
THE LAWSONS: A CIVIL RIGHTS LOVE STORY SOUNDTRACK LYRICS

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0 – Overture

*The overture opens the play, and includes excerpts of several songs from the play.
Instrumental. No lyrics.*

1 – Letters (Whole Song)

*This is the main song of the play. It is the big soaring ballad that recurs throughout the play.
This is the most Broadway musical song of the play.*

(Verse 1)

Audrey

I hope you won't think me
bold and wrong for writing you,
But I've,
Heard so much about you

Bill

Of course, I won't think you bold and wrong.
The fact that you wrote at all,
Is flattery
Of the most ego-boosting kind.

(Pre-chorus 1)

Audrey

I, would appreciate if you,
Wrote me one or two
Of your beautiful letters, letters.
Bill, Please drop me a line.

Bill

My whole world comes alive,
When I answer your

Bill and Audrey

Answer your, answer your...

(Refrain/Chorus)

Bill and Audrey:

Letters. Our love letters.
Bind our hearts

Audrey:

One word at a time.

Bill and Audrey:

Letters. Our love letters.

Audrey:

This romance

Audrey and Bill:

Confounds reason or rhyme

Audrey:

Bill, don't *you* ever stop writing me.

I love every line, of your...

Audrey and Bill:

Letters

Verse 2:

Audrey:

Could this be love that I feel?

Yes, I am sure

And I'll

declare it in my letters.

Bill:

Love's possibility

I admit it's driving me

To meet

The woman of these letters, letters.

Pre-Chorus 2:

Audrey (and Bill):

A weakness in my stomach. (weakness in my stomach)

A heart-rending love (a heart-rending love),

that's what I feel

Bill (and Audrey):

That's what I feel with each letter, (letter)

Bill:

I pray to God above it's you

Audrey:

I know that I'm in love with you

Bill:

You thrill me with

Audrey:

the words of your ...

Audrey and Bill:

The words of your

Chorus/Refrain:

Audrey and Bill:

Letters. Our love letters.

Bind our hearts

Audrey:

One word at a time.

Audrey and Bill:

Letters. Our love letters.

Audrey:

This romance

Audrey and Bill:

confounds reason or rhyme

Audrey

Bill, don't ever stop writing me.

I love every line, of your...

Audrey and Bill:

Letters.

Interlude

Pre-Chorus 2:

Audrey (and Bill):

I feel a weakness in my stomach. (weakness in my stomach)

A heart-rending love (a heart-rending love),

that's what I feel

Bill (and Audrey):

That's what I feel with each letter, (letter)

Bill:

I pray to God above it's you

Audrey:

I know that I'm in love with you

Bill:

You thrill me with

Audrey:

the words of your ...

Audrey and Bill:

The words of your

Chorus/Refrain:

Audrey and Bill:

Letters. Our love letters.
Bind our hearts

Audrey:

One word at a time.

Audrey and Bill:

Letters. Our love letters.

Audrey:

This romance

Audrey and Bill:

confounds reason or rhyme

Audrey:

Bill, don't ever stop writing me.
I love every line, of your...

Audrey and Bill:

Letters.

1.b – Letters (Reprise)

Audrey

A weakness in your stomach.

Bill

A weakness in your stomach

Audrey

A heart-rending love, that's what I feel

Bill

A heart-rending love
That's what I feel with each letter, letter
I thank God above for you

Audrey

Please know how much I've loved you

Bill

You've thrilled me with

Audrey

the words of your ...

Bill and Audrey

The words of your

Letters. Our love letters.
Bind our hearts

Audrey
One word at a time.

Bill and Audrey
Letters. Our love letters.

Audrey
This romance
Confounds reason or rhyme
Bill, don't you ever stop loving me.

Bill
Our love has stood the test of time.

Audrey and Bill
Letters

2.1 - Meet Up

This song sets up Bill and Audrey meeting for the first time. It is fun, playful, and inflected with various decades of R&B.

Chorus 1

Bill and Ensemble:

Just a letter won't do
When can I meet you, at last?

Audrey and Ensemble:

Just a letter won't do
When can I meet you, at last?

Verse 1

Audrey:

I'm a sassy single sister and I look good in red.
Since corresponding with my Bill. No other guy has a chance.
I am educated, outspoken, yet so elegant.
There's no reason why this brother wouldn't want me to wed.

Pre-Chorus 1

Bill:

When I lay my eyes on you

Ensemble:

Ah

Audrey:

I'll know if your

Audrey and Ensemble:

love is true

Ensemble:

Ah

Bill:

Real and true

Chorus 1

All:

Just a letter won't do
When can I meet you, at last?

Just a letter won't do
When can I meet you, at last?

Verse 2

Bill:

I'm a preacher, teacher, church boy
And they call me the Pin
I love to read, and write, and preach,
and follow where God's leading
We're gonna take it to the next level,
but no we won't sin
We were pen pals, now we're courting
Only good intentions

Pre-Chorus 2

Audrey:

Since I laid my eyes on you,

Bill:

My world's changed; there's only you.

Audrey:

Only you.

Chorus 2

All:

Just a letter won't do
So glad I got to meet you, at last!

Just a letter won't do
So glad I got to meet you, at last!

Just a letter won't do
So glad I got to meet you, at last!

Just a letter won't do
So glad I got to meet you, at last!

2.0 - Meet Up (original, aka "Hot Letters")

Chorus 1

*Just a letter won't do
When can I meet you, at last?*

Substituted with

*Ooh you turned the heat up
When can we meet up, at last?*

And

Chorus 2

*Just a letter won't do
So glad I got to meet you, at last!*

Substituted with

Ooh you turned the heat up

So glad we got to meet up, at last!

Everything else is the same.

3 - Time for Change

This song represents church-originated protest music of the civil rights era, with a quartet-style vamp.

Chorus

Ensemble (with lead):

(It's time, it's time) Time for change.
(It's time, it's time) Time for change.
(It's time, it's time) Time for change.
It's a new day, and it's time for change.

Ensemble (with lead):

(It's time, it's time) Time for change.
(It's time, it's time) Time for change.
(It's time, it's time) Time for change.
It's a new day, and it's time for change.

Ensemble (with lead):

(Tell your sister and your brother it's) Time for change.
(Tell your sister and your brother it's) Time for change.
(Tell your sister and your brother it's) Time for change.
It's a new day, and it's time for change.

Interlude

Male Quartet Singers (with male lead):

(It's time for change) It's time for change.
(It's time for change) It's time for change.
(It's time for change) It's time for change.
(It's time for change) It's time for change.

Oh God, please lead the way.
Oh God, please lead the way.
Oh God, please lead the way.
Oh God, please lead the way.

Back to the Beginning

Ensemble (with lead):

(It's time, it's time) Time for change.
(It's time, it's time) Time for change.
(It's time, it's time) Time for change.
It's a new day, and it's time for change.

4 - Bill's Prayer (Quartet Song)

This is a quartet song. Bill is praying to God for direction, because the students want to take more drastic actions in their activism than he thinks is safe. He starts the song with fear or worry, but by the end, he feels prepared to face the challenges.

Quartet:

Shoo doop
Shoo doop

Bill:

Oh God, please speak to me.

Quartet

Oh God, please speak to me.
Oh God, please speak to me.
Oh God, please speak to me.
Oh God, please speak to me.

Verse

Bill:

Oh God,
I come to you humbly as I know
Can't fix it without you, need your help for sure
Oh Lord,
I just don't really know what to do
The students look to me and I'm asking You

How
To lead the people for freedom now.
I see the fight in their eyes but I don't know how
We
Can make the change
Stand up
and in Your name.
Fight on fight on
Without bloodshed and pain
And now for the students

Quartet:

Please make a way

Bill:

Please bring deliverance

Quartet:

Please make a way

Bill:

And, I thank you 'cause I feel my help

Quartet:

I feel my help, oh yes
I feel my help
I feel my help, oh yes
I feel my help

Bill:

I am the change I'm looking for!

Reprise

Quartet:

I feel my help, oh yes, I feel my help.
I feel my help, oh yes, I feel my help.
I feel my help, oh yes, I feel my help.
I feel my help, oh yes, I feel my help.

I feel my help. I feel my help.
I feel my help, oh yes, I feel my help.

Bill:

(Thank You Jesus)

5 – Take This City

This is a high-energy song that involves the entire cast / ensemble. The song is supposed to sound like a mid-twentieth-century black popular music song that was taken from gospel—think “I’ve Got a Feeling Everything’s Going to Be Alright” meets Houston 1980s shouting music. Three women lead this song, representing three women who were founding members of Wheeler Avenue Baptist Church who were celebrating the newly established integration of Houston’s department stores.

Charter Chick 1

Integration’s ‘bout to take this city

All Charter Chick s, aka Charter Chick s

over!

Charter Chick 2

Integration’s ‘bout to take this city

All Charter Chicks

over!

Charter Chick 3

Integration's 'bout to take this city

All Charter Chicks

over!

Charter Chick 2

We're gonna

All Charter Chicks

Take and shake and change this city yeah

Ensemble

We're gonna take this city yeah

Gonna shake this city

Take And

Shake And

Change This city Yeah

We're gonna take this city yeah

Gonna shake this city

Take And

Shake And

Change This city Yeah

Segregation has got to go!

Integration is the new normal.

Charter Chick 3

Sat at lunch counters, marched in the streets

Charter Chick 2

Boycotted big stores. For equality.

Charter Chick 3

Met with the mayor. And, staked our claim.

Charter Chick 1

And now Houston, will never be the same.

Ensemble

Segregation has got to go!

Integration is the new normal

We won't stop

We won't stop

We won't stop

We won't stop

We're gonna take this city yeah
Gonna shake this city
Take And
Shake And
Change This city Yeah

We're gonna take this city yeah
Gonna shake this city
Take And
Shake And
Change This city Yeah!

All Charter Chicks

Yeah,
Yeah,
Yeah ooh,
Yeah!

Yeah,
Yeah,
Yeah ooh,
Yeah!

Yeah!
Yeah,
Yeah ooh!

6 - The Plea

This song is a dialog and prayer, during a stressful time for the play's main characters Audrey and Bill. Essentially, it is a duet between Audrey and Bill, with the ensemble providing background vocals. Bill is in jail because of his activism, and Audrey is at home feeling the absence of her husband. This song is a tension-filled conversation between Audrey and Bill, but also prayers of Audrey and Bill to God for help in this difficult time. The ending vamp represents them finding strength in God.

Intro

Audrey

Ooh.

Chorus

Audrey

God, please, tell me, why I am

Audrey and Ensemble

sitting here by myself

Bill

God, please, speak to me, while I am

Bill and Ensemble

sitting here by myself

Audrey

God, please, tell me, why I am

Audrey and Ensemble

sitting here by myself

Bill

God, please, speak to me, while I am

Bill and Ensemble

sitting here by myself

Verse 1

Audrey

My mind is racked with emotions

I need your love and devotion

Instead the mayor's calling

Sky's falling

And I can't even hug you at all

Bill:

From this jail I write this letter
And I'm wondering whether
My constituency will stick with me
Through the good bad whatever

Bridge

Audrey

Through the pain and the suffering
God please let your hope spring eternal.
Peace like a river.

All (Audrey, Bill, and Ensemble)

Through the pain and the suffering
God please let your hope spring eternal.
Peace like a river.

Audrey

I don't know what tomorrow will bring

Bill

But I'm

Bill and Ensemble

Certain

Bill

About this one thing
God, You can speak to me while I am

Bill and Ensemble

sitting here by myself

Audrey

God, please, speak to me, while I am

Audrey and Ensemble

sitting here by myself

Bill

God, You can speak to me while I am

Bill and Ensemble

sitting here by myself

Audrey

God, please, speak to me, while I am

Audrey and Ensemble

sitting here by myself

Verse 2

Audrey

Fear and anxiety
Piling up and weighing me down
Feel the loving arms of my husband
Is all I want to do now.

Bill

Fight for our destiny
fight for black families

Audrey

Fight for you and me
Do you feel the urgency?

Bill

Through the pain and the suffering

Bill and Ensemble

God please let your hope spring eternal.
Peace like a river.

Audrey and Ensemble

Through the pain and the suffering
God please let your hope spring eternal.
Peace like a river.

Audrey and Bill

I don't know what tomorrow will bring
But I'm

All

Certain

Audrey and Bill

About this one thing

Vamp

All

Speak to me and I'll be strong
Give me faith to hold on
Speak to me and I'll be strong
Give me faith to fight on

Speak to me and I'll be strong
Give me faith to hold on
Speak to me and I'll be strong
Give me faith to fight on

7 - Welcome to the Avenue

This is a church welcome song. It's lively, to encourage dancing, walking around to greet your neighbor and visitors, and in the play, to celebrate the groundbreaking for the church edifice.

Chorus

Ensemble (or Choir)

Welcome to the Avenue
We've got so much in store for you
You won't leave here like you came.
There's blessings in Jesus Name

Welcome to the Avenue
We've got so much in store for you
There's a blessing with your name on it
At Wheeler Avenue

Repeat Chorus

Vamp 1 (x4)

Lead

We're a family
Changing the community, together!

Ensemble

We're a family
Changing the community, together!

Vamp 2 (x4)

Lead

What we gonna do?

Ensemble

Change the Community

Lead

How we gonna do it?

Ensemble

Together

Vamp 3 (x4)

Lead

How we gonna do it?

Ensemble

Together

x4

Lead

Adlibbing out

8 - The Amen (Going Home)

This song is part of the funeral for Audrey Lawson in the play.

Choir

Verse

I'm going home. I'm going home.
Where I will rest in power and peace.
Jesus will welcome me home!
x2

Vamp

No more sorrow. No more pain.
I'll finally get the victory.
Because I fought the good fight in Jesus's name.

No more sorrow. No more pain.
I'll finally get the victory.
Because I fought the good fight in Jesus's name.

Vamp—Inverted up

No more sorrow. No more pain.
I'll finally get the victory.
Because I fought the good fight in Jesus's name.

No more sorrow. No more pain.
I'll finally get the victory.

Amen

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.
Amen. Amen. Amen.

Ooh

Ooh. Ooh. Ooh. Ooh.
Ooh. Ooh. Ooh.

Amen

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.
Amen. Amen. Amen.