

# THE GIG

a musical by  
Douglas J. Cohen

based on the motion picture *THE GIG* by Frank D. Gilroy

Winner of the Richard Rodgers Development Grant  
Winner of the inaugural Noël Coward Prize  
Winner of Five NYMF Awards

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## CHARACTERS

With the exception of Abe Mitgang, all the principal men should be between 35-55 years of age.

**MARTY** – Gregarious self-appointed leader of the band and the one who gets the idea to book the group at a Catskill resort. A used car salesman who puts his hot air to good use playing trombone. Although he has a rocky relationship with his son and his second wife, he is extremely loyal to his friends. Baritone.

**JACK** – Works on Wall Street and plays piano in the band. Very uptight, educated, afraid of being open with his wife regarding his musical passion. Follows in his father's footsteps and is unfulfilled. Baritone.

**GIL** – Once a pro trumpet player but married into wealth and works for his father-in-law's real estate firm. Ladies man who lacks the inner fire to stick with music on a serious level. High baritone.

**AARON** – Teaches clarinet for a living but fancies himself a pro, although his talent is limited. In contrast to Gil, he'd kill for a chance at the big time and has tremendous passion for music. Second Tenor.

**ARTHUR** -- A dentist who lives with his ailing mother and has a non-existent social life...until Paradise Manor. Modest, naïve, and charming. He plays drums. First or Second Tenor.

\***GEORGIE** – Owner of a deli/convenience store and the bass player. Forthright, down-to-earth, a realist. For reasons later disclosed, he's unable to go to the Catskills. High Baritone.

**MARSHALL** – Georgie's replacement on the gig. A black bass player who is a pro, and played with the greatest jazz musicians ever. He is well-read, worldly, and a recluse: he's not happy being among amateurs. Bass-Baritone.

**ABE** – Abe Mitgang is the owner and proprietor of Paradise Manor, as well as being a frustrated stand-up comedian. Basically a decent guy...until his back is up against the wall. Early fifties to mid-sixties. Baritone.

**MISS RICKI VALENTINE** – Ricki is a fading songstress and TV personality who is hoping to make a big comeback at Paradise Manor after a stint in a detox center. Although she's attractive and personable from afar, a closer examination reveals she's insecure about an uncertain future. Mezzo with good belt.

\***VINCE AMATI** – Ricki's shady manager and boyfriend. He should be physically threatening. Doesn't sing.

**LUCY AND DONNA** – Two waitresses at Paradise Manor who are not nearly as seasoned in the game of love as they are at waiting tables. Lucy is younger (28-35) and less aggressive. Mezzo-soprano and Mezzo.

\*Can double if necessary

## SETTING

The entire action of THE GIG takes place during August 1975 in New York City and the Catskills.

## AUTHOR'S NOTE

Even though THE GIG is about musicians, the actors should not play actual instruments on the stage. In fact, when we first see them “jam”, it is more effective and theatrical to have them mime their performances and use their voices as instruments. (This is actually what’s contained in the “fugue” at the end of “FAREWELL MERE EXISTENCE, HELLO JAZZ.”) What counts is not the men’s technical expertise but the passion that comes from their soul.

This theatricality can also influence the physical production. Workshops and showcases have utilized the men’s chairs/stools as seats in the van and bunks in their cabin, as well as playing a part in their 9 to 5 worlds. The more the audience is asked to use their imagination, the better.

Dedication: For my son, Jeremy – may you have the courage to live your dreams

ACT ONE, Scene One*(MARTY FLYNN MAKES A PITCH, ADDRESSING THE AUDIENCE AS HIS CUSTOMER.)***TRACK ONE**

MARTY

*(RECITING A SLOGAN:)* "No profit without honor,' at Marty's Used Car Lot. If your cash is cold, our service is warm...while our cars are never hot!" (HE LAUGHS) What's that, my friend? Oh, usted habla espanol? No problema. Cars are a universal language. How's this for the transportation vehicle you thought you couldn't afford? Un carro magnifico el Pinto. Or as we say in English, "nineteen hundred bucks." See? Nothing lost in the translation. Go ahead, look it over. Nothing lost in the transmission either! (HE FORCES A LAUGH)

*(THROUGH CLENCHED TEETH:)*

BUY THE CAR  
OH, HURRY UP AND BUY THE CAR.  
TRUST ME, SAP --  
IT'S FIRST-RATE CRAP  
NOW BUY THE CAR!

KICK THE TIRES  
AND EVEN GIVE THE HORN A TRY  
ONLY BUY  
THE CAR.

Oh, now there's a beauty you got there, amigo. Yes, sir, the very one advertised in today's paper. With thirty-four miles to the gallon, I call it "The Ralph Nader Environmental Special." And don't it look like nature herself gave it a paint job with that stunning shade of lime-green!

*(AN ASIDE:)*

I JUST WANNA GET OUT OF HERE,  
I JUST WANNA MAKE TRACKS.  
I'VE A LIFE TO PURSUE  
AND IT DON'T INCLUDE YOU --  
JUST YOUR FOUR THOUSAND THIRTY-NINE DOLLARS  
PLUS TAX!

I'M JUST CRAZY FOR WEDNESDAY NIGHTS!  
THE EXCITEMENT I FEEL!  
LOOK, WHILE YOU'RE TRYING TO CHOOSE,

*(OPENS NEWSPAPER)*

I'LL CATCH UP ON THE NEWS  
WHILE MY FUSE IS ABOUT TO --

*(MARTY SPOTS SOMETHING IN THE PAPER AND LOOKS UP AS IF HE  
HAS JUST HEARD THE ANGELS CALLING)*

**PARADISE MANOR!**

*(CALLING TO HIS CUSTOMER:)* Hey, amigo, if you ever decide, drop me a line. I've got a phone call to make! Adios!

*(MARTY EXITS AS LIGHTS COME UP ON JACK LARMON, VERY CORPORATE AND STRAIGHT-LACED, GIVING A RECITAL OF STATISTICS AND PROJECTIONS FOR THE FINANCIAL COMPANY IN WHICH HE'S EMPLOYED.)*

JACK

Ryan International estimated its sales in the period at 4,800. Conversely sales by Benjamin Brothers dipped 11% in the same period to 1,624 units. This includes gains from discontinued operations for a nine-month period...

*(LIGHT SHIFT AS JACK SINGS OF HIS INTERNAL THOUGHTS)*

ALL THESE NUMBERS AND UNITS  
ADD UP TO NADA!  
IF I STAY, I'LL BE BURIED ALIVE  
I GOTTA  
PLAN MY ESCAPE ON THE 5:14...

*(CONTINUING HIS RECITATION TO HIS FELLOW EMPLOYEES)*

Shattering the 6.5% level.

*(ASIDE:)*

WEDNESDAY NIGHT!  
WHAT A CURE  
FOR THIS HOPELESS DRIVEL.  
BUT MY HOPES  
FOR ESCAPE HAVE BEGUN TO SHRIVEL.  
HOW DO I LEAVE ON THE 5:14?

Resulting in a significant growth of negative earning...

SHOULD I FEIGN A FAINTING SPELL?  
FLING THESE PAGES ABOUT PELL-MELL?  
IT'S DEGRADING BUT WHAT THE HELL --  
WHY NOT TRY IT?  
THEY MIGHT BUY IT!

*(HE THROWS HIS PAGES UP INTO THE AIR AND DRAMATICALLY DROPS TO THE FLOOR AS WE SEGUE TO GEORGIE PAPPAS IN HIS DELI/CONVENIENCE STORE. LIKE MARTY, HE ADDRESSES THE AUDIENCE AS IF IT WERE A CUSTOMER.)*

GEORGIE

You're just in time. I was just putting the cold cuts to bed. (PAUSE) A quarter pound of my tuna salad? That's enough to cover a cracker...not a sandwich. Oh, maybe a sandwich. You know: two piece of bread, a dab of mayonnaise, and you wish something else went inside. (PAUSE) A half a pound. Now we're getting somewhere! Fresh?! Mrs. Kazantsis, you've been coming here for twelve years and you have to ask if the tuna salad's FRESH! Shame on you. Wait right there while I ring it up.

*(LIGHTS CHANGE SLIGHTLY TO SHOW GEORGIE IS SINGING INTERIOR THOUGHTS:)*

HOW DO YOU KNOW IF SOMETHING'S FRESH?  
 YOU'VE ONLY TO LOOK IN ITS EYES.  
 IF THEY ARE CLEAR, THEN LIFE'S A SONG;  
 IF THEY ARE CLOUDY, SOMETHING'S WRONG.

JUST WHEN YOU THINK YOU'VE GOT IT MADE,  
 THAT'S WHEN YOU GET THE HOOK.  
 COULD BE THE TUNA NEEDS A WEDNESDAY NIGHT  
 TUNE-UP  
 LIKE ME....

*(LIGHTS FADE ON GEORGIE AND COME UP ON AARON WOHL INTENSELY  
 CONDUCTING WHILE HIS CLARINET STUDENT, NOT SEEN, STRUGGLES TO KEEP UP.)*

AARON

SEVEN HOURS A DAY  
 I AM COMMITTED TO MY STUDENTS  
 AND THEIR MEDIOCRE TALENT  
 BUT NOT EVERYONE IS GIFTED...

YET I FEEL SELF-SATISFACTION  
 WHEN THEY MAKE AN OUNCE OF PROGRESS --

*(AN ANNOYING SQUEAK IS HEARD)*

**SHOULD** THEY MAKE AN OUNCE OF PROGRESS.  
 STILL NO FEELING QUITE COMPARES TO HOW I FEEL ON  
 WEDNESDAY NIGHTS.

*(WE SEGUE TO GIL MACRAE, A REAL LOOKER, SEATED COMFORTABLY BEHIND A  
 DESK WITH PHONE IN HAND.)*

GIL

I'm terribly sorry about your condo, ma'am, but as you know everything was in perfect working order the day of closing. Just how badly did your air conditioner leak? (PAUSE) Your dog drowned?!! Okay, I'll send someone right over -- (PAUSE) Well, no, ma'am, I can't **personally** tend to it -- (PAUSE) Besides, I have no technical expertise -- (HE LISTENS, THEN GIVES A SIGH) Give me a half hour. I'll be right over. (HANGS UP)

THE DON **JUAN** OF **CONDOS**,  
 THE **ROMEO** OF **CO-OPS**,  
 THE ROBERT **BROWNING** OF **BROWNSTONES**  
 IS RAISING HIS SIGHTS.

*(HE PICKS UP A MOUTHPIECE ON HIS DESK AND BLOWS INTO IT)*

FOR NOW AND THEN I GET THE URGE  
 TO HEED THE CALL WHEN GREATER PASSIONS SURGE.  
 THERE'S MAGIC WHEN WE ALL CONVERGE  
 ON WEDNESDAY NIGHTS.

*(LIGHTS FADE ON GIL AND COME UP ON ARTHUR WINSLOW, A DENTIST WHO ADDRESSES AN UNSEEN PATIENT.)*

ARTHUR

I'm not Superman, Robbie. I don't have the necessary x-ray vision to see straight through your clenched mouth and into your gums. But I am a super crusader for oral hygiene, and together we could become a dynamic duo. But first you've got to let me look into that terrific mouth of yours...

*(IN SOLILOQUY TO THE AUDIENCE:)*

WHEN YOU GET RIGHT DOWN TO IT,  
IT'S A DISGUSTING JOB.  
IT'S A DISGUSTING JOB  
PUTTING YOUR FINGERS  
IN OTHER PEOPLE'S MOUTHS.

BUT WEDNESDAY NIGHTS ARE NOT ABOUT THE DAILY  
GRIND,  
LIKE WHEN THEY GRIND THEIR TEETH  
INTO MY FLESH  
OR SPRAY MY FACE  
OR MESS WITH MY EQUIPMENT!  
WEDNESDAY NIGHTS ARE THERE TO HELP FORGET MY  
SCARS.  
IN ONLY THIRTY-TWO BARS  
I'M ONE OF SIX SHOOTING STARS...

Okay, Robbie, how about we play "astronaut"? I'll start the countdown and when I say "blast-off", you open your mouth WIDE as a spaceship. You ready?

*(ARTHUR FREEZES AS THE LIGHTS COME UP ON MARTY, HOLDING A PHONE)*

MARTY

*(INTO THE PHONE:)* Hello, Abe Mitgang? Marty Flynn. I just caught your ad in the paper. You still looking for a band? Well, look no further!

*(THE FOLLOWING MUSICAL MOTIFS OVERLAP AS A PULSATING ACCOMPANIMENT UNDERSCORES IT FOR MAJOR TENSION)*

ARTHUR

Ten, nine, eight...

IT'S A DISGUSTING JOB

JACK

PLAN MY ESCAPE ON THE 5:14?

GIL

NOW AND THEN I GET THE URGE...

ARTHUR

seven, six...

MARTY

I'VE A LIFE TO PURSUE --

AARON

NO FEELING QUITE COMPARES...

GEORGIE

SURE COULD USE A WEDNESDAY NIGHT TUNE-UP...

JACK

PLAN MY ESCAPE ON THE FIVE --

ARTHUR

FIVE...

JACK

FOUR-

ARTHUR

FOUR...

JACK

-TEEN

MARTY

I'M YOUR MAN  
MISTER MITGANG,  
I'M YOUR MAN!

ARTHUR

THREE, TWO, ONE...

GIL

MAGIC WHEN WE ALL CONVERGE ON...  
WEDNESDAY NIGHTS



MARTY, GEORGIE

WEDNESDAY NIGHTS

JACK, AARON

WEDNESDAY NIGHTS

ARTHUR

WEDNESDAY NIGHTS!

*(MARTY, INTO THE PHONE:)*

MARTY

**Mitgang, you got yourself a deal!**

ALL THE MEN

*(LOOKING AT THEIR WATCHES, THEN IN UNISON:)*

**BLAST-OFF!!!**

*(MARTY KISSES THE NEWSPAPER AS EVERYONE LETS GO IN WILD ABANDON.  
A CHARGED, MUSICAL VAMP BEGINS...)*

**TRACK TWO**

**SONG: "FAREWELL MERE EXISTENCE, HELLO JAZZ"**

ALL SIX GUYS

SAY GOODBYE TO SUITS AND TIES THAT BIND,  
GOT TO FIND THE INNER ME I LEFT FAR BEHIND.

GIL

TRASH THE MEMOS,

JACK

SKIP THE MEETINGS,

MARTY

PUSH ASIDE THOSE PHONY GREETINGS.

ALL SIX GUYS

FAREWELL MERE EXISTENCE,  
HELLO JAZZ!

AARON

"THOSE WHO CAN'T DO, TEACH,"  
SOME JOKER SAID.  
WELL, I'M LIVING PROOF THAT HE WAS  
OUT OF HIS HEAD.

*(HE GRABS A CLARINET)*

ONCE A WEEK I GET TO SHOW HERE  
WHO EXACTLY IS THE PRO HERE!

ALL SIX GUYS

FAREWELL MERE EXISTENCE,  
HELLO JAZZ.

SMOOTH AS SATIN,  
WE'LL TAKE MANHATTAN --  
WHATEVER IT TAKES TO MAKE THE GRADE.

OFF AND RUNNING,  
IN NEON WE'RE SUNNING:  
OUR JAZZ IS SO COOL IT GIVES OFF SHADE!

GEORGIE

JUST THE SIGHT OF PICKLES MAKES ME WINCE.

ARTHUR

THERE IS MORE TO LIFE THAN SAYING, "NOW YOU  
MAY RINSE."  
NO MORE "OPEN WIDE" --

GEORGIE

*(TURNING AWAY A CUSTOMER:)*

WE'RE CLOSING.  
TIME TO DROWN MY WOES COMPOSING...

GEORGIE, ARTHUR

FAREWELL MERE EXISTENCE, HELLO JAZZ!

*(MARTY WAVES A BROCHURE IN HIS HAND, LIKE A KID HOLDING A CHRISTMAS  
PRESENT AS THE TRAPPINGS OF THE MEN'S 9-5 WORLD DISAPPEAR.)*

MARTY

GOT GOOD NEWS NOW!

NO MIDDLE-AGE BLUES NOW --  
WAIT TILL THEY HEAR WHAT MARTY'S DONE.

GEORGIE

GOODBYE SORROW,  
PLAY LIKE THERE'S NO TOMORROW.  
TONIGHT'S ABOUT JUST HAVIN' FUN!

*(THE PANELED WALLS OF MARTY'S REC ROOM COME INTO VIEW. ALL SIX GUYS COME TOGETHER TO FORM A BAND)*

ALL

HAVIN' FUN!!!  
WHEN I HAVE MY INSTRUMENT IN HAND,  
SUDDENLY I'M PLAYING IN THE GENE KRUPA BAND.  
BETTER THAN A PAID VACATION,  
RIDE THE WINGS OF SYNCOPATION.

GIL

NO MORE CO-OPS,

ARTHUR

CAPS,

MARTY

CAR SWAPPIN'.

ALL

TIRED OF TALKIN' SHOP --  
WE'RE BOPPIN'!

IN A RUT,  
SO CUT THE B.S.  
GETTING DOWN TO MUSIC.  
P.S. FAREWELL MERE EXISTENCE.  
HELLO...

*(THE MEN LAUNCH INTO AN EXTENSIVE JAZZ FUGUE USING THEIR VOICES AS IF THEY WERE THEIR INSTRUMENTS.) (AFTER THE FUGUE:)*

HELLO...HELLO...HELLO...HELLO...HELLO...HELLO...

*(THEY PLAY THE VAMP ONE LAST TIME)*

**JAZZ!!!**

*(AT THE END OF THE NUMBER, THE MEN ALL APPLAUD AND CONGRATULATE THEMSELVES ON A JOB WELL-DONE)*

ACT ONE, Scene Two

MARTY

Hey, hey! Pretty good, pretty good! WHO'S BETTER THAN WE ARE?

ALL

NO ONE!

MARTY

I don't know about you guys, but Georgie's feast is making it difficult to concentrate. So as Dave Brubeck says, "Take five."

AARON

And as my stomach says, "Take pastrami."

MARTY

And as my wife says, "Keep your food on your plates and off the furniture."

JACK

Calm yourself, gentlemen. There's more than enough plastic here to cushion the fall!

*(THEY ALL SNICKER, EXCEPT MARTY AND GEORGIE, WHO BEGINS TO PUT HIS BASS AWAY)*

MARTY

Beer, Georgie? *(HE TAKES ONE AND OFFERS ONE TO GEORGIE)*

GEORGIE

No, I've got to leave. *(GIL PUTS THE EXTRA BEER IN HIS PILE)*

MARTY

What's the rush? We haven't gotten to one of your tunes yet.  
GIL

Got a little something going, Georgie?

GEORGIE

Goodnight, guys.

**TRACK THREE**

MARTY

Wait, I've got a surprise.

ARTHUR

I love surprises. What?

MARTY

You know, I figured it out. We've been playing together once a week for twelve years --

JACK

In point of fact, I only joined in sixty-seven when Harry moved...

MARTY

Eight years, twelve years. What's the difference? It's a long time.

AARON

Longer than your first marriage.

MARTY

*(CRINGING)* Yeah. And we're all pretty good, right?

GIL

Hear-hear.

MARTY

So how would you like to play a real job -- see how good we really are?

AARON

So what else is new?

ARTHUR

Mustard, please.

MARTY

Will you let me finish?

GIL

Marty, we've been through this a hundred times. And it's always the same story: all talk -- no action.

MARTY

Yeah, but this time I'm serious. Guys, put down your sandwiches and listen!

**SONG: "FOUR HOURS AWAY FROM PARADISE"**

WHY DO WE JAM  
YEAR AFTER YEAR?  
WASTE OF BREATH  
AND A WASTE OF PASSION.

WHAT DO WE GET?  
PICKLES AND BEER.  
SOMETIMES CORNED BEEF ON RYE...

WHY DO WE STAY  
PLAYING THE MUSIC THAT NOBODY HEARS.  
WHEN WILL WE SAY,  
"THANK YOU, BUT WHAT'S IT ALL FOR?"  
WHY ARE WE SCARED?  
WHEN ARE WE GONNA START FACING OUR FEARS.  
WHO HAS THE GUTS TO WANT  
SOMETHING MORE?

AARON

I could use some more cole slaw. What about it, Georgie?

MARTY

Wiseguy.

LOOK, THE ANSWER IS RIGHT IN MY HAND.  
YES, YOU'LL FIND IT IN THIS HERE BROCHURE.  
IT'S THE PERFECT RESORT IN THE HEART OF THE  
CATSKILLS: "PARADISE MANOR."

JACK

Marty, the perpetual salesman.

*(MARTY CLEARLY DOES NOT LIKE JACK'S INNUENDO.)*

MARTY

THEY'RE IN NEED OF A SIX-MEMBER BAND,  
SO I ANSWERED THE CALL. UNDERSTAND?  
FELLAS, I WENT AND BOOKED US A...

*(HE PURPOSELY STOPS SHORT. THE GUYS, ENRAPTURED, GOAD HIM ON. "YEAH?" "WHAT?" "SAY IT, MARTY" ETC...)*

**GIG!**

GIL

You serious?

MARTY

Two weeks, two hundred dollars a week at **PARADISE MANOR**. Free room and board. (*READING FROM THE BROCHURE:*) "All rooms with private bath and double exposure. Every meal a culinary delight." Yeah, I'm serious.

AND WE'RE  
FOUR HOURS AWAY FROM PARADISE.  
WHY SHOULDN'T WE TASTE THE CREAM?

JACK

Now Marty, I don't know...

MARTY

PUT ALL OF YOUR FOOLISH DOUBTS ON ICE.  
FOUR HOURS AWAY IS NOT A LONG WAY FROM A  
DREAM.

We start Monday. I'll supply the transportation and the blazers. So what do you say?

GIL

Count me in.

AARON

Music is meant to be shared -- not just playing for ourselves.

MARTY

A simple "yes" or "no" will do.

AARON

Yes!

MARTY

Jack?

JACK

First and foremost, may I remind you we are adults with duties and responsibilities that can't be dismissed on a whim. Besides...

GUYS, I PROMISED JANET  
TWO WEEKS IN NANTUCKET.

MARTY

*(INCREDULOUSLY:)*  
NANTUCKET...?

JACK

EVERY YEAR FOR SEVEN YEARS --  
OUR OWN PLEASURE GROUND.

MARTY

Sounds like "grounds" for divorce.

AARON & GIL

*(FOLLOWING MARTY'S LEAD AND NEEDLING JACK:)*

BETTER BRING A BUCKET:  
SEA SHELLS AND  
SAND CASTLES

GIL

NO HASSLES

AARON

SEA HORSES

AARON & GIL

AND HORSIN' AROUND!

JACK

Besides, I'd lose a sizeable deposit.

MARTY

JACK, TELL HER TO CHUCK IT.

JACK

CAN'T DO IT -- NANTUCKET.

MARTY

*(HUMORING JACK:)*  
"NANTUCKET..."  
DOESN'T MEAN YOU TAKE IT --  
JACK, THIS IS OUR ONE SHOT IN LIFE!



JACK

EVEN SO,  
JUST MY LUCK IT  
COINCIDES WITH NANTUCKET.  
CAN NOT DUCK IT --  
I AM STUCK  
WITH MY WIFE.

MARTY

So Jack's out. What about you, Arthur?  
FOUR HOURS AWAY FROM PARADISE...

ARTHUR

Marty, my mom...she's in frail health.

MARTY

WHY SHOULDN'T WE LIVE OUR DREAM?

ARTHUR

She depends on me, Marty.

MARTY

So, Arthur, what's the worst that could happen?

ARTHUR

IT COULD KILL HER.

MARTY

Now you're overreacting.

ARTHUR

No. IT COULD KILL HER.

MARTY

You and Jack are so predictable.

ARTHUR

Some people have a sense of responsibility to their family.

JACK

Thank you very much.

MARTY

*(THIS STINGS)* Okay, two down, one to go. What's your excuse, Georgie? *(GEORGIE DOES NOT RESPOND)* Ho, Georgie!

**TRACK FOUR**

GEORGIE

It's a crazy idea - guys our age going away from their regular lives. A week ago I would have said "no" because my business can't run without me, my wife would be mad, et cetera. Tonight it's for a different reason.

ARTHUR

What's he saying?

GIL

I don't know.

GEORGIE

I went for a checkup. They found something. I'm being operated next week.

MARTY

Major? *(GEORGIE NODS)*

ARTHUR

I know a good man if you'd like another opinion.

GEORGIE

I've had other opinions. *(SLIGHT PAUSE)* You mind if I say something?

MARTY

No, go ahead.

GEORGIE

*(TO JACK AND ARTHUR)* You guys are a couple of class A schmucks. I mean, take it from a charter member who like most of you has spent his life doing for other people.

**SONG: "TIME OUT"**

THE CAR NEEDS WASHING,  
THE LEAVES NEED RAKING,  
YOU'RE ALWAYS GIVING BUT RARELY TAKING.  
THE KIDS NEED SHOES NOW,  
FORGET THAT CRUISE NOW;  
YOUR WIFE WILL UNDERSTAND.

YOUR FOLKS GET FRAILER  
 AS TIME ADVANCES,  
 YOU CHAPERON AT THE HIGH SCHOOL DANCES.  
 THE KIDS NEED COLLEGE --  
 YOU DRIVE A CAB AT NIGHT.

WHEN IS THERE TIME OUT  
 TO LISTEN TO YOUR GUT?  
 YOU'RE ALWAYS MUCH TOO BUSY PROVIDING.  
 YOU'VE GOT TO CLIMB OUT  
 OF THAT OL' DAILY RUT  
 AND FIND THE GUY WHO MIGHT BE HIDING...

YOUR LOCAL Y HAS THIS GREAT GUITAR CLASS,  
 YOU END UP TAKING SOME CPR CLASS.  
 YOUR TEACHER'S PRETTY --  
 IT'S SUCH A PITY  
 YOU PRACTICE ON A DOLL.

YOUR BEST FRIENDS BREAK-UP,  
 YOUR WIFE STARTS SPARRING...  
 BEFORE YOU KNOW IT YOU NOW ARE STARRING  
 IN SOME OLD RERUN OF THE TWILIGHT ZONE.  
 BETWEEN YOUR FRIENDS, YOUR KIDS, YOUR WIVES,  
 YOU'VE LIVED A HUNDRED LIVES --  
 EXCEPT THE LIFE YOU CALL  
 YOUR OWN...

When was the last time you did something you really wanted? In my case, if I answered truthful, not for twenty-five years. Except for the time we spend together jamming. I don't know what I'd do without it...

GEORGIE (CONT.)

FOUR HOURS A WEEK OF PARADISE,  
 FOUR HOURS OF BROTHERHOOD.  
 FOR WHAT IT'S WORTH,  
 TAKE MY ADVICE:  
 DON'T GIVE UP THE CHANCE I'D GRAB --  
 IF ONLY I COULD.

See you 'round, guys. (*HE STARTS TO LEAVE*)

MARTY

Anything we can do, Georgie?

GEORGIE

Yeah, if you decide to go, play a song for me.

*(HE EXITS. THERE IS A TERRIBLE SILENCE UNTIL MARTY PROVIDES THE LIGHT AT THE END OF THE TUNNEL.)*

MARTY

*(ALMOST A CAPPELLA)*

FOUR HOURS AWAY FROM PARADISE...

GIL

FOUR HOURS AWAY FROM PARADISE...

MARTY, GIL, AARON

NO JOURNEY IS TOO EXTREME...

ARTHUR

*(STARTING TO GIVE IN)*

NO JOURNEY IS TOO EXTREME...

MARTY, GIL, AARON

*(ENCOURAGED, THEY PRESS ON)*

WE'VE ALL HAD ENOUGH OF SACRIFICE!

JACK & ARTHUR

*(THEY DECIDE TO RISK IT:)*

WE'VE ALL HAD ENOUGH --

ALL

FOUR HOURS AWAY  
IS NOT A LONG WAY...  
FROM A DREAM!!!

*(RAISING THEIR BEER GLASSES)*

**TO GEORGIE!**

BLACKOUT

ACT ONE, Scene Three

*(IN A MUSICAL SEQUENCE, THE MEN BID THEIR "SIGNIFICANT OTHERS" GOODBYE. ONLY THE MEN, HOWEVER, ARE SEEN: THE AUDIENCE FUNCTIONS AS THE PERSON THEY ARE ADDRESSING.)*

TRACK FIVE

## SONG: "DEPARTURES"

JACK

JANET, I READ  
 IN THE JOURNAL OR MAYBE THE TIMES  
 SOME MAN MY AGE  
 IN **NANTUCKET**  
 WAS SWIMMING IN THE OCEAN.  
 NEXT THING HE KNEW,  
 HE WAS INSIDE THE MOUTH OF A SHARK.  
 IT SEEMS ITS BITE WAS WORSE THAN ITS --

*(THE SCENE SHIFTS TO MARTY)*

MARTY

TWO LOUSY WEEKS --  
 THAT'S ALL, BABY,  
 TILL I COME HOME TO YOU.  
 PROMISE ME THAT YOU'LL STOP CRYING --  
 DON'T YOU MAKE THOSE BROWN EYES BLOOD SHOT!

I'll call you every day. How about twice a day? Only turn off the waterworks. Oh, what's the use? I'm going home: my wife didn't make half this fuss!

*(MARTY EXITS. ARTHUR AND AARON, IN THEIR RESPECTIVE WORLDS, ENTER)*

ARTHUR

MOTHER, GUESS WHAT?  
 YOU REMEMBER THAT GROUP THAT I PLAY JAZZ  
 ONCE A -- WELL, WE DECIDED...

AARON

ALL LESSONS HAVE BEEN CANCELLED  
 TILL I RETURN  
 FROM MY MAJOR, PROFESSIONAL TOUR

ARTHUR

DON'T LOOK SO SHOCKED

AARON

YES, OF COURSE, I AM **SURE!**

ARTHUR

OH, **BREATHE!**

AARON

DO YOU THINK MY WHOLE LIFE IS IN TEACHING?

ARTHUR

PLEASE, **BREATHE!**

AARON

I HAVE TALENTS THAT YOU NEVER SEE

ARTHUR

MOTHER, **BREATHE!**

AARON

I'M AN ARTIST  
 IMPARTING MY CRAFT.  
 BY THE WAY, I'LL BE RAISING MY FEE.

*(LIGHTS OUT ON AARON & ARTHUR; LIGHTS UP ON GIL & JACK.)*

GIL

TWO WEEKS OF MUSICAL SPLENDOR

JACK

OH, JANET, I THINK I JUST SLIPPED A DISC!  
 GO ON WITHOUT ME. IT'S...

JACK & GIL

TWO WEEKS OF TRAVELING SOLO:

GIL

A JOURNEY THAT'S FRAUGHT WITH RISK...

It's a resort, lots of girls, and all you can say is "sounds like fun"?! Aw come on, as my wife, don't you feel the least bit jealous? *(DEFENSIVE)* Yeah, well, maybe this time I'll keep on playing my horn! Remember that talent scout who heard me sit in at Eddie Condon's? **I still have his number etched in my mind!**

*(LIGHTS UP ON OTHER MEN)*

ARTHUR

OH, **BREATHE!**

AARON

KEEP IN TOUCH

MARTY

SURE, I'LL MISS YOU

GIL

FINE! SEE IF I CARE!

JACK

HONEY, GUESS WHAT?  
NEXT WEEKEND'S  
MY TWENTY-THIRD REUNION.

ARTHUR

SHOULD YOUR HEART STOP,  
SQUEEZE THE NECKLACE AND MEDICS ARRIVE

ALL

TWO LOUSY WEEKS!  
WILL WE EVER SUR --

ARTHUR, AARON, MARTY, GIL

-- VIVE!

JACK

I'VE THIS SHRAPNEL THAT HAS TO COME OUT

ARTHUR, AARON, MARTY, GIL

GOTTA GO!

JACK

PLUS THE DOG HAS OBEDIENCE SCHOOL

ARTHUR, AARON, MARTY, GIL

GOTTA FLY!

JACK

NANTUCKET CHOWDER CAN BREED HEPATITIS

ALL

DON'T FORGET TO WRITE US.  
ABOVE ALL...  
STAY **COOL**

*(THEY WALK TO THEIR DESTINATION AS THEIR LAST NOTE SWELLS)*

ARTHUR

*(TURNING AROUND ONE LAST TIME:)*

**BREATHE!**

ALL

*(THE GROUP SIMULTANEOUSLY HEAVES A **SIGH OF RELIEF** TO BUTTON THE SONG)*

BLACKOUT

ACT ONE, Scene Four

*(LIGHTS COME UP ON MARTY IN A PHONE BOOTH. NEARBY IS MARTY'S VAN, COMPRISED OF CHAIRS REPRESENTING THOSE BAND MEMBERS ALREADY PRESENT: AARON, GIL, AND ARTHUR. THEY ARE WEARING UNIFORMS RENTED ESPECIALLY FOR THE OCCASION AS MARTY MAKES A LAST MINUTE PHONE CALL...)*

MARTY

*(INTO THE PHONE:)* Hello, Brian -- guess who this is? No, it's your old man. Yeah. Guess what, Brian? I got a gig...yeah, me and the band! Just like the Fab Four...plus two! In the beautiful Catskill mountains, starting today. So listen, Brian, I thought if you weren't busy, maybe you could drive up later and stay a few days...(PAUSE) Well, how long is it going to be in the garage? That long? What the hell kind of car are you driving anyway? *(WITH A TINGE OF DISDAIN)* Oh, your **mother's**. Brian, tell you what -- you come on down here and ask for Tony. That's right, Tony. I'll tell him to let you drive any car off the lot free of charge! Is that a deal or what? And next to the car keys, I'll leave behind a map and some extra money so you can join me in no time --

*(AARON MAKES A GESTURE WITH HIS HANDS INDICATING FOR MARTY TO SPEED THINGS UP)*

*(TRYING TO DISGUISE HIS DISAPPOINTMENT:)* Oh, I didn't realize you had so much going on. Hey, don't worry if your plate's full. It's just a gig. What's that? *(PAUSE. HE'S CRESTFALLEN)* Yeah, you can still have the car. *(HE MOUTHS THE WORD "BYE" AND PUTS DOWN THE PHONE.)* *(TO AARON:)* Now what's the problem?

AARON

I counted six uniforms and four musicians.

ARTHUR

Marty, I canceled two weeks of appointments for this --



MARTY

Trust me: the others'll be here.

GIL

How can you be so sure?

MARTY

*(THOUGH HE'S CLEARLY SWEATING BULLETS)* I know my customers.

AARON

Hey, look, it's Jack! *(JACK ENTERS AS HIS FELLOW PLAYERS CHEER. HE IS CARRYING A CHAIR WHICH HE ADDS TO THE VAN AND A SMALL SUITCASE.)*

MARTY

See, what did I tell you? So Jack, how'd your wife take it?

JACK

Not an issue. Honesty is the best policy.

MARTY

Aaron, how about a forty regular for our pianist. *(AARON HELPS JACK ON WITH THE JACKET.)*

GIL

Comes complete with a Trojan in every pocket. *(PATTING ARTHUR ON THE BACK. ARTHUR GIVES HIM A BEWILDERED LOOK)*

MARTY

*(ANTICIPATING A COMPLIMENT FROM JACK:)* So what do you think?

JACK

*(INSPECTING HIMSELF)* Let's hope we sound better than we look.  
*(BEGINS TO TAKE OFF THE JACKET)* So who's playing bass?

AARON

*(THEY'VE BEEN OVER THIS)* He hired him sight unseen.

MARTY

The guy who recommended him, besides being a friend, is also knowledgeable.

ARTHUR

Hey, could that be the guy...?

*(THEIR EYES ALL FOCUS ON ACTIVITY OUT IN THE DISTANCE)*

MARTY

Well, well. The gang's all here. Guys, we've got ourselves a bass player!

AARON

Looks tall.

JACK

Looks big.

ARTHUR

Looks black. *(SPOKEN MERELY AS AN OBSERVATION, ALTHOUGH THEY'VE ALL NOTICED. GIL LOOKS AT ARTHUR QUIZZICALLY)* Well, he is.

*(ENTER MARSHALL WILSON, A WEATHERED BLACK MAN. HE CARRIES A STOOL OR CHAIR AS IF IT'S HIS INSTRUMENT.)*

MARSHALL

Who's Flynn?

MARTY

*(OFFERING HIS HAND)* That's me.

MARSHALL

Tommy Brazwell told me \$200 a week. I said "no way." He said he was sure you'd negotiate.

MARTY

We're all getting two hundred.

MARSHALL

That's **your** business.

AARON

*(IN A LOUD WHISPER:)* Get someone else.

MARTY

Would you let me handle this? *(TO MARSHALL:)* How much?

MARSHALL

\$300. \$100 in advance.

AARON

Beautiful.

JACK

I wouldn't give him a dime.

MARTY

You don't have to: I made the arrangements. *(GIVES MARSHALL THE MONEY IN CASH)*  
Anything else?

MARSHALL

Not for the moment. *(GIFTING THEM WITH A SMILE)* Marshall Wilson.

ARTHUR

Nice to know you, Marshall. Arthur Winslow - drums.

GIL

Gil Macrae - trumpet. This here is --

JACK

I can do my own introductions, thank you. Jack Larmon. And I play piano.

AARON

*(EAGER TO IMPRESS)* Aaron Wohl - I teach clarinet, professionally. You put any reed in my mouth, I can play it.

MARTY

Just plain Marty: trombone and vocals. Hey, got a present for you. *(OFFERING HIM THE REMAINING BLAZER)* Try this on for size.

MARSHALL

Sorry, man. I don't wear uniforms.

AARON

What do you do?

MARSHALL

Play bass as good as anyone around.

*(SLIGHT AWKWARD PAUSE)*

MARTY

Let's go. We're late. Put that fiddle on top.

MARSHALL

No way.

MARTY

Inside's full.

AARON

What does he want us to do? Repack the van?

MARSHALL

How about in the front seat next to the driver...

JACK

Hey, that's where I was going to sit!

*(THE OTHERS CONCUR)*

MARTY

*(SENSING A CONFRONTATION)* You know, he's right. All in favor say "aye" --

AARON

Wait a minute --

JACK

Hey, Marty --

*(ADDITIONAL GRUMBLES)*

MARTY

It's unanimous. The "ayes" have it. Let's go.

*(MARSHALL PLACES HIS STOOL UPSIDE DOWN IN THE FRONT NEXT TO MARTY, AS IF IT WERE HIS INSTRUMENT. THE ENTIRE GROUP THEN ATTEMPTS TO CRAWL INTO THE VAN WITH GREAT DIFFICULTY DUE TO CLOSE QUARTERS. MARTY MIMES TURNING THE IGNITION KEY AS AN OMINOUS VAMP SOUNDS. BEHIND MARTY IN THREE ROWS ARE AARON, JACK, MARSHALL, GIL, AND FINALLY ARTHUR. THE VAN FACES THE AUDIENCE HEAD-ON WITH THE STAGE SLIGHTLY RAKED. MARTY USES THE FLAT PART OF A MUSIC STAND TO SIMULATE A STEERING WHEEL.)*

**TRACK SIX**

**SONG: "A REAL NICE TRIP"**

AARON

Marshall **Wilson**. Any relation to Nancy Wilson?

MARSHALL

No, but Woodrow Wilson was a third cousin.

*(A VAMP CONTINUES, THE MEN SING OF THEIR INTERNAL FEELINGS:)*

JACK

WE'RE OFF NOW TO A GREAT BEGINNING.

ARTHUR

*(TAKING OFF HIS BLAZER)* Sorry if I'm crowding you.

MARSHALL

No problem.

AARON

LOSE GEORGIE BUT GAIN AN ASSHOLE

ARTHUR

Sure?

MARSHALL

I would have said.

*(ARTHUR SMILES, THEN TURNS AWAY)*

ARTHUR

HOW LONG CAN I KEEP ON GRINNING?

AARON, JACK, ARTHUR

I'LL GO BUT I KNOW MY HEART'S NOT IN IT.

AARON

Hey, Marty, how's your wife?

MARTY

Listen, while we're up here, no talk about wives and kids, OK?

AARON

OK. Hey, Marty, how's your mistress? *(ALL LAUGH EXCEPT MARTY AND MARSHALL, WHO ANXIOUSLY LOOKS UP FROM HIS BOOK.)*

MARSHALL

*(TO MARTY:)*

HEY, MAN, DO YOU MIND NOT SPEEDING.

The limit's 40.

MARTY

Sorry.

AARON

WHY? YOU WANNA LIVE FOREVER?

*(JACK PEERS OVER THE SEAT TO SEE WHAT MARSHALL'S READING)*

JACK

The essays of George Orwell.

GIL

HEY, MAN, DO YOU MIND? HE'S READING.

It's rude.

JACK

ORWELL WROTE NINETEEN EIGHTY-FOUR.

MARSHALL

No kidding.

*(THIS LAST COMMENT TEMPORARILY KNOCKS THE WIND OUT OF JACK AS MARSHALL RETURNS TO HIS BOOK.)*

ALL

THIS IS GONNA BE A REAL NICE TRIP,  
NOTICE HOW THE TIME FLIES BY.  
COMPARED TO OTHER TRIPS, THIS ONE'S A PIP.  
ANYTHING CAN HAPPEN --  
AND IT HAS!  
THERE IS NOT A LOT OF BREATHING SPACE.  
IS IT ANY WONDER WHY?

MARTY

GUYS, I JUST ADORE A BASS IN MY FACE.

GIL, AARON, JACK, ARTHUR, MARSHALL

WE SHOULD BE SO LUCKY!

ALL

*(SARCASTICALLY:)*

BUT WE'RE TOTALLY THRILLED,  
THRILLED!  
TERRIBLY THRILLED!  
GOOSEBUMPS CLIMBING OVER MY SKIN!  
AND IT'S GREAT!  
GREAT!  
GREATER THAN GREAT!  
SHOOT THE GUN AND LET THE GAMES BEGIN...

AARON

Hey, anyone else want to smoke?

*(AARON HOLDS OUT A PACKAGE OF CIGARETTES)*

MARSHALL

Hey, do you mind not lighting that?

AARON

I don't see any signs.

GIL

Me neither.

MARSHALL

Cool. Just what I need -- fresh air. *(HE MIMES ROLLING DOWN HIS WINDOW)*

GIL

What do you want to do? Blow off Jack's toupee?

AARON

Close that, will you?

MARSHALL

I don't see any signs, man.

*(AARON RELUCTANTLY PUTS AWAY THE CIGARETTE, AND MARSHALL CLOSES THE WINDOW, RETURNING TO HIS BOOK)*

ALL

THIS IS GONNA BE A REAL NICE TRIP.  
NOT A SINGLE NOTE OF PANIC -- AAAHHHHHH!!!!!!

ARTHUR

I'LL CONDUCT A SING-A-LONG THAT'S HIP:  
"WE HAD A REAL NICE CLAMBAKE -- "  
MARTY, GIL, AARON, JACK

CLAM IT!

ALL

COME ALONG AND HOP ABOARD CLUB MED  
ON THE PLEASURE SHIP TITANIC.  
CAREFUL, THERE'S AN ICEBERG UP AHEAD --  
GO AHEAD AND RAM IT!

ALL EXCEPT MARSHALL

GOTTA BRING OUT THE BEER!  
BEER!  
TOSS ONE RIGHT HERE,  
LOSE OURSELVES AT ANY PRICE.  
DRINK!  
DRINK!  
ONE BLESSED DRINK!  
FOUR MORE AWAY FROM PARADISE...

*(ALL BUT MARSHALL AND MARTY INDULGE. GIL TAKES ON A SIX-PACK.)*

JACK

Psss. Marty, I thought the guy who recommended him was a friend.



MARTY

*(IN A WHISPER)* Not anymore.

JACK

Great -- Nantucket in exchange for two weeks of tension. Thank you, Smarty Marty.

*(THIS IS CLEARLY NOT A PHRASE MARTY ENJOYS HEARING.)*

GIL

Cool it. So, Marshall, what kind of jazz do you dig?

MARSHALL

All kinds, man. Bebop, Post-Bop, Progressive...

AARON

Uh...we happen to play classic jazz.

MARSHALL

Relax, those chords go down real easy -- like baby food.

JACK

Thus spake "Marshall Wilson."

AARON

Who I never heard of.

MARSHALL

Spit it out, man.

AARON

If you're such a great bass player, how come none of us ever heard of you - man?

MARSHALL

Maybe you don't move in the right circles.

AARON

And maybe you're a phony.

MARTY

And maybe we'd better just knock it off, hunh?

AARON

How do we know he can play at all?

MARSHALL

*(TO MARTY:)* Pull over.

MARTY

Are you nuts? We're in the middle of nowhere. You'll never get a lift!

MARSHALL

Pull the damn van over!

MARTY

*(STOPPING THE CAR)*

Okay, but I promised them six men, and when I give my word -

AARON

If he wants out, good riddance. *(MARSHALL GETS OUT OF THE VAN AND GRABS THE STOOL IN THE FRONT SEAT.)*

JACK

Gil, go talk to him.

GIL

Listen, man, it's not too late to change your mind. You know, we could just wipe the slate clean...

*(MARSHALL CALMLY SITS DOWN WITH HIS BASS AND BEGINS TO "PERFORM" JAZZ WITH SUCH A DAZZLING DISPLAY OF TECHNIQUE AND IMAGINATION THAT THE GROUP IS SOON APPLAUDING ENTHUSIASTICALLY. NOTE: THIS IS ACCOMPLISHED BY THE ACTOR SINGING HIS INSTRUMENTAL SOLO WHILE MIMING PLAYING A BASS.)*

MARTY

*(AFFECTIONATELY)* Get back in here!

MARSHALL

NO. *(THERE IS A STILLNESS)* You didn't say 'please'. *(MARSHALL SLYLY GRINS, THEY LAUGH NERVOUSLY. HE GETS BACK ON BOARD WITH HIS BASS.)*

GIL

I knew the guy was holding out on us! So whom do you play with mostly?

MARSHALL

You name it: Basie for a year. Ellington, Brubeck, Goodman's last tour –

AARON

Good God, Goodman! Benny Goodman?!

MARSHALL

You know another?

ARTHUR

*(SOMEWHAT DRUNK)* Why's he playing with us? *(TO MARSHALL:)* Why are you playing with us?

MARSHALL

I've got a wife, two kids, and haven't worked in a month.

AARON

Jocks get millions while artists starve!

MARSHALL

It'd be a lot easier if guys like you stopped taking jobs away that belong to professionals.

MARTY

Hey, Marshall, so you're a pro and we're just a bunch of little cockers trying to live a once in a lifetime dream. But I could turn this van around if you keep pissing on it. What do you say?

MARSHALL

*(DECIDING NOT TO ROCK THE VAN)* My lips are sealed. Drive on.

**SONG: "FAREWELL MERE EXISTENCE" (REPRISE)**

MARSHALL

WHEN I HAVE MY INSTRUMENT IN HAND...

AARON

SUDDENLY I'M PLAYING IN THE GENE KRUPA BAND...

JACK

BETTER THAN A PAID VACATION...

GIL

RIDE THE WINGS OF SYNCOPATION.

ALL BUT MARSHALL

IN A RUT SO CUT THE B.S.  
GETTING DOWN TO MUSIC.  
P.S. FAREWELL MERE EXISTENCE...

*(AS THEY HOLD THE NOTE, A SMALL SIGN ADVERTISING "PARADISE MANOR" COMES INTO VIEW. ABE MITGANG, PROPRIETOR OF PARADISE MANOR AND FRUSTRATED BORSCHT-BELT COMEDIAN, MAKES A DRAMATIC ENTRANCE IN BERMUDA SHORTS.)*

**TRACK SEVEN**

ABE

SHALOM, YASU, WILKOMMEN, AND WELCOME  
TO PARADISE MANOR!

ACT ONE, Scene Five

MARTY

You must be the guy I talked to on the phone --

MITGANG

Wait, are you Marty Flynn?

FLYNN

Yeah.

MITGANG

Abe Mitgang, owner and manager. *(LOOKING AT THE GROUP:)* And this must be the Grenadiers!

MARTY

The what --

ABE

Since you never told me your band's name, Flynn, I took the liberty of naming you myself. Catchy, huh? **THE GRENADIERS!**

JACK

*(HOLDING OPEN A BROCHURE:)* I had no idea the photos in the brochure were actual size.

ABE

FEH! Paradise Manor "small?" Never, my friend. **Boutique**. The jewel of the Catskills built out of blood, sweat, and chicken fat! Come, I'll give you a personal tour.

AARON

You want us to leave our instruments?

ABE

No one will touch them, Boychick. People come to Paradise Manor to escape crime and commune with nature. So...let's commune!

MARTY

You heard the man. *(THE MEN BEGIN TO FOLLOW ABE ON FOOT AS A JAZZ PIANO ACCOMPANIMENT BEGINS.)*

ABE

You want hills, we got hills. You want dales, we got dales. You like?

MARTY

We like.

ABE

Ahh, behold Paradise Manor's pride and joy: our magnificent pool, which I clean twice a week personally. Hey, you know how much that pool cost me?

AARON

How much?

ABE

Don't ask.

GIL

Last one in's a rotten egg.

ABE

One proviso. *(THE MUSIC STOPS)* In order to make adequate space for the guests, all the help, the band included, may use the pool **anytime** they want...between the hours of midnight and six in the morning. **ENJOY!** *(THE MUSIC CONTINUES)*

JACK

Midnight!

AARON

What?

ABE

Oh, coming up on your right is the dining commons. A view on every side. Isn't it gorgeous? For guests only. You eat your meals in the kitchen along with the crew.

ARTHUR

The kitchen?

*(GRUMBLES FROM THE GUYS)*

ABE

**ENJOY!**

MARTY

Hey, listen, can we cut the rest of the tour? Just show us where we live?

ABE

My pleasure, chochem. *(ABE POINTS THEM IN ANOTHER DIRECTION AS THE MUSIC TAKES AN OMINOUS DIP)* Breathtaking, huh?

AARON

This is it? This is where we live?

ABE

This is it.

JACK

OH, THIS IS GONNA BE A --

GIL

THIS IS GONNA BE A --

MARTY

Where are the windows?

ABE

No windows...no mosquitoes!

MARTY

*(CHEERFULLY)*

THIS IS GONNA BE A --

ARTHUR

It looks like an outhouse.

ABE

Oh, that's just down the road.

ARTHUR & AARON

THIS IS GONNA BE A --

ABE

Look, if you have to go at night, I suggest you pick up a flash-light back at the main desk at the lodge. Also, toilet paper is free of charge.

ALL FIVE (EXCLUDING MARSHALL & ABE)

THIS IS GONNA BE...  
THIS IS GONNA BE A...  
THIS IS GONNA BE...  
THIS IS GONNA BE A --  
THIS IS GONNA BE A REAL NICE STAY HERE!

JACK

SOMEONE IS ABOUT TO DEARLY PAY HERE!

ALL FIVE (EXCLUDING MARSHALL & ABE)

WISH I HAD THE NERVE TO SKIP  
THIS REAL NICE --

*(JUST AS THEY'RE ABOUT TO STRANGLE MARTY AND MITGANG, MARSHALL INTERCEDES.)*

MARSHALL

Mitgang, could you show us to the stage?

ABE

Your wish is my command...

*(THE GUYS GRAB THEIR CHAIRS FROM THE VAN AS THE MUSIC SWELLS. SUDDENLY THEY ARE STANDING IN THE CRYSTAL ROOM. EXCEPT FOR MARSHALL, THEY ARE IN TOTAL AWE OF THE STAGE, MIRRORED BALL, A SIGN ADVERTISING "THE GRENADIERS," AND THE PROMISE OF GREAT MUSIC TO COME.)*

MARTY

ANYTHING CAN HAPPEN...

ARTHUR, AARON, GIL, JACK

AND IT HAS!

*(THE MUSIC SWELLS AGAIN AS THEY CIRCLE THE ROOM)*

MARTY, GIL, AARON, ARTHUR, JACK

SUDDENLY THE FUTURES BRIGHT  
IT'S OUR LUCKY DAY  
CAN'T WAIT TO PLAY

**TONIGHT...**

*(AS THEY HOLD THE LAST NOTE, A PASSAGE OF A FEW HOURS OCCURS AS THE GUYS PUT DOWN THEIR CHAIRS AND PUT ON THEIR UNIFORM JACKETS, WITH THE EXCEPTION OF MARSHALL. WHEN THEY SIT ON THE BUTTON, THEY ARE IN A BAND FORMATION, NERVOUSLY ANTICIPATING THEIR BIG DEBUT...)*

ACT ONE, Scene Six

ABE

GREETINGS AND WELCOME TO PARADISE MANOR'S CRYSTAL ROOM! Now before tonight's social calendar commences, I just have a few announcements. Will the lady who lost the seven karat diamond ring, please form a double line. Oh, and due to Mrs. Teitelbaum's unfortunate accident, tomorrow's archery tournament has been cancelled. But don't despair -- Friday kicks off the annual "WEEKEND OF MAGIC" starring our own Lou "Houdini" Goldstein. Watch as he attempts to wriggle out of a straitjacket while submerged in a tank of borscht! And if that doesn't leave you **seeing red**, only ten more days till "Valentine's Day." Yeah, you heard right, Bernie: Valentine's Day in August! The beautiful songstress and TV personality, Miss Ricki Valentine, has chosen Paradise Manor to stage her comeback! So with the boys in the band and Ricki Valentine, there's plenty of excitement in store. ENJOY!

*(HE STARTS TO GO OUT TO THE AUDIENCE, PRETENDING TO GREET GUESTS.)*

MARTY

Ricki Valentine? I remember her. She had a string of hit records in the sixties --



MARSHALL

"Ave Maria" with a bossa nova beat.

AARON

Hey, this could be the break we've been waiting for! Remember, Eddie Fisher was discovered waiting tables at Grossinger's!

ARTHUR

We don't have to play for her, do we? I mean, I've never played for a star before -- I've never played for **anyone** before.

AARON

As Marshall and I can tell you, when an opportunity like this comes around, you take it.

MARSHALL

(To Arthur): Relax, man. They usually travel with their own musicians.

GIL

See, Arthur? It'll all work out.

MARSHALL

Sure. Once they arrive, we'll just be the warm-up act.

*(DONNA, an attractive seasoned waitress, enters with LUCY, a younger waitress who is clearly less experienced with the clientele).*

DONNA

Lucy, another order of kreplach for table 4 *(Eying the band)* Oh...don't look now, but we're in the presence of new blood. This place could sure use a transfusion.

LUCY

It's really not a priority –

DONNA

No, but it sure beats the "ambience" or whatever passes for charm here. *(Notices GIL smiling at her)* Gabriel with the horn seems to like the décor. *(She gives him a faint smile in return)*

LUCY

It doesn't bother you? Last week Mr. Feinshreiber tried to pinch my rear. When I objected, he said, "There's nothing wrong with a healthy tookass." *(She gives a miserable pronunciation to the Yiddish).*

DONNA

*(Correcting her pronunciation) Touches.* Don't sweat it, Lucy. Your Yiddish will improve...  
and so will your reflexes.

SONG CUE: "A SUMMER JOB"

IF THERE'S NO RING ON YOUR FINGER,  
SOME EYES ARE CERTAIN TO LINGER.

LUCY

I DIDN'T ASK FOR THIS ATTENTION...  
ONLY A PLACE TO DISAPPEAR

DONNA

YOU'VE BLOWN YOUR COVER –  
NEED I MENTION  
IT'S A SUMMER JOB?

LUCY

WHAT STARTS AS A HARMLESS FLIRTATION  
OFTEN GETS LOST IN TRANSLATION.

ONE DAY THEY'RE TIPPING WITH A TWENTY...

DONNA

NEXT DAY THEY LEAVE THEIR CABIN KEY.  
BUT WHY REJECT THE HORN OF PLENTY *(looks at GIL)*  
IT'S A SUMMER JOB.

LUCY/DONNA

IT'S FAR FROM A SUMMER VACATION  
WHEN YOU'RE CARRYING THE WORLD ON YOUR SHOULDERS

DONNA

WELL, SAVE THAT HEAVY LIFTING FOR TRAYS  
AND LOVE AND TROUBLE WILL SOON PART WAYS

LUCY

PARTING WAYS...

DONNA

FOR ALL YOUR DAYS

LUCY

AND DAYS AND DAYS AND...

DONNA/LUCY

WHEN YOU'VE A NEW CHANGE OF VENUE,  
TRY SOMETHING NEW ON THE MENU

LUCY

IT'S TIME TO CLEAR THAT TABLE SETTING  
NOW THAT I'M STANDING ON MY OWN

DONNA

TRUST ME, THE PAST IS PAST REGRETTING...

LUCY

TIME FOR MOVING ON

DONNA

SERVICE WITH A SMILE

LUCY

YESTERDAY IS GONE

DONNA

GO THAT EXTRA MILE.

LUCY

TRY TO SPREAD GOOD WILL

DONNA

TILL THEY PAY THE BILL

DONNA/LUCY

WARD OFF WINTER'S CHILL  
WITH A SUMMER JOB.

*(DONNA puts her arm around LUCY, who nods her head. They return to their duties)*

ARTHUR

Gil?

GIL

What is it?

ARTHUR

I don't feel so good.

GIL

It's just stage fright. You'll be fine once we get started.

ARTHUR

I think I may pass out.

GIL

*(SIGNALING TO DONNA)* Miss, I wonder if you could help me. My friend here needs a glass of water...

*(LUCY BEGINS TO WALK BY)*

DONNA

Of course, sir. *(GESTURING TO LUCY)* Lucy, if you don't mind, a glass of water for this gentleman... *(INDICATING ARTHUR)*

LUCY

Sure thing. *(SHE EXITS)*

DONNA

And what can I get **you**, sir?

GIL

A vodka martini...*(GIVING HER THE ONCE OVER)*...and a chance to drink in your beauty.

DONNA

I'm positively blinded.

GIL

By my smile? *(SHE SHAKES HER HEAD)* My horn? *(AGAIN SHE SHAKES HER HEAD)*

DONNA

Your wedding ring.

GIL

Oh, that. *(HE TRIES TO HIDE HIS HAND.)* What if I told you "on the rocks"?

DONNA

I'd serve your drink on ice.

GIL

Well, I tried.

DONNA

Cheer up -- you haven't blown it yet.

GIL

My chances?

DONNA

Your horn. *(SHE GIVES HIM AN ENCOURAGING SMILE AND EXITS)*

*(LUCY ENTERS WITH THE GLASS OF WATER)*

LUCY

*(GIVING IT TO ARTHUR)* One water, straight up.

ARTHUR

Thanks.

LUCY

Those lights can get kind of hot. You might need this. *(SHE HANDS HIM A CLOTH NAPKIN)*

ARTHUR

*(BRINGING THE NAPKIN TO HIS BROW)* Is it that obvious?

LUCY

*(HELPING TO GUIDE HIS HAND)* No, you just give off a healthier glow.

*(ARTHUR SMILES SHEEPISHLY AS LUCY RETURNS TO HER DUTIES.)*

ABE

Folks, I was just talking to Sadie Berman -- ninety-two years *young*. Where are you, darling? Stand up, sweetheart. (*THE WORLD'S LONGEST PAUSE*) **ATTA GIRL!** God bless you. Isn't she beautiful? Sadie was telling me she didn't like the rooms -- she wants a room **and** a bath. Listen, I can give you a room, Sadie, but you'll have to take your own bath. (*IMITATES A DRUM:*) Ba-dum-bum! Hey, you wanna see small rooms, go down the road to the other lodge -- no names, please. That place the rooms are so small, they have adjoining towels! Ba-dum-bum!

(*ARTHUR, CATCHING ON, HITS A CYMBAL CRASH -- A BEAT LATE. ABE CONTINUES, LOOKING A BIT FLUSTERED*)

They're so small, you can hear the lady in the next room changing her --  
(*ARTHUR DOES A "BA-DUM-BUM" ON HIS DRUMS BUT IS A TAD TOO EARLY THIS TIME!*)

ABE

-- MIND!

(*IRRITATED WITH THE INTRUSION*) But seriously folks, we are glad to have a wonderful **aggravation** of musicians here.

GIL

What should we open with?

MARTY

How about one of Georgie's tunes?

ABE

They're always breaking into song. Listen, they wouldn't have to break in if they'd only get the right key! So let's give a big Paradise Manor welcome to **THE GRENADIERS!**

MARTY

One, two, three, four...

### **TRACK EIGHT**

(*THEY LAUNCH INTO A RAUCOUS, BOUNCY NUMBER WHICH WILL LATER BE LABELED "BIFF-BAM-BANG!" THE PROBLEM IS IT'S TOO RAUCOUS AND NOT AT ALL WHAT MITGANG HAD IN MIND. HE FRANTICALLY RUNS OVER TO THE GROUP, BLOWING A WHISTLE TO GET THEM TO STOP.*)

ABE

What are you, mishugah?! (*TURNS TO FACE HIS GUESTS*) Ladies and gentleman -- please, eat, eat. We're just having a few technical problems with the microphones. ENJOY!

**SONG: "PLAY NICE"**

WHADDYA TRYING TO DO,  
 YOU WANNA KILL THEM, BOYS?  
 WHADDYA TRYING TO PROVE  
 WITH THAT BLASTED NOISE?  
 ALL THAT -- BIFF-BAM-BANG!  
 THEY CAN HEAR YOU ALL THE WAY TO CHINA!

MARTY

Oh, you want us to play softer --

ABE

And different!

AARON

Then why hire a jazz band in the first place?

ABE

Look, "hire" means I'm paying you --

MARSHALL

**Less than scale.**

ABE

And as long as I'm paying -- no BIFF-BAM-BANG!

JACK

Well, that's it, gentlemen. Nantucket awaits...

*(HE STARTS TO LEAVE AND INDICATES TO ARTHUR TO DO THE SAME)*

ABE

HEY,  
 WHADDYA TRYING TO PULL?  
 I HOPE MY LEG.

*(HE LAUGHS NERVOUSLY. THEN BECOMES SOLEMN)*

LISTEN TO ME, BOYS --  
 DON'T MAKE ME BEG.

LOOK AT ALL THE PEOPLE WAIT  
WITH BAITED BREATH.  
LET THE MUSIC SOOTHE THEM --  
JUST DON'T SCARE 'EM HALF TO DEATH!

PLAY NICE,  
LOWER THE NOISE AND CUT THE BRASS.

MARTY

Cut the brass?!

ABE

EVERYONE'S EATING TO YOUR BEAT:  
YOU'RE GONNA GIVE 'EM ALL GAS!

MARSHALL

*(DRAMATICALLY CHANGING THE TEMPO INTO SWING)*

WE DON'T CARE WHAT WE PLAY  
JUST AS LONG AS YOU PAY A PRICE

ABE

That's blackmail, I tell you --

MARTY

WE'LL PLAY YOU A WALTZ  
AND THE REST OF THE SCHMALTZ

MARSHALL  
IF YOU PAY MORE DOUGH  
OR ELSE NO DICE!

ABE

*(RETURNING TO A GENTLE TEMPO)*

PLAY SWEET...

MARTY

*(FOLLOWING MARSHALL'S EXAMPLE:)*

SWEETEN THE POT  
AND WE'LL PLAY SWEET.



ABE

For instance...

AARON

WE TAKE A SWIM AT ANY TIME

ABE

But that's against company policy.

ARTHUR

WE GET TO EAT WHAT THEY EAT

ABE

I'll have a mutiny in my kitchen!

GIL

IF YOU PLAY IT OUR WAY  
THEN WE MIGHT JUST DECIDE TO STAY.

ABE

I warning you, don't push your luck --

MARSHALL

YOU'VE HIRED THE BEST,  
WHY NOT GRANT OUR REQUEST?

ALL THE GUYS

TELL US, ABE, WHAT DO YOU SAY?

ABE

*(THE MUSIC CUTS OUT ENTIRELY. HE MEANS BUSINESS)*

It's MY way or the Interstate!

*(MARSHALL CONTINUES TO DEFY HIM)*

MARSHALL

A One, two, three, four...

SHOO-BAH-BAH! SHOO-BEE-DOO-BEE-DOO-BEE-DOO-BEE! SHOO-BAH-BAH!

*(MARSHALL LEADS THE GROUP IN A FRENZIED, INFECTIOUS SCAT SECTION. GIL PICKS IT UP AND EMBELLISHES IT, AS THE OTHER GUYS FOLLOW SUIT -- MUCH TO ABE'S DISMAY.)*

ABE

ENOUGH!  
SIT TIGHT!  
OR YOU CAN BE **REPLACED** TOMORROW NIGHT!

*(THREATENINGLY:)*  
NOW PLAY

*(MARSHALL DEFIANTLY STANDS UP TO ABE AS IF THEY WERE ABOUT TO DUEL IN A WESTERN)*

MARSHALL

NOW PAY...

ABE

*(DIGGING INTO HIS POCKETS)*  
Look, here's \$300. You'll get the rest at the end of the night. Agreed?

MARTY

*(TAKING THE MONEY) Agreed. (HE SMILES AT MARSHALL. ABE BEGINS TO WALK AWAY)*

JACK

Play?! But what chords?!

MARSHALL

Stay cool. Count of four -- G Seven...a one, two, three, four...

*(JACK PLAYS AN OPENING ARPEGGIATED CHORD. THE OTHERS JOIN IN.)*

And...C. Brushes nice and easy. F Seven. Good. Now back to C.

JACK

Just one problem: what do we do for the next four hours?

MARSHALL

Relax. I've got a million of them...A Seven. Now you got it!

ARTHUR

Look, people are dancing!

MARTY

Hey, who's better than we are!

*(THE MUSIC SWELLS, THE MİRRORED BALL TURNS, AND THE LIGHTS DIM ON THE BAND AS THE TURNTABLE ROTATES TO REVEAL ABE MITGANG'S SPARE OFFICE. HE IS ON THE PHONE AND LOOKING VISIBLY UPSET. AS HE CLOSES HIS OFFICE DOOR SLIGHTLY, THE MUSIC BECOMES PERCUSSIVE...)*

ABE

You can't bail on me, Mr. Amati. I promised them Ricki Valentine. Do you have any idea how I'll look if she's a no show?!

*(DONNA stands on the other side of the door unseen by ABE)*

My clientele is already dwindling. I'm barely able to pay my expenses. And you want another 10Gs!

THE BAND

*(STAGE WHISPER):*

PLAY NICE

ABE

Plus 50% of the drinks?!!!

THE BAND

PLAY NICE

ABE

Don't threaten me with Grossingers! They've got Don Rickles, Bobby Vinton, Norm Crosby. Ricki Valentine will just get lost in that roster. You stick with me, Mr. Amati. I'll come up with the extra somehow... A choleryeh ahf dir, putz! What's that? You don't speak Yiddish? What a shame. There's really no translation. Shalom.

*(ABE hangs up. DONNA knocks and enters)*

How long have you been standing there?

DONNA

Long enough. Should I start looking for a new job after eighteen years?

ABE

Eighteen? That's "Chai" in Hebrew. "Living" And that's what we'll do – go on living. Come, let's dance...

*(HE OPENS THE DOOR TO HIS OFFICE, THE MUSIC SWELLS. ABE TAKES DONNA'S HAND -- THEY DO A LITTLE FOXTROT AS THE SCENE CHANGES ONCE AGAIN. THE INTERIOR OF THE MEN'S BUNKS. IT IS FOUR HOURS LATER, AND THEY ARE HIGH FROM THEIR SIGNIFICANT VICTORY -- EVEN IF THEY DIDN'T GET TO PLAY MUCH OF WHAT ABE REFERS TO AS "BIFF-BAM-BANG!" JACK LOOKS VERY DISTRACTED...)*

ACT ONE, Scene Seven

(CHANGING OUT OF THEIR CLOTHES TO GET READY FOR BED:)

AARON

Did you see Mitgang's face?

MARTY

"There will be no Biff-Bam-Bang!"

GIL

How about Arthur on that rumba!

AARON

Or Marshall on that bass!

MARTY

Or Gil on that waitress!

GIL

Hey, just because Donna chose me over you. *(BRINGING A BEER TO HIS LIPS)*

MARTY

*(SINCERELY)* Hey, I'll have you know I would never cheat on my girlfriend. *(A BEAT)* So, Gil, tell me: what were you first attracted to? Her shapely legs, her voluptuous curves, or the fact that she knows the bartender?

GIL

Bingo! *(HE TAKES ANOTHER SWIG)*

MARTY

*(FLASHING THE MONEY)* Well, after tonight's little raise, we can buy all the booze we want.

JACK

Speaking of our "bonus," let me see my share.

MARTY

*(GOOD NATUREDLY)* What? Afraid I'm gonna gyp you?

JACK

*(IMPATIENTLY)* Yep.

MARTY

*(HE HANDS OVER THE MONEY TO JACK)* There you go, Jack. One hundred bucks.

JACK

Thank you. *(HE DELIBERATELY RIPS HIS TAKE IN TWO)*

MARTY

Hey --

JACK

If I had wanted to earn money, I would have stayed at my job. There I net a lot more than a hundred dollars.

MARTY

Jack, that money was a token of Abe's affection --

JACK

Bull! It's hush money, Marty, and we all know it. "Play nice and I'll reward you." Yeah? Well, I'm sick of "playing nice." I "play nice" for my boss, I "play nice" for my clients. *(ADDRESSING THESE LINES TO MARSHALL)* But you see, Marshall, when I meet with my friends here, I play **jazz**. Not waltzes, not rumbas, not fox-trots... but **JAZZ**.

MARTY

So little by little we'll win him over --

AARON

-- And be able to play jazz soon --

JACK

Not as long as pacemakers roam the earth. But you guys go ahead: "enjoy" your big-time bonus. For some strange reason, I'm not quite ready to sell my soul.

*(HE WALKS AWAY FROM THE GROUP.)*

ARTHUR

*(BREAKING THE TENSION)* Uh, anyone for brushing their teeth? I think I spotted a hose outside.

AARON

Be right there. Marshall, you coming?

MARSHALL

Maybe later, man. *(AARON LOOKS DISAPPOINTED BUT SOFTLY SAYS "COOL" AND EXITS WITH ARTHUR. GIL AND MARSHALL TAKE OUT A DECK OF CARDS IN ANOTHER SPOT OF THE CABIN AS MARTY TRIES TO LIFT JACK'S SPIRITS.)*

MARTY

Jack, listen to the postcard I'm sending Georgie:

"WISH YOU WERE HERE INSTEAD OF THERE.  
MY EYES ARE GETTING DAMP  
JUST THINKING OF YOU AND WHAT IT COST  
TO BUY A FRIGGIN' STAMP!"

*(MARTY LAUGHS, JACK DOESN'T.)*

MARTY

Come on, Jack, what gives?

JACK

My wife went sailing today with Smiley Tanner, one of the prime lechers of all time.

MARTY

That's what's eating you? Jack, she's in love with a piano player, not a sailor. Why, I'm sure when you tell her all about tonight, she's going to get all hot and -- *(JACK RISES AND MOVES AWAY UNCOMFORTABLY)* She **does** know, doesn't she? *(JACK SHAKES HIS HEAD)* Oh, Jack. What the hell does she think happened? Am I gonna start seeing your picture on milk cartons?

JACK

"Troubleshooting in one of our out-of-town branches." That's what I told her.

MARTY

Aw, Jack...

JACK

Now listen, Marty, I couldn't tell her I threw away a romantic vacation to spend two weeks with "the Grenadiers." She's got feelings you know.

MARTY

And **you** haven't.

JACK

That's not the point.

MARTY

No, that is exactly the point. Jack, when are you going to start doing for yourself and stop this -- *(HE HAS MORE TO SAY, BUT DECIDES AGAINST IT)* It's late. We'll talk tomorrow.

JACK

I wouldn't be too sure of that.

MARTY

*(REALIZING THE IMPLICATION OF WHAT JACK HAS SAID)* Jack, how would you like your wife to know where you really are?

JACK

You wouldn't dare. *(HE LOOKS AT MARTY)*

MARTY

*(A SMILE THAT MEANS BUSINESS)* Get some sleep, Jack.

*(JACK RELUCTANTLY HEADS FOR BED. LIGHTS COME UP ON MARSHALL AND GIL PLAYING CARDS.)*

MARSHALL

Gil, you play a mean horn.

GIL

*(FLATTERED)* Thanks, man.

MARSHALL

Ever do it professionally?

GIL

For a couple of years after college.

MARSHALL

And then?

GIL

I met a girl who could support me in the style to which I'd always aspired. So I went to work for her father.

MARSHALL

Yeah? Doing what?

GIL

Real estate.

MARSHALL

*(A BEAT)* Everyone's gotta live their life.

GIL

You've got a family, right? A couple years in the business and I saw what it could do to a guy. That's when I said, there's gotta be a better way.

MARSHALL

Real estate.

GIL

Right. *(A PAUSE, THEN)* Hey, I think a couple years is long enough to give music a fair shake. Don't you?

MARSHALL

Long enough for some. *(PUTS DOWN HIS CARDS)* Hey, I've got a flush. Beat that.

*(GIL GIVES A SELF-DEPRECATING LAUGH AS HE THROWS DOWN HIS CARDS AND TAKES A SWIG OF BEER. ARTHUR AND AARON ENTER. EVERYONE CLIMBS INTO THEIR RESPECTIVE BEDS. THIS CAN BE ACCOMPLISHED BY MERELY PLACING THE GUYS ON DIFFERENT PLATFORMS.)*

ARTHUR

I'm speaking to Mr. Mitgang tomorrow. There's not enough fluoride in his water.



AARON

*(HE GOES OVER TO MARSHALL)* Marshall, I brought an extra blanket... *(PLACES IT AT THE FOOT OF MARSHALL'S BED)*...in case you need it. *(GIL AND MARSHALL EXCHANGE QUIZZICAL LOOKS.)*

**TRACK NINE**

ARTHUR

Marty, if anything happened to my mother...

MARTY

I'm sure they'd call.

ARTHUR

How would they know where to find us?

MARTY

Stop worrying and get some sleep... *(HE TURNS OUT THE LIGHT)*

AARON

Who can sleep on a night like this?

GIL

You said it.

MARTY

Must be a full moon.

JACK

How can you tell? There are no windows.

MARTY

Sometimes you don't have to see the moon to know...

**SONG: "DRIFTING"***(THE MEN IN THEIR BEDS SING OF THEIR INTERNAL THOUGHTS)*

MEN

SIMPLE MEDITATIONS COME TO MIND  
WHILE I AM DRIFTING...

GIL

MAKING IT WITH DONNA...

MARSHALL

IT'S A WRITE OFF --  
SAVE RECEIPTS.

AARON

WHEN WE PLAYED TONIGHT  
I COULD HAVE SWORN I REACHED NIRVANA.

MEN

WONDER IF THEY'VE EVER CLEANED THESE SHEETS?

JACK

WONDER IF YOU'RE DREAMING OF ME, JANET...

MEN

EVERYONE'S ASLEEP WITHOUT A CARE WHILE I AM  
DRIFTING...

MARTY, GIL

DRIFTING INTO SPACE...

ARTHUR

HOW CAN I RELAX TILL I KNOW MOTHER IS  
ALL RIGHT

MARSHALL

DRIFTING THROUGH THE NIGHT...

GIL

MARSHALL WOULDN'T ASK IF I'M A PRO  
UNLESS HE MEANT IT

MARSHALL

NEVER PLAYED WITH GUYS SO GREEN...OR WHITE.

OTHERS

EVERYONE'S ASLEEP BUT I AM DRIFTING...

MARTY

DRIFTING, ALWAYS DRIFTING  
IN AND OUT OF MY SON'S LIFE...

ARTHUR, GIL, JACK

THOUGHTS ARE RUNNING THROUGH MY MIND...

MARTY

MAYBE STORMS ARE LIFTING  
AND THE HEARTACHE ENDS  
WITH A BAND OF FRIENDS...

MEN

WONDER IF I'LL EVER GET TO SLEEP  
OR JUST KEEP DRIFTING

GIL

WONDER IF IT'S MORNING...

ARTHUR

*(PULLING OUT LUCY'S NAPKIN)*

WONDER WHO'S THAT WAITRESS

JACK

I WONDER WHEN THE BUS LEAVES...

ARTHUR

WONDER IF THIS TRIP WILL PROVE  
TRAGIC THAN COMEDIC

ARTHUR/JACK/MARSHALL

LOVED ONES LEFT BEHIND...

AARON/GIL/MARTY

THINK OF THE ROAD THAT LIES AHEAD...

JACK

THE ROAD THAT LIES...

MEN

AT PRESENT I WOULD **KILL**  
TO HAVE A SEALY POSTUREPEDI.  
BACK PAIN IS ENOUGH TO MAKE MEN WEEP --  
JUST KEEP SHIFTING --  
SOON YOU'RE DRIFTING OFF TO...

*(THERE IS THE SOUND OF LIGHT SNORING. EVERYONE BUT AARON IS ASLEEP.)*

AARON

Hey, Guys...Mitgang said we can rehearse in the recreation room tomorrow morning. *(NO ONE RESPONDS)* Hey, Marshall, it must have been a gas playing with Goodman.

MARSHALL

*(ONLY HALF CONSCIOUS:)* Yeah.

AARON

What's Dizzy Gillespie like?

MARSHALL

Good people.

AARON

And Basie?

MARSHALL

*(COMPLETELY TIRED OF THIS CONVERSATION, HE WANTS ONLY TO SLEEP)*  
Swell. Ditto Ella, Buddy Rich, and everyone else I ever played with. Okay? *(HE TURNS OVER)*

AARON

We keep practicing, and we'll sound great by Labor Day. Maybe Ricki Valentine will hear us and who knows. Right? *(NO RESPONSE)* Marshall? *(NO RESPONSE EXCEPT THE FORCED SOUND OF MARSHALL SNORING AND THE BEGINNING OF A WALKING BASS LINE VAMP.)* Marshall? *(LIGHTS COME UP ON AARON AS HE LOOKS OUT TO THE AUDIENCE. HE'S BEAMING.)*

**TRACK TEN**

**SONG: "BENNY GOODMAN"**

AARON

I PLAYED WITH A GUY WHO PLAYED WITH  
BENNY GOODMAN!  
IT'S NOT EVERY DAY AND NOT JUST  
ANY GOODMAN...

*(HE RISES OUT OF BED IN HIS EXCITEMENT, AS THEIR SLEEPING QUARTERS  
DISAPPEAR:)*

A MAN WHO I IDOLIZE  
WAS A KID FROM THE SLUMS.  
WHO'D GUESS THAT ONE DAY HE'D RISE?  
HIS MUSIC TOOK WING,  
NOW HE'S CROWNED KING OF SWING!

*(HE PULLS A TOP HAT AND CANE FROM UNDER HIS BLANKET)*

I, TOO, HAD MY SHARE OF KNOCKS LIKE  
BENNY GOODMAN.  
I'VE LIVED ON SOME ROUGH, TOUGH BLOCKS LIKE  
BENNY GOODMAN!

WE BOTH WOULDN'T RUN OR COWER --  
OUR MUSIC WOULD OVERPOWER.  
WITH MARSHALL I'LL FLOWER  
JUST LIKE BENNY...

*(A CYMBAL DRUM BEAT SOUNDS. THE OTHER MEN IN THE BUNK  
BECOME A SINGING/DANCING CHORUS IN AARON'S FANTASY.  
HATS AND CANES CAN BE UTILIZED AS THEY PARADE IN THEIR  
BOXER SHORTS AND T-SHIRTS.)*

VOICES

BENNY!

AARON

WHEN I PLAY WITH MARSHALL  
IT'S LIKE PLAYIN'  
WITH THE KING HIMSELF.

AARON & OFFSTAGE VOICES

BENNY!

AARON

UP THERE ON THE STAGE WITH ME IS

## AARON &amp; VOICES

ELLA!

AARON

SCATTIN' WITH

AARON & VOICES

COUNT BASIE!

AARON

OH, IT LEAVES ME

AARON & OFFSTAGE VOICES

DIZZY!

AARON

HE'S THERE TOO WITH BUDDY!

AARON & VOICES

BENNY! BENNY! BENNY!

*(DURING THIS LAST SECTION OF THE SONG, BENNY GOODMAN HIMSELF BEGINS TO MATERIALIZE FROM BEHIND THE SCRIM [PLAYED BY EITHER THE CLARINET PLAYER FROM THE PIT OR THE ACTOR PLAYING GEORGIE.] AARON JOINS HIS IDOL AS THEY ALL LAUNCH INTO A SWINGING RENDITION OF THE SONG. THE GUYS ALL BECOME PART OF THIS SPECTACULAR DREAM COMPLETE WITH TRACER LIGHTS. AARON DANCES JOYOUSLY, USING HIS CANE AS A CLARINET. BY THE END OF THE INSTRUMENTAL SECTION, THE DREAM BEGINS TO DISAPPEAR.)*

AARON

I FOUND ME A LUCKY PENNY,  
LET'S HOPE IT'S THE FIRST OF MANY.

*(THE GUYS RETURN TO THEIR BEDS.)*

I PLAYED WITH A GUY WHO PLAYED WITH...

OTHER GUYS

HE PLAYED WITH A GUY WHO PLAYED WITH...

*(A CLARINET SOLO WAILS AS THE GUYS RETURN TO SLEEP)*

AARON

**BENNY!**

(MUSICAL BUTTON)

**TRACK ELEVEN**

*(AFTER THE SONG, THE "DRIFTING" MUSIC IS HEARD AGAIN. AARON LOOKS OVER AT MARSHALL, WHO IS STILL SNORING. SUDDENLY ARTHUR STIRS:)*

ARTHUR

Marty, did you hear a phone ring just now?

MARTY

Good night, John Boy. *(QUIETLY TO GIL:)* Gil...

GIL

Hmm?

MARTY

Arthur's homesick. If he leaves we're through.

GIL

You concentrate on the repertoire. See if you can't introduce some more jazz.

MARTY

And that's gonna keep him here?

GIL

Music isn't the only area where Arthur's missing a little "biff-bam-bang." I've got an idea.

GUYS

DRIFTING, ALWAYS DRIFTING...

MARTY

*(STEALING AWAY TO A NEARBY PAY PHONE:)*

I'VE GOT GEORGIE ON MY MIND...

*(HE PICKS UP THE RECEIVER AND DIALS)*

GUYS MINUS MARTY

THOUGHTS ARE RUNNING THROUGH MY MIND...

MARTY

*(INTO THE PHONE:)* Hey, you'll do just fine, Georgie. Just look at it this way -- instead of the brisket, this time it's you going under the knife.

*(LIGHTS COME UP ON GEORGIE WEARING A BATHROBE PRESUMABLY IN THE HOSPITAL)*

GEORGIE

Compared to your jokes, the operation should be a piece of cake. So tell me, Marty...what's it like?

MARTY

*(LYING)* Oh, the place is great and the guys are great --

GEORGIE

No, what's it like --

MARTY

Of course, the bass player isn't up to our usual standards --

GEORGIE

No, Marty. **The music...What's it like making music?**

MARTY

"What's it like?" Well, to tell you the truth, it's...*(LYING THROUGH HIS TEETH)* -- **it's beyond anything you've dreamed!** We're playing JAZZ, Georgie. Just JAZZ. Man, if you could only hear us -- hey, what am I saying? In a week you'll be well enough to join us, so get some rest --

GEORGIE

*(PLAYING ALONG WITH THE FANTASY)* Maybe I'll tell my doctor to stitch me up like a bass guitar.

MARTY

Hey, why not? You've got some practicing to do.

GEORGIE

Marty, thanks for the call.

MARTY

No problem. You take care, buddy.



*(MARTY HANGS UP THE PHONE. LIGHTS OUT ON GEORGIE. MUSIC BEGINS...)*

MARTY

*(WRYLY:)*

"FOUR HOURS AWAY FROM *PARADISE*..."

BUT GEORGIE, I DON'T MEAN TO SNOW YOU:  
I'LL SEE THIS THROUGH --  
THAT MUCH I OWE YOU.  
THIS BAND WILL STAY TILL WE PLAY  
YOUR SONG...

*(AS MARTY HOLDS THE NOTE A CAPPELLA, THE "DRIFTING" SONG RETURNS.)*

*(AARON, TOO EXCITED TO SLEEP GRABS HIS CLARINET AND EXITS THE CABIN.)*

*(GIL STEPS OUT OF THE CABIN WITH A BOTTLE OF BEER.)*

*(JACK COVERTLY SWITCHES ON A SMALL FLASHLIGHT AND EXAMINES A BUS SCHEDULE.)*

JACK

Arthur...

WE'LL PLAN OUR ESCAPE ON THE TWELVE-EIGHTEEN...

*(ARTHUR NODS, THEN PRESSES LUCY'S NAPKIN TENDERLY TO HIS CHEEK)*

*(MARSHALL IS THE ONLY ONE WHO'S ASLEEP)*

*(AARON, IN THE MOONLIGHT, BEGINS PRACTICING HIS "BENNY GOODMAN" SOLO NEAR A LIFE-SIZE CARDBOARD CUT-OUT OF MISS RICKI VALENTINE WHICH HERALDS HER APPROACHING COMEBACK CONCERT.)*

*(THE LIGHTS COME UP ON MARTY)*

MARTY

*(OUT TO THE AUDIENCE:)*

Georgie, it's beyond anything you've dreamed...

*(AARON PLAYS A HAUNTING, ASCENDING SCALE, GIL BRINGS THE BOTTLE TO HIS LIPS, JACK AND ARTHUR CONSPIRE TO LEAVE AS THE MUSIC AND MEN DRIFT INTO THE NIGHT...)*

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO, SCENE ONE

THE FOLLOWING EVENING. THE CURTAIN RISES WITH THE BAND PERFORMING ABE'S FAVORITE, THE EVER-SO-TAME, "PLAY NICE".)

ABE

Aren't they terrific? What did I tell you? Does Abe Mitgang know talent or what? And speaking of talent, only **nine** more days till Miss Ricki Valentine arrives. But for those of you who just can't wait, starting tomorrow we'll be selling copies of Miss Valentine's autobiography, hot off the press, entitled, "RICKI -- ROCKY ROAD AIN'T JUST AN ICE CREAM." But hey, speaking of **just desserts** --the fabulous "GRENADIERS" will be back after this very short break to play their final selection tonight... (*PLACES A HAND OVER THE MIKE AND WHISPERS TO THE GROUP:*) Hey, what are you going to play?

MARTY

(*HE'S NO LONGER GOING TO TELEGRAPH SELECTIONS:*) It's a surprise.

ABE

(*TO CROWD:*) You hear that? "A nice, **quiet** surprise!" So order that last round of drinks because remember: the more you drink, the better they sound! ENJOY!

(*MARTY STEPS OFF THE STAGE. JACK GRABS ARTHUR AND STARTS TO APPROACH MARTY TO TELL HIM THEY'RE PLANNING ON LEAVING AFTER THE NEXT SET.*)

JACK

Marty! (*MARTY PRETENDS TO IGNORE HIM*) Marty! Listen, Arthur and I have been doing some serious thinking, and we think you ought to know that we've decided --

(*GIL IMMEDIATELY COMES TO THE RESCUE*)

GIL

Psss. Arthur, she's waiting to meet you...NOW.

JACK

Can't you see, I'm talking to Marty.

GIL

So talk. I want Arthur. (*HE TAKES HIS ARM*) She told Donna she thought you were cute.

ARTHUR

(*EXITING WITH GIL*) Are you sure she meant me?

JACK

(*WATCHING HIS CO-CONSPIRATOR LEAVE*) ARTHUR!

MARTY

He seems to be otherwise engaged.

JACK

Oh, I see. Well, congratulations – now you've got one child who won't run away. (*THIS CUTS MARTY LIKE A KNIFE*)

MARTY

You win.

JACK

What?

MARTY

Go to Nantucket. Go to the moon. But go.

JACK

Why the change of heart?

MARTY

Because you're a complete, utter, and total drag.

JACK

YEAH? Well, what about the job?

MARTY

We'll survive.

JACK

I wish you'd thought of that sooner.

MARTY

So do I.

JACK

You won't say anything to my wife?

MARTY

No. But maybe you should, Jack. You know, I may not know much about fidelity, but both my wife and my girlfriend know I'm here. You've been married to the same woman for over twenty years and feel you have to lie about making music. Who's the bigger cheat?

*(JACK TENSES AS THOUGH HE MIGHT HIT MARTY, THEN TURNS ABRUPTLY AND EXITS THE ROOM. MARTY EXITS IN THE OPPOSITE DIRECTION AS DONNA AND LUCY ENTER.)*

LUCY

Maybe this isn't such a good idea.

DONNA

Look, I know it's hard getting over someone. But don't pass up an opportunity, Lucy -- sometimes you don't get a second chance.

*(GIL AND ARTHUR ENTER FROM THE OPPOSITE SIDE)*

ARTHUR

Oh, God. They're coming over.

GIL

That's usually the way it's done.

*(DONNA AND LUCY APPROACH.)*

DONNA

*(TO GIL:)* You are really hot tonight.

GIL

Well, thanks. Ditto to you.

DONNA

*(TURNING TO ARTHUR:)* Hi, I don't think we've been officially introduced. I'm Donna and this is Lucy.

GIL

This is Arthur. Say, why don't the two of you get to know each other?

LUCY

Oh, I don't know if Mr. Mitgang would be too happy. We should be working.

GIL

Don't worry. We'll cover for you. (*GIL PUSHES ARTHUR TOWARDS LUCY AS HE AND DONNA RACE OFF TOGETHER. LUCY AND ARTHUR APPREHENSIVELY LOOK AT ONE ANOTHER*)

LUCY

I really like your music, Arthur.

ARTHUR

Thank you. I didn't write it -- I just play it.

LUCY

It's still an achievement.

ARTHUR

So is carrying heavy trays.

LUCY

Thank you. (*PAUSE*) Can I get you anything? A soda maybe? My treat.

ARTHUR

No, but thanks for offering.

LUCY

I heard Mr. Mitgang say he was going to ask your group back next year.

ARTHUR

Will you be here?

LUCY

Probably not.

ARTHUR

Then it's no deal. (*THEY BOTH SMILE AT ONE ANOTHER*) Actually, this is just a once-in-a-lifetime dream. I have a job... a real job.

LUCY

So multi-talented.

ARTHUR

I don't know if it's a talent -- I'm a dentist.

LUCY

That's fascinating.

ARTHUR

Maybe sometime I could tell you secrets of dentistry never before revealed.

LUCY

*(NON-COMMITTAL)* Maybe...

GIL

Sorry to break this up, but we're about to play our last song. Look, we finish up soon. Why don't we all meet after that and unwind?

LUCY

I don't know; I mean, Donna and I have to get up real early to serve breakfast.

DONNA

Relax. This crowd won't regain consciousness until Saturday. Besides, remember what Mitgang says..."Enjoy!"

LUCY

*(SHE WAVERS, THEN LOOKS AT ARTHUR.)* Sure.  
*(SHE AND DONNA EXIT)*

GIL

Way to go, Arthur!

*(GIL SPIRITS A BEAMING ARTHUR UP TO THE BANDSTAND. MARSHALL, AARON, AND MARTY CONVERGE UP THERE AS WELL.)*

AARON

Where's Jack?

MARTY

He went home.

AARON

What?!

MARTY

He was miserable so I gave him his walking papers.

MARSHALL

Mitgang's not gonna like it.

MARTY

*(TO MARSHALL:)* Got any suggestions? You must know somebody.

GIL

*(SEEING JACK ENTER)* Company coming.

JACK

I came to say goodbye. *(THEY JUST LOOK AT HIM)* Unless you can use a piano player.

MARTY

Look, don't do it out of charity.

JACK

I'm not.

GIL

Why the sudden change of heart?

JACK

Oh, something Marty said a little while ago.

MARTY

*(NOT WANTING TO EMBARRASS JACK BY SPILLING THE BEANS)* It must have been a different Marty.

JACK

Also, I theorized that on Nantucket, I'd spend half my time wondering if you were all having a ball without me. Whereas if I stay here with you, at least I know you're miserable.

ABE

Boys, enough shmoozing. You're losing your crowd.

**TRACK TWELVE**

MARTY

Alright guys, this calls for a little celebration. (*INTO THE MICROPHONE:*) Ladies and gentlemen, for our final number tonight, we'd like to show our appreciation by performing one of our old favorites. Those of you with hearing aids are advised to turn them down.

ABE

(*RUSHING UP IN A FRANTIC STATE*) Boys, boys! May I remind you that we're sixteen miles from the nearest hospital and the average age in this room is deceased --

MARTY

(*TRYING TO IGNORE ABE*) Yeah, like I was saying, this next song is near and dear to our hearts. So Abe, **before you put your hands over your ears**, this one's for you.

ABE

(*TO THE GUYS*) NO! They'll be NO "BIFF-BAM-BANG!" (*TO THE AUDIENCE:*) The show's over, folks! Goodnight! (*ABE YANKS OFF THE MICROPHONE AND MICSTAND AS EXITS.*)

MARTY

(*TO PATRONS*) We have one more song for you tonight! A one, a two, a one, two, three, four!

(*THEY AGGRESSIVELY LAUNCH INTO THEIR NUMBER.*)

**SONG: "BIFF-BAM-BANG"**

MARTY

USED TO THINK, "I'M NO GOOD" --  
NEVER COULD MAKE THE GRADE.  
PRACTICED IN A BASEMENT  
MARTY AND GUYS

WEDNESDAY NIGHTS!

MARTY

ENTERTAINED A DREAM OF BROADWAY LIGHTS.  
GUESS I WOULD BE THERE STILL,  
PLAYING TILL I WAS DEAD,  
IF NOT FOR A SOUND



ADD GIL & JACK

THAT CAME UP FROM THE GROUND

ADD AARON & ARTHUR

AND REVERBERATED IN MY HEAD.

ADD MARSHALL

AND IT WAS SAYING:

MARTY

BIFF-BAM-BANG!  
DREAMS SHOULDN'T STAY DREAMS!  
LIVE TODAY  
THOSE YESTERDAY DREAMS!

TAKING CHANCES IS THE WAY DREAMS  
HAVE A CHANCE TO COME TRUE --  
IT'S ALL UP TO YOU  
BUT FIRST YOU HAVE TO PURSUE

MARTY AND GUYS

THAT "BIFF-BAM-BANG!"

MARTY AND GUYS

"NEVER SIT ON YOUR CAN;  
THINK OF WHAT YOU CAN DO.  
GO OUT ON THE ROAD AND FIND A GIG --  
PRETTY SOON YOU'LL FIND YOU'LL HIT IT BIG."

MARTY

SOON I GOT ON A STAGE,  
BUT WHEN I BEGAN TO PLAY...

MARTY AND GUYS

WHAT SHOULD I HEAR  
BUT A SOUND LOUD AND CLEAR  
AND THIS IS WHAT IT HAD TO SAY:

*(INSTRUMENTAL AND PERCUSSIVE SECTION FOLLOWS BEFORE RETURNING TO THE LYRICS:)*

"BIFF - BAM - BANG --  
WHY KEEP THE FUN OUT?  
JOIN THE SONG

AND BRING THE SUN OUT.  
 SHOW THOSE BLUES  
 THAT JAZZ HAS WON. OUT-  
 SHINE THE STARS IN THE SKY.  
 YOUR SPIRIT WILL FLY  
 THE VERY MOMENT YOU TRY  
 THAT BIFF-BAM-BANG!

*(THEIR ENTHUSIASM IS CONTAGIOUS. THE PLACE BEGINS TO ROCK)*

MARTY & BAND

BIFF-BAM-BANG --  
 PURE JUBILATION!  
 ONE EXPLOSIVE COMBINATION!  
 LET IT CHIME YOUR LIBERATION --  
 HOW SWEET IT FALLS ON THE EAR.  
 YOU'VE NOTHING TO FEAR,  
 YOU'LL CONQUER ANY FRONTIER  
 HEARING BIFF-BAM-

*(SUDDEN DECRESCENDO WITH A POWERFUL BUILD)*

biff-bam-bang

Biff-Bam-Bang

BIFF-BAM-BANG!

**BIFF - BAM - BANG!!!**

**BIFF --- BAM --- BANG!!!!!!**

(BUTTON)

*(THEIR AUDIENCE APPROVES)*

MARTY

WHO'S BETTER THAN WE ARE?

GUYS

NO ONE!

MARTY

You've been a great audience -- see you tomorrow night. And remember: drive safe!

JACK

Their cabins are only a few feet away.

MARTY

**Walk** safe!

*(THE MEN STEP OFF THE STAGE. ABE GOES OVER TO MARTY)*

ABE

*(TO MARTY)* A word about the music.

MARTY

Less "Biff-Bam-Bang?"

ABE

More. Not for me -- for the customers! Personally, I hate it. *(HE WINKS AND WALKS OFF SINGING THE TUNE. AARON SIGNALS TO THE OTHERS NEAR THE WINGS)*

AARON

Hey, guys, let's give Georgie a call and see how the operation went. We'll tell him we'll play a song for him the last night with the phone off the hook.

MARTY

We'll use **Mitgang's** phone. Come on!

*(THE MEN FOLLOW AARON AND MARTY INTO THE WINGS. GIL STOPS ARTHUR BEFORE HE HAS A CHANCE TO BOLT FROM THE SCENE:)*

ARTHUR

I don't know about going out tonight. I'm a little tired.

GIL

Don't worry, you'll get a second wind.

ARTHUR

Well, help me out in case I run out of things to say.

GIL

Sorry, Arthur. Marty's loaning Donna and me the van -- you're on your own.

ARTHUR

But I thought -- Oh, this isn't going to work; she'll probably expect things and... *(QUIETLY)* I'm not very experienced.

GIL

You're a musician, right?

ARTHUR

Yeah?

GIL

So improvise!

*(DONNA AND LUCY ENTER)*

DONNA

Hi. *(SHE RUSHES INTO GIL'S ARMS AS THEY TAKE OFF FOR THE VAN.) (TO ARTHUR AND LUCY:)* Goodbye.

*(ARTHUR IS LEFT ALONE WITH LUCY. A LIGHT CHANGE SUGGESTS THEY ARE IN THE WOODS.)*

ACT TWO, Scene Two

**TRACK THIRTEEN**

LUCY

I have an uncle who's a dentist.

ARTHUR

I hope you like him.

LUCY

He's a very wise man.

ARTHUR

As a matter of fact, you can learn a lot about human nature from the way people behave in a dentist's chair.

LUCY

For instance?

ARTHUR

Take pain. There's a certain type who feels guilty if they're not suffering so they refuse anesthesia no matter what.

LUCY

Not I.

ARTHUR

Then there's the ones with no tolerance who need Novocaine to sit in the waiting room.

LUCY

That's me.

ARTHUR

No it isn't.

LUCY

How do you know?

ARTHUR

Like I said - you learn to read people. And I size you up as eminently sensible.

LUCY

You're right. I said the other to be funny.

*(SHE SMILES. HE SMILES IN RETURN)*

**SONG: "BEAUTIFUL"**

ARTHUR

BEAUTIFUL.

LUCY

Sorry?

ARTHUR

*(UNCOMFORTABLE THAT HIS FEELINGS SLIPPED OUT)*

YOUR **TEETH** ARE BEAUTIFUL.  
THEY ARE SO PERFECTLY IN PLACE;  
THEY COMPLEMENT YOUR FACE.  
SO...BEAUTIFUL

THEY'RE IN THERE TIGHT AS DRUMS  
THANKS TO THOSE HEALTHY GUMS.  
THEY'RE ALSO BEAUTIFUL,  
YES, BEAUTIFUL.  
SO BEAUTI --

I'm embarrassing you.

LUCY

A little.

ARTHUR

I'm just giving you my professional opinion.

SMILES FROM YOU  
CAN CHEER ME WHEN I'M GLUM.  
YES, AFTER YOU THEY BROKE THE MOLD:  
YOUR FILLINGS AREN'T JUST GOLD --  
THEY'RE PLATINUM!

IT REALLY COMES ACROSS  
HOW MUCH YOU LIKE TO FLOSS.  
YOUR SMILE IS BEAUTIFUL,  
OH, BEAUTIFUL, SO, BEAUTIFUL.

BEAUTIFUL...

LUCY

*(IN SOLILOQUY)*

I DIDN'T WANT TO LIKE HIM.

ARTHUR

SO BEAUTIFUL...

LUCY

WHY AM I HERE AT ALL?  
THIS IS NOT WHAT I EXPECTED,  
HOW'D I EVER GET SELECTED?  
BETTER LEAVE RIGHT NOW.

ARTHUR

DON'T GO -- YOU'LL STEAL THE MOON.

LUCY

I'LL BLAME IT ON MOSQUITOES  
BUT THIS CRAZY HEART -- IT VETOES  
EVERY LAME EXCUSE.  
OH, GOD, HE'S DANCING NOW:  
HOW ODD...BUT SWEET.  
I'D BETTER STAND MY GROUND  
OR HE COULD SWEEP ME OFF MY FEET.

ARTHUR

Care to dance?

LUCY

Sorry, I have no sense of rhythm.

ARTHUR

So who are you trying to impress? The squirrels?

FRED ASTAIRE  
 TAUGHT ME THESE STEPS, YOU SEE.  
 WELL, I'M NO ASTAIRE, AND THAT'S A FACT,  
 SO, HEY, YOU SHOULDN'T ACT SO  
 "GINGER"-LY...

*(SHE QUIETLY LAUGHS AND EXTENDS HER ARMS TO MEET HIS. THEY BEGIN TO DANCE AS THE MUSIC SWELLS.)*

ARTHUR

YOU "ONE-TWO-THREE-FOUR,  
 ONE-TWO-THREE-FOUR"  
 BEAUTIFULLY...

*(THE LAST "BEAUTIFUL" IS SUNG SIMULTANEOUSLY WITH GIL WHO IS SINGING TO DONNA FROM INSIDE THE VAN. THEY ARE UNDER A BLANKET WITH LITTLE CLOTHING.)*

GIL

BEAUTIFUL.

DONNA

*(IN SOLILOQUY:)*  
 THEY ALWAYS SAY...

GIL

YOU ARE SO BEAUTIFUL.

DONNA

HOW CAN THEY KNOW IN THE DARK?

GIL

SO GENTLE AND ADORING  
 THAT YOU KEEP MY TRUMPET ROARING.  
 YOU'RE SO BEAUTIFUL.

DONNA

WE'RE MAKING BEAUTIFUL MUSIC

GIL

MY WIFE IS NOT AS CARING  
SO THERE'S NO SENSE IN COMPARING  
WHO'S MORE BEAUTIFUL...

WHO NEEDS A BEAUTIFUL HOME?  
WHO NEEDS A BEAUTIFUL BED  
WHICH I SHARE WITH MY COMFORTABLE WIFE  
IN MY COMFORTABLE LIFE  
EARNING BEAUTIFUL BREAD...

*(GIL KISSES DONNA AT THE SAME TIME ARTHUR TENDERLY TAKES LUCY'S HAND AND KISSES IT.)*

ARTHUR, LUCY, GIL, DONNA

ALONE WITH YOU  
HERE IN THE DARK,  
WE TWO CREATE A SPARK  
SO BEAUTIFUL.

WHO CAN TELL  
IF TIME WILL BREAK THE SPELL?  
TONIGHT IS BEAUTIFUL,  
OH, BEAUTIFUL,  
SO BEAUTIFUL...

*(BOTH MEN KISS THEIR DATES ON THE LIPS ON THE BUTTON)*

BLACKOUT

ACT TWO, Scene Three

*(LIGHTS COME UP ON AARON, ALONE, PRACTICING A CLARINET SOLO OF "BEAUTIFUL." THE MUSIC UNDERSCORES A SEGUE AS GEORGIE APPEARS IN A ROBE IN HIS OWN "SPECIAL". LIGHTS ALSO COME UP ON MARTY, JACK, AND MARSHALL WHO APPEAR FISHING ON A NEARBY LAKE. IT IS A FEW DAYS LATER.)*

MARTY

BEAUTIFUL  
THIS PLACE IS BEAUTIFUL.  
IT FEELS SO PEACEFUL AND SERENE,  
LIKE NOTHING ELSE I'VE SEEN.  
SO BEAUTIFUL...

JACK

You said it. This musician's life could be addicting.



MARSHALL

You really believe that?

JACK

Relax all day, jazz at night...

MARSHALL

You want to hear the down side? Filthy clubs, owners that stiff you –

JACK

Hey, not today. Today everyone and everything is -- like Marty said, "beautiful." Right, Marty?

MARTY

*(LOST IN REVERIE)* Huh?

JACK

Where were you just now...if it's not too personal?

MARTY

I don't know. I like it here, you know. It's like summer camp...only there are no kids around. *(HE THINKS OF HIS SON & TRIES TO CHANGE THE SUBJECT)* Plenty of trees, birds...

JACK

Fresh air.

MARTY

I feel like someone with an untraceable license plate. No one knows who I am or where I came from. And if anyone asks, I just say, "I'm a musician."

JACK

I got a letter from my wife.

MARTY

Yeah, how'd she take the news?

JACK

Relieved. Get this: she thought I was lying -- there was another woman! *(MARTY AND MARSHALL LOOK AT EACH OTHER, THEN EXPLODE WITH LAUGHTER.)* Well, it is within the realm of possibilities!

*(THEY CONTINUE TO LAUGH AS AARON PLAYS A SHORT, SEXY RIFF FROM "BIFF-BAM-BANG". LIGHTS COME UP ON GIL AND DONNA SNUGGLING IN BED WHERE WE LAST SAW THEM.)*

GIL

Don't you hate being the "other woman?"

DONNA

You mean, there's someone else in bed with us?

GIL

Come on, I'm serious.

DONNA

All right. I'd rather be the woman, but you learn to stop wanting what you can't have.

GIL

I could change all that.

DONNA

Lots of guys here tell me that. They even slip their wedding band on my finger. It's usually a lousy fit.

GIL

Maybe. But sometimes when I'm playing up there on that stage, I feel "this is it!" Nothing else matters. Just the music. And you...

DONNA

Baby, don't confuse two weeks with a lifetime. *(GIL LOOKS REJECTED)* All right, supposing we get serious. Then what? I helplessly watch while you play in some dive and another waitress throws herself at you? Look, I know I'm a precious gem, but there are a lot of cubic zirconia running around. And it's hard to tell the genuine article...especially in the dark. *(PAUSE)* Am I right?

GIL

*(HE KNOWS SHE'S PAINTED A TRUE SCENARIO)* I would never play in dives. *(HE BEGRUDGINGLY NODS AND SMILES AT HER)* At least think about it.

DONNA

Tell you what -- you still feel the same way next week when you pack your things, and I may just turn in my apron.

*(AARON WAILS WITH "FAREWELL MERE EXISTENCE" AS LIGHTS COME UP ON ARTHUR AND LUCY AS THEY RIDE IN ON THEIR BIKES.)*

LUCY

How are you doing?

ARTHUR

*(RIDING UNSTEADILY)* Fine.

LUCY

Say stop when you want to.

ARTHUR

STOP! *(THEY BOTH COME TO A HALT. ARTHUR IS A BIT WINDED.)*

LUCY

You okay?

ARTHUR

Never better. I've got a confession to make, though.

LUCY

What's that?

ARTHUR

It's my first time. On a **bike**, I mean.

LUCY

I never would have known.

ARTHUR

Well, it's easy to pick up -- kind of like...riding a bike!

LUCY

*(SHE LAUGHS)* Right. So you want to keep going?

ARTHUR

What? And miss this beautiful view? *(HE LOOK AT HER AND TAKES OFF HIS HELMET:)*  
 You know, one of the great drawbacks of being a dentist is you work on mouths for so long, you take them for granted. *(HE DISMOUNTS HIS BIKE AND WALKS OVER TO HER.)* Do you realize it's been a full twenty minutes since I last kissed you?

*(THEY KISS WHILE AARON PLAYS "FOUR HOURS AWAY FROM PARADISE" AS WE CROSS FADE TO MARTY, MARSHALL, AND JACK FISHING)*

MARTY

There goes "Aaron the fanatic" again -- rehearsing for his next "gig"!

MARSHALL

I wouldn't kid him about it.

MARTY

I guess you're right. So Marshall, you got anything lined up?

MARSHALL

A month in Chicago with Marian McPartland. A European tour with in November with Warren Vache –

MARTY

Wow, Europe. Jack, how'd you like to do that?

JACK

I almost did.

MARTY

Oh, yeah? When?

JACK

The summer I graduated, the band we had at college was invited to a jazz festival in Belgium.

MARTY

What happened?

JACK

My father felt music was strictly a collegiate activity. Since I'd graduated, it was -- how'd he put it? Oh, yes, "time to put the toys away." (PAUSE) Anyway, I've visited Belgium a couple of times on business trips, so it's not like I've led a deprived life. (*LOOKING AT MARTY, HE'S CLOSE TO GIVING HIM A COMPLIMENT*) And in a crazy way, maybe these two weeks made up for it.

MARTY

Hey, don't talk about it like it's over. We've still got a big weekend ahead of us --

JACK

Oh, with that "premiere recording artiste..." *(ALL THE MEN SUDDENLY REALIZE IN HORROR THAT THEY ARE DUE BACK AT THE LODGE.)* Hey guys, what time is it?!!

*(ABE, BACK AT THE LODGE, NERVOUSLY ADDRESSES HIS PATRONS)*

ABE

Folks, Miss Ricki Valentine and the Grenadiers will be here... momentarily. In the meantime, did you all get a chance to visit our chopped liver model of Mount Sinai Hospital? There's still an entire wing left untouched!

*(A DISHEVELED GIL APPEARS FROM BEHIND AN ENCLAVE)*

GIL

*(TO A POSSIBLY UNSEEN DONNA)* Damn! We're the warm-up act! Hey, throw me my underwear, will you!

JACK

*(JACK'S FLAILING AT THE DOCK)* Somebody cut me loose! My lure is stuck!

ABE

Could that be the pitter-patter of THE GRENADIERS' feet? You know those boys -- they just can't stop practicing. Day and night. Night and day. *(LAUNCHES INTO A SONG:)* "**Night and day -- you are the one, Mrs. Finkelstein...**"

ARTHUR

*(ON HIS BIKE:)* I'm peddling as fast as I can!

GIL

Gotta go, babe!

JACK

*(MARTY CUTS HIS LINE)*

Free at last!

AARON

*(WITH CLARINET)* I'M READY FOR YOU --

MARTY, JACK, MARSHALL, ARTHUR, GIL, AARON

RICKI VALENTINE!!!

*(THEY CONTINUE TO HUSTLE AS THE STAGE IS TRANSFORMED BACK INTO PARADISE MANOR'S CRYSTAL ROOM. THE MUSIC TO "BIFF-BAM-BANG!" IS HEARD AS THE GUYS*

*GET INTO THEIR BLAZERS. WHEN THE LIGHTS COME UP, THEY ARE FINISHING THE SONG.)*

ACT TWO, Scene Four

MARTY

*(INTO THE MIKE:)* We'd like to thank you for that warm reception, and we hope you've enjoyed our **eighth encore** of "BIFF-BAM-BANG!" almost as much as we enjoyed playing it. Just as soon as Ricki Valentine arrives, we'll get this show on the road --

ABE

*(FOR THE BAND'S EARS ONLY)* What am I going to do?! I promised them Ricki Valentine! That's all they've heard out of my mouth for the last week! And what do I get for it? A no good, no talent, no show --

*(RICKI VALENTINE AND HER MANAGER, VINCENT AMATI, ENTER. ABE GREET'S HER AS IF SHE WERE STREISAND.)*

RICKI! So wonderful to see you!

RICKI

*(SURVEYING THE SCENE WHILE TRYING TO MAINTAIN HER OPTIMISM)* Oh, Vince, you've outdone yourself!

AMATI

Don't start with me. *(INTRODUCING HIMSELF TO MITGANG:)* Vincent Amati - we spoke on the phone.

ABE

Abe Mitgang, at your service. It's a pleasure to meet you, Miss Valentine. I have all your records --

RICKI

Aww, aren't you sweet?

ABE

And I saw all your movies --

RICKI

My!

ABE

-- **both** of them. *(SHE CASTS ABE A DISPARAGING LOOK)*

AMATI

Our rooms ready?

ABE

Yes, although frankly we thought you might want to entertain first, seeing as dinner was three hours ago.

RICKI

Oh, did I make these nice people wait?

ABE

What's **time** at Paradise Manor? *(HE CHUCKLES)*

RICKI

You know, Vince had a dickens of a time trying to find your quaint little establishment.

AMATI

Let's not go over that again.

RICKI

Everywhere we drove we saw **big** billboards: Bobby Vinton at Grossingers', Steve and Eydie at the Concord. But I didn't see BUPKUS about me.

ABE

Well, we have this wonderful sign in the Crystal Room. And besides, it was a last-minute booking.

AMATI

(TO RICKI:) The people we want will be here tomorrow night.

RICKI

You're the boss.

AMATI

Ricki, why don't you go and get ready for tonight's "preview," while I discuss a few details with Mr. Mitgang.

RICKI

Whatever you say, Vince. *(TO ABE:)* Just point me in the direction of my dressing room.

ABE

Uh, we don't exactly have a dressing room.

RICKI

No?

ABE

It's more like a bathroom. *(HE POINTS OFFSTAGE)*

RICKI

*(FOR VINCE'S BENEFIT)* A bathroom.

ABE

But once you lock the door, no one will bother you.

*(RICKI GRABS HER MAKE-UP CASE FROM VINCE AND FURIOUSLY EXITS)*

AMATI

I'll join you in a minute, honey. *(HE HANDS ABE A SHEATH OF MUSIC:)* Here.

ABE

What's this?

AMATI

Music for your band. Pass it out.

ABE

Uh, it was my understanding that you travel with your own musicians.

AMATI

We parted due to "artistic differences." Any other questions?

ABE

No. *(HE HANDS MARSHALL THE ARRANGEMENTS)*

AMATI

Good. Now how about you showing me to Miss Valentine's "dressing room?"



ABE

Of course.  
*(THEY EXIT LEAVING THE BAND ALONE ONSTAGE)*

MARSHALL

*(PASSING OUT THE ARRANGEMENTS)* Guys, these are her charts. I hope you can read music.

MARTY

*(TRYING TO RALLY THE TROUPES)* Hey, who's better than we are?!!

GUYS

*(WITH A LACK OF ENTHUSIASM)* no one...

JACK

*(EYING THE SCORE)* Listen, guys, I read a little, but oh my God, **key changes with five sharps**, and what's that: **a flatted Seventh with a diminished Ninth?!**

ARTHUR

At least you can read.

MARTY

I'm with you.

MARSHALL

Gil?

GIL

I can handle it.

AARON

*(FIERCELY COMPETITIVE)* No problem for me.

JACK

So what do we do?!

MARSHALL

"F" and "P".

JACK

Forte and piano?

MARSHALL

"Fake and pray"!

AARON

Hey, guys, don't blow it. A chance like this comes once in a lifetime.

*(AMATI, RICKI, AND ABE ENTER)*

RICKI

What do you say, boys? *(THEY RETURN THE GREETING)* Oh, did Vince mention that I have a teeny-tiny throat ailment? Hope you don't mind transposing my numbers a whole step down. Great! *(JACK AND MARTY LOOK PANICKED)*

AMATI

Who's the leader?

MARTY

Me.

RICKI

*(TRYING TO WIN FAVOR WITH MARTY, "THE LEADER")* You know, I **love** your shirt.

MARTY

*(FEELING AS IF THE GODS ARE SMILING DOWN ON HIM)* Thanks.

AMATI

Well, you got it together?

MARTY

Whenever you're ready.

AMATI

You guys better know what the hell you're doing. Miss Valentine is a major star with a major following, and wrong notes will not be tolerated. *(THREATENINGLY:)* Do I make myself clear?

RICKI

Now Vincent, calm down. *(SWEETLY TO THE BAND)* Hi, boys. How are you coming along with the music? You know, it all looks like chicken scratch to me. *(THEY ALL FORCE A*

LAUGH)

MARTY

I guess we're a little nervous working with a big star and all.

RICKI

Awwwwww. If you want to know a little secret, (*ALMOST IN A WHISPER:*) I'm a little nervous, too. You see, while you guys try and figure out what all those little black notes are trying to say, important people are coming to see if I still have it. **My credibility, my career, my life is on the line.** (*SHE SMILES*) Now, relax and have a good time!

AMATI

I'm going out in the house, sweetheart. You knock 'em dead, you hear me?

RICKI

I'll make you proud, Vince.

AMATI

That's my baby. (*TO ABE:*) Who's the M.C.?

ABE

Me.

AMATI

(*HANDING HIM A CARD*) Read this. (*MITGANG STARTS TO READ TO HIMSELF*) Out loud.

ABE

Oh, right. (*MITGANG NERVOUSLY STUMBLES OVER TO THE MICROPHONE*)

AMATI

You're on.

(*ARTHUR STARTS A DRUM ROLE*)

### **TRACK FOURTEEN**

ABE

(*READING FROM THE CARD:*) "Ladies and Gentlemen, you are in for a treat tonight. A great star is in our midst to give us a sneak preview of tomorrow night's one-woman concert extravaganza... 'A GIRL NAMED RICKI!' So now, by special arrangement with Arco Records, I am privileged to present - movie star, TV star, recording star - the one, the only, Miss Ricki Valentine!"

*(THEY LAUNCH INTO THE OPENING NUMBER. THEIR PLAYING IS FAR FROM FLAWLESS, MUCH TO THE CHAGRIN OF RICKI AND AMATI. AMATI LEADS THE APPLAUSE ON HER ENTRANCE.)*

**SONG: "RICKI IS BACK IN TOWN"**

RICKI

Oh, gosh! This is such a special night tonight...

'CAUSE RICKI IS BACK IN TOWN!  
SHE'S HAD HER SABBATICAL.  
NOW FANS ARE FANATICAL  
'CAUSE RICKI IS BACK IN TOWN!

"UNSINKABLE MOLLY BROWN" --  
THAT'S RICKI, THE CRITICS VOTE.  
HER LOVE BOAT WILL STAY AFLOAT.  
RICKI IS BACK IN TOWN --  
SHE'S REALLY BACK IN TOWN!

*(TO THE BAND:)* Oh, we're smokin', boys!

RACETRACK HORSES REVERT TO AMBLIN',  
AND IN LAS VEGAS THEY PROHIBIT GAMBLIN'.  
EVERY OCEAN IS MINUS SALT AND  
EARTHQUAKES OCCURRING ARE NOT AT FAULT.

YOUR WORLD WILL TURN UPSIDE-DOWN;  
YOUR EYES WILL TURN INSIDE OUT.  
DON'T BE SUCH A SAUERKRAUT --  
'CAUSE RICKI IS BACK IN TOWN!  
GUESS WHO IS BACK IN TOWN!

*(VINCE AMATI LEADS A TEPID ROUND OF APPLAUSE)*

Thank you, thank you all. It's so wonderful to be back and see all your lovely faces. I've missed you all terribly.

*(JACK UNSUCCESSFULLY TRIES TO FUDGE, "BE IT EVER SO HUMBLE, THERE'S NO PLACE LIKE HOME" IN THE WRONG KEY AS RICKI TRIES UNSUCCESSFULLY TO SING ALONG. HE TOTALLY SCREWS UP THE ENDING. SHE GLARES AT HIM AND CLENCHES HER TEETH.)*

JACK

*(WHISPERING)* Sorry.

RICKI

It's amazing how true that sentiment still is, even if the notes aren't quite right. *(SHE TURNS HER ATTENTION BACK TO HER FANS.)*

You know, many of you have written me asking, "Where've ya been, Ricki?" Well, I could tell you that I've been traveling or writing my autobiography...but I couldn't lie to my fans. After my series "OUR FUNNY VALENTINE" -- thank you, thank you -- was **cancelled**, I went through a period of adjustment...of self-discovery.....a revelation...a detox center. (*AMATI LEADS THE APPLAUSE*) Thank you, thank you...But you know -- sometimes things happen for the best. For I not only found me there, the real Ricki Valentine, but I also discovered a certain someone who is everything to me now. He's watching over me, He's watching over you, He's watching over this whole crazy, jumbled world. It's a big job, but He's gotta do it. And so I've written this little song to show my appreciation. I hope you like it.

*(SHE WAITS FOR HER PROPER INTRO FROM JACK, THE PIANIST)*

I love the **intro** to this song.

MARTY

Jack!

*(JACK REALIZES HIS MISTAKE AND PLUNGES IN)*

RICKI

I especially love it in **my** key. (*JACK MAKES THE ADJUSTMENT TO THE LOWER KEY, BUT NOT WITHOUT SOME GLARING ERRORS*) Thank you.

### TRACK FIFTEEN

#### SONG: "ME AND MR. 'G' "

ME AND MISTER "G",  
ME AND MISTER "G."  
CLOSE AS WE CAN BE  
KEEPING COMPANY  
WITH MY MISTER "G".

NO MORE LOST AT SEA;  
HE'S MY LIFE BUOY.  
HEALTHIER THAN COKE

*(SHE DEMURELY PLACES A FINGER DOWN ON ONE NOSTRIL AND SNIFFS THROUGH THE OTHER)*

AND I DON'T GO BROKE  
HOOKED ON MISTER "G"....  
WHO NEEDS THOSE GIGOLOS WHO BULLIED ME?  
MY LOVE FOR HIM JUST OVERFLOWS

*(JACK TRIES TO SIMULATE AN ARPEGGIATED GLISS BUT WITH POOR RESULTS)*

I'D RATHER HAVE HIM IN MY HEART  
THAN ANY FOREIGN SUBSTANCE **UP MY NOSE**

MARSHALL

**There's a key change here.**

JACK

**HELP!**

*(HE SCREWS UP THE KEY CHANGE. SHE LOOKS LIKE SHE'S ABOUT TO BREATHE FIRE)*

RICKI

**MY NOSE!!!**

ME AND MISTER "G"  
TILL ETERNITY  
AFTER I AM DEAD  
I KNOW WE'LL BE WED  
ME AND MISTER --

*(THE BAND MAKES A GLARING ERROR. SHE LASHES OUT AT THEM.)*

**GODDAMMIT!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!**

*(SUDDENLY SHE REALIZES WHAT SHE'S DONE. APOLOGETICALLY SHE LOOKS AT HER AUDIENCE:) Sorry. (THEN TO GOD:) Sorry!*

AMATI

*(SHOUTING IN A WHISPER TO THE BAND)* Go back to the opening number!

ARTHUR

Where's that?

AMATI

Hurry for Christ's sake!

MARSHALL

A one-two-three-four!

*(THEY LAUNCH INTO A FRENETIC VERSION OF "RICKI IS BACK IN TOWN")*

RICKI

THE IRON CURTAIN BECOMES TIN FOIL  
AND IN RHODE ISLAND THEY'VE DISCOVERED OIL.  
THE STOCK MARKET RISES,  
NIAGRA FALLS –

*(SHE RIPS OFF HER OUTFIT TO REVEAL A SKIMPY, HIGHLY RISQUE LITTLE NUMBER UNDERNEATH.)*

AND RUNNING WATER NO LONGER CRAWLS!

CHICAGO'S HER KIND OF TOWN!  
FOR L.A. SHE'LL GO ALL THE WAY!  
BUT SHE'S MOVING HERE TO STAY!  
RICKI IS BACK IN TOWN –

Head for the hills, boys!

RICKI IS BACK IN TOWN!

She'll cure your ills, boys!

HER PRICE IS RIGHT,  
COME ON DOWN!  
YOU BET YOUR ASS SHE'S IN TOWN!  
RICKI!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

*(RICKI GIVES THE NUMBER A BIG FINISH, THEN FREEZES IN A PROVOCATIVE POSE.)*

ABE

Wasn't she wonderful, ladies and gentlemen? And that's only the tip of the iceberg! (RICKI breaks from her trance and blows kisses as she races offstage.) So go, get some sleep, come back tomorrow and spend an entire evening with Miss Ricki Valentine! This is Abe Mitgang saying Goodnight and ENJOY!

*(RICKI COMES BACK, HAIR DISHEVELED WITH VINCE AMATI IN PURSUIT)*

RICKI

AMATEURS! Every one of you! I have never been so humiliated in all my –

AMATI

Ricki, save your vocal chords and let me handle this.

ABE

You know, Miss Valentine, with just a little practice I'm sure by tomorrow night —

RICKI

*Tomorrow* night? You think there's gonna be a *sequel*?!

ABE

But you *have* to perform. It's in your contract!

RICKI

*(TRYING TO COMPOSE HERSELF)* Vince, you tell this man to get himself another band...or get himself another star!

AMATI

Don't you worry, Ricki.

MARTY

*(IMPULSIVELY RUNNING OVER TO HER, HE TRIES TO USE HIS CHARMS.)*

Miss Valentine – Ricki, listen, we read you loud and clear. We need to practice our asses off – and we will. Only just give us another chance. Please, Ricki, this gig means so much to us...

RICKI

*(SHE BEGINS TO LAUGH, REALIZING HOW NAÏVE MARTY IS AS TO WHAT THE GIG MEANS TO HER.)*

You know, I've changed my mind. *(MARTY BRIGHTENS)* I *hate* your shirt. *(SHE EXITS)* Vincent!!!

AMATI

*(TO MITGANG)* She quits, and I'm in bad trouble. *(WITH AN AIR OF MENACE)* And if I'm in bad trouble, you're in worse.

ABE

What can I do? What?!

AMATI

Get a band that can cut it by tomorrow night.

ABE

How?

AMATI

That's *your* problem.

*(AS AMATI STARTS FROM THE ROOM, MARTY IN FRUSTRATION AND DEFIANCE PRODUCES A RASPBERRY ON HIS TROMBONE. AMATI TURNS ON HIS HEELS AND OMINOUSLY RETURNS TO THE BANDSTAND.)*

Nice horn. Let me see it.

MARTY

No.



AMATI

Maybe you didn't hear me right.

MARTY

*(PROTECTIVE OF HIS INSTRUMENT)* What do you want to see it for?

AMATI

I used to play one of those. That last note sounded off – too much hot air. I'm going to locate the source of the problem.

*(AS AMATI GOES FOR THE INSTRUMENT, MARTY IMPULSIVELY HOLD HIM OFF.*

MARTY

The hell you are!

*AMATI PUNCHES MARTY IN THE JAW AND SENDS HIM DOWN . HE CONTINUES, TO MITGANG:)*

A band that can cut it by tonight.

*(AMATI EXITS. THE GROUP GOES TO MARTY'S ASSISTANCE)*

JACK

*(TO MITGANG:)* Call the police!

ABE

Are you crazy?

JACK

A man was assaulted.

ABE

You call the police, a man is going to be killed: ME!

MARSHALL

Welcome to the wonderful world of music.

ARTHUR

What happens now?

GIL

The gig is up.

AARON

*(DEVASTATED)* You mean, we're fired?

ABE

What else can I do? *(TO MARSHALL:)* Can you get me what I need?

MARSHALL

Maybe.

ABE

How much?

MARSHALL

Tough order to fill on such short notice.

ABE

How much?

MARSHALL

Five hundred a man for the weekend.

ABE

Highway robbery!

MARSHALL

Beats murder.

GIL

*(TO MARSHALL:)* Wait a minute -- you're going to stay after what happened?

MARSHALL

Can you make me a better offer?

ACT TWO, Scene Five

*(LIGHTS DIM ON THE MEN AND COME UP ON DONNA AND LUCY. THEY SING THE FOLLOWING SONG AS THE MEN WATCH THEIR MIRRORED BALL DISAPPEAR ONLY TO BE REPLACED BY THE NAKED BULB OF THE BUNKHOUSE)*

**TRACK SIXTEEN**

**SONG: "TIME TO PUT THE TOYS AWAY"**

## DONNA &amp; LUCY

TIME TO PUT THE TOYS AWAY.  
 TIME TO LEAVE THE PAST BEHIND YOU.  
 HOLDING ON WILL JUST REMIND YOU  
 OF CHANCES THAT SLIPPED BY,  
 AND YOU'RE LEFT THERE WOND'RING WHY...

*(THE MEN'S BUNK. MARTY, JACK, GIL AND AARON ARE PACKING TO LEAVE...  
 PLEASE NOTE: THIS SCENE IS NOT INCLUDED IN THE RECORDING)*

JACK

Where the hell's my razor?

AARON

How should I know?

JACK

You borrowed it.

GIL

I can't believe I ever lived in this dump.

MARTY

You didn't. You spent the last week in my van, remember?

GIL

It's all a blur.

MARTY

No kidding? I had the same feeling after getting socked in the jaw --

AARON

For a certain piano player's screw-ups!

JACK

Correction: he got socked for being a wise-ass.

MARTY

Oh, is that the party line? I deserved it -- which excuses all of you for not helping me?

GIL

What the hell could we do?

AARON

*(TO JACK:)* Here -- here's your damn razor!

*(THEY RESUME PACKING AS THE LIGHTS DIM)*

LUCY

BETTER NOT TO DWELL ON CHILDHOOD MEM'RIES.  
WHY FACE REGRET?  
LET THEM ALONE.

*(AS LUCY MOVES TOWARDS ARTHUR, HE TAKES HER HAND.  
DONNA JOINS GIL...)*

DONNA

BUT MOVING ON DOES NOT ERASE THE MEM'RIES.  
HEARTS WON'T FORGET  
PLEASURES THEY'VE KNOWN...

Where to?

GIL

It looks like my next gig is Rockefeller Center.

DONNA

Rainbow and Stars? I'm impressed.

GIL

Not quite -- twelve floors below. My father-in-law is leasing office space, and I have an appointment with a client Monday morning. (PAUSE) Look, I'm really sorry if I -- I feel foolish.

DONNA

Why? You're not responsible for what you do in your dreams.

GIL

If you knew I was dreaming, why didn't you pinch me?

DONNA

Gil, didn't anyone ever tell you it's dangerous to awaken a sleepwalker?

*(GIL KISSES HER HAND TENDERLY, THEN LETS GO. SEGUE TO LUCY & ARTHUR...)*

LUCY

What happened?

ARTHUR

The band got fired and we're leaving.

LUCY

Now?

ARTHUR

Right now. Look, I know we've only known each other a short time, but I really care for you --

LUCY

Please, Arthur --

ARTHUR

And I know nothing would make me happier than if the two of us -

LUCY

*(HER FINGER TO HIS LIPS)* Don't...I'm married.

ARTHUR

*(AS THOUGH STRUCK A BODY BLOW)* What?

LUCY

He's in the service. We were having problems, big problems. I hadn't heard from him in months. And then they said you were lonely -- I was too. Being with you helped me to forget.

ARTHUR

I'm not hearing this.

LUCY

I got a letter from him yesterday. I've known him for thirteen years...that's almost half my life.

*(ARTHUR TURNS AND RUNS OFF)*

I'm sorry, Arthur. You're a wonderful person...

*(GIL SILENTLY BIDS DONNA GOODBYE)*

DONNA

TIME TO PUT THE TOYS AWAY.  
TIME TO HEAR THE FUTURE CALLING.

DONNA & LUCY

YOU CAN'T STOP THE LEAVES FROM FALLING:  
WINDS OF CHANGE WILL BLOW,  
SWEEPING PAST THE JOYS OF LONG AGO...

*(LUCY AND DONNA DISAPPEAR UPSTAGE AS MARSHALL ENTERS THE CABIN.)*

MARSHALL

You guys seen Mitgang?

*(MARTY, JACK, AARON, AND GIL LOOK AT HIM, BUT DO NOT ANSWER)*

Give me a break, guys? I wasn't the one who socked Marty in the jaw.

MARTY

No, you waited until my back was turned. Now, if you don't mind we have a long trip ahead of us.

MARSHALL

For you guys it's a lark -- for me it's my bread and butter.

AARON

Sorry, but we can't relate...being "amateurs" and all.

MARSHALL

Gil, at least you know where I'm coming from.

GIL

I only know we're going...and you're staying.

MARSHALL

And that makes me into some kind of criminal?!

MARTY

Hey, Marshall. You should be flattered -- we felt you were part of the group.

## MARSHALL

Man, the only thing we had in common was this gig!

TRACK SEVENTEEN**SONG: "CHOICES"**

YOU'VE GOT CHOICES...  
 YOU'VE GOT LOTS AND LOTS AND LOTS  
 AND LOTS AND LOTS AND LOTS OF CHOICES.  
 SURE, YOU PLAY FOR FUN  
 BUT WHEN IT'S DONE  
 YOU DRIVE OFF IN ROLLS ROYCES.  
 YOU'VE GOT CHOICES  
 EVERYDAY.

IT'S A HOBBY --  
 YOU'VE GOT ONLY PRIDE AT STAKE,  
 WELL, TAKE A LOOK AT THIS HERE FINGER.  
 WITH A CUT OR SPRAIN  
 EACH TIME I PLAY  
 THE PAIN IS GONNA LINGER.  
 THAT DON'T MAKE FOR CHOICES,  
 NOT WITH BILLS TO PAY!

I'VE WORKED AT ONE JOB  
 MY WHOLE LIFE  
 AND HELL, I THINK I'M MORE THAN  
 PRETTY GOOD.  
 BUT IF TOMORROW  
 IT ENDED,  
 THIS BASS IS ONLY GOOD FOR  
 KINDLING WOOD.

BUT YOU'VE GOT OPTIONS,  
 YOU'VE GOT STOCKS AND BONDS  
 WHILE I AM BOUND TO PLAY MY BASS FOREVER.  
 I DON'T ASK FOR PITY --  
 IT'S A CHOICE I NEVER WANT TO SEVER.  
 IT'S MY MUSIC:  
 IT'S MY LIFE!

SO KEEP YOUR CHOICES.  
 BUT DON'T RAISE YOUR VOICES SAYING  
 I'VE NO RIGHT TO MAKE A LIVING AT MY TRADE.  
 YOU DON'T HAVE TO RESPECT ME --  
 RESPECT THE CHOICE  
 I'VE MADE!

*(AFTER THE NUMBER, HE LOOKS AT THE GROUP, THEN TURNS TO LEAVE.)*

MARTY

Hey, MAN.  
(*MARSHALL TURNS, BRACED FOR THE WORST*)

(*SMILING*) Take care of yourself.

MARSHALL

You, too. All of you guys.

MARTY

How are you making out with the replacements?

MARSHALL

Got a couple of guys for sure and calls in to others. (*TO GIL:*) I don't have a trumpet yet. You want to stay?

GIL

That's very flattering...but no thanks.

MARTY

Don't refuse on my account.

GIL

I'm not. (*TO MARSHALL WITH A SENSE OF PRIDE:*) I already have a job.

AARON

If you need a clarinet player, I'm available.

MARSHALL

Thanks, but I've got someone.

(*MITGANG ENTERS*)

ABE

(*TO MARSHALL:*) The guy from New York is on the phone. He's got everything but a trumpet and clarinet. (*NOTING THE LOOKS AND TENSION IN RESPONSE TO WHAT HE'S SAID*) What's the matter?

MARSHALL

Nothing.



ABE

What'll I tell him?

MARSHALL

Give him directions and have them here by six.

ABE

Right.

*(HE EXITS. AARON, DEEPLY HURT, HAS TURNED AWAY. MARSHALL SIGNALS THE OTHERS TO LEAVE)*

MARTY

Someone want to give me a hand with the luggage?

GIL

I will. *(THEY EXIT)*

JACK

I think I left my watch on the band stand. *(HE FOLLOWS THEM OUT)*

MARSHALL

Aaron?

AARON

Go away.

MARSHALL

I'm sorry. I really am.

AARON

Yeah? Then hire me.

MARSHALL

The guys that are coming up are top flight -- you'd be in over your head.

AARON

You mean, I stink.

MARSHALL

I never said that.

AARON

Oh, boy.

MARSHALL

Aaron, look --

AARON

Go to hell!

MARSHALL

It's not a religion.

AARON

Meaning...

MARSHALL

Forget it.

*(MARSHALL STARTS TO EXIT. AARON GRABS HIS ARM)*

AARON

Say it.

MARSHALL

Devotion isn't enough.

*(MARSHALL EXITS LEAVING AARON ALONE. MARTY, GIL, AND JACK RESPECTFULLY ENTER TO PUT THE FINISHING TOUCHES ON PACKING THE VAN.)*

MARTY

Guys, let's get going. It would be nice if I could beat that bridge traffic.

JACK

Where's Arthur?

ARTHUR

*(ENTERING, OBVIOUSLY DISTRAUGHT)* I'm here.

JACK

What's with him?

GIL

Just grab a seat.

*(ABE APPROACHES THE VAN)*

ABE

*(CHIPPER, AS IF NOTHING HAS HAPPENED:)* Flynn, I'll give you a call next year. Tell your agent to keep your calendar's free. *(HE HAS NO INTENTION OF FOLLOWING THRU)*

MARTY

Abe, I'm a used car salesman, remember? We invented bullshit.

ABE

*(THEN, WITH GENUINE SINCERITY)* You know, Marty, there was a time when I didn't need stars to fill this place. Good food, good music, good weather -- it was enough. Now I've got competition from every direction -- Atlantic City, Club Med, that fekahkta Disneyworld. The Catskills is no longer the only game in town.

*(MARTY NODS, ABE SHRUGS HIS SHOULDERS AND EXTENDS HIS HAND)*

Drive safe.

MARTY

*(MARTY TAKES IT)* Shalom.

*(ABE EXITS. MARTY STARTS THE ENGINE. THE GUYS TAKE A LAST LOOK AT PARADISE MANOR.)*

*(SAME OMINOUS BASS VAMP IN "REAL NICE TRIP" UNDERSCORES THE DIALOGUE.)*

*(THE BACKDROP REFLECTS THEY ARE ON THE HIGHWAY. A LIGHT CHANGE SIGNIFIES A PASSAGE OF TIME. EVERYONE IS SILENT UNTIL...)*

ACT TWO, Scene Six

JACK

If we get to New York by five, I could be in Nantucket by tonight.

AARON

Do you mind if I don't have to worry about that?

JACK

Pardon me.

ARTHUR

*(TO GIL:)* What right did you have telling her I was lonely?

GIL

Weren't you?

MARTY

Would you mind turning that record over?

ARTHUR

I don't want to see any of you ever again.

MARTY

That's the first good news today.

JACK

I propose we not speak until we reach New York.

GIL

I'll buy that.

AARON

Me too.

MARTY

A terrific suggestion. All in favor, shut up. It's unanimous: the shut-ups have it!

*(AN EXPLOSION JOLTS THE VAN. MARTY TURNS HIS WHEEL SHARPLY FROM RIGHT TO LEFT AND BACK AGAIN BEFORE HE BRINGS IT TO A HALT ON THE SHOULDER OF THE ROAD.)*

MARTY

Well, it's a flat. The bad news is: no spare. *(GROANS FROM THE GUYS)* The good news is: there's a diner just up ahead. I'll make a call.

ARTHUR

I'm coming too.

MARTY

Suit yourself.

*(MARTY AND ARTHUR EXIT. THE OTHERS WAIT IMPATIENTLY OR GET OUT TO STRETCH.)*

JACK

Unbelievable! A used-car salesman with no spare!

*(AFTER A FEW MOMENTS OF SILENCE, GIL STARTS TO IMPROVISE THE SONG "CHOICES" ON HIS "TRUMPET".)*

AARON

Turn it off.

GIL

Why?

AARON

I don't want to hear it.

GIL

So cover your ears.

*(GIL RESUMES HIS PLAYING)*

AARON

*(PUTTING HIS HAND OVER GIL'S HORN)* I said turn it off!

JACK

It is intrusive.

GIL

You stay out of this.

*(GIL PURPOSELY POINTS HIS HORN IN AARON'S DIRECTION AND RESUMES PLAYING)*

AARON

If you have to practice something -- drink a beer. It's quieter!

GIL

Look, why don't you say what's really on your mind?! You're mad because Marshall asked me to stay and he didn't ask you.

AARON

I am mad because you are handed a one-in-a-million gift. A ONE-IN-A-MILLION GIFT...which you shit on!

GIL

Can I help it if I don't want to play? That's just the way it is!

*(ARTHUR ENTERS, SMILING AND WHISTLING)*

JACK

Well, well... What is up with you?

ARTHUR

I ordered a cup of coffee from a nice waitress. *(FOR GIL'S BENEFIT:)* **Never married.**

GIL

*(AFTER A BEAT)* When's the wedding?

ARTHUR

Don't laugh. I got her number.

*(MARTY ENTERS. HE LOOKS EXTREMELY DISTRAUGHT.)*

JACK

Uh, oh. Guys, this doesn't look good.

MARTY

The nearest service station said they couldn't be here for at least a half hour.

JACK

Farewell, Nantucket!

MARTY

You know, if I hear one more crack about your goddam Nantucket -

JACK

*(GETTING OUT OF THE VAN)* Oh, don't you threaten me, Marty, because I saw you back there at the lodge when you really had a chance to prove how tough you were!

MARTY

You're on thin ice, Jack...

JACK

Well, go ahead, Marty, hit me. Hit me! I deserve it -- I think we all do for buying the bill of goods you sold us!

GIL

Cut it out, Jack!

MARTY

Let him finish, Gil.

JACK

You know, my father was right -- some things are better left alone. But you -- you had to have it your way..."Hey, Guys, let's see how good we really are!" Well, the truth hurts, Marty. And if you don't believe me, just take a good look around!

GIL

NOW THAT'S ENOUGH! (*JUSTIFYING JACK'S OUTBURST:*) Listen, Marty, don't take it personally or anything. We're all just eager to get home.

MARTY

No, Jack's right, Gil. The customer is always right.

JACK

What? That's it? I can't believe my ears. For the first time in your life, Marty, you're **not** going to put in your two cents?!

MARTY

(*MARTY STARTS TO LOSE IT:*) You know, after I spoke with the garage, I called my wife to tell her we were on our way.

(*GIL STEPS BETWEEN THE TWO MEN HOLDING OFF MARTY IN CASE HE AND JACK COME TO BLOWS.*)

MARTY

(*BACKING OFF*)...She told me she got word this morning that Georgie died.

GIL

What?

AARON

Oh, God.

ARTHUR

He was doing so well. They were going to send him home.

MARTY

Poor Georgie. And here he thought he missed the chance of a lifetime...

AARON

If he only knew...

ARTHUR

Some hot shot band we turned out to be.

GIL

Yeah.

*(There is stillness. Then a low chuckle from Jack. They all turn in his direction.)*

JACK

*(Quietly, then building)* "Class A schmucks." Wasn't that Georgie's turn of phrase? Well, gentlemen, we're all acting like **class A schmucks**.

GIL

What are you getting at?

JACK

Look at us. We just found out Georgie's dead...and all anyone can say is how we let him down.

AARON

We did. We were fired for being amateurs.

JACK

Maybe. But maybe that's all right...maybe we're just a bunch of guys who make music not for money or recognition...but because it feels good.

MARTY

Go ahead, Jack. Rub it in.



**TRACK EIGHTEEN**

JACK

Look, Marty, I can't pretend I loved this gig -- sometimes it was closer to hell than paradise --

MARTY

You don't know when to quit, do you?!

JACK

But Georgie could only **dream** about it. And we lived it. (*Marty doesn't respond*) (*Extending his hand:*) So...thank you for inviting me, Marty.

MARTY

I'm going to wait in the van.

JACK

(*With great urgency:*) Marty, don't put the toys away.

**SONG: "I CAN'T LIVE WITHOUT YOUR HORN"**

JACK

(*TO MARTY:*)

I CAN LIVE WITHOUT YOUR NERVE,  
 YOU'RE OBNOXIOUS TO A FAULT,  
 THERE ARE TIMES I CURSE THE DAY THAT YOU WERE  
 BORN.  
 IT'S A WONDER WE SURVIVE  
 WHEN YOUR MOUTH IS STUCK IN DRIVE --

MARTY

You know, there's only so much a guy can take --

JACK

(*almost under his breath:*)

BUT I CAN'T LIVE WITHOUT...YOUR HORN.

MARTY

What?

JACK

You heard me.

MARTY

Yeah?! Well, you're not getting off that easy.

YOU'RE AS STUBBORN AS A MULE --  
NO, ON SECOND THOUGHT, AN ASS.  
YOU'RE AS SPINELESS AS A FISH THAT'S BEEN  
FILETED.

JACK

Hey, let's not get too personal.

MARTY

YOU ARE RIGID AND REPRESSED,  
BUT YOUR FINGERS HAVE BEEN BLESSED,  
AND I CAN'T LIVE WITHOUT YOUR  
SERENADE.

ARTHUR

ASIDE FROM MUSIC THERE IS LITTLE THAT WE SHARE...

AARON

LITTLE THAT CAN RESCUE US FROM STRIFE.

ALL

PLAYING ONCE A WEEK IS ALL THAT I CAN BEAR  
AND ALL I NEED TO GET ME THROUGH THIS LIFE...

MARTY

(TO ARTHUR:)

YOU ARE HOPELESSLY NAIVE,  
AND YOU WHIMPER LIKE A CHILD.  
WHEN YOU LECTURE ME ON TEETH I REACH FOR  
"TUMS."

ARTHUR

They're loaded with sucrose.

GIL

WITH A CHICK YOU'RE INSECURE,  
BUT OF THIS MUCH I AM SURE --  
MAN, I CAN'T LIVE WITHOUT YOUR DRUMS.

ALL

MAKING MUSIC AIN'T THE SAME AS MAKING FRIENDS.  
FRIENDS ARE HERE ONE MINUTE,  
THEN THEY'RE GONE.

SHOULD ONE DAY WE FIND OUR FRAGILE FRIENDSHIP  
ENDS,  
WE KNOW THE SONG WE'RE PLAYING WILL GO ON AND  
ON AND ON AND ON AND ON...

AARON

I WOULD SELL MY VERY SOUL  
FOR THE TALENT YOU NEGLECT.

GIL

I WOULD SMASH MY HORN IN TWO  
TO STEAL YOUR FIRE.

AARON

WE'RE A BAD O'HENRY TALE

GIL

BUT EACH TIME I HEAR YOU WAIL

ALL

I AM SURE I CAN'T LIVE WITHOUT...

GIL

YOUR CLARINET

AARON

YOUR HORN

ARTHUR

YOUR PIANO

MARTY

AND YOUR DRUMS

JACK

AND YOUR TROMBONE

ALL

WHEN WE PLAY,  
THERE'S A HIGH THAT NOTHING CAN REPLACE!  
NO, I CAN'T LIVE WITHOUT --

GIL

WEDNESDAY NIGHT --

AARON

WEDNESDAY NIGHT

JACK & ARTHUR

WEDNESDAY NIGHT

MARTY

GEORGIE'S BASS...

*(THERE IS BRIEF SILENCE AS THEY REMEMBER THEIR FRIEND. THEN...)*

AARON

We never even played a song for Georgie. He asked us to play a song for him.

MARTY

Well, now's as good a time as any. Guys, how about "one for the road"?

*(HEARING GEORGIE'S BASS PLAYING IN THE DISTANCE, EACH OF THE GUYS PICKS UP HIS INSTRUMENT AND TENTATIVELY BEGINS TO SING AND PLAY A REPRISE OF "BIFF, BAM, BANG!" JACK SINGS AND CLAPS ALONG. BEFORE LONG, THEY ARE A BAND AGAIN...)*

MARTY

BIFF, BAM, BANG --  
DREAMS SHOULDN'T STAY DREAMS.

MARTY, JACK

LIVE TODAY THOSE YESTERDAY DREAMS.

ARTHUR JOINS IN

TAKING CHANCES IS THE WAY DREAMS  
HAVE A CHANCE TO COME TRUE...

GIL AND AARON JOIN IN

IT'S ALL UP TO YOU  
BUT FIRST YOU HAVE TO PURSUE  
THAT BIFF-BAM-BANG!

MARTY

Here we go, Georgie.

*(THEY LAUNCH INTO AN INSTRUMENTAL VERSION OF THE SONG. AN ENLARGED PHOTO OF THE GROUP CAPTURED AT THE OUTSET OF THEIR JOURNEY IS LOWERED AND TAKES AN HONORED PLACE AMONG PHOTOS OF JAZZ GREATS FROM THE LAST FIVE DECADES. THE MEN CONTINUE TO PLAY THEIR HEARTS OUT AS...)*

THE CURTAIN FALLS