

FUZIWINK

by  
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## ACT I

INT. BOOKSTORE - TWILIGHT

Middle aged GRANT is behind the counter of the bookstore he owns with CAMILLE. She is looking out the bay windows at the snow accumulating in heaps outside. A Christmas tree is near the counter and decorations adorn the windows through which a BUS STOP sign is illuminated by a street lamp. GRANT looks up at the large clock above the front door.

GRANT

Twenty to five. I'd say we could call it a day.

He reaches for the clear "F. ALRAD BOOKSTORE - CLOSED" sign behind the counter and moves towards the front door stopping at CAMILLE who hasn't answered him. She is gently scratching her arm. GRANT lovingly puts his hand to her cheek smiling.

GRANT (CONT'D)

You okay?

CAMILLE

Yes... of course, why?

GRANT gently covers her scratching hand with his.

GRANT

You're doing that again. Maybe it's the cold...or nightfall. It's over. Let's leave well enough alone.

She stops.

GRANT (CONT'D)

(changing tone)

Christmas Eve - and a heavy snow. I think we've seen our last customer.

CAMILLE

Yes. People have already bought their stories.

(suggestively)

Now it's time to give them...to people wanting to hear them.

GRANT doesn't answer. The glass front door swings open with a MOTHER and FATHER and their two plainly dressed school aged children, PETEY and GRACIE, who enter loudly followed by their parents. The family is covered in snow. The parents begin dusting themselves off.

The FATHER becomes aware of Grant and Camille watching PETEY and GRACIE spread their mess a near the stacks.

BOOKSTORE FATHER  
(to his wife, angrily)  
Can't you control your children?

BOOKSTORE MOTHER  
(to her husband, tenderly)  
'Our' children...  
(to PETEY and GRACIE)  
Petey, Gracie, please get away from  
those expensive books.  
(to GRANT and CAMILLE)  
Oh my, I'm so sorry.

PETEY and GRACIE don't stop.

BOOKSTORE FATHER  
It's really coming down now.

GRANT  
(to PETEY and GRACIE)  
Children...  
(playfully)  
Freeze!

PETEY and GRACIE delight in the command and comply.

GRANT (CONT'D)  
(to the PARENTS, smiling)  
Actually, my job is to get kids  
closer to books. I'll take it as I  
can get it. Merry Christmas.  
(to PETEY and GRACIE)  
Unfreeze! And Merry Christmas to  
you!

The kids re-animate and resume playing.

CAMILLE  
(to PETEY and GRACIE)  
Merry Christmas!

CHILDREN AND BOOKSTORE MOTHER  
Merry Christmas!

The BOOKSTORE FATHER does not engage. GRACIE looks at him.

BOOKSTORE FATHER  
(motioning to PETEY and  
GRACIE)  
(MORE)

BOOKSTORE FATHER (CONT'D)

Well good luck with the 'closer to books' thing. They're not really readers.

GRACIE stops and looks at her father with embarrassment.

CAMILLE

(to GRACIE and with emphasis to GRANT)

Everyone loves a good story.

BOOKSTORE FATHER

We're waiting for the Five O'Clock bus - do you mind?

CAMILLE takes the closed sign from Grant to keep it hidden.

BOOKSTORE MOTHER

(noticing)

We're not good customers. We don't want to keep you from your home on Christmas Eve.

GRANT

I am home - live upstairs. You're always welcome here. The streets are bad and the buses will be running late. Please, make yourselves at home.

GRANT and CAMILLE return behind the counter. PETEY notices GRACIE'S and instigates more horseplay. Their FATHER CLAPS his hands loudly and they stop in fear. PETEY goes to his MOTHER'S side. GRACIE begins to wander away looking at the stacks as if something foreign. The FATHER begins nervously looking out the window at the falling snow. The MOTHER removes her scarf and starts to run it across the fronts of the books where PETEY and GRACIE may have gotten snow. GRANT and CAMILLE take notice of GRACIE surveying the stacks near the counter.

CAMILLE

(to GRANT)

Look at that little cutie - her dad said 'not much of a reader' - sure looks like she might love a good story.

(suggestively)

Everyone does. Looks like we have a little time. You could get started.

GRANT

A thousand stories in here...and you want that one?

CAMILLE  
I can read the others.

GRANT  
We've been through this before -  
Why drive forward looking in the  
rearview mirror?

CAMILLE  
Cars all have mirrors for a  
reason... I've been thinking a lot  
about him... It's the time of year  
I guess.

GRANT pauses and looks at the child.

GRANT  
(tenderly, significantly,  
to GRACIE)  
Touch one - go on. Pull it down -  
smell it. They say 'don't judge a  
book by it's cover' - I say  
'Whatever it takes.'

GRACIE  
There's so many. Do...do you know  
a good story mister?

CAMILLE  
(with dual delivery to the  
child and Grant)  
Does he ever. Ask him to tell it.

GRANT  
What's your name sweetheart?

GRACIE  
Gracie...is this book good mister?

GRANT  
You bet it is Gracie. You bet it  
is.

The front door swings open again. A BUS DRIVER with THREE of  
his stranded PASSENGERS with different dispositions enter all  
covered in snow.

PASSENGER 1 is effeminate.

PASSENGER 2 is negative.

PASSENGER 3 is philosophical.

BOOKSTORE FATHER

(angrily looking at the  
clock)

Hey! You're early! ...Where the  
heck is your bus?

BUS DRIVER

Not early - I'm the 4:30 - late.  
Roads a mess. Thank God only three  
passengers. Bus got stuck 2 doors  
down - saw the lights on here.

(looking at the falling  
snow)

It's coming down a while now.

(to GRANT)

Mister, I need your phone. The  
company's probably halted service-  
I got to tell em I got a few people  
here and my bus is done. Can I call  
em and we wait it out here?

GRANT

(smiling)

Merry Christmas everyone! Phone's  
there. Everyone can use it - tell  
your loved ones where you are and  
you're safe. We'll all make do.

BOOKSTORE MOTHER

Oh my. Looks like we're not going  
anywhere soon.

PETEY

Dad! We can't go?

GRACIE AND PETEY

(in disappointed  
cacophony)

Yeah?! / How's Santa gonna get  
through? / How we getting home? /  
What are we gonna do?! He won't  
come here / There's no chiminey!

(in unison)

It's Christmas!!

CAMILLE

(happily, disappearing to  
hostess the gathering)

And I've got the cookies to prove  
it!

BOOKSTORE MOTHER  
 We'll, we'll be okay. You know why?  
 Because we have each other and  
 we're safe - it'll be great for me!  
 Know why? Because I've got you!

BUS DRIVER  
 (not paying attention,  
 declaring his successful  
 phone connection)  
 Got the company!

BUS PASSENGER 1  
 (sarcastically,  
 effeminately)  
 No, You got a broken bus.

BOOKSTORE FATHER  
 I got a mess.

BUS PASSENGER 2  
 (angrily)  
 I got a storm!

BUS DRIVER  
 (not paying attention,  
 passing on what he's  
 hearing)  
 Gonna be a while. Roads impassible.

BOOKSTORE MOTHER  
 (to PETEY and GRACIE  
 trying to inspire)  
 We have a white Christmas!

PETEY and GRACIE are beginning to make noise and play again.  
 PETEY points at his sister's face.

PETEY  
 (to GRACIE)  
 You know what you got?

BOOKSTORE MOTHER  
 That's 'have' Petey.

GRACIE  
 What?

PETEY  
 A booger!

GRACIE  
 Girls don't get boogers!

PETEY  
Are you sure?

GRACIE  
You ARE a booger.

The kids roar with laughter and screaming chasing each other around the store.

BUS PASSENGER 1  
I've got a headache.

GRANT  
I have aspirin.

BUS DRIVER  
(still in his own world  
conveying loudly)  
About 2 hrs.

BOOKSTORE FATHER  
(to his WIFE)  
God bless it control them!

The MOTHER takes off after PETEY and GRACIE smiling.

BOOKSTORE MOTHER  
No running kids!

She catches up and they settle - the decrescendo is interrupted.

BUS PASSENGER 2  
I've got places to be! Christmas  
Eve in a bookstore? For Christ's  
sake!

BUS PASSENGER 3  
(keenly, quietly,  
significantly )  
Well seems what we have is...each  
other for the next couple hours.  
(calmly, diverting by  
needling the angry man)  
You know what else you have? Check  
your pocket - a transfer that's  
expiring soon...

BUS PASSENGER 2, now diverted to new crisis, begins searching his pockets for his ticket and looking at his watch.

GRANT  
 (trying to be helpful)  
 I've a phone...and plenty of  
 coffee...  
 (to PETEY and GRACIE)  
 and I have Cocoa!

CAMILLE  
 (reappearing happily)  
 I have cookies!

PETEY and GRACIE rush her platter noisily and begin cheering. Some of the BOOKSTORE ENSEMBLE look dejected. BUS PASSENGER 3 is quietly looking through a book taken from the shelf. CAMILLE is confused missing the news and looks to GRANT for an explanation.

BUS PASSENGER 1  
 Oh my, kids and sugar. That oughta  
 perk em up.

PETEY and GRACIE take off in a loud chase again - this time cookies in mouth and hand. Their MOTHER follows in vain. Grumbling, some combine to make the volume level reach it's peak thus far.

BUS PASSENGER 2  
 (to the DRIVER, loudly,  
 waving his found  
 transfer)  
 You're honoring this!

BUS DRIVER  
 Mister, there's procedures\_\_\_\_

BUS PASSENGER 2  
 (interrupting, yelling)  
 To hell with your procedures and  
 lousy company. YOU broke the bus!

BUS PASSENGER 1  
 Ooo. Touche.

BUS DRIVER  
 I broke the bus?

PETEY has caught GRACIE now and they both let out a playful scream in unison.

BUS PASSENGER 1  
 (to himself)  
 'Headache' I said?  
 (quasi-melodically)  
*Migraine.*

BOOKSTORE FATHER  
 (with great force)  
 Everybody SHUT UP!

GRACIE and PETEY stop in their tracks at the tone. The room goes silent in anticipation.

CAMILLE  
 (desparately, almost  
 whispering)  
 I've got...I've got some food in  
 back - I think.

GRANT  
 And I...  
 (seeking solution)  
 I've got a story.

The KIDS and MOTHER excitedly fall in taking their places semi-circle on the floor before him. CAMILLE follows with mutual excitement. BUS PASSENGERS 1 & 2 and BOOKSTORE FATHER are dejected and turn their backs to consider the snow out the window. PASSENGER 3 leans against the wall considering not the snow, nor his book, but GRANT.

CAMILLE  
 (as excited as PETEY and  
 GRACIE)  
 Heee Heee! Funny how that worked. I  
 guess I have an angel.

The FATHER walks to a place of his own by the windows to look through his wallet.

GRANT  
 I'm sorry everyone. I'll try to  
 amuse the kids. There's... books -  
 help yourself to whatever will make  
 this better. If you want to listen -  
 it will pass the time...I know it  
 will...I ... I love this  
 story...and I...I loved him.

PASSENGER 2 looks over his shoulder from the snow to Grant with raised eyebrows, then turns away.

GRANT (CONT'D)  
 (a little emotional and  
 almost having difficulty  
 starting)  
 You see...it was Christmas  
 time...four days before...here...in  
 this town.  
 (MORE)

GRANT (CONT'D)  
 (settling now begun -  
 committed - animated -  
 smiling)  
 His name was Fuziwink. David  
 Fuziwink.

FADE OUT.

As The action area of the scene fades, a new area of the stage comes alive. GRANT continues his story which shifts into VOICE OVER as the "HOLIDAY SEASON IS UPON" begins - the other scene becomes primary - representing the story told.

GRANT (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
 (gaining in enthusiasm,  
 excitement and pace)  
 He'd just married the love of his  
 life - Darla... The two were  
 heading for a train, but the town  
 square was alive - a celebration -  
 the town's people decorating the  
 town for Christmas!

FADE IN:

EXT. TOWN SQUARE - DAY

TOWNSPEOPLE have congregated to decorate the town square.

SONG "THE HOLIDAY SEASON IS UPON US",

is sung in ensemble by the townspeople. A man dressed in military clothes, 20 YR. OLD FUZIWINK, enters holding the hand of his new wife, DARLA, his other supports a large duffle on his shoulder. They don't join the singing but head for train station bordering the square. Other service men with duffles are also there kissing their wives and families goodbye. As the song ends, the train whistle blows and 20 YR. OLD FUZIWINK boards the train. He assumes a POSE in the vestibule (pose important to a later scene).

DARLA  
 You come back to me DAVID. You hear  
 me MR. FUZIWINK? We never even had  
 a honeymoon!  
 (seriously)  
 You come back to me DAVID.

20 YR. OLD FUZIWINK  
Count on me DARLA. I'm not ready to  
die! I'm just starting to live!

FADE OUT.

FADE IN:

INT. BOOKSTORE - TWILIGHT

PETEY

He didn't stay at the party?

GRANT

No, and they had only just married.  
He got on the train.

BUS PASSENGER 1

(sarcastically)

At least the *trains* were running.

BUS PASSENGER 2

(without turning)

Story'd be better with a snow  
storm. More pertinent. Closer to  
home.

GRANT

It's plenty close to home.

BUS PASSENGER 1

Like us. So close but yet so far.

BUS PASSENGER 2

Boring. We've heard it all before -  
married and off to war. A long  
night just got longer. I know where  
this is going.

BUS PASSENGER 3

(quietly)

Do you? Let the man tell his story.  
Let the others listen.

GRANT

Darla left the station not knowing  
what to do. She went to a favorite  
place of theirs - the park. It was  
empty on Christmas Eve, and it was  
the first time she was there  
without him. She could... taste it.

BUS PASSENGER 1

What? What does a park taste like -  
a gym sock?

PETEY

(raising hand, waving)  
I know! I know! Dog poo!

BOOKSTORE MOTHER

Petey!

BUS PASSENGER 2

Exactly what I was gonna say - good  
going kid.

BOOKSTORE FATHER

(to his WIFE)  
Good going 'dear'. What the heck  
are you teaching your kids all day?

BUS PASSENGER 3

(wiping his glasses)  
Perhaps the things you aren't.

BOOKSTORE FATHER

Who asked you - four eyes? You  
don't know what goes on in my home!

BUS PASSENGER 3

(quietly)  
Don't I?

BOOKSTORE MOTHER

(tearing up, quietly, to  
her HUSBAND)  
'Our' home... 'our' children.

BUS PASSENGER 1

To heck with the other story - this  
one's getting good.

BOOKSTORE FATHER

(to PASSENGER 1, shouting)  
You! You're gonna pay.

The BOOKSTORE FATHER stalks towards PASSENGER 1. GRACIE begins to cry. Her mother embraces her as if to shield. BUS PASSENGER 3 smoothly moves to a point between them. The FATHER pauses at the impasse in stare down with No. 3. GRACIE is sobbing. PETEY has slid on the floor behind his mother. The two men stand face to face for a while.

BUS PASSENGER 1  
 (unaffected, still joking)  
 Never hit a man with glasses.

The BUS DRIVER joins PASSENGER 3.

BUS DRIVER  
 Mr...there's no fighting on the  
 bus.

BOOKSTORE FATHER  
 We're not on the goddam bus you  
 idiot - you broke it.  
 (looking around the room)  
 You!...To hell with all of you!  
 (heading for the door)  
 I'm leaving!

GRACIE  
 Dada!

BOOKSTORE MOTHER  
 Dont! Please! I'm sorry. I didn't  
 mean it.

BUS PASSENGER 1  
 (sarcastically)  
 Merry Christmas.

BOOKSTORE MOTHER  
 (crying)  
 Please. Please stop. It's not safe  
 out there!

PETEY AND GRACIE  
 Daddy! / Dada don't go!

The father pauses at the door considering the snow.

BOOKSTORE MOTHER  
 Please... For the children...please  
 stop. It's not safe out there.

BUS PASSENGER 3  
 (seriously, stoic)  
 Nor is it in here...let him go.

The FATHER exits.

GRACIE  
 Dada!

BUS PASSENGER 1  
 Don't worry. He'll be back in...  
 (looking at his watch)  
 Five, Four Three, Two\_\_

The FATHER stops walking.

BUS PASSENGER 1 (CONT'D)  
 He can't take much. It's cold out  
 there. lame excuse is coming in...  
 Five, Four Three, Two\_\_

The FATHER bursts in and gets in PASSENGER 3's face.

BOOKSTORE FATHER  
 You want me to go? Think I should  
 go? I'm staying just to spite you  
 tough guy! You don't tell me what  
 to do!

BUS PASSENGER 1 rolls his eyes.

PETEY  
 Daddy? I...I'm sorry for saying  
 'oop' backwards.

Some of the BOOKSTORE ENSEMBLE laugh. The father turns his  
 back on everyone.

CAMILLE  
 (quasi-melodically,  
 nudgingly)  
*Oh Grant, I think it's time to  
 start the story, start the story.*

PETEY  
 Can you start over - I don't  
 remember.

BUS PASSENGER 1  
 Oh, boy. Now I'm the one who's  
 heard this story all before.

CAMILLE  
 (quasi-melodically)  
*Leave out the tasting part...*

GRANT

I will. I mean, well, I'll explain later..Look, Petey, everyone, a young couple, David Fuziwink, and Darla, fell in love, were married, right after that he got called away and got on a train. She went to a park they loved when they were together, went to when they were children even, she was now alone there for the first time. She wandered around, lost, then, then she came home - to their new home - empty now - so she picked up what he'd given her.

FADE OUT.

CONCURRENT  
ACTION FADE IN:

INT. FUZIWINK'S AND DARLA'S MARRIAGE HOME - DAY

DARLA is straightening ornaments on their Christmas Tree. She notices the PINK GIFT BOX WITH PINK RIBBON under the tree, picks it up gently, and holds it to her chest lovingly. She removes the ribbon and drapes it over one forearm while pulling off the lid, it's contents remain hidden as she peers into the box cradling it in one arm. She slowly walks about her home while considering the contents. GRANT and the BOOKSTORE AUDIENCE are heard in voice over briefly.

GRACIE (V.O.)

She got a present!

GRANT (V.O.)

She did.

PETHEY (V.O.)

I want one too. I love presents!

GRANT (V.O.)

We all do! And, I want to give you one now - this story. Listen up kids, it's really special, and that year, her present - was - really special.

DARLA

(sung, recitative, rubato-  
a capella)

Bows and string, wrap what we  
bring, bring him home...

(MORE)

DARLA (CONT'D)  
 wreaths, like rings  
     (looking at her wedding  
     ring on the hand holding  
     the lid)  
 are lovely things - once the  
 meanings known...  
     (spoken)  
 Christmas is a time to be together.  
     (skyward)  
 Why? Why this, now.  
     (head down, towards the  
     floor)  
 Why do you make some so strong...  
 and some so... ?

She places the lid on the box and stares at her ring.

DARLA (CONT'D)  
 Faith... Faith? David, I remember  
 you saying: "Take the 'I' out of  
 faith - and it becomes a four  
 letter word."  
     (skyward)  
 I... I love you David. I hope  
 they're giving you a little break  
 tonight - Merry Christmas.

FADE OUT.

CONCURRENT  
 "PRESENT" ACTION  
 FADE IN OTHER  
 SIDE OF STAGE:

INT. BURNED OUT BUILDING - NIGHT

FUZIWINK is cradling a FALLEN SOLDIER. Another SOLDIER stands  
 above FUZIWINK and the fallen comrade.

SOLDIER  
 He's gone David. We gotta move out.  
 They're coming.

20 YR. OLD FUZIWINK  
 He's breathing. We're taking him  
 with us.

SOLDIER  
 There isn't time man! We'll have to  
 come back for him.

20 YR. OLD FUZIWINK  
If they over run this place - there  
is no coming back.

SOLDIER  
And if they over run this place  
with us here, there is no *going*  
back.

(handing him his gun,  
kneeling face to face)  
Let's go - now's our time - part of  
the goddam ceiling fell on him -  
he's gone David.

20 YR. OLD FUZIWINK  
Alright! Go - I'm right behind you.

The SOLDIER takes off looking bsck to make sure FUZIWINK is  
in tow. FUZIWINK rises and feigns following but then slowly  
bends down to the FALLEN SOLDIER showing no urgency for time.  
He places his own weapon down again, takes the FALLEN  
SOLDIER'S weapon from the man's clutched hands laying it next  
to his. FUZIWINK kneels and wraps his arms around him. The  
FALLEN SOLDIER is alive but stares blankly forward.

20 YR. OLD FUZIWINK (CONT'D)  
We're going, you and me.

FALLEN SOLDIER  
(weakly)  
You... *You and your damned war...* I  
was just married...

20 YR. OLD FUZIWINK  
(under his breath)  
Me too...  
(to the soldier)  
Hey pal, it's me, it's me David.  
I've got you. We're going.

Disoriented, the FALLEN SOLDIER looks at another fixed place  
with blank stare while becoming more cognizant.

FALLEN SOLDIER  
David? I, I can't see... I'm  
finished.

20 YR. OLD FUZIWINK  
Nah, you're as good as the day you  
were born. Put your arms around my  
neck. I'm getting you out of here.

FALLEN SOLDIER

I... I can't. I'm done... dammit -  
They got me Dave.

20 YR. OLD FUZIWINK

No, I've got you. They've got  
nothing. Pull yourself up. Pull  
yourself up a little so I can grab  
on to you better. You can. We're  
going back.

FALLEN SOLDIER

Look at us. Two groomsmen. Carry me  
across the threshold too? I'm too  
damn fat.

(laughing)

Does this uniform make me look fat?

(becoming serious)

I've got a baby coming. Just found  
out.

20 YR. OLD FUZIWINK

Pull yourself on to me! Pull  
yourself up! We can do this! You've  
got to have the will!

FALLEN SOLDIER

I've got it - but it seems to have  
spilled out all over me. Keep yours  
inside where it belongs. Lets call  
it how we see it for once - I can't  
see -

(sadly)

I'm not going to see them.

FUZIWINK brushes the mans hair from his face.

FALLEN SOLDIER (CONT'D)

Tell them I love them. Go.

(smiling, staring forward)

Go buddy... we go way back Dave. Go  
way back - so... go. I can't tell  
them, but I can tell you - I love  
you.

(uncomfortable)

I'm getting really dizzy... like on  
a Tilt-A-Whirl with my eyes closed.

FUZIWINK looks at his own WATCH and places his other palm  
atop it reacting to sounds of approaching enemies.

20 YR. OLD FUZIWINK  
 (smiling)  
 We've got nothing but time pal. I'm  
 with you then.

FUZIWINK struggles to prop the FALLEN SOLDIER up to a sitting  
 position against the adjacent ROOF SUPPORT BEAM next to them.

FALLEN SOLDIER  
 They're coming.

20 YR. OLD FUZIWINK  
 No.

FALLEN SOLDIER  
 I mean angels.  
 (worried)  
 I see them.

20 YR. OLD FUZIWINK  
 An angels' inside every man.

FALLEN SOLDIER  
 Seems mine is just dying to get  
 out.

20 YR. OLD FUZIWINK  
 (stroking the mans hair)  
 I love you too.  
 (joking)  
 We do go way back you know.

FALLEN SOLDIER  
 Sing. Sing me to sleep.

20 YR. OLD FUZIWINK  
 Sing? For God's sake.

FALLEN SOLDIER  
 Sing... me to sleep. Come on Dave.  
 Let your angels out. You, you were  
 the best in choir when we were  
 kids. Always the best - at  
 everything. "Voice of an angel" old  
 Choir director Brown used to say.  
 "Listen to David" he'd tell us.  
 Sammy Brown. Remember Dave?

20 YR. OLD FUZIWINK  
 I do.

## FALLEN SOLDIER

(weaker)

'I do.' - those are marriage  
words... hey... I gotta tell you  
something...

(more disoriented)

just told me... I'm gonna be a dad

(starting to cry)

Oh my God Dave.

FUZIWINK hugs the man's head tightly into his chest while he kneels next to him and looks at the WATCH on his own wrist now in front of the man's face. He places his other palm to cover it again and starts to sing to comfort his friend. A Capella from **WREATH SONG**:

## 20 YR. OLD FUZIWINK

(rubato, as a lullaby)

*Hang a wreath upon the door - so  
all who come can see the beauty -  
of this simple wreath - that  
welcomes us to be...*

(the Fallen Soldier begins  
to relax and go limp)

*Bend the branches..bend not  
break... and then we lay them  
weaving one by one*

(the Fallen Soldier  
expires)

*...to make them strong...*

FUZIWINK straightens his friend's collar and once more his hair, then closes his friend's eyes. FUZIWINK grabs the mans weapon laying next to him and stands up shaking his own head.

## 20 YR. OLD FUZIWINK (CONT'D)

(all skyward)

An angels' inside every man.

(more angered)

Just dying to get out are ya?

(with anger)

Why don't you stick around and see  
the show?!

FUZIWINK, the man's rifle held even with his own waist, slams the bolt action forward to load the chamber with a loud DOUBLE-CLICK.

## 20 YR. OLD FUZIWINK (CONT'D)

What a waste.

He looks towards the ceiling, down at his friend, then pulls the bolt back forcefully so the live round is flung from the chamber and bounces to the floor, saying concurrently with the action:

20 YR. OLD FUZIWINK (CONT'D)  
Go then!

FUZIWINK tosses the man's weapon to the floor and takes his same defiant nonchalant POSE against the ROOF SUPPORT BEAM as he did in the scene 1 train vestibule.

As the weapon hits the floor in the other scene, DARLA'S action is rejoined where she was peering at her wedding ring while holding the PINK BOX.

FADE OUT.

CONCURRENT  
"PRESENT" ACTION  
FADE IN OTHER  
SIDE OF STAGE:

INT. FUZIWINK'S AND DARLA'S MARRIAGE HOME - DAY

DARLA  
(as if she heard  
something)  
David?

The music begins. She begins to sing.

SONG - "AN ANGEL INSIDE EVERY MAN"

She sings through to the point of DUET in the song where:

CONCURRENT  
"PRESENT" ACTION  
FADE IN OTHER  
SIDE OF STAGE:

FADE IN.

INT. BURNED OUT BUILDING - NIGHT

Now both action areas of the stage are active and the couple duets concurrently. FUZIWINK is as last seen in the pose against the roof support. He moves from it and begins to sing.

During the song 20 YR. OLD FUZIWINK will realize he will face the enemy and his defiance and confidence follows the lyric - at his high melodic point he takes a bullet to his chest and stumbles backward to lean against the ROOF SUPPORT BEAM. He continues to try to sing as he slips down the BEAM finishing in a seated position next to his expired friend.

As the song culminates, DARLA is replacing the lid onto the PINK BOX and re-tying the PINK RIBBON tightly.

BOTH CONCURRENT  
"PRESENT" ACTION  
SCENES:

FADE OUT.

FADE IN.

INT. FUZIWINK'S SHACK - NIGHT

Now disheveled, poor and old, FUZIWINK is standing exactly as in the train vestibule in his POSE leaning against the fireplace mantle of his sparse one room shack with only a bed, cupboard, small table and chair, no pictures, a small shelf with dusty books, and a tiny Christmas Tree adorned only with bows. He is nearly immobile and his voice is weak. CAROLERS ARE OUTSIDE APPROACHING. THEIR VOLUME INCREASES. THEY STOP IN FRONT OF HIS SHACK. Fuziwink is oblivious to them.

FUZIWINK

It's cold... They couldn't leave  
well enough alone. They made it  
cold - from its songs to its  
trappings - they gave up its  
ghost... in favor of its wrappings -  
... carolers don't even come round  
anymore.

CONCURRENT  
PRESENT ACTION  
FADE IN:

INT. BOOKSTORE - TWILIGHT

The story recount action is shown while FUZIWINK very slowly moves from the mantle towards the table.

GRANT

He could barely talk, barely walk.  
He could hear - he'd just stopped  
listening - all he heard was his  
own footsteps.

BOOKSTORE MOTHER

Wait a minute. That's him? The  
soldier? You said\_\_\_

GRANT

I said he was in trouble, trapped.

BUS PASSENGER 1

(interested in the story  
now, skeptical)  
Oh come on. He lived?

GRANT

Well..no.

BUS DRIVER

Where's the girl - Darla?

BOOKSTORE FATHER

What do you mean - no? What kind of  
story is this?

CAMILLE

A good one.

GRANT

Listen...Listen. He was a survivor.  
Always. He made it back but...  
sometimes to survive, we go numb.  
He used to sing - sing!

BUS PASSENGER 3

Sometimes people forget how to  
really live- ...but sometimes we  
forget...just so we can live.  
Either way - the heart is silenced.

BUS PASSENGER 1

(deeply)  
Sometimes we forget...so we can  
remember...

BUS DRIVER

Say what?

Everyone looks at PASSENGER 1. He looks at all of them with  
dramatic pause as if hen to impart the answer to a riddle.

BUS PASSENGER 1

(in character)

Just kidding. Mr. Glasses here is letting some kind of poetry fly, so I took a chance. Couldn't sell it without the glasses I guess.

BUS PASSENGER 2

Okay genius- whatever. Smoke a clove cigarette or something. I hope I can forget you as soon as this is over.

(to Grant)

Come on - this Fuzington, or whatever you call him, forgot everything? No way- phoney. The war? We're all at war. The war did this?

GRANT

No....I Mean, yes of course, it was part of it. He stopped remembering - practice makes perfect. After a while, the past was quiet, or I guess it could have happened quickly - we've heard stories about amnesia - we all have.

FUZIWINK, in the action area of the recall, having made it to table and standing looking at the fire, now sits down - staring at the tree blankly.

BOOKSTORE MOTHER

I see. He got sick - she left him. Heartless.

GRANT

She left him *heartless*.

BUS DRIVER

Real nice.

BOOKSTORE MOTHER

'In sickness and in health'. Shes a real....a real\_\_\_\_\_"

CAMILLE

(interupting))

Angel.

(to GRANT, frustrated)

Would you please tell the story?

GRANT

I'm trying. After many years he'd even forgotten that - *there was something he'd forgotten*. If we deny our better angels, something else comes out - anger...and blame.

CAMILLE

We've all done it - maybe his case was just stronger.

GRANT

A lot of people had changed in ways - to forget. The songs were new - different. It would have all stayed like this. But what is really good endures - that's true in music. See, one night an angel, like a forgotten picture found in a drawer, was released - inside...a song. First the carolers had re-discovered it...and then...

CONCURRENT  
BOOKSTORE ACTION  
FADE OUT:

The modern song outside is over. A new one begins amid FUZIWINK'S noise. Christmas CAROLERS can be heard in the background HUMMING the opening melody to "THE WREATH SONG".

FUZIWINK

(noticing)

Carolers?

(listening)

Carolers?...

The song is gaining in volume as if the CAROLERS are walking past his home now. They are humming in ensemble - no lyrics. He stares blankly, frozen, like the fallen soldier.

FUZIWINK (CONT'D)

Go away. Please stop that... I... I know that... No, I don't know it. I never knew it... Please stop... you have no right. No one hangs wreaths anymore...

FUZIWINK looks atop his cupboard where there is a very old dusty WREATH. It can be seen edge on slightly protruding over the top.

FUZIWINK (CONT'D)

My wreath...it's up there. The first carolers in decades - and you sing that? You stopped doing that one - I stopped - it's your fault -  
 (looking at the wreath)  
 you made me put it away - And now it's out of reach.  
 (angered)  
 You made me old! I'll show you.

He takes the broom handle and threads it through what would be it's slightly exposed opening of it's center atop the cupboard. He pulls at the old WREATH which falls to the floor in a cloud of dust, but with it comes tumbling also a PINK BOX WITH PINK RIBBON. He stares blankly at it on the floor. The CAROLERS begin a slow fading moving on.

FUZIWINK (CONT'D)

What a stupid box. Don't remember even putting it there - who would give me a present in such foolish colors? Loud colors. Noisy colors. No wonder I hid it there.

He slowly moves to pick it up, but is too stiff.

FUZIWINK (CONT'D)

I can't seem to remember anything.  
 (quietly)  
 All I remember is:  
 (resolutely)  
 I don't want it anymore.  
 (explosively)  
 I don't want it anymore!

FUZIWINK kicks the PINK BOX under the cupboard. Threading the wreath's center with the broom, and retrieving it onto the broom, FUZIWINK holds it up and inspects it. He moves towards his front door to hang it on an exposed nail inside.

GRACIE (V.O.)

He kicked her present!

GRANT (V.O.)

He didn't remember it was her present. Gracie, sometimes people don't know something is wrong with them. Sometimes they see an outline in a fogged up mirror and someone's got to just wipe it clean. Someone - or something.

(MORE)

GRANT (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
 That song...it wiped just enough  
 that...maybe he could see his eyes  
 looking back...

FUZIWINK  
 (to the wreath)  
 You can stay. Not so darned loud.

Standing by the hung wreath, FUZIWINK nods his head to the quieting lines of the wreath song as the CAROLERS fade to silence moving on. He traces the circle of the wreath with his hand.

FUZIWINK (CONT'D)  
 (considering)  
 Song... What went away first? The  
 words, or the notes. Yesterday...  
 or tomorrow? Does it matter?  
 They're both gone... Singing?  
 (towards the outside  
 carolers)  
 You think you 'sing'? People don't  
 'sing' anymore. We, we used to  
 sing! I used to... 'sing'.  
 (angrily towards the  
 outside carolers)  
 You're just a bunch of gosh darn  
 takers! Singing is...  
 (sweetly, quietly)  
 giving.

FUZIWINK again traces the circle of the wreath with his hand.

FUZIWINK (CONT'D)  
 (wiping his brow)  
 I just want to leave it all alone.  
 Peace. I know this:... I never  
 lost, ever  
 (angrily towards the  
 outside carolers)  
 Ever!  
 (to himself, confused)  
 I just know it. And something else:  
 (struggling to get it out)  
 ... what you give a taker: ...  
more.  
 (confused)  
 You think you're winning! I still  
 have more voice than you'll ever  
 have.

PETHEY (V.O.)  
 Why is he so mad Mr. Why are people  
 always so mad?

CAMILLE (V.O.)  
Because it hurts sweetheart.

GRANT (V.O.)  
Yes...because anger is  
just...another way of crying.

BUS PASSENGER 3  
The spirit in a person is like a  
soaring thing not meant for a cage.

CAMILLE  
And nature doesn't make cages -  
people do.

BUS PASSENGER 3  
And the spirit is as an ocean -  
men may build walls to contain it -  
but those walls will wear away  
quickly once breached.

BUS PASSENGER 1  
(about to quip)  
The spirit is\_\_\_

BUS PASSENGER 2  
(interrupting)  
Be quiet clove guy.

FUZIWINK  
(resolute)  
They test the wrong man. I'm  
Fuziwink. So what? The specific  
words are all gone - I'll make my  
own carol. I could sing... and I, I  
could make music from nothing.  
(to the carolers, without  
anger, but with pride)  
Can you do that?  
(clearing his throat -  
next lines slightly  
melodious)  
*I'm just an old man... I'm just an  
alone man... in modest home.*  
(clearing his throat -  
with resolution)

FUZIWINK stands very erect, chest out, his hands cupped  
before him as a performer. He closes his eyes for a moment  
gathering himself. The music begins.

FUZIWINK (CONT'D)  
(smiling)  
Think it's funny?  
(MORE)

FUZIWINK (CONT'D)  
 I'm composing myself. I'm -  
 'composing' - *by myself.*

SONG - "I'M JUST AN OLD MAN"

During the song he will slowly make his way to the front door and end with his back against it. At the song's ending melodic peak, a BELL RINGS on the same pitch as his held climax note. FUZIWINK looks around, and with the music now over he sings the note again 'a capella' and the BELL RINGS again. Intrigued, he tests by singing another pitch in harmony and the original BELL - the note does RING again. He tests with a staccato note and again the BELL sounds as before. FUZIWINK tries a sound without pitch - guttural - nothing is heard in response though. He claps his hands - nothing again. He sings a long high note in complex harmony and the bell sounds for the duration of his note. He responds to the BELL as he did to the train whistle.

FUZIWINK (CONT'D)  
 God that felt good.  
 (skyward, dignified)  
 Praise to you old man. We don't  
 talk anymore... Praise to you for  
 that.  
 (embarrassed suddenly)  
 I, I don't mean the talking part -  
 I mean the singing.  
 (to himself)  
 The old man can. Yes he can.  
 (towards the outside  
 carolers now long gone,  
 now joyously)  
 Resonance. I can even ring bells!  
 Yes, this old man can.

Now the BELL RINGS without being induced by singing.

GRANT (V.O.)  
 Old Fuzi got a little embarrassed  
 realizing the doorbell must be  
 ringing. He thought it had been so  
 long since he'd had a visitor that  
 he'd forgotten it's sound.

FUZIWINK opens the door, but nobody's there. He raises his hand to push the doorbell, but before he presses it, the BELL sounds again and he looks around. He presses his DOORBELL but it SOUNDS A DIFFERENT TONE.

Confused, he moves his hand to press it again but before making contact the original BELL is heard. He quickly presses his doorbell, as if raced, only to realize the sounds are different.

FUZIWINK

(following the sound which  
is occurring again)

It's coming from inside my home. It can't be. It's coming from the attic. There's nothing up there... I haven't been able to make it up the steps in so long.

GRANT (V.O.)

He was always defiant in the face of a challenge, but knew his legs wouldn't make the climb. It must have been his will. He wanted to make that climb. He needed help. He got it from Ms. Carol, his childhood caretaker at a place called Elderberry..

GRACIE (V.O.)

What's an Elderberry?

GRANT (V.O.)

It's an orphanage. He grew up there. Carol was... like a mommy.

FUZIWINK is interrupted by the BELL again followed by an immediate VOICE OVER by his childhood caretaker, MS. CAROL, as if remembering:

MS. CAROL (V.O.)

Sometimes we must climb. Sometimes when the body is unable, the heart alone can pull us up.

FUZIWINK

Ms. Carol... I haven't thought of you in years. Oh Carol - you were - like a...how I loved you Carol.

(tears in his eyes)

What makes me remember now- the bell? Or is it my remembering that is making the bell?

(excited, looking at the  
broom resting against the  
stairs)

The broom!

FUZIWINK AND MS. CAROL (V.O.)  
 (as if recalling now - he  
 speaks the next line  
 CONCURRENTLY with her)

Strength really exists to aid the  
 weak. Why not use your strengths to  
 assist what is unable? Heart to  
 lift the soul, arms to lift the  
 legs.

FUZIWINK begins climbing and singing:

SONG **"SOMETIMES WE MUST CLIMB"**

As he climbs, a CONCURRENT ACTION FLASHBACK occurs as a darkened area of the stage lights up so that the song becomes a DUET between the old man FUZIWINK and MS. CAROL as his recollection increases.

CONCURRENT  
 ACTION FLASHBACK  
 FADE IN:

INT. ELDERBERRY HOME FOR CHILDREN - NIGHT

As the song is continuing, DAVID, WHO IS FUZIWINK AS A 13 yr. OLD BOY (emphasized by his leaning against the wall in the previously defined CHARACTERISTIC POSE) is watching, while a GIRL, seen only from the back, is being tended to by caretaker MS. CAROL. The GIRL is in a wheelchair and attempting to rise at the coaxing of MS. CAROL who is singing the 'Sometimes We Must Climb' song to her and DAVID. The GIRL is struggling as DAVID is nodding to her with encouragement. MS. CAROL places a long pole upright by the GIRLS feet and holds it firmly as she motions to the girl to take hold and pull herself up hand over hand. The GIRL slowly manages to pull herself out of her chair during the song's progression so that by the end, she is standing - as FUZIWINK is concurrently reaching the attic door. The GIRL, finally risen raises both hands overhead in victory.

CONCURRENT  
 ACTION FLASHBACK  
 FADE OUT:

FUZIWINK is breathing heavily after his climb hunching over with his hands on his knees. He straightens up and raises both hands in victory.

He flings open the attic door and walks in.

GRANT (V.O.)  
 But the window was closed. The  
 room, it was empty. There was no  
 bell.

The attic door suddenly SLAMS shut and FUZIWINK is left in  
 complete darkness. The BELL RINGS loudly.

BUS PASSENGER 1 (V.O.)  
 (quasi-melodically)  
*Spooky...*

FUZIWINK  
 Who calls me here? Who are you?  
 What do you want? I can't see! If  
 I trip I may not be able to get up.  
 I'm too weak. Are you here to take  
 me? Is this how it happens?! A cold  
 hand on my shoulder in the dark?!  
 Coward! I won't move so I won't  
 fall. I'm not going out on my hands  
 and knees! Well? Show yourself and  
 be done with it!

GRACIE (V.O.)  
 (afraid)  
 Mister, this story is scary.

PETHEY (V.O.)  
 (happily)  
 Is there blood?

GRANT (V.O.)  
 No!

PETHEY (V.O.)  
 (disappointed)  
 Oh..

GRANT (V.O.)  
 Listen - this is important.

CONCURRENT  
 ACTION FLASHBACK  
 FADE IN:

INT. ELDERBERRY HOME FOR CHILDREN - NIGHT

The same flashback begins again where it stopped. DAVID is  
 applauding the GIRL as she holds her hands above her head in  
 victory after rising from her wheel chair.

She is now seen face on. The GIRL is his best friend, 13 YR. OLD DARLA, whom he later marries.

FUZIWINK  
 (SCREAMS from the dark  
 attic in the present  
 time)  
 No! Da... Dar... DARLA. My... wife.  
 No! I don't want to remember! No!!  
 I want to forget!

CONCURRENT  
 ACTION FLASHBACK  
 FADE OUT:

NEW CONCURRENT  
 ACTION FLASHBACK  
 FADE IN:

EXT. TOWN SQUARE - DAY

Present action still in the dark attic, a new lit area signifies further flashback: 20 YR. OLD FUZIWINK, in new military uniform, is going down on his knee, then proposing marriage to DARLA, significantly under a Christmas WREATH.

BOOKSTORE FATHER (V.O.)  
 You said this was real! Don't  
 believe it for a second. What kind  
 of man forgets his wife?

BUS PASSENGER 3 (V.O.)  
 (significantly directed at  
 FATHER)  
 Yes. What kind of man?

FUZIWINK (V.O.)  
 (from the present - still  
 in the dark as the  
 flashback remains  
 visible)  
 No! I don't want to remember!  
 Darla... I can't remember you!  
 (voice breaking)  
 Dar-la... How many years for that  
 lovely name to pass these lips? Is  
 it you tonight - the bell? How I've  
 tried to forget you. I...Forgive me  
 Darla. I'm sorry  
 (depressed, with  
 realization)  
 I... buried your memories ... in  
 the dark attic of my mind.

The BELL RINGS softly.

FUZIWINK (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
 You've come back to me? The bell. I  
 must hold it. I must have you!  
 (fumbling sounds)  
 - but, but it's...

CONCURRENT  
 ACTION FLASHBACK  
 FADE OUT:

The attic door opens suddenly and light comes into the attic. It is empty, save for a cherry wood box that is now in FUZIWINK'S hands. He shakes it listening for the bell. There is only silence.

FUZIWINK (CONT'D)  
 A box? Darla?

He shakes it with desperation but there is no sound.

GRANT (V.O.)  
 He looked at the strange thing in  
 his hands. A box without sounds or  
 a keyhole.

FUZIWINK  
 Darla?... I remembered you... Am I  
 dying? Oh my God... I loved you...  
 I love you.  
 (sweetly)  
 Oh sweetheart... Maybe I can  
 remember you just a little. The  
 trouble with remembering is once  
 you start...

CONCURRENT  
 ACTION FLASHBACK  
 FADE IN:

EXT. TOWN SQUARE - DAY

The last flashback of 20 YR. OLD FUZIWINK on his knee in proposal to DARLA is rejoined where it left off. He rises from his knee to her acceptance of marriage and they embrace. They begin to DANCE A SLOW WALTZ UNDER by a WREATH.

CAMILLE (V.O.)  
 A man can't ever really forget a  
 woman, can he?

GRANT (V.O.)

Maybe lose for a while dear. Forget forever? Never. Not when they've shared a dream of tomorrow.

GRACIE (V.O.)

Mamma- Am I in your dream?

BOOKSTORE MOTHER (V.O.)

You and Petey...and daddy...tonight tomorrow, for forever and a day.

GRACIE (V.O.)

Good.

20 YR. OLD DAVID and DARLA release from their dance embrace and begin to speak. She is marvelling at her ring.

DARLA

David. It's so beautiful. I've never had a diamond. The lights of the square collect inside it - and they spread out in little rainbows - like it's somehow the whole sky packed into a tiny thing. Like the sky is on my finger.

20 YR. OLD FUZIWINK

Some say the future is written in the sky.

DARLA

(kissing him)

I'll say the future is on my hand.

20 YR. OLD FUZIWINK

No, don't, because the future is IN your hands.

DARLA

Our hands. I guess everything is referred to as 'ours' now.

20 YR. OLD FUZIWINK

No - cause I'm still... 'yours'.

DARLA

Always.

(looking at the ring  
again, and then the  
wreath)

I used to think what was before would last forever. It was this - this moment, and what comes after;

(MORE)

DARLA (CONT'D)

this is what is forever  
though...round and  
round....wreaths, like rings...are  
lovely things...once the meaning's  
known.

20 YR. OLD FUZIWINK

All that from a tiny little stone  
in a tiny ring. I'd give you a  
bucket full of them if I could - a  
whole room full if I could.

DARLA

One will do. I don't more.

CONCURRENT  
ACTION FLASHBACK  
FADE OUT:

ALL SCENES- FADE  
OUT.

INT. FUZIWINK'S SHACK - MORNING

FUZIWINK is sitting at his table staring at the cherry box  
he's placed under his tree.

FUZIWINK

Quite a night last night.  
(smiling at the Christmas  
Tree)  
Anyhow, my tree has a present under  
it. I don't need anything else. One  
will do.

GRANT (V.O.)

You see it was that caroler's song.  
So much of him, of him and her, was  
wrapped up in that song that it  
shook him and then uncorked him.  
Once it was out - he wasn't going  
to get it back in.

FUZIWINK

Yes - One will do. I don't need  
anything else. One will do. I've  
had, I've had a bucket full of  
Christmases - a room full.

BUS PASSENGER 1 (V.O.)  
Buckets, champagne - finally found  
something here I want.

BUS PASSENGER 2 (V.O.)  
I want the empty bottle to crack  
over your head, be quiet champagne  
guy.

CONCURRENT  
ACTION FLASHBACK  
FADE IN:

INT. FUZIWINK'S AND DARLA'S MARRIAGE HOME - NIGHT

The newlyweds, 20 YR. OLD FUZIWINK and DARLA, are standing  
before their Christmas Tree. SHINY GLITTERING ORNAMENTS catch  
the light. The tree is twinkling.

DARLA  
Oh David! Our first Christmas as  
husband and wife, and our first  
Christmas tree. It's magnificent!  
It glitters. It sparkles.

20 YR. OLD FUZIWINK  
Sparkles like the stars above.

DARLA  
You've captured the sky and brought  
it to our first Christmas!

20 YR. OLD FUZIWINK  
Yes, I may have done just that.  
I've brought them inside our home  
for you.

CONCURRENT  
ACTION FLASHBACK  
FADE OUT:

FUZIWINK  
What's happening to me? What the  
heck happened to me? She loved me  
and I loved her. That's the end. I  
don't need to see anymore. Maybe  
she came to me again to give me the  
gift of how we started. I got one  
memory back. One's enough.

GRANT (V.O.)

He looked at the cherry box and thought he understood it all. A present with bows wouldn't be right: a beautiful box could be put on the mantle all year round - it could remind him forever. He thought it was the best gift ever given to an old man whose life age was erasing.

STORY ACTION  
FADE OUT:

BOOKSTORE  
NARRATION ACTION  
FADE IN:

INT. BOOKSTORE - NIGHT

GRANT

He figured there was no keyhole because it wasn't a gift that was about what was on the inside - it was what it represented.

CAMILLE

Did she give it to him?

GRANT

You be the judge.

PETEY is raising his hand.

GRANT (CONT'D)

You have a troubling question little man?

PETEY

Yeah...if I gotta pee, where's the bathroom?

GRANT

(laughing)

It's behind that door - everyone can help themselves.

BUS PASSENGER 1

Good, I might have to throw up now.

BOOKSTORE MOTHER

(to GRANT)

Well that's a lovely story. Thank-you.

GRACIE

Thanks mister.

BUS PASSENGER 2

(sarcastically)

Yeah - great.

GRANT

What? No, no! You're...you're being like him: that's not the end point - it's only the beginning! There's a big difference between age wiping out memories forever and a man\_\_\_

BUS PASSENGER 3 (V

(interrupting)

Trying to hold back an ocean of 'whys' with a breakwater of sand.

PETEY

Mommy can you 'break' water?

BUS PASSENGER 1

No, but you can break wind. Wanna see?

BOOKSTORE FATHER

We're seeing it already - this story stinks and the snow's still pouring down.

CAMILLE

(happily)

This story is heaven. I've waited a long time to hear it. Maybe we all have. Tell the story Grant.

BOOKSTORE MOTHER

Yes please - especially if it turns out to be a better love story.

CAMILLE

It does - two of them all wrapped together I think.

BOOKSTORE FATHER

(in effeminate voice)

Oh that sounds sweet.

BUS DRIVER  
Mister there's none of that on the  
bus.

BOOKSTORE FATHER  
You're an idiot.

CAMILLE  
Grant!

A BELL RINGS.

PETEY (V.O.)  
What's that??

GRANT (V.O.)  
It's the story. A bell rang again.  
He heard it. The trouble with  
remembering is that once it  
starts...

BOOKSTORE  
NARRATION ACTION  
FADE OUT:

STORY ACTION  
FADE IN:

INT. FUZIWINK'S SHACK - MORNING

FUZIWINK  
No! Not again! I can't make it up  
there again.

The BELL RINGS again and FUZIWINK looks towards the door  
recognizing the sound is actually the DOORBELL this time.

FUZIWINK (CONT'D)  
It couldn't be. My friends are all  
gone. People just don't show up at  
my door - it's the doorbell.  
(yelling towards the door)  
Come in! It's open.

DELIVERY PERSON  
Excuse me? Ah, is there a Mr.  
FUZIWINK here?

FUZIWINK  
That is me... I think.

DELIVERY PERSON  
Sir, expedited delivery for you.  
(handing him a small  
package and clipboard)  
Please sign here.

FUZIWINK  
What is it?

DELIVERY PERSON  
I have no way of knowing.

FUZIWINK  
Who sent this? Read the return  
address. My eyes are a blur.

DELIVERY PERSON  
(squinting)  
Mine too because it's a scribble.

FUZIWINK  
Read it!

DELIVERY PERSON  
It looks like - FARL-AND? FAL-RAD?  
F ALRAD? I don't know. Sign please.

FUZIWINK  
(mocking, signing)  
FA-LA-LA-LA-LA-LAND... What town?!  
You're no help at all!

DELIVERY PERSON  
Can't make it out.  
(looking at clipboard)  
Looks a little like your writing.  
I guess scribble is scribble.  
(lingering for a tip)

FUZIWINK  
I guess drivel - is drivel. Want a  
tip?

DELIVERY PERSON  
Well sir... I think I know how that  
joke goes.

FUZIWINK  
Open it for me. My hands are weak.

DELIVERY PERSON  
Mister, we're not supposed to\_\_

FUZIWINK

Open it! I'll tip you well.

DELIVERY PERSON

(looking around the shack)

Really?

(tearing the package open)

It's... some ornamental - key.

FUZIWINK

I knew it! It's an ornament! Hang it on the tree!

DELIVERY PERSON

Really? I have many deliveries.

Well - fine - there.

FUZIWINK

It sparkles like the stars above off the fireplace, doesn't it?

DELIVERY PERSON

(holding his hand out)

If you say so.

FUZIWINK

I'm too tired to get up. I'll give your tip from here: don't fall in love. Now get out!

The DELIVERY PERSON rolls his eyes and leaves. FUZIWINK remains seated at the table staring at the key glittering.

FUZIWINK (CONT'D)

(to the ceiling)

Whoever sent this, I love it. It's glittering.

(to the ceiling again)

Darla Look! It's glittering like the night sky. We have our tree! It's beautiful. It even has a present under it. I wish, I wish - you were here.

STORY ACTION

FADE OUT:

CONCURRENT

ACTION FLASHBACK

FADE IN:

EXT. TOWN SQUARE - DAY

The last flashback is rejoined where the young couple is in an embrace on the heels of the marriage proposal. DARLA lifts her cheek of David's shoulder and looks him in the eyes face to face while their arms still surround one and other. Both are smiling widely, entirely familiar and comfortable, but with great affection.

GRANT (V.O.)

He got his wish - see we all get  
that wish - it's not a wish  
really...people we love are always  
here with us - we just have to  
listen and let them speak - he'd  
begun to listen again.

DARLA

I'm here.

20 YR. OLD FUZIWINK

Yes you are.

DARLA

You're pretty sure of yourself Mr.  
Fuziwink.

20 YR. OLD FUZIWINK

I am, but I'm more sure of  
something else.

DARLA

And what might that be my love?

20 YR. OLD FUZIWINK

You... your love, and mine for you.

DARLA

Oh David - we've come a long way to  
here. Could I love you any more?

20 YR. OLD FUZIWINK

We have. And no, you couldn't love  
me anymore.

DARLA

We're funny - aren't we?

20 YR. OLD FUZIWINK

Not particularly.

DARLA

No silly - I mean, most couples meet later in life and have a torrid affair, and marry, and some, I think, never reach that height again. But we've been together for so long\_\_\_\_

20 YR. OLD FUZIWINK

We've been together so long we should be cooled down by now.

DARLA

But I've never loved you more.

20 YR. OLD FUZIWINK

You cannot tell a lie.

DARLA

(laughing a bit, pushing him away playfully)  
Hey lover, that's where you say "and I never loved you more" or something sweet and romantic - not reference George Washington. I haven't an axe, nor white wig.

20 YR. OLD FUZIWINK

(sarcastically, smiling)  
Maybe for the wedding.

DARLA

My real hair is prettier, and there aren't cherry trees in this town. Two strikes slugger.

20 YR. OLD FUZIWINK

(presidentially)  
It is I who cannot tell a lie...  
(turning serious, lovingly)  
I'm laid low by your beauty...and made blind in your luster.

She takes him in her arms.

DARLA

That's my David, clutch hitter - sure beats 'historical humor'  
(sensually)  
I am kinda shiny aren't I?

20 YR. OLD FUZIWINK  
Pretty sure of yourself Mrs.  
Fuziwink?

DARLA  
All that glitters is gold.

20 YR. OLD FUZIWINK  
I love you ... Mrs. Washington.

DARLA  
I love you Mr. President.

The couple laughs.

20 YR. OLD FUZIWINK  
I'm here.

DARLA  
Yes. Yes you are.

20 YR. OLD FUZIWINK  
Be with me always.

DARLA  
Nothing could take me away from  
you. Nothing. I think you are the  
sun, and I am Venus.

20 YR. OLD FUZIWINK  
Now it makes sense - you are the  
first and last star to appear in my  
sky. No wonder I fell for you.

DARLA  
No wonder. And who could shine  
brighter than you? I've a shining  
piece of you on my finger now  
darling. I have the sun and the  
moon and the stars - in my heart,  
on my hand, and in my arms. Oh  
David, I, I couldn't want another  
thing.

20 YR. OLD FUZIWINK  
Sure you could - and I can give it.

DARLA  
(sensually, moving closer  
to his lips)  
Or I could just help myself.

They kiss, but all too briefly. She pulls away coquettishly.

20 YR. OLD FUZIWINK  
 (sweetly)  
 My favorite singing partner needs  
 to hold that note longer. I think  
 we're officially in rehearsal.

DARLA  
 David I'm so happy.

20 YR. OLD FUZIWINK  
 Me too.  
 (playfully)  
 Now let's get that part of the duet  
 a little tighter.

DARLA  
 We are officially in rehearsals!

20 YR.  
 I see that the most beautiful  
 presents are beautifully wrapped -  
 and not easily opened.

DARLA  
 (breaking away from him)  
 I cannot tell a lie.

CONCURRENT  
 ACTION FLASHBACK  
 FADE OUT:

STORY ACTION  
 FADE IN:

INT. FUZIWINK'S SHACK - MORNING

FUZIWINK  
 Damn you to hell... who ever did  
 this...I lost her - isn't that  
 settling the tab enough? I thought  
 it was forever. She's not here.  
 That's my forever. I, I think she  
 left the country. I looked. I must  
 have gone mad. Forgiveness? Things  
 like that don't happen to me.

FUZIWINK gets up and shuffles to the tree and picks up the  
 box. He shakes it but there is no sound or way to open it. A  
 CLICK is heard and a small plate pops open on the front.

FUZIWINK (CONT'D)  
 A hidden keyhole?

FUZIWINK looks at the key on the tree and then the box.

SONG "WOULDN'T BE - COULDN'T BE".

CONCURRENT  
ACTION FLASHBACK  
FADE IN:

EXT. TOWN SQUARE - DAY

PEOPLE are gathering looking sullen with apprehension. The men are holding little pieces of paper and occasionally looking at them. 20 YR. OLD FUZIWINK and DARLA are arm in arm. She is encouraging him with a rub to his back. He looks at her with blank expressions and forced smile. As The song progresses, a MAN IN UNIFORM appears and the TOWNSPEOPLE part for his entry and then follow him to a wall and gathering around. He posts a notice on the wall. Some men and women leave excitedly, while some, reading the post, hang their heads. DARLA and 20 YR. OLD FUZIWINK make their way to the post. As they do, nearing the end of the song, a TIGHT SPOTLIGHT illuminates the post areas hidden sign which reads "DRAFT LOTTERY".

At the songs culmination, FUZIWINK, in the present, the old man, puts the key in the hidden hole, as 20 YR. OLD FUZIWINK is holding his paper up to the post comparing numbers, so that both at the same instant are singing: "It just couldn't be, wouldn't be, shouldn't be ... . But it is!"

FUZIWINK'S BOX OPENS at the same moment 20 YR. OLD FUZIWINK realizes his number has come up to leave for war - the younger FUZIWINK hangs his head - DARLA stares at the post.

CONCURRENT  
ACTION FLASHBACK  
FADE OUT:

FUZIWINK

I knew it'd be empty. But... I was wrong.

Grabbing a handful of the contents, and letting them cascade from in front of his face back into the box as he loosens his grip, they sparkle wildly as they fall from his hand.

FUZIWINK (CONT'D)

Diamonds Hundreds of them,  
thousands!

(to the ceiling)

Darla! Look! Like the stars falling  
from the sky!

(MORE)

FUZIWINK (CONT'D)

Everything I ever wanted has become mine. I can have everything!

GRANT (V.O.)

And so it was. How it was? You be the judge.

EXT. TOWN SQUARE - DAY

FUZIWINK has just exited the bank and is carrying a large money bag. He takes a large breath of the winter air and exhales while stuffing the contents of the bag into every available pocket.

GRANT (V.O.)

He had a large bag full of large bills. More than his entire life's earnings. And, he had forty-nine more bags inside the bank.

PETEEY AND GRACIE (V.O.)

Fifty bags of money! / This is getting good! / Wow! / Toys !

FUZIWINK

I am... rich.

(straightening his back)

No, I'm a man of means.

FUZIWINK looks at his shoes and his straight back slumps becoming aware of his disheveled appearance.

FUZIWINK (CONT'D)

But I look like a bum.

Appearances... I've heard clothes make the man. So I'll make me first - work first - than play.

After all, I should look the part. I, am the richest man in town, in the county, in the... I... I am a man of means... it seems... that I am a man of means - extreme! This all means that I am a man of extreme means, it seems.

He begins to sing:

SONG "A MAN OF MEANS"

The scene action follows the lyric: FUZIWINK walks past several businesses that pertain to certain wants he will now satisfy.

The first shop is a HABERDASHER and after he sings the verse pertaining to clothing he enters and the music continues for a time allowing him to change clothing. He emerges in a three-piece suit with gold vest and shiny silk tie, glittering cufflinks, a black top hat, and carrying a diamond encrusted cane to assist his weak legs. The outfit is reminiscent of the turn of the century industrial barons - the Monopoly character. As he walks and sings, he passes street vendors, buying from them and acting out various parts of the sung verses. He will enter a store and immediately emerge with gifts given to himself, his arms filling, so that by the end of the song, he's had to pay someone to carry the things he no longer can. The song culminates in front of the restaurant he's been smelling for years and unable to attend. He will enter for his massive meal upon the last line of music of ACT 1. The song is incomplete here and will be rejoined as ACT 2 opens at this point.

Coming out of the bank...

## ACT II

The music plays as before to set the joyous holiday tone similar to an overture, though it is somewhat stripped down. As the curtain is raised, it comes in with full orchestration and FUZIWINK is seen as he was at the end of ACT 1. He sings at the chorus "Tra-La-La" to bring us back in and culminates at "I'm a man, a most glorious man, a .....man of means!" He enters the restaurant as the music continues. It has a marked change as lights slowly dim to show the passage into evening. FUZIWINK emerges with visibly swollen stomach looking ill. He sings the new section about not achieving satisfaction. He sings the final attempt to regain the excitement of the pre-meal verses but falls short - the music this time is a shadow of what it was. He will utter the final lines of the scene regarding sleep and a warm bath and reflect that he will finally settle in by morning.

EXT. HOTEL - MORNING

The next morning FUZIWINK emerges from the town's most glamorous hotel. He lifts his glittering cane to smell his hand.

FUZIWINK

I'm clean and have never smelled so fine. I've eaten and slept but I still don't feel right. What is this feeling? Maybe I have to 'work first' so I can play, but what work is to be done?

Some GIDDY CHILDREN running by stop at FUZIWINK.

CHILD GOING TO THE PARK  
 Hey look guys! It's the real  
 monopoly man! Come on Monopoly guy,  
 were going to the park!  
 (grabbing FUZIWINK'S coat  
 tail and pulling it)  
 We'll play a real life board  
 game\_\_\_\_\_

The action FREEZES when the BOY tugs at FUZIWINK'S jacket.

CONCURRENT  
 ACTION FLASHBACK  
 FADE IN:

INT. ELDERBERRY HOME FOR CHILDREN - DAY

13 YR. OLD DARLA is in her wheel chair. DAVID is looking out  
 the window by her. A GROUP OF CHILDREN run in and stop.

ELDERBERRY CHILD  
 (tugging at DAVID'S shirt  
 tail)  
 Come on! The rainy season is over,  
 at least for today! Ms. Carol is  
 taking us all on a field trip to  
 the park!

13 YR. OLD DARLA, excited for DAVID, motions for him to join  
 the kids, instead DAVID leaves the window and sits by her.

13 YR. OLD DAVID  
 We're playing some board games.  
 (to 13 YR. OLD DARLA)  
 When you get out of that chair, you  
 and I - we - are going to the park.  
 (smiling)  
 And I want to go so keep trying!

CONCURRENT  
 ACTION FLASHBACK  
 FADE OUT:

Agitated at being tugged at, and remembering, confused, as if  
 still in both the flashback and present, FUZIWINK pulls his  
 coat away from the CHILD.

FUZIWINK  
 No. I'm staying here to play some  
 board games.

CHILD GOING TO THE PARK  
 Play em? Mister you are the board  
 game!

The laughing CHILDREN continue on to the park.

FUZIWINK  
 (to himself)  
 It must be all the changes. They  
 are knocking things loose in my  
 mind - and I don't like it. The  
 park - I can now have everything.

GRACIE (V.O.)  
 I think he bought everything!

PETHEY (V.O.)  
 Didn't buy an elephant - I'd buy an  
 elephant.

BOOKSTORE MOTHER (V.O.)  
 Shhhh!

FUZIWINK  
 The park - Darla did walk, and we  
 did go. I can have everything? No -  
 not true. The park - maybe I'll go  
 there - maybe that will make me  
 feel better.

EXT. PARK - DAY

Fuziwink is sitting in the park away from everyone else.

FUZIWINK  
 Now what? I don't feel better,  
 worse actually: my feet hurt.

PETHEY (V.O.)  
 Mommy, my butt's starting to hurt.

BOOKSTORE MOTHER (V.O.)  
 Shhhh! Walk around a bit.

BUS PASSENGER 1  
 Oh boy, I think this is the part we  
 fought about before - I mean the  
 park thing - not the butt thing.

BUS PASSENGER 2  
 Be quiet.

FUZIWINK takes his shoe off and rubs his foot.

FUZIWINK (CONT'D)

You think for all the money these shoes cost... Well, they are getting a lot of use - they'll need new heels soon. I'll just buy new ones! For Pete's sake - new heels and soles... That's funny... Music. I've remembered a song lyric all of a sudden:

**SCRIPT NOTE: During this scene's remaining sequences of soliloquy, remembered actions fade in/out on the other part of the stage. No dialog occurs there. They are silent unless direction for sounds are given.**

CONCURRENT  
ACTION FLASHBACK  
FADE IN:

EXT. TOWN SQUARE - DAY

20 YR. OLD DAVID & DARLA are moving away from a group around an area selling Christmas Wreaths. They are all singing. Darla carries a wreath they've just bought. THEY ARE NOT HEARD.

FUZIWINK (FROM PRESENT ACTION)

(looking at the bottom of  
the shoe seriously)

"We've been together so long - we both need to be re-soled"... or was that a play on s-o-u-l souled? It's good, really good either way. Some things are good either way. What about Fuziwink? - good either way? Rich or poor - old or young... with... or without.

He rubs his brow aggressively. He continues to, almost hiding his face as he says:

FUZIWINK (CONT'D)

She made it here... I keep loosing her in my thoughts. I'm focusing on shoes. Maybe I'm focusing on heels. Dammit - she was here in my life and I... 'forgot' her? You expect me to believe that?! - what a heel.

He stops himself.

FROM CONCURRENT FLASHBACK: 20 YR. OLD FUZIWINK is acting amorous, continually trying to kiss her as they are moving away from the wreath stand, but DARLA is flirtatiously and coquettishly pulling away smiling.

FUZIWINK (CONT'D)  
 (composed)  
 She was here. In this park. She was  
 HERE. What the hell kind of man  
 forgets about his wife

FROM CONCURRENT FLASHBACK: DARLA coquettishly breaks away from DAVID, running away with their wreath which he is trying to grab from her. She is darting around and behind areas of the town square.

FUZIWINK (CONT'D)  
 What the hell kind of man can't  
 remember what happened?! Damn you!

He is sitting quietly when he suddenly slams the heel of his right clinched fist into his left breast.

FUZIWINK (CONT'D)  
 (aggressively)  
 Be careful old man, you'll wrinkle  
 your new gold vest.

He looks at the diamond cane's tip. He places the cane behind his head on his shoulders and drapes each wrist over it's exposed ends.

FUZIWINK (CONT'D)  
 (depressed, chin to his  
 chest)  
 What the hell kind of man can't  
 remember what happened... just one  
 big empty canvas with wrinkled  
 hands. I'm sick for God's sake. I'm  
 all hung up...  
 (skyward  
 Why do I forsake me?

FROM CONCURRENT ACTION FLASHBACK: DARLA coquettishly breaks away from DAVID, running away with their wreath which he is trying to grab from her. She is darting around and behind areas of the town square.

He sits silently like this for a few moments and then takes the cane from his shoulders and lays it on the bench. He then angrily takes both shoes off and throws them.

FUZIWINK (CONT'D)

God Dammed coward! You need to get your feet on the ground. You need to feel the earth under you. What happened to you Darla? Why did you leave me? Why? Was I crazy and you left me? Did I do something awe...

DAVID finally catches her by the arm without the wreath, while DARLA playfully struggles at being caught which takes on an eerie significance as he considers if he abused her.

He takes his socks off quickly and starts rubbing his bare feet into the loose dirt surrounding the park bench as if they were on fire.

FUZIWINK (CONT'D)

(frantically)

Get your feet on the ground you bastard and remember what you did! I need to feel the earth. What did I do?! Why can't I remember everything!

FROM CONCURRENT ACTION FLASHBACK: DARLA, caught and playfully struggling, takes the wreath, seemingly to strike him, and slips it over his head around his neck effectively capturing him - she then CLIMBS UP INSIDE IT'S CENTER WITH HIM FACE TO FACE, the wreath around both their necks - they kiss slowly.

CONCURRENT  
ACTION FLASHBACK  
FADE OUT:

IN PRESENT ACTION - OLD FUZIWINK abruptly stops. He stretches his legs out to look at his now dirty feet.

FUZIWINK (CONT'D)

(considering)

No... That's crazy.

(smiling, nearing tears)

I loved her. We were so happy.

(genuinely)

I need help. I'll go to a doctor.

Tomorrow. Tomorrow I'll get help.

He gently rubs the earth with his feet as a touchstone.

FUZIWINK (CONT'D)

(genuinely)

Oh god, it's good to feel the earth again. Why must we wear shoes? What if I wear out my feet? Maybe I can get re-souled.

(MORE)

FUZIWINK (CONT'D)

The trouble is people don't go barefoot enough... but worse... we cover our eyes, and our ears.

He stops moving his feet and sits quietly with his eyes closed.

FUZIWINK (CONT'D)

I used to feel you Lord... I used to feel - singing is - feeling. I've started again. This old man can.

He rises, eyes closed, and steps from the dirt area of the park bench into the grass just beyond.

FUZIWINK (CONT'D)

Ooh... it's cool, so soft, like, like a child's hair.

He sits down begins touching the grass with his hands.

CONCURRENT  
ACTION FLASHBACK  
FADE IN:

EXT. PARK - DAY

An area of the grass nearby illuminates. 13 YR. OLD DAVID and 13 YR. DARLA are sitting Indian style laughing. They are feeling the grass with their hands. Darla pinches a blade and ceremoniously puts it to her lips without words, she waits for her friend to follow her and do the same. She tastes it. He does the same. In the CURRENT ACTION AREA OLD FUZIWINK is also doing the same.

CONCURRENT  
ACTION FLASHBACK  
FADE OUT:

FUZIWINK

I'm not sure. But I think she was never in my shack. I feel that. I am sure that she... we... were here as children... we were in this grass playing... being... oh dear God... I'm listening. I love you Darla... I've faith in that.

Both hands in the grass, barefooted, he lowers his head.

FUZIWINK (CONT'D)

Faith - you take the 'I' out of  
faith and it becomes - a four  
letter word.

SCRIPT NOTE: Here, TWO (2) CONCURRENT ACTIONS will occur, (1) will be a flashback to Elderberry times and the other, (2) will NOT BE A FLASHBACK, but a glimpse into action occurring after DARLA saw DAVID off at the train - SHE is wearing the same clothes as then to emphasize - alone now - she sought refuge in this park and although not a flashback to FUZIWINK, he will "feel'her presence transcend through her dialog, song and actions....this is a memory they BOTH are experiencing of Elderberry together in the same place but in different times...

(ELDERBERRY)  
CONCURRENT  
ACTION FLASHBACK  
FADE IN:

INT. ELDERBERRY HOME FOR CHILDREN - DAY

DAVID will be remembering a scene (without words or sound) where the group of children has taken a ball from a weaker child and is tossing it amongst themselves keeping it from the boy. 13 YR. OLD DAVID is NOT participating, off to the side with 13 YR. DARLA who is in her wheelchair. DAVID is attempting to fix it's wheel. The action unfolds interspersed within the actions of ADULT DARLA's walk in this park (after saying goodbye to him at the train) detailed below - the Elderberry actions appear underlined.

2ND  
(2) CONCURRENT  
ACTION -DARLA  
PARK WALK ACTION  
FADE IN:

EXT. PARK - DAY

Alone, DARLA is walking in the park smiling. She is wearing the same clothes she wore when she saw him off to the train the last time.

DARLA

He's gone. Where do I go? What do I  
do? I always could talk to him. He  
was always there. Now we've got an  
ocean - of silence between us.

( hopefully)

I'll write him letters, beautiful  
letters,

13 YR. OLD DAVID leaves the wheelchair and DARLA and walks past the raucous teasing children.

DARLA (CONT'D)

(dejected  
and they'll wait a month to find  
him. Maybe he'll be able to write  
back. 2 Months between hellos.  
Perhaps... forever... perhaps today  
was our last - he can't hear me  
from now on. It's like my thoughts  
are translated into foreign  
language... or birdsong.

13 YR. OLD DAVID, quietly, detached, reaches into a TOY CHEST and grabs a ball. Walking back towards 13 YR. DARLA, passing the teased child, he grabs him by the arm and brings him with.

DARLA (CONT'D)

(skyward, as if try to  
convince the sky, and  
herself)  
I do. Really... I...

13 YR. OLD DAVID hands the boy, denied his ball, this surrogate new ball and motions to toss it to 13 YR. DARLA in the chair since she is unable to play.

DARLA (CONT'D)

(significantly)  
I... do. Those are marriage words.

13 YR. OLD DAVID, appearing detached from all action, as if focused on the wheel problem solely through this but acting subconsciously to assist both children, squats down and returns to his intended repair.

DARLA (CONT'D)

He can't hear me now, no matter if  
I shout at the top of my lungs,  
from the highest place...  
(hopefully, again)  
but birdsong. He can feel me. I  
just know it.  
(with resolution and  
confidence)  
I do...

(ELDERBERRY)  
CONCURRENT  
ACTION FLASHBACK  
FADE OUT:

DARLA (CONT'D)

(skyward again)

David? David - you listen for me.  
Do you hear me Mr. Fuziwink? You  
listen for me. That is our  
'letters' between. You'll read me -  
You'll read my letters in the sky.  
You'll hear my songs in rustling of  
the leaves on the wind where you  
are. You'll taste me in the grass -  
I know you will. I've faith in  
forever.

CONCURRENT  
ACTION FLASHBACK  
FADE OUT:

FUZIWINK

I can taste the clouds. I love you  
Darla. I did and always will. But  
you knew that.

He stands from the grass and begins to put his socks and  
shoes on.

FUZIWINK (CONT'D)

Adults wear shoes. We need to. We  
also need to remember to take them  
off and walk in the grass more  
often. The trouble with adults is  
that some play - just to remember,  
and some play - just to forget.  
Children, yet to live those years  
between, play... just to play.

FUZIWINK watches CHILDREN playing in the park. A slight smile  
is on his face.

FUZIWINK (CONT'D)

I can't seem to play, somethings in  
the way. I remember something:  
(sung)  
When you walk a path (beat) but  
somethings in the way... .

CONCURRENT  
ACTION FLASHBACK  
FADE IN:

INT. ELDERBERRY HOME FOR CHILDREN - DAY

MS. CAROL sings the beginning to the:

PARTIAL SONG - "WORK FIRST"

and FUZIWINK concurrently duets in portions. The song is cut short by yelling heard in FUZIWINK'S present time frame.

CONCURRENT  
ACTION FLASHBACK  
FADE OUT:

Yelling breaks the reverie. A POLICEMAN has cornered a young homeless BOY, against an area of fence by two picnic tables. The BOY is animalistic, dirty, with tattered clothes and matted long hair covering his face. The BOY has food in his hands that he's stolen off the tables. Now trapped, the boy acts like a caged animal. Sensing his imminent capture and looking for a way out, the BOY hurriedly begins stuffing food into his mouth. Worried mothers are screaming and sheltering their well dressed CHILDREN.

POLICEMAN  
Steady everyone! Nobody move.  
(pulling his billy club  
from his belt - holding  
it forward like a gun)  
We don't want anyone to get hurt  
here.

CONCURRENT  
ACTION FLASHBACK  
FADE IN:

## INT. ELDERBERRY HOME FOR CHILDREN - DAY

Young DAVID is cornered like a trapped animal near two high open windows. A POLICEMAN, standing with some Elderberry officials and caretakers, stands with his hands held palms forward as if ready to intercept a quickly moving object. MS. CAROL is with them in tears.

MS. CAROL  
(crying)  
David stop - don't move!  
(to the POLICEMAN)  
He just wants to leave and find  
where he came from. He just wants  
to go home. I can deal with this.  
You can leave now!

POLICEMAN  
Can't let the boy hurt himself -  
cant keep running off - he might  
jump - he's all mixed up.

13 YR. OLD DAVID  
I want to leave! Let me out of  
here! I don't belong here!

CONCURRENT  
ACTION FLASHBACK  
FADE OUT:

WOMAN IN THE PARK  
That's the animal! What is it!?  
*It's* been stealing our food - THAT  
ANIMAL IS NOT SAFE!

POLICEMAN  
(to the trapped BOY)  
Where are your parents boy? You  
just sit down there. Nobody's gonna  
hurt you. Can't you answer boy? DO -  
YOU - SPEAK - ENGLISH - ENG-LISH?

The BOY begins pulling frantically at the fence.

POLICEMAN (CONT'D)  
I'm not gonna hurt you boy - unless  
you make me. Just sit down.

As the POLICEMAN approaches, the BOY frantically shakes the  
fence and finds a loose portion and begins attempting to  
squeeze through it.

POLICEMAN (CONT'D)  
Stop it. You're gonna get hurt boy.  
That's sharp metal! Stop it!

The POLICEMAN begins to move quickly towards the BOY who  
pulls himself through the opening but snags his leg on the  
jagged chain links. His leg is obviously caught and causing  
great pain, yet the BOY endures even more by ripping it free.  
The BOY winces and hobbles away into the dense brush on the  
other side of the fence.

POLICEMAN (CONT'D)  
You don't come around here again  
boy! You hear me! I'm looking for  
you. We are all looking for you!

EXT. PARK - DUSK

FUZIWINK is carrying a large sack in the now deserted park.  
He approaches the picnic tables where the BOY and policeman  
confrontation occurred. FUZIWINK begins pulling out place  
settings for two, setting the table on the park bench and  
unloading foods and fruits.

The BOY can be seen in the bushes. FUZIWINK knows the BOY is watching and pretends to be oblivious. When done setting the table FUZIWINK sits down and spreads a napkin on his lap.

FUZIWINK

Well let me see what we've got here: chicken salad, grapes, strawberries. We've got salami. We've got cheese.

The BOY is seen sneaking about BEHIND where FUZIWINK sits.

FUZIWINK (CONT'D)

I have so much food and the table is set for two. I'm here. Where are you?

Quietly, the BOY grabs a large straight BRANCH the size of a baseball bat.

FUZIWINK (CONT'D)

(looking forward)

Me... it's been many years since I've been to dinner with someone else. It's been a big change for me - good food. It's all new child. I know you are here somewhere. I am talking to you. I am inviting you to be my first guest - join me.

The BOY begins moving toward FUZIWINK, positioning himself to stay directly behind him to avoid detection.

FUZIWINK (CONT'D)

(calling off into the bushes in front of him)

Child! My name is FUZIWINK and I am a hungry man. I've set a place - for you. Join me... please.

The BOY slowly raises the BRANCH behind FUZIWINK and readies to deliver a forceful blow to the old man's head. FUZIWINK becomes aware of the presence behind him, hearing a small movement of the BOY'S feet on the twigs, but does not turn around.

FUZIWINK (CONT'D)

(calling off forward, but aware the BOY is behind)

My child. There is more here than two men could ever eat. There is even enough to eat for tomorrow and the next day too. Join me.

The BOY coils the branch fully above his head. As he starts the motion towards FUZIWINK'S head, FUZIWINK hears the movement and instinctively spins, intercepting the branch with his hand just before his face, and while continuing his motion of turning, rips the branch from the BOY'S hand. The momentum leaves FUZIWINK in a posture of coil, with the branch now in his hand, as if a tennis player after shot. The BOY sees the large man with the branch now above *his* head. FUZIWINK'S momentum of interception causes a pose indicative of an imminent counter strike - but it is an unintended posture. The BOY, not aware of anything other than violence begetting the same - and cruelty, striking - immediately collapses to the ground on his knees putting his hands over his head to protect himself.

FUZIWINK, not visible to the BOY now, looks sickened and very gently and slowly leans down to tenderly kiss the BOY'S head. The BOY startles almost as if hit, expecting such; confused, he looks up at the old man.

FUZIWINK (CONT'D)  
 (tenderly, affected)  
 Oh my dear son. I suddenly know all  
 there is to know about a boy.

The BOY runs off into the safety of the bushes, but he can be seen watching. FUZIWINK sits down to the table.

FUZIWINK (CONT'D)  
 (peacefully - to the BOY)  
 Now we know each other, whether you  
 speak my language or not. And if  
 you do, understand these simple  
 words: join me for a meal. And if  
 you don't: then good God let the  
 boy see a tired old man eat and  
 offer. Let your child be full. Dear  
 God, have mercy on the boy.

The BOY slowly comes to eventually sit opposite FUZIWINK. He reaches quickly for some food but FUZIWINK stops him gently. Without saying anything, FUZIWINK motions to the BOY to mimic him as he places his palms together.

FUZIWINK (CONT'D)  
 God, thank you for this meal. Thank  
 you for the gift of life in the  
 face of what we do wrong. Amen.  
 Lets eat!!

The BOY gobbles handfuls of food.

FUZIWINK (CONT'D)

Easy child. It will be here. There is no rush. Take it in and chew it. Taste it. You won't be hungry again.

FUZIWINK gets up during the meal. The BOY watches him, still placing various items of the buffet in his mouth, attempting to slow his tempo. FUZIWINK picks up the large branch. The BOY stops eating watching him now with worry. FUZIWINK slowly brings it into similar coiled position as before as if to strike something, but this time releases it full force hurling it high into the bushes.

FUZIWINK (CONT'D)

(towards he thicket)

Troubles... be gone!

(quietly to the BOY)

Child... can you speak?

The BOY shakes his head in the negative.

FUZIWINK (CONT'D)

Well, your response tells me you understand what I say. And now, we know each other even more... Sticks were once living things. Some of us insist on forging them into the clubs of war. And some of us, insist on casting those away. Young man, be a caster. Someone once taught me...

CONCURRENT  
ACTION FLASHBACK  
FADE IN:

MS. CAROL is standing before a table where a group of Elderberry CHILDREN are seated. Before each of them is a pile of branches.

MS. CAROL

Children, the holiday season is upon us. Today we will make wreaths. You see, a branch was a living thing once. We, people, have the power to fashion them into the handles of weapons, or tools, or other things - beautiful things - things that remind us - of other beautiful things. Today you will learn how, and learn the song passed down to me, so you may pass it along.

MS. CAROL begins to sing:

SONG - "THE WREATH SONG"

While she sings, FUZIWINK is absorbed in the memory repeating her actions in the present moment showing the BOY how to fashion the pattern. FUZIWINK will begin singing in DUET.

CONCURRENT  
ACTION FLASHBACK  
FADE OUT:

At the song's conclusion, the BOY holds up the wreath he has fashioned in front of him to present it to FUZIWINK who does the same with his sample wreath, so that, both have the two circles between them, through which FUZIWINK places his one arm, penetrating both, to offer his hand in friendship to the BOY who accepts his hand in a shake bounded by the wreaths.

FUZIWINK

There is much blood on your pants.  
Your leg has been cut badly.

The BOY shakes his head mildly in the negative.

FUZIWINK (CONT'D)

Let's go to the doctor now.

The BOY violently shakes his head in protest. FUZIWINK kneels before him. The BOY rises and makes a pose of the a man holding a gun with both hands outstretched before him in defensive aim as the policeman had held the club.

FUZIWINK (CONT'D)

I see. I also see how to fix this.  
They know you as a dirty boy in the  
woods. Cleaned up, they will know  
you not; they will know you as  
my...

The BOY places his hand next to FUZIWINK to emphasize the difference in the skin color.

FUZIWINK (CONT'D)

... as my relative. Who are they to  
say?! We need to get you cleaned up  
and then fixed up. See this large  
bag that carried our meal? I'll  
carry you into the hotel in it. No  
one will see you. You'll be a new  
man all cleaned up. We will start a  
new life in the morning - together.

FUZIWINK stands up before the BOY and picks up his jeweled CANE that is resting against the table.

FUZIWINK (CONT'D)

I needed this. You need it now until you are stronger. I suddenly feel... *a great deal stronger*. Look at the diamonds. They sparkle like the stars don't they? In the stars is opportunity. In *these* stars is your opportunity. This cane is worth enough to buy years at a university and a home thereafter.

(handing it to the BOY)

Here. It's become yours because you pulled yourself out of the thicket to a table set in your honor. Know that. Know you could run from me now and never again feel want because of this cane. The stars have fallen into your hands son.

The BOY jumps into FUZIWINK'S arms in a powerful affectionate embrace and then kisses him. FUZIWINK hugs the BOY and for the first time displays a wide beaming smile.

INT. HOTEL - NIGHT

FUZIWINK appears in the hotel lobby carrying the BOY concealed in the burlap bag. The cane can be seen in outline inside the bag. The BELL BOY and FRONT DESK WORKER hold their noses as if accosted by a terrible smell.

FUZIWINK

Gentleman quickly. I need a cart. This bag is very heavy.

FRONT DESK WORKER

Sir. Please. There are no animals allowed in the hotel.

FUZIWINK

My fine man, I assure you no animal is in this bag.

BELL BOY

Sure smells like one.

A well dressed couple walks by and grab their noses.

FRONT DESK WORKER  
Sir, please. There are other  
patrons and no animals are allowed  
in this hotel. You'll have to leave  
it outside.

INT. FUZIWINK'S SHACK - NIGHT

FUZIWINK is sitting at one end of the shack and the BOY  
opposite him at the far end.

FUZIWINK  
Sometimes people are fools. Child,  
I don't know your particular past  
and we are in close quarters now.  
See that crack in the floor? That  
is a line I will not cross. You  
have your space within this small  
space. You are safe. I want you to  
go to the wash room and scrub.  
Those people in the hotel were  
mistaken. I smell nothing. Go. Be  
clean son.

The BOY hears but is transfixed on the small shelf with a few  
books.

FUZIWINK (CONT'D)  
Can you read?

The BOY nods in a weak affirmative as if yes, but not well.

FUZIWINK (CONT'D)  
You ever had a book?

The BOY nods affirmative but looks sad.

FUZIWINK (CONT'D)  
(tenderly, significantly,  
to the BOY)  
Touch one - go on. Pull it down -  
smell it. They say 'don't judge a  
book by its cover' - I say  
'Whatever it takes.'

The boy chooses, fingers, and smells the book.

FUZIWINK (CONT'D)  
Tell you what - work first - clean  
up - and I'll read you a story.

The BOY immediately disappears to the washroom offstage and  
FUZIWINK can be seen building a fire.

FUZIWINK sings to himself, a capella, "THE WREATH SONG" while the BOY cleans offstage.

After a while, the BOY emerges from the washroom with a towel wrapped around his waist. His arms are crossed in front of his body, each palm holding on to the opposite upper arm, his long hair is now hanging, dripping on the floor, and obscuring his now cleaned face.

FUZIWINK (CONT'D)  
 You'll catch cold. Their are new shirts in there. We'll get you clothes after the doctor tomorrow morning. Why didn't you dress and dry?

The BOY stands quietly not moving but lets one arm fall to his side - the other remains as if concealing a tattoo.

FUZIWINK (CONT'D)  
 What is it ? You can show me.

The BOY shakes his head in the negative.

FUZIWINK (CONT'D)  
 Well it's still freezing in here. We need to switch sides over the line. You can come sit by the fire then.

The BOY shakes his head in the negative.

FUZIWINK (CONT'D)  
 Oh yes. I don't want you sick. You're soaking wet. Here I'll get it good and hot and we'll switch.

FUZIWINK grabs the POKER from the fireplace tool rack and begins poking at the logs. The BOY shakes the hair from his eyes and places his chin high, appearing affected, but FUZIWINK is focused upon renewing the flames.

FUZIWINK (CONT'D)  
 Yes. That's it. A cold night and blazing burning. Oh I feel the heat. Oh yes! It will dry those locks of yours quickly.

The BOY begins slightly shaking his head in the negative but FUZIWINK is unaware as he straightens up from the fire and removes the POKER which is smoking. He holds it up so that it is pointing towards the BOY, its end aglow in orange.

FUZIWINK (CONT'D)

Look at that! I got it good and hot  
- yes I did!

The BOY collapses to his knees removing his hand that was concealing. It reveals three parallel marks - scars - blackened boiled skin in a curved shape - a branding - the shape of the poker. FUZIWINK, who stands looking down the length of the POKER, see's at its end the same curve glowing that resides upon the BOY. FUZIWINK begins to tremble and immediately lowers the instrument of great past pains from its pointing - not sure what to do with it - not wanting to touch it any longer; hands shaking, body shaking, he looks around in revulsion, as if holding a rotting dead thing by accident, disgustingly casting it off towards the other tools by the mantle as if a child with hot potato. He removes his coat and throws it over the whole configuration to hide it from both their views in terror. Tears fill his eyes.

FUZIWINK (CONT'D)

(crying)

Oh my child! Oh my child! I know  
your particular past - my poor  
little soldier.

(moving frantically like a  
caged animal)

I'm... I'm crossing the line. I'm  
coming over there - child - child.

FUZIWINK rushes to the terrified BOY and picks him up in his arms.

FUZIWINK (CONT'D)

(skyward, angrily)

Darned animals! Who's the animal  
here!!(beat) Why slander the  
animals? Darned humans!! Animals  
don't know this cruelty, only us!  
Damn you! All of you monsters! Oh  
my child... oh my child.

(sobbing)

Troubles!!! Be Gone!!! Fuziwink is  
here. I'm here now.

EXT. TAILOR SHOP - MORNING

FUZIWINK is standing outside of the tailor shop, whistling, arms crossed, without his cane, waiting for the BOY to emerge from his makeover. The BOY exits in beautiful clothes hobbling on FUZIWINK'S cane. His HAIR, before matted, and then seen wet, is now dry and combed, blonde and long. His new HEAVY COAT is draped over his arm like an adult.

FUZIWINK

Well, well, well. Nobody would notice you ! You know how I know? Because I don't recognize you! Is it really you? You look good kid! And you know what? That makes me look good.

The BOY shakes his head in the affirmative. He is bashful yet proud of his appearance.

FUZIWINK (CONT'D)

What about the coat? Don't you like it?

The BOY shakes his head in agreement enthusiastically.

FUZIWINK (CONT'D)

I see - modeling the clothes are you? Well looking good! Now put your great coat on - it will keep you alive - you'll never be cold again. Probably your first real coat. Looks good! Warm?

The BOY is so happy smiling and rubbing his arms as if to communicate his warmth.

FUZIWINK (CONT'D)

Excellent, that... makes me warm. You are a good boy. Now *don't be outside without that jacket until the tulips peak out of the ground - promise? Until the tulips.*

The BOY nods in the affirmative.

FUZIWINK (CONT'D)

Well, well... now what? Food?

The BOY shakes his head no.

FUZIWINK (CONT'D)

Shopping? Toys!

The BOY shakes his head no.

FUZIWINK (CONT'D)

Okay, anything you want then. Anything.

The BOY grabs FUZIWINK'S hand and points over to the train station.

FUZIWINK (CONT'D)

You want to go somewhere?

The BOY shakes his head no, but points to his eyes and then the station.

FUZIWINK (CONT'D)

You've never seen a train up close?  
You want to see a train is all;  
that's all you want?

The BOY excitedly shakes his head. FUZIWINK is not enthusiastic.

FUZIWINK (CONT'D)

You've been unable to go into  
public and one thing you've wanted  
to do is see a train?

The BOY enthusiastically shakes his head yes and grabs FUZIWINK'S hand expecting to go, but FUZIWINK is apprehensive and fidgety.

FUZIWINK (CONT'D)

Uh, that's what you really want?  
Isn't there something else... Uh, a  
train ride would be better than the  
station. Lets get in a carriage and  
get on in the next town, yes that's  
it! A ride from the next station!

The BOY looks quizzically at the old man, putting his fingers to his eyes again and gently motioning at the station. He then begins leading FUZIWINK.

FUZIWINK (CONT'D)

I... I... lets go to the next  
town... child stop... please  
(shaken)  
Please child.

The BOY stops with great tenderness tilts his head to one side in a gesture of questioning.

FUZIWINK (CONT'D)

I can't go in.

The BOY tilts his head to the other side.

FUZIWINK (CONT'D)

I can't... explain... .I can't go.

The BOY begins leading him again but motioning with his hands in a gesture of 'move slowly' and putting his fingers close together to signal 'just near' or 'close perhaps'. FUZIWINK, not wanting to disappoint, struggles to move closer to the station, trying to explain as they inch closer.

EXT. TRAIN PLATFORM - DAY

FUZIWINK

I promised I wouldn't... you can go though... I'll walk with you, but you go in. I'll wait... take all the time you want - don't get too close now - be careful you hear? I'm sorry... I ... promised.

The BOY nods as they reach the gated entry. The BOY holds his hands upright and looks around at the town quickly, as if asking to 'whom' FUZIWINK owes this vow.

FUZIWINK (CONT'D)

Me. I promised, me... go.  
(smiling)  
Go and see they glorious big train.

A whistle blows.

FUZIWINK (CONT'D)

It's coming! Go - enjoy!

The BOY runs off and FUZIWINK stands before the gate.

FUZIWINK (CONT'D)

(to himself)  
I promised I would never lay a hand upon this gate again... I'm sorry child.

FUZIWINK notices that the BOY, in his excitement, has handed the cane to him and he really hadn't noticed.

FUZIWINK (CONT'D)

Must be feeling stronger too. Soon he won't need it at all. The young need strength. The young need the old to show them strength. The old sometimes - need it as much as the young - we all...

FUZIWINK looks at the cane. HE holds it up and looks at the gemstones. He looks at the gate.

FUZIWINK (CONT'D)  
 I promised I would not lay a hand  
 upon it.

He takes the cane and gently, as if about to defuse a bomb, delicately touches the end of the cane to the gate and pushes it open just a tiny bit.

MUSIC from the SONG "**MENDED HEARTS**" begins to sound. He pulls the cane immediately back and the gate shuts and silence follows. He looks skyward as if struggling to find strength to attempt again, as if the music itself causes a deep cutting inside. He puts the cane to the gate once more and pushes it so it moves a open a few inches open, more than the last, the MUSIC begins again - the gate finds its recoil point on a weak spring and closes and silence follows.

FUZIWINK (CONT'D)  
 (skyward)  
 Dar... Darla... I just can't.

FUZIWINK (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
 (as if remembering his own  
 words)  
 The young need strength. The young  
 need the old to show them...  
 strength.

With resolve he puts the end of the cane upon the gate but does not push. He takes a deep breath and slowly pushes it slightly ajar. The MUSIC begins again. He closes his eyes as if enduring pain stoically. Lighting changes on the platform.

CONCURRENT  
 ACTION FLASHBACK  
 FADE IN:

EXT. TRAIN PLATFORM - DAY

The lights on the platform reveal the end point of the opening scene where 20 YR. OLD FUZIWINK is standing in his last POSE, legs crossed, leaning against the vestibule, giving DARLA a thumbs up. DARLA is in her last seen position waving goodbye to him as he ships off to war. She begins to sing the song:

SONG - "**MENDED HEARTS**"

As she sings, the lights on 20 YR. OLD FUZIWINK go dark, signaling that the train is leaving as she waves acting that she is losing sight of him.

When the DUET portion between him and her begins, the lights come up on him - they are singing the same song, separated, thinking the same, feeling the same things, he moving far away and she watching him disappear from the station. During this, the old man FUZIWINK can be seen holding the gate open with his cane, trying not to look, nor listen, but enduring, tears welling up in his eyes. Upon the songs completion he lets the gate shut.

CONCURRENT  
ACTION FLASHBACK  
FADE OUT:

Having let the gate shut, FUZIWINK is drained and squats down crying. The BOY reappears, so happy from his first up close train viewing, only to find the old man broken down. The BOY bends over and KISSES the top of FUZIWINK'S head in loving symmetry. FUZIWINK looks up at him through his tears wiping them quickly, not ashamed, but in a show of recovery and strength. FUZIWINK picks him up in his arms and hugs him with great gratitude.

EXT. PARK - DAY

FUZIWINK and the BOY are sitting on a park bench eating a picnic. The BOY rises and twirls the cane.

FUZIWINK  
Don't need it anymore huh? It's  
turned into a toy.

The BOY smiles in agreement.

FUZIWINK (CONT'D)  
That's good, but that cane is your  
freedom son. It's truly yours. It's  
your college, your home... it's  
your future. I... I love you, but  
you... are not mine. You are free  
to leave anytime. I'll give you  
money and - well I want you to stay  
of course, but you obviously can  
handle yourself alone without  
resources, and with resources: you  
might be king!

The BOY sits down next to FUZIWINK and puts the cane down. There are a few poor families across the path that the BOY is fixated on. A man in religious clothes appears leading a large group of people past them into the park. The PEOPLE appear poor, dirty, tattered, yet upbeat, a few look at the BOY and FUZIWINK as they pass.

The BOY looks uncomfortable as a few of the young look not only at them, and their fine clothes, but also at their food. The people meet over across the path by the other poor families. All are upbeat.

The BOY motions to their food and then makes an offering motion with his hands to FUZIWINK.

FUZIWINK (CONT'D)

You are a good boy. I don't think there's nearly enough son.

The BOY picks up the cane and looks at FUZIWINK. HE rubs his own stomach and gives FUZIWINK a thumbs up gesture, then motions to the youngest in the congregation, giving FUZIWINK a thumbs down. He holds the cane up as if offering it to FUZIWINK, who, taken by the BOY'S magnitude of heart, rises as a proud man, beaming, and kisses the BOY.

FUZIWINK (CONT'D)

You do it. It's your idea... and it's your cane.

The BOY smiles and rushes off towards the elder man in charge and presents it to him.

FUZIWINK (CONT'D)

(to himself)

Who is this child dear Lord? Who gives away his future so easily - a boy marked by blackened skin, by the hand of a man - a boy so marked by shining gold heart - by the hand of his maker... Who's taught whom here? Who is in need of strength here? Who is this child Lord? I am not to be outdone. I am ready to step in line, behind this little man. Elderberry. The children. Christmas. What a fool I am I: so many in need, struggling, and all I wanted was presents for me. God bless this child and the others,

(skyward)

I'm at your service - forgive me.

(to the BOY)

Come along! We've got work to do.

The BOY returns.

FUZIWINK (CONT'D)

Son, I mean, I'm not worthy to call you that really, it's nearly Christmas.

(MORE)

FUZIWINK (CONT'D)

There is much to enjoy, but we've  
got work to do first.

(to himself)

More work than you could ever  
know...

(to the BOY)

We must work first - then play -  
the play is better than - anyway!

The music begins for another shortened version of SONG -  
"WORK FIRST"

CONCURRENT  
ACTION FLASHBACK  
FADE IN:

INT. ELDERBERRY HOME FOR CHILDREN - DAY

MS. CAROL is teaching young DAVID, YOUNG DARLA, and other CHILDREN, the song that FUZIWINK is now teaching the BOY. They are singing in DUET concurrently with old FUZIWINK. The song is just a shortened version that will appear later in it's totality.

CONCURRENT  
ACTION FLASHBACK  
FADE OUT:

EXT. TOWN SQUARE - DAY

FUZIWINK is seen with the BOY pulling a wagon loaded with presents. He is offering cash to some less fortunate men asking them to help carry the load. He is giving some various instructions and sending them off to procure more goods to take up the hill to Elderberry. The music from the CHORUS section of "WORK FIRST" is playing during the acquisition of manpower and presents.

INT. ELDERBERRY HOME FOR CHILDREN - DAY

Caretakers, MS. MCKEELS and MS. ANNA BRANYON, are tending to the needs of CHILDREN. In the room is also a quiet CURLY HAired BLONDE GIRL, CAMILLE, sitting alone. The atmosphere is somber and the tempo of all movements lacks enthusiasm. A knock is heard at the front door and MS. MCKEELS moves to answer it.

MS. MCKEELS

Who could be visiting us? People  
just don't show up at my door.

FUZIWINK  
Madam, Merry Christmas.

MS. MCKEELS  
Merry Christmas, sir.

FUZIWINK  
Allow me, my name is David  
Fuziwink. We've brought some things  
for the children to make their  
holiday a bit brighter. May we come  
in?

MS. MCKEELS  
Of course sir. I am Georgia  
McKeels, the head steward of  
Elderberry. Please come in.

The men helping FUZIWINK appear loaded down with gifts followed by the BOY who starts shuttling gifts inside from the cart. CHILDREN begin gathering and word spreads quickly that presents are at hand. MS. ANNA BRANYON approaches. A TROUBLED GIRL does not move from her place at the window seat. The room fills with excited talk and laughing, the noise level growing to the point that FUZIWINK must speak very loudly to MS. MCKEELS and his entourage.

FUZIWINK  
Stop men, child.  
(to MS. MCKEELS)  
Why don't they put the gifts  
directly under the tree?

MS. MCKEELS  
(to the ELDERBERRY  
CHILDREN)  
Children, this kind man is MR.  
FUZIWINK. He has brought things for  
you. What you must give him in  
return is your finest behavior. Now  
quiet down. Show the gentleman your  
respect.

(to FUZIWINK)  
Sir, I'm afraid we haven't a tree.  
This is an exceptionally hard year  
and we must tend first to the most  
important, neglecting the  
frivolities.

FUZIWINK  
Oh my, when a tree is a frivolity  
it would appear this old man has  
misjudged exactly what is needed  
here. No tree? No wreaths?

MS. MCKEELS

Wreaths?

FUZIWINK

Yes, like we made here, when I made them... as a boy... nothings changed - except we had more somehow.

(to the MEN and the BOY)

Gentleman, it looks as though we will be making one more trip back up the hill here before our work is through. Young man, please shuttle the gifts from the cart and pile them over there.

The BOY continues to pile the gifts in the room. He notices the TROUBLED GIRL sitting alone and pauses for an instant to look at her, and she stares back at him.

FUZIWINK (CONT'D)

(to MS. MCKEELS)

Madam, we will provide food and those things terribly important - amongst them a fine tree and wreaths.

MS. MCKEELS

Perhaps angels wear top hats these days fine sir! You, you say that your youth was here? What year would that have been sir?

Each load the BOY brings into the room, he and the TROUBLED GIRL lock eyes without expression. MS. ANNA BRANYON, standing very near where the pile is growing, notices the interaction.

FUZIWINK

Year? As if I had a sense of that kind of thing anymore. I remember (introspectively - with significance)  
Only particular things now - I've seemed to have lost much more than dates... lost good with the bad, but some things are so vivid, and some things, more things, are becoming so. Like my caretaker, MS. CAROL, a dear woman, a singer - a teacher.

MS. ANNA BRANYON takes notice upon the mentioning of the specific name. She approaches FUZIWINK.

MS. ANNA BRANYON  
 Sir, my name is ANNA, MS. ANNA  
 BRANYON. My mother sir, is CAROL  
 BRANYON - she was here before I.  
 Could it be?

FUZIWINK studies her face beaming. He cannot contain himself  
 and hugs her. The affection catches her off guard.

FUZIWINK  
 Oh dear woman! It is as though I am  
 young again looking into her face.  
 The finest person I ever knew! You,  
 my fine woman, surely are fruit  
 falling not far from that lovely  
 tree. Oh Anna! My beautiful Anna  
 Branyon. How lovely you are.  
 (to MS. MCKEELS)  
 Madam. I am taken back in this  
 room.

He walks over to her and embraces her lifting her feet off  
 the ground. MS. MCKEELS is startled.

MS. MCKEELS  
 (embarrassed)  
 Really Mr. Fuziwink. Oh my!

FUZIWINK  
 Oh yes! You madam are a lovely  
 woman also!

MS. MCKEELS  
 (blushing)  
 You are most inappropriate.

FUZIWINK  
 Yes - Merry Christmas to you!  
 (to the ELDERBERRY  
 CHILDREN)  
 To you too!

ELDERBERRY CHILDREN  
 Merry Christmas!

The BOY is standing quietly, oblivious to the cacophony  
 staring at the TROUBLED GIRL, who is doing the same. FUZIWINK  
 notices him.

FUZIWINK  
 (quietly to MS. MCKEELS  
 and MS. ANNA BRANYON)  
 I think the Young man has found  
 beauty in this room as well.

MS. ANNA BRANYON approaches the boy with outstretched hand.

MS. ANNA BRANYON  
Hi, my name is Ms. Anna. What is  
your name?

The BOY looks away from the girl to MS. ANNA with blank expression. MS. ANNA, is confused at the lack of response.

FUZIWINK  
(to MCKEELS)  
The poor can't speak. He's with me  
now.  
(to MCKEELS and MS. ANNA)  
Ladies, may I ask you to join our  
entourage to assist with the  
particulars in town? I would love  
to tell you all I could about what  
I remember during our walk, and  
that should make for more, and so  
on.

MS. MCKEELS  
My place is with the children sir.  
ANNA, please accompany the kind  
gentleman and assist him.

MS. ANNA BRANYON  
I'd be honored to assist him in  
whatever form, especially that one!  
Please tell me everything you could  
remember about my mother here! She  
had me much later in life. Please  
tell me stories.

FUZIWINK  
I will pull them out of this dark  
attic of mine; you deserve a fine  
gift along with the children.  
(to MCKEELS)  
Madame, what is your pleasure?

MS. MCKEELS  
It has already been given. Children  
say goodbye to MR. FUZIWINK for a  
while.

The ELDERBERRY CHILDREN erupt. FUZIWINK bows before them.

FUZIWINK  
Come along young man.

The BOY appears held in a powerful gravity, but gives the TROUBLED GIRL a last look and breaks himself free.

EXT. TOWN SQUARE - NIGHT

The BOY is walking with the MEN while FUZIWINK is lagging behind with MS. ANNA BRANYON. She is listening intently to his recollections, laughing, and asking questions. They stop in front of the train station stairs. FUZIWINK is happy, yet he appears stiff; the physical exertion is taking its toll.

FUZIWINK

(to the MEN)

Men, you've come a long way already  
yet I'll ask you for more. Here,  
(handing them each more  
money)

talk is cheap, accept my gratitude,  
and please decide to stick around  
and help get the final things up  
the hill before retiring to your  
own Christmas.

(to one of the MEN)

You, go buy some ornaments for the  
tree.

(to another MAN)

You, go buy warm things, blankets,  
scarves, gloves.

(to another MAN)

You, get rice, and oats, dried  
fruits - things that keep.

(to another MAN)

And you, go find some tools, an  
axe, flints, ... tools - think what  
they might need - then go get it.

(to another MAN)

You, go find a wreath for the front  
door, with big bells on it. It must  
have bells! I want a glorious, huge  
wreath with bells!

(to MS. ANNA, giving her a  
large sum of money)

MS. Branyon, you dear, get the  
grandest tree you can find so the  
kids can all have fun dressing it.  
Also, arrange for caterers to bring  
up the finest meal anyone at  
Elderberry has ever seen!

(to the remaining MEN)

You men, are the man power to carry  
the tree up for MS. ANNA. But don't  
forget, it's for the children.

(MORE)

FUZIWINK (CONT'D)

(To everyone)

Do this for them! Thank-You all!  
What a team we are! We'll meet back  
in one hour and finish this. Merry  
Christmas!

MS. ANNA BRANYON

And you? Are you okay?

FUZIWINK

Oh just a little tired... me - I've  
got one last matter to settle up at  
the bank. I'll see you in an hour.

MS. ANNA BRANYON

Sir, you've given me way too much  
money for the greatest tree and  
meal - a hundred times that. More.

FUZIWINK

Yes I have. Off with you. Merry  
Christmas.

The BOY doesn't move.

FUZIWINK (CONT'D)

Are you waiting for your own  
marching orders?

The BOY shakes his head 'no'.

FUZIWINK (CONT'D)

Well off with you. You're a man  
now. Go with the men and ANNA.  
Carry that tree son. You are my  
muscle... and a whole lot more.

The BOY doesn't move.

FUZIWINK (CONT'D)

Look... MS. CAROL, MS. ANNA'S mom,  
was about ANNA'S age when I knew  
her. She was like a mother. She  
looked after me, a boy of about the  
age you are right now. Do you see?  
It's a big old circle son: ride the  
merry-go-round. Go. I'll see you in  
an hour.. A day will come I may not  
be here. I'll be here. I promise.  
Go be with *her* - go!

The BOY runs after ANNA.

FUZIWINK (CONT'D)  
 (to himself, weary, now  
 alone and able show it)  
 Just a couple days ago I couldn't  
 get up the stairs to the attic.  
 I've climbed hills now, done a lot.  
 It's catching up with me. A lot is  
 catching up with me.

A group of CHILDREN GOING TO THE PARK come running by making  
 noise having fun. They stop in front of him.

LEADER OF RUNNING CHILDREN  
 Hey guys stop! Look. It's the real  
 life monopoly man again! He's back!  
 Hat, vest, it's him!

FUZIWINK  
 Sorry men, that character has a  
 long white mustache and I am clean  
 shaven, amongst other thing... .

LEADER OF RUNNING CHILDREN  
 Naw - doesn't matter - you're him!

FUZIWINK  
 I'm no more the Monopoly man than  
 you are monopoly game pieces, than  
 you are the 'thimble'... and you,  
 no more than you are the 'dog'.

The CHILDREN GOING TO THE PARK look at each other: one puts  
 his arms above his head in an arc and squats, the LEADER  
 pulls his arms near his chest as if a dog begging.

LEADER OF RUNNING CHILDREN  
 Ruff! Ruff!

They all laugh, FUZIWINK as well.

FUZIWINK  
 Fine. I'm him then. Here, I better  
 play the part.

FUZIWINK pulls out cash and gives each a generous amount.  
 They are in shock.

FUZIWINK (CONT'D)  
 Now dog and thimble, and whatever  
 you others are, off with you. Make  
 your families and friends Christmas  
 really special!

LEADER OF RUNNING CHILDREN  
 Wow! He's not the monopoly man  
 after all; he's Santa Clause!

FUZIWINK  
 Yes, a man of many suits. Now get  
 out of here. What are you doing  
 playing on Christmas Eve anyhow?

LEADER OF RUNNING CHILDREN  
 We're going to the square. It's a  
 party haven't you heard.

FUZIWINK begins to look distracted.

LEADER OF RUNNING CHILDREN (CONT'D)  
 There's a big Christmas dance.  
 Where you been? Come on! You're  
 coming too!

The CHILD grabs FUZIWINK'S coat tails and starts pulling at  
 him, tugging at him as the CHILD begins to dance.

LEADER OF RUNNING CHILDREN (CONT'D)  
 It's starting. Come with us!

The TEENS run off but FUZIWINK begins to have a flashback  
 which occurs in front of him as he watches.

CONCURRENT  
 ACTION FLASHBACK  
 FADE IN:

EXT. TRAIN STATION STEPS - DAY

20 YR. OLD FUZIWINK in military uniform is walking down the  
 train station steps, not carrying his duffle bag as before,  
 instead dragging it on the ground behind him. Old man  
 FUZIWINK watches his younger self descend. Old man FUZIWINK  
 covers his eyes, but struggles to watch. Old FUZIWINK sits on  
 the train stairs to watch.

The FLASHBACK TEENS run by and see the 20 YR. OLD FUZIWINK'S  
 uniform and stop.

LEADER OF FLASHBACK RUNNING TEENS  
 Hey guys look! An officer!

THEY stop in a line to proudly salute him. 20 YR. OLD  
 FUZIWINK is oblivious and continues shuffling down the steps.

LEADER OF FLASHBACK RUNNING TEENS  
(CONT'D)

Sir, haven't you heard? It's over!  
See over there? A celebration in  
the square! A party! It's over!  
Armistice!! Come with us sir!

They begin pulling at his uniform, tugging at him as if coaxing him to dance, but he is oblivious. They are shocked. The opening MINOR SUBDUED CHORDS TO "TROUBLES, BE GONE" SOUND, DEPRESSED - DEFLATED. The TEENS continue through the hedges where the town square is, the lights come up on to reveal a gathering of MEN, WOMEN, and CHILDREN. The MAJOR UPBEAT INTRO TO "TROUBLES, BE GONE" starts. Across the street, 20 YR. OLD FUZIWINK sits down on the stairs near the older version of himself and adopts the same posture - except his face stays buried in his hands.

SONG and DANCE ENSEMBLE - "TROUBLES, BE GONE!"

During the song, the stage dims where BOTH FUZIWINKS are sitting, so that after the song is done, the dance area of the stage goes black and the entire stage is dark.

CONCURRENT  
ACTION FLASHBACK  
FADE OUT:

EXT. TOWNS SQUARE BENCH ACROSS FROM TRAIN STEPS - NIGHT

FUZIWINK is seated on the bench, resting, waiting for the others to arrive after their tasks.

FUZIWINK

Been to the bank, my work is...  
done. I thought when the work is  
done the play is better. Not  
feeling too much play in me. How  
many dances can one man miss?

The others show up carrying the goods as instructed. The BOY runs to FUZIWINK and hugs him.

FUZIWINK (CONT'D)

Did you think for a second I  
wouldn't keep my promise? I'm here  
you see?

The BOY is smiling. He tugs at FUZIWINK to beckon him to go.

FUZIWINK (CONT'D)  
 Oh boy - don't do that!  
 (with humor)  
 I don't want to see that whole song  
 and dance again!

The BOY looks puzzled. FUZIWINK kisses him.

FUZIWINK (CONT'D)  
 Never mind.  
 (to everyone)  
 Thank-you all! Did we loose  
 anybody? No? You all have the  
 holiday season upon you. The  
 holiday season is upon us! Up the  
 hill now men. ANNA, come here.

The MEN begin moving towards ELDERBERRY and ANNA joins  
 FUZIWINK and the BOY.

FUZIWINK (CONT'D)  
 (to the BOY)  
 I didn't lie to you. I was here  
 waiting. A real man doesn't lie -  
 remember that. That's why...  
 (he takes the BOY'S face  
 in his hands)  
 I'm not gonna lie to you now: I  
 can't make it up the hill son. My  
 body is like an old candle, there  
 is only so much to burn.  
 (kissing him, then nodding  
 towards ANNA)  
 Behold the woman, your mother.  
 (to ANNA)  
 Woman, behold the son.  
 (to the BOY)  
 Go with her young man - it's time.  
 God I love you.

He moves to kiss the BOY but the BOY squirms away,  
 emphatically shaking his head, pointing at FUZIWINK and then  
 ANNA and then himself, motioning that they all go together.

FUZIWINK (CONT'D)  
 We all love each other... and we  
 all leave each other, eventually -  
 but the good news is: if we've done  
 it right - we're always together -  
 and we've done it right.

The BOY shakes his head no. ANNA comes behind the BOY to  
 support him.

MS. ANNA BRANYON  
Mr. FUZIWINK. We'll all stay  
together a while right here.

FUZIWINK  
People, people... it's Christmas  
Eve people. Up there, that's where  
you belong. They are waiting for  
you ANNA. Life is there. Your  
future is there young man. We know  
it... We'll always be together. You  
know it. You just can't see it:  
round wreath round - we're just  
about to make another loop. I watch  
this one though, with you still,  
but my legs can't spin the circle  
anymore - my heart can though -  
forever.

The BOY sits on the bench and shakes his head no.

FUZIWINK (CONT'D)  
Listen - oh... .  
(to ANNA)  
MS. BRANYON, you run along dear and  
catch the men before they get too  
far ahead. They need a band leader -  
that is your calling you lovely  
woman. Give me a kiss and go. The  
young man will follow soon - I'll  
see to it.

She kisses his cheek and runs away, tears in her eyes, but  
stoic, strong for the BOY.

FUZIWINK (CONT'D)  
She's running off alone into the  
dark. You son, should protect her.  
Oh... oh... I love you too.

They sit on the bench together quietly FUZIWINK looking a  
little more ill, but very content - peaceful.

FUZIWINK (CONT'D)  
You know what I want for Christmas?

The BOY excitedly shakes his head wanting to fulfill it.

FUZIWINK (CONT'D)  
A little duet - with you.

FUZIWINK begins singing the first verse of "THE WREATH SONG"  
but the BOY unable to sing - smiles and moves his hands like  
a conductor.

FUZIWINK (CONT'D)  
You sing beautifully!

They BOTH smile. The BOY makes a motion like receiving a gift from FUZIWINK.

FUZIWINK (CONT'D)  
What's that? You mean, do I know  
what YOU want for Christmas?

The BOY emphatically shakes his head affirmative.

FUZIWINK (CONT'D)  
I don't know - what?

The BOY gets up from the bench and points up to the train station taking FUZIWINK'S hand. FUZIWINK starts making the motions of a conductor with his hands. The BOY sits. They are quiet together.

FUZIWINK (CONT'D)  
Just a couple of stubborn old men.

The BOY nods yes.

FUZIWINK (CONT'D)  
You sing young man and I'll go  
through the gate up there.

The BOY looks sad - unable to.

FUZIWINK (CONT'D)  
You see - I can't either. Well... I  
told you I don't lie - and I just  
did, I guess. Shoot... It's not  
like I can't, like you - it's  
that... I don't... I don't want  
to. That's different. It's really  
different. Shoot. I love you so  
much. Oh God, I do.  
(hugging & kissing him)  
Do you know how much?

The BOY shakes his head no.

FUZIWINK (CONT'D)  
This much.

FUZIWINK gets up and takes the BOYS hand and leads him up the stairs to the gate. He pauses there, frightened but resolved, trying to leave the BOY with a memory of strength. He pushes the gate with his hand and the OPENING TO "NOW THAT IT'S OVER" STARTS. FUZIWINK recoils as if receiving an electric shock.

He has a startled sharp breath inward, as if plunging into icy water. He turns his head fully to one side and closes his eyes. After a moment. He moves his head forward, smiles at the BOY, raises his chin bravely and pushes open the gate forcefully and walks through to the train platform. NO MUSIC SOUNDS this time. He WINKS at the BOY. He assumes a military 'at attention' stance.

CONCURRENT  
ACTION FLASHBACK  
FADE IN:

EXT. TRAIN STATION - DAY

The lights come up on the platform revealing it is full of SERVICEMEN disembarking their train. A mad rush is ensuing as men rush to find their loved ones. Hugging and kissing can be seen everywhere. Once reunited, the couples, or families, leave through the gate spilling down the stairs into the square. OLD MAN FUZIWINK this time is actually interacting within the crowd pushing visages aside looking for his younger self. 20 YR. OLD FUZIWINK is seen pushing his way through the throng looking for DARLA. OLD MAN FUZIWINK finds himself in a position about 10 feet from himself, 20 YR. OLD FUZIWINK. It appears they both pause and are staring at one and other, but 20 YR. OLD FUZIWINK moves forward pushing OLD FUZIWINK out of the way. The crowd continues to thin until everyone has left through the gate except: old man FUZIWINK, the BOY, 20 YR. OLD FUZIWINK, a man in an officer's uniform.

MILITARY OFFICER EDWARDS  
Fuziwink? David Fuziwink?

Both the younger and older FUZIWINKS' acknowledge the man standing near side by side saluting him.

BOTH FUZIWINKS' CONCURRENTLY  
(militarily, saluting)  
Yes sir. Fuziwink here sir.

The man approaches.

MILITARY OFFICER EDWARDS  
(to 20 YR. OLD FUZIWINK)  
Mr. Fuziwink, my name is Edwards  
from communications.

FUZIWINK  
How did you know it was me?

The OFFICER looks around at an empty platform.

MILITARY OFFICER EDWARDS  
Mr. Fuziwink. There was a  
communication during your transit.

The OFFICER EDWARDS hands FUZIWINK an envelope. FUZIWINK opens and reads the contents. In shock, he looks to the OFFICER EDWARDS.

MILITARY OFFICER EDWARDS (CONT'D)  
I'm so very sorry.

20 YR. OLD FUZIWINK  
No... no... it's not true. I was  
shot at, almost killed a hundred  
times - I'm home now..and she's the  
one gone? NO! Where is she?  
Complications during a routine  
procedure? WHAT? Where is she!!!

MILITARY OFFICER EDWARDS  
I'm so very sorry.

FUZIWINK  
(skyward)  
Nooooooooooooooooo!! We had no time  
together.  
(to the officer)  
*You and your damned war!!*

He reaches out for the OFFICER EDWARDS and puts his hands on the mans throat. EDWARDS has to hit FUZIWINK in the stomach forcefully to release himself. FUZIWINK bends at the waste holding his stomach after the blow.

MILITARY OFFICER EDWARDS  
I understand Mister.  
(straightening his tie  
with dignity)  
I am so very sorry.

OFFICER EDWARDS departs. 20 YR. OLD FUZIWINK sings:

SONG - "NOW THAT IT'S OVER"

Nearing the end of the song, 20 YR. OLD FUZIWINK exits the station, dragging his duffle bag in quiet, disengaged shock, giving a special look at the gate, so that at the music's culmination, he is seen in the position where earlier the RUNNING CHILDREN tugged at him before the flashback song "Troubles, Be Gone". The BOY follows as old man FUZIWINK watches a group of TEENS tug at 20 YR. OLD FUZIWINK.

CONCURRENT  
ACTION FLASHBACK  
FADE OUT:

Old man FUZIWINK is trembling and begins to cough. The BOY helps him across the street to the now empty bench by the square. The BOY helps him to sit down.

FUZIWINK

What is wrong with me? I don't want  
to see what was. I want to enjoy -  
what is.

The BOY flexes his bicep on one arm and then points at FUZIWINK giving a thumbs up.

FUZIWINK (CONT'D)

Some kind of 'work first' - I see  
in theory. I am  
(coughing)  
hardly playing now.

It begins to SNOW.

FUZIWINK (CONT'D)

Well I can enjoy this... I love  
this town - as a poor man - as a  
rich man. You know, I love  
Elderberry too. It's where you  
belong young man... Are you ready  
to go up the hill?

The BOY looks sad.

FUZIWINK (CONT'D)

It's okay. You gotta know by now  
that I'm truly gonna be with you  
always. Funny those we love... are  
always with us - even if we try to  
suppress - make a change to forget-  
they are always there - like all we  
are capable of is a whitewash which  
always weathers away in time.

FUZIWINK holds the BOYS hand.

The row of merchant shops is adjacent to the square and bench. A POOR COUPLE with their little DAUGHTER emerge from the TOY SHOP. The little POOR GIRL WITH COUPLE is holding her Christmas present just purchased: a DOLL DRESSED IN WHITE.

FUZIWINK (CONT'D)

(to the BOY)

I'm so glad I found you - Merry Christmas son.

POOR GIRL WITH COUPLE

Look it's started snowing while we were inside! Mommy, daddy, I just love her! Thank-you for her... I think... I think I'll call her ... 'snowflake'.

Hearing this FUZIWINK drops to his knees and covers his face as the BOY did when he saw the hot poker. The BOY is startled and looks at the COUPLE, who is walking away, and then back at FUZIWINK, unsure what is happening.

CONCURRENT  
ACTION FLASHBACK  
FADE IN:

INT. FUZIWINK'S AND DARLA'S MARRIAGE HOME - CHRISTMAS EVE

This is a replay of the flashback from early in ACT I - with additional material FUZIWINK was then not yet ready to remember. The newlyweds, 20 YR. OLD FUZIWINK and DARLA, are standing before their Christmas Tree. SHINY GLITTERING ORNAMENTS catch the light; the tree is twinkling.

DARLA

Oh David! Our first Christmas as husband and wife, and our first Christmas tree. It's magnificent! It sparkles.

20 YR. OLD FUZIWINK

Sparkles like the stars above.

DARLA

You've captured the sky and brought it to our first Christmas!

20 YR. OLD FUZIWINK

Yes, I may have done just that. I've brought them inside our home for you.

... . . . NEW ACTION begins here

DARLA

Well I never was any good at keeping a secret. I've brought you something.

DARLA goes and retrieves a SMALL GIFT BOX from a hiding place and gives it to 20 YR. OLD FUZIWINK.

20 YR. OLD FUZIWINK

I thought we weren't exchanging gifts. Where did you find the money?

DARLA

Well I found it. Open it. I can't wait. It's something to take with you overseas... and think of me!

20 YR. OLD FUZIWINK

Well first, you pull up the corner of that tree skirt there and get yours then.

DARLA

I thought we weren't exchanging gifts!

20 YR. OLD FUZIWINK

I guess we are. Go on.

DARLA pulls up the tree skirt and recovers the PINK BOX WITH PINK RIBBON seen in ACT I. They stand before each other, gifts in hand.

DARLA

Merry Christmas sweetheart.

20 YR. OLD FUZIWINK

Merry first Christmas my bride. Shall we open?

DARLA

Oh David! It's the one we saw in the market! I love her!

20 YR. OLD FUZIWINK

And this watch will mark the hours until I'm home. Every time I see its face, I'll see your face. Good choice. Thank-you.

DARLA

Oh I feel a little stupid. We are poor and I am playing with a toy. It had to be expensive.

20 YR. OLD FUZIWINK

Not stupid at all - it's a place marker - a practice piece. It's... our first child.

DARLA

Oh David... hurry back you. The instant this silly war is through for us we'll make our family. We'll give them everything we've wanted David - a real life with parents. We will make up for whatever happened to us.

20 YR. OLD FUZIWINK takes her in his arms. The DOLL is cradled between them like a baby. The three stand there as DARLA gently brushes the hair from the DOLL'S face while still in embrace.

DARLA (CONT'D)

(seriously, with fear)

David... you hurry back... you take care... you come back to me.

20 YR. OLD FUZIWINK

It will take more than a little war to come between this family. I'll be back. I promise.

Tenderly holding the facsimile child between them, DARLA looks into FUZIWINK'S eyes.

DARLA

I think... I think I'll call her 'snowflake'.

CONCURRENT  
ACTION FLASHBACK  
FADE OUT:

Back in present action at the bench, FUZIWINK is on his knees sobbing uncontrollably. The BOY is moving like a caged animal unsure what to do for the grieving man.

FUZIWINK

(sobbing, voice weakened and breaking)

Darla! I lost you! And then... I hid away what was left.

(MORE)

FUZIWINK (CONT'D)

Lost the good with the bad - stupid  
war! Stupid evil stupid man!! I'm  
so sorry my love - forgive me!  
FORGIVE ME!!

The BOY'S hands are trembling as if he knows not what to do with them. The broken old FUZIWINK is kneeling, his face in his hands. The BOY takes his hands and gently puts them over the old man's hands that are shielding his face, then the BOY leans over, as did FUZIWINK when the BOY cowered after the poker, and kisses the old man's head. This breaks FUZIWINK'S despair long enough for him to look up at the BOY from his broken position. FUZIWINK, with ultimate gratitude, scoops the BOY into his arms and embraces him while standing up, then puts the BOY onto the bench and sits next to him, pulling the BOY under his arm to cradle him and gently brushing the BOY'S bangs from his face, while they both watch the snow fall.

FUZIWINK (CONT'D)

You... are the best son a man could dream of. You are the best present I ever had: The greatest gift. I watched you become a man. You are a strong young, a strong young decent man. You are my play after the work son - I think... I think... I think I'll call you - 'snowflake'.

BOY

That's a pretty girly name for a 'strong young man'.

FUZIWINK

Well it's not meant to be girly  
(then stopping, realizing  
the BOY spoke)  
You... You!... You are free  
son!! You are free. Ha Ha!  
(hugging him forcefully)  
Oh dear God you freed the young  
man! I though I had my gift, but  
now so much more - so much more!

BOY

(face smashed into  
FUZIWINK'S coat from the  
hug)  
Don't feel so free all squashed  
like this.

They both start laughing as FUZIWINK separates - a tempo back in his step - beaming smile across his face.

FUZIWINK

You are right. You are so right!  
You need a real name son. You need  
a worthy, strong, wonderful name! I  
think... I think\_\_

BOY

Choose wisely please.

FUZIWINK

I think... I'll call you... GRANT.

The BOY puts out his palm for a HANDSHAKE in approval and FUZIWINK grabs the BOY'S palm to seal the deal. FUZIWINK, appearing depleted, musters the strength in celebration to sing:

SONG - "THE GREATEST GIFT"

As the song culminates, FUZIWINK is wobbly, as if he has run his tanks dry in the emotional outpouring. He just makes it to the bench before his legs give out. The BOY rushes over to him and puts his arm around him. He smiles widely at the BOY, GRANT, and kisses his cheek, before his head slumps down to his chest. GRANT tenderly brushes the old man's hair from his face and then gets up and takes off the jacket FUZIWINK gave him. GRANT places his jacket around the expired old man and then sits next to him, cradling him as if trying to keep him warm.

GRANT

You told me to wear this until the  
tulips came. I see flowers all  
around... dad.

INT. ELDERBERRY HOME FOR CHILDREN - NIGHT

The home is full of activity as CATERERS are bringing in food, the tree is being decorated by CARETAKERS and CHILDREN who are unpacking new shiny ornaments and bows. MS. MCKEELS is fixing the new large WREATH WITH BELLS to the FRONT DOOR while singing the first verse of:

SONG "WREATH SONG"

with CHILDREN as she works and leads them. She shuts the door. MS. ANNA approaches.

MS. ANNA BRANYON  
 Children, go help the others with  
 the tree or wash up. We'll be  
 eating soon, run along.

The ELDERBERRY CHILDREN disperse. She is now alone with MS.  
 MCKEELS.

MS. ANNA BRANYON (CONT'D)  
 I'm worried. Mr. Fuziwink looked  
 very worn out down in town. He  
 should have been back by now.

MS. MCKEELS  
 Anna dear, we mustn't expect him  
 back. You see, he was probably  
 being polite. It hurts me, that  
 walk up that hill. He's a very old  
 man. Once was enough to make it up  
 here, twice, twice is really not  
 possible. The child will tend to  
 him. I saw it in his eyes; the  
 child will never leave him.

The door opens quickly and the wreaths BELLS RING wildly.  
 Everyone stops still and there is no sound at the sight of  
 GRANT who stands in the doorway alone. MS. ANNA takes hold of  
 MS. MCKEELS arm for support. Everyone stands motionless.  
 GRANT walks into the room quietly, looking at everyone's  
 faces. He stops and looks out the open door.

FUZIWINK appears in the doorway loaded down with presents.  
 EVERYONE CHEERS.

MS. MCKEELS (CONT'D)  
 It's a miracle!

FUZIWINK  
 It is, if we define miracle as a  
 nap for a tired old man. The young  
 man, GRANT is his name, kept me  
 warm - or we might have needed a  
 miracle.

(to GRANT, lovingly  
 dusting snow off him)  
 I'd say you are finally home. You  
 waited a long time tonight, and a  
 longer time before tonight. Go  
 play!

GRANT shakes his head no and then says aloud to everyone's  
 amazement:

GRANT  
 (pointing to the nearly  
 finished tree)  
 There is still work to be done.

MS. ANNA BRANYON  
 He talks!

FUZIWINK  
 No Mam - the young man *speaks*. Show  
 them son. Playfully find pitch -  
 will you? Show them.

GRANT begins singing:

SONG **"WORK FIRST"**

While the song develops, he helps decorate the tree and keeps looking at the TROUBLED GIRL who is standing quietly across the room. MS. ANNA joins, and later FUZIWINK also, in trio with him.

CONCURRENT  
 ACTION FLASHBACK  
 FADE IN:

INT. ELDERBERRY HOME FOR CHILDREN - NIGHT

Once the duet portion begins, the flashback sequence reveals MS. CAROL singing with them concurrently, teaching this ethic to young DAVID and 13 YR. OLD DARLA who join in. The circle is seen completed as MS. CAROL'S daughter, MS. ANNA, picks up her mother's torch reinforcing the lesson that FUZIWINK was taught, and has now taught GRANT - both passing it on.

CONCURRENT  
 ACTION FLASHBACK  
 FADE OUT:

As the song is nearing completion, GRANT begins rolling his sleeves up with the lyric, but self consciously stops before his scar. Holding his sleeve at the songs end, he looks at FUZIWINK who lovingly nods to the BOY, signaling the BOY should continue and bare his true self before his new family.

GRANT looks around and bravely rolls his sleeve above his wound of abuse.

Several GASPS are heard along with MS. ANNA'S SCREAM. The TROUBLED GIRL begins to cry and MS. McKEELS put her hands over her mouth.

FUZIWINK  
 (angrily - going over to  
 GRANT putting his arm  
 around him to shield)  
 You call that acceptance!  
 How dare all of you!

MS. ANNA BRANYON  
 (frantically)  
 You... you... you just don't  
 understand... you\_\_\_

FUZIWINK  
 (interrupting, holding on  
 to the BOY)  
 No you are the one who doesn't\_\_\_

MS. ANNA BRANYON  
 (interrupting him, almost  
 hysterical)  
 No... no

MS. ANNA runs to the TROUBLED GIRL who is now sobbing uncontrollably. She holds on to the girl, shielding her, across the room from FUZIWINK and GRANT.

MS. ANNA BRANYON (CONT'D)  
 (tears in her eyes and  
 voice breaking)  
 It's... it's you who doesn't...

MS. ANNA pulls the TROUBLED GIRL'S sleeve up to reveal the exact branding scar upon the girl's arm. Her name: CAMILLE.

ELDERBERRY CHILD  
 The exact same burn mark on both of  
 them!

GRANT and the girl look at each other, then run to the center stage between FUZIWINK and MS. ANNA and unite as brother and sister, hugging, GRANT bravely consoling and stroking her hair. CHEERS ring out from CARETAKERS and CHILDREN.

CAMILLE and GRANT sing in duet.

The song at its completion, music does NOT quiet and begins the shift to the next number, over which is heard, as FUZIWINK approaches MS. MCKEELS:

FUZIWINK  
 (to MS. MCKEELS)  
 I forgot to tell you.  
 (MORE)

FUZIWINK (CONT'D)

There is a also present for a most deserving woman. There is no... no longer any rent to pay - there is only a new owner - an old man - who wishes very much to live here - and to help with our greatest gifts - these children.

MS. MCKEELS hugs him and kisses his cheek. The music to:

SONG "TROUBLES BE GONE"

begins in recapitulation. This time FUZIWINK is able to join and dances with MCKEELS, BOTH playing the parts of the previous choreography for the men and women. The ELDERBERRY CHILDREN have great fun attempting to follow their lead.

During the song, FUZIWINK slowly walks out the back door to the porch and stares at the STARS. The music is fading but still audible as the door closes behind him.

FUZIWINK looks to the sky. The door opens. It is GRANT.

FUZIWINK (CONT'D)

Son? What are you doing?

GRANT

(very concerned)

Are...are you leaving?

FUZIWINK

(smiling, placing his hands on GRANT'S shoulders, pausing)

Never...never again.

(straightening GRANT'S HAIR tenderly)

Go inside.

Grant goes to the door but stops.

GRANT

Will you promise to tell me the whole story?

FUZIWINK

You know it all son,

(smiling)

you lived it with me.

GRANT

No...What came before - I want to know.

FUZIWINK  
 (smiling at him, pausing)  
 Grant...Grant...why drive forward  
 looking in the rearview mirror?

GRANT  
 I want to know. I really do.

FUZIWINK  
 (searching Grant's eyes)  
 I promise...but only if you'll do  
 the same. When you're ready - I'm  
 ready.

Grant smiles widely before returning inside. Through the french doors the Christmas Tree lights GLITTER in visual symmetry with the SHIMMERING STARS. CLOCK CHIMES RING to mark the hour.

FUZIWINK (CONT'D)  
 It's midnight... it's Christmas  
 Day.  
 (skyward again)  
 The stars are bright and extra  
 beautiful this night.

DARLA (V.O.)  
 Oh David! It's magnificent. They  
 glitter. They sparkle.

FUZIWINK  
 (skyward)  
 Sparkle like the stars above.

DARLA (V.O.)  
 You've captured the sky and brought  
 it to our first Christmas!

FUZIWINK  
 Yes - I may have done just that -  
 I've brought them inside our home -  
 for you.  
 (exhaling, pausing,  
 resolutely)  
 We have it dear. It's ours. We have  
 our family. Thank-you for coming  
 back, for staying... waiting for  
 me. Merry Christmas.

FADE OUT.

FADE IN:

INT. BOOKSTORE - NIGHT

Clapping is heard.

The BOOKSTORE ENSEMBLE is applauding GRANT and his story. Some who were disassociated from the story telling and looking out the windows in the beginning, are now gathered around GRANT fully engaged. The snow has stopped outside. The CLOCK shows 7pm.

BUS PASSENGER 2  
(shaking GRANT'S hand)  
That's quite a story.

BOOKSTORE FATHER  
Yes, quite.

BUS PASSENGER 3  
(looking at everyone)  
There are no accidents - every  
season has it's purpose.

BOOKSTORE MOTHER  
(looking towards the  
stacks)  
Where is it? I want to take it with  
us.

GRANT  
Ah...all sold out. You'll remember  
it.

BUS PASSENGER 1  
(noticing the time)  
Good Lord - it's 7:00 - time really  
flies when you're talking of  
orphans, war, abuse and amnesia.

BUS PASSENGER 3  
(significantly, looking at  
the clock)  
Yes, there's still time. Looks like  
the storm's cleared.

CAMILLE  
(significantly to GRANT)  
It does - doesn't it?

GRANT  
It does.

The front door swings open and TWO TOW OPERATORS IN BUS  
MECHANIC COMPANY UNIFORMS enter loudly.

BUS MECHANIC 1  
 (to the BUS DRIVER)  
 Well what the heck. You abandon the  
 darn bus?

BUS DRIVER  
 Ah - no! You said you'd call. You  
 said\_\_

BUS MECHANIC 2  
 (interrupting, angry)  
 Been calling.

CAMILLE  
 (picking up the near  
 decimated platter of  
 sweets, to the MECHANICS)  
 Cookie?

BUS MECHANIC 2  
 (pace broken, attitude  
 changing)  
 Ah...yeah.  
 (to the BUS DRIVER)  
 You gave us a bad phone number -  
 how we supposed to find you?

BUS DRIVER  
 No I didn't!

BUS MECHANIC 1  
 Good thing we noticed the lights  
 are in here.

CAMILLE  
 Yes, they're certainly on here.

BUS MECHANIC 1  
 (tasting a cookie)  
 Delicious - what a bonus.  
 (to everyone)  
 It's unstuck - let's go.

The BOOKSTORE ENSEMBLE all cheer.

BOOKSTORE FATHER  
 (aware of his missing  
 child)  
 Petey? Petey!

GRANT  
 (motioning towards  
 counter)  
 Ah...

PETEY is standing with the phone receiver in his hand.

BOOKSTORE MOTHER  
Petey! What are you doing?

PETEY  
I had to tinkle. I been trying to  
call Santa for a while. He might  
not know we're here and skip us.

Everyone laughs.

BOOKSTORE FATHER  
Petey!...and you too Gracie!

The laughter stops at his tone. PETEY becomes fearful and slowly puts the phone receiver down. Gracie lowers her head.

BOOKSTORE FATHER (CONT'D)  
(somewhat sternly)  
What did I tell you about...  
(opening his arms)  
Not running and jumping into  
daddy's arms?

PETEY  
Ah...nothing??

BOOKSTORE FATHER  
(smiling widely)  
That's right.

PETEY and GRACIE both leap into their father's embrace.

BUS DRIVER  
All right you all - ready to try  
again?

BOOKSTORE ENSEMBLE  
Yes! - let's go! - great!

BUS PASSENGER 1  
Hey? Where's glasses guy?

The BOOKSTORE ENSEMBLE looks around. CAMILLE and GRANT look at each other. GRANT runs his finger's through his hair.

BUS PASSENGER 2  
He must have gone on ahead.

The BOOKSTORE ENSEMBLE begins to file out quickly with enthusiastic and courtesy towards one and other expressing holiday best wishes while thanking and waving to GRANT and CAMILLE.

BOOKSTORE FATHER  
 (to the exiting crowd)  
 Right behind you. Gathering our  
 children's things.  
 (to his wife)  
 Yes...gathering our children's  
 things....Baby...I been busy.

BOOKSTORE MOTHER  
 (tenderly as she puts the  
 large open ended bag over  
 her shoulder)  
 I know.

BOOKSTORE FATHER  
 I've been...They're closing the  
 factory.

BOOKSTORE MOTHER  
 We'll make do.

BOOKSTORE FATHER  
 (looking at the Christmas  
 tree)  
 It's going to be a lean one. I've  
 lost everything.

BOOKSTORE MOTHER  
 We've lost...nothing.

PETEY  
 Dada I'm tired.

GRACIE  
 Me too.

BOOKSTORE FATHER  
 (tenderly to them both)  
 Me too. You rest.

They put their heads down on his shoulder. His WIFE approaches and kisses and embraces him. He puts his head upon her shoulder and she closes her eyes in peace.

BOOKSTORE MOTHER  
 You rest.

BOOKSTORE FATHER  
 (looking at the TREE, then  
 shutting his eyes)  
 I'm sorry...for them ...it's a lean  
 one.

CAMILLE grabs a handful of books from the CHILDREN'S SECTION  
 SHELF nearby and quietly piles them into the MOTHER'S open  
 ended bag on her back.

BOOKSTORE MOTHER  
 (unaware)  
 We'll make do - together.

They file out, the children resting in his arms, she with his  
 arm through hers and their large children's bag significantly  
 behind them. The store becomes still and silent.

CAMILLE  
 (mystified)  
 Do you think\_\_\_\_\_

GRANT  
 (interrupting)  
 Yes, they'll be okay.

CAMILLE  
 No, I meant the man with glass\_\_\_\_\_

GRANT  
 (interrupting again)  
 I know....

CAMILLE  
 (gently subconsciously  
 scratching her arm,  
 looking lovingly towards  
 him)  
 Oh my gosh...Nice job. It was worth  
 the wait...Merry Christmas.

GRANT approaches her and tenderly puts his hand on her other  
 arm.

GRANT  
 (smiling, motioning with  
 his eyes to her arm)  
 People need to learn to leave well  
 enough alone.

She stops.

CAMILLE  
I will GRANT.  
(resolutely)  
I will.

GRANT  
Merry Christmas CAMILLE.

He kisses her cheek. GRANT again picks up the transparent CLOSED SIGN from its brackets. CAMILLE takes the wreath off the front glass door and GRANT hangs the sign face forward upon its hook instead. The stores name is seen reversed to the insiders. GRANT and CAMILLE take each other's hand.

The opening number:

SONG **"THE HOLIDAY SEASON IS UPON US"**

begins playing, and this time is sung by the ENTIRE ENSEMBLE: including ANNA'S MOTHER - MS. CAROL, and BOTH younger versions (13 & 20 YR.OLD) of DARLA and FUZIWINK, all taking stage in a showing of the timeless and interconnected theme of giving going beyond the bonds of time and place.

FADE TO BLACK.