

FAME
"Metamorphosis"

by
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Prod. # 2797

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FAME

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CAST LIST

Lydia Grant
Bruno Martelli
Rhonda
Coco Hernandez
Shorofsky
Margaret Sherwood
Doris Schwartz
LeRoy Johnson
Julie Miller
Mr. Martelli
Ralph Garcy
Montgomery MacNeill
Mrs. Miller

Michael Harrison
Phenicia
Dance Store Clerk

ATMOSPHERE

Doorman
Man In Business Suite (On Bus)
Taxi Driver
Man In Elevator
Student Band
Dance Class Students
Cafeteria Students
Music Class Students
Passersby

FAME

"Metamorphosis"

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

1A INT. P.A. THEATRE - ON BATON - DAY 1A

Blurring through the air as the ANGLE WIDENS to REVEAL a pleasant looking young girl in her middle teens, garbed in a sequined outfit that makes dayglo orange look restrained. She's pretty, perky, and probably named DEBBIE. She's beaming out at:

1B POV - P.A. AUDITION JUDGES 1B

LYDIA, SHOROFKY, and two or three other teachers are seated in the first few rows of the auditorium. Lydia and Shorofsky are in close proximity and exchange a subtle but mutually pained glance as the performance onstage moves towards its traditional big finish.

1C ANGLE TO THE WINGS 1C

where JULIE MILLER stands, looking out onto the stage nervously as she struggles to adjust a music stand to the proper height. There is a cello and bow in the b.g., leaning against the stage wall. Julie's attitude is nervous, apprehensive.

1D ANGLE TO STAGE 1D

As the taped music backing up the baton twirler comes to a halt and she spins triumphantly toward the footlights, dazzling smile in place.

LYDIA

Thank you very much, Miss Bryant. We'll be sure to --

DEBBIE

I have one where there are flames on my baton, but I didn't want to set off the sprinklers.

LYDIA

That's very considerate of you.

(CONTINUED)

ID CONTINUED:

ID

SHOROFSKY

Miss Bryant...

Debbie beams. Anything other than dismissal is to be welcomed.

SHOROFSKY

(continuing)

I understand that you are new to our city. But...what I don't understand...and maybe you can help me...the purpose of our school is to prepare young people for careers as performers. Is there a...demand...for professional... 'twirlers'... that I'm unaware of?

DEBBIE

Well, sure. If a girl twirls really well, she might get asked to be a cheerleader for a professional football team.

Better she would have said harlot as far as Shorofsky's concerned. He nods, smiles.

SHOROFSKY

I understand. Thank you for explaining.

LYDIA

Thank you, Miss Bryant. We'll let you know.

(to the wings)

Miss Julie Miller?

1E DIFFERENT ANGLE

1E

as Julie moves out onto the stage, passing the departing Debbie. Julie smiles nervously as she starts to set up cello, chair, music stand and music.

1F ANGLE TO DOOR

1F

as it's opened by BRUNO and MONTGOMERY, each carrying a cardboard container of electrical equipment. Shorofsky turns and signals with a finger to his lips, both boys reading and understanding the need for quiet. They move toward the back of the area and start to unpack what the boxes contain, stacking it neatly.

IG ANGLE TO STAGE AND AUDITIONERS

IG

As Julie seats herself and pulls the music stand closer, Lydia tries to assuage her apparent nervousness.

LYDIA

Miss Miller, these auditions are for new arrivals to New York City. Maybe you could tell us a little bit about what brings you here?

Julie searches for the words, the easy phrase, but decides to opt for simple statement of painful fact.

JULIE

My... Mom and Dad got divorced.

Lydia not decimated by the news and her easy reaction helps smooth it over for Julie. Lydia sits back in her chair, indicates the cello.

LYDIA

Whenever you're ready.

Julie smiles slightly and turns her attention to the sheet music.

IH ON BRUNO AND MONTGOMERY

IH

as Julie begins to PLAY O.S., and both young men swing their gazes toward the direction of the stage.

II ANGLE TO JULIE - SLIGHT PUSH IN

II

The nervousness departs in a glimmering as she begins to play. She has talent and skill. Nervousness doesn't stand a chance. We HOLD a short beat, then we --

DIRECT CUT TO:

IJ INT. OFFICE - FULL SHOT - DAY

IJ

A couple of clerks are going over some stacks of forms and paperwork, attempting as best they can to rid the office of clutter. Standing nearby is MISS MARGARET SHERWOOD, doing what she can to make sense out of her class scheduling. They all react to the entrance of a small, energetic whirlwind named COCO HERNANDEZ. Her smile rivals the sunrise.

(CONTINUED)

13 CONTINUED:

14

MISS SHERWOOD
Coco? How was summer stock?

COCO
Terrific.

MISS SHERWOOD
Did you get to perform?

COCO
I got to perform painting
scenery, nailing furniture
together, and scrounging up
props. And I got to understudy
the healthiest ingenue who ever
joined Equity. Where's Bruno
Martelli? His father said he
was here.

This last comes without a change of gears. Coco's pace
doesn't lend itself to the obvious transitions.

MISS SHERWOOD
Probably in the auditorium helping
set up lights.

Coco waves understanding and heads for the corridor.

MISS SHERWOOD
(continuing;
calling after)
Sorry you didn't get to be a star.

COCO
(holding
at the door)
Miss Sherwood -- I'm already
a star. Thing is, not enough
people know about it yet!

With a grin and a wave, she's out the door. Miss Sherwood
resumes studying her class schedule, smiling wryly.

MISS SHERWOOD
I hope we can bring her out of
that shell.

DIRECT CUT TO:

1K INT. THEATRE - ON JULIE - DAY 1K

as she plays and, as previously established, plays very, very well.

1L ANGLE TO BACK DOOR 1L

as Coco silently pulls the door open and slips in. She glances to the audition panel, none of whom note her entrance, then creeps along the back wall to where Bruno and Montgomery are crouched down, both listening respectfully. ANGLE CLOSES on the three of them as Coco kneels next to Bruno, speaking in a discreet whisper.

COCO

Martelli -- I decided you and me wasted last year. What do ya think about us getting some people together and --

Bruno waves a hand for silence, indicating the MUSIC being created by Julie. Coco looks toward the stage for a beat, then back to Bruno.

COCO

(continuing)

You dig that kind of music?

BRUNO

I like any kind of good music.
And she's good.

1M ON COCO 1M

"Good" from Bruno is worth a second look. She swings her look back toward the o.s. stage, evaluating, gauging.

1N ON JULIE 1N

Intent on her music, wholly unaware of the scrutiny she's receiving from the back of the room. Clearly, however, her gifts and ethereal look are in marked contrast to:

1O TIGHT ON COCO 1O

Julie's not the sort she'll seek out as a friend. That she knows. But is she looking at a rival, someone who's nudging into a spotlight she had earmarked for herself -- that she doesn't know. And she seems likely to find out as we HOLD a beat, and then we --

DIRECT CUT TO:

19 INT. MILLER APARTMENT - FULL SHOT - DAY

Julie is seated on the couch, wearing blouse and a slip. Her skirt is bunched in her lap as she works at a last minute repair job on a faulty button or zipper. MRS. MILLER, an attractive woman in her early forties, moves out of the kitchen area, taking a sip of coffee, scooping up Julie's empty juice glass, and dropping a bill on the couch next to Julie, all in one easy move. Julie looks down at the bill, puzzled. She continues to work on the skirt.

JULIE

What's the money for?

MRS. MILLER

Cab fare.

JULIE

(mortified)

Mother. I am not taking a cab to school. It's going to be hard enough to fit in without arriving like Goodie-Shoes Gotrocks.

MRS. MILLER

Julie, it's been twenty years since I lived in New York. Until I know what's happened to that neighborhood since your Father and I moved away -- well, until I know more --

JULIE

Mother, not a taxi. Please.

Mrs. Miller thinks about Julie's anguish a beat, and attempts to be a reasonable person.

MRS. MILLER

Okay. How about a compromise?

Julie smiles, listening hopefully.

MRS. MILLER

(continuing)

I'll walk you to school.

10 ON JULIE

10

Her expression transforms itself instantly. Her mother can call it compromise all day long; this kid knows a threat when she hears one. We HOLD a beat, and then --

DIRECT CUT TO:

2 EXT. CENTRAL PARK WEST - MORNING 2

A nattily-dressed Julie emerges from the front (revolving) door of her apartment building.

The doorman signals, and a cab pulls up. Julie gets glumly in, and the cab pulls away as we HEAR:

JULIE
The High School of the Arts please.

3 EXT. THE HIGH SCHOOL OF THE PERFORMING ARTS - MONTAGE - MORNING 3

The MUSIC of "FAME" ERUPTS on the SOUNDTRACK, as we watch several freshman students coming to school from different areas of the city.

4 THE CAMERA PANS BACK 4

A lunchbox swings from GARCY'S hand. He walks beside Coco, a copy of "Snow Business" masking her face.

RALPH
You wanna hear what happened at the United Nations last week?

Coco lowers the paper. Busy.

COCO
Sorry, baby. I'm booked.

Ralph shrugs, moves on. The paper goes back up in front of Coco's face. She crosses the street, oblivious to traffic.

CUT TO:

5 EXT. OUTSIDE THE SCHOOL ENTRANCE - CLOSEUP - MORNING 5

LEROY JOHNSON, hawking a cheap gold chain.

LEROY
Solid gold, too. One-hundred carats. And cheap.

CLOSEUP on Bruno, Leroy's potential mark.

(CONTINUED)

BRUNO

I'm not interested.

LEROY

Five dollars.

BRUNO

I don't wear chains.

LEROY

This ain't for you. It's for
the sweet little fox in your
life.

BRUNO

I don't have a fox.

LEROY

You would an' you be flashin'
this around!

SHERWOOD (V.O.)

MacNeill, Montgomery.

Montgomery walks in front of Leroy, school books in hand.
Ralph is beside him, continuing his joke. Montgomery
walks up the stairs, trying to lose Ralph. Music of
"Fame" fades out -- END CREDITS.

RALPH

The Jewish Ambassador punches
the Chinese Ambassador. The
Chinese Ambassador gets up off
the floor and asks what that
was for. The Jewish Ambassador
says: 'That's for Pearl Harbor.'
The Chinese man says, 'Pearl
Harbor! That was the Japanese.
I'm Chinese.' 'Chinese...
Japanese...' says the Jewish
man, 'what's the difference?'

The CAMERA CLOSES IN on Ralph.

RALPH

(continuing)

... So, the next day...

Ralph looks around. Montgomery has disappeared.

CUT TO:

6 EXT. REVERSE ANGLE - THE SAME - MORNING

6

Coco walks onto the curb, reading. A taxi door opens, bumping against her. Her books fall into the street. Julie gets out of the cab.

JULIE
(apologizes)
I'm sorry.

Julie helps Coco pick up her books. We see other students including RHCNDA, MICHAEL react with disapproval to Julie's immaculate appearance.

COCO
You said it, baby. And blind,
too.

Julie smiles at a small circle of girls, standing on the school steps. They pointedly ignore her.

CUT TO:

7 INT. OUTSIDE HOMEROOM - MORNING

7

Ralph continues his joke with Doris. She is not amused.

RALPH
... The Chinese dude punches the
Jewish dude. The Jewish dude
gets up, rubs his chin, says...

DORIS
Buzz off, creep!

CUT TO:

7A WE TRACK WITH DORIS

7A *

a few steps until she stops, her attention caught by Michael who is heading her way until he stops and hits upon a stunning redhead. Doris studies the scene -- some idea brewing.

CUT TO:

8 INT. HOMEROOM - MORNING

8

Ralph sits beside Julie, finishing his joke.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RALPH

... The Jewish dude gets up, rubs his chin, says, 'What was that for?' And the Chinese guy says, 'That was for the Titanic.' And the Jewish guy says...

SHERWOOD

Silence!

But Ralph continues.

RALPH

... 'I had nothing to do with the Titanic.' And the Chinese guy says...

CLOSEUP, Sherwood, glowering.

SHERWOOD

I'm not speaking until I hear silence.

Sherwood looks pointedly at Ralph. He stops talking. She continues...

SHERWOOD

(continuing)

Thank you.

She points to the blackboard, on which a word is written.

SHERWOOD

(continuing)

... The word for the day is: 'pretentious.' 1. Making claims explicit or implicit to some distinction, importance, dignity or excellence. 2. Affectedly grand, superior, et cetera. Ostentatious...

The students are writing it down. After a moment...

SHERWOOD

(continuing)

Who can use it in a sentence?

Ralph's hand shoots up.

(CONTINUED)

8 CONTINUED: (2)

8

SHERWOOD

(continuing)

Mr. Garcy.

Ralph rises, delivers his punch line.

RALPH

The pretentious Chinese
Ambassador...

Sherwood is momentarily confused.

RALPH

(continuing)

...says, 'Iceberg, Goldberg.
What's the difference...?'

No laughs. Ralph reacts to lack of laughter.

SHERWOOD

Garcy -- Enough with the clowning!

Ralph sits, cowed. Sherwood takes a long, hard look
around the room. Then...

SHERWOOD

(continuing)

This is no song and dance class...
It's English. You're going to take
it and all your other academic
subjects just as seriously as you
take your 'presumed' careers.
You're going to work twice as
hard as the other students in
this city.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

SHERWOOD (CONT'D)

You don't get any breaks because you're talented...or cute...or funny.

(a glance
at Ralph)

This is still a high school. If you don't leave my class speaking, reading and writing English properly, you'll leave it period. The same for French and Biology and Algebra and Physics.

She flashes a look at Ralph.

She looks around the room.

SHERWOOD

(continuing)

... Hernandez!

Coco stands.

COCO

Yes?

SHERWOOD

Use 'pretentious' in a sentence.

Coco grins at Julie.

COCO

Coming to school in a taxi is pretentious.

Some of the girls giggle. Bruno, seated, behind and to the side of Julie, comes to his own defense.

BRUNO

That's not fair. I take a cab to school. Every day.

COCO

That's different, your father drives one.

Julie turns and mouths "Thank you" at him, out of gratitude. Bruno sits down. Totally oblivious to her interpretation that he acted in her behalf.

CUT TO:

8A INT. CORRIDOR - FULL SHOT - DAY

8A

Julie has a crumpled slip of paper in hand and is struggling to open a combination lock that's affixed to one of the dinged-up student lockers which line the wall. She's not having any success in opening the door and doesn't note Montgomery's arrival. He's carrying a stack of books that's relatively sizable and a burden.

MONTGOMERY

You're Miller. I'm Montgomery and these are your books.

JULIE

Okay. Can you just put them down there? I can't get this darned thing to work.

MONTGOMERY

Let me. Short people understand locks better than tall people. Comes from being at keyhole height during our formative years.
(works the lock quickly, and:)

Ta-dah.

Together, they start to pile some of the books into her locker.

JULIE

Thanks. But what am I going to do when you're not here to open this thing?

Montgomery looks at her with a soulful expression. His accent becomes theatrically English.

MONTGOMERY

(quoting some B movie)

'Sweetheart -- No one's running Little Rico out of town. They can shoot me -- stab me -- throw me in the East River -- no matter how tough it gets -- you can count on Little Rico!'

JULIE

In the morning before first bell?

(CONTINUED)

8A CONTINUED:

8A

MONTGOMERY

(straight)

I'm not sure I can make that.

(nicely)

Seriously -- you got any questions?

8B CLOSE ON JULIE

8B

Her smile fades a bit, reflecting the real concern underneath. She studies his look closely, then:

JULIE

Just...one or two.

TIME JUMP CUT TO:

9 INT. HALLWAY - BETWEEN CLASSES

9

Montgomery and Julie walk down the hall. She is trying to explain...

MONTGOMERY

You see... New York's like a lot of cities. It isn't unfriendly. It's just crowded. So everybody carries around a little piece of invisible, private space. So...you don't stare. You don't smile at strangers. You don't invade someone's private space unless invited. That's Lesson One. Everybody here grows up knowing that.

JULIE

What if you don't grow up here?

MONTGOMERY

Someone has to help you.

He pauses, looks at her. Is he being asked?

MONTGOMERY

(continuing)

... It's really simple. I could probably explain it all to you in...oh...ten easy lessons.

(CONTINUED)

JULIE

That many?

MONTGOMERY

Well, it's a big subject. You gotta know what to do on the streets...who to talk to and...

JULIE

Okay.

MONTGOMERY

(surprised)

Okay, what?

JULIE

Will you teach me?

MONTGOMERY

Sure, but...

(confused)

Why me?

JULIE

Because you're the first friendly person I've met in this whole school. And you seem to know what you're talking about. At least I can understand you.

(pause)

Sort of.

Julie gives Montgomery a strange, semi-despairing glance.

CUT TO:

10 INT. THE PIANO ROOM - MORNING

10

Shorofsky conducts the Keyboard Harmony Class. Students sit, two on a bench, playing together. Bach.

Shorofsky looks pained. He walks around the room. He stops in front of Bruno and CHING, a young Chinese-American student. Bruno has begun to embellish on the basic harmonies.

SHOROFSKY

Martelli?

Bruno stops playing, looks up.

SHOROFSKY

(continuing)

If you please, the same notes and tempo as the rest.

BRUNO

I am in tempo. All I was...

SHOROFSKY

You are in your tempo. You will play in my tempo. In the tempo of the class. You must develop some sense of the other players.

BRUNO

(sotto voce)

I'm not into group scenes.

SHOROFSKY

I'm not inviting you to an orgy, but to play in an ensemble.

Bruno grimaces.

CUT TO:

11 INT. THE DANCE CLASS - MORNING

11

The Freshman Dance Class sits on the floor. LYDIA GRANT stands, her back to the barre, addressing them. The CAMERA SURVEYS the room.

LYDIA

A dancer's body remembers everything. Learn something once and it's yours for life.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

LYDIA (CONT'D)

But first you've gotta become
a dancer...now, you may be hot
stuff in Harlem, or have the
best tutu collection in the
country. It doesn't matter.
I don't have time for prima
donnas. You want to be dancers,
you're gonna have to work your
little tights off.

CLOSEUP, Leroy.

LEROY

(sotto voce,
to Coco)

I ain't wearin' no tights.

LYDIA

You've got big dreams. You want
fame. Well, fame costs. Here's
where you start paying. In sweat.
I want to see sweat. And the
better you are, the more sweat
I'm gonna demand. So, if you've
never had to fight for anything
in your life...

She looks at Julie.

LYDIA

(continuing)

...put your gloves on, and get
ready for Round One. Daddy and
Mommy's little darlings are
gonna have to come out swinging!
Now everyone onto the floor.

CLOSEUP, Julie, nervous. Coco sits beside her.

JULIE

What does that mean?

COCO

They don't take credit cards.

LYDIA

(demonstrating)

All right. I want eight great
battements, forward and back.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

11 CONTINUED: (2)

11

LYDIA (CONT'D)

Four changements, end in fifth.
Close left front. And one...

We watch the classes execute her instructions, with varying degrees of precision and grace.

CUT TO:

14 EXT. BUS STOP - AFTERNOON

14

Julie and Montgomery stand waiting for a bus. Doris is behind them, a cup of hot coffee in her hand, contributing her two cents.

MONTGOMERY (V.O.)

How to get around New York:
Lesson One.

*

JULIE

The buses are so crowded I
feel weird in them.

DORIS

Try the subways at five o'clock;
there's weird.

MONTGOMERY

(to Julie)

It does get hectic.

DORIS

Hectic! It gets downright deadly!
You can't stand too close to the
edge. Lots of creeps get their
kicks outa wasting people on the
tracks.

JULIE

Wasting people?

DORIS

Doing away with them.

Julie steps back, shuddering involuntarily.

(CONTINUED)

14 CONTINUED:

14

DORIS

(continuing)

... I saw a woman one morning -- well, half a woman, really. It was gross...actually it wasn't the grossest thing I ever saw. There was this one day -- you're not going to believe this, it was really gross. I mean, have you ever seen...

The subway comes. CLOSEUP, Julie's face, not feeling too well.

CUT TO:

14A EXT. NEW YORK STREET

14A *

As the BUS ROARS INTO FRAME right-left moving INTO FRAME we:

CUT TO:

15 EXT. INSIDE THE BUS - AFTERNOON

15

The train is packed. The kids stand. A man in a business suit is behind Julie, reading the "Wall Street Journal."

DORIS

(offering her coffee)

You want some coffee?

JULIE

No, thanks. I don't drink coffee.

DORIS

Montgomery?

MONTGOMERY

Me either. My doctor won't let me.

DORIS

You get anxiety attacks, too?

MONTGOMERY

Well, I don't know if it's anxiety, exactly...

(CONTINUED)

Rev. 9/3/81

20.

*

15 CONTINUED:

15

DORIS

You get this kinda pukey feeling
in the pit of your stomach?

(CONTINUED)

15 CONTINUED:

15

CLOSEUP, Julie, blanching.

DORIS
(continuing)
...and then your body starts
getting all hot and prickly...

Julie feels "something"...

DORIS
(continuing)
...like a thousand busy little
fingers all workin' overtime
on your skin?

MONTGOMERY
Yes... Sometimes...

DORIS
I feel it too.

JULIE
(suspiciously)
So do I.

Julie turns, looking at the man behind her, with the newspaper.

MONTGOMERY
Don't stare. Remember what I
said. Give people their space.

Doris sizes up the situation instantly, moves closer to the man with the newspaper.

JULIE
What about my space?

MONTGOMERY
What are you talking about?

The man with the newspaper howls suddenly. He glares at Doris, then moves away. Doris smiles conspiratorially at Julie. Julie grins. Montgomery is confused.

MONTGOMERY
(continuing)
What's going on?

(CONTINUED)

15 CONTINUED:

15

JULIE
Lesson Four: How to 'Waste'
Creeps.

The two girls laugh.

15A EXT. NEW YORK STREET

15A *

As the bus weaves away into the distance we:

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

16 EXT. IN FRONT OF THE SCHOOL - MORNING

16

Julie comes down the street, a cup of hot coffee in her hand. She is practicing aiming her coffee at imaginary "creeps." She is also avoiding looking at the people around her. Which is unfortunate for Coco, who is with a couple of other girls, dancing on the school's front steps to the beat of one of Leroy's probably hot "ghetto-blasters" (RADIOS). Coco struts suddenly forward, knocking the coffee in Julie's hand all over her jeans. She screams and jumps back.

JULIE

I'm sorry.

COCO

Don't you have eyes?

JULIE

I said I'm sorry.

COCO

They oughta hang a danger sign
around your neck!

CUT TO:

17 INT. HOMEROOM - AFTERNOON

17

Sherwood is making routine announcements from a notice. CLOSEUP, Leroy's neck, around which is fitted a tiny earphone, leading directly to his ear. Leroy has a smile on his face.

The CAMERA PANS DOWN Leroy's body, following the cord, and ending at his feet, which are tapping enthusiastically to whatever is coming over the earphone, as we HEAR...

SHERWOOD

The Senior Class will sponsor a mixer next Wednesday, for the benefit of the incoming Freshman Class. All new students are invited to attend, and 'get acquainted.' There will be a band and entertainment...

(CONTINUED)

17

CONTINUED:

17

SHOT of Sherwood from Leroy's "angle": DISCO MUSIC loudly accompanies Sherwood's silent, moving lips.

CLOSEUP, Sherwood, as she glances suspiciously at Leroy's smiling face. And she continues...

SHERWOOD

(continuing)

You may perform yourselves, of course, if you make prior arrangements.

CLOSEUP, Coco, considering this possibility. Sherwood briskly crumples the paper that the notice was written on, tosses it unerringly into the waste basket, on the other side of the room.

RALPH

All right!

The students laugh. Sherwood turns to the definition written on the blackboard.

SHERWOOD

The word for the day is 'deleterious.'

Students begin writing.

SHERWOOD

(continuing)

... Harmful to health, well-being, property. Injurious. Who can use it in a sentence?

Coco raises her hand.

SHERWOOD

(continuing)

Hernández?

Coco rises, looks at Julie, contributes...

COCO

Coffee can be deleterious to some people's health...

The girls around her giggle. Bruno is not amused. And Coco is not finished.

(CONTINUED)

17 CONTINUED: (2)

17

COCO

(continuing)

...and to other people's clothes.

More laughs. CLOSEUP, Julie, flushing with embarrassment. Sherwood cuts in, sensing her humiliation.

SHERWOOD

All right, Coco. That's the general idea. Who can be more specific?

Ralph's hand shoots up.

SHERWOOD

(continuing)

... Garcy.

Ralph stands up.

RALPH

My uncle Ramon is a real deleterious person...

SHERWOOD

That doesn't tell me...

RALPH

I'm not finished yet. You see, last month he moved to the country to raise chickens, like he always wanted...only he's a city dude, see...?

SHERWOOD

What does this have to do with 'deleterious'?

RALPH

His chickens all died. I asked him why. He said, 'I don't know. Maybe I planted 'em too close.'

Scattered groans and boos from the class.

CUT TO:

18 INT. THE DANCE CLASSROOM - DAY

18

Lydia is conducting warm-up exercises for the Modern Dance Class. Julie is at the barre, visibly distressed. And sweating. Coco is directly in front of her. Julie speaks to her...not so sotto voce...

LYDIA

(to Leroy)

Leroy, what are you wearing?

LEROY

Dancin' clothes.

LYDIA

This isn't Roseland.

LEROY

This isn't dancin'.

LYDIA

That's cute Leroy. You're real cute. Now you either dress for this class or you won't be in it. All right, we're going to repeat what we did yesterday. Everybody in groups of two.

Lydia demonstrates the moves.

LYDIA

(continuing)

All right, first pair.

JULIE

It was an accident.

COCO

Sure, hon.

JULIE

I just wasn't looking.

COCO

Don't get 'A' girl.

JULIE

'A'?

COCO

As in 'annoyed.'

(CONTINUED)

18 CONTINUED:

18

(Coco punctuates her lines with deft manipulations of the barre exercises; each time coming a bit closer to Julie's body behind her.)

JULIE

Oh, I'm not. I mean... Well...
(awkwardly)
I wouldn't do something like
that deliberately.

LYDIA

Miller!

Julie freezes. The class looks at her.

LYDIA

(continuing)
When I say extensions...
I don't mean your mouth!

And they all laugh. Again. Julie bites her lip.

CUT TO:

23 MONTGOMERY

23

is sitting at a table with Julie, pointing at the sneakers and sharing a sandwich with her. She looks, as usual, over-groomed for her surroundings. A small gold chain hangs around her neck.

MONTGOMERY

That means the right shoes.
And the right jeans. And no
jewelry. Ditch the gold chain.

Julie reaches for it like a life preserver.

JULIE

No.

MONTGOMERY

Flashy is out, especially gold.

JULIE

I don't care. You can take the
rest of my 'identity' away, but
the gold chain is...special.

(CONTINUED)

23 CONTINUED:

23

MONTGOMERY

It's very pretty, but...

JULIE

It's more than that.

MONTGOMERY

You can't worry about what looks good. In fact, the better you look, the bigger the danger. You don't want to draw attention to yourself. You want to dress down. Which brings us to Lesson Nine: Defensive Fashion.

CUT TO:

19 INT. A HALLWAY - NOON

19

A BELL RINGS. The halls fill up with kids rushing to the lunchroom. Coco, still in tights, walks down the hall, laughing...probably about Julie...with some of her girlfriends. Then... She hears something. She motions to her friends to go on. She opens the door of a music classroom. Bruno is alone inside, playing his own composition, completely oblivious to her presence. She listens, intrigued.

CUT TO:

20A INT. THE LUNCHROOM - NOON

20A

MEDIUM SHOT, in a corner four boys, mix it up nothing formal. CHAOS of the SOUNDTRACK. Laughs, chatter, squeals, etc.

The CAMERA PULLS BACK. The room, usually reserved for acting classes, has become the focus of all noontime activity. Eating mostly. And noisily. But a few students dance. The CAMERA CONCENTRATES on one of them...a supremely well-developed junior girl, bounding up and down in New Wave delight. As we HEAR...

RALPH

Forty - twenty-three - thirty-seven.

(CONTINUED)

20A CONTINUED:

20A

LEROY (V.O.)

Are you blind, or dreamin'?

The CAMERA GOES to a corner of the room where some of the lockers are located. Ralph is packing his HOT LUNCH box with some undisclosed items. Leroy is beside him.

RALPH

Ain't she somethin'!

LEROY

You seen the witch in 104?

Ralph nods enthusiastically, volunteers...

RALPH

Francine Lincoln.

LEROY

Her legs never end!

RALPH

Forget her legs! Her bra sleeps four!

20B THE CAMERA MOVES

20B

to the "dance floor." MICHAEL, the senior class heart-throb, is watching a long-haired dark girl, RHONDA, singing a 1940's style take-off. She ends. They all laugh. Michael notices someone o.s., and winks at her.

REVERSE ANGLE. Doris, now a flaming redhead, winks back at Michael. Julie stands next to her, still feeling defeated. Montgomery is with them.

DORIS

Did you see that? He winked at me. Michael Harrison winked at me!

Julie knows better, but says nothing.

MONTGOMERY

He winks at everybody, Doris.

(CONTINUED)

20B CONTINUED:

20B

DORIS

He's only the most popular
boy in the school!

MONTGOMERY

...with a tick.

DORIS

He never noticed me before!
It's my new look.

MONTGOMERY

(to Julie)

It's a learned behavioral
response.

A fat, blunt black girl, SHEILA, barrels by, on her way
to the lunch counter.

DORIS

I knew it would work. The real
me is a redhead.

SHEILA

(in passing)

Girl, an' you keep treatin' your
hair like that, the real you is
gonna be bald!

Doris gasps suddenly. Michael heads her way, Rhonda
trailing.

DORIS

He's coming over here! In person!

Doris fluffs her hair, primps. To no avail. Michael,
with another glib wink, goes to Julie.

MICHAEL

Hi, a couple of us are having
a party Friday! You wanna come?

JULIE

I...don't think so...

RHONDA

(to Michael)

I think she's busy.

(CONTINUED)

20B CONTINUED: (2)

20B

JULIE

No, I just...

RHONDA

(to Michael)

I think she doesn't like us.

JULIE

No, not at all.

MICHAEL

(unused to
being turned down)

Then what's wrong?

JULIE

Nothing really.

RHONDA

You're really very smart. You
wouldn't like most of us anyways.

JULIE

Well, I didn't mean...huh...
huh... I mean we --

MONTGOMERY

(quickly)

...have to eat.

(pause)

Lunch.

Montgomery and Julie literally scurry away. Michael
stands where he is, looking at them.

RHONDA

Do you think it's something
we said?

DORIS

I'm on a diet.

He looks at her.

DORIS

(continuing)

...I mean, I don't eat.

He doesn't get it.

(CONTINUED)

20B CONTINUED: (3)

20B

DORIS

(continuing)

...I mean...I'm free Friday.

RHONDA

That's all right, dearie, we
have enough people anyway!

20C MICHAEL

20C

moves on. Passing Bruno, with Coco following him.

COCO

You must be a Leo.

Bruno halts, turns around. All he wants is a quiet
"private space." Why is this girl haunting him?

BRUNO

No. I'm a Bruno.

COCO

I mean your sign. What's your
birthday?

BRUNO

Private.

COCO

That's your problem, baby.

BRUNO

Please don't say that.

COCO

I mean, in general.

BRUNO

I mean 'baby...'

COCO

You know what you need. You
need exposure.

BRUNO

I don't want exposure!

COCO

We could be big!

(CONTINUED)

20C CONTINUED:

20C

BRUNO

We...?

COCO

I don't just dance, see? I
sing, too. And...we can go
places!

BRUNO

You can go places.

He turns.

BRUNO

(continuing)

... I'm going to the bathroom.

- Bruno breaks away from Coco, heads in the direction of the bathroom, passing the locker area.

20D MONTGOMERY AND JULIE

20D

are eating sandwiches.

MONTGOMERY

That was real...considerate of
you. Considering he's the most
popular boy in the school.

JULIE

Doris wanted the date.

(pause)

I have a boyfriend anyway.

MONTGOMERY

You do?

JULIE

Yes...back in Grand Rapids.

MONTGOMERY

You never said anything...

JULIE

Well...I try not to think about
him too much. You see...he's
...huh...

(CONTINUED)

20D CONTINUED:

20D

She stops, a gulp in her throat that isn't from the sandwich.

MONTGOMERY

You really miss him, don't you?

Julie nods yes.

20E THE CAMERA SWINGS

20E

to DARRYL, a black drama student, talking to a white girl, acting student, DAPHNE.

DARRYL

...I have an identity problem. Just 'cause I'm black, people are always coming up and slapping my hand and saying, 'Hey, man... what's happenin'...? My father works for Merrill Lynch...

20H THE CAMERA MOVES

20H

along to the boy's bathroom, where Bruno is coming out. Coco is right there, waiting for him. She continues where she left off...

COCO

With your sound and my voice... and a couple of back-up singers, maybe...and a small band...

BRUNO

A band?

Bruno looks at her blankly.

COCO

For the money, honey. We could clean up. There's bar mitzvahs and tea dances on Long Island and...

BRUNO

(defensively)
I'm not into money.

(CONTINUED)

20H CONTINUED:

20H

COCO

You don't have to be, baby.
You just keep turnin' out
your music and...

BRUNO

(stubbornly)

I don't 'turn out' my music.
And I don't perform.

COCO

That's cool, baby. I do.

BRUNO

(incredulous)

I don't believe you!

COCO

(suddenly
realizing)

I know. You ain't seen...or
heard the best of me yet. But...

A glance at the student band.

COCO

(continuing)

...we're gonna handle that right
here and now! I don't work
lunchrooms as a rule, but...
you deserve a break today...

The CAMERA GOES to the band. Coco approaches the
keyboard man.

COCO

(continuing)

Can you guys handle 'Take Me!'

(CONTINUED)

201 ANGLE TO TABLE

201

as Doris arrives with a dollop of cottage cheese on a leaf of wilted lettuce and seats herself next to Julie and Montgomery.

JULIE

Looks like you've got sort of a crush on that Michael Harrington guy.

DORIS

Julie, maybe people in Grand Rapids get 'crushes.' That's not the way it is in New York City.

JULIE

What do people get in New York City?

MONTGOMERY

Herpes, mostly.

Before Julie can react or respond, the SOUND of the BAND charging ahead takes their attention to:

(CONTINUED)

20I CONTINUED:

20I *

COCO'S VOICE is heard suddenly in the b.g., SINGING.

20J JULIE AND MONTGOMERY

20J

look up, surprised.

20K LEROY

20K

is putting his wares away. He, too, looks up, smiles, moves toward the floor.

20L THE CAMERA

20L

GOES to Coco, performing with the band. Singing her heart out. CLOSEUP, Bruno. He is unimpressed. After a moment, he leaves. He passes in front of Leroy, who is leaping onto the dance floor.

Coco watches Bruno leave. As she does, she misses a beat or two of the song, but...the complete professional ... She keeps singing. Leroy "gets down" on the music. And the two of them dazzle the rest of the lunchroom.

More students start dancing. The room is alive with movement. Coco is singing again, and the CAMERA is CROSS-CUTTING between her singing and Leroy dancing; almost as if a curious kind of competitive courtship ritual is occurring.

20M DORIS

20M

sits in the center of all this activity, writing in her journal. Doris looks up. Michael is dancing with the same gorgeous long-haired girl, Rhonda, who now holds her hair up and away from her head.

Rhonda has two things Doris covets, a body that won't quit and Michael. There may be a connection between these two factors. Doris sighs and the frenzy around her increases.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

20N INT. MILLER APARTMENT - ON MRS. MILLER - NIGHT 20N

looking slowly at something o.s., the point of her focus not receiving unqualified approval.

MRS. MILLER

Julie -- spare me.

200 WIDER ANGLE - ON JULIE 200

who has obviously turned her fashion wardrobe over wholly to Montgomery's ministrations. If she had a bottle of Sauterne in hand and were forty years older, you'd look for her under cardboard on a Bowery street corner.

JULIE

It's called Defensive Wardrobe.

MRS. MILLER

I's called the-Salvation-Army-
opened-your-box-and-sent-it-back.
If your father could see you...

She trails off and Julie needs a certain few seconds to retrench.

JULIE

Well, he can't. Not anymore.

MRS. MILLER

Julie, regardless of what
happened between he and I, he's
still your father and he expects
me to raise you...in a certain way.
To maintain certain standards.

JULIE

Those standards don't apply
any more, Mom.

MRS. MILLER

Is that what all your friends
in school say?

JULIE

I don't have that many friends.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

200 CONTINUED:

200

JULIE (CONT'D)

What they say...they say with their eyes, with the way they treat me.

MRS. MILLER

(concerned)

What do you mean? Do they pick on you?

JULIE

They...set me apart. Not all of them...but some. I mean... my dancing was a big deal in Grand Rapids, Mom, but here it's kindergarten stuff. My music is still okay, but I'm barely in their league sometimes.

MRS. MILLER

Hate to sound like a shrink, but... it's a learning experience for both of us. You're trying to fit in at school. I'm trying to wedge my way back into the job market.

JULIE

And I'm trying to 'fit in' with a preppie wardrobe! Either I look right or I look like a nerd. And get treated like one.

MRS. MILLER

(beat, and:)

Want some advice?

(quickly)

Don't answer because I'm going to give you some.

(and:)

Like is not either-or. I used to think: Either I made the marriage work or my life was ruined. Not true. We both used to think: Either Julie gets an academic education or a musical one. Not true, and the school you're going to proves it.

JULIE

Maybe I'm just not tough enough.

(CONTINUED)

200 CONTINUED: (2)

200

Mrs. Miller looks at her daughter lovingly and pats the cushion on the couch. Julie moves to her, their hands intertwining. Mrs. Miller brushes back a stray wisp of Julie's hair.

MRS. MILLER

You'll be amazed how...tough...
you can be...when you have to be.
Voice of experience talking now.

Julie smiles and idly touches the chain about her neck. Mrs. Miller notices the necklace.

MRS. MILLER

(continuing)

Still wearing the chain Lester
gave you?

Julie nods somberly.

MRS. MILLER

(continuing)

Lester's back in Grand Rapids,
sweetheart.

Julie looks up, meeting her mother's gaze with thoughtful perception.

JULIE

Maybe part of me is, too.

Their looks meet and Mrs. Miller's arm goes around Julie's shoulder for a beat, and we HOLD on the pair of them before we --

DIRECT CUT TO:

21 INT. HOMEROOM - AFTERNOON

21

Sherwood has detained Leroy for a private "conversation."
After Class. They are alone in the room.

LEROY

I'm a workin' man.

SHERWOOD

(with mock surprise)

Well...how about that!

LEROY

How about you hasten this
conversation 'cause I got
business associates waitin'...

SHERWOOD

I'm waiting, too. For your
homework. Romeo and Juliet,
remember?

LEROY

I forgot it.

SHERWOOD

Four days in a row?

LEROY

I told you. I done it. And
I forgot it. An' you got ears
you can save us bof' some breath!

SHERWOOD

My hearing is fine. It's your
homework that's missing. And
the quality of the few pages
I have is unsatisfactory...if
you want to stay in school.

LEROY

Ain't nobody makin' me walk
'less I wants to.

SHERWOOD

I will, Mr. Johnson. And I
won't waste any time.

LEROY

Yeah, an' you been down on me
from Day One...

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

LEROY (CONT'D)

...where you oughta been out
testifyin' to all the new life
I been donatin' to yo' tired
little school!

SHERWOOD

I am 'down'...as you say...
on your big open mouth, your
little closed mind, your rude
manners, and your fourth grade
reading level.

LEROY

It ain't my readin' level you're
workin'...it's...
(a new idea)
...racial discrimination!

SHERWOOD

(archly)

Dis-crim-in-a-tion. Well, how
about that! Five whole syllables!
There's hope for you yet...

(then sternly)

If I find your missing English
assignments on my desk tomorrow
morning.

LEROY

An' if you don't...?

SHERWOOD

You'll be dancing right out of
this school!

LEROY

You better have more 'n your
mouf' ready, an' you go readin'
my flight patterns.

He turns to go.

SHERWOOD

Four days worth.

Leroy turns back at the door. Furious.

LEROY

I never said I was stayin'...
but I hate makin' bigots happy!

And he slams out. As soon as he leaves, her demeanor relaxes.

CUT TO:

25 INT. THE MUSIC CLASSROOM - DAY

25

CLOSEUP, Bruno, explaining...

BRUNO
I wasn't being funny. Violins
are on the way out.

Some laughter. Bruno turns, confused, to the class. He
is not being smart-aleck. He is clearly in earnest.

BRUNO
(continuing)
It's the truth. You don't need
strings today.

SHOROFSKY
(pained)
Orchestras need strings.

BRUNO
Orchestras are an endangered
species.

More laughter.

BRUNO
(continuing)
You can do it all on one
instrument. If you've got a
keyboard, some oscillators and
the right combination of wave
forms...you don't need all the
dinosaur tracks...

He indicates the score in front of him.

SHOROFSKY
Mozart made 'dinosaur tracks.'

Laughter.

SHOROFSKY
(continuing)
...you should make such 'dinosaur
tracks.'

BRUNO
He wouldn't orchestrate today.
He'd overdub.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

BRUNO (CONT'D)

He wouldn't need all this bowing stuff. He could play the violin with his fingers...at a keyboard!

Bruno points to the score.

BRUNO

(continuing)

...And this fingered bass business...it was probably necessary in prehistoric days, but...

SHOROFSKY

(defending more than music)

It was necessary in Leipzig. It was necessary in Dresden. It was necessary in...

BRUNO

...the good old days.

SHOROFSKY

(fiercely)

Yes!

BRUNO

Is this a school or a museum? Can't we bury the dead...?

More laughs.

SHOROFSKY

(with some pain)

I have buried mine, Mr. Martelli.

(pause)

...And I have taught music to other bright young men with big, brave mouths, and superior visions.

CLOSEUP, Bruno, a little ashamed. Back to Shorofsky, picking up his baton and adding, pointedly...

SHOROFSKY

(continuing)

...The music survived.

CUT TO:

31 INT. A POOL HALL - A FEW MINUTES LATER 31

CLOSEUP, Leroy in the same corner, slowly writing. The CAMERA PANS BACK, revealing the Pool Hall he calls home. Over this, we HEAR an INSTRUMENTAL from Bruno. *

CUT TO:

32 INT. JULIE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT 32

Julie is lying on her bed, writing a letter to her boyfriend. The INSTRUMENTAL CONTINUES in the b.g. *

JULIE (V.O.)

Dear Lester...things are very difficult for me. The kids here don't accept me, no matter what I do. They look at me as if I just dropped in from outer space or something... Maybe I don't belong here. Maybe I don't belong in New York. I miss you desperately. When I think of last year, by the lake ...when all the leaves were turning red and gold...and how you put this chain around my neck...and how I vowed I'd never take it off ...until the day I saw your precious face again...

CUT TO: CU

33 INT. BRUNO'S BASEMENT - NIGHT 33 *

as he finishes the song he's been playing and lifts his fingers from the keyboard gently, even a bit sadly. The end of any song is a touch sad for Bruno. We HOLD a beat, and then we --

FADE TO BLACK.

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

A35

ON JULIE

A35

running down the hall late for class. As she runs out of frame, CAMERA looks in on a chemistry class in progress.

35

INT. ENGLISH CLASS - DAY

35

CLOSEUP, Montgomery, standing and reading from "Romeo and Juliet."

MONTGOMERY

... 'O, speak again, bright
angel! For thou art as glorious
to this night, being o'er my
head...'

The CAMERA SURVEYS the room. Ralph is reading a comic book. Julie is finishing her letter to Lester.

MONTGOMERY

(continuing)

'...As is a winged messenger
of heaven,
onto the white-upturned
wandering eyes
of mortals that fall back to
gaze on him,
when he bestrides the lazy-
pacing clouds,
and sails upon the bosom
of the air...'

SHERWOOD

(interrupting)

Thank you, Montgomery. That
was very nice... Garcy!

Ralph rises awkwardly.

RALPH

I...left my book at home.

SHERWOOD

Borrow Miller's.

(CONTINUED)

35 CONTINUED:

35

(PICKUP - CLOSE REACTION JULIE)

Ralph reaches down, takes Julie's English book. A look of pure panic crosses her face. Her letter to Lester is open on the page.

Ralph glances at Julie very briefly. He begins to read... (coincidentally, almost in perfect iambic pentameter...)

RALPH

... 'And how you put this chain around my neck, and how I vowed I'd never take it off...'

CLOSEUP, Sherwood, puzzled. But he continues.

RALPH

(continuing)

... 'Until the day I saw your precious face... again. I miss you more than words alone... can see. Dear Lester, there is not a night...'

SHERWOOD

Ralph!

The class begins to catch on. They know it's a love letter, but whose...?

RALPH

... 'When you are not in Julie Miller's dreams...'

Suddenly, open laughter. Coco hoots loudly. Julie buries her face on the desk.

SHERWOOD

That's enough, Garcy.

RALPH

There's some more...

Bruno rises, rips the letter out of Ralph's hands, gives it back to Julie.

BRUNO

A person's privacy ought to be respected.

CLOSEUP, Coco, not laughing any more.

CUT TO:

35B INT. LOCKER ROOM AREA - FULL SHOT - DAY

35B

The few minutes between classes finds a constant flow of those repacking their books, getting new texts, dropping off the old ones, edging between one another, all carried out with a minimum of fuss or caring. Bruno moves into the area and starts to unlock his locker. His is located right next to Montgomery's, who is engaged in the same pursuit. Montgomery glances up at Bruno, correctly reading his mood as a chilly one. *

MONTGOMERY *

You have the look of tension
headache Number Nine.

BRUNO *

And it's name is Garcy.

MONTGOMERY *

What'd he do?

35C DIFFERENT ANGLE

35C

as Coco reaches her locker, which is in proximity to Bruno's and Montgomery's. She opens it, dumps a few books, but is soon using this activity as a mask to eavesdrop and absorb what's being said. *

BRUNO'S VOICE (O.S.) *

Like they say on the playground
in the third grade, man -- he
ought to pick on someone his
own size.

35D BRUNO AND MONTGOMERY

35D

Neither aware of Coco's interest in their conversation.

MONTGOMERY *

Lighten up. That's just Garcy.
You know him. He'll do anything
for a laugh. That's the way he
is, is all.

BRUNO *

Does he tell Leroy jokes about
eatin' watermelons on the levee?
Does he tell Shorofsky a funny
one about stingy Jews? Maybe
he can do a funny bit about
Italian gangsters for me.

(CONTINUED)

35D CONTINUED:

35D

MONTGOMERY

Hey, man...what are you so bent about?

BRUNO

I'm 'bent' about people picking on minorities, dope! And here -- in this school, in this city -- she is in the minority. And all the talk we do about talent being the one thing we care about -- no, man. What we care about is laughs and feeling superior.

(beat, and:)

I thought we were better than that, that's all.

Bruno slams his locker door shut angrily and sets the lock in a quick flop of the wrist. He turns and moves away, a deeply shaken young man. Bruno's cross takes our PAN to a CLOSE SHOT of Coco, also looking after Bruno, expression ticking away, replaying his points for a count, finding some meat there, as we HOLD and then --

DIRECT CUT TO:

26A INT. SCHOOL CORRIDOR

26A

CAMERA DOLLIES down the empty corridor. The SOUND of a sole CELLO resounds through the hall. CAMERA stops at an open rehearsal room. In the center, head bowed, Julia plays. Somehow the music expresses her loneliness.

35E INT. DANCEWEAR STORE - ON DOORWAY - DAY

35E

Passersby moving along the sidewalk outside, all briskly moving, scarcely giving the store and its window display a second look. Except one passerby who passes by and then reverses course and then switches back again, looking in furtively, glancing about, wary of being seen, like a deacon skulking into the local porno movie. A deep breath taken, courage gathered, and Leroy enters the shop.

35F DIFFERENT ANGLE

35F

as Leroy moves uneasily to the display case, which is bookended by two female torso mannequins, sporting the latest in leotards and tights. A beat, the the CLERK, a slim, graceful sophisticated sort in his middle forties, glides up on the other side of the counter.

CLERK

Good afternoon. Anything I
can help you with today?

Leroy's mouth works after a second or two, but the sound doesn't pop forth with great ease. His tongue has the texture of terrycloth.

LEROY

Tights.

CLERK

Certainly. For yourself?

LEROY

Yeah.

CLERK

(brightly)

What size?

LEROY

I...don't know.

The Clerk leans across the counter, studying Leroy from the waist down. Leroy's about to commit what he considers to be justifiable homicide.

CLERK

Medium, I'd say.

LEROY

Oh. Right. Medium.

(CONTINUED)

35F CONTINUED:

35F

CLERK

Colored?

Leroy can't believe his ears, can't believe this sucker would look him in the eye and say such a thing. Just prior to the man's last few seconds on earth:

CLERK

(continuing)

I imagine you prefer black, don't you?

And taking Leroy's nonplussed silence as a reaction, the Clerk turns to one of the shelves behind the counter and produces a pair of black tights. Leroy now is in step.

LEROY

Tights. Right. Black tights. Yeah, man. That's it.

CLERK

Dance belt?

LEROY

Say what?

CLERK

Do you have a dance belt?

LEROY

(not to be trifled with)

Most tights I've seen don't need no belt to hold 'em up.

CLERK

We're not talking about that kind of belt, young man. You see...most tights are...well, tight.

LEROY

You ain't talkin' to no fool, turkey.

CLERK

(overlapping)

I know that, but --

LEROY

(overlapping)

Tights are tight! I know that.

(CONTINUED)

35F CONTINUED: (2)

35F

The Clerk opens the package and shakes out the tights which, let's face it, look rather like a snake had just crawled out of its skin. Leroy steps back, apalled. He regards them icily, then:

LEROY

No way.

And Leroy is on his way to the door, fleeing rather than leaving.

36

INT. THE DANCE CLASSROOM - AFTERNOON

36

CLOSEUP, Lydia, unamused.

LYDIA

Where are your tights, Leroy?

Leroy starts to answer. She cuts him off with...

LYDIA

(continuing)

...And don't say you forgot them. That was last week's excuse.

LEROY

I didn't forget 'em. I washed 'em. And they shrunk so much, when I put 'em on, they cut off my circulation, and I couldn't walk.

LYDIA

(takes a beat;
patronizingly)

That's awful, Leroy.

The class begins to giggle.

LYDIA

(continuing)

...You bring them in tomorrow morning and I'll trade you for a pair that fits you.

Lydia scans the rest of the class.

LYDIA

(continuing)

Take off the earrings, Phenicia.

CLOSEUP, Phenicia, great hoops hanging from her ears.

PHENICIA

These aren't earrings...

(pause)

Exactly.

LYDIA

What 'exactly' are they?

(CONTINUED)

36 CONTINUED:

36

PHENICIA

Religious objects. Tribal warriors in Africa wear them. To ward off evil spirits.

LYDIA

Well...when your troupe performs in Togoland, you can put on your dashiki, and stick elephant tusk in your nose...but in my class, between two and three p.m., we don't pray. We dance. Without jewelry.

Julie laughs. Unfortunately, she is the only one who does. And they all look at her. She turns red. Then...

LYDIA

(continuing)

Miller! Off with the necklace!

JULIE

(involuntarily)

No. I mean. It's not a necklace. It's not just a necklace. It's...

LYDIA

Another religious object?

The class laughs. Julie's face turns redder. This, we sense, is the line of last defense; the straw breaking her will to succeed in the school.

JULIE

You don't understand...I promised...

36A TIGHT ON GIRL DANCER

36A *

Near the barre, primping and posing in a cutesy manner as she mimics Julie's letter to Lester. Her name is MOIRA.

MOIRA

Dear Lester...I remember that precious day...when your precious fingers put this precious chain around my precious neck...

The class, some of them, snicker derisively.

36B ON COCO

36B *

Not smiling or joining in as she gazes at Julie.

MOIRA'S VOICE (O.S.)

And I promised myself...my dear sweet midwestern self...

36C FULL SHOT

36C

Julie has had enough. And screams...

JULIE

Stop it!

Moira does. But everyone stares.

JULIE

(continuing)

Stop looking at me! Please
stop...

And as Julie bolts from the room.

JULIE

(continuing)

...looking at me!

Lydia is not laughing. Neither is Moira, who senses she
has gone too far.

LYDIA

All right, you kids have had
your fun. Now you're gonna
work...

The BELL RINGS as we...

CUT TO:

37 INT. GIRL'S BATHROOM - IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING

37

(PICKUP - COCO'S CLOSEUP) *

Julie is splashing water on her face, trying to stop crying.
Coco enters, spots her, and goes over to the adjacent wash
basin. She pretends to be playing with her make-up. In
reality, she is trying, in her own curious way, to apologize.
Julie tries not to look at her. After a moment...

COCO

You're a moon child, aren't you?

JULIE

(a little archy)

I beg your pardon.

COCO

What's your birthday?

(CONTINUED)

JULIE

July thirteenth.

COCO

I thought so. That's why you're into big emotional scenes.

JULIE

(almost screaming)

I am not into big emotional scenes!

COCO

Rest, girl.

JULIE

If you gave me half a chance...

COCO

Nobody gives you anything, baby. You make your own chances.

JULIE

Well...constant ridicule doesn't help.

COCO

Forget it. Everybody gets bad reviews.

JULIE

Nobody laughed at me back home.

COCO

You're not out-of-town any more. You're in the hot, burning center of the galaxy. You oughtta thank her.

JULIE

Thank her?

COCO

Around here, people want to get looked at. I gave you a spotlight.

JULIE

I don't want a spotlight.

*

*

(CONTINUED)

COCO

Then what are you doin' here?

JULIE

(starting to
cry again)

I don't know. I don't...know.

COCO

Yeah, well...I do.
(grudgingly)
You're good.

Julie looks up, amazed.

COCO

(continuing)

You're not as good as me...
but then you don't have my
experience...or my planets.
A friend of my sister, see, she
tells fortunes, and she says I
have the sun and the moon in
my hand. All I have to do is
wait for Opportunity to knock...
Of course, I'd probably be a
star without the outside help,
but it doesn't hurt to have
cosmic connections.

JULIE

Why are you telling me this?

COCO

Because in this school you got
to be tough. You can't break
into tears over every unkind
word. You gotta work harder.
Prove 'em wrong.

JULIE

(almost to herself)

I can't...

COCO

Or you can quit!

Julie reacts.

COCO

(continuing)

But you won't...

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

37

CONTINUED: (3)

37

COCO (CONT'D)

...not if you really belong
here...if you're a professional.

The MUSIC of "FAME" begins in the background. Coco gives an airy wave and splits. Julie looks in the mirror at herself. Something has changed. Slowly, she takes off the gold chain; looks at her reflection without it, and likes what she sees. She raises her chin and...

CUT TO:

38

INT. THE LUNCHROOM - AFTERNOON

38

Coco is singing "Fame"; the words illustrating the content of the previous scene. As she does, Julie enters the Mixer, and looks around. Sheila is dancing by her ample self. So is Leroy -- the star of the dance floor -- as usual. Ching dances with a Tall Girl, whose generously endowed chest is approximately level with his eyes.

Sherwood and Shorofsky watch the action. Montgomery sees Julie across the floor, starts to cross over to her. Too late. A Senior Boy asks her to dance. This time, Julie accepts. She realizes her isolation is partly self-imposed, and decides, finally, to join the party.

CLOSEUP, Montgomery, mixed emotions on his face. Back to Coco for a moment. Bruno enters, watches her. This time he doesn't walk out. She is good. Maybe...
CLOSEUP, Lydia, watching Leroy dance. CLOSEUP, of her feet, tapping involuntarily. Leroy goes to her and drags her onto the floor. At first he tries to impress her with his dancing. But then she lets loose and there is no question who is the teacher and who is student. Sherwood watches all this, the hidden satisfaction all but bursting from her eyes.

Coco continues singing as the CAMERA CLOSES IN on Doris, sitting by herself, her hair piled up, revealing newly-pierced earlobes, from each of which three earrings dangle. She is watching Michael, who dances with Rhonda, who is now dressed in punk clothes.

CLOSEUP, Doris, considering...as we...

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT FOUR

EPILOGUE

FADE IN:

39 INT. THE HALLWAY OF JULIE'S APARTMENT - MORNING 39

Julie opens the door to leave, her schoolbooks in one hand, a cup of coffee in a paper cup in the other. She is dressed like a perfect little lady, in skirt, pumps, jewelry, and just the right touch of make-up.

(PICKUPS - LOOP NEW V.O.'s) *

MRS. MILLER'S VOICE

You look beautiful, sweetheart!

JULIE

Thanks!

MRS. MILLER'S VOICE *

Have a good day.

She punches the elevator button. Then, as she waits, takes out a kleenex, wipes off the lipstick. The elevator door opens and she steps inside.

CUT TO:

40 INT. THE ELEVATOR - MORNING 40

We HEAR SHERWOOD'S VOICE on the soundtrack, as...

SHERWOOD (O.S.)

Silence!

Julie apparently asks a lady in the elevator to hold her coffee. The lady does.

SHERWOOD (O.S.)

(continuing)

Do I hear silence?

CLOSEUP, a man in the elevator, surprised.

SHERWOOD (O.S.)

(continuing)

...The word for the day is:

'met-a-mor-pho-sis.'

REVERSE ANGLE. Julie removes her blouse. A T-shirt is on underneath.

(CONTINUED)

40

CONTINUED:

40

SHERWOOD (O.S.)

(continuing)

...A change of form, shape,
structure...

Julie takes off her skirt. Jeans are on underneath.
She unrolls the cuffs. CLOSEUP, of the same stunned man.

CUT TO:

41

INT. THE FRONT OF THE LOBBY - MORNING

41

The elevator door opens. The fully "metamorphosized"
Julie Miller emerges and walks out of the building.

SHERWOOD (O.S.)

...or substance. Transformation.
Two. A marked or complete change
of character, appearance or
condition...

CUT TO:

42

EXT. THE STREET - MORNING

42

The "new Julie" walks jauntily down the street, a
coffee cup in her hand and a new lightness in her
attitude. As...

SHERWOOD (O.S.)

Who would like to use it in
a sentence?

Pause.

SHERWOOD (O.S.)

(continuing)

...Ralph?

CUT TO:

42A

CLASSROOM

42A

RALPH

I never met a morphosis I
didn't like.

Scattered boos and laughter as we...

FADE OUT.

THE END