



# **WELCOME TO THE HARD LUCK CAFE**

A New Musical

By  
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**WELCOME TO THE HARD LUCK CAFÉ**  
**(Characters in order of appearance)**

Cast size 11, 6 women and 5 men. Actors serve as customers during Café and bar scenes. Characters can be of unspecified age, except Cynthia and Anne, about 40 and Katie, 18. Casting can be color-blind except for Alexis and Marcus, an African American couple. All female roles can be sung by an alto; all male roles by a baritone, bari-tenor.

1. JOE, (m) a recovering alcoholic, former bar owner, and no-nonsense co-proprietor of the Hard Luck Café, with a soft spot for his second wife, Mimi

2. MIMI, (f) Joe's kind, but preoccupied wife, also in recovery, and yearning for connection with her estranged children.

3. DAN, (m) a nice-guy, gun-shy waiter in recovery, studying to be a financial planner.

4. HAZEL, (f) a lively, street-wise waiter, finishing a degree in addictions counseling and volunteering at the detox unit.

5. ALEXIS, (f) a waiter/nurse in recovery, at the end of her rope with long-term boyfriend Marcus.

6. MARCUS, (m) a recovering addict/alcoholic and commitment-phobic boyfriend of Alexis.

7. GREG, friend of Marcus and Dan's from rehab, mourning the loss of his partner, Tom.

8. ANNE, (f) a disenchanted single clinical psychologist and Cynthia's lifelong friend.

9. KATIE, (f) Cynthia's angry teenaged daughter, about to go to college.

10. RICHARD, (m) a self-absorbed "drying drunk", periodically in recovery.

11. CYNTHIA, (f) a care-worn, alcoholic divorced woman, mother of 18 year old Katie.

**Time:** Present time, over the course of about one year.

**Setting:** An unidentified urban area

## **WELCOME TO THE HARD LUCK CAFE**

### **Act I**

Scene I	Hard Luck Café
Scene II	Cynthia's Home
Scene III	Hard Luck Café, a few days later
Scene IV	Jimmy's Bar
Scene V	Hard Luck Café- 2 weeks later
Scene VI	Hospital room

### **Act II**

Scene I	Halfway house.
Scene I	Hard Luck Cafe- 1 week later
Scene II	Hard Luck Café- six weeks later
Scene III	Hard Luck Café- several months later
Scene IV	Greg's Townhouse
Scene V	Hard Luck Cafe
Scene VI	Anne's office
Scene VII	Hard Luck Café, after hours
Scene VIII	Arboretum
Scene IX	A graveyard

<b>Epilogue</b>	Hard Luck Café, months later
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## **SONG LIST**

### **ACT ONE**

- |     |                               |                     |
|-----|-------------------------------|---------------------|
| 1.  | WELCOME TO THE HARD LUCK CAFÉ | ALL                 |
| 2.  | DIVORCED WHITE MALE           | Hazel, Mimi, Alexis |
| 3.  | THIS HOUSE WAS ONCE A HOME    | Cynthia             |
| 4.  | LEAVE ME ALONE                | Cynthia             |
| 5.  | BE HONEST WITH ME             | Alexis (Mimi/Hazel) |
| 6.  | PAL FOR THE NIGHT             | Richard             |
| 7.  | CHOOSIN'                      | Marcus              |
| 8.  | WHAT DO WOMEN WANT?           | Joe, Marcus, Dan    |
| 9.  | NOW YOU'VE DONE IT            | Cynthia             |
| 10. | LAY YOUR BURDEN DOWN          | Anne                |

### **ACT TWO**

- |     |                               |                     |
|-----|-------------------------------|---------------------|
| 11. | I TRIED TO ERASE MYSELF       | Cynthia             |
| 12. | ONE FOOT                      | Cynthia             |
| 13. | I COULD HAVE DANCED ALL NIGHT | Dan                 |
| 14. | JUST ONE LAST MAN             | Hazel               |
| 15. | OBSESSED                      | Richard (Hazel)     |
| 16. | 90 in 90                      | Marcus, Dan         |
| 17. | DELAYED GRATIFICATION         | MIMI, ALEXIS, HAZEL |
| 18. | YOU ARE NOT MY MOTHER         | Katie               |
| 19. | TODAY                         | Mimi/Joe            |
| 20. | GUILTY                        | CYNTHIA             |
| 21. | TIME AND AGAIN                | Marcus              |
| 22. | LOVE IS ALL YOU NEED          | Anne, Cynthia       |
| 23. | TIME AND AGAIN, (Reprise)     | Joe, Mimi           |
| 24. | SERENITY PRAYER               | ENSEMBLE            |

25.	CHOOSE LIFE	ALL but Anne, Katie)
26.	MY FRIEND	Cynthia, Anne
27.	AUTUMN WAS OUR FAVORITE	Greg
28.	FORGIVE, MOVE ON, LET GO MARCUS, ALEXIS	JOE, MIMI DAN, HAZEL,

### **Epilogue**

29.	KISS for KISS	HAZEL, DAN
30.	MAKING A COMEBACK	HAZEL, ALL
31.	DAY BY DAY/HARD LUCK FINALE	ALL

## WELCOME TO THE HARD LUCK CAFE

### Act I Scene I

(MARCUS enters and sings the intro to WELCOME TO THE HARD LUCK CAFÉ. MIMI, DAN, and HAZEL enter, singing.

#### (MUSIC #1: Welcome to the Hard Luck Café)

MARCUS

SOMETIMES IT SEEMS THE MISTAKES OF LIFE  
WON'T EVER GO AWAY. YOU MAKE A BAD MOVE

MIMI

My name is MIMI and I'm an alcoholic.

MARCUS

YOU TAKE A WRONG TURN

DAN

My name's DAN and I'm an alcoholic.

MARCUS

YOU'D LIKE TO KISS THE PAST GOODBYE  
AND JUST BE ON YOUR WAY.

HAZEL

My name is HAZEL and I'm an alcoholic.

MARCUS

BUT CLOUDS AND CLOWNS AND MORE BAD LUCK  
STILL HAUNT YOU EVERY DAY

BUT YOU CAN'T LOSE HOPE, YOU CAN'T DESPAIR.  
YOU CAN'T JUST SIT THERE IN YOUR UNDERWEAR!  
COME ON DOWN TO THE CORNER PLACE  
WHERE A SMILE AND A FRIEND WILL GREET YOUR FACE.

WELCOME TO THE HARD LUCK CAFE  
WHERE WE'RE ALL ON OUR WAY  
TO A BETTER LIFE.

ALEXIS

WE HAVE ABUSED.  
WE'VE BEEN MISTREATED AND MISUSED

JOE

BUT WE'VE JUST REFUSED  
TO BE DEFEATED BY THE BLUES.

ENSEMBLE  
WE HELP EACH OTHER SURVIVE.  
WE HELP KEEP HOPE ALIVE.  
'CAUSE WHEN THE CHIPS  
ARE REALLY DOWN  
THERE'S ALWAYS A FRIEND TO BE FOUND

HAZEL  
AT THE HARD LUCK CAFÉ

HAZEL AND DAN  
WHERE YOU KNOW WE'RE ALL ON OUR WAY  
TO A BETTER LIFE.

MIMI  
AND YOU KNOW THAT THINGS COULD BE WORSE.

ENSEMBLE  
DON'T THROW YOUR LIFE INTO REVERSE.

ALEXIS  
WELL YOU CAN YELL AND YOU CAN CURSE

ENSEMBLE  
OR COME ON DOWN AND QUENCH YOUR THIRST.

MIMI  
FILL YOUR CUP WITH COFFEE AND KINDNESS.

MIMI AND ALEXIS  
HAVE A CHAT AND YOU'RE ON YOUR WAY.

ENSEMBLE  
AND JOE'S ALWAYS HERE TO REMIND US:

JOE  
HIT THE THROTTLE! GET THE LEAD OUT!  
KICK THE BOTTLE! THROW THE BUM OUT!

ALL  
HARD LUCK CAFE.  
WHERE WE'RE MOVIN' FORWARD DAY BY DAY  
TO A BETTER LIFE.

HAZEL  
MAMA ALWAYS CALLED ME THE HARD LUCK KID.  
WHEN THINGS COULD GO WRONG THEY USUALLY DID.

MARCUS  
IF IT WEREN'T FOR HARD LUCK I'D HAVE NO LUCK AT ALL.  
BUT SOMETIMES,

ENSEMBLE  
WE HAVE US A BALL AT THE  
HARD LUCK CAFE. THE HARD LUCK CAFE!

(ANNE, accompanied by CYNTHIA's daughter, KATIE,  
enter the café and look around for a seat.)

ANNE  
Your mom and I used to come here a lot. They serve a  
great all-day breakfast.  
(Heads for a table)

KATIE  
I'm not hungry.

ANNE  
Just take a look at the menu. Maybe something will appeal  
to you.

KATIE  
I said, I'm not hungry. Just coffee.

ANNE  
O.K. *(Beat)*. You know, I wanted to talk to you about your  
mom before you leave for school.

KATIE  
I figured. What is there to say?

DAN  
Why so glum, ladies? Need coffee?

ANNE  
Desperately, thanks.  
(DAN pours into ANNE'S extended cup and then  
KATIE'S.)

DAN  
Here you go. My name's Dan and if you'll excuse me, I'll  
be  
right back with some menus.  
(DAN heads for the counter as focus shifts to  
HAZEL.)



HAZEL

(Approaches RICHARD with a pot of coffee and hands him a menu.)

Morning!

RICHARD

So it is.

(RICHARD extends his cup while continuing to read his newspaper.)

HAZEL

Do you want to hear about our specials or...?

RICHARD

I'll have the Number One.

HAZEL

How would you like your eggs?

RICHARD

Surprise me.

HAZEL

Scrambled? Fried?

RICHARD

(Finally looking up at HAZEL)

Allow me one break from the utterly predictable monotony of my day!

HAZEL

Scrambled with cheese is my favorite.

RICHARD

(Returns to his newspaper)

Don't ruin the surprise.

HAZEL

Gotcha.

(Turns on her heels and hands ticket sharply to JOE.)

Jerk!

JOE

Take it easy. He's probably just drying out.

HAZEL

I'll be on my best behavior.

(Focus returns to ANNE and KATIE.)

ANNE

Katie, this has been hell for you. And you must be pissed that you won't have your own room to come back to next school break.

KATIE

Not really. I don't plan to be back.

DAN

(Returning with menus)

Ladies, our specials today - homemade roast beef hash topped with a fried egg, buckwheat cakes with fresh blueberries, short or tall stack, and spinach feta cheese omelet. Need a minute to reflect?

ANNE

Yes, thanks.

DAN

OK. I'll check back later. (Departs)

ANNE

Katie, I hope you'll consider my home to be yours. You are always welcome, no matter what.

(KATIE stares off into space)

I haven't given up on your mother. I'll never give up on her. I hope...

KATIE

(interrupting)

I know you and Cindy best buds, but how many times have you found her comatose on the floor or had to clean up after her? (Beat) You might as well get used to it. She is never gonna stop. (Beat) Until she's dead.

(Focus shifts to JOE, who sees Mimi lost in thought at the counter.)

JOE

Mimi? Earth calling Mimi!

(A bit sharper)

MIMI!

MIMI

(Startled, coming out of a fog)

Oh! Sorry, Joe! I...Today is Brenda's 22<sup>nd</sup> birthday. I can't help wondering...how...where she is? Is she--?

JOE

Don't go there again, Mimi.

MIMI

It's not her fault she had me for a mother.

JOE

Mimi...It's not just every birthday, it's every day.  
What's the point? You've got to stop beating yourself up!

MIMI

Ah, Joe! How do you let go of your children! I wanted...a  
chance to make it up to them.

JOE

Maybe your kids will come around, maybe they won't. Are  
you going to put the rest of your life on hold waiting to  
find out?

MIMI

It's a huge hole in my life.

JOE

I know, but staring at the holes doesn't fill 'em. Just  
keeps you from seeing what's right in front of you. Me,  
for instance.

MIMI

Oh, my darling Joe, you deserve better.

JOE

Will you stop already? I've married a broken record!  
You're lonely for your kids - I'm lonely for my wife!  
(JOE shuffles off. MIMI is on the verge of tears, as  
HAZEL approaches and puts her arm around MIMI.)

HAZEL

Joe's in a funk today.

MIMI

Only with me, sweetheart.

HAZEL

I still love you.

MIMI

Oh, so does he, dear.

Focus turns to DAN, greeting MARCUS and GREG, who  
have seated themselves.)

DAN

Hey guys! Great to see you!

MARCUS

(Shaking hands with DAN)

How's my main man?

DAN

(Shaking hands with Greg).

Not bad. Not bad at all. Greg, I hope you're keeping on eye on this guy.

GREG

Yeah, yeah, but lately (gesturing toward Marcus), he's all over the map.

MARCUS

(Ignores this. Addresses Dan)

This pay'n the bills while you launch your career as a financial planner?

DAN

Well, almost.

MARCUS

Save those tips!

DAN

Yeah, there's a winning strategy! Can I interest either of you in investing in your future?

MARCUS

I keep my assets under the mattress where I know they're safe.

GREG

Just gathering dust! Not working for you under there!

MARCUS

What do you mean? They're holding up the mattress!

DAN

You could get a new bed with the interest you've foregone.

MARCUS

You don't have to convince me, Danny boy. If I had anything to invest right now, you'd be the first to know.  
(Beat) Hey, here's Hazel!

HAZEL

Hi Marcus. Hi Greg.

MARCUS

You're lookin' good, Hazel!

HAZEL

Why, thank you Marcus.

(Checks to see if DAN agrees, but he's oblivious.)

GREG

Hazel, I hear about you all the time from Alexis and Dan.

HAZEL

I hope you'll listen to my side of it.

GREG

Believe me, they only sing your praises.

DAN

I've told Hazel about our time together in treatment. How you two figured prominently in the practical joke arena.

GREG

You were such an easy target.

MARCUS

Like shooting ducks in a barrel.

(Greg looks askance.)

DAN

First time in my life I really got to know a black guy and a gay guy, so it messed up my stereotypes but good!

MARCUS

(To Greg)

I didn't know you was *black*!

GREG

(To Marcus)

I didn't know you was *gay*!

DAN

Twenty-eight days of non-stop abuse.

MARCUS

Ol' Earnest Dan we called him.

GREG

He really wanted to understand the "black experience".  
What it's like to have all that rhythm and sexual  
prowess?

MARCUS

Funny, he wasn't that curious about being gay!

DAN

Don't listen to them. I never said anything of the sort!

HAZEL

Thanks for the insight into this mysterious man.

(Giving DAN a friendly once-over)

Now, duty calls. Nice seeing you two.

MARCUS

Likewise, Hazel. Keep an eye out for our friend Dan. He's  
special.

HAZEL

(as she walks away)

Yes he is!

(Focus returns to KATIE and ANNE)

KATIE

Anne, I've gotta go...finish packing and figure out what  
to do with the rest of my stuff.

ANNE

You can store anything you want at my place. I'll be  
by soon and can pick it up.

KATIE

Don't hurry on my account. When she wakes up, I'm outta  
there.

(KATIE gets up to leave.)

ANNE

OK, Katie. Take care of yourself, and please, don't  
hesitate to call. Any time. Good...bye.

(Reaches out, but Katie unceremoniously departs.)

My God. Cindy is really going down the tubes.

(As lights return to HAZEL and RICHARD, ANNE motions  
to DAN for the check. She leaves money on the table  
and quietly departs during the following scene.)

HAZEL

Can I take that for you?

RICHARD

What do you mean, take it for me? You could take it from me or take it for yourself, but under what circumstances would you take it for me? Induct me into the Clean Plate Club?

HAZEL

Got up on the wrong side of the bed?

RICHARD

Got up on the wrong side of the day. I generally miss this part if I can avoid it.

HAZEL

I hear you.

RICHARD

Look, I haven't had a drink in weeks. I don't mean to take it out on you, but I heard that this is a place where drying drunks are tolerated.

HAZEL

Tolerate is the operative word. We don't condone bad behavior.

RICHARD

Better a bad boy than a fool.

HAZEL

Would you like your check?

RICHARD

There you go again. You'd like to give me my check. Why don't you just say so!

HAZEL

Mimi told me there'd be days like this.

RICHARD

Who's Mimi?

HAZEL

She and Joe own the place. Kind of a public service for people in recovery - giving us jobs, helping us get back on our feet.

RICHARD

I don't need a job.

HAZEL

Lucky you.

RICHARD

You find me cross.

HAZEL

You're not the first grouchy customer. Trust me.

RICHARD

Why should I trust you? I don't even know you.

HAZEL

Good point. Will there be anything else?

RICHARD

No. That's enough abuse for one day. What if I leave you a big tip? Will you wait on me again?

HAZEL

I'm not for sale.

RICHARD

Look, I'm...sorry if I was an ass. Some people are better drunk.

HAZEL

Not in my experience. Give yourself time. You could be a closet nice guy.

RICHARD

Yeah, I'm really a wonderful person.

HAZEL

(Laughing) Well...It's been swell, but I really must tear myself away. Do drop in again.

(Walks to the counter where MIMI and HAZEL are out of Richard's earshot.)

NOT!

ALEXIS

Dare I ask?



HAZEL

Some days it takes all the self-control I have just to...  
(Hits one fist against the other)

MIMI

I know it tries your patience, my dear, but weren't we  
all a bit testy at first?

HAZEL

You're saying I was no angel?

MIMI

I'm saying, we've got to find you a good man. Someone  
who'll give you backrubs...

HAZEL

And foot rubs!  
(Glances in DAN'S direction, MIMI'S gaze following)

MIMI

You deserve the best. Checked the personals lately?

HAZEL

For those of us without iPads? Yeah.  
(Pulls a well-worn copy out from under the counter.)  
Who'd want to jump into that pool?

ALEXIS

There's gotta be something... (Grabs the paper).  
Wait! This one describes you to a T: "Savvy, street smart  
and sexy!"

HAZEL

"Successful and yet subservient?" Yeah, I read that one.  
Listen. This is the pick of the litter:

**Music # 3 Divorced White Male**

HAZEL

DIVORCED WHITE MALE  
FORTY-ONE AND NONE THE  
WORSE FOR WEAR.  
NOT BAD LOOKING AND AS  
CUDDLY AS A TEDDY BEAR.

IF YOU WANT SOMEONE WHO'S  
HANDSOME, ROMANTIC AND SWEET.  
KINDLY LAY YOUR  
SELF AT MY FEET.

'CUZ I'M THAT RARE VINTAGE FIND. A  
SINGLE, FORTY-ONE YEAR OLD MALE.

MIMI

(Grabbing the paper, continues)  
STEP RIGHT UP. LEAVE A  
MESSAGE. LET ME  
HEAR YOUR VOICE.  
GOD'S GIFT TO WOMEN IS  
GEARING UP TO MAKE HIS CHOICE!  
PLEASE BE BLOND AND BLUE-EYED.  
WELL-ENDOWED. (Nods to Hazel)  
CIGARETTES ARE NOT ALLOWED.  
CUZ I'M THAT ONE OF A KIND.  
A SINGLE FORTY-ONE YEAR OLD MALE.

(HAZEL, MIMI and ALEXIS alternate lines, slightly  
accelerating speed.)

ALEXIS

BE SEXY, NOT SLUTTY

HAZEL

BE NORMAL, NOT NUTTY.

ALEXIS

NO HOARDERS. NO SNORTERS.

HAZEL

NO EGO DESTROYERS.

MIMI

NO POTHEADS. NO DEADHEADS.

ALEXIS

NO BRUNETTES. NO REDHEADS.

HAZEL

NOBODY AT ALL!

HAZEL, MIMI, ALEXIS

JUST LEAVE ME ALONE!  
A DIVORCED WHITE MALE  
KNOWS EXACTLY WHAT HE'S LOOKING FOR.

MIMI, ALEXIS

THE BALL IS IN MY COURT

HAZEL  
AND I'LL FIND SOMEBODY TO ADORE—

MARCUS  
ME!

HAZEL, MIMI, ALEXIS  
IF YOU'RE DROP DEAD GORGEOUS AND  
HALF WAY BRIGHT  
YOU'RE LUCKY DAY MAY BE IN SIGHT

HAZEL  
FOR WHEN I'VE MADE UP MY MIND

ALEXIS  
YOU'LL LEAVE THE OTHERS BEHIND

MIMI  
CUZ THERE'S NO BETTER FIND

HAZEL, MIMI, ALEXIS  
THAN A SINGLE 41 YEAR OLD MALE.

MARCUS  
Single forty-one year old?  
(HAZEL sings, swinging her hips while circling  
a dish towel suggestively over her head, MIMI joins  
in.)

HAZEL, MIMI, ALEXIS  
I SAID A  
SINGLE  
FORTY-ONE YEAR OLD

HAZEL, MIMI  
READY AND WILLING AND  
EAGER AND ABLE WHITE MALE!

ALEXIS  
(JOINS ON "MALE").

HAZEL, MIMI, ALEXIS  
OH YEAH!

MARCUS

(Spontaneously)  
I'll have what she's having!

ALEXIS

Oh, that's original. Give me that!  
(Grabs the paper and hits him on the head).

**End Scene I**

**Scene II, Living room of CYNTHIA's house**

Katie angrily approaches her mother, Cynthia, **disheveled hair, rumpled clothing**, passed out on the couch. Shakes her by her shoulder.

KATIE

Get up, you lousy drunk! You can't live off my child support any more. I'm 18 and I'm getting the hell out of here!

(CYNTHIA doesn't respond. Katie slaps her.)

KATIE, (CONT)

Wake up, you good for nothing lush!

Cynthia stirs, opening her eyes to Katie's hatred.

CYNTHIA

Shit.

KATIE

What the hell's the matter with you. (Heads for the door).

CYNTHIA

Where are you going?

KATIE

Out!

(Door slams. Cynthia struggles to sit up, retrieves a bottle from behind a couch cushion and takes a long drink. She is surrounded by packing boxes, wads of newspaper, and empty liquor and beer bottles. Slowly she raises the bottle and despondently salutes what has been her home.)

**Music #3 This House was Once A Home**

CYNTHIA

THERE WAS A TIME WHEN THIS WAS A HOME.  
THERE WAS A DAY OF HAPPINESS.  
SOMETIMES A COZY FIRE TO BE FED.  
A STORY TO BE READ.  
A CHILD TUCKED INTO BED.

WHERE IS THE HOME THAT HELD A HEART?  
WHERE IS THE HEART THAT HELD OUR DREAMS?  
GONE WITH THE LOVE THAT BLEW APART.  
LIFE ISN'T ALWAYS WHAT IT SEEMS.

WAS THERE A CHOICE AND WHY WOULD I CHOOSE?  
NOTHING TO GAIN AND SO MUCH TO LOSE.  
THERE WAS A DAY BUT NOW IT'S GONE.  
TIME TO GET OUT AND MOVE ALONG.

(She hears a knock on the door as ANNE appears).  
Dammit, Anne! I told you not to come!

ANNE

Cindy, please! At least let me help you pack.  
(Takes in the chaos, sits down on a box, dejected.  
Picks up an empty bottle from the floor.)  
Jesus, Cynthia. I know how hard this has been for you,  
but you've got to pull yourself together.

CYNTHIA

Don't start on me again! My life and choice of poison are  
no longer your business. I have my home for a few more  
days, and I'll be damned if you're going to come barging  
in here, offering me...therapy!

ANNE

Cindy, I'm the daughter, the granddaughter, the sister of  
dead alcoholics. Don't make me add best friend to that  
list! Look beyond your pain for Christ's sake and think  
about Katie! This can't be your legacy to her! Who else  
does she have? *(Beat)* Think about **her future**. You'll want  
to be there. She needs you. I need you, and I'm not  
going to stand by and watch you drink yourself to death!

CYNTHIA

You're not hearing me, Anne! Katie would be better off  
without me, and you - you can't tell the difference  
between a friend and a client.

(CYNTHIA sings pacing and begins to advance  
aggressively, while ANNE backs towards the door.)

#### **Music #4 Leave Me Alone**

LEAVE ME ALONE  
DON'T TRY TO CHANGE ME.  
DON'T EVEN THINK OF REARRANGING MY MIND.  
I'VE GOT A RIGHT TO LIVE

THE WAY I WANT TO LIVE.  
YOU'VE GOT NO RIGHT TO GIVE ME A HARD TIME!

WHO ASKED YOU TO COME HERE?  
PUSHING INTO MY LIFE  
WHAT ON EARTH MAKES YOU THINK YOU CAN  
STAND IN MY WAY?  
IF I EVER NEED YOU  
I KNOW WHERE TO FIND YOU.  
TILL THEN I REMIND YOU TO  
LEAVE ME ALONE!

YOU. YOU KNOW A LOT.  
YOU THINK YOU'VE GOT THE  
ANSWER TO MY PROBLEMS.  
BUT YOU. YOU DON'T KNOW ME.  
WHY CAN'T YOU SEE I'M NOT  
LOOKING FOR SOLUTIONS?

THIS, THIS IS MY LIFE.  
THIS IS MY PLAN  
AND I'VE GOT ALL THAT I NEED TO SUCCEED.

YOU. YOU'VE HAD YOUR SAY.  
STAY OUT OF MY WAY.  
I'M NOT ASKING YOU TO FIX ME.

DON'T THINK OF CALLING.  
DON'T BOTHER TRYING.  
I'M NOT JUST DYING TO TALK ON THE PHONE.  
I'VE GOT A RIGHT TO DRINK.  
I'VE GOT A RIGHT TO THINK  
I CAN HAVE PRIVACY IN MY OWN HOME.

WHO ASKED YOU TO COME HERE?  
PUT THE PAST BEHIND YOU.  
ALL I WANT TO DO IS TO  
FORGET YESTERDAY.

IF I EVER NEED YOU  
I KNOW WHERE TO FIND YOU.  
CLOSE THAT DOOR BEHIND YOU AND  
LEAVE ME ALONE!

(ANNE leaves as door slams behind her.)

**End Scene II**

**Scene III Hard Luck café, a few days later**

(HAZEL SPOTS DAN talking with MARCUS).

HAZEL

Alexis! Are you sure about this?

ALEXIS

It's got to be done.

(Heads for the table)

MARCUS

Hey, baby!

ALEXIS

Apologies, Dan, but...will you excuse us for a moment? I need to talk to Marcus. Alone.

DAN

No problem. Sounds serious!

(Shrugs at MARCUS and exits as ALEXIS glares at MARCUS.)

ALEXIS

Marcus. Where've you been?

MARCUS

Oh, you know, baby. So many meetings to keep me out of trouble-AA, NA, NBA. (*Pretends to shoot a basket*)  
Something wrong, baby? C'mon now. Sit down. Tell me about it.

ALEXIS

(Remains standing).

Marcus, don't "baby" me. I'm quittin' you! I just can't go on like this any...

MARCUS

But, baby!

ALEXIS

That's it! I've waited long enough. I want a husband, a home, children. I want the whole package, Marcus. I deserve it. But what am I doing...waitin' for you to grow up? You ain't never gonna change!

MARCUS

Change...?



ALEXIS

Yeah, Change!

**MUSIC #5: BE HONEST WITH ME)**

ALEXIS

I NEED A MAN  
TO SPEND MY DAYS WITH.  
LOVE TO GROW WITH.  
LOVE TO STAY WITH.  
I NEED A MAN.  
SOMEONE WHO LOVES ME TOO.  
GOT A FEELIN' IT WON'T BE YOU.  
AND IF YOU DON'T WANT ME BABY.

MARCUS

But, I do want you!

ALEXIS

LET ME GET ON WITH MY LIFE.  
LET ME FIND THE MAN WHO'LL  
BE PROUD TO MAKE ME HIS WIFE.

BE HONEST WITH ME.  
BE HONEST WITH ME.  
YES THAT IS MY PLEA.  
BE HONEST WITH ME.

BE HONEST WITH ME.  
OR JUST LET ME BE.  
THAT'S MY REMEDY.  
BE HONEST WITH ME.

(MIMI and HAZEL stand by ALEXIS, as she sings:)

ALEXIS

YOU SAID TO ME  
I MUST BE PATIENT.

MARCUS

Well, it wouldn't hurt!

ALEXIS

THAT YOU NEEDED A BIT MORE TIME.  
WELL, WAS I PATIENT  
OR WAS I A FOOL?

MARCUS

I'm not going to answer that!

ALEXIS

WATCHIN' YOU JUST KEEP YOUR COOL, MAN.

I DON'T SEE YOUR LOVE GROWIN'.  
YOU WILL NEVER BE MINE.  
IT'S UP TO ME TO GET GOIN'  
CUZ YOU'RE JUST WASTIN' MY TIME.

BE HONEST WITH ME. (*NOTE: SOME CHORUS LINES CHANGED  
SINCE DEMO*)

OR JUST SET ME FREE.  
YES THAT IS THE KEY.  
BE HONEST WITH ME.  
(HAZEL and MIMI join in harmony.)

BE HONEST WITH ME.  
HAVE MERCY ON ME.

ALEXIS, WITH HAZEL, AND MIMI  
I NEED YOU TO BE  
HONEST WITH ME.

MARCUS

But...

ALEXIS

(Sings verse while MIMI and HAZEL sing backup.)

H-O-N-E-S-T-Y  
HONESTY IS WORTH A TRY

DON'T GIVE ME AN ALIBI  
NO MORE WILL I LIVE A LIE

H-O-N-E-S-T-Y  
IT'S TIME FOR ME TO SAY  
I'VE GOT TO SAY  
GOODBYE.

(MARCUS, looking stricken, stumbles out of the  
café.)

**Lights fade. End of Scene III**

**Act I Scene IV - JIMMY'S Bar, later.**

GREG and CYNTHIA are seated at opposite ends of the bar,  
both with drinks in hand.)

(Richard enters and observes Cynthia, reasonably  
dressed and made up, seated alone at the bar).

RICHARD

Hello, Miss. Can I join you?

CYNTHIA

I want to be alone.

RICHARD

Yeah, OK Greta..... Listen. I'm harmless. I just want  
someone to talk to.

CYNTHIA

Sorry. Not interested.

RICHARD

C'mon! I'm not looking to score here. I'm a great  
conversationalist, if I do say so myself. You'll warm up  
to me!

CYNTHIA

Are you hard of hearing?

RICHARD

Look,

**(MUSIC: #6 PAL FOR THE NIGHT)**

IF YOU'RE A GOOD TIME GAL  
OR A SOLITARY DRINKER  
LET ME BE YOUR PAL FOR THE NIGHT.  
I CAN'T BEAR TO GO HOME.  
I DON'T DARE BE ALONE.  
LET ME BE YOUR PAL FOR THE NIGHT.

WE CAN SIT HERE TOGETHER  
AND COMPLAIN ABOUT THE WEATHER.  
OR DISCUSS WHATEVER YOU LIKE  
AND I WON'T BE A PEST  
I WON'T MAKE YOU DEPRESSED.  
IF YOU LET ME BE YOUR PAL FOR THE NIGHT.

PLEASE DON'T TELL ME THAT YOU'D RATHER SIT ALONE HERE.

LET ME BE YOUR PAL FOR THE NIGHT.  
YOU DON'T HAVE TO EXPLAIN.  
IT IS PERFECTLY PLAIN  
THAT YOU NEED A PAL FOR THE NIGHT.  
I'LL BE YOUR ONE NIGHT FRIEND  
YOU'LL NEVER SEE ME AGAIN SO  
THERE'S NO NEED TO BE SO UPTIGHT.  
AND I WON'T MAKE A PASS  
I'LL JUST FILL UP YOUR GLASS  
IF YOU'LL LET ME BE YOUR PAL FOR THE NIGHT.  
PLEASE, LET ME BE YOUR PAL FOR THE NIGHT.

I CAN SEE QUITE CLEARLY THAT YOU  
YEARN FOR CONVERSATION.  
LET ME PLAY THE ROLE FOR THE NIGHT.  
I WON'T TALK OFF YOUR EAR  
CAN'T I BUY YOU A BEER?  
LET ME BE YOUR PAL FOR THE NIGHT.

WELL, THE EVENING'S YOUNG AND THE FUN HAS JUST BEGUN SO  
LET'S NOT START IT OUT WITH A FIGHT.  
WON'T YOU WIPE OFF THAT FROWN  
AND LET ME SIT DOWN?  
SO I CAN BE YOUR PAL FOR THE NIGHT.  
PLEASE, LET ME BE YOUR PAL FOR THE NIGHT.  
I JUST WANNA BE YOUR PAL FOR THE NIGHT.

CYNTHIA

Your insecurity is really not my problem. Not tonight.  
Not any night!

(Buries her face in her hands).

Offside

Leave the lady alone, buster.

RICHARD

The lady. Ok. Ok. ...the lady!

(Moves away, muttering to himself.)

(Marcus enters, spotting Greg).

MARCUS

Greg! I was afraid I'd find you here.

GREG

What, are you stalking me now? I knew I should have gone  
to a gay bar!

MARCUS

Just a hunch. You seemed low. (Beat.) You shoulda called.

GREG

You've got your own problems.

MARCUS

Yeah, but Alexis ain't dead! There's still hope. (Beat).  
Sorry. God, has it been a year?

GREG

A year today.

MARCUS

Oh, man. I shoulda been on top of that one.

GREG

No. Why should you? You never even met him.  
(He takes a drink of scotch)

Tom made me promise, literally on his deathbed, that I'd  
go into rehab. Which I did. But, sometimes I wonder, what  
was the point? These fall nights...

MARCUS

What is it about fall?

GREG

We met in the fall. He died in the fall. Fall was our  
season.

MARCUS

Ahh. How'd you meet?

GREG

At the Arboretum - attracted to the same flaming maple.  
(Marcus laughs)

GREG

I came over this hill, and there was a gorgeous man,  
facing this glorious tree, his arms wide open like he was  
giving a benediction.

(Greg spreads his arms wide.)

I couldn't help but admire his taste in trees. That was  
the beginning of a beautiful friendship.

MARCUS

Mmm Mmm. How long did you have...

GREG

Four years and change, You know, you struggle all your life to make a real connection with someone, and you finally do, only to have it severed by this damned disease....

MARCUS

I'm sorry, Greg. He was so...young.

GREG

And no one can take his place.

(Marcus nods in agreement.)

You think nobody dies anymore, but they've only got so many drugs, you know? First line, second line,... end of the line.

(Raises his glass)

Here's to Tom!

(Marcus puts his arm around Greg while trying to stop the glass from reaching his lips).

MARCUS

But...we're connected, aren't we, bro?

GREG

Oh, I suppose we share more than the usual bond, neither being a straight, white male. But no, I'm talking about the only true antidote to loneliness. A soul mate. Perhaps what Alexis is also seeking?

MARCUS

Oh, don't go there, Greg. I got my hands full trying to deal with you.

(Greg signals the bartender for a refill. Marcus shakes his head to cancel the request.)

MARCUS

Man, I don't want to get on your case at a time like this, but, remember what your doctor said? Now, I got responsibilities!

**(MUSIC: #7 Choosin')**

YOU'RE EITHER CHOOSIN' TO LIVE OR  
YOU'RE CHOOSIN' TO DIE.

THERE'S NO IN BETWEEN FOR YOU MY FRIEND AND  
THAT'S THE REASON WHY  
I WON'T STAND HERE AND SMILE IF  
YOU'RE GONNA GET HIGH.  
YOU'RE EITHER CHOOSIN' TO LIVE OR  
YOU'RE CHOOSIN TO DIE

(MARCUS opens his mouth as if to sing another  
verse. GREG interrupts, holding up his hand).

GREG

And they call me a drama queen. Enough already!

MARCUS

C'mon. Let's grab some coffee.

GREG

(Exasperated)

God, it's hard to be around someone who's so  
sanctimonius.

(Leaving money on the counter).  
Shortest relapse on record.

(They exit.)

(CYNTHIA semi-staggers from the bar to  
edge of the dark stage. She pulls a  
flask from her purse, wanders tipsily  
for a short distance and sits down  
heavily, as if near a bush on a deserted  
street. She opens the bottle and holds  
it up to the light, singing in a half-  
spoken, tuneless stupor.)

CYNTHIA

What a comfort!  
That you're with me tonight.  
You fortify me! You're holding me tight.  
I won't have to face the morning's light  
Alone.

(long swig).

Right up to the end I can pretend  
You're not my enemy but my dearest friend.  
(as she slumps)  
You alone I can't offend.

(Night fades to early morning. CYNTHIA is partially concealed by a bush, but cars are beginning to be heard on nearby streets. She wakes, confused, disheveled, unable to understand at first where she is. She starts to get up, becomes ill, falls back. Finally, she is on her feet, stuffs the bottle inside her coat, walks a few steps, collapses).

**Fade out.**

**End of Scene 1V**



**Scene V Hard Luck Café, a few days later.**

(JOE is behind the counter. DAN waits on a customer,  
MIMI is in the kitchen.)

MARCUS

(To Joe)  
Got a minute?

JOE

You bet, Marcus. You holding up ok?

MARCUS

Hell no! I invested a lot of years in that woman. And  
she's off me - just like that!

JOE

Not just like that. You've been stringing that fine woman  
along for years.

MARCUS

I ain't stringin' nobody! I got just one woman in my life!

JOE

Well, then? I know you love her.

MARCUS

Hell, yes, I love her. She's my best friend! But in my  
neighborhood, you don't necessarily marry over that. Even  
Oprah ain't married!

JOE

What's Oprah got to do with it? From what I see, Alexis  
is her own woman.

MARCUS

And I don't want to disappoint her! (Beat)

JOE

Fair enough. What can I do to help?

MARCUS

No offense, but I don't know how much light you can shed  
on this. Compared to Alexis, your wife is an open book!

JOE

Don't be too sure about that. Sometimes I don't know who  
I married. But, go ahead. Try me.

(DAN returns with coffee, and is all ears.)

**(MUSIC #8: What Do Women Want?)**

MARCUS

WELLA WELLA WELLA  
WELLA WELLA  
WHAT DO WOMEN WANT?

MARCUS AND DAN

WELLA WELLA WELLA  
WHAT DO WOMEN WANT?

DAN

DO THEY WANT NICE?

MARCUS

I GOT NICE

DAN

DO THEY WANT KIND?

MARCUS

I GOT KIND  
WELL I GOT KIND

MARCUS AND JOE

I GOT SWEET

MARCUS

I GOT SWEET LOVE IN THE MORNING  
FOR MY GIRL  
WELLA WELLA WELLA

MARCUS, JOE AND DAN

WHAT DO WOMEN WANT?  
WELL WHAT DO WOMEN WANT?

MARCUS

CAN A MAN BE HUMBLE?

DAN AND JOE

BE SO HUMBLE

MARCUS

CAN A MAN BE AFRAID?

DAN AND JOE

BE AFRAID

MARCUS  
CAN A BROTHER BACK DOWN?

DAN AND JOE  
WON'T BACK DOWN

MARCUS  
CAN HE RUN AWAY?

DAN AND JOE  
HE WON'T RUN AWAY

MARCUS  
CAN A MAN BE UNCERTAIN?

DAN AND JOE  
NO HE CAN'T.

MARCUS  
CAN A GUY BE SHY?

JOE AND DAN  
CAN'T BE SHY.

MARCUS  
CAN A MAN BE PRIVATE?  
(Silence)

MARCUS, JOE AND DAN  
AND CAN A GROWN MAN CRY?

MARCUS  
WELLA WELLA WELLA  
WELLA WELLA WELLA

MARCUS, JOE AND DAN  
WELLA WELLA WELLA  
WHAT DO WOMEN WANT?  
WHAT DO WOMEN WANT?

MARCUS  
DO THEY WANT MONEY?

JOE AND DAN  
THEY WANT MONEY

MARCUS  
IS IT EVER ENOUGH?

JOE AND DAN  
IT'S NEVER ENOUGH.

MARCUS  
FOR THE SEASON TICKETS

JOE AND DAN  
SEASON TICKETS

MARCUS  
AND THE COUNTRY CLUB?

JOE AND DAN  
AND THE COUNTRY CLUB

MARCUS  
IS A MAN NOT WORTH IT

JOE AND DAN  
HE'S NOT WORTH IT

MARCUS  
UNTIL HE HAS THE BREAD?

JOE AND DAN  
TIL HE GOT THE BREAD

MARCUS  
DOES HE HAVE TO PLAY GOLF?

JOE AND DAN  
DOES HE HAVE TO PLAY?

MARCUS  
WELL I'D RATHER BE DEAD!

DAN  
You don't like golf?

MARCUS  
Man, that's not the point!  
WELL, WHAT DO WOMEN WANT?

MARCUS, JOE AND DAN  
WELL, WHAT THE HELL DO WOMEN WANT!  
WELL, WHAT DO WOMEN NEED?

MARCUS

WHAT THE HELL AM I SUPPOSED TO BELIEVE!

**End of Scene V**

**Scene VI A hospital.**

(A white-curtained enclosure. Cynthia appears asleep as Hazel enters, but stirs when Hazel speaks.)

HAZEL

Mrs. Crockett? Hi. Hazel Martin - a volunteer at Renooze. Dr. Dutton tells me you're ready to check out - in more ways than one.

(CYNTHIA turns back towards the wall.)

HAZEL

I may be the last person you want to see right now, but let's not beat around the bush you were found under. Here's the deal. The doctor says you come into treatment, or you won't survive. Are you on board with us, Mrs. Crockett?

CYNTHIA

(Turns to face HAZEL.)

He said...?

HAZEL

That's right. Maybe not tomorrow, but soon. (Beat) Have you been through treatment before?

CYNTHIA

No...but I know...I can't quit.

HAZEL

You'll surprise yourself. Not long ago I had this same conversation. Being stubborn is more useful when you're aim is to stay sober.

CYNTHIA

I...need to think about it.

HAZEL

(Ignores this.)

First, you spend several days in detox, whatever it takes to get your addiction under control. You will be made comfortable. Actually, you'll sleep through most of it.

CYNTHIA

I haven't...

HAZEL

Then, the fun begins. A month will pass before you know it. Most of us develop a strong support network. Some of my closest friends are former drunks. Our success rates are among the best!

CYNTHIA

Good for you.

(Turns away momentarily and then back to Hazel.)  
You're a volunteer?

HAZEL

Yes, and in recovery for about a year now. (Checking her watch). Sorry. I gotta get to work. Is there someone I can call for you?

(Hands her a flip top cell phone.)

CYNTHIA

No, not really. (Beat) Maybe...my friend Anne.

(Enters a number and hands phone back to HAZEL.)  
Thanks.

HAZEL

I'll call her and I'll see you tomorrow. Sleep well.  
(Exits)

CYNTHIA

**(MUSIC #9: Now You've Done It)**

NOW YOU'VE DONE IT  
YOU'VE HIT BOTTOM  
WHAT'S LEFT BUT TO DIE?  
NOW YOU'VE DONE IT.  
IT'S ALL OVER.  
NO NEED TO ASK WHY.  
NOW YOU'VE GOTTEN WHAT YOU WANTED.  
NO POINT TO DENY.  
NOW YOU'VE FOUND IT.  
HELL ON EARTH SO  
KISS YOUR ASS GOODBYE.

WHEN YOU'RE HELL-BENT  
ON DESTRUCTION  
WHO'LL STAND IN YOUR WAY?  
TAUNT THE DEVIL:  
"COME AND GET ME"  
WHAT'S THE PRICE TO PAY?

YOU'VE SOARED THE HEIGHTS. NOW  
MINE THE DEPTHS  
FOREVER AND A DAY.  
JUST FORGET.  
DON'T ASK FORGIVENESS  
NOTHING'S LEFT TO SAY.  
NOTHING'S LEFT TO SAY.  
NOTHING'S LEFT TO SAY.

(Beat. CYNTHIA drifts off. ANNE enters, sits on  
CYNTHIA'S bed, and reaches out tentatively to stroke  
her hair.)

ANNE

Oh, Cindy, Thank God you're OK. You scared the hell out  
of me!

CYNTHIA

(Shifting slightly, faces ANNE)  
Let me go, Anne.

ANNE

I can't do that, Cindy. You know I won't go down without  
a fight.

CYNTHIA

I've made such a mess of things. Especially with Katie...

ANNE

You are not to blame for what happened to Katie!

CYNTHIA

You'll never convince me of that. I married the jerk.

ANNE

For God's sake, you couldn't know what he'd become--

CYNTHIA

(Interrupting)  
You never liked him.

ANNE

I didn't want you to be alone! After Danny was killed,  
you were so... (Beat.) But, forget the past. You're here  
now. It's time to...

**(MUSIC #10 Lay Your Burden Down)**

LAY YOUR BURDEN DOWN

WEARY TRAVELER.  
LAY IT DOWN AND REST YOUR WEARY HEAD.  
I AM HERE FOR YOU.  
I WILL LISTEN TO  
WHATEVER YOU SAY.  
HAVE YOU LOST YOUR WAY  
WEARY TRAVELER?  
MADE A WRONG TURN.  
LIFE HAS GONE ASTRAY.  
NOTHING YOU CAN SAY  
WILL DRIVE ME AWAY  
SO LAY IT DOWN.  
WHY DON'T YOU LAY YOUR BURDEN DOWN?  
(CYNTHIA rests her head in ANNE'S lap with eyes  
closed as ANNE sings.)

THERE IS AN END IN SIGHT  
OH WEARY TRAVELER.  
THERE IS A PLACE WHERE YOU CAN REST THE NIGHT.  
AND IN THE MORNING'S LIGHT  
OH WEARY TRAVELER  
YOU WILL FIND THE PEACE THAT YOU'RE  
LONGING FOR TODAY, MY FRIEND

LAY YOUR BURDEN DOWN  
WEARY TRAVELER  
I AM HERE TO LEND A HELPING HAND.  
MAKE YOURSELF AT HOME. YOU ARE NOT ALONE.  
SO LAY IT DOWN.  
NOW YOU CAN LAY YOUR BURDEN DOWN.

**End of Scene VI**



**Act II, Scene I, A halfway house, two months later.**

(CYNTHIA is lying on a cot, reading the Big Book. ANNE approaches and they embrace.)

ANNE

Cindy! You're looking... so much better. How are you feeling?

CYNTHIA

Ashamed.... Grateful.... in equal measures. They've been very kind to me.

ANNE

Your coming here was such a relief. I slept through the night for the first time in months.

CYNTHIA

Oh, Anne! I'm sorry. How did I fall so far?

**(MUSIC #11 I Tried to Erase Myself)**

I TRIED TO ERASE MYSELF!  
WIPE MYSELF OFF THE FACE OF THE EARTH.  
ANNIHILATE, ERADICATE MYSELF.  
OBLITERATE, ELIMINATE MYSELF.

BUT I ONLY DISGRACED MYSELF  
DIDN'T VANISH WITHOUT A TRACE.  
COULDN'T LIE IN THE BED I MADE.  
NOR ESCAPE ALL I HAD BETRAYED.

BY SOME FLUKE OR UNDUE GRACE  
I HAVE HELD ON TO MY SPACE.  
I SHOULD BE DEAD, BUT SINCE I'M NOT  
I'M GRATEFUL FOR HOW HARD YOU FOUGHT AND  
GREEDY FOR ALL LIFE HAS GOT TO GIVE.

I WANT TO LIVE!  
I WANT TO LIVE!  
I WANT TO LIVE!  
I WANT TO LIVE!

(Anne and Cynthia embrace)

**End of Act II Scene I**

**Act II, Scene II Hard Luck Cafe, a week later**

(ANNE enters, looking out of sorts, sits down, gets up and approaches MIMI.)

ANNE

Good morning. Can I speak with you a minute?

MIMI

Sure, sweetie. Want some coffee?

ANNE

No, thank you. I don't have much time. My name is Anne Winthrop.

MIMI

I'm Mimi. What can I do for you?

ANNE

My friend Cindy and I come in sometimes for your wonderful breakfasts.

MIMI

Thank you dear. I knew I'd seen you before. Don't tell me you found a hair in your omelette!

ANNE

Oh, heavens no. Everything is fine, at least as far as that goes. Cindy...is in rehab right now, which is a good thing, but...

MIMI

Yes. Good for her.

ANNE

Yes. Well, let me get straight to the point. I know you hire people in recovery and soon, Cindy will need a job. She lost hers, as well as her home, her daughter, pretty much everything. I'm hoping you might help her get back on her feet.

MIMI

Her daughter?

ANNE

Is no longer in contact.

MIMI

I know something about that.

ANNE

I'm sorry. That's hard.

(Both women nod in silence.)

Cindy is a kind, decent person who got seriously off track. She needs far more than I can give her. (Beat) Are you hiring?

MIMI

Not any time soon, I'm afraid.

ANNE

She waited tables in college and I know she'd do her best.

MIMI

Joe doesn't want folks to make a career out of this place, but the economy is kinda tough right now, so we don't have much turnover.

ANNE

Please consider her if...She's just moved to an extended rehab program and...here's my card, just in case...

MIMI

You're a good friend, Anne. I'll let you know if something turns up.

ANNE

Thank you. Thanks for being here.

JOE

(JOE passes ANNE as she exits and he enters with produce bags, putting them on the counter.)  
Good morning, Love. Who was that?

MIMI

Somebody's best friend.

JOE

And...?

MIMI

(Turns to give him a kiss, as she puts ANNE'S card in her pocket)  
Nothing. Just a girl chat.

JOE

Don't give me that. I know that look.

**End of ACT II, Scene II.**

**Act II, Scene III Hard Luck Café, 6 weeks later.**

(MARCUS walks in, first checking that Alexis is not working.)

MARCUS

Is the coast clear?

(Heads for a table. HAZEL approaches with a coffee pot.)

HAZEL

Hey, Marcus. How're you doing?

MARCUS

Can't you see, I'm a broken man, Hazel! How about Alexis? Is she bad-mouthing me?

HAZEL

Oh hell to the no. Alexis has way too much dignity for that. She's moving on, Marcus...At least that's what she tells herself.

MARCUS

Have I still got any skin in the game?

HAZEL

Maybe that's the problem, Marcus. Alexis doesn't want to play games anymore.

MARCUS

But, Hazel! I've only got 13 months. Thirteen! What if I screw up? Again.

HAZEL

From what I hear, MARCUS, the love of a good woman can only help. Maybe you have to have faith in yourself. And in Alexis.

(Marcus, nods and departs. Hazel checks her watch.)

HAZEL

Plebe alert! Morning guys. New recruit on her way. She's a bit fragile, Joe. Take it easy on her.

JOE

This is a democracy, Hazel. All former drunks receive equal treatment.

HAZEL

Yeah, but you could be a little less gruff, maybe, Joe. You can intimidate! This one's maybe a bit premature for the likes of our customers.

JOE

Well, what's she doing here then?

HAZEL

(Hazel gives him a look as CYNTHIA enters)  
Meet Cynthia Crockett. She's living at the Net while she gets back on her feet.

JOE

(Reaches out to shake hands with CYNTHIA)  
Joe Cardozo. You've met my wife, Mimi.  
(CYNTHIA nods, smiling shyly)

DAN

Hi, I'm Dan.

MIMI

Welcome to the Hard Luck Cafe, Cynthia.

CYNTHIA

Thanks for the opportunity.

JOE

That's a good way to look at it.

HAZEL

This is your home away from home. Don't take any grief.

MIMI

Don't expect any either, Cynthia (glancing at Joe.)

CYNTHIA

Please, call me Cindy.

JOE

OK, Cindy. We'll be busy in a minute here, so I won't stand on ceremony. Fill out this W-4. Despite evidence to the contrary, this is not a non-profit public service organization but a business struggling to stay afloat. We don't ask for a resume because we know you are starting

from scratch. But there are four things that I expect from everyone. Complete honesty, dedication to good service, punctuality and complete sobriety. A two-week notice would be nice. Don't even think about coming in if you're not sober, and if you have to call in sick, you might as well forget it too.

HAZEL

Joe...

CYNTHIA

(Whispers to HAZEL)

What if I'm really sick?

JOE

Mimi will bring you some chicken soup. Now get to work. Hazel will show you the ropes. She's been here for nearly a year. Time to get a move on, Haze.

HAZEL

You're pushing me out?

JOE

Your destiny awaits. Mustn't get stuck at the Hard Luck, much as we all love it---and you of course. I know why you're hanging around.

HAZEL

I haven't graduated yet!

JOE

Yeah. Right. So finish already. Make room for new recruits - like Cindy. We're glad to have you, Cindy. And glad you have experience. You'll need it.

(Walks away)

HAZEL

Listen, this can be a real trial by fire, as if we haven't had enough humiliation for one lifetime. But all the same, it's a great little family. Don't let Joe scare you. He's got a heart of...

CYNTHIA and HAZEL (in unison)

Pure gold.

CYNTHIA

(Laughs, nervously).

So I've heard.

HAZEL

Don't worry. Waiting tables is waiting tables. You were younger the last time you did this so your feet will hurt more. I soak mine in Epsom salts. Let me show you where we keep the family jewels.

(Moving to a supply shelf)

Salt, pepper, ketchup, hot sauce, napkins, jams and jellies. That's about it. (Beat) Oh! Don't let me forget coffee! The most important item on the menu for most of our customers. Here's our private label.

(Cynthia examines the coffee tin)

Honey, this ain't Starbucks. But we make it better than weak and don't get too many complaints. You've probably done this a hundred times, but...

(Quickly makes a new pot of coffee.)

Ok, kiddo. It's time you ventured forth. Can you bring some ketchup to that table and see if they need anything else?

(Grabs a bottle of ketchup to hand to CYNTHIA)

Here you go!

CYNTHIA

(Reaches for the bottle but misses the hand-off and the bottle falls to the floor. Fortunately, it is plastic but CYNTHIA looks stricken as HAZEL retrieves it.)

Sorry! I'm...so clumsy!

HAZEL

Don't give it a thought. We don't call it the Hard Luck Café for nothing!

CYNTHIA

(Nervously)

Thanks. I'd better earn my keep.

(Heads off to the other table. Stops and faces the audience.)

**(MUSIC #12: ONE FOOT (Day by Day intro))**

ONE FOOT IN FRONT OF THE OTHER  
AND STRAIGHT AHEAD.  
ONE FOOT IN FRONT OF THE OTHER  
AND STRAIGHT AHEAD.  
DAY BY DAY  
I MAKE A NEW BEGINNING  
PIECE BY PIECE  
I'M BUILDING BACK MY LIFE

ONE BY ONE  
I'M PICKING UP THE PIECES  
DAY BY DAY  
DAY BY DAY.

(CYNTHIA resumes walking toward a table.

HAZEL, looking glum, heads back to the counter  
where DAN is making coffee.)

DAN

What is it? Are you ok?

HAZEL

Joe says I need to move on.

DAN

He says that to everyone who's been here more than six  
months. He doesn't mean, like, tomorrow.

HAZEL

I hope not. If I have to look for another job before I  
finish school, there goes any hope of a personal life.

DAN

I thought that's what AA was for.

HAZEL

Ha! Struck up any AA romances lately?

DAN

Well, no, but I've been...celibate for quite some time  
now. My sponsor said--

HAZEL

(Interrupting)

Celibate? If you're talking like the average marriage  
after the honeymoon, I think you mean abstinent.

DAN

Whatever.

HAZEL

A temporary state of affairs, no pun intended. Even I go  
through it.

DAN



How long before abstinence turns into celibacy?

HAZEL

When abstinence fails to make the heart grow fonder.  
(Laughs) Get it?

DAN

You're way ahead of me!

HAZEL

I doubt that. When was the last time you went to  
something besides a meeting?

DAN

I went to the Unitarian singles dance a couple weeks  
back.

HAZEL

That's brave! How'd it go?

DAN

Well, it seems I have totally lost my nerve!

**(MUSIC #13: I Could have Danced All Night, But Instead)**

I COULD HAVE DANCED ALL NIGHT  
BUT INSTEAD,  
I WENT HOME EARLY, SAFELY TO BED.  
WHY SHOULD I TAKE A CHANCE  
IN LETTING A ROMANCE  
BREAK MY HEART?

I DON'T BELIEVE IN LOVE ANY MORE.  
IT ALL TOO QUICKLY WALKS OUT THE DOOR.  
AND I'LL NOT TAKE THE RISK  
OF LETTING THAT FIRST KISS  
LEAD TO MORE.

WHEN I COME HOME AT NIGHT  
THERE'S NO ONE TO HOLD ME TIGHT.  
BUT EVERYTHING'S ALL RIGHT.  
THERE'S NO SHOUTING.  
NO ONE'S POUTING.

I COULD HAVE DANCED ALL NIGHT WITH HER THERE  
AND FELT THE THRILL OF THINKING SHE'D CARE  
BUT BY THE MORNING'S LIGHT  
WHAT'S FANCIFUL AT NIGHT

CAN'T BE DARED.  
AND MORE AND MORE IT SEEMS  
ROMANCE IS BETTER LEFT TO MY DREAMS.

THERE IS LITTLE TO BE SAID  
FOR A COLD AND EMPTY BED.  
BUT WORSE THINGS THAT I DREAD  
LIKE A BROKEN HEART THAT TEARS ME APART.

I WOULD HAVE DANCED ALL NIGHT  
BUT COULD NOT.  
WHY SHOULD I MAKE MYSELF OVERWROUGHT?  
WHEN ALL IS SAID AND DONE  
I'M SATISFIED ENOUGH WITH MY LOT.  
AND MORE AND MORE IT SEEMS.  
ROMANCE IS BETTER LEFT TO MY DREAMS.

HAZEL

That's a bit jaded, even for a Unitarian!

DAN

I'm not really Unitarian.

HAZEL

No? The difference between you and me, sweetheart? I've  
been burned too, but life is a learning process, practice  
makes perfect, and someday, I'm going to get it right!

#### **Music #14 Just One Last Man**

I'VE HAD MY SHARE OF MEN.  
SOME WERE HANDSOME. SOME WERE TALL  
SOME WERE NICE AND SOME WERE - (*laughing*)  
NOT AT ALL.

WE'D START AND THEN WE'D END.  
SOMETHING ALWAYS WENT AWRY.  
ONE OR BOTH OF US WOULD SAY GOODBYE.

BUT NOW I THINK I'M READY  
FOR A PERMANENT STEADY.  
FOR THE DISTANCE, FOR THE RACE AND  
NOT JUST FOR THE STEEPLE CHASE.

GOTTA HAVE  
JUST ONE LAST MAN.  
A LOVE TO LAST A LIFETIME.  
I'LL GIVE HIM ALL THAT I CAN.

I WANT TO DO IT RIGHT THIS TIME.  
LOVE TO COUNT ON.  
LOVE TO TRUST.  
LOVE FOREVER, BUT I  
MUST HAVE HIM.  
JUST ONE LAST MAN.

SOMETIMES I ASK MYSELF  
KNOWING I DEMAND A LOT,  
DID I REALLY GIVE IT ALL I'VE GOT?  
IT'S HARD TO KNOW FOR SURE.  
WOULD THERE HAVE BEEN HELL TO PAY?  
OR DID I LET A GOOD MAN GET AWAY?

BUT I'VE STILL GOT SOMETHING TO OFFER.  
AND I'M GOING TO OFFER IT ALL  
TO THE GUY WHO  
WANTS TO TRY TO  
MAKE IT WORK  
AS MUCH AS I DO.

GOTTA HAVE  
JUST ONE LAST MAN!  
A LOVE TO LAST A LIFETIME.  
I'LL GIVE HIM ALL THAT I CAN.  
I WANT TO DO IT RIGHT THIS TIME.  
I'LL BE PATIENT.  
I'LL ADJUST.  
I'LL BE FAITHFUL ONLY  
TRUST ME WITH  
JUST ONE LAST MAN

AND IF I FIND THAT MAN  
DON'T YOU KNOW I'LL  
LOVE HIM SO?  
DON'T YOU KNOW I'LL  
NEVER LET HIM GO.

DAN

(A bit intimated)

You'll find him, Haze. And he'll be a lucky guy.

HAZEL

Think so? For all my bravado, I'm going home to my cat  
and the crosswords--unless-- you want to grab a coffee?

DAN

(Nervously)

Let's not rush into anything.

(Hazel shrugs, departs. Focus shifts to Mimi and Cynthia)

MIMI

How's it going at the Net, Cindy?

CYNTHIA

So far, so good. I just arrived from the "extended stay" program.

MIMI

That means they really liked you. Any family?

CYNTHIA

(Beat) A daughter--a freshman in college...but...Do you have children?

MIMI

Four before I was 30! Two of them still don't speak to me.

CYNTHIA

My daughter, too. Out of touch. My counselor says, she'll come around, but I...

MIMI

My younger daughter's addicted to meth.

CYNTHIA

Oh,...I'm so sorry. That's very tough.

MIMI

Yes, it is. But we try to put our personal trials behind us, just for the day, and be there for our customers. Many are also in recovery. They can be shut down, irritable. Sometimes they just stare into space...

CYNTHIA

I hope I can measure up.

MIMI

You'll be fine. Our bottomless cup of coffee is no moneymaker, but some folks say we've saved a life now and then. We look out for each other when the going gets rough. You can count on us.

CYNTHIA

Thanks. I'm very grateful.

HAZEL

Hold that thought when you see your first paycheck.

**End of Act II, Scene III**

**Act II Scene IV** GREG'S townhouse -

SEVERAL WEEKS LATER

Marcus hesitates at the front door. The shades are drawn but a sliver of light comes through. He peers in, knocks. No answer.

MARCUS

Greg, It's me. Marcus. Open up.

(Greg, a half empty bottle of bourbon beside him and holding a half full glass, hears the knock and immediately mutes the television, sitting rigidly in the silence.)

Outside, Marcus knocks more insistently.

MARCUS

Greg, I know you're in there. Don't do this. Don't isolate.

(Greg takes a drink. Remains sullenly silent.)

MARCUS

C'mon, man! Talk to me. We can get through this! Let me in!

(No answer. Marcus knocks again, but without conviction.)

O.K., Bro, but call me, will ya? Your people are worried.  
(Marcus walks away, dejected.)

(Greg takes a swig and hangs his head.)

**End Act II Scene IV**

**Act II Scene V - Hard Luck Café.**

Mimi, Joe, Hazel and Cynthia are working as Marcus enters.

MARCUS

Hey y'all. Anyone seen Greg?

JOE

Nope.

MIMI

He hasn't been in for awhile, Marcus. Do you think he's ok?

MARCUS

I don't, actually. He's MIA. When I go 'round his place, he's never home. Or pretends he's not.

MIMI

Last time I saw him he was pretty upbeat, remember? Has something happened?

MARCUS

The anniversary of Tom's death hit him hard. I'm real worr.....Oh-oh!

(Alexis has just entered. She brushes past Marcus, ignoring him.)

Gotta run! If you see Greg, tell him I'm looking for him.

JOE

Will do! Alexis! You're late!

MIMI

It's my fault....I forgot to tell you that she....

JOE

That's par for the course!

(Stomps offstage, Mimi's gaze following).

(Alexis mouths "I'm sorry" to Mimi, who shrugs).

**Brief Fade out. Hard Luck Café - Later**

MIMI

(Spotting Richard as he enters).

Here comes one of our more colorful customers. Cindy, I suggest you steer clear--just for today.

HAZEL

(Walks over to DAN, behind the counter.)  
Oh, not again! He's been in every day this week!

DAN

And nobody but *you* can wait on him!

RICHARD

(RICHARD hails HAZEL.)  
Hazel, my muse! Have you missed me?

HAZEL

What can I bring you, Richard?

RICHARD

How about a smile for starters? My, but you look ravishing today!

HAZEL

You're apparently alone in that opinion, Richard, but thank you. Now, what'll it be?

RICHARD

Truth is, I can't get you out of my mind!

**(MUSIC #15: Obsessed)**

OBSESSED.  
I AM OBSESSED WITH YOU.  
OBSESSED  
NO OTHER WORD WILL DO  
AM I CURSE OR BLESSED?  
WHAT'S YOUR POINT OF VIEW?

HAZEL

Cursed, cursed!

RICHARD

THOUGHTS OF YOU ARE ALL CONSUMING.  
YOU COULD WELL BE MY UNDOING.

HAZEL

Are you off your meds?



RICHARD

OBSESSED  
I AM OBSESSED WITH YOU.  
HAVEN'T YOU GUESSED  
HOW MUCH I YEARN FOR YOU?

MY HEART IS YOUR POSSESSION  
AND IT WILL HAVE NO REST  
TILL YOU SAY THAT YOU'RE OBSESSED  
WITH ME TOO.

HAZEL

What on earth are you talking about?

RICHARD

OBSESSED.  
I AM OBSESSED WITH YOU.  
NO SECOND BEST.  
NO OTHER LOVE WILL DO.  
BUT WILL I PASS THE TEST?  
I HAVEN'T GOT A CLUE.  
WON'T YOU PLEASE GIVE ME A SIGN IF  
THERE'S A CHANCE THAT  
YOU'LL BE MINE?

HAZEL

I'll give you a sign all right.

RICHARD

OBSESSED.  
WHAT AM I TO DO?  
NOW I'VE CONFESSED.  
THE FUTURE'S UP TO YOU.  
OH WHAT WILL BE YOUR ANSWER?  
I PRAY THAT IT IS YES.  
PLEASE SAY THAT YOU'RE OBSESSED  
WITH ME TOO.

HAZEL

Certifiable!

RICHARD

WON'T YOU SAY THAT YOU AT LEAST  
LOVE ME TOO?

HAZEL

Man, you need help!

(RICHARD attempts to grab HAZEL'S hand but DAN  
intervenes. Quietly, to DAN.)

He's out of his mind!

DAN

You got a problem?

(Facing Richard, DAN places hand on HAZEL'S shoulder.)

RICHARD

Nothing that a scolding from this lovely lady won't fix.

HAZEL

You are delusional.

RICHARD

You are sensational!

DAN

She is, but you are way out of line.

RICHARD

Since when does a little flirting constitute harassment?

DAN

You barely know this woman, and she doesn't want to know you better.

RICHARD

And who are you to say?

DAN

I'm her...friend and you either behave yourself or...

HAZEL

It's OK, Dan. He's just a lone ranger. No AA. No support, other than coming in here and alienating everyone he meets.

RICHARD

That's harsh!

DAN

Look I don't want to have to ask you to leave, but can I sit down for a minute?

RICHARD

Don't add injury to insult!

DAN

(Sits down and extends hand)  
No, of course not. I'm Dan.

RICHARD

(Beat) Richard.

DAN

Richard, if I might say, flying solo is not really working for you. In treatment, I--

RICHARD

(Sanctimoniously)

I didn't go to treatment.

DAN

That's obvious, but if you had...

(Motions to MARCUS, who has just entered)

Marcus, help me out here. What did they tell you before you left rehab?

MARCUS

They said get your ass to a meeting—every day for 90 days.

RICHARD

Why 90? Why not 75 or 50?

MARCUS

90 is the sweet spot, man! You might need 100.

**(MUSIC 16: 90 in 90)**

MARCUS:

THEY TOLD ME I WOULD HAVE TO GO  
TO 90 MEETINGS IN A ROW  
FOR 90 DAYS TO BEAR MY SOUL  
TO PEOPLE I DON'T EVEN KNOW  
IT'S NOT AN OPTION TO SAY NO  
WHEN FIGHTING THAT SWIFT UNDERTOW.

MARCUS, DAN, HAZEL

GO MAMA GO.  
GO DADDY GO.  
GET YOU TO A MEETING AND  
DON'T BE SLOW.

GET THERE ON A BUS  
GET THERE ON A BIKE  
FIND A RIDE OR GRAB A CAB OR

TAKE A HIKE.  
ANY WAY YOU CAN  
YOU'LL FEEL BETTER THAN  
STAYIN' HOME ALL ALONE OR GOIN' ON THE LAM.

RICHARD  
I WANT A DRINK, GOD! I  
WANT ONE SO BAD!  
THIS MAY BE THE WORST CRAVING  
I'VE EVER HAD.  
IF I AM DETERMINED, I WILL FIND A WAY AND  
MY HIGHER ANGELS I WILL DISOBEY.

DAN  
IF YOU HAD A SPONSOR YOU KNOW WHAT HE'D SAY:  
DON'T THROW IT AWAY. YOU WILL BE OK IF YOU  
JUST FIND A MEETING AND DO NOT DELAY.

CHORUS  
90 DAYS WILL HELP YOU STAY SOBER.  
90 DAYS WILL STRENGTHEN RESOLVE.  
YOU'LL ATTEND ALL THE GROUPS IN THE CITY  
FIND THE ONES THAT CAN HELP YOU *EVOLVE*.  
90 DAYS AT FIRST SEEMS FOREVER  
BUT 90 DAYS GOES BY IN A FLASH.  
YOU'LL MAKE FRIENDS AS YOU WORK THE PROGRAM

MARCUS  
AND IT'S FREE! YOU NEVER NEED CASH!

CHORUS  
GO BROTHER GO.  
GO SISTER GO.  
GET YOU TO A MEETING AND  
DON'T BE SLOW.

GET THERE ON A BUS  
GET THERE ON A BIKE  
FIND A RIDE OR GRAB A CAB OR  
TAKE A HIKE.  
ONCE YOU HAVE ARRIVED  
KNOW THAT YOU'VE SURVIVED  
YOU'RE RENEWED. BACK  
IN THE GROOVE  
AND GLAD TO BE ALIVE.

NINETY IN 90!

RICHARD

Enough already.

(He starts to leave.)

HAZEL

There's one at St. Barnabus in half an hour.

MARCUS

Do you want company? I could use a tune up.

RICHARD

Lead the way!

(MARCUS bows and motions to the door. They depart.)

**End of Act II, Scene V**

**Act II, Scene VI, Hard Luck Café, several months later.**

(MIMI, JOE, HAZEL and CINDY are working and ALEXIS has just entered.)

ALEXIS

How you doing, Cindylamb?

CYNTHIA

I haven't broken anything yet today, but there're still several hours to go.

ALEXIS

Nothing here is irreplaceable. Including me, I guess.  
(CYNTHIA looks puzzled.)

MIMI

Alex will soon be leaving us. Moving up in the world.

CYNTHIA

Where to?

ALEXIS

Back to Critical Care at the hospital. Pill-free for a year and they're giving me another chance.

CYNTHIA

Good for you!

ALEXIS

Yeah. I had a great profession for ten years, until I blew it.

HAZEL

You didn't blow it! You just took a little detour. Builds character.

ALEXIS

What bullshit!

(Hazel is surprised by her vehemence.)

HAZEL

That's what I tell myself. Got to think positive.  
Mimi nods.

HAZEL

I hate to see you go, but you sure saved my bacon. Maybe now Joe will get off my case about finding another job before I finish school.

ALEXIS

Glad to assist. At least something's goin' right.

MIMI

Alex, are you still hurting?

ALEXIS

(Changing the subject)

And more than my heart--Look at these shoes! The heels are so run down, I look bowlegged!

HAZEL

And wouldn't I love a new hair-do!

MIMI

Tell me about it!

HAZEL

What good is it to tell you, MIMI? You can't afford to pay us more! We're all in the same damn fix!

ALEXIS

(To Mimi)

At least you have a husband.

(Mimi turns to look at Joe.)

**(MUSIC: 17. Delayed Gratification)**

HAZEL

I WANT

MIMI

I WANT

ALEXIS

I WANT WHAT I CAN'T HAVE

MIMI

CAN'T HAVE

HAZEL

CAN'T HAVE AND

ALEXIS

I CAN ALMOST SALIVATE FOR

MIMI

THINGS I KNOW I'LL  
HAVE TO WAIT FOR

HAZEL  
NEVER KNEW DELAYED GRATIFICATION  
HURT SO BAD!

CHORUS (ALL)  
AH-OO AH-OO AH-OO-OO-OO-OO.  
MOULA, I CAN'T WAIT NO MORE FOR YOU.

ALEXIS  
MY CLOCK IS TICKING  
LIKE A TIME BOMB  
THAT WILL SEAL MY FATE  
IF IT DON'T HAVE A BABY SOON ITS  
BOUND TO BE TOO LATE!

HAZEL  
BUT I DON'T  
HAVE MY LIFE ON TRACK  
NOR DO I HAVE A MATE!

CHORUS (ALL)  
AH-OO AH-OO AH-OO-OO-OO-OO.  
LOVER, I CAN'T WAIT NO MORE FOR YOU!

HAZEL  
I CAN'T MOVE TO PITTSBURG  
CUZ I'M STILL ON PROBATION

ALEXIS  
I CAN'T TAKE A DAY OFF  
CUZ I'VE GOT NO PAID VACATION.  
(Glaring at Joe)

MIMI  
EACH DAY THAT PASSES BY IS SUCH A  
PAINFUL WAITING GAME

HAZEL  
WHERE I'M SO FILLED WITH ENVY THAT I  
THINK I'LL GO INSANE!

ALEXIS  
I WANT



MIMI  
I WANT

HAZEL  
I WANT WHAT I CAN'T HAVE

ALEXIS  
CAN'T HAVE

MIMI  
CAN'T HAVE AND

ALEXIS  
I CAN ALMOST  
SALIVATE FOR

HAZEL  
THINGS I KNOW I'LL  
HAVE TO WAIT FOR

MIMI  
NEVER KNEW  
DELAYED GRATIFICATION  
HURT SO BAD.

ALL  
AH-OO AH-OO  
AH-OO-OO-OO-OO.  
FUTURE, I CAN'T WAIT NO MORE FOR YOU.

JOE  
Enough fun, girls. Back to work.

Brief fade out. After hours, Joe and Mimi are alone  
cleaning up in opposite ends of the darkened café.

JOE  
MIMI?

MIMI  
Hmm?

JOE  
Did you order the coffee filters?

MIMI  
Oh, oh.

JOE

You said you'd take care of it. We're completely out!

MIMI

I'm hopeless!

JOE

Stop it! You're not hopeless, just hopelessly preoccupied. The café was your idea, Mimi. Are you all in or not?

MIMI

Of course! Please don't be mad, Joe. I...

JOE

What can I say that won't become fodder for you to feel worse about yourself? You're great with our customers and crew--you give 100 percent. But when you zone out, it tends to be on my time. And maybe I'd like not to be the heavy all the time.

MIMI

You're right, Joe. I know I'm not always there for you.

JOE

Mimi...

(Focus shifts to ANNE as she enters the café and approaches CYNTHIA. They hug.)

ANNE

Cindy! You look great. Do you have a second?

CYNTHIA

(Checks to see that no one needs attention before they sit.)

It's going pretty well, considering I'm such a klutz. The staff is very forgiving. (beat) It would be a demanding job for someone firing on all cylinders, and...I guess you know how many cylinders I've got left.

ANNE

Cylinders regenerate Cindy, and I'm proud to be your friend right now.

CYNTHIA

You've always been there for me, but I miss Katie so

much.

ANNE

Maybe it's time to reach out and tell her where you are.  
(Before CYNTHIA can protest, ANNE has dialed the  
number on her own cell and handed her the phone.

CYNTHIA

Anne!

KATIE

(Offside, answers phone with resignation.)  
Hello, Anne.

CYNTHIA

(Beat). No, Katie. Es tu Mama.

KATIE

(Long silence)

**(MUSIC #18: You Are NOT My Mother!)**

YOU ARE NOT MY MOTHER!  
A MOTHER WOULD BE TRUSTWORTHY  
A MOTHER WOULD BE KIND.  
SHE WOULD NOT NEGLECT HER CHILD TO  
DRINK HERSELF HALF BLIND.

A MOTHER WOULD BE SENSITIVE.  
AND YOU DON'T HAVE A CLUE.  
A MOTHER WOULD PROTECT HER CHILD  
FROM THE LIKES OF YOU.

THEY SAY YOU'RE IN RECOVERY  
WELL I'VE RECOVERED TOO  
ENOUGH TO KNOW I'LL NEVER NEED A  
MOTHER SUCH AS YOU.

AND JUST BECAUSE YOU'VE FINALLY STOPPED  
DOES NOT MEAN THAT WE START.  
THE HARM IS DONE.  
I'M DAMAGED GOODS.  
I DO NOT HAVE A HEART.

IF ANYONE SHOULD ASK ME  
I WILL TELL THEM THAT YOU'RE DEAD.  
I WILL NOT LIVE ANOTHER DAY  
WITH YOU INSIDE MY HEAD.  
SO IF YOU THOUGHT TO MAKE AMENDS  
I'M TELLING YOU, DON'T BOTHER!

FOR I AM NOT YOUR CHILD AND  
YOU ARE NOT MY MOTHER!  
(KATIE and CYNTHIA both slam down their phones.  
CYNTHIA rises.)

Jodete! (or appropriate expletive)

CYNTHIA  
What on earth were you thinking!

ANNE  
Cindy!

CYNTHIA  
You're always pushing, pushing, pushing!

ANNE  
For God's sake!

CYNTHIA  
I really didn't need this now!

ANNE  
(As Cynthia walks away, ignoring her)  
You think I would have called if I had known...(Head in  
hands. Anne and Cynthia exit.

Joe and Mimi are alone at closing.

MIMI  
It's not like you to belittle me in front of staff, Joe.  
What's eating you?

JOE  
(Surprised)  
Belittle!

MIMI  
Yeah. I know I'm a space cadet at times but you made me  
sound like a total slackard.

JOE  
That was not my intent. It's just...somebody's got to  
look out for the bottom line, Mimi! We'll barely make  
payroll this month.

MIMI  
I thought business had picked up. The place is full half

the time.

JOE

Yeah, because our \$2.00 cup of coffee keeps 'em in their seats all day! At the bar, we didn't refill the glass every time someone finished a beer! How do you think Starbucks makes so much money?

(Mimi shrugs.)

JOE (CONT'D)

And if Cindy breaks one more god-damned plate I'm gonna dock her pay!

MIMI

Now, Joe. Some of those were not her fault. And she's got a daughter in college.

JOE

So do you, Mimi. And did we really need a new girl?

MIMI

She's not a girl! And you know as soon as they get on their feet, they're off to bigger things. It'll all work out.

JOE

(Shaking his head)

Yeah. I suppose. (Beat). I was out of line this morning. I'm sorry.

MIMI

Yes, you were. And not for the first time you've been short-tempered. Maybe it's time to come back to a meeting.

JOE

You think I'm a dry drunk, huh? That's an indictment!

MIMI

I didn't say that, but... it's a wake up call.

(Joe looks dejected.)

MIMI (Cont)

Let's both try.

**(MUSIC: #19. TODAY)**

TODAY IS THE TOMORROW OF YESTERDAY

AND TODAY'S THE YESTERDAY OF TOMORROW.  
BUT TODAY IS ONLY FOR TODAY.  
LET ME LIVE IT.  
LET ME GIVE IT A CHANCE.

I SPEND SO MANY DAYS REGRETTING YESTERDAY.  
OR FRETTING ABOUT TOMORROW.  
WHILE TODAY JUST SEEMS TO SLIP AWAY.  
AND I LOSE IT.  
DID I CHOOSE IT SOMEHOW?

WHILE THE PLAY'S ON THE STAGE  
I AM OFF IN THE WINGS  
MY MIND ON OTHER THINGS.  
THEN THE CURTAIN FALLS AND  
I CAN'T RECALL  
ANY LINES FROM THE PLAY AT ALL.

I WANT TO BE HERE IN THE MOMENT.  
NOT CAUGHT IN THE FUTURE OR PAST.  
WITH YOU NOW  
OH WON'T YOU SHOW ME HOW?  
WON'T YOU HELP ME  
LEARN TO MAKE THE TIME LAST?

FOR EACH DAY IS UNLIKE ANY OTHER.  
AND OUR MOMENTS TOGETHER ARE FEW.  
I DON'T WANT TO WAKE UP AND DISCOVER  
THAT I'VE RUN OUT OF TIME WITH YOU.

MIMI AND JOE  
TODAY IS THE TOMORROW OF YESTERDAY.  
AND TODAY'S THE YESTERDAY OF TOMORROW.  
BUT TODAY IS ONLY FOR TODAY.  
LET ME LIVE IT.  
LET ME GIVE IT A CHANCE!

JOE

(Embrace)

I never want to lose you, Mimi.

Mimi's phone rings. Joe exits.

(Center stage in darkness. Spotlight on CINDY, with  
phone in hand opposite MIMI, who answers the phone.)

MIMI

Hello?

CYNTHIA

Mimi. It's...Cynthia. You said to call...if...I'm in trouble.

MIMI

Where are you, Cindy?

CYNTHIA

I'm downtown...within shouting distance of a liquor store.

MIMI

Well, for God's sake, don't shout. I'll be right there.

CYNTHIA

I messed up, Mimi. I really can't undo it.

MIMI

No, Cindy! You did the right thing. Just tell me where you are.

(Phone goes dead. Fear enters her voice.)

Cindy? Cindy?

**MUSIC #20. Guilty**

CYNTHIA

(alone on stage Sings "Guilty")

I'M GUILTY.

GUILTY AS A WOMAN CAN BE

OH I'M SO GUILTY

GUILTY AS A WOMAN CAN BE

I WOULDN'T BE IN THE MESS I'M IN NOW

IF I'D ONLY DONE THINGS DIFFERENTLY.

I SHOULD HAVE SEEN IT COMING

SHOULD HAVE KNOWN THE SIGNS

ALL THAT I CAN SAY IS

WELL YOU KNOW THAT

LOVE IS BLIND

THAT'S WHY I'M GUILTY

GUILTY AS A WOMAN CAN BE

I WOULD NOT BE IN THIS MESS NOW

IF I'D ONLY DONE THINGS DIFFERENTLY.

YOU SAY THAT IT'S NOT MY FAULT.

YOU SAY I'M NOT TO BLAME.  
WELL TELL ME THEN WHY IT IS  
THAT I'M FEELING SO MUCH SHAME

IF I'M NOT GUILTY  
GUILTY AS A WOMAN CAN BE.  
I WOULD NOT BE IN THIS MESS NOW  
IF I'D ONLY DONE THINGS DIFFERENTLY.

Fade out. End of Scene VI



**ACT II Scene VII Anne's office**

(KATIE sits across from ANNE, her body language closed and hostile.)

ANNE

What are you taking next term?

KATIE

Calculus, English Lit, Biology. (Beat) Did you know a thousand soldiers a year die from stupid stuff, like car accidents.

ANNE

And why did your dad have to be one of them? Katie, there's no denying that you've had more than your share. The only way to come out ahead is if you can lead a happy life in spite of it all.

KATIE

That's bullshit! Your mother is not a drunk.

ANNE

No, but my father was. Your mom's in recovery.

KATIE

I can't wait to see how that turns out.

ANNE

You feel that your mother didn't protect you. (Beat) Of course, you have every right to be angry, Katie, but your mother's life was also damaged.

KATIE

Yeah, let's make it all about her.

ANNE

I can only imagine how hard it has been for you.

KATIE

Can you? Imagine being on a date with a baby-faced freshman and flashing back to a middle-aged man crawling all over you?

ANNE

That would unnerve anyone.

KATIE

Unnerve? I opened the door and threw up! Try explaining that to a poor, insecure nerd. "Oh, I'm so sorry! It's not you. It's me!"

ANNE

No one should have to go through what you did, Katie. But if you talk about this, it will lose its...

KATIE

Not with you. You're too close to her.

ANNE

(Nods). Before you came along, your mom and I loved to solve the world's problems over a couple of beers. Then, everything changed. She stepped up, over-night it seemed. (Beat) As her best friend, I can tell you - she was completely devoted to you.

(ANNE realizes she sounds a little jealous and tries to reassure KATIE. KATIE remains silent.)  
Can you at least trust that I'm on your side?

KATIE

I don't even trust myself.

ANNE

You can trust yourself, Katie. Your mom did screw up, no question. The humiliating...

KATIE

I know about the DUI. She coulda killed someone.

ANNE

(Nods). Forgiving her will be hard, but--

KATIE

Yeah, maybe she'll finally give me driving lessons.

ANNE

(Flustered) Well...let me just say that with determination and support, people really can change--

KATIE

(Caustically interrupting)  
Now I'm inspired!

ANNE

(ANNE'S telephone buzzes, as she realizes she is

getting nowhere)  
OK. Thanks. (Beat). I'm sorry, Katie, but a client has arrived.

(KATIE leaps up, relieved to be leaving.)  
If you do want to talk, please know that I'm here for you.

(As KATIE shrugs off ANNE'S attempted hug.)  
Or if you prefer, I can recommend someone else.

(KATIE is out the door, ANNE calling after her.)  
Please! Stay in touch, Katie.

**End of Scene VII**

**Act II Scene VIII The Hard Luck Café after hours, later**

(The end of the workday. ALEXIS, MIMI, CINDY, DAN and JOE are cleaning up. MARCUS enters, sits down, rubs his hands together with glee and terror.)

MIMI

Uh-oh, Alexis. Look who's here. Do you want Cynthia to...

ALEXIS

No, thank you. I'll handle it. She marches over the door and flips the "CLOSED" sign.

(Reluctantly heads to the table)

Marcus. What're you doing here? We're closed!

MARCUS

Closed? Oh. Well, the door was... Thanks for...comin' over, baby. You're lookin' good! Sit down for a minute.

ALEXIS

Don't you baby me. What's up, Marcus? I've got work to do.

MARCUS

Baby, I've been doin' a lot of thinkin', and a whole lot of missin'.

ALEXIS

Don't start this again.

MARCUS

Hear me out, baby. I've made up my mind. I can't live without you!

**(MUSIC #21: Time and Again)**

TIME AND AGAIN  
I'VE TRIED TO FORGET YOU.  
WASN'T GONNA LET YOU  
UNDER MY SKIN. BUT

TIME AND AGAIN  
I BEGAN TO DOUBT  
I COULD REALLY LIVE WITHOUT  
YOUR TENDER LOVIN'.  
TIME AND AGAIN  
YOU'VE BEEN HAUNTING MY DREAMS.

NOW IT SEEMS

I'LL NEVER BE FREE  
OF LOVIN' YOU.

I KNOW I'M HOOKED.  
MY GOOSE IS SURELY COOKED.  
I HAVEN'T OVERLOOKED WHAT ALL OF THIS MEANS. SINCE  
I WILL REFORM  
WHY NOT MAKE IT EASY?  
LIFE COULD BE A BREEZE INSTEAD  
OF A STORM. AND

TIME AND AGAIN  
I'LL MAKE CERTAIN YOU KNOW  
THAT I'M GLAD I'LL NEVER BE FREE  
OF LOVIN' YOU.

I BUILT A WALL YOU COULDN'T PENETRATE.  
MY HEART WAS SAFE FROM YOUR CHARMS.  
NOW LIKE A CHILD WHO JUST COULDN'T WAIT  
I LONG TO BE SAFE IN YOUR ARMS.

OH, TIME AND AGAIN  
MIGHT AS WELL ADMIT I  
ALMOST DIDN'T GET IT  
TILL LOVE WAS DEAD. BUT  
TIME AND AGAIN  
IT'S THE SAME OLD STORY  
LOVE IN ALL ITS GLORY  
CONQUERS THE HEAD. AND  
TIME AND AGAIN  
I'LL MAKE CERTAIN YOU'LL SEE  
THAT I'M GLAD I'LL NEVER BE FREE  
OH, TIME AND AGAIN  
YOU'VE BEEN HAUNTING MY DREAMS  
NOW IT SEEMS I'LL NEVER BE FREE  
OF LOVIN' YOU.

ALEXIS

Oh, Marcus, don't do this! I'm getting on with my life.

MARCUS

Alexis, Marry me.

(Gets down on his knees beside the booth and shouts  
to the whole café.)

As 'veu are all my witnesses, I'm asking this woman to  
marry me. What do you say, Alexis. I love you, Woman!

ALEXIS

Marcus! Get up. You're making a fool of yourself.

MARCUS

I am a fool for you, baby, and I'm not getting up till you say yes.

JOE

Say yes, for cryin' out loud, Alexis. We're tired of seeing you mope around here.

MIMI

You know you've been miserable without him.

ALEXIS

Oh, all right. Yes! If you stay for the meeting, I will marry you!

MARCUS

The meeting? Whatever you say!

(MARCUS grabs her in an embrace and they swirl around the room.)

Oh, baby! You've made me a happy man! I feel like bustin' a move!

(MARCUS dances ALEXIS offstage. Brief fade out. ANNE arrives just as CYNTHIA is leaving.)

ANNE

Cindy! I'm glad I caught you.

CYNTHIA

I'm not.

ANNE

I want to apologize. I don't blame you for being upset. I should not have made that call. But honestly, I thought Katie was coming around, and she needed to hear from you.

CYNTHIA

You're always trying to make decisions for me! You've done your job. I've gone through treatment. Now, let me mend my own fences.

ANNE

I said, I'm sorry! Please! Can we talk for a minute?

(CYNTHIA reluctantly moves to a table and sits down)

with ANNE. They sit in silence for a moment.)

Do you ever think about how differently our lives have turned out from what we imagined? We both thought we'd get married, have kids. (Beat). That didn't happen for me.

And then, Danny died and your marriage to Paul was a train wreck. But...you still had Katie! I was so envious!

(CYNTHIA remains silent, while looking at ANNE for more)

I may have been jealous of how much Katie took over your life, but I would never, never intentionally harm your relationship with her! You've got to believe that!

CYNTHIA

(Hesitates, then reaches her hand out to ANNE). I...do. Of course, I do. It was just so raw, so painful, to hear her anger, and know how justified it was! How could I have put her through this? I was furious at you for making the call, but Katie has every right to hate me!

(They sit in silence for a moment.)

Later that day, I came this close (indicating with two fingers) to relapsing.

ANNE

(ANNE is taken aback)

And you weren't about to call me.

CYNTHIA

No. I figured I'd spread the love. I called Mimi.

(Anne looks disappointed.)

ANNE

Mimi's terrific. And probably had better advice than I could have given.

CYNTHIA

Not really. Sometimes it's just easier to hear it from another... (Beat) And, despite her good advice, I hung up on her and loitered around a liquor store for nearly an hour.

ANNE

Did you go in? (Cynthia shakes her head "no.") Why not?

CYNTHIA

I thought of how I'd let Katie down, again and again. An

older woman came out, clutching a paper bag. We locked eyes for a few seconds, and hers seemed to say "You don't want to go there." (Beat) Besides, Mimi and Joe have faith in me.

ANNE

I have faith in you.

CYNTHIA

I know you do. Maybe it's pride or shame...or envy. I still can't figure out why I slipped on that ice and you didn't.

ANNE

You had Paul to give you a shove. What's my excuse?

**Music #22. Love is All You Need**

I BELIEVED THE MESSAGE OF MY YOUTH  
LOVE IS ALL YOU NEED.  
LOVE IS ALL YOU NEED.  
IT SEEMED TO ME THE QUINTESSENTIAL TRUTH  
LOVE IS ALL YOU NEED.  
LOVE IS ALL YOU NEED.

BUT WHERE IS THE LOVE  
THAT DOESN'T NEED JUSTICE?  
WHERE IS THE LOVE  
IMMUNE TO HARDSHIP?  
WHERE IS THE LOVE  
THAT COULDN'T USE  
JUST A LITTLE BIT OF LUCK  
AND A LITTLE BIT OF MONEY?

I HAD A LOVE.  
IT WASN'T ENOUGH.  
TO WEATHER THE STORM  
WHEN SEAS GOT TOO ROUGH.  
AND NOW I CONCEDE  
LOVE'S NOT ONLY WHAT YOU NEED  
NO NO NO.  
I BELIEVED THE MESSAGE OF MY YOUTH  
LOVE IS ALL YOU NEED.  
LOVE IS ALL YOU NEED.

CYNTHIA

*(Trying to cheer ANNE)*



YOU NEED A LITTLE BIT OF LUCK.  
A LITTLE BIT OF MONEY.  
A FEW GOOD LOOKS WILL NEVER  
HURT YOU HONEY.  
BUT OTHER THAN THAT

ANNE and CYNTHIA (*duet*)  
ALL YOU NEED IS LOVE, LOVE, LOVE, LOVE.

YOU NEED PEACE IN THE HOME AND  
PEACE IN THE NATION.  
ONCE IN AWHILE YOU NEED A WEEK'S VACATION  
BUT OTHER THAN THAT  
ALL YOU NEED IS LOVE.

CYNTHIA  
AND IF YOUR LUCK IS BATTING ZERO  
YOU'RE DISAGREEING WITH THE CALL  
JUST REMEMBER IF YOUR  
BACK IS REALLY UP AGAINST THE WALL

THAT IF YOU DON'T WANT TO FACE A LONG JOURNEY  
YOU'LL NEED A FAIR JUDGE

ANNE  
AND A CUNNING ATTORNEY!

ANNE AND CYNTHIA  
BUT OTHER THAN THAT  
ALL YOU NEED IS LOVE, LOVE, LOVE, LOVE.  
ALL YOU NEED IS LOVE.

CYNTHIA  
AND IF YOU HAVE SELF-ASSURANCE  
AND A JOB WITH DECENT PAY  
BETTER HAVE SOME HEALTH INSURANCE  
AND SAVINGS FOR A RAINY DAY.

ANNE and CYNTHIA (*duet*)  
CUZ YOU NEVER KNOW WHAT  
HAND LIFE MIGHT DEAL YOU.  
BEST TO KEEP A CARD UP YOUR SLEEVE, TOO  
BUT, OTHER THAN THAT  
ALL YOU NEED IS LOVE, LOVE, LOVE, LOVE.  
ALL YOU NEED IS LOVE.

ANNE  
(*Resumes her melancholy*)

I BELIEVED THE MESSAGE OF MY YOUTH.  
LOVE IS ALL YOU NEED.  
LOVE IS ALL YOU NEED.

*(CYNTHIA offers a hug).*

Brief fade out. CYNTHIA AND ANNE depart.

JOE and MIMI enter and begin to rearrange chairs for the AA meeting.

MIMI

What a day!

JOE

You know what day it is?

MIMI

'Course I do. It's Tuesday-our weekly AA night.

JOE

Not just any Tuesday--

(Pulls a bouquet of roses from behind the counter.)  
Happy Anniversary, Love of my life!

MIMI

(Clearly she has forgotten.)  
Ah, Joe. You are .... I'm sorry...but ...you know how I am.

JOE

Yes, and I love you just the way you are. Well, maybe a little less self-flagellation wouldn't hurt. Remember the night we met? I said to myself "Grant me the courage to talk to this wonderful creature!"

**(MUSIC #23 Time and Again**

TIME AND AGAIN  
MIGHT AS WELL ADMIT IT  
ALMOST DIDN'T GET IT  
THOUGHT LOVE WAS DEAD. BUT  
TIME AND AGAIN  
YOU'VE BEEN HAUNTING MY DREAMS  
NOW IT SEEMS I'LL NEVER BE FREE  
OF LOVIN' YOU.

MIMI

OF LOVIN' YOU.

JOE AND MIMI

OF LOVIN' YOU.

MIMI

I LOVE YOU.

DAN

Am I interrupting?

MIMI/

No!

JOE

(Simultaneously)

Yes!

MIMI

We're just...It's our anniversary.

DAN

(Tempering his sarcasm with awe.)

And you're spending it hosting an after-hours AA meeting!  
We are truly grateful for your sacrifice.

MIMI

This is where it all started for us, Dan.

DAN

Well, many happy returns of the day! But Joe, you don't usually hang around for the meeting. Mimi tells us you've taken up meditation.

JOE

Yeah, Peace brother. I'm trying to see what it's all about. Maybe I can stop scaring people.

(Returns to rearranging chairs)

DAN

(Genuinely)

Thanks for joining us.

MARCUS

(Entering with Alexis)

Yeah, yeah. One Day at a Time, Easy Does It, and so

forth.

DAN

(Shaking MARCUS' hand)

Hey, my friend. Glad you skipped "Keep it Simple, Stupid."

I really can't stand that one.

(Kisses ALEXIS. CYNTHIA has arrived.)

HAZEL

(Enters, blowing kisses)

KISS, KISS!

(To DAN)

You cleaned up nicely.

DAN

You're not bad yourself!

Hazel kisses Marcus and Alexis.

HAZEL

What's this I hear about you becoming an EMT?

MARCUS

Yeah, Alexis like to keep me on a short leash.

ALEXIS

You know perfectly well, you love it.

(To Hazel)

It suits his needs for action and drama.

MARCUS

Hey! I saved a guy's life the other day!

HAZEL

That's wonderful, Marcus.

ALEXIS

And how's the addiction counseling business going?

HAZEL

Well, there's no shortage of clients. This opioid business is something else. I think I'm going to need a sabbatical soon.

DAN

(Nods sympathetically) If you'll excuse me, I'm the designated driver tonight.

(Turns to the group)  
Hey, everybody. We all know each other. Shall we skip introductions and get started?

MARCUS  
I *like* sayin' "Marcus is an alcoholic and an addict!"

ALEXIS  
Oh, Marcus!

ALL  
Hi Marcus!

MARCUS  
Hey, Y'all. I was hoping Greg'd be here.

MIMI  
We haven't seen him in for ages.

DAN  
That's not a good sign.

RICHARD  
(*Marcus turns hopefully as RICHARD rushes in*)  
I'm not too late? I'm Richard...and I'm an alcoholic.

ALL  
Hi Richard!

DAN  
Glad you made it. Welcome, everyone. We're pretty informal here, Richard. May not be what you're used to, but you're up to trying new things, right?

RICHARD  
I'm a new man.  
(waves away concern.)

DAN  
Great. Well, let's get started.

(The group stands and joins hands, forming a circle.  
Hazel pulls Richard up from his seat.)

**Music #24: Serenity Prayer**

ENSEMBLE (except Richard)  
GOD, GRANT ME THE SERENITY  
TO ACCEPT THE THINGS I CANNOT CHANGE  
THE COURAGE TO CHANGE THE THINGS I CAN  
AND THE WISDOM TO KNOW THE DIFFERENCE

(The group squeezes hands before taking their seats.)

DAN  
A nice, intimate group. Plenty of time for discussion.  
Anyone want to suggest a Step, or....

HAZEL  
(Raising her hand, diving in at the same time).  
Step Two? I still stumble over the God concept.  
Basically, I'm an agnostic, maybe even an atheist. Who is  
my Higher Power? It feels disingenuous to pray when I'm  
not a believer. Not that it stops me. I just feel guilty  
doing it.

DAN  
Ever wonder where guilt comes from if not from a belief  
that our actions are being judged by a higher power?

JOE  
But there's the rub. I've seen more people trip up on  
this step than any other. If your higher power has little  
to do with religious beliefs, so be it.

ALEXIS  
That'd be my Granny T-Bone. Granny was always my moral  
compass growing up. She taught me right from wrong, and  
when I need a good talking to, I conjure up a 4 foot-10  
inch rotund little dynamo with wispy hair and wire-rims.  
Granny T-Bone says, "Alexis, I love you no matter what,  
but I know you can do the right thing here. I expect it  
of you." So Granny T, you are my Higher Power!

HAZEL  
Thanks, everyone. It's good to know I'm not alone in  
this.

DAN  
Not at all. Be creative. Other - concerns?

MIMI  
Making amends is still my biggest bugaboo. I screwed up.

That's all there is to it. I have apologized, but others have to live with the harm I've done.

RICHARD

(Interrupting suddenly)

I was an angry SOB, and I took it out on you folks. According to my sponsor, (nodding to Dan), I received the Asshole of the Week award on more than one occasion. (beat) If I appeared rude, and, probably obnoxious, I ...

HAZEL

(Aside)

Probably?

RICHARD

...apologize.

HAZEL

(Shrugs) Apology accepted. See, that one wasn't so tough. Sometimes, hearing the sad stories, including my own, makes me want to scream! Getting sober is only half the battle.

MIMI

And medicating that pain just postpones the inevitable, doesn't it? Let it out and let it go.

DAN

Good advice. Let's all move on. Hazel, I think you have an announcement?

HAZEL

Yes, indeed. Tonight, I have the honor of presenting a five year medallion to our guardian angel, and dear friend, Mimi. She and Joe are blessings for whom I know you share my feelings. When I saw that Mimi treated customers and everyone who worked for her with respect and compassion, eventually, maybe, a little rubbed off on me. It's hugely because Mimi always assumed I would do the right thing that I'm here tonight. How could I disappoint such a trusting soul? Mimi?

(As MIMI arises, HAZEL hands her a medallion and they embrace to clapping and cheers.)

ALEXIS

(To MIMI) What do you have to say for yourself, girl?

MIMI

Only that I'm very.... touched...and...just know  
that these have been the five happiest years of my life,  
- not to mention the only recent ones I can remember!  
Thanks for this...milestone. I really owe so much to my  
dear Joe. He's taught me...you've all taught me...

(JOE shuffles and smiles)

**(MUSIC #25: Choose Life)**

YOU CAN EASILY SPEND  
THE REST OF YOUR LIFE  
FEELING SORRY FOR YOURSELF OR  
YOU CAN DECIDE  
YOU'RE NOT GONNA HIDE AND  
CLIMB DOWN FROM YOUR SHELF.  
YOUR LIFE HAS BEEN TRAGIC AND  
WE HAVE NO MAGIC TO  
MAKE THE PAIN GO AWAY BUT  
YOU CAN DECIDE TO  
REGAIN YOUR PRIDE AND  
YOU CAN  
CHOOSE LIFE.

ENSEMBLE

CHOOSE LIFE

HAZEL

WHY TRY TO MAINTAIN  
THAT WORN-OUT REFRAIN  
IT'S TIME TO START ANEW.  
WHAT MORE CAN YOU GAIN BY  
RE-LIVING PAIN  
YOU'RE MAKING YOURSELF BLUE.  
YOUR PAST WAS UNKIND BUT YOU CAN  
PUT IT BEHIND YOU AND  
THROW THAT BAGGAGE AWAY  
CUZ LIFE IS A CHOICE AND  
YOU HAVE A VOICE AND

ENSEMBLE

YOU CAN CHOOSE LIFE!  
CHOOSE LIFE!

NO IT ISN'T VERY PRETTY  
IF YOU WALLOW IN SELF-PITY.



BETTER LET IT GO!  
YOU CAN DO IT.  
WE'LL HELP YOU PULL THROUGH IT.  
LET IT GO.

ALL

LET IT FLOW.

DAN AND HAZEL

YES, DAY AFTER DAY THINGS  
GET IN THE WAY OF YOUR SERENITY.  
IT'S MORE OF THE SAME. FIND  
SOMETHING TO BLAME FOR  
YOUR REALITY.

ENSEMBLE

IT'S SUCH A TEMPTATION  
YOU'VE GOT VINDICATION  
TO SAY "WHAT THE HELL, ANYWAY!"  
BUT YOU CAN **REVISE**  
TAKE THE WORLD BY SURPRISE  
IF YOU WILL  
CHOOSE LIFE!

DA DA DA DA DA DA  
CHOOSE LIFE!  
DA DA DA DA DA DA DA  
CHOOSE LIFE!  
DA DA DA DA DA DA  
CHOOSE LIFE!

Circle breaks up. People say their good-byes to one another. Alexis and Hazel hug, Dan and Marcus shake hands. Dan meets Hazel at the coffee pot

DAN

Coffee?

HAZEL

Sure. Thanks

DAN

I've been thinking about you, Hazel How come you've stayed so brave and I'm such a coward? It's not like we both haven't been rejected more than once.

HAZEL

I just have faith that I am lovable and someday, some lucky guy...

DAN

You really are remarkable, Hazel. Your talents are wasted waiting on tables.

HAZEL

Not wasted! What better on-the-job training than the Hard Luck Cafe? Some of those old geezers live for my smile, or so they tell me.

DAN

That smile is worth living for.

HAZEL

What a nice thing to say! (Beat). How is the financial planning business coming?

DAN

Might be able to retire from the cafe in a year or so.

HAZEL

So, we'll both be moving on.

DAN

Yes. But... I wouldn't want to lose touch with you, Hazel. (Beat). Can I walk you home?

HAZEL

You're sure you're not just after my assets?

DAN

I am, but not the financial ones. Let's go. The night is young!

As they depart, Anne arrives to pick up Cynthia.

ANNE

Sorry I'm late.

CYNTHIA

No. Right on time. How was Al-Anon?

ANNE

Good. I'm learning a lot... about myself.

CYNTHIA

And? (Beat). I know it's been a one-way street of late, but you used to confide in me.

ANNE

How many breakups do you want to hear about? I seem incapable of maintaining a relationship. Or perhaps unwilling to. And here I am, about to be 40...and look who's slipping now.

CYNTHIA

What do you mean?

(Anne holds up two fingers, mimicking Cynthia's earlier gesture.)

ANNE

I came this close to sleeping with a patient. How's that for desperate?

CYNTHIA

Take it easy on yourself. You thought better of it.

ANNE

Yes, but not until we'd almost landed on the couch, and I realized Marie was in the next room. What the hell was I thinking?

CYNTHIA

Even more reason to give yourself credit. It took willpower to stop!

ANNE

No excuses! It's absolutely never acceptable! Let's drop it.

CYNTHIA

Oh come on, old chum. Forty is the new 30, or even 25. Life's not over yet.

ANNE

Certainly not for you! You're just getting started. You said yourself, I can be pushy! Maybe I push too hard.

CYNTHIA

Sometimes, yes, and (laughs) not just with men. But, I wouldn't be here today if you hadn't pushed.

ANNE

Commiserating was easier when we were in the trenches together. Now you've got a whole new circle of friends.

CYNTHIA

But only one best friend.

**(MUSIC #26 My Friend)**

MY FRIEND.

YOU'RE SO IMPORTANT TO ME

I JUST WANTED YOU TO KNOW

I CARE.

YOU'VE ALWAYS SEEN RIGHT THROUGH ME

AND YOUR LOVE HAS HELPED ME GROW.

SO OFTEN YOU'VE REVEALED MYSELF TO ME.

AND FOR A CHANGE I'M LIKING WHAT I SEE.

MY FRIEND

MY FRIEND

MY FRIEND.

ANNE

AT TIMES,

IT HURT SO MUCH

THE THINGS YOU'D SAY TO ME.

BUT NOW,

I'M GLAD THAT YOU ARE ON YOUR WAY TO

FIND SERENITY

CYNTHIA AND ANNE

OUR FRIENDSHIP HAS A LIFETIME WARRANTY.

SO IF YOU NEED ME I CAN GUARANTEE

I WILL BE THERE FOR YOU.

I CARE FOR YOU,

MY FRIEND.

CYNTHIA

I CAN'T HELP BUT WONDER THAT YOU'RE

STILL HERE BY MY SIDE

FAIRER WEATHER FRIENDS LEFT LONG AGO

ANNE

BETTING ALL YOUR STUBBORNNESS

AGAINST MY FOOLISH PRIDE

YOU ARE THE TRUEST FRIEND I'LL EVER KNOW.

CYNTHIA AND ANNE

MY FRIEND.

YOU'RE MORE IMPORTANT TO ME  
THAN I EVER LET YOU KNOW.  
I CARE.  
YOU'VE FINALLY GOTTEN THROUGH TO ME AND  
HELPED MORE THAN YOU KNOW.

CYNTHIA  
SO MANY DAYS ARE JUST A HAZE TO ME.

ANNE  
BUT YOU WILL WRITE A BRAND NEW HISTORY

ANNE AND CYNTHIA  
CUZ I (YOU) CAN SMILE AGAIN  
AND I (YOU) CAN TASTE AGAIN  
  
AND I (YOU) CAN FEEL!

CYNTHIA  
I AM ALIVE AGAIN!  
MY FRIEND.

## **Act II Scene IX Arboretum**

Greg sits alone beneath a tree, bottle in hand,  
talking to himself.

GREG

Tom! Look at these gorgeous colors! One of the  
prettiest falls in memory and you're not here to  
share it. I'm tired. So tired of doing this alone.

### **Music #27 Autumn was Our Favorite**

I CAN'T WATCH THE AUTUMN LEAVES  
TURN TO RED AND GOLD  
WITHOUT REMEMBERING  
HOW I LONG TO HOLD YOU AND TO  
HAVE YOUR ARMS ENFOLDING ME.  
OH HOW I MISS YOU SO!

HOW CAN I FORGET YOUR FACE?  
TELL ME, HOW CAN I FORGET YOU?  
AND THE WARMTH OF YOUR EMBRACE.  
I NEVER QUITE BELIEVED THAT YOU WERE  
REALLY GOING TO LEAVE ME, DEAR.  
OH HOW I MISS YOU SO!

AND MY LIFE GOES ON BUT WITHOUT YOU  
IT SEEMS I'VE LOST MY WAY.  
AS I WATCH ANOTHER SLEEPLESS NIGHT  
TURN INTO RESTLESS DAY.

SOON THE TREES WILL BE AS BARE  
AS MY HEART IS IN THE WINTER.  
AS I STRUGGLE WITH DESPAIR FOR  
ALL THAT I HAVE LOST AND  
ALL THAT LOSING YOU HAS COST ME, DEAR.  
OH HOW I MISS YOU SO!

AND I'LL MISS YOU IN THE SUMMER  
AND THE WINTER AND THE SPRING.  
BUT THIS SEASON WILL REMIND ME  
OF THE SORROW LOVE CAN BRING.  
REMEMBERING THAT AUTUMN  
WAS OUR FAVORITE TIME OF YEAR.

Greg slumps.

**End of ACT II Scene IX**

**Act II, Scene X. A Graveyard**

(Joe, Mimi, Hazel, Dan, Alexis Marcus and Cynthia are gathered outdoors, holding umbrellas.)

MARCUS

Greg, why wasn't I there for you!

DAN

Don't beat yourself up, Marcus. No one can know the dark night of another man's soul.

HAZEL

You were a good friend to Greg, Marcus. You tried your best. You too, Dan.

ALEXIS

And he's here, next to Tom, where he wanted to be.

MIMI

Greg, we miss you more than we can say.

JOE

Peace, brother.

ALEXIS

You've left a big hole in all of our hearts.  
(Places a bouquet on the ground.)

MARCUS

The rest of us - we just gotta keep on keepin on.

**MUSIC #29. FORGIVE, LET GO, MOVE ON)**

FORGIVE, MOVE ON. LET GO.

ENSEMBLE

THE BEST THERAPY THAT WE KNOW.  
OUR MENTAL AFFLICTIONS JUST  
FUEL OUR ADDICTIONS  
I KNOW WE FIND PEACE ONLY  
WHEN WE RELEASE AND

LET GO, MOVE ON. FORGIVE,  
THE WAY WE HAVE LEARNED HOW TO LIVE  
LEARNED TO UNWIND  
AND QUIET THE MIND  
LET GO, MOVE ON. FORGIVE

CYNTHIA  
IS THERE HOPE FOR ME ?  
I DON'T WANT TO BE  
ANGRY ANYMORE.  
I DON'T WANT TO BE AFRAID  
I NEED TO FIND A LITTLE PEACE OF MIND AND  
BANISH MY DEMONS  
BEFORE THEY BRING ME DOWN.

ENSEMBLE  
DON'T LET THEM BRING YOU DOWN.

ENSEMBLE  
FORGIVE OURSELVES AS WELL  
FAREWELL TO OUR PERSONAL HELL  
WE MAY FIND REDEMPTION  
OUR OWN AMNESTY  
WHEN WE CEASE TO BE OUR OWN  
WORST ENEMY SO

FORGIVE, LET GO. MOVE ON  
OUR MANTRA FOR GETTING ALONG.  
A LINE TO RECITE  
ALL THROUGH THE DARK NIGHT  
FORGIVE, LET GO, MOVE ON.  
FORGIVE, LET GO. MOVE ON.  
FORGIVE, LET GO, MOVE ON.  
FORGIVE, LET GO. MOVE ON.  
FORGIVE, LET GO, MOVE ON.  
FORGIVE, LET GO. MOVE ON.

**End Act II Scene X**



**Epilogue: The Hard Luck Cafe, a number of months later**  
*(HAZEL and DAN are alone in the cafe. The shades are drawn. DAN stands behind and has his arms around HAZEL, who is trying to set a table arranged around a large cake.)*

HAZEL

DAN!!

*(Unconvincingly)*

Stop!

DAN

I can't! Do you really want me to?  
*(Sings)*

**Music: #29 KISS FOR KISS**

KISS FOR KISS.  
 SIGH FOR SIGH.  
 I KNOW YOU CAN'T TELL A LIE.  
 SO, IS THERE ANY REASON WHY  
 WE SHOULDN'T FALL IN LOVE?

HEART TO HEART.  
 MIND TO MIND.  
 ALL OUR DREAMS ARE NOW COMBINED.  
 REASONS WOULD BE HARD TO FIND  
 WHY WE SHOULDN'T FALL IN LOVE.

ALL MY FRIENDS WOULD DOUBTLESS BE  
 HAPPY THAT THE LIKES OF ME  
 FOUND THE LIKES OF YOU TO BE  
 WILLING TO FALL IN LOVE.

AND SOMEDAY WE'LL LOOK BACK AND SEE  
 THAT OUR LOVE WAS MEANT TO BE.  
 WE FULFILLED OUR DESTINY  
 WHEN WE MET AND FELL IN LOVE.  
 HOW COULD WE NOT FALL IN LOVE?

HAZEL

I KNEW FROM THE DAY WE MET  
 AND I WILL NOT SOON FORGET  
 A SENSE OF EXPECTATION THAT  
 MAYBE WE'D FALL IN LOVE.

HAZEL AND DAN (*duet*)  
AND SOME DAY WE'LL LOOK BACK AND SEE  
THAT OUR LOVE WAS DESTINY.  
ME FOR YOU AND YOU FOR ME.  
WE HAD TO FALL IN LOVE.  
HOW COULD WE NOT FALL IN LOVE?

(*They embrace but pull apart as ALEXIS and MARCUS  
and arrive*)

MARCUS  
At ease. It's only us.

ALEXIS  
So, the inevitable has finally happened. It was obvious  
you were made for each other.

DAN  
(*Flustered*)  
Really? I...

HAZEL  
C'mon! They'll be here any minute!  
(*They scurry around setting up chairs, blowing up  
balloons, putting out soft drinks. They hear voices and  
crouch down below the table*).

(JOE, MIMI, ANNE and CYNTHIA arrive at the cafe.)

JOE  
Why go anywhere else for coffee? Home sweet home.

ENSEMBLE  
Surprise!

CYNTHIA  
(*Embarrassed, confused*)  
Whoa! What are you all doing here?

MARCUS  
Where there's cake, there's Marcus!

HAZEL  
We're here for you, Cindylamb. You did it, you son-of-a-  
gun. A college grad!

CYNTHIA  
At 41.

HAZEL

You cheated, having only a year to finish. I had to start from scratch!

ALEXIS

But now you've both reinvented yourselves.

JOE

More in a continuing series of Hard Luck success stories. I'm damn proud of both of you. Dan, gingerale all around.

MIMI

You are the latest Comeback Kid, Cindy. This one's for you!

ALL (*Sing*)

**MUSIC: #30 MAKING A COMEBACK**

OH, I'M MAKING A COMEBACK!  
TAKING MY SECOND BOW  
GOT MY LIFE BACK ON THE TRACK.  
NOTHIN'S GOING TO STOP ME NOW!  
OH I'M MAKING A COMEBACK  
LOOK OUT WORLD I'M COMIN' BACK FOR MORE!  
I SAID  
LOOK OUT WORLD I'M COMIN' BACK FOR MORE!

HAZEL (*Sings*)

I'M RISING UP OUT OF OBSCURITY  
DOES ANYBODY STILL REMEMBER ME?  
AND IF YOU DO I'LL BET YOU THOUGHT  
"THAT GAL WAS HISTORY!"  
WHEN I HIT BOTTOM I HIT IT GOOD.  
MUST HAVE DISGRACED MY NEIGHBORHOOD. I'D  
LIKE TO MAKE IT UP TO THEM IF I COULD BY  
BEING KIND AND DOING GOOD AND  
LIVING MY LIFE BETTER DAY BY DAY.  
I SAID  
LOOK OUT WORLD I'M COMING BACK TO STAY!

CYNTHIA (*sings*)

I'VE RENEWED MY SUBSCRIPTION TO LIFE.  
JUMPED BACK INTO THE STORM AND STRIFE.  
BUT THIS TIME I WILL PLAY IT STRAIGHT. YEAH,

NO MORE WILL I TEMPT MY FATE

BY LIVING MY LIFE ALWAYS ON THE EDGE.  
I SAID LOOK OUT WORLD,  
I'M GOING TO TAKE THE PLEDGE!

ALL  
I'M MAKING A COMEBACK.  
I'VE GOT MY SECOND WIND.  
NOW I'VE SAILED AROUND THAT BEND,  
I'LL NOT GO BACK THERE AGAIN. NO  
I'M MAKING A COMEBACK.  
LOOK OUT WORLD I'M COMIN' BACK FOR MORE!  
I SAID LOOK OUT WORLD  
I'M COMIN' BACK FOR MORE!

ALEXIS  
NOW I'M SHOUTING RIGHT OUT LOUD THAT  
I'VE DONE THINGS OF WHICH I'M NOT PROUD.  
BUT I'VE PICKED MYSELF UP OFF THE FLOOR AND  
NOW I'M KNOCKIN' AT YOUR DOOR SAYING,  
WON'T YOU PLEASE JUST GIVE ME ONE MORE CHANCE?  
I SAID LOOK OUT WORLD

ALL  
YOU'D BETTER LOOK OUT WORLD!  
LOOK OUT WORLD  
I'M COMIN' BACK FOR MORE!

MIMI  
Thank you for graduating, Cindy. After Greg's death, we  
needed something to celebrate.

CYNTHIA  
You've been so good to me. I'm embarrassed, but...(Beat)  
Forgive me. You've all met my friend, Anne.

HAZEL/DAN/ALEXIS/MARCUS  
Yes, Welcome, Anne!

ANNE  
Thanks! I'm glad to be part of the festivities for my  
oldest friend.

MIMI  
We knew she had what it takes.

MARCUS

Yeah, the girl has grit.

CYNTHIA

What I've got is friends. All of you.

ALEXIS

Will you keep in touch once you're working up town,  
Cindy?

CYNTHIA

You bet! Let's meet for lunch at the Hard Luck and leave  
those big tips we always yearned for.

(Begins to tear up)

The truth is... I don't really want to graduate from the  
Hard Luck Café.

(As she fumbles for a handkerchief, JOE hands her  
his. ANNE leaves the stage.)

JOE

Don't worry kid. We know it's hard to leave us.

MARCUS

Tell us, Professor Crockett, what's next?

(KATIE appears. All eyes turn towards her, but only  
CYNTHIA and ANNE know who she is. Mimi soon  
guesses.)

CYNTHIA

(Stunned, CYNTHIA is frozen for a few seconds before  
moving toward her daughter.)

Katie!

(KATIE is stiff, but as she sees the effect that her  
appearance has on her mother, they embrace  
cautiously, CYNTHIA crying, KATIE whispering  
something inaudible.) ANNE rejoins the group.)

MIMI

This gives me hope.

ANN

This...is Cynthia's daughter, Katie.

ALL

Hello Katie!

MARCUS

That's some graduation gift!

MIMI

(Moving right in to give KATIE a big hug.)  
Bless your heart! You've made your mom's day!

ALEXIS

We've heard so much about you, Katie. (Extends her hand)  
I'm Alex, and this is my husband, Marcus.

MARCUS

Husband! I like the sound of that! Pleased to meet you,  
Katie.

(Others come forth to introduce themselves and shake  
KATIE'S hand. KATIE is gracious but shy.)

JOE

Your mom means a lot to us.

KATIE

You...mean a lot to her too.

(Holding hands with KATIE, CYNTHIA links arms with  
ANNE and the others. CYNTHIA begins singing, joined  
by others.)

CYNTHIA

**(MUSIC #31: Day by Day/Finale**

ONE FOOT IN FRONT OF THE OTHER AND  
STRAIGHT AHEAD  
ONE FOOT IN FRONT OF THE OTHER AND  
STRAIGHT AHEAD  
DAY BY DAY  
I MAKE A NEW BEGINNING

DAN

PLAY BY PLAY  
I'M LEARNING HOW TO LIVE

ALEXIS

ONE BY ONE  
I'M PICKING UP THE PIECES

ENSEMBLE

DAY BY DAY  
DAY BY DAY

HAZEL

PIECE BY PIECE  
I'M SORTING OUT THE PUZZLE.  
BLOCK BY BLOCK

I'M BUILDING BACK MY LIFE.

MIMI

INCH BY INCH  
I'M GAINING SELF-ACCEPTANCE.

ENSEMBLE

DAY BY DAY.  
DAY BY DAY.

DAN

SOME NIGHTS ARE SO LONELY.  
SOME DAYS ARE SO LONG.

RICHARD

SOME TIMES I THINK ONLY  
THAT A DRINK CAN MAKE ME STRONG!

ALEXIS

BUT HOUR BY HOUR  
I CALL MY HIGHER POWER.  
DAY BY DAY  
I'M LEARNING HOW TO PRAY.

MARCUS

STEP BY STEP  
I'LL FOLLOW TO GET THROUGH THIS.

ENSEMBLE

DAY BY DAY  
DAY BY DAY

CYNTHIA

AND THE BLESSINGS OF FRIENDSHIP.  
THE GIFT OF A SONG.

ANNE

THE PROMISE OF SUNRISE ALL  
HELP ME TO GET ALONG.

JOE

AS DAY BY DAY  
I PUT THE PAST BEHIND ME.

MIMI

ONE BY ONE  
I'M MAKING MY AMENDS.

HAZEL

MILE BY MILE  
I'M WALKING MY OWN PATH NOW.

KATIE AND CYNTHIA

DAY BY DAY.  
DAY BY DAY.

ENSEMBLE

DAY BY DAY  
DAY BY DAY  
DAY BY DAY  
DAY BY DAY!

ENSEMBLE

WELCOME TO THE HARD LUCK CAFE  
WHERE WE'RE ALL ON OUR WAY  
TO A BETTER LIFE.

NO MATTER WHERE YOU'RE GOING OR WHERE YOU'VE BEEN  
THERE'S JUST NO SUBSTITUTE FOR A FRIEND.  
AND LIKE MOST FOLKS THAT COME DRAGGIN' IN HERE.

WE WERE BATTERED.  
DREAMS WERE SHATTERED.  
CLOTHES WERE TATTERED.  
NOTHING MATTERED. TILL THE

HARD LUCK CAFE  
HELPED US TO GET STARTED ON OUR WAY  
TO A BETTER LIFE.

MOMMA ALWAYS CALLED ME THE HARD LUCK KID  
WHEN THINGS COULD GO WRONG THEY USUALLY DID.  
IF IT WEREN'T FOR HARD LUCK CAFE  
I'D HAVE NO LUCK AT ALL, BUT SOMETIMES  
WE HAVE US A BALL AT THE

HARD LUCK CAFE. THE  
HARD LUCK CAFE!

**THE END**