

ALLEY DOG

A musical by  
Paul Lewis

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## CAST OF CHARACTERS

A note on the animal characters: they may have just the suggestion of animal features, such as whiskers and tails, but stand on two feet and hold forth with largely human qualities. ALLEY DOG may be dressed in a T-shirt, suspenders and blue jeans. MISSY could be any well-dressed woman of the 1950s.

ALLEY DOG, male. 20s to 40s, aging as the play progresses

MISSY, a youngish cat with a posh upbringing

SAM, 20s, a young hockey player drafted into the Army

JOE, Sam's older Army buddy, 20s to 30s

PENELOPE, 20s, a lunch counter waitress at the Woolworth's Five & Dime

FLO, 30s to 40, Penelope's older, gimlet-eyed coworker

CHUCKIE, 20s, a shy appliance repairman in love with Penelope

LEAD CROW: a Groucho Marx type (also plays Mr Maxwell if M), M or F

CROW 2 and CROW 3, M or F

MR BAXTER, 40s to 50s, the city dogcatcher

MR MAXWELL, middle-aged, Mr Baxter's boss (may also play Lead Crow)

ENSEMBLE or cast doubles: Bus Driver and Passengers, Motorists, Hostile Dogs, Weasel. With doubling, Alley Dog may be played with a cast as small as ten (6M,4F or 5M,5F). Doubling possibilities include Lead Crow: Mr Maxwell. Flo: Crow 2 or 3. Joe: Weasel and Hostile Dog 1. Chuckie: Crow 2 or 3, Hostile Dog 2. Mr Baxter: Bus Driver. All except Crows: Bus Passengers

### TIME

Act One: 1950  
Act Two: 1951-1953

### PLACE

Cleveland, Ohio

## PREFACE

**Alley Dog** retells the story from The Odyssey of Ulysses' faithful dog, Argos, who stubbornly and patiently waits for two decades for his master to return to Ithaca, long after Penelope has lost hope of ever seeing him again. The set and costumes may suggest a 1950s comic book sensibility.

## MUSICAL NUMBERS

### ACT ONE

0. OVERTURE
1. WE'RE DOING HOMER TONIGHT (Crows, Bus Driver and Passengers)
2. THE STREETS OF THE CITY (Part 1: Sam, Part 2: Missy)
3. UNFINISHED STORIES/THE STREETS OF THE CITY (Alley Dog/Ensemble)
4. ALLEY DOG, THAT'S ALL (Alley Dog)
5. I LOVE PENELOPE (Penelope, Flo, Chuckie)
6. COULD BE THE DOUGHNUTS (Mr Baxter, Crows)
7. WAITING FOR SAM (Alley Dog)
8. SOMEONE LOVELY (Sam, Penelope)
9. BE CAREFUL WITH THIS HEART (Penelope)
10. YOU STAY (Alley Dog)
11. FOR THIS ONE MOMENT (Penelope, Flo)
12. FOR THIS ONE MOMENT (Missy, Ensemble)

### ACT TWO

13. THAT'S WHAT MY MUDDER SAID TO ME (Crows)
14. BE BRAVE, MY LOVE (Penelope)
15. COULD BE THE DOUGHNUTS (reprise) (Mr Baxter)
16. I LOVE PENELOPE (reprise) (Chuckie, Penelope)
17. THE STREETS OF THE CITY (reprise) (Missy)
18. BABY, THAT'S WHAT FRIENDS ARE FOR (Alley Dog, Missy)
19. YA STAYED/YOU STAY (Lead Crow, Alley Dog)
20. FINALE: UNFINISHED STORIES/FOR THIS ONE MOMENT (Sam, Alley Dog, Missy, Ensemble)
21. EPILOGUE (Crows)

Music cues are indicated in the script in bold and brackets, e.g. [1].

ACT I

SCENE 1

Cleveland, Ohio, 1950.

Overture [0]. At solo trombone line, lights come up on a bus rolling through town at night: a BUS DRIVER, a number of sleeping PASSENGERS, and two soldiers, SAM and JOE, sitting side by side.

JOE

Hey, Sam. Wake up. We're coming into Cleveland. Didn't you used to live here?

SAM

'Til I was twelve.

(A beat as he stretches and looks out the window.)

Funny: looks like nothing has changed.

JOE

Not much of a town. How come you moved away?

SAM

Huh? Oh, my parents died. Just wake me up when we get to San Francisco, okay?

JOE

I got news for you. This bus ain't goin' to San Francisco anytime soon.

SAM

Are you kidding me? Again?

JOE

More engine trouble, if you ask me. She's been making a funny noise ever since the Ohio state line.

SAM

I don't hear any funny noise.

The SOUND of a CATASTROPHIC ENGINE FAILURE accompanied by a cloud of smoke.

JOE

Try that funny noise.

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Passengers, startled awake,  
immediately begin complaining.  
MUSIC vamp begins [1].

## PASSENGERS

Oh, for the love of God... Not again...! This is  
outrageous... Didn't I tell you this bus trip was a lousy  
idea?

Passengers and Bus Driver freeze  
in place while three CROWS enter,  
as if they own the place. Crows  
quickly size up the situation,  
then turn to us.

## LEAD CROW

What a cryin' shame. Those two soldiers over there are tryin'  
to get to a war. And the woman in the babushka, she was  
hopin' to get to her new grandson's baby naming.

## CROW 2

At this rate she'll be lucky to get there in time for the  
kid's Bar Mitzvah.

## CROW 3

Maybe next time she'll fly.

## LEAD CROW

Anyways: not our problem. We got bigger fish to fry.

1. WE'RE DOING HOMER TONIGHT

WE'RE DOING HOMER TONIGHT

## ALL CROWS

WE'RE DOING HOMER TONIGHT

## LEAD CROW

'THOUGH WE WON'T BE SPEAKIN' GRECIAN  
CAUSE IT'S BORING AND SQUARE

## CROW 2

AND WE WON'T BRING OUT THE CYCLOPS  
OR ELSE PEOPLE MIGHT STARE

## CROW 3

AND WE WON'T BE WEARING TOGAS. THIS IS FA-  
MI-LY FARE

## LEAD CROW

MAY THE GODS OF THE THEATRE DELIGHT

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ALL CROWS  
THIS AIN'T NO MISNOMER: IT'S HOMER TONIGHT

MUSIC continues as Passengers and  
Bus Driver come to life.

PASSENGER  
This is the third mechanical breakdown since Pittsburgh, for  
crying out loud!

BUS DRIVER  
A wheel falling off an axle doesn't technically count as a  
breakdown.

PASSENGER  
Oh, for Heaven's sake. This is like a bad Greek tragedy.

Passengers and Bus Driver freeze  
in place.

ALL CROWS  
WE'RE DOING HOMER TONIGHT  
WE'RE DOING HOMER TONIGHT

LEAD CROW  
NO, WE WON'T DO 'OKLAHOMA', IT'S TOO CORNY  
AND TRITE

CROW 2  
AND WE WON'T BE DOING SHAKESPEARE, WE AIN'T  
THAT ERUDITE

CROW 3  
AND FORGET ABOUT THE BIBLE, 'CAUSE WE'D BE  
HERE ALL NIGHT

ALL CROWS  
(Pointing skyward)  
AND BESIDES, HE WON'T SELL US THE RIGHTS  
SO WE'RE DOING HOMER IN CLEVELAND TONIGHT

Passengers and Bus Driver become  
animated again.

PASSENGERS  
STUCK HERE IN CLEVELAND  
STUCK HERE IN CLEVELAND  
THEY SAID 'LEAVE THE DRIVING TO US'  
BAD LUCK IN CLEVELAND  
WE'RE STUCK IN CLEVELAND  
WHERE THE HELL DID THEY FIND THIS BUS?

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PASSENGER 1

WELL, MY TICKET SAYS CHICAGO, BUT THAT'S  
CLEARLY A JOKE

PASSENGER 2

THE GUY SITTIN' BEHIND ME JUST WENT UP IN  
SMOKE

BUS DRIVER

I THINK THAT'S 'CAUSE THE ALTERNATOR  
SUFFERED A STROKE

ALL PASSENGERS

NOT EXACTLY A TRAVELER'S DELIGHT

BUS DRIVER AND PASSENGERS

THAT WE'RE STUCK IN CLEVELAND TONIGHT!

BUS DRIVER

Now, don't worry, folks. We'll just make a few repairs and  
have you on your way by...let's see: what day is it today?

ALL CROWS

WE'RE DOING HOMER TONIGHT

THERE AIN'T NOBODY ELSE TO BLAME  
WE'RE DOING HOMER TONIGHT

SEEMS THE GUY ONLY HAD ONE NAME

PASSENGERS AND BUS DRIVER

STUCK HERE IN CLEVELAND  
BAD LUCK IN CLEVELAND  
THEY SAID LEAVE THE DRIVING TO US AND SO WE'RE  
STUCK HERE IN CLEVELAND  
BAD LUCK IN CLEVELAND  
WHERE THE HELL DID THEY GET THIS BUS?

LEAD CROW

WELL, IF YOU LIKES YOUR SHOWS  
ABOUT YOUR BIRDS AND YOUR  
BEES

PASSENGERS AND BUS DRIVER

LET THIS NIGHTMARE END.

CROW 2

AND IF YOU LIKES YOUR SHOWS  
ABOUT YOUR WAR AND DISEASE

PASSENGERS AND BUS DRIVER

WE'D MAKE BETTER TIME BY  
CRAWLING ON OUR HANDS AND OUR  
KNEES

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CROWS  
MISTER, WE'RE GONNA HIT ALL  
THE HEIGHTS  
'CAUSE WE'RE DOING HOMER  
  
WE'RE DOING HOMER  
  
WE'RE DOING HOMER IN  
  
CLEVELAND, OHIO  
TONIGHT. TONIGHT!

PASSENGERS AND BUS DRIVER  
  
NEVER AGAIN  
  
STUCK HERE IN CLEVELAND  
  
BAD LUCK IN CLEVELAND  
  
WE'RE STUCK IN  
CLEVELAND, OHIO  
TONIGHT. TONIGHT!

[1a] Scene change MUSIC.

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## SCENE 2

The street.

Duffel bags in hand, Sam and Joe step out onto the street at night.

SAM

Follow me, Joe. There should be a hotel around here somewhere.

JOE

Good thing we don't ship out of Frisco for a week.

SAM

See that corner over there, with the streetlight?

JOE

Over there?

SAM

My old neighborhood. We had street hockey tournaments that went on all summer long. My dog Smokey used to play defense for both sides. I never thought I'd end up back in this town again.

JOE

Yeah, go figure.

MUSIC underscoring as Sam remembers [1b]. Lights dim on soldiers.

JOE (CONT'D)

Sam?

B&W photo projections: a twelve-year-old boy with his parents. Recorded dialogue begins, lines slightly overlapping.

AUNT SUZIE'S VOICE

(Prim and formal)

You're going to live with us now, Sammy. It was in your mother and father's will. We know you'll be very happy in Philadelphia.

YOUNG SAM'S VOICE

Yes, Aunt Suzie. And Smokey's coming with us, too, isn't he?

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Photo projection: a playful dog  
on a city sidewalk.

AUNT SUZIE'S VOICE

Uh...no, dear, I'm afraid we can't have a dog in our  
apartment-

UNCLE NATHAN'S VOICE

-We...found him a good home. In the country, on a farm. With  
lots of animals. Don't you worry about Smokey. He'll be as  
happy as a pig in mud.

YOUNG SAM'S VOICE

Goodbye, Smokey. Goodbye. I'll never forget you.

Photo projection: the boy hugging  
the dog, as if saying goodbye.

AUNT SUZIE'S VOICE

Come along now, Sammy. It's a long drive to Philadelphia.  
Your uncle will follow in the moving van... After he drops  
your dog off at the farm, that is.

Back to real time.

JOE

Sam. Wake up. You must be thinkin' about the girl you left  
behind.

MUSIC Cue: [2].

SAM

A girl? Yeah, I guess there was a girl, too. But I told you,  
I was just twelve. The only thing left on these streets for  
me here are a few sad old stories.

## 2. THE STREETS OF THE CITY

THE STREETS OF THE CITY  
HAVE STORIES TO TELL  
EV'RY DOORWAY AND STOREFRONT AND SILL  
THE BASEBALLS AND FOOTFALLS  
OF DAYS LONG AGO  
ARE ECHOING STILL

A BOY WHO IS GROWING,  
HIS HEART OVERFLOWING  
WITH FEELINGS HE CANNOT DESCRIBE

THE STREETS OF THE CITY  
HAVE UNFINISHED TALES  
ABANDONED AND LEFT BEHIND.

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AND ONE OF THOSE STORIES  
JUST HAPPENS TO BE MINE

MUSIC continues until break in  
music.

SAM (CONT'D)

C'mon. Let's go find a hotel room. Tomorrow I'll show you  
around.

JOE

Yeah, I've heard so much about the sights of Cleveland.

Sam and Joe exit. Lights up  
immediately on the Alley at  
night. The three Crows are on a  
wire.

LEAD CROW

So I'll tell you what I think. Tomorrow morning, bright and  
early, we head on over to the open dumpster behind Trader  
Vic's for some breakfast and then we go over to Public Square  
and steal bread crumbs from the pigeons.

CROW 3

Aw, we do that every mornin'.

LEAD CROW

You got a better plan?

CROW 2

Well, for your information, there's no use going to Public  
Square anymore. I heard that the bread crumb lady fell down  
and broke her crown and she ain't comin' back no more.

LEAD CROW

That's too bad... Who'd ya hear that from?

CROW 2

A pigeon over at Public Square.

LEAD CROW

A pigeon over at... It's birds like you bring disrepute to  
the term 'birdbrain.'

CROW 3

Hey, leave me out of it. I didn't say a thing.

LEAD CROW

What difference does it make? You're a moron anyways.

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All Crows start cawing at each other. **MISSY**, a pampered cat, enters, frightened and lost, clutching a handbag.

**MISSY**

Excuse me... Excuse me, but can you direct me to-

**LEAD CROW**

-Well, excuse me. But we're in a meeting right now.

**MISSY**

I'm very sorry, but can you direct me to the Fairmount Arms Apartments? It's...where I live and I can't seem to find it anymore.

Crows look at each other, then shrug.

**CROW 2**

Sorry, sister, we ain't never heard of such a place.

**CROW 3**

Perhaps you can describe it.

**MISSY**

Well, it's a large brick building with a copper roof. And a doorman out front. And inside, a grand piano and a bed with satin sheets. In the afternoon, the sun streams in through the windows-

**LEAD CROW**

-Whoa, whoa, whoa! From the sound of it, you musta taken a wrong turn-

**CROWS 2 AND 3**

A very wrong turn-

**LEAD CROW**

-And ended up in an altogether indelectable part of town. Can't help you, sister. Now, where were we?

**MUSIC resumes [2, continued].**

**CROW 3**

I believe we was engaged in a lively exchange of views regarding our respective intelligences, or lack thereof.

**CROW 2**

Oh, yeah.

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All Crows resume cawing at each other, fading out as Missy begins to sing to us.

MISSY

THE STREETS OF THE CITY  
HAVE SECRETS TO KEEP  
HOW I WISH THEY'D REVEAL THEM TO ME  
THE SMOKESTACKS AND STEEPLES  
THE TRAFFIC AND PEOPLE  
CONFUSE ME, YOU SEE?

IT ISN'T SO PRETTY  
TO WANDER THE CITY  
ALL HUNGRY AND LOST AND ALONE  
THE STREETS OF THE CITY HAVE SECRETS TO  
KEEP  
BUT THEY'RE ONLY MADE OF STONE  
IF THE STREETS HAD A HEART  
I MIGHT FIND MY WAY BACK HOME

MUSIC continues until break in music.

MISSY (CONT'D)

Oh, dear. I've been walking such a long ways. Would you mind if I rest here for a few hours?

LEAD CROW

You better take that up with Alley Dog over there. Or better yet, you better not. He's not very fond of visitors.

CROW 3

Especially those of the feline persuasion.

Lights up on ALLEY DOG, sitting and gazing into the distance.

MISSY

Is he dangerous?

ALL CROWS

Very.

MISSY

Oh my... Why, he doesn't look dangerous to me. He simply looks sad.

LEAD CROW

You'd be sad, too, if you was waitin' all these years for someone to return.

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CROW 3

Yeah, someone whom, in our collective opinion, ain't never comin' back.

LEAD CROW

How many years has it been now?

CROW 2

(Pulling out an adding machine.)

You want that in dog years, cat years, bird years or people years?

LEAD CROW

People years.

CROW 2

Okay: are we talkin' Gregorian calendar here, Babylonian, or Hebrew-Judaic?

LEAD CROW

I'm sorry I asked. Gregorian.

CROW 2

(Calculating)

Nine and three-quarters.

ALL CROWS

That's a lotta years, by any measure.

Photo projection of the boy saying goodbye to his dog.  
Recorded voices resume.

YOUNG SAM'S VOICE

Goodbye, Smokey. Goodbye. I'll never forget you.

MUSIC Cue: [3].

AUNT SUZIE'S VOICE

Come along now, Sammy. It's a long drive to Philadelphia. Your uncle will follow in the moving van.

(A beat)

After he drops your dog off at the farm, that is.

Photo projection of a man in shadow, smoking a cigar.

UNCLE NATHAN'S VOICE

OK, dog, you're on your own now.

A dog whimpers.

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## UNCLE NATHAN'S VOICE

Yeah, I know, life stinks sometimes. I'm sure somebody'll take you in. No, no, no...sit! Stay! That's right. Stay. And good luck.

Photo projection of the dog sitting on a city sidewalk and looking plaintively ahead, in the same pose as Alley Dog. The sound of a car starting up and pulling away. Back to real time.

3. UNFINISHED STORIES/THE STREETS OF THE CITY

## ALLEY DOG

ONCE I HAD A FRIEND. WE WERE QUITE A PAIR  
 ANY TIME HE CALLED I WAS ALWAYS THERE  
 UNFINISHED STORIES. UNFINISHED STORIES!  
 HE SLEPT ON A BED AND I UPON THE FLOOR  
 I FOLLOWED WHERE HE LED, NEVER WANTING MORE  
 UNFINISHED STORIES, UNFINISHED STORIES!  
 AND WE OWNED THE STREET , OUR BREATH UPON  
 THE AIR  
 HELLO TO FRIENDS WE'D MEET. TO ENEMIES,  
 BEWARE  
 UNFINISHED STORIES. UNFINISHED STORIES!  
 BUT I'LL FOLLOW THIS TALE TO THE END  
 TIL THE DAY THAT I'M BACK WITH MY FRIEND  
 AND I'LL DO WHATEVER IT TAKES  
 THEY SAID, 'STAY'. SO I'LL WAIT. I'LL WAIT

ENSEMBLE has entered. Lights up on Ensemble, singing directly to us.

## ALL EXCEPT ALLEY DOG

THE STREETS OF THE CITY HAVE STORIES TO  
 TELL  
 IF YOU LISTEN YOU MAY HEAR THEM, TOO  
 IN SOME, HEARTS ARE BROKEN  
 IN SOME, VOWS ARE SPOKEN  
 EACH ONE OF THEM'S TRUE  
 A BOY COMING HOME AND A CAT ON HER OWN  
 AND A DOG WHO WAS LEFT IN THE COLD  
 THE STREETS OF THE CITY HAVE STORIES TO  
 TELL,  
 MANY STORIES BOTH NEW AND OLD  
 IT'S LIKE OPENING A BOOK. ON EACH CORNER  
 YOU LOOK  
 THERE ARE STORIES AND STORIES AND STORIES  
 TO BE TOLD

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Lights begin to fade on All  
except Alley Dog and Missy.

SAM

LIKE OPENING A BOOK

PENELOPE

ON EACH CORNER YOU LOOK

ENSEMBLE

THERE ARE STORIES AND STORIES AND STORIES  
TO BE TOLD

[3a] Scene change MUSIC.

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## SCENE 3

The alley.

MISSY

Excuse me, sir. I'm sorry to bother you.

ALLEY DOG

Yeah? Well, what is it?

MISSY

I'm afraid I foolishly wandered away from home and I'm lost. I'm looking for the Fairmount Arms Apartments. It's a large brick building with a copper roof. And a doorman out front-

ALLEY DOG

-Never seen it.

MISSY

Oh, dear. And you must travel all over the city.

ALLEY DOG

Hmmm. Did it ever occur to you that I might have more important things to do than travel all over the city?

MISSY

I didn't mean to offend you...! I wonder: could I rest in your alley? Just for a few hours. My paws are so sore.

ALLEY DOG

You can curl up over there. But just for a few hours. Then you'll have to be on your way.

MISSY

Oh, thank you.

ALLEY DOG

(A beat)

That torn-up bag over there. It's got part of somebody's leftover bologna sandwich. Just in case you're hungry.

MISSY

Thank you. I hope it doesn't have any mustard. I can't abide mustard.

She takes a look inside the bag.

MISSY (CONT'D)

Perhaps I don't mind it all that much.

(Eating hungrily)

And what is it that you do here, if I may ask?

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ALLEY DOG

You ask a lot of questions, don't you?

MISSY

I suppose I do. You know what they say: curiosity kills the...oh! Cats have nine lives. I like that one better, don't you? They call me Missy.

(A long beat)

And you are...?

ALLEY DOG

Just Alley Dog.

MISSY

Oh, but surely that's not a proper name.

MUSIC Cue: [4].

MISSY (CONT'D)

Let me guess: Spot? Fido? Bosco? Bowser-?

#### 4. ALLEY DOG, THAT'S ALL

ALLEY DOG

IT'S ALLEY DOG, THAT'S ALL

ALLEY DOG, THAT'S ALL

I HAD A NAME BUT THAT WAS LONG AGO

MISSY

Oh dear, I just can't seem to do anything right these days.

ALLEY DOG

I'M AN ALLEY DOG, THAT'S ALL

ALLEY DOG, THAT'S ALL

THAT'S THE ONLY NAME YOU NEED TO KNOW

MISSY

Thanks again...Mister Alley Dog.

Missy curls up and tries to sleep.

ALLEY DOG

(Soliloquy)

A NAME HAS POWER

A NAME HAS MAGIC

A NAME CAN BIND YOU

A NAME REMINDS YOU

BUT WITHOUT A NAME YOUR HEART'S INVINCIBLE

BEHIND A WALL OF SOLID STONE

IT BEATS IN SILENT TIME

WELL-HIDDEN, LIKE GOLD

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MUSIC continues. TWO HOSTILE  
DOGS, both wearing collars,  
stroll onstage.

DOG 1

Hey, Alley Dog. Who's your new friend?

ALLEY DOG

You're in my territory. Scram.

DOG 2

Here, kitty kitty-

ALLEY DOG

(Moving towards them)

-What'd I just say?

DOG 1

(Threateningly)

We'll catch you later, Alley Dog.

The Two Hostile Dogs exit.

ALLEY DOG

JUST AN ALLEY DOG, THAT'S ME  
WOULDN'T YOU AGREE?  
FACE IT, THAT'S EXACTLY WHAT YOU SEE

AND AN ALLEY DOG'S A BUM  
THE LOWEST KIND OF SCUM  
NAMES AREN'T MEANT FOR CREATURES SUCH AS HE

A NAME HAS MEANING  
A NAME REMEMBERS  
'THOUGH NAMES HAVE VIRTUE  
A NAME CAN HURT YOU  
WITHOUT A NAME YOU HAVE NO HISTORY  
WITHOUT A NAME YOU HAVE NO PAST  
YOU SLEEPWALK THROUGH YOUR DAYS  
'TIL SLEEP COMES AT LAST

AND WITHOUT A NAME NO ONE GETS CLOSE TO YOU  
WITHOUT A NAME NO ONE WILL TRY  
THEY'LL NEVER STEAL YOUR HEART  
AND THEN SAY GOOD BYE

IT'S ALLEY DOG, THAT'S ALL  
ALLEY DOG, THAT'S ALL.  
ALLEY DOG!

[4a] Scene change MUSIC.

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## SCENE 4

A street corner, later that night.

Sam and Joe are consulting a map.

SAM

Maybe I'm a little turned around. Coulda sworn that it was on this corner. Toddle House, they called it. Three hamburgers and a mug of root beer for fifteen cents.

JOE

Prices like that, maybe they went out of business.

SAM

Could be.

JOE

Let's keep walking. We'll run into something.

PENELOPE (OFFSTAGE)

Goodnight, Mrs O'Reilley. Saw hello to the Mister for me.

WOMAN (OFFSTAGE)

I'll do that. Goodnight.

SAM

Hold on a sec. Let me ask this girl.

PENELOPE enters, carrying a small bag of groceries.

SAM (CONT'D)

Excuse me, Miss. We're looking for a place called the Toddle House. You ever hear of it?

PENELOPE

Oh, yes. It moved years ago, to just around the corner. Down this block, and go right at East 9th. You can't miss it.

SAM

(A beat)

Thank you, Miss.

PENELOPE

(A beat)

You're welcome.

MUSIC underscoring: Be Careful  
With This Heart [4b].

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She begins to walk away, then stops and looks back. They catch each other's eye, then she moves on.

JOE

Whatsa matter, Sam? You never seen a pretty girl before?

SAM

No, it's not that. Something about her was so familiar. But so different, too. The angle of her cheek. Her voice... Maybe I should have walked her to her door.

JOE

Water under the bridge.

Sam hesitates, looks back in her direction.

JOE (CONT'D)

Sam? The Toddle House. C'mon, pal, I'm starvin' over here.

After a beat, they exit.

[4c] Scene change MUSIC.

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## SCENE 5

The next morning. A Woolworth's Five-and-Dime with a lunch counter. Its door opens onto the sidewalk and street. A bench on the sidewalk.

FLO is busy behind the lunch counter. MR. BAXTER, the dogcatcher, and MR. MAXWELL enter along the sidewalk, speaking.

MR. MAXWELL

Listen, Baxter, the mayor's been breathing down my neck to clean up this neighborhood. And that means getting rid of every last stray dog.

MR. BAXTER

I been tryin', boss. Believe me, I been tryin'.

MR. MAXWELL

Well, whatever you been tryin' ain't workin'. Try something else.

(Pulling out a mug shot of Alley Dog.)

There's this one homely mutt here, ya see? He's been spotted all over this part of town.

MR. BAXTER

Oh, I know the one, boss. He's very crafty. Him and his animal friends.

Mr. Maxwell looks at him squint-eyed.

MR. BAXTER (CONT'D)

For animals, that is.

MR. MAXWELL

Whatever. If you don't nab that dog soon, I'm going to have to demote you.

MR. BAXTER

You can't do that.

(With a hint of pride)

In all o' city government, it don't go no lower than dogcatcher.

MR. MAXWELL

Oh yeah? Well try ex-dogcatcher! Now get to work!

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He exits.

MR. BAXTER

Oh boy, now I'm in trouble. Gotta think.

(Begins to pace)

Nah, I can't think on an empty stomach.

(To us)

Besides, they say that breakfast is the most important meal o' the day.

Mr. Baxter ducks into the lunch counter.

MR. BAXTER (CONT'D)

Hello, Flo. The usual, please.

Penelope enters and joins Flo behind the lunch counter.

PENELOPE

Good morning, Flo. Morning, Mr. Baxter.

FLO

Morning, Penelope.

(To Mr. Baxter)

Here it is, hon, all packed up and ready to go. A dozen jelly doughnuts and a maple bar.

MR. BAXTER

Charge it to my account, please. I get paid on Friday.

(To us)

If I still have a job, that is.

FLO

Goodbye, Mr. Baxter.

Mr. Baxter exits Woolworth's, moves to the bench and starts to eat a doughnut. CHUCKIE walks onstage, neat and tidy in appliance repairman uniform and bow tie. MUSIC begins [5].

FLO (CONT'D)

Oh, look, Penelope. It's your would-be suitor.

PENELOPE

Oh, cut it out, Flo. I've known Chuckie since kindergarten. He's just a friend.

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Chuckie paces, trying to muster up the courage to go inside the Woolworth's.

FLO

This is excruciating. My heart can't take it anymore. I swear I'm going to have a coronary right here.

5. I LOVE PENELOPE

PENELOPE

A LITTLE SHY, IS ALL

FLO

Ya really think?

PENELOPE

A BIT BASHFUL  
AND RESERVED

FLO

A LITTLE SHY, IS ALL:  
A NERVOUS BREAKDOWN  
WITHOUT THE NERVES

Penelope: how many years has this been going on?

PENELOPE

What, you think I should ask him for a date? I'm not that kind of girl, you know. Besides, I really don't think he has the slightest interest in me.

Flo reacts. Chuckie, still outdoors, turns to us and begins to sing.

CHUCKIE

I LOVE PENELOPE  
I LOVE PENELOPE  
AND ONE OF THESE DAYS  
I'M GOING TO TELL HER  
YES, ONE OF THESE DAYS  
I WON'T BE TOO YELLER  
TO ASK HER OUT

MUSIC continues.

FLO

Oh, for crying out loud.

(Opening the door.)

Chuckie, is you coming in or ain't you?

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CHUCKIE

(Embarrassed)

Oh, hi, Flo! I was...just breaking in a new pair of shoes.

He runs through the same sequence  
of moves as before.

FLO

How's the fit?

CHUCKIE

It's good... I can't stay long, I'm afraid. I have a 9:30  
delivery: a brand-new Frigidaire for Mrs Kowalski.

PENELOPE

Come on in, Chuckie. You've got time for an Ovaltine, don't  
you?

Chuckie turns back to us to sing.

CHUCKIE

I LOVE PENELOPE  
WHEN SHE SPEAKS, I HEAR SYMPHONIES  
IF ONLY I KNEW  
JUST HOW TO TELL HER  
WHAT I WOULDN'T DO  
TO BE HER FELLER.  
THERE'S NO DOUBT

Chuckie, entering Woolworth's,  
fumbles a handful of postcards  
which spill out onto the floor.  
MUSIC continues until break in  
music.

CHUCKIE (CONT'D)

Oh, Jiminy Christmas.

PENELOPE

Oh, here. Let me help you. What are all these?

CHUCKIE

They're just my entries for the Pompadour Hair Cream radio  
jingle contest. The winner gets twenty-five thousand dollars.  
And each runner-up gets an economy-size tube of Pompadour, in  
creamy, extra creamy, or viscous.

PENELOPE

So what do you have so far?

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CHUCKIE

(Looking around first to make  
sure no one is  
eavesdropping.)

Okay. Here's one: 'Pompadour Hair Cream. At work or play, it  
stays and stays...and stays.'

FLO

That sounds like my ex-mother-in-law.

CHUCKIE

Or how about this one: 'Caught in a gale miles from shore?  
You'll still look swell with Pompadour.'

FLO

Uh, you might not want to turn in your two week's notice yet.

Flo prepares an Ovaltine, then  
pretends to turn her attention  
elsewhere. Chuckie sits down at  
the counter. MUSIC resumes: [5].

CHUCKIE

(After a long, awkward pause)

How about them Indians, huh?

PENELOPE

I didn't know you liked sports, Chuckie.

CHUCKIE

(A long beat, then glumly)

I don't.

CHUCKIE (CONT'D)

(To us)

BUT I LOVE PENELOPE

I LOVE PENELOPE

AND ONE OF THESE DAYS

I'M GOING TO TELL HER

YES ONE OF THESE DAYS

I WON'T BE TOO YELLER

TO ASK HER OUT

I LOVE PENELOPE

SPEAK HER NAME,

I HEAR SYMPHONIES

IF ONLY I KNEW

JUST HOW TO TELL HER

WHAT I WOULDN'T DO

PENELOPE

(To us)

IT WOULDN'T BE SUCH A BAD  
LIFE

TO BE A WESTINGHOUSE-WIFE

A CUTE LITTLE HOUSE AND A  
YARD

WE COULD SAVE UP FOR A CAR

MAYBE WE'D LEARN TO PLAY

BRIDGE

WE'D HAVE A COUPLE OF KIDS

AND DISCOUNTS ON GARBAGE

DISPOSALS

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CHUCKIE  
TO BE HER FELLER  
THERE AIN'T ANY DOUBT

FLO  
ASSUMING A MARRIAGE PROPOSAL

PENELOPE  
WILL HE ASK ME OUT?

FLO  
LET THEM WORK IT OUT

Chuckie drinks down his Ovaltine.

CHUCKIE  
More Ovaltine, please!

[5a] Scene change MUSIC.

## SCENE 6

Lights up on bench.

Mr. Baxter is sound asleep with a half-eaten jelly doughnut in one hand. The Crows have appeared on a wire nearby.

LEAD CROW

There's Baxter. Watch this.

(Mr. Maxwell's voice)

Hey, Baxter. Get to work!

MR. BAXTER

Uh oh. I'm starting to hear things again. This is bad. Very bad.

CROW 2

I don't know how you do it. Throwin' your voice and sounding like a person, all at the same time.

LEAD CROW

I told you already. I was raised by a flock of parrots in a school for ventriloquists.

(Mr. Maxwell's voice)

Get up, Baxter! Make yourself useful for a change!

MR. BAXTER

(Looking around frantically)

Yes, boss, I was...just doing undercover surveillance on this corner.

CROW 2

You're very talented, you know. You should go to Hollywood, be in the movies!

LEAD CROW

Aw, who needs the aggravation? Besides, what's wrong with Cleveland?

CROW 2

How much time ya got?

MUSIC begins [6].

MR. BAXTER

Gotta find that mutt or I'm in trouble. I think I'll start by going this way.

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LEAD CROW  
 (Mr. Maxwell's voice)  
 Not that way, you imbecile! The other way!

Lead Crow exits.

MR. BAXTER  
 OK, boss. Whatever you say.

He looks around anxiously, then  
 begins to sing to us.

### 6. COULD BE THE DOUGHNUTS

MR. BAXTER (CONT'D)  
 METHINKS THAT I'VE BEEN WORKING MUCH TOO  
 HARD  
 I HEAR THINGS 'TWOULD BE BETTER TO DISCARD  
 AND IT'S MY INTERPRETATION  
 THAT A VERY LONG VACATION  
 MIGHT HELP MY HALLUCINATIONS TO RETARD  
  
 METHINKS THAT I'VE BEEN WORKING FAR TOO  
 MUCH  
 MEFEARS THAT I AM SLOWLY LOSING TOUCH  
 IF INSANITY IS PENDING  
 THEN PERHAPS I SHOULD BE SPENDING  
 A LONG WEEKEND WITH THE PENNSYLVANIA DUTCH

Tympani rolls as Mr. Baxter  
 pauses to think.

MR. BAXTER (CONT'D)  
 Now wait a minute. Maybe the answer is right here in the palm  
 of my sticky little hand.

COULD BE THE DOUGHNUTS  
 HAVE FI-NA-LLY TURNED MY MIND ASKEW  
 THESE SWEET JELLY DOUGHNUTS  
 WITH THEIR RED DYE NUMBER TWO  
 COULD BE THE DOUGHNUTS  
 BUT HOW IT WOULD GRIEVE ME TO ESCHEW  
 THESE FABULOUS DOUGHNUTS  
 WITH THEIR RED DYE NUMBER TWO

Mr. Baxter exits. Lights up  
 immediately on the Alley, now  
 decorated with a geranium in a  
 tin can. Missy, cast-off apron  
 on, is dusting the garbage pails.  
 Crows are on a wire. Alley Dog  
 sits in his usual pose.

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ALLEY DOG

Just what do you think you're doing?

MISSY

What does it look like I'm doing? This place could use a feminine touch, if you ask me.

Alley Dog glares.

MISSY (CONT'D)

Well, you can hardly expect me to leave when I have no other place to go. So I'm afraid I'm going to have to stay right here, at least for another day or two. Until I get my bearings... You wouldn't want me to fall into the clutches of those mean, horrid dogs, would you?

ALLEY DOG

(Muttering as he turns away.)

I never shoulda capitulated in the first place.

(To Crows)

Hey, I thought you birds were gonna look for that building of hers.

LEAD CROW

What, today? There's a new pizzeria opening up on Prospect today.

CROW 2

The rats say it's fabulous.

LEAD CROW

We'll see what we can do, but no promises.

(To other Crows)

Wait a sec. Hold the parade. Dogcatcher's rounding the corner on West 4th and headed this way. Pass it on.

Chase MUSIC begins: [6,  
**continued**].

CROW 2

Cleveland catcher Ray Murray is rounding second base, top of the 4th inning. Pass it on.

CROW 3

The score's tied at the top of the fourth inning, and there's a swing and it's a line drive into center field, and Johnny Berardino is rounding West 4th and heading-

LEAD CROW

-Oh, for crying out loud. Hey, Alley Dog! Baxter's over on West 4th and headed this way.

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ALLEY DOG

Yeah, I know. I seen him.

MISSY

Who's Baxter?

ALLEY DOG

They say he's a dogcatcher.

MISSY

Oh my! You'd better run, don't you think?

ALLEY DOG

I don't ever run. This is my home.

LEAD CROW

Alley Dog's a bit set in his ways, in case you haven't noticed.

CROW 2

So we like to help him out with Baxter now and then. It passes the time.

CROW 3

You know, we ain't done banana peels in awhile.

CROW 2

Impossible. Have you seen the markup on bananas lately?

LEAD CROW

No bananas? Okay. I guess that means the magical light show.

CROWS 2 AND 3

No! Not the magical light show!

LEAD CROW

I said, the light show! On the double.

MR. BAXTER

(Stealthily rounding a corner  
and getting his net ready.)

There he is. Doesn't even know I'm here. Hee-hee-hee.

LEAD CROW

You birds ready?

CROW 2

That all depends on your definition of ready.

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LEAD CROW

Aw, quit your bellyachin'.

(Mr. Maxwell's voice)

Don't just stand there, Baxter. Get him!

MR. BAXTER

I got him now, boss. I got him...arrgh!

Just as Mr. Baxter breaks into a run, Crows 2 and 3 bring two broken ends of a power line together in their beaks. Strobe lights come on, blinding Mr. Baxter. He runs chaotically in slow motion. Strobe lights go off and he staggers past Alley Dog and offstage to the sound of brakes squealing and car horns blaring.

MOTORISTS (OFFSTAGE)

Hey! What do ya think you're doing?... Get out of the road, you bum!

LEAD CROW

(Laughing)

Nyut, nyut, nyut, nyut, nyut, nyut, nyut.

CROW 2

Ya know, you should try holding them power lines sometime. You might not find it so amusing.

MISSY

Oh my. It looks like he's coming back! And he's got dark goggles on.

LEAD CROW

Coming back? This is highly irregular. We are talking about a city worker, after all.

MISSY

What do we do now?

LEAD CROW

Let me see that list.

Crow 3 hands him a piece of paper.

LEAD CROW (CONT'D)

Banana peels: that's out. Magical light show: that's out, too.

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LEAD CROW (CONT'D)

(A beat as Missy and other  
Crows look at him  
expectantly. Then, to us)

At times like this, it would be nice to have a third option.

MR. BAXTER

(Creeping up and muttering to  
himself as he bumps into  
things and tries to feel his  
way forward.)

I'll get you now, you mangy mutt, you. I'll get you if it's  
the last thing I do.

He stands still and readies his  
net.

MISSY

(Frantically tying Mr.  
Baxter's shoelaces  
together.)

I guess I'm going to have to take matters into my own hands.  
But I really think you ought to run, Alley Dog.

ALLEY DOG

I'll fight if I have to. But I ain't gonna run. This is my  
home.

LEAD CROW

That's very good: the shoelace gambit. A bit cliched, but  
serviceable. Say when.

MISSY

When.

LEAD CROW

(Mr. Maxwell's voice)

Don't just stand there, Baxter. Get him!

Missy holds on tightly to the end  
of the net as Mr. Baxter  
struggles to pull it forward.

MR. BAXTER

I got him now, boss. I...got...him...

Missy lets go of the net and Mr.  
Baxter suddenly lurches forward,  
past an impassive Alley Dog and  
offstage.

MR. BAXTER (CONT'D)

Aaarggh!!!

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Brakes squeal and car horns  
blare. MUSIC pauses.

MOTORISTS (OFFSTAGE)

Hey! What are you, some kind of a nut?... Watch where you're  
going, you bum!

CROWS

Nyut, nyut, nyut, nyut, nyut, nyut, nyut.

CROW 2

Now that was funny.

CROW 3

Who says birds don't have a sense of humor?

MUSIC resumes: [6, part two]. Mr.  
Baxter, limping, slowly enters  
and moves downstage, one shoe  
dragging behind the other, an ice  
bag on his head and a doughnut in  
his hand.

MR. BAXTER

METHINKS I AM DISMAYED AND EVEN IRKED  
TO FIND THAT I'VE GONE TOTALLY BESERK.  
IS THE ANSWER TO THIS RIDDLE  
BURIED DEEP WITHIN THE MIDDLE  
OF THESE BAKED GOODS PURCHASED  
ON MY WAY TO WORK?

METHINKS THAT I SHOULD TRY TO CHANGE MY  
WAYS  
BEFORE MY MIND COMPLETELY GOES AWAY  
WELL, PERHAPS I'LL FIND THE GUMPTION  
TO REDUCE MY MASS CONSUMPTION  
TO A BAKER'S DOZEN EVERY OTHER DAY

CROWS

COULD BE THE DOUGHNUTS

MR. BAXTER

THE VERY ONES I DAILY CHEW.  
NOW, GOING PSYCHOTIC  
COULDN'T BE VERY GOOD FOR YOU

CROWS

TOO MANY DOUGHNUTS

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MR. BAXTER  
BUT HOW IT WOULD GRIEVE ME TO ESCHEW  
THESE SWEET JELLY DOUGHNUTS  
WITH THEIR RED DYE

MR. BAXTER AND CROWS  
NUMBER TWO! NUMBER TWO! NUMBER TWO!

MR. BAXTER  
NAH-AH-AH-UMBER TWOOOO!

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## SCENE 7

The Alley, later that day.

Alley Dog and Missy are sitting side by side.

MISSY

Alley Dog. Off in the distance: all that water. Is that the ocean?

ALLEY DOG

Yeah. I think so.

MISSY

Ships and boats. I've only seen them in pictures up until now... I'd like to go sailing on a boat some day, wouldn't you?

ALLEY DOG

No.

MISSY

O-kay...

(A beat)

That was a close call. That little interlude with Baxter.

ALLEY DOG

I've seen worse.

MISSY

It might not have ended so well for you, if it weren't for me.

ALLEY DOG

Don't kid yourself.

MISSY

I've heard rumors about the kind of things that go on at the pound. Animals go in and are never heard from again. It's not exactly a nice-

ALLEY DOG

-Listen here: the last thing I need is a cat thinkin' she can teach me anything, let alone bail me out of a jam. That sounds like a recipe for complications, if you ask me. I don't need your help or anyone else's. No complications is the way I like it. I've gotten along perfectly fine by looking after myself.

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MISSY  
(Sotto voce)

Well, excuse me.

ALLEY DOG

Let's just hope the crows come back with some news.

MISSY

Oh, I'm sure they will. A brick building with a copper roof shouldn't be hard to spot from the air-

ALLEY DOG

-Then things can get back to normal around here.

MISSY

I'd hardly call this life of yours normal... Why do you keep staring at that window?

ALLEY DOG

How come you ask so many questions?

MISSY

Did you used to live up there? Not much of a place, if you ask me. No doorman, I see. But I guess one can get used to almost anything. I guess even I could get used to a place like that. As long as it has a grand piano and a bed with satin sheets.

(A beat)

Who are you waiting for, Alley Dog? Let me guess. It must be a handsome gentleman who waited on you hand and foot, or a kindly old woman with a dress of velvet and a broad lap.

MUSIC begins [7].

ALLEY DOG

You wouldn't understand.

MISSY

Try me.

ALLEY DOG

(A beat)

A boy.

MISSY

A boy? A boy? A boy is scarcely worth waiting five minutes for, let alone ten years. Where did he go? This boy.

YOUNG SAM'S VOICE

Goodbye, Smokey. Goodbye. I'll never forget you.

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ALLEY DOG

I wouldn't be here if I knew. He got in a car. A car I never seen before.

MISSY

Why didn't you follow it?

ALLEY DOG

Maybe I should have.

UNCLE NATHAN'S VOICE

No, no, no...sit! Stay! That's right. Stay. And good luck.

ALLEY DOG

I'm sure there was a reason. I'm sure he did whatever he thought was best.

(Angrily)

You sure do ask a lot of questions-

MISSY

I'm afraid I do, Alley Dog.

### 7. WAITING FOR SAM

ALLEY DOG

ON A DAY LONG AGO  
EVERYTHING CHANGED  
SAM HUGGED ME TIGHT  
SAM WALKED AWAY  
IF IT'S SOMETHING I DID,  
THAT SOCK THAT I HID  
IN TIME HE'LL FORGET  
AND HE'LL FORGIVE ME

WAITING FOR SAM  
FIRST I BELIEVED THAT HE'D  
REAPPEAR AT DAWN.  
TOO MANY DAWNS  
HAVE COME AND GONE  
WITHOUT A TRACE OF SAM

WAITING FOR SAM  
THEN I BELIEVED THAT HE  
WOULD APPEAR IN SPRING  
BUT THE SPRING  
DIDN'T BRING  
THE SLIGHTEST TRACE OF SAM

NOW SOMEONE ELSE  
LIVES IN HIS ROOMS  
A MAN WITH A COUGH  
A WIFE WITH A BROOM

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CLOSE BY THE DOOR  
 I WAIT FOR MY FRIEND  
 FOR HIM TO RESTORE  
 HIS RIGHTFUL PLACE AGAIN

WAITING FOR SAM  
 SOON I BELIEVED HE'D RETURN  
 WITH WINTER'S SNOW  
 BUT THE SNOW DIDN'T SHOW  
 THE SLIGHTEST TRACE OF SAM

WHY, WHERE AND WHEN?  
 ONCE HE IS HOME  
 I WON'T THINK OF IT AGAIN  
 IT WON'T MATTER THEN  
 CAUSE WE'RE FRIENDS  
 I'M WAITING FOR YOU, SAM

MUSIC continues.

MISSY

It sounds as if we have more in common than you might think. I'm lost in a strange part of town. And you're missing the one person who made this place your home. Either way, we're both so far away from what we call home, aren't we?... What is he like? Sam?

ALLEY DOG

Brown hair and freckles: a boy like any other.

MISSY

He would be all grown-up by now, you know.

ALLEY DOG

(Taken aback for a beat,  
 then)

Don't matter. When he comes back, I'll know it's him.

WHY, WHERE AND WHEN?  
 ONCE HE IS HOME  
 I WON'T MENTION IT AGAIN  
 IT WON'T MATTER THEN  
 CAUSE WE'RE FRIENDS  
 I'M WAITING FOR YOU, SAM

[7a] Scene change MUSIC.

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## SCENE 8

The street in front of  
Woolworth's, late afternoon of  
the next day.

Sam and Joe enter talking.

SAM

So that's your tour of Cleveland. I hope you enjoyed it.

JOE

It was unforgettable. Except that I've already forgotten it.  
Say, you never did show me around your old neighborhood.

SAM

Nah, forget about it. Too many memories.

JOE

Suit yourself. Listen, I'm gonna go check on the bus  
situation.

SAM

Yeah, good idea. I'm going to stop in the five-and-dime here  
and pick up some shaving soap.

JOE

OK - meet you back here.

Joe exits. Sam turns to go into  
Woolworth's, just as Penelope is  
locking the door from the  
outside.

SAM

Drat. Just my luck.

PENELOPE

Oh, I'm sorry. We open again at nine. And tomorrow's our  
special red letter day sale-

(Turns and recognizes Sam  
from the night before.)

Oh! Hello. Did you find the Toddle House alright?

SAM

Thanks to you. So what's a red letter day sale?

PENELOPE

Everything marked with a special red letter tag is 15% off.

SAM

Would that include a bar of shaving soap?

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PENELOPE

Yes, I believe it would.

SAM

That's swell. But what if I need a shave tonight?

PENELOPE

Let me see. Yes, you do need a shave, don't you? Hold on a second.

She ducks into the store, then returns with a bar of shaving soap.

PENELOPE (CONT'D)

Here you go. You look like an honest enough person. You can bring the money by tomorrow.

She locks the door.

SAM

Thanks. That's what I like about the Midwest. People trust one another.

PENELOPE

You're visiting?

SAM

Yeah, kind of a tourist, I guess you could say.

PENELOPE

We don't get too many tourists around here.

SAM

No, I suppose you don't.

PENELOPE

You're in the Army, I see.

SAM

Yeah, for the time being. But I'm a hockey player, if you really want to know.

PENELOPE

My goodness.

SAM

I know, I know. 'I went to see a fight and a hockey game broke out.'

PENELOPE

I'm sorry?

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SAM

It's an old joke.

PENELOPE

I'm afraid I don't follow hockey, mister. Or any sports, for that matter. Unless you consider horseshoes a sport. Well, goodnight.

She turns and begins to walk away.

SAM

Wait. Please don't go...Penelope.

PENELOPE

(Stopping in her tracks.)

You are Sam, aren't you? Sam Buller, from seventh grade. Sam, Sam, the goalie man.

SAM

That's right. Although I'm a left defenseman now.

PENELOPE

Your parents died. In a plane crash.

SAM

Yeah, that's right.

PENELOPE

And you moved away.

SAM

That's right. And your parents got divorced that same year.

PENELOPE

(Surprised)

You remembered.

SAM

'Course I do. I felt bad for you.

PENELOPE

You were so nice to me then... You never wrote to me after you moved, you know.

SAM

Should I have? You never wrote to me.

PENELOPE

I didn't have your address.

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SAM

We were just kids. What did we know?

PENELOPE

It might surprise you, the things that children know.

SAM

For example?

PENELOPE

For example: I knew that I liked you from the moment I met you. With those serious eyes of yours and that funny, crooked smile. How you used to know everything there was to know about the different railroad lines that ran through Cleveland. The Erie Lackawanna, the Chesapeake and Ohio-

SAM

-The Pennsylvania.

PENELOPE

The Pennsylvania, too. You were different from the other boys, somehow older than your years.

SAM

I liked you, too, Penelope. Liked the sound of your name, for example.

MUSIC begins [8].

SAM (CONT'D)

And I still remember the way your hair smelled, all fresh and flowery, when you sat in front of me in History.

PENELOPE

I cried when you left, you know. I suppose you were my first crush. My one true schoolgirl crush... Oh, why am I even telling you all of this? What are you doing here?

SAM

Something brought me back. At first I thought it was just a bus breaking down on the highway. But now I think I know better. Some people might call it destiny. To me, it feels like a story in search of a different ending.

### 8. SOMEONE LOVELY

SAM (CONT'D)

YOU TAKE A PIGTAILED LITTLE GIRL  
AND LET A DOZEN YEARS UNFURL  
AND STANDING IN HER PLACE YOU FIND SOMEONE  
LOVELY  
YOU TAKE A BOSSY LITTLE FRIEND

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FROM THE DAYS OF MAKE BELIEVE AND 'LET'S  
 PRETEND'  
 AND THEN SUDDENLY AGAIN YOU ARE FACE TO  
 FACE  
 WITH THAT GIRL FROM YESTERYEAR  
 BUT STANDING IN HER PLACE SOMEONE LOVELY  
 APPEARS

PENELOPE

You flatter me. Oh, this seems like something out of a dream.

SAM

Trust in what you see, Penelope.

PENELOPE

YOU TAKE A TOUSLE-HEADED GUY  
 AND LET THE TIME GO PASSING BY  
 AND THEN BEFORE YOUR EYES  
 YOU SEE SOMEONE LOVELY

SAM AND PENELOPE

YOU TAKE A NEAR-FORGOTTEN FRIEND  
 YOU TURN AROUND AND THEN TURN BACK AGAIN  
 WELL, YOU DON'T KNOW HOW IT'S ALL GOING TO  
 END  
 BUT STILL, YOU'RE GRATEFUL FOR THE YEARS  
 FOR STANDING IN THE PLACE

SAM

OF THAT GIRL

PENELOPE

OF THAT GUY

SAM AND PENELOPE

SOMEONE LOVELY APPEARS

MUSIC swells as they kiss. Joe  
 enters speaking. MUSIC fades to  
 break in music.

JOE

OK, Sam, so they're pulling another bus onto the route. It  
 leaves at 6 tomorrow eve - Oh, sorry, I didn't know you was  
 tied up. I'll just wait over there.

Joe backs away and exits.

SAM

We're shipping out of San Francisco in a week. For Korea.

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PENELOPE

(Trying to compose herself.)

For Korea. Of course.

SAM

That's right.

PENELOPE

Well...I think you should know that I'm...engaged to be married, Mr. Buller.

SAM

Oh, I see. And who's the lucky guy?

PENELOPE

His name is...Charles.

SAM

I see. Local fella?

PENELOPE

I doubt if you'd remember him.

SAM

I see... It's not Chuckie Perlmutter, is it?

PENELOPE

He's very successful. He has a whole fleet of trucks at his disposal. And he travels quite extensively.

SAM

I see.

PENELOPE

So there's not a lot more for us to talk about. You do see that, too, don't you?

SAM

Yeah, I can see it just fine. Like it was a movie.

PENELOPE

And what do you mean by that?

SAM

The honeymoon at Cedar Point. Church on Sundays. Maybe one day you'll buy yourselves a little duplex in Mayfield Heights.

PENELOPE

Why, of all the-! Who do you think you are? A perfect stranger-

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SAM

(Holding her by the  
shoulders.)

-Penny. I'll tell you what else I can see. I can see it plain as day. You're not in love with Chuckie Perlmutter. Now look me in the eyes and tell me that if you walk away from me right now you won't regret it for the rest of your life.

She slaps him, and then turns  
away.

SAM (CONT'D)

(Quietly, after a beat)

You know what? I deserved that.

PENELOPE

You just don't understand... This whole situation makes me so mad.

SAM

I can see that, too.

PENELOPE

And just what do you have to offer a girl, Mr Buller?

MUSIC resumes until end of scene:  
[8] continued.

SAM

Not much, to be truthful. A shoebox full of letters from the war. A year's worth of crazy fantasies. And once I'm back home, a grand tour of the ice rinks of the Eastern seaboard.

(He again holds her shoulders  
in his arms)

Listen. Twenty-four hours from now I'll be on a bus for San Francisco. Let's start over. We'll go out and-

PENELOPE

-No. I can't. I won't.

SAM

Then, tomorrow. Spend the day with me-

PENELOPE

-No. Impossible. You're not going to do this to me again. Good luck in the war, Sam. I really, truly mean that. Godspeed. Let me see that cheek.

She kisses his cheek lightly.

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PENELOPE (CONT'D)

You do need a shave, you know. Now I think it would be best if both of us forget that any of this ever happened.

Penelope turns and walks away as  
MUSIC swells and lights fade on  
Sam.

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## SCENE 9

The Crows are on a windswept perch on the 53rd story of the Terminal Tower.

LEAD CROW

Here we are. The top deck of the Terminal Tower. Topping out at 718 feet, this was the second-tallest building in the world when construction was completed in 1930.

(To Crow 2)

Whatsa matter with you? How come your beak's green?

CROW 2

I don't like heights. They make me carsick.

CROW 3

Say, will ya look at that: from up here everybody looks like ants.

LEAD CROW

You're looking at the railing. And those are ants. Now everyone focus. We're supposed to be looking for a brick building with a copper roof.

CROW 3

I don't see it.

LEAD CROW

Neither do I.

CROW 2

(Not looking)

Me neither.

(Opening eyes tentatively.)

Hey, where'd the Terminal Tower go?

LEAD CROW

We're on the Terminal Tower. I give up. Let's go.

Crow 3 hesitates.

LEAD CROW (CONT'D)

Now what is it?

CROW 3

It's just that...looking out over this teeming metropolis, I begin to realize how small and insignificant my life is.

LEAD CROW

For once, I think you're onto something. Alright, let's beat it.

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CROW 2

How are we gonna break the news to Missy?

LEAD CROW

I suggest we do it gradually.

CROW 2

How about, 'Sister...you're hopelessly lost.'

LEAD CROW

Yeah, that oughta do it. Let's get outta here.

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## SCENE 10

Penelope's bedroom, 4 a.m.

MUSIC begins [9]. A distant train whistles.

Penelope tosses and turns, unable to sleep. Finally, she goes to her window and gazes at the sky.

**9. BE CAREFUL WITH THIS HEART**

PENELOPE

DEAR VENUS, CUPID, EROS, APHRODITE  
YOU GODS OF LOVE, ATTRACTION AND APPEAL  
AS YOU TRIFLE WITH OUR HEARTS  
FROM YOUR VANTAGE HIGH AND MIGHTY  
HAVE YOU EVERY STOPPED TO WONDER  
HOW A GIRL IN LOVE MIGHT FEEL?

BE CAREFUL WITH THIS HEART  
MAKE NO MISTAKE: A HEART CAN BREAK  
AND ONCE A HEART IS BROKEN  
IT CAN NEVER BE UNBROKEN

BE CAREFUL WITH THIS GIRL  
AS YOU KNOW WELL: GIRLS ARE LIKE SHELLS  
DROP A SHELL ONTO THE GROUND  
THERE'LL BE PIECES ALL AROUND

BE CAREFUL WITH THIS HEART  
A HEART CAN BLEED, A HEART CAN TEAR.  
SO WHEN YOU'RE OUT SLINGING ARROWS  
YOU JUST MIGHT BRING DOWN A SPARROW

A SONG WITHIN ITS HEART  
A SONG LIKE THIS, A GIRL LIKE THAT  
WHO PLAYED WITH LOVE BEFORE AND WASN'T VERY  
SMART  
SO THAT'S WHY I IMPLORE YOU TO BE CAREFUL  
WITH THIS GIRL  
AND MOST OF ALL, BE CAREFUL WITH THIS HEART

[9a] Scene change MUSIC.

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## SCENE 11

The Alley, later the same night,  
just before dawn.

Missy is disheartened. The Crows  
are on the wire, dozing. A TRAIN  
WHISTLE recedes into the  
distance.

ALLEY DOG

And see, over there is Orion, the hunter. Up there you see  
his shoulder, and his other shoulder, and down there his foot  
and his other foot. And a belt with a sword. No dog. They say  
there's one in the Southern part of the sky, but I never seen  
it. Now that might be farther away than either of us could  
imagine. Maybe all the way to the end of that railroad line.

MISSY

It might be a place where there are no dogcatchers, or city  
traffic.

ALLEY DOG

If there is such a place.

MISSY

A place where cats are not foolish enough to wander away from  
their homes.

CROW 3

(To other Crows)

If he's trying to cheer her up, I don't think it's working.

MISSY

I'm never going to see my home again. Or my bowl. Never,  
ever, ever.

ALLEY DOG

You give up hope, you won't last very long on these streets.

MISSY

Is that what you call it? This stubborn doggedness of yours?  
Hope?

(A beat)

Why are you being so nice to me?

ALLEY DOG

Like you said. We got somethin' in common.

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MISSY

(A beat)

Life can turn on a dime, can't it? And then...poof! Goodbye pillow, goodbye bowl, goodbye boy.

ALLEY DOG

We're exiles. The both of us.

MISSY

But that doesn't mean you have to stay in this dangerous alley with those annoying crows. You are a dog, you know. You can take care of yourself wherever you are. Stay here, and sooner or later they will catch up with you. If not Baxter, someone else. Look around you, Alley Dog. What do you see?

ALLEY DOG

(Pacing)

I see Sam turn the corner and standing right there, before my eyes.

MISSY

Garbage cans and brick walls is what I see.

ALLEY DOG

Me and Sam, bounding up the stairs and reclaiming our place on the second floor.

MISSY

I see cast-off shoes and fire escapes and traffic and nasty people. If you bound up those stairs, they'll chase you right down them again with a broom, or worse. I see an abandoned dog whose whole life is built on a delusion.

ALLEY DOG

But Sam will return. He will come back!

MISSY

You stake everything on that one belief of yours. But what if you're wrong?

ALLEY DOG

But I'm not!

MUSIC Cue: [10].

MISSY

You're in a place where nobody remembers you and nobody wants you, with enemies at your heels, and yet you stay and stay and stay.

## 10. YOU STAY

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## ALLEY DOG

EVERY DOG NEEDS SOMETHING TO LIVE FOR  
 OR TO LOVE, OR SOMETHING TO GIVE FOR  
 SO ONCE YOU'VE FOUND IT, YOU HOLD ONTO IT  
 FAST  
 YOU'LL HAVE DOUBTS, BUT DOUBTS CANNOT HURT  
 YOU  
 JUST SAY 'OUT!'. DON'T LET THEM DIVERT YOU.  
 WHEN YOU STAND FOR SOMETHING, DON'T EVER  
 LOOK BACK

THOUGH THE STREETS MAY TURN INTO DUST  
 THOUGH YOUR HEART MAY TURN INTO RUST  
 YOU HOPE AND PRAY THAT YOUR TRUST WILL BE  
 REPAID  
 YOU STAY!

## MISSY

The years go on, there's no sign of Sam and yet you stay and  
 stay and stay.

## ALLEY DOG

YOU'LL BE MET WITH SCORN AND DERISION.  
 THAT'S OKAY. YOU'VE MADE YOUR DECISION.  
 IF IT'S WORTH BELIEVING, THEN DON'T LET IT  
 DIE.  
 CLOUDS MAY GATHER, SWIRL AND SWARM  
 BUT DON'T FORGET THAT THE END OF A STORM  
 WILL BRING A PHOSPHORESCENCE THAT LIGHTS UP  
 THE SKY

THROUGH THE WIND AND THE DRIVING RAIN  
 YOU STAND YOUR GROUND AND YOU DON'T  
 COMPLAIN  
 'CAUSE YOU'VE A CALLING AND SO YOU MUST  
 OBEY  
 EVEN WHEN THESE STREETS HAVE ALL TURN'D TO  
 DUST  
 AND THIS IRON TOWN HAS TURN'D INTO RUST  
 YOU SIMPLY CAN'T DO IT ANY OTHER WAY  
 YOU STAY. YOU STAY. YOU STAY!

MUSIC continues as Alley Dog  
 dances, demonstrating resolve and  
 courage. Missy is drawn into the  
 dance, and by the end of the song  
 we see that she has been  
 completely won over.

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ALLEY DOG (CONT'D)  
THROUGH THE WIND AND THE DRIVING RAIN  
YOU STAND YOUR GROUND AND YOU DON'T  
COMPLAIN  
'CAUSE YOU'VE A CALLING AND SO YOU MUST  
OBEY  
EVEN WHEN THESE STREETS HAVE ALL TURN'D TO  
DUST  
AND THIS IRON TOWN HAS TURN'D INTO RUST  
YOU SIMPLY CAN'T DO IT ANY OTHER WAY  
YOU STAY. YOU STAY. YOU STAY!

[10a] Scene change MUSIC.

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## SCENE 12

The Woolworth's lunch counter,  
late in the afternoon of the next  
day. A sign reads 'Red Letter Tag  
Sale!'

Flo and a sleepy Penelope are at  
work behind the counter.

FLO

Penelope, you've been wiping that same spot on the counter  
for the last twenty minutes. You're gonna wear away the  
formica.

PENELOPE

Oh... I guess you're right.

She moves to a different spot.

FLO

What's the matter with you, anyways? You look terrible.

PENELOPE

I'm fine.

FLO

Have some coffee and a slice of pie. That'll pick up you.  
Take it from Flo. When you're down in the dumps, there's  
nothin' like a slice of pie to put a smile on your-

PENELOPE

-I'm not hungry.

FLO

You're impossible, is what you are. It's that soldier, ain't  
it?

PENELOPE

What soldier?

FLO

The one you told me about this morning. This Stan guy, who  
you was in third grade with.

PENELOPE

Seventh grade.

FLO

Same difference.

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PENELOPE

Big difference.

FLO

Point granted. You ain't seen him since. And now he drops outta the sky-

PENELOPE

-As if I've been waiting my whole life for him to appear and set everything right. And talk about conceited. Why, he could even be dangerous...! And his name is Sam, not Stan.

FLO

Yeah, well... That soldier.

PENELOPE

Dishonest, too. He didn't even come back to pay for that shaving soap.

FLO

Look at me. Look me in the eyes, Penelope.

(A beat)

Oh, boy. I knew it.

PENELOPE

Bloodshot.

FLO

Naw, it's a little more than that.

MUSIC underscoring: Be Careful  
with This Heart [10b].

FLO (CONT'D)

Penelope, when I was a little girl there was this red tricycle in the window at Sears Roebuck over on Euclid that I wanted more than anything in the world. And finally one day Daddy takes me there and we go inside. And the salesman says, 'You don't want that red tricycle, little girl. You want the pink one.' And since I didn't speak up we came home with a pink tricycle instead of the red one I really wanted.

PENELOPE

And you never rode it from that day on?

FLO

(A beat as she considers)

No, actually I rode it all the time. But the point is: your heart knows what it wants. It has its reasons. Face it, darlin'. You're in love with the red tricycle-

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PENELOPE

-That's leaving on a 6 o'clock bus for San Francisco.

FLO

If we skedaddle, we can make it to the Greyhound terminal in time.

PENELOPE

There's not a moment to lose.

They are on their way out when  
Chuckie enters.

CHUCKIE

Hello, Flo. Hello, Penelope. I just happened to be driving by and wanted to see what all the excitement was about. Red letter tag sale, huh? Boy oh boy!

FLO

Yeah, the excitement is truly unbearable.  
(Putting an apron on  
Chuckie.)

We need you to help out tonight, Chuckie. We're short-staffed.

CHUCKIE

But...you're here!

FLO

(Rushing Penelope along.)

No, we're not.

PENELOPE

'Bye, Chuckie.

CHUCKIE

'Bye...Penelope.

Flo and Penelope exit.

CHUCKIE (CONT'D)

But...but...what about Ovaltine? Is that 15% off, too?  
And...hey! Where are ya goin' with my truck?!

[10c] Scene change MUSIC.

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## SCENE 13

The front seat of Chuckie's truck.

Flo is driving like a maniac, with Penelope beside her.

FLO

Say, look! There's Mr. Baxter. Wonder how come he's on crutches.

(Shouting)

Hey, Mr. Baxter! Over here. It's me: Flo! Driving a truck, can you believe it? What happened? Looks like you got run over by cement mixer!

MR. BAXTER

(Limping across the stage.)

I was!

PENELOPE

Can't you drive any faster?

FLO

I would, except that this particular vehicle seems to have only three speeds: slow, slower, and reverse. Maybe we shoulda grabbed a taxi instead... Oh, looky out there, the Cuyahoga River's on fire again.

PENELOPE

Flo!? Just drive, will you please?

FLO

They say it might have somethin' to do with all the industrial waste and chemicals that get dumped in the river... 'Course I'm no scientist or anything.

PENELOPE

Hurry, please hurry!

FLO

Have you ever tried driving a truck full of refrigerators through rush hour traffic?

MUSIC Cue: [11].

FLO (CONT'D)

Oh, wait a minute. I got the parking brake on. There, that's better. At least now we're going forward.

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PENELOPE

I hope we get there in time. Oh, what time is it? What time is it?

FLO

It's the moment that people wait their whole life for. That's what time it is.

11. FOR THIS ONE MOMENT (PART ONE)

PENELOPE

LOVE WAS THE DREAM THAT I ONCE ONLY DARED  
TO DREAM

FLO

LOVE MAKES YOU LAUGH

PENELOPE

MAKES YOU CRY

FLO

MAKES YOU WANT TO SCREAM

PENELOPE AND FLO

BUT LOVE IS A RIVER THAT GALLOPS AND SWIRLS  
TO THE SEA

PENELOPE

AND LOVE IS A WHISPER THAT GENTLY CARESSES  
YOUR LIPS, YOUR KNEES

They leave the truck behind and  
enter an undefined space.

FLO

WHAT TIME BRINGS IS REALLY ONLY BORROWED  
THOUGH THE BIRDS SING, THEY MAY BE GONE  
TOMORROW  
BUT FOR THIS ONE MOMENT  
LOVE HAS COME YOUR WAY

PENELOPE

THEY SAY THAT IT'S ONE LIFE YOU'VE BEEN  
GIVEN  
AND YOU PRAY FOR ANOTHER DAY TO LIVE IN  
BUT FOR THIS ONE MOMENT  
THIS ONE DAY  
ALL THE CLOUDS HAVE BURNED AWAY  
SO I'LL TAKE THIS MOMENT  
TAKE THIS DOOR  
AND RISE TO HEIGHTS WHERE EAGLES SOAR

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FOR IN THIS ONE MOMENT  
LOVE HAS COME MY WAY

MUSIC continues until break in music.

Lights out on Penelope and Flo.  
Lights up immediately on Sam and Joe at the bus station. In the distance is the Alley, where Alley Dog and Missy are napping. Action shifts between these two locales for the remainder of the Act.

JOE

So, you got skunked. Happens to the best of us, Sam.

SAM

What'd I tell you? There's nothing in this town for me but a bunch of sad stories. Hey - I must be seeing things. That dog over there: it almost looks like Smokey.

JOE

You mean the dog you had when you where a kid? Where?

SAM

Across the street, block and a half from here. In that alleyway next to my old apartment building. Aw, I must be dreaming.

JOE

I thought you said he got taken to a farm.

SAM

(After a beat, less than certain)

Sure I did.

JOE

Well, what do we have here?

Penelope and Flo enter, breathless, interrupting Sam's train of thought.

PENELOPE

Sam, oh Sam. I couldn't let you leave town again, not without saying goodbye this time.

Sam takes her hand and they talk as Joe and Flo flirt.

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JOE  
Hey, sister. What's your name?

FLO  
Depends who's asking.

JOE  
Call me Joe.

FLO  
Joe, meet Flo. So, what's up?

JOE  
Just on my way to a war, is all.

FLO  
A short one, I hope.

JOE  
The feeling's mutual, doll.

PENELOPE  
Here's my address. Write to me every once in awhile, will you?

SAM  
Are you kiddin' me? I'll write to you every day.

FLO  
(To Joe)  
What about you? Are you gonna write to me?

JOE  
Sure I'll write to you, doll. What'd you say your name was?

Flo points to her name tag. The two couples continue talking as action shifts to the Alley. Lead Crow enters.

LEAD CROW  
Alley Dog, wake up!

MUSIC resumes: [12].

LEAD CROW (CONT'D)  
I was just over at the bus terminal on a popcorn run. There's a guy there, looks like he just got off a bus. And the girl keeps calling him Sam. Sam this, Sam that.

ALLEY DOG  
Where?

LEAD CROW

See them two soldiers? The tall one. He just got off a bus.  
I'm sure of it.

ALLEY DOG

Could it be? You know, I think it might be him. The way he  
carries his arms, his shoulders. Yes, I believe it is him!

MISSY

Are you sure?

ALLEY DOG

You were right: has he ever grown!

Time stops as lights dim on All  
except for Alley Dog and Missy.  
Missy takes Alley Dog's hand,  
surprising him.

ALLEY DOG (CONT'D)

It's a homecoming, Missy. The moment I've been waiting for.

## 12. FOR THIS ONE MOMENT (PART TWO)

MISSY

I'm so happy for you.

WHAT TIME BRINGS IS REALLY ONLY BORROWED  
THOUGH THE BIRDS SING THEY MAY BE GONE  
TOMORROW  
BUT FOR THIS ONE MOMENT  
LOVE HAS COME YOUR WAY

Ensemble has entered. Lights up  
on All.

ALLEY DOG, MISSY, PENELOPE, FLO,  
SAM, JOE, ENSEMBLE

(Turning to face us.)

THEY SAY THAT IT'S ONE LIFE WE'VE BEEN  
GIVEN  
THOUGH WE PRAY FOR ANOTHER DAY TO LIVE IN  
WE MUST TAKE THIS MOMENT, TAKE THIS DAY  
QUICK, BEFORE IT FLIES AWAY  
YES, WE MUST TAKE THIS MOMENT, TAKE THIS  
DOOR  
EVERYTHING WORTH LIVING FOR  
IS IN THIS ONE MOMENT  
WHEN LOVE HAS COME OUR WAY

MUSIC continues.

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ALLEY DOG  
(Setting off in the direction  
of the bus terminal.)

I'm on my way.

MISSY  
There's lots of traffic. Be careful!

BUS DRIVER (OFFSTAGE)  
All aboard!

SAM  
I love you, Penelope.

PENELOPE  
I love you too, Sam! I've always loved you!

MUSIC swells. Sam and Penelope  
kiss passionately. Joe and Flo  
look at each other, shrug and  
then kiss as well. Sam and Joe  
exit, duffel bags in hand.  
Penelope and Flo stand in place,  
waving goodbye.

LEAD CROW  
Alley Dog! They're leaving! Hurry!

Alley Dog tries to run for it but  
is thwarted by traffic and is too  
late. The sound of a bus pulling  
away. Alley Dog appears stricken  
as he pants for breath at the  
edge of the stage. MUSIC quiets.  
Missy, catching up to Alley Dog,  
tries to console him.

ALLEY DOG  
He was right there, Missy. He was right there...

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today!