

# Tom and the magic door

## Synopsis

### *Dramatis personae*

Tom Freeman. A musician who has lost his way.

Mickey. A petty drug dealer.

Soul. The wise owner of a modest drugstore.

Mariana Trench. A kung fu master, friend of Soul.

Harbogast. The local policeman.

Johanna. A song writer and regular customer of Soul's drugstore.

Ted. Soul's teddy bear.

The Woman in blue.

Calypso. A nymph.

### Act I

#### 1.1 Opening scene. Lost in the crowd.

*(Tower of Power "Soul with a capital S")*

A busy bus station, rush hour, singers and band go full blast, the dancers sweep over the stage like a great flock of birds.

Everything quiets down, the stage empties. Tom Freeman is standing there, guitar case in hand, seemingly at a loss as to where to go. He watches the destinations panel go empty as the last bus leaves, shrugs, and goes sit down on the floor. He takes his guitar out of its case, puts his cap in front of him, and starts tuning his guitar. Harbogast, the local policeman, approaches him and allow him to play in the station. Tom starts singing, first alone, then the band joins in.

*("Bitter sweet symphony")*

Dark figures move in the station. Mickey, a petty drug dealer, is mugged. No one intervenes. After the attack, Mickey catches his breath, then goes to Tom, and asks where he is going. Tom answers that he doesn't know. Mickey offers to buy him a drink at the neighbouring drugstore. They exit.

#### 1.2 The drugstore

Tom and Mickey enter as Soul, the drugstore manager, and Mariana Trench, a friend, fight it out furiously and loudly with bokkens, all the while insulting each other. Harbogast, the local policeman, looks on benevolently. As it turns out, this was only their daily kenjutsu practice. They all greet Tom and chat. Enters Johanna, a song writer, who, finding out that Tom plays the guitar, invites him to play while she sings.

*(Ray Baretto's "pastime paradise")*

After inviting Tom to her flat one of these days to write a song with her, Johanna leaves, soon followed by Mickey.

Soul asks Tom whether he would accept to work in the drugstore. Tom agrees and thanks him.

#### 1.4 A few days later.

It is late evening, Soul and Tom are about to close for the night. Ted, Soul's teddy bear, asks Tom to sweep behind the counter. The clock chimes midnight, and the door to the storage room changes

colour. Tom wants to finish cleaning up, but Soul tells him he should better wait until the following morning. Tom insists. Soul leaves shortly after. Tom finishes sweeping the floor, then picks up a crate of beverages and enters the storage room. Ted wishes Tom a “good luck”

#### 1.4 The Ball of zero probability

Following a long fall in darkness, Tom finds himself in a ballroom, brightly lit and full of dancers.

*(Eurythmics “sweet dreams”)*

A man with extravagant costume and high heels welcomes Tom to the “Ball of zero probability” and invites him to join the dance by taking off his shoes. They are placed on a heap, and dancing partners are found by drawing two pairs, one from the female heap, one from the male heap. The orchestra starts playing, the dancers begin their circular motion around the room.

*(Dan Barta’s “Brother wolf and sister moon”)*

Tom dances with a masked woman, who reminds him of someone. As he asks her her name, all stop and look ominously at him. As Tom approaches the woman, great movement of panic. All flee screaming, and Tom is suddenly back in the grocery store, the woman’s shoes in his hands.

#### 1.4

Soul is sitting on the counter, and listens to Tom’s story. Tom wants to pass the Door again and return with the woman. Soul answers that he will have to train first, and offers his and Mariana’s guidance.

#### 1.5 Shooting practice

Inside the drugstore. Tom practices shooting with a plastic bow at a Coca-Cola poster (“the great Enemy” as Soul puts it). Soul explains the archer does not decide when to release the string, but that he must know when the moment has come for the arrow and the target to become one. Mariana arrives in tears, announcing that Bruce Lee is dead. Soul consoles him, saying that Bruce Lee’s atoms are now free to flow into a new living being.

*(Sun Ra’s “love in outer space”)*

Mickey arrives at the end of the training. Soul and Mariana leave, Mickey tells Tom of Harbogast’s hate towards him. Harbogast has lost his son, who died of an overdose, and thinks Mickey is responsible, although he only sells weed, and “never ever” deals with hard drugs, and never would.

#### 1.6 The magic of music.

Tom and Johanna work on a song in Johanna’s flat., throwing chords at each other with gusto.

*(“Fly like an eagle”)*

Harbogast arrives for a singing lesson.

*(Beyond the sea)*

Harbogast provokes Tom, who becomes very angry. Harbogast leaves.

Johanna plays a chord progression, but finishes on a dominant seven chord. She goes on telling to Tom that this is like casting a spell, and that they won’t be able to go to sleep that night if they don’t find the major chord, which might well be in Johanna’s bedroom. They go look for it, arm in arm...

### 1.7 High expectations.

Tom is alone in the drugstore, telling Ted about Johanna and the mysterious woman in blue from the ball. He then enters the Door a second time, confident that thanks to Soul's and Mariana's training, he will be able to come back with the woman.

End of Act I

## Act II

### 2.1 Second voyage. Calypso's island.

Tom is saved from drowning by Calypso. At first he is charmed by her company, and thinks he has found his place on her island. But he grows restless, and asks her to let him go.

*(Sting's "If you love somebody, set them free")*

Calypso refuses, and tries to convince Tom to stay with her. As she realizes he cannot love her, she relents and lets him go.

*(Suzanne Vega's "Calypso")*

### 2.2 Practicing once more

Tom and Mariana practice the kung fu drill called "chi sao", arms locked. Mariana keeps finding openings in between Tom's arms, which annoys Tom greatly. He becomes discouraged, and tells Mariana that he will never be ready for a third voyage behind the Door. Johanna enters, and tells Tom she missed him. They sit, and Tom tells Johanna of his past.

### 2.3 The third voyage.

Tom is sitting on the counter, looking at the Door. As midnight chimes, it turns red. Ted asks him why he does not dare to pass the Door again. Tom tells Ted of a vision he had a few days before. Ted reassures him, and Tom passes the door for the third time.

*(Madonna's "Frozen")*

### 2.4 Frozen, but still alive

Tom is back in the drugstore, on his knees. Soul comes to him and puts his hand on Tom's shoulder. Tom tells him that he has failed, and will never go back behind the Door. He then announces that he will leave the next day.

### 2.5 The last training

Tom and Mariana practice one last time. Tom's bag is ready. Johanna comes to say goodbye

*("I wish you love")*

Johanna leaves.

Soul, Ted and Mariana wish Tom well. Tom picks up his bag and leaves for the bus station.

### 2.6 The bus station, late evening.

The place is nearly deserted. Mickey is discreetly selling his "stuff" to someone downstage. Harbogast appears, shouts "police, freeze". The customer disappears, Harbogast points his gun

towards Mickey. Seeing they are alone, Harbogast tells Mickey that he is going to shoot him. Tom appears. Realizing what is happening, he moves in between the two, and tries to assuage the policeman. Harbogast orders Tom to get out of his way. Mickey makes an unexpected gesture which startles Harbogast, who pulls the trigger. Tom falls.

2.7 On the other side of the door, one last time.

(Dan Barta's "O Maria, o felix Puerpera")

Tom stands up, leaving his inanimate body behind. The Woman in blue appears, he gives her her shoes back, and they talk. Tom asks where he should look for her on the other side. She suggests he looks for the number nine. They dance.

(Enya's "only time")

2.7 The circle of life.

Tom is back at the bus station, as in 1.1. Again, Mickey is mugged, but this time, Tom stops the aggressor with a sharp "get lost". Mickey goes to him, thanks him, and asks where he is headed. Tom asks in return whether a bus is leaving soon from platform nine. Mickey says yes. Tom smiles and declares simply "This is the bus I will take, then. Goodbye, Mickey". Mickey is astounded that this stranger knows his name. They leave.

2.8 Emptiness and fulfillment.

Soul is sitting cross-legged on his counter drinking lassi from a pack. Ted tells him that he misses Tom, and asks whether Tom really had to leave. Soul quotes the tao te king "observe how endings become beginnings." Soul takes a new lassi, opens it, and resumes drinking.

### Epilogue

Tom on stage with a band, singing Stevie Wonder's "Don't you worry 'bout a thing". An enthusiastic audience dances in front of the stage. Finale, dancing, etc...

**The end**