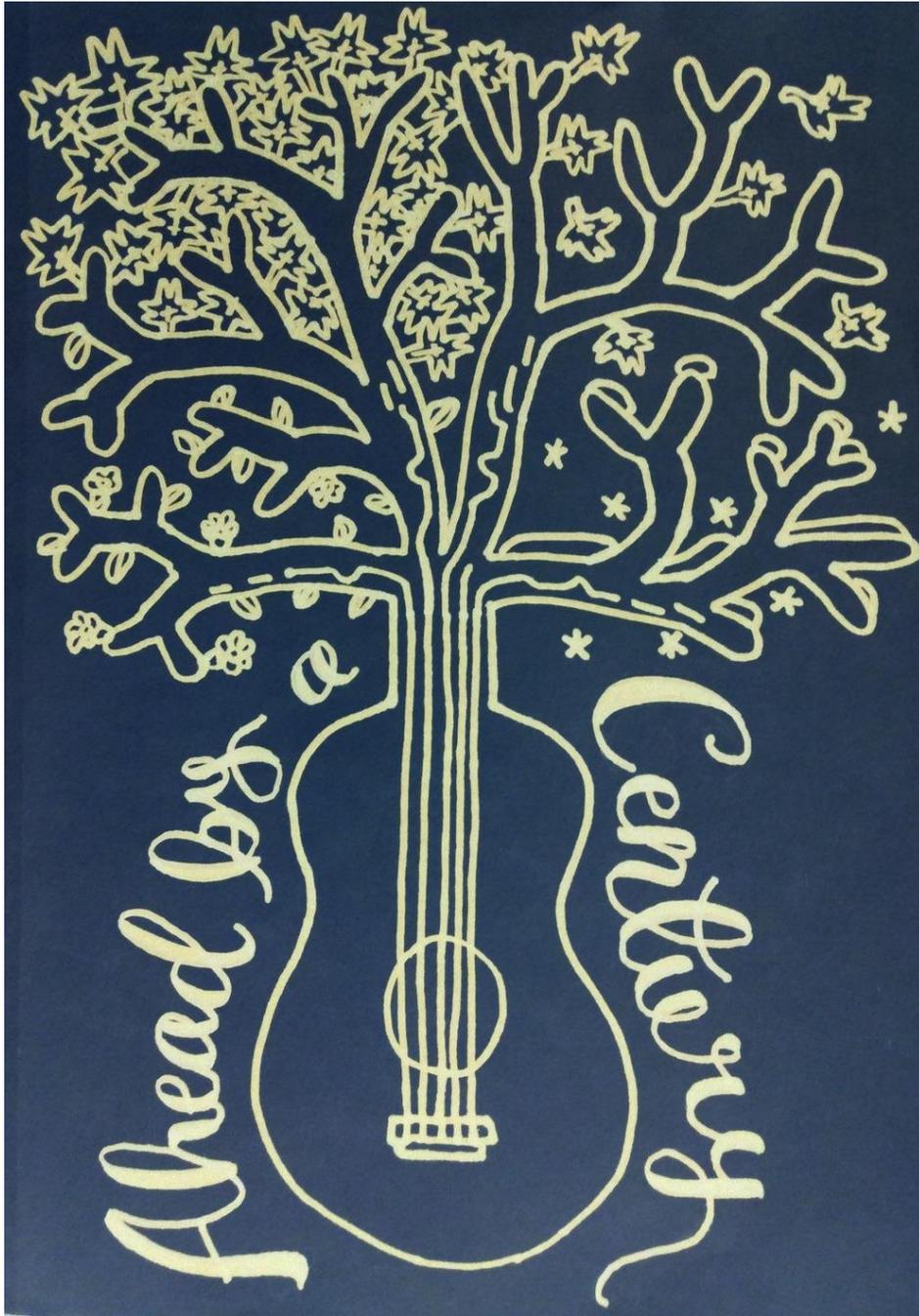


Ahead by a Century Complete Working Script



Written and Created by the Cast, Crew and Directing Team

World Premiere at The Country Day School Performing Arts Center, King Ontario, 2017

Production Credits

Ahead by a Century – A Theatrical Experience Inspired by the Words and Music of Gord Downie and the Tragically Hip had its World Premiere at the Performing Arts Center of The Country Day School on Thursday March 2nd, 2017.

It was written and performed by the cast, crew and directing faculty: Gisa Bevaqua-Tirone, Alia Brown, Mira Cantor, Ryan Corbeil, Sarah Corbeil, Trinity De Simone, Fraser Fell, Chloe Flowers, Olivia Furiato, Emily Gagliano, Jeremy Garbe, Julia Garbe, Scott Garbe, Isabella Giancola-Schieda, Anais Leiva von Bovet, Jessica Mantella, Carter Moore, Corson Panneton, Jordan Robertson-Reid, Ian Rokas, Dima Sameem, Kendra Shields, Nicholas Suriwka, Maeve Tebbutt, Sinaed Tebbutt, Jose Torrealba, Kabir Walia and Emily Wright.

Director - Scott Garbe

Associate Directors - Fraser Fell and Gisa Bevacqua-Tirone.

Set Design – Scott Garbe

Costumes – Leslie Colucci

Lighting and Projections – Will Hoffstetter

Musical Direction – Scott Garbe

Set Construction and Technical Direction – Kim Marchessault

Choreography – Cast, Directing Team, Jordan Robertson-Reid

Cover, Program, Poster and T-Shirt Design- Julia Garbe

All monetary proceeds from this production, future productions, as well as the intellectual property, were/are to be donated to the Gord Downie and Chanie Wnejack Foundation and the Gord Downie Foundation for Brain Cancer Research, Sunnybrook Hospital.

Rights to perform this piece or to use this piece as a framework to create further original material can be secured through the Foundation. Additional production support materials can be made available through the Foundation or by contacting The Country Day School.

Future productions are asked to acknowledge the creators of the original production in the program as follows: “*Ahead by a Century – A Theatrical Experience Inspired by the Words and Music of Gord Downie and the Tragically Hip* originally conceived, written and performed by the cast, crew and directing faculty of The Country Day School, King, Ontario, March 2017.”

Future productions are also asked to consult and collaborate with their local First Nations/Indigenous communities and leadership in concert with the Wnejack Foundation in a spirit of reconciliation.

Director's Note

“Are You Going Through Something? ‘Cause I Am Too...”

Canada at 150 – I know I will never look so good at that age! We love this country, one of the reasons being the words and music that Gord Downie, Rob Baker, Paul Langlois, Gord Sinclair and Johnny Fey as *The Tragically Hip* have woven into the fabric of its experience. The millions of Canadians who came together in back yards, living rooms, town parks and hockey rinks to watch the band's final show beamed from Kingston, Ontario around the world by the CBC was a testament to that fact. In the face of Gord's cancer diagnosis this band of brothers took to the road to make music and, as is typical, when they did, they made us *face* the music, face not only the joys but also the shortcomings of our nation – namely the plight of our First brothers and sisters who continue to courageously move forward through the harrowing legacy of residential schools.

The current generation is not responsible for creating the destructive system of residential schools, but if we remain idle and uninformed, we become complicit in its legacy. The cast and crew of this production, through the creation of this piece of theatre, has declared its determination to not remain silent and instead, to actively set a course to reconciliation and healing.

Won't you join us?

Tonight is a night of joy, celebration, tears and laughter. Together with you, our audience, we honour this remarkable band, one incredibly brave young boy, a poet/brother who gave that boy a voice and a nation we are so fortunate to be a part of, a country still striving to be the best version of itself 150 years on.

Scott Garbe

Ahead by a Century: A Scene by Song Guide

ACT ONE

Pg. 5 - Pre-show: Welcome to Our Cottage! (Boots or Hearts – from Road Apples, 1991)
Become a part of the show by joining the cast on stage in some cottage fun – cards, chalk drawings, crokinole – make some new friends while making yourself at home. Share a favourite childhood memory with a cast member and be a part of the next scene.

1. *Pg. 7 - Illusions of Someday/Cast in a Golden Light (Ahead by a Century – from Trouble at the Henhouse, 1996)* When you remember your childhood, what do you see?
2. *Pg. 10 - Ogoki Post Hoedown (Ashes of Love – Jack and Jim Anglin, Johnnie Wright, songwriters – first performed by Johnny and Jack, 1951)* This is the only song in the show not written by Gord Downie and *The Tragically Hip*. It is the song that Chanie and his sister Pearl used to sing and dance to in the moonlight when Chanie's aching lungs (scared from illness) would not let him sleep. Chanie's father joins them. We honour their joy and love for each other by representing their voices in this scene. We also stand with them in their struggle and loss by acknowledging our nation's role in, not only removing Chanie from his family, but its attempt to remove him from his identity within Canada's Residential School System.
3. *Pg. 13 - Ghost Stories! (Nautical Disaster – from Day for Night, 1994 – pg. 14 / Locked in the Trunk of a Car Pg. 17/ 50 Mission Cap – from Fully Completely, 1992 – Pg. 21)* A great cottage tradition, the telling of ghost stories around a fire with friends, with one story leading to a quest for the Stanley Cup and a missing Canadian hockey hero.
4. *Pg. 30 - The Stranger – (The Stranger – from Secret Path, Gord Downie with Kevin Drew and Dave Hamelin) “I am a stranger – you can't see me...”* Chanie arrives at Residential School, bravely attempting to navigate a bewildering world he can't possibly understand. Only 12 years old, mistreated by those entrusted with his care, Chanie runs away from school, back to the place he truly belonged – home.
5. *Pg. 343 - Poets! (Poets – Phantom Power, 1998)* Poetry that belongs to everyone – poetry that makes everyone a poet. Our homage to one of the reasons why Gord's lyrics are so unique and *The Hip* are so loved.
6. *Pg. 39 - Bitter Roast (Coffee Girl & Morning Moon – from We Are the Same, 2009, I'm a Werewolf, Baby – from The Tragically Hip 1987, Goodnight Josephine – from Between Evolution, 2004)* – Holocaust survivor Elie Wiesel once said, “*The opposite of love is not hate, it is indifference.*” Canadians are not immune from this poignant observation, as the cast explores in this scene. What will be our response?

7. Pg. 51 - *Living Poem* (*Thompson Girl* and *Fireworks* – from *Phantom Power*, 1998, *Ahead by a Century* – from *Trouble at the Henhouse*, 1996, *Another Midnight* – from *Up to Here*, 1989, *Coffee Girl* – from *We Are the Same*, 2009) – A found poem collage mined from the lyrics of these songs exploring the idea of what we can find if we care enough to look.
8. Pg. 52 - *Winter Wedding* (*In View* – From *World Container*, 2006) – Here’s to the joy of love!

INTERMISSION!

1. Pg. 55 - *Winter Wedding Reception* (*Long Time Running* – from *Road Apples*, 1991, *Wheat Kings* – from *Fully Completely*, 1992) – Johnny and the Coffee Girl invite you to celebrate – our beloved officer gets an emergency call.
 2. Pg. 57 - “*I’ll Be on Your Shoulder*” (*Son* – from *Secret Path*, 2016) – Walking alone on the railway track in the freezing rain, Chanie is visited by his father.
 3. Pg. 59 - *Finding Gail Miller* (*Wheat Kings* – from *Fully Completely*, 1992) – The story of Gail Miller, nursing assistant, and the teenager who was wrongfully convicted of her murder, David Milgaard, told through the voices of those who would love and miss them most.
 4. Pg. 67 - *The Fall of Icarus* (*The Rock: The Depression Suite* – from *We Are the Same*) If you had to choose between a final mandatory university lecture and a chance to see the Hip in concert, what would you do? As a professor, what could you possibly say to compete? As a reporter, how could you predict the story that was about to unfold?
 5. Pg. 72 - *Courage* (*Courage* – from *Fully Completely*, 1992) – When tragedy strikes, it transforms moments from ordinary to profound, and in the process, does the same to us. “*Courage – it couldn’t come at a worse time...*”
 6. Pg. 74 - “*In Your Eyes / What Love Looks Like*” (*What Blue* – From *Man Machine Poem*, 2016, *Stay* – from *Music @ Work*, 2000, *Now for Plan A* – from *Now for Plan A*, 2012) – A meditation on living and letting go.
 7. Pg. 77 - *Man Who Walks Among the Stars – A Homecoming*– (*Here Here and Here* – *Secret Path*, 2016) – Inspired by Gord Downie’s Lakota spirit name, this scene sees Chanie finding his way home, finding a friend, and all of us, hopefully, joining with each other on a path of reconciliation to a more complete and inclusive incarnation of our country.
- Pg. 79 - *Curtain Call* – *Bobcaygeon* (from *Phantom Power*, 1998)

ACT ONE

Pre-show: Welcome to Our Cottage!

Audience members enter a playing space meant to evoke the Canadian landscape in all five senses. The playing space is set up in alley style, with the audience on either side and the playing space running down the middle. The idea is to eliminate as much of the distance between the audience members and the actors as possible, symbolic of the idea that fans of The Tragically Hip feel little or no distance between themselves and their band, that The Hip are a band that is comprised of members who are without pretense or artifice.

At the upstage end of the playing space there is a small rustic cottage on a raised deck, its look is inspired by the home of Pearl Wenjack that appears in the film Secret Path.

Along the edges of the playing space are 20 wooden “drama boxes”- 10 on each side, evenly spaced running down the edges in front of the audience seating – one for each member of the cast. These will be used for the cast to sit or stand on throughout the show.

The downstage end of the playing space, opposite the cottage, is the “nether space” an open area marked with the trunks of trees and leafy break-ups of light on the floor.

There is the sound of the forest – wind, birds chirping, a loon call, etc., anything that might evoke the sensation for the audience member of being at the cottage.

There is also a screen that slides into place between the nether space and the main playing space during certain scenes. Right now it is slid to the side to allow the audience to see the full space.

Audience members enter the theatre to a show already in action. Once they have found their seat, cast members greet and engage audience members in various cottage activities – a game of corn hole, crokinole, card games, crafts, puzzle making. On either side of the cottage is a space where audience members are asked to draw chalk scenes of their childhood and representations in words, phrases or images of what Canada or being Canadian means to them. Some audience members join a circle of cast members singing Hip songs. Some are invited to watch the sunset.

Once the audience is in the theatre, a small group of cast members begin to sing The Hip’s “Boots or Hearts” from the 1991 album Road Apples. During the singing of this song, cast members lead audience members back to their seats. If there is time after the audience is settled and the song is still playing, cast members can get audience members to “whoop and holler” as the cast dances along.

When the song ends, the cast members are sitting on the drama blocks that line either side of the stage.

NOTE: It would be ideal that representatives from the local First Nations Community hold a smudging ceremony to cleanse and bless the playing space. This could take place with the cast before the audience enters, before the playing of “Boots or Hearts” or after.

Representatives from the Gord Downie and Chanie Wenjack Fund are very helpful in helping to make a connection with your local First Nations Community if assistance is needed.

Boots Or Hearts – From *Up to Here* (1989)

Well, I think that there's a problem here
Her voice just don't sound right
But I left myself on her answering machine
Said, "I'm back in town tonight"
I feel I've stepped out of the wilderness
All squint eyed and confused
But even babies raised by wolves
They know exactly when they've been used

See when it starts to fall apart
Man, it really falls apart
Like boots or hearts, Oh when they start, They really fall apart

Fingers and toes, fingers and toes
Forty things we share
Forty one if you include
The fact that we don't care
Now you've blocked off most of Main Street
For your faith parade
Well, everyone in town now, they probably all agree
I'm lying in the bed I made

See when it starts to fall apart
Man, it really falls apart
Like boots or hearts
Oh when they start, they really fall apart
Well, fall apart

Now you won't even let me talk to you
We got some air to clear
We'd probably only agree on one thing anyway
That's what the hell is happening here?
Fingers and toes, fingers and toes
Forty things we share
Forty one if you include
The fact that we don't care

See when it starts to fall apart
Man, it really falls apart
Like boots or hearts
Oh when they start, they really fall apart
Well, fall apart

Act 1, Sc. 1: *Illusions of Someday/Cast in a Golden Light*

Guitar Player: (House lights down as the GP comes to center stage. The DS screen slides into place. Slides that support the following monologue visually play on the screen behind the GP)

On August 20th, 2016, millions of Canadians gathered around the world, from Bobcaygeon, Ontario to the summer Olympics in Brazil to watch a global inspiration return home to leave their final mark on the world once and for all. Alongside the 5700 fans that filled the Rogers K-Rock Centre in Kingston, Ontario, 11.7 million Canadians tuned in to watch the live CBC broadcast of the unforgettable show.

The Tragically Hip is a rock band with many of their songs inspired by the Canadian identity. Gord Downie, lead singer with a classy array of suits and feathered fedoras, Paul Langlois and Rob Baker, lead guitarists, bass player Gord Sinclair and Johnny Fay on the drums continually inspire musicians and listeners around the world. Since their formation in Kingston, Ontario the Hip has released fourteen albums in their thirty three years as a group.

I can remember since I was seven, listening to the Hip with my dad on long car rides. Their songs bring to the surface childhood memories from hornet stings to climbing trees - something everyone can relate to. The experiences of our childhood remain sacred to who we are as human beings, and stay with us throughout our lives. Memories like...

(each actor steps forward into the playing area as they say their line until the cast evenly occupies the playing place)

Jeremy: Going down my first toboggan run.

Anais: Going skating at Harbour Front.

Emily G.: Always being surrounded by my family during the holidays and being happy to have such incredible people in my life.

Mira: The way my mom wrapped the straps of my pink backpack around my shoulders and sent me off to my first day of school.

Jordan: Transitioning to a new lifestyle in a new place at such a young age and how it changed my life forever.

Olivia: Making pasta with my Nonna.

Dima: Eating lots of shawarma and swimming in the Dead Sea in Jordan.

Julia: That Sunday at Church when everyone was silent in prayer and my brother laid down a huge fart.

Cast: EEEWWWWWW! Jeremy!

Jeremy: A man's gotta do what a man's gotta do.

Chloe: Exploring my imagination.

Emily W: Playing with dinosaurs while all the other girls played with Barbies.

Kabir: Singing to my heart's content to my favourite songs on the radio.

Isabella: Reading as many books as my arms could carry and imagining as many worlds as my mind could handle.

Trinity: Getting in trouble for staying up past my bedtime because I just wanted to read one more chapter of my book.

Carter: My dad reading to my sister and me.

Alia: Swimming in the pool on a hot summer's day with my sisters.

Sinead: My imagination constantly being sparked by the novelty of every new sensation I felt and experience I had.

Maeve: Carrying a pack three times my size for 1500 meters, then happily collapsing in front of a roaring fire with all my camp friends.

Kendra: Sitting around a campfire singing music together with my family.

Jose: Hearing all of the crackling of the campfire as its warmth washes over me.

Guitar Player: When you remember your childhood - what do you see?

(The lights of the stage dim to a single spotlight that surrounds the Guitar Player. He sings)

“Illusions of someday / Cast in a golden light

No dress rehearsal / This is our lives”

The opening strains of Ahead by a Century are heard as the GP steps out of the spot light. The spot light goes out to reveal a waving Canadian flag projected on the floor. Over the flag in a separate image is projected the name of the show – Ahead by a Century)

During the song, the cast is divided into five groups of four. Each group will be performing a set of four tableaux that capture the essence of childhood for each of its members. Groups 1 and 3 perform in an US spotlight, 2 and 4 in a DS spotlight and group 5 in a center spotlight.

As each actor's tableau is struck, a picture of them as a child appears on the DS screen.

At certain moments of the song, cast members take out hand held glowing lights – nicknamed “life lights” and carry them as if in constellations. This is inspired by the idea in First Nations culture that the stars are our ancestors and are always with us.

Ahead By A Century – from Trouble in the Henhouse (1996)

First thing we'd climb a tree and maybe then we'd talk – *Mira (Group 1 in US spot)*
Or sit silently and listen to our thoughts – *Anais (Group 2 in DS spot)*
With illusions of someday casting a golden light – *Jordan – (Group 1)*
No dress rehearsal, this is our life – *Olivia – (Group 2)*

During musical Break – Sinead – (Group 1) / Trinity – (Group 2)

And that's where the hornet stung me – *Carter – (Group 1)*
And I had a feverish dream – *Jeremy – (Group 2)*
With revenge and doubt – *Julia – (Group 3 in US spot)*
Tonight we smoke them out – *Isabella - (Group 4 in DS spot)*

You are ahead by a century (this is our life) – *During the chorus, group 5 enters the center*
You are ahead by a century (this is our life) *area with their life lights lit and walk slowly through*
You are ahead by a century *the center space as if planets are moving. All other*
cast members do the same US and DS.

During next section of musical break, in count of 8, Maeve and Jordan move into the center spotlight to do patty cake, Jeremy and Corson do leap frog, Mira and Alia do Hopscotch and Sinead, Trinity and Chloe play tag

Stare in the morning shroud and then the day began – *Emily G – (Group 3)*
I tilted your cloud, you tilted my hand – *Jose – (Group 4)*
Rain falls in real time and rain fell through the night – *Emily W – (Group 3)*
No dress rehearsal, this is our life – *Kabir – (Group 4)*

During Musical Break, first two 8 counts – Alia – (Group 3) / Dima – (Group 4)

But that's when the hornet stung me - *Corson – (Group 5- in center spot)*
And I had a serious dream – *Maeve – (Group 5)*
With revenge and doubt – *Chloe – (Group 5)*
Tonight we smoke them out – *Kendra – (Group 5)*

You are ahead by a century (this is our life) *During this section, group 5 move with their lights*
You are ahead by a century (this is our life) *lit while other groups stand still with their lights*
You are ahead by a century *glowing.*

You are ahead by a century (this is our life) *During this section, all cast members move with*
You are ahead by a century (this is our life) *their lights to create a star-scape in the playing*
You are ahead by a century *grace*

And disappointing you is getting me down All cast stops in dark with lights lit.

Lights up on cast. Lights are back in their pockets. They each perform 3 of their own tableaux inspired by a discussion with an audience member about their childhoods during the preshow. They have told the audience

members to look for them during this section of the show, creating a relationship with audience members and giving them a stake in the performance.

During the final moments of the song, lights are out, cast take out their life lights again and the stars settle to sit on their designated drama box.

Act 1, Sc. 2a: Ogoki Post Hoedown – Intro to Chanie’s Story

In the darkness, a single life light floats into the middle of the main playing space – it is carried by the actor playing Chanie. As he moves into place he sings:

Chanie: Happy birthday to you...

USC spot light up on Isabella – she is gleeful. She is also representing Canada. The cast joins in...

Cast: Happy birthday to you...

They move into the center of the playing space surrounding Chanie’s light with their own, creating the image of a big birthday cake before Isabella

Cast: Happy birthday dear Canada...

Canada (*Isabella, bashfully*): Ah...you shouldn’t have, eh?

Cast: Happy birthday to you...

Isabella takes a deep breath to blow out the candles. At the climax of her breath in, her USC spot goes out. DSC spot goes up on Jose.

Jose: Canada at 150 years old – still a spring chicken in terms of nationhood. Still young enough to get all excited about its birthday and the future stretches before it. Every child’s birthday should be like that. But in our nation’s past, there were thousands of birthdays that were marked by loneliness, helplessness and despair.

I’m referring to the generations of First Nations and Inuit children who were removed from their families by law and placed into Canada’s residential school system. A system created by our government and run most often by our churches. A system designed to assimilate First Nations children into white society by destroying any trace of their language and identity. A system that is a scar on the heart of our nation.

From 1840 to 1996, these children suffered malnutrition, disease and abuse. Chances of surviving World War 2 were one in 26. The odds of a child surviving in a residential school? 1 in 25.

Chanie Wenjack, a 12 year child of the Ojibway nation is only one child out of thousands who did not survive the experience. He died of hunger and exposure on a railway track trying to make his way home after running away from his residential school. He had travelled 32 ½ miles in 36 hours. He had 367 ½ to go when he died.

Over the course of creating this production, Chanie has become our little brother. Tonight we live, laugh, cry and share his story with you. Together, perhaps we can take the first steps in completing Chanie's journey home, steps that begin with the voice of his sister, Pearl.

Our birthday wish for Canada as we blow out the candles in its cake is for reconciliation and healing – for our First Nations and Inuit brothers and sisters and for our country. We invite you to wish along with us. If we wish together, maybe it will have a chance of coming true.

(Jose blows out the life light candles – blackout with the exception of the life light held by Chanie)

Act 1, Sc. 2b

In the dark we hear Pearl Wenjack's voice, from the film Secret Path. As she speaks, Chanie walks with his life light and into the cottage – it is as if the light is a firefly floating through the night air.

Pearl: He was always proud... when he accomplished something. Even little things. Knowing that song, *Ashes of Love*. He used to sing that at night. We used to dance to it. When he was sick, after he had his lung surgery, he was up all hours of the night because he couldn't sleep with the pain. So I'd stay up with him, and in the moonlight... we'd dance. While everybody was sleeping.

While Chanie's life light has entered the cottage, the GP is far DS lying down and looking up at the stars. Stars are projected onto the floor.

*US we see the lights from the cottage warm. Chanie enters from the cottage holding his chest painfully, struggling to breathe. He sits on the steps of the cottage and comforts himself by singing the opening verse of the song *Ashes of Love* by Johnny and Jack.*

Ashes of love, cold as ice

You made the debt and I'll pay the price

Our love is gone, there's no doubt

Ashes of love, the flame burned out

At the end of the verse, Chanie's sister, Pearl, enters from the cottage to check on him, rubbing his back. She steps off the porch in front of him, knowing what will lift his spirits. She begins to sing:

Ashes of love, cold as ice *One guitar accompanies her.*
You made the debt and I'll pay the price
Our love is gone, there's no doubt *Chanie singing*
Ashes of love, the flame burned out *Both singing together*

A love light that gleams in your eyes *Father enters from cottage to watch*
Has gone out to my surprise *Both Chanie and his sister signing full out with*
Now we said goodbye. *actions to go with their voices.*
My heart bled
I can't revive a love that's dead

Ashes of love, cold as ice
You made the debt and I'll pay the price
Our love is gone, there's no doubt
Ashes of love, the flame burned out

A hoedown dance ensues – cast has joined in to clap and play other instruments. Chanie joined by his sister and father all dance together until father has to recuperate on the steps while his kids enthusiastically continue.

Now I trusted you, our love would stay *The kids continue to dance and sing*
Your every wish was my command
And my heart tells me
I must forget
I loved you then.
I'll love you yet

From the back of the “nether space” we see through the trees the approach of a priest flanked by a nun and school official carrying a clip board. They all wear white neutral masks and white gloves. Their approach is unsettling, as if floating towards the family.

Ashes of love, cold as ice
You made the debt and I'll pay the price *Father sees the approaching group and stands*
Our love is gone, there's no doubt *Sister's voice trails off*
Ashes of love, the flame burned out *Chanie is left singing enthusiastically*

Ashes of love, the flame burned out *Chanie's voice trails off*

The school group is now in front of the family. Chanie hides behind his sister.

We hear Pearl's voice again...

Pearl: And when he had left that day for the school... My name wasn't on the list, so I was told I couldn't go. And he kept on asking me why I couldn't leave. And I told him, well, my name is not on the list, I gotta stay home. And he said, "I don't want to leave," he said. "I don't want to go," he says, "If you're not going," he says. I didn't know then... I think he must have known he wasn't gonna come back. But I know now that he knew he wasn't gonna come back again.

During her speech, the following action occurs:

The school official flips through his clip board to a document with Chanie's name. The official approaches and shows Chanie's father.

His father retrieves a small suitcase or bag from the cottage.

Sister hugs Chanie. Father returns with the bags.

Father gives bag to school official. He holds Chanie.

Chanie walks off with school officials looking over his shoulder at his family for what will be the last time.

The GP, meanwhile, has sat up, sensing something as time and space intersect. As Chanie walks past, he pauses to lay his hand on the GP's shoulder, causing the GP to turn in his seated position toward the cottage.

The priest pulls Chanie away, and the group continues into the "nether space" with father and sister watching from the deck of the cottage.

The scene goes to black, returning to the stars on the floor with a spotlight on the GP sitting alone – crickets are chirping. It's as if he has felt something foreboding in the universe.

The GP strums the opening chords of The Stranger from Secret Path, reflecting on his feelings.

Act 1, Sc. 3: Ghost Stories!

GP, still feeling the chill from the previous scene

GP: Did you guys feel that?

Kendra: What?

GP: I don't know - kind of a chill...

(Chloe sneaks up behind Kendra, winking at the other kids)

Chloe: Maybe it's the ghosts!

GP: *(scared)*: Or spirits?

Jose: *(playing along)* Ghosts. Didn't you know? They say it's haunted here!

(Carter grabs Kendra's shoulders and yells. She screams and the other kids laugh)

Kendra: *(pulling her blanket tighter around her)*: That's not funny!

Chloe: *(excitedly)*: Let's tell some ghost stories!

GP: That's not what I meant.

Carter: Ya! Don't you want to hear about the taxi driver taxidermist?

Chloe: Or the haunted grocery store-

Emily G: *(mimicking PA system)*: Uh we've got a ghost on aisle five!

(they all laugh)

Kabir: What about "The Nautical Disaster of Otamot Shores"?

Olivia: Oh yeah I love that one!

GP: Hey, I'm putting some burgers on the grill- who wants?

Jordan: *(nervously)*: Carter, I'm scared...

Carter: *(wrapping his arm around Jordan)*: Don't worry, it's just a story.

Julia *(in a spooky voice)*: Or is it!!

The cast gather in a circle. They are all excitedly chatting as Julia runs into the cottage through the front door

KABIR: Once,

Chloe opens the door dramatically to reveal Julia who is wear a sea captain hat.

KABIR: There was a brave fisherman who lived off the coast of France.

Julia acts as the comically French fisherman going up to audience members and saying over the top French phrases, kissing their hands etc. until Kabir grabs her shoulders to calm her down.

KABIR: One day, he decided to fish at...

JULIA/KABIR/CHLOE *(big hand gesture)*: OTAMOT SHORE.

JULIA: Now, Otamot Shore was famous for its great yellow-bellied, green-finned, Elppaenip fish.

Kabir and Chloe act as the fish swimming around

Any great fisherman knew that this rare breed of fish (*gesturing to Chloe*) could only be seen during a

JULIA/KABIR/CHLOE (*big hand gesture*): TERRIBLE STORM -

Julia and Kabir pick up Chloe as the fish

CHLOE(*continuing sentence*): when the strong tide carried them in from the deep abyss of the ocean. This fisherman knew that the only way to prove himself as the finest fisherman of France would be to catch his very own yellow-bellied green-finned Elppaenip fish, even if it meant risking his own life in the

JULIA/KABIR/CHLOE (*big hand gesture*): TREACHEROUS WATERS.

JULIA: Death does not scare *moi!*

Julia prepares fishing boat. Chloe boards up the windows of the cottage.

KABIR: As the fisherman prepared his small sailboat to go out in the storm, he overheard the villagers who were boarding up their windows, speaking nervously about the

JULIA/KABIR/CHLOE (*big hand gesture*): IMMINENT STORM.

JULIA (*in an old woman's voice*): "Last time a storm like this happened was back in '94. That afternoon,

JULIA/KABIR/CHLOE: FOUR THOUSAND MEN DIED IN THE WATERS,

JULIA: and five hundred more were thrashing madly, as

JULIA/KABIR/CHLOE: PARASITES MIGHT IN YOUR BLOOD!"

JULIA: Fear not mademoiselle, for I am the strongest fisherman of France!

JULIA (*as old woman*): Oh la la! Bonne chance Monsieur!

Julia puts on hat and jumps on Kabir's back.

JULIA: Allons-y!

CHLOE: As he sailed away, the panicked bustle of the village was drowned out by a

JULIA/KABIR/CHLOE: SYMPHONY OF CRASHING WAVES AND ROARING THUNDER.

JULIA: Zut alors!

KABIR: That's when the storm hit.

Julia jumps off Kabir's back

KABIR: The waves crashed against the bow of his boat,

Kabir and Chloe make wave motions as Julia struggles to fish

KABIR: his fishing line snapped, and the boom began to swing back and forth wildly. He fumbled frantically for the main sheet, but just before he could grasp it, the boom swung across the boat and

JULIA/KABIR/CHLOE (*Kabir and Chloe hit Julia over the head as the boom*): HIT HIM OVER THE HEAD, KNOCKING HIM ONTO THE FLOOR OF THE BOAT.

JULIA: Oof! Mon Derriere! Suddenly everything was silent. [*She pauses.*] That's when he heard...

[*Cast begins to scratch the floor eerily*]

JULIA/KABIR/CHLOE: THE NOISE.

CHLOE: The water was calm, except for the faint sound of fingernails scratching on the hull of the boat.

Julia crawls looking for the source of the scratching

CHLOE: Nervously, he crawled over to the bow, but couldn't find the source of the scratching.

JULIA: Suddenly, he heard an earsplitting.

JULIA/KABIR/CHLOE: SCREAM FROM BEHIND HIM.

KABIR: He spun around and got the strangest feeling that he recognized the voice of the scream.

JULIA: Terrified, but determined to save the person whose scream he had heard, he put the task of catching the yellow-bellied green-finned Elppaenip fish aside. *Vas-y possion!* But as he sailed away the scratching became

JULIA/KABIR/CHLOE: LOUDER THAN EVER.

CHLOE: He raced to the bow of his boat to discover the source of the sound, when he noticed a hole

JULIA: Suddenly a ghastly hand with frayed fingernails SHOT UP from the water, grabbing hold of his ankle, pulling him off the boat and down into

JULIA/KABIR/CHLOE: THE DEEP DEPTHS OF THE UNKNOWN.

CHLOE: It was at that moment in final breath when he met the eyes of his capturer, he saw that the face was none other than

JULIA/KABIR/CHLOE: HIS OWN.

JULIA: Ooh la la, who is this handsome man?

KABIR: Once he accepted the fate of his mortality, he had a spiritual revelation... Otamot was simply

JULIA/KABIR/CHLOE: TOMATO SPELLED BACKWARDS!!!

(The cast screams and then laughs)

GP *(offstage)*: Has anyone seen the ketchup? I can't find it!

(The kids scream and then continue to laugh about tomatoes etc.)

Jeremy: That *was* a pretty good story, but it's nothing compared to "Locked in the Truck of a Car"!

Mira: Ooh! I love that one!

Emily W: Me too!

Carter: Alright, if this "*spooky story*" is so good, let's hear it.

Jeremy: It was a dark and foggy night... on the same faded highway you all used to arrive at this. Very. Spot . The air was sitting eerily, as if waiting to take hold of someone and never let go.

Mira: A young girl named Becky, daughter of the owner of the local Marina...

Olivia: You mean Sinclair's Marina, down the road?

Mira: That's the one.

Olivia: Creepy...

Mira: Becky was teary eyed after a fight with her parents. Against her father's commands, she took the car and drove away into the descending night.

Dima: As she drove, she became distraught over the fight and contemplated going back, but anger clouded her judgment and compelled her to keep driving.

Emily: Soon, she was so far away from home that she had lost all sense of direction. She turned onto an old highway that was surrounded by a dark, unfamiliar forest.

Jeremy: As Becky drove, her radio turned to static and then surged into an unbearable squeal. It started changing stations frantically, as if it was possessed, assembling strange messages...

(cast members make 'TSSST' noises of static radio)

Mira: "TSSST---TST--TURN BACK--TSSST-TST"

Dima: (amidst crackles): "Bobcaygeon..."

Emily: 1992...

Jeremy: Girl abducted...

Mira: Murdered...

Dima: Body found

All: In trunk of car...

Emily: Becky was filled with terror. Desperately, she started slamming all the buttons on the radio, but its piercing screech could not be stopped.

Jeremy: In a panic, driven to near madness by the radio's assault, Becky looked to see a dim glow on the crest of the approaching hill. She squinted through the gathering mist and realised, too late, that what she saw was...

Mira: A little girl.

Dima: A tattered white dress on her frail translucent body.

Emily: Her dead-black eyes staring right into Becky's cracked windshield.

Jeremy: The girl stood directly in the path of Becky's car, waving frantically, begging her, it seemed, to stop.

Mira: Becky screamed, terrified that she would hit and kill the little girl. She slammed the breaks. But no impact came...

Dima: Becky opened her eyes to find that the little girl had disappeared - the haunted road was empty, and the radio calmly played once more.

(They pause to make it seem as if it's over)

Carter: I thought this was supposed to be scary - that wasn't so bad!

Emily: That's exactly what Becky thought as she turned the car around and headed for the safety of home.

Jeremy: Suddenly, as she passed back over the spot where the little girl had first appeared, a huge thump shook the back of the car.

Mira: She struggled to maintain control of the vehicle.

Dima: It swerved wildly from side to side until it finally came to rest on the shoulder of the road in a shower of gravel.

Emily: Her rear tire was in shreds.

Jeremy: Becky knew that she had to step out of her car to get the tools from the trunk.

Mira: Terrified, she fumbled for her flashlight, opened the door, and cautiously walked outside.

Dima: She used her flashlight to look down the road - the girl in the tattered dress was nowhere to be seen.

Emily: Crickets moaned in the dark woods as a shaken Becky walked to the rear of the car and opened the trunk.

Jeremy: As she leaned in, groping nervously for the jack and spare tire, thin pale fingers wrapped coolly around her wrist.

Mira: And in the dull light of the August moon, Becky found herself looking into the enraged face of the same forlorn girl in the tattered dress she had left behind.

Dima: Her breath was foul as she spoke

Emily: "You didn't stop to save me..."

Jeremy: Blood oozed from her black eyes.

Mira: "So now you are going to keep me company..."

Dima: Her skin was thin and white, exposing the veins behind her crumbling facade.

Emily: “We’re going to be... very close...”

Jeremy: And through clenched teeth that seethed impending doom, the pale girl in the tattered dress hissed....

Mira: “I found a place, it’s dark and it’s rotted”

Dima: “It’s a cool sweet kind of place, where coppers won’t spot you.”

Emily: “And I’ve destroyed the map, that my killer carefully dotted.”

Jeremy: “And that’s the place where I’m dumping your body.”

Mira: Becky screamed as the ghostly figure snatched her up and locked her in the trunk of the car.

Dima: The engine roared to life, the radio blared, the shredded tires shrieked and didn’t grow silent until the car flew through the guardrail, over Baker’s Ridge, and into... this... lake.

Emily: And if you walk onto the dock of Sinclair’s Marina...

Jeremy: On a silent night like tonight...

Mira: Some say you can still hear the dull thumping of Becky’s fist...

Dima: Pounding inside the locked trunk of her parent’s car...

Emily: Her murky cries breaking over the surface of the lake...

Jeremy: *(whispering)* Let me out....

Mira: *(a little louder)* Let me out....

Dima: *(louder)* Let me out!

All Cast: LET ME OUT!

(cheers and applause - Carter gets up from the group and moves toward the cottage)

Corson: Hey Carter, where are you going?

Carter: I’m...a...just...a...gonna... go to the bathroom for a little bit.

Carter has just run off to the bathroom at the end of Locked in the Trunk of a Car

The cast laughs. The Guitar player notices Kendra looking at her cell phone.

GP: Hey, Kendra – you know the cottage rules – no cell phones.

The cast vocally gives Kendra the gears. Kendra looks up from his phone for a second. The cast is confused as to why Kendra isn't responding and becomes quiet.

GP: Kendra? What's wrong?

Kendra: It's my mom. My Grandma Jo passed away.

GP: Joe?

Kendra: Short for Joey.

Silence except for the nighttime sounds of the wilderness.

GP: I'm so sorry. What do you need? Do you want me to drive you back to the city? I'm heading down tonight.

Kendra: Can I stay over here with your folks?

GP: Sure.

Kendra: My mom said she would drive up and get me in the morning. The funeral's up here in Parry Sound. No offense to your driving habits. There's nothing we can do right now anyway.

GP: Are you sure?

The sound of a brush plane is heard overhead. It inspires an idea.

Kendra: *(Pause)* Well, actually... Can I tell you a story she used to tell me? *(The cast encouragingly voices agreement)* It's a scary story too. What makes it different is that it's true. *(Cast members eye each other, uneasy)*

Kendra takes out a toy plane from her pocket and lights it with her life light. Kendra circles the cast and quietly sings the first verse of 50 Mission Cap.

Kendra: My Grandma Jo was ahead of her time. Ahead by a Century. She was a rebel-rouser and one hell of a hockey player along with her pals Maxine and Alex – long before most women played. She was always a big fan of Bill Barilko. When she and her friends heard that he had disappeared and that the Maple Leafs were cursed, they decided to take matters into their own hands - and find his body.

The cast clears the space revealing a scene with kids playing road hockey. A hockey rink is projected down onto the stage.

Grandma Jo as a kid has Leafs jersey, the other, Max has on a Canadiens jersey, and the third, Dusty, is doing the play-by-play as Foster Hewitt.

DUSTY: McNeal, paired off to the side; he passed right out to Barilko, who's on the left wing; He shoots, he scores! He's done it! Bill Barilko has won the Stanley Cup for the Toronto Maple Leafs!

JOEY: Oh, what a goal, the crowd goes wild!

MAX: Yeah, yeah, nice shot. Can I take this sweater off now? I feel so ... unclean!

JOEY: No, no! You lost the bet. You have to wear it for the rest of the game.

MAX: The game's over! The Leafs won the Stanley Cup! Let me out of this thing.

DUSTY: "The Leafs won the Stanley Cup," *there's* something I never thought I'd hear again.

MAX: Yeah, how long has it been now, 10 years?

DUSTY: Eleven now; if we count last April. Detroit walloped us!

JOEY: Yeah, that was rough. I don't know why the Leafs just can't get it together.

DUSTY: I do! It's because they're cursed!

MAX: Huh?

DUSTY: The Bill Barilko curse!

JOEY: Bill Barilko? Wait; is that who you were calling me when we were playing?

DUSTY: Yeah! You scored his last goal!

MAX: Dusty, you're confusing us again. Speak sense.

DUSTY: Bill Barilko scored the game winning goal of the Stanley Cup finals in 1951. He just disappeared that summer when he was on a fishing trip. They think his plane went down. My uncle Gord told me that unless his body is found, the Leafs will never win a cup again!

JOEY: I've never known you to be superstitious.

DUSTY: I'm *not!* ...Except maybe for this

MAX: Guys! Why don't we go find him!

DUSTY: Are you insane?

MAX: I'm serious! We're going camping anyway!

DUSTY: Yeah, with the Boy Scouts!

MAX: We can ditch 'em!

JOEY: It'll be an adventure, Dustbin.

MAX: So? You in?

DUSTY: Okay. I'm in.

JOEY: Well what are we waiting for? Let's go! [*the kids start mounting their bikes*]. Wait! I almost forgot.

JOEY runs inside the cottage

MAX: Hurry up, we're wasting time.

DUSTY: Ya, if we don't get there by sundown, Max will turn into the Montreal Canadiens' water girl.

MAX: Better that than the Boston Bruins' toilet scrubber.

DUSTY: How about you just shove it, Max?

(Joey comes out of the cottage with an old, worn in military hat)

MAX: What the heck is that thing?

JOEY: My lucky hat. My dad gave it to me. He got it during the war after flying his fiftieth mission. And look! Bill Barilko's hockey card. Just snagged it from my brother's collection. [*Puts the card in the cap and the cap on his head*]. Girls, I think we're gonna need all the luck we can get.

DUSTY: Fair enough!

MAX: Yeah, looks great. Can we go now?

JOEY and DUSTY: Yeah / Alright!

(The girls excitedly leave the playing space. Kendra is left DSC lit only by her life light)

KENDRA: So, Jo, Max and Dusty sped off on their bikes to Lillabelle Lake in search of the missing body of Bashin' Bill Barilko. They peddled through the day and into sunset before

finally reaching their destination. They left their bikes on the side of the gravel road and trekked into the thick bush on foot. Night had now fallen, and they only had the light of their flashlights to guide them.

During the last line of Kendra's speech, we see Joey, Max and Dusty making their way back to the mainstage using their life lights to guide them. They speak as they approach. The stage is dark except for projected stars. When they arrive, the three girls move into a spot DSC and speak, noticeable exhausted.

DUSTY: Girls, the more I think about this mission, the more I'm convinced that we are, in fact, clinically insane.

MAX: I second that. I mean, what were we thinking when we thought that we, three 11 year olds, would be able to find a wreckage that hasn't been found in over 10 years?

JOEY: Aw, c'mon! Don't give up on this now! We literally just got to the lake!

DUSTY: Yeah, and now we have no idea where to begin looking. For all we know Bill Barilko could be at the bottom, swimming with the fishes.

MAX: Yeah, yeah! And I don't know about anyone else, but these blackflies are driving me bonkers!

JOEY: Yeah, yeah. I get it. But don't tell me you haven't enjoyed this so far. I mean, DUSTY, was that not the first full grown moose you've ever seen up close back there? [*DUSTY mumbles in agreement*], and Max, don't act like you didn't enjoy the rush of crossing that railway bridge. [*MAX mumbles in agreement*]. This is what living is! It's not always about where we're going. Sometimes it's more about how we're going to get there. For me, this has been one *heck* of an adventure.

DUSTY: Well, I guess there's no denying that.

JOEY: And just *think!* What if we actually *do* end up finding Bill Barilko's body!

MAX: We'll be famous!

Dusty: The Leafs will win the cup again!

JOEY: Yes, yes, of course all that. But imagine what it will be like seeing a dead body. At this point it'll be a skeleton! Just dressed in fishing clothes. We'll be able to look at that skull, and say, "That was Bill Barilko."

MAX: You know, Joey, you're right. Even if we don't find Bill Barilko, today's been pretty swell.

DUSTY: Max's right. I think this will be one of those stories we tell to others one day. You know, to our grandkids and such.

JOEY: [*Contently*] Yeah, The story about three kids who went off to find the body of Bill Barilko to help the Leafs win the cup again. I like it.

JOEY: [*Joey sees something shining in the forest before them USC. Whispering*] Max? Dusty? What's that?

Joey moves slowly towards the mysterious object.

As she moves closer to the object, it begins to reveal itself through increasing light shone on it. By the time he is just about a foot away, it fully reveals itself as the Stanley Cup. Joey is in shock.

JOEY: Max! Dusty! (*she says this without turning back to them, too enthralled by what is before him.*)

Joey begins, almost in a trance, to reach for the cup. When her hand is mere centimeters away from the cup, ENTER BILL BARILKO.)

BARILKO: What do you think you're doing?! That's mine! (*Barilko quickly swipes the cup as he says this. JOEY stammers an incoherent response, terrified. MAX and DUSTY stare, eyes wide and terrified.*) Well? Speak up, kid! What are you doing here?

Joey still can't give a response. DUSTY, realizing what is happening, slowly moves toward BARILKO.

DUSTY: We - we've been looking - are you -

MAX: Holy crap, it's Bill Barilko! Hey, aren't you supposed to be dead?

BARILKO: I *am* dead! Thanks there, Captain Obvious!

DUSTY: So how is this even possible?

MAX: Yeah, you don't look very dead! Where's your skull? Joey said there was gonna be a skull! Right Joey?

JOEY: I - (*still dumbstruck*)

BARILKO: Haven't you kids ever heard of ghosts?

DUSTY: I mean yeah, but I never thought... they actually... you know.

BARILKO: Existed? Well, I'm here, aren't I?

JOEY: *(On an impulse, finally speaks up)* We - we've been looking for you!

BARILKO: What? Why? To look at my skull like your buddy suggested?

JOEY: I - no! We wanted to break the curse!

BARILKO: What do you mean, "curse"?

DUSTY: The Barilko Curse! The Leafs haven't won the cup since your last goal. Since your ... disappearance - We just came 'cuz.... We want to bring the cup back to Toronto.

BARILKO: Death, kid. Not disappearance. I died. No point beating around the bush here.

MAX: Ha! Get it. Bush.

(Everyone shoots MAX a dirty look)

MAX: 'Cause like, you know? Forest? With bushes? Nevermind, stupid... *(mumbling to himself, embarrassed.)*

BARILKO: You think this is funny?

JOEY: No, don't listen to him, he -

BARILKO: No. Your friend thinks my death is funny. Tell me, kid! What's so hilarious about me dying at age 24? I hadn't even reached the peak of my career. Sure, that was a big goal. It was a huge goal. But I had more in me. A lot more. And not just on the rink, either. I had a girlfriend I had planned on marrying. Places I planned on visiting. I had my whole life ahead of me. I wanted to make my mark and thought I had all the time in the world to do it. But that time was taken from me. Robbed. Carelessness snatched up the blueprint that I was writing for the rest of my life. And your friend thinks that's laughable.

MAX: I - I'm sorry -

BARILKO: Listen closely. What's left of my whole existence - any remnants of a legacy - lies right here, in this cup. And now you kids have the audacity to come and take that from me?!

JOEY: We didn't mean - we didn't come here to try to erase your legacy. We came to give others a chance to build on it. We came because we love our team... *(timidly)* just like you did.

BARILKO: *[Beat]* I did love that team. I bled for the Leafs.

MAX: I heard stories. My dad says you were one of the toughest players in the league. 'True Grit,' he said. He said they called you "Bashin' Bill Barilko."

BARILKO: [*Chuckles, reflectively*] Yeah, I liked to throw the body around a bit. But most of all I just liked to play. I loved the sounds of skates as they cut through the ice; the roar of the audience after a big goal. That's what I miss the most. The love and the loyalty of Leaf fans.

JOEY: They are loyal, Bill. And all they ever want is to see their team do well. But since you disappeared, the team has lost its spark. It's like your death has put a cloud over Maple Leaf Gardens. The team needs the cup back. Not *just* the team, but the city, the province, just about the entire country is thirsting for it. You gotta let it go, Bill.

BARILKO: [*looks at the cup*] But it's all I have. Without this, nobody will even know I ever existed.

DUSTY: But they *will*! We'll make sure of it!

BARILKO: [*doubtfully*] Oh, yeah? How?

MAX: We'll...we'll write a song about it!

JOEY: What? DUSTY: Huh?

BARILKO: A song?

MAX: Yeah, a song! We'll write a song about you, the three of us. And we'll sing it, and sing it, and keep on singing it. In schools and at festivals.

JOEY: At restaurants, and in nightclubs.

DUSTY: In theatres and hockey arenas.

MAX: And we'll keep sing it until it catches on so that everybody in the country knows it! It might take a while, but as long as we keep singing we'll be sure that 'Bill Barilko' becomes a household name: a name cherished by all Canadians.

DUSTY: Even people in Montreal!

BARILKO: [*opening up to the idea*] Okay, let's hear it then.

JOEY: Right now? DUSTY: Uhhhh....

BARILKO: Yeah, if you want me to let go of this, you need to convince me that it's going to be good so it catches on.

MAX: Uh, okay... [*he pauses, incredibly unsure of himself, then 'improvises. The Guitar Player plays the chords of 50 Mission Cap on acoustic guitar along with the kids*] Bill Barilko disappeared...

JOEY: That summer.

DUSTY: He was on a fishing trip.

MAX: The last goal he ever scored / Won the Leafs the cup

JOEY: They didn't win another / until 1962.

DUSTY: The year he was discovered.

JOEY: I stole my pop's hockey card / I kept tucked under

ALL: My fifty mission cap.

JOEY: I worked it in / To look like that.

BARILKO: *[Beat] [nodding his head approvingly]* Not bad... Can it be louder?

ALL: *[Looking at each other, they pull out hand-held microphones, the three begin to rock and sing along to the version done by The Tragically Hip - one verse from 1:58 – 2:51 in the track.*

Full on rock lighting – Kendra moves the DSC screen into place to catch images of Bill Barilko during the song. The kids run down to the DSC spot, huddle and jump turn into choreography that illustrates the content of the song as the lyrics start.

Rock lighting as they sing along with the Hip blaring over the speakers – even Bill is fully rocking by the end. Projections of Bill Barilko accompany their actions)

Bill Barilko disappeared that summer, (in 1951) *(In DSC spot, Jo is center, flanked by her pals)*
He was on a fishing trip (in a plane)
The last goal he ever scored (in overtime)
Won the Leafs the cup.
They didn't win another until 1962,
The year he was discovered.
My fifty mission cap!

The song comes to an end. Barilko pulls back and looks at them sternly, seemingly unimpressed

JOEY: Did you like it?!

BARILKO: *(Breaking into a radiant smile)* I loved it!

The kids celebrate with each other - hoops n'hollers n'high fives.

DUSTY: Does that mean you'll let go of the cup?

Barilko looks at the cup thoughtfully for one final time.

BARILKO: Yeah, I'll let it go. As long as you kids keep singing your hearts out I'll be satisfied.

ALL: Thanks / That's amazing / I'm so excited.

BARILKO: Here. [*He tilts the cup towards them. A light illuminates from within. The kids approach. Hesitantly, JOEY reaches in and removes the glowing life light from the cup*]. That's my legacy. It's all that's left of me now. Keep it glowing bright, hear?

DUSTY: Yes, Sir.

MAX: You got it!

JOEY: Thank you, Mr. Barilko. You can count on us.

BARILKO: So long, kids.

BARILKO EXITS. Lights fade to black over the Stanley Cup, creating a disappearing effect.

JOEY: Let's go! We have a promise to keep.

MAX: Now the Leafs will win the cup!

DUSTY: Over and over again! Our grandkids will get sick of watching them win.

JOEY: Let's just focus on '62 for now.

Jo and her friends exit into the nether space.

Kendra: That year, the Leafs won the cup for the first time in over a decade.

GP: All because of your Granma Jo.

Kendra: I don't know. That's just the story she told me.

Jordan: I love that story.

Kendra: Thanks. (*Jordan and Kendra hug*)

Jordan: I'm sorry, I have to head back.

Other cast members agree – the party breaks up. Cast members hug Kendra, say goodbye to the Guitar Player and exit, leaving him and Kendra alone under the stars.

GP: Ok. Well, I'm off.

Kendra: Heading to the city to play music?

GP: It's now or never.

Kendra: Then I guess it's now.

GP: Is there any other time?

He goes to the side to pack up his guitar. While he is busy, Kendra steps DS and opens her hand to reveal a life light.

Kendra: (looking down into her glowing hands) I love you Grandma Jo.

Kendra looks up, then throws the life light into the sky. It illuminates a Barilko Jersey hung in the rafters of the theatre. The GP returns with his guitar slung over his shoulder.

GP: Take care.

Kendra: Go get 'em.

Kendra leaves to the cottage. GP watches her go. She turns and waves and goes inside. At the same time we see Chanie, the priest, the nun and the school official heading toward the main space from the nether space. The GP turns and walks into the nether space toward the city. Chanie touches his shoulder as he passes and keeps walking. The GP pauses, again feeling uneasy. He looks back. Sees nothing and continues. Chanie and the school officials walk into the playing space to begin the next scene.

Act 1, Sc. 4: The Stranger

This scene is largely pantomime.

- *Priest, nun and school official arrive with Chanie into the main space from the nether space. As before, the school figures are wearing white neutral masks and white gloves.*
- *The school official slides the DS screen into place after they enter.*
- *The priest walks Chanie center stage while the nun gets him a grey school uniform.*
- *The priest turns Chanie around and takes off Chanie's jean jacket. The back of the jacket has an important animal symbol relating to his identity and father.*
- *Chanie turns to face the uniform he must change into. He reaches for his jacket but the priest holds it out of reach.*

- *The nun gives Chanie his uniform and leads him off stage to change. She returns center to wait once she has led him off stage.*
- *The priest turns at center stage to see the school official lead 4 students in grey uniform and white neutral mask into the playing space in front of the screen. Their faces are turned from the audience so the masks are not seen.*
- *Images of students in residential school have been playing on the screen.*
- *The school official indicates for the students to kneel. Three kneel mechanically in complete synchronization. One struggles and fidgets once kneeling – an image of students kneeling by their beds is projected.*
- *The priest walks DS and inspects the line of kneeling students. The fidgeting student is corrected.*
- *Once at the end of the line, Chanie has returned center stage. The nun takes his old clothes with gloved hands and takes them off stage, and moves to the end of the line of students opposite the priest when she is done.*
- *Chanie is standing center, self-consciously touching his hair. It sticks up, indicating a haircut. He is watching the students kneeling away from him, facing the screen.*
- *The nun claps her hands twice. The image on the screen changes to students at a chalk board with “Looking Unto Jesus” writing above in large letters. The students stand in unison and begin to mime the solving of a math problem, all writing with their right hand. Once they begin writing, the nun crosses UCSL, across from Chanie, with a stack of five metal pails and coarse wooden scrub brushes.*
- *On by one, as they are inspected by the priest, the students come to an incorrect answer. When this happens, the school official takes the student roughly by the ear to the nun. And returns to the board. The nun gives them a pail and brush to the student and roughly takes them to a corner of the playing space. In a spotlight in that corner, the student is instructed to scrub the floor in punishment. This happens to each student in turn until all four corners are occupied.*
- *Chanie is watching all of this in incomprehension. It is such a bewildering world. He sees that as each student turns to face him that they are wearing white neutral masks as well, symbolic of their loss of identity.*
- *The priest indicates for Chanie to come to the board. He does so with trepidation.*
- *Chanie hesitates and then gamely begins to work with his left hand. The priest takes down his hand and squeezes it, making Chanie wince. The priest comes around Chanie to the right side and puts the chalk in his other hand. Once again, Chanie begins to work.*

- *After inspection, the answer is incorrect. The school official leads Chanie by the ear USCL. The priest moves USCR, opposite Chanie. The nun is standing behind Chanie.*
- *A projection of the first line of O, Canada appears on the floor: "O, Canada, our home and native land..." The priest points at the line and says a single word: Sing.*
- *Chanie cannot read these symbols, but gamely sings the opening lines from Ashes of Love, having a little fun as he goes along: Ashes of love, cold as ice / You paid the debt, and I paid the price..."*
- *On "price" from across the playing space to ensure it is clear that the action is symbolic, the priest raises his hand across his body and slaps Chanie. The sound of the slap has been made by the other four students who are currently scrubbing clapping their hands sharply in unison.*
- *Chanie is absolutely shocked. He has never been struck by an adult he has trusted – his father being a gentle and kind man.*
- *The priest repeats his instruction: Sing.*
- *One of the corner students, to be supportive, softly sings some of the opening line of O, Canada. The school official sharply approaches that student, and they fall silent.*
- *Chanie is emboldened now that he knows what to do. He begins to sing the line. When he gets to the words "native" the priest holds up his hand. Chanie sees this but sings through to the end of the line. The priest again instructs him to sing.*
- *Chanie repeats. When he gets to the word "native" the priest raises his hand across his body and Chanie flinches, holding his hands up to protect himself.*
- *The priest instructs the nun to bring Chanie a pail and brush. He then instructs Chanie to scrub the word "native" out of the line. In anguish, Chanie does so.*
- *The priest instructs Chanie to sing a third time. This time Chanie sings the line skipping the word "native".*
- *The priest comes forward to Chanie and embraces him. He pulls away, holds Chanie's chin in his hand and says and says: "Kill the Indian. Save the child." As he does, a before and after image of a First Nations boy in traditional dress and then in school uniform is projected.*
- *The priest exits. The school official puts Chanie's pail center. The nun claps twice. The other four students mechanically come forward and stack their pails in Chanie's and return to their corners. The school official exits with the pails leaving the nun alone with the children.*

- *The nun claps twice and makes a low, sweeping gesture with her arm. The four students lay rigidly on the ground face up to sleep. Chanie looks about and curls up in his side in the center. The nun exits.*
- *We hear the opening music of “The Stranger”. Chanie sits up and sings to audience. We see images of children from residential school projected on the screen behind him as he sings:*

I am the Stranger, you can't see me
I am the Stranger, do you know what I mean?

I navigate the mud, I walk above the path
Jumping to the right, and I jump to the left

(Train tracks are projected on the floor)

On the Secret Path, the one that nobody knows
And I'm moving fast, on the path that nobody knows

And what I'm feeling, is anyone's guess
What is in my head, and what's in my chest

I'm not gonna stop, I'm just catching my breath
They're not gonna stop, please, just let me catch my breath

I am the Stranger, you can't see me
I am the Stranger, do you know what I mean?

That is not my dad. My dad is not a wild man. *(We see a stereotypical image – Chanie refers to it as he sings)*

He doesn't even drink. My dad is not a wild man.

I am the Stranger... *(Going up into the audience aisles, Chanie gathers a map,*

I am the Stranger... from one side and a glass jar of matches from the other)

I am the Stranger... Other students are sitting up now, looking at Chanie)

Looking furtively, Chanie looks back at the other students. They take off their masks and look at him. Pause. He slides the screen away and we see the forest. Chanie turns and walks off to a clap of thunder. Inspired, the other students dare to sneak away as well. As Chanie walks into the forest, rubbing his arms in the cold, the GP is entering for his next scene from the nether space. Again, he and Chanie cross paths, the guitar player sensing Chanie's presence as past and present meet.

Act 1, Sc. 5: Poets!

Lights up to the sound of traffic.

Gobo of city scape on the curtain in front of the cottage.

Projection of city on the floor.

Opening Sequence:

1. Enter Poet in stereotypical clothing with stereotypical disposition. Arrives center stage and breathes the air. He goes to the side to retrieve a block, returns to place it center and sits. With great ceremony, he begins to observe and write.
2. A Municipal Worker in overalls and armed with a broom enters with large garbage pail on casters. She rolls by the Poet, perhaps playfully poking him on the way with her broom – much to his consternation. Once she arrives at the end of the playing space, she grabs a block and sits, turns her pail over, preparing to drum.
3. Enter the Coffee Girl who travels across the stage down stage right to set up two blocks that will serve as an outdoor café table. She serves the Sweeper a coffee. There is a toast.
4. The sweeper then begins to drum at the same tempo as the opening drum beats of the song *Poets*.

Once the beat is established, each character that enters, starting with Coffee Girl and excluding the Sweeper, is involved in an activity representative of his or her character. They also repeat a short rhythmic phrase to the beat the sweeper is pounding on her garbage container, a phrase also representative of their character. These phrases and activities will build into a collage of city hustle and bustle.

(See diagram for entrance locations and designated stage areas)

Each character, after entering, goes to a designated numbered space on the stage floor, of which there are 10. Each time there is an instruction in the script, the characters go to the next sequential number which will be a spot across the stage from them, creating the sense of movement and city bustle.

- a) A trio of tourists enters, clicking photos.
- b) A hotdog seller and construction worker enter, building and selling
- c) A newspaper carrier enters touting the day's headlines
- d) A representative from the environmental group Waterkeepers enters to canvas the crowd
- e) A reporter and camera person enter to collect stories saying, "This just in..."

- f) Two Hipsters enter, mocking those they see as uncool.
- g) A police officer enters, ensuring all is up to code and forging good relations with the community.
- h) Two business people enter and settle into the Coffee Girl's shop DSR.
- i) A yoga instructor enters giving out flyers for her classes.
- j) A mail carrier enters delivering letters.

Once all these characters have entered, the Guitar Player arrives to the big city. He circles through the playing space taking in all the sights and sounds.

The poet stands up on his drama box and clears his throat loudly, purposefully getting the attention of all the characters. All sound effects, rhythmic phrases and movement stops. Everyone turns to him. We hear music described as "frilly Baroque" as the poet reads from his notebook a pretentious line in a pretentious way while looking down pretentiously at everyone around him.

Poet: Token love, tendered with a cheap card / Bartered lyric from a trite bard.

(Beat)

Construction Worker: Um, I'm sorry, but what does that even mean? *(reaching for Poet's notebook)* Can I see that?

Poet: *(appalled - snatching notebook away)* NO!

The sweeper claps a four count and the traffic noise, rhythmic phrases begin again. Characters move across the stage to their next designated space. Once they have arrived, the poet again clears his throat, grinding everything to a halt, and reads. The Guitar Player is watching all this from the side with interest.

Poet: Gilded, fabricated smarm / Brokered, supplemental smarm / Words, symbols, grandiloquent hyperboles for plebian propriety.

(Beat – the Hipsters snap their fingers in approval)

Business Person #1: Do you two even know what he's talking about?

Hipsters: Ya! Of course!

Newspaper Seller: *(coming forward and reaching for the Poet's notepad)* Ya, right. Let me have a look at that.

Poet: *(snatching notebook away)* Methinks NOT!

Back to the rhythm of the city, with the characters moving to their next spot. The GP brings a drama box center, beside the Poet's box, stands on it and takes out a notepad – he wants to give this a try. He listens carefully to the rhythm of the city as he writes.

When done, he gets the crowd's attention. Everything stops. As he reads, the opening beats of the Tragically Hip's "Poets" playing on a loop.

Guitar Player: I come from downtown. Born ready for you. *(He points at a character in the crowd – the other characters react)* Armed with will and determination. And grace too.

(Beat)

Sweeper: Hey! I really like that. God knows we need more grace in this world. *(Coming forward)* Can I have that?

GP: *(shrugging)* Sure!

Sweeper: *(thrilled - after taking the GP's notepaper, while returning to her drumming)* ONE – TWO – THREE – FOUR

The routine repeats with the poet writing. Once the characters have moved to their next stage spots, he gathers their attention and reads to the rhythm of "Poets".

GP: A goal that I think we all remember... *(characters shrug)* ...no... *(GP scratches out and starts again)* If there's a goal that everyone remembers, it was back in ol' 72.

(Beat)

Construction Worker: Hey, Paul Henderson's series winning goal! I remember that!

Hot Dog Vendor: Yeah! We beat the Russians!

Construction Worker: Dude, can I have that?

GP: Ya, of course. *(gives the CW the notebook paper)*

The crowd has begun to gather around the GP in appreciation and they begin to clamour for other lines - much to the dismay of the poet. Clearly, drastic action is needed. The next line he not only recites but also does movement to as the "frilly Baroque" plays.

Poet: Swinging from the hilt of a protective gendarme / Swooning in the clutches of ingratiating charm.

(Beat)

The Crowd: *(becoming impatient and unruly)* BOOOOOOOOO!

GP: *(calling the crowd)* Woah... woah... WOAHH! *(They fall silent. To poet)* How about a little poetry for everyone? *(To crowd)* Stand back everybody!

The crowd makes a circle. The poet and GP put their blocks to the side.

We hear the opening beats of “Poets” sound. Over the first 2 counts of 8, the stage is clear of the drama boxes, the crowd forms a circle and the poet sits to the side. The Guitar player is standing CS in the middle of a pool of light.

When the instruments kick in to join the solo drum beat, the GP does 4 patented Gord Downie dance moves from the CBC created graphic “How to Dance Like Gord Downie”. Each graphic is projected on the DS screen (which has been slid into place by the stage crew). Each move is sustained over a count of 8. They are as follows:

- 1. The Underarm Shuffle*
- 2. The Mic Stand Twerk*
- 3. The Busted Hip*
- 4. The Kingston Jig*

The crowd is into it, the GP’s free-wheeling, unself-conscious moves inspiring them to join in. Over the next sequence, different character groups jump up on either side of the GP to teach him a move inspired from their characters. He repeats it back to them. Then they do it together.

*Spring starts when a heartbeat's pounding – Tourists show their move
When the birds can be heard above the reckoning – GP repeats their move back
carts doing some final accounting – GP and tourists together*

(Hipsters replace the tourists)

*Lava flowing in Superfarmer's direction – Hipster’s show their move
He's been getting reprieve from the heat in the – GP Repeats move back
frozen food section – GP and Hipsters repeat together*

(Tourist and Hipsters come up together, surrounding the GP. They dance together)

*Don't tell me what the poets are doing – The Underarm Shuffle
Don't tell me that they're talking tough – The tourist moves
Don't tell me that they're anti-social – The Mic Stand Twerk
Somehow not anti-social enough, all right – The hipster moves*

(Over the next 2 counts of 8, this group does the Busted Hip and the Kingston Jig)

*And porn speaks to it's splintered legions – Reporter/Camera Operator show their moves
To the pink amid the withered cornstalks in them – GP repeats back
winter regions – GP and Reporter/Camera Operator together*

(Reporter/Camera Operator sit while Construction Worker and Hot Dog Seller come up

*While aiming at the archetypal father - Construction Worker and Yoga Instructor show
He said with such broad and tentative swipes why do – GP repeats back
you even bother? – GP and Construction Worker, Yoga Instructor repeat together*

(Previous 4 groups jump up with the GP and they run through all the character moves)

*Don't tell me what the poets are doing – Tourist moves
Those Himalayas of the mind – Hipster moves
Don't tell me what the poet's been doing – Reporter / Camera Operator moves
In the long grasses over time - Construction Worker and Yoga instructor moves*

*Over the 8 counts numbered below that happen during the musical break, the group has cleared
the spotlight and the following action occurs:*

- 1. The poet comes into the center spotlight trying to intimidate the GP*
- 2. The GP intimidates back*
- 3&4 The poet and GP grab opposite arms and turn in a slow menacing circle, a la the two
gang members in Michael Jackson's Beat It video – instead of knives, they swipe at each
other with pencils.*
- 5. The Sweeper jumps between them. Breaks them up and dances his/her own move*
- 6. The sweeper brings them together in peace – now they will dance together*

*The Coffee Girl and Cop come up to show their moves with the business people behind ready
to go. When one set of moves is done and the GP/Sweeper/Poet repeat, the GP/Sweeper/Poet
do a quick jump turn to learn the next set of moves facing the other direction – and so on for
the next four groups.*

*Don't tell me what the poets are doing – Cop and the Coffee Girl show moves
On the street and the epitome of vague - GP/Sweeper/Poet repeat – jump turn
Don't tell me how the universe is altered – Business People show their moves
When you find out how he gets paid, all right - GP/Sweeper/Poet repeat – jump turn*

*If there's nothing more that you need now- Hot Dog Seller / Newspaper Seller show moves
The lawn cut by bare breasted women - GP/Sweeper/Poet repeat – jump turn
Beach bleached towels within reach for the women - Mail Carrier / Waterkeeper show moves
Got to make it, that'll make it by swimming -- GP/Sweeper/Poet repeat – jump turn*

Over the next 12 counts of 8 numbered below, this is the action that occurs:

- 1 & 2. *All characters move into their positions surrounding the central group of the GP/Sweeper/Poet*
3. *Tourist moves*
4. *Hipster moves*
5. *Reporter/Camera Operator moves*
6. *Construction Worker / Yoga Instructor moves*
7. *Police Officer / Coffee Girl moves*
8. *Business People moves*
9. *Newspaper Hot Dog Seller moves*
10. *Mail Carrier / Waterkeeper moves*
11. *And 12. – Crowd breaks up and carries poet away over their shoulders in celebration. The GP watches cheering.*

- *The Construction Worker, Sweeper, Waterkeeper (Happy Barista), one of the tourists (who changes into the Sassy Barista) and the Coffee Girl and the actor playing “The Creepy Stranger” are not part of this group – they will be setting up for the transition into the next scene – *Bitter Roast*.*
- *The Reporter and Camera Operator are also setting up for their transition – they will be doing a newsflash.*

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Act 1, Sc. 6: *Bitter Roast*

After the Poet has been carried off over the heads of a cheering throng, we hear The Tragically Hip’s “Coffee Girl” come over the theatre speakers.

The Sassy Barista (after changing from Tourist costume) and Happy Barista set up the Morning Moon Café with other cast members in the nearly darkened stage. While the café is being set up, Coffee Girl gets the Guitar Player a coffee in the center spot. Happy Barista exits the stage before the lights come up on the main action.

Once that café is set up, a “Creepy Stranger” bumps into the GP center. His jacket collar is pulled up around his ears and he is wearing a pulled down cap and white neutral mask. They stand in a center spot light while the news reporter and camera operator do a news flash on the plight of missing native women in Canada, that another First Nations woman has gone missing, and that others need to be on their guard..

There is a slide or video sequence on the DS screen indicating a CBC News break.

Reporter: Good evening, this is Chloe Flowers, CBC News. Our top story this hour: the mystery of a missing 26 year old First Nations' woman. Mackie Basil. Ms. Basil was last seen around the Kuzche Reserve near Fort St. James, British Columbia. So far, an extensive search has failed to find her, but the Fort St. James RCMP is currently handling the active and ongoing investigation. This marks the 43rd case across Canada in the past 2 years which involves the death or disappearance of an Indigenous woman, with over 4,000 in the past three decades. There is currently no information regarding possible suspects; however, an alert has been issued to all residents around the St. James area to stay safe and stay vigilant. This has been Chloe Flowers for CBC News.

While this is happening, Coffee Girl, Sassy Barista (after changing from Tourist costume) and Happy Barista set up the Morning Moon Café in the nearly darkened stage. Happy Barista exits the stage before the lights come up on the main action.

As the newflash ends and the café is set, the GP watches as the shady character eerily takes his seat USL with his back to the café bar of the coffee shop. GP sits opposite end in the DSL corner.

Shop comes to life with other characters to the sound of The Hip playing Coffee Girl – a business woman enters to the counter to place an order and sits CSR.

Johnny is sitting alone in a table by the corner, pretending to read his newspaper but constantly looking up and staring at Coffee Girl. Whenever she looks at him/ catches him staring, he scurries back to his sports section and sheepishly looks away. This pattern repeats several times, and then Dave enters the coffee shop looking for Johnny.

Dave: There you are. Break was over 15 minutes ago, space cadet. Pot holes don't fill themselves you know.

Johnny: Shhh...

Dave: Don't "shush" me. It's work habits like yours that give tax payers good reason to despise the average municipal worker. Are you listening to me?

Johnny: *(Points to coffee girl)* There she is. Isn't she just beautiful? I mean look at her!

Dave: *(The Sassy Barista approaches the BW's table)* Ah, what's another 15 minutes... *(sits beside Johnny)*

Sassy Barista: *(to Business Woman)* One Double Salted Carmel Mocha Frappuccino.

BW: Divine

Sassy Barista: I certainly am. *(Business Woman smiles. Sassy Barista returns behind the counter)*

Dave: *(looks)* Are you kidding, Johnny? That woman will rip your heart out your chest and roast it over an open fire like a marshmallow.

Johnny: Not her! Her.

Coffee Girl: *(Two tourists enter - panicked for directions)* Just calm down. Breathe. Just sit down here. That's it. Now, how can I help you? Are you hurt? *(They shake their heads - no)* Did you lose something important? *(Shake no)* Some ONE important? *(Shake no – catching their breath)*

Tourist #1: The CN Tower...

Tourist #2: It's GONE!

Dave: Why don't you just ask her out?

Johnny: What? Ask her out?

Dave: Johnny, every time we come here, all you can do is talk about her – your “Coffee Girl”. I just don't understand why you won't ask her out. What's the worst that can happen?

Tourist #1: The map says it's supposed to be right here...

Tourist #2: And here we are, but the, quote, *(pointing to brochure)* “Tallest free-standing structure from 1976-2010” is not. How can something like that just disappear?

(Coffee Girl takes their map, slowly turns it back right-side up, and returns it to them. There is a pause.)

Tourist #1: And we'll be on our way...

Tourist #2: You are a sweetheart. Our apologies.

Tourist #1 *(on their way out)* I told you it was the other way!

Tourist #2: You also told me Justin Trudeau was married to one of the Rolling Stones.

Tourist #1: No – I said his mother dated Mick Jagger. That's where he got his hair.

Tourist #2: *(exasperated)* That's NOT TRUE! Justin Trudeau is NOT Mick Jagger's love child!

Tourist #1: *(fading into the distance)* Well, if global warming's a myth, why can't THAT be true?

Coffee girl laughs as she watches them go. She walks around serving drinks to patrons, sees Johnny in the corner without a drink and makes her way over to him. Smiling, CG places her hand politely on his shoulder. He nearly faints but tries to conceal it.

Coffee Girl: Hey, can I get you something to drink? Coffee? Tea? *(pause)* Me? *(she laughs)*

Johnny: *(He almost faints, obviously flustered and unable to form concrete sentences, mumbles random things)*

Coffee Girl: Do you need a second? I can come back. *(Coffee girl begins to walk away.)*

Johnny: No! *(Stammering, trying form words)* Water!

Coffee Girl: Oh, ok. Sure! Coming right up. *(clearly oblivious to the fact that he likes her)*

Johnny: *(Face in palms)*

Dave: What the hell was that?!

Johnny: Was it that bad?

Dave: *(Dave says nothing – just stares at Johnny)*

Johnny: Ugh!

Dave: Okay, settle. Why don't you try a pick up line? Something flattering but not too cheesy.

Johnny: I don't know... *(Guitar Player is eavesdropping)*

Dave: Come on man, she'll love it!

Johnny: Okay maybe... but what kind of pickup line?

Dave: I always use song lyrics. She'll fall right into your arms, trust me.

Johnny: Really? *(Thinks. Sings a well-known commercial jingle)*

Dave: What are you doing!

Johnny: *(panicked)* I can't think! She's too beautiful! Hair the colour of perfectly roasted coffee beans. Eyes the colour of espresso.

Dave: O.K., calm down. I got one. Works every time at the Horseshoe Tavern. Write this on your hand.

(After writing Dave's suggestion on his hand, Johnny approaches the café bar nervously, but halfway there the Happy Barista bursts in and he has to retreat)

Happy Barista: Sorry, I'm sooooo late, I was out canvassing for Water Keepers. *(rushing behind the counter to put on her apron)*

Sassy Barista: Always trying to save the planet.

Happy Barista: Because it needs saving, thank you very much. I just passed two tourists arguing about the myth of global warming. They sounded like two drowning polar bears.

Coffee Girl: Weren't they adorable? *(walking to Business Woman)*

Sassy Barista: Don't be naïve.

Coffee Girl: *(to Business Woman)* Can I get you anything else?

Business Woman: If I need anything I'll ask *her*. *(Indicating Sassy Barista)* Thank you.

Coffee Girl: *(confused)* O...kay.... *(to Sassy Barista on her way back to café bar)* What's with her?

Sassy Barista: Forget about it. She's just particular.

(Unsettled, Coffee Girl retreats behind the counter – Johnny has been making his way towards her with great trepidation)

Coffee Girl: *(Flashing a big smile at Johnny)* Oh, I so sorry, I forgot your water! Can I help you with anything else?

Johnny: *(His knees buckle but he recovers. Looks at coffee girl, looks at Dave who gives him a big thumbs up. Looks at coffee girl and loses nerve)* Coffee please?

Coffee Girl: Would you like any milk or sugar with that?

Johnny: *(Looks back at Dave who gives an encouraging gesture. Peeks at hand.)* "The moon goes up. I start to sweat. Call the doctor. Call the Vet. My brain goes numb and my blood gets hot. All I need is what you got.... I'm a werewolf, baby."

Silence. Happy and Sassy Barista stop. Coffee Girl's jaw drops, everyone just stares in shock.

Johnny: *(starting to get disoriented)* "I lose control. I just can't stop you look so good like a big pork chop. Ripped my pants."

Coffee Girl: *(breaking the silence)* A big pork chop? Are you saying I'm fat?

Johnny: No! No! Not at all! You're delicious. I mean - You're beautiful! *(panicking now – retreats to hand)* "I can smell your blood. I can hear you breathe. I'm going to eat your heart right off your sleeve. I'm a werewolf? Baby?"

Coffee Girl: Riiiiiiight um thanks, I think.

Johnny: (*Retreats back to his table slapping his forehead in disgust. Slumps back into his chair, humiliated*) Never let me talk to anyone of the female gender ever again.

Dave: (*Speaking from misplaced experience*) Just wait. Give it 5 minutes.

Johnny: (*Exploding*) Are you kidding? “I’m a werewolf, baby”!? Who writes stuff like that?! I’ll never be able to talk to her.

Dave: So maybe talking isn’t your strong suit, so what? Talking isn’t the only way to earn a girl’s heart.

Johnny: What do you mean?

Dave: Okay, I may have an idea. Hear me out!

Coffee Girl: (*goes over to Business Woman*) Can I clear that for you?

Business Woman: I told you, if I needed anything I would ask *her*.

Sassy Barista: (*busy/warily*) I’ll be right there.

Happy Barista: Where’s the extra cream?

Coffee Girl: I’m sorry... are you sure?

Business Woman: Look, don’t you have a teepee to crawl back into?

(*silence*)

Coffee Girl: Pardon me?

Business Woman: (*calmly wiping her hands with a napkin*) I think you heard me.

Sassy Girl: I heard you. Get out.

Coffee Girl: You can’t speak to me that way.

Business Woman: Can’t I?

Happy Barista: No. You can’t. Not here.

Business Woman: Oh. I get it. Not here. (*Standing. Looking down at coffee girl*) This is your “territory”. Right? With your friends.

Sassy Barista: I said: Get. Out.

Business Woman: Fine. *(walks past then turns)* But outside this coffee shop, out there, you're invisible. You know that, right?

Happy Barista: She's not invisible.

Business Woman: *(to Coffee Girl)* Tell me I'm wrong.

Sassy Barista: She's not invisible.

Business Woman: *(she walks toward Coffee Girl and stops in front of her)* Out there, you're a ghost. Tell me I'm wrong.

(Coffee Girl is silent. Satisfied, the Business woman turns and walks out.)

Coffee Girl: *(Looking at her stunned friends)* What? You don't think I've heard worse? *(She numbly goes back to work)*

Johnny: *(anguished)* Did you hear that woman? I can't believe she said that. Why didn't I do something? I have to do something.

Dave: Text her!

Johnny: What? I don't even know her number?

Dave: I'm sure we could find her Instagram no problem, you can just DM her!

Johnny: What?

Dave: Direct Message? How old are you anyway? Are you going to throw rocks at her window?

Johnny: Ok, ok – let's do it. I have nothing to lose.

Dave: *(Dave takes Johnny's phone and finds Coffee Girl's Instagram)* All set.

Johnny: *(He starts typing but stops when he realizes he has no idea what to say. Addressing Guitar Player, who has watched the events unfold – he has also been talking casually with the yoga instructor. They are charmed by each other.)* Hey Guitar Player, got any lyrics?

Guitar Player: Yeah, of course, any specific occasion?

Dave: I'm trying to get my friend here to wow the love of his life. See that waitress over there? *(points to coffee girl)* Her.

Guitar Player: Okay, well.... *(Thinks for a moment. Huddles with Johnny)*

Johnny: Perfect – I think it's perfect! Here it goes.

(Johnny texts her. Coffee girl's checks her phone. She reads the lines aloud)

Coffee Girl:

“I remember you there at the table, surrounded by all the day’s plans,
eyes flickering,
you’re trying to let a coffee cup warm in your hands,
maybe we’re born lost, born to persevere,
I’d walk into your painting until I reappeared”

(She blushes and looks around. Yoga instructor is smitten)

Johnny: Look at her face.

Dave: Radiant.

Johnny: Got any more lines?

(They huddle again)

Johnny: You truly are a genius. *(Sends text)*

Coffee Girl: Girls, look at this.

Sassy Barista: *(swooning)* Oh, my gaaaaawwwwwd...

Happy Barista: (reading) “A speck of comet tail dust,
a blue green northern light,
flickering just in your eyes deepest ravines”

Coffee Girl: *(blushing – she has never been spoken to like this)* What do I do?

Sassy Barista: What, are you kidding? Write him back. *(She does)*

Johnny: She asked what my name was! What do I say!?

Dave: Be honest – right now she doesn’t know “Johnny” as the guy who called her a pork chop. Those new lyrics are strong enough to wash away the aftertaste of the BBQ metaphor. *(to GP)* Many thanks. *(to Johnny)* Next time you see her as you, you’ll be off to the races.

Johnny: I love it – you’re right. *(to Guitar Player)* I don’t know how to thank you.

Guitar Player: Thank me by loving her right.

Dave: Okay. Ask her if she wants to go out later. *(Johnny sends text)*

(Coffee girl reads the text excitedly, shows the phone to the Baristas - giggle excitedly.)

Happy Barista: He wants to go out with you.

Coffee Girl: What do I do?

Sassy Barista: My brain says no, but my thumbs say yes! (*grabbing her phone*)

Coffee Girl: What are you doing?

Sassy Barista: You're beautiful. You're a somebody. But you never take risks. Love is risk.

Coffee Girl: Ok... yes... ok – but I press send. (*After a breath, she does*)

Johnny: (*Jumps up*) Wooooo! (*The Baristas look from across the shop, perplexed. Johnny trying not to blow his cover*) Leafs... just a... scored a touchdown... (*Sits back down, embarrassed but glowing*) She agreed to go out with me at the end of her shift! The woman of my dreams actually agreed to go out with me! (*Excitedly*) You have to help me get ready! I've had the perfect bowtie all picked out just in case this moment ever came. (*Walks out of the shop with Dave, desperately trying to be cool*)

(*After a little preening*)

Coffee Girl: I'm nervous. How do I look?

Sassy Barista: (*Tenderly*) Beautiful. (*All business*) Let's go to the break room, tree hugger, so we can get back in time to see this girl off.

Happy Barista: Right. Though technically, I'm a Water Keeper. Though I do love trees.

Sassy Barista: You can tell me all about it at break.

Happy Barista: I can?! You never let me do that!

Sassy Barista: Ya? Well, sometimes love makes you do crazy things. Is that right coffee girl?

They leave with Happy Barista listing facts about the dangers to Ontario waters: "Did you know..." with Sassy Barista interjecting with "You owe me one Coffee Girl!"

Coffee Girl: (*to Guitar Player and Yoga Instructor at the back of the shop*) Can I get you anything?

Yoga Instructor: No, I think we're good. (*They go back to their conversation, not noticing what follows*)

Coffee Girl is alone looking at the poetic texts on her phone and smiling when a man enters the shop. He is dressed in a pristine suit and is very handsome. He is looking around for someone – the business woman – but does not see her.

Coffee Girl: Are you looking for someone?

Man: Yes.

Coffee Girl: *(Nervous, blushing)* Are-are you Johnny?

Man: I'm sorry?

(Coffee Girl looks at the floor and blushes - bring her phone over and shows him)

Man: *(thinks about this for a second, clearly hesitates)* Johnny. Yes. It's great to finally meet you - Coffee Girl. *(Referring to the poetry on the phone)* Sorry, this is not my best.

Coffee Girl: It's the best I've seen.

Man: Thanks.

Coffee girl: *(blushes, clearly believing his act)* My shift ends now, if you want to go and do something... The girls should be back from break any second. *(She reaches for her phone)*

Man: Just let me hold on to it for a bit – may I? I'll write you something better. You deserve it.

(Coffee Girl is swept off her feet)

The Baristas: *(enter and wave from the back of the shop together smiling)* Hiiiiiii....

Coffee Girl: I'm good to go?

Sassy Barista: You're good to go.

Man: *Motions towards door.* After you.

(Coffee girl blushes and undoes her apron, leaving it beside the till. Steve follows her out of the shop. As he is leaving, he slips her phone into his front suit pocket. Checks back over his shoulder)

Happy Barista: I love happy endings.

Sassy Barista: Ya, they're alright.

Happy Barista: You're impossible. I'll get some more napkins.

Sassy Barista: I'll put on some more coffee.

(Sassy Barista disappears behind the counter. When she does, Johnny enters. He is carrying a bouquet of flowers and nervously approaches the counter, extremely happy)

Johnny: *(Holds out flowers, thinking Coffee Girl is behind the counter)* Thank you for seeing me tonight. My words....before...I...well... Love isn't exactly my first language.

Sassy Barista: *(Standing up from behind the counter)* You coulda fooled me.

Johnny: (shocked) Woah! *(instead of Coffee Girl, the Sassy Barista is standing there, it is awkward)*

Sassy Barista: Uh, wow! Are those for me? I didn't know you cared! All this time, all these coffee visits have been for me...

Johnny: No! No! These aren't for you,

Sassy Barista: Typical, they're never for me. *Rolls her eyes*

Jonny: Sorry, they're for...she was just here. *(Happy Barista enters with bundle of napkins, listening)* We were supposed to meet. I'm Johnny.

Happy Barista: *Confused* You're Johnny? Then who...

Sassy Barista: *(Takes out her phone and dials)* Pick up, Coffee Girl. Pick up, god dammit.

Happy Barista: Oh my god... *(runs out of the shop, frightened and aghast. Guitar Player and Yoga instructor now are aware something is wrong but have missed it)*

Johnny looks around helplessly, realizing slowly that she left with someone other than him.

A Police Officer rushes in with the Happy Barista.)

Sassy Barista: She's not picking up.

Police Officer: Just go to my squad car, they can't have gone far. *(Baristas grab their coats and rush out. To the Guitar Player and Yoga instructor)* Did you see anything? *(They shake their heads no. Turning to the Creepy Stranger in the corner)* Did you see anything? *(He looks up – he is wearing a white mask. He shakes his head no)* No one saw anything? *(Looks at either side of the audience. No response. Nods to herself, as if making a resolution. Turns to Dave)* City worker? *(Dave Nods)* I'll call the owner – stay here until he arrives. This shop is closed. Everybody else. Out. *(Officer rushes out.)*

After a few moments of his emotion building, Johnny runs from the shop.

Guitar Player and Yoga Instructor leave. Guitar player looks back at Dave who has his head down. The GP and Yoga Instructor exit.

The GP will now go to the DSC area to set up to play the song "Thompson Girl" after the scene concludes.

Dave: (Looks up) Chasing ghosts. (Dave and creepy stranger left staring at each other).

Lights fade to black. End of scene.

The GP begins to strum the opening chords of Thompson Girl. The Sweeper goes to join him with ukulele in hand. As they sing Thompson Girl together in a single spot light, a slide show of missing aboriginal women is playing behind them on the DS screen

Thompson Girl – from *Phantom Power* (1998)

Thompson Girl, I'm stranded at the Unique Motel
Thompson Girl, winter fighter's shot on the car as well
Looks like Christmas at fifty five degrees
This latitude weakens my knees, Thompson Girl

Grunt work somewhere between dream and duty
Poking through with all them shoots of beauty

Thompson Girl walking form Churchill
Across the icy world with polar bears it's mostly uphill
But when she saw that nickel stack
She whistled hard and I whistled back, Thompson Girl

Grunt work time between dream state and duty
Poking through with all them shoots of beauty
Grunt work somewhere between dream and duty
Poking through with all them shoots of beauty

Thompson Girl, we're down to the dead house plants
Thompson Girl, we've jettisoned everything we can
She says springtime's coming, wait till you see it

Poking through with them shoots of beauty
It's the end of rent-a-movie weather
It's time we end this siege together, Thompson Girl

Thompson Girl
Thompson Girl
Thompson Girl

Act 1, Sc. 7: Living Poem

As the song ends from the previous scene, Jeremy has come to put a drama block center and begins the "Living Poem". The first set of actors who enter until otherwise noted stand in a large, evenly spaced circle around the Coffee Girl.

Jeremy: I'll tell you a story

(The Coffee Girl enters and sits on the block, center, looking frightened)

Coffee Girl: All I remember is sitting beside you

Isabella: Under all the stars with you by my side

Jordan: You tilted my hand

Kendra: Is she telling you I'm the one

Dima: Beautiful and disaffected

Sinead: I tilted your cloud

The Abductor: *(standing outside the circle, DS of the GP and Sweeper who are still sitting on their drama blocks after singing Thompson Girl)* I want your song in my head. Want a little piece of your heart.

Olivia: *(coming in between others in the circle. Others will do the same unless otherwise noted)* I love you, you know I do

Alia: I can feel it deep in my bones

Emily G: It was perfect till

All: He came along and wrecked it *(those in the circle look out at the abductor. The abductor approaches. Those in the circle back in toward the Coffee Girl and link arms, protecting her)*

Chloe: The pendulum swings

Coffee Girl: *(Standing on her drama box, over the heads of those encircling her to the abductor)*
Don't want a little piece of your heart

Jeremy: And disappointing you is getting me down

Maeve: *(entering, she takes the arm of a member of the circle and walks counter clockwise. The members of the circle follow over the next few lines until they are making a moving figure 8 pattern – one circle of the 8 contains the Coffee Girl, the other contains the abductor)* Can we take it back?

Carter: *(entering to join the figure 8. The next few actors do the same)* Can't they let us run wild

Trinity: All us herded beings

GP: *(from his seat)* We're free to dream

Coffee Girl: For just another midnight

Mira: All flaws in progress

Abductor: *(walking through his circle into the Coffee Girl's circle)* I walked through your revolving door

Jordan: *(from her position in the moving figure 8)* Isn't it amazing anything's accomplished

Dima: *(from her position in the moving figure 8)* Beautiful and disaffected

Kendra: This war isn't for children

At this point, the moving figure 8 breaks apart. Each actor goes to the aisle that was closest to their entrance for this scene. Actors take pictures of missing aboriginal women out of their pockets and go into the audience aisles, asking if they have been seen while the abductor circles behind the Coffee Girl as she turns, not aware he is behind her.

The abductor reaches out and grabs the Coffee Girl's wrist. Actors turn away from the scene, sitting in the aisle with their backs toward the action. Lighting narrows to a single pool of light.

Abductor: We end this siege

Coffee Girl: *(after looking around to see she has been abandoned)* ...together

The abductor turns the Coffee Girl to face him. He forces her to sit. He walks slowly behind the Coffee Girl and moves her hair away from the back of her neck. As he reaches toward her throat from behind we see the Police Officer slowly move into the light with her gun drawn.

Police Officer: Don't. Move. *(The abductor freezes)* Hands behind your head. Slowly. *(The Police Officer slowly circles in the pool of light behind the abductor and forces him to this knees)*

Coffee Girl: *(disbelieving)* How did you find me?

Johnny bursts into the circle, out of breath. He still holds his bouquet of flowers.

Coffee Girl: (to Johnny) How did you find me?

Johnny: (simply) I looked. *(Coffee Girl stands. Police Officer takes abductor out of the spotlight)*
I see you. You're not invisible to me. *(Coffee Girl jumps up and embraces Johnny. Blackout)*

Act 1, Scene 8: Winter Wedding

In the blackout we hear the opening kick-drum of The Tragically Hip's "In View". Projected onto the floor is an explosion of colliding hearts of various sizes.

After the opening drum beats, there are 8 counts of 8 before the main lyrics begin. The following action occurs during those counts:

First set of four 8 counts: USC spot on the Coffee Girl. Cast members run in and out of the spot light helping her get ready for a date – the Happy Barista, Sassy Barista and the Yoga instructor. At first she is brought ear rings, then eye liner, then her hair is primped.

Second set of 8 counts: DSC spot up on Johnny. Cast members run in and out of the spotlight helping him get ready for his date – the Sweeper, the Guitar Player and the Police Officer. At first, a shaver down either side of his face, then deodorant under each arm and then his hair is primped.

The following action occurs as the song proceeds:

I love you... You know I do *(Emily G comes forward to scoop Coffee Girl and Johnny ice cream)*
Yeah, it's perfect *which they share in adorable fashion in the USC spotlight)*
Well, it isn't and it is

And I've been meaning to call you *(Coffee Girl and Johnny step forward from the ice*
I've been meaning to call you ... Then I do *cream parlor into a movie theatre. Four drama*
boxes are waiting for them in two pairs. They
I've been meaning to call you *nibble popcorn, joined by Kendra and Sinead.*
I've been meaning to call you... Then I do *Chloe and Jeremy act out "plane scene" from*
Projection of Casablanca on DS screen *Casablanca dressed as Bogie and Bacall. Johnny*
and Coffee Girl wave bye and run into their US
and DS spots. Cast take the movie boxes from the
center to the sides of the playing space.)

Phone rings once... *(Johnny calls Coffee Girl from USC spot)*
Phone rings twice *(Coffee Girl calls Johnny from DSC spot)*
Phone rings three times *(They approach each other into center spot)*

I, I am of you
And you are in everything I do

*(In center, Johnny proposal speech with gestures)
(CG's reply to Johnny with gestures)
(Celebration during short music break – Johnny
drops to one knee, CG is amazed, puts on ring and
says...)*

I do

*Before next lines of song, Johnny goes DSC and
Coffee Girl goes USC*

I trust you
That makes you true
I don't care if
It isn't the way it is

*(Johnny now in DSC spot. The Sweeper brings
him a frilly tuxedo shirt, GP brings a bow tie, Cop
brings a winter suit jacket – he is set for wedding)*

I've been meaning to call you
I've been meaning to call you
Then I do

*(Coffee Girl in USC spot. Happy Barista brings
white winter boots, Sassy Barista, a white winter
coat, Yoga instructor, a wedding veil – she's ready)*

*(We see both Johnny and Coffee girl make calls to
their friends and a minister)*

Phone rings once...
Phone rings twice...
Phone rings three times...

*(Friends in USR spotlight – Trinity & Carter)
(Friends in USL spotlight – Isabella & Chloe)
(Friends in DSR spot and minister in DRL spot –
Sinead, Emily G and Maeve)*

PROJECTION OF STAIN GLASS WINDOW ON DS SCREEN

I, I am of you
And you are always **in view**

*(Johnny waits pacing with his 3 pals in DSC spot)
(He stops when he sees Coffee Girl in USC spot)*

Yeah, I, I am my will
And you are in everything I do

*(Coffee Girls 3 pals walk down the aisle as bride's
maids in winter gear – friends line the playing
space on either side in their winter gear)*

I do, I do, I do

(Coffee Girl comes down the aisle)

In the Day Eraser's dark of night
In the Excited States, gone in plain sight
Under the wave or by cave light
I lose, things change, but never in your eyes

*(Coffee Girl's vows are these lines – gives Johnny
ring as she says them)
(Johnny's vows are these lines, but as he goes for
the ring, he realizes he does not have it – panic!)*

I, I am of you
And you are always **in view**

*(Johnny hunts desperately for the ring, asking the
audience on either side if they have seen it. On*

the words “in view”, he finds it behind the ear of an audience member. D)

And I, I am my will
And you are in everything I do

*(Johnny shows CG the ring CS)
(CG runs to CS and jumps into his arms in joy!
On the last chord of the song, he slips the ring on
Coffee Girl’s finger)*

Confetti cannons explode from above.

The cast turns to either side of the audience and shouts:

*Cast: **INTERMISSION!***

Blackout.

Act Two

Act 2, Sc. 1: Winter Wedding Reception

After snacking on cottage food – hot chocolate, s'mores, popcorn, etc. the audience returns through the nether space to their seats. They have to walk past Chanie, who is huddled in the nether space sleeping.

When they reach their seats, Johnny and Coffee Girl's wedding reception is in full swing, with Hip tunes playing over the radio on the deck of the cottage.

Once everyone is almost settled in their seats, Olivia comes forward as the Sassy Barista.

Sassy Barista: Good evening dear friends. And welcome to the winter wedding reception of Johnny and his beloved Coffee Girl! (*applause*) Johnny – I hope you hold onto her better than you held onto that ring! And now I would like to call the happy couple forward to share their first dance together – may your lives be blessed now that you can finally stop running.

She sings as the couple dances:

Long Time Running – from *Road Apples* (1991)

Does your mother tell you things
Long, long when I'm gone?
Who you talking to?
Is she telling you I'm the one?

It's a grave mistake, And I'm wide awake

Drive in's rained out
Weatherman wet fingers the sky
He pokes it out, he pulls it in
He don't know why

It's the same mistake
It's been a long time running
It's been a long time coming
It's well worth the wait

We don't go anywhere, Just on trips
We haven't seen a thing, We still don't know where it is
It's a safe mistake

It's been a long time running
It's been a long time coming

Well, well, it's all the same mistake

Dead to rights and wide awake
I'll drop a caribou
I'll tell on you
I'll tell on you
I'll tell on you

You've got a boatload of nerve
But I would say you've been told
You work me against my friends and you'll get
You'll get left out in the cold

It's the same mistake
It's been a long time running
It's been a long time coming
It's been a long, long, long time running
It's well worth the wait
It's well worth the wait
It's well worth the wait
It's well worth the wait

Johnny and the Coffee Girl are about to kiss when the Police Officer's radio goes off loudly.

Radio: Officer Langlois, we have a report of a missing female, white, blond hair, one Gail Miller, M-I-L-L-E-R. 21 years of age. Please respond.

Officer: Yes. Yes. Langlois out. *(to guests)* Sorry about that. *(The air has gone out of the gathering – the news hits close to home)* I'd better go.

GP: *(hoping to break the tension)* Come on inside everybody. How about another song?

Guests agree and follow GP into the cottage. Johnny and the CG are the last to go after hugging the officer and wishing her good luck.

It begins to snow. The officer is left outside alone as we hear "Wheat Kings" being sung inside.

The lighting shifts to moonlight – the officer takes in the singing. We feel her loneliness. She thoughtfully pulls the curtain in front of the cottage and exits DSR.

Act 2, Sc. 2: I'll Be On Your Shoulder

A railway track is projected onto the stage floor.

Chanie gets up from the center of the nether space and walks toward the main playing space.

We hear thunder and rain, raven crowing.

When he gets to the DSC area of the main playing space, he falls to his knees holding his lungs. He digs out his map and looks about, lost. He puts down the map beside him and bends to all fours, exhausted.

Behind him we see, light in black light, the priest, nun, school official and four students, all in white neutral masks and white gloves approaching slowly. They begin to whisper Chanie's name, asking him to return.

Chanie senses them coming and slowly turns to see them. Emotion builds as they approach until Chanie turns to run. When he does he bumps into a figure. There is music – a soft version of the opening chords of "Son" from Secret Path.

The light is dull and it is difficult to tell who it is – Chanie backs up a step, lights rise slightly to see it is his father.

He begins to sing softly to Chanie, but also to the figures beyond:

You know that they just can't resist

No man could make them feel nervous

And they put zero into it

And their country doesn't exist *(a raven calls, the figures disperse)*

(Chanie turns to embrace his father – father holds him at arm's length and sings)

Son, when you dance,

I'll be on your shoulder

And you'll feel it

(During 4 by 8 count music break – Chanie and father embrace, turn, father inspects Chanie's bruised hand and cut hair)

Son, when you dance, *(Father walks downstage, turns to face Chanie and raises his arms)*

I'll be on your shoulder *Fireflies appear in the nether space and are projected on the floor)*

And you'll feel it

And when something stirs in your heart (*Father kneels and Chanie come to him DSC. He takes
A feeling so strong and intense Chanie's hand and sings to him*)

When something occurs in your heart

And there isn't a next sentence

(During this 4 by 8 musical break to the music of the chorus, Chanie and his father laugh and try to catch fireflies – the life lights held by the cast)

Son, when you dance, (*Chanie and his dad return. Chanie is holding a firefly.*

I'll be on your shoulder *He turns in a dance, hands raised. His father watches)*

And you'll feel it

Even as the world convulses (*School official enters USR, Chanie stops and moves USL*)

Don't stop wishing what you wish

Even as the world convulses (*USL he is confronted by the nun. He turns DSR*)

Even as the world convulses

Don't stop wishing the things you wish (*DSL he is met by the priest – he back into his father*)

Don't stop wishing what you wish

And when something stirs in your heart (*In sharp spot light, his father turns Chanie toward him.*

A feeling so strong and intense *He opens Chanie's hands to reveal the firefly light and*

When something occurs in your heart *sings the final lines as advice and comfort.)*

And there isn't a next sentence

Chanie raises his hands and closes his eyes and begins to turn and dance, holding his light aloft. His father slowly backs out of the spotlight leaving Chanie alone. The spotlight fades to black leaving Chanie illuminated by his firefly light in the falling snow. He walks into the forest singing the chorus holding his firefly light. He crosses paths with the police officer coming forward into the main space from the forest with her flashlight. Snow is falling.

Act 2, Sc. 3: Finding Gail Miller

In the blackout we see a single flashlight of the police officer from the back of the theatre. When the officer makes it to the playing space, there is snow falling. She scans the audience with her flashlight as the lights come up slightly so we can see it is the officer.

She looks USR, nothing. Turns her light USL and sees something. She moves in that direction and stops, muttering a profanity under her breath. She has found the body of the missing girl. She takes a moment, gathers herself, and says into her radio:

Officer: “Dispatch come in. I found her. It’s Gail Miller.”

She reaches into the space between the curtain and audience risers and pulls out a tiny sphere of light - the victim’s life force. She walks DS and tosses the light up so it becomes a constellation. After she throws the light, the Officer exits DSR. Proceed to black out.

The reporter and camera operator appear to do their news story.

NEWS FLASH - GAIL MILLER MURDERED; DAVID MILGAARD CONVICTED

Reporter: Good Evening. This is Chloe Flowers, CBC News. Justice has finally been served in a case that has shocked the nation – or has it? 16 year old David Milgaard has been sentenced to life in prison for the murder of 21 year old nursing student Gail Miller. The body of Miller was found in a snowbank in Saskatoon back in January of this year. Milgaard’s mother, Joyce, maintains that her son is innocent of the crime but has no evidence to support her claims. Only one thing seems certain in this story, that a beautiful and promising young woman, Gail Miller, has lost her life. This has been Chloe Flowers for CBC News.

Spotlights turn on to reveal the two mothers.

Both: When you sign up to be a mom, there are things in the fine print that you never take the time to read.

Miller: Warning: There will be days of delirium from losing sleep.

Milgaard: Warning: You won’t get to choose their friends. Yes, even George from down the street who you just *know* is a bad influence.

Miller: Warning: Some days, you won’t be enough.

Beat.

Both: Warning: You may be around long enough to lose them.

Knock on door.

Both: I remember exactly what I was doing when I heard the knock.

Miller: I had finally gotten around to picking up an issue of *Chatelaine* that had been collecting dust on my shelf. I always found myself to be too busy to read, even magazines - I worked full-time as an accountant, and when I wasn't doing that, there was a house to clean, food to cook, errands to run, and Gail's younger sister to take care of. But I had some free time on my hands, and was ready to just relax.

Milgaard: I was doing the dishes from the night before. The hot water was running, and the clatter of it hitting the plates was blocking out the knocking from my ears. I didn't know there was someone at the door until I had finished.

Miller: When I do get the chance to relax, I tend not to let anyone interrupt me. I let them knock a few times before I realized whoever it was wasn't giving up. I walk to the door grumbling to myself.

Milgaard: I'm embarrassed to open the door in my apron and sweatpants. I worry if whoever was knocking would be able to smell the remnants of last night's dinner - store-bought tomato sauce gone sickly sweet in the stale air. I didn't want them to think I was cheap.

Both: What a luxury it was to have those worries at the top of my list.

Miller: I was sitting in Gail's chair when the officer told me I had lost her.

Milgaard: I was sitting in David's chair when the officer told me that he had mur... that he ra... that I had lost him.

My gut told me then what I still believe - what I *know*: He didn't do it.

Miller: Who was it?

Milgaard: It wasn't him.

Miller: Who did this?!

Milgaard: I know it wasn't him!

Miller: My daughter -

Milgaard: You have to believe me!

Miller: How could they -

Milgaard: Don't take him from me -

Miller: Who took her from me?! (*Beat.*) She wouldn't say. "Soon", she told me.

Both: She asked for my patience and cooperation with the process. Said there were still facts they needed to sort through. Things they needed to work out.

Milgaard: As if this were about taxes.

Miller: As if this were a business deal.

Both: As if this was about anything other than the loss of my child.

(children enter from opposite ends of the playing space during these lines. They get an extra block and begin to work on their crafts - Gail - human paper chains, David, a model car)

Milgaard: Ma'am, has your son ever been known to hurt animals?

Miller: Ma'am, is your daughter known to be excessively flirtatious?

Milgaard: Was there ever any trouble with the kids at school?

Miller: Did she change partners often?

Milgaard: Did he often appear angry or vengeful?

Miller: Does she tend to spend time in unsafe areas?

Both: No. That is not my child.

Milgaard: I could tell she felt helpless, trying to force me to make sense of something nonsensical.

Miller: The questions were so foreign to what I knew Gail to be.

Milgaard: I wasn't in a shape to answer them in any case.

Miller: Flirt or introvert, it didn't matter - I had lost my daughter, and there was nothing the officer could do.

Milgaard: I could tell she didn't believe me. Why would she, I guess. She looked at me like I was a child who was still too naive to understand the ways of the world.

Both: It was the strangest sort of pity. A kind I had never expected to land on me.

(Beat. Let this thought sink in.)

I didn't sign up for this.

I thought I was ready for anything motherhood had in store for me.

Miller: The glum, angsty silences.

Milgaard: Heartbreak.

Miller: Bullying.

Milgaard: Broken bones.

Both: But not losing them. Not like this.

Miller: But it was in the fine print.

Milgaard: Who reads the fine print?

Both: The loss turned even the moments I tried to forget into trophies of their existence.

Miller: I remember when she was 3 or 4, she used to make these human paper chains.

Milgaard: He was 5 when he started building models.

Miller: Each time she made them, she'd present it to me as if it was the first. I remember trying to put on my best face of surprise every time the familiar fluttering of its unfolding came; with additional awe as she'd hold it outstretched in her arms like a banner of victory.

Gail: Look, mom! They're all friends!

Milgaard: It started off with a small one I had gotten him for Christmas - a red '57 Chevy. He didn't ask for much as a kid, so when he told me he wanted a new model to build, I happily obliged.

Miller: I remember she used to give each of them a different outfit. It was important to her that they were unique. I made sure she saw me taking the time to look at each one.

Milgaard: There was something meditative for him about it. About all the pieces fitting together. A calm concentration washed over him every time he began to build.

Miller: When the unveiling of her paper chain masterpiece was complete, she'd leave a mess of paper scraps on the floor that I'd have to prod her to clean up. And every time, she seemed surprised - not feigned like mine, but a genuine forgetting.

Gail: Oh, sorry! *(begins to clean up, but clumsily leaving a trail of the scrap paper that she is cleaning behind her as she does this.)*

Milgaard: I remember him stewing over one of his most complex models until I had to beg him to get some sleep.

David: This piece won't fit, mom. It's broken. Should I throw it away?

Milgaard: I told him he shouldn't throw it away because we couldn't afford a new one. I told him to keep trying, and if it really wasn't working, that was alright - sometimes things just don't fit.

Both: *(to David/Gail)* Stick with it.

Miller: I told myself these were the parts of childhood I wouldn't miss -

Milgaard: Nagging him to go to bed.

Miller: Begging her to clean up.

(David begins to take off his socks)

Milgaard: Telling him not to leave his socks in the middle of the carpet.

Miller: Telling her to get off the phone when people were trying to sleep.

Milgaard: These moments -

Miller: They were tiresome.

Milgaard: They were tedious.

Miller: But they were beautiful.

Milgaard: But they were sacred.

Both: They are trophies.

Milgaard: On his shelf of model cars.

Miller: In her scrapbook filled with paper chains.

Milgaard: But you can't have a conversation with a trophy collection.

Miller: You can't hold a memory in your arms.

Lights come on to reveal a bustling city with civilians all moving in one direction, filtering through the two mothers who stand still facing the direction opposite to the movement of the civilians, as well as Gail and David, asleep on their backs beside each other.

Both: It's strange, you know.

Miller: The way your head can hold an entire orchestra of loud thoughts,

Milgaard: But the people around you can't hear a thing.

Miller: I miss her.

Milgaard: I miss him.

Miller: And it's hard to process that she isn't even entering the minds of others when she's all I can think about.

Milgaard: And it's hard to process that what has become my whole world is irrelevant to the worlds of others.

Miller: I want her to be remembered.

Milgaard: I want people to care about the life that was unjustly stolen.

Both: I want people to listen to my orchestra playing symphonies of my memories of [him/her].

I want to tell them,

Miller: She was a nurse at the hospital just a couple blocks away.

Milgaard: He wanted to save enough money to go backpacking once he graduated.

Miller: She was always the favourite amongst her patients.

Milgaard: He just loved travelling, adventuring, exploring...

Miller: She was always so focussed on making her patients feel at home that she'd almost forget to do her actual job.

Milgaard: I couldn't keep him at home for very long.

Miller: Some of her colleagues thought she was absent-minded. But she just cared about others, you know?

Milgaard: But I didn't mind too much - he always came back from his road trips so invigorated.

Miller: Wanted to make them smile at the times when it was hardest to be feeling happy.

Milgaard: I was just happy that he was so in love with life.

(Both turn to look at their sleeping kids.)

Larry Fisher (the Creepy Stranger from the Bitter Roast scene, slowly enters as they speak.)

Both: I want to ask them: have you ever watched your child sleep?

Miller: She's like that now. *(Turns away)* But it stops being beautiful when it's permanent.

Milgaard: His life is like that now: dormant. *(Turns away)* But it stops being beautiful when it's against their will.

Both: *(increasingly desperate)* It stops being beautiful when they should be awake. When they deserve to be awake. When they need to be awake. *(Turn back towards their kids as they shout,)*
WAKE UP -

The civilians stops to turn to the mothers.

*By the time the mothers turn to where their kids were, Larry has reached the kids, waken them up, grabbed them by the arm, and is walking them into "nether space".
All that is left of the kids is their model and paper chain remains.*

Both mothers remain in the place where their children were. The civilians continue walking offstage, unphased.

Blackout.

NEWSFLASH - DAVID MILGAARD FREED & LARRY FISHER CONVICTED OF GAIL MILLER MURDER

Reporter: Good evening. This is Chloe Flowers, CBC News. The twists continue in the case of murdered nursing student, Gail Miller. Today, David Milgaard was released from prison after new DNA evidence conclusively proves that he was innocent of the murder of Gale Miller, Saskatoon nursing student, 23 years ago. The evidence has linked 49 year old Larry Fisher to the crime. Today, a jury found Fisher guilty of Miller's murder and put him behind bars life. While the truth is now known, what is unclear is how Milgaard will adjust to what years he has left outside of prison. Chloe Flowers, CBC News.

Upon this newsflash, David stops at the edge of "nether space". Larry and Gail continue walking.

Citizens are no longer on stage. Spotlight on each mother.

Milgaard: He is back now, but there are so many pieces of him that are missing.

Miller: She won't ever be back, and I am missing her in pieces. *(Picks up Gail's scrap paper from her paper chains)*

Milgaard: But I am trying to remind him what I taught him when he was young: that sometimes, things just don't fit. And perhaps fitting himself back into the rhythm of everyday life won't be

easy for him. But that doesn't make his life disposable. That doesn't make his life worth throwing away.

Miller: Her life was just thrown away.

(Beat.)

Everything was just starting for her.

Milgaard: He hardly had a chance to begin.

Miller: 21.

Milgaard: 16.

Miller: And undeserving.

Milgaard: And innocent.

Both: Taken.

(Both take a moment to think)

Miller: See, I've realized what the problem is with the fine print: It doesn't leave you instructions for the moments that are not under warranty.

Milgaard: Maybe that's why it's so small: in the business of our lives, it hopes we are too impatient to fuss over the possible trauma in its details.

Both: So it has been a game of improvisation,

Miller: Learning how to get used to the way my stomach drops like it did on the day I first heard the news every time I am reminded of her.

Milgaard: Learning how to stand strong beside my living son as I stare at the pixelated face of his murderer -

Miller: - her murderer -

Milgaard: - in the television screen.

Both: Learning how to build my life all over again.

Miller: But I am learning.

Milgaard: But we are learning.

Miller: To be her voice.

Milgaard: To help him find his voice again.

Both: To read the fine print.

Blackout

Act 2, Sc. 4: *The Fall of Icarus*

In the blackout from the previous scene we hear the crowd roar – it is the first track of The Tragically Hip’s album “Live Between Us” – “Grace Too”. Gord thanks the Rheostatics and the song begins. Cast members enter in the dark with their life lights lit, waving them and joining in the crowd cheers and sing-a-long as the band goes through the first verse:

He said, "I'm fabulously rich, come on just let's go"
She kind of bit her lip, "Jeez, I don't know"
But I can guarantee, there'll be no knock on the door
I'm total pro, that's what I'm here for

I come from downtown, born ready for you
Armed with will and determination, and grace, too

On the last line the music fades, the cast leaves. The house lights brighten onto the audience illuminating the playing space to create the atmosphere of a lecture hall setting. A professor rushes into the room balancing her books, papers from the students, briefcase, coffee etc. on her way to the podium. She addresses the audience as her students, similar to Yale history professor, Joanne Freeman, and puts the papers she has graded on her desk with a smile.

Professor: *(As she enters, apologetically)* Good evening class, I’m sorry I’m late. Isn’t it just like Toronto street cars to arrive in ill-timed clumps of three. *(As she unpacks)* You’re right! No excuses. “Early is on time, on time is late and late is inexcusable.” *(posing melodramatically)* Like Hamlet, I stand ready to suffer your “outrageous slings and arrows.” *(Laughs)* Ok. *(Deep centering breath)* I hope that you have all done your assigned readings... for a change. *(laughs - laboriously lifting her stack of term papers)*. As you can see, I’ve been labouring away grading all your papers. So yes, you will be getting them back at the conclusion of class. I appreciate your patience, well, from some of you at least.

She inspects the audience numbers.

Professor: It’s good to see that at least *some* of you read the fine print of the course syllabus and wisely decided to attend your very last **mandatory** lecture instead of trundling off to the *Tragically Hip* concert down the road. *(Smiling)* I must admit, as a fan, I had considered going as

well, until I remembered - I'm the professor and am here for you - "Fully. Completely." (laughs) Alright. Down to business.

Just a reminder that your final exam is on *Tuesday* - I hope this isn't the first you're hearing of it! This is our last lecture and honestly I was a bit nervous last night (*laughs*) I just want to leave a lasting final impression; leave you with something you'll actually *remember* twenty, thirty years from now! (*laughs*) Hopefully I don't fail to disappoint! (*she smiles*) On we go. I thought today we could take a look at this beautiful painting, one of my favourites by Peter Bruegel:

She presses her clicker to show "Landscape with the fall of Icarus" by Peter Bruegel.

Professor: We'll start with a little background information: This is an oil-tempera painting, 29 by 44 inches, currently housed in the Museum of Fine Arts in Brussels. So, when you look at the painting, what do you see? (*Pause - addressing an imagined comment*) A man in a dress? Well-observed Michael - thank you for giving us a start. Let's say a peasant ploughman in traditional Flemish costume circa 1560. Bruegel places him in the foreground, center, in a bright red flowing shirt. That's certainly what the *artist* wants you to see by way of composition. But is there more? A ship? Yes. A shepherd who seems to be day dreaming? Not exactly employee of the month. (*laughs*) Other observations? (*no response*) Remember that *seeing* is more than *looking*. (*pause*) Let's challenge our minds - the reason I hope that you took this class, not just to fulfill the dreaded (*with mock horror*) "mandatory liberal arts credit".

Professor: If I told you that the name of title of the painting is *The Fall of Icarus*, how does that change what you see?

If you strain your eyes, and look at the bottom right-hand corner you will see the legs of poor Icarus entering the water - right in front of a fisherman seemingly more interested in what is on the end of his line than the drowning boy only meters away.

And not just any boy - *Icarus* - who tragically melted his wings of feathers and wax after flying too close to the sun, falling into the chipped blue of the Mediterranean Sea after escaping from the labyrinth of Daedalus - a story, I trust you recall that we studied earlier in the term.

Returning to our earlier question: how does the title change what you see? And more importantly, what does the painting say about tragedy and its position in our lives?

Presses clicker and a photo of Auden appears on the screen.

Professor: Who is this?

Silence, laughs to herself.

Professor: No, Michael, it's not my grandfather, although I continue to miss him every day. (*laughs*) Cover page of your assigned readings? Thank you for teaching me patience. W. H. Auden, English poet, born Feb. 21st 1907 - died Sept. 29th, 1973. He lived in America,

summered in Austria and taught for a period, of course, at Oxford. In 1938, after pondering Bruegel's painting, Auden writes this in his poem, *Musee Des Beaux Arts*:

About suffering they were never wrong,
The old Masters: how well they understood
Its human position: how it takes place
While someone else is eating or opening a window or just walking dully along;

In Breughel's *Icarus*, for instance: how everything turns away
Quite leisurely from the disaster; the ploughman may
Have heard the splash, the forsaken cry,
But for him it was not an important failure; the sun shone
As it had to on the white legs disappearing into the green
Water, and the expensive delicate ship that must have seen
Something amazing, a boy falling out of the sky,
Had somewhere to get to and sailed calmly on.

The Professor lets the last line of the poem sink in for a moment before continuing.

Professor: 1938 - a year before the Second World War commences. The horror of the Holocaust is about to break over the horizon, and yet "How everything turns away... quite leisurely... from the disaster..." Tragedy is not the way we portray it in the movies. It will often occur, not in Shakespearean "sound and fury" but in the silence of the most ordinary moments. When we find ourselves alone, far from the front page. Its virus rarely goes viral. It happens, "While someone else is eating or opening a window or just walking dully along..."

Pause

What is it about us, generation after generation that makes us turn away from the moments of tragedy in our everyday lives? In each others lives? If faced, if shared, would they not be easier to bear?

The lights gradually fade into a single spotlight while the professor begins to speak, sitting down at her desk.

Professor: Moments like when I was grading your papers three weeks ago. It was a cloudy Sunday. I had spent the whole day sitting hunched over my desk, my dog, Grace, curled up at my feet. I was working on my third cup of coffee when my neck began to hurt from hunching over.

A second spotlight appears on the opposite side of the stage. A reporter and a camera person step in.

Reporter: I was recording a segment at the *Tragically Hip* concert. My camera operator, Emma, and I had been looking forward to covering the concert for weeks! The show was insane! The fans were radiating happiness, and after the show we were going to interview the band.

Professor: I looked at the stack of papers I had left, and my pen was running out of ink. As I got up to get a new one, I rubbed my neck in an attempt to ease the pain. And I felt it.

Reporter: We were about to begin filming an interview with this concert goer - a literature student from U of T. He had been a fan his whole life and had skipped class to see the show. I turned to Emma, my camera person, who was also a huge fan, and asked her to count me in for a second time, It didn't seem like she had heard me the first time, the crowd noise was so loud.

Professor: It was a small lump.

Reporter: She just stared at me, blankly.

Professor: I wasn't overly worried.

Reporter: I asked her again, but she wasn't reacting to anything I said. It wasn't like her.

Professor: I took the streetcar to the doctor's office, there was a couple arguing about what wallpaper to use for their kitchen.

Reporter: That's when I noticed that her camera began to droop, so I took it out of her hands and placed it on the ground.

Professor: I couldn't find my health card. The receptionist was annoyed as I spent five minutes digging through my purse before I finally found it.

Reporter: Her eyes were empty. It was hard to tell what was going on with all the commotion. So, I put my hands on her shoulders and asked if she was okay.

Professor: I asked the doctor if I was okay.

Reporter: Then she just collapsed, right there on the sidewalk, I called 911 and we rushed to the hospital. They didn't like what they saw in her bloodwork so they took a scan. They told me she had cancer.

Professor: He told me I had cancer.

Reporter and camera operator exit in the darkness. The house lights come on to simulate the classroom setting and the reporter has left the stage.

Professor: Many of us might not know Bruegel. Or Auden. Or even Icarus. Though I hope you won't forget them now. Or, at least you'll remember them during Tuesday's exam. *(smiles)* But I'll bet my tenure that you know this story: "Friend, relative, loved one, family member discovers she or he has cancer and faces the fight of their lives." *(scans the audience)* Why am I sharing this with you? I'm not looking for pity. Or sympathy. Or gift baskets. *(smiles wistfully)* Though some might be nice... I am sharing this because I stand - we stand - in a long line of artists, with Brueghel, with Auden, *understanding* how easy it is for us to turn away from

our tragedies, but *knowing* the value in facing our disasters straight on and fighting as hard as we can. In every moment to teach, to bake, to study, to write music, to run across Canada... to go on tour. Create. Talk. Listen. Put our lives in each other's hands.

Pause

Because maybe then, the load will not be as unbearable, and we won't have to join poor Icarus, falling from the sky and into the ocean, silently.

The lights fade to black. Kabir appears in the USC spotlight and sings "Are You Going Through Something?" from "The Depression Suite: The Rock". We see a pantomime of the reporter, camera operator and lecturer going into treatment and forming a relationship with each other.

Under the pillow, *(singer alone in USC spotlight)*

I bury my head and try to shut Chicago out
As it turns out there's a whole other world of sounds
of perfect fifths low skids and Arctic howls

All saying, "*Are you going through something?*" *(Professor enters into CS spotlight. She is met by Doctor #1 (Mira) who consults with her)*
Are you going through something?"

Under the pillow a little room to breathe *(Camera Operator enters with Reporter who guides her to Doctor #2 (Kabir) for consult)*
the early morning light's a pale cranberry *(Doctors leave USR and DSL for IV stands.)*
I hear the "aaa-aah-aah not-wow-wow" *Reporter leaves to take a call. The Pro and CO look to each other for comfort)*
of a siren faraway and closing steadily

Saying, "*Are you going through something?*" *(Doctor #1 enters with IV stands- raises hand for Professor to join her)*
Are you going through something? *(Doctor #2 enter with IV stands - raises hand For Caamera Operator to join him)*
Cuz I-I-I-I I am too." *(Prof. and CO embrace before exiting with doc)*

Under the pillow, *(Reporter left alone and anxiously waiting in spotlight, which fades at the*
I can hear you whisperin' "*Are you going through something?*"

end of this line)

Well honey, *(Cast enters singing on either side of the playing*
Are you going through something? *space in an order ready for their next scene. They*
Are you going through something? *face the audience and sing)*
Then I, Then I... I am too... *(Over these 3 lines the cast join hands as they sing)*

Are you going through something? *(Light transition to single CS spot. The prof returns, then*
Are you going through something? *the CO – cast turns and sits on drama blocks in dark)*
Then I... then I am too... *(Prof. and CO embrace, sit, hold hands and wait)*

Act 2, Sc. 5: Courage – Discovery/Diagnosis/Treatment Scene

After the last notes of “Are You Going Through Something?” fade, the chords of “Courage” begin, sung by Trinity and the Yoga Instructor (Jordan). During the opening instrumental chords, the cast members who were sitting along the sides on their drama boxes take their places in designated groups. The pantomime shows ordinary people in ordinary moments who discover the threat of cancer in their lives.

GROUPS

1. *Johnny getting coffee with the Police Officer/Coffee Girl – Jose, **Emily W**, Anais*
2. *Birthday Party – **Emily G** (B-Day Girl), Olivia (mom), Maeve, Sinead (sisters)*
3. *Family Baking – Kendra, Julia, Alia (family)*
4. *Basket Ball Playing – Jeremy and Carter (players)*

Sport light in four corners (1 = DSR, 2=USR, 3=DSR, 4=USL – Chloe, Dima and Isabella in center spot)

The Professor, Camera Operator and Reporter remain in the center.

Watch the band through a bunch of dancers (Intro. Coffee Group #1 meeting for coffee)
Quickly, follow the unknown

With something more familiar (Intro. Birthday Group #2 – spotlight blows out with candles)
Quickly, something familiar

Courage, my word, It didn't come, it doesn't matter (Prof. CO and Reporter wait for news)

Sleepwalk, so fast asleep (Intro. Family Group #3 – mom baking with her children)
In a motel that has the lay of home

And piss on all of your background (*Intro. Sports Group #4, two boys playing basketball*)
And piss on all your surroundings

Courage, my word (*Symptoms – Coffee Group #1 – Officer's hands shake – drops mug*)
It didn't come, it doesn't matter

Courage, your word (*Symptoms – Birthday Group #2 – Birthday girl gets piercing headache*)
It didn't come, it doesn't matter

Courage, my word (*Symptoms – Family Group #3 – mom feels pain in her lower abdomen*)
It didn't come, it doesn't matter

Courage, it couldn't come at a worse time (*Symptoms – Sports Group #4 – player get winded*)

(General Hospital Lighting up – a drama block is brought into the center for each group by the doctor. The patients will be in a line down the stage, groups 1 and 3 facing one side of the audience, group 2 and 4 facing the other. The Camera Operator, Prof and Reporter remain CS)

There's no simple (*Hospital – Coffee Group #1 enter to consult with Doctor #1*)
Explanation
For anything important
Any of us do

And, yeah, the human (*Hospital Birthday enter to consult with Doctor #2*)
Tragedy

Consists in (*Hospital – Family Group #3 enter to consult with doctor #1*)
The necessity

Of living with (*Hospital – Sports Group #4 – enter to consult with Doctor #2*)
The consequences
Under pressure
Under pressure

Courage, my word, It didn't come, it doesn't matter (*Lead out Coffee Group #1*)

Courage, your word, It didn't come, it doesn't matter (*Lead out Birthday Group #2*)

Courage, my word, It didn't come, it doesn't matter (*Lead out Family Group #3*)

Courage, it couldn't come at a worse time (*Lead out Sports Group #4*)

Repeat Chorus

Courage, my word, It didn't come, it doesn't matter (*Doctor let's Dima know she's ok*)

Courage, your word, It didn't come, it doesn't matter (*Isabella ok*)

Courage, my word, It didn't come, it doesn't matter (*Jordan starts to walk center*)

Courage,

It couldn't come at a worse time (*Guitar Player kneels proposing to YI, Doctor #2 with behind at screen with scan revealing cancer everywhere. Doctor #1 has rolled in IV stand*)

(Doctor #2 point out cancer in many different places with a pointer. YI shakes head, refuses treatment, turns to accept proposal. YI and GP embrace. There is applause – scene is transformed through lighting and opening of curtain to cottage)

Act 2, Sc. 6: “In Your Eyes / What Love Looks Like”

To the rousing applause of their friends, GP and the YI end their embrace.

Yoga Instructor: Thank you everyone. We so much appreciate everybody coming all this way for this special weekend. You have all become such an important part of our lives. I personally want to thank you for all your love and thoughtfulness over the past months.

(Each of the following items gets an appropriate response from the friends gathered)

For Johnny's famous casserole, movie tickets from my Sassy Barista, hikes around Lake Ontario with my favourite Waterkeeper, our beloved Coffee Girl for the...well... coffee! Passes to the Leafs game from our dear new friends from the CBC – I feel the second curse lifting! The collection of W.H. Auden poetry for our professor and of course, *(she takes a card from her pocket)* the “Get Out of Jail Free” card from our favourite Police Officer! You have all helped make our time together... exquisitely beautiful.

But kindness, giving...love... flow both ways. Are needed... both ways. So, with that in mind, I've prepared something for you. My gift to you... and to my beloved Guitar Player.

The Yoga Instructor goes up into the cottage. The guests talk and arrange themselves for the performance. She comes out in a beautiful summer dress to the applause of everyone who has gathered. She takes her place and nods to a friend who starts a track of prerecorded music – the cover of What Blue by Stars from the Strombo Show's “Hip @ Thirty”, New Year's Special.

What follows is a joyous dance, in “La La Land” style of the Yoga Instructor's life and time together with the Guitar Player.

What Blue – from *Man Machine Poem* (2016)

Ah, it's what love looks like, in a world of reproach, (*The first two verses capture the YI's life memories, dance recitals, travel, etc.*)
Completely absorbed in that too
Exciting over fair,
Always daily forward,
Always the power to choose

In your eyes,
What love looks like,
It's still the longest thing that I do
In your eyes, the useless nights and all the dreary places,
But what blue

Oh, I was always too uneasy, too for solitude, (*This verse captures the GP's journey and experiences in the show*)
Too into all the things you can do
To come into the open, to come into the light.
Forward! Daily forward for what blue
In your eyes, what our love looks like, (*YI and GP meet*)
It's the longest thing that we do
In your eyes, all of our dark doors, our disenchanted paths,
But what blue

Instrumental Break

I love you so much, (*Memories the GP and YI have together*)
It distorts my life,
What drove and drives you drove and drives me too
When I think I'm clear,
I think I'm doing fine,
Completely absorbed in what blue

In your eyes, (*Proposal and marriage – more memories*)
It's what love looks like,
It's the longest thing that we do
In your eyes, all the useless nights and all the dreary places
And what blue.

In your eyes, (*Joyous wrap up*)
It's what love looks like,

It's the longest thing that we do
In your eyes, all the useless nights and all the dreary places
And what blue.

At the conclusion there is rapturous applause but soon, the YI wilts CS. The GP rushes to her and a hush falls. The GP wants call 911 but the YI refuses to let him do so. She wants to choose the path of her life on her terms.

We hear the opening chords of "Now for Plan" A on acoustic guitar. The GP wants to say something, to protest but she interrupts him by singing:

Yoga Instructor Sings:

Yeah, I know, I know, I know
It's still not enough
Nothing short of everything
Nothing short of everything's enough
No matter how wide or how tough
Nothing short of everything's enough

Yeah, I know, I know, I know
Now for Plan A
I'll stay till the wisteria fades
And falls over the lake
No matter how high or how rough
Nothing short of everything's enough

The song transitions to "Stay" (refer to Hey, Rosetta's cover of these two songs on the Strombo Show "Hip @ Thirty" New Year's Eve special for the arrangement)

Guitar Player sings:

Is it the worst that you could do?
You were a great you
Who tried to nurture and preserve your faith in you
And with the bureau chiefs and the shrugging spies
You could stay, but why?

'Cause you see a light and then another
Everything you thought you sought's uncovered
You're a fighter and a lover
And there's no one up above her
So stay, stay

Transition back to “Now for Plan A”. GP raises her up. They dance to the DSC spotlight

GP: Yeah, I know, I know, I know (*Holding each other, looking into each other’s eyes*)
Everything is not enough

YI: I’ll stay till the wisteria fades
And falls over the lake

GP: No matter how high or how rough

YI: Nothing short of everything’s enough

During an instrumental repeating of the final two chords, the GP and YI begin to dance in a slow circle. Wisteria petals begin to fall from above. The time has come to part.

As the last petals fall, they pause; she gives him her life light and backs out of the light, leaving the GP alone.

Kabir begins to sing “Are You Going Through Something?” One by one, cast members move DSC to the GP, offer their comfort and exit the space, leaving him alone.

Stars are projected onto the stage – there are forest night sounds. The GP looks down at the YI’s life light in his hands, then tosses it up into the constellations. Stars are projected onto the stage floor.

Act 2, Sc. 7: Man Who Walks Among the Stars – A Homecoming

The guitar player turns to see, amongst the stars on the floor, railway tracks projected on the floor back to the cottage. Devastated by the loss of his loved one, he walks along them US toward the cottage, eventually kneeling in sadness, his face in his hands.

Chanie approaches, shivering and exhausted, from the nether space, perhaps lit by his life light. When he reaches the guitar player, he kneels and places his hand lightly on the GP’s shoulder, just as he had done when first taken from his home earlier in the play. The GP turns and looks into Chanie’s face. He had been sensing Chanie’s presence throughout his journey.

Chanie begins to sing:

I feel *(looking into the Guitar player’s eyes)*

Here, Here and here

I hurt *(Chanie puts the GP’s hand to his chest)*

Here, here and here

I lived *(Chanie gestures at his cottage, behind the GP)*

Here, here and here

I died *(Chanie falls slowly onto his back)*

Here, here and here

Guitar Player *(sings to Chanie)*: Here, here, here and here

Chanie *(as he curls into a ball on his side)*: Here, here, here and here

Chanie: *(as his father emerges from the cottage – there is a warm glow from the windows)*

(Chanie shivers as he sings) Ashes of love... cold as ice...

You paid the debt...

Father: Chanie?

Chanie: ...and I paid... *(he struggles)* I paid... the price... *(Chanie stops breathing)*

Silence. A Canadian flag is projected onto the floor where the GP holds Chanie in his arms.

Father: Chanie..

Chanie gets up slowly from the GP's arms, looking into his eyes. Chanie touches the GP's cheek. They are brothers.

Chanie starts to go toward the cottage, but sees he has stepped into a large Canadian flag. He freezes, remembering his time at the residential school. Chanie begins to pacing frantically, trying to reach his father but trapped in the borders of the Canadian flag, in his past trauma

Pacing, he begins to sing:

Chanie: O, Canada. Our home and... *(he starts again)* O. Canada. Our home and...

GP: *(joining in, reaching out)* ... native land. True patriot love, in all our son's command.

(GP slowly stand coming to be with Chanie. It becomes clear that he is singing for the healing of his country, for the reconciliation between the First Peoples and the nation. From back stage, the cast joins in in full voice)

...with glowing hearts we see the rise, the true north, strong and free

From far and wide, O. Canada, we stand on guard for thee.

God keep our land, glorious and free. O, Canada, we stand on guard for thee.

O, Canada...(he pauses, the cast stops singing, GP kneels in front of Chanie, looks into Chanie's face and sings a promise to him)

....we stand on guard for thee...

Chanie is relieved. He hugs the GP, turns and bounds up the stairs to his father, who he embraces. His father takes off the windbreaker he received from his residential school and replaces it with the jean jacket that was taken from him, with a hand painted raven on the back, just like his father's.

Chanie and his father turn to go inside but Chanie stops. He runs back to the Guitar Player who is still kneeling. He takes out his life light and puts it into the Guitar Players hands.

The Guitar Player stands and extends his hand to Chanie. Chanie takes it and they walk together to the DSC of the main playing space. They trade glances. Then the GP throws Chanie's life light into the night, lighting a spectacular constellation in the night sky. The floor is filled with stars. Chanie laughs in delight.

In the darkness we hear a recording of Gord Downie's voice from the Strombo Show:

Gord: "Let's watch more dance, let's read more poetry, let's see more art, let's sing more songs...it's a.... you know... get out of the rinks one night a week, for god's sakes. Just be ok with that. Be ok with expressing yourself. And expressing yourself means risk, and risk means vulnerability, and all of that is ok. Art never killed anybody, and you know what? As painful as it is, art never ends."

Chanie runs back to his father on the deck of the cottage, looks back once more at the GP and goes inside.

The GP pulls the DS screen into place, the lights go out, and we see a slideshow of The Tragically Hip from early days to today to the music of Choir!Choir!Choir!'s version of "Ahead by a Century", last two image is of Gord Downie's face and Chanie's photo. Constellations are projected onto the floor.

When the slide show ends, the GP pulls back the screen in preparation for the curtain call.

Blackout

CURTAIN CALL

Chanie comes out of his cottage door. He takes a deep breath – his lungs no longer ache. He goes down the front steps and over to the radio. He turns it on. We hear “Bobcaygeon” by The Tragically Hip.

Chanie likes what he hears. He starts to dance to the instrumental opening, getting more into the music as it plays. He makes his way to center stage, dancing.

The cast and crew members do their curtain call.

I left your house this morning (*Chanie’s sister emerges from the cottage to join him*)
About a quarter after nine
Could have been the Willie Nelson (*Chanie’s dad comes out of the cottage, dances too*)
Could have been the wine
When I left your house this morning (*The Guitar Player walks over to join in*)
It was a little after nine
It was in Bobcaygeon, I saw the constellations (*Cast enters with their life lights, making
Reveal themselves one star at a time constellations as the group gets into a diamond
formation*)

During this musical break, during each court of four, Chanie, his sister and father and the GP do Gord’s four signature moves from the Poets! scene.

Drove back to town this morning (*lights up to reveal the cast. They take their bows, wave
to the audience and then exit to the atrium to greet them
as they exit*)
With working on my mind
I thought of maybe quitting
I thought of leaving it behind
I went back to bed this morning
And as I’m pulling down the blind
Yeah, the sky was dull, and hypothetical
And falling one cloud at a time

That night in Toronto
With its checkerboard floors
Riding on horseback
And keeping order restored
Till the men they couldn’t hang
Stepped to the mic and sang
And their voices rang
With that Aryan twang

I got to your house this morning
Just a little after nine
In the middle of that riot
Couldn’t get you off my mind
So I’m at your house this morning
Just a little after nine

'Cause it was in Bobcaygeon, where I saw the constellations
Reveal themselves one star at a time

Next track as the audience leaves is “Country Day”. ☺

Cast members meet the audience in the atrium, welcoming any donations to The Gord Downie & Chanie Wenjack Fund and the Gord Downie Fund for Brain Cancer Research – Sunnybrook Foundation.