



## New Orleans Notes 3

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New Orleans Notes 3

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ACT IScene 6

ANA LA PREMIER's parlor. It is late afternoon and EVERYONE is getting ready for the evening. The place is bustling with TRADESPEOPLE, PROSTITUTES in dishabille, a BABY is crying, a fight or two breaks out between the GIRLS, the TRICK BABIES are underfoot, and the COOK-LAUNDRESS is carrying towels and grumbling. Through it all LA PREMIER is managerial, serene. And CLARENCE DEAL, the musician, provides the music and an easy masculine touch.

The scene may open with music like the "Twelfth Street Rag," and the movement of the PEOPLE prior to dialogue might be like that of an early silent movie: jerky, fast. ONE young GIRL, in very cheap and flashy clothes, stands apart. LA PREMIER enters.

LA PREMIER

(To the flashy GIRL)

There you are. Good God. What kind of get-up is that, child? If you're going to work for me you have to take that mess off your face.

(Wipes)

And that dress, and those shoes. This is a house, darling, not a crib. See? Silk wall paper, velvet sofas, chandeliers all the way from New York. The men who come here have time as well as money to spend.

(SHE is undressing her, rearranging her clothes to mostly underwear and a robe)

They don't want a woman to look like what she is. They want dolls, ladies, school girls, nuns if they can get 'em. You have to look delicious, not eaten. Now come and meet my girls. If you have any questions they'll help you. Girls! Girls! Let me introduce you to Knockout.

BAD BLOOD

Knockout? Looks knocked down to me.

MOUTH

Knocked down and stomped.



1-6-31

KNOCKOUT

(Starts to fight)  
You gonna find out what stomped is.

(ANA separates them)

LA PREMIER

Will you all shut up? Now.

(To KNOCKOUT)

What's a good name for you?

MOUTH

Call her Country.

LA PREMIER

Mouth? Close it!

DOLLAR BILL

Hey. I got it. Belle Fleur. How 'bout that?

LA PREMIER

Lovely! OK, Miss Belle Fleur.

(KNOCKOUT is preening and thinking of  
her new name)

LA PREMIER (Continued)

Let me introduce you. This is Mouth -- we advertise her as  
Gloria Moon. Copperbottom, known as Lurleen Price. Rat.

RAT

Rochelle La Forte, if you please.

MOUTH

We please, we please.

LA PREMIER

Dollar Bill or Adella Westwood.

KNOCKOUT

That what they pay you?

DOLLAR BILL

(Laughing)

No. They call me that because I have a interesting way of  
picking a dollar bill up.

LA PREMIER

Bad Blood. Come over here.

BAD BLOOD

Hi, Baby. I'm Patricia Diamond.

(KNOCKOUT stiffens)



Vocabulary  
Clarence

READ

Belongings

IDEA Private & Dialogue

only? Ernestine Jackson  
? Phyllis Ayer Allen } Knockout  
Kim Stapleton  
~~? Rhetta Hughes~~ Does she dance?  
Charlaine Woodard

Duquesnay (mouth) Gloria Moon  
Carol Maillard (Rochelle) Rat?  
? Jackee Harry Bad Blood  
Sylvia Vesuvius  
Elaine Dollar Bill Adella  
? Roz Ryan  
? Rhetta Hughes -> Copper bottom

Lydia Abarca



BAD BLOOD (Continued)

Oh, come on. Lighten up. You gonna be Belle Fleur ain't you? Well loosen up a little.

DOLLAR BILL

Leave her alone. She'll be all right. Get her some decent clothes.

LA PREMIER

We'll take care of all that. And this is Vesuvius.

VESUVIUS

In the flesh.

KNOCKOUT

How come you don't have two names?

VESUVIUS

I play one game, I got one name.

(Laughter)

DOLLAR BILL

Ask her what her game is.

VESUVIUS

You forgot how to close your mouth when it's empty?

LA PREMIER

Cut that out. I'm trying to explain to this child how classy you all are and you're making me out a liar.

(To KNOCKOUT)

Don't pay them any mind. They're just showing off for you.

KNOCKOUT

Now what do I do?

LA PREMIER

Now you take a basin and water up to your room. Cobalt! Cobalt! Bring us some more fresh towels.

(COBALT BLUE, the cook-laundress,  
stops what SHE is doing to go get  
towels)

LA PREMIER (Continued)

A fresh towel for each trick, Knockout, remember that. Now sprinkle a little potash -- just a few drops in the water and throw the water out as soon as you finish, so your customer can see you pour fresh water for him.

MOUTH

Yeah, we use fresh water here and we have inside toilet. You ever seen a inside toilet?

I'm looking at one.

KNOCKOUT

Ooooooooooooo.

COPPERBOTTOM

Does it bother you, honey, having legs like that?

VESUVIUS

Don't bother me none. Legs the first thing they push aside.

KNOCKOUT

Quiet. Everybody works on a mattress. Knockout, you've been working a crib, so I know you're quick.

LA PREMIER

What's it like working a crib for a dime?

RAT

Your mama was next door. Ask her.

KNOCKOUT

Here, fifteen minutes is the limit. If he wants more he pays more. And if he gives you any lip -- call me. And keep a little lye under the bed just in case.

LA PREMIER

Lye? What kinds of mens come here?

KNOCKOUT

The kind that has five dollars. You can read his money but not his mind.

LA PREMIER

(CONTINUED)



ACT IIScene 1

SATAN's Hole. This is the gambling house attached to LA PREMIER's establishment which is operated by SATAN under the aegis and protection of LA PREMIER. What LA PREMIER's parlor is in catering to the luxurious taste of men looking for pleasure in comfort, SATAN's Hole is just the opposite in catering to the taste of men for starkness, ruggedness, the absence of frill in their search for treasure. SATAN's place contains nothing superfluous; in it is the atmosphere of the hunt -- with the possibility of violence and huge satisfaction going hand in hand. A lone table furnishes SATAN's establishment and it is here that the games are played. The entrance to SATAN's domain is directly Up Center of the gambling table and as the GAMBLERS enter through it, light pours in, illuminating the darkened reaches. This particular portal gives the gambling joint its name. It is round and unusually low causing one to bend, almost crouch, to gain entry or exit. This also makes a speedy departure most difficult.

As the curtain rises a downspot hits SATAN standing at the table. Music accompanies the stealthy entrance of the GAMBLERS. Among them are SWEET JUSTICE and JOHNNY. Entering ONE at a time THEY sing:

"LETTERS OF THE GAME"

(Lyrics © 1982 by Toni Morrison)

GAMBLERS

A B C  
D E F  
G H I  
J K L  
M N O  
P & Q

## GAMBLERS (Continued)

YOU GOT A ALPHABET

WE DO TOO

YOU GOT A DICTIONARY

WE DO TOO

(SATAN and GAMBLERS sing simultaneously)

SATAN

GAMBLERS

THE LETTERS OF THE ALPHABET  
FAMILIAR TO US  
ARE GENERALLY 'SOCIATED  
WITH A FRIDAY NIGHT BUST

A B C D  
E F G H  
I J K L  
M N O P

I CAN'T BELIEVE MY NATURAL BEHAVIOR  
IS CLASSIFIED WITH LETTERS  
THAT WOULD MYSTIFY THE SAVIOR

Q / A B C D E F G H  
I J K L M  
N O P Q

ALL

D & D  
F O B  
D & S  
W O S

R A  
A K A  
F A  
D O A

L O  
M O  
DIS CON  
MURDER-ONE

YOU GOT A ALPHABET  
WE DO TOO

YOU GOT A DICTIONARY  
WE DO TOO

D & D DRUNK AND DISORDERLY  
F O B FREE ON BAIL  
D & S DANGEROUS AND SUSPICIOUS  
W O S WARD OF THE STATE

A K A ALSO KNOWN AS  
F A FELONIOUS ASSAULT  
M - ONE MURDER 1ST DEGREE  
N F IT WASN'T MY FAULT

DIS CON YOUR CONDUCT IS DISORDERLY  
M O THE WAY YOU OPERATE  
M E MEDICAL EXAMINER  
D O A DEAD AT THE GATE



## GAMBLERS (Continued)

YOU GOT A ALPHABET

WE DO TOO

YOU GOT A DICTIONARY

WE DO TOO

(SATAN and GAMBLERS sing simultaneously)

SATAN	GAMBLERS
THE LETTERS OF THE ALPHABET	A B C D
FAMILIAR TO US	E F G H
ARE GENERALLY 'SOCIATED	I J K L
WITH A FRIDAY NIGHT BUST	M N O P
I CAN'T BELIEVE MY NATURAL BEHAVIOR	Q / A B C D E F G H
IS CLASSIFIED WITH LETTERS	I J K L M
THAT WOULD MYSTIFY THE SAVIOR	N O P Q

ALL

D & D  
F O B  
D & S  
W O S

R A  
A K A  
F A  
D O A

L O

M O

DIS CON

MURDER-ONE

YOU GOT A ALPHABET

WE DO TOO

YOU GOT A DICTIONARY

WE DO TOO

D &amp; D

DRUNK AND DISORDERLY

F O B

FREE ON BAIL

D &amp; S

DANGEROUS AND SUSPICIOUS

W O S

WARD OF THE STATE

A K A

ALSO KNOWN AS

F A

FELONIOUS ASSAULT

M - ONE

MURDER 1ST DEGREE

N F

IT WASN'T MY FAULT

DIS CON

YOUR CONDUCT IS DISORDERLY

M O

THE WAY YOU OPERATE

M E

MEDICAL EXAMINER

D O A

DEAD AT THE GATE

## ALL (Continued)

W I H WITH INTENT TO DO HARM  
 ARMED & DANGEROUS: MEANS I CARRY A KNIFE  
 VAGRANCY: MEANS I AIN'T GOT THE RENT  
 FUGITIVE FROM JUSTICE  
 I'M RUNNING FOR MY LIFE

L O LAW AND ORDER  
 MISDEMEANOR WALKING ON THE GRASS  
 R A RESISTING ARREST  
 AND ANOTHER WAY OF SAYING I WAS  
 SHOT IN THE

A B C D  
 E F  
 G H I J  
 K L  
 M  
 N  
 O  
 P & Q / A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P & Q

YOU GOT AN ALPHABET  
 WE DO TOO

(SATAN, JOHNNY and TWO GAMBLERS are seated at the card table. Among the ONLOOKERS is SWEET JUSTICE who is surreptitiously taking side bets on the game. As the music takes on a new timbre, SATAN separates the deck of cards. Dealing from the bottom of the deck HE announces:)

SATAN

Low Catch -- Call your bets.

PLAYER 1

Two bits.

PLAYER 2

Four bits.

SATAN

Six bits.

(Barely peeking at their cards the PLAYERS place their bets on the table. SATAN turns to JOHNNY)

JOHNNY

I might bet and I might dis.

SATAN

I might call you if you dis.



JOHNNY

STANDING ON THE CORNER  
DRESSED TO THE GILLS  
OH MAN WAS I DELICIOUS  
FOUR IN HAND TIE, TWO TONE SHOES  
POLICE SAY -- DANGEROUS AND SUSPICIOUS  
(JOHNNY places his bet)

A dollar.

SATAN

I call.

(PLAYER 2 spreads his hand. The OTHERS  
throw their cards in. PLAYER 2 collects  
his winnings and slips some to SWEET  
JUSTICE. SATAN catches the exchange  
and turns menacingly on SWEET JUSTICE  
who covers with song)

SWEET JUSTICE

DOWN ON THE GULF WITH MY FISHING POLE  
A WHOLE SCHOOL OF CATFISH SWAM UP  
BAITED MY HOOK, THREW MY LINE  
TOOK A BUCKET FULL OF FISH HOME TO COOK  
JUST AS I GOT OUT MY FRYING PAN  
AND A LITTLE HOT SAUCE DOWN BESIDE IT  
HERE COME THE COPS, I SWEAR TO GOD  
SAID YOU INCITED THEM CATFISH TO RIOT

(Another round is dealt. Bets are  
placed. JOHNNY confidently places a  
large bet. SATAN covers JOHNNY's amount  
and says:)

SATAN

I'll see you.

(With a smile, JOHNNY spreads his  
hand showing three cards of the  
same suit)

JOHNNY

Legae!

SATAN

(Topping him)

Got a Tiger!

(HE spreads three sixes)

Cotch 3 6!

(Gathering his winnings, SATAN sings.  
HE pulls out his knife to graphically  
punctuate his story and addresses this  
parable pointedly at SWEET JUSTICE.  
The OTHER PLAYERS move Off)



SATAN (Continued)

ALL ALONE AT A GAME OF SOLITAIRE  
IN THE COURTYARD OVER THERE  
A SPIDER FLOATED DOWN  
RIGHT ON MY ACE  
I SAW HIS NASTY LITTLE HAIRS  
I WHIPPED OUT MY BLADE AND I FLICKED IT AWAY  
IT WASN'T THE SPIDER'S FAULT  
BUT THE LAW BUSTED IN AND GRABBED HOLD OF ME  
SAID BUDDY -- THAT'S FELONIOUS ASSAULT

(As the song climaxes SATAN pulls a rope from underneath the table and tosses one end of it directly at SWEET JUSTICE who catches it. The TWO MEN lean in toward each other and stretch the rope tautly across the table in a practiced motion as the arena is prepared for the next game)

SATAN (Continued)

Come in you all. Get your money down. One dollar in the center will get you a poor boy sandwich. Who's coming out?  
(SATAN places the ante and the dice on the table. JOHNNY picks them up.

The craps game becomes highly vocal and SWEET JUSTICE continues his side racket as JOHNNY strains his luck one more time.

JOHNNY blows on the dice and is about to throw them when the SECOND SHOOTER in line calls out to SATAN)

SHOOTER 2

Stop the first one, stickman, then let him go. As long as he shake 'em up.

SATAN

Shake 'em up? What you think I got that rope across table for? Throw the dice, man.

SHOOTER 2

Satan must be scared of his money. Got a rope in the middle of the table an inch thick and still scared somebody's gonna win.

SWEET JUSTICE

A jealous man can't work and a scared man can't gamble.

JOHNNY

Damn right he scared, and he got reason to be. Don't make



JOHNNY (Continued)

me no difference. I'll shake 'em up, on the bottom, on the top and throw 'em cross the street.

(HE throws)

Roll Flo. Stretch out little sisters.

SATAN

He threw six. What you six for? Get your bets down and drop them quarters in the bag. Speak on that six, shooter, they crying for you all around the table.

Is it the music or the environment?

BEAU

I told you. I want to play -- with you.

CLARENCE

The District can look awful good to somebody new. Looks like fun and games every day.

BEAU

I don't care what it looks like. I don't even know what it looks like. It can be whatever it wants, I don't care.

CLARENCE

Oh, but you have to know and you have to care. It's a whole lot of laughter "Blood" money. People in here risk the blood just to get the money. But take it from me, most of what goes on ain't really all that funny.

BEAU

You tryin' to put me off.

CLARENCE

No. No. No I ain't. I just want to know you coming in here for the right reasons.

BEAU

I know what I heard and I know how I feel. It's like -- like I, met my self. For the first time I met my self.

CLARENCE

Met yourself?

BEAU

Yeah. Right there. In the doorway. It all came together. All the pieces of me. I know what I am now.

CLARENCE

What are you?

BEAU

A musician.

(CONTINUED)

2-2-12

BEAU

I don't just like it, it makes my blood go.

CLARENCE

What you lookin' for in here? Square business, now. You want to play or you want to play?

BEAU

I don't understand.

CLARENCE

Is it the music or the environment?

BEAU

I told you. I want to play -- with you.

CLARENCE

The District can look awful good to somebody new. Looks like fun and games every day.

BEAU

I don't care what it looks like. I don't even know what it looks like. It can be whatever it wants, I don't care.

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CLARENCE

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BEAU

Yeah. Right there. In the doorway. It all came together. All the pieces of me. I know what I am now.

CLARENCE

What are you?

BEAU

A musician.



CLARENCE

(Pause)

This self you met in the doorway, the real Beau, you like him?

BEAU

(Thinks)

Yeah.

CLARENCE

You think you can rely on him? Trust him?

BEAU

I know I can.

CLARENCE

Did it feel like he was waiting for you -- to come and be him?

BEAU

You know about it, don't you? I know you know.

CLARENCE

I know. Oh, do I know!

BEAU

Well?

CLARENCE

Well. Let me tell you somethin'. Music is like a tree. When you climb all the way up into it, as high as you can go, there ain't no way to get back down.

BEAU

I don't want to get back down.

CLARENCE

Some men get up in that tree and get strung out. The music leaves them and they just fall right out.

BEAU

I have to play, Mr. Deal. I have to.

CLARENCE

Okay, okay, okay, but let me tell you something else before you start thinking it's all gravy. Everybody ain't wild about this music. Some people hate exactly what you love. They think it's the devil's own tune. Preach sermons against it even. But if you serious, and you look serious to me, you can't pay it no mind.

BEAU

How could anybody hate it?

CLARENCE

(Playing)

Because it makes them think and feel things they don't want to think or feel. I call it noise, pretty noise, but you know what it is? A weapon. Some people think it's entertainment but it's a secret weapon. They can't kill a man's music and they can't kill a man who knows that.

BEAU

Just teach me, Mr. Deal. Teach me.

(JOHNNY enters with LA PREMIER)

JOHNNY

What is this?

(To BEAU)

You back in here? I thought I told you never to come back in here!

CLARENCE

Come on, Johnny. Let him stay, the boy is --

JOHNNY

Over my dead body.

CLARENCE

Hey! Hey! No cause for alarm. Let him stay. He can come here early, in the afternoon, before the rough trade starts. I'll play with him for an hour or two, and see that he gets home myself, okay?

JOHNNY

I don't want him here early or late. He's not a man, Clarence. Nothing but a baby.

TRICK BABIES

What you say? Nothing but a baby?

JOHNNY

You heard me.

TRICK BABY 1

He's older than me and I'm here.

JOHNNY

(To LA PREMIER)

Will you get these children away from me?

COBALT BLUE

Maybe you should be away from them.

LA PREMIER

Calm down, Johnny. If he's a musician there's nothing you can do about that and nobody can teach him better than Clarence. Look, I know what you're feeling -- I know --



Rev. Ed. ①

Scene 1 - Roger's Room  
[Enter Roger, looking thoughtful]  
[Enter Mary, looking concerned]  
[Enter John, looking angry]  
[Enter Susan, looking sad]  
[Enter David, looking nervous]  
[Enter Elizabeth, looking calm]

Scene 2 - The Dining Room  
[Enter Roger, Mary, John, Susan, David, Elizabeth]  
[Enter Mr. and Mrs. Smith]  
[Enter Mr. and Mrs. Jones]  
[Enter Mr. and Mrs. White]  
[Enter Mr. and Mrs. Black]

Scene 3 - Roger's and Mary's Room  
[Enter Roger, Mary]  
[Enter John, Susan, David, Elizabeth]

Scene 4 - John's Parlor  
[Enter John, Susan, David, Elizabeth]  
[Enter Mr. and Mrs. White]

Scene 5 - Mrs. Smith's Parlor  
[Enter Mrs. Smith, Mr. Smith]  
[Enter Mr. and Mrs. Jones]

Scene 6 - Mrs. Jones's Parlor  
[Enter Mrs. Jones, Mr. Jones]  
[Enter Mr. and Mrs. White]

Scene 7 - Elizabeth's Study  
[Enter Elizabeth]  
[Enter Mr. and Mrs. White]

Scene 8 - John's Bedroom  
[Enter John, Susan, David, Elizabeth]

Scene 9 - The Garden  
[Enter Roger, Mary, John, Susan, David, Elizabeth]  
[Enter Mr. and Mrs. Smith]  
[Enter Mr. and Mrs. Jones]  
[Enter Mr. and Mrs. White]  
[Enter Mr. and Mrs. Black]

1-4-32

MUSICAL NUMBERS

ACT II

Entr'acte

Scene 1 - Satan's Hole

LETTERS OF THE GAME..... Satan, Johnny,  
Sweet Justice,  
Gamblers

Scene 2 - Ana's Courtyard

LONGSHOT GAMBLER..... Johnny  
I PREFER THE PLEASURE..... La Premier  
Clarence's Theme..... Beau & Clarence  
Reprise: DADDY..... Beau, Cobalt Blue &  
Trick Babies

Scene 3 - Cally's and Johnny's House

WE BEEN MAMA..... Geneva & Friends  
GET IT..... Cally & Friends

Scene 4 - Ana's Parlor

Naked Dance..... Copperbottom  
Duel..... La Premier & Cally

Scene 5 - Ana's Courtyard

CALLA LILY..... Johnny  
Reprise: IT'S SUNDAY..... Cally & Johnny

Scene 6 - Ana's Parlor

THIS PIECE OF PLANET..... La Premier & Masquers  
Reprise: Clarence's Theme..... Beau

Scene 7 - Outside the Cemetery

EPITAPH..... Vesuvius

Scene 8 - Ana's Bedroom

AU REVOIR, BON SOIR..... La Premier

Scene 9 - The Docks

THANK YOU..... Beau, Cobalt Blue &  
Company



1-6-30

ACT I

Scene 6

ANA LA PREMIER's parlor. It is late afternoon and EVERYONE is getting ready for the evening. The place is bustling with TRADESPEOPLE, PROSTITUTES in dishabille, a BABY is crying, a fight or two breaks out between the GIRLS, the TRICK BABIES are underfoot, and the COOK-LAUNDRESS is carrying towels and grumbling. Through it all LA PREMIER is managerial, serene. And CLARENCE DEAL, the musician, provides the music and an easy masculine touch.

The scene may open with music like the "Twelfth Street Rag," and the movement of the PEOPLE prior to dialogue might be like that of an early silent movie: jerky, fast. ONE young GIRL, in very cheap and flashy clothes, stands apart. LA PREMIER enters.

LA PREMIER

(To the flashy GIRL)

There you are. Good God. What kind of get-up is that, child? If you're going to work for me you have to take that mess off your face.

(Wipes)

And that dress, and those shoes. This is a house, darling, not a crib. See? Silk wall paper, velvet sofas, chandeliers all the way from New York. The men who come here have time as well as money to spend.

(SHE is undressing her, rearranging her clothes to mostly underwear and a robe)

They don't want a woman to look like what she is. They want dolls, ladies, school girls, nuns if they can get 'em. You have to look delicious, not eaten. Now come and meet my girls. If you have any questions they'll help you. Girls! Girls! Let me introduce you to Knockout.

BAD BLOOD

Knockout? Looks knocked down to me.

MOUTH

Knocked down and stomped.

KNOCKOUT

(Starts to fight)

You gonna find out what stomped is.

(ANA separates them)

LA PREMIER

Will you all shut up? Now.

(To KNOCKOUT)

What's a good name for you?

MOUTH

Call her Country.

LA PREMIER

Mouth? Close it!

DOLLAR BILL

Hey. I got it. Belle Fleur. How 'bout that?

LA PREMIER

Lovely! OK, Miss Belle Fleur.

(KNOCKOUT is preening and thinking of her new name)

LA PREMIER (Continued)

Let me introduce you. This is Mouth -- we advertise her as Gloria Moon. Copperbottom, known as Lurleen Price. Rat.

RAT

Rochelle La Forte, if you please.

MOUTH

We please, we please.

LA PREMIER

Dollar Bill or Adella Westwood.

KNOCKOUT

That what they pay you?

DOLLAR BILL

(Laughing)

No. They call me that because I have a interesting way of picking a dollar bill up.

LA PREMIER

Bad Blood. Come over here.

BAD BLOOD

Hi, Baby. I'm Patricia Diamond.

(KNOCKOUT stiffens)



BAD BLOOD (Continued)

Oh, come on. Lighten up. You gonna be Belle Fleur ain't you? Well loosen up a little.

DOLLAR BILL

Leave her alone. She'll be all right. Get her some decent clothes.

LA PREMIER

We'll take care of all that. And this is Vesuvius.

VESUVIUS

In the flesh.

KNOCKOUT

How come you don't have two names?

VESUVIUS

I play one game, I got one name.

(Laughter)

DOLLAR BILL

Ask her what her game is.

VESUVIUS

You forgot how to close your mouth when it's empty?

LA PREMIER

Cut that out. I'm trying to explain to this child how classy you all are and you're making me out a liar.

(To KNOCKOUT)

Don't pay them any mind. They're just showing off for you.

KNOCKOUT

Now what do I do?

LA PREMIER

Now you take a basin and water up to your room. Cobalt! Cobalt! Bring us some more fresh towels.

(COBALT BLUE, the cook-laundress,  
stops what SHE is doing to go get  
towels)

LA PREMIER (Continued)

A fresh towel for each trick, Knockout, remember that. Now sprinkle a little potash -- just a few drops in the water and throw the water out as soon as you finish, so your customer can see you pour fresh water for him.

MOUTH

Yeah, we use fresh water here and we have inside toilet. You ever seen a inside toilet?

I'm looking at one.

KNOCKOUT

Ooooooooooooo.

COPPERBOTTOM

Does it bother you, honey, having legs like that?

VESUVIUS

Don't bother me none. Legs the first thing they push aside.

KNOCKOUT

Quiet. Everybody works on a mattress. Knockout, you've been working a crib, so I know you're quick.

LA PREMIER

What's it like working a crib for a dime?

RAT

Your mama was next door. Ask her.

KNOCKOUT

Here, fifteen minutes is the limit. If he wants more he pays more. And if he gives you any lip -- call me. And keep a little lye under the bed just in case.

LA PREMIER

Lye? What kinds of mens come here?

KNOCKOUT

The kind that has five dollars. You can read his money but not his mind.

LA PREMIER

(CONTINUED)



ACT IIScene 1

SATAN's Hole. This is the gambling house attached to LA PREMIER's establishment which is operated by SATAN under the aegis and protection of LA PREMIER. What LA PREMIER's parlor is in catering to the luxurious taste of men looking for pleasure in comfort, SATAN's Hole is just the opposite in catering to the taste of men for starkness, ruggedness, the absence of frill in their search for treasure. SATAN's place contains nothing superfluous; in it is the atmosphere of the hunt -- with the possibility of violence and huge satisfaction going hand in hand. A lone table furnishes SATAN's establishment and it is here that the games are played. The entrance to SATAN's domain is directly Up Center of the gambling table and as the GAMBLERS enter through it, light pours in, illuminating the darkened reaches. This particular portal gives the gambling joint its name. It is round and unusually low causing one to bend, almost crouch, to gain entry or exit. This also makes a speedy departure most difficult.

As the curtain rises a downspot hits SATAN standing at the table. Music accompanies the stealthy entrance of the GAMBLERS. Among them are SWEET JUSTICE and JOHNNY. Entering ONE at a time THEY sing:

"LETTERS OF THE GAME"

(Lyrics © 1982 by Toni Morrison)

GAMBLERS

A B C  
D E F  
G H I  
J K L  
M N O  
P & Q

## GAMBLERS (Continued)

YOU GOT A ALPHABET  
WE DO TOO

YOU GOT A DICTIONARY  
WE DO TOO

(SATAN and GAMBLERS sing simultaneously)

SATAN  
THE LETTERS OF THE ALPHABET  
FAMILIAR TO US  
ARE GENERALLY 'SOCIATED  
WITH A FRIDAY NIGHT BUST

GAMBLERS  
A B C D  
E F G H  
I J K L  
M N O P

I CAN'T BELIEVE MY NATURAL BEHAVIOR  
IS CLASSIFIED WITH LETTERS  
THAT WOULD MYSTIFY THE SAVIOR

Q / A B C D E F G H  
I J K L M  
N O P Q

ALL

D & D  
F O B  
D & S  
W O S

R A  
A K A  
F A  
D O A

L O  
M O  
DIS CON  
MURDER-ONE

YOU GOT A ALPHABET  
WE DO TOO

YOU GOT A DICTIONARY  
WE DO TOO

D & D DRUNK AND DISORDERLY  
F O B FREE ON BAIL  
D & S DANGEROUS AND SUSPICIOUS  
W O S WARD OF THE STATE

A K A ALSO KNOWN AS  
F A FELONIOUS ASSAULT  
M - ONE MURDER 1ST DEGREE  
N F IT WASN'T MY FAULT

DIS CON YOUR CONDUCT IS DISORDERLY  
M O THE WAY YOU OPERATE  
M E MEDICAL EXAMINER  
D O A DEAD AT THE GATE



ALL (Continued)

W I H WITH INTENT TO DO HARM  
 ARMED & DANGEROUS: MEANS I CARRY A KNIFE  
 VAGRANCY: MEANS I AIN'T GOT THE RENT  
 FUGITIVE FROM JUSTICE  
 I'M RUNNING FOR MY LIFE

L O LAW AND ORDER  
 MISDEMEANOR WALKING ON THE GRASS  
 R A RESISTING ARREST  
 AND ANOTHER WAY OF SAYING I WAS  
 SHOT IN THE

A B C D  
 E F  
 G H I J  
 K L  
 M  
 N  
 O  
 P & Q / A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P & Q

YOU GOT AN ALPHABET  
 WE DO TOO

(SATAN, JOHNNY and TWO GAMBLERS are seated at the card table. Among the ONLOOKERS is SWEET JUSTICE who is surreptitiously taking side bets on the game. As the music takes on a new timbre, SATAN separates the deck of cards. Dealing from the bottom of the deck HE announces:)

SATAN

Low Catch -- Call your bets.

PLAYER 1

Two bits.

PLAYER 2

Four bits.

SATAN

Six bits.

(Barely peeking at their cards the PLAYERS place their bets on the table. SATAN turns to JOHNNY)

JOHNNY

I might bet and I might dis.

SATAN

I might call you if you dis.

JOHNNY

STANDING ON THE CORNER  
DRESSED TO THE GILLS  
OH MAN WAS I DELICIOUS  
FOUR IN HAND TIE, TWO TONE SHOES  
POLICE SAY -- DANGEROUS AND SUSPICIOUS  
(JOHNNY places his bet)

A dollar.

SATAN

I call.

(PLAYER 2 spreads his hand. The OTHERS  
throw their cards in. PLAYER 2 collects  
his winnings and slips some to SWEET  
JUSTICE. SATAN catches the exchange  
and turns menacingly on SWEET JUSTICE  
who covers with song)

SWEET JUSTICE

DOWN ON THE GULF WITH MY FISHING POLE  
A WHOLE SCHOOL OF CATFISH SWAM UP  
BAITED MY HOOK, THREW MY LINE  
TOOK A BUCKET FULL OF FISH HOME TO COOK  
JUST AS I GOT OUT MY FRYING PAN  
AND A LITTLE HOT SAUCE DOWN BESIDE IT  
HERE COME THE COPS, I SWEAR TO GOD  
SAID YOU INCITED THEM CATFISH TO RIOT

(Another round is dealt. Bets are  
placed. JOHNNY confidently places a  
large bet. SATAN covers JOHNNY's amount  
and says:)

SATAN

I'll see you.

(With a smile, JOHNNY spreads his  
hand showing three cards of the  
same suit)

JOHNNY

Legae!

SATAN

(Topping him)

Got a Tiger!

(HE spreads three sixes)

Cotch 3 6!

(Gathering his winnings, SATAN sings.  
HE pulls out his knife to graphically  
punctuate his story and addresses this  
parable pointedly at SWEET JUSTICE.  
The OTHER PLAYERS move Off)



SATAN (Continued)

ALL ALONE AT A GAME OF SOLITAIRE  
IN THE COURTYARD OVER THERE  
A SPIDER FLOATED DOWN  
RIGHT ON MY ACE  
I SAW HIS NASTY LITTLE HAIRS  
I WHIPPED OUT MY BLADE AND I FLICKED IT AWAY  
IT WASN'T THE SPIDER'S FAULT  
BUT THE LAW BUSTED IN AND GRABBED HOLD OF ME  
SAID BUDDY -- THAT'S FELONIOUS ASSAULT

(As the song climaxes SATAN pulls a rope from underneath the table and tosses one end of it directly at SWEET JUSTICE who catches it. The TWO MEN lean in toward each other and stretch the rope tautly across the table in a practiced motion as the arena is prepared for the next game)

SATAN (Continued)

Come in you all. Get your money down. One dollar in the center will get you a poor boy sandwich. Who's coming out?

(SATAN places the ante and the dice on the table. JOHNNY picks them up.

The craps game becomes highly vocal and SWEET JUSTICE continues his side racket as JOHNNY strains his luck one more time.

JOHNNY blows on the dice and is about to throw them when the SECOND SHOOTER in line calls out to SATAN)

SHOOTER 2

Stop the first one, stickman, then let him go. As long as he shake 'em up.

SATAN

Shake 'em up? What you think I got that rope across table for? Throw the dice, man.

SHOOTER 2

Satan must be scared of his money. Got a rope in the middle of the table an inch thick and still scared somebody's gonna win.

SWEET JUSTICE

A jealous man can't work and a scared man can't gamble.

JOHNNY

Damn right he scared, and he got reason to be. Don't make

JOHNNY (Continued)

me no difference. I'll shake 'em up, on the bottom, on the top and throw 'em cross the street.

(HE throws)

Roll Flo. Stretch out little sisters.

SATAN

He threw six. What you six for? Get your bets down and drop them quarters in the bag. Speak on that six, shooter, they crying for you all around the table.

CLARENCE

Is it the music or the environment?

BEAU

I told you. I want to play -- with you.

CLARENCE

The District can look awful good to somebody new. Looks like fun and games every day.

BEAU

I don't care what it looks like. I don't even know what it looks like. It can be whatever it wants, I don't care.

CLARENCE

Oh, but you have to know and you have to earn. It's a whole lot of laughter "Blood" money. People in here risk the blood just to get the money. But take it from me, most of what goes on ain't really all that funny.

BEAU

You tryin' to put me off.

CLARENCE

No. No. No I ain't. I just want to know you coming in here for the right reasons.

BEAU

I know what I heard and I know how I feel. It's like -- like I, met my self. For the first time I met my self.

CLARENCE

Met yourself?

BEAU

Yeah. Right there. In the doorway. It all came together. All the pieces of me. I know what I am now.

CLARENCE

What are you?

BEAU

A musician.

(CONTINUED)



BEAU

I don't just like it, it makes my blood go.

CLARENCE

What you lookin' for in here? Square business, now. You want to play or you want to play?

BEAU

I don't understand.

CLARENCE

Is it the music or the environment?

BEAU

I told you. I want to play -- with you.

CLARENCE

The District can look awful good to somebody new. Looks like fun and games every day.

BEAU

I don't care what it looks like. I don't even know what it looks like. It can be whatever it wants, I don't care.

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CLARENCE

Met yourself?

BEAU

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CLARENCE

What are you?

BEAU

A musician.

CLARENCE

(Pause)

This self you met in the doorway, the real Beau, you like him?

BEAU

(Thinks)

Yeah.

CLARENCE

You think you can rely on him? Trust him?

BEAU

I know I can.

CLARENCE

Did it feel like he was waiting for you -- to come and be him?

BEAU

You know about it, don't you? I know you know.

CLARENCE

I know. Oh, do I know!

BEAU

Well?

CLARENCE

Well. Let me tell you somethin'. Music is like a tree. When you climb all the way up into it, as high as you can go, there ain't no way to get back down.

BEAU

I don't want to get back down.

CLARENCE

Some men get up in that tree and get strung out. The music leaves them and they just fall right out.

BEAU

I have to play, Mr. Deal. I have to.

CLARENCE

Okay, okay, okay, but let me tell you something else before you start thinking it's all gravy. Everybody ain't wild about this music. Some people hate exactly what you love. They think it's the devil's own tune. Preach sermons against it even. But if you serious, and you look serious to me, you can't pay it no mind.

BEAU

How could anybody hate it?



CLARENCE

(Playing)

Because it makes them think and feel things they don't want to think or feel. I call it noise, pretty noise, but you know what it is? A weapon. Some people think it's entertainment but it's a secret weapon. They can't kill a man's music and they can't kill a man who knows that.

BEAU

Just teach me, Mr. Deal. Teach me.

(JOHNNY enters with LA PREMIER)

JOHNNY

What is this?

(To BEAU)

You back in here? I thought I told you never to come back in here!

CLARENCE

Come on, Johnny. Let him stay, the boy is --

JOHNNY

Over my dead body.

CLARENCE

Hey! Hey! No cause for alarm. Let him stay. He can come here early, in the afternoon, before the rough trade starts. I'll play with him for an hour or two, and see that he gets home myself, okay?

JOHNNY

I don't want him here early or late. He's not a man, Clarence. Nothing but a baby.

TRICK BABIES

What you say? Nothing but a baby?

JOHNNY

You heard me.

TRICK BABY 1

He's older than me and I'm here.

JOHNNY

(To LA PREMIER)

Will you get these children away from me?

COBALT BLUE

Maybe you should be away from them.

LA PREMIER

Calm down, Johnny. If he's a musician there's nothing you can do about that and nobody can teach him better than Clarence. Look, I know what you're feeling -- I know --



Young children obey - ~~the~~ none ever stray for

<u>Blessed</u>	<u>stood</u>	<u>obey</u>	
best	could	Ch	Kay
Chest Crest	Shaved	day	
Confessed	Waved	Gay	from come done them
		have none	

Bridge : We have doilies on our chairs  
 (A) At <sup>our</sup> Church picnics work is shared  
 In a quiet colored neighborhood.

We seek guidance in the Bible  
 (B) We stay away from ~~nothing~~ <sup>all</sup> tribal  
 In a quiet colored neighborhood.

(3) We never meet strangers on ~~the~~ <sup>our</sup> street  
~~At the onset of~~ ~~darkness~~ night we blow out the light  
 Thank God Only the tablecloth is white

Children ~~obey~~ <sup>young</sup> ~~the~~ - ~~that~~ <sup>and none</sup> ~~were~~ <sup>from</sup> ~~stray~~ <sup>for</sup>  
 Anywhere but ~~It~~ ~~stranger's~~ ~~store~~ ~~is~~ ~~very~~ ~~near~~  
~~where~~ ~~for~~ ~~the~~ ~~Customs~~ ~~should~~ ~~be~~ ~~understood~~  
~~And~~ ~~from~~ a quiet colored neighborhood



# Quick Notes.

"Family" in part of stage that looks like neighborhood  
\* Curse

La Premier Entrance sets up tension between the 2 neighborhoods.

Johnny looks lasciviously <sup>at her as she leaves</sup> and <sup>dances only</sup> imagines S. with street scene.

Peddler does something to let us know  
Curse is working [peddler music]

Calley's <sup>"I don't understand"</sup> house: Geneva - Beau - Sisters shorter

Jessie Fine: kind.

Beau playing alone - friends come  
Blue Book.  
she imagines women

[we are a good family, living uptown]

Scene 4 Kitchen of Ara's House with several leats

then Courtyard - Cobact

Bedroom Ara is in it dressing with Johnny looking on

Parlor - <sup>meanwhile</sup> K.O. wanders <sup>from</sup> Parlor to kitchen

? Satan's Italy - Johnny and men?

~~Back to kitchen~~ Parlor with Ara & men & Beau.



When Cully set S. Peddler China is

At end <sup>when Beau</sup> plays at <sup>Claremont</sup> <sup>Funeral</sup> peddler ascends. to top of ladder



up town  
to Higgins

to fall  
looking

Cally: Well, get it,  
Girl get it.

[ They go and return  
with clothing during  
the following song ]

" Damsel in Distress "

→ (next page)

~~Battle stations~~

Friends

oh Get it  
Go get it.

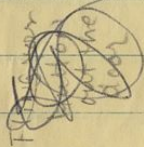
Crack the egg  
pierce the yolk

RAVEL that Hem  
unbutton your coat

THrow out the laundry  
THrow out the soap

Stoke the fire ~~TEAR DOWN~~  
~~Disassemble~~ the stove

~~Strut~~ ON  
~~Fling~~ ~~Put~~ out  
~~And~~ open wide the  
adam Door



Cally: Gonna do what Eve never did  
Take the life I came here - come here

This damsel is in distress

trailer  
her  
amer.

so

yes

as

al

!

it



Up town  
to H. G. W.

4:45  
looking

## Damsel in Distress

(A)

This damsel is in distress  
Daring to have all - not less

(A)

Of the life I grew up to live  
Loose the fire my — hid

(B)

I didn't grow wings to help me walk  
When I want to sing don't tell me to talk

(A)

This here damsel in distress  
Says no to no and yes to yes

(A)

I'm gonna do what Eve never did  
Take the life I came here to live.

it



Up town  
to Algiers

(1) Cargo Square

Dancers in the dark (Beautiful  
Private looking dance)

Tall-inordinately so Shadows

Drums and rattling things

Single voice N.O. verse

[ Piano picks up a phrase ]

Suddenly a single dancing woman in  
[ a Cobalt Blue robe ] noticed as the  
light comes up as the dawn.

Dancers are life-size after  
all and not dancing either

Rather they are normal

Algiers folk hand at work

What looked <sup>was</sup> like a dance

movement for each one or

each ensemble ~~turns out~~ <sup>becomes</sup>

to be a work movement: smaller  
the same movement done in a harsher manner.

~~legce but de~~ Noisy  
Steve does on the levee  
let Cas. very

Shoeing (horses)

Cigar makers

iron mangers

bricklayers

peddlars

plasterers

sweepers

barbers

leather makers

Coopers

The N.O. verse is sweet and  
romantic - but the work these  
people are doing is hard and/or  
tedious - and they look as  
though it is hard. - they  
wipe brows and the dance  
movement is not lyric nor is it  
warm and joyful

We are not <sup>yet</sup> in a "set" we  
are in a timeless <sup>ness</sup> placid <sup>ness</sup>  
and what is distinctive is the



music - African to Congaillie and the people

(2) As the people continue to sing - beautifully in contradiction to their work shapes - the set <sup>appears in</sup> place [color and Algeria's suggestiveness]

(3) and identifiable people/characters in the ~~public~~ <sup>market</sup> (which once was Congo Square) (and is now a park?)

Cathedral spire in background } 1. The <sup>ancestor</sup> singer, in a blue dress, is <sup>now</sup> ~~shuffling~~ <sup>meandering</sup> among the peddlars. Others are

2. The women of Algeria

" men "

Children

a family group  
a woman selling charms.

SATAN ?

Sweet Justice ?

Spasm Bands Children

etc.

Simultaneously.  
Here something with  
Johnny & Beau  
and maybe Carley

re: #

~~Johnny, betting on a race?~~

Business man does not buy his catch. Beau comes asking for money

FAIR  
PARADE  
Funeral

Work  
Tribute

why does  
he leave?

week  
Spent

SONG - 1811  
= then

work ironing  
D.B. put



<sup>the</sup>  
Ancestor/woman in Blue appears  
while Johnny is talking with Bear  
In the background the working people  
continue their gestures - but in silence  
as in a no-sound movie. <sup>or</sup> frozen perhaps

Woman in Blue

Plums? Last of the season.

Johnny - waves her away.  
No

Blue Woman: Don't spite me darling

Buy a ~~whole~~ <sup>few</sup> So ripe <sup>they</sup> But open <sup>tomorrow</sup>

Johnny: ~~I~~ <sup>You heard me</sup> ~~said~~ <sup>NO.</sup> Go on, now,

Blue Woman: Let <sup>half</sup> <sup>topping</sup> me live, Child, ~~you~~  
~~can have~~ Two for a penny.

Johnny: ~~Look old woman~~ I don't  
~~have a penny~~ AND if I did I  
wouldn't throw it away on some  
rotten plums. (<sup>starts to</sup> walk away)

Blue Woman: (wailing) Looka here, <sup>you all,</sup> he's  
crucifying me and my ~~water~~ <sup>pottery</sup> fruit.  
She pulls his sleeve; he jerks away  
and fruit falls from her basket.

+ smashes <sup>more</sup> to the floor

Blue Woman: (wailing) as she tries to  
gather <sup>up</sup> the fruit. What am I? A dog?  
~~You~~ ~~messing~~ me up. <sup>for good.</sup> Look what you did.  
~~You men~~

~~You make me~~ Now I got to get down  
on all ~~four~~ <sup>four</sup> to clean up  
the mess. Who raised you? Nobody?  
You'll cry for me one of these days.  
Hot tears. ~~all~~

<sup>ignores her and</sup>  
Johnny joins cast in continuation  
of work dance, which is done to the

Johnny  
humps  
into her  
spilling her  
fruit  
smashing  
her melon  
right after  
she offers  
to sell him  
Plums?

Satan:  
leave him  
alone

Call me  
next  
year?



music of — (formerly "river") DIV A

? Congo Square Drum

Street / Work. ["New Orleans"]?

~~laughter (derisive)~~  
~~[If you really know]~~

\* Market voices / real conversation

\* Family altercation: Beau plays and Clarence hears?

\* Ancestor in Blue isolated = curse: Bad times only music to save you  
Follow to Devil & Sweet Justice  
Watch Johnny  
Long

Mommy voice

La Premier (drops Johnny off)

x x x

2. Geneva in Blue w/ Cally & Beau & Cally  
stays in Blue

3. J-5 Knd - cash register  
wonder in Blue?

4. (M) Spasm plus fantasy - "Hot tears" but no name  
K.O. in Blue  
guts in "houses"

5. Ana's Kitchen - 3 Prefers & Knockout

\* 7. 6 Ana's Courtyard - (B) Knockout & Beau  
First & here?  
(A) Cobalt & children

\* 5 7 Ana's Parlor - Beau and Clarence

\* 7. Voodoo scene (woman in Blue laughter)  
Ana's bedroom

ver. 1  
Star &  
Sweet Justice  
& Johnny  
& Clarence  
& Ana

400 Cobalt were 1)  
situation with Johnny

Beau comes in to see father

get  
finger  
nails

Beau & father  
hears  
Beau playing  
attention  
for the 1st

meets Clarence



# Sweet Justice & Satan more?

## ① To Beau

Satan w/ Johnny & others in Blue menace Johnny in despair  
 father Cobalt breaks up fight. ~~then hallis pray~~  
 Healing Sound ~~then hallis indifference~~

## 2. Beau & Clarence

Johnny & Mummy laughter then // is repaired  
 I make men? break men  
 Beau k.o. & Clarence  
 Happy Blue lady

## 3. Algiers and Cally & the women

~~Shoes away~~  
 Sisters ~~men~~

## 4. Ana's Parlor with dancing then duel

Johnny & Cally Blue lady angry

## 6. Ana's Parlor Cobalt sings. verse 2

Sweet Justice interrupts  
 Party Piece of Planet  
 Clarence dies Breaking up fight which threatens

Cobalt verse 3 Beau & K.O. sing  
 Beau appears Blue lady by giving her back her

K.O. & Beau singing Beau  
 Funeral Final - Am Revoir

where in my sound. = Epitaph  
 Mummy relents & shows her self

Beau consoling K.O.  
 ff. "Inside Pain"

buyen is off choosing  
 first he wants. Mummy (from side)

delivers curse: You want me to get out of here  
 That'll do just fine as a curse on you. You'll never  
 see me again. Not until you cry hot tears

Nothing will save you from your self.  
 But your self. Now that Mummy's  
 gone.

Confusion, darkness & death  
 when Mummy's gone

Lonesome

what you think

11  
 Mummy laughter

Healing Sound

Mummy laughter

Instrument

Instrument

Instrument

Instrument

DE MAN

Then he joins worker

You'll never see me again

no hear me



She waves her arm and leaves <sup>slowly</sup>

Work scene intensifies with noise  
and music.

La Premier entrance.

Clarence

Sounds  
good  
warm but

mean.  
but what you  
got to see and  
at

Life  
with no + ears, you know.  
What you gonna  
say, ing  
old.

all it.  
What you just  
said. ~~to the~~  
Cold + ears.



5 ~~6.~~

Kitchen

Girls introduced to K.O. <sup>the two (three)</sup>

Dialogue with ~~men~~ <sup>in it</sup> ~~he~~

I prefer. (Ana to Johnny - then <sup>girl</sup> join in)

First (alone) Beau hears K.O.

~~men with Ana~~

Beau enters for fingernails ( <sup>doesn't need</sup> ~~underwear~~ )

<sup>sees Father</sup>

Sees Satan - Satan sings

Hears Clarence.

6 ~~7.~~ Robert & children

7 ~~8.~~ Voo doo



back  
wall  
Tall

Justice is what happens  
to the rats

Ultimately this is a book about ~~justice~~  
the people who work the land (in order  
to live). There are — in Hong Kong  
2 — in China. Hinton

hinge  
lend  
more

hat  
jacks

few  
few  
few  
few  
few

Bunge  
Cringe  
dinge  
friends  
Gin

Bats  
cats  
bo

See my life without the lid

Stare down life from eyes

that hid safety  
Behind the comfort of

case  
page  
page  
(Sage)  
was  
hate  
days  
Face  
PAYS  
Raise

maze

civilized

a polite

in a case their lids

is polite

Teeth

look polite in a case



CLARENCE (Continued)

easy for you? Greasy for you with some pretty noise for the boys?

(HE sits down at the piano and plays over the keys. COPPERBOTTOM comes over to the piano)

CLARENCE (Continued)

What you want, Copperbottom? A little syncopated melody?

(HE plays)

What about a good old cakewalk?

(HE plays and sings while the GIRLS dance)

"CAKEWALK"

HI THERE YOU GALS  
FLUFF UP THEM PRETTY FEATHERS  
SALUTE YOUR PARTNER  
WHILE THE BANJO RINGS  
JUDGES LOOK WISE  
WATCHIN' OUT FOR WINNING COUPLES  
SHOUTING COPPERBOTTOM  
TAKE THE CAKE

LA PREMIER

Bill, you have to share your room with Knockout. Blood, you show her how to work the string.

MOUTH

Just keep her away from me. I'm telling you, there's going to be trouble if she's anywhere near me.

BAD BLOOD

Okay.

(Yawning)

Come on, Sweetheart.

(Showing her the knots, etc.)

I don't know why they love it so, but they do.

LA PREMIER

(To arguing TRICK BABIES)

What's the commotion?

TRICK BABY 1

Mama said you was going to auction us.

TRICK BABY 2

Yeah, you promised!

LA PREMIER

Not yet, Sweetheart. Soon. Now go play in the kitchen.

TRICK BABY 1

Cobalt say not to.



LA PREMIER

Well go on out in the courtyard for a while. Bill, put more water in your drink. He's supposed to get drunk; you supposed to stay sober, all right? Blood, those stockings don't match each other.

BAD BLOOD

I can't find a match. Bill stole my new ones.

DOLLAR BILL

She a lying whore. Rat stole 'em.

BAD BLOOD

You another, you ol' drunken heifer.

(DOLLAR BILL slaps BAD BLOOD.  
BAD BLOOD pushes DOLLAR BILL)

TRICK BABY 1

She hit my Mama!

TRICK BABY 2

She pushed my Mama!

LA PREMIER

Stop it!

(Uses her walking stick to get attention and to separate the GIRLS)

BAD BLOOD

Look what she did!

LA PREMIER

(To MOUTH)

You got any extra?

MOUTH

Yeah, on my legs.

LA PREMIER

(Impatient)

Where's Sweet Justice? He should have been here by now. Blood, here's six dollars. When he comes, buy another pair from him. Bill, put your fingers to better use.

(SWEET JUSTICE comes in through the door with an armful of clothes)

LA PREMIER

At last!

GIRLS

(Running toward him)

Hey Sweet! Sweet!

(THEY shriek with delight. HE shows his wares and collects their money which THEY pull from various places on their person)



GIRLS (Continued)

Oh, Sweet Justice, we sure love you!

(SWEET JUSTICE sings:)

"SWEET JUSTICE"

(Lyrics © 1982 by Toni Morrison)

SWEET JUSTICE  
EVERYBODY LOVES JUSTICE, SWEET JUSTICE  
BUT MERCY IS WHAT THEY NEED

LA PREMIER'S GIRLS  
MERCY JUSTICE MERCY JUSTICE

SWEET JUSTICE

Look,

BOSS MAN WAS LAYIN' IN HIS BED ONE NIGHT  
WHEN A POWERFUL FEVER TOOK HOLD  
HE CALLED ME OVER TO THE SIDE OF THE BED  
SAID, "GET DOWN ON YOUR KNEES"  
SAID, "PRAY SWEET JUSTICE TO THE LORD ABOVE  
TO RESTORE MY HEALTH  
IF HE HEARS YOUR PRAYER AND RELEASES ME  
I'LL GIVE YOU ALL MY WEALTH."  
I GOT RIGHT DOWN AND PRAYED REAL HARD  
SOFTLY UNDER MY BREATH,  
"OH LORD, HE WANTS RELEASE  
AND ALL SAINTS WELCOME DEATH."  
AND HE HOLLERED, "JUSTICE, SWEET JUSTICE"  
BUT MERCY IS WHAT HE NEED

LA PREMIER'S GIRLS  
EVERYBODY LOVES JUSTICE

SWEET JUSTICE

Yeah.

LA PREMIER'S GIRLS  
SWEET JUSTICE

SWEET JUSTICE

Uh huh.

LA PREMIER'S GIRLS  
BUT MERCY IS WHAT THEY NEED

SWEET JUSTICE  
I JOINED MY BUDDIES IN THE SPANISH AMERICAN WAR  
AND CLIMBED UP SAN JUAN HILL  
TEDDY SAID, "BOYS RIGHT OVER THE TOP  
IS A MIGHTY LOT OF PEONS TO KILL



SWEET JUSTICE (Continued)

SO, LOOK ALIVE BOYS, AIM YOUR SHOT, LET'S  
SHOW 'EM WHAT WE CAN DO

I WANT EVERY MAN TO LOOK ALIVE UNTIL THE  
BATTLE IS THROUGH"

I LISTENED REAL CLOSE TO WHAT HE SAID  
AND IT SOUNDED PRETTY GOOD TO ME  
I TOOK MY FEET BACK DOWN THAT HILL  
LIKE A CONVICT JUST SET FREE  
WHEN THE SMOKE DIED DOWN, AND THE MOON  
CAME UP

THAT "LOOK ALIVE" MAN WAS ME  
TEDDY HOLLERED, "JUSTICE, COME BACK HERE,  
JUSTICE"

BUT MERCY IS WHAT I NEED  
EVERYBODY LOVES JUSTICE

LA PREMIER'S GIRLS  
MERCY

SWEET JUSTICE  
SWEET JUSTICE

LA PREMIER'S GIRLS  
MERCY

SWEET JUSTICE  
BUT MERCY IS WHAT THEY NEED

LA PREMIER'S GIRLS  
MERCY!

SWEET JUSTICE  
MY WOMAN TOOK A SHINE TO MY BEST FRIEND  
AND THREW HER FEMALE NET  
PUT A RED SILK RIBBON IN HER HAIR  
AND PERFUME ALL OVER HER NECK  
SHE TIPPED ON OUT SMELLING LIKE A CAKE  
AND DIDN'T COME BACK 'TIL DAWN  
SHE SAID, "OH LORD, WHAT'S GOING ON  
WHAT'S THAT BEHIND YOUR BACK?"  
I SAID, "I LOVE TO SMELL THAT PERFUME  
SO I'M GONNA CUT IT RIGHT OFF YOUR NECK"  
SHE HOLLERED, "JUSTICE, DON'T GIMME NO  
JUSTICE  
MERCY IS WHAT I NEED"

LA PREMIER'S GIRLS  
SWEET JUSTICE

MERCY

SWEET JUSTICE

Huh?



JUSTICE

LA PREMIER'S GIRLS

Again?

SWEET JUSTICE

MERCY JUSTICE

LA PREMIER'S GIRLS

SWEET JUSTICE

I RISK MY LIFE ALL OVER THIS TOWN  
TO STEAL YOU THESE PRETTY THINGS  
BRACELETS AND DRESSES AND OPERA HOSE  
RIBBONS AND DIAMOND RINGS  
I GOT WATCHES AND SHAWLS AND BLOOMERS FOR ALL  
SHOES AND SATIN CHEMISE  
YOU HAGGLE, YOU FUSS, YOU CHEAT ALTHOUGH  
YOU KNOW I'M JUST AN HONEST THIEF  
I LIKED TO GET KILLED GETTING THESE THINGS  
MY PROFESSION IS A DANGEROUS ONE  
BUT WHEN AT LAST YOU MADE YOUR CHOICE AND  
DRESSED FROM TOE TO CHIN  
YOU CLIMB THOSE STAIRS, GOT TO WORK,  
AND TAKE 'EM ALL OFF AGAIN

ALL

AND YOU CALL THAT JUSTICE,  
SWEET, SWEET JUSTICE  
BUT MERCY --

(LA PREMIER'S GIRLS ad lib responses  
to SWEET's following verse).

SWEET JUSTICE

I'M TALKING ABOUT MERCY  
LET ME TELL YOU WHAT KIND OF MERCY  
WHEN NO ONE ELSE CAN HELP YOU  
IN THE MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT  
WHEN ALL ELSE FAILS  
DOWN ON YOUR KNEES  
I MEAN WHAT I SAY  
WHEN I SAY  
MERCY IS WHAT I NEED

ALL

EVERYBODY LOVES JUSTICE

(MOUTH and RAT pulling on an item  
of clothing)

MOUTH

He said that was for me.

RAT

I don't care what he said.



COPPERBOTTOM

She lying. I heard him.

(CLARENCE enters and begins playing  
the piano)

LA PREMIER

Girls! Give me that!

(A knock at the door. ANA opens  
it. It is BEAU)

VESUVIUS

Well, well looka here.



New Orleans Notes 3



[illegible]

4

A hand-drawn diagram of a cell on lined paper. The cell is represented by a large rectangle with a smaller rectangle inside it. The inner rectangle is labeled 'p' and the outer rectangle is labeled 'r'. The labels are written in a cursive, handwritten style.

me



Melpomene  
Willow

Claiborne  
Galvez

Rampart Basin Iberville Canal

Chicago  
Plats

Navy  
Cannon

Hot pits

nobody wants  
to buy Johnny's  
CATCH.



Hot tears and Sweat  
(will get you out of debt)



In is out up is down

~~When~~  
~~Until~~ my voice becomes <sup>your</sup> ~~Breath~~

When Mammy's Gone

~~Until~~ I hear ~~of Health~~  
~~When~~ the sound <sup>healing</sup> reaches

- Mammy's Gone