

## LIFESTYLE

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## Cleaning up

## A Peninsula twist to this long-running soap

Tom Scanlon

## DIVERSIONS

Those wondering how accessible rap music is to mainstream America might tune in to Channel 7 weekdays at 1. There, set against the usual "I know that baby is mine!" soap angst of the long-running "One Life to Live," is the blossoming story of Kerry Nichols, the police commissioner's rapping son.

Introduced in early October, Kerry is played by Allan Dean Moore, the second East Palo Alto native to make a dent in rap music. Moore's journey into the

realm of rhymes is quite a bit more circuitous than the one taken before him by his old schoolmate, Will Griffin. Now living in Los Angeles, Griffin fronts a



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rap band called the Uzi Bros.

Where Griffin has been a musician most of his life, Moore has been studying acting for years. Until very recently, his resume included "no singing, no rapping, no dancing - other than stuff I did in plays. I'm a neophyte to this," Moore said last week.

Moore's entree into the music world was precipitous; the "One Life to Live" role blind-sided him, leaving him precious little time to prepare before being seen and heard by millions.

**MOORE, WHO GRADUATED FROM** Menlo-Atherton High School in 1978, had

been living in Los Angeles since 1982. He worked "day jobs" to support himself, and landed small parts in several movies, notably "Lethal Weapon 2" (in which Moore courted the daughter of Danny Glover's character). This year, Moore acted in two Los Angeles stage productions, and on an episode of TV's "America's Most Wanted."

A few weeks after attending a casting call for "One Life to Live," Moore received a call-back: "They said to come in for a (video) test, and I had to have a rap ready," Moore recalled. "I don't rap, so I stayed up all night, thinking 'What am I going to do?'"

Relying fully on his acting skills, Moore bluffed his way through the audition, and signed a three-year contract. This fledgling rapper could hardly ask for a better tutor than the consultant provided by ABC: "Mr. Curtis Blow — Mr. Rap himself," Moore said, exaggerating only slightly, for Blow is one of the founding fathers of rap.

Moore said Blow has written and produced all the raps of K-Funk Mob, the group of which Kerry Nichols is a member.

Last Wednesday's episode took place at a Halloween party. Kerry and his K-Funk partner Miles (Dex Sander) rapped "Women," which includes the lines "All men are doomed/when women of the '90s start to assume." Later, Kerry was confronted by a furious Rica (Vanita Harbour), who was not amused by the rap that was clearly aimed at her. "Why don't you check the banner in a couple of days, and find out

who has the last laugh," she fumed, before stalking off.

As you might guess, romance looms.

**MOORE CHARACTERIZED**

"WOMEN" as "soft rap," a la Jazzy Jeff and the Fresh Prince (the latter has his own situation comedy, Monday nights on NBC). "ABC wants it to be more like the one I just did ('Women'), as opposed to the hard stuff. They figure middle America will be more receptive of the softer raps," Moore said.

Curtis Blow, he added, wants the K-Funk Mob to be a little more Public Enemy-esque, at least occasionally. Moore said "K-Funk," the first rap he performed on TV, had a harder edge than "Women."

Similarly, Moore alternates on the show between rapping and dancing and more traditional acting. "The acting is most important to me. It hasn't been focused on as much as I would like," said Moore, who hopes to continue acting in movies.

Moore's recurring character is scheduled to make appearances this Tuesday and Friday, and Monday and Tuesday of next week. They are well aware of Kerry Nichols' appearances at Menlo Park's Mixed Media Hair Design, owned and operated by Moore's mother and aunt. The Menalto Street beauty shop has a new fixture, a television set.

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Allan Dean Moore of East Palo Alto is starting to make it in show business in the role of Kerry Nichols, a rapping son of the police commissioner on the soap opera "One Life To Live."