

MARK
SHE'S PERFORMING TONIGHT

BENNY
I KNOW.
STILL HER PRODUCTION MANAGER?

MARK
TWO DAYS AGO I WAS BUMPED

BENNY
YOU STILL DATING HER?

MARK
LAST MONTH I WAS DUMPED

ROGER
SHE'S IN LOVE

BENNY
SHE'S GOT A NEW MAN

MARK
WELL - NO

BENNY
WHAT'S HIS NAME?

BOTH
JOANNE

BENNY
RENT, MY AMIGOS, IS DUE
OR I WILL HAVE TO EVICT YOU
BE THERE IN A FEW

(ROGER defiantly picks out "Musetta's" theme
on the electric guitar. The fuse blows on the amp.)

MARK
The power blows...

(The stage bursts into a flurry of movement and
all but MARK & ROGER freeze in a group upstage)

04. RENT

MARK
HOW DO YOU DOCUMENT REAL LIFE
WHEN REAL LIFE'S GETTING MORE
LIKE FICTION EACH DAY

MARK (CONT)
HEADLINES - BREAD-LINES
BLOW MY MIND
AND NOW THIS DEADLINE
“EVICTION - OR PAY”
RENT

ROGER
HOW DO YOU WRITE A SONG
WHEN THE CHORDS SOUND WRONG
THOUGH THEY ONCE SOUNDED RIGHT AND RARE
WHEN THE NOTES ARE SOUR
WHERE IS THE POWER
YOU ONCE HAD TO IGNITE THE AIR

MARK
WE’RE HUNGRY AND FROZEN

ROGER
SOME LIFE THAT WE’VE CHOSEN

TOGETHER
HOW WE GONNA PAY
HOW WE GONNA PAY
HOW WE GONNA PAY
LAST YEAR’S RENT

MARK
WE LIGHT CANDLES

ROGER
HOW DO YOU START A FIRE
WHEN THERE’S NOTHING TO BURN
AND IT FEELS LIKE SOMETHING’S STUCK IN YOUR FLUE

MARK
HOW CAN YOU GENERATE HEAT
WHEN YOU CAN’T FEEL YOUR FEET

BOTH
AND THEY’RE TURNING BLUE!

MARK
YOU LIGHT UP A MEAN BLAZE

(ROGER grabs one of his own posters)

ROGER
WITH POSTERS-

(MARK grabs old manuscripts)

MARK
AND SCREENPLAYS

ROGER & MARK
HOW WE GONNA PAY
HOW WE GONNA PAY
HOW WE GONNA PAY
LAST YEAR'S RENT

(Lights out on Loft - up on phone booth)

(JOANNE JEFFERSON appears at the pay phone)

JOANNE
DON'T SCREEN, MAUREEN
IT'S ME - JOANNE
YOUR SUBSTITUTE PRODUCTION MANAGER
HEY HEY HEY! (DID YOU EAT)
DON'T CHANGE THE SUBJECT MAUREEN
BUT DARLING - YOU HAVEN'T EATEN ALL DAY

YOU WON'T THROW UP
YOU WON'T THROW UP
THE DIGITAL DELAY--
-DIDN'T BLOW UP (EXACTLY)
THERE MAY HAVE BEEN ONE TEENY TINY SPARK
YOU'RE NOT CALLING MARK

(COLLINS struggles and stands)

COLLINS
HOW DO YOU STAY ON YOUR FEET
WHEN ON EVERY STREET
IT'S 'TRICK OR TREAT'
(AND TONIGHT ITS 'TRICK')
'WELCOME BACK TO TOWN'
I SHOULD LIE DOWN
EVERYTHING'S BROWN
AND UH - OH
I FEEL SICK

MARK (At the window)
WHERE IS HE?

COLLINS
GETTING DIZZY

(HE collapses)

MARK & ROGER
HOW WE GONNA PAY
HOW WE GONNA PAY

MARK & ROGER
HOW WE GONNA PAY
LAST YEAR'S RENT

(THEY stoke the fire)

Crosscut- Benny's Range Rover

BENNY (On Cellphone)

ALLISON BABY-YOU SOUND SAD
I CAN'T BELIEVE THOSE TWO
AFTER EVERYTHING I'VE DONE

EVER SINCE OUR WEDDING
I'M DIRT-THEY'LL SEE
I CAN HELP THEM ALL OUT IN THE LONG RUN

Add JOANNE at the phone, the Loft, and COLLINS on the ground

(The following is sung simultaneously)

BENNY
FORCES ARE GATHERING
FORCES ARE GATHERING
CAN'T TURN AWAY
FORCES ARE GATHERING

COLLINS
UGHHHHH-
UGHHHHH-
UGHHHHH- I CAN'T THINK
UGHHHHH-
UGHHHHH-
UGHHHHH- I NEED A DRINK

MARK (Reading from a script page)
"THE MUSIC IGNITES THE NIGHT WITH PASSIONATE FIRE"

JOANNE
MAUREEN-I'M NOT A THEATRE PERSON

ROGER
"THE NARRATION CRACKLES AND POPS WITH INCENDIARY WIT"

JOANNE
COULD NEVER BE A THEATRE PERSON

MARK
ZOOM IN AS THEY BURN THE PAST TO THE GROUND

JOANNE (realizing she's been cut off)

JOANNE (CONT)

HELLO?

MARK & ROGER
AND FEEL THE HEAT OF THE FUTURE'S GLOW

JOANNE

HELLO?

(The phone rings-MARK picks it up)

MARK

HELLO, MAUREEN?
-YOUR EQUIPMENT WON'T WORK?
OKAY-ALL RIGHT, I'LL GO!

MARK & HALF THE COMPANY

HOW DO YOU LEAVE THE PAST BEHIND
WHEN IT KEEPS FINDING WAYS TO GET TO YOUR HEART
IT REACHES WAY DOWN DEEP AND TEARS YOU INSIDE OUT
TIL YOU'RE TORN APART
RENT

ROGER & OTHER HALF OF COMPANY

HOW CAN YOU CONNECT IN AN AGE
WHERE STRANGERS, LANDLORDS, LOVERS
YOUR OWN BLOOD CELLS BETRAY

ALL

WHAT BINDS THE FABRIC TOGETHER
WHEN THE RAGING, SHIFTING WINDS OF CHANGE
KEEP RIPPING AWAY

BENNY

DRAW A LINE IN THE SAND
AND THEN MAKE A STAND

ROGER

USE YOUR CAMERA TO SPAR

MARK

USE YOUR GUITAR

ALL

WHEN THEY ACT TOUGH - YOU CALL THEIR BLUFF

MARK & ROGER

WE'RE NOT GONNA PAY

MARK & ROGER W/HALF THE COMPANY

WE'RE NOT GONNA PAY

MARK & ROGER W/OTHER HALF OF COMPANY
WE'RE NOT GONNA PAY

ALL
LAST YEAR'S RENT
THIS YEAR'S RENT
NEXT YEAR'S RENT

RENT RENT RENT RENT RENT
WE'RE NOT GONNA PAY RENT

ROGER & MARK
'CAUSE EVERYTHING IS RENT

05. The Street: in front of the Pay Phone. YOU OKAY HONEY?

(A HOMELESS MAN appears on the right above.
Across the stage, sitting on the sculpture is
ANGEL DUMOTT SCHUNARD with a plastic plaster tub)

A HOMELESS MAN
CHRISTMAS BELLS ARE RINGING
CHRISTMAS BELLS ARE RINGING
CHRISTMAS BELLS ARE RINGING
SOMEWHERE ELSE!
NOT HERE

(The HOMELESS MAN exits. ANGEL gets a good
beat going on the tub until a moan interrupts him.
HE starts to drum again and sees COLLINS limp to
downstage left proscenium)

ANGEL
YOU OKAY HONEY?

COLLINS
I'M AFRAID SO

ANGEL
THEY GET ANY MONEY?

COLLINS
-NO
HAD NONE TO GET-
BUT THEY PURLOINED MY COAT-
WELL YOU MISSED A SLEEVE! - THANKS

ANGEL
HELL IT'S CHRISTMAS EVE
I'M ANGEL