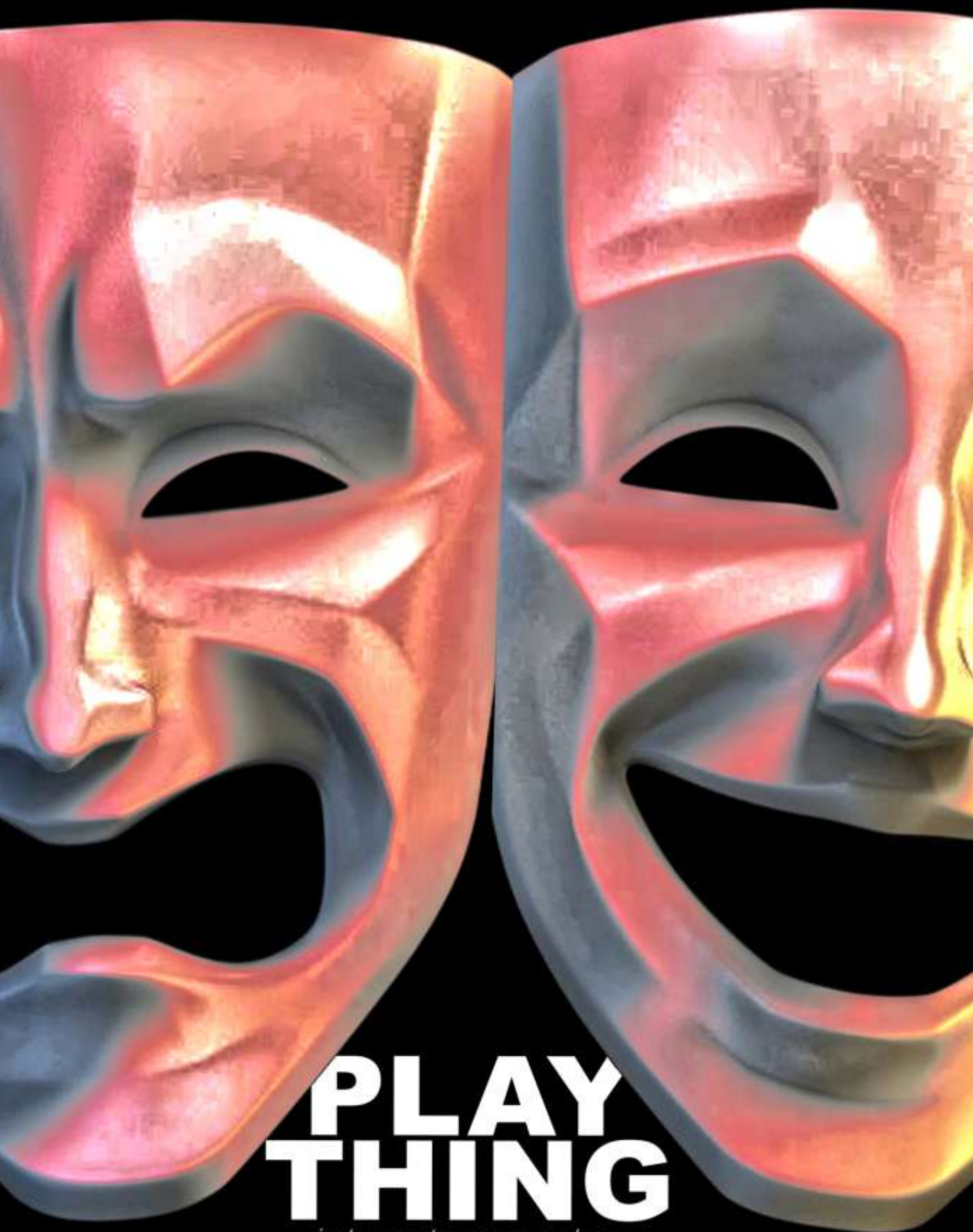


NEW AMERICAN THEATER



PLAY THING

in two acts, more or less

John Scott G

*PLAY THING: Scenes, Songs, Sketches, and Speeches from the Most Preeminent
Dramatic and Comedic Works of Western Civilization, More or Less*

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gnud edition 2026-01-01

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“The play’s the thing in which
groovy stuff happens.”

—*Christopher Marlowe*

(Quotation unconfirmed.)



Bare stage. White Cyclorama.

Lights & projections as budget permits.

*Four actor/singers: 2 male, 2 female.**

**Each plays a bunch of parts, so they better be better than “meh.”*

Act One

Four actors enter and address the audience (“Hiya,” “Good evening,” “Hello,” “Hey.”)

ANGIE: We are pleased to extend a warm welcome to ladies and gentlemen of all genders, roles, behaviors, and persuasions.

JIM: We also welcome boys and girls, but only if they are accompanied by a parent or guardian. Otherwise, scram, you little hooligans.

FRAN: Our work may be immature enough for children, but it’s also offensive, and therefore reserved for those who are currently adulting.

CHARLIE: Just before we begin, we have a couple of announcements.

ANGIE: The following acts will be unable to appear at this performance...

CHARLIE: Reynard & Doug, the world’s first two-man one-man band...

FRAN: The Westborough Bagpipers...

JIM: And the Slovakian National Kazoo Orchestra.

ANGIE: To any of you whose main reason for attending was one of these acts, we extend our sincerest apologies.

CHARLIE: Although we question your taste.

JIM: We decided that it will be best to go on with the show despite the absence of some of our fellow performers. They would have wanted it that way.

FRAN: Well, we don't know if they would have wanted it that way, but it's how *we* want it, so that's what we're going to do.

(Stage manager provides a guitar or two)

JIM: Another thing we're going to do is demonstrate that our show is definitely not a musical.

(They pair up on the verses; some harmonizing would be nice.)

(Verse 1)

Wait all week, dreaming of you.
Been waiting all my life.
Then there you are, bright and new.
But I'm still waiting...

(Chorus)

May this moment be one that truly matters.
May this moment be one that means so much.
May this time be our time.
May this be the time that lasts forever.

(Verse 2)

Got closer, pulse was pounding.
Knees go weak but heart stays strong.
You smile, and the world's astounding.
But I'm still waiting...

(Chorus)

(Verse 3)

Head spinning as I try to think.
Emotions flare and rise anew.
You say "yes," and in the blink
of an eye I'm a part of you.

(Chorus)

(Coda – half-spoken)

Until my heart can dance
on heaven's highway
I will cling to the chance that
Forever starts today.

Forever Starts Today, Golosio Publishing, BMI

ANGIE: Thank you. Now, we need to have one quick word on what is required for a full appreciation of tonight's program...

CHARLIE: This is important.

ANGIE: It's critical.

FRAN: Vital.

CHARLIE: Feel free to take notes.

ANGIE: You will need to use the most powerful tool humanity possesses...

JIM: Psychotropic drugs?

ANGIE, FRAN & CHARLIE: No!

ANGIE: It's ... whimsy.

JIM: Whimsy??

CHARLIE: Reverie.

FRAN: The mind's eye.

ANGIE: Flights of fancy.

CHARLIE: Visualization.

ANGIE: Will-o-the-wisp.

CHARLIE: Dreams so real.

ANGIE: Imagination!

FRAN & CHARLIE: Imagination!

JIM: Oh, right. Humankind's secret sauce.

ANGIE: It's the wonder of the ages.

JIM: It powers the synapses of the brain.

FRAN: It lets you make credible the incredible.

JIM: And vice versa.

CHARLIE: Fantasy is a gift.

ANGIE: A gift that permits us to envision anything: distant star clusters, other forms of life, infinite variations of yogurt. And hummus.

JIM: We invite you to try this experiment: Imagine an attractive female.

FRAN: An attractive nude female.

CHARLIE: An attractive nude female dripping wet and up to her knees in mud.

ANGIE: Are you with us so far?

FRAN: It's amazing that everyone was thinking of a mama hippopotamus at a watering hole!

CHARLIE: Not me.

JIM: Yeah, I wasn't going there, either.

FRAN: Let's try another experiment.

CHARLIE: Do we have to?

FRAN: Yes. Now, this may be a stretch for some, but I want you to imagine that you're an audience seated in a theater. Are you with me so far? I said, are you with me so far? Good. Now, imagine that the play has just begun, you're still settling into your semi-uncomfortable seat, you're wondering if the show will make some sort of sense, and you're hoping the acoustics are good enough that you can hear all the jokes. Assuming there are jokes.

CHARLIE: Oh, there are jokes, they just might not be funny.

ANGIE: And now, the next phase of our theatrical outrage: multiple roles!

CHARLIE: Wait, what? Nobody told me anything about multiple—

ANGIE: Alright... PLACES PLEASE!

(all four scurry as if in a crowd; "Pardon me," "Oops," "Coming through," "Hot soup," "Lady with a baby," "Move it or lose it," etc.)

FRAN: Distinguished guests, lovers of the arts, and potential investors in our theatrical venture, here is our Producer!

JIM: I want a great show! Amazing, stupendous, exciting, and spectacular! But stay on budget, so I can make enough to buy a vineyard.

FRAN: Here is our Director!

ANGIE: I want passion! I want to see your guts on display! You've got to give it everything you've got! But, y'know, with subtlety and taste, so I can win an award.

FRAN: And here's the writer.

CHARLIE: I just want the lines spoken properly.

ANGIE: Do you mean emPHASis on the right sylLABles, or making the ideas clear?

CHARLIE: Both.

ANGIE: Seems a little greedy.

CHARLIE: Nothing of the kind. Every writer wants explication as well as enunciation.

ANGIE: Oh my God, you're one of those.

CHARLIE: Who?

ANGIE: The type who enjoys using a thesaurus.

CHARLIE: Well, I—

ANGIE: In fact, I'll bet you're the kind who sometimes reads the dictionary.

CHARLIE: I do not know the meaning of the words you are saying, but I am going to look them all up when I get home because I have a dictionary *and* a thesaurus.

ANGIE: You done been edge-uh-muh-kay-ted?

CHARLIE: I will have you know I've attended several highly respected universities.

ANGIE: La-di-dah.

CHARLIE: And I've been thrown out of every one of them.

ANGIE: Oooh, a radical word nerd. My favorite.

CHARLIE: Wait, is that sarcasm?

ANGIE: Maybe.

CHARLIE: Or irony?

ANGIE: Perhaps.

CHARLIE: We should meet up after the show.

ANGIE: So you can whisper sweet nothings in my ear?

CHARLIE: Not if you don't want me to.

ANGIE: Oh no, whisper sweet nothings in my ear. Yeah, that works.

CHARLIE: It's a deal.

FRAN: Excuse me. May we continue?

ANGIE: Oops, the play thing.

CHARLIE: Right. Where were we?

JIM: We're coming up to the auditions.

CHARLIE: Oh, that.

FRAN: All right, people, here's how this is going to go. Each actor will present an audition piece of his or her choice. A scene, song, sketch, or speech. When we've seen enough, you will hear "Thank you," and then it's on to the next victim, I mean thespian.

JIM: She's really good at exposition.

FRAN: Yes, among other things. Now, remember, people, just because we say, “Thank you,” doesn’t mean you won’t get called back. Everyone clear on this?

CHARLIE: I don’t know, it seems pretty complicated...

FRAN: You’ll figure it out. Okay, first up is... Jenny Rutledge.

ANGIE: Uh, hi. I’m here to... I’m Jenny. Uh, Rutledge. You already heard that. Sorry. Okay, my scene is from Masterson Pinkney’s classic Restoration drama, *The Crown of the World*. And, um, it’s the famous mad princess soliloquy from Act Three. *(She nervously turns her back, shakes her hands, takes a breath, then spins to face the audience. Gone is the timid girl. We are confronted with a commanding and powerful entity.)* Who gives you pitiful creatures the right to determine my fate?!? By what infernal edict do you presume to sit in judgement of my royal personage? From whence do you derive your imagined power? Your wigs? Your baubles, your vestments, your accouterments? Bah! Bah and

fie! You are trapped within a web being spun by obsequious knaves and toadying jesters. You and your society of sycophants are spiraling down in a vortex of illusion, and it is clear to all who catch sight of your putrid flesh and the dead tissue of your souls that you are usurpers in the eyes of God! I am the true rightful heir to the throne, protector of the realm, and walker above the wind and skies. And you will display obeisance! That, my dear friends, is what I told the court. And of course I added, with the proper degree of grandeur, ‘Bring me a bowl of fig leaves, I feel like decorating the statues again’.”

FRAN: Thank you.

ANGIE: (*bows regally then becomes timid again*) Um, I, uh, thank... (*Runs offstage*).

FRAN: Next!

CHARLIE: I have just seven things to say. First: *Bonsoir. Je m'appelle Mitchell McPayne, mais tu peux m'appeler "Mitch."* Second: Here in Bucktown—the seven-eighteen, or Brooklyn—we all know that soiten kinda voices don't blend wid da classics. Dey don't blend. Thoid. I mean,

Third: Whereas and wherefore and whatnot, a British voice adds a delightful layer of beautifully elitist tones that elevate even a basically meaningless sentence like this one. Fourth: Yo, yo, yo, what's the sitch down at the drama club, bro? Fifth: Wa' you tink, mon? If I and I speak true, den everyting Irie. Rastafariiiiiii! Sixth: Now, some of y'all don't expect much of us Southern boys. It's like I wuz sayin' to Neal DeGrasse Tyson the other day. "Neal," I sez, "your theorem corollary to the quantum principles of astrophysics jus' ain't gonna apply once y'all are in the gravitational pull of Saturn!" And he didn't buhleave me 'til I shown him the way the apogee an' perigee was affected within Saturn's gol-durned rings. Why didn't he buhleave me in the first place? Ah think it's on account of mah accent. Or, as my momma sez, mah lack of any accent a-tall. Seventh: Tonight's top story: a politician steps into a hole located near his mouth. Film at eleven.

FRAN: Thank you!

ANGIE: Hi! We're Bobbie Clymer...

JIM: And Carter Braxton.

ANGIE: We're going to perform a scene from the off-off-off...off Broadway musical version of *2001: A Space Odyssey*.

JIM: The show is Clymer and Braxton's original comedy/drama/romance/musical, *Out There!*

ANGIE: Yes! We wrote it! And our scene is from the apoplectic second act.

JIM: "Deep space—I love it! Don't you?!?"

ANGIE: Not yet.

JIM: Oop. Sorry, hon-bun.

ANGIE: That's alright, snookums. (*takes deep breaths*) Okay.

JIM: What?

ANGIE: I'm ready.

JIM: Now? Oh, you mean for the play. Okay. "Deep space—I love it! Don't you?"

ANGIE: “Yes!”

JIM: (*sings*) “The blackness that entices, the orbiting devices, the planetary jewelry sparkles sooooooo...”

ANGIE: (*sings*) “But despite the starry twinkle, in a spacesuit I can’t tinkle, and all I want’s a private place to goooooooooo...”

ANGIE & JIM: (*singing*) “Outer space, outer space, the man in the moon’s got a pasty face. Now we’re *Out There!* Way, way *Out There!*”

CHARLIE: (*off stage*) Thank you!

ANGIE: (*exiting*) Was it any good?

JIM: They can feel talent when they hear it.

CHARLIE: (*off*) Next, please!

(*nothing happens*)

CHARLIE: (*off*) Let’s keep it moving, people!

(nothing; CHARLIE enters holding the script)

CHARLIE: It says Rob Saunders is next.

FRAN: *(enters tentatively)* He was traveling with the Kazoo Orchestra.

CHARLIE: Well, you'll have to do his part.

FRAN: I don't know it.

CHARLIE: Here. *(hands her the script)* Just give us a reading, so we get an idea of the timing.

FRAN: But I... Oh, whatever. *(reads)* "Hi, I'm Rob Saunders. My scene is from the Pulitzer Prize-winning drama about soldiers in Viet Nam, *Cloud Chamber Company* by David Newton. I will be playing multiple parts..." Wonderful. *(reads)* "You don't know fuck about shit!" "Yeah? You don't know shit about fuck!" "Look, jizz-for-brains, you don't have to think about killing. You just kill." "That what your mama taught you? Just kill?" "No, I learned that from your mama." "Fuck you." "Fuck you." "Fuck everybody." "Listen, the both of you. You can

kill for God, you can kill for country, you can kill for hate.” “What do you mean, ‘kill for hate’?” “I remember my mama after dad left, her goin’ out nights and comin’ back all beat-up if the tricks turned bad. Plenty to hate out there, man.” “Is that why you kill?” “That’s why I kill. And now you got to find something you hate, and there’s always one thing you hate that’s with you every day.” “What’s that?” “The Army.”

CHARLIE: Thank you!

ANGIE: I’m Joanne Barton, and I prepared two scenes. One is Cora’s monologue from Maria Metzlov’s *Lightning Bolts in Broad Daylight*. The other one is the mad princess soliloquy from Masterson Pinkney’s classic Restoration drama, *The Crown of the World*. So, you can probably guess which one I’m going to perform. “Who gives you pitiful creatures the right to determine my fate?!?” No, just kidding. I’m doing Cora’s monologue. *(takes a breath)* “I was twelve when our town was invaded. Dozens of scalawags, vagabonds, and rascalions brought their tents, their flowing costumes, their trained animals, and their percussive instruments. They quickly

set up a makeshift theater on a two-acre lot at the edge of town. Nothing we'd ever seen prepared us for *Ganso Tonto*. We found out later that it meant 'Silly Goose,' but we didn't mind because the show was fun. Everything went fine through the belly dancing, the juggling, and the cavorting, but somebody imbibed a bit too much and lost track of one of the animals. The finale of Act One involved the snake charmer, Birsheba. She undulated across the stage, her hips percolating in her skimpy costume of translucent silk. She approached a large wicker basket, opened it, and did a double take at the contents. Or the lack of contents. Mr. Sinister, her partner, a long and perpetually hungry boa constrictor, was missing. Birsheba kept dancing while actors and stage crew searched for the absent serpent..."

(dance, dance, dance, percussion, percussion, percussion, search, search, search; actors and crew meet center stage, slowly and dramatically turn to point into the audience, and yell...)

ALL: Snake!!!

ANGIE: Gotcha.

CHARLIE: Thank you!

JIM: Hi, I'm Larry Soucek. I haven't prepared a speech, so at this time, I will perform the alphabet. *(Note: While the author has provided a few suggestions, feel free to go your own way with this. You're welcome.)*

(statement of fact) "A."

(supporting fact) "B."

(just asking) "C?"

(duh) "D."

(saw the theatre mouse) "E!"

(angry) "F!!!"

(amazed) "G."

(accusatory) "H."

(moi?) "I?"

(in the kitchen) "J-K-L-Mmmmmmm!"

(Okay, you get the idea; have fun with it.)

(Wait, one more...)

(triumphant) "Z!"

ANGIE: Thank you!

FRAN: Hi. I'm Valerie, and I— Wait, can I ask the author something?

CHARLIE: Sure.

FRAN: I'm a new character now, and it would be helpful to have a prop or a costume change.

CHARLIE: Fine with me but people don't usually have props and costumes at auditions.

FRAN: But we're in a play.

CHARLIE: I, um... Okay, right. Well, take off your jacket and that'll be like a costume change.

FRAN: Alright, thanks! *(Removes jacket, flings it off stage, and struts down center, confronting the audience.)* "Hi... Line?"

CHARLIE: "Hi, I'm Valerie, and I—"

FRAN: Got it. "Hi, I'm Valerie, and I know what you want. You want me. To be in this show. And to prove it, I'm going to do a scene from Juan De

Restreppo's *A Nun Remembers*, but this evening I'm doing it as if the nun is being played by an actress of international renown. See if you can guess which one. (*runs her hands over her body, flexes her muscles, luxuriates in her body's sensations, and then...*) Oh, oh...oh... Oh My God!!!

JIM, CHARLIE & ANGIE: (*guessing*) "Marilyn Monroe!" "Scarlett Johansson!" "Margo Robbie!" (*Etc., etc., ending with...*) "Angela Lansbury!"

JIM: Angela Lansbury?

ANGIE: She was hot in *Picture of Dorian Gray*.

JIM: Oh, right. I always think of her as the hag in *Mame*.

FRAN: That was Lucille Ball.

JIM: Oops, my bad.

ANGIE: Next!

JIM: Hi. I'm Morgan Carroll. Remember when music and lyrics contained genuine emotion? Let's try this... (*Sings*)

(V1)

You are wonder and enlightenment.
You are mystery and excitement.
You are more than a choir can sing.
You are more than everything there is.

(V2)

You are clay, you are fire.
You are dreams, you are desire.
My world was made when you came along.
You are brighter than all the angels' songs.

(*Chorus A*)

You are the sky, the time, the moon, the air.
You are the thought that's everywhere.
You are love.

(V3)

You are stronger than the mountains.
You are greater than the seasons.
You are inside all sensations.
You are ideas beyond all reason.

(*Chorus B*)

You're the light, the dark, the earth, the sun

the stars, the clouds—you are the one.
You are love.

(V4)

You are the air that we're breathing.
You are the wings of the dove.
You are all of what we're feeling.
You are what dreams are made of.

(Chorus A&B)

(Coda)

You bring glory to each day.
You are all that waits above.
You're the one who lights the way.
You are love.

You Are Love, Golosio Publishing, BMI

FRAN: Thank you. Next!

ANGIE: (*Sniffs*) Hellow. I'm...(*Sniffs, coughs*).

FRAN: Thank you!

JIM: Hi! I am "Marcel." (*Begins miming.*)

FRAN, ANGIE, CHARLIE: Thank you!

CHARLIE: To be, or— Line?

ALL: Thank you!

FRAN: Costume change. *(Removes her blouse. Her bra is shocking pink.)*

CHARLIE: Thank you.

FRAN: Wait, these are not the audition.

CHARLIE: You mean you can act, too?

ANGIE: Totally unacceptable!!!

CHARLIE: What is?

ANGIE: This misogynistic, patriarchal, sexist objectification of women!

CHARLIE: Oh, I don't think that this—

ANGIE: That's right. You don't think!

CHARLIE: Female nudity is a time-honored tradition in theatrical arts.

ANGIE: Slime-honored, you mean.

CHARLIE: It's "the theater!"

ANGIE: It's inequality!

CHARLIE: Well, what would you suggest?

ANGIE: She needs to stay dressed.

CHARLIE: She's not hurting anybody.

ANGIE: Or we all need to start stripping.

(A pause is recommended.)

CHARLIE, FRAN, JIM: ("Okay." "Sure thing."
"Works for me.")

(Everyone removes jackets and shirts/blouses.)

FRAN: Our model Jim is ready for action in his skimpy outfit we like to call "flexilicious."

JIM: Thank you, thank you. Our model Angie is mischievous in a little number we like to call “do it to me several more times.”

CHARLIE: Hey, enough ad libs. Stick to the script.

JIM: This part is in the script.

CHARLIE: (*checks*) Whoa, you’re right. Who edited this?

FRAN: (*peering over his shoulder*) Your lines are in there, too.

CHARLIE: Damn, what is happening?

FRAN: (*simultaneously*) “Damn, what is happening?”

(*All four check the play manuscript.*)

CHARLIE: Oh shit.

ANGIE/FRAN/JIM: “Oh shit.”

CHARLIE: This is weird.

ANGIE/FRAN/JIM: This is weird.

CHARLIE: We have to—

ANGIE/FRAN/JIM: “We have to—”

CHARLIE: Stop this!

ANGIE/FRAN/JIM: “Stop this!”

CHARLIE: Damn!

ANGIE/FRAN/JIM: “Damn!”

(Charlie holds up a hand for silence. It doesn't seem like a comedy anymore.)

CHARLIE: I don't understand...

FRAN: You didn't write this?

CHARLIE: I would never do this to my fellow actors.

JIM: Sure you would.

CHARLIE: Well, yeah, but not to you. I like you guys.

ANGIE: So, we're stuck in this thing?

CHARLIE: (reads script) "So, we're stuck in this thing?"

JIM: So, we're actually stuck in this thing.

FRAN: Maybe we can improv our way out.

CHARLIE: We can try.

FRAN: What if I strip?

JIM/CHARLIE: Sure.

ANGIE: Knock it off. Are you saying we're trapped inside this play?

CHARLIE: I'm not saying it, the script is saying it.

ANGIE: Screw the script.

CHARLIE: Oh my God, you're one of those.

ANGIE: Who?

CHARLIE: The type who does theater to get into movies.

ANGIE: Aren't we all?

CHARLIE: No!

JIM: No!

FRAN: No!

CHARLIE: Well...

JIM: I guess...

FRAN: Yeah, you're right.

JIM: So, what do we do now?

FRAN: Anyone know "Monsterization"?

ANGIE: Every actor knows that.

FRAN: Okay, why don't we do the Creation sequence. I can be "Control."

CHARLIE: I've done the beast before.

(Fran is handed a microphone.)

FRAN: Good. Alright, then. *(to audience)* Vladimir Dworkin's *Monsterization*. *(She uses the mic melodramatically, as one does)* The time: from before there was time.

(Charlie lies down; the others hover over him.)

FRAN: The place: the land of everywhere. The sequence: Creation of the Beast.

(Charlie struggles to get up as the others reach out to gently caress him)

FRAN: *(She likes the reverb.)* Creation of the Beast. The Beast. Beast-beast-beast...

ANGIE: *(hissed)* That's enough of that.

FRAN: Okay-kay-kay.

ANGIE: Girl, get on with it!

FRAN: Fine. A cacophony of angels fills the air with sweet, singing, sighing sounds. Clouds billow and whoosh, drawn inward to a source of unfettered power, swirling, and curling toward the forever of now.

ALL: The forever of now!

(Charlie writhes, rises, falls back, rises again—as if using his muscles for the first time. The others begin keening, oohing, ahing, and so on and so forth; really dramatic stuff here.)

FRAN: Particles begin flowing faster!

(Now they all have microphones; this scene expands to sonic madness, but in a good way.)

JIM: Wisps of air grow into hurricanes!!

ANGIE: Gravity is defied and defeated!!!

FRAN: Space and time are reversed!!!!

JIM: You have become life!!!!

ANGIE: You have become eternity!!!!!!

ALL: You have joined infinity!!!!!!

(Everyone shouts and freezes in place. Then, miraculously, they have guitars. Okay, maybe it's only theatrical magic—some whoopy-doo lighting effects coupled with the perspicacity and valor of the stage crew.)

CHARLIE: *(Sings)*

There's a storm following me.
It seems to know my sins.
I can no longer hope to be
the one trying to get in.

Buying trouble by the pound.
Searching for the end.
The eerie, haunting sound
A violin being played by the wind.

The sacred & profane
the exquisite pain
of memories haunting me.

Pressure building up
No way to let off steam
World wants me to give up
I'm the only one on this team.
Anger, noise, and strife
My circuits are overloaded
The landscape of my life
looks like a skull has just exploded.

Into the swirling mist.
Eyes seeking confirmation.
Could be saved if kissed.
My soul needs affirmation.

The storm is on the grow.
We are worlds apart.
And now you've come to know...
The storm is my heart.

Storm Following Me, Golosio Publishing, BMI

ANGIE: *(to the audience)* We never know what's going to emerge from the "Creation" sequence. In this case, we made... a folksinger.

FRAN: Hey, we created a human being—something that is almost perfect!

ANGIE: “Almost”?

FRAN: Except for the hubris, misogyny, greed, racism, fascism, and willful ignorance.

CHARLIE: I had you guys get real close.

ANGIE: Wait, what?

CHARLIE: A playwright controls the words and actions of the characters.

ANGIE: Is that in the script?

CHARLIE: Of course.

JIM: Are you saying you control us?

CHARLIE: As a writer, I am Prometheus.

ANGIE: That’s the most ridicu—

(Charlie waves his hand at Angie)

ANGIE: Although you can see he's right.

JIM: Hold on. This isn't—

(Charlie waves his hand at each of them)

JIM: This man is a genius.

ANGIE: This is the best play I've ever seen.

FRAN: Make love to me now.

CHARLIE: The last sex scene I wrote got protests from SAG/AFTRA, the International Stunt Association, and PETA, so you may want to think twice about your request.

FRAN: You're turning me down?

CHARLIE: Not at all. I am merely questioning the time and place.

FRAN: Oh. Okay then.

ANGIE: So, you're saying actors are at the mercy of the author?

CHARLIE: Yup, and you're all fine with that.
(*Waves hand again.*)

JIM: Absolutely.

ANGIE: Sure thing.

FRAN: You bet.

JIM: I disagree. There is one thing you cannot control.

CHARLIE: What?

JIM: Love. (*sings to Fran*)

Pretty is just the start.
Lovely is only a part.
Radiant will have to do
to suggest all the things that are you...

...will always be
the one who's on my mind.
I've got you right here with me,

Every day, all the time.

There's sunlight every time you smile
You make the world complete
So much more than a matter of style
You are my heartbeat, and...

(Chorus)

There is only one you.
There is only one you.
There is only one...
And it's you.

Surrender to the senses.
Take down all your defenses.
The time is right, now.
Won't you let me show you how.

With each smile is a ray of light.
You make the world complete.
You're every color shining bright.
You are my heartbeat, and...

(Chorus)

You are a part of me.
You're my imagination.
You're the one who holds the key.
You're my ultimate destination.

There is a wonder that is you.
The glow is a constant surprise.
There is a parallel universe.
It's in your eyes, and...

(Chorus)

There is only one.
There is only one.
Only one in the world...
And it's you.

There is Only One You, Golosio Publishing, BMI

FRAN: Now I'll go. *(Sings to Jim)*

Candles flicker when the room is still.
Shadowy form on the windowsill.
Dogs jump with no one there.
Unexplained scent of rose in the air.
Creatures howl at the empty skies.
Light at night that shines in a cat's eyes.

It's eerie. It's unearthly.
But the strangest thing that ever came to be
Is standing right in front of me.
And I'm wary, because it's scary.

Trees that sway without a sound.
Clouds that creep along the ground.
The silence when the crickets stop.

Champagne corks that fail to pop.
Goosebumps up and down my arms.
Voodoo lady with a bag full of charms.

It's ghostly. Contrary.
But the weirdest thing that ever came to be
Is walking right next to me.
And I'm wary, because it's scary.

Ringin' phone, no one on the line.
Folks who always look for a bad sign.
Memory banks that need a jog.
Digital versus analog.
Backyard swing with high-pitched squeaks.
A career of valleys with no peaks.

It's spooky. Uncanny.
But the wildest thing that ever came to be
Is lying right here next to me.
And I'm wary, because it's scary.

Dollar bill not worth a dime.
Verse and chorus that just won't rhyme.
Loud talkers who ruin the show.
E-string snaps during the solo.
Alibi shot full of holes.
City filled with empty souls.

Feeling woozy. Feeling crazy.
And the oddest thing that ever came to be

Is that you're in love with me.
It's thrilling, but chilling.
The greatest thing that ever came to be
Is that you're in love with me.
I'm in love with you, but it's scary.

It's Scary, Golosio Publishing, BMI

CHARLIE: I don't know a better way to entice the audience than holding out the possibility of love overwhelming us after Intermission. So, *(to the audience)* we'll see all you lovers in Act Two.

(Blackout)

Act Two

Actors enter as before.

ANGIE: Welcome back from your leg stretching, kvetching, and snack fetching.

CHARLIE: Glad you survived that harrowing experience.

ANGIE: We're very pleased to see all of you who are brave enough to return.

CHARLIE: Brave, foolish, whatever.

ANGIE: We have been asked to make two more announcements. First, the Slovakian National Kazoo Orchestra has landed at the airport and they're on their way.

JIM: That's a promise and a threat.

FRAN: Oh come on, everyone can enjoy a kazooapalooza.

CHARLIE: Enjoy, endure, whatever.

ANGIE: And second, it seems we now have costumes.

(Crew members bring/toss clothing on stage. Keep it simple: yoga pants, jeans, t-tops, sweatshirts—casual but nice. Look, I'm not trying to do your job or anything, but maybe get some local stores to donate the clothing.)

FRAN: What's the deal with these outfits?

ANGIE: I'm not sure about this.

JIM: *(reading a tag on a shirt)* It says they're very slimming.

ALL: I'm in.

(Lights down on actors and up on the cyc so they're in silhouette as they don the outfits.)

CHARLIE: This is an anti-striptease.

JIM: Can we get a blue spot for this?

(He gets a green spot.)

ANGIE: Close enough for theater.

CHARLIE: We'll call it teal or aqua.

(Lights back up on the actors)

JIM: And now we're all dressed the same.

FRAN: Not unless you're also wearing a pink bra and panties.

JIM: They're lavender.

FRAN: Ooh-la-la. You'll have to show me later.

JIM: Deal.

ANGIE: Excuse me. May we continue?

FRAN: Oops, the play thing.

JIM: Right. Where were we?

ANGIE: We “created” the thing; it turned into a singer; and everything went off the rails.

FRAN: Maybe if we retrace our steps.

CHARLIE: Worth a try.

(They get in position with Charlie on his feet with the others reaching out to him. They race through the lines perfunctorily.)

JIM: Wisps of air... hurricanes...

ANGIE: Gravity defeated...

FRAN: Space and time... something something... something...

JIM: Life...

ANGIE: Eternity, infinity, frivolity...

(Everyone shouts and freezes, but halfheartedly.)

CHARLIE: That was blah. What if we—?”

JIM: Good evening, ladies and germs! It's time for some of you to rise and shine!

FRAN: We're now ready for open auditions!

JIM: That's right, some lucky members of our audience will present a scene, song, sketch, or speech from anything, as long as it is in the public domain, so we don't have to pay royalties.

ANGIE: Hint: Shakespeare is in the public domain.

CHARLIE: Alrighty then, who's up for doing a speech from *Titus Andronicus*?! Anyone? Anyone? Anyone at all.

FRAN: One of these days, someone will do a little of the Bard for us. Oh, wait—here's a volunteer now.

JIM: Hi, I'm Bob Bates, I manage an auto dealership—Bates Used Cars. You know, out on the highway? Bates Used Cars, Your Transportation Destination.

FRAN: No commercial announcements, please.

JIM: Right, right. Okay, my speech is from Shakespeare's most famous unknown play, *A Midwinter Daydream*. Forsooth! Cans't thou perceive that, I, but a poor actor, am now snoggle-tossed upon this barren and forsaken stage, destined for a fate beyond the loss of time. Here, with glare of prickling lights and the sleezing glints of a thousand eyes... (*does a quick count*) ...a few dozen eyes... here, here I struggle, lost upon this meager pulpit, in dire need of a lifeline. Or, would's't seem a lifeline, yet fortune knows it is not about a stripe or a contour, but a line. A LINE! I beggest thou. Forsooth. Nothing? If no one is going to help, I shall now demonstrate theatricality as I...Exeunt Stage left! (*Jim Exeunts*)

FRAN: That was fun. But now we—Oops, another sucker, I mean another wonderful member of our audience.

ANGIE: Hello, everyone. I said, Hello, everyone! That was a little better, thank you. My speech is from Slavko Pittman's *Haranguing the*

Audience. Acting is a passion as well as a profession. Some of us are programmed to perform. We are meant for music, destined for drama, and/or comfortable with comedy. Most people have some of the DNA of actors. Or perhaps you have the mental aberration of actors. Officially, people in the theater are a little strange. I believe the technical term is “nutsy-goofus.” It sounds better in Latin. Probably. But we all suffer from this theatrical virus to a certain degree. Who among us hasn’t injected an element of drama into our regular lives? You call in sick and fake a cough. You tell someone their outfit is great while inwardly rolling your eyes. You threaten a shopkeeper with a lawsuit for ripping your clothing on the edge of their counter to extort a free pair of expensive nylons. But maybe that’s just me. The point is that you must embrace your inner hunger for artifice, for simply playing “pretend.” Never pass up an opportunity for a little dramatic interplay. For example, you. (*Points to an audience member.*) Yes, you. What’s your name? But what’s your stage name? I’m suggesting that you use Mergatroyd McFearson. Or Boots McGillicuddy. Or Vampire Jones. Or Slavko Vorkapich. Or

Jimmy Ray. Or Riminey Rungundunsengen. Each one unique and unforgettable. I mean, if you can remember them. Do you remember them? Aha! You have been harangued!

JIM: Thank you! Next!

(Perhaps there are a couple of audience members willing to play along. Personally, I think this is a good marketing stunt, but it's up to you. If you try it, here are some one-liners to consider using after each audience audition...)

Cool!

Cool.

Meh.

I did not see that coming.

So close.

Whoo-ya!

And a new career beckons.

Too much alcohol in the liquor.

Who's your agent?

Thumbs up on that!

Alright!

Microdosing can be so interesting.

ANGIE: That was fun, but perhaps we can now go a little deeper.

CHARLIE: Deeper?

ANGIE: I want reality, sadness, loss, pain, and suffering, but with an uplifting message.

CHARLIE: That's all?

ANGIE: That's it.

CHARLIE: Can you do that?

ANGIE: I think so.

CHARLIE: Dare ya.

ANGIE: *(Sings)*

I had barricades around my heart.
There was no way I'd let feelings start.
There had been far too much sorrow.
Never hoped to reach tomorrow.

(Chorus)

Then I met you, and I knew.

This could be a love that never dies.
A love that reaches past the skies.
Once I met you, I just knew:
Our souls were destined to be one.

Running wild, off the course.
Immovable object, irresistible force.
Heart is screaming, tongue is quiet.
Intense feeling, can't deny it.

(Chorus)

Barricades down, soul wide open.
Hesitating, truth unspoken.
Hands shaking, knees gone weak.
Compelled to say it, had to speak.

Cannot breathe, cannot sigh.
Seconds are days as I await your reply...
And it was "No."

(Coda)

Don't waste time on what might-have-been.
I know our souls will meet again...
In heaven.

Our Souls Will Meet Again © Golosio Publishing (BMI)

CHARLIE: Thank you! Next.

JIM: Welcome to America's number one game show! Yes, it's time once again for "Theater of Truth," brought to you by Cream of Mush.

FRAN: The scene: the lecture hall of a great university...

CHARLIE: "And so, graduates of this year's senior class, as you travel down the road of life, you will discover that the primary goal of all Americans is to acquire more money than brains."

FRAN: The scene: a comedy club...

ANGIE: I'm sitting on the couch, trying to watch a program, and a goddamn commercial comes on. "Call the number on your screen for your complimentary hemorrhoidal discomfort brochure." Yeah. "Complimentary hemorrhoidal discomfort." Guess that means you have very polite hemorrhoids. Ba-dum-pum-pum. (*Or do the drum & cymbal thing: Ba-dum-pum-tssh.*)

JIM: The scene: an elegant bar...

CHARLIE: What may I serve you?

FRAN: Well, I don't know if you have it.

CHARLIE: We pride ourselves on having every commercially available liquor. If we don't, you may enjoy something else, gratis.

FRAN: Fine. I'll have a glass of Thunderbird.

CHARLIE: Pardon?

FRAN: Thunderbird wine. A glass, please.

CHARLIE: Well, we don't have *that*.

FRAN: I see. Alright, I'll just have a free cognac. Courvoisier, please.

JIM: Ba-dum-pum-pum.

FRAN: The scene: a campfire in the woods...

CHARLIE: Members of Scout Troup 666, your camp leaders proudly present a terrific entertainer—and a close personal friend of

mine—would you please welcome The Fabulous Hawkman, the world’s greatest spitter!

(JIM bows. Lights down on stage and up on the cyc, leaving Jim in silhouette.)

CHARLIE: First, a regular spit.

(JIM arches his body, then thrusts his head forward. A CLANK off stage.)

CHARLIE: Next, a powerful spit.

(JIM arches, thrusts... VERY LOUD CLANK.)

CHARLIE: Here’s the one that rocketed him to fame, the double spit.

(JIM arches, thrusts... two CLANKs.)

CHARLIE: And now, the hitherto unheard of triple spit.

(JIM arches, thrusts... three CLANKs.)

CHARLIE: Same joke; yet still gets a laugh.
Next, his justly renown slow spit.

(JIM arches, thrusts... A rather long pause, and then... a far away PLINK.)

CHARLIE: Of major interest to the Pentagon and NASA, here is Hawkman's fast spit.

(JIM arches... CLANK ... thrusts.)

CHARLIE: Finally, never before attempted in the history of expectoration, Hawkman will now perform the wondrous and improbable triple ricochet spit.

(JIM rocks back and forth, arches, thrusts... CLANK off left, CLANK off right, and CLINK at the back of the house.)

CHARLIE: The Fabulous Hawkman!

ANGIE: I think that's enough of that.

CHARLIE: Oh yeah? *(He points offstage, and we hear another CLANK.)*

ANGIE: We can't go on—

(Charlie points again; CLANK)

ANGIE: I'm warning you.

CHARLIE: Sorry.

ANGIE: We can't go on making people laugh without a point. There are lives to be changed. Theater must have a purpose.

CHARLIE: How Brechtian of you.

FRAN: So, let me get this straight.

ANGIE: You would know how that works.

FRAN: Thank you. So, you want funny stuff that is truthful, real, important, and potentially life-altering, is that correct?

ANGIE: If it's not too much to ask.

FRAN: Well, I think it is too much to ask, but let's try it anyway. The scene: the Natural History Museum...

JIM: A redwood tree lasts an average of 1,000 years; a human being, 75 years; copper plumbing, 20 years; a face lift, eight years; a fruit fly, one day; and lightning, 45-55 microseconds.

CHARLIE: Good stuff, but where's the funny?

JIM: I'd love to tell you more, but we've run out of ti—.

CHARLIE: That was okay, I guess.

FRAN: The scene: December 26, 1985. Quote from the president of the United States: "This generation may be the one that will face Armageddon." Could be right now.

CHARLIE: Again, not funny.

FRAN: The scene: an audience in a theater...

ANGIE: Think about your job. What if you had to be re-hired for it over and over again? What if your profession conducted business like the theater handles actors? You'd question the validity of your own existence.

CHARLIE: Downright depressing.

FRAN: The scene: a cozy breakfast nook...

JIM: I went to a friend's cabin this weekend and found blood on the refrigerator. A dark red streak ran from the upper compartment down the door to the linoleum. There were ants wriggling in the trail of blood. What could be bleeding in the freezer? I opened the upper door and found... a broken bag of raspberries. The 'fridge was running, so probably there was a power failure the night before. The raspberries must have thawed out and the juice leaked through the rubber seal in the freezer door. In the meantime, the power came back on, the contents of the freezer were now cold and stiff, and that included the ants on the inside. I wonder what it was like to have been one of those ants...

(Red lights hit them as everyone gets in a row.)

CHARLIE: Alright, you lot, let's look alive!

JIM: Oh great, it's Sergeant Ant.

CHARLIE: Straighten up this line. One feeler's distance from the ant in front of you. Chin out, middle torso flat, rear torso high and sassy! Ready to scale the white rectangle, Ho!

(They begin "climbing" in place. Might be nice to project an image of a 'fridge taken from the floor looking up.)

CHARLIE: Left-left-left, right-right-right. Ants sound off!

FRAN/ANGIE/JIM: Left-left-left, right-right-right!

CHARLIE: Three-six—

FRAN/ANGIE/JIM: Nine-twelve!

FRAN: How do we stick to things like this?

JIM: Yeah, it's weird.

CHARLIE: Keep marching up the white precipice on the red sugar trail! Three-six—

FRAN/ANGIE/JIM: Nine-twelve!

ANGIE: Man, have you seen how far down the floor is from here?

FRAN: Oy.

ANGIE: Are you a Jewish ant?

FRAN: No, but “oy” always gets a laugh.

CHARLIE: Quiet in the ranks! The white precipice shall not hold us back. We will press on until we reach the summit and the source of all things sticky and fruity.

JIM: I'll show him something sticky and fruity.

CHARLIE: Button your lip, mister!

ANGIE: Is anybody else getting cold?

CHARLIE: Quiet! We're almost there!

(They clump to a halt.)

CHARLIE: What's this? Dissension in the ranks? The makings of a revolt? Mutiny? Sedition? Uprising?

FRAN: Oh, for bug's sake, it's just a door.

CHARLIE: A door? Ah, well then, that's different. Ants, parade rest. Lead drone, prepare to knock.

(Fran mimes knocking, striking the air three times as Charlie stamps his foot four times. There are probably some eye rolls.)

CHARLIE: Ants, prepare to squeeze.

FRAN: Squeeze?

CHARLIE: If we can't open the door, we'll have to squeeze through the rubber seal. Squirm

lively. We're ants! Formidable and fierce! And we dare to go where no ant has gone before!

(Fran mimes squeezing through the rubber seal.)

JIM: I've read about this. It's like human birth.

CHARLIE: Quiet! Let's keep it moving, people!

(They all mime squeezing through the seal.)

ANGIE: Now you see what I mean about cold.

(They begin shivering and shriveling up.)

CHARLIE: *(to audience)* Okay, there's a gargantuan special effects scene here that we can't afford. *(Perhaps they light sparklers.)* Lightning! Lasers! Explosions! Suddenly, accompanied by lots of loud music, all the ants are magically transported into the bodies of actors auditioning for a play they're already in. Presto and voila!

(Lights down everywhere except for a square of white light. Fran enters and mimes pushing a

button. The others enter, push buttons, and jockey for position. Yes, it's the dreaded "elevator sequence.")

ANGIE: Close the door, will ya?

JIM: Oh, yeah.

(All watch the door close, bend at the knees as the elevator begins moving. A moment passes. A couple of sideward glances, straightening hair, etc. There is a BANG and everyone staggers.)

FRAN: We stopped!

ANGIE: Oh my God...!

FRAN: 'Oh my God' is one of my best lines.

CHARLIE: Let's not panic. It's probably just a glitch.

JIM: A glitch?

CHARLIE: A temporary malfunction.

JIM: Define “temporary.” Seconds, minutes, hours, days...?

CHARLIE: Seconds. Probably seconds.

(Seconds go by.)

CHARLIE: Probably minutes. Just a couple minutes.

JIM: Come on, come on...! *(pushes buttons)*

ANGIE: Christ.

FRAN: Damn it!

CHARLIE: Easy. Let’s not use up all the air.

(All freeze.)

FRAN: Don’t they pump in the air?

ANGIE: Sure, with big machines. Just like the big machines that move the elevators.

FRAN: Somebody do something.

JIM: Isn't there supposed to be a phone in here?

ANGIE: What's that say above the floor buttons?

CHARLIE: "In emergency, pull."

JIM: Pull it.

CHARLIE: Is this enough of an emergency?

JIM/FRAN/ANGIE: Yes!

CHARLIE: Okay. *(pulls the knob)*

(BANG. They all stagger again.)

CHARLIE: Did I break the elevator?

JIM: This is ridiculous. This sucks.

CHARLIE: Easy.

JIM: This sucks!

CHARLIE: I know, I get it. It sucks, but let's try to stay calm.

JIM: No, I want to freak out for a couple minutes.

FRAN: Me, too.

CHARLIE: That won't help.

JIM: Look, we're stuck in an elevator in a high-rise building. It's now after 6:30 on a Friday night. No one will find us until Monday morning, so if I want to vent a little frustration, I will vent, damn it!

FRAN: Some people will be in my office tomorrow.

JIM: On Saturday?

FRAN: It's a real grind where I work. We have a saying: If you don't come in Saturday, don't bother showing up Sunday.

JIM: God damn it! (*pounds the buttons*)

CHARLIE: Hey! Stop that!

JIM: Damnation!!!!

CHARLIE: Will you knock it off? What's wrong with you?

JIM: I have to go to the bathroom.

(They inch away from him.)

CHARLIE: Number one or number two?

JIM: Both.

(They move a little further away from him.)

JIM: Oh, thanks a lot.

ANGIE: Listen, listen, I was only going out to get something to eat and then I was going back. There are folks working late in my office.

CHARLIE: That's good. They might hear us if we all shout together.

JIM: Yeah, let's try that.

CHARLIE: Okay, I'll go one-two-three, and then we all yell. Alright?

ANGIE/FRAN/JIM: "Yeah." "Yes." "Sure."

CHARLIE: Okay. Everybody, take a deep breath. One, two, three—

(BANG. They stagger.)

JIM: We're moving!

CHARLIE: Alright!

FRAN: Thank God.

ANGIE: I'm so relieved.

JIM: Not as relieved as I'm going to be.

CHARLIE: Let's hope it keeps moving.

FRAN: If I get out of here, I am going to fuck like hell tonight.

CHARLIE: If I get out of here, I am going to tell someone how much I love them. And then fuck like hell tonight.

(BANG. They stagger.)

JIM: We stopped again!

ANGIE: Fuck.

FRAN: *(Checks out the others.)* Yeah, maybe not a bad idea.

ANGIE: What?

FRAN: Fuck.

ANGIE: What?

FRAN: I like how we look. Let's all fuck.

ANGIE: This one has to take a shit.

FRAN: Oh, right. Never mind.

CHARLIE: Good idea, though. I like your thinking.

FRAN: Thank you.

(BANG. They stagger.)

ANGIE: Moving!

JIM: Thank God!

(They tensely watch the door.) (Another BANG and now a HUMMING/GRINDING sound.)

JIM: This isn't working.

FRAN: We're moving. I can feel it.

JIM: But we're not getting anywhere.

(Pause)

ANGIE: *(mutters)* Look at them.

CHARLIE: Who?

ANGIE: Them. Our audience.

CHARLIE: What about them?

ANGIE: I'm going to put an end to this.

CHARLIE: And end to what?

ANGIE: *(to audience)* Don't do that. Don't be smirking. We see you, sitting there grinning with smug satisfaction. You're mocking us. You're thinking, "Oh, how cute. Next, they're going to pretend they're trapped in the play *and* trapped in the theater." Well, now we're trapping you. We're locking the doors. *(She waves her hand and there are DOOR SLAMS and BOLTS SLIDING into place.)* You're trapped in here, too. Yeah, feels different now, doesn't it? You're not going home until you suffer.

CHARLIE: You shouldn't attack the audience.

ANGIE: I'm not attacking them. I'm just informing them they won't be able to leave until

they feel our pain and learn to play the kazoo
when the Slovaks get here.

FRAN: Sounds like attacking them to me.

(BANG. They stagger. Light changes.)

JIM: We stopped!

ANGIE: It's opening!

*(They pour out of the elevator. "Thank God!"
etc.)*

JIM: You!!!!

CHARLIE: Me?

JIM: *(Grabs script and waves it in Charlie's
face.)* What the GODAMN FUCKING HELL is
this all about?!?!?!!!!!

FRAN: Jim, Jim, Jim, that's not the way to do it.

JIM: Fine. You try. *(tosses her the script)*

FRAN: (*calmly, sincerely*) What the goddam fucking hell is this all about?

CHARLIE: Better tone.

FRAN: Seriously, we like the play. The play is nifty-keen. But what the hell is this about, man?

CHARLIE: What do you think it's about?

FRAN: Levels.

CHARLIE: Levels.

FRAN: Strata. Interlocking bands of meaning. Explicating it is like peeling layers of an apple.

CHARLIE: You mean onion.

FRAN: Whatever. I don't cook.

ANGIE: She's right about levels. On the surface, it's about actors in a theater. People being judged on their looks, their deportment, their attitude, and their ability to fake it.

CHARLIE: Okay...

ANGIE: It's about all of us. Humanity, I mean.

FRAN: Right. Living our lives, interacting with others, searching for fulfilment, yet demeaned by the very social conventions that are supposed to serve us.

JIM: You have a wonderful way of alternating between philosophical observation and sexual innuendo.

FRAN: Actually, I don't do much sexual innuendo, I just exude sex. Pheromones, you know.

JIM: I don't know, but I would be happy to learn.

FRAN: Well, maybe I'll just have to teach you.

JIM: Will there be spanking?

FRAN: Oh God, I hope so.

JIM: Both of us?

FRAN: Oh God, I hope so.

CHARLIE: Can we get in on this?

ANGIE: Hold on. I'm not sure you're up for a commitment. Even a commitment for sex.

CHARLIE: *(Sings)*

You say this is the time
You say now you are mine
Earth, moon, stars realign

There's a white-hot sunrise
In the center of your eyes
Lungs, head, heart full of sighs

(Chorus)

You are an object of intense desire
You are the match, the spark, the fire
You lift my soul higher and higher

Put the past to one side
Find a love that will abide
Hope, trust, care swirl inside

After all is said and done

We are two who now are one
Love on love has begun

(Chorus)

(Bridge)

The mists have lifted
The curtains parted
The sands have shifted
And life has truly started

(Chorus)

Object of Desire © Golosio Publishing

*(Angie extends her hand to Charlie; same with
Fran and Jim)*

JIM: Maybe this is what it's about.

CHARLIE: It's about everything we've just
discussed.

JIM: You expect actors to play every one of those
interpretations?

CHARLIE: All you need to do is be truthful to
each moment and the audience will put the pieces

together. (*To audience*) Right? I said, right? That's better. Glad some of you are still awake.

ANGIE: We have another audition.

FRAN: Hi. Sorry we're late. Our scene is from Jan Sherman's *Game, Set, Match*. As you're sitting there, debating if you want to slip out now to beat the traffic, imagine a conflagration wiping out every living soul on the planet.

JIM: No mortals anymore. Just vast plains of solitude in a void of overwhelming sadness.

CHARLIE: At least there's no traffic.

FRAN: Shhh.

CHARLIE: Sorry.

FRAN: Now, just imagine how you might behave after a re-boot of humanity.

ANGIE: Would you change your behavior? Consider how differently you might act if the

new beginning of the world coincided with your new beginning as a human being.

JIM: Imagine how your behavior might help set an example for forthcoming generations.

FRAN: That's the altruistic approach.

ANGIE: Got something better?

JIM: Try this: Consider what would happen if you were God for an hour each day.

ANGIE: Ooh, that's good.

JIM: Thank you.

CHARLIE: Then consider what would happen if a neighbor was God for an hour a day.

FRAN: Yipes!

ANGIE: We have reached our final audition.

JIM: Double yipes.

ANGIE: This is from Faith Robson's *History Mystery*, where she expounds on George Santayana's philosophy.

CHARLIE: Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it.

FRAN: In fourteen hundred ninety-two, Columbus sailed the ocean blue. In two thousand seventy-five, only insects left alive.

JIM: Good God, man, what will history say?

CHARLIE: History will tell lies, as usual.

ANGIE: Toxic spillage in the water and the air.

FRAN: History will tell lies...

JIM: Chemicals and plastics in our bloodstreams will reduce humanity to mutants.

CHARLIE: History will tell lies...

ANGIE: One bomb sets off another bomb.

FRAN: And another bomb.

JIM: And another, and another, and another.

ANGIE: History will tell lies...

CHARLIE: History on this planet will be silent.

FRAN: But we don't have to be silent right now.

ANGIE: That's right.

ALL: *(Sing)* In a daze, when I've lost my place.
There is one who lights the way.
In a maze, fighting the rat race.
There is one who brightens the day.

Who rescues my heart, makes breathing start.
Gives me a new beginning.
Who makes life a thrill, makes time stand still.
And keeps the planets spinning.

(Chorus)

I'm amazed by the light that is you.
I'm fulfilled that you make loving true.
You are joy that is constantly new.
I am amazed by the light that is you.

In the dark, when alone and cold.
There's an eternal flame.
When I'm standing at a crossroad.
She makes it right
Just calling my name.

Eyes like rainbows, a heart that ever glows.
Arms full of healing.
On a star we ride, on clouds we glide.
With a love that is redeeming.

(Chorus)

(Bridge)

You've got me whirling...
Falling... twirling... calling out:

(Chorus)

Amazed by the Light That is You © Golosio Publishing (BMI)

(Stage manager beckons Charlie off stage)

ANGIE: You already know that your life is defined by your actions, but the singular, most important thing to remember is—

CHARLIE: *(enters)* They're not doing it.

ANGIE: What?

CHARLIE: They cancelled *Play Thing*.

ALL: “No!” “They can’t!” Etc.

FRAN: Did they say why?

CHARLIE: It was frivolous and unrealistic.

FRAN: What are they doing instead?

CHARLIE: *Gypsy*.

FRAN: Why are you looking at me?

ANGIE: No reason.

CHARLIE: We’ve only got one song left, so let’s do it, and then we’ll all go home and get high.

FRAN: And fuck.

JIM: That’s the spirit!

ALL: (*Sing*)

Bill went for a ride, in a big black Cadillac.
Enough room inside to stretch out on his back.
But Bill didn't shout, he didn't even smile.
Didn't say a single thing about going in style.

Bill's happy it seems that they're driving so far.
Been one of his dreams, to be seen in that car.
But in heaven or hell, Bill probably cursed
'Cause his last ride in a Cadillac was his first.

If Bill hadn't died of cirrhosis complications
He'd probably sigh, and say of that ride:
"It didn't live up to expectations."

Bill missed out, and you know what's worse?
His dream Cadillac turned out to be a hearse.

(Coda – slow, hymn-like)
All the mourners looked sad
Now that Bill has passed
And that his first ride in a Cadillac
Was his last.
Beep-beep!

First Ride in a Cadillac © Golosio Publishing (BMI)

CHARLIE: Great news: the kazoos are here!

(They play the coda again with kazoos.)

CHARLIE: Hold on, hold on, everybody! Okay, okay, there's just one more thing! *(to audience)* We recognize that many of you are suffering through the annoyance of the kazoos. Just be thankful we didn't book the Slovakian National Bagpipe Orchestra.

FRAN: And now, everyone... Exeunt!

(All exeunt, kazooing)

About the Author

Silly, sarcastic, sanctimonious, scheming, stupid, scruffy, sacrilegious, scary, and scummy, John Scott G pesters people with his incessant scribbblings, most of which accuse society of draining all value from what was once called the human spirit, tra-la-la.



Please visit our website for more outrageous anti-literature from JSG, snark from Jimmy Ray, and erotica from Victoria Sarkozy-Reiss.

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