

FAME  
Reunions  
Prod. #2722

by  
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FAME

"Reunions"

Prod. #2722

CAST LIST

LYDIA GRANT  
BRUNO MARTELLI  
BENJAMIN SHOROFSKY  
DANNY AMATULLO  
ELIZABETH SHERWOOD  
DORIS SCHWARTZ  
MONTGOMERY MacNEILL  
LEROY JOHNSON  
JULIE MILLER

MRS. BERG  
MICHELLE

DOLORES JOHNSON  
FREIDA GRAUER  
WALLY ZAWICKY  
SHOP OWNER  
PLAYER #1

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SET LIST

INTERIORS:

SCHOOL OF THE ARTS  
DANCE CLASS - DAY/NIGHT  
SCHOOL OFFICE - DAY  
CORRIDORS - DAY/NIGHT  
MUSIC CLASS - DAY  
SHERWOOD'S CLASS - DAY  
MAKEUP ROOM - DAY/NIGHT  
TEACHER'S LOUNGE - DAY  
SHOROFSKY'S CLASS - DAY  
LOBBY - NIGHT

MINI-AUDITORIUM

LACEY KITCHEN - DAY

DOOR TO SHOROFSKY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

SHOROFSKY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

THRIFT SHOP - DAY

POOL HALL - NIGHT

EXTERIORS:

SHOROFSKY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

PHONE BOOTH OUTSIDE OF  
THRIFT SHOP - DAY

FRONT OF THRIFT SHOP - DAY

FAME  
"Reunions"

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

1 PAN CLOSEUP FEET DANCING - DAY 1

A rehearsal in progress, as we see a graceful pair of feet, then another, and another...

LYDIA (O.S.)  
... Five six seven turn, again.  
One two three four five six  
seven turn.

Followed by an obvious klutz, several steps behind tempo.  
START OPENING CREDITS HERE.

2 INT. LYDIA'S DANCE CLASS - DAY 2

She backs off, watching. With the dance troupe are several actors, including DORIS and DANNY. Their moves are less than fluid. LYDIA is clearly not related to Job as she nods to the piano player.

LYDIA  
Now let's put them together,  
and one two three four five  
six seven turn, step step turn  
step, step step, turn step.

3 POV LYDIA 3

Chaos. Danny lurches into a spin as all others finish theirs. He clobbers MICHELLE, loses his balance and careens into LEROY.

MICHELLE  
Ow!

LEROY  
Hey!

What follows looks more like bowling than dancing, as a tangle of bodies crumple to the floor.

(CONTINUED)

3 CONTINUED:

DANNY

Sorry. I almost had it.

4 ANOTHER ANGLE

Lydia approaches the heap, focuses on Danny.

LYDIA

You left two people standing.  
Would you like to try to pick  
up the spare?

DANNY

I think I've got the idea.

MICHELLE

You could've killed me!

DORIS

It was an accident, Michelle.

LEROY

He's the accident. Tryin' to  
dance with actors is dangerous.

As the group starts to get up:

LYDIA

This show is a cooperative  
effort -- and you will cooperate.  
(to Danny)  
Danny, you have to concentrate.

DANNY

I know. My feet can't get the  
hang of it.

LYDIA

You don't dance with your feet.  
You dance with your brain.

LEROY

In that case he should dance  
sittin' down.

5 ANOTHER ANGLE

Laughter. Danny takes a half-hearted swipe at Leroy.

LYDIA

That's enough!

(CONTINUED)

5 CONTINUED:

5

A beat; Lydia veils her anger in a voice of sweet reason.

LYDIA

(continuing)

Mr. Amatullo, if you don't wish to learn the dance I can always remove you from the show.

DANNY

The steps are becoming clearer already, Miss Grant.

LYDIA

And Mr. Johnson, when we work with non-dancers, we try to help them improve. In this way we achieve a better performance, and we avoid the pitfalls of false pride. Can you dig it?

LEROY

Loud and clear.

LYDIA

Good. It will be your personal responsibility to help Mr. Amatullo learn the routine.

LEROY

What? When am I supposed to do that?

LYDIA

In your spare time.

LEROY

You're not talking spare time, you're talking miracles.

LYDIA

Then pray for one. How well you do depends on how well he does.

Danny and Leroy share a look, as the BELL RINGS. Lydia moves to the piano, holds up forms, addressing the class.

(CONTINUED)

5 CONTINUED: (2)

5

LYDIA

(continuing)

Don't forget to bring these forms back as soon as you can. We have to know how many parents to expect at the show.

(to Leroy, Danny)

I want to see both of you in the office after you've cleaned up. I have a job for you.

As Lydia moves to collect her gear:

DANNY

Well -- how much does this 'job' pay? We don't come cheap, you know.

Lydia gathers up her dance bag and sweeps on past Leroy and Danny, her expression a bit smug.

LYDIA

Oh, I think we're talking about a couple hundred dollars changing hands. Something like that.

As she moves on out the door, our ANGLE CLOSES ON Leroy and Danny, both puzzled but the mention of a couple of hundred dollars seems to guarantee they're not about to lose interest as we HOLD A BEAT, and then we:

DIRECT CUT TO:

6 INT. SCHOOL OFFICE - TIGHT ON LEROY - DAY

6

looking o.s., not at all pleased about the developments taking place.

LEROY

Props? I don't know anything about getting props.

7 WIDER ANGLE

7

REVEALING Leroy and Danny standing at the counter, speaking to Lydia, who is just putting together a stack of forms and requisitions all related to the assignment she's handing out to her two charges.

(CONTINUED)

7 CONTINUED:

7

LYDIA

What better time to learn, then?

DANNY

Suppose we don't spend the whole two hundred on the props? Do we get to keep what's left over?

LYDIA

No, Mr. Amatullo. It doesn't work quite like that. And I don't think you're going to be able to get what we need for the two hundred, anyway. Just do the best you can.

She rises from the desk, crossing to them with all the required paperwork.

LYDIA

(continuing)

Here's the check. And both of you sign where I've marked an 'X.'

LEROY

What is all this stuff?

As the two young men sign where appropriate, we spot SHERWOOD as she enters and moves to the counter, checking one of the "in" boxes for any germane items. MRS. BERG is at the mailbox bank, placing items into each cubbyhole.

LYDIA

This is a receipt saying you have the money. This is a form authorizing you to have it for the purpose stated.

DANNY

What's this one?

LYDIA

You guarantee the money will be spent only on approved items.

DANNY

Trust is a wonderful thing. Where are we gonna find this stuff?

(CONTINUED)



7 CONTINUED: (2)

7

LYDIA

That's your problem. But I suggest you skip Bloomingdale's and try the second-hand stores, thrift shops. But get it done...cheap.

Mrs. Berg, still delivering the notices at the teachers' mailboxes, takes the reference to anything monetary as a way to gently broach her particular selling point this morning.

MRS. BERG

Speaking of money, there's a very intriguing offer from the Teachers' Credit Union you all ought to take a look at. They're offering an investment counseling service.

Sherwood is nearby, organizing papers.

SHERWOOD

Too bad. I just squandered all my money on rent.

LYDIA

Keeping up with the jet set?

SHERWOOD

In a way. I live under the approach to LaGuardia.

(beat, and)

How are the acting students working out in your production number?

LYDIA

I'm not sure. I've never choreographed a stampede before.

This gets an appreciative laugh from Leroy and a sour expression from Danny, who elbows Leroy as the two of them move out for the lobby, their signing done and the check in hand. As they go:

LYDIA

(continuing)

Think 'cheap'!

The two boys acknowledge the admonition with a wave back as they go out the door, pausing to allow SHOROFSKY to enter before they leave the office area.

(CONTINUED)

7 CONTINUED: (3)

7

The ANGLE CLOSES ON Shorofsky as he checks his box, working around Mrs. Berg, who still has a few notices to place in the proper pigeonhole.

SHOROFSKY

I have a suggestion, Mrs. Berg. Instead of distributing worthless announcements to everyone, you could post one copy and we could all ignore it more efficiently.

MRS. BERG

You should consider this offer, Mr. Shorofsky. This is a very good time for small investors.

SHOROFSKY

Teachers don't qualify as small investors. We're serfs.  
(considers, and)  
Maybe not. Serfs have a better medical plan.

MRS. BERG

Oh, I almost forgot. This call came for you. A...Freida Grauer.

She reads a phone message. Shorofsky is surprised, puzzled.

SHOROFSKY

Freida Grauer? Are you sure?

He takes the message, reading.

MRS. BERG

I took the call myself. She said to call her at that number.

Sherwood is on her way out, teasing.

SHERWOOD

Mr. Shorofsky -- What's the matter? You look like you just heard from your bill collector.

SHOROFSKY

I guess I have...in a way.

He moves back out into the lobby, clearly not inviting any additional questions. Sherwood glances to Lydia, both women intrigued, as we:

CUT TO:

8 INT. FIRST FLOOR CORRIDOR - DAY

Leroy at one of the phones, impatient, cupping an ear to hear as students swirl around him on the way to class. He counts coins, jams them in the slots, starts to dial.

INTERCUT TO:

9 INT. ELEGANT KITCHEN - DAY

The digs are out of House Beautiful. A hefty black woman of indeterminate age answers the phone:  
DOLORES JOHNSON.

DOLORES

Lacey residence...Leroy?

A wide grin, that drops instantly to a frown.

DOLORES

(continuing)

What are you doing calling me  
before the rates go down?  
You're supposed to be in school.

INTERCUT WITH Dolores in the kitchen and Leroy in the school lobby.

LEROY

I am in school. I just wanted  
to talk to you, Mom. You get  
my letter?

DOLORES

Yes, I got your letter, but I  
don't know, honey. That's a  
lot of money.

LEROY

I was sorta hopin' you could  
make it. This is the last show  
of the year.

DOLORES

Leroy -- it's not up to me. If  
the people I'm working for decide  
they want to do some entertaining  
later on this month, I'll be hard  
put to get some time off. And  
airplane tickets aren't getting  
any cheaper, either, you know.

(CONTINUED)

9 CONTINUED:

LEROY

(beat, and)

Sure, I know that. That's cool.  
There'll be lots of other shows.

But he doesn't believe it and doesn't feel good about it  
in any way, shape or form.

DOLORES

And I'll see 'em all. Tell you  
what. I'll try to come. I  
can't promise, but I'll try.  
You doing okay in school?

LEROY

Oh, yeah -- great. I'm in charge  
of...uh, getting props, and Miss  
Grant picked me to help teach one  
of the other kids.

DOLORES

You must be one of her favorites.

10 INT. SCHOOL LOBBY - ON LEROY - DAY

10

The school BELL RINGS.

LEROY

I've got to go, Mom.

(beat)

Yeah, I'm eating right. I love  
you, too.

He hangs up, pauses a beat, then slams the flat of his  
hand against the phone. Money tumbles back to the coin  
return. Leroy does not look a gift horse in the mouth,  
as he scoops up the change and hurries to class.

CUT TO:

11 INT. SHOROFSKY'S MUSIC CLASS - DAY

11

CLOSE ON instrumental group playing through a complicated  
arrangement. WIDEN TO REVEAL Shorofsky distracted,  
troubled. He takes the phone message slip from his  
pocket and studies it, then crumples it and drops it in  
the waste basket.

12 ANOTHER ANGLE

12

The class plays well. Bruno misses an obvious chord, and Shorofsky winces, raps the desk.

SHOROFSKY  
Take that again, please. From  
the last measure before the  
interior cadence. Begin.

The students are nervous, in pre-dread, as they play.  
The dischord again: it's Bruno.

SHOROFSKY  
(continuing)  
Stop! Mr. Martelli, what is the  
first progression of the interior  
cadence, please?

Martelli studies the music, seeking an answer that is not  
there.

BRUNO  
Uh, five-one-four, but it  
doesn't sound right.

SHOROFSKY  
It has sounded just fine for  
more than two hundred years.  
Play the five chord.

Martelli does. It sounds off.

SHOROFSKY  
(continuing)  
You play the five as a dominant  
seventh, but interior cadence  
requires a minor seventh.

Bruno hesitates, studying the score, then:

BRUNO  
(finds it)  
Oh.  
(plays the cadence)  
That's better.

SHOROFSKY  
It's even correct. Was that so  
difficult, Mr. Martelli? Or am  
I speaking in tongues?

(CONTINUED)

12 CONTINUED:

12

BRUNO

(a little irked)

Okay, I've got it.

SHOROFSKY

Wonderful. Haydn survives more than two centuries, and he even survives Martelli.

The class is cowed by Shorofsky's outburst, and in sympathy with Bruno -- the kind of sympathy that translates: Glad it's not me.

BRUNO

The question is, will Martelli survive Haydn?

Shorofsky approaches Bruno, very closely.

SHOROFSKY

Mr. Haydn is mercifully dead so he doesn't care, Mr. Martelli, and I may be stuck with you but I don't care, either. To you music is not melody but megawatts, not Wagner, but voltage. Fine. Go play in your electric sandbox. Or better yet --

And suddenly Shorofsky stops, seeing the young face before him and the look of shock and injustice there. He glances to the others in the class. Their expressions are of a similar nature.

SHOROFSKY

(continuing)

I'm sorry.

(to Bruno)

You make a small joke and I react as if you are attacking something sacred. I beg your pardon, Mr. Martelli.

BRUNO

Hey, we all have bad days...

SHOROFSKY

I apologize to you. I apologize to all of you.

(CONTINUED)

12 CONTINUED: (2)

12

He moves back to his desk, taking his seat. The youngsters watch him. Apologies are not Shorofsky's style. His fingertips form a small bridge behind which he rests his forehead.

SHOROFSKY  
(continuing;  
quietly)  
Play...please.

A few seconds tick by and once it becomes apparent that Shorofsky isn't about to start them off:

BRUNO  
(softly)  
From the top.

He establishes silently, the tempo, then gives a starting downbeat. The ensemble begins the melody once again. Bruno's gaze remains on Shorofsky and the gaze is a troubled one. Concerned. HOLD and then:

DIRECT CUT TO:

13 INT. SHERWOOD'S CLASS - DAY

13

The assembled, bored, sprawled throng -- including Danny, Leroy, Doris, JULIE and MONTGOMERY. On Sherwood's desk is a stack of worn paperbacks. She finishes counting a stack of papers, turns to the class, impressed.

SHERWOOD  
I must congratulate you -- all  
the book reports are in on time.

DORIS  
They say if you live long enough  
you see everything.

DANNY  
Maybe you should declare today  
a holiday.

SHERWOOD  
Wait till I read them. I want  
to make sure none of you is  
trying to review Heavy Metal  
comics again.

Loose, easy laughter. Sherwood takes a book from the desk.

(CONTINUED)

SHERWOOD

(continuing)

How many people in here have  
ever kept a diary?

The group seems embarrassed, shy.

LEROY

A diary? No way.

DANNY

It's not smart to write stuff  
that can be used against you.

SHERWOOD

But a diary is private. It's  
a way of communicating with  
yourself, expressing your hopes,  
your dreams...

DORIS

If I wrote down my dreams I'd  
get arrested.

MONTGOMERY

We're talking dreams not wishful  
thinking.

Sherwood silences the class with a gesture.

SHERWOOD

I'd like to read you something,  
by a young girl who also had  
doubts about keeping a journal.

(reading)

'It's odd for me to keep a diary.  
It seems to me that neither I --  
nor for that matter anyone else  
-- will be interested in the  
unbosomings of a thirteen-year-  
old schoolgirl.'

DANNY

That depends on what's unbosomed.

Laughter, but Sherwood's look regains control of the  
room.

SHERWOOD

She called her diary 'Kitty.'

(CONTINUED)



13 CONTINUED: (2)

13

Mewing from the class. Sherwood's eyes flash anger.

SHERWOOD

(continuing)

She wrote to Kitty often, about what she saw and felt, problems with her parents, what she wanted to be. Once she said: 'I want to go on living even after my death.'

The attention level grows a little. They can relate to that last thought.

SHERWOOD

(continuing)

One August day she wrote: 'It's really a wonder that I haven't dropped all my ideals, because they seem so absurd and impossible to carry out. Yet I keep them, because in spite of everything I still believe that people are really good at heart.'

(a beat)

Within a month, for the price of a loaf of bread, a man told police where the girl's family was hiding. A year later, when she was about your age, the girl died in Bergen-Belsen -- a Nazi concentration camp. Her name was Anne Frank. Your assignment is to read her diary. I would also like you to begin keeping diaries for yourselves -- for at least a month.

JULIE

Does that mean we have to show our diaries to the class?

SHERWOOD

Of course not.

MONTGOMERY

Then why should we keep one?

SHERWOOD

Because it's just possible, Mr. Montgomery, you might learn something about yourself.

as Leroy and Danny, after a whispered conference, slow on their way out of the room, sidling up to Sherwood, neither one initially taking one of the books from the stack there.

LEROY

Uh... Miss Sherwood...how long do we get to read this diary assignment?

SHERWOOD

Couple weeks.

LEROY

I don't know if me and Danny can do that.

SHERWOOD

Why not?

DANNY

Well, Leroy and me, we're kind of doing double duty, you know? We're both in the spring Festival and we have to get all the props for the show.

LEROY

I think we'll be too busy to get the book done in two weeks.

SHERWOOD

Twelve days.

LEROY

You said two weeks.

SHERWOOD

Eleven days.

DANNY

We told you we're going to be really busy with --

SHERWOOD

(breaking in)

Ten days.

Danny starts to protest once again, but Leroy's grip on his elbow stifles him.

(CONTINUED)

14 CONTINUED:

14

LEROY

The more we ask out...the less  
time we're going to get, right?

SHERWOOD

(beat)

That's the message.

A look between Leroy and Danny confirms for both of them that there really isn't any way out; she's got the clout and the determination to use it. Each reaches out and takes a book, smiling a sour surrender. They turn and head for the door. Sherwood, feeling this particular confrontation is over with, busies herself with other matters. As the two young men reach the door:

DANNY

Still don't think it's fair  
to have to do all the stuff  
for the show and have to read  
ancient history, too.

Sherwood turns, angry, but her words are delivered to their backs and have no effect.

SHERWOOD

It is not...  
(deflated)  
...ancient history.

But it is, obviously, to those she's dealing with. Her expression is one of frustration and an unwillingness to accept that fact as we HOLD A BEAT, and then we:

DISSOLVE TO:

15 EXT. SHOROFKY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

15

An old, rent-controlled brownstone. TILT UP TO a dim light apparent from a window. We HEAR incredibly loud CHEERING.

CUT TO:

16 INT. SHOROFKY'S APARTMENT HOUSE - DOOR - NIGHT

16

The simple, wood-framed door of a third-floor walk-up. A beat of silence, then more SOUNDS of CHEERING from an enormous crowd. We HEAR the SOUND of a WOMAN'S VOICE:

(CONTINUED)

16 CONTINUED:

16

FREIDA (V.O.)  
 ... It is very hard since they  
 lower the rations once more...

CUT TO:

17 INT. SHOROFSKY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

17

A corridor bathed in reflected light from the end of the hall. The apartment itself is dark, a bit stodgy, with a few old prints of landscapes, sagging shelves crammed with books. A utilitarian kitchen is off to the side. As the cheers fade, the CAMERA seems to be SEARCHING FOR them, and they come from the direction of the pale light. Welling up is the SOUND of MEN MARCHING IN JACKBOOTS, a company...an army...a nation, and rising in pitch is the HORST WESSEL SONG, SUNG AS AN ANTHEM.

FREIDA (V.O.)  
 ...and there are much soldiers  
 in the strasses. It is better  
 you not come home but remain.  
 I try most hard to learn the  
 English in order that you are  
 not embarrassed of me when we  
 are reuniting...

CUT TO:

18 INT. SHOROFSKY'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

18

The CAMERA REACHES the end of the hall and PROBES INTO the living room, where Shorofsky sits weary, slumped in a worn, overstuffed chair. In his lap is a ragged cardboard box filled with photos. The walls are covered with bookshelves and hundreds, perhaps thousands of record albums -- which are the only things neatly arranged. If there is a stereo, it is an old tube-type MacIntosh, but it is not on. We HEAR the sharp staccato of SOLDIERS SHOUTING "SIEG HEIL!" Shorofsky is visibly moved as he holds a tissue-thin paper, and glances from time to time at snapshots. PUSH IN...

INSERT CUT:

19 CLOSEUP - SNAPSHOT

19

A photo of a young, lean Shorofsky, unbearded, with his arm self-consciously around a handsome young woman.

(CONTINUED)

19 CONTINUED:

19

The photo is old, with scalloped edges, creased and faded to yellow-brown.

FREIDA (V.O.)  
 ...I am loving you, darling  
 Benjamin. Your family is well...

CUT TO:

20 RETURN TO SCENE

20

Shorofsky sets down the photo, cleans his glass.

FREIDA (V.O.)  
 ... Do not be worrying. Our  
 visas are expectant any day.  
 Love, Freida.

He puts on his glasses, stares toward a group of photos on the nearby lamp table.

21 ANGLE ON PHOTOS

21

Pictures of a middle-aged couple; the young man we saw earlier holding a soccer ball, flanked by two other young men; and a large formal photo of the young woman in an oval frame.

FREIDA (V.O.)  
 P.S. Do you remember where  
 we would make picnic in the  
 park, by the lilacs? There is  
 a gun battery there now.

The marching soldiers, the cheers, all fade. Shorofsky studies the portrait. The PHONE RINGS. He makes no move to answer it as it keeps ringing. He's in tears, now, singing almost as a lullaby, as the PHONE KEEPS RINGING, and we PUSH IN ON the portrait:

SHOROFSKY  
 Du, du, liegst mir im Herzen,  
 Du, du, liegst mir im Sinn,  
 Du, du, machst mir viel Schmerzen,  
 Weisst nicht wie gut ich dir bin...

HOLD ON the photo of the woman. The FOCUS TURNS, the IMAGE DISSOLVES.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

22 INT. SECOND-HAND SHOP - DAY

22

A narrow, crammed store where the aisles are jammed with every conceivable kind of merchandise -- from chairs and tables and couches to doors, clothing, a display case of jewelry. Leroy and Danny wander through the aisles, excited about finding so many items from their list. Leroy grabs a floor lamp.

LEROY

Check it out -- they've even got the floor lamp we need.

Danny staggers down the aisle lugging an armchair.

DANNY

Is this an armchair or is this an armchair?

LEROY

Fantastic. That should pretty much finish the list.

23 ANGLE ON SHOP COUNTER

23

As the boys haul their finds to the counter, the shop OWNER is figuring out their tab, adding the figures by hand on a scrap of note paper. Along the counter is an eclectic assortment of odds and ends -- a bookcase, lamps, an old radio, a couple of tables, a few small appliances.

OWNER

Will there be anything else?

LEROY

That should do it. Add 'em up easy.

OWNER

Looks like quite a haul. You boys furnishing a mansion or something?

DANNY

No, a stage. We need this stuff for a show at school.

(CONTINUED)

23 CONTINUED:

23

OWNER

...How'd you hear about my shop, anyway?

LEROY

A guy who comes into the poolhall where I work -- he said you could beat anybody's prices.

OWNER

You remember his name?

LEROY

Calls himself 'Stroke'...on account of his pool playing. Real smooth, you know?

OWNER

Well, seein' how you're friends of Stroke, it looks like...\$245. Call it 240, even.

Leroy and Danny exchange glances.

DANNY

Uh...we're only allowed to spend up to two hundred dollars.

The Owner looks pained, scratching his head.

OWNER

Well, boys...I'm afraid we're going to have to work something out here. I operate on a very thin profit margin.

LEROY

How about we put a free ad in the program for your place?

OWNER

How many people'd see it?

LEROY

Two hundred.

DANNY

(unison)  
Three thousand.

Both youngsters wince. Danny glances daggers at Leroy.

(CONTINUED)

23 CONTINUED: (2)

23

OWNER

(to Danny)

I'm going with your friend's estimate. I'll knock twenty off for the free ad. That still leaves us twenty apart. You better put something back to make up the difference.

DANNY

How much you charging us for that chest of drawers?

OWNER

Forty bucks.

DANNY

(right away)

We'll give that back.

LEROY

Amatullo --

OWNER

Done. I'll get your change after I put it back over there.

The Owner goes to the chest and starts to maneuver it onto a small handcart. Our ANGLE CLOSES ON Leroy and Danny.

LEROY

We're not supposed to bring back 'change', man! We're supposed to bring back props.

DANNY

Leroy -- you better not fight me on this, because I happen to be one hundred percent right.

LEROY

Oh, this is going to be good...

DANNY

If we give back a twenty buck item, we're one prop short and out of money. This way we're still one prop short, but we still got twenty bucks to work with.

(CONTINUED)



23 CONTINUED: (3)

23

Leroy regards Danny noncommittally. There is a kind of bizarre twisted logic to his point. After a beat:

LEROY

You got a weird mind, Amatullo.  
I'm not sure if it's good or  
bad, but for sure it's weird.

But it's said with a smile, one that Danny chimes in on, too, as we HOLD ON them and their laughter, until we:

DIRECT CUT TO:

24 INT. CORRIDOR OUTSIDE OFFICE - DAY

24

Shorofsky comes into school wearing his coat, carrying a briefcase, and Lydia approaches.

LYDIA

Mr. Shorofsky -- wait up a minute.  
Need to talk about the music  
for the show.

SHOROFSKY

Nothing to talk about. The  
orchestra will be ready as  
promised.

LYDIA

Well, it's just that the time-  
table --

SHOROFSKY

I know. You would like to see  
the arrangements sooner. I would  
like to see corned beef in the  
cafeteria. We all must shoulder  
our disappointments. Excuse me.

He continues on, expression unusually set. Lydia stops, looking after him, wondering if he's in trouble or if she'd be justified in nailing him. She decides to let it go for the time being, as we:

CUT TO:

25 INT. SCHOOL OFFICE - DAY

25

Shorofsky enters in a black mood. Mrs. Berg is ebullient.

(CONTINUED)

25 CONTINUED:

25

MRS. BERG  
Good morning, Mrs. Shorofsky.

SHOROFSKY  
I'm sure that somewhere it is,  
Mrs. Berg.

MRS. BERG  
Oh, you had another message.  
Freida Grauer called again.

She offers the message and he takes it without looking at it, jamming the paper in a coat pocket. Mrs. Berg is eager to know more about this woman.

MRS. BERG  
(continuing)  
She seemed disappointed that you  
hadn't returned her call.

No response, as Shorofsky busies himself stapling paperwork in a brusque, businesslike manner.

MRS. BERG  
(continuing)  
It may seem silly, but somehow  
I get the feeling Miss Grauer  
is an old flame or something.  
(beat)  
I can't help but wonder about  
her. I'm only human, after all.

Shorofsky finishes his paperwork, smiles sweetly.

SHOROFSKY  
Be better than human, Mrs. Berg.  
(beat, and)  
Be quiet.

HOLD ON Mrs. Berg as Shorofsky exits.

CUT TO:

26 EXT. PHONE BOOTH - DAY

26

Leroy is on the phone with his mother, trying not to seem too disappointed. In the b.g. we can see Danny working with the Owner of the Thrift Shop, loading a battered pickup truck with the fruits of their negotiations.

(CONTINUED)

26 CONTINUED:

26

LEROY

But the man at the airline said  
you could order your ticket in  
advance, and fly for nearly  
half-fare.

27 ANGLE ON DANNY

27

as he tightens some of the ropes being used to secure the  
payload in the back of the pickup. He looks off to:

28 HIS POV - LEROY

28

His body language telling us that he's not getting any  
encouraging news from the other end of the line. He hangs  
up the phone and just stands there a few seconds, gathering  
himself within. He opens the door and starts out.

29 DIFFERENT ANGLE - LEROY AND DANNY

29

as Leroy comes up to Danny, trying to maintain an outward  
calm.

LEROY

We about ready to go?

DANNY

Yeah. No luck with your Mom,  
huh?

LEROY

It shows, huh?

DANNY

Like a piece of coal in a snowdrift.

LEROY

Well...she's trying to make it  
happen, but these people she  
works for...they're talking about  
doing some more entertaining...  
and if they do, they'll need her  
more, and... Well, it's a long  
shot, that's all.

DANNY

This isn't any of business man,  
but how come your mother works  
in Detroit?

(CONTINUED)

29 CONTINUED:

29

LEROY

She didn't, until about four, five months ago. But the family she worked for...here in New York... the man got transferred to Detroit. He said it'd only be for six months and offered to take my Mama along with 'em. Even offered to get me into school there...

DANNY

They got a school like our school in Detroit?

LEROY

(shakes head)

That was the problem. So her and me decided she'd go her way, I'd stay here and go mine. I mean, six months isn't all that long a time, right?

DANNY

You asking me, or telling me...

LEROY

I'm telling you.

(beat, and)

And I'm lying.

Expression angry and confused, Leroy starts around Danny, moving for the passenger side of the pickup. Danny looks after him a beat, empathetic and caring as we HOLD a beat, and then we:

DIRECT CUT TO:

30 INT. SHOROFSKY'S CLASS - DAY

30

Shorofsky writes notations on the blackboard as the students work on a melody planned for the show. He has to talk over the MUSIC. Bruno and Julie are among those playing.

SHOROFSKY

This time you repeat the two chord from the original cadence.

We HEAR a variation on the THEME from Lydia's rehearsals. The MUSIC begins to sound richer, more balanced and full.

31 ANOTHER ANGLE - ON DOORWAY

31

The door opens and Doris enters. Shorofsky moves to her, speaking to the class.

SHOROFSKY

Go on, go on...don't stop.

DORIS

Sorry to bother you, Mr. Shorofsky.

SHOROFSKY

Then come back after class.

DORIS

There's a Miss Grauer who says she has to speak with you.

SHOROFSKY

Take a number; tell her I'll call her back when I --

DORIS

No, she's not on the phone; she's outside.

This brings some substance to Shorofsky's manner. He looks to the door which leads to the hallway with a new light. Something of apprehension and fear in the look. The musical number from the students comes to an end. He looks to them.

SHOROFSKY

Why did you stop playing?

BRUNO

We...got to the end of the piece.  
(and)  
Almost all at the same time, too.

The small laugh this gets doesn't reach Shorofsky. He waves a hand impatiently, gesturing for quiet.

SHOROFSKY

All right. Fine. Try it again, please.

(to Doris)

She is outside...

DORIS

Yeah.

(CONTINUED)

31 CONTINUED:

31

A sigh from Shorofsky. He moves to the door, Doris trailing after him, looking a question to Bruno, whose shrug signifies he doesn't have the answer.

32 INT. THE HALLWAY - SHOROFSKY AND DORIS

32

As they emerge from the classroom, the SOUNDS of the MUSICAL piece once again being played bleeding out from the classroom. He stops, looking off to:

33 POV - FREIDA GRAUER

33

A handsome older woman dressed smartly in simple, understated fashion. She's studying some of the items on a nearby bulletin board and is unaware of Shorofsky's scrutiny.

34 DORIS AND SHOROFSKY

34

Doris would kill to be able to stick around, but right now she's as welcome as a belch during confession. She moves off down the hallway as the ANGLE ADJUSTS and Shorofsky crosses slowly to Miss Grauer. She hears him approach and turns to see him. They regard each other silently for a few seconds. The smiles between them are small, tentative, almost childlike.

FREIDA

Well...would you have recognized me?

SHOROFSKY

Yes.

FREIDA

I'm not sure if I would have recognized you. The beard... that's new.

SHOROFSKY

Had it for twenty years.

FREIDA

Benjamin...the last time I saw you, you were new to shaving... a beard was out of the question.

(beat, and)

But you know what? I think I would have recognized you, anyway...

(CONTINUED)

34 CONTINUED:

34

SHOROFSKY

*How?*

FREIDA

Your eyes. With the beard...and  
the white hair...and the glasses  
...and the distinguished manner...  
your eyes are still the Benjamin  
*I remember.*

35 ANGLE TO CORRIDOR INTERSECTION

35

as Doris reaches the corner and slows, looking back at:

36 HER POV - LONG SHOT

36

as Benjamin moves to Freida and the two of them embrace.  
The nature of the embrace is gentle, fragile.

37 ON DORIS

37

moved, though probably unable to explain why. She holds  
a beat, then continues on her way, as we:

DIRECT CUT TO:

38 INT. DANCE CLASS - CLOSE ON DANCERS - DAY

38

working to the same MUSIC we just heard, straining, now,  
sweating hard, and even the actors in the group are doing  
a good job maintaining position, weaving across the stage  
as Lydia watches. The MUSIC BUILDS toward a climax.

LYDIA

...And five six seven turn, step  
step turn step, step step turn  
step.

The group collapses, exhausted, after the most rigorous  
rehearsal they've had yet. Lydia studies them.

LYDIA

(continuing)  
Better. Much better.

39 ANGLE ON EXIT DOORS

39

A door opens, and Danny enters, carrying a box of articles.

LYDIA

Mr. Amatullo -- are you in a different time zone from the rest of the world or are you simply better than the rest of us?

*Leroy moves in carrying a box of his own, and a triumphant grin!*

LEROY

The propmasters have arrived!

Mixed applause, a few cheers.

MONTGOMERY

It's about time. It's ridiculous trying to follow all those lines of tape.

DANNY

You'll wish you still had tape the first time you mess up and trip over any of this stuff. You break it, we break you.

Montgomery notices the watch on Leroy's wrist.

MONTGOMERY

Where'd you get the watch? .

LEROY

At the Thrift Shop, and hands off -- it's not a prop. It's mine. It's guaranteed down to 450 feet.

MONTGOMERY

Terrific. That way you'll know what time it is when you drown.

LYDIA

Maybe now you'll make it to class on time.

LEROY

It doesn't come with that kind of guarantee.

(CONTINUED)



39 CONTINUED:

39

DANNY

We would have been here sooner  
but we had trouble hauling all  
the stuff. We got almost  
everything on the list.

LYDIA

(impressed)

Everything? Did you go over  
budget?

LEROY

(proud)

Nope. And we've still got  
twenty bucks to spend.

LYDIA

(even more impressed)

All right! Where's the rest of  
it?

DANNY

Down in the lobby. We're  
propmasters -- not common  
laborers.

LYDIA

Okay. Strong backs, weak minds.  
Let's go. All of you. Right  
now!

With Lydia as a prime motivator, Danny and Leroy acting as  
her First Lieutenants, the dance troupe is hustled, with  
AD LIBS regarding slave drivers and artists not getting  
involved with matters as crass as props, the group moves  
en masse out into the corridor.

40 INT. CORRIDOR - MRS. BERG

40

as the dancers file past her, giving her the appearance  
of a frail salmon who has momentarily forgotten whether  
nature has decreed upstream or downstream at this  
particular time of year. Seeing Lydia bringing up the  
rear, she reaches out and detains her.

MRS. BERG

Uh...Miss Grant...could I talk  
to you for a moment...?

(CONTINUED)

40 CONTINUED:

40

LYDIA

Well, I'm in sort of a hurry  
right now, but...

(relenting, calling  
after the group)

You get started! I'll be along  
directly!

(pleasantly)

What can I do for you, Mrs. Berg?

MRS. BERG

Well...do you remember that nice  
detective who came here a few  
months ago? Lieutenant Kessler?

LYDIA

...Yes...

MRS. BERG

Well, he's back. He's in the  
office and he says he'd like  
to talk to you.

LYDIA

Right now? I've got a pile of  
props to move out of the lobby,  
Mrs. Berg.

MRS. BERG

Well, I believe that's what  
he wants to talk to you about.

LYDIA

(growing appreciation)

Why...does a police officer  
want to talk about our props...?

Mrs. Berg flutters noticeably. She wants, as always, to  
get this right.

MRS. BERG

Well, that's why I'd like you  
to talk to him, because I  
didn't quite understand it  
all. It just seemed to me  
that he was paying you a  
compliment in regard to the  
quality of the props you obtained.

LYDIA

What...exactly did he say?

(CONTINUED)

40 CONTINUED: (2)

40

MRS. BERG

(beaming)

He said all of your props  
were hot.

And Mrs. Berg positively swells with pride. That's not precisely Lydia's reaction. Her smile is the kind you smile when you first become aware of the flashing red light in the rearview mirror. We HOLD ON this endearing look for a beat, and then we:

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

41 INT. MAKEUP ROOM - ON DORIS - DAY 41

gazing soulfully down into her container of unsweetened nonfrUITed yoghurt.

DORIS

I think I'm going to be sick.

We WIDEN THE ANGLE TO REVEAL Montgomery seated next to her, munching on a candy bar. He glances at what is on her afternoon's menu.

MONTGOMERY

Can't say as I blame you.

42 WIDER ANGLE 42

revealing that the post-mortum is being conducted by Doris, Montgomery, Julie, Danny, and Leroy. The last two have no food. They also have no appetite.

DORIS

I mean about the show.

DANNY

(looking for the  
best light)

Well, look -- maybe it's not  
such a big deal.

DORIS

Not such a big deal? We have  
a show with unfinished music,  
incomplete choreography and  
zilch props. To me, this is  
a big deal.

JULIE

Doris is right. We'll be lucky  
if they don't transfer us to  
Manual Arts. At least there  
they've got a woodshop -- we  
could make our own props.

DANNY

It's not that serious. I'm  
telling you. Take the props --

(CONTINUED)

MONTGOMERY

(breaking in)  
The cops already did.

DANNY

Lay off, will you? We need  
props. So: we go out and get  
more. We're in good shape.

The laugh this elicits from Leroy isn't one that's chock-  
full of love for Italian mankind.

LEROY

Whoa! Quiet down, everybody!  
I really want to hear this.  
This one's going to be really  
special. Go on, Amatullo --  
tell us about what kind of  
good shape we're in.

DANNY

(combative)  
Well, first of all -- we've got  
the twenty bucks that we wouldn't've  
had if I hadn't outfoxed the guy  
at the Thrift Shop.

DORIS

Don't call him 'the guy'. Makes  
him sound normal. Call him 'The  
Thief', because that's what he is.

LEROY

Quiet, Doris. Amatullo's going  
to tell us all about how we're  
going to get two hundred bucks  
worth of props with twenty dollars.

DANNY

Twenty dollars is not all we've  
got.

LEROY

Well, it's all I know about.  
You been holdin' out on us?

DANNY

(smugly)  
The other thing we've got is --  
me.

Montgomery stares at Danny. He nods, a smile of understand-  
ing forms.

(CONTINUED)

MONTGOMERY

We kill you for the insurance.  
I like it.

JULIE

Maybe he wants to sell his body  
to science.

DORIS

Okay -- so that makes it  
twenty-two fifty. That's still  
a long way from --

DANNY

Okay! Fine! Forget it!

He starts out of the room, but finds the way barred by  
Leroy, who doesn't think it's okay, fine, and isn't  
about to forget it.

DORIS

(as per stage  
directions)

Enter the character of Danny  
Amatullo. He sees his audience  
eagerly awaiting the recital  
of his brilliant plan. He  
moves to the downstage apron,  
and he says:

Danny frees himself from Leroy's grasp and straightens,  
formality filling his delivery.

DANNY

In the past three years in the  
South Bronx -- which is major  
league territory -- I have not  
lost one game of nine ball.

(to Leroy)

And you have a job in a pool  
hall where I am not known.

(and finally)

And we have a twenty buck stake.

LEROY

You're talking about a money  
game?

DANNY

That's what we need; that's  
what I'm talking.

(CONTINUED)

42 CONTINUED: (3)

42

MONTGOMERY

(to Leroy)

What kind of odds could you  
get?

Leroy regards Danny thoughtfully, mulling the possibility.

LEROY

I don't know...he puts on that  
Miami Dolphins tee-shirt...  
wears that white bread smile  
of his...maybe ten to one.  
Something like that.

DORIS

Shouldn't be too hard to raise  
another twenty or so to go with  
what we've got.

JULIE

That'd give us four hundred  
dollars. What do we need the  
extra two hundred for?

DORIS

To help Leroy's mother get into  
town to see the show.

Eyes go to Leroy. His expression is thoughtful, turning  
over the options. He crosses to Danny, holds his gaze  
evenly.

LEROY

How good are you, man...don't  
shuck me, now. I mean, how  
good are you, really?

DANNY

Good. Really.

It seems evident that the ball is in Leroy's court. He  
surveys Danny with an enigmatic gaze, then:

LEROY

You better be.

DIRECT CUT TO:

43 INT. TEACHERS' LOUNGE - ON COFFEE MAKER - DAY

43

as we WIDEN TO FIND Shorofsky pouring the water in to make a fresh pot. As he does so, we note Freida seated at the table behind him, hard at work in making out a grocery list. They're more relaxed and at ease with each other now, their smiles more secure.

SHOROFSKY

Freida, this is ridiculous.  
Let me take you someplace nice  
for dinner.

FREIDA

Benjamin, I am not doing this  
for you. Stop flattering yourself.  
But half my time is spent  
travelling and eating at  
restaurants when I go to my  
students' concerts. I want a  
home-cooked meal, even if I have  
to do the cooking.

SHOROFSKY

A compromise, then: we'll eat  
dinner at my place, but you won't  
be doing the cooking.

FREIDA

You're going to cook?

SHOROFSKY

No. I thought we'd stop on the  
way, pick up something to go.'

She looks up from her listmaking. It's not a gigantic thing but there is some sadness in her look and tone.

FREIDA

'Something to go'... Benjamin,  
have you truly become so American?

His smile, like hers, is a bit sad. Though his has an overlay of embarrassment. He nods.

SHOROFSKY

Like I said: you cook.

44 DIFFERENT ANGLE

44

as Sherwood enters, not casually, but specifically seeking out Shorofsky. Sherwood is dressed for the homeward leg of her day's schedule.

(CONTINUED)



44 CONTINUED:

44

SHERWOOD

Mr. Shorofsky, do you have a minute? I really need to...

(noting Freida)

I'm sorry. And I interrupting something?

Both Shorofsky and Freida quickly and sincerely AD LIB denials, urge Sherwood into the room.

SHOROFSKY

This is Freida Grauer, an old friend of mine. Freida, Miss Sherwood.

The two women exchange polite AD LIBS of greeting, then:

FREIDA

You two go right ahead. Don't mind me at all. Just making up my shopping list.

SHOROFSKY

Yes. What is so pressing?

SHERWOOD

Well, I need your help.

SHOROFSKY

In what?

Sherwood takes a breath, sorts out her presentation, then:

SHERWOOD

In your music class -- how are you able to make things real to the kids? Things that happened before they were born?

SHOROFSKY

I'm not, always. Witness Mr. Martelli. What are we talking about specifically?

SHERWOOD

The study project we're doing now involves use of The Diary of Anne Frank.

45 ON FREIDA

45

A slight reaction, a mere lifting of the head for a second. She's no longer totally involved with her list making.

46 BACK TO SCENE

46

as Sherwood goes on. Shorofsky, as the topic continues, glances over from time to time to Freida, his expression one of concern.

SHERWOOD

Two of the kids didn't want to read the book because they saw the movie and thought it was 'slow'. I mean, the reality doesn't exist for them. They react to it as if it was a story. Instead of imagining how the girl felt, they start wondering how they'd play her.

SHOROFSKY

That is part of what we teach here. We train people to be performers.

SHERWOOD

But there has to be a person inside the performer.

SHOROFSKY

That's a separate specialty. I think there's a school for it in the Bronx.

FREIDA

Benjamin --

He looks over to her. A beat, then Freida smiles, folds up the shopping list.

FREIDA

(continuing)

If I'm going to get all the things we need and get it into the oven in time, we really should get going now.

SHOROFSKY

We're on our way.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

46 CONTINUED:

46

SHOROFSKY (CONT'D)

(to Sherwood)

You and I will talk tomorrow,  
okay?

SHERWOOD

I'd appreciate it.

(to Freida)

Nice to have met you.

Freida smiles, an undercurrent there, viewing Sherwood  
as Shorofsky assists her into her coat.

FREIDA

I'm sorry to have shortened  
your conversation with Benjamin.

SHERWOOD

No problem. We'll talk tomorrow.

FREIDA

Good.

And she smiles a perfunctory farewell and moves on out  
of the room. Shorofsky follows her, closing the door  
after himself.

47 INT. SCHOOL CORRIDOR - FULL SHOT - DAY

47

As soon as the door is closed he looks to Freida. She's  
striding down the hallway, not angry, but not waiting  
for him, either. No small talk invited.

SHOROFSKY

Freida...

FREIDA

Later, Benjamin. It's too  
soon now. We'll talk after  
dinner. But not...not right  
now.

He holds at the door looking after her. A beat, then he  
follows, as we HOLD ON the pair of them, and then we:

DISSOLVE TO:

48 INT. SHOROFSKY'S APARTMENT - ON TABLE - NIGHT

48

Lit by candles, the ambient glow warming the tablecloth and the thoughtful visage of Benjamin Shorofsky. He looks off in the direction of the kitchen, where we can see Freida just finishing the last of the mealtime preparations.

SHOROFSKY

Freida...I poured your wine.

FREIDA

In a minute. Here, taste.

She carries a soup spoon, and Shorofsky tastes.

SHOROFSKY

Excellent. It reminds me of home.

(a beat)

Isn't it odd? Home isn't there anymore, but I still think of it as home.

FREIDA

You took good memories with you when you left.

An awkward beat. They're still not at ease with each other. Freida focuses on the photo of herself, reaches out and turns it over.

FREIDA

(continuing)

I'll have to steal that picture. It reminds me how old I've become.

(tastes the soup)

You think it needs salt?

SHOROFSKY

It's fine. And you can never grow old in my eyes. Come enjoy your wine.

FREIDA

Let me add some salt, first.

She exits, and Shorofsky replaces her picture the way it was, staring at it for a beat. Freida returns, undoing her apron. Shorofsky hands her a wine glass. They clink a toast.

(CONTINUED)



48 CONTINUED: (2)

48

SHOROFSKY

(quietly)

I never sent one.

FREIDA

(simply)

Why?

SHOROFSKY

I was...afraid, and ashamed.  
I know what you must have gone  
through in the war.

FREIDA

You couldn't know what it was  
like, Benjamin. You weren't  
there.

SHOROFSKY

Do you blame me that much?

FREIDA

Not as much as I think you  
blame yourself. I had a box  
seat in hell. And I thank God  
you didn't have to share it with  
me.

SHOROFSKY

It was a kind of hell, being  
helpless when I heard you  
were sent to the camps.

FREIDA

Benjamin...I'm afraid we have  
different definitions of hell.  
This afternoon when you were  
talking to that nice Mrs. Sherwood  
...you made a little joke. About  
a specialty school in the Bronx.  
Do you remember?

SHOROFSKY

Yes.

FREIDA

Benjamin...for me...there can  
never be jokes in a conversation  
that relates to what happened  
in the camps.

(CONTINUED)

SHOROFSKY

You don't think I was making  
light of --

FREIDA

No. Of course not. I think  
you were worried that the topic  
might effect my mood and you  
were trying to prevent that.

SHOROFSKY

Precisely.

FREIDA

The topic doesn't effect my mood.  
That topic is my mood. At  
a concert...in a store shopping,  
at night alone in bed...it is always  
there.

(beat, and)

We are...what...? Two or three  
feet apart...and a million miles  
away because of what life has  
handed us.

Freida looks at Shorofsky for a long beat, then drains the  
glass of wine. She rises, taking her coat from its place  
on the back of one of the chairs.

FREIDA

(continuing)

It's not my fault you were safe,  
when so many of us were not.

(a beat)

It's not your fault, either.

Shorofsky rises to go to her, but Freida starts for the  
door.

SHOROFSKY

Freida...

FREIDA

No, Benjamin. It's been too  
many years. I think I should go.

SHOROFSKY

(quietly)

Then perhaps you should.

(CONTINUED)

48 CONTINUED: (4)

FREIDA

Let's just forget about the dinner tomorrow. One of my students will escort me.

(beat, and)

Don't forget to turn the flame down under the stew.

She exits, and Shorofsky watches as the DOOR CLICKS closed quietly, but firmly. Shorofsky is motionless, then leans forward and pinches out the candles as we:

CUT TO:

49 INT. SEEDY POOL HALL - NIGHT

49

Danny practices at the far table, with Leroy and n.d. PLAYERS watching on. Danny checks the clock.

DANNY

He's late.

PLAYER #1

He'll be here.

Danny turns to Leroy.

DANNY

Hey, did you hear about Shorofsky, and his girlfriend?

LEROY

Yeah -- Doris told me.

DANNY

You think he...I mean, they... you know.

LEROY

(catching on)

He's just old; he's not dead.

50 ANGLE ON DOORWAY

50

Enter WALLY ZAWICKY, an unassuming, hefty man in his thirties, who peers around, sees the Players and moves toward the table. Leroy nudges Danny.

DANNY

Hi. I'm Danny Amatullo.

(CONTINUED)



50 CONTINUED:

50

WALLY

Wally Zawicky. You want to  
get started?

He begins to assemble a pool cue from a case. Leroy  
and Danny share a look.

DANNY

Sure. You want to warm up?

WALLY

No.

DANNY

Lag for break?

WALLY

No.

It begins to dawn on the boys they may have outfoxed them-  
selves. Wally takes off his coat.

WALLY

(continuing)

We'll shoot straight pool,  
okay? First one gets fifty  
balls wins.

DANNY

(a brave front)

Fine by me.

Wally addresses the Players.

WALLY

What are the stakes?

PLAYER #1

Fifty at eight-to-one.

WALLY

(shakes his head)

Minimum wages. I'll get some  
more action after I take  
Fuzzcheeks over there.

Leroy and Danny are determined not to be shaken. Wally  
chalks up, turns to Danny.

(CONTINUED)

50 CONTINUED: (2)

50

WALLY

(continuing)

Your man keeps score for me,  
my man scores for you, okay?

DANNY

Sounds fair.

WALLY

Good.

(to Player #1)

Spot 'im forty-nine balls.

(hands cue to

Danny)

You break. You need one to win.

Danny looks up as the Player slides all but the last button over on the overhead wire. Determination has gone past shaken to serious panic. Danny prepares to break.

51 ANGLE ON BREAK

51

Danny aims, strokes softly, the cue ball banks against the far rail, loops into the rack and barely kisses one ball to a side rail. The cue ball is buried.

LEROY

Nice break.

Wally is all business, as he prowls the table, figuring his shot. He calls:

WALLY

Three in the side.

Wally forms a perfect bridge, aims, strokes smoothly and the cue ball hits the rail, jams back to the rack and the three squirts softly to the side pocket. Danny is in shock. Disgusted, Leroy uses a cue to rack Wally's first ball on the overhead wire.

LEROY

It's okay, man. We only need one.

Wally smiles.

WALLY

But it's the hard one. Nine back to the corner.

(CONTINUED)

51 CONTINUED:

51

He strokes, hits a cushion-nine that rolls true as called. Leroy racks another tally.

DISSOLVE TO:

52 ANOTHER ANGLE

52

Wally studies a tight, nearly full rack of balls.

WALLY

Combination six in the corner.

DANNY

What's the combination? I don't see it.

WALLY

(insulted)

Four-nine-six-ten-twelve.

Danny is still trying to spot the numbers when Wally shoots, and the six rolls to the corner. Leroy racks the tally.

LEROY

Twenty-nine.

Off Danny's glum look...

DISSOLVE TO:

53 ANOTHER ANGLE

53

Two balls left. The cue ball is blocked from the fourteen by the eleven.

WALLY

Eleven, corner.

DANNY

Combination?

WALLY

No.

Wally stabs the cue, sends the cue ball hopping over the eleven. Perfect call. Leroy scores.

LEROY

Thirty-five.

DISSOLVE TO:

54 ANOTHER ANGLE

54

Wally lines up a shot with four balls left.

WALLY  
Thirteen in the side.

DANNY  
He gets these four and he's done.

LEROY  
You get one and he's done.  
One's all we need.

Wally shoots. The thirteen rolls to the side, catches a bad corner and skims across to the wrong pocket.

PLAYER  
Wally -- what happened?

WALLY  
(shrugs)  
I missed.

LEROY  
Amatullo -- go do it.

Danny studies the table. The cue ball is trapped behind the thirteen, which has been re-spotted. He takes a deep breath.

DANNY  
Thirteen bank to the corner.

Wally nods. The obvious shot. Danny concentrates, shoots. The thirteen banks, rolls to the corner and drops in.

55 ON DANNY

55

fairly swelling with victory, whirling to Leroy, extending his hand for a triumphant high-five. Instead, the look on Leroy's face is deadpan, neatly catatonic, moving slowly as his gaze follows something o.s. Danny follows the look to:

56 POV - THE CUE BALL

56

Clearly possessed by an evil outside force, the cue ball rolls slowly, yet with a kind of inexorable hubris toward the corner pocket.

(CONTINUED)

56 CONTINUED:

56

Its momentum carries it up to the brink where it almost seems to halt. Almost is the imperative word. It disappears into the blackness of the pocket with a stubborn will of its own.

57 ON LEROY AND DANNY

57

*looking to each other, then back in the direction of the table. Their expressions are devoid of hope. And rightfully so, as we HEAR:*

WALLY (V.O.)

Twelve in the side.

POOL SHOT EFFECT:

WALLY (V.O.)

(continuing)

Ten in the corner.

POOL SHOT EFFECT:

PLAYER #1

Sweet shot, my man.

WALLY (V.O.)

Five in the far corner.

(the EFFECT)

And...six up top.

The POOL SHOT EFFECT is finally capped by:

WALLY (V.O.)

(continuing)

Nice game, boys.

(and)

Pay me.

Leroy takes a deep breath and reaches into his pocket. He pulls out a thick roll of bills, which he starts to count out with sour reluctance, as we HOLD and then:

FREEZE FRAME.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

58 INT. SCHOOL MINI-AUDITORIUM - ANGLE TO STAGE - DAY 58  
(EARLY MORNING)

as Shorofsky comes out onto the stage from the miniscule wings area. He wears his overcoat, carries the briefcase in one hand. The other hand balances a take out cup of tea, on top of which is an English muffin wrapped in waxed paper. There are various items of furniture scattered about the stage, left over from various rehearsals. Shorofsky pulls up a chair and starts to sort out his Chock Full o' Nuts repast. As he unwraps the muffin:

                                  LEROY (V.O.)

                                  It's just me. Don't get scared  
                                  or anything.

Shorofsky looks out to:

59 HIS POV - LEROY 59

seated in one of the aisle seats, legs resting over the back of the chair in front of him. On the floor is a bottle of soda and a cellophane bag of corn chips.

                                  LEROY

                                  Figured I better tell you I was  
                                  out here, or you'd faint or  
                                  something if I made a noise.

60 ANGLE TO COVER SHOROFSKY AND LEROY 60

Shorofsky edges the chair around to face Leroy more directly. He starts to deal with the muffin and container of tea.

                                  SHOROFSKY

                                  I appreciate it. What are you  
                                  doing in here so early?

                                  LEROY

                                  It's quiet in here. Good place  
                                  to think things out.

(CONTINUED)

SHOROFSKY

I agree.

(and)

Would you like part of my English muffin?

LEROY

Nope.

(beat, and)

You want some corn chips?

Shorofsky's smile is genuine. He shakes his head.

SHOROFSKY

Maybe later.

Leroy takes this with casual goodwill. He starts to write in a small spiral notebook. Shorofsky notes this with interest.

SHOROFSKY

(continuing)

Last-minute homework?

LEROY

(embarrassed)

No. Well, sort of. It's a diary. Mrs. Sherwood said we ought to start one.

SHOROFSKY

I used to keep a diary. How are you coming?

LEROY

Okay, I guess. I'm not sure I'm doing it right.

SHOROFSKY

There's no right way or wrong way. It's just...what you feel.

LEROY

Well...I feel I should be saying this stuff to the person I'm writing about, instead of to a piece of paper.

SHOROFSKY

That's the way I always felt.

(beat)

Is your mother coming to the show?

(CONTINUED)

60 CONTINUED: (2)

60

Leroy shakes his head, disheartened, discouraged.

LEROY

Nope.

(his explanation)

Amatullo scratched the cue ball.

Shorofsky nods, once again dealing with a generational idiom that creates a mighty moat in the path of communication.

SHOROFSKY

This means your plans fell through...?

(off of Leroy's nod)

An old friend of mine was planning to come...but our plans fell through, too.

LEROY

It's hard to be far away from people you really care about.

SHOROFSKY

Sometimes it's just as hard to be close to them.

LEROY

Yeah, it used to be when my Momma was home, we argued a lot. But when she went to Detroit, we really missed each other. Dumb, huh?

Shorofsky smiles, amused to be communicating with -- and comforted by -- Leroy. As a pair, the two are the school clams.

SHOROFSKY

Well, it's not smart or dumb -- it's just human. Who can say why? We each have our own lives to lead, our own destinies to follow.

LEROY

Which one, though?

SHOROFSKY

I don't understand...

(CONTINUED)



60 CONTINUED: (3)

60

LEROY

Well...you talked about leading a life. And following a destiny. Lead and follow. Two different things. Real different.

SHOROFSKY

We can't always be in total control, Mr. Johnson.

LEROY

Maybe...but I had an uncle used to tell me... 'We're in the woods and life is a mean old bear...and either you eat the bear...or the bear eats you.'

SHOROFSKY

And you intend to eat the bear...

LEROY

Sure going to give it a try.

Shorofsky lets that settle in for a second or two, musing over what implications Leroy's point might have for his own specific personal situation. His smile and gaze take on a growing mantle of determination.

SHOROFSKY

Mr. Johnson...could I trouble you for a handful of corn chips?

Leroy looks at the older man with surprise and pleasure. His smile flowers nicely as he extends the sack of corn chips and Shorofsky starts down to the apron to accept them, as we:

DIRECT CUT TO:

61 INT. SCHOOL OFFICE - FULL SHOT - DAY

61

Early morning chaos, with students and clerks bustling in and out from behind and around the counter. As we scan the area, we PICK UP Lydia as she moves behind the counter, trailed by an anxious Mrs. Berg. Lydia's polite to Mrs. Berg, but not about to be turned around in any way.

LYDIA

We are not going to cancel, Mrs. Berg, so let's not waste time discussing it.

(CONTINUED)

MRS. BERG

But I don't think the audience will understand...

LYDIA

Audiences are smarter than people think, Mrs. Berg. They want to be entertained and they want to learn. This is our opportunity to do both.

MRS. BERG

But working without props, leaving everything to their imagination...

LYDIA

(a little impatient now)

Mrs. Berg...didn't you ever want to do something different? To defy convention and go your own way, explore fresh territory?

Mrs. Berg smiles, a shade embarrassed by the concept, but still a very honest lady.

MRS. BERG

Well -- in finishing school, I was the first one in my class to incorporate a dip into my foxtrot.

Lydia requested caviar and got a soda cracker with Velveeta and mayo. She'll take what she can get.

LYDIA

Well -- with that kind of impetuous nature, I just know you'll help me set up an additional tech rehearsal, so the kids can get the routines done without props.

MRS. BERG

It is exciting, isn't it...

Lydia nods and smiles, moving with Mrs. Berg to a desk where the mimeo machine is located atop one of the desks. Their move TAKES our CAMERA TO the door which is opened by Shorofsky. He murmurs morning greetings, but his mind is clearly on other matters. He moves around behind the counter to one of the empty desks and seats himself.

62 CLOSER ANGLE - SHOROFSKY

62

He pulls one of the pink telephone message slips out of his pocket and consults it briefly. He punches up an outside line and quickly dials the requisite amount of numbers. A short beat, and:

SHOROFSKY

Room four-three-seven, please.

Another short beat, then:

FREIDA (V.O.)

Good morning, Benjamin.

SHOROFSKY

Good morning. How did you know it would be me?

Then the FAINT SOUND of the PHONE still RINGING in the receiver causes him to look up to:

63 DIFFERENT ANGLE

63

REVEALING Freida standing at the counter across from Shorofsky. He gives the phone an irritated look, then puts the receiver back down on the cradle. He crosses to Freida, the ANGLE ADJUSTING. The calm straightforward exchange that takes place between them is played against the start of the day busyness taking place all about them.

SHOROFSKY

I'm glad to see you.

FREIDA

I packed my bags four times. I couldn't bring myself to leave. Not yet.

SHOROFSKY

You always did need a lot of rehearsal.

FREIDA

I came by because...I have a question I had to ask you...  
(beat, and)

Why didn't you call me in Rome -- really?

SHOROFSKY

I guess I was afraid of being rejected again.

(CONTINUED)

FREIDA

Benjamin...when did I ever  
reject you...

SHOROFSKY

When I wrote and asked you to  
join me here...and marry me.

FREIDA

I couldn't get a visa. I  
explained that in the last  
letter I sent.

SHOROFSKY

I never got a letter saying  
that... The last letter I got  
from you...said you were expecting  
visas any day.

FREIDA

My God...forty-two years over a  
letter that didn't arrive...

(beat, and)

Why didn't you call me today?

SHOROFSKY

Because someone told me, you eat  
the bear or the bear eats you.

(before she can ask  
further)

And the stew was too salty. I was  
going to give you a second chance.

FREIDA

I think...our time for second  
chances is gone, Benjamin.

SHOROFSKY

(a nod, and)

Why did you stop by to see me?

FREIDA

To ask the question I asked.

(beat, and)

And to see if I could help  
that nice Mrs. Sherwood.

DIRECT CUT TO:

Sherwood has eagerly relinquished charge of the class and turned it over to Freida, who is leaning against the desk in front of the class. The room is still. They lean forward in their seats to catch her every word. Freida's voice is soft, her delivery thoughtful and non-condemning in nature. Present in the class are Bruno, Doris, Montgomery, Julie, and Danny.

FREIDA

...it is not that it is unthinkable such a thing could happen once more. The problem is...it is unpleasant to think about such matters. And it is difficult to comprehend of numbers of millions of human beings...men, women, children... systematically being put to death as a matter of government policy... but we must do it...because it is happening now...

BRUNO

No one's out in the streets rounding up Jews...

FREIDA

We are not talking about Jews... we are talking about oppression, about injustice. And these two things are not limited to any race or creed or color...and you are the kind of young people...more than any other...who must be aware of that.

DORIS

Why are we so special?

FREIDA

Because you are special. You have special gifts that let people see the glorious things human beings can be. You can create moments of magic that affirm the value of life...you are the bearers of a gift of joy...because you carry the light, you must never forget the power of the darkness.

Thoughtful. Not chastised, but having been brought to a new viewpoint to some degree.

(CONTINUED)

65 CONTINUED:

65

A beat, then Montgomery's hand goes up.

SHERWOOD

Yes, Montgomery...

MONTGOMERY

Can we get another shot at this  
'Diary of Anne Frank' thing?

A look goes between Freida and Sherwood, a look acknowledging a small step taken.

SHERWOOD

I think that can be arranged.

DIRECT CUT TO:

66 INT. MAKEUP AREA - ANGLE TO MAKEUP TABLE - NIGHT

66

As Danny and Doris and Leroy jockey for some kind of position in front of the mirror, creating a kind of three-sided square dance in the process.

DANNY

I hate dress rehearsals worse than just about anything, except tech rehearsals. Why do we have to go through all this, anyway?

DORIS

We have to do it because you blew it in the pool game.

LEROY

Now, get off his case. He only lost by one ball, fifty to forty-nine. The man's only human.

There's no sarcasm in Leroy's tone. It's a friend covering for a friend and the look that Danny gives him is a quiet one, but one that expresses a real portion of gratitude for the thoughtfulness. The ANGLE ADJUSTS as Julie comes up. Her garb is that of backstage person and the sweatshirt is liberally spotted with paint. Her smile is an infectious one. She moves to Leroy.

JULIE

I haven't seen this number put together, so give me an idea of where you are most.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

66 CONTINUED:

66

JULIE (CONT'D)

Downstage right, left,  
centerstage...wherever.

LEROY

They got you running the follow  
spot?

JULIE

No...but Mr. Shorofsky asked me  
to make sure your mother got a  
good seat.

As Leroy and the others around react to this, Julie steps to one side and we see Mrs. Johnson standing in the entrance from the hallway. Leroy is in a state of disbelief and delight.

LEROY

Momma...what are you doing  
here...

DOLORES

Waiting to see you dance,  
sweetheart. Now don't go  
getting temperamental on me.

LEROY

But -- how?

DOLORES

I got a telegraph money order from  
somebody named Shorofsky. The  
message with it said he was paying  
a debt he owed you.

Leroy hugs his mother, looking off as he does so, to:

67 HIS POV - SHOROFSKY

67

in the band area, helping Bruno and Montgomery set up the needed instrumentation. He senses Leroy's look and meets it with a small nod and a gracious bow.

68 ANGLE TO LEROY AND HIS MOTHER

68

Leroy's arms about his mother, his look holding on Shorofsky o.s.

(CONTINUED)



68 CONTINUED:

68

LEROY

Well, then...I'm going to make  
sure he gets his money's worth!

DIRECT CUT TO:

69 INT. DANCE CLASS - NIGHT

69

PRODUCTION NUMBER - FEATURING LEROY

The number is played out by the dance troupe and Leroy. REACTION CUTS TO the audience SHOW the faculty -- Lydia, Sherwood, and Shorofsky -- garbed in casual "work" clothes, befitting their function this evening as back-stage helpers as opposed to representatives of the school image. Those who are more formally attired consist of Freida and Leroy's mother. Leroy is totally shameless in selling his performance to his mother and she doesn't waste time trying to be blase about it. It's her boy and he is heaven and earth all rolled into one as far as she's concerned. Those watching are watching two shows, really. The exuberant panoply of the dance and the heartwarming effect it's having on the two people most deeply involved. At the conclusion of the number, Leroy takes a bow, and then, laughing with pride, pulls his mother up into the curtain call with him, pre-empting her, as it were to his peers. As the applause and the smiles build, we HOLD a beat, and then we:

DISSOLVE TO:

70 INT. SCHOOL CORRIDOR - LONG SHOT - NIGHT

70

The hallway deserted, save for the two solitary figures of Shorofsky and Freida moving slowly away from us, moving down toward the lobby area. Their FOOTSTEPS ECHO slightly, as do their voices. After a short beat of stillness:

SHOROFSKY

You leave tomorrow?

FREIDA

Yes.

SHOROFSKY

There was a time when you said you  
couldn't bring yourself to leave.

(CONTINUED)



70 CONTINUED:

70

FREIDA

That was when there was much unfinished between us. That's no longer true.

SHOROFSKY

Our particular chord is resolved.

FREIDA

I believe so.

SHOROFSKY

(without rancor)

And so do I.

Now in the lobby, Freida stops, turning to face him. She cups his face gently in both hands.

FREIDA

I'm glad you've been in my life, Mr. Shorofsky. I'm richer for having known you.

Shorofsky says nothing for a beat, then one hand is placed with formality on her waist, the other lifts her hand to shoulder height.

71 HIGH ANGLE - THE LOBBY

71

No underscore. Only the sound of Shorofsky's voice echoing in the cavernous area. The hush of their shoes upon the marble flooring.

SHOROFSKY

Du, du, liegst mir im Herzen,  
Du, du, liegst mir im Sinn,  
Du, du, machst mir viel Schmerzen,  
Weisst nicht wie gut ich dir bin...

And as they move with wonderful stately grace about the deserted lobby, we HOLD on them as they hold each other's gaze, and then we:

FREEZE FRAME.

FADE TO BLACK.

THE END