

THE
CROSS
AND THE
SWITCHBLADE

The Musical



A Musical by Peter G. James Sinclair

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THE CROSS & THE SWITCHBLADE

~ The Musical ~

A Musical by Peter G. James Sinclair
Additional Material by Rob Koops
Orchestration by J. S' Bach

ACT 1

- Scene 1** Highbridge Park
- Scene 2** David Wilkerson's Study
- Scene 3** One Hundred Court Street - The Courtroom
- Scene 4** The Street - Phone Booth / Davie's Study
- Scene 5** The Street - The Next Day
- Scene 6** The Street with a view of the Brooklyn Bridge
- Scene 7** The Mau Mau Clubroom
- Scene 8** The Alley - Outside the Mau Mau Clubroom
- Scene 9** The Park
- Scene 10** The Street

ACT 2

- Scene 1** The Street/The Spanish Church
- Scene 2** The Alley - Outside the Mau Mau Clubroom
- Scene 3** The Ortez's Apartment
- Scene 4** The Mau Mau Clubroom
- Scene 5** The Arena

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THE CAST

Davie	Tommy
Gwen	Jo-Jo
Lydia	Tommy's Gang (The Rebels)
Nicky	Child/Boy/Ortez Child
Israel	Window People
The Mau Mau Gang	Trumpeter
Nancy	Buckboard
The Dragons (Gang of Seven)	Stagecoach
Michael Farmer	The Chaplain Gang
Judge Davidson	Vincente Ortez
Court Official	Delia Ortez
Jury	Mr. Delgado
Spectators 1, 2	Prostitutes 1,2,3
Shirley	Street kids
Lawyer	Spanish Congregation
Policemen 1, 2	Ushers 1,2,3
Reporters 1, 2	

NB: Many of these parts can be duplicated by actors.

CAST-LISTWITH BRIEF CHARACTER DESCRIPTIONS.

- DAVIE - A skinny preacher whose strength is not physical but comes from his convictions and a desire to help.
- GWEN- Davie's wife. Gentle and perceptive.
- LYDIA - A heroin addict. Emotional and unpredictable.
- NICKY - Violent, angry, hard to the core. Vice president of the Mau Maus.
- BUCKBOARD - Leader of the Chaplains (a coloured gang). Has a sense of humour. A playful side.
- STAGECOACH - Buckboard's vice president. Follows the lead of the president without question.
- VINCENTE- - The pastor of the Spanish congregation. A jovial disposition. Plenty of smiles and hugs.
- DELIA - Vincente's wife. Supportive and compassionate.
- JO-JO - Playful and observant. He is a member of Tommy's gang.
- TOMMY - Tough but under the thumb of people like Nicky.
- MAU MAU GANG/THE DRAGONS (GANG OF SEVEN)/TOMMY'S GANG (THE REBELS)
- Gang members can be identified by their clothing. i.e.: Jackets with gangs emblems.
- THE CHAPLAINS
- MICHAEL FARMER/TRUMPETER
- JUDGE DAVIDSON
- LAWYER/MR DELGADO
- COURT OFFICIAL
- NANCY/SHIRLEY/PROSTITUTE 1
- POLICEMAN 1, 2
- REPORTERS 1, 2
- SPANISH CONGREGATION/USHERS 1, 2, 3
- JURY/ WINDOW PEOPLE/SPECTATORS 1, 2
- PROSTITUTES 2, 3
- STREETKIDS - Can be drawn from the gangs.

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SYNOPSIS

There is a murder in New York. The Cross & the Switchblade tells the story of the dream of a country preacher, David Wilkerson, to provide the members of teenage gangs in New York a way of escape from the cycle of destruction that they have found themselves in.

The dream begins as Davie (as he is called by the gangs) is in his study one night. He reads a copy of Life Magazine which reports on a trial being conducted to convict seven teenage boys for the cold-blooded murder of a young polio victim, Michael Farmer.

Davie attends this trial and on trying to gain an audience with the judge, during the proceedings, he is evicted and photographed by the local press. Now that he is somewhat of a celebrity, especially because of his run in with the police, Davie finds himself somewhat accepted by the gangs except for Nicky Cruz, Vice President of the Mau Maus.

The conflict surrounds three main characters; Davie, Nicky and his girlfriend, Lydia, who is a heroin addict. Lydia ultimately reacts strongly against Davie as Nicky's attention is stolen from her because of his focus of hatred towards Davie. Davie's influence on Israel, President of the Mau Maus, creates further conflict with Nicky.

After a successful street meeting Davie comes in contact with a Spanish congregation who encourage him to hold a mass rally where he can invite all the gangs. The final night of these meetings culminates in a surprising turn of heart by Nicky and the gang members. It is the start of something very special amongst the gangs in New York City.

THE CROSS & THE SWITCHBLADE

SCENARIO

ACT 1

Scene 1: It's the 1960's. A park in New York City. A gang of seven seek out a victim. They find a fifteen year old polio victim named Michael Farmer. They corner him, surround him and proceed to stab him seven times with their knives in the back as he seeks to escape. They leave the body and the scene laughing.

Scene 2: The Reverend David Wilkerson (Davie) is sitting in his study 350 miles away from New York City and while flicking through the pages of Life Magazine he is confronted with the story of the trial of the seven boys who had committed murder. It is in this setting that he makes the decision to go to New York City to help those boys.

Scene 3: One Hundred Court Street. Davie has travelled to New York to be at the trial. He is seated in a crowded courtroom. A very negative atmosphere where the people around him interject negative comments about those on trial. Davie wants to speak to the judge and at the conclusion of the days proceedings gets up out of his seat and approaches the bench. Davie is apprehended by the court officials. The police interrogate him. On the discovery of his true identity he is freed but warned not to return. The press take advantage of this drama by taking Davie's photograph.

Scene 4: A few days later. Street scene. Davie is still recovering from the humiliation he experienced at the Courthouse. He is in a phone booth talking to his wife, Gwen who is at home, about the disastrous event that occurred in the Court House.

Scene 5: On the same day, Nicky Cruz and his girl, Lydia, pass by the rebel territory to harass and collect monies owed by Tommy. Nicky leaves the scene. Lydia waits behind to see her drug dealer when Davie passes by. He is recognized by the gang members who see his picture in the newspaper. They identify with Davie because, like them, he's had trouble with the police. Some of the gang members still treat him with caution because he's an outsider. Davie wants to meet other gangs. He is introduced to Lydia who will take him to the Mau Maus.

Scene 6: Lydia leads Davie to the Brooklyn Bridge and explains that until he crosses the bridge and visits the Bedford-Stuyvesant area he hasn't seen New York at its worst. He goes with her and sees the ghetto in its reality.

Scene 7: Lydia and Davie arrive at the Mau Maus clubroom. Davie meets Nicky (Lydia's boyfriend). He is received positively by the President, Israel but is totally rejected by Nicky Cruz who tries to turn the gang against him. Davie leaves dejected and on leaving finds out that Lydia is a heroin addict.

Scene 8: In the alley outside the clubroom he meets Jo-Jo, a young bum and a member of Tommy's gang. Davie shows the young gang member that he is not just talk when he gives the teenager his own shoes and then walks off in his stocking feet to the jeers and laughs of the locals. Jo-Jo though has been touched and follows

the preacher earnestly.

Scene 9: The street people come out of their ghetto to share their view of the city which contrasts with the view seen up to this point. Nicky and Lydia are spending time together in the park when they are suddenly set upon by the Chaplains. Nicky and Lydia are lucky to escape with their lives when the attack is unexpectedly foiled by two policemen on their beat.

Scene 10: The streets come alive as a trumpet is played on the streets. Davie has set himself up with his trumpeter near a lamp post preparing to preach. A crowd gathers around to hear what he has to say. Two policemen arrive on the scene to break up the crowd and on hearing that Davie wants to preach they tell him to stop. One gang member says that it's Davie's constitutional right to speak. The policeman says that it's only allowed under the American Flag. Another gang member happens to have a small flag stitched on the back of his leather jacket. With this solved the policemen back off. Davie challenges the Presidents and vice Presidents of the gangs to shake his hand. The Chaplain leaders come forward and on Davies directions drop to their knees and 'get religion'. The Mau Mau leaders meet the preacher again but Nicky again shows how much he despises the preacher.

ACT 2

Scene 1: The air is filled with the sound of Spanish music. Davie is high with excitement from the experience of the street meeting a few days before. As he is again combing the streets he recognizes that the Spanish music is coming from a nearby building. He is directed by a youth to an upstairs apartment. He knocks on the door and is received with open arms by the Spanish congregation led by Vincente and Delia Ortez. They want to hear all the news as they were familiar with his face from the newspaper story. After hearing his account they challenge him to conduct a mass rally for youth at the St Nicholas Arena, a prize fight centre in New York. All the gangs could be invited to meet at the one place.

Scene 2: Lydia is desperate for love and is with Nicky in the alley outside the Mau Maus Clubroom. She tries to get the attention she wants from him but he is obsessed with the preacher. He is angry, violent and outraged that the preacher is going to break up the gang. Lydia realizes that the preacher even threatens the relationship she has with Nicky. Nicky leaves. Lydia resolves that she will put an end to this preacher.

Scene 3: Delia and Vincente Ortez are in their apartment. Delia is getting dinner ready and Vincente is reading a paper. A knock is heard at the door. Delia puts down the knife with which she had been slicing meat and walks to the door. There stands Lydia. She is high on heroin. She asks for the preacher. On finding out he's not in she begins to abuse them for trying to break up the gangs. She sees the knife and lunges forward to grab it and then threatens to commit suicide then

and there. One of Delia's children enters the room. Delia moves in front of him to protect him. After a very tense moment and through Delia's dialogue Lydia begins to settle. The knife is lowered until it is held limply in her hand. Finally Delia knocks it out of her hand onto the floor and Lydia makes no effort to get it again. She stands in the centre of the room, the most forlorn bundle of dejection. She finally straightens up, shrugs her shoulders and walks out.

Scene 4: Israel is in love with his girl, Nancy and Nicky notices that the President of the Mau Maus has softened. It is more than love. Israel starts sharing about what the preachers been telling him. This provokes Nicky to attack Israel verbally at first and then physically. Another relationship is threatened by the preacher. Nicky, though, is visibly moved by this encounter.

Scene 5: The arena is a big room with a stage. Davie nervously waits on the stage. Other members of the team are also nervous as the gangs make their way in. Davie steps onto the stage and invites six gang members to take up the collection. Nicky Cruz and five other Mau Maus step forward. As they collect the offering the teenagers are threatened to give more than usual. Once the collection is taken the six boys walk around the back of the stage. At the back of the stage there is an exit sign and all the teenagers are laughing and jeering knowing that the inevitable is about to happen. They're certain that the six boys and the collection will never be seen again. To everyone's surprise Nicky leads them all on to the stage and gives the cardboard containers to Davie. A change has begun.

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ACT I, SCENE I

Highbridge Park at night.

The Dragons (Gang of seven) seek out their victim. They find a fifteen year old polio victim named Michael Farmer.

The Dragons:	We hunt
	We stalk
	Our Prey
	And walk
	To cut
	And maim
	Our charge
	Our aim
	To seize
	We seek
	To claim
	The weak
	Destroy
	Destruct
	Our ploy

Erupts
As vile
As snakes
We slide
We scheme
To kill today
We dream
We hunt
We stalk
Our Prey
And walk
To cut
And maim
Our charge
Our aim
To seize
We seek
To claim
The weak
Destroy
Destruct
Our ploy
Erupts
As vile
As snakes
We slide

We scheme
To kill today
We dream
For we are the dragons
A mighty gang
Of seasoned warriors
To life we hang
On tight
While travellin'
On the edge of a knife
We're ready
To win tonight
Sharpened our knives
We're lookin' for a fight
To fight.
For we are the dragons
A mighty gang
Of seasoned warriors
To life we hang
On tight
Blood in our veins
Blood in our hearts
Blood's gonna run
As we tear apart
It's gonna be a bloody night
Cause we're lookin' for a fight

To fight.
We hunt
We stalk
Our prey
And walk
To cut
And maim
Our charge
Our aim
To seize
We seek
To claim
The weak
Destroy
Destruct
Our ploy
Erupts
As vile
As snakes
We slide
We scheme
To kill today
We dream.....

The boys proceed to stab their victim seven times with the seven discordant chords played and then close the scene with laughter.

ACT I, SCENE 2

David (Davie) Wilkerson's Study at night. Davie is reading a copy of Life Magazine. He is seated and leaning over his desk when his wife, Gwen enters.

Gwen: Davie
It is getting late
Can't what you are doing wait
You've been in your study now for hours
Preachers need to get their sleep
Sunday's over can't it keep
Surely it could wait
I am so drowsy

Gwen leans over Davie's shoulder and kisses him goodnight

Gwen: I love you, Davie

Davie: Goodnight Gwen

Gwen turns and leaves the room through the study door.

Davie: This whole strange adventure
Got its start one night
As I sat in this study
Reading Life magazine.
As I turned each page

At first glance it appeared
That there was nothing
That would ever start to interest me
But my eyes
They were drawn to see
An artists sketch
Portraying the gravity
Of a trial taking place
In New York
In New York
In New York City
As I drew upon each drawing
In my heart I felt a gnawing
Feeling as I looked into their eyes
As I peered into their eyes
I felt compassion start to rise
For each and every one
Of the seven.
On trial for their lives
On trial for taking a life
The story revolted me

Visual images of the attack and the attackers are shown on the suspended video screen as Davie sings.

They stabbed Michael Farmer
In the back

Seven times
With their knives
They stabbed and bashed him
Seven times
Wiping blood through their hair
Saying, “We messed him good”
This story revolts me
My stomach turns
My heart yearns
My head turns
As my mind begins to learn.
Suddenly from somewhere else
A thought sprang into my mind
Go to New York City
Go to help those boys
Take pity
You must go
To New York City.

Davie walks across the room and picks up a suitcase that is already packed. He tidies his desk and finalizes preparations as he sings.

Davie: I’ve gotta go

I've gotta go
To New York City
I've gotta go
I've gotta go
To New York City
Just a boy
He was just a boy
Playing games
Dangerous games
While flaunting with death
With every breath
While just a boy
Just a boy
He was just a boy
One of seven
Boys who shared
In murderous crime
And bloody grime
While just a boy
Why
Does it make me cry?
They'd believed a lie
That another should die
Just a boy
He was just a boy

Bewildered and scared

Full of despair

Just look at that stare

While just a boy

Davie begins to leave his study with suitcase in hand. As the stage revolves, Davie crosses the room and enters the Courtroom that is already in session. He takes his seat with the other spectators.

I've gotta go

I've gotta go

To New York City

I've gotta go

I've gotta go

To New York City.