

Candlelight

Lee Sheldon

NOTE: This version of the play is a reconstruction, thirty-four years after it was performed as a workshop production at Boston University in 1971. All I had to work from was the stage manager's copy of the script. There was quite a lot of improvisation during rehearsals. Much of the dialogue, particularly that of the minor characters, is taken from those improvisations. This, plus improvised bits of action, and the many changes to scripted dialogue, were added by hand to the script. In many places the indicated action is incomplete. The quick scene changes were all done by lighting, and some of those may not be properly re-produced here. Some of the music has survived, as well as some rehearsal photographs. They can be found under separate links.

Characters:

Todd
Christobel
Peter
Diana
Linda
Steve
Kit
Mark
Mary Lou
Tim
Patti

THE SONGS

ACT ONE

Darkness, Darkness (Company)
Two (Linda and Company)
Who Was that Girl I Saw Me with Last Night?
(Todd)
Traffic in the Undergrowth (Company)
Candlelight and Christobel (Christobel)
Remember Me? (Diana)

ACT TWO

Welcome, Christy! (Peter and Company)
Remember Me? Reprise (Christobel)
It's all Alright (Christobel and Peter)
Leaving (Todd)
Darkness, Darkness Reprise (Company)
Candlelight (Todd)

ACT ONE

The bulk of the stage is taken up with various sections of a singles bar. These sections can be isolated and emphasized by lighting. Upstage is the band: piano, two guitars, bass, flute and percussion. There's a bed in front of the stage, very close to the audience. Time is fluid. As we begin the stage is in darkness. We hear voices.

TODD

Goodbye.

(Pause.)

CHRISTOBEL

What?

TODD

I want to say it now. I won't be able to when the time comes.

CHRISTOBEL

Todd, what brought this out tonight?

(Todd lights a candle. He and Christobel are in bed.)

TODD

I don't know. The heat.

CHRISTOBEL

It's cooler now. The wind has shifted.

TODD

Yes.

CHRISTOBEL

Todd, I don't know you.

TODD

You never will.

CHRISTOBEL

You're proud of that.

TODD

No.

CHRISTOBEL

You are. You try like hell to make yourself larger than life. Big people are never known, only admired. The distance between them and us - me - is too great.

TODD

You can't judge.

CHRISTOBEL

I wouldn't dare. The distance is too great.

TODD

(gets up)

I'll get dressed.

CHRISTOBEL

No. No, don't leave me. Not yet.

TODD

I want to get dressed.

CHRISTOBEL

Not yet, please.

TODD

Alright.

CHRISTOBEL

Stay with me. You don't want to.

TODD

Yes, I do. It's just-

CHRISTOBEL

Some day you won't. Some day soon you'll get dressed and walk away without saying a word.

TODD

I said goodbye.

CHRISTOBEL

I wasn't listening.

(blows out candle. Darkness.
Lights come up on singles
bar as company enters
singing)

COMPANY

(sings)

Love...
Darkness (oh my baby)
Darkness (she's a lady)
Chritobel, Christobel...

I can't hear you breathe
But I didn't hear you leave
I suppose I should look for you
But it's easier to grieve
I suppose I should call your name
But it's easier to blame...
It's all the same

You give yourself without a thought
In the circus of the night
You perform, but you are caught
Like a moth in candlelight

Don't preach at me, I know your game

Listen to him: the man in chains
That's the way Todd plays

How he talks, not what he says
How she walks, not what she says
Not what he says...
Not what she says...

Love...
Darkness, darkness
Christobel...Todd?
Christobel...Todd?

I can't hear you breathe
But I didn't hear you leave
I suppose I should look for you
But it's easier to grieve
I suppose I should call your name
But it's easier to blame...
It's all the same...

(singles bar fades out.
Light comes up on Todd and
Peter. Todd lights a
candle.)

TODD

So where do I go from here?

PETER

Forget her.

TODD

And do what?

PETER

Come with me to a little place I know, Todd old man, a
swinging little bar I know.

TODD

Oh come on, Peter-

PETER

Hey... listen... some of my best friends...

TODD

How's Linda?

PETER

Extreme.

TODD

I mean, don't you think-

PETER

Listen, Todd, I have a theory. I'm always looking for one girl. Miss Right. That special someone-

TODD

And Linda isn't Miss Right.

PETER

Oh, she could be. But why cut myself off from other possibilities? Why limit my warmth and good nature to Linda when she could be Miss Wrong. And that special someone could drift right by? I could miss her completely. No, it doesn't pay to be narrow-minded.

TODD

No, I guess not.

PETER

So don't be narrow-minded. Let's go.

TODD

What's this place called?

PETER

A dating bar.

TODD

No, Peter. The name.

PETER

The Cowardly Lion.

TODD

Oh my God.

PETER

What?

TODD

Wait, let me guess: there's a yellow brick road from the sidewalk in the door - wait - probably to the bar. That'll be the Emerald City. The bartender will be the wizard. I'll bet the waitresses dress like Dorothy.

PETER

No, like munchkins.

TODD

Uh huh. And the Wicked Witch of the West?

PETER

It's a drink with coke and tequila served with a sprig of mandrake root.

TODD

And the toilet seats are emerald green.

PETER

They match the bar top.

TODD

And the drinks are expensive.

PETER

And you talk too much. Are you coming or not?

TODD

So where do we go from here?

(light change)

CHRISTOBEL

Come back to bed. What were you doing?

TODD

Thinking.

CHRISTOBEL

About what?

TODD

You.

CHRISTOBEL

That's a lie.

TODD

What makes you say that?

CHRISTOBEL

Because every time I ask you what you're thinking of, you say me. And I know that's a lie.

TODD

Why?

CHRISTOBEL

Because there isn't enough here to think about.

TODD

You occupy a very high position of importance in my mind.

CHRISTOBEL

My only place up there is horizontal.

TODD

That's not true.

CHRISTOBEL

I hope not.

TODD

There is enough to occupy my mind for a considerable length of time.

CHRISTOBEL

No.

TODD

Quit bringing yourself down. Nobody has that bad an inferiority complex.

CHRISTOBEL

I've been the Eastern Seaboard champ three years running.

TODD

You just need to be brought out.

CHRISTOBEL

What do you mean: brought out?

TODD

All that...real beauty is hidden behind fearful doors, padlocked with doubts and chained with suspicions.

CHRISTOBEL

(laughs)

What?

TODD

I want to show you...you. So you won't just be a cute chameleon.

CHRISTOBEL

A chameleon...oh yes... Is that what you think of me?

TODD

No, of course not. You've just got a few drops of changeling in your blood. Properly directed it could work miracles. But how do I begin?

(Lights up on singles bar
meat parade. Peter and Todd
enter the bar. Peter mounts
the platform. The men
applaud and cheer as Peter
introduces the women.)

PETER

To begin with we have Patti Vanderbilt. Patti is from Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. She is currently a junior at Wellesley. Her hobbies are skiing, golf and truck drivers.

(applause)

PETER

Next we have Kit Crowley. Kit is currently employed at the Connelly Plumbing Warehouse, serving the Boston community. Kit's hobbies are gin, vodka and rum.

(applause)

PETER

Next we have Mary Lou Cusak from Pittsburgh. Mary Lou is a graduate rhetoric major at MIT and her hobby is semantics.

(applause. Peter gets off
the platform)

MARY LOU

Tell me about this sweetheart Mark.

LINDA

He's a wallpaper salesman at Raymonds. He comes in here a lot. I think he went to college. You probably have a lot in common.

PATTI

Tell me about the "red shirt."

LINDA

I think his name's Tim. He's in a band or something like that. But be careful. I think he's looking for a quick one-nighter. Every night.

KIT

Who's the short little cutey in the cowboy hat?

LINDA

His name's Stephen. He's a graduate law student at Harvard. I think he's rich. His mother's putting him through school.

(looks at Peter)

LINDA

Now there's a familiar face...

TODD

(to Peter)

What do I do if-you know-I see-you know?

PETER

Ask her name.

TODD

I can't just walk up to someone and ask her who she is.

PETER

Make polite conversation. Oh my God. Hi Linda!

LINDA

Hi, Peter.

PETER

I didn't expect to see you here.

LINDA

Obviously.

TODD

What'll I say?

PETER

Say hi to Linda.

TODD

Hi Linda.

LINDA

Hi Todd, how are you? How's the world of literature? Seen any good libraries lately?

TODD

Fine. Fine. No.

LINDA

Fine. Fine. No?

PETER

This is Todd's first time here.

LINDA

There's a first time for everything.

(Christobel enters)

PETER

Yeah, and Linda's had more first times than most. Just kidding!

TODD

Yeah.

(He moves to get a better
look at Christobel.)

PETER

Don't say: yeah. Todd?

(to Linda)

Well!

LINDA

Well.

PETER

Well.

(Music begins.)

COMPANY

Two, Two, Two, Two
Let's play the game of courtship
Two, Two, Two, Two

Let's play the game of courtship

CHRISTOBEL

We share ideas, at least I think we do
I share mine and he shares his too
And they bounce off each other like smiles

(Christobel and Todd smile
at each other.)

COMPANY

Two, Two, Two, Two
We play the game in pairs
Two, Two, Two, Two
The object you see
Is to get me
To care

LINDA

Once, Once, Once, Once
Just once I'd like to try
To find one son of a gun
Who, when he got the itch
Wasn't a son of a bitch

KIT

Who, when he got the chance
Wasn't a pain in the pants

CHRISTOBEL

We see each other, I know that's true
We love each other, at least I think I do
But our love
Flickers faintly
In the dark

STEPHEN

Do not pass go
Do not collect two hundred dollars
Go directly to hell

COMPANY

Oh hell

MARY LOU

Momma's little baby wants a little lovin'
Wants to make it in his momma's oven

COMPANY

Two, Two, Two, Two
Let's play the game of courtship
Two, Two, Two, Two
Let's play the game of courtship

CHRISTOBEL

We try to love, but it all seems play
We try to talk, but we've got nothing to say
And our words
Cannot
Fill the dark

MEN

Momma's little lady wants a little lovin'
Wants to bake it in her hot little oven

COMPANY

Two, Two, Two, Two
Let's play the game of courtship
Two, Two, Two, Two
Let's play the game of courtship

(Mark and Mary Lou cross
right together. Tim and
Patti cross left together.
Stephen and Kit cross right
together.)

TODD

(crosses to Christobel)
Would you like to dance?

(Christobel spills her drink on him as she stands. She tries to wipe the liquor off. He ignores it and takes her in his arms to dance. She leaves him and dances alone.)

TODD

(sings)

Who was that girl
I saw me with last night
Who put me in
A whirlwind
Of light

Who danced for me
Till the end of day
Who raced
And chased
The dark away

And light-
Candlelight
Was in my heart
Was in her eyes last night
Those eyes that shone
Themselves alone-
With light

CHRISTOBEL

Thank you for the lovely dance. I'm sorry. I've ruined your shirt.

TODD

It can be cleaned.

CHRISTOBEL

They can be pressed.

CHRISTOBEL

But your tie.

TODD

I'll buy a new one.

CHRISTOBEL

But your evening.

TODD

Will be ruined.

CHRISTOBEL

Oh!

TODD

Unless you tell me your name.

(music begins again)

CHRISTOBEL

Oh?

TODD

Will you?

CHRISTOBEL

No...

TODD

Oh!

(sings)

Who was that girl
A saw me with last night
Who spun me in
A whirlwind
Of light

Who danced for me
Till the end of time
Who found me love
And made it mine

Who was that girl
All aglow with flame
I must know who
I must find out

Her name
Why she came...

But where is she?

MARK

Bet you can't guess what I do for a living?

MARY LOU

What makes you think I'm going to try?

TIM

When you're horny you go after something; none of that
four dozen roses shit.

PATTI

I like the way you express yourself. It's so natural.

PETER

I'm looking for that special someone.

KIT

I don't see her.

(light change, bar fades)

CHRISTOBEL

How did you find me?

TODD

Peter knows your friend Linda.

(Behind them in the dark the
rest of the company becomes

a cheering section, routing Todd on, up when Todd is doing well, down when he's not.)

CHRISTOBEL

It figures. She goes to those places a lot.

TODD

I think she's a chameleon.

CHRISTOBEL

A what?

TODD

I'll tell you my theory sometime.

CHRISTOBEL

Will you?

TODD

Do you go to the bars much?

CHRISTOBEL

That was my first trip.

TODD

Mine too!

CHRISTOBEL

Imagine that.

TODD

And look at the fringe benefits!

CHRISTOBEL

I wasn't aware of any fringe benefits.

TODD

You!

CHRISTOBEL

FRINGE benefits?

TODD

Beautiful benefits.

CHRISTOBEL

Oh, come on...

TODD

I was wondering if you might like to go to a movie this evening...

CHRISTOBEL

What movie?

TODD

McCabe and Mrs. Miller.

CHRISTOBEL

Oh, I've seen that one.

TODD

In case you had, I planned an alternate.

CHRISTOBEL

What?

TODD

Walkabout.

CHRISTOBEL

I've seen it. It was beautiful.

TODD

Was it? I'll have to see it sometime. How about The Anderson Tapes?

CHRISTOBEL

Just last week.

TODD

Plaza Suite?

CHRISTOBEL

Fraid so.

TODD

The Vampire Lovers?

CHRISTOBEL

Twice.

TODD

Twice?

CHRISTOBEL

I did want to see Fiddler on the Roof, though.

TODD

(frowns)

You want to go to a play?

CHRISTOBEL

Oh no. I mean the movie version.

TODD

Oh! Great! But isn't it a musical?

CHRISTOBEL

Is it?

TODD

I think so. But that's okay. We can find out about each other during to the songs.

CHRISTOBEL

I go to watch the film, not to talk.

TODD

Oh, me too. Is this Friday okay?

CHRISTOBEL

Okay. Find out what time the movie starts and how long it'll take to get there. I never come in in the middle of the movie. You do have a car?

TODD

Oh yeah, a volkswagon.

CHRISTOBEL

Oh boy. Call tomorrow or the next day and tell me when you're coming. Leave a message if I'm not here.

TODD

Alright, bye.

CHRISTOBEL

Goodbye. I got a date! I got a date!

ROOMMATE (OFF)

Hot damn. What's his name?

(Christobel realizes she has
no idea as whispers are
heard from all sides.)

COMPANY

There's traffic in the undergrowth
Bouncy babies in the trees

(sing)

Climbing, frowning, snuffle-sneeze

Crowds of flowers; dirty bees
Busy beeing ill at ease
Seduction's on the springy wind
Simple pleasures on the breeze

They pollenate and populate
And procreate and copulate
Virginity bee-sieged

If only they had weeded
Much of what they seeded
We'd know the allergies of bees...

There was a bee named Todd
A pretty flower Christobel
They'll be united under God
Their union underwritten by Hell

In the garden of stray delights
Over numerous days and night
They'll lose their innocence
Yet gain no new insights

There's traffic in the undergrowth
Among the knowledgeable trees
And be sure the snake lurks there
Enjoying all he sees

The apple though is something more
For the flower and the bee
And the gift will take a shift
Now: from he to she
Not from the flower to the bee
But from he to she...

(music ends)

TODD

Christy, believe me.

CHRISTOBEL

But I don't understand. Why do you have to do anything? Why can't we just let things happen? Why do we have to make a plan?

TODD

We haven't seen Christy yet. She's all locked inside. You're afraid to show yourself because you're afraid people won't approve... won't like you.

CHRISTOBEL

Really?

TODD

Trust me. I know what I'm doing.

CHRISTOBEL

But I don't. I don't know if I want to be exposed. Providing you can.

TODD

I can.

CHRISTOBEL

What if you don't like what you see?

TODD

(kneels)

There you go! That's the first trap we've got to pull you out of. I like you. I also like what I see within you struggling to get out.

CHRISTOBEL

You don't love me now? This...way?

TODD

I don't think so.

CHRISTOBEL

Do you love this other me?

TODD

I don't know. I can't promise anything. But there's a good chance. It's the real Christobel after all.

CHRISTOBEL

Come to bed.

TODD

To sleep.

CHRISTOBEL

To sleep.

(Todd falls asleep on the bed. Christobel remains standing.)

CHRISTOBEL

(sings)

Christobel and candlelight
 Could go well to warm the night
 In spite of all there's wrong with me
 He says he wants to keep me company

To rearrange my life
 To change my mind

Candlelight he says, Christobel
 Knows the answer, but will not tell
 There's a spark inside to free
 To fan and set afire for me

I'll learn to grow
But how does he know?

That this is the thing to do
The choice to make, the plan to see through?
How do I know he deserves my trust?
Because I love him so I guess I must

But why the dread
In the back of my head?

Todd, think it over
Have you tried this before?
Some fair lady from some place
Who loved you still more?

But failed to live up
To your young expectations
Until she was modeled
To exact specifications

What happened then?
Will it happen again?

But Christobel and candlelight
Could go well to warm the night
In spite of all there's wrong with me
He says he wants to keep me company

Me, we wants me
And so, I'll go...

(spot isolates Christobel)

CHRISTOBEL

Hello, Todd? I've decided.

DIANA

Hello, Todd.

(separate spot finds Diana
upstage)

DIANA

I've decided.

(Todd sits up in bed)

TODD

And?

CHRISTOBEL

I know that I love you.

DIANA

I know that I love you.

TODD

You'll do it?

CHRISTOBEL

For you.

DIANA

For you.

TODD

For us.

CHRISTOBEL

For us.

DIANA

For us.

TODD

I have to think now. I'll call you.

CHRISTOBEL

Goodbye.

TODD

Hello?

DIANA

Hello, Todd?

TODD

Diana?

DIANA

Yes. I just called to say goodbye.

TODD

What?

DIANA

Todd, I know you meant well. But I realize now I never really loved you. Or maybe I still do, but it's different now.

TODD

Diana, don't leave me. I need you.

DIANA

I don't think you do. Perhaps you need no one.

TODD

No, I do. Don't leave me.

DIANA

We'll all leave you Todd.

(light change)

DIANA

May I come to you? To visit you this evening? I'm only in town for this one hello. It's been so long.

TODD

Yes.

DIANA

And your letters told me little.

TODD

Yes.

DIANA

Will you tell me about Christy? I'd like her I think.

TODD

Yes.

DIANA

May I come and see you?

TODD

Yes.

DIANA

Goodbye.

TODD

Don't leave me!

DIANA

Goodbye.

(singles bar lighting)

PATTI

What did you say your name was?

TIM

T...uh...Tim...

PATTI

Tee-uh-tim? Is that Hungarian?

STEVE

Have you ever had any long-lasting relationships?

KIT

Yeah, with Jim Beam.

STEVE

Does he come here?

KIT

If you could be anything in the whole wide world, what would you be?

STEVE

Well, ma'am, I think I'd be a traveling poet.

KIT

A traveling poet? Where would you go?

STEVE

Well ma'am, I think I'd pull my hat down over my eyes, and head down south to those western skies.

PETER

I'm looking for that special someone.

MARY LOU

Don't let me be the one to stop you.

(singles bar conversations
continue as a murmur in the
background. Light up on
Diana and Todd)

TODD

Hello, D. Come on in. Sit down. Well, how have you been?

DIANA

Fine. I've been doing a little traveling now. I'll catch
the first plane in the morning back to New York.

TODD

Fashions. I never heard you know, whether or not you
finally got that last job. Or you might have gone off to
Spain with - oh that's long ago. Do you still make your
own clothes?

DIANA

I don't have much time to myself I'm afraid.

TODD

Do you still hear from Ken?

DIANA

No, not a word.

TODD

I'm sorry.

DIANA

I'm happy.

TODD

Good.

(at a restaurant)

DIANA

I just wanted to see you. To say hello.

TODD

Are you staying in town long?

DIANA

No. Just this evening. I'm catching the late plane tonight.

TODD

Can I take you to the airport?

DIANA

Yes.

(inside volkswagon. Todd drives)

DIANA

Do you go to church now?

TODD

No. Are you sure I can't drop you somewhere?

DIANA

Positive. Write, it will help you sleep.

(Todd's apartment)

TODD

Thanks for stopping by. Take care.

DIANA

I will.

TODD

And write, won't you? Getting a letter out of you is next to impossible.

DIANA

You write, too.

TODD

I will.

DIANA

Goodbye, Todd.

TODD

Goodbye D.

DIANA AND CHRISTOBEL

Todd?

(light change)

PETER

I'm looking for that special someone...

PATTI

Come back when you know how to drive a truck.

LINDA

He's been using that same damn line for three years.

(light change)

TODD

Hi, Christy, how are you?

CHRISTOBEL

How are you? You've been down in the dumps lately. Is it because of me?

TODD

No. A new story. A poem really. I've got a lot on my mind. When will I see you?

CHRISTOBEL

Soon.

TODD

How soon?

CHRISTOBEL

I'm almost ready. I'm almost there.

TODD

Yes, I think you are.

CHRISTOBEL

I'm meeting new people. Seeing new places. I'm expanding. I'm growing. That's what you want, isn't it?

TODD

Of course. When will I see you?

CHRISTOBEL

In about fifteen minutes. It'll give me time to have a long cigarette.

TODD

I wish you wouldn't?

CHRISTOBEL

Do you? I need it to calm me down. See you in about fifteen.

TODD

Fifteen, yes. There isn't much time.

(darkness, spot comes up on
Diana.)

DIANA

(sings)

Time was when
The gentle night
Came softly to the ocean
To kiss and then
Retreat in flight
Slight rhythm to its motion.

Now was free
As yesterday
With time enough tomorrow
And time, a tree,
To dip and sway
To bear more joy than sorrow

Remember me?
Remember me?

In the sunlight
In the moonlight
With hair down on my shoulders
In the wintertime
In the firelight
Then after when the embers smoldered.

I am
Diana,
Someone you should remember:
Sagi-
Tarian,

Birthday in December

Do you remember me?
Remember me?

You once begged
I didn't know
Myself and so I let you go
But you touched me
I can't remove your hand.
Can we try? I know we can't.

But I had to see you
Just this once
To see you now we're grown
Remember D
Remember winter weather
I wish we'd grown together

Do you remember me? Remember me?
Remember me? Remember me?
Diana, Oh my God
Todd...
Todd...
Todd...

(music ends)

There isn't much time.

(light comes up on the band)

BARBARA

Me and the band are gonna take a little break. We'll be
back in ten minutes.

(the band files off)

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

The stage is in darkness.

TODD

Yes. You should go meet people.

CHRISTOBEL

I've met them.

TODD

And it's eating me up inside.

CHRISTOBEL

Is it really?

(A single light comes up on
Christobel, center stage)

CHRISTOBEL

I was shy once;
Stealthy in the corners.
I slunk down the halls
Clinging to the walls.
Darkness was my mother
And a shadow was my child.
I very rarely smiled...
I was quiet once;
Silent in my laughter.
Oh, my dreams were somewhat frightening
Caroling the clouds like thunder
And partly in wonder I cried,
But only inside...

(sings)

Once I was a shadow
Passing down the halls
Clinging to the walls
Like a whisper
After tea:
Remember me?

COMPANY

Shhhh! Shhhh!
 (sings)
 Hey, look around you:
 See, we have found you;
 We surround you,
 Christobel...

PETER

(sings)
 Introducing the brightest new face
 To enter a room and light up the place
 Introducing the number one
 Sparkling person under the sun
 So fascinating so no one gets wise
 To her patented, practical, proper disguise

COMPANY

Now you see through her, now you don't
 Maybe you will, but we bet you won't
 We'll lay even money you'll never uncover
 Discover another someone or other
 To make her his friend as well as his lover
 To make her his sister before he has kissed her

Welcome, Christy
 To the fold
 You may be icy
 But you'll never be cold
 You may grow wrinkled
 But you'll never grow old

PETER

There she is!
 Miss A-daptable!

COMPANY

There she is, the biggest surprise
 To enter your life and open your eyes
 She may be claimed, but she'll never be tamed
 She may be bad, but she'll never be had
 If everyone everywhere sees what he sees

Then raise up your hands and get down on your
knees

Worship Christy
But don't thank God
She wasn't lifted
By a rib from the sod
But born in the brain of another
Thank, Todd

What's the matter, Todd?

TODD

I've taught her the art of camouflage.

CHRISTOBEL

Hello, Todd.

TODD

Hi.

CHRISTOBEL

You've changed.

TODD

Have I? I could say the same about you.

CHRISTOBEL

I only want to be what you want me to be.

TODD

Be yourself. That's all I ever wanted.

CHRISTOBEL

(recitative)

But Todd, it was you
Who said I wasn't free
Something from inside
Was struggling to be me
So you sat me down

And taught me
To be beautiful, so I am
To be talented, if I can
I'm worldly like you said
Like Eliza I'm well-bred
Well read...

TODD

You wear darkness like a badge of honor.

CHRISTOBEL

No.
That's not true.
I can't change my spots...
Like you.

TODD

But the light is gone.

CHRISTOBEL

(stands)

No, just the opposite. It just began to glow. I feel it
lifting me out, holding me up, suspending me in light.

TODD

Not candlelight.

CHRISTOBEL

Of course not candlelight. Candlelight is dim and dull.
This beam is bright and starry, warm and all around me,
steady, constant, reliable. It won't vanish in a puff of
smoke.

(pause)

I have to go now, Todd. They're waiting.

TODD

For what?

CHRISTOBEL

For me. For once.

(sings)

Time was when
The gentle night
Came softly to the ocean
To kiss and then
Retreat in flight
Slight rhythm to its motion.

Now was free
As yesterday
With time enough tomorrow
And time, a tree,
To dip and sway
To bear more joy than sorrow

Remember me?
Remember me?

In the sunlight
In the moonlight
With hair down on my shoulders
In the wintertime
In the firelight
Then after when the embers smoldered.

I am
Christobel,
Someone you should remember:
Sagi-
Tarian,
Birthday in December

Do you remember me?
Remember me?

(light change, spot on
Linda)

LINDA

Peter? I don't think I can make it this weekend. No, I'm-
I'm going to be pretty busy. Well, a lot of things.
Really. No, of course I'm not mad. You mean well. I know
that. No, it has nothing to do with that. I've just got a
lot of things to do. I've got some thinking to do. Yeah,
I guess about us, but more about me. Peter, try to

understand. Yes, but- You know you can really be very cruel at times, Peter. I know you don't mean to be, but- No, let me finish. I am what I am. I am a person. Linda. Remember me? I have-needs. I-I can't be something I'm not. I won't try to be- Not even for you. There are things you must except about a person. Me. Dear God, Peter- Love me for who I am. If you cannot then you can't love me. You don't know what love is, Peter. You don't know.

(light change, spot on Peter)

PETER

Hey, Linda. It's only as big as you want to make it. It's all for you. Look, people don't try to-change-other people. Not consciously. That's too cold. We aren't like that. But- being together- a little has to rub off. Love is sharing, Linda, helping. If you can't see that, then what can I say? You're just not that special someone, I guess. No hard feelings. It didn't work, okay? We can part amiably can't we? Go on in the search? You shouldn't let it get to you like this. There'll be others. There'll always be others. There'll be better chances. Believe me. I know.

(singles bar lighting)

KIT

You gonna be in again? I don't see much of you

STEVE

I don't rightly know, ma'am. They call me The Wanderer.

MARY LOU

I hope you get your job.

MARK

So do I.

MARY LOU

You have a funny mouth.

CHRISTOBEL

Todd? Are you awake?

(recitative)

On the edge of your lips
Is a trickle of sweat
That seals them together
As ours sometimes met.
It falls to the sheet
To stain with a lie
What the love that was made
Meant to you and I.
As your turn on your side
Give your face to the wall
Your eyes open wide
I ask if that's all.
Is that all, Todd?
No reply.
No reply.
I'm answered.
Goodbye.

(music ends; light change)

PETER

Hello, Christy.

CHRISTOBEL

Peter! Where's Linda?

PETER

I don't know.

CHRISTOBEL

Did you have a fight?

PETER

Our first and last.

CHRISTOBEL

Oh?

PETER

You know I'm the kind of guy that way down underneath is looking for that one girl, that special someone. And the funny thing is I keep finding her. Only the special someone starts to fade. In several short weeks, months, whatever-before you can say "I love you" and mean it-I mean really mean it-she's gone the next morning. No note, just a hangover to remind me she was there. It must be nice to have a long-lasting relationship...once in awhile.

CHRISTOBEL

Don't envy me. They're deadly too.

PETER

(puts his arm around her)

You and Todd have a fight?

CHRISTOBEL

Funny thing: it was our first and last too. You and I are very much alike, Peter. We sit on opposite sides of this teeter-totter, yet we balance each other.

PETER

Yeah, it is funny. Would you, uh, care to discuss it further? Over a drink, let's say?

CHRISTOBEL

If it has gin in it and if you're buying.

PETER

Naturally. It's just a short walk from here.

CHRISTOBEL

Lead on, brother. There isn't much time.

(music begins. They begin to
dance soft shoe)

CHRISTOBEL AND PETER

(sing)

Blending in, trying
To be what you want me to be
Pleasantly entertaining
You see what you want to see
Always changing and rearranging
Keeping the view satisfactory

We're all alike
But it's alright
Everything's fine
It's all alright
We're okay and happy too
What's right for me is right for you

When it's cold out there
It don't matter cause you are near
Ain't it nice to have
Some familiar faces near
Friends to sing and friends to bring
A small spot of simple cheer

We're all alike
But it's alright
Everything's fine
It's all alright
We're okay and happy too
What's right for me is right for you
And vice versa - that's true too!

Blending in, trying
To be what you want me to be
Pleasantly entertaining
You see what you want to see
Always changing and rearranging
Keeping the view satisfactory

(music ends)

TODD

Christy? Are you here? Gone again? Gone again. Gone to the heady cry of the pounding of the drums. And here I sit in spite of it. Well, why not? Is death so far ahead of time it can't be caught? I don't think so. Time is clever. Time will kill us all. And I trusted time. And a trusted the girl: Christobel.

(singles bar lighting; as people begin to leave)

KIT

Buy me a drink?

STEVE

Another one?

TIM

(to Patti)

Well, uh, we better get going pretty soon. Wellesley's a long way.

MARK

I think I'd better take a cab home.

MARY LOU

I think so too.

MARK

I wonder how I'll get it through the door.

(lighting changes to bed)

TODD

Christobel?

CHRISTOBEL

What?

TODD

Come back to bed.

CHRISTOBEL

No.

TODD

I'm sorry.

CHRISTOBEL

For what?

TODD

That it didn't work out.

CHRISTOBEL

Oh.

TODD

Did I do it?

CHRISTOBEL

What makes you ask that?

TODD

By helping you I drove you away. Is that possible? Or did I not help, but instead destroy you?

CHRISTOBEL

Whatever you did, it didn't destroy me. If anything you only destroyed us.

TODD

Did you ever love me?

CHRISTOBEL

I don't know.

TODD

I do.

CHRISTOBEL

I can live with that. I'm going to get dressed and go home.

TODD

No, please. Not yet. No, maybe it's better. Maybe you should go.

CHRISTOBEL

I think so.

TODD

How can things get so twisted?

CHRISTOBEL

Sometimes by accident. Sometimes by inclination.

TODD

Which?

CHRISTOBEL

Ask yourself that.

TODD

Don't you think I have?

CHRISTOBEL

No. The distance is too great. I'm sorry.

TODD

Don't be sorry. Just go, go please.

CHRISTOBEL

Todd-

TODD

Christobel...

(sings)

I trusted you.
I gave myself.
I lay myself
At your feet.

I believed in you
More than I wanted to,
More than I had any right to do.

But then,
Again,
I was in love with you.

Can you understand
What it means to be a mam
Who believes in you?

Do you know the reason why
Even though I know you lie
I won't be leaving you?

Whatever the weather
You're never at home.
When we're together
I'm all but alone.
I'm alone.

I can't see you.
I try, you know.
I cry, you know
In our bed.

Oh God, can you see?
What there is wrong in me?

What there is inside that is squeezing me?

But oh,
I know
You are leaving me.

So go,
I'll stay.
No, just go away.

(music ends)

May I call you tomorrow?

CHRISTOBEL

If you like.

TODD

Will you be in?

CHRISTOBEL

(sees Peter)

I don't know.

(music begins)

COMPANY

(sings)

Love...
Darkness (oh my baby)
Darkness (she's a lady)
Chritobel, Christobel...

I can't hear you breathe
But I didn't hear you leave
I suppose I should look for you
But it's easier to grieve
I suppose I should call your name
But it's easier to blame...
It's all the same

You give yourself without a thought
In the circus of the night
You perform, but you are caught

Like a moth in candlelight

Don't preach at me, I know your game
Listen to him: the man in chains
That's the way Todd plays

How he talks, not what he says
How she walks, not what she says
Not what he says...
Not what she says...

Love...
Darkness, darkness
Christobel...Todd?
Christobel...Todd?

I can't hear you breathe
But I didn't hear you leave
I suppose I should look for you
But it's easier to grieve
I suppose I should call your name
But it's easier to blame...
It's all the same...

TODD

(sings)
Remove me to the banquet table;
I am but flesh in a shadow fable-
Remember me in candlelight:
I was bring
At the night.
Remember me in candlelight:
I was blinking
At the night.

(he reaches for the candle)

JoAnn?

(pause)

JoAnn, come back to bed.

(he blows it out. Darkness)

END OF THE PLAY