

FOLLOW THE SUN

by Aaron B. Weir

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One day you'll look to see I've gone
For tomorrow may rain so I'll follow the sun
Some day you'll know I was the one
But tomorrow may rain so I'll follow the sun
And now the time has come and so my love
I must go
And though I lose a friend in the end
You will know...

Lennon & McCartney

ACT I:

The stage is dark. Two lights will alternately come up at two separate places on stage. One light will expose a hand which signs. The other hand will hold an oversized ruler close to the first hand. In the other light will be a man standing. He will look preacher-like, stern in visage and fanatical in mannerisms. The effect of the alternation of the lights between hands and the man will be fairly rapid.

HAND

"A"

HAND WITH RULER
[Slams ruler hard on a flat surface]

HAND

"B"

HAND WITH RULER
[Slams ruler hard on a flat surface, closer to hand]

HAND

"C"

HAND WITH RULER
Slams ruler hard on a flat surface, closer to the hand again]

[Light fades on hands and appears on the man]

MAN

Just when you think you're one up on the world, everything clicking away on all 4 cylinders...WHAM! Just when you think you're safe from bad luck of any kind...WHAM! Just when you think God's on your side...WHAM!

[Lights fade on man and return to the hands]

TWO HANDS

Not

HAND WITH RULER

[Slams closer to other hand on a hard flat surface]

TWO HANDS

Fair

HAND WITH RULER

[Slams very close to other hand]

[Lights fade on hands and return to the man]

MAN

You may run pretty fast but that does not always win the race. You might be strong in many ways. Wise perhaps and skillful. Maybe even famous. But in the end it's all in the timing.

[Lights fades and returns to the hands]

TWO HANDS

Hate

HAND WITH RULER

[Ruler slams down harder than before and precariously close to the hand]

TWO HANDS

Each other

HAND WITH RULER

[Slams down harder]

TWO HANDS

Same-same

HAND WITH RULER
[Ruler slams down the hardest yet]

TWO HANDS

Change never.

HAND WITH RULER
[Ruler slams down and breaks.]

[Light fades and returns to the man.

MAN

Who decides if a person can speak or not speak; see or not see;
hear or not hear?

[Lights fade and the alternate light now shines on
four actors each facing in a different direction
on stage]

TWO HANDS

BALL

[A small ball bounces across the stage in front of
actor 1.]

FACE1

[Mouths the word "ball"]
[Distorted sound comes across on sound system for
word "ball"]

[Another small ball bounces across the stage in
front of actor 2.]

TWO HANDS

BALL

[The word "ball" is signed bigger.]

FACE 2

[Mouths the word "ball" with more effort than Face 1.]

[Voice distortion is louder.]

[Another small ball bounces across the stage in
front of actor 3.]

TWO HANDS

BALL

[The word "ball" is signed bigger and voice distortion is louder.]

Face 3

[Mouths the word "ball" with more effort than Face 2.]

[Another small ball bounces across the stage in front of actor 4.]

TWO HANDS

BALL

[The word "ball" is signed intensely and voice distortion is louder.]

Face 4

[Mouths the word "ball" with more a more painfuleffort than Face 3 The face begins to contort, attempting to voice the word "ball" which is increasingly difficult. The face struggles for a period of time and then all four actors collapse in exhaustion.

[The voice lets go with a howl of anguish.]

[The lights reveal the man again]

MAN

Where has the right to pursue happiness gone?

[As the light comes up another area of the stage, we see a man fitfully asleep. As he restlessly tosses and turns the four actors go to him and gently lay hands on him. The light focus intensifies on him and he awakens, bolting upright.]

ZAK

I am not a victim. I am not a victim. I am not a victim. I am not a victim. I am not—dreaming. I was dreaming again. Why can't I let go of the past.

[Looks up at four actors who are standing at the head of the bed.]

Actor 1

Because you may be through with the past

Actor 2

But the past

Actor 3

Is not through

Actor 4

With you!

All laugh hysterically and exit in different directions]

[The lights slowly come up to reveal a common room area. Stage left there is a frayed couch. The stage right area reveals a table with a model of a bus, half completed. We can see that paint is peeling from parts of the walls. It is almost, but not quite an institutional setting. Someone has tried to make it a nice environment but things are not quite right. These various objects scattered around the room that will be used by the characters during the course of the play to construct various memory scenes that will occur. There is a small table located close to the bus model. Zak goes to the small table and fills the coffee maker with coffee. He picks up a garden hose from the ground and fills the coffee maker container with water and then turns the coffee maker on. He roots around the other table, looking at the various parts that are scattered there. He finds a cup, sugar and cream. He then notices a engine part, it up, sits on the stool and begins to tinker.]

[Two women and two men appear in chaotic order. They are out of breath from running. They are

almost giddy in demeanor. Their laughter is loud and the sound of it causes another woman to come out of the small glassed office that is connected to the common room to see what the commotion is all about. All of this is apparent to the audience, but the man is oblivious to the event. He continues to tinker, notices the coffee is ready and pours himself a cup, fixes it the way he likes and resumes his tinkering. The group notices all this, but has not yet noticed the woman standing just outside the doorway of the glassed in office.

T-BONE

Well, lookey there, there's old Zak wastin' another morning on that damn bus. Good lord almighty, how long has it been since he got that damn fool idea to try and fix that bus?

ARIEL

Gettin' close to ten years now. Fact is it'll be ten years tomorrow.

ALICE

No kiddin', kind of a dreamer like me, huh?

ARIEL

Ain't no dream for him. He's convinced it's gonna happen and it's gonna be any day now.

T-BONE

Hell, he's been thinkin' that for as long as I can remember.

PENNY

Well, we gonna do what we come to do?

T-BONE

What? Oh sure, sure will. Come on Peachy

[He musses up the hair of a young boy as a way of getting his attention.]

You're gonna meet someone real interstin'

PEACHY

True?

T-BONE

I know so, come on.

[They walk over the table. T-Bone gestures to Ariel to be quiet and not tip off Zach that they are there. They all creep up on Zach. T-Bone signals the group to hold back slightly. T-Bone continues to move closer to Zach until he is right behind him. He suddenly reaches over and grabs the engine part away from Zach. A game of "keep away" begins and Zach chases everyone around the room. Soon he becomes winded and comes to a stop.]

ZAK

Awww, come on you guys. I gotta lot of stuff to do and this foolin' around don't help matters a bit. I'm close to getting this dang bus fixed.

T-BONE

It can wait, I got someone I want ya to meet. Peachy, this is Zach. Zach meet another crazy fool in the world.

ARIEL

Now T-Bone

T-BONE

Ain't nothin' but the truth

ZACH

What truth?

T-BONE

Him, he's a strange one

PENNY

You should be one to talk

T-BONE

Go on, tell him

PEACHY

What?

T-BONE

'Bout the seven days

ZACH

Before anyone gets started, how about a proper introduction

ALICE

This here is Peachy, he's new around here

ZACH

How come you all is a callin' him Peachy

ALICE

Because his face is nice and soft, not prickly like T-Bone's is over here.

PEACHY

Aw, come on you guys, quit rubbin' it in.

T-BONE

Okay, enough 'bout that. We brought him over cuz he's got something interesting to tell ya.

PENNY

He come from one of those oral schools but he don't sign too bad for an oralist. So be patient with him Zach.

ZACH

One of those speech boys, eh?

PEACHY

Yeah...One of those kind

[Everyone freezes. The lights fade to show only Peachy.] As he delivers his next lines, the other actors move about in the background to prepare for Peachy's story]

I speak and you might look at me in amazement. I speak and they look at me in horror. I must seem like a Frankenstein figure to them. Wandering between two worlds that don't know quite what to do with me. The hearies want me to be like them and the deafies just look at me in CONTEMPT!

[Lights come up enough to reveal the other actors rearranged in the yard area as if they were in a lecture hall. One person, the lecturer is standing next to a strange looking chair. Everyone is waiting for him to start his lecture. Peachy steps into the scene and sits in the chair. The lecturer straps him in and the lights come up fully.]

LECTURER

Behold! We are on the verge of another scientific discovery. A breakthrough that you could never have imagined. You've been long told that the deaf are dumb. That they are inferior in every regard. Only the social workers have the audacity to claim that they are people like anyone else. It's been said that they are similar to the ancient species known as homo alalus, that breed of humanity without speech in prehistoric time, yet more retarded than they because they cannot hear. Thus they pass through the world among the hearing like shadows of whom we represent. They hear us not, understand us not, all things human

are foreign to them. I am here today to demonstrate the fallacy of these assumptions.

RESPONDER #1

Heresy!

LECTURER

My fellow colleagues, please! Let me conclude my argument. Allow me the benefit of the doubt. In recent time the deaf have come to claim that they are equal to us in all respects. It is our duty as scientist to respect this illusion in order to allow us the fullest opportunity to explore this species of humanity. For we know that whatever they believe, deafness remains an infirmity and it is our scientific duty to repair this infirmity whether the person who has the infirmity is disturbed by it or not.

RESPONDER #2

Your comments seem rather obvious.

LECTURER

Allow me to conclude my thoughts! It is generally agreed that all that humanity has every dreamed, wanted or done or will ever do depends on that rare ability to create movement of the air. A breath of air that creates sounds distinguishable from all the random sounds of the universe to create meaning, such as I do at this moment. This ability is a divine gift, not inspired by us but floated down like magic to our lips and if this gift had not been made we would still be running wild in the forest. Is this not so?

RESPONDER #3

Hear, Hear!!

LECTURER

Is it unreasonable to presume that we can, through strenuous scientific effort, render the same gift of speech to the deaf?

RESPONDER #4

Preposterous! Aristotle was quite clear on the subject.

RESPONDER #1

You speak the truth, let us get away from this madman.

LECTURER

Mad! You call me mad? Has not science made prodigal discoveries. Have we not made leaps of knowledge that exceed anything we could have dreamed of? Why not speech to the deaf? I tell you it is possible and I am here today to silence your doubts and prove beyond a scientific doubt that it is possible. Let me demonstrate.

[Turns to the chair, grabs a microphone contraption and shouts into it the word "ball." The man in the chair writhes in agony and begins to respond.]

MAN IN CHAIR

B.....B...B....Ba...Bal...Ball!

LECTURER

Awaken you men of science, I present you with a miracle.

[Turns back toward the chair and shouts into the microphone again. This time it is the word, "airplane."]

MAN IN THE CHAIR

[Writhing in pain, responds with great effort]

A..A...A...AAIR.....AIRPL...AIRPLANE!

RESPONDER #2

Astounding

RESPONDER #3

Yes, remarkable, but note, it is only one or two syllable words.
None of this indicates signs of intelligence.

LECTURER

You dare to doubt, let me further demonstrate

[Turns to the chair and shouts into the
microphone]

Your name...Your name....YOUR NAME IS...

MAN IN CHAIR

[In greater agony, begins to respond]

M..M..My...Na..Nam...Name...Is...B..B...B...Bo...BOB!

[Sobs]

LECTURER

It speaks! It thinks! It is conscious of its name. ladies and gentlemen, it is obvious this deaf man has responded with intelligence and flair. Proof, my fellow colleagues, that the deaf can join the ranks of the living, the world of the hearing, and walk among us with their heads upraised. No longer social

outcasts but productive members of our society. Living in the world as it was intended to be lived in.

[Suddenly the man in the chair begins to flop about in the chair, convulsing about, wildly looking about for a way out, seeing none, he opens his mouth and begins to let go of a blood curdling scream]

MAN IN THE CHAIR

AHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!

LECTURER

Colleagues, do not let this episode distract you. What you have seen is a modern scientific miracle. Now franchise brochures are on the back table...

[Audience stampedes to back to get brochures. Lights fade back to only Peachy still strapped in the chair. He slowly unloosens his straps and as he works his way out of the chair he speaks to the audience]

PEACHY

A miracle of scientific endeavor. What an apt description. Yet no one asks what it costs to accomplish such scientific achievements. That is what haunts me, the cost! For every success, for every Peachy, how many lives are sacrificed at the holy altar of speech. How many! I look out and I see the millions. Just beyond the sound of speech I see them standing, their faces stare back at me with a look worst than any holocaust victim. I said...I said...I said I see the millions, everyday of my life. So...the next time you feel like coming up to me and telling me that I speak so well for a deaf person. Please, pause and consider

[Lights begin to come up and the scene is as it was before Peachy's memory began.]

T-BONE

Come on, tell him, tell him about the seven days.

ZACH

What about seven days?

PEACHY

Well, I was telling everybody before about, you know, how God made the world in seven days. On the first day he made

ARIEL

Light

PEACHY

Yeah, and on the second

PENNY

He made the sky and the oceans

PEACHY

And on the third

ALICE

Day he made earth and let all kinds of things begin to grow

PEACHY

And on the fourth day

T-BONE

He made the sun and the moon

PEACHY

Then on the fifth day

ZACH

He filled the seas and the sky with life

PEACHY

Then on the sixth day he made people and finally he got to rest on the seventh

ZACH

We all know that story, T-Bone what's got you all worked up?

T-BONE

Just wait, he hasn't told it all yet.

PEACHY

Yes, well, I was telling them that I used to be mad at God about that.

ZACH

About making all these things?

PEACHY

No, about the next day, Monday, the eight day. What God do on the eight day after he rested?

ZACH

Nothing, I guess

PEACHY

That's right! Nothing. He could have taken that day to sort out all the things he made and when we found the deafies he could have said, well these I gotta put some place else in the universe. but he didn't and I was kinda mad about that. But just the other day I realized that there is this other thing about God, they say that in the beginning was the word. Now if in the very beginning was the word, what was before the word.

T-BONE

Nothing!

PEACHY

Right, nothing, and if there was nothing then that means there was silence and if there was silence than that means deaf people were around before hearing people. And if we were here first then we're like the Indians, we've been screwed.

T-BONE

Well Zach, don't that beat all? We been screwed...someone's been doing some revisions of the history books, just like they did with the black folks.

ALICE

And that made us thing of your story, Zach, the one you used to tell so well before you go this crazy idea about the bus.

ZACH

I don't want to talk about that

PENNY

But Zach, that's why we brought Peachy over here. You're the best story teller around, especially that story.

ZACH

I tell ya, I don't want to tell that one no more. It don't mean nothing to me no more. So now, just give me my engine part and I'll get back to work on the bus.

ARIEL

Oh, come on Zach

ZACH

NO!

ALICE

Alright, then I'll tell it.

ZACH

Suit yourself

[Lights fade, to Alice]

ALICE

I've always loved the deaf stories. It made me believe there was hope, at least I call it hope. And my favorite stories we always told by Zach, and then one day he just stopped. I guess he gave up on all those deaf stories and now he's got this one vision he just won't let go of and so we gotta try and keep these stories alive until something better comes along. When Peachy told us about the seven days I remembered a story that Zach used to always tell us, but he hasn't told it in nearly ten years..So I guess I'll tell it cuz it reminds us of our dignity and when I tell it I think that it reminds hearing folks of the fact they robbed us of it just like they robbed the Indians of Manhattan Island. Yeah, they robbed us good. So I keep on tellin' some of these stories until Zach decides to tell them again to us. And maybe then some new ones too. So...

[Lights begin to come up and Alice begins to step into the story as it unfolds]

Once there was this old teacher...

[One actor, as an old teachers walks across the yard. As this happens, he/she notices a little boy sobbing on the steps. He goes toward the boy]

OLD TEACHER

What's wrong

BOY

Nothing

OLD TEACHER

No please, tell me

BOY

Alright, I'll tell you what's wrong. I HATE school. They hit my hands every time I try to sign and they tell me all the time I must talk, talk, talk. I'm gonna runaway from here and never, ever, ever come back!

[Starts to sob again]

OLD TEACHER

Hey, how about I tell you a secret

BOY

A secret? Sure what is it.

OLD TEACHER

Follow me

[They go down the stairs and the old teacher crouches, points up to the sky]

Can you see?

BOY

See what?

OLD TEACHER

That star

BOY

That one?

OLD TEACHER

Yes

BOY

What about it?

OLD TEACHER

What about it! If you travel just past that star you'll find a place they call Eye-th. I've been told that it's a world full of deaf people signing away.

BOY

Really?

OLD TEACHER

That's what I've been told

BOY

How do I get there?

OLD TEACHER

It's not easy, but if you want to you can.

BOY

Oh, I do!

OLD TEACHER

Alright, but it's not easy. You'll have to work really hard and learn all sorts of things like math, physics and many other subjects as well. And when you get done with all that you'll have to build your very own rocket ship so you can get there. Think you can do it?

BOY

Yes!

OLD TEACHER

Then you better go back to the dorm and get a good night's sleep.

BOY

Okay.

[Boy departs and returns into another scene. He is sitting reading a book and has the look of a nerd.]

[A girl shows up with another girl. They both see the boy and a look between them decides the action to take]

GIRL #1

Hey book worm, when you gonna quit reading?

Girl #2

Yeah, your brain is gonna turn into a fried egg.

Girl #1

Come on

[Tries to take book away from him, fails]

GIRL #2

I'll trade ya my Sega for your Game Boy

[Thinks a minute]

BOY

No, I have to study

GIRL #1

Let's go and find someone more cool than this dreeb!

GIRL #2

Yeah, that sounds good to me.

[The boy gets up and goes off stage left. He comes back with a rocket helmet on and makes adjustments to a homemade rocket.]

BOY

Finally! One more adjustment and I'm o my way.

[Steps up into the rocket]

Well, here goes nothing.

[The other actors crowd around the base and create vibrations, rocket dust and help move the rocket in some way]

[He travels through space, worlds pass and then he spots what he thinks is Eye-th]

[He prepares to land, a cloud of dust occurs, he gets out of the rocket and looks around. An inhabitant of the planet appears]

EYETH PERSON #1

Are you all right, You gave us quite a scare when you came crashing down.

SPACE TRAVELER

You're signing

EYETH PERSON #1

Of course, what else would you expect?

EYETH PERSONS #2 & #3

What happened?

EYETH PERSON #1

That's what I'm trying to find out.

EYETH PERSON #2

Who are you?

SPACE TRAVELER

I'm a space traveler. Is this Eye-th?

EYETH PERSON #1

Eye-th, yes why?

SPACE TRAVELER

I was told that if I came this far I would find a place where everyone used sign language.

EYETH PERSON #3

What's so special about that?, everyone signs here.

SPACE TRAVELER

You mean everyone signs here?

EYETH PERSON #2

Of course

SPACE TRAVELER

My God! I've found it, I've really found it.

[Celebrates and then comes to a pause]

You're not teasing me are you?

EYETH PERSON #1

Why would I do that, come on I'll show you around.

[Other actors fade away to assume other roles]

Look, there's a traffic cop

[Sees traffic cop using signs]

And there's our town movie theatre

[Goes in and sees a movie in sign, some current
movie line is used during the viewing]

And there's one of our stores

[Looks in window and sees a salesperson making a
sale to a customer in sign]

SPACE TRAVELER

I just can't believe it, I'm finally home where everyone uses
sign language. But, wait, what about the schools

EYETH PERSON #1

Come on, I'll show you

[They walk into a hall way and view classrooms,
where sign is happening.]

SPACE TRAVELER

Everyone is signing, even the teachers

[As they continue to walk, he notices a classroom
where no signing is happening]

Wait, what about this room?

EYETH PERSON #1

Oh, this is the special room where we put children who have
trouble learning to sign.

SPACE TRAVELER

Can I go in and watch?

EYETH PERSON #1

Sure

[They go in and watch, as they do he realizes what
is happening]

SPACE TRAVELER

Hey, I know what's happening here. There's nothing wrong with
these children.

EYETH PERSON #1

Nothing wrong!

SPACE TRAVELER

Where I have come from, everyone communicates like this. It's
another way of talking.

EYETH PERSON #1

What kind of nonsense is this. This isn't talk, it's gibberish.

SPACE TRAVELER

It's not gibberish, you see they use sound to communicate

EYETH PERSON #1

Sound!

PACE TRAVELER

Yes, sounds..You see sound is something you can't see but it floats around in the air and they can hear it with their ears.

[Demonstrates how sound might work]

[Other two actors join the conversation]

EYETH PERSON #1

What they do is primitive, it can't be language.

EYETH PERSON #3

Yeah, that's nonsense

EYETH PERSON #2

Signing is the only proper way to communicate.

EYETH PERSON #2 & #3

Everyone knows that!

[They all start to argue and it becomes chaotic.
The scene begins to change. Eyeth person #2
begins to narrate as someone else voices or vice
versa]

EYETH PERSON #2/LITTLE GIRL

So he stayed on Eye-th for a long time and worked very hard to convince people that there were various ways of communicating and tried to make the children's who could speak and hear have a better life, but it was a hard task because there were so many signers and so very, very few speakers. Time passed and he grew old.

[Narrator becomes little girl, space traveler becomes old man and as he walks across the yard he notices the little girl crying]

OLD MAN

What's wrong

LITTLE GIRL

Nothing!

OLD MAN

Come on, please tell me.

LITTLE GIRL

Alright, I'll tell you what's wrong. I HATE school. They hit my mouth every time I try to talk and they tell me all the time that I must sign, sign, sign. I'm gonna run away from here and never, ever, ever come back!

OLD MAN

Hey, you want to know a secret?

LITTLE GIRL

A secret?, sure what is it.

OLD MAN

Come, I'll show you.

[Goes down the stairs, crouches, and points to a star]

See that star

LITTLE GIRL

That one?

OLD MAN

Yes.

LITTLE GIRL

What about it?

OLD MAN

What about it! If you travel just past that star I've been told there's a place called Ear-th and there you will find a whole world full of people just talking away.

LITTLE GIRL

Really

OLD MAN

Really

LITTLE GIRL

How do I get there?

OLD MAN

It's not easy, but if you want to you can get there.

LITTLE GIRL

Oh, I do!

OLD MAN

Alright but it's not easy. You'll have to work hard and study things like math, science, physics and after you've learned all that you'll have to build your very own space ship to get there. Think you can do that?

LITTLE GIRL

Yes!

OLD MAN

Fine, then you'd better go back to the dorm and get a good night's rest.

LITTLE GIRL

Okay, I will.

OLD MAN

[He starts to walk away and stops to look up at the stars again]

I wonder if the two worlds will ever

[starts to do the sign "join" but stops just short of completing the sign]

Who knows...

[Lights begin to fade back to Alice]

ALICE

And that's the way I remember Zach's story

[Lights come up fully and the scene is as it was before]

So, Zach how come you won't tell that story no more

ZACH

Because I don't believe in it no more. I found me something else to belief in that's better than that fool story. God almighty, it's nearly the 21st century and we ain't found no signs of life outside of this planet. So why tell a foolish story like that.

ALICE

Because it's about hope

T-BONE

Hope, big deal, so Zach, what do you believe in these days

ZACH

This old bus

PEACHY

How come

ARIEL

If there was an answer to that, it'd be the miracle of this century

ZACH

Ain't no mystery to it at all

PENNY

Then why don't you tell us

ZACH

You wouldn't believe me if I told you anyways.

PEACHY

Well I'm new around here and I don't have no reason to doubt you so why don't you try me out.

ZACH

Alright, you got me going there. I'll tell you, but you gotta promise not to laugh at me.

PEACHY

Hey, they call me Peachy, think I can't understand what it means to be laughed at?

ZACH

Okay, well it all started with the deaf preacher

[The lights fade to just Zach. He begins to tell his story.]

It all began when I was little and the deaf preacher came to town. He stood right over there on that stump. Right there. I remember it like it was yesterday.

[Preacher appears on stump, this can be the same actor who did the preacher like lines at the top of the show]

PREACHER

What's the matter, ain't you folks ever seen a deaf preacher. I'm here to pass on to you the good news. Yes sir, the good news is why I'm here and you all is going to rejoice and make a joyful noise to the lord after I'm done here. Here me now? A joyful noise that will rise all the way to heaven and back. I tell you I'm here to give you the word, the word right from the bible, and it says right here in Isaiah. Right here in chapter 62 verse 10. It says it right clear "Go out! Go out! Prepare the roadway for my people to return!" That's right, there's a road being built right this moment just for you and when it's ready. When it's done, you will be able to get on it and go find that place that the lord has prepared for you, his special people. Hear me out, hear me and forgot not what I've said. I'm the preacher and I've applied myself to the searching for understanding about

everything in the universe. I tell you wait and the road will be prepared for your salvation.

ZACH

Now I was little and it didn't make much sense to me, but as the years went by, by God, they did build a road. It went right by my house and when I asked what all the commotion was about they said they was building a freeway. A FREEWAY and it was for everybody to use to get from here to there. That's when I knew. That's when I knew the preacher was right and I went down and stood in the middle of that freeway. You heard me right, I stood right in the middle of it and looked up to the stars and thanked god almighty for bringing the road. I did I did.

[Lights come up, the others join]

PEACHY

Good lord, standing in the middle of a freeway, you could have been killed.

ZACK

No because it was my destiny. I heard the preacher when I was little and that's when I knew I would have to follow him, follow that sun and find that place that the lord had prepared for me and all the others who will come with me when I get this bus fixed.

T-BONE

You mean, you been working on this time on that bus because you think the freeway is gonna lead you to some fool place just for you to plop down on when you get there.

ZACH

Not just anyplace, but a place of our own

ALICE

A place of our own! That has a nice ring to it. Do you really think the preacher was right. He could have been off his rocker

ZACH

I thought the same. But when they built the freeway, that convinced me.

ARIEL

And I've been listening to him tell it over the supper table for ten years. Ten years his butt stuck up in the air as he tinkers with that bus engine. Sometimes he don't come in for days, just sleeps out in the hammock and dreams about getting that bus started.

PEACHY

So what ya gonna do when you get the bus started.

ZACH

I tell you what I'm a gonna do. I gonna be just like Noah. I'm gonna drive that bus right into the town square

[gets up, goes over and pulls the bus hood down
and climbs up to sit on the hood]

I'm gonna sit right here on the hood and I'm gonna sign as big as I can sign to the whole town and I'm gonna tell them that I'm on my way to follow the sun and any takers can join me. I'll give them plenty of warning. Then I'll check the old radiator, fill up the gas tank and just take off at the crack of dawn. Just as soon as the sun comes up, I'll take off and I'll find it. I'll find it just like the preacher said, a place of our own just like he said.

ARIEL

And it'll be good riddance cuz I'm tired of that man yapping about this foolish dream

ZACH

You go ahead sister, you talk that way and see if I let you know when I'm a leaving.

PEACHY

I'll go with you

ALICE

Me too, I'd like to find that place we could call our own.

T-BONE

Good God, I bring you all over to hear out these crazy stories and now you all is gonna go off and try to make them come true. What's happening to this community. You all are going off your rockers. That's what's happening!

PENNY

Crazy or not, let's see if we can help Zach get this bus up and running. Ain't much of any reason I can think of for staying around this place. Come on Zach...

[The group breaks down into overlapping conversations, everyone trying to get their views of the situation into the argument. The lights start to fade to black]

END OF ACT 1