

ACT ONE - SCENE ONE

An unseen MERRY-GO-ROUND plays **ONCE YOU HAVE A DREAM**. A small cluster of EVERGREEN SHRUBS stands behind a PARK BENCH, stuffed GROCERY BAG resting on an opened BLANKET before it, as JOHN WUNDER appears, a teenager wearing PLAID SHIRT and KHAKIS, followed by ALICE MONROE, also a teenager, TIE-DYED SCARF around the MADRAS SHIRT and JEANS she wears. MERRY-GO-ROUND music fades...

ALICE

That was fun...thanks.

JOHN

Can't believe you've never been on the merry-go-round.

ALICE

Never even knew it was even there...darn, and I was *this* close to grabbing that ring.

JOHN

A lot closer than *I* ever got...ready for the castle?

...she pulls away...

JOHN (CONT'D)

What's wrong?

ALICE

Do you mind if we just sit and talk a few minutes?

JOHN

Of course not.

...he begins to squat on BLANKET...

ALICE

No, not there.

...she sits on BENCH...he joins her...

JOHN

I'm really glad you came.

ALICE

Me too, it's beautiful here.

JOHN

It's my favorite place in the whole world.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Come here a lot? ALICE

Often as I can. JOHN

With other girls? ALICE

No. JOHN

It's OK if you did, it's not like we're a couple or anything. ALICE

But I haven't. JOHN

Why not? ALICE

Because...it's special, just like you. JOHN

Think you've got the wrong girl. ALICE

Never met anyone like you. JOHN

Is that good? ALICE

It's not good, it's...here, this is for you... JOHN

...he removes a RED PLASTIC HEART from his SHIRT and offers it...

...they were selling them at the merry-go-round. JOHN (CONT'D)

I can't. ALICE

It's only plastic. JOHN

Doesn't matter. ALICE

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

JOHN

It doesn't mean you have to be my Valentine, just thought you might like to have it, since it was your first time and all.

...she grabs HEART and turns away...

JOHN (CONT'D)

What's wrong?

ALICE

No one's ever given me anything like this before.

JOHN

I don't believe that.

ALICE

It's true, that so weird?

...she opens HEART...

JOHN

Not weird, sad, do you like it?

ALICE

Like it, I...(snaps HEART shut)...know what they say about me, don't you?

JOHN

People always talk.

ALICE

How do you know they're not right about me?

JOHN

Are they right about *me*?

ALICE

I don't think you're a freak.

JOHN

Is that what they say?

ALICE

You always answer a question with a question?

JOHN

Only when I can't answer the one I'm being asked.

ALICE

Then maybe you can tell me who'll kick *both* our butts if he finds us here together.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

JOHN  
That's easy, Joey G.

ALICE  
Doesn't that scare you?

JOHN  
Should it?

ALICE  
Scares *me*.

JOHN  
Joey or being here?

ALICE  
Both.

JOHN  
Is he always as angry as he looks?

ALICE  
Not always, though lately...look, he's really not as mean as everyone thinks.

JOHN  
He isn't?

ALICE  
No, he's just...I don't know...kind of broken, maybe.

JOHN  
Broken?

ALICE  
Yes, broken, don't you ever feel a little broken sometimes?

JOHN  
Sometimes.

ALICE  
Well, that's what it feels like, and he doesn't talk very much about anything that really matters to him, things that are, you know, inside him, so...it's so confusing.

JOHN  
Are you talking about him or you?

ALICE  
What do you mean?

JOHN  
Do you love him or just want to fix him?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

...she turns away...

JOHN (CONT'D)

You don't know, do you?

ALICE

I didn't say that.

JOHN

Yes, you did.

...turning to him just as he stands...

ALICE

No, I...

JOHN

...show me.

ALICE

Show you what?

JOHN

**Show me what no one has seen**

ALICE

What?

JOHN

**Take me where no one has been**

ALICE

You alright?

JOHN

**Let the secret keeping you awake at night be free  
Your secret's safe with me**

ALICE

What do you mean...secret?

JOHN

**What no one has cared to know  
Where no one has dared to go**

ALICE

And where's that?

JOHN

**Where a little girl inside plays hide-and-seek alone**

ALICE

**It's late, I'm going home!**

(CONTINUED)



CONTINUED: (6)

ALICE

**Get away while you can leave  
I break the heart of anyone who ever cares for me**

JOHN

**Someone must have hurt you so**

ALICE

**I have to go**

...she walks away...

JOHN

Please don't.

ALICE

(Turning)

Didn't you hear what I just said?

JOHN

Every word.

ALICE

Look, this was very sweet, *you're* very sweet, and I've never been on a picnic or a merry-go-round before in my life, but...

JOHN

...(but) we haven't seen the castle yet...or the zoo...

ALICE

...I can't do this!

JOHN

What are you so afraid of?

ALICE

Afraid?

...she throws HEART at him...it bounces off his chest and onto BLANKET as she turns and begins walking away...

ALICE (CONT'D)

Thanks for the ride!

JOHN

**Would you recognize your true love standing there?**

...she stops and looks back...

ALICE

What?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (7)

JOHN

On a crowded beach, a busy street  
on line in Duffy Square

ALICE

You deaf or just dopey?

JOHN

The summer heat may turn the asphalt soft  
it's hotter still for you  
Or when the breath of winter chills the bone  
you're warmed by just a glimpse of her

ALICE

So that's it, you're blind.

JOHN

My eyes are perfect.

ALICE

Then you're crazy.

JOHN

I am - about *you*.

ALICE

Why me?

JOHN

Why *not* you?

ALICE

Forget about me, John Wunder, I'm trouble.

...as she turns to go, he touches her  
shoulder...

JOHN

Fate never sends a warning or gives you time  
It hits you like a bolt and there you stand  
amazed at what you find  
One day you're riding on a crosstown bus  
alone and full of fear  
Just then it stops and she walks in your life  
like she was always waiting there  
There are no books, there are no rules  
There aren't any experts to describe what you must do  
'Cause when you fall, you fall alone  
until the one you love returns that love

ALICE

You *are* crazy.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (8)

...cautiously accepting his hand, they begin to DANCE, awkwardly at first, but soon they whirl around and around the bench and bushes, finally coming to rest atop the BLANKET...

ALICE (CONT'D)

I don't know what to say.

JOHN

Say you'll come to the movies with me...Saturday...there's a new double bill at...

ALICE

...no!

JOHN

But we just had our first dance, our first merry-go-round ride...

ALICE

...I can't.

JOHN

Why not?

ALICE

Because we can't have any firsts because...

JOHN

...because?

ALICE

Because...first there's something I haven't told you that I have to tell you.

JOHN

There's nothing you could tell me that would make me change my...

ALICE

...it'll have to be a double date...

JOHN

...that's it?

ALICE

Yes...that's it...sort of.

JOHN

Who's the other couple?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (9)

Me. ALICE

Huh? JOHN

You and...(she rubs her stomach)...two of me. ALICE

You mean you're... JOHN

...very. ALICE

Joey. JOHN

Uh-huh. ALICE

Does he know? JOHN

Are you crazy, he'd go out of his... ALICE

...she turns away...

...hey, I'm sorry, I didn't mean to... JOHN

...so much for the double bill, right? ALICE

Raisinettes or Sno-caps? JOHN

What? ALICE

You heard me. JOHN

Are you kidding? Sno-caps! ALICE

Come with me. JOHN

Where? ALICE

(CONTINUED)



CONTINUED: (11)

ALICE  
Really mean that, don't you?

JOHN  
A promise is a promise.

ALICE  
I wouldn't know.

JOHN  
**There are no books, there are no rules**  
**There aren't any experts to describe what you must do**  
**'Cause when you fall, you fall alone**  
**Until the one you love returns that love**

...he again offers KNIFE...she accepts,  
placing it onto HEART just as JOEY G, a  
ruggedly handsome older boy in BLACK  
JEANS and T-SHIRT suddenly appears...  
ALICE sees him and pulls away...

ALICE  
Joey!

JOHN  
Joey?

...JOHN slowly turns around...

JOEY  
What the hell's goin' on here?

ALICE  
Nothing, Joey, honest.

JOEY  
Come here!

...JOEY grabs ALICE...JOHN steps  
between them...

JOHN  
She's telling the truth, we weren't...

JOEY  
...shut your face, freak!

...JOEY forces JOHN to the ground and  
kneels on his chest, as ALICE scoops  
HEART off BLANKET, hiding it behind her  
back...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (12)

ALICE  
Leave him alone, Joey!

JOEY  
I want you to stay away from her, you got me, freak?

JOHN  
Get off me.

ALICE  
You're hurting him.

...ALICE leaps onto his back as JOEY presses his face up against JOHN's...

JOEY  
(Whispering)  
Look, kid, I don't wanna' have to kick your ass, but I will if I have to, so just stay outta' our way and everything will be cool, understand?

...JOHN tries to push him off...

JOEY (CONT'D)  
Crazy freak.

...JOEY raises his hand, as ALICE suddenly puts the pen knife against JOEY's neck...

ALICE  
I said stop it now! Let him go or I'll cut you, Joey, I swear it!

JOEY  
OK, just...take...the blade...away.

ALICE  
After you drop him.

JOEY  
Sure, baby, sure.

...he slowly releases JOHN and stands as ALICE slides down his back...quickly spinning, JOEY grabs ALICE's knife hand and twists it until she drops the blade and falls to her knees...

JOEY (CONT'D)  
You ever do that again...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (13)

ALICE

...I just don't want any more trouble.

JOEY

What do you mean, *more* trouble?

ALICE

You're hurting me!

...JOHN reaches up and grabs her arm...

JOHN

Let her go!

JOEY

You again?

...as JOEY reaches down and grabs JOHN's shirt, JOHN's hand slides down ALICE's arm and grips the HEART she clutches...

JOEY (CONT'D)

When I tell someone to shut their face, I expect it to stay shut, got me?

...JOHN nods as JOEY turns to ALICE...

JOEY (CONT'D)

And you...we've got a lot to talk about...let's get out of here.

...as JOEY drags her away, the HEART snaps in half - HALF a HEART remaining in her hand, the other in JOHN's...

ALICE

I warned you.

JOHN

I'll wait.

JOEY

Happy Valentines Day, freak!

JOHN

I promise.

...ALICE stuffs BROKEN HEART HALF into her coat...

ALICE

I'm sorry.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (14)

...ALICE & JOEY exit as JOHN slowly  
lifts himself onto his elbows...

JOHN

**So be prepared**  
**If you see your true love standing there**

...BLACKOUT.