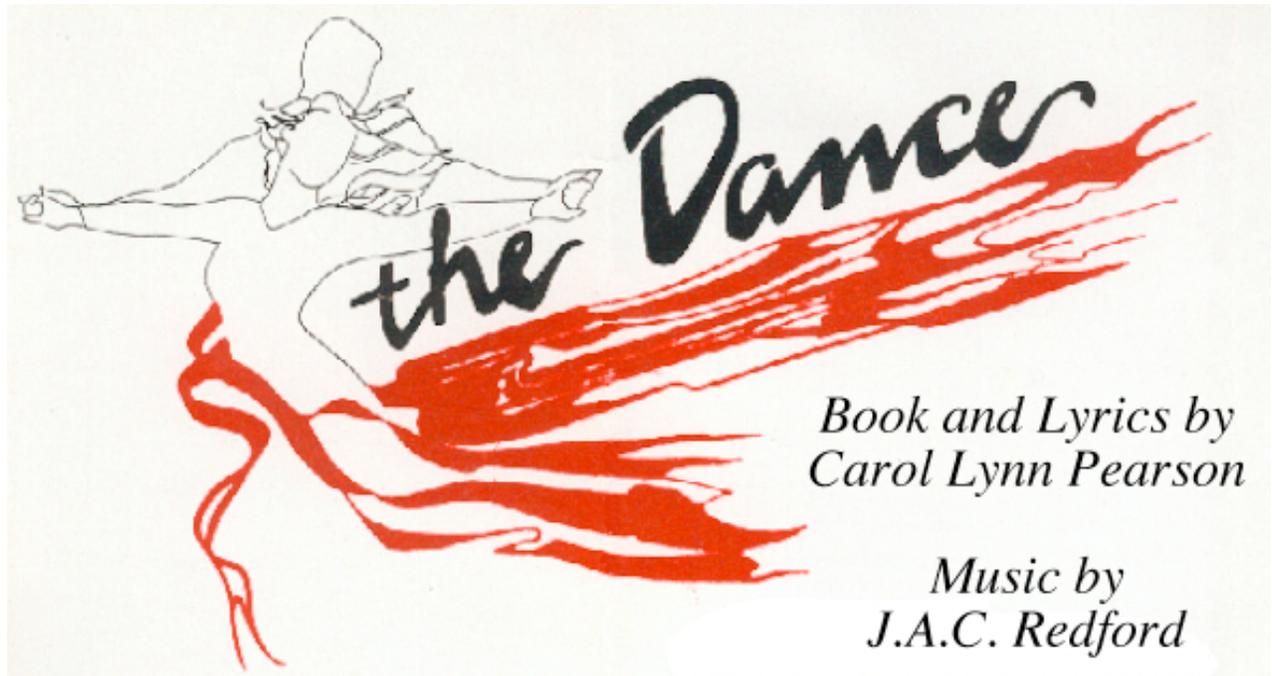


PERUSAL SCRIPT



Newport, Maine

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THE DANCE

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The Dance

CAST: 3M 3W

Howard—the forever single guy (Bass/Baritone)

Alison—the newly divorced woman (Alto)

Brad—eighteen and newly broken-hearted (Tenor)

Janet—the unclaimed jewel of twenty-three (Soprano)

Neil—married to Karen for seven years (Baritone)

Karen—married to Neil for seven years (Soprano)

MUSICAL NUMBERS

#1 -- You Come to the Dance	COMPANY
#2 -- I Tried!	JANET
#3 -- Do You Take This Man?	NEIL and KAREN
#4A -- My Eternal Girl	HOWARD and MEN
#4B -- Send Me a Man	WOMEN
#5 -- The Girl I Used to Be	KAREN
#6 -- Be a Man	BRAD
#7 -- The Activities Guy	HOWARD
#8 -- May I Have This Dance?	NEIL
#9 -- Love Lingers	JANET
#10 -- Always the M.C.	HOWARD
#11 -- The Tap Dance	BRAD
#12 -- I Am Me	ALISON
#13 -- I'm Okay!	BRAD
#14A -- May I Have This Dance? [Reprise]	KAREN
#14B -- You Come to the Dance [Reprise]	COMPANY

THE DANCE a musical Book and Lyrics by Carol Lynn Pearson. Music by J.A.C. Redford. 3M (1tenor, 1 baritone, 1 bass/baritone) 3W (2 sopranos, 1 alto) One open setting. About 90 minutes. Come to the dance and meet: Couple #1 -- Neil and Karen “the perfect married couple” to everyone but themselves; Couple #2 -- Howard, still searching for “the right one” 14 years after his mission, and Alison, a recently divorced mother of three; ‘Couple’ #3 -- Brad, 18, and suffering from his first broken heart, and Janet and unclaimed jewel of 23. “You come to the dance ‘cause there’s a chance that something good might, just might, happen tonight.” is a lyric from the opening song of this LDS classic. “*The music, written by J.A.C. Redford, was subtle, adding dimension to the different characters*” -- The Daily Universe. “*A sensitive, realistic look at life, love and marriage. Pearson has successfully interwoven laughter and tears to create dialogue that is painfully honest.*” -- Karlene Davis, Central Utah Journal. “*The Dance is sincere, realistic and very entertaining. You will be amazed at how much you have in common with these people.*” -- Joseph Walker, The Deseret News. ORDER #2036.

Carol Lynn Pearson -- has been a professional writer, speaker and performer for many years. Many of her poems have been widely reprinted in such places as Ann Landers' column and Chicken Soup for the Soul, as well as college literary textbooks. The poems appear now in a compilation, Picture Window. Her autobiography, Goodbye, I Love You, tells the story of her marriage to a homosexual man, their divorce, ongoing friendship, and her caring for him as he died of AIDS. This story made her a guest on such programs as "The Oprah Winfrey Show," and "Good Morning, America." She has been featured in "People Magazine." Ms. Pearson has written numerous educational motion pictures, including the well-known "Cipher in the Snow," as well as many plays and musicals, two commissioned by Robert Redford's Sundance Theater. A major contribution of Ms. Pearson has been writing and performing a one-woman play, "Mother Wove the Morning," in which she plays sixteen women throughout history in search of the feminine divine. The play was performed over 300 times internationally and is now available on a videotape that earned an award from "Booklist" as "one of the top 25 videos of the year." A series of seven inspirational books, "Fables for Our Times," began with The Lesson, a look at life as a series of story problems, and includes, Will You Still Be My Daughter? and Girlfriend, You Are the Best! The recent Consider the Butterfly: Transforming Your Life Through Meaningful Coincidence tells forty-four of her personal stories, showing how the phenomenon of synchronicity can bless our lives daily. Other of her plays that include LDS themes are "My Turn on Earth" and "The Order is Love." She considers "The Dance" one of her favorites. Ms. Pearson has an M.A. in theater, is the mother of four grown children, and lives in Walnut Creek, California. You can visit her at www.carollynpearson.com.

J.A.C. Redford is an accomplished composer of concert music, film and television scores, and music for the theater. His concert music compositions span a wide range of forms from symphony, choral music, and ballet, to art songs and chamber music. His larger works have been performed by the Utah Symphony, the American Chamber Orchestra, the Pasadena Chamber Orchestra, the Los Angeles Chamber Singers and the Utah Chamber Artists, at the Kennedy Center in Washington D.C., the Tel Aviv Museum of Art in Israel and at London's Royal Albert Hall. His chamber music has been performed by the Debussy Trio, Liona Boyd, the Philadelphia Brass, the Westminster Brass and Zephyr. Recent compositions include the score for subVersions, a site-specific modern dance work created in an abandoned subway tunnel in Los Angeles by the Collage Dance Theatre. Redford's incidental music has been heard in theatrical productions at the Matrix Theater in Los Angeles and South Coast Repertory Theater in Costa Mesa, California, as well as on the American Playhouse series on PBS. Two of his musical comedies are published by Anchorage Press and performed frequently across North America. Composing music in the film and television industries for over 20 years, Redford has written the scores for the feature films The Trip to Bountiful, Bye Bye Love, Extremities, The Joyriders, The Mighty Ducks II and III, Oliver and Company, A Kid in King Arthur's Court, Heavyweights, and Newsies. He has composed the music for over two dozen TV movies or miniseries and over 480 episodes of series television, including multiple seasons of Coach and St. Elsewhere (for which he received Emmy nominations in 1984 and 1985). He has conducted scores for composers Rachel Portman, Danny Elfman, Marc Shaiman, Mark Isham, and Alan Menken, including The Little Mermaid, The Nightmare Before Christmas, and Benny and Joon, as well as for Cirque du Soleil's Benoit Jutras and Terence Blanchard's Jazz in Film CD. Recent assignments have included composing scores for the mini-series Mama Flora's Family, and the Hallmark Hall of Fame productions What the Deaf Man Heard and Grace & Glorie, orchestrating James Horner's scores for The Perfect Storm, Iris and Windtalkers. Redford co-composed "The Journey" for Steven Curtis Chapman's 1999 Grammy Award-winning CD, Speechless. He co-wrote the song, "Stand Up to the Night," and recorded it with Bonnie Raitt for her album, Nine Lives. He has served as a music consultant for the Sundance Film Institute, a teacher in the Artists-in-Schools program for the National Endowment for the Arts, a guest lecturer at USC and UCLA, and currently serves on the Music Branch Executive Committees for the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences and the Academy of Television Arts and Sciences. He is the author of Welcome All Wonders: A Composer's Journey, published by Baker Books in 1997.

The Dance

by Carol Lynn Pearson and J. A. C. Redford

(HOWARD, ALISON, BRAD, JANET, NEIL, KAREN enter, sing.)

MUSICAL #1 -- YOU COME TO THE DANCE

ALL

YOU COME TO THE DANCE,
YOU COME TO THE DANCE,
YOU COME TO THE DANCE,
'CAUSE THERE'S A CHANCE THAT SOMETHING GOOD MIGHT,
GOOD MIGHT JUST MIGHT HAPPEN TONIGHT.
YOU COME TO THE DANCE,
YOU COME TO THE DANCE,
YOU COME TO THE DANCE,
BECAUSE ROMANCE IS SOMETHING THAT MIGHT
THAT MIGHT JUST MIGHT HAPPEN TONIGHT.
MIGHT HAPPEN TONIGHT. (repeated)

BRAD

AM I SWEATING?
DO MY PALMS FEEL WET?
AM I SWEATING?
YES, I'M SWEATING!
DID I FORGET MY DEODORANT?
I'LL HAVE TO DANCE WITH MY ARMS DOWN.
HOW DO YOU DANCE WITH YOUR ARMS DOWN?

JANET

TO BE SUCCESSFUL AT THE DANCE
YOU'VE GOT TO FOLLOW THESE RULES:

ALL GIRLS

DON'T STAND IN A LINE.
DON'T STAND IN A CIRCLE.
DON'T FOLD YOUR ARMS.
STAND WITH THE COOL GIRLS, YES, LOOK LIKE A COOL GIRL,
AND SMILE, SMILE, SMILE, SMILE, SMILE, SMILE, SMILE --
YOU HAVE TO SMILE A LOT.

NEIL:

I HATE THIS TIE.

ALISON:

I HATE THIS DRESS.

NEIL:

HOW'S MY BREATH?
DO YOU HAVE SOME GUM?

ALISON:

I SHOULD HAVE WORN THE OTHER DRESS.

HOWARD:

THE MUSIC'S GOOD.

ALISON:

THE MUSIC'S BAD.

KAREN:

WAY TOO LOUD.

BRAD:

I CAN HARDLY HEAR THE SOUND.
WHY CAN'T THEY GET A DECENT SOUND?

JANET:

IF HE HEADS IN MY DIRECTION
I'LL TAKE OFF FOR THE LADIES' ROOM.

BRAD:

HOW DO YOU DANCE WITH YOUR ARMS DOWN?

ALISON:

IF I CALLED UP MOM WOULD SHE BRING
THE OTHER DRESS?

KAREN:

WHAT IF I STAND HERE ALL NIGHT
AND ONLY THE BISHOP ASKS ME TO DANCE? I THINK I'LL DIE.

ALL GIRLS:

SMILE, SMILE, SMILE, SMILE, SMILE, SMILE, SMILE!

ALISON:

THE WORLD WILL LITTLE NOTE NOR LONG
REMEMBER -- THIS DRESS.

HOWARD:

SHE DOESN'T WANT TO DANCE WITH ME. SHE'S TOO POLITE TO SAY NO.
SHE THINKS I'M DUMB.
I WISH I WAS HOME FIXING MY CAR --

JANET:

-- DOING MY HOMEWORK --

KAREN:

-- WATCHING TV --

BRAD:

-- PUTTING ON MY DEODORANT.

ALL:

BUT --
YOU COME TO THE DANCE,
YOU COME TO THE DANCE,
YOU COME TO THE DANCE,
'CAUSE THERE'S A CHANCE THAT SOMETHING GOOD MIGHT
GOOD MIGHT JUST MIGHT HAPPEN TONIGHT. HAPPEN TONIGHT.
YOU COME TO THE DANCE,

YOU COME TO THE DANCE,
YOU COME TO THE DANCE,
BECAUSE ROMANCE IS SOMETHING THAT MIGHT
THAT MIGHT JUST MIGHT HAPPEN TONIGHT.
MIGHT HAPPEN TONIGHT.
YES, SOMETHING GOOD MIGHT JUST MIGHT
JUST MIGHT HAPPEN TONIGHT
AT THE DANCE!
AT THE DANCE!
AT THE DANCE!
AT THE DANCE!
DANCE! DANCE! DANCE! DANCE! DANCE!

HOWARD: Would the owner of the blue Lincoln, license number DKJ-417 please go out and turn out the lights. The couple in the car in front are complaining. Just joking. I'm your M.C. tonight. Again. When they asked me I said, "Why don't you ask Brother Halverson? He'd be a great M.C." They said, "we had him, and when he finished all his jokes we had to rededicate the cultural hall." You don't need to worry about my jokes. I have always been as pure as the driven snow--and I have never drifted! My jokes are so clean they could all be printed in the Reader's Digest. In fact, most of them have been. Enough of this chit-chat. You didn't come to hear me. Let's dance!

(EVERYONE dances. Others freeze or exit, leaving HOWARD and ALISON alone.)

You're a really good dancer, you know that? For a person who's as out of practice as you say you are, you're really very good.

ALISON: Thanks. I dance with my babies. I always have. I put on some good music and pick them up and away we go. They love it.

HOWARD: Lucky kids.

ALISON: But dancing with a man is -- different.

HOWARD: We're -- bigger, huh?

ALISON: Yes. And -- uh -- different.

HOWARD: You have three? Children.

ALISON: Yes. A boy and two girls. You like children?

HOWARD: *(Guarded.)* Sure. I even -- used to be one. At least, that's what my mother tells me. Hey, Alison.

Look. Because this is your first date since -- since you've been dating -- I think I'd be doing you a favor to tell you something. You don't say to a guy, "Do you like children?"

ALISON: Oh.

(Sincerely.)

I'm sorry.

HOWARD: Most men would take it as a very -- leading question.

ALISON: I can see that. Thanks.

HOWARD: You want to keep things light. Tell a funny story. Got any funny stories?

ALISON: Uh. Here's one. Yesterday my little Bobby -- . Oh. It's about my child.

HOWARD: That's okay. Just keep it light.

ALISON: Well, Bobby came back from washing his hands in ten seconds flat and I said, "Bobby, don't tell me you washed your hands." And he said, "I don't use soap, Mommy. I just drown the germs and wipe them off."

HOWARD: That's good. That's very funny.

ALISON: Bobby's clever. You would like him. Oh.

(BRAD and JANET enter. HOWARD and ALISON stay on.)

BRAD: *(Points.)* There she is!

JANET: Where?

BRAD: By the punch bowl.

HOWARD: Hi, Brad. Great dance, huh?

BRAD: *(Not hearing, speaks to JANET.)* The blonde. That's Marcie.

HOWARD: *(Crosses to them.)* Hi, Brad. Keeping your standards high?

BRAD: Huh? Oh, yeah. Sure. Right up there.

HOWARD: Who's your friend?

BRAD: *(Looks off past them.)* Uh -- this is Janet. Janet, uh -- Howard and uh -- .

HOWARD: Alison.

JANET: Hi.

ALISON: Hi.

BRAD: *(In a hurry.)* Uh -- 'scuse me.

HOWARD: Going somewhere?

BRAD: Yeah. *(Flustered.)* The -- uh -- punch bowl -- .

(BRAD grabs JANET'S hand and pulls her away. JANET looks back at HOWARD and ALISON.)

JANET: He's real thirsty.

(HOWARD and ALISON move off. BRAD stops suddenly, turns around.)

BRAD: She saw us!

(JANET cranes her neck to see. BRAD pulls her back.)

Don't let her see you staring at her.

JANET: That's the one that broke your heart, huh?

(Casually steals a glance.)

Look at that dress!

BRAD: *(Craning his neck.)* I've never seen her like that. Oh, Marcie!

(Not sarcastic.)

Was this supposed to be costume?

JANET: Isn't everything? Come as you see yourself.

BRAD: She looks like a fallen Charlie's Angel.

JANET: How old is she?

BRAD: Seventeen.

JANET: She'll grow up. Take it from an old woman of twenty-three.

BRAD: Shhhhhhhh!

JANET: Huh?

BRAD: I don't want anyone to know.

JANET: That I'm -- ?

BRAD: An old woman.

JANET: Hey, I can say that. You can't. So I'm five years older than you are.

BRAD: Shhhhhhh!

JANET: I don't look it.

BRAD: If the guys find out they'd razz me for a year. But I had to come -- especially after she shot me down. I had to show her she isn't the only girl in the world.

JANET: So you called your brother's old girlfriend to help with the show.

BRAD: You don't mind? I told you why.

JANET: Of course I don't mind. And I will put on the show of the year. I will faun on you, my dear, all evening.

(Wraps her arms around him.)

Oh, Brad, you are so irresistible!

BRAD: *(Teeth clenched.)* Cut it out! My gosh -- look what happens to that dress when she walks. My gosh!

JANET: *(Puts hand over his eyes.)* Don't look, Brad. You're too young.

BRAD: Why would she do that?

JANET: She does it because she thinks that he thinks that that's the way he would like her to be. And maybe even he thinks that that's what he would like. But I think that he thinks that she thinks that that's what she is, but really is not. Don't you think so?

BRAD: Uh, yeah.

JANET: Most girls fall into that trap at one point or another.

BRAD: You didn't. You were always -- just you.

JANET: You didn't know me at the age of nineteen. That was my worst. You would not believe all the really dumb, stupid, outrageous things I would do to be what I thought this guy wanted -- or that guy wanted.

BRAD: Yeah?

MUSICAL #2 -- SO THAT SOMEONE WOULD LOVE ME

JANET:

TED SAID THAT HE COULD BE
QUITE INTERESTED IN ME
IF I COULD KEEP HOUSE LIKE HIS MOTHER DID.

Kid! Nothing to it. Maintaining a home in domestic bliss is all I ask of life!

I TRIED!

I REALLY TRIED --

TO BE EVERYTHING THAT TED

SAID I OUGHT TO BE,

SO THAT MAYBE THE MIRACLE WOULD FINALLY HAPPEN:

SOMEONE WOULD LOVE ME!

On the day he introduced me to his mother, she was just finishing canning her 844th quart of fruit for the summer, and that didn't even count tomatoes and jam. She asked me if I used the pressure cooker or the water bath, and I said, well, personally I prefer to shower. She did not think that was funny. And later on that night -- Ted did not propose.

MATT FELT THAT I SHOULD TRY

TO BE A BIT MORE SHY,

DEMURE AND FEMININE AND SOFT AND SWEET.

Neat! That's always been the ideal I've been striving for. That's the real me!

I TRIED!

I REALLY TRIED --

TO BE EVERYTHING THAT MATT
FELT THAT I SHOULD BE,
SO THAT MAYBE THE MIRACLE WOULD FINALLY HAPPEN:
SOMEONE WOULD LOVE ME!

Well, after we had seen this certain movie, he said, "That was the best move I've seen in years. Wasn't that great?" And I shyly said, "No, I don't think it was great at all. I thought the plot was flawed and the characters were terribly one dimensional, and the theme was handled much better by Fellini." And -- Matt sent me a postcard the next year from school.

JOHN WANTED ME TO BE
THE SORT WHO'D SWIM AND SKI,
THE TYPE WHO'D RISE AT FIVE AND JOG 'TIL EIGHT.

Great! I'll do it -- I'll do it. I love the out of doors!

I TRIED!

I REALLY TRIED --

TO BE EVERYTHING THAT JOHN WANTED ME TO BE,
SO THAT MAYBE THE MIRACLE WOULD FINALLY HAPPEN:
SOMEONE WOULD LOVE ME!

One day while my leg was mending. Dad came up to my room and said, "Why do you do this? If you want to know who you ought to be, why don't you ask yourself? After all, you are a person, you know." Me, a person? Well, what did I have to lose? So --

I ASKED MYSELF HOW TO CUT MY HAIR,
I ASKED MYSELF WHAT CLOTHES TO WEAR,
WHAT TO READ, WHERE TO GO,
WHAT TO SAY, WHAT TO DO,
I ASKED MYSELF WHAT I THOUGHT WAS REALLY TRUE. THEN I LISTENED,
AND I LEARNED:

I like running. I like almond fudge. I hate all the spam that I find every morning in my inbox. I like reading to little kids and to old people in rest homes. I like sleeping in. I hate red lipstick. Before I die I want to walk on the Great Wall of China. I might like to put up pickles, but nix on 844 bottles of fruit every summer. I love the Beatles and Liza Minnelli. (*update names as desired*). And I like wearing Levis every day except Sunday.

I TRIED!

I REALLY TRIED --

TO BE EVERYTHING THAT I'D
LIKE MYSELF TO BE.

AND WHAT DO YOU KNOW, THE MIRACLE FINALLY HAPPENED:

I -- LOVE -- ME!

(BRAD and JANET move off.)

NEIL: Decorations are great, huh? Took a lot of time.

(Waits for her to speak. She doesn't.)

Looks like a pretty good turnout.

(Waits again. Nothing.)

Doesn't anybody else here have anything to say?

(Waits for about ten seconds.)

Well, I hate to let this time go to waste. So -- uh. I'm thankful for my wife. She's the lady here who's not

speaking to me.

KAREN: (*Coldly.*) Neil, you are being sacrilegious.

NEIL: Well, you're being mean. And that's worse. Why the stony silence?

KAREN: We didn't used to have to talk at a dance. We could spend the whole evening and hardly say a word.

NEIL: There is a difference between a warm, companionable silence and an icy chill. Like about one hundred degrees. What did I do? What did I say?

KAREN: Nothing.

NEIL: Nothing.

(Back to his imaginary congregation.)

And one of the qualities I most appreciate in my wife is her candid frankness. Now, whatever is going on here seems to have started late this afternoon. We have to give a workshop, see, at this marriage enrichment seminar -- .

KAREN: Neil -- will you stop it?

NEIL: All I did was suggest a title for our session. We have to have a title.

KAREN: Yeah. "Is There Life After Marriage?"

NEIL: It's funny, Karen. It's a funny title.

KAREN: The way you said it was not funny. And the answer to the question is not funny either.

NEIL: Whoa! What's your answer?

KAREN: (*Pause.*) No. There isn't. Not like there was going to be. Not like there should be.

NEIL: Oh. Where do you want me to put the body?

KAREN: (*Ignoring him.*) It has been clinically established -- after a great deal of testing -- that there is not life
(Pause.)

Neil -- we used to be in love! We used to come to these dances and be in ecstasy just to be able to put our arms around each other. Don't you remember?

NEIL: I remember.

KAREN: And it's different now. Haven't you noticed?

NEIL: I've noticed. Your pulse doesn't go up at all anymore.

KAREN: What?

NEIL: You know how I could tell you were in love with me? A little trick I learned first year of medical school. I took your pulse while I was kissing you.

KAREN: You didn't!

NEIL: I did that to all the girls I kissed.

KAREN: Neil!

NEIL: It was like biofeedback. I'd keep one hand on her wrist, or if I could right here on the throat. Let me show you.

KAREN: Don't touch me!

NEIL: Do you remember the first time I kissed you? You went right off the chart.

KAREN: You are disgusting.

NEIL: You don't go off the chart anymore. You don't go anywhere.

KAREN: You see? What did I tell you? I'm dead! We're dead!

NEIL: Hey, come on, now, Karen. We're in this thing forever.

KAREN: Thanks, Neil. That's a real comfort.

NEIL: You want to give it up?

KAREN: No! I -- I don't know what I want!

NEIL: We knew what we were getting into. Time and all eternity.

KAREN: The eternity part does not bother me. It's the time part that I am getting worried about.

NEIL: Hey, there's another great title -- "The Eternity Part Does Not Bother Me -- It's the Time Part -- ."

KAREN: Neil, we don't have time for the funnies.

NEIL: Why?

KAREN: I have to call Lonnie before ten-thirty and give her the title, plus a summary of what we're going to be saying.

NEIL: (*Stunned.*) What?

KAREN: She has to type it for the announcement sheet. We were supposed to get it to her by Thursday. But that was the day the kids got sick, and then the next day -- .

NEIL: Skip it.

(*Looks at watch.*)

Okay. We've got an hour and fifteen minutes. Let's get this meeting underway. Oh, boy. I thought I was taking my wife out to the dance -- and it turns into another lousy meeting!

(*Violently.*)

All right -- who has the spiritual thought?

KAREN: (*Equally violent.*) Not me!

(*Both are silent for a moment.*)

NEIL: Can this marriage be saved? Let alone exalted.

KAREN: And you did not just come to take your wife out to the dance. You came to chaperone. We are here because you were assigned to be here. And before long you'll probably be having more Daddy-Daughter dates than dates with your wife.

NEIL: (*Quiet.*) You're right.

KAREN: And we did not know what we were getting into -- getting married. And I'll bet everyone who'll be at the marriage seminar jumped into it as blind as we did. And I'll bet every once in a while every one of them looks across the table or the bed and says -- "What am I doing with this person?" Only most of them won't raise their hand and admit it.

(*Raises her hand.*)

I'll admit it. You fall in love -- you do everything perfectly -- the bishop even uses you as an example in his annual "Meet Your Mate at B.Y.U." talk -- you get married and you're supposed to live happily ever, ever, ever after. Only -- sometimes --

(*Falters.*)

NEIL: -- You look around and you say --

KAREN: -- What am I doing --

NEIL: -- with this --

KAREN: -- person.

MUSICAL #3 -- DO YOU TAKE THIS MAN?

NEIL and KAREN:

THE MAN IS NOT -- WITHOUT THE WOMAN.

THE WOMAN IS NOT -- WITHOUT THE MAN. BUT SOMETIMES

IT SEEMS I'M -- NOT -- QUITE--

WHAT HAVE I GOT -- WITHOUT THE WOMAN?

WHAT HAVE I GOT -- WITHOUT THE MAN?

WOULD I BE,

COULD I BE -- A LOT MORE? --

KAREN:

DO YOU TAKE THIS MAN?
YES, I TOOK THIS MAN
AND THE VIEW WAS DIVINE, BUT --
I JUST DIDN'T KNOW
THIS GOD IN EMBRYO
FROM ANOTHER VIEW
WOULDN'T CHEW WITH HIS MOUTH SHUT.

NEIL:

DO YOU TAKE THIS WOMAN?
YES, I TOOK THIS WOMAN
IN A LIGHT SO CELESTIAL.
IT WAS NOT YET SEEN
THAT MY HEAVENLY QUEEN
IN ANOTHER LIGHT
COULD LOOK QUITE SO TELESTIAL.

SOMETIMES --
I WANT TO BE -- WITHOUT THE WOMAN.

KAREN:

I WANT TO BE --
WITHOUT THE MAN. I'M HUNGRY
TO BE ME -- ALONE.

NEIL and KAREN:

CAN I TAKE FOREVER? DO I WANT FOREVER?
SIGNED AND SEALED AND DELIVERED?
AND WHY, WHEN I'VE SEEN
WHAT ETERNAL MEANS
DO I FIND
I HAVE KIND OF SHIVERED?

KAREN:

DO I LOVE THIS MAN?

NEIL:

STILL, I LOVE THIS WOMAN,

BOTH:

BUT THERE'S TIMES
I'D LIKE TO SAY--

KAREN:

STOP --

NEIL:

ENOUGH --

KAREN:

GO AWAY --

NEIL:

FINIS --

KAREN:

THE END --

NEIL:

GIVE THE CLOSING PRAYER --

BOTH:

AMEN!"

KAREN:

'CAUSE I WANT OUT --
I WANT OUT --
I STILL WANT OUT--
THOUGH I LOVE THIS MAN,
I STILL WANT OUT!

NEIL:

IS THERE LIFE WITHOUT THE WOMAN?
COULD I SURVIVE WITHOUT THE WOMAN?
BUT I LOVE THIS WOMAN.
BUT I LOVE THIS WOMAN.
BUT I LOVE THIS WOMAN.

BOTH:

BUT NOT -- NOT WITHOUT YOU.

(NEIL, KAREN move as if to leave. HOWARD, ALISON enter.)

HOWARD: Hey, how's it going, Neil?

NEIL: *(Puts on a good smile.)* Great. Just great. And you?

HOWARD: Fantastic! But I'll be better tomorrow. Hi, Karen.

KAREN: Hi.

HOWARD: This is Alison Porter. She belongs to the third ward.

NEIL: How are you?

KAREN: Hi, Alison.

HOWARD: And this is Neil Bradley. He belongs to the geriatrics ward.

(Laughs.)

NEIL: Funny, Howard.

HOWARD: He's an intern. And isn't it great to know we have our very own doctor in the house? If I excite you too much, Alison, and you feel faint, just call for Doctor Bradley here.

(Laughs.)

ALISON: Okay.

HOWARD: So things are all right, huh?

NEIL: Couldn't be better.

KAREN: Just great.

HOWARD: How do some guys get all the luck? A cute little wife -- three terrific kids --

NEIL: Why don't you borrow them next Sunday for Sacrament meeting?

HOWARD: *(Still making his list.)* -- Great sense of humor --

(All laugh.)

Seriously. Neil is a shining example to me. When I need to remember that there is one person I know who's got it all together, I think of you.

NEIL: *(Modest.)* Well -- .

KAREN: *(Takes his arm.)* Excuse us, please.

HOWARD: *(Salutes.)* Remember who you are and what you stand for. And that we're all watching.

KAREN: (*Under her breath.*) I'm sure you are.

(*NEIL, KAREN exit. HOWARD and ALISON are silent for a moment.*)

HOWARD: You're pretty quiet, Alison.

ALISON: Oh. I'm just trying to think of some more funny stories.

HOWARD: Relax. Just relax.

ALISON: I'll try. It's a very strange thing, you know, to be out on a date. Just having to make conversation with a man over seven -- makes me very nervous.

HOWARD: You're cute. Just say whatever happens to come to your mind.

ALISON: Howard! People never do that. I should go up to somebody and say, "Hi. I'm Alison, and I just got a divorce, and I still cry at least once a day, and I don't even like to go to Church anymore because all of a sudden I'm not a person, I'm a problem." That's what I should say?

HOWARD: You're right. Think of another funny story. Tell you what, Alison. You've got to have your answers all ready, a whole list of them. Somebody asks what happened to your marriage, and you say, oh -- "It's better to have loved and lost. Much better."

ALISON: Really?

HOWARD: Sure. You can't just come out and suffer in front of people. It makes them -- terribly -- uncomfortable.

ALISON: I know.

HOWARD: Take me, for example. Sure, I'd like to be married, have a nice little wife and family. But I can't make a big tragic deal out of it. Ask me why I'm not married. Go ahead. I get it at least three times a week. Ask me.

ALISON: Howard, why aren't you married?

HOWARD: My intended mate was killed in the war in heaven.

ALISON: That's old, Howard. Old.

HOWARD: Ask me again.

ALISON: Howard, why aren't you married?

HOWARD: It's not my fault I'm single. I was born this way.

ALISON: (*Laughs.*) Oh, Howard.

HOWARD: Tell me I'm going to end up a ministering angel.

ALISON: You're going to end up a ministering angel, Howard.

HOWARD: Service above self! That's a good one, huh?

(*ALISON laughs. They move off. JANET and BRAD move on.*)

JANET: Do you want to tell me about your big romance with Marcie? Or is it too painful?

BRAD: You won't laugh?

JANET: Of course not. You know all about my big romance with Jay. You even hid behind the couch one night when he brought me over to watch TV.

BRAD: Okay. I was never much interested in girls. Always had better things to do. Then, three weeks ago, it happened.

(*JANET pantomimes playing violin and hums.*)

You said you wouldn't laugh.

JANET: I'm not laughing. I'm bleeding. It's too familiar.

BRAD: It couldn't have happened to you like this. It's never happened to anybody like this.

JANET: Go on.

BRAD: I heard the guys talking about some new girl that had moved into the ward, but I didn't pay any attention. Then at road show rehearsal -- I was walking toward the drinking fountain, and she was too, from

the other way. We looked at each other. And suddenly it was like one of those shampoo commercials that go into slow motion with people running through the fields. After about a hundred years we both got to the fountain at the same time, looking right in each other's eyes. Wow, those eyes. Blue, like -- like the summer sky. Those eyes.

JANET: Both of them.

BRAD: (*Not hearing her.*) All these dumb things came into my mind to say. Like, "What are you doing for the next thousand years?" Or "Didn't we meet in the pre-existence?" But I just turned the handle of the fountain, real cool-like, and said, "Can I buy you a drink?" After rehearsal she was waiting for me outside. I knew she would be. I walked her home, and it was all slow motion again.

JANET: Her mother must have wondered why it took so long.

BRAD: (*Still caught up in it all.*) I was in love. I couldn't sleep. I couldn't study. All I could think about was her. And those eyes.

JANET: Both of them.

BRAD: By that weekend, we'd planned our whole lifetime together. The kind of house we wanted. The names of our first six children. I told her I couldn't marry her until I could support her -- there would be a mission, and college. She said, "What's six years? I could wait forever for you. You're the one for me, Brad. I knew that for sure when I found those three roses in that vase on my window sill. A little voice inside me said, this is the one that I will love forever."

JANET: How romantic.

BRAD: But I didn't give her any roses. When I told her, she looked like I'd stabbed her in the stomach and said, "I'm afraid I've made a terrible mistake."

JANET: Who gave them to her?

BRAD: (*Points violently to where they have been observing Marcie.*) He did! That's why she's with him tonight, and not with me. Look at them. They're probably thinking up names for their first six children. They'd just better not use Lisa -- or Eric -- or Kevin.

(*Furious.*)

I sold my walkman to buy her a promise ring!

JANET: Oh, Brad. I'm sorry. Keep it. Someday you'll use it.

BRAD: No. It'll never happen again. I trusted once. I loved once. And she threw me away like an old apple core. Never again.

JANET: Brad, you're only eighteen.

BRAD: What does age mean? My love life is over.

JANET: Brad -- take it from an old woman of twenty-three -- .

BRAD: Shhhhhhh!

JANET: Let's dance.

(*They dance off. ALISON and HOWARD move on.*)

ALISON: Howard? Can I ask you something?

HOWARD: Sure.

ALISON: I want a serious answer now. Why aren't you married?

HOWARD: (*Looks around, loud whisper.*) Promise you won't tell.

(*She nods.*)

I've got terminal dandruff.

ALISON: Howard! Aren't you ever serious? Have you ever been engaged?

HOWARD: Only in a good cause. And the best cause I know of is staying single. Hey, that's really funny. I'll have to remember that one.

ALISON: You're impossible.

HOWARD: Okay, I'll tell you the truth. I do want to get married. I know it's what I ought to do. And I want to. I've been working on it ever since I got back from my mission. Don't tell anybody, but my six months have been up twenty-eight times. That's fourteen years. I get tired of my mother introducing me as her son who never married. I get tired of her sending me newspaper clippings every time a jewelry store has a sale on diamonds. Two years ago I got so desperate that I -- . Okay. I heard somewhere how one of the brethren met his wife. He decided it was time for him to get married. He fasted three days, prayed a lot, went to this certain place, and said to the Lord, "Now the rest is up to you. The first girl I see is the one you want me to marry." In a couple of minutes a girl came walking by, he started a conversation with her, and three weeks later they were married in the temple. Great story, huh?

ALISON: Terrific.

HOWARD: So I decided if it worked for him it would work for me. I fasted for three days, chose a good place. At first I was going to sit on the steps of the campus library at six a.m., but then I thought, what if she's working downtown or going to beauty school or something. I wanted to give everybody an equal chance. So at twelve noon on the big day, I got on the bus downtown, and I said "Okay, Lord, you've had three days to arrange this. I'm going to close my eyes, and at the next bus stop, the first woman to get on is the one you want me to marry."

ALISON: Oh, Howard.

HOWARD: So I closed my eyes. The bus stopped. I heard the doors open and then close. I opened my eyes. And there was a seventy year-old woman with a sack of groceries in her arms. She walked back and sat down right beside me, smiled and said, "Hello."

ALISON: And you said?

HOWARD: I took a deep breath, looked her in the eyes and said, "Lady, I'm awfully hungry. Could you spare a slice of bread?"

ALISON: (*Laughs.*) Oh, Howard! You can't make bargains like that with the Lord. I just don't think he works that way.

HOWARD: You're right. You can't tell the Lord the exact day and place to deliver her. You just have to keep your eyes open, have faith, and one day -- there she'll be.

ALISON: Just like that, huh?

HOWARD: I know it won't be long now. Deep inside me there's a feeling that says -- .

MUSICAL #4A -- MY ETERNAL GIRL

JUST AROUND THE CORNER,
OR THERE ACROSS A CROWDED ROOM, I'LL SEE HER,
I'LL SEE HER.
SINGING IN THE CHOIR,
OR PAUSING IN THE FOYER, SOON WILL BE HER,
WILL BE HER.
MY ETERNAL GIRL, DEARER THAN A PEARL OR RUBY.
MY ETERNAL GIRL,
GIVEN FROM HEAVEN'S TREASURY TO ME.

I'll know her when I see her. I'll recognize her by that special quality I'm looking for -- perfection.

ALL MEN:

ISN'T SHE GREAT, NEVER COMES LATE,

KNOWS ALL THE VERSES TO "COME, COME, YE SAINTS."
GENTLE AND KIND, CULTURALLY REFINED,
PLAYS THE PIANO, DANCES, SINGS, AND PAINTS -- All at the same time!
ISN'T SHE FINE, TRACING HER LINE,
GIVES A TERRIFIC TWO-AND-A-HALF-MINUTE TALK.
ISN'T SHE SWELL, I CAN JUST TELL
INTO MY WORLD SHE SOON IS GOING TO WALK --

HOWARD: With a note from my bishop pinned to her dress -- "This is the one!"

ALL MEN:

MY ETERNAL GIRL, DEARER THAN A PEARL OR RUBY.
MY ETERNAL GIRL,
GIVEN FROM HEAVEN'S TREASURY TO ME.

HOWARD: And after we're married, what was perfection will blossom into absolute unending, divine delight.

ALL MEN:

ISN'T SHE CUTE, CANNING HER FRUIT,
STUDYING SCRIPTURES WHILE SHE CURLS HER HAIR.
ISN'T SHE NEAT, SPROUTING HER WHEAT,
WAITING TO GREET ME, STANDING SWEETLY THERE.
ISN'T SHE GRAND, MENUS ARE PLANNED
FROM TWO YEAR'S SUPPLY THAT ALWAYS UP TO DATE.
ISN'T SHE TRIM, STAYS MUCH MORE SLIM
THAN WOMEN WHOSE CHILDREN ONLY NUMBER EIGHT.

HOWARD: She does it by bicycling to the grocery store, visiting teaching, and P.T.A.-- with one or two wagons tied on behind, in which the children sit contentedly eating small boxes of raisins. I know she's out there -- somewhere -- right this very minute -- waiting for me to find her. And I know that any day now, very soon --

ALL MEN:

MY ETERNAL GIRL, DEARER THAT A PEARL OR RUBY.
MY ETERNAL GIRL,
GIVEN FROM HEAVEN'S TREASURY TO ME.
SHE'S MY EVERYTHING --
SWEETHEART, HELPMEEET, BABY-DOLL, QUEEN!

ALL MEN:

SHE'S MY ETERNAL GIRL!

MUSICAL # 4B -- SEND ME A MAN

ALL WOMEN

OH, DEAR HEAVEN,
SEND ME A MAN,
IN DUE TIME IF YOU MUST, BUT NOW IF YOU CAN.
OH, DEAR HEAVEN,
YOU KNOW WHAT'S BEST. I'LL TAKE WHAT YOU'VE GOT,
BUT I MAY SUGGEST:
A HIGH I.Q. -- ONE HUNDRED AND FORTY.

A BODY STRONG AND ABLE TO SUPPORT ME.
A SPIRIT TRUE, AND SUCH A PURE HEART.
SOMEDAY HE MUST BE PERFECT
SO PLEASE GIVE HIM A GOOD START.

Sort of a nice combination of Brad Pitt and Jeffrey Holland. (or Paul Newman and Truman Madsen)

ALL MEN:

Marilyn Monroe, my mother, and just a touch of Eliza R. Snow.

ALL WOMEN:

OH, DEAR HEAVEN, SEND HIM TONIGHT.
HERE AT THE DANCE WOULD BE JUST RIGHT.
OH, DEAR HEAVEN,
SEND HIM IN HASTE.
I'M ONE OF EARTH'S FAIR FLOWERS AND I'M GOING TO WASTE.

MEN: (*together*)

MY ETERNAL GIRL,
DEARER THAN A PEARL
OR RUBY.

MY ETERNAL GIRL,
GIVEN FROM HEAVEN'S TREASURY
TO ME.
SHE'S MY EVERYTHING --
SWEETHEART, HELPMEEET,
BABY-DOLL, QUEEN.
SHE'S MY ETERNAL GIRL!

(*OTHERS off. NEIL and KAREN stay.*)

WOMEN: (*together*)

SEND ME A MAN.
NOW IF YOU CAN.
I'M ONE OF THE EARTH'S FAIR FLOWERS
AND I'M GOING TO WASTE.

SEND HIM --
SEND HIM --
SEND HIM --
IF YOU CAN SEND THE SEAGULLS
I KNOW THAT YOU CAN SEND ME --
A MAN!

NEIL: Hey, here's a great title. "How to Stay Active in the Church by Going Inactive in Your Marriage -- or Ninety-Nine Approved Ways to Avoid Your Spouse."

KAREN: Neil, that is not fair! We don't avoid each other. At least I don't avoid each other. And it's not just the Church. There's your job -- and all of my involvements.

NEIL: So -- they're all to blame. We're to blame. But somehow -- in our marriage -- we have slowly but surely dropped out of activity. And nobody has come by to see what's the matter. Not even us.

KAREN: (*Taken aback.*) But -- you have to make a living. Being an intern is tough.

NEIL: You're as busy as I am. Three children -- a house -- school committee -- Church work. If ever I do have a minute -- you don't. Sometimes I think you do stay busy to avoid me.

KAREN: Neil, that's crazy. I'm busy because I have always been taught to be busy. Good little Mormon girls are taught you have to stay busy so the devil doesn't get you.

NEIL: Karen, I am not the devil. I am your husband. And once in a while I would like to get you. For instance -- every time lately that I suggest retiring early for a nice romantic experience it just doesn't seem to work out -- you've got to fold the laundry or make some calls for Relief Society. And when you do get time for me -- I get the feeling it's sort of like compassionate service.

KAREN: That isn't fair! I plan a romantic experience every now and then.

NEIL: Once a month like visiting teaching. "Let me know if I can do anything else for you." Do you call it in some where? -- "Well, he's done."

KAREN: Neil -- that was ugly!

NEIL: I can live with it, Karen. I can live with it. But look. I think I would feel better about it if you could get me at the first of the month instead of the last. Okay?

KAREN: (*Tries very hard not to laugh, then lets go.*) Who could I call it to? That's really a wonderful idea, Neil.

NEIL: (*Shakes head.*) Oh, boy.

KAREN: Neil -- guess what?

NEIL: What?

KAREN: I think you're right. I do avoid you. I mean I think I -- avoid talking about anything that's -- difficult. And -- maybe I spend three times longer that I need to on my Relief Society lesson because -- I feel like I'm appreciated there. And on the school committee.

NEIL: (*Sincere.*) Karen -- you don't feel that I appreciate you?

KAREN: Well -- yes. But I don't think you really see me -- like you used to see me. And I need that. I realize all the time how much I need that. At school they see me as "Mrs." At Church they see me as "Sister." The children see me as "Mother." You see me as "Wife." But --

MUSICAL # 5 -- THE GIRL I USED TO BE

BACK BEHIND THE MOTHER IN ME,
BACK BEHIND THE WIFE IN ME,
THERE'S THE GIRL I USED TO BE,
THE GIRL I THINK YOU HARDLY SEE ANYMORE.

SHE STILL LIKES THE SMELL OF RAIN,
CAN'T RESIST A COUNTRY LANE,
LISTENS FOR THE PASSING TRAIN
COVERS UP A PRIVATE PAIN, LIKE BEFORE.

BUT NOBODY SEES HER.
DAYS GO BY AND NOBODY SPEAKS HER NAME.
WHEN NOBODY SEES HER
SHE GOES INSIDE AND CLOSES THE DOOR, CLOSES THE DOOR,
NO ONE CAN BLAME HER.

SO --
SEE ME DUST THE BOOKCASE THERE,
SORT THE SOCKS TO MAKE A PAIR,
BRUSH AND BRAID THE CHILDREN'S HAIR,
TAKE MY PLACE AT EVENING PRAYER, AND THEN --

LOOK BEHIND THE MOTHER IN ME,
LOOK BEHIND THE WIFE IN ME,
FIND THE GIRL I USED TO BE,
THE WOMAN SHE BECAME --
WHO NEEDS FOR YOU TO SEE HER AGAIN.

(NEIL and KAREN off. BRAD and JANET on.)

BRAD: She waved at me. Can you believe the nerve? She smiled at me and waved at me. Don't look.

JANET: Do you want to leave, Brad? I wouldn't mind.

BRAD: I can't I'm on the floorshow.

JANET: You didn't tell me.

BRAD: You didn't ask me.

JANET: What's your act going to be -- slitting your wrists?

BRAD: Don't be dumb. I'm a tapper.

JANET: You're kidding. A tap dance? Are you any good?

BRAD: I'm terrific. And when Marcie sees how terrific I am, boy, is she going to be sorry.

JANET: How long have you been dancing?

BRAD: About a year. The basketball coach read somewhere that the top athletes take dance classes. Helps the footwork, you know. So he enrolled us all in this class. Tapping turned out to be more fun than making a basket. So -- I stayed with the dance class and dropped the team.

JANET: What did the guys have to say about that?

BRAD: Plenty.

MUSICAL #6 -- BE A MAN

I'M IN THE PARKING LOT AT SCHOOL.
DAN WALKS UP -- REALLY COOL --
SAYS, "SHIRLEY! SHIRLEY TEMPLE!
DANCE FOR US.
COME ON, DANCE FOR US!"

I KEEP ON WALKIN' PAST.
HE KEEPS ON TALKIN' FAST.
"SHOW ME YOU'RE A MAN.
BRAD, BE A MAN, BRAD -- BE A MAN!"

I'm trying to think what a man ought to do in that situation. So I turn -- the other way.

HE JUMPS RIGHT ON MY CASE,
HIS FIST IS IN MY FACE.
"SHOW ME YOU'RE A MAN.
BRAD, BE A MAN, BRAD, BE A MAN!"

I remember now what I learned about how to handle that kind of a thing. So I turn -- the other cheek.

HE QUICKLY THINKS IT THROUGH,
THEN SWINGS AT THAT ONE TOO.
"SHOW ME YOU'RE A MAN.
BRAD, BE A MAN, BRAD, BE A MAN!"

Well, I can't remember what it says to do after that, so I turn -- and beat the crap out of him. After my dance class I have a karate class. Anyway, I help him to the school nurse to look at his head.

TAKES TWELVE STITCHES AND
I HAVE TO HOLD HIS HAND.
“SHOW ME YOU’RE A MAN,
DAN, BE A MAN, DAN -- BE A MAN!”

(JANET and BRAD off. ALISON and HOWARD on.)

ALISON: Howard, what if she never makes her entrance like that? What if it never happens?

HOWARD: It will. And I’m not just waiting around. I’m working on it. I date at least twice a week. I’m always given the kind of Church positions that force me into contact with women. Like I’ve been on the activities committee about seven different times. All the bishops seem to think that if they can just keep me dancing, sooner or later one of my partners is bound to take.

ALISON: No wonder you’re such a good dancer -- all that practice.

HOWARD: Yeah. It’s like typing with your eyes closed. Hey, you know what dance was the first I had to teach?

ALISON: What?

HOWARD: The jitterbug.

ALISON: You’re not that old.

HOWARD: In my ward we got all the dances thirty years behind everybody else.

ALISON: Show me.

HOWARD: The jitterbug?

ALISON: Or some of the other ones. Can you remember?

HOWARD: Can I ever forget? Okay. Here’s this hall full of thirteen to eighteen year-olds, just dying to get their hands on each other. And I teach them the dances and keep them moral at the same time. Every once in a while the bishop pops his head in to see if anybody needs to repent.

(ALL break their positions and fall into place.)

16 MORE PAGES TO END