ACT ONE – SCENE 1

The office of Almaelou Music Corp. in New York

At rise, ALBERT PETERSON, *a nervous young man in his early thirties, is talking excitedly on the phone, standing center.*

No. 2 Opening Curtain

(*see p. 80*)

(Orchestra)

ALBERT. ... I know that, sir, but think of the disastrous effect this might have on the morale of the American teenager! No, I am not suggesting the boy doesn't want to go into the Army! It's just that ... no, I'm not trying to ... well, it seemed to me that ... two weeks from today? At the Induction Center? He'll be there.

ALBERT *hangs up as* ROSIE *enters briskly.*

Rosie, thank God you've come! This is the end of Almaelou Music Corporation! Conrad Birdie is going into the Army!

ROSIE. And your faithful secretary is hereby submitting ... (*Slapping a letter down on* ALBERT'S *desk*) ... her resignation!

ROSIE *starts to leave.*

ALBERT. Hah?

ROSIE. I just dropped in to say goodbye, Albert, darling ... (*blows* ALBERT *a kiss*) ... Lots of luck!

ROSIE *goes to the door.* ALBERT *stops her.*

ALBERT. Rosie, you can't! Not today of all days! (*Runs to his desk. Looks frantically through drawers.*) My pills, where are my pills ... the little white ones I take when I'm overwrought.

ROSIE. (*Picking up bottle from desk and handing* ALBERT *one.*) Here.

ALBERT. Not so much. Break it in half.

ROSIE. You're thirty-three years old, Albert. You can take a whole aspirin.

ALBERT *takes the pill from* ROSIE, *who goes upstage left to the water pitcher and starts pouring a glassful.*

ALBERT. I am not thirty-three; I'm a long way from thirty-three; I won't be thirty-three till tomorrow ... water!

ROSIE. (*Handing it to* ALBERT) It's no use, Albert. My mind's made up. I've been with Almaelou eight years now and as you well know I've been a lot more than just a secretary to you.

Sterling High School 732/69 02/14/202

ALBERT. Rose! Those were moments of madness!

ROSIE. Well, between the moments of madness and the office I've put in a good ninety hour week. And for what? A five-dollar raise in 1954 and a bottle of Arpege last Christmas.

ALBERT. Promise her anything but give her Arpege, Rosie.

ROSIE. Yeah, but not a sixteenth of an ounce! (*Crosses right to her desk*) ... Besides, I want something more than that.

ALBERT. Rosie, if you're referring to anything of a more permanent nature between you and me, I'm not ready for it. Besides, there are religious differences.

ROSIE. Spanish is not a religion!

ALBERT. And if its part of the company you're after, the answer is no to that, too! Almaelou is me, Momma, and Lou...and any changes in it would kill that wonderful woman who bore me.

ROSIE. Nothing could kill your mother, Albert. Except maybe a silver bullet!

ALBERT. (*Rising to go to* ROSIE) And I won't drop poor old Lou either. He loved you, Rose!

ROSIE. I loved Lou, too. Sure he was warm, he was loyal, he was loveable, but he died six years ago and, besides, he was a wire-haired terrier. (ALBERT *walks left*) Anyhow, I don't want a part of the company. This is something much more important.

ALBERT. (*Turns*) Rosie, if you're going to discuss what I think you're going to discuss, I'm in no mood to discuss it! (*Sits at his desk*)

ROSIE. (*Goes to* ALBERT) There's nothing to discuss, Albert. Conrad Birdie's going in the Army; I've quit. There's nothing you can do but give up the business and go back to college and get your ...

ALBERT. (*Interrupting*) ... Rosie, I'm up to my ears in debt! Conrad's got a fifty-thousand dollar guarantee which I can't pay! And I've just taken a severe overdose of aspirin ...

ROSIE. Albert, this may be your last chance!

No. 3 An English Teacher (*see p. 81*)

(Rosie)

ROSIE. (*Over music*) Will you listen to me, Albert ... I'm serious!

(*Sung*) His going in the Army
Is the best thing he could do!
Now you're free to start to do
What you wanted to.
Albert? Albert! Al—bert!

ACT ONE – SCENE 3

The MacAfee home, Sweet Apple, Ohio

As lights come up, we see URSULA MERKLE, *a dark-haired, hyper-enthusiastic young lady of about fifteen, sitting in the window downstage left talking excitedly on the phone.*

URSULA. Kim MacAfee, what do you mean you're resigning from the Fan Club! I mean just because Hugo Peabody gave you his pin doesn't mean you have to retire from all social life! Going steady is very important but there are some things more important than very important and the Conrad Birdie Fan Club is one of them.

In event of a technical problem and MacAfee house is not in downstage position, URSULA *may add:*

I mean, after all, where else can we girls gather together to worship that wonderful creature? I mean, do you realize what you'd be giving up, Kim?

The MacAfee House has moved downstage, the scrim is up and we see KIM *upstage right in her upstairs bedroom. The house is a two-story affair, bedroom upstairs, combination family room and kitchen downstairs.* KIM *is a month or two older than* URSULA, *very pretty, quite self-possessed.*

KIM. (*Into the phone*) I'm sorry, Ursula, but my mind's made up. Of course, I'll still play his records, but things like the Pledge and the Conrad Birdie Scream are past me now.

URSULA. You're giving up the scream? You mean when Conrad Birdie sings, on television, you're not going to go AAAAAAAAA!!! (*Tragically*) ... Oh, Kim!

Downstairs, MRS. MACAFEE *has crossed left and lifted the telephone through the last of the above. She now puts it down and calls upstairs.*

MRS. MACAFEE. Kim Dear, would you please get off the phone. I've got some calls to make.

KIM. (*Calling down*) All right, Mother! (*Then back into the phone*) ... Sorry, Ursula, I've got to hang up. You'll explain everything to the other kids, won't you?

URSULA. I suppose I'll have to. 'Bye, Kim ... (URSULA *hangs up.* KIM *hangs up.* URSULA *leans out of the window*) ... Kim, are you sure? I mean after all! I mean really, Kim, are you absolutely sure?

KIM. (*Also leaning.* THEY *evidently live right next door to each other.*) Positive. After all, I'm fifteen years old and it's time I settled down.

Through the course of following song, KIM *puts on jeans, huge sweater, socks and a baseball cap.*

No. 6 How Lovely to Be a Woman

(*see p. 94*)

(Kim)

ROSIE. Speaking of your mother, Albert ...

have you told her about dissolving Almaelou?

ALBERT. I couldn't, Rosie. Yesterday was the anniversary.

ROSIE. Of what?

ALBERT. (*Taking off his hat*) Lou. Six years ago he was hit on 181st Street and Broadway by a loaded beer truck. (*Just then an ear-splitting "Yooohoo" is heard off right*) Do you suppose that's Mamma?

ROSIE. It's either her or the all-clear.

MRS. PETERSON. (*Entering stage right*) Yoohoo!

MRS. PETERSON *is a Mamma in every sense of the word, dressed in a faded pink dress, a fabulous full-length beige mink coat and brown walkover shoes, shoving her way through a group of* TRAVELERS.

Sonny!

ALBERT *and* MRS. PETERSON *embrace.* SHE *staggers.*

ALBERT. Mamma! What's the matter?

MRS. PETERSON. Don't worry about me, Sonny. I'm just a little faint, from the subway ...

ALBERT. Mamma, I told you to take a taxi.

MRS. PETERSON. Taxi! What do I need with taxis? I'll leave the taxis for my successful son. A mother can ride crowded in a dirty subway full of foreign people wouldn't give you a seat if your life depended on it, but what's the difference; nowadays a mother is lower than dirt anyway! Here's the money I saved from not taking the taxi; buy some candy with it. (*Looks at* ROSIE) Who's she?

ALBERT. Mamma, you know Rose Alvarez from the office.

MRS. PETERSON. This is Rose Alvarez? Pretty little Rose Alvarez? I can't believe it ... (*Then with an agonized shout*) ... Rose, what happened? You had a sudden shock or something?

ROSIE. (*Trying to get out, crosses left*) Excuse me, Albert; I think I'll go see if Conrad's here.

MRS. PETERSON. By all means, Miss Alvarez. (*Putting her arm around* ROSIE) ... Look at her, Sonny. How nice she looks. It's a wonder to me some older man doesn't snatch her up. A personable matron like that with brains and a few dollars. What a catch you'd be for a convalescent. Goodbye, Rose.

Sterling High School 732769 02/14/2027

MRS. PETERSON *extends her hand.* ROSIE *takes it.*

ROSIE. Goodbye, Mae.

MRS. PETERSON. Call me Mrs. Peterson.

ROSIE *exits.*

ALBERT. Mamma, what I wanted to discuss with you is sort of about Rose.
Maybe you'd better sit down.

MRS. PETERSON. Why? I know my Sonny. He loves his mamma.
He isn't going to say anything that would break her heart. Go ahead, dear.
(*Levelly*) ... What about Rose?

ALBERT. Well, it's about Lou, too.

MRS. PETERSON. (*As if struck, calling to heaven*) ... Lou. Where are you, Lou?
Struck down by a beverage I consumed faithfully for thirty-two years.
(*To* ALBERT) What about Lou?

ALBERT. Well, Mamma, Rose thinks, and I agree, that I should give up Almaelou.
(MRS. PETERSON *staggers*) What's the matter, Mamma?

MRS. PETERSON. Nothing's the matter. You killed me, that's all.
(*Looking up*) ... Lou, I'm coming. I'm on my way up.

ALBERT. You don't understand, Mamma. It's just that Rose thought ...
I mean I thought ... I mean ... (*Giving up*) Look, Mamma, here's some money.
Take a cab home. The subways are too crowded.

MRS. PETERSON. Nothing is too crowded for a mother. I'll take the I.R.T.
That's the worst subway. (*Alternative line for locales too far from New York:*
"I'll go during the rush hour. That's the worst time.")
Wait a moment, how many blocks is it after all?
Only a hundred and seven. I'll walk.

ALBERT. Mamma ...

MRS. PETERSON. (*Moving right to leave*) Enjoy yourself, son. Take care.
Wear your heavy coat. Be careful crossing the street. Keep your
money in your inside pocket. Wear you rubbers. And eat a hot lunch ...

MRS. PETERSON *exits downstage right.* ROSIE *has entered stage left through the train gate in time to witness* MRS. PETERSON'S *exit.*

ROSIE. ... Albert, I thought you were going to break it to her gently.

ALBERT. (*Sheepishly*) Well, as a matter of fact, Rosie, I didn't tell her at all.
I mean, she was so upset about my leaving I thought I'd better wait.

ROSIE *sighs, puts down* ALBERT'S *briefcase and throughout the following picks up two of the seven bags placed center stage by the* TRAINMEN. ROSIE *puts them on the baggage wagon.* KIM *and the last* TWO GIRLS *start off left after the others. As they do, a* BOY *who has been standing apart from crowd steps forward.*

HUGO. ... Kim, before you go, could I talk to you for a minute?

KIM. Right now? I mean, couldn't it wait? I'm in an awful hurry!

HUGO. I don't think so, Kim. It's important.

DEBORAH SUE. Hugo Peabody, what's so important
that you have to talk to her right now?

HUGO. (*Bursting forth*) What's so important? I'll tell you what's so important!
The day after I give her my pin she goes around kisses someone else,
that's what's so important! I want you to know I'm quite upset about this.
I've already had several headaches and a nosebleed!

ALICE. Why Hugo, I believe you're actually jealous of Conrad Birdie!

HUGO. Me jealous? I'm the opposite of jealous. I'm very jealous!
And I have every right to be. Kim's my steady!

KIM. That's just it, Hugo, I'm your steady! Oh I may admire Conrad Birdie as one admires a far-distant and unattainable ideal. But I'm pinned to you, Hugo, and I don't care how common and ordinary you are, that's how I'm going to stay!

HUGO. You're not just saying that to make me feel better?

No. 12 — One Boy

(*see p. 107*)

(Kim, Two Girls & Rosie)

KIM. (*Over music*) I mean every word of it, Hugo.
Conrad Birdie is just a fling. A steady is forever ...

KIM *sings as* ROSIE *sits on a suitcase and listens quietly.*

KIM. (*Sung*) One boy,
One special boy,
One boy to go with,
To talk with,
And walk with,

KIM & ONE LITTLE GIRL (*Optional*: ALICE & DEBORAH SUE).
One boy,
That's the way it should be.

Sterling High School 732769 02/14/202

KIM. Daddy, I wish you'd hurry. I want to have all this mess cleared away before Conrad comes down!

MR. MACAFEE contains his bitterness as he looks at the elaborate table beside him.

MR. MACAFEE. This mess, as you call it, Kim, happens to be my breakfast. And I intend to enjoy it!

MRS. MACAFEE. Your father has a right to enjoy his eggs, Kim. But I'm sure he won't mind if we just quietly start clearing away some of these other things ...

As MR. MACAFEE tries to eat, KIM and MRS. MACAFEE begin snatching up bread, butter, jam, salt, pepper, sugar, milk, and all the utensils. MR. MACAFEE makes futile grabs at disappearing items as MRS. MACAFEE rattles on.

...I know the house is a bit hectic this morning, but Kim's gone to a lot of trouble to fix a special breakfast for Mr. Birdie and I want to make sure everything's ready and waiting for him when he comes down. After all he is a national figure and I want to show these New York people we know how to treat a national figure here in Sweet Apple. Of course it really doesn't mean that much to me personally but for Kim's sake I ...

Throughout MRS. MACAFEE'S speech, SHE and KIM have pretty well got everything off the table. KIM removes the table itself. MR. MACAFEE reaches for the table, and manages to grab his two fried eggs and is holding them in his hands when MRS. MACAFEE, still talking, reaches over and snaps them up in a silent butler.

There we are! All done! Did you enjoy it, dear? Good! (*Takes empty plate from* MR. MACAFEE) Now if you'll just hurry along ...

MR. MACAFEE. (*A pronouncement*) Doris, I am not budging from this room till I get my coffee, smoke a cigarette, and read my paper!

MRS. MACAFEE. Oh, I'm sorry, dear. I didn't have time to make your coffee this morning. How about a nice warm Seven-Up?

MRS. MACAFEE goes to the cabinet to get one as RANDOLPH comes down from upstairs.

RANDOLPH. Morning, Pa. Here's your paper. I hope you don't mind but I cut out a few stories about Conrad.

RANDOLPH hands MR. MACAFEE a folded newspaper. MR. MACAFEE opens it. It is in shreds. Quietly he puts it down and turns to his family.

MR. MACAFEE. ... I have tried to run this house on a democratic basis. I have extended the privilege of self-determination to both the woman I have married, and the children I have sired...the vote has been denied no one for reason of age, sex, or political affiliations. There has been no taxation without representation, and open covenants have been openly arrived at!

With mounting anger, MR. MACAFEE rises and moves to the table. RANDOLPH crosses to the bottom of the stairs.

(MR. M.) Last night I gave up my room to a guest who repeatedly referred to me as "Fats." Telephone calls were made to New York, Chicago, Fairbanks, Alaska, and Hong Kong. I slept on a camp cot with my feet in the fireplace and my head in an ashtray. Outside my window three harpies shrieked We Love You Conrad four thousand seven hundred and twenty-three times! ... I have just lost two fried eggs. (*In ringing tones*) Gentlemen, the democracy is over! Parliament has been dissolved; the Magna Carta is revoked, and Nero is back in town! And you don't offer an emperor a warm Seven-Up!

ALBERT. (*From upstairs*) Oh, Mr. MacAfee! I hope you won't mind keeping off the phone for a few minutes. We're expecting a long-distance call from New York.

MR. MACAFEE. (*Exiting right*) Perfectly all right. I'll go out and burn Rome.

KIM. Mother, what's wrong?

MRS. MACAFEE. Nothing, dear. Your father's just excited about Conrad's being here, that's all.

RANDOLPH. He's coming! He's coming!

KIM. He's coming! I'll get the eggs! Mother, you call the kids!

MRS. MACAFEE. (*Calling off right*) Girls, he's coming! You'd better hurry if you want to watch him eat!

URSULA *enters stage right with* MRS. MERKLE *and the* MAYOR'S WIFE. OTHERS *peer through the screen door and window.*

URSULA. Here we are, Kim!

MRS. MERKLE. I'm sorry, Doris, but we just had to come, too!! We'll stand quietly back here.

RANDOLPH. (*From the bottom step*) Here he is!

Attired in a leopard-skin bathrobe, CONRAD *comes down slowly, crosses to the beautiful table, looks at it, pushes his way to the sink, finds a can opener, takes a beer can out of his pocket and punches it open.* CONRAD *drains the entire beer, burps and hands the can to* MRS. MACAFEE. *NOTE: Use warm beer and shake it up so it really shoots up like a geyser.*

CONRAD. Call me for lunch.

Crossing left, CONRAD *passes* MR. MACAFEE *who has just re-entered upstage center.*

... Hi, Fats! (*And* CONRAD *is gone up the stairs*)

MR. MACAFEE. (*Crossing right to* MRS. MACAFEE) Now look here, Doris. About that boy ...

MRS. MACAFEE. Please, Harry, he's just shy ...

MRS. MERKLE. Well, if you ask me ...

Sterling High School 732769 02/14/2027

ROSIE. Every one of them! Except maybe Albert Schweitzer. And I'm not his type.
They're all the same. From puberty to senility ... from Arnold to Mussolini ...

KIM. I never understood why Ingrid Bergman married him in the first place.

ROSIE. Egotistical, selfish human beasts!

KIM. Then what are we poor women to do, Miss Alvarez?

ROSIE. (*Crossing to upstage of bed*) Use them!

Music vamp in.

Let them be our playthings! While we live! Sip from the cup of life!
Mix the potion full strong and drain it to the dregs!

ROSIE *slams down the lid of the suitcase. Music pauses for the next line.*

How do you like them apples, Mr. Peterson!

KIM & ROSIE.
(*Sung*) Do we need them? No, we don't!
Do we want them? No, we don't!

KIM. Will we leave them?

ROSIE. No, we won't!
Tell me, what did I say that for?

BOTH. What did we ever see in them?
How could we ever think that they were nice!
Take it from us, we've paid an awful price!
It was rough, from the start,
Broken dates, broken nails, broken heart...
What did we ever see in ...

KIM. Hugo F. Peabody!

ROSIE. Hah?

KIM. Hugo! What did I ever see in him? Why, he's as bad as Mr. Peterson if not worse!
(*Suddenly*) ...Miss Alvarez, I'm coming with you!

ROSIE. Kim, don't be ridiculous! You're only fifteen!

KIM. Juliet was fourteen when she left home.

ROSIE. And look what happened to her! Now look, Kim,
why don't you have some milk and cookies and go to bed like a ...

KIM. It's too late for cookies, Miss Alvarez! I want to live!
We'll sip the dregs together! We'll help each other with our potions!

No. 22 Underscore: See in Him

(*see p. 128*)

(Orchestra)

But ROSIE *has already fled in terror,*
out the door and down the stairs, as lights come up to reveal:

Sterling High School 732769 02/14/202

ALL. Oh, life's a ball!
If only you know it!
And it's all just waiting for you!
You're alive!
So come on and show it,
Oh, we've got a lot of livin',
Such a lot of livin',
What a lot of livin' to do!!
Oo oo oo oo oo. Yeah!

Two by two, the KIDS *spin off. Last to go are* CONRAD *and* KIM, *who dash off downstage right as* HUGO *calls after—*

HUGO. Kim! Kim, come back! Kim ...

HUGO *turns around and starts left as the corner of the MacAfee House comes on stage left and* MR. MACAFEE *steps out.*

MR. MACAFEE. Kim! Kim, where are you? (*Seeing* HUGO) ... Hugo, have you seen Kim?

HUGO. (*Crossing to center*) Don't ask me. Ask Conrad Birdie ...

MR. MACAFEE. (*Crossing to* HUGO) What are you talking about?

HUGO. They're out together having moonlight swims and motorboat races and loop-the-loop! I'm going to do the only sensible thing. Drink myself to death ...

HUGO *crosses upstage and off left.*

MR. MACAFEE. Moonlight swims ... motorboat races ... loop-the-loop! (*To* MRS. MACAFEE *who comes out during this*) ... Doris, get my gun.

ALBERT. (*Coming out of the house*) Mr. MacAfee, you haven't seen Conrad, have you?

MR. MACAFEE. No, but I intend to see him, Mr. Peterson. So if you have a message, I'll be glad to deliver it right after I shoot him.

ALBERT. Shoot him! Rosie! I've got to find Rosie! (*Dashes off*)

MRS. MACAFEE. Dear, what are you talking about? You know you don't have a gun!

MR. MACAFEE. There's the Daisy Air Rifle in the garage.

RANDOLPH. (*Who has come out of the house*) That's mine, Pa.

MR. MACAFEE. You shut up! (*Crossing center*) I wonder where I can buy BBs this late at night ...

MRS. MACAFEE. Anyway, it's broken, dear ...

MR. MACAFEE. Then get me anything! That bow and arrow I bought you last Christmas with the suction tips! Don't just stand there! My daughter has run off to loop-the-loop with a fiend! Get me a water gun!

MRS. MACAFEE *and* RANDOLPH *go into the house.*

ACT TWO – SCENE 6

Back door, Maude's Roadside Retreat

We see trash cans, back fence and a lamppost. Wearing a red fez, ROSIE *comes limply out of the door and collapses on a box downstage left, next to a garbage can.* HUGO *comes in center from stage right. Music fades out.*

HUGO. Miss Alvarez, I have a favor to ask you.
Could you go back in there and get me some grain alcohol to go?

ROSIE. Not for a million dollars!

HUGO. My whole world is collapsing before me!
I can't get a drink; and Kim's run off with Conrad to the ice house …

ROSIE. Kim and Conrad! Albert! I've got to phone Albert! Hugo, you stay right here …

No. 30 (again) Shriner Playoff

(see p. 145)

(Orchestra)

ROSIE *opens the door into Maude's.*
Instantly SHRINERS *burst forth.* ROSIE *backs away.*

ROSIE. Now, fellas! Wait a minute!

The SHRINERS *lift* ROSIE *and carry her madly to center, then off right.*
HUGO *goes into Maude's and* ALBERT *comes dashing on from downstage right.*
Music fades out.

ALBERT. Here it is! Maude's Roadside Retreat! (*Opens the door and shouts in*)
I'm coming, Rose! Hurry, Mamma!

MRS. PETERSON. (*Staggering on*) I don't know why we have to go running around all night looking for someone it would be better not to find in the first place. If you listen to me, Sonnyboy, you'll come home, have a nice cup of Postum and go to bed.

ALBERT. (*Crossing right to approach*) Mamma, I told you I'm not coming home till I find Rosie! Now if you want to leave, that's okay with me.
(*Stopping and turning*) As a matter of fact, it's not a bad idea …
(*With a deep breath*) … Why don't you go home, Mamma?

MRS. PETERSON. What did you say, sweetheart darling?

ALBERT. I said, "Why don't you go home, Mamma."

MRS. PETERSON. (*After a pause*) Would you mind repeating that once more, sunshine of my existence?

ALBERT. I said, go home, Mamma. I don't need you anymore.

Sterling High School 732769 02/14/2027

MRS. PETERSON. So it's come at last! At last it's come! The day I knew would come at least has come at last! My Sonnyboy doesn't need me anymore. Well, what are you waiting for? Get rid of me! (*Moves left, indicating garbage can*) Put me out with the garbage! Just throw me out with the used grapefruits and empty cans from the Bumble-Bee salmon. Never mind putting a lid on. Leave it open so a hundred thousand pussycats can walk all over a mother. And by the way, sweetheart darling, I got some good news for you. I got the report from the hospital. It's absolutely definite. I got a condition. Never mind what kind of condition—a condition. And the one thing doctors can't cure is a condition. I don't want you to worry though. Fancy funerals are for rich people. I don't want you to spend a cent. Just wait till Mother's Day, wrap me in a flag, and dump me in the river! (*Pauses, with handkerchief to lips, then, more calmly*) Well. I feel better now. Everything is as it should be. A mother is lying on top of a sanitation truck bound for the City Dump, and a son is running around in saloons with a Mexicali Rose who came over for the fruit picking season and stayed to ruin an American woman's life!! (*The last is near hysteria*)

ALBERT. (*Turning to* HER) Are you finished, Mamma?

MRS. PETERSON. Yes, Sonnyboy.

ALBERT. Goodnight, Mamma.

MRS. PETERSON. (*Bitterly*) You're just like your father—you'd marry anything. (*Starts off*) ... Goodnight, Sonnyboy.

ALBERT. My name is not Sonnyboy.

MRS. PETERSON. (*Turning back to* ALBERT) Goodnight ... (*It's wrung out of* HER) ... Aaalbert!

No. 31 Incidental: Glory Hallelujah

(*see p. 145*)

(Orchestra)

MRS. PETERSON *moves off right as we hear the strains of "Battle Hymn of the Republic." They grow louder as* SHE *is gone.* ALBERT *swells with triumphant pride and is transfixed as* MR. & MRS. MACAFEE *and* RANDOLPH *come hurrying on center from left.*

MR. MACAFEE. Mr. Peterson! Have you seen Conrad and Kim?

ALBERT. Ah there, Mr. MacAfee! A great pleasure to see you again. Unfortunately, I must tell you that Conrad's affairs no longer interest me. I'm looking for Miss Alvarez now to tell her that ... (*Hears it*) ...Conrad and Kim?

MRS. MACAFEE. They've run off together!

MR. MACAFEE. And if we don't find them soon, Mr. Peterson, I intend to call the FBI! Who's the head of it now, dear? Is it Peter Lawford yet?

ALBERT. I'm sure there's nothing to worry about ...

ROSIE *has had enough.*

ROSIE. Out of my way ... you defrocked English teacher!

ALBERT *yells "Ouch!" when* ROSIE *lets him have it in the arm with her suitcase.* ROSIE *then strikes out the door.*

(*Sung*) What did I ever see ...
In him!

ROSIE *hurries left as* ALBERT *limps after her and bellows off left through a window.*

ALBERT. Rosie, come back! Do you hear me? This is King Kong calling! Rosie! Rosie, I need you. Rosie, please come back! Rosie! ...

As THE MACAFEES *and* RANDOLPH *enter from stage right,* ALBERT'S *tone immediately changes.*

... And I don't care how you plead and beg, Miss Alvarez, you're through here at Almaelou! Not only do I accept your resignation, but furthermore you're fired. And just remember one more thing. Sticks and stones will break my bones but names will never harm me. You big rat. (*Starts back from the window*) Sorry to do this in front of you, folks, but I've had to let Miss Alvarez go. (*The phone rings*) I'll get that.

MR. MACAFEE. Probably Hong Kong again.

ALBERT. (*Into the receiver*) Hello, this is Albert Peterson speaking! I'm sorry, Mr. Lewis, but Miss Rose Alvarez is no longer with us. That's right ...

Through the last, KIM *has appeared at the head of the stairs clutching a heavy suitcase. The following is interspersed as* KIM *starts down and* ALBERT *continues on the phone in pantomime.*

KIM. ... Miss Alvarez! Wait for me! I'm coming!

MR. MACAFEE. And where do you think you're going, young lady?

KIM. With Rosie! To drain deep the dregs and sip
full hearty the brimming cup. To live!

MR. MACAFEE. Upstairs.

KIM. But Daddy ...

MR. MACAFEE. Upstairs. (*Then bursting out*) ... Do you hear me?
I said ... (*Controlled again*) Upstairs.

KIM. Miss Alvarez was right! You're all the same. From puberty to Mussolini...

MR. MACAFEE. ... What's that? You dare say 'puberty' in front of your own father?
Not to mention Mussolini? Doris ... we've failed as parents!

MR. MACAFEE *falls into* MRS. MACAFEE'S *arms.*

(MR. M.) I never asked for much from my children. Just respect. A little respect. That's all I asked for. Respect. But did I get respect? I did not get respect. I got no respect.

Sterling High School 732769 02/14/2027

RANDOLPH. I respect you, Pa.

MR. MACAFEE. (*Snarling*) I don't want your respect! You're a child.
What good is respect from a child! Doris, take me upstairs, I'm not a well man ...
(*As* THEY *start up*) ... Certain words I didn't want to hear in this house.
Puberty was the first ... and Mussolini was the second ...
(*As* THEY *disappear*) And respect was the third ...

ALBERT. (*Still on the phone. Aloud*) ... Now look here, Mr. Lewis, no three-cent reporter can bulldoze me! I happen to be Albert J. Peterson and you can print that in whatever cheap paper you happen to represent! (*Pause*) It's not a paper, it's a magazine. (*Another pause*) And it's not Mr. Lewis ... (*Softly*) It's Mr. Luce. (*Then with a wail as* HE *hangs up*) ... Rosie, I need you!

MRS. PETERSON. (*From the head of the stairs as* ALBERT *starts to the door*)
Sonnyboy! Where are you going?

ALBERT. Nowheres, Mamma. Just out. It's stuffy in here so I thought ...
(*Bravely*) ... To look for Rosie, Mamma! I love her and want her back!

MRS. PETERSON. Is that all? I thought it was something serious. By all means, sonny, find your Lady of Spain and bring her back here. (*Crosses into the kitchen*) And by the way, dear, when you get back be sure to stop in the kitchen, take my head out of the oven, and turn off the gas ...

MRS. PETERSON *has turned on the gas, gets down on her knees and calmly sticks her head in the oven.*

ALBERT. (*Crossing over and pulling* HER *out*) Mamma!

MRS. PETERSON. (*Stopping to turn off the gas*) It's a strange house.
I don't want to run up a bill.

ALBERT. Mamma, I've had enough of this! If you really loved me, you'd help me find Rosie before it's too late. Don't you realize what's happened?
That poor girl's gone out to make up for all the years she wasted on me.
Who knows what low dive she's in at this very moment.

MRS. PETERSON. Oh, Sonny, you're right! I'll help you find her.
Only maybe I better give you the message from Conrad first ...

ALBERT. What message?

MRS. PETERSON. Nothing to worry about, Darling. He just says he's going out tonight and he doesn't think he'll get back on time to kiss Kim tomorrow ...

ALBERT. Mamma, why didn't you tell me this before!

MRS. PETERSON. I tried to, darling sweetheart, but you kept bringing up a certain party from South of the Border.

ALBERT. (*Shouting upstairs*) I don't know what the matter with him is!
He knows how much this means to me! Conrad! Conrad!

CONRAD'S VOICE. Take it easy! I'm coming...

Sterling High School 732769 02/14/2021

CONRAD, *dressed in tight jeans, leather jacket and boots, starts downstairs.*

CONRAD. And before you start hollering, Albert, I just want you to know I made up my mind! I'm tired of getting up at nine every morning, having people watch me when I eat, and letting kids poke me in the eye. I wanna have some fun! Go out! Meet a couple of young chicks! Don't you understand, Albert? I am tense!

ALBERT. Mamma, don't just stand there! Do something!

MRS. PETERSON. (*Planting herself sexily in front of the door*) Conrad, did you ever think in terms of a more mature woman? (*Shows a bit of shoulder*)

CONRAD. Man, I hope I never get that tense! (*Goes to right center*) ... Now look, buddy boy, this is my last free night before I go into the Army, and I am going out!

ALBERT. (*Goes to* CONRAD) You can't go out without my permission! It says so in your contract! Mamma, get the contract. It's in my ... never mind, I'll get it myself. (*Running upstairs*) ... Conrad, you stay right here!

Music in.

No. 24 A Lot of Livin' To Do

(*see p. 129*)

(Conrad, Teen Chorus & Kim)

MRS. PETERSON. (*Over vamp*) Conrad ...

MRS. PETERSON *shyly shows* CONRAD *a bit of ankle, then is embarrassed and hurries out the door, upstage right.*

CONRAD. There are chicks,
Just ripe for some kissin'!
And I mean to kiss me a few!
Man, those chicks
Don't know what they're missin'!
I got a lot of livin' to do!

Sizzlin' steaks!
All ready for tastin'!
And there's Cadillacs...all shiny and new!
Gotta move,
Cause time is a-wastin'!
There's such a lot of livin' to do!

CONRAD *moves out of the house as lights come up on a defiant* KIM *in her bedroom.*

KIM. There are men
Of nineteen or twenty
Who are suave and reckless and true!
Older men,
Who'll give a girl plenty!
I've got a lot of livin' to do!

By now the MacAfee House is moving off, and we find ourselves in ...

ACT TWO – SCENE 8

Sweet Apple Railroad Station

Music segues on applause. Early next morning.
There is a train at left. ALBERT'S *head pokes in from the right.*

No. 37 **Morning** (*see p. 151*)
(Orchestra)

ALBERT. There's no one here! Come on ...

A FIGURE *with a large black woman's coat, purse and a veil comes on.*
Music fades out.

CONRAD. Now look, Albert.

ALBERT *shoves the disguised* CONRAD *towards the train and onto the platform.*

ALBERT. Shut up and get on that train! It took every cent I had to bail you out, and I don't want you seen till we're out of this state! ... Now get aboard!

CONRAD. Now wait a minute, buddy boy! You saved my life, and whether you pay me no guarantee or not ... you got a contract with me forever.

ALBERT. Conrad, what are you saying?

CONRAD. (*Hands* ALBERT *a piece of paper*) Here's a blank piece of paper I signed my name to, Albert. You just fill in whatever you want.

MRS. PETERSON. (*Having entered during this from downstage right*) Hello, Albert.

ALBERT. Mamma!

MRS. PETERSON. (*Passes* ALBERT, *looks up at* CONRAD) Rose, you look good for a change. I know all about you two. Don't worry! I won't make a fuss. I'll do what any intelligent Mother has to do ... (*Shakes hands with* ALBERT) ... Goodbye, dear. Don't worry about the coat. You'll have three mink stoles as soon as the train passes over me.

MRS. PETERSON *lies down on the tracks.*
ALBERT *picks her up and puts her on the train.*

ALBERT. Mamma, get up and get on that train! I have no time for any nonsense ...

MR. MACAFEE. (*Offstage*) ...Just a moment, Mr. Peterson!
(*The* MACAFEES *hurry on, followed by some* KIDS *and* ADULTS)
I demand to know what you've done with Mr. Birdie! He's not in that jail!

ALBERT. How should I know where he is? I haven't seen him all night. I'm just down here to say goodbye to ... to Rosie!

CONRAD *has taken a beer can out of the coat and punched it open.*
Beer foam soars in the air. ALBERT *hurries* CONRAD *into the train.*

Sterling High School 732769 02/14/2027

MR. MACAFEE. Mr. Peterson!

MRS. MACAFEE. Now, there's no point in getting excited, dear!
After all, there's no real harm done. Kim and Hugo are back together again. As a matter of fact, the sweetest thing happened. He proposed to her this morning, and she accepted him.

MR. MACAFEE. Aaaaah!!!

MRS. MACAFEE. Dear, what's wrong?

MR. MACAFEE. (*As* THEY *go*) My life is over now. I'll sell the house and go into a home.

The MACAFEES *exit left.*

CONDUCTOR. All aboard!

CONRAD *reappears on the train platform with* MRS. PETERSON.

No. 38 Hand Car (*see p. 151*)

(Teen Girls)

CONRAD. (*Over music*) Hey, Albert, the train's leaving! Get on!

ALBERT. (*As* KIDS *spot* CONRAD) Bye, Conrad.

MRS. PETERSON. (*Screaming*) Albert!!

TEEN GIRLS. We love you, Conrad
Oh yes we do!
We love you, Conrad,
And we'll be true!

When you're not near us,
We're blue!
Oh, Conrad
We love you!

The train starts.

CONRAD. Albert, don't leave me!

MRS. PETERSON *tries to climb over the railing of the observation car as it goes off left.* ALBERT *waves till the last scream from* MRS. PETERSON *fades in the distance, then happily rips up Conrad's "contract," scatters the pieces in the air, crosses right and sits on a luggage cart.* ROSIE *enters stage right.*

ROSIE. Well, here I am, Albert. Six-thirty on the button. Where's the train?

ALBERT. It left at six twenty-five.

ROSIE. Albert, you told me to be here at—

ALBERT. With Conrad.

ROSIE. At six-thirty sharp. I know because—