

Oh, wondrous day!

At rise: Lights pop up. A chorus spreads. They whirl across the stage. Characters rise and fall from members of the chorus throughout the play.

Chorus

Oh, wondrous day!

Let me sing your praises!

The fireflies are nowhere, nowhere to be seen.

The breadboxes are empty.

The tables haven't been cleared and the lamb stew has congealed.

Oh, wondrous day!

Let me sing your praises!

A man looks at a woman.

His glance is askance.

Positively askance.

Oh, wondrous day!

Let me sing your praises!

My dog passed away.

My mother.

My best friend since elementary school where I played tetherball every recess.

Oh, wondrous day!

Let me sing your praises!

You rise and fall like riding bareback on that old nag.

You rise and fall like a river gushing from all sides; the storm was unexpected.

You rise and fall like my breath.

My breath

My labored breath.

My dying breath.

My first breath like a first kiss begins.

Lights fade and then pop up

I'm washing this dress and these panties. I'm not looking to be sold just yet, but I'd like a chance out there in the world.

I'm washing these dishes. The eggs are caked on, stiff, hard to get off. Need to pick.

I'm washing these elbows. I forget too often. They are rough, not gentle at all.

I'm washing this floor. You broke my heart on it and then walked across it and out that old door.

I'm washing this car. I don't like driving, but I'll do it anyways. Anyway, I'll do so.

Lights fade and then pop up

A song for my beloved:

Dearest, darling, beloved one.

No need to flee from your dearest, darling, beloved one.

I see you leave. I'm terrified. You came back.

Let's embrace now before you decide to go again.

Dearest, darling, beloved one.

How did you forget and remember my birthday all at once?

I'll never stand for it, but I do.

I'll never stand for it, but I do.

Dearest, darling, beloved one.

Dearest, darling, beloved one.

Lights fade then pop up.

Interior scene begins like so.

Is that how you want to put it?

I think so.

Are you sure?

Interior driveway.

That's exterior.

It's a carport.

Still exterior.

But, I picture it inside.

Inside out. Inside out. And that doesn't make the most sense.

You don't make the most sense.

Don't lash out.

Bite the hands the feed you. That's what I'll do. Interior living room with exterior skylight.

Doesn't make a ton of sense. Where are you going with that?

The terror at rise.

Terror? Really, terror? I don't think so.

Don't talk to me like that. I'm making art.

Oh, is that what you call it.

Now, I'll sing in anger:

I'm angry, I'm furious, I'm so very mad.

I will tear you apart.

I'm fuming.

Don't look glad.

After all, I'll never speak of this ever.

Never speak of this ever.

Never speak. Of this. Ever.

Lights fade then pop up.

Hand me those shoes.

They are mine

Hand them over to me. I'm the shoe man. I'll pretend I like your shoes. I'll pretend I'm a shoe scientist. I'll take your shoes and sniff them. I'll follow you in this tan car. Then I'll ask you if you need a ride to your little home.

And I'll say, "No!"

And I will follow you, follow you to the ends of the earth 'til you give me your shoes.

You'll follow me, follow me, to the ends of the earth 'til I give you my shoes. These old shoes. They're falling apart.

I want them.

They're falling apart.

I need them.

They're falling apart, falling apart. They will not last much longer.

Please, lady, give them to me. I'll test them and develop more like them and they will live forever in this world. Forever in this world. Unlike you. They'll be a masterpiece—your masterpiece (and mine).

You're scaring me. I want to go home.

Need a ride, young lady? Need a ride?

No! Serial killers ask if you need a ride. No! I won't take a ride. You might be a serial killer and they always ask to give young ladies a ride.

Who me?

Yes, you.

But your shoes, your shoes, your shoes, your shoes.

I just bought some spaghetti and some canned sauce for dinner and I'm going home and you interrupted the flow of the evening in a surprising way that I'll talk about years later.

I'm listening.

Go away! Don't listen! Just leave! (I'm afraid, after all, afraid.)

Poor dear, need a me to wipe your tear?

Go away! Don't wipe! Just leave! (I'm afraid, after all, afraid.)

Don't worry, I just want your shoes. I won't bludgeon or rape today. I promise. Scout's honor.

Well, in that case. Wait! No, go away! Don't deny! Just leave (I'm afraid, after all, afraid.)

But your shoes, your shoes, your shoes. I want, I need, I must have your shoes.

Fine.

Really?

Here they are?

Really?

Let me alone.

Need a ride.

No!

You're barefoot!

I know, but so. Go!

But...

Go...

Lights fade then pop up.

I'm a mother who didn't die in a car crash I almost had yesterday. All I could think about was the baby. The baby! The baby. I thought, at last I'm finished with it. At last I'm done. No more crying and sagging boobs and sucked dry boobs and hanging boobs. No more screaming at all hours. At 4am, 3am, 2am, midnight, or 5am. None of that. The car skidded on ice and I thought there's that! There's that! It's all done. I'm done. And the baby was with the sitter and you were out drinking with the guys and I was on my way home from caring for my mother in a wheelchair at the place with all the old folks where she doesn't belong, but she now belongs because she pisses her pants at night. In the morning, too. And we agreed that that would be that. And my mother drooled just a bit, but otherwise just looked normal. And the wall was yellow and there were dried bits of food in places, leftovers that never got scrubbed and then blood where someone wiped a finger that was cut perhaps and that was that that was that.

My darling, I almost died. I wanted to when the plane flipped back and forth, but then steadied. I wanted to go down in a kind of blaze of glory. I wanted to go down, down, down to mother earth and splat into her like a frenzied lover. It wouldn't hurt, I thought, it wouldn't hurt all that much. And then I wouldn't have to see your face as you looked at me so yearning, so yearning for something I cannot will not give to you—my unrepentant goodness. I will have swept that away for a lifetime and then splat! I will have buried it for the fortnight and then splat! I will never deign you the recipient of my goodness, oh, no. But then the plane straightened. The pilot said, "Sorry about that folks." Everyone sighed, some cried, some wept like children turned to stone and then restored like you hear about in fairy tales. I didn't. I was stony faced. Inured. I wanted the ground like a love.

Sweet girl, I love you and I almost was a goner there. I didn't see it coming. I was asleep and they were cutting deep. I imagine my insides were crimson. I imagine there were flecks of blue too. I imagine that I almost didn't wake up. And when I did from that blackest of sleeps, I remember shivering as they put on warm blankets. I didn't want them, I made little sounds that meant go away, but they thought I meant more, and then I knew I wasn't dead, that I had to see you and everyone and do my taxes and clean yet again. And my heart stopped, they didn't say so but it did because I felt the blush of death and it was cozy and then it wasn't. I'm still here and therefore I want you to leave me. I want you to leave me and pretend that it was all your idea. Take your clothes and pack them neatly. Load your records into the car. Drive far away. I didn't die, so you need to. I didn't die then, did I? Did I?

Lights fade and then pop up.

What are you doing?

I'm watching?

What?

You, dummy.

Oh. Hey?

Come here cause I love you.

Really?

Come here cause I wanna eat you up. I want to gobble you like candied yams.

I will be right there. Here I am.

You will be right here. There you are.

And now we are together. Let's rub like two sticks and set something on fire.

Sure.

Let's commit arson with our love.

Charmed.

Let's murder something. Someone said "moonshine"—let's kill it all dead.

Okay?

Am I strange?

Slightly.

Do I worry you?

Nah.

Really?

Well, just a little.

Okay, let's fuck.

What?

You don't hear curse words. I remember now. You don't hear curse words. Okay, let's make cookie dough instead.

Can we listen to Mary Martin as *Peter Pan*?

Of course, you took the wind from my sails, but of course.

She sings.

Yes. "I gotta crow!"

Yes!

Get the butter.

Get the sugar.

Get the flour.

But what about the vanilla?

But what about the baking powder.

Preheat the oven.

400?

No. 325.

375?

Oh, fine. But they'll burn.

I love the smell of rubber.

But they're cookies!

Oh, yeah. I love the smell of cookies.

Burnt cookies?

Burnt rubber?

Burnt cookies?

Um. Sure.

Lights fade then pop up.

What now.

Lay down.

What now.

Lay down.

And sleep.

Yes.

What if I cry?

Boo-hoo?

Yes, boo-hoo.

Then go right ahead.

What if my nose runs?

So what.

So what?

Yes, so what.

But what if I stop breathing?

I'll give you CPR.

You'll put your mouth over mine.

Yes. And pinch your nose.

And chest compressions?

If needed.

And then what?

I'll come and get you for the hayride.

Oh, yes. And I'll wear sweet gingham.

Sweet gingham.

And I'll miss you so.

I'll miss you too. Wait. When?

Just now.

You're missing me now?

Yes.

But I'm here.

But I imagined you.

I'm ghost?

Not exactly.

Fortune teller?

Not exactly.

Ticket seller?

Something like that. If you sold tickets across the river.

Like the river Styx.

Like that one.

But that's all dead.

But don't worry. You're not here.

I'm a figment.

Of my mind.

I want to sing.

Just try.

Here it goes:

Over and through and under and over and through and across and over and under and through and under and the bridge and the bridge where people gather like they do and there is a foot dipped in the river and forgot to get it all and there is a spot that wasn't gotten there was a spot that is unprotected there is spot that you will be felled one day. You will be felled one day.

A little pitchy.

Ah.

But, it made complete sense.

Of course. I'm a figment. I make sense.

Of course.

Lights fade then pop up.

Oh, wondrous day.

Let me sing your praises.

Oh, wondrous day.

Oh, wondrous day.

I sing your praises like warm noodles that are slurped

I sing your praises like pinecones spread over the carpet from errant shoes.

I sing your praises like my mother used to do.

I sing your praises like this and this and this.

I sing your praises, the way I needed you.

Praise me, praise me.

Oh, wondrous day!

I haven't forgotten you.

I haven't just blanked.

I haven't lost my words.

Oh, wondrous day!

These words I sing:

Daylight.

Fireflies.

Night-night.

All right.

Nighty-night.

Twinkling bright.

A kerchief.

A soiled dress.

A sideswipe.

A miss.

A day.

A night.

And then:

Another day, so bright.

Another day, so bright.

Oh, wondrous day, don't turn to night.

Oh, wondrous day, don't turn to night.

Oh, wondrous day!

Lights fade.