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Revolution, Song Lyrics by John Lennon and Paul McCartney Playscript

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REVOLUTION

Song lyrics by John Lennon and Paul McCartney

Playscript

by

LeRoy C. Boyd, III

B.S. May 1992, Norfolk State University

A Creative Project submitted to the Faculty of
Old Dominion University in Partial Fulfillment of
the Requirement for the Degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

HUMANITIES

OLD DOMINION UNIVERSITY

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Approved by:

Erlene Hendrix (Director)

ABSTRACT

REVOLUTION

LeRoy C. Boyd, III
Old Dominion University, 1995
Director: Dr. Erlene Hendrix

Revolution is a two-act play inspired by the works of John Lennon and Paul McCartney, formerly of the rock and roll music quartet known as The Beatles. Originally meant for a production, the play studies the lack of respect people have for the performing arts. It also examines the negative stereotypes that society places upon people who are actively involved within the arts and humanities.

The selection of songs from the Lennon-McCartney catalogue are synthesized with an original story line. The songs will reflect the feelings of a particular character at the time of a vocal performance.

A musical stageplay inspired by and based on the works of John Lennon and Paul McCartney.

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DEDICATION

To Bev, who always wanted me to rest and to J.B.K.O., a true supporter of the arts.

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PREFACE

Revolution is a two-act musical play inspired by the works of John Lennon and Paul McCartney. As with many creative works, Revolution began from depression over the end of a romantic relationship. I was fond of a woman who was unhappy with my involvement in the theatre as well as many facets of the performing arts as a profession. Many others have the same attitude. After five months of searching for a central theme to write a play, it finally came to me to try to prove that such a lack of respect for the performing arts can and must be changed. If my writing were effectively put into a production, it could quite possibly move an audience to think about the arts and the recognition and support they deserve.

Nearly two years ago on a rainy Wednesday morning in May, I awoke feeling very depressed. Although it had been nearly a month since I had terminated my relationship with this woman, I still thought about her. I turned on the television, surfing the channels, hurriedly looking for a sitcom or cartoon to help cheer me. I stumbled upon a commercial inviting the public to take part in a contest to witness former Beatle Paul McCartney perform live in concert in Charlotte, North Carolina. Because I am a Beatles' fan

(especially of Paul McCartney), I wasted no time getting dressed and going out to the fast food chain which was co-sponsoring the contest with a TV station to obtain the order forms for the contest.

When I returned home to fill out the forms, I decided to put myself in a "Beatles mood" by playing video tapes of their performances, promotional films and interviews. While filling out the forms, I was listening to an interview that Paul McCartney gave to a British television reporter in 1986. When the gentleman asked him, "Have you ever thought about stage musicals?" his reply was, "If you take some of the Beatle songs you could put 'em into a pretty nifty musical."

When I heard that, I thought, "Why not? Why not do that? Why can't it be me to put it together?" Seconds later I said to myself, "That's it, that will be my creative project in completing the requirements for my degree." I visualized making this a production with all the essentials for a Broadway hit, containing a fine cast, a set, a lighting plan and strong publicity. The seeds were sown.

I went to the public library to research Beatle musicals. I found that few writers have ventured in this area of synthesizing the music of Lennon/McCartney with dramatic literature for the stage. For example, in 1974, big-time music promoter Robert Stigwood launched a Broadway musical entitled Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band On The Road. It became a movie musical four years later with rock and roll

musicians Peter Frampton and The Bee Gees starring in the lead roles. Another Broadway production which premiered on Broadway in 1977, inspired by the boys from Liverpool, was Beatlemania, a multimedia musical featuring a "look-a-like," "sound-a-like" Beatles quartet.

Though many of these shows did enjoy critical success, they all had one thing in common: they failed to possess a good story worthy enough to carry the prestige of associating itself with some of the greatest pop music of all time. I hoped that I could achieve this with Revolution.

In addition, I wanted to send a message to the reader or audience member about how there happens to be a lack of respect for the performing arts--whether it be poetry, dance, music theatre, fine art or film--and how those who pursue this area as a profession are many times discouraged and treated unfairly. The best way to show it was through a work of art, the art of dramatic literature.

The story became about one man's struggle to achieve his dreams among people who would rather he go along with the way of life that they have made for him. Desmond Jones returns to his hometown after a five-week music tour in which he promotes his first record album. At the last performance of this tour which happens to be his hometown, he realizes that the one thing he really wants to do in life is to be a musician. Desmond's girlfriend, Molly, believes that being a musician is not the way to go in choosing a career. Together she and her

father, Episcopal priest Father McKenzie, try to get Desmond to change his mind and put away his music to pursue a career with the National Trust in Washington, D.C. Desmond refuses to take the job, and with much opposition from both Molly and her father, Desmond turns to Prudence, his childhood art teacher. Prudence tells him the one way to feel better is to experiment with drugs because it would mellow him out, and it would help put away the stress he is feeling. Desmond quickly disregards this and continues working on his music. Things intensify between him and Molly as well as with Father McKenzie. Out of anger, Father McKenzie issues an arts' banning on the town, claiming that the influence of the arts contributes to the demoralization of youth. Feeling that the town deserves a much better way of life, Desmond, with the help of his band and Prudence, puts together a revolution to help bring the arts back into the community.

The first thing that occurred to me was to create a fantastic world filled with the imagery of the music and lyrics written by all four Beatles (Lennon, McCartney, Harrison and Starr), whether a song was to be used in performance or not. The way to achieve this was to obtain a Beatles' song book containing all of their lyrics. For the sole reason of consistency in negotiations for publishing rights, I thought it would be best to use Lennon and McCartney as the only composers in the play.

The best songs I could find to create a world around were

"Strawberry Fields Forever," "Octopus's Garden," "A Day In The Life," "You Know My Name Look Up The Number," and "Eleanor Rigby." Strawberry Fields, derived from the song "Strawberry Fields Forever," showed to me the image of a small, midwestern town embraced by its deep faith in God and moral convictions. The title of Ringo Starr's "Octopus's Garden" gave me a mental picture of a beautiful botanical garden, created for public use. Therefore in Act One, Scene Four, I thought it would be a good idea to place the lead characters, Desmond and Molly, in a town park. "A Day In The Life" is one of the most haunting and quizzical songs written by Lennon/McCartney. The song's lyrics cover a variety of themes from a car crash to an LSD mind trip to a public works project of counting the number of potholes in a British town. "He blew his mind out in a car" inspired me to describe the car accident involving Desmond's father and the rest of his family. Blackburn Lancashire from the song's lyric, "Four thousand holes in Blackburn Lancashire" was used to make reference to a neighboring town where kids in Strawberry Fields could go to school at a community college and where the nearest mental institution was located. And "Slagger's Bar" along with the spoken reference of "Mr. O'Bell" came from one of the most nonsensical songs ever recorded by The Beatles entitled, "You Know My Name Look Up The Number."

As I stated earlier, the one thing I wanted more than anything from this project was to create a very strong story.

I went about this by writing story drafts in the form of a synopsis. I thought this was very important before starting on any dialogue or stage directions needed for a theatrical script. During the Creative Writing Workshop class in September of 1994, when the story was still in synopsis form, the main point of suggestion I received from my peers was that it was time for the dialogue to come in and become a play. It didn't take long for that to happen. By the seventh draft, the standard theatre format was taking shape.

When writing an earlier draft of the synopsis, I made a very bold decision: I wanted all of the characters to be African-Americans. First, I felt the need to produce a study which gives a glimpse on why people of all races, but particularly African-Americans, find the performing arts as a demeaning or "sissified" profession and second, to make a social comment on how the African-American female feels about her power over her African-American male partner. In the spring of 1994, I brought Revolution to a professional theatre director for criticism. The primary piece of advice she gave me was to keep these characters Caucasian. Her exact words were, "Your descriptions of these characters' physical presence makes them sound like white folks with dark skin." Taking that comment into consideration, Desmond went through some changes. He evolved from a longhaired hippie to a dreadlocked leather-clad rocker to a "Sly Stone like" entertainer with a relaxed afro. Desmond came full circle,

from white to black to white to black again. At this point, I listened to the director and made everyone Caucasian.

In the fall of 1994, some of the responses I received from the Creative Writing Workshop class at Old Dominion University prompted me to ask myself, "What makes Desmond Jones different?" We all know about the guitar hero who wants to save the world but what is it about him that sets him apart from say, Jim Morrison? What is it about Desmond that would make the audience pay close attention to him? Long and hard I thought about it. The problem brought me back to the concept I had in the beginning, to make Desmond and only Desmond, an African American. The story can chronicle his trials and tribulations not only with his artistic revolution, but with his struggle as a black man, living in an all-white town, dating a clergyman's daughter. A black man who plays rock and roll guitar music is different. Many African-American rock acts such as Lenny Kravitz and Living Color have not yet reached mainstream acceptance.

In addition to finding suggestions for scenes and events in the lyrics, another advantage of writing a story around the music of Lennon/McCartney is that the characters are already in the songs. This was one reason that I knew this musical could work. I began the process of creating the characters by going through the song book and looking for songs that included the many imaginary people around whom Lennon and McCartney built many of their songs. "Eleanor Rigby," for

example, gave me the character of Father McKenzie.

Considering that the settings and characters were easily obtainable within the song lyrics, this process contributed convenient access to themes that were needed to create the fantastic world built around the music of the Beatles. I knew I wanted a love story between two young people who have fallen in love and have made the decision to get married. "Ob-La-Di Ob-La-Da" carried the names of a married couple, "Desmond and Molly Jones." This song encouraged me to make both Desmond and Molly the main characters. Since the song's theme is domesticity, the song, "Ob-La-Di Ob-La-Da," could be used to express their desire to get married and raise a family.

The name Molly represented to me purity and virginity. The name is full of tradition and conservative ideals. She was best suited to be Father McKenzie's youngest daughter carrying with her a straight-laced set of social norms that appear when she convinces Desmond to get his haircut and take his place in society.

From the beginning, Father McKenzie showed himself to my mind's eye as a mature, stern, "by the book" disciplinarian. I decided to make him an Episcopalian priest in order for him to marry and have Molly and Prudence as his biological daughters as opposed to being a Catholic priest who must take a vow of chastity. The name McKenzie is Anglo-Saxon. It is a name of Scottish descent and whose coat-of-arms possesses a family crest of a rugged rock. This best describes Father

Jude McKenzie--a man strong and solid as a rock, but as weak as a soggy noodle when it comes to his youngest daughter. When Molly leaves home in the second act, he loses his tough edge ignited by the infamous "Irish temper." He is similar to a character in Shakespeare's Othello--Brabantio, who died of grief because his daughter did not do what he had wished regarding her marriage to a man of whom he did not approve.

Since the story's conception, Prudence was destined to be Father McKenzie's eldest daughter. Prudence, taken from the song "Dear Prudence," exemplified a free spirit who had qualities of purity as Molly did, but chose to have fun immersing herself in decadence. She expresses to Desmond how she has lived the life of the open road and traveled all over the country with rock and roll bands to take her fill of sex and drugs as just something to do. Personifying the romantic philosophy of "Carpe Diem" (seizing the day), Prudence deals with her personal pain, the pain of her family. Prudence herself is a contradiction. The name is ideal in that it reflects her father's involvement in her life, but the character does not live up to the quality or state of being prudent. At one time in her life she may have done so, before taking part in her own personal revolution.

The name Desmond happens to work well in that it is different, and it's the closest appellation to an African-American in the Beatles' music, so it is fitting for the leading Negro character. To me it is very Bohemian sounding.

The supporting characters of Dr. Robert, Mr. Kite and Desmond's bandmates were used to complete loose ends. In the first non-musical scene, Desmond's musicians--Rex, T-bone, and Sam--help Desmond reveal to the audience that direct moment when he realizes that music is his life's work. Raising support for the arts is usually done in the form of a festival or a benefit. "Being For The Benefit Of Mr. Kite" was the song that gave me the character of Mr. Kite. Making Mr. Kite the town's artistic guru by claiming the title "The father of performance art," came to me through the sound of the name. Although the name came from a nineteenth-century circus poster that inspired John Lennon to compose the song, it imported a psychedelic mysticism to the man. I felt this character should be one that the younger generation of the town (those of the artistic persuasion) could look up to. Dr. Robert was, once again, a great inclusion because he's a character within the music. The lyrics inspired me to have Prudence endorse Dr. Robert to Desmond.

Sex and music have always shared a cultural relationship throughout history. But it wasn't until the mid 1960's that a revolutionary life style evolved with the international credo of "sex, drugs and rock and roll." By late 1965, a mind-altering chemical substance called Lysergic Acid Diethylamide (better known as LSD) broke into the mainstream of a new counter culture of beatnik poets from San Francisco's Haight Ashbury district. They called themselves "Hippies."

Novelist Allan Harrington once said, "Hippies are no more than Beats plus drugs." The archetypal image of the poet-artist drug user goes back as far as Edgar Allen Poe, French poets Baudelaire, Rimbaud and many others. By the 1960's, drugs were very much a part of the counter cultural society. The performers of the era who made many references to drug use were Bob Dylan, Sly Stone, The Rolling Stones and, of course, The Beatles. The Beatle albums, Revolver, Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band, and Magical Mystery Tour just to name a few, contained timeless works inspired by experiences with such substances as LSD, marijuana and cocaine. In my play the frustration of our character Prudence is pretty much reflective in the songs, "Dr. Robert," "Tomorrow Never Knows," and "Happiness Is A Warm Gun." The text shows the toll drugs take on her, and it is through Desmond's friendship and love that she reaches self control. She sets out to seek comfort by visiting the resting place of her deceased mother.

A fun story that came from a scribbled outline two years ago has now turned into a study about the acceptance of gifts that artists give to the world. Everyone has the power to create,--not just singers, actors and poets--but doctors, lawyers and anyone in the critical and analytical fields. Everyone is gifted and talented in his or her own way; until we can understand that and recognize our hidden talents, we cannot accept and support the arts, especially here in the United States where the morale of artistic support is lower

than anywhere else in the world. I can't think of a better way to show my feelings about this subject than to tell a passionate story of one man's pursuit of artistic freedom through the wonderful music of the greatest pop songwriters in the world. John Lennon and Paul McCartney were men who believed in the artistic spirit with great intensity, and that belief shows in their music.

Will my script ever be a production? When I thought of the amount of work I had ahead of me to make this a production and the little time I had to do it (not to mention that I had been denied permission by EMI music publishing to use the songs by Lennon and McCartney in order to make this a musical), I had to face reality and terminate my aspirations for production. Maybe it will one day. I understand that there is nothing you can do that can't be done, meaning, of course, if it can be done, it can be done because "All You Need Is Love."

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Scenes

Act One

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| Scene one: | On Stage at the Strawberry Theatre |
| Scene two: | Backstage |
| Scene three: | Parrish Office |
| Scene four: | Octopus's Garden |
| Scene five: | Dr. Robert's Pad |
| Scene six: | The Warehouse |
| Scene seven: | Parrish Office |
| Scene eight: | Desmond's Apartment |
| Scene nine: | A street |
| Scene ten: | Mr. Kite's home |
| Scene eleven: | McKenzie Household |
| Scene twelve: | Desmond's Apartment |

Act Two

| | |
|--------------|---------------------|
| Scene one: | Desmond's Apartment |
| Scene two: | Cemetary |
| Scene three: | Outside town hall |
| Scene four: | Bishopsgate |

Musical Numbers

Act One

Magical Mystery Tour Desmond
Ob-La-Di Ob-La-Da. Desmond & Molly
Dear Prudence. Desmond
Dr. Robert Prudence
I'm Looking Through You. Molly
The Word Prudence & Molly
She's Leaving Home Father McKenzie & House Band
Happiness Is A Warm Gun. Desmond & Prudence

Act Two

Oh Darling Desmond
Julia. Prudence
Revolution Desmond
Being For The Benefit Of Mr. Kite. Desmond & Molly
Hey Jude Desmond & Company

The time: The Present

The place: Strawberry Fields, U.S.A.

ACT ONE

SCENE ONE

(It is the second week in May on a Friday night in a small theatre in Strawberry Fields. The 400-seat auditorium is filled to capacity as people are awaiting a performance by a well-known local talent --Desmond Jones. Desmond has returned from a five-week regional tour of college clubs promoting songs from his first record album. He opens the show with a song inviting his audience to participate in what he calls his "Magical Mystery Tour." For the duration of the performance, the audience in the house is Desmond's audience in Strawberry Fields.)

Desmond: (Arrives on stage with his guitar and sings "Magical Mystery Tour." While on stage, he is all smiles and giving one of the best performances of his life. He knows from this performance that music is his life's work, the special thing he has been looking for all of his life.)

Roll up, roll up for the Mystery tour
Step right this way.
Roll up, roll up for the mystery tour.
Roll up, roll up for the mystery tour.
Roll up, (and that's an invitation)
Roll up for the mystery tour.
Roll up, (to make a reservation)

Roll up for the mystery tour.
Roll up, (to make a reservation)
Roll up for the mystery tour.
The Magical Mystery Tour is waiting to
take you away.
(Waiting to take you away).
Roll up, roll up for the mystery tour.
Roll up, roll up for the mystery tour.
Roll up, (we've got everything you need).
Roll up for the Mystery tour.
Roll up, (satisfaction guaranteed)
Roll up for the Mystery Tour.
The Magical Mystery Tour is hoping to
take you away
(Hoping to take you away).
The mystery trip.
Aah!
The Magical Mystery Tour.
Roll up, roll up for the Mystery Tour
Roll up, (and that's an invitation)
Roll up for the Mystery tour
Roll up (to make a reservation)
Roll up for the Mystery Tour.
The Magical Mystery Tour is coming
to take you away,
(Coming to take you away)
The Magical Mystery Tour is dying to
take you away
(Dying to take you away)
Take you today.

(After the performance, Desmond receives enormous
praise from his hometown peers as the lights fade.)

ACT ONE

SCENE TWO

(Onstage, after the audience has left the show, the roadies are loading up the equipment. Desmond is conferring with the members of his backing band.)

Desmond: Guys, that was a great show. All of you deserve Grammys for the fine work you've done.

Sam: Thanks, Desmond, but you were the one who made the show.

T-Bone: As usual.

Rex: (Concerned) There were a few clinkers in there.

Desmond: Ah, man, nobody knows. The audience don't have music sheets.

Sam: Well fellas, I guess the Mystery Tour has now come to a close.

Rex: Umm-hmm, now it's time to prepare ourselves for the next tour. And the next, and the next, and the next.

(The band laughs while Desmond is alone, thinking to himself.)

T-Bone: Hey Des, what's up?

Rex: Are you alright, man?

Desmond: (Composed) Yeah, I'm fine. (Pause) I tell you, I never felt like that before. I know we've gone away for five weeks and everything, but what I just felt up there, I want to feel again and again. Do you understand?

Sam: Hey, that's what it's all about.

Rex: (Singing) "I know, it's only rock and roll, but I like it."

(The band laughs.)

T-Bone: Hey, Desmond, you coming to Slagger's with us?

Desmond: Yeah, I'll meet you guys there. I still have a lot more to pack up.

T-Bone: Okay, we'll see you. C'mon guys.

(The band exits. While Desmond is packing up his equipment, Desmond's girlfriend, Molly McKenzie, comes backstage to greet him.)

Molly: (With a big smile) Desmond!!

Desmond: (Amazed) Molly!!

(They run to hug and kiss each other with a fierceness that shows that they have spent much time away from each other.)

Desmond: (Smiling) I've been looking all over for you.
How have you been?

Molly: (Arms around Desmond) Miserable, until now. I couldn't wait to see you. You were wonderful up there!

Desmond: Thank you, I couldn't wait to see you either. I mean, I've spent five weeks wishing that you were with me on the road.

(They kiss.)

Molly: (Noticing his dreadlocks, she frowns, but rubs her fingers through his hair.) And I see that the road has been very good to you.

Desmond: Oh yeah, what do you think? Do you like the new do?

Molly: (Sarcasm) Sure, if you were to go to a masquerade party as Bob Marley.

Desmond: (Wiping the sweat off his forehead) Hey, don't crack on Marley. He's cool.

Molly: Yeah, well you're burning up (Brushing the sweat off his brow). Playing under those hot lights and wearing all that leather. Have you been wearing that stuff every night?

Desmond: Yeah, y'know, it's rock-n-roll.

Molly: It's foolish.

Desmond: (Not offended, thinking she's joking) Ah now.

Molly: Look, please tell me that you'll wear your regular clothes tomorrow for the meeting with my father. You didn't forget, did you?

Desmond: No, I didn't forget, but look babe, you saw me out there. Do you really think it is necessary to get rid of my art for a desk job?

Molly: Desmond, my father has come so far pulling his strings to get you this job, and now you practically have it. (Concerned) Is there something wrong? Before you left, you were all for this position.

Desmond: No, nothing's wrong; it's just after being on the road the past five weeks and receiving all of the accolades from people who really like my music, I honestly cannot see myself doing

anything else but writing songs and performing.
I mean, being a Program Associate for the
National Trust? That's fine for some but not
for me--

Molly: Just sleep on it; you'll feel better about it
in the morning, alright?

(Being reminded of Molly's "bossy" personality,
Desmond is disappointed. He hangs his head down to
Molly. She lifts it up and turns on her girlish
charm that Desmond cannot resist.)

Desmond? Do it for me . . . please?

Desmond: (Laughing) Okay, Okay, I'll go. Besides, you
never know what might happen in the future.
It's probably not a bad idea.

Molly: (Smiles) Good. That's my man. (She hugs him
tightly.) I love you.

Desmond: I love you, too.

Molly: (Runs her hand through his dreadlocks) Now we
just have to cut some of this off.

Desmond: (Smiling but firm) Lay off the hair issue,
alright?

Molly: Desmond, you know my dad.

Desmond: Stop worrying about your dad. Everything's cool. (Smiling with an afterthought) You haven't changed a bit, you know that?

Molly: I just want you to do well.

Desmond: And I have. And now I want you to have some fun. Mr. O'Bell at Slaggers is throwing a party for the band and me; please come, huh?

Molly: (Smiling) I always want to go where you go.

(Molly plants a big kiss on Desmond's cheek, and they go off together to the "end of tour" party at Slagger's as the lights fade.)

ACT ONE
SCENE THREE

(It is Saturday morning at the Parish office. Desmond, wearing sunglasses, arrives to see Father McKenzie, a prominent Episcopal priest who is the leader of the conservative community in Strawberry Fields. A 62-year-old man with the mind of an 80 year old, McKenzie is not too happy with Desmond's appearance. Despite his promise to Molly, Desmond arrives with the same style of clothing he wore at his concert the previous night. However, Father McKenzie chooses not to display his fury. Desmond is reluctant to be there, and it shows in his attitude with Father McKenzie.)

McKenzie: Well, Desmond, it's nice to see you again.

(They shake hands.)

Desmond: Yeah, same here.

(Father McKenzie walks from the door to his desk.)

McKenzie: (Offering him a chair) Please sit down.

Desmond: Thanks! (Desmond sits in the chair in a slouched position, his legs apart; he does not

remove his sunglasses.)

McKenzie: I understand that your regional college tour went well. Molly is very proud of you.

Desmond: Yes, well I had a good time, a real good time.

McKenzie: I'm sure you did. But now you are ready to get back to reality and concentrate on some serious work. (Smiling) Am I right?

Desmond: (Unsure) Ah . . . yeah.

(McKenzie finds it as unpleasant to be in the office with Desmond as Desmond is uncomfortable to be there. Father McKenzie continues with the discussion, but finds it difficult not to comment on Desmond's new hairstyle.)

McKenzie: (Clears his throat and changes the subject) AH-HEM. Now what we talked about before your departure was the Program Associate position at the National Trust in Washington, D.C. I felt it suited you well considering your high marks in history and your well-known appreciation of historical artifacts in high school and at the junior college in Lancashire. You will be responsible for generating income for the National Trust's main

headquarters, working with high level contracts, helping with the development of new technicalities, and you will play a part in the creation of new ideas in commercial district preservation in urban areas. The position is still available and (an abrupt pause) . . . Desmond . . . your glasses, please?

(Desmond reluctantly takes his glasses off.)

Thank you. The position is still available. You can start Monday.

Desmond: (Pause) I'm not too sure if I'm real keen to go to Washington, D.C., to work in some cushy desk job. Why are you doing all of this for me?

McKenzie: You plan to marry my daughter at some time, don't you?

Desmond: Yes, of course I do.

McKenzie: Well, I want to make sure that she will be well provided for. I was very fond of your parents. I just feel the need to "take care" of you more or less. (Smiling) You understand, don't you?

Desmond: Well sir, you don't have to worry. Towards the end of my tour, I was awarded a three-album

deal with Savoy Truffle Records. I'll start recording soon, and with the royalties we'll receive, Molly and I will be living large. Y'know what I'm saying?

McKenzie: (Laughing) Desmond, Desmond, Desmond. That's not a job. That's some adolescent activity to waste time with. You're too old for that. I am proposing to you a career with capital and prestige. Your rock and roll will not support my daughter, let alone you. (Smiles with dignity, thinking Desmond will come to his senses) Now, I have talked with the Trust President, and everyone would like it very much if you would come aboard and stay. (Pause) I understand how you feel. You just got back from your little music tour, and now I'm asking you to go away to Washington, and you haven't spent a full week with Molly. Well, she has already finished her exams, and throughout the summer I'll send her up to spend the weekends with you. After you marry, she'll move there to be with you. In the long run it'll be worth it. She'll be a good wife for you Desmond, and she's a fine cook. After I lost my wife Michelle to breast cancer several years ago, Molly pulled her weight in

the kitchen. She'll treat you well.

Desmond: I'm sure she will, and sir, I am very touched over your concern to help me out and again thank you for your blessing with our engagement. But I tell you, this is not for me. I'm not the office type; I mean, I'm an artist. The corporate world is not for everyone, and you know that.

McKenzie: (Thinking Desmond is a little jittery about the entire situation, McKenzie approaches him and persuades him in a fatherly manner.) Now Desmond, look, you have a health plan, a dental plan, two weeks vacation in the summer--and during the summer you can leave work early. You also get one week off for Christmas. It's a good job. I know how you young folks like a lot of recreation and well, there you go. Lots of good time for you to do your silly music.

Desmond: Father McKenzie, again, I appreciate everything you're trying to do, but I don't have an interest in any of this. I love doing what I'm doing right now, and that is making music on a full-time basis.

McKenzie: How can you make it in life doing that?

Performing in bars, working for low wages.
How can you call it a life?

Desmond: Because it's fun and rewarding. And a lot of us are not the androgynous, guitar-smashing freaks you see on television.

(McKenzie gives Desmond a look of dissatisfaction.)

For instance, while we were on tour, my band and myself gave a free concert for the homeless at Blackpool University. All the money that we could have made went towards new clothes, food and temporary shelter for them. And I'm proud to say that, for once, my music made a difference. Experiences such as these are why I want to continue doing what I'm doing. Sure, playing guitar was a nice hobby while I was growing up, but it really did not satisfy anyone but myself. When I performed at the theatre last night, I saw that my work satisfied so many people, and it made them happy. I can't let go of that, man. You dig?

McKenzie: That's all very well and good, Desmond, but it's a tough world out there. (Pause) Believe it or not, some people are not going to give a hoot about how many homeless people you feed.

They are going to be more concerned if your past employers considered you as profit or overhead.

Desmond: Father McKenzie, I can make just as much money as a recording artist as I could working the National Trust. It's my choice. Let me make it.

McKenzie: Desmond, drug dealers can make as much money as a Trust Associate, even more. I am trying to offer you an honest future. A future of stability, something that you can hold on to. You are entering into an area that could leave you for broke tomorrow. Is that what you want? This world of music and dance is for the heathen. There's nothing in it that can do you any good.

Desmond: (Stands up and prepares to leave) I'm not a heathen, and I'm not a drug dealer. I am a performer. And I am very disappointed in you comparing my profession to drug dealers. We are good people, and so many of us are just looking for a break. And that's kind of hard to do with people like you in the way of the hopes and dreams of others. I am very sorry, but this is not what I want. I'm sorry.

(Desmond walks out of the office. McKenzie opens the door and shouts to Desmond.)

McKenzie: Desmond, Desmond, please come back. Give it a chance.

(The lights fade.)

ACT ONE

SCENE FOUR

(Later that evening, Desmond and Molly are sitting together on a park bench in the town park called Octopus's Garden. They're making out and showing how happy they are to see each other. Molly is enjoying herself in Desmond's arms, looking starry-eyed.)

Molly: I love you.

Desmond: (Smiles) I love you, too.

Molly: Y'know, when you would call from the road, like after you'd finish a show or something, I heard a lot of giggling girls in the background. I was afraid that you would run off with them or something.

Desmond: No way. There was always one special lady I had on my mind. When it was hard some nights to get on stage, y'know like having stage fright or something, all I had to do was think of you and concentrate on the fact that I was coming home soon, and everything turned out okay.

Molly: (Grinning) Mmmm, I'm gonna love being married to you.

Desmond: (A little excited) Y'know, Savoy Truffle wants the band to get started on our first album around the first of next month. We'll release in October and go out and plug it around November and not just the college circuit, the whole nation. (Pause)

Molly: (Curious and concerned) Well, who's going to get your name out there? Who's going to know who you are?

Desmond: The record company. If you mean like the booking of dates and publicity, they're gonna assign us with some management to coordinate things on the tour as well as promotional events and the whole bit, y'know?

(Molly shakes her head with a misunderstanding of what has been explained to her. She is not impressed.)

(Very proud of himself.) Molly, (Pause) I'm here. I've been waiting for this moment ever since I've been a little boy. (Pause) I'm here, and there's nothing better than to have

you with me to share it with.

Molly: (A little scared) Oh Desmond, this means I'll have to go even longer without seeing you. This is gonna kill me.

Desmond: No, it isn't. (Pause) I want you to go with me.

Molly: (Surprised) What! Do you know what my father would say?

Desmond: (Sly) Ah come on; just trick him into it-- y'know, trap him. You're a psych major; use your trade.

Molly: (Laughing) You're silly. But I really don't know about that. I mean as much as I want to go . . . and what about school? Do you really think you are going to make as much money on this tour as you would with the Trust? What if you bomb?--

Desmond: (Full of confidence and smiling at her question.) Molly.

Molly: Well, what if you don't want to get married, and you decide to play music all over the world and have groupies all over you every night. You might find that this is what you truly

want.

(Desmond laughs, thinking she's worrying about nothing.)

(Firm) I want a family, Desmond!

(Music in)

Desmond: (Wraps his arms around Molly as to assure her everything will work out.) Babe, everything is going to be just fine. All you have to do is believe. Trust me.

Desmond and Molly: (Sing "Ob-La-Di, Ob-La-Da")

Desmond: Desmond has his barrow in the marketplace;
Molly is the singer in a band.
Desmond says to Molly, girl I like
your face
And Molly says this as she takes him by the
hand:
Ob-la-di ob-la-da life goes on bra
La-la how the life goes on.
Ob-la-di ob-la-da life goes on bra
La-la how the life goes on.

Molly: Desmond takes a trolley to the jewelry
store
Buys a twenty carat golden ring (golden ring)
Takes it back to Molly waiting at the door
And as he gives it to her she begins to
sing (sing):
Ob-la-di Ob-la-da life goes on bra
La-la how the life goes on.
Ob-la-di Ob-la-da life goes on bra
La-la how the life goes on--yeah.

Desmond: In a couple of years they have built a

home sweet home.
 With a couple of kids running in the yard of
 Desmond and Molly Jones.
 (Ho ho ho ho ho)

Molly: Happy ever after in the market place
 Molly lets the children lend a hand
 (Arm - Leg).
 Molly stays at home and does her pretty face
 And in the evening she still sings it with the
 band, yes.
 Ob-la-di Ob-la-da life goes on bra
 La-la how the life goes on (he he he)
 Hey, ob-la-di ob-la-da life goes on bra
 La-la how the life goes on.

Desmond: In a couple of years they have built a home
 sweet home.
 With a couple of kids running in the yard
 of Desmond and Molly Jones.
 (Ho ho ho ho ho)

Molly: Hey happy ever after in the marketplace
 Molly lets the children lend a hand
 Desmond stays at home and does his pretty face
 And in the evening she's a singer with
 the band, yeah.
 Ob-la-di Ob-la-da life goes on bra
 La-la how the life goes on - yeah
 Ob-la-di ob-la-da life goes on bra
 La-la how the life goes on (ha ha ha ha
 ha ha).

Both: But if you want some fun (ha ha ha)
 Take ob-la-di 'b-la-da (ha ha ha)
 Thank you (ooo) (ha ha ha).

Molly: (Cynical) Yeah, that all may be well and dandy,
 but tell me Mr. Desmond. How much time out of
 the year do you think you will be working?

Desmond: Well, with recording and touring together
 probably ten months out of the year.

Molly: Umm-mmm, and you are talking about a "couple of kids running in the yard." Desmond, I'm not having children with any man who cannot afford time to spend with them.

Desmond: Molly, I'll spend time with the kids, really. I bet you I can spend more time with the children in a couple of months than someone who has a silly nine-to-five job everyday.

Molly: (With skepticism) O.K., we'll see. Oh that reminds me, how did the meeting go with my father?

Desmond: I guess it went okay.

Molly: What do you mean?

Desmond: Well, I went in his office, and I thanked him for everything he has done for me, but I was on the level with him. I have no interest in working in Washington.

Molly: (Upset) Desmond!

Desmond: Hey, it's my life. I sometimes feel he's forcing me into this. I do have a say about my future, don't you think?

Molly: (Smiles) Desmond, he's just thinking about me.

He always wanted a good man to provide for me ever since I was born. Of course the kind of man that Dad's looking for doesn't exist. Desmond, I hate to say this, but because you're black, my father is going to be extra tough on you.

Desmond: (Nodding his head) Yeah, I know. We've talked about this.

Molly: He may be a man of the cloth, but he's human too. (With Desmond) Especially when it comes to his little girl.

Desmond: (Shakes his head and says to himself) Yeah, really.

Molly: (Takes a second look at Desmond, and realizes something.) Desmond?!

Desmond: Ummm.

Molly: What did you wear when you went to see my father?

Desmond: Molly, I know what you're thinking, but while I was on tour, I threw away all of that preppy shit I used to wear. These are the clothes I wear now, and this is how I choose to express

myself. The record company loves the image.

Molly: (Angry) Forget the record company. I can't believe you lied to me.

Desmond: (Defensively) Molly, I didn't have time to get any clothes between last night and this morning!

Molly: Maybe you ought to learn to cooperate a little more when people are trying to help you.
(Pause) We just want you to succeed.

Desmond: And I have. I've made it! And I've noticed that ever since I've been back, the most important people in my life have not congratulated me on my record deal. My chance of a lifetime. Aren't you happy for me?

Molly: I am very happy for you, and I think your music is very good. But keep in mind that the National Trust is something we've concentrated on because it pays a lot more than, say, performing at Slagger's bar for beer and tips.
(Pause) Desmond, music will always be there for you. It's not like taking this job will drain you of your talent. Honestly, I don't think having a record contract and promoting records is going to make you happy.

Desmond: (Perturbed) And you know what will make you happy?

Molly: That's just how I feel, (In a scolding tone) and you know music is not the most lucrative business.

Desmond: There have been many successful musicians in the field of rock and roll.

Molly: Yes, people who have exceptional talent!--

Desmond: And I don't?!

Molly: (Softly covering up her statement) I didn't mean that, and you know it. I just think that that business is made for certain kinds of people. Promise me you'll think about it, okay?

Desmond: Alright.

Molly: (Puts her arms around Desmond) And Desmond, please, get your hair cut.

Desmond: You really don't know when to stop, do you?

Molly: Desmond, it's so unprofessional.

Desmond: I'll call you tomorrow.

Molly: (Smiles) Okay.

(They kiss.)

(Molly leaves. Desmond is alone on the park bench, feeling very low. He walks from the park bench planning to spend some time to himself figuring out some answers to these problems. He finds a beautiful, blonde, golden-tanned woman sitting Indian style underneath an oak tree. Her name is Prudence. In appearance, she is a colorful and flowery vision. Meditating on a psychedelic tie-dye blanket, she is wearing dark "granny" shades. She has an assortment of two or three flowers in her hair. She is also wearing light blue hip-hugging bell bottom jeans and a psychedelic vest with no bra. At 38, she is a starving bohemian artist who paints and sketches pictures for a living and a pleasure. About ten years earlier, she was an art teacher for Desmond and his deceased sister. This is the first time in many years since he has seen her.)

Is that Prudence?

(Desmond is captivated by her and attracted to her. He finally recognizes her and is happy to see a more familiar face in the midst of all the adversity he

is going through.)

Desmond: (Sings "Dear Prudence." She awakes from meditation during his song.)

Dear Prudence, won't you come out to play?
 Dear Prudence, greet the brand new day.
 The sun is up, the sky is blue
 It's beautiful and so are you.
 Dear Prudence, won't you come out to play?
 Dear Prudence, open up your eyes
 Dear Prudence, see the sunny skies.
 The wind is low, the birds will sing
 That you are part of everything.
 Dear Prudence, won't you open up your eyes?
 Look around, 'round, 'round
 ('round, 'round, 'round, 'round)
 'round, 'round, 'round, 'round
 Look around, 'round, 'round,
 ('round, 'round, 'round, 'round)
 'round, 'round, 'round, 'round
 Look around ('round).
 Dear Prudence, let me see you smile
 Dear Prudence, like a little child.
 The clouds will be a daisy chain
 So let me see you smile again.
 Dear Prudence, won't you come out to play?
 Dear Prudence, greet the brand new day.
 The sun is up, the sky is blue
 It's beautiful and so are you.
 Dear Prudence, won't you come out to play?

(Desmond and Prudence hug.)

Prudence: (Excited) Desmond, I hardly recognized you child; you look great!

Desmond: (Happy) You too! How have you been?

Prudence: Cool man, real cool. Just hanging here catching the vibes of nature and getting in tune with it. Y'know what I'm saying? I was

at the show last night, man. You were dynamite!

Desmond: (Smiling) Why, thank you.

Prudence: Really dig your sound brother, y'know.

(Singing) "Roll up, roll up for the mystery tour." That is like the baddest vibe. It's wild.

Desmond: (Laughing) You have not changed a bit.

(Prudence laughs matter-of-factly.)

Well look, what happened that day when my sister Vera and I went to your apartment for an art lesson, and we learned that you'd left town? Why didn't you say anything?

Prudence: I had to move on man, just move on. I'm sorry I didn't leave a note or anything; I didn't realize until later how foul it was to book out without saying anything. Shit just got too rough. I hope you understand.

Desmond: Yeah I do. You were a great art teacher. I just wish Vera was here to see you.

Prudence: I heard what happened to Vera and your parents. I'm sorry.

Desmond: (Softly) It's okay, thank you.

Prudence: Did they ever find the drunk driver who rear ended them?

Desmond: Yeah. Dad blew his mind out through the windshield. Didn't even notice that the lights had changed. Mom and Vera went right with him (Desmond uses his hand to motion the impact of the bodies in the car through the windshield). They went right on through. I was at track practice. (Pause, softly) It was so sad.

Prudence: But hey, even though it may be hard sometimes, don't let it get you down. Keep every thought you make of your family happy because every thought you make of them will travel to them.

Desmond: (Smiling, softly) Thanks, I'll keep that in mind.

Prudence: Well, at least you're not alone. I hear you're a big rock and roll star now. I'm sure you have lots of people on your side now.

Desmond: Umm, I don't know about the star part, but I'm on my way.

Prudence: That's great. When I was traveling the country, I was in a few bands, sang my heart

out and lived the life of the open road.

Desmond: (Gasps in agreement) Yeah!

Prudence: There's nothing like it. Been to New York, did the happening art scene. Traveled to California, did the acid jazz scene--now that right there is a trip.

Desmond: You mean acid jazz?

Prudence: No man, acid.

(Desmond and Prudence laugh.)

Desmond: (Amazed) Wow, what a life.

Prudence: Yeah, take it day by day. Know what I'm saying? I just came back to Strawberry because my fortune in the I-Ching said that it was time for me to return to my roots. I needed a change of scene, and so here I am.

Desmond: Mmmmm.

Prudence: So what's up with you, Des? (Eyeing him up and down.) You turned out to be a fine looking young man.

Desmond: I just wish things were fine looking.

Prudence: Got everything going for you, man. A record

contract?! (Pause) That shit is wow man!

Desmond: It's not so "wow" when people keep trying to run your life.

Prudence: What are you talking about?

Desmond: Well, my girlfriend and her father want me to abandon my music career for some traditional paper-pushing desk job shit.

Prudence: I know all about it. My old man was the same way. I can't understand why people disregard what we do as a living so badly. It pisses the shit out of me.

Desmond: (Frustrated) Yeah, me too.

(Prudence reaches into her knapsack and grabs a bag of Kiwi fruit.)

Prudence: (Offers him a piece of fruit.) Want some?

Desmond: No, thanks.

Prudence: Yeah, people are like that. They look at our profession like a piece of fluff, y'know. I don't let it get me down.

Desmond: Because the system looks at what we do as a waste of time. And many of those conservatives

around here won't even give it a chance. What we do is a hell of a lot more than child's play.

Prudence: (Mildly surprised) Child's play? Who would say that?

Desmond: (Upset) Father McKenzie.

Prudence: Oh boy. How did you get mixed up with him?

Desmond: (Closed mouth smile, with a hint of sarcasm) He's my girlfriend's father.

Prudence: Whoa! . . . (Curious) You mean Molly McKenzie's your girlfriend?

Desmond: Yeah, you know her?

Prudence: (Covering up) No, no man, I just heard of her someplace. But McKenzie's tough; those conservatives don't fuck around.

Desmond: And it's just like the church to condemn art. Back in the Middle Ages if they found you were an actor, they'd have you excommunicated.

Prudence: It's so sad, man. So sad.

Desmond: (Depressed) Nobody understands our dreams.
(Pause) And the stereotypes with our business,

there's no need for that. It's not easy being an artist (Smiles).

Prudence: It sure ain't. But overall I say fuck'em. Do what you do. You can't let those scumbags get you down.

Desmond: I wish I was more like you. It hasn't even been three days, and I return home to all of this nonsense. Why can't people accept us for who we are?

Prudence: (Pause) The world's a cold place my brother. But if you're feeling down, you ought to see my dude, Doctor Robert.

Desmond: Doctor Robert? Who's he?

Prudence: He's the man, the brotha, he'll make you feel so fine--make you feel like nothing's been wrong. (Pause) You gotta get out of this depression. Everything is not as bad as it seems. And Doctor Robert'll make you understand that. Give him a chance, man.

Desmond: (Skeptical) Doctor Robert huh?

Prudence: You'll be a new and better man.

Prudence: (Sings "Dr. Robert")

Ring my friend I said you call, Dr.
 Robert
 Day or night he'll be there any time at
 all, Dr. Robert
 Dr. Robert, you're a new and better man
 He helps you to understand
 He does anything he can, Dr. Robert.
 If you're down he'll pick you up, Dr.
 Robert
 Take a drink from his special cup, Dr.
 Robert.
 Dr. Robert, he's a man you must believe
 Helping anyone in need
 No-one can succeed like Dr. Robert.
 Well, well, well, you're feeling fine
 Well, well, well, he'll make you,
 Dr. Robert.
 My friend works for the National health,
 Dr. Robert.
 Don't pay money just to see yourself with
 Dr. Robert.
 Dr. Robert, you're a new and better man
 He helps you to understand,
 He does anything he can, Dr. Robert.
 Well, well, well, you're feeling fine
 Well, well, well, he'll make you,
 Dr. Robert.
 Ring my friend I said you call, Dr.
 Robert
 Ring my friend I said you call, Dr.
 Robert
 Dr. Robert!

Desmond: Y'know at this point, I'll try anything.

Prudence: Well, I'm on your side baby. I ain't the
 enemy. Screw them man. Come on, let's make
 you well.

(Prudence and Desmond leave Octopus's Garden to the
 tune of Doctor Robert as the lights fade.)

ACT ONE

SCENE FIVE

(As the music begins, setting the tone for this scene, Desmond and Prudence arrive at Dr. Robert's pad. Immediately, Desmond is very skeptical and a little scared because he is being led into a drug-oriented atmosphere. But Robert believes that what he's doing is perfectly fine and that people have the right to partake of his services if they please. Prudence and Desmond arrive inside where Robert has just finished "treating" one of his "patients." Prudence and the Doctor speak; at first Robert thinks Prudence is coming in for some help, but she explains to him that it's her friend Desmond who really needs it. Robert tells Desmond to sit in the white chair that closely resembles a dentist's chair. He asks Desmond if this is what he wants to do. Desmond answers that he believes anything will help to make him feel better. Robert goes into his medicine cabinets for some vials of LSD and explains to Desmond that this can cure his depression and make him feel so "lovely." Robert just wants to make money. Desmond pays and listens to Doctor Robert before taking the drugs.)

Dr. Robert: (Sings "Tomorrow Never Knows")

Turn off your mind, relax and float
 downstream
 It is not dying, it is not dying.
 Lay down all thought, surrender to the void
 It is shining, it is shining.
 That you may see the meaning of within
 It is being, it is being.
 That love is all and love is everyone
 It is knowing, it is knowing.
 That ignorance and hate may mourn the dead
 It is believing, it is believing.
 But listen to the colour of your dreams
 It is not living, it is not living.
 Or play the game existence to the end.
 of the beginning
 of the beginning
 of the beginning
 of the beginning
 of the beginning
 of the beginning
 of the beginning
 of the beginning.

(Robert feeds Desmond several pills of LSD as
 Prudence looks on. Desmond takes a cup of water to
 wash down the pills. He realizes the mistake he's
 making and stops taking the drugs.)

Desmond: Wait a minute . . . Stop! . . . Stop this
 . . . This isn't what I had in mind. This
 isn't what I want. This is not going to get
 rid of the depression I'm feeling. It's only
 going to make things worse. I'm sorry Dr.
 Robert, I'm sorry Prudence, but this isn't the
 way to go . . . I'm sorry.

(Desmond runs out of the pad while Prudence and

Robert stay and indulge in the pills as the lights
fade.)

ACT ONE
SCENE SIX

(A couple of days later, Molly and Desmond are at a warehouse which Desmond and his band use as a rehearsal space. Desmond is stringing up new strings on his guitar while Molly once again persuades him to tone down his appearance, cut his hair and return to her father for a second chance.)

Desmond: (Adamantly) NO!

Molly: Desmond, he says he's willing to forget everything if you would come back.

Desmond: He's lying.

Molly: (Smiling) Desmond, my father does not lie.

Desmond: (Perturbed) Look! I don't know why we're discussing this. I told you, I don't want to do this. (Laughs) Is anyone listening to me? (Walks to the microphone on the bandstand and shouts . . .) Do I have to shout it out for everyone?

Molly: (Upset over the mockery he is making of this) Desmond--

Desmond: Why is everyone treating me like a kid?

Molly: (Mumbling) Probably because you're acting like one.

Desmond: (Softly and full of sarcasm) Alright Molly.

Molly: You can't fool around here. You are jeopardizing our relationship. My father reluctantly, and I mean reluctantly, gave in to let me date a black man; don't let him take away what we have.

Desmond: What do you mean, don't let him take away what we have? Let me ask you something, how old are you? Huh?

Molly: (Sighing) Desmond . . .

Desmond: C'mon, answer me.

(Molly refuses to answer.)

You are 20 years old. You are a grown woman; you need to stand up to your father at one time or another, and I don't care if he's a priest or not. There used to be a time when you said you would support me no matter what. What happened?

Molly: You 'used to be so sensible. You used to be on top of things. Now you're some foolish rebel standing your ground over some stupid music--

Desmond: (Fiery) I thought you liked my music!!

Molly: (Pause) Y'know something, I'm giving up. I'm not going to take this anymore. (With anger) I have done everything I possibly can to help you make something of yourself, and you're throwing it away. You think stringing up your stupid guitar strings is so important. You ought to leave that alone and think about your responsibilities, like finding a job.

(Desmond ignores her and continues to string up his guitar strings. It is evident that although he is trying not to pay her any mind, he is very much hurt by the remarks thrown to him by his girlfriend.)

This rock and roll crap isn't going to do anything for you. You're living in a fantasy world. A guitar's alright, Desmond, but you'll never earn a living from it. You need to grow up and cut your hair short like Daddy's. I just can't believe what I'm seeing. I'm so disappointed in you.

Molly: (Sings "I'm Looking Through You")

I'm Looking Through You. Where did you go?
I thought I knew you, what did I know?
You [sure] look different, [and] you have
changed,
I'm looking through you, you're not the
same.
You're lips are moving, I cannot hear,
Your voice is soothing but the words
aren't clear.
You don't sound different, I've learned
the game.
I'm looking through you, you're not the
same.
Why, tell me why did you not treat me right?
Love has a nasty habit of disappearing
overnight.
I'm looking through you, where did you go?
I thought I knew you, what did I know?
You [sure] look different, [and] you have
changed.
I'm looking through you, you're not the
same.
Yeah, oh baby you've changed.
Aah, I'm looking through you.
Yeah, I'm looking through you.
You've changed.
You've changed.
You've changed.

I can't live like this. I'm sorry. I just
can't.

(Molly leaves the warehouse in a fit of anger by
slamming the door. She returns a few seconds
later.)

(With harsh sarcasm) Oh, by the way, thank you
so much for ruining my summer vacation. I
really appreciate it.

(Molly leaves. Desmond is alone. He continues to
string up his guitar strings and with a little

difficulty, the strings tangle up. Out of anger, he drops the guitar on the ground. He drops to his knees and cries to himself as the lights fade.)

ACT ONE

SCENE SEVEN

(A few hours later, after thinking about the things she said to Desmond, Molly is at her father's office seeking his guidance. Father McKenzie is interested and very concerned with anything to do with his little girl. Molly enters the office crying and running to her father's arms.)

McKenzie: (Overly concerned) Molly! baby, what's wrong?
Shhhhh. What's wrong?

Molly: (In tears) Daddy, Desmond and I had a big fight. We broke up.

McKenzie: (Comforting) Now dear, shhhh. It's okay, it's okay. (They sit down.) What happened? What did he do?

Molly: (Upset) He didn't do anything. It was mostly me. I told him that he was throwing his life away, and the music he makes is not important, and that I was very disappointed in him; I see now that I shouldn't have said those things to him. He has every right to do the things he loves to do.

McKenzie: Now did he say or do anything to you to make you say all of those things? Hmmm? (Pause) C'mon Molly, what did that boy do to you?

Molly: Nothing, I thought I could--I just wanted him to have a life where he and I could be happy. But all I was worried about was a great big house and a lot of money.

McKenzie: Molly, what's wrong with doing well in life?

Molly: Nothing, but if you love someone, you should be with them to the end. Through thick and thin. We're supposed to work it out. If Desmond's music doesn't follow through, then, I can support him. (Pause) I didn't realize these things then, but after thinking about it and. . . . I saw how upset he was and everything, I see that there was no reason to be so rough on him. (Pause) I didn't mean to hurt him. And he's so sensitive. (Crying) Oh daddy.

(Molly falls to her father's arms in tears. Father McKenzie hugs her.)

We had no right to push him into anything he didn't want to do. He's a fine person.

McKenzie: Shhhh. (Lovingly) Tell me something. Do you love him?

Molly: (Softly) Yes, of course I do.

McKenzie: Well, do you love him as the good ol' American athlete who would make his school win every Saturday track meet or do you love the singing, guitar-playing fella on that stage who makes people go crazy?

Molly: Right now, I just want him. I don't care. I want Desmond because I love him.

McKenzie: (Sighs) Y'know, I think a bit of this is my fault. You know I really did not approve of your dating a black man, even if it was someone like Desmond. I've known him all of his life; his parents were fine people of this congregation. But when I saw how happy he made you feel, I went ahead with it. I don't approve of what he wants to do with his life. But I want you to be happy. Dear, why don't you take some time, think about everything we've talked about and go back to him after the two of you have cooled down, hmmm?

Molly: (A little happier) I love you, dad.

McKenzie: I love you, too. I have an errand to run. I have to meet somebody. I'll be right back and remember what I told you; take some time to cool down, okay?

Molly: (Quietly) Alright.

(The lights fade.)

ACT ONE

SCENE EIGHT

(Desmond is back at his apartment where he is confiding to his bandmate Sam about the fight he and Molly had. Sam is Desmond's closest friend, and he opens his arms to Desmond in true friendship.)

Sam: When did this happen?

Desmond: (Despondent) About three, maybe four hours ago . . . I don't know.

Sam: Buddy, I'm sorry. Y'know, it's not the end of the world. Go back to her tomorrow and talk to her. Try to apologize if you can.

Desmond: (Appalled) What? Apologize? I did nothing wrong. I just don't want to go with that job. It seems that my choice for a profession is having everyone run amuck.

Sam: Desmond, I understand, but sometimes in life you got to give in just to avoid an unpleasant situation. (Pause) You never know, she might apologize to you.

Desmond: (Pause and then laughs) Yeah, I guess you're

right. I'm sorry if I was being a jerk
. . . I'm just confused, y'know. I love Molly.

Sam: I know you do. And we're right behind you.
The band, Prudence, all of your friends.

(Desmond and Sam shake hands.)

Desmond: (Grateful) Thanks man.

(Sam hugs Desmond to comfort him. At this moment
Father McKenzie arrives at the apartment to
apologize to Desmond and to give him his blessing to
pursue his music if he wants to for Molly's sake.
Noticing that the door is ajar, he knocks at the
door and walks in. He misunderstands the situation
at hand and foolishly flares up.)

McKenzie: (Knock, knock, knock) Hello Desmond? It's
Father McKenzie.

(McKenzie opens the door and slowly walks in.)

Desmond, I think we've gotten off on the
wrong . . . (Shocked) What? . . . What in
Hades is this?!

(Desmond and Sam break the hug.)

Desmond: Oh, Father, hello.

McKenzie: (Shocked and at a loss for words) Don't you dare say one word to me. This . . . this is immoral . . . this is tasteless . . . this is crude . . . this is sin . . . (Raising his index finger.) This is Sodom and Gomorrah, that's what this is, Sodom and Gomorrah!

Desmond: (Annoyed) Man, what are you talking about?

McKenzie: (Outraged) I know you and Molly have difficulties, but for you . . . to go to a man . . . this . . . this . . . this is disgusting. You are to be my future son-in-law, for goodness' sakes.

Desmond: (Mumbling) I don't believe this. (Pause) Father, Sam was just comforting me, man. This is really ignorant of you. He's my best friend.

McKenzie: (Sarcasm) I bet he is.

Desmond: Man, if you would just listen instead of jumping to these conclusions.

McKenzie: I've already seen and heard enough. It is people like you. People who dwell in this . . . cesspool of secular art. It is a tool of the devil that confuses sexuality.

Music and art of your nature encourages evil.
This is a playground for the devil.

Desmond: (To Sam) Now see, he would think that way about creative people. Father, this is a stereotype. Why can't you give us a chance and listen to us?

McKenzie: (Sarcasm) Okay, fine. What have you got to say for yourself?

(Prudence walks in with a joint in her hand. She gets mixed up in the situation.)

Prudence: Hey brothers. How's it shaking?

(McKenzie turns his head, and Prudence and McKenzie share a brief moment of amazement. Surprised to see him, Prudence whispers "Hi." Father McKenzie is quiet and startled by her presence. Noticing the joint in her hand, he flares up even more.)

(More outraged) All of you . . . all of you have gone too far. (To Desmond) Especially you--what would your parents say?

Desmond: O.K. McKenzie, that's enough.

(Father McKenzie starts to leave. He goes to the door and says . . .)

This nasty rock and roll is controlling you.
It is ruling your mind and soul. Bringing out
destruction and anarchy. Oh, I knew you
weren't good enough for Molly. She wanted you
back, but you ruined it.

Desmond: (Stunned by that remark) What?!

McKenzie: I hope you're happy. And I pray that Jesus
saves your soul. And I promise, do you hear
me? I promise that Molly won't even do so much
as to look at you ever again.

(McKenzie frantically leaves the apartment.)

Desmond: Do you believe that?

Sam: That was unreal!

Desmond: I mean, where did that man come from?

Sam: Some preacher-man. Won't even listen. I
wonder how he presides over his confessions.
The person wouldn't even get a chance to say
anything; he'll be like, (Mocking McKenzie's
tone) "You're a sinner. Go home and repent,
you scum!"

(Prudence stands there still in a daze over
McKenzie's appearance.)

Desmond: Prudence, you're okay?

Prudence: (Dazed) What? . . . Oh yeah man, yeah I'm cool.

Desmond: Are you sure? You wiped out when you saw the padre there.

Prudence: No, I'm fine. What happened?

Desmond: Molly and I had a big fight, and I was feeling rather upset, and Sam was just being a buddy and hugged me, and Father McKenzie walked in and took it as me having a homosexual affair with Sam.

Prudence: Get real!

Sam: (To Prudence) Y'know, I'm not gay. But if I was, I'd like to think I can do better than this. (Points to Desmond.)

Desmond: (Playfully jabbing Sam in the arm.) Oh shut up, just shut up.

(Sam and Prudence laugh.)

I'm offended that people around here have that mentality. Not all artists are homosexuals and if some are, fine. Nothing wrong with that. I just don't like the stereotypes. The

stereotypes that are preventing me from living my life the way I want to around here.

Sam: I agree.

Prudence: Y'know, like maybe we can like change the minds around here.

Desmond: How can you do that?

Prudence: Man, don't you know that there's nothing you can do that can't be done?

Sam: (Disbelieving) Prudence!

Desmond: No, maybe she has a point. Maybe through a peaceful manner, we can have some sort of revolution. Nothing violent or anything. Just something to let people know that the spirit and the perception of the arts need a little more support than what people are giving them.

Prudence: Maybe you can talk to Mr. Kite about the idea.

Sam: The father of Performance Art in Strawberry Fields? Hey, not a bad idea.

Prudence: But if you really want to know how I feel? I wouldn't pay those bozos any mind. Especially the preacher-man. You just do your own thing.

Desmond: Yeah, I just might do that. What better way than to throw out your frustrations through music. (To Sam) Hey bud, I feel a song coming on. You wanna see if we can put something together?

Sam: Yeah sure!

(Desmond picks up his guitar and goes to the other room with Sam to compose a new tune.)

Desmond: You wanna help, Prudence?

Prudence: Nah, y'all go ahead.

(Desmond and Sam leave Prudence)

(Thinking about Father McKenzie.) I'm getting out of here, man; the vibes aren't right.

(The lights fade.)

ACT ONE

SCENE NINE

(Prudence is walking down Abbey Road in the Bohemian section of town. There she sees Molly conversing with her favorite street vendor. Out of natural curiosity, Prudence goes up to talk to her. She wants to know what Molly is doing talking to this Indian gentleman who has nothing to offer her but incense, oils and herbs--things Molly knows nothing about.)

Prudence: What's up, Sis?

(They give each other the black power handshake.)

Vendor: Ay yo! what up!

Prudence: (Sarcasm to Molly) Garlic has a really nice aroma.

Molly: (Surprised) Garlic?

Prudence: Trust me, the aroma is not what you think.

Molly: (To the vendor) I'll take a couple of packs of these.

(Prudence looks at Molly as if she has lost her

mind.)

(Catching Prudence's eye.) Oh, this isn't for me; this is for my boyfriend.

Prudence: So your stars are out of order?

Molly: (Confused) I'm sorry?

Prudence: Your stars, they're off key. (Trying another angle) There's trouble in paradise, babe?

Molly: (Feeling foolish for not understanding) Oh yeah. Y'know how it goes. (Thinking) What made you say that?

Prudence: Well, what's a nice girl like you doing in this part of town?

Molly: (Taking a second look at herself and suddenly becomes embarrassed) Oh! well I guess I am a little out of place here. You see, I kinda got into a spat with my boyfriend, so I'm just trying to make amends.

Prudence: No girlfriend, you ain't doing nothing but buying his love honey, just buying his love.

(Molly listens, and she is beginning to see Prudence's point of view.)

You see, frivolous gifts that express apologies, people do that shit all the time. (Picks up her incense) Incense? (Throws it back on the vendor's table.) Fuck that shit! Diamond rings--all of that mess, fuck it. You see, what you need to do is get away from that poisoning mindset. What you need to do is say the word.

Molly: What's the word?

Prudence: Love!

Prudence and Molly: (Sing "The Word;" Molly and Prudence dance, and the street vendor joins in.)

Say The Word and you'll be free.
 Say The Word and be like me.
 Say The Word I'm thinking of.
 Have you heard the word is love.
 It's so fine, it's sunshine
 It's the word love.
 In the beginning I misunderstood
 But now I've got it the word is good.
 Spread the word and you'll be free
 Spread the word and be like me
 Spread the word I'm thinking of
 Have you heard the word is love?
 It's so fine, it's sunshine,
 It's the word love.
 Everywhere I go I hear it said
 In the good and the bad books that I
 have read.
 Say the word and you'll be free
 Say the word I'm thinking of
 Have you heard the word is love?
 It's so fine like sunshine

 It's the word love.
 Now that I know what I feel must be right

I'm here to show everybody the light.
Give the word a chance to say
That the word is just the way
It's the word I'm thinking of
And the only word is love.
It's so fine, it's sunshine
It's the word love.
Say the word love
Say the word love
Say the word love
Say the word love.

(A loud shout is heard.)

McKenzie: (Offstage) Molly!!!!

(Molly turns around to see it's her father. The street vendor quickly packs up and runs away in the threatening wrath of Father McKenzie.)

Molly: (Happy) Daddy, I'm here to get a gift for Desmond. Look, I want you to meet--

McKenzie: (Grabs Molly and pulls her away from Prudence)
You stay away from her!

Molly: (Surprised) Daddy!!!

McKenzie: You are not to come into this part of town ever again, and you are not to see Desmond Jones ever again. (To Prudence) And you, you stay away from my daughter. And I will do everything in my power to reform the youth of this town, taking abundance of the devil in

evil artistic expression. And that
also means deconstructing this awful section of
town. Good day. Let's go, Molly.

(McKenzie and Molly leave Prudence. She becomes so
hurt that she takes a joint out of her pocket,
lights it and smokes it as a way to escape from the
frustrations that Father McKenzie put on her.
Blackout.)

ACT ONE

SCENE TEN

(Days later, Prudence sees that Desmond may be right about his observations. The headlines gracing the Strawberry Times say, MCKENZIE FORCING "STAMP ACT" ON THE ARTS AND POP CULTURE. The Times article stated that McKenzie will head a special committee in conjunction with the town council that will focus on the banning of secular music and art festivals and the rehabilitation of the Bohemian section of Strawberry Fields. Desmond is upset by this move. He is at the home of the surrealist artist guru, Mr. Kite, for advice on the matter. They are sitting on the floor in Indian style, commenting on the headline with some annoying psychedelic music playing in the background.)

Desmond: (Shouting) Mr. Kite!, Mr. Kite! Have you seen this?

Kite: (Reads the headline) "McKenzie forcing Stamp Act on the arts and pop culture." (Speeds up in reading) McKenzie will head a special committee in conjunction with the town council that will focus on the banning of secular music

and art festivals and the rehabilitation of the Bohemian section of Strawberry Fields.

McKenzie will devote his time and energy to promoting the seasonal entertainment events sponsored by the church because the secular performances and art exhibitions are detrimental to the youth of the town and everyone in general. McKenzie believes with this move, Strawberry Fields will return to the nice, bucolic, family-planned community it was meant to be. This ordinance has been in effect since 7 pm last night."

Desmond: (Sighs) This is a drag man, a real drag. And no one's doing anything. No street performers or mimes. Even the cafes have closed because if they have one poetry reading--one poetry reading--the Town Council'll throw the whole damn bunch in jail.

Kite: (Slow and easy) Can't you get your girlfriend to talk to him?

Desmond: I've been hearing through the grapevine that Molly wants to talk to me, but I can't get to her because of you know who. (Pause, then smacks the newspaper.) This is why I think we

should have a revolution. This shit is crazy. It's outright fascism.

Kite: (Cool and easy) A revolution is a situation that brings about a change in the attitudes of people. You will need reinforcements. You're a loner, man. You don't let anyone in. Who's going to help you? You got Prudence, you got me, but you won't get out the front door with that.

Desmond: Well, what about the other artists?

Kite: Desmond, Desmond, Desmond . . . this is a small town. There aren't enough artists to outnumber the conservative party of McKenzie's. Besides the people you have here in town are afraid because of their conditioning. Some of the parents of these artists are on McKenzie's board of directors, and the kids are gonna surrender to the opposition because they don't want their allowance taken away. You're talking about high school kids and twenty something kids here. It is expected of them to be good boys and girls and do what they are told to do. I know what you are going through, and I trust that you are learning that you must suffer for your art. I can also see that you

are serious and that you are not messing around. If you can unite these artists, they have to understand that this is serious. We ain't playing. And the way the town is now, there is no middle ground. You are either with the establishment or not. It's either do or die. They have to understand that whatever we do, we are doing for the benefit of the artists around here.

Desmond: (Glowing with a great idea) That's it! "Benefit." A benefit for the arts. And we'll have it in your name. We can have a show of some sort to project to the people of this town that the arts are important. Yes, a showcase where artists of all kinds can display their works. Artists, writers, actors, musicians and well. . . . a concert. A benefit concert. Check this out! (Desmond stands up; places his hands in the air and imagining the words on a poster or marquee.) "Come one, come all to an extraordinary affair. An evening of fun and fellowship. A celebration of the arts, for the benefit of Mr. Kite! To be held at Bishopsgate, Strawberry Fields." Yes! Yes! Fantastic . . . everyone will see through

the works displayed how the artistic medium has been given such a bad rap. We can give our side of the situation through our works before the town council and the establishment, and if we are successful, McKenzie would have to back down and let us live our lives as artists.

Kite: (Excited) Yes! Yes! Yes!

Desmond: The wheels are turning, man. The wheels are turning!

(They slap "five" on each other's hands.)

Kite: (Pulls out two vials of LSD from his denim jacket) Make 'em turn some more!

(Prudence enters the room.)

Prudence: What's happening, brothers?

Kite: You're just in time.

(Prudence sits down, next to Mr. Kite; he offers her some LSD.)

Take off!

Prudence: Far out!

Desmond: Why are you guys doing that stuff?

Prudence: It's a release, man. You should try it again.

(Offering Desmond some pills.) Don't be afraid.

Kite: Yeah man, let loose of all the tension.

Desmond: Nah, that's quite alright. I need my strength
in running this showcase . . . FOR YOUR
BENEFIT!

(Desmond leaves them alone as the lights fade.)

ACT ONE

SCENE ELEVEN

(The next morning at the McKenzie household. Molly McKenzie believes that the arts banning orchestrated by her father is ridiculous. She is also upset that she is forbidden to see Desmond, so she can explain how wrong she was to chastise him earlier that week and that she wants to make amends. She leaves a note for her father at the top of the stairs telling him that she is a grown woman, and she is free to do whatever she pleases. Desmond always told her she was going to have to stand up to her father. This is the day. Later in the morning Father McKenzie picks up the note. He breaks down and whispers to himself, "She's leaving home. My God." McKenzie is at a stand still and stares into space. Slowly and gradually, his mentality is crumbling. His hair grows grey overnight due to intense worry, and he eventually grows sick over his daughter's defiant move.)

Father McKenzie and House Band: (Sing "She's Leaving Home")

Band: Wednesday morning at five o'clock as the

day begins
 Silently closing her bedroom door
 Leaving the note that she hoped would say
 more.
 She goes downstairs to the kitchen
 Clutching her handkerchief
 Quietly turning the backdoor key
 Stepping outside she is free.
 She ([He]) gave her most of [his life])
 Is leaving (sacrificed most of [his life])
 Home. ([He] gave her everything money
 could buy)
 She's leaving home after living alone
 For so many years.

McKenzie: (Hears the backdoor shut, awakes from bed to
 look for Molly) Molly? Molly?

(Father McKenzie stands alone at the top of the
 stairs.)

Picks up the letter that's lying there
 Standing alone at the top of the stairs
 [He] breaks down and cries [out . . .]

McKenzie: [Molly, Molly my] baby's gone.
 Why would she treat [me] so thoughtlessly?
 How could she do this to me?

Band: She ([He] never thought of himself)
 Is leaving (never a thought for [himself])
 Home. (We struggled all of our lives
 to get by)
 She's leaving home after living alone
 for so many years.
 She's leaving home. ('bye, 'bye)

(The lights fade.)

ACT ONE

SCENE TWELVE

(Meanwhile, at Desmond's apartment, Desmond is sitting at his desk, talking on the telephone-- talking to promoters. He is raising money for the benefit concert. Prudence is with him)

Desmond: Yeah, well, I need about two to three hundred dollars for extra amplifiers, reverb and microphones . . . yes sir, we can really use all the help we can with all of the bands in the community.

(As a result of her involvement in LSD, Prudence gets into a rage and demolishes the apartment. Desmond tries to get hold of her. He tries to work with her and helps to ease her pain, and in effect, tries to get Prudence back to her regular self. When it appears that she's okay, he sings her a new song.)

Desmond: (Arms around Prudence) Calm down, calm down. You want to hear my new song? I wrote it this morning. Hmm? I'm gonna sing you my song.

Desmond and Prudence: (Sing "Happiness is a Warm Gun")

She's not a girl who misses much.
 Do do do do do do, oh yeah.
 She's well acquainted with the touch of
 the velvet hand
 Like a lizard on a window pane.
 The man in the crowd with the multicolored
 mirrors on his hobnail boots.
 Lying with his eyes while his hands are
 busy working overtime.
 A soap impression of his wife which he ate
 And donated to the NATIONAL TRUST!

Prudence: (Singing to Desmond)

I need a fix 'cause I'm going down.
 Down to the bits that I left uptown
 I need a fix 'cause I'm going down.

Desmond: [FATHER] SUPERIOR JUMPED THE GUN
 [FATHER] SUPERIOR JUMPED THE GUN
 [FATHER] SUPERIOR JUMPED THE GUN
 [FATHER] SUPERIOR JUMPED THE GUN
 [FATHER] SUPERIOR JUMPED THE GUN
 [FATHER] SUPERIOR JUMPED THE GUN
 Happiness (happiness) is a warm gun.
 (Bang, bang, shoot, shoot)
 Happiness (happiness) is a warm gun,
 momma
 (Bang, bang, shoot, shoot)
 When I hold you in my arms (oh yeah)
 And when I feel my finger on your trigger
 (oh, yeah)
 I know that nobody can do me no harm (oh,
 yeah)
 Because--(happiness) is a warm gun,
 yes it is
 (Bang, bang, shoot, shoot)
 Happiness is a warm, yes it is--gun
 (Happiness--bang, bang, shoot, shoot)
 Well don't you know that happiness
 (happiness)
 Is a warm gun, momma (is a warm gun,
 yeah).

(Desmond and Prudence feel a certain closeness
 together in their comfort. They come together with

their arms around each other and kiss very passionately. They proceed to make love.)

Curtain

ACT TWO

SCENE ONE

(Desmond and Prudence are on a mattress in the living room making love. A knock comes at the door. They ignore it at first. The knock comes again.)

Prudence: (Moaning) Desmond.

(Desmond ignores; she moans again.)

Desmond!

Desmond: (Whining) WHAT!!!

Prudence: (Moaning) Answer the door; someone's at the door--

Desmond: No!

(Knocking comes from the door again.)

Prudence: C'mon, Desmond!

Desmond: (Irritably) Ok, Ok!

(Desmond gets up, goes to the door wearing nothing but boxer shorts. He looks out the peephole and screams . . .)

OH SHIT!! IT'S MOLLY!!

Prudence: (Scared, jumps from the mattress) What?!

Goddamn it!

(Prudence and Desmond try furiously to get their clothes on. Desmond remains bare-chested but adds on a pajama bottom while Prudence wraps one of Desmond's bedsheets around her.)

Desmond: What are you worried about?

Prudence: (Surprised) Are you kiddin'? Man, if she finds me with you, it'll be cat scratch fever around here, man.

Desmond: (Panicking) Oh my God! Oh my God-Oh my God-Oh my God! . . . What do we do?

Prudence: (Excited) How the fuck am I supposed to know?

Desmond: (Putting his finger to her lips) Shhhh!!!
(Places his hands on her shoulders) Look, calm down, okay? Go to the closet and stay in there. I'll see what she wants, and maybe I'll try to get rid of her--

Prudence: (Upset) Maybe? What do you mean, maybe?

Desmond: Shhhhh!!!

Prudence: Your moon's messed up brother--

Desmond: (Disgusted) Get in the closet, alright? (Coming back to his senses) Oh my God, what did I do? What did I do?

(Desmond straightens up the apartment a little bit, and he finally gets himself together to answer the door. In a trenchcoat and holding two suitcases, Molly McKenzie is standing outside his door.)

Molly: (Smiling) Hi, Desmond!

Desmond: (Moaning, stuttering and smiling) Hi, Molly.

Molly: (Pause) Hi!

Desmond: (Pause) Hi!

(They both stand at the door for a few seconds, looking helplessly at each other and staring into space.)

Desmond: (Getting his head together) Um, please come in.

Molly: Thanks.

(Molly comes in and sets her suitcases down on the floor.)

Desmond: (Nervous) So, how is everything?

Molly: Fine. Could be better. How about you?

Desmond: Me? Aw it's not easy being me.

(A loud "bungling" type noise is heard from the closet.)

Molly: What was that?

Desmond: (Frightened) Nothing. Nothing at all. Look, would you like to have a seat? Anything I can get you?

Molly: (Eyes still fixed on the closet) No thanks.
(Molly sits.)

(Still standing, Desmond looks at Molly. Molly, who's nervous because she thinks Desmond is still mad at her, looks at him with smiles.)

Desmond: So what are the suitcases for?

Molly: (Despondent) Oh. (Pause) Desmond, I left home.

Desmond: Why?

Molly: Because I think what my father is doing is wrong. The ultimatums he is placing on the community are not fair. (Pause) I miss you. I miss you very much. And I want to come and stay here with you until things cool down.

Desmond: (Surprised) Molly, I--

Molly: (Stands up and puts her arms around Desmond)
I'm here for you, Des. I'm here to back you up
all the way in anything you want to do.
(Smiling) I love you.

Desmond: (Smiling) I love you.

(They kiss and hug.)

Thank you. All I ever wanted from you was your
support, you know that?

Molly: Yeah.

Desmond: I love you.

(They kiss and hug again. For a couple of beats,
they nod their heads at each other and smile like
two star-crossed lovers.) Well, we better get you
set up. (Smiling) I guess you can stay in my room.

Molly: (Smiling) Woooo!

(They laugh and kiss. Desmond straightens up the
place to make it more presentable to Molly prior to
putting her things away.)

My father is so crazy; gosh it really gets on
my nerves!

Desmond: What do you mean?

Molly: A few days ago, I met this really nice girl
named Prudence--

Desmond: (Scared, remembering that Prudence is in the
closet) How do you know Prudence?

Molly: I met her while buying

(She walks across the room to the closet door, where
incense sticks are stuck into a claylike fixture on
the wall.)

incense sticks

(She opens the door to put her coat in the closet.)

just like--

(Prudence, with her ear to the door, falls to the
ground at the opening of the door.)

these.....

(Desmond is very embarrassed and ashamed. Molly is
speechless and shocked. Prudence laughs off the
whole thing, trying to make the tense situation a
little light.)

Prudence: (Laughs) Hi guys! (Mumbles) Oh shit!

Desmond: (In a panic) Molly!--

Molly: (Raising her hand up) I don't want to hear it!

(A slight pause comes up among the three of them.)

Prudence: (Nervous) Uh, I'll be in the other room, if you need me.

(Prudence gets up from the floor, goes to the door of the next room, and still making light of the situation, she turns to the door and says...)

Oh boy!

(Prudence leaves.)

Molly: So when the cat's away, the mice will play.

Desmond: Molly--

Molly: No, no. We weren't seeing each other; you had every right to do as you pleased.

Desmond: But Molly--

Molly: (Looks down and finds a burnt joint on the floor.) What the heck is this?

Desmond: Molly, it's not what you think.

Molly: Why, Desmond?

Desmond: Molly--

Molly: (Raising her voice) WHY DESMOND?! (Holding up the joint to him) WHY?!

Desmond: (Shouting) Will you listen to me? I was trying to help Prudence.

Molly: Yeah, I bet she really needed your help.

Desmond: (Grabs her by the arm forcefully) Now you listen to me. I was trying to help her because she was going too far with this junk that she's putting into her system. I was trying to help her get back to earth. (Pause) You're no better than your father. You don't listen.

Molly: I resent that Desmond!

Desmond: Well then listen to me!

Molly: Why all of a sudden are you hanging out with this "netherworld" of people?

Desmond: Because they accept me, that's why. Prudence and Kite, they are the only ones to take me as who I am. They don't try to make me into something I'm not.

Molly: (Looking at the joint in her hand) There's no excuse for this. What would your mother say?--

Desmond: (Firm) You leave my mother out of this.

Molly: I'm just saying, she would be very disappointed in you--

Desmond: (Shouting) DAMN IT MOLLY, I DIDN'T TAKE ANY DRUGS! SHUT UP! SHUT UP GODDAMN IT! YOU ARE NOT MY MOTHER. MY MOTHER IS DEAD. (He cries and kicks the coffee table across the room.) DEAD!!!!

(Molly finally gets enough courage to go up to him, grab a hold of him and tell him to calm down. He gradually calms down and cries . . .)

WHY DON'T YOU BELIEVE ME?!!!

WHY?!!!

(Molly and Desmond collapse on the floor holding each other. Molly apologizes to Desmond.)

Molly: (Softly) I'm sorry. I'm sorry. I exploded like that because . . . I don't know. I really don't know why I said that.

Desmond: (Looks at her) Molly, why can't you trust me?
(Pause) I need you.

Molly: I love you.

Desmond: I love you.

Molly: I really want to help you. I'll support you in any way. Believe me this time.

Desmond: (Pause) Molly . . . Prudence was just--

Molly: (Puts her fingers over his mouth.) You don't have to explain. (Pause) Let me in, Desmond.

(Music in)

Desmond: Oh Darling.

Desmond: (Sings "Oh Darling;" note: to the band, play in a slow, bluesy, R&B ballad style.)

Oh-oh Darling, please believe me, I'll
never do you no harm.
Believe me when I tell you, I'll never
do you no harm.
Oh Darling, if you leave me I'll never
make it alone
Believe me when I beg you--ooo--don't
ever leave me alone.
When you told me you didn't need me anymore
Well you know I nearly broke down and cried.
When you told me you didn't need me
anymore
Well you know, I nearly broke down
and died.
Oh Darling, if you leave me, I'll
never make it alone
Believe me when I tell you, I'll never
do you no harm.
Believe me, darling.
When you told me--ooo--you didn't
need me anymore
Well you know I nearly broke down
and cried.
When you told me you didn't need me
anymore
Well you know I nearly broke down

and died.
Oh Darling, please believe me, I'll
never let you down.
Oh believe me darling
Believe me when I tell you--ooo--I'll
never do you no harm.

(At the end of the song, Prudence is seen from the back leaving the apartment from the side door fully dressed and carrying a bouquet of flowers as the lights fade.)

ACT TWO

SCENE TWO

(At the cemetery, we find Prudence kneeling at her mother's grave. Confused about everything happening at this time, she speaks to her in song.)

Prudence: (Sings "Julia")

Half of what I say is meaningless.
But I say it just to meet you Julia.
Julia, Julia, ocean child, calls me.
So I sing a song of love, Julia.
Julia seashell eyes windy smile calls me
So I sing the song of love, Julia.
Her hair of floating sky is shimmering
Glimmering in the sun.
Julia, Julia morning moon touch me
So I sing the song of love, Julia.
When I cannot sing my heart
I can only speak my mind, Julia.
Julia sleeping sand silent cloud touch me
So I sing a song of love, Julia.
Hmm hmm hmm, calls me
So I sing a song of love for Julia
Julia, Julia.

(A distraught and weak Father McKenzie enters the gravesite.)

McKenzie: (With a slight grin.) I haven't heard that song since you sang it at your mother's funeral. And you sang it just as lovely now as you did then.

Prudence: (Turning her head slowly towards him, giving him an evil look.) I don't know you anymore.

McKenzie: (Laughing) Well I know you--that has to account for something.

(He comes and sits next to Prudence, and they both look at the grave.)

Your mother was a very beautiful woman, and if I know her, she would not like us feuding like this.

Prudence: Maybe I don't like it either! But you have a narcissistic urge to run other people's lives.

McKenzie: (Laughing) I thought you didn't know me.

Prudence: FUCK OFF MAN!

McKenzie: (Slightly upset) Must you with that language! I wish we could respect your mother a little better by not arguing over her grave.

Prudence: (Stubborn, wearing a nasty look) I agree.
(Pause) Why don't you leave Desmond and the rest of us alone? All we want to do is express ourselves. Used to be a time when you were all for that.

McKenzie: (Points at Julia's grave) Yes, and look what happened?!

Prudence: I can't live in such a (Sarcasm) "marvy" condition just because what happened to mom was unfortunate. Yes, I know Mom got killed through an Art happening, but that kind of creativity was her thing. You are lashing out over all forms of art. That's not fair.

McKenzie: (Places his hand on Julia's gravestone)
I don't want to see another mistake. I am working diligently with the Town Council to put some ethics back in this town. You people have no organization, no responsibility over your lives. Someone has to keep order. You hippies and beatniks have to grow up sometime.

Prudence: Well, what about Michelangelo's painting of the Sistine chapel? That's art.

McKenzie: That is in concordance with the scriptures. In that area it's totally permissible. It is not like the secular art that brings out the devil inside. What you young people need is a good exorcism.

Prudence: What does it matter? Why do you care? I can't win with you. (Smirk) And that display you put

on in front of Molly the other day was
hilarious. You'd win an Oscar for that, man.

McKenzie: I meant every word I said. I will reform that
awful Bohemia of yours if it means persecuting
each and everyone of you--

Prudence: (Belligerent) FOR WHAT?!!

McKenzie: (Angry) For your sickening revolution, that's
what!

Prudence: (Smirk) Oh please, you couldn't put me away if
you tried, old man, because you couldn't take
something like that, and you know it. (Pause)
Does Molly know about me?

(McKenzie looks at her; Prudence nods her head.)

Of course, I forgot who I was talking to.

(Prudence stands up straight, sucks in her gut, puts
her hand on her breast and in a sarcastic and
authoritative manner recites . . .)

Uphold the family motto of McKenzie . . .

"Truth Will Prevail." What truth? There's
nothing but secrets crawling all over this
family.

McKenzie: I am an Episcopal clergyman in this town.

I have responsibilities--

Prudence: And a reputation to protect? You know damn well that Molly should not be kept in the dark about her family, our family.

McKenzie: Don't you dare.

Prudence: If you don't put a stop to this arts banning, I'll tell Molly about her family . . . her real family. (Points to McKenzie) Her father, (Points to herself) and her sister, her half sister. It's all up to you, my man.

McKenzie: (Threatening tone) You tell her that, then I'll tell you that it was you who drove your mother to her grave. Not some stupid Art happening. That was something I made up just to tell you what happened to her while you were growing up. Julia didn't want you. She never wanted you to begin with. If it hadn't been for me, you would be dead!

Prudence: (Shocked) No.

McKenzie: Your mother made three attempts to have an abortion, and I stopped her each time. We talked about you quite a bit before you were

born, and your mother wanted nothing to do with you. Julia was an artistic spirit like yourself, and it's people like you that lead the world to destruction. That's why I'm trying to stop this revolution of yours; that's why we don't accept you people here. You tell Molly who you really are, then I'll tell her what you are, a mistake . . . an illegitimate one.

Prudence: (Crying) No . . . no . . . this can't be true.

McKenzie: You were a product of a one-night stand between your mother and myself. I met Julia at a frat party at Lancashire Community College. We were drinking too much, and I invited her back to my place and there you go. I offered to marry your mother, but she didn't want anything to do with me. She warned me three times that she was going to have an abortion.

Prudence: (Crying) DADDY STOP!!

McKenzie: After she gave birth to you, she went crazy. She blamed you for setting back her career, and she was upset with me, too, keeping her in seclusion because after that incident I repented, quit teaching and went into the

priesthood. I had to take the responsibility of raising you under the pretense that you were a ward of the court.

Prudence: (In a screaming rage) I thought you loved each other!!!! This can't be true.

McKenzie: Oh no? You go to that insane asylum in Lancashire and look up the records there; you go to Doc. Grayson's office. He'll tell you.

Prudence: (Screams) NO!

(Prudence is so shocked and upset she runs out of the cemetery. Father McKenzie tries to call her back after realizing what he did, but she doesn't listen. Running out to the street, Prudence gets hit by a car and dies instantly. Blackout.)

ACT TWO

SCENE THREE

(A half hour later outside Town Hall, Desmond, whom the artistic community have unofficially elected as their leader and spokesman, presides over a rally. With him on the podium are Molly and Mr. Kite. Desmond is telling these artists--young and old--that a boycott of their works and boycotts of events that appreciate the spirit of art are offensive.)

Desmond: (Preaching) Thank you very much for your outstanding support. All throughout history, artistic expression has been treated like a joke. And I would like to see the day when many more will join me and look towards a better day when artists of all genres will be paid handsomely for the work that they do.

(Applause from the crowd)

A day in which we can share with our friends and loved ones artistic aspirations without ever getting discouragement from opposite sides.

(Applause from the audience)

Now many of us participate in the arts as a form of relaxation, a way to release stress or for just plain fun, and that's alright. But some of us out here in the world participate in the arts as a way to make a living. True, our profession is tough and competitive, but if we had some way or means of support from the town council or maybe a non-profit organization, all artists could enjoy the wealth and satisfaction of their craft with full enjoyment.

(Applause)

So it is at this time, I wish to announce to you my contribution to this problem. With the help of Mr. Kite, I am hereby erecting "The Strawberry Fields Performing Arts Society."

(Audience cheers.)

This is a non-profit organization that will help promote the value of art in this community and to convince the City Council that we are a valuable resource that should not and cannot be banned. Some of you are probably thinking about Father McKenzie shutting this down. But we are going to keep on. This town cannot be repressed any further. We have so much to

give. And through this society, we hope that both the younger generation as well as the older generation can provide a cultural exchange and educate each other. Yes, this is a revolution, but one of passive resistance. One of civil disobedience.

(Audience applauds.)

Fine art helps complete the human soul. And without it, we are very much disoriented. You see, the Conservative community here in Strawberry Fields wants you to think the way it does. It wants to twist your head around. You suggest a revolution? Well, people will think you've gone mad. You suggest an artistic revolution? Then you'll be laughed at. Do you think we're silly and have us declared insane? But you all know we don't play.

(Audience feedback)

If they say to you, "You say you want a revolution? We all want to change the world."

(Audience feedback)

Now I just want to clear something up. I am in no way up for a violent demonstration, and I

hope to see none of you participating in such either. But we have to get certain things straight. They think we want to change the constitution or something. And they say to us, "You say you'll change the Constitution? Well y'know, we all want to change your head!" If anyone's head needs to be changed, it's Father McKenzie and the Town Council . . . I'm sorry, but that's how I feel.

(The audience cheers. Desmond turns his mike and himself around to the direction of City Hall.)

And the people on McKenzie's crazy board of directors are asking for contributions from the rich folks in this town, wanting to make this a bleak, dismal and unfulfilled town. Well City Hall! If you asked me for a contribution to your filthy, fascist cause, all I can tell you is, brother, you have to wait!

(The crowd cheers.)

(Softly) People, this is kind of personal to me. I'm not just doing this for me, but for you as well. Making music is my way of staying alive, as whatever form of art you participate in happens to be your bread and butter. This

ordinance is downright ridiculous. (Pause)
Town Council, you have to wait to see my
pocket change when we see some true support
from you. Let's get on with it!

(The crowd cheers hysterically.)

Are you with me?

(The crowd roars.)

Are you with me?

(The crowd cheers louder.)

Are . . . You . . . With . . . me!

(The crowd loses verbal control. Desmond grabs his
guitar and performs his message mocking the outland-
ish beliefs of the right wing in song.)

Desmond: (Sings "Revolution")

Aah!
You say you want a revolution
Well you know
We all want to change the world.
You tell me that it's evolution
Well you know.
We all want to change the world.
But when you talk about destruction
Don't you know that you can count me out?
Don't you know it's gonna be alright,
alright, alright?
(Alright)
You say you got a real solution
Well you know,
We'd all love to see the plan.
You'd ask me for a contribution

Well you know,
 We're doing what we can.
 But if you want money [from] people with
 minds that hate
 All I can tell you is brother you have
 to wait.
 Don't you know it's gonna be alright,
 alright (alright), alright?
 Oh!
 You say you'll change the constitution
 Well you know
 We all want to change your head.
 You tell me that it's the institution
 Well you know
 You better free your mind instead.
 But if you carrying pictures of
 [Father McKenzie]
 You ain't gonna make it anyone anyhow.
 Don't you know it's gonna be alright,
 alright, alright (alright)?
 Alright, alright, alright, alright
 Alright, alright, alright, alright!

(Desmond tries to speak to the artists of the
 community through the applause given to him for his
 number.)

Desmond: Alright, people . . . people . . . now next
 Saturday night at Bishopsgate, I want to see
 each and every one of you at the benefit
 concert for the father of Performance Art, Mr.
 Kite. And if the police come, we're not going
 anywhere. We'll chain ourselves to Bishopsgate
 if we have to. Let's put art back into the
 community and support it!

Desmond and Molly: (Sing "Being For The Benefit of Mr.
 Kite")

For the benefit of Mr. Kite
 There will be a show tonight on trampoline.
 The Henderson's will all be there
 Late of Pablo Fanques fair - What a scene.
 Over men and horses hoops and garters
 Lastly through a hog's head of real fire
 In this way Mister K. will challenge the
 world!

The celebrated Mr. K. Performs his feat on
 Saturday at Bishopsgate.

The Hendersons will dance and sing

As Mr. Kite flies through the ring -
 don't be late.

Messrs. K. and H. assure the public
 Their production will be second to none
 And of course Henry the horse dances
 the waltz.

The Band begins at ten to six
 When Mr. K. performs his tricks
 without a sound.

And Mr. H. will demonstrate
 Ten somersets he'll undertake on solid
 ground.

Having been some days in preparation
 A splendid time is guaranteed for all
 And tonight Mr. Kite is topping the bill.

(Dancers, jugglers and all the artists of Strawberry
 Fields come out and perform in the artistic
 demonstration of music, art and entertainment. This
 comes to an end as the police come along to break up
 the disturbance because it is against the new "Stamp
 Act." Desmond, Molly and Mr. Kite are resisting the
 force of the police, but eventually give in and are
 taken away with the others. Before they go, a
 grief-stricken Father McKenzie arrives at the scene
 to speak to Molly about Prudence.)

McKenzie: Molly, Molly, I have to talk to you.

Molly: Daddy, I have nothing to say to you.

McKenzie: Molly, please.

Desmond: Father, Molly has made it clear that she does
 not want to talk to you.

Molly: I can handle this, Des.

McKenzie: I have something very important to tell you,
 and you need to hear this too, Desmond.

Molly: (Reluctantly giving in) Alright! What's up?

McKenzie: It's about Prudence.

 (Desmond and Molly give their undivided
 attention.)

Desmond: What do you mean, it's about Prudence?

Molly: (Attentive) What's wrong?

McKenzie: (Crying) Prudence died about a half an hour
 ago. She was hit by a car on Forthlin Rd.

Desmond: (Shocked) How did it happen?

McKenzie: She was leaving the cemetery and . . . Molly I
 have something very important to tell you about
 Prudence. (Pause) She's your half sister.

 (Molly is so shocked and mortified that she stands

still to contain all of her feelings.)

Molly: I . . . I don't understand. What . . . what do you mean? What do you mean?

McKenzie: Before you were born, I was teaching history at the Strawberry Institute. I met Prudence's mother at a party, and Prudence was conceived. I offered to marry Julia. But she wanted nothing to do with me. The health department sent her to an insane asylum in Lancashire. Because she felt ill about having a child out of wedlock, she committed suicide by hanging herself. While she was growing up, I instilled ambitions for Prudence to become a lawyer. I wanted her to keep out of trouble, through. She gave up those dreams to tour with a rock and roll band. She changed her name to Valentine for love, and went on the road. I strictly forbade it. I did not want to lose Prudence since I hadn't too long ago lost her mother. But she was adamant and determined and left home. She hurt me so much that I said to her, "I no longer have a daughter." So she left and never returned, until recently. Shortly after, I met your mother while in France at a Clergy convention. She wasn't an

artist. We fell in love, married and had you. I've already lost two people whom I really cared about to death. And I always believed that Prudence would come back. Come back to me, and to us and . . . I was hoping that the three of us would one day become a happy family so we can put away all of these squabbles and secrets. But now I know it is not so. I told her about her mother. That's what killed her. I should have waited for the correct time and place. I wanted to hurt her. I wanted to intimidate her. I wanted to rule her. (Crying) And my God I'm so sorry I did.

(McKenzie is on his knees, crying to heaven for the sin that he committed.)

Father in Heaven. Have mercy upon me! I have done such a terrible mistake. A mistake full of selfishness and ignorance. You have warned me against Satan and his deceitful nature. He stood before me in white, meaning well, I thought, and convinced me that threatening her was the right thing. (Screaming) How can it be the right thing when I lost my daughter!!!! (Softly) This is my responsibility for disobeying the Holy Word. This is a mistake.

There is no mistake. There is no excuse for what I've done. Lord, Father Almighty, have mercy on me. (Crying) Prudence, please have pity on me and forgive me. Father, blessed father, have mercy on me and forgive me!!!! (Crying softly) IT'S OKAY BABY, DADDY'S HERE. YOU CAN PLAY YOUR GUITAR NOW. IT'S OKAY, YOU CAN PLAY YOUR GUITAR NOW. YES I'M GONNA LET YOU PLAY.

(Desmond and Molly console Father McKenzie.
Blackout.)

ACT TWO

SCENE FOUR

(Saturday at Bishopsgate, the benefit concert for Mr. Kite is now a wake for Prudence Valentine. Everyone is there, including Father McKenzie. Delivering a message to the people of Strawberry Fields is Desmond Jones.)

Desmond: If I know Prudence, she really would've never wanted it like this . . . really. She would've wanted all of us to work together to reach a united front. A common goal of understanding between man and woman, rich and poor, black, white, artist and scientist. I've learned, fellow artisans of Strawberry, that we should not condemn our scientists and those who are well endowed of the analytical side of the human brain. For they are in need for the caring of our health, the advancement of our technology and for the preservation of our personal security in the areas of law and commerce. They have a high amount of stress in their work and it demands respect. And you scientists and mathematicians, without

the arts, the world would be an awfully dreaded place to be. You, as well as us, have the human desire to project the expression of the human soul. And as for the clergy? The Holy Bible says, "Make a joyful noise unto the Lord." Let us not forget that King David himself was a poet and musician who danced before the Ark of the Covenant. We should not be crucified for taking a stand to the full extreme if necessary, and why? Because the arts and humanities do not provide a decent living or believing in stereotypes that are not only untrue but shortchanges the many others who are serious people perfecting their crafts and not hurting anyone. We can be supported, but we need your help--artists too! But nothing beats the kind of moral support coming from a family member, especially a parent. Sometimes parents make the wrong decisions, but they love us. We can expect no more from them than they are able to give. (Directed to Molly who is upset for learning about her family secret.) I wish I was as fortunate as Molly to have such a caring parent. Just so all of us here will remember Prudence, the performing arts society founded

by Mr. Kite and myself will be renamed from the "Strawberry Fields Performing Arts Society" to the "Prudence Valentine Performing Arts Society." Father McKenzie, what I'm about to say to you are the words of your daughter Prudence. She speaks to you through me. And she'll always be with you. She begs you to reach out and reconcile with your daughter. (Thinking and chuckling) Her muse inspired me to create this song for you. And I say to you . . .

Desmond: (Sings "Hey Jude")

Hey Jude, Don't make it bad.
 Take a sad song and make it better
 Remember to let her into your heart
 Then you can start to make it better.
 Hey Jude, don't be afraid
 You were made to go out and get her
 The minute you let her under your skin
 Then you begin to make it better.
 And anytime you feel the pain
 Hey Jude, refrain
 Don't carry the world upon your shoulder.
 For well you know that it's a fool who
 plays it cool
 By making his world a little colder.
 Nah nah nah nah nah, nah nah nah nah.
 Hey Jude, don't let me down
 You have found her, now go and get her
 (Let it out and let it in)
 Remember (hey Jude) to let her into
 your heart
 Then you can start to make it better.
 So let it out and let it in
 Hey Jude, begin
 You're waiting for someone to perform with.
 And don't you know that it's just you
 Hey Jude, you'll do
 The movement you need is on your shoulder.

Nah nah nah nah nah, nah nah nah nah, yeah.
 Hey Jude, don't make it bad
 Take a sad song and make it better
 Remember to let her under your skin (oh)
 Then you begin (let it out) to
 make it better
 Better, better, better, better (make
 it Jude), better.
 oh yeah - nah nah nah, nah - nah - nah
 nah - nah - nah - nah
 Hey Jude.
 Nah nah nah, nah - nah - nah - nah
 nah - nah - nah - nah, Hey Jude.

(During the fade out, Desmond invites the audience
 in the house to join him. At the front of the
 stage, we have in this order: Desmond, Molly and
 Father Jude McKenzie. Note: Molly must be in the
 middle to symbolize her neutrality. Prudence's
 spirit is above them. All is well in Strawberry
 Fields and both left wing and right wing have
 reached a "united front" and learned to live
 together and not against each other.)

Curtain