

SID. *(As she exits.)* Let's go take an ad out in the *Eagle*.

IRENE. Let me pull the quotes. I have my station wagon. *(The cast members ad-lib as they leave. Car puts down new tape.)*

CAR. But then school was out and I had a birthday and turned fifteen, thanks for the card, too late. And thus began the best summer of my life. Prometheus was the center, I'd rehearse from seven to eleven every night, but after that I would work at the theater, paint, sew, stretch muslin, Dutchman the flats—Google it later, you'll be surprised—and make midnight runs and all the time getting to know these fascinating creatures that were the exact opposite of anything suburban I had seen. I'd be home at two in the morning. I'd wake up at eleven. And then, as if God himself had created the syllabus, every day at noon Channel 48 showed another midday musical. The entire MGM and Warner Brothers catalogue of movie musicals. For me. Then a trip to the Wyomissing library. I took out all the plays I could: Williams, Noël Coward, Oscar Wilde, the collected plays of Kaufman and Hart. George Kaufman was my gateway drug to the harder stuff—the Algonquin wits! I think it's safe to say my life would have turned out differently if I had played sports as a child. Let me show you one of the midnight runs! Yellow tape. *(Looks down at the small box with yellow tape, puts five chairs in the box.)* This is a small one. A 1969 Dodge Coronet station wagon. The back is filled with costumes, playbills, scripts (return to Tams-Witmark three months ago or be fined). Tuxedos picked up from Joe's Tuxedo, pick up after nine. Irene. Is in the front seat with Damien. The waiter. Who is now playing the pornographic postman. We are on to the next show. Getting props for a production of an O'Neill play. I am asleep in the back seat—well pretending to be asleep. *(Damien and Irene sit in two chairs side by side. Car sleeps on the back two.)*

IRENE. Here we be.

DAMIEN. Cold. Late. Should we wake up the kid and make a run, it's only a block?

IRENE. Cold on a June night, go figure. He asleep?

DAMIEN. Yeah. *(A mischievous smile from Irene. He warns her.)*

REENIE. Nothing too much, we'll wake the closet case. *(She kisses him.)*

YOU'RE CRAZY. Like everyone says you're crazy, and you are. I hear—Mayor Lackey's popped his lid he's so ticked off at you.

IRENE. Why?

DAMIEN. 'Cause you got Jo Jo to give you the building.

IRENE. Then he should be mad at Jo Jo, not me.

DAMIEN. No one thought you would do anything with the building. But you did. You got lots of attention.

IRENE. Good, maybe Lackey'll give me a theater. Or build me one when they rebuild here.

DAMIEN. Swear—you theater people are like—naive on purpose. You know what they call Lackey?

IRENE. Lackey Lackey? But what—

DAMIEN. You know who Lackey's a lackey for?

IRENE. I thought that was just a nickname—

DAMIEN. He's a lackey for the Toomeys, Irene.

IRENE. What are you talking?

DAMIEN. Toomeys own half of fucking Wyomissing. Throwing up the Berkshire mall in that cornfield. So what do they need? People out of the city and shopping in the suburbs. So what did Lackey do? Got rid of these businesses with the promise of a mall in the city—gonna tear them down—but the Toomeys'll never build a mall in the city. Like come on. It's a scam. This place'll be a vacant lot for forty years.

IRENE. How can you think that way?

DAMIEN. I'll tell you the way to think. Just say how can somebody make some money? Now throw out morality, decency, fair play—hell throw out common sense. And you'll be surprised how much it matches what's really going on.

IRENE. Alright meshugenah, let's just go—

DAMIEN. And you put yourself right in the middle of it. They're just looking for you to mess up—then they're gonna stick it to you.

IRENE. You're sweet. We're just doing art, that doesn't do anything but upset people anyway.

DAMIEN. God, Irene. Listen. I—like you. I wanna be with you.

IRENE. I like you, too.

DAMIEN. I wanna be your old man.

IRENE. That would involve time travel.

DAMIEN. No jokes. I want to marry you.

IRENE. Damien, I'm old enough to be your mother's younger friend.

DAMIEN. Hey. Marry me. (*Kisses her.*)

IRENE. Out of left field, here. Stop. Just—we just played around for a couple of weeks, what are you, a Mennonite?

DAMIEN. On my mother's side, yeah.

IRENE. I'm already married.

DAMIEN. Divorce him.

IRENE. What would I live on?

DAMIEN. I have a good job—if you give up theater or only do it once in a—

IRENE. That's not living. Now this silly talk is over.

DAMIEN. We could be in love and have a life together. A marriage.

IRENE. Oy. Darling, I had all that. I'm saving you from that *(He kisses her. Then kisses her again passionately. There is a bang on the window. It is Sid.)* **STOP**

DAMIEN. *(Getting out of car.)* I should be going. Get tuxes inside. *(He runs to the back of the station wagon, mimes opening the back, mimes grabbing the suit bags and running to the theater. Sid gets in the car.)*

IRENE. This never happened back at Civic Players of Reading. You respected my privacy at C.P.R. You knocked like a person at the Players.

SID. It wasn't my company then.

IRENE. Why did you—

SID. I noticed you AND Mr. AC/DC was talking awful long, I knew something was—

IRENE. Don't say AC/DC, you don't know—

SID. How much you wanna bet?

IRENE. If you will excuse me, I am about to produce O'Neill's *Great God Brown* in Berks County and if that's not a journey up a hill with a cross on my back I don't know what is.

SID. Irene?

IRENE. Yes?

SID. No.

IRENE. No?

SID. Yes, no. You? And Damien? No.

IRENE. It's really none of your business, Sid—

SID. It becomes my business when you do something that puts this company that I founded with you—

IRENE. He's practically twenty.

SID. Eighteen is practically nineteen, cradle-snatcher.

IRENE. Oh, drop it and admit it. You're just in love with me.

SID. Not for years. Now all I got is "stuck-with-you-ness." Whatever that's called.

IRENE. Well then, you are sulking over Madeline and you are taking it out on—

SID. Madeline is dead to me and moved to Harrisburg and you got no right bringing her up.

IRENE. GOD, Sid, you cling to me so you don't have to let go of

with you three. Where the hell is Irene? (*Storms out. Clive chases after her.*)

CLIVE. She is up at the new theater and you—

MARIA. (*Running after Sid and Clive.*) Leave her be, Sid! (*It is just Damien. He picks up the paper, looks at the headline, then throws it.*)

DAMIEN. Go away all of you! (*He sits down and is about to cry; there is a noise from behind some boxes.*)

CAR. They gone?

DAMIEN. Jesus, Car. (*Car comes out from behind the boxes.*)

CAR. This is so intense, this is like the penultimate scene of *Sound of Music*.

DAMIEN. Don't make jokes, everything is fucked.

CAR. I don't know, maybe that's the best time to make jokes.

DAMIEN. Everybody knows about us.

CAR. Are we illegal?

DAMIEN. Oh God what the fuck do I do? Jesus, Car, you don't think.

CAR. I do too think. New York City, next bus. We could even borrow costumes and like go in disguise.

DAMIEN. You're fucking insane—and even if we did—you—you just would leave everything in disarray?

CAR. It's time. You and me—we'll crash at Jeannie's pad on Bank for a while, then get our own place—you know—do the scheme. Be in love.

DAMIEN. But I don't love you.

CAR. You will—in time. I'm irresistible, and I'm going to be so big and have a lot of charisma—you'll love me. Soon. Real real soon.

DAMIEN. Car, no. I won't. I won't ever love you.

CAR. (*A moment, then.*) Then—I'll take you as you are, then. Like that's the cool thing about not being normal, there are no rules. Come with me.

DAMIEN. I can't.

CAR. Damien, here is impossible, there is nothing but possible, let's go there.

DAMIEN. And we're not going to be exclusive?

CAR. You don't have to be, no.

DAMIEN. And you?

CAR. You'll be enough. For me. For a lifetime even.

DAMIEN. I don't want to hurt you.

CAR. Of course you will, come on! Should we go in disguise?

DAMIEN. I don't think we need to. God, Car. (*They kiss warmly*)

at first. Then look at one another.) This is so fucked up. (They kiss passionately. An explosion as another wrecking ball hits. They laugh.)
When's the next bus? **STOP**

CAR. Like a half-hour. *(They kiss again. Irene enters.)*

IRENE. Car, I believe your mother is looking for you.

CAR. Irene, I'm so sorry about this.

IRENE. If you were sorry you wouldn't do it.

DAMIEN. Irene, we—this is awkward.

IRENE. So what do we do, children? Are you two going to be boyfriends? If that's the case it's no whoop, I've always been a friend of the gays.

CAR. We're going to—we're running away to New York. Dam and me. We're sorry to hurt you, but we have to think of ourselves this time around.

IRENE. Yes. Yourselfs. This time around. We all have to think of ourselves. This time around. *(Clive runs on, panting. Quickly followed by Maria.)*

CLIVE. Jesus, lady. We're halfway up the hill to Tenth and Walnut, dear heart, when Betty Ann and Fred said they saw you on your way here and—

IRENE. Lookie who's here—

MARIA. Car—you have a lot of nerve.

CLIVE. Where've you been, Reenie?

IRENE. Oh I've been VERY busy all this morning. All morning, why it's all I can do to accept all the resignations that are being offered to me. Prometheus fags and whores. That seems to be the new catch phrase. All have begged off board membership. Seems somebody did a little hatchet piece on us in the *Reading Eagle*. Told a story of a certain underage homosexual affair that led to underage drinking and it just being the tip of an iceberg.

CLIVE. It's all Sid's fault, she talked to Kurt—she caused the article.

IRENE. Who cares? Let's deal with the subject at hand.

MARIA. God only knows how much money we lost this morning—I don't want to think about it. We'll lose our new building!

IRENE. No, that we'll keep, that was a gift, but it will look very shabby in a few years no doubt. Now as to Car and Damien—

CAR. It doesn't matter. We're leaving anyway. We're going to New York. We're doing what none of you had the nerve to do—get the fuck out of here.

IRENE. A destroyer and with condescension, it's like I'm back