

THE *Lotte Lenya* COMPETITION SONGBOOK

“The Kettle Song” from *Darling Grenadine* *Music & lyrics by Daniel Zaitchik*

SHOW SYNOPSIS

When charismatic songwriter Harry falls for clever actress Louise, all of Manhattan glitters with the blush of new love. But what happens when the sparkling fantasy begins to dissolve? What begins as a whimsical romantic comedy that nods to the backstage musicals of yesteryear, becomes an intimate, contemporary exploration of addiction and denial, as both Harry and Louise must confront patterns in their own behavior they’ve been unwilling to see.

SONG CONTEXT AND SCENE DESCRIPTION

Three years after walking away from her relationship with Harry, Louise invites him over to her apartment for a platonic catch-up. Their relationship ended suddenly and tempestuously; there was never closure. Though they’ve both moved on and Louise is now happily married and pregnant, they still have deep affection and respect for one another. Her leaving him was a complicated decision, and one that she’s often questioned, but it led Harry to eventually confront his demons, and it allowed Louise to address her own unhealthy behavior. A little awkward at first, the reunion becomes a warm conversation and it’s clear they are both proud of how far the other has come. Louise’s career is thriving, and Harry appears to be healthy and sober. And though things remain strictly friendly, there is no denying the easy chemistry they still have.

They sit at Louise’s kitchen table and she offers to make tea. As she sings, bittersweet feelings arise, and we see how two things can be true at once: she can be secure in her current life, and also hold love for Harry and curiosity about their short-lived romance, which may have had a happier ending under different circumstances. And while it’s been clear to us all along how much Harry loved Louise, here we learn what’s gone unspoken: this was the “what if” romance of her life as well. Yet, it’s not a tragedy, just part of the grey complexity of life. She is a confident woman with a partner she loves and a child on the way; still, she wants to sit in this moment with Harry for a little longer. It’s likely to be the last time they see each other alone.

CHARACTER DESCRIPTION

Louise. Late 20s - mid 30s. Mezzo. Warm and light; folky. Brainy, quick-witted, vulnerable and deeply empathetic (to a fault). An off-beat leading lady; a contemporary young Diane Keaton. We meet Louise as a self-conscious understudy and follow her as she becomes a confident Broadway star.

NOTES ON PERFORMANCE

The song alternates between external and internal thoughts. In production, this has been indicated with lighting shifts or simply a slight turn of the head. The distinction should be subtle and seamless. While it's a fine choice to have a kettle and mugs (or imaginary ones), it can be just as effective (if not more) to allow the song to exist poetically without props. With a simple and honest delivery, we can imagine the action without needing to see it.