



New Orleans Script

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New Orleans Script

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1905

DATE: March 5, 1982



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January 14, 1982

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N' ORLEANS

The Storyville Musical

by:

TONI MORRISON

with

DONALD MCKAYLE

Kevin Gebhard
225 Central Park West
New York, New York 10024

CAST - cont'd

CAST

JOHNNY: Handsome trawler - mid-thirties - hardworking, but loves a good time

CALLY: Johnny's wife (nee Calla Lily) - submissive - lovely and girlish - later, transformed into a very adept woman

BEAU: Son of Johnny and Cally - 14 to 16 years old - a young musician about to discover that fact

ANA LA PREMIER: A fatally attractive madam - the first to have a high class Black house of prostitution

JESSICA FIVE: (aka MADAM FIVE, JESSIE FIVE) A powerful, mysterious eccentric "voodoo" woman who loves the number five and all its configurations

FAYE and ELISE: Cally's sisters - daily communicants - proud of their holiness and self-flagellation

SATAN: An outrageously beautiful gambler and card shark - operates a cotch house attached to, and under the protection of, La Premier's establishment - he is seductive, touchy and violent

SWEET JUSTICE: A cheerful, highspirited thief and veteran of the Spanish American War who plies his trade as though it were a divine mission to rearrange objects - does business all over New Orleans, but is most welcome in the District

CLARENCE DEAL: An excellent all around musician who plays nightly in La Premier's house - about twenty-five years old - very savvy, generous, wide spirited, at ease with himself and very clear about his music

COBALT BLUE: Cook-laundress - about 60 years old - maternal and feisty - cares for the trick babies

KNOCKOUT: (aka K.O., BELLE FLEUR) A former crib whore - recently chosen by La Premier to work in her house - seventeen - pretty, ignorant and charming.

CAST - cont'dMUSICAL NUMBERS & SONGS

PROSTITUTES: Vary in age from 16 to 30 - each a distinctive "personality" from elegant to funky to sullen - all merry and seductive

GLORIA MOON (aka MISS THING)

LURLEEN PRICE (aka COPPERBOTTOM)

ROCHELLE LA FORTE (aka RAT)

ADELLA WESTWOOD (aka DOLLAR BILL)

PATRICIA DIAMOND (aka BAD BLOOD)

VESUVIUS (aka MOUTH)

TRICK BABIES: Very young girls - eight or nine years - born to prostitutes living with La Premier - fathers unknown and unsought. These children are still playing with dolls but know no other life than the sporting one - guilelessly sexual

TRAWLERS: Friends and co-workers of Johnny - live in Algiers as Johnny does

TRAWLERS' WIVES: Friends of Cally's - her neighbors in Algiers

OTHERS:

TOURIST COUPLES

POLICE

VENDORS

MUSICIANS (including a teenage spasm band, second liners, etc.)

SPORTS

Scene 1 - Madame Five's House

"A Woman Like Me"

Jessica Five

Scene 2 - Street in Algiers

"Bourbon Street Parade"

Spasm Band

"Gloria Moon"

Gloria Moon

"Lurleen Price"

Lurleen Price

✓ = Toni's lyrics

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MUSICAL NUMBERS & SONGS

ACT I

Scene 1 - Dock

"The Chant" ✓
Johnny & Company

"The Pearls"
Ana & Company

Scene 2 - Johnny's Journey

(Garden District)

"Bethena Waltz"

(Little Italy)

"Tarentella"

(Perdido Street)

"

"

(Vieux Carré)

"Michie Banjo"
Johnny

(cribs)

"When They Gets They Lovin' They's Gone"
Knockout & 2 Crib Girls

Scene 3 - Cally's House

"Woman: Worn Once" ✓
Cally

"It's Sunday" ✓
Cally

Scene 4 - Jessica Five's House

"A Woman Like Me"
Jessica Five ✓

Scene 5 - Street in Algiers

"Bourbon Street Parade"
Spasm Band

"Gloria Moon" ✓
Gloria Moon

"Lurleen Price" ✓
Lurleen Price ✓

MUSICAL NUMBERS & SONGS cont'd

"Rochelle LaFort" ✓
Rochelle LaFort

"Adella Westwood" ✓
Adella Westwood

"Patricia Diamond" ✓
Patricia Diamond

"Vesuvius" ✓
Vesuvius

"My House" ✓
Ensemble

Scene 6 - Ana's Parlor

"Jungle Blues" ("The Lesson")

(to come)

Clarence Deal

"Sweet Justice"
Sweet Justice

" "
Gloria Moon

Scene 7 - Ana's Courtyard

"New Orleans"
Cobalt Blue

Scene 8 - Ana's Bedroom

"Satan's Song" ✓
Satan

"Sweet Substitute"
Clarence Deal

Scene 9 - Jessica Five's House

Voodoo Ritual
Jessica, Cally & Company

MUSICAL NUMBERS & SONGS cont'dACT IIScene 1 - Satan's Hole

"Fickle Fay Creep"

(to come)

Scene 2 - Ana's Courtyard

"I Prefer the Pleasure"
Ana La Premier ✓

"Sweet Substitute" (reprise)
Beau & Clarence

"If I Can't Sell It"
Trick Babies

Scene 3 - Cally's House

"Put It Right Here"
Trawler's Wife

Get It
Cally & Trawlers' Wives

Scene 4 - Ana's Parlor

Naked Dance
Knockout

Duel
Ana & Cally

Scene 5 - Ana's Courtyard

"Calla Lily"
Johnny ✓

"It's Sunday" (reprise)
Cally & Johnny ✓

Scene 6 - Ana's Parlor

"

"

"Sweet Substitute" (reprise)
Beau

MUSICAL NUMBERS & SONGS cont'd

Scene 7 - Ana's Bedroom & Street

"Au Revoir, Bon Soir"
Ana La Premier ✓

Funeral Dirge
Company

Celebration
Company

ACT I, Scene 1

New Orleans: Fall of 1917. Curtain opens on the docks which front the Mississippi River and the Gulf of Mexico. It is just before sunrise and in this darkness the figures are lit only at their edges. No one moves. Then, along with the music, they begin to: a snake here, a step there, a gesture over there...building until there is a loud cry and, along with the sunrise, the whirp TRAWLERS are seen arriving. Now everything is animated: the music is infectious, the movements festive -- energetic with no mistaking that what they are doing is work. When the TRAWLERS disembark, they handle expertly and gracefully their nets and their catch. The catch is good, so the mood is joyful.

One of the trawlers is handed a banjo. He is JOHNNY, and he plays a lively tune for the crowd, some of whom dance and some of whom continue their work rhythmically. There are VENDORS, IDLERS, CHILDREN, TOURISTS, POLICE, WOMEN with baskets and MEN with carts. At the end of this performance, at the last strum of Johnny's banjo, ACT I body freezes. For a beat or two it is deeply still. Everyone turns in one direction. A tap, as of a walking stick, is heard. (This complicated tapping rhythm dominates the tuba sound and beat of La Premier's theme song.) There are whispers throughout the crowd of "La Premier, La Premier!", interspersed through the music and dance of LA PREMIER's entrance.

Throughout her dance the following libretto is heard, sung or spoken by various characters in the crowd:

CHILDREN:	HERE COMES THE LADY WITH THE SILVER ON HER CANE
	MY MAMA WON'T LET ME SAY HER NAME
	LA PREMIER, LA PREMIER
	GET ON BACK TO WHERE YOU LAY
	LA PREMIER, LA PREMIER
	GET ON BACK TO WHERE YOU LAY

MEN:	THE FIRST COLORED MADAM IN NEW ORLEANS
	WHO WITH A STREET WALKER'S TRADE BECAME A WOMAN OF MEANS
	THEY SAY HER UNDERWEAR IS SILK
	THEY SAY SHE BATHES IN ASHES MILK
	THEY SAY HER RED IS RED AND GOLD
	THEY SAY HER HEART IS ICE-HOUSE COLD

ACT I, Scene 1

New Orleans: fall of 1917. Curtain opens on the docks which front the Mississippi River and the Gulf of Mexico. It is just before sunrise and in this darkness the figures are lit only at their edges. No one moves. Then, along with the music, they begin to: a shake here, a step there, a gesture over there...building until there is a loud cry and, along with the sunrise, the shrimp TRAWLERS are seen arriving. Now everything is animated: the music is infectious, the movements festive -- energetic with no mistaking that what they are doing is work. When the TRAWLERS disembark, they handle expertly and gracefully their nets and their catch. The catch is good, so the mood is joyful.

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Throughout her dance the following libretto is heard, sung or spoken by various characters in the crowd:

CHILDREN:

HERE COMES THE LADY WITH THE SILVER ON HER
CANE

MY MAMA WON'T LET ME SAY HER NAME

LA PREMIER, LA PREMIER

GET ON BACK TO WHERE YOU LAY

LA PREMIER, LA PREMIER

GET ON BACK TO WHERE YOU LAY

MEN:

THE FIRST COLORED MADAM IN NEW ORLEANS

WHO WITH A STREET WALKER'S TRADE BECAME A
WOMAN OF MEANS

THEY SAY HER UNDERWEAR IS SILK

THEY SAY SHE BATHES IN ASSES MILK

THEY SAY HER BED IS RED AND GOLD

THEY SAY HER HEART IS ICE-HOUSE COLD

MEN: THE FIRST NEGRO WOMAN IN THE WHOLE WIDE SOUTH
TO UPLIFT THE RACE WITH A CLASSY PLEASURE
HOUSE.

THEY SAY HER UNDERWEAR IS SILK
THEY SAY SHE BATHES IN ASSES MILK
THEY SAY HER BED IS RED AND GOLD
I KNOW HER HEART IS ICE-HOUSE COLD.

WOMEN:

IS THAT DRESS SATIN?
LOOK AT THAT CANE
A NASTY WOMAN IS A TERRIBLE THING
WHAT KIND OF BIRD GROW THEM FEATHERS?
LOOK AT HER GLOVES
WHAT A BEAUTIFUL HAT
I'D KILL MYSELF BEFORE I'D LIVE LIKE THAT.

LOOK AT THE HEELS ON THEM SHOES
MONEY IN HER PURSE
DIAMONDS IN HER EARS
HER MISERABLE LIFE WILL BRING YOU TO TEARS

MEN:

LOOK AT HER LIPS
OH LORD THOSE EYES

WOMEN:

A LOW DOWN WOMAN I DO DESPISE

MEN:

LITTY BITTY WAIST
POMPADOOR HAIR

WOMEN:

A FALLEN SISTER IS A MOTHER'S DESPAIR.

CHILDREN:

LOOK AT THE LADY WITH THE SILVER ON HER
CANE

MY MAMA WON'T LET ME SAY HER NAME.

LA PREMIER, LA PREMIER

GET ON BACK TO WHERE YOU LAY.

(LA PREMIER's response to this lust, envy and outrage is an arrogant and seductive dance that ends with her touching JOHNNY with the tip of her walking stick. All exit but the two of them.)

JOHNNY: Well, well. Look what the canal threw up.
You in a respectable neighborhood, girl.
You lost or something?

LA PREMIER: Not at all. I just thought I'd take a look
at what the sea got that I don't.

JOHNNY: What does the sea have that you don't?

LA PREMIER: (Suggestively.) A fish. A big handsome
fish that don't mind getting caught.

JOHNNY: If you can't catch a fish must be something
wrong with your net.

LA PREMIER: Then I came to the right place, didn't I?
If my net needs fixing, who else but a
fisherman would know how to mend it?

JOHNNY: (Laughing.) Get on way from here. I got
work to do.

LA PREMIER: What work? Shrimps all packed.

JOHNNY: You don't know nothing about day people's
work, do you? I don't just trawl. If I
did that, me and my family, we'd starve.
I do all kinds of work: haul a little,
dig a little, clean up a little --

LA PREMIER: Don't you play none?

JOHNNY: Play?

LA PREMIER: The banjo, I mean.

JOHNNY: Oh, that ain't nothing.

LA PREMIER: Yes it is something. A man like you shouldn't
be hauling, digging and cleaning nothing.
Look here. (She takes one of his hands in
hers.)

JOHNNY: What?

LA PREMIER: You messing them up. A musician shouldn't
mess up his hands. His hands is his instru-
ment. I wish I had somebody to play the
banjo in my place.

JOHNNY: Picking a banjo don't feed nobody. Work pays money.

LA PREMIER: Crayfish is three cents a pound.

JOHNNY: I don't owe nobody. We make out all right.

LA PREMIER: A good musician in Storyville makes fifty, a hundred dollars a week.

JOHNNY: Go on way from here.

LA PREMIER: You don't believe it? Come on home with me and see for yourself. 200 North Basin Street. Only house in the district where men your color are welcome. I'd pay good money for a good man. But I wouldn't want a musician, no matter how handsome he was, that didn't take care of his instrument. It's precious, you know. And you ought to take better care of it. If I was your woman, I'd make sure you took care of it. I'd rub it, clean it, pat it. Keep it in perfect working condition. So you could play with it. Know what I mean? And make us some music.

JOHNNY: I know all about you and your house, but I have a wife who takes care of the things I need.

LA PREMIER: If she lets you get up in the middle of the night and go shrimping, she ain't taking care of your instrument.

JOHNNY: Hey, woman. You better start watching your mouth.

LA PREMIER: Like I been watching you? Oh, I've been looking at you a long time. I've seen you picking strings. You're good. Real good. Come on home with me. I'd pay you anything you could spend. Don't you want to be my partner?

JOHNNY: You really are the devil. You want me to leave my wife and child and move into some nasty house with you? You as bad as they say.

LA PREMIER: Um hm. As bad as they say and as good as they say. Think about it. I'm at 200 North Basin Street. You'll recognize the house.

LA PREMIER: 2

The shutters are wide open and wild red.
 They don't call me La Premier for nothing --
 I ain't just The First -- I'm also the last.
 Remember, my shutters are wide open. (Makes
 a gesture of open legs.)

JOHNNY, locked in
 in pursuit of her... neighborhood has its own
 music which illustrates the type of neighborhood that it is:
 LA PREMIER taps off stage, but the sound of her tapping rhythm
 stays. JOHNNY starts to walk away, but stops to listen to
 her rhythm. It gets louder and louder. He begins to move to
 it, does a step or two, struggles to maintain his own beat,
 but finally surrenders to hers and exits to the original tap
 of La Premier's walking stick.

(Here a PROSTITUTE dressed as a baby doll sings "When They
 Gets They Lovin' They's Gone" accompanied by two CHIEF GIRLS.)

KNOCKOUT:

OH LADY-DY-DY-DY-DY-DY LA WATTLE
 WATTLE A WATTLE A WATTLE A WATTLE
 A WATTLE A WATTLE, LAU DOW DOGGONE IT

DONE HAD SO MANY DADDIES
 CAN'T THINK OF ALL THEIR NAMES
 DONE HAD SO MANY DADDIES
 CAN'T THINK OF ALL THEIR NAMES
 BUT I DONE FOUND OUT
 ALL DADDIES ARE JUST THE SAME

NEE WILL ALL LOVE YOU
 UNTIL THEY GET YOU ON THE SHELF
 OH NEE WILL ALL LOVE YOU
 UNTIL THEY GET YOU ON THE SHELF
 I KNOW THEY ALL DECEITFUL
 CAUSE I FOUND OUT FOR MYSELF

KNOCKOUT and ONE: OH LADY-DY-DY-DY-DY-DY A LATTLE A WATTLE

ALL:

A DOTTLE A WATTLE, A ROTTLE A ROTTLE
 A WATTLE A WATTLE, A DOTTLE A WATTLE, LAU DOW

ACT I, Scene 2

JOHNNY, locked into La Premier's beat, journeys from the dock in pursuit of her. He passes through several distinctive neighborhoods of New Orleans. Each neighborhood has its own music which illustrates the type of neighborhood that it is: the Garden District of large elegant houses where the wealthy white people live; the French Quarter with absinthe houses, coffee shops, a "good time" strip for white people; Little Italy where the immigrant population lives; Perdido Street lined with tonk houses, black music halls and barrel houses; to the edges of The District: Storyville: cribs where whores sell themselves for a few cents and a few minutes -

(Here a PROSTITUTE dressed as a baby doll sings "When They Gets They Lovin" They's Gone" accompanied by two CRIB GIRLS.)

KNOCKOUT: OH LADY-DY-DY-DY-DY-DY LA WATTLE
 WATTLE A WATTLE A WATTLE A WATTLE
 A WATTLE A WATTLE, LAU DOW DOGGONE IT

DONE HAD SO MANY DADDIES
 CAN'T THINK OF ALL THEIR NAMES
 DONE HAD SO MANY DADDIES
 CAN'T THINK OF ALL THEIR NAMES
 BUT I DONE FOUND OUT
 ALL DADDIES ARE JUST THE SAME

MEN WILL ALL LOVE YOU
 UNTIL THEY GET YOU ON THE SHELF
 OH MEN WILL ALL LOVE YOU
 UNTIL THEY GET YOU ON THE SHELF
 I KNOW THEY ALL DECEITFUL
 CAUSE I FOUND OUT FOR MYSELF

KNOCKOUT and ONE: OH LADY-DY-DY-DY-DY-DY A LATTLE A WATTLE
 ALL: A DOTTLE A WATTLE, A ROTTLE A ROTTLE
 A WATTLE A WATTLE, A DOTTLE A WATTLE, LAU DOW

ONE: I tell him
 IF YOU DON'T LIKE MY SWEET POTATOES
 WHY DO YOU DIG SO DEEP
 IF YOU DON'T LIKE MY SWEET POTATOES
 WHY DO YOU DIG SO DEEP
 YOU DIG IN MY SWEET POTATO PATCH
 THREE, FOUR, FIVE TIMES A WEEK

JOHNNY continues on his journey to the large brothels for whites
 TWO: where white 00 barons are available in
 luxurious narrow 200 North Basin
 Street -- La Fran e its wide open
 will red shutters
 (When he sees the same musical
 refrain that she
 when she exited
 I tell him
 IF YOU DON'T LIKE MY OCEAN
 WHY DO YOU FISH IN MY SEA
 IF YOU DON'T LIKE MY OCEAN
 WHY DO YOU FISH IN MY SEA
 STAY OUT OF MY VALLEY
 AND LEAVE MY MOUNTAINS BE

ONE and TWO: OH LADY-DY-DY-DY-DY-DY A LATTLE A WATTLE
 A DOTTLE A WATTLE, A ROTTLE A ROTTLE,
 A WATTLE A WATTLE, A DOTTAL A WATTLE
 ALL: LAU DOW

KNOCKOUT: THEY CHASE YOU LIKE A BLOODHOUND
 UNTIL THEY FINALLY RUN YOU DOWN, OH DADDY
 THEY CHASE YOU LIKE A BLOODHOUND
 UNTIL THEY FINALLY RUN YOU DOWN
 JUST AS SOON AS THEY GET YOU
 START RIGHT IN TO RUNNING 'ROUND

(Ad libs from ONE and TWO.)

KNOCKOUT: WHEN THEY TRY TO GET YOUR LOVIN'
 THEY JUST AS CUNNING AS A FOX
 KNOCKOUT and ONE: WHEN THEY TRY TO GET YOUR LOVIN'
 ALL: THEY CUNNING AS A FOX
 KNOCKOUT: BUT WHEN YOU GIVE IT TO THEM
 THEY STUBBORN AS A DOGGONE OX

ALL:

OH LADY-DY-DY-DY-DY-DY LA DOTTLE,

A WATTLE A WATTLE, A VITTLE A WATTLE,

A WATTLE A WATTLE, A WATTLE A WATTLE

A DOTTLE A WATTLE, A DOTTLE A WATTLE

LOW DOWN

JOHNNY continues on his journey to the large brothels for whites only, where white women and/or Octeroons are available in luxurious surroundings. Finally he arrives at 200 North Basin Street -- La Premier's house. He stops before its wide open wild red shutters.

(When he sees these shutters, there should be the same musical refrain that accompanied La Premier's leg opening gesture when she exited from the dock scene.)

CALLY:

WOMAN: SLIGHTLY PRATED

WOMAN: MARGMALE

GOT MY GOING-OUT-OF-BUSINESS SIGN UP

BECAUSE MY MAN HAS MADE HIS MIND UP

WOMAN: WOMEN ONCE

WOMAN: HARDLY USED

WOMAN: LIKE NEW

HE TOOK AN AD OUT IN THE PAPER

"USED MARGMALE ON SALE" FOR

WOMAN: WOMEN ONCE

A BIT SOILED; NEVER SPOILED

NOT YET, BUT STILL RUNS

STEP THIS WAY, SIR: TERMS ARRANGED FOR

WOMAN: WOMEN ONCE

WOMAN: SECOND HAND

WOMAN: ON DEMAND

ACT I, Scene 3

The front room of Cally's house. A typical shotgun lay out with a large front room which leads into a bedroom which leads into a kitchen which leads into the back yard which one can see into from the front door (which is to say that one can fire a shot gun through the front door and hit somebody out the back door). CALLY (Calla Lily) is listless, unfocused, almost dotty with grief. She is a lovely, lithe woman in her thirties. A veil of submissive femininity and frailty hides the adult inside her that has never been allowed or encouraged to appear. She has been married since she was sixteen and finds life without her husband (Johnny) unimaginable (literally) and impossible. Now he has been gone for two weeks and she is deeply blue. This blue mood is pervasive as she goes about her chores in a desultory way. She is primarily trying to stretch some curtains on a frame stretcher. A basket of limp damp ones is at her feet and they are very much like the way she feels. The curtains keep popping away from the pins and drooping down from the frame. Not concentrating on any one thing, she sings "Woman: Worn Once."

CALLY: end of her (the window.)
 WOMAN: SLIGHTLY FRAYED
 WOMAN: HANDMADE
 GOT MY GOING-OUT-OF-BUSINESS SIGN UP
 BECAUSE MY MAN HAS MADE HIS MIND UP
 WOMAN: WORN ONCE

T.M. Lyriu

WOMAN: HARDLY USED
 WOMAN: LIKE NEW
 HE TOOK AN AD OUT IN THE PAPER
 "USED MERCHANDISE ON SALE" FOR
 WOMAN: WORN ONCE

A BIT SOILED; NEVER SPOILED
 NOT YOUNG: BUT STILL RUNS
 STEP THIS WAY, SIR: TERMS ARRANGED FOR
 WOMAN: WORN ONCE

WOMAN: SECOND HAND
 WOMAN: ON DEMAND

CALLY: VACANT PROPERTY; WILL BUILD TO SUIT

THE LEASE EXPIRED; HE WON'T RENEW

WOMAN: WORN ONCE

WOMAN: MARKED DOWN

WOMAN: HEART SOUND

EXAMINE CAREFULLY THIS BARGAIN

BUY THESE GOODS BEFORE THE SALE ENDS

WOMAN: WORN ONCE

GUARANTEED; HIGHLY TRAINED

EASY TERMS; WILL TRADE

LOW DOWN PAYMENT WHEN YOU TAKE THIS

WOMAN: WORN ONCE

(At the end of her song her son, BEAU, pokes his head through the window.)

BEAU: Ma.

CALLY: Beau. You startled me, baby.

(BEAU climbs in the window. He is just sixteen years old. Handsome -- just becoming a man.)

BEAU: (Looking around at the room that is in disarray, then at her.) You still moping.

CALLY: No. Course not. I'm fine, baby.

(BEAU sniffs into the air.)

CALLY: Oh! The red beans! (She runs out.)

BEAU: (Shouting after her.) Jesus, Ma. You burning everything. I used to run home to eat your cooking. Now if you don't burn it, you forget to light the fire under it.

(He picks up curtains from the floor and through a portion of the following scene is straightening up the house.)

BEAU: Ain't nobody dead, you know. Two weeks now and you still acting like you at a wake.

BEAU: Life goes on, Ma. Just because he ran off, don't mean we have to lie down and die.

CALLY: (Returning.) I'm sorry, baby. I'll make a little tomato gravy for the rice. Will that be okay?

BEAU: Some Sunday dinner -- rice and gravy.

CALLY: You have to forgive me, Beau. My mind is so full.

BEAU: With what Ma? Your mind ain't full of my dinner. It ain't full of cleaning house. Look at these curtains. They ain't on your mind. You didn't even go to mass. I never knew you to miss mass.

CALLY: I can't. I've been on my knees every morning and every night for two weeks now and I can't get down there no more. Nobody's listening.

BEAU: Ma. Come on.

CALLY: It's true, Beau. I don't want to look in stone eyes any more. That's all they are: Mary, Joseph, even St. Anthony. Pretty, decorated rock. I'd get down on my knees and bend my head so low it hurt to raise it up again. But I'd do it. And then when I looked up, all I see is sad, soft eyes made out of rock. I need living eyes. Eyes that move, that can see me and what I'm going through. I found me somebody with living eyes.

BEAU: What you talking 'bout, Ma?

CALLY: Beau, he's got to come on back home. I can't keep on like this: taking money from my sisters and food from the neighbors. What about next week and the week after?

BEAU: Is that all you worrying 'bout? Money?
I can work. Let me out of that simple school,
and I can make as much money as he ever did.

CALLY: It ain't just that.

BEAU: He left us, Ma. Not just you. He left me
too. We'll get along. We don't need him.

CALLY: I need him.

BEAU: No, you don't. This stuff you feel --
it'll pass. I know you're lonely, Ma, but
it'll pass. Just wait.

CALLY: But it's Sunday. He ought to be sitting in
that chair right about now.

("It's Sunday" is sung by CALLY, which could include dance
with CALLY and BEAU.)

CALLY: DON'T YOU UNDERSTAND? IT'S SUNDAY
HE'D BE SITTING IN THAT CHAIR NOW

T.M. Lyni

BEAU: I can sit in his chair.

CALLY: DON'T YOU UNDERSTAND? IT'S SUNDAY
HE'D BE WANTING A COOL BEER NOW

BEAU: I can drink his beer.

CALLY: I CAN'T HELP IT IF IT'S SUNDAY
A WOMAN'S HEART CAN BREAK BY MONDAY
THIS HAS ALWAYS BEEN THE ONE DAY
HE'D COME BRAID MY HAIR

BEAU: But I'm still here.

CALLY: CAN'T YOU UNDERSTAND? IT'S SUNDAY
HE'D BE STRUMMING ME A TUNE NOW

(Enter FAYE and ELISE, Cally's sisters.)

BEAU: I can play his song.

CALLY: HOW COME HE DOESN'T KNOW IT'S SUNDAY
I'D BE DANCING ROUND THIS ROOM NOW

(She begins to dance.)

BEAU: Don't dance alone.

CALLY: I CAN'T HELP IT IF IT'S SUNDAY
A WOMAN'S HEART CAN BREAK BY MONDAY
THIS HAS ALWAYS BEEN THE ONE DAY
HE'D COME TAKE MY HAND

(They dance.)

CALLY: I'M SO LONELY WHEN IT'S SUNDAY
A WOMAN'S HEART CAN BREAK BY MONDAY
THIS HAS ALWAYS BEEN THE ONE DAY
HE'D COME TAKE MY HAND

(They stop. CALLY lets her hand drop from BEAU's.)

BEAU: Ma, I'm telling you. It's going to be
all right.

CALLY: I know it is because I'm going to make it
all right. As soon as it's dark, I'm going
to make it all right.

BEAU: What you gonna do?

CALLY: I sent a message. She said she'd see me.

BEAU: Who?

CALLY: She's got living eyes and she's got the
power!

(Enter FAYE and ELISE, Cally's sisters.)

FAYE and ELISE: Power? Power? Who's got the power?

BEAU: Aunt Faye. Aunt Elise. Talk to your sister. Please?

FAYE: We brought some gumbo.

ELISE: And a loaf of fresh bread.

FAYE: We thought you might be hungry.

ELISE: With nothing to eat.

FAYE: You weren't at mass.

ELISE: And everybody noticed.

FAYE: Last Sunday either.

ELISE: As I recall.

FAYE: Your hair's a mess.

ELISE: And your dress is too.

FAYE: That hound bring the rent?

ELISE: Or a bite to eat?

CALLY: Oh, please. Things are bad enough without that.

FAYE: They gonna put you out of here, you don't pay the rent.

ELISE: Out in the street if you don't pay the rent.

FAYE: So we want you and Beau to move in with us.

ELISE: Pack your bags and -- move in with us?

BEAU: Thanks, Aunt Faye, Aunt Elise, but we can manage. I'm going to find me some work.

FAYE: Work?

ELISE: Work?

FAYE: You supposed to be going to high school. Don't you want to graduate from high school?

ELISE: You'd be the first one in our family to graduate from high school.

CALLY: It's all right. It's really all right.
I appreciate your offer, but don't worry.
Johnny's coming back and everything's gonna
be like it was.

FAYE: Oh Lord.

ELISE: Oh Lord.

BEAU: Oh shoot.

CALLY: He will. I know how to get him to come
back.

BEAU: Stop it, Ma. Talk to her Aunt Faye, she's
getting ready to do something crazy.

FAYE: You buy you a pistol?

ELISE: Or a long sharp knife?

CALLY: No. No.

BEAU: Tell 'em. Tell 'em where you going tonight.

CALLY: I just can't get down on my knees no more.

(FAYE and ELISE cross themselves.)

CALLY: I lit candles.

(FAYE and ELISE cross themselves.)

CALLY: I prayed.

(FAYE and ELISE cross themselves.)

CALLY: I need a bigger, stronger power.

(FAYE and ELISE cross themselves three times.)

CALLY: I'm going to see Madam Jessica Five.

(FAYE and ELISE scream and throw up their hands to ward off the
evil that comes from the sound of her name.)

FAYE: Have mercy. A witch.

ELISE: Have mercy. A bitch.

FAYE: Have mercy. A fake.

ELISE: Have mercy. A snake.

FAYE: Oh God. Voodoo.

ELISE: Oh God. Hoodoo.

FAYE: Oh Lord. Satan

ELISE: Oh Lord. Matin'

FAYE: Wild raves.

ELISE: Evil graves.

FAYE: Magic potions

ELISE: Sexy lotions

FAYE: Horse's manes

ELISE: Baby brains.

FAYE: Powers of darkness

ELISE: Naked starkness

FAYE: Moral ruins

ELISE: Nasty doin's

FAYE: Filth and sin there.

ELISE: (To Faye.) Have you been there?

FAYE: (To Elise.) Why you witch!

ELISE: (To Faye.) Oh you bitch!

FAYE: (To Elise.) You old fake!

ELISE: (To Faye.) You old snake!

FAYE and ELISE: (To each other - exiting.) Have mercy, have mercy, have mercy on you!

ACT I, Scene 4

Jessica Five's house. Same lay out as Cally's, but full of the signs and materials of her profession. No musical score here. Perhaps just the sound of certain instruments: rattles, bones, metal things, etc. CALLY sits before her on a stool. JESSICA FIVE sits above her on a kind of flowered throne, and after suitable dramatic gestures and pyrotechnics and the drinking of rum -- which CALLY must partake of as well, JESSICA FIVE speaks.

JESSICA FIVE: So. You want him back.

CALLY: Yes, ma'am, I do.

JESSICA FIVE: No substitute will do?

CALLY: Not for me, Madam Five. I have to have him. I have to.

JESSICA FIVE: You will have to bring me certain things.

CALLY: What things?

JESSICA FIVE: Depends on the Five
I might need the hair from his head.
I might need the wax from his ears.
I might even need a blind man's tears.

CALLY: Please help me. I'll bring you anything you need. Anything. I have to have him --

JESSICA FIVE: Ssssh, I hear them.

CALLY: Who?

JESSICA FIVE: The Five. I can feel them: Wind. Water.
Fire. Earth. And the unknown Element.
Consider here this poor weak child
Gather in her spirit mild
Pity her broken woman's heart
And your secrets now to me impart.

(She listens and groans.)

Get me five nail clippings
All from his left hand
Your morning water
And your wedding band.

JESSICA FIVE: Bring me the clothes he
Wore next to his skin
Bring me his picture
And a long hat pin.

CALLY: But he's gone. How can I get nail clippings
and underwear and --

JESSICA FIVE: Send for them. Send somebody that loves
you. Somebody you trust. And somebody
who's fast on his feet.

CALLY: Beau! I'll have to send my son, Beau.

JESSICA FIVE: Then bring all those things here to me and
he will be back in your bed in five days.

CALLY: Oh Madam Five, thank you. Thank you.

JESSICA FIVE: Ssssh. Just don't forget to thank the Five.
The best way to thank the Five is with
another five.

CALLY: I will. Oh thank you, Madam Five. (She
exits.)

JESSICA FIVE: OH WHAT A FINGER BREAKER THIS LIFE CAN BE
WHAT WOULD PEOPLE DO WITHOUT A WOMAN LIKE ME
A WOMAN LIKE ME
A WOMAN LIKE ME
AN INTELLIGENT, CLEVER WOMAN LIKE ME

*T.M.
Lyric*

FEATHERS, BEADS AND PROPERTY DEEDS
DROUGHT, FLOOD AND ANIMAL BLOOD
OH A WOMAN LIKE ME
A WOMAN LIKE ME
AN INTELLIGENT, CLEVER WOMAN LIKE ME

CAT'S BALLS
RAG DOLLS
AND GRIS-GRIS DUST

JESSICA FIVE:

LODESTONES

CHICKEN BONES

AND TRAIN TRACK RUST

OH WHAT A FINGER BREAKER THIS LIFE CAN BE

WHAT WOULD PEOPLE DO WITHOUT A WOMAN LIKE ME

A WOMAN LIKE ME

A WOMAN LIKE ME

BEAU:

AN INTELLIGENT, CLEVER WOMAN LIKE ME

BANDMEMBER 1:

Hurry up, Beau. We want to be the first
ones out there to get those tips.

BANDMEMBER 3:

Yeah, man. Hustle it. White folks crawling
all over the place, pockets so heavy with
silver they be walking howlegged.

BEAU:

Wait. Listen. I didn't tell you before,
but I can't go play downtown today.

BANDMEMBER 1:

What? How come?

BEAU:

I gotta go do something for my mother.

BANDMEMBER 3:

(Teasing.) Ooooo. Beau's mama want him home.

BEAU:

Quit it, man.

BANDMEMBER 2:

You gotta come. We can't get another horn now.

BANDMEMBER 3:

Come on, Beau. You bring her home the kind
of money we got last Saturday, she'll forgive
you.

BEAU:

No, I promised. This is something more im-
portant than money.

BANDMEMBER 1:

(To another member.) You know something
more important than money?

BANDMEMBER 3:

Yeah, more of it.

BEAU:

Let me go on, now. Maybe I can get back
before you through.

BANDMEMBER 3:

Where you going?

BEAU:

I gotta go to the District. Storyville.

ACT I, Scene 5

The SPASM BAND is rehearsing. Four teenagers with horns, strings, etc. BEAU is among them. They play a rousing tune. When the music ends they are very pleased with themselves.

BANDMEMBER 1: All right! Solid!

BANDMEMBER 2: That's it. Let's go. It's almost noon.

BEAU: Listen you all --

BANDMEMBER 1: hurry up, Beau. We want to be the first ones out there to get those tips.

BANDMEMBER 3: Yeah, man. Hustle it. White folks crawling all over the place, pockets so heavy with silver they be walking bowlegged.

BEAU: Wait. Listen. I didn't tell you before, but I can't go play downtown today.

BANDMEMBER 1: What? How come?

BEAU: I gotta go do something for my mother.

BANDMEMBER 3: (Teasing.) Ooooo. Beau's mama want him home.

BEAU: Quit it, man.

BANDMEMBER 2: You gotta come. We can't get another horn now.

BANDMEMBER 3: Come on, Beau. You bring her home the kind of money we got last Saturday, she'll forgive you.

BEAU: No, I promised. This is something more important than money.

BANDMEMBER 1: (To another member.) You know something more important than money?

BANDMEMBER 3: Yeah, more of it.

BEAU: Let me go on, now. Maybe I can get back before you through.

BANDMEMBER 3: Where you going?

BEAU: I gotta go to the District: Storyville.

MEMBERS 1,2 &3: The District! So long. Nice knowing you, man. Yeah, come back and see us some time. Wanna leave me your horn?

BEAU: Aw quit it. What's the matter with you?

BANDMEMBER 1: Ain't nothing the matter with us, but something's sure gonna be the matter with you.

BANDMEMBER 2: Yeah. Next time we see you, you be an old man.

BEAU: I'll be back in two hours.

BANDMEMBER 1: You crazy? You go in Storyville, you never coming out. Them women eat you alive, boy.

BANDMEMBER 2: You be crawling on all fours.

BANDMEMBER 3: Howling like a dog.

BANDMEMBER 1: Slobbering at the mouth.

BANDMEMBER 2: Grunting like a hog.

BANDMEMBER 3: People who go in there don't come back out, and if they do, they never the same. You ever go down to the docks and look up under the pilings? See them big river spiders hanging there on they web? A leg up here, another over there, and some back here, two out like this.

(He and the others form a spider by climbing up on one another.)

BANDMEMBER 3: And here you come: Little Beau, Little Beau. Come here, Little Beau.

(They separate and each begins to mimic the seductive walk of a prostitute.)

BANDMEMBER 1: I got sugar in my bowl, little Beau.

BANDMEMBER 2: I got honey in my bowl, little Beau.

BANDMEMBER 3: I got cream in my bowl, little Beau.

BANDMEMBER 1: I got some peaches in my bowl, little Beau.

(They undulate toward him.)

Wanna little sugar, Beau. It's sweet.

How 'bout a little honey, Beau. It's smooth.

Try a little cream, Beau. It's thick.

Have some of my peaches, Beau. They real juicy.

(BEAU backs away and they pounce on him. He yells.)

BANDMEMBERS: (Laughing and shouting - they exit.) They kept your daddy, you know they keep you!

BEAU: (Dusting himself off and straightening his clothes.) Not me. No way. I ain't my old man. Nothing like him.

(Scene changes. Lights, backdrop etc. PROSTITUTES appear surreally seductive and each one comes forward to sing her own publicity.)

GLORIA MOON: MY TABLE'S ALL LAID
MY PUDDING'S ALL MADE
PATRICIA DIAMOND: YOU'LL SHINE
WHEN YOU DINE WITH MISS MOON
MY MENU'S COMPLETE
MY LIQUOR IS SWEET
BRING YOUR CUP
SO YOU CAN SUP FROM MY SPOON

T.M. Lyric

LURLEEN PRICE: NOTHING'S QUITE LIKE A LITTLE CLASSY VICE
IN THE COMPANY OF A GIRL THIS NICE
WHEN YOU ASK FOR A CRUMB, I GIVE YOU A SLICE
WHAT THEY DO ONCE, I DO TWICE
IF YOU COME UP WITH LURLEEN'S PRICE

T.M. Lyric

ROCHELLE LA FORT: I ONCE HELD COURT
IN OLD NEWPORT
I'M JUST THE RIGHT SORT
FOR A LITTLE NIGHT SPORT
A LITTLE SHADY
BUT STILL A LADY
SO TAKE ME
MAKE ME
I'LL EVEN LET YOU SAVE ME
PROVIDED YOU WILL PAY ME
TO BE ROCHELLE LA FORT
FROM OLD NEWPORT

ADELLA WESTWOOD: I'M MISS ADELLA WESTWOOD
THE GENTS ALL SAY I'M VERY GOOD
I'D BE BETTER IF I COULD
FIND A MAN WHO THINKS I SHOULD
HAVE A CHANCE TO SHOW WHAT I CAN DO
TO MAKE HIM LOVE WHAT HE DON'T WANT TO

PATRICIA DIAMOND: I'M PATRICIA DIAMOND
AND I'M SUCH A SHY ONE
IF YOU THINK YOU CAN FIND ONE
LIKE ME, GO HEAD AND TRY ONE
YOU'LL COME BACK TO BUY ONE
HOT MINUTE WITH ME

VESUVIUS: THEY CALL ME VESUVIUS
I GOT LAVA ENOUGH FOR THE TWO OF US
MY VOLCANO NEVER COOLS
AND IN MY OVEN THERE AIN'T NO RULES

TM
Lyrics

VESUVIUS:

I'LL COOK A LITTLE STEW FOR YOU
THERE AIN'T NOTHING I WON'T DO FOR YOU
WHEN MY DAMPER'S UP
I GOT A HEALING TOUCH
AND I DON'T USE NO GOOFY DUST
COME ON AND COOK WITH VESUVIUS
I GOT LAVA ENOUGH FOR THE TWO OF US

(They all sing the following as they try to seduce BEAU who struggles mightily against them.)

ALL:

COME TO MY HOUSE
JUST KNOCK ON THE DOOR
YOU NEVER GONNA WANT TO GO HOME NO MORE
COME TO MY PLACE
KICK DOWN THE DOOR
I'LL HAVE YOU GRINNING BEFORE THE KNOB
HITS THE FLOOR
I'LL HOLD YOU
ENFOLD YOU
TAKE YOU IN MY ARMS
I'LL NURSE YOU
IMMERSE YOU
SHOW YOU ALL MY CHARMS
SEDUCE YOU
REDUCE YOU
TIE YOU UP IN KNOTS
MANIPULATE YOU
COPULATE YOU
PULL OUT ALL THE STOPS
COME TO MY HOUSE
PULL DOWN THE SHADE
TAKE YOUR SHOES OFF, BABY, YOU GOT IT MADE
COME GET IN MY BED

ALL:

I'VE THROWN AWAY THE KEY

YOU AIN'T NEVER GONNA GET AWAY FROM ME

(BEAU struggles for mastery, escape and loses both in his dream.)

towels and grumbling. Through it all LA PREMIER is managerial, serene. And CLARENCE DIAL, 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 flashy clothes, stands apart. LA PREMIER enters.

LA PREMIER:

(To the flashy GIRL.) There you are. Good eve. 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 home, darling, this is not a crib. See? Nice wall paper, velvet sofas, chandeliers and the way from New York. The men who come here have time as well as money to spend. (She is undressing her, re-arranging her clothes to mostly underwear and a robe.) They don't want a woman to look like what she is. They want baby dolls, ladies, school girls, nuns if they can get 'em. You have to look delicious, not eaten. Come now and meet my girls. If you have any questions they'll help you. Girls! Girls! Let me introduce you to Knockout, who also will be known as ah, let me think. Belle Fleur.

Knockout, this is Miss Thing whom we advertise as Gloria Moon. Copperbottom, known as Arleen Price; Ray or Rochelle La Porte; Sailor Bill called Adella Westwood and had lived otherwise Patricia Diamond; and the famous Yessie who everybody knows as Mouth.

KNOCKOUT:

Now what do I do?

(An instructive pause.)

LA PREMIER:

Now you take a basin and water up to your room. Schnell! Schnell! Bring her fresh towels.

ACT I, Scene 6

Ana La Premier's house at 200 North Basin Street. 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 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, this is 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, re-arranging her clothes to mostly underwear and a robe.) They don't want a woman to look like what she is. They want baby dolls, ladies, school girls, nuns if they can get 'em. You have to look delicious, not eaten. Come now and meet my girls. If you have any questions they'll help you. Girls! Girls! Let me introduce you to Knockout, who also will be known as ah, let me think. Belle Fleur.

Knockout, this is Miss Thing whom we advertise as Gloria Moon. Copperbottom, known as Lurleen Price; Rat or Rochelle La Forte; Dollar Bill called Adella Westwood and Bad Blood otherwise Patricia Diamond; and the famous Vesuvius who everybody knows as Mouth.

KNOCKOUT: Now what do I do?

(An instructive dance.)

LA PREMIER: Now you take a basin and water up to your room. Cobalt! Cobalt! Bring her fresh towels.

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

LA PREMIER: A fresh towel for each trick, Knockout, remember that. Sprinkle a little potash -- just a few drops in the water and throw the water out as soon as you finish, so the joker can see you pour fresh water for him. You've been working in a crib, so I know you're quick. Now here, fifteen minutes is the limit. The absolute 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?

KNOCKOUT: Lye? What kinds of mens come here?

LA PREMIER: Any kind with money. Traveling men, local men --

RAT: Especially those white teenagers, and look out for them Nordic Negroes too.

MOUTH: And the preachers, and the undertakers and the police.

DOLLAR BILL: What's the matter with the police? All they do is talk.

MOUTH: But they want to talk with their mouth full.

RAT: The best ones are the black men who make a killing next door.

KNOCKOUT: What's next door?

LA PREMIER: That's Satan's Hole. Cotch mostly, but he'll run any kind of game.

KNOCKOUT: Why they call him Satan?

COPPERBOTTOM: Cause he's so pretty he looks like the devil.

(CLARENCE DEAL enters.)

KNOCKOUT: Who's that?

LA PREMIER: That's Clarence Deal, the Professor. The best piano man and all around musician in town. If he ever leaves me, I might have to close my doors.

CLARENCE: Good evening, you gorgeous evening ladies.
Want me to make it 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: What you want, Copperbottom? A little shuffle?
(Plays.) A little syncopated melody? (Plays.)
What about a good old cakewalk? (Plays.)

KNOCKOUT: What about a little blues?

CLARENCE: Blues? Can't play no blues in here. Cus-
tomers don't want to be blue, they want to
be red hot! (Plays.)

LA PREMIER: Miss Thing, you have to share your room with
Knockout. Bad Blood, you show her how to
work the string.

BAD BLOOD: Come on, Knockout. (Showing her the knots,
etc.) I don't know why they love it so, but
they do.

(WINE SELLER enters with a barrel over his shoulder.)

LA PREMIER: Who told you you could come in the front
door?

WINE SELLER: I can't get my wagon in no courtyard.

LA PREMIER: Bring it to the back or leave it in the street.
Only my creditors come in the front. My
debtors go to the back.

(He goes back out.)

LA PREMIER: What's the commotion?

(The TRICK BABIES pull at her skirt.)

LA PREMIER: What do you all want?

A TRICK BABY: Mama said you was going to auction us.

A TRICK BABY: Yeah, you promised!

LA PREMIER: Not yet, sweetheart. Soon. Now go play in the kitchen.

A TRICK BABY: Cobalt say not to.

LA PREMIER: Well go on out in the courtyard for a while.

(COBALT BLUE comes in with a FISHMONGER.)

COBALT BLUE: He trying to give me some day old fish.

FISHMONGER: I caught that fish today.

LA PREMIER: (Smelling the fish.) Well they died yesterday. Get out the way.

(SATAN comes through the room holding a knife around the throat of a GAMBLER. He walks him through and throws him out of the door. No one pays any attention (except KNOCKOUT). On the way back through, he pauses to look in the mirror and fix his hair, tie, adjust cuffs, etc. Then takes out his fingernail file and exits filing his nails.)

LA PREMIER: Dollar Bill, put more water in your drink. He's supposed to get drunk; you supposed to stay sober, all right? Bad 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!

(DOLLAR BILL slaps BAD BLOOD.)

TRICK BABY: She hit my Mama!

LA PREMIER: Stop it! (Uses her walking stick to get attention and to separate the girls.) Blood, here's six dollars. Get another pair. Bill, put your fingers to better use.

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

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: Oh, Sweet Justice, we do love you!

SWEET JUSTICE: Girls! Give me that!

(A fight breaks out. The clock strikes six o'clock. LA PREMIER waves her walking stick and in a flash the house is ready for business -- with CLARENCE BEAL holding forth.)

(There is a knock at the door. LA PREMIER opens it. It is BEAL.)

GIRLS: Well, well looka here:

Hi Sweetie.

Ain't he cute?

Wanna dance?

LA PREMIER: What's your name, sugar?

BEAL: My name's Beau.

LA PREMIER: You sure are.

BEAL: I came here to see my father.

LA PREMIER: Your what? You mean --

(JOHNNY enters. He is beautifully dressed now, but looking a bit wan. He is also irritable.)

LA PREMIER: Johnny, you have a visitor.

JOHNNY: Beau!
(To LA PREMIER.) What you let him in here for?

(SATAN enters to examine the goods.) no locks.

SATAN: Well don't you rearrange nothing of mine.
(Menacing.)

GIRLS: (Pulling on an item of clothing.)

BEAU: He said that was for me.

LA PREMIER: I don't care what he said. him. Use my room.

BEAU: She lying. I heard him. get through you can

LA PREMIER: Girls! Give me that!

(A fight breaks out. The clock strikes six o'clock. LA PREMIER waves her walking stick and in a flash the house is ready for business -- with CLARENCE DEAL holding forth.)

(There is a knock at the door. LA PREMIER opens it. It is BEAU.)

GIRLS: Well, well looka here. (accompanied by walking backwards looking at the women.)

LA PREMIER: Hi Sweetie. (LA PREMIER enters.)

Ain't he cute?

Wanna dance? (BABIES.) Shoot! Shoot! Cobalt!

LA PREMIER: What's your name, sugar? (Ana. I don't

BEAU: My name's Beau.

LA PREMIER: You sure are. (LA PREMIER stands in the courtyard.

BEAU: I came here to see my father. (JOHN and the GIRLS

LA PREMIER: Your what? You mean -- (COBALT leaves with the

(JOHNNY enters. He is beautifully dressed now, but looking a bit wan. He is also irritable.)

LA PREMIER: Johnny? Of course he's all right. Why?

LA PREMIER: Johnny, you have a visitor. day and resting

JOHNNY: Beau!
(To LA PREMIER.) What you let him in here for?

LA PREMIER: My doors don't have no locks.
 JOHNNY: Well get some.
 BEAU: I have to talk to you, Daddy. In private.
 JOHNNY: This ain't no place for no talk.
 BEAU: I got to. You owe me that.
 LA PREMIER: Go on, Johnny. Go talk to him. Use my room.
 MOUTH: (To BEAU.) And when you get through you can use my room, sweet stuff.

(JOHNNY throws a fake punch at her.)

JOHNNY: Watch your filthy mouth!
 (To BEAU.) All right. But make it short.
 (He walks into the room which he shares with La Premier.)

(BEAU accompanies him, walking backward looking at the women.)

(A JOHN enters.)

LA PREMIER: (To the TRICK BABIES.) Shoo! Shoo! Cobalt! Come get these children.

COBALT BLUE: I have to shell these peas, Ana. I don't have time to --

LA PREMIER: Shell them outside in the courtyard.

(Other JOHNS are entering; CLARENCE is playing and the GIRLS are being selected, selecting, etc. COBALT leaves with the TRICK BABIES in tow, carrying her bowl of peas.)

CLARENCE: (To ANA.) Is he all right?

LA PREMIER: Johnny? Of course he's all right. Why?

CLARENCE: He's used to sweating in the day and resting at night. He can't change his clock just because you tightening the mainspring.

CLARENCE: It ain't natural -- you can change a man's mind, but you can't change his clock.

LA PREMIER: I didn't want to change his clock. I just wanted it to tick in my bed.

KNOCKOUT: If he was my man I wouldn't care what time he ticked, or where, long as I could oil his springs.

RAT: You telling me there's some oil in that litty bitty can? (Hits her behind.)

KNOCKOUT: It may not be much, but at least my engine's new.

RAT: It better be new. It sure ain't got no power.

LA PREMIER: That's enough! You all hush.

CLARENCE: Come on, Knockout. Tell me what would you do with your new little engine.

KNOCKOUT: I quit all this mess, that's what. And I make him marry me and be my husband.

GLORIA MOON: That's because you don't know nothing about husbands. A husband is the last thing you want to be married to.

KNOCKOUT: Why?

GLORIA MOON: Because you can't keep one twenty minutes without a gun in your hand. Every man that comes in here is somebody's husband, and there ain't but one way to keep him home.

GLORIA MOON:

GLORIA MOON:

The courtyard.

COBALT BLUE: (Putting the CHILDREN to work on the peas.)
All I got to do, and now I got to watch
you all too. You getting too big to put
down and too little to stay up.

A TRICK BABY: How come they never let us stay for the
party?

COBALT BLUE: Calm yourself. Pretty soon you'll be the
party.

A TRICK BABY: How soon is soon?

COBALT BLUE: What's the matter with you all? You can't
wait, can you?

A TRICK BABY: I can do all that stuff the grown-up girls
do.

COBALT BLUE: Grown-ups? Girl, your mama ain't much
older'n you are.

A TRICK BABY: How old is my daddy?

COBALT BLUE: Your guess is as good as mine.

A TRICK BABY: Guess, Cobalt, guess!

COBALT BLUE: Oh, somewhere between fifteen and eighty.
A tall short white-black man in a sailor
suit who come from a poor rich family that
lived in Texas and Baton Rouge selling in-
surance on horseback in the navy.

A TRICK BABY: Did he like my mama?

COBALT BLUE: Did he like her? Oh, baby, he loved her and
she loved him. Nothing in this world could
separate 'em, for, good lord, a whole twenty
minutes, maybe more!

A TRICK BABY: How come he leave her?

COBALT BLUE: That's the way it is, darling. That's al-
ways the way it is.

ACT I, Scene 7

The courtyard.

COBALT BLUE: (Putting the CHILDREN to work on the peas.)
All I got to do, and now I got to watch
you all too. You getting too big to put
down and too little to stay up.

A TRICK BABY: How come they never let us stay for the
party?

COBALT BLUE: Calm yourself. Pretty soon you'll be the
party.

A TRICK BABY: How soon is soon?

COBALT BLUE: What's the matter with you all? You can't
wait, can you?

A TRICK BABY: I can do all that stuff the grown-up girls
do.

COBALT BLUE: Grown-ups? Girl, your mama ain't much
older'n you are.

A TRICK BABY: How old is my daddy?

COBALT BLUE: Your guess is as good as mine.

A TRICK BABY: Guess, Cobalt, guess!

COBALT BLUE: Oh, somewhere between fifteen and eighty.
A tall short white black man in a sailor
suit who come from a poor rich family that
lived in Texas and Baton Rouge selling in-
surance on horseback in the navy.

A TRICK BABY: Did he like my mama?

COBALT BLUE: Did he like her? Oh, baby, he loved her and
she loved him. Nothing in this world could
separate 'em, for, good Lord, a whole twenty
minutes, maybe more!

A TRICK BABY: How come he leave her?

COBALT BLUE: That's the way it is, darling. That's al-
ways the way it is.

A TRICK BABY: Can't you follow where he go?

COBALT BLUE: You poor little ignorant things. If they ever do close down the District like they keep sayin' I suspect it'll be mercy in disguise. Much as it's going to hurt me and everybody else in here makin' good money for a change, it might do you all a favor.

A TRICK BABY: Are they closing down our house?

COBALT BLUE: There's some talk, like always. Not just this house, baby, the whole neighborhood.

A TRICK BABY: How come?

COBALT BLUE: Beats me. Some old white man named Storey figured out a way to keep sportin' people -- that's them -- away from other people.

A TRICK BABY: What other people?

COBALT BLUE: (Laughs.) North Basin and Iberville ain't the whole world darlin'. There's a great big city out there. It's got gardens and levees and schoolhouses and markets. Talk about pretty! You'll see it maybe one of these days. Nothing but flowers.

A TRICK BABY: We got flowers. (Runs to one of the potted plants in the courtyard.)

COBALT BLUE: That's true. We do. But when I get to thinking in a memory kind of way it seems like flowers were prettier and smelled better to me when I was a girl. But I guess every old woman sitting around shelling peas thinks things was prettier when they was young. But, oh My Lord, you should have seen it when I was a girl. Way back, I'm talking about 1850. That really was something. And before that, when my mama was a girl. I used to hear her talk about New Orleans then. Now that was way, way back. 1792. You know what she told me? When the river was high you could look up and see tall white ships sailing in the sky. The Mississippi River is higher than the ground down here, so if you stood in a certain place at evening, you could see them

COBALT BLUE:

floating -- just like clouds. And Indians swarmed all over the levee selling herbs and pots and cloth. And plantation owners in white suits came in carriages to buy dresses and diamonds for their wives. English wasn't even a little language then. If you walked around you'd hear Spanish, Portuguese, German, Italian and French mostly of course. But almost no English. She say Africans walked all over this town in their own clothes. Their own clothes -- from Africa. They was slaves from Santo Domingo and Africa, but they didn't wear those old missionary dresses and pants. And they didn't wear no tied up shoes. Oh no. They had robes in Sapphire blue and green and yellow the color of butter. And not only did they wear their own clothes, they spoke their own language and used their own true names. You know there were places in the city and right outside of it where no white man could set foot and expect to come out alive. African places. And sometimes at night or on Sunday -- that was the free day for slaves -- they would go into the very middle of town, to a big square and they'd have drums and flutes and rattling things. And right there under a sky full of stars they'd dance and dance and dance. (She drifts off in memory.)

A TRICK BABY:

We got dancing.

COBALT BLUE:

That stuff? Shoot. I mean real dancing. Where whole lines of men and whole lines of women would talk to the ground with their feet. People come from all over just to see. They still dance there and people still come to see them, but the way she told it, it was better then. Just like I'm telling you it was better when I was little. Flowers. Nothing but flowers and big white houses and the cabins, where we lived -- well nothing much to them, I can tell you, but everywhere we looked -- flowers and mimosa trees and birds like you can't find nowhere anymore.

A TRICK BABY:

What kind of house you all have?

COBALT BLUE:

One room. Sitting up on some bricks. Holes in the floor so when we scrubbed we could just pour the water right through to the

COBALT BLUE: dirt underneath. Had to watch out for snakes though.

COBALT BLUE:
A TRICK BABY: You all had snakes?

COBALT BLUE: Sure did.

A TRICK BABY: You wasn't scared?

COBALT BLUE: They didn't do us much harm. The snakes that caused the trouble -- the ones I should have been scared of didn't crawl on the ground. They walked upright. And I'll tell you one thing. Those upright snakes? Drive you stone out of your mind.

COBALT BLUE: (Singing "New Orleans.")

A TRICK BABY: Cobalt, what's a African?

COBALT BLUE: Dear God.

In Premier's bedroom.

JOHNNY: Here. Take this. That's fifty dollars there, and if you need some more --

BEAU: That's not what I came all the way over here for.

JOHNNY: (Quietly.) I know you didn't. (Walks to French Windows which look out on the courtyard.)

(While his back is turned, BEAU opens a bureau drawer.)

JOHNNY: (Turning around.) Look, Son, I can't explain it. I just can't explain it to you. Maybe when you older you'll understand.

BEAU: Suppose I don't get no older.

JOHNNY: What?

BEAU: Suppose I die tomorrow.

JOHNNY: Don't talk crazy.

BEAU: I mean it. Talk to me like I was going to die tomorrow. What would you say to me now, if you knew that this was my last day?

JOHNNY: I'll tell you that -- that I (Stops.) That I ain't a bad man. And that your ma is a good woman.

BEAU: Uh huh.

JOHNNY: I got married when I was sixteen. Your mother too. Life just came down on me. Every nickel took a gallon of sweat to get, and still it wasn't enough. I never saw nothing of this life. Nothing. I never had no -- fun.

BEAU: You call this fun?

JOHNNY: Well, sometimes maybe not, but, look. (Shows his shirt.) Silk! And looka here. (Opens a closet. It's full of suits, etc. Opens a drawer.) Ever see anything like that?

BEAU: No. I guess not (Stealing an item of clothing.).

JOHNNY: Now I'm going to keep on taking care of you and your ma. Don't think I ain't. I meant to send you all something long before now, but I didn't know what the weather was like back home.

BEAU: Weather's fine back home. Keep your silk shirts, hear? And your spats. We don't need nothing from you. I just came cause Ma asked me to look in on you and see how you was doing. Now I can tell her you doing fine. Pimpin' agrees with you.

JOHNNY: Don't talk to me like that.

BEAU: Oh sorry, Daddy, I forgot where I was.

JOHNNY: You get the hell out of my face.

BEAU: Be a pleasure.

JOHNNY: I don't have to explain nothing to you, you hear?

(SATAN knocks on the glass of the French doors. He is standing in the courtyard.)

SATAN: hey, brother. We got a game starting. You in or you not in?

JOHNNY: I'm in, I'm in.
(To BEAU.) Don't let me catch you back here no more. (Exits.)

SATAN: (To BEAU.) See you later.

BEAU: No you won't.

SATAN: Satan sees everybody later -- or sooner.
(Menacingly pulls out his knife and begins to pare his nails.

(When BEAU sees the knife he's startled.)

SATAN: Don't be scared. (he sings "Satan's Song.")

SATAN: SATAN AIN'T VILE
I JUST GOT STYLE
SATAN AIN'T ROUGH
I JUST CUT MY STUFF
SATAN AIN'T MEAN
I JUST SO CLEAN
ASK ANY FOOL IF SATAN'S CRUEL
AND YOU'LL HEAR HIM SAY
SATAN GETS HIS WAY
FROM SIDEWALK TRAMPS
TO SOCIETY VAMPS
SATAN GETS HIS WAY
SATAN GETS HIS WAY
ASK THE CHUMPS WHO ARE BREATHING DIRT
CAUSE I GOT MY FEELINGS HURT
IF SATAN GETS HIS WAY
OH SATAN GETS HIS WAY
ASK THE PIMPS LOCKED IN JAIL
ASK THE WOMEN OUT ON BAIL
IF SATAN GOT HIS WAY
OH YEAH, SATAN GETS HIS WAY.
MY MOTHER NEVER UNDERSTOOD MY SMILE
MY MOTHER NEVER 'PRECIATED MY STYLE
I TOLD HER SHE HURT ME
ASKING HER BABY BOY NOT TO ENJOY HIS TOY
I GOT A TASTE FOR THE WHOLE HUMAN RACE
BUT I CAN GET WILD IF YOU MESS WITH MY STYLE
SATAN SHO LIKES HIS STYLE!

TM Lyrics

(SATAN exits after his song and dance. BEAU starts to leave, snaps his fingers and remembers. Turns around and collects the fingernails that Satan has dropped. He carefully places them in his pocket and is about to leave when he hears, coming through the courtyard window, the horn music. He goes toward it in courtyard. CLARENCE DEAL is playing "Sweet Substitute." The music begins to manipulate Beau very much like the movements he experienced with the women he had fantasized. He is seduced utterly.)

By CLARE figure that dominates the space behind her, towering above her torso and wielding a giant rattle. She lifts a bottle of rum to her lips, coughs a hot breath and hands it to CALLY who takes a quick sip and hands it back. JESSIE smiles as CALLY pats her chest, shuts her eyelids and sucks in a mouthful of cooling air. Then JESSIE extends her hands to CALLY and repeats:

JESSICA FIVE: The nail clippings
 All from his left hand
 Your morning water
 Your wedding band

 The clothes he wore
 Next to his skin
 His picture
 A long nat pin

CALLY delivers the items as JESSIE requests them. JESSIE flourishes open a red kerchief and drops the nail clippings into it. She places the picture wrapped in the underwear over the clippings, gathers the corners of the kerchief together, weaving them through the wedding band. CALLY takes the nat pin from her nat, uncovering her head, and hands the pin to JESSIE who pierces the kerchief with it and begins to sing in a sustained obligato, spiraling up the scale. She bends CALLY backward, placing the gris-gris on her groin, sprinkling it with a few drops of the morning water Cally has brought to her in a small jar.

At this moment, the drums strike up the ceremonial rhythm and JESSIE commences to sing a voodoo chant which is answered antiphonally by the five male MUSICIANS. She calls forth the ELEMENTS:

JESSICA FIVE: A.Wind...Water...Fire...Earth

Each element is a female celebrant who cleverly manipulates five props: various fans for wind; liquid filled gourds for water; candles for fire; sprigs and branches of healing plants for earth.

ACT I, Scene 9

Jessica Five's house. SHE is seated on her flowered throne. her body sways in small continuous circles as she moans. her guttural sounds are echoed by the four DRUMMERS that flank her. Intermittently the moaning resolves into a clicking of her teeth as she draws in a deep breath. This sound is reinforced by a seemingly GIANT figure that dominates the space behind her, towering above her throne and wielding a giant rattle. She lifts a bottle of rum to her lips, coughs a hot breath and hands it to CALLY who takes a quick sip and hands it back. JESSIE smiles as CALLY pats her chest, shuts her eyelids and sucks in a mouthful of cooling air. Then JESSIE extends her hands to CALLY and repeats:

JESSICA FIVE: The nail clippings
 All from his left hand
 Your morning water
 Your wedding band

 The clothes he wore
 Next to his skin
 his picture
 A long hat pin

CALLY delivers the items as JESSIE requests them. JESSIE flourishes open a red kerchief and drops the nail clippings into it. She places the picture wrapped in the underwear over the clippings, gathers the corners of the kerchief together, weaving them through the wedding band. CALLY takes the hat pin from her hat, uncovering her head, and hands the pin to JESSIE who pierces the kerchief with it and begins to sing in a sustained obligato, spiraling up the scale. She bends CALLY backward, placing the gris-gris on her groin, sprinkling it with a few drops of the morning water Cally has brought to her in a small jar.

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JESSICA FIVE: ...Wind...Water...Fire...Earth

Each element is a female celebrant who cleverly manipulates five props: various fans for wind; liquid filled gourds for water; candles for fire; sprigs and branches of healing plants for earth.

THEY dance and join into the antiphonal singing, placing their props on CALLY's body. JESSIE draws herself up on the seat of her throne and stands as the throne revolves to reveal...

JESSICA FIVE: The Unknown Element.

...a huge black doll. Around her rotund figure she wears a dress covered with cabalistic signs and elements. A necklace comprised of snake vertebrae ending in a silver encased alligator's fang hangs from her plump and neckless shoulders. From her perch, JESSIE sprinkles the gathering with rum and finishes by placing the bottle to the lips of the huge black doll.

A strange hissing seems to come from the black GODDESS as her head turns completely to reveal the black tignon-tied head of the fifth CELEBRANT singing. JESSIE begins to shiver. A SERPENT emerges from the black skirts. The UNKNOWN ELEMENT's voice rises, octave upon octave, as the SNAKE rises upright, balancing on its narrow tail. It falls suddenly to the ground and with it, the four ELEMENTS drop to the floor writhing, hissing and crying strangely.

The SNAKE retraces its path under the voluminous skirts and a DANCING FIGURE emerges slowly, transformed into the serpent god, Zombi. He slithers over the supine ELEMENTS, speaking and singing hissing syllabants until he reaches CALLY.

Within THEIR dance, he coils his serpentine torso about her and then lifts her. The CELEBRANTS circle about the duo. As the ritual climaxes, CALLY is dropped to the floor; the ZOMBI disappears from where he came; the throne revolves to once again reveal JESSIE seated. The drums and the dance crescendo.

JESSICA FIVE: In five days he will be back in your bed.

ACT I: CURTAIN

ACT II, Scene 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 drill 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 and hand. There is no eating going on, but there is much smoke and drink.

There is a kind of cashier's stand where SATAN reigns, dispenses numbers, makes change, issues fresh decks etc., but from which he descends frequently to monitor the games going on below him and to settle disputes. Mostly, however, he is guarding his money, making sure the house gets its share of winnings.

ACT II

At least four kinds of games are going on, each of which occupies a part of the room, and each of which has its own dedicated PLAYERS who are committed to that game and no other. The games are: Numbers (polly or giss), Dutch (an intense, quiet, three-hand poker), Pool, and Craps.

The scene opens with a dance involving all the MEN playing these games. At one point, the lights dim to shafts of light over the various game tables. All else is black. The players take their positions.

NUMBERS:	5 15 45 I dreamed my sister was still alive.
CRAPS:	Fever in the morning, chills at night But an add and a nina will make it all right.
DUTCH:	Two bits, four bits, six bits, a dollar.
NUMBERS:	Nasherman gig got a ring around the collar.
CRAPS:	My baby needs a new pair of shoes. She can't get 'em if I lose.
POOL:	Knock it sock in the side pocket.
DUTCH:	I thought you had a tiger swinging by the tail.
CRAPS:	Box cars don't carry no freight.
POOL:	Give me a dime; one more time. Stick that sucker in his behind.

ACT II, Scene 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 and hand. There is no eating going on, but there is much smoke and drink.

There is a kind of cashier's stand where SATAN reigns, dispenses numbers, makes change, issues fresh decks etc., but from which he descends frequently to monitor the games going on below him and to settle disputes. Mostly, however, he is guarding his money, making sure the house gets its share of winnings.

At least four kinds of games are going on, each of which occupies a part of the room, and each of which has its own dedicated PLAYERS who are committed to that game and no other. The games are: Numbers (policy or gigs); Cotch (an intense, quiet, three-hand poker); Pool; and Craps.

The scene opens with a dance involving all the MEN playing these games. At one point, the lights dim to shafts of light over the various game tables. All else is black. The players take their positions.

NUMBERS:	5 15 45 I dreamed my sister was still alive.
CRAPS:	Fever in the morning, chills at night But an ada and a nina will make it all right.
COTCH:	Two bits, four bits, six bits, a dollar.
NUMBERS:	Washerwoman gig got a ring around the collar.
CRAPS:	My baby needs a new pair of shoes. She can't get 'em if I lose.
POOL:	Knock it sock in the side pocket.
COTCH:	I thought you had a tiger swinging by the tail.
CRAPS:	Box cars don't carry no freight.
POOL:	Give me a dime; one more time. Stick that sucker in his behind.

NUMBERS: Scene 2 4 11 44 Soapy water and dirty clothes.

CRAPS: Look down rider, spot me in the dark.
When I calls these dice, break a rich man's
heart.

COTCH: Cotch! 3 6
This fool is rich!

CRAPS: Little Joe, Little Joe,
Everywhere this poor man go.

(At some point during the dance, SATAN places a bag of silver dollars behind his grill, or somewhere carelessly in view. During one of the times when the stage is darkened, it disappears. SATAN notices it and accosts SWEET JUSTICE who was nearest to it and whose Spanish American War uniform is full of bags, watches, diamond rings and other items he has stolen and which are for sale. He is a walking bazaar.

SWEET permits SATAN to search him, but nothing is found and SATAN, always ready to settle an argument terminally, is barely prevented from cutting SWEET JUSTICE's throat.

After a frenzied dance concerning this violence, the MEN return to their places and, serenely, the games go on.)

LA PREMIER: You do work.

JOHNNY: I mean real work.

LA PREMIER: Come on, baby. You hardly made a quarter out of that river. What you trying to tell me? You tired of silk shirts and spats on your shoes? You not tired of Ana, are you?

JOHNNY: how could I be?

LA PREMIER: Then what?

JOHNNY: I don't like to see you smiling at other men.

LA PREMIER: Clients.

JOHNNY: You don't have to have clients, do you? Ana, you can do anything, anything. You're good with figures, people like you, you know how to make a business work. You don't have to stay in this place.

ACT II, Scene 2

Courtyard and Ana La Premier's house. ANA and JOHNNY are having an irritable conversation.

JOHNNY: Now, Ana. Let's get out now. If they don't do it this year, they'll do it next. We can take what we have, go off somewhere: Jackson, Atlanta, anywhere. We'll buy a house and live like normal people. Just the two of us. I'll go to work again.

LA PREMIER: Something else is bothering you. Not all that talk about closing down the District. Somebody's always trying to close it, or move it or own it. It won't happen, I'm telling you and if it does, it'll just crop up somewhere else. Now come over here and tell me what's really on your mind.

JOHNNY: I can't be just a fancy man. It ain't in me.

LA PREMIER: You telling me you want to go home.

JOHNNY: No, no. I never thought I'd hear myself say it, but -- I want to work.

LA PREMIER: You do work.

JOHNNY: I mean real work.

LA PREMIER: Come on, baby. You hardly made a quarter out of that river. What you trying to tell me? You tired of silk shirts and spats on your shoes? You not tired of Ana, are you?

JOHNNY: How could I be?

LA PREMIER: Then what?

JOHNNY: I don't like to see you smiling at other men.

LA PREMIER: Clients.

JOHNNY: You don't have to have clients, do you? Ana, you can do anything, anything. You're good with figures, people like you, you know how to make a business work. You don't have to stay in this place.

LA PREMIER: This place is mine. I own it. I came up like those trick babies with nothing but a doll and a pair of drawers. The drawers I threw away, but the doll I kept. To remind me. Now I'm the Madam, I'm the boss. You want me to give that up? So I can stay home and cook your meals?

JOHNNY: You don't have to cook my meals. You can go in another business. Buy a restaurant, or a a a

LA PREMIER: A what?

JOHNNY: You like this business, don't you?

LA PREMIER: It's my life.

JOHNNY: You can change it.

LA PREMIER: I can't. I can't live any other way.

JOHNNY: Why? Why can't you?

(LA PREMIER sings "I Prefer the Pleasure.")

LA PREMIER: I PREFER TO RESIST AN UNEVENTFUL LIFE
NO BUTTER CHURNING, BISCUITS BURNING, MELON RINDS
NO BABY BLANKETS HANGING OUT ON MY LINE
NO KITCHEN GARDEN IN THE REAR

CLARENCE: I BEG TO DECLINE A HUMDRUM LIFE
BEAU: AVOID THE MILKIN AND THE QUILTIN STUFFED IN CHINKS
CLARENCE: NO DIRTY DISHES WAITIN FOR ME IN MY SINK
BEAU: OLD YARD DOG LYING NEAR

CLARENCE: SOME WOMEN ARE CONTENT WITH WHAT THEY FIND
BUT I REQUEST THE PLEASURE OF MY MIND

BEAU: Yeah. Yeah. That's it.

TM Lyric

LA PREMIER: I CHOOSE TO AVOID A TREADMILL LIFE
 NO ROCKING CHAIR, SILVERED HAIR ON MY HEAD
 NO HEATED WATER BOTTLES WARMING UP MY BED
 NO CARPET SLIPPERS ON THE FLOOR

I STAND ALOOF FROM A MUNDANE LIFE
 NO SPINNING WHEEL, NO FISHING REEL ON MY PORCH
 NO STANDING BY THE WINDOW WITH A LIGHTED TORCH
 NO HONEY SUCKLE ROUND MY DOOR

SOME WOMEN ARE CONTENT WITH A GREAT DEAL LESS
 BUT I REQUEST THE PLEASURE OF MY FLESH

(They both exit. She with her tapping stick; he entangled in her rhythm.)

(BEAU enters the courtyard with his horn. He sits for a moment. Begins to try out a note or two -- to get someone's attention. Nothing happens. He tries again. Nothing. He waits. CLARENCE pokes his head out of the window. BEAU does not see him. CLARENCE leaves. Returns with his own instrument. Plays a phrase. BEAU jumps and turns around. CLARENCE plays another. BEAU answers with his own horn. Their "conversation" continues until it becomes a duet. All OTHERS come into the courtyard and enjoy the music. At the end they applaud.)

CLARENCE: Well, how 'bout that? Ain't he something?

BEAU: Will you teach me?

CLARENCE: You like music, huh?

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

CLARENCE: Oh yeah? You mean it's like a part of you that was there before you was -- a part of yourself that stood on the road and waited for you to find it, and be it?

BEAU: Yeah. Yeah. That's it.

CLARENCE: You mean you rely on it, to help you know what you think and what you feel when there's no other way to know it?

BEAU: That's right. That's how it is.

CLARENCE: Well, I have to warn you. Music is like a tree. When you climb way up high into it, 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, but let me tell you. Some people are wild about this music. But before you start thinking it's all gravy, I have to tell you that 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: Because it makes them think and feel things they don't want to think or feel. Now in here, everybody's loose. They ain't scared. You know what I mean. And for Negroes, well it's what keeps us men. It's a way of dealing with the hurt. Not denying it, but dealing with it in a way that keeps us men. Cause for us things don't never get no better. And a little pretty noise is the only way to make it through. I call it noise, but you know what it is? A weapon. A secret weapon. They can't kill a man's music and they can't kill a man who knows that. It's what you send to your friend if he was in trouble and there was no way to get help. It's the way we talk about what's inside.

BEAU: Just teach me, Mr. Deal. Teach me.

(JOHNNY enters with ANA.)

JOHNNY: What is this?
(To BEAU.) You back in here? I thought I told you never to come back in here!

SATAN: Let him stay.

JOHNNY: Over my dead body.

SATAN: You jealous, man. That's all.

JOHNNY: You change your mouth or I'm gonna change your teeth.

SATAN: Did I hear you say something about a dead body?

CLARENCE: Hey! Hey! No cause for alarm. Let him make a little noise for the boys. 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 still a kid, Clarence. Nothing but a baby.

TRICK BABIES: What you say? Nothing but a baby?

JOHNNY: You heard me.

A TRICK BABY: He's older than me.

JOHNNY: Will you get these children away from me? Everyone of them needs to be in somebody's school.

A TRICK BABY: What's a school?

CLARENCE: A school is where you sit in a chair all day.

A TRICK BABY: What for?

CLARENCE: To learn something, that's what for. So you can make a living.

A TRICK BABY: We already know how to make a living. We want to sit in a chair, and...

(The TRICK BABIES sing "If We Can't Sell It.")

TRICK BABIES:

IF WE CAN'T SELL IT

KEEP SITTIN ON IT

BEFORE WE GIVE IT AWAY

YOU'VE GOT TO BUY, DON'T

CARE HOW MUCH YOU WANT IT

WE MEAN JUST WHAT WE SAY

JUST FEEL THAT NICE OLD BOTTOM BUILT

FOR WEAR OR TEAR

WE REALLY HATE TO PART WITH

SUCH A LOVELY CHAIR

IF WE CAN'T SELL IT

KEEP SITTIN ON IT

BEFORE WE GIVE IT AWAY

YOU'VE GOT TO BUY, DON'T

CARE HOW MUCH YOU WANT IT

WE MEAN JUST WHAT WE SAY

WHEN YOU WANT SOMETHIN GOOD

YOU'VE GOT TO SPEND YOUR JACK

WE GUARANTEE YOU'LL NEVER

WANT YOUR MONEY BACK

IF WE CAN'T SELL IT

KEEP SITTIN ON IT

BEFORE WE GIVE IT AWAY

FIRST WOMAN:

FOURTH WOMAN:

FIRST WOMAN:

THIRD WOMAN:

SECOND WOMAN:

FIRST WOMAN:

ACT II, Scene 3

Cally's living room. Three women friends, WIVES OF THE TRAWLERS are assembled. A FOURTH enters.

FOURTH WOMAN: Is she dead?

FIRST WOMAN: You hush! No, she ain't dead. She's lying down in her bed trying to get a little peace and quiet. Her sisters are in there with her now.

FOURTH WOMAN: I heard she was dead or dying or asleep or something.

SECOND WOMAN: It's a long way from sleep to dying.

FOURTH WOMAN: Maybe not as long as you think.

FIRST WOMAN: Will you hush? The girl is tired is all.

THIRD WOMAN: Three days in the bed is a mighty lot of tired.

FOURTH WOMAN: Three days? Where's that boy of hers?

THIRD WOMAN: I heard he been sneaking in and out of the District too.

FOURTH WOMAN: Oh my Lord. These men! Soon's they get old enough to buckle their own belt they go find some place they can unbuckle it.

FIRST WOMAN: That's not it. He's taking music lessons over in there.

FOURTH WOMAN: Oh yeah? Who's teaching?

FIRST WOMAN: Clarence Deal. You know. Mary Deal's oldest son.

THIRD WOMAN: Oh yes. I know him. That whole family plays music. They say he's awful good.

SECOND WOMAN: I don't care how good he is. Beau shouldn't stay away from home so much. His mama needs him.

FIRST WOMAN: Her sisters see after her.

SECOND WOMAN: Them two? Good God. If I ever get sick please don't let them stand at my bedside. I believe I'd just as soon pass on.

FOURTH WOMAN: What I want to know is what got her down so? Look like she was doing fine a few days back: cleaned this house from roof to floor.

FIRST WOMAN: That was right after she went to see Jessie Five.

FOURTH WOMAN: So?

FIRST WOMAN: So. Jessie Five said five days. In five days he be back and --

FOURTH WOMAN: And nothing happened.

FIRST WOMAN: Not a thing. And it's the seventh day.

THIRD WOMAN: I can't believe that. Jessie Five's stuff always works.

SECOND WOMAN: Well what she gonna do. Stay in bed forever?

FOURTH WOMAN: Let me tell you women something. Some men are hard, you hear. Hard, and anybody unlucky enough to get that kind is in trouble, deep trouble. Trouble even Jessie Five can't fix. Don't nothing work on that kind but a steel mind and an iron fist. Listen here. (She sings "They Got to Get it, Bring it and Put it Right Here.")

FOURTH WOMAN: I'VE HAD A MAN FOR FIFTEEN YEARS
GIVE HIM HIS ROOM AND BOARD
ONCE HE WAS LIKE A CADILLAC
NOW HE'S LIKE AN OLD WORN OUT FORD
HE NEVER BROUGHT ME A LOUSY DIME
AND PUT IT IN MY HAND
SO THERE'LL BE SOME CHANGES FROM NOW ON
ACCORDING TO MY PLAN

FOURTH WOMAN:

HE'S GOT TO GET IT, BRING IT, AND PUT IT
RIGHT HERE

ON' ELSE HE'S GONNA KEEP IT OUT THERE

IF HE MUST STEAL IT, BEG IT, OR BORROW IT
SOMEWHERE

LONG AS HE GETS IT, I DON'T CARE

I'M TIRED OF BUYING PORK CHOPS TO GREASE
HIS FAT LIPS

AND HE'LL HAVE TO FIND ANOTHER PLACE FOR TO
PARK HIS OLD HIPS

HE MUST GET IT, BRING IT, AND PUT IT RIGHT
HERE

ON' ELSE HE'S GONNA KEEP IT OUT THERE

THE BEE GETS THE HONEY AND BRINGS IT TO
THE COMB

ELSE HE'S KICKED OUT OF HIS HOME SWEET HOME
TO SHOW YOU THEY BRINGS IT WATCH THE DOG
AND THE CAT

EVERYTHING EVEN BRINGS IT FROM A MULE TO A
GNAT

THE ROOSTER GETS THE WORM AND BRINGS IT TO
THE HEN

THAT OUGHT TO BE A TIP TO ALL THEM NO GOOD MEN

THE GROUND HOG EVEN BRINGS IT AND PUTS IT
IN HIS HOLE

SO MY MAN IS GOT TO BRING IT DOGGONE HIS SOUL
HE'S GOT TO GET IT, BRING IT, AND PUT IT
RIGHT HERE

ON' ELSE HE'S GONNA KEEP IT OUT THERE

IF HE MUST STEAL IT, BEG IT, OR BORROW IT
SOMEWHERE

LONG AS HE GETS IT (CHILE), I DON'T CARE

I'M GONNA TELL HIM LIKE THE CHINAMAN

WHEN YOU DON'T BRINGUM CHECK

YOU DON'T GETUM LAUNDRY

IF YOU BREAKUM DAMN NECK

YOU GOT TO GET IT, BRING IT, AND PUT IT
RIGHT HERE

ON' ELSE YOU GONNA KEEP IT OUT THERE

(CALLY enters in her slip rushing behind ELISE and FAYE whom she is forcing toward the front door.)

CALLY: Out! Out!

FAYE: ...And he'll never be nothing.

ELISE: Never. Nothing.

FOURTH WOMAN: I thought you said she was sick.

FAYE: You can't get water from a stone.

ELISE: Or blood from a turnip.

CALLY: If you want to help me then help me, but don't come in here signifying on me and my son and my husband!

FAYE: You're going to be sorry.

ELISE: You're going to need us.

CALLY: I don't need you as much as you need me. You need to pity somebody, you need to feel better than somebody. I believe you're glad he left me because it makes you feel good and holy. You can't help me because you don't know what I feel. You never loved nobody. Out! Get out!

(SISTERS exit - CALLY paces -- furious.)

FIRST WOMAN: Come on, honey.

SECOND WOMAN: It's going to be all right. Poor Cally.

CALLY: Get away from me! Get away. I'm sick of all that. "It's gonna be all right." It ain't gonna be all right. It's never gonna be all right. I'm sorry. I know you mean well, but I can't take any more "Poor Cally, Poor little Cally." I'm sick to death of it. I'm not poor little Cally. I'm Calla Lily, you hear? Calla Lily and Calla Lily is not a little girl. She's a woman.

FOURTH WOMAN: The girl is gone. There's a grown up woman standing here.

CALLY: Nobody's gonna just take my man from me.
Nobody. You got that?

FIRST WOMAN: I got it.

CALLY: You got it?

SECOND WOMAN: I got it, girl.

CALLY: And you? You got it?

THIRD WOMAN: We got it.

CALLY: Okay! Now! Battle stations!

FOURTH WOMAN: What you gonna do?

CALLY: I'm gonna take what is mine.

FIRST WOMAN: Oh Lord.

CALLY: I'm gonna hold what I have.

SECOND WOMAN: Praise His name.

CALLY: I'm going in there and snatch him out by
the scruff of his neck if I have to.

THIRD WOMAN: Sweet Jesus.

CALLY: I'll pull him out by his ankles if I have to.

FOURTH WOMAN: Save us.

CALLY: And I need shoes!

ALL: Amen.

FOURTH WOMAN: I got some shoes.

CALLY: Get 'em.

THIRD WOMAN: I got some real pretty stockings.

CALLY: Get 'em.

SECOND WOMAN: (To FIRST WOMAN.) Didn't that woman whose
house you clean give you a dress?

FIRST WOMAN: Sure did. Got a grease spot on it.

CALLY: Get it, girl.

ALL: Scene 4 Get it, girl.

Get it, girl.

La Premier's part Get it, girl.

(The phrase "Get it, girl" is -

at first, a reference to go get the clothes.

then, as repeated, becomes a rhythmic chant to Cally as they dress her, fix her hair and she becomes glamorous in a loud tacky raiment.

then, the phrase becomes a chorus for themselves as well as Cally, as she struts around completely dressed

then, as she exits, it becomes a battle cry.)

SINGLE VOICE: (After a huge swell of voices saying "Get it, girl.") Get him, girl. Get him!

All the while CALLY is surrounded by COUPLES and TRIPLES dancing, fondling one another. SALAN comes over and lifts the hem of her dress. She is fighting him off when SOMEBODY breaks a bottle over ANOTHER's head. There is a lull while a FEM watch the hit MAN slump to the floor. A THIRD MAN punches the KITTER. ANA sallies over to see what is going on. JOHNNY follows her and pulls the fighting MAN apart.

Into the space (in movement as well as visual space.) CALLY spies ANA and JOHNNY. He starts. ANA see her too and calls "Ah!" The music stops as SYMBIOTESE stares at her. CALLY is thoroughly non-plussed. Hurt, angry, completely out of her element.

Into the silence ANA saunters forward with her walking stick and teases CALLY with it. CALLY trips and stumbles before the stick. ANA darts forward but is held back by CLANK who shakes his head as if to say "This is not your affair." JOHNNY moves in to take ANA's stick away. They stand for a moment and look into each other's eyes holding onto the stick. JOHNNY's grasp is firm. ANA begins to stroke the stick up and down, up and down suggestively. JOHNNY's hold on the stick loosens and the stick wavers.

CALLY, outrage surfacing, kicks JOHNNY in the shins. The CROWD ooh's. JOHNNY, surprised, lets go. CALLY dances around and with him, with some aggression and then turns to ANA. ANA enters with confident aggression. The two WOMEN then dance competitively. It ends with a "draw."

JOHNNY hands ANA her walking stick if the stick is not used in the dance. He comes to CALLY and tries to take her by the arm outside to the courtyard. She resists. He prevails. CROWD picks up its activity but soundlessly and increasingly darkened until CALLY and JOHNNY are alone in courtyard.

ACT II, Scene 4

La Premier's parlor.

CLARENCE DEAL is at the piano. BEAU is near him playing occasional riff. A crowd is watching the Naked Dance: HOUSE WOMEN, ANA, JOHNNY, JOHNS -- black and white -- in Navy uniforms, business suits, white planter's suits, TRICK BABIES. POLICEMEN, etc.

Toward the end of this dance, CALLY enters. She is in some disarray -- hat wrongly tipped, sash loose perhaps. When she sees the woman dancing naked, she opens her mouth and covers and uncovers her eyes. Before she can register fully what she sees, a SAILOR puts his arm around her and kisses her neck.

As the dance is completed, there is riotous uproar of applause and calls. CALLY struggles free of the SAILOR and bumps into two TRICK BABIES, dressed only in woman's panties of the day and holding dolls. A MAN picks one of the TRICK BABIES up high in the air. A PROSTITUTE snatches the CHILD down, slaps the MAN and sends the two CHILDREN off.

All the while CALLY is surrounded by COUPLES and TRIPLES dancing, fondling one another. SATAN comes over and lifts the hem of her dress. She is fighting him off when SOMEBODY breaks a bottle over ANOTHER's head. There is a lull while a FEW watch the hit MAN slump to the floor. A THIRD MAN punches the HITTER. ANA sallies over to see what is going on. JOHNNY follows her and pulls the fighting MEN apart.

Into the space (in movement as well as visual space.) CALLY spies ANA and JOHNNY. He starts. BEAU see her too and calls "Ma!" The music stops as EVERYBODY stares at her. CALLY is thoroughly non-plussed. Hurt, angry, completely out of her element.

Into the silence ANA saunters forward with her walking stick and teases CALLY with it. CALLY trips and stumbles before the stick. BEAU darts forward but is held back by CLARENCE who shakes his head as if to say "This is not your affair." JOHNNY moves in to take Ana's stick away. They stand for a moment and look into each other's eyes holding onto the stick. JOHNNY's grasp is firm. ANA begins to stroke the stick up and down, up and down suggestively. JOHNNY's hold on the stick loosens and the stick wavers.

CALLY, outrage surfacing, kicks JOHNNY in the shins. The CROWD ooo's. JOHNNY, surprised, lets go. CALLY dances around and with him, with some aggression and then turns to ANA. ANA enters with confident aggression. the two WOMEN then dance competitively. It ends with a "draw."

JOHNNY hands ANA her walking stick if the stick is not used in the dance. He comes to CALLY and tries to take her by the arm outside to the courtyard. She resists. He prevails. CROWD picks up its activity but soundlessly and increasingly darkened until CALLY and JOHNNY are alone in courtyard.

ACT II, Scene 5

The Courtyard.

JOHNNY starts to say something -- walks away a step or two. CALLY stands still saying nothing. She is flushed and beautiful and standing very tall. JOHNNY turns back to look at her.

JOHNNY: You look different.

CALLY: You look the same.

JOHNNY: You're not the woman I left.

CALLY: You're not the man I loved.

JOHNNY: The woman I left wore braids in her hair.

CALLY: The man I loved braided it for me.

JOHNNY: I kinda like it this way. (He reaches to touch her hair.)

(CALLY moves away.)

JOHNNY: Cally.

CALLY: Calla Lily!

JOHNNY: Calla Lily? (He sings "Calla Lily.")

JOHNNY:

To be a lyric by TM

JOHNNY: (Sings "It's Sunday". JOHNNY joins her.)

SALLY: All I know is that it's Sunday
I'd be hassled in my bed now

JOHNNY: Let us make your bed.

SALLY: Don't you see clearly? It's Sunday
I light like some lechard now

JOHNNY: Let us squeeze your lemons.

SALLY: How come you don't know it's Sunday?
A woman's heart can break by Monday
This should be the one day
You'd unraid my hair

JOHNNY: Oh yes I know it's Sunday
Let us stir us up a fire now
I shiver now on Sunday
We'd be dancing in our room now

I feel lucky when it's Sunday
Let's not put it off till Monday
I can't wait half even one day
To get "way" from here

(They dance.)

SALLY: I'm so lucky that it's Sunday
Cause when we wake up on Monday
We are going to be a long way
A long way from here

(They dance the tango and they exit.)

11.5:3

(CALLY sings "It's Sunday", JOHNNY joins her.)

TM Lync

CALLY: ALL I KNOW IS THAT IT'S SUNDAY
I'D BE RESTING IN MY BED NOW

JOHNNY: Let me make your bed.

CALLY: DON'T YOU UNDERSTAND? IT'S SUNDAY
I MIGHT LIKE SOME LEMONADE NOW

JOHNNY: Let me squeeze your lemons.

CALLY: HOW COME YOU DON'T KNOW IT'S SUNDAY?
A WOMAN'S HEART CAN BREAK BY MONDAY
THIS SHOULD BE THE ONE DAY
YOU'D UNBRAID MY HAIR

JOHNNY: OH BABE I KNOW IT'S SUNDAY
LET ME STRUM US UP A TUNE NOW
I REMEMBER HOW ON SUNDAY
WE'D BE DANCING IN OUR ROOM NOW

I FEEL LUCKY WHEN IT'S SUNDAY
LET'S NOT PUT IT OFF TILL MONDAY
I CAN'T WAIT NOT EVEN ONE DAY
TO GET 'WAY FROM HERE

(They dance.)

BOTH: I'M SO LUCKY THAT IT'S SUNDAY
CAUSE WHEN WE WAKE UP ON MONDAY
WE ARE GOIN' TO BE A LONG WAY
A LONG WAY FROM HERE

(JOHNNY takes the banjo and they exit.)

ACT II, Scene 6

Parlor of Ana La Premier's house. SWEET JUSTICE enters with a carton full of opera stockings. He is anxiously looking around.

SWEET JUSTICE: Where's everybody?

(COBALT BLUE enters.)

COBALT BLUE: Sleep. What you think?

SWEET JUSTICE: Ana?

COBALT BLUE: Sleep, I told you. It's twelve noon.

SWEET JUSTICE: Well, wake her up.

COBALT BLUE: Not me.

SWEET JUSTICE: Well somebody better.

COBALT BLUE: You want to leave 'em? You know she'll pay you exactly what you ask.

SWEET JUSTICE: I ain't asking you to wake somebody out of a sleep just to buy some stockings. I got some information, woman.

COBALT BLUE: You always do.

SWEET JUSTICE: I mean real information.

COBALT BLUE: Graveyard?

SWEET JUSTICE: Graveyard if she don't get up.

COBALT BLUE: You better not be fooling nobody.

SWEET JUSTICE: Hurry up, girl and go wake the lady.

(COBALT exits. SWEET JUSTICE opens his carton and examines the hose. SATAN comes in.)

SATAN: You got my money?

SWEET JUSTICE: I told you, man. It wasn't me.

SATAN: It was you. I need my money.

SWEET JUSTICE: You need a suitcase.

SATAN: What's that supposed to mean?

SWEET JUSTICE: Never mind. You'll find out.

(Enter ANA LA PREMIER.)

LA PREMIER: This better be good. Never felt worse in my life.

SWEET JUSTICE: Well, you gonna feel worse than that before you feel better.

SATAN: Spit it out, man. Stop cock teasin!

SWEET JUSTICE: Why don't you get out of my face?

LA PREMIER: Quit! What you wake me for?

SWEET JUSTICE: (Whispering.) They did it! You all said they wouldn't, but they did. And Mayor Behman can't do a thing about it.

(Two GIRLS come down the stairs with a JOHN.)

LA PREMIER: (To the JOHN.) Charge?

(HE nods, tying his tie and yawning.)

JOHN: Gawd, what time is it?

LA PREMIER: (To SWEET JUSTICE.) Can't do a thing about what?

SWEET JUSTICE: The Navy, that's who. This place is over!

COBALT BLUE: Oh Lord.

LA PREMIER: You know what you're talking about?

SATAN: He's lying.

SWEET JUSTICE: The City Council just met this morning. I'm telling you. The Navy say if the city don't close the District down, they will. You got till midnight the twelfth. They moving out of the Arlington and Mahogany Hall now. As we speak!

(CLARENCE and BEAU enter with their instruments.)

CLARENCE: What's going on?

(Two more GIRLS enter down the staircase: KNOCKOUT and VESUVIUS.)

VESUVIUS: What's all the racket? People trying to sleep.

SWEET JUSTICE: They shutting it down!

LA PREMIER: (Stunned.) It's true then.

(Some general moans of outrage and confusion.)

KNOCKOUT: You mean I got to go back to a crib? I don't even know where my baby doll dress is.

SWEET JUSTICE: No, fool. If they ain't gonna be no whore houses, you know they ain't gonna be no cribs. No saloons either and (To SATAN.) no gambling.

SATAN: All they can do is make it illegal. They can't make it unpopular.

(KNOCKOUT is crying.)

VESUVIUS: Shut up!

(Other GIRLS enter, a FEW gather in clusters whispering.)

COBALT BLUE: I'm too old to go looking for another job.

MISS THING: What you gonna do, Ana?

ANA: (Standing.) First I'm going to comb my hair. Then I'm going to get dressed. Then I'm going to the bank. Then I'm going to have the biggest party this district has ever seen. Everything -- on the house. Starting right now! Cobalt, open the shutters and bring me some coffee. We are open for business.

(CLARENCE starts to play the piano -- a very lively tune. The GIRLS dance with each other and the two or three MEN there. THEY drink and chat and laugh with the white SAILORS who enter a few minutes later during the dialogue below. Also during the dialogue below, SATAN and SWEET JUSTICE are arguing.)

BEAU: (To CLARENCE.) Why you grinning? You glad the District is closing?

CLARENCE: I ain't glad, exactly. But in a way, I guess I am.

BEAU: (Accusingly.) You going North, ain't you?

CLARENCE: Gotta do it. I told you, Beau, you have to move if you want to keep up with the music.

BEAU: Take me with you.

CLARENCE: I can't do that. Your daddy would kill me.

BEAU: He have to catch me first.

CLARENCE: Well, let me get situated up there, and maybe I'll send for you.

BEAU: You won't.

CLARENCE: Yes, I will. Just wait. You'll get a letter from me at the Royal Gardens in Chicago or the Deluxe Hotel or the Dreamland. All my buddies are up there. All the boys: Mutt Carey, Sugar Johnny, Tubby, George Baquet, Lawrence Duke, Roy Palmer, Freddie Keppard, Tig Chambers, Kid Ory, Joe Oliver, Tony Jackson, Minor Hall. They got a Chicago style and a New York style and a Kansas City style. Now all of it comes from right here, but you got to move with the music.

(Now the argument between SWEET JUSTICE and SATAN is physical. While CLARENCE is playing various styles and talking about his buddies up North, SATAN grabs SWEET JUSTICE's arm. SWEET JUSTICE jerks away. SATAN pulls a knife. SWEET runs. SATAN throws the knife and hits CLARENCE between his shoulder blades just as he is saying:

CLARENCE: My bag is packed and I'm ready to -- (Falls sideways in his chair.)

(Screams. The JOHNS run out immediately. BEAU grabs CLARENCE by the shoulders. EVERYBODY is still. Then, ANA rushes toward CLARENCE.)

LA PREMIER: Call the doctor! Run! Sweet, you go. Now! Satan get out of here.

(SATAN runs out.)

LA PREMIER: Oh Clarence. You of all people.

(CLARENCE coughs.)

CLARENCE. Take it out. Somebody take that nigger's steel out of my back.

(Nobody moves. Then BEAU does it. Bracing himself, he pulls it out. Some blood flows. He looks at his hands. ANA takes the knife from him and gives it to COBALT who drops it in her apron. BEAU holds CLARENCE in a sitting position.)

CLARENCE: Well you baptized now, Beau, in the blood of a musician who never left town.

BEAU: The doctor is coming.

CLARENCE: Tell Freddie and Joe I was on my way, but was -- unavoidably detained. Tell em, Beau. Tell Kid Ory boxcars don't carry freight.

CLARENCE: You go, in my place, hear me? Tell em I sent you. But when you go, don't stay long. Keep moving. The music gotta keep moving. And don't write it down. If you write it down it'll freeze to death. Keep it moving: Kansas, St. Louis, Los Angeles, Detroit, New York. Move it, Beau. All the boys gonna need some real pretty noise. (He dies.)

(BEAU lets CLARENCE's head gently rest on the back of the chair. Then he picks up his horn. SOMEBODY sobs.)

BEAU: Sssh. Let's have a little noise for the boy. (He plays "Sweet Substitute" solo.)

(Into the silence at the end of this solo, there is a loud knocking at the door.)

ANAL: AU REVOLV' FRIENDS I'VE HAD A
BALL OLD FRIENDS KEEPING MY
SHUTTERS WIDE OPEN FOR YOU
AU REVOLV' FRIENDS TAKE IT FROM
ME OLD FRIENDS THERE'LL NEVER
BE HIGHER WILDER WITH STARS
NO STARS. GIRL NO DIAMOND
GLASS IN EYES THAT HAVE BEEN
KINDNESS OTHERS NEVER
DREAMED. WE'VE HAD A
GREAT TIME OF IT AND SINCE IT'S
GONE BY FRIENDS WHY NOT SAY
BON SOIR LONELINESS GOOD
EVENING LONELINESS ON
AU REVOLV' LOVE I'VE HAD A
BALL MY LOVE. AU REVOLV'

ACT II, Scene 7

ANA LA PREMIER is standing in her bedroom. The huge brass bed with red satin pillows and spread is disassembled: head board and foot lying against the wall. Trunks are being wheeled out by two MOVERS. There is a tall mirror and a washstand, an armoire, a chaise lounge. All of this is being moved out. Next to the French doors is a brightly painted wooden chest. SHE moves toward it, kneels, unlocks it and examines the contents: a jewel box, some items of clothing, an album of photographs, a couple of pillows, some lace and finally a doll.

Outside the French doors MEN are pounding wooden slats against the glass. As they cover the doors, the light from the courtyard disappears. When the view is completely blocked out, ANA "sees" a variety of ghost MEN who come in to dance with her, toast her, give her presents. JOHNNY comes in with his banjo and SHE twirls her stick for him. Each of these MEN fade and ANA, watching them go, sings "Au Revoir, Bon Soir.")

ANA:

AU REVOIR FRIENDS I'VE HAD A
 BALL OLD FRIENDS KEEPING MY
 SHUTTERS WIDE OPEN FOR YOU
 AU REVOIR FRIENDS TAKE IT FROM
 ME OLD FRIENDS THERE'LL NEVER
 BE NIGHTS WILDER WITH STARS
 NO TEARS, GIRL NO DIAMOND
 GLEAM IN EYES THAT HAVE SEEN
 KINGDOMS OTHERS NEVER
 DREAMED. WE'VE HAD A
 GREAT TIME FRIENDS AND SINCE IT'S
 GONE MY FRIENDS WHY NOT SAY
 BON SOIR LONELINESS GOOD
 EVENING LONELINESS OH
 AU REVOIR LOVE I'VE HAD A
 BALL MY LOVE, AU REVOIR

TM Lyric

(The set continues to disappear and we hear the first notes of the funeral dirge. ANA turns her back to the orchestra and walks up stage to join the MOURNERS that have begun to form a cortage with the hearse of Clarence Deal. the MUSICIANS play until the interment at which point THEY break into the celebratory "parade" that follows. BEAU, dressed up and with a suitcase, plays and marches against the MOURNERS. ALL of the cast is there. They ALL dance until

ACT II: CURTAIN

THE END

