

FINALE!

a new-fashioned musical

by Bob Ost

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FINALE! -- cast
(in order of appearance)

CRAIG LAWRENCE	late twenties, ambitious young head of Display at Beaumont's, and not quite as sophisticated as he would like you to think he is
RANDY	twenty-ish, gay-ish assistant to Craig
WARREN	Craig's other assisant, well into his cynical forties
GUARD	near retirement -- been with the store for years [can also play either JEREMIAH TRUMBULL or COCKTAIL PARTY GUEST]
ALLISON EDWARDS	age undetermined, glamor unquestionable; although from a humble background, she has learned to wear her social position as comfortably as a designer suit
BOBBI	forty-ish, weary saleswoman
LOTTI	sixty-ish, same with a dour wit
DONNA PLOTNICK	twenty-five, aspiring dancer with a talent for tripping over her tongue and feet; currently a Beaumont's salesgirl
COSMO DELANEY	almost fifty, though he'd never admit it; Creative Director of Beaumont's--half southern gentlemen, half lech [can also play ACTOR at COCKTAIL PARTY]
GLADYS	a crotchety old elevator operator; she's been with the store for thirty years, and thinks she runs the place
ROSA PEREZ	late thirties, flashy Latin spitfire working as secretary to Wilbur Shulman until she gets her break in show biz
WILBUR SHULMAN	fifty, President of Beaumont's and a perfect match for the store's staid, conservative image
PAUL EDWARDS	Allison's husband, slightly her senior; a man of polish, breeding and unreasonable understanding

JEREMIAH TRUMBULL old southern fogey, tolerated because he happens to be corporate vice-president of Coretco, the retail conglomerate that owns Beaumont's
[can be played by actor who plays GUARD]

MRS. TRUMBULL bored to tears from sixty years of southern gentility and forty years of marriage to Mr. Trumbull
[played by actress who plays LOTTI]

MRS. SHULMAN a good, dutiful, dull-witted wife
[played by actress who plays BOBBI]

GLORY JEAN JOHNSON coked up disco diva
[also plays SALESGIRL, COCKTAIL PARTY GUEST]

KIKI MACDONALD spunky steamroller of a reporter for Women's Wear Daily
[played by actress who plays GLADYS]

ADOLFO FEMINICCI hot young Italian designer of dubious origin, but unmistakable pretentiousness
[played by the actor who plays WARREN]

NOREEN the Edwards' housekeeper
[played by the actress who plays GLADYS]

GORDON the Edwards' butler/valet
[played by actor who plays RANDY]

DORIAN REYNOLDS ruthless young financial tycoon
[played by actor who plays WARREN and FEMINICCI]

CHORUS OF 6 MEN/6 WOMEN WHO PLAY:

MODELS

SALESPEOPLE

CATERERS/WORKERS

BEAUTIFUL PEOPLE

CUSTOMERS

COCKTAIL PARTY GUESTS (COMPTE/COMPTESS)

SYNOPSIS OF SCENES AND SONGS

PROLOGUE - the Fifth Avenue windows of Beaumont's department store, from 1883 to today
 "Beaumont's" Ensemble

ACT ONE

i - the Fifth Avenue windows of Beaumont's
 "Make Them Beautiful" Craig, Randy, Warren
 ii - the main floor of Beaumont's
 "Make Them Beautiful"/"Beautiful People" Bobbi, Lotti, Salesgirl, Randy, Warren,
 Guard
 "Make It Beautiful" Allison
 iii - the employee elevators
 iv - the office of store president Wilbur Shulman
 "He Needs Me" Allison, Shulman
 v - the display department/Shulman's office
 "Look, Don't Touch" Donna, Craig
 vi - Allison's office
 "Making a Difference" Allison
 "Making a Difference" (reprise) Allison
 vii - the display department/Allison's office
 "Allison, Allison" Craig, Paul
 "So Much" Paul
 viii - the employee elevators
 "You Got It!" Rosa, Donna, Cosmo
 The "Make Them Beautiful" March
 ix - the Pulitzer Fountain across from the Plaza
 "Sunset" Donna, Allison, Craig
 x - the main floor of Beaumont's
 Runway Music/"Movin' Along" Allison, Feminicci, Kiki, Randy, Rosa,
 Mrs. Trumbull, Party Guests

ACT TWO

i - the living room of Allison and Paul's Park Avenue duplex
 "Do You Think That I Care?" Allison, Craig, Paul, Donna, Cosmo
 ii - the employee elevators
 iii - Shulman's office/the display department
 "A Desk of My Own" Donna
 iv - Allison and Paul's apartment
 "Right Through My Fingers" Allison
 v - the same
 "The Cocktail Party Tango (Chat!)" Gordon, Noreen, Paul, Trumbull,
 Mrs. Trumbull, Kiki, Dorian, Party Guests
 "The Business of Love" Paul, Allison
 vi - the employee elevators
 vii - the Fifth Avenues windows of Beaumont's
 "Beautiful" Gladys, Bobbi, Lotti
 "Sunset" Craig, Gladys, Bobbi, Lotti, Donna, Rosa
 viii - the main floor of Beaumont's
 "Finale!" Allison

PROLOGUE

The Fifth Avenue facade of Beaumont's, Manhattan's oldest store specializing in women's fashion. The scrim has an old-fashioned tintype feeling to it; the architectural details are projected on the scrim, so that they can change with the narrative of the store's history. On either side of the elaborate entrance are two grand display windows, now empty.

As the lights come up, we hear a NARRATOR's voice that we will soon learn belongs to socialite ALLISON EDWARDS.

ALLISON'S VOICE

Once upon a time, there was a strange and beautiful world where men held doors for women without running the risk of being shot down as chauvinist pigs. Hard to believe, but there still is one place like that left on this cockeyed planet, where a gentleman can actually be gentle, and a woman can wear white lace gloves, without being suspected of having liver spots on her hands. Call me old-fashioned, but I love Beaumont's department store.

OFFSTAGE VOICES

BEAUMONT'S ... BEAUMONT'S ...

ALLISON'S VOICE

People from all over America and the world devoutly pilgrimage to this shopping Mecca at least once a season. And some have even been known to miss a mortgage payment just to bring home something in that familiar Beaumont's box.

OFFSTAGE VOICES

STROLLING DOWN FIFTH AVENUE,
YOU'LL FIND THAT BEAUMONT'S
IS THE STORE FOR YOU.

ALLISON'S VOICE

The phenomenon was founded in 1883 by Clarence Beaumont, a southern plantation owner who survived the Civil War, and reconstructed a few hundred acres of cotton into a textile empire. Success brought him to New York, where Mr. Beaumont was dismayed by the lack of refinement in the dress of the Yankee woman. With uncanny foresight, he purchased a modest plot of land and built a store on an undeveloped tree-lined city street ... called Fifth Avenue.

A light comes up behind the scrim. In one of Beaumont's windows we see a MANNEQUIN COUPLE in period (1880's) couture dress.

By the turn of the century, Beaumont's was flourishing, as the wealthy carriage trade soon flocked to America's new lifeline to European style. Opening night at the Met, the Governor's Ball, Mrs. Astor's private parties -- these were the beautiful occasions that cried out for a gown from Beaumont's.

Another light comes up behind the scrim, and we see a second MANNEQUIN COUPLE, this one in turn-of-the-century couture.

Then tragedy hit in May of 1919, when a raging fire leveled the cherished store to the ground.

The scrim turns red.

Some say the shock was what killed old Mr. Beaumont. Turning down hundreds of offers for the Fifth Avenue land, his sons decided to renew their father's vision and build a monument to his life. In 1921, a magnificent new Beaumont's opened on the original site.

The new facade of Beaumont's is projected on the scrim, MANNEQUIN COUPLES still visible in the window. A third MANNEQUIN COUPLE is now visible, in 1920's couture.

And so it has stood on the very same spot for over one hundred years, beautiful and proud, through a Depression, a World War, beatniks, a baby boom, flower children, Viet Nam, Watergate, Laverne and Shirley. To this day it remains an eye of calm and comfort in the thrashing hurricane of a changing world.

MANNEQUIN COUPLES are highlighted in the windows, representing at least three more decades of couture. They strike poses.

MANNEQUINS

BEAUMONT'S --
BUY A DREAM AT BEAUMONT'S.
LIFE WILL SEEM
MORE BEAUTIFUL ... BEAUTIFUL ... BEAUTIFUL.

The lights fade on the MANNEQUINS. The windows are empty for a brief moment, then the scrim rises to reveal ...

ACT ONE

SCENE ONE

Beaumont's windows today. The theme is simple and tasteful: black cocktail dressing. For visual impact, the display is propped with five foot high liquor bottles and highball glasses. Downstage right, the elaborate revolving door entrance to the store; around the stage left corner, a side entrance to the store, and beyond that, the dank employee entrance.

It is just before nine on a Monday morning, and Beaumont's customer doors are locked. CRAIG LAWRENCE, the Display Director, is putting the finishing touches on the mannequins. He is in his twenties, and self-conscious about his relative youth; but what he lacks in experience, he tries (a little too hard) to make up for with charm. He is assisted by RANDY, an impish, over-eager twenty-year old; and WARREN, long past forty and ideals.

RANDY

Aren't these the same dresses we had in last month's windows?

WARREN

Last month, last year, last world war. At Beaumont's, time stands tastefully still.

CRAIG

You're obviously insensitive to the subtleties of fashion. These are nothing at all like last month's black cocktail dresses.

RANDY

But they're every bit as dull.

CRAIG

Chic.

RANDY

Safe.

CRAIG

Soignee.

RANDY

Well, this dress sure has an interesting trim.

CRAIG

It adds a certain je ne sais quoi.

RANDY

Is that French for ugly?

WARREN

Mr. Lawrence is the Display Director of Beaumont's. It doesn't matter what he says, as long as he says it in French.

CRAIG

It happens to be the language of fashion.

WARREN

It used to be the language of love. Then it got dressed.

CRAIG

Come on, you've got to love what we do, Warren. Don't you find it exciting to see how people's faces light up when they walk into Beaumont's. Maybe for a few moments they forget what a mess the world has become, and imagine a time that was a little bit more... beautiful.

THERE'S A WORLD OUT THERE STARVING FOR TASTE,
LONGING FOR PEARL BUT STICKING WITH PASTE --
WASTING AWAY UNESTHETICALLY.

THERE'S A WORLD OUT THERE, STRICTLY MUNDANE --
NOT KNOWING VIN ORDINAIRE FROM CHAMPAGNE.

RANDY

DRESSING COMPLETELY SYNTHETICALLY --

WARREN

AND LOOKING COMPLETELY INANE.

CRAIG

Those ladies out there need us. We're the molders of "la mode", the savants of soignee.

RANDY

And mom thinks I'm just a window dresser.

CRAIG

MAKE THEM SHINE, MAKE THEM CHIC,
MAKE THEM BEAUTIFUL.

WARREN

EVEN THOUGH THEY'RE ANTIQUE,
MAKE THEM BEAUTIFUL.

RANDY

SO WHAT IF THEY CREAK?
THEY LOOK SLEEK IN CHIFFON.

WARREN

FASHION'S THEIR FAVORITE CON-
SOLATION!

CRAIG

MAKE THEM BELLES OF THE BALL,
MAKE THEM BEAUTIFUL.
ENLIGHTEN THEM ALL --
MAKE THEM BEAUTIFUL.

ALL THREE

THEY'LL "OOH" AND THEY'LL "AHH"
WHEN THEY REAP WHAT WE'VE SEWED:
THEY'LL BE OOH-LA-LA
WHEN THEY'RE DRESSED A LA MODE!

Other SALESPEOPLE have drifted through on
their way to the employee's entrance.

CRAIG

We should be proud to work for a store that stands for quality in a world of compromise,
a store that stands for traditional values in a world of change.

RANDY

A store that stands, but for how much longer? I've heard this antique's got a few financial
cracks in it.

CRAIG

Nonsense. Beaumont's is a survivor, a proud symbol of fashion for over one hundred
years.

WARREN

And I say it's high time they updated her merchandise.

THERE'S A WORLD OUT THERE WE NEVER SELL --
THEY KNOW THERE'S LIFE AFTER COCO CHANEL.

RANDY

WHY CAN'T WE NORMA KAMALI' EM?

CRAIG

THERE'S A WORLD OUT THERE DRESSED TO THE NINES --
LOOKING FANTASTIC IN CLASSIC DESIGNS ...

WARREN
AND JUST AS UPLIFTING AS VALIUM.

RANDY
IT'S TIME THEY WERE DRESSED TO THE KLEINS.

RANDY and WARREN do a mock waltz with the lifeless mannequins. ALLISON EDWARDS enters and sweeps past the windows, and with a wave of her hand and a toss of her head, brings the MANNEQUINS to life. We are now watching ALLISON's imagination take flight, as each of the MANNEQUINS does a simple adjustment to her plain black dress, adding or subtracting something, and those classic cocktail dresses become daring designer creations.

ALLISON
MAKE THEM QUEENS OF THE NIGHT,
MAKE THEM BEAUTIFUL.
IT'S THEIR GOD-GIVEN RIGHT
TO BE BEAUTIFUL.

WARREN
SO WHAT IF THEY'RE TACKY
AND LACKING IN CLASS ...

RANDY
AND THEY GIVE YOU A PAIN IN YOUR AS-
PIRATION.

ALL
MAKE THEM GLITTER AND GLEAM,
MAKE THEM BEAUTIFUL ...
OR AT LEAST MAKE THEM SEEM
TO BE BEAUTIFUL.

The MANNEQUINS have returned to their original poses, as ALLISON's fantasy comes to an end. With determination, she marches off.

CRAIG/RANDY/WARREN
BEAUMONT'S PROFITS ARE FEW
SO THERE'S ONE THING TO DO:
MAKE THEM SPARKLE LIKE NEW
TIL THEY'RE ALL JUST TOO TOO
RECHERCHE!

TRY TO DRESS THEM UP,
AND FINESSE THEM UP.
MAKE THEM BEAUTIFUL ...
AND MAKE THEM PAY!

The Fifth Avenue windows of Beaumont's are spotlighted in their quiet elegance. Then they move off to reveal ...

SCENE TWO

The main selling floor of Beaumont's. The perspective is reversed from the opening scene: the windows are upstage, the main store entrance stage left of them. The side entrance is stage right; downstage of that, an archway leading to the employee entrance, employee elevators, and so on. Downstage left is an archway leading to a small boutique area of the store.

Within the conservative decor and imposing architectural columns are counters dripping with makeup, treatment and fragrance lines. At left are the hosiery, jewelry and scarf counters.

SALESPEOPLE are getting ready for the day's business. DONNA PLOTNICK, twenty-five and ever-optimistic in the face of the daily disasters of her life, is arranging the scarves at her counter; BOBBI, middle-aged and strictly business, and LOTTI, older and sarcastic, are setting up their cosmetic counters. Other SALESPEOPLE drift in.

SALESGIRL

GIVE 'EM POWDER AND BLUSH --
MAKE THEM BEAUTIFUL.

SECOND SALESGIRL

THEY THINK IT'S A RUSH
TO BE BEAUTIFUL.

LOTTI

CLINIQUE AND LANCOME
WILL BRING OUT THEIR BEST.

BOBBI

THANK GOD FOR MY TRAINING FROM EST-
EE LAUDER!

LOTTI

So I said to her, "Coral Passion is coral at Beaumont's. If it has more blue at Bloomingdale's, then why don't you get your ass on over to Bloomingdale's!"

SALESGIRL

GIVE A GIFT OF PERFUME --
MAKE THEM BEAUTIFUL.

ANOTHER SALESGIRL

UPLIFT THEIR "BAZOOM" --
MAKE THEM BEAUTIFUL.

ALL

PAMPER AND FLATTER
AND SERVE 'EM WITH STYLE.
IT DOESN'T MATTER
HOW MUCH THEY COMPLAIN.
IN SPITE OF THE STRAIN
AT BEAUMONT'S THEY TRAIN US
TO SMILE, SMILE, SMILE!

BOBBI

It's a half hour till opening, girls. The beautiful people are on their way.

LOTTI

Better pop those valiums now while there's still time for them to kick in.

CRAIG, RANDY and WARREN enter singing.

GIRLS

SCRAPE, BOW
TO BEAUTIFUL PEOPLE.
COW-TOW
TO BEAUTIFUL PEOPLE.
BAD MOOD,
LOUD, RUDE,
RICH!

EVERY LAST PRIG OF THEM
MUCH TOO BIG FOR THEIR
BRITCHES!

BEAUTIFUL PEOPLE
WHICH IS
ONLY TO SAY:
GOOD LORD,
WISH WE COULD AFFORD

BOYS

LA LA LA LA LA LA
MAKE THEM BEAUTIFUL.
LA LA LA LA LA LA
MAKE THEM BEAUTIFUL.
LA LA LA LA LA LA LA
LA LA LA
RICH!
A PAIN IN YOUR AS-
PIRATION!

LA LA LA LA LA LA
MAKE THEM BEAUTIFUL.

LA LA LA LA LA LA
MAKE THEM BEAUTIFUL.
LA LA LA
LA LA LA LA LA LA
WISH WE COULD AFFORD

TO BE THAT WAY!

"SIR", "MA'AM" --
BEAUTIFUL PEOPLE.
GODDAMN
BEAUTIFUL PEOPLE.

DRESS, CLOTHE
BEAUTIFUL PEOPLE.
I LOATHE
BEAUTIFUL PEOPLE.

ISN'T IT ALWAYS THE WAY?

WE HAVE TO DRESS THEM ALL,

'CAUSE GOD BLESS THEM ALL:

BEAUTIFUL, BEAUTIFUL, BEAUTIFUL,
BEAUTIFUL PEOPLE ...
PAY!

TO BE THAT WAY!

MAKE THEM GLITTER AND GLEAM,
MAKE THEM BEAUTIFUL.
OR AT LEAST MAKE THEM SEEM
TO BE BEAUTIFUL.

THOUGH THEIR GRACES ARE FEW
TAKE THE WHOLE MOTLEY CREW --
MAKE THEM SPARKLE LIKE NEW
'TIL THEY'RE ALL JUST TOO TOO
RECHERCHE!

TRY TO DRESS THEM UP,

AND FINESSE THEM UP --

MAKE THEM BEAUTIFUL ...

AND MAKE THEM
PAY!

CRAIG

The swimsuits for next week's windows look fine, but we still don't have a visual concept.

RANDY

How about hula hoops? All bright and summery. Fun! ... No hula hoops, huh?

WARREN (confidently)

Scarves.

CRAIG

Perfect! Lots of scarves drifting all around, like the waves of the ocean. Or something.

DONNA (eagerly coming forward)

What a great idea! Well, take your pick.

She gestures towards the display rack, only to
wind up knocking it over.

I don't believe I did that.

CRAIG

No harm done. I don't think these scarves are breakable.

He helps DONNA pick up the scarves.

DONNA

I'm Donna Plotnick. That's my real name, but I dance under the name of Nickles.

CRAIG

Nickles Plotnick?

DONNA

No. Donna Nickles.

CRAIG

My name is Craig Lawrence. All the time.

DONNA

Oh God, I know, Mr. Lawrence. I've always admired your windows. You've got terrific eyes. I mean, eye. A terrific eye. Artistic.

CRAIG

I'm afraid I'd better get my terrific eye up to my office. It's nearly nine. Randy, give Donna a hand. Oh, and while you're picking through the rubble, see if you can come up with a dozen or so to show me for the windows. Blue tones, like the ocean.

DONNA

You bet, Mr. Lawrence!

RANDY, WARREN and DONNA pick up scarves. CRAIG starts to go off, but stops as ALLISON EDWARDS enters, pushing her way past a burly SECURITY GUARD. She is confident, haughty and every inch a lady. CRAIG watches her with growing interest.

GUARD

Ma'am, you can't go in there. The store isn't open yet.

ALLISON

Of course the store isn't open. You don't imagine that I dragged myself in here at nine o'clock on a Monday morning just to shop. Nobody needs to spend money that badly!

GUARD

If you work here, you gotta show me your employee ID.

ALLISON

If you want to know who I am, ring up your president, Wilbur Shulman. Tell him Allison Edwards is back where she belongs, fifteen years older, a few centuries wiser and twice as determined as ever!

GUARD

Allison Edwards. He'll know the name?

ALLISON

Would Lord know Taylor?

GUARD

Beats me, lady. Just don't move.

He goes to a Security phone. CRAIG gives her one more curious glance, then goes off. A spot tightens on ALLISON.

ALLISON

I remember the first time my mother brought me here -- I must have been eight or nine. We were poor then, and couldn't really afford it, but I simply had to have something from elegant Beaumont's. So mom bought me a single white linen handkerchief. I still have it, in its original box. I've always loved this store. It used to remind me of the deck of some grand old luxury liner.

The spot goes out as the lights bump up.

At the moment, the Titanic comes to mind.

LOOK AT THIS STORE: A LIVING ANTIQUE.
DATED DECOR WITH A FORMER MYSTIQUE.
WHY NOT UPDATE IT DRAMATICALLY?

LOOK AT THIS STORE: BACKWARD AND BLAH!
I'LL TURN THIS SHACK INTO SHANGRI-LA.
THINKING TOO ARISTOCRATICALLY
HAS BEEN BEAUMONT'S FATAL FAUX PAS.

Somebody's got to save this ship, to steer it from its collision course with disaster!

GIVE IT VERVE AND VENEER --
MAKE IT BEAUTIFUL.
IT'S SO AWF'LY AUSTERE --
MAKE IT BEAUTIFUL.

I FEAR THAT THEY FEEL
IT HAS OLD-FASHIONED FLAIR,
BUT IT REALLY JUST HAS SAVOIR "FAIR
TO MIDDLEING"!

Doesn't anybody here know it's 1980? Somebody's got to give this old girl a good dose of today!

GIVE HER SPARK, GIVE HER SASS,
MAKE HER BEAUTIFUL.
GIVE HER MORE CHROME AND GLASS --

MAKE HER BEAUTIFUL,

CHANGE IS LONG OVERDUE.
EVEN THOUGH, ENTRE-NOUS,
THIS IS MORE MY MILIEU,
CHACUN A SON GOUT,
AS THEY SAY.
LET'S PROGRESS HER UP,
AND SUCCESS HER UP.
MAKE HER BEAUTIFUL ...
AND MAKE HER PAY!

The GUARD has motioned to ALLISON with a gesture of approval. She triumphantly follows him off to the elevators.

BLACKOUT

SCENE THREE (crossover)

The employee elevators. An "out of order" sign is on one of the two elevators.

CRAIG is waiting for the elevator. With him is COSMO DELANEY, Creative Director of Beaumont's, a fine southern gentleman of a few more years than he cares to admit.

COSMO

Love the new windows, Craig, but don't you think some of those black dresses are -- well, you know -- a tad bold fo' Beaumont's?

CRAIG (nervously)

I thought they were pretty basic. Aren't they basic?

ALLISON comes sweeping in.

COSMO

Allison Edwards, as I live and breathe! What brings you slithering back down into the depths of the working classes, deah? Buyin' the store, perhaps?

ALLISON (through gritted teeth)

Cosmo, dah-ling! How too too pleasant to run into you, the man responsible for Beaumont's advertising. I must compliment you on your ad in yesterday's Times, dear -- that splendid full page on new American designers.

COSMO

That was Bloomingdale's, deah. We ran blouses.

ALLISON

Oh yes. And they were very ... sweet. Weren't they.

The elevator doors open. GLADYS the operator steps out.

GLADYS

Okay, just start piling in. I ain't got all day.

ALLISON

Going up?

GLADYS

No. I'm taking my little submarine down to the bottom of the ocean. All aboard.

ALLISON gives her a look, then gets on with an amused COSMO. Just as GLADYS is about to shut the doors, ROSA, the store president's Latin secretary, runs in.

ROSA

Gladys, hold the elevator! Hold the elevator! Meester Shulman, he gonna cook my goat! You wouldn't believe the traffic!

GLADYS

Just get on, Rosa, and let's get goin'!

DONNA (running in with a stack of scarves)

Hold the elevator! I'm really sorry, Gladys, but Mr. Lawrence asked to see these scarves for next week's windows ...

She trips running onto the elevator, falling right into the arms of COSMO. The scarves go flying.

COSMO

Nahce of you to drop in, little lady.

ROSA

Forgive her, Meester Delaney. Everybody knows dancers can't walk -- their feet is all thumbs.

ALLISON (exasperated)

Cosmo, dear -- I suspect that if you restored this "little lady" to an upright position and helped pick up her scarves, Gladys might be able to launch her little submarine.

GLADYS

Okay, step back and step in. We're takin' off -- and I mean now!

The elevator doors close, the lights flicker, and after a moment we are on the eighth floor: Executive Offices and the Display Department.

SCENE FOUR - immediately following

The office of WILBUR SHULMAN, president of Beaumont's. Not a standard piece of office furniture in sight -- SHULMAN's taste runs more towards the antique and traditional.

SHULMAN is a man well into his fifties. He has worked for twenty-five years to reach this top executive position, inching his way up strictly by the rules. He isn't particularly innovative, which makes him perfect for Beaumont's. He is alone at his desk, dictating a letter into a tape machine.

SHULMAN

... and I am pleased to report to Consolidated Retail Corporation that Beaumont's sales figures for the month of June were up one full percent ... make that "were up significantly" ... "noticeably" ... were up from last year.

He takes out a bottle, pops a pill.

Looking to the future, I can report great enthusiasm from the Milan collections. In an unprecedented move, Beaumont's has decided to put a major capital investment behind an exciting newcomer, Adolfo Feminicci ... God help us!

ROSA flings open the door. He jumps.

ROSA

Meesus Edwards here to see you.

SHULMAN (clicks off machine, pops a pill)

Oh God, what does she want from me?

ROSA scoots out as ALLISON enters.

ALLISON (a little nervously)

Hello, Willie.

She tentatively enters, pauses, then confidently "models" herself for him.

It's Allison, Willie. Allison Edwards, formerly Barton. I suppose I've changed a lot in fifteen years. Well ... what do you think?

SHULMAN

When they called to say you were here, you could have knocked me over with a blank check.

ALLISON

You're as sturdy as Beaumont's -- it would take a bulldozer to knock you over.

SHULMAN

And here you are.

ALLISON (a beat)

Making up for lost insults? Well, I suppose seeing me makes you edgy. And quite honestly, the feeling is mutual. There's a lot left unsaid between us.

SHULMAN

So why have you decided to break a perfectly comfortable fifteen year silence? Don't tell me -- one of your pet charities wants us to sponsor a fund-raising fashion extravaganza. Save the Condominiums, perhaps?

ALLISON

Frankly, the cause that I'd like to get involved with now is Saving a Dinosaur -- Beaumont's, to be specific.

SHULMAN

And what makes you think Beaumont's needs to be saved?

ALLISON

Between the gossip of Women's Wear and the gospel of the Wall Street Journal, it doesn't take a Darwin to predict extinction. You need me. I'm one of the ten best-dressed women in New York. I know the right people. And I have some splendid ideas. There was a time when you thought my ideas were splendid enough to offer me Creative Director.

SHULMAN

I gave a silly young girl from Jersey a chance to work for one of the world's most prestigious stores. And when I handed her the break of a lifetime, she left.

ALLISON

Marrying a rich and famous architect was a lot to handle for a silly young girl from New Jersey. Being Creative Director on top of it all? Well, it scared me to death.

SHULMAN

And so you left me high and dry.

ALLISON

I'm back, Willie. And I'm ready to do something sensational. Life goes by so quickly. Before I die, I'm determined to hear the fanfare of trumpets, the roll of drums and the cymbals crashing.

The phone rings.

SHULMAN

Sorry. The best I can offer is bells. Excuse me. (into phone:) Wilbur Shulman here.

ALLISON (aside)

HE DOESN'T KNOW IT,
BUT HE NEEDS ME. HE NEEDS ME.
HE'LL NEVER SHOW IT,
BUT HE NEEDS ME. HE NEEDS ME.

I'LL UNDERPLAY THE ROLE,
AND FEED HIS PRIDE.
HE'LL THINK HE'S IN CONTROL.
HE'LL DECIDE
HOW MUCH HE NEEDS ME ...
HE NEEDS ME ...
AND THEN I'LL MAKE HIM CRAWL!

SHULMAN (aside)

IT'S REALLY FUNNY
HOW SHE NEEDS ME. SHE NEEDS ME.
WITH ALL HER MONEY,
NOW SHE NEEDS ME. SHE NEEDS ME.

IT'S TAKEN ALL THESE YEARS --
THE TABLES TURNED.
SHE WANTS TO CHANGE CAREERS.
NOW SHE'S LEARNED
HOW MUCH SHE NEEDS ME.
WHAT ABSOLUTE GALL!

He hangs up the phone. They turn to each other,
false smiles on their faces.

BOTH

HOW CAN I SA-AY WHAT A TREAT THIS IS?
HOW NICE TO SEE YOU LOOKING GRATE...FUL.
HOW TO CONVEY THE PURE CONCEIT THIS IS?
DON'T YOU AGREE IT'S REALLY HATE...FUL?

SOMEHOW WE KNEW WE'D LIVE TO SEE THIS DAY.
SOMEHOW THE TWO OF US ASSUMED IT.
SOMEHOW WE KNEW THAT IT WOULD BE THIS WAY:
WE'RE DOOMED
TOGETHER AFTER ALL!

ALLISON
IT'S REALLY FITTING
THAT HE NEEDS ME.
HE DOESN'T GUESS HOW MUCH
HE NEEDS ME.

SHULMAN
SHE HATES ADMITTING
THAT SHE NEEDS ME.
SHE WON'T CONFESS HOW MUCH
SHE NEEDS ME.

SHULMAN
THE THRILL OF SEEING YOU
IS TRULY RARE.
BUT I'VE GOT WORK TO DO.
PLEASE TAKE CARE,
AND IF I NEED YOU
I PROMISE I'LL CALL.

He has nearly ushered her out the door, when the
phone rings. He answers it.

Wilbur Shulman here.... Signor Feminicci, what a pleasant surprise! ... Of course it's
pleasant.... You're going to what? ... You can't pull out on us. We have a four hundred
thousand dollar investment riding on this ...

He pops a pill. ALLISON grabs the phone.

ALLISON
Aldo, dah-ling! This is Allison Edwards.... Si, caro mio.... What am I doing here? Only
planning the biggest promotional event of the decade! When I heard about Beaumont's
supporting your new line, I rushed down here and had dear Wilbur put me in charge of
your fall introduction.... Grazie, and I can't wait to see you, either! Ciao!

She casually hangs up the phone, and stares at
WILBUR triumphantly.

SHULMAN
SO GOOD TO SEE YOU HAVEN'T CHANGED.

ALLISON
NOR YOU.
SO GOOD TO SEE YOU LOOKING WELL.

SHULMAN
SWELL.
I'LL SEE IF THINGS CAN BE ARRANGED
FOR YOU.

ALLISON
SO GOOD TO KNOW YOU'RE GOING TO HELP.

BOTH

HELL--

ISN'T IT NICE TO KNOW YOU'VE GOT A FRIEND?
ISN'T THE PRICE A LITTLE GRUESOME?
ISN'T IT NICE TO KNOW THAT WE WOULD END
A TWOSOME?
OOH! SOMEBODY TELL ME PLEASE:

SHULMAN

DO I NEED HER ABILITY?

ALLISON

DO I NEED HIS HOSTILITY?

SHULMAN

LIKE CATCHING COLD.

ALLISON

LIKE LAST RESORTS.

SHULMAN

LIKE GROWING OLD.

ALLISON

LIKE GROWING WARTS.

SHULMAN

I NEED HER ...

ALLISON

I NEED HIM ...

BOTH

INDEED --
AS MUCH AS [S]HE
NEEDS ME!

They shake hands, as the lights fade.

SCENE FIVE - immediately following

The lights come up on the opposite side of the stage: the workroom of the Display Department, filled with mannequins, and props of every size and shape -- plates, feathers, flowers, fabric.

CRAIG is sitting at his battered desk.
COSMO is at the door, handing DONNA a
pile of scarves.

CRAIG (feigning casualness)

Who is this Allison Edwards woman? She's very ... dynamic.

COSMO

So's a tornado, but ah wouldn't wanna tangle with one. Now this pretty little lady has risked the wrath of Gladys just to see you. Ah think we should give these scarves our serious attention.

DONNA nervously slips out of COSMO's overly friendly reach, and wanders into the room.

DONNA

Wow! So this is where you make all those funny little animals and fruit and things you put in the windows.

CRAIG

Shall we look at these on the table, or toss them all over the floor again?

ROSA comes running in.

ROSA

Mr. Delaney, I seen how much you liked Donna's scarves, I thought I find you here. Mr. Shulman, says he want to see you and Mr. Lawrence in his office right away, and make it a double.

COSMO

Come on, Craig. We'd bettah get a move on.

CRAIG

Donna, unless you think you can call a truce with gravity, don't touch anything until I get back.

COSMO, CRAIG and ROSA exit. DONNA wanders through the room, examining the props like a little girl in a toy store.

DONNA (singing)

CHINA PLATES, PAPER WEIGHTS,
SILKS AND SUCH --
LOOK, DON'T TOUCH.
SIGH A BIT, TRY A BIT,
CLING AND CLUTCH --
LOOK, DON'T TOUCH.
LOOK, DON'T TOUCH.

PRETTY THINGS CATCH MY EYE:
PRETTY RINGS, MAYBE DIAMOND.
TOUCH THEM, AND I'M UNDONE.
OTHERS CAN HAVE THE FUN.
I'LL KEEP MY DISTANCE --
WATCH MY RESISTANCE.

Lights fade to a spot on DONNA. Another spot comes up on SHULMAN's office. SHULMAN is at his desk, ALLISON is seated near him, CRAIG and COSMO have just been officially introduced to her.

SHULMAN

And so Mrs. Allison Edwards will be joining us as Director of Special Events. I understand she already has some ideas she's anxious to bounce off the two of you.

ALLISON

Yes, I have ideas. But I'm going to depend on your input and assistance. After all, you boys are the experts.

CRAIG

Surely the input from a woman of your breeding and experience will prove invaluable to us all, Mrs. Edwards.

ALLISON

You must call me Allison.

ALLISON, COSMO and SHULMAN drift out of view as the spot tightens on CRAIG, paralleling the spot on DONNA.

CRAIG (singing)

JUST A FEW THINGS IN LIFE
TOP THE VIEW FROM THE EIFFEL.
STILL, IT'S A TRIFLE HIGH.
OTHERS CAN SEARCH THE SKY.
I'VE FOUND A VISION
JUST AS PARISIAN.

PARIS DRESS, GENTILESS,
LEATHER CLUTCH --
LOOK, DON'T TOUCH.
TANTALIZE, FANTASIZE
NOT TOO MUCH --
LOOK, DON'T TOUCH.
LOOK, DON'T TOUCH.

CRAIG/DONNA

BUT ISN'T [S]HE PERFECT? ISN'T [S]HE FINE?
 ISN'T IT OBVIOUS [S]HE ISN'T MINE?
 MAYBE MY DREAMS ARE WAY OUT OF LINE.
 SEE HOW [S]HE STANDS OFF?
 I'LL KEEP MY HANDS OFF.

CRAIG

CONFIDENT, AFFLUENT --
 DON'T CONFRONT.
 WATCH, DON'T WANT.
 LOOK, DON'T HOLD.

DONNA

CONFIDENT, INSOLENT,
 EYES SO COLD.
 LOOK, DON'T HOLD.

TAKE IT SLOW, PAS DE TROP --
 NOT TOO BLUNT.
 WATCH, DON'T WANT.
 LOOK, DON'T HOLD.

DARE A BIT, STARE A BIT,
 NOT TOO BOLD --
 LOOK, DON'T HOLD.

CRAIG/DONNA

BUT DOESN'T [S]HE NOTICE? DOESN'T [S]HE CARE?
 HOW CAN [S]HE POSSIBLY BE UNAWARE?
 MAYBE I REALLY ASK FOR TOO MUCH.
 SLOW THE PACE ...
 KNOW YOUR PLACE ...
 LOOK, DON'T TOUCH.

The lights fade on CRAIG and DONNA.

SCENE SIX - one week later

ALLISON's new office, formerly a storage room.
 RANDY and WARREN have been redecorating,
 capturing CRAIG's apparent idea of femininity:
 lace curtains frost the window, brocade oozes over
 the desk, floral paintings adorn the walls.

RANDY

She'll be here any second. Is this everything? Curtains, brocade, paintings ...

WARREN (sitting at ALLISON's desk)

What is Craig thinking? It's all a bit dainty for the barracuda Mr. Delaney described.

RANDY

Anything she doesn't like, she can just get rid of.

WARREN

Like Mr. Delaney.

CRAIG nervously ushers ALLISON into her new office. WARREN gets up quickly.

CRAIG

Well, here it is: your new office.

ALLISON (looking around, dismayed)

Yes. Isn't it ... sweet.

CRAIG

I hope you like it.

ALLISON

I did bring a few little things of my own with me. Unfortunately, they're being held captive downstairs by your security guards. Could you and your boys see if you can bail out my cartons?

WARREN

Us boys are supposed to be working on a window display, if you girls don't mind.

CRAIG (glaring at WARREN)

Warren! We'd be happy to help out. (to ALLISON) You just relax and settle in. We'll be back right back. A bientot.

WARREN

French toast for breakfast again?

CRAIG, RANDY and WARREN exit.

ALLISON

SO MANY DREAMS
RIGHT THROUGH MY FINGERS.
SO MANY SCHEMES
NEVER COME TRUE.
SO MANY PLANS, SO MUCH I HAVE TO DO
BEFORE I'M THROUGH!

She looks around, trying to decide what to do first.

THERE'S A LIFE THAT'S HAPPENING --
A MEANINGFUL LIFE THAT'S HAPPENING.
A LIFE THAT'S MORE THAN
BANK ACCOUNTS
AND CHARGE ACCOUNTS
AND LARGE AMOUNTS
OF COCKTAIL PARTY CHAT.
THERE'S GOTTA BE MORE TO LIFE THAN THAT.

She pulls the curtains off the windows, the brocade off the desk and the paintings off the walls.

THERE'S A WORLD THAT'S POSSIBLE--
A BEAUTIFUL WORLD THAT'S POSSIBLE.
A WORLD THAT'S MORE THAN
CO-OP SHARES
AND WALL STREET SCARES,
AND CHIC AFFAIRS
WHERE MILLIONAIRES GROW FAT.
THERE'S GOTTA BE MORE TO LIFE THAN THAT.

She stuffs everything in a carton, as RANDY and WARREN enter with two more cartons and a chrome arc lamp. She directs an eager RANDY and a resistant WARREN in arranging things.

BUT TELL ME
WHERE DO I START
MAKING A DIFFERENCE?
I DON'T LIKE THE WORLD I SEE.
I KNOW WHAT THE WORLD CAN BE
IF I JUST MAKE A DIFFERENCE.

RANDY and WARREN exit. She unpacks her cartons: abstract paintings, a metal sculpture, plants, books.

DEEP IN MY HEART
I KNOW THE DIFFERENCE
SOMEBODY LIKE ME CAN MAKE.
NEVER MIND MY LAST MISTAKE.
NOW I MUST MAKE A DIFFERENCE!

THERE'S A NEW DRIVE IN ME --
SOMETHING THAT'S COMING ALIVE IN ME.
AND HERE'S MY SOLEMN VOW:
I'LL START MAKING A DIFFERENCE
RIGHT NOW!

ALLISON proudly sits at her new desk. The office is in impeccable order -- contemporary, executive. CRAIG and COSMO have entered and sat down. The music continues under the scene.

ALLISON

Well! Down to business. We've got to pull together the Feminicci promotion, and pull it together toute suite.

COSMO

But it's not scheduled until October.

ALLISON

Move it up. Shoot for the last week in August, to get it in before the other stores break with their Fall promotions. Beaumont's will be first, now and always.

COSMO

That only gives us fahv weeks to prepayah the invitations ...

ALLISON

And the full page ad in the Times.

COSMO

We don't have that kahnd of money ...

ALLISON

There'll be no skimping. Everything will be done first class. The whole promotion must have a theme, of course -- something that conveys the spirit of Aldo's creations. Very forward. Very future. That's it: the future is Feminicci at Beaumont's!

COSMO

We have professionals on staff who are paid to come up with promotional themes.

ALLISON steps out of the scene, in a spotlight.

ALLISON

LET HIM GIVE ME ATTITUDE --
SOMEDAY HE'LL GIVE ME GRATITUDE.
I'VE HAD MY FILL OF
SMART CAFES
AND MATINEES
AND EMPTY DAYS,
PREDICTABLE AND PAT.
THERE'S GOTTA BE MORE TO LIFE THAN THAT!

She steps back into the scene, and continues directly to CRAIG and COSMO.

WE'VE GOTTA START
MAKING A DIFFERENCE!
GOTTA SHOW A LITTLE SPARK --
TIME FOR US TO MAKE OUR MARK.
YES! WE'RE MAKING A DIFFERENCE!

Craig, start on renovations for the Designer Salon. You've seen the Feminicci dresses -- pick up the colors in the Salon, the windows and throughout the main floor. In fact, for

one night, we'll transform Beaumont's into a symbol of today's changing world: a club so flashy and flamboyant, everyone will think Studio 54 is just a boring hallucination.

COSMO

Just lahk a woman -- spend, spend, spend! (he leaves angrily)

ALLISON

THERE'S A NEW NEED IN ME--
SOMETHING THAT HAS TO SUCCEED IN ME.
AND HERE'S MY SOLEMN VOW:
WE'LL START MAKING A DIFFERENCE
RIGHT NOW!

CRAIG (slightly dazed)

It all sounds very ... exciting.

ALLISON

One more thing, Craig. That fellow in your department -- Warren? He's trouble. I can smell it. Can't we have him transferred to another branch? Someplace in New Jersey, perhaps?

CRAIG

But I can't just ... I mean, I need time to replace him.

The door is thrown open, and DONNA comes dancing in. She is halfway in the room before she realizes anyone is there.

DONNA

Step-step-kick-leap-kick... Oh, God! Did I walk into the wrong room? This used to be storage. Didn't this use to be storage?

CRAIG

We've just transformed it into an office for Mrs. Edwards.

DONNA

That's a relief. I always come here and practice when I have free time, and I'm on lunch now, and I have this audition tomorrow, and I thought the room would be empty and I could run a few steps, but I guess we can ditch that one, huh?

ALLISON

Young lady, what do you do?

DONNA

Modern and jazz, mostly.

ALLISON

I mean here at Beaumont's.

DONNA

Oh, God. I sell scarves.

ALLISON

You should be doing something more creative -- like working in Display.

CRAIG

A woman in Display?

ALLISON

Sure, let's be daring.

CRAIG

Uh, yes. Fine. I suppose. Why not?

ALLISON

Splendid. We'll arrange it with Personnel.

CRAIG

So ... Warren is out, Donna is in, Feminicci is the future, and we'd better get moving. Come on, Donna. We'd better start your training now.

CRAIG and DONNA drift off.

ALLISON (alone in the spotlight)

IT'S TIME TO MOVE --
I'LL SET THE PACE.
SO MUCH TO PROVE,
SO MUCH TO FACE.

Picking up phone and dialing.

Yes, operator. This is Allison Edwards at 513. Get me Kiki MacDonald at Women's Wear Daily, and Adolfo Feminicci at Feminicci's in Milan. Ring me back ASAP. Thank you. (she hangs up)

WHO CARES ABOUT A STORE?
I CARE ABOUT A STORE!
HERE'S WHERE I SEE
WHAT THE WORLD CAN BE.
IT'S BEAUTIFUL.
IT'S PART OF ME.

The phone rings.

Kiki, dah-ling! I'm back at Beaumont's, and I wanted you to be the first to know. I've created the promotional event of the decade, and Women's Wear must cover it -- an exclusive from Feminicci.... We'll do lunch, and I'll give you the details. Bye for now!

She hangs up.

HERE'S WHERE I START
MAKING A DIFFERENCE.
GONNA GIVE IT ALL I'VE GOT.
LET 'EM KNOW I'M HERE, I'M HOT,
AND I'M MAKING A DIFFERENCE!

The phone rings.

Aldo, dah-ling! I just had to tell you right away: we're doing a drop-dead dance evening for you on August twenty-eighth, so of course we need samples immediately.... Grazie, dah-ling.... Ciao!

She hangs up.

THERE'S A NEW NEED IN ME --
SOMETHING THAT HAS TO SUCCEED IN ME.
SO MUCH HAS PASSED ME BY.
TELL ME WHERE DO I START
MAKING A DIFFERENCE?
HERE'S WHERE I START
MAKING A DIFFERENCE.
HOW DO I START
MAKING A DIFFERENCE?
I'LL SIMPLY TRY ...
I'LL TRY ...
I'LL TRY!

BLACKOUT

SCENE SEVEN - two weeks later

The workroom of the Display Department.
DONNA is being shown around by RANDY. It is
her first day on the new job, and she is frantically
jotting down notes.

RANDY

When you don't know what else to use in a display, you're always safe with artificial trees. They're even seasonal: green for summer, gold for autumn, white for winter.

DONNA (writing assiduously)

White for winter.

ROSA comes running in.

ROSA

Donna bebee, how you do in the audition today? You get called back?

DONNA

No such luck. Did you?

ROSA

You kiddin'? You know how they discriminates against Spanish people.

RANDY

What's the show?

ROSA

A revival of "Song of Norway".

CRAIG (enters with false cheerfulness)

Not so good morning, mes amis! Rosa? I just came from Shulman's office. He thinks he's dictating a memo to you over the phone right now.

ROSA (running out)

Oh, sheet!

CRAIG

Well, our best idea just got killed -- the mirrors for the Feminicci windows have gone the way of all flash. I'm open to suggestions.

DONNA

What's a Feminicci window?

RANDY (jumping in quickly)

Feminicci's that designer we're promoting. You know -- the whole big number we're doing in like three weeks: the future is Feminicci at Beaumont's.

CRAIG

And we may not be part of that future if we don't come up with a sensational visual concept for the Fifth Avenue windows. Now, what can we put in the windows that will say "future"?

RANDY

How about clocks? Lots of modern ones. Chrome, matte black. Real slick, real shiny.... No clocks, huh?

CRAIG (pause)

Not bad. Donna, I want you to go through those crates -- there may some odds and ends left from last year's watch promotion. Randy, run down to the clock department. See if we can hook up a promotion with one of their vendors.

DONNA starts looking through crates. RANDY runs out.

DONNA

Look at this music box -- isn't it sweet?

She pulls out an antique music box, opens the lid. It plays a little classical tune.

CRAIG

Perfect! Absolutely perfect!

He takes the music box from her.

Keep looking for clocks -- I'll be right back.

DONNA stares bewildered, as CRAIG abruptly rushes out.

The lights fade on the workroom and come up on ALLISON's office. PAUL, a distinguished gentleman, is sitting patiently. CRAIG enters.

CRAIG

Excuse me. I take it Mrs. Edwards isn't here.

PAUL

Ah-ha! So I do have the right office, after all. I thought I recognized the fichus.

CRAIG

Are you a friend of hers?

PAUL

I sincerely hope so.

CRAIG

Well, I guess I'll stop by later. I wanted to give her a little gift for her new office.

PAUL

Is that what you're clutching so dearly?

CRAIG

It's an antique music box. I thought she might appreciate it.

CRAIG has lifted the lid, and the music box has begun to play.

PAUL

It'll fit right in with the chrome and glass.

CRAIG

Don't be taken in by appearances.

ALLISON, ALLISON -- CLASSIC AND CRYSTAL.
LUSH AS AN ARIA SUNG BY CALLAS.

PAUL

ALLISON, ALLISON -- SHARP AS A PISTOL.
POSSIBLY DEADLIER. AS YOU SAID,
SHE'S CALLOUS.

CRAIG

ALLISON SPEAKS
AND THE WORDS JUST GLISTEN.

PAUL

ALLISON SPEAKS --
LISTEN WITH CARE
TO UNCOVER THE MALICE.

ALLISON SPEAKS
AND THEY LISTEN.
LET'S BE FAIR --
NO ONE ELSE CAN COMPARE TO
ALLISON, ALLISON --

ALLISON SPEAKS ...
LISTEN:
LET'S BE FAIR --
NONE COMPARE TO
ALLISON, ALLISON.

CRAIG

SEQUINS AND SATIN.
BRIGHT AS THE MIRRORS IN VERSAILLES PALACE.

PAUL

ALLISON, ALLISON LIKES IT MORE LATIN.
STILL, YOU MIGHT TRY HER --
JUST PROMISE TO BUY HER
THE PALACE.

CRAIG

ALLISON SMILES --
DISCOVER
BEAUTY AS RARE
AS A SOLID GOLD CHALICE.

PAUL

ALLISON SMILES --
BETTER RUN FOR COVER!

ALLISON SMILES.

ALLISON SMILES
AND SHE'S WON A LOVER.

LOVE HER SMILE.
EVEN LOVE
THE WAY SHE HOLDS
HER HEAD.

I'LL BET NOBODY
EVER BREAKS EVEN --
SHE HOLDS
THE WINNING HAND.

AND NOBODY EVER TAKES
ADVANTAGE OF
SOMEONE

AS FINELY BRED ...

AS STUNNING AS ...

YOU'RE WRONG IN YOUR ANALYSIS
OF ALLISON, ALLISON.

AND NOBODY EVER TAKES
A SINGLE TRICK
FROM SOMEONE
IN COMMAND ...

AS CUNNING AS ...

YOU'RE WRONG IN YOUR ANALYSIS
OF ALLISON, ALLISON --

PAUL

MELTING DEFENSES.
STRINGS OF ADMIRERS FROM HERE TO DALLAS.

CRAIG

ALLISON, ALLISON QUICKENS THE SENSES.

PAUL

MAYBE A SMIDGE, BUT YOU'RE SAFER WITH DIG-
ITALIS!

CRAIG

LOVELY AS MOZART.
HAUNTING AS MOONLIGHT.
ELEGANT ...

PAUL

WEALTHY AS MIDAS.
SHARP AS A KNIFE.

ARROGANT ...

BIGGER THAN LIFE.
ALLISON, ALLISON --
MY QUEEN ...
MY FUTURE BOSS ...

BIGGER THAN LIFE.
ALLISON, ALLISON --
MY CROSS ...

MY WIFE!

CRAIG

Mr. Edwards?

PAUL

Please call me Paul. After all, any friend of my wife ...

CRAIG

I'm not that good a friend. Really.

PAUL

She's very beautiful, isn't she?

CRAIG

Not at all. I mean, I hadn't noticed. Look at the time. I have to get back to my office.

PAUL

Just out of curiosity, Mr. Lawrence, is the "love token" to woo and win her, or to thank her for a special evening?

CRAIG

Whoa! How can you talk like that about the woman you love?

PAUL

LOVE IS A QUESTION OF COMPROMISE,
IN SPITE OF WHAT POETS HAVE SUNG.
THAT ISN'T EXACTLY A STUNNING SURPRISE,
BUT THEN, I FORGOT YOU'RE YOUNG.
I'LL SPARE YOU THEORY AND CONJECTURE --
SERMONS MAKE ME WEARY, HENCE:
DISPENSING WITH MY DREARY LECTURE,
I'LL VOLUNTEER MY EXPERIENCE.

CRAIG

I really have to get going. I've got a lot to do. Your wife and I are overhauling the entire Designer Salon -- you'd hardly believe it was Beaumont's.

PAUL

Nothing's ever quite the same once Allison gets her hands on it. Just look at me.

AFTERNOONS SPENT IN CENTRAL PARK,
PRIVATE LAUGHTER LONG AFTER DARK --
ALL THE FUN I COULD SAVE UP,
THEN I GAVE UP
SO MUCH FOR LOVE.

FLASHY CLOTHES THAT I USED TO WEAR,
AND THE FRIENDS THAT SHE COULDN'T BEAR --
ALL THE BRIDGES I BURNED DOWN
WHEN I TURNED DOWN
SO MUCH FOR LOVE.
AND THE DAYS FLEW BY,
AND I COULDN'T DOUBT IT --
AND I'D HAVE TO SHOUT IT:
ALLISON LOVED ME!

HOW THE TIME WOULD FLY
WHEN WE'D LAUGH TOGETHER,
NEVER WONDERING WHETHER
ALLISON LOVED ME.
KEEPING PACE WITH HER SOCIAL CLIMB,
LOSING FACE NEARLY ALL THE TIME.
EV'RY WHIM, EV'RY FAVOR --
YES, I GAVE HER

SO MUCH FOR LOVE.

CRAIG

You've got the wrong idea, Mr. Edwards. My interest in your wife is strictly professional. Please excuse me -- I've got work to do.

He beats a hasty retreat.

PAUL

AND THE YEARS CREPT BY
WITH PERFECTION STRAINING,
BUT MY STILL MAINTAINING:
ALLISON LOVED ME.

THEN ONE HOT JULY
I IGNORED THE WARNING,
AND ONE SUDDEN MORNING
ALLISON LEFT ME.

NOW SHE'S BACK FOR APPEARANCE SAKE.
WHAT A PRACTICAL PAIR WE MAKE.
WE PREFER THIS ARRANGEMENT
TO ESTRANGEMENT.
OH WELL, SO MUCH FOR LOVE.
I GAVE UP
SO MUCH FOR LOVE ...
SO MUCH ...
FOR LOVE.

ALLISON (entering in a rush)

I just saw my Display Director looking pale and shaken. I thought you might be here. When did you get back?

PAUL

Late last night. You were asleep.

ALLISON (trying to be civil)

How did the trip go? Did you make enough for a down payment on that house in Connecticut?

PAUL

I think I made enough for a down payment on Connecticut.

ALLISON (pause)

Why the hell haven't I heard from you for two weeks?

PAUL

I've tried calling. You're a very busy lady these days.

ALLISON

And you've been a very busy gentleman for fifteen years.

PAUL

Architects are notable for making homes, not homemaking.

ALLISON

Maybe you could leave me a blueprint of yourself.

PAUL (pause)

Excuse me, madam. I'm here to congratulate Beaumont's new Director of Special Events. Do you know where I might find her?

ALLISON

Try the nearest wall -- she's probably climbing it.

PAUL

Your Display Director seems to think you've got things completely under control.

ALLISON

Oh, sure -- I could put naked mannequins in the Fifth Avenue windows, hang Japanese lanterns and paint the main floor pink and avocado, and he'd hail me as inventive!

PAUL

Perhaps he's from L.A. How about a congratulatory kiss?

ALLISON (not kissing him)

You can just hold the congratulations until August twenty-eighth.

PAUL

I think a dream come true is always worth a congratulations. After all, you're finally back at Beaumont's.

ALLISON

I had to practically blackmail Wilbur into hiring me, and now Cosmo and he are sitting around like a pair of vultures waiting for the promotion to die an agonizing death. I have to fight tooth and nail for every precious penny, and with both hands tied behind my back, I'm expected to create an evening that'll knock Manhattan right on its blase ear.

PAUL

Allison ... whatever happens, I'm proud of you.

ALLISON

It can't be "whatever happens". Fifteen years ago, I walked out and threw away an opportunity. This is my second chance, and second chances don't come along that often.

PAUL

Sure they do, if you want them enough. Just look at you and me.

ALLISON

And how often are we in the same city, let alone the same room?

PAUL

When Dorian Reynolds starts building closer to Manhattan, you'll have me around more often, I promise. In the meantime, I'm ... well, I'm off to Kentucky again in a few days.

ALLISON

Just promise you'll be back to pick up the pieces on the twenty-eighth.

PAUL (pause)

Well, how about it -- do I get to take the new Director of Special Events to lunch?

ALLISON

I've really got to run, dear. We're seeing models this afternoon, and I want to go through the headshots with Cosmo. It's not that I don't trust his judgment, but I'd rather not have my fashion show mistaken for a Louisiana bordello. See you at home, dear. Let Noreen know we'll be two for dinner. She loves surprises.

She is out the door. PAUL stares after her.

PAUL

NOW SHE'S BACK FOR APPEARANCE SAKE --
WHAT A PRACTICAL PAIR WE MAKE.
WE PREFER THIS ARRANGEMENT
TO ESTRANGEMENT.
OH WELL, SO MUCH FOR LOVE.
I'D GIVE UP
SO MUCH FOR LOVE.

BLACKOUT

SCENE EIGHT - the weeks that follow

The employee elevators. The "out of order" sign is still posted. COSMO and SHULMAN are waiting for the one working elevator.

COSMO

What ah simply cannot fathom, Wilbuh, is how that woman gets you to approve a budget foh renovating the Designer Salon, and ah cannot squeeze out a few measly dollahs foh some classy image advertising.

SHULMAN

Nobody approved the budget. She just went ahead and spent. Hiring Allison Edwards is turning into one of the more expensive moves of my otherwise unblemished career.

COSMO

Well, I must congratulate you on the amount of rope you have handed her high-handedness.

SHULMAN

Enough to hang you and me both. Thank God the Coretco people aren't up from Dallas to see what that woman is doing.

COSMO

Wilbuh, that's a dazzling idea! I think the corporate vice-president himself, mah good friend Jeremiah Trumbull, should get a personal invitation to Allison Edward's one woman disaster: the Feminicci fiasco.

SHULMAN

What if it's a huge success? What if that damned Park Avenue dilettante shows us all up?

COSMO

Ah assure you that the financial report will clearly and unequivocally demonstrate that the Feminicci promotion was one great big costly fiasco. And then, naturally you'll want to do a reevaluation of company spending, at which point you will suggest some prudent cuts in the budget. Lakh firing that reckless new Directoh of Special Events.

SHULMAN (pleased)

Damn, you're good!

The elevator doors open and GLADYS stomps out, followed by ALLISON.

ALLISON (heading right to SHULMAN)

Wilbur Shulman, you've been avoiding me, and it's no wonder! That budget you've condemned me to wouldn't cover the cost of a Sunday school picnic. In the Ozarks.

SHULMAN

It is a perfectly reasonable budget ... for a store that has no money.

ALLISON

You have to spend money to make money, Wilbur. This event requires style and taste. Things must be done right.

SHULMAN

Does that include hiring that overpriced screaming diva?

ALLISON

Wake up, Wilbur -- Glory Jean Johnson is the hottest recording artist in the business. The publicity of having her here is going to be sheer gold!

GLADYS

Time is money, if ya don't mind my saying so, Mr. Shulman. You keep me waitin', and I keep the rest of your employees waitin'.

SHULMAN

I'm glad at least someone around here understands the value of a dollar

ALLISON follows SHULMAN and COSMO onto the elevator.

The elevator doors shut, and the lights flicker to denote a passage of four days. It is now one week before the Feminicci promotion. DONNA and ROSA are waiting for the elevator.

ROSA

De way I see eet, Meester Delaney gonna ask you to de dance next Saturday, unless maybe someone else ask you first. So Meester Lawrence he gotta ask you, so den Meester Delaney gotta ask me. Simple?

DONNA

Oh sure, except for the part about Mr. Lawrence asking me.

ROSA

Don't you worry, honey. Rosa gonna show you how to take care of that. You just gotta be subtle. When you see Meester Lawrence, you tell him what you want. Like this.

YOU GOT IT
AND YOU KNOW I WANT IT,
AND I WON'T STOP 'TIL THE DAY I GET TO YOU.

YOU KNOW THAT I NEED IT
EVERY TIME I SEE IT,
AND I WON'T STOP 'TIL YOU SAY YOU WANT ME, TOO.
GOT A FEELIN'
JUST GRABS A HOLD O' ME
EACH TIME YOU'RE NEAR.
DON'T BE SO COLD TO ME.

YOU GOT IT
AND I GOTTA GET IT,
AND MY HEART BREAKS EVERY TIME YOU TURN AWAY.
AND THOUGH I'M GETTIN' BOLDER,
YOU'RE JUST GETTIN' COLDER.
THOUGH MY HEART ACHES, BABY I'M RIGHT HERE TO STAY.

I'M DETERMINED
YOU'RE GONNA FALL FOR ME

LIKE IT OR NOT.
I WANT IT ALL FOR ME--
ALL YOU GOT!

EYES THAT SHINE -- YOU GOT IT.
LIPS SO FINE -- YOU GOT IT.
HOPE I'M NOT MISUNDERSTOOD.
I GOTTA GET THROUGH NOW --
GOTTA GET TO YOU NOW,
'CAUSE BABY ... YOU GOT IT GOOD!

DONNA

Maybe that works for you, Rosa, but I could never be that forward.

ROSA

Honey, sometimes there's just no substitute for a ton of bricks. Now come on and try.

DONNA

Well ... all right. (She starts tentatively, but gradually gets into it.)

YOU GOT IT
AND I KNOW YOU GIVE IT,
SO GIVE IN NOW, AND WE'LL SAVE A DAY OR TWO.

ROSA

That's it, honey!

DONNA

YOU KNOW THAT YOU SHOW IT,
AND YOU KNOW YOU KNOW IT.
IT'S A SIN HOW YOU BEHAVE THE WAY YOU DO.

DONNA/ROSA

I'M TALKIN' ABOUT
LOOKIN' SO HOT
THAT I'M MELTIN' INSIDE.
IT'S A FEELIN' I GOT
THAT I JUST CAN'T HIDE.

They don't notice COSMO entering from the store.
He stares delightedly at DONNA, who is really
carried away by now.

SOMEONE'S TOUCH EXCITES ME.
SOMEONE'S SMILE INVITES ME.
DO YOU THINK YOU CAN GUESS WHO?
YOU GOT IT!
I'M SIGHIN',
AND I WON'T STOP TRYIN'

'TIL BABY, I GOT IT ...

<p>COSMO (to DONNA) YOU GOT IT AND I NEVER KNEW IT, AND I'M HERE TO SAY I'M DELIGHTED WITH THE NEWS.</p>	<p>DONNA WHO'S GOT IT? OOH ... I DON'T WANT IT! OH, NO!</p>	<p>ROSA WHO'S GOT IT? I KNEW IT! AY, AY! SHE DON'T GOT IT!</p>
--	---	--

DONNA/ROSA
I THINK THAT HE DON'T GET IT!

<p>ROSA(to COSMO) HEY! I GOT IT -- IF YOU WANT TO GET IT THERE'S A GOOD CHANCE THAT I MAYBE WON'T REFUSE! I HOPE I WON'T REGRET IT!</p>	<p>DONNA OOH,SHE'S GOT IT! OOH, SHE'S GOT IT! MR. LAWRENCE ... I KNOW YOU WON'T REGRET IT!</p>	<p>COSMO OOH, SHE'S GOT IT! I WANT TO GET IT! YOU MAYBE WON'T REFUSE!</p>
---	--	---

ROSA continues singing to COSMO, who
sings to DONNA, who nervously joins in.

ROSA/COSMO/DONNA
I'M DETERMINED YOU'RE GONNA FALL FOR ME
LIKE IT OR NOT.
I WANT IT ALL FOR ME --
ALL YOU GOT!

SOMEONE'S TOUCH EXCITES ME.
SOMEONE'S SMILE INVITES ME.
DO YOU THINK YOU CAN GUESS WHO?
YOU GOT IT!

<p>ROSA/COSMO I'M SIGHIN' AND I WON'T STOP TRYIN' 'TIL BABY, I GOT IT TOO!</p>	<p>DONNA COME ON, CRAIG! DON'T MAKE ME BEG 'TIL BABY, I GOT IT TOO!</p>
--	---

COSMO (to DONNA)
Little lady, theah's a question ah've been meanin' to pose ...

ROSA
De answer is she can't because she's goin' wid Meester Lawrence, but I just came
available, so how's about it, big shot?

COSMO
The dance next Satuhday?

You got it!

ROSA

COSMO starts back into the store, passing CRAIG, who is on his way to the elevators.

CRAIG (entering from the store)

Good morning, Mr. Delaney.

COSMO (a touch testy)

Gonna have to remembah what a fast workah you are, Craig.

CRAIG (referring to the promotion)

Thank you, but there's still tons left to do.

COSMO a glances towards DONNA, as he exits

Good morning, ladies.

ROSA

Good morning -- is that all you can say?

CRAIG

I know it's not real creative, but it usually breaks the ice.

ROSA

Enough of this beatin' de bush around! There's a big party next Saturday, an' if you were any kind of gentleman, you would ask Donna to go wid you. Hokay? It's settled!

DONNA is mortified. The elevator doors open. GLADYS storms out, followed by MODELS, who exit into the store.

GLADYS (to someone in the elevator)

And if you wanna get out on three, shout it out the next time. I ain't no mindreader!

DONNA (getting on elevator with CRAIG)

Maybe we could sneak some dinner -- have a little picnic in the park before the shindig begins. I could make some sandwiches.

CRAIG

Sounds nice.

GLADYS

The doors are gonna shut now. Decide real quick which side of them you wanna be on.

ROSA (running on)

Keep your horses on -- I'm comin'!

The doors close, and the lights flicker to denote a passage of five days. It is now Wednesday afternoon, two days before the promotion. COSMO is waiting for the elevator, as JEREMIAH TRUMBULL enters from the street. He is the corporate vice-president of Coretco, well on in years and very old-time South. MRS. TRUMBULL is tagging along crankily.

TRUMBULL

Cosmo Delaney, ya dirty old coot! A pleasure to see ya.

COSMO

Jeremiah Trumbull, welcome to Yankee territory! Charlotte, deah, you're lookin' young as evah.

MRS. TRUMBULL

Bullfeathers!

TRUMBULL

Honestly, Cosmo -- do y'all think this heah Feminitchy thing is the propah image foh the Beaumont lady?

MRS. TRUMBULL

It's about tahm someone trahed to bring this ol' mausoleum to lahf!

TRUMBULL

Charlotte, deah, wha don't you go and play with yo charge card?

The elevator doors open, and GLADYS strides out, followed by DONNA, ROSA and other SALESPEOPLE.

GLADYS

Mr. Trumbull, what are you doin' here? I thought you died.

MRS. TRUMBULL

I defah anyone to prove othawahz! (she exits into store)

ROSA

Hola, Meester Delaney! Wait'll you see de dress I get for Saturday -- Saks Feeth Abnu got some pretty sexy stuff!

TRUMBULL

You didn't buy yo dress heah at Beaumont's?

ROSA

How old you think I am? Hey Donna bebee -- wait up!

ROSA runs off. TRUMBULL and COSMO get on the elevator. The doors shut. The lights flicker to denote a passage of two days. It is Saturday, August twenty-eighth, just before store closing. MRS. SHULMAN and MRS. TRUMBULL are waiting for the elevator.

MRS. SHULMAN

It seems like Wilbur just never stops working these days. Why, I hardly ever see him any more. Seven days a week! I don't understand why anyone has to work on Sunday -- even God rested one day. But as Wilbur always says: "God doesn't run Beaumont's."

MRS. TRUMBULL

Bullfeathahs! He's probably cheatin' on ya, fool!

The elevator doors open, and GLADYS steps out. She is followed by SHULMAN, TRUMBULL and a very worried ALLISON.

MRS. TRUMBULL

Hello, Wilbur. Elaine and I were just talkin' 'bout you.

SHULMAN

Charlotte, a pleasure as always. Hello, dear.

He gives his wife a peck on the cheek, and doesn't notice that she is in shock.

TRUMBULL

Ah still don't understand what clocks have to do with dresses. Or what a bunch of loud music has to do with anything!

MRS. TRUMBULL

Jeremiah Trumbull -- hush up and join the livin'!

The SHULMAN's and TRUMBULL's exit to the street. CRAIG enters from the store.

ALLISON

Thank God -- a friendly face! Craig darling, tell me the world isn't coming to an end.

CRAIG

The world isn't coming to an end. Oh, God -- is it?

ALLISON

Paul's flight should have landed an hour ago, and I still haven't heard from him. Aldo decided that the models' shoes were wrong, so I had to make an emergency raid on Maud Frizon and I missed my hair appointment. And now Miss Glory Jean Johnson has a sore throat! She's supposed to be singing a new song written for the promotion. I paid for the musical arrangements out of my own pocket, so God help her if Chloraseptic doesn't!

[optional: The "MAKE THEM BEAUTIFUL" MARCH begins. The elevator doors open, and MODELS enter carrying their Feminicci dresses. ALLISON checks them over, and they exit into the boutique. RANDY and DONNA race in with decorations; CATERERS enter with trays of food. ALLISON, CRAIG and DONNA check everything, and the CATERERS exit into the store. ALLISON looks at her watch and exits in a panic. RANDY runs into the boutique.

WORKERS enter with decorations, followed by RANDY. CRAIG and DONNA check it all over, and RANDY and the WORKERS exit into the store. DONNA checks her watch and drags CRAIG off.

RANDY runs in. The MODELS reenter in their slips -- something is wrong with the dresses! RANDY panics, then switches all the dresses around. MODELS, WORKERS and CATERERS run in and out; RANDY runs after them. The music builds to a hectic pace, the lights flicker, and then]

BLACKOUT

SCENE NINE - early that evening

The Pulitzer Fountain across from the Plaza Hotel, just before sunset. DONNA is cleaning up from the picnic dinner.

DONNA

It's still early, you know. We don't have to go for another fifteen minutes or so.

CRAIG

Signs! Oh, Christ -- I'll bet we forgot the signs to tell people what entrance to use!

DONNA

Not to worry, I put them up myself. I was just saying that there's really no point rushing back to the store ...

CRAIG

They'll probably set the band up too near the door. I don't want the band too near the door! It makes people self-conscious when they enter.

DONNA

Listen, after tonight things won't be so crazy for a while, so I was thinking maybe it would be nice to spend a relaxing Sunday together. I could make brunch.

CRAIG

Sunday? No, no. Sundays are no good for me. Did you say you put the signs up?

DONNA

Can't you relax for a minute? This is nuts!

RISE AND SHINE, AND BE IN BY NINE --
IT'S THE SAME OLD LINE EVERY DAY.
LABORING FOR OUR PAY
MAKES LIFE A DULL CLICHE.

WORK PAST FIVE IF YOU'VE GOT THE DRIVE.
YOU'LL FORGIVE ME, I'VE GOT A PAIN.
I START TO FEEL THE STRAIN.
I'D RATHER REST MY BRAIN
AND WATCH THE

SUNSET --
HOW I LOVE THE SUNSET.
UP ABOVE ME BLUSHING SKIES
TELL MY EYES
THAT NIGHT IS NEAR.
DAYLIGHT
DIMMING INTO GREY LIGHT --
I LOVE THE WAY LIGHT
SIMPLY SEEMS TO DISAPPEAR

AT SUNSET --
NIGHT BEGINS AT SUNSET.
MY HEART SPINS A FAIRY TALE
THAT MAY JUST COME TRUE:
STROLLING DOWN FIFTH AVENUE,
I'LL WATCH THE SUNSET
EVERY NIGHT WITH YOU.
I'LL WATCH THE SUNSET
EVERY NIGHT WITH YOU.

CRAIG

I know there's something I forgot to do!

ALLISON enters at the other side of the stage --
dressed to kill, and looking as if she might.

ALLISON

SUNSET --
HOW I HATE THE SUNSET.

NOW I WAIT
'TIL EVENING LIGHT
TURNS TO NIGHT
BEFORE MY EYES.

MOONLIGHT
CAN'T COMPARE TO
NOON LIGHT.

THE OPPORTUNE LIGHT
FOR A FOOL
TO RHAP-
SODIZE

IS SUNSET.
I'M ALONE
AT SUNSET.

'CAUSE ONCE AGAIN
SOMEONE MISSED
HIS FLIGHT.

AFTER
SUCH A LOVELY
FIGHT,
I'LL FEEL THE SUNSET
FADING INTO NIGHT.

I'LL FEEL THE SUNSET
FADING INTO NIGHT.

DONNA

SUNSET,
SUNSET --

NOW I WAIT
'TIL HE
TURNS TONIGHT
INTO OUR AFFAIR.

I MIGHT SCREAM!
HE MIGHT
NOTICE ME THEN.

I'M A FOOL,
PERHAPS.
I DON'T CARE

AT SUNSET.
I FORGET I'M ALONE
AT SUNSET.
ON MY OWN
OH, WELL.

HE'LL NEVER NOTICE
THAT I'M AFTER HIM.
I SUPPOSE
I'LL BE ALL RIGHT.
I'LL WATCH THE SUNSET
TONIGHT.

I'LL WATCH THE SUNSET
TONIGHT AT SUNSET.

CRAIG

I FORGET --

DID I SET UP THE
FOLDING CHAIRS?

AND THE LIGHTS?

I HATE
THESE NIGHT
AFFAIRS!
SEEMS TO ME
THERE'S
SOMETHING WRONG.

I'M A FOOL!
THE NAPKINS!
HOW COULD I FORGET?

I'M UPSET NOW!

THE NAPKINS!

OH, WELL.

PERHAPS NO ONE
WILL NOTICE
AFTER ALL.

IT WILL BE ALL RIGHT.

I FORGOT THERE'S A
SUNSET.

I'LL WATCH THE SUNSET
TONIGHT AT SUNSET.

ALLISON rushes over to CRAIG and DONNA.

ALLISON

Randy said I might find you here. I heard from Paul finally, and he has not disappeared off the face of the earth. The bad news is: he's still in Kentucky, so he might as well!

DONNA

That's just awful, Mrs. Edwards. I know how important this evening is to you.

ALLISON

Good. Then you'll understand why I have to borrow Craig. I need an escort.

DONNA

He's my date, Mrs. Edwards. Craig, tell her.

ALLISON

Forgive me. I had no idea the two of you were dating.

CRAIG

Dating? No, no -- I would never date someone I worked with, of course. Donna and I are just friends. Right, Donna?

ALLISON

Well, I'm afraid I must borrow your friend, Donna. You're young. I promise you'll survive. I on the other hand, might not. Come along, Craig.

CRAIG (to DONNA)

We'll see you there in a few minutes. Okay, friend?

ALLISON and CRAIG have exited. DONNA marches after them defiantly.

BEAUTIFUL PEOPLE enter on their way to the store. As they stroll, the Beaumont's windows slide into view, decorated within an inch of their life: Feminicci dresses, chrome clocks and a banner proclaiming "The future is Feminicci at Beaumont's!"

BEAUTIFUL PEOPLE

SUNSET.

NIGHT BEGINS AT SUNSET.

MY HEART SPINS A FAIRY TALE

THAT MAY JUST COME TRUE:

STROLLING DOWN FIFTH AVENUE,

I'LL WATCH THE SUNSET

EVERY NIGHT WITH YOU.

The Fifth Avenue windows slide off to reveal the store within.

SCENE TEN - immediately following

The main floor of Beaumont's, transformed into an extravagant dance club. The counters have been pushed to the sides, and a raised dance floor has been created, with a fashion runway leading offstage. Tables of food and punch at stage right. A mirrored ball spins from the ceiling, reflecting the multi-colored lighting.

ALLISON and CRAIG are checking the banquet table; ROSA is trying to get COSMO to dance with her; RANDY is on the dance floor with a MALE MODEL date; DONNA is by herself. BEAUTIFUL PEOPLE enter and jump onto the dance floor ("Moving Along").

COSMO

Isn't that sadder than the burning of Atlanta -- a pretty little thang lahk Donna all alone at a great big party lahk this. Excuse me foh just a second, mah little Rosita.

ROSA

Hokay, Meester Delaney. But if you not back soon, a pretty little thing like Rosa is declarin' our date null and avoided!

COSMO makes his way through the crowd to get to DONNA.

ALLISON

The hors d'oeuvres look yummy, but where are the napkins? Do those fool caterers expect us to use our shirt sleeves?

CRAIG (with a gulp)

I don't know what those fools could have been thinking of. Excuse me for just a second.

He races over to RANDY and pulls him off the dance floor.

Mayday, Randy! I forgot the napkins! Here's some money. Dance on over to the nearest store!

RANDY

Okay, but don't lose my place.

He runs off. ROSA TAKES RANDY'S PLACE and dances with MALE MODEL.

ALLISON goes to DONNA with a glass of wine.

ALLISON

How about a peace offering? It'll make you feel better. Unless you happen to like palatable wine.

DONNA

I don't happen to drink.

ALLISON

This is a good time to start. Think of it as a part of growing up.

DONNA (downs the drink in a gulp)

There. Have I reached your age yet?

KIKI MACDONALD enters from the boutique.

KIKI

Allison! Yoo-hoo, sweetie!

ALLISON

Kiki, dah-ling! (under her breath, to COSMO:) Don't you dare leave me alone with that barracuda!

DONNA

Cosmo, darling -- let's get me another drink.

COSMO

Excuse us, Allison. I'm sure you can swim with the best of them.

DONNA drags COSMO over to the punch.

KIKI (barreling over to ALLISON)

How ya doin', sugarcakes? My photographer'll be taggin' along in a sec. He's still snappin' away at those gorgioso windows. Of course, we must get a few snaps of the Big Apple's new retail genius. Where's that filthy rich hubby of yours?

ALLISON

I'm so pleased you like the windows. I must introduce you to the man responsible -- Craig Lawrence, our Display Director, and my right hand on this promotion.

ALLISON has pulled CRAIG off the dance floor and over to KIKI. ROSA is furious, and looks for another dance partner.

KIKI

I'm sure both of his hands are terrific, but you're the hot item, honeybunch. Has the blueprint widow found true happiness in the rag business?

ALLISON (calling)

Cosmo, it's your old friend Kiki MacDonald. Come over and say hi!

COSMO acknowledges ALLISON's frantic waving by blandly waving right back. ROSA pulls COSMO onto the dance floor.

ALLISON and CRAIG are cornered by KIKI. Grateful to escape COSMO, DONNA has wandered over and gotten two drinks. She brings them over to CRAIG.

DONNA (slightly tipsy)

Craig, daaah-ling -- you must have a glass of champagne.

She thrusts a glass at CRAIG, inadvertently spilling all over CRAIG. ROSA comes over.

ROSA

Good for ju, Donna bebee. Only next time, aim for de face!

DONNA suddenly starts laughing.

CRAIG

So what's so damn funny?

DONNA

I'd wipe you off, but there aren't any napkins!

The SHULMAN's and TRUMBULL's enter with a dazzlingly overdone ADOLFO FEMINICCI.

FEMINICCI

Ah-lee-sohn, cara mia!

ALLISON (as he floats over to her)

Aldo, dah-ling! Well, how do you like it?

FEMINICCI

Ees tacky -- ees gaudy -- ees overdone! Ees justa lahk mah dresses!

ALLISON (aside)

Where's Glory Jean?

FEMINICCI

First she'sa fix herself a niza glass of Chloraseptic. Then she'sa take a powder.

ALLISON (aghast)

You mean she left?

FEMINICCI (pantomimes snorting cocaine)

No -- she'sa take a powder. Capeesh?

ALLISON

I don't know if I can take much more of this excitement. Come on, Aldo. It's showtime.

She starts off with FEMINICCI. GLORY JEAN JOHNSON comes bopping in, talking a mile a minute.

GLORY JEAN

Aldo! Oh, hello everybody. Yes, it's really me. Glory Jean Johnson. Where the hell are you, Aldo -- oh, there, you are. I feel so much better now. I guess it was just nerves, but I feel like so calm and centered, and like I think I really have my shit together for this gig and God! Would you look at this place? It's like an acid flashback.

ALLISON (trying to usher her off)

Hadn't you better change for your number, dear?

GLORY JEAN

That's why I need Aldo -- I'm never sure which is the front of his dresses. Not that I don't love them -- I mean, they're gorgeous once you figure out how to get into them.

KIKI

May I quote you, dear?

FEMINICCI and ALLISON are dragging GLORY JEAN off. KIKI runs after them.

Hey Feminicci, what's this I keep hearing about you being about as Italian as the Brooklyn Bridge?

ALLISON, FEMINICCI, GLORY JEAN and KIKI have exited. TRUMBULL, SHULMAN and MRS. SHULMAN wander through the whole scene, like strangers in a strange land.

TRUMBULL

Frankly Wilbuh, even without the music, theah's something loud about this heah room.

MRS. TRUMBULL

Jeremiah's idee of a good time is a walk in a cemetery.

A musical fanfare. Suddenly ALLISON's voice booms over the loudspeaker, and the band begins playing fashion show music -- a variation of "Make Them Beautiful".

ALLISON'S VOICE

The future is Feminicci at Beaumont's! Here already, one jump ahead of the fall season: the latest designs from Adolfo Feminicci and the contemporary fashion capitol of the world, Milan.

Polite applause offstage, then a MODEL comes down the runway dressed in a lavish outfit. She strikes a pose.

Here at last: designs that today's woman can relate to, expressing so well her fast-paced lifestyle.

Polite applause offstage, then another MODEL enters and joins the first.

Here is an attitude, a lifestyle, a look that will now and forever be the Beaumont attitude, the Beaumont lifestyle, the Beaumont look!

Polite applause offstage, another MODEL enters.

And that is why we say tonight, and proclaim to the fashion-conscious woman of the world: the future is Feminicci at Beaumont's!

Applause, then ALLISON and FEMINICCI bound down the runway in the most drop-dead outfits of them all.

ALLISON (cont'd)

Ladies and gentlemen, I proudly present the designer of the future: Adolfo Feminicci!

FEMINICCI

I love-a you! Thank-a you! I love-a you! Thank-a you!

ALLISON

And here to help us move Beaumont's into the future, the one and only Glory Jean Johnson!

GLORY JEAN enters in an outrageous FEMINICCI dress, and grabs center stage. ALLISON graciously steps to the side. RANDY runs in with a stack of napkins. KIKI and her PHOTOGRAPHER enter, flashing pictures.

GLORY JEAN (with CHORUS)

DANCE TO THE MUSIC PLAYIN' IN YOUR SOUL.
DANCE 'CAUSE THE MUSIC FEELS SO SOOTHIN'!
LISTEN -- THE MUSIC'S SAYIN' LOSE CONTROL,
NOW DON'T YOU STOP 'CAUSE YOU'VE
JUST GOT TO MOVE!

YOU'RE MOVIN' ALONG SO YOU'RE NOT LEFT BEHIND,
FEELIN' THE CROWD SO YOU'RE NOT LONELY,
LOSIN' THE TROUBLES YOU'VE GOT ON YOUR MIND,
AND YOU CAN'T STOP THE FLOW --
JUST LET IT GO!

She pulls FEMINICCI into the act.

GLORY JEAN/FEMINICCI

DON'T TRY TO HOLD ME BACK,
DON'T TRY TO KEEP ME STILL.
I GOTTA DANCE UNTIL
I SEE THE DAWN.
YOU GOTTA TURN ME LOOSE,
YOU GOTTA SET ME FREE
OR ELSE YOU'RE GONNA SEE
ME MOVIN' ON!

CRAIG has left DONNA to join ALLISON.
COSMO has slipped away from ROSA to be with
DONNA. RANDY notices that his date is dancing
with someone else. They each sing about their
respective dates.

GLORY/FEMINICCI
MOVIN' ALONG --
UNTIL MY HEAD STARTS SPINNING.
FEELIN' IT STRONG TONIGHT!
MOVIN' ALONG --
AND THIS IS JUST THE BEGINNING.
NOTHING'S WRONG
LONG AS YOU KEEP ON
MOVIN' ALONG!

ROSA/DONNA/RANDY
WHAT'S HE DOIN' WITH HER?
HE'S SUPPOSED TO BE WITH ME.
WHAT A CREEP!
I'LL JUST KEEP
MOVIN' ALONG!

FEMINICCI jumps onto the dance floor, and pulls
ALLISON along with him. ROSA starts over to
COSMO, but DONNA gets to him first. ROSA and
RANDY pair off and let loose. COSMO senses
something is wrong, and pulls DONNA away from
the dance floor, and over to the SHULMAN's and
TRUMBULL's, who are watching in horror.

CRAIG goes to ALLISON, with admiration.

TRUMBULL
IS THERE SOMEONE WHO THINKS
THIS IS BEAUTIFUL?
IT'S A VULGAR DISPLAY!

CRAIG (to ALLISON)
THIS IS BEAUTIFUL!
WHAT A DIFFERENCE YOU'VE MADE!

IT ISN'T TASTEFUL,
IT'S WASTEFUL
THROWING MONEY AND
TRADITION AWAY!

ALLISON
IS IT BEAUTIFUL?
SOMEONE
TELL ME
IT'S BEAUTIFUL!

SHULMAN/COSMO
BLAME IT ALL ON
ALLISON, ALLISON --
SPENDING AND SPENDING.
TURNING THE PLACE INTO
VERSAILLES PALACE.

CRAIG
ALLISON, ALLISON --
IT'S SPLENDID.
TURNING THE PLACE INTO
VERSAILLES PALACE!

ALLISON, ALLISON --
OVER-EXTENDING.

MRS. S./MR. T.
LOUD MUSIC! LEWD DANCING!

HER CAREER WILL BE SHORT
ONCE WE REPORT
TO DALLAS!

LOUD MUSIC! LEWD DANCING!
THIS IS NOT THE SOUND OF
SUCCESS -- NO!

GLORY JEAN/CHORUS
DON'T TRY TO BEAT MY GAME,
DON'T TRY TO CUT MY TIME.
DON'T TRY TO TELL ME I'M
NOT FIT TO MOVE!
I'VE GOT THE ENERGY
TO SHOW I'M STILL ALIVE.

ALLISON (to CRAIG)
COSMO WANTS ME OUT --
WILBUR WANTS ME DEAD --
NOW EVEN DONNA HATES ME
AND KIKI BAIT'S ME --

I'VE GOT A LOT THAT I'VE
JUST GOT TO PROVE!

STILL I'VE GOT TO MOVE AHEAD.

MRS. TRUMBULL
AH WANNA DANCE AFTER
ALL THESE YEARS.
AH WANNA JOIN IN THE SONG!

MR. TRUMBULL
CHARLOTTE, NO --
STOP THIS FOOLISHNESS!
CHARLOTTE, COME BACK --
DON'T YOU GIVE ME NO FLACK!

HUSH UP -- I'M GETTIN' IN

THE GROOVE,
AND NOW I'M MOVIN' ALONG!

MRS. TRUMBULL has freed herself and jumped onto the dance floor, partnered with RANDY.

GLORY/FEM/MRS. T/ RANDY/ROSA KIKI/CHORUS	ALLISON/CRAIG	SHULMAN/MRS. S/ COSMO/TRUMBULL DONNA
MOVIN' ALONG -- AND ALL THE LIGHTS START FLASHIN'. FEELIN' IT STRONG AND BRIGHT! MOVIN' ALONG -- UNTIL THE DAWN COMES CRASHIN' PLAY A SONG THAT'LL JUST KEEP ME MOVIN'...	IT'S TIME TO MOVE. WE'VE SET THE PACE. COULD THIS BE THE WAY TO SUCCESS? WE'RE IN THE GROOVE. WE'RE IN THE RACE!	LOUD MUSIC! LEWD DANCING! LOUD MUSIC! LEWD DANCING! IS THAT ANY WAY TO DRESS IN PUBLIC?

SHULMAN

Cosmo, at the end of this disgraceful display, I want you to tell Allison Edwards not to bother coming back Monday morning. She is hereby summarily dismissed.

GLORY/FEM/MRS. T/ RANDY/ROSA KIKI/CHORUS	ALLISON/CRAIG	SHULMAN/MRS. S/ COSMO/TRUMBULL DONNA
MOVIN' ALONG ... MOVIN' ALONG ... KEEP ME MOVIN' ALONG!	HERE'S WHERE WE START MAKING A DIFFERENCE!	THEY'RE MOVIN' TOO FAST! THEY'RE MOVIN' TOO FAST!

Lights flash, smoke comes up from the floor, glitter flutters from the ceiling. COSMO slithers towards ALLISON like a snake to its prey. ALLISON, unaware of impending doom, smiles triumphantly.

BLACKOUT (end of ACT ONE)

ACT TWO

SCENE ONE

The living room of ALLISON and PAUL's Park Avenue duplex. A staircase at stage right leads up to two doors: one to ALLISON's bedroom, the other to PAUL's. An archway upstage left leads into a formal dining room. The foyer and front door are downstage left.

It is the Monday evening following the Feminicci event. ALLISON, in a silk dressing gown, is alone -- cool, calm and sipping a very strong drink.

ALLISON (wistfully)

SO MANY DREAMS
RIGHT THROUGH MY FINGERS.
SO MANY SCHEMES
NEVER COME TRUE ...

So many fools clinging to old ways -- clinging so hard, Wilbur Shulman, they don't see the world changing around them. Well, to hell with you and that charmless Rhett Butthead you call a Creative Director.

SO THEY GAVE ME THE AX --
SO I'M STOPPED IN MY TRACKS.
THAT'S NO REASON TO TEAR MY HAIR OUT.
SO I'M PUSHED TO THE BRINK --
DO YOU THINK THAT I CARE?

SO THAT DIRTY OLD COOT
WENT AND GAVE ME THE BOOT.
NOW MY TEMPER WON'T FLARE -- I SWEAR IT!
SO THE LOT OF THEM STINK --
DO YOU THINK THAT I CARE?

DO WHAT I WOULD FOR THEM,
NOTHING'S ENOUGH.
KILLING'S TOO GOOD FOR THEM --
IT'S TIME TO PLAY JUST A BIT ROUGHER.
I'LL MAKE THEM SUFFER.

The door to ALLISON's bedroom opens.
CRAIG enters wearing a robe.

CRAIG

SO I PRACTIC'LY SCORED --
I SUSPECT SHE WAS BORED.
WHO WOULD THINK THAT MY FLAIR WOULD WEAR OUT?
BETTER CALL UP MY SHRINK --
I DON'T THINK THAT I CARE.

ALLISON

SO THEY STINK --
DO YOU THINK THAT I
THINK THAT I CARE?

WHAT TO DO NOW?
GO,
WHAT IF SOMEHOW
I GOT MY ROMEO
TO USE HIS POSITION
TO HELP MY AMBITION.

CRAIG

DO YOU THINK THAT I
THINK THAT I CARE?

NOW THAT THEY'VE LET HER

HOW CAN I LET HER KNOW
I'M NOT HER ROMEO --
SHE'S IN NO POSITION
TO HELP MY AMBITION.

The front door opens, as ALLISON and
CRAIG stare in astonishment. PAUL enters
with his suitcase, and takes in the situation at a
glance.

PAUL

Surprise!

ALLISON

Home so soon?

CRAIG

I was just leaving.

PAUL

Don't be ridiculous -- you're wearing my robe.

PAUL

SO SHE ISN'T ALONE.
GUESS THE NEXT TIME
I'LL PHONE --
GIVE HER TIME TO PREPARE
HER HAREM.
THINK I'LL POUR ME A DRINK.
DO THEY THINK THAT I CARE?
I DON'T CARE,
I THINK.

ALLISON

SO HE'S BACK.

SERVES HIM RIGHT!
A SURPRISE ATTACK
THIS TIME OF NIGHT!

HAVE A DRINK --
I DON'T THINK THAT I
CARE WHAT YOU THINK!

CRAIG

OH-H-H-H ...

SHIT!

I DON'T THINK
THAT SHE CARES
THAT I THINK I
DON'T CARE!

ALL THREE

IF YOU DON'T ALWAYS
FIND WHAT YOU'RE LOOKING FOR ...
GET WHAT YOU BARGAINED FOR ...
WHAT ARE YOU FROWNING FOR?
LIFE IS EASY TO BEAR
IF YOU TRY NOT TO THINK ... YOU CARE.

SO YOU DON'T ALWAYS
GET WHAT YOU WANT TO GET ...
DO WHAT YOU WANT TO DO ...
LOVE WHO YOU WANT TO LOVE.
LIFE IS OFTEN UNFAIR,
BUT I REALLY DON'T CARE ... I THINK!

ALLISON
SO HE'S BACK --
HIP HOORAY!
A SURPRISE ATTACK
AGAIN TODAY.

PAUL

CRAIG

SO HE'S BACK --
HIP HOORAY!
IT'S BEEN
SOME DAY!

SO I'M BACK --
WHAT A DAY!
THINK I'LL GO UNPACK
AND HIT THE HAY!

SO HE'S BACK --
SERVES HIM RIGHT
THIS TIME OF
NIGHT!

SO HE'S BACK.
GOOD ...
NIGHT!

I'M POLITE.
SINCE SHE GOT THE SACK,
I'LL SAY GOOD NIGHT!

PAUL goes off to his bedroom. CRAIG goes
off to ALLISON's bedroom.

A bed and nightstand slide in from stage left:
DONNA is alone in bed.

DONNA

Craig Lawrence, I saw you leave with that woman. Well, what does she have that I don't
have? Wealth, social position, glamor ... Well, at least I've still got a job!

SO SHE'S OUT IN THE COLD --
SHE'S GOT SOMEONE TO HOLD.
I SUPPOSE WE COMPARE UNFAIRLY:
I'M ACRYLIC, SHE'S MINK.
DO YOU THINK THAT I CARE?

A bed and nightstand slide in from stage right:
COSMO is alone in bed.

COSMO

WE WERE FEELIN' JUST FINE
AFTER ALL OF THAT WINE.
I SUGGESTED WE DARE TO PAIR UP.
SHE PASSED OUT AT THE SINK --
DO YOU THINK THAT I CARE?

DONNA
SO SHE'S MINK --
DO YOU THINK THAT I
THINK THAT I CARE?

ALLISON
I DON'T CARE ...
I THINK.

DONNA
WHAT TO DO NOW?
I DON'T KNOW HOW
I COULD COMPETE WITH HER --
I'M IN NO POSITION
TO HELP HIS AMBITION.

ALLISON
SO I'M OUT.
CRAIG IS IN.
THERE'S NO DOUBT
WE CAN WIN.
I'M NOT DEFEATED YET.
HE'S IN A POSITION
TO HELP MY AMBITION.

COSMO

DO YOU THINK THAT I
THINK THAT I CARE?

CRAIG (reentering)
I DON'T THINK THAT SHE CARES
THAT I THINK I DON'T CARE.

COSMO
WISH SHE WOULD SAY "OKAY".
I'D LIKE TO GO ALL THE WAY.
WHY BE DISCREET WITH HER?
I'M IN A POSITION
TO HELP HER AMBITION.

CRAIG
ALLISON'S OUT.
WHY SHOULD I FIGHT?
I SHOULD JUST SAY
GOOD NIGHT.
SHE'S NOT DEFEATED YET.
I'M IN A POSITION
TO HELP OUR AMBITION.

CRAIG is carrying his clothes, and has so far
managed to get his pants on. PAUL reenters in
his pajamas.

ALL

IF YOU DON'T ALWAYS
FIND WHAT YOU'RE LOOKING FOR ...
GET WHAT YOU BARGAINED FOR ...
WHAT ARE YOU FROWNING FOR?
LIFE IS EASY TO BEAR
IF YOU TRY NOT TO THINK ... YOU CARE.

SO YOU DON'T ALWAYS
GET WHAT YOU WANT TO GET ...
DO WHAT YOU WANT TO DO ...
LOVE WHO YOU WANT TO LOVE.
LIFE IS OFTEN UNFAIR,
BUT I REALLY DON'T CARE ... I THINK!

WHAT I THINK THAT I CARE ABOUT IS ...

GETTING HIM BACK. DONNA

GETTING AHEAD. CRAIG

GETTING A PIECE. COSMO

GETTING TO BED. PAUL

GETTING ANOTHER CHANCE TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE. ALLISON

WHAT I PROBABLY CARE ABOUT IS ... ALL

GETTING HIM BACK. DONNA

GETTING AHEAD. CRAIG

GETTING A PIECE. COSMO

GETTING TO BED. PAUL

GETTING ANOTHER CHANCE TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE. ALLISON

WHAT I HONESTLY CARE ABOUT IS ... ALL

GETTING HIM BACK. DONNA CRAIG COSMO

GETTING AHEAD.

GETTING A PIECE.

PAUL
GETTING TO BED.

ALLISON
GETTING ANOTHER CHANCE.

ALL
DO YOU THINK THAT I CARE ENOUGH TO FIGHT?
DAMNED RIGHT!

DONNA and COSMO are back in their
respective beds. They turn out their lights as
their beds slide off.

PAUL plants himself on the sofa.

PAUL
Well, it looks like we have quite a problem.

ALLISON
Oh come on, Paul. This is no surprise to you.

PAUL
This isn't the problem. I'm talking about the way those fools treated the most brilliant
Director of Special Events Beaumont's ever had.

ALLISON
If you're so Goddamned concerned about me, why didn't you show up last night?

PAUL
You didn't really need me last night. I thought you really needed to be with someone
now. Apparently I thought right.

ALLISON
Don't you dare decide for me when I need you and when I don't.

CRAIG
The invisible man is leaving. Good night, everyone.

ALLISON
Forgive us, Craig.

PAUL
We're being very rude.

CRAIG
I've just invaded your marriage. And I'm forgiving you? I don't understand. Why aren't
you furious? Why aren't you threatening to throw me out? Why aren't you threatening to
shoot me? Oh my God, what am I saying?

PAUL

Relax, Mr. Lawrence. Now, would one of you fill me in on what's happening at Beaumont's?

ALLISON

Very simply, the store finally created a little excitement, and those Southern corpses are ready to drag it back down to its grave.

PAUL

Any chance of getting hired back if the sales figures pick up?

ALLISON

After the hatchet job Cosmo Delaney does on my reputation, not likely. He's probably saying all the terrible things about me, that I've been saying about him.

CRAIG (still a wreck)

All right. Just tell him -- tell him nothing happened! I can take the humiliation. For God's sake, tell your husband nothing happened!

ALLISON

Don't be ridiculous. You were tender and caring, and very comforting.

PAUL

Glad to hear it.

CRAIG

What are you saying?

PAUL

It's very simple, Mr. Lawrence. I love my wife, and appreciate it when someone treats her lovingly.

CRAIG

I can't take this.

ALLISON (to PAUL)

Why don't you pour us drinks? Nice big ones.

CRAIG (puzzled)

I'm sure I should be leaving.

PAUL (at bar)

Scotch?

CRAIG

Gin.

ALLISON

Sit down. We have to talk about Beaumont's.

CRAIG

Now??

ALLISON

I'm not going to sit around and watch Wilbur and Cosmo run it into the ground. All right, they ditched me. But there's still one creative mind left at that store, one person with taste and imagination.

CRAIG

Who's that?

PAUL (bringing him his drink)

I believe she's talking about the Display Director.

ALLISON

Bingo, darling.

CRAIG

What am I supposed to do?

ALLISON

Jump in and get involved. Make suggestions, be so positively brilliant, they'll create a vice-presidency for you.

PAUL (giving ALLISON a drink)

And brilliant you will be, because you're going to have Allison Edwards behind you.

CRAIG

I don't think Shulman will take too kindly to my working with you.

ALLISON

Don't be stupid, darling. He's simply not to find out. I'll be in the background -- someone has to connect that fashionable vacuum with the real world. I've got the connections, you're the electricity, and tomorrow is none too soon to start lighting up the future -- even if it's not Feminicci, we can still make it fabulous!

She lifts her glass in a toast. PAUL and CRAIG join her.

To the future!

BLACKOUT

SCENE TWO - the following morning

The employee elevators. The "out of order" sign is still up.

The TRUMBULL's are waiting for the elevator. She is proudly wearing an outlandish Feminicci dress; he is thoroughly embarrassed. SHULMAN enters from the store, on his way to lunch.

New dress, Charlotte?

SHULMAN

It's a gen-u-ine Feminicci!

MRS. TRUMBULL

Tell her how foolish she looks.

TRUMBULL

SHULMAN
Have you seen the sales figures for the Feminicci's? We seem to have broken a rec- ... done quite well for one day of sales.

TRUMBULL
A fluke, Wilbuh! Just a fluke! No possible relation to Frahday naght's disastah. Come on, Charlotte. We've got a plane to catch.

ROSA enters from the store, wearing a flashy Feminicci.

MRS. TRUMBULL
Well, the future certainly is Feminicci at Beaumont's!

Hush up, Charlotte. Bah, Wilbuh!

TRUMBULL

He whisks her out of the store.

ROSA
Hola, Meester Shulman. You like my new Feminicci?

SHULMAN
I'm not at all sure it is appropriate dress for the office. Especially this office. I am going to lunch now. There are four very important letters on my desk, which you had promised to stamp and mail for me. I do pay you for such complicated tasks. I would appreciate knowing that, while I am sip ... gulp ... guzzling a much-needed martini or two, those letters will, as promised, be placed in the hands of the United States Postal Service.

ROSA

Meester Shulman, I'm late for an audition, an' it's a show I know I'd be perfect for. They're casting replacements for "Grease".

SHULMAN

Why are you perfect for "Grease"?

ROSA (hands on hips)

You gonna tell me I don' look Greek? So I run off now, an' I take care of de letters when I get back.

SHULMAN

You take care of the letters now!

The elevator doors open, and GLADYS steps out followed by CRAIG and DONNA.

GLADYS

Things are really buzzin' in the Designer Salon, Mr. Shulman. I guess women'll wear anything these days.

CRAIG (going to SHULMAN)

I've been trying to see you all morning. I've got this terrific idea for an ad campaign to go with the new windows. I think it could really goose sales.

SHULMAN

Advertising is Cosmo's area -- he's all the goose this store needs. Stick to windows.

ROSA (to DONNA)

I'm late for dees audition, and Meester Shulman he's on de warpaint because I forgot to mail some stupid letters, which are in the middle of his desk -- can't miss them. Thanks.

DONNA

I can't go into his office like that.

ROSA

Don' you worry -- he's leavin' for lunch now. He'll never know.

CRAIG (to SHULMAN)

You talk about the Feminicci promotion as if it were a bust. Have you seen the sales figures?

SHULMAN

Why this sudden interest in matters that don't concern you?

CRAIG

Excuse me, but I'd say the future of this store does concern me.

GLADYS (to DONNA)

Come on, honey -- I'll take you up.

DONNA

But I ...

ROSA

Donna, you're a real ... what's that round fruit candy?

DONNA

Lifesaver?

GLADYS and a bewildered DONNA have gotten on the elevator. The doors shut. ROSA sneaks off behind SHULMAN and CRAIG.

CRAIG

We should have more promotions like that one. Stir up some healthy interest in the store. I've got some splendid ideas, Willie, if only you'd listen to me.

SHULMAN

I've told you never to call me Willie in public. And if you insist on discussing this foolishness any further, we'll do it in my office. Where's that Goddamn elevator?

BLACKOUT

SCENE THREE

SHULMAN's office. DONNA opens the door and peeks her head in. "Look, Don't Touch" plays softly as DONNA enters and takes in the plushness. After trying out the sofa, stroking an antique chair and marvelling at a painting, she makes it to SHULMAN's desk, runs her hand across the top of it, and knocks over an ashtray. The music stops. She bends down behind the desk to clean up the mess, just as the door opens. SHULMAN and CRAIG enter.

CRAIG

I just want a chance to be more involved, Willie.

SHULMAN

You and I are pretty well involved already, I'd say.

CRAIG

I mean with creative decisions.

SHULMAN

And I want to know where the hell you were last Sunday. We're supposed to have an agree- ... an arrange- ... a thing.

CRAIG

I told you -- I had family problems.

SHULMAN

Your family has managed to solve its problems without you every Sunday for the last two years. With Allison Edwards in the picture, your sense of filial duty seems to have increased.

CRAIG

What does this have to do with Allison? She's out of the picture.

SHULMAN

She may be out of Beaumont's, but she is apparently not out of the picture when scruffy little know-nothings think they can run a Fifth Avenue landmark.

CRAIG

Who are you calling a know-nothing?

SHULMAN

You, Larry Azzaro. When I met you you were a know-nothing pretty boy fresh out of F.I.T. I gave you a chance. Do you think it was because of your artistic talent?

SHULMAN has reached his desk, and in spite of DONNA's attempts to make herself invisible, she is discovered.

Are you looking for something, young lady?

DONNA

Not any more. I found it. The ashtray. It dropped. And here are the cigarette butts that were in it, and now that I've finished cleaning off your beautiful floor, I'll be on my way.

SHULMAN

You just got yourself quite an earful, didn't you?

DONNA

I didn't hear a thing. You really can't hear very well down there on the floor. Strange acoustics. Well, gotta go!

SHULMAN

I believe you know Mr. Lawrence.

DONNA

Sure. What a great guy to work for. I've learned so much about him ... uh, from him.

SHULMAN

Well, it seems Mr. Lawrence has decided to go to Bloomingdale's. We'll be needing someone to take over for a little while. You're about to be promoted, young lady.

DONNA (distraught)

Not again!

SHULMAN (to CRAIG)

And as for you, you might pass this word along: wealthy Park Avenue dilettantes shouldn't try to do to the retail business what they do to their marriages. I accept your two weeks notice.

CRAIG

I wouldn't give you two seconds. I'm getting the hell out of here.

He starts out, then turns to DONNA.

Donna, I don't know how you do it, but do me a favor and do it to someone else from now on.

He goes out and slams the door.

DONNA (calling after him)

Craig, no! You're not really going to let him go? This is just a little spat -- you guys'll kiss and make up later. I don't mean literally. I don't know about any of that ...

SHULMAN

Calm down and come with me, Donna.

He leads her out of his office and into the Display Department.

DONNA (chattering away)

I can't replace Craig. I don't know enough. I don't even know how this all happened. I mean, I was in your office getting some letters for Rosa, and I knocked over this ashtray, and ... Oh, my God! I forgot the letters!

SHULMAN (stopping her at CRAIG's desk)

How do you like your new desk, Ms. Display Director?... Sit here for a few minutes. Take some time to get used to it -- it's yours now. In exchange for your... discretion.

He exits quietly. DONNA sits and stares, not quite comprehending it all.

DONNA

What am I doing, sitting at Craig's desk like this? I have no right ... I mean, it's his desk ... I mean ...

AM I ASLEEP?
CAN IT REALLY BE
FATE HAS LOOKED ON ME WITH KINDNESS?
WILL THIS DREAM KEEP,
OR WILL I SOON AWAKE?
IS THIS MY BIG BREAK?
IS IT A MISTAKE

TO HAVE A DESK OF MY OWN --
IT'S KIND OF BATTERED,
AND YOU HARDLY CAN OPEN THE DRAWERS.
BUT STILL IT'S MY OWN --
I'M KIND OF FLATTERED.
SORRY CRAIG, I WISH IT STILL WERE YOURS.

Of course, this is totally out of the question. He'd never speak to me if I really ... But I'm not really his type anyway ... I mean, how could I ... I mean ...

A DESK OF MY OWN --
MY EGO'S BOLSTERED,
BUT I'M STILL NOT TOO WELL EQUIPPED:
THIS CHAIR OF MY OWN
COULD BE UPHOLSTERED
IN SOMETHING THAT WASN'T QUITE SO RIPPED.

NOW IN MY HEART
SOMETHING FEELS SO STRANGE.
CAN IT BE THIS CHANGE OF FORTUNE?
IS THIS A START,
OR JUST A HAPPY END?
WHO CAN COMPREHEND
WHAT'S BEYOND THE BEND?

BESIDES A DESK OF MY OWN,
I'VE GOT TO MENTION
THERE'S SOMETHING THAT TOPS THIS THRILL --
A NEW TELEPHONE,
MY OWN EXTENSION.
AND GUESS WHO NEVER HAS TO PAY THE BILL?

NOW WHILE I'M ALONE
I MIGHT CONSIDER
WHAT ELSE MIGHT BE STILL IN STORE --
PERHAPS I'LL BE SHOWN
MY NAME IN GLITTER
SOME DAY ON MY OWN OFFICE DOOR!

Hell, you weren't really happy here, Craig. This is the push you've been needing, to go out and find something better.

IS THIS A JOKE?
CAN IT MEAN SO MUCH --
JUST THE MEREST TOUCH OF FORTUNE.
STILL, FROM DREAM SMOKE
FIRES CAN BE FANNED.
WILL I BURN MY HAND?
IF THINGS GO AS PLANNED

I'LL HAVE A DESK OF MY OWN
NEXT TO A WINDOW
SO I CAN LOOK OUT AND SEE
THE REST OF THE WORLD
OUTSIDE MY WINDOW
WALKING BY, LOOKING UP AT ME!

Hey, I think I like it!

THE REST OF THE WORLD
OUTSIDE MY WINDOW
WALKING BY, LOOKING UP AT ME!

BLACKOUT

SCENE FOUR - later that afternoon

ALLISON and PAUL's apartment. NOREEN, the housekeeper, is gathering up glasses from the night before. ALLISON emerges from PAUL's bedroom and storms down the stairs.

ALLISON

There has been yet another change of plans for dinner, Noreen.

NOREEN

Don't tell me -- Mr. Edwards is heading back to Kentucky.

PAUL's bedroom door is thrown open and GORDON, the valet/butler, comes racing down the stairs. He stops at the bottom, throws his arms in the air wildly, waves a laundry receipt and shouts a single word of explanation.

GORDON

SHIRTS!

He races out the front door.

ALLISON

I need a drink.

NOREEN

Let me do that for you, Mrs. Edwards.

ALLISON

I am perfectly capable of pouring myself a bourbon.

NOREEN

Look, sweetie -- in my last lifetime I was a very rich lady like you, and I had lots of servants like me, only I wasn't real nice to them, so I died and came back to earth as your housekeeper. Put the bottle down and let me work out my karma.

NOREEN takes the bottle from ALLISON and proceeds to fix her a drink. PAUL emerges from his bedroom.

PAUL

GORDON!

ALLISON

We just had a nice chat, dear. He's getting your shirts.

PAUL

Oh. What time is it?

ALLISON

Somewhere between nine and five.

PAUL

I'm late.

PAUL starts down the stairs.

ALLISON

Wish I had something to be late for. I'd kill for a creative meeting. Hell, I'd settle for a bitch session with Cosmo.

PAUL (pause)

Well, I'm all packed but the shirts, the cab is ordered, and I need a drink.

NOREEN (going to bar)

Allow me, Mr. Edwards.

PAUL

That's all right, Noreen. I can do it.

ALLISON

She has to work out her karma, Paul.

PAUL

She has to what?

NOREEN

It's a long story, Mr. Edwards. Just drink, relax, and have a good trip.

She hands him a drink, and carries the dirty glasses off to the kitchen.

ALLISON

I must say, as a husband, you make a swell overnight guest.

PAUL

I know this is a bad time to be leaving. But I've got some news that might cheer you up.

ALLISON

Does it involve Wilbur Shulman and something painful?

PAUL

How would you like to have me working closer to home?

ALLISON

North of the Mason-Dixon line might be nice for a change.

PAUL

How about an office tower right smack on Fifth Avenue? Dorian Reynolds Corporation has started scouting locations, and where Reynolds scouts, Edwards designs. Of course, finding prime real estate on Fifth Avenue may take some time.

ALLISON

An Edwards building on Fifth Avenue? My dear, I am impressed, and I'm married to you.

GORDON comes racing out of PAUL's room with a suitcase, packed and ready to go. He stops at bottom of stairs.

GORDON

Your bags!

He runs out the front door.

PAUL

Well, I guess I'm about to leave.

The front door intercom buzzes.

ALLISON (going to answer it)

Quality time is now officially over. That must be your taxi. (into intercom) This is Mrs. Edwards. My husband will be right down.... Who?... Oh, well send him right up. (to PAUL) That's strange. It's Craig. What's he doing here in the middle of the afternoon?

The front door is flung open. GORDON enters.

GORDON

Taxi!

PAUL

Thank you, Gordon. That will be all.

GORDON races off to the kitchen.

ALLISON

It's the oddest thing -- I'm not certain I really know what he looks like.

PAUL

Well, If I'm going to make this flight, I have to get going.

ALLISON

Call me when you land. I'm easier to get a hold of these days.

PAUL (kissing her)

I promise.

ALLISON

Give 'em hell in Kentucky!

PAUL

I'm really sorry, Ali.

He opens the front door, and comes face to face with CRAIG.

You're timing's excellent, Mr. Lawrence. The husband is just on his way out.

CRAIG

I won't be staying long, Mr. Edwards. I have ... a quick report from the frontlines, and I'll be on my way.

PAUL

No hurry. I think my wife could use the company right now. Ali, you'll fill me in later. Love you.

He exits. ALLISON picks up her drink.

CRAIG

I ... hope you don't mind my stopping by like this.

ALLISON

You don't look happy.

CRAIG

People who get fired don't usually look happy. Shulman and I had a little disagreement about store policy. It seems there's not much room for new ideas in his world.

ALLISON

What happened? What did you say to him?

CRAIG

I didn't say anything -- I just tried to get him to listen to our idea about the ad campaign.

ALLISON

Why would he have fired you for that?

CRAIG

Why do you think? To get back at you.

ALLISON

He wasn't supposed to know I was involved.

CRAIG

Allison, he's not that stupid. But I guess I am, getting myself fired because of some Park Avenue diletante.

ALLISON

What did you call me?

CRAIG

I'm sorry. Those were Wilbur's words. Look, I didn't give a damn about changing that store until you came along. Life was a lot simpler when I just had a job, and not a Goddamned cause.

ALLISON

The world is overrun with people who just have jobs. We were trying to make a real difference.

CRAIG

Some difference -- you're back in the lap of luxury, I'm heading for unemployment, and Beaumont's is chugging along like we never even existed.

ALLISON

It may not be chugging much longer, with Wilbur and Cosmo at the helm.

CRAIG

Face it -- nothing lasts forever. Let them tear the whole damned place down and build a parking lot, for all I care! You'll excuse me -- I've got to go figure out what to do with what remains of my life.

He rushes out. ALLISON stares after him for a moment, then angrily bangs the glass down on the table.

ALLISON

BANG YOUR HEAD AGAINST THE WALL ... FOR NOTHING!
BE A FOOL AND GIVE YOUR ALL ... FOR NOTHING!
LEND A HAND, THEY'LL ONLY SLAP YOU DOWN.
TRY TO FLY, THEY'LL TRY TO STRAP YOU DOWN.

WILBUR SHULMAN, DEAREST -- THANKS FOR NOTHING.
THOUGH YOU CLIMBED UP THROUGH THE RANKS, YOU'RE NOTHING!
SO IT LOOKS AS THOUGH THIS TIME YOU'VE WON --
I'M NOT DONE YET!

SO MANY DREAMS
RIGHT THROUGH MY FINGERS.
SO MANY SCHEMES
NEVER COME TRUE.
SO MANY PLANS, SO MUCH I HAVE TO DO ...

AND WHEN I'M THROUGH, I'LL SHOW THEM!
IF IT TAKES A CLAW OR TWO, I'LL GROW THEM.
SILLY FOOLS, THEY THINK THEY KNOW IT ALL --
I'LL SIT BACK AND WATCH THEM BLOW IT ALL!
JEREMIAH TRUMBULL, FACE TOMORROW:
BEAUMONT'S WON'T BE IN THE RACE TOMORROW!
DON'T YOU KNOW WHEN TIME HAS PASSED YOU BY?
BETTER WISE UP!

SO MANY DAYS
RIGHT THROUGH MY FINGERS.
COUNT ALL THE WAYS
CHANCES CAN DIE.
COUNT ALL THE TIMES
LOVERS MUST SAY GOOD-BYE.

CLOSE YOUR EYES --
HOLD A DREAM FOREVER.
PLAY NAIVE AND MAKE BELIEVE
THAT DREAMS COME TRUE,
AND FRIENDS COME THROUGH.

WHY SO WISE?
WHY SO GODDAMN CLEVER?
WHY SO GROWN, AND SO ALONE ...

AND SO MANY YEARS
RIGHT THROUGH MY FINGERS.
SO MANY TEARS,
SO MANY TRIES.
SO MANY HOPES, SO MANY HOPELESS LIES!

NOW WILBUR SHULMAN DEAR, AND JEREMIAH TRUMBULL --
THE FUTURE IS DRAWING NEAR, JUST HEAR THE DISTANT RUMBLE.
MAKE WAY, TOMORROW'S HERE -- LET'S WATCH TRADITION CRUMBLE!

She goes to the phone and dials.

Hello? Dorian? This is Allison Edwards. Paul tells me you're in the market for Fifth Avenue real estate.... Well we're having some people over next Friday night whom you must meet. From Coretco. You know -- they own Beaumont's, dear. That struggling old Fifth Avenue relic.... Splendid! I can't wait to see you. Good-bye.

She hangs up.

WAKE UP DREAMER -- TIME TO RESIST.
CLOSE YOUR FINGERS -- MAKE A FIST,
MAKE A FIST! MAKE A FIST AND HOLD ON ...
HOLD ON ... HOLD ON!

THIS DREAM WON'T SLIP
RIGHT THROUGH MY FINGERS.
I'LL KEEP MY GRIP
TIGHT WITH MY FINGERS.
HOLD ON WITH ALL MY MIGHT
WITH MY FINGERS ...
BEFORE THIS LAST CHANCE IS GONE!

BLACKOUT

SCENE FIVE

The same, the following Friday evening.
GORDON enters with a punchbowl, which he carries to the bar. NOREEN is tidying up.

GORDON/NOREEN

IT'S NEARLY EIGHT ...
TIME TO FACE THE ADVANCING MOB.
IF I COULD, I WOULD QUIT THIS JOB
RIGHT OFF THE BAT.

IT'S GETTING LATE.
IS THERE STILL TIME FOR SUICIDE?
I'D BE GRATEFUL IF YOU WOULD HIDE
THE WELCOME MAT.

PAUL enters from his bedroom, fussing with his cummerbund, and carrying his tuxedo jacket. GORDON and NOREEN help him finish dressing.

PAUL
OH, WHAT A FATE!
BETTER GET SET TO SOCIALIZE.
TIME TO PULL OUT THE STOCK REPLIES
OF COCKTAIL CHAT.

NOREEN
I'LL PUT THE CANAPES
ON TRAYS. (she exits)

GORDON
LET'S PULL OUT THOSE CLICHES.

The bell rings. GORDON goes to answer the door. JEREMIAH and CHARLOTTE TRUMBULL tango in.

PAUL/GORDON
GOOD EVENING.

PAUL
HELLO, IT'S SO GOOD TO SEE YOU.

JEREMIAH
HELLO, IT'S REAL NICE TO SEE YOU, TOO.

JEREMIAH/PAUL
HOW DO YOU DO?

CHARLOTTE
I DIDN'T HAVE TIME FOR LUNCH.
JUST POINT ME TOWARDS THE PUNCH
AND SOMETHING I CAN MUNCH.

CHARLOTTE follows GORDON over to the punch, as NOREEN enters with a tray of canapes. Bell rings. GORDON runs to answer it, and escorts in a well-known ACTOR and ACTRESS.

PAUL/GORDON
PLEASE COME RIGHT IN.

ACTRESS
MY HAIR'S A WRECK, I GUESS.

JEREMIAH/CHARLOTTE
HAVEN'T SEEN YOU IN AGES, DEAR. A MESS!

ACTOR
I RETIRED FROM THE STAGE THIS YEAR.

CHARLOTTE (to ACTRESS) I LOVE YOUR HAT.
ACTRESS (to CHARLOTTE) AND WHERE'D YOU FIND THAT DRESS?

The bell rings. GORDON runs to answer it.
The COMPTE and COMPTESSSE tango in.

PAUL/JEREMIAH/ACTOR COMPTE
HOW HAVE YOU BEEN?

I'VE HAD TO CONVALESCE...
FROM STRESS.

COMPTESSSE
I DON'T SLEEP FROM THAT AWFUL SMELL
IN THAT DAMNED OVERPRICED HOTEL
WE'RE STAYING AT.

CHARLOTTE/ACTRESS
A GENUINE COMPTESSSE?

PAUL
A GLASS OF GIN!

MALE GUESTS
MY SHRINK SAYS I REPRESS

PAUL/GORDON/NOREEN
WISH A STORM HAD PRE-EMPTED IT:
THIS BARRAGE OF ATTEMPTED WIT
AND EMPTY CHAT. SUCCESS.

ALL GUESTS
NEXT FRIDAY AT LUTECE?

EVERYONE
GOOD EVENING.
HELLO, IT'S SO GOOD TO SEE YOU.

The bell rings. GORDON runs to the door.

GUESTS

HELLO, IT'S SO GOOD TO SEE YOU ...
CHIT CHAT CHIT CHAT
WHO'S THAT? WHO'S THAT?
CHIT CHAT CHIT CHAT
WHO'S THAT? WHO'S THAT?

GORDON ushers in KIKI MACDONALD
and a PHOTOGRAPHER from Women's
Wear Daily who immediately begins
flashing pictures.

KIKI MACDONALD'S HERE FROM WOMEN'S WEAR!

ACTRESS

OH GOD, MY HAIR!

KIKI

DEAREST PAUL, I'M NOT ONE TO SNOOP,
BUT I'M NOT NAIVE.
ON THE LEVEL -- NOW, WHAT'S THE SCOOP?
DOES ALLISON HAVE SOMETHING UP HER SLEEVE?

PAUL

HELLO ...
OF COURSE, I KNOW ...

NOREEN is walking around with a tray of
canapes.

GUESTS

THANK YOU. THE EGGS ARE DELICIOUS.

NOREEN

THANK YOU. DO TRY THE KNISHES.

Doorbell rings. GORDON runs to the door.

GUESTS

HELLO, IT'S SO GOOD TO SEE YOU.
CHIT CHAT CHIT CHAT
WHO'S THAT? WHO'S THAT?
CHIT CHAT CHIT CHAT
WHO'S THAT? WHO'S THAT?

GORDON ushers in DORIAN
REYNOLDS.

DORIAN REYNOLDS! DORIAN REYNOLDS!
THE REAL ESTATE TYCOON?

KIKI

HOW OPPORTUNE!

PAUL pulls NOREEN aside quickly, and whispers to her. She discreetly slips off to ALLISON's room.

DORIAN

IT'S GOOD TO SEE YOU, PAUL.
I UNDERSTAND WE HAL-
TED WORKING ON THE TALL-
EST EDIFICE IN ALL KENTUCKY.

PAUL

WE RAN INTO A SLIGHT
DELAY ABOUT THE HEIGHT,
BUT THINGS WILL BE ALL RIGHT
AND ALL IN ALL WE'RE MIGHTY LUCKY.

PAUL/DORIAN

A BIT OF COMPROMISE,
AND RIGHT BEFORE OUR EYES ...

DORIAN

MY CORPORATE STOCK ...

PAUL

MY BRONZE GLASS TOWER ...

PAUL/DORIAN

AND THE SOUTH
WILL ONCE MORE RISE!

PAUL

ENOUGH OF TALKING SHOP --
WE OUGHT TO TAKE THIS OP-
PORTUNITY TO SWAP
SOME BETTER-BRED WORDS.

DORIAN

WE'LL HAVE TO TALK SOME MORE.
I'M ABSOLUTELY SURE
WE'LL FIND SOME MOMENTS FOR
ALL THOSE UNSAID WORDS.
BUT NOW, WHERE IS THE GOR-
GEOUS MRS. EDWARDS?

NOREEN emerges from the bedroom.

NOREEN

SHE'LL BE RIGHT DOWN, SIR.
IN FACT, I WAS ABOUT TO ANNOUNCE HER!

GUESTS

ALLISON, ALLISON, ALLISON, ALLISON ...
SHE'LL BE RIGHT DOWN, SHE'LL BE RIGHT DOWN!

ALLISON makes a grand entrance from her
bedroom, dressed magnificently. She
elegantly descends the steps.

ALLISON, ALLISON -- LOVELY AS EVER.

ALLISON

GRACIOUS, THE TRUMBULLS ARE HERE FROM DALLAS.

PAUL

ALLISON, ALLISON -- CUNNING AND CLEVER.

ALLISON

DORIAN, DEAREST, I HEAR YOU BOUGHT A PALACE.

Very nice, but there really is something to be said for owning property closer to home,
Dorian dear.

ALLISON and DORIAN do a steamy cha-
cha.

ALLISON

... real estate ...

GUESTS

CHAT CHAT CHAT!

DORIAN

... capital gains ...

GUESTS

CHAT CHAT CHAT!

ALLISON

... Fifth Avenue ...

GUESTS

CHAT CHAT CHAT!

... fifty million ...

DORIAN

CHAT CHAT CHAT!

GUESTS

ALLISON
SEE THAT MAN THERE?
HE'S CORETCO'S CORPORATE HEAD.
TELL ME, WHAT WAS THE LAND YOU SAID
YOU'RE LOOKING AT?

DORIAN
WHO IS HE?
I SEE.

FIFTH AVENUE
PROPERTY.

NOW, PLEASE DON'T STARE.
I'VE HEARD BEAUMONT'S ABOUT TO CRASH,
AND CORETCO'S IN NEED OF CASH.

PARDON ME.

WE SHOULD CHAT.

EXCUSE ME.

She leaves DORIAN and dances over to
JEREMIAH.

GUESTS/ALLISON
HELLO, IT'S SO GOOD TO SEE YOU.
HELLO, IT'S SO GOOD TO SEE YOU, TOO.

HOW DO YOU DO?

KIKI (to PAUL)

THIS DAME'S GOT LOTS
OF NERVE.

KIKI/PAUL
STEP BACK AND LET'S
OBSERVE HER THROW
ANOTHER CURVE.

ALLISON
YOU'RE LOOKING WELL.
THERE'S SOMEONE WHO'S HERE TONIGHT
WHO COULD SETTLE CORETCO'S PLIGHT
IN NOTHING FLAT.
BUT WOULD YOU SELL?
IT'S THE LAND, NOT THE DYING STORE
THAT HE'LL PAY A SMALL FORTUNE FOR.

JEREMIAH
FOR SIXTY-THREE.
I SEE.

I GUESS I KNOW THE KEY.

WE SHOULD CHAT!

CHAT CHAT CHAT CHAT ...

GUESTS

ALLISON dances JEREMIAH over to
DORIAN.

DORIAN/JEREMIAH

GOOD EVENING.

HELLO, IT'S SO GOOD TO SEE YOU.

ALLISON

KIKI

PAUL

JUST THINK --

IF I, YOU AND HE UNITE?

SHE PUTS ON QUITE A SHOW.

I KNOW.

YOU GET THE GIST?

A GODDAMN DYNAMO.

A PRO.

WE THREE TONIGHT

KIKI/PAUL

SHE JUST UN-STATUSED BEAUMONT'S QUO!

MIGHT MAKE HIST'RY!

GUESTS

HELLO, WE PRATTLE AND CHATTER --

BON MOTS ARRANGED ON A PLATTER.

AND OH, WE DO LOVE TO FLATTER

WITH NO REMARKS THAT WOULD MATTER ...

KIKI, notebook in hand, is taking down a statement from JEREMIAH.

JEREMIAH

Though it is true that Beaumont's performance in the last favh years has been disappointing, Coretco has no plans at the moment for abandoning their flagship store!

GUESTS

WE SIMPLY CHAT!

KIKI has turned her attention to DORIAN, who is replying:

DORIAN

Yes, Dorian Reynolds Corporation is currently scouting prime Fifth Avenue locations. However, no negotiations have begun, nor contracts signed. I may have further news for you when I get back from Dallas.

GUESTS

WE ONLY CHAT!

KIKI is taking down a statement from ALLISON.

ALLISON

Dismissed from Beaumont's? Where do these rumors start? No, I was only there temporarily, to help organize the Feminicci promotion. Why, you can see that Jeremiah and I are just as close as collard greens and grits.

GUESTS

WE LOVE TO CHAT!

ALLISON is between JEREMIAH and DORIAN; the men are shaking hands. The PHOTOGRAPHER flashes a picture.

KIKI

Women's Wear has one humdinger of a front page story!

GUESTS

CHAT!

Tableau, then Blackout.

When the lights come back up, the GUESTS have all gone, except for the TRUMBULL's and DORIAN. JEREMIAH is trying to pry a very drunk CHARLOTTE from a chair. DORIAN is sipping a brandy.

JEREMIAH

Come on, Charlotte. We don't want to ovahstay our welcome.

CHARLOTTE

Cool yoh engines, Jeremiah. Believe me, we're welcome heah. Wha, we're the lahf of this party, you old fool!

ALLISON

I'm feeling as high as that thirty story building in Kentucky.

DORIAN

Breathe it in, Allison -- draw it deep into your lungs. You know what that is? It's power. Makes the cells vibrate, doesn't it?

JEREMIAH

Charlotte, deah, ah think it really is tahm now foh us to say our farewells, and get back to the hotel.

CHARLOTTE

But it's impolite to stab and run.

JEREMIAH

Hush up.

ALLISON

All this chat is perfectly charming, but when can we get together and talk business?

JEREMIAH

I've got some thinkin' to do.

DORIAN

Let's not kid each other, Trumbull -- there's real potential here.

ALLISON

Potential? You're sitting on top of a goddamned gold mine, Jeremiah. With plenty of gold for everyone.

DORIAN

Everyone who's gutsy enough to take a chance.

JEREMIAH

Well, ah'm not exactly sure at the moment ...

DORIAN

I'm telling you I'm hot to build on Fifth Avenue, Trumbull. And if it's not on your property, I guess I'll just have to find some other tired old antique that's willing to make way for the future. (pause) So when can we sit down and talk? We have fifty million details to work out.

JEREMIAH (pause)

With sixty million details to work out, I suppose we'd better try for early next week.

ALLISON

Better make sure those Coretco accountants can pull together a preliminary report of company assets. Figures for the last five years might be of interest, with an indication of trends, and some reasonable projection for this quarter.

DORIAN

The store figures aren't really essential. It's the property I'm buying.

ALLISON

But the bids are going to start coming in on Beaumont's as soon as the story hits the paper, and guess who's going to have leverage in any deal that's cut?

PAUL

Especially with prime storefront space soon to be available in the fantastic new Reynolds office tower on Fifth Avenue.

ALLISON

Designed by the brilliant Paul Edwards.

PAUL

What do you say we shoot for the sky this time, Dorian. A monument to the future, one hundred stories high.

JEREMIAH

Ah'm afraid y'all are goin' a bit fast foh this heah Southern fox.

ALLISON

It's a fast world we're living in, Jeremiah. News travels around this planet in a split second, economies rise and tumble with a phone call, and the entire face of a city is changed overnight by giants like Dorian Reynolds. Either we stand by and let it happen around us, or we take a chance, jump in and become a part of it.

JEREMIAH

Ah do not lahk being pressured.

DORIAN

I don't blame you one bit, Trumbull. We're all getting a little ahead of ourselves here. There's a lot to think about, and a good night's sleep would clear out some of the cobwebs. My driver's downstairs. We can drop you at your hotel.

CHARLOTTE

You're gonna give us a lift in that ostentatious two-block long gold limo of yours? Get a move on, Jeremiah -- we're goin' out in style!

DORIAN, JEREMIAH and CHARLOTTE
are at the door.

DORIAN

Thanks, Paul. And thank you, Allison Edwards, for a memorable evening.

DORIAN and the TRUMBULLS have
exited. ALLISON leans against the door.
PAUL walks suggestively towards her.

PAUL

POW! WHO JUST CREATED A NEW SENSATION?

ALLISON

Excuse me?

PAUL

HOW'D YOU LIKE TO POWER MY CORPORATION?

ALLISON

You choose me?

PAUL

FOR THE GOD KNOWS WHAT CONSECUTIVE YEAR,
I VOTE YOU MY CHIEF EXECUTIVE -- DEAR,
TELL ME HOW DOES IT FEEL?

You throw one helluva party, Mrs. Edwards. You wouldn't be available for a private celebration, would you?

ALLISON

I MIGHT TAKE A MOMENT TO CRITICIZE YOU --

PAUL

You might, dear?

ALLISON

WHY SHOULD MY ACCOMPLISHMENT SO SURPRISE YOU?

PAUL

You're right, dear.

ALLISON

SOMETIMES I COULD JUST ATTACK YOU MEN -- WHY
UNDERRATE A WOMAN'S ACUMEN? I
KNEW I'D SEW UP THE DEAL.

BOTH

NOW THAT WE'VE PROVED TO THEM ALL
THAT WE REALLY MEAN BUSINESS,
THERE'S SOME BUSINESS I'M RATHER FOND OF:
YOU KNOW I'D LOVE MAKING LOVE
LIKE IT'S NOBODY'S BUSINESS,
AND I LOVE LOVING SOMEONE WHO LOVES
THE BUSINESS OF LOVE.

PAUL

Mrs. Edwards, did anyone ever tell you you look positively lovely in a corporate takeover?

ALLISON

Good-bye stockings, hello stocks -- nice assets for a silly little girl from north Jersey.

PAUL

YOUR STOCK HAS THE OTHERS DEVALUATED.

ALLISON

You gush, dear.

PAUL

IN MY DUN & BRADSTREET, YOU'RE A-1 RATED.

ALLISON

I blush, dear.

LET'S REVISE THE CORPORATE MANUAL. NOW
CAN WE MEET MORE OFTEN THAN ANNUAL? HOW
'BOUT AN EVENING OR TWO?

BOTH

YOU KNOW I'VE NEVER BEEN ABLE
TO GIVE YOU THE BUSINESS,
SO I SWEAR TO THE HEAVENS ABOVE:
MY DEAR, I'D LOVE MAKING LOVE
LIKE IT'S NOBODY'S BUSINESS,
AND I LOVE LOVING SOMEONE WHO LOVES
THE BUSINESS OF LOVE!

PAUL

LET'S TAKE A MEETING -- SET UP THE BOARDROOM.
WE'VE GOT SOME HOT TRANSACTIONS AHEAD, DEAR.
LET'S GET OUT OF THE RED, DEAR.

ALLISON

I MAKE A MOTION: FORGET THE BOARDROOM.
I'VE GOT A NOTION
WE'D BE BORED IN THE BOARDROOM.
LET'S HEAD FOR THE BEDROOM INSTEAD!

PAUL

I like that motion a lot.

ALLISON

Wait till you see some of the other motions I've got in store!

They dance together.

BOTH

HERE'S MY DECLARATION OF LOVE ETERNAL.
LET'S REVEAL IT ALL IN THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.
DON'T JUST STAND THERE LOOKING QUIZZICAL -- HEY,
THIS ATTRACTION'S GETTING PHYSICAL. SAY
THAT YOU FEEL WHAT I FEEL.

NOW THAT WE'VE PROVED TO THEM ALL
THAT WE REALLY MEAN BUSINESS,
THERE'S SOME BUSINESS I'M RATHER FOND OF:

MY DEAR, I'D LOVE MAKING LOVE
LIKE IT'S NOBODY'S BUSINESS,
AND I LOVE LOVING SOMEONE WHO LOVES
THE BUSINESS OF

COURTING AND MERGING
AND PASSIONATE SURGING ...
[THE BUSINESS OF]
COMPANIES FOLDING
AND PERSONAL HOLDING ...
[THE BUSINESS OF]
MAKEOVERS, TAKEOVERS,
QUESTING, INVESTING,
BUT BETTER THAN ALL THE ABOVE:
THE BUSINESS OF LOVE!

They kiss.

BLACKOUT

SCENE SIX

The employee elevators, early the following Monday morning. GLADYS is at the elevator, reading a copy of Women's Wear Daily. A GUARD stands near the employee entrance. SHULMAN storms in, reading a copy of WWD. GLADYS runs ahead to the elevator.

GLADYS

Mornin', Mr. S. That's some story there about that Reynolds fellow buying the land right out from under us. Of course, it ain't really true. They exaggerated or somethin', right?

SHULMAN

Express to eight, and not another word!

GLADYS

We're screwed.

GLADYS and SHULMAN get on the elevator. The doors shut. An ominous variation of "Make Them Beautiful" plays as Beaumont's employees enter on the way to

work, with copies of WWD in front of their faces. They are joined by the GUARD, then BOBBI and LOTTI.

BOBBI

Bless my soul, did you see that headline?

LOTTI (reading)

"Beaumont's Killing: Reynold's Takes Fifth."

GUARD

Somebody shot Mr. Trumbull? I'm not surprised.

RANDY and DONNA enter reading WWD.

DONNA

If this means what I think it means, I'm sure it's not what it sounds like.

RANDY

I think it means we're heading for an unpaid vacation. Time to pull our portfolios together.

The elevator doors open.

GLADYS

Anyone goin' up to eight this morning's takin' his life in his hands. Mr. Shulman ain't fit for human company. More than usual.

COSMO enters buried behind WWD, with ROSA hot on his heels.

ROSA

Meester Delaney, you din't answer me. I aks you how we all gonna have jobs if de building's all knocked up?

GLADYS

Do all southerners have it in for us Yankees, or only friends of yours like Trumbull?

BOBBI

Why weren't we told before it hit the papers?

LOTTI

I never trusted those shysters from Coretco.

DONNA

I think you're all jumping the gun just a little. Nobody's really going to tear down Beaumont's. It's a Fifth Avenue tradition.

COSMO

Let me make this perfectly cleah: Jeremiah Trumbull is one of mah oldest and deahest friends. There is absolutely no reason to doubt the status of this heah store, or your jobs.

GLADYS

Hop on, Mr. D. Now I'll take you for a ride!

BLACKOUT

SCENE SEVEN - one month later

The Fifth Avenue windows. DONNA and RANDY are finishing the new display: black and white designer coats with paper mache penguins.

DONNA

What am I doing here? It's over a month now -- doesn't anybody realize I'm not a display genius?

RANDY

Donna, the windows have really been very nice.

DONNA

What a terrible thing to say. Craig's angry enough at me as it is.

RANDY

Would you stop doing this guilt number about Craig? I've told you before, he's not angry at you. Besides, we'll all be catching up with him at the unemployment line soon enough.

DONNA

But when? I can't stand being in limbo. Everyone knows the store's going to be sold, but no one will talk about it until the contracts are signed.

RANDY

It kind of lost the feeling of a rumor when Mr. Delaney gave his notice.

The SALESPeOPLE come bounding down Fifth Avenue, buried behind copies of WWD. BOBBI, LOTTI and GLADYS are at the end of the line.

GLADYS/BOBBI/LOTTI

WHAT A KICK IN THE PANTS --

IT'S BEAUTIFUL!

SOMEONE GIVE US A CHANCE TO SCREAM.

LOOKS LIKE BEAUMONT'S IS SOLD.

WE'RE THE LAST TO BE TOLD.

WHAT A BEAUTIFUL,
HORRIBLE SCHEME!

The SALESPEOPLE, BOBBI, LOTTI and
GLADYS head to the employee entrance.
Fade out.

When the lights come back up, it is one
month later. The windows are now filled
with dresses and accessories, with the
overall banner: 50% OFF AND MORE!
Another sign proclaims: THE LAST GOOD
BUYS! And yet another: NOTHING
LASTS FOREVER -- NOT EVEN THE
BEST OF BEAUMONT'S!

DONNA and RANDY enter.

DONNA

I can't believe this is really happening.

RANDY

It's no big deal -- just a lunch date. After three months, Craig figured someone had to
break the silence.

DONNA

I meant the store closing.

RANDY

I can't wait till December twenty-third rolls around so we can all be put out of our misery
at last. Personally, I'm gonna take some time off and do what I've always wanted to do --
design clothes. What about you? Will it be so awful to have time to dance?

DONNA

I like display. Dancing was only kind of a dream. This is a career.

SALESPEOPLE, BOBBI, LOTTI and
GLADYS come marching on, wearing
designer coats from the previous windows.
GLADYS/BOBBI/LOTTI

EVEN WE CAN AFFORD
TO BE BEAUTIFUL.
THANK YOU LORD -- POINT US TOWARD THE SALE.
OF COURSE, THE MONEY WE SAVE
PUTS THE STORE IN ITS GRAVE --
WHAT A HORRIBLE
LITTLE DETAIL.

They head off to the employee's entrance.

ROSA (running in)

Donna bebee, don't look, don't turn -- just move real slow back into the store. Dere's someone heading this way you been wantin' to see, so you better get out of here before he sees you. Too late.

CRAIG comes walking down Fifth Avenue, portfolio in hand. ROSA confronts him.

Meester Lawrence, is it too much to expect' to hear from you in two months? Dere are some of us who's been worryin' what happened to you, but you better believe dat Donna is not one of them!

DONNA

Rosa, we were expecting Craig. I told you we were having lunch with an old friend.

CRAIG

Glad I'm still a friend.

DONNA

Of course you are. I'm the one who wasn't much of a friend.

CRAIG

You didn't do anything.

DONNA

So why haven't you called?

CRAIG

Every time I see you, you run away. I thought you didn't want to see me.

ROSA

She wants to see you, you want to see her. You Americans get everything so confused! I tell you who I never want to see again -- dat lousy Mr. Delaney, dat Benedict Albert! You know who he's working for now?

DONNA/RANDY/CRAIG

Coretco.

RANDY

I don't know about the rest of you, but I could go for a nice leisurely lunch.

ROSA

You can count me in, long as we don't take too long.

CRAIG

We'll catch up.

ROSA and RANDY have exited, leaving
CRAIG and DONNA.

CRAIG

So who's been responsible for the window designs since I left?

DONNA

I shouldn't get any credit at all -- they're carbon copies of Craig Lawrence windows ...

CRAIG

Donna ... enough! Pull your book together and go over to Macy's. There's an opening,
and I think you should interview.

DONNA

Why don't you take the job?

CRAIG

I just came from there. Shulman's badmouthed me all over the city.

DONNA

That's awful!

CRAIG

Maybe, or maybe it was just the slap I needed to come to my senses. I used to dream of
being a fine artist, not a corporate slave. You're different -- you really like display. Go
land that job, and maybe even throw a little freelance my way.

DONNA and CRAIG stroll off. The "Make
Them Beautiful" March begins to play as
CUSTOMERS emerge from the store piled sky
high with packages. As they appear, the
merchandise in the windows dwindles until the
windows are completely bare. All that remains
are the sale signs.

SALESPeOPLE, BOBBI, LOTTI and
GLADYS come marching through, sadly.

GLADYS/BOBBI/LOTTI

WHAT A CRIME, WHAT A SHAME --
IT WAS BEAUTIFUL.
LIFE'LL NEVER BE THE SAME AGAIN.
SOMEDAY AFTER THE FALL
PERHAPS THEY'LL RECALL
IT WAS BEAUTIFUL
WAY BACK WHEN.

GUESS THE WORLD'S GOTTA CHANGE,

BUT IT ALL FEELS SO STRANGE.
IT WAS BEAUTIFUL ... BEAUTIFUL ... BEAUTIFULL
WAY BACK WHEN.
MERRY CHRISTMAS!

They exit. The lights fade. When the lights come back up, it is Friday, December twenty-third, just before five o'clock. Beaumont's is about to close its doors for the last time. A Christmas tree graces the windows, plus a cheerless banner: MERRY CHRISTMAS AND HAPPY NEW YEAR FROM THE DORIAN REYNOLDS CORPORATION!

DONNA and RANDY are staring sadly at their last display. A well-dressed gentleman is nearby, casually surveying the store. It is DORIAN REYNOLDS.

DONNA

I can't believe they made us put up those dumb Christmas trees. Like that Dorian Reynolds jerk thinks he's Santa Claus or something. Well, take a good look, Randy -- this may be the last window display we'll ever design.

RANDY

Know what I'm gonna do now? I'm gonna go get drunk and dance my brains out!

DONNA

I didn't know you cared so much about this dumb place.

RANDY

I didn't know either, but it sure feels weird to see it empty like this. Like the first time someone you love dies and you realize there's no such thing as forever.

DONNA

If I ever meet that Dorian Reynolds jerk, I'm going to tell him a thing or two! Who does he think he is, coming along and wrecking a store and a couple thousand lives.

DORIAN has casually drifted over to them.
RANDY recognizes him, and is speechless.

DORIAN

Forgive me -- I couldn't help overhearing you. Don't you think the new Reynolds Tower is an exciting prospect?

DONNA

Real exciting -- another big, ugly building on Fifth Avenue.

DORIAN

I heard it was a beautiful design.

DONNA

Beaumont's was beautiful. Why couldn't that Reynolds jerk leave well enough alone?

RANDY (trying to warn her)

D-D-Donna ...

DONNA

Well, that man screwed me out of the first job I've ever really loved.

DORIAN

What was your job?

DONNA

Window and store display.

DORIAN

Why don't you stop by Alexander's sometime after the holidays. I'll bet they'll have something for you there.

DONNA

What makes you think so?

DORIAN (with a wink)

I know some people there. What's your name?

DONNA (warming up to him)

Donna Plotnick. What's yours?

DORIAN (handing her a card)

I'm that Dorian Reynolds jerk. You're very charming. Why don't you give me a call some time soon?

He gives her a smile, and exits. She and RANDY stare in disbelief. BOBBI, LOTTI and SALESPEOPLE enter from the store.

BOBBI

I can't believe it. From a beauty advisor at Beaumont's to a Goddamned shoe salesperson at A&S.

LOTTI

What are you griping about? I'm stuck selling girdles at Macy's.

BOBBI

I hate feet.

LOTTI

Honey, I'm not real crazy about what goes in girdles.

BOBBI

Well, it was still real nice of Mrs. Edwards to write those recommendations for us. It's good to have a job. And nobody's gonna tear down A&S, right?

CRAIG enters from the other direction.

CRAIG

Bobbi, Lotti -- how are you gals?

LOTTI

Mr. Lawrence? I didn't recognize you. A person forgets what someone looks like when you don't see him for a few months, you know.

GLADYS (entering)

Look who's come to pay his last respects. It's just as well you ain't been around -- I've seen B-52's go down with more grace.

CRAIG

How ya doin', Gladys?

GLADYS

How should I be doin'? You work for a place for thirty years, it becomes your home. It's like I'm evicted, that's how I'm doin'.

LOTTI

What's she complainin' about? She starts at Tiffany's in two weeks.

CRAIG (to DONNA and RANDY)

Hi, kids. Welcome to the wonderful world of unemployment.

GLADYS

Funny, for years I've been wanting a long Christmas vacation. But not this long.

BOBBI

A real slap in the face.

CRAIG

What's the matter with all of you? Take a look around -- the world has not come to an end.

GLADYS

I have a horrible feeling he's about to say something cheerful..

CRAIG

WHEN YOU'RE SLAPPED,
OR YOUR DREAMS GET SCRAPPED,

AND YOUR LIFE IS APT TO DEPRESS ...

LOTTI

That about sums it up.

CRAIG

SEND ME AN S.O.S.

DONNA

That ship's already sunk.

CRAIG

I'VE GOT A CURE FOR STRESS.

RANDY

How about a job?

CRAIG

CLEAR YOUR MIND,
'CAUSE YOU CAN'T UNWIND
IF YOU STAND THERE GRINDING YOUR AXE.
NOW THAT YOU'VE STRAINED YOUR BACKS,
JUST TAKE A BREATH, RELAX...

GLADYS

Here comes the cheerful part.

CRAIG

AND WATCH THE

SUNSET --
JUST ENJOY THE
SUNSET.
UNEMPLOYMENT'S
NOT AS GRIM
IN THIS SHIMMERING MIRAGE.

DAYTIME

IS THE EARN-YOUR-PAY TIME.

BUT SKIES-OF-GREY TIME
WEARS A ROSY CAM-
OUFLAGE.

AT SUNSET.
TROUBLES FADE AT SUNSET.

OTHERS
WE'RE UPSET

AND HE'S GETTING POETIC!

WHO ASKED HIM?

THAT IMAGE IS PATHETIC!

NINE TO FIVE ...

WHAT A BEAUTIFUL TIME.
SKIES ARE GREY --
WHO GIVES A DAMN?
WE DO I SUPPOSE.

AT SUNSET --
I FORGET TROUBLES FADE
AT SUNSET.

I'M AFRAID MY TROUBLED FRIENDS
MAY NOT FIND ME ALL THAT WISE!

PARDON

WHILE I MORALIZE:
YOU NEED A SUNSET
FOR THE SUN TO RISE.

YOU NEED A SUNSET
FOR THE SUN TO RISE.

WHO KNOWS?
WE'LL TRY
TO SEEM ENTHUSED.

YOU'RE EXCUSED.
IT'S NO SURPRISE
YOU NEED A SUNSET.

IF WE GET THROUGH THIS
SUNSET,
IT'S A REALLY SAFE BET

WE'LL SEE THE SUN RISE!

ROSA comes running in excitedly.

ROSA

Donna, bebee! Meester Lawrence! Eet happen! Eet finally happen! I got casted!

DONNA

Terrific! What's the show?

ROSA

I am off to Raleigh, North Carolina to play "Feedler on de Roots"!

GLADYS

Only in America!

ROSA

SUNSET --
HOW I LOVE THE SUNSET

OTHERS (joining in)

MY HEART SPINS A FAIRY TALE
THAT MAY JUST COME TRUE:

CRAIG/DONNA/ROSA
STROLLING DOWN FIFTH AVENUE
I'LL WATCH THE SUNSET

EVERY NIGHT WITH YOU.

I'LL WATCH THE SUNSET

EVERY NIGHT WITH YOU

OTHERS

I'LL WATCH THE SUNSET.

I FORGOT THERE'S A
SUNSET.

I'LL WATCH THE SUNSET

EACH NIGHT AT SUNSET!

They stroll down Fifth Avenue. The windows slide off to reveal ...

SCENE EIGHT

The main selling floor of Beaumont's, stripped to the bare walls. All that remains is a cracked glass counter and a few broken mannequins.

WILBUR SHULMAN is alone. He walks tentatively through the empty space. After a moment, a GUARD enters.

GUARD

I'm gonna have to lock up pretty soon, Mr. Shulman.

SHULMAN

Forever is such a long time. Do you think we could put it off for just a few more minutes?

GUARD

Sure. I gotta go check the other floors anyhow.

SHULMAN

What's your name?

GUARD

Rick, Mr. Shulman.

SHULMAN

Thank you, Rick. And you call me Wilbur.

GUARD

You're welcome ... Wilbur.

He exits. A moment later, ALLISON comes in, stopping at the entrance.

ALLISON

Hello, Willie.

SHULMAN

The word is good-bye. It's a hard word for some of us to say.

ALLISON

Sometimes you just have to let go of the past to make way for the future.

SHULMAN

Don't talk to me about the future. It doesn't mean much to a store president without a store.

ALLISON

Life goes on, Willie. Really it does.

SHULMAN

Beaumont's is the only life I've known for twenty-six years.

ALLISON

Then maybe it's time to move on. Look at this as an opportunity. I know you've had offers from other stores.

SHULMAN

Yes. I've been offered the opportunity to uproot my family and move to any number of non-metropolitan hellholes. Thank you so much for making all this possible.

ALLISON

I'm sorry.

SHULMAN

Bullshit. You've never been sorry, unless you thought it could get you something. A calculator where your heart should be -- that's the Allison Edwards I know and loathe.

ALLISON

Don't be cruel.

SHULMAN

Cruel? I'll show you cruel: take a look at the glory that was Beaumont's. Monster that you are, you'll destroy anything that you can't control. Welcome to your finale.

He exits. ALLISON stares for a moment, then calls after him.

ALLISON

Damn you! This is my moment, Wilbur Shulman, and you'll not take it away from me!

LISTEN TO THE DISTANT TRUMPETS
THUMP IN YOUR HEAD.
IF YOUR THROAT HAS GOT A LUMP,
IT'S NOT SOMETHING MEDICAL!

THE FINAL CURTAIN IS ABOUT TO FALL--
HERE COMES THE ENDING THAT WE TRIED TO STALL.
TAKE THE CREDIT--
DON'T REGRET IT,

NOT AT ALL!
TOSS YOUR HEAD, AND FLASH 'EM A SMILE!

THEY SAY THAT ALL GOOD THINGS MUST END SOME TIME,
SO IF YOU CELEBRATE IT, WHAT'S THE CRIME?
OTHERS CRY,
"SO LONG, GOOD-BYE",
BUT I'M GONNA SING A FINALE -- SWEET AND TOUGH!
DANCE A FINALE -- STRUT MY STUFF!
GIVE 'EM THE WORKS, AND EXIT IN STYLE!

SUDDENLY A SUBTLE RUMBLE
HUMS IN YOUR SOUL.
SUDDENLY THE CRASH OF DRUMS
BECOMES UNCONTROLLABLE!
AND THEN ANTICIPATION FILLS THE HALL --
HERE COMES THAT FINAL SCENE THAT THRILLS THEM ALL.
RAISE THE CEILING --
NOW YOU'RE FEELING
TEN FEET TALL.
BOW YOUR HEAD, AND PUT ON A CROWN!

YOU COULD BE IN THE BLOOM, OR PAST YOUR PRIME.
WHY ASK A PSYCHIC TO FORECAST YOUR TIME?
WHEN IT'S HERE, THE CROWDS'LL CHEER
THE CLIMAX, SO
PLAY A FINALE FULL OF HOKE!
LIVE A FINALE -- GO FOR BROKE!
SHOOT FOR THE STARS, AND NEVER LOOK DOWN.

BUT WHERE'S THE BRASS
AND SHEER AUDACITY?
WHEN THERE'S A FINALE, CYMBALS CRASH.
WHERE'S A FINALE'S SPARK AND SPLASH?
THERE MUST BE MORE:
BRING ON THE CHORUS, AND LET'S
SHAKE A FINALE FROM THIS DUST!
MAKE A FINALE BUILD, OR JUST
FAKE A FINALE ...

Through her imagination, ALLISON coaxes out the chorus of ghost-like, white-faced MANNEQUINS from the prologue, wearing couturier from Beaumont's history. They drift through the cavernous room, ignoring ALLISON's attempts to get them to join her.

PARDON ME, BUT I FORGOT
THE PLOT TWISTS AHEAD.

MAYBE I SHOULD LAUGH A LOT --
I'M NOT PLAYING OEDIPUS!

FORGET THE SOPHOCLEAN UNDERTONE --
YOU'VE COME THIS FAR, AND NOW YOU CAN'T BE THROWN.
SHOW YOUR PLUCK,
BUT LOTS OF LUCK --
YOU'RE ON YOUR OWN.
NO ONE'S THERE TO GIVE YOU A HAND.

The MANNEQUINS have drifted off,
leaving ALLISON totally alone.

NO ORCHESTRATIONS, AND THE STAGE IS BARE.
IMAGINATION'S ALL THAT FILLS THE AIR.
STILL, WE HAVE
TO GIVE THEM SAVOIR-FAIRE.
NOW WE NEED A FINALE -- NOT A PAUSE.
LEAD A FINALE TO APPLAUSE.
SOMEBODY'S GOT TO STRIKE UP THE BAND!

FOR I DEMAND
TO END OUTSTANDINGLY.
WITHOUT A FINALE, NO ONE CHEERS.
SHOUT A FINALE IN THEIR EARS!

AND I INSIST
ON MAKING HISTORY!
I'LL HAM A FINALE -- SPIT THOSE NOTES!
CRAM A FINALE DOWN THEIR THROATS!
DAMN THE FINALE!

She pushes over a mannequin in anger. The
crash echoes in the emptiness. After a
moment, the GUARD enters.

GUARD

Thought I heard somebody. Sorry lady, no one's supposed to be here. I gotta lock up.

ALLISON

I was just saying good-bye.

GUARD

Lotta people seem to wanna say a last good-bye to the old girl.

ALLISON

She used to be something special.

GUARD

Hey, I know you -- you're that Mrs. Edwards! That's some deal you pulled off here. You must be one shrewd lady!

PAUL (entering)

That she is. After all, she picked me for a husband.

GUARD (exiting)

Well, if the two of you will follow me, I gotta let you out the back door now.

PAUL

We'll be right there. Come on, Ali.

ALLISON

My God, Paul, look around. What have I done?

PAUL

You figured out where Beaumont's was heading, and gave it a little push, that's all. The world changes. It's a pretty inescapable fact. You've made way for something new.

ALLISON

Wilbur called me a monster.

PAUL

Out on his ass after twenty-some years, I wouldn't expect him to vote you Miss Congeniality. But there are some people who think you're one shrewd lady. Me included. Of course, what do I know -- I'm in love with you. Hope you don't mind having me around for a while.

ALLISON (she smiles in spite of herself)

THERE'S A NEW NEED IN ME --
SOMETHING THAT HAS TO SUCCEED IN ME.
TOO MUCH HAS PASSED ME BY.
SO WHERE DO I START
MAKING A DIFFERENCE?
WHEN DO I START
MAKING A DIFFERENCE?
HOW DO I START
MAKING A DIFFERENCE ... ?

Paul, let's head on home now and go over those plans for the new building. I've got some splendid ideas!

They exit. The ghostly MANNEQUINS in haute couture are silhouetted across the upstage wall for a lingering moment.

CURTAIN