

WHITE ROCK

A ONE ACT PLAY

by

IAN A. BROWN

1984

(Lights up on a sign that reads, 'BY THE SEASIDE - NOT SO LONG AGO'. Hold a few seconds. Lights out. A few seconds pause. Lights up slowly. As lights go up, we hear the first few bars of a song. At the piano, STAGE, LEFT is Randy. He is dressed like a twenties music-hall actor. He wears white flannel trousers, a striped blazer, and a boater.

Scene I:

RANDY: *(singing)*

Sunny White Rock by the sea
We're as lucky as can be
Never snows, always mild
It's a west coast haven for your child

People come from East and West
From Montreal and Budapest
From London, England and Hong Kong too
Come on everybody, enjoy the view

(Solo. Tap dance.)

East of Eden, west of the sun
Move out here folks and have some fun
Buy a house before it's too late, I'm
Randy your rep. in Real Estate
Randy the rep, Randy the rep
I'm Randy your rep. in Real Estate

(gesturing expansively) It's the potential of the place, eh? Just takes your breath away. (*Sound of waves and seagulls can be heard*). I mean you sit down here on a beautiful summer's day, and out there, you see the Cascades and Mount Baker, and over there, *(gestures slightly left of centre)* you got the great U.S. of A and beautiful Birch Bay. I mean, ain't that great folks? The U.S. only a stone's throw away. Let's face it. That's a big selling point, eh.

(Confidentially) I tell some of my male clients, 'hey listen, only five minutes from here, you got not one, but two hard-core porno movie-houses. No, really - I don't mind telling you, that's been the clincher for quite a few folks. And you can't blame 'em eh? I mean, the sexual revolution sort of passed by places like Moose Jaw and Brandon. Right? Right.

(Pause. Uncertain as to whether or not his pitch is favorable.)

Yes, well anyway, you folks are probably not into that kind of thing, and frankly I don't blame you. I mean who needs it anyway? Right? Right. I mean it's not very wholesome, is it? And believe me, many of my clients are very wholesome types. You know, organic apple juice, natural grain foods, plenty of exercise, etcetera, etcetera. Anyway, these

wholesome types go crazy when they come here. They just can't believe it. Take the climate for instance. You know what I mean. Folks used to trudging through the mush and slush of Montreal or Toronto in March, or trying to get their car started on a minus 30 degree day in Edmonton. They just can't believe it here. Like this year. Mildest in memory. No snow. Crocuses in February. Paddles in the sea in April. Yes folks, all in all, a holistic environment for the wholesomes.
(Indicating a banner) 'Holism for

the Wholesomes' ... hey, I like that, it's catchy. *(Pause)* But seriously folks, you know, the real reason people come here? Do you? Well I'll tell you. Freedom. Yes that's right, freedom. That's what it's all about here. Freedom to be yourself. Freedom to do your own thing. Freedom for you kids. Freedom for your wife ... *(aside)* within reason, as Trudeau said to his wife. Ha, ha. Even freedom for your dog. Yes folks, here you've got it all. Free beaches, free swimming, free canoeing, free enterprise. You name it and it's free. Except Real Estate of course, ha, ha, ha.
Yes it's ... *(sitting, at the piano and singing)*

Sunny White Rook by the sea

We're as lucky as can be
Never snows, always mild
It's a west coast haven for your child

People come from East and West
From Montreal and Budapest
From London England and Hong Kong too
Come on everybody, enjoy the view

East of Eden, west of the sun
Move out here folks and have some fun
Buy a house before it's too late
I'm Randy your rep. in Real Estate
Randy the rep, Randy the rep
I'm Randy your rep. in Real Estate. (
Lights off)

Scene 2: *(Light's up slowly. Sound of waves and seagulls. After a few moments, the sounds of deep inhalation are heard from behind the White Rock. Eventually HERPY enters)*

HERPY: Wow. Far out man. Look at those waves. See, here's a little one. Here it comes ... getting bigger ... see the sun sparkle on it ... here it comes ... *(he makes the sound of a crashing wave)* Wow ... rhythm. That's where it's at man. Rhythm in all things, like those waves. Never ending, back and forth. Now that's sensual man. Mmm ... *(moving hips)* rhythmic waves back and forth ... like fuckin' when

you're stoned. Hey, it's all interconnected, man.

(He looks around) hey Dianne, where are you baby? Your old man needs you. *(He ends his undulating with a grunt)* Yeah, we bin together quite a while Dianne and me. (*Gesturing*) We live up there on Kozmic Alley, just above the railroad tracks. That's right man. That's what they call it, 'Kozmic Alley', 'cos that's where all the drifters and freaks live. You can score anything there man, weed, speed, smack, acid ... you name it. You can catch just about anything there too. It's like them sweatshirts I seen around, 'I caught crabs in White Rock'. People got a sense of humor around here man. That's why we moved out here, the dope that is ... hey the crabs we can do without. Like things were getting tight back east, know what I mean. See we met this guy in Cabbagetown 'bout a year ago. We got rappin', 'bout how things were pretty bad in the east. Like not just the dope scene but the whole thing man, I man the whole fuckin' rat race there. Too many people into money and making it there man. It ain't healthy. So anyways, he says 'go west fellow freaks', or something like that. 'That's where it's at', he says. 'Alberta's got the jobs and B.C's got the dope', he says. 'Man, there's even a place called White Rock where you can find magic mushrooms growing right there in the fields.

You can help yourself', he says. 'Walk away with armfuls, no hassle'. So that does it man. We jump into the Econoline and out we come, Dianne, me, and the two kids, Dylan and Sarah. (Pause) And man, let me tell you, that dude ... he wasn't jiving us. Like this place **is** magical, with or without mushrooms. Know what I mean? Hey, alright, let me lay it down for you.

(HERPY makes up poem as he goes along and enacts it in a very stoned and graphic way. He sounds like a cross between 'Zoot' of 'The Muppet Show and Mohammed Ali.)

There's a magic mountain across the plain

There's a magic rock upon the shore
There's magic in the morning mist
There's magic in a ... shit man, what

rhymes

with 'mist' ... hey and
There's magic in a soul-stoned piss
Yes, there's magic in the chain of isles
That shimmer in the sunset light
And there's magic in my lady's loins
When we make love all through the night
The magic spirits, they draw me near
They say my karma's led me here
They caste a spell that soothes my soul
And makes me dig White Rock and Roll ..

(Moving towards the piano)

'Cos that's what's underneath it all man ...
white rock and roll.

(He starts playing and singing)

White Rock and Roll

It's so good for your soul,

White Rook and Roll

I'm a fishy swimming is a shoal

White Rock White Rock and Roll

White Rock and Roll

I'm an underground and antiquated mole

White Rock and Roll

I'm a-floating through a big black hole

White Rock, White Rock and Roll

White Rock and Roll

I'm an angel climbing up a pole

White Rock and Roll

It's so very, very good for your soul

White Rock, White Rock and Roll

You see, it's back to rhythm man, like those
waves rollin' and rockin' their way to shore.

(Pause) Shit ... time for another toke. *(He
heads for behind the rock, pauses and turns
around)* I have to say it man. Diane and me
... we've had our problems ... but this place
has given us a new start. Like we're on a
real high. I don't mind sayin' it. Well ...
excuse me. Welcome to Supernatural B.C. *(He
disappears behind the rock, Lights dim and*

out to the accompaniment of renewed deep inhalation)

Scene 3: *(Lights up. Sound of waves and children playing)*

VERONICA: *Melodramatically)* Ah this precious stone set beside the silver sea, this blessed plot, this earth, this ... White Rock. Well of course it's not the Old Country but as far as I'm concerned, it's the next best thing. *(She sets up a deck chair and then takes out a thermos and some sandwiches)* *(Pause)*

At least it's clean. Quite frankly, my dear, when I first heard the name 'White' Rock, I was immediately attracted to the place. I mean the name says so much, doesn't it? It conveys an image of solidity and cleanliness. And when I first came here I was terribly impressed. Attractive little houses with neatly kept gardens. A small, unostentatious town. No nasty, urban sprawl. And my dears, a veritable proliferation of churches. Now that always tells you something about a place, wouldn't you say? Mind you, it **is** something of an untamed paradise in other ways. Of course, there's no culture to speak of, but then what would you expect? After all, Canada is so frightfully young, isn't it? Good heavens, this was still virtually frontier land only thirty or forty years ago. Yes,

there's no question one has to adjust to the uncivilized aspects of life here. It's the little things one notices. Like the scarcity of pavements, or what do they call them here, 'sidewalks'. What a mother pushing a baby in a pram is meant to do, I really don't know. Then of course there's that dreadful eye-sore of a railway running all the way along the beachfront, with absolutely no fence or any kind of protection for little children. But it's the things that affect you personally that niggle the most. For instance, where am I supposed to buy my Sunday Telegraph? And where, for heaven's sake, can I find someone with whom I can discuss something more interesting than pruning trees or what's wrong with the medicare system. *(Pause)*

Ah ... but all in all the compensations more than suffice. *(She throws some bread to the seagulls)* At least here there's none of that creepy-crawly socialism that's ruining England. There seems to be respect for law and order here, thank God. Good heavens, there's more support for the Monarchy here than there is in the Old Country. It probably all comes back to the influence of the church. It's as our vicar said the other day: 'our community is a rock of cleanliness and decency in a mire of stinking excrement. Ah, how true ... *(Pause)*

(Striking a pose) 'White Rock! This fortress built by Nature for herself against infection

and the hand of war. *(Breaking the pose and becoming like a little girl, she starts to dance and sing. Her fruity accent is replaced by a Lancashire inflection, a la Gracie Fields)*

Oh I do like to be beside the seaside!
I do like to be beside the sea
I do like to stroll upon the prom, prom,
prom

Where the brass bands play tiddely om
pom pom

So just let me be beside the seaside
I'll be beside myself with glee
And there's lots of girls beside
I should like to be beside
Beside the seaside, beside the sea.

(Exit VERONICA OFF RIGHT, waving hand in vaudeville style. Lights off)

Scene 4:

(Randy enters RIGHT in jogging outfit. Sound of seagulls, waves and heavy rain. Throughout his talking, Randy keeps exercising, e.g. jogging on the spot, push-ups, sit-ups, etc.)

RANDY: *(Confidentially, -to the audience, with frequent furtive looks around)*

Hey, listen, everything I say now is strictly off the record. I mean you gotta keep your image, eh? You gotta keep smiling. But

frankly, between you and me, your old Randy is not altogether happy at the moment.

(Starts doing vigorous push-ups) White Rock in November ... depressing ... business not good ... only sold one house so far this month ... everyone hibernates this time of year ... rains all the time ... gray, dark, dismal ... gets dark at four ... *(pause)*

(doing. stretching exercises) the potential's here, but no-one's exploiting it ... things deteriorating ... city council sitting on their hands ... developers frustrated ... lots of land to be developed but City won't give Permits ... acres of virgin land right in the center of White Rock, lying useless, wasted ... it's a crying shame ...over there *(he gestures LEFT)* a whole beach-front with masses of prime land just waiting ... just begging to be transformed ... but of course that's Indian land ... the Feds wouldn't let us get anywhere near it. *(Pause)* Yes, between you and me folks, this town's becoming stagnant you got the old folks up the hill and the hippies down here on the waterfront ... they've got to start attracting regular folk ... they've got to revitalize this place. And hey, listen, if things don't change, I may just turn my hand to something else. Your old Randy's no slouch, no sir. For instance, there's mucho bucks to be made selling hot tubs. You'd better believe it. *(Pause)*

Shit! Things are even getting to Janie and I ... I have to say it ... we're a little frayed at the seams at the moment ... she wants to move back into Vancouver ... says she doesn't have any friends out here ... says she's lonely ... I'm different, I've got friends, the boys at the office, the guys I go bowling with ...

(Confidentially) But, you know, between you and me, you know what I miss? ... what I really miss is a little something on the side, you know what I mean? In Vancouver it was easy. But out here they're either too young, too old, or married ... well, and then there's the hippies and single mothers and stuff like that ... *(pause)*

My friend Jock, he says to me the other day? Have you ever considered wife-swapping? Jeez! Can you believe that? 'Wife-swapping!' I said, c'mon Jock, who are you kidding? There isn't anything like that out here'. And he says, oh you'd be surprised'. I mean, it was interesting what he was saying, but there are limits eh? I don't want anyone fooling around with my wife, I can tell you. *(Pause)* Well I'd better get going. Yup, things ain't good folks but they could always be worse. At least there's going to be Municipal Elections soon. So who knows eh? Maybe we can get the right sort of guy in. Someone to get things moving. Someone to revitalize this place.

(Exit RIGHT jogging. Lights off)

Scene 5

(Sound of seagulls and waves. HERPY is huddled in a sleeping-bag in front of the rock as lights go up. The lighting indicates early morning. After a while there are signs of stirring.

HERPY: Hey, how about this man? It's Herpy, the Last of' the Hippies. Former husband, former Father, stripped of his titles, eking out an existence on the beach. Too much, huh? You see, it's quite simple man. It was just a case of her removing her magical loins from my bed and depositing them in someone else's ... permanently. Pouf! *(gesturing like a magician)* So long, Magic.

(Pause. He rolls a cigarette)

It ain't so bad here. Shit, it's not even Spring yet. Imagine crashing out on Toronto Island in March ... freeze your nuts off. *(He gets out of the sleeping-bag and. begins to pace the stage in an agitated fashion. He mutters to himself)* Keep movin' man. You gotta keep movin'.

(To audience) See, I don't understand it man. *(He becomes motionless)* I don't understand why she done it. Like it was groovy. We were tight. It was a new start. *(Pause)* It happened over a week ago. She walked out on

me. She split. Just like that. I bin sleepin' out here since then. Can't go back there man. *(Becoming agitated again)* Can't go back. I don't know how to say it man. It hurts. It fuckin' hurts. *(He starts pacing again)* That's why I walk. You gotta keep movin' when you're hurtin' *(Pause)* I'm confused man. I mean, I don't even know where she fuckin' is. She just walked out on me. And she took the kids with her. She took Dylan and Sarah. She can't do that man. She don't have no right. She don't have no right to do that. You know what she said man? *(He stops pacing)* I mean, like this is as she's walking out the door, right? She says, 'Herp, I've bin seein' this other dude ... I'm movin' in with him'. Yeah, and then she turns round and says, 'man, you, ain't never gonna get your act together'. That's it man. That's all. And the thing is, I ain't even angry with her. I mean, I love that chick. She's my old lady. What happened to Peace and Love man? Except, you know what, I still believe in it. It's like I have to believe. I mean it's all karma man, right? There's a reason for everything. She'll come back. I know she'll come back. No point getting uptight, man. Like she's doin' her own thing. There's gotta be a reason for it. *(Pause)* Yeah! Peace and love ... it ain't dead man. You've just got to give it a chance. Lennon

was right man. Give it a chance and things'll work out.

(He takes a felt tip pen out of his bag and makes a big peace sign on the rock. Then he addresses the rock)

Hey Spirit of The Great White Rock, I hope you're listening man. Give it a chance man, that's all I'm askin'. *(Pause)*

(Regaining his defenses. Speaking to audience) Jesus, here I am, speaking to a fuckin' rock! You know what I need man? I need someone to straighten my head out. Like a shrink or a shaman ... or a guru. That's it. I need a fuckin'guru - someone to help me make sense of all this shit. There shouldn't be any problem finding one. There are whole fuckin' islands of 'em out here; Saltspring island, Gabriola island, Vancouver island, the Queen Charlotte islands ... *(thinks)* Granville island. Trouble is man, how do you know the real ones from the fakes?

(He suddenly strikes a dramatic pose facing the audience and begins the 'Guru' song. The first four lines are spoken rhythmically and interspersed with hand-claps. The question is delivered forcefully to the audience.

Gestures are a la Mick Jagger. 'Guru' is in two syllables, GU - RU.

Are you *(clap clap)* Guru? *(clap clap)*

Are you *(clap clap)* Guru? *(clap clap)*

Are you, *(clap clap)* Guru? *(Clap clap)*

C'mon tell me now man, are you a guru?

(At piano, he sings)

So many people, tightly wound
So many people feeling bound
They need a guru, to slow them down
They need a guru to break new ground
They need a guru to make them see
Their navel, jump off the Tower of Babel
Well stop your talking and look inside
Quit your job and you will find
That the answer is really clear
You gotta withdraw for at least a year

You gotta retreat and take it slow
Quit your job and learn to grow
Crunchy foods and meditate

If you stick to it man you might
levitate

I need a guru, a guru right now
I need a guru to save me somehow
I need a guru to put me straight
(ad lib, spoken rhythmically)
To help me Meditate and levitate and
reveal my fate

And show me the gate before it's too
late

I'm in such a state, I can't find a date

And I've lost my mate, I just can't wait
...
I need a guru, guru, guru, a guru right
now
I need a guru, guru, guru, a guru right
now
I need a guru, guru, guru, a guru right
now
G - U - R - U, Shazam, Kapow!

(Lights off abruptly)

Scene 6

*(Lights up. Sound of seagulls and waves. Enter
VERONICA stage RIGHT
carrying a can of white paint)*

VERONICA: Now this is the kind of thing that truly disgusts me! *(she points to the sign on the rock)* Sheer wanton vandalism, that's what I call it. I thought this town was free of this kind of thing. *(Pause)*
You know, this especially upsets me as it was only the other day that I learned the history of this rock. The vicar told me that there was an Indian legend explaining how this rock came to be here. Well, of course I was immediately interested. You know when people in the Old Country think of Canada, they have a picture of four things

in their minds - Indians, Eskimos, Mounties, and bears. They mistakenly believe that's where the interest lies. They just don't know any better. They haven't a clue about the rest - hockey, horseshoe-throwing, pancakes, Baby Duck, Beaver Tails. Well anyway ... back to my story. One day I toddled along to the library and I dug up this legend. Well my dears, it's simply fascinating! So without further ado, I'll tell it to you. *(Pause)* Are you sitting comfortably? Good ... then, I'll begin. The Legend Of The Great White Rock. Once upon a time, long before the white man, there lived a beautiful Indian princess on the shores of what we now call Vancouver Island. One day her father, the Chief of the Cowichan tribe, decided that it was high time a suitable husband be found for his daughter. So he invited all the eligible braves on the island to attend a big contest to determine who was the fittest to marry his gorgeous daughter.

Well the day of the competition came, and from dawn to dusk, the assembled braves shot their arrows, and. threw their spears and wrestled each other, but by the end of the day, there wasn't one man who stood out clearly as being clearly superior to the others.

So the contest continued into a second day. Once again, the braves shot their arrows, threw their spears, and wrestled each other.

Well, by the time the sun set at the end of the second day, an undercurrent of discontent had set in. The braves were, to put it mildly, a trifle testy that the Chief had not yet announced a victor. For his part, the Chief was stomping around saying things like 'bunch of weaklings', 'not like in my day' ... 'just won't do', and so on.

Meanwhile, the beautiful princess sat out on a rock by herself, gazing across the waters and wishing secretly that they would all go away. 'How can I marry someone I don't love?' she was thinking to herself. 'I wish my father, much as I love him, would let me make my own choices. Just then, there was a mighty sound of rushing water, and out of the sea there appeared the most - well how can I put it, the most scrumptious young man. It was love at first sight. 'Who are you!?' asked the princess breathlessly, as she tried not to blush. 'I am the son of the mighty Sea God', he replied in a deep and resonant voice and without further ado, he swept her into his glistening arms saying, 'you are so beautiful you are not fit to be wed to a mere mortal. I, the Prince of the Sea claim your hand for myself. You will live with me beneath the waves. Well my dear, how could she refuse?

But ... alas, they hadn't counted on, guess who? Of course - their fathers ... always the villain in this kind of story. When the Sea

God heard the news in his kingdom beneath the waves, he was absolutely livid. 'How **dare** you marry a mere mortal', he said to his son.

'You have defied my will. Leave my kingdom henceforth, **never** to return!' In shock and dismay the two lovers returned to the Cowichan Chief, but he too rejected their union.

Well that was quite enough for the young Prince. In a fury, he climbed a nearby mountain and, finding a huge rock, he lifted it above his head, and as his lithe muscled rippled, he cried out 'I will hurl this rock over the waters and wherever it falls, we will make our home. Then the young Prince of the Sea threw the rock with all his might. Quicker than a flash, he took the smitten Princess in his arms and, diving beneath the waves, they followed the rock. Eventually they found it sixty miles away on the shores of Semiahmoo Bay.

And so it was, dear friends, that on these sunny shores they made their happy home and from their union, a mighty tribe grew and flourished. When, after many years, the Prince died, he was buried under The Great White Rock, the rock that was the symbol of his undying love for the beautiful Indian princess. *(she adds a few dabs of paint to the rock)*

Now isn't that a lovely story? And the moral is so clear, isn't it? One of those dreadful

Beatle people once said it ... now what was it?
Ah yes ...

(as she exits LEFT, she sings with a strong Liverpudlian accent) 'All you need is love, all you need is love, all you need is love, love is all you need.' (lights out)

Scene 7:

(Lights up on a sign that reads 'WHITE ROCK - SANDCASTLE CAPITAL OF THE WORLD. Hold for ten seconds or so. Lights out. A few seconds pause. Lights up slowly to the sound of honking cars, screeching brakes and squealing tires. Enter RANDY LEFT. He is singing to himself.)

RANDY: 'Sunny White Rock by the sea ... we're as lucky as can be *(putting a hand up to the sound of the traffic)*. Ah, music to my ears. *(Facing audience and spreading arms out wide)*. Yes folks, this is it ... 'White Rock, Sandcastle Capital of the World.' The man's a genius to come up with an idea like that. 'We have this wonderful resource here, the beach, and no-one's using it', says the Mayor. 'Participation - that's the key to a thriving community', says the Mayor, 'get them building sand castles together', says the Mayor. Everything's changed since he took over. Business is booming. The developers are

everywhere. He got this town on its feet again. He got the hippies off the beach. He got the place cleaned up. Yes sirree, you are looking at one happy Real Estate agent. Housing prices are up. Development costs steady or even down. Yes folks, people are coming back to White Rock! I mean, look at it today. Listen to that (*gestures toward the honking*). A beautiful Spring Saturday and the place is crawling with people. Revitalization he calls it. And that's what it is. Re-vitalization. (*deep inhalation of sea air*) (*Struck by a thought*) But then again, people do bring problems eh? Like the other day, Jock tells me about this man he met who said that he would only go to the public swimming pool if they had health inspectors checking everyone who went in there. You see, that's how some people feel about the beach. Now if we could somehow privatize the beach People are attracted to exclusivity. They want to be something special. They want to have something special. I mean, it's all very well opening the floodgates to the outside hoards from places like Langley and Whalley, but I'll tell you ... I have my ear to the ground, I've heard the resentment. They're just a different class of people, that's all. A lot of East Indians among them - not that I've got anything against Hindus. But it would be nice to have a private beach - you

know, for the people who live here all the time, the folks who've been here the longest. Other people can always use the beach down by the Indian Reserve. They're not fussy down there. Anyway, it's my lunch break. Must be off. I'm meeting Jock at the O.B. Boy, has that place been re-vitalized! They've got a stripper there now, and hey, you wouldn't believe some of her routines. Who needs to go to the States anymore eh? It's not like the old days. I'll tell you, things are really moving in this town. Even Janie is finally getting into the act, you know, catching the wave. We joined one of those 'swinger' clubs. Interesting! *(With a sly smile as he EXITS RIGHT)* You could almost say re-vitalizing.

Scene 8:

(Lights up slowly to the sound of seagulls, waves and a strong wind. HERPY is sitting at the foot of the rock, a case of twelve at his side)

HERPY: *(Taking a swig from his bottle of beer)* I'm off dope man. Makes me see things I don't want to see. Yeah, booze is better. Cheaper too. Let's me feel things. Helps me come out of myself. Things change man. Things change. It's magic. Black magic. *(Pause)*

Like I don't see the waves no more. I mean I see them, but I don't **see** them if you see what I mean (*he laughs - it sounds hollow and mocking*) I don't see the sky. I don't see the sunlight. I don't even see people no more. You know what? I only see inwards man. And you know what I see? I see a red fire in a black pit. That's all I see man. The rest is feeling. It's all feeling. Like sometimes the red fire burns bigger and higher until it consumes me, and that feels good. And other times the fire dies right down, and I'm left alone in the black pit. That's when it gets bad, real bad. You see the fire's got a rhythm man. It's alive. It flickers and thrusts out. But in the black pit, there's nothin' ... nothin' but pain and fear, nothin' but the blues ... the black blues. Yeah, black blues and white rock ... which way to go? (*He opens a second bottle of beer*) But I've changed man. Don't think I ain't changed. I'm getting my act together. A year ago I was sleepin' out here on the sand. Did that 'till the cops kicked me off. Now I'm stayin' in a motel on the edge of town, near the Indian reserve. It's called The Last Resort. Great name eh?

(*pause*)

Never spoken much to Indians. They don't talk much. Keep to themselves. I like that. Met a guy the other day who knows Indians. Worked with them up north. He told me that long ago

there used to be a great tribe here. That was before they got the white man's diseases. I asked him how come they didn't fight back when they started losing their land and all that. He just laughed man. He said, 'only a fool fights back when he ain't got no power. That ain't what you do. What you have to do is go underground. That way you hide your pain and your fear and your anger. Meanwhile you mark out your territory and you keep to it'. And then he said somethin' out of nowhere man, somethin' that really made me sit up. He said, 'and if you have to, you even paint yourself white, like this rock here'. *(Pause while he drinks the rest of the bottle. He stands up, half-drunk)* You see that's the joke man. *(raising his voice)* That's the fuckin' joke. That rock ain't really white. It's just painted white. It's an Indian tombstone. Ain't that funny man? An Indian tombstone. A **gray** tombstone. It ain't fuckin' white white. *(He throws his bottle against the rock, smashing it)* So much for fuckin' Love and Peace! *(He begins his exit)* So much for Love and Peace. *(HERPY exits RIGHT)*

Scene 9: *(Lights up on VERONICA standing CENTRE stag. She is holding a newspaper in her hand. Sounds of waves and seagulls in background. Close to sunset lighting)*

VERONICA:

Well I must say I'm shocked ... deeply shocked. As if things weren't bad enough anyway. Lately they've been simply desecrating our White Rock. Tearing down beautiful virgin forest. Putting up monstrous shopping Malls and chain restaurants, erecting acre upon acre of nasty, impersonal apartment buildings. Believe me, things have changed. There is a different kind of person here now. The tone of the place has definitely gone downhill. And now (*slapping newspaper*) to cap it all off, what do I find on the front page of my local paper? 'WIFE SWAPS ON THE RISE'! It's simply disgraceful! How dare they put that kind of filth in our community newspaper. I came here to get away from corruption and decadence ... and what do I find? Even White Rock is rotten to the core. It just won't do.

(Pause. She sees the broken bottle and with an exclamation of disgust begins to pick up the pieces and put them in a plastic carrier bag emblazoned with a Union Jack)

I don't know. It seems like the whole world has gone completely bonkers. There's no moral backbone anymore. While we're on the brink of global disaster of one kind or another, they're out swapping wives and building sandcastles. I don't know. Of course, it may not be true. Who's to know? Could just be cheap sensationalism I suppose.

I mean how do they know that there are ...
(looks at newspaper) 'more than two thousand
couples engaging in wife swapping and group
sex'. Good heavens. I'm surprised we don't
see it happening in the parks. Well, at any
rate, I can tell you, I've had enough. I'm
going to do something about it. It's time for
decent people to stand up and say what they
think. It's time for action. I've decided
I'm going to start a Clean-Up White Rock
Campaign. If no-one else is prepared to do
it, then let it be me. I know the vicar will
support me. *(She sits down at the piano and
begins to sing)*

We're going to clean up this town, O
Lord, O Lord

We're going to clean up this town, O
Lord

We're going to wipe out the filth
and crud O Lord

We're going to sweep up the filth, O
Lord

We're going to whiten the rock on which
we stand

We're going to make this all our
promised land

We're going to clean up this town O
Lord, O Lord

'Till we're all one Christian band
(Repeat)

(Exit RIGHT as she marches off singing the last line of the song. Lights off)

Scene 10

(Sound of gale-force wind and thrashing waves. Seagulls optional. Spotlight comes up on HERPY stage RIGHT. The rest of the stage including the rock, is darkened. In the following scene, HERPY acts and speaks in a hard and cold way. There is no trace of self pity)

HERPY: Pretty dramatic ah? No-one crazy enough to be down here except me. I don't care man. I don't care anymore. There's only so much you can take. I hadn't seen my kids for more than six months what with her up in Kamloops. So I took a Greyhound up there and went straight to her house - like I'd found out where she lived, see. So I banged on the door, and I hear Dylan saying, 'hey Mum, it's Dad'. You know, like the kid sounds excited. And then I hear her fuckin' voice and she's sayin' 'go away, get lost, we don't want you here'. So I tell her to let me in, and that I want to see my kids, and that I've got a goddammed right to see my own fuckin' kids. And then she says, 'you ain't got no goddammed rights, man, you ain't even got legal access'. And then she threatened to call the fuzz. That did it, man. That did it. Somethin' snapped

inside of me. I started to kick the fuckin' door in. And then I hear the sound of a car startin' up round the back of the house. I go runnin' round and there she is screamin' at Sarah to get in the car. Then she jumps out and picks up Sarah. I get to her just before she gets back into the car. And I shove her man. I shout 'you fuckin' bitch' and I shove her real hard. But she kind of twists round, and Sarah gets banged against the car. *(Softening for a moment)* Jesus, that's not what I meant to happen. I never hurt my kids, man. Never. Anyways, it's a bad scene, man

Sarah's all cut and braised on the face and arms. That's when Diane says, 'don't you ever come round here again, and they drive off. Yeah, they ... they drove off. *(pause)*

And you know what man? A few weeks later, I get charged with child-battering. I'm on some list somewhere as a registered 'Child Batterer'. Jesus ... me ... Herpy ... the last of the Hippies, the last of the peace and love generation, me a registered child-batterer. I loved those kids, man. I never raised a finger to them. I used to read 'em stories ... like The Little Prince and Batman, and the Incredible Green Hulk. They used to laugh at me and pick stuff out of my beard, you know bits of yolk and tobacco and shit like that. *(Pause)*

Well, it was after that, after I had to go to court, that I said 'fuck it', 'fuck the whole thing, man!' So I went up to the Welfare Office and told them that they could keep their goddammed welfare, and that from now on, I was going to be on my own. Then I checked out of the Last Resort. Things change. Things change.

Know where I am now man? I'm on the Indian Reserve livin' in the woods. No-one bothers me man. They'd better not try man. Know why? Black Sabbath will rip 'em open, that's why. That's my dog. 'Black Sabbath', I call him. Yeah man, I did what all good White Rockers do. I went out and bought me a doberman. That's the name of the game man. You see I learned from the Indians what they learned from the white man. First you stake out your property, then you protect it with all you got. (*Insight*) That's it man. The three P's. Property, protection, power. That's what they should be teaching in school, the three P's not the three R's.

(*Pause*)

Yeah, I've had it with White Rock, man. Little boxes on the hillside.

That's all it is. Little boxes on the hillside. And kids. Kids everywhere. They're all called somethin' cute like Jason, or Justin, or Jessie. I don't want to see no

more kids. Can't stand to hear them. Just
keep 'em away from me. *(pause)*

*(HERPY moves to CENTRE stage. Lighting goes
up so that the rock is dimly visible)*

We're livin' under the volcano man. Let's
have the fuckin' explosion. I'm tired of
waitin'. *(Sweeping gesture)* All those people
in their little boxes are worried about the
earthquake, or the stock market, or invasion
of their property. Well let me tell you, I
ain't worried. I don't fuckin' care. Let's
have the fuckin' explosion, that's what I
say. *(pause)*

*(HERPY puts his forehead against the rock.
After a few moments he sits down and starts
to beat a hand drum in a ritualistic way)*

(incanting)

O Spirit of the Waves, let me hear your
Voice

O Spirit of the Waves let me feel your
power

O Spirit of the Waves, make me invisible

O Spirit of the Waves, take me down

Take me down, take me down, take me down

*(Lights dim and then go out as he repeats the
phrase 'take me down')*

Scene 11: *(Sound of waves and seagulls. Enter VERONICA
RIGHT with suitcase in hand)*

VERONICA:

It's really too bad. The Clean-up White Rock campaign was just beginning to get somewhere. We'd held meetings. We'd put out a petition. We'd even managed to get the editor removed. I had a sense of purpose. A sense of doing something worthwhile for my community. And then, last week, something happened that completely changed my desire to keep living here. *(Pause)*

You see I'd been talking to the vicar about my on-going interest in Indian Legends, and he asked me if I had ever visited the present-day Reserve of the Semiahmoo Indians. I told him that I hadn't, and on his recommendation, I decided to take a walk down there. You see I hoped that I might bump into someone with whom I could talk. I mean, how much more interesting to speak to a living members of the First Nations than to get a second-hand account from a book. Well, I was walking along the beach in the direction of the Reserve when I saw something unusual ahead of me. I couldn't make out what it was, so I walked closer to investigate. And then ... I nearly died of shock. There, in front of me, was this naked body ... all bloated and misshapen and covered with seaweed. It was just too repulsive for words. And then, suddenly, out of nowhere, almost like the Hound of The Baskervilles, appears this huge black dog and it ... it starts

attacking me. Never, never have I experienced anything like that before. I don't even remember what happened after that. Somehow I managed to get away. Naturally, when I got home, I called the police. Later on, a police officer came round to ask me some questions. After he had finished, I asked him if they had determined what had happened. He said they had identified the body. That it was some drifter of no fixed address. I asked if they suspected foul play, and he said no, that they were certain it was a case of suicide. And then he said, and this my dear, shocked me, shocked me to the quick ... he said, 'it's no surprise, we see it all the time out here. After all, B.C.'s got the highest suicide rate in Canada, and White Rock has got the highest suicide rate in B.C. 'So that makes White Rock the suicide capital of Canada', I said. 'That's right', he said. White Rock ... The Suicide Capital of Canada ... sandcastles and suicides, need more be said? (pause)

Well my dear, that was when I decided I'd had enough. I mean there's only so much you can take, isn't there? 'Somebody else can clean up White Rock', I said to myself. 'Veronica, you deserve better', I said. So I've made my decision. I'm going to move to Vancouver Island. 'Go West, Veronica', I said to myself. 'That's all you can do!' As it turned out, the vicar seemed in favor of the

idea, which was nice. *(momentary confusion)*
Hmm ... I wonder why? Yes, Vancouver Island.
Actually, to tell you the truth, I'm really
quite excited. In a way, it will be like
moving back to The Old Country. Good heavens,
I'll even be able to have tea at the Empress!
(pause)

I'll be sorry to leave here in some ways.
When I first came here, it was like a dream.
It was so ... so clean - ah well, I'm going
to be living in Qualicum Beach, so at least
I'll still be beside the sea. *(singing)*

Oh I do like to be beside the seaside
Oh I do like to be beside the sea
I do like to stroll upon the prom, prom,
prom
Where the brass bands play tiddely om
pom pom
So just let me be beside the seaside
I'll be beside myself with glee
And there's lots of girls beside
I should like to be beside
Beside the seaside, beside the sea.

*(Exit VERONICA LEFT, waving hand in
vaudeville style. Lights off)*

Scene 12: *(Lights up. At the piano, stage LEFT is
RANDY. He is dressed like a twenties music-*

hall actor. He wears white flannel trousers,
a striped blazer, and a boater)

(Singing)

Sunny White Rock by the sea,
We're as lucky as can be
Never snows, always mild
It's a west coast haven for your child

Strange thing happened the other day. I was closing a sale for this lady ... (*mimicing badly*) terribly British whatto ... and I asked her why she was selling. Anyway, she tells me about some hippy that was found. washed up on beach. Not that that's so strange, eh? You can find burned out and washed up hippies a dime a dozen in these parts. It's an elephant's graveyard of the sixties out here. Anyway, what was strange was that I knew this guy indirectly like. It was when she told me about the black dog. That's when I made the connection. You see, I met his ex-wife. She's ... well she's sort of a hooker in Kamloops. Jock introduced me to her. Seen her a couple of times on business trips. Anyway, that's when I first heard about this guy, from her. All I can remember is that she said he was weird and that he was living rough on the Indian land outside White Rock. And she said something about a big, black dobie - name of Black Sabbath, I think it was. Small world eh? (*music resumes*)

People come from East and West
From Montreal and Budapest
From London England and Hong Kong too
Come on everybody enjoy the view

(Breaking off again) Ah, some things never change eh? Sunny White Rock by the sea.
(gesturing expansively) It's the potential of the place eh? Just takes your breath away. I mean you sit down here on a beautiful summer's day, and out *there* *(gestures LEFT)* you see the Cascades and Mount Baker, and over there *(gestures slightly left of center)* you got the great U.S. of A. and beautiful Birch Bay. Quite something, eh? Yes, people go crazy when they come here. They can't believe it. Take the climate for instance. You know what I mean.

(Sitting at the piano and singing)

Sunny White Rock by the sea
We're as lucky as can be
Never snows, always mild
It's a west coast haven for your child
People come from East and West
From Montreal and Budapest
From London, England and Hong Kong too
Come on everybody, enjoy the view

East of Eden, west of the sun
Move out here folks and have some fun

Buy a house before it's too late
I'm Randy your rep. in Real Estate
Randy the rep., Randy the rep.
I'm Randy your rep. in Real Estate.

(Lights out)