KEVIN KILLIAN: “WET PAINT”

Characters in order of appearance

Officer Bigarini, a North Beach boy .......................................................... Tucker Bennett
Bob Kaufman, a Beat poet ................................................................. D. Scot Miller
Sasha Cholnaky, a Hungarian refugee .................................................. Steve Orth
Eva, his sister ....................................................................................... Tanya Hollis
Michael McClure, poet and neighbor of Jay DeFeo’s ....................... Benjamin Vilmain
Countess Cholnaky, their mother ....................................................... Suzanne Stein
Wallace Berman, artist ......................................................................... David Brazil
Dorothy Miller, curator for the Whitney Museum .......................... Leslie Shows
Magda Filbert, psychoanalyst ............................................................... Dodie Bellamy
Jay DeFeo, artist .................................................................................. Karla Milosevich
Kay DeFeo, her imaginary twin sister ............................................... Lindsey Boldt
Janis Joplin, Texas transplant new to North Beach ...................... Scott Hewicker
Hall Mark, founder of a fledgling greeting card company .............. Jordan Essoe
Wilma Vape, his assistant .................................................................. Jocelyn Saidenberg
Leonora Weld, stage mother ................................................................. Laurie Reid
Tuesday Weld, 14 year old Hollywood starlet ................................. Anne McGuire
Diego Rivera, painter .......................................................................... Cliff Hengst
Frida Kahlo, a painter as well ............................................................... Charlene Tan
Helen Adam, Scots poet and balladeer ............................................. Chloe Veylit
Bobby Beausoleil, not yet in the Manson family ......................... David Buuck
Kenneth Anger, visionary filmmaker ............................................. Craig Goodman
Clerk, in a hardware store, in a flashback ........................................ Ryan Funk
Rebeca, an artist in a flashback who was there first ..................... Rebeca Bollinger

[Scene – North Beach 1959. Music cue. Jazzy North Beach music like Take Five by Dave Brubeck Quartet, or some sort of Take Five pastiche.]

OFFICER BIGARINI. Here I am in North Beach, 1959, wandering the streets round Grant and Green, a sworn officer of the law looking for those no good beatniks. I’ve been on this beat since Hiroshima and it’s just getting worse and worse. Every day a new menace to law and order and today it’s Bob Kaufman.

[Enter BOB KAUFMAN.]
OFFICER BIGARINI. Half Jewish, half black, Bob Kaufman represents everything wrong with North Beach today. When I was a boy my father hid me in his lunch pail, in the hull of the Nina, the Pinta and the Santa Maria from Genoa, but how did this kook get here, I ask you? I see his grinning beatific face and I reach for my gun. I’m Officer Bigarini, the cop the Beats call the scourge of North Beach,

KAUFMAN. Greetings, little Big.

BIGARINI. What’s this little Big shit, stand up when I’m talking to you, Kaufman!

KAUFMAN. I am standing, Bigarini.

BIGARINI. That’s Officer Bigarini to you, you worthless vagrant piece of—

KAUFMAN. And that’s Saint Bob to you, blue boy, tedious excuse for a senator of Broadway. Those could have been wings on your shoulders, for you wear the look of an angel, but instead, malice has melted your mambo.

BIGARINI. Why you! Run off to your coffee shop lifestyle and co-exist.

KAUFMAN. Man, I feel sorry for you. This is San Francisco, not Selma, Alabama. Your head in the wrong year. Hitler and his youth camps burnt up in the bunker! Don’t let your mouth write a check your nightstick can’t swing, Little Big.

BIGARINI. I’m-a run you out of town if it’s the last thing I do!


BIGARINI. Translation?

KAUFMAN. Go peddle your hate to the mediocre, Big. You’re living in the Beat State now, and you, like every man and woman, should be on fire with love!

[Exit KAUFMAN.]

BIGARINI. Thing I can’t figure out about Bob Kaufman, is, he knows my beat, he knows where I am every minute of the day. He knows how to avoid me, if he cared. It’s like he’s throwing himself in front of my face, like he wants another arrest. Bah!
[Enter SASHA and EVA.]

SASHA. Oh, sister, there is so much life here in San Francisco, and how good it is of our wonderful lady to give a corner of her flat to hide us.

EVA. I do not know, Sasha. North Beach is scary place for young girl.

BIGARINI. Why not go back to where you came from?

SASHA. Officer Bigarini! I have my papers.

BIGARINI. If it’s not the Beatniks it’s the foreigners, we’re overrun. These Hungarians, only thing they’re good for is their goulash.

SASHA. But Officer,—

BIGARINI. And Zsa Zsa Gabor, now there’s a woman!

EVA. Let me pass.

BIGARINI. Pass for an American? No way.

SASHA. Sister, he is only, what’s the word, kidding you.

BIGARINI. You live with Jay DeFeo, don’t you? Lemme give you some free advice.

EVA. What’s that, Bigarini?

[Enter MICHAEL McClure.]

BIGARINI. Flee! —Oh for Christ’s sake, another poet! You two know Michael McClure?

EVA. He is the upstairs neighbor of Miss Jay DeFeo.

SASHA. Michael McClure is the coolest cat in the Fillmore.

BIGARINI. Yeah? Well, he’s Kansas garbage to me! McClure, you think you’re something special, don’t you, with your beast language and your meat science energy and your pants made of shoe leather.

MICHAEL McClure. You and your kind would make peyote illegal! But until that dark day let’s take a handful and really go to town.
[Offers BIGARINI some peyote buttons.]

BIGARINI. No thanks.

MICHAEL McClure (offering some to the Hungarians). Huh, Eva and Sasha? All is cool and boundless as a rolling lamb of jazz! I see the shades slipt behind me. Officer Bigarini!

[BIGARINI circles McClure examining his pants.]

BIGARINI. I keep walking around those pants and thinking, they’re obscene according to the statute of California. I can see every little bump and freckle on your what’s it.

MICHAEL McClure. I invented these pants, true—but the wild lions told me how.

EVA. Lions! Oh my!

[Music cue — some sort of menacing Stravinsky-like chords endlessly repeating like the lions’ growls. Or like the On the Waterfront theme song.]

MICHAEL McClure. I sit at the zoo with the lions in their cage, and I speak to them in the beast language I learn from my brain, my heart, soul, and my balls. This is what I say to them. GRAWR! And they pad up to me—they lean against the bars—and roar back at me.

SASHA. GRAWR!

MICHAEL McClure. GRAWR. Now everybody do it.

SASHA, EVA, BIGARINI. GRAWR!

MICHAEL McClure. GRAWR.

SASHA, EVA, BIGARINI. GRAWR!

MICHAEL McClure. This is how we lions talk to each other and how we eat our prey and feel the heat of the sun on our haunches.

[He caresses his hips as though feeling the sun on them.]

EVA, BIGARINI. GRAWR!
MICHAEL McClure. How’s Jay? Haven’t seen her in three hundred thousand light years in the tree core of sequoia.

BIGARINI. I’m giving you a warning this time, McClure, but next time I’m turning you in for indecent exposure.

MICHAEL McClure. Maybe you’ll go your way, I’ll go mine.

[Exit OFFICER BIGARINI and MICHAEL McClure — in opposite directions.]

SASHA. I know you miss Budapest, Eva, but here in California we are free. No tanks, no guns.

EVA. It is gloomy in this apartment, painted black, black, like eternal night.

SASHA. It is the black color of my love of freedom! Sings: “From the hillsides, black with foam! God bless America—”

EVA (reluctantly). “My home sweet home!”

SASHA. Even Officer Bigarini is somewhat friendly. He did not arrest you, Eva.

EVA. I detest him.

[Aside.]

And yet I find him strangely attractive. Poor refugee girl, that cop on the beat makes your heart bigger than Budapest.

[Enter COUNTESS CHALNAKY, their elderly mother.]

COUNTESS. Why you wake an old widow with the screaming play of cats in alley?

SASHA. Excuse me, Mother dear, I did not hear you sleeping with my ears.

COUNTESS. Last night I pose for your favorite, the dark woman who owns this house of hell. Your precious Jay DeFeo.

SASHA. Mother, why so ungrateful? Here we come, family of needy Magyars, with no pockets, and she take us in, stick us in corner.

EVA. In corner, I sleep and dream terrible dreams. And always, the smell of wet paint.
COUNTESS. And it is dirty in here, many Christmas trees. “Edelweiss, edelweiss—”

EVA (reluctantly). “Bless this homeland forever!” Sasha, when we go back to revolution? I miss many friends—Bertha, Frieda, Hedy, and Muumuu.

SASHA. You, sister! You, mother! Cheer up, will ya!

EVA. I don’t even remember the tanks. Tanks. No tanks.

COUNTESS. All night long, I pose, standing in corner with arms akimbo, while your Saint Jay DeFeo make mocking picture of old hag, call it “The Veronica.”

SASHA. A very good likeness say I.

EVA. I think our brother loves Jay DeFeo!

COUNTESS. She’s one strange lady, always her hands in lead paint, —like Stalin. I spit on Stalin. And her friends, all in black—Beatniks.

SASHA. She has heart of gold.

COUNTESS. I wear bright colors, the colors of Hungary, to spite her charity! I, the Countess Cholnaky, am proud woman!

EVA. Mother dear, I take you to Beatnik Lounge for heavy tea.

COUNTESS. Take me to big gold bridge, I jump, like Weldon Kees. You will be happy, Sasha, to see me go. Goodbye.

[Exit EVA and COUNTESS.]

SASHA. All day long, the jazz music, the Chet Baker, the Ella Fitzgerald, the Charlie Parker. Strange, mad assemblage and funk. Mother and sister, they don’t like. Me, I like it lots. Jay DeFeo—the magical name of the rose. I greet great friend of Jay DeFeo. Hello, neighbor! Hello, Mr. Wallace Berman!

[Enter WALLACE BERMAN. Music cue.]

WALLACE BERMAN. Good morning.

SASHA. Holy cow! Of all the swinging cats Frisco has to offer, Mr. Wallace Berman, you Number One.
WALLACE BERMAN (calmly). Let me in—and quickly, Sasha. I just saw Officer Big out on Green Street. He’s the man who arrested me for obscenity at the Ferus Gallery in 1957.

SASHA. So heroic a victim!

WALLACE BERMAN. He’s a vice squad goon, on the take, like a locust with teeth.

SASHA. Come in, come in!

WALLACE BERMAN. Is Jay home?

SASHA. No, Mr. Wallace, Jay DeFeo is at doctor! Brain doctor, she not sick, except in head.

WALLACE BERMAN. Psychiatry! Science of limits, free zone of trick quart chick bride. Drive the psychiatry bat to Hell!

SASHA. No, Mr. Wallace, no bat!

WALLACE BERMAN. Psychiatry, the cold cure, the anti-Semia.

SASHA. She’s seeing Magda Filbert on Greenwich Street! Is that your baby, Wallace Berman? Your baby in beat up old brown bag?

WALLACE BERMAN [placing bag on table]. All matter is illusion. Tosh might as well be in a bag as not in a bag, for this is 1959, when all Americans are live in an existential trap, caused by the specter of the A-Bomb and the separation of God from man. Tosh might as well suck this up via the medium of brown paper.

SASHA. I give him little cherry roll [opens bag and slips in cherry roll] as we do to the babies of Hungary.

WALLACE BERMAN. Can I buy your outfit, Sasha? The Hungarian things you are wearing on your body? I will give you one silver dollar for clothes, then rip them to shreds, hang them like parachutes, the Cold War dangling from Columbus Avenue like the Hanged Man of the Jewish Tarot card.

SASHA. You have the fun of a goose, you amaze me. Doorbell rings.

[Enter DOROTHY MILLER.]

You answer door, Mr. Wallace. I strip in the closet.
WALLACE BERMAN. Who shall I say is here to see Miss DeFeo?

DOROTHY MILLER. Tell her it’s Dorothy Miller.

WALLACE BERMAN. No! Not the Dorothy Miller, from New York!

DOROTHY. None other.

WALLACE BERMAN. Everyone in North Beach knows you’re here in San Francisco putting together your famous “Sixteen Americans” exhibition for the Whitney!

DOROTHY. True.

WALLACE BERMAN. I am Wallace Berman, perhaps you’ve seen my work.

DOROTHY. Yes. [Pause.] I have.

WALLACE BERMAN. I hate you, Miss Miller. I’m glad you’re not putting me in your show. We hate New York! We keep our work private, pure and clean—like snow on the mountains.

DOROTHY. Are you the butler for Miss DeFeo?

WALLACE BERMAN. No. I am a free spirit. I work for no one, I create my idiosyncratic, Kabbalah-influenced art works, I let them speak for themselves, then throw them away. Is this your purse?

DOROTHY. Yes.

WALLACE BERMAN. I’ll make a piece of it, then destroy it!

DOROTHY (to the audience). Get me Walter Hopps on the phone right now. He told me it would be safe to approach these North Beach radicals.

WALLACE BERMAN. Without your filo-fax you New Yorkers don’t even know who you are! I’m from L.A. where the winds are flat but we know our names like our cars.

DOROTHY. I’ll be back.

[Enter KAY de FEO, disguised as her sister.]
KAY DeFEO. Dorothy! Come in to my garret, I am Jay DeFeo. Dorothy Miller, marvelous Manhattanoiselle!

DOROTHY. Refreshing to be treated as a dignitary.

KAY DeFEO. I am making this wonderful life-changing painting called, “The Rose.” You, a seasoned New Yorker, will understand what I am doing.

WALLACE BERMAN. You told me you hate New Yorkers.

KAY DeFEO. Silence, please. [Sotto voce to WALLACE BERMAN.] Later I will reward you with some chick action.

WALLACE BERMAN. I’ll never understand you, Jay.

KAY DeFEO. Of course you won’t.

WALLACE BERMAN. Everything about you, from your name to your exquisite madcap dead Christmas trees, screams of abstraction.

KAY DeFEO. Doesn’t it! Who was it said, life is nasty, brutal, and short? Brittle and short’s more like it.

DOROTHY MILLER. Then what happens to “nasty”?

WALLACE BERMAN. It winds up at the Whitney.

KAY DeFEO (with great savoir-faire). Right this way, I’ll show you “The Rose.”

[Exit DOROTHY MILLER and KAY DeFEO. Baby remains on table.]


[Enter SASHA, in his underwear, his clothes folded in a neat pile. He steps in front of the chaise longue, extends his pile of clothes to the audience.]

SASHA. My beat wardrobe is yours.

WALLACE BERMAN. O the pure of heart!
SASHA. Make a piece of it. Before I came to San Francisco, I never heard the saying, make a piece of it.

WALLACE BERMAN (accepts gift of clothes). Thanks, Sasha. I just had a vision, staring into the sun. One day I’m gonna be on the cover of Sergeant Pepper.

SASHA. Right next to Tony Curtis.

[Exit WALLACE BERMAN and SASHA. BERMAN leaves paper bag on table. Enter ANALYST and JAY DeFEO.]

ANALYST. Miss DeFeo, we must get to the root of your problems.

JAY DeFEO. I’ll lie down here in my usual place on your couch, Dr. Filbert.

[She does so, and ANALYST takes chair behind her.]

ANALYST. You tell me that you’re an artist, working inside a male-dominated art culture in San Francisco’s North Beach?

JAY DeFEO. Yes, and it’s so exciting. But sometimes I wonder, is it really worth all the frustration? Maybe I should have just married and moved to Daly City or the Richmond, wherever that is.

ANALYST (coldly). I live in Daly City.

JAY DeFEO. Oh! I didn’t mean that—you know, that Daly City—your city—isn’t filled with creativity and beauty. Is it?

[Pause.]

ANALYST. The days are fair there.

JAY DeFEO. Actually, I live in the Fillmore.

ANALYST. Now, Miss DeFeo, you manifest some difficulty when articulating your own case.

JAY DeFEO. All of my problems can be summed up in one word—Kay.

ANALYST. Ah yes, your imaginary twin sister.

JAY DeFEO. “Imaginary”—far from it! She’s sneaky, that’s all.
ANALYST. Kay DeFeo. How handy that a painting subject like yourself should have an imaginary twin sister who comes in at night and makes her painting larger and larger.

JAY DeFEO. And my studio is so dark now that she’s made the painting so big it blocks out the window.

[Enter KAY DeFEO.]

KAY DeFEO. She doesn’t think I’m real.

JAY DeFEO (blinking and extending her hands as though she were blind). I feel like Bette Davis at the end of Dark Victory.

KAY DeFEO. You didn’t like “seeing” anyhow.

JAY DeFEO. Leave me alone!

ANALYST. Need some quiet time?

JAY DeFEO. Can’t you see her?

ANALYST. No—I must have my glasses checked by my optician. My optician in Daly City.

KAY DeFEO (to JAY). Touché!

JAY (to ANALYST, defeated). Touché.

ANALYST. And you are married, I think?

JAY DeFEO. Yes—to Wally Hedrick.

ANALYST. What is it like, to be Jay DeFeo?

JAY DeFEO. Oh, sometimes it’s this, sometimes that. Only rarely do I have the day to myself. I signed this stupid contract, when I was young and poor, trying to beat a shoplifting rap. Actually, Kay signed it.

KAY DeFEO. But I used her name. We’re like two letters of the alphabet, “J” and “K,” linked together by proximity and rue. A contract with Hallmark cards. They wanted a simple little picture of a rose.
JAY DeFEO. Please, no details!

ANALYST. Details! Of course not, I’m not a Freudian by any means. You rented me from the Jung Institute. I was trained by Joseph Campbell.

KAY DeFEO. I bet!

JAY DeFEO. Please keep a civil tongue in your head.

KAY DeFEO. Rather than do so, I will return to the hardware store and fetch some more paint.

[Exit KAY DeFEO.]

ANALYST. I’m interested in your use of the rose as a sacred symbol.

JAY DeFEO (sighing). Well—

ANALYST. But our hour is up!

JAY DeFEO. Oh please, let me tell you about myself—

ANALYST. Walk briskly, then, I’m meeting Lenny Bruce at high noon in the Broadway Tunnel.

JAY DeFEO. And about my contract with Hallmark—

ANALYST. Lenny Bruce will not be kept waiting!

JAY DeFEO. And my recessive subjectivity—

[Exit ANALYST and JAY DeFEO. Enter HALLMARK and WILMA. Music cue. James Bernard’s theme for the Hammer Dracula movies.]

HALLMARK. Wilma Vape?

WILMA. Yes, Hall Mark. I am here.

HALLMARK. Let us proceed to the house of the rose woman, Jay DeFeo. We shall make her follow our bargain. Have you the contract, Wilma Vape?

WILMA. In my reticule, Hall Mark, like a tragic leaf.
HALLMARK. “Reticule,” what we in Germany would call a “knap-sack.”

WILMA. It is the cloth bag in which a contractual document is kept, like the ark of the covenant. Call it knap-sack, if you want to sound like a square.

[She makes the sign of the square with her fingers.]

HALLMARK. You have been with me since the war.

WILMA. The war, the war. Always in my mind I hear the bombs, the shelling. As if, perhaps, you and I came as stowaways to San Francisco to found our fortune.

HALLMARK. I remember the porthole bringing closer to my hands the Golden Gate.

WILMA. Dear Jeannette MacDonald singing, “San Francisco.”

[Music cue. Instead of “San Francisco,” again we hear the Dracula theme.]

HALLMARK. Ah, you are a naughty one, Wilma Vape! Do you know the little sailors on our ship, and how I dandled them on my knee, each one laughing in a different Dutch argot?

WILMA. And now we own the largest card company in the world!

HALLMARK. “Hans,” I said to one, the curly one with the amazing chest, “Hans, would you be my plaything in the New World?” Hans and I shared many jokes. We called the portholes our Dutch wives. [He mimes having sex with porthole.] That was our cunning acronym for relief—C.A.R.

WILMA. Hallmark, let us sail on to Fillmore Street. Cold War’s in bloom, and so’s the need for Hallmark cards. Soon everyone will be wearing them like state I.D.

[Enter JAY DeFEO.]

JAY DeFEO. Oh, look, Wallace Berman left the baby here.

HALLMARK. (to WILMA). Let us clear our throats in meaningful manner.

[They do so.]

JAY (swivels around, baby drops to floor). Mr. Mark! Wilma Vape! I know I promised you that little picture of a rose. A year ago.
WILMA. Two years, DeFeo. Two long years you have kept Hallmark waiting.

HALLMARK. A picture four inches by five inches, Hallmark size.

JAY DeFEO. I’m afraid my rose has gotten out of hand.

HALLMARK. Out of hand? I’m afraid I don’t—what do you say here in America?

WILMA. “Get it.”

HALLMARK. “I don’t get it.” How could this be! You promised one cute picture of white rose for face of Hallmark Card 2457. I and Wilma already pay you over thirty-five guilders.

WILMA. She is appealing in her misery.

JAY DeFEO. I have this sister, you see—

HALLMARK. Is she behind the Iron Curtain?

[Enter BOB KAUFMAN.]

BOB KAUFMAN. Silence, Jay DeFeo! Do not attempt to explain your plight to these two buccaneers of cards!

HALLMARK. Bob Kaufman? Another convicted felon.

BOB KAUFMAN. Cunning acronym for relief, dear sir. “C.A.R.D.S.”

JAY DeFEO. Cards!

WILMA VAPE. From neither you—nor you—[she points] do we brook insolence. Hall Mark?

HALLMARK. Produce the picture at once.

JAY DeFEO. I’d need a crane.

WILMA (to HALLMARK). Large white bird, like the German “eglon.”

JAY DeFEO. What I mean is it weighs 2,000 pounds.
WILMA. Bird known for standing on one leg, like stork.

HALLMARK. 2,000 pounds! All the sailors in my life don’t weigh that much, even when laid end to end.

BOB KAUFMAN. My body once covered with beauty
Is now a museum of betrayal.
This part remembered because of that one’s touch
This part remembered for that one’s kiss.

HALLMARK. Vape! Seize this dark beautiful man, bring him to bedroom, sign him up to Hallmark Cards as a poet.

WILMA VAPE. It will bring me pleasure.

BOB KAUFMAN. Today, I bring it back, and let you live forever.

WILMA VAPE. For that special someone.

JAY DeFEO. Bob—sign nothing! They’ll take your soul and make greeting cards out of it!

[Exit WILMA VAPE and BOB KAUFMAN. Enter JANIS JOPLIN.]

JANIS. Is this big galoot bothering you, Miss DeFeo?

JAY DeFEO. No, Janis. [In a burst of candor.] Well, actually he is, but it’s my fault, I suppose.

JANIS. I’m Janis—Janis Joplin—before I became famous. [To HALLMARK.] Can’t you leave her be for one hour?

HALLMARK. Not even a minute. [To AUDIENCE.] What do you think of my US accent? I watch current TV programs for cues. I love me my favorite, Andy of Mayberry, and I try to mimic his stern ways of speaking. America’s most powerful lawman, Sheriff Andy, tempted on the one hand by the mature curves of his old Aunt Bee and on the other by the boyish charm of young Opie. You dig?

JANIS. I swear, Jay DeFeo would have to have a hundred hands to do all the things people want from her.

JAY DeFEO. Oh, it’s not that bad....
HALLMARK.  Janis Joplin, a gawky girl from Port Arthur, no?  In Texas, by Galveston?  I know Port Arthur well, its sunny skies, its bordellos manned by cowhands.

JANIS.  Port Arthur!  I hated it there.  I was the ugliest girl in town, they said, but here in North Beach I’m a human being with rights!  Oh look, someone dropped the baby on the floor.  [Replaces baby on table.]  He’ll keep, like a jar of Mama’s bread and butter pickles.  Miss DeFeo?

JAY DeFEO.  Yes, Janis.

JANIS.  Have I your permission to ham string this armadiller?  We could make a skull out of his numbskull, put a candle in it, use it for Chianti.  [To HALLMARK.]  You’re in North Beach now, and this lady’s the hippest chick in town.

HALLMARK.  Hip?  Chick?  She is a “hip chick,” commit to memory.  Rhymes with lipstick.  I’ll be back by night fall, and return for the painting or my name is not Walter Benjamin—I mean—Hall Mark.

[Exit HALLMARK.]

JAY DeFEO.  “They” won’t leave me alone.

JANIS.  “They” never do!  I’m not famous yet, but I will be, and then “they” will come after me.

JAY DeFEO.  What I’d give for just one day of peace!

JANIS.  I hate to tell you this, Miss DeFeo, but you have other visitors at the end of the long, dark tunnel of light you call your studio.

JAY DeFEO.  I sense an innocent nature, blonde and young.

JANIS.  That’s the daughter.

JAY DeFEO.  And a strong perfume.

JANIS.  That’s the mother.

[Music cue.  “Hooray for Hollywood.”  Enter Mrs. WELD and TUESDAY WELD.  Exit JANIS.]

Mrs. WELD.  I was assured by Mr. Dennis Hopper that this was a decent, Christian home.
JAY DeFEO. How do you do?

Mrs. WELD. An oxymoronic home.

JAY DeFEO. Are you Dorothy Miller, from the Whitney?

Mrs. WELD. You’ve made a tragic mistake! I am Leonora Weld, and this is my daughter—[mumbles].

JAY DeFEO. I beg your pardon, I know the fumes are thick.

Mrs. WELD (struggling to pronounce name). Tmbrrdwng.

JAY DeFEO (to TUESDAY). I can’t make her out, what’s your name, dear?

TUESDAY. Tuesday! Like the days of the week! I’m Tuesday Weld! Oh, Miss DeFeo, I have longed to meet you for years, and years!

Mrs. WELD. Don’t exaggerate. You’re only fourteen.

TUESDAY. But a wise man looked into my eyes once, and told me I have the wisdom of the ancients. A wise man of Los Angeles, Dennis Hopper, now starring in Night Tide.

JAY DeFEO. Oh, yes. Well, your eyes are striking.

Mrs. WELD. My daughter has taken a role in “The Many Loves of Dobie Gillis,” and the studio sent us here for research. Tuesday’s led a sheltered life, and I intend to keep her cocooned. These black walls have to go. Black reminds me of Satan. Satan feeling frisky. Satan under the counter. Cheap.

JAY DeFEO. Tell me, Tuesday Weld, who gave you that unusual name?

Mrs. WELD. That’s a secret.

JAY DeFEO. Oh really?

Mrs. WELD. Suffice it to say that she came with her name on a tag round her neck, like a kitten.

TUESDAY. I’m innocent, and sweet, like a cube of sugar. Let my blonde beauty radiate throughout your dark studio.
JAY DeFEO. Oh, why not! The Cholnakys have that corner over there. You can put your bags right here. Tuesday, this is where you’ll learn about Beat Culture. I’m the epicenter of a new social movement that will rock this nation. And yet I keep an intense privacy around me, even as I move through life in my soon-to-be-chic painters smocks and tight cocktail gowns.

I’m particularly excited today. Important visitors arrive from the South. Oh, Mrs. Weld, think of it! The greatest artists of Mexico are coming to visit!

Mrs. WELD (visibly nervous). Mexico!

JAY DeFEO. Yes, the land of the hot sun and shaking earth.

TUESDAY. Let’s shake, rattle and roll!

JAY DeFEO. Drawn by my superb draftmanship and aura of tormented wisdom, they arrive any moment.

Mrs. WELD. Artists! Which ones?

TUESDAY. Who, Miss DeFeo?

Mrs. WELD. Let’s all hide behind the couch. I’m afraid, I tell you—afraid of my past.

[JAY, LEONORA, TUESDAY crouch behind couch. Enter COUNTESS CHALNAKY and EVA.]

COUNTESS. Ding-dong! In Budapest we no answer door for bohemian riffraff.

EVA. But here, we must. It is terrible, mother dear.

COUNTESS. I hate that painting, it is wet, always wet, and alive, like Venus Fly Trap.

EVA. I lost my American hula hoop by swinging it too close to vivid gulping painting.

COUNTESS. And I my gloves. Big painting, wet with paint, simply swallow them up! Poof, gone. Doorbell ring and ring, like finger probing my heart.

EVA. Come and lie down on American fiberglas cushion. It is like lifeboat. We dream on, maybe dreams take us back to Budapest.

[COUNTESS lies on couch. Enter OFFICER BIGARINI.]
EVA. Why, it’s the secret police! Come in, please, do!

BIGARINI (awkwardly). These flowers are for you.

COUNTESS. Oh! And who are you, blue boy?

BIGARINI. Just a kid from Green Street who grew up a total hard-ass.

EVA (takes flowers). Yet you come to me, Little Big, with your heart on your sleeve?

BIGARINI. Mama always said, always arrest the pretty girls! One of ’em’s got to put out sometime.

EVA. These flowers—they are not for our Hollywood blonde? They are for me?

BIGARINI. The boys down at the precinct are gonna think I’ve gone soft.

[Jay leaps up from behind couch.]

JAY DeFEO. I heard the doorbell—was it Dorothy Miller?

COUNTESS. Mexican people at door. I spit on you, De Feo, and your Mexican friends.

EVA. She is very strange woman, with monkeys crawling up and down her face. He is large fat man like—

COUNTESS. Like Stalin, who curdles my gut. Eva, we go. Let Mexican people come in, lounge and laugh and paint like peasants.

EVA. We go, goodbye.

COUNTESS. We go to Union Square, sit in park like pigeons of royalty.

EVA. Gumps maybe. Come with, Officer Bigarini.

OFFICER. Maybe I will, maybe I won’t.

[Exit COUNTESS, EVA, BIGARINI.]

Mrs. WELD. Mexican artists! I must go to Gump’s as well. I’ll follow those Hungarians, like a bridesmaid in heat.

JAY. Well, at least say “hi.” This will be exposure for Tuesday.
TUESDAY. Oh, mother, please may I?

[Enter DIEGO RIVERA. Mrs. WELD hides her face.]

RIVERA. Ola! [To JAY.] I am Diego Rivera, man of the people! You are lovely lady of the Rose, the mystical symbol of our love!

JAY. What an honor! Diego Rivera, returning to North Beach at last!

RIVERA. And you, American, like corned beef and kibbles.

JAY. Often I have looked at your mural at the Art Institute, studying and dreaming.

RIVERA. Now we paint together, you and me.

JAY. And Frida Kahlo? She is here, too?

RIVERA (impatiently). Frida is in kitchen, making tortillas for Rivera. She is little woman, little hands, she must spend long hours to wrap hands around tortilla dough. But when she finished, oh my God! A tortilla of perfection!

Mrs. WELD. Goodbye, Miss DeFeo.

RIVERA. Wait! Hollywood woman, let me catch you with my hands! I know you, do I not?

Mrs. WELD. You certainly do not, senor.

RIVERA. You look strangely familiar.

Mrs. WELD. Release me, sir.

RIVERA. And your delicate skin, like the hide of little gray burro. I have felt this skin before, in Mexico, in my country!

Mrs. WELD. Never been there. Come, Tuesday!

RIVERA (alert to nuance). Your daughter is called “Tuesday”?

TUESDAY. Tuesday’s child is fair of face, adorable and full of grace.
RIVERA. You are regular Cantinflas! Dance for me, Miss Tuesday, while I gaze with longing and regret at the tiny body of your mother, and locate her within the deep catalogue raisonné of my memory bank!

JAY. Come and see my big picture, Mr. Rivera. Tuesday will dance for you later.

RIVERA. She is cute ballerina on top of music box, but her mother is so much more!

JAY. Enough about them! What about me?

RIVERA. Kierkegaard tells us, “The very mark of my genius is that Governance broadens and radicalizes whatever concerns me personally.” [To Mrs. WELD.] That mean you, striking phantom. Frida! Fridita! Come and see strange American woman!

[Enter FRIDA KAHLO. Music cue: “La Malaguena.”]

FRIDA. Rivera, no shouting! [Sees JAY, and clasps her hands.] Muy caramba, how lovely, like a blood clot!

DIEGO. Not her, this tall woman here, tall, like flagpole. Did you love her, or did I, when we were young and full of bananas?

FRIDA (gaze swivels to LEONORA, but then jack to JAY). I see her, but my eyes, my dark coal eyes, swing—like a pendulum, or a boomerang, to return to lovely dark haired, paint-stained, San Francisco woman.

JAY. I am Jay DeFeo.

FRIDA. I stab myself, with desire.

TUESDAY. Oh, darn, my little watch says, two hands on the hour, I have an appointment with the young Lawrence Ferlinghetti. He has promised to show me his paintings!

Mrs. WELD. They’re said to be quite unsettling.

[Exit Mrs. WELD and TUESDAY.]

JAY. Frida, I’m flattered. But you don’t understand what we’re trying to do here in San Francisco. This isn’t about sex or even about life. We’re delving deep inside ourselves to try to find the true divination of the Holy Spirit who gave us birth.

FRIDA. Reproach me then—I beg of you.
DIEGO (aside). That tall woman—I know her, but where or when?

JAY. We’re in the Cold War and I’m surprised they even let you two into the country.

FRIDA. Sneaked in!

DIEGO (in agreement). We sneak. [Aside.] Leonora Weld! Who is she? Now Leonora Carrington I know. Won her from Max Ernst in poker game. Oh that crazy night at Berggruen’s. But this magnificent tiger woman—I don’t remember remembering her!

FRIDA. Devour me, Jay DeFeo, or I put my head in paper bag and blow up like balloon. [Picks up paper bag.] Oh—a baby! Muchacho mio?

JAY. That’s the Berman baby.

FRIDA. He is my kewpie doll, I take him to remember how a woman artist of San Francisco made me into her slave bracelet.

DIEGO (sternly). Put down, Frida!

[Reluctantly FRIDA replaces baby on couch.]

JAY. We’re under pressure to conform, to be these Mom and Dad cutter cookies. Cookie cutters. But not me, me, Jay DeFeo. I don’t know where I found the courage to defy the zeitgeist, but here I flicker, like a shadow in my cave, drinking my seven and sevens and making a stand.

RIVERA. You say, “no” to patriarchy.

JAY. “No,” to New York values of art.

RIVERA. “No,” to frivolous exploitation.

JAY. And “no” to the Whitney. —Though Kay has other ideas.

[Enter DOROTHY MILLER.]

DOROTHY MILLER. I’ve come back one more time to beg you to let me include you in my epochal “Sixteen Americans” show in 1960.

DIEGO RIVERA. Dorothy Miller! I love a curator.
JAY DeFEO. I’ll send my work—and Wally will too—but I don’t want to go to New York.

DOROTHY. This show will make household names of Robert Rauschenberg, Jasper Johns, many more.

JAY DeFEO. You are very kind, but Jasper and I have made a pact. I don’t go to New York, and he doesn’t come to San Francisco!

DIEGO RIVERA. Turf war, Jay DeFeo?

DOROTHY MILLER. May I take the Rose with me, then?

JAY DeFEO. Take anything but that!

FRIDA. Hello Miss Miller. Like a bride I come to you, blushing, roses in my cheeks, and a postage stamp pasted to my forehead. Hail, Dorothy Miller, come talk with me about new show, I propose magical “Sixteen Mexicans” show.

[Exit DOROTHY and FRIDA KAHLO.]

JAY. Frida’s great. I love her enthusiasm!

DIEGO. Usually she just lie in bed, look depressed, like piñata without candy.

JAY. Señor Rivera, I have a professional question. Did you ever sign a contract with Hallmark Cards, planning to make just a little picture of a rose?

RIVERA. Of sunflower, yes! Hallmark Card 473!

JAY. And say you had an invisible twin who kept coming to your room at night and making it larger—larger and larger—

RIVERA. Like the old Spanish legend of the duende!

JAY. And now I’m afraid—what happens when I give up my painting?

RIVERA. My sunflower picture, tiny as my fingernail, grew to huge proportions. Hall Mark and Wilma come, and Bigarini slam my fingers in drawer, like Paul Newman in The Hustler.

JAY (recoiling). My hands—broken by goons?
RIVERA. You learn to live without them! Look at me, wriggle my joints!

JAY (sinking to a chair). It’s just that—sometimes gloom overcomes me.

RIVERA. Me, too! They call me—the sad sad sack. Me and Frida, we lie in bed and brood over fate of little people under US foreign policy.

JAY. So I told my analyst—

[Enter ANALYST.]

JAY. Why are my dreams so big?

ANALYST. Instead ask yourself, why has your gender been squashed, a day late and a dollar short?

JAY. I wanted one tiny perfect thing, is that too much to ask?

ANALYST. Only in America.

JAY. Here you get many, many, dozens of large imperfect things. God, I went to a US school and I felt I was passing the cemetery.

ANALYST. As you neared completion of “The Rose,” did it sadden you?

JAY DeFEO. What a leading question! [To RIVERA.] And while I was in there discussing my problems, Kay was here, in my studio, enlarging my picture like some Carol Doda Tom Wolfe silicone explosion.

RIVERA. Kay? Que Kay?

JAY DeFEO. She’s my twin sister. All right, maybe she’s not my twin. Maybe she’s not even my sister.

RIVERA (to ANALYST, as he pushes JAY off the couch). I am Diego Rivera. I like professional women very very much. I paint you as the spirit of Daly City at carnival time, I make love to you like wild Fiji of Mazatlan.

ANALYST (lightly). I’m expensive.

RIVERA. I sell a painting to you, we will discuss money and love at—Cafe Trieste.

ANALYST. Tell me, Mr. Rivera, why murals? Why so big a canvas?
RIVERA. My family is big—it includes the whole world, including Johnny Ray and Walt Disney.

ANALYST. When you lived in the hacienda, were your parents having sexual intercourse in your bed?

RIVERA. In my bed? On my, how do you say, stomacho. Very messy, they ruin pjs of Mexican boy. I take you to cafe, you buy champagne for Rivera. My little toothpick, I shall insert you in gold, molar gold! [He indicates an exit.] This way?

ANALYST. Must be, there’s no other way.

[Exit ANALYST and DIEGO RIVERA.]

JAY DeFEO. All good things must come to an end, I suppose. For close to six years now, I’ve breathed in the fumes of lead paint. Dear me, how unusual when one’s psychiatrist takes a romantic interest in one’s Mexican idol. I need some poetry! Poetry in my life.

I’ll call Jack Spicer. No wait, he doesn’t have a phone. No wait, he’s said to hate women. Is he Kay he dislikes? I thought he loved me—or was he just being kind? Or am I losing—

[Enter KAY.]

Kay, do not torment me now.

KAY. I come with good news, sister dear.

JAY DeFEO. Are the police here to break my fingers in the drawer?

KAY. No—not yet! Here’s what—

[Enter HELEN ADAM. Music cue: Scottish music like bagpipes.]

HELEN. Knock-knock! May I come in, like a little bird?

JAY DeFEO (delighted). Helen Adam! Of course, come in.

HELEN. I was passing on the street, and heard you from the window. You said you wanted poetry. Or were you just being kind? Hello, Jay. Hello, Kay.
JAY DeFEO. Oh Helen, I’ve been so—Wait—did you say, “Hello” to Kay? So you can see her?

HELEN. I’m Scottish you know, and we gifted ones see things! Even the invisible.

KAY. I’m as real as you are, Jay, maybe realer.

JAY DeFEO. Helen Adam, beloved Scottish poet, now the beloved poet of the North Beach bohemians, poets and artists. No one knows why you recite your old school ballads in that sing-songy voice, but you know what, we just love you to death.

HELEN. Yes, dear, and I have second sight, which came to me with the waters I drank in Loch Lomond.

KAY. And what does your second sight tell you?

HELEN. I can’t see you, Kay, but I know you mean no good for our lovely Jay. Look at her, she is the curious blue jay of the highlands, and you are like the fog over the brae.

JAY DeFEO. Sing us a song, Helen.

HELEN. One of my bloodthirsty ballads that have made me famous?

KAY. Oh, why not. You’re a freak, lady!

HELEN. My poem is called, I strangled my love with a scarf.

“When I was a young girl all giddy and gay, I met a young laddie from Fotheringay.”

KAY. Great rhyming! “Gay” and “Fotheringay.”

HELEN. “But when he came near me I started to cough, Hey hey, So I strangled my love with a scarf.”

[JAY applauds, and after a bit, so does KAY.]

HELEN. Verse Two. “The.... living fleece of my long black hair He combed with a flair that was debonair. But his voice was a squeak, like a rat on the wharf,”

JAY and KAY. Hey, hey!
HELEN. “So I strangled my love with a scarf.”

KAY. Hey, hey, Jay! Now you’re learning something.

JAY. Thank you, Helen—there’s just one thing—I’m wondering about—is there something you’re trying to tell me, with your mystical Scottish cane and your piercing black eyes?

HELEN. Listen to the poem that’s in all of us! It’s violent and harsh, like life!

KAY. You tell em, Helen Adam!

HELEN. “In medieval Scotland, life can be cruel,
And your man will control you, if you give him the tool.
So when he comes near you, and you want to barf—”

KAY and JAY and HELEN. “Hey, hey,
Then strangle the fool with your scarf.”

HELEN. And now I have to go, the spirits call—Anubis! Diana! What a lovely visit, Jay, and no tea for once.

KAY. Goodbye, Helen.

HELEN (looking in another direction). Fare thee well, Kay.

[Exit HELEN ADAM.]

JAY DeFEO. Maybe she’s right! I wanted one perfect rose, but you came in, night after night, as I lay sleeping, and added extra cells and layers. It’s fat in the middle, like pregnancy, and in it are lost many household items like curlers, gloves, and tears.

KAY. Yes, and you will be famous!

JAY. But I never wanted fame, only the respect of people at the “6” Gallery.

KAY. That’s what you think.

[Enter HALL MARK. Music cue: Dracula theme again.]

HALLMARK. I must adjust my bifocals. I’m seeing double.
JAY. Hello, Mr. Hallmark.

HALLMARK. Mr. Mark. “Hall” is my first name. Isn’t it a common name here in California?

JAY. It usually refers to a kind of passageway between two rooms.

KAY. It’s common as pig tracks. Hello, Hall!

HALLMARK. On the border between France and Spain, I lost most of my right ear, and grew this hair to cover it. I was all alone; the Fascist troops behind me. So you must speak up.

KAY. Your painting will be ready tomorrow morning.

JAY. I’m sorry, I’m not done with it yet.

KAY. It’s 2,000 pounds, weighs more than you do.

JAY. A little rose, small as a Hallmark card.

HALLMARK. You’re confusing me, Miss DeFeo. I suspect, on purpose. I am the European man, I come from an old culture with new ideas about art, in an age of mechanical reproduction. You and your kind are doomed, as my greeting cards and allied developments burnt the heart out of your individual project.

[HALLMARK and Jay stand very close to one another.]

JAY DeFEo. You can’t threaten me. What’s the worst that could happen to a woman? It happened already — and to me.

HALLMARK. I stood in the cottage of the voluble Basque villagers, gun in hand. Should I shoot myself, or no? I thought back to all I learned in the Frankfurt School, the clever lessons of use and adversity. I, Walter Benjamin.

KAY. Why did you change your mind?

HALLMARK. With the barrel in my mouth, my gaze fell onto the little cards Spanish peasants send each other to cheer each other up when crops fail or bulls gore their sons in city arenas. Little cards, four inches by five inches. And as I gazed, gun in mouth, the bright colored cards made me happy.

JAY DeFEo. So then, you figured—
HALLMARK. You might as well live! Live, live, live! Life is a banquet, and most sons of bitches are starving to death!

KAY. What a disgusting story.

JAY DeFEO. A lovely parable.

HALLMARK. Now it is midnight. I will be back when the sun rises, to take possession of my painting. Like your studio, the future of bourgeois individualism is dark indeed.

[Exit HALLMARK.]

KAY. My new plan is to make a film, starring you. Tomorrow when the crane comes, I want you sitting there looking wistfully at “The Rose” as the wall comes down.

JAY DeFEO. Oh, no, Kay, I couldn’t! I’m so camera-shy!

KAY. And I know the perfect man to direct this movie!

JAY DeFEO. Who?

KAY. Kenneth Anger, of course! He’s here in San Francisco, over on Polk Street, shooting “Scorpio Rising.” I’ll go fetch him, shall I?

[Enter JANIS JOPLIN.]

JAY. No—Kay—no, please!

[Exit KAY DeFEO, JAY running after her.]

JANIS. I thought I saw two of them—whoa, Janis girl, better lay off the Southern Comfort! I lay on my back on the floor, staring at “The Rose,” for twenty-four hours, till when I shut my eyes I saw this black rose spinning like a pinwheel. It was trippy, man! My throat loosened up like gravel was being shoved down my larynx, or was that Joe Namath? When I woke, I could sing, or gargle, and I traded in my cowgirl suit for the full Haight Fillmore drag. I became a woman of style, at the same time that I lost my wits. Who’s this?

[Enter BOBBY BEAUSOLEIL.]

BOBBY. I’m Bobby. Kenneth Anger sent me over to add the street trash element to his magnum opus on “The Rose.”
JANIS. You’re Bobby McGee?

BOBBY. Bobby Beausoleil.

JANIS (sizing him up). “Busted flat in Baton Rouge—waitin’ for a train—”

BOBBY. From the Manson family. I’m this long, lean, lanky piece of street candy poured into vinyl like liquid prime rib.

JANIS. Welcome, young stranger! I was feelin’ ‘bout as faded as my jeans. See this fringe? It was just hanging there like Spanish moss till you moved your hips in my rearview mirror.

BOBBY. You’re pretty for a girl. In jail we didn’t see many women, only each other.

JANIS. Poor boy, and now you’re saddled with Kenneth Anger? I heard he was rough on his leading men.

[Enter SASHA (dressed again).]

SASHA. Janis, Janis, help me. America’s #1 poet is at the door!

JANIS (to BOBBY). That’s Michael McClure. He and I are writing a song together, “Mercedes Benz.” He’s as cute as you are, only dark, where you are fair.

SASHA. Michael McClure! A friend of Hungary, a friend to America!

JANIS (to BOBBY). Quick now—what’s the one thing you want out of life?

BOBBY (instantly). Parole.

SASHA. The friend of lions! He has written a special poem in Beast Language in honor of Miss DeFeo.

[Enter MICHAEL McCLURE and WALLACE BERMAN, Berman with guitar.]

WALLACE BERMAN (looks in bag). How’s my boy? The world treating you all right?

MICHAEL McCLURE. Dark brown, color of whale intestine! Funky clitoral petals of rose, unfold in thrusting waves of FEEE REEE ROW A-BOOM FUGO FEE REEE RU
WALLACE BERMAN. Thy kisses are like lily centopads, thy thighs like Caryl Chessman preying on couples in lovers lane.

MICHAEL McClure. Rose painting! Like a thumbtack through my mind! The punctum of the absurd, endowed with an irrevocable punctum!

WALLACE BERMAN. Thy rich tresses like spotlights glittering along the waters of Babylon, thy cheeks like red marshmallows, soaked in blood of lovers.

MICHAEL McClure. At the moment of ultimate madness of zombie hesitation I, poet of ecstatic wisdom, mix butter and black paint, make a new song under the earth, under Artaud, mad cub of night outfoxed!

WALLACE BERMAN. Let thy petals fall on top of my primitive Xerox machine so I may make a sign unto Zion.

MICHAEL McClure. Peyote dramas of bright lights electrify my brain fence, top secret gossip surrounds the world like hands I see in the future. Row of wild beasts join trunks and tails, Barnum and Bailey animal crackers, high, high as kites.

WALLACE BERMAN. Lo, I have seen her in Estanian, where the Lord of the dark places hath rendered her native. Are you there yet?

MICHAEL McClure. I go, into the future, for all things are meat, with creatures springing from it in chic lavender, duende black, blue and red bacteria!

[Exit MICHAEL McClure.]

SASHA. Three cheers for Mr. Cool and Mr. Berman, hurrah.

WALLACE BERMAN. So the baby’s been no trouble?

BOBBY. Gee, Janis, I’d like to be your boyfriend, but I have another girl I’ve tattooed to my chest, feel. [Takes her hand, puts it on his chest.]

JANIS (reading chest). Tuesday Weld!

BOBBY. I met her in a vice den down in Chinatown. I showed her the jailhouse rock, she showed me how they do it in Hollywood.

JANIS. You’re out on the street, looking good, but baby, deep down in your heart, you know that ain’t right.
SASHA. Someday I dream of becoming American artist and being iconoclastic. You have fun here.

JANIS. Oh! Big fun! It’s Port Arthur all over again. Sasha, come with me and help me dry the painting. I’ve got to gangbang some quarterbacks, give me back my self-esteem.

SASHA. Okay.

JANIS. Oh, here she is again, Miss Popularity.

[Enter TUESDAY WELD. JANIS spits at her on her way out. Exit JANIS and SASHA. TUESDAY is now quite altered in look, like Olivia Newton-John at the end of “Grease.”]

TUESDAY. Goodbye. Mr. Berman, I love your sound.

WALLACE BERMAN. You’re a cute chick, but I’m a married man with a baby. [Brings forward bundle.] This is him. It’s a boy.

TUESDAY. Teach me to play the guitar.

BOBBY. Tuesday! We cut our thighs together, rubbed blood on my chest.

TUESDAY. I had enough commitment in Hollywood, Bobby, thanks to 20th Century Fox.

BOBBY. Say, Mister, I’m Bobby Beausoleil, dig? I’ve got talent! Let’s jam.

[Enter LEONORA WELD.]

LEONORA. Let me feel that inscription. It’s a living scar. Young man, have you been making lewd advances to my daughter?

TUESDAY. Mother! I was innocent, but Bobby says his hobby is “corrupting Tuesday.”

BOBBY (to BERM AN). I’m the white Chet Baker, Mister! Give me a break, I can’t stay Kenneth Anger’s love slave forever.

BERMAN. First, we are going to learn the Yigdal, the ancient Jewish piyyut. Kabbalah tradition says that in early times, wind instruments were considered particularly sacred. Thus, says Rabbi Vohar, the word “Hanukkah” is derived from “harmonica.”
BOBBY. Cool!

LEONORA. Now scat, boy!

BOBBY. Tuesday, you’re just mad because I spelled your name wrong.

TUESDAY. What’s so hard about “Tuesday”? It has a “u” in it. And a “T.” You just skipped right ahead to the “E.”

BOBBY. That weren’t no “E,” sorry doll.

[Exit WALLACE BERMAN and BOBBY BEAUSOLEIL.]

TUESDAY. Mr. Berman, you forgot your baby!

LEONORA (advances towards the audience, miserably). So did I. (To TUESDAY.) What have you to say for yourself? Make-up! Cosmetics! High heels! Intercourse!

TUESDAY. Mother, you’re embarrassing me and embarrassing yourself.

LEONORA (unrolls newspaper). You’re in Herb Caen’s column. “Teenage Tuesday Weld cavorting at Trader Vic’s.” Vile!

TUESDAY. Mother, it’s time for a heart to heart.

LEONORA. You’re acting like a slut.

TUESDAY. The apple doesn’t fall far from the tree.

LEONORA. What are you implying, young lady?

TUESDAY. I was having a little chat with Russ Tamblyn, he spilled some beans — jumping beans, Mama.

LEONORA. Okay. I give up.

TUESDAY. Mexican jumping beans!

LEONORA. I said, “okay”! You want to hear the whole story?

TUESDAY. Of course I do.
LEONORA. I was in Tijuana with Max Ernst, Peggy Guggenheim, Arthur Cravan—the whole Surrealist bunch. Lovely little lunch. A small orchestra—just three trumpets and a castanet. Okay, I had some rum and Coke. I was feeling good, Tuesday. Is that a crime?

TUESDAY. And?

LEONORA. And a little man asked me to dance. I thought he was a waiter. And Peggy said, Leonora, give him a tip. We danced the cucaracha. And—[lost in thought] and it was Tuesday, I recall! “Martes,” in Spanish. Next thing I knew, nine months later. I was lying in a ward in Juarez, and tied to the leg of my bed was a basket. You were in the basket, dear. Taped to your nose, I saw a tag, like a price tag, with one mysterious word. “Martes.” So I named you that. Well, Tuesday.

TUESDAY. Oh Mother, why didn’t you tell me this sooner?

LEONORA. Because I wanted to watch you grow up.

TUESDAY. There are some things no mother can do for her daughter, and one is to live her whole life for her.

LEONORA. They say only a woman who forgets childbirth will have another baby.

TUESDAY. Blow out the candles, Leonora Weld. I don’t like what’s in so I must be out. [Picks up bundle.] Rockabye, baby, in the tree top . . .

LEONORA (joining her in song). “When the wind blows, the cradle will rock.” What a cute baby, what’s his name?

TUESDAY. Tosh. T-O-S-H. Like Shot spelled backwards over Bobby Beausoleil’s juvenile chest.

LEONORA. “Tosh”! What an odd name! Wonder how they came up with that?

TUESDAY (acidly). Gee Mother, let’s think. Shirley Berman woke up in a Juarez clinic and there was a little price tag on the baby’s nose.

LEONORA. How can you mock my woe, my amnesia? Put down that baby and empathize!

TUESDAY (puts baby on table). What did this little Mexican waiter look like, Mother?

LEONORA (haunted). I thought he was Mexican . . .
[Enter HALL MARK and JAY DeFEO.]

HALL MARK. I demand my painting, now!

LEONORA. But he could have been from the Frankfurt School.

JAY de FEO. Mr. Mark, this is Leonora Weld. And her daughter, Tuesday, an ingenue.

LEONORA (turns her back). I mustn’t face the great Hall Mark without my makeup.

TUESDAY. Were you ever in Mexico, Mr. Mark? Do you know the cucaracha?

LEONORA. What’s the best place for makeup in San Francisco?

TUESDAY. Foxy Lady, on Mission. Come on, Mother, I’ll take you there. By the way, Mr. Mark, where’s your assistant, Wilma Vape?

HALL MARK. She is negotiating with Wayne Thiebaud for some pictures of cake for Hallmark Cards. She will be here shortly to supervise removal of “Rose.”

TUESDAY. This way, Mother. Forward march!

[Exit LEONORA and TUESDAY.]

HALL MARK. Is very charming girl of the lower classes. But the other woman, the mother, mm, she stir some pine-sweet memory in ancient oaken heart.

JAY DeFEO. So, you hold me to ancient contract. [Aside.] Why am I talking like him? Out of some kind of protective coloration?

[Enter ANALYST.]

ANALYST. You ape the manners and morals of men, seeking in their absent centers the original rupture.

JAY DeFEO. Should I be lying down?

HALL MARK. I hold you to the Magna Carda, the right of card holders over all their serfs. Hand over your oil. This senseless over-painting must cease, and cease today.

ANALYST. Men always fret when they see a woman doing something twice. Why not abandon feminist art and paint Walter Keane’s big-eyed waifs for him? He needs help.
JAY DeFEO. I’m torn!

ANALYST. Nothing new, due to your gender.

[Enter FRIDA KAHLO.]

FRIDA. I wish to have talk with you, Miss Filbert.

ANALYST. Uh-oh. [Confiding in JAY.] I had a little transference with her husband at the Top of the Mark.

FRIDA. Filbert, in your country the name of a nut..

ANALYST. And of a pleasant street, here in the Marina. [To JAY.] He left love bites on my neck that gleam like plantains. [To FRIDA.] Shall we walk up and down my pleasant street like two old friends?

FRIDA (consulting monkeys). Let me ask my monkeys. What do you say, my monkeys? This is Frida, and this is Diego. Frida says, she used to be Friday, only a little Mexican man snipped the “y” off her nose. [Sadly.] Now she is Frida. [Turns to other shoulder.] And Diego, what do you say?

ANALYST (patiently, still nervous). Hi, Diego! What do you say?

FRIDA. Diego says, [uses monkey voice] “I slept with a psychiatrist named Magda Filbert!” Ho, ho, ho, my little monkey – very funny!

ANALYST. Cheeky thing!

FRIDA. In Mexico, I killed Trotsky for less, – Tina Modotti too.

ANALYST. Well, let’s walk… towards the police station.

FRIDA. We go. And Frida says, “But I fell in love with woman, Jay DeFeo, woman of fire and mango and wine.” We go, Magda Filbert.

HALL MARK. I will consult sales slip of 1953.

[Exit FRIDA and ANALYST.]

JAY DeFEO. That old thing. I made a Faustian bargain with you, Walter Benjamin.
HALLMARK. Yes. For $12.00, and I own “The Rose.” [Sharply.] How would you know my name?

[Enter KENNETH ANGER.]

KENNETH ANGER. Ah—the children of the Night! You must be Jay DeFeo. I am the last of the performers on this bill.


KENNETH ANGER. You have mistaken me for Bill. Though I know you fell asleep in my arms, aboard the Queen Mary. I am the inimitable Kenneth Anger.

HALL MARK. Ah! The genius who will film the events of tomorrow. When I take possession of my painting.

JAY (aside). When I lose my reason for living.

KENNETH ANGER. But you, my darling, are too old to play Jay DeFeo. [Studies her face with hand.] I will have Bobby playing you, walking down the stairs with light in his cupped hands, and you can be some old bag woman who looks on with regret.

HALL MARK (rubbing his hands). So—tomorrow morning, we meet here at dawn. I shall bring my crane, you your camera, and you your tears. In thunder, lightning or in Rainer, as I said on shipboard to a little, merry, elf sailor.

When he knelt on the floor I filled his mouth with cotton as one would an aspirin bottle, in my country. — America. [Picks up baby.] I’ll take out the trash on my way out.

[Exit HALL MARK with baby.]

ANGER. Well, as Scarlett says, tomorrow is another day! [To JAY DeFEO.] My dear, is there anyone in North Beach who looks like you, only less—well, less paint-scraped? I mean—there’s a whole Caravaggio on your face—no, a Rembrandt or Holbein or whoever did all those elderly Dutch women touching utensils and looking dowdy.

JAY. Well—

ANGER. Is it Vermeer?

JAY. I have a twin sister, who doesn’t sow, only reaps.

ANGER. And they say there are no miracles!
JAY. But I’ve tried snapping her with a camera, and she just disappears from the frame!

ANGER. Like my famous photo of Marlon Brando! What that man can put away!

JAY. Disappears! Like a vampire . . . or a figment of—why, maybe she’s not real at all.

ANGER. Well, real or imaginary, she’s got to look better than you. We’ll try a nice Kodachrome exposure, shall we, and hope for the best. What’s her name?

JAY. Kay.

ANGER. Now, Jay, I want you—actually “Kay”—to be staring sadly out of this wall—the fourth wall [points towards audience]—which we will remove tomorrow at dawn. It will be you, here, Fillmore Street, there. I have a lovely swimsuit for you to wear, made of nylon, nylon from the parachutes of our brave boys of Iwo Jima, then spun by human jaws and ejaculated on by pet Marines.

Where’s that Bobby Beausoleil? In French, his name means, Beautiful Sun, but just don’t call him late for supper.

JAY. I wanted to do the thing Wally Berman always says, to be the creator, the kim-kam of the Kabbalah who, in the ultimate act of self-abnegation, removes herself from the site of work in order to—

ANGER. To let the work find its own space to unfold. Yes, dear, of course you did. Me too, I’m just less braggy about it.

JAY. And now it’s leaving me.

ANGER. Right! But my film will make you famous, so what’s a little empty nest?

[Enter COUNTESS CHOLNAKY, with bag.]

COUNTESS. We have a saying in Budapest . . . let San Francisco fall into the sea, the angels will laugh. I found this bag on the stairs. Bag is human!

ANGER. And who’s this cheerful dowager?

JAY. Another boarder.

ANGER. I love her complexion, like a bag of cocaine broke in my pocket.
COUNTESS. You—dark woman. I give notice with this month’s rent.

[Enter EVA.]

EVA. Mama, this woman, Jay, may be tool of Stalin, but she has let us live here free.

ANGER. How generous.

EVA. If you can call it living. Like manger!

ANGER (to EVA). I will put you in my film—you, my ingenue, will have sexual intercourse with a great Shetland Pony, who represents Bobby Beausoleil.

COUNTESS. And now, I leave, I marry again.

ANGER. These Hungarians! Look at Zsa Zsa, married twelve times. [To EVA.] A Shetland pony, brown, clop-clop, many hooves, with enormous erection and boyish grin, like Bobby.

EVA. Mama! Who you marry?

COUNTESS. I go to him now. Diego Rivera, of Mexico.

JAY DeFEO. What on earth are you thinking? He’s married already.

ANGER. The virgin waits on the altar of the Rose. Slowly, on four long legs, with great neighs of pleasure, the Shetland pony approaches, bowlegged, pinned with colorful ribbons. You feed him sugar, darling, stroke his genitalia.

JAY DeFEO. Are you sure there hasn’t been some mistake?

EVA. Mama, this American man’s aspooks me.

COUNTESS. We have been man and wife for many months. He may be a Stalinist, but I forgive a man his faults when he loves the Countess so deeply. Together we return to Hungary, restore feudal system.

JAY DeFEO. How on earth do you plan to dispose of Frida Kahlo?

COUNTESS. Eva, you know man on cable car?

EVA. Yes, mama. Very nice Hungarian man, Josef.
COUNTESS. Very sympathetic to cause.

ANGER. I know him. I helped him call out all the stops from Powell Street to the wharf.

COUNTESS. Frida is on cable car now. I arrange small accident with driver.

[Enter FRIDA KAHLO, pierced by spoke from cable car,]

COUNTESS. My plan succeeds, she useless now as woman.

EVA. Good only as spectacle.

JAY DeFEO. My God, Frida, what happened?

FRIDA. I was riding up and down your famous hills. The driver gave me funny look—the evil eye, then he slam the brakes and I fly, through your famous air, like mockingbird.

JAY DeFEO. That pole or whatever must be killing you.

FRIDA. Yes, and only you can soothe me. Take me, Jay, to your black studio where the pine trees of Jesus litter the floor and paint.

COUNTESS. Rivera divorce her now quicker than the good paprika.

EVA (sneezing). Ah-choo!

ANGER. God bless you. I mean—Satan bless you.

JAY. I know I have some band-aids and mercurochrome, unless Kay added them to the painting.

FRIDA (to JAY). I, Frida, rent with pain, look at your angelic face and find rest there.

ANGER. Madame Kahlo, with that pole through your middle you are now an interesting example of California funk junk assemblage. Half human being, half iron rod, half goddess. Will you play Anais Nin in my new film, “Wet Paint?”

KAHLO. If Jay wants me to do so, Kenneth Anger.

JAY. We must see to your wound at once.
KAHLO. Ah, I was hoping you would, mm, say that.

[Exit JAY DeFEO and KAHLO.]

ANGER. You two are evil, and that’s the nicest thing I can say about anyone, male or female.

EVA. We make wedding gown now, for Mama. Cream lace and cherries, like proper bride of Hungary.

COUNTESS. Man of anger, you shall throw rose petals in my wake.

[Exit COUNTESS and EVA.]

ANGER. I’ve lit the fireworks. Jay DeFeo—walking a perilous tightrope between obscurity and fame in the late 1950s. The brilliant romantic artist, taunted by sister Kay DeFeo. Kay, who sneaks in night after night to dash more paint on Jay’s finished production. Jay, woman, rebel, artist, haunted by a shoplifting arrest in her past, and puzzled by how dark her apartment seems to be getting . . .

[Enter DIEGO RIVERA.]

RIVERA. Are they gone?

ANGER. You are not marrying that Countess, I hope.

RIVERA. Nor her daughter, Eva, either. I have made love to both, but a man has got to do what a man must do, for Stalin.

ANGER. Substitute “Satan” for “Stalin,” and there, in a nutshell, is the reason I made “Kustom Kar Kommandos.”

RIVERA. Feel, the sweat on my brow, flowing like wet bull sperm.

ANGER. Olé! Señor Rivera, have you seen my brand, Bobby Beausoleil? I bought him from Bigarini at juvenile hall for two bottles of Dr. Pepper and a rookie Roger Maris.

RIVERA. They are throwing rice in my direction. What was it Burt Bacharach said, ten years from now? “I’ve got the wedding bell blues.”

ANGER. There’s a large statue of the Great God Beelzebub in my studio on Polk Street. Hide in it. I’ll wait here and throw them off the track.
RIVERA. You are a good man under layers of lurid homosexual vice.

ANGER. I’m in no mood for compliments, I think.

[Enter TUESDAY WELD.]

TUESDAY. Mother’s told me everything.

RIVERA. Then she is lying mentirosa!

TUESDAY. If you are my father, at least you can advise me.

RIVERA. I never laid a finger on that woman, Leonora. If she says she was at the Restaurant, I was out sick that day.

TUESDAY. So you were never a waiter.

ANGER. Father and daughter, escape your lies, run to Beelzebub. Starlet and Stalinist, only if you enter the body of the Dark Master shall ye escape your own damnation.

RIVERA. We take your advice, leave now, come back later for filming.

TUESDAY. Where are we going—Daddy?

RIVERA. We coat our bodies in grease, then force them through the anal cavity of a great bronze she-bull.

TUESDAY (after a pause). Tora, tura, tura, I suppose. [To ANGER.] Let my mother know I’m off hungering for new experiences.

RIVERA. Andale! Andale!

[Exit RIVERA and TUESDAY. Enter WILMA VAPE.]

ANGER. Tell me, Wilma Vape, how did you get involved in this man Hall Mark’s circus?

WILMA. Who told you I knew that man?

ANGER. I heard it through the Vapevine.

WILMA. It’s a long story. I was one of many brave men and women who helped prominent theorists escape Europe and bring them to America.
ANGER. You risked your neck for Hall Mark?

WILMA. I had my reasons. Sexual ones. So we reach San Francisco. Here nothing is sacred—except, as I find to my disgust, Richard Diebenkorn. I help Hall Mark found great business built on ideas. Powerful ideas.

ANGER. I was hoping to interest you in a business proposition. "Kenneth Anger Cards." I'll paint small pictures of Satan, we could have a whole franchise—once you've made your escape, Vape.

WILMA. You share an interest with Hall Mark. An interest in sailors.

ANGER. Tattoos, fireworks, leather pants, yes, the open sea. The breeze in my face!

WILMA. I'll think about it.

[Enter WALLACE BERNAN.]

BERMAN. Hi, fellas. Gee, did I put the baby down somewhere? I think I lost him. He's in a bundle, looks like a Duchamp kind of Meret Oppenheim thing.

ANGER (eagerly). A human baby?

BERMAN. Don't get your hopes up, he's been circumcised already.


BERMAN. We haven't met—I'm Wallace Berman.

ANGER. You, Wallace Berman, the great artist of the 20th century. I love your movies.

BERMAN. I've only made one.

ANGER. I'm thinking of Bruce Conner. You or Bruce Conner intersect from frame to frame, TV news, still photos, white noise, found footage. I worship you, like a graven idol. I kiss your sandals.

[Enter KAY DeFEEO.]

KAY. Hello everyone.

BERMAN. Jay—have you seen Tosh? He was in a paper bag.
KAY. I think he might have gotten sucked into the painting. I heard some wailing coming from the painting—I remember it vaguely, as one might recall a previous life, a la the Search for Bridey Murphy. Was I an Irish colleen, beating the sod? Or was I applying thick firm brushstrokes over the baby?

WILMA. In that case, baby is now part of the contract between this woman and Hallmark Cards.

BERMAN. It's just like the story of Abraham and Isaac. Father in heaven, did I deliver my first born son to the altar of Beat Culture?

[Pause while ALL consider this.]

WILMA. Could be.

KAY. What a pity, eh?

BERMAN. But, but, but, this isn’t cool!

WILMA. I hear baby cry now. Come, Wally Berman, let us remove bag from painting, and baby from bag, like Eskimo pie.

BERMAN. And so it was written.

[Exit WILMA and BERNAM.]

KAY. If I’m only part of Jay, why do I feel so alive, so independent? I step towards my only window and look into the dark. Thousands of stars spin round me, slowly circling planet Earth like Sputnik. Like butterflies. I close my eyes tight as I can and my heart comes pounding up in my throat. “I’m alive,” I say.

ANGER. I never feel that way—except when I’m sacrificing a goat, or watching Norma Shearer in The Women.

KAY. Then she comes in and takes over. Walks through my skin like rain through a window, and I shut down, no one can see me.

ANGER. So let’s try this Elizabeth Taylor, Suddenly Last Summer kind of burst of recovered memory.

KAY (amused). I remember going into the hardware store . . . and a young man—
ANGER. A handsome young man, like a Greek god—or a faun—

[Enter a paint store CLERK.]

CLERK. Need any paint today?

ANGER. He will have to do!

KAY. My name is Jay DeFeo.

CLERK. Why, yes, Miss DeFeo. You’ve been coming in daily for years. Two buckets of lead paint?

KAY. Yes. (Aside.) Thick white paint with metal running through it, like the calcium of my bones.

CLERK. Can I just finish waiting on Miss Bollinger? She has an actual career!

[Enter REBECA BOLLINGER.]

BOLLINGER. Yes, and I was first on line.

KAY. Were you?

BOLLINGER. I heard the bells over the door ring when you came in behind me.

CLERK. I too heard bells, heard the screen door slam, and there you stood, all weird like.

ANGER. Good, Ryan. Like she’s utterly strange, like Maya Deren. No! Mamie Eisenhower. Rebeca?


CLERK. Will that be cash?

ANGER. And you say—

KAY. I am stealing these two cans of paint.

ANGER. That’s putting it a little baldly.
BOLLINGER. A female thief!

KAY. Remember my name, paint clerk boy?

CLERK. Yes, but you can’t do that!

KAY. I can and will. I have no money, I’m an art student at Berkeley. I need this paint for my masterpiece.

ANGER. “Give to me what I need.”

KAY. “Give to me what I need.”

[Enter JAY with the brown paper bag in her arms.]

JAY. No, Kay, don’t do this to me.

KAY. You are not strong enough to stop me or say no.

JAY. I saw the paint.

KAY. Two heavy cans that made my arms ache to lift my brush.

JAY. I saw the paint, felt it enter the veins of my heart. But —

KAY. He said —

JAY. Shoplifting is a serious crime.

CLERK. A serious crime.

JAY. I can’t do that. I’m a good girl, I am.

BOLLINGER. She will be a felon. Her art career blighted. Who would hire that woman to teach? She’s got a record.

JAY. I saw the paint. Sealed in drums like pig poison. My hands reached out — my long white arms —

KAY (takes baby). I reached out and told the clerk, —

CLERK. I’m afraid I can’t just let you take the paint, Miss DeFeo.
JAY. Two heavy cans, that felt wrong in my hands.

ANGER. Like the scrotum of the devil!

CLERK. Here in America, when you want something, you have to pay for it.

BOLLINGER. And I was first. One day I’ll invent surveillance cameras that would prove it.

CLERK. That’s economics 101!

JAY (to CLERK). “Fuck you.” [To audience.] And I left the shop with my paint. The clerk knew my name, my address.

KAY. At home I sat and panted, sweating, like a dog.

JAY. Breathing in the open tins of paint, the life line.

CLERK. Hello, Operator, get me the police.

KAY. My painting had to be fed, like a dog.

ANGER. Bobby! Bobby Beausoleil! Get out here and play some throbbing chords, like the theremin of Forbidden Planet.

[Enter BOBBY, who goes to the piano and plays some chilling chords.]

JAY. I felt her in my body like running blood, a fever, high and hot, blood like fire. My pulses were pounding.

KAY. The pounding at the door, who is it?

[Enter OFFICER BIGARINI.]

BIGARINI. “It’s the police, open up, lady.”

KAY. Open the paint. Dip in the brush. Apply lead paint to brush.

BIGARINI. Artists come in, they ruin a town.

JAY. I get tired.
KAY. Above you, as far as you can see, in either direction, all the way up, then all the way down, stands the rose.

BIGARINI. She was a hot chick, but she shoulda stuck to painting her nails.

JAY. Read me my rights.

BIGARINI. That’s a laugh. There’s only one right here, the badge of Bigarini.

JAY. I’m so tired.

KAY. Yet the rose must be fed.

[Enter MICHAEL McCLURE.]

BIGARINI. GRAWR! GRAWR!

MICHAEL McCLURE. GRAWR!

[Enter BOB KAUFMAN.]

BIGARINI, McCLURE. GRAWR! GRAWR!

KAUFMAN (opens his mouth to growl, but no sound comes out).

McCLURE. Bob Kaufman has taken a vow of silence, in protest of a social system that allows black oppression, enforced shoe wearing in restaurants, corrupt policemen like Bigarini here—

BIGARINI. Hey! I’m right here, sir! Am I invisible to you Beat people?

McCLURE. GRAWR! GRAWR!

[Enter SASHA.]

SASHA. Miss Jay, Miss Jay, the crane is here. Big day on Fillmore Street!

JAY (raising her arms to the audience, as though sleepwalking). They led me away in handcuffs. My picture in the paper.

ANGER. Under arrest. Look haggard, Jay!

McCLURE. Look at Bob, he’s crying for all the injustice in the world.
[BOB KAUFMAN cries, his back wracked with sobs no one can hear.]

KAY. I never felt more alive.

ANGER. Bobby, more soul in those chords. Sex power, Bobby. Look at him crying, what is the aural equivalent of that grief?

JAY. I never felt more restrained.

[Exit KAY.]

ANGER (to BOBBY). Pathos, shock, steel! Think of the cattle prod, that took your cherry in juvie. Tuesday! Wallace Berman, Diego Rivera, get out here and tune up. Jay—give it everything you’ve got, and more.

JAY, I did. I am. I was.

SASHA, McCLURE, BIGARINI. GRAWR!

BOB KAUFMAN. [Again KAUFMAN growls but no sound comes out.]

[Enter TUESDAY, BERMAN, RIVERA.]

SASHA. The walls have collapsed. They’re lifting the painting right out of the room I live in. Will I ever see it again?

[Enter ANALYST.]

ANALYST. It could be worse, Miss DeFeo. They could be sealing up your painting behind a wall for thirty years.

WALLACE BERMAN. Or selling it to the Whitney.

ANGER. Every cloud has a silver lining.

[Enter HALL MARK, WILMA, LEONORA.]

HALL MARK (pointing). It’s like a rose in the sky.

WILMA (pointing). Or the dead skull of a white cow.

HALL MARK. “Crane … above road’s dusty surface.”
WILMA. “C.A.R.D.S.”

LEONORA. Like the mother who’s found her daughter only to lose her to men, mink and Manhattans.

ANGER. And now—Janis Joplin, with a very special tribute to “The Rose.”

[On the wall behind them a giant projection of Jay DeFeo’s painting “The Rose,” appears. Enter JANIS JOPLIN.]

JOPLIN (singing that old Bette Midler song, “The Rose” a la Joplin.). Some say love, it is a river that drowns the tender reed. Some say love, it is a razor that leaves your soul to bleed.

Some say love, it is a hunger, an endless aching need. I say love, it is a flower, and you its only seed.

JOINED by ALL. It's the heart afraid of breaking that never learns to dance. It's the dream afraid of waking that never takes the chance.

It's the one who won't be taken, who cannot seem to give, and the soul afraid of dying that never learns to live.

JOPLIN. When the night has been too lonely and the road has been too long,

JOPLIN, JAY, and KAY. And you think that love is only for the lucky and the strong,

ALL. Just remember in the winter far beneath the winter snows lies the seed that with the sun's love in the spring becomes the rose.
[Curtain.]