

The Love Below: A Jukebox Musical

An Honors Thesis (HONR 499)

by

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Abstract

Perhaps one of the most interesting blends of modern culture is that of popular music and stage performance which can be seen in jukebox musicals. Jukebox musicals are stage productions where a majority of the performed songs are previously released, popular songs. Some examples include *Mamma Mia!* (1999), *Rock of Ages* (2005), and *American Idiot* (2009). For my thesis, I have taken the popular R&B album *The Love Below* (2003) by Atlanta hip-hop duo OutKast and adapted it into a full-length stage production. The musical follows our young male protagonist, Ice Cold, through his emotional escapades and attempts to secure his own idea of love throughout the year. Ice Cold begins his journey dismissive of love and any interpersonal moments that might lead to a feeling of love. As time progresses, he begins to accept his inevitable fate and settles down with one woman. However, her attempts at marriage only scare him away and he breaks things off with her. Ice Cold's fear of commitment and love causes his own lonely, bittersweet ending which occurs at the emotional and physical climax of the story.

Acknowledgments

I would like to thank Jennifer Blackmer for her amazing support throughout this creative process. I started this piece with minimal knowledge on writing musicals and thanks to her advice, feedback, and conversations, I feel extremely proud of what I have accomplished because of her assistance.

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To my parents, thank you for never doubting me and believing in my abilities. I would have never completed such a project if it were not for over 21 years of love, support, and devotion. I am forever grateful for everything you have done for me and my success is owed to you.

Process Analysis Statement

I have been a fan of rap music since 2009 because of my father and one simple action of his, which at the time felt inconsequential, that resulted in years of obsession, research, and this final creative thesis. As my family and I were walking through the store, we stopped at the CD section and browsed. I was only ten years old, and my music knowledge and interests were limited in scope. I mainly looked for album covers that I thought were cool or exciting. Then my dad grabbed a CD and said we would listen to it on the drive home. My father, having been born in the 1960s, was raised on funk, soul, R&B, and hard rock. His record collection consisted of Marvin Gaye, Jimmy Hendrix, Pink Floyd, Al Green, and Led Zeppelin to name a few of many.

As the 1970s came to a close, a new genre of music was formed from the mixing of all those classic genres into something radical and transcendent. Hip-Hop or rap music initially came onto the underground in the late 1970s and reached mainstream critical and commercial success in the mid-1980s with groups such as N.W.A., Public Enemy, and Run-DMC. These early groups constructed and produced much of their music from samples of soul, disco, and R&B. Sampling is the process of reusing, remixing, and/or recreating another sound recording in one's own recording for creative purposes. Much of early rap music had a strong foundation of sampling older music and the modern-day sound of rap is due to this early influence and mixing of genres. As rap music gained more traction in the mainstream, a new rapper emerged in 1999 called Eminem. He is perhaps the most popular and well-known rapper of all time and he certainly did not go unnoticed in the media due to his controversial lyrical content. My father, being a fan of his, grabbed Eminem's 2005 greatest hits album titled *Curtain Call: The Hits*.

On the ride home, my father put the CD into the car radio and my life changed. The songs were unlike anything I had heard before on kid-friendly radio stations which played on the school bus rides. His music was harsh, loud, and explicit. It should be noted that my father bought the clean/edited version of the album and skipped many of the songs that he felt I was not old enough to hear. However, despite the censorship, I could tell the music had explicit content far beyond my 10-year-old comprehension. I immediately fell in love with the pounding

instrumentals, diverse word choice, and lack of repetition compared to most contemporary pop music on the radio. This initial listen of a mere three songs on the drive home led to us listening to the album every time we were in the car. I became obsessed with that CD and eventually became the self-declared biggest Eminem fan a young pre-teen could be.

I mainly listened to Eminem over the next three years because he was the only rapper that I knew a lot about. However, over time I went through my father's CD collection and found Ludacris, Jay-Z, Snoop Dogg, and The Notorious B.I.G. As I listened to these artists, I began to discover more styles of rap and new artists that had been featured on the CDs that my father had. Thanks to the internet, I was able to enjoy all the music I wanted to for free which diversified my tastes even more. By the time I entered college, I felt that I knew more than enough about music to narcissistically consider myself a "rap connoisseur." I felt this way until I stepped into Muncie's local record store and was completely lost. I had never heard of 90% of the musicians and felt embarrassed that I had never heard of some rap artists like Death Grips or MF DOOM. As I shuffled through the CD section, I found an artist whose name I did recognize – OutKast.

The only song that I could name by OutKast at the time was "Hey Ya!" because it played on popular radio stations for years. I grabbed a deluxe edition CD package which included three of their most popular albums, *ATLiens* (1996), *Aquemini* (1998), and *Stankonia* (2000). I listened to all three albums multiple times over the next week and was amazed. It was like hearing Eminem for the first time all over again. Even though I was knowledgeable and enjoyed rap music for years, this style was rather alien and otherworldly to me. The albums were a diverse blend of southern gangster rap, experimental psychedelic soul, and upbeat radio classics. I could not pinpoint an exact genre, but I could tell that the two artists that make OutKast, André 3000 and Big Boi, had opposite yet complimentary styles. This observation of mine was only confirmed months later when I purchased their fifth album titled *Speakerboxxx/The Love Below* (2003).

Their fifth album was experimental like their last three albums but conceptually unique compared to anything they had released before. *Speakerboxxx/The Love Below* is a double album where each half is a solo album by one of the two members of OutKast. *Speakerboxxx* is Big Boi's album which focuses on various themes including religion, politics, and a range of emotional responses in a southern hop-hip style. *The Love Below* is André 3000's album which focuses on themes of love, commitment, and relationships using soul, psychedelic rock, rap, and R&B genres. *The Love Below* is the perfect blend of genres and demonstrates how much rap was influenced by other genres and how they perfectly play off each other to create a wonderful new style that was initially shocking and unwelcome to long-time fans of the Atlanta hip-hop duo.

The second half of the double album quickly became my favorite OutKast musical work. I was amazed at André 3000's ability to shift genres so effortlessly between *Stankonia* and *The Love Below* only three years later. As I continued to listen to the album for the next few years, I began to notice common motifs and a subtle, underlying story throughout the album. This story is not explicitly clear but rather cryptic and linked together between each song with lyrical storytelling. The story told in the album is loose and vastly unclear as not much detail is given. Rather it is up to the listener to make their own conclusions regarding the meaning and significance of each song in the grand context of the larger album. As I listened to the album, I heard and interpreted my own story which was influenced by my own experiences and thoughts.

Roughly a year after initially purchasing the album, I went and saw *American Idiot* (2009) at Ball State University performed by students of the theatre department. *American Idiot* is a jukebox musical with music and lyrics by Green Day and book by Billie Joe Armstrong and Michael Mayer. Jukebox musicals are stage productions where a majority of the performed songs are previously released, popular songs. The musical is based around the 2004 album of the same name and tells a story using the songs, in order, from the album. After watching this live performance, I felt amazed by the creativity and ability to transform a hard rock album onto the

stage. I quickly became inspired to attempt something similar on my own. Within the month, I began thinking of albums that I believed would make for great musicals. I looked through my CDs and was intrigued by *The Love Below* as a starting point.

I recognized the album as a potential candidate along with a few other albums. However, the main difference was the tone and adaptability of it when compared to other albums which were more grounded in reality and less interesting for a stage production. I decided to begin working on the script for the musical, or book, at the end of my sophomore year. The first draft of the book consisted of the album tracklist and events that I wanted to occur in between each song. There were no character names, descriptions, setting, nor stage actions. I did not work on my musical until the end of my junior year and during the summer after. By the start of my academic senior year, I had a second draft of the first act finished using a program called *Trelby*. However, unknown to myself, the formatting of my musical was inconsistent with professional work.

As I began looking for a thesis advisor, I knew that I wanted a faculty member of the theatre and dance department. I was lucky enough to have Jennifer Blackmer accept my proposal and agree to be my mentor. Her insight not only as a professor of theatre but as an accomplished playwright was extremely helpful to encourage me initially. She read my draft of Act 1 and gave helpful feedback in terms of writing style, voice, and consistency. After a few more weeks of writing, editing, and adjustments, I had completed my first draft of the entire musical which sat around 60 pages. After this, she read my newest draft and we had a virtual video meeting to discuss edits that need to be completed. She asked me many provocative questions regarding race, gender, and sexual rights of individuals. These questions were essential for the process as they required me to think critically about my representation of many groups that I have written in my musical.

I am a white, straight, male that has written a musical with mostly black characters of various sexualities and gender identities. Her questions and concerns for me were important to ensure

that I was not appropriating nor representing these groups in an offensive or stereotypical way. It was important to me to have a woman help with my writing because she was able to give me advice and tips regarding how I wrote my female characters that many men might not be able to give. I am not a woman and I do not claim to understand how women should be written, therefore Jennifer Blackmer's advice was much needed and very welcome. She also had similar advice to writing homosexual characters and ensuring that I was not being offensive in my portrayal or dialogue. Her experience with writing diverse characters ensured that her advice was very warranted and beneficial to my own writing.

Jennifer Blackmer's other piece of advice that was extremely beneficial was her formatting recommendations. Before this, I had never written a musical before and instead only worked on short film screenplays. Due to this, my musical was written as a movie and there was no indication that it was a stage production. After our discussion, I had to completely reformat my work. This included retyping all the song lyrics in all capital letters, writing the character's names in all capital letters, adding a character sheet with descriptions of their appearance and personality, transition notes, and stanza breaks. To properly format, I was sent two example musicals, one play, and a worksheet from her class that gives step-by-step instructions for formatting.

As I was writing the musical, I used the website, *Genius*, to copy the lyrics into the playwriting software. The website provided the most accurate lyrics for me to use which was essential for the structure of my entire musical. This was what a majority of my research consisted of. In addition to providing lyrics, members of the website are able to provide annotations of the song lyrics and their interpretations of each stanza. These annotations provided extra insight to me and helped me to understand certain slang words within the songs. Some of these annotations provided links to other websites that had extra information regarding the album and context.

One such website included *WhoSampled*, which provides information regarding samples in songs. This information helped provide me some context for the song “Pink and Blue” by OutKast which samples “Age Ain't Nothing but a Number” by Aaliyah. My research into this song and the sample inspired me to include the original Aaliyah song in the musical. Including this song sets up the OutKast song later and provides a more humorous reveal. Additionally, the inclusion of the original song flips the OutKast song’s meaning on our protagonist and his new love interest in the context of the story.

Using the research that I conducted on *Genius*, *WhoSampled*, and the documents provided to me by my thesis advisor, I was able to effectively combine my preexisting content knowledge on rap music, screenwriting, and creative writing to create a unique and original jukebox musical. I decided to create this thesis because it was not only an appropriate application of my knowledge, but it also allowed me to express myself in a creative manner that I do not usually get the opportunity to do as secondary mathematics education major. I have been writing short films with my friends since 7th grade and writing a long-form creative piece seemed like the next logical step for me in my creative endeavors.

This thesis is not only important to me on a personal level but also to larger communities beyond my circle of interaction. Writing my thesis over the last few months and beginning it years ago has been a very therapeutic learning process. I have learned a lot about myself and my writing style. Working with Jennifer Blackmer has only been beneficial because of the feedback I have received and instruction from her on how to improve my writing, especially when writing female characters. Participating in creative processes and writings have always been an enjoyable experience for me as it allows me to express myself in a way that I am typically unable to do. I found myself including my own beliefs regarding love and commitment as I wrote the dialogue of the protagonist. For me, creative writing, no matter the genre, has always been autobiographical. Artists tend to write what they know and feel comfortable expressing their own beliefs rather than ones they are unfamiliar with.

On a larger level beyond my personal benefit, my musical provides entertainment value for a diverse audience. As a jukebox musical, it appeals to fans of theatre as well as fans of OutKast. Perhaps there is not a large overlap between these groups which may result in a diverse audience and an appeal to a large number of individuals. My target audience is perhaps wider than most musicals because I hope to appeal to fans of musicals, fans of rap music, fans of R&B music, and fans of the hit song "Hey Ya!" This musical has immense appeal because it is not specifically targeted at one group. I believe that most everyone can find something interesting and entertaining within it. I expect a great majority of people will receive a great deal of enjoyment from it and perhaps even learn something about rap music, the history of the form, how it can be adapted into a unique and stylish production, inner-city culture, and the Black-American experience. One of the most important elements of my musical is the inclusion of a predominately black cast in a world that is mainly dominated by white men. Many musicals are full of an entirely white cast and lack the inclusion of any characters or cast members of color. My musical is specifically written to reflect the work of a man of color and the culture surrounding such work.

My honors thesis is an accumulation of over eight years of short film screenwriting experience, my knowledge and passion regarding rap music, and my appreciation for OutKast's album *The Love Below*. I am extremely proud of what I have accomplished over a few months thanks to the support of my advisor and mentor, Jennifer Blackmer. My work is not only a reflection of myself and the effort that I put forward but also the assistance of my advisor and my peers. It was a joy to create, and I proudly present *The Love Below: A Jukebox Musical*.

THE LOVE BELOW

Book by

Kenneth Patterson

Music and Lyrics by

OutKast

André Lauren Benjamin "Andre 3000" and Antwan André Patton "Big Boi"

Note:

All the music and lyrics were written by the two members of OutKast,
which are two individuals of African American Descent.
The lyrics and the significance of such lyrics reflect their
beliefs and opinions of the time and are not an indication
of my own thoughts and beliefs.

I have not censored or edited the lyrics as it would not be an accurate
representation of the thoughts and creative work of the original
creators/musicians.

CHARACTERS (IN ORDER OF APPEARANCE):

ICE COLD - Black male, tall and thin, 28 - An independent song writer

SHARON - Black female, 60s - *ICE COLD*'s mother

LAWRENCE - Black male, larger body type, 60s - *ICE COLD*'s father

CHORUS - An ethnically diverse collection of roughly half women, half males OR roughly half low vocal range (Bass, Baritone, Tenor) AND high vocal range (Alto, Mezzo-Soprano, and Soprano)

CUPID VALENTINO - Black male, athletic build, 20s - A modern representation of Cupid

CAROLINE - Black female, 20s - A local record store owner, *ICE COLD*'s first love interest

OFFSTAGE - Male - Occasionally screams on cue

JOHNNY VULTURE - Black male, 30s - A local bar owner, *ICE COLD*'s friend

MANDY - Female, 20s - A friend of *CAROLINE*, works at *CAROLINE*'s business

DIRECTOR - White male, 50s - A stereotypical movie director

ANTWAN - Black male, larger body type, 20s - A local club owner, *ICE COLD*'s best friend

BENTLEY FONZORTH - Black male, 20s - *ICE COLD*'s friend

NORAH JOHNSON - Black female, tall, 42 - A singer, *ICE COLD*'s second love interest

ROSARIO - Black female, 20s - A friend of *CAROLINE*, works at *CAROLINE*'s business

MIKE - Black male, 30s - *CAROLINE*'s brother

ERYKAH - Black female, 30s - A mysterious and friendly bar patron

TIME:

Roughly February 2003 - March 2004.

PLACE:

An modern and stylish urban area. A fictional, idealized, small-town version of Atlanta.

LIGHTS RISE:

ACT 11 **THE LOVE BELOW (INTRO)**

1

ICE COLD is sitting on a wooden, black bar stool. His feet rest on the bottom row of the cross beams. He is in front of a closed, red curtain. He is alone. White lights shine on him. The lighting is not harsh but rather soft and comforting. "The Love Below (Intro)" plays and the lights fade between pink and white slowly until the song ends.

ICE COLD

SOME SAY ATLANTA.
SOME SAY NEW YORK.
SOME SAY PARIS, FRANCE BUT WHO KNOWS...
WHERE THIS FLOWER... GROWS?

As "grows" is said, the lights slowly fade into a vibrant red as the piano trails out.

2 **LOVE HATER**

2

The curtains pull back and ICE COLD slowly stands, grabs the bar stool, and puts it inside of his house.

We see a busy city street. Local shops and apartment buildings fill the skyline. ICE COLD is in his house, cleaning up and dancing around the living room and kitchen. "Love Hater" plays.

ICE COLD

EVERYBODY NEEDS A GLASS OF WATER TODAY
TO CHASE THE HATE AWAY.
YOU KNOW YOU'VE GOT COMPANY COMIN' OVER,
SO YOU SCRUB EXTRA HARD.
AND EVERYBODY NEEDS SOMEBODY TO LOVE.

All the lights fade except those inside ICE COLD's house.

ICE COLD

BEFORE IT'S TOO LATE, IT'S TOO LATE.
OH, DON'T NOBODY WANNA GROW OLD ALONE.

Lights rise as the music does.

ICE COLD

EVERYBODY NEEDS SOMEONE TO RUB THEIR
SHOULDERS
AND SCRATCH THEIR DANDRUFF.

The city is moving with haste outside of his house, couples are holding hands and walking around. One woman scratches her male partner's head and snow falls from the ceiling.

ICE COLD

AND EVERYBODY NEED TO QUIT ACTIN' HARD AND
(MORE)

ICE COLD (cont'd)

SHIT
BEFORE YOU GET YOUR ASS WHOOPED

CHORUS

I'LL SLAP THE FUCK OUT YA!

ICE COLD

AND EVERYBODY NEEDS SOMEBODY TO LOVE
BEFORE IT'S LATE, IT'S TOO LATE.

CHORUS

LOVE HATER, LOVE HATER.
HATER OF LOVE.
LOVE HATER, LOVE HATER.
HATER OF LOVE.
LOVE HATER, LOVE HATER.
HATER OF LOVE.
LOVE HATER.

ICE COLD AND CHORUS

EVERYBODY NEEDS SOMEONE TO LOVE.
EVERYBODY NEEDS SOMEONE TO LOVE.
EVERYBODY NEEDS SOMEONE TO LOVE.

The CHORUS and ICE COLD get quieter as an older couple arrive at ICE COLD's front door and knock. He jumps at the sound and quickly finishes cleaning his house before rushing to the door to greet his guests. He adjusts his shirt and hair before quickly opening the door and motioning for his guests to enter.

LAWRENCE

Took your time, Ice. How are you son?

SHARON

Oh Lawrence, don't be so ridiculous. How are ya sweetie? I feel like it's been so long.

ICE COLD

(laughs)

We got lunch just last week, Mom. I'm feeling fine. A little tired maybe.

SHARON

Ice, you better not be getting sick.

She feels his forehead with her hand.

SHARON

Oh my baby, you are burning up. You haven't been up playing video games all night, have you? You remember to eat everyday too, right?

ICE COLD

Mom, chill out, it's fine. I've just been busy cleaning up and running around the house. And cooking lunch is tiring and I -

He quickly walks from the living room to the kitchen to check on the pot cooking on the stove top.

ICE COLD

- Need to check on the food anyways.

LAWRENCE

Don't worry about him, Sharon. Ice, get me a beer while you are up.

LAWRENCE grabs the remote and starts flipping channels, the TV is overpowering in noise.

SHARON

You know Ice, well, Ice, I wanted-

SHARON grabs the remote and turns the TV off. LAWRENCE puts his head down and looks at SHARON after a beat.

SHARON

Ice, we are both so happy that you offered to cook us lunch, but we also wanted to talk to you today.

ICE COLD

Anytime. Mom, you want anything to drink?

LAWRENCE

Get me another beer, Ice. This one is empty.

SHARON

I'm fine, Ice. I just feel like- well your father and I -

ICE COLD

You had the last Coors, Dad, you okay with Shiner or do you want a Bud?

LAWRENCE

I'll take the Bud.

ICE COLD walks the drink over to his dad. LAWRENCE grabs it and ICE COLD heads back to the kitchen.

SHARON

I just- we just feel like maybe... I-

LAWRENCE

Ice, get me a glass would ya?

ICE COLD

Yeah Dad, of course.

SHARON

Would you both shut the hell up?

Both get wide-eyed and quickly quiet down, ICE COLD grabs the glass without breaking eye contact with SHARON.

SHARON

We didn't come here to get drunk, Lawrence.
Ice, we need to talk. Come sit down with us.

ICE COLD quickly walks over. He rubs his knees and taps his foot quickly on the floor as he sits down.

SHARON

Your dad and I both, well, we both feel that it's time for you to move on.

ICE COLD

What do you mean, Mom? Dad?

LAWRENCE

Don't look at me, this is all your mom's idea. I wish I could live like you. Alone, no wife, no responsibilities. Better than waking up next to your mom every morning.

SHARON glances over at LAWRENCE and then back to ICE COLD.

SHARON

Baby, you haven't had a real girlfriend in over three years. I think you need someone in your life right now to keep you busy and get ready to settle down. A lot better than those damn video games and porn.

ICE COLD quickly turns his face away from his mom and looks down at the floor.

SHARON

You think I'm dumb? I caught your dad the other day.

LAWRENCE nods his head while staring at the TV and appears to not be listening.

SHARON

I think you should start going out, or at least try it for a little bit. That's all I'm asking of you. You don't have to marry anyone, I just think you need to get out in the world and explore your options. A lot of my girlfriends have daughters your age. I can give you their numbers or we could set up a date. A lot of them are very pretty, Ice. No Beyonce, but definitely Kerry Washington or Angelina Jolie. You can't be too picky sweetie. Don't get me wrong, you are a good looking guy, but you have nothing on Denzel.

LAWRENCE

Here we go again with this Denzel shit.

ICE COLD

Mom, Dad. I really appreciate your concern
(MORE)

ICE COLD (cont'd)

for me. But I'm fine, seriously. And thank you for volunteering to hook me up but I don't need it. I'm just taking things slow. Nothing wrong with being alone. Plenty of people are alone and happy with it. Thank you, really, but I don't need anything right now. Let's just have some lunch, huh?

LAWRENCE and SHARON both look at each other. They sigh and smile at ICE COLD.

SHARON

If that's what you want, then that's what you'll get. Lawrence, go help him in the kitchen, I'll go wash up. And no more damn beer.

Fade to black.

3 **GOD (INTERLUDE)**

3

ICE COLD's bedroom. A large bed with red sheets rests in the center of the stage with nothing else around. ICE COLD is kneeling on the right side look towards the left side. He is praying. "God (Interlude)" plays.

ICE COLD

(spoken over music)

God. Come in, God. God. Come in God.

A bright light shines from the upper left onto ICE COLD, it is blinding, ICE COLD jerks his head back and rubs his eyes.

ICE COLD

(spoken over music)

Damn, you're a girl? Wow. I guess the reason I'm talkin' to you tonight is because I've been doin' a lot of thinkin' and I consider myself a pretty cool guy. And I've never cheated on any of my girlfriends. Well, well except that one little time in Japan but that was just some head and head don't count right?... Ah, thanks God, I knew you'd understand. Well I just feel like. Well to be honest with you. God, I just need me a sweet bitch. You know somebody not too fast but not too slow. Cause I don't have it all my damn self and life ain't easy. You know you just want somebody by your side to help smooth that thang out. You know what I'm talkin' bout? And at this point, I mean, I'm not being picky. She doesn't even have to have a big ol' ass you know? Just something well proportioned to her body. You know a nice little tail you know? What? You say you, you say you found somebody? Is she cute? So when do I get to meet her? Oh god, you're the

(MORE)

ICE COLD (cont'd)
 greatest. Well I guess ill talk to you later.
 Amen. Oh, I'm sorry, I'm sorry. A-lady.

Fade to black.

4 **HAPPY VALENTINE'S DAY**

4

ICE COLD wakes up in his bedroom. This time, there is a large over sized calendar near his bed. The date is concealed by the darkness. ICE COLD yawns and looks over at the calendar while still laying down. He reaches over towards the wall while still in bed and flips the light switch. A harsh and sudden light floods the calendar that reads "February 14th".

ICE COLD

Ah, fuck.

The set is pulled away and the city landscape returns from the first scene. ICE COLD is in his underwear quickly stumbling to put his pants on while falling backwards. From the left, CUPID VALENTINO comes out. He is adored with a white hat, dark circular glasses, a white satchel, skinny jeans, no shirt, and pink Air Jordan 1 shoes with wings on them. "Happy Valentine's Day" plays.

CUPID

MY NAME IS CUPID VALENTINO, THE MODERN DAY
 CUPID
 AND I JUST WANT TO SAY ONE THING.
 HAPPY VALENTINE'S DAY.

CUPID AND CHORUS

EVERY DAY THE 14TH.

CUPID

I DON'T THINK Y'ALL HEARD ME.
 I JUST WANNA SAY HAPPY VALENTINE'S DAY.

CUPID AND CHORUS

EVERY DAY THE 14TH.

CUPID

CAN Y'ALL DIG THAT?
 NOW WHEN ARROWS DON'T PENETRATE, SEE...

CUPID AND CHORUS

CUPID GRABS THE PISTOL!

CUPID pulls a bright, glowing, pink pistol from his back pocket and waves it around the crowd.

CUPID

UH, YEAH, NOW, NOW LOOKIE HERE.
 HE SHOOTS STRAIGHT FOR YOUR HEART, NOW...

CUPID AND CHORUS

AND HE WON'T MISS YOU.

CUPID

BUT THAT'S ALRIGHT, Y'ALL WON'T BELIEVE IN ME
ANYWAY, BUT...

CHORUS

YOU WON'T BELIEVE IN ME
BUT YOU WOULD FANCY LEPRECHAUNS OR
GROUNDHOGS.
NO, THANK YOU, EASTER BUNNY.

CUPID

THERE'S ALL THIS TALK ABOUT SANTA CLAUS, BUT
SEE
LOVE WILL RULE SUPREME!
HAPPY VALENTINE'S DAY

CUPID AND CHORUS

EVERY DAY THE 14TH.

CUPID

YOU GOT IT, WHEN CUPID KNOCKS AT YOUR DOOR.

CUPID AND CHORUS

YOU CAN'T IGNORE ME.

CUPID

THERE'S NO NEED TO RUN.
SO, HAPPY VALENTINE'S DAY, HEY...

*ICE COLD runs around the city dodging in and out of
buildings, peaking out of windows, going in doors and coming
out on rooftops, hiding behind strangers. A beautiful, young
woman, CAROLINE, is walking around the city talking to
others, she is wearing a tight, red dress, and high heels.
ICE COLD sees her and avoids going near her.*

CUPID AND CHORUS

EVERY DAY THE 14TH.

CUPID

NOW I MAY HAVE IT ALL WRONG, SEE.
IF YOU KNOW WHAT LOVE MEANS, WELL...

CUPID AND CHORUS

SOMEBODY TELL ME.

CUPID

CAUSE THEY JUST DON'T BELIEVE IN ME.

CHORUS

YOU WON'T BELIEVE IN ME
BUT YOU WOULD FANCY LEPRECHAUNS OR
GROUNDHOGS.
NO, THANK YOU, EASTER BUNNY.

CUPID

THERE'S SO MUCH FUSS ABOUT SANTA CLAUS, BUT
SEE

(MORE)

CUPID (cont'd)

CUPID WILL NOT BE DEFEATED.
 HAPPY VALENTINE'S DAY, EVERY DAY ... THE
 14TH.
 NOW, I KNOW YOUR HEARTS HAVE GROWN COLD
 AND THAT BOTHERS ME.
 NOW, I UNDERSTAND, CAUSE I USED TO BE A BAD
 BOY IN MY DAY.
 I KNOW YOU TRYIN' TO PROTECT YOUR LIL'
 FEELINGS.
 BUT YOU CAN'T RUN AWAY.
 HO-OH!

CHORUS

YOU WON'T BELIEVE IN ME BUT YOU WOULD FANCY -

CUPID

HEY, DON'T YOU SUPPOSED TO BE
 SOME KIND OF PLAYER, OR SOMETHING?

CHORUS

BUNNY

CUPID

WELL, KEEP ON RUNNING, PLAYER.
 CAUSE I GOT MY GOOD SHOES ON.
 AND I GOT 'EM TIED UP TIGHT.
 SO YOU GON' FIND OUT TONIGHT.

ICE COLD is walking backwards from right to center stage looking left and right, unaware that CUPID is behind him. CAROLINE comes out from right stage and stares ICE COLD down. Walking towards him with a seductive pose. Near her is NORAH in the background. The music rises, CUPID slowly pulls his gun out. Imitating "This is America" Jim Crow pose. The gun fires at the climax of the song. ICE COLD is hit and stumbles backwards while grabbing his chest but does not fall. He then takes a breath and faces the crowd.

ICE COLD

GOT A SWEET LIL' DARLIN' BACK IN MY CORNER.
 BELOW, I KNOW I LOVE HER, BUT ACT LIKE I
 DON'T WANT HER.
 SURROUNDED BY THE LOVELY, BUT YET, FEEL LIKE
 A LONER.
 COULD BE AN ORGAN DONOR THE WAY I GIVE UP MY
 HEART.
 BUT NEVER KNOW BECAUSE, SHIT, I NEVER TELL
 HER.
 ASK ME HOW I'M FEELING, I'D HOLLA THAT IT'S
 IRRELE-
 I DON'T GET MYSELF CAUGHT UP IN THE JELLO
 JELLA
 AND PUDDING POPS, THAT OTHERS OPT TO CALL
 FALLING IN LOVE.
 BUT FOR THE RECORD, HAVE YOU EVER RODE A
 HORSE?
 LIKE FOR YOU TO SEND ME TO PLUTO, I SAID, OF
 (MORE)

ICE COLD (cont'd)

COURSE!
 BUT IF YOU AIN'T A SWEETY, INDEEDY, I WON'T
 ENDORSE
 HAN SOLO 'TIL I'M HIT BY THE BULLET, SO MAY
 THE FORCE
 BE WITH YOU AND I'LL HIT YOU WHEN BETTER TIME
 PERMITS
 FOR NOW, SHOW ME SAMPLES, EXAMPLES WHY YOU'RE
 THE SHIT.
 BUT HOW AM I TO KNOW WITH THE PROFESSION THAT
 I'M IN?
 AND IF YOU DO NOT KNOW ME THEN HOW COULD YOU
 BE MY FRIEND?

The lights fade around ICE COLD and all that is left is ICE COLD illuminated by a harsh white light. The music rises and the lights pulse to reveal the CHORUS in pink and white attire standing next to CUPID. CAROLINE is standing next to ICE COLD with a smile. ICE COLD is avoiding eye contact.

CHORUS AND (CUPID)

HAPPY VALENTINE'S, HAPPY VALENTINE'S,
 HAPPY VALENTINE'S DAY (HAPPY VALENTINE'S
 DAY).
 HAPPY VALENTINE'S, HAPPY VALENTINE'S,
 HAPPY VALENTINE'S DAY (HAPPY VALENTINE'S
 DAY).
 HAPPY VALENTINE'S, HAPPY VALENTINE'S,
 HAPPY VALENTINE'S DAY (HAPPY VALENTINE'S
 DAY).

ICE COLD is shaking his head and pushing CAROLINE away, he begins to sing with the CHORUS but instead throws in "Fuck" occasionally.

CHORUS AND (ICE COLD)

HAPPY VALENTINE'S, FUCK THAT VALENTINE'S,
 FUCK THAT VALENTINE'S DAY (FUCK THAT
 VALENTINE'S DAY).
 FUCK THAT VALENTINE'S, FUCK THAT VALENTINE'S,
 FUCK THAT VALENTINE'S DAY (FUCK THAT
 VALENTINE'S DAY).
 FUCK THAT VALENTINE'S, FUCK THAT VALENTINE'S,
 FUCK THAT VALENTINE'S DAY (FUCK THAT
 VALENTINE'S DAY).
 FUCK THAT VALENTINE'S, FUCK THAT VALENTINE'S,
 FUCK THAT VALENTINE'S DAY (FUCK THAT
 VALENTINE'S DAY).
 FUCK THAT VALENTINE'S, FUCK THAT VALENTINE'S,
 FUCK THAT VALENTINE'S DAY (FUCK THAT
 VALENTINE'S DAY).
 (FUCK THAT VALENTINE'S DAY.)

CUPID pleads with his CHORUS to go back to love. They are on ICE COLD's side now and overpower CUPID's song of love and instead dance with ICE COLD. The chorus cuts and ICE COLD sings the final "Fuck that Valentine's Day" alone. Hold pose

for applause. CHORUS and CUPID dismiss but go separate ways. ICE COLD tries to walk with CHORUS but is stopped by CAROLINE.

CAROLINE

Hi, I'm Caroline. I love your style. You from around here?

ICE COLD

Yeah, I live just down the street.

CAROLINE

Oh, that's funny. I've never seen you around before. Did you just move in?

ICE COLD

No, I've been there for a few years now.

CAROLINE

Oh, you must not get out of your house often then?

CAROLINE laughs.

ICE COLD

I guess not...

CAROLINE

So, are you going to tell me your name?

ICE COLD

Sorry. I'm Ice Cold...

Man from right side peers from behind the curtain and screams with hands by his mouth.

OFFSTAGE

Ice Cold!

CAROLINE

Nice to meet you, Ice Cold. You know, I'd love to show you around town since you don't seem to know any of it.

ICE COLD

Oh that's not necessary. Thank you though. I really should be going anyway.

CAROLINE

I insist. You can never have too many friends, Ice Cold. But of course, if you are too busy then whatever. I can find someone else.

ICE COLD

Oh I have plenty of friends, don't even trip.

CAROLINE

Oh good, then you can bring them with you tonight. How about tonight at 8? Meet right here?

ICE COLD

I never said yes.

CAROLINE

Well I did. I'll be here regardless. I hope to see you. Goodbye Ice Cold. Don't leave me all alone tonight.

CAROLINE walks away. ICE COLD watches her walk away. His blank stare turns into a smile. He pulls out his phone and dials a number. ICE COLD puts it up to his ear and it rings for a while before he begins to speak.

ICE COLD

Hey Johnny. Can you come over? I need your help with something.

Fade to black.

5 **SCENE 5**

5

ICE COLD's house, he is cleaning frantically. He has multiple outfits laid out on the couch. JOHNNY VULTURE is walking up to the door, he is calm and very fashionable. He begins to knock, but ICE COLD flings the door open before his hand can even touch the door.

ICE COLD

(frantically)

Hey Johnny, how are you? Please come in.

JOHNNY

Jesus, what the hell happened here? Are you okay, Ice? I haven't seen you like this since... Oh my god! You sly dog! Come here, my boy! You got yourself a new woman! What's her name? Where did you meet her? What's her sign? Do you think -

ICE COLD holds up two different suits

ICE COLD

Which one?

JOHNNY

Alright, stop right now. Are you going to a funeral? Put that shit away. Let Johnny Vulture take care of you.

JOHNNY grabs ICE COLD's hand and brings him to the hall way which leads to the bedroom, there we see a closet. ICE COLD steps into the closet and he is out of view.

JOHNNY

(pointing)

Alright, try those paints and that shirt.
Now, maybe that scarf. Scratch that. Try the
turban. Fuck it, go back to the scarf. Def
not those shoes. Damn Ice, those are ugly.
There we go. Alright, let me see you.

ICE COLD walks out dressed exactly the same as JOHNNY.

JOHNNY

Now, you look great. Good lord you look
great. Shit, even I'd fuck you. Now tell me
about this girl. Is she cute? Probably not if
she likes your ugly ass.

ICE COLD

She is ... alright. I don't even think this
is a date. I just felt bad for her, you know?
I don't even care, Ice Cold baby.

OFFSTAGE

(screams)

Ice Cold!

JOHNNY

That's right baby. Hell yes, Ice Cold.

*ICE COLD checks his watch and begins to check for his phone,
wallet, and keys.*

ICE COLD

I got to go, I'm meeting her in 3 minutes.
Clean up for me will ya? Please, I might be
bringing her back and I don't want it to be
messy. Not that I really give a shit, but I
don't want to trip over anything.

JOHNNY

I hate you. Go have fun. I'm straight up
shoving this shit in the closet, don't expect
me to hang any of it up.

*ICE COLD is already out of the door by the time JOHNNY
finishes his line.*

JOHNNY

This dude better get his dick wet or I'm
going to be pissed.

*The meeting spot. CAROLINE is already waiting there in a
long, purple party dress. She smiles at ICE COLD, he looks
behind himself to see if she was smiling at someone else.*

CAROLINE

I was thinking you weren't going to show up.
I would have been heartbroken. Your friends
couldn't make it, huh?

ICE COLD

(embarrassed)

Oh, I thought you were joking about that. I can call some of them if you want me to -

CAROLINE

No, don't worry about it. We will have fun, just the two of us.

CAROLINE laughs and covers her mouth.

ICE COLD

Dope, what do you want to do?

CAROLINE

Follow me.

CAROLINE walks off stage and ICE COLD hesitates. He looks back at his home and back to her. She is out of sight now. He begins to walk home but she calls his name once more and he follows her path. Fade to black.

6 **SCENE 6**

6

They are at a club, she walks in with confidence while ICE COLD is hesitant. He looks around cautiously and avoids coming close to people. She turns around and grabs his hand to lead him to the bar.

CAROLINE

I'll have a whiskey. You want anything Ice Cold?

ICE COLD

Uh yeah, make it two.

CAROLINE

Cheers! I'm glad you could make it out tonight. I love this place.

They toast, ICE COLD quickly downs the drink while CAROLINE slowly sips the drink. "The Way You Move" by OutKast plays in the background.

CAROLINE

Oh wow! I love this song! Let's dance!

They both set down their drinks on the bar. CAROLINE grabs ICE COLD's hand and heads to the center of the crowd. CAROLINE is dancing independently and freely. ICE COLD dances uncomfortably. CAROLINE begins to dance closer to ICE COLD and he loosens up. A smile forms on his face.

ICE COLD

You are a great dancer!

CAROLINE

Thanks! I bet you are too if you knew how to have fun!

ICE COLD

Oh! I do, trust me, I just need a few more drinks. You want anything?

CAROLINE

Get me whatever you get!

ICE COLD walks to the bar and get two beers, he drinks half of one before walking towards CAROLINE.

CAROLINE

Thanks! You having fun?

ICE COLD

I suppose I am. To be honest, I haven't been out in a long time and this isn't necessarily my scene.

CAROLINE

Oh. Lets finish our drinks and then we can get out of here?

ICE COLD

That's okay, its your choice. Really.

CAROLINE finishes her beer quickly. ICE COLD looks around the bar to see if anyone noticed. She grabs his hand once again and leads him out of the bar towards the city street. Fade to black.

7

SPREAD

7

The new friends walk the empty night street together towards ICE COLD's house.

CAROLINE

So, what do you do for a living?

ICE COLD

I'm a song writer.

CAROLINE

That's pretty cool actually! Any songs I would know?

ICE COLD

Just a few songs for a some local artists. Nothing you would know.

CAROLINE

Try me, I know quite a lot about music. I'm the owner of my own business, the record store on fifth.

ICE COLD

Word? That's awesome! How long have you owned that?

CAROLINE

About 2 years actually. It's one of the most popular local businesses according to the Atlanta Tribune.

ICE COLD

I really need to get out more.

They both laugh and continue to walk between street lamps and homeless people.

CAROLINE

You want to go on a drive? My car is parked just over there!

ICE COLD

Damn, that's your car?

The car is a red sports car with white leather interior.

CAROLINE

Yes sir, I don't play around.

ICE COLD

Wow, this is... A beautiful car. But, you know, I need to get up for work early tomorrow, so I should probably go home.

CAROLINE

Tomorrow is Saturday. And didn't you say you were a song writer? Don't you work at home?

ICE COLD

Well, I- I - um.

CAROLINE

Look, Ice, if you don't like me, I won't be offended but I thought that things went well tonight. You seem like a pretty cool guy.

ICE COLD

Thank you, but I really just think we should take things slow. I'm not in a rush.

CAROLINE

Who said this had to be anything serious?

ICE COLD stares at CAROLINE and plays with his hands.

CAROLINE

Nothing wrong with having fun, Ice...

CAROLINE grabs ICE COLD by the waist and kisses him.

ICE COLD

Let's go to my place.

"Spread" plays. And ICE COLD begins to dance.

ICE COLD

I DON'T WANT TO MOVE TOO FAST, BUT
 CAN'T RESIST YOUR SEXY ASS.
 JUST SPREAD, SPREAD FOR ME.
 I CAN'T, I CAN'T WAIT TO GET YOU HOME.
 DON'T WANT TO COME ON TOO STRONG, BUT
 I'LL PLAY IN YOU ALL DAY LONG.
 JUST SPREAD, SPREAD FOR ME.
 I CAN'T, I CAN'T WAIT TO GET YOU HOME.
 I, I CAN'T READ MINDS, BUT I CAN READ YOURS.
 I THINK SHE SAYS THAT SHE WANTS TO POUR,
 YOUR, YOUR, YOURSELF ALL OVER ME.
 WHAT YOU THINK?
 I COULD BE WRONG BUT PUPILS DON'T LIE
 AND IF THEY DO, BY, GOD THEY MUST FRY

CAROLINE

FRY?

ICE COLD

YOU KNOW, LIKE ELECTRIC CHAIR.
 THE WAY YOU STARE, YEAH, I'M THERE.
 YOU COMMITTED A CRIME AND I'M THE VICTIM.
 I'VE GOT AN EYE OUT FOR SHE THAT CRIES OUT
 PASSIONATELY.
 WE'LL DO THINGS BACKWARDLY, FORWARDLY,
 HORIZONTALLY.
 I'M TOO YOUNG TO BE SETTLIN' DOWN,
 QUICK TO CHANGE MY MIND TOMORROW.
 SO, NOW CAN I BORROW YOUR TIMID TORSO?
 MORE SO THAN YOUR SOUL? HONEST ME, GOTTA BE
 HOW I ROLL.
 FUCK THE RHYTHM, TUCK THE RHYTHM UNDER YOUR
 BOSOM.
 YOU'RE THE PRISM, SHIRLEY CHISHOLM
 WAS THE FIRST, LET'S REHEARSE MAKIN' A BABY,
 PUT IN YOUR ORDER, I WANT A BABY DAUGHTER.
 DANCE ON THE TIP OF MY TONGUE.
 SHAKE THE CLOUDS UNTIL THERE'S NO MORE
 WETNESS IN THEM.
 TELL YOUR HOMEGIRLS THAT YOU WILL SEND THEM
 A POSTCARD FROM 3000, HARD.
 DON'T WANT TO MAKE YOU FEEL STRANGE, BUT
 DON'T LET THESE WORDS BE IN VAIN.
 SO SPREAD, SPREAD FOR ME.
 I CAN'T, I CAN'T WAIT TO GET YOU HOME.
 NATURE KNOWS THAT I WANT YOU, BUT
 NOT UNLESS YOU WANT ME TOO.
 SO SPREAD, SPREAD FOR ME.
 I CAN'T, I CAN'T WAIT TO GET YOU HOME.

CAROLINE and ICE COLD get into the car and "drive" to ICE COLD's house. (This should match with the instrumental break). They open the door then slam it closed. When we hear the clothes rip off, it's a comedic one piece tear-away outfit for both of them.

ICE COLD

OH! I DON'T WANT TO MOVE TOO FAST, BUT
 CAN'T RESIST YOUR SEXY ASS.
 JUST SPREAD, SPREAD FOR ME.
 I CAN'T, I CAN'T WAIT TO GET YOU HOME.
 DON'T WANT TO COME ON TOO STRONG, BUT
 I'LL PLAY IN YOU ALL DAY LONG.
 JUST SPREAD, SPREAD FOR ME.
 I CAN'T, I CAN'T WAIT TO GET YOU HOME.
 I DON'T WANT TO MAKE YOU FEEL STRANGE, BUT
 DON'T LET THESE WORDS BE IN VAIN.
 SO SPREAD, SPREAD FOR ME.
 I CAN'T, I CAN'T WAIT TO GET YOU HOME.
 NATURE KNOWS THAT I WANT YOU, BUT
 NOT UNLESS YOU WANT ME TOO.
 SO SPREAD, SPREAD FOR ME.
 I CAN'T, I CAN'T WAIT TO GET YOU HOME.

We see silhouettes under the bed sheets shaking and their bodies touching. As the song fades out, the lights dim and there are quiet whispers of "the morning after". Their bodies collapse and the lights fade to black.

8 **WHERE ARE MY PANTIES? (INTERLUDE)**

8

ICE COLD's bedroom. The bed is slanted up so their bodies are visible. Their bodies are covered and arms are resting over the sheets.

CAROLINE

What time is it? 7:48! Where, where are my...

OFFSTAGE

(overlapping)

Where are my...

CAROLINE

(overlapping)

Where?

OFFSTAGE

(overlapping)

Where are my panties?

CAROLINE

Oh my God, where are my panties? Damn, where, I don't - he gon' think I'm a ho. Fuck that, I liked it. I was drunk and it was my birthday anyway. Maybe I should lay here and let him touch my booty. Mm, I bet he don't even know my name.

ICE COLD

I know she think I just think she some kind of ho. I don't give a shit about givin' it up on the first night. That's just lettin' me know she know what she want outta life. What a hell of a way to goddamn wake up. Oh that
 (MORE)

ICE COLD (cont'd)
 shit was good. Oh maybe she'd get me some
 breakfast. Oh, she is so goddamn sweet, sweet
 as she wanna be. Oh, I just lay, ohh, I wanna
 lay in her hair. You can't fall for it, don't
 fall for it, Ice Cold.

OFFSTAGE

(screams)

Ice Cold!

ICE COLD

Maybe, I just roll over and just lay on her
 booty, yeah. Naw, no no, nah just lay here
 and be cool, be cool, Ice Cold.

OFFSTAGE

(screams)

Ice Cold!

ICE COLD

But what if she...

OFFSTAGE

(overlapping)

What if she...

ICE COLD

(overlapping)

What if she's the one?

Fade to black.

9

PROTOTYPE

9

*For The Record, CAROLINE's store. The collection of vinyls
 is expansive and the store is busy. CUPID is one of the
 customers. CAROLINE, MANDY, and ROSARIO work behind the
 counter. CAROLINE is wearing a blazer and formal attire.*

CAROLINE

Thank you for coming in sir, have a great
 day!

*She hands the customer a bag. As he walks out the store, he
 holds the door open for ICE COLD.*

CAROLINE

Welcome to For the Record! I can help who is
 next in li-

*CAROLINE stares at ICE COLD as he walks in and she smiles at
 him.*

CAROLINE

Hey, Mandy, take over for me, I'll be right
 back.

She leaves the cash register and MANDY takes over, offering

to help the next person in line. CAROLINE walks up to ICE COLD who is in the front corner, which is most isolated from other customers.

ICE COLD

Hey

CAROLINE

Hey... I really-

ICE COLD

I.. I had a great time last night. If I'm being honest with you. I haven't had that much fun in a long time.

CAROLINE

Me too, Ice. I was surprised.

ICE COLD

I hope I'm not overstepping but I'd like to maybe go out with you again sometime. Or at least get your number.

CAROLINE

You know, I'd like that. Let me get you a business card real quick and you can call me when you are ready.

She walks back to the desk and grabs a card from under the counter. ICE COLD appears to be out of listening distance.

MANDY

Is that the man from last night? He is a great ass birthday present if you ask me.

CAROLINE

Yeah that's him, he is something else.

ICE COLD walks back over to the counter after looking at the rap and r&b section. He can't seem to make a decision.

ICE COLD

Sweet. I'll call you tonight. What are you wearing? You usually wear a suit?

CAROLINE

Of course, I have to be professional. What did you expect? A slutty dress?

ICE COLD

Oh no. I guess - I just thought you'd be different. I've only seen you partying with heels and a dress.

CAROLINE

Of course, I have to dress up for a fun night. But it can't always be parties and sexy dresses.

ICE COLD

Yeah... I suppose you are right about that.
As much as I'd like to do that.

CAROLINE

(laughs)

You'd like to wear a dress?

ICE COLD

Yeah, close enough. Anyway, I should really
get going now. I'll see you later.

CAROLINE

Thanks for stopping by.

*ICE COLD begins to walk out the door, the door bell goes off
as he opens the door. He stands there and waits. CAROLINE
looks at MANDY, away from the door.*

CAROLINE

Mandy, I think I really like him. Like,
really like like him. He makes me feel like a
kid again.

*ICE COLD walks outside the store and begins to sing.
"Prototype" plays.*

ICE COLD

I HOPE THAT YOU'RE THE ONE,
IF NOT, YOU ARE THE PROTOTYPE.
WE'LL TIPTOE TO THE SUN.
AND DO THINGS, I KNOW YOU LIKE.

He is slow dancing in the parking lot.

ICE COLD

I THINK I'M IN LOVE AGAIN.
I THINK I'M IN LOVE AGAIN.

*As love is said, the store goes dark and the lights rise a
vibrant red. ICE COLD is dancing a professional duet without
the female counterpart.*

ICE COLD

TODAY MUST BE MY LUCKY DAY.
BABY, YOU ARE THE PROTOTYPE.
DO SOMETHING OUT THE ORDINARY.
LIKE CATCH A MATINÉE.
BABY, YOU ARE THE PROTOTYPE.
I THINK I'M, I THINK I'M LOVE AGAIN.
I THINK I'M IN LOVE AGAIN.

*The store is wheeled to the left side and is replaced by ICE
COLD's house. He enters and begins the strip down to his
underwear.*

ICE COLD

IF WE HAPPEN TO PART,
(MORE)

ICE COLD (cont'd)
 LORD KNOWS I DON'T WANT THAT, BUT HEY,
 WE CAN'T BE MAD AT GOD.
 WE MET TODAY FOR A REASON.
 I THINK I'M ON THE RIGHT TRACK NOW.
 I THINK I'M IN LOVE AGAIN.
 I THINK I'M IN LOVE AGAIN.

ICE COLD puts on a tuxedo and a cinema appears on the left side. He walks in and CAROLINE is waiting for him in an old-fashioned flapper dress.

ICE COLD
 LET'S GO TO THE MOVIES, YEAH

They sit down in traditional red fabric movie seats and a film camera rolls in. The film camera lens frames their faces and the camera's projection appears in black and white on a screen near them.

DIRECTOR
 (spoken over music)
 And action!

CAROLINE
 (spoken over music)
 Come here, nah, come here. Uh'uh I said come here. Come here.

They lean in for a deep romantic kiss that lasts seconds long.

CHORUS
 I THINK I'M IN LOVE AGAIN.

The CHORUS repeats this consistently, getting quieter each time.

ICE COLD
 GIRL, RIGHT NOW.
 I WANNA SAY.
 I WANNA SAY, STANK YOU, STANK YOU, VERY MUCH
 FOR PICKING ME UP AND BRINGING ME BACK TO
 THIS WORLD.
 I CAN'T, I'M NOT.
 I CAN'T AFFORD TO NOT RECORD.
 I THINK I WANNA SAY.
 I THINK I WANNA SAY STANK YOU, STANK YOU
 SMELLY MUCH FOR PICKIN' ME UP, PICKIN' ME UP
 OUT TO THIS WORLD.

The CHORUS begins to fade out as ICE COLD gets louder and more passionate. When he finishes, they lean in for a final kiss as the lights fade.

ICE COLD and CAROLINE are hand in hand and stone-faced in the city near ICE COLD's house. Their voices are

unenthusiastic and slow.

CAROLINE

So, what are you doing tonight?

ICE COLD

Well, I was going to maybe work on a new song for Johnny. We'll see how long I stick with it before moving on to something else. You going out with the girls?

CAROLINE

Yeah, it's Stephanie's birthday. She really wants to try out that new club, Left Foot, or something like that.

ICE COLD

My boy Antwan owns that joint with a buddy of his.

CAROLINE

I didn't know that. Why didn't you tell me that, Ice?

ICE COLD

... I don't know. Didn't think it really mattered.

CAROLINE

We could have got in for free, dude. He know what I look like? Is he there tonight?

ICE COLD

I doubt he does.

CAROLINE

What does that mean?

Caroline lets go of his hand and backs up.

ICE COLD

I don't know. He just doesn't know a lot about my personal life.

CAROLINE

Well what does that mean? Does he even know about me?

ICE COLD

I think so. But he has just been busy with the club and shit so I haven't really talked to him about you and ... Us.

CAROLINE

Call him. Make sure he knows I'm coming tonight with my girls.

She walks passed ICE COLD's house without looking back. ICE COLD walks into his house, sits down, and slouches into his

love seat. He pulls out his phone and dials a number. *ANTWAN* walks in from left and into a spotlight, he is talking with some guys around him when his phone rings and he answers.

ANTWAN

Yo

ICE COLD

Yo, it's Ice Cold.

OFFSTAGE

(screams)

Ice Cold!

ANTWAN

Sup Ice, what's good man?

ICE COLD

Nothing man. Just wanted to let you know that my girl and her friends are coming over to your place tonight for some drinks and shit.

ANTWAN

Man. I didn't know you had a girl. That's great! How long y'all been together?

ICE COLD

6 months tomorrow.

ANTWAN

Shit Ice! That's a long ass time, especially for your dog ass. Good for you. So I bet she is a thickey then, huh?

ICE COLD

You could say that. I just wanted to give you the heads up. I think she is a little mad at me right now, so sorry about that.

ANTWAN

Don't worry man. I'll handle it. Send me a picture of her.

ICE COLD begins looking for photos to send.

ICE COLD

I don't have any. She is a nice looking black woman. Uh, and she is cute. You'll know when you see her.

ANTWAN

Alright bro. I'll let you know how it goes tonight. See you later.

ICE COLD

Peace.

ICE COLD hangs up and lays down on the couch. He covers his face with a pillow as the lights fade.

"Left Foot", Antwan's club. It is full of patrons and the music is loud with flashing lights. CAROLINE and her friends are dancing when CAROLINE goes to the bar to get a drink. ANTWAN walks up to her and leans on the bar counter.

ANTWAN

Hey beautiful. Can I buy you a drink?

CAROLINE

Depends, do you even have enough money for what I want?

ANTWAN

Girl please, I have more than enough. I get them for free around here. Hey Keith, one drink on the house for this beautiful woman.

CAROLINE

You're going to run up your tab if you keep pulling stunts like this to impress girls like me.

ANTWAN

Well it's no problem. I own this wonderful place.

CAROLINE

Oh my, I'm sorry. I had no idea. I'm Caroline.

ANTWAN

Nice to meet you Caroline. I'm Antwan.

CAROLINE

Yeah, I know. Ice Cold is my boyfriend.

ANTWAN

Oh shit! I'm so sorry, I had no idea.

CAROLINE

Did Ice not tell you I was coming? I asked him to do that hours ago. He gets on my damn nerves some times and -

ANTWAN

No no! Of course he did! I just didn't know what you looked like. But he told me you'd be coming with some of your girlfriends.

CAROLINE

Why didn't you know what I looked like? He didn't show you a photo?

ANTWAN

Uhh, you know he did but I just didn't get a good look that's all. Look, you and your
(MORE)

ANTWAN (cont'd)
 girls can get a round of shots for free as my
 apology. If I had known it was you, I
 wouldn't have come up and st-

CAROLINE
 (frustrated)
 Don't even worry about it. I'm going to dance
 now. I'll see you around I'm sure. Thanks
 Antwan.

CAROLINE walks away and ANTWAN shakes his head.

ANTWAN
 Fucking asshole. Made me make a damn fool of
 myself.

ANTWAN waves his hands around in a mocking tone.

ANTWAN
 (mocking)
 Oh, don't worry Antwan. You'll know her when
 you see her. She is a pretty black woman.
 Every fucking person in a my club is a pretty
 black woman, dumbass.

Fade to black.

12 **SHE LIVES IN MY LAP**

12

*ICE COLD's house and city setting. CAROLINE walks with her
 girls on the street outside. They say goodbye to her, she
 walks in, and sees ICE COLD on the couch sleeping.*

CAROLINE
 Hey baby, I'm back. Ready to go to bed?

ICE COLD
 Hey, sorry, I fell asleep. You staying here
 tonight? I might just stay on the couch.

CAROLINE
 Nah baby, come to bed. I missed you today.
 I'm kind of in the mood too.

ICE COLD
 I don't really feel like it tonight. Maybe
 tomorrow? I'm just tired and want to sleep.

CAROLINE
 You don't want me to show you some affection?
 I can show you how much I love you.

ICE COLD
 What did you just say?

CAROLINE laughs. "She Lives In My Lap" plays.

CAROLINE

What's wrong? What are you afraid of? The love below?

ICE COLD

SHE STAYS ALONE, NEVER SHEDS A SINGLE TEAR.
SHE STAYS IN THE COOLEST MOODS, CLEARLY WOMAN OF THE YEAR.
SHE AND ALL GIRLFRIENDS, THEY GO OUT DRESSED TO WIN.
SHE COMES BACK TO THE COOLER SIDE OF TOWN.
AH, BE SHE LIVES IN MY LAP.
SHE LIVES IN MY LAP, SHE LIVES IN MY LAP.
SHE LIVES IN MY LAP, SHE LIVES IN MY LAP.
SHE LIVES IN MY LAP, SHE LIVES IN MY LAP.
OH, SHE LIVES IN MY LAP, FOREVER MY FIANCÉE.
SHE LIVES IN MY LAP, DON'T LEAVE, DON'T STAY.
SHE LIVES IN MY LAP, I'LL GET THE COURAGE ONE DAY.
MAKE ME WANT YOU, MAKE ME MISS YOU.
MAKE ME WONDER WHERE YOU ARE, THEN FORGET YOU.
GIRL, REMIND ME JUST WHO WE ARE.
WE'RE OH SO CLOSE, BUT YET SO FAR.

ICE COLD runs outside and begins speaking much louder. His voice is cracking and he collapses on his knees. CAROLINE is standing in the doorway.

CAROLINE AND (ICE COLD) AND [BOTH]

(Spoken over music.)

Baby, why are you acting like this? I don't care about any of them, I care about you.
Baby, I love you. [You've got me open wide].
(I love you). Just come inside (baby). It's yours (it's yours), I'm yours (I'm yours).
For sure (for sure). [Play baby play]

ICE COLD

SHE LIVES IN MY LAP, SHE LIVES IN MY LAP.
SHE LIVES IN MY LAP, SHE LIVES IN MY LAP.
OH, SHE LIVES IN MY LAP, FOREVER MY FIANCÉE.
SHE LIVES IN MY LAP, DON'T LEAVE, DON'T STAY.
SHE LIVES IN MY LAP, I'LL GET THE COURAGE ONE DAY.

Sampled outro plays and the lights are flickering between red, pink, and white. Both ICE COLD and CAROLINE are dancing and singing. They are unable to control their emotions and their bodies. The distance between them is growing. They run towards each other but never touch. As the sample ends, they are on opposite ends of the stage. They stare at each other as the lights calm down to a pink. They both turn around at the same time and go separate ways. Fade to black.

For The Record. ICE COLD walks in and looks around. MANDY and ROSARIO scoff at him and help the costumer in line. ICE

COLD looks around looking for CAROLINE. As he scans the room, he quickly jerks his head to a stop when he sees her. The lights dim and a harsh flood light reveals CAROLINE. She is talking to and laughing with an attractive male costumer, MIKE. ICE COLD begins to storm out but stops and sings by the door. "Hey Ya!" Plays.

ICE COLD

ONE, TWO, THREE, UH!
 MY BABY DON'T MESS AROUND
 BECAUSE SHE LOVES ME SO, AND THIS I KNOW FOR
 SURE, UH!
 BUT DOES SHE REALLY WANNA,
 BUT CAN'T STAND TO SEE ME WALK OUT THE DOOR?
 AH!

CAROLINE looks over and sees ICE COLD. She casually begins to walk towards him with a blank expression.

ICE COLD

DON'T TRY TO FIGHT THE FEELING
 CAUSE THE THOUGHT ALONE IS KILLING ME RIGHT
 NOW, UH!
 THANK GOD FOR MOM AND DAD
 FOR STICKING TWO TOGETHER CAUSE WE DON'T KNOW
 HOW, C'MON!

CAROLINE is now next to ICE COLD. She steps to the side to avoid his dramatic dancing.

ICE COLD

HEY YA! HEY YA!
 HEY YA! HEY YA!
 HEY YA! HEY YA!
 HEY YA! HEY YA!

As he sings, the other customers in the store begin to dance with glee besides CAROLINE who is standing still and looking around at the other customers with a slow scan.

ICE COLD

YOU THINK YOU'VE GOT IT, OH, YOU THINK YOU'VE
 GOT IT.
 BUT GOT IT JUST DON'T GET IT TIL THERE'S
 NOTHING AT ALL.
 WE GET TOGETHER, OH, WE GET TOGETHER
 BUT SEPARATE'S ALWAYS BETTER WHEN THERE'S
 FEELINGS INVOLVED.
 IF WHAT THEY SAY IS NOTHING IS FOREVER,
 THEN WHAT MAKES, THEN WHAT MAKES, THEN WHAT
 MAKES,
 THEN WHAT MAKES, WHAT MAKES, WHAT MAKES LOVE
 THE EXCEPTION?
 SO WHY OH, WHY OH, WHY OH, WHY OH, WHY OH,
 ARE WE SO IN DENIAL WHEN WE KNOW WE'RE NOT
 HAPPY HERE?

Everyone stops dancing. The flashing lights stop and a single white light focuses on ICE COLD.

ICE COLD

Y'all don't want to hear me, you just want to dance.

The music cuts ICE COLD off before he can finish his line. The customers begin dancing again and the lights return.

CHORUS AND (ICE COLD)

HEY YA! (UH-OH) HEY YA!
 (UH-OH DON'T WANT TO MEET YOUR DADDY UH-OH)
 HEY YA!
 (UH-OH JUST WANT YOU IN MY CADDY UH-OH)
 HEY YA!
 (UH-OH DON'T WANT TO MEET YOUR MAMA UH-OH)
 HEY YA!
 (UH-OH JUST WANT TO MAKE YOU CUMMA UH-OH)
 HEY YA!
 (UH-OH, I'M, I'M, I'M, I'M JUST BEING HONEST
 UH-OH)
 HEY YA! (I'M JUST BEING HONEST)

The lights and music calm down. The dancing halts to a more relaxed form. The following dialogue is delivered over music.

ICE COLD

Hey, alright now, alright now fellas.

MALE CHORUS

Yeah?

ICE COLD

Now, whats cooler than being cool?

MALE CHORUS

Ice Cold!

ICE COLD

I cant hear ya. I say what's cooler than being cool?

MALE CHORUS

Ice Cold!

ICE COLD

ALRIGHT. ALRIGHT. ALRIGHT. ALRIGHT. ALRIGHT.
 ALRIGHT. ALRIGHT. ALRIGHT. ALRIGHT. ALRIGHT.
 ALRIGHT. ALRIGHT. ALRIGHT. Okay now ladies.

FEMALE CHORUS

Yeah?

ICE COLD

Now we gon break this thing down in just a few seconds. Now don't have me break this thing down for nothing. Now I want to see y'all on your baddest behavior. Lend me some sugar. I am your neighbor.

(MORE)

ICE COLD (cont'd)

AH! HERE WE GO!
 SHAKE IT, SH-SHAKE IT, SHAKE IT, SH-SHAKE IT.
 UH-OH! SHAKE IT, SH-SHAKE IT, SHAKE IT, SHAKE
 IT, SH-SHAKE IT, UH-OH
 SHAKE IT LIKE A POLAROID PICTURE HEY YEA!
 SHAKE IT, SH-SHAKE IT, SHAKE IT, SH-SHAKE IT,
 SHAKE IT, SHAKE IT OKAY, SHAKE IT, SUGAR,
 SHAKE IT LIKE A POLAROID PICTURE.
 Now all the Beyonces and Lucy Lius and baby
 dolls, get on the floor.
 YOU KNOW WHAT TO DO,
 OH, YOU KNOW WHAT TO DO.
 YOU KNOW WHAT TO DO.

CHORUS

HEY YA! UH-OH. HEY YA! UH-OH.
 HEY YA! UH-OH. HEY YA! UH-OH,
 HEY YA! HEY YA! UH-OH.
 HEY YA! OH, OH, UH-OH.
 HEY YA! UH-OH. HEY YA! UH-OH!

The song fades out and both choruses continue to dance. Moving towards each other in a seductive manner. ICE COLD walks out with his head down. CAROLINE is crying and screams for everyone to get out of her store. No one can hear her over the joyful music. She storms out in the opposite direction from ICE COLD. The music stops and all dance partners kiss.

14 **ROSES**

14

ICE COLD is back at his home, pacing back and forth in his living room. His house takes up a small section of the stage and the city center fills the remaining space.

ICE COLD

Fuck. Fuck. Fuck. Fucking shit!

He throws something in his hand and we hear something break off stage. He grabs his wall-mounted cord phone and dials a number.

ICE COLD

Hey, I need to talk to you. Can you meet me downtown in five minutes? No, I need to see you. Please. Thank you.

Lights fade to a soft glow. "Roses" plays. The area begins to fill with well dressed men and ICE COLD walks to the center of them. As ICE COLD starts to sing, the lights flash on and the men around him begin dancing.

ICE COLD

CAROLINE!

MALE CHORUS

CAROLINE!

ICE COLD

SEE, CAROLINE,
ALL THE GUYS WOULD SAY SHE'S MIGHTY FINE

MALE CHORUS

MIGHTY FINE!

ICE COLD

BUT MIGHTY FINE ONLY GOT YOU SOMEWHERE HALF
THE TIME
AND THE OTHER HALF EITHER GOT YOU
CUSSED OUT OR COMING UP SHORT.
YEAH, NOW DIG THIS, NOW EVEN THOUGH

MALE CHORUS

EVEN THOUGH

ICE COLD

YOU'D NEED A GOLDEN CALCULATOR TO DIVIDE

MALE CHORUS

TO DIVIDE

ICE COLD

THE TIME IT TOOK TO LOOK INSIDE AND REALIZE
THAT REAL GUYS GO FOR REAL DOWN TO MARS
GIRLS.
HAHA YEAH!

ICE COLD AND CHORUS

I KNOW YOU'D LIKE TO THINK YOUR SHIT DON'T
STANK, BUT
LEAN A LITTLE CLOSER, SEE
ROSES REALLY SMELL LIKE POO-POO-OOH.
YEAH, ROSES REALLY SMELL LIKE POO-POO-OOH.
I KNOW YOU'D LIKE TO THINK YOUR SHIT DON'T
STANK, BUT
LEAN A LITTLE CLOSER, SEE
ROSES REALLY SMELL LIKE POO-POO-OOH.
YEAH, ROSES REALLY SMELL LIKE POO-POO-OOH.

The dance is the same as that in the music video.

ICE COLD

CAROLINE!

MALE CHORUS

CAROLINE!

ICE COLD

SEE, SHE'S THE REASON FOR THE WORD BITCH

MALE CHORUS

BITCH

ICE COLD

I HOPE SHE'S SPEEDIN' ON THE WAY TO THE CLUB.
TRYNA HURRY UP TO GET TO A BALLER OR SINGER
(MORE)

ICE COLD (cont'd)
 OR SOMEBODY LIKE THAT
 AND TRY TO PUT ON HER MAKE UP IN THE MIRROR
 AND CRASH, CRASH,
 CRASH INTO A DITCH. JUST PLAYIN'.
 SHE NEEDS A GOLDEN CALCULATOR TO DIVIDE

MALE CHORUS

TO DIVIDE

ICE COLD

THE TIME IT TAKES TO LOOK INSIDE AND REALIZE
 THAT REAL GUYS GO FOR REAL DOWN TO MARS
 GIRLS, YEAH.

ICE COLD AND CHORUS

I KNOW YOU'D LIKE TO THINK YOUR SHIT DON'T
 STANK, BUT
 LEAN A LITTLE CLOSER, SEE
 ROSES REALLY SMELL LIKE POO-POO-OOH.
 YEAH, ROSES REALLY SMELL LIKE POO-POO-OOH.
 I KNOW YOU'D LIKE TO THINK YOUR SHIT DON'T
 STANK, BUT
 LEAN A LITTLE CLOSER, SEE ROSES REALLY SMELL
 LIKE POO-POO-OOH.
 YEAH, ROSES REALLY SMELL LIKE POO-POO-OOH.

ANTWAN

WELL, SHE'S GOT A HOTTIE'S BODY BUT HER
 ATTITUDE IS POTTY.
 WHEN I MET HER AT A PARTY, SHE WAS HARDLY
 ACTING NAUGHTY.
 I SAID SHORTY, WOULD YOU CALL ME?
 SHE SAID PARDON ME, ARE YOU BALLING?
 I SAID DARLING, YOU SOUND LIKE A PROSTITUTE
 PAUSING.
 OH, SO YOU'RE ONE OF THEM FREAKS.
 GET GEEKED AT THE SIGHT OF AN ATM RECEIPT
 BUT GAMES BEEN PEEPED, DROPPIN' NAMES, SHE'S
 WEAK.
 TRICKIN' OFF THIS BITCH IS LOST, MUST TAKE ME
 FOR A GEEK.
 A QUICK WAY TO EAT, A NEAT PLACE TO SLEEP.
 A RENT-A-CAR FOR A WEEK, A TRICK FOR A TREAT.
 NO GO ON THE RAW SEX, MY AIDS TEST IS
 FLAWLESS.
 REGARDLESS, WE DON'T WANT TO GET INVOLVED
 WITH ALL THEM LAWYERS
 AND JUDGES JUST TO HOLD GRUDGES IN A
 COURTROOM.
 I WANNA SEE YOUR SUPPORT BRA, NOT SUPPORT
 YOU.

ICE COLD AND CHORUS

I KNOW YOU'D LIKE TO THINK YOUR SHIT DON'T
 STANK, BUT
 LEAN A LITTLE CLOSER, SEE
 ROSES REALLY SMELL LIKE POO-POO-OOH.

(MORE)

ICE COLD AND CHORUS (cont'd)
 YEAH, ROSES REALLY SMELL LIKE POO-POO-OOH.
 I KNOW YOU'D LIKE TO THINK YOUR SHIT DON'T
 STANK, BUT
 LEAN A LITTLE CLOSER, SEE
 ROSES REALLY SMELL LIKE POO-POO-OOH.
 YEAH, ROSES REALLY SMELL LIKE POO-POO-OOH.
 YEAH, I...
 I KNOW YOU'D LIKE TO THINK YOUR SHIT DON'T
 STANK, BUT
 LEAN A LITTLE CLOSER, SEE
 ROSES REALLY SMELL LIKE POO-POO-OOH.
 YEAH, ROSES REALLY SMELL LIKE POO-POO-OOH.
 I KNOW YOU'D LIKE TO THINK YOUR SHIT DON'T
 STANK, BUT
 LEAN A LITTLE CLOSER, SEE
 ROSES REALLY SMELL LIKE POO-POO-OOH.
 YEAH, ROSES REALLY SMELL LIKE POO-POO-OOH.
 I KNOW YOU'D LIKE TO THINK YOUR SHIT DON'T
 STANK,
 BUT LEAN A LITTLE CLOSER, SEE
 ROSES REALLY SMELL LIKE POO-POO-OOH.
 YEAH, ROSES REALLY SMELL LIKE POO-POO-OOH.
 I KNOW YOU'D LIKE TO THINK YOUR SHIT DON'T
 STANK, BUT
 LEAN A LITTLE CLOSER, SEE
 ROSES REALLY SMELL LIKE POO-POO-OOH.
 YEAH, ROSES REALLY SMELL LIKE POO-POO-OOH.
 I KNOW YOU'D LIKE TO THINK YOUR SHIT DON'T
 STANK, BUT
 LEAN A LITTLE CLOSER, SEE
 ROSES REALLY SMELL LIKE POO-POO-OOH.
 YEAH, ROSES REALLY SMELL LIKE POO-POO-OOH.
 I KNOW YOU'D LIKE TO THINK YOUR SHIT DON'T
 STANK, BUT
 LEAN A LITTLE CLOSER, SEE
 ROSES REALLY SMELL LIKE POO-POO-OOH.
 YEAH, ROSES REALLY SMELL LIKE POO-POO-OOH.

ICE COLD

BETTER COME BACK DOWN TO MARS.
 GIRL, QUIT CHASING CARS.
 WHAT HAPPENS WHEN THE DOUGH GETS LOW,
 BITCH YOU AIN'T THAT FINE, NO WAY, NO WAY, NO
 WAY.
 BETTER COME BACK DOWN TO MARS.
 GIRL, QUIT CHASING CARS.
 WHAT HAPPENS WHEN THE DOUGH GETS LOW,
 BITCH YOU AIN'T THAT FINE, NO WAY, NO WAY, NO
 WAY.

ICE COLD runs into his house and slams the door behind himself. He begins throwing things on the ground. His house is made a mess and he lays on the couch.

MALE CHORUS AND (ANTWAN)

(spoken over music.)

Crazy bitch. Crazy bitch. Crazy bitch. Crazy
 (MORE)

MALE CHORUS AND (ANTWAN) (cont'd)
 bitch. Crazy bitch. Crazy bitch. Crazy bitch.
 (Bitch). Crazy bitch. (Stupid ass bitch).
 Crazy bitch. (old punk ass bitch). Crazy
 bitch. (Old dumb ass bitch). Crazy bitch. (A
 bitch's bitch). Crazy bitch. (Just a bitch).
 Crazy bitch. (Stupid ass bitch). Crazy bitch.
 (Stupid ass bitch). Crazy bitch. (Old punk
 ass bitch). Crazy bitch. (Old dumb ass
 bitch). Crazy bitch. (a bitch's bitch). Crazy
 bitch. (Just a bitch).

Fade to black. Curtains close. End of Act 1.

Intermission.

LIGHTS RISE:

ACT 2

15 **GOOD DAY, GOOD SIR / BEHOLD A LADY**

15

Curtains open as the music break begins. ICE COLD is in traditional "newsies" style clothing, walking around the city square and snapping his fingers. He is smiling and his movements are over-the-top stereotypes. His hair is longer and more well-kept. "Good Day, Good Sir" plays.

ICE COLD

Ahh, such sweet sound. The Fiddler on the
 Fucking Roof. Is that Mr. Bentley Fonzworth?

BENTLEY

Indeed, it is, sir.

ICE COLD

Good day, good sir. How do you do? Look fine.

BENTLEY

Fantastically well, I am certainly not fine
 by far. But you could say I'm close to
 spectacular.

ICE COLD

Close to spectacular? How so?

BENTLEY

Open your eyes, spectacular's right in front
 of you.

ICE COLD

Whatever you say. You're spectacular.

BENTLEY

No. I'm fantastically well.

ICE COLD

Come on man. Make up your mind. A minute ago
 you said you were fine.

BENTLEY

No, I said I'm close to spectacular. But I'm meeting fine in a minute.

ICE COLD

Close to spectacular? You said you were fantastically well.

BENTLEY

Exactly.

ICE COLD

Exactly? Which one are you? Close to spectacular or fantastically well?

BENTLEY

I am certainly and without a doubt fantastically well and was close to spectacular but I must say, good sir, you just pissed spectacular off and don't even mention exactly... But here comes fine right now.

ICE COLD

Oh Lord, she is fine.

A woman with heels walks past the gentlemen as they are obviously starrng at her and following her with their eyes. She wears business casual clothing and heels so her steps are loud.

NORAH

(looking at them)

Gentlemen.

BENTLEY

Behold.

ICE COLD AND BENTLEY

A lady.

"Behold A Lady" plays and ICE COLD begins to follow her while dancing. He displays jolty steps and powerful movement.

ICE COLD

SOPHISTAFUNK, ARISTOCATS,
DISTINGUISHED DOGS, CLEAN UP YOUR ACTS.
PULL UP YOUR PANTS, LADIES AND GENTS.
PLEASE, ACT LIKE YOU GOT SOME SENSE.
YOU KNOW WHAT I REALLY WANNA KNOW?
WHERE DO ALL THE GOOD GIRLS GO?
WHAT CLUBS THEY HANG AT?

Dance becomes more fluid and moving. He slides across the stage and dances around her. She continues to walk.

ICE COLD

BEHOLD.
 A LADY.
 I SEE YOU STANDING ON THE WALL.
 CLAP. CLAP. YOU DESERVE IT ALL.

CHORUS AND (ICE COLD)

BEHOLD (CANDY-COATED UNICORNS ARE)
 A LADY (QUITE HARD TO FIND).
 I SEE YOU STANDING ON THE WALL.
 (THE CLASSIC LADY, A RARE BREED INDEED)
 CLAP CLAP, YOU DESERVE IT ALL.
 (IS THAT MAKE AND MODEL DISCONTINUED?)

ICE COLD

TODAY, I MIGHT SNOW, TOMORROW, I'LL RAIN.
 3000'S ALWAYS CHANGING BUT YOU STAY THE SAME.
 AND I NEED THAT.
 HEY, I NEED THAT, IN MY LIFE.
 WHEN I FEEL WASHED AND INADEQUATE.
 AND THROW ALL MY SONGS AWAY, NO MATTER HOW
 MAD I GET,
 YOU MAKE ME SMILE. YOU MAKE ME SMILE.
 YOU MAKE ME SMILE. YOU MAKE ME OH!
 YOU'RE THE ANCHOR THAT HOLDS ME DOWN
 WHEN MY SHIP IS SINKING, YOU WON'T LET ME
 DROWN
 AND I'M GRATEFUL OH OHOH!

CHORUS AND (ICE COLD)

BEHOLD (MAYBE THEY DISAPPEARED WITH THE
 DINOSAURS)
 A LADY (OH, BUT SUCH A BIG BAND THEORY).
 I SEE YOU STANDING ON THE WALL. (MAYBE THEY'RE
 STILL AROUND?)
 CLAP CLAP, YOU DESERVE IT ALL.
 (BUT ONLY TO BE SEE WITH APPRECIATE EYES).
 BEHOLD (MAYBE THEY WERE TAKEN FOR GRANTED?)
 A LADY (AND LOST ALL THEIR MAGIC).
 I SEE YOU STANDING ON THE WALL (OH, HOW
 AWFUL).
 CLAP CLAP, YOU DESERVE IT ALL (OH, SO
 TRAGIC).

ICE COLD

YO MAMA'S OLD FASHIONED, YO DADDY DON'T PLAY.
 YOU'LL ALWAYS BE THIS LOVELY CAUSE THEY
 RAISED YOU THAT WAY.
 HALLELUJAH! THANK YA, JESUS! THANK YA, LORD!
 THANK YA, JESUS! THANK YA, LORD!
 THANK YA, JESUS! THANK YA, LORD!
 YOU'RE NOT EXTRA EXTRA, YOU'RE SO PLAIN JANE.
 THE YING TO MY YANG, DARLIN', YOU'VE GOT THAT
 THANG.
 AND YOU KNOW IT, BUT YET YOU DON'T,
 BUT YET YOU DON'T AND THAT'S WHAT'S SO COOL.
 YOU DON'T SAY TOO MUCH, BUT WHEN YOU DO, IT'S
 PROFOUND.

(MORE)

ICE COLD (cont'd)
 IN THE STREET, YOU HOLD YOUR HEAD HIGH.
 AT HOME, YOU GET LOW DOWN FOR ME.
 CAN'T GET NO LOWER, CAN'T GET NO LOWER, CAN'T
 GET NO LOWER, YEAH.
 OH, YOU'RE THE ANCHOR THAT HOLDS ME DOWN.
 WHEN MY SHIP IS SINKING, YOU WON'T LET ME
 DROWN AH-AH-AH-AH.
 SAD, BUT ONE DAY OUR KIDS WILL HAVE TO VISIT
 MUSEUMS
 TO SEE WHAT A LADY LOOKS LIKE.

CHORUS AND (ICE COLD)

BEHOLD (SO IF YOU FIND ONE, I BEG YOU, HOLD
 HER TIGHT)
 A LADY (YES, IF YOU SPOT ONE, GOOD SIR, TREAT
 HER RIGHT).
 I SEE YOU STANDING ON THE WALL (ICE COLD,
 SIGNING OFF).
 CLAP CLAP YOU DESERVE IT ALL (THANKS A
 MILLION,
 GOOD LUCK AND GOODNIGHT).
 BEHOLD.
 A LADY.
 I SEE YOU STANDING ON THE WALL.
 CLAP CLAP, YOU DESERVE IT ALL.
 BEHOLD.
 A LADY.
 I SEE YOU STANDING ON THE WALL.

*ICE COLD catches up with the woman after dancing. They are
 back at their original positioning before the song began.*

ICE COLD

Hello beautiful. I couldn't help but notice
 you when you walked by.

NORAH

Believe me, I could tell. You and your friend
 aren't very good at being subtle.

BENTLEY slowly backs away before running off stage.

ICE COLD

I'm sorry. I don't tend to be subtle when I
 see a piece of art. I need to appreciate it.
 Can you dig it?

CAROLINE

So now I'm a piece of art? Something to look
 at? Admire but not touch?

ICE COLD

Well. When you say it that way it sounds bad.
 But I meant it in a flirtatious manner.
 Please, let me take you out sometime. Buy you
 a drink - you know, to make up for my
 comments.

NORAH

That's real nice, but no thank you.

ICE COLD

Why? Are you scared? What are you afraid of?
The love below?

NORAH

No, I just don't think I'm really your type,
sugar.

ICE COLD

Well you won't know until you let me find
out.

NORAH laughs sarcastically.

NORAH

You're funny.

ICE COLD

Just asking for one night. Nothing more. Just
a few drinks and then you can throw me to the
side.

NORAH

Why are you being so insistent? Never been
denied before?

ICE COLD

No, it's just - I don't know.

NORAH

And did you act this way with all the other
girls?

ICE COLD

No.

NORAH

Well, why not? Just feeling extra lucky
today?

ICE COLD

No, you are... Different. A true lady. I'm
tired of all these party girls. I need a
woman in my life, someone different.

NORAH

(sarcastic)

Well, if that's all you want go find someone
else. There are plenty of other girls, I mean
women, out there.

ICE COLD

But, I want you. Please. Just a drink. You
can pick the bar and bring your friends if
that makes you feel better.

NORAH

...Come to Vulture's tonight at 8. You need directions?

ICE COLD

I know the place. I'll be there. I just hope you will be too, beautiful.

Norah is starting to walk away.

NORAH

Don't get your hopes up. One drink, that's it.

Norah leaves via left stage.

ICE COLD

I'm back baby.

Fade to black.

16 **PINK & BLUE**

16

Vulture's Club. It is dark and moody, a true jazz bar. Many of the customers are smoking and filling the room with a haze. There are patrons all around standing by the bar. All the seats and tables are taken. Patrons are facing the stage which is occupied by a man on piano and a man on saxophone. There is a deep red curtain behind the two men. ICE COLD walks in, surprised at the crowd and begins to look around for NORAH. ICE COLD is wearing a pink suit. JOHNNY VULTURE is in a fedora and holding a cigar, he walks onto to stage and faces the crowd.

JOHNNY

Ladies and gentlemen. Our entertainment for tonight. Ms. Norah Johnson.

The audience claps and JOHNNY walks off stage. The clapping stops. Suddenly, a woman comes out from behind the curtain, too dark to be seen, she sings "Age Ain't Nothing But a Number" by Aaliyah.

NORAH

AGE AIN'T NOTHIN' BUT A NUMBER.
 THROWIN' DOWN AIN'T NOTHIN' BUT A THANG.
 THIS LOVIN' I HAVE FOR YOU,
 IT'LL NEVER CHANGE.
 AGE AIN'T NOTHIN' BUT A NUMBER.
 THROWIN' DOWN AIN'T NOTHIN' BUT A THANG.
 THIS LOVIN' I HAVE FOR YOU,
 IT'LL NEVER CHANGE.

As she finishes the first line, she slowly comes out of the dark. Revealing to ICE COLD and the audience that it is the same woman from earlier. NORAH is wearing a light blue dress.

Lights and vocals fade after the first verse is finished.

Reset to after her performance is done. Lights rise. ICE COLD and NORAH are talking at the bar. Both have drinks in their hands. ICE COLD appears cool and relaxed, standing while leaning on the bar counter. NORAH is sitting on a bar stool, surrounded by others that interrupt their conversation, congratulating her.

ICE COLD

(stumbling over his words)

I have to got to say, you were wonderful. I had no idea you could even sing. I was - I mean, I come in here, expecting to meet you at the bar to get a drink or two. But instead. I mean, wow. Shit. You were incredible. I loved that song. I never would have guessed, or hell- even thought, that you could sing.

NORAH

Well there is a lot you don't know about me.

ICE COLD

Such as?

NORAH

We can get to that later. There is something I don't even know about you.

ICE COLD

And what would that be?

NORAH

You never told me your name.

NORAH pushes her hair back and smiles.

ICE COLD

Aww baby. Don't even trip. My name's Ice Cold

Man in bar turns his head when he hears the name. Put his hands to his mouth and screams.

OFFSTAGE

(Screams)

Ice Cold!

NORAH

Well Ice Cold, it's nice to meet you.

NORAH shakes his hand and Ice Cold is taken back.

NORAH

Thank you again for the drink and thank you for coming to my show.

ICE COLD

You can have as many drinks as you want. And
(MORE)

ICE COLD (cont'd)

I didn't even know it was your damn show. You never told me that.

NORAH

We barely spoke today. One minute in passing. I only told you about tonight because I get 5% on all drink sales and I knew I could get at least a dollar from you.

ICE COLD

Damn. And I thought I was cold.

OFFSTAGE

(Screams)

Ice Cold!

NORAH laughs and touches ICE COLD's arm. She looks at the bartender.

NORAH

Hey Harry, can I get another drink please? Well Ice Cold, we shall see how tonight goes. No promises.

ICE COLD

All I'm asking for is a chance. Get to know me and you won't be disappointed. All promises.

NORAH

So, what do you do? I've seen you around town maybe once or twice. And Johnny seemed to know you well.

ICE COLD

I'm a song writer. Trying to get into producing. You know, I used to come here often to look for talent. People to sell songs to. But I haven't been in a while... Johnny and I became friends because I was here almost every night. I actually get half off on drinks. So, sorry about your cut.

NORAH

I only moved here two months ago but I met Johnny at some record store and he asked me to check his place out. I haven't seen you here before. You've definitely missed all my shows. I've performed the last three Fridays and Saturdays.

ICE COLD

I wish I could have seen you a few weekends ago. Would have been nice to have met you sooner.

NORAH

Well... Why weren't you here? You said you would come every weekend.

ICE COLD

I was just going through some shit. Nothing important. Seeing your beautiful face was more than I needed to get me going. Shit, I might even write a song about you.

NORAH

I'd be honored.

The two share a brief moment of silence.

NORAH

So... Why didn't you come see me last weekend? Or the weekend before?

ICE COLD

I was just... Not in the mood. Not really motivated.

NORAH

Oh yeah? And why was this?

ICE COLD

Just some girl.

NORAH

That's usually what is with boys.

ICE COLD

Now listen. I ain't no boy. I'm a fucking man.

NORAH

Relax Ice... From my experience, boys -

NORAH raises her hand to correct herself.

NORAH

- men, always get overly emotional over a girl or give no emotion at all. I'd rather have an overabundance of emotions than none at all. I've been around a while and I've seen both.

ICE COLD

Been around a while huh? That's a good one.

NORAH

Yeah... How old do you think I am?

ICE COLD

Not much older than me. I'm 28 so you are probably 30 or 32. I hope this isn't a trick question.

NORAH laughs and shakes her head.

NORAH

You must be plain stupid or haven't payed attention. I'm most certainly not 30.

ICE COLD

That's okay. As long as you are at least 18.

NORAH

I'm 42.

The lights dim around them to only focus on the two talking. "Pink & Blue" starts playing. A sample of NORAH's earlier singing starts playing.

NORAH

AGE AIN'T NOTHIN' BUT A NUMBER, NOTHIN' BUT A NUMBER.
 AGE AIN'T NOTHIN' BUT A NUMBER, NOTHIN' BUT A NUMBER.
 AGE AIN'T NOTHIN' BUT A NUMBER, NOTHIN' BUT A NUMBER.
 AGE AIN'T NOTHIN' BUT A NUMBER, NUMBER, NUMBER, NUMBER-BER.

As each color is said, the lights above NORAH and ICE COLD fade to match. Everyone around them is still and silent as ICE COLD sings.

ICE COLD

PRETTY PINK, BABY BLUE.
 WHY DON'T, WHY DON'T YOU TEACH ME SOMETHING NEW?
 WE'RE ALL, WE'RE ALL, JUST BABIES IN MY VIEW.
 SO CRAWL, BABY, CRAWL, BABY.
 PRETTY PINK, BABY BLUE.
 WHY DON'T, WHY DON'T YOU TEACH ME SOMETHING NEW?
 WE'RE ALL, WE'RE ALL, JUST BABIES IN MY VIEW.
 SO CRAWL, BABY, CRAWL, BABY.

ICE COLD stands up dramatically and suddenly from his leaning position. The lights brighten and the bar patrons begin to dance.

ICE COLD

MISS LADY, YOU COULD HAVE BEEN BORN A LITTLE LATER, BUT I DON'T CARE.
 SO WHAT IF YOUR HEAD SPORTS A COUPLE OF GREY HAIRS?

NORAH touches the top of her head, embarrassed. The lights dim and the dancing stops.

ICE COLD

SAME HERE, AND ACTUALLY, I THINK THAT'S FUNKY.
 IN A CLAIRE HUXTABLE TYPE OF WAY.

The lights and dancing resume.

ICE COLD

MISS LADY, IT LOOKS TO ME LIKE YOU NEED A
LITTLE JUICE IN YOUR LIFE.
CALL ME WHEN THAT BIG OL' HOUSE GETS
LONELY-FIED.
AND I'LL TELEPORT FROM HERE TO THERE.
YOU SHOW ME HOW IT'S SUPPOSED TO BE DONE.
I'LL MAKE SURE YOU HAVE YOUNG FUN.

When ICE COLD sings "Here to there", he slides across the floor towards her.

ICE COLD

PRETTY PINK, BABY BLUE.
WHY DON'T, WHY DON'T YOU TEACH ME SOMETHING
NEW?
WE'RE ALL, WE'RE ALL, JUST BABIES IN MY VIEW.
SO CRAWL, BABY, CRAWL, BABY.
PRETTY PINK, BABY BLUE.
WHY DON'T, WHY DON'T YOU TEACH ME SOMETHING
NEW?
WE'RE ALL, WE'RE ALL, JUST BABIES IN MY VIEW.
SO CRAWL, BABY, CRAWL, BABY.

ICE COLD stands on the top of bar counter and crawls towards her, she laughs but continues to dismiss him.

ICE COLD

YOU'RE SOPHISTICATED.
JUST ME AND MISS LADY.
YOU'VE GOT ME TALKIN' LIKE A BABY. YOU MAKE
ME TALK BABY TALK.
SHE'S SOPHISTICATED. YOU MAKE ME TALK BABY
TALK.
JUST ME AND MISS LADY. SHE MAKES ME TALK BABY
TALK.
YOU GOT ME TALKIN' LIKE A BABY. LIKE GAGA AND
GOO-GOO
OH MOMMA, YEAH.
YOU'RE SOPHISTICATED. YOU MAKE ME TALK BABY
TALK.
JUST ME AND MISS LADY. YOU'RE SO EXPERIENCED.
YOU GOT ME TALKIN' LIKE A BABY. TEACH ME
SOMETHIN' NEW.
TEACH ME SOMETHIN' NEW.
YOU'RE SOPHISTICATED.
JUST ME AND MISS LADY.
YOU GOT ME TALKIN' LIKE A BABY.
SOPHISTICATED.
JUST ME AND MISS LADY.

As the song ends, ICE COLD is holding NORAH close, they lean in and kiss. They both smile.

ICE COLD

Let's go back to my place.

ICE COLD walks over to a table in the corner of the club to grab his coat from a chair. *NORAH* is watching him, but she is occasionally turning to talk to *JOHNNY* at the bar. As *ICE COLD* is grabbing his coat, *CAROLINE* approaches him. *ICE COLD* turns around and sees her. His body slumps when he notices her.

CAROLINE

Hey Ice...

ICE COLD

Hey.

CAROLINE

I was going to call you today but I was busy. Glad I ran into you here.

ICE COLD

I bet you are. Most people are glad to see me. Can't say the same for you.

CAROLINE

... We need to talk.

ICE COLD

No. You need to talk... To somebody else. I'm busy if you can't tell.

CAROLINE

It's serious Ice. I really need to talk with you.

ICE COLD

I don't care. Talk to Johnny about it or your girlfriends or one of your fifty fucking boyfriends. I'm done. I've moved on.

CAROLINE

Please Ice. It's not like that. You just don't understand-

ICE COLD

- I understand. Have a good night but keep me out of it.

ICE COLD walks away from *CAROLINE* and towards *NORAH*. *NORAH* looks concerned as *CAROLINE* begins to cry. *ICE COLD* walks away from her and towards *NORAH*, who still wears a concerned look. He grabs her hand and they walk out of the club. Fade to black.

17 **LOVE IN WAR**

17

ICE COLD's house. It is disorganized and unclean unlike his usual living situation. He flips the lights on and *NORAH* gasps.

NORAH

Hmm, some place you got here.

ICE COLD

I know... It's usually not like this. Honest.
I just haven't had the motivation to clean.

NORAH

All because of some bitch huh?

ICE COLD

Woah. Don't call her that. You know nothing
about her.

NORAH

Who was that girl at the club?

ICE COLD

Which girl? I knew most of the girls at that-

ICE COLD tries to stop himself.

NORAH

So, you know most of the girls huh? Now why
would that be?

ICE COLD stares in silence.

NORAH

I don't know about you, Ice. But I am not
some bitch you can just use and be done with
after the night is over.

ICE COLD is silent and looks at the floor.

NORAH

Now, who was that girl at the bar?

ICE COLD

Nobody.

NORAH

Nobody? So you just walked up to a stranger
and made her cry?

ICE COLD

She is nobody to me anymore. It's not
important.

NORAH

Well shit, it must be kind of important. She
the reason for this fucking mood you are in?

NORAH gestures to the floor and the mess around her.

ICE COLD

I don't know if she is the reason. But she is
a factor... Maybe.

NORAH

So why'd you talk to her?

ICE COLD

She was talking to me. I wasn't talking to her.

NORAH

Well you must have said something for her to fucking cry like that.

ICE COLD

I didn't say shit to her. Why the fuck do you even care, Norah? I don't know her anymore! I don't care about her anymore. Let's focus on right now instead.

NORAH

Because you are clearly hiding something. Why would I want to be around someone who lies all the time? And you must be one mean motherfucker if you can make a woman cry without talking to her.

ICE COLD

Listen. She said she wanted to tell me something. I told her that I didn't want to hear it.

NORAH

Why didn't you hear her out? It might be important, right?

ICE COLD

Because I'm with you tonight. I'm not going to blow you off for my exgirlfriend.

NORAH

But why did you make her cry, Ice? I just don't understand how you could be so cruel.

ICE COLD

Listen. You weren't there for the conversation. You don't know what I said - which was nothing. You and I both have no idea why she cried. She is just emotional. Always has been. We broke up because of her. Not me!

NORAH

There are three sides to every story, Ice. Your side, her side, and the truth. I'm sure she would blame you.

ICE COLD

Don't project your insecurities and failed relationships on me.

NORAH

Wow. Okay. Fuck you.

ICE COLD

No. Fuck you. You don't understand shit about me or my relationship with Caroline.

NORAH

Maybe I don't, but that doesn't mean you understand shit about me or my relationship with anybody else before you.

ICE COLD is silent. He can't look at NORAH.

NORAH

I just wanted to know why you made that poor girl cry. And you're right. I don't know the situation. But I know pain when I see it. And I can tell she was in pain and I can tell that you've been in pain.

ICE COLD shrugs her off and begins to walk away to the other side of the room.

ICE COLD

Whatever. I'm not in pain. I'm over it. I've been over it. She wasn't even the reason for all this.

ICE COLD gestures to the floor and the mess.

ICE COLD

It was just some temporary disinterest with work. Everybody gets that occasionally.

NORAH

You need to open up and admit it, Ice. You were sad. I get it. It's okay. Just admit that you were depressed because of the breakup.

ICE COLD

I was and never have been depressed.

ICE COLD gestures with air quotes for "depressed".

NORAH

Relax Ice. I'm not coming at you. I'm trying to get you to open up. You need to relax. Take off your cool.

ICE COLD

I am relaxed! I'm tired of people actin' like something wrong with me.

NORAH

Nothing is wrong with you Ice! Nothing at all. You have emotions just like everybody else. You need to open up and let me see them. Let the world see them. You can't be alone in this world.

ICE COLD

I don't want to talk about this anymore. I don't want to fight.

NORAH

We aren't fighting. If we were, I'd be winning.

ICE COLD

It's the first day I've known you and we've already screamed at each other. Let's not fight. I'm over it. I came back here to have a good time.

NORAH

A good time huh? What did you expect would happen?

ICE COLD

I don't know. Figured we could have a few more drinks. Maybe kiss, not fight.

NORAH

You would be so lucky.

"Love In War" plays.

ICE COLD

LET'S KISS, NOT FIGHT.
 TRY TO DO WHAT'S RIGHT TONIGHT.
 MAKE LOVE, NOT WAR.
 WHAT THE HELL ARE WE LIVING FOR?
 LET'S KISS, NOT FIGHT.
 TRY TO DO WHAT'S RIGHT TONIGHT.
 MAKE LOVE, NOT WAR.
 WHAT THE HELL ARE WE LIVING FOR?

ICE COLD dances over to his piano and pretends to play while looking at NORAH.

ICE COLD

TONIGHT WE'LL MAKE THE PRETTIEST SONG
 THAT NO ONE WILL EVER HEAR.
 NO ONE WILL EVER HEAR.
 NO ONE WILL EVER.

ICE COLD walks towards NORAH and grabs her hips and pulls her close.

ICE COLD

THESE AIN'T THE TIMES TO BE ALONE.
 CLICHÉ, THE END IS NEAR.
 CLICHÉ, THE END IS NEAR.
 CLICHÉ, THE END IS
 QUICKLY APPROACHING WHILE WE CARRY ON.
 NO ONE IS PROMISED ANOTHER DAY.
 WHY THE STORY END LIKE FAIRYTALES OFTEN DO?
 BEFORE I LET YOU LEAVE, I'VE GOT TO SAY.

ICE COLD and NORAH are classically dancing together.

ICE COLD

LET'S KISS, NOT FIGHT.
 TRY TO DO WHAT'S RIGHT TONIGHT.
 MAKE LOVE, NOT WAR.
 WHAT THE HELL ARE WE LIVING FOR?
 LET'S KISS, NOT FIGHT.
 TRY TO DO WHAT'S RIGHT TONIGHT.
 MAKE LOVE, NOT WAR.
 WHAT THE HELL ARE WE LIVING FOR?

ICE COLD and NORAH are dancing while armed soldiers in pink uniforms on the left are having a battle with an opposing army in blue uniforms on the right. Shots are fired but miss the pair as smoke fills the air from the gunfire.

ICE COLD

LET'S KISS, NOT FIGHT.
 TRY TO DO WHAT'S RIGHT TONIGHT.
 MAKE LOVE, NOT WAR.
 WHAT THE HELL ARE WE LIVING FOR?
 LET'S KISS, NOT FIGHT.
 TRY TO DO WHAT'S RIGHT TONIGHT.
 MAKE LOVE, NOT WAR.
 WHAT THE HELL ARE WE LIVING FOR?
 LET'S KISS, NOT FIGHT.
 TRY TO DO WHAT'S RIGHT TONIGHT.
 MAKE LOVE, NOT WAR.
 WHAT THE HELL ARE WE LIVING FOR?
 LET'S KISS, NOT FIGHT.
 TRY TO DO WHAT'S RIGHT TONIGHT.
 MAKE LOVE, NOT WAR.
 WHAT THE HELL ARE WE LIVING FOR?

ICE COLD and NORAH kiss deeply. They hold hands and walk towards his bedroom. Fade to black.

18 **SCENE 18**

18

For the Record. CAROLINE is crying and talking to MANDY and ROSARIO behind the counter. There are a few customers browsing.

CAROLINE

I don't know what to do. He won't even text me back and his phone goes straight to voicemail.

ROSARIO

Have you seen him in person? Can you just talk to him?

CAROLINE

I already tried. I went to Vulture's because I knew he would be there, or at least I thought. I've been going for weeks but I didn't see him until last night for the first
 (MORE)

CAROLINE (cont'd)
time. Anyways, he was there with some bimbo. I didn't even get a good look at her but I know she is a slut. When he walked away from her, I went up to him and tried to talk but he was being such a dick. Wouldn't even respond to me.

MANDY
That sounds like Ice Cold to me.

ROSARIO
Mmhmm.

CAROLINE
I had it all planned out in my head. I was going to just tell him straight out. "Ice. I'm pregnant". But it all fell apart. It was a disaster. And I couldn't stop crying. Even after he left with that bitch, I was just crying and crying. Johnny offered me a free drink to make me feel better but I had to make up some excuse about being a designated driver.

MANDY
Go to his house Caroline. You know where he lives.

CAROLINE
No. I'm not going to do that. I can't bring myself to go there and confront him like that and -

ROSARIO
Well he obviously blocked your phone number. So how else are you going to talk to him?

CAROLINE
I don't know. I fucking don't know.

CAROLINE begins to cry harder and falls on the ground and sits.

MANDY
It's okay. We will figure this out. We just need to talk to him. We will find a way to confront him and tell him straight up.

ROSARIO
You aren't going to go through this alone. You have us to support you. And dammit, I will make sure Ice is there to support you if it fucking kills me.

CAROLINE
I don't even know if I want to have this baby or not.

MANDY and ROSARIO both share a concerned look with each other as they are crouching near CAROLINE on the floor.

ROSARIO

Well, we can figure that out when the time comes. Let's just focus on talking to Ice right now. You have to tell him.

ROSARIO and MANDY help CAROLINE to her feet. The attractive male from "Hey Ya!" Approaches the counter.

MIKE

Hey Caroline. What's going on? Can I help?

CAROLINE

Not now, Mike. Thank you for your help around the store today. I need to take the rest of the day off. Can you close for me?

MIKE

Of course I can. What else are big brothers for?

Fade to black.

19 **SHE'S ALIVE**

19

ICE COLD's house. He walks in alone with his jacket and throws it on the chair. His house is clean once again. He joyfully walks towards the kitchen and the phone on the wall. He picks it up and dials a number. As it rings, the lights rise on stage left to reveal his mother in a chair, she picks up the phone on the table next to her.

SHARON

Hello.

ICE COLD

Hey Mama!

SHARON

Oh hi baby. How are you doin'?

ICE COLD

I'm doing great actually. I haven't really talked to you in a while. I think the last time I saw you was around February.

SHARON

Shit. Has it really been four months? Your daddy and I will come visit you sometime soon! How about this weekend?

ICE COLD

Well that's why I was calling you actually! There is this gir- woman, that I want you to meet. Her name is Norah.

SHARON

Oh my! Lawrence! Ice got himself a girlfriend!

LAWRENCE runs from offstage to SHARON and grabs the phone from her. He is noticeably excited and a little out of breath.

LAWRENCE

Hey Ice... You got a girl huh? Is she hot?

SHARON playfully slaps LAWRENCE's arm and grabs the phone from him.

SHARON

You know Lawrence... So can we come down to meet her soon?

ICE COLD

I don't see anything wrong with that. I also don't want to scare her off, so maybe lets wait a few more weeks. She is great. Very talented and beautiful. You should come on Fridays so you can see her sing at Johnny's club! You remember Johnny right?

SHARON

Of course. He is quite the interesting fella. I'd love to see her sing. What do you mean by "scare her off"?

ICE COLD

I don't know how serious things are between us. We've only been seeing each other for about 3 months or so.

SHARON

Why don't you just ask?

ICE COLD

Well, what if things aren't that serious with us? What if I'm misreading things?

SHARON

You know Ice, I felt that same when I first met Lawrence. I thought to myself, "what man would want to stay with a single mom with a baby?". Christ, Ice, I wasn't even 3 months pregnant when you dad walked out. I was so grateful to meet your stepdaddy - and you know damn well, I never let you call him that. I don't care what the DNA says, that man is your father. He raised you when that other man refused.

ICE COLD

I know. Dad is the only real dad I ever knew and the only one I ever care to know.

SHARON

And I'm so grateful that I found the right man so early in my life. Lawrence has been the best thing to me for 28 years now and I'm forever grateful that I survived through all that pain long enough to meet him.

"She's Alive" plays. The lights dim and are only focused on ICE COLD.

ICE COLD

A BOY TO RAISE AT A YOUNG AGE.
NO HELP FROM HIM, BUT SHE'S ALIVE.
TO BE MADE STRONG, BUT ALL ALONE.
MUST BE A PAIN, BUT SHE'S ALIVE.

On stage far right, three women in 1970's style clothing walk slowly towards the front of stage. One is pregnant and struggling to walk, the other girls provide their arms for support.

ICE COLD

THE YEAR WAS 1975.
THAT NIGHT CRICKETS CRIED.
THEY KNEW WHAT WAS GOIN' DOWN.
THREE GIRLS TRAVEL A LONG COUNTRY ROAD
AND ONE SAYS SHE THINKS IT'S TIME.
THIS BABY WANTS TO COME RIGHT NOW.

The pregnant woman, stumbles to her knees and the other girls are concerned. The lights fade to only focus on ICE COLD.

ICE COLD

A BOY TO RAISE AT A YOUNG AGE.
NO HELP FROM HIM, BUT SHE'S ALIVE.
TO BE MADE STRONG, BUT ALL ALONE.
MUST BE A PAIN, BUT SHE'S ALIVE.

The lights shift to focus only on SHARON.

SHARON

I was scufflin' going to school, I was scufflin' working at night and you know what? I truly believe and that's why I tell a lot of parents, single parents, don't tell me what God can't do. I made sure you had, I never felt like you should be deprived of anything. If a man didn't want to take of his child, you move on. And that's what I did, I moved on.

CAROLINE can be seen in the background behind SHARON paralleling her own situation. Lights focus back on ICE COLD.

ICE COLD

A BOY TO RAISE AT A YOUNG AGE.
(MORE)

ICE COLD (cont'd)
 NO HELP FROM HIM, BUT SHE'S ALIVE.
 TO BE MADE STRONG, BUT ALL ALONE.
 MUST BE A PAIN, BUT SHE'S ALIVE.

Lights focus back on SHARON. CAROLINE is no longer there.

SHARON

He always wanted to be a father but he never
 took care of you. He ain't have no money, he
 ain't have nothin'. How can you care about
 somebody and never give the welfare of them?

Lights focus on ICE COLD.

ICE COLD

A BOY TO RAISE AT A YOUNG AGE.
 NO HELP FROM HIM, BUT SHE'S ALIVE.
 TO BE MADE STRONG, BUT ALL ALONE.
 MUST BE A DRAG, BUT SHE'S ALIVE.
 A BOY TO RAISE AT A YOUNG AGE.
 NO LOVE FROM HIM, BUT SHE'S ALIVE.
 TO BE MADE STRONG, BUT ALL ALONE.
 MUST.

*Lights focus to reveal CAROLINE near SHARON and 1970's woman
 near ICE COLD with a baby in her hand.*

SHARON

And I knew I had to go that road by myself.

*The 1970's woman is all alone and walks off stage-right with
 baby. CAROLINE walks off, pregnant, stage-left.*

ICE COLD

She's alive.

Lights fade.

20 **DRACULA'S WEDDING**

20

*Large calendar on the wall in ICE COLD's bedroom. Date reads
 February 13th. ICE COLD gets out of bed and rips page to
 reveals February 14th. Ice Cold speaks to himself.*

ICE COLD

Ah, fuck.

*A figure moves around in the bed and groans before sitting
 up.*

NORAH

What is it, baby? Everything okay?

ICE COLD

Of course... Happy Valentine's day, Norah!

NORAH

Aww, you remembered! Happy Valentine's day. I have a special night planned for us.

ICE COLD

Oh great. I'm looking forward to it!

The two share an awkward silence and stare at each other.

ICE COLD

So... What are we doing then?

NORAH

Well, it's the day of love. So something romantic of course.

ICE COLD

Cool... Cool.

NORAH

It's going to be a lot of fun, baby. Don't worry. I'm happy to spend it with you. I love you.

ICE COLD

Yeah. I'm excited too. Let's get head out.

ICE COLD and NORAH get dressed into fancy attire. ICE COLD sports a tuxedo and Norah wears a dark red dress with a large leg slit. On stage right, a fancy restaurant is being set up. When they are finished getting dressed, they walk over to the restaurant. The lighting is dim and moody. ICE COLD walks ahead of NORAH and quickly grabs his seat. A waiter pulls the chair out for NORAH. The restaurant is decorated with candles and chandeliers.

ICE COLD

This is...

ICE COLD is looking around slowly, taking in the atmosphere.

ICE COLD

Really nice... What... I'm kind of... This is crazy Norah.

NORAH

Lost for words, huh?

ICE COLD

Yeah, I am...

ICE COLD laughs uncomfortably.

NORAH

I've loved every moment that I've spent with you Ice. Even the fights. Even the times we were physically apart, I still felt close to you. You've been such an essential aspect of
(MORE)

NORAH (cont'd)

my life and I'm so grateful to have met you. These months with you have been incredible and I've really learned so much about you. And I can't wait to learn even more about you as the year goes on.

ICE COLD is shifting around in his chair a lot, he is struggling to make eye contact.

NORAH

You are talented, you are sweet, you are handsome, and you are kind. And most of all, you are cold, baby.

OFFSTAGE

(screams)

Ice Cold!

NORAH reaches across the table to grab ICE COLD's hands.

NORAH

I love you, Ice. You are the love of my life. I'm devoted to you and only you. And I'm ready to take things to the next step. Let's get married.

The lights begin to flash and people located in the restaurant begin to run around. In the chaos, ICE COLD receives a bright red cape and white Dracula-style wig. The lights calm and become harsh red. "Dracula's Wedding" plays. ICE COLD leads the dance with the servers and staff as back up.

ICE COLD

YOU'RE ALL I'VE EVER WANTED, BUT I'M
TERRIFIED OF YOU.
SEE, MY CASTLE MAY BE HAUNTED, BUT I'M
TERRIFIED OF YOU.
I'VE CAST MY SPELL ON MILLIONS, BUT I'M
TERRIFIED OF YOU.
BABY, I DO THIS FROM THE CEILING, BUT I'M
TERRIFIED OF YOU.

The waiters and other customers are dressed in vampire, zombie, and werewolf costumes.

ICE COLD

I WAIT MY WHOLE LIFE TO BITE THE RIGHT ONE,
THEN YOU COME ALONG AND THAT FREAKS ME OUT.
SO I'M FRIGHTENED.
OOH, DRACULA'S WEDD-

The monsters are setting up a wedding scene around the restaurant.

ICE COLD

I'VE NEVER RAN FROM NO ONE, BUT I'M TERRIFIED
(MORE)

ICE COLD (cont'd)

OF YOU.
 SEE, MY HEARTBEAT IS A SLOW ONE, BUT I'M
 TERRIFIED OF YOU.
 I'VE BEEN AROUND FOR AGES, BUT I'M TERRIFIED
 OF YOU.
 DONE MY THANG ACROSS THE STAGE, BUT YET, I'M
 TERRIFIED OF YOU.

ICE COLD seems to slide across the floor when he sings "do my thang across the stage." NORAH has disappeared among the crowd.

ICE COLD

I WAIT MY WHOLE LIFE TO BITE THE RIGHT ONE
 THEN YOU COME ALONG AND THAT FREAKS ME OUT.
 SO I'M FRIGHTENED.
 OOH, DRACULA'S WEDDING.

The wedding scene is finished being set up. And the other monsters are setting up chairs to watch.

ICE COLD

AH, YOU KNOW I'M TERRIFIED.
 OH, YOU KNOW I'M TERRIFIED.
 YOU KNOW I'M TERRIFIED.
 SHH-SHH! HERE SHE COMES...

NORAH walks across the stage with blood trickles on her lips. She also wears a veil. Fog begins to pour on stage.

NORAH

THREE-THOUSAND, THREE-THOUSAND.
 THREE-THOUSAND, THREE-THOUSAND.

NORAH is following ICE COLD around the stage. ICE COLD continues to look back over his shoulder.

NORAH

GIVE ME THE CHANCE TO DANCE ROMANCE.
 DON'T RUN, I'M NOT THE SUN.
 SO MUCH AT STAKE, OH, BAD CHOICE OF WORDS
 BUT I'M NOT THE GUN
 WITH SILVER BULLETS.
 AND I CAN COUNT, ONE, TWO, THREE.

NORAH counts on her fingers.

NORAH

PLUS, I MAKE GREAT PEANUT BUTTER AND JELLY
 SANDWICHES,
 VAN HELSING.

ICE COLD and NORAH are standing at the altar now and ICE COLD vocalizes a faint scream.

ICE COLD

AHH AHH.

NORAH

For richer or poorer. Through sickness and in health. 'Til death do us part. 'Til death do us part. You only live once. Well, not in our case 'cause we live forever.

NORAH leans in for a kiss and ICE COLD runs off stage, leaving NORAH alone. The other monsters are open-mouthed and follow ICE COLD with their eyes. Fade to black.

21 **THE LETTER (INTERLUDE) / MY FAVORITE THINGS**

21

ICE COLD's house. Once again, his house is messy. JOHNNY and ANTWAN are sitting on the couch while ICE COLD is on the recliner.

ICE COLD

I couldn't do it man. I just... I don't get it, man. Why? Why would she even fucking ask something like that? I feel like I barely know her and she is asking me to marry her?

ANTWAN

Yeah. That's wack. It sounds like she is a little crazy.

JOHNNY

I think it's great that she asked. It's about time you settled down and quit your playing.

ICE COLD

I ain't no player.

ANTWAN laughs dramatically and sarcastically over-the-top.

ICE COLD

Shut the fuck up.

ANTWAN

Look man, you are a bigger player than me.

ICE COLD

No, you listen. I liked this woman a lot. I hate to see her go. But I also don't want to be with no crazy bitch that is trying to get married to me.

JOHNNY

So now she's a bitch because she wants to get married?

ICE COLD

No. That's not what I meant. I just, it sort of slipped out.

The three men stare at each other in silence.

ICE COLD

I don't know why she had to go and ruin everything. Things were fine between us and she just had to take it too far. It's not fair.

ANTWAN

You really think she took it too far?

ICE COLD

Fuck that supposed to mean?

ANTWAN

Asshole, you got up and left without saying a fucking word to her. No answer. Nothing. No goodbye. No "let me think about". Just down and out. Like a little bitch.

JOHNNY

Too afraid to fly. You need to open up and be free, my friend.

ICE COLD

I am free. I am open. I don't know what else y'all want from me. This woman made a mistake and now she has to deal with it. Nothing I can do about that shit.

ANTWAN slowly stands up and begins his dialogue in a calm tone, gradually becoming more angry and aggressive.

ANTWAN

Nothing you can do, huh? How about givin' this woman another chance? How about respecting her question and giving her a real fucking answer? About not running away from everything like a little bitch?

ICE COLD quickly jumps out of his chair and pushes ANTWAN. ANTWAN stumbles back onto the couch.

ICE COLD

Get the fuck out of my house! Both of y'all. Out, right now. Go on!

ANTWAN stares at ICE COLD and JOHNNY shakes his head.

ICE COLD

I invite you into my house and you gon' disrespect me like this. Deal with your own shit before you go and lay it all on me like I'm yo fuckin' therapist.

ANTWAN

You haven't talked to this woman in two weeks. Two whole weeks that you haven't given her a definitive answer. Two weeks that she had to sit around and feel like she isn't good enough.

JOHNNY

We don't mean any disrespect, Ice. We-

ANTWAN

- oh I mean all the disrespect. You need to grow the fuck up.

ICE COLD

I am grown, I'm more grown than both of y'all. I know women better than you and certainly better than Johnny.

ANTWAN

You may know pussy better than Johnny, but he certainly knows how to treat women with respect better than you do. And he knows how to be a better friend than you. When was the last time you were at my club, huh? I offer you free drinks, I offer you the VIP room. You never come over because you say you have plans. We both know what your plans are. Sitting around, playing videogames, jerking off, and crying. You ain't going nowhere in life unless you pick yourself up off the fucking shit covered floor. Can't keep feeling sorry for yourself.

ICE COLD

I don't feel sorry for myself. I have a great life. Only downside is I got two shitty friends and a crazy ass girlfriend. Other than that, my life is fucking great!

ICE COLD puts his arms up to gesture to his surroundings as if they were his pride.

JOHNNY

Yeah. Real great life you have here. Burning bridges with the only two people that stuck with you through all of your bullshit throughout the years. And now you are yelling at them in your disaster of a house.

ANTWAN

Don't be such a little bitch about this Ice. You need to accept it and fucking repair your life. Because at this rate, you are going to be alone.

ICE COLD

Well, I like it that way. I like being alone. I don't need y'all. I don't need nobody!

ANTWAN

So that's it, huh? You don't need us anymore?

ICE COLD

You're goddamn right. I don't need y'all
(MORE)

ICE COLD (cont'd)
 douchebags. Get the fuck out of my house and
 never fucking show your face around here
 again. Fuck you both.

*ANTWAN and JOHNNY walk out and slam the door behind them.
 ICE COLD begins to cry and screams out.*

ICE COLD

Fuck y'all!

*ICE COLD collapses on his knees. Sobbing uncontrollably. He
 lays down on the ground and falls asleep. The lights dim to
 a blue hue to symbolize the passage of time into night. A
 letter is thrown through the letter slot in ICE COLD's door
 and hits him on the face, he wakes up.*

ICE COLD

What the fuck?

*ICE COLD inspects the letter. He stands up with it in firmly
 in both hands. He opens the letter and begins to read. "The
 Letter (Interlude)" plays.*

ICE COLD

Ah! A letter from *censored*. "Dear Ice,"

*The lights rise and there are women on both stage-left and
 right. These women include: CAROLINE holding her baby,
 NORAH, MANDY, ROSARIO, and two other women from CHORUS.*

CAROLINE

I hope this letter finds you in the best of
 health.

NORAH

As for myself, I'm doin' well.

CAROLINE

And P.S.

NORAH

With or without you.

CAROLINE

I can't get enough.

FEMALE CHORUS

That's why you're my favorite stuff.

*"My Favorite Things" plays. ICE COLD dances frantically
 around his room, jumping off of furniture and walls. This
 continues and gradually elements of the set are removed
 until there is only an empty stage with intense lighting
 cued to musical motifs. One-by-one, ICE COLD dances with
 members of the female cast members. They are dancing in a
 manner that tells a story paralleling their own relationship
 with each other. The dance becomes slower or faster
 depending on the intensity of the song and ends with ICE*

COLD alone and slowly drifting around the empty stage under dim white light. Fade to black.

22 **TAKE OFF YOUR COOL**

22

ICE COLD is at an unknown bar, sitting alone with a drink in his hand. Staring at the wall, playing it cool. The dance floor is filled with people having fun, ICE COLD is the only person not talking to another person. A young woman with a turban, jeans, and a loose floral top walks up to ICE COLD and begins to talk.

ERYKAH

Hey, baby. How are you? You look so sad all alone.

ICE COLD

Nah, I'm straight.

ERYKAH

You sure about that? You looking like you could use somebody to talk to. Just a friend.

ICE COLD

I don't need anybody to make me happy.

ERYKAH

Damn, alright then.

ERYKAH waves him off and starts to turn around.

ICE COLD

Let me buy you a drink. Let me buy you a drink. I'm sorry.

ERYKAH is reluctant and turns around.

ERYKAH

You going to be a little nicer to me?

ICE COLD

Yeah, sure.

ERYKAH

I'll have a bloody mary.

ICE COLD stares at ERYKAH with a confused look.

ERYKAH

You said you were buying me a drink right? Then buy me a drink.

ICE COLD raises his hand to call over the bartender.

ICE COLD

She'll have a bloody mary. I'll take another shot.

The bartender begins to make their drinks.

ERYKAH

Thank you. So, what's your name?

ICE COLD

It's Ice Cold.

OFFSTAGE

(with minimal effort and
disdain)

Ice Cold!

ERYKAH

Nice to meet you. I'm Erykah. Thank you for the drink.

ICE COLD

Yeah, I guess. It's fine.

ERYKAH

I like this place a lot. I've never seen you here before.

ICE COLD

I came here last night too. Did the same shit I'm doin' now. Same with the week before.

ERYKAH

Damn. Shit sucks for you.

ERYKAH gestures to the bartender for another drink.

ERYKAH

Hey, I'll have a shot of -

ICE COLD

I've been to Left Foot and Vulture's. They weren't for me. Kind of shitty and dirty.

ERYKAH

Those places are tight. I don't know what your problem with them are. Great music, cheap drinks. I only come here because it's close to my home.

ICE COLD

Well maybe you should just go to those places if you like them so fucking much.

ERYKAH

Seriously, what is your problem?

ICE COLD

Nothing. I'm just tired.

ERYKAH

Long day at work or something? You need to relax. Take a load off.

ICE COLD

Tired of all of this. Tired of fucking...
life, man.

ERYKAH

Word?

ICE COLD

I don't want to get into it.

ERYKAH

Fair enough. I'm just out here living my best
life bro. Being as close as I can to God and
others. I think you need to find that same
balance to reach this nirvana.

ICE COLD

I don't really think it's that deep as you
think it is.

ERYKAH

I think it's very important to talk about
this type of stuff.

ICE COLD

Why the fuck do you care? I just met you.

ERYKAH

True. But I can also see there is pain in
your eyes. All three of them.

ICE COLD

What makes you think you can help me? Or that
I even want your help?

ERYKAH

You bought me a drink didn't you? I think you
probably want some help if you did that.

ICE COLD

You don't know what I want. You don't even
know me.

ERYKAH

I know that you won't talk to me?

ICE COLD

What the fuck are we doing right now?

ERYKAH

Saying words at each other. Talking at each
other. We ain't having a conversation, that's
for sure.

ICE COLD

I don't want to talk. I have nothing to say.
I'm here to drink and go home with someone
for a night. That's it. I don't need all this
extra shit.

ICE COLD gestures to ERYKAH, waving over her body.

ERYKAH

And I'm just trying to make a friend. And I felt like you could really use one too.

ICE COLD

Well I don't. I don't need shit. I don't need you. I'm cool. I'm chill. I don't need you to kill my vibe.

ERYKAH

You know, it would be a lot easier for you to quote, take someone home for the night, if you weren't such a dick about it.

ICE COLD

I'm not a dick. I'm just calm and don't care. Ice Cold.

OFFSTAGE

(quietly and trailing off)

Ice col-

ERYKAH

And how's that working for you?

ICE COLD

Fucking fantastic.

ERYKAH

Maybe you should start caring and I bet you would see a different. Fate only happens if you make an effort for it.

ICE COLD

Excuse me?

ERYKAH

I'm saying nobody wants to be with a quote, cool guy. Women want emotions. You need to show me that you want me.

"Take Off Your Cool" plays. ERYKAH pushes in closer to ICE COLD and the crowd seems to dance in slow mo as their party music switches to the song.

CHORUS

HEY, OH.
BA-DO-BA. BA-DO-BA.
HEY, OH.
BA-DO-BA. BA-DO-BA.

ERYKAH

BABY, TAKE OFF YOUR COOL.
I WANNA SEE YOU, I WANNA SEE YOU.
BABY, DON'T BE SO COOL.
I WANNA SEE YOU, I WANNA SEE YOU.

The dancing customers are dancing even slower. The lights slowly fade between a soft white and blue.

ERYKAH AND CHORUS

BABY, TAKE OFF YOUR COOL.
I WANT TO GET TO KNOW YOU.

ERYKAH slowly stands up and touches ICE COLD on the shoulder. He is now intrigued by her.

ERYKAH

Baby, take off your cool.

ERYKAH walks off stage along with every other female cast member with their male or female counterpart. ICE COLD is left alone at the bar. Ice Cold watches all the couples leave before slouching down, drinking, and staring at the bar countertop. Fade to black.

23 **VIBRATE**

23

ICE COLD is walking through the city, drunk and stumbling around. People pass him by and ignore him as he makes a fool of himself. ICE COLD is slurring his speech and talking to himself.

ICE COLD

Fucking stupid.

ICE COLD stops and looks around him. He shouts at an unknown person.

ICE COLD

Hey! You want to?

It is not clear who he is talking to. Everyone is ignoring him.

ICE COLD

Fucking bitch.

ICE COLD pulls out his phone and dials a number. He holds it up to his ear.

ICE COLD

Hey! You are awake? Hello? Hello?

ICE COLD flips his phone closed and quickly and sloppily puts it in his pocket. He waits a little bit and dials another number. It dials and a voicemail starts to play. He shuts his phone and puts it in his pocket and walks home. ICE COLD stumbles inside his house, throwing the door open. It is more messy than it's ever been before. "Vibrate" plays.

CHORUS

EVERY BOY AND GIRL, WOMAN TO MAN.
WHEN YOU FEEL YOU'VE DONE ABOUT THE BEST YOU
(MORE)

CHORUS (cont'd)

CAN.
 MOTHERFUCK THE WAGON, COME JOIN THE BAND.
 VIBRATE. VIBRATE HIGHER.
 EVERY BOY AND GIRL, WOMAN TO MAN.
 WHEN YOU FEEL YOU'VE DONE ABOUT THE BEST YOU
 CAN.
 MOTHERFUCK THE WAGON, COME JOIN THE BAND.
 VIBRATE. VIBRATE HIGHER.

ICE COLD begins to put his stuff down and take off his outer layer of clothing. He sits down on the couch and pulls out his phone. Aimlessly scrolling.

ICE COLD AND CHORUS

EVERY BOY AND GIRL, WOMAN TO MAN.
 WHEN YOU FEEL YOU'VE DONE ABOUT THE BEST YOU
 CAN.
 MOTHERFUCK THE WAGON, COME JOIN THE BAND.
 VIBRATE. VIBRATE HIGHER.
 EVERY BOY AND GIRL, WOMAN TO MAN.
 WHEN YOU FEEL YOU'VE DONE ABOUT THE BEST YOU
 CAN.
 MOTHERFUCK THE WAGON, COME JOIN THE BAND.
 VIBRATE. VIBRATE HIGHER.

ICE COLD puts the phone up to his ear.

ICE COLD

SOMETIMES WHEN IT'S LATE AT, WHEN IT'S LATE
 AT NIGHT
 AND YOU HAVE NO ONE TO TALK TO.
 HERE'S WHAT YOU DO.
 YOU GO THROUGH THAT RAGGEDY CELL PHONE 'BOUT
 TWO OR THREE TIMES.
 TRACY AIN'T HOME, TINA AIN'T HOME.
 THE LOVE BELOW STARTS TALKING TO YA.

ICE COLD puts away his cellphone. He stands up and walks to his bedroom.

ICE COLD AND CHORUS

EVERY BOY AND GIRL, WOMAN TO MAN.
 WHEN YOU FEEL YOU'VE DONE ABOUT THE BEST YOU
 CAN.
 MOTHERFUCK THE WAGON, COME JOIN THE BAND.
 VIBRATE. VIBRATE HIGHER.
 EVERY BOY AND GIRL, WOMAN TO MAN.
 WHEN YOU FEEL YOU'VE DONE ABOUT THE BEST YOU
 CAN.
 MOTHERFUCK THE WAGON, COME JOIN THE BAND.
 VIBRATE. VIBRATE HIGHER.

ICE COLD has stripped down to his underwear, leaving his clothes on the floor, once again, creating more of a mess. A spotlight forms on the bed. ICE COLD sits down on the bed.

ICE COLD

(spoken over music)

The circumcision has already begun.
 Desensitizing the very thing or thang that
 brought you into this motherfucker in the
 first place. And when I say "motherfucker", I
 do mean "motherfucker" because Mother Earth
 is dying and we continue to fuck her to
 death. Play with your own score sheet. Become
 the master of your own 'bation. And yes, God
 is watching you. But no need to be
 embarrassed, for the future is in your hands.
 No, the future is in your hand. Play with
 your own score sheet.

ICE COLD lays down and gets under the covers. He begins to masturbate while the CHORUS sings, the music gets louder, the lights begins to flash and alternate colors in coordination with the music.

CHORUS

EVERY BOY AND GIRL, WOMAN TO MAN.
 WHEN YOU FEEL YOU'VE DONE ABOUT THE BEST YOU
 CAN.
 MOTHERFUCK THE WAGON, COME JOIN THE BAND.
 VIBRATE. VIBRATE HIGHER.
 EVERY BOY AND GIRL, WOMAN TO MAN.
 WHEN YOU FEEL YOU'VE DONE ABOUT THE BEST YOU
 CAN.
 MOTHERFUCK THE WAGON, COME JOIN THE BAND.
 VIBRATE. VIBRATE HIGHER.

ICE COLD climaxes as the chorus ends and the final lyrics echo. The spotlight stays on ICE COLD, who is calm and satisfied. However, he is still alone, without anyone to love. The lights fade to a soft light over ICE COLD as a computerized voice plays over.

COMPUTERIZED VOICE

L-O-V-E... not... found...

Fade to black. Curtains close.

THE END

LIGHTS RISE:

CURTAINCALL

Curtains open and the cast comes out to take a bow. When ICE COLD comes out, he sits on a bar stool in the middle of the stage with a microphone attached to a stand. The other cast members leave. "A Life In the Day of Benjamin André" plays.

ICE COLD

I MET YOU IN THE CLUB IN ATLANTA, GEORGIA.
 SAID ME AND MY HOMEBOY WERE COMING OUT WITH
 AN ALBUM.
 YOU LOOKED AT ME LIKE "YEAH, NIGGA, RIGHT."
 BUT YOU GAVE YOUR NUMBER ANYWAY, YOU WERE ON
 THE TALCUM
 POWDER - HOW'S ABOUT THEM ORANGES?
 MOVED AWAY FROM HOME TO SCHOOL WITH BIG
 PLANS.
 BY DAY, STUDIED THE HISTORY OF MUSIC,
 BY NIGHT, JUST TO PAY FOR THAT SHIT, YOU'D
 DANCE.
 TO GET YOUR PANTS WAS A MISSION IMPO-SSIBLE.
 WE WERE BOTH THE SAME AGE, BUT I
 SUPPOSE, WASN'T ON THE SAME PAGE, BUT IN
 THE SAME BOOK OF LIFE, SO I'D PAGE YOU WHEN
 I FELT YOU THAT WERE GETTING OFF OF WORK
 OR EITHER WHEN YOU'RE ON YOUR WAY TO SCHOOL.
 WE STARTED HANGING LIKE ERNIE AND BERT
 AND IN MY IDLE HEAD I'M THINKING, "COOL."
 JUST WHEN I THINK I'M GOING DOWN YOUR SHIRT,
 YOU'RE HIKING UP YOUR SKIRT NOW.
 THE EVENTS THAT FOLLOWED HAD ME VOLLEY
 IF YOUR HOMETOWN WOULD BE HEAVEN OR HELL.
 THE ANGELIC NASTINESS YOUR POSSESSED MADE YOU
 BY FAR THE BEST.
 THEREFORE, HARD TO TELL.
 YOU'D DROP ME OFF BY THE DUNGEON.
 NEVER CAME IN, BUT I KNEW THAT YOU WERE
 WONDERING,
 "NOW, ARE THESE NIGGAS IN THIS HOUSE UP TO
 SOMETHING?
 SELLING CRACK, SACK BY SACK, SO THEY COULD
 FUNCTION?"
 W-W-WELL, YES AND NO.
 YES, WERE SELLING IT, BUT NO, IT WASN'T BLOW.
 COOK IN THE BASEMENT THEN MOVE IT AT A SHOW.
 THEN GRAB THE MICROPHONE AND EVERYBODY
 YELLED, "HO!"
 MEANWHILE, THE VIDEO STARTS PLAYING,
 BET, COLLEGE RADIO, AND A VAN,
 PACKED FULL OF NIGGAS WITH A BLUNT IN THEIR
 HAND
 AND ONE IN THEIR EAR, YOU KNOW WHAT I'M
 SAYING. BUT,
 I KEPT YOUR NUMBER IN MY OLD PHONE,
 GOT A NEW CHIP-FLIP WITH THE ROAM-ROAM,
 SO IT TOOK ME A MINUTE TO RETRIEVE SEVEN
 DIGITS
 BUT I PROMISED I WOULD CALL YOU WHEN I GOT
 HOME. BUT,
 WHEN I GOT HOME, I NEVER DID.
 BY THE TIME I DID, HEARD THAT YOU'D HAD A KID
 BY SOME NIGGA IN DECATUR WHO REPLIED "SEE YA
 LATER"
 WHEN HE GOT THE GOOD NEWS; THAT'S LIFE, SHIT.
 NOW, I'M NINETEEN WITH A CADILLAC.

(MORE)

ICE COLD (cont'd)

MY NIGGA HAD A LEX WITH THE GOLD PACK.
 GOT A PLAQUE, BUT I'M LIVING WITH MY POP-POP.
 SO I GOT A GLOCK AND A LOJACK.
 YEAH, KINDA FAST FOR THAT FELLA IN CLASS WHO
 USED TO DRAW
 AND NEVER SAID MUCH, 'CAUSE HALF OF WHAT HE
 SAW
 WAS SO FAR FROM THAT PLACE YOU WANNA BE
 THAT WORDS ONLY FUCKED IT UP MORE, FOLLOW ME.
 ARE YOU STARTING TO GATHER WHAT I'M GETTING
 AT?
 NOW IF I'M LOSING YOU, TELL ME, THEN I'LL
 DOUBLE BACK
 BUT KEEP IN MIND, AT THE TIME, "KEEP IT REAL"
 WAS THE PHRASE.
 SILLY WHEN SAID NOW, BUT THOSE WERE THE DAYS.
 WHEN SPRING BREAK AND DAYTONA AND FREAKNIKS
 MADE YOU WANNA DROP OUT OF COLLEGE AND NEVER
 GO BACK.
 MOVE TO THE SOUTH, BUT THAT AIN'T A KODAK
 MOMENT, ON WENT MYSELF AND BIG BOI -
 WELL YOU KNEW HIM AS 'TWAN.
 THAT'S RIGHT, YOU WERE AROUND BEFORE THIS
 SHIT BEGUN.
 WELL 'TWAN HAD A DAUGHTER AND
 SORTA WAS MADE TO MATURE BEFORE THE FIRST
 TOUR.
 WE HIT THE ROAD LIKE JACK,
 LAUGHED AND CRIED AND DRIVE IT BACK WITH SOME
 YAK.
 GIRLS USED TO SAY, "Y'ALL TALK FUNNY, Y'ALL
 FROM THE ISLANDS?"
 AND I'D LAUGH, AND THEY'D JUST KEEP SMILING.
 "NO, I'M FROM ATLANTA, BABY. HE FROM
 SAVANNAH, MAYBE
 WE SHOULD HOOK UP AND GET TORE UP AND THEN
 LAY DOWN; HEY, WE
 GOTTA GO BECAUSE THE BUS IS PULLING OUT IN
 THIRTY MINUTES."
 SHE'S PLAYING TENNIS, DISTURBING THE TENANTS,
 15-LOVE, FIT LIKE GLOVE.
 DESCRIPTION IS LIKE FIFTEEN DOVES
 IN A JACUZZI CATCHING THE HOLY GHOST
 MAKING ONE WOozy IN THE HEAD AND COMATOSE -
 AGREE?
 ENOUGH ABOUT ME, HOW'S ABOUT YOU? HOW'S THE
 LIL' KID?
 SHE WAS ABOUT TWO THE LAST TIME WE SPOKE.
 I HADN'T SMOKED OR TOOK A SHOT OF DRINK
 'CAUSE I'D START THE SECOND ALBUM OFF ON
 ANOTHER NOTE.
 NOW, THAT NOTE THREW SOME NIGGAS IN THE HOOD
 OFF.
 BUT SEE, I'D BALLEd OUT, AND 'FORE I'D FALL
 OUT,
 I'D SLOW MY LAC DOWN TO A NICE SPEED.
 THE BRAIN WAS THAT FRIED EGG, I MIGHT NEED.
 (MORE)

ICE COLD (cont'd)

NEW DIRECTION WAS APPARENT.
I WAS A CHILD LOOKING AT THE FLOOR, STARING.
SO CHANGING MY STYLE WAS A RELIEF FOR THE
PRIMITIVE BEAST.
YES, I WAS ON THE RISE, YEAST WAS THE STREET
TO MAKE BREAD, NEVER PRIMARY CONCERN
JUST TO HOP ON THESE BEATS AND WAIT MY TURN.
I'D MEET MUSLIMS, GANGSTAS, BITCHES, RASTAS,
AND MACARONI NIGGAS: IMPASTAS.
SO ON A TRIP TO NEW YORK ON SOME BEESWAX,
I GET INVITED TO A CLUB WERE EMCEES AT
AND ON STAGE IS SINGER WITH SOME THING ON HER
HEAD,
SIMILAR TO THE TURBAN THAT I COVERED UP MY
DREADS WITH,
WHICH I WAS ROCKING AT THE TIME.
WHEN I WAS GOING THROUGH THEM PHASES TRYING
TO FIND
ANYTHING THAT SEEMED REAL IN THE WORLD.
STILL SEARCHING, BUT I STARTED LIKING THIS
GIRL.
NOW, YOU KNOW HER AS ERYKAH "ON & ON" BADU,
CALL TYRONE ON THE PHONE, "WHY YOU
DO THAT GIRL LIKE THAT, BOY? YOU OUGHT TO BE
ASHAMED."
THAT SONG WASN'T ABOUT ME, AND THAT AIN'T MY
NAME.
WERE YOUNG, IN LOVE, IN SHORT WE HAD FUN.
NO REGRETS, NO ABORTION, HAD A SON
BY THE NAME OF SEVEN.
AND HE'S FIVE; BY THE TIME I DO THIS MIX,
HE'LL PROBABLY BE SIX.
YOU DO THE 'RITHMETIC, ME DO THE LANGUAGE
ARTS.
Y'ALL STAND AGAINST THE WALL BLINDFOLDED, WE
THROW THE DARTS
TO POKE YOU IN THE HEART AND TAKE YOU FROM
THE START
TO WHEN LUXURY TRANSPORTATION MEANT A MARTA
CARD
OR EITHER WHEN YOUR GIRLFRIEND THAT WENT TO
MAYS.
MAMA OR HER DADDY LET HER BORROW THE BENZ,
BECAUSE SHE SMART.
OR MAYBE IF YOUR NEIGHBOR DOES YOU A HUGE
FAVOR
AND SELLS YOU THAT RABBIT THAT'S BEEN SITTING
IN HIS YARD.
YOU FIX IT UP, YOU TRICK IT OUT,
YOU GIVE IT RIMS, YOU GIVE IT BUMP.
YOU GIVE IT ALL YOUR TIME BECAUSE THAT'S ALL
YOU CAN THINK ABOUT...
AND THAT'S AS FAR AS I GOT...

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