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Family Plays



I JUST WANNA TELL SOMEBODY

Book and lyrics by
HAROLD J. HAYNES

Music by
JOHN J. GORDON

I JUST WANNA TELL SOMEBODY

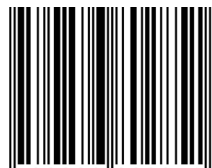
Drama with optional music. Book and lyrics by Harold J. Haynes. Music by John J. Gordon. Cast: 10m., 10w., flexible (double- and triple-casting is possible with virtually any mixture of men and women). Childlike characters appear in tiny shafts of light as they utter a simple yet powerful message: “I just wanna tell somebody.” Through a series of episodes, we learn what it means to be an abused child in America. We attempt to understand why some parents are the way they are. The plot begins to take shape when a boy named Tony is physically abused by his unemployed father, Willie, because the child would rather play on his high-school basketball team than work to support a father who will not work. Following the beating—abused and distraught—Tony retires to his room, falls on his bed and cries himself to sleep. As Tony slumbers, he dreams of an imaginary courtroom where all abused children in America bring their abusive parents to trial. In the dream, Tony becomes the prosecutor and calls forth witnesses to document bizarre cases of child abuse. Willie, a classic child abuser himself, becomes the defense attorney. Twelve abused children—some living, some dead—serve as members of the jury. When all the cases have been revealed and all the facts have been dramatically stated, the judge asks the jury for its verdict. The nightmare ends. Tony cries out in his sleep and then awakes. We are shocked back into reality, where child abuse is uglier than ever before. But, hopefully, by this time we realize—beyond a shadow of a doubt—we can no longer stand by and just witness what is happening to our children. We have to do something. We have to “Tell somebody!” In order to make the play available to a larger audience, the director can choose to produce it as a musical or a nonmusical. Written in episodes, it is easy to control the length of the performance by omitting sections. The play is for adults and young adults. *Approximate running time: 100 minutes. Music score available. Demo/accompaniment CD available. Code: ICI.*

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ISBN-13 978-0-88680-285-1



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I Just Wanna
Tell Somebody

I Just Wanna Tell *SOMEBODY*

A Drama in 2 Acts

by

Harold J. Haynes

Music by John J. Gordon

Family Plays

311 Washington St., Woodstock, IL 60098

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HAROLD J. HAYNES

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(I JUST WANNA TELL SOMEBODY)

ISBN: 978-0-88680-285-1

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“Produced by special arrangement with
Family Plays of Woodstock, Illinois”

I JUST WANNA TELL SOMEBODY

Cast

(An ensemble of 15 or fewer players may perform all the roles)

Coach

Teacher

Tony

Willie, Tony's father

Angela Wright

Earnest Wright, her father

Mildred Wright, her mother

Debbie Wright, Angela's little sister

Pretty Red (P. R.), a pimp

Louis, Tony's friend

Bailiff

Judge

Linda Anderson

Millie Anderson, Linda's mother

Lazaro Gomez

Juan Gomez, Lazaro's father

Donna Car

Mona Car, Donna's mother

Mr. Davis, Mrs. Car's "friend"

Ricardo Salazar, dance instructor

Delvin Ross, his pupil

Mr. Ross, Delvin's father

**Voices, Basketball Players, Hotline Counselors, Members of the Jury,
Courtroom Spectators, Prostitutes**

Place: A City

Time: Today



This play may be presented as a musical or non-musical. As a non-musical, the song lyrics may be spoken or chanted, or omitted entirely. For a musical production, scores are available from the publisher.

I JUST WANNA TELL SOMEBODY was first presented at the Maceba Theatre for the Performing Arts in Houston, Texas, in August, 1986, by the Wheatley Drama Workshop. Produced by the Downtown YMCA, the production was directed by Harold J. Haynes with musical direction by John J. Gordon. The set was designed by Harry Haynes III, with lighting by Phayboune Siluangkhot and McKinley Dukes. The production included the following cast:

TONY/PROSECUTOR. André Sam Haynes
WILLIE/DEFENSE ATTORNEY. Felix Haverly
ANGIE Delleanor Miles
PRETTY RED/COACH/MR. GOMEZ. Richard Lopez
MR. WRIGHT. Deon Davis
MRS. WRIGHT. Patricia Thompson
LOUIS/JUDGE. Paul Miles
DEBBIE Zedri McDowell
MRS. ANDERSON/HOTLINE OPER. 1. Regina Evans
LINDA/HOTLINE OPERATOR 2 Yolanda Vaughn
LAZARO. Richard Delacruz
TEACHER/DONNA Tomitria Gaston
MRS. CAR. Demetria Buckner
MR. DAVIS Edward Haverly

The play was subsequently produced by Prairie View A & M University at the American College Theatre Festival at Pan American University in Edinburg on November 7, 1986.

ABOUT THE PLAY

Child-like characters appear in tiny shafts of light, as they utter a simple yet powerful message—*"I just wanna tell somebody."* From that moment on, we are drawn into the world of the play, which is sometimes filled with laughter and tears, sometimes with mixed emotions, but always with enduring truths about ourselves, our children, and our National shame—CHILD ABUSE.

Through a series of episodes, we learn what it means to be an abused child in America. And we attempt to understand why some parents are the way they are. The plot begins to take shape when a boy named Tony is physically abused by his unemployed father, Willie, because the child would rather play on his high school basketball team than work to support a father who will not work. Following the beating—abused and distraught—Tony retires to his room, falls on his bed, and cries himself to sleep.

As Tony slumbers, he dreams of an imaginary courtroom where all abused children in America bring their abusive parents to trial. In the dream, Tony becomes the Prosecutor and calls forth witnesses to document bizarre cases of child abuse. Tony's father, Willie, a classic child abuser himself, becomes the Defense Attorney. Twelve abused children—some living, some dead—serve as members of the jury.

When all the cases have been revealed and all the facts have been dramatically stated, the judge asks the jury for its verdict.

The nightmare ends. Tony cries out in his sleep, then awakes. We are shocked back into reality, where child abuse is uglier than ever before. But, hopefully, by this time we realize—beyond a shadow of a doubt—that we can no longer stand by and just witness what is happening to our children. We have to do something. We have to **"TELL SOMEBODY!"**

—Harold J. Haynes



This insightful drama was first presented by an ethnically mixed company of teenagers—mainly high school students—at the Maceba Theatre in Houston, and then by drama students at Prairie View A & M University, directed by Ted Shine. It may be staged as a musical or non-musical, with a relatively small cast of 10 to 15 ensemble players, or a cast as large as 30 to 40 of virtually any mixture of males and females.

Since the play is episodic in structure, double- and triple-casting is

simple. The only scene requiring all players to be on stage at the same time is the courtroom scene. A jury of 12 people is called for in the script, but 6 jurors may be used instead—or an invisible “jury” may be seated just offstage.

The dialog is written in a more or less standard English. Directors are urged to let their actors speak with the grammatical errors, accents, and dialects common to the community in which the play is being performed. Current street slang may also be interjected, as long as the audience can understand what is being said.

The author has skillfully implied sexual abuse and vulgar language with a minimum of scenes and words which may be considered objectionable in a few areas. Directors are granted permission to omit material which may be offensive in their communities.

PRODUCTION NOTES*Props***ACT I, Scene 2**

Watch—Tony

Scene 3

Tattered suitcase—Angie

Scene 4

Can of beer—Mr. Wright

Hairbrush—Debbie

Scene 5

Belt—Willie

Torn nightgown—Debbie

Sheet of paper; bottle of sleeping pills—Debbie

ACT II

Gavel—Judge

Doll (with removable head)—Linda

Can of beer—Mr. Gomez

* Knife—Mr. Gomez

Lighter and cigarette—Mrs. Car

Big roll of money—Girl 1

2 big rolls of money—Girl 2

Fur wrap—Angie

* Gun—Willie

*The use of knives and firearms on stage is extremely dangerous. Use knives made of rubber, soft plastic, or other material which will not cut or penetrate flesh. Toy guns or replicas which cannot be fired should be used in place of real guns. Even blanks can kill. The publishers recommend that directors and actors study a good book on simulated combat, like Claude Kezer's *Principles of Stage Combat*, and carefully follow the instructions for fighting, falling, and using weapons without injury.

Costumes

Current school and street clothes are appropriate. The **Basketball Players** in Act I, Scene 2 can change to basketball uniforms (underdressed) during the Hot-line Counselor scene; they can participate in the "Enough" song in the basketball uniforms. **Debbie** wears a nightgown and then appears with the gown torn. The script suggests that the six living **Jurors** wear white and the six dead ones wear black.

Lights, Sound, and Special Effects

Area lighting, special spotlights, and backlighting of scrim-covered screens for silhouettes are effective, if available. The stage directions give specific suggestions. The play is also gripping and powerful without special lighting.

Sound effects suggested in the stage directions include chimes, telephones ringing, whipping with a belt, a knock on Tony's window, and a recording of Louis's speech (p. 18).

Dry ice dropped in a tub of water (and stirred) will produce the fog effect called for on page 18.

I JUST WANNA TELL SOMEBODY

[The action takes place in a unit set made up of platforms, step units, and ramps of varying sizes and heights. See Production Notes, beginning on page 40]

Prologue

Mu si No .1: " ABS E "

[As the theatre darkens, hauntingly beautiful CHIMES sound out a lovely melody. When it is completely dark, the ENSEMBLE performers enter and fill the darkness with their voices and presence. Each character is silhouetted in a shaft of isolated LIGHT as he begins to speak. Though all are one in their plight, each is separated by his individual story]

DONNA. I j u swanna te lsb me bo d y.

SHAUNI j u swan n a e lsb me bo d y.

TONY I j u swan n a e lsb me bo d y.

GENE I j u swanna t e lsb me bo d y..

DONNA. Mo mmy. ..

SHAUN Dad d y ..

[The following parts are to be spoken in an overlapping fashion:]

DONNA .. Do n ' dtot h an y
mo re . Mo mmy, i th urts Mo m
my. . . Ple ase do n ' t make i th urt
any mo re . I do n ' t wa nna cry
any mo re .

TONY. Th e f ir sth an c d g e
I ' m o nna kill him . . . I ' m o nna
make him hu rtle h e m ad e me
hu rt . I do n ' t wa n t to hu rry
mo re .

DEBBIE. . . St o p Dad d y . I
do n ' t wa n t to any mo re . I th urts ,
Dad d y . I th urts bad . . Ple ase
do n ' t make i th urty mo re .

DELVI NI ne v e k n e w wh at
h app i ne was . . . I ne v e m ad e ny
th i ng . . . he v e o r w n e d h e im
ple s t f th i ng s . . . Al l ' v e e v e r
k n o w n was pain . . And I do n ' t
wa n t to hu rry mo re .

VOI CE. Chil d bu sei n Ame ri ca .

VOI CE. Chil d bu sei n Ame ri ca ..

VOI CE. Ch i h d bu sei n Ame ri ca ..

VOI CE. Ch i h d bu sei n Ame ri ca ..

VOICE 5. Is a reality . . .

VOICE 6. Is a reality . . .

VOICE 7. Is a reality . . .

VOICE 8. Is a reality . . .

VOICE 3. A million . . .

VOICE 4. . . . boys and girls . . .

VOICE 2. . . . feel pain . . .

VOICE 1. . . . are hurt . . .

VOICE 3. . . . cry in their sleep . . .

ENSEMBLE. . . . and tell nobody! Nobody! Nobody! Nobody! Nobody!

ACT I

The Discovery

Scene 1

[A modern-day school]

COACH. I'm just a coach . . . and I know I'm only supposed to be concerned with winning—with the almighty *game*. I'm not really supposed to see or hear anything that might distract me from my so-called *objective* . . . I'm not supposed to really care . . . But the fact is I DO CARE! . . . It was about a year ago that I first really thought about . . . *child abuse*. Oh, don't get me wrong—I had heard about it before, many times. But I never really gave much thought to it. You know, you always think things like that won't ever happen to anyone you know. It's all so funny. You'd think that being a coach—a father figure—I would be close enough to my players that I'd know if a thing like that was happening to one of them . . . but you don't know. Sometimes you spend your whole career making guys tough and impervious to pain—so much so that they become afraid to tell you—to tell anybody—when they are hurting. God, how I hate coaching. Sometimes, I wish I were just a regular teacher.

TEACHER. You think just being a regular teacher makes it easier . . . Well, Coach, you've got a lot to learn . . . You think you're the only one who has to deal with pain. Who gave you the corner on the market? It's not easy, I tell you, to stand before an English class and teach the beauty of Shakespeare to eager minds knowing full well that in any corner of the room on any given day there's a child who does not hear you—not because he refuses to learn, but because his body is racked with pain or

because he hasn't eaten in a couple of days. You see the bruises, then you sense the loneliness and despair. Your heart goes out to the child, but you feel your arms are too short to reach the problem. Silently, you tell yourself: "It's not what you think . . ." But you keep thinking it. And, then, one day a child walks into your classroom with a busted lip and a bruised forehead. You ask her what happened. And when she starts telling you one lie after another, you say, "Enough!"

ENSEMBLE. Enough!

TEACHER. You pick up the phone and call her parents to make an inquiry. But, of course, they calmly ease your fears and you hang up reassured that it was just an accident.

ENSEMBLE. Accident?

TEACHER. Then for four days the child does not return to school. Finally, on the fifth day she shows up. Her lip and forehead have started to heal and you think all is well . . . that is until you notice the child having great difficulty sitting back in her chair. She looks at you, and you look at her. She doesn't say anything, and you don't either. But, for the first time, you decide to do what you should have done all along. You realize that you've got to tell somebody!

ENSEMBLE. Tell somebody!

[The COACH pantomimes dialing a telephone. The PHONE rings and is answered. The TEACHER repeats the procedure]

HOTLINE COUNSELOR 1. Child abuse hotline—May I help you?

COACH. *[Covering the receiver]* What if I report this case? What will the father do to his son then? *[He thinks for a moment]*

HOTLINE COUNSELOR 2. Child abuse hotline—May I help you?

TEACHER. Yes, this is Mrs. Moss. I want to . . . *[covering the receiver]* I wonder if I'm doing the right thing. Maybe they'll work it out without me . . .

[The following parts are to be spoken in an overlapping fashion:]

HOTLINE COUNSELOR 1. . . .
Child abuse hotline—May I help you? . . . Sir, you're going to have to speak up . . . I can't help you if you don't talk to me . . . Sir? . . . Sir? . . . *[She hangs up after the Coach]*

COACH. *[Covering receiver]*
Maybe this call will only serve to anger the boy's father even more. Maybe I should just forget about the whole thing. After all, parents do have rights . . . Don't they? *[He hangs up]*

HOTLINE COUNSELOR 2. TEACHER. *[Covering receiver]*
 Yes, Mrs. Moss. How may we help you? . . Mrs. Moss? . . I can' hear by call ing make more troubl e for the child? . . God, I don' twant to do t hat. . . *[She hangs up]*
 Pl eas hang up and dial again. *[He hangs up after the teacher]*

[The two Child Abuse HOTLINE COUNSELORS move Down Stage Center to address the audience. As LIGHTS dim on the rest of the stage, the other ENSEMBLE members exit]

HOT LINE COUNSELOR 1. Child abuse—ugl y sn' t?

HOT LINE COUNSELOR 2. But it is as much a part of us as the air we breathe.

HOT LINE COUNSELORS 1 & 2. We sho uld know. We' re Chil d Abuse Hotl ine Counselors. And we deal with the problem fi ve days a week. Year i n—yea out.

HOT LINE COUNSELOR 1. We fi nd it ironic that a nation which sp ends literall y billions on national defense and millions o n human rights abroad . . .

HOTLINE COUNSELOR 2. . . woul d systematically fail to protect and defend its most valuable natural resource—THE CHILD. It is sick- ening to thin k how annually. . .

HOTLINE COUNSELOR 1. . . . hundreds of children are beaten . . .

HOTLINE COUNSELOR 2. . . . tortured . . .

HOTLINE COUNSELOR 1. . . . maimed . . .

HOTLINE COUNSELOR 2. . . . molested . . .

HOTLINE COUNSELOR 1. . . . and murdered . . .

HOTLINE COUNSELOR 2. . . . by sick and demented individuals . . .

HOTLINE COUNSELOR 1. . . . who dare call themselves human.

HOTLINE COUNSELOR 2. Is the q uality of huma nity so strained that we hav e resorted to the incl inations of the lower p rimates?

HOTLINE COUNSELOR 1. Must we feed off o ur own young to sur- vive?

HOTLINE COUNSELORS 1 & 2. America, we are toying with the very fi ber which shapes our existence. Have we come to that? Surely it' s time f or someone somewhere to stand up and say , " Enough! "

Music No. 2: "ENOUGH"

ENSEMBLE. *[The ENSEMBLE enters the stage from all points singing:]* ENOUGH – E NOUGH – ENOUGH – ENOUGH – ENOUGH
E NOUGH – E NOUGH – ENOUGH H!

Enou ghof alth pain t h atip and wreck sou rl ives –
Enou ghof al t hbruises we da il y r y chide.
Enou ghof a ltlhet ear dr oph asoak ou rpil l owshr ou gh –
Enou gh,enou gh,enou gh,enou gh, enough for me and you .
Enou ghof all the sea rcheswe go t hr ou gver yday –
Enoughof a lth ebl a m wit hou a t hig t o sa y.
Enou ghof a l the l onel iness of feeling sad and bl u e –
Enou gh,enou gh,enou g h,enou gh enou ghf ome an dyou .

CHORUS .We' vegot t otel somebody—we' vegot t d ett hemknow,
Or else t hisp a inwe' r e feeli wij hever ever go.
We' vegot to tel somebody—we' vegot t omak et hems ee
That chil d a bu s kil l ingds like you a ndme.

Enou ghof al t h epai rt hat ip and wreck sou rl ives –
Enou ghof al t h br uisewe da il try t chide.
Enou ghof a ltlhet ear dr opt sh aso a kou rpil l owshr ou gh .
Enou gh,enou gh,enou gh enou gh enou ghf ome and you .

[Repeat and fade. LIGHTS dim to brief blackout (5 seconds), then come up on:]

Scene 2

[The Boys Gym Locker Room. A few BASKETBALL PLAYERS come in horsing around with each other. There is one, TONY, who is noticeably distant from the others. It is the end of a game. Victory has taken hold of them, and they are ready for the showers]

LOUIS (Player 1) Ma n, did you see t hat! a st ay- u! Tony went in on? Oooh, t ha w a sweet !

PLAYER2. Sweet Ma n, sweet ain' tt hewor dfor it .T ha w a s a we- some!

PLAYER3. Yea h T ony. Ma n, you ar e one bad du de!

PLAYER4. Yeah, man . . . *[signaling for the other players to crowd around Tony]* I fy ou had been pl a ying n t heot h et ea n a, ft a r h game we wo uldah adt o . .

ALL PLAYERS. *[Playfully]* KICK YOUR BUTT! *[They lift him up in celebration, but TONY fights himself free]*

TONY. Say, man—put me down! Put me down! Get your hands off me. *[The other PLAYERS are somewhat caught off guard by Tony's sudden hostility]*

PLAYER 4. Wow, dude! You ain't gotta get all heated up just 'cause your pals wanna show you some appreciation. *[ALL agree with Player 4, except LOUIS]*

LOUIS. *[Trying to smooth things over]* Aw, fellows. Knock it off. It was a rough game today, even though we won. Tony's just a little tired. We all are.

PLAYER 2. Louis is right, man. Let's hit the showers and go home.

PLAYER 3. Yeah, that's a good idea 'cause I got this tough little cheerleader from the other team just waiting for me to show her how to slam dunk.

PLAYER 2. Man, you ought to get off of that stuff. The last time you tried to slam dunk you almost broke your @†\$%! *[The other PLAYERS beep his anticipated remark]*

PLAYER 4. Say, man. Watch your mouth! Coach just got through reminding us about our filthy language.

LOUIS. Yeah, and my butt ain't ready to take no more reminding anytime soon. *[He painfully illustrates with an exaggerated rub of his rear. ALL laugh and head for the showers. EVERYONE removes his shirt except Tony]*

PLAYER 4. Say, Tony. Ain't you gonna shower?

ALL PLAYERS. Yeah, man.

TONY. Naw, man. Y'all go on in without me. I'm kind of in a hurry to get home today.

PLAYER 4. Say, chump! What is it with you? What's the matter—we ain't good enough to share the same soap and water with you!

TONY. It ain't that. I'm just in a hurry—that's all.

PLAYER 2. You said that after practice yesterday.

PLAYER 3. —And the day before that.

PLAYER 4. —And the day before that. Say, man—you're gonna take a shower with us today whether you like it or not. *[ALL rush in and grab Tony. He struggles, but it's no use. They start to undress him. First the tennis shoes go. Then they pull off his jersey. Suddenly the GROUP freezes in horror when they notice the scars that cover his back]*

LOUIS. *[Shocked]* Man! . . .

PLAYER 3. Wow . . . who could've done that to you?

PLAYER 2. We're sorry, Tony. We didn't know.

PLAYER 4. Yeah, man. We didn't know.

LOUIS. *[To the other players]* Say, man. Y'all go on hit the showers. I'll be in there in a minute. *[The OTHERS leave, obviously shaken by what they saw]* Tony. . . *[LOUIS tries to help his friend Tony get up, but TONY pulls away from him]* Say, man. I know you're hurting right now, but I'm your best friend. Can't you tell me what happened? Maybe I can help.

TONY. Man, just buzz off and leave me alone! I don't want your help!

LOUIS. Tony. . . I'm not going nowhere! I'm gonna stay right here until you tell me something . . . I've noticed you every day at practice. Sometimes you come in limping . . . other times your lip is busted . . . and just last week you missed three days out of school. When you came back, you had a cut on the back of your head . . . Man, don't nobody have that damn many accidents!

TONY. Just forget it, man. It ain't nothing.

LOUIS. It's your father, isn't it? . . . You don't have to tell me. I know. I think I've known for quite some time. I just wasn't sure. But now I am. I see how he looks at you when we drop you off after practice. I don't think I've ever seen him without a glass of booze in his hand . . . Look, let's tell Coach about it. Maybe he—

TONY. No! . . . Look, Dad's not all that bad. Sure he takes a drink sometimes. But that's just because he's a little depressed over not being able to find a job.

LOUIS. Just stop making excuses for your old man. He hasn't worked in three years. And he ain't planning to . . . not as long as he can force you to work every day after school to support him. The man is a leech! That's probably what drove your mother to an early grave. Face it, man. Your father is *sick!* There are lots of fathers in the world who are out of work, but you don't see them beating up on their kids.

TONY. I don't know what happened. Dad and I used to be so close. When I was small, he'd play ball with me and take me everywhere he went. Whenever I did the simplest things, he'd say, "That's my boy!" He'd squeeze me so tight I thought I was going to smother. Then, he'd scoop me up and put me high atop his shoulders and parade me around for everyone to see. I was so happy then.

LOUIS. Man, that was then. But this is now. Look, either you tell Coach about it, or I'm going to.

TONY. No, don' tdo t hat !. . I ' t d l h i m.

LOUI S When?

TONY. S oon. . I ' t d l h i m soon.

LOUI S *[Shaking his head in disgust]* All righ t Later man.

TONY. And, man . . don' tel the other gu ys abou t my dad, okay?
I don' want them t oknow.

LOUI S. What everyou say, T ony. ~~Whatever~~ you say. Later .

Mu si No. 3: " ADAY WTHOUT PAI N"

TONY. L at erman. *[All alone now, TONY begins to gather his things. As he prepares to go to work, he stops a moment and sings. His innermost feelings are revealed:]*

I wonder what i woul d e l i ke—day wi thou pain

I wonder what i woul d e l l i ke—tbe l oved agai n?

Ther was a ti me w heneverything seemed so f ine.

And t he none ni gh t I awoke—I thou gh t I was l osi ng my mi nd.

Bef or me st ood a man—a v ery awes ome- l ooking.

He r eached ou thi arm and stru ck me wi th hi hand.

And ever si nc e hatawf u ni gh t I, ' wanted to ru n away and hide.

And ever si nc e hatawf u day, I f e l st o dead i ns i de.

Th at man was my f a t h e r —my father was that man.

He t or my hear t to pieces with one bl ow fr om his hand.

And every ni gh t si nc e that nigh t—and ever y day s i nc e that day,

My f a t h e r' been a ni gh tmar e ha f u swon' go away.

[He looks at his watch and reacts to the lateness of the hour] Wow! I ' m
l at e for wor k agai n! ' ve got to get ou t ~~fast~~ *[He runs out quickly]*

S cene 3

[A Street Corner. A lone teenage girl, ANGIE, sits beside her tattered suitcase and weeps. A pimp, P. R., walks up and takes advantage of the situation]

P. R. Hey, p r e t by ow n su ga r Now, what' a f i n e s i t e r i k e your self
doi ng all al one, si t t i n g next to a su i t c a s e r y i n g you r sweet l i t t l e
ou t You know what You need a man l i k e . . someone who' l l r y
you r eyes wi t t e n d e r k i s s e s . . who' l b e r f u m y o u r b o d y w i t h i n y
t o u c h e s o f d e l i g h t . who' l b e t r o k y o u r h a i n n t i r b o s e p e t a l s f a l l f r o m
you r e a r a n d d r o p d o w n a n d c o o l y o u r l o v e l y e a s t You need s o m e -
one who' l l k u n n t h o u s a n d t i n y f i n g e r t i p s o v e r y o u r l u s c i o u s b o d y i n

a hundred different ways and caress you until you give up the sweetness that's locked away inside your chocolate-coated, syrupy-covered thighs of delight. In short, what you need is a man like me. I bet when I'm finished, you'll never have a need for tears again. *[A beat]* By the way, I'm Pretty Red. But you can call me P. R. Say, pretty baby—what's your name?

GIRL. Angie . . . Angela Wright.

P. R. Well, what a coincidence. I just happen to be *Mister Right*.

GIRL. Are you a p—p— *[She can't bring herself to say the word]*

P. R. That's right. I'm a pimp. And I'm proud to be one.

GIRL. That's what I thought. I don't talk to pimps. *[She starts to leave, but P. R. grabs her arm]*

P. R. Say! Hold on a minute, Miss Sweetness and Goodness. You don't really want to run away from me, now do you? *[She gives in a bit]* In the first place, you ain't got nowhere to go. And in the second place, you ain't got a dime to your name. And you just ate your last meal this morning. By now, I bet your stomach is talking to your back . . . Look, I'm gonna do us both a favor and lay your whole life story out in a couple of minutes. In the first place, you're a runaway. You left home because your old lady works nights and drinks days. So your father takes you to bed instead of her. When you complain to your mom, she lays all the blame on you. She beats you and slaps you around because you remind her of herself when she was young. Now, you can't be a day over sixteen, and I'll bet your old man broke you in at fourteen, and for two years he's had you nearly every night. *[She breaks down and cries in P. R.'s arms]* There . . . There . . . get it all out. Because after one big cry, I'm gonna put you on the road to success. I'll promise you your old man will never hurt you ever again. From now on, when you go to bed, it'll be with someone who can afford to pay his way. There will be no more freebies here! Now hush your crying, and come with me. I'm gonna wine you and dine you; clean you up; dress you in silks and satins, and wrap you in fur. Then I'm gonna take you in my arms and show you how to love and be loved. Because, baby, before me there were none . . . and after me, the rest won't even matter. I'm everything you ever needed—and more. *[P. R. stretches out his hand to her. ANGIE hesitates a moment, then takes it. They walk off together. He looks so confident. She looks so helpless . . . LIGHTS fade and come up immediately on:]*