Seeing Roses

By Joyce Back
The Cast:
Rose Carroll  Teen girl entering her senior year in high school; nice but not a pushover
Rose Bentley  Teen girl entering her senior year in high school; restless and discontented, also vain and manipulative
Jason Grillo  Blind teen boy entering a new high school; intellectual type
Mrs. Grillo    Jason's mother; devoted mom
Mrs. Carroll   Rose Carroll's mother, perky and twangy
Mr. Carroll    Rose Carroll's father, a rather serious accountant
Reverend Bentley  Rose Bentley's father, a minister; has blind spot for his daughter
Carlie and Mimi Rose Bentley's friends; blindly loyal to Rose
Erin and Josie  Rose Carroll's friends; fun-loving happy types
Carter and Lincoln Teen boys entering their senior year in high school; their love is classic rock and they're trying to start a band

The Set:

The sidewalk/street in front of the homes of Rose Carroll and Jason Grillo. The two homes are represented by two front porches, one for the Carroll home and one for the Grillo home. All the action of the play takes place in the sidewalk/street or on one of the porches.
Act One
Scene 1

(The set throughout both acts consists of two front porches, one for the Carroll home and one for the Grillo home. Each porch has a door leading into the house. The porches are large enough to accommodate three or four actors. Actors can exit and enter through the doors or via stage left/right. A nice touch to the set would be a suggestion of a rose garden near the Grillo porch.)

(Scene 1 features a block dance held in the street in front of the porches; therefore the set for this scene should include perhaps balloons or other festive touches, a CD player, and a sign that says 'Church of the Spirit Block Dance'.)

(When the curtain opens, all teen cast members except Jason are on stage. They are milling about, talking and laughing.)

(Enter Reverend Bentley.)

Reverend Bentley: Okay, everyone, it's time to call it a night. Did you all have a good time at the first of the Church of the Spirit summer block dances?

All Teens: Yes!

Reverend Bentley: Great! Before you leave, I want to tell you about a wonderful new honorary title and scholarship to be provided by the church. The title is Young Citizen of the Year and the winner will be chosen based on his or her contributions to the community.

Rose Carroll: Did you say that there would be a scholarship also, Reverend Bentley?

Reverend Bentley: Indeed there will be, Rose. And you will be a strong candidate because of your volunteer work at the hospital. The scholarship will pay one full year of tuition and living expenses at a university of your choice! Or, if by chance the recipient is not planning to attend college, a check for $10,000 will be presented instead.

{All teens express interest and amazement in various ways.}

Carter: Reverend Bentley, sir. Excuse my asking this question, but who will choose the winner?

Reverend Bentley: {laughing} That's a very good question, Carter, because of course my daughter Rose will be in the competition. So I told the board that I could not be involved in the selection.

Erin: {to Rose Carroll} Rose Bentley wins everything anyway. What's the point of applying?

Josie: {sarcastically} Rose Bentley gets whatever she wants because she's sooo popular…
Erin: And sooo selfish and annoying.

Rose Carroll: Sshhh! She'll hear you.

Josie: I don't care if she does.

Reverend Bentley: You can get your application package at my house next week. I wish all of you could win because you are all fine young people and very deserving. Don't forget to pick up your application, and good luck!

{Reverend Bentley exits. The teens talk and laugh as they move off stage.}

Scene 2

{Mr. and Mrs. Carroll walk on stage from right or left as if they’re arriving home.}

Mrs. Carroll: [stopping] Oh, there’s our new neighbor! Hello, Meredith!

[Mrs. Grillo enters, brushing off her clothes.]

Mrs. Grillo: Hello! Excuse my appearance. I’ve been clearing leaves around the rose bushes.

Mrs. Carroll: Your new home has lovely rose gardens. Oh, I don’t believe you’ve met my husband, John Carroll. John, this is Meredith Grillo, our new neighbor.

[Mr. Carroll and Mrs. Grillo shake hands.]

[Enter Reverend Bentley.]

Reverend Bentley: John, Joy…just the people I wanted to see.

Mrs. Carroll: Hello, Walter. Have you met our new neighbor, Meredith Grillo? Meredith, Walter is the pastor of the Church of the Spirit. He has done amazing things for the young people in the neighborhood.

Reverend Bentley: I certainly have met her. I invited her son Jason to the block dance. How is Jason doing, by the way? I hope he’s beginning to accept his move here.

Mrs. Grillo: Yes…but he misses his grandfather very much.

Mr. Carroll: {to Mrs. Grillo} Will Jason be going to Richardson High School in the fall? Our daughter Rose is going to be a senior.

Mrs. Grillo: Yes…Jason will be a senior also, but he’ll be in a special class. You see, he’s blind.

Mr. Carroll: I am sorry to hear that.

Mrs. Grillo: Thank you. His blindness resulted from the auto accident that caused his father’s death. Jason was seven at the time.
Reverend Bentley: Jason is an extremely bright young man. He has a little trouble with mathematics, I’m told, but he is an excellent writer and very good at languages.

Mr. Carroll: Our Rosie is good at math. I’m sure she’d be happy to tutor him this summer so that he can start school with improved skills.

Mrs. Carroll: That’s a super idea! But he’ll have to listen to some of her songs.

Mrs. Grillo: Her songs?

Mrs. Carroll: Rose plays guitar and composes her own songs. Last year her songs were loud rock things, but this year it’s been all country and western. I think that’s my influence. I’ve always loved country music.

Mrs. Grillo: I’m sure Jason would love to hear her songs.

Mr. Carroll: We’re hoping she won’t take her devotion to music too seriously. We want her to go to nursing school.

Reverend Bentley (to Mrs. Grillo): My daughter – also named Rose – is the same age as Rose Carroll. I know she’ll be happy to visit Jason and help him in any way she can.

Mrs. Carroll: By the way, Meredith, we’re having a little get-together a week from Saturday…why don’t you and Jason join us? Our Rose will be there, and so will Rose Bentley and some of the other young people in the neighborhood.

Mrs. Grillo: We would love to…but…we might not be able to make it. Jason doesn’t know about this, and I don’t want him to know just yet. Because of some new surgical techniques, he might be a candidate for a cornea transplant. If the tests say that he is, he’ll be in the hospital next week.

Reverend Bentley: That is excellent news!

Mr. Carroll: Has a donor been found…or is Jason on a waiting list?

Mrs. Grillo: I am going to be the donor. I’m going to give one eye so that my son can see. We moved to this state because the best transplant doctor in the country is here at the university medical center.

Mrs. Carroll: That is a wonderful gift to give your child!

Mrs. Grillo: Any parent would do the same…

[They all nod in agreement.]

Mrs. Carroll: If we can help at all, please let us know.

Mrs. Grillo: Thank you. I’ll phone you when I get the test results.

[Mrs. Carroll hugs Mrs. Grillo, then Mrs. Grillo exits.]
Reverend Bentley: Before I forget the reason I walked over here to talk to you, I received a phone call this morning from the governor’s office…

Mr. Carroll: The governor’s office?

Reverend Bentley: Yes. I was told that the governor is going to honor a group of high school seniors who show outstanding talent in the arts. His office is accepting recommendations from church and community leaders.

Mrs. Carroll: That would be an honor for any student!

Reverend Bentley: Yes, and I want you both to know – I’m going to recommend Rose.

Mr. Carroll: Rose? Why?

Reverend Bentley: Why? How can you ask that, John? You have a daughter who taught herself to play several instruments and who writes songs, both music and lyrics…

Mrs. Carroll: Well, yes, Rose certainly has shown some musical talent. But it’s a hobby for her, Walter, and I don’t expect her to ever take it seriously.

Reverend Bentley: Perhaps…but I’m going to recommend her for a citation just the same.

Mr. Carroll: That’s good of you, Walter, but personally I would not want to see Rose distracted from more serious pursuits.

Reverend Bentley: My dear friend, the path of life is long, with many twists and turns. Rose must find her own way.

[Reverend Bentley exits.]

Mrs. Carroll: {smiling} I wish, John, that the good Reverend would be as clear-sighted when it comes to his own daughter.

Mr. Carroll: Indeed!

[Mr. and Mrs. Carroll exit through their porch door.]

Scene 3

{Erin and Josie enter. Josie is carrying a basket. They sit on the steps of Rose Carroll’s porch. Josie pulls scissors, colored paper, and Elmer’s Glue from the basket. The girls begin cutting origami type shapes.}

{Rose Carroll enters through the porch door.}

Rose Carroll: Hi!

Erin and Josie: Hi!
Rose Carroll: What are you making?

Erin: Mobiles. See? You make a bunch of these origami thingies, and then you glue them to a board and hang it from the ceiling.

Rose Carroll: Cool! Can I make one?

Josie: Sure. We’re giving them to Carter and Lincoln to decorate Carter’s dad’s garage for their first concert.

Rose Carroll: Good idea! I gave them a song I wrote last year. It’s going to be their signature song.

Erin: Why don’t you sing in their band, Rosie? They need a singer.

Rose Carroll: Oh, I don’t know. It would take a lot of time…and my parents wouldn’t be happy about it. Anyways, C and L are way into classic rock and I’m way into country!

Josie: Did you hear what they named the band? The Presidents!

{The three girls giggle.}

Erin {picking up the Elmer’s Glue} When I was a little kid, my mom used to say ‘Elmer’s Glue will mend anything…even a broken heart!’

Rose Carroll: Well, if my heart ever gets broken, maybe I’ll give it a try.

Josie: Your heart will never be broken, Rosie!

Rose Carroll: Why not?

Josie: Because you're so nice. Some guy will come along who will love you forever!

Erin: Jose, you've been reading too many romance novels!

Rose Carroll: But I do believe that love lasts forever, Erin…don't you?

Erin Yeah…if it's real. But how will we know the difference?

{The girls look at each other, none of them sure how to answer the question. Enter Mrs. Carroll through the porch door.}

Erin and Josie: Hi, Mrs. Carroll.

Mrs. Carroll: Hi, girls. Rose, did you talk to your dad before he left for work?

Rose Carroll: No, mom, I didn’t see him. What did he want to talk to me about? He hasn’t volunteered me for something, I hope.

Mrs. Carroll: Well, sweetie, I know you’ve been busy lately with your work at the hospital and your various activities, but your dad and I knew that you’d want to help…
Rose Carroll: Mom, what did you and dad volunteer me for now?

Mrs. Carroll: Honey, your dad thought you’d ENJOY helping Jason Grillo, our new neighbor, with his math. He’s going to need a little tutoring this summer.

Rose Carroll: {sarcasically} Okay, mom, I get it. Dad was only thinking of me.

Mrs. Carroll: Now, Rosie, don’t get on your high horse. This boy deserves our compassion. He’s blind.

Rose Carroll: {immediately sympathetic} Blind? Oh gosh!

Mrs. Carroll: You will help him out, then, won’t you, honey? They’re our neighbors, and Mrs. Grillo is very nice. She lost her husband in the car accident that blinded Jason.

Erin: That’s so tragic! We’ll go visit Jason, too, Mrs. Carroll.

Josie: Yeah, it’ll be nice for him to have some friends when school starts.

Mrs. Carroll: Thank you, girls. Rose…?

Rose Carroll: Okay, I’ll tutor him. But mom...do you think you could ask dad to check with me first before he volunteers me?

Mrs. Carroll: {laughing} You’d better ask him yourself, sweetie.

{Mrs. Carroll exits through the porch door.}

Erin: Hey, let’s walk over to my house. I want to show you the dress I got for the next block dance.

{The three girls gather up the origami materials, but they forget the glue and leave it on the porch. They all exit stage right or left.}

Scene 4

{Rose Bentley, Carlie and Mimi enter. Rose Bentley is dressed as a cheerleader and carrying a bouquet of flowers.}

Rose Bentley: Honestly, I don’t know why Coach makes us practice in the summer. It’s such a drag!

Carlie: Rose, I’m getting angry! Why won’t you tell us who sent you the flowers?

Rose Bentley: Carlie, I told you, I don’t know. You know how it is; someone is always giving me flowers.

{Rose Bentley tosses the flowers toward the back of the stage.}

Mimi: Rose, you are SO popular!

Rose Bentley: I don’t know why; I’m just an ordinary girl…
**Carlie:** Ordinary! You’re SO not ordinary!

**Mimi:** Rose, you’re beautiful and…and…just so cool!

*Carter and Lincoln enter. Lincoln is carrying a guitar.*

**Rose Bentley:** {sarcastically} Well, if it isn’t America’s newest pop craze! Kids, here they are…the band you’ve been waiting for…the Presidents!

**The Boys:** Hey Rose, hi Carlie, hi Mimi.

**The Girls:** Hey guys, how’s it goin’?

**Carter:** It’s going great! We worked out our signature song. Dad said we can have the concert in August just before school starts. That’ll give us time to rehearse some more songs.

**Rose Bentley:** Your signature song…?

**Lincoln:** Yeah, Rose Carroll gave us a song she wrote. It’s cool. It’s gonna be our theme song.

**Carlie:** Sing it for us! Please?

**Rose Bentley:** {sarcastically} Yes, do sing it. If Rose Carroll wrote it, it must be fahbulous…

**Carter:** You'll hear it at the concert. So don't forget to come.

*Enter Rose Carroll, Erin, and Josie.*

**Josie:** Hi everyone!

**Rose Bentley:** Well, if it isn’t the great composer herself and her faithful followers.

**Rose Carroll:** {sarcastically} Happy to see you too, Rose. Hi, Carlie. Hi, Mimi. Hi guys.

**Rose Bentley:** {in a phony sweet manner} I hope all of you will pick up your scholarship applications this week. I wouldn’t want any of you to lose out on the opportunity.

**Erin:** Yeah, right! Like anyone has a chance to win except you, Rose.

**Rose Bentley:** Oh dear, I’m sorry you feel that way. But if I am the best candidate, that won’t be my fault. {to Carlie and Mimi} Come on; let’s go find some good deeds to do. I feel an attack of altruism coming on!

*Rose Bentley, Carlie, and Mimi exit laughing.*

**Erin:** Don’t let the door hit you on the way out. Ugh! I hate the way Carlie and Mimi follow Rose B around like puppy-dogs!
Carter: What is it with Rose B? Her dad is the nicest guy in the world, and she can be such a…witch!

Lincoln: Sometimes she’s okay, but she always gets nasty when Rose Carroll is around.

Josie: That’s because she’s jealous of Rose!

Rose Carroll: Why should she be jealous of me? She’s the most popular girl in school.

Josie: Because…because…she wants to be good…like you. She wants people to admire her because she does volunteer work and stuff.

Erin: I think Josie’s right!

Carter: You’re on to something, Jose.

Lincoln: Concur!

Rose Carroll: Speaking of volunteer work, I’ve gotta get going. I’m going to help Jason Grillo with his math this afternoon.

{They all exit, saying ‘see you’ and other appropriate comments. Rose Carroll exits through her porch door and the others exit stage right or left.}

{Enter Rose Bentley, Carlie, and Mimi. Rose Bentley is ahead of the others. She is obviously thinking about something. As she begins talking aloud to herself, Carlie and Mimi stop their own conversation and stare at her.}

Mimi: Rose, what’s wrong? Why are you, like, talking to yourself?

Rose Bentley: {dramatically} I was thinking about my dad.

Carlie: Your dad?

Rose Bentley: {her expression shows that she’s conning them} Yes, it’s so sweet the way my dad encourages all the kids to do volunteer work. And I feel like I let him down because I don’t do any. But I’m so busy…

Mimi: Of course you are! It’s very hard work to be a cheerleader!

Carlie: You’re so popular and everyone loves you so much. You’re sure to win the Young Citizen Award!

Rose Bentley: {obviously lying} Oh, I don’t care about that. I just wish there were some way to keep my dad happy without making myself exhausted.

Mimi: My mom told me that the town needs people to pick up trash in the park. Maybe you could do that. We’re going to do it every Saturday morning, aren’t we, Carlie.

Carlie: Yes, you could come with us. We’d have a good time, and your dad would be happy.
Rose Bentley: Oh, it sounds like such fun, but…but…I’ve got rehearsals every Saturday for the Miss Teen Pageant.

Mimi: I thought those rehearsals didn’t start ‘til September.

Rose Bentley: It’s a sort of pre-rehearsal. It’s very important.

Mimi: Oh…well, I’m sure your dad will understand.

Rose Bentley: Mimi…Carlie…you could help me out if you wanted to. I’d be very, very grateful, and I would certainly be your best friend forever.

Carlie: Of course we’ll help you, if there’s something we can do.

Rose Bentley: When you go to the park to pick up trash, every Saturday one of you could sign in as Rose Bentley. That way, I’d get credit for doing volunteer work and my dad would be happy and stop nagging at me about it.

Mimi: Oooh, isn’t that, like, against the law or something?

Rose Bentley: Of course not, goof. It’s not like you’d be getting paid.

Carlie: But Rose, what if you get credit for picking up trash and you win the Young Citizen Award?

Rose Bentley: {obviously lying} I don’t care about the award. But if I did win, I’d make a little speech about how I didn’t deserve it, and then I’d give it to someone else. One of you…or that do-gooder Rose Carroll. Or Carter; he serves meals to the homeless every Thanksgiving.

Carlie: Well…if you promise to do that, I guess I could sign in as you at the park. I mean, what could it hurt?

Mimi: Yeah, I would too…as long as you wouldn’t keep the award if you won it.

Rose Bentley: {hugging them} You are the best friends a girl ever had! Come on, let’s walk downtown and I’ll buy you an ice cream!

{They all exit.}

Scene 5

{Two small chairs should be placed on the Grillo porch for this scene.}

{Jason, wearing dark glasses, enters through his porch door. He feels his way to a chair and sits down.}

{Rose Carroll enters from the Carroll porch door. She is carrying two books. She steps down from her porch, looks around, and sighs. Then she resolutely walks to the other porch. She sees Jason and slows down so that she will not alarm him.}
Rose Carroll: Jason? It’s Rose Carroll from next door. Did your mom tell you I was coming over?

Jason: Yes, she told me.

{Rose Carroll seats herself in the other chair.}

Rose Carroll: So…do you want to study here on the porch or go inside?

Jason: There’s no place on earth where I WANT to study mathematics. But apparently I have no choice in the matter.

Rose Carroll: {trying to make light of an awkward situation} I feel that way about English!

Jason: That is a statement that chills me. You would choose to ignore all the great literature of the world? As long as $A^2 + B^2$ makes sense to you, you will be content?

{Rose Carroll looks at him, her face expressing her annoyance.}

Rose Carroll: That is not exactly what I meant, but…whatever. I told my mom I’d tutor you, and I only have a half-hour, so let’s get started.

Jason: Ah…I see…I am a duty to be performed. ‘Rose, go help the blind boy. He can’t add two and two.’

Rose Carroll: {instantly sorry for her thoughtless remark} Jason…I’m sorry…that was a dumb thing for me to say. Look, let’s just talk this time and get to know each other. Next session, we’ll hit the books. Deal?

Jason: Certainly. I’ll agree to anything that puts off the inevitable misery of algebra. One talks of death and taxes, but algebra is another of life’s unavoidable plagues.

Rose Carroll: Uh…right…

Jason: Well, if we’re going to get to know each other, why don’t you ask me the question you want very much to ask.

Rose Carroll: What question would that be?

Jason: What it’s like to be blind. That’s the question on everyone’s mind when they meet me.

Rose Carroll: Okay, I’ll bite. What’s it like to be blind?

Jason: Dark…but light in a way.

Rose Carroll: Light in a way? What do you mean?
Jason: When you can't see, you hear things...and feel things. For example, I always know when my mother is going to call my Aunt Lou because they don't get along all that well, and when Mom picks up the phone to call Lou, her breathing changes.

Rose Carroll: You can hear your mom breathing?

Jason: Yes. When she calls Aunt Lou, her breathing gets louder and faster.

Rose Carroll: Can you hear me breathing?

Jason: Yes. Your breath is rapid. You're angry because you don't want to be here. But...but I sense that you're unhappy about something else, some problem that you don't know how to solve.

Rose Carroll: Now what would make you think that?

Jason: I'm not sure. Maybe the weight of your footsteps when you walked over here. I can sense it somehow. And another thing...I think you like math because numbers are much easier to deal with than people.

Rose Carroll: Well, you know what I sense? I sense that you're full of blarney!

Jason: [laughing] I've managed to prevent you from opening the math books!

Rose Carroll: How did you know I had books with me?

Jason: You set them on the floor next to your chair when you sat down.

Rose Carroll: Okay, smart guy. How many books?

Jason: Two. I could hear them slide against each other as you set them down.

Rose Carroll: Wow, now you have impressed me. But getting back to questions, there is one I would like to ask you.

Jason: Ask away.

Rose Carroll: What do you remember...from before the accident?

Jason: The accident that killed my dad and left me blind? That accident?

Rose Carroll: Yes, that accident, of course. Do you remember what it was like...to see?

{Jason stands. It is obvious that he is thinking deeply.}

Jason: Do I remember what it was like to see...? That is an excellent question...I remember light...sun on the water...the moon and stars in a black sky...

Rose Carroll: What else do you remember?

Jason: My dad laughing as we drove along. Then later...waking up in a hospital bed and hearing my mom but not seeing her...
Rose Carroll's expression indicates that she is reacting to him emotionally as she watches him. She rises and reaches out her hand to touch his face. He senses her movement and turns toward her. She quickly draws back and moves away.

Rose Carroll: I have to get going now, Jason…

Jason: You have to leave? I thought we were going to talk and get to know each other.

Rose Carroll: I’m sorry…I…I really have to go.

{Rose Carroll quickly leaves the porch and walks toward stage front. Jason exits through his porch door.}

{Mrs. Carroll enters through the Carroll's porch door. She sees Rose Carroll and watches curiously as Rose paces at stage front lost in thought.}

Mrs. Carroll: Rose? Rosie…?

Rose Carroll: Oh, hi Mom.

Mrs. Carroll: Penny for your thoughts, honey.

Rose Carroll: Oh, I was just thinking…I mean…well, I…

Mrs. Carroll: Rosie, are you okay?

Rose Carroll: I think so.

Mrs. Carroll: You THINK so?

Rose Carroll: Mom…can I ask you a question?

Mrs. Carroll: Of course.

Rose Carroll: When you met Dad, what made you fall in love with him?

Mrs. Carroll: Hmmm…I'd better not ask why you're inquiring...

Rose Carroll: {laughing} No, please don't!

Mrs. Carroll: You know, I remember asking my ma the same question.

Rose Carroll: What did she say?

Mrs. Carroll: She said when she was young, she wanted to find a real country boy to love…you know, the kind of guy who drives a pickup truck and likes to sit around the supper table with his family and maybe strum a banjo or guitar.

Rose Carroll: And then Grandpa came along. He IS a real country boy!

Mrs. Carroll: Yep, and I decided that ma was right, and I should find a real country boy for myself. So that's why I fell in love with your dad.
Rose Carroll: But Mom, Dad isn't a country boy. He wears a suit to work…and he drives a sedan. And I've sure never seen him pluck a banjo!

Mrs. Carroll: That's true, honey. But he has those old country values. Hard work, family, love, faith, service to others. Do you know what he does on Tuesday nights when he gets home late?

Rose Carroll: I thought he was working.

Mrs. Carroll: He is, but he's working for free. He helps poor people figure out their taxes. {Mrs. Carroll hugs Rose Carroll.} When you fall in love, sweetie, make sure it's with a country boy…even if he drives a Lexus!

Rose Carroll: Okay, I promise.

Scene 6

{Two small chairs should be placed on the Grillo porch for this scene.}

{Jason enters through his porch door. He feels his way to a chair and sits down.}

{Rose Carroll enters from her porch door. She is carrying a CD player.}

Jason: Ah, the sound of footsteps! That can mean only one thing - I am about to be accosted with mathematics!

Rose Carroll: Sorry, Jason, you're wrong. I'm taking a new approach to the problem.

Jason: My recalcitrance being the problem, of course.

Rose Carroll: Your recal…whatever…isn't the problem. What we have to do is approach mathematics in an artistic manner…

Jason: An artistic manner… I get it! 'A squared plus B squared equals C squared' is true only if the creator of the triangle deems it to be so.

Rose Carroll: Oh, stop being so silly. Yesterday I was reading about music, and I discovered an interesting fact: children who like music are generally good in math because music is a sort of mathematical expression.

Jason: {singing operatically} A squared plus B squared equals C squared.

Rose Carroll: Wow, you actually have a very good voice. Have you had singing lessons?

Jason: No. Perhaps I should. {dramatically} I could be another Andrea Bocelli.

Rose Carroll: Maybe you could, if you APPLIED YOURSELF instead of fooling around.

Jason: Ah, the daily lecture on ethics and morality. I so look forward to it.
Rose Carroll: Be quiet. I'm going to play some music and I want you to focus on the structure and rhythm.

Jason: And if I don't care to?

Rose Carroll: I'll go home and get Calculus for Dummies.

Jason: Okay, okay!

{Rose Carroll turns on the machine and plays a slow, rather romantic song. They listen together.}

Jason: It's a pretty song.

Rose Carroll: Do you want to dance? That will make you focus on the rhythm.

Jason: Okay.

{Rose Carroll and Jason stand and begin to dance a slow dance.}

Jason: It's fun dancing on the porch.

Rose Carroll: {softly} Yes…

Jason: You're a good dancer.

Rose Carroll: You are too.

Jason: I usually step on girls' feet.

Rose Carroll: Ouch! I see what you mean.

Jason: That wasn’t funny.

Rose Carroll: Sorry.

Jason: I wouldn’t tell this to anyone but you, but I’ve never kissed a girl.

Rose Carroll: Why not?

Jason: I don’t know. I’ve spent my time reading books in Braille or listening to them on tape. Books have been my whole world...until now.

Rose Carroll: {softly} I guess...there's a first time for everything...

{Jason gently kisses Rose Carroll on the forehead, and then Mrs. Grillo enters from the porch door. Rose Carroll quickly steps away from Jason. Mrs. Grillo has a serious expression on her face.}

Mrs. Grillo: Jason, Dr. Lorton just called with your test results. I have something important to tell you.

Rose Carroll: {a little nervously} I'd better go...
Jason: Dr. Lorton called? What did she say about my tests? The usual, I suppose.

Mrs. Grillo: Jason, I think you'd better sit down because I have some amazing news for you. {Jason is surprised. He sits down and waits for his mother's next words.}

Honey…Dr. Lorton has cleared you for a transplant. She said that with the new techniques available now, there's about a 75 percent chance that the transplant will restore some vision.

Jason: {completely shocked} Restore some vision…you mean…you mean…I will be able to see…?

{Jason rises and steps off the porch. His mother steps off the porch to join him.}

Mrs. Grillo: It's not a sure thing, darling…but…there's reason to hope...

Jason: A transplant…but that will mean being put on a transplant list and waiting…Mom, how will I stand the waiting? And…and…how will I stand the thought…that someone will have to die so that I can see?

Mrs. Grillo: No, you won't have to wait for a transplant, and no one must die. I am going to donate an eye to you. One of the tests was for donor compatibility. I had the test also, but I didn't want to tell you and give you false hope.

Jason: You will donate an eye…? Mom, no. No, I won't take one of your eyes.

Mrs. Grillo: Jason…

Jason: You had this planned, didn't you. That's why we moved here. That's why Grandpa said those words to you.

Mrs. Grillo: Words? What words?

Jason: When we were getting in the car to begin our trip, he said 'Remember, sweetie, if you're not compatible, I might be.'

Mrs. Grillo: You heard that? He was whispering in my ear!

Jason: Mom…you should know by now that I hear everything. But…but…that doesn't matter. I won't let you give up an eye for a 75 percent chance of SOME sight for me.

Mrs. Grillo: Jason…if you won't do this for yourself, do it for me.

Jason: For you?

Mrs. Grillo: Yes. There's no greater happiness for a parent than helping her child.

Jason: But Mom, how can I ever repay you?

Mrs. Grillo: You can repay me by always being a good person…just as you are today.
Scene 7

{Jason enters through his porch door. He stretches and smiles and dances a little, as if he’s remembering his dance with Rose Carroll. Then he pauses and listens for he hears someone coming.}

{Rose Bentley, Carlie, and Mimi enter. They are laughing and chatting, but they pause when they see Jason.}

Rose Bentley: Who is that hottie? He doesn't go to our school.

Mimi: I think that must be Jason Grillo, the blind kid that Rose C is tutoring.

Carlie: He is definitely eye candy! Now I know why Rose C wanted to tutor him!

Rose Bentley: Ladies…I'm feeling an attack of altruism. Let's pay the young man a visit and bring some joy to his lonely life.

Mimi: Good idea! Why should Rose Carroll have him all to herself?

Rose Bentley: Indeed.

{Rose Bentley, Carlie, and Mimi walk to the porch.}

Carlie: Jason? It's Carlie. I live in the neighborhood. Rose and Mimi are with me and we thought we'd stop in and see how you're doing.

Jason: Rose? The footsteps didn't sound like yours.

Rose Bentley: Jason, it's Rose Bentley, not Rose Carroll.

Jason: I see. I didn't realize that this neighborhood is a veritable garden of Roses!

Rose Bentley: We wanted to meet you. We heard you're an awesome guy.

Jason: Thank you, that's very kind. I'd invite you to stay, but Rose Carroll will be here soon. She's helping me with math…sort of.

Carlie: That's so nice of her! She might not be the most popular girl, but she IS good at math.

Mimi: Yes, we all have our gifts.

Rose Bentley: Rose Carroll is such a good person…it's a shame that she's not more…attractive.

Jason: Odd that you should say that. My mother told me that she's very pretty.

Carlie: Oh, well…you know how moms are…
Mimi: But, Carlie, it's difficult for us to judge because we hang out with Rose Bentley.

Carlie: That's right! And she's so gorgeous and popular that no one else can measure up.

Rose Bentley: Ladies, you're embarrassing me. Jason, I'm very glad you can't see the blush on my face!

{Rose Carroll enters from her porch door. She starts to walk toward Jason’s home, but then she sees the other girls. But Jason has heard her footsteps, and he looks toward her.}

Jason: Rose, is that you?

Rose Carroll: Yes, but you have company, so I’ll come back later.

Jason: No! Come over. I want to talk to you.

{Rose Carroll approaches slowly.}

Rose Bentley: Come on, girls. We’d better go and let dear Rosie do her tutoring thing.

Mimi: Bye Jason. Enjoy your math lesson!

{Rose Bentley, Carlie, and Mimi exit. Rose Carroll steps onto the porch. Jason excitedly says something to her, but the audience doesn’t hear his words. Rose Carroll throws her arms about Jason happily, and they stand together as the stage darkens slightly. Finally Rose Carroll steps away.}

Rose Carroll: I’d better go, Jason. You should rest. You have a big day tomorrow.

Jason: Okay. Good night.

Rose Carroll: Good night.

{Jason exits through his porch door, and Rose Carroll moves to her own porch and sits down. Then she rises and walks about, looking up as if at the evening sky. Mr. Carroll enters through his porch door.}

Mr. Carroll: Rosie? Did you write that letter yet?

Rose Carroll: Letter? What letter?

Mr. Carroll: Rose! We talked about it 15 minutes ago! Your acceptance letter to the university nursing program, of course.

Rose Carroll: Oh, that letter…

Mr. Carroll: You were very fortunate to receive early admission, honey. They'll give your place to another student if you delay much longer.
Rose Carroll: Dad…I hate to disappoint you, but I don't think I want to go to nursing school.

Mr. Carroll: You don't? But, Rose, I thought…

Rose Carroll: Dad...dad…listen to me, please. I want to major in music.

Mr. Carroll: Music. Rose, that's foolish. What sort of career can you have with a music major? And how does music help people or contribute to improving the human condition?

Rose Carroll: Dad, why do I, Rose Carroll, have to single-handedly solve the world's problems? Can't I just…do what I want to do?

Mr. Carroll: That is a selfish remark, and one I never thought I'd hear from my daughter.

Rose Carroll: I'm sorry, Dad. But right now I can't solve my own problems, let alone the entire world's.

{Mr. Carroll realizes that Rose is troubled, and he takes her in his arms. Rose Carroll weeps on his shoulder.}

Mr. Carroll: What's wrong, honey? Can you talk about it?

Rose Carroll: Not…not really…but…but…I'll be okay. And, Dad, just give me two more days to think about nursing school, okay? Just two days.

Mr. Carroll: Of course. {He hugs her again.} I'm going in to watch some TV with my OTHER best girl. Are you coming in?

Rose Carroll: I think I'll stay out a little while longer. It's such a beautiful evening. {Mr. Carroll exits through the porch door. Rose sits on the porch and sighs.} Starlight, star bright, first star I see tonight, I wish I may, I wish I might, have this wish I wish tonight. I wish…I wish…that he would fall in love with me. I know that he’s far too handsome and clever for me…but I wish so much that he would love me.

Scene 8

{Jason is sitting on his porch listening to classical music. An overnight bag and light jacket are next to him. Carter and Lincoln enter from stage left or right.}

Carter: Dude, are you sure this is a good idea?

Lincoln: Sure! Rose C told me he has a great voice.

Carter: Yeah, but he's blind, so how will he read music?

Lincoln: Cart-Man! Did you ever hear anybody ask Ray Charles that?

Carter: No…
Lincoln: Well, come on. We need a singer.

{Jason hears them approaching and waits expectantly.}

Lincoln: Hey, Jason. Lincoln and Carter here. We live over near Erin on the next block.

Jason: The Presidents! I've been hoping to meet you.

{Jason switches off his music, and Carter and Lincoln join him on the porch. The three young men shake hands.}

Lincoln: So, Jason, you like that classical stuff?

Jason: Some of it. I promised Rose Carroll I'd listen to music because she said it would help me with math.

Carter: Music will help you with math? I don't know, dude. If that was true, I'd be Einstein.

Lincoln: Can it, Cart-Man. If Rose Carroll said music will help him with math, it must be true.

Carter: Uh, yeah...for sure.

Lincoln: It's lucky that we came over here with an idea to get Jason REALLY involved in music.

Carter: Yeah, super lucky!

Jason: I'm getting an interesting vibe here. Is it too much to ask that you guys get to the point?

Lincoln: The point is, Jason, we need a lead singer for our band, and Rose Carroll recommended YOU.

Jason: Rose Carroll recommended me...?

Carter: Yeah, she said you have a great voice!

Jason: But...I'm blind. I can't read music.

Lincoln: No problém. We'll teach you the songs by ear.

Jason: You will? Guys, I want to say yes! I really want to say yes. But...but...

Lincoln: But what?

Jason: You've got to promise me that if I can't keep up, you'll tell me. I don't want anyone feeling sorry for me. That's the worst, you know?

Carter: We hear ya, dude. But if you give it a chance, we'll do everything we can to make it work.
Lincoln: Concur.

Jason: Wow, this is so cool! I hope I can do it! I hope it works out!

Carter: You gotta know, it’s a lot of practice. It’s not always fun, ya know?

Lincoln: We rehearse every Tuesday and Thursday at my house, and you can’t miss rehearsal.

Carter: We’ll walk you over and back again.

Jason: Cool! Thanks, guys!

{Lincoln, Carter, and Jason shake hands happily.}

{Lincoln and Carter exit stage left or right.}

Jason: Yes! Singer in a band! Wow!

{Mrs. Grillo enters through the porch door.}

Mrs. Grillo: Time to go, Jason. We have to be at the hospital by ten.

Jason: Okay, Mom, I’m ready.

{Mrs. Grillo takes Jason's arm and begins to guide him toward stage right or left.}

{Rose Carroll enters from her porch door and hurries to Jason. The audience doesn’t hear the conversation between Rose Carroll, Jason, and Mrs. Grillo, but it is obvious that Rose is wishing him luck with his surgery.}

{Rose Bentley enters from stage right or left, but stops when she sees the others. They do not see her. Rose Bentley observes the group carefully.}

{Rose Carroll embraces Mrs. Grillo and then Jason. Jason and Mrs. Grillo exit, and Rose Carroll stands on stage looking after them wistfully.}

Rose Bentley: Well, well, well…I think sweet little Rosie’s in love.

{Rose Carroll turns back to her own porch, and Rose Bentley quickly ducks out of sight. Both exit.}
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