

SONG OF LILIAN

A Ten-Minute Dramatic Duet

by
Ken Bradbury



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CAST: MAX and LILIAN

(Background: MAX and JEANIE were married young and quickly, and their lives have gone down hill quickly since then. MAX's early addiction to alcohol and JEANIE's to a mixture of booze and crack, has produced a disastrous marriage, an ugly divorce, and a daughter born with severe brain damage. A year before this scene, the courts took their daughter away from MAX, who made his first court appearance drunk. JEANIE managed to present herself well enough to the judge that her problems were not obvious. Because of MAX's condition, no one believed his pleas to keep LILIAN away from her mother. Now, a year later, MAX is recovering from his alcoholism and is allowed weekly, supervised visits with his child. Twice HE has found her alone, unattended, with JEANIE's drug problem worsening. Unable to find JEANIE to let him in, MAX enters the house anyway.)

(LILIAN, sixteen years old but with the mind of a four-year-old, sits alone, sorting through a pile of socks, quietly singing "Jesus Loves Me" to herself. MAX enters in a hurry, sees her and stops)

MAX: Lilian? *(no response)* Where's your mother? *(no response, LILIAN continues to sort through things)* Where's your mother, Lilian?

LILIAN: I got stuff today. *(again SHE begins singing)*

MAX: Where's your mother?

LILIAN: Mommy said, "I got stuff to do." ...so, I got stuff to do.

MAX: *(grabbing her)* Listen to me!

LILIAN: You mad?

MAX: No. Lilian, where did your mother go? Listen to me carefully, Lilian. I'm talking about Mommy. Where is she?

LILIAN: Mommy's gonna be mad.

MAX: Why? What's happened?

LILIAN: I ain't got my stuff done yet. She told me to do my stuff.

MAX: *(looks at what SHE's been working on)* Socks. What're you doing?

LILIAN: Red ones with the red ones and white ones with stripes with the ones with stripes and the blue ones...

MAX: *(grabbing her again)* Where is your mother, Lilian? She promised never to leave you alone again. Tell me what's happened!

LILIAN: You mad?

MAX: *(HE lets go of her and crosses away from her, gathering his thoughts, finally)* Lilian, have you had supper?

LILIAN: Noodles.

MAX: Good. Was Mommy here? Did Mommy fix your noodles?

LILIAN: And fruit loops.

MAX: And Mommy fixed them? *(LILIAN continues to sort the socks)* Lilian, did Mommy fix the Fruit Loops?

LILIAN: If you get the milk too full it spills on the table. Then you got a mess. I brush it off to the floor sometimes 'cause I gotta hide it.

MAX: *(grabbing her roughly)* Lilian, where's Mommy!? *(LILIAN begins to cry)*

MAX: Don't cry, Lilian. I'm sorry. Daddy didn't mean to scare you. *(but SHE continues)* Lilian, stop crying. I just want to know... *(HE lets go of her and moves away)* Lilian, you want to play a game? *(SHE stops her sobbing and looks at him)* If you stop crying, we'll play a game.

LILIAN: Good game?

MAX: A good game.

LILIAN: Can I win?

MAX: If you're good...if you try real hard.

LILIAN: I'm good.

MAX: I know you're good, Lilian. You're very good.

LILIAN: Damned betcha.

MAX: Don't say that, Lilian. It's not nice. You're almost a grown lady and ladies don't talk like that. Look...*(Picking up a sock)* This is Lilian.

LILIAN: *(looking at his hand in the sock and laughing)* No, it's not!

MAX: Yes it is. It's a game and this is Lilian.

LILIAN: I want red.

MAX: *(changing the socks on his hands)* Okay...here. Lilian's a red sock.

LILIAN: *(laughing)* Lilian's a red sock.

MAX: And this...*(putting a sock on his other hand)* This is me! This is Daddy!

LILIAN: Daddy's white!

MAX: Daddy's a white sock. And he's gonna tickle Lilian! ***(HE plays out a puppet scene with his hands, making the appropriate noises...LILIAN quickly gets into the gist of the game and begins to laugh)*** He's gonna tickle Lilian!
And tickle and tickle and tickle and...

LILIAN: ***(laughing)*** Stop! Stop, Daddy!

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