CARMEN

That's your opinion. I mean, whattayou know about the truth? Whattayou have some special insight the rest of us don't have?

CHRETIEN

'Ey, (Carmen)(1), everybody know the truth. But, the trick is that everyone know a different truth. And everyone is right and everyone is wrong. And if you take all of these different truths and put them all together they will only scratch the surface of the real truth!

CARMEN

(sarcastically)

Which you know.

Chretien shrugs modestly.

They continue walking and exit stage left. As they leave the stage Frankie pops out from the wings stage right. He takes a furtive look all around and then runs back offstage. He returns wheeling his rig in front of him, takes the bench off the top of the piano and adjusts himself.

FRANKIE

We'll just see who's outa the show.

He again starts the introduction to the song that he keeps trying to play. He has a big smile on his face as if to say "finally!" Just as he's about to start singing, a loud trumpet playing a swing version of "Reveille" stops him short and he almost falls off his seat as the Trumpet Player from the brass trio in the first act saunters down the aisle from the back of the house. He walks up onto the stage and smiles at Frankie. He pauses just long enough to speak.

TRUMPET PLAYER

How ya doin', pal? Hope you didn't think you could sneak back that easy.

He starts to play again.

FRANKIE

Shit!

The stage and the house go dark.

SECOND ACT

The Trumpet Player is still wailing away as the lights come up gradually, almost like the dawn, on a wooded area of the park. Didier is lying in his sleeping bag underneath a tree. He hears "Reveille" and wakes up smiling. He jumps out of his bag, gives a snappy military salute in response to the trumpet music (which then fades out) and washes his face and brushes his teeth at a drinking fountain. He then starts enthusiastically packing up his things as the music begins.

*(10) LOVE AT FIRST SIGHT

DIDIER

(singing)

Last night you walked into my life
 And the minute I saw you I knew it
 was right
 A feeling so new took ahold of my
 life
 And I knew all at once that it had
 to be right

I could see all at once so
 surprisingly bright
 The moment I'd dreamed of all of my
 life
 So the stories are true, this is
 finally love at first sight.

Last night you walked into my life
 And the minute I saw you I knew it
 was right
 I know this is finally love at first
 sight

I don't think I could ever find
 another love just like yours
 How could anyone ever find another
 love just like yours

I saw you alone in the night
 My heart cried she's the one, it's
 just got to be right
 I know that this has to be love at
 first sight
 This has to be finally love at first
 sight

Last night you walked into my life
 And the look on your face said for
 me too this is right
 Here it is, this is finally love at
 first sight

I don't think I could ever find

(MORE)

DIDIER (CONT'D)

another love just like yours
How could anyone ever find another
love just like yours

Lost in the middle of a crowd last
night
We still were alone, we knew it was
right
Now let's hope it becomes more than
love at first sight
'Cause it has to be more than love
at first sight
It has to be more than love at first
sight

As the song ends Didier grabs his knapsack and sleeping bag and exits stage right. As he leaves he passes Chretien who is entering riding a bicycle. They slap five as their paths cross.

CHRETIEN

Beautiful!

Chretien rides around the stage a couple of times and finally comes to rest in his usual place in the middle.

CHRETIEN (CONT'D)

So, there you are. As I have promise,
now you see how Didier feel about
all this. He has change since we
first see him, eh. But, of course!
He has fall in love at first
sight...(pause) again. But! This
time there is a big difference. This
time he say he hope it will be *more*
than love at first sight! Ahhhh...
alors là! Perhaps for the first time
Didier begin to grow up. Perhaps for
the first time Didier begin to realize
that there is more to love than
physical beauty and the attraction
of chemistry, because, the mature
lovair is the lovair who is capable
of seeing beyond that. The mature
lovair is the lovair who can see
past the body and touch the soul!
(Getting louder) The mature lovair
is the lovair who can see his woman
as more than just... AN ARMPIECE!!!

(MORE)

CHRETIEN (CONT'D)

(He wheels and stares
daggers into the
wings. He then turns
back to the audience
with a look that
says "need I say
more")

Okay... we go on.

The stage goes dark.

The lights come up on the area of the park where the meeting took place earlier. Johnny and Hinton are in the middle of the stage trying to outdo each other handing out union flyers, while Carmen and Selena are sitting on a bench looking bored. Everytime somebody strolls by, Johnny and Hinton both try and get to him first. When Johnny spots a late arrival walking down the front row aisle towards his seat, he dashes to the edge of the stage and accosts him. Hinton follows.

JOHNNY

Yo, mister... check it out! All about
the Guild for Street Performers!

MAN

No thanks, I already...

HINTON

(pushing Johnny)

Hey, beat it, sucker! I saw him first!

The man starts to walk away, but Hinton, dropping to his knees so he can reach him, stretches over the edge of the stage and grabs his arm.

HINTON (CONT'D)

Hey, wait a minute, man!

MAN

(nervous)

Uh, excuse me, I'd like to...

JOHNNY

(dropping to his knees,
too)

Hey, sap, let go the man!

(He knocks Hinton's
hand off the man's
arm and then tries
to move him away
from Hinton)

Listen, citizen, this here's gonna
change your life!

Hinton grabs the man's arm again and starts to pull him away from Johnny.

MAN

Please!

HINTON

Hey, will you let me talk to the man... or do I haveta lay you out!?

JOHNNY

Oh, now I'm scared!

HINTON

I'm serious, man! I'm startin' to get mad!

He lets go of the man and assumes a karate stance. The man avails himself of the situation and makes for his seat.

JOHNNY

(seeing the man has gone)

Aw shit. Now see what you done.

CARMEN

Hey, why don't you two cut it out already? You just wastin' your time. She ain't interested in either one of you!

SELENA

Yeah, she's not foolin' around with any kids. She's already got a boyfriend!

JOHNNY

Kids! Willya look who's talkin'! And anyway, she don't care about that guy. She's just usin' him to get to me!

SELENA

Ha!!

Hinton, taking his karate stance again, turns on the girls.

HINTON

Why don't you jerks get lost, before I really hurt somebody!

Selena puts her hand over her mouth and yawns loudly.

Leonie enters. The second Johnny and Hinton see her they jump back to work trying to foist flyers on anything that moves.

LEONIE

Hey, you guys, how's it goin'?

JOHNNY

Great!

HINTON

Dynamite!

JOHNNY

I musta give out a hundred a these things! Everybody wants one! This is definitely an idea whose time has come!

When nobody's looking, Hinton drops a handful of flyers offstage.

HINTON

Yeah, I musta give out two hundred! I worked the whole audience!

JOHNNY

Bullshit, man! What'd you do with all those things? (He looks around) I'm the one's doin' all the work! Ask anybody! (He points at the audience)

HINTON

You! That's it, man! Now you really gonna get it!

He drops the rest of his flyers and starts for Johnny. Leonie jumps between them.

LEONIE

Hey, calm down, man. Don't do anything stupid. I mean, after all, you're the one's gonna be a professional boxer. You could really hurt him!

HINTON

(relaxing)
Yeah, I guess you're right...

JOHNNY

Ha!!

HINTON

Watch it! I might not let you off so easy.

JOHNNY

(to Leonie)
Hey, you don't have to stick up for me. I can whip this sap with one hand tied behind my back!

HINTON

You keep talkin' and you're gonna
get your chance!

LEONIE

(still calming them)
Alright, alright...

JOHNNY

He's gonna be a pro. Ha! That's a
laugh! Hey, listen... I can tell you
right now what kinda pro he's gonna
be.

LEONIE

Hey, let it go, man. I think under
the circumstances we oughta skip
that song. I'm gonna go ask Chretien.
(She starts towards the wings)

JOHNNY

Forget it. I ain't skippin' nothin'!

(He picks up a
newspaper from the
ground and thumbs
through it. He shows
it to Carmen)

Yeah, here it is! This is what I was
lookin' for.

(She doesn't say
anything and he pokes
her)

C'mon!

CARMEN

What!?

JOHNNY

Well, this here's an article on the
sports page all about Hinton's big
boxing debut at the Garden last night!

CARMEN

(getting into it)
No kidding!

JOHNNY

That's right. It's all down here in
black and white!

CARMEN

So, what's it say!?

JOHNNY

What's it say? It say...
 (singing; all through
 the song Johnny runs
 around pretending to
 show the imaginary
 article to everyone.
 During the bridge he
 shadow boxes, mocking
 Hinton)

*(11) HINTON WENT DOWN

JOHNNY (CONT'D)

Hinton went down in the third round,
 baby
 Hinton went down today
 A cry of "foul" went up from his
 corner

Hinton went down today
 Hinton went down
 Hinton went down today
 Hinton went down
 Hinton went down today

Hinton looked like he didn't know
 what hit him
 Popped him right on the jaw
 His headlights flickered like an old
 DeSoto
 The crowd screamed out for more

Hinton went down
 Hinton went down today
 Hinton went down
 Hinton hit the hay

Not a word leaked out about his glass
 jaw, baby
 How was anybody to know
 He hit that canvas like a sack of
 potatoes
 And all it took was one blow

Hinton went down
 Hinton went down today
 Hinton went down
 S.O.S... Mayday!!

Hinton went down in the third round,
 baby
 Hinton went down today
 A cry of "foul" went up from his
 corner

(MORE)

JOHNNY (CONT'D)

Hinton went down today
 Hinton went down
 Hinton went down today
 Hinton went down
 Hinton went down today

Hinton looked like he didn't know
 what hit him
 Popped him right on the jaw
 His headlights flickered like an old
 DeSoto
 The crowd screamed out for more

Hinton went down
 Hinton went down today
 Hinton went down
 Hinton hit the hay

Not a word leaked out about his glass
 jaw, baby
 How was anybody to know
 He hit that canvas like a sack of
 potatoes
 And all it took was one blow

Hinton went down
 Hinton went down today
 Hinton went down
 S.O.S... Mayday!!

Hinton Went Down

CARMEN AND SELENA

(singing)
 In the third round

JOHNNY

(singing)
 Hinton went down today
 Hinton Went Down

CARMEN AND SELENA

(singing)
 And he stayed down!

JOHNNY

(singing)
 What more can I say? (then speaking)
 Yeah... truer words was never spoke.
 Fits this fool to a "T," 'cause that's
 the name of the game around here...
 type-casting!

Hinton grabs Johnny.

HINTON
That's it, sucker!

He hits him and Johnny falls down. He lies there while Selena and Carmen grab Hinton and hold him back.

LEONIE
Hey, you really hit him!

HINTON
Ahhhh... he had it comin' to him!
He's been buggin' me ever since we
started this gig.

Johnny, still lying on the floor, looks dazed. He rubs his jaw. Didier enters.

DIDIER
Hey, what's going on here!?

LEONIE
Oh, it's nothing. Just a little
disagreement.

They all look uncomfortable. Didier tries to help Johnny up.

JOHNNY
(shrugging him off)
Hey, I don't need no help! 'Specially
from you!

DIDIER
What'd I do!?

HINTON
C'mon, you want some more!?

LEONIE
Alright, that's enough! I want you
guys to shake hands and call this
off.

CARMEN
Yeah, man, enough's enough. C'mon.

SELENA
C'mon...

She touches his arm but he shrugs her off, too.

JOHNNY
Forget it! You're outa the picture!
You already had your chance and you
blew it!

HINTON

(offering his hand)
C'mon, man.

JOHNNY

I said forget it! (He gets up and then turns to Leonie) And you! You gotta choose, and now's the time! So, who's it gonna be? Me or him... or *this* jerkoff!? (He points at Didier)

LEONIE

Hey, c'mon... what're you talkin' about?

JOHNNY

You know what I'm talkin' about! You gotta choose!

LEONIE

First of all, I don't "gotta" do nothin'...

JOHNNY

Listen, you been comin' on to me all over the place ever since rehearsals, so now you gotta put up or shut up! Are you gonna be my woman or not!?

LEONIE

(softening)
Oh, (Johnny)(1), please. If I gave you the wrong impression I'm so sorry. I think you're as sweet as can be, and I'm so flattered... but, I can't be your girl.

JOHNNY

Why not?

LEONIE

Well, because... (She looks at Didier and then looks away) Well, for one thing I'm too old for you...

JOHNNY

(seeing her look at Didier)
Alright, I get it!

LEONIE

(putting her hand on his arm)
(Johnny)(1)...

JOHNNY
 (brushing her off)
 Forget it! I'll see you around
 sometime... like never!

He turns and marches offstage (right), dropping his flyers
 on the ground.

JOHNNY (CONT'D)
 And fuck your stupid union, too!

SELENA
(Johnny)(1)!

Everybody just stands there looking upset and uncomfortable.
 Selena finally speaks up.

SELENA (CONT'D)
 Well, don't you think we oughta go
 get him? (Nobody says anything) I
 mean, just because *some* people have
 no feelings
 (she looks at Leonie) doesn't mean
 we *all* have to be primitives!

LEONIE
 Now, wait a minute...

SELENA
 He happens to be very sensitive! He
 is an artist, y'know.

HINTON
 (under his breath)
 Hey, just 'cause he's got a can of
 spray paint don't make him no
 artist...

SELENA
 (giving Hinton the
 evil eye)
 Don't you think you've done enough
 damage.
 (Hinton looks down at
 the ground)
 Now... are we going or not!?

HINTON
 Yeah.

SELENA
 Well, c'mon!

Hinton, Carmen and Selena start off in the direction that
 Johnny went. Leonie is right behind them. Didier catches her
 by the arm as she passes him and she stops. They look warmly
 at each other.

DIDIER

Much ado about nothin', huh.

LEONIE

Yeah, I guess. But, it means a lot to them.

DIDIER

He'll be alright. Kids bounce back real quick.

LEONIE

I know.

(She then looks
apologetically
offstage)

But, I really oughta help. It looks like I'm kinda the cause, y'know.

DIDIER

Can I just ask you one question before you go?

LEONIE

Sure.

DIDIER

You believe in love at first sight, don't you?

LEONIE

(smiling)

I believe in infatuation at first sight.

DIDIER

Well, I just wanted you to know that's how I felt when we first met. The minute I saw you I knew it was love at first sight.

(He then nods towards
the band with a
conspiratorial air)

Okay, (Band-Leader)(1). Now.

(singing, reprise:

"Love at First Sight")

Last night you walked into my life
And the minute I saw you I knew it
was right

A feeling so new took ahold of my
life

And I knew all at once that it had
to be right

I could see all at once so
surprisingly bright

The moment I'd dreamed of all of my

(MORE)

DIDIER (CONT'D)

life
 So the stories are true, this is
 finally love at first sight
 (then speaking)
 It seemed such a waste to sing it to
 the air before, when I should've
 been singing it right to you. (To
 the Band Leader) Thanks, man.

Leonie melts and they kiss.

LEONIE

(grabbing his hand)
 C'mon! Let's go look for the kid!

DIDIER

(laughing)
 Okay.

They run offstage together and everything goes dark until a small spot comes up downstage center on Chretien.

CHRETIEN

Ah, love is so sweet... and yet, it
 is also filled with much despair, is
 it not!? But, don't worry, I get
 that boy back in the show, no
 problème. So, now we have reach the
 point where I come into the story.
 And it's about time, eh!

The stage lights come up revealing another area of the park. There is a small portable table set up stage right covered with magician's paraphernalia. A crowd is standing around the table.

Chretien runs over, takes his place and starts to perform his magic act. He's very good and keeps up a steady patter throughout his tricks. Johnny, pushed onstage by Selena and Carmen, enters reluctantly from the opposite side and wanders over to watch the act. He's carrying a gym bag. Chretien waves the scarf he's been dabbing his eyes with in Johnny's face and then throws it into the air. It becomes a cane. Everybody applauds.

CHRETIEN (CONT'D)

(looking around)
 But, where is my scarf!? Ahhh...
 here it is!

He reaches into Johnny's shirt and pulls it out. Johnny looks surprised and the audience applauds again.

CHRETIEN (CONT'D)

And now, for my next feat of wonderment, I need a volunteer from the audience. (He focuses instantly on Johnny) You, young man. Would you please be so kind as to help a struggling magician?

JOHNNY

Whattayou crazy! No way, José!

CHRETIEN

I am afraid you mistake me for someone else. My name is Chretien, and I will not take no for an answer! You are the man I have been looking for!

(Chretien begins to
clap his hands
together, soliciting
the crowd and even
the audience to take
up the applause.

Johnny is embarrassed)

Please, young man.

JOHNNY

No way...

CHRETIEN

(pleading)

Oh, but please! (under his breath)
'Ey, (Johnny)(1), the show must go
on!

JOHNNY

(shrugging)

Ah, what the hell. I got nothin'
better to do.

CHRETIEN

Bravo!

He applauds again as does the crowd. Johnny mockingly bows and then struts real cool towards Chretien.

CHRETIEN (CONT'D)

Give me your hand, young man. (He takes Johnny's hand and inspects it) Is it clean? Hmmm... you look like a man who works with your hands. (pause) At night!

He then has Johnny make a fist and proceeds to stuff the handkerchief into it. He then steps back and dramatically waves his arms.

CHRETIEN (CONT'D)

Hocus pocus... help me focus!! Ope
là!!

Johnny opens his hand and the scarf has disappeared. He looks surprised. The spectators applaud.

CHRETIEN (CONT'D)

(taking off his beret)

And now, Ladies and Gentlemen, for
my greatest trick of all. To turn
your money into mine!!

(He gives the beret
to Johnny and asks
him to collect for
him)

Join the millions who know the joy
of giving!

He notices as Johnny pockets a couple of dollars. The crowd wanders off and they are left alone.

JOHNNY

That was pretty slick, man. How'd
you do that?

CHRETIEN

Oh, but really, my young friend.
Surely you know that a magician never
reveal his secrets!

JOHNNY

Hey, I wouldn't tell no one.

Chretien reaches into Johnny's shirt pocket and pulls out the two dollars that he hid there.

CHRETIEN

It seem to me that you have already
learn one trick too many!

Johnny looks embarrassed at first, but then his face becomes defensive.

JOHNNY

Hey, gimme back my two bucks!

CHRETIEN

Your two bucks!?

JOHNNY

Yeah, *my* two bucks!

He grabs the bills out of Chretien's hand and jumps back a couple of steps, ready to fight or run.

JOHNNY (CONT'D)

And anyway, what makes you think you're so hot? You'd think you were the only street performer around here! Well, lemme tell you somethin'... this place is lousy with 'em... and they're all a hell of a lot better than you!

CHRETIEN

(sarcastically)

Oh... excusez moi!

JOHNNY

Boy, you think you're so cool. You think you can get away with murder. Don't think I didn't notice the way you copped my girlfriend!

CHRETIEN

Your girlfriend!? (Carmen)(2) is your girlfriend?

JOHNNY

Don't be cute, man. You know who I mean!

CHRETIEN

Who!?

JOHNNY

(Selena)(2)!

CHRETIEN

(Selena)(2)! This girl who play Selena! Are you crazy!? I have not "cop" her! I have only help her with her lines!

JOHNNY

That's it, man. I'm outa here!

CHRETIEN

But wait! Where are you going!?

JOHNNY

Outa town.

CHRETIEN

But, what about your home? What about your maman?

JOHNNY

Nah... I'm blowin' that dump.

CHRETIEN

Oh, this is a big mistake! A boy like you does not know the first thing about *real* life on the street!

JOHNNY

What're you kiddin'!? I been on the streets my whole life!

CHRETIEN

Ah, but if this were really true, how could it be that you do not even know parsley when you see it?

JOHNNY

You're crazy, man! That shit was Grade A!

CHRETIEN

(shaking his head)

And where will you stay?

JOHNNY

Don't worry about me. I got my resources. And anyway, I got some business in...eh... Chicago.

CHRETIEN

Oh, Chicago. That is very nice as cities go.

JOHNNY

You been there?

CHRETIEN

But, of course. I have been many places.

JOHNNY

That ain't where you're from, is it?

CHRETIEN

Oh no!

JOHNNY

I didn't think so. I mean with that accent and all. You must be from some foreign country or somethin', right?

CHRETIEN

Oh well, if you are really interested, then come and sit with me a moment and I will tell you all about it.

Chretien looks over his shoulder at the audience and winks. He then turns back to Johnny and leads him over to a bench.

They sit down and he starts to sing.

*(12) MY PARENTS' HOUSE

CHRETIEN (CONT'D)

(singing)

A long ways away
Far from you and me
Lies the land where I was born

And though it's been years
My heart is still there
At night I cry until dawn

From my parents' house you can't see
the sky
The air's so thick it hurts your
eyes

From my parents' house you can't see
the sun
But we don't care we still have fun
(During the break
Chretien dances a
slithery kind of
softshoe)

I was once a young man just like you
I thought I had enough, I ran away,
too

In my parents' house life was so
great
I'd like to go back, but it's too
late

(He looks warmly at
Johnny as the song
ends and then
speaks... with no
accent)

You catch my drift, pal. A lotta
people'd cut off their arm to have
what you're walkin' away from.

Johnny thinks it over for a few seconds. He's thinking hard and even looks a little impressed. Chretien has a satisfied, fatherly look on his face.

JOHNNY

(abruptly)

Boy, are you full of it!

CHRETIEN

(surprised)

Huh...

JOHNNY

You're full of it! And anyway, what happened to your accent!?

CHRETIEN

(very French again)

My accent? But, notheeng! It is always the same, no!?

JOHNNY

(emphatically)

No! (He gets up and grabs his bag)
Hey, you big phoney, if you think you're such a hot magician, just watch this. I'm gonna make myself disappear! (He laughs at his own joke)
Take it easy sucker!

He struts offstage.

JOHNNY (CONT'D)

(offstage)

And thanks for the two bucks!

CHRETIEN

(facing the audience)

Oh là là... I think perhaps I did not do so well.

(He thinks for a second
and then yells
offstage)

'Ey, Sharlie! Stop that little brat!
He has take my two dollar!

The stage goes dark.

The lights come up on the area of the park that was used as the meeting place. Sally and Tony, wearing full mime make-up, enter stage left. Didier is with them. He is carrying their equipment. He doesn't look pleased at all, as he drops their bags on the ground. Leonie enters stage right. Hinton is with her. He is carrying her equipment. He, however, looks pleased as punch.

LEONIE

Hey, guys!

TONY

Hey, Leonie, what's happenin'!?

LEONIE

Not much. Just breakin' in my new mover.

SALLY
 (to Hinton)
 How's it goin', tough guy? Not workin'
 you too hard, is she?

HINTON
 (faking a punch at
 Sally)
 Nah!

Leonie takes Didier's hand. He smiles weakly at her and then looks in the other direction.

LEONIE
 Something botherin' you?

DIDIER
 (flatly)
 Uh uh...

Leonie doesn't look convinced.

TONY
 Hey, Leonie, I wanna show you guys
 this new bit we're doin'. See what
 you think.

LEONIE
 Great.

Just then Johnny C. runs onstage (right) being chased by Charlie the stagehand, who stops dead in his tracks as he enters and realizes where Johnny has led him. Johnny turns around and wiggles his hips and makes faces, taunting Charlie.

JOHNNY
 What's a matter, stupid!? Afraid!?

LEONIE
 (shooing him)
 Get outa here!

JOHNNY
 Up yours! (Then to Charlie) Hey man,
 if they was to put wheels on you,
 you still couldn't catch me. You so
 lame your brain needs crutches!

At that point, with an almost superhuman effort, Charlie stows his fear and dashes onstage after Johnny. Johnny turns and bolts for the wings stage left and runs straight into Chretien's arms.

CHRETIEN
 Gotcha!

Charlie reaches them and he and Chretien hold Johnny, who's squirming like a fish.

CHRETIEN (CONT'D)

(to actors onstage)

Allez, go, go... continue with the scene!

JOHNNY

Let go a me, you phony frog!

TONY

Yeah... so anyway, like I was sayin'... I wanna show you guys this new bit we're doin'. See what you think.

LEONIE

Great.

Tony and Sally go over to their equipment as Chretien and Charlie continue to struggle with Johnny. They're just about to open their bags when Chretien stops them.

CHRETIEN

'Ey, don't do that!

TONY

(looking up)

Huh?

CHRETIEN

You must let Didier get these things for you. He is your mover and, except for the performance, you must not touch the equipment! Remember... protection!

TONY

Sorry, man.

DIDIER

Oh, brother...

Johnny takes advantage of Chretien's momentary change of focus and kicks him in the shin. Chretien lets out a howl and Johnny is able to break loose. He jumps off the stage and runs up the aisle.

JOHNNY

(over his shoulder)

You better get those wheels, man!

CHARLIE

Damn!

CHRETIEN

(rubbing his leg)

Never mind. We get him later. (Then to Didier) Alright, go, go, go... (He points at the equipment. He then grabs Charlie by the arm and pulls him offstage)

HINTON

I'll get him!

Hinton runs after him. Didier lets go of Leonie's hand and mopes his way over to the bags. He opens them up and hauls Tony and Sally's props out. Sally runs her hand sympathetically across Didier's cheek and smiles. He returns the look. Leonie and Tony both notice. Didier rejoins Leonie as Tony and Sally set up.

LEONIE

What was that all about?

DIDIER

What?

LEONIE

You know. (She runs her hand across his face like Sally did) I thought you were just supposed to be into her in the show.

DIDIER

Oh, gimme a break, willya.

LEONIE

What happened to love at first sight? Don't think I didn't notice that smeared make-up before.

DIDIER

Oh, lighten up, willya! I may be in love, but I'm not dead! I gotta right to look!

Tony and Sally, who have been ready to begin for awhile, are standing impatiently on the side waiting for Leonie and Didier to finish. They're starting to look really irritated.

TONY

Okay, you guys... check it out!

LEONIE

(snapping at him)

Just one second! (then to Didier) Look, something's obviously bothering you. I'd like to know what it is.

DIDIER

(giving in)

Aw... I mean, I signed on as a singer and a dancer. That was the deal. Now all of a sudden you guys got me hauling equipment all over the place.

LEONIE

Hey, c'mon, man. Everybody's gotta do their bit to get the Guild's point of view across!

DIDIER

Yeah? I don't see you carryin' equipment. Great...

She and Didier both look upset.

TONY

Hey, whattaya say, you guys. Mime's supposed to be a *silent* art!

LEONIE

Sorry, man. Go ahead.

TONY

(sarcastically)

Well, thank you...

He and Sally take their positions and are just about to start when Chretien pops out of the wings. He points at his watch dramatically.

CHRETIEN

I am sorry, but thanks to them (he indicates Leonie and Didier) we will have to skip this part now. They have use up all the time!

TONY

But...

CHRETIEN

I am sorry. The time for this scene is up!

SALLY

Whattayou kiddin'! We been rehearsin' this thing all week!

CHRETIEN

I am sorry! But, that is show biz, eh! Now please get your things off the stage so I can introduce the next scene which is a very important one!

Tony and Sally look pissed. They reluctantly pick up their equipment and start towards their bags.

CHRETIEN (CONT'D)
(scolding)
Uh, uh, uh...

TONY
(exasperated)
Oh, for God's sake...

They drop their props on the ground and both stomp offstage.

CHRETIEN
(pointing at the props)
Didier!

Didier sighs loudly and starts towards the equipment. Leonie stops him.

LEONIE
Listen, sweetheart, I'm really sorry,
but it's all for the cause.

DIDIER
(unconvincingly)
That's okay.

LEONIE
Love you. (She points at a bag) Don't
forget that one.

Didier looks pissed. He picks up the bags. Chretien walks onstage.

CHRETIEN
(excited)
And now, my friends, at this time it
is my great privilege to introduce
to you an old and valued colleague.
He is one of the first people to
have help me when I was just a boy
and starting out in this field. He
is still quite active and for those
of you who do not know his work I
have ask him down here to play for
you today. This will bring him much
joy.

He goes offstage (right) and comes back accompanied by Didier and Hinton. They are helping him with a little old MAN. The man looks like he is wearing everything he owns and is carrying a beat up old accordion. The three of them help him sit down on a folding bridge chair that they set up.

The man babbles in some strange melding of languages that is obviously unique to him.

It sounds like a cross between Italian, English and anything else you can think of. It is completely unintelligible, bordering on plain old babbling.

Didier shrugs and shakes his head. The man takes his hat off and carefully puts it on the ground in front of him. He then takes a couple of coins from his pocket and puts them in the hat as "start-up" money. He fiddles interminably with his accordion.

CHRETIEN (CONT'D)

Ladies and Gentlemen! It gives me great pleasure to present to you the one and only... Professeur Emilio Caramalucci, honorary president of the Amalgamated Guild of Independent Street Performers! Professeur Caramalucci!!

Chretien, Didier and Hinton hurry offstage and the professor starts to play. His playing, however, is just like his talking. Completely unintelligible. There are smatters of everything in it, but never enough to get a handle on. And, what's more, every ten seconds or so he rises from his seat and yells something, at which point he loses his place (wherever that was, anyway) and has to start over again. Sometimes he just stops and talks to the audience for a few seconds. Then he begins again. After three or four of these episodes he drops his accordion on the ground. He doesn't seem to notice its absence, but keeps on playing and hopping to his feet anyway. Didier comes out from the wings stage right and hurries over. He picks up the accordion and sticks it back in the professor's hands.

The professor never misses a beat.

PROFESSOR

(hopping to his feet)

Hup!!

From the side of the stage we hear someone whisper "pssst!" and Didier turns his head in that direction. He sees Frankie standing in front of the stage (left) off to one side.

FRANKIE

Pssst!

DIDIER

Hey, man, what're you doin' here?
You better not let Chretien see you.

FRANKIE

Who cares.

(MORE)

FRANKIE (CONT'D)

(He walks onstage and circles the prof. a few times shaking his head in disbelief)
 Man, we gotta do something about this!

DIDIER

(starting towards the wing)
 I don't want any part of it.

FRANKIE

(stopping him)
 Hey c'mon, man. They already got you movin' equipment. What're you waitin' for? A broom?
 (He stares at him for a beat and then laughs)
 Ohhh, I get it. Love at first sight!

He plunks himself down on the bench next to the professor.

DIDIER

(indignantly)
 That's right.

FRANKIE

Boy, I'da thought you've wised up by now.

DIDIER

Whattaya mean?

FRANKIE

Well, I guess you must've noticed that she's a little... uh... willful.

He sits down on the other side of the professor.

DIDIER

Well, I'll admit she can be a bit bullheaded, but... she'll come around.

FRANKIE

Don't kid yourself, pal. What you see is what you get. (He pokes the professor) Hey buddy, am I right or am I right? Tell the guy!

The professor babbles something quite unintelligible in response.

FRANKIE (CONT'D)

See what I mean? Everybody knows it. The girl's a bitch.

DIDIER

(to the professor)

Hey, that's your opinion! I mean, you don't know her like I do. You gotta remember you're seeing her under a tremendous amount of pressure!

The professor continues to babble on. He loves the attention.

FRANKIE

(to the prof)

Oh, c'mon! You're not gonna buy that, are you!?

You've got a mind of your own. Don't let him push you around!

DIDIER

C'mon man, can't you see he's just pissed 'cause he let her get away!

FRANKIE

Don't listen to him!

The professor tells it like it is until it finally sinks into both Frankie's and Didier's heads exactly who it is their talking to. They both jump to their feet.

DIDIER

(abruptly)

Well, I guess I'll be getting back.

FRANKIE

(just as abrupt)

Uh, yeah...

Didier starts towards the wings and Frankie starts towards the aisle, but then, thinking better of it, runs back on the stage.

FRANKIE (CONT'D)

Hey, Chretien! I'm calling on you!

Chretien walks slowly onstage. He puts his script and notes on the ground and takes his glasses off. He and Frankie start to walk towards each other looking very much like two Dodge City gunslingers about to slap leather. They stop with about ten paces between them.

CHRETIEN

Alors, what do you want, you traitor, you? If you have come back to try and steal my girlfriend, then you are wasting your time!

Other members of the cast, including Leonie, Carmen, Didier, Hinton and Selena start to come onstage to watch.

They start to walk towards each other again, but Leonie and Carmen jump between them and hold them apart. Leonie takes Frankie and Carmen takes Chretien.

FRANKIE

I dont want your girlfriend. I want you!

LEONIE

Alright, that'll do!

FRANKIE

Get outa my way, willya! I'm gonna put a stop to this once and for all.

CHRETIEN

Let me at him, this alienator of affection! I will kill him!

CARMEN

C'mon, calm down!

Hinton starts bobbing and weaving on the balls of his feet. He's ready for action.

HINTON

C'mon, you guys, let 'em go!

LEONIE

Now listen, I've had about enough of this. Why don't you two just get off the stage so we can get on with this play.

FRANKIE

Play! What play!? There's no play left since this butcher got goin'!

LEONIE

That's a dead issue, man. All of that was settled a long time ago!

CHRETIEN

That's right. You seem to think that just because you do not agree with us nobody else does either!

FRANKIE

That's right!

LEONIE

Well, you're wrong. Even the author agrees with us.

FRANKIE

Hey, Goldberg doesn't agree with you. He's just so nervous he doesn't know whether he's comin' or goin'!

CHRETIEN

Well, everyone else is with us! (He turns to Carmen, putting his arm around her shoulder) Right!? (She doesn't say anything) Right!? (She looks away)

FRANKIE

The hell they are!

Leonie and Chretien look around the stage. One by one the actors look down at their shoes.

HINTON

Well, I'm with you. I think what you're doin' is great!

LEONIE

(taking his hand and squeezing it)

Thanks, man. And so does (Didier)(1).

FRANKIE

Oh yeah? Why don't you let your boyfriend speak for himself.

He runs off and gets Didier.

LEONIE

(to Didier)

Well, what about it?

DIDIER

What about what?

LEONIE

Hey, don't be coy. It's not becoming. You're either with us or against us!

DIDIER

Hey, whatever's okay with you is okay with me. I don't really care.

LEONIE

What a wimp. You're just like him (Frankie). Unbelievable. It's always the same. You fall in love first, then you get the bad news.

DIDIER

Look, whattayou wanna do, force me into saying something you don't wanna hear?

LEONIE

I just want you to say what you believe, that's all.

DIDIER

Okay, I will. (He pauses, takes a deep breath and plunges into it) Personally, I think what you're doing stinks.

LEONIE

I don't believe this! You're just pissed because we made you a mover!

DIDIER

Hey, you can believe anything you want, but he's right. This has all gotten way outa hand.

LEONIE

Get lost, creep! You're like two peas in a pod. Why don't you just run away with (Johnny)(2)! You crybabies all gotta stick together!

SELENA

(entering)
Watch it, sister!

Hinton, Carmen, Frankie and Didier exit.

LEONIE

Now what!?

SELENA

You got a big mouth on you! I mean, where does a jerk like you come off callin' someone as good and sensitive as (Johnny)(2) names, just 'cause he had the nerve to get out while the gettin' was good.

LEONIE

Oh, gimme a break, willya. The kid's a thief!

SELENA

He is not! Can't you even tell when a guy is just showin' off!? No wonder you keep losin' all your boyfriends. You're so vicious!

(MORE)

SELENA (CONT'D)

(Leonie exits)

And you... (she turns on Chretien)...
well, you're the worst! If I knew
then what I know now I'd never have
stopped seeing (Johnny)(1) for you.
I mean, who do ya think you are
anyway... God!?

CHRETIEN

(slapping himself in
the forehead)

Gevult! This is more than I can stand!
I'm going out for a drink! I be back
in five minutes!

He turns and walks off the stage.

SELENA

That's it run, you dirty dog! You
haven't got the balls to stand and
fight! (To Leonie)

She stands there staring viciously at each and every one of
them. One by one they leave the stage until Selena is left
alone. When all is quiet a lone person at the back of the
theatre starts to clap slowly.

VOICE

Bravo...

Selena squints and shades her eyes trying to see who it is.

SELENA

(Johnny)(1)?

JOHNNY

Yeah.

SELENA

You're still here.

JOHNNY

Nice speech.

SELENA

Hey, c'mon down here. I wanna talk
to you.

JOHNNY

Okay.

He saunters up the aisle and hops up on the stage, while
Selena runs over to the band and whispers something in the
leader's ear. He nods. She goes back and joins Johnny.

JOHNNY (CONT'D)

So, what're you like into me again
or what?

SELENA

(coyly)

Maybe.

*(13) ALIEN LOVE

The music starts and the lights dim to a seductive glow as Selena begins to sing and dance evocatively. Johnny is floored by just how sexy the piece is.

SELENA (CONT'D)

(singing)

Love me just a little bit longer
Love me just a little bit more
Love me just a little bit longer
Love me just a little bit more

Don't leave me in pain
Love me just a little bit longer
Love me just a little bit more
Love me, hey open up your heart now
Love me, here's the key to my door

Don't leave me in pain
Don't leave me in pain
No strain, no gain
What's wrong with your brain?

Love me just a little bit longer
Love me just a little bit more
Love me, hey open up your heart now
Love me, here's the key to my door
Don't leave me in pain
Don't leave me in pain
No strain, no gain
What's wrong with your brain?
What's wrong with your brain?
Love me
Love me
Love me
Love me
Love me

As the song ends Johnny grabs her by the arm.

JOHNNY

C'mon. Let's get outa here!

SELENA

Not so fast...

JOHNNY

Huh?

SELENA

First we gotta settle a coupla things.

JOHNNY

Like what?

SELENA

Like, one... stealin', like, two...
dealin'!

JOHNNY

(innocently)

Who!?

SELENA

You! I saw you and Chretien before.

JOHNNY

Aw, c'mon... that wasn't nothin'!
That stuff I sold him wasn't even
real!

SELENA

(looking him hard in
the eye)

Are you tellin' me the truth?

JOHNNY

Yeah!

SELENA

Okay. Well, then that's that. Now,
what about (Leonie)(2)?

JOHNNY

Whattayou kiddin'!? That old broad!
I was just leadin' her on!

They both laugh. Johnny grabs her by the hand again.

JOHNNY (CONT'D)

C'mon!

They jump off the stage and run up the aisle and out the back of the theatre as Mrs. C. backs onstage (right) as if she's pushing her way through a door. Her arms are so loaded with groceries that they almost cover her face. She's muttering to herself.

MRS. C.

My God, it just never ends, does it!
Groceries, laundry, groceries,
laundry, groceries, laundry,
groceries, laundry...

She walks a few paces downstage, hoists the bags up a bit and lets go of them. They crash to the ground around her feet. She looks shocked.

MRS. C. (CONT'D)
Where the hell's the counter!?
(She looks around her)
Where the hell's the kitchen!?

She starts trying to improvise, picking up the groceries and continuing to mutter to herself. She frantically looks all around for help.

LEONIE
(offstage, right)
What's she doing out there!?

STAGEHAND
(offstage, right)
I don't know. I think she went out for dinner or somethin' way back in the beginning, so I guess she doesn't even know her scene was cut!

LEONIE
(offstage)
Well, someone get her offstage!

STAGEHAND
(offstage)
Good idea. How 'bout you?

HINTON
(offstage)
Hey, not to worry, I'll take care of it!

Mrs. C. looks up, listening to their conversation as Hinton comes barreling onstage. He's obviously enjoying his chance to ad lib.

HINTON (CONT'D)
Hi, Mom, what's happenin'!? Drop the groceries again!? That's okay, I'll give you a hand!

He starts picking up the groceries.

MRS. C.
(knocking them out of his hands)
Don't give me that Hi Mom crap! What the hell were they talkin' about!?

HINTON

(excited)

Where you been, man? Everything's changed. Chretien took over the show and he's been rewritin' everything!

MRS. C.

(calmly)

And he cut my scene?

HINTON

Yeah, but that's not the point! I mean, it's all for the cause!

MRS. C.

(really pissed)

Bullshit! Where is that little creep! I didn't kill an hour waitin' around here so he could cut me out of the second act!

HINTON

(backing off)

Well, I ain't got nothin' to do with it and Chretien's not around. He went out, but he'll be back any minute, so you better talk to him.

MRS. C.

That's great, 'cause I'm not movin' from this spot! (She sits down on the ground) So, if anybody wants anything to happen on this stage then they better get that kitchen out here and they better get those actors out here, too. 'Cause the only scene anybody's gonna see on this stage is my scene!

HINTON

But...

MRS. C.

Now, beat it!!

Hinton turns and runs offstage.

MRS. C. (CONT'D)

(yelling after him)

I know my rights! I've got union representation, y'know! I got a contract!

LEONIE

(offstage)

Where the hell's Chretien!?

CHRETIEN

(offstage, sounding a
little tipsy)

Voila, here I am! I have just have a
leettle drinkie!

LEONIE

(offstage)

Oh, thank God! Chretien, we got a
boycott on our hands!

CHRETIEN

What!

LEONIE

It's (Mrs. C)(2)! We just told her
that you cut her scene, and now she
won't get off the stage!

CHRETIEN

No probleme!

(He walks onstage
with his arms spread
warmly)

Ahhh... ma chere ami! How are you!?

(He looks at the
groceries on the
floor)

What is this, a picnic?

(She looks straight
ahead, ignoring him.
He pats her on the
back)

Okay. Everything is parfait now. I
have take your scene out, so you can
go home. Also, I take your song out
of the first act, so you do not have
to come in tomorrow at all! This is
good, eh!?

MRS. C.

(hitting him in the
head with a piece of
celery)

Fuck you, you little shit! If you
wanna talk to me, call my union! I
gotta contract!

CHRETIEN

(sobering up real
quick)

But, you do not understand! You will
still get your money! You are
protected!

MRS. C.

Get a green card!

Leonie sticks her head out.

LEONIE

See! Now what!?

CHRETIEN

No probleme! We work around her!
Everybody just ignore her as if she
were not here!

Mrs. C. starts sliding groceries around the stage from where she sits. Chretien kicks anything that comes near him. Just then two stagehands enter stage left wheeling a bathtub in front of them.

CHRETIEN (CONT'D)

'Ey, what's this!? What do you think
you are doing!?

He runs towards them.

VOICE

(offstage, left)
That's for the next scene!

CHRETIEN

Uh uh... that scene is out! (Then to
stagehands) Take this backstage!

VOICE

(offstage)
Whattaya mean, it's out!?

CHRETIEN

You heard me! It's out!

VOICE

(offstage)
Aw c'mon, man, that's my favorite
scene!

CHRETIEN

'Ey, that make no difference to me,
'Oh-ward! I told you this soap garbage
is out! (To stagehands again) Get
this out of here!

VOICE

(offstage)
Now, wait a minute!

CHRETIEN

(marching backstage)
No! You wait a minute! Just who's
running this show anyway!?

VOICE
(offstage)
That does it!!

Chretien comes flying out backwards from the wings and lands on his butt. He is followed by a very tall, thin man who bears an uncanny resemblance to me, HG.

GOLDBERG
I'm gonna break your neck!

CHRETIEN
'Ey, 'Oh-ward, relax! Don't take it so serious!

GOLDBERG
Too late, pal!

Goldberg jumps on top of Chretien and they start to go at it. The cast is onstage by now cheering them on.

HINTON
Get 'im, Chretien! Show 'im what for!

MRS. C.
C'mon, Howard! Knock his block off!

ACTOR
Yeah, he's got it comin' to him!

GOLDBERG
Rip my play apart, willya!

CHRETIEN
'Ey, take it easy, eh!

They are rolling all over the stage. Goldberg finally maneuvers Chretien over towards the bathtub and, twisting his arm, forces him into the water. He dunks Chretien's head underwater and then hauls him up for air.

GOLDBERG
Okay, hand over that key!

CHRETIEN
Absolutely no!! I have hid it where you will never find it, and without this key you cannot run the show, because the checkbook is in the office and these people cannot work for free! The union will not allow it!

GOLDBERG
You're getting me mad! (He dunks him again) Now, where is it!?

CHRETIEN

Nevair!!

Johnny C. meanders onstage (right) eating a hot dog.

JOHNNY

Yo, Goldy, here y'are. (He tosses him the key)

GOLDBERG

Where'd you get this!?

JOHNNY

Aw, I lifted it off him back in the first act. Piece a cake, man. He never felt a thing.

Chretien struggles wildly, trying to search his pockets.

CHRETIEN

Why, you little thief!

JOHNNY

Boy, that's the pot callin' the kettle black! I'm just a amateur next to you, man. I mean, I pick pockets, but you... you tried to steal the whole show! That's grand larceny, Jack!

Goldberg is grinning from ear to ear.

CHRETIEN

(seeing the look on Goldberg's face)

Merde!

GOLDBERG

(shooting a thumbs up at Johnny)

Well, alright! Thank God for type-casting! Hey, somebody get me that soap! (An actor runs over and hands him a bar of soap) So... you think my ideas are stupid, huh!?

CHRETIEN

Oui!

He starts to scrub Chretien from head to toe while the actors cheer him on. Chretien is squirming all over the place.

GOLDBERG

Well, they may be stupid, but at least they're mine! Maestro, if you please!

The music starts up and, as he scrubs the living daylights out of Chretien, smacking him on the top of the head every once in awhile for accent, Goldberg sings "Soap is Good for You."

*(14) SOAP IS GOOD FOR YOU

GOLDBERG (CONT'D)

(singing)

Soap, soap, soap, soap, soap
 Soap is good for you
 Soap, soap, soap, soap, soap
 Soap is good for you

Rub diddedly ub dub dub dub dub
 Rub diddedly ub dud dub
 Rub diddedly ub dub Scrub Scrub Scrub
 Soap is good for you

In all walks of life
 Soap has had its hand
 It's a major part
 Of the Master Plan

Rub diddedly ub dub dub dub dub
 Rub diddedly ub dud dub
 Rub diddedly ub dub Scrub Scrub Scrub
 Of the Master Plan

(with a Chinese accent)

Ten thousand miles away
 In a foreign Rand
 One billion Chinamen
 All with soap in hand
 Lub diddedly ub dub dub dub dub
 Lub diddedly ub dud dub
 Lub diddedly ub dub Sclub Sclub Sclub
 All with soap in hand

(with Indian accent)

After big battle
 All listen to Medicine Man
 War painted Navajo Braves
 All take soap in hand

Rub diddedly ub dub dub dub dub
 Rub diddedly ub dud dub
 Rub diddedly ub dub Scrub Scrub Scrub
 All take soap in hand

Soap, soap, soap, soap, soap
 Soap is good for you
 Soap, soap, soap, soap, soap
 Soap is good for you

(Spanish accent)

In sunny Spain
 The señoritas grand-é
 All chase their caballeros

(MORE)

GOLDBERG (CONT'D)

Soap in hand-é

Rub diddedly ub dub dub dub Rub
didedly ub dud dub

CHRETIEN

Olé!

GOLDBERG

(singing)

Rub diddedly ub dub Scrub Scrub Scrub
All with soap in hand

And even in gay Paree where they
dance the Can-Can
After the show they hit the showers
And all take soap in hand!

As the song ends the cast applauds. A beaming Goldberg takes a mock bow.

GOLDBERG (CONT'D)

(offering his hand to
Chretien)

Truce.

CHRETIEN

(smiling)

Oui... truce.

GOLDBERG

Maybe now things can get back to
normal.

They shake hands (the secret handshake) and Chretien gets out of the tub. They all start to move offstage.

CHRETIEN

'Ey, 'Oh-ward.

GOLDBERG

Yeah?

CHRETIEN

Thanks for washing me with this soap.

GOLDBERG

That's okay.

CHRETIEN

Was that the famous magique soap?

GOLDBERG

(laughing)

Yeah, I guess so.

CHRETIEN
 (looking at him
 strangely)
 'Ey, 'Oh-ward...

GOLDBERG
 Yeah?

CHRETIEN
 I think maybe I love you, eh!

Goldberg's face drops. He's stunned.

GOLDBERG
 Huh!?

Chretien winks at him and then starts to laugh. Goldberg thinks hard for a few seconds and finally catches on. He starts to laugh too, until they are both cracking up. They walk offstage together arm in arm, followed by the rest of the cast. Leonie and Didier, who have been avoiding each other, linger behind until they are alone.

LEONIE
 So, I guess if everything's going
 back to normal, then this is our
 scene, right?

DIDIER
 Yeah, I guess so.

They pause for a second.

LEONIE
 Listen, I wanna tell you how sorry I
 am about what happened before.
 Sometimes I get carried away, y'know.

DIDIER
 Yeah, I know.

LEONIE
 I really love you, and I don't want
 to blow it. (She looks at him for a
 few seconds) Or did I already?

Didier shrugs.

DIDIER
 This is all so hard for me. I don't
 think I'm capable of falling in love.

LEONIE
 Of course you are. Everybody is.

DIDIER

I don't know. I mean, I really fell in love with you, but then just like always you find out that it's never the way you want it to be.

LEONIE

Well, of course it's not. The way you want it to be is just fantasy and you can't live a fantasy... who'd want to? The whole point to love is sharing reality.

DIDIER

You're right. I know I've always been searching for something that can't possibly exist, and yet I still can't seem to settle for anything less.

LEONIE

You have to let go, man. 'Cause when you finally face real love, all of it, I mean all of the good and the bad that comes with it, you'll find that it's ten times better than your best fantasy! Hey, I've got an idea!

(She runs over to the bathtub and picks up the bar of soap. She runs back over to Didier)

Listen, if you believe in love and you want it bad enough like you say you do, then this is *really* a magical bar of soap! (Didier laughs) So, all you gotta do is use it and it'll do the rest!

*(15) I KNOW WHAT LOVE CAN BRING

DIDIER

(singing)

I know, I know
I know what love can bring
I know, I know I know what love can bring

Another chance for a brand new start
Another chance for a broken heart
Another chance for a brighter tomorrow
Another chance for pain and sorrow

I know, I know
I know what love can bring
I know, I know
I know what love can bring

LEONIE

(singing)

I understand the reasons
 For all these things you feel
 I have the same thoughts myself
 Your doubts are real
 I can see how scared you are
 I've heard everything that you've
 said
 You see, half of me screams to turn
 and run, too
 But, I'll stay with you instead

DIDIER

(singing)

I know, I know
 I know what love can bring
 I know, I know
 I know what love can bring

LEONIE

(singing)

Take my hand, don't be afraid to try

DIDIER

(singing)

I think I want to but I can't, I
 don't know why

LEONIE

(singing)

Take my hand, don't be afraid to fly

DIDIER

(singing)

I really want to but I can't, Babe,
 I don't know why

LEONIE

(singing)

I understand all the reasons for
 your uncertainty and your fear
 But, to live alone is to be half
 alive and that's how we've both been
 for years

DIDIER

(singing)

Another chance for a broken heart
 Another chance for a broken heart

LEONIE

(singing)

So come on now, my darling
 Is your life so complete
 That you won't take a chance on love
 Must this all end in defeat

DIDIER

(singing)

I know, I know
I know what love can
bring
I know, I know
I know what love can
bring

LEONIE

(singing with him)

I know, I know
I know what love can
bring
I know, I know
I know what love can
bring

Take a chance on a brighter
tomorrow
Take a chance on a brighter
tomorrow

As the song ends Leonie holds out the bar of soap to him.

LEONIE (CONT'D)

I'm giving you a chance to fall in
love for real. All you gotta do is
take it.

Didier stares at her hand. The stage goes dark.

The lights come up stage right on the kitchen as we saw it
in the first act. Mrs. C., her arms loaded with groceries,
backs onstage as if she were pushing her way through a door.
She's muttering to herself.

MRS. C.

My God, it just never ends, does it!
Groceries, laundry, groceries,
laundry, groceries, laundry,
groceries, laundry...

She walks the same few paces downstage as before, hoists the
bags she's carrying up a bit and lets them go. This time
they come to rest safely on the kitchen counter.

MRS. C. (CONT'D)

(smiling to herself
with great
satisfaction as she
pats the counter)
Ahhhhhhhhh...
(She then yells loudly)
So, where's all my brats!? Your lovin'
mama's home!

She takes a big roast out of one of the bags and plops it
down on the counter. Just then Johnny and Selena, hand in
hand, breeze into the kitchen like two whirling dervishes.

JOHNNY

Hi Ma bye Ma...

SELENA

Hi, Mrs. C...

They head for the door.

MRS. C.

Wait a minute, wait a minute... where do you think you're goin'!?

JOHNNY

Nowhere. Gotta go.

They're out the door.

MRS. C.

But, I bought a beautiful roast...

Hinton hits the kitchen just as frantically as Johnny and Selena. He heads for the door, too.

HINTON

Hi Ma bye Ma...

Mrs. C. throws herself between Hinton and the door.

MRS. C.

Hold it!

HINTON

(trying to get by her)
Gotta date! Gotta go!

He feints to the left and then scoots around her to the right. Out the door. Carmen enters.

CARMEN

Hi, Ma.

MRS. C.

Well, I hope you'll be here for dinner. I bought a beautiful roast and...

CARMEN

I can't, Ma. I'm goin' out.

MRS. C.

What!?

CARMEN

Yeah, my new boyfriend's takin' me out for dinner.

MRS. C.

Your new boyfriend? When did this happen?

CARMEN
 (blushing)
 Aw, you know...

The door bell rings and Carmen jumps for it. She opens the door and ushers in Bob the Cop.

CARMEN (CONT'D)
 Ma, this is Bob.

BOB
 (holding out his hand)
 How are you, ma'am?

Mrs. C. smiles weakly, shakes his hand and then takes Carmen by the arm.

MRS. C.
 (ever so sweetly)
 Can I talk to you for a moment, Dear?
 (She leads her over
 to the side)
This is your new boyfriend?

CARMEN
 Yeah.

MRS. C.
 But, he's a cop!

CARMEN
 I know. Isn't he dreamy!?

MRS. C.
 But, I thought you could only fall
 in love with a movie star!

CARMEN
 Are you kidding? Don't be stupid,
 Ma. I only idolize them. I wouldn't
 marry one!
 (She grabs her new
 beau's arm)
 C'mon, cutie, let's go. See ya later,
 Ma!

MRS. C.
 But, what about my roast!?

BOB
 Goodbye, ma'am, it was nice...

Carmen gives him a yank and he flies out the door.

MRS. C.
 (looking at the
 groceries)
 I don't believe this! What am I
 supposed to do with a three pound
 roast!?
 (She starts fiddling
 with the groceries
 and muttering to
 herself again)
 Never again. I'm gonna get my tubes
 tied tomorrow!

The stage goes dark.

The lights comes up on the area of the park where Leonie first danced. She is alone stage left practicing. She counts the steps out loud as she repeats the movement she's working on a few times. We hear voices offstage.

GOLDBERG
 (offstage)
 No! We're gonna do it exactly the
 way I wrote it! I can't believe this.
 You're the last person I would've
 expected to try and make changes.

FRANKIE
 (offstage)
 But, the way you wrote it Frankie
 leaves because he's defeated and
 can't take it, but now, with
 everything that's happened I'm... I
 mean, he's a new man and he should
 be leaving out of strength, not
 weakness. He's a winner!

GOLDBERG
 (offstage)
 That's fine, but I don't care. Not
 one word of this play is ever gonna
 be changed again! Now get going!

Frankie enters stage right and sees Leonie.

FRANKIE
 Hey, there you are.

LEONIE
 Yeah, here I am.

FRANKIE
 Good. I got something for you.

He runs offstage and returns pushing his one-man-band rig in front of him. Leonie walks over.

LEONIE

I don't get it. What gives?

FRANKIE

Well, I'm leavin' town, so I figured maybe you could use it or give it to someone who can.

LEONIE

Whattayou mean, you're leaving?

FRANKIE

Just that. I'm hittin' the road. Time to move on.

There's a long pause as they both look in every direction but each other. Suddenly Frankie becomes extremely excited.

FRANKIE (CONT'D)

(grabbing her hand)

Listen! I'm *really* leaving!

LEONIE

What?

GOLDBERG

(offstage)

Oh no! Not again!

FRANKIE

I mean, I'm really leavin' New York. I'm gonna do just what I always said I was gonna do. Travel all around the country, maybe even the world, and set up a little stage in every town I get to. And I want you to come with me.

LEONIE

Come with you! Are you kidding!?

FRANKIE

No, I was never more serious about anything in my life! I still love you!

(She doesn't say anything. She just stares at him, amazed)

Y'know, it's funny, I was always so insecure I could never have said that before. But, now I've learned so much about myself I've found that I like me. I'm not as good-looking as I always wanted to be, but I'll do in a pinch.

(MORE)

FRANKIE (CONT'D)

I'm not as talented as I dreamed of being, but I can sure make people laugh. And, for the first time in my life I've come to grips with who I am and I no longer feel as if I have to justify myself or apologize for myself... because, *I've* accepted myself.

LEONIE

But, what about (Did...)... I mean, Didier?

FRANKIE

What about him? Can't you see he's just your fantasy? Are you going to throw away a love that's based on strength, concern and commitment for nothing more than a hot flash?

LEONIE

But, I've been waiting for that hot flash all my life. *We* never had it.

FRANKIE

Listen, I'm growing now and that's why I want you with me. But, if you say no, that's okay, 'cause I'm still gonna grow and I'm gonna keep getting stronger and stronger everyday. I'd just as soon do it with you, but I can just as easily do it without you, 'cause nothin's gonna stop me!

Leonie turns and starts to walk away.

FRANKIE (CONT'D)

Hey, I love you, pal... and I always will!

LEONIE

(without looking back
as she leaves the
stage)

I love you, too.

*(16) ETUDE

Frankie is beaming. The excitement of the decision he's made is obvious in his face. The music starts and he dances a strong, athletic piece that clearly reflects his newfound strength and determination. The piece ends on a loud note and he freezes at the same instant. The stage goes black.

The lights come back up on the path in the park where we first saw Didier.

The stage is empty for a few moments and feels very calm. The music begins and after the introduction Didier appears. He is dressed as he was when we first saw him, wearing his knapsack and carrying his walking stick.

*(17) MAYBE I'M LONELY

DIDIER

(singing)

Maybe I'm lonely, maybe I'm not
 Maybe I'm just trying to hold on to
 what I've got
 To what I've got

Maybe I'm lonely, maybe I'm sad
 Maybe I'll miss the best love
 I've ever had
 I've ever had

Here comes that lonely feeling again
 It's cold yet it burns, 'cause my
 loves never end
 Here comes that lonely feeling again
 Each time it's new, yet it's still
 my old friend

So here I am, I walk alone again
 Here I am, I talk alone again
 Once again on a long and fruitless
 flight
 I'll think about her all through the
 night
 I never seem to know what's wrong or
 right
 I'm just lonely

There's never been a single moment
 in time
 When I understood just what was mine
 I choose my course, but then I always
 find
 I'm still lonely

Here comes that lonely feeling again
 Lost in time, in a search that can't
 end
 Here comes that lonely feeling again
 It brings back the pain, yet it's
 still my old friend

Didier walks quietly into the wings leaving the stage empty and quiet. After a few moments Chretien enters and walks downstage towards his usual spot in the center. He addresses the audience.

CHRETIEN

So, my friends, there you have it. Even though Leonie, for the first time in her life, has decide to take a chance on love, Didier has chose to be alone again. I guess this is not the happy ending that we had all hoped for, but, as I say before, life is a beetch, eh! (He laughs) Now, the authair- who, by the way, is a wonderful guy with much talent (he rubs his sore arm and laughs)- has ask me... no... has *tell* me, in no uncertain terms, to say to you here the moral of this story, so this I will do...

The moral of this story is that some people cannot fall in love and live with someone else. Now, by this the authair mean...

GOLDBERG

(stepping out of the wings)

Hey, Chretien... c'mere a second. (Chretien looks amazed) I guess now it's my turn... I got a couple of changes I wanna make.

CHRETIEN

What!!? The great Goldberg want to change something! This I cannot believe!

GOLDBERG

Alright, cool it, huh. It's just that maybe I realized a few things out of all this that I never thought of before. Here... (he holds out a piece of paper. Chretien takes it, puts on his glasses and reads it quickly)

CHRETIEN

Um hmmm... um hmmm...

GOLDBERG

So, do me a favor and just read that for me, willya.

(He smiles sheepishly at the audience)

I'm really sorry about all this, but...

He trails off and then, having nothing else to say, leaves the stage.

Chretien is just about to start reading when Goldberg marches back onstage.

GOLDBERG (CONT'D)

Never mind. I'll do it myself.

(He addresses the audience as Chretien stands to one side watching)

Up until just now I had always intended to show that Didier was the big loser in all this. I felt that even though all of the other characters in the play, especially Leonie, had finally come to grips with the realities of love, Didier was still this poor jerk who was exactly the same in the end as he was in the beginning. No change. No growth. And I felt sorry for him. I was sure that Didier's destiny was to live alone and that this ridiculous search for perfect love was just an unconscious way of dealing with the guilt he felt because he had no desire to have someone permanent in his life. That's what the magic soap was for. To point out that the only way someone like him could ever fall in love was if by magic.

But, as I sat backstage tonight and watched (Leonie)(2) and (Didier)(2)'s "love at first sight," fall apart I began to see that some of us have to be like Didier. Despite the fact that he has the same burning need for love and companionship that we all have, he's still willing to pay the price that continuing his quest demands. He may very well have to spend the rest of his life alone.

It's a price I don't think I could pay and I don't know if you could either. But, now I know that without people like Didier who accept the concept of true love at first sight without question then the small part of that magic which exists in all of us would die.

Chretien, clapping his hands lightly in appreciation, walks back over.

CHRETIEN

Very nice, very nice...

GOLDBERG

Thank you...

Goldberg nods his head tentatively at the audience and then, looking very embarrassed, walks offstage as Chretien continues to clap.

CHRETIEN

Merci, 'Oh-ward.

(He continues clapping
until Goldberg is
off the stage and
then turns to the
audience)

Not one word! I have not understood
one thing he has say! Perhaps it is
too heavy for me! (He laughs) Next
time I don't think I let him take
back the show so easy, eh!

(beat)

Ladies and Gentlemen...

(he takes a deep bow)

Good afternoon!

He runs offstage (left).

The stage is quiet for a few moments and it seems that the play is finished when suddenly Frankie appears stage right wheeling his rig in front of him.

FRANKIE

(to audience)

Just one last thing I gotta do before
I leave.

He looks around carefully in all directions to make sure there'll be no interruptions and then begins to play the same song he's been trying to perform all through the show. Just as he's about to start singing, the entire cast begins to come onstage. Some of them take turns singing the verses of the song. The rest sing chorus.

*(18) ICE CREAM

FRANKIE (CONT'D)

(singing)

Haagen-Dazs, Frusen Gladje, Baskin
Robbins
So many brands to choose from sets
my heart a-throbbin'

SELENA

(singing, holding
Johnny's hand)

Chocolate Chunk, Butter Pecan, Rainbow
Sherbert

JOHNNY AND HINTON

(singing)
It boils my hemoglobin, I'm an Ice
Cream pervert!

LEONIE AND SALLY

(singing)
I love Ice Cream...

ALL ONSTAGE

(singing)
I love Ice Cream...

TONY, GOLDBERG, MRS.C.

(singing)
Jamoca Mousse, Oatmeal Raisin, Coffee
Walnut

DIDIER

(singing, from the
other side of the
stage)
Some of my very favorites, I love
them so much, but...

CARMEN

(singing)
Then there's Mocha Almond and-a *French*
Vanilla

HINTON

(singing)
It isn't right, but for a bite I
think I'd kill her!
(He fakes a punch at
Carmen)

ALL

(singing)
I love Ice Cream...
I love Ice Cream!!

At this point Chretien enters and heads straight for the
center of the stage.

CHRETIEN

(singing and dancing
slinkily)
Tantalize, Hypnotize, Mesmerize...

ALL

(singing as if in a
trance)
We love it

CHRETIEN

(singing)
Immortalize, Rhapsodize... CANONIZE!!

ALL

(singing)
ICE CREAM!!

They all dance.

ALL (CONT'D)

(singing)
Haagen-Dazs, Frusen Gladje, Baskin
Robbins
Eat designer Ice Cream when you're
out hobnobbin'

BOYS

(singing)
But, if you hear the old standbys
are dead, that's rumor

GIRLS

(singing)
'Cause for me the Ice Cream of choice
is still... GOOD HUMOR!!

ALL

(singing)
I love Ice Cream
I love Ice Cream

They dance again.

CHRETIEN

(singing)
Tantalize, Hypnotize, Mesmerize...

ALL

(again singing in a
trance)
We want some!

CHRETIEN

(singing)
Immortalize, Rhapsodize... CANONIZE!!

ALL

(singing)
ICE CREAM!!

Chretien grabs Carmen's hand and finishes up the song surrounded by the entire company. He and Goldberg do the secret handshake.

CHRETIEN

You see... I told you Ice Cream was
bettair than Soap!

He slaps Goldberg on the back almost knocking him over. The cast then starts to take their bows and run offstage one at a time. Chretien is the last. He takes a deep, deep exaggerated bow.

CHRETIEN (CONT'D)

So, next time I have my own show!
Maybe you come and see me then, eh!

- THE LIVIN' END -