

# The Ones Who Walk away from Omelas

## Scene I

*[Song: Good Morning Star Shine by Oliver Urdaneta]*

*[The sound of a train pulls into the Omelas Town Station. The train makes a toot noise as the train engineer shouts off stage.]*

**Train Engineer:** Next stop Omelas!

*[Lights On]*

*[Enter a mild mannered gentleman named Derek Love wearing black rimmed glasses, a conservative colorless coat and a black tie. Derek moves down stage with a gentle pace, while adjusting the tightness of his tie. He is greeted by two beautiful women down-center stage with flowers in their hair named Amy Eilish and Barbie Swift. Amy is wearing a seductive red dress and black heels. Derek notices the smell of her strong perfume and takes a huge whiff with the look of intoxication. Barbie is equally charming wearing an appealing small skirt layered in lace. Amy and Barbie's faces are permeated with happiness.]*

**Amy Eilish:** Welcome to Omelas Mr. Love. I'm Amy Eilish and this is my associate Barbie Swift. When we read your application, we...well, the committee thought you would be a perfect fit for our little utopia.

*[Derek gives Amy and Barbie a firm handshake.]*

**Derek Love:** Thank you Miss Eilish and Miss Swift. I'm hoping for a new start.

**Barbie Swift:** *(sincerely empathetic)* I'm so sorry for your loss. When we heard what happened to your wife...

*[Derek makes an awkward gesture. Amy recognizes that Derek is slightly uncomfortable.]*

**Amy:** Barbie...

*[Barbie realizes she overstepped a boundary.]*

**Barbie:** ...I 'm sorry. I didn't mean to bring up something so personal.

**Derek:** No worries. Of course, it's on my application for residency here. My wife Justice battled cancer for 2 years and we made our peace. I don't want to reach for a bottle of wine when I think of my wife. I'm here not to forget her, but to be able to carry on with my life till I see her again in the next one.

**Amy:** We completely understand Mr. Love.

**Derek:** Please call me Derek.

**Amy:** Yes, Derek. Everything in Omelas is peaceful and wonderful. The joy of Omelas is not the joy of ignorance, but the joy generated by wisdom. Everyone here is educated and wise. But most importantly we are happy. Please allow us to give you a tour of our town.

**Derek:** Absolutely.

*[Derek, Amy and Barbie walk together down Main Street. The town is filled with exuberant colors. National flags of all sorts hang from the French style architecture. There is also food vending booths, artists working on their latest painting and carnival games on every other corner street. Green parks for playing, beautiful libraries and a giant Ferris wheel are other notable things in town. ]*

**Derek:** The buildings here are beautiful. It's like being in Paris. *(looks up)* A flying car?! *(looks down)* The roads are made of smooth marble like an ancient city. Omelas is the best of both the future and the past. This is truly amazing.

*[Amy and Barbie smile and wave to all the townsfolk. Up stage people socialize happily on the street, some skipping, some prancing and some with their head phones on. Children are laughing & quarrelling in a playful manner. Pedestrians are eager to give Derek a warm greeting. Derek greets back at them with a smile and a wave.]*

*[A smiling teenage girl wearing headphones enters from right stage. Sound: Teen Pop from her iPod]*

**Teen Pedestrian:** Welcome to Omelas.

*[A smiling elderly man wearing headphones enters left stage. Sound: classical music from his iPod]*

**Elderly Pedestrian:** Welcome to Omelas.

*[Enter left stage a mother and father pushes their baby carriage.]*

**Pedestrian parents:** Welcome to Omelas.

**Amy:** As you can see, Omelas is pure happiness but not without sacrifice... Shall we sit on the park bench?

**Derek:** Good idea.

*[Amy, Barbie and Derek sit down on the bench. A golden retriever dragging Anson enters from right stage. Anson, panting from exhaustion, tries in vain to stop his dog. Anson's funny expression makes Amy, Barbie and Derek laugh.]*

**Anson:** Good day Amy and Barbie. So this is our new resident.

**Derek:** Hello, I'm Derek.

**Anson:** *(Anson shakes Derek's hand.)* My name is Anson. I'm the town mayor. Well, I work for the citizens of Omelas anyway. We don't believe in kings or in any other ultimate positions of power here. Welcome aboard! I'll see you tonight at the welcoming ceremony.

*[Anson leaves as Derek waves his hand goodbye.]*

**Barbie:** Golden retrievers are very naughty, making a mess in the house. They are disobedient creatures that urinate everywhere.

**Amy:** I did have a love-hate relationship with my pet... until we moved to Omelas. If you notice, the streets are completely clean because even the pets here are ethical.

*[Amy and Barbie look at each other and laugh.]*

## Scene II

*[The local inhabitants gather together in an old church as 1950's American Christmas music plays in the background. The church is the only structure in town that looks tattered and old. A giant feast with an assortment of dishes and wine bottles are set on a long dinner table covered in a red table cloth center stage. The dinner table is on the stage floor where a pastor used to preach. A colorful stained glass image of Jesus Christ hangs high behind the dinner table looking over the festivity. The children in the background crowd around a Christmas tree while playing with their new toys and opening gifts. Barbie, Amy and all the passerby people that Derek encountered earlier in the day are all sitting at the table. A man named Angelo sits in the center of the table. He wears a bishop's robe but he does not represent any religion. Anson sits beside him on one side and Derek sits on the other side.]*

**Derek:** A Christmas party in the middle of July. I am impressed. Oh, what's that delicious smell?

**Amy:** Derek, would you like to try a utopian hot dog?

**Derek:** Utopian hot dog? Don't mind if I do.

*[Amy passes a hotdog to Derek then he takes a bite and savors it.]*

**Derek:** This is scrumptious! Unbelievable!

**Barbie:** Derek, it is time to try Omelas' secret sauce. Are you ready?

**Derek:** *(excitedly)* Yes, I can't wait.

*[Barbie sitting next to Derek squeezes secret sauce on Derek's hot dog. Derek takes another bite of the hotdog.]*

**Derek:** *(in ecstasy)* Wow! What a sauce! The aftertaste...words cannot describe the deliciousness.

*[Anson stands up]*

**Anson:** Young citizens of Omelas and those young at heart. Our town founder Angelo would like to speak.

**Angelo:** Don't be shy. Just enjoy and have fun. I have provided plenty of wine for everyone. In Omelas, we live in the moment. And to our new citizen Derek Love, we welcome you to our community.

**Everyone:** Hip-hip hooray!

*[Everyone drinks except for Derek.]*

**Derek:** Is life always this good here? It seems that everyone is in complete bliss...

**Angelo:** What do YOU think of our little town?

**Derek:** I've heard rumors about Omelas; that the inhabitants made a pact with the devil in exchange for utopia.

**Barbie:** *(amused)* I assure you Mr. Love. Most of us are god fearing citizens and our secular residents don't believe in hell. We have Christians, Muslims, Buddhists and Atheists living together in harmony.

**Derek:** Another rumor is that the technological leaps of Omelas are due to extra-terrestrials...

**Angelo:** As for aliens, I have yet to meet any.

*[Everyone laughs.]*

**Angelo:** Once again, what do YOU think of our little town?

**Derek:** I think that Omelas is a government funded experiment. How else could you operate independently without interference? How else could you explain the unlimited resources? Honestly, I don't care how you maintain this utopian city. I just want to be happy and sober.

**Angelo:** That's what I like to hear. Bring in the boy!

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*[Enter the married couple Derek saw earlier in the day with the baby carriage. They drag a young boy about eight years old down-center stage in front of the dinner table. The boy is in filthy tattered clothes and wearing chains around his neck, legs and hands. The boy is beaten, bruised and dirty. He shows no expression and his mind seems to be gone. The locals scream, curse and throw food at the boy. Everyone calls him horrible names and some leave the table to kick and punch the boy. Even the children hiss at the boy. Derek tries to contain his horror and sorrow while looking at the boy carefully, seemingly already knowing the truth about Omelas.]*

*[The boy stutters words as if just trained to.]*

**The Boy:** Good evening, sir.

*[Angelo whispers mockingly in the boy's ear. The boy gives a strange expression.]*

**Angelo:** Just pretend you're happy, beast.

*[Derek looks like he's seen a ghost. He responds in a shaky voice to the boy even though he knows the boy's words might as well have come from a puppet. Derek tries to hold back tears.]*

**Derek:** Good evening, come here to sit with me... if you want to.

*[The boy's eyes blink expressionlessly.]*

**Barbie:** Oh Derek, no he can't sit here with us. He must suffer.

*[Barbie backs away from the boy, slowly covering her nose and mouth. Angelo beckons Anson to move the boy away from him. Angelo cannot bear the smell of blood and sweat from the boy.]*

**Amy:** Derek, don't worry about it. He's used to it. It's ok. He must suffer for the salvation of Omelas.

**Derek:** I know.

*[Everyone gasps. Derek angrily throws a wine bottle to the floor breaking the glass. The boy looks into space as if nothing occurred with a strange expression. Derek thrusts himself in front of the boy to protect him. The townsfolk surround Derek ready to pounce on him. Derek holds the broken glass bottle like a cutting knife.]*

**Derek:** For god's sake, what the hell are you doing to this poor boy? Utopia falls apart even if one person suffers! All you did is made another class system except now there is only one poor person in the bottom class.

**Angelo:** If you know, then you know this boy has no feelings or a mind of his own. You know this town will lose all happiness and hope if this boy can somehow feel love. We welcomed you to our town because you said you would do anything to be happy. This is a fair trade! ...There's one thing I must ask you, Derek. How do you know? Tell me the truth!

**Derek:** My wife walked away from Omelas 5 years ago. She told me the horrible truth. She was quite different from the rest of you. Loving...caring...But you guys pushed her to hell. She left so she got cancer.

**Anson:** You too must leave Omelas.

**Derek:** I won't. I can't let him go on suffering.

**Angelo:** *(with a wicked smile)* Don't force us to kill you, Derek. Besides, you see he wouldn't go with you even if he could.

**Derek:** I'm not trying to take him away from this place. I know there is no way out. I'm here to trade places with him.

*[The townsfolk express confusion.]*

**Derek:** But under one condition.

**Angelo:** ...and what is that?

**Derek:** You must bring back the boy's ripple in his heart. For once he must experience love replacing the suffering he has endured. Furthermore, you must treat him like a king for the rest of his life. Finally, you must give him an honorable name.

*[The townsfolk beg Derek to stop. Derek firmly holds the boy's hand and looks into the boy's eyes.]*

**Derek:** I love you son.

*[The boy shakes and gives an unclear response. Did he understand? Angelo realizes what might occur that Omelas could crumble. With a worried look and without hesitation Angelo summons the people of Omelas with a physical gesture to unchain the boy and to chain Derek.]*

**Angelo:** Move... Quickly before the spell is broken. Break his spirit then put him in the basement.

*[The people of Omelas kick, punch and spit on Derek while yelling and screaming at him in anger. Angelo changes his expression toward the boy. He comforts the boy and guides him off stage. Derek looks behind to see the boy off to his new life then smiles toward the audience while being beaten. Then Derek looks to the sky.]*

**Derek:** This is for Justice.

*[Lights turn off.]*

**The End**