Act I: Paris, 1884-1886

Opening Monologue

GEORGE: [spoken]
White. A blank page or canvas. The
challenge: Bring order to the whole.

Through design.
Composition.
Balance.
Light.
And harmony.

"Sunday in the Park with George"

DOT:
A trickle of sweat.
The back of the—
Head.
He always does this—
Now the foot is dead.
Sunday in the park with George,
One more Sun—!

The collar is damp.
Beginning to pinch.
The bustle's slipping—
I won't budge one inch.

Who was at the zoo, George?
Who was at the zoo?
The monkeys and who, George?
The monkeys and who?

GEORGE: [spoken] Don't move.

DOT:
Artists are bizarre. Fixed. Cold.
That's you, George, you're bizarre. Fixed.
Cold.
I like that in a man. Fixed. Cold.
God, it's hot out here.

Well, there are worse things
Than staring at the water on a Sunday.
There are worse things
Than staring at the water
As you're posing for a picture
Being painted by your lover
In the middle of the summer
On an island in the river
On a Sunday.

The petticoat's wet,
Which adds to the weight.
The sun is blinding.
All right, concentrate.

GEORGE: [spoken] Eyes open, please.

DOT:
Sunday in the park with George!

GEORGE: Look out at the water. Not at me.

DOT:
Sunday in the park with George . . .
Concentrate . . . Concentrate . . .

Well, if you want bread
And respect and attention,
Not to say connection,
Modeling's no profession.

If you want, instead,
When you're dead,
Some more public and more permanent
Expression—
Of affection—
You want a painter,
Poet,
Sculptor, preferably:
Marble, granite, bronze.
Durable.
Something nice with swans
That's durable
Forever.

All it has to be is good.
And George, you're good.
You're really good.
George's stroke is tender.
George's touch is pure.

Your eyes, George.
I love your eyes, George.
I love your beard, George.
I love your size, George.
But most, George,
Of all,

But most of all,
I love your painting . . .
I think I'm fainting . . .

The tip of a stay,
Right under the tit.
No, don't give in, just—
Lift the arm a bit . . .

GEORGE: Don't lift the arm, please.

DOT:
Sunday in the park with George!

GEORGE: The bustle high, please.

DOT:
Not even a nod,
As if I were trees.
The ground could open
He would still say, “Please."

Never know with you, George,
Who could know with you?
The others I knew, George.
Before we get through,
I'll get to you, too.
God, I am so hot!

Well, there are worse things
Than staring at the water on a Sunday.
There are worse things
Than staring at the water
As you're posing for a picture
After sleeping on the ferry
After getting up at seven
To come over to an island
In the middle of a river
Half an hour from the city
On a Sunday,
On a Sunday in the park with—

GEORGE: Don't move the mouth!

DOT:
—George!

“No Life”

JULES: Ahh . . .

YVONNE: Ooh . . .

JULES: Mmm . . .

YVONNE: Oh, dear.

JULES: Oh, my.

YVONNE: Oh, my dear.

JULES: It has no presence.

YVONNE: No passion.

JULES:
No life.
It's neither pastoral
Nor lyrical.

YVONNE:
You don't suppose that it's satirical?

JULES:
Just density
Without intensity—

YVONNE:
No life.
[spoken] Boys with their clothes off . . .

JULES: [spoken] I must paint a factory next!

YVONNE: It's so mechanical.

JULES: Methodical.

YVONNE:
It might be in some dreary
Socialistic peri-
Odical.

JULES: [spoken] Good.

YVONNE: So drab, so cold.

JULES: And so controlled.

BOTH: No life.

JULES: [spoken] His touch is too deliberate, somehow.

YVONNE: [spoken] The dog.

JULES: These things get hung—

YVONNE: Mmm.

JULES: And then they're gone.

YVONNE:
Ahhh.
Of course he's young—
But getting on.

JULES:
All mind, no heart.
No life in his art.

YVONNE: No life in his life!

BOTH:
No—
Life.

"Color and Light" [excerpts]

GEORGE: [spoken]
Order.
Design.
Composition.
Tone.
Form.
Symmetry.
Balance.

[sings]
More red . . .
And a little more red . . .
Blue blue blue blue
Blue blue blue blue
Even . . . even . . .
Good

Bumbum bum bumbumbum
Bumbum bum . . .

More red . . .
More blue . . .
More beer . . .
More light!

Color and light.
There's only color and light.
Yellow and white.
Just blue and yellow and white.

[Addressing the woman he is painting]

Look at the air, miss—
See what I mean?
No, look over there, miss—
That's done with green . . .
Conjoined with orange . . .

. . .

[Talking to a woman in the painting]
[spoken] Aren't you proper today, miss? Your parasol so properly cocked, your bustle so perfectly upright. No doubt your chin rests at just the right angle from your chest.

[addressing the man next to her]
And you sir. Your hat so black. So black to you, perhaps. So red to me.

. . .

Red red red red
Red red orange
Red red orange
Orange pick up blue
Pick up red
Pick up orange
From the blue-green blue-green
Blue-green circle
On the violet diagonal
Di-ag-ag-ag-ag-ag-o-nal-nal
Yellow comma yellow comma

Numnum num numnumnum
Numnum num . . .

Blue blue blue blue
Blue still sitting
Red that perfume
Blue all night
Blue-green the window shut
Dut dut dut
Dot Dot sitting
Dot Dot waiting
Dot Dot getting fat fat fat
More yellow
Dot Dot waiting to go

Out out out but
No no no George
Finish the hat finish the hat
Have to finish the hat first
Hat hat hat hat
Hot hot hot it's hot in here . . .

Sunday!

Color and light!

DOT: [spoken]
But how George looks. He could look forever.

GEORGE:
There's only color and light! . . .

"The Day Off" (Dog Song)

GEORGE:
If the head was smaller . . .
If the tail were longer . . .
If he faced the water . . .
If the paws were hidden . . .
If the neck was darker . . .
If the back was curved . . .
More like the parasol . . .

Bumbum bum bumbumbum
Bumbum bum . . .

More shade . . .
More tail . . .
More grass! . . .
Would you like some more grass?
Mmmm . . .

SPOT (George):
Ruff! Ruff!
Thanks, the week has been—
Rough!
When you're stuck for life on a garbage scow,
Only forty feet long from stern to prow,
And a crackpot in the bow—wow, rough!

The planks are rough
And the wind is rough
And the master's drunk and mean and—
Grrrruff! Gruff!
With the fish and scum
And planks and ballast . . .
The nose gets numb
And the paws get callused.
And with splinters in your ass,
You look forward to the grass
On Sunday,
The day off.

[Barks]
Off! Off! Off!
Off!

[spoken] The grass needs to be thicker. Perhaps a few weeds. With some ants, if you would. I love fresh ants.

[sings]
Roaming around on Sunday,
Poking among the roots and rocks.
Nose to the ground on Sunday,
Studying all the shoes and socks.
Everything's worth it Sunday,
The day off.

Bits of pastry . . .
Piece of chicken . . .
Here's a handkerchief
That somebody was sick in.
There's a thistle.
That's a shallot.
That's a dripping
From the loony with the palette.

FIFI (George):
Yap! Yap!
Yap!
Out for the day on Sunday,
Off of my lady's lap at last.
Yapping away on Sunday
Helps you forget the week just past—

Yep! Yep!
Everything's worth it Sunday,
The day off.
Yep!

Stuck all week on a lady's lap,
Nothing to do but yawn and nap,
Can you blame me if I yap?

SPOT: Nope.

FIFI: [spoken] There's just so much attention a dog can take.

[sings]
Being alone on Sunday,
Rolling around in mud and dirt—

SPOT:
Begging a bone on Sunday,
Settling for a spoiled dessert—

FIFI: Everything's worth it—

SPOT: Sunday—

FIFI: The day off.

SPOT: Something fuzzy . . .

FIFI: Something furry . . .

SPOT:
Something pink
That someone tore off in a hurry.

FIFI:
What's the muddle
In the middle?

SPOT:
That's the puddle
Where the poodle
Did the piddle.

"The Day Off" (Ensemble Songs)—Excerpts

GEORGE:
Taking the day on Sunday,
Now that the dreary week is dead.
Getting away on Sunday
Brightens the dreary week ahead.
Everyone's on display on Sunday—

ALL: The day off!

GEORGE:
Bonnet flapping,
Bustle sliding,
Like a rocking horse that nobody's been riding.
There's a daisy . . .
And some clover . . .
And that interesting fellow looking over . . .

OLD LADY: Nurse!

NURSE & GEORGE:
One day is much like any other
Listening to her snap and drone.

NURSE:
Still, Sunday with someone's dotty mother
Is better than Sunday with your own.

Mothers may drone, mothers may whine—
Tending to his, though, is perfectly fine.
It pays for the nurse that is tending to mine
On Sunday—
My day off.

. . .

BOATMAN (George):
You and me, pal,
We're the loonies.
Did you know that?
Bet you didn't know that.

'Cause we tell them the truth!
Who you drawing?
Who the hell you think you're drawing?
Me?
You don't know me!
Go on drawing,
Since you're drawing only what you want to see,
Anyway!

One eye, no illusion—
That you get with two:
One for what is true.
One for what suits you.
Draw your wrong conclusion,
All you artists do.
I see what is true . . .

ALL:
Taking the day on Sunday
After another week is dead.
Getting away on Sunday
Brightens the dreary week ahead.
Leaving the city pressure
Behind you,
Off where the air is fresher,
Where green, blue,
Blind you—

"Finishing the Hat"

GEORGE:
Mademoiselles . . .
You and me, pal . . .
Second bottle . . .
Ah, she looks for me . . .
Bonnet flapping . . .
Yapping . . .
Ruff! . . .
Chicken . . .
Pastry . . .

Yes, she looks for me.
Good.
Let her look for me to tell me why she left me—
As I always knew she would.
I had thought she understood.
They have never understood,
And no reason that they should,
But if anybody could . . .

Finishing the hat,
How you have to finish the hat.
How you watch the rest of the world
From a window
While you finish the hat.

Mapping out a sky,
What you feel like, planning a sky,
What you feel when voices that come
Through the window
Go
Until they distance and die,
Until there's nothing but sky.

And how you're always turning back too late
From the grass or the stick
Or the dog or the light,
How the kind of woman willing to wait's
Not the kind that you want to find waiting
To return you to the night,
Dizzy from the height,
Coming from the hat,

Studying the hat,
Entering the world of the hat,
Reaching through the world of the hat
Like a window,
Back to this one from that.

Studying a face,
Stepping back to look at a face
Leaves a little space in the way like a window,
But to see—
It's the only way to see.

And when the woman that you wanted goes,
You can say to yourself, "Well, I give what I give."
But the woman who won't wait for you knows
That however you live,
There's a part of you always standing by,
Mapping out the sky,
Finishing a hat,
Starting on a hat,
Finishing a hat . . .

Look, I made a hat
Where there never was a hat.

"We Do Not Belong Together"

[Dot tells George she is moving to America with Louis the baker, although she is carrying his child.]

GEORGE: [spoken] Why are you telling me this? First you ask for a painting that is *not* yours—then you tell me this. I have work to do.

DOT: [spoken] Yes, George, run to your work. Hide behind your painting. I have come to tell you that I am leaving because I thought you might *care* to know—foolish of me, because you care about nothing—

GEORGE:
I care about many things—

DOT: Things—not people.

GEORGE: People, too. I cannot divide my feelings up as neatly as you, and I am not hiding behind my canvas—I am living in it.

DOT: [sings] What you care for is yourself.

GEORGE: I care for this painting. *You* will be in this painting.

DOT: [sings]
I am something you can use.

GEORGE: [sings]
I had thought you understood.

DOT:
It's because I understand that I left,
That I am leaving.

GEORGE:
Then there's nothing I can say,
Is there?

DOT:
Yes, George, there is!
You could tell me not to go.
Say it to me,
Tell me not to go.
Tell me that you're hurt,
Tell me you're relieved,
Tell me that you're bored—
Anything, but don't assume I know.
Tell me what you feel!

GEORGE:
What I feel?
You know exactly how I feel.
Why do you insist
You must hear the words,
When you know I cannot give you words?
Not the ones you need.

There's nothing to say.
I cannot be what you want.

DOT: What do *you* want, George?

GEORGE: I needed you and you left.

DOT: There was no room for me—

GEORGE:
You will not accept who I am.
I am what I do—
Which you knew,
Which you always knew,
Which I thought you were a part of!

DOT:
No,
You are complete, George,
You are your own.
We do not belong together.

You are complete, George,
You all alone.
I am unfinished,
I am diminished
With or without you.

We do not belong together,
And we should have belonged together.
What made it so right together
Is what made it all wrong.

No one is you, George,
There we agree,
But others will do, George.

No one is you and
No one can be,
But no one is me, George,
No one is me!
We do not belong together,
And we'll never belong—!

You have a mission,
A mission to see.
Now I have one too, George,
And we should have belonged together.

I have to move on.

"Beautiful"

OLD LADY: *[looking across the river at the Eiffel Tower]*
Changing.
It keeps changing.
I see towers
Where there were trees.

Going,
All the stillness
The solitude,
Georgie.

Sundays
Disappearing
All the time,
When things were beautiful . . .

GEORGE:
All things are beautiful,

Mother,
All trees, all towers,
Beautiful.

That tower—
Beautiful, Mother,
See?
A perfect tree.

Pretty isn't beautiful, Mother,
Pretty is what changes.
What the eye arranges
Is what is beautiful.

OLD LADY: Fading . . .

GEORGE:
I'm changing.
You're changing.

OLD LADY: It keeps fading . . .

GEORGE:
I'll draw us now before we fade,
Mother.

OLD LADY:
It keeps melting before our eyes.

GEORGE:
You watch
While I revise the world.

OLD LADY:
Changing,
As we sit here—
Quick, draw it all, Georgie!

BOTH: Sundays—

OLD LADY:
Disappearing,
As we look.

GEORGE:
Look! . . .
Look! . . .

OLD LADY:
You make it beautiful.

[spoken] Oh, Georgie, how I long for the old view.

"Sunday"

GEORGE: [spoken]
Order.
Design.
Tension.
Balance.
Harmony.

ALL:
Sunday,
By the blue
Purple yellow red water
On the green
Purple yellow red grass,
Let us pass
Through our perfect park,

Pausing on a Sunday
By the cool
Blue triangular water
On the soft
Green elliptical grass,
As we pass
Through arrangements of shadows
Towards the verticals of trees
Forever . . .

By the blue
Purple yellow red water
On the green
Orange violet mass
Of the grass
In our perfect park.

GEORGE:
Made of flecks of light
And dark,

MEN:
And parasols . . .

GEORGE:
Bumbum bum bumbumbum
Bumbum bum . . .

ALL:
People strolling through the trees
Of a small suburban park
On an island in the river
On an ordinary Sunday . . .
Sunday . . .
Sunday . . .