

QUANTUM LEAP
"A Song For The Soul"
April 7, 1963

TEASER

FADE IN

INT. BACKSTAGE - NIGHT - ON SAM

An explosion of azure and white subsides into Sam as he is being hustled off stage. He slams his head into a low overhang while screams and applause wash in from the wings. "My Boyfriends Back" vamps from the house band on stage.

WIDER ANGLE

Sam wears a beehive wig and a black chiffon dress. He is being pushed by two black girls in identical wigs and dresses. The smallest is Lynell. She is all of fifteen and a bundle of adorable energy. Next to her is Paula, seventeen, lanky and all attitude.

PAULA
(to Sam)
Are you all right?

LYNELL
(thrilled)
Listen, God listen, they love us!

PAULA
Girlfriend, we were bad!

They slide some skin and squeal with delight. The announcer yells to the audience from the stage.

BOBBY LEE'S VOICE
Y'all want more?

Screams and cheers from the crowd.

BOBBY LEE'S VOICE (CONT'D)
Let's bring 'em back one more time!
(beat)
Ladies and Gentlemen, The Lovettes.

They both turn wide-eyed to Sam; a mix of panic and delight flushes their faces.

LYNELL
They want an encore!
(beat)
Cheree, what do we do!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SAM

What?

NEW ANGLE - INCLUDING BOBBY LEE

He's slick and handsome and is all style with his conk and shiny sharkskin suit. He anxiously rushes up to the girls and Sam.

BOBBY LEE

Ladies, ladies, get to it!

PAULA

We don't have any more songs.

BOBBY LEE

(to Sam)

Just do a reprise. Cheree?

SAM

Oh, no I...I don't think I...

Sam catches his reflection in a full length mirror.

SAM'S POV - INTO MIRROR

A healthy black girl, stuffed into the chiffon dress, stares back at him. Her eyes widen as she looks from the beehive wig and down to the dress. Then settling on Cheree's face, we hear...

LYNELLS VOICE

Come on Cheree.

FEATURING SAM - INCLUDING MIRROR IMAGE

His expression is one of total stun as he mouths...

SAM

Oh, boy.

PAULA

(calls out to the
band leader)

From the bridge!

They shove a reluctant Sam back on stage as we...

FADE OUT:

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

FADE IN

INT. BOBBY'S BLUE NOTE NIGHTCLUB - NIGHT - FEATURING SAM

He is hopelessly trying to get through the lyrics, not to mention the choreography of "My Boy Friend's Back."

PAULA/LYNELL/SAM

'And he knows that you've been tryin', and he knows that you've been lyin'. What made you think he believes all your lies. My Boy Friend's back and there's gonna be trouble.'

SAM AND PAULA

'Hey la de la, My Boy Friend's back. Hey la del la My Boy Friend's Back.'

Lynell wails on top, trying to hold onto the crowd all the while looking from Paula to Sam, as if he's lost his mind.

WIDER SHOT

The audience is with them for awhile, but even they are having trouble figuring out what the hell is going on. The handclaps dissipate from a rockin' full house to a measly few.

CLOSE ON SAM

He's dying. As he smiles and fakes his way through the end of the number, you have to feel for the way he's suffering.

ON GIRLS AND SAM

They can't believe what's happening. They hit their final pose and Sam scrambles to match the picture. We hold an anguished beat, and we hang on to the sound of one hand clapping, as we...

CUT TO:

EXT. CHICAGO STREET - NIGHT - ON SAM AND GIRLS

They talk and walk down a southside neighborhood street, carrying their bundles of costumes and wigs. Their makeup has been washed away and they are dressed in cotton dresses

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

of the period. For the first time you can see how young these girls are. In the distance a street gang harmonizes a "Do Wop".

LYNELL'S VOICE

You must have hit your head a lot harder than you thought.

CUT TO:

NEW ANGLE

Sam looks around him, a little uncomfortable about the area they are walking in. They pass an occasional wino.

SAM

Uh...yeah. I guess I did.

PAULA

(angry)

We could have won.

(beat)

That would have been a hundred dollars, new costumes and a shot at the finals.

LYNELL

Bobby Lee said we could come back and try again.

PAULA

He was scopin' you so hard, he would have said anything.

LYNELL

That's not true. He just saw that Cheree hurt herself and wanted to give us another chance.

PAULA

We should have won.

Paula notices Sam checking out the street.

PAULA (CONT'D)

(to Sam)

Now, what's your problem?

SAM

Well, I was just thinking that it was kind of late for you...us...to be out walking around by ourselves.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

LYNELL

My daddy would kill me if he knew I was here and so would yours.

PAULA

Cheree's old man doesn't stay home long enough to know when she's gone.

RAG HEAD TEEN'S VOICE

Hey baby, come on over here and talk to me.

The "Do Wop" dissipates into cat calls and whistles.

NEW ANGLE - INCLUDING THREE HARD-LOOKING BLACKS

They lounge all over the stoop of a run-down Brownstone. Garbage is strewn around them.

PAULA

Now, who the hell would want to talk to your ugly ass?

SAM

Paula...

RAG HEAD TEEN

You're talkin' to me, Paula. Come on, bring your fine brown body over here...

PAULA

I said I don't talk to night crawlers. So why don't you just crawl back into whatever hole you crawled out of.

The boys start to get up and Paula stops defiantly and puts her hands on her hips. Sam grabs Paula by the arm and pulls her along.

LYNELL

Damn, Paula!

SAM

(to girls)
Just keep walking.

The boys circle around in front of them. The Rag Head stops Sam.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

RAG HEAD TEEN

What about you darlin'? 'Cause you know I like me some tall, healthy woman.

SAM

Why don't you and your friends just go on back and sit down.

RAG HEAD TEEN

Why don't you just sit down with me?

LYNELL

Well, actually we were supposed to be home hours ago, and my father's gonna be real upset if...

RAG HEAD TEEN

(grabbing Lynell)
Well, let's give him somethin' to be real upset about.

NEW ANGLE - FEATURING SAM

Sam's moves are so fast that the youth never knew what hit him. A roundhouse kick, followed through with a straight kick, sends the boy into a mound of trash cans. The little group stands frozen in shock for a beat and then Sam takes a stance to face off the other two youths. They scramble and vanish into the night, with the Rag Head a few steps behind.

ON SAM, PAULA AND LYNELL

They are staring at Sam with their mouths hanging wide open.

Sam shuffles, trying to cover and starts walking, dragging the two stunned girls with him.

PAULA

How did you do that?

SAM

I think we better get home.

LYNELL

We live this way.

(turning the corner)
Cheree, I think we better get you to the hospital. I mean, somethin' must of really happened when you hit your head.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

PAULA

Are you crazy? That bump turned
this child into some kind of
supergirl.

Paula mimics one of Sam's moves like a dance step.

PAULA (CONT'D)

Maybe we can put some of it in the
act.

(beat)

I love this move.

SAM

I...really don't know what happened
back there. But I do know young
girls shouldn't be walking the
streets at two in the morning.

LYNELL

Especially one with a mouth like
Paula.

PAULA

I can take care of myself!

LYNELL

Yeah, right.

NEW ANGLE

They turn the corner and head past a row of old Brownstone houses. They stop and head down some steep steps to a basement door. Lynell hands her bundle to Sam. Her voice drops to a whisper and she begins to work the lock with a hidden key.

LYNELL (CONT'D)

(continuing)

All I know is if Cheree hadn't done
whatever it was she did, you'd be
tellin' my daddy about it 'cause
I'd a made sure I was dead.

(reaching for
bundle)

Are you gonna spend the night?

SAM

Well, no, maybe I better...

MAN'S VOICE

Maybe the three of you better...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (5)

WIDER ANGLE - INCLUDING REVEREND WALTERS

He's a tall, imposing man of about fifty. He stands before them wearing a simple sweater and a stern look. Reverend Walters voice explodes like a cannon in the night.

REV. WALTERS

...get your hides right through this door and do some serious explaining about what my daughter is doing out until two in the morning.

Paula, Sam and Lynell look like deer caught in someone's headlights, wide-eyed and frozen.

REV. WALTERS (CONT'D)

I said, inside!

SAM'S VOICE OVER

Leaping into other people's lives has taught me never to judge a book by its cover, as well as many other equally cliché, but useful, sayings.

Sam and the girls march sheepishly inside, as we...

CUT TO:

INT. WALTERS HOME - MIRROR SHOT

The girls sit quietly in a row on the living room couch looking down at their hands while the Reverend preaches to them about the sins of singing in nightclubs. Lynell is in tears.

REV. WALTERS

...and you certainly aren't old enough or experienced enough to understand the kind of people who frequent places like that. Not to mention the fact that three young girls have no place on the streets of Chicago unescorted at two o'clock in the morning. And since you are foolish enough to not understand the dangers of life in a big city...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SAM'S VOICE OVER

I liked this man. Even with all his blustering and bravado, Reverend Walters was actually saying everything that I had wanted to say since this leap started. His concern for his daughter's safety and well-being was as grounded in as much reality as the walk we just took home.

NEW ANGLE

Camera pans around with the pacing Reverend to reveal Sam sitting on the couch.

REV. WALTERS

So, I've taken it upon myself to call your parents and tell them what's going on and how you children have lied to us.

LYNELL

We wouldn't have to lie if you'd come hear us, Daddy.

PAULA

We're really good, Reverend.

REV. WALTERS

I will not support my fifteen-year-old daughter singing in a brothel.

PAULA

It's not a brothel!

REV. WALTERS

Paula, your mother is waiting up for you right now and Cheree, since your parents are...not in...you are staying with Lynell and I, until they come back.

LYNELL

I...I don't think you understand how important this is to us, Daddy.

REV. WALTERS

(to Lynell)

What's important is that you understand there will be no more nonsense about singing in nightclubs.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

NEW ANGLE - FEATURING LYNELL AND REVEREND WALTERS

Lynell stands in terrified defiance, her small frame dwarfed under his strong angular shoulders. She unleashes a rage of anger.

LYNELL

It...it's not nonsense.

REV. WALTERS

Not finishing school is nonsense.
Not getting your degree is
nonsense. Not becoming...

LYNELL

I want people to hear me sing!

REV. WALTERS

You can sing for God and my
congregation.

LYNELL

God gave me a voice to do with
whatever I want.

REV. WALTERS

Not as long as you are under my
roof.

LYNELL

Then I'll leave!

SAM

Lynell!

LYNELL

(to Sam)
I won't let him lock me away in
this miserable house. I killed mama
and I won't let it kill me too!

With that Lynell runs out of the room, trying desperately to hold onto her emotions.

REV. WALTERS

Lynell! Lynell Walters!

(beat)

You come back here.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

NEW ANGLE - ON ALL

Sobbing, Lynell races up the stairs to her bedroom. Paula is on her feet and about to go after her when Reverend Walters holds her back.

REV. WALTERS (CONT'D)

Let her go, Paula.

Paula turns on the Reverend. He is crestfallen by his daughter's words. His eyes never leave the empty stairs.

PAULA

She didn't mean that, Reverend. I swear she didn't.

REV. WALTERS

(softly)

But she did. She still misses her mother.

(beat)

I love her and I have to do what I believe is right. She'll understand that when she grows up.

(to Paula)

I better walk you home. Your mama's up waitin' for you.

SAM

I'll walk her home. Why don't you go talk to your daughter.

The Reverend smiles.

REV. WALTERS

And then who's gonna walk you back here?

PAULA

Cheree can take care of herself, Reverend. You should have seen...

Sam clamps a hand over her mouth to shut her up. Sam looks into the mirror.

SAM'S POV - MIRROR SHOT - ON CHEREE AND PAULA

The two girls stand there as Paula pulls her hand away and shoots her a look.

SAM/CHEREE

Of course. I don't know what I was thinking of.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

NEW ANGLE - BACK ON SCENE

The Reverend Walters picks up Paula's bundle, hands it to her and then gestures toward the door. He turns back to Sam.

REV. WALTERS

Tell Lynell to get you a nightgown from her mother's chest. There's a blue one that should fit you just fine.

(beat)

We'll all talk after services tomorrow.

With that he opens the door and gestures for Paula to exit. Paula shoots a last look at Sam and they head out, closing the door behind him.

NEW ANGLE - INCLUDING AL

He stands quietly in the b.g., watching. Sam startles a beat when he sees him.

SAM

How long have you been here?

OBSERVER

Long enough to hear the fireworks between Lynell and her father.

SAM

She's a very angry little girl.

OBSERVER

All Ziggy's come up with is that her mother dies five years ago of no apparent causes.

(beat)

From what little we have to put together, she just went to her bed one day and stayed there until she died, six months later.

SAM

What did the autopsy say?

OBSERVER

No autopsy.

SAM

So Ziggy thinks I'm here to help Lynell deal with her mother's death.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (5)

OBSERVER

We don't know. We're still assimilating the data.

SAM

Well, what do you know?

LYNELL'S VOICE

Know about what?

NEW ANGLE - INCLUDING LYNELL

She stands watching Sam with a curious look on her face. He picks up a photo of the three girls together in the living room.

SAM

That...you still have this old picture of us.

OBSERVER

Good recovery, Sam.

LYNELL

Old? I just got that printed last week.

OBSERVER

Not so good.

SAM

Last week! How time flies when you're having...fun.

OBSERVER

Quit while you're ahead, Sam.

LYNELL

People are gonna think you're as crazy as I feel.

SAM

You're not crazy.

Sam crosses next to her and the two of them sit on the sofa.

FEATURING SAM AND LYNELL

She is dressed in her babydoll PJ's and holds a folded nightgown in her arms. There is almost a reverence in the way she touches it before she passes it on to Sam. Al stands to the sides. He and Sam exchange a look. The handlink beeps.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (6)

LYNELL

I'm going to be, if I don't get out of this house.

OBSERVER

According to Ziggy, she runs away day after tomorrow.

SAM

What happened?

OBSERVER

No data.

LYNELL

You heard him. He's got my life planned for the next twenty years.

SAM

Your father seems to be trying to protect you.

LYNELL

He wants to control me.

SAM

He loves you.

LYNELL

It's killing me, Cheree. The same way it killed my mother.

NEW ANGLE

Sam and Al exchange a look.

OBSERVER

Don't look at me. Ziggy's working as fast as he can.

SAM

I don't think your mother's death was your father's fault.

LYNELL

You weren't here, Cheree. You didn't see what it was like.

(beat)

She had no friends. She wasn't allowed to go out, except to church.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (7)

SAM
You're just angry and...

LYNELL
(sadly)
No, I'm not. And I'm not going to
let him lock me in and make me
shrivel up and die so he won't be
alone!

(beat)
I'm hungry, want some chicken?

With that she heads into the kitchen.

NEW ANGLE - FEATURING SAM AND AL

They watch her as she exits the room. Al works the handlink.

SAM
What happens, Al?

OBSERVER
She runs away and tries to make it
as a singer. Gets locked up in a
slave contract, someone named Bobby
Lee and it's pretty downhill from
there on out.

SAM
Downhill?

OBSERVER
Drugs, arrests, crummy little
clubs.

SAM
And her father?

We hear the sounds of the front door opening and they both
turn.

NEW ANGLE - FEATURING REVEREND WALTERS

tired and troubled. He locks the front door, his mind
preoccupied with the events of the evening.

OBSERVER
Dies in Seventy-two after losing
his church to a fire.

(beat)
Ziggy says he and Lynell never
speak to each other again.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (8)

CLOSE ON SAM

He looks from Al to Reverend Walters and back again, as we...

FADE OUT:

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN

EXT. CHURCH FRONT - DAY - ESTABLISHING - STOCK

The strains of a gospel chorus wail and fill the cloudless sky with songs of praise. Above the chorus Lynell's voice soars clear and free singing, "He may not come when you want him, but he's right on time."

CHOIR

He may not come when you want him,
but he's right on time. Right on,
on time. He may not come when you
want him, but he's right on time,
on time.

INT. CHURCH FRONT - DAY - FEATURING LYNELL, SAM AND PAULA

She stands among the choir, her face glowing with the spirit of God. Next to her, Sam claps to the rhythm of the music as he watches Lynell. The organ and tambourines, as well as the handclaps of the congregation, praise the Lord.

CHOIR

Same today and forever more, He'll
be there, don't you worry. He will
open every door. He may not come
when you want him, but he on time.

(Repeat)

Right on, right on, Right on time,
he's on time. Right on. Right on
Right on. Right on.

WIDER ANGLE - ON ALL

The song ends on a sustain that's so powerful it sends shivers up your spine and then falls into the revel of praises and amens.

CONGREGATION

Amen! Praise the Lord! God
Almighty!

NEW ANGLE - FEATURING REVEREND WALTERS

He stands and crosses to the podium, his face reflecting power and reverence. He stops and studies his congregation. They respond to his sermon as the spirit moves them.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

REV. WALTERS

The voices of children.

(beat)

The voices of children raised in praise to the Lord God Almighty. You know what that means, brothers and sisters? It means...we are blessed.

CONGREGATION

Yes, Lord. Bless the children.

REV. WALTERS

Blessed are those who walk in the name of the Lord.

(beat)

We are blessed. But with each blessing comes the dangers of temptation. Sinful temptation that often leads those pure, sweet young spirits to stand in the fiery light of Satan himself.

CONGREGATION

Save us Father! Sweet Jesus!

NEW ANGLE - FEATURING LYNELL

It's obvious by the expression on her face that she's angry at the intimation her father is preaching. She exchanges looks with Sam.

REV. WALTERS

And in that burning light those innocent children lose their way to God's light. And fall by the wayside...like the seeds of the farmer that fall upon the barren rock never to take root and bear fruit.

(beat)

God help us save the children from damnation.

CONGREGATION

Save the children.

OBSERVER'S VOICE

Amen. Hallelujah!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

NEW ANGLE - SAM AND AL

He stands next to Sam obviously caught up in the passion of the sermon. Sam just looks at him.

OBSERVER

There's nothing like a good preacher to make you remember the devil's out there waiting to try and getcha.

SAM

(whispered aside)
Does that mean he got you and forgot to let go?

LYNELL

(whispered aside)
What?

SAM

(whispered)
I...uh...have to go to the ladies room.

Lynell nods and turns back as the choir stands to sing. Sam rises and crosses in front of Al, gesticulating for him to follow.

OBSERVER

Got me and forgot to let go.

Al feigns mock hurt and exits. Sam makes faces of "I have to go to the bathroom" as he passes the pianist

INT. SIDE CORRIDOR OF CHURCH - ON SAM AND AL

They slip out the door and into a narrow corridor. The choir goes into a rich spiritual. "Walk in the light of the Lord."

OBSERVER

I resent your insinuations.
(beat)

I'll have you know that I went to Catholic schools my whole life.

SAM

That was at the orphanage and only until you ran away.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

OBSERVER

It always amazes me what your Swiss-cheesed brain chooses to remember.

SAM

I think I figured out why I'm here.

OBSERVER

Ziggy says there's a ninety percent chance you're here to keep Lynell out of show business.

SAM

Wrong.

OBSERVER

Wrong?

SAM

Wrong.

(beat)

I'm here to make sure her father supports her and therefore keeps their relationship intact.

OBSERVER

No, no, no, Ziggy says...

SAM

Ziggy has been known to be wrong.

OBSERVER

So, you and I have to trust her statistics over yours.

SAM

Why?

OBSERVER

She keeps better records.

(reading handlink)

Besides, Ziggy says the day after tomorrow, you're supposed to sing in some local contest. The winner gets a hundred bucks and a guest spot at the Regal Theater.

SAM

Regal Theater?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

OBSERVER
It's Chicago's version of the
Apollo.

NEW ANGLE

Sam walks forward and peers into a side window of the church.

SAM
Except Lynell didn't sing.

SAM'S POV - LYNELL

singing with the choir.

OBSERVER'S VOICE
She sings, alright.

BACK ON SAM AND AL

Sam turns from the window and stares at Al.

OBSERVER
Apparently she lies to her father.
He finds out, traces her to the
club and pulls her off stage in the
middle of the show. A fight breaks
out and...

SAM
Lynell never forgives him.

OBSERVER
Bingorooney.

SAM
Then I'm right.
(beat)
I'm here to help Reverend Walters
understand and accept his daughter.

OBSERVER
How are you supposed to do that?

SAM
Maybe if he saw how good we were...
(realizing)
...oh no! That means I'll have to
sing.

OBSERVER
So?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

SAM

So! First of all I don't know the songs or the routines and secondly...I'm a man, not a sixteen year old girl.

OBSERVER

That's never stopped you before. Besides, they'll see and hear Cheree.

SAM

What does Ziggy say are the chances of winning?

OBSERVER

(checking the handlink)
Fifty-fifty. But I could up the odds with the right music and a few choice steps.

SAM

I don't know a few choice steps.

OBSERVER

(big smile)
I do. I'll teach you some moves...

SAM

You'll teach me some moves?

Al does a step slide a la The Temptations.

OBSERVER

Sam, I saw the Regal in its prime. Smokey, the Marvellettes, Martha and the Vandellas, James Brown.

(beat)

All you've got to do is get your harmonies tight and remember to say...

THE LOVETTES VOICES

Do you love me? Do you love me?

EXT. WALTERS HOME - DAY - ESTABLISHING

The row house sits like a cookie cut out of the two that rest on either side. In the heart of Forty-seventh street, their home has the grace of a cared-for property. A rough

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

piano track with drums, plays on the Wallensack tape deck underneath their voices.

THE LOVETTES VOICES

Do you love me? Do you love me? Do
you love me? Do you love me? Now
that I can Dance. Dance, Dance,
Dance!

INT. LYNELL'S BEDROOM - MIRROR SHOT

The three of them strike poses in the mirror to the rhythm of the music...hands on hips and then in the air singing as they struggle through the new positions. There is something strange about the movements, as we pull back to reveal...

PULL BACK - INCLUDING SAM AND AL

Al (who doesn't reflect in the mirror) stands in front of the group and strikes a pose. Sam follows and Paula and Lynell copy him.

LYNELL

I can mash potatoes.

SAM/PAULA/AL

I can really groove.

LYNELL

I can do the twist.

Paula is getting frustrated. Lynell is doing the best she can.

PAULA

I don't get these steps.

SAM/AL

I can really move.

OBSERVER

Trust me, Sam. These moves made The Temptations famous.

LYNELL

Won't you tell me baby.

SAM

These steps are ahead of their time.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PAULA/AL
Tell me baby.

LYNELL
Are you in the mood?

PAULA
These steps are out of time.
(beat)
Damn, Cheree, you're movin' like a
white girl.

ALL
Are you in the mood. Tell me! Tell
me! Tell me!

OBSERVER
Stay with me, Sam.

NEW ANGLE

Sam rolls his eyes to heaven as they start to fall into a groove. The song lays into the ending vamp and even Sam looks like he's starting to have fun.

LYNELL
I can mash potatoes.

SAM/PAULA/AL
I can really groove.

LYNELL
I can do the twist.

SAM/PAULA/AL
I can really move.

LYNELL
Won't you tell me baby.

SAM/PAULA/AL
Tell me baby.

LYNELL
Are you in the mood.

ALL
Are you in the mood. Tell me! Tell
me! Tell me!

(beat)
Hey push push. Aw shake it shake it
baby. I can really move. Push push.
Aw shake it shake it baby.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

ALL (CONT'D)

(beat)

Now that I can dance...dance...
dance. Watch me now. Hey, push.

They punch the ending and freeze for a beat in a "Supremes" type pose. Then break and squeal with delight, applauding themselves.

OBSERVER

Don't be too thrilled. You guys
still need a lot of work.

SAM

We still need a lot of work.

PAULA

We'll be terrific!

LYNELL

Yeah, but we're doing the wrong
song.

PAULA

'Dance' was a number-one hit.

LYNELL

But that's just it, it was...we
need something hot.

Sam looks to Al. Al dives on the handlink.

SAM

Lynell is right. We need something
with some real fire.

PAULA

What?

OBSERVER

'Mickey's Monkey?'

SAM

Mickey's Monkey!

LYNELL

What?

OBSERVER

Oh. No. It won't be out for another
month. 'Can I Get A Witness'?

Sam starts to speak, but Al cuts him off.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

SAM

Uh...

OBSERVER

Never mind. Not out.

PAULA

What? What!

BOBBY LEE'S VOICE

How about 'Heat Wave'?

NEW ANGLE - FEATURING BOBBY LEE

He stands in the bedroom doorway looking wickedly handsome and holding a slip covered forty-five. The girls are stunned and Sam and Al are suspicious.

BOBBY LEE

It's by Martha and the Vandellas and I just so happen to have a pre-release on it.

OBSERVER

Who's this jabor?

SAM

How'd you get in here, Mister Lee?

BOBBY LEE

(piano smile)
I told you to call me Bobby.

Al starts a rundown on Bobby. It's obvious that Lynell has a crush on him. But she's more afraid of her father than of her emotional attraction.

LYNELL

My father will get upset if he finds you here, Bobby.

PAULA

He'll be more than upset, honey. We're talking murder in the first degree.

CLOSE ON LYNELL AND BOBBY LEE

He crosses uncomfortably close and stands next to Lynell. He strokes her cheek as he talks to her, his eyes locked into her eyes. There is some definite heat between them and Lynell is totally overwhelmed.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

BOBBY LEE

Well, that's because a lady would never entertain a gentleman in her bedroom.

SAM

Well, since you understand that, why don't we go downstairs.

BOBBY LEE

It's not my fault, you see. There I was, walking down the street, and I heard that sweet, sensual voice of yours riding on a cool breeze. So I walked up to the door and knocked. But nobody came. So I knocked a little harder and...

(gesturing the door)

...it opened.

Al steps into the shot.

OBSERVER

Watch him, Sam. This guy's slicker than spit on a pair of patent leather shoes.

WIDER ANGLE - INCLUDING AL

Sam steps in between Bobby and Lynell and breaks the moment.

SAM

You shouldn't be here.

BOBBY LEE

Lynell knows I mean no disrespect.

OBSERVER

Trust me, Sam. This is a snake.

SAM

I'm sure you didn't. So why don't you leave.

He kisses Lynell's hand and steps back near Paula, handing her the record.

BOBBY LEE

I still meant what I said about this song.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (5)

BOBBY LEE (CONT'D)

(beat)
 You girls sing this tomorrow night
 and you are a cinch for first place
 and a shot at the Regal.

(beat)
 Especially with a voice like
 Lynell's.

LYNELL

We don't have charts for the band
 or...

BOBBY LEE

Can you learn the song?

PAULA/LYNELL

Well, yeah.

BOBBY LEE

Then I'll get Rainy to do up some
 charts. He knows your keys.

SAM

Why?

Bobby Lee cuts Sam a look. The handlink goes wild.

BOBBY LEE

'Cause I believe in talent. And if
 you win, you sign an exclusive
 contract with Bobby Lee and I take
 you all the way to the top.

The handlink starts to beep in Al's hand.

OBSERVER

More like the bottom. Get this Sam.
 Robert Z. Lee. Small time business
 man. Part-time pimp.

BOBBY LEE

Well? What do you say?

OBSERVER

Owner of the Blue Note Nightclub,
 ended up doing twenty in the big
 house for statutory rape.

SAM

Lynell?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (6)

LYNELL

(in response to Sam)
I...I don't know if we can get it
together that fast.

OBSERVER

No data.

Sam takes Bobby's arm and directs him out the door. Bobby's surprised by the brute force.

SAM

Well, Mister Lee Lynell, Paula and
I need to talk about this and...
listen to the song...

INT. WALTERS LIVING ROOM - DAY - FEATURING SAM AND BOBBY LEE

Sam is escorting him down the stairs and toward the front door.

SAM

...before we can make a final
decision.

BOBBY LEE

That's a hellified grip you've got
there darlin'.

SAM

You don't know the half of it.

WIDER ANGLE - TO REVEAL REVEREND WALTERS

Paula and Lynell are close behind. Sam reaches the door and runs smack dab into the Reverend who's standing in the doorway watching everything. Al pops in just in time to know there's big trouble. Everyone else freezes. Like a bolt of lightning he's got Bobby by the collar, dragging him toward the door.

LYNELL

Daddy!

REV. WALTERS

Get out of my house!

SAM

He came by to bring us a new
record.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PAULA

That's the God's truth, Reverend Walters. It's so new it hasn't even been played on the radio yet.

Reverend Walters slams Bobby into the door frame and then looks at Sam and the girls.

REV. WALTERS

Then you better tell me why this sinner has to deliver his record to my daughter's bedroom?

LYNELL

Daddy!

REV. WALTERS

(flaring)
I asked a question.

BOBBY LEE

The fact that I don't attend your church doesn't make me a sinner, Reverend.

REV. WALTERS

Even the fact that you don't attend any church doesn't make you a sinner.

(beat)

But what you said to Leda Brown's little girl, that makes you a sinner.

BOBBY LEE

(controlled smile)
That's her word against mine. Now if you don't mind.

Bobby pries the Reverend's hands off his jacket lapels. Again Sam looks to Al. Al punches the handlink.

OBSERVER

I got nothing, Sam. Whatever happened, the charges were never pressed or else they didn't stick.

REV. WALTERS

Well, in my home your word has as much truth as the devil hisself.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

LYNELL
 (exploding)
 Stop it!
 (beat)
 Mister Lee was trying to be nice to
 me, not commit a crime.

REV. WALTERS
 This man will only hurt you,
 Lynell.

LYNELL
 Does that privilege only belong to
 you?

Reverend Walters raises his hand to slap Lynell's face. He freezes as she cowers, covering her face. The group is stunned.

FEATURING LYNELL

Her eyes widen. Shock is the only emotion. He trembles, trying to control himself.

REV. WALTERS
 Go to your room!

LYNELL
 No.

REV. WALTERS
 You will not defy me!
 (to Bobby)
 And you stay away from my daughter
 or as God is my witness, I'll rip
 that brothel down with my bare
 hands.

BOBBY LEE
 If you step one foot into my club
 I'll tear you apart old man.

OBSERVER
 Do something, Sam. This must be
 where it started.

LYNELL
 Stop it!

SAM
 You better leave, Mister Lee.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

Reverend Walters and Bobby are nose to nose. Sam steps in the middle and pushes the Reverend gently back toward the stairs.

SAM (CONT'D)
Please.

BOBBY LEE
I'm leaving.

Even Bobby Lee knows when it's time to go and exits out the door. Lynell moves to follow.

LYNELL
Daddy, don't do this.

REV. WALTERS
I'm doing this for your own good.
(beat)
Now come in and close the door.

Reverend Walters goes back into the kitchen as Lynell glances from Bobby to her father. As soon as the Reverend disappears, Lynell is out the door.

EXT. WALTERS PORCH - ON SAM AND LYNELL

She exits out onto the street, Sam is close behind. He grabs her arm and turns her.

SAM
Lynell.

She turns and looks at Sam and then after Bobby Lee, who disappears down the street.

LYNELL
He's my chance to get out of here.

SAM
Maybe there's another way.

LYNELL
What?

SAM
I don't know.

LYNELL
Then let me talk to him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SAM

Not until you give me a chance to
figure out another way.

She looks after Bobby then back to Sam. Flustered, she gives Sam a look and turns going back into the house. Al pops next to Sam.

OBSERVER

You better think of something, Sam.

SAM

I have.

(beat)

I want you to get me the names of
all the local record companies in
Chicago.

(beat)

I'm going to call every one of them
until I get somebody to come here
The Lovettes. Maybe I can make
Lynell understand there's better
people out there than Bobby Lee.

CLOSE ON SAM

His eyes shift from Al to Lynell. His face is filled with concern, as we...

FADE OUT:

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN

EXT. CHICAGO SOUTHSIDE ELL TRACKS - NIGHT -ESTABLISHING - STOCK

The city stretches out before us filled with a million faces. As they pass, each face keeps its secrets.

INT. WALTERS LIVING ROOM - NIGHT - FEATURING LYNELL

Lynell sits on the steps, staring down at her shoes and humming. After a beat, Sam comes in and crosses to sit beside her.

SAM
What are you doing?

LYNELL
Lookin' at my feet.

SAM
(looking down)
Nice feet.

LYNELL
(sigh)
Yep, and they're nailed down right here at forty-seventh and Ellis. Nailed down tighter than pine coffin...
(looking to Sam)
...and I'm running out of air, Cheree.

Sam puts a comforting arm around her slumped shoulders.

SAM
You're going to be fine.

LYNELL
(funny smile)
That's what my momma used to say. She'd say, you'll make it just fine Lynell. Just fine.

SAM
I'm sure she meant it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NEW ANGLE

Lynell gets up and crosses to the upright piano that sits in the corner of the room. She picks up a photo of her mother.

CLOSE ON PHOTO

She is a beautiful woman in her thirties. Alive and vibrant.

LYNELL'S VOICE

She meant it until the day she
decided to die.

ON LYNELL AND SAM

She stares sadly down at the photo.

SAM

People don't decide to die.

LYNELL

Momma did.

(beat)

And you know what? I think she was
happy. Happy to be free.

SAM

She couldn't have been happy,
Lynell...not to leave a daughter
she loved.

LYNELL

She hated him more.

Setting the photo down.

LYNELL (CONT'D)

(continuing)

She tried to leave him once. She
took me and she tried to run away.
But he brought us back.

(beat)

You know why?

SAM

Because he loved you.

LYNELL

Because he was afraid of what
people would say about the
righteous Reverend Walters if his
wife had run off and left him.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

LYNELL (CONT'D)

(beat)
It didn't matter that she was unhappy. Or that she had no life of her own. The only thing that mattered was what everybody thought.

(beat)
That's when she decided to die. And so will I if we don't sing in that contest tomorrow night.

SAM

Singing in a talent contest isn't going to save your life.

LYNELL

Bobby will give us a contract and...

SAM

We don't need Bobby Lee or his contract.

He holds up a piece of paper.

SAM (CONT'D)

(continuing)
I called Mister Madison Simms, he's head of Checker Records and he's willing to hear us sing.

LYNELL

(excited)
When?

SAM

As soon as I can find a club.

LYNELL

(excited)
He can hear us at Bobby's club tomorrow night.

SAM

No.

LYNELL

We don't have a choice.

NEW ANGLE

Sam is up and pacing. He knows he is running out of time.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

SAM
(reluctantly)
Okay, we sing in the club.

LYNELL
(thrilled)
Alright!

SAM
But you have to promise not to sign
with Bobby.

LYNELL
What?

SAM
And...finish high school.

WIDER ANGLE

The look of hope in her eyes changes to one of betrayal. Sam crosses to her and turns her to him.

SAM (CONT'D)
Trust me, Lynell. It's the only way
to get your father to let you sing.

LYNELL
I can't change him, Cheree.

SAM
I think I'm here to try.

Lynell thinks about Sam's idea. Part of her wants to believe and the other struggles with what has gone before.

Finally...

LYNELL
How?

SAM
We'll invite your father down to
see us.

Her face falls.

LYNELL
Are you crazy?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

SAM

It's the only way. He'll accept
your singing career and you accept
his love.

(beat)

It's the only way.

LYNELL

But if this doesn't work...

She turns and walks up the steps.

OBSERVER'S VOICE

It doesn't work.

WIDER ANGLE ON SAM AND AL

Al stands by the steps watching as Lynell disappears
upstairs.

LYNELL

...we sign with Bobby.

OBSERVER

According to Ziggy, she ends up
with Bobby and a miserable life.

When she's out of earshot...

SAM

I don't think history can change
until after I talk to her father.

OBSERVER

And when do you plan to do that?

SAM

Tomorrow night right before the
show. You'll choreograph some steps
to the new song and...

OBSERVER

What about the sleaze with the
perfect teeth?

SAM

What he doesn't know won't hurt him
and keeping Lynell out of his
clutches is all that matters.

Al looks at Sam wondering if he's bitten off more than he
can chew. He punches up the stats on the handlink.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (5)

OBSERVER

Ziggy says this is still going to be a disaster.

SAM

Tell Ziggy to have a little faith in human nature.

OBSERVER

(the handlink
squeals at him)

She says that's the problem.

Sam looks at Al, whose look of concern only spurs him on more, as we hear...

OBSERVER'S VOICE

Hands over your heart and pump those hips.

INT. BLUE NOTE CLUB - DAY - ON SAM AND GIRLS

They are dressed in rehearsal clothes and standing three across with Sam out front leading them through the moves.

SAM

Then on 'itchin' in my heart, fists clenched over your heart...

WIDER TO REVEAL AL

He dances a few feet ahead of them. A waiter passes by.

OBSERVER

(to waiter)

Hey, watch where you're going!

(to Sam)

Pump those hips. Then rip and open and shoulder, shoulder.

SAM

Keep the hip action. 'Tearin' it all apart'. Then tear and open your hands like this and shoulder, shoulder...

PAULA

Show me that shoulder thing again.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NEW ANGLE

Sam steps back and does the whole sequence again slowly with Lynell and Paula.

SAM

Then when we say, 'It's like a heat wave', both hands go up...

OBSERVER

...and shimmy down your body, real sexy and sensual...

Al is getting off on his choreography. Sam shoots him a look as if to say, 'Cool off'.

OBSERVER (CONT'D)

Okay, okay, a little sexy.

Sam repeats the look and they put all the moves together.

LYNELL

Okay, let's try it with the words. Take it from the chorus.

ANOTHER ANGLE - FEATURING BOBBY LEE

He sits at one of the cocktail tables watching Lynell, with a look of a cat about to pounce on a canary. Rainy Gregoir, the musical director, comes to the table and shows Bobby the charts. He's a fair-skinned Creole with glasses and mussed hair.

RAINY

These charts are so hot I hope to hell your girls can handle them.

BOBBY LEE

Lynell will do fine and that's all that matters to me.

(calling out to Sam)

Cheree. Rainy's made a pass on the chord sheet. You want to take a look at it.

He says something to Bobby and Bobby gestures him toward the stage.

WIDER ON AL

Sam stops the rehearsal.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

SAM

Uh...Okay.

OBSERVER

Say 'Let's take five!'.

SAM

Take five everybody.

(aside to Al)

I forget, can I read music?

OBSERVER

You have a doctorate in it

SAM

Oh. Good.

Sam and Rainy meet by the first row of tables. Sam and Al study the chart while Lynell looks on. Paula slips into the wings and after a beat something catches Lynell's eye.

NEW ANGLE

We see Bobby crook a finger to Lynell. She smiles and looks around then slips over to talk to him.

CLOSE ON BOBBY AND LYNELL

He leads her off into a shadowy corner of the club where they can talk privately.

BOBBY LEE

You ladies are going to be fantastic.

LYNELL

There's so much to do and it's already one o'clock.

BOBBY LEE

You'll be perfect.

(pulling her away)

Come here, I want to show you something.

INT. BACKSTAGE WINGS - ON LYNELL AND BOBBY

He takes her into the dimly lit corridor that leads to the dressing rooms. Lynell is uncomfortable and hesitant.

LYNELL

Where are we going?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BOBBY LEE

I have a little surprise for you.

He stops at a wardrobe rack and pulls back a sheet to reveal...

NEW ANGLE - FEATURING THREE SEQUIN GOWNS

Even in the dim light they sparkle and shine almost as much as Lynell's eyes.

LYNELL

Oh Bobby, they're beautiful!

BOBBY LEE

I had them made for a girls group I was puttin' together but...things didn't work out.

(beat)

I want you girls to wear them tonight.

LYNELL

(thrilled)

Oh, Bobby!

BOBBY LEE

Now they're just on loan until you're under contract and start earning some real money. Then you can pay me back.

LYNELL

I...I don't know what to say.

CLOSE ON BOBBY AND LYNELL

He smiles as he runs his fingers down her neck. She is caught in his eyes. Slowly his face moves toward hers.

BOBBY LEE

Darlin' you don't have to say a thing.

He kisses her passionately, pulling her body into his and taking her breath away. There is a moment of resistance but she doesn't have a chance. As the kiss intensifies, we...

CUT TO:

INT. STAGE - ON SAM, AL AND RAINY

They finish up some minor changes.

SAM

Then vamp for twelve bars and punch the end.

OBSERVER

Oh, tell him if there's a big applause, be ready to come back in.

SAM

If we've got the crowd, be ready to go back in at the coda.

RAINY

Smokin'.

(beat)

You ladies pull this one off, ain't nobody to stop you.

SAM

That's what I'm countin' on.

Rainy smiles and walks off leaving Sam and Al. After a beat, Paula walks back on from the other side of stage.

PAULA

Everything together?

SAM

I don't know about everything but the charts are...smokin'.

Sam is so proud of himself for being hip. Al just rolls his eyes.

PAULA

Well, we better get our chocolate behinds in motion of we're gonna look like a bunch of amateurs from the boonies.

SAM

You got it.

OBSERVER

Where's Lynell?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SAM
Yeah, where's Lynell?
(calling out)
Lynell! Lynell!

There's no answer. Al punches up the computer.

OBSERVER
I'll center in on her and give you
a holler.

He pops out.

INT. BACKSTAGE - DAY - ON BOBBY AND LYNELL - CONTINUOUS

She struggles in his embrace. Her blouse pulled up, her small arms pushed against him. Al pops in.

BOBBY LEE
Come on, baby. Just relax.

LYNELL
Bobby, please. Please, stop.

OBSERVER'S VOICE
Sam!

BOBBY LEE
I like it when you struggle.

OBSERVER'S VOICE
Back stage. Hurry!

CUT TO:

INT. STAGE - FEATURING BOBBY, LYNELL AND AL - SFX

Bobby is getting more aggressive. He pins her to the wall and kisses her. By now she is a frightened little girl in tears. Al grabs through them trying to defend Lynell.

LYNELL
You're hurting me!

OBSERVER
Sam!
(to Bobby)
Take your hands off of her, you
slime!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Sam rounds the corner and in a flash, assessing the situation, pulling Bobby away from her. Bobby pushes Sam away and out of reflex, Sam slugs him, knocking him to the ground at Paula's feet. She looks from a very pissed Bobby to Sam.

PAULA

Damn.

BOBBY LEE

(getting up)

Don't you ever lay a hand on me, bitch!

SAM

Then keep your hands off...

BOBBY LEE

I wasn't doin' nothin' she didn't want.

LYNELL

You...you were hurting me.

OBSERVER'S VOICE

As far as I'm concerned you can hit him again.

BOBBY LEE

Hurtin' you? You don't know the meaning of the word.

SAM

She doesn't have to learn it from you.

BOBBY LEE

(to Lynell)

You want to sing in my club, you take whatever I dish out.

SAM

We don't need you or your club.

LYNELL

Cheree!

FEATURING LYNELL

She is torn and frightened. She looks back from Sam to Bobby Lee. Her young life and all its dreams are falling apart in front of her.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

BOBBY LEE
You better apologize.

LYNELL
I...I...

OBSERVER
Don't do it!

SAM
We don't need him.

BOBBY LEE
Then leave.
(to Lynell)
You want to to perform tonight, you
be here with my apology or forget
it.

With that he exits rubbing his sore jaw.

NEW ANGLE - ON ALL

Lynell is freaking.

LYNELL
What have you done!

OBSERVER
He just saved your neck!

SAM
What have I done?

LYNELL
We...we have to apologize.

PAULA
Are you crazy?

SAM
You don't need him, Lynell. We'll
get the man from the record company
to...

LYNELL
To do what? Come see us perform in
my bedroom?
(beat)
Now either you apologize with me or
I'm going on by myself.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

Lynell storms off. Paula looks after her and throws up her hands.

PAULA

Now what?

OBSERVER

Lynell goes on by herself, her father still breaks up the show and she still ends up alone. But this time she's completely alone.

(beat)

She never speaks to Cheree and Paula again.

CLOSE ON SAM

Now he's ruined everything. Off of his stunned expression we...

CUT TO:

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

FADE IN

INT. CHURCH - EVENING - FEATURING REVEREND WALTERS

He moves through the front pew straightening bibles and stops frozen in thought. He sits, tired and confused and stares up at the stain-glass window. After a beat his eyes close in prayer and he talks to the heavens.

REV. WALTERS

(sigh)

Oh, Sylvia. Some days I miss you so much.

(beat)

The way you laughed. The sound of your footsteps at night. The smell of your hair on my pillow. But you know what I miss most of all...your wisdom.

(small smile)

You always knew just the right thing to say to Lynell.

WIDER ANGLE TO INCLUDE SAM

He stands near the back of the church, listening. He walks slowly toward the Reverend.

REV. WALTERS (CONT'D)

(continuing)

She won't listen to me you know. Lord help her. That child's got so much anger locked inside her.

(beat)

See, I used to think she was mad at you for dying and me for letting you, but Lynell...

SAM

Lynell's mad at herself, Reverend.

Reverend Walters turns to see Sam. After a long beat he turns back toward the window but speaks to Sam.

REV. WALTERS

I never should have let her take care of her momma. She was too young to see that kind of pain.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SAM
My mom used to say, God only gives
us what he knows we can handle.

REV. WALTERS
She blames me.

SAM
She's hurt and angry.

NEW ANGLE

Sam sits down next to him.

REV. WALTERS
I've lost her.

SAM
Not yet.

REV. WALTERS
If I try to hold her she'll run
away.

SAM
Like your wife did?

REV. WALTERS
Sylvia was very sick for a long
time. She stopped seeing her
friends and locked herself away
from everybody.
(beat)
When she found out she was dying,
she tried to run away from me.

SAM
Lynell told me you stopped them.

REV. WALTERS
Them? She didn't take Lynell.

SAM
But Lynell said...

REV. WALTERS
That's what Lynell needed to
believe.
(beat)
After Sylvia left, Lynell cried for
weeks. I finally found her mother
in a hotel and brought her home.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

REV. WALTERS (CONT'D)

(beat)
Lynell wouldn't leave her side
until they took her away.

(beat)
She has a right to be angry. I left
them there to face death, while I
went and hid in my church.

(beat)
And now, I've lost my little girl.

SAM

Not if you stand by her.

(beat)
Tell her you want her to sing
tonight. And you want to be there
to hear it.

NEW ANGLE

Reverend Walters looks at Sam. For a moment it looks as
though he's going to bend.

REV. WALTERS

I can't. I want her to finish
school. Be someone.

SAM

Trust her to find her own reasons
to finish school. Make her own
choices.

Reverend Walters stands, he is weary and adamant with his
decision.

REV. WALTERS

She's fifteen. She has plenty of
time to make her own choices. Right
now she has to live by mine.

With that he walks to the back of the church and finishes
gathering the bibles.

OBSERVER'S VOICE

Now what?

FEATURING SAM AND AL

Al stands next to Sam. They watch Reverend Walters.

OBSERVER

Ziggy says there's a seventy
percent chance that Lynell goes
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

OBSERVER (CONT'D)
back to the club and... apologizes
to the slime bucket.

SAM
So, she goes on tonight?

OBSERVER
Alone.
(beat)
But she doesn't win. That's what
really makes her desperate.

SAM
What about the man from Checker
Records?

OBSERVER
I guess he never shows up.
(beat)
Sam you've got to stop Lynell. That
pervert's gonna destroy her...

SAM
Not if I can help it.

Sam is on his feet and heading out of the church.

OBSERVER
She's at her house. I'm going to
check on Mr. Sleazoid.

Al pops out as Sam disappears out the back door of the
church, as we...

CUT TO:

EXT. WALTERS HOME - NIGHT - ESTABLISHING

The Chicago hawk whips at the barren branches of the front
tree.

PAULA
Why are you doing this?

INT. LYNELL'S ROOM - CLOSE ON LYNELL

She sits at her vanity applying makeup. The lipstick is too
red, the shadow too heavy and the dress is too revealing.

LYNELL
Doing what?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PAULA

Don't go playin' stupid with me girl. You're gonna go give it up to that creep, so you can sing tonight.

LYNELL

I'm not gonna give up nothin'. I'm gonna apologize so that 'we' can sing.

PAULA

Don't use me as an excuse. You want to lay down for that old man, do it cause you want to, not for me and Cheree.

Lynell stops putting on makeup and turns to Paula.

LYNELL

Bobby's just mad at Cheree. I'll tell him I'm sorry and everything will be fine.

PAULA

But you shouldn't be sorry. Or have your forgotten what he tried to do?

LYNELL

I just wasn't ready for what he wanted.

PAULA

Are you ready now? 'Cause if you go in there talkin' a bunch of I'm sorry, he's gonna be all over you.

FEATURE LYNELL - MIRROR SHOT

She looks at herself and tries to be brave.

LYNELL

I'm only fifteen...

PAULA

So! To men like Bobby Lee that's woman enough.

LYNELL

You're wrong.

Cheree steps into the mirror behind her.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

CHEREE/SAM'S VOICE

No, she's not.

NEW ANGLE - INCLUDING SAM

He stands in the doorway. After a beat he crosses over and sits on the edge of the bed next to Paula.

LYNELL

Oh, don't you start too. Bobby's a business man who wants to help us and y'all are talking about him like he's dog.

PAULA

If the name fits...

SAM

Some men believe they should have everything they want and they don't care who they hurt to get it.

LYNELL

But Bobby's not like that.

SAM

Yes, he is.

LYNELL

He respects my talent.

SAM

I respect your talent but I'm not going to seduce you to prove it.

LYNELL

(with a giggle)
You're a girl.

SAM

You know what I mean.

(beat)

You can't go to Bobby Lee by yourself.

LYNELL

I will if I have to.

SAM

(getting an idea)
You can't go by yourself...but you can go with us.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

Lynell gets up and crosses to Sam and Paula.

LYNELL
You'll come with me?

PAULA
(after a beat)
You gonna apologize to that fool?

SAM
I'll do whatever Lynell needs me to do.

Sam is heading out the door. A stunned Lynell and Paula look on.

SAM (CONT'D)
Well, don't just stand there. We've got ourselves a contest to win.

He's out the door. Paula and Lynell squeal and hug, then bolt out the door as we...

CUT TO:

INT. ON STAGE - CLOSE ON MALE SINGER

A handsome black singer sings a sensual version of "Stay" to the audience.

INT. CLUB - BACKSTAGE WINGS - CLOSE ON BOBBY LEE

He stands adjusting his tie and admiring himself in the mirror. Al watches, disgusted. The band is cooking and the performer is pouring his heart out to the crowd.

BOBBY LEE
(to his reflection)
You, my man, are fine as they come.

OBSERVER
You, my man, are the kind of jerk that gives men a bad name.

A young man of about twenty interrupts Bobby's admiration of himself.

YOUNG MAN
Mr. Lee, The Lovettes are here.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BOBBY LEE
(smug smile)
Well, we knew that.

OBSERVER
(mimicking him)
Well, we knew that.
(to himself)
Sam, I hope you know what you're
doing.

BOBBY LEE
Give them the pink sequins to skip
into and then bring them to me.
(back to the mirror)
I want them gorgeous when they
crawl.

JoJo pads off in double time. Al all but growls and Bobby
just gloats.

REV. WALTERS
Mr. Lee? May I have a word with
you?

OBSERVER
(looking up)
Uh oh. Gooshie center me on Sam.

With that and a punch of the handlink he pops out.

NEW ANGLE

Reverend Walters stands with his hat in his hand. If it's
possible Bobby's smug smile gets smugger.

BOBBY LEE
Well, well, well.
(beat)
You know Reverend, you said some
pretty harsh words to me at your
home yesterday and...

REV. WALTERS
(cutting him off)
What I said to you yesterday had
nothing to do with why I'm here.

BOBBY LEE
And why is that?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

REV. WALTERS

My daughter wants very much to sing
in your contest.

BOBBY LEE

That's up to her.

REV. WALTERS

It's up to you too. And I want you
to tell her no.

BOBBY LEE

(surprised)

Now why would I do that?

REV. WALTERS

Because she's fifteen years old.
Let her grow up.

BOBBY LEE

(calmly)

No, you let her grow up.

(beat)

I see kids in and outta here, year
after year. Lynell's got the gift.

REV. WALTERS

She'll still have it three years
from now. But she'll be able to
handle herself.

(beat)

I'm asking you as a father to help
me.

BOBBY LEE

What's in it for me?

REV. WALTERS

I...I'll make a deal with you...you
get my daughter out of here and I
won't call the police and tell them
you've got minors in your club

LYNELLS VOICE

I don't need you to make a deal for
me.

NEW ANGLE - INCLUDING SAM, LYNELLS, PAULA AND JOJO

They are visions in hot pink sequins. Bobby is pleased.

REV. WALTERS

Then come home.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

LYNELL

I can't.

JOJO

The Lovettes are on next, Bobby.
What do you want me to do?

BOBBY LEE

(to Sam)
I'm waiting.

OBSERVER

Don't say it Sam.

SAM

We want to sing in your club
tonight.

BOBBY LEE

And when you win, you sign a seven
year contract with me.

SAM

If that's what Lynell wants.

PAULA

Cheree!

REV. WALTERS

I can't let you do this, Lynell.

SAM

It's Lynell's life. She's got to
decide what's important.

LYNELL

I...I want to sing. Please Daddy.
Please understand.

Sam crosses next to Reverend Walters.

SAM

(to Reverend
Walters)
Tell your daughter you love her,
Reverend Walters. Tell her that you
trust her enough to stand by her,
whatever decision she makes.

The reprise is done and the audience is chanting for the
next act. The Reverend looks desperately to Lynell.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (5)

THE CROWD
(screaming)
YEAH!

BOBBY LEE
Then put your hands together and
get ready to stand up and party
with the lovely, the vivacious, the
fabulous...Lovettes!

The band kicks into a funky groove of "Heat Wave".

BACKSTAGE - ALL

Lynell looks to her father. His face is hard and cold and
then as if he is touched by a spirit, he crosses to Lynell
and touches her. He smiles.

REV. WALTERS
Sing Lynell. Sing with all your
soul.
(beat)
I love you.

She smiles and hugs her father, then races out on stage. Sam
and Al exchange a look of triumph.

OBSERVER
Alright!

ON STAGE

Sam and girls sing "Heat Wave".

SAM/LYNELL/PAULA
(Heat Wave lyrics
to come)

INTERCUT WITH BACKSTAGE - REVEREND WALTERS

He watches his daughter with pride and love.

ON BOBBY LEE

looking like the cat that ate the canary and loving every
minute of it.

THE CROWD

totally into it and having a party.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (6)

ON AL

Mister Soul himself in a total groove.

ON STAGE - SAM AND THE LOVETTES

having a great time. They are tight and together.

ON BOBBY LEE

A man in a silk suit whispers in his ear. Bobby's smile gets bigger. He turns back to Lynell with dollar signs in his eyes.

CLOSE ON LYNELL

She is singing her ass off.

WIDER ANGLE

The song ends to wild applause. They run off the stage.

BACKSTAGE - FEATURING BOBBY

He sweeps Lynell into his arms.

BOBBY LEE

Y'all did it. You are going to the
Regal.

Paula screams. Sam looks at Lynell who hugs Bobby. Reverend Walters watches the excitement and then fades back, slipping out the door. The crowd shouts for more.

PAULA

We did it! We did it!

ON SAM AND AL

Sam is caught up in the excitement. Al sees the Reverend leave and nods to Sam.

OBSERVER

Sam.

ON REVEREND WALTERS

He slips out the side door.

WIDER ANGLE - ON ALL

Sam starts to go after him when Bobby sweeps Lynell into his arms. She struggles to get free, looking for her father.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (7)

LYNELL
Where's my father?

BOBBY LEE
Who cares? All that matters now is
that I'm gonna make you a star. You
belong to me, baby.

LYNELL
I don't belong to anybody.

BOBBY LEE
We had a deal.

SAM
No deal.

Sam jerks him off Lynell and slams him against the wall. He's about to punch him out when Paula grabs his arm pulling him and Lynell back on stage for the reprise. The crowd goes crazy and Lynell soars, giving a grateful smile to Sam.

CUT TO:

INT. CHURCH - NIGHT

It's dimly lit and hangs in the silence of loss. Reverend Walters sits next to his pulpit, an empty man. Sam walks up to him with Al close behind. Sam has changed out of his gown.

REV. WALTERS
I've lost her forever.

SAM
A profit named Gibran once said
'Hold your children with open arms
and they will always know they can
come home.'

REV. WALTERS
(shaking his head)
Too much sorrow has gone between
us. I don't think she can ever
forgive me for loving her the only
way I knew how.
(beat)
I'll miss her, Cheree. I'll miss
that I'll never hear her sing
again.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Lynell's voice fills the church and echo the strains of "Eye on the Sparrow". Sam and the Reverend turn. Tears fill the Reverend's eyes as he moves toward her.

NEW ANGLE - She stands in her gown, backlit by a wash of light from the entry and singing with the passion of an angel.

LYNELL
(song to come)

NEW ANGLE - ON SAM AND AL

They look on like proud parents who've done a good thing. Al reads the handlink.

OBSERVER
She turned down the Regal, the contracts, the whole kit and caboodle and stays at her father's church.

(beat)
Get this Sam, the man from Checker comes through. The Lovettes have a hit that gives Lynell enough money to get through medical school. She becomes a doctor, Sam. Gets married and has three kids.

ON LYNELL AND HER FATHER

She finishes her song and touches his face. Her eyes well with tears.

LYNELL
I love you, Daddy.

REV. WALTERS
I love you too.

They embrace. Paula stands in the b.g. watching, happy for her friend.

INCLUDING SAM AND AL

They smile. With a small good-bye he's enveloped by a flash of Quantum blue, and...

QUANTUM LEAPS

FADE OUT:

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

END OF ACT FOUR