

MISS SAIGON

Music: Claude-Michel Sch?nberg

Lyrics: Richard Maltby, Jr. + Alain Boublil

**** 1 ** OVERTURE/BACKSTAGE AT DREAMLAND**

(A Friday night in April 1975. Backstage at an after-hours club in Saigon.
Vietnamese bar-girls are getting into costumes.)

GIRLS

one of us will be Miss Saigon

ENGINEER

I spread the word - it's Miss Saigon

GIGI

who's left to screw who hasn't gone

ENGINEER

shut up! and get your hot pants on

GIGI

each day more GI's disappear

ENGINEER

there's still some left and they'll all be here

ALL GIRLS

a girl can trust the Engineer

(THE ENGINEER brings in a new girl, KIM)

ENGINEER

surprise!

I found this new girl, get her dressed
from the country untouched

GIGI

just give that virgin act a rest

ALL GIRLS

(mocking the new girl)

"you are my first American"

(they laugh)

ENGINEER
allez! allez! allez!
why does it take all day?
get your asses on stage... I'm raising cash tonight

GIRLS
tonight I will be Miss Saigon

ENGINEER
they say Saigon has weeks
I say it's time to pack

GIRLS
tonight I will be Miss Saigon

ENGINEER
each day these little buns of theirs are worth less and less
I need a visa fast, and I'm not looking back

(the ENGINEER looks through the door into the club.)

ENGINEER
son of a bitch, they're here!
I can still engineer
it's like the old days, my little gamines

GIRLS
oh sure!

ENGINEER
you know who's out here? a gang of marines!

GIRLS
they're here?

ENGINEER
we'll pick 'em clean that's what this contest's about

GIRLS
yes, sir!

ENGINEER
one of these boys might be your ticket out

(turns to KIM)

why is she in that dress?
ah! it's my new princess
ah, yes!
a bride will give the guys a treat
lower your eyelids and play sweet

men pay the moon to get fresh meat

allez! allez! allez!
get out and do your song!
don't make the show too long

voila'! on stage all! welcome to...
Dreamland!!!

**** 2 ** THE HEAT IS ON IN SAIGON**

("Dreamland" is a club filled with American Marines, civilians and south Vietnamese officers. The girls parade around and get the crowd to buy raffle tickets: the winner of the "beauty contest" will be the prize.)

AMERICANS

the heat is on in Saigon
the girls are hotter 'n' hell
one of these slits here will be Miss Saigon
God, the tension is high, not to mention the smell
the heat is on in Saigon
is there a war going on?
don't ask, I ain't gonna tell

(two friends, CHRIS and JOHN, are among the Marines. JOHN is with one of the girls)

ENGINEER

ah, monsieur Chris! monsieur John!
you've come to win Miss Saigon

JOHN

I gotta get my friend laid
as a last souvenir

CHRIS

I love you, pal, but your bullshit
I've had up to here

ENGINEER, CHRIS and JOHN
the heat is on in Saigon

JOHN

but 'til they tell us we're gone
I'm gonna buy you a girl

CHRIS

you can buy me a beer

(the girls leave the men and move onto the stage)

MIMI

see my bikini, it's just the right size

YVETTE

don't you enjoy how it rides up my thighs?
look from behind, it'll knock out your eyes

YVONNE

I'll show you: my special trophy of war

MIMI

for a Marine, I'll show more

AMERICANS

you won't get up off the floor

the heat is on in Saigon

don't tell me I'm reassigned, all that chickenshit sucks
tonight I'm out of my mind, not to mention ten bucks

GIGI

if I'm your pin-up, I'll melt all your brass
stuck on your wall, with a pin in my ass
if you get me, you will travel first class
I'll show you, we will make magic, cheri

ENGINEER

you buy more tickets from me
the winner gets her for free

CHRIS

the meat is cheap in Saigon
I used to love getting stoned, waking up with some whore
I don't know why I went dead, it's not fun anymore

(the ENGINEER pushes KIM forward)

KIM

I'm seventeen, and I'm new here today
the village I come from seems so far away
all of the girls know much more what to say
but I know
I have a heart like the sea
a million dreams are in me

CHRIS

Good Jesus, John, who is she?

AMERICANS (AND CROWD)

the Cong is tight'ning the noose
is it a week or a day or an hour that we got?

tonight could be our last shot got to put it to use

(the GIRLS come off the stage and mingle with the men.)

ALL, INCLUDING GIRLS

tonight I bet that you and I will get along
forget about the threat, forget the Viet-Cong

ALL MEN

Mimi, Gigi, Yvette or Yvonne
gonna buy me a beer, and elect Miss Saigon

(the ENGINEER holds the election by holding his hand over each girl's head for applause. When KIM is judged, CHRIS claps loudly, which makes her notice him.)

ENGINEER

Yvonne, Yvette, Mimi, Kim, Gigi

(GIGI wins)

ENGINEER

attention, s'il vous plait!

by popular demand

Miss Gigi Van Tranh

is elected Miss Saigon!

(the ENGINEER puts a cheap tiara on GIGI and a ribbon which says "Miss Saigon".)

AMERICANS

the heat is on in Saigon

and things are not going well

but still at midnight, the party goes on

a good-bye party in hell

ENGINEER

and now who wins this pussycat?

(the ENGINEER holds a bowl; GIGI picks up a ticket.)

GIGI

number 66!

(it is one of the Marines. He cheers with his friends. The scene freezes.)

** 3 ** THE MOVIE IN MY MIND

GIGI

they are not nice, they're mostly noise
they swear like men, they screw like boys

I know there's nothing in their hearts
but every time I take one in my arms
it starts:

the movie in my mind
the dream they leave behind
a scene I can't erase
and in a strong GI's embrace
flee this life
flee this place

the movie plays and plays
the screen before me fills
he takes me to New York
he gives me dollar bills

our children laugh all day
and eat too much ice cream
and life is like a dream

dream
the dream I long to find
the movie in my mind

KIM

I will not cry, I will not think
I'll do my dance, I'll make them drink
when I make love, it won't be me
and if they hurt me, I'll just close my eyes

KIM GIRLS

and see they are not nice, they're mostly noise
the movie in my mind they kill like men, they die like boys
the dream that fills my head they give their cash, they keep their hearts
a man who will not kill but every night again it starts

KIM

who'll fight for me instead
he'll keep us safe all day
so no one comes at night
to blow the dream away

dream
the dream I have to find
the movie in my mind

ALL GIRLS

and in a strong GI's embrace
flee this life
flee this place

KIM

a world that's far away
where life is not unkind
the movie in my mind

** 4 ** THE TRANSACTION

(the ENGINEER approaches JOHN)

ENGINEER

hey monsieur John, how'd you like to get rich
go home in style. . .?

JOHN

yeah okay, what's the pitch?

ENGINEER

an U.S. visa to help me out
lend me a bit of your embassy clout

JOHN

there isn't a chance pal, you're too well known
look, what I want is that girl in the dress

ENGINEER

you have a good eye
her name is Kim, she's my new princess
you give her a try?

JOHN

it's my friend Chris
who's the one feeling down

MARINE

I ordered a beer!

ENGINEER

she'll get him up,
it's her first night in town
but I have to warn you
she don't come cheap
it's got to be twenty for my princess

JOHN

twenty dollars??

ENGINEER

she's sort of a virgin, well more or less
for twenty more you get a room and key
for fifty bucks, she's got the whole night free

MARINES
no one gives us a buzz
like the Engineer does

(JOHN approaches CHRIS with Kim)

JOHN
stop drooling white boy
you're losing your cool
you like this jail bait

CHRIS
John, open your eyes
this is the end of the line
this whole rotten scene

this little girl, we could be in the sack
for what it costs me to buy a big mac
John, it's time to go back -
you know what I mean

JOHN
I'm starting to cry pal
you're so out of touch
the trouble with you is you think too much
ooh
ol' Dr. John knows what you need alright
I've bought you a present
she yours all night

MARINES
no one gives you a hit like the Engineer's shit!!

(Across the room, the ENGINEER speaks to KIM.)

ENGINEER
see little princess, I was right
you got the biggest score tonight
you caught that sergeant by the nose
you stay with him until he goes
call him Chris
he'll like that

KIM
that marine
wants his beer

ENGINEER
you said you needed a job
you said you'd turn a trick
you'd better prove it, and quick!

(he leads KIM to CHRIS)

ENGINEER
voila!

**** 5 ** THE DANCE**

(A MARINE begins to play the saxophone. CHRIS and KIM start to dance. For a long time they don't speak. Finally:)

KIM
my name is Kim

(trying to do her job)

KIM
I like you Chris

CHRIS
don't talk like that

KIM
what did I say?

CHRIS
you shouldn't be here

(CHRIS hands KIM some money)

get the hell out . . .

ENGINEER
what's going on?
you don't like her?

CHRIS
oh, yes I do

KIM
I like him too

ENGINEER
take her away

KIM
take me away
don't say a word
just come with me

** 6 ** WHY GOD WHY?

(KIM leads CHRIS out of the Club, and into a tiny cubicle, which has in it only a bed, a table, and a small window overlooking the moonlit city.
Later in the night, CHRIS is dressed and standing at the window. KIM is asleep. Outside, Saigon still bustles.)

CHRIS

why does Saigon never sleep at night?
why does this girl smell of orange trees?
how can I feel good when nothing's right?
why is she cool when there is no breeze?

Vietnam

you don't give answers, do you friend?
just questions that don't ever end

why God? Why today?
I'm all through here, on my way
there's nothing left here that I'll miss
why send me now a night like this?

who is the girl in this rusty bed?
why am I back in a filthy room?
why is her voice ringing in my head?
why am I high on her cheap perfume?

Vietnam

hey look I mean you no offense
but why does nothing here make sense?

why God? Show your hand
why can't one guy understand?
I've been with girls who knew much more
I never felt confused before

why me? What's your plan?
I can't help her, no one can
I liked my mem'ries as they were
but now I'll leave rememb'ring her

(CHRIS leaves some money on a table and goes out into the street. CHRIS is accosted by Vietnamese who beg for help leaving the country. He pushes them.)

when I went home before
no one talked of the war
what they knew from TV
didn't have a thing to do with me

I went back and re-upped
sure Saigon is corrupt
it felt better to be

here driving for the embassy

'cause here if you can pull a string
a guy like me lives like a king
just as long as you don't believe anything

(CHRIS stops, then goes back into KIM'S room.)

why God? Why this face?
why such beauty in this place?
I liked my mem'ries as they were
but now I'll leave rememb'ring her
just her

** 7 ** THIS MONEY IS YOURS

(KIM wakens. CHRIS hands her the money he had left.)

CHRIS
this money's yours
please take it all
hey, you want more?

KIM
no, no, I don't want anything

CHRIS
hey, what's wrong with you?

KIM
I've not done this before

CHRIS
Sure!
that can't be true!

KIM
why would I lie?

CHRIS
Look,
everyone lies!
they just want to get out of here
ok, you're not like that
but I don't know who you are!

KIM
do you want one more tale of a Vietnam girl?
want to know I was bound to a man I don't love?
do you want to be told how my village was burned?
want to hear how my family was blasted away?

how I ran from the rice field and saw them in flames?
how my parents were bodies whose faces were gone?

I have had my fill of pain
I will not look back again
I would rather die

CHRIS
can I see you tonight?

KIM
well, I'll be at the club
selling "beaucoup amour"

CHRIS
no, you won't

how would you like...

KIM
how would I like...?

CHRIS
how would you like
living with me?
you feel good like this
so that's how we should be

so would you like?

KIM
yes, I would like!

CHRIS
okay, it's set
you'll stay with me
screw the Engineer
you're the one good thing
that I've found out here

** 8 ** **SUN AND MOON**

KIM
you are sunlight and I moon
joined by the gods of fortune
midnight and high noon
sharing the sky
we have been blessed, you and I

CHRIS
you are here like a mystery

I'm from a world that's so different
from all that you are
how in the light of one night
did we come so far?

KIM
outside day starts to dawn

CHRIS
your moon still floats on high

KIM
the birds awake

CHRIS
the stars shine too

KIM
my hands still shake

CHRIS
I reach for you

BOTH
and we meet in the sky!

KIM
you are sunlight and I moon
joined here
bright'ning the sky
with the flame
of love

BOTH
made of
sunlight
moonlight

KIM
tomorrow will be the full moon
I can bring friends to bless our room
with paper unicorns and perfume
if you want me to

CHRIS
unicorns? sure. . .

**** 9 ** THE TELEPHONE SONG**

(It is the middle of the next day. CHRIS is on the telephone.)

CHRIS

John, is that you, buddy? Listen to me
do I sound diff'rent? how else could I be?
last night I spent a whole lifetime in paradise.

hey, tell the CO I'm taking all of my leave
we're gonna play house, oh John, it's like Christmas eve
we have sworn we won't see the sun for forty-eight hours

(JOHN at the Embassy, in the midst of chaos: files being packed or burned, typewriters crated, etc.)

JOHN

what are you saying? Are you out of your mind?
all leaves are canceled, you could be left behind
Saigon is falling apart, and you'd better be here

here is the news, since you've been on the moon
cities in the boondocks are dropping like flies
wives and civilians will be shipping out soon
crowds around the Embassy have tears in their eyes
Thieu has resigned, the new regime may not hold
people at the place think we'll send the marines
we are sending nothing from what I've been told
buddy, are you there? Do you know what this means?
sure! Time to fall in love!

CHRIS

John, listen fast, you did not get this call
you're the one who bought the girl for me after all
"once you're a friend, you're a friend through and through"
when you are in trouble, then I'll cover for you

JOHN

not this time, the town's too hot
for one Kongai whore
ol' buddy, I will not get you killed

CHRIS

she is no whore, you saw her too
she's really more, like... the April moon

JOHN

april fuckin' moon!!

CHRIS

she's been hurt, you see
both her parents died
what else could she be?

JOHN

sweet as that, and she's an orphan too!
how can a guy fight that? You got one day, not two
then be back!

** 10 ** **THE DEAL**

(At another location, CHRIS and the ENGINEER)

ENGINEER
my friend
we had a deal for Kim, but that's on ice
I'm sorry, sergeant, but I've changed the price
I need a visa from your embassy
you get me that, you'll get the girl for free

CHRIS
cut the crap, this money's all I got
I don't give visas out, is this a deal or not?
you tell me

(CHRIS draws his revolver and aims at the ENGINEER)

ENGINEER
okay, okay, the money...it will do
too bad, I had a Rolex watch for you
I'll get my papers in another way
I'll make a rich man of some attach?

(CHRIS leaves)

with little shits like him, you take the bucks and run
he gave me six weeks income, I'll be gone in one

** 11 ** **THE WEDDING CEREMONY**

GIRLS
one of us girls is moving on
one girl will get out of saigon

GIGI
so now who's really Miss Saigon

GIRLS
tv and stereo she gets
and Elvis Presley on cassettes

(KIM and CHRIS enter)

GIRLS
look how he bought her a new dress
you did a job on him I guess

KIM

he simply asked me
I said, "yes"

GIRLS

come on, let's bless the new princess

GIRLS

dju vui vay
yu doi my
dju vui vay
vao nyay moy

KIM

will you give me life smile today
look with favoring eyes on this man
show your daughter's heart your forgiveness
and send to us
from your home above
your blessing on our love

GIRLS KIM (echoing)

dju vui vay dju vui vay
yu doi my yu doi my
dju vui vay dju vui vay
vao nyay moy

GIRLS CHRIS

dju vui vay it's pretty but what does it mean?

GIRLS KIM

yu doi my it's what all the girls sing at weddings

(CHRIS looks up, startled)

GIRLS KIM

dju vui vay they didn't know what else to sing

GIRLS CHRIS

vao nyay moy it's the prettiest thing that I've ever heard

(friends arrive carrying beer and a platter of food. The party gathers around the bed, and GIGI leads a toast to KIM.)

GIGI

to Miss Saigon!

GUESTS

Miss Saigon!

**** 12 ** THUY'S ARRIVAL**

(the door opens. A stranger enters.)

THUY

you're here, at last
I've come to take you home
all night, I ran
I made it through the line
Kim, tell your friends, it's time to go away
this life, it ends
you're safe with me

CHRIS

this girl is mine!

THUY

yours?

CHRIS

now

THUY

you?

TOGETHER

who are you?

KIM

stop!

THUY

who is this man? this American man?
do none of you see what's ahead
have you gone mad?
these are losers and whores
who will soon all be gone or be dead

CHRIS

get out of here

KIM

you have no right to be here
I'm not a prize you can claim
we were promised at thirteen
the woman I am now is not the same

THUY

our parents bound us together, and that is our fate
you knew I'd come back to get you
why didn't you wait?

KIM

my parents got themselves killed in the week you changed sides
if there were promises all of them died when they died

(CHRIS and THUY pull guns. The girl scream.)

(GIGI and the GIRLS leave quickly)

THUY

Kim, leave this man behind

KIM

go on!
and shoot!
I will not change my mind!

THUY

you are still mine!

KIM

not anymore!

THUY

you're mine until we die!

THUY

Saigon
is doomed
and so is your GI

CHRIS

get the hell out!

THUY

you broke your father's word
this is your curse!

(THUY runs out. CHRIS runs out after him but he's gone.)

CHRIS

what a party that was!

KIM

you're going to leave me now

CHRIS

yes, I'm going to leave
and take you out with me

** 13 ** THE LAST NIGHT OF THE WORLD

CHRIS

in a place that won't let us feel
in a life where nothing seems real
I have found you
I have found you

KIM

in a world that's moving too fast
in a world where nothing can last
I will hold you
I will hold you

CHRIS

our lives will change, when tomorrow comes

KIM

tonight our hearts drown the distant drums

CHRIS

and we have music all right
tearing the night

a song

played on a solo saxophone
a crazy sound

KIM

a lonely sound

BOTH

a cry that tells us love goes on and on
played on a solo saxophone
it's telling me
to hold you tight
and dance like it's the last night of the world

CHRIS

on the other side of the earth
there's a place where life still has worth
I will take you

KIM

I'll go with you

CHRIS

you won't believe all the things you'll see
I know 'cause you'll see them all with me

BOTH

if we're together that's when

we'll hear it again

a song
played on a solo saxophone
a crazy sound
a lonely sound
a cry that tells us love goes on and on
played on a solo saxophone
it's telling me
to hold you tight
and dance like it's the last night of the world

KIM
dreams
were all I ever knew

CHRIS
dreams
you won't need when I'm through

BOTH
anywhere
we may be
I will sing with you
our song. . .

(they dance together in the balcony)

BOTH
. . . played on a solo saxophone
so stay with me
and hold me tight
and dance
like it's the last night of the world

** 14 ** THE MORNING OF THE DRAGON

(It is three years later. Saigon has been renamed Ho Chi Minh City. A street pageant is celebrating the glorious victory of North Vietnam and the Third Anniversary of Reunification.)

FIRST GROUP
on silent feet it came
breathing a sheet of flame, it came
closing in on its rightful prey
burning a hundred years away

the morning of the dragon truth lit up the street
the tiger we were stalking walked on paper feet
and in the clear white heat of dawn
was gone. . .

FIRST GROUP SECOND GROUP
from every door they came victory
these children born of war, they came victory
sharing a secret word, which they victory
waited a hundred years to say

FIRST GROUP SECOND GROUP
the morning of the dragon truth lit the morning of the dragon all the
[up the street [walls fell down
the tiger we were stalking walked brother greeted brother in a
[on paper feet [sudden light
and in the clear white heat of dawn and in the endless night
it's gone was gone

FIRST GROUP SECOND THIRD GROUP
on silent feet it came victory may all our children learn
breathing a sheet of flame, it came victory
closing in on its rightful prey victory the tide of right will turn
burning a hundred years away

FIRST GROUP
the morning of the dragon truth lit up the street
the tiger we were stalking walked on paper feet
and in the clear white heat of dawn
was gone. . .

(two soldiers enter with the ENGINEER)

ENGINEER
three years of school was nice
in rice fields, planting rice
you did good work you see
re-educating me

SOLDIERS
who lives a lie must change or die

ENGINEER
three years - how quick they moved
look how the world's improved
Saigon, that queen of sin
renamed for Ho Chi Minh

SOLDIERS
who lives a lie must change or die

ENGINEER
but men, will always be men
they washed out my brain
I'm still who I am

deep inside, I know what I know
wherever I go, I speak Uncle Ho
and think Uncle Sam

SOLDIER #1
your name is Trahn Van Dinh

ENGINEER
at your service

SOLDIER #1
you're called the Engineer

ENGINEER
yes sir

SOLDIER #1
the people's commissar

ENGINEER
am I free?

SOLDIER #1
has ordered you back here

SOLDIERS
who lives a lie must change or die

(THUY, now the people's commissar, enters)

SOLDIER #2
we found the man that you wanted so bad

SOLDIER #3
and Commissar, you were perfectly right

SOLDIER #2
he had been take up north to a camp

SOLDIER #3
we brought him down under cover of night

SOLDIER #2
once he had served the American clique

SOLDIER #3
selling our sisters and daughters for gold

SOLDIER #2
notice we caught him in less than a week

SOLDIER #3

when we get orders we do what we're told

THUY

alright, alright
that's it, that's all
you've done your job
that's it
now go back
I'll take over now

(the soldiers leave)

THUY

Kim...
find my cousin for me
I know she worked for you
you knew who her friends were
one of them is the clue
sniff her out, you know how
think now what would she do?

ENGINEER

I never saw her again
I am a different man
I've been enlightened since then

but...

men must help other men
and seeing it's you
I'll work to the bone

THUY

I'll give you 48 hours
if you want to stay free
don't come back here alone

(the ENGINEER leaves)

THUY and SOLDIERS

FIRST GROUP SECOND THIRD GROUP
on silent feet it came victory may all our children learn
breathing a sheet of flame, it came victory
closing in on its rightful prey victory the tide of right will turn
burning a hundred years away

FIRST GROUP

the morning of the dragon truth lit up the street
the tiger we were stalking walked on paper feet
and in the clear white heat of dawn
was gone...

**** 15 ** I STILL BELIEVE**

KIM

last night I watched him sleeping
my body pressed to him
and then he started speaking
the name I heard him speak...was Kim
yes I know that this was years ago
but when moonlight fills my room I know
you are here... still

I still
I still believe
you will return
I know you will
my heart
against all odds
holds still

yes, still
I still believe
I know as long as I can keep believing, I'll live
I'll live
love cannot die
you will return
you will return
and I alone know why

(in a bedroom on the other side of the world, in America. A woman is sitting beside CHRIS who is sleeping. She is ELLEN, CHRIS' s wife)

ELLEN

last night I watched you sleeping
once more, the nightmare came
I heard you cry out something
a word that sounded like... a name
and it hurts me more than I can bear
knowing part of you I'll never share
never know

but still
I still believe
the time will come
when nothing keeps us apart
my heart, forever more
holds still

(CHRIS wakes up from his sleep with a cry. ELLEN takes him in her arms and calms him)

ELLEN

it's all over, I'm here
there is nothing to fear
Chris, what's haunting you?
won't you let me inside
what you so want to hide!
I need you too!

KIM ELLEN

for still I will hold you all night, I will make
[it all right
I still believe you are safe with me
as long as I and I wish you could tell what you don't
[want to tell
can keep believing, I'll live what your hell must be

I'll live you can sleep now
you will return you can cry now
and I know why I'm your wife now
I'm yours for life
until we die until we die

(In America, CHRIS holds ELLEN; in Vietnam, KIM is alone in her room.)

** 16 ** BACK IN TOWN

(the ENGINEER enters, looking for KIM)

ENGINEER

coo-coo princess, look who's here
your resurrected Engineer
don't ask me how I tracked you down
who has the sharpest nose in town?
I'm here to throw a rope before you drown

for men, will always be men
you change the regime
the lust doesn't stop
you and I will team up again
together we'll reap
the cream of the crop

KIM

Engineer, I don't want you here
I gave up that life
you must understand

ENGINEER

out that door is a big shot who waits
like a pup to come up

and eat out of your hand
Kim, the good times are back

KIM
don't go on
it's too late

ENGINEER
not too late for my star!

KIM
please let me hide in peace

ENGINEER
better to screw the police
enter, monsieur commissar

(THUY enters)

THUY
three years I've been away
I kept faith we would meet

ENGINEER
me, I found her for you

THUY
you, out in the street

(the ENGINEER and the others leave)

THUY
I knew in time faith would weave a design
tying your life and mine into one
each day I'd wait
like a soldier must wait
trusting victory to come with the sun
after the fight in the still of the night
I would picture my bride, bright as jade
you'll be my wife
we will build a new life
and fulfill the vow our fathers made

KIM
my father's vow I can't honor today
and I pray in my heart he'll forgive
what you want now are some words I can't say
if I lied to you how can I live?

THUY
don't say anymore!

not a word!
you can change
you can learn
look at me
don't decide too soon

KIM

somewhere deep in my soul
shines the smallest of lights
and no wind blows it out
it burns steady and strong
through the darkest of nights

dju vui vay
yu doi my
dju vui vay
vao nyay moy

I made a promise once with these words
which neither time nor distance has changed
he will come to me, still

THUY

you must be mad, your american jack
has gone for good and he'll never come back
they ran away with the skin they could save
the ones who stayed here are dead in a grave

(the ENGINEER re-enters)

ENGINEER

come on now, princess, get off your cloud
I'm sorry, sir, she was talking so loud
the commissar is a powerful man
a girl with brains makes a life where she can
princess remember your place
don't make people lose face

THUY

why do you look away?
I can end all this shame
all you need say is, "yes"

(from outside, soldiers are heard marching by)

you hear those soldiers out there
they'll do whatever I say

KIM

I cannot change how I feel!

THUY
come inside!
I think you can change before my eyes

this me-my has just been found
she hid the day we closed the bars
show her that we don't forget
no one is cured here without scars

SOLDIER #1
you are a woman who lived without shame

SOLDIER #2
you're an infection left over from war

SOLDIER #3
you have dishonored the national name

SOLDIER #4
re-education will cure the disease

SOLDIER #5
you must be shown what we do to a leach

SOLDIER #6
see how we teach an American's whore

ENGINEER
I have heard hundreds of speeches like these
take it from me you don't want to hear more

THUY
it's time to act
my friends it's time

SOLDIERS
her face betrays her crime
she must pay, and her partner too

THUY
get out!!
everybody out!!

ENGINEER
are you waiting for them to kill me?
did you not get what he said?
there's a big screw loose inside you
I will rip it out of your head

that's a mad dog on the rampage
if you think he'll change, save your breath

just say "yes", I don't care if you love him
Princess, life has it all over death!

KIM

I have a husband I love
real as the sun in the sky
I cannot live with a lie

THUY

do you see now who has the power?
do you still think crazy things?

KIM

Chris will come to me like the Phoenix
and he'll take me off on his wings

THUY

you're a traitor to your country

KIM

if I am, then let it be

KIM, THUY and the ENGINEER
I am talking of life or death now
I am talking of staying free

ENGINEER

so there it is now, I'll be moving on
if you don't need me, I'd rather be gone
two kids in love don't need strangers around

THUY

you just get out!

ENGINEER

right! I won't make a sound

(grabs his sack and exits)

THUY

and as for you, come with me

KIM

no!

there is a secret
that you don't know
there is a force here
I never show
you say it's treason

to keep my vow
season after season
I survived somehow
if you want the reason
I will show you now

Tam!

(TAM comes out from behind the curtain and runs to KIM)

look, Thuy, this is my son
he has kept me alive
now you see why
I must tell you "no"

** 17 ** **THUY'S DEATH / YOU WILL NOT TOUCH HIM**

THUY
no one must ever see
this thing you're showing me
that bastard fouls our name

KIM
my baby's not to blame
for what I've done

THUY
you must decide upon
which side you're really on
you whored to make this kid

KIM
that isn't what I did
don't touch my son

THUY
you must seem how it is when you're my wife
having that child of his brands us for life
no alternative! This child cannot live!

(THUY pulls a knife, threatening the boy.)

KIM
no!
you will not touch him
don't touch my boy
he's what I live for
he's my only joy

KIM THUY
you will not touch him he is my enemy

it's he turns you from me
don't touch my boy erase him from your life
even your memory
he's what I live for he's one drop in a flood
left here to taint our blood
he's my only joy our marriage bond was sworn
forget that he was born

(KIM pulls out a gun)

KIM THUY
of course you have a gun
don't touch my little boy and now you'll shoot your cousin'
and it's a U.S. gun
and do not test my will a gun that lost the war
you're the corrupted one
I'm warning you, for him I'll kill go on and shoot! Don't wait
to save your bastard son
you must not hesitate

KIM
the earth moves where I stand
I feel the turning of a wheel
I feel nothing in my hand
not even the feel of steel
you will not take my child...

THUY
you don't know how to kill

KIM
I have no other choice
what I must do I will

(she shoots THUY and, at the same moment, the street pageant continues in the street outside.)

CROWD
this is the hour
this is our land
we found the power
in our brother's hand
and from a storm

KIM
no!

CROWD
pierced with light
fierce and white
the lightning came

a bright'ning flame
to end the night

(a gigantic statue of Ho Chi Minh is raised in the square outside.)

one man to heed us
each girl, each boy
one voice to lead us
in a song of joy

this is the hour
this is the land

(in the room, KIM stares at THUY'S body.)

(KIM puts the gun, her family shrine and a few valuables in a sack and,
taking TAM by the hand, escapes.)

**** 18 ** IF YOU WANT TO DIE IN BED**

(The ENGINEER is making his way furtively through the city.
SOLDIERS seem to be everywhere.)

ENGINEER

if you want to die in bed
follow my example
when you see a cloud ahead
it's time to show your class
hit the door before
they make a target of your ass

if you want to die in bed
in times of revolution
when the flag they fly is red
let pride fill up your chest
meanwhile pack a sack
and take the first boat heading west

(he enters the abandoned backroom of what was once "Dreamland", opens
a trapdoor in the floor and removes a tin box. He opens it.)

my precious souvenirs
of all the golden years
Rolex watches in steel
that look practically real
I'll need a little stock
to start me in Bangkok!

if you want to die in bed
forget about your karma
when your life hangs by a thread

don't cry about the fates
grab a stash of cash
and plan a rest'rant in the States

let me stop for a bit
this was my greatest hit
Miss Saigon in her crown
I made queen of the town
I got 'em paying more
for just another whore

here I come
USA
your next champ's
on his way

for men will always be men
the rules are the same
for kings or for clerks

give me Francs, or Dollars or Yen
I'll set up a game
I know how it works

why was I born of a race
that thinks only of rice
and hates entrepreneurs?

me I belong in a place
where a man sets his price
and you pay, and he's yours

I should be... American!
where every promise lands
and every businessman knows where he stands

first stop Bangkok then I roam
cross that ocean white with foam
to the place that's my heart's true home

America!

if you want to die in bed
en route to your nirvana
you grab a chance and plunge ahead
and go where people win

heaven's there... but, shit!
you need a visa to get in!

** 19 ** KIM AND ENGINEER

(KIM bursts into the ENGINEER'S shack, carrying TAM)

KIM
Engineer!
Thuy is dead!
he was going to kill my baby and I shot

ENGINEER
you did what?
who is that?
you'll be followed! Get him out of here! Good-bye!

KIM
we must leave!
Tam and I!
we must set off for America tonight

ENGINEER
all right!
just like that!
tell me how, and while you're at it, tell me why

KIM
I hear the voice of my soldier
telling me to bring... his son

ENGINEER
you're telling me this half-breed brat
is born the son of a marine?

let me see his western nose
this bastard is... the most beautiful sight I've ever seen!
a passport in my hand
my new life can begin
your brat's American
so they must let us in!
in!
the playground of mankind!
the movie in my mind!

I'm your dear brother from now on
and all our family is gone
boy, kiss your brand-new uncle Tran
this kid is okay
he is our entree
to the USA

with these two little diamonds to bait my hooks
I'll book us on a cruise "boat-people" deluxe
don't worry 'bout the sharks out in the Mekong bay

the pirates taking us are more scary any day

you just stay here and hide
don't show your face outside
take care of our little dear
I will go "engineer"

(He runs out.)

(In the street)

ENGINEER

if you want to die in bed
don't care too much for country
hit the open sea instead
and float there like a cork
uncle Ho, ho ho ho!
I'll have to call you from New York

** 20 ** I'D GIVE MY LIFE FOR YOU

KIM

you who I cradled in my arms, you
asking as little as you can
little snip of a little man
I know I'd give my life for you

you didn't ask me to be born, you
why should you learn of war or pain
to make sure you're not hurt again
I swear I'd give my life for you

I've tasted love beyond all fear
and you should know it's love that brought you here
and in one perfect night
when the stars burned like new
I knew what I must do

I'll give you a million things I'll never own
I'll give you a world to conquer when you're grown

you will be who you want to be, you
can choose whatever heaven grants
as long as you can have your chance
I swear I'll give my life for you

sometimes I wake up
reaching for him
I feel his shadow brush my head
but there's just moonlight on my bed

was he a ghost? was he a lie
that made my body laugh and cry?
then, by my side, the proof I see:
his little one, gods of the sun, bring him to me!

you will be who you want to be, you
can choose whatever heaven grants
as long as you can have your chance
I swear I'll give my life for you

no one can stop what I must do
I swear I'll give my life for you.

(a CHORUS of VIETNAMESE gathering to leave the country)

FIRST GROUP

no place, no home
no life, no hope
no chance, no change

SECOND GROUP FIRST GROUP

no regret, no return no place, no home
no good-bye, no regret no life, no hope
no return, no good-bye no chance, no change

SECOND GROUP FIRST GROUP THIRD GROUP

no regret, no return no place, no home one day, one night
no good-bye, no regret no life, no hope one day, one night
no return, no good-bye no chance, no change one day, one night
no regret... no... one day...

(the ENGINEER, KIM and TAM join the boat people)

CURTAIN
END OF ACT I

**** 1 ** ENTR'ACTE**

**** 2 ** BUI-DOI**

(In September 1978 JOHN is addressing a conference in Atlanta that CHRIS and his wife ELLEN are attending at JOHN'S request.)

CHOIR
they're called bui-doi
the dust of life
conceived in hell
and born in strife
they are the living reminders
of all the good we failed to do
we can't forget

must not forget
that they are all our children too

JOHN
like all survivors, I once thought
when I'm home I won't give a damn
but now I know I'm caught
I'll never leave Vietnam

war isn't over when it ends
some pictures never leave your mind
they are the faces of the children
the ones we left behind

they're called bui-doi
the dust of life
conceived in hell
and born in strife
they are the living reminders
of all the good we failed to do
we can't forget
must not forget
that they are all our children too

these kids hit walls on every side
they don't belong in any place
their secret they can't hide
it's printed on their face

I never thought one day I'd plead
for half-breeds from a land that's torn
but then I saw a camp for children
whose crime was being born

they're called bui-doi
the dust of life
conceived in hell
and born in strife
we owe them fathers, and a family
and loving homes they never knew
because we know
deep in our hearts
that they are all our children too

these are souls in need
they need us to give
someone has to pay
for their chance to live
help me try

CHORUS

they're called bui-doi
the dust of life
conceived in hell

JOHN AND CHORUS
and born in strife
they are the living reminders
of all the good we failed to do

CHORUS JOHN
that's why we know that's why we know
deep in our hearts deep in our hearts

CHORUS
that's why we know

JOHN
that they are all our children...

JOHN AND CHORUS
...too

** 3 ** THE REVELATION

(After the conference, JOHN introduces CHRIS and ELLEN to his co-workers. CHRIS draws JOHN aside.)

CHRIS
John, you were great. Can I see you alone?
I gotta know what you meant on the phone
what is this news you received you can only tell me

JOHN
a lot of groups use my Bangkok staff
to process problems on their behalf
we got this in from the embassy
it's not easy to tell you, it's best that you see

CHRIS
it's about Kim, isn't it?
every day for a year how I tried to get word
tell me first, nothing else, tell me: did she survive?

JOHN
you must read the report, Chris, but yes, she's alive

CHRIS
you don't know, John, these nightmares, the things that I've seen
I have seen her face burned, seen her shot with my gun
I have chased her through streets and heard nothing but screams
what's wrong? Come on. There is still something more

JOHN
she has a child
you have a son

(shows CHRIS the report)

CHRIS
you won't believe me but I dreamed this, John
it's in the nightmare when I see Saigon
Jesus, John, I am married
is this story for real?

JOHN
I'm only telling you what I received
but our reports can usually be believed
Kim's a bar-girl in Bangkok
pal, I know how you feel

CHRIS
It's too late! I have a whole new life
I was in love with Kim, now I have a wife I love

JOHN
listen, Chris, I know the shock you've had
there are solutions here, it isn't always bad,

CHRIS
oh John, I never told her
my wife, how can I tell her?
a child, what do I do?
I shattered Kim
now Ellen too

JOHN CHRIS
I have learned the best thing for a couple to do - I have to tell her
you should both come to Bangkok, I mean Ellen too - I have to tell her

CHRIS
us both?

JOHN
you both should go!

ELLEN
hey guys, come on

CHRIS
You maybe rightt
but first . . . Ellen has to know

**** 4 ** WHAT A WASTE**

(A street filled with vendors in Patpong in Bangkok, outside a sleazy night-club called "Le Moulin Rouge" where the ENGINEER is doorman and barker. Other DOORMEN compete with him for the attention of crowds of TOURISTS.)

ENGINEER
check it out!

DOORMEN
girls! I got girls!

DOORMEN
gorgeous girls!

DOORMEN
very nice!

TOURISTS
hey, wow! Oh look! We gotta see!

DOORMEN
girls! I got girls!

DOORMEN
gorgeous girls!

DOORMEN
very nice!

TOURISTS
I'm glad my wife's not here with me!

ENGINEER
what a waste!
to pay for my keep
I'm rounding up sheep
to fleece here in Bangkok

I'm disgraced
I can't get ahead
there's nothing as dead
as peace here in Bangkok

ten cents an hour, that's all they pay
I'll have to swim to the USA

(to some TOURISTS)

if you're looking for fun

original sin
if you want to put out
then you gotta come in

(TOURISTS pass. He tries to make them take his leaflets.)

DOORMEN
girls! I got girls!

DOORMEN
gorgeous girls!

DOORMEN
very nice!

DOORMEN ENGINEER (to TOURISTS)
girls! gee, isn't Bangkok really neat?
I got girls! the things they're selling on the street
girls! fresh dog, if that's what you'd enjoy
worth the price a girl, or if you want a boy

DOORMEN and the ENGINEER
come, come to me
first drink is free

ENGINEER
(to two Japanese TOURISTS)
don't be a lump, you can hump
for a small extra fee

hump - "humpy, humpy"

ENGINEER
I'm depressed
for hustling amours
to Japanese tours
is no treat in Bangkok

I'm the best
but selling these runts
for sexual stunts
leaves me beat in Bangkok

ten cents an hour...

(The CLUB OWNER, the ENGINEER'S boss, passes.)

CLUB OWNER
you said you'd fill my place up - where are they?

ENGINEER

they're coming, Boss

CLUB OWNER

Just get to work, half-breed!

ENGINEER

...screw the Siamese

look how they're ripping off... refugees

(to another PASSER-BY)

ENGINEER

if you're looking for fun

original sin

if you want to put out

then you gotta come in

DOORMEN ENGINEER

girls! hey boys, don't stand around like wimps

I got girls! watch out, those guys, they're really pimps

girls! you want some thrills, come-on and grab it!

half the price! three girls, two gerbils, and a rabbit

DOORMEN

hey, come to me!

(unfolding folders of photos)

DOORMEN

look what you'll see!

ENGINEER

hey, that's a joke, mine blow smoke

for a small extra fee

VENDORS

come try the streets in every venue

with tricks, you'll pick from off the menu

ENGINEER TOURISTS

hey, Joe, try taking a little excursion

you'll all feel good from a little perversion oh yeah!

massage requiring total immersion oh wow!

some strange positions they say are Persian oh no!

ENGINEER

drinks are on me

first girl is free

what can I say? You get me

for a small extra fee!

(JOHN enters looking for KIM. The VENDORS surround him.)

ENGINEER

(handing a leaflet to John)

you want a girl sir? you'll like one of these

JOHN

you have a Kim here, can I see her please?

ENGINEER

you pick 'em well. . .

monsieur John, is that you?

JOHN

the Engineer!

Jesus Christ! you're here too

ENGINEER

of all my friends, you're the one that I miss

JOHN

I'm looking for Kim

ENGINEER

I love you so, you and your buddy Chris

JOHN

I'm here about him

Kim has a child born in...

BOTH

seventy-five

ENGINEER

I filled that out and it's you who arrive

you'll find the end of your quest here in our little dive

I'm impressed

American clerks, a system that works

there's really no other

JOHN

listen, spare me the gas

is there really a child?

ENGINEER

yes, we're blessed

and Kim's on a trip

for citizenship, and I am her brother

JOHN

you're her brother, my ass
come on, take me inside

ENGINEER

look Kim, who got our application
I said I'd bring us all salvation

KIM

oh my god! monsieur John!
yes, of course he sent you

JOHN

not in here, is there someplace near we could talk?

KIM

(to one of the customers)
Take your hands off! We're finished! Go find someone else!

JOHN

come with me, there's a lot I've got to say first

KIM

Chris is here! say he's here! oh my god, it's all true

ENGINEER

I suggest, whatever may be
you leave it to me
just play little mother

JOHN

what I need to find out
she can tell me alone

KIM

can you take me to Chris?
I can leave here right now
we've been here for so long
took this job to survive
one month at sea
I was sure we'd drown
but I thought about Chris
and we didn't go down
I've done terrible things
but we're safe and you're here
so perhaps all the gods
have begun to forgive

CLUB OWNER

did the gentleman order champagne?

ENGINEER
she was about to get it

CLUB OWNER
you better get back on the chain, or get out

KIM ENGINEER
monsieur John I'm so sick of that prick
quick before he gets wise
look at this let John look at your kid
come see love see the lids of his eyes
come see Chris let John have his surprise

ENGINEER
look Uncle Sam
how nice I am
I doing all this just for Tam
an American boy

(KIM brings JOHN to her room and shows him TAM)

KIM
look John, this is his son
don't they have the same the smile
he's been waiting for his father
for a long, long while

** 5 ** PLEASE

JOHN
I'm not here as a friend
I have a job to do
it's strange to find my work
should lead me here to you
Chris knows all about you
I have shown him all this
but I think that it's time
you know all about Chris

KIM
please, don't you see that's all I live for?
I have him and nothing more
at night, everything that's not him
disappears behind my door

JOHN
please, he went crazy when he lost you
spoke to no one for a year
then he finally said "I'm home now,
my life has to go on here"

Kim, let me finish talking, please
that was three whole years ago

KIM

yes, yes I know
I know how pain can grow
when the rock you hold onto
is a love miles away, listen:

please, I already know the story
take us to the USA

JOHN

when we finish here, you'll see him
Chris arrived with me today!

KIM

oh Tam! He's here!
he is here, he's so near
we might breathe the same air tonight!
your father's here

KIM JOHN

I dreamed so hard I can't tell her like this
I kept my faith I should not be the one
and now it's true Chris must come see his son

please, they don't say
don't you see we've been in the files
watched over? there's a woman in love
as we crossed here
the wildest sea? what sustained her for miles
even god wants us together Chris still knows nothing of
can I end this journey, can I end this journey
please? please?

JOHN

there's only one thing I can do
I must bring Chris here to see you

**** 6 ** CHRIS IS HERE**

(CLUB OWNER enters, seeing TAM)

CLUB OWNER

I thought I said, "no kids around"
so what's that brat doing here
you better take care, I'm watching both of you
you, and your Engineer

(as JOHN leaves)
sir, would you like a massage?

JOHN
no thanks, it's not my scene

CLUB OWNER
you can find boys at La Cage

(CLUB OWNER leaves and the ENGINEER enters)

ENGINEER
where is he?
what is that look
he was right on the hook
don't tell me he slipped free

KIM
Engineer, Chris is here
John is going to get him
and bring him to me
my heart's ready to burst
I don't know what I'll tell him first

ENGINEER
that guy is no one to trust
or a soldier who's just learned he's fathered a son
you got to get to Chris first
I will find his address now
before he can run

KIM
you can trust what he'll do
don't you worry
I'll mention you

ENGINEER
don't screw with me little bitch
I don't want any hitch
you just do as you're told
you'll go to his hotel
I'll be working as well
guarding our bag of gold

KIM
tell me where, and I'll go
he is longing for me I know

(KIM picks up the picture of her parents)
you have brought me through the lightning
you have watched me from afar

you know all and you forgive me
loving parents that you are

ENGINEER

please, let your daughter have your blessing go on, talk to your ghosts, little girl
on the life that starts today 'til you're blue
we must journey to a new world you have one chance, just one
he's here
talking to you
and I must be on my way I'm on my way

(the ENGINEER leaves)

** 7 ** KIM'S NIGHTMARE

(as the room darkens, the ghost of THUY appears)

THUY

did you think I'd gone away
this is the face you saw that day
staring at you with open eyes
you're safe in the daylight
but in the dark I rise

I'm the crime that you hid
for you want yo forget that you killed, but you did!
you will never be free
not as long as there's me

did you think you would escape the judgement that was planned?
did you think you would escape the truth's avenging hand
just because you have escaped the bound'ries of your land
I'm here! I'm here! I'm never dead
I'm here! I am the guilt inside your head

(KIM finds herself back in Saigon, April 1975)

you think your marine's not like other men

(CHRIS appears)

he betrayed you once
and he will again
think about that night
where was he back then

CHRIS

I'm getting you out!

CAPTAIN SCHULTZ

sorry, sergeant, as things degenerate
all I'm giving her is her emigration papers
without the wait, sign here

CHRIS
that's not good enough . . .

CAPTAIN SCHULTZ
this will get her on board the carrier
you're declaring that you will marry her
when you get back to the states, sign here

(a solider brings in KIM)

SOLDIERS
by order of the old man
the embassy will close according to plan

CAPTAIN SCHULTZ
I'll stretch a couple rules to issue her pass
that's it, you're ready. nice ass. who's next?

SOLDIERS
by order of the old man
we're processing the gooks as fast as we can

CAPTAIN SCHULTZ
I mean Vietnamese, hey don't get me wrong
can't leave these looks for the Cong - right?

(The scene changes to the room of CHRIS and KIM)

CHRIS
Christ, I am due at the embassy
no time to lose

KIM
I don't want you to leave me today

CHRIS
well at least Uncle Sam bought our honeymoon cruise

KIM
if you're going I don't want to stay

CHRIS
look I'm leaving my gun
we got time
stay and pack

KIM

well I will do whatever you say

CHRIS

we'll get plenty of word when the VC attack
I want you in that bed waiting when I get back

(CHRIS returns to the embassy)

DOC

sorry, sergeant, we must accelerate
state department says we evacuate
the word is, we must be out by dawn

CHRIS

but my girl is out there!

REEVES

sorry, sergeant, it's straight from Washington
no one leaves the grounds now, not anyone
as fast as we load the planes, we're gone
(a huge crowd of VIETNAMESE is pushing at the Embassy gates)

GIBBONS

(to the crowd)
okay! Keep quiet! don't shout!
the Ambassador won't leave till everyone's out
the choppers're on their way, there's room for you all

TROY

they're climbing over the wall!
get back!

MORE MARINES

get back! I tell you, don't shout
the Ambassador won't leave till everyone's out

NOLAN

(entering)
the Ambassador just sent an order to freeze

HUSTON

that's it! No more Vietnamese! Get in!

(in the streets outside the Embassy, KIM can't get through the guards.)

KIM

I'm the wife of a soldier
please, let me through!
help me, who must I pay?
tell me what I must do

CHRIS
(to an OFFICER)
let me out, I have got to go back to my bride!

KIM
listen, someone! My husband is waiting inside!

CHRIS
(telephoning, inside the Embassy yard)
please Kim
hear the phone
I can't get there
please be home

KIM
(in the street)
please Chris
no one sees
I am lost here
find me please

BOTH
please, get me through, I don't care how
don't take my love away, not now

KIM CHRIS
oh, Chris oh Kim
I can't get free please get free
still I'm with you I am with you
wait for me wait for me

FRYE
(to CHRIS)
sorry sergeant, inside the Embassy!
we are pulling out now and there will be
no more reprieves

CHRIS
I got till the old man leaves!

JOHN
Chris, don't be a ass
the Ambassador is leaving now

(CHRIS is forced inside the Embassy, whose doors are then barricaded.
The VIETNAMESE are now yelling through the Embassy gates.)

ONE VIETNAMESE
take me with you!
take my children!

ANOTHER

I have a letter, look!

ANOTHER

I helped the CIA!

CROWD

they'll kill who they find here!
don't leave us behind here!

A VIETNAMESE

I've a wife who left already!

ANOTHER

I have an aunt in New York!

ANOTHER

I have gold, I can pay!

CROWD

there is no one to find here!
they have left us behind here!

(KIM has pushed her way through the gate.)

KIM

I must get in there, listen, anyone!
please tell my husband... look! I have his gun!

A VIETNAMESE

out of my way, if that's all that you've got!

CROWD

if I am here when they come, I'll be shot!

(inside the compound: MARINES guard the roof helipad.)

CHRIS

let me go, John, I can't leave her
why in the world should I be saved instead of her?

CROWD

they'll kill who they find here!
don't leave us behind here!

JOHN

it's not you, it's the war that's cruel
and if some dreams get smashed, perhaps it's best they were

CROWD and KIM

there is no one to find here!

they have left us behind here!

JOHN

wake up, my friend, your mercy trip has failed
there's nothing you can do, that ship has sailed
she's not the only one we'll have betrayed

CROWD

get to the roof, or else we are betrayed!

(the CROWD tries to batter down the fences.)

KIM

(in the yard)

oh, Chris
I still believe
the heart of you
is here with me
my heart, against all odds
holds still

(on the Embassy roof, the last helicopter lands. CHRIS runs up and down the wall, shouting for KIM. Finally he is forced to board the helicopter, which takes off. The nightmare passes. KIM is in her little room with TAM.)

(KIM takes out her wedding dress and puts it on)

KIM

you are sunlight and I moon
joined by the gods of fortune
midnight and high noon
that's what we are
how in one night have we come so far
outside, day starts to dawn
one long night time is gone
I feel you near
I cry no more
I know you're here
I reach your door
and our love is reborn!
bright'ning the sky
with the flame
of love
made of sunlight
moonlight

ENGINEER

Kim! Kim! Chris is at this hotel! Go quickly!

KIM

take care of Tam!

(KIM runs through the city of Bangkok to CHRIS'S hotel, as CHRIS and JOHN travel throughout the city to find her.)

** 8 ** **ROOM 317**

(A hotel room)

KIM

good evening, maam

ELLEN

don't turn the bed yet

KIM

I'm not the maid

ELLEN

what do you want then?

KIM

they must have written the room number wrong

I am looking for someone named Christopher Scott

three-seventeen, oh I'm sorry... unless

well, you must be, of course, you're John's wife, are you not?

ELLEN

oh God, I see

it had to happen

you must be Kim

Chris went to find you

please come inside

no one will hurt you

I'm Chris's wife

my name is Ellen

(KIM doesn't move)

ELLEN

in a way, I am glad I am meeting you first

understand, you were only a name till tonight

I don't know how I'd feel if our roles were reversed

please won't you sit down

KIM

tell me you are lying

ELLEN

we've been married a year, I am sorry, it's true

KIM

he said he'd come to get me

ELLEN

he says he tried to reach you, but what could he do?

KIM

please tell me you're not married

you don't know, you can't know what I've done to be here

ELLEN

you don't know how he needed a new start

KIM

I feel walls in my heart

closing in

I can't breathe

I can't win

ELLEN

as for the child

you say it's Chris's

KIM

oh yes, Madame

my son is Chris's

I had a dream for my son to belong

and not live his life in the streets like a rat

ELLEN

we aren't rich, but we'll shoulder our load

Chris and I are totally together on that

KIM

then you must take Tam with you

ELLEN

take a child from his mother, impossible Kim

KIM

you will take Tam with you

then he'll get what I wanted for him

ELLEN

but Kim, your child needs you

Chris is married to me, we want kids of our own

KIM

Tam's chance lies with you now, not with me

BOTH

no!
can't you see
it won't work
it can't be

KIM

if you're saying that because you've made him change his mind
Chris must go away and leave me and his son behind
if you're saying that because my husband has another wife
my child has no future, like the dust of life
he must come tonight to my place
tell me so to my face

(KIM exits)

ELLEN

I don't want this
I didn't come here
to meet a girl
who loves my husband
I came here to help, but what do I do?
now, after this, what do I . . .

**** 9 ** NOW THAT I'VE SEEN HER**

it's alright
it's alright when you can just imagine
there's no face, she's not real
and you can tell yourself it's all okay

but she's here
and my heart cries this isn't happening
but the truth is cold and real
and I know this storm won't go away

now that I've seen her
there's no way to hide
she is not some fling
from long ago
now that I've seen her
I know why he lied
and I think it was better when I didn't know

in her eyes, in her voice
in the heat that filled the air
part of him still lingers there
I know what pain her life today must be
but if it all comes down to her or me
I don't care, I swear, I'll fight

now that I've seen her

she's more than a name
I don't hate this girl even so
now that I've seen her
I can't stay the same
who's this man that I always trusted?
now I have to know

** 10 ** **THE CONFRONTATION**

(CHRIS and JOHN return)

CHRIS
we could not find her anywhere
honey, what's wrong?

ELLEN
Kim was here
the one who had to tell her was me

JOHN
oh, my God, it's my fault

CHRIS
I knew we were gone too long!

ELLEN
no, I think it's exactly what I had to see
you said you lived with her, that's all you were
only one thing you left out is that you loved her

CHRIS
it was just two weeks, that was years ago

JOHN
nothing's changed for her

ELLEN
don't explain
there's nothing you can say
it's like she's gone insane
she tried to give away
her own child

JOHN
she wants your son to be an American boy

ELLEN
don't you see, she still thinks she's married to you
you must tell her she's not, she must hear it and soon
'course that only depends if it's true

CHRIS

please don't doubt me Ellen: you're my wife
lots of guys came back and had no life
I had you

ELLEN

you can say what you want but she's borne you a son
in your nightmares the name that you shouted was hers
you've been with me two years and not shared things you've done
don't hold back
let me see
is it her now
or me?

CHRIS

let me tell you the way it was
back when I was a different man
back when I didn't have a clue who I am
the feelings locked behind a dam
that kept me there in Vietnam

there in the shambles of a war
I found what I was looking for
Saigon was crazed, but she was real
and for one moment, I could feel

I saw a world I never knew
and through her eyes I suffered too
in spite of all the things that were
I started to believe in her

so I wanted to save her, protect her
Christ, I'm American, how could I fail to do good?
all I made was a mess, just like everyone else
in a place full of mystery that I never once understood!
I wanted back a world I knew
the story of my life began again
with you

ELLEN CHRIS

it's all right now, that's all through oh Ellen, I should have told you
we'll get past this, start anew will you ever trust me again?
all I want all I have
in my life in my life now
is you is you

JOHN

now listen guys
it's not so easy
there is this kid
who looks just like you

hey, I think it's great
you have each other
but he exists
you have to face it

I run a camp that is filled with bui-doi
looking for the fathers that they may never find
you don't have a complicated choice with this boy
do you want to take him out or leave him behind?

CHRIS
he's my son
I won't abandon him
except that, Jesus Christ, John
there is also Kim
what of her?

ELLEN
if it was only Tam
I'd take him now
he is your son
we'd make it work somehow
but Chris, she still loves you
how can I have her near?

CHRIS
there's no choice
I think the answer's clear
they'll have to stay in Bangkok
we'll support them here

ELLEN JOHN
I think this is the answer Listen, you didn't see what's in that girl's head

CHRIS AND ELLEN
for now this is the answer I hope you are both proud of what you've just said

ELLEN
it's done

CHRIS
it's done

CHRIS AND ELLEN
it's planned
the girl is smart
she'll understand

KIM
(walking around the streets of Bangkok)
you must take Tam with you

CHRIS AND ELLEN
in Bangkok, he will go to American schools

KIM
I won't break my promise to my son

CHRIS AND ELLEN
they will start a new life

KIM
you will take Tam with you

CHRIS AND ELLEN
we'll provide for their needs

JOHN
you are talking like fools!

KIM
you won't forget Tam is a part of you

CHRIS, ELLEN, JOHN
we will (you should) do what is right
right for him
right for us
right for Kim

KIM
I still taste your kisses
your voice sings in my ear
you can betray what we were yesterday
but you'll come back tonight for him

(KIM returns to the bar. THE ENGINEER comes out with TAM.)

ENGINEER
come on, come on, your recitation
describe your reconciliation
I hope before his stimulation
he bought our little group vacation

KIM
in all his dreams he saw our baby
and he's teaching him to fly
paper dragons in the sky

ENGINEER
yes, papers, what's the situation?
we'll need our cards for immigration
no tricks, I've got my reputation

don't want no phony complications

KIM

no, no

he's coming to us tonight

pack your things

get yourself arranged

while I change for my last performance

ENGINEER

me, Chris and you

what a menage!

Bangkok can screw!

bon voyage!

**** 11 ** THE AMERICAN DREAM**

ENGINEER

my father was a tattoo artist in Haiphong

but his designs on mother didn't last too long

my mother sold her body, high on Betel nuts

my job was bringing red-faced monsieurs to our huts

selling your mom is a wrench

perfume can cover a stench

that's what I learned from the French

then it all changed with Dien Bien Phu

the frogs went home. Who came? Guess who?

are you surprised we went insane

with dollars pouring down like rain?

businessmen never rob banks

you can sell shit and get thanks

that's what I learned from the Yanks

I'm fed up with small-time hustles

I'm too good to waste my talent for greed

I need room to flex my muscles

in an ocean where the big sharks feed

make me Yankee, they're my fam'ly

they're selling what people need

what's that I smell in the air

the American dream

sweet as a new millionaire

the American dream

pre-packed, ready-to-wear

the American dream

fat, like a chocolate eclair

as you suck out the cream

luck by the tail

how can you fail?
and best of all, it's for sale
the American dream

greasy chinks make life so sleazy
in the States I'll have a club that's four-starred
men like me there have things easy
they have a lawyer and a body-guard
to the Johns there I'll sell blondes there
that they can charge on a card

what's that I smell in the air?
the American dream
sweet as a suite in Bel-air
the American dream
girls can buy tits by the pair
the American dream
bald people think they'll grow hair
the American dream

call girls are lining time square
the American dream
bums there have money to spare
the American dream
cars that have bars take you there
the American dream
on stage each night: Fred Astaire
the American dream

shlitz down the drain!
pop the Champagne!
it's time we all entertain
my American dream!

ENGINEER and CROWD
come ev'ryone, come and share
the American dream
name what you want and it's there
the American dream
spend and have money to spare
the American dream
live like you haven't a care
the American dream
what other place can compare
the American dream
come and get more than your share
the American dream

ENGINEER
there I will crown
Miss Chinatown

all yours for ten percent down

ALL
the American dream!

(CHRIS, JOHN and ELLEN enter. THE ENGINEER takes them to see KIM and TAM.)

** 12 ** **FINALE**

(In KIM'S room she has dressed TAM in his best clothes.)

KIM
now Tam, my brave boy
our long wait has ended
smile Tam
for you have a father at last

he has come
to take you home
all I dreamed for you
he'll do
you're still mine
but I can't go along
don't be sad
though I'm far away
I'll be watching you

this is the hour
I swore I'd see
I alone can tell now
what the end will be
they think they'll decide your life
no, it will be me

look at me one last time
don't forget what you see
one more kiss
and then say goodbye

(THE ENGINEER comes in and takes TAM to CHRIS. KIM prays before the shrine of her parents, blows out the candles and disappears behind the bed curtain. A gunshot. KIM's body falls to the floor.)

CHRIS
Kim! Kim!

(CHRIS picks up KIM and cradles her in his arms.)

CHRIS
what have you done, Kim? Why?

KIM
the gods have guided you to your son

CHRIS
please don't die

KIM
hold me one more time

(CHRIS holds her)

KIM
how in one night have we come... so far

(KIM'S embrace becomes lifeless. CHRIS sobs, holding her.)

THE CURTAIN FALLS
END ACT II