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Book & Lyrics by **Ben H. Winters**

Music by **Steve Margoshes**

FAME FOREVER – TALENT SPRINGS ETERNAL was inspired by Mildred Cram's romantic novella *Forever*, the classic Bernstein/Sondheim musical *West Side Story*, Georges Bizet's popular opera *Carmen* and Thornton Wilder's timeless play *Our Town*.

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FAME FOREVER

Talent Springs Eternal

CAST

The Spirits

Carmen Diaz
Michael Peters

The Teachers

Miss Greta Bell
Miss Serena Katz
Mr. Ramon Garcia

The Students

Vanessa Vegas
Georgia Washington
J.J. Byrd

The Alumni

Joe Vegas
Mabel Washington
Schlomo Metzenbaum
Tyrone Jackson
Iris Kelly-Tompkins

The Kid

Sonny Vegas

The Ensemble

Chantelle
Tyrone Jackson Dancers
Other Students (Kids)
Other Alumni and Guests

**The story takes place in and around the “FAME” School
(Fiorello LaGuardia High School of Music & Art and Performing Arts)
in New York City between 2004 and 2014 and...**

SONGS & MUSICAL INTERLUDES

ACT 1

AROUND & AROUND (PROLOGUE)
THE 20TH REUNION OF THE CLASS OF '84
EVERYBODY WANTS TO BE MARIA
BEAT OUT DAT RHYTHM*
IT'S IN HER DNA
IT WOULD MEAN A LOT TO ME
SONG WITHOUT WORDS (piano)
ON THE OTHER HAND
WARMING UP TO TANGO
THE MIRACLE IS ME

ACT 2

TIME FLIES / THE 20TH REUNION...
JUST WHEN YOU THINK
TOREADOR* / TAKES 3 TO TANGO
LOVE IS RARE
RAINDROPS AND TEARS (BALLET)
THE MIRACLE IS ME (REPRISE)
AROUND & AROUND (REPRISE)
HEY! SPRING IS SPRINGIN'
THE 10TH / 30TH REUNION OF THE CLASS OF '04 / '84
HABANERA*
I'VE GOT ANOTHER SONG TO SING
AROUND & AROUND (FINALE)

FAME – I'M GONNA LIEVE FOREVER (CURTAIN CALL)

*BIZET

ACT ONE

SCENE ONE.

(PROLOGUE)

A Very Odd Place. It's a classroom (chalkboard, desks, chairs, etc.).

CARMEN DIAZ (dressed in white), an 18-year-old Hispanic girl, is asleep at a desk. She is bathed in a ghostly blue light. From offstage, a chorus sings a cappella, gently:

#1: FAME FOREVER OPENING

CHORUS (*offstage*)

OOO
YOU'RE GONNA LIVE FOREVER,
YOU'RE GONNA LEARN HOW TO FLY.
YOU FEEL IT COMIN' TOGETHER,
PEOPLE WILL SEE YOU AND...

As they sing, MICHAEL PETERS (dressed in white) floats into the space.

(NOTE: Both Michael and Carmen move with a soft, fluid dance energy. Their dialog is underscored with a flute.)

MICHAEL

Wake up! Wake up Carmen!

CARMEN
(waking up)

Who's Carmen? Where am I? What's going on?

MICHAEL

You've been asleep, for twenty years, like Rip Van Winkle. But now it's time to wake up.

CARMEN

I don't remember anything.

MICHAEL

You were a very talented girl who made some bad choices and that was that, end of story. But the end of the story is where the new one begins.

2: AROUND AND AROUND begins

MICHAEL (con't)

Your life finished, except it didn't. Because nothing finishes. Life moves in cycles. Around and around. Simple.

CARMEN

That doesn't sound very simple.

MICHAEL

Listen up kid. I'm talkin' about the rebirth of the spirit. You make peace with the past; you are drawn to your future; and then you can embrace the present.

CARMEN

Who are you?

MICHAEL

I'm a fellow traveler. I'm a friend. I'm gonna help you remember.

I KNOW THAT WE TWO ARE CONNECTED
FOREVER WE'RE GONNA BE BOUND
LIKE THE WHEELS OF A BICYCLE TURNING
TOGETHER WE'RE SPINNING AROUND
YES WE'RE ALWAYS TRAV'LIN' TOGETHER
WANDERING THE VERY SAME GROUND
LIKE THE BIG BLUE EARTH IN ITS ORBIT TURNING 'ROUND
AROUND AND AROUND
A BEAUTIFUL SONG
AROUND AND AROUND

Michael holds his last note, giving himself a theatrical flair, as the music continues softly underneath. Beat. He puts out his hand. Carmen takes a step towards him, then hesitates.

MICHAEL

Dance with me.

CARMEN

I wanna go home.

MICHAEL

Home is where the music's playin' kid.

Carmen takes his hand. Defying gravity, the two strangers dance together beautifully as the music swells.

MICHAEL (cont'd)

YOU KNOW THAT WE'RE FOREVER CONNECTED
AND HERE'S THE PART THAT'S REALLY PROFOUND
REMEMBER NO MATTER WHAT HAPPENS, BABY
TOGETHER WE'RE SPINNING AROUND

MICHAEL (*cont'd*)
AND THE PRESENT ALWAYS SURROUNDS US
WHILE THE FUTURE WAITS TO BE FOUND
TIME IN A CIRCULAR MOTION, SPINNIN' ROUND
AROUND AND AROUND
AROUND AND AROUND
AROUND AND AROUND

CARMEN
LIKE A SONG.

MICHAEL & CARMEN
AROUND AND AROUND.

#2a: TIME FLIES

A huge jump in music and lights and...

SCENE TWO.

...we're in Greta Bell's office, Jan. 2004 at the Fiorello H. LaGuardia High School of Music & Art and Performing Arts: the "FAME" school.

Greta Bell, an efficient no-nonsense woman in late 50's is on the phone while another line is ringing. The overall impression is of continuous activity, in stark contrast to the environment we just left.

#2a.1 PHONE RING.

Enter English teacher, SERENA KATZ.

GRETA
(*into the phone*)
Alumni and Friends, this is Greta Bell. From LaGuardia High School for the Performing Arts? Which you attended? Yes? OK? Are you with me?
(*motioning for Serena to sit*)
Yes! About the reunion! Can you believe it?

#3: THE 20th REUNION OF THE CLASS OF '84

It's gonna be a helluva night – The 20th Reunion of the Class of '84"

All the noise stops at once.

Pinpoint spot on Serena.

SERENA

WAIT A MINUTE, THAT CAN'T BE RIGHT—
I REALLY DON'T SEE HOW
TWO THOUSAND FOUR MINUS TWENTY YEARS
EQUALS ... HOLY COW!
WELL THEN I GUESS THAT IT'S OFFICIAL
I AM A CHILD NO MORE:
IT'S THE TWENTIETH REUNION OF THE CLASS OF EIGHTY-FOUR!

*Lights and noise return, blaring into Serena's reverie.
Music continues as underscoring.*

GRETA

Great!! Swell!! I'll be excited to see you too! Good bye.

(hangs up)

Also excited if you make a small donation. Serena! Help me out here! You ARE a member of the class of '84.

SERENA

Yes I am. And also an English teacher and my theatre class is about to start.

GRETA

Who's next on that list?

SERENA

Tyrone Jackson! Son of a gun.

A pool of light opens and we find TYRONE JACKSON at the Tyrone Jackson Dance Theatre, working out at a dance barre. In various poses around him are members of his dance company, including his girlfriend, CHANTELE.

GRETA

Best dancer who ever went here.

TYRONE

(into his cell phone)

MS. BELL, YOU GOTTA BE KIDDIN'!
NO WAY HAS IT BEEN TWENTY YEARS
JUST GETTING USED TO MY LIFE IN THE PRESENT
AND BAMMO! THE PAST RE-APPEARS!

(out to the audience as Greta dials another number)

TWENTY YEARS OUTTA SCHOOL
TWENTY YEARS CHASIN' FAME
TWENTY YEARS I'M OUT HERE DANCIN'
STILL THE WORLD DON'T KNOW MY NAME

GRETA

Joe?

SERENA

Joe Vegas!

GRETA

(into the phone)

How's my favorite class clown?

We find radio DJ JOE VEGAS, taking off his headphones to answer the phone. The music takes on a Latin feel.

JOE

MS. BELL, YOU KNOW I WILL BE THERE!
THIS IS A NIGHT I WON'T MISS
BETTER BELIEVE YOUR MOST FAMOUS ALUM
WON'T SKIP OUT ON SOMETHING LIKE THIS!!

(out to the audience as Greta keeps dialing)

TWENTY YEARS OUTTA SCHOOL!
TWENTY YEARS ON THE AIR
TWENTY YEARS ON MY WAISTLINE
TWENTY YEARS OF LESS HAIR!

SERENA

Mabel Washington. Is she still in the business?

GRETA

Sort of.

Here's MABEL WASHINGTON, videotaping a weather report, holding an umbrella over her head.

MABEL

... the rain will continue at least through the weekend, folks, so be sure to –

(her cell phone rings)

Oh, shoot! Sorry!

(she gestures to “cut” taping and sings into her cell phone)

MS. BELL! MY GOODNESS, HOW ARE YA?
GEE, I LOVE HEARIN' YOUR VOICE!
YOU KNOW MABEL WASHINGTON'S COMIN'
YOU KNOW IT AIN'T EVEN A CHOICE!

(out to the audience)

TWENTY YEARS OUTTA SCHOOL!
GUESS I AIN'T TRAVELED TOO FAR
THE WEATHER GIRL ON LOCAL CABLE:
NOT EXACTLY A SUPERSTAR

Greta keeps dialing. SCHLOMO METZENBAUM is holed up in his studio with his keyboard and violin.

GRETA

Schlomo?

SCHLOMO

(into his phone)

MS. BELL, IT SOUNDS VERY PLEASANT
AND I'LL DO MY BEST TO ATTEND
IF I CAN TAKE TIME FROM COMPOSING
WHICH THESE DAYS IS MY ONLY FRIEND

(out to the audience)

TWENTY YEARS I'VE BEEN WORKING
SO MUCH MORE LEFT TO WRITE
TWENTY YEARS OF PERFECTION—
HOVERING JUST OUT OF SIGHT

*Suddenly all the alumni are singing together; they're calling
one another, marking calendars, making plans.*

ALL

LIFE'S CONTINUED CHANGING,
IT'S GONE BY IN A SHOT
THERE ARE OLD FRIENDS WHO WILL BE THERE,
AND OTHERS WHO WILL NOT
A VOICE THAT RINGS A BELL
AN OLD FAMILIAR NAME
A SMILE THAT'S SLIGHTLY FADED
A LAUGH THAT'S JUST THE SAME
THOSE FRIENDS YOU SWORE YOU'D LOVE FOREVER
AND DON'T SPEAK TO ANYMORE
AT THE TWENTIETH REUNION OF THE CLASS OF EIGHT FOUR!

In Greta's office:

GRETA

Wait! I remember!!

SERENA

Remember what?

GRETA

Why I called you into my office dear. Try to stay with me. One member of your
graduating class has yet to respond.

SERENA

Nick Piazza?

GRETA

That TV show of his is a huge hit which means great publicity for the school if he comes.
Drop him a note dear and if he doesn't come, get him to send us a check. A BIG ONE!

SERENA

I haven't spoken to Nick in ages.

GRETA

I know he has sweet memories of you. I saw you play Juliet with him. You were sooo hot together.

SERENA

Greta, that was twenty years ago!

Everyone sings out to the audience.

ALL

LIFE, IT KEEPS ON CHANGING,
IT'S GONE BY IN A RUSH

TYRONE

THERE ARE NAMES THAT YOU'VE FORGOTTEN

SERENA

AND NAMES THAT MAKE YOU BLUSH

JOE & MABEL

THERE ARE FACES YOU'LL RECALL

SCHLOMO

AND OTHERS THAT YOU WON'T

TYRONE

SOME PEOPLE YOU LOSE TRACK OF

JOE & MABEL

AND OTHERS THAT YOU DON'T

ALL (*COUNTERPOINT*)

THOSE FRIENDS YOU SWORE YOU'D LOVE FOREVER
AND DON'T SPEAK TO ANYMORE
AT THE TWENTIETH REUNION OF THE CLASS OF EIGHTY-FOUR!
(AT THE TWENTIETH REUNION OF THE CLASS OF EIGHTY-FOUR!)
AT THE TWENTIETH REUNION OF THE CLASS OF EIGHTY-FOUR!
(THE CLASS, THE CLASS OF EIGHTY-FOUR!)
(THE CLASS OF EIGHTY-FOUR!)
THE CLASS OF EIGHTY-FOUR!

Song ends. "Time Flies" immediately transitions to...

SCENE THREE.

...Joe in his radio station office and Mabel (with an umbrella) outside somewhere on assignment.

#3.1 CELL PHONE RINGS

Joe and Mabel are on the phone with each other, in pools of light on opposite sides of the stage.

Music out.

JOE

Mabel Washington! How's my favorite weather girl?

MABEL

Hey Joe. How's my favorite DJ? I need to ask a favor, hon'. I wouldn't ask, but—promise you won't tell anyone?

JOE

I promise.

MABEL

The station is planning a series of one-hour reality specials. They're calling it "New York In A Nutshell." They want a host who is warm and colorful and exciting... and guess who they're interviewing today?

JOE

Hey, that's fantastic! I'm telling everyone.

MABEL

Joe!

JOE

Break a leg, kid.

He puts back on his headphones and turns back to his turntables.

#3a: TRANSITION TO CLASS (TIME FLIES) *music plays lightly, as the lights dim in their respective areas...*

SCENE FOUR.

...and go up in the classroom, which is full of the bustling energy.

We're in Senior Performance Class, team-taught by Serena and a charismatic RAMON GARCIA, a handsome and dedicated music teacher in his late 20's.

In the back row sit two girls: shy, nervous GEORGIA WASHINGTON and her best friend -- brash, outgoing VANESSA VEGAS.

Music out.

GEORGIA
You did not.

VANESSA
I did.

GEORGIA
You SO didn't.

VANESSA
I so totally did. This is gonna be the coolest party ever. I told my Dad, whether he likes it or not, I'm going to this party – and don't expect me home before midnight!

GEORGIA
So how was it?

VANESSA
Sucked.

GEORGIA
Oh my God, though, Vanessa, you are SO amazing for standing up to your Dad like that.

VANESSA
Please. My Dad is not so tough! Oh my God, though. Did I tell you who showed up there?

GEORGIA
He didn't!

VANESSA
Yes he did!

GEORGIA
He SO didn't.

VANESSA

Georgia!

GEORGIA

How did he look?

Enter JJ BYRD, a scruffy, slouchy sexy guy in a backwards baseball cap and low-slung jeans.

JJ

I looked good!

Georgia and Vanessa collapse in embarrassed giggles as JJ takes his seat.

RAMON

Glad you were able to join us, Mr. Byrd.

JJ

My name's JJ, man.

RAMON

I will call you by your name as indicated on your birth certificate, man.

GEORGIA
(about JJ)

I love him.

VANESSA

I know.

GEORGIA

No, but I'm serious. I love him.

VANESSA

I know.

GEORGIA

No, but I'm serious.

VANESSA

Georgia!

We are aware of Carmen and Michael present in the classroom again in their blue light. No one can see or hear them as they appear and disappear in the "real world."

The “real world” freezes as Michael and Carmen interact.

#3b: AROUND & AROUND UNDERSCORE #1 begins.

CARMEN

What are we doin’ here?

MICHAEL

YOU went here. Me too!

CARMEN

It’s the FAME school. Is that how we’re connected?

Serena enters.

MICHAEL

I was before your time. You recognize anybody?

CARMEN

Serena! Oh my God! Serena Katz.

MICHAEL

Someone you know?

CARMEN

(Calling out to her.) Hey Serena. It’s me Carmen. Remember me?

MICHAEL

She can’t hear you.

Music ends. Our attention shifts to the “real world” and the action in the classroom. Michael and Carmen observe.

RAMON

Ah, Miss Katz is back from Miss Bell’s office. Is everything alright?

SERENA

She wanted me to contact an old boyfriend. Very old! OK, OK. Where were we?

RAMON

Casting? For “WEST SIDE STORY”? Our men have been selected. Bernardo, Riff, and... Tony.

JJ

That’s right!

(sings, showing off)

“Maria... I just kissed a girl named Maria...”

The girls all sigh.

RAMON

That will be enough Mr. Byrd. You may have been the obvious choice for Tony, but we have a little more competition for Maria.

#4: EVERYBODY WANTS TO BE MARIA begins

SERENA

And girls, we need an Anita and an Anybody's...

VANESSA

I'm gonna be Maria!

All the kids begin talking at once.

THE GIRLS

EVERYBODY WANTS TO BE MARIA,
MARIA, MARIA
EVERYBODY'S GOT THAT YEARNING IN THEIR SOUL
EVERYBODY WANTS TO BE MARIA—
EVERYBODY WANTS THAT ROLE!
LA LA LA LA LA LA, LA LA LA LA LA

EVERYBODY WANTS TO BE MARIA,
MARIA, MARIA
EVERYBODY WANTS THE MAGIC AND ROMANCE
EVERYBODY WANTS TO BE MARIA—
EVERYBODY WANTS THAT CHANCE!

VANESSA

MARIA—I HAVE TO BE MARIA!
I'VE GOT TO BE...
THIS IS MY SHOT TO BE
MARIA
I SIMPLY GOT TO BE HER
THEY'VE GOT TO LET ME BE MARIA!
LOOK AT ME,
DON'T YOU JUST SEE MARIA?

VANESSA & GIRLS

EVERYBODY WANTS TO BE MARIA,
MARIA, MARIA
EVERYBODY'S GOT THAT ACHING IN THEIR HEART
EVERYBODY WANTS TO BE MARIA—
EVERYBODY WANTS THAT PART, THAT PART
EVERYBODY WANTS THAT PART, THAT PART
EVERYBODY WANTS THAT PART!

Dance Break.

The girls dance with confidence and joy, occasionally flirting with JJ.

THE GIRLS

THEY MIGHT OFFER ME ANITA,
I WOULD TURN THAT DOWN FLAT, CUZ

GEORGIA

WHO WOULDN'T WANT TO BE MARIA?
WITH A TONY THAT LOOKS LIKE THAT!

VANESSA

MARIA—I HAVE TO BE MARIA!
IT'S MY FATE TO BE...
WON'T IT BE GREAT TO BE...
I CAN'T WAIT TO BE
MARIA
I SIMPLY GOT TO BE HER
THEY'VE GOT TO LET ME BE MARIA!
LOOK AT ME,
DON'T YOU JUST SEE MARIA?

Ramon and Serena sit behind a table, auditioning the girls one by one.

RAMON

Georgia Washington?

GEORGIA
(beautifully)

EVERYBODY WANTS TO BE MARIA.

SERENA

Good. Vanessa Vegas?

VANESSA
(beautifully)

EVERYBODY WANTS TO BE MARIA...

SERENA
(as they exit)

This is not going to be an easy decision.

BOY

Now, you have to think outside the box...
(sings, off-key)

EVERYBODY WANTS TO BE MARIA...

RAMON

Well, that made it a little easier.

Meanwhile:

VARIOUS GIRLS
LOOK AT ME, DON'T I JUST LOOK LIKE MARIA?
LISTEN HERE, DON'T I JUST SING LIKE MARIA?

VANESSA
HONEY, YOU AIN'T A THING LIKE MARIA

ALL
EVERYBODY WANTS THAT PART, THAT PART,
EVERYBODY WANTS THAT PART, THAT PART,
EVERYBODY WANTS TO BE MARIA—
EVERYBODY WAAAAANTS THAAAAT PAAAART!

Song ends. The girls run off.

SCENE FIVE.

The lights shift, and suddenly only Carmen and Michael are left in the classroom.

CARMEN
So what's the story? This Vanessa girl gets cast as Maria, and she's a total hit, and she like, goes on to fame and fortune and whatever. Is that what happens?

#4a: AROUND & AROUND UNDERSCORE #2 begins.

MICHAEL
Maybe yes and maybe no. Maybe not maybe so.

CARMEN
What is that supposed to be all mysterious?

MICHAEL
Maybe it is and maybe it isn't.

CARMEN
Oh, stop it!

MICHAEL
You make peace with the past, you are drawn to the future... and then you embrace the present.

Music out.

CARMEN

Yeah, yeah. You told me that already. What you didn't tell me is who you are?

MICHAEL

My name was Michael. Michael Peters. I went here. Performing Arts Class of '66. After that, I was lucky enough to work with two other Michaels: with Michael Bennett on *Dreamgirls* and Michael Jackson.

CARMEN

(skeptical)

Are you serious? You worked with Michael Jackson? Doin' what?

MICHAEL

Choreography. The "Thriller" video. Heard of it? I did a lot of things. And then I died.

CARMEN

You mean you went to sleep.

MICHAEL

Yeah. But now, life is calling me back to this place where my creative spirit was first ignited. And YOURS! The thing is Carmen I think this is where my spirit is gonna be reborn.

CARMEN

I don't believe it!

MICHAEL

I can't make you believe in anything. But you should trust me.

CARMEN

Why?

MICHAEL

Because I'm here to guide you. For now. You're gonna have to figure things out for yourself after...

CARMEN

After what?

MICHAEL

After I go back. Believe it or not.

They stare at each other for a beat. Then a rush of high energy music enters

#5: BEAT OUT DAT RHYTHM (from CARMEN JONES)
and...

SCENE SIX.

...we move to Tyrone's dance studio. For a long moment we are treated to The Tyrone Jackson Dance Theatre rehearsing Tyrone's newest piece.

Mabel enters and watches, until...

TYRONE

I can't believe it. Mabel Washington. You finally showed up.

MABEL

Oh, Tyrone, don't let me interrupt! This is some company you got here. Y'all are cookin'!

TYRONE

Pretty sweet, huh? It's my little take on "CARMEN JONES".

MABEL

I love it!

CHANTELLE, Tyrone's younger, somewhat haughty girlfriend, detaches herself from the group. Everybody stops dancing.

CHANTELLE

Baby? Who is this?

TYRONE

An old friend of mine. Meet Mabel Washington

MABEL

A pleasure.

CHANTELLE

Oh, wait. I know you. You do the weather on Channel 1.

MABEL

Yeah. And you must be Chantelle! Tyrone has told me lots of things – all good, don't worry. So –

CHANTELLE

Hey, is it supposed to rain this weekend?

TYRONE

All right, let's take ten.

CHANTELLE
(to the group)

That's ten, people.

Music stops. Chantelle and the dancers exit.

TYRONE

What brings you by, kiddo?

MABEL

Well, I just had this job interview, is all. To be the host of a new show.

TYRONE

Good for you, Mabel. How'd it go?

MABEL

Ah, not so good. I mean, I don't know. Who knows? They asked me to give them what my "Big Idea" for my first story would be... and you know what I said? I said I'd like to do stories about people trying to make their dreams come true. People like my friend Tyrone Jackson, the choreographer.

TYRONE

Sounds like a pretty cool guy.

MABEL

Mind if I hang out and watch you work for a bit? Watching you is gonna lift my spirits, and I think they need a little liftin' today.

TYRONE

You're always welcome, Mabel. You stay as long as you want.

Chantelle, passing by with her water bottle:

CHANTELLE

Are we all done chit-chatting, darling?

TYRONE

OK, people – back to work!

#5a: TRANSITION TO JOE (CARMEN JONES' music resumes.)

The dancers return to their routine.

Cross-fade...

SCENE SEVEN.

...to Joe at home. Georgia and Vanessa enter, all excited.

Music out.

JOE

So, ladies, how was school?

#5b: EVERYBODY WANTS TO BE MARIA
UNDERSCORE enters.

GEORGIA

(overlapping with Vanessa)

Oh my God, they had auditions for “WEST SIDE STORY” today and everybody wants to be cast as Maria but Vanessa is totally going to get it –

VANESSA

(overlapping with Georgia)

Don’t say that because you just never really know. I think it went pretty well, but I may have been a little flat on...

JOE

Stop! Stop! Girls!

Music out as Mabel enters.

GEORGIA

Vanessa you are totally going to get that role. You’re *perfect* for it!

VANESSA

It has always been my dream to play Maria, and I mean, they’re doing it my senior year – *our* senior year – and I mean, I am kind of perfect for it... right, Dad?

JOE

No doubt, my princess.

VANESSA

Besides, Dad and I agree it is crucial I get a lead role senior year. He knows a guy who’s the assistant casting director for Broadway musicals and he thinks he might be able to get him to come see me! Right, Pop?

JOE

You goin’ to the big leagues, little lady... that is a Joey Vegas guarantee!

The girls run off, excitedly.

MABEL

(calling after her)

Don't get too settled, honey – we're going home in a minute

(to Joe)

You shouldn't get her hopes up, Joe.

JOE

Why shouldn't I? You telling me that girl is *not* going to be a superstar?

MABEL

Here we go.

JOE

I got big plans for that kid. Playing Maria is just the next step.

MABEL

Wait, now, honey! What makes you think my Georgia won't get the part?

JOE

Oh, now, Mabel...

#6: *IT'S IN HER DNA* begins.

JOE *(cont'd)*

...Georgia is a very talented young lady. But ah...you know. Not like Vanessa.

EVER SINCE MY LITTLE GIRL
WAS JUST A LITTLE GIRL
SHE'S BEEN LIKE A LITTLE FRED ASTAIRE
HER FAVORITE GAME TO PLAY
WAS DANCE AROUND THE HOUSE ALL DAY
AND EVERY STEP WAS LIGHT AS AIR!
EVEN WHEN MY LITTE BUG
WAS CRAWLING ON THE RUG

SHE WAS CUTE AND CHARMING AS CAN BE
SHE DANCED BEFORE SHE WALKED
AND SANG BEFORE SHE TALKED
AND EVERY NOTE WAS RIGHT ON KEY!

WHERE DID IT COME FROM?
HOW DID SHE GET THAT WAY?
THERE AIN'T NO QUESTION –
IT'S IN HER DNA

JOE (*cont'd*)

WHERE DID IT COME FROM?
HOW'D SHE END UP THAT WAY?
SHE'S GOT THE MAGIC MOLECULE
SHE'S HAD THE LEAD IN EVERY SCHOOL PLAY!
IT'S IN HER DNA!

My Vanessa was born a star. Nobody sings like her.

MABEL

My Georgia has got some chops, too, ya know!

(*sings*)

WHEN SHE WAS IN SECOND GRADE
WASN'T SELLIN' LEMONADE
PRACTICE, PRACTICE, PRACTICE DAY AND NIGHT
REHEARSALS ALL THE TIME
BALLET AND TAP AND MIME
SHE DID IT ALL, AND DID IT ALL JUST RIGHT!
WHEN SHE WAS SIX YEARS OLD,
A WONDER TO BEHOLD
YOU SHOULD HEAR THE LITTLE SONGS SHE WROTE
SHE'D SING 'EM ON THE BUS
AND FOLKS WOULD STARE AT US
AND THEN THEY'D CHEER FOR EVERY NOTE!

WHERE DID IT COME FROM?
HOW DID IT GET THAT WAY?
THERE AIN'T NO QUESTION—
IT'S IN HER DNA
WHERE DID IT COME FROM?
HOW'D SHE END UP THAT WAY?
YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE A SHERLOCK HOLMES
TO SEE WHICH WAY THE CHROMOSOMES LAY:
IT'S IN HER DNA!

JOE

AMBITION!

MABEL

ABILITY!

JOE

TALENT!

MABEL

AGILITY!

JOE & MABEL
IT'S THANKS TO HER FAMILY TREE
YES, ALL THAT SHE GOT, SHE GOT FROM ME
EACH OF US BEAR IT,
WHAT WE INHERIT
THEY CALL IT DNA!

Dance Break. Joe and Mabel ad lib about their kids talents.

*Vanessa and Georgia return at the end of the dance break,
and stay through the end of the song.*

JOE & MABEL (*cont'd*)
AMBITION! ABILITY!
TALENT! AGILITY!
IT'S THANKS TO HER FAMILY TREE
ALL THAT SHE GOT, SHE GOT FROM ME
EACH OF US BEAR IT,
WHAT WE INHERIT
THEY CALL IT DNA!

JOE
(*to Vanessa*)
MY LITTLE VANESSA

MABEL
(*to Georgia*)
MY DARLING GEORGIA

JOE & MABEL
A GENIUS AT THE AGE OF THREE!

JOE
MY DARLING VANESSA

MABEL
MY LITTLE GEORGIA

JOE & MABEL
A DANCER! A SINGER!
A REAL HUMDINGER
JUUUUST LIIIIKE MEEEE
IT'S IN HER DNA!

Song ends.

#6a: TIME FLIES/TRANSITION TO GRETA'S OFFICE
music transitions us to...

SCENE EIGHT.

...Greta's office. Tyrone enters.

Music out under Greta dialog.

GRETA

Look who's here. The brilliant Tyrone Jackson. So proud. So proud of you! *(She gives him a hug.)* So? Sit. Make yourself comfortable.

TYRONE

Heya, Ms. Bell. So what do you need?

GRETA

Need? Why do I have to need something? I can't call my favorite alumni dancer just to say hello?

TYRONE

So what do you need?

GRETA

I need you to dance at the reunion.

TYRONE

You got it. Done. My pleasure.

GRETA

With Iris.

Beat.

TYRONE

You mean like, Iris Iris? I don't know...

GRETA

It's a natural. Hot, handsome choreographer reunited with his high school sweetheart for a one-time-only performance. It'll be fun. It'll be adorable. AND—

TYRONE

I knew there was gonna be an "and".

GRETA

And her husband is loaded. In case you haven't heard. If she comes to the reunion and has a good time, perhaps she'll get him to donate a little of his real estate money to the school.

TYRONE

I don't know, Ms. Bell.

GRETA

Look me in the eyes and tell you don't miss dancing with Iris Kelly?

Beat.

TYRONE

You got her number?

Greta dials.

#6a.1 CELL PHONE RING

Elsewhere on stage, IRIS KELLY-TOMPKINS answers her cell phone.

IRIS

Hello?

TYRONE

(into the phone)

Iris?

**#6b: IT WOULD MEAN A LOT TO ME UNDERSCORE
#1 begins.**

IRIS

Oh my God: Tyrone Jackson?!

TYRONE

The one and only.

IRIS

It's been forever.

TYRONE

How ya doin' gorgeous?

IRIS

I'm ...fine. I'm fine. Wow. Tyrone!

Music out as Greta punches a button, putting her on speaker phone.

GRETA

And Ms. Bell!

IRIS

Well, hello!

GRETA

Tyrone and I were wondering if you'd like to dance with him at the reunion.

IRIS

You gotta be kidding me!

#7: IT WOULD MEAN A LOT TO ME

IRIS

IT'S KIND OF YOU TO ASK! THE ANSWER'S NO

GRETA

IT WOULD MEAN A LOT TO ME

IRIS

I PUT THAT WORLD BEHIND ME YEARS AGO

TYRONE

IT WOULD MEAN A LOT TO ME

IRIS

I DON'T SEE WHY I WOULD

GRETA

DEEP DOWN YOU KNOW YOU SHOULD

IRIS

IT'S SUCH A SWEET IDEA, BUT I WON'T BE ANY GOOD!
I'M REALLY NOT A DANCER ANYMORE

TYRONE

IT WOULD MEAN A LOT TO ME

GRETA

NOW, IRIS, DON'T BE SHY

IRIS

THAT'S NOT THE REASON WHY

TYRONE

YOU'LL NEVER KNOW WHAT COULD BE IF YOU DON'T GIVE IT A TRY!

A spotlight on "young Iris", dancing in Iris' memory.

GRETA & TYRONE

A LOT TO ME

IT WOULD MEAN A LOT TO ME

IRIS
I HAVEN'T DANCED A STEP IN TWENTY YEARS!

TYRONE
AND SO THE WHOLE WORLD WAITS FOR YOU
TO COME BACK ON THE SCENE
AND, OH, IT WOULD REALLY MAN
A LOT TO ME

GRETA
IT WOULD MEAN A LOT TO ME

TYRONE
NOW WE DON'T MEAN TO FORCE

GRETA
OF COURSE WE DON'T, OF COURSE!

IRIS
WELL FINE THEN...

GRETA
You'll do it?

TYRONE
That's great, Iris!

Iris lowers her cell phone for a moment.

IRIS
(to herself as an aside)
Maybe it will help me get through my damn divorce.

TYRONE
What'd you say?

IRIS
(into her cell phone)

I'm in!

(sings)
IT WILL MEAN A LOT TO ME

GRETA & TYRONE & IRIS
A LOT TO ME

Song ends.

GRETA

Great!

TYRONE

Ms. Bell has already got Scholomo working on a little tango number for us to dance to.

IRIS

Schlomo Metzenbaum?

GRETA

How many Schlomos do you know?

#8: SONG WITHOUT WORDS piano solo underscore

Cross-fade from Miss Bell's office...

SCENE NINE.

...to Schlomo in his studio.

Michael and Carmen enter and watch Schlomo playing on his keyboard.

CARMEN

I remember that his father was a very famous violinist.

MICHAEL

I met his father. Died young. Heart condition.

CARMEN

Schlomo inherited his talent.

MICHAEL

And his heart condition. But he doesn't know that yet.

CARMEN

What?

MICHAEL

Tell me more Carmen.

CARMEN

He wrote a beautiful sonata. I wrote the words. We wrote it together.

"Song Without Words" underscoring continues.

CARMEN

(remembering her lyrics)

“Bring on tomorrow, we can make a difference, bring on tomorrow, I can’t wait!” Oh, Schlomo, do you remember me? I wish we could write another song together... Michael, why does he seem so sad?

MICHAEL

Maybe he feels frustrated that he’ll never create anything as meaningful as that song he wrote with you.

CARMEN

Why don’t people see what an incredible thing life is when their livin’ it? The miracle of it all!

MICHAEL

That’s Emily in “OUR TOWN.”

CARMEN

Who’s Emily?

MICHAEL

She was Debbie Cohen in our school production. I worked the lights.

(He gestures upward and the lights flicker.)

CARMEN

Schlomo, I want you to feel it... the miracle of it all... The miracle of livin’ life in the now. Bring on today. *Not* tomorrow. Every day’s a miracle. Every moment. It’s all a miracle...a miracle...a miracle...

SCHLOMO *(overlapping, he starts writing lyrics)*

... a miracle... a miracle...lo and behold... a miracle my eyes can see.

CARMEN

The miracle is *you*.

SCHLOMO

The miracle is *me*.

MICHAEL

Lo and behold. I think he’s got it!

CARMEN

What happened to me Michael? I wanted to be a singer. And I – blew it. I lost my chance.

MICHAEL

We have more than *one* chance. Cycles. Remember? It’s not about what you want right now. Right now it’s somebody else’s turn.

Segue back to classroom.

#8a: EVERYBODY WANTS TO BE MARIA
UNERSCORE begins.

SCENE TEN.

RAMON

Now, which of these girls is going to play Maria?

SERENA

Well, I think the choice is fairly clear.

RAMON

As do I. Georgia Washington is a remarkable girl. She deserves this opportunity.

SERENA

Georgia? Really?

RAMON

Yes. She excels in my gospel choir class. Last weekend I arranged for them to see a matinee of CARMEN at City Opera. And Serena, you should have seen this kid's face light up when she heard that Bizet score. She gets it – she gets music in a way that kids her age just never do.

SERENA

That's all well and good, Ramon, but Vanessa Vegas –

RAMON

Oh, come on. How many times has Vanessa already played lead roles?

SERENA

There's a reason for that. We have a responsibility to put on the best possible show here.

RAMON

Of course we do, but... I gotta listen to my gut. My gut is saying Georgia is ready. She's the right choice.

SERENA

(skeptical)

Your gut?

RAMON

Yes! My gut!

SERENA

Okay maestro. We'll follow *your* gut. But you're going to have to be the one to break the news to Poppy Vegas.

#8a.1 SCHOOL BELL rings as Serena rushes off. Kids noisily enter the classroom.

Ramon begins handing out the WEST SIDE STORY scripts.

GEORGIA

I'm Maria! Me? Really? I can't believe it.

RAMON

Yes, you may believe it or not, Miss Washington. Either way, you have quite a bit of work in your immediate future.

VANESSA

Anybody's? I'm playing Anybody's? But she has nothing to sing.

RAMON

Vanessa, there are no *small* parts in the theatre. Congratulations to all of you for some very enthusiastic auditions. Rehearsals start tomorrow and we will not be wasting a moment.

The kids exit, except for Georgia, Vanessa, and JJ.

GEORGIA

I'm Maria. How can I be Maria?

VANESSA
(with effort)

Nice work, G.

GEORGIA

I'm co-starring with JJ! This is amazing.

VANESSA

I'm so happy for you.

GEORGIA

You are?

VANESSA

Of course. Look, it's just a stupid play.

GEORGIA

I know, I just – maybe me and JJ will... you know?

VANESSA

Yeah. Maybe!

GEORGIA

Besides, Anybodys is a cool part, too!

VANESSA

Right.

JJ is crossing to exit and pauses.

JJ

Bravo, Maria. Guess I'll see you at rehearsal.

He exits.

GEORGIA

Oh my God! My mom is gonna freak.

VANESSA

So is my Dad.

Georgia is gone.

VANESSA (*cont'd*)

(*self-mockingly*)

"Congratulations." "Nice work, G." "It's just a stupid play."

JJ re-enters, unnoticed.

#8b: EVERYBODY WANTS TO BE MARIA EXCERPT

VANESSA (*cont'd*)

(*sings, a cappella, feeling miserable*)

EVERYBODY'S GOT THAT ACHING IN THEIR HEART

EVERYBODY WANTS TO BE MARIA...

EVERYBODY WANTS THAT PART

JJ bursts into applause.

JJ

That's what I'm talkin' about.

VANESSA

Damn, JJ. You scared me. I didn't think anyone was here.

JJ

I'm not. Forgot my cap. You just keep on... doin' whatever it is you're doing.

VANESSA

Shut up.

JJ

Alright. Guess I'll see you in rehearsal or whatever. It'll be fun.

VANESSA

No it will not be fun.

JJ

Alright, well then I guess it won't.

VANESSA

If I were playing Maria, it would be fun. A lot of fun. But I'm not, so it won't. Got it?

Beat.

JJ

Damn. You're pretty hot when you're pissed off.

VANESSA

I'm not pissed off.

JJ

Oh yeah? Vanessa, I know good acting when I see it. I saw you acting like you were psyched for your friend, and I see you acting like you ain't pissed off now.

VANESSA

Whatever, JJ.

JJ

Not whatever. You got ripped off, no doubt about it. I'm the best actor, so I'm Tony – right? Well, you're the best actress, and everybody knows it, so you ought to be Maria. But you ain't, and that is a rip off. Is all I'm saying.

He grabs his cap from the table and is about to leave.

VANESSA

So you think I'm the best, huh?

#8c: EVERYBODY WANTS TO BE MARIA
UNDERSCORE #2 enters.

JJ

Oh, baby, you woulda *burned up* that stage.

VANESSA

It's too bad they ain't gonna let me.

JJ

Aw, now, that's just a play, Vanessa. You and me, standing here right now? That's real life.

They smile at each other. Vanessa kisses him.

JJ (*cont'd*)

Wait, wait – that was pretty nice, for, like a *stage* kiss. Let me show you what a real kiss is...

They kiss again, more passionately, and sink under a desk.

Michael watches them intently.

MICHAEL

You are drawn to your future...

Music out. Lights dim on Michael, JJ and Vanessa.

#9 ON THE OTHER HAND begins as music transition/underscoring as we cross-face to...

SCENE ELEVEN.

...the Washington's apartment. Mabel is at the kitchen table when Georgia bursts in

GEORGIA

I got it! Mom, I got the part! It's me! I'm Maria!

MABEL

Oh, honey, that is wonderful news! And no surprise, by the way.

GEORGIA

What about you? Weren't you supposed to hear about your show today?

MABEL

Still waiting, baby. They'll call when they call. And who cares about that – this is such a big day for you!

GEORGIA

I know!!

THIS IS TOTALLY
THE BEST DAY, THE MOST INCREDIBLE DAY—
I MEAN, FAR AND AWAY
EVER, EVER, EVER, EVER
BUT ON THE OTHER HAND
I'LL NEVER DO IT

GEORGIA (*cont'd*)

I CAN'T! NEVER, NEVER, NEVER
I CAN'T LEARN ALL THOSE LINES
AND I SING TOO SOFTLY
AND THERE'S A HUNDRED OTHER THINGS
I CAN'T DO NOTHING ABOUT—
OH THEY'LL HATE ME! THEY'LL THROW ME OUT

MABEL

Georgia. Honey. Sit.

GEORGIA

THIS IS, BAR NONE,
THE GREATEST DAY OF MY ENTIRE LIFE
AND I CAN'T WAIT FOR THE MONTH AHEAD
BUT ON THE OTHER HAND,
A TOTAL NIGHTMARE
I WISH THAT I WERE DEAD

MABEL

I just don't want you to get overwhelmed.

GEORGIA

JJ! I GET TO SING WITH JJ?
HOW COULD IT BE BETTER?
WHAT POSSIBLE WAY?
TODAY IS THE BEST, BEST, BEST, BEST
MOST WONDERFUL FABULOUS DAY

*Mabel's cell phone rings – she takes the call as Georgia
picks up her script and dances around with delight.*

MABEL

(*into her cell phone*)

Yes? Hello? Uh-huh...

GEORGIA

THIS IS TOTALLY
THE BEST DAY, THE MOST SPECTACULAR DAY—
I MEAN, FAR AND AWAY
EVER, EVER, EVER, EVER
BUT ON THE OTHER HAND
I'LL NEVER DO IT
I CAN'T! NEVER, NEVER, NEVER

*Mabel is still on her cell phone, getting more and more
excited, while Georgia dances around the kitchen.*

MABEL
(into her cell phone)

Yes...hello... wait, seriously? Go on...

GEORGIA
(practicing)

SO THEN MARIA SAYS “GOOD NIGHT”
AND THEN TONY SAYS “GOOD NIGHT”
AND THEN TONY ‘N’ MARIA ARE KISSING AGAIN...

Mabel snaps shut her cell phone and spins around:

MABEL
It’s happening, Georgia! It’s a go! I got the show!

GEORGIA
Mom! That’s fantastic!

MABEL
THIS IS SUDDENLY
THE BEST DAY, THE MOST INCREDIBLE DAY—
I MEAN, FAR AND AWAY
EVER, EVER, EVER, EVER
BUT ON THE OTHER HAND
I’LL NEVER DO IT
I CAN’T! NEVER, NEVER, NEVER
I CAN’T HOST MY OWN SHOW!
WHO DO I THINK I AM?
THERE’S A HUNDRED LITTLE WAYS
I’M NOT CUT OUT FOR THIS STUFF
THEY’RE GONNA SEE THAT I’M NOT GOOD ENOUGH

GEORGIA
Mom, you have your *own* show. This is awesome!

MABEL
On the other hand—

GEORGIA
Mom!

MABEL
ON THE OTHER HAND
IT MIGHT BE DISASTER

GEORGIA
ON THE HAND
IT COULD BE SUCCESS!

MABEL

ON THE OTHER HAND,
I SHOULD SAY “FORGET IT”

GEORGIA

ON THE OTHER HAND,
YOU GOTTA SAY “YES”!

GEORGIA & MABEL
(overlapping, weaving)

ON THE OTHER HAND,
ANYTHING COULD HAPPEN
ON THE OTHER HAND
IT COULD ALL GO WRONG
ON THE OTHER HAND
IF YOU DON’T DO IT YOU’LL NEVER KNOW...

BUT ON THE OTHER HAND
WHO KNOWS WHICH WAY IT MIGHT GO?
BUT ON THE OTHER HAND,
LIFE IS MUCH TOO SHORT TO SAY NO!
YES!

Song ends. They hug excitedly, and then...

Segue: #9a: TIME FLIES/WARMING UP TO TANGO

SCENE TWELVE.

...we are in a rehearsal room at the Tyrone Jackson Dance Theatre. Tyrone and Iris are warming up at the dance barre as the end of Schlomo’s tango piece plays on a CD player.

IRIS

What a talent!

TYRONE

He calls it “Variations on the Tango”.

IRIS

It’s very sexy music.

TYRONE

Now we just gotta figure out how to dance it. Come on, Iris. Let’s do this.

Tyrone holds out his hand.

IRIS

Promise to go easy on me, Tyrone. I haven't danced in a long time.

TYRONE

I promise nothing. Gimme your hand, girl.

*#10: SCHLOMO'S TANGO VARIATIONS continues.
They dance, slowly at first, then faster and easier – two old
partners finding each other's rhythms again.*

*Chantelle enters and observes their chemistry with a raised
eyebrow.*

TYRONE (*cont'd*)

You're getting' it, kid.

IRIS

You're very sweet, Tyrone.

CHANTELLE

(As she shuts off the CD player.)

A little too sweet, if you ask me.

TYRONE

Oh, hey baby. This is an old friend.

CHANTELLE

I never knew a man with so many old friends.

TYRONE

Chantelle, this is Iris. Iris, this is my, uh... this is Chantelle.

CHANTELLE

Tyrone doesn't like labels.

IRIS

A pleasure to meet you, Chantelle.

CHANTELLE

Pleasure's all mine. You're the girl he was all into in high school. That's you, right?

IRIS

I suppose it is.

CHANTELLE

Well you're pretty hot for a middle aged lady.

IRIS

Excuse me?

TYRONE

Chantelle!

CHANTELLE

What? All I said was she's pretty hot.

TYRONE

We gotta rehearse, Chantelle.

CHANTELLE

Nope. You gotta go to work.

TYRONE

What? Oh, no.

CHANTELLE

Sorry, baby. They tried your cell and it was off, so they called me.

Tyrone starts changing clothes.

IRIS

We're done?

TYRONE

For now. My boss called. I gotta bolt.

IRIS

It's ten p.m.

TYRONE

You hearda the rapper Preposterous?

IRIS

No.

CHANTELLE

I'm shocked.

TYRONE

Well, I'm his bodyguard.

CHANTELLE

By day, mild-mannered choreographer. By night: a bodyguard! Like Batman. Pretty hot, huh?

TYRONE

Can we pick this up again tomorrow?

IRIS

Sure.

CHANTELLE

I think I'll join you.

(meaningfully)

Unless anybody minds?

Beat. Iris and Tyrone shake their heads.

#10a: EVERYBODY WANTS TO BE MARIA
UNDERSCORE #3 begins as music/transition.

Lights shift as we transition to...

SCENE THIRTEEN.

...class the next morning, Serena is teaching the subtext of "WEST SIDE STORY." Georgia and Vanessa are alongside each other with J.J. behind them. Carmen and Michael are also present.

SERENA (AS MARIA)

"My hands are cold...yours too...so warm..."

SERENA (AS TONY)

"Yours, too."

SERENA (AS MARIA)

"Of course they are. They are the same."

Music out.

SERENA

OK. What does Maria mean when she says to Tony, "They are the same." Anyone?

No response from the class.

SERENA

Come on, guys. Can someone tell us what this play is about?

MICHAEL

I danced in a touring production of WEST SIDE when I was a kid. It's a play about friendship.

SERENA

Well, for one thing, it's a play about friendship...

Georgia turns to Vanessa.

GEORGIA

First rehearsal! How nervous am I? God, are you nervous?

VANESSA

Oh, yeah. Real nervous. Anybody's has got like two lines.

MICHAEL

It's a play about love!

SERENA

It's a play about love. What Shakespearean play inspired this musical?

STUDENTS

(responding in unison)

Romeo & Juliet.

SERENA

Who read the play? Hands up.

STUDENT

I saw the movie.

SERENA

Anyone who takes time to read the play gets extra credit.

(JJ leans toward Vanessa)

JJ

(playfully)

Oh my sweet little "Somebody." Let me kiss the palms of your hands.

(He takes her hand and kisses it as if she were his Juliet.)

VANESSA

(pulling away)

Wait, JJ, don't—

GEORGIA

Oh... oh my God!

MICHAEL

And it's a play about tragedy.

VANESSA

Georgia... wait. Hold up.

GEORGIA

Are you guys....

VANESSA

It was just ONE time.

GEORGIA

(raising her voice)

OH MY GOD! How could you?

RAMON

Ladies? Is there something you would like to share with the class?

VANESSA

Georgia, OK. We hooked up ONE time! Just ONCE! It was totally not a big deal.

JJ

Not a big deal? That's not what you said –

VANESSA

You shut up. Georgia, look—

Georgia pushes her. Vanessa pushes her back. A physical fight is erupting.

SERENA

Whoa! Whoa! That's enough.

VANESSA

I can't believe you just did that.

GEORGIA

You can't believe it! You can't! Vanessa!

Georgia bursts into tears, runs out of the room. Beat.

RAMON

I knew we should have done "CAROUSEL".

Attacca: #10b: WEST SIDE MAMBO music transition/underscore begins

SCENE FOURTEEN.

“WEST SIDE STORY” dress rehearsal, onstage: kids running back and forth; some rehearsing mambo dance steps; barely controlled chaos.

MICHAEL

God, ain't this a kick? Dress rehearsal. I love it!

Music out. The “real world” freezes, as Michael and Carmen interact as flute underscoring plays.

MICHAEL (*cont'd*)

You know something, one day I'm gonna choreograph this show AND direct it. Mark my words, girl, I will do it!

CARMEN

I was in a show here... I was part of this world. But then... I freaked out. I ran from it all. And then—I got into trouble. Is this that moment again? Why can't I remember it?

MICHAEL

Every moment is new Carmen. These kids aren't you. They've got their own problems and they've got their own dreams to walk away from or not.

CARMEN

Tell me something. And be honest. If you did direct this show one day, if you ever do, do you think I could be in your production? Could I be Maria?

MICHAEL

Oh I bet you could kid.

CARMEN

But how would you know it's me? Will I look the same?

MICHAEL

I'll recognize you and your talent. I'll get your vibe. I'll make it happen.

CARMEN

You will?

MICHAEL

Remember I'm gonna be The Director. *He* picks the talent. And you wanna know something else I believe... some of *our* dreams are born before *we* are. In a cosmic cradle.

Schlomo enters with Greta.

GRETA

Glad you could be here, Schlomo. I know you've always loved “WEST SIDE STORY”.

SCHLOMO

Maybe I'll just stay for the first act. I have a lot to do.

GRETA

You work too hard, Schlomo. Sit down. Relax.

SCHLOMO

Well...

GRETA

I said, sit!

Cross-fade to the balcony scene.

#10c: EVERYBODY WANTS TO BE MARIA
UNDERSCORE #4 piano underscore plays.

Georgia, as Maria, leans in towards JJ.

GEORGIA (AS MARIA)

I cannot stay. Go quickly.

JJ (AS TONY)

I'm not afraid.

GEORGIA (AS MARIA)

They are strict with me. Please.

JJ (AS TONY)

Good night.

GEORGIA (AS MARIA)

Buenas noches.

VANESSA

(imagining that she is in the scene)

Buenas noches.

JJ (AS TONY)

I love you.

VANESSA

I love you.

JJ and Georgia kiss. Then the moment is interrupted as Vanessa bursts on stage.

VANESSA (cont'd)

As if!

Music out. "Maria" and "Tony" pull apart.

GEORGIA

Vanessa! Anybody's isn't in this scene.

VANESSA

She is now.

GEORGIA

But you don't have any lines.

JJ

Come on, you guys. Let's all just be professional, OK?

VANESSA

What's wrong, "Maria"? Don't you like it when somebody messes up your dreams?

CARMEN

I don't remember this part.

MICHAEL

It's new.

GEORGIA

Maybe some people don't deserve to have dreams, because they just take everything they want, even other people's true loves.

JJ

Hey, come on! Let's act professionally. You're ruining my moment here, girls!

VANESSA

What the hell do you know about love, Georgia?

GEORGIA

Maria! My name is Maria, damn it!

The two girls shove each other. JJ turns out to the audience.

JJ

Miss Katz? Can I skip to my monologue?

RAMON

Stop! Stop it, all of you! Well, that's it. "WEST SIDE STORY" is ruined.

The kids start to filter off the stage.

SCHLOMO

No. I think perhaps it has been – deepened.

RAMON

Excuse me?

SCHLOMO

It's been deepened by these kids, by all their passion and outrage.

RAMON

You think so, huh?

SCHLOMO

My God, how long has it been since I felt that way – since I let myself feel that way – let myself feel anything! Locked away in my little studio, trying to write something people will care about a hundred years from now. For God's sake, that's not the point at all! Art is about changing people's lives today.

RAMON

Can't argue with that.

SCHLOMO

(getting excited)

You know what Ramon? I've been working on a new song – a very *special* song. The inspiration for it came to me in a dream I had about a girl I knew in high school. The next morning the words and the music just poured out of me. I didn't know who I was writing it for. But now I do! It's perfect for *your* kids to sing at their graduation! It's a gospel song.

RAMON

A gospel song? Really?

SCHLOMO

Yeah, really!

Schlomo rushes off stage. Ramon is left standing there, skeptical.

#10d: TIME FLIES TRANSITION TO RAMON'S CLASS
music plays as the set transforms; kids come on and off stage – a feeling of hustle and bustle as time moves forward. It is now...

SCENE FIFTEEN.

...a few days later. Ramon is addressing his class.

Music out.

GEORGIA

A gospel song? Really?

RAMON

That's exactly what I said. But then I heard it. Let's get to work, shall we people?

He hands out sheet music.

#10e: MIRACLE IS ME UNDERSCORE quietly enters.

Meanwhile, Schlomo approaches Greta.

SCHLOMO

I'm done worrying about the future, Ms. Bell. It's time to change some people's lives right now. Starting with a Carmen Diaz Memorial Scholarship.

CARMEN

Oh, Schlomo. Thank you, thank you for remembering me.

GRETA

I think that's a marvelous idea; you can present the first award at the reunion.

SCHLOMO

The award will go to the graduating senior who embodies not just the talent and ambition of Carmen Diaz, but her spirit.

GRETA

What a wonderful legacy.

CARMEN

Why don't I remember *being* a graduating senior?

Michael's attention is drawn to the classroom – specifically to Vanessa.

Beat. Music out.

Ramon stands before the class. Schlomo observes, eager to see his new song come to life.

RAMON

Attention class, we have the honor of having the composer joining us today. So everybody needs to be on their best behavior. And everybody needs to hit the right notes!

VANESSA

(to Georgia)

Hey – can I talk to you about something, real quick?

GEORGIA

I don't want to talk to you, Vanessa Vegas – not now, and not ever.

VANESSA

I'm late, Georgia – you know what I'm sayin'? Late.

Beat.

GEORGIA

Oh, shit!

#11: THE MIRACLE IS ME begins.

Serena, Schlomo and Greta gather around to listen.

RAMON

(at keyboard)

OK people are we ready to learn this thing? All right, kids – after me:

THERE'S A REASON WE'RE SET DOWN UPON THIS EARTH BY OUR CREATOR

KIDS

THERE'S A REASON WE'RE SET DOWN UPON THIS EARTH BY OUR CREATOR

RAMON

A REASON THAT WE GET SHAPED INTO FLESH FROM LUMPS OF CLAY

KIDS

A REASON THAT WE GET SHAPED INTO FLESH FROM LUMPS OF CLAY

RAMON

WE DON'T KNOW THE REASON NOW, BUT WE'RE GONNA FIND OUT LATER
AND LORD, IT'S GETTING CLEARER EVERY DAY

KIDS

AND LORD, IT'S GETTING CLEARER EVERY DAY

*The music intensifies, shifting from the introduction into the
full song...*

RAMON

Come on, people – sing it like you care!

GEORGIA

I WAS HIDIN'
HIDIN' IN THE SHADOWS
SHAKIN' LIKE A KITTEN WHO'S SITTIN'
TREMBLIN' AT THE TIPPY TIPPY TOP OF THE TREE

YES, I WAS HOPIN'
HOPIN' FOR A MIRACLE
WHEN LO AND BEHOLD THE MIRACLE WAS ME.

RAMON

Good. Very good, Georgia—

VANESSA (and/or KIDS)

I BEEN WAN'DRIN! (I BEEN LOST AND OUT OF PLACE!)
I BEEN CRYIN'! (TEARS BEEN STREAMIN' DOWN MY FACE!)
I BEEN WAITIN'! (WAITIN'!)
HURTIN', (HOPIN', HESITATIN'!)
I BEEN WAITIN' FOR A BOLT OF LIGHTNIN' TO FILL THE SKY SO I CAN SEE
(SO I CAN SEE)

RAMON

Nice! Very nice!

VARIOUS KIDS

WAITIN' FOR A MIRACLE
WAITIN' FOR A MIRACLE
WAITIN' FOR A MIRACLE
WAITIN' FOR A MIRACLE
LO AND BEHOLD THAT MIRACLE WAS ME.

JJ and VARIOUS KIDS (KIDS)

I BEEN LOOKIN'
LOOKIN' FOR THE REASONS
CALLIN' OUT FOR RESCUE LIKE I'M
(DROWNIN' AT THE VERY VERY BOTTOM OF THE DARKEST SEA)
OH! I BEEN SEARCHIN' (OOO)
SEARCHIN' FOR A MIRACLE (OOO)
BUT (LO AND BEHOLD, THE MIRACLE) IS ME.

VANESSA (and/or KIDS)

I BEEN WAN'DRIN' (WAN'DRIN')
I BEEN (LOST AND OUT OF PLACE!)

GEORGIA (and/or KIDS)

I BEEN CRYIN'! (CRYIN'!)
TEARS BEEN (STREAMIN' DONW MY FACE!)

VANESSA (KIDS)

I BEEN WAITIN'! (WAITIN'!)

VANESSA & GEORGIA (and/or KIDS)
HURTIN', (HOPIN', HESITATIN'!)
I BEEN (WAITIN' FOR A CLAP OF THUNDER TO SHAKE THE SKY AND SET ME)
FREE... (SET ME FREE)

GEORGIA (KIDS)
SET ME FREE (SET ME FREE)

VARIOUS KIDS (COUNTERPOINT)
WAITIN' FOR A MIRACLE (MIRACLE)
WAITIN' FOR A MIRACLE (MIRACLE)
WAITIN' FOR A MIRACLE (MIRACLE)
WAITIN' FOR A MIRACLE (WAITIN' FOR A MIRACLE)
(Michael and Carmen speak after a cappella section begins)

MICHAEL
Life is calling me back Carmen.

CARMEN
Will I see you again?

MICHAEL
You better believe it!! Remember kid, talent springs eternal.

KIDS (w/COUNTERPOINT)
LO AND BEHOLD (AH)
THE MIRACLE UNFOLDS,
A MIRACLE MY EYES CAN SEE
(MY EYES CAN SEE/LO AND BEHOLD)
LO AND BEHOLD
THE MIRACLE UNFOLDS,
THE MIRACLE, THE MIRACLE, THE MIRACLE,
THE MIR-A-CLE IS ME!

GOSPEL CHORUS – VANESSA, GEORGIA & KIDS (COUNTERPOINT)
WAITIN' FOR A MIRACLE (MIRACLE!)
WAITIN' FOR A MIRACLE (MIRACLE!)
WAITIN' FOR A MIRACLE!
WAITIN' FOR A MIRACLE!
WAITIN' FOR A MIRACLE!

MICHAEL & GOSPEL CHORUS (COUNTERPOINT)
LO AND BEHOLD (OOO), THE MIRACLE (AAH) IS ME! (ME! ME!)
MIRACLE IS ME! (ME! ME!)
IT IS ME! (ME! ME!)
I'VE BEEN WAITIN' FOR A MIRACLE!
IT'S ME! (ME! ME!)

MICHAEL & GOSPEL CHORUS (COUNTERPOINT) (*cont'd*)

MIRACLE IS ME! (ME! ME!)

IT IS ME! (ME! ME!)

I'VE BEEN WAITIN' FOR A MIRACLE!

IT'S ME! (ME! ME!)

MIRACLE IS ME! (ME! ME!)

IT IS ME! (ME! ME!)

I'VE BEEN WAITIN' FOR A MIRACLE!

I BEEN WAITIN' FOR A BOLT OF LIGHTNIN' TO COME,

BUT THE MIRACLE IS ME!

As the song ends, Vanessa jumps up clutching her stomach saying "I don't feel so good" as she falls to the floor startling those around her. Michael has disappeared into the chorus.

END OF ACT ONE.

ACT TWO

[NOTE: Act One was the planning of the 20th Reunion of the Class of '84. Act Two opens with the celebration of that reunion. Then TIME FLIES as we jump ten years to the 10th Reunion of the Class of '04 and the 30th Reunion of the Class of '84. We want to feel the emotional impact of time moving very fast in life.]

SCENE ONE. THE 20TH REUNION OF THE CLASS OF '84

#12: TIME FLIES/THE 20th REUNION REPRISE begins, taking us into the 20th Reunion celebration.

[NOTE: A banner indicates that this is the 20th Reunion of the Class of '84.]

GRETA & ALUMNI (COUNTERPOINT)

IT'S FINALLY OUR REUNION!
THE LAST SATURDAY IN MAY
TIME TO SEE WHERE WE'VE ALL GONE TO
AND HOW WE'VE CHANGED ALONG THE WAY
AM I DIFFERENT NOW?
ARE THEY?
TODAY WE'LL FIND OUT ALL OF THIS AND MORE
(ALL OF THIS AND MORE)
IT'S THE TWENTIETH REUNION
IT'S THE TWENTIETH REUNION...

GRETA

THERE'S A MILLION THINGS TO DO, FOLKS
IN CASE YOU HAVEN'T HEARD
SILENT AUCTION ON THE FIRST FLOOR
AND DANCING ON THE THIRD
TODAY IS FINALLY HERE
SO GO ON HAVE A BLAST
AFTER TWENTY YEARS OF WAITING
YOUR REUNION'S HERE AT LAST!
AND ALL THAT I CAN PROMISE
IS A SURPRISE OR TWO IN STORE

ALL

IT'S THE TWENTIETH REUNION OF THE CLASS OF EIGHTY-FOUR!

As the song ends, "Time Flies" continues as music/transition underscoring. The stage is filled with excitement; streamers and balloon, etc. Alumni wear nametags. The reunion is under way...

SCENE TWO.

..enter Schlomo with a female STUDENT PHOTOGRAPHER and a male STUDENT REPORTER. The photographer takes quick snaps of Schlomo throughout, while the reporter interviews him. Carmen, holding a white balloon, is standing nearby and listening to their conversation. Alumni and guests mingle around the three, chatting away and taking cell phone pics of each other.

Music out.

STUDENT REPORTER

So, OK. About this scholarship you're giving tonight, Mr. Metzenbaum.

SCHLOMO

You may call me Schlomo.

STUDENT REPORTER

OK, so, Schlomo – so this scholarship is in honor of a girl you knew when you went here?

#12a: BRING ON TOMORROW UNDERSCORE enters.

SCHLOMO

That's right. She was my first love. One never forgets one's first love.

STUDENT PHOTOGRAPHER

I heard she, like, died of a drug overdose.

STUDENT REPORTER

Shut up, Sheila.

STUDENT PHOTOGRAHER

What?

STUDENT REPORTER

Um...so, did she? Overdose?

SCHLOMO

In fact she did.

CARMEN

Oh no, I don't remember doin' that.

SCHLOMO

She dropped out of PA and followed her dream to Hollywood.

STUDENT REPORTER

And so that's why you're putting up, like, a zillion bucks for a scholarship? For your first love?

SCHLOMO

I am putting up the money because I have it – and I’m lucky to have it. And my father, God rest his soul, sent me to this incredible *public* school to learn the value of the creative arts, and because he made that decision—

STUDENT REPORTER

Wait. Slow down. I can’t write that fast.

SCHLOMO

I met kids here that I never would have met in a *private* school. Like Carmen Diaz who taught me the power of passion and to live in the moment. When you’re not living in the moment, you’re senses get numb. You can’t create anything. And life gets very boring.

Music out.

STUDENT REPORTER

OK. Um, can you say that again, but, like, slower?

As they exit, Vanessa and JJ enter from opposite sides. The business and excitement of the reunion filter around them.

VANESSA

JJ.

The sound of Vanessa’s voice draws Carmen’s attention. She follows her like a magnet.

JJ

What’s up, Vanessa? Ms. Bell has me helping out with food and drinks upstairs.

He’s crossing past her.

VANESSA

JJ, hold up a second.

He stops, turns back to her.

JJ

Oh, actually, lemme ask you something. I got an audition next week for this agent. I’m thinking Bernstein or Sondheim – maybe “Being Alive”. From COMPANY? What do you think?

VANESSA

I really don’t know.

JJ

Well. Geez. Sorry to bother you, Vanessa. We ain’t all nominated for big fancy scholarships. I’m sorry things didn’t work out between us, all right? But this is a big moment for me.

VANESSA

Yeah. Me too. I'm pregnant.

JJ

What?

VANESSA

I'm having a baby.

CARMEN

Oh my God.

JJ

But we were – I mean, we used a – we were careful, weren't we?

VANESSA

Well, I guess something happened.

CARMEN

Yeah. Fate!

White balloon pops.

#12b: JUST WHEN YOU THINK UNERSCORE enters.

VANESSA

You gotta step up here, JJ.

JJ

Look, Vanessa...is it too late to—ya know—take care of it?

VANESSA

Not an option. This is happening, JJ, and you can help me, or not help me. You don't have to, like, marry me, you don't have to love me, but just please – just please be part of this. OK?

JJ

I'm sorry, Vanessa.

VANESSA

JJ...

JJ

I'm sorry.

#13: JUST WHEN YOU THINK song begins

VANESSA

JUST WHEN YOU THINK YOU HAVE FOUND SOME DIRECTION
THE RUG SLIPS OUT FROM UNDER
AND YOUR STEADINESS GOES—
JUST WHEN YOU THINK YOU’RE IN A PLACE OF PROTECTION
THE EARTH STARTS TO TREMBLE,
AND FATE THUMBS ITS NOSE—
NOTHING IS CERTAIN AS WE LIKE TO SUPPOSE

JUST WHEN YOU THINK YOU HAVE ANSWERED YOUR QUESTIONS—
THE GRASS STOPS GROWING,
THE PIPES STOP FLOWING
THE SUN FORGETS TO SHINE—
JUST WHEN YOU THINK THAT YOU’RE FINE...
JUST WHEN YOU THINK THAT EVERYTHING’S FINE

JUST WHEN YOU NEED THEM THE MOST
THE SHOULDER YOU CRIED ON
THE FRIEND YOU RELIED ON
IS GONE

*[NOTE: The girls, offstage, may sing background vocals
with Carmen.]*

VANESSA & CARMEN (w/optional THE GIRLS offstage)

GONE LIKE THE STARS AT DAYBREAK (GONE)
GONE LIKE THE SUN AT TWILIGHT (GONE)
GONE (GONE)
LIKE YESTERDAY IS GONE (GONE)

*Here are Joe and Mabel waiting for the girls. Georgia
enters under dialog, followed by two attentive boys.*

JOE

Vanessa has got that scholarship locked up.

MABEL

I don’t know, Joe. Georgia’s sound pretty hot lately. There she is!

JOE

Hey, Georgia...you seen Vanessa?

GEORGIA

No!

Joe and Mabel exit.

GEORGIA (*cont'd*)

JUST WHEN YOU THINK THAT YOU'LL BE THE SAME WAY FOREVER
A BORING LITTLE SUNBEAM
CAUGHT BEHIND A CLOUD
JUST WHEN YOU THINK THAT YOUR LIFE'S A USELESS ENDEAVOR
THE WALLFLOWER BLOSSOMS,
YOU EMERGE FROM THE CROWD
YOU SUDDENLY SING – AND YOU'RE SINGING OUT LOUD

JUST WHEN YOU THINK THAT YOU'LL ALWAYS BE IN DARKNESS
THE WORLD STARTS TURNING,
YOUR HEART STARTS BURNING
THE SUN BEGINS TO SHINE
AND THEN ALL AT ONCE: EVERYTHING'S FINE!
THEN ALL AT ONCE: THE WHOLE WORLD IS FINE!

Georgia exits.

VANESSA

JUST WHEN YOU NEED THEM THE MOST
THE SHOULDER YOU CRIED ON
THE FRIEND YOU RELIED ON
IS GONE

VANESSA & CARMEN (w/optional THE GIRLS offstage)
GONE LIKE THE STARS AT DAYBREAK (GONE)
GONE LIKE THE SUN AT TWILIGHT (GONE)
GONE (GONE)
LIKE YESTERDAY IS GONE (LIKE YESTERDAY IS GONE/GONE)

JUST WHEN YOU THINK LOVE WILL LAST FOREVER
THE RUG SLIPS OUT FROM UNDER
AND IT'S GONE (AND IT'S GONE/AND IT'S GONE)
AND IT'S GONE (AND IT'S GONE/AND IT'S GONE)
AND IT'S GONE

Song ends.

#13a: REUNION TRANSITION *segue underscore begins as...*

SCENE THREE.

A jubilant Joe and alumni rush on stage. Old friends meet and greet and share cellphone pictures with each other.

#14: DNA DANCE underscores their celebration.

VARIOUS ALUMNI

Hey! How are ya...oh my God, it's so good to see you... Wow ! You look great I never would have recognized you...you haven't changed... how are the kids? Let me show you my twins....[etc.]

Music out. NOW they're quiet.

In the midst of everything, Serena approaches Vanessa who is depressed and standing alone. She puts her arm around her and gives her a big hug.

SERENA

So when are you going to tell him? You can't hide it forever.

VANESSA

Uh, no, I can't. But I have a plan.

SERENA

Which is?

VANESSA

YOU tell him. He really, really likes you. And he respects you, Ms. Katz.

SERENA

Bad plan, Vanessa. Bad plan.

GRETA

Sit! Quiet! Shush.

More talking.

GRETA

Shut up, people!

GRETA (cont'd)

Get ready for your close-up. Tonight's event is getting a little more media attention.

Mabel, with the student photographer helping her, moves up front.

GRETA

Our own Mabel Washington, Class of '84, is going to videotape tonight's event for a segment on her show, "New York In A Nutshell".

MABEL

Just act naturally, everyone.

Everyone stares at the camera.

JOE

Everybody look like you're having a good time. Dance! Mingle!

#14: DNA DANCE starts again and continues as Alumni and Guests continue to socialize. Joe and Mabel dance as the student photographer videos the joy of the moment.

Ramon and Serena approach Schlomo.

SERENA

So Schlomo. Who's the lucky winner?

SCHLOMO

I can't tell you.

RAMON

Come on, Mr. Metzenbaum. The secret is safe with us.

SCHLOMO

No, I mean, I can't tell you. I haven't decided yet. You're their teachers. What do you think?

RAMON & SERENA

No question about it.

SERENA

Vanessa.

RAMON

Georgia.

Music out.

SERENA

What? Really?

RAMON

Yes! Georgia Washington is an amazing singer, and she needs encouragement.

SERENA

Due respect to Ramon, but he's crazy. Vanessa Vegas is the better actor, and this school has a long tradition of cultivating good actors. Like our old friend Nick Piazza.

SCHLOMO

Yeah, I've seen his TV show.

SERENA

I started a Facebook fan club for him. You wanna join?

SCHLOMO

I'm not on Facebook. Give him my regards if you talk to him.

SERENA

I definitely will. When we speak.

SCHLOMO

Well, thank you both for your input. It was...not really that helpful

Focus turns to Tyrone and Iris.

#14a: IT WOULD MEAN A LOT TO ME
UNDERSCORE #2 enters.

IRIS

This is so exciting! Oh, Tyrone – I have to tell you. This has been a special experience for me. I had forgotten how much I love to dance, how wonderful it is to be practicing for something you care about. I'm so glad Ms. Bell had this idea.

TYRONE

About that...

IRIS

If you're going to tell me it was just to get my husband's money, I figured it out some time ago. And I don't mind one bit.

TYRONE

So is he gonna make a donation?

IRIS

It's rather unlikely. We're getting a divorce.

Music out.

TYRONE

Oh, man, Iris, I'm so sorry.

IRIS

I'm not. In fact, I'm quite happy to be single again. *(She takes Tyrone's hand.)*

The student photographer is videoing Mabel as she speaks.

MABEL

(into the camera)

Choreographer Tyrone Jackson has danced a lot of dances over the years, but tonight is something special. Tonight he'll dance at his reunion, with his high school sweetheart Iris Kelly-Tompkins.

CHANTELLE

I'm sorry to interrupt this touching moment guys. But... we're on!

#14b/15: INTRO/TAKES 3 TO TANGO (PAS DE TROIS)

The three dance. The music begins rhythmically with a clapping riff on the "Toreador Song" from "CARMEN," then segues gracefully into "Takes 3 To Tango. The two women play out a theme of jealousy with Tyrone in the middle. Mabel's camera captures the dancing dynamics.

After applause from everyone focus shifts to Greta and Schlomo.

SCHLOMO

So what do you think, Greta? Georgia or Vanessa?

GRETA

What do I think? I think you oughta flip a coin.

SCHLOMO

What? Why?

GRETA

Because these girls are both great. All these kids are great. Just like you were great when you went here, and Mabel was great, and Joe...and poor Carmen. So who deserves to go on to fame and fortune? They were all talented kids. But at the end of the day, the only thing you know for sure is that talent and a couple of bucks will buy them two lottery tickets or a slice of pizza. That's called "life is unfair."

Schlomo takes out a coin and flips it. Beat.

SCHLOMO

Head's up!

He whispers in Greta's ear as she takes "center stage".

GRETA

Attention everybody! I'm thrilled to announce that the winner of the *very first* Annual Carmen Diaz Memorial Scholarship is... is *(miming opening an envelope)* Miss Vanessa Vegas!

JOE
(*over-responding*)

YES!!

VANESSA

Oh. No.

GEORGIA

What?

VANESSA

I can't – Dad, I can't take the scholarship.

JOE

Excuse me, honey?

VANESSA

I can't take it. I don't want it.

JOE

What?

SCHLOMO

This is not a trifling thing, young lady.

JOE

Listen to him, dear. This is a smart man.

VANESSA

I'm having a baby.

GRETA

Remember when I said reunions are full of surprises?

JOE

Stop. Back up. You're WHAT?

SCHLOMO

In this day and age, young lady, there is no reason why you cannot have a child and go to college.

VANESSA

I know that, but – God. If I'm gonna go to school – *when* I go to school, I want to do it right. I want to go and just have that be my whole life. And if I'm gonna have a baby? I want to do that right, too. No, I've been thinking about this a lot, and this prize should go to someone who can use it, and take full advantage. Someone who deserves it. Georgia Washington.

JOE
No. No!

GEORGIA
Oh, Vanessa.

MABEL
Joe, take it easy, honey.

JOE
No, I will not take it easy. Things were planned out a certain way. OK? They were supposed to go a certain way, and this scholarship could be what we need for you, Vanessa. And now we have to what, just throw it away?

VANESSA
No, not throw it away—

JOE
And you're not going to go to school?

VANESSA
No, I will, just not—

GRETA
Joe...let's all just—

JOE
Forget it. Forget it!

He storms out, Serena goes after him.

GRETA
OK. Time for more dancing!!

#15a: TRANSITION TO SERENA'S CLASSROOM plays.

Cross-fade...

SCENE FOUR.

...to the classroom.

Music out as Joe enters followed by Serena.

JOE

She's pregnant. Vanessa is pregnant. Do you believe it?

SERENA

Yeah, I knew about it.

JOE

What?

SERENA

She told me.

JOE

When? Serena!

SERENA

I told her to tell you, Joe, but she wasn't ready yet.

JOE

God!

#16: LOVE IS RARE begins

JOE (*cont'd*)

That girl! That girl was meant to be something special. Something special.

SERENA

She still will be, Joe.

JOE

Don't patronize me.

SERENA

I'm not.

JOE

Well then don't be naïve! It's over for her. All her big dreams.

SERENA

Whose dreams are we talking about here?

SERENA (*cont'd*)

JOE, TAKE A BREATH, OK?
COUNT BACK FROM TEN
AND WHEN YOU'RE DONE
COUNT BACK FROM TEN AGAIN
I UNDERSTAND YOU'RE ANGRY
ANYONE WOULD BE
BUT ANGER'S NOT WHAT VANESSA NEEDS TO SEE
YOU ARE ANGRY BECAUSE YOU CARE
REMEMBER THAT YOUR DAUGHTER LOVES YOU
AND LOVE IS RARE

JOE

I am so pissed off!

SERENA

SO GO AND SCREAM YOUR HEAD OFF
IT'S A CHOICE THAT YOU WILL REGRET
YOU'LL BE THROWING SOMETHING AWAY, JOE
MOST PEOPLE NEVER GET
HER FATHER'S HER BEST FRIEND
AND THAT IS RARE
DON'T WASTE LOVE
DON'T YOU DARE
YES, YOU'RE ANGRY BECAUSE YOU CARE
REMEMBER, YOU LOVE YOUR DAUGHTER
AND LOVE IS RARE

Music continues as underscoring.

JOE

Are you – are you crying, Serena?

SERENA
(*crying*)

No.

JOE

Take it easy, kid. Here, here...

Comforting her, Joe takes out his handkerchief and puts it up to Serena's nose.

JOE (*cont'd*)

Blow.

SERENA

That's exactly what my dad used to do. We were so close.

JOE

I remember your father! He was a teacher, too, right?

SERENA

Yeah. God. What would he think of me now? Crying like a baby.

JOE

I think he'd be pretty proud of you, Serena. Vanessa's pretty lucky she had you to turn to.

SERENA

I was just doing my job.

(sings)

SHE NEED SOMEONE TO HOLD HER
SO HOLD HER TO YOUR HEART
SHE'S GOT A LONG ROAD AHEAD, JOE
SO GO HELP HER TO START
YOU ARE HER BEST FRIEND
AND THAT IS RARE
LOVE IS RARE

Song ends.

JOE

Will you...Serena, will you close your eyes for a second?

SERENA

What?

JOE

Just close your eyes. Take a breath...

She does. He kisses her tenderly. She opens her eyes. He kisses her again.

SERENA

Life changes so fast...

Lights dim.

SCENE FIVE.

#17: RAINDROPS AND TEARS – a ballet sequence.

Time jumps into the future. We are at Schlomo Metzenbaum's funeral. Alumni and friends (chorus) with black umbrellas move into the scene as they mourn and pay their respects. The spirit of Carmen, carrying a white umbrella, is present.

At the end of the ballet Mabel is center stage.

#17.1: RAIN CUE softly plays under.

#18: THE MIRACLE IS ME REPRISE

MABEL (*sings a cappella*)

I WAS HIDIN'
HIDIN' IN THE SHADOWS
SHAKIN' LIKE A KITTEN WHO'S SITTIN'
TREMBLIN' AT THE TIPPY TIPPY TOP OF THE TREE
YES, I WAS HOPIN'
HOPIN' FOR A MIRACLE
WHEN LO AND BEHOLD THE MIRACLE WAS ME...

As the song ends, Schlomo (now in white) enters and approaches Carmen.

#18a: AROUND & AROUND segue underscore begins.

SCENE SIX.

CARMEN

Schlomo Metzenbaum.

SCHLOMO

Oh my God. Am I dreaming? Is it you? I forgot your name.

CARMEN

It's Carmen.

SCHLOMO

What are you doing here? What are *we* doing here? Where are we?

CARMEN

We're in dreamland.

SCHLOMO

Excuse me?

CARMEN

You died. You had a heart thing. A major malfunction in your arterial something or other. Nothing you could do about it. Genetics.

SCHLOMO

If that's a joke, it's not very funny.

CARMEN

No joke. But here's the good part. Every ending is a new beginning. And *that*, dear Schlomo is where you are now. Where *we* are.

SCHLOMO

I'm sorry. I don't get it.

CARMEN

I'm a fellow traveler. Following the steps, just like you: we make peace with the past; we are drawn to the future; and *then* we can wake up in the present.

SCHLOMO

I don't understand.

CARMEN

Let's dance.

She dances around him – a floating energy without gravity.

SCHLOMO

Oh no no. I couldn't. I do like this melody.

They dance together.

#19: AROUND & AROUND REPRISE

CHORUS (*offstage*)

I KNOW THAT WE TWO ARE CONNECTED
FOREVER WE'RE GONNA BE BOUND
LIKE THE WHEELS OF A BICYCLE TURNING
TOGETHER WE'RE SPINNING AROUND
YES WE'RE ALWAYS TRAV'LIN TOGETHER
WANDERING THE VERY SAME GROUND
LIKE THE BIG BLUE EARTH IN ITS ORBIT TURNIN' ROUND

AROUND AND AROUND
AROUND AND AROUND

(continuing as Carmen and Schlomo speak)

(AROUND AND AROUND)
(AROUND AND AROUND)
(AROUND AND AROUND)

CARMEN

Don't be scared, Schlomo. Everything will be all right in the long run.

SCHLOMO

It certainly doesn't feel that way.

CARMEN

I said the long run. Think longer. Longer...

#20: HEY! SPRING IS SPRINGIN' begins

SCENE SEVEN.

Lights brighten, and the ensemble floods the stage; they turn forward as the years fly by...

VARIOUS

HEY! SPRING IS SPRINGIN'
HEY! AUTUMN'S HERE
HEY! SNOW IS MELTIN'
ANOTHER YEAR
HEY! SPRING IS SPRINGIN'
HEY! LIFE GOES ON
HEY! ANOTHER SUMMER
COME AND GONE

AND WITH EVERY SPRING THAT SPRINGS
WITH EVERY BELL THAT RINGS
WITH A HUNDRED THOUSAND THINGS
TIME FLIES BY ON WINGS
YOU BLINK AND MISS A DAY
A DECADE FADES AWAY
AND WHAT IS THERE, WHAT IS THERE TO SAY?

BUT HEY! SPRING IS SPRINGIN'
HEY! KIDS ARE GROWN
HEY! GETTIN' OLDER
HEY! WHO'D 'VE KNOWN?
HEY! WINTER WEATHER
HEY! SUMMER'S DAY
HEY... HEY... HEY... HEY

AND WITH EVERY SPRING THAT SPRINGS
WITH EVERY BELL THAT RINGS
WITH A HUNDRED THOUSAND THINGS
TIME FLIES BY ON WINGS
YOU BLINK AND MISS A DAY
A DECADE FADES AWAY
AND WHAT IS THERE, WHAT IS THERE TO SAY
BUT HEY!

Dance break. With a few cell phone cameras in hand and some clothing and hair adjustments we can see the passing of a decade.

ALL (COUNTERPOINT)

HEY! SPRING IS SPRINGIN'
HEY! AUTUMN'S HERE
HEY! SNOW IS MELTIN'
ANOTHER YEAR (HEY, HEY, HEY)
HEY! SPRING IS SPRINGIN'
HEY! LIFE GOES ON
HEY... HEY... HEY... HEY
AND WITH EVERY SPRING THAT SPRINGS (WITH EVERY SPRING)
WITH EVERY BELL THAT RINGS
WITH A HUNDRED THOUSAND THINGS (WITH EVERY BELL THAT RINGS)
TIME FLIES BY ON WINGS
YOU BLINK AND MISS A DAY (TIME FLIES BY ON WINGS,)
A DECADE FADES AWAY (A DECADE FADES AWAY)
AND WHAT IS THERE, (AND) WHAT IS THERE TO SAY
BUT HEY!
HEY!
HEY!

SCENE EIGHT. THE 10TH REUNION OF THE CLASS OF '04 / THE 30TH REUNION OF THE CLASS OF '84.

#21: 10th/30th REUNION OF THE CLASS OF '04/'84

...as Serena, Joe, Mabel, Tyrone and Greta enter. Carmen and Schlomo, watch from their vantage point.

[NOTE: Hanging banners indicate that this is the 10th Reunion of the Class of '04 AND the 30th Reunion of the Class of '84.]

10ERS

LIFE'S CONTINUED CHANGING,
IT'S GONE BY IN A SHOT
THERE ARE OLD FRIENDS WHO WILL BE HERE,
AND OTHERS WHO WILL NOT
A VOICE THAT RINGS A BELL
AN OLD FAMILIAR NAME
A SMILE THAT'S SLIGHTLY FADED
A LAUGH THAT'S JUST THE SAME

THOSE FRIENDS YOU SWORE YOU'D LOVE FOREVER
AND DON'T SEE MUCH ANYMORE
AT THE TENTH REUNION OF THE CLASS OF TWO-THOUSAND-FOUR!

30ers – MABEL, JOE, SERENA, ETC. (COUNTERPOINT)
(AT THE THIRTIETH REUNION OF THE CLASS OF EIGHTY-FOUR!)

10ERS (30ERS)
AT THE TENTH REUNION OF THE CLASS OF TWO-THOUSAND-FOUR!
(THE CLASS, THE CLASS OF EIGHTY-FOUR!)
(THE CLASS OF EIGHTY-FOUR!)
CLASS OF TWO-THOUSAND-FOUR!

Song ends

GRETA
Singing from Bizet's "CARMEN," Georgia Washington Class of 2004.

#22: HABANERA from "CARMEN"

*As we join the reunion in progress, Georgia is singing the
"Habanera" for a rapt crowd.*

After her performance, applause from Alumni & Friends.

GRETA
Wasn't that lovely. AND let's have a hand for Serena Katz, people. I have never seen
such a well-organized reunion. Except of course for the two dozen that I organized.

SERENA
Thank you, Greta. I think.

Vanessa approaches Georgia.

GEORGIA & VANESSA
Oh my GOD!

(speaking over each other in their excitement)

GEORGIA
I—

VANESSA
I—

GEORGIA & VANESSA
I missed you so much!

They hug again.

VANESSA
So, Ms. Celebrity Opera Star. You've done pretty well for yourself the last ten years.

SONNY VEGAS runs to Vanessa's side. He is a hip and energetic 10 year old.

SONNY

Mama! Mama!

GEORGIA

(smiling at Sonny)

You too Mama! He's such a sweetie. I wanna eat him up.

VANESSA

Hey – check it out Georgia. Mr. Garcia's here.

GEORGIA

Yeah. He's with me.

VANESSA

What?

Ramon enters the conversation.

RAMON

I'm her manager.

VANESSA

You're kidding!

RAMON

No, ma'am. I went to see Ms. Washington sing at her graduation from Juilliard. And I said to myself: Ramon Garcia, you are a fool if you do not go with this young lady wherever she is going.

GEORGIA

We've been a team ever since. He's my lifetime coach

VANESSA

I can't believe it. Can you believe it, little one?

SONNY

Mom, I don't even know these people. Can I get a soda or something?

*#22a: IT'S IN HER DNA UNDERSCORE plays softly as
Serena and Joe enter.*

JOE

Where is he? Where is my grandson? Come here my beautiful little Sonny boy!

Joe picks up Sonny, hugging and kissing him.

SONNY

Grandpapa, stop it! Come on!

JOE

This kid's a genius! A dancer, a singer, a real humdinger!

SERENA

You're embarrassing him, dear.

JOE

What about you, my little sweet potato? Can I embarrass you?

He picks her up and swings her around.

Music out. Meanwhile:

SONNY

Hey! Look Mama – he's here! *(Getting his attention.)* Hey Dad!

JJ

(giving him a tight squeeze)

How you doin', superstar?

(to Vanessa)

You guys doing all right?

VANESSA

We're doing good.

JJ

Oh, hey, you should come see me next week. I'm doing "WEST SIDE" in Philly.

SONNY

Oh, we're totally coming! Right, Mom? Right?

VANESSA

So how's your Maria?

JJ

She's alright, but she isn't you.

(They share a moment and then he turns to Sonny)

Maybe you'll be in "WEST SIDE" one day, superstar.

SONNY

IN it? Dad – one day, I'm gonna choreograph AND direct it!

He does some dance moves with great theatrical flair, reminiscent of Michael's moves in Act One. Carmen is mesmerized by him.

SERENA

All right folks, I have an announcement to make. Please join me in thanking Nick Piazza, our favorite alumni TV star, Class of '84, for his generous contribution to Alumni & Friends in support of our theatre department. \$50,000!!!

(waving check to cheers and applause)

GRETA

(as an aside)

Serena dear, I knew you'd score again with Nicky. You were sooo hot together. We never forget our *first* loves.

SERENA

Thanks Greta. It's *only* taken me thirty years to be remembered!

(back to the group)

#22b: THE MIRACLE IS ME *clarinet/piano underscore enters.*

RAMON

Ms. Washington, I need to speak with you about something.

GEORGIA

Yes?

RAMON

(in a rush)

I have over the past few months begun to develop certain feelings for you.

GEORGIA

Oh.

RAMON

Feelings that can only be fairly categorized as romantic. In fact: I love you.

GEORGIA

Oh.

RAMON

I think it is only appropriate therefore that we sever our professional relationship and go our separate ways.

GEORGIA

How 'bout we get married instead?

Music out. Carmen gravitates to Georgia and Ramon's conversation.

RAMON

Wait. What?

GEORGIA

I love you, too, Ramon.

RAMON

You do?

GEORGIA

Yes indeed.

RAMON

But – but, I was your teacher

GEORGIA

Ten years ago – and I still have a lot to learn from you. That's the past. I'm talkin' about the future. Let's get married, have a little girl. We'll teach *her* to sing. We'll take *her* to Broadway musicals, Carnegie Hall and The Met.

RAMON

You mean it?

GEORGIA

I do. I do!

They embrace. The "real world" freezes as Carmen and Schlomo interact.

CARMEN

That's my cue to say good-bye.

SCHLOMO

What? Wait. Where are you going?

CARMEN

In time you'll understand.

SCHLOMO

I need you to show me.

CARMEN

I wish that I could, Schlomo...I wish I could.

*#22c: TOREADOR SONG UNDERSCORE play.
Breaking the freeze – a triumphant passage as Tyrone enters.*

SONNY

Holy – oh my God! Tyrone Jackson!

TYRONE

Yeah.

SONNY

You're in all those rap videos on You Tube – and so is she. You guys are awesome.

(He does some imitation hip-hop moves.)

CHANTELLE

I like this kid.

TYRONE

You're gonna be a dancer.

SONNY

Like my mom. She is a fantastic dancer – ain'tcha, Mom?

VANESSA

Sonny.

SONNY

She teaches at the community center. She choreographs ME! Right, Mom?

VANESSA

Sonny.

TYRONE

You oughta try out for a spot on our next tour.

VANESSA

Oh. I don't know. I got my kid here and...

SONNY

She'll do it!

VANESSA

Sonny.

ALEX

Mom!

VANESSA

All right. All right!

#23: I'VE GOT ANOTHER SONG TO SING begins as underscoring. Carmen starts to exit.

CARMEN

Life is calling me back, Schlomo.

SCHLOMO

Wait! Will I ever see you again?

CARMEN

You better believe it!!!

I HAD LOST MY VOICE
FORGOTTEN HOW TO SING
NOW SOME NEW SONG
IS GLIMMERING
IF I LET IT OUT
WHERE WILL IT GO?
WHO CAN KNOW
WHERE THE WIND WILL BLOW?
BUT IT AIN'T UP TO ME

IT'S NOT MY CHOICE
I JUST GOTTA BE STRONG
AND FIND MY VOICE
NOW IT'S TIME TO HOLD MY HEAD UP HIGH
LET IT FLY!

I'VE GOT ANOTHER SONG TO SING
IT'S THERE IN SOME BRAVE CORNER OF MY HEART
IT'S BEGGING ME TO SET IT FREE,
THAT MELODY
IT'S TIME FOR ME TO START
AS SIMPLE AS A SONG CAN BE

I NEED TO LET IT FREE AND FLY AWAY
I'VE GOT ANOTHER SONG TO SING
ANOTHER DREAM TO DREAM
I'VE GOT ANOTHER SONG TO SING

GEORGIA

YEARS ARE GOING FAST
TIME IS RACING BY
THERE'S SOME THINGS
I'D LIKE TO TRY

VANESSA

OF COURSE I'M AFRAID
YOU NEVER KNOW
JUST WHICH WAY
THE WORLD WIL GO

CARMEN

THINGS COULD GO WELL –
THEY COULD GO WRONG
BUT THOUGH I AM AFRAID
MY HEART IS STRONG!

GEORGIA, VANESS & CARMEN (SOLOS)

SO IT'S TIME TO LIFT MY VOICE AND SING
(LET IT RING! / LET IT RING! / LET IT RING!) LET IT RING!
I'VE GOT ANOTHER SONG TO SING
AND NOW THE TIME HAS COME TO LET IT FLOW

GEORGIA

I FEEL IT BURSTING OUT OF ME

VANESSA

MY SYMPHONY

CARMEN

IT'S TIME TO LET IT GO

CARMEN, GEORGIA & VANESSA

I'VE GOT ANOTHER SONG TO SING

VANESSA

IT'S TIME TO RAISE MY VOICE AND WATCH IT FLY

GEORGIA & VANESSA

I NOW THE TIME HAS COME TO TRY –

CARMEN

I'VE GOT ANOTHER SONG

CARMEN, GEORGIA & VANESSA

I'VE GOT ANOTHER SONG TO SING

ALL
I'VE GOT ANOTHER SONG TO SING
IT'S THERE IN SOME BRAVE CORNER OF MY HEART

CARMEN, GEORGIA & VANESSA
IT'S BEGGING ME TO SET IT FREE,
THAT MELODY
IT'S TIME FOR ME TO START

MEN
TIME FOR ME TO START

WOMEN
AS SIMPLE AS A SONG CAN BE

ALL
I NEED TO LET IT FREE AND FLY AWAY
I'VE GOT ANOTHER SONG TO SING

CARMEN, GEORGIA & VANESSA
ANOTHER DREAM TO DREAM
I'VE GOT ANOTHER SONG TO SING

ALL
I'VE GOT ANOTHER SONG TO SING

CARMEN
ANOTHER DREAM TO DREAM

ALL
I'VE GOT ANOTHER SONG TO SING

As Georgia and Ramon kiss, lights flash and Carmen disappears.

The cast begins an exuberant reprise of "Around & Around" – in a whirl of crystal blue light.

#24: AROUND & AROUND FINALE

ALL (*cont'd*)
YOU KNOW THAT WE'RE FOREVER CONNECTED
AND HERE'S THE PART THAT'S REALLY PROFOUND/IT'S PROFOUND
REMEMBER NO MATTER WHAT HAPPENS, BABY
TOGETHER WE'RE SPINNING AROUND
AND THE PRESENT ALWAYS SURROUNDS US
WHILE THE FUTURE WAITS TO BE FOUND
TIME IN CIRCULAR MOTION, SPINNIN' ROUND
AROUND AND AROUND

ALL (*cont'd*)

YEAH, WE'RE ALWAYS TRAV'LIN TOGETHER
YEAH, WE'RE/WANDERING THE VERY SAME GROUND
LIKE THE BIG BLUE EARTH IN ITS ORBIT TURNIN' ROUND

MEN

AROUND AND AROUND

WOMEN

LIKE A SONG

MEN

AROUND AND AROUND

WOMEN

A BEAUTIFUL SONG

MEN

AROUND AND AROUND

WOMEN

LIKE YOUR FAVORITE SONG

ALL

AROUND AND AROUND!

THE END

CURTAIN CALL:

Michael, Carmen and Schlomo lead The Company in a rousing rendition of "FAME."

#25: I'M GONNA LIVE FOREVER - FAME

CARMEN

BABY, LOOK AT ME
AND TELL ME WHAT YOU SEE.
YOU AIN'T SEEN THE BEST OF ME YET
GIVE ME TIME, I'LL MAKE YOU FORGET
THE REST

I GOT MORE IN ME
AND YOU CAN SET IT FREE.
I CAN CATCH THE MOON IN MY HAND
DON'T YOU KNOW WHO I AM?
REMEMBER MY NAME.

ALL (*Except Carmen*)

FAME!

CARMEN

I'M GONNA LIVE FOREVER,
I'M GONNA LEARN HOW TO FLY-

ALL (*Except Carmen*)

HIGH!

CARMEN

I FEEL IT COMIN' TOGETHER,
PEOPLE WILL SEE ME AND CRY

ALL

FAME!

CARMEN

I'M GONNA MAKE IT TO HEAVEN,
LIGHT UP THE SKY LIKE A FLAME-

ALL

FAME!

CARMEN

I'M GONNA LIVE FOREVER
BABY, REMEMBER MY NAME.
FAME

ALL

REMEMBER
REMEMBER
REMEMBER
REMEMBER
REMEMBER
REMEMBER
REMEMBER
REMEMBER

CARMEN

BABY HOLD ME TIGHT
CAUSE YOU CAN MAKE IT RIGHT
YOU CAN SHOOT ME STRAIGHT TO THE TOP
GIVE ME LOVE AND TAKE ALL I GOT TO GIVE

BABY I'LL BE TOUGH
TOO MUCH IS NOT ENOUGH
I CAN RIDE YOUR HEART TIL IT BREAKS
OOO I GOT WHAT IT TAKES

FAME ALL

I'M GONNA LIVE FOREVER CARMEN
I'M GONNA LEARN HOW TO FLY

HIGH ALL

I FEEL IT COMING TOGETHER CARMEN
PEOPLE WILL SEE ME AND CRY

FAME ALL

I'M GONNA MAKE IT TO HEAVEN CARMEN
LIGHT UP THE SKY LIKE A FLAME

FAME ALL

I'M GONNA LIVE FOREVER CARMEN
BABY REMEMBER MY NAME

REMEMBER ALL
REMEMBER
REMEMBER
REMEMBER
REMEMBER MY NAME!

(Then final company bows and then a joyous ad lib dance as the cast exits.)