

**Kander & Ebb 101: Lyrics from *The Happy Time, Zorbá, & 70, Girls, 70*
All Music by John Kander and Lyrics by Fred Ebb (unless otherwise noted)**

***The Happy Time* (1968)**

**“The Happy Time” (Opening number
as sung on the Original Broadway
Cast recording)**

JACQUES [spoken]

You know, it’s a very strange thing, but the
memory plays tricks. Perhaps home is only a
memory. Ah, but what a pleasant place!
What a happy time! Hey, come back with
me, ha? Would you mind? and remember,
remember . . .]

[sings]

Remember the Christmas morning long ago,
The frosted glass, the dancing snow,
The happy time?
Remember the painted horse, the carousel,
The chocolate kiss, the caramel,
The happy time?
Remember a pale pink sky,
Your first Easter hat?
And if you should ask me why,
The reason I ask you this is that
I want to remember you
Remembering the happy time.

Remember the day you found the dollar bill,
Or roller-skating down the hill,
The happy time?
Remember the compliments you once
received,
The lie you told they all believed,
The happy time?

Remember a long, deep sigh,
A tentative kiss?
And if you should ask me why,
The reason I ask you that is this
I want to remember you
Remembering the happy time.

[spoken]

Happy time! When? a long time ago. Where?
A little town in French Canada called St.
Pierre. You never heard of it? Come with me
—let me show you.

[sings]

The furniture’s all in place
The table is set.
This journey through time and space
May strike you as odd, perhaps, and yet
I’m longing to see you smile
And hear you laugh,
So I can have the photograph
And remember you
Remembering the happy time.

[singing intercut with dialogue of other
characters:]

Remember a drafty house with rooms to
spare?
Those Sundays—

["Is your brother there? The potage will be
ice cold if they do not hurry."]

Remember the napkin ring, the dinner plates,
A pocket watch?

["They’re late, they’re late. Foufie, call your
uncle!" — "Uncle Louis!"]

Remember the child, the boy, the voice in
the hall?

["I’m sorry I’m late. I have to wait for my four
women."]

Remember the mean old man,
But maybe the youngest of us all.

["Louis, you thief! What have you done with
my pictures? Thief!" — "Pictures? Who stole
your stupid naked pictures, you old goat?"]

How nice if the sight of them
Should make you laugh
While I enlarge the photograph
Remembering,
Remembering the happy time.

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“Please Stay”

BIBI:

When I was, I don't know, many many years
ago,
I used to say “I love you” to everything.
Like a game someone plays,
It became my favorite phrase,
And I would say “I love you” to everything.

I love you, Mama. I love you, Papa.
I love you, Grandpère. I love you, dog.
I love you, picture. I love you, window.
I love you, bed, and I love you, door.
But I don't say “I love you” any more.

Isn't that funny, Uncle Jacques?
I mean terrible, Uncle Jacques,
The saddest story you were ever told?
I haven't said I love you to anything at all
Since I was nine or ten years old.

[Dialogue]

[JACQUES] I'm sorry to hear that, my boy.

[BIBI] Uncle Jacques, would you, I mean
could you stay in St. Pierre?

[JACQUES] What do you mean—live here?

[BIBI] Well yes. You could open a studio. We
need a good photographer here. Would you
stay?

[JACQUES] No, Bibi.

[BIBI] Oh, I didn't think you would. I know
how you feel about it—with Paris, Rome,
Venice, why would anyone want to stay in St.
Pierre?

[sings]

I read a book on London.
It's beautiful, I know.
Such fun to be in London:
Don't go.

And Lisbon must be pretty
Around this time of year.
Just marvelous in Lisbon:
Stay here.

And Venice takes your breath away,
They say.
Stay!

It's dumb to be in St. Pierre,
When you could be in Rome.
Please stay home.

Vienna, so you tell me, is just your kind of
town.
Romantic old Vienna:
Sit down.

And Paris has the fountains,
The churches and the Louvre,
So everyone loves Paris:
Don't move.

In Hong Kong oriental splendors wait,
Wait!

Each night in New York City
Is a lot like New Year's Eve.
Please don't leave.
I know you'll never do it
But I'm asking anyway,
Please, please stay!

[JACQUES] No, Bibi. Come on. You go to
bed.

[BIBI] It's not the brandy that made the night
beautiful. It's just beautiful, that's all.

[JACQUES] Yes, Bibi, you're right, my boy.
What are you laughing at.

[BIBI] Behind the screen. with that girl
Lisette.

[JACQUES} Behind the screen, Bibi! Did you
look?

[BIBI] Well, I peeked a little.

[JACQUES] Thank God, there's some hope
left in the world!

[BIBI]

Isn't it funny, Uncle Jacques?
I mean terrible, Uncle Jacques,
The saddest story that you ever knew?
I haven't said I love you n all these many
years,
But Uncle Jacques?

[JACQUES: Yes?

[BIBI] I love you.

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“I Don’t Remember You”

JACQUES

I don’t remember you
I don’t remember you
I don’t recall a single thing we used to say or
do.

What dancing in the park?
What laughter in the dark?
What smoldering fire place
That lit your face with every spark?

And if I left you once before,
Somehow I can’t recall it any more.
That was another girl.
You’re not at all like her.
Though for an instant when I saw you
I believed you were.

But I was wrong—
This moment is new.
Because I can’t.
I won’t.
I don’t remember you.

[LAURIE and SCHOOL GLEE CLUB sings
“St. Pierre” in French, Jacques joins in.]

“Seeing Things”

JACQUES

We see a child eating ice cream
Right there before us he stands
I say, “Look what a happy face.”
You say, “Look, he’s got dirty hands.

We see a child in a maple tree.
We’re watching him climb, you and I.
You say, “Come down—you will hurt
yourself.”
I say, “Go up—you’re touching the sky.”

There’s a difference between us
No observer could miss.
What’s the difference between us?
Only this . . .

Seeing things . . .
There’s a way of seeing things,
A certain way of seeing things that makes
the difference.

Is that sun up there a circle spun of lights
and air,
Or just an everyday practical sun?

You and I have a way of seeing things,
A different way of seeing things, I’d say.
Paint your truth with my illusion.
Please consider seeing things my way.

LAURIE

Attractive and charming, forever it seems,
Disturbing, disarming, my spinner of dreams,
But different we are
And different we’ll stay
Try as we might we won’t find a way.

I’m of the earth, and you’re of the sky.
I love you very much.
I love you very much.
Goodbye.

Seeing things . . .
There’s a way of seeing things,
A certain way of seeing things that makes
the difference.
I need more than love—
I need someone I’m certain of,
And when I reach for him, he must be there.

BOTH

You and I have a way of seeing things,
A different way of seeing things, I say
One is truth, and one’s illusion.

LAURIE

I of earth and you of sky . .

JACQUES

But I love you very much.

LAURIE

And I love you very much.
Goodbye.

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***Zorbá* (1968)**

“Life Is”

Life is what you do while you're waiting to
die.
Life is how the time goes by.
Life is where you wait while you're waiting to
leave.
Life is where you grin and grieve.

Having if you're lucky, wanting if you're not.
Looking for the ruby underneath the rot.
Hungry for the pilaf in someone else's pot.
But that's the only choice you've got!

Life is where you stand just before you are
flat.
Life is only that, Mister.
Life is simply that, Mister,
That and nothing more than that.

Life is what you feel till you can't feel at all.
Life is where you fly and fall.

Running for the shelter naked in the snow.
Learn that a tear drops anywhere you go.
Finding it's the mud that makes the roses
grow.
But that's the only choice you know.

Wiat!
Once again.

Life is what you do while you're waiting to
die.
This is how the time goes by.

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***70, Girls, 70* (1971)**

“Coffee in a Cardboard Cup”

The trouble with the world today it seems to
me
Is coffee in a cardboard cup.
The trouble with the affluent society
Is coffee in a cardboard cup.
No one's ever casual and nonchalant.
No one waits a minute in a restaurant.
No one wants a waitress's passing
pleasantry,
Like “Hiya, miss, Hiya, sir,
May I take your order please?”

The trouble with the world today is plain to
see
Is everything is “Hurry up.”
It's “rush it through,” and “don't be slow”
And BLT with a rye to go.
With coffee in a cardboard cup.

The trouble with the heater skelter life we
lead
Is coffee in a cardboard cup.
The trouble the psychologists have all
agreed
Is coffee in a cardboard cup.

Tell me what could possibly be drearier
Than Seymour from the Biltmore cafeteria.
Seems to me a gentleman would much
prefer
“Afternoon! How ya' been?
Would you like the special, sir?”

The trouble with the world today is plain to
see
Is everything is “Hurry up.”
There's ready-wear and instant tea
And minute rice, and, my oh me,
There's coffee in a cardboard cup.

The trouble with the world today beyond a
doubt
Is coffee in a cardboard cup.
The trouble is the way we like to take things
out
Like coffee in a cardboard up.
No one knows the meaning of utopia
Is dining at the corner cornucopia.
Seems to me we wouldn't be such nervous
wrecks
With “Hello, there. Be right back.
Would you care for separate checks?”

The trouble with the world today is plain to
see
Is everything is “Hurry up.”
It's all become Looney Tunes
And sugar packs and plastic spoons.
And coffee in a cardboard cup!

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“Yes”

Yes.
Say “Yes.”
Life keeps happening every day.
Say “Yes.”
When opportunities come your way
You can’t start wondering what to say
You never win if you never play.
Say “Yes.”
There’s mink and marigold right outside
And long white Cadillacs you can ride
But nothing’s gained if there’s nothing tried
Say “Yes.”

Don’t say “Why?” say “Why not?”
What lies beyond what is,
Is not.
So what?
Say “Yes.”

Yes, I can.
Yes, I will.
Yes, I’ll take a sip.
Yes, I’ll touch.
Yes, of course.
Yes, how nice.
Yes, I’d happily thank you very much.
Yes.
Oh, yes.
There’s lots of chaff but there’s lots of wheat
Say “Yes.”

Yes! Yes!
You might get mugged as you walk the street
But on the other hand, you might greet
That handsome stranger you’ve longed to
meet.
Say “Yes.”
Yes!

Don’t say “Why?” say “Why not?”
What lies beyond what is,
Is not.
So what?
Say “Yes.”
Yes.

Yes, I’ll walk.
Yes, I’ll look.
Yes, I’d love to do such and such.

Yes, I’ll try.
Yes, I’ll dare.
Yes, I’ll fly.
Yes, I care.
Yes, I’ll happily thank you very much.
Yes.
Oh, yes.

You can’t look back on a chance that’s lost.
Say “Yes.”
Yes!
The dice mean nothing unless they’re
tossed.
The throw is usually worth the cost.
The hope of summer denies the frost.
Say “Yes.”

Yes, I am.
Yes, I’ll be.
Yes, I’ll go.
Oh yes!
Yes!