

Love Burns

Libretto by Louis Nowra

Act 1

Scene 1 (Folksong)

*Scene in darkness
Set bathed in dim light.*

MANSFIELD

In a feeble, cracked voice

I took my lover to town
He bought me a wedding gown
The ring was made of the sunset
My necklace diamonds of dew.

His love I will ne'er forget.
His love was always true.

You hear that? I sing to keep you out.

Humming to himself

Scene 1 continued (waltz)

ANGELA

Don't make fun of me
A woman without love is not a woman.
I dream, I dream all the time
A handsome stranger
Mysterious and dark and strong
One who loved me for my soul

JAYNE

When will you meet him?

ANGELA

Tonight.

JAYNE

Do you know what he looks like?

ANGELA

I can tell from his letters.
I'm so nervous I'm having kittens.
He teaches dance!

He says he's lonely.
He wants a woman he can love – love!

He reads my letters before he goes to bed at night.

JAYNE

How did you get to meet him?

ANGELA

In the newspapers. The personal columns.
He sounded so nice.

Recalling advertisement

“Elegant warmhearted male wants to dance into a woman’s heart. Object: romance. Only those who want a true soul mate should answer.”

So I answered.
Tonight!

JAYNE

Don't wet yourself! I'm going inside.

MANSFIELD

Get out of my head!

ANGELA

Shut up! Shut up, Mr Mansfield!
Come on. Take these pills. They'll make you feel better.

MANSFIELD

No, I have to stay on my guard.
They're inside me. The aliens are inside me. They want to possess me!

ANGELA

Why would the aliens pick on you?

MANSFIELD

Because I'm special.

ANGELA

Why don't they pick on me then?

MANSFIELD

No!

Spits out pills.

ANGELA

You're damn crazy. Open your mouth!

MANSFIELD

No, the pills will make my defences weak.

ANGELA

Open up, I said open up. Open your mouth.
Got you!

MANSFIELD

Spits out pill.

SUPER

Miss Wilson! That is enough.

ANGELA

He won't take his pills.

SUPER

You treat these sick people like they were criminals.

ANGELA

You sit in your office all day. You don't know what the real world is like.

SUPER

I've had enough of your backchat. I want you to leave this asylum now.

ANGELA

I'll be glad to leave, you're as mad as these people.

SUPER

I'm dismissing you.

ANGELA

So fancy!

With exaggerated precision.

So plum in the mouth!

SUPER

Get out this instant!

MANSFIELD

Urgently

The aliens are coming.

Scene 2 (Tango 1)

Jack is teaching Mrs Thomson to dance. She is not good.

JACK

That's right, Missus Thomson, right, then left turn.

MRS THOMSON

I'm sorry.

JACK

Don't apologise.

MRS THOMSON

I don't think I'll ever become good at this Mister Anderson.

JACK

Call me Jack.

Nonsense! You have talent. Why didn't you learn to dance before?

MRS THOMSON

My husband didn't like me to dance.

JACK

What a shame; dance and romance go together.
Plenty of men would chase after a woman like you.

MRS THOMSON

Now my husband has gone I sit at home alone.

JACK

But not for long.

MRS THOMSON

A widow of my age? Men go for the young ones.

JACK

Not necessarily.
Ouch!

MRS THOMSON

Timidly

I'm sorry.

JACK

No, it's all right. I tripped.
Oh damn, I'm late.
I have to go, Mrs Thompson.

MRS THOMSON

Thelma.

JACK

Thelma.... Tomorrow?

MRS THOMSON

Tomorrow.

Mrs Thomson goes back to practising her dancing.

Scene 3 (recitative)

ANGELA

Well, this is it. This is my apartment.

JACK

You left the wireless on.

ANGELA

I always leave it on, for company. I don't feel so alone.

JACK

I'd better call a taxi...

ANGELA

You're not going already?

JACK

I said I'd escort you home.

ANGELA

I said I'd give you coffee.

JACK

No, I'd better go. It was a lovely night.

ANGELA

You're going?

JACK

Yes, you see I'm not one of those men who thinks because he paid for a meal then he can stay the night.

ANGELA

I know that.

JACK

I have my faults, but I'm not one of those Don Juan's who'd do anything to get a woman in bed.

ANGELA

I know.

JACK

I respect women. I respect what is in their mind.

ANGELA

I know, our conversation was lovely. I loved listening to you.

ANGELA

JACK

I have never met a man like you before.

I have never met a woman like you before.

JACK

Looking out window

It's a long way down.
See, you can see the moon past the neon lights
The moon is the eye of God
He hypnotises lovers.

I had better ring for a taxi.

ANGELA

No, no, not yet. I don't feel in the least bit tired.
Anyway, I don't have to work tomorrow.
I lost my job.

JACK

You lost your job?

ANGELA

That's all right. Why, with my superannuation, holiday pay and of course my savings...

Takes off her shoes

Not used to heels so high.

JACK

My feet don't rest. Always on the move.

*Jack demonstrates an elegant dance move.
Jack improvises a short dance.
Angela applauds his performance.*

Why are you clapping?

Jack grabs Angela

Music is two people.

ANGELA

I can't dance.

JACK

Everyone can dance, deep down in their soul.
Your soul has to convince your feet.
Now, tell your feet.

Angela and Jack dance together.

Ah! My favourite tunes!

ANGELA

I could never have done this before.

JACK

See, your soul is dancing.

They continue to dance.

ANGELA

This is wonderful!
I'm so glad I wrote to you.

JACK

I'm so glad I replied.
I must go.

ANGELA

No, please stay.

JACK

I don't want you to think I'm only after one thing.

ANGELA

I know you're not. Stay the night with me.

JACK

I don't know.

ANGELA

Oh, please.

JACK

It's a long way down.

ANGELA

Thank you.

JACK

Dance, madam?

ANGELA

JACK

It's been a beautiful night.

It's been a beautiful night.

Scene 4 – Waltz ostinato

ANGELA

It's good to have someone in the apartment.
I don't need the wireless on anymore.

JACK

It's nice to see you happy.

ANGELA

I feel like we're the king and queen of Persia; lie in bed all day making love.

JACK

I haven't much time. I'm meeting him at twelve.

ANGELA

You know, we've been spending too freely.
Once I give you this cheque, I'll hardly have anything left.

JACK

Once I pay the owner, we'll have a dance studio all to ourselves.
Dance is the "in thing" now! We'll make a fortune.
You won't have to work, my sweet. I can put up my feet.

ANGELA

We can get married.

JACK

Very matter of fact

Do all sorts of things, so hurry; he doesn't like to be kept waiting.
It was a lucky day I met you.

ANGELA

When I first saw you sitting in the restaurant, I was so afraid.

JACK

Afraid?

ANGELA

Of you disliking me.

JACK

What a silly thing to think!

ANGELA

You were too good to be true.
I couldn't say a word. My knees were trembling, my throat was dry.
When you said you like me, I could have died right there and then a happy woman.

JACK

My darling Angela, have more confidence in yourself.
I'm here now with you – only you.
Now I must go. I'll return soon.

ANGELA

Don't make any plans for the weekend. Jayne's having a party. I want to show you off.
I love you!

JACK

I love you too.

ANGELA

Don't forget the takeaway!

JACK

Be back soon!

ANGELA

You wait...
Others look down on you.
She's going to stay on the shelf...
Others get married, they do things together
But you stay alone.
And you wait, you wait until almost too late...
And then, just when you believe you'll be alone for your whole life
He comes.

Scene 5 – Recitative and Arioso

ANGELA

Where is he? He hasn't called.
What can have happened?
Maybe he's had an accident. He's bleeding, dying somewhere...
Where could he be?
I shouldn't have let him out of my sight.
He's gone.
I was blind. Men don't like to be suffocated. I read that once.
I shouldn't have pushed him so quickly.

Grab a hold of yourself!
Boys will be boys.
Maybe he's drinking with his mates.
See. His suitcase. If he'd fled he wouldn't have left it.

You're stupid! So stupid!
He's gone for a moment and you think the sky has fallen in.
Love's making me crazy. Control yourself!
Be calm.
His suitcase. His world.

I get so frightened my darling of losing you.
I always felt a part of my soul was missing.
But you made me feel complete.
Forgive me if I doubted you. Forgive me.

I know men hate a woman looking through their things. I read that once too.
But I can't stop myself. I must know everything about you, my darling, everything.

*Angela opens the suitcase and is stunned.
She takes out telephone book after telephone book....*

Oh no....

Scene 6

JACK

With mock tenderness.

"I am a widow. Lost my man years ago.
He was a wealthy businessman, he left me everything except happiness.
I believe in love. I believe I can be happy.
Christine."

He laughs

I'll make you happy.

Knock at the door.

It's open!

He spins around.

Angela!

ANGELA

You bastard!

JACK

I can explain.

ANGELA

For five months I have been searching for you. Not one word, not one phone call.

JACK

I can explain, please listen...

ANGELA

You'll lie to me again.

JACK

I was unsure. I didn't think you loved me.

ANGELA

You never loved me.

JACK

I loved you.

ANGELA

Lies! You wanted my money.

JACK

No! I swear!

ANGELA

Where is my money?

JACK

I tell the truth! It's the truth!

ANGELA

You stole my money!
You broke my heart.
You made a fool out of me.
When you left I wanted to kill myself.

Champagne? Another sucker to ruin?

JACK

I didn't mean to hurt you.

ANGELA

Shut up. Do you do this to all your women?
Is Jack even your real name?

JACK

Ernest.

ANGELA

Stick to Jack.

Doorbell.

JACK

Not yet!

CHRISTINE

Michael!
Who are you?

ANGELA

One of his victims... you're his next.

JACK

CHRISTINE

Pay no attention.

What are you?

ANGELA

Men are shits. Men are bastards. He's the biggest shit of them all.

JACK

She's my sister...

ANGELA

I was his lover...

JACK

She's got rabies...

ANGELA

He said he loved me, then he took my money...

CHRISTINE

Is this true?

JACK

She's strange in the head...

ANGELA

Run, run before he takes your money.
Go, go, you stupid woman!

CHRISTINE

Michael?

ANGELA

It's Jack!

JACK

You'd better go, I'll call you tomorrow.

ANGELA

Never call him again. Go!

Christine leaves.

JACK

Why did you do that? She was worth a fortune!

ANGELA

Jail, it's jail for you.

JACK

Jail?

ANGELA

Look how scared you are. I like you being frightened.
That's how I felt when you left me.

JACK

I don't want to go to jail.

ANGELA

Not such a big man now?
See, I'm learning to be light on my feet, how you taught me.

JACK

Please, I'll find the money, I'll get the money, I'll get a loan.

ANGELA

I want to see you behind bars.

JACK

Forgive me.

Angela looks triumphant.

ANGELA

Will you do anything to stay out of jail?

JACK

Yes, yes.

ANGELA

I was so lonely when you left.
I still love you, Jack – I want to call you Jack.
I'll never leave you. We'll be together.

JACK

Together?

ANGELA

Together. You'll learn to love me because you need me.

JACK

What are you talking about?

ANGELA

I'll be your sister. It will be perfect.

JACK

You're mad.

ANGELA

The women won't suspect a brother and a sister.

JACK

I work alone.

ANGELA

In a prison cell you can be alone.
Don't you see? I need you, you need me.

Jack is unconvinced.

Then it's prison?

Jack shakes his head.

JACK

I need you, you need me
Together a team
Fulfilling our dream
of getting rich together
You needing me
I needing you.

ANGELA

I need you, you need me
Together a team
Fulfilling our dream
of getting rich together
You needing me
I needing you.

Scene 7 – Conga

Jack is teaching Mrs Birkinhead to dance under the watchful eye of Angela.

JACK

One, two, three, four, that's the way.
You're improving every day.

MRS BIRKINHEAD

You're such a wonderful teacher.

ANGELA

Any more chips?

Angela leave the room.

Mrs Birkinhead points to the kitchen.

MRS BIRKINHEAD

It's been such a long time since a man held me in his arms.

She kisses him quickly.

You're sister never leaves us alone.

JACK

I've had to look after her ever since both our parents died.

MRS BIRKINHEAD

Quietly

Parents died?

I'm sorry.

JACK

Missus Birkinhead...

MRS BIRKINHEAD

Miriam...

JACK

Miriam. These are some of the happiest days of my life.

MRS BIRKINHEAD

These are the happiest days of my life.

JACK

Will you be my wife?

MRS BIRKINHEAD

Everything seems so rushed.

I've been a widow for only one year.

I love my husband very much.

ANGELA

I can't find the chips!

MRS BIRKINHEAD

Irritated.

I'll get them.

Mrs Birkinhead leaves.

JACK

I had her! I had her, she was going to say yes!

ANGELA

You love her!

JACK

I had her on the edge. If I marry her we get it all!

ANGELA

That's bigamy.

JACK

So? I've done it before.

ANGELA

How many times?

JACK

A few.

ANGELA

And you made love to them all?

JACK

It's a job, like cleaning teeth.

ANGELA

Is that how you feel about me?

JACK

Of course not.

ANGELA

It's real passion for me?

JACK

Real passion.

ANGELA

She's just a little older than me.

JACK

Don't you want the money?

ANGELA

I have a deal.

JACK

Not another one.

ANGELA

After this one, the women have to be fifty-five or more.

JACK

Fifty.

ANGELA

A deal.

JACK

A deal.

ANGELA

Like cleaning teeth.

JACK

Like cleaning teeth.
The thing is, because of you, I still have to win her.

ANGELA

Leave her to me.

Mrs Birkinhead enters with chips.

Thank you.

Takes chips.

Miriam, I've been watching you two, and to be perfectly frank I've never seen my brother look so in love.
Why don't you two tie the knot?

JACK

I know I'm not wealthy...

MRS BIRKINHEAD

That means nothing to me.

JACK

All I want is to spend the rest of our lives together.
Do you?

MRS BIRKINHEAD

I do.

JACK

MRS BIRKINHEAD

I want to marry you.

I want to marry you.

ANGELA

Angela smiles and tears open the chips.

I love chips.

Scene 8

STEWARD

Oh Pacific moon, who can resist you?
Oh Pacific moon, are you in love too?
Oh Pacific moon, you shine so brightly.
Oh, yellow honey moon...

TOURIST

Angrily

Why are you Australians always so goddamn cheerful?

ANGELA

After Tourist speaks to Steward

Some food!

STEWARD

More, madame?

ANGELA

Yes, more?

JACK

Ah, sea air.

ANGELA

JACK

A dream come true
Above our class
Living it up like king and queen
A dream come true.

A dream come true
Above our class
Living it up like king and queen
A dream come true.

ANGELA

Are you learning to love me?

JACK

Little by little, more day by day.

ANGELA

How did you learn to be so smooth?

JACK

I had to learn
I was born poor, in and out of jail
Until I found that lonely women will do anything for love
For the least sign of affection

ANGELA

Angela notices something in the paper

“He’s a con-man, so is his sister” said Miriam Birkinhead.

JACK

That’s old news.

ANGELA

I found you.
The other women will find you, sooner or later.

JACK

What is it darling?

ANGELA

The women will have to go.

JACK

What do you mean?

Angela makes a cutting motion across her throat.

No!

ANGELA

The women can’t trace us if they’re dead.

JACK

No!

ANGELA

Do you want to go to jail again?

Jack shakes his head.

You break their hearts.
When you leave them they become the living dead.
It's best to end their pain.

JACK

Better to end their pain...

ANGELA

Look at us! Me a nurse for the insane, you a gigolo.
We've always been on the bottom rung of the ladder of life.

ANGELA

JACK

We've always been on the bottom rung of the
ladder of life.
Well, no more.
We'll end their pain.
End their misery.
And we'll climb up from the bottom rung of the
ladder of life.
We've always been on the bottom rung of the
ladder of life.
Well, no more. No more!

We've always been on the bottom rung of the
ladder of life.
Well, no more.
We'll end their pain.
End their misery.
And we'll climb up from the bottom rung of the
ladder of life.
We've always been on the bottom rung of the
ladder of life.
Well, no more. No more!

Act 2

Scene 1 (Waltz)

JACK

Let me carry you across the threshold!

MRS FOX

Put me down! Don't be silly.

ANGELA

Champagne!

MRS FOX

Too extravagant. There's a flagon in the fridge.
It's been there some time, but then wine gets better with time.

JACK

Our wedding day!

MRS FOX

You spend too much money.

We must get ready for our honeymoon.

Look after my house properly.

Turn off the lights you don't need, go easy on the food, you eat enough for ten.

Mrs Fox leaves.

ANGELA

I could kill her cheerfully, kill that miser.

JACK

Shhh!

ANGELA

Always picking on me....

JACK

Keep your voice down.

ANGELA

You agreed today's the day we'll do the world a favour.

A knife for a wife, a wedding present.

JACK

Never done this before...

ANGELA

You were a virgin once, you're a virgin again.

JACK

A knife for a wife... life was simpler when I took the money and ran.

MRS FOX

What's that?

JACK

I want to go to Iran.

MRS FOX

Too expensive.

ANGELA

A toast. The most beautiful bride in the whole world.

MRS FOX

Don't be silly.

ANGELA

Do it now.

MRS FOX

Do what?

ANGELA

Jack...

MRS FOX

Jack? Your name's Bill.

ANGELA

Now...

JACK

Let's dance.

MRS FOX

There's no music.

JACK

We don't need music.

MRS FOX

We don't have time.

ANGELA

Do the world a favour.

JACK

Our honeymoon will be wonderful!

MRS FOX

Go easy on the spending.

ANGELA

Get rid of her!

MRS FOX

What?

JACK

The honeymoon...

ANGELA

She's a dried up prune!

MRS FOX

How dare you!

ANGELA

Do it now!

JACK

The honeymoon...

ANGELA

What are you two up to?

JACK

The honeymoon...

ANGELA

Now!

The knife falls from Jack's pocket.

MRS FOX

A knife?

JACK

More wine!

MRS FOX

You two...

ANGELA

Coward!

JACK

Dance?

MRS FOX

You want to kill me!

ANGELA

What an I.Q.

MRS FOX

Swine!

ANGELA

Oink! Oink! Wanted to do that for months...

MRS FOX

Police! Murder!

ANGELA

Be quiet.

Angela hands knife to Jack

Your turn. All for one and one for all!

MRS FOX

Murder!

ANGELA

Shut her up!

MRS FOX

Police! Murder

JACK

Shut up! Shut up!

What have I done?

ANGELA

The world a favour.

JACK

Life was simpler when I took the money and ran.

ANGELA

It's simple now, my darling. She'll never find us.
Life is simple now my darling.

Scene 2

JACK

Why am I doing it all?

ANGELA

Because you're the man.
No-one will ever suspect her grave is in her very own garage.

JACK

This is hard work.

ANGELA

I did the hard work. Next time don't be a coward.
You're lucky I'm the strong one.

JACK

I work hard. Can you get their money? Can you woo the women?

ANGELA

We complement each other, like sister and brother.

ANGELA

Like sister and brother
Laurel and Hardy
Tweedledum and Tweedledee
Romeo and Juliet

JACK

Like sister and brother
Laurel and Hardy
Tweedledum and Tweedledee
Romeo and Juliet

ANGELA

Are you learning to love me?

JACK

I love you forever and eternity.

ANGELA

Oh Jack, you've made me the happiest girl in the whole world.

JACK

Careful, the concrete's wet.

ANGELA

A heart with no names. An arrow of love through it.
And the word, our word underneath it. "Forever."
Two people...

JACK

... one heart.

ANGELA

Two people, one heart
Forever one heart

JACK

Two people, one heart
Forever one heart

Bound to each other
Forever
Star-crossed
Forever

Bound to each other
Forever
Star-crossed
Forever

Scene 3 (part 1)

Jack is reading to Joan from a cheap romantic novel.

JACK

“He took her in his arms. She was wild, tempestuous.
She tried to break away, but he was too strong, too masculine.”

Angela enters with a vacuum cleaner.

JOAN

You’re doing the cleaning now?
Tony’s reading to me.

ANGELA

Mustn’t interrupt that.
Some tea?

JOAN

Thank you, Beverly.

JACK

“He held her against his chest.
His eyes were smouldering...”

JOAN

Like your eyes, your smouldering eyes.

JACK

“Love for women is surrender, love for men is victory.”

JOAN

Yes! Yes!

Angela enters with a cup of tea for Joan.

ANGELA

Freshly brewed.

JOAN

Joan sips the tea.

Tastes funny.

ANGELA

Your taste buds are gone.

Angela leaves the room.

JOAN

She's so moody.

I feel bad.

Something's wrong with the tea.

JACK

The tea?

Angela enters dragging a chest.

Jack assists Angela.

Why?

ANGELA

I'm bored with her.

JOAN

What are you doing?

ANGELA

Vicious.

Seeing if you fit in it.

They place the chest near Joan.

JOAN

Don't joke, I'm sick.

ANGELA

You've had your fun.
Two months of it – more than life owes you.

JOAN

What are you going on about?

ANGELA

You women are so stupid.
Why do you fall in love at the drop of a hat?

JOAN

Help me Tony, I think I'm dying.

ANGELA

It's certain you are.

JOAN

The tea!

ANGELA

Ten out of ten.

JOAN

Oh Tony, please, your sister is killing me.

ANGELA

We're lovers!

JOAN

Tony?

ANGELA

Where do you want to be sent? Fiji? Spain? New Guinea?

JOAN

Whispered

Tony, help me.

ANGELA

You'll be a tourist in death.
Where's your Tony now?

Suddenly a knock at the door.

JACK

Her brother! He said he'd pass by!

ANGELA

Why didn't you tell me?

JACK

I didn't know you were going to do her in.

*More knocking. Joan mouths her brother's name and weakly motions to the door.
Jack is nonplussed, but Angela is goaded into action.*

ANGELA

The chest!

Yelling.

Won't be long!

They try to put Joan in the chest.

JACK

It's too small!

More knocking.

BOTH

Be right there!

ANGELA

Push her in!

JACK

My God!

More knocking

BOTH

Hang on! Won't be a moment!

They have her in.

Jack goes to the door as Angela shuts the lid.

Jack opens the door and Thomas enters.

Scene 3 (part 2)

JACK

Thomas.

THOMAS

A long time to answer the door...

JACK

Want a drink?

THOMAS

Where's Joan?

JACK

Not here.

ANGELA

Gone away.

THOMAS

Gone away?

ANGELA AND JACK

Yes, yes.

The chest lid opens, a hand comes out.

Angela reacts. Jack is paralysed with fear.

JACK

She left a note... said she was leaving me.

THOMAS

Strange... where is it?

JACK

Nervously

Gone... tore it up... I was upset.

THOMAS

You just got married.

JACK

Too much...

THOMAS

Too much?

JACK

... love. It brought out ...

ANGELA

... the perverse in her.

THOMAS

Perverse?

ANGELA

Loving does that too some women

ANGELA AND JACK

She was ashamed.

JACK

She's seeking help... with an expert...

THOMAS

My sister, perverse?

Knocking from inside the chest.

What's that?

ANGELA AND JACK

Nothing.

Angela rushes to chest.

ANGELA

Opens lid.

A rat!

Picks up vacuum cleaner, hits body inside with it.

Rats. Awful, terrible, terrible things.

JACK

Rats.

ANGELA AND JACK

Rats, terrible things.

ANGELA

Dead, thank God.

Closes lid.

THOMAS

It's all very strange...

ANGELA

Your sister will be cured.

Guides him to door

JACK

I love her, Thomas, I'll wait for her...

THOMAS

Very strange...

He leaves, confused.

Angela looks into the chest.

ANGELA

Those eyes, dumb like sheep.
Bon voyage.

Closes lid of chest.

As though trying to remember a song.

Another woman...
Another heart...
Another step to our fortune.

ANGELA

Another woman
Another step
Another step to our fortune
Another step in our revenge
On all those kind who look down on us.

Another woman
Another stepping stone
As our love grows and grows.

JACK

Another woman
Another step
Another step to our fortune
Another step in our revenge
On all those kind who look down on us.

Another woman
Another stepping stone
As our love grows and grows.

Scene 4

*Jack is out walking with Hilary (an attractive widow.)
A jogger is running in the background.
Angela enters and watches them jealously.*

HILARY

A honeymoon in France, it sounds romantic.
Spring bride.

JACK

Two long months away.

HILARY

Let's not rush things.

JACK

I like being with you, here in the park.

JACK

The sun
The grass
Winter has turned
Summer for us
For us

HILARY

The sun
The grass
Winter has turned
Summer for us
For us

The jogger bumps into Angela

ANGELA

Hey!

HILARY

Despina! Why don't you come for a walk with us?

ANGELA

Get run over by joggers?
I want a word with my brother.

All very lovey-dovey...

JACK

Don't go on and on about it.

ANGELA

Do away with her!

JACK

We don't have to kill them all!

ANGELA

You love her.

JACK

I don't!

ANGELA

That's why you won't kill her!

JACK

I don't!

ANGELA

I see the way you look at her!

JACK

You're jealous.

ANGELA

You love her.

Viciously.

Watch it, creep.

Scene 5

Hilary is standing on a balcony.

I was dead
A zombie
I was dead
He brought me to life.

ANGELA

Hot chocolate?

HILARY

How kind.
I've stood on this balcony for years, and only seen lights
Reminding me I was alone.
Now I see those lights are stars.

ANGELA

You're a poet, and don't know it.

HILARY

You need your own lover.

ANGELA

I have one. A secret one.

*Angela laughs.
Hilary is bemused.*

Don't let it get cold.

Jack enters.

HILARY

To Jack

Your sister is so kind, she brought me some hot chocolate.
Smells...

ANGELA

Delicious!

Hilary is about to drink.

JACK

No!

ANGELA

What are you doing?

Jack takes the cup from Hilary.

JACK

It's off.

ANGELA

It's perfectly fine. It'll help her sleep.

JACK

I'll make you a new fresh one.

ANGELA

We're finished if you do.

HILARY

Don't quarrel over me.

JACK

My sister's become a bore.

ANGELA

My brother is stupid.

Angela leaves room.

HILARY

At least she's left us alone.
Cheer up.

Scene 6

ANGELA

You find me attractive?

JACK

Yes.

ANGELA

More than her?

JACK

Yes.

ANGELA

We're lovers like Romeo and Juliet, aren't we?

JACK

Like Romeo and Juliet

ANGELA

I'm strong. You said you liked strong women.

JACK

I do, I love you.

ANGELA

Then don't sleep with her!

JACK

She'll get suspicious if I don't.

ANGELA

Where are you going?

JACK

To bed.

ANGELA

Her bed.

JACK

Angrily

Will you stop this!

ANGELA

You think she's attractive?

JACK

Shrugs shoulders

Not really.

ANGELA

You do!

That's why you won't kill her!

JACK

Stop this!

HILARY (offstage)

Where are you, my darling?

JACK

There...

ANGELA

Imitating Hilary

She called you "darling".

JACK

For Christ's sake, stop it!
Your jealousy is driving me mad!

ANGELA

Kill her!
For me.
For our love.

JACK

I can't take any more of this.
I'm going to bed.

ANGELA

A kiss.

He gives her a perfunctory kiss.

A lover's kiss.

She grabs him and gives him a long kiss.

Goodnight.

JACK

'Night.

Berceuse

ANGELA

She's in there in bed with her
I hear her laughing
They're making love
He said he loved me
He doesn't love me

She picks up the phone and dials

Hello, police –

She hangs up

If I tell on him I tell on me
I love him
I can hear you laughing
Laughing at me
You're planning to leave me
Please don't leave me
We belong together
Sister and brother

Lovers
Nothing can tear us apart
Except you breaking my heart.
I'm strong, a strong woman.

I'm not one of those women
who take this from men.
I don't care if I die.

Quietly but firmly

No-one else is going to have you.

She dials.

Scene 7 (In the Police Station)

Hilary is pleading with a policewoman.

HILARY

He didn't kill them.

POLICEWOMAN

Go home. There's nothing you can do.

HILARY

It was his sister.

POLICEWOMAN

Go home, there's nothing you can do.

HILARY

He needs me.

POLICEWOMAN

He needs a lawyer.

HILARY

He loves me.

POLICEWOMAN

Silly, silly woman.

POLICEMAN

To the Policewoman

Get the other one.

To Jack

How many did you bump off?
What did they see in you?

JACK

Women love to be loved.

Policewoman enters with Angela

To Angela

Why did you do it?

Angela doesn't answer.

To Policewoman about Angela:

Can I talk to her..... in private?

POLICEWOMAN

There, where I can keep an eye on you....

Jack goes over to Angela

JACK

Why? Why? Why did you do it?

ANGELA

You were going to leave me.

JACK

I wasn't.

ANGELA

You love her.

JACK

I don't.

ANGELA

Why didn't you get rid of her then?

JACK

I was tired of the killing.

ANGELA

Love gave us the courage to kill.
You don't love me.

JACK

I don't understand it.
You and me, we made a great time.
Why did you have to take love so seriously?

Angela realises he is telling the truth.

ANGELA

Oh God, what have I done?

ANGELA

JACK

My jealousy has destroyed us.

Your jealousy has destroyed us.

ANGELA

What have I done?

The Policeman enters.

POLICEMAN

To Jack

You first!

He grabs Jack, leading him off.

ANGELA

Jack! I am with you my darling!

JACK

You stupid fucking cow!

Scene 8 – March

The warders are wheeling out food together.

WARDER

Not long before they burn.
He's eaten nothing.

WARDRESS

She's had three chickens, a leg of lamb;
Eaten like there's no tomorrow.

WARDER

There isn't.

WARDRESS

What did they see in each other?

WARDER

Opposites attract.

WARDRESS

Strange world where such love could exist.

WARDER

Is that what you call it?

Angela is writing poem.

ANGELA

My heart cries out for you
It sings a song of grief
And death, and only sweet death
Will bring relief to me

JACK

I don't want to die.
See that cockroach
Look at that rat
Trying to scavenge something
Just trying to get by.

They won't die for love.

ANGELA

Writing her poem.

What to me is the starlight
Or the moonbeams splendour?....

JACK

See that cockroach
Look at that rat.

ANGELA

Reading her poem.

If I cannot feel the thrill...

JACK

Just trying to scavenge something
Trying to get by...

ANGELA

...of your fingers tender, my love.

JACK

They won't die for love.

ANGELA

As if speaking to Jack

We will soon die,
And you will know
That you are the only man I ever loved.
The only man who ever loved me.
I want to shout our love to the world.

Without love, a woman is nothing.

WARDRESS

That's not rational.

WARDER

All those letters women wrote to you...

JACK

Women love a lady-killer.

ANGELA

Love is not rational.

WARDRESS

You must be mad. Women don't need men.

WARDER

Any advice for picking up girls?

JACK

Learn to dance, they think it leads to romance.

ANGELA

Without a man, a woman is nothing.

WARDRESS

You're a fool.

WARDER

All the papers say that you two are like the great lovers of the past.
Romeo and Juliet.
Tristan and Isolde.

JACK

Don't believe all you read in the papers.

ANGELA

I'm a fool for love.
Our love is forever.
Eternity.

Hilary rushes in.

WARDRESS

Come on...

HILARY

Wait!
Let me through
Where is he?
He must have loved me.
He didn't want to kill me.
We were going to get married.
It was her, that witch.
That ugly witch.
She did it to him.
She destroyed our future.
She destroyed our love.

As they prepare the electric chair:

WARDER

Was it love?
What was it?
What drove him to it?
Was it love?

WARDRESS

Was it love?
What was it?
What drove her to it?
Was it love?

ANGELA

Our LOVE is eternal.
Jack, tell me love's eternal.

HILARY

Our LOVE is eternal.
Jack, tell me love's eternal.

I love him.
He loves me.
Jack tell me...
He loves me
I love him

I love him.
He loves me.
Jack tell me...
He loves me
I love him

JACK

Softly.

I love.... Myself.

Electrocution.
(If hung instead, go straight to Epilogue.)

Epilogue.

HILARY, WARDRESS & WARDER

People will die for love
For love.
People will kill for love
For love.
The need for love yearns in us all.
The need for LOVE BURNS in us all.

END