The other now begins to break out of the tableau. MAN I say, "Will you listen to me?" If you learn it by heart as a teenager, it'll be easy to recall later. I have total recall of my home-room attendance, like my Latin. WOMAN I've been out of school for fifteen years, and I still have total recall of my home-room attendance. MAN I step out of the tableau. The sound tape fades and music begins. WOMAN I step out of the tableau. You hear a prerecorded rol call— an echo of the past.

ACT ONE

High School?
Is There Life After
IS THERE LIFE AFTER HIGH SCHOOL?

MAN 1.
THERE'S A KID INSIDE,
AND I HAVE HIM WITH ME ALWAYS.
WOMAN 2.
THERE'S A KID INSIDE,
WALKING DOWN OLD HIGH SCHOOL HALLWAYS.
WOMEN 1 & 3, MEN 2, 3, 4.
THERE'S A KID INSIDE,
WOMAN 3.
AT A DESK,
WOMAN 1 & MAN 2.
AT A DANCE,
WOMAN 2 & MAN 3.
IN THE HALLS,
MAN 4.
IN THE SHOWERS.
ALL SEVEN.
THERE'S A KID INSIDE,
MAN 1.
TO THIS VERY DAY.
MAN 5.
AND HE MAKES A TRY
FOR THE HIGH POP FLY
THAT I FUMBLED ONE SEPTEMBER.
WOMAN 4.
AND SHE MAKES A FUSS
OVER SOME A-PLUS
THAT I SHOULDN'T STILL REMEMBER.
ALL.
AND HE GOES ALONG
5 VOICES.
GETTING HURT,
4 VOICES.
GETTING MAD,
ALL.
FIGHTING FIGHTS THAT ARE OVER.
AND UNLESS I'M STRONG,
ALL MY SENSES ARE CARRIED AWAY.
WOMAN 3.
I CAN FEEL JOHN'S HAND
MAN 5.
(MY TREMBLING HAND)

IS THERE LIFE AFTER HIGH SCHOOL?

WOMAN 3.
ON MY OLD ANGORA SWEATER.
MAN 1.
I CAN HEAR MY BAND,
MAN 3.
(THAT AWFUL BAND)
MAN 1.
ONLY NOW IT SOUNDS MUCH BETTER.
ALL BUT MAN 2.
I CAN SEE THE KID
MAN 2.
( THE KID I USED TO BE)
3 VOICES.
ON THE STAGE,
2 VOICES.
ON THE FIELD,
4 VOICES.
ON THE LUNCH LINE.
7 VOICES.
I CAN FEEL HIM TUGGING AT ME.
ALL.
I CAN HEAR HIM SAY:
ALWAYS REMEMBER.
NEVER FORGET.
ALWAYS REMEMBER.
NEVER FORGET.
ALWAYS REMEMBER
MAN 2.
CHOOSING SIDES.
ALL.
NEVER FORGET
WOMAN 2 & MAN 5.
DANCING IN THE GYM.
ALL.
ALWAYS REMEMBER
WOMAN 3.
SAVING SOMETHING DUMB.
ALL.
NEVER FORGET
WOMAN 4 & MAN 1.
BEING CHEERED BY THE CROWD.
IS THERE LIFE AFTER HIGH SCHOOL?

ALWAYS REMEMBER
4 Voices.
THE FACES, THE NAMES.

NEVER FORGET
5 Voices.
WHO WAS POPULAR AND WHO WAS NOT.

REMEMBER THE DATES.
AND THE LOVES, AND THE HATES, AND THE GAMES.

AND WHEN I THINK I FORGOT:

THERE'S A KID INSIDE
KEEPING TRACK, KEEPING SCORE,
LIKE IT'S ALL STILL IMPORTANT.

THERE'S A KID INSIDE,
EVERY TIME I THINK I DON'T CARE
I BLINK AND HE'S THERE AGAIN.

HE'S THERE AGAIN.
FIGHTING ANCIENT WRONGS,
HUMMING OLD HIT SONGS IN MY HEAD,
SINGING "COME ALONG, COME ALONG,
COME ALONG FOR THE RIDE."
TO A TIME AND PLACE
I COULD NOT FORGET IF I TRIED.

ALWAYS REMEMBER


NEVER FORGET

MAN 1. Amo, amas, amat.

ALWAYS REMEMBER

WOMAN 4. It was blue chiffon.

NEVER FORGET

(music continues under)

IS THERE LIFE AFTER HIGH SCHOOL?


MAN 2. Then Ellen said, "You won! You're the new class president!"

WOMAN 4. Blue chiffon with pink rosebuds.

WOMAN 1. When I think about high school... Oh, God. I don't wanna think about it.

MAN 3. Harriman High.

WOMAN 3. St. Agnes.

WOMAN 2. Polytech.

MAN 4. Grover Cleveland Memorial High School.

MAN 1. It's like it never ended. I mean, what the hell was I doing last night dreaming about Richard Delavecchio?

WOMAN 3. She wasn't any better than I was, so why'd she get to be cheerleader?

MAN 5. My high jump record still stands at Oceanside.

WOMAN 3. I could do the splits, and she couldn't!

MAN 4. Screw them! Didn't want to sit at their table anyway.

MAN 2.

THERE HE GOES AGAIN

MAN 3. We came this close to taking State.

THERE HE / SHE GOES AGAIN

WOMAN 1. Charlie! Charlie Rogers!

ALL.

AND I NEVER KNOW
WHEN THE BREEZE'LL BLOW
WITH A RUSH OF OLD SENSATIONS.
WHY THE KID SHOULD WAKE,
AND MY HEART SHOULD ACH
EVERY TIME I SMELL CARNATIONS.

SOMETHING RINGS A BELL.

WOMEN.

MEN.

THERE AGAIN
SHE'S THERE AGAIN;

THERE HE GOES AGAIN,

HUMMIN' HIS SONGS.
IS THERE LIFE AFTER HIGH SCHOOL?

FIGHTING ANCIENT WRONGS,
HUMMING OLD HIT SONGS IN MY HEAD,
SINGING "COME ALONG, COME ALONG,
COME ALONG FOR THE RIDE."

THERE'S A KID INSIDE.

TO A TIME AND PLACE
I CANNOT BEGONF OR IF I TRIED.
THERE'S A KID INSIDE.
THERE HE GOES AGAIN.
THERE AGAIN.
HUMMIN' HIS SONGS.
THERE'S A KID INSIDE.
HE'S THERE AGAIN.
THERE AGAIN.
THERE'S A KID INSIDE.

* * *

(After applause the music begins again softly.)

ALL BUT MAN 2.
ALWAYS REMEMBER

Man 2. Twelve to the right, twenty-one to the left, four to the right. (HE exits.)

ALL BUT MAN 1 & WOMAN 2. (as they exit, except for WOMAN 3)

ALWAYS REMEMBER

Man 1. What I wish is that I could live it all again. (HE exits.)

Woman 2. I wish I'd never had to live through it for REAL. (SHE exits. WOMAN 3 is left alone on stage.)

ELLEN CLARK (Woman 3). I don't want to sound like a fanatic or anything, but Mary Jo Drennan ruined my senior yearbook, and I'll never forgive her for it. On the very first page of the book she wrote, "Roses are red, Violets are blue. If I had your breath, I'd go live in a zoo." She wrote this with a green felt-tip pen right on top of the picture of our school. After I read what she wrote, I never let anyone else sign my book again, or even look at it. I just stuck it in a drawer at home. And then last week the mailman handed me this package... My mother sent me the yearbook because she thought I should have it to show my kids. At first I was going to hide it, but I realized that sooner or later I'd come up again, and something had to be

(SHE exits as MAN 5 enters and sings "THINGS I LEARNED IN HIGH SCHOOL" in an empty classroom. In the New York production the classroom, which contains a teacher's desk and a row of student desks, emerged from a mobile platform Up Center.)

MAN 5.
I LEARNED TO COUNT TO TEN IN FRENCH.
I LEARNED TO CUT A FROG IN TWO.
I LEARNED THAT SHOWING HOW YOU FEEL CAN BE A DEADLY THING TO DO.

AND THE THINGS I LEARNED IN HIGH SCHOOL
I CARRY WITH ME STILL.
THE LESSONS TAUGHT,
THE STUFF I THOUGHT,
THE JUNK I HEARD
AND THE CRAP I BOUGHT.
THE THINGS I LEARNED IN HIGH SCHOOL,
THE PARTS I LEARNED TO PLAY,
HAVE MADE ME WHAT I AM TODAY.

I LEARNED THE HISTORY OF THE WORLD.
I LEARNED THAT SOMETHING EQUALS "PP."
I LEARNED THAT GIVING UP IS FINE
AS LONG AS NO ONE SAW YOU TRY.

AND THE THINGS I LEARNED IN HIGH SCHOOL
HAVE BEEN THERE EVER SINCE.
THE FEELINGS TAUGHT,
THE HABITS CAUGHT,
THE HOPES I HELD
AND THE FEARS I FOUGHT.
THE THINGS I LEARNED IN HIGH SCHOOL
HAVE STUCK ALONG THE WAY,
AND MADE ME WHAT I AM...
THANKS A LOT.
THANKS A LOT
FOR ALL THE LESSONS I LEARNED.
I PICKED IT UP,
TOOK IT IN,
GOT IT DOWN ON THE SPOT.
THANKS A LOT.
THANKS A LOT,
TO ALL THE PARTIES CONCERNED,
FOR THE GREAT, WELL-ROUNDED
PUBLIC EDUCATION I GOT.

I LEARNED A LOT OF THINGS
A PERSON MIGHT BE BETTER NOT TO KNOW.
A LOT O' JUNK!
SHOULD'VE GOTTEN RID OF LONG AGO.
I LEARNED A LOT OF FACTS
THAT ARE NO LONGER EVEN SO.

BUT THE THINGS I LEARNED IN HIGH SCHOOL
ARE WITH ME ALL THE SAME.
IN HOW I THINK
AND HOW I SPEAK.
IN WHERE I'M STRONG
AND WHERE I'M WEAK
THE PLAYING CUTE,
THE ACTING TOUGH,
THE NAGGING DOUBTS,
AND ENOUGH'S ENOUGH.

THE THINGS I LEARNED IN HIGH SCHOOL
CANNOT BE WISHED AWAY.
THEY MADE ME WHAT I AM TODAY.

(After the song we see MAN 3, who is holding a yearbook.)

MAN 3. I decided the best way to deal with high school was to
get rid of all the evidence. For starters, there's the good ol' Har-
per High yearbook. (*HE rips out a page, wads it up, and tosses it
over his shoulder.*) I'm telling you, this is a hell of a lot cheaper
than therapy. (*HE exits and MAN 1 enters with a yearbook.*)
WOMAN 3.
IF I'D ONLY CHECKED THE MIKE, WHO KNOWS?
MAN 3.
IF I'D ONLY CALLED HIM BACK, JUST SUPPOSE.
MAN 2.
IF I'D GOTTEN IN HER PANTS, THERE AND THEN.
ALL FIVE.
IF I ONLY HAD THE CHANCE,
'F I ONLY HAD THE CHANCE AGAIN.

BUT SCHOOL IS OUT.
IT'S NOTHIN' I
CAN DO A THING ABOUT.
THE GAME IS OVER,
AND THERE AIN'T A DOUBT.
THE SCORE IS FINAL;
WHERE WE STOOD
IS WHERE WE STAND.

TIME TICKS ON,
AND FINDS YOU TALKIN' TO YOURSELF
IN GROWN-UP LAND.
THE CHANCE IS GONE.
I CAN'T BELIEVE I LET IT SLIP
RIGHT THROUGH MY HAND.

IF I KNEW THEN
WHAT I KNOW NOW:
WHAT I WOULDN'T SAID WAS . . .

MAN 3.
HEY, BILLYO,
I'M SORRY ABOUT BEFORE.
I'M SORRY I MADE YOU SORE.
YOU'RE STILL MY BEST FRIEND, OKAY?
I'M SUCH A JERK ANYWAY,
FORGIVE ME ABOUT TODAY.
ALL BUT MAN 3.
WHAT I WOULDN'T SAID WAS . . .
WOMAN 3.
PUSH THE MIKE ASIDE.
GET MY TONGUE UNTIED.
IS THERE LIFE AFTER HIGH SCHOOL?

WHAT I WOULD'A DONE/SAID WAS...
WHAT I SHOULD'A DONE/SAID WAS...

(All five sing the following parts simultaneously.)

MAN 3.
HEY, BILLYO,
I'M SORRY ABOUT BEFORE.
I'M SORRY I MADE YOU SORE.
YOU'RE STILL MY BEST FRIEND, OKAY?
I'M SUCH A JERK ANYWAY,
FORGIVE ME ABOUT TODAY.
OKAY?

WOMAN 3.
PUSH THE MIKE ASIDE.
GET MY TONGUE UNTIED.
KNOCK 'EM OFF THEIR FEET,
AND WATCH MY LANDSLIDE SLIDE.
THEY WOULDA GONE:
"YAAAAY JUDY!"
"YAAAAY JUDY!"

MAN 4.
IF - YOU - DUNK - ME -
EVER - A - GAIN - I'LL -
BUST YOUR FRIGGIN' HEAD, TOD.
GOD, THAT WOULD HAVE BEEN BEAUTIFUL.
IT WOULD HAVE BEEN BEAUTIFUL.

WOMAN 4.
MARGUERITE TOLD ME
YOU WERE T'D BECAUSE
YOU WERE CONVINCED
I GOT THE LEAD BECAUSE
BECKER WOULD NEVER
"BREAK THE HEART OF HIS PET."
HAH!
I GOT THE PART
'CAUSE I'M BETTER THAN YOU.
IT WOULD HAVE BEEN BEAUTIFUL.

MAN 2.
GIVE HER WHAT SHE WANTED.
I SHOULD'A KNOWN ENOUGH TO
GIVE HER WHAT SHE WANTED.

IS THERE LIFE AFTER HIGH SCHOOL?

SHE SAID IT WAS SAFE.
"THE SAFEST TIME" SHE SAID.
SAFE!
I DIDN'T KNOW WHAT SHE MEANT.
SO THAT WAS THE WAY IT WENT.

ALL.
IF I ONLY WAS
HALF AS GOOD IN HIGH SCHOOL
AS I AM IN MY SECOND THOUGHTS.
HALF AS GOOD IN HIGH SCHOOL
AS I AM IN MY SECOND THOUGHTS.

* * *

(After applause:)

ALL.
WHAT I SHOULD'A DONE/SAID WAS...

(THEY all exit while singing the five simultaneous parts. The singing fades as WOMAN 2 enters.)

MAIDA VINER (WOMAN 2). We had something at my school called Daisy Days, which was the last week of the year, and there was always a Daisy Princess chosen from all the senior girls. On a certain day in June, every single one of us had to walk across the auditorium stage in front of everybody and say our names into the microphone. This was supposed to be another example of Democracy In Action. The teachers would write down the names of the six prettiest girls, and then we'd all get to vote on them for Daisy Princess. That way nobody was overlooked. I still remember exactly what I wore on Elimination Day. I imagine we all do. What I remember best, though, is Nancy Dugan. She was the tallest girl in our class— taller than most of the boys, even. While the rest of us paraded across that stage and tried to smile as we said our names, she had the guts to go out there and say, "My name is Nancy Dugan, and I decline the nomination."

(Other actors enter one by one.)

MAN 1. I was voted best public speaker.
WOMAN 1. I was voted friendliest.
MAN 3. I was voted Student Council president.
WOMAN 4. I was voted best dancer.
IS THERE LIFE AFTER HIGH SCHOOL?

MAN 5. I'm the one who tallied the votes.
MAN 2. I didn't win any big awards or prizes. I know winning was the name of the game in high school, and if you couldn't point to some kind of trophy you weren't really anybody. Still, there was one time during a track meet when there were about six guys out in front of me and somebody in the crowd called out my name.

MAN 5. (to MAN 2) Come on, Sammy! You can do it, Sammy!
MAN 2. I only took third that day, but just hearing that guy yell my name has gotta be one of the best moments in my whole life. (music cue)

WOMAN 3. I was standing on the third step of the north staircase—I even remember the step, that's how important it was—when Jack Soloway told me he thought I was sexy. We both blushed, and then I had to run to my next class, and I spent the whole period writing the word SEXY over and over in my notebook. It was the most thrilling thing that had ever, ever happened to me. I remember thinking I could die happy now. No matter what happened to me ever again, I could always tell myself, "Jack Soloway said I was sexy." (music cue)

MAN 4. Once when I was cleaning out my wallet I decided to throw away a snapshot of my high school girlfriend. Who needs that kinda thing, right? Imagine me at 3 a.m., down on my hands and knees in the garage, sifting through the contents of the garbage can. Now imagine my wife asking me what I'm doing. (Music begins. WOMAN 1 sings "NOTHING REALLY HAPPENED").

WOMAN 1.
HE ASKED ME OVER TO HIS HOUSE.
I WORE SUZANNE'S EMBROIDERED BLOUSE.
I STILL REMEMBER THAT NIGHT,
AND NOTHING REALLY EVEN HAPPENED.

WOMAN 2.
WE TALKED SOME TRUTH; WE TOLD SOME LIES.

WOMAN 3.
HE PULLED THE HAIR AWAY FROM MY EYES.

WOMAN 4.
IT FELT SO DANGEROUS THEN,
AND NOTHING REALLY EVEN HAPPENED.

ALL FOUR.
FUNNY, THE THINGS YOU THINK ABOUT.

IS THERE LIFE AFTER HIGH SCHOOL?

FUNNY, THE THINGS YOU DON'T.
FUNNY, THE THINGS THAT FADE AWAY.
FUNNY, THE THINGS THAT WON'T.

WOMAN 1.
The Girl I Tried So Hard To Hide.

WOMEN 1 & 3.
The Woman Waking Up Inside.

WOMEN 1, 2 & 3.
The Way I Pictured His Bed.

ALL FOUR.
The Scenes I Saw in My Head.

WONDER IF I SHOULD WRITE HIM.
WONDER IF I SHOULD CALL.
WONDER IF HE'D REMEMBER AT ALL.
I WONDER IF HE'D REMEMBER AT ALL.

WOMAN 1.
A Million Years Ago Tonight
The T.V. Glowed in Black and White.

ALL FOUR.
AND I REMEMBER THAT GIRL;

WOMEN 1, 2 & 3.
That Girl Alone With That Boy.

WOMEN 1 & 2.
AND I REMEMBER THAT NIGHT;

WOMAN 1.
That Night When Nothing Really Happened.

* * *

(JERRY DOYLE, dressed in a business suit and carrying a briefcase, enters s.r. He puts down the briefcase.)

JERRY DOYLE (MAN 3). Just picture this: it's 3:15 and everybody from the whole school knows what's gonna happen. There're like a hundred kids out pack in the parking lot just waiting to see me cream Eddie Rondello. The tension is terrific, 'cause like everybody knows it's him or me, y'understand? I say to him, "Okay, asshole—you ready?"

(EDDIE RONDELLO enters s.r., speaking. HE also is wearing a business suit and puts down his briefcase.)
IS THERE LIFE AFTER HIGH SCHOOL?

Eddie Rondello (Man 5). . . . and I say, “You bet I am, you chicken-shit mick.”

Jerry Doyle. So I take off my shirt, see, and he takes off his.

Eddie Rondello. Timmy said he’d referee, but where’s Timmy? Nobody knows. So I say, “Screw the referee. Let’s get on with it.” Kids start backin’ away all of a sudden, and I come at Doyle like crazy. My first punch is a beauty. Wham! There’s like this big roar from the crowd, and I’m feelin’ good, y’know? Really good.

Jerry Doyle. First I let him think he’s got me. He goes punchin’ away like the stupid wop he is, usin’ up all his energy in the first two minutes. I go “Unnh! Unhh! —lettin’ on like he’s really givin’ it to me. An’ all the time I’m thinkin’, “That’s it, Eddie—just wear yourself out.” In two minutes he’s like all done, an’ except for the fact I got like blood comin’ outta my ear, I’m fresh as a daisy.

Eddie Rondello. Some girl starts screamin’ cause she sees I clipped him on the ear, and he’s kinda staggerin’ around with all this blood all over him. She starts screamin’ “Stop it! Stop it! Stop it!” an’ that’s when I made my big mistake. She yells, “You’re murdering him!” and in like a split-second I turn away and then Doyle grabs me by the knees and topples me over on the blacktop and starts poundin’ me.

Jerry Doyle. And I go like Bam! Bam! Bam! Bam! Ya give? Ya give? Ya give?

Eddie Rondello. If she hadn’t’ve made me turn away . . .

Jerry Doyle. What are you? Say it! What are you?

Eddie Rondello. Doyle was good. I gotta give ‘im that.

Jerry Doyle. (after a pause) Then I got scared all of a sudden ‘cause I can see he’s unconscious. The rest is kind of a blur. Patsy ran up and put her arms round me, I know that, and then Eddie opened his eyes and I could see he was okay. I mean, thank God. I coulda killed him.

Eddie Rondello. I never said I give, that’s the thing. I wouldn’t. I think he respected me for that.

Jerry Doyle. After the fight, o’ course, I was like a king!

Eddie Rondello. I coulda beat him, though. I coulda beat him. He knew that, too. (Picking up their briefcases, they see each other for the first time.)

Jerry Doyle. (slowly) Hey . . . Eddie?

Eddie Rondello. (apprehensive, but pleased) Jerry Doyle?

Jerry Doyle. (crossing to shake his hand) Long time no see, fella.

IS THERE LIFE AFTER HIGH SCHOOL?

Eddie Rondello. (while shaking hands—equally friendly)

Long time no see.

(THEY walk off together. Music begins and crepe-paper decorations descend as a couple (WOMAN 3 and MAN 2) enter slow-dancing in prom attire. THEY represent an image of the past—a visible flashback to the senior prom. As THEY dance WOMAN 2 enters and watches them from a distance. (See piano-vocal score for cues.)

Woman 2. He looked so handsome, so . . . I don’t know. Just the way I’d hoped, I guess. Not like a boy all dressed up in formal clothes. Like a man.

(MAN 1 enters and watches the couple dancing.)

Man 1. It was the last time I saw her—the last good time—before college. We had a fight afterwards about something. But that night was beautiful, really beautiful. (MAN 3 also looks on.)

Man 3. Mary Ann and I didn’t go to the prom, but sometimes I wish we had. She said she’d rather just stay home and talk, because the prom was only a chance for the rich kids to show off and she thought it was stupid. That was the night Mary Ann got pregnant. She still says she’s glad we didn’t go, and I say, “Yeah, me too.” High school ended real fast, y’know? Right now it seems like light years away.

(The music changes to a ghostly interlude in which the dancers move toward and around the speakers and look at them. The music then shifts back and the couple begins slow-dancing again.)

Woman 2. It really was the happiest night of my life. Don’t get me wrong—I’m not complaining or anything. I just know that nothing is ever gonna be as wonderful and scary and . . . and romantic as the Senior Prom.

(The couple keeps dancing until WOMAN 4 appears. The music stops abruptly as SHE speaks.)

Woman 4. At my school the prom had to be cancelled because
of a bomb scare. I recommended that this be made an annual tradition. (Lights out on WOMAN 4 and all the others.)

(MAN 4 enters, extremely agitated, and speaks to the audience.)

JIM WANAMAKER (MAN 4). I had a dream last night where someone found out I never took these courses that were necessary for graduation, and I had to go back to school to make up the work. I sat down at a desk which was way too small for me, but nobody else in the classroom seemed to notice that I was any different from them. Then Mrs. Delaney—I'm American Problems teacher—hands out these test booklets, and I look at the cover and someone has drawn obscene pictures all over it. I don't know what to do. Should I tell Mrs. Delaney, and call attention to myself, or should I just ignore the pictures?—in which case she'll probably think I drew them. The pictures are in pencil, see, so I start to erase them. All of these little breasts and penises and stick-people doing horrible things to each other. But as soon as I get one part erased, I notice another one—and another. Finally the bell rings and Mrs. Delaney starts collecting the booklets and I realize I never even opened mine. I don't even know what the test was about. And what's worse, all the pictures are still there. I start tearing up the booklet like crazy and sticking pieces of it in my mouth, trying to chew it all up and swallow it before she gets to me. Then she's standing over me and she says, "Where's your booklet, James? What have you done with it?" That's as far as it went. I woke up in a cold sweat. I'd wanted to say, "I ate it, you bitch! I ate it!"—but I never talked back to Mrs. Delaney in my life.

(HE exits as a flagbearer.—MAN 4 enters to parade drumming. WOMEN 1, 2 and 4, and MEN 2 and 5 enter and stand in a row—holding their hands over their hearts. THEY recite the Pledge of Allegiance as if it were a round.)

WOMAN 1, 2 & 4 and MEN 2 & 5, I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America, and to the republic for which it stands. One nation, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

WOMAN 4. Once upon a time I believed that you could cover up your pimplies with Clarasal and nobody would know they were there.
IS THERE LIFE AFTER HIGH SCHOOL?

MAN 2, 3 & 5.
DRINKIN' THE NIGHT AWAY.

(Flashback: THEY are now together in the past as THEY sing a
drunken "La La" verse. Their animated activity is a sharp
contrast to their stillness in the present. Back in the present,
MAN 3 sings. MEN 2 and 5 remain in the past in a freeze.)

MAN 3.
NOW I'M HALF WAY THROUGH MY 32ND YEAR,
AND I STILL GET THIRSTY FOR A CAN OF BEER.
BUT I DON'T GO CRAZY LIKE A KID.
DON'T GO BANANAS THE WAY WE DID.

(MEN 2 and 5 come to life for one riotous moment, then freeze
again.)

MAN 3.
I CAN DRINK ALL NIGHT BEFORE IT EVEN SHOWS.
NOW WHEN I GET LOADED NO ONE EVER KNOWS.
ONLY TROUBLE IS IT DOESN'T FEEL LIKE IT USED TO FEEL.

(Flashback: THEY come together for a second "La La" verse,
which builds this time to an extended drunken dance. Back
in the present, but still together, THEY sing:)

MAN 3.
BUT IT DOESN'T FEEL,
MAN 5.
NO, IT DOESN'T FEEL,
MAN 2.
LIKE IT USED TO FEEL.

(The three men stand frozen for a moment with their arms
around each other's shoulders, as if in a snapshot, then break
apart.)

ALL.
TAKE ME BACK TO THOSE SATURDAY NIGHTS,
I'M TELLIN' YA, JACK, IF THEY HAD ANY FLIGHTS
I WOULD FLY—

IS THERE LIFE AFTER HIGH SCHOOL?

MAN 3. WALKS OFF DR
TO GET TO WHERE MY LIFE WAS EASY AGAIN.
MAN 2 & 5. STILL TOGETHER C
I WOULD FLY—
MAN 3.
TO FEEL A FEELING THAT WAS TEN OUT O' TEN.
MAN 2 & 5.
I WOULD FLY—
ALL.
MAN 5 THEN WALKS OFF DR
TO BUY THE BEER AND MEET MY BUDDIES AND THEN
(coming-together-again)
OPEN A CAN AND CHUG A LUG A LUG AWAY,
(in snapshot grouping)
AND GET BOMBED OUT OF MY MIND!

(After applause the "BEER" vamp plays as the three men exit.
WOMAN 1 enters.)

ROXANNE PRENDERGAST (WOMAN 1). What I remember most
about high school is my mother telling me not to worry that
nobody ever asked me out. I was a late bloomer, she said. And I
thought, "What if I never bloom?" And then one day in the spring
of my junior year, Ricky Dalton, who was captain of the swim-
ing team and used to sing solos with the glee club, came up to
me in the hall and asked if he could go out with me on Saturday
night and I said yes. I was so happy and nervous and excited.
And then . . . well, the very next morning I found out why he
asked me. I got a pink slip in home-room, which meant that I
had to go see the girls' vice-principal. I'd never gotten a pink slip
before, and I used to think that people who got them were in
deep trouble. I felt really sick to my stomach, even though I
knew I hadn't been doing anything bad, and when third period
came I went to the office. And Miss Haskell said . . . she said
there was something written about me in one of the boys' lav-
torries, and was it true? I started to cry, and I felt so sick I
couldn't even talk and Miss Haskell just kept saying "Is it true?"
"Is it true?" "Is it true?" Finally I said no it wasn't, and she said
that was all right then, but if it ever happened again I'd have to
be put on probation. And I said . . . I said I understood, and I
thanked her. I thanked her. But anyway . . . That was only high
IS THERE LIFE AFTER HIGH SCHOOL?

EVERY DAY
FOR FOUR YEARS.
RACED AROUND THE TRACK,
MEASURED BACK TO BACK,
LIVED WITH THEM
FOR FOUR YEARS.
YOU SAY GOODBYE AND THEN
YOU GO YOUR SEPARATE WAYS,
BUT TIME AND TIME AGAIN
THERE THEY ARE
IN THE HAZE.

(The u.s. figures come out of their freeze and resume their high school activities.)

SOMETIMES IT'S LIKE THEY'RE WATCHING,
WATCHING AS I GO ON.
DAY OUT, DAY IN
I LOSE, I WIN
AND SOMEHOW I FEEL
I DO IT FOR THEM.

WHY SHOULD I STILL BE BOTHERED?
WHEN WILL THE GHOSTS BE GONE?
HOW CAN I FEEL
MY LIFE IS REAL
WHEN HALF OF THE TIME
I DO IT FOR THEM?

I WONDER, I WONDER . . .

(The rest of the cast, in a freeze once more, starts singing.
They're positioned and lit so we can't see them sing; their voices represent MAN 1's thoughts.)

ALL BUT MAN 1.
WHAT WOULD THEY THINK OF ME NOW?
MAN 1.
I WONDER, I WONDER . . .
ALL BUT MAN 1.
HOW WOULD I MEASURE UP NOW?
MAN 1.
I WONDER, I WONDER . . .
IS THERE LIFE AFTER HIGH SCHOOL?

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ALL BUT MAN 1.
EVEN THOUGH YEARS HAVE GONE BY,
NO MATTER HOW FAR I FLY,
MAN 1.
WHAT WOULD THEY THINK OF ME?
ALL.
I WANNA KNOW.
I WANNA KNOW.
I WANNA KNOW.
I WANNA KNOW.
(Activities begins again v.s.)

MAN 1.
I SOUND LIKE A BROKEN RECORD,
ENDLESSLY SPINNING ON.
RUNNING MY RACE,
MY FOOLISH CHASES,
ONLY TO FIND
I DO IT FOR THEM.
ALWAYS FOR THEM.
LOOKING BACK OVER MY SHOULDER

(HE looks over his shoulder at the v.s. group, now still.)

ALL.
FOR THEM.

everyone has been.

(Stage freeze or everyone—MAN 1 last of all. Each of the speeches in the following “revenge sequence” is underscored. MAN 4 enters as music begins.)

MAN 4: I’m writing my dissertation on the parameters of social interaction in the American adolescent society. Put most simply, my central thesis is: that the people who gave me grief in high school oughta be stood up against a wall and have their guts splattered out with a machine gun. (Music cue. WOMAN 1 enters.)

WOMAN 1. Rita Morrison once told me that being beautiful was a 24-hour-a-day job, and that sometimes she wished she could be more “casual” about her appearance—. . .

(Music cue. MAN 2 enters with a yearbook.)

MAN 2. (studying the book) Oh, here he is! Here he is! (reading) “Most Outstanding Senior Athlete: Jay Steinhouse.” (HE takes out a pencil and stabs Jay’s picture, then rips it. As if dismayed by what he’s done) Oh! I ripped his head off! (Music cue. WOMAN 3 enters.)

WOMAN 4. He’s a used-car salesman now—which creep used to call me Little Miss Tiny Tits. I can’t wait to run into him again. He’ll say, “What are you doing now?” and I’ll say, “I’m teaching at the university.” Then I’ll say, “And what are you doing now?”—and when he tells me he’s selling used cars, I’ll say, “I’m so glad—just where a shit like you belongs!” (Music cue. MAN 3 enters.)

MAN 3. I demand an apology from every single person in my class for not recognizing what a great guy I was. What’s more, I’m not gonna accept this apology. I demand to know how many of the devices that I list—moneys, greats, awards, etc.—are still being sold at the dealership. I demand to be a full athletic scholarship to the college of my choice. I demand . . .

Aw, hell, I don’t want it now—I want it then.

(Coronation music begins and everyone turns v.s. to applause, cheer, and throw confetti as WOMAN 3 enters and comes v.s. WOMAN 2, MAN 1, and MAN 5 also rush in to applaud WOMAN 3. The music ends abruptly. The crowd freezes and the lights fade out on them as WOMAN 3 begins singing “DIARY OF A HOMECOMING QUEEN.” The crowd exits in darkness as she sings.)

Stadium bluchers are brought on, filled with
tons who are Shilled.

(sung)

TODAY I WAS CROWNED THE HOMECOMING QUEEN,
AND JEFF WAS THE FOOTBALL KING.
I WORE MY FLOOR-LENGTH FORMAL
FROM THE JUNIOR PROM LAST SPRING.
BEFORE THE GAME WAS PLAYED
WE LED A BIG PARADE,
AND WE HAD A 50 YARD LINE CORONATION.

WOMAN 3 is dressed
in “homecoming attire.”
ALL THE KIDS WERE CHEERING
AS WE WALKED OUT ON THE FIELD,
AND THERE WERE PEOPLE TAKING PICTURES
EVERYWHERE.

THE STANDS WERE FULL TO BURSTING,
AND THE SENIORS RAISED A BANNER,
AND JEFF POINTED TO OUR NAMES UP IN THE AIR.

THE MARCHING BAND WAS PLAYING,
AND THE KIDS ALL THREW CONFETTI,
AND I FEEL LIKE I STILL HAVE SOME IN MY HAIR.

(During transitional music SHE moves several steps d.s.)


(spinning steps)

(sung)

THE CARPETING CAME, AND SO DID THE RUG
WE BOUGHT FOR THE BEDROOM FLOOR.
JEFF REALLY GOT A BARGAIN
WITH HIS DISCOUNT THROUGH THE STORE.
I LOVE THE WALL TO WALL.
THE BABY HAD A BALL
WHEN THE MEN WERE HERE TO DO THE
INSTALLATION.

ALL THE KIDS WERE CHEERING
AS WE WALKED OUT ON THE FIELD,
AND THERE WERE PEOPLE TAKING PICTURES
EVERYWHERE.

THE STANDS WERE FULL TO BURSTING,
AND THE SENIORS RAISED A BANNER,
AND JEFF POINTED TO OUR NAMES UP IN THE AIR.

THE MARCHING BAND WAS PLAYING,
AND THE KIDS ALL THREW CONFETTI,
AND I FEEL LIKE I STILL HAVE SOME IN MY HAIR.

(SHE again moves d.s.)

(spooken) August 3, 1978

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IS THERE LIFE AFTER HIGH SCHOOL?

THE MARCHING BAND WAS PLAYING,
AND THE KIDS ALL THREW CONFETTI,
AND I FEEL LIKE I STILL HAVE SOME IN MY HAIR.

(Chorus music begins again. For a time SHE is unable to sing.)

THE MARCHING BAND WAS PLAYING,
AND THE KIDS ALL THREW CONFETTI,
AND I FEEL LIKE I STILL HAVE SOME IN MY HAIR.

THE MARCHING BAND WAS PLAYING,
AND THE KIDS ALL THREW CONFETTI,
AND I FEEL LIKE I STILL HAVE SOME IN MY HAIR.

I GUESS IT ALWAYS WILL BE THERE.

(The coronation music begins again. The cheering-crowd re-
enters, at first in slow motion, and showers her with conf-
etti. All freeze as the music stops abruptly.)

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Curtain reacts
in normal motion
CHEERING THROWS CONFETTI
on W3 DC
ACT TWO

AT RISE: The entire cast is once more in the TABLEAU as at
the beginning of the play. MAN 4 steps out of it and starts
singing "THOUSANDS OF TRUMPETS". The others re-
main in place.

MAN 4.
THERE ARE THOUSANDS OF TRUMPETS
IN THOUSANDS OF CLOSETS
THAT NEVER GET PLAYED ANYMORE.
COUNTLESS TRUMPETS IN CASES
IN TUCKED AWAY PLACES
THAT NEVER PARADE ANYMORE.
THERE'S A CLARINET
BACK HOME AT MY MOTHER'S,
IN A CARDBOARD BOX
LIKE THOUSANDS OF OTHERS.
THERE ARE SAXOPHONES,
AND SLIDE TROMBONES
WE PACKED AWAY WAY BACK WHEN;
AND THEY'RE NEVER GONNA SPARKLE IN THE SUN
AGAIN.

(One by one the other actors break out of the tableau.)

MAN 3. I got drawers full of stuff at home I don't know what
to do with anymore. Who remembers how to use a slide rule?
WOMAN 4. Isn't it about time I got rid of my notes on the Indus-
trial Revolution?
WOMAN 1. I've still got my baton somewhere, but people tend
to be suspicious of a doctor who twirls.
MAN 5. What am I supposed to do with my old protractor?
MAN 2. My copy of Beowulf?
WOMAN 2. Tony Green's L.D. bracelet?
MAN 1. That J.V. pennant?
WOMAN 3. My push-up bra?

ALL.
THERE ARE THOUSANDS OF TRUMPETS
IN THOUSANDS OF CLOSETS
THAT NEVER GET PLAYED ANYMORE.
COUNTLESS TRUMPETS IN CASES
IN TUCKED AWAY PLACES

IS THERE LIFE AFTER HIGH SCHOOL?

THAT NEVER PARADE ANYMORE.
THERE'S A BIG BRASS BAND
OF RUSTY MUSICIANS
THAT AT ONE TIME PLAYED
SOME NOISY RENDITIONS
OF "THE STARS AND STRIPES"
BUT HOLY CRIPES,
IT'S SILENT ALL THROUGH THE LAND;
AND THERE'S NOTHIN' LIKE THE SILENCE
OF A BIG BRASS BAND.

MAN 4.
I WAS THERE.
ALL BUT MAN 4.
SO WAS I.

ALL.
GOING "RUM BIDDA BUM BUM",
GOD KNOWS WHY.
I WAS THERE;
STEPPING HIGH.
THOSE WERE MY WHITE BUCKS
PROUDLY MARCHING BY
WITH THE BAND.

(Dance. Tentatively, with much embarrassment, the band re-
groups and performs something resembling a high school
half-time show. In New York the dance music was played
by a pre-recorded marching band. When the dance is fin-
ished the song continues.)

ALL.
HALF-TIME IS OVER,
AND SO IS THE THUNDER.
THE FLUTES AND THE FRENCH HORNS
ARE STARTING TO WONDER.
THE BEAT OF THE BASS DRUM,
THE ROLL OF THE SNARE
ARE BUT ECHOES IN THE AIR.
AND THERE ARE THOUSANDS OF TRUMPETS
IN THOUSANDS OF CLOSETS
THAT NEVER GET PLAYED ANYMORE.
COUNTLESS TRUMPETS IN CASES
IN TUCKED AWAY PLACES
THAT NEVER PARADE ANYMORE.
THERE'S A BIG BRASS BAND
OF RUSTY MUSICIANS
THAT AT ONE TIME PLAYED
SOME NOISY RENDITIONS
OF "THE STARS AND STRIPES".
BUT HOLY CRIPES,
IT'S SILENT ALL THROUGH THE LAND;
AND THERE'S NOTHIN' LIKE THE SILENCE
OF A BIG BRASS BAND.

NOTHIN' LIKE A BIG BRASS BAND!

* * *

(After applause, music begins and all but WOMAN 4 parade
offstage.)

GINNY PHILLIPS (WOMAN 4). I like to think I've changed a lot
since high school. I mean, I've got a family now, and responsi-
BILITIES. But then every once in a while somebody says to me
something like "You're a real cheerleader type, aren't you?" or
"You musta been a cheerleader when you were in school," and I
always say, "Sure I was!" Maybe some of 'em mean it like a put-
down, but that's not the way I take it. I take it as a compliment,
like they were saying, "I can see you got a good, positive kind of
outlook." O' course then there're the dumbos who think it's a big
joke to've been a cheerleader . . . or a big turn-on. One guy even
said to me, "I guess you got a lotta practice spreadin' your legs,
didn't ya?" Denny—my husband—woulda punched him out in a
minute if he heard that. I just turned and walked away. The best
fun I ever had was when Molly Baylor and Chrissie Lindell and I
did this routine at the state tournament 'cause the Pirates were
about ten points behind and everybody was getting real dis-
couraged, and we came out and did "Who's got the muscle?" six-
teen times. I mean, we were almost dead at the end. But it really
got everybody all charged up, and then when the Pirates came
from behind and actually won, I felt like I really gave my all and
it really meant something. People say to me, "Oh, Ginny, you're
just too full of pep—I can't keep up with you," but what I hate
to see is all the people I know who get so down in the dumps all
the time over nothing. You know: worry-worry-worry. Y'know
their problem? They don't know how to get excited about things.
Me, well—ever since my operation I'm just excited to still be
alive. When Denny brought me home from the hospital I said:
"If we can beat cancer, we can beat anything." And you know
what he said to me? He gave me a look like who-is-this-crazy-
woman-I'm-married-to? and said, "You really are a cheerleader,
aren't you?"

(SHE exits and WOMEN 1, 2 and 3 and MEN 2 and 3 enter.
This sequence is underscored.)

MAN 2. Of the 648 kids in my class, there are only four or five
I still keep in touch with. But sometimes I can't help wondering
about the others. Bet Joey Lambert's voice never did change.
WOMAN 2. What ever happened to Eric Rice, who told me that
the human brain stops functioning at age 30?
WOMAN 3. I heard last week that Donna Sullivan passed her
bar exam. Donna Sullivan I used to help her with her home-
work.

MAN 3. Jerry Davis, Charlie Silverman—I know what hap-
pened to them. They went to Nam and they didn't come back.
Hell, I can still see 'em sittin' around the pizza place with the rest
of us, talkin' about what we were gonna be.

(WOMEN 2 and 3 and MEN 2 and 3 exit together, and under-
score ends as WOMAN 1 starts to speak.)

WOMAN 1. I always wondered what happened to Johnny—
Johnny DeBernardis. He wasn't a real close friend of mine, but I
adored him. The thing I always think of is the time he came into
Social Studies with his face painted blue, and Mr. Reikle got all
upset and told him to wash his face or he'd be sent home. Johnny
just said, "Am I to understand, Mr. Reikle, that you're discrimi-
nating against me because of my color?" Well, we all started to
laugh because we knew Mr. Reikle was a bigot, but nobody'd
ever challenged him like that before. Reikle began sort of sput-
tering, and then he said we were all human garbage—that's what
he said, honest!—and he just walked out of the classroom and
never came back. I adored Johnny DeBernardis.
(MAN 5 enters and speaks to the audience. WOMAN 1 listens to him.)

MAN 5. Johnny D. was my year, but in some ways he was like ten years ahead of me. He saw through all the crap before I knew it was crap. But that meant the administration really came down on him. If they could, they woulda crucified him. Johnny just laughed in their faces, and somehow he always got away with it.

(MAN 4 enters; WOMAN 1 and MAN 5 listen to him.)

MAN 4. I remember when Johnny set up a stand to sell bricks in center hall. He had this sign that said, “SHOW YOUR SCHOOL SPIRIT—BUY A BRICK.” They came with a mimeographed sheet that said things like “Why’d you buy this brick, anyway? What are you gonna do with it? Why do you think school spirit is so important?” He was weird, that’s for sure. I still got my brick somewhere. And y’know what? I miss that crazy son of a b**ch.

(MAN 1 enters; WOMAN 1, MAN 4 and MAN 5 listen to him.)

MAN 1. Johnny DeBernardis was a pain in the ass. He thought he was so smart, but all he did was make a fool of himself. I guess he was what you’d call a radical. If you ask me, he was only a short little bastard with bad acne who needed a haircut.

MAN 4. He was crazy, really crazy. (MAN 4 exits on this line.)

MAN 5. Y’know how they always told you in school to stand up for what you believe, and then if you did they’d kill you? Well, they couldn’t kill Johnny. (MAN 5 exits.)

MAN 1. Guys like that can’t hack it in the real world. They just can’t hack it. Probably turned out to be a druggie and burned his brains out on LSD. (MAN 1 exits.)

WOMAN 1. When Sally told me what happened to him I couldn’t believe it. I thought he’d be a lawyer or go into politics or . . . I don’t know. The last thing I ever expected to be was a high school teacher. But when you think about it, that’s exactly what he oughta be. (WOMAN 1 exits.)

(Reunion intro music begins. We see WOMAN 3 holding her reunion announcement and studying it in a state of shock. SHE reads aloud.)

IS THERE LIFE AFTER HIGH SCHOOL?

WOMAN 3. “Hear ye! Hear ye! Our long-awaited tenth reunion will be held at Robert Louis Stevenson High . . .”

(Music continues under as the other actors appear with their announcements in hand. Their reading of them is slightly overlapped.)

MAN 1. “The class of ’71 from Southside High is cordially invited to attend . . .”

MAN 4. “It’s reunion time!”

MAN 5. “Twenty years?”

(WOMAN 2 looks at her announcement in silence, then crumples it up.)

WOMAN 4. “Time to say hello again to all your friends from Floral Park’s Class of ’67.”

WOMAN 1. “Remember the good old days at Harris High . . .”

MAN 5. “Come as you are and meet the folks who remember you the way you were.”

(WOMAN 2 uncrumples her announcement and studies it.)

MAN 2.

THERE HE GOES AGAIN,

ALL BUT MAN 2.

HE’S/SH’S THERE AGAIN.

MAN 2.

HUMMIN’ HIS SONGS.

ALL BUT MAN 2.

SINGIN’ “COME ALONG, COME ON AND COME ALONG,”

MAN 2.

HE’S THERE AGAIN

ALL BUT MAN 2.

“COME ALONG FOR THE RIDE.”

ALL.

SINGIN’ “COME ALONG.”

(Music continues under as everyone makes preparations for and starts toward his reunion. The scene changes to represent a composite of several reunion locales. The cast enters, looks around, then stands motionless and sings.)
IS THERE LIFE AFTER HIGH SCHOOL?

All.
SO HERE WE ARE
Man 1. I knew I shouldn’t have come. I knew it.
All.
PINNING ON OUR NAMETAGS.
Man 5. Hey—what happened to their hair?
All.
FLASHING BACK ON SCHOOL,
ACTING CALM AND COOL,
SCARED AS EVER.
HERE WE ARE.
Woman 3. If I keep sweating like this, I’m going home.
All.
WE SCAN THE ROOM,
WE CATCH OUR BREATH,
THE HEARTBEAT RACES.
GUESS IT’S NOW OR NEVER.
FACE THE CLASS;
FAIL OR PASS.
GOD, IT’S BEEN FOREVER!
IT’S BEEN FOREVER.
HERE WE ARE.

(\textit{Underscoring begins and continues under all the scenes in the following “reunion sequence” except where designated otherwise. This underscoring is intended to be the kind of innocuous background music one hears at a reunion.}
\textit{The sequence is a montage of many different reunions. We are not in one particular place with one particular class but constantly shifting, regrouping, witnessing first one encounter here, then another someplace else. The actors change character from scene to scene.}
\textit{Between scenes there are brief musical swells and/or bursts of laughter, greetings, conversation and activity which then subside as the next scene begins.})

Man 3. Hey, beanbrain!
Man 4. Corey! You old douchebag!
Man 3. What the hell are you doing now?
Man 3. Aw, come off it.
Man 4. No, really. I’m in the neurosurgery unit up at the medical center.

WOMAN 3. That’s Peggy Carstairs. She sat next to me in Home Ec. And that’s Warren Daniels. He’s the guy who threw up on me in the cafeteria. And there’s Madge Pierce.
Man 1. Aren’t you gonna talk to anybody?
Woman 3. Not to \textit{them}. Far as I can see the only people who came are the real drips. Wait a minute! That’s Tony Pulaski!
Man 1. Well, at least there’s somebody you can talk to.
Woman 3. Are you kidding? Tony Pulaski was Student Body President. Why would he wanna talk to \textit{me}?

\textit{(WOMAN 4 takes a photo of MEN 2, 3 and 5.)}

Woman 4. Hold it! That’s perfect!

\textit{(\textbf{**})}

Woman 2. I’m just so glad you’re divorced!
Woman 1. You’re glad.
Woman 2. I didn’t want to be the only one. I almost didn’t come tonight because I couldn’t face everybody saying, “Hey—where’s Eddie?”
Woman 1. I forgot. You and Eddie were voted Cutest Couple, right?
Woman 2. You got it. Cutest Couple ever to get married too young.
Woman 1. Come on, cheer up. Donald Wilson just told me you look sensational.
Woman 2. Really? Donald Wilson?
Woman 1. Uh-huh. And what’s more, he’s divorced, too.

\textit{(\textbf{**})}

Man 2. Steskel’s class. You sat up front.
Man 2. Never forget that guy.
Woman 4. Who?
IS THERE LIFE AFTER HIGH SCHOOL?

MAN 2. Steskel.
WOMAN 4. Oh, me neither. Excuse me, Some friends of mine are holding a table for me, and I promised I'd sit with them. (Underscoring concludes.)
MAN 2. Oh. Well, maybe I could . . . ?
WOMAN 4. Hm?
MAN 2. Join you?
WOMAN 4. Well, we . . . I mean . . . There are lots of tables.

(Everyone on stage except MAN 2 freezes at this point. HE sings "HIGH SCHOOL ALL OVER AGAIN". The entire company comes briefly to life during the interjected lines.)

MAN 2.
HIGH SCHOOL ALL OVER AGAIN,
THE OLD FUN AND GAMES.
HIGH SCHOOL, PLAYED OUT AT A TABLE FOR TEN.
MAN 1. (to WOMAN 4, about MAN 2) He's not gonna sit with us, is he?
MAN 2.
I KNOW, THE GUYS ARE IN TIES,
AND THE GIRLS HAVE NEW NAMES,
BUT IT'S HIGH SCHOOL ALL OVER AGAIN.
MAN 3. (calling to a woman) Hey, stuck-up! (All the women turn toward him.)
MAN 2.
COME BACK, COME BACK TO THE LAND
OF THE KINGS AND THE QUEENS.
COME BACK, IF ONLY TO SEE HOW YOU SCORE.
MAN 4. (to WOMAN 2, about MAN 2) Do you believe those shoes he's wearing?
MAN 2.
IT'S TIME FOR DOIN' A FEW
O' YOUR FAVORITE ROUTINES.
YES, IT'S JUST LIKE THOSE OLD DAYS OF YORE.

(WOMEN 2, 3 and 4 scream with pleasure as they catch sight of each other.)

MAN 2.
I THINK I'VE SEEN THIS FLICK BEFORE.

(WOMEN 2, 3 and 4 go through an old cheerleader routine.
This short scene is not underscored.)

WOMEN 2, 3 and 4. We're the kids from Carey High.
We never put out
And we never get high! (WOMAN 1 comes running over to them.)
WOMAN 1. C'mon! Do it right! Do it right!
WOMEN 2, 3 and 4. Aw, Cindy!
WOMEN 1, 2, 3 and 4. We're the kids from Carey High.
We never give up
And we never say die!
WOMAN 1. Well, that's better! (All freeze again as MAN 2 resumes singing.)
MAN 2.
HIGH SCHOOL ALL OVER AGAIN.
THE BEAST WILL NOT DIE.
WE GOT OLD CHEERLEADERS DOIN' OLD CHEERS.
WOMEN 1, 2, 3 and 4. Yay, team!
MAN 2.
JUST WHEN YOU THOUGHT YOU WERE SAFE,
HIGH SCHOOL SAYS "HI".
YOU FORGET WHERE YOU'VE BEEN ALL THESE YEARS,
WHEN HIGH SCHOOL APPEARS.

(The cast breaks from the freeze and MEN 1, 3, 4 and 5 start playing football with a shoe. There is no underscoring here.)

MAN 3. 38, 17, 52—hike! (receiving the shoe) Hey, Terry! It's your pass!
MAN 1. Mine? Okay! (MAN 3 throws the shoe and MAN 1 catches it.)
MAN 3 & 4. Yay!!
MAN 5. Way to go!
MAN 1. I'm in better shape now.
MAN 4. Keep practicing, Terry. Maybe someday you'll make the first string.

(Everyone begins singing.)
IS THERE LIFE AFTER HIGH SCHOOL?

All But Man 2.
Welcome back
Man 2.
Rah rah rah
All But Man 2.
Welcome back
to the high and the low.
Man 2.
Same old tune
All But Man 2.
La la la
Man 2.
Same old tune
We all sang long ago.

Hurry on down,
don't put up a fight.
Hey, come meet the husbands and wives.
Say, what do you know,
they got reruns tonight
of the happiest years of our lives.
All But Man 2.
High school .
Man 2.
I got the feelin' I've been here before.
All But Man 2
All over again!
High school .
Man 2.
I got the feelin' I've been here before.
All But Man 2
All over again!
High school .
Man 2.
I been here before.

* * *

IS THERE LIFE AFTER HIGH SCHOOL?

(After applause the underscoring resumes. Man 3 takes a photo
of Woman 1 and Man 4, then Woman 4 comes over to
join them.)

Man 4. (to Woman 1) And this is Erica, the woman I'm liv-
ing with.
Woman 1. Oh!
Woman 4. We're engaged. Ray makes it sound as if . . .
Woman 1. (breaking in) I understand. I'm old-fashioned my-
self.
Man 4. (to Woman 4) Judy and I go back a long way. We
started dating at what? Fifteen?
Woman 1. Fourteen. He was the first boy I ever dated. I'll tell
you a secret even he doesn't know: he was the first boy I ever
kissed.
Woman 4. (at a loss) Well, that's certainly . . .
Man 4. Sure was a long time ago.
Woman 1. We went to all the dances together.
Woman 4. (to Man 4) Really? You used to dance?
Woman 1. Oh, doesn't he still? He was terrific.
Man 4. I had a terrific partner.
Woman 1. Honestly, Ray—you don't dance anymore?
Man 4. Not really, no.
Woman 4. We have other interests.
Woman 1. Well, sure. I'm sure you do. (to Man 4, after a
brief awkward pause) Listen—say hi to your sister for me.
Man 4. Sure.
Woman 1. (to Woman 4) And get him out on the dance
floor sometime, okay?

* * *

Man 3. (with a laugh) Whaddaya mean, make-out artist?
Man 1. If you weren't, who was?
Man 3. I'm not saying I didn't get to first base a couple o' times, but I sure don't remember any home runs.
Man 1. That's not what you said back then. Remember the
old parking spot on Adams' Road?
Man 3. Remember it? I was there last week—with Peggy.
Man 1. Your wife? You took your wife?
Man 3. What can I tell ya? I got this crazy idea. Lucky for me
she's just as crazy as I am. We got the kids to bed early, and I put
on some English Leather. It was pitch black except for the moon, and we started necking. Then I said, “Hey! Did you ever do it in a car?” She turned real serious all of a sudden and said, “I’m not the kind of person who does that sort of thing.” We looked at each other and started to laugh. Here we are, married eleven years, with three kids at home, and I finally find out just where she draws the line.

* * *

MAN 5. I always thought you’d go into modeling or something.

WOMAN 2. I did for a while, but . . .

MAN 5. Nobody’s getting any younger, I guess.

WOMAN 2. It’s not really a steady business.

(Underscoring concludes.)

MAN 5. Heard that. Like the suit?

WOMAN 2. Mm-hm.

MAN 5. Brooks Brothers.

WOMAN 2. Great!

MAN 5. Got it in Hong Kong.

WOMAN 2. A Brooks Brothers suit?

MAN 5. They’re cheaper over there. Not that money’s an object.

WOMAN 2. Yeah.

MAN 5. You been to Hong Kong?

WOMAN 2. No.

MAN 5. Europe?

WOMAN 2. Uh-uh.

MAN 5. Well, you got time, right? Never can tell when things’ll start to break for you. But jeez, you used to be something, y’know? You really used to be something.

* * *

(The party noises die down. WOMAN 3 and WOMAN 4 see each other across the stage as music begins. THEY start toward each other and on coming together turn toward the audience. They sing “FRAN AND JANIE” side by side, looking at each other only where specified.)
SO HOW'S YOUR LIFE SO FAR?
SO DID YOU CATCH THAT STAR?
(facing front)
TWO OLD FRIENDS,
ALL GROWN UP,
ONE IS SINGLE,
AND ONE HAS A COUPLE O' KIDS
Fran. (to Janie)
AND A HUSBAND NAMED BOB.
Janie. (to Fran)
AND A CHANCE FOR THIS JOB.
Fran. (to Janie)
TAKING COURSES AT NIGHT.
Janie. (to Fran)
COMING OFF A ROMANCE.
Both. (facing front)
A MILLION FACTS
AND FEELINGS TO SORT.
TWO OLD FRIENDS
WITH MUCH TO REPORT,
WHO NEVER DID KNOW HOW
TO MAKE LONG STORIES SHORT.

SO WE TALK 'TIL WE LAUGH
AND WE LAUGH 'TIL WE CRY.
AND WE GO ON AND ON,
MY GIRL FRIEND AND I.

(THEY clasp hands but remain facing front.)

Both.
Fran and Janie
SHARING SECRETS,
PASSING BY.
Fran and Janie
SHOUTING WISHES
AT THE SKY.
AND BEHIND US,
Fran and Janie
CALLING BOYS UP,
PAINTING POSTERS,
BUILDING SNOWMEN,

LOOKING FORWARD,
YOU AND I,
(to each other)
TO THE PRESENT DAY.

(slowly letting go of each other's hands and facing front)

WE TALK OF WHAT'S IN STORE
AS WE'VE TALKED BEFORE,
UNTIL THERE'S NOTHING MORE
TO SAY.

(THEY turn to each other, then embrace on the last chord.)

* * *

(Underscoring resumes after applause.)

Man 1. (showing photographs) This is Chrissie and Jennie
and Jim Junior. That's Ellie holding Jennie.
Woman 1. She's so pretty!
Man 1. Who?
Woman 1. Your wife.
Man 1. Oh, right. Right!

* * *

(MAN 5, who has been standing apart from the others, drinking, is approached by MAN 4.)

Man 4. Hi. I'm Ed Kendall.
Man 5. So?
Man 4. I just thought ... You were in my class, weren't you?
Man 5. Oh yeah. Your class. Your year. Your school. I was there.
Man 4. (peering at his nametag) I don't remember ... 
Man 5. (breaking in) Why would you? Only time you ever said "hi" to me before was when you wanted my vote. So what can I do for you? You still running for class president?
Man 4. Look, pal. I don't know what your problem is.
Man 5. (raising his voice) I don't go for All-American assholes, that's my problem.
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(Under scoring stops abruptly. MAN 5's wife (WOMAN 3) hur-
ries over to him.)

MAN 5. You wanna make something of it?
WOMAN 3. Larry, come on.
MAN 5. Look—maybe he wants to make something of it.
MAN 4. I don't. I really don't.
MAN 5. See! Look at 'im back off. Whata matter? So you
were a big deal. So what?
WOMAN 3. Larry, come on. Please?
MAN 5. (lashing out) That was high school! High school!
WOMAN 3. Larry, for God's sake.
MAN 4. Cool it, okay?
MAN 5. Cool it, shit! You always looked down your nose at
guys like me, didn't you?
MAN 4. No, I . . .
MAN 5. You and your hot-shit crowd with your hot-shit girl-
friends. I woulda liked to been the one who stuck it to Beverly
Naylor prom night, I'm tellin' ya.
WOMAN 3. Larry, shut up. We're going home.
MAN 5. Sure—why not? Just wanted to tell him what I think
of him. (yelling) Nothing! That's what I think! Nothing!
WOMAN 3. (to MAN 4, as she and her husband leave) I'm
sorry. I'm sorry. (THEY exit and re-enter later as different char-
acters.)

* * *

(The underscoring begins again. It is the prom music from Act I.
MAN 2 and MAN 3 are watching WOMAN 4, who's danc-
ing with MAN 1.)

MAN 3. I'd ask her to dance, but . . .
MAN 2. But what?
MAN 3. Hell, she's not gonna say yes. She isn't even gonna say
maybe.
MAN 2. How do you know?
MAN 3. She never gave me the time of day.
MAN 2. Go on, go on! Look: she's on her own.

(The two of them look to see that the man she's been dancing
with has left. MAN 3 hesitates, then goes over to her.)

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MAN 3. Excuse me, but . . .
WOMAN 4. Steven!
MAN 3. You remember?
WOMAN 4. Of course.
MAN 3. I'm just drunk enough to ask you to dance.
WOMAN 4. (smiling) But not too drunk to dance?
MAN 3. Nope. (THEY start dancing together.)
WOMAN 4. Still don't talk much.
MAN 3. Hm?
WOMAN 4. You were always like that. I had this great crush on
you junior year, and you couldn't've ever said more than three
words to me.
MAN 3. You had a crush on me? (HE stops dancing, amazed.)
WOMAN 4. Uh-huh. What's the matter? Steven . . .?

(HE beams at her, shakes his head, and they dance off. The
prom underscoring ends.)

* * *

(MAN 2, looking at a yearbook, exclaims to MAN 4.)

MAN 2. Oh man! you gotta see this to believe it!

* * *

(WOMAN 2 and MAN 1 observe the others from across the
room.)

WOMAN 2. So these are the kids I went to school with. Whadd-
daya think?
MAN 1. I think you should have been voted sexiest.
WOMAN 2. Well, thank God for that. (points out another
woman) See that girl? (Music begins.)
MAN 1. Uh-huh.
WOMAN 2. She's who I wanted to be. She was so pretty and
popular and poised.
MAN 1. Wait a minute! That's how I always figured you
must've been.
WOMAN 2. No way. But I almost died trying. (SHE begins
singing "I'M GLAD YOU DIDN'T KNOW ME").
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WOMAN 2.
I CAN JUST SEE ME AT SIX AND SEVENTEEN,
TYPICAL DOWN TO MY CIRCLE PIN,
PIERCING MY EARS WITH THE FUTURE NURSES CLUB,
WORKING LIKE MAD TO BE "IN".

I'M SO GLAD YOU DIDN'T KNOW ME.
WHAT A NOTHING I WAS THEN.
I'M JUST GLAD YOU DIDN'T KNOW ME.
I'M GLAD YOU DIDN'T KNOW ME WHEN.

MAN 1.
I'M THANKFUL TOO
THAT I DIDN'T KNOW YOU,
'CAUSE THAT WOULD'VE MEANT YOU KNEW ME.
SINGING MY FOLK SONGS,
OR LEARNING TO SMOKE,
OR PANICKED AT PULLING A "D".
AND SPEAKING OF FEARS,
I HAD AN ERECTION
THE WHOLE FOUR YEARS.

WOMAN 2. (spoken) No kidding!
MAN 1.
I'M SO GLAD YOU DIDN'T KNOW ME.
I WASN'T READY FOR YOU THEN.
WOMAN 2. (spoken) Sounds like you were.
MAN 1.
I'M JUST GLAD YOU DIDN'T KNOW ME.
THANK GOD YOU DIDN'T KNOW ME . . .

WOMAN 2.
PICTURE ME PEppy, BUT FAKE AS THEY COME,
MAKING CORSAGES OF JUICY FRUIT GUM.
MAN 1.
PICTURE A GEEK ON THE EDGE OF HIS CHAIR,
WAVING HIS HAND IN THE AIR:
(spoken) "Ooh, call on me! Call on me!"
WOMAN 2.
PICTURE A PHONY,
MAN 1.
PICTURE HOW SUAVE I COULD BE,
WOMAN 2.
DOIN' THE PONY.

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MAN 1.
PASSING MY BROTHER'S I.D.
WOMAN 2.
I WAS THE WORST.
MAN 1.
AND I WAS AS BAD.
Both.
PICTURE THE DATES WE'DA HAD!
WOMAN 2.
I'M GLAD YOU DIDN'T KNOW ME
MAN 1.
I'M GLAD . . .
GLAD THAT YOU WEREN'T AROUND.
WOMAN 2.
AT EISENHOWER HIGH.
MAN 1.
WHAT A CREEP YOU'DA FOUND.
WOMAN 2.
AMEN,
Both.
GOOD RIDDANCE, 'N GOODBYE!

GOODBYE!
HAND ME NO YEARBOOKS TO SIGN.
AND DON'T EVER ASK TO SEE MINE.
I WANT NO AULD LANG SYNE.
I'M GLAD YOU DIDN'T KNOW ME.
GLAD YOU DIDN'T KNOW ME WHEN.

'CAUSE IF YOU HAD GONE TO MY SCHOOL
WE'D NEVER HAD A PRAYER.
YOU'D HATED ME IN HIGH SCHOOL.
I'M GLAD YOU WEREN'T THERE.

MAN 1.
PASSING ON THE STAIR.
WOMAN 2.
PASSING ON THE STAIR.
Both.
GLAD YOU DIDN'T KNOW ME . . .
WOMAN 2.
SAVING ALL THE SEATS.
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MAN 1.
CLOWNING IN THE BLEACHERS.
WOMAN 2.
PRESSING ALL THE PLEATS.
MAN 1.
BROWNING UP THE TEACHERS.
BOTH.
PUSHING ALL THE WAY
TO GRADUATION DAY!

* * *

(WOMEN 1 and 3 and MAN 5 are exchanging phone numbers.)

MAN 5. 247-3115.

(Underscoring resumes.)

WOMAN 1. (as she writes it down)... 3115. I'm practically
blind without my glasses, but I'd be damned if I was gonna wear
them tonight.

WOMAN 3. Here's my business card.

WOMAN 1. Your business card! I forgot we all grew up.

MAN 5. I didn't grow up. I just got older.

WOMAN 1. Let's not use that word, okay?

MAN 5. Y'know, it's funny... I didn't come to the first re-
union 'cause I felt I hadn't changed enough.

WOMAN 3. I know the feeling.

MAN 5. Second time around I thought, "How can I go back if
I'm not rich and famous?"

WOMAN 1. Or married.

WOMAN 3. Or glamorous.

MAN 5. But when I got the announcement this time I thought,
"What the hell?". The worst thing about high school was think-
ing you were in some kind of contest all the time. But I mean,
what's the contest? All I know is, I wouldn't have missed seeing
you guys again for anything.

(These three embrace as the rest of the cast is saying goodbye to
each other, then separate. Everyone begins singing.)

ALL.

TIME HAS COME.

IS THERE LIFE AFTER HIGH SCHOOL? 55

THE NIGHT IS WINDING DOWN,
WINDING DOWN.
TIME TO CLOSE THE BAR.
TIME TO GET THE CAR.
TIME HAS FLOWN.

(They remove their nametags as they sing.)

AND ONCE AGAIN
HERE WE ARE.
HERE WE ARE.
HERE WE ARE.
ENEMIES AND FRIENDS,
ALL THE ODDS AND ENDS
OF ANOTHER TIME.

(By the time the singing ends, the reunion scenery has disap-
peared. Music continues as each actor echoes a line
heard earlier in the play.)

WOMAN 3. And I remember thinking I could die happy now.

MAN 5. I never said I give, that's the thing. I wouldn't.

WOMAN 2. I still remember exactly what I wore on Elimination
Day.

MAN 1. This was my one chance, and I only had a second to
decide.

MAN 2. Hearing that guy yell my name has gotta be one of
the best moments in my whole life.

WOMAN 1. Miss Haskell just kept saying "Is it true?" "Is it
true?" "Is it true?"

WOMAN 4. You really are a cheerleader, aren't you?

MAN 3. You hadda be there, you know? You just hadda be
there.

(As each speaks, HE or SHE moves to a spot on stage from
which HE can easily step into the TABLEAU which began
both acts of the play.
Music ends as MAN 4 begins speaking. Lights dim on the oth-
ers.)

JOEL NYQUIST (MAN 4). I drove by my old school this after-
noon, and I stopped for a while to watch the kids playing base-
ball on South Field. They seemed so young!—hardly like high
school kids at all. I'd been watching for maybe five minutes before I realized that the old guy who was coaching the team was Mr. Buckowitz, my Phys. Ed. teacher from way back in freshman year. Back then I was fat, real fat, and about a foot shorter than I am now. The guys used to call me Joel the Jelly-Roll. Mr. Buckowitz told the class one time that I was the most uncoordinated kid he'd ever had in all his years of gym-teaching. I went home that day and got a razor blade out of the medicine cabinet and sat on the side of the bathtub for three hours. I remember thinking, "I can't even kill myself," and I could just hear Buckowitz and all the others laughing. But there he was!—today, on South Field, and I wanted to hate him again the way I'd hated him when I was fourteen. I wanted to walk up to him and say, "I know what you are. Don't think I've forgotten what you did to me." But he was this little man—so much smaller than I remembered him, and so much older. He must be about ready to retire now. And besides—I don't hate him anymore. I don't have to. I'm not fourteen, and I don't have to obey him, and I'm not Joel the Jelly-Roll anymore. Jesus Christ! Sometimes when I look back, all I can think is: I made it! I made it! I made it!

(Music plays as MAN 4 and the rest of the cast step into the opening TABLEAU, as if posing for a class picture.)

CURTAIN

PROPERTY LIST

p. 14 yearbooks (2, each from a different school)
p. 21 briefcases (2)
p. 24 American flag
p. 28 schoolbooks, notebooks, pompoms, shoulder pads and other assorted high school paraphernalia for Upstage figures
p. 31 yearbook, pencil, confetti
p. 38 reunion announcements (9, varied)
p. 39 nametags (9, varied), punch cups, punch bowl
p. 41 camera with flash
p. 43 shoe
p. 45 camera
p. 49 wallet with photos
p. 51 yearbook
p. 54 address books, pens, business card

SOUND CUES

p. 7 school bell, roll call
p. 28 school bell
p. 35 marching band