

The Sparkley Clean Funeral Singers

Book by  
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Music and Lyrics by Lori Fischer and Don Chaffer

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## CHARACTERS

LASHLEY LEE LASHLEY      Funny, attractive, alcoholic who feels more at home when she's not at home, great singer, plays guitar, 40s.

JUNIE LASHLEY              Optimistic, yet curiously obsessed with death, ambitious, loves to sing back-up plays tambourine and guitar, 40s.

LYLE E. LASHLEY            Lashley and Junie's father, deeply in love with his estranged-wife, has Alzheimer's, plays guitar and ukulele, late 60s/early 70s, also plays BROTHER BUBBA

PASTOR PHIL                Great preacher, gambling addict, sincere, plays various instruments, singer, 40s; also plays BIG T and HOSPITAL V.O.

MADDY                      Great singer, plays piano, ambitious, passionate, poet, 30s, also plays MARTHA URDA the quirky church organist

## SETTING

Ashland City, Tennessee

## LOCATIONS

Sparkley Clean Dry Cleaners  
Lashley Family Kitchen  
Third United Methodist Church  
A Crappy Hotel Room/Crappy Hotel Hallway

## TIME

Spring, 2009

\* "The Sparkley Clean Funeral Singers" was originally commissioned by Stacia Fernandez.

## MUSICAL NUMBERS

- 1.) Back At The Sparkley
- 2.) Big Time Plans
- 3.) Bindy, Take A Seat At The Banquet Table (Cause There's No Need For Food Drives In Heaven)
- 4.) Death Is Everywhere
- 5.) Sweet Macaroon
- 6.) I Got A Cadillac With No Wheels
- 7.) Love Hangs On
- 8.) Building Up For Years
- 9.) St. Peter, If You're Listening, Tell Arthur Reid Hello
- 10.) Larger Arms Than Yours
- 11.) All You Can Eat Liver And Onions
- 12.) Begin And End With You
- 13.) Alcoholic Bungee Jumper
- 14.) Lay Your Burden Down
- 15.) Hello To Another Goodbye
- 16a.) Remember to Buy Blackberry Jam For Lashley/Buy a Hat in the Winter, Junie, So You Won't Catch Cold (not on CD)
- 16b.) Dream Daughters Dream
- 18.) Sweet Macaroon Reprise
- 19.) Love's What Holds You Now
- 20.) To Build a Beautiful Life

SCENE ONE

SPARKLEY CLEAN DRY CLEANERS/LASHLEY  
FAMILY KITCHEN

JUNIE, LASHLEY and LYLE sing *Back at the Sparkley*. Lashley and her father Lyle are in the kitchen. Junie speaks in the Dry Cleaners to a picture of her mother, MADDY.

LASHLEY/JUNIE/LYLE

BACK AT THE SPARKLEY  
DRY CLEANING LIFE  
MOSTLY GETTING IT WRONG  
WHILE WE'RE TRYING TO GET IT RIGHT  
FEELING THAT OLD TUG AND PULL  
IN THE DODGY LIGHT  
OF BEING BACK AT THE SPARKLEY  
DRY, DRY, DRY CLEANING LIFE

JUNIE

GOOD MORNING COUNTER, PLASTIC BAG ROLL, STAPLER  
(to picture)  
GOOD MORNING, MAMA  
HERE'S MY TO-DO LIST FOR BECOMING FAMOUS:  
NUMBER ONE, SING ON REGULAR BASIS  
NUMBER TWO GET RECORDING CAREER BACK ON TRACK  
NUMBER THREE THROUGH FIVE, KEEP MY SISTER CLEAN AND SOBER  
WHILE RE-STARTING AND RE-GROUPING OUR MUSIC ACT

LASHLEY/JUNIE/LYLE

BACK AT THE SPARKLEY DRY CLEANING LIFE  
MOSTLY GETTING IT WRONG  
WHILE WE'RE TRYING TO GET IT RIGHT  
FEELING THAT OLD TUG AND PULL IN THE DODGY LIGHT  
OF BEING BACK AT THE SPARKLEY DRY, DRY, DRY CLEANING LIFE

LASHLEY

OH, GOD, BACK FROM REHAB  
(takes out bourbon)  
THAT WORKED  
(drinks bourbon)

FINE  
HOW FUN, LIVING WITH MY FATHER  
WORKING AT THE CLEANING OF THE DRY  
HOME OF THE ONE HOUR MARTINIZE  
WHAT I'D GIVE TO BE IN ITALY OR PERU  
ANYWHERE, BUT HERE SHOOT GATLINBURG WOULD DO

LYLE

(singing to photo of his wife)

YOU SAID A CAKE NEEDS FLOUR IN IT  
 YOU SAID THAT YOU WOULD BE BACK IN A MINUTE  
 I DIDN'T EVEN BOTHER SAYIN' BYE  
 EVER SINCE THAT MOMENT, I BEEN ASKIN' MYSELF WHY I'M

JUNIE/LASHLEY/LYLE

BACK AT THE SPARKLEY DRY CLEANING LIFE  
 MOSTLY GETTING IT WRONG  
 WHILE WE TRY, TRY, TRY TO GET IT RIGHT

Scene two

The sound shifts to a radio in the...

LASHLEY FAMILY KITCHEN

JUNIE AND LASHLEY ON RADIO

I KEEP HOLDING ONTO HOPE THAT THINGS ARE GONNA GET BETTER  
 THAT ALL THE BROKEN PIECES WILL GET PUT BACK TOGETHER  
 BUT I KEEP STARING AT THE MESS THAT EVERYTHING BECAME  
 WONDERING HOW I CAME THIS FAR JUST TO STAY THE SAME

BACK AT THE SPARKLEY DRY CLEANING LIFE  
 MOSTLY GETTING IT WRONG  
 WHILE WE TRY, TRY, TRY TO GET IT RIGHT

At the end of the song, LYLE stands in the middle of the kitchen in his bathrobe, unsure of where he is and what to do. The cabinets are open and the counter is cluttered.

BIG T. (V.O.)

That was a little song by The Lashley Sisters, two of our hometown favorites.

LYLE

THINGS ARE GONNA GET BETTER

SOUND OF A ROOSTER CROWING ON THE RADIO

BIG T. (V.O.)

Hey there, Folks. Big T. and Brother Bubba here with your morning wake up call. In just a little bit here, we're gonna give away another get-away.

LYLE

THINGS ARE GONNA GET BETTER

FUNNY SOUND EFFECT. Lyle continues to stand forlorn and lost in his own kitchen.

BIG T. (V.O.)

All right, we are about ready to give one of you lucky listeners an all-expense paid trip to beautiful, fabulous Hawaii.

LASHLEY runs in from another room.

BIG T. (V.O. CONT'D)

So, man or woman your phones, People. 'Cause we're looking for caller number three, caller number three.

Hoping to be caller number three, Lashley grabs the phone.

LASHLEY

Hello?

(Hanging up)

Dangit. Caller number two.

(Lashley hits speed dial)

Hello?

(Hanging up)

Crap on a stick! Five. Oh well, guess I'm stuck here in beautiful, fabulous, Ashland City.

BIG T. (V.O.)

Stay tuned and keep listening and remember gratitude, best thing for your attitude.

LYLE

Gratitude!

LASHLEY

Yeah, I'm gonna have to work on that one, Daddy.

LYLE

More coffee!

LASHLEY

Now, that I can do. Here, Daddy, want to take a seat?

Lashley sits her father down. He talks to her as if she's a waitress.

LYLE

I would like to order a steak with a baked potato now please.

LASHLEY

How 'bout a bowl of cereal instead?

No. LYLE

Lashley heats two bowls of oatmeal in the microwave.

LASHLEY  
Oatmeal with blueberries and walnuts?

No. LYLE

LASHLEY  
Steak with a baked potato?

No. LYLE

LASHLEY  
How 'bout a whole entire platter of exotic fruit picked from the last remaining branch of the tree of life?

LYLE  
Thank you, Young Lady. I'll have that with a side of pancakes.

Lashley puts a bowl of oatmeal in front of her father and they eat.

LYLE (CONT'D)  
I used to own my very own dry cleaning business.

LASHLEY  
Sparkley Clean Dry Cleaners?

LYLE  
Why yes. Have you heard of it?

LASHLEY  
As a matter of fact, I have.

LYLE  
I used to own my very own dry cleaning business.

LASHLEY  
No offense, but this Alzheimer's thing of yours really blows.

LYLE  
Sparkley Clean Dry Cleaners. Have you heard of it?

JUNIE (O.S.)  
(Singing scales)  
LA LA LA LA LA LAAAAA--

LYLE

(singing)

LA LA LA LA LA LAAAAA..

LASHLEY (CONT'D)

Oh crap, Junie's up. Listen, Daddy, I just can't deal with all her over-the-top, if-you-can-see-it-it-can-happen positive energy bull doodle right now. So just pretend I ain't awake yet.

Lashley puts their oatmeal bowls back into the microwave, pours her coffee down the sink and then hangs her coffee cup back onto its hook.

JUNIE (O.S.)

(Singing)

BEE BO BEE BO BEEE--

LYLE

(Singing)

BEE BO BEE BO BEEE--

As Lashley goes to exit, she sees her bottle of bourbon, hides it then goes to exit. JUNIE enters with her guitar.

Junie

(Singing)

GOOD MORNING, LAAAASHLEY. ME MAY MOO MOH MAAAAH, GOOD BE BO BEE BO MORNING, DADDY.

LYLE

(Singing)

ME MAY MOO MOH MAAAAH--

JUNIE/LYLE

(Singing)

GOOD BE BO BEE BO MORNING, DADDY.

JUNIE

You sound good, Daddy. How 'bout I pour us all some coffee? Hmm...some of these cups are on the dirty side. Lashley, I know you only been home a week, and don't get me wrong, I, for one, am gladder than sunshine that you made it through the rehab and all. Alcoholism can really mess a person up. But still, if you could just give the coffee cups a tiny peek to make sure they don't look like they been dunked in a vat of brown before you hang them up, that'd be much appreciated. Anyhoo, Y'all want potato bread toast, whole wheat toast or a bagel?

(Looking at the bread)

Oh, you know what? The whole wheat's gotten all moldy.

(To Lashley)

If you'd just put it in the freezer, our bread would have a longer shelf life.

LASHLEY

Is that a fact?

JUNIE

Abso-tutin-lutely, this humid weather is just one big boiler pot for creating germs and mold and God knows what really. Thelma Morrison said she got a rash the other day from just walking down her driveway. Course, before she became a believer, she led a seriously heathen-type-a-life. So, I guess her body coulda been incubatin' those there rash germs for years already. I heard some of these new things can be spread by just shaking a stranger's hand. Still, what are you gonna do? Tell some poor stranger you can't even give 'em a simple howdy doodie handshake?

LYLE

Howdy doodie!

LASHLEY

Howdie doodie, Daddy.

Junie takes out a bagel, squeezes it then drops it onto the kitchen table. It drops with a loud bang.

JUNIE

You know what? These bagels are like breaded hockey pucks. So, let's all just have us some potato bread.

(Putting bread into toaster)

I know it takes an extra two point five seconds, Lashley, but, if you'd just twist the end of the bread bag before putting on the twisty tie, the bread would stay fresher longer.

LASHLEY

I'll keep that in mind.

JUNIE

It's just bread, I know. But there are people literally all over the world would walk a flat mile for this here moldy, hard bread.

(Dumping bread into the trash)

That reminds me, I'll go ahead and read today's Bread of Life Bible verse for us.

(She pulls a card out of a plastic loaf of bread and reads)

Second Chronicles thirty-two ten. "This is what Sennacherib King of Assyria says, On what are you basing your confidence, that you remain in Jerusalem under siege?" Huh, I'm gonna have to contemplate on that one for a while.

(The toast pops up.)  
 Here's your toast, Daddy.  
 (Singing)  
 LA, LA, LA, LASHLEY, HERE'S YOUR TOAST.

LASHLEY

Thanks.

Lashley gets a tub of Margarine out of the refrigerator. Junie takes it away from her.

JUNIE

Oh, by the way, let's all make a pact to not eat any margarine anymore. I know you love it, but...

(Throwing margarine into trash)

Did you know that margarine is something like one molecule away from being plastic? How is that possible? Doesn't somebody, isn't someone somewhere supposedly in charge of things that are supposedly edible? I mean, how can plastical particles even be digestible? There are holes all over America just crammed full to the gills with un-recyclable containers, bottles, jugs. And now, I find out, I'm one tiny molecule away from coating my spleen with Tupperware. That is not a comforting thought. I mean, no wonder there's cancer everywhere.

Lashley retrieves the margarine as Junie puts various appliances away.

LASHLEY

Don't put that stuff away. I'm havin' a sidewalk sale.

JUNIE

You can't sell this stuff, every single bit of it still works.

LASHLEY

We don't use it.

JUNIE

But we will.

LASHLEY

We don't need two juicers, Junie.

JUNIE

All right fine, you can sell one of the juicers.

Lashley grabs one of the juicers.

JUNIE (CONT'D)

Not that one, this one. Why are you still goin' around in your robe? Do you not feel well or something?

LASHLEY

I don't know. What is it you want from me?

JUNIE

(Feeling Lashley's head)

You do feel hot. Do you think it might be strep? 'Cause we can't afford to get no strep right now. Plus, you might end up infecting the pastor. You know how big he is on huggin' everybody.

LASHLEY

The Pastor? What Pastor?

JUNIE

Pastor Phil. I only been talkin' about him all week long. Anyhoo, he's dropping by the Sparkley to have a talk with us. He thought that'd be the best place to meet up since he has some sweaters and things he needs to drop off to be dry cleaned.

LASHLEY

Just tell him I couldn't be there 'cause some kind of apathetic contagion is having its way with me.

JUNIE

You can't tell something like that to a faith healer. He'll just lay his hands all over you and try to heal you right there on the spot. Don't get me wrong, I am a total believer in the healing power of God, but we're Methodist.

LASHLEY

And?

JUNIE

Well, up until last week, I'd never even heard of a Methodist faith healer, to be honest. I just think this might be a phase, like the time Pastor Phil took the deacons out in the boat and told them all by night's end every single one of them would be walking on water.

LASHLEY

Didn't someone's dog end up drowning that night?

JUNIE

Jimmy Boy Brown brought his toy poodle, Fat Biscuit, 'cause he thought the dog had a special animal spirit connection with the Holy Ghost. The down right sad thing is, Jimmy Boy really kinda imploded on himself after Fat Biscuit drowned. He pretty much lost his faith right there in that water.

LASHLEY

That's extreme.

JUNIE

It was. I do think that Fat Biscuit went straight to heaven though. Anyhoo, throw yourself together. 'Cause Pastor Phil's gonna be here in about fifteen minutes.

LASHLEY

Why does Pastor Phil want to meet with us again?

JUNIE

Because, and you are gonna love this, he's gone and hired us to be his new funeral singers. So he wants to talk us through what all funeral singing entails.

LASHLEY

Say what?

JUNIE

He heard how we lost our record deal. And he and I got to talking 'bout how hard it is to, you know, be an artist and all, especially you being an alcoholic artist. Anyway, long story short, looks like we're gonna be doing our act again, but with different lyrics.

LASHLEY

What? I am not going to go around singing for a bunch of dead people.

JUNIE

We can't just not sing. This is a way for us to re-start our career.

LASHLEY

Are you being serious with me?

JUNIE

Look, a lot of big wig record producer-types know people that die on a regular basis.

LASHLEY

Exactly. I mean, come on, Junie. We sang live at the Grand Ole Opry. We can't go from that to this.

JUNIE

That was almost a whole year ago already. Besides, I already told him we'd do it.

LASHLEY

Why can't you just funeral sing by yourself?

JUNIE

Because I'm the one always sings harmony. That's why.

LASHLEY

Well, just think of the melody like it's the harmony.

JUNIE

I'm not the lead singer-type. You are. Besides, I thought we could take all the money we're gonna make from funeral singing and record us a new CD.

LASHLEY

I don't want to record a new CD.

JUNIE

You can't just give up just 'cause we've had a few setbacks.

LASHLEY

Setbacks? Our music manager stole every single solitary cent we ever made.

JUNIE

But at least he's in jail for it now.

LASHLEY

I did seven shots of Cuervo in the span of thirty minutes and then went and plowed our tour bus into a pet store. I literally killed puppies.

JUNIE

You didn't mean to--

LASHLEY

You can't come back as a country singer after you've gone and killed puppies.

JUNIE

Of course you can. Country music is built on drunken, jail-time-serving, cheaters makin' their musical comeback--

LASHLEY

And to top it all off, you and I are right back where we started working at the family dry cleaning business.

JUNIE

But that's not why we lost our record deal. We lost our record deal 'cause our records weren't selling.

LASHLEY

Exactly. Look, Junie, singing was never my dream. I just got roped into it cause I could carry a tune.

JUNIE

You don't just carry a tune like it's some log. Your voice takes the tunes to a whole new level.

LASHLEY

You sound just like mama did. Why can't you just sing while you do the laundry and be satisfied?

Lights come up on a life-sized picture of their mother, MADDY. From inside the picture, Maddy sings the song *Big Time Plans*. Junie sings harmony.

MADDY

I CAN FILL OUT AN APRON, I CAN BOIL UP A SOUP

JUNIE

Like mama would ever be satisfied just singing while she separated socks.

MADDY

I CAN GET ALL OF THE EGGS OUT OF THE CHICKEN COOP  
AND IF I WANTED TO I COULD PROBABLY GET EVERYBODY TO APPROVE  
BUT THE PROBLEM IS, HONEY, I GOT BA-BETTER THINGS I GOTTA DO

JUNIE/MADDY

WHEN I HEAR THE STARTER PISTOL, BABY, I WANT TO GO  
PUT ME ON A BULL AT THE RODEO  
WANT TO FEEL THE HOT SPOT LIGHT ON ME AT MY MICROPHONE  
FRONT AND CENTER SINGING AT THE SUPER BOWL  
ARE YOU GETTING IT YET? WE'RE GOING TOO DARN SLOW  
LOOK AT ME YOU'LL SEE THAT I'M ON FIRE  
LOOK AT ME AND YOU'LL KNOW WHO I AM  
I'M POSITIVELY BA-BA-BURNING WITH AMBITION DESIRE  
I MAY BE A SMALL TOWN MAMA BUT I GOT MYSELF SOME BIG TIME  
PLANS  
THEY SAY GET OUT OF THE KITCHEN IF YOU CAN'T STAND THE HEAT  
BUT I GOT SOMETHING COOKIN' GONNA BE SO SWEET  
WHEN WE GET OURSELVES TO THE PLACE WHERE WE WERE ALWAYS MEANT  
TO BE  
OUR DREAMS ARE RIGHT IN FRONT OF US, BA-BA-BA-BABY CAN'T YOU  
SEE?

MADDY

(To Lyle)

YOU BE MY GEORGE JONES I'LL BE YOUR TAMMY WYNETTE

JUNIE

(To Lashley)

I'LL BE BONNIE YOU BE CLYDE NOW LET'S GO SEE WHAT WE CAN GET

JUNIE/MADDY

WE WERE MADE TO DO THIS, HONEY, WE JUST HAVEN'T DONE IT YET  
OUR DREAMS ARE RIGHT IN FRONT OF US, THEY'RE A SURE FIRE BET

JUNIE/MADDY/LYLE

LOOK AT ME YOU'LL SEE THAT I'M ON FIRE  
LOOK AT ME AND YOU'LL KNOW WHO I AM  
I'M POSITIVELY BA-BA-BURNING WITH AMBITION DESIRE  
I MAY BE A SMALL TOWN MAMA BUT I GOT MYSELF SOME BIG TIME  
PLANS

LOOK AT ME YOU'LL SEE THAT I'M ON FIRE  
 LOOK AT ME AND YOU'LL KNOW WHO I AM  
 I'M POSITIVELY BA-BA-BURNING WITH AMBITION DESIRE  
 I MAY BE A SMALL TOWN MAMA BUT I GOT MYSELF SOME BIG TIME  
 PLANS  
 I MAY BE A SMALL TOWN MAMA BUT I GOT MYSELF SOME BIG TIME  
 PLANS  
 I MAY BE A SMALL TOWN MAMA BUT I GOT MYSELF SOME BIG TIME  
 PLANS

LASHLEY

Junie, are you listening to me? I said, I gave up everything, college, romance, everything for that broken down singing career that I ended up with and it never, not even once made me even remotely happy.

JUNIE

Did or did I not put my whole life on hold while I travelled across the entire map of the United States being a back-up singer for you?

LASHLEY

I guess you did, but--

JUNIE

Well then, the least you can do is sing a few funeral songs here and there for me. Besides, it's not like you got something better to do.

LASHLEY

Yet. I don't have something better to do yet, but at some point, hopefully in the very near future, I will.

JUNIE

Well, up until then, you might as well use your God given gift and sing.

LASHLEY

Fine, I'll do it for now. But as soon as I get my act together, I'm quitting the act.

JUNIE

You'll see, now that you're sober, you're gonna love singing in a whole new deep down way.

LASHLEY

Oh Lord, just the thought of all this makes me want a triple shot of Jack.

JUNIE

Don't joke like that. Funeral singing is serious business. You gotta stick to your twelve steps full-time now.

Think about it, we're gonna be soothing folks in the first flush of the grieving process. They're gonna be in starving need of your experience, strength and hope.

LASHLEY

Whatever you say, Junie. And who knows, once we make it big as funeral singers, maybe we'll start doing double funerals.

JUNIE

I'll see you over at the Sparkley.

Junie exits. Lashley retrieves the oatmeal bowls. Junie re-enters.

JUNIE

(Picking up her guitar case)

Forgot my guitar. Can't be a funeral singer without my axe.

(As she leaves)

Pastor Phil's always a few minutes early. So, if I'm a few minutes late, just, you know, talk to him about the Lord or something.

LASHLEY

Say what?

Junie exits with her guitar.

LASHLEY (CONT'D)

I don't know why she can't just go be a funeral singer by herself.

Lyle, back to his regular self, responds.

LYLE

Your sister Juniper has always been afraid of dead things.

LASHLEY

Hey, Daddy.

LYLE

Hey, Peanut.

LASHLEY

Want me to re-heat your oatmeal?

LYLE

No. It's all right.

(Pause as they eat)

Sometimes, on a day that had too many things, I used to drive over to Murfreesboro. They have a library there with windows the size of walls. Always sat at the big, green desk. That was my spot. My secret secret. I used to sit there and just figure it all out.

LASHLEY

Yeah? I need a spot like that.

LYLE

Don't worry, Peanut, you'll figure it all out.

SCENE THREE

THIRD UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

PASTOR PHIL does the eulogy for the Bindy Moss funeral.

PASTOR PHIL

"Without a vision the people perish." I'm sure you will all agree when I say, Bindy C. Moss sure 'nough did have a vision. Had a vision for her life and how the world could become a better place. In fact, I'm pretty sure, she had a vision of hope for every single person ever fortunate enough to cross her path. Why just last month, I was going through a slump, a spiritual sag, of sorts. Out of the blue, here come Bindy with a just out of the oven coffee cake. I said, Bindy, I've lost track of it all somehow and now here I am just plum full of doubt. Without missin' a beat she says, "Sounds to me like your dream truck's gone and got four flat tires, Pastor Phil. You got to get to concentratin' on gratitude while you come up with some new doable dreams." Well, don't you know, I went and put "come up with a doable dream" on my to-do list. And I haven't had a slump since. Without a vision the people perish. Amen? Thank you, Bindy, for pointing me towards mine. And now, it is my great honor to introduce the Lashley Sisters.

Junie and Lashley pick up their guitars. MARTHA URDA, the church organist, chimes in.

MARTHA URDA

I still can't believe two of the most talented, nominally famous country singers are gonna be singing funerals for us.

PASTOR PHIL

Thank you, Martha for that heartfelt welcome.

MARTHA URDA

(To Lashley and Junie)

Seriously, I have been a fan of y'all's music ever since your first single *Seven Times Ago* came out.

(Reciting the lyrics)

AND WE DANCED BACK INTO FORGIVENESS

AS YOU WHISPERED, I MEAN IT THIS TIME

AND ALL I COULD THINK WAS WITH YOU I FELT WHOLE

(Bursting into song)

BUT THAT WAS SEVEN TIMES AGO

JUNIE

Thank you. Lashley and I are both very excited about being here at Third United Methodist.

LASHLEY

That's right, in fact, ever since you hired us, we've been making a list of all the death type-songs we could sing.

PASTOR PHIL

Now, as you all probably remember, one of the things the Lashley Sisters are known for are their song tributes, you know biopic tunes to historical figures.

LASHLEY

Which is most likely the main reason our record deal tanked.

MARTHA URDA

Oh! Y'all's song "Daniel Boone Has Come and Gone" was like an arrow to my heart every time I heard it.

JUNIE

Well, good. 'Cause, Lashley and I were thinking rather than sing a straight up hymn, why not write a song tailor made for the deceased. You know like if they loved to fish. Or, if they were a great seamstress, we'd mention that in the song lyric.

LASHLEY

Or if they liked buttons. You know, the important stuff.

JUNIE

But today, we're here to focus on Bindy and the details her family might want to hear about most in their sad time of loss.

PASTOR PHIL

Dear Grievers, I give you, the Lashley Sisters.

LASHLEY

(Singing)

YESTERDAY, I CAME ACROSS BINDY'S FAVORITE FOOD DRIVE SHIRT.

Junie holds up a shirt that reads "If you got it, give it."

JUNIE

She brought it in to the Sparkley to be dry cleaned last Tuesday.

LASHLEY

Oh good, that grape juice stain from her grandson came out.

JUNIE

I THINK SHE WORE THIS SHIRT FOR EVERY CHURCH FOOD DRIVE SHE WORKED.

LASHLEY

Lord, that woman sure did work a lot of food drives.

JUNIE

That woman got more businesses to donate canned goods than anyone else I know from here to Coffee County.

LASHLEY

YEP, BINDY MOSS WAS SOMEONE MADE THE MOST OF HER TIME

LASHLEY/JUNIE

DURING HER SHORT TIME HERE ON EARTH

LASHLEY

BINDY

JUNIE

BINDY

LASHLEY/JUNIE

BINDY, TAKE A SEAT

JUNIE

TAKE A LOAD OFF

LASHLEY/JUNIE

YOU BEEN WORKING FOR THE LORD SINCE YOU WERE SEVEN  
TAKE A SEAT NOW, BINDY AT THE BANQUET TABLE  
CAUSE THERE'S NO NEED FOR FOOD DRIVES IN HEAVEN

LASHLEY

SHE WAS A UNIFIER

JUNIE

AN AVID BIRD FEEDER

LASHLEY/JUNIE

A GIVER WITH A CAPITAL GIVE.  
BINDY MOSS WAS A FOURTH GRADE TEACHER  
HER LIFE A LESSON ON HOW TO LIVE

LASHLEY

SHE WAS A BIG RECYCLER

JUNIE

A ROCK COLLECTOR

LASHLEY

TAUGHT SWIMMING AT THE YMCA  
A FOOD DRIVE MAVEN

JUNIE

A PEOPLE CONNECTOR

LASHLEY

HAD TWO KIDNEYS, BUT SHE GAVE ONE AWAY  
BINDY

JUNIE

BINDY

LASHLEY/JUNIE

BINDY TAKE A SEAT

JUNIE

TAKE A LOAD OFF

LASHLEY/JUNIE

YOU BEEN WORKING FOR THE LORD SINCE YOU WERE SEVEN  
TAKE A SEAT NOW, BINDY AT THE BANQUET TABLE  
CAUSE THERE'S NO NEED FOR FOOD DRIVES IN HEAVEN  
PULL UP A CHAIR AND LAY YOUR BURDEN  
PULL UP A CHAIR AND LAY YOUR BURDEN DOWN, DOWN, DOWN  
BINDY, BINDY, BINDY TAKE A SEAT

MARTHA URDA

(Joining in)

TAKE A LOAD OFF

LASHLEY/JUNIE/MARTHA URDA

YOU BEEN WORKING FOR THE LORD SINCE YOU WERE SEVEN  
TAKE A SEAT NOW, BINDY AT THE BANQUET TABLE  
CAUSE THERE'S NO NEED FOR FOOD DRIVES IN HEAVEN  
THE LORD DON'T NEED NO FOOD DRIVES IN HEAVEN

After the song, Lashley leans back into  
the mic.

LASHLEY

If you need some distraction from your grief, I just want to  
remind everyone that I'll be having a sidewalk sale tomorrow  
from twelve to five.

JUNIE

(Whispering)

This is not the time to be bringin' up your sidewalk sale.

(Leaning into the mic)

We all have Bindy on our minds and in our hearts. That's  
what my sister Lashley meant most of all. Do I hear an  
"amen?"

PASTOR PHIL

Amen.

(Praying)

Lord, we thank you for the life of Bindy. We thank you for the promise that we will one day see her again--

Lyle stands up.

LYLE

(To Pastor Phil)

Your suit is very noisy.

PASTOR PHIL

And, Lord, we ask that you go with us now as we--

LYLE

Your suit is very noisy.

PASTOR PHIL

Uuuh...Lord, go with us and comfort--

LYLE

Every time you move, it sounds like a newspaper opening up.

(Extending his hand)

Lyle E. Lashley.

PASTOR PHIL

Right.

LYLE

The "E" is for Everette. I own the Sparkley Clean Dry Cleaners. So, I know what I'm talking about.

PASTOR PHIL

(To the congregation)

Uh, amen, y'all.

LYLE

Thank you.

PASTOR PHIL

(To the congregation)

Blessings to you all, now go in peace over to the fellowship hall for snacks, beverages and, well, fellowship.

(To Lyle)

Pleased to meet you, Mr. Lashley. Pastor Phillip Peter Martinson.

LYLE

Long name.

PASTOR PHIL

Yes, I suppose it is.

LYLE

My wife will be here shortly. She's out parking the car.

JUNIE  
Daddy?

LYLE  
Hello, Young Lady.

JUNIE  
It's me Junie.

LYLE  
I have a daughter named Juniper. We call her Junie for short. She's a lot younger than you, of course, and very good in math. Named my other daughter Lashley. Lashley Lee Lashley. That way, we'll keep the family name in the family. It's been hard on her having the same two names, but one of these days, she'll grow up, get herself married and then it will all even out.

LASHLEY  
Daddy, want to go and get some refreshments?

LYLE  
(He raises Pastor Phil's arm)  
Hear that? Sounds like a brown paper bag every time you move. Man like you needs to glide into a room so folks don't see you coming. Man like you needs to have on a brown silk suit with a light yellow tie. That's what you need, a lucky silk suit.

Lyle takes the jacket off of Pastor Phil and looks at its tag.

LYLE (CONT'D)  
Made out of things I never even heard of.

JUNIE  
Daddy, let's go get us some lunch in the fellowship hall.

LYLE  
I'll be with you in a minute, Young Lady. This man was here first.

(To Pastor Phil)  
Sorry about that.

PASTOR PHIL  
That's okay.

LYLE  
How about Tuesday?

PASTOR PHIL  
Tuesday works.

LYLE

Fine. We'll have your jacket cleaned and ready for you on Tuesday then.

Lyle exits with Pastor Phil's jacket.  
Lashley and Junie follow him out.

JUNIE

(As she exits)

Sorry, Pastor Phil.

PASTOR PHIL

Perfectly fine. Probably needs to be cleaned anyway.

MARTHA URDA

Guess, I'll go too before all the food's gone.

Martha exits. Pastor Phil pulls out a racing form. Then, makes a call.

PASTOR PHIL

(On phone)

How's Big Dream lookin' for the third race? No, no, just put me in for Big Dream in the third. Really? Forty to one, huh? All right do me a trifecta box for forty with Big Dream, By A Nose and Alonzo's Lightning. No, that's all. I just want a taste. If I do anymore, I won't be able to stop. Yeah, you know me. Thanks, Marty.

Pastor Phil hangs up, walks around, looks at the racing form. Then, makes another call.

PASTOR PHIL (CONT'D)

I'm thinking twenty on Runs Like A Winner to win in the fourth. I'm good for it. If I call again, don't pick up, okay?

He hangs up. Unseen, Lashley enters. She carries a cup and a plate of food.

PASTOR PHIL (CONT'D)

Ah, Bindy, maybe you could say a few prayers for me up there in heaven?

LASHLEY

Everything okay?

PASTOR PHIL

Oh, you know, funerals are always hard.

JUNIE (O.S.)

Don't forget to tell Pastor Phil.

LASHLEY

(Yelling to Junie)

I'm not going to forget. You told me to tell him all of ten seconds ago.

(To Pastor Phil)

Don't drink the punch. Somebody went and spiked it. Evidently, Bindy's family is big on medicating their pain.

Junie enters. She carries a plate of food.

JUNIE

(To Pastor Phil)

Did she tell you about the punch?

PASTOR PHIL

Yes.

LASHLEY

I told you I'd tell him.

JUNIE

He's a pastor. I don't want him to unbeknowingly get himself drunk.

LASHLEY

It's unbeknownst. Unbeknowingly is not a word.

Junie smells Lashley's drink.

JUNIE

Are you kidding me?

LASHLEY

It's not even half full--

JUNIE

(Holding up the cup)

You think this is some sort a good idea?

LASHLEY

Not exactly.

JUNIE

Here, let me just take that idea right off the table for you.

Junie pours the drink into a nearby flower arrangement.

LASHLEY

There's more punch in the bowl.

JUNIE

There won't be after I pour it out on the church lawn.

PASTOR PHIL

Could you pour it somewhere else--

LASHLEY

There's a liquor store two blocks down the road.

PASTOR PHIL

I don't want the grass to turn brown from the alcohol.

JUNIE

Yes, I know and they all know you by name there, I'm sure. The point is, you've been doing good for a whole one hundred and seven days, right, Pastor Phil?

PASTOR PHIL

Well, it does seem like a good time to take a breath and think of your future.

LASHLEY

As a funeral singer?

JUNIE

Better a funeral singer than the person that the funeral's being sung for. Here, Pastor Phil, I made you a plate.

Junie hands Pastor Phil the plate of food and exits.

LASHLEY

If she wasn't my sister, I highly doubt we'd be friends.

PASTOR PHIL

Are you?

LASHLEY

What?

PASTOR PHIL

Friends?

LASHLEY

Not exactly. We see the exact opposite sides of pretty much every coin. She's a true believer and I'm...not.

PASTOR PHIL

She is a very positive person, that's for sure.

LASHLEY

Positive while being strangely obsessed with death.

PASTOR PHIL

I just thought she was getting into the whole funeral singer thing.

LASHLEY

No, ever since Daddy's Alzheimers ramped up to full blown, she's become a collector of all the ways a person could die. God, I want a drink.

PASTOR PHIL

Was that a prayer?

LASHLEY

More like a confession.

PASTOR PHIL

How 'bout I pray for our lunch? Lord, thanks for providing this food and please help Lashley as she wades through her non-drinking business. Amen.

LASHLEY

(As they eat)

Speaking of eating, did you know that the average person will eat four spiders while they sleep in their lifetime?

PASTOR PHIL

How can anyone possibly prove a statistic like that?

LASHLEY

I don't know. I heard it at a birthday party.

A CHURCH BELL CHIMES THE TIME.

PASTOR PHIL

I guess I better eat a little faster. I have to teach my Wednesday marriage counseling class in just over ten minutes.

LASHLEY

Didn't your wife divorce you or something?

PASTOR PHIL

She left me, but Midge doesn't believe in divorce. So, yeah, I'm not really the ideal teacher for the marriage counseling class.

LASHLEY

That sucks. Although, since you're a pastor, I guess you have to find the silver lining in all that somehow.

PASTOR PHIL

That's true. Thankfully, God often works in an upside down way though. So...

LASHLEY

No offense, but that sounds like a bunch of bull crap.

PASTOR PHIL

I take it you're a "the cup is half empty" type of person?

LASHLEY

More like, my cup has all kinds of cracks in it and all the good stuff just leaks immediately right on out, but yeah. You wouldn't happen to have any hard liquor on you would you?

PASTOR PHIL

No, but I do seem to have an over-abundance of radishes on my plate. Want one?

LASHLEY

No, thanks. I've never really gotten the radish craze.

PASTOR PHIL

Craze? Is there a radish craze going on?

LASHLEY

Definitely. They're everywhere, in stews, salads, shakes.

PASTOR PHIL

Shakes, really?

LASHLEY

Definitely. I was having a shake not long ago. Fruit-veg-medley, I believe it was, and there were radishes all through it. Couldn't even find a nary a banana for all the radish chunks.

PASTOR PHIL

Hmmm. More radishes for me, I guess.

LASHLEY

Tell you what, you can have my share of radishes for the rest of your life.

PASTOR PHIL

How very kind of you.

LASHLEY

Kind? No, I don't want to be kind.

PASTOR PHIL

Everybody wants to be kind.

LASHLEY

Not if they're honest. Everybody wants everyone to think that they're kind.

PASTOR PHIL

Some of us want to be kind.

LASHLEY

Some, not all.

PASTOR PHIL  
Maybe I could give you something. You know, in exchange for  
the radishes.

LASHLEY  
That'd be nice.

PASTOR PHIL  
Not kind?

LASHLEY  
No. Kindness costs something. Nice is just nice.

PASTOR PHIL  
So...I don't like--

LASHLEY  
Celery? Eggplant? Brussel sprouts?

PASTOR PHIL  
Potatoes.

LASHLEY  
You don't like potatoes?

PASTOR PHIL  
I love potatoes.

LASHLEY  
So, you're saying, you'll give up your share of potatoes for  
life for me?

PASTOR PHIL  
Yeah, I want to be kind to you.

LASHLEY  
But potatoes are so good. I don't think you could do it, not  
for life.

PASTOR PHIL  
I bet I can.

LASHLEY  
Okay. From now on, you have my radishes.

PASTOR PHIL  
And you have my potatoes.

PASTOR PHIL/LASHLEY  
(Shaking hands)  
Deal.

LASHLEY  
 (Picking up Pastor Phil's  
 racing form)  
 Big Dream in the third, huh?

PASTOR PHIL  
 I have a little bit of a gambling issue.

LASHLEY  
 How little is it?

PASTOR PHIL  
 I've been stealing money from the offering baskets.

LASHLEY  
 What? Don't pastors have to take some oath about not hurting  
 or harming others?

PASTOR PHIL  
 No, that's doctors.

LASHLEY  
 I'm not an expert on morality or anything, but, you gotta  
 figure out a way to return all that money. Between my  
 drinking and your gambling, we are hot mess. This is so not  
 where I thought I'd be at this point in my life. And yet...

PASTOR PHIL  
 YOU KEEP FEELIN' LONELY  
 YOU KEEP HURTIN' BAD

LASHLEY  
 I KEEP WALKIN' DOWNHILL  
 I KEEP FEELIN' SAD

LASHLEY/PASTOR PHIL  
 AND IT'S ONLY  
 HALFWAY THROUGH  
 AND YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'RE GONNA DO  
 NOBODY WANTS TO FEEL LIKE WE FEEL  
 NOBODY WANTS TO LOVE LIKE ITS REAL  
 CAUSE IT HURTS TOO MUCH  
 YEAH IT HURTS TOO MUCH

PASTOR PHIL  
 KEEP ON THE HIGHWIRE  
 KEEP STEPPIN' LIGHT

LASHLEY  
 WATCH FOR THE TURNING  
 OF DAYTIME TO NIGHT

LASHLEY/PASTOR PHIL

DON'T UNDERSTAND  
CAN'T MAKE A PLAN  
LIKE THE OCEAN ROLLS  
AND WEARS AWAY AT THE SAND

MAYBE IF YOU TRIED  
MAYBE IF YOU WANTED  
MAYBE YOU COULD FINALLY GET  
IN THE MOMENT  
AND IF YOU WERE EVEN A LITTLE BIT READY  
YOU WOULD SAY  
NOBODY WANTS TO FEEL LIKE WE FEEL  
NOBODY WANTS TO LOVE LIKE ITS REAL  
CAUSE IT HURTS TOO MUCH  
YEAH IT HURTS TOO MUCH

PASTOR PHIL

What would you think about me kissing you right about now?

LASHLEY

Take a chance and find out, Radish Man.

Pastor Phil kisses Lashley. Unseen,  
Junie enters.

LASHLEY/PASTOR PHIL

NOBODY WANTS TO FEEL LIKE WE FEEL  
NOBODY WANTS TO LOVE LIKE ITS REAL  
CAUSE IT HURTS TOO MUCH  
YEAH IT HURTS TOO MUCH

Junie coughs to announce her arrival.

LASHLEY

You okay there, Junie?

JUNIE

Are you okay?

PASTOR PHIL

Y'all sounded good today.

JUNIE

Oh, you think so?

PASTOR PHIL

Of course.

JUNIE

Where was your wife Midge today, Pastor Phil?

PASTOR PHIL

She's visiting family in Tuscaloosa.

JUNIE

She's been down there for a while now.

PASTOR PHIL

She has a big family.

JUNIE

Well, it might be a good thing she's safe and sound in Alabama. I suppose you heard about the whole arsonist thing that's been going on?

PASTOR PHIL

Arsonist thing?

JUNIE

(Speak-singing)

THERE'S AN ARSONIST ON THE LOOSE NEAR WHITE BRIDGE ROAD  
BURNT THREE DOG HOUSES, A CAMPER AND A DUPLEX HOME  
A DOG NAMED CARL IS THE SOLE SURVIVOR  
ONLY EVIDENCE IS A BUTANE LIGHTER  
THERE'S AN ARSONIST ON THE LOOSE NEAR WHITE BRIDGE ROAD

PASTOR PHIL

That's terrible.

JUNIE

It is. But you know--

(Speak-singing)

COULD BE A RUNAWAY TRAIN OR A TAINTED PEAR  
YOU COULD COUGH TILL YOU DROP, DEATH IS EVERYWHERE  
YOU COULD CHOKE ON LINT, SLIP ON BLACK ICE  
WHEN YOU THINK ABOUT YOUR LIFE, YOU BEST THINK TWICE  
YOU COULD DIE IN THE BLINK OF AN EYE, DEATH IS EVERYWHERE

NINE PEOPLE HAD NO IDEA THEY'D DRAW THEIR LAST BREATH  
WHEN THEY UNBEKNOWNST PACKED A BROWN BAG LUNCH OF DEATH  
IT'S A SAD SAD THING YOU CAN'T FIGURE OR FACTOR  
THAT YOUR LOVED ONE GOT KILLT BY A PEANUT BUTTER CRACKER  
THEY UNBEKNOWNST PACKED A BROWN BAG LUNCH OF DEATH

COULD BE A BRAND NEW VIRUS, A FAULTY CANOE  
A BAND OF PIRATES COMING AFTER YOU  
BEFORE YOU MAKE A MOVE OR TAKE ANOTHER BITE  
WHEN YOU THINK ABOUT YOUR LIFE YOU BEST THINK TWICE  
YOU COULD DIE IN THE BLINK OF AN EYE, DEATH IS EVERYWHERE

JUNIE/LASHLEY/PASTOR PHIL

THE WHOLE WORLD'S TOPSY-TURVY

PASTOR PHIL

EVER SINCE THE FALL OF MAN

JUNIE/LASHLEY/PASTOR PHIL

THE WHOLE WORLD'S TOPSY-TURVY

PASTOR PHIL  
GOTTA TRUST IN THE GOOD LORD'S PLAN

JUNIE/LASHLEY/PASTOR PHIL  
THE WHOLE WORLD'S TOPSY-TURVY

LASHLEY  
ALL THIS TOTTERING ON THE BRINK

JUNIE/LASHLEY/PASTOR PHIL  
THE WHOLE WORLD'S TOPSY-TURVY

LASHLEY  
IT COULD DRIVE A GIRL TO DRINK

JUNIE  
THAT'S WHY, WHEN YOU THINK ABOUT YOUR LIFE YOU BEST THINK  
TWICE CAUSE DEATH IS EVERYWHERE

SCENE FOUR

LASHLEY FAMILY KITCHEN

Lyle sings *Sweet Macaroon*.

LYLE

(Singing)

STRAWBERRIES, WARM MAPLE SYRUP  
APPLES PICKED RIGHT OFF THE TREE

(Touching the picture of Maddy)

Maddy, you sure did give the fellows a lot of food for thought in this number. Just came into the room ready for business. Ready to raise the roof with that voice of yours. I was never the right one for you, I know. Man who dreams of running a dry cleaning business ain't all that much. I thought for sure you'd end up on a top ten record or in some celebrity magazine. But you never did. That made me worry, of course. Guess it meant you never made it big time. Made me wonder did you ever think about coming back to me here, but wouldn't 'cause you felt like you'd failed with all your trying. I hope you found somebody that saw you the way I saw you, Maddy. Somebody who looked the part standing beside you. Hope you got the thing you was always wanting.

(Singing)

STRAWBERRIES, WARM MAPLE SYRUP  
APPLES PICKED RIGHT OFF THE TREE  
NOTHING COMPARES TO YOUR LOVE MY DEAR  
YOUR SMILE IS LIKE SUNSHINE TO ME

Maddy harmonizes from inside the picture.

LYLE/MADDY

YOU'RE MY SWEET MACAROON, MY SWEET MACAROON  
MEET ME TONIGHT 'NEATH THE MOON, MY MACAROON  
YOU'RE MY SWEET MACAROON, MY SWEET MACAROON  
MEET ME TONIGHT 'NEATH THE MOON, MY MACAROON

LASHLEY

Daddy, you all right?

LYLE

I been talkin' to your mama.

LASHLEY

Maybe someday I'll find somebody to love me the way you love  
Mama.

LYLE

You will. Just sit tight, Peanut. It'll happen.

LASHLEY

(Looking at the picture)

I never thought I looked like her.

LYLE

When you sing you do. Back when you were up on stage, and  
the light would hit you, I almost found myself saying her  
name.

LASHLEY

Is that good?

LYLE

Patchwork.

LASHLEY

Daddy?

Lyle can't find the word he wants.

LYLE

Patchwork. Patchwork. Name me. Name me. Hyacinth.  
Hyacinth. I want.

LASHLEY

I know you do, Daddy.

LYLE

I'll just wait right here if you don't mind, Young Lady.

SCENE FIVE

SPARKLEY CLEAN DRY CLEANERS

A few days later. There are dresses and shirts strewn about the room. Lashley takes out a bottle of bourbon, circles it, puts the bottle away, takes the bottle back out, drinks, and then hides the bourbon. Junie enters.

JUNIE

How 'bout this lyric?

(Reading)

TIME IS A MERCIFUL FRIEND  
TIME IS A RIVER THAT FLOWS  
BEYOND THE STORM THERE'S A BIG, VAST BEYOND  
OF BLUE SUNSETS AND RED, RIPE TOMATOES

LASHLEY

What was she a farmer?

JUNIE

No. Tomato eater.

LASHLEY

What else did she do besides eat tomatoes?

JUNIE

(Reading from a list)

Well, according to her Cousin Candy, the deceased boarded collies for awhile.

LASHLEY

Uh-huh.

JUNIE

Her main thing was her pet turtle, Buford. That and Bingo. Oh yeah, and her favorite color was taupe.

LASHLEY

Taupe and tomatoes, perfect.

Lashley sifts through the contents of a cardboard box.

JUNIE

Thanks for coming back to help out with daddy.

LASHLEY

I wouldn't call myself helpful exactly.

JUNIE

For a minute there, I thought you might never come back.

LASHLEY

I'm just out of rehab without a cent to my name. Where else would I go?

JUNIE

You and Pastor Phil sure did hit it off.

Lashley continues to sift through the box in silence.

JUNIE (CONT'D)

(Looking at the pile of clothing)

What is all this stuff?

LASHLEY

This is all the articles of perfectly good dry cleaned clothing that for one reason or other folks never came to claim.

JUNIE

This shirt's nice. Or, how 'bout these matching dresses? We could wear 'em when we sing.

LASHLEY

(Snatching the jackets back)

They're for my upcoming sidewalk sale.

JUNIE

Why can't I look through it first?

LASHLEY

Fine, go for it.

JUNIE

(Looking at the clothes)

Makes you wonder, don't it? Why someone would go to the trouble to drop off a perfectly good pair of wool pants or, look at this, one, very high class sweater set, and then never pick it up.

LASHLEY

They forgot.

JUNIE

How can you forget something like a whole entire wardrobe, practically? See, five suits all under the name McMurphy.

LASHLEY

They went on the lam.

JUNIE

That's possible.

LASHLEY

It's been building up for years. And after a decade or more, I figure, I'm entitled to sell it.

JUNIE

Yeah, we could use the money for our new CD.

LASHLEY

You can. I'm using it for other purposes.

JUNIE

What other purposes?

LASHLEY

Just, you know, life.

JUNIE

All your contest calling not working out like you thought it would?

LASHLEY

I used to be lucky. I don't know what happened.

JUNIE

You were only ever lucky in one area. Singing. Here, what about this box? Should we sell this stuff too?

They open the box and hold up some clothes. It is a box of their mother's old stuff.

LASHLEY

Daddy must've brought it over here after she left thinking he'd dry clean her clothes, I guess.

JUNIE

Do they smell like Mama?

LASHLEY

(Smelling the clothes)

No.

JUNIE

(Smelling the clothes)

Yes, they do.

LASHLEY

You just want them to.

JUNIE

It's her perfume, hyacinth, definitely.

(Pulling stuff out)

All our singing outfits.

LASHLEY

Uniforms.

JUNIE

Let's see if the jackets still fit.

They both put on matching shiny jackets.

JUNIE

Look, our ukuleles.

LASHLEY

Oh, Lord.

JUNIE

Let's sing something.

LASHLEY

Junie.

Junie starts playing her ukulele.

JUNIE

(singing)

I GOT A CADILLAC WITH NO WHEELS  
I GOT A CADILLAC WITH NO WHEELS

LASHLEY

I CAN SIT THAT CAR  
BUT I DON'T VERY FAR

JUNIE/LASHLEY

CAUSE MY CADILLAC HAS GOT NO WHEELS

I WANNA LEAVE BUT I GOT NOWHERE TO GO  
I WANNA LEAVE BUT I GOT NOWHERE TO GO  
NO PLACE FEELS LIKE HOME  
CAUSE I GOT A RESTLESS SOUL  
I WANNA LEAVE BUT I GOT NOWHERE TO GO

SO I GO DRIVING IN MY MIND MIND  
SO I GO DREAMING ALL THE TIME TIME  
WHEN I GET FOUR WHEELS THAT ROLL  
AND I GOT SOMEWHERE TO GO  
I'M GONNA LEAVE EVEN IF I LEAVE MYSELF BEHIND

I GOT A CADILLAC WITH NO WHEELS  
I GOT A CADILLAC WITH NO WHEELS  
I CAN SIT THAT CAR  
BUT I DON'T VERY FAR  
CAUSE MY CADILLAC HAS GOT NO WHEELS

JUNIE

God, I loved it when the four of us all piled into the Winnebago and headed off to sing at some festival or other. My favorite part was, when we all practiced together.

Daddy at the piano plunking out our notes. Mama fixing our hair and getting us to stand just so. They were beautiful too. When they sang up at the microphone looking like they were always about to kiss.

LASHLEY

They didn't want to kiss.

JUNIE

Course they did.

LASHLEY

Junie, they were like two ravenous hungry dogs. I was scared half to death when they sang so close together. I remember once, during our last concert, I thought for sure they were gonna bite each other right in the face.

JUNIE

For your information, that was passion.

LASHLEY

How is it possible we grew up in the same household? First off, we only sang in the summertimes. And secondly, the singing thing was a last ditch effort 'cause Daddy was always trying to keep her from leaving us all like she never knew us to begin with.

JUNIE

(Sifting through the box)

I remember this outfit. This was her yard work hat. And this was her special occasion skirt.

LASHLEY

And this was her, I'm reading all day leave me alone robe.

JUNIE

What is wrong with you? You got a whole different Mama jammed up in your head.

(Putting on the robe)

I loved her in this robe.

(Finding a piece of paper in the robe pocket)

*A poem for my daughters.*

LASHLEY

What's it say?

JUNIE

Nothing. It's just the title.

LASHLEY

Sounds about right, more silence.

JUNIE

That's not the point. The point is it's proof she wanted to write us a poem, a tribute, a flush of motherly love is crammed into that title. And, who knows, this coulda been her first try. The real poem might be crumpled up in some other pocket.

Lashley rifles through the pocket of the abandoned dry cleaning clothes.

LASHLEY

Look, a penny. I'd rather find my treasure in the pocket of some stranger.

JUNIE

(Searching in the box)

I bet the rest of that poem is in here somewhere. In my heart of hearts, I truly believe Mama's coming back someday. Although, I do, every once in a while, wonder did she just suddenly keel over and die in some small town hospital. She had a terrible habit of forgetting her ID.

LASHLEY

That's 'cause she wanted to forget who she was.

JUNIE

No. Really she was just absent-minded. She was an artist. Her mind was always on poem and rhyme ideas. But, you know, really, there's so many things that can just up and do you in. Heart attack, aneurism, organ failure. Remember Barb? Her daughter had an aneurism on the way upstairs in their two-story home. Couldn't speak. Couldn't move. Laid in that hospital for years with her eyes just staring off into space. But, Barb said she could tell that her mind was full of a million thoughts. She just had no way to let 'em out anymore. I'm sure Mama coulda had something happen. She wouldn't just leave. She was plum full of love. And, one of these days, she's gonna wake up from her coma and show up, plain as day.

LASHLEY

Junie?

JUNIE

What?

LASHLEY

Does it feel good, being full of all that unfounded hope? Or, does it feel like a big sack of rocks piled high on your back? 'Cause, sometimes, when I listen to you, I feel like I can almost see her stepping out of that old red Ford. And, other times, I feel like filling the bathtub full of water and just putting my head under long enough so's I can't hear all your bull crap happy talk.

JUNIE

Least sometimes I get you to half-believe me. Look, oh, never mind, it's just some old peppermints.

LASHLEY

Least we know she had fresh breath.

JUNIE

You're not allowed to sell this stuff.

LASHLEY

You didn't even know it was here till five minutes ago. I'm selling it.

JUNIE

You can't sell this. It's Daddy's.

LASHLEY

Daddy doesn't even know where he is half the time. I'm selling it. Some way, somehow, I'm getting out of this town.

JUNIE

You can't leave me with Daddy. Taking care of Daddy's a full-time job. I thought you came home to help out.

LASHLEY

I did, but that doesn't mean I can't take a trip somewhere.

JUNIE

We saw half the country from the tour bus.

LASHLEY

Maybe so, but I have no recollection of it 'cause I was all-out drunk the whole entire time.

JUNIE

Well, I'm gonna go through every bit of this here stuff and anything I find that's the least bit nostalgic, I'm keeping. Here, you can sell this here half-pack of half-eaten peppermints.

LASHLEY

Thanks.

(Seeing their father)

Daddy's coming. Take off Mama's robe.

JUNIE

I don't want to take it off.

LASHLEY

Take it off. You're going to upset him.

Lyle enters.

JUNIE

Hey, Daddy.

LYLE

Today, one little pigeon in a tree full of crows.

JUNIE

Sounds lonely.

LYLE

They come in from the fields. Warmer here. The weather all across the nation is all the same now. They fly north instead a south.

(Smelling the robe)

I know you.

JUNIE

It's Mama's smell.

LYLE

Is she coming now?

LASHLEY

No, Mama died, Daddy.

JUNIE

Don't tell him that.

LYLE

(Grabbing clothes)

I want that one.

Lyle puts on a dress and a sweatshirt.

LASHLEY

Daddy, Mama's gone.

SOUND OF APPLAUSE.

LYLE

(Picking up a guitar)

Thanks, folks. This next song--

JUNIE

Daddy, you okay?

LYLE

Is a song I wrote after a tornado took down our first home. Ain't that, right, Darlin'?

Maddy sings *Love Hangs On* from inside the picture.

MADDY

THE LAST STRAW FELL 'BOUT A WEEK AGO  
THAT CAMEL'S BACK LONG BEEN BROKE

LYLE

HAD THE PEDAL TO THE MEDAL TILL THE ENGINE BLEW  
BEEN NON-STOP HARD FOR ME AND YOU

LYLE/MADDY/LASHLEY/JUNIE

DON'T YOU WORRY, BABY  
JUST HOLD ME TIGHT WHEN YOU DON'T FEEL STRONG  
DON'T YOU WORRY BABY  
CAUSE WHEN ALL SIGN OF HOPE IS GONE  
LOVE HANGS ON

LASHLEY

WE'VE BEEN BENT BY THE WIND TILL THE BENDING HURTS  
THINGS KEEP GOING FROM BAD TO WORSE  
HARD TO TURN BACK WHEN YOU'VE LOST YOUR WAY  
AND YOU'RE RUNNING OUT OF GAS AND WORDS TO SAY

LYLE/MADDY/LASHLEY/JUNIE

DON'T YOU WORRY, BABY  
JUST HOLD ME TIGHT WHEN YOU DON'T FEEL STRONG  
DON'T YOU WORRY BABY  
CAUSE WHEN ALL SIGN OF HOPE IS GONE  
LOVE HANGS ON

MADDY

I CAN FEEL THE HARD TIMES CHANGING ME

LASHLEY

I DON'T KNOW WHO I AM OR WHO I'LL BE

LYLE

DON'T YOU THINK THE SORROW MAKES US STRONG?

JUNIE

DON'T YOU THINK THE NIGHT CAN'T LAST MUCH LONGER?

LYLE/MADDY/LASHLEY/JUNIE

DON'T YOU WORRY, BABY  
JUST HOLD ME TIGHT WHEN YOU DON'T FEEL STRONG  
DON'T YOU WORRY BABY  
CAUSE WHEN ALL SIGN OF HOPE IS GONE  
WHEN ALL SIGN OF HOPE IS GONE  
WHEN ALL SIGN OF HOPE IS GONE

LYLE

LOVE HANGS ON

Pastor Phil enters. He wears a brown,  
silk suit with a light yellow tie.

PASTOR PHIL

Lashley, ready to go to lunch?

LASHLEY

Sure. You don't mind if I go out for a little BBQ do you, Junie?

JUNIE

(Referring to the opened boxes)

Uh, what about all this stuff?

LASHLEY

I'll deal with it when I get back. See you in a little bit, Daddy.

Lashley exits with Pastor Phil.

JUNIE

Daddy, Lashley have started singing again. What do you think of that?

LYLE

I used to own my very own dry cleaning business. I could press a suit with creases so sharp the suit could almost walk home by itself. Sparkley Clean Dry Cleaners. Ever heard of it?

JUNIE

I sure have.

LYLE

(Looking out the window.)

Look at that. Those flowers are just about brand new.

JUNIE

It's your hydrangea bush. You planted it when I turned two.

LYLE

It's wonderful.

JUNIE

Sure is. I wish you could really talk to me right now, Daddy. You were always so good at fixing things.

LYLE

Hard day.

JUNIE

Terrible. It's just, nothing is the way I thought it would be. What I mean is, I'm not really sure how I got here. Not to the Sparkley, of course, but here to this time line, this particular space that I seem to be occupying. Because, the path I'm on doesn't look familiar to me in the tiniest little bit. It isn't the path I pictured myself on at all.

LYLE  
Those flowers look brand new.

JUNIE  
It's your hydrangea bush.

LYLE  
That's my bush?

JUNIE  
Yeah.

LYLE  
Well, it's wonderful.

JUNIE  
I miss you, Daddy.

Lyle picks his guitar and plays a short instrumental reprise of *Love Hangs On*.

SCENE SEVEN

LASHLEY FAMILY KITCHEN

Junie sits in the kitchen, journals and papers everywhere. She weeps. She looks at a page in a tiny book, weeps. She turns the page and weeps. Pastor Phil knocks.

JUNIE  
Yes.

Pastor Phil knocks.

JUNIE (CONT'D)  
I said, yes. Yes!

Weeping, Junie opens the door.

PASTOR PHIL  
Oh.

Junie weeps.

PASTOR PHIL (CONT'D)  
Bad time? This is a bad time?

JUNIE  
No, I'm fine. What do you need?

PASTOR PHIL  
I came to tell you that somebody died.

Junie wails.

PASTOR PHIL (CONT'D)

Did you know them?

JUNIE

What?

PASTOR PHIL

I meant...It was a sudden sort of thing sort of and--

JUNIE

Who died?

PASTOR PHIL

So the funeral is on Saturday.

JUNIE

Who's gone?

PASTOR PHIL

Arthur Reid.

JUNIE

Perfect.

PASTOR PHIL

Come again?

JUNIE

It's just--

PASTOR PHIL

Did you know him?

JUNIE

Kinda, sorta. We dated in Junior High.

(Breaking down)

He said I had nice lips.

PASTOR PHIL

What?

JUNIE

Nice lips. He liked my lips.

PASTOR PHIL

Well, I can see that.

JUNIE

No, they're terrible.

He comforts her.

PASTOR PHIL  
No really, I can see.

JUNIE  
Really?

PASTOR PHIL  
Of course.

She goes to kiss him. He pulls away.

PASTOR PHIL  
I'm sorry. I meant to look at. Nice lips to look at.

JUNIE  
But not kiss?

PASTOR PHIL  
I'm married.

JUNIE  
Except when it comes to my sister.

PASTOR PHIL  
Junie.

JUNIE  
No really, whatever. I don't want to kiss you anyway. I just want to be kissed someday, somehow, somewhere by somebody who feels something, some tiny bit of everything for me. Besides, I like Midge. Please don't tell her you almost kissed me.

PASTOR PHIL  
What? No, I would never tell her that.

JUNIE  
Because you're the one who leaned in. You may have pulled back, but before that part, you definitely leaned in.

PASTOR PHIL  
I don't remember leaning in at all.

JUNIE  
The body does what the body does.

PASTOR PHIL  
What does that even mean?

JUNIE  
We're adults. You know what it means and I know what it means. And you may think it means something different to you than it does to me, but the truth is, you definitely meant it.

PASTOR PHIL

I didn't mean it at all.

JUNIE

Then what did you mean?

PASTOR PHIL

To comfort you?

JUNIE

(Crying)

Well, that is not, you have done the exact opposite. What kind of pastor are you?

PASTOR PHIL

A bad one?

JUNIE

I'll say.

(Pause)

I found my mama's poetry book.

PASTOR PHIL

Poetry?

Junie pulls out the paper.

JUNIE

She wrote about us. See? *A Poem for My Daughters*. That's the title. Well, I thought it was the title. It's really just a line in the middle of something. See, I found the other half of the page.

(Reading from the tiny book)

Someday, maybe I'll write...

(Piecing the pages together)

A poem for my daughters.

PASTOR PHIL

No poem then, huh?

JUNIE

No. At least not yet. I've been reading mama's journals. They're pretty mundane.

(Reading)

Need to get grass cut. This haircut works. Remember to buy blackberry jam for Lashley.

PASTOR PHIL

Why were you?

JUNIE

I don't know. I guess I wanted her advice. I have no idea how to get the life I want. I've been reading these self-help books. I've been praying.

I've been working hard for years, and none of the things on my list are realities. See.

(She holds up a list)

Be a famous singer. No. Get married. No. Have a baby. Not. Be financially stable. I don't even know what that means anymore.

PASTOR PHIL

I feel like this is all my fault. I know it was a bad example of faith. My borderline infidelity with your sister.

JUNIE

My foundation has had hairline cracks in it for forever.

PASTOR PHIL

You're a good funeral singer. So much so, I'm thinking we should do weddings too.

JUNIE

Watching other people marry? That sounds very depressing to me.

PASTOR PHIL

There's lots of money in it though.

JUNIE

Singing all these songs about two people having a dream-come-true, happy life together.

PASTOR PHIL

It's not perfect, I know. But, maybe you'll meet someone soon. I'm kinda shocked you're single.

JUNIE

Are you going to try and kiss me again?

Lashley enters. She holds up a wad of cash.

LASHLEY

Look at that, seven thousand whole dollars! That was the best sidewalk sale ever.

JUNIE

What'd you do sell everything for twice what it's worth? You better not have sold any of Mama's stuff.

LASHLEY

How could I? You carried it all into your bedroom? This is all from the unclaimed dry cleaning, which did include three fur coats. I don't know where I'm going yet, but I am gonna take me a real vacation with this here money.

JUNIE

Go for it. Travel round the world non-frickin-stop.

LASHLEY

What's the matter? You look like you been crying?

JUNIE

Arthur Reid died.

LASHLEY

Really?

JUNIE

That's what they say.

LASHLEY

That's sad.

(Lashley begins to face all of  
her bills.)

He was an odd duck, that's for sure.

JUNIE

No, he wasn't. He was a do-gooder. He built that naked  
people statue. He opened the Ashland City Archive Library.

LASHLEY

The what?

JUNIE

He started the Earth-centric Awareness Foundation.

LASHLEY

I always wondered who started that.

JUNIE

Really?

LASHLEY

No. So, Arthur Reid drew his last cigarette-filled breath  
and keeled over, huh? How did he die?

PASTOR PHIL

Choked on a corn bread chunk.

LASHLEY

He always did eat way too fast. Note to self. Even corn  
bread chunks need to be chewed.

JUNIE

You can joke all you want, but his life mattered, Lashley.  
He made his time here on Planet Earth really count.

LASHLEY

Okay.

JUNIE

A lot, a whole lot of people found him incredibly inspiring.

LASHLEY

Didn't Arthur Reid take you to your Junior Prom?

JUNIE

That has nothing whatsoever to do with my high admiration for the man. He was a real go-getter--

LASHLEY

A do-gooder and a go-getter--

JUNIE

An energizer. He was wonderful.

LASHLEY

He did compliment my lips once.

JUNIE

What? When?

LASHLEY

I don't remember the details of the compliment. It was in passing. You know, is this seat taken? No. Do you mind if I sit here? No. I've never noticed this before, but you have exquisite lips.

JUNIE

Exquisite?

LASHLEY

Yeah, something like that.

JUNIE

Perfect. Even your lips are better. You know, Lashley, I don't know why you don't have a life because, if you wanted one, Lord knows, it's right there for the taking.

LASHLEY

What?

JUNIE

You have what it takes all over the place, in every area. So why you can't just reach out and take it is beyond me. Going off, having self-pity parties with a jug of alcohol. While the rest of us are left here actually trying.

LASHLEY

Jug? It was a cup and I only took one solitary sip.

JUNIE

Oh really, then what's this here bourbon all about?

Junie pulls the bottle of bourbon out of its hiding place.

JUNIE (CONT'D)

I have no respect for you. I'm done. Just go ahead and kiss Arthur Reid and Pastor Phil, drink till you pop, win every contest from here to Coffee County, make thousands of dollars at stupid sidewalk sales, end up on mama's to-do list--

LASHLEY

I'm on mama's to-do list?

JUNIE

(Reading)

Remember to buy blackberry jam for Lashley.

LASHLEY

It says that?

JUNIE

Pastor Phil, if you will excuse me, I have papers to sort through and a poem to find.

Junie takes the papers and journals and leaves.

LASHLEY

Did I miss something here?

PASTOR PHIL

Evidently, a poem--

LASHLEY

From Mama?

PASTOR PHIL

Turned out to maybe be just a title. That and Arthur liked her lips.

(Pause)

Speaking of lips, did you know that the average woman eats ten pounds of lipstick in her lifetime?

LASHLEY

It's a good thing I don't consider myself average. Otherwise, I'd just be chomping on lipstick all day.

PASTOR PHIL

Yeah, you're definitely not average.

Pastor Phil and Lashley kiss. Pastor Phil pulls away.

PASTOR PHIL

I'm sorry. I want to kiss you.

LASHLEY

You just did.

PASTOR PHIL

I got to go pray this through.

LASHLEY

Let me know how it turns out.

Pastor Phil exits. From their various places, Junie, Pastor Phil and Lashley sing.

JUNIE

I BACKUP SING  
I'M SECOND STRING

PASTOR PHIL

I'M NOT THE REAL THING  
I'M JUST PRETENDING

LASHLEY

I'M NOT OKAY  
HOW'D I GET THIS WAY

JUNIE

AT THE END OF THE DAY  
NOBODY'S SAYING MY NAME

PASTOR PHIL

AND MY WHOLE LIFE  
DOESN'T SEEM RIGHT

LASHLEY

I FIGHT AND FIGHT  
BUT I DON'T KNOW WHY

JUNIE/LASHLEY/PASTOR PHIL

I'M A SONG WITH NO CHORUS  
I'M A BOOK WITH NO END  
I START OFF LIKE A HOUSE ON FIRE  
BUT THE FIRE GOES OUT AND I START OVER AGAIN  
I ALMOST UNDERSTAND IT  
I ALMOST CRACK THE CODE  
BUT THEN IT SLIPS AWAY FROM ME  
A LITTLE FURTHER ON DOWN THE ROAD  
I KEEP BUILDING UP TO THE DAY  
THAT I OVERCOME MY FEARS  
BUT THE ANTICIPATION'S KILLING ME  
I'VE BEEN JUST BUILDING UP FOR YEARS

JUNIE

I GOT TO SHAKE IT UP

PASTOR PHIL

PAY IT DOWN

LASHLEY

FIND A WAY TO LEAVE THIS TOWN

JUNIE

GOTTA CHANGE MY LIFE

PASTOR PHIL

GOTTA MAKE THINGS RIGHT

LASHLEY

LOSE MYSELF AGAIN TONIGHT

JUNIE/LASHLEY/PASTOR PHIL

I'M A SONG WITH NO CHORUS  
 I'M A BOOK WITH NO END  
 I START OFF LIKE A HOUSE ON FIRE  
 BUT THE FIRE GOES OUT AND I START OVER AGAIN  
 I ALMOST UNDERSTAND IT  
 I ALMOST CRACK THE CODE  
 BUT THEN IT SLIPS AWAY FROM ME  
 A LITTLE FURTHER ON DOWN THE ROAD  
 I KEEP BUILDING UP TO THE DAY  
 THAT I OVERCOME MY FEARS  
 BUT THE ANTICIPATION'S KILLING ME  
 I'VE BEEN JUST BUILDING UP FOR YEARS

SCENE SEVEN

THIRD UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

PASTOR PHIL

Arthur Reid had a lot of heartache in his life--

MARTHA URDA

I'll say. Wife left him while he was literally on the operating table for a tumor removal. Not to mention, that bout he had with histoplasmosis.

PASTOR PHIL

And yet, through it all, he remained a man of great character. See that wall over there? Arthur painted that. Three years ago, we threw a church painting party. And for some odd reason, Arthur's the only one showed up. So, I said, "Forget it, Arthur, take your roller and go on home." "Pastor Phil," He said. "My yes means yes and I have more paint in the truck." Twelve hours later, I walked in to find Arthur fast asleep on the pew and that there wall mural testifying to the Lord's glory.

MARTHA URDA

I always wondered where that *Apostle Eating a Cracker* picture came from.

PASTOR PHIL

It's communion.

MARTHA URDA

Oh.

PASTOR PHIL

Arthur Reid. I can't say I ever saw him relax much, but he sure 'nough did leave the world a better place than he found it. I am not the best pastor around. I know. And when a good and giving man like Arthur Reid dies, it's hard to know what to say. My first year seminary teacher used to always say, "God is more interested in our character than our happiness." Still, sometimes all the answers ring hollow and stick in my throat. Sometimes the answers, well, they don't feel like sturdy, solid footing answers, you know?

Junie, a bit stymied, responds to Pastor Phil. Lashley, on the road to drunk, takes a long drink.

JUNIE

That's right, Pastor Phil. God is way more interested in our character than our happiness.

LASHLEY

Although, I'm pretty sure God would like us to be happy.

JUNIE

Well said, Lashley. The joy of the Lord is my strength. This next song is called--

LASHLEY

Thanks For The Naked Statue, Arthur.

JUNIE

Now, Lashley. The statue my dear, sweet sister is referring to, Ode To Humanity, I think it's called--

LASHLEY

Oh, it's an ode all right--

JUNIE

It's a work of art, a tribute in bronze to all those--

LASHLEY

Naked people.

JUNIE

As many of you know Arthur Reid--

LASHLEY

Ellis, Arthur Ellis Reid.

JUNIE

Yes, Lashley, thank you for reminding us that the man had a middle name. He was the type of person who made things happen. He lived his life to the fullest. And he may have sometimes given a few over-the-top compliments to some undeserving people here and there. But he also gave compliments to people who actually did deserve them. This next song is for you, Arthur.

Lashley and Junie sing *Saint Peter If You're Listening Tell Arthur Reid Hello.*

LASHLEY

HE WAS A DO-GOODER, A GO-GETTER, AN ENERGIZER

JUNIE

HE INSPIRED US ALL FOR SURE

LASHLEY

HE WAS A TREE-PLANTIN', PLANET LOVIN' VEGAN

JUNIE

HIS LOVE FOR GOD WAS PURE--

LASHLEY

GOATS WAS PURE

They look at one another. Then, tear into the chorus.

LASHLEY/JUNIE

SAINT PETER IF YOU'RE LISTENING TELL ARTHUR REID HELLO  
 MOSES IF YOU HAVE THE TIME, TELL HIM WE MISS HIM SO  
 WHY HE HAD TO LEAVE US THE GOOD LORD ONLY KNOWS  
 SAINT PETER IF YOU'RE LISTENING TELL ARTHUR REID HELLO

LASHLEY

HE ALWAYS SAID YOU HAVE TO WORK FOR PEACE  
 IT WON'T DESCEND LIKE A MYSTICAL RAIN

JUNIE

HE DIED AN UNTIMELY DEATH

LASHLEY

CORN BREAD WAS TO BLAME

JUNIE

HE'S A NEWCOMER IN HEAVEN NOW AND--

LASHLEY

ELLIS WAS HIS MIDDLE NAME

LASHLEY/JUNIE/MARTHA

SAINT PETER IF YOU'RE LISTENING TELL ARTHUR REID HELLO  
 MOSES IF YOU HAVE THE TIME, TELL HIM WE MISS HIM SO  
 WHY HE HAD TO LEAVE US THE GOOD LORD ONLY KNOWS  
 SAINT PETER IF YOU'RE LISTENING TELL ARTHUR REID HELLO

SAINT PETER IF YOU'RE LISTENING TELL ARTHUR REID HELLO  
 JACOB, ISAAC, ABRAHAM, TELL HIM WE MISS HIM SO  
 ANGELS SHOW OUR FRIEND AROUND THROUGH THOSE STREETS OF GOLD  
 SAINT PETER IF YOU'RE LISTENING TELL ARTHUR REID HELLO  
 HE BUILT THE ARCHIVE LIBRARY

LASHLEY

THOUGH NO ONE EVER GOES

LASHLEY/JUNIE

SAINT PETER IF YOU'RE LISTENING TELL ARTHUR REID HELLO

SCENE EIGHT

SPARKLEY CLEAN DRY CLEANERS

Lyle and Junie sing along with a radio commercial.

COMMERCIAL/LYLE/JUNIE

DON'T CHASE YOUR TAIL DON'T CHASE YOUR TAIL  
 IF YOU WANT TO GO THE DISTANCE THEN DON'T CHASE YOUR TAIL  
 TESSIE RYAN'S RUNNING SHOES  
 IT'S NEVER TOO LATE TO GET IN SHAPE  
 (Speaking)

Tessie Ryan's Running Shoes! It's never too late to get in shape!

Pastor Phil enters with a box full of flower arrangements.

PASTOR PHIL

Hey, Junie, how you doing?

JUNIE

To be honest, I think maybe my spleen's a little under the weather.

PASTOR PHIL

Huh. I never heard of such a thing. You might want to drink six to eight glasses of water. That usually works for me. Do you want these flowers? The church is so jam packed with foliage, there's hardly any room left for the casket.

JUNIE

What about the people that sent them? Won't they notice their flowers aren't over there?

PASTOR PHIL

I doubt it.

JUNIE

They are pretty.

PASTOR PHIL

Take them. They're going to waste over there. Here they look special. Flowers should be for the living. Plant a tree for the dead or, better yet, give a donation to a charity as a symbol that life goes on. Don't send flowers to dead people. Flowers say, I hope you feel better, I love you or I'm sorry, but the person's dead. People all over are starving and Buzz Brisbee has a church full of wasted money.

JUNIE

I guess I never thought of it like that.

(As she takes the flowers)

I still can't believe poor Buzz up and died.

PASTOR PHIL

I know, man watched a marathon a few months back and everything.

JUNIE

Plus, he was a huge diet cola expert. Course he pretty much had to be after that emergency liposuction. Last time I saw him, he had just bought himself a life long membership to the *Model Train Museum*.

PASTOR PHIL

I guess the only thing certain is God and uncertainty.

(As he takes the last bouquet  
out of the box)

How's Lashley this morning?

JUNIE

Part way through a hangover I'm sure.

PASTOR PHIL

Right then, I guess I'll go and work some more on my sermon.

JUNIE

Thanks for the flowers.

Pastor Phil exits. THE RADIO PLAYS A  
LOUD WACKY SOUND.

BIG T. (V.O.)

All right listeners, get ready. 'Cause in just a few short seconds, we're gonna be giving the final clue. Get all five questions right and you could win five thousand dollars and an all-expense paid vacation.

Lashley enters.

LASHLEY

Where's the phone?

JUNIE

Want some water, Daddy?

LYLE

No, thanks.

JUNIE

Have some anyway.

LYLE

(Drinking)

It's delicious.

LASHLEY

Junie, where's the phone? They're about to give the last clue to win a free vacation.

JUNIE

You and all your contest calling. You'd swear it was your full-time job.

LASHLEY

Where's the ding-dang phone?

JUNIE

You already have all your sidewalk sale money. What do you need the phone for?

LASHLEY

I want to win something.

JUNIE

Will you steam these shirts?

LASHLEY

I've got a contest to call.

JUNIE

That's all fine and good, but why is it I'm the only one handling the Sparkley?

LASHLEY

Just give them to me already.

JUNIE

(Handing Lashley a pile of shirts)

Here. They were supposed to be done two hours ago. Not to mention the fact...

(Holding out the phone)

I've been fielding calls all morning long, folks asking were you drunk at poor Arthur Reid's wake.

LASHLEY

I agreed to be a funeral singer, not a saint.

Lashley takes the phone then turns up the radio.

JUNIE

Where is the spleen located? I should know since I have one of my own, but I don't.

LASHLEY

I'm listening for the clue.

JUNIE

Oh, this is something. Where's the pancreas? Maybe it's my pancreas that hurts.

LASHLEY

Junie! I'm trying to listen for the fifth clue.

JUNIE

Fine, but I think my pancreas may be enlarged or infected somehow. You were always good in science. What do you think it is?

LASHLEY

Great. You made me miss the clue. You did that on purpose.

JUNIE

I'll have you know, I've been having unexplained pain right around here all morning long.

Junie waves her hand over her chest.

LASHLEY

That's too high to be something pancreatic. It could be...do your lungs hurt?

JUNIE

Maybe.

LASHLEY

(Noticing the flowers)

Why are all these flowers in here?

JUNIE

Pastor Phil gave them to us.

LASHLEY

(Reading)

"The sound of your laughter will be missed?" These funeral flowers?

JUNIE

Sorta.

LASHLEY

That's bad luck.

JUNIE

I don't believe in luck.

LASHLEY

Karma, bad karma.

JUNIE

No such thing.

LASHLEY

Take them out.

JUNIE

You're hardly here with all your flitting around. What do you care?

LASHLEY

No wonder you're feeling a bunch of lung pain. You're breathing in pollen-filled death fumes.

JUNIE

Pastor Phil says so many people are sending flowers, there's hardly any room left for the casket.

LASHLEY

Seriously, Junie, no good can come from having funeral flowers up in here.

JUNIE

Which reminds me, this Buzz Brisbee funeral is gonna be packed. He was a bigwig in the music industry.

LASHLEY

He was a small time record distributor. Once iTunes came out, he was done for.

JUNIE

Exactly. That's probably what killed him. But he was good at connections. So this time, no liquor. We got to really be on our game.

LASHLEY

About that. I been working on a number called *All You Can Eat Liver and Onions* for his funeral.

JUNIE

Say what?

LASHLEY

He liked liver and onions. It was his favorite dish.

JUNIE

First off, that's a terrible title. And secondly, have you lost your only good mind?

LASHLEY

I was talking to his wife Melanie.

JUNIE

First wife. First wife.

LASHLEY

He was married to the woman for fifteen years. She should have some say in his funeral.

JUNIE

And?

LASHLEY

And? He had three kids with her.

JUNIE

We're only getting song ideas from his current, last wife, wife number four.

LASHLEY

She's twenty-six. She was only with him eight months total. Besides, wives one through three had a lot to say about his life of excess and his lack of self-control. Not to mention the fact that he missed the birth of his first and third born because he was away at model train track conventions?

JUNIE

That's not the kind of information you bring up at a funeral.

LASHLEY

Why not?

JUNIE

Are you kidding me?

LASHLEY

Everyone from here to Coffee County is going around saying he was a pillar of the community. And, if that's the case, no wonder we're all totally falling apart.

I really like this *All You Can Eat* song it's got a message, a real message to it.

JUNIE

You're playing with fire.

LASHLEY

You're the one playing with fire. These are his flowers. Having them here is like stealing.

JUNIE

That's ridiculous.

LASHLEY

(Reading one of the cards)

"Our sorrow goes out to you and your family?" This is not okay.

JUNIE

Just take the card off.

LASHLEY

Don't you get it. You've brought tragedy into the Sparkley.

JUNIE

Fine. I'll give them back. I wasn't up for hurtin' Pastor Phil's feelings, especially since my spleen was all inflamed, but fine. He probably brought them over here for you anyway.

LASHLEY

That's ridiculous.

JUNIE

Now that I think about it, just as he pulled out that extra nice bouquet of red roses is when he asked about, "How's Lashley doing?"

Pastor Phil enters reading the *All You Can Eat Liver and Onions* song lyric.

PASTOR PHIL

I like this *All You Can Eat Liver and Onions* lyric. I'm gonna build a whole sermon around it.

JUNIE

(grabbing the lyric from Phil)

No, no. First off, she's only got three dad-gum lines written so far. Secondly, we're singing *Resting In Larger Arms*.

SCENE NINE

THIRD UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Lights shift to the funeral. Martha Urda plays an organ intro for *Resting in Larger Arms than Yours*. Already drunk, Lashley strums, blatantly drinks, strums.

LASHLEY/JUNIE

YOU'VE PASSED ALONG  
AND YOUR EARTHLY ACCOUNT

Junie takes the bottle away and empties it out.

LASHLEY/JUNIE

HAS BEEN CLOSED DOWN AND EMPTIED OUT

JUNIE

NOW YOU'RE

Lashley pulls out a new bottle and drinks.

LASHLEY/JUNIE

INVESTING YOUR TREASURES DOWN HERE NO MORE  
YOU'RE ATTESTING TO THE GLORY OF THE HEAVENLY SHORES  
OH YOU'RE RESTING IN EVEN LARGER ARMS THAN YOURS

Lashley takes a long drink.

JUNIE

(Whispering)

Lashley, start the second verse.

LASHLEY

DOO DOO DOOT DOO DOO DOO DOOT DOOT

JUNIE (CONT'D)

Start the ding-dang verse.

LASHLEY/MARTHA URDA

DOO DOO DOOT DOO DOO DOO DOOT DOOT

Suddenly, Lashley tears into *All You Can Eat Liver and Onions*.

LASHLEY

ALL THAT YOU CAN EAT LIVER AND ONIONS  
THAT WAS HIS FAVORITE MEAL  
HE LIKED GRAVY FROM A JAR  
HAD FIVE DOGS AND TEN CARS  
HE MADE RECORD DISTRIBUTION DEALS  
DOO DOO DOOT DOO DOO DOO DOOT DOOT

HE SHOULDA BEEN SATISFIED

WITH EIGHT KIDS AND THREE BRIDES  
 BUT HE ALWAYS WANTED MORE  
 HE LEFT HIS THIRD WIFE TO START A NEW LIFE  
 AND BE THE OWNER OF A HOBBY STORE

CAUSE HIS LIFELONG GOAL, HIS NUMBER ONE HOPE,  
 HIS ALL-CONSUMING DESTINATION  
 WAS TO BE THE AT LARGE WORLDWIDE DIRECTOR DIRECTOR  
 OF THE NATIONAL MODEL RAILROAD ASSOCIATION  
 WE'RE TALKIN' TRAINS  
 WE'RE TALKIN' MODEL TRAINS  
 DOO DOO DOOT DOO DOO DOO DOOT DOOT

ALL THAT YOU CAN EAT LIVER AND ONIONS  
 THAT WAS HIS FAVORITE MEAL  
 HE LIKED TO SIT ON COMMITTEES  
 COUNCIL MEMBER FOR THE CITY  
 WAS A MAN OF PECULIAR ZEAL

HE SHOULDA BEEN GRATIFIED  
 HAD A PICKET FENCE LIFE  
 BUT THAT MAN HAD A THING FOR THINGS  
 HE WAS OX-EYED, JUST DIDN'T SEE RIGHT  
 HE DIED ALONE AND DISSATISFIED

CAUSE HIS LIFELONG GOAL, HIS NUMBER ONE HOPE,  
 HIS ALL-CONSUMING DESTINATION  
 WAS TO BE THE AT LARGE WORLDWIDE DIRECTOR DIRECTOR  
 OF THE NATIONAL MODEL RAILROAD ASSOCIATION  
 WE'RE TALKIN' TRAINS  
 WE'RE TALKIN' MODEL TRAINS  
 DOO DOO DOOT DOO DOO DOO DOOT DOOT

PASTOR PHIL

Thank you, Lashley.

LASHLEY

Wait. I got a killer bridge. This part goes out to Buzz and  
 my dear ol' mother wherever she may be. Except for the train  
 part.

(singing)

DO WHAT YOU WANT ON YOUR OWN TIME  
 BUT YOU OUGHTA BE ASHAMED  
 THAN LEAVIN YOUR LOVED ONES BEHIND  
 BREAKIN' HEARTS AND CAUSIN' PAIN

(to Pastor Phil)

You smell nice.

(singing)

ALL FOR THE LOVE OF A MODEL TRAIN  
 (dancing towards Pastor Phil)  
 I'M TALKIN CHA, CHA, CHA, CHA, CHA, CHA, CHA, CHOO CHOO  
 TRAINS  
 CHA, CHA, CHA, CHA, CHA, CHA, CHA, CHOO CHOO TRAINS

PASTOR PHIL

Thank you Lashley and Junie for that incredibly divulging yet almost comforting tribute.

JUNIE

You are totally out of line, Lashley.

LASHLEY

Not according to his first three wives I'm not.

MARTHA URDA

And most certainly, not according to me! The reason I'm single to this very day is 'cause Buzz Brisbee told me my skin was softer than bird feathers coated in cotton. Then, he went and left me for a girl from Smyrna by the name a Linda.

Martha exits.

LASHLEY

I told you that man was a walking disaster.

Lashley goes after Martha.

JUNIE

(Calling after Lashley)

You're the one who's a walkin disaster.

(To mourners)

I don't know what to say except, I'm so sorry.

Junie exits.

PASTOR PHIL

Refreshments will be served in the fellowship hall. Go in as much peace as possible.

Pastor Phil exits.

SCENE TEN

LASHLEY FAMILY KITCHEN

Lyle sits in front of Maddy's picture.  
He plays his guitar.

LYLE

I WAS A FRONT PORCH LIGHT, LEFT ON FOR A LONGING  
THAT SOMEONE COULD COME MAKE MY HOUSE A HOME  
SO I STOOD MY GROUND FOR LONELINESS OR PROMISE  
A FORTY-WATT HOPE AGAINST THE VAST UNKNOWN

OH, HOW COULD I HAVE KNOWN  
AT YOUR FIRST HELLO  
YOU'D TAKE ME AWAY

LYLE

AND WHEN I MET YOU  
 I HAD DIFFERENT DREAMS COME TRUE  
 ALL THE THINGS I THOUGHT I WANTED  
 JUST FADED OUT OF VIEW  
 AND WHEN I FELL IN LOVE I COULDN'T TELL  
 WHAT I'D FALLEN INTO  
 NOW ALL THE DREAMS THAT I ONCE HAD  
 BEGIN AND END WITH YOU  
 OH, ALL THE DREAMS I THOUGHT I HAD  
 BEGIN AND END WITH YOU

MADDY

(Singing)

I WAS A SHOOTING STAR  
 BLAZING IN THE DARKNESS  
 WITH A ONE-TRACK MIND AND A HEART OF STEEL  
 SO I SET MY COURSE FOR BURNOUT OR GREATNESS  
 DRIVEN BY THE THUNDER OF THOSE WHEELS

OH, HOW COULD I HAVE KNOWN  
 AT YOUR FIRST HELLO  
 YOU'D TAKE ME AWAY

LYLE/MADDY

AND WHEN I MET YOU  
 I HAD DIFFERENT DREAMS COME TRUE  
 ALL THE THINGS I THOUGHT I WANTED  
 JUST FADED OUT OF VIEW  
 AND WHEN I FELL IN LOVE I COULDN'T TELL  
 WHAT I'D FALLEN INTO  
 NOW ALL THE DREAMS THAT I ONCE HAD  
 BEGIN AND END WITH YOU  
 OH, ALL THE DREAMS I THOUGHT I HAD  
 BEGIN AND END WITH YOU

YOUR LOVE IS CHANGING ME  
 THERE IS A CHANGE IN ME  
 OH, YOUR LOVE IS CHANGING ME FOR GOOD  
 YOUR LOVE IS CHANGING ME  
 THERE IS A CHANGE IN ME  
 OH, YOUR LOVE IS CHANGING ME FOR GOOD

AND WHEN I MET YOU  
 I HAD DIFFERENT DREAMS COME TRUE  
 ALL THE THINGS I THOUGHT I WANTED  
 JUST FADED OUT OF VIEW  
 AND WHEN I FELL IN LOVE I COULDN'T TELL  
 WHAT I'D FALLEN INTO  
 NOW ALL THE DREAMS THAT I ONCE HAD  
 BEGIN AND END WITH YOU  
 OH, ALL THE DREAMS I THOUGHT I HAD  
 BEGIN AND END WITH YOU

## SCENE ELEVEN

## THIRD UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Junie stands in front of the microphone  
at the Hattie C. Moore funeral.

## JUNIE

"But Joseph said to them, 'Don't be afraid. Am I in the place of God? You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done...' Genesis 50, verse nineteen through twenty. Right before she died, Hattie C. Moore said, and I quote, "I've had some hard knocks and some set-backs, but God used all of it for good." So, this song was written, was based on--

## SOUND OF A DOOR OPENING AND CLOSING

## JUNIE (CONT'D)

Lashley?

(To Mourners)

Sorry 'bout that. I just thought...life sure is full of surprises isn't it? I thought my sister would be here by now, but as it turns out Lashley is currently out of commission, so to speak. As you may well know, I'm just the back-up singer. Not to mention the fact that Lashley went and took the chord chart with her. Anyway, this goes out to all of you Hattie C. Moore fans...friends. It's based on some of her highs and lows, the experiences she experienced.

(Throughout the song, Junie  
sings the harmony part)

OOOOOOOH...OOOOOOOH...ALCOHOLIC  
AAAAAAAH...AAAAAAAH...BUNGEE JUMPER  
OOOOOOOH...OOOOOOOH...BAD MARRIAGE  
AAAAAAAH...AAAAAAAH...THREE GREAT KIDS  
MY LIFE COULD FILL THE PAGES OF A BOOK. OH WHAT A BOOK

BUT GOD MEANT IT ALL FOR GOOD, GOD USED IT ALL FOR GOOD  
I'M NOT SURE HOW HE USED IT, BUT I KNOW HE USED IT GOOD  
YES, GOD MEANT IT ALL FOR GOOD, GOD USED IT ALL FOR GOOD  
THERE'S MEANING IN THE MEANING AND I KNOW HE MEANT IT GOOD

OOOOOOOH...OOOOOOOH...TIME IN PRISON  
AAAAAAAH...AAAAAAAH...WROTE A NOVEL  
OOOOOOOH...OOOOOOOH...MET MY TRUE LOVE ON A HIKE  
AAAAAAAH...AAAAAAAH...LEARNED TO DRIVE AT SIXTY-FIVE  
LIFE IS TOO SHORT, TOO DARN SHORT, LIFE IS TOO DARN SHORT

BUT GOD MEANT IT ALL FOR GOOD, GOD USED IT ALL FOR GOOD  
I'M NOT SURE HOW HE USED IT, BUT I KNOW HE USED IT GOOD  
YES, GOD MEANT IT ALL FOR GOOD, GOD USED IT ALL FOR GOOD  
THERE'S MEANING IN THE MEANING AND I KNOW HE MEANT IT GOOD  
GOOD GOOD

(Speaking)

In the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Refreshments and snacks will now be served in the fellowship hall. Go in peace.

Lyle steps forward.

LYLE

(Clapping)

Nicely done, Juniper, nicely done.

JUNIE

You were here?

LYLE

I watched from the balcony.

Junie gathers her stuff to leave as her father stands watching.

JUNIE

Do you need something, Daddy?

LYLE

Need? Yeah, I need a whole slew of things, but so far it don't look like I'm getting any of them. I'm wondering where was that nice Pastor Phil today?

JUNIE

Pastor Phil has flown the coop.

LYLE

And your sister Lashley?

JUNIE

I'm not sure if you noticed, but yesterday during Buzz Brisbee's funeral, she had a little too much of the communion wine.

LYLE

I can't say as I remember that.

JUNIE

Truth is, she was stone cold drunk throughout the entire service. It being the second time she's done it, I'm sure the whole town noticed. So, well, I guess she decided to take a funeral singing break. I just wish she'd told me she wasn't going to be here this morning. Only scripture I could think of under pressure was Second Timothy four-five. "Complete the ministry God has given you." There's no "completing the ministry." It's a funeral for a dead person.

LYLE

Still, you sure sounded good.

JUNIE

No, I didn't. I sounded like a car driving around without wheels.

(Pause)

Lashley's been gone over twenty-four hours. That's never a good sign when you're dealing with an all-out alcoholic. I think she's off drinking somewhere.

LYLE

Maybe she's off thinking somewhere.

JUNIE

Maybe.

SOUND OF A HARD RAIN BEGINNING TO FALL

LYLE

Sure is some rainstorm.

JUNIE

I hope no trees fall on us.

LYLE

We're inside, Juniper.

JUNIE

That don't mean nothing. Just the other week, man was warm and toasty right there in his very own home, but that didn't mean one single solitary thing about his safety. Can you imagine that? There you are standing up inside your house or whatever and boom an express jet just blows up your entire everything.

LYLE

Don't be so afraid, Juniper. Just try and live life to its fullest. Just keep doing the things you really want to do.

JUNIE

I'll try. But, seriously, Daddy, the way things are going, I could just lick myself a stamp and be done for.

SOUND OF THUNDER AND MORE RAIN

LYLE

I met your mama on a rainy night like this.

JUNIE

Yeah?

LYLE

I had a brave and ridiculous crush on this redheaded pianist named Joleen Piper. Anyway, I went over to her apartment for dinner. Homemade pizza, I think it was. Maddy was her roommate.

And, throughout the meal, Maddy talked to me non-stop while that Joleen Piper barely said a word and then the darn girl vanished like an apparition into her room. It would've been incredibly disappointing were it not for Maddy's unwavering attention. She asked could I drive her to the library. And on the way, it began to pour buckets and buckets of rain. Suddenly, she said, "Stop the car." And there, at the War Memorial, overlooking all of downtown Nashville, we danced.

JUNIE

I'm sorry mama's stayed gone so long, Daddy.

LYLE

Me too, Juniper. It would've been nice, having her around all these years.

(Pause as they listen to the  
rain)

What's the one thing you want most, Junie?

JUNIE

All I ever wanted was singing, really.

LYLE

In that case, here look, just walk up to the mic, start up with your tambourine and sing.

Martha Urda plays a blues progression  
on the organ as Lyle talks to Junie.  
Junie stiffly walks up to the mic.

LYLE

Maybe you should just sway a little.

JUNIE

I can't "just sway." I'm a total non-dancer.

LYLE

Anybody can sway.

JUNIE

Well, I guess I'm a nobody then because there's no way I'm doing this right.

LYLE

You're thinking too hard.

JUNIE

I feel like a first rate fool doing this and I hope this is over fast.

LYLE

Try and unlock your arms from your sides.

She awkwardly holds her arms away from her body.

JUNIE

It's no use. I'm a natural born side arm locker. I wanna just go back to singin' harmony. I quit. I take it back. I don't want to be a lead singer-type.

LYLE

You can't quit. You barely just started. Oh look at that, you're kinda sorta swaying.

JUNIE

I can't do it.

LYLE

Oh, good lord, Juniper. Just let the music take you to another place.

(Singing)

SHADRACH, MESHACH, ABEDNEGO IN THE FIERY FLAMES WERE TOSSED  
SO THEY COMMENCED TO PRAYING TO THE ALMIGHTY BIG BOSS  
NEBUCHADNEZZAR DROPPED HIS JAW WHEN HE PEEKED RIGHT IN  
AN ANGEL RIGHT THERE IN THEIR MIDST AND NARY A HAIR WAS  
SINGED

NOW IF THE LORD COULD BRING  
THOSE POOR BOYS THROUGH THE FIRE  
MAYBE EVEN YOU AND ME CAN HEAR THAT ANGEL CHOIR SINGING

LAY YOUR BURDEN DOWN, LAY IT DOWN, LAY IT RIGHT ON DOWN  
SEND THOSE PRAYERS UP TO THE LORD AND LAY YOUR BURDEN DOWN

LYLE

Now you try.

JUNIE

Daddy.

LYLE

Just think of it as a conversation. Like this..

(Singing)

LAST NIGHT I HAD CAULIFLOWER  
AND THIS MORNIN' I HAD GAS...

JUNIE

I'm not singing about gas.

LYLE

Just tell the folks the situation.

(Singing)

THESE DAYS I GET UP THREE TIMES  
A NIGHT JUST TO GO PEE

JUNIE

This is not helpful.

LYLE

(Singing)

AND OFTEN ONCE I GET WOKE UP  
I CAN'T BACK TO SLEEP  
IT'S FUNNY WHAT YOU THINK ABOUT  
IN THE SILENCE OF THE NIGHT  
AND IT'S HARD TO TELL THE DIFFERENCE  
BETWEEN DREAMS AND REAL LIFE

I'VE HAD HALF A HEART  
SINCE THE DAY YOUR MAMA LEFT  
NOW IT SEEMS MY MIND IS GOING TOO I GOTTA

LYLE/JUNIE

LAY MY BURDEN DOWN, LAY IT DOWN LAY IT RIGHT ON DOWN  
SEND THOSE PRAYERS UP TO THE LORD AND LAY MY BURDEN DOWN

JUNIE

(Singing)

YESTERDAY I HAD MYSELF A TUNA MELT ON WHEAT

LYLE

That's it.

JUNIE

IT HAD THE PERFECT BALANCE OF CHEESE AND MELT AND MEAT  
JUST WHEN I PREPARED TO DIP THAT SANDWICH IN MY SOUP  
I SAW RIGHT THERE A FLOATING HAIR AND I HAD TO REGROUP

EVERY TIME MY HOPES GET UP AND I THINK I'M ON THE RISE  
THE RUG GETS PULLED RIGHT OUT FROM UNDER ME  
YOU GOTTA...

LYLE/JUNIE

LAY THAT BURDEN DOWN, LAY IT DOWN LAY IT RIGHT ON DOWN  
SEND THOSE PRAYERS UP TO THE LORD AND LAY YOUR BURDEN DOWN

LYLE

Take the lead now, Junie. Just pretend you're singing back-  
up, but sing the lead part.

JUNIE

OLD JOB LOST NEAR EVERYTHING HIS LAND, HIS SHEEP, HIS WEALTH  
HE EVEN LOST HIS FAMILY HE EVEN LOST HIS HEALTH  
ALL HE HAD WAS FAITH AND SO HE LET OUT A LOUD PRAYER CRY  
THE BIG G SENT HIS MERCY DOWN RESTORING OLD JOB'S LIFE

IF JOB COULD STILL CALL OUT WHEN HE'D LOST EVERYTHING  
THEN, I CAN OVERCOME MY FEAR AND OPEN MY MOUTH AND SING

YOU GOTTA LAY YOUR BURDEN DOWN, LAY IT RIGHT ON DOWN

SEND THOSE PRAYERS UP TO THE LORD AND LAY YOUR BURDEN, LAY  
YOUR BURDEN, LAY THAT BURDEN DOWN

LYLE

Now, that's what I call some lead singer singing.

JUNIE

You think?

LYLE

What do you think?

JUNIE

I think I just shook my soul into place. Thanks, Daddy.

LYLE

My pleasure, Juniper, my pleasure.

SCENE TWELVE

A CRAPPY HOTEL ROOM

Lashley and Pastor Phil sit in a ratty  
bed.

PASTOR PHIL

You are beautiful.

LASHLEY

Stop.

PASTOR PHIL

Just say it.

LASHLEY

Stop.

PASTOR PHIL

Just say it for me once.

LASHLEY

I'm beautiful.

PASTOR PHIL

I wish I had met you before I met Midge.

LASHLEY

Are we gonna talk about your wife now?

PASTOR PHIL

Can you blame me? I'm a big cheat. I'm a cheater now.

LASHLEY

We didn't cheat.

PASTOR PHIL

We tried to.

LASHLEY

We kissed three times. And then you were so wracked with guilt about a wife who won't even take your phone calls, we stopped.

PASTOR PHIL

I'm sorry.

LASHLEY

Stop.

PASTOR PHIL

Not that we tried. I'm sorry I brought up Midge.

LASHLEY

What kinda name is that?

PASTOR PHIL

A bad one.

LASHLEY

She's bigger than a house.

PASTOR PHIL

Not on the inside. On the inside, she's really very small.

LASHLEY

I refuse to feel guilty about this.

PASTOR PHIL

What do you think it'd been like if we'd met, I don't know, fifteen or twenty years ago?

LASHLEY

I don't know.

PASTOR PHIL

Everything would have been the right temperature. Who knows? We coulda ended up anywhere, owning sheep maybe.

LASHLEY

Sheep?

PASTOR PHIL

Goats, dogs, salamanders. I know how much you love animals. We coulda started our own local petting zoo.

LASHLEY

You're crazy.

PASTOR PHIL

I love how when you smile your happiness reaches up into your eyeballs. Not everybody's joy takes over like yours does.

LASHLEY

I'm only smiling at the thought of salamanders.

PASTOR PHIL

Let's just get married.

LASHLEY

You're already married.

PASTOR PHIL

They won't know that. There's a wedding chapel just around the corner. Then, we'll come back and have us a real honeymoon. We'll sit in the hot tub, order from the room service, walk around naked without shame, like Adam and Eve.

LASHLEY

Then, we'll go back to Ashland City and start us an animal rescue-type place?

PASTOR PHIL

Yeah.

LASHLEY

What about all the money you stole from the church?

PASTOR PHIL

I'm thinking I'll get an extra job at the Home Depot to help expedite my repayment plan.

LASHLEY

And Midge?

PASTOR PHIL

That part's a problem.

LASHLEY

Yeah, she doesn't strike me as the divorcing type.

PASTOR PHIL

Which is crazy 'cause she's never gonna come back to me.

LASHLEY

We did meet before.

PASTOR PHIL

Not possible.

LASHLEY

We met. It was at some community cookout-type thing over at Briar Park.

PASTOR PHIL

Are you making this up?

LASHLEY

No. I just remember 'cause you reminded me of someone I'd like to meet. Midge was there. She had on this yellow almost see-through top that showed a lot when she bent over. And she bent over a lot that day. She showed everything while showing nothing.

PASTOR PHIL

Yeah, that's my Midge.

LASHLEY

(Opening a bottle of wine)

Want some?

PASTOR PHIL

I can't do that, I'm a pastor.

LASHLEY

It's good we didn't have sex. In a week to ten days, we'll both be back to whatever our normal is.

PASTOR PHIL

(On the phone)

Yes, I'd like to make a marriage appointment? Yeah, we could do five o'clock. Do we need to bring anything?

(He hangs up)

Let's go get a license.

LASHLEY

You're crazy.

PASTOR PHIL

Do it for the dream of the salamander.

LASHLEY

Stop playing with me.

PASTOR PHIL

I'm not playing. I just get carried away sometimes, that's all.

There is a loud banging on the door.

JUNIE (O.S.)

Lashley? Lashley Lee Lashley? I know you're in there. I could hear your voice resonating all the way down the hall. Lashley?

PASTOR PHIL

Holy Christ!

JUNIE (O.S.)

You might as well open up.

PASTOR PHIL

How did she get here?

LASHLEY

I didn't want her to worry. So, I might've left a message along the way.

PASTOR PHIL

What did you say?

LASHLEY

I don't know. I was drunk. I could've said anything.

JUNIE (O.S.)

Lashley!

PASTOR PHIL

Let me pretend to be counseling you?

LASHLEY

No.

PASTOR PHIL

Please?

Loud banging on the door. Lashley opens it.

LASHLEY

Junie! What are you doing here?

JUNIE

What do you mean what am I doing? I'm here to take you back.  
(Seeing Pastor Phil)

Oh.

PASTOR PHIL

Junie, I'm glad you've come. I'm here counseling. I'm... Lashley lost control. See, she's here doing alcoholic beverages and the like and I'm trying to help.

JUNIE

Not at the Aztar Casino you're not. You got yourself a gambling addiction. There's the sound of slot machines and blackjack tables all around and I'm supposed to believe you're here on some spiritual purpose or other? Something 'bout that don't sound right.

PASTOR PHIL

A moment of weakness.

JUNIE

More like the better part of a week of weakness.

Lashley takes a drink.

JUNIE (CONT'D)

What are you doing?

LASHLEY

What do you think I'm doing? I'm getting high. I'm getting a week's worth of high in the span of two days.

JUNIE

Well, stop it. All addictions are ceasing as of this ever livin' moment.

(Noticing Pastor Phil's feet)

Why are your shoes off?

PASTOR PHIL

Huh?

JUNIE

What exactly have you two been gambling here?

LASHLEY

Just so you know, the good pastor and I have not had sex.

JUNIE

Just 'cause you're drunk and have impaired judgment, don't mean I do. Y'all are in a crappy hotel room with your shoes off in the middle of the day and we all know what that means.

PASTOR PHIL

(Breaking down)

I almost just had an affair and I'm in a terrible amount of debt.

LASHLEY

You didn't have an affair. Your wife left you.

PASTOR PHIL

I was on the straight and narrow for a solid two years and eight months. And then I had to go and place one single solitary bet.

JUNIE

How is this even possible? What's the point of all your faith healing if you yourself don't stay healed?

PASTOR PHIL

I never really healed anybody.

JUNIE

Of course not. It's God that does the healing. All we need is the faith of a mustard seed. Do you know how tiny a mustard seed is? How is it possible that you can't even maintain a mustard seed's worth of faith?

PASTOR PHIL

I don't know. I just forget. When I'm gambling, I feel hope in a whole other way.

JUNIE

You are a pastor. You could have been a dentist, a chiropractor, something harmless like a house painter. But this, this is the thing you chose. Pastors can't make these kinds of mistakes.

LASHLEY

Look, we're addicts. We don't have control--

JUNIE

Shut up, just shut the hell up. I don't get it. You just, what? Got in your car or on a bus or whatever and came here for some two-day liquor party? Daddy and I have been losing our minds with worry over you. Doesn't that mean even the tiniest bits to you?

LASHLEY

It means everything to me. Although, I doubt Daddy even noticed I was gone.

JUNIE

Addict is just another word for your rampant selfishness. Both of you should be ashamed.

LASHLEY

All right, fine. I'm selfish and ashamed, down at the bottom with still farther to drop. I don't get it, the point, the thrill. You wake up humming, Junie. I hear you all through the house. I wake up wanting more sleep. Wanting a bigger blanket, darker curtains. And nothing breaks through all that for me except around the third drink, something else takes over. The real me steps forward. And God, I like her. She laughs. She doesn't feel guilty all the time. She likes life. She's just, well, kinda like you seem to be. And so, yes, I decided to let myself have a little fun.

JUNIE

But what about our funeral singing thing?

LASHLEY

Look, I told you, I didn't want to sing again. Told you, only way I could do it was if I got back on the sauce.

JUNIE

Fine, but just remember before all that, it was me put my whole life on hold for you.

LASHLEY

You know what, I don't buy that crap anymore. You may have put your life on hold, but I never, not once, asked you to do it. You've loved your life. It just didn't turn out like you thought maybe, but you loved every second up on that stage. You love it still. Just go on back to Ashland City, Junie. I don't know why you came here anyway.

JUNIE

I came here to tell you that Mama died.

LASHLEY

What?

JUNIE

Lady came into the Sparkley, recognized Mama's picture and gave me this obituary.

Junie pulls out an old newspaper clipping.

LASHLEY

She's been dead all along?

JUNIE

The whole entire time. Car wreck corner of Sharondale and Peach out near Pleasantview. No one knew who she was cause she was driving without a license.

The sisters sit in silence.

LASHLEY

Where's Daddy? Does he know?

JUNIE

He's downstairs talking to the nice lady at the front desk and no he don't know.

LASHLEY

I don't want Daddy to see me like this. I'll come home in a day or so.

JUNIE

Or, you could just leave your vices here, come pile into my car and we'll head on back to Ashland City for Mama's memorial.

LASHLEY

(taking a drink)

It's my life, Junie, stop trying to tell me how to live it.

JUNIE

You're going to keep drinking?

LASHLEY

Yeah. Now, if you don't mind, I came here to binge. And no offense, but you are getting in the way of my buzz.

JUNIE

You're my sister. I can't leave you like this.

LASHLEY

I don't want you here.

Junie goes to leave.

JUNIE

Pastor Phil, are you coming or are you gonna stay here aiding and abetting and, no doubt, trying to seduce my good hearted, dumb ass sister?

PASTOR PHIL

I'm coming.

Junie exits with Pastor Phil. After a few seconds Pastor Phil re-enters.

PASTOR PHIL

I left my shoes.

Pastor Phil puts on his shoes.

LASHLEY

Here.

Lashley pulls a wad of money out of her purse.

LASHLEY (CONT'D)

Use it to pay back the church.

PASTOR PHIL

Really?

LASHLEY

Guess I want to be kind after all. I don't like the idea of a whole church full of disappointed people.

PASTOR PHIL

Don't give up on me, Lashley. I'll square things away with Midge and--

Pastor Phil reaches for the money

LASHLEY

(Still holding onto the money)

If you use even one dollar of this money for gambling, I'm gonna kick your ever-livin' ass.

PASTOR PHIL

I won't.

Pastor Phil exits. Lashley takes a hit of wine.

Junie, Lashley, Lyle and Pastor Phil sing *Hello to Another Goodbye*.

JUNIE

I FEEL SO DISCONNECTED, EMPTY AND ALONE  
THIS IS NOT HOW I EXPECTED MAMA WOULD COME HOME  
AND NOW I AM COMING UNDONE  
I'M DRIFTING TOO FAR FROM THE SHORE  
ONLY TO FIND NOBODY'S HOME IN MY HEART ANYMORE

LOVE ISN'T EVERYTHING, IT'S THE ONLY THING  
I SAID, LOVE ISN'T EVERYTHING, IT'S THE ONLY THING  
TURNS OUT THERE'S NO EASY ANSWERS, AND SOMETIMES THERE'S NO  
WRONG OR RIGHT  
I GUESS IT'S JUST HELLO TO ANOTHER GOODBYE

LASHLEY

(Holding up a liquor bottle)

MY LONGEST RELATIONSHIP, MY BIGGEST REGRET  
THOUGHT I WAS OVER YOU, I GUESS NOT YET  
HERE I AM IN THIS HOTEL ROOM WITH EMPTY BOTTLES OF WINE

JUNIE/LASHLEY

SOMEHOW I LOST MY WAY TO THE LIFE THAT WAS MINE

LOVE ISN'T EVERYTHING, IT'S THE ONLY THING  
I SAID, LOVE ISN'T EVERYTHING, IT'S THE ONLY THING  
TURNS OUT THERE'S NO EASY ANSWERS, AND SOMETIMES THERE'S NO  
WRONG OR RIGHT  
I GUESS IT'S JUST HELLO TO ANOTHER GOODBYE

EVERYONE

ONE OF THESE SOMEDAYS

LASHLEY

I'LL GIVE YOU UP FOR GOOD

LYLE

SHE'LL COME BACK TO ME

EVERYONE

ONE OF THESE SOMEDAYS

JUNIE  
I'LL GET THE LIFE THAT I WANT

PASTOR PHIL  
I WILL FINALLY BREAK FREE

EVERYONE  
WHY DO I KEEP ON WAITING FOR CHANGE TO COME TO ME SOMEDAY?  
WHY NOT NOW?

Lashley begins to put all of her wine  
bottles into the trash can.

JUNIE/LYLE/PASTOR PHIL  
LOVE ISN'T EVERYTHING, IT'S THE ONLY THING  
I SAID, LOVE ISN'T EVERYTHING, IT'S THE ONLY THING  
TURNS OUT THERE'S NO EASY ANSWERS, AND SOMETIMES THERE'S NO  
WRONG OR RIGHT  
I GUESS IT'S JUST HELLO TO ANOTHER GOODBYE

EVERYONE  
LOVE ISN'T EVERYTHING, IT'S THE ONLY THING  
I SAID, LOVE ISN'T EVERYTHING, IT'S THE ONLY THING  
TURNS OUT THERE'S NO EASY ANSWERS, AND SOMETIMES THERE'S NO  
WRONG OR RIGHT  
I GUESS IT'S JUST HELLO TO ANOTHER GOODBYE  
I GUESS IT'S JUST HELLO TO ANOTHER GOODBYE

By the end of the song, Junie, Lyle and  
Pastor Phil are assembled in the car,  
driving back to Ashland City.

SCENE THIRTEEN

JUNIE'S CAR

Pastor Phil drives as he talks to Lyle  
in the front seat. Junie is asleep in  
the back seat of the car.

PASTOR PHIL  
I've been a wolf in sheep's clothing, Mr. Lashley, a wolf in  
sheep's clothing.

LYLE  
Sounds hot.

PASTOR PHIL  
Psalm sixty-six-ten says, "For you, O God tested us; you  
refined us like silver." I used to read that verse and  
think, "How wonderful."

I'm being refined by God's fire!" Now, I read it and find myself thinking about that poor, sorry, chunk of busted-down silver being shoved over and over and over into that fiery, hot blaze. I'm not sure I signed on for all this gambling addict refining business. Guess I'm going to have to give up teaching my marriage counseling class.

LYLE

I been married to my Maddy going on fifty-one years.

PASTOR PHIL

Fifty-one years! That's a testament in and of itself, Mr. Lashley. Congratulations.

LYLE

Thank you. Course, I haven't seen her in about forty-two of those years, but still.

PASTOR PHIL

Yeah. I'm so sorry to hear that she passed.

LYLE

Maddy died?

Maddy enters.

MADDY

(Singing)

STRAWBERRIES, WARM MAPLE SYRUP  
APPLES PICKED RIGHT OFF THE TREE

Lyle leaves the passenger seat and goes to Maddy.

LYLE

NOTHING COMPARES TO YOUR LOVE MY DEAR  
YOUR SMILE IS LIKE SUNSHINE TO ME

LYLE/MADDY

YOU ARE, YOU ARE, YOU ARE MY SWEET MACAROON  
MEET ME TONIGHT 'NEATH THE MOON  
YOU ARE, YOU ARE, YOU ARE MY SWEET MACAROON

MADDY

COME HOME SOON, COME HOME SOON  
COME HOME SOON COME HOME SOON

Maddy exits, but the music, which has taken on a strange and surreal quality, continues to play. Lights come up on Junie as she dreams in the backseat of the car.

HOSPITAL (V.O.)

Dr. Spangler, please report to the O.R. Dr. Spangler, please report to the O.R. Nurse Wilkinson, you have a phone call. Nurse Wilkinson? Lashley party of four, your table is now ready, Lashley party of four? Will the person who left the lights on in their fire truck please report to the principal's office? Will the person with the social security number two-oh-three-two-three-oh-oh-oh-four please report to the identity theft counter?

Lyle, still dressed in Maddy's robe, taps Junie on the shoulder.

JUNIE

(Dreaming)

Daddy! You shouldn't be up.

LYLE

The early bird gets the worm, Junie. Remember that.

JUNIE

Okay.

LYLE

I know it's dinner time, but I decided to make you eggs for breakfast.

JUNIE

You did?

LYLE

I did. I made them just the way you like them all scrambled and sunny-side up with whipped cream and cherries on top. Because today, you're gonna have your cake and eat it too.

JUNIE

Thanks, Daddy.

LYLE

Don't sweat the small stuff; that's what I always said.

JUNIE

You never said that, Daddy. You were a workaholic.

LYLE

That may be, but look at me now.

Lyle takes off his robe. Underneath, he has on a muscle suit.

LYLE (CONT'D)

I'm fit as a fiddle, happy as a lark, calm as a cucumber.

JUNIE

Are you?

LYLE

Why of course I am. And another thing, if I had to do it all all over again, I'd do every single bit of it exactly the way I did it the first time.

JUNIE

You would?

LYLE

No, I'd change every single detail.

JUNIE

What about the part where you married Mama?

LYLE

Right, what was her name again?

JUNIE

Mama?

LYLE

What a wonderful name. May I call you that.

JUNIE

That would be awkward. I'm so lonely, Daddy.

LYLE

Oh now, Butter Pat, you won't be alone forever.

JUNIE

Easy for you to say.

LYLE

Not really. Don't turn into a pumpkin now, Pumpkin.

SOUND OF A LOUD LONG BEEP

LYLE (CONT'D)

That's my cue.

Lyle, now dead, sits back down in the passenger seat of the car. Junie wakes up.

JUNIE

Daddy?

LASHLEY

I KNOW YOU WERE WEARY

JUNIE

Daddy?

LASHLEY

HEAVY WITH SORROW

PASTOR PHIL

Mr. Lashley, are you okay?

LASHLEY

HAD A HOLLOW ACHE THAT WORE YOU DOWN

JUNIE

Daddy!

LASHLEY

BUT YOU HELD ON TO FAITH IN  
AN UNENDING BATTLE  
BUT THAT'S ALL OVER NOW

SCENE FOURTEEN

THIRD UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

JUNIE/LASHLEY/PASTOR  
PHIL/MARTHA URDA

SO YOU CAN REST, YES, YOU CAN REST  
YOU CAN LAY YOUR BURDEN DOWN  
NO MORE SUFFERING, NO MORE PAIN  
'CAUSE LOVE'S WHAT HOLDS YOU NOW

PASTOR PHIL

When our Lord arrived at the funeral for his dear friend Lazarus. He was filled with grief and he wept with his sisters Mary and Martha. And today, I am filled with grief on behalf of Junie and Lashley. Lyle Everette Lashley was a testament in faithfulness. His life was a sermon I will not soon forget...

As Junie speaks, an instrumental version of *You Can Rest* plays.

JUNIE

Can you hear me, Daddy? Is your brain back now that you're dead? Do my sentences make sense again? Look here, Daddy, a music manager went gave me his card. Got a possibility of this lead-singing thing becoming something and everything.

(Looking at the manager's card)

Got myself a possible music manager. I been thinking of it ever since last night, before the long beep of you leaving sounded. Right before you ran off to the afterlife. Ever since I found out about Mama, really.

Thinking, I don't know the first thing about love. But you did. Even with all your Alzheimer's, you loved me good, Daddy.

JUNIE/LASHLEY/PASTOR  
PHIL/MARTHA URDA

SO YOU CAN REST, YES, YOU CAN REST  
YOU CAN LAY YOUR BURDEN DOWN  
NO MORE SUFFERING,  
NO MORE PAIN  
LOVE'S WHAT HOLDS  
OH, LOVE'S WHAT HOLDS  
I SAID, LOVE'S WHAT HOLDS YOU NOW

PASTOR PHIL

As you all know, this is the last service I'll be preaching for a while. But I do want to leave you this before I go.

Pastor Phil puts a large wad of cash into a nearby offering basket.

MARTHA URDA

I know you've rolled your dice on over to the ultimate Higher Power, Pastor Phil. Nonetheless, I think I'll go ahead and put this here offering money under lock and key.

PASTOR PHIL

Sounds like a good idea.

Martha exits with the offering basket.  
Junie and Lashley look at the coffin.

LASHLEY

He looks so peaceful.

JUNIE

He's with Mama.

LASHLEY

Yeah.

JUNIE

What's the suitcase for?

LASHLEY

I'm going back to rehab. This idea that Mama didn't leave me. That this whole time I haven't been abandoned.

JUNIE

It's re-writing my whole life.

LASHLEY

Mama loved us all along.

JUNIE (cONT'D)

Every day, since the day Mama went away, I woke up wondering would this be the day she came back. I just always felt like the thing that was missing inside had to do with her. And, even now, I can feel it. That old hollow ache sitting right here in my heart just like always. I was thinking about it the whole car ride back. Thinking about how if I'm counting on someone or something from the outside to do the trick and make me whole, well, maybe it won't work out quite like that. Always going after attention and applause. Thinking if I just had Mama back or a successful singing career, I'd finally feel like a big deal somebody. Now, I come to find out, I either feel like a big deal somebody or I don't.

LASHLEY

Guess we gotta figure out how to undo all the damage caused by thinking she just left us. I felt abandoned for so long. I don't know how else to feel.

JUNIE

It's like I've lived my whole life backwards.

LASHLEY

I'm a bigger head case than I ever knew. And yet, I'm suddenly more loved than I ever thought possible.

JUNIE

Daddy left us this.

Junie pulls out an old journal.

LASHLEY

Mama's poems?

JUNIE

Come to find out that list of mundane chores was a list of titles after all.

LASHLEY

(Flipping through the journal pages)

She had a poem titled "*This Haircut Works?*"

JUNIE

Yeah, it's pretty bad.

LASHLEY

(Reading the title)

"*Remember To Buy Blackberry Jam for Lashley.*" No poem for Junie?

JUNIE

She wrote me one. It's called "*Wear A Hat In the Winter, Junie So You Won't Catch Cold.*" It's really short and it's not all that good, but it's mine so I like it.

Junie flips to another page in the journal.

JUNIE (CONT'D)

Read this one.

LASHLEY

*Someday, Maybe I Should Write a Poem to my Daughters.* She actually did write us a poem?

JUNIE

She did.

LASHLEY

(reading)

You got to die to live, let go to hold on.

JUNIE

I was thinking it could go like this

Junie picks up her guitar.

JUNIE

YOU GOTTA DIE TO LIVE  
LET GO TO HOLD ON  
YOU GOTTA STOP SINGING  
TO LEARN THE SONG

LASHLEY

TURN IT ON ITS END  
IT'S NOT WHAT YOU THINK

JUNIE/LASHLEY

IF YOU WANNA FIND A BRIDGE  
YOU GOTTA GO TO THE BRINK

PHIL

IT'S AN UPSIDE DOWN  
MERRY GO ROUND  
YOU GOTTA DIG DEEP  
TO GET UPWARD BOUND

JUNIE/LASHLEY

I KNOW. YOU DON'T THINK YOU CAN, BUT YOU CAN  
I KNOW. YOU DON'T THINK YOU ARE, BUT YOU ARE

CAUSE THERE'S LOVE TO FIND IF YOU WANT TO BE FOUND

JUNIE/LASHLEY/PHIL

IF YOU WANT TO SAIL THE SKIES  
YOU GOTTA WALK ON THE GROUND  
TO GET WHAT YOU WANT  
YOU GOTTA LAY IT DOWN  
START AT THE END  
AND WORK BACKWARD FROM THERE  
IF YOU DON'T KNOW WHERE YOU ARE  
HOW CAN YOU GET ANYWHERE?

IT'S AN UPSIDE DOWN  
MERRY GO ROUND  
GOTTA DIG DEEP  
TO GET UPWARD BOUND

JUNIE/LASHLEY/PASTOR  
PHIL/LYLE/MADDY

YOU STACK ONE MORE DAY  
ON TOP OF ONE MORE NIGHT  
IT TAKES A LOTTA SMALL STEPS  
TO BUILD A BEAUTIFUL LIFE

I KNOW. YOU DON'T THINK YOU CAN, BUT YOU CAN  
I KNOW. YOU DON'T THINK YOU ARE, BUT YOU ARE  
CAUSE THERE'S LOVE TO FIND IF YOU WANT TO BE FOUND

END OF PLAY