

THE BLACK PARADE

Music and Lyrics by My Chemical Romance

Book by Anthony J. Caiola

Capstone Project

October 01, 2016

Cast of Characters

Main Characters

Michael	- Early 30s. An ex-Army vet who has been fighting cancer for almost a year.
Nikki	- Early 30s Michael's ex-girlfriend and Ft. Robert's sister. She is a touring singer.
Ft. Robert	- Early 30s Michael's best friend, Nikki's brother. He is a local priest.
Chris	- 17 yrs old Mark and Nikki's son. He is trying to decide on a college.
Mark	- Mid 30s Nikki's husband and manager.
Mother	- Mid 60s Michael's birth mother. Nikki and Ft. Robert's foster mother.

Secondary Characters

Doctor	- Mid 50s	Old Man	- Late 50s
Nurses	- Late 20s	Beggar	- Late 40s

Ensemble Cast - Various Ages

Musical Numbers

Act One

The End.....	Michael
Dead!.....	Ensemble
This Is How I Disappear.....	Michael
Kill All Your Friends.....	Michael
The Sharpest Lives.....	Nikki
Welcome To The Black Parade.....	Ensemble
I Don't Love You.....	Michael and Nikki
House Of Wolves.....	Ft. Robert and Michael
Cancer.....	Old Man

Act Two

Mama.....	Michael and Ensemble
Sleep.....	Michael and Nikki
Heaven Help Us.....	Michael and Beggar
Teenagers.....	Ft. Robert and Michael
Disenchanted.....	Michael and Nikki
Famous Last Words.....	Nikki

Setting

This musical can be set anywhere in the United States within a few hundred miles of Denver, Co.

ACT ONESCENE ONE

MICHAEL is pushed to a small operating room on a gurney in the middle of the stage, where he is hooked to a EKG machine. The stage is dark and only the operating room is bathed in light. Surrounding him is a DOCTOR and NURSES who are preparing for the surgery.

MICHAEL

NOW COME ONE COME ALL TO THIS TRAGIC AFFAIR
WIPE OFF THAT MAKEUP, WHAT'S IN IS DESPAIR
SO THROW ON THE BLACK DRESS, MIX IN WITH THE LOT
YOU MIGHT WAKE UP AND NOTICE YOU'RE SOMEONE YOU'RE NOT
IF YOU LOOK IN THE MIRROR AND DON'T LIKE WHAT YOU SEE
YOU CAN FIND OUT FIRSTHAND WHAT IT'S LIKE TO BE ME
SO GATHER 'ROUND PIGGIES AND KISS THIS GOODBYE
I'D ENCOURAGE YOUR SMILES I'LL EXPECT YOU WON'T CRY

ANOTHER CONTUSION, MY FUNERAL JAG
HERE'S MY RESIGNATION, I'LL SERVE IT IN DRAG
YOU'VE GOT FRONT ROW SEATS TO THE PENITENCE BALL
WHEN I GROW UP I WANT TO BE NOTHING AT ALL!

I SAID YEAH, YEAH!
I SAID YEAH, YEAH!

C'MON C'MON C'MON
I SAID SAVE ME!
GET ME THE HELL OUT OF HERE

NURSES

SAVE ME!

MICHAEL

TOO YOUNG TO DIE AND MY DEAR

NURSES

YOU CAN'T!

MICHAEL

IF YOU CAN HEAR ME JUST WALK AWAY AND TAKE ME!

(The EKG machine suddenly flatlines and MICHAEL goes limp. The DOCTOR quickly place a defibrillator on MICHAEL'S chest and shocks him.)

MICHAEL

YEAH!

(The lights turn on and next to the operating room is a small waiting room. Waiting there is FT. ROBERT and MICHAEL'S MOTHER. She hears MICHAEL'S scream and stands up.)

MOTHER

AND IF YOUR HEART STOPS BEATING
I'LL BE HERE WONDERING
DID YOU GET WHAT YOU DESERVE?
THE ENDING OF YOUR LIFE
AND IF YOU GET TO HEAVEN
I'LL BE HERE WAITING, BABE
DID YOU GET WHAT YOU DESERVE?
THE END, AND IF YOUR LIFE WON'T WAIT
THEN YOUR HEART CAN'T TAKE THIS

NURSES

HAVE YOU HEARD THE NEWS THAT YOU'RE DEAD?
NO ONE EVER HAD MUCH NICE TO SAY
I THINK THEY NEVER LIKED YOU ANYWAY

MICHAEL

OH, TAKE ME FROM THE HOSPITAL BED
WOULDN'T IT BE GRAND?
IT AIN'T EXACTLY WHAT YOU PLANNED.
AND WOULDN'T IT BE GREAT IF WE WERE DEAD?
OH, DEAD.

(The DOCTOR and NURSES place a machine on MICHAEL'S chest. An x-ray comes out and the DOCTOR takes it and begins to study it with the NURSES.)

FT. ROBERT

TONGUE-TIED AND, OH, SO SQUEAMISH
YOU NEVER FELL IN LOVE

DID YOU GET WHAT YOU DESERVE?
 THE ENDING OF YOUR LIFE
 AND IF YOU GET TO HEAVEN
 I'LL BE HERE WAITING, BABE
 DID YOU GET WHAT YOU DESERVE?
 THE END, AND IF YOUR LIFE WON'T WAIT
 THEN YOUR HEART CAN'T TAKE THIS

NURSES

HAVE YOU HEARD THE NEWS THAT YOU'RE DEAD?
 NO ONE EVER HAD MUCH NICE TO SAY
 I THINK THEY NEVER LIKED YOU ANYWAY

MICHAEL

OH, TAKE ME FROM THE HOSPITAL BED
 WOULDN'T IT BE GRAND TO TAKE A PISTOL BY THE HAND?
 AND WOULDN'T IT BE GREAT IF WE WERE DEAD?

(The NURSES wheel MICHAEL into the waiting room.)

DOCTOR

(Addressing the waiting room)
 AND IN MY HONEST OBSERVATION
 DURING THIS OPERATION
 FOUND A COMPLICATION IN YOUR HEART
 SO LONG,
 'CAUSE NOW YOU'VE GOT

NURSES

NOW YOU'VE GOT

DOCTOR

MAYBE JUST TWO WEEKS TO LIVE
 IS THAT THE MOST THE BOTH OF YOU CAN GIVE?

(MOTHER grabs her chest and faints. The DOCTOR, NURSES,
 and FT. ROBERT begin to attend to her. MICHAEL sits up
 in the gurney.)

MICHAEL

ONE, TWO, ONE, TWO, THREE, FOUR!
 LA, LA, LA, LA, LA!
 LA, LA, LA, LA, LA, LA!
 LA, LA, LA, LA, LA, LA, LA!
 WELL COME ON,

LA, LA, LA, LA, LA!
 LA, LA, LA, LA, LA, LA!
 LA, LA, LA, LA, LA, LA, LA!
 OH, MOTHERFUCKER,

MICHAEL/NURSES

IF LIFE AIN'T JUST A JOKE (LA, LA, LA, LA, LA!)
 THEN WHY ARE WE LAUGHING? (LA, LA, LA, LA, LA, LA!)
 IF LIFE AIN'T JUST A JOKE (LA, LA, LA, LA, LA, LA, LA!)
 THEN WHY ARE WE LAUGHING?
 IF LIFE AIN'T JUST A JOKE (LA, LA, LA, LA, LA!)
 THEN WHY ARE WE LAUGHING? (LA, LA, LA, LA, LA, LA!)
 IF LIFE AIN'T JUST A JOKE (LA, LA, LA, LA, LA, LA, LA!)

MICHAEL

THEN WHY AM I DEAD?

(MICHAEL falls limp on the gurney.)

ALL EXCEPT MOTHER AND MICHAEL
 DEAD!

ACT ONE

SCENE TWO

MICHAEL wakes up in a hospital
 bed. He is groggy. A DOCTOR
 comes into the room with a
 chart in hand.

DOCTOR

Good evening, Mr. Anderson. We weren't sure when you would be
 waking up. You gave us quite a scare. How are you feeling?

MICHAEL

Like shit.

DOCTOR

I'm very sorry. Are you aware that we did not do the surgery this
 morning.

MICHAEL

Yea, I know.

DOCTOR

We thought the cancer was isolated in your lungs but it has since spread to your heart, lymph nodes and brain. Unfortunately, we cannot operate at all. It's very aggressive. Maybe after a few rounds of chemotherapy we can take another look but there isn't anything I can do at this time. I'm very sorry.

MICHAEL

Holy shit. I'm going to die, aren't I?

DOCTOR

After some rounds of treatment we can take another look and see what we can do for you. I have seen patients who take the treatment and live for another year or so. I'm confident that if we start you right away-

MICHAEL

How long do I have if I don't take the treatment?

DOCTOR

In your current condition, I'm not going to let you out of the hospital. I want to put you on treatment as soon as possible.

MICHAEL

Can you go get my mother? I want to be the one to tell her.

DOCTOR

Michael, I'm very sorry but your mother suffered a massive heart attack. She's downstairs in the CCU. She is unresponsive and shows little to no brain activity. I'm very sorry. The sisters of St. Anthony's are praying for her in the chapel downstairs. I believe Ft. Robert is with them.

MICHAEL

Can I see her?

DOCTOR

You are her only family, it is up to you to make any medical decisions on her behalf while she is unresponsive.

MICHAEL

CAN I see her?

DOCTOR

Yes, you can.

(The stage goes dark. The lights come back on and MICHAEL and the DOCTOR are standing in the doorway of the hospital room. MOTHER is in the bed. The EKG machine beeps. MICHAEL takes a few steps into the room and looks at his mother. His face is expressionless. The DOCTOR walks into the room.)

MICHAEL

How long does she have?

DOCTOR

At this point, that is up to her. Any minute can be her last. I'll leave you alone.

(DOCTOR leaves. MICHAEL goes to the foot of the bed and stares at his mother. FT. ROBERT appears at the door.)

FT. ROBERT

Mike, I'm so sorry. I tried to help but when they said you had two weeks, I think her heart gave out.

MICHAEL

It's fine Rob. Doctor says these could be her last minutes.

FT. ROBERT

Oh, Mikey, I'm so sorry. Come, let's say a prayer for her.

MICHAEL

What do you want me to say to her? I have nothing to pray for. I go in for surgery but she ends up dying.

FT. ROBERT

Michael, you can't be serious.

MICHAEL

Oh I'm as serious as a heart attack.

FT. ROBERT

That isn't funny. Now isn't the time for your bullshit. We need to-

MICHAEL

Leave me alone Robert.

FT. ROBERT

Mike-

MICHAEL

GO!

(FT. ROBERT leaves the room.)

TO UN-EXPLAIN THE UNFORGIVABLE,
DRAIN ALL THE BLOOD AND GIVE THE KIDS A SHOW.
BY STREETLIGHT
THIS DARK NIGHT,
A SEANCE DOWN BELOW.
THERE'RE THINGS THAT I HAVE DONE,
YOU NEVER SHOULD EVER KNOW!

AND WITHOUT YOU IS HOW I DISAPPEAR,
AND LIVE MY LIFE ALONE FOREVER NOW.
AND WITHOUT YOU IS HOW I DISAPPEAR,
AND LIVE MY LIFE ALONE FOREVER NOW.

WHO WALKS AMONG THE FAMOUS LIVING DEAD,
DROWNS ALL THE BOYS AND GIRLS INSIDE YOUR BED.
AND IF YOU COULD TALK TO ME,
TELL ME IF IT'S SO,
THAT ALL THE GOOD GIRLS GO TO HEAVEN.
WELL, HEAVEN KNOWS

THAT WITHOUT YOU IS HOW I DISAPPEAR,
AND LIVE MY LIFE ALONE FOREVER NOW.
AND WITHOUT YOU IS HOW I DISAPPEAR,
AND LIVE MY LIFE ALONE FOREVER NOW.

CAN YOU HEAR ME CRY OUT TO YOU?
WORDS I THOUGHT I'D CHOKE ON FIGURE OUT.
I'M REALLY NOT SO WITH YOU ANYMORE.
I'M JUST A GHOST,
SO I CAN'T HURT YOU ANYMORE,
SO I CAN'T HURT YOU ANYMORE.

AND NOW, YOU WANNA SEE HOW FAR DOWN I CAN SINK?
LET ME GO, FUCK!
SO, YOU CAN, WELL NOW SO, YOU CAN
I'M SO FAR AWAY FROM YOU.
WELL NOW SO, YOU CAN.

AND WITHOUT YOU IS HOW I DISAPPEAR,
AND WITHOUT YOU IS HOW I DISAPPEAR,
AND WITHOUT YOU IS HOW I DISAPPEAR,
AND WITHOUT YOU... IS HOW, IS HOW, IS HOW...
FOREVER, FOREVER NOW!

(As the music ends, there is a sound of the EKG machine flatlining. Michael just stands away from the bed and looks at his mother while the NURSES run into the room to try to resuscitate her. The lights fade to black.)

ACT ONE

SCENE THREE

The lights fade up on stage. In the center of the stage there is a closed casket. On top is a picture of MICHAEL'S mother. Standing next to the casket is MICHAEL and FT. Robert. In front of the casket are rows of chairs, occupied by mourners. Flowers are on either side of the casket.

MICHAEL

Bob, who are these people? Mom didn't know this many people.

FT. ROBERT

Most of these people you won't recognize because they are all grown up now. These are the kids your mother fostered when we were in high school. Remember how the house was always full of kids? These are the kids all grown up now.

MICHAEL

I hated these kids. Every single stray my mother gave a- ah!

(MICHAEL grabs his chest.)

FT. ROBERT

Mikey, are you okay?

(MICHAEL pulls out a pill bottle and takes a pill. The pain starts to lessen. MICHAEL takes a few deep breaths and puts the pills away.)

MICHAEL

I'll be okay. Doctor said I would get shortness of breath or flashes of pain.

FT. ROBERT

You're going right back to the hospital once this is over. Believe that, my friend.

MICHAEL

(Sarcastically) Sure, Bob.

FT. ROBERT

Hey, watch what you say about these strays! My sister and I are in that group of kids!

MICHAEL

Yeah, well, you two were the only exception.

FT. ROBERT

Speaking of which...

(A beautiful woman, a young man, and a man approaches the casket and say a small prayer. They turns to FT. ROBERT and MICHAEL.)

NIKKI

Bobby! It's great to see you! It's been too long.

FT. ROBERT

Hey, sis!

(NIKKI hugs FT. ROBERT. MICHAEL takes a step back behind FT. ROBERT. After they hug, FT. ROBERT hugs CHRIS.)

CHRIS

Hey, Uncle Bobby.

FT. ROBERT

Hello, nephew. Decided on a school yet?

CHRIS

Not yet. But I've been looking into a few options after I graduate. I'm not sure where I want to go but I think I know what I want to study.

FT. ROBERT

Good. I'm sure whatever you choose it will be the right decision. Hello, Mark.

MARK

Hello, Father.

(FT. ROBERT shakes MARK'S hand.)

MICHAEL

Hey, Nikki.

NIKKI

Hello, Michael. This is my husband, Mark, and our son, Christopher.

MARK

Hello, Michael, nice to meet you.

MICHAEL

Likewise. Hello, Christopher.

CHRIS

Hi.

(There is a moment of awkward silence.)

FT. ROBERT

Well, Chris, why don't you tell me about those options for after high school. Let's step someplace quieter.

CHRIS

Sure, unc.

(FT.ROBERT and CHRIS leave.)

MICHAEL

You look great, Nik.

NIKKI

Thanks, how long have you been back?

MICHAEL

About a year. I got sick while I was deployed and I've been trying to get better. But the treatment isn't exactly working. I'm not sure it will, either.

MARK

(Dryly) You look fine to me.

MICHAEL

Thanks, but I'm not. (Addressing Nikki) How have you been? Your son looks just like you, except you eyes. He doesn't have your eyes.

NIKKI

Thank you, although I think he looks more like his father. We've been doing fine, we have been touring again recently. It's easier now that Chris is out of school for the summer. I'm not headlining anywhere but I can pay my bills. I have an album releasing next week.

MICHAEL

That's amazing, congrats on your career. How did you hear about mom, though?

NIKKI

Bobby called me and told me. I knew I had to come and to show my respect. After all it was her who told me to go out there and sing.

MARK

And thank God she did. A voice like yours is meant to be heard.

MICHAEL

Thank you for coming for mom. I appreciate it.

MARK

Of course. After all, you weren't there to support Nikki. Your mother was though, without whom, Nikki wouldn't be where she is today. Now, if you'll excuse us but we have to be going. We have a long road trip ahead of us.

NIKKI

We aren't leaving until tomorrow, Mark. I told you, I want to stay for the funeral.

MARK

I'm not sure we can fit that in. It's still a few hundred miles to Denver and we only have a few days. Not to mention you also have a radio interview in Boulder.

NIKKI

No, we'll make it. I want to stay, please.

MARK

(After a moment of thinking) We'll leave straight from the cemetery. (Turning to Michael) My condolences. (To Nikki) I'll get Chris and we will wait for you in the car. (He walks away.)

NIKKI

Take care Mike. (She starts to leave.)

MICHAEL

Wait, you don't have to leave.

NIKKI

Yes I do. Mark gets angry if we waste time. And Chris has some applications to finish.

MICHAEL

Did Mom really push you into singing?

NIKKI

Yes, your mother did all she could to help me after you left. She held me together.

MICHAEL

She never told me that or that you got married or had a son. Even when I wrote home asking about you. She never said anything.

NIKKI

You know you could have just written to me, right?

MICHAEL

I was so angry when I left I didn't think about anything.

NIKKI

Your mother was angry that you left. I was heartbroken that you left me. All we wanted was you to be home with us.

MICHAEL

Well, I'm home now.

NIKKI

Now is too late. Goodbye, Michael. Please, take care of yourself.
(She walks away.)

MICHAEL

Wait! (awkward silence)

(She stops. He goes to say something but stops. They stare at each other for a moment. MARK appears with CHRIS. He grabs her hand and leads her off stage. MICHAEL turns to the casket.)

MICHAEL

WELL YOU CAN HIDE A LOT ABOUT YOURSELF,
BUT HONEY, WHAT'RE YOU GONNA DO?
AND YOU CAN SLEEP IN A COFFIN,
BUT THE PAST AIN'T THROUGH WITH YOU.

'CAUSE WE ARE ALL A BUNCH OF LIARS.
TELL ME, BABY, WHO DO YOU WANNA BE?
AND WE ARE ALL ABOUT TO SELL IT,
'CAUSE IT'S TRAGIC WITH A CAPITAL T.
LET IT BE, LET IT BE, LET IT BE!

'CAUSE WE ALL WANNA PARTY WHEN THE FUNERAL ENDS.

MOURNERS

(BA-BA-BA, BA-BA-BA)

MICHAEL

AND WE ALL GET TOGETHER WHEN WE BURY OUR FRIENDS.

MOURNERS

(BA-BA-BA, BA-BA-BA)

MICHAEL

IT'S BEEN EIGHT BITTER YEARS SINCE I'VE BEEN SEEING YOUR
FACE.

MOURNERS

(BA-BA-BA, BA-BA-BA)

MICHAEL

AND YOU'RE WALKING AWAY, AND I WILL DIE IN THIS PLACE.

SOMETIMES YOU SCRAPE AND SINK SO LOW,
I'M SHOCKED AT WHAT YOU'RE CAPABLE OF.
AND IF THIS IS A CORONATION,
I AIN'T FEELING THE LOVE.

'CAUSE WE ARE ALL A BUNCH OF ANIMALS
THAT NEVER PAID ATTENTION IN SCHOOL.
SO TELL ME ALL ABOUT YOUR PROBLEMS;
I WAS KILLING BEFORE KILLING WAS COOL.
YOU'RE SO COOL, YOU'RE SO COOL, SO COOL!

'CAUSE WE ALL WANNA PARTY WHEN THE FUNERAL ENDS.

MOURNERS

(BA-BA-BA, BA-BA-BA)

MICHAEL

AND WE ALL GET TOGETHER WHEN WE BURY OUR FRIENDS.

MOURNERS

(BA-BA-BA, BA-BA-BA)

MICHAEL

IT'S BEEN NINE BITTER YEARS SINCE I'VE BEEN SEEING YOUR
FACE.

MOURNERS

(BA-BA-BA, BA-BA-BA)

MICHAEL

AND YOU'RE WALKING AWAY, AND I WILL DIE IN THIS PLACE.

YOU'LL NEVER TAKE ME ALIVE.
YOU'LL NEVER TAKE ME ALIVE.
DO WHAT IT TAKES TO SURVIVE,
'CAUSE I'M STILL HERE.
YOU'LL NEVER GET ME ALIVE.
YOU'LL NEVER TAKE ME ALIVE.
DO WHAT IT TAKES TO SURVIVE,

AND I'M STILL HERE.
 YOU'LL NEVER TAKE ME ALIVE.
 YOU'LL NEVER GET ME ALIVE.
 DO WHAT IT TAKES TO SURVIVE,
 AND I'M STILL HERE.
 YOU'LL NEVER GET ME.
 (GET ME!)
 YOU'LL NEVER TAKE ME.
 (TAKE ME!)
 YOU'LL NEVER GET ME ALIVE.
 'CAUSE WE ALL WANNA PARTY WHEN THE FUNERAL ENDS.

MOURNERS

(BA-BA-BA, BA-BA-BA)

MICHAEL

AND WE ALL GET TOGETHER WHEN WE BURY OUR FRIENDS.
 IT'S BEEN TEN FUCKING YEARS SINCE I'VE BEEN SEEING
 YOUR FACE 'ROUND HERE.
 AND YOU'RE WALKING AWAY, AND I WILL DROWN IN THE FEAR.

(MICHAEL watches NIKKI walk towards the door. He looks away. She turns and looks at him with tears in her eyes. She leaves. Lights fade down on the stage.)

ACT ONE

SCENE FOUR

The lights fade up on stage. Onstage is a big bedroom with a couch. Rain and thunder can be heard. MICHAEL is sitting on the bed with a box. Sprawled across the bed are pictures. MICHAEL is looking through the photos. There is a knock at the door. MICHAEL goes to open it. FT. ROBERT enters the room.

FT. ROBERT

Mike, we really ought to get you back to the hospital. The doctor wants to start your treatment tonight.

MICHAEL

I'm not going back Bobby. Why didn't you tell me that you spoke to her?

FT. ROBERT

Because I didn't think it was that big a deal. She had to come back to show respect for your mother. It was the right thing to do. What your mother did for her after you left was amazing. What did she say to you?

MICHAEL

Nothing. I don't know anything about her anymore. I didn't even know she was married to that dick until this afternoon. I didn't know about her son. I feel like I don't know her at all anymore. How did my mother helped her after I left?

FT. ROBERT

Well it was sudden. All I remember is a lot of shouting and fighting and then we get word you are off to Fort Benning. It broke all our hearts. I mean I haven't mentioned this because you came back sick but you were selfish for just leaving us. No warning, just gone. Sixteen years go by and you come back with cancer. How do you think any of us was going to react to seeing you?

MICHAEL

Why didn't you tell me about your nephew?

FT. ROBERT

She met Mark shortly after you left. She was still hurt and he had a way into the business. His cousin was an audio engineer who worked with everyone. They had Chris shortly after that and moved away. I saw him a few times, but mostly I just spoke to Chris over the phone.

MICHAEL

Do you think she still loves me?

FT. ROBERT

If the person you loved one day just left, would you still love them after damn near twenty years? Would you still love her?

MICHAEL

I don't know.

FT. ROBERT

Well, what do you know?

MICHAEL

I know I was wrong but I can't change that now. She's gone. Mom is gone and soon I'll be gone.

FT. ROBERT

(Smacks upside his head.) It's never over Michael. Don't talk like that! You will fight this and win. If you don't beat this cancer, then I'll kill you myself.

MICHAEL

Some man-of-the-cloth you are.

FT. ROBERT

I may be a priest, but I'm still that same kid you grew up with. Now get dressed. You are going back to the hospital. That's an order, soldier.

MICHAEL

Tomorrow. I'll go tomorrow after the burial. I just want to spend the night here. It feels kinda good to be back in my old room. Please.

FT. ROBERT

Fine. I guess one more day can't kill you.

MICHAEL

(Laughing) Thanks, Bobby.

(FT. ROBERT leaves. MICHAEL goes back to the bed and looks at more pictures. A moment goes by. There is knock at the door.)

MICHAEL

What is it now Bobby? Forget something?

(MICHAEL opens the door and standing there is NIKKI. Her clothing is wet.)

NIKKI

WELL, IT RAINS AND IT POURS WHEN YOU'RE OUT ON YOUR OWN
IF I CRASH ON THE COUCH CAN I SLEEP IN MY CLOTHES?

'CAUSE I'VE SPENT THE NIGHT DANCING I'M DRUNK, I SUPPOSE

MICHAEL

IF IT LOOKS LIKE I'M LAUGHING I'M REALLY JUST ASKING TO
LEAVE

THIS ALONE, YOU'RE IN TIME FOR THE SHOW
YOU'RE THE ONE THAT I NEED, I'M THE ONE THAT YOU LOATHE
YOU CAN WATCH ME CORRODE LIKE A BEAST IN REPOSE

NIKKI

CAUSE I LOVE ALL THE POISON AND AWAY WITH THE BOYS IN THE
BAND

MICHAEL

I'VE REALLY BEEN ON A BENDER AND IT SHOWS

NIKKI

SO WHY DON'T YOU BLOW ME A KISS BEFORE SHE GOES?

GIVE ME A SHOT TO REMEMBER
AND YOU CAN TAKE ALL THE PAIN AWAY FROM ME
A KISS AND I WILL SURRENDER
THE SHARPEST LIVES ARE THE DEADLIEST TO LEAD

A LIGHT TO BURN ALL THE EMPIRES
SO BRIGHT THE SUN IS ASHAMED TO RISE AND BE
IN LOVE WITH ALL OF THESE VAMPIRES
SO YOU CAN LEAVE LIKE THE SANE ABANDONED ME

THERE'S A PLACE IN THE DARK WHERE THE ANIMALS GO
YOU CAN TAKE OFF YOUR SKIN IN THE CANNIBAL GLOW
JULIET LOVES THE BEAT AND THE LUST IT COMMANDS
DROP THE DAGGER AND LATHER THE BLOOD ON YOUR HANDS, ROMEO

MICHAEL

I'VE REALLY BEEN ON A BENDER AND IT SHOWS

NIKKI

SO WHY DON'T YOU BLOW ME A KISS BEFORE SHE GOES?
GIVE ME A SHOT TO REMEMBER
AND YOU CAN TAKE ALL THE PAIN AWAY FROM ME
A KISS AND I WILL SURRENDER
THE SHARPEST LIVES ARE THE DEADLIEST TO LEAD

A LIGHT TO BURN ALL THE EMPIRES

SO BRIGHT THE SUN IS ASHAMED TO RISE AND BE
 IN LOVE WITH ALL OF THESE VAMPIRES
 SO YOU CAN LEAVE LIKE THE SANE ABANDONED ME

BOTH

GIVE ME A SHOT TO REMEMBER
 AND YOU CAN TAKE ALL THE PAIN AWAY FROM ME
 A KISS AND I WILL SURRENDER
 THE SHARPEST LIVES ARE THE DEADLIEST TO LEAD

A LIGHT TO BURN ALL THE EMPIRES
 SO BRIGHT THE SUN IS ASHAMED TO RISE AND BE
 IN LOVE WITH ALL OF THESE VAMPIRES
 SO YOU CAN LEAVE LIKE THE SANE ABANDONED ME

(NIKKI climbs on top of MICHAEL and kisses him. They fall backwards onto the bed. Lights fade out on them kissing each other.)

ACT ONE

SCENE FIVE

Lights go up on the stage.
 There is a crowd of mourners
 surrounding a grave in a
 cemetery.

FT. ROBERT

We're here today to honor the life of Catherine Anderson. We ask God to bless her now that her time in this world has come to an end. For us, there is loss, grief and pain. But for Ms. Cathy, there is peace. She is with her husband again and together they are in paradise on this very day. Every one of us here has been affected by Ms. Cathy. By her nonstop generosity she took care of so many children who sometimes had nowhere else to go. I speak from experience because I was one of those who Ms. Cathy brought in and raised as one of her own. I am not the man I am today without her. It is important for us to understand and accept that the world has changed with her passing. Together, let us open our hearts and minds and grieve as the family she created. At this time, I would like to ask her son, Michael, to step forward and speak.

(MICHAEL slowly gets up and steps to the front of the casket.)

MICHAEL

You have to forgive me. I don't remember everyone. My mother helped a lot of people, like Ft. Robert said. But I wasn't always there so I don't know most of you. Umm, I joined the service because I made a promise to my dad and she didn't like that promise. That promise was that I would help those who couldn't help themselves. My mom helped the less fortunate by giving them a home. I thought I could protect people, so I joined the service. Some of you might have been there on the night I told her and heard the argument that followed. It was a bad fight. But how stupid was it? Because we both wanted the same thing, to help others. I was young and dumb and I thought at the time she loved the kids she took in more than she loved me. Now I'll never get to ask her if I was right. Thanks for coming.

(MICHAEL steps away from the casket and sits down. He stares at the casket. FT. ROBERT stands at the head of the casket.)

FT. ROBERT

Remember to live each day to the fullest in honor of life itself and of Ms. Cathy. We often take life for granted and yet it is the greatest gift God gave us.

(MOURNERS begins to gather their things and talk amongst themselves. FT. ROBERT pulls MICHAEL to the side.)

FT. ROBERT

Mike, what the hell was that about? What is the matter with you? You feel like trashing your mother at her own funeral?

NIKKI

Michael, what's wrong?

MICHAEL

WHEN I WAS A YOUNG BOY,
MY FATHER TOOK ME INTO THE CITY
TO SEE A MARCHING BAND.

HE SAID, "SON WHEN YOU GROW UP,
WOULD YOU BE THE SAVIOR OF THE BROKEN,

THE BEATEN AND THE DAMNED?"
 HE SAID "WILL YOU DEFEAT THEM,
 YOUR DEMONS, AND ALL THE NON-BELIEVERS,
 THE PLANS THAT THEY HAVE MADE?"
 "BECAUSE ONE DAY I'LL LEAVE YOU,
 A PHANTOM TO LEAD YOU IN THE SUMMER,
 TO JOIN THE BLACK PARADE."

WHEN I WAS A YOUNG BOY,
 MY FATHER TOOK ME INTO THE CITY
 TO SEE A MARCHING BAND.
 HE SAID, "SON WHEN YOU GROW UP,
 WOULD YOU BE THE SAVIOUR OF THE BROKEN,
 THE BEATEN AND THE DAMNED?"

SOMETIMES I GET THE FEELING SHE'S WATCHING OVER ME.
 AND OTHER TIMES I FEEL LIKE I SHOULD GO.
 AND THROUGH IT ALL, THE RISE AND FALL, THE BODIES IN THE
 STREETS.
 AND WHEN YOU'RE GONE WE WANT YOU ALL TO KNOW.

MOURNERS

WE'LL CARRY ON,
 WE'LL CARRY ON
 AND THOUGH YOU'RE DEAD AND GONE BELIEVE ME
 YOUR MEMORY WILL CARRY ON
 WE'LL CARRY ON
 AND IN MY HEART I CAN'T CONTAIN IT
 THE ANTHEM WON'T EXPLAIN IT.

MICHAEL

A WORLD THAT SENDS YOU REELING FROM DECIMATED DREAMS
 YOUR MISERY AND HATE WILL KILL US ALL.
 SO PAINT IT BLACK AND TAKE IT BACK
 LET'S SHOUT IT LOUD AND CLEAR
 DEFIANT TO THE END WE HEAR THE CALL

MOURNERS

TO CARRY ON
 WE'LL CARRY ON
 AND THOUGH YOU'RE DEAD AND GONE BELIEVE ME
 YOUR MEMORY WILL CARRY ON
 WE'LL CARRY ON
 AND THOUGH YOU'RE BROKEN AND DEFEATED
 YOUR WEARY WIDOW MARCHES

MICHAEL

ON AND ON WE CARRY THROUGH THE FEARS
 OOH OH OHHHH
 DISAPPOINTED FACES OF YOUR PEERS
 OOH OH OHHHH
 TAKE A LOOK AT ME CAUSE I COULD NOT CARE AT ALL

ALL

DO OR DIE, YOU'LL NEVER MAKE ME
 BECAUSE THE WORLD WILL NEVER TAKE MY HEART
 GO AND TRY, YOU'LL NEVER BREAK ME
 WE WANT IT ALL, WE WANNA PLAY THIS PART
 I WON'T EXPLAIN OR SAY I'M SORRY
 I'M UNASHAMED, I'M GONNA SHOW MY SCAR
 GIVE A CHEER FOR ALL THE BROKEN
 LISTEN HERE, BECAUSE IT'S WHO WE ARE

MICHAEL

I'M JUST A MAN, I'M NOT A HERO
 JUST A BOY, WHO HAD TO SING THIS SONG
 I'M JUST A MAN, I'M NOT A HERO
 I
 DON'T
 CARE!

ALL

WE'LL CARRY ON
 WE'LL CARRY ON
 AND THOUGH YOU'RE DEAD AND GONE BELIEVE ME
 YOUR MEMORY WILL CARRY ON
 WE'LL CARRY ON
 AND THOUGH YOU'RE BROKEN AND DEFEATED
 YOUR WEARY WIDOW MARCHES ON

DO OR DIE, YOU'LL NEVER MAKE ME
 BECAUSE THE WORLD WILL NEVER TAKE MY HEART
 GO AND TRY, YOU'LL NEVER BREAK ME
 WE WANT IT ALL, WE WANNA PLAY THIS PART (WE'LL CARRY ON)

DO OR DIE, YOU'LL NEVER MAKE ME (WE'LL CARRY ON)
 BECAUSE THE WORLD WILL NEVER TAKE MY HEART (WE'LL CARRY ON)
 GO AND TRY, YOU'LL NEVER BREAK ME
 WE WANT IT ALL, WE WANNA PLAY THIS PART

(WE'LL CARRY ON!)

(MICHAEL falls to his knees crying and FT. ROBERT and NIKKI stand at his side. Lights fade to black.)

ACT ONE

SCENE SIX

Lights fade up on stage. We are back in MICHAEL'S bedroom. MICHAEL is lying on his bed with a pillow over his face. There is a knock at the door. He doesn't move. Another knock is heard, louder. He still doesn't move. Finally the door opens a bit.

NIKKI

Mikey? Are you in there?

MICHAEL

Yea, I'm here.

NIKKI

You okay?

MICHAEL

(After a moment of silence) No. I don't think I am.

NIKKI

Is there anything I can do?

MICHAEL

No.

(There is a moment of silence.)

NIKKI

I'm sorry Mike but I have to leave.

(MICHAEL gets up and walks over to the door angrily. He grabs the door and throws it open.)

MICHAEL

Leave?! You are going to leave now? At this moment? You really have the best timing!

NIKKI

What do you want me to do? Stay and coddle you? I have places that I have to be, agreements I need to fulfill!

MICHAEL

You're leaving because your asshole husband is making you leave.

NIKKI

No, Mark decided to drive ahead and set things up for when I get there. I came back to pay my respects for your mother.

MICHAEL

Then what was last night? Why did you come back after the wake? To fuck with me?

NIKKI

I came back last night to prove something to myself!

MICHAEL

Really? What was that? That you still love me?

NIKKI

No, I wanted to prove that I don't still love you.

MICHAEL

WELL, WHEN YOU GO
DON'T EVER THINK I'LL MAKE YOU TRY TO STAY
AND MAYBE WHEN YOU GET BACK
I'LL BE OFF TO FIND ANOTHER WAY

NIKKI

AND AFTER ALL THIS TIME THAT YOU STILL OWE
YOU'RE STILL A GOOD-FOR-NOTHING I DON'T KNOW

MICHAEL

SO TAKE YOUR GLOVES AND GET OUT
BETTER GET OUT
WHILE YOU CAN

WHEN YOU GO
WOULD YOU EVEN TURN TO SAY

"I DON'T LOVE YOU
 LIKE I DID
 YESTERDAY"

SOMETIMES I CRY SO HARD FROM PLEADING
 SO SICK AND TIRED OF ALL THE NEEDLESS BEATING
 BUT BABY WHEN THEY KNOCK YOU
 DOWN AND OUT
 IS WHERE YOU OUGHTA STAY

AND AFTER ALL THE BLOOD THAT YOU STILL OWE
 ANOTHER DOLLAR'S JUST ANOTHER BLOW
 SO FIX YOUR EYES AND GET UP
 BETTER GET UP
 WHILE YOU CAN
 WHOA, WHOA

BOTH

WHEN YOU GO
 WOULD YOU EVEN TURN TO SAY
 "I DON'T LOVE YOU
 LIKE I DID
 YESTERDAY"

WELL COME ON, COME ON

WHEN YOU GO
 WOULD YOU HAVE THE GUTS TO SAY
 "I DON'T LOVE YOU
 LIKE I LOVED YOU
 YESTERDAY"

I DON'T LOVE YOU
 LIKE I LOVED YOU
 YESTERDAY

I DON'T LOVE YOU
 LIKE I LOVED YOU
 YESTERDAY

(NIKKI goes to the door. She opens it and MICHAEL steps up behind her and closes it. They kiss. Lights fade to black.)

ACT ONE

SCENE SEVEN

Interior of a church. MICHAEL is walking up to the altar where FT. ROBERT is standing, cleaning some items. There are a few people in the church quietly praying.

FT. ROBERT

Mike, what are you doing here?

MICHAEL

I need to talk to you.

FT. ROBERT

About what? What do you need?

MICHAEL

I need to talk to you as the priest you are, not my friend.

FT. ROBERT

You mean as a confession?

MICHAEL

No, I need a question answered. Do you think God forgives all?

FT. ROBERT

What would he forgive you for? What have you done?

MICHAEL

Just give me an answer.

FT. ROBERT

God forgives those who are truly sorry.

MICHAEL

What if I'm not sorry? What if I did something because I wanted to do it?

FT. ROBERT

Where is this coming from?

MICHAEL

If I don't get help for my illness, then I'm going to die. And you know, maybe I deserve to go to hell. I've done a lot of bad shit in my life and I'm not sorry I did any of it. I'm sorry I failed as a friend, and as a son. But I did what I needed to do because I wanted to do them. It felt right.

FT. ROBERT

Did something happen while you were deployed?

MICHAEL

(He stares at the priest for a moment.) What happened doesn't matter. All I want to know is will God forgive me for something I did even though I'm not sorry? Like, what if I did something horrible but with the best intentions?

FT. ROBERT

Michael, the path to hell is paved with good intentions. If you feel responsible for what happened then it's probably because you did something terrible and you want the forgiveness of the Lord.

MICHAEL

I'm not sorry. I'm responsible but I'm afraid of hell.

FT. ROBERT

Sounds to me like you need more time to think it over. You to need to live Mike. Go get the chemo, go get the treatment and live so you can avoid hell for as long as possible until you learn to ask God's forgiveness.

MICHAEL

You really know your shit, don't you?

FT. ROBERT

WELL, I KNOW A THING ABOUT CONTRITION,
BECAUSE I GOT ENOUGH TO SPARE.
AND I'LL BE GRANTING YOUR PERMISSION,
'CAUSE YOU HAVEN'T GOT A PRAYER.
WELL I SAID HEY, HEY HALLELUJAH,
I'M GONNA COME ON SING THE PRAISE.
AND LET THE SPIRIT COME ON THROUGH YA,
WE GOT INNOCENCE FOR DAYS!

MICHAEL

WELL, I THINK I'M GONNA BURN IN HELL,
EVERYBODY BURN THE HOUSE RIGHT DOWN.

AND SAY, HA
 WHAT I WANNA SAY
 TELL ME I'M AN ANGEL,
 TAKE THIS TO MY GRAVE.
 TELL ME I'M A BAD MAN,
 KICK ME LIKE A STRAY.
 TELL ME I'M AN ANGEL,
 TAKE THIS TO MY GRAVE.

CHURCH GOERS

(S-I-N, I S-I-N
 S-I-N, I S-I-N
 S-I-N, I S-I-N
 S-I-N, I S-I-N)

FT. ROBERT

YOU PLAY RING AROUND THE AMBULANCE,
 WELL LIKE YOU NEVER GAVE A CARE.
 SO GET THE CHOIR BOYS AROUND YOU,
 IT'S A COMPLIMENT, I SWEAR.
 AND I SAID, ASHES TO ASHES, WE ALL FALL DOWN,
 I WANNA HEAR YOU SING THE PRAISE,
 I SAID, ASHES TO ASHES, WE ALL FALL DOWN,
 WE GOT INNOCENCE FOR DAYS!

MICHAEL

WELL, I THINK I'M GONNA BURN IN HELL,
 EVERYBODY BURN THE HOUSE RIGHT DOWN.

AND SAY, HA
 WHAT I WANNA SAY
 TELL ME I'M AN ANGEL,
 TAKE THIS TO MY GRAVE.
 TELL ME I'M A BAD MAN,
 KICK ME LIKE A STRAY.
 TELL ME I'M AN ANGEL,
 TAKE THIS TO MY GRAVE.

FT. ROBERT

YOU BETTER RUN LIKE THE DEVIL,
 'CAUSE THEY'RE NEVER GONNA LEAVE YOU ALONE!
 YOU BETTER HIDE UP IN THE ALLEY,
 'CAUSE THEY'RE NEVER GONNA FIND YOU A HOME!
 AND AS THE BLOOD RUNS DOWN THE WALLS,

YOU SEE ME CREEPIN' UP THESE HALLS.

MICHAEL

I'VE BEEN A BAD MOTHERFUCKER
TELL YOUR SISTER I'M ANOTHER
GO! GO! GO!

AND I SAID, SAY,
WHAT I WANNA SAY
TELL ME I'M AN ANGEL,
TAKE THIS TO MY GRAVE.
TELL ME I'M A BAD MAN,
KICK ME LIKE A STRAY.
TELL ME I'M AN ANGEL,
TAKE THIS TO MY GRAVE.

TELL ME I'M A BAD, BAD, BAD, BAD MAN.
TELL ME I'M A BAD, BAD, BAD, BAD MAN.
TELL ME I'M A BAD, BAD, BAD, BAD MAN.
TELL ME I'M A BAD, BAD, BAD, BAD MAN.
SO GET UP!
SO GET OUT!
S-I-N, I S-I-N!

(MICHAEL runs out of the church. Lights fade to black.)

ACT ONE

SCENE EIGHT

A hospital cancer ward. A few patients are sitting in chairs getting chemotherapy. A NURSE leads MICHAEL into the ward.

NURSE

Sit right here and I'll be right back, okay?

MICHAEL

Sure. (He sits down.)

(A few chairs down is a man who is very sick. Surrounding him is a few family members. He starts to cough. Michael watches him. Nurse comes back with some papers.)

NURSE

I need you to sign some papers.

MICHAEL

Excuse me, is he going to be okay?

NURSE

Mr. Johnson is very ill. We are hoping the treatment will help him.

MICHAEL

Is he far along?

NURSE

I'm sorry but I'm not at liberty to say.

MICHAEL

Can I read this before I sign?

NURSE

Of course. Take your time. (She leaves.)

(MICHAEL starts to read the papers. The man coughs again, drawing MICHAEL'S attention.)

OLD MAN

TURN AWAY

IF YOU COULD GET ME A DRINK
OF WATER 'CAUSE MY LIPS ARE CHAPPED AND FADED
CALL MY AUNT MARIE
HELP HER GATHER ALL MY THINGS
AND BURY ME IN ALL MY FAVORITE COLORS
MY SISTERS AND MY BROTHERS
STILL
I WILL NOT KISS YOU
'CAUSE THE HARDEST PART OF THIS IS LEAVING YOU

NOW TURN AWAY

'CAUSE I'M AWFUL JUST TO SEE
'CAUSE ALL MY HAIR'S ABANDONED ALL MY BODY
OH, MY AGONY
KNOW THAT I WILL NEVER MARRY
BABY, I'M JUST SOGGY FROM THE CHEMO
BUT COUNTING DOWN THE DAYS TO GO

IT JUST AIN'T LIVING
AND I JUST HOPE YOU KNOW

THAT IF YOU SAY (IF YOU SAY)
GOODBYE TODAY (GOODBYE TODAY)
I'D ASK YOU TO BE TRUE (CAUSE I'D ASK YOU TO BE TRUE)

'CAUSE THE HARDEST PART OF THIS IS LEAVING YOU
'CAUSE THE HARDEST PART OF THIS IS LEAVING YOU

(As the song ends MICHAEL gets up and places the papers
on the chair and leaves.)

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWOSCENE ONE

MICHAEL is sitting at a desk in the middle of an empty, dark stage. He is wearing an army fatigue jacket and writing a letter.

MICHAEL

MAMA, WE ALL GO TO HELL.
MAMA, WE ALL GO TO HELL.
I'M WRITING THIS LETTER AND WISHING YOU WELL,
MAMA, WE ALL GO TO HELL.

OH, WELL, NOW,
MAMA, WE'RE ALL GONNA DIE.
MAMA, WE'RE ALL GONNA DIE.
STOP ASKING ME QUESTIONS, I'D HATE TO SEE YOU CRY,
MAMA, WE'RE ALL GONNA DIE.

(Lights explode on stage. There are five other men, sitting at desks and writing letters.)

ALL MEN

AND WHEN WE GO DON'T BLAME US, YEAH.
WE'LL LET THE FIRE JUST BATHE US, YEAH.
YOU MADE US, OH, SO FAMOUS.
WE'LL NEVER LET YOU GO.
AND WHEN YOU GO DON'T RETURN TO ME MY LOVE.

MICHAEL

MAMA, WE'RE ALL FULL OF LIES.
MAMA, WE'RE MEANT FOR THE FLIES.
AND RIGHT NOW THEY'RE BUILDING A COFFIN YOUR SIZE,
MAMA, WE'RE ALL FULL OF LIES.

WELL, MOTHER, WHAT THE WAR DID TO MY LEGS AND TO MY TONGUE,
YOU SHOULD'VE RAISED A BABY GIRL,
I SHOULD'VE BEEN A BETTER SON.
IF YOU COULD CODDLE THE INFECTION
THEY CAN AMPUTATE AT ONCE.
YOU SHOULD'VE BEEN,

I COULD HAVE BEEN A BETTER SON.

ALL MEN

AND WHEN WE GO DON'T BLAME US, YEAH.
WE'LL LET THE FIRE JUST BATHE US, YEAH.
YOU MADE US, OH, SO FAMOUS.
WE'LL NEVER LET YOU GO.

MICHAEL

SHE SAID, "YOU AIN'T NO SON OF MINE
FOR WHAT YOU'VE DONE. THEY'RE GONNA FIND
A PLACE FOR YOU
AND JUST YOU MIND YOUR MANNERS WHEN YOU GO.
AND WHEN YOU GO, DON'T RETURN TO ME, MY LOVE."
THAT'S RIGHT.

MAMA, WE ALL GO TO HELL.
MAMA, WE ALL GO TO HELL.
IT'S REALLY QUITE PLEASANT
EXCEPT FOR THE SMELL,
MAMA, WE ALL GO TO HELL.

2 - 3 - 4

MAMA! MAMA! MAMA! OH!
MAMA! MAMA! MAMA! MA...

MOTHER'S VOICE

AND IF YOU WOULD CALL ME YOUR SWEETHEART,
I'D MAYBE THEN SING YOU A SONG

MICHAEL

BUT THERE'S SHIT THAT I'VE DONE WITH THIS FUCK OF A GUN,
YOU WOULD CRY OUT YOUR EYES ALL ALONG.

ALL MEN

WE'RE DAMNED AFTER ALL.
THROUGH FORTUNE AND FLAME WE FALL.
AND IF YOU CAN STAY THEN I'LL SHOW YOU THE WAY,
TO RETURN FROM THE ASHES YOU CALL.

ALL MEN (MOTHER'S VOICE)

WE ALL CARRY ON (WE ALL CARRY ON)
WHEN OUR BROTHERS IN ARMS ARE GONE (WHEN OUR BROTHERS IN
ARMS ARE GONE)
SO RAISE YOUR GLASS HIGH

FOR TOMORROW WE DIE,
AND RETURN FROM THE ASHES YOU CALL.

(The lights go out. Chairs and desks are removed from the stage. Lights come back on. MICHAEL and NIKKI are in bed. He is tossing and turning in his bed. NIKKI wakes up and shakes MICHAEL awake. He sits up trying to catch his breath.)

NIKKI

Are you okay?

MICHAEL

I had a really bad dream. Lots of fire and I couldn't escape. Couldn't run. It was all sorts of fucked up.

NIKKI

What was it?

MICHAEL

It was just fucked up alright?

NIKKI

I'm sorry.

(MICHAEL gets out of bed and starts getting dressed.)

NIKKI

Where are you going?

MICHAEL

Out, away from here.

NIKKI

Where, Michael?

MICHAEL

Just on a walk. I need to clear my head.

NIKKI

Why don't you just lay down and sleep?

MICHAEL

I can't.

NIKKI

Please...

MICHAEL

No!

NIKKI

What happened to you over there Mike? You're obviously dreaming about it and it won't let you sleep. Please talk to me.

(MICHAEL sits on the edge of the bed.)

MICHAEL

I did things that I didn't think I could do. I didn't fight in a war, Nikki, I killed people. Women and children, it didn't matter. They pointed a barrel at me and pointed one back. I'm sitting here because I won.

NIKKI

Is that what you feel guilty over? The fact that you killed them?

MICHAEL

No, I don't feel guilty. They deserved what they got. No, I feel guilty because I didn't take a shot. And he threw a grenade that landed under my convoy. I was the only soldier not in it. I lost four friends that day because I didn't take the shot.

NIKKI

Michael, you couldn't have known he would do that.

MICHAEL

Yes I did. Because I saw it in his hand. He was a kid and I thought it was a ball and I didn't shoot. I just watch as he lobbed that grenade. Then there was fire and screaming and I couldn't get to them. About a week later I was on patrol and I saw a kid with a grenade in his hand and I didn't hesitate. I shot him down. Turns out it wasn't the same kid. And this kid had a toy. But I'm not sorry.

(NIKKI stares at MICHAEL in disbelief.)

MICHAEL

Do you know what it's like for me to sleep? Like last night, they are not like tremors, they are worse than tremors, they are these

terrors. And it's like, it feels like as if somebody was gripping my throat and squeezing.

SOME SAY, NOW SUFFER ALL THE CHILDREN
AND WALK AWAY A SAVIOR,
OR A MADMAN AND POLLUTED
FROM GUTTER INSTITUTIONS.
DON'T YOU BREATHE FOR ME,
UNDESERVING OF YOUR SYMPATHY,
CAUSE THERE AIN'T NO WAY THAT I'M SORRY FOR WHAT I DID.

AND THROUGH IT ALL
HOW COULD YOU CRY FOR ME?
CAUSE I DON'T FEEL BAD ABOUT IT.
SO SHUT YOUR EYES,
KISS ME GOODBYE,
AND SLEEP.
JUST SLEEP.

THE HARDEST PART IS LETTING GO OF YOUR DREAMS.

(MICHAEL gets up and walks to his dresser. He grabs a bottle of liquor.)

A DRINK FOR THE HORROR THAT I'M IN,
FOR THE GOOD GUYS, AND THE BAD GUYS,
FOR THE MONSTERS THAT I'VE BEEN.
THREE CHEERS FOR TYRANNY,
UNAPOLOGETIC APATHY,
CAUSE THERE AIN'T NO WAY THAT I'M COMING BACK AGAIN.

AND THROUGH IT ALL
HOW COULD YOU CRY FOR ME?
CAUSE I DON'T FEEL BAD ABOUT IT.
SO SHUT YOUR EYES,
KISS ME GOODBYE,
AND SLEEP.
JUST SLEEP.

THE HARDEST PART'S THE AWFUL THINGS THAT I'VE SEEN.

MICHAEL (Speaking)

Sometimes I see flames. And sometimes I see people that I love dying and... It's always...

JUST SLEEP.
JUST SLEEP.
JUST SLEEP.
JUST SLEEP.
JUST SLEEP.
JUST SLEEP.

NIKKI

WAKE UP!

MICHAEL (Speaking)

And I can't... I can't ever wake up.

(MICHAEL grabs his jacket and leaves the bedroom.)

ACT TWO

SCENE TWO

MICHAEL is standing outside the church. There is a beggar on the corner with a sign that read "Pray for us!" MICHAEL sees the beggar and walks up to him.

MICHAEL

Do you think that will work?

BEGGAR

I do.

MICHAEL

No one is praying for us. People don't care about you and me or what we go through.

BEGGAR

Man, this sign isn't about me. It's about everyone. The world is a bad place right now and we need all the help we can get. But we are only gonna get the help from one another. We need to pray for us.

MICHAEL

So you don't believe God will save you?

BEGGAR

Well, he hasn't so far. Maybe he will. We could use Heaven's help too. They know we are hurting. They know we need saving. But we have to save ourselves before anyone comes and help us.

BEGGAR

HEAR THE SOUND
THE ANGELS COME SCREAMING
DOWN YOUR VOICE
I HEAR YOU'VE BEEN BLEEDING

MAKE YOUR CHOICE
THEY SAY YOU'VE BEEN PLEADING
SOMEONE SAVE US

MICHAEL

HEAVEN HELP US NOW
COME CRASHING DOWN
WE'LL HEAR THE SOUND
AS YOU'RE FALLING DOWN

I'M AT THIS OLD HOTEL
BUT CAN'T TELL IF I'VE BEEN BREATHING OR SLEEPING
OR SCREAMING OR WAITING FOR THE MAN TO CALL
AND MAYBE ALL OF THE ABOVE
CAUSE MOSTLY I'VE BEEN SPRAWLED ON THESE CATHEDRAL STEPS
WHILE SPITTING OUT THE BLOOD AND SCREAMING
"SOMEONE SAVE US!"

HEAVEN HELP US NOW
COME CRASHING DOWN
WE'LL HEAR THE SOUND
AS YOU'RE FALLING DOWN

BEGGAR

AND WILL YOU PRAY FOR ME?
OR MAKE A SAINT OF ME?
AND WILL YOU LAY FOR ME?
OR MAKE A SAINT OF?

CAUSE I'LL GIVE YOU ALL THE NAILS YOU NEED
COVER ME IN GASOLINE
WIPE AWAY THOSE TEARS OF BLOOD AGAIN
AND THE PUNCHLINE TO THE JOKE IS ASKING
SOMEONE SAVE US

HEAVEN HELP US NOW
 COME CRASHING DOWN
 WE'LL HEAR THE SOUND
 AS YOU FALL

MICHAEL

AND WOULD YOU PRAY FOR ME?
 (YOU DON'T KNOW A THING ABOUT MY SINS
 HOW THE MISERY BEGINS)
 OR MAKE A SAINT OF ME?
 (YOU DON'T KNOW
 SO I'M BURNING, I'M BURNING)
 AND WILL YOU LAY FOR ME?
 (YOU DON'T KNOW A THING ABOUT MY SINS
 HOW THE MISERY BEGINS)
 OR MAKE A SAINT?
 (YOU DON'T KNOW
 CAUSE I'M BURNING, I'M BURNING)

CAUSE I'LL GIVE YOU ALL THE NAILS YOU NEED
 (I'M BURNING, I'M BURNING AGAIN)
 COVER ME IN GASOLINE AGAIN

(MICHAEL walks up to the church door, opens it and
 enters.)

ACT TWO

SCENE THREE

MICHAEL, stumbles into the
 church where FT. ROBERT is
 speaking to CHRIS. MICHAEL
 interrupts them as they are
 talking to one another.

MICHAEL

BOBBY! I need to talk to you.

FT. ROBERT

Michael, what's going on? Is everything okay?

MICHAEL

No! I can't stop the nightmares.

CHRIS

Unc, is there anything I can do?

FT. ROBERT

Chris, get me a bottle of water from the back.

(CHRIS goes and gets the water.)

FT. ROBERT

What is going on, Mike?

MICHAEL

I'm not ready for hell but I can't live like this anymore.

FT. ROBERT

Like what?

MICHAEL

Like the old guy. All he does is cough and cry and I can't live like that. I won't live like that.

FT. ROBERT

I don't know who you are talking about but it's gonna be okay. We can through this, Mikey.

(Chris returns with the water.)

MICHAEL

I don't know what worst bobby, the hell I'm in or the hell I'm going to.

CHRIS

What does he mean Unc?

MICHAEL

I don't want to live my life stuck to a machine and puking my guts up. That's no way to live. But what I did in the service is gonna put me in hell anyway.

CHRIS

What do you mean?

FT. ROBERT

Mike, you need to watch what you are saying.

MICHAEL

Why?

CHRIS

Because I just enlisted.

MICHAEL

No, no please don't tell me that. Why would you do that? (looks at FT. ROBERT) What the hell is wrong with you? Why would you let him do that? After everything I've been through, why would you let him do this? What the fuck man?

FT. ROBERT

Mike, stop it, that's not fair. I didn't push him into anything. He chose this and I'm supporting his decision.

(MICHAEL punches FT. ROBERT in the mouth. FT. ROBERT and CHRIS grab MICHAEL and hold him down.)

FT.ROBERT

Enough!

MICHAEL

Get off of me!

(They let him go.)

MICHAEL

I'm sorry. I just dont think its a good idea for him.

CHRIS

Why shouldn't I go?

MICHAEL

Because my mother was right!

FT. ROBERT and CHRIS

What?

FT. ROBERT

What does your mother have to do with it?

MICHAEL

My mother was right, Bobby. Do you remember the fight her and I had before I left?

FT. ROBERT
Of course.

MICHAEL
Do you remember what my mother told me when I enlisted?

FT.ROBERT
She said it wasn't right for you. She said you didn't have to go if you wanted to help people. She was afraid for your safety and she wanted you to stay.

MICHAEL
That's right, you remember what else she said?

FT. ROBERT
THEY'RE GONNA CLEAN UP YOUR LOOKS
WITH ALL THE LIES IN THE BOOKS
TO MAKE A CITIZEN OUT OF YOU
BECAUSE THEY SLEEP WITH A GUN
AND KEEP AN EYE ON YOU, SON
SO THEY CAN WATCH ALL THE THINGS YOU DO

MICHAEL
BECAUSE THE DRUGS NEVER WORK
THEY'RE GONNA GIVE YOU A SMIRK
'CAUSE THEY GOT METHODS OF KEEPING YOU CLEAN
THEY'RE GONNA RIP UP YOUR HEADS,
YOUR ASPIRATIONS TO SHREDS
ANOTHER COG IN THE MURDER MACHINE

BOTH
THEY SAID ALL TEENAGERS SCARE THE LIVING SHIT OUT OF ME
THEY COULD CARE LESS AS LONG AS SOMEONE'LL BLEED
SO DARKEN YOUR CLOTHES OR STRIKE A VIOLENT POSE
MAYBE THEY'LL LEAVE YOU ALONE, BUT NOT ME

FT. ROBERT
THE BOYS AND GIRLS IN THE CLIQUE
THE AWFUL NAMES THAT THEY STICK
YOU'RE NEVER GONNA FIT IN MUCH, KID

MICHAEL
BUT IF YOU'RE TROUBLED AND HURT
WHAT YOU GOT UNDER YOUR SHIRT

WILL MAKE THEM PAY FOR THE THINGS THAT THEY DID

BOTH

THEY SAID ALL TEENAGERS SCARE THE LIVING SHIT OUT OF ME
 THEY COULD CARE LESS AS LONG AS SOMEONE'LL BLEED
 SO DARKEN YOUR CLOTHES OR STRIKE A VIOLENT POSE
 MAYBE THEY'LL LEAVE YOU ALONE, BUT NOT ME

OHHH YEAH!

THEY SAID ALL TEENAGERS SCARE THE LIVING SHIT OUT OF ME
 THEY COULD CARE LESS AS LONG AS SOMEONE'LL BLEED
 SO DARKEN YOUR CLOTHES OR STRIKE A VIOLENT POSE
 MAYBE THEY'LL LEAVE YOU ALONE, BUT NOT ME

ALL TOGETHER NOW!

TEENAGERS SCARE THE LIVING SHIT OUT OF ME
 THEY COULD CARE LESS AS LONG AS SOMEONE'LL BLEED
 SO DARKEN YOUR CLOTHES OR STRIKE A VIOLENT POSE
 MAYBE THEY'LL LEAVE YOU ALONE, BUT NOT ME

(MICHAEL exits the church.)

ACT TWO

SCENE FOUR

Inside MICHAEL'S room NIKKI is
 on the phone, pacing back and
 forth.

NIKKI

...damn it, I don't know when. I just need more time to figure
 something out. No, chris is fine right here, you don't need to
 come and get him. When I am done with what I am dealing with I
 will let you know, goodbye Mark.

(NIKKI hangs up the phone. MICHAEL walks into the
 room.)

NIKKI

Michael! Bobby called. You punched him? And then tells me you
 don't want my son to join the service?

MICHAEL

Our.

NIKKI

Excuse me?

MICHAEL

I said our. He is our son. Yours and mine.

NIKKI

No he isn't. He is Mark-

MICHAEL

Stop bullshitting me. He's my son. He's OUR son. He has my mother's eyes.

(There is a moment of silence.)

NIKKI

He's joining as a chaplain.

MICHAEL

What?

NIKKI

He's been looking into seminary school. He has been talking to Bobby about how to go about becoming a man of God. He wants to join the military but he doesn't want to fight. He wants to save people. Save lives. What's a better way than saving lives than never taking any life? He will probably never seen direct combat. He will lead sermons and conduct prayers and mass but he will be safe.

(MICHAEL stares in disbelief. He makes a smile and begins to cry. NIKKI holds MICHAEL in her arms while he cries.)

NIKKI

I support his decision and if this is what he wants to do then I'm going to be there for him, Michael.

MICHAEL

I just... don't want him to end up like me. I remember being so happy all the time. With you and Bobby. And then one day it was just gone. I feel like I haven't smiled in forever. I know I did

it to myself, I just hope that he doesn't make my mistakes. I should have never ran from you. I loved you. I still do. But I gave you up for no reason other than I thought I was doing the right thing. But I was just so wrong and now I dont have the time to fix it.

WELL I WAS THERE ON THE DAY
 THEY SOLD THE CAUSE FOR THE QUEEN,
 AND WHEN THE LIGHTS ALL WENT OUT
 WE WATCHED OUR LIVES ON THE SCREEN.
 I HATE THE ENDING MYSELF,
 BUT IT STARTED WITH AN ALRIGHT SCENE.

IT WAS THE ROAR OF THE CROWD
 THAT GAVE ME HEARTACHE TO SING.
 IT WAS A LIE WHEN THEY SMILED
 AND SAID, "YOU WON'T FEEL A THING"
 AND AS WE RAN FROM THE COPS
 WE LAUGHED SO HARD IT WOULD STING

YEAH YEAH, OH

IF I'M SO WRONG (SO WRONG, SO WRONG)
 HOW CAN YOU LISTEN ALL NIGHT LONG? (NIGHT LONG, NIGHT LONG)
 NOW WILL IT MATTER AFTER I'M GONE?
 BECAUSE YOU NEVER LEARN A GODDAMNED THING.

NIKKI

YOU'RE JUST A SAD SONG WITH NOTHING TO SAY
 ABOUT A LIFE LONG WAIT FOR A HOSPITAL STAY
 AND IF YOU THINK THAT I'M WRONG,
 THIS NEVER MEANT NOTHING TO YA

MICHAEL

I SPENT MY HIGH SCHOOL CAREER
 SPIT ON AND SHOVED TO AGREE
 SO I COULD WATCH ALL MY HEROES
 SELL A CAR ON TV
 BRING OUT THE OLD GUILLOTINE
 WE'LL SHOW 'EM WHAT WE ALL MEAN.

YEAH YEAH, OH

IF I'M SO WRONG (SO WRONG, SO WRONG)
 HOW CAN YOU LISTEN ALL NIGHT LONG? (NIGHT LONG, NIGHT LONG)

NOW WILL IT MATTER LONG AFTER I'M GONE?
BECAUSE YOU NEVER LEARN A GODDAMNED THING.

NIKKI

YOU'RE JUST A SAD SONG WITH NOTHING TO SAY
ABOUT A LIFE LONG WAIT FOR A HOSPITAL STAY
AND IF YOU THINK THAT I'M WRONG,
THIS NEVER MEANT NOTHING TO YA

SO GO, GO AWAY, JUST GO, RUN AWAY.
BUT WHERE DID YOU RUN TO? AND WHERE DID YOU HIDE?
GO FIND ANOTHER WAY, PRICE YOU PAY

WOAH, WOAH, WOAH, WOAH, WOAH, WOAH

YOU'RE JUST A SAD SONG WITH NOTHING TO SAY
ABOUT A LIFE LONG WAIT FOR A HOSPITAL STAY
AND IF YOU THINK THAT I'M WRONG,
THIS NEVER MEANT NOTHING TO YA, COME ON

YOU'RE JUST A SAD SONG WITH NOTHING TO SAY
ABOUT A LIFE LONG WAIT FOR A HOSPITAL STAY
AND IF YOU THINK THAT I'M WRONG,
THIS NEVER MEANT NOTHING TO YA

AT ALL, AT ALL, AT ALL, AT ALL

(MICHAEL sits on his bed and puts his head in his hands
and cries. NIKKI sits beside him and hold him.)

NIKKI

I will always love you. Our son will be safe. I promise.

ACT TWO

SCENE FIVE

The next morning, NIKKI wakes up in bed next to MICHAEL. She kisses his face and he doesn't respond. She gets up and leaves the room. MICHAEL never moves while she is gone. She returns a moment later with a toothbrush. She looks at

MICHAEL. Curiously she moves towards him and reaches for his hand. She begins to shake him awake but he doesn't wake up. She checks his pulse and then collapses at the side of the bed. She begins to cry.

NIKKI

NOW I KNOW
 THAT I CAN'T MAKE YOU STAY
 BUT WHERE'S YOUR HEART?
 BUT WHERE'S YOUR HEART?
 BUT WHERE'S YOUR...

AND I KNOW
 THERE'S NOTHING I CAN SAY
 TO CHANGE THAT PART
 TO CHANGE THAT PART
 TO CHANGE...

SO MANY
 BRIGHT LIGHTS, THEY CAST A SHADOW
 BUT CAN I SPEAK?
 WELL IS IT HARD UNDERSTANDING
 I'M INCOMPLETE
 A LIFE THAT'S SO DEMANDING
 I GET SO WEAK
 A LOVE THAT'S SO DEMANDING
 I CAN'T SPEAK

I AM NOT AFRAID TO KEEP ON LIVING
 I AM NOT AFRAID TO WALK THIS WORLD ALONE
 HONEY IF YOU STAY, I'LL BE FORGIVEN
 NOTHING YOU CAN SAY CAN STOP ME GOING HOME

CAN YOU SEE
 MY EYES ARE SHINING BRIGHT
 'CAUSE I'M OUT HERE
 ON THE OTHER SIDE
 OF A JET BLACK HOTEL MIRROR
 AND I'M SO WEAK
 IS IT HARD UNDERSTANDING
 I'M INCOMPLETE
 A LOVE THAT'S SO DEMANDING

I GET WEAK

I AM NOT AFRAID TO KEEP ON LIVING
 I AM NOT AFRAID TO WALK THIS WORLD ALONE
 HONEY IF YOU STAY, I'LL BE FORGIVEN
 NOTHING YOU CAN SAY CAN STOP ME GOING HOME

I AM NOT AFRAID TO KEEP ON LIVING
 I AM NOT AFRAID TO WALK THIS WORLD ALONE
 HONEY IF YOU STAY, I'LL BE FORGIVEN
 NOTHING YOU CAN SAY CAN STOP ME GOING HOME

THESE BRIGHT LIGHTS HAVE ALWAYS BLINDED ME
 THESE BRIGHT LIGHTS HAVE ALWAYS BLINDED ME
 I SAY

I SEE YOU LYING NEXT TO ME
 WITH WORDS I THOUGHT I'D NEVER SPEAK
 AWAKE AND UNAFRAID
 ASLEEP OR DEAD

(HOW CAN I SEE, I SEE YOU LYING) 'CAUSE I SEE YOU LYING NEXT
 TO ME
 (HOW CAN I SEE, I SEE YOU LYING) WITH WORDS I THOUGHT I'D
 NEVER SPEAK
 (HOW CAN I SEE, I SEE YOU LYING) AWAKE AND UNAFRAID
 (HOW CAN I SEE, I SEE YOU LYING) ASLEEP OR DEAD

'CAUSE I SEE YOU LYING NEXT TO ME
 WITH WORDS I THOUGHT I'D NEVER SPEAK
 AWAKE AND UNAFRAID
 ASLEEP OR DEAD

'CAUSE I SEE YOU LYING NEXT TO ME
 WITH WORDS I THOUGHT I'D NEVER SPEAK
 AWAKE AND UNAFRAID
 ASLEEP OR DEAD

I AM NOT AFRAID TO KEEP ON LIVING
 I AM NOT AFRAID TO WALK THIS WORLD ALONE
 (OR DEAD)
 HONEY IF YOU STAY, I'LL BE FORGIVEN
 NOTHING YOU CAN SAY CAN STOP ME GOING HOME
 (OR DEAD)
 I AM NOT AFRAID TO KEEP ON LIVING

I AM NOT AFRAID TO WALK THIS WORLD ALONE
(OR DEAD)
HONEY IF YOU STAY, I'LL BE FORGIVEN
NOTHING YOU CAN SAY CAN STOP ME GOING HOME
(OR DEAD)
I AM NOT AFRAID TO KEEP ON LIVING
I AM NOT AFRAID TO WALK THIS WORLD ALONE
(OR DEAD)
HONEY IF YOU STAY, I'LL BE FORGIVEN
NOTHING YOU CAN SAY CAN STOP ME GOING HOME

(NIKKI leaves the room. Lights fade to black. A
spotlight shines on MICHAEL. Spotlight fades to black.)

END OF ACT TWO

THE END