

ABSTINENCE

A New Musical

Book and Lyrics by Tom Attea

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CHARACTERS

RICHARD COCHBURN (pronounced "Co-burn") -- Ph. D., Sociology. A zealous and proud man, almost in complete control of his own desires.

MELANIE COCHBURN -- His pulchritudinous daughter and convinced follower.

PRISCILLA ERNST, M.D. -- The dedicated and attractive dean of the medical school.

DAN FOX -- An All-American quarterback, inspired ladies' man, and a good, though never great, student.

PLACE

THE COCHBURN LIVING ROOM. It is traditionally furnished, with much wood, but accented with a few feminine touches Melanie has dared to add. Door to den, s.r. Door to outside, s.l. Melanie's room, r.c.

TIME

Spring -- 1990s.

SONGSAct I

The Thing They Do And Do And Do

Can Sex Survive?

What Big Problems Little Things Can Cause!

I Never Thought That I'd Miss Love

Your Rules Of Abstinence!

No More Sex For Me?

Just Say No To Sex

Temptation Struck!

Well, Screw It!

All I Long To Do

ACT II

Think How Life Wants to Live

I'm Only Human, After All

Only As A Friend

I Want You to be the First

How Quick A Dream Can Die!

Your Heart Grows Fonder

ACT I

Scene 1

AT RISE, DR. COCHBURN is on the PHONE,
with pen and schedule book.

DR. COCHBURN

Excellent, Dan! See you at four.
(hangs up)

MELANIE ENTERS from the front door, waving
good-bye to her many luckless male pursuers,
whose clamorous adulation and drive-by
honking we can hear. SHE has a bag from
the university bookstore in hand.

MELANIE

Bye, good-bye, bye-bye, guys!
(closes door, exhausted from the attention,
and then crosses to DR. COCHBURN)
Hi, Daddy!

DR. COCHBURN

Hello there, Mel. The usual crop of undisciplined admirers?

MELANIE

I'm sorry. They're so boring.
(takes out his book: Just Say No to Sex)
Here's the extra copy of your new book!

DR. COCHBURN

Thank you, dear.
(takes it)
I want to autograph it for Dr. Ernst. She'll be here any minute.

MELANIE

Dr. Ernst? What for?

DR. COCHBURN

Oh, one wonders. I could tell by her tone of voice when she called that she's quite piqued that the

answer to the population time-bomb and the AIDS epidemic has come from the sociology department, rather than from the medical school.

MELANIE

That's not very nice!

DR. COCHBURN

But to be expected. The human race as yet knows no cure for professional jealousy. But, forgive me -- I can't help gloating. Given the way my book is being received, what choice does she have but to congratulate me?

MELANIE

Guess what, Daddy? I want to do the same.
 (takes second copy of book from bag)
 It's a present from me!

DR. COCHBURN

Why, thank you, Mel!

MELANIE

You're welcome, Daddy! And look! I wrote a note to you!

DR. COCHBURN

(opens book; reads)
 "To Daddy. Thanks to you, I will never procreate or contract a sexually transmitted disease.
 Love, Mel."

(a bit emotional)
 My dear, sweet, Melanie -- I'm touched. I know your entire life will shine forth like a beacon of hope to all who know the transcendent value of my work.

MELANIE

Thank you, Daddy.
 (sings)
 I haven't got a clue
 Why people do
 The thing they do
 And do and do.
 Does every normal girl and boy
 Have to be someone's sexy toy?
 And why can't every Mr. and Mrs.
 Control their things and orifices?

MELANIE (CONT'D)

I haven't got a clue
 Why people do

The thing they do
 And do and do.
 Don't have a baby, just have fun,
 They think, till, oops, there's another one.
 And isn't it just terrifying
 How fast they keep on multiplying?

I mean, when they make love,
 What are they thinking of?
 I'm glad it's not for me.
 I'm quite content to be
 An android of some kind,
 Made fun of every day,
 But inwardly I say
 Why don't they get a mind?

I haven't got a clue
 Why people do
 The thing they do
 And do and do.
 Abstaining's one of the crusades
 That works against the spread of AIDS.
 It's tough, but isn't it worth trying
 If it stops just one person from dying?

I haven't got a clue
 Why most people do
 The thing they do
 And do and do.

I just haven't got a clue!

DR. COCHBURN

I haven't got a clue, either, Melanie. Oh, guess what happened while you were at school?

MELANIE

What?

DR. COCHBURN

Prevention Magazine called.

MELANIE

No?

DR. COCHBURN

Yes! They want to do an excerpt!

MELANIE

How great!

DR. COCHBURN

Yes. At last, the popular media are starting to pay attention. It looks as if I'm destined to transcend the confines of The Journal of Sociology. Soon, there will undoubtedly be major reviews of the book, and I suppose I'll be busy on the lecture circuit and making appearances on various talk shows. Then, my dear, where won't you find a Cochburn Club for Popular Celibacy?

MELANIE

It's so great!

DR. COCHBURN

And a great triumph for the human race -- a turning point! I have put the wise, conservative position of just saying no to sex on a solid and far broader foundation. At last, mankind -- and womankind -- can begin to work their way back from the brink of self-inflicted annihilation in an acceptable, cost-efficient and efficacious manner. At last, the natural remedy is at hand for overpopulation -- and the resultant ecological depredation -- teenage pregnancy, the heartbreak of abortion, and the scourge of AIDS and other STDs -- all thanks to my brilliant method.

MELANIE

Oh, Daddy, I'm so proud of you!

DR. COCHBURN

Thank you, dear.

(MUSIC: "CAN SEX SURVIVE?"; HE sings)

I ask you, now,
Given my book,
If you see how
Anyone can brook
The continuance of
What's called making love?

At the current rate of birth
We'll soon populate the earth
Till we end up in a squeeze

That's as tight as honey bees.
 So I ask, can sex survive?
 I doubt it very much.
 Why, the time will soon arrive
 When you'll hardly want to touch.

Who would think it's cause for mirth
 That the bounty of the earth
 Could be gobbled up like cheese
 Clear to the antipodes?
 So I ask, can sex survive?
 I doubt it very much.
 And to disengage your drive,
 Let my method be the clutch.
 (holds up his book)

Yes, I stand for a world
 Of big, healthy spaces
 From which all traces
 Of sex have been hurled.
 Oh, sure, it's a sacrifice,
 No doubt about it.
 But I instill in my students
 So much joyful prudence
 That, even without it,
 They'll think they're in paradise.

And who'd dare say sex is worth
 The heart-stopping thought the earth
 Could become like one sick room
 Where we weep our friends to doom?
 So I ask, can sex survive?
 I doubt it very much.
 No way sex can stay alive
 If you whack it with my crutch!
 (hits piece of furniture with book)

(DOORBELL rings)

DR. COCHBURN

That must be Dr. Ernst now.

MELANIE

I'll get it for you.

DR. COCHBURN

Thank you.

(As SHE crosses to the door, HE poses grandly with his book)

MELANIE

(opens door)

Hello, Dr. Ernst. My dad's expecting you.

(PRISCILLA ERNST, M. D., ENTERS with regal bearing)

DR. ERNST

Thank you, Melanie.

(THEY cross to COCHBURN)

DR. COCHBURN

Good afternoon, Dr. Ernst.

DR. ERNST

Good afternoon to you, Dr. Cochburn.

(THEY shake hands)

MELANIE

May I get you a cup of tea or anything?

DR. ERNST

No, thank you. I had lunch in the cafeteria. And a meal there does more than satisfy one's appetite. It destroys it.

MELANIE

How about you, Daddy?

DR. COCHBURN

Thank you, Mel. Nothing right now.

MELANIE

Excuse me, then. I'm going to do some reinforcement training.

DR. COCHBURN

Good girl. Today, why not concentrate on your first line of defense?

MELANIE

Yes, Daddy.

(as SHE EXITS)

Remember, Mel: "Sex, Mexico!"

DR. COCHBURN

Quite a girl. I'm very proud of her. May I offer you a seat?

DR. ERNST

Thank you.

(THEY sit)

DR. COCHBURN

You said you have something to discuss?

DR. ERNST

Indeed, I do. As I said when I called, I've read your new book.

(holds up a copy)

Just Say No To Sex.

DR. COCHBURN

And?

DR. ERNST

Well, I must say it has aroused --

DR. COCHBURN

-- "Aroused?" Careful with your choice of words, Priscilla. Don't want to key off, as my book cautions, an inadvertent association?

DR. ERNST

Such little things --

DR. COCHBURN

-- Little? Let me tell you, we are in the hands of such things!

(sings)

Think what big problems

Little things can cause!

The tiny tug that passion

Provokes is all that draws

Most people to the thoughtless deed

That crowds the earth with mouths to feed.

Think what big problems
 Little things can cause!
 An ill-bred, lurking virus
 That stealthily withdraws,
 Once in, in time plots to make of
 One's life the unfair price for love.

And how big we all must be
 To face such little things;
 And how wise to overcome
 The anguish each one brings.

Think what big problems
 Little things can cause!
 An itty-bitty atom
 Contains such mighty laws
 A few infractions could well send
 Us all off to a dreadful end.

DR. COCHBURN (CONT'D)

Yes, think what problems
 Little things can cause.
 Oh, what problems
 Little things can cause!

DR. ERNST

Excuse my linguistic oversight, Richard. Let me say, instead, that your book has "caused" serious concern at the medical school?

DR. COCHBURN

"Concern?" I should think there would be a chorus of undiluted praise!

DR. ERNST

Undiluted concern, I assure you. In fact, as dean, I must ask you to disavow your book.

DR. COCHBURN

Disa --

DR. ERNST

-- And retract your absurd and dangerous method.

DR. COCHBURN

Priscilla, you must be joking. Retract it -- when the very survival of the human race has no other

hope?

DR. ERNST

Oh, please, Richard. Someone is always imagining the end of the world to foist a belief on the human race. But today's challenge is to imagine, not the end, but the beginning of humanity well-adjusted to life and settling in for the ages ahead.

DR. COCHBURN

And my method offers no hope toward that goal?

DR. ERNST

Richard, there is, of course, some merit in advising abstinence. But to present it as a cure-all offers, we believe, only a false hope.

DR. COCHBURN

Oh, this is too much, Priscilla! Out of the illimitable depth of my compassion for society springs this majestic fountain of immediately applicable wisdom -- and you say such a thing! Why, soon I expect that I shall even begin to be mentioned for the Nobel Prize.

DR. ERNST

You mean, the dumbbell prize!

DR. COCHBURN

Hold on! There are certain minimum standards of civilized intercourse that I believe are being breached here.

DR. ERNST

"Intercourse?" Careful, Richard.

DR. COCHBURN

I'm afraid you've upset me. There is never a need to insult --

DR. ERNST

-- Nor ever a need to raise your voice! In fact, I'm so remarkably perceptive, Doctor, that I can usually even take a hint.

DR. COCHBURN

But to cast aspersions on an intellectual breakthrough so vital --

DR. ERNST

-- Vital, smital! We call it Cochburn's Folly.

DR. COCHBURN

Folly?

DR. ERNST

Not invariably. At other times, I've heard it simply referred to as "f-ing" stupid.

DR. COCHBURN

How disgraceful! Do you think I have been inspired to imagine such an answer out of nothing? My work grows out of my own hard-won experience. How hopeless I felt when, as a young idealist in the city's Department of Social Services, I saw my dreams buried under the ever-copulating, ever-procreating masses! And you and I have both seen a brilliant colleague succumb to AIDS. But now my years of retreat and seeming unconcern are over. I have reentered the world with an irrefutable answer.

DR. ERNST

I understand the depth of your involvement. Nevertheless, I believe there is good reason for the negative response your work has received.

DR. COCHBURN

You --

DR. ERNST

-- Hear me out, Doctor. We at the medical school are concerned that the attention being paid to your book may provide a shallow excuse for conservatives in congress to cut back funding for the sort of research that might actually lead to scientifically valid answers --

DR. COCHBURN

"-- Scientifically valid!?" --

DR. ERNST

-- And possibly provide an excuse to reduce funding for true sexual education, including family planning, safe sex, and other proven --

DR. COCHBURN

-- The Cochburn Method is proven.

DR. ERNST

To be what -- moronically unrealistic?

DR. COCHBURN

No, Doctor. Something you have turned your back on, with all your so-called scientific research. It is no less than the natural panacea for many of today's most daunting problems. The neglected cure-all built into every human being -- and requiring only expert reinforcement. Will-power, Doctor. Will-power -- reinforced by my axioms of sexual abstinence. Together, they form a team that is the natural, irresistible answer for doubting, beleaguered humanity. And both I and

my own daughter are living proof of the effectiveness of my method.

DR. ERNST

Ah, you remind me of a physician, and I say that generously, who's first response, upon seeing an ill patient, is to throw away his medical bag. Are you even sure of your own capacity for self-control?

DR. COCHBURN

Absolutely!

DR. ERNST

How long has it been now since your wife fled with the gardener?

DR. COCHBURN

Three years.

DR. ERNST

And never once since then have you felt the desire --

DR. COCHBURN

-- Desire is irrelevant. What matters is that my axioms have prevailed.

DR. ERNST

Lucky you. I'm sorry that I can't say I'm as satisfied with my own situation.

DR. COCHBURN

What? You, Priscilla? The ever-dedicated and accomplished career woman!

DR. ERNST

Let me simply say that, having reached the age of 37 with only one brief and inexplicable marriage to go by -- oh, how could I have married Roger, a man without a trace of ambition! -- I've begun to resent returning to an empty apartment.

DR. COCHBURN

You, Prissy?

DR. ERNST

Yes. And on some nights, to an empty bed, especially in these harsh times.

(sings)

I never thought that I'd
Miss love the way I do.
Yet the more success I have
The more I find it's true.
I ask why I don't love someone

Like any cheerful simpleton.

I never thought that I'd
Miss love the way I do.
But I live in a cold world
My childhood never knew.
A day of dodging moving steel
Can somehow make one long to feel.

As time goes on I find
It harder to endure
Alone what we can't cure,
Like countries left behind.
I miss a wide-spread sense
Of mutuality
About the quality
Of life we each dispense.
What made the world a place,
I ask, where peaceful souls
Are prey to bullet holes
And scenes they can't erase?
Inside I hear a yelp:
The heart is too sedate
To mass communicate --
But wonders, would love help?

I never thought that I'd
Miss love the way I do.
But I often feel that nice,
Smart people are too few --
And ask if there might finally be
A wise and smiling love for me.

I ask if there might finally be
A wise and smiling love for me!

(spoken)

But never mind. You wouldn't understand such feelings.

DR. COCHBURN

I understand them perfectly, Priscilla. But I simply have no place for them. Nor does my daughter.

DR. ERNST

Poor child. What a waste!

DR. COCHBURN

I resent that, Dr. Ernst.

DR. ERNST

Why? To take such a lovely girl and train her totally away from the normal development of her emotions --

DR. COCHBURN

-- She is a shining example of the possibilities of sexual abstinence.

DR. ERNST

Really? Come on, Richard, you've had her under your control since she was a child. Try your method on other --

DR. COCHBURN

-- I've already assembled quite a following. Have you seen the latest list of students who've signed up for my crash course?"

(holds out notebook)

DR. ERNST

(leafs through it)

Impressive on the surface. But how long do you expect they'll abstain before their idealism and their libidos crash into each other?

DR. COCHBURN

For the rest of their lives, I'm certain, at least, many of them will.

DR. ERNST

Only time will tell. I think they'd be much better off simply using condoms.

DR. COCHBURN

Condoms? Oh, don't even mention the word. How unnatural, how risky, how --

DR. ERNST

-- About shutting up? You should be ashamed of the antiquated ideas you have in your mind -- and in this age of science? Talk about hopelessness! Why, it's a disgrace! Richard, you've got cobwebs in your brain!

DR. COCHBURN

Cobwebs to you. Conservatism to me! I admit it proudly! Antiquated ideas are my favorite kind!

DR. ERNST

How disheartening.

DR. COCHBURN

Disheartening? Prepare yourself, Prissy. The widespread adoption of my method will actually make the need for much of your research superfluous.

DR. ERNST

Dr. Cochburn, you are a dangerous man. A most dangerous, insensitive, and -- yes, in this way -- a most ignorant man.

DR. COCHBURN

Ignorant! Ah, now I know how my arch-nemesis, Freud, must have felt in the early days.

DR. ERNST

Come on, Richard! You must know deep down that your entire approach is simply unworkable. In fact, it's the most cockamamie --

DR. COCHBURN

-- Dr. Ernst, if you please. "Cockamamie" is one of my least favorite words -- a regrettable morass of unfortunate associations.

DR. ERNST

Excuse me. Wrong-headed --

DR. COCHBURN

(interrupts)

-- Wrong altogether! Professional envy! That's all this is! The medical school is infuriated by the fact that this historic advance has come from the sociology department.

DR. ERNST

Hardly. We at the medical school must be realistic every moment. We must deal with humanity -- poor, weak, ever-fecund humanity -- as we find it. And we know that, to put it bluntly, at this particular time in history, Mother Nature has us by the balls!

DR. COCHBURN

Priscilla, shame on you!

DR. ERNST

If you prefer, by the ovaries.

DR. COCHBURN

However you choose to phrase our current predicament, don't forget one very important thing. My remedy is a reality -- available for implementation immediately, while your so-called scientific research offers, in the most critical areas, but a faint hope.

DR. ERNST

Come now, Dickie --

DR. COCHBURN

-- Richard, if you choose to be familiar.

DR. ERNST

Of course. But certainly you know, somewhere beneath your self-assured surface, the weakness of man and woman. How can you possibly hope that your method can control the tidal wave of sexual desire that sweeps through the world at every moment? How will it restrain the young, whose entire physical mechanism is programmed for sexual prowess? Or the poor, who have few other sources of pleasure? Or the wealthy, who court indulgence?

DR. COCHBURN

Dr. Ernst, what you obviously fail to understand is that I don't merely ask people to abstain from sex. I provide, in a series of 100 self-evident truths, the badly needed strength the human will requires. It is no less than the geometry of sexual resistance -- a geometry as logical as Euclid's.

DR. ERNST

Oh, Richard, come on --

DR. COCHBURN

-- No, no! While you and your so-called medical researchers have cast your eyes on the far horizon, I have had the insight and strength of will to see the gold at my feet.

DR. ERNST

Fool's gold, I'm afraid!

DR. COCHBURN

On the contrary, a solid-gold chain of irrefutable truths -- a system of logic where each rule follows the other as relentlessly as the tread of one minute upon its antecedent! Take, for example, Cochburn's First Rule of Abstinence -- and try to find a weak spot.

"Sex leads to pregnancy. Pregnancy leads to overpopulation. Therefore, sex must be avoided." Argue with that, if you will!

DR. ERNST

Richard, the argument is not with your logic but with your hopes for compliance.

(sings)

Imagine, if you will,
A teenage girl and boy,
Aflame with love's desire,

Saying no to promised joy
 Out of obedience
 To your rules of abstinence!

Or late night in a club
 Where all the couples there,
 You note, are the same sex,
 But don't seem to have a care.
 They turn for their defense
 To your rules of abstinence!

Teach it in all the schools
 And make it very clear:
 There's nothing more to fear
 When you know Cochburn's Rules.
 Yes, let's all be specious fools,
 From cities tinged with rust
 To savannas lost in dust,
 And trust in Cochburn's Rules.

See in a village hut
 A sad-eyed man and wife,
 Alive, at least, with lust,
 Just say no to sex for life,
 With nightly reference
 To your rules of abstinence!

DR. COCHBURN

Priscilla, mock me if you must! But my hopes are being confirmed with every passing moment, as more and more responsible young people, concerned about the quality of life on our planet and the quality of our behavior in regard to it, flock to Cochburn's Celibacy Club.

DR. ERNST

But for your theory to work a man or woman must be celibate, not just for today or for a year, but for his or her entire fertile -- no, not even that! -- entire sexually active life. Celibate through all manner of frustration and temptation, through sobriety, drunkenness or drugs -- or your theory falls flat on its face! What good does it do if one is sexually abstinent twenty, thirty, or even forty years, if just once, even in the sunset of his or her life, temptation or carelessness overwhelms? Frankly, I prefer condoms to Cochburn.

DR. COCHBURN

Oh, even to mention the two in the same breath?

(DOORBELL RINGS)

DR. COCHBURN (CONT'D)

(looks at watch)

Ah, ha, that must be our star applicant, Dan Fox.

DR. ERNST

Fox? He wants to sign up?

DR. COCHBURN

Correct. He called to apply less than an hour ago.

DR. ERNST

I can't believe he's serious.

DR. COCHBURN

Exactly why I scheduled him to arrive when I knew you'd be here. I had hoped to celebrate with you how irresistible the drawing-power of my method is becoming. He's quite a make-out artist.

DR. ERNST

A legend in that area, I'd say. And you expect to convert him?

DR. COCHBURN

Absolutely!

DR. ERNST

How many young girls' hearts you'll break! Why, it's laughable even to think your method can control that, that outlandishly gifted stud.

(MELANIE ENTERS from the den)

MELANIE

Didn't I hear the doorbell ring?

DR. COCHBURN

Yes, dear. It's Dan Fox.

MELANIE

Dan Fox? What's he doing here?

DR. COCHBURN

He wants to join up.

MELANIE

Daddy, come on. He's the last one in the world --

DR. COCHBURN

-- I swear, it's true. He called just before you got home.

MELANIE

This I have to see. I'll get the door.

DR. COCHBURN

Thank you, Mel.

(SHE crosses to the door and opens it)

MELANIE

What are you doing here?

DAN FOX ENTERS.

DAN

Hi, Melanie.
(eyes her)

MELANIE

You are too much.

DAN

Come on, Mel. I want to sign up and save the world.

MELANIE

I'll believe it when I see it.

DAN

Hi, Dr. Cochburn.

DR. COCHBURN

Dan, my boy, come right in.

DAN

Thanks.

(HE crosses the room and MELANIE follows)

DR. COCHBURN

Welcome, Mr. Fox.

DAN

Thanks for the invitation.
(to DR. ERNST)
Hi, Dr. Ernst.

DR. ERNST

Hello, Fox.

DR. COCHBURN

I'm delighted you've made the big decision.

DAN

Well, it wasn't easy. But I'm convinced it's the responsible thing to do -- I mean, with all the problems sex can cause.

DR. COCHBURN

Good man! I see that, besides brawn, you've got brains.

DAN

Yes, sir. My ideal is "a sound mind in a sound body," as the Greeks said.

DR. ERNST

In a very sound body, I see. The girls tell me you're quite a sex machine?

DAN

Yeah, I've been doing a great job of fulfilling that part of my physical potential.

DR. ERNST

How quaint!

DAN

You bet. Physical, mental, interpersonal -- the whole thing. That's living. But now the sex part's all over. I've decided to give that up --
(mispronounces name as "Cotchburn")
-- with Dr. Cochburn's expert help.

DR. COCHBURN

(corrects him)
Excuse me, it's pronounced Cochburn.

DAN

Sorry, sir. Sometimes, I forget, since it's spelled --

(spells first syllable)
 -- "C-O-C-H."

DR. COBURN

A mere ancestral peculiarity.

DR. ERNST

Dan, what makes you think his method can work for you? Have you read his book?

DAN

Not yet. But I've heard a lot about it. From what I can tell, it appeals to the mind -- and I like that. Mind over body -- the same thing you need in the fourth quarter when you're behind by a touchdown and --

DR. COCHBURN

-- Good, good! And, Dan, my boy, once you're beyond sex, think how much more energy you'll have for football.

DAN

Hey, you're right. I didn't even think of that.

(sings)

I happy to say
 No more sex for me --
 After today,
 No more sex for me.
 Good-bye to girls
 And their soft curls.
 So long to thoughts
 That give me the hots.

I'm happy to say
 No more sex for me --
 After today,
 No more sex for me.
 Good-bye to looks
 Not in school books.
 So long to words
 Spoken by lovebirds.

But how can I do it?

(indicates DR. COCHBURN)

He's got all I need
 So I can live through it
 And somehow succeed.

I'm happy to say
 No more sex for me --
 After today,
 No more sex for me.
 Good-bye to nights
 Of tender bites.
 So long to spasms
 Experts call orgasms.

I'm happy to say
 No more sex for me!
 No more sex for me!

DR. COCHBURN

I have great faith in this boy.

DR. ERNST

As a matter of fact, so do I!

MELANIE

Dad, I need to speak with you.

DR. COCHBURN

Later, dear. Please, take Mr. Fox to the den and get him signed up while I finish with Dr. Ernst.

MELANIE

I can't believe this! Come on.

DAN

Thanks, Melanie.

(to DR. ERNST)

Nice meeting you.

DR. ERNST

The pleasure is mine.

(HE follows MELANIE to the den; THEY EXIT)

DR. ERNST

Dick --

DR. COCHBURN

-- Richard, if you please.

DR. ERNST

OK, Richard. You don't have a chance. Did you notice the way he looked at your daughter?

DR. COCHBURN

At Mel?

DR. ERNST

Yes, you fool. She does have her share of charms, no matter how much you've taught her to hide them.

DR. COCHBURN

Oh. You think he's only here because of her?

DR. ERNST

Why, it's as clear as can be. Would you like to bet on it?

DR. COCHBURN

What do you mean?

DR. ERNST

Agree to this. After you've indoctrinated him, allow Melanie to make advances --

DR. COCHBURN

-- No?

DR. ERNST

-- Yes! If he gives in, you lose and disavow your method.

DR. COCHBURN

Never!

DR. ERNST

But listen to me! If she tries her best to seduce him, and he manages to "say no to sex," then, you win. And I'll withdraw my objections.

DR. COCHBURN

You will?

DR. ERNST

Every last one of them.

DR. COCHBURN

But to ask her to do something so contrary to --

DR. ERNST

-- Richard! Think of it! The medical school will be off your back. You'll have a free hand on campus and on to the far reaches of the world!

DR. COCHBURN

Do you I have your word on that?

DR. ERNST

Positively -- as long as you agree to disavow --

DR. COCHBURN

-- I will admit publicly that my method needs more work. I trust that is enough.

DR. ERNST

Fine, fine! But I'm under a great deal of pressure. How long do you need to indoctrinate the young man? I can't wait too long.

DR. COCHBURN

I would say two weeks.

DR. ERNST

Then you're on.

DR. COCHBURN

You've got a bet, Priscilla.

(THEY shake)

Now, if you'll excuse me, I must get started.

DR. ERNST

Good luck. You'll need it.

SHE heads for the door and EXITS. HE takes up the book he had intended for DR. ERNST and autographs it. Then HE goes to the entrance of the DEN.

DR. COCHBURN

Mel, Dan, please, come here.

(THEY ENTER; to MELANIE)

Get Dan all signed up?

DAN

(holds up book)

Got my book and everything.

COCHBURN

No, no -- that won't do. I have something special for you.

(holds out book)

An autographed copy.

DAN

(takes it)

Gee, thanks, Dr. Cochburn.

(reads inscription)

"To Dan Fox: I know you can do it, kid. Your friend and teacher, Dr. Cochburn." Dynamite! I really appreciate this.

DR. COCHBURN

My pleasure. Now, I'll instruct you in the beginning. Then, as you make progress, Melanie will join in.

MELANIE

Daddy!

DR. COCHBURN

-- Mel, please. Dan's going to be an excellent student.

(to DAN)

As I was saying, when you've shown sufficient progress, Melanie will be able to help you along, too. But, first, let's get started.

DAN

Yes, sir.

DR. COCHBURN

Don't mind if I get "sexplicit," do you?

DAN

I guess you have to.

DR. COCHBURN

Right. If we don't confront the problems head on, we can't hope to master them. Have a seat.

(DAN sits)

DR. COCHBURN (CONT'D)

Now, why must you learn how to say no to sex?

DAN

Well --

DR. COCHBURN

-- I'll tell you. Because, my son, you carry within your loins the destruction of the human race. Got it?

DAN

Yes, sir. But can I say something?

DR. COCHBURN

Of course.

DAN

I practice safe sex.

DR. COCHBURN

My boy, you can practice all you want. But you'll never perfect it. There is no such thing as safe sex.

DAN

But I use condoms.

DR. COCHBURN

Not safe by any stretch of the imagination! The only safe thing to do is, as the saying goes, to keep your pecker in your pants.

DAN

Yes, sir. But I don't call it names like that.

DR. COCHBURN

Why not?

DAN

I guess I just think too highly of it.

DR. COCHBURN

And what do you call it, if I may ask?

DAN

My lovemaker.

DR. COCHBURN

I see. Did you think up that remarkable appellation at a time of so-called sexual bliss?

DAN

Yes, I did.

DR. COCHBURN

Well, forget it. And, whatever you call it, just keep it in your pants. OK?

DAN

Yes, doctor.

DR. COCHBURN

Good. Then let's move on. Now, when I say the word "sex," what do you think of?

DAN

(looks at MELANIE)

You really want to know?

DR. COCHBURN

Of course.

DAN

I think of women.

DR. COCHBURN

Obviously, the first problem. An association like that can lead to nothing but trouble.

DAN

What am I supposed to think of?

DR. COCHBURN

I'll demonstrate. Melanie, when I say the word "sex," what do you think of?

MELANIE

Mexico.

DR. COCHBURN

Excellent.

(to DAN)

See? Soon, you'll think like that, too.

DAN

I can't wait. But how does she do it?

DR. COCHBURN

Sound association. The word "sex" keys off the syllable "Mex" in Mexico.

DAN

You mean, like "sex-Mex"?

DR. COCHBURN

That's right. And notice that there is no similar word association for "sex-woman," or, in Melanie's case, for "sex-man"?

DAN

"Sex-man?"

DR. COCHBURN

Right. And, since the sound association is therefore stronger for "sex-Mex," you can see that our replacement has the advantage.

DAN

Right, right -- I see that. But what happens if someone goes on and on, really trying to break down your resistance? Do you just keep saying the same thing to yourself?

DR. COCHBURN

As long as it works. Then, you turn to your second line of defense.

DAN

What's that?

DR. COCHBURN

"Texaco."

DAN

Oh, you mean like "sex-Tex"?

DR. COCHBURN

Exactly!

(to MELANIE)

See how quickly he's catching on?

MELANIE

Oh, he's really brilliant!

DR. COCHBURN

Now, once you've got both words working, you can resist nearly anyone, because you just switch back and forth between the two associations, while the person who's tempting you only has one word to work with. How can you lose?

DAN

Say, that's good. A girl says to me, "Let's have sex." And I think --

DR. COCHBURN

-- Come on, come on, you can do it, kid!

DAN

"Mexico!"

DR. COCHBURN

Right! And then, if she persists --

DAN

-- I switch to "Texaco."

DR. COCHBURN

Perfect! And then --

DAN

-- And then?

DR. COCHBURN

Come on! Come on! You switch back and forth until she gives up.

DAN

Great! I've got it now! "Mexico, Texaco! Texaco, Mexico!"

DR. COCHBURN

Good, good!

(MUSIC: "JUST SAY NO TO SEX"; sings)

And so you see
When you study with me
How easily you
Can learn what to do.

When someone mentions sex,
You'll be on your way
To the strength to say,
"No, no,"
If you simply think of Mex-
Ico!

Just say no to sex.
That's all you have to do

When a person starts to woo.
Just say no to sex.

And if someone begs for sex,
You still won't stray
From the strength to say,
"No, no,"
If you quickly think of Tex-
Aco!

Just say no to sex.
And you can put the lid
On the most enticing id.
Just say no to sex.

Of course, things can get more complex.
So in addition to this lex-
Icon, I've got a hundred rules
To memorize as added tools.

Yet should someone strip for sex,
You can display
Enough strength to say,
"No, no,"
If you only think of Mex-
Ico
And Tex-
Aco.
Or Tex-
Aco
And Mex-
Ico.

Just say no to sex.
The way you can abstain
Is to love love's new refrain.
Just say no to sex.
Just say, "No, no!"
(spoken)

Well, what do you think, Mel?

MELANIE

I'm overwhelmed.

So am I.

DAN

Dad, can I speak to you a minute?

MELANIE

Of course.

DR. COCHBURN

(SHE takes him aside)

Daddy, he's not sincere at all.

MELANIE

What do you mean, Melanie?

DR. COCHBURN

He's been chasing me all year, and now --

MELANIE

-- Nothing to fear, my dear. Soon, he'll be a changed man. I promise you.

DR. COCHBURN

But --

MELANIE

-- Leave it to me.

DR. COCHBURN

Oh, I can't stand it!

MELANIE

(SHE EXITS, and HE returns to DAN)

Anything wrong?

DAN

She doesn't think you're sincere.

DR. COCHBURN

Really?

DAN

DR. COCHBURN

But we know better, don't we, Dan?

DAN

That's right. So let's keep going. I like this.

DR. COCHBURN

Good. But, before I move on, let me point out that you actually have, not just two, but an infinite number of defensive words to turn to.

DAN

Why is that?

DR. COCHBURN

Think of all the things that you can immediately associate with the words "Mexico" and "Texaco." For example, quick -- what's a word that goes with "Mexico."

DAN

"Taco?"

DR. COCHBURN

And with "Texaco"?

DAN

"Gasoline." Oh, I get it. "Taco," "burrito"; "gasoline," "self-service!"

DR. COCHBURN

Right! And in time you'll be able to think of even more defensive associations. But these simple word associations merely form your first line of defense. Now, it's time to move deeper into the Cochburn Method -- to my Rules of Popular Celibacy. How you holding up?

DAN

I'm ready to go on.

DR. COCHBURN

Good, good! Then let's move on. We'll dive right in and begin with one of my most charming and self-evident rules. Number ten.

DAN

Ten? Why don't you begin with one?

DR. COCHBURN

Good question! Do you expect to be tempted in numerical order? No! You must be able to think of any rule at any moment. Therefore, I teach them in as chaotic a manner as the tumult of

desire itself. Got it?

DAN

Yes, sir.

DR. COCHBURN

Good man! Now, here is rule ten. "Winking leads to interest. Interest leads to intimacy. Therefore, winking must be avoided." Please, repeat that.

DAN

Right. "Winking leads to interest. Interest leads to intimacy. Therefore, winking must be avoided."

DR. COCHBURN

Very good! I'm already optimistic about you prospects!

DAN

Thank you, sir. You don't know how grateful I am. But, Dr. Cochburn, aren't there ever exceptions to your rules?

DR. COCHBURN

Dan, I'm surprised at you. I would never call something a rule if there were exceptions to it. All of Cochburn's Rules are as relentless as a railroad track. And the sooner the human race says "All aboard," the sooner we may all travel to a land of perpetual bliss, where, in moderate and healthy numbers, we shall cultivate a rejuvenated and resplendent earth.

DAN

But don't you think some people might jump the track?

DR. COCHBURN

Oh, no doubt about it. But, Dan, one cannot be dissuaded from the truth by a handful of recalcitrant, will-powerless people. Despite these very rare exceptions, Cochburn's Rules will have their day -- or we are doomed to a world where the reckless, multitudinous billions will stand, squeezed, for lack of room, shoulder to shoulder, breathing the unbreathable, drinking the undrinkable, dying like flies from starvation and disease, while they no doubt still try to find a moment for a stolen orgasm. Not to mention that we will have obliterated the mere courtesy -- no, the necessity -- of leaving some room for the other creatures of the earth. And we certainly cannot expect that nature will be forever patient with our burdensome numbers. We might, in fact, be surprised at any time by a sudden environmental collapse, in which we could all die like the dinosaurs.

DAN

No?

DR. COCHBURN

Yes! In fact, I will give you a modern example -- a rustic tragedy that fell upon me some years ago when we owned a summer place with a small trout pound. In early summer, when the water was cool and rich in dissolved oxygen, the lovely trout leapt and fed at every bug that fell on the water. But then the heat of summer squeezed much of the oxygen from the water. I, the uncomprehending owner, concluded from the inactivity of the ...

DR. COCHBURN

... trout that there were no longer enough of them in the pond. Perhaps, I thought, the muskrats, otters, and birds of prey had eaten most of them. In fact, I imagined each time I stocked the pond that the muskrats and otters were sitting on the hillside, clapping for joy. Well, be that as it may, I decided to order a hundred more trout from the hatchery. And what happened? The next morning I awoke to find every last one of them belly up. There were simply too many of them for the amount of oxygen in the water -- and they had all suffocated!

DAN

That's really sad.

DR. COCHBURN

Immensely! But I learned the greatest lesson of my life from that.

DAN

What, Dr. Cochburn?

DR. COCHBURN

That nature's will to live has its limits.

DAN

Wow.

DR. COCHBURN

Yes. It was this unfortunate incident that first taught me the fragility of an ecosystem and the terrible finality of its collapse. It was, in fact, the time when I began my quest for a workable, worldwide restraint on the human proclivity to overbear children.

DAN

That's really an experience. I hope someday your system works for everybody.

DR. COCHBURN

I will settle for very nearly everybody. The fact is, there is simply no available alternative with equal potential. Can we expect 100% success in population control and disease prevention with condoms? If so, why are the problems still with us, while in these bitter and sorrowful days condoms sprinkle down upon the earth like perpetual autumn leaves? And can we hope for the general availability of any sort of artificial contraception in the most desperate voids of the

world? No! The only answer resides in the human mind, needing only to be awakened and reinforced by my method. Just think of it, Dan! No further scientific breakthrough is necessary. All that is required is the power to say, "No!" "No" to every occasion that may lead to arousal. And we're all aware of what arousal can lead to.

DAN

What's that, Dr. Cochburn?

DR. COCHBURN

I refer you to Cochburn's Fifth Rule!

(Quotes)

"Arousal leads to contact. Contact leads to sex. Therefore, arousal must be avoided."

DAN

Boy, you really know the material. But how can I avoid arousal? I mean, I'm not responsible for the way I've been designed. I see a cute girl, and there I am -- aroused. I'm just trying to live with the setup.

DR. COCHBURN

Yes, and quite a challenge it is. Precisely why I devised Cochburn's Fourth Rule of Popular Celibacy.

(MELANIE ENTERS)

Ah, just in time. Darling, tell Dan how to avoid the snare of arousal.

MELANIE

I was just going out.

DR. COCHBURN

Come on, dear. Tell him. Nothing inspires like a good example.

MELANIE

Oh, sure. Do I have to?

DR. COCHBURN

Please, for Daddy.

MELANIE

Oh, all right.

(Quotes)

"Attraction leads to familiarity. Familiarity leads to arousal. Therefore, attraction must be avoided."

DR. COCHBURN

Excellent!

DAN

Wow, Melanie, that was good. I can't wait to know this stuff as well as you do.

MELANIE

You've got to be kidding.

DR. COCHBURN

Mel, please. Give Mr. Fox a chance.

DAN

That's all I ask.

DR. COCHBURN

And that's all you need. My boy, soon you, too, will know exactly how to say no -- no to winking, no to attraction, no to arousal, no to touching and kissing, no the whole gamut of sexual enchantment!

BLACKOUT

END OF ACT I

Scene 1

ACT I

Scene 2

The COCHBURN LIVING ROOM.
One week later.

(DOORBELL RINGS; DR. COCHBURN
ENTERS from the den and heads
for the door; MELANIE is in pursuit)

MELANIE

Daddy, please, don't let him in!

DR. COCHBURN

But why, child? You aren't, by some remote chance, attracted to him, are you?

MELANIE

No way!

DR COCHBURN

Then why can't you see him as just another student?

MELANIE

Because -- everyone is making fun of me!

DR. COCHBURN

Fun of you? In what way, child?

MELANIE

Do I have to go into it?

DR. COCHBURN

Courage, Mel. How else can I respond to your inexplicable anxiety?

MELANIE

Well, they're saying I can't possibly be a virgin anymore.

DR. COCHBURN

No! How could they think such a thing?

MELANIE

Because he's here every day, that's why!

DR. COCHBURN

And those fools think -- ha, ha, with you, of all people! And have they talked with him lately? They'd find out -- he's the last one you have to worry about, now.

MELANIE

Sure, he is. They won't go for that, no matter what.

DR. COCHBURN

But do you believe it?

MELANIE

Daddy, come on.

DR. COCHBURN

Melanie, don't tell me -- you doubt my work? How can you?

MELANIE

I'm sorry, Daddy. But he's got such a reputation for,
for --

DR. COCHBURN

-- No need to go on, dear. I understand perfectly. But I can't have my own daughter lacking complete faith in my method. I'll tell you what. After I've finished with him today, I want you to give him some advanced training.

MELANIE

No, Daddy, I --

DR. COCHBURN

-- Believe me, I wouldn't suggest it if I didn't think he's at the stage where he can handle himself.

MELANIE

You really think he can resist me?

DR. COCHBURN

Of course, he can, Mel. Now, just give me a little time with him. Then I'll let you take over. The experience will give you plenty to tell your stupid, unfeeling friends.

MELANIE

All right, Daddy. I'll be in my room, studying.

DR. COCHBURN

Call you soon.

(SHE EXITS, while HE heads for the door;
opens it)

DR. COCHBURN

Dan, my boy, come in.

DAN
Thank you, Dr. Cochburn.

DR. COCHBURN
How are things going?

DAN
Great!

DR. COCHBURN
And how are you dealing with the numerous opportunities that seem to come your way.

DAN
No problem.

DR. COCHBURN
Haven't given in, have you?

DAN
No, sir.

DR. COCHBURN
Not even once?

DAN
Not once, sir.
(breaks down)
I'm sorry, sir.

DR. COCHBURN
What's wrong?

DAN
I lied. Oh, help me! I need help!

DR. COCHBURN
Tell me all about it.

DAN
Temptation, sir! Just too much temptation!

DR. COCHBURN
What kind of temptation?

DAN

The worst. I mean, you won't believe it.

DR. COCHBURN

Tell me, Dan. I can't help if I don't understand fully.

DAN

Oh, how can I even say it. Two girls --

DR. COCHBURN

-- Two? Go on.

DAN

I don't want to mention names, but, incredible, let me just say, they were incredible.

DR. COCHBURN

Yes, yes, go on.

DAN

They showed up at my door.

DR. COCHBURN

At the same time?

DAN

Yes, sir.

DR. COCHBURN

And what did they have on their minds?

DAN

They were there to double-team me.

DR. COCHBURN

No?

DAN

They said they miss me, and, if I'd give in, they'd do it with me together.

DR. COCHBURN

No?

DAN

Yeah.

DR. COCHBURN

So?

DAN

I gave in.

DR. COCHBURN

But why? I've got to know why.

DAN

My will-power went. The temptation was just too much for me. I guess I need more training for something like that.

(sings)

I'm sorry to report
Temptation struck!

DR. COCHBURN

(sings)

He's sorry to report
He had bad luck!

DAN

I didn't know what to do
Because they came as two.

DR. COCHBURN

He couldn't know what to do
If what he says is true.

DAN

Oh, doctor, please, excuse me.
But two at once confuse me.

DR. COCHBURN

I never can excuse you.
Why can't you just refuse two?

DAN

But they're both cute
And when they smile...

DR. COCHBURN

... Be resolute
Through every trial.

DAN

I can't keep cool
Without a rule.

DR. COCHBURN

He needs more school,
But what's my rule?

I'm sorry to report
You're out of luck.

DAN

He's sorry to report
I'm out of luck.

DR. COCHBURN

I never even thought
Of such a tempting spot.

DAN

He never even thought
Of sex that's double hot.

DR. COCHBURN

Excuse me, but, you see,
It's not my cup of tea.

DAN

Excuse me, but you see,
That's what happened to me.

BOTH

We're sorry to report
We're out of luck!
We're sorry to report
When two, not one,
Want something done,
We're out of luck!
Out of luck!

DR. COCHBURN

Well, then, I can't blame you entirely. What we need is a new rule.

DAN

I think so, sir. I mean, one incredible girl I can handle, but two at the same time, just begging for me to, you know --

DR. COCHBURN

-- I understand, son. We've got to fix this. Let me see now. I've got it!

DAN

What?

DR. COCHBURN

A new rule.

DAN

Already? Boy, you've got a real talent for this stuff.

DR. COCHBURN

I know.

(points to own head)

It all depends on where your gray lump is, I always say. That's where your talent is. Otherwise, the topography of your brain can be as ordinary as mud. I'm going to call it, in your honor, The Cochburn-Fox Addendum.

DAN

Wow, that's too much. Tell me what it is.

DR. COCHBURN

"Two simultaneous sexual objects can prove twice as tempting. To say no you need twice as much will-power. Therefore, you must study twice as hard."

DAN

Twice as what?

DR. COCHBURN

Excuse me. I got carried away. "Therefore, you must study twice as much."

DAN

That sounds a lot better.

DR. COCHBURN

Thank you. Now, with our new rule in mind, let's move on.

DAN

I'm ready.

DR. COCHBURN

And don't feel bad. Despite your moment of weakness, you've made real progress -- especially after only a week of instruction. I'm still proud of you.

DAN

Thanks, Doctor Cochburn.

DR. COCHBURN

Now, have a seat.

(indicates couch)

DAN

Yes, sir.

DR. COCHBURN

Now, today we're going to move on into some advanced territory. The imaginary part of your training is pretty much over. It's time to get significantly more explicit.

DAN

Ready when you are.

DR. COCHBURN

OK.

(holds up copy of men's magazine)

You know what this is?

DAN

Yeah, I sure do.

DR. COCHBURN

Now, tell me, -- what do you do think of when I open it thus.

(opens it to centerfold)

DAN

You really want to know?

DR. COCHBURN

Why else would I be asking?

DAN

OK. I think, "Wow, what great-looking ink."

DR. COCHBURN

Why?

DAN

Rule 58.
(quotes)
"Sexy pictures lead to arousal. Arousal leads to satisfaction. Therefore, sexy pictures must be seen as mere ink."

DR. COCHBURN

Right you are!
(shakes his hand)
Congratulations!

DAN

Thank you, Dr. Cochburn.

DR. COCHBURN

(looks at watch)
Oh, my, I have to leave for an appointment.

DAN

Is my lesson over already?

DR. COCHBURN

No, no. We've got to press on. But I actually think you're at the point when Melanie can help out. Don't you agree?

DAN

Melanie? Well, if you say so, sir.

DR. COCHBURN

(hands him the magazine)
Review the example, while I get her.

DAN

Yes, Doctor.
(begins to look over the pictures)

DR. COCHBURN goes to MELANIE's door and knocks. Then he EXITS to her room. Seeing the coast is clear, DAN picks up the phone and dials quietly.

DAN

(on phone, hushed)

Eddie, guess what?...

(intentional mispronunciation)

"Cockburn's" gonna leave me alone with Melanie... I kid you not... You wanna double the bet?... OK, 100 bucks says I make it with her... Well, maybe not today, but kiss your bucks good-bye, baby.... Gotta go now.

(hangs up; begins to look at the centerfold again)

MELANIE ENTERS.

MELANIE

Studying hard?

DAN

You could say that. Where's your dad?

MELANIE

He went to do research at the adult bookshop.

DAN

Sounds like a great field trip to me.

MELANIE

Oh, this is such a joke!

DAN

What do you mean?

MELANIE

I can't believe my father thinks you're serious.

DAN

Why not?

MELANIE

Oh, come on, you couldn't care less about "popular celibacy."

DAN

You really believe that?

MELANIE

What else? I know you're only here because you're like all the rest. You only want --

DAN

-- What?

MELANIE

"Mexico."

DAN

You mean, sex?

MELANIE

I mean, "Texaco"! Of course, that's what I mean.

DAN

Well, you're wrong. How can you even say that -- after all the studying I've done? Your dad said you're gonna give me a lesson?

MELANIE

No chance.

DAN

Come on, Melanie. Didn't he tell you to? And remember -- you never disobey your dad.

MELANIE

Oh, this is so incredibly ridiculous! All right. You sit right there on the couch and don't move.
(takes the magazine and throws it aside)

DAN

Whatever you say.

MELANIE

Let's begin with Rule One. Do you even know that much?

DAN

Sure.

(quotes)

"Sex leads to pregnancy. Pregnancy leads to overpopulation. Therefore, sex must be avoided."
Well, what do you think?

MELANIE

As if you believe it. What's Rule Two?

DAN

"Sex can lead to disease. Disease can lead to death. Therefore, sex must be avoided."

MELANIE

And how much sex have you avoided lately?

DAN

As much as possible.

MELANIE

That's not saying much.

DAN

If you want to know the truth, I haven't touched a woman since I started to come here. What's wrong, don't you believe me?

MELANIE

That's an understatement. You must think I'm a real jerk.

DAN

What makes you say that?

MELANIE

Don't all the guys -- just because I won't do it? Come on, be honest.

DAN

Well, you are sort of the campus virgin.

MELANIE

Oh, I know all too well.

(sings)

They think it's really funny

That I'm nobody's honey

Because I won't do it?

Well, screw it!

I hear the dumb jokes after

I go by and the laughter

Because I won't do it.

Well, screw it!

I can take what they say,

Because I know one day

Everyone will agree

With my father and me!

"Ha! Ha! She's still a virgin.
Wow! No man's been her surgeon
Because she won't do it!"
Well, screw it!
Screw it!
And screw it!

DAN

OK, Melanie. I admit it. I used to be in on that. But not anymore. Now, I think it's great that you're a virgin.

MELANIE

Oh, sure, you do. Well, let me tell you something. I'm proud I am!

DAN

Proud?

MELANIE

Yes, I am. And, if you believed a single thing my father has taught you, you'd know why.

DAN

But, Melanie, I believe every last word.

MELANIE

Right. Then you know I am ...
(as if SHE's quoting)

... the natural remedy for overpopulation, the resultant ecological depredation, the heartbreak of abortion, the scourge of AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases, as well as the human race's historic obsession with sexual, sexual --

DAN

-- What?

MELANIE

Pl... pl... pleasure.

DAN

Pleasure? Well, we both know to avoid that.

MELANIE

I do.

DAN

Oh, for sure. And I admire you for what you are.

MELANIE

You're such a liar.

DAN

No, you're wrong. In fact, I plan to be as great an example of your dad's beliefs as you are.

MELANIE

Sure, you do.

(sits down beside him)

DAN

I mean it. I'm even talking to the rest of the guys on the football team. Soon, I'll bring them all here to study.

MELANIE

I can't wait. Don't you find me attractive?

DAN

Well, I have to tell the truth. I used to, but not anymore.

MELANIE

Really?

(nuzzles close to him)

DAN

Yeah. And do you think I'm handsome.

MELANIE

Oh, come on, all the girls think you are.

DAN

But you don't?

MELANIE

Well, sometimes.

DAN

You can't be serious?

MELANIE

Nobody said a girl can't be a little normal. But "Handsome men lead to..."

DAN

"... feminine arousal." I know the whole thing.

MELANIE

And what do sexy women lead to?

DAN

"Mexico."

MELANIE

And what do I lead to?

DAN

I can't help it. "Masculine arousal." I confess, Melanie. I'm still attracted to you.

MELANIE

I knew it!

DAN

Well, what am I supposed to do about it? I'm trying to control myself. I guess I just need more education. Come on, Melanie. Teach me. I'm all yours.

MELANIE

Why waste my time?

DAN

But I can be taught. I promise.

MELANIE

I think you should leave.

DAN

You don't mean that?

MELANIE

Oh, give up, will you? How stupid do you think I am? Now, just get out.

DAN

Honest? I mean, do you really want me to go?

MELANIE

What else? Just leave and I'll tell my dad you were only kidding around.

DAN

But I don't want to leave. Come on, Melanie, educate me. I mean, let's try something really advanced.

MELANIE

What's the point?

DAN

I promise you -- you can't get me excited.

MELANIE

Right.

DAN

No, I mean it. My resistance is up.

MELANIE

It's what?

DAN

Skip it. I'm here to learn. Take me beyond pictures to the real thing.

MELANIE

(getting close to him)

And then what?

DAN

Give me the next rule. I yearn for advanced study.

MELANIE

(as if to kiss him)

The next rule?

DAN

Oh, do I yearn!

MELANIE

Seventy.

DAN

What about Rule 69?

MELANIE

There is no rule number 69. And you know it! We skip from 68 to 70.

Why?
DAN

Do you want a lesson or don't you?
MELANIE

Sorry. Quick, I need rules!
DAN

"Kissing leads to --"
MELANIE

-- Rules, give me more rules! I want to earn a graduate degree -- a Ph. D. I need it for this!
DAN

(HE grabs her and kisses her passionately. SHE
participates for a few moments and then jumps up)

(excited)
I knew it! I knew it all the time! You were kidding me!
MELANIE

That's not true, Melanie! But you can't put me to that kind of test this early. I'm still an sexual
undergraduate. And I'm crazy about you.
DAN

You are?
MELANIE

Totally.
DAN
(sings)
What can I say?
I can't obey
All your dear dad
Tells us is bad.

All I long
To do
Is wrong
To do,
But at least you know

I can't outgrow
What I long
To do
With you.

Can there be hope
For this big dope?
If there's a bit,
Don't count on it.

All I long
To do
Is wrong
To do,
But at least you know
I can't outgrow
What I long
To do
With you.

I hope you don't hate me.
But how can you educate me,
And sublimate me
When you fascinate me?

I apologize,
But no surprise.
I guess this hunk
Was bound to flunk.

All I long
To do
Is wrong
To do,
But at least you know
I can't outgrow
What I long
To do
With you.

At least you know
I can't outgrow
What I long
To do

With you!

MELANIE

You better leave.

DAN

You mean that?

MELANIE

Please.

DAN

Well, let's think about that. If you give me time --

MELANIE

-- Out!

DAN

No, no, I promise -- I'll learn not to be attracted to you. In your presence I'll be pure plastic. But trust me, it's hard.

MELANIE

It's what? You know by now to avoid that buzz word as well as I do.

DAN

Sorry. I mean, it's difficult. Oh, Melanie, I'm hopeless without your help. And I want to learn. Don't turn me away. Think how many babies I might make if you give up on me.

MELANIE

Oh, all right. You can stay, if you promise to behave yourself. And learn everything I tell you. No more fooling around.

DAN

You have my word. I'll do anything to be around you, even after I don't feel anything.

MELANIE

Now, back to our studies. Rule number 69.

DAN

69? I'm ready for that.

MELANIE

"Sitting close together leads to touching. Touching leads to kissing. Therefore, sitting close together must be avoided." Please, repeat that.

(she moves away from him a bit)

DAN

Yes, Melanie.

(he notices and moves away from her
even more)

(DR. COCHBURN pokes his head out of MELANIE's room
and observes the lesson with pleasure, as DAN continues
as unemotionally as he can)

DAN (CONT'D)

"Sitting close together leads to touching. Touching leads to kissing. Therefore ...

(DR. COCHBURN closes the door with satisfaction)

BLACKOUT

END OF ACT I

ACT IIScene 1

DR. COCHBURN'S LIVING ROOM. About a week and a half later. DAN is on the phone.

DAN

(on phone)

No way, Eddie! I don't owe you no hundred bucks.... I'm tellin' ya, the only reason I haven't is, I just don't want to anymore.... Because I don't want to screw up her brains, that's why.... Believe it or not, I like her too much.... We'll talk about the money later.... Yeah, yeah, good-bye.

(hangs up; walks to end table and looks at photo of Melanie with her father, as ...

DOORBELL rings. DR. COCHBURN ENTERS from den.

DR. COCHBURN

That's Dr. Ernst now. Be right with you, Dan.

DAN

Sure thing, Dr. Cochburn.

DR. COCHBURN crosses to door and opens it.

DR. COCHBURN

Ah, Dr. Ernst, come in.

DR. ERNST

Thank you.

(SHE enters and follows DR. COCHBURN across
the room)

DR. COCHBURN

Dr. Ernst, say hello to my best new pupil, Dan Fox.

DR. ERNST

Good afternoon, Fox.

DAN

Hi, Dr. Ernst.

DR. ERNST

Dr. Cochburn tells me you're coming along quite well.

DAN

I've been trying my best, Doctor.

DR. ERNST

Is that a fact?

DR. COCHBURN

(to DR. ERNST)

Let me show you some real progress.

(to DAN)

Have a seat.

DAN

Yes, sir.

DR. COCHBURN

OK, Danny, my boy, now, quick -- what do you think of when I say the word "sex"?

DAN

Old reliable.

DR. COCHBURN

Well, say it!

DAN

"Mexico."

DR. ERNST

Remarkable.

DR. COCHBURN

And what else?

DAN

"Texaco."

DR. COCHBURN

Well done!

(to DR. ERNST)

Beginning to fear I might be onto something?

DR. ERNST

I have merely come to see how things are going. I'm under increasing pressure to move things along.

DR. COCHBURN

Forget it, Priscilla. Soon, you'll be telling the medical faculty that Cochburn's Method is cause for celebration! Watch this! Dan, quickly, give me Cochburn's 92nd rule of popular celibacy?

DAN

(recites)

Rule 92. "Nudity leads to loss of control. Loss of control leads to Mexico." Excuse me. "Sex. Therefore, nudity must be avoided."

DR. COCHBURN

Right again.

(to DR. ERNST)

And in less than two weeks. Well, what do you think?

DR. ERNST

(to DAN)

Mr. Fox, may I ask you something in private?

DAN

Sure.

(DR. ERNST takes him aside)

DR. ERNST

Do you really believe all this malarkey?

DAN

Malarkey? Hey, it works for me.

DR. ERNST

Are you sure? Tell me, when was the last time you had sex?

DAN

Right before I started to study here.

DR. ERNST

Not since then?

DAN

Nope.

DR. ERNST

And you're absolutely convinced you can avoid the temptations of sex for the rest of your life?

DAN

Now that I'm learning the Cochburn Method? No problem.

DR. ERNST

Is that so? May it be my good fortune never to learn it.

(THEY cross back to COCHBURN)

DR. ERNST

Dick -- I mean, Richard -- you seem to be making a certain amount of progress.

DR. COCHBURN

Thank you.

DR. ERNST

But, as we say, the future is long. Allow me to leave you both with a thought.

(sings)

If passion dies
 And love's true sighs,
 Yet we're content
 And somehow smile,
 Will life consent
 To stay awhile?

Think how life wants to live.
 It's so philoprogenative
 Almost as soon as lava cools
 It takes shape in geyser-hot pools.

Think how life wants to live.
 It courts its own imperative --
 In time sorts out a fin and hand
 And overcomes both sea and land.

DR. ERNST

Yes, life's made with a well-cocked spring,
 But life's a very fragile thing.
 Just harm one vital part and soon
 It's dead as dust upon the moon.

Think how life wants to live.
 It makes you more appreciative.
 Without a doctor or a nurse,
 It spreads throughout the universe.

Yes, if passion dies
 And love's true sighs,
 Yet we're content
 And somehow smile,
 Will life consent
 To stay awhile?
 Will life consent
 To stay awhile?
 (spoken)
 I'll be in touch.

DR. COCHBURN

In "touch," Priscilla? You mean you'll be in communication.

DR. ERNST

As you wish, doctor.

DR. COCHBURN

Allow me to get the door.

(MELANIE ENTERS from her room)

MELANIE

I'll get it, Daddy.

DR. COCHBURN

Thank you, Mel.

MELANIE

Hi, Dr. Ernst.

DR. ERNST

Hello, dear.

(as SHE and MELANIE cross to the door)

Tell me, Melanie, what do you think of Dan's progress?

MELANIE

I used to wish he'd just leave us alone, but now, well --

DR. ERNST

-- You think he's sincere?

MELANIE

I don't know what to think.

DR. ERNST

Melanie, have you grown fond of him?

MELANIE

Who, me? No way.

DR. ERNST

Not even a little bit?

MELANIE

(sings)

Well, I try my best

Not to fall

For him like the rest;

But I'm only human, after all.

And he is kind of nice

And sort of smart,

And he sure is built

To win over your heart.

Yes, I try my best
Not to fall
For him like the rest;
But I'm only human, after all.
And it's still kind of cute
The way he tries
To learn my dad's rules
If he is telling lies.

But how can I not say no
When I know dad
Would say it's bad
To let my feelings go?

So I try my best
Not to fall
For him like the rest,
But I'm only human after all.

And he is sort of like,
Well, he's kind of
The hardest kind of
Man for me not to love.

And I'm only human, after all.
I'm only human, after all.

BLACKOUT

END OF ACT II

Scene 1

ACT II

Scene 2

Two weeks later.

DAN is seated on the couch. DR. COCHBURN is
pacing about, pontificating.

DR. COCHBURN

Dan, you have now completed two weeks of intensive training.

DAN

Yes, sir.

DR. COCHBURN

And tonight we have come to a critical right of passage -- your first evening class. And I'm sure I don't have to tell you about evening -- evening, when the human race seems to be most susceptible to lust, generally disguised as moonlight and romance, love, if you will.

DAN

I remember how that happens.

DR. COCHBURN

Only faintly by now, I'm sure. Now, normally I would be present to oversee this great test of your now unassailable will-power. But Dr. Ernst has been kind enough to invite me out to dinner. And I have such great confidence in you, Dan, that I have decided to allow Melanie to give you a private lesson.

DAN

You have?

DR. COCHBURN

Yes, Dan -- so great is my confidence in you. Is it justified?

DAN

Yes, sir. I can handle anything.

(DOORBELL RINGS)

DR. COCHBURN

I'm certain of it. That's Dr. Ernst now.
(crosses to door and opens it)
Ah, Priscilla. Nice of you to invite me out.

DR. ERNST

My pleasure, Richard.
(ENTERS)
Hello, Mr. Fox. Well, how are your studies progressing?

DR. COCHBURN

He couldn't be doing better.

DR. ERNST

Is that a fact?
(looks about)
But shame on you, Richard. Where is your ecological conscience?

DR. COCHBURN

What do you mean?

DR. ERNST

Do you always leave this much light on -- when you know very well the amount of pollution electrical generation can cause?
(turns down the illumination; to DAN)
Now, young man, tell me, what does the softness of evening bring to mind -- perhaps accompanied by a little music ...

(points to stereo)
... and moonlight?

(raises arm to window)
Could it be --
(puts her arm around DR. COCHBURN)

DAN

(yawns)
-- bedtime.

DR. ERNST

Bedtime?

DR. COCHBURN

Ha! Spoken like a true Cochburnian!

DR. ERNST

My, this is distressing!

DAN

Have a nice dinner.

DR. COCHBURN

Thanks. And may you have an excellent lesson.

DR. ERNST

Yes. Be good, Mr. Fox.

DAN

Oh, count on it.

DR. ERNST

But do not forget the many meanings of the word "good," as, for example, in the phrase "good in bed."

DR. ERNST

Ha! We know what our interpretation is, don't we, Dan?

DAN

No doubt about it, Dr. Cochburn.

DR. COCHBURN

I'll just let Melanie know we're leaving.
(goes to her door and knocks; opens it)

Mel, dear, I'm on my way. Don't leave our friend, Dan, waiting too long for his private lesson.
(winks and closes door; to DAN)
She'll be out in a moment. See you tomorrow.

DAN

OK. And don't worry. I'm in control.

DR. COCHBURN

Good man.
(to DR. ERNST)
Shall we?

DR. ERNST

Of course.
(to DAN)
Oh, where are the fires of yesterday? Are they mere embers and ashes -- and at such a young age?

DR. COCHBURN and DR. ERNST EXIT.

DAN picks up DR. COCHBURN's book and begins to read. Soon, MELANIE ENTERS. SHE has makeup on and is wearing a revealing evening dress. SHE looks quite irresistible.

MELANIE

Hi, Dan.

DAN

(looks up)
Wow! Graduate school! What's going on?

MELANIE

I just felt like dressing up.

DAN

Well, what your dad has taught me to see as only mortal protoplasm sure does look great.

MELANIE

Thank you. This is the first time I've put on makeup since my mother left home three years ago.

DAN

Really?

MELANIE

Yes. I wanted you to see me looking great.

DAN

Why?

MELANIE

Well, I know how many girls you've been with. And I want to look pretty for you.

DAN

You do?

MELANIE

Yes.

(sits down beside him)

Reading Daddy's book again?

DR. COCHBURN and DR. ERNST open the door
to the DEN and begin to observe.

DAN

Yeah. Gotta catch up with you. Aren't you proud of me?

MELANIE

(puts her hand on his leg)

So proud I think I like you.

DAN

Really? Hey, what about Cochburn's 68th rule? "Touching leads to..." Well, you know.

MELANIE

I know.

(kisses him lightly)

DAN

Come on, Melanie, what is this -- advanced study or what?

MELANIE

I have to confess. I'm not in the mood for a lesson.

DAN

You aren't?

MELANIE

Not at all.

DAN

Well, if it's not a lesson, what is it?

MELANIE

It's me.

DAN

But, Melanie, I'm trying to live by your dad's rules.

MELANIE

Sure, you are.

DAN

I am. But you're making it a real challenge.

MELANIE

I am?

DAN

Yeah. I mean, part of me says, "Watch out."

MELANIE

And?

DAN

The other part says, "Wow!"

MELANIE

Which part are you going to listen to?

DAN

Which part? Hey, come on! "Taco, burrito, the whole enchilada!"

MELANIE

Don't you like me?

DAN

"Gas! Good mileage! Pump your own!"

MELANIE

You're the first man I've ever known who took my dad's rules seriously.

I am? DAN

Uh-huh. MELANIE

You mean, all the others -- DAN

-- only wanted, you know. Sex -- MELANIE

-- Mex! DAN

But you're different, aren't you? MELANIE

You know it. DAN

How different? MELANIE

You really want to know. DAN

Why else would I ask? MELANIE

A hundred-dollars' worth, that's how much. DAN

I don't get it. MELANIE

Well, promise not to get mad? DAN

Sure. MELANIE

I came here on a bet. DAN

MELANIE

At last, the truth comes out. What kind of bet?

DAN

That I could make it with you.

MELANIE

Oh, that's really low, Dan.

DAN

I guess. But then, after I really got to know you, I decided to lose.

MELANIE

You did?

DAN

I had to. I mean, I felt rotten. Here you are, this beautiful, nice, intelligent girl, really devoted to your father, and here I am, thinkin' I'm gonna destroy all that, just to have an incredibly beautiful physical time with you and --

MELANIE

-- And?

DAN

-- Have a fantastic orgasm and --

MELANIE

-- Go on.

DAN

-- And make you come your guts out for the first time, while making sure I'm wearing a condom or maybe even a half dozen condoms. And -- yes, I admit it -- not only to feel great and to help you discover sex, but to build up my big, stupid ego. I even hate to think about it now.

MELANIE

You do?

DAN

Yeah. Now, all I really care about is you as a person. And I just want to be your friend.

MELANIE

My friend?

DAN

Yeah. I mean, maybe even your friend for life.

MELANIE

My friend for life?

DAN

Yeah. Your friend, even with my clothes off.

(sings)

I could date you

And hold your hand, too,

But I can't pretend --

Only as a friend.

I might love you

And kiss till we're blue,

But you can depend --

Only as a friend.

I know the sudden change

In me sounds kind of strange,

But I think that's the way

Everyone should live today.

I may marry you,

And always be true,

But until the end --

Only as a friend.

Yes, until the end,

Only as a friend!

(spoken)

Got a problem with that?

MELANIE

No, it's just that no man ever said that to me before. I can't believe how I feel about you, Dan.

For the first time, I feel attraction!

DAN

Attraction?

MELANIE

Even more than that -- arousal!

DAN

Wow, hey, Melanie, come off it! I can't take it!

MELANIE

Oh, I can't believe it -- I'm starting to think of, of --

DAN

What?

MELANIE

Sex.

DAN

-- aco! And you're letting yourself do that?

MELANIE

Yes! Oh, forget Mexico and Texaco! The feeling is so strong and exciting it might even be love.

DAN

Love? Already!? Melanie, come on. That can't be true.

MELANIE

Make love to me, and I'll know.

DAN

Wow! "Mexico, Texaco!" My first line of defense is crumbling, too! I better leave.

MELANIE

Dan, I'm serious. I never felt this way before. I want you to be the first man to make love to me.
(kisses him)

Say yes. Please, I need you. I'm sick of being the campus virgin. I've been having my period since I was eleven, and tonight, ten years later, I want to become a woman! Cripes, I feel as if I have dust down there!

DAN

But, Melanie, I know you'd regret it.

MELANIE

I wouldn't. Honest, Dan. I want you to be the first. My whole body is alive with desire for you!
I want to begin to realize my physical potential, too!

(sings)

I never said this to anyone.

It's about something I've never done:

I want you to be the first,
The first man in my life --
The first who I invite
And hope I will excite.

I want you to be the first,
The first man in my life --
The first, I will recall,
Who kissed and touched me all.

I've waited until now.
Be good and show me how
A man and woman feel
When love's more than ideal.

I want you to be the first,
The first man in my life.
The first to be in me
And share love's ecstasy.
The first to be in me
And share love's ecstasy!

DAN

(stands up)

Hey, Melanie! Cool it, will you? Ecstasy? Wow, I've got to tell your dad. There's not even a rule for that!

MELANIE

-- My room. Come to my room.

DAN

I'm sorry. I've got to go.

MELANIE

Kiss me! Carry me to my bed!

DAN

No, no. You can't let your dad down. I won't let you. He loves you too much. And I don't want to let him down, either.

MELANIE

But I want you, Dan! Think of that -- after all the chasing, I'm ready.

(sings)
I want you to be the first

DAN
Mel, back off. You're really making popular celibacy tough.

MELANIE
(stands and takes his hand)
Come to my bedroom. You're the first man I ever invited there.

DAN
I appreciate that, but I'm leaving.

MELANIE
Don't, please. I've waited so long.

DAN
I can't take the responsibility.

MELANIE
Why?

DAN
It's too much. You'll want me to marry you.

MELANIE
No, I just want sex!

DAN
Sure, you do. But then how could we just be friends for life?

MELANIE
I'm past that.

DAN
No, Melanie! Think before you say that! What hope is there for the world if even you relent?
I'm leaving.
(heads for the door)

MELANIE
Dan, please!

DAN
Forget it, Mel!

SHE goes after him, as HE opens the door.

MELANIE

Oh, I'm so crazy about you. Stay! Please, stay!

DAN

Not a chance! Good-night!

(HE struggles with her as he tries to get out
the door. DR. COCHBURN and DR. ERNST ENTER)

DR. COCHBURN

Bravo! Bravo!

(quotes)

"Not a chance!"

(to DR. ERNST)

Did you hear that? Ha, ha, ha! You lose! Admit it -- I won!

(to DAN)

Great work, Dan! My method in action -- proved beyond a doubt! If I had this scene on videotape, I could change the world!

DAN

Hey, I thought you were going out to dinner. What's going on?

DR. COCHBURN

Pride, Dan! Pride in you! You did it!

DAN

Did what?

DR. COCHBURN

Won the bet for me.

DAN

The bet?

DR. ERNST

I'm afraid so.

DR. COCHBURN

She refused to believe my method could work, especially on a healthy hunk like you. So I made her a bet --

DAN

-- You made a bet?

DR. COCHBURN

Yes. That I could teach you to resist the temptations of even a girl as potentially desirable as Mel -- and in return, Dr. Ernst would accept my method and get the medical school off my back! So now I'm free to go forward with my work. And all because of you, Danny!

DAN

(to COCHBURN)

You mean, all the time, you were using me just to win a bet?

DR. COCHBURN

Well, not "just" for that, certainly --

DAN

(to MELANIE)

-- And everything you said, you were only pretending?

MELANIE

I --

DR. COCHBURN

-- And she did it very well! Wonderful job, Mel. Brilliant work, really!

DAN

Wow, am I a dork or what? You and Melanie -- you were both using me! Let me out of here.

DR. COCHBURN

What?

DAN

Take your lousy method and stuff it, Doctor ...

(intentional mispronunciation)

... "Cockburn!" I'm through with you all.

(heads for the door)

And you know what I'm going to do tonight? Make a date with the most exciting, sexually well-adjusted woman I know!

MELANIE

Dan, don't do that!

HE EXITS.

DR. COCHBURN

Ah, my. A terrible loss. But you played your part well, Melanie. In fact, I couldn't have asked for a better performance.

MELANIE

Daddy, I mean, Father, I love you and I don't want to hurt you. But --

DR. COCHBURN

-- What?

MELANIE

It wasn't all a performance.

DR. COCHBURN

It wasn't?

MELANIE

I'm sorry, Daddy. I can't help it. At a certain point, it became something else.

DR. COCHBURN

Mel, stop talking that way! It was a private lesson, pure and simple!

MELANIE

No, Daddy. Oh, forgive me, but it became lust.

DR. COCHBURN

Lust?

MELANIE

Yes. And, and -- oh, I may even love him!

DR. COCHBURN

Love him? But, Mel, you know as well as I do -- love is an illusion, a mere disguise for desire.

MELANIE

But I feel so good inside, Daddy! And, if all you've taught me is right, why do I feel so wonderful? Oh, now I know! I was born to feel this way! And I love Dan! I do love him!

DR. COCHBURN

You, love a man, Mel? Impossible!

MELANIE

Well, maybe, as you say, it's only desire, disguised as love. But it's the most fantastic feeling I've ever had!

DR. COCHBURN

Please, get hold of yourself. Assert control!

MELANIE

Why? I like the way I feel! For the first time, I feel in harmony with my whole being. Oh, what bliss! What a natural blessing true feeling can be! And, and -- oh, I know it's terrible to say this -- but I'd even consider having a baby with him.

DR. COCHBURN

A baby? You'd put another baby in the world -- as if there aren't enough? Control, Melanie, control! Remember rule number 100! "Babies lead to overpopulation. Overpopulation leads to pollution. Therefore, babies must be avoided."

MELANIE

Even if the baby is your own grandchild? Oh, Daddy, I can't help it. I'm going after him!

(SHE heads for the door)

DR. COCHBURN

(calls after her)

Mel, come back here!

MELANIE

No, no! And guess what, Daddy? I'm the sexiest woman he'll ever have a date with!

(SHE EXITS)

DR. COCHBURN

My own daughter. Oh, my. I ask you, Priscilla -- is there any hope for this sad, crowded, disease-plagued world? And did I build my hopes on a mere language game that has no more relation to the deep workings of reality than clothes to the inner workings of a person's anatomy? Yet what a dream I had -- a dream of a new-won paradise! But now I see it's dead -- dead as a little, little bird, feet up in my palm. Now I feel how fragile its bones are and realize how easily it could be crushed.

(sings)

How quick a dream can die --
Like a bird that darts into the sky,
Cavorts and soars so high,
And then hits glass before your eye!

How quick a dream can die --
Like a sea under a pure-blue sky

Shines like emeralds that high
Or low clouds steal before your eye!

I told myself a fairy tale
Till I believed in my big "if".
I had my eyes fixed on the stars
So much I walked right off a cliff.

DR. COCHBURN

How quick a dream can die --
Like a rocket lifts off to the sky
And climbs with hopes so high
But then explodes before your eye!

Ah, how quick a dream can die,
How quick a dream can die,
A dream can die!

DR. ERNST

I'm sorry, Richard. But there is still a hope.

DR. COCHBURN

Sure, there is. What?

DR. ERNST

A hope with which, from out of all our uncertainty and sorrow, we may finally wrest a world where humanity is well proportioned to its resources and in good health; a joyful, life-entranced world, cultivated in serenity, for as long as the life span of the human race permits -- a world in harmony with the brightness of the sun, the loveliness of a blue sky, and the effulgence of the land. A world fresh anew, as the flowers and leaves, the scents and bird-songs, of spring, and forever kept that, by people who care about life too much ever to desecrate it; but, most important of all, wisely enough to want our best hope to bear on its well-being.

(sits down beside him and puts
her arm around him)

DR. COCHBURN

And what hope is that, Priscilla?

DR. ERNST

The mind empirical, Richard, applied to the facts of life. Real science, and from it, sure-footed progress, education as natural and courageous as life itself, soundly compassionate care, and -- certainly now, you must admit -- every other hope is a dreadful and dangerous illusion.

DR. COCHBURN

But I --

DR. ERNST

-- Did your best, darling. You don't mind if I call you darling, do you?

DR. COCHBURN

If you must.

(puts his hand on hers)

DR. ERNST

If you'll excuse a pun then, darling, it appears that, contrary to your theory, abstinence makes the heart grow fonder.

(sings)

When something's over yonder,
Like a home you used to know,
Does time let you outgrow
The way your heart grows fonder?

When someone's over yonder,
A good friend who's gone away,
What do you feel each day
But that your heart grows fonder?

And what difference can you find
Between the state of mind
You get from that friend's absence
And your years of abstinence?

When love is over yonder,
As a feeling you once had,
How can you say it's bad
To find your heart grows fonder?

Yes, how can you say it's bad
To find your heart grows fonder?

DR. COCHBURN

You know, Prissy, this is the first time a woman's been close to me since my wife picked up and left.

DR. ERNST

It is?

DR. COCHBURN

Yes. And I'm afraid I must agree with you.

DR. ERNST

About what?

DR. COCHBURN

Abstinence makes the heart grow much fonder!
(he takes her in his arms and
gives her a great kiss)

DR. COCHBURN & DR. ERNST

(duet)

When love is over yonder,
As a feeling you once had,
How can you say it's bad
To find your heart grows fonder?

MELANIE and DAN ENTER.

(quartet)

Yes, how can you say it's bad
To find your heart grows fonder?

BLACKOUT

THE END