

DRA

by Johnny Dantonio

DRA musical - 1942...

Open on the General Jackson crowded with Marines, headed to (Tennessee Base),
at the front of the ship, young men laughing, unrealistic military dreams/wordless chatter...

LET IT RIDE .. main character is a marine en route to base...Solo verse, (all chorus "I wasn't ready to go") ... words stop at "tennessee's my brother," as they dock, instrumentals continues/ fades soon after excitement of Nashville port, arm and arm marines/ friends

DANCE ALL NIGHT... Debutante ball ...gorgeous girls slow dancing with boys... spot light center left, not front of stage, main character is beautiful southern belle

BAR LIGHTS — glorifying Marines life, southern belles .. also when/where boy and girl meet

MY LOVE FOR YOU IS REAL — falling in love
Callous dialogue

IF I AM A STRANGER — before departing, goodbye to girl

CALL ME ON YOUR WAY BACK HOME— girl as he leaves

PEACEFUL VALLEY — WWII arrival

WISH YOU WERE HERE — WWII violence

OMG, ETC. — train ride home

JACKSON SKYLINE— returned soldier, PTS.. girl coming to
comfort him...
marriage

HARDEST PART — duet... a tired couple trying, but struggling...
he is now a wood worker, she a dancer/dance teacher

SHADOWLANDS — PTS Nightmare while sleeping with her

SO ALIVE - girl trying to save them... she sings/cries only “I ... am
on your side! It isn't real” repeat... boy singing snippet from TURN
AROUND “its just the memory, and the distance and the damage still
between us...” overlapping...
physical/verbal abuse

WHAT SIN — drug use after WWII ... opiates into,
WHY DO THEY LEAVE — boy after drug use....

IN MY TIME OF NEED — girl discovered drug use, leaves him

MISS SUNFLOWER — sober boy, regret, apart/alone
AVENUES - girl, alone, saddened

DONT FAIL ME NOW — her dancing, him working.. emphasis on
persistence, endurance, working so hard to forget something

Last verse of MEADOWLAKE ST. — Girl running out of to wood
shop emphasis on the snare, harmonic build “... you an I” .. stops...
winter [SEE BELOW]

LIFE IS BEAUTIFUL — end

Ends with two long separated lovers,
happy and attached to things other than what they were, when
one,

I think it should be the woman,
notices an imperfection or a signifier or inside joke in the oddest
of places, at the oddest of times —

(lets say a post-ballroom dancing lesson which takes place in a
huge hardwood floor studio, full of other young women, when
she notices the callouses she has developed on the heels and toes on
her feet while changing shoes, the kind her lover once wrote to her
about in a poem while he was away at war, an allegory of the way
love stays smooth within the arches of two flawed people...)

— and drops all her things and abandons what she has grown
comfortable with,
turning and sprinting through city snow, lifting her dress to show
her ankles as she runs madly past strangers,
ruining her gown, to THIS SONG to find this man,
a man equally moved on, and who is probably found hard at work,
saw in hand, at a wood shop where he dirties himself to make desks
and chairs and such,
and as he sees her.

They both pause, before he seemingly blows the thing off as
mirage and begins to work again,
where upon she walks over to him and lifts a muddied foot to the
unfinished furniture and applies his hand along its length as she
stares at him,
tears building in his eyes to utter how ugly his insides have
become since his return from war
before looking at her and spreading his thumb and index
finger to massage the stiff skin at both ends,
which ignites her to respond, “I am too”.

