

FAME

"Tomorrow's Farewell"

By

William Blinn

Prod. # 2711

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SECOND DRAFT

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FAME

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CAST LIST

LYDIA GRANT  
BRUNO MARTELLI  
COCO HERNANDEZ  
SHOROFSKY  
DANNY AMATULLO  
MARGARET SHERWOOD  
DORIS SCHWARTZ  
MONTGOMERY MacNEILL  
LEROY JOHNSON  
JULIE MILLER

OFFICER #1  
OFFICER #2  
HECTOR MELENDEZ  
MR. TIPTON  
MISS POLSDORFER  
WILLARD JOHNSON  
DETECTIVE KESSLER  
DRIVER

ATMOSPHERE

TICKETED DRIVER  
CAFETERIA WORKERS  
MUSIC CLASS STUDENTS  
DANCE CLASS STUDENTS  
TEACHERS  
CRANDALL  
SEVEN DANCERS  
FIVE JOCKS  
CHORUS

□\*

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SET LIST

EXTERIORS:

SCHOOL OF THE ARTS  
STREET NEAR SCHOOL  
SECOND STORY WINDOW  
SCHOOL DOORWAY  
SCHOOL STEPS

WALL

ALLEYWAY

N.Y. - 2ND UNIT STREET

INTERIORS:

SCHOOL OF THE ARTS  
CORRIDOR  
CAFETERIA  
SHERWOOD'S ROOM  
LYDIA'S DANCE CLASS STUDIO  
SHOROFSKY'S CLASS  
SCENE SHOP OR DRESSING ROOM  
AREA  
SCHOOL STAGE  
AUDITORIUM  
FIRST FLOOR CORRIDOR  
OFFICE  
FILE ROOM  
CONFERENCE ROOM  
TEACHER'S LOUNGE  
DANCE REHEARSAL HALL  
CORRIDOR OUTSIDE DANCE REHEARSAL  
HALL  
MUSIC STUDIO  
DRAMA ROOM  
STREET FLOOR CORRIDOR

CAB

LEROY'S PLACE

BEDROOM

POOL HALL

FAME

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MUSIC CUES

- MUSIC #1 - Sc. 18 MODERN DANCE PIANO ACCOMPANIMENT  
(Solo acoustic piano)  
P.B. #2711-1-NV Post production (:30)
- MUSIC #2 - Sc. 24 BALLET DANCE PIANO ACCOMPANIMENT  
(Solo acoustic piano)  
P.B. #2711-2-NV Post production (:30)
- MUSIC #3 - Sc. 60 I CAN DO ANYTHING BETTER THAN YOU CAN  
(Full production number)  
P.B. #2711-3-V Pre-recorded ( : )
- MUSIC #4 - Sc. 73 COME WHAT MAY/aka LEROY'S BALLAD  
(Full production number)  
P.B. #2711-4-V Pre-recorded (3:47) (3:18)
- MUSIC #5 - Sc. 89 LEROY'S DANCE - TBA  
(Full production instrumental)  
P.B. #2711-5-NV Post production (1:00)

FAME

"Tomorrow's Farewell"

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

EXT. STREET NEAR SCHOOL - ON LYDIA GRANT - FULL SHOT - 1  
DAY

UNDER OPENING CREDITS, striding purposefully along the street, bundled in a heavy coat, burdened with a number of books and a large bag containing her dancing gear and change. START TITLES OVER this.

DIFFERENT ANGLE - LYDIA 2

as she jaywalks across the street, skirting the few vehicles passing at this relatively early hour. In the b.g. we note a NYPD patrol unit has pulled over a civilian vehicle and the team of officers is in the process of filling out a ticket for whatever the driver of the car did. Or failed to do. Lydia registers their presence offhandedly as she reaches the corner across from school. She glances across the street to the school, expression clouding over.

HER POV - SECOND STORY WINDOW 3

Standing there is a dour faced man in his thirties, looking out and noting that Lydia has seen him. A beat, then he moves back out of sight.

BACK TO LYDIA 4

Concern registering on her face as she moves closer to the area where the two Officers have pulled over the car and its driver.

LYDIA

Excuse me...officers...

OFFICER #1

When we're done here, lady.

LYDIA

But I think there's a prowler inside the school...across the street there.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

4

She has their interest now and races ahead, making each word count.

LYDIA

(continuing)

I'm a dance teacher at the School of the Arts and I have a key from the custodian so I can come in early and rehearse and -- well, I just saw somebody there and the place is supposed to be empty!

\*

OFFICER #1

(to his partner)

Come on.

Lydia and the two policemen start toward the school, causing an expression of hope to form on the face of the ticketed driver. That bubble is quickly popped by Officer #1, who turns back with:

OFFICER #1

(continuing)

You wait here; we ain't done with you yet!

The driver grimaces; his light at the end of the tunnel turned out to be an oncoming meteor.

ANGLE - TO SCHOOL DOORWAY

5

as Lydia finishes unlocking the padlock securing the door handles and sets to work on the lock in the door. As she works:

OFFICER #2

Sure it couldn't have been one of the janitors or somebody like that?

LYDIA

(dead certain)

No. I know all of them -- and this guy wasn't one.

And she has the door open. Both Officers move into the interior, each man unsnapping the safety loop on their holsters. Lydia watches them go and backs off a few steps, no heroine when it comes to physical confrontations of this nature. Her glance moves in the direction of the street.

HER POV - THE TICKETED DRIVER

6

He looks up and down the street thoughtfully, glances at his watch, mulling his potential next move. Making a decision, he pulls open the door on the driver's side and is about to get in behind the wheel again when his gaze falls upon Lydia watching him from the steps of the school.

WIDER

7

as Lydia smiles with sympathetic understanding, but also pointing out that the reality is:

LYDIA

They've got your license number.

The man sags in defeated frustration. Lydia's small smile of commiseration is abruptly replaced by an expression of terror as the two policemen come barreling out of the school, propelling a man in his middle to late thirties, MELENDEZ. One Officer has his hand on the butt of his holstered weapon as the other places Melendez up against the wall, none too gently. \*

MELENDEZ

You are making a mistake!

OFFICER #1

When we want to hear from you,  
we'll let you know!

(to Lydia)

You know this guy?

LYDIA

No.

MELENDEZ

May I show you some identification,  
please?

OFFICER #1

That's a peachy-keen idea, Mac,  
but take it out very slow.

Melendez complies, pulling a wallet from his hip pocket, with one hand. Officer #2 quickly takes charge of the wallet, flipping it open.

OFFICER #2

Name's Hector Melendez.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

7

OFFICER #1

Okay, Melendez -- what were you  
doing in the school?

OFFICER #2

(interjecting)

He's an inspector, Ed...

OFFICER #1

A Police Inspector?

And we can see him loosen his hold on Mr. Melendez' wrist.  
Officer #2 shakes his head and looks over to Lydia.

OFFICER #2

An inspector with the State  
Board of Education.

TIGHT ON LYDIA

8

No rock to crawl under, no place to hide at all. Her  
smile falters, tries to fly, barely attains air speed,  
then:

LYDIA

You know...someday this will  
make a very funny story.

(beat, and:)

A year or two. Maybe five.

DIRECT CUT TO:

INT. CAFETERIA - ON COFFEE POT, ~~A~~ DAY

9

as the ANGLE WIDENS and we FIND Lydia drawing two cups  
of coffee, one for herself and one for Melendez. It is  
still long before school opening and the cafeteria is  
empty, though we may see one or two workers preparing  
the steam table.

As Lydia crosses to the table where Melendez is seated:

LYDIA

The school is better than the  
coffee, I can guarantee that  
much.

MELENDEZ

I'm used to cafeteria food,  
Miss Grant.

(CONTINUED)



CONTINUED:

LYDIA

Poor you.

MELENDEZ

(nodding his  
thanks)

It comes with the territory, I  
think they say.

LYDIA

(carefully)

And...what exactly is your  
'territory'?

Melendez takes a sip of coffee, grimaces. Then replies:

MELENDEZ

You've heard of 'budget cuts'?

LYDIA

(wryly)

Occasionally.

MELENDEZ

It's a new hobby. Legislatures  
all over are voting 'budget  
cuts'. None of them are all  
that sure about what they're  
cutting, but it seems nice to  
cut something, so they vote it  
in. It's people like me that  
get to go out and see where the  
fat's located.

LYDIA

And that's why you got a pass  
key to the freight entrance --  
so you could look around for  
what you call 'fat'?

MELENDEZ

Well...let's be honest. A  
school like this...pretty easy  
target. What do you turn out?  
Engineers? Electricians? Bus  
drivers? Nope. Singers.  
Dancers. Actors. That's pretty  
hard for us to overlook.

LYDIA

Us? There's more than one of  
you?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

9

MELLENDEZ  
 (small smile)  
 Miss Grant -- I am a team player.

DIRECT CUT TO:

EXT. SCHOOL - FULL SHOT - DAY ✕

10

The steps crowded as the preschool Happy Hour takes place. Flirtations, jokes, gossip, bitching, all the order of the day. As we PAN OFF to the street, we see LEROY, COCO, JULIE, MONTGOMERY, and DORIS, all featured in the cluster of chatter and activity. As we CENTER ON the street, we see a battered taxicab pull into view and head for a dropoff space in front of the school.

ON MONTGOMERY

11

spying the cab, breaking into a delighted grin.

MONTGOMERY

There he is! Hey, Bruno!

And he's off to be at the curb before the cab can pull to a complete halt.

DIFFERENT ANGLE - THROUGH PASSENGER WINDOW

12

as Montgomery scoots down the steps, reaching out to pull the door open as he starts into his breathless delivery.

MONTGOMERY

Hey, Bruno -- you know that Darin chick in Biology? I was just talking to her, and now that she's got her braces off, she's really --  
 (anemically)

Hi, there.

He stops, looking into the cab at:

REVERSE - HIS POV - MR. TIPTON AND MISS POLSDORFER

13

If colitis could be transfigured into flesh, it would look like MR. TIPTON. He's in his thirties and was the only boy in his seventh grade class who swore he didn't masturbate and was telling the truth.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

13

He also wears a truly awful, laughable toupee. MISS POLSDORFER is in her thirties, too. At one time she was very attractive. Then she turned three and it started to go downhill. They both regard Montgomery with remote disdain.

WIDER

14

as Montgomery backs away, allowing them to exit the vehicle.

MONTGOMERY

Sorry...I thought you were somebody else.

② COULD YOU EXCUSE US

TIPTON

① Obviously. Excuse us.

③ HECTOR

Their smiles are the smiles that adults who have forgotten much of their childhood give to children. As the ANGLE ADJUSTS, we see Melendez heading down the steps, smiling his welcome.

MELLENDEZ

Alex. Beverly. Come on in.

As they head on the steps, Melendez continues to AD LIB, telling the new arrivals that they've been given an office on the third floor, that they can start to work almost at once, that he was mistaken for a prowler this morning, etc. Montgomery stands looking after them, distrust forming on his face. A number of other students group about him, also a shade curious about the trio. Leroy is next to Montgomery as they watch.

MONTGOMERY

Now who the heck are they...?

LEROY

I don't know names, but I sure know who.

MONTGOMERY

Who?

LEROY

Those people are The Man.

DIRECT CUT TO:

INT. SHERWOOD'S ROOM - ON SHERWOOD - DAY

15

(NOTE: The following THREE SCENES are quick and butted to one another so that the effect for the audience is that they are listening to the same speech split up among three speakers in three separate locales.) Of our principals, Doris, Montgomery and AMATULLO are present in Sherwood's class. Their attitude on hearing her message is the self-same one we will see in the FOLLOWING TWO SCENES: it all sounds like adult BS to them, something to rock a boat they like just as is.

SHERWOOD

You'll note for the upcoming week or so, there will be some visitors...observers...here in school. They're representing the State Board of Education, and I guess you could say they're here to check us out.

DIRECT CUT TO:

*Modern*  
INT. LYDIA'S CLASS - FULL SHOT - DAY

16

The class is doing warmup exercises and stretching at the barre. Coco and Leroy are our people within this group. Lydia moves along behind, continuing the oration started in Sherwood's room.

LYDIA

Now, as far as you people are concerned -- it's business as usual. We don't need any additional clowning or mouthing off or showboating from anyone. If they ask you something, tell them the answer. Without embellishment or comment.

DIRECT CUT TO:

INT. SHOROFSKY'S CLASS - FULL SHOT - DAY

17

BRUNO and Julie are the principals within Shorofsky's domain this morning. Shorofsky's delivery is a shade slower than the previous two, as he's reading it off the mimeoed memo that was found this morning in each teacher's box. SHOROFSKY clearly views this evaluation procedure as being in the same league with those who would put mayonnaise on lox. Not illegal, perhaps. Not immoral. Just such a waste.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

17

SHOROFSKY

In addition, certain students will be picked for private question and answer sessions with Mr. Tipton. Mr. Tipton is well grounded in conducting studies of this nature in order to establish a profile of the student body attitude toward the school and its curriculum.

BRUNO

Mr. Shorofsky, what's all that mean?

Shorofsky rummages about for a reply and settles upon:

SHOROFSKY

It means we got three snoops, Mr. Martelli. That's what it means.

DIRECT CUT TO:

INT. DANCE CLASS STUDIO - ON LYDIA - DAY

18

MUSIC #1 (Solo acoustic piano) P.B. #2711-1-NV (:30)

\*

She looks o.s., clapping her hands in tempo with the PIANO. In a previous life she undoubtedly stood at the back of a barge beating on a phalanx of galley slaves.

\*

LYDIA

One and two and three and four,  
and one and two and three and  
four, and one and two and three  
and four, and you're hopeless,  
you're hopeless, you're hopeless.

WIDER ANGLE

19

as Lydia trails off, waving her hands as if to eradicate a bad memory, signalling the class to cease and desist. Coco and Leroy are among the panting participants in the room. Their attitude on being told to stop is one of gratitude and a little anger. Miss Polsdorfer is seated at the rear of the room, a steno pad resting on her lap.

\*

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

19

LYDIA

Never mind...maybe it's the  
Monday blahs or something, but  
you're all moving like you're  
wearing hiking boots.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

19

LEROY

We ain't wearing boots, but maybe you ought to consider none of us got wings sprouting out of our backs, either.

LYDIA

Meaning what?

COCO

Meaning it's legal for a dancer to have both feet on the ground once in a while. We're getting more flight time than a seven-forty-seven.

LYDIA

(sarcastic)

Awww, poor child... Is teacher being too hard on you, Coco?

COCO

(right back)

I can take it.

LYDIA

No, you can't. None of you can, from what I've seen. You can't take it and you can't fake it, and until you can do one or the other or both, you're going to be a day late and a dime short!

She fixes her charges with an unwavering gaze, then becomes aware of the SOUND of a PEN SCRATCHING at the back of the room. She looks off to:

MISS POLSDORFER

20

writing with a fountain pen. A scratchy, noisy fountain pen. She senses Lydia's look and smiles briefly. It's a bad nun's smile.

ON LYDIA

21

There are a lot of things that are nearly impossible to do with people watching you. Teaching is second on the list.

DIRECT CUT TO:

INT. SHOROFSKY'S CLASS - ON MELENDEZ - DAY

22

speaking in a whisper reserved for churches and libraries and classrooms.

MELENDEZ

I'm just wondering if it is wise, that's all.

The ANGLE WIDENS to REVEAL Shorofsky at his desk, leaning in toward Melendez. In the b.g., we can see the class working in notebooks with reams of sheet music in evidence, as well.

SHOROFSKY

Why is studying Gregorian chant in a class dealing with musical history unwise?

MELENDEZ

Well, because the music is religious in nature, it might be misunderstood.

SHOROFSKY

By whom?

MELENDEZ

Well, by parents of some of the Jewish students, for example.

SHOROFSKY

Let me get this straight. You, Mr. Melendez, are explaining to me, Mr. Shorofsky, the Jewish parental position.

MELENDEZ

That's right.

SHOROFSKY

(long beat; and:)  
Genius.

\*

DIRECT CUT TO:

INT. SHERWOOD'S CLASS - DOLLY SHOT - DAY

23

The students have their heads over test booklets on each page. Sherwood is seated at the rear of the class in an empty student chair. Mr. Tipton is seated across the aisle from her. The SOUND of a rehearsal PIANO and DRUM bleeds through from an adjacent classroom.

(CONTINUED)



CONTINUED:

23

SHERWOOD

(glances at  
watch; and:)

Two minutes, people.

TIPTON

(beat; and:)

Don't you think the music and  
noise must distract them?

SHERWOOD

(shakes head)

They're used to it.

TIPTON

I can't imagine how they could  
get used to this racket all the  
time.

SHERWOOD

Maybe so, but there isn't much  
that can be done about it.

TIPTON

How about earplugs?

SHERWOOD

(restrained)

It's hard to teach English to  
a class of students wearing  
earplugs.

TIPTON

(considers; and:)

Point well taken.

DIRECT CUT TO:

INT. LYDIA'S CLASS - FULL SHOT - DAY

24

MUSIC #2 (Solo acoustic piano) P.B. #2711-2-NV (:30) \*

as Lydia puts the class through the last few bars of an  
exuberant dance exercise (not a musical number, but a  
progression backed by PIANO), the exercise brought to a  
halt by the O.S. SOUNDING of the BELL. The kids trail  
off activity and collect towels, etc., as they move for  
the corridor. Over this action: \*

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

24

LYDIA

Okay -- better get here early tomorrow and take plenty of time stretching and warming up. We're going to get into some new repertory and I don't want you pulling any muscles!

The admonishment is acknowledged AD LIB as the kids leave the classroom. Lydia blots away some of the perspiration from her brow as Miss Polsdorfer ambles up to her, the ANGLE CLOSING on them.

POLSDORFER

And where do they go now? Is there some sort of shower facility?

LYDIA

(nods)  
Second floor.

POLSDORFER

That's unusual, isn't it?

LYDIA

To shower after a dance class?

POLSDORFER

To have a gymnasium located on the second floor.

LYDIA

The showers are on the second floor. There isn't any gymnasium.

POLSDORFER

No gymnasium?

LYDIA

No.

And Polsdorfer flips open her pad; again her scratchy pen starts to write. She smiles perfunctorily to Lydia, then moves away, still writing furiously. Lydia watches her for a beat, knowing no good will eventuate as a result of that damned scratchy pen, and we:

DIRECT CUT TO:

INT. SCENE SHOP OR DRESSING ROOM AREA - ON MUSICAL  
CALCULATOR - DAY

25

(This musical "instrument" -- whatever it's named -- is put out by Casio and features a small keyboard and an electronic rhythm backing of various tempo.)

As we WIDEN the ANGLE, we FIND Bruno experimenting with the device, examining it with an expert's care and precision. Amatullo is seated in front of one of the makeup mirrors, concentrating mightily as he attempts to master the art of "age" makeup. He glances over at Bruno who continues to play.

AMATULLO

That yours?

BRUNO

(shakes head)

Belongs to Goldman. He asked  
me to check it out for him.  
It's really something...take  
it wherever you go...

\*

A wistful tone in Bruno's voice. Amatullo attempts to lighten the pensive air. He swings about, facing Bruno straight on:

AMATULLO

How old do I look?

Bruno studies him, cocking his head this way and that, and:

BRUNO

Oh...I'd say about sixteen with  
orangy splotches and a lot of  
black lines on your face.

AMATULLO

Very funny. Wakka-wakka.

DIFFERENT ANGLE

26

as Julie and Doris enter, both bearing the makings of a yogurt and fruit lunch. Doris views Amatullo's "look".

DORIS

Aren't you a little old to go  
trick or treating?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

26

AMATULLO

Wakka-wakka-wakka. And aren't you eating lunch in a weird place?

JULIE

It's here or the caf, and those three inspectors or whatever they're called are in there now. I don't want to be around them anymore than I have to be. I'm supposed to be interviewed by that one guy after lunch.

BRUNO

Mr. Nylon Hair?

AMATULLO

Yeah. His head looks like a flying squirrel trying to mate with a bowling ball.

Laughs of embarrassed delight from the girls. Even Bruno's normal cool is slightly breached by Amatullo's thought. Then Bruno seems to react to something and waves the laughter away.

AMATULLO

(continuing)

Hey, man -- I don't catch one like that everyday; dont' rain on my parade, y'know?

BRUNO

Quiet...listen.

The other three comply and, a beat later, there is a SOUND of an O.S. CRASH followed by the sound of laughter.

BRUNO

(continuing)

There's someone out in the house...

A little puzzled, not terribly apprehensive, Bruno and Amatullo move out of the area, heading in the direction of the school stage. Julie and Doris each take a quick spoonful of yogurt and trail after the two boys.

INT. SCHOOL STAGE - ON BRUNO AND AMATULLO - DAY

27

as they come on out to the stage proper, shielding their eyes against the glare of the worklight placed downstage center as they peer out at the source of the laughter emanating from the auditorium.

## THEIR POV - THE AUDITORIUM

28

In the semi-gloom of the auditorium, a young black man has tripped in the middle of one of the rows of seats and is attempting to regain his footing. He notes the two young men standing on stage and grins likably as he stands, the process made a shade more difficult by the fact that he's got a small mini-buzz on. His name is WILLARD.

WILLARD

Whoo! You people didn't pay your electric bill or somethin' ...dark as the inside of a peach pit out here...

BRUNO

Well...you're not supposed to be out there, anyway... Security guard finds you, he'll call the cops, Mister. You better find someplace else to crash.

WILLARD

No place else, man. Got to be here. I just got all turned around out in the halls there. I'm just sort of lost, is all. But I'm in the right place...

AMATULLO

You real sure about that?

WILLARD

Isn't this the school for the Arts...?

(off their nods)

There a Leroy Johnson goes here?

Again, the nods, but there's growing wariness about their responses now. After looks move between the four young people on stage:

AMATULLO

How come you want to talk to Leroy?

ON WILLARD

29

arms spread wide, ingratiating smile in place, still weaving slightly from side to side.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

29

WILLARD

Hey, man...that little dude is  
my brother...

And as he starts to laugh, head tilting back with inebriated release, we HOLD a beat, and then we: FREEZE FRAME:

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

INT. FIRST FLOOR CORRIDOR - FULL SHOT - DAY

30

Coco is moving down the hallway, an unaccustomed nervousness in her body language and gait. She starts up one of the stairways, slowing as Leroy comes around the bend in the steps, clearly very much involved with his own concerns. Coco slows him, smiling winningly. She holds out a hand, palm up.

COCO

Wish me luck; I'm going for  
my evaluation interview.

LEROY

Wish yourself luck, girl.  
I got troubles of my own.

And he moves on, our ANGLE TIGHTENING on Coco as she watches him depart. Not a pleased young lady, this. She deals with it as best she can, then resumes her heading toward her own destination, as we:

DIRECT CUT TO:

INT. OFFICE - FULL SHOT - DAY

31

As Leroy enters, drawing up just inside the door. Sherwood stands at the counter going over some test papers. She looks up, meets Leroy's solemn secretive gaze for a beat, than returns to her papers with:

SHERWOOD

In there.

Leroy looks to the door indicated. He nods stiffly and strides to the door, opens it, goes in.

INT. FILE ROOM - ON WILLARD - DAY

32

Head on the table. Not asleep, but eyes closed, probably a tad more in contact with things this time as opposed to our last time seeing him. The O.S. SOUND of the DOOR OPENING and CLOSING, the brief change in the room's...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

32

...illumination, bring his head up. He looks o.s. for a beat, then smiles.

WILLARD

Well, well, well. Look who went and grew up on me.

WIDER ANGLE

33

Leroy stands with his back against the door, not moving physically or emotionally. He's here and that's commitment enough for now. Willard waits for Leroy to reply, but the stillness holds and forces him to continue the conversation solo..

WILLARD

So, uh...what they got you studying here? You going to be Gene Kelly or somebody like that?

LEROY

What you want, Willard?

WILLARD

That ain't much of a tone for 'family'.

LEROY

(simply)  
We ain't much of a family.  
(and:)  
What you want, Willard?

ON WILLARD

34

Looks away, smiling ruefully, then back to Leroy. A new element in the look now. Honesty. Strategy. Whatever. A new element.

WILLARD

Boy...last time I seen you, you weren't big enough to understand what happened to me. Oh, you could understand I robbed a place and that I had to go to jail. But you couldn't understand the 'why', the how-come. Three years in the Army. A lot of pain. Lot of dope. Lot of booze.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)



CONTINUED:

34

WILLARD (CONT'D)

Takes a big toll on a man. Makes him get desperate. You couldn't understand that then. I'm banking on you bein' able to understand it now.

(and:)

You and me is the only people each other has got in this whole blessed world, Leroy.

WIDER

35

Leroy's look holds enigmatically. A beat, then:

LEROY

I got a place where you could bunk in till you get it together, I guess.

Willard beams with relief and gets to his feet. He moves to Leroy and embraces him warmly. Leroy returns the embrace as best he can, but he's not used to this at all, not used to this fact of having a brother in his life at all. But having a brother, even a brother who's a stranger, put his arms about you, isn't half bad, it seems, as we:

DIRECT CUT TO:

INT. LIMBO CONFERENCE ROOM - EFFECT SHOT - DAY

36

The "effect" is garnered by placing Mr. Tipton in front of a sun-flooded window, rendering him essentially a rather remote yet regal silhouette. We can see a clipboard on his lap.

TIPTON

What is it you like best about the school, Miss Hernandez?

REVERSE - COCO HERNANDEZ - INTERVIEW SEGMENT

37

NOTE: All interview segments will NOT be scripted, but will involve the principals reacting to questions in character and replying as they believe their characters would, in fact, reply. Cast members will be allowed to see most of the questions before the interview segments are filmed. Other questions will evolve as the interviews take place and will not be "tipped" prior to rolling camera. Page count this at two.

Use  
Set  
A & B CAMERA

INT. FIRST FLOOR CORRIDOR - DOLLY SHOT - DAY

38

MOVING BACK along the hallway slowly, allowing the SOUNDS from the classrooms on each side to impress themselves upon us. A NUMBER of PIANOS being PLAYED, Shorofsky's VOICE YELLING OVER; LYDIA'S VOICE counting out the cadence for a DANCE EXERCISE, SHERWOOD reading from an ENGLISH TEXT, A SECOND TEACHER talking math theories, CRANDALL's VOICE talking ACTING TECHNIQUES. As all these voices and sounds BUILD AND OVERLAP, we stop DOLLYING and PAN OVER to a corner bulletin board where there is a large caricature of a bald eagle wearing a pompadour-type hairpiece. Labelled, of course: MR. TIPTON. Then the O.S. SOUND of the class BELL RINGING SHRILLY.

DIRECT CUT TO:

*Conference Room*  
INT. TEACHERS' LOUNGE - COFFEE POT - DAY

39

As Lydia pours out the last little remaining liquid into her cup. As the ANGLE WIDENS, we find Sherwood with her feet up, also enjoying a cup of coffee. Shorofsky is involved with making a strong dose of tea. One or two other teachers can be seen in the b.g. A young male in leotards and loose sweater reading a trade paper. An older lady going over a theatrical musical score.

LYDIA

It's like they came from Mars.  
They don't have any idea of  
what we're doing.

SHERWOOD

Wrong. We're the ones who come  
from Mars, as far as they're  
concerned. All their questions,  
all their suggestions, make  
perfect sense in a normal  
school.

SHOROFSKY

They make me ashamed.

LYDIA

Of what?

SHOROFSKY

Of me.

SHERWOOD

You? Why, for heaven's sake...?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

39

SHOROFSKY

Because they are nebbishes and fools and I should be a bigger person than to hate such people.

LYDIA

You don't 'hate' them, Mr. Shorofsky.

SHOROFSKY

(right back)

I hate anything that stifles freedom and anyone that stifles creativity. These people are pencil pushers and adder-uppers and they have no place in our school.

SHERWOOD

(to Lydia)

Don't you just want to take him home and put him on your mantel?

SHOROFSKY

But, we must be careful about how we conduct ourselves. We should appear to go along. We should try to appear friendly and cooperative. That's the only way we can --

DIFFERENT ANGLE

40

As the door from the outer corridor is opened by Mr. Melendez, who enters with the weary smile of a man who's put in a long, albeit productive day. Shorofsky turns into a veritable Welcome Wagon.

SHOROFSKY

Mr. Melendez-- how are you?  
Let me get you a cup of coffee.  
Oh. Never mind. I'll make a fresh pot. Won't take a minute.  
Sit down. Take your shoes off.  
Enjoy.

Shorofsky bustles to the coffee maker as Melendez takes him at his word and sinks onto the overstuffed couch with a sigh of relief.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

40

MELENDEZ

Well -- I think maybe I have some good news for you all.

The three teachers exchange a somewhat apprehensive look.

SHERWOOD

What...good news...are you talking about?

MELENDEZ

We're going to recommend the budget include monies for a gymnasium.

SHOROFSKY

(deadpan)

A gymnasium.

MELENDEZ

That's right.

SHOROFSKY

You've looked around and of all the things you could have picked, you decided we need a gymnasium.

MELENDEZ

It was Miss Polsdorfer pointed it out to me, actually.

SHOROFSKY

Bless her.

(and:)

How do you take your coffee?

MELENDEZ

Black.

Shorofsky nods sourly, sets about preparing the cup of coffee. Lydia moves into Melendez's area.

LYDIA

Mr. Melendez...I'm no expert on budgets and things...but is this money you're recommending we get... is that in addition to our regular budget...or will it come out of programs already established?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

40

MELENDEZ

Not for me to say. Probably  
a little bit of both.

LYDIA

Mr. Melendez...we don't need a  
gymnasium.

MELENDEZ

State regulations call for an  
hour of PE every day, Miss Grant.

LYDIA

Mr. Melendez, I can assure you,  
my dance classes are a workout  
and a half.

MELENDEZ

But the other students...

SHERWOOD

All the students are required  
to take some kind of movement  
class.

MELENDEZ

Well, 'movement', stretching...  
whatever...that's not the same  
as an hour of PE.

LYDIA

No. It's more.

MELENDEZ

Miss Grant --

LYDIA

(interrupting)

There isn't a football or a  
basketball player in this city  
who could make it through one  
of my classes.

MELENDEZ

You think so...

LYDIA

I know so.

This incipient revolt is headed off by Shorofsky, who  
arrives bearing a cup of coffee which he hands to  
Melendez.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

40

Lydia exhales her anger as best she can, turning away to glare out the window. Melendez takes a grateful pull at the fresh coffee, then his expression prunes up. He looks at the contents of the cup.

MELENDEZ

This has a ton of cream and sugar in it.

SHOROFSKY

Silly me. I must have forgot.

And Shorofsky sets sail for the door. The atmosphere in the lounge is tangibly chilled. Lydia moves after Shorofsky.

LYDIA

I've got to get going.

SHERWOOD

I'll meet you out front. \*

They nod farewells as the ANGLE CLOSES ON Melendez watching them leave. He sighs, sips, and reacts accordingly, as we HOLD, and then:

DIRECT CUT TO:

INT. LIMBO CONFERENCE ROOM - JULIE'S INTERVIEW - DAY

41

FOCUSSING ON Julie's attitude toward the transition she's undergoing as she attempts to fit into this new setting. Her point of view might dwell on her efforts to overcome her cliched perceptions of NYC and its citizens. The other side of the coin is the equally cliched opinions her classmates have of anyone who hails from the "country". New York kids are not dope crazed muggers; Midwestern kids are not wide eyed hayseeds.

DIRECT CUT TO:

INT. STREET FLOOR CORRIDOR / SHERWOOD - DAY

42 \*

coming down the hall, a shade deflated from the exchange with Melendez. As she rounds a corner she finds Leroy seated on one of the benches in the lobby, using the book placed across his lap as a bongo drum, the beat being laid down a soft, bluesy tempo. His back is to Sherwood and he seems lost in whatever he's hearing. \*

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

42

SHERWOOD

Leroy?

(seeing the  
earphones)

Oh -- kay.

Sherwood goes to Leroy, taps him on the shoulder. On seeing her, he removes the earplug and snaps off the small cassette player resting next to him.

SHERWOOD

(continuing)

Hi.

LEROY

Hi.

SHERWOOD

I just wanted to check up... that young man who showed up here this afternoon...he is your brother, isn't he?

LEROY

How come you think you got to 'check up'?

SHERWOOD

(a rueful smile)

Well...two reasons: A...there is a phrase in black slang about so-and-so being a 'brother', and I wasn't sure if that was the kind of 'brother' this young man was to you, or if he was a brother-brother.

LEROY

What's the second reason?

SHERWOOD

(considers; then,  
simply)

The second reason is that he was drunk and that concerns me.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

42

LEROY

Why's that concern you?

SHERWOOD

Because as maddening and arrogant as you can be sometimes, I care about you and I don't want to see you getting into trouble.

LEROY

The man is my brother! He's not trouble, woman!

SHERWOOD

Leroy -- with that 'evaluation team' around here, we've got to be especially... 'careful'.

LEROY

Thought you were so worried about poor little me...

SHERWOOD

Leroy, he was drunk, and I can't just look the other --

LEROY

(breaking in  
angrily)

He was celebratin' seeing me!  
That's what he was doin'! And  
if your tight ears can't handle  
that, too bad!

SHERWOOD

You're pleased about seeing him?

LEROY

Yes!

SHERWOOD

(quietly)

Then why are you hanging out  
here, doing everything you can  
not to go home?

Leroy is on his feet and moving down the stairs, his voice ECHOING on up the stairwell as he exits.

LEROY

Woman, can't you ever stop  
fussin' at me?!

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)



CONTINUED: (3)

42

LEROY (CONT'D)

Who elected you to run my life?  
 Just leave me be! There's a  
 worldful of space out here,  
 witch, just you let me have my  
 piece of it, hear?

And he is out of sight, leaving Sherwood to lean wearily  
 against the wall, cranking up her resolve once again not  
 to allow this particular human being to force her into  
 retreat as we HOLD a COUNT, then:

~~DIRECT CUT TO:~~ *Peel*  
*43*

INT. LEROY'S PLACE - ON DOOR - DAY *ST 24-*

as the SOUND of a KEY being fitted into a lock is HEARD  
 and the door slowly opens, revealing Leroy. He looks  
 about a beat.

LEROY

Willard...

WIDER ANGLE - LEROY'S PLACE

44

If there is such a thing as clean disarray, Leroy's place  
 personifies it. A couple of rumpsprung chairs, a card-  
 table. A TV with coathanger rabbit ears and a checkered  
 ownership history. A hotplate rests next to the sink, a  
 stack of canned goods next to that. A large transistor  
 stereo radio is prominently displayed. Leroy's gaze  
 falls upon:

POV - SMALL CASSETTE RECORDER

45

with a large note balanced on top of it, the lettering  
 reading: LEROY, with an arrow pointing to the play but-  
 ton on the recorder.

WIDER ANGLE

46

as Leroy crosses to the cassette recorder and presses the  
 "play" button. A count of stillness, then:

WILLARD'S VOICE

(filter)

Hey, man...

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

46

## WILLARD'S VOICE (CONT'D)

...your place ain't the Waldorf, but compared to where I've been the past six years, I'll take it, hands down! I'm headin' downtown to get myself re-established with the people that count, see if I can't get me some kind of gig that'll put a little jingle in my jeans. I emptied out one of the dresser drawers and put my stuff in it. Hope that's okay.

Leroy moves toward the other room to check out what changes, if any, have been made. He stops near the entrance, looking at a small picture in a chipped frame that's hanging on the wall.

## CLOSER - THE PICTURE

47

A large black woman, clearly the mother, stands in front of a ND house, her hands resting on the shoulders of her two boys. Eight-year-old Leroy, a shy smiler in shorts and T-shirt, and a seventeen-year-old Willard, who's embarrassed and a little surly in look. Leroy's mother has the look of one who might be, in the words of the spiritual, 'buked and scorned, but this is not a woman who was ever beaten or defeated.

## BACK ON LEROY

48

studying the faded picture from a fading time. He moves on into the sleeping area.

## INT. BEDROOM - ON LEROY - DAY

49

A sagging single bed, no spread over the tangle of covers, is central. A mattress and box spring are near the window, a single sheet and blanket providing the cover.

## WILLARD'S VOICE

(filter)

If I ain't back tonight, don't sweat it. I got me some howlin' to do yet, and I just might get lucky. Take care, little brother. I'll pick up on you tomorrow. Later!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

49

The message clicks off and Leroy places the recorder atop the single dresser. He goes to slide one of the drawers shut and has to cram some clothes into the drawer in order to do so. He shoves the clothes in, then freezes. He pulls the drawer open slowly, having found something under the clothes. He withdraws the object.

CLOSER ANGLE

50

as Leroy opens his hand and reveals the shining nickel-plated automatic that was buried beneath the shirts and socks. He seems almost to have expected it, in a way. He studies the weapon sadly, stolidly, then:

LEROY

(softly)

Welcome home, brother...

He stands unmoving, still studying the weapon and its implications, as we HOLD a beat, and then we:

FADE TO BLACK.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - MR. TIPTON - DAY

51

Once again silhouetted against the glare of light from the outside, clipboard in place, body language regally secure.

MR. TIPTON

All right, Doris. Let's talk about what convinced you to try out for this particular school.

INTERVIEW SEGMENT - DORIS

52

The questions will relate to Doris and her family, how they feel about her performing aspirations, how she feels about her chances as a character actress/comedienne, etc. Underscored will be her dumpling demeanor contrasted with her fierce desire to succeed. Page count approximately two.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. DANCE REHEARSAL HALL - FULL SHOT - DAY

53

Leroy is in the center of the room, going through a series of leaps and spins, all of which are done with great energy, though not a great deal of precision. It's really an effort to burn off some bottled-up rage and frustration, a fact that's read accurately by Leroy's sole viewer, Coco. He finishes his "warmup" routine and moves to the table where a mop-up towel is located. Coco watches him a beat, then:

COCO

Want some advice?

LEROY

No.

COCO

Throw him out.

LEROY

I said, I didn't want any advice.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

53

COCO

You don't always get what you want in life, my dear.

LEROY

Lay off.

COCO

You're just going to look the other way, is that it?

LEROY

(flaring)

Yes, that is 'it'! That is on-the-money 'it'!

COCO

Leroy -- the man is out of prison less than a week and he's got a gun! That is trouble and don't you buy into it!

LEROY

There could be lots of reasons for him having a gun!

COCO

Name me one. Just one.

Leroy's answer is silence and that's a tough answer in these circumstances. He moves away from Coco. She won't let him off that easily.

COCO

(continuing)

Isn't he on parole?

A curt nod from Leroy.

COCO

(continuing)

Won't he have to go back to prison if they found out he had a gun?

LEROY

Girl, will you let it be?

COCO

No! Not if you can't tell me why you're acting so flatout dumb!

\*

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

53

LEROY

Willard is the only family I got on earth, damnit! I'm not going to give him a big hassle and see him head on down the road, and that's all there is to it!

COCO

(gently)

He's a lot older than you, isn't he?

LEROY

Ten years.

COCO

How old were you when he got sent off to jail?

LEROY

Nine. Thereabouts.

COCO

Sounds to me like he might be your brother, but that you don't hardly know him. He's more like a stranger.

LEROY

He's blood, girl. That's all I know.

COCO

From what you told me, he ain't treatin' you like blood, Leroy. He's treatin' you like dirt. He's not movin' in with you; he's moving in on you.

LEROY

You don't ever run out of advice, do you?

COCO

Make him get rid of the gun, Leroy.

LEROY

How am I supposed to 'make' him?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

53

COCO

I don't know. But it's trouble.  
 Maybe you won't admit it, but  
 I know it's so.  
 (beat; and:)  
 And you do, too.

\*

Leroy looks at Coco a beat, then averts his gaze. The stillness holds for a beat, then Coco turns and moves for the doorway. Leroy just holds his look to the floor.

EXT. CORRIDOR OUTSIDE REHEARSAL ROOM - ON COCO - DAY

54

as she emerges from the room, looking back sadly toward Leroy, then facing down the hallway and reacting with puzzlement to:

HER POV - LYDIA, MR. MELENDEZ AND ENTOURAGE

55

The entourage trailing behind Lydia and Melendez consists of seven husky young men, bull-necked, cow-brained, all of whom can bench press three hundred pounds which is roughly five times their IQ. The young men are wearing T-shirts with a school athletic department logo on the chest and work-out shorts. Lydia's expression has no nonsense written all over it. She spies Coco standing outside the rehearsal room.

\*

LYDIA

Miss Hernandez -- pick out the line of dancers we talked about yesterday. Mr. Melendez needs to see how physically 'fit' we are!

\*

BACK TO COCO

56

reacting to the offbeat manner of Lydia's, the formalistic wording, and the underlying relish with which Lydia delivered her "command". We HOLD a beat, and then we:

DIRECT CUT TO:

INT. REHEARSAL HALL - FULL SHOT - DAY

57

The seven young men are now matched by youngsters from school, Leroy among them, schedule permitting.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

57

Melendez and Lydia are seated next to each other on the other side from the group. Lydia's chair rests next to the table bearing the cassette recorder.

## MELENDEZ

Let's start off with some simple jumping jacks first.

ANGLE - TO LYDIA

58

watching with a small smile. She glances over at Melendez a beat, then reaches over to the cassette player and turns it on. She picks up a batch of cassettes, selects one, and drops it into the machine. A second button pushed and an explosion of DRIVING MUSIC fills the air.

FULL SHOT - ANGLES TO COVER - MUSIC #2

59

The tempo of the MUSIC becomes markedly faster than the speed with which the group was attacking the calisthenic routine. As the students were initially uncertain how to deal with straightout calisthenics, now it is the jock contingent who are a bit unhinged. The "jumping jacks" are now augmented by our kids, embellished with spins and kicks and leaps. Situps become nipups and the pattern is thus set; every standard exercise is added on to and soon the jocks have their tongues scraping the floor, while Lydia's people seem positively energized by the driving beat. When the music ends they collapse in one large breathless laughing pile of humanity.

MUSIC #3

60 \*

"I CAN DO ANYTHING BETTER THAN YOU CAN" P.B. #2711-3-V \*

:00

INTRO

## LYDIA

:09

Okay...calisthenics...here we go...ready...? Begin!!

## DANCERS AND JOCKS

:16

1, 2, 3, bend	1, 2, 3, stretch
1, 2, 3, bend	1, 2, 3, stretch
1, 2, 3, bend	1, 2, 3, stretch
1, 2, 3, bend	1, 2, 3, stretch

(CONTINUED)



CONTINUED:

60

:32	LYDIA		DANCERS AND JOCKS
	Come on boys,	1, 2, 3, bend	1, 2, 3, stretch
	you can do it...	1, 2, 3, bend	1, 2, 3, stretch
	<u>Move it!!</u>	1, 2, 3, bend	1, 2, 3, stretch

FILL

:43 NEW TEMPO FILL

:46 COCO  
 WATCH MY SMOKE  
 FEEL MY THUNDER  
 YOU'LL BE FADING IN THE DISTANCE  
 (DISTANCE, DISTANCE)  
 I'LL BE LEAVING YOU UNDER  
 MY SPELL TONIGHT  
 BUT YOU'LL BE ALL RIGHT  
 I'M JUST LOST IN A DREAM  
 I'M A DANCIN' MACHINE

1:11 COCO AND CHORUS  
 I CAN DO ANYTHING BETTER THAN YOU  
 CAN

COCO  
 YES I CAN

COCO AND CHORUS  
 HAVE YOU EVER SEEN ANYONE MOVE LIKE  
 THIS?  
 OH, I CAN DO ANYTHING BETTER THAN  
 YOU CAN

COCO  
 JUST STAND ASIDE  
 AND WATCH ME FLY

1:38 MY HEART'S ON FIRE  
 AND MY SOUL IS BURNING  
 I'M A LIVE WIRE  
 AND I LOVE TURNING YOU ON  
 I'M JUST LOST IN A DREAM  
 I'M A DANCIN' MACHINE

2:05 CHORUS

2:32 GUITAR SOLO

2:48 CHORUS  
 I CAN DO ANYTHING BETTER

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

60

COCO

OH YES I CAN

CHORUS

I CAN DO ANYTHING BETTER  
 I CAN DO ANYTHING BETTER THAN YOU...  
 (fall-off)

3:00 OUT

ANGLE - TO LYDIA AND MELENDEZ

61

She reaches over and turns the cassette player off. Her eyes move to Melendez. He looks to the exhausted cadre of jocks, then nods grudgingly.

MELENDEZ

Well -- Maybe you don't need a gymnasium, after all.

DIRECT CUT TO:

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - ON MR. TIPTON - DAY

62

The Oracle in front of the sun-flooded window.

MR. TIPTON

But there are schools a lot closer to your home, Mr. Amatullo. Why come here?

INTERVIEW SEGMENT - DANNY

63

would deal with Danny's home life in the South Bronx and how the subway ride means next to nothing to him considered in view of what he's leaving compared with what he finds at school. The tone is a light one, bantering jokes.

DIRECT CUT TO:

INT. POOL HALL - ON RACK OF BALLS - NIGHT

64

as the CUE BALL SMASHES into the rack, creating an instant of mathematical havoc, caroms and confusion. We TILT UP as Willard, who just broke, surveys what he's accomplished, then chalks the cue. He looks o.s., his look angry, intense. His tone is low.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

64

WILLARD

Might be real interesting to know how you found the piece, too. It was at the bottom of a drawer. A closed drawer.

WIDER ANGLE - THE POOL ROOM

65

Two or three tables. A booth nearby holds Leroy. There's a bar in the dim recesses of the place, occupied by a duo of life-weary regulars. The bartender reads The Form. Willard moves about the table looking for his next target.

LEROY

It wasn't closed all the way. That's how I found it, when I tried to close the drawer.

WILLARD

Man in my kind of fix can't afford to pass up opportunities, you know.

LEROY

What kind of 'opportunities'?

Willard makes the shot, then notes that their conversation might be overheard by the patrons at the bar. He moves to the booth where Leroy is located and slides in across from him. The ANGLE CLOSES ON them.

WILLARD

Guy told me where to find the piece when I got out of the stoney-lonesome. All I was going to do was sell the thing and get some bread. If I'm going to get anything going, I got to get me a stake.

LEROY

You can't sell it legal; the only place you can sell it is the street.

WILLARD

And that don't meet with your approval, is that it? All of a sudden you're the Commisioner of Police or some-such.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

65

LEROY

I'm just trying to look out for you, that's all.

WILLARD

Son -- I don't need no 'lookin'' out done for me! 'Specially not by any tippy-toed dancer.

This draws a look from Leroy that would freeze novas.

LEROY

You best not follow that up, Willard. 'Cause you can't handle what you're gonna find at the end of that street.

WILLARD

All I'm gonna find is a baby brother who don't know what it takes to get it done in this world! You got to scratch and grab what you can, man --

LEROY

(uneasily)

I...don't go along with you on that.

WILLARD

Oh, you got so much goin' for you, is that it?

LEROY

I don't know about 'so much', but -- I got a place I can afford... A job swamping out here...and I got the school.

WILLARD

Your school gives me a pain.

LEROY

Me, too, sometimes, but if I got a chance to be something, a chance to do something... it's likely to come out of that school and I'm not going to blow it. Not with guns or drugs or nothin'...

(low and hard)

Get rid of the piece, Willard.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

65

There's no "please" in Leroy's tone. It's an order. Willard meets the hard look for a beat, then reaches into his jacket.

WILLARD

Boy, if you feel so strong about it, you get rid of it.

And he slams the automatic down on the table between them.

LEROY

Man, you're carrying it around on you?! You must miss that prison!

Leroy grabs the weapon and pockets it. Willard gets to his feet angrily.

WILLARD

I don't miss prison at all, boy. 'Cause I'm right back in one, and it looks to me like you've appointed yourself my warden!

He spins, slamming the pool cue down on the table as he heads under a full head of steam toward the door. Leroy looks after him with anguish.

LEROY

Willard --

But he's gone, out into the darkened street. Leroy looks uneasily down at the gun he holds under the table, and then we:

DIRECT CUT TO:

EXT. ALLEYWAY - FULL SHOT - NIGHT

66

Very little traffic at this hour and we soon seen Leroy as he comes around the corner from the street, checking to make sure he's not being tailed or observed. A large commercial trash container is located in the middle of the back alley and this is Leroy's goal. He glances at a sleeping wino covered with newspapers, huddled in a doorway, skirts the wino and pulls the automatic out from under his shirt and holds just a beat, studying the weapon. The "wino" comes out from under the newspapers.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

66

COP

Police! Hold it right there!

An angry "why-me" groan from Leroy. A beat, then he throws the gun into the trash container and takes off for the other end of the alley. The Cop is on his feet, clawing a handheld walkie-talkie from his coat pocket. He speaks into it as he moves to the container.

COP

(continuing)

Kid coming out your end! Collar him!

He moves to the trash container and levers himself up on the edge, looking for whatever Leroy tried to dispose of.

ANGLE TO FAR END OF ALLEY - FULL SHOT

67

as Leroy streaks toward the street at the end of the alley. He's nearly there when a blue-and-white NYPD unit skids to a halt, cutting off his avenue of escape. As Leroy stops, looking about for any additional means of escape, the policeman at the wheel comes out with weapon drawn and leveled at Leroy from across the hood.

DRIVER

Freeze! Right there! Not a move!

And Leroy knows when he's beaten. He looks to the sky, unable to believe his bad fortune. His hands raise slowly and he stands motionless as the uniformed officer makes his way toward him, gun still drawn and at the ready, as we HOLD a beat, and then we: FREEZE FRAME.

FADE TO BLACK.

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - ON LEROY - DAY

68

We are SHOOTING THROUGH the window in the door of the conference room TO ESTABLISH Leroy seated on one of the benches outside. His posture is that of a beaten dog. Resignation in the stance. The ANGLE ADJUSTS slightly TO INCLUDE Lydia as she looks out at him. She turns away, facing back into the room.

LYDIA

But he's not charged with anything...

WIDER ANGLE

69

REVEALING Melendez is there as an onlooker to the conversation taking place between Lydia and DETECTIVE KESSLER, previously seen in his undercover role in the alley. He's dressed more neatly now, but it's an eclectic mix and his stubble place him on the funky side of the scale. He's been a cop for a while and very little surprises him.

KESSLER

Not yet, no, Ma'am.

LYDIA

'Not yet.' What does that mean?

KESSLER

Well, I seen him throw something into that trash bin, but I couldn't testify it was the gun I fished out of that junk.

\*

LYDIA

What were you doing in the alley anyway?

\*

KESSLER

Somebody's been rolling winos.

(beat; and)

I don't think I want to know why I got picked for this assignment.

(back to topic)

Whatever --

\*

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

69

KESSLER (CONT'D)

\*

-- if his prints turn out to be on the gun and if we find the weapon was used in any prior crime...I think the D.A.'s office might try to clear a few things off the books.

LYDIA

Did he say the gun was his?

(CONTINUED)



CONTINUED:

KESSLER

(shakes head)

He said his name, his address, and that his mother was... 'out of town.' When we asked for the name of a responsible adult, he gave us your name.

This is both touching and sad to Lydia. She looks back to Leroy in the corridor a beat, then:

LYDIA

Well...I'm his faculty advisor. I guess I qualify...

(at a loss)

Look: he's not charged with anything. What's the purpose of this...

KESSLER

I need an adult to make sure he'll show up for questioning if we need him, that he'll show up for trial if we press charges. I'm hoping that'll be you.

LYDIA

Guaranteeing anything when it comes to Leroy...

KESSLER

Can we go off the record a second?

LYDIA

Not sure what that means.

KESSLER

It means if you tell anyone what I'm about to say, I'll call you a liar.

LYDIA

(uneasily)

Okay.

Kessler looks to Melendez to make sure he's onboard, then:

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

KESSLER

I can manufacture enough stuff to put the kid in jail long enough to make sure he'll show up for a trial. I don't really want to do that. He can get one kind of education here; the kind he's likely to get in the can is a whole different ballgame. I don't want to put him through that and neither do you.

It's delivered quietly and honestly. Lydia hears and responds to that fact.

LYDIA

I'll make sure Leroy...stays available.

KESSLER

Thanks much. See you around.

Kessler goes to the door and starts to open it. He has a second thought and turns back.

KESSLER

(continuing)

This school...

LYDIA

Yes...

KESSLER

It's nice.

(beat, and:)

Weird...but nice.

And he steps out. Lydia looks after him with appreciation, then turns to deal with Melendez.

MELLENDEZ

Most schools would give the boy a three-day suspension.

LYDIA

He hasn't been charged with anything.

MELLENDEZ

That's because he got arrested by an overworked officer who doesn't want to waste his days off on a meaningless case.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

69

MELENDEZ (CONT'D)

(reiterating)

Most schools would give the boy a  
three-day suspension.

Lydia meets his gaze with an edge of strong conviction.

LYDIA

We are not... 'most schools.'

On the reaction from Melendez, we...

DIRECT CUT TO:

INTERVIEW SEGMENT - BRUNO

70

speaking thoughtfully about the school and the relationships that develop within it, that the prejudices that might exist out on the street are not applicable here, that race and color simply don't matter. Not to paint the place as heavenly, however, he might also go on to point out that the drama majors don't like the dance majors and nobody really understands the music majors at all. He views this contradiction as rather droll.

*Dressing Room*INT. ~~SCENE SHOP~~ - MAKEUP TABLE AREA - ON LEROY - DAY

71

seated on the floor, back against the wall, webbed in dark thoughts that cut back upon themselves offering no solution. He looks up as the door opens and Bruno comes in, once again carrying the portable electronic Casio keyboard. Bruno holds on seeing Leroy there.

BRUNO

Okay to come in...?

LEROY

(shrugs)

Free country.

Bruno enters, but his attitude is still one that treads lightly in deference to Leroy.

BRUNO

I just thought you might want  
to be alone...because of what  
happened.

LEROY

What do you mean... 'what  
happened.' How do you know  
'what happened?'

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BRUNO

Everybody knows Leroy. Whole school knows.

LEROY

Aw, man...

BRUNO

Hey, it's a school full of flakes; it's not the CIA.

He tries a few idle runs on the keyboard. Doesn't help Leroy's mood in the least.

LEROY

Well, what's 'everybody' saying about me?

BRUNO

Well... 'everybody' isn't talking about you. You're not that big a deal.

Leroy grins after a beat; he deserved that. Bruno continues to noodle on the Casio.

BRUNO

(continuing)

However...of those who are talking about you...I'd say a third think it's cool you had a gun. Another third think it's very heavy and courageous that you're covering for your brother...and another third think that anyone who goes to jail for something he didn't do in order to protect someone he barely knows...is a stone jerk.

(off Leroy's look)

You asked.

LEROY

(after a beat)

Which third you vote with?

Bruno's look to Leroy is not one that indicates he thinks Leroy is cool or courageous. A beat, then Leroy nods.

LEROY

(continuing)

I asked.

DIRECT CUT TO:

R4  
↓  
p5  
↓

## INTERVIEW SEGMENT - MONTGOMERY

72

Montgomery's interview will, because of the nature of his character, tend to the notion that the school and his classmates are really a surrogate family for him. He's bright enough to know that, like a real family, disagreements will abound, but that, in the long run, the emotional support, the give and take, are teaching more than anything heard in a classroom.

MUSIC #4 - "COME WHAT MAY" P.B. #2711-4-V (Post-production) (3:37) (3:18)

:00	INTRO
:13	VERSE 1
	ANOTHER CURVE, ANOTHER CHOICE TO MAKE WHICH ONE'S THE ANSWER, WHICH ONE SHOULD I TAKE SOMETIMES I WONDER IF IT'S ALWAYS BEEN THIS WAY AND I'VE GOT THE FEELING UP AND DOWN IS HERE TO STAY
:43	CHORUS
	COME WHAT MAY  I'LL BE WAITING FOR IT I KNOW THE WIND THAT BROUGHT IT DIDN'T MEAN ME ANY HARM COME WHAT MAY  IT WON'T REALLY MATTER IF IT'S GOT TO BE THAT WAY IT'S OKAY COME WHAT MAY
1:14	INSTRUMENTAL BRIDGE
1:30	INSTRUMENTAL VERSE
1:56	INSTRUMENTAL CHORUS
2:27	VERSE 2 (EDITABLE)
	ONE WAY'S ALL RIGHT, THE OTHER'S NOT ALL WRONG IT ALWAYS SEEMS THAT WAY THE BRIGHT ONE-HEADED COIN NOW I GOT TO FIND THE ANSWER AND I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO SAY BUT IT DON'T REALLY MATTER, I TAKE IT DAY BY DAY

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

72

2:56

CHORUS (2:27)

\*

COME WHAT MAY

I'LL BE WAITING FOR IT I KNOW THE WIND  
 THAT BROUGHT IT  
 DIDN'T MEAN ME ANY HARM  
 COME WHAT MAY

IT WON'T REALLY MATTER  
 IF IT'S GOT TO BE THAT WAY  
 IT'S OKAY  
 COME WHAT MAY

3:30

END (2:58)

\*

3:47

OUT (3:18)

\*

As the BALLAD PLAYS OVER:

INT. FIRST FLOOR CORRIDOR - ON LEROY - DAY

73

The hall's quiet, an after-school amount of traffic. Leroy moves slowly down the hall, everted, drained. He stops at one classroom and looks in.

POV - LYDIA AND COCO

74

Coco going through a routine, faltering at a certain step, then moving aside and watching intently as Lydia demonstrates the step properly. Neither is aware of Leroy looking on.

INT. MUSIC STUDIO

75

Bruno at the keyboard of the piano. His concentration on the task at hand is total. We PAN UP TO FIND Leroy watching him through the windows.

INT. DRAMA ROOM - FULL SHOT - DAY

76

Doris, Montgomery, and Amatullo are onstage rehearsing a scene, the pace and blocking of the scene frenetic and energetic. They wear pieces of costumes to help the illusion along. The ANGLE ADJUSTS TO REVEAL we are watching them from over Leroy's shoulder. A beat, then he turns and walks o.s.

INT. FIRST FLOOR CORRIDOR - FULL SHOT - DAY

77

as Leroy walks along the empty corridor, moving away from us. We HOLD ON him as the BALLAD CONTINUES OVER --

EXT. NEW YORK - 2ND UNIT

77A

Leroy walks the street, meets a Mime and heads home.

INT. LEROY'S PAD - ON DOOR - NIGHT

78

as it's opened and Willard bursts in, grinning with triumph, his clothes somewhat disheveled, his smile reflecting a successful evening on the town. He leans back against the door, pulls a pint bottle from his pocket and takes a long pull from it. He lowers the bottle and looks o.s. The smile develops a small leak.

POV - LEROY

79

seated near the stereo, looking out the window. Not really looking. Just staring. We PAN DOWN and see two suitcases stacked at the side of the chair.

DIFFERENT ANGLE

80

as Willard takes note of the suitcases. He gazes at Leroy a beat, then reaches into his pocket, pulling out a crumpled wad of bills. He drops the wad on the table.

WILLARD

I won near to a hundred bucks playing poker with Fat Rollie.

LEROY

Thought you was lookin' for a job.

WILLARD

Name me a job that pays a hundred dollars for three hours work and I'll take it.

(re: the  
pint bottle)

You want a drink?

Leroy shakes his head. A beat, then Willard lifts the bottle and drains it.

LEROY

I got a hundred-and-eighty-three dollars in a savings account. You can have a hundred-fifty of it.

WILLARD

What for?

(CONTINUED)



CONTINUED:

80

LEROY

To find yourself a place.  
You're moving out of here.

Willard finds a chair near the two suitcases. He tries a smile.

WILLARD

Oh. And here I thought you  
was sending out my cleaning.

Leroy doesn't attempt to share in the strained joke.

LEROY

I'm serious, Willard.

WILLARD

You're more than serious, Leroy.  
You're one of the coldest  
people I've ever seen in my  
life. Anybody who'd turn  
out his own brother --

LEROY

(breaking in)  
You ever learn how to swim,  
Willard?

WILLARD

(at a loss)  
What?

LEROY

You ever learn how to swim...?

WILLARD

No.

Leroy looks back out the window. He strives to keep his tone even, conversational. As he speaks, we might note an impending glimmer of moisture in his eyes.

LEROY

'For Mama went away...she took  
me down to the YMCA for swimmin'  
lessons. I didn't want to go,  
but she said I ought to learn...  
So I took the lessons and got  
to where I was pretty good.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

80

LEROY (CONT'D)

And I thought maybe I'd try to learn more, maybe get me a summer job somewhere bein' a lifeguard.

WILLARD

What is this about, Leroy...?

LEROY

Know the first thing they teach in that life saving course...

(off Willard's headshake)

Not to let the person you're tryin' to save pull you under.

(and...)

You're pullin' me under, Willard. And I'm swimmin' away from you.

WILLARD

I'm your brother.

LEROY

(shakes his head)

You're my Momma's other son.

That's not the same as 'brother.'

Willard regards Leroy stonily. He rises, moves to the dresser and starts to repocket the wad of bills he placed there.

WILLARD

I'm dead to you, boy. You ain't got no family anymore. You're alone in this world.

LEROY

You're wrong, Willard. I got family. We all got different last names, is all.

As Willard looks over at Leroy, mildly puzzled by the last remark, we HOLD ON the pair for a beat, and then we --

DIRECT CUT TO:

INT. 1ST FLOOR CORRIDOR - ON LEROY - DAY

81

moving with less than characteristic verve as he walks down the corridor. He reaches the conference room. It takes a couple of seconds before he can gear up and get himself to go on in. \*

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - ON LEROY - DAY

82

as he steps into the room, then holds, looking o.s., with some relief and surprise.

LEROY

Thought these things were run by the tall dude with the plastic hair.

WIDER ANGLE

83

REVEALING Margaret Sherwood behind the desk, a sheaf of forms and papers spread out in front of her.

SHERWOOD

Mr. Tipton had an...accident. Asked me to fill in for him.

LEROY

Suits me.

Leroy places his books out of the way and takes the seat indicated by Sherwood. As he does so:

SHERWOOD

That Detective Kessler called. Said they're dropping the gun investigation. Thought you'd like to know.

Leroy takes that with deadpan thoughtfulness, then:

LEROY

I got my brother to move out. Thought you'd like to know.

SHERWOOD

That must have been hard.

LEROY

(nods)

Was.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

83

SHERWOOD

And sad.

LEROY

(nods)

Was.

SHERWOOD

But necessary.

LEROY

That, too...I guess.

She gazes at him, hurting for him, but then moving on to matters at hand. She turns her attention to the forms before her.

SHERWOOD

Well, let's get these questions out of the way.

LEROY

See, the thing about Willard that makes me hurt the most...

Sherwood looks up from the questionnaire. Leroy needs to get this out, needs to deal with it before he can move on. Her look invites him to continue.

TIGHT SHOT - LEROY

84

His hands work in the air, shaping the words with difficulty.

LEROY

Willard isn't a bad guy, not really...he's just got no reason to get up in the mornin' ...all he knows how to do is hustle and game folks...'cause that's all he ever got taught, all he ever learned how to do... him and me are really a lot alike, you know...? 'Cept when I get up in the mornin'...I'm comin' in here...and it ain't just that I'm comin' in to dance...'cause the workin' and the dancin' isn't just something I do...

(MORE)

\*

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

84

LEROY (CONT'D)

(beat, and...)

The workin' and the dancin'...  
is somethin' I am. And Willard  
don't have nothin' like that.

\*

WIDER ANGLE

85

as Sherwood regards him with love, then closes the folder  
containing the questionnaire.

SHERWOOD

Get out of here, Leroy Johnson.  
You just answered all the  
questions anyone could want.

Leroy smiles nicely. He collects his books and moves  
to the door, then turns back to Sherwood.

LEROY

What kind of 'accident' happened  
to that Mr. Tipton.

Sherwood's grin has an appreciation of mischief in it.  
She leans forward, speaking in a conspiratorial tone.

SHERWOOD

I'd recommend you take a look  
at the trophy case out in the  
lobby.

\*

DIRECT CUT TO:

INT. FIRST FLOOR CORRIDOR - ON LEROY - DAY

86

\*

as he moves down the corridor TOWARD CAMERA, then draws  
up, his point of focus directed at a point above him o.s.

HIS POV - EDWIN BOOTH BUST

87

wearing the toupee previously seen atop the venerable  
Mr. Tipton. Looks good on Booth, too.

ON LEROY

88

his grin spreading like the rising of a new sun. We  
HOLD ON him a beat, and then we --

DIRECT CUT TO:

FAME - "Tomorrow's Farewell" - Rev. 9/25/81

53.

INT. DANCE REHEARSAL CLASS - FULL SHOT - DAY

89

MUSIC #5 - TBA - P.B. #2711-5-NV (1:00)

\*

This is a short "production number" that is backed by a HARD ROCK SOUND and features Leroy in the front line of performers. They split away from him as the MUSIC DRIVES and BUILDS, giving Leroy room enough to soar high into the air, young and alive and fairly glowing as we:

FREEZE FRAME. And over his form suspended in space:

\*

LEROY (V.O.)

The workin' and the dancin' is  
somethin' I am.

\*

FADE TO BLACK.

THE END