

THE AUDITION

By

Don Zolidis

ACT I

"The Audition" by Don Zolidis

A high school auditorium. A bare stage. The STAGE MANAGER (SM) runs on with a stack of sides.

STAGE MANAGER

Where do you want these?

MS. TORRANCE

Put them downstage right.

SM heads stage left.

STAGE MANAGER

Here?

MS. TORRANCE

Is that stage right?

(STAGE MANAGER thinks)

STAGE MANAGER

Whoops. I'm nervous.

(She heads stage right.)

On the edge of the stage?

MS. TORRANCE

Yep. All right, bring 'em in.

STAGE MANAGER

Okay, people! Come on in!

(The ACTORS enter from all sides of the stage.)

MS. TORRANCE

All right, stop right there! First off, thank you for coming out today. If you don't know me, my name is Ms. Torrance and--

(ACTOR 1 raises hand.)

Yes?

ACTOR 1

Can I go to the bathroom?

MS. TORRANCE

Just hold on.

ACTOR 2

My Mom needs to pick me up in half an hour so I need to go first--

MS. TORRANCE
 Okay, just--

STAGE MANAGER
 Quiet, please.

MS. TORRANCE
 I know that I'm new here but I want to talk to you a little bit about this theatre program. First, this is a little unusual, since the district can't afford two drama teachers right now. So, high schoolers, that means you'll see some younger faces around. But I see that as an advantage. Agreed?

(The HIGH SCHOOL ACTORS groan in semi-assent.)

Okay, then. You might go to some others schools around here and see some pretty good shows. They do a fine job. We don't do a fine job here. (ACTORS mumble questioningly.) We do an *amazing* job. (ACTORS voice their assent.) And if you're going to be in this show, you are *going* to be amazing. So what I am looking for today are the best of the best. (As if leading a cheer.) Do you understand?

ACTOR 1
 So I can't go to the bathroom?

STAGE MANAGER
 (As if finishing a cheer.)
 No.

MS. TORRANCE
 This is Josh. He's our Stage Manager. It goes from God to me to Josh to you. You will listen to Josh as if he were me. If you're going to be late, you will call him. If you have a problems with scheduling you talk to him--

(ACTOR 2 approaches STAGE MANAGER.)

Later. This is the first audition. I'm going to call back a few of you. From these, the best will be in the show. You have three minutes to prepare yourselves.

The ACTORS relax and begin walking around, stretching and warming up. The following section overlaps a lot. It is very fast-paced. It builds and builds until ALL THE ACTORS scream "PLEASE!" ALL THROUGH THIS SECTION, HOWEVER, MS. TORRANCE AND THE STAGE MANAGER ACT AS IF THEY DO NOT HEAR THEM, AND INSTEAD MIME A DISCUSSION AND LAST-MINUTE PREPARATIONS.

CARRIE

(doing a vocal/singing warmup)
Mee mee mee mee mee mee mee mee...

ALISON

(doing a lip trill)

Bbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbrrrrrrrrrrrr--

GINA

To sit in solemn silence on a dull dark dock--

ELIZABETH

Guh guh guh kuh kuh kuh--

ACTOR 3

Breathe in. Breathe out. Breathe in. Breathe out.

ACTOR 4

I hope I get this part. I hope I get this part.

ACTOR 5

Just a little one. I don't really need anything big--

ACTOR 6

Is anyone else auditioning for the first time? Anyone? Anyone at all?

ACTOR 3

Breathe in. Breathe out.

ACTOR 4

I hope I get it.

GINA

I'm going to get it. I know I'm going to get something. I don't know what.

ACTOR 5

I want a line.

ACTOR 4

I want a solo.

ACTOR 5

I don't want a solo. Just a line.

ACTOR 1

I want to go to the bathroom--

ACTOR 2

Can I just go early?

ACTOR 3

Please, God, let me get this part.

ACTOR 4

Who's that girl?

ACTOR 5

I've never seen her before.

ACTOR 4

Is she better than me?

ACTOR 5

What is Ms. Torrance looking for?

ACTOR 6

I've never been in a show before--

ACTOR 2

Please let me get this--

ACTOR 3

Please--

ALISON

I'm going to get the lead. No one can stop me.

ELIZABETH

I need something, anything--

TOMMY

Is this the right place?

SARAH

(immediately flirting with Tommy)

Hi there. I'm Sarah.

ACTOR 4

I want to get something--

ELIZABETH

I need something--

ACTOR 5

I just want to be an extra. Maybe one line. I could say good morning or something, and that's it. And then I could wave at my parents in the back and then I could say that I was in the show.

ACTOR 6

(overlapping)

I'll do anything--

GINA

(overlapping)
I can do a Hungarian accent. Do you need anything with
a Hungarian accent?

ACTOR 5

(overlapping)
I just need one line--

ACTOR 1

(overlapping)
Please!

GINA

(overlapping)
I can burp on command--

ACTORS 1 AND 2

(overlapping)
Please!

ACTOR 5

(overlapping)
One line is all I ask!

ACTORS 1, 2, AND 3

(overlapping)
Please!

GINA

I'm left-handed. Does that help?

ACTORS 1-6

('overlapping)
Please!

ELIZABETH

I need this.

ALL ACTORS

I need it. I'll be great. I'll be wonderful. I'll be
the best thing you've ever seen. Please please please
please PLEASE!

ACTOR 1

Can I go to the bathroom now?

*The overlapping scene is over. Things return to
normal.*

MS. TORRANCE

(Sits at her table and chair stage
right)

(MORE)

MS. TORRANCE (cont'd)
Who's first?

STAGE MANAGER
We have Cassie.
(ACTOR 2 [Cassie] enters)

CASSIE
Hi, I'm Cassie. My Mom's waiting in the parking lot.

MS. TORRANCE
Great. What are you going to sing?

CASSIE
I have to *sing*?

MS. TORRANCE
This is a musical.

CASSIE
This is a musical?

STAGE MANAGER
It said so on the posters.

CASSIE
There were *posters*?

STAGE MANAGER
Didn't you listen to the announcements? For a show
called *A Chorus Line*? How could you not know?

CASSIE
I can't even hear the announcements. No one ever shuts
up for them.

MS. TORRANCE
So you don't have a song prepared?

CASSIE
We're supposed to have--?

MS. TORRANCE AND STAGE MANAGER
Yes!

CASSIE
Oh. Um, No. I don't have a song.

MS. TORRANCE
How about "Happy Birthday?"

CASSIE

Are you sure I have to sing?

MS. TORRANCE

Can you sing "Happy Birthday?"

CASSIE

Are there any non-singing parts?

MS. TORRANCE

I need to hear you sing first before I can put you in a non-singing part.

CASSIE

That doesn't make any sense.

STAGE MANAGER

She needs to make sure you can sing.

CASSIE

Okay, um... "Happy Birthday," right?

MS. TORRANCE

Sure.

CASSIE

I forgot the words.

STAGE MANAGER

It starts with "happy birthday."

CASSIE

Okay

(CASSIE'S cell phone rings. She answers it.)

Hi. Oh. Okay. I gotta go.

(She runs off. MS. TORRANCE and STAGE MANAGER look at each other. After a few seconds, CASSIE runs back on.)

When are call-backs?

(She leaves.)

YUMO enters.

YUMO

(very loud, abrasive, and full of way too much enthusiasm.)

HI!!! I'm... YUMO!

STAGE MANAGER

This is--

YUMO

And I just gotta *dance!* Kick it!

(Nothing happens. YUMO approaches STAGE MANAGER.)

When I say kick it, you hit the music, okay?

(Without waiting for a response, YUMO crosses centerstage.)

And I just gotta *dance!* Kick it!

(YUMO does one half of one dance before realizing that no music is happening.)

Hold on one second.

(He approaches STAGE MANAGER again.)

Did you understand me when I said, "kick it" that was your cue to start the music? You got that?

STAGE MANAGER

You didn't bring any music.

YUMO

(his anger is rising)

You think that's gonna stop me? I'm determined to get this role. I don't care if I didn't bring music. When I say "kick it," you play it.

STAGE MANAGER

But there is no--

YUMO

(either screaming or menacingly quiet.)

DON'T GIVE ME PROBLEMS. GIVE ME SOLUTIONS.

STAGE MANAGER

(at a loss)

I could... hum something.

YUMO

Can you do more of a beatbox thing?

(STAGE MANAGER tries a beatbox)

I'm not feeling you. I'm really not feeling you. But it's gonna have to work.

(YUMO approaches center again.)

AND I JUST GOTTA DANCE!!! Kick it!

STAGE MANAGER does a rather pathetic beat box, but then begins to beatbox more and more intensely, really getting into it. YUMO dances. He's wild, he's unpredictable, and he's full of insane energy. He also provides his own sound effects.

YUMO

Uh huh. Yeah. Yeah. Y-iaao! Uh huh. Wa wa wa wa wa! Zoog! And I'm over here and you can't stop me! Yeah! Uh huh. Yeah! Uh huh. Yeah! Uh huh. And stop.

(YUMO strikes a pose for a few seconds,
then steps forward, breathing hard.)

What now?

MS. TORRANCE

I don't know that that's really the... style of dance
we're looking for.

YUMO

I can do anything. Watch this. Ballet? Check it.
(YUMO does a wild, insane ballet. Once
again, he provides his own sound effects
to the ballet.)

Uh huh. Yeah. Leg up in the
air. Graceful. Graceful. Wa! Yeah! Uh
huh! Yeah! Uh huh. And...dropping the head like a
swan. Stop.

(He stops. He walks to STAGE MANAGER,
intense to the point of threatening.)

How about that? How about *that*, son? That's how I
roll in the ballet.

MS. TORRANCE

Um...

*YUMO grabs SM. He is now wild-eyed with
intensity. Everyone around him is slightly
terrified.*

YUMO

You want tango?

(He begins a tango with STAGE MANAGER.)

No, I'm leading! Just go with me and give me a beat.

STAGE MANAGER

(trying to provide a tango beat)

Dun dun dun dun da dun! Dun dun dun dun da dun! Dun
dun dun dun da dun! Dun dun dun dun da dun!

YUMO

(simultaneously with STAGE MANAGER's
beats)

Tango tango tango yeah! Uh
huh! Arm-up-head-back-rose-in-teeth TANGO! Yeah! Uh
huh! Zoom! Spin! Work it! And yeah. Stop.

*YUMO stops and releases STAGE MANAGER, who is near
tears.*

MS. TORRANCE

Call-backs will be posted tonight.

YUMO

That what I'm talking about!

(He leaves, taking STAGE MANAGER with him.)

You did good out there. You did good.

*YUMO hugs STAGE MANAGER suddenly, then leaves.
GINA enters timidly.*

GINA

What exactly are you looking for? I think I would do a better job of auditioning if I knew exactly what it was you were after, you know? Because I can do anything. I mean, not everything. But pretty close. Like if you wanted sassy and funny, I can do that. Or if you wanted me to be like all mean and everything, I can do that, too. Or if it's like a really sad role, I cry just about everyday. Not for any real reason, just for practice. I practice crying. In case it comes in handy sometime. You never know when you might need to cry. I'll stand in front of my mirror at home and then I'll try to imagine my Mom dying. That usually doesn't work. But then I think about all those starving kids in Africa, and that doesn't make me cry either. And then I think about puppies, and they make me cry. Not like hurting puppies or anything. Just puppies.

(her mood suddenly changes)

I hate puppies. They're always looking at you like "look at me, I'm so cute." Well, you're not cute. You're just a baby dog. That doesn't automatically make you cute. And personally, I think puppies are sell-outs. I mean, try and turn on the TV and not see a puppy selling something. So I think about puppies. And then I cry. I can also burp on command.

MS. TORRANCE

Next.

Lights change. ELIZABETH enters.

ELIZABETH

My life: by Elizabeth.

ELIZABETH'S DAD enters right behind her.

ELIZABETH'S DAD

You better hurry up.

ELIZABETH

I'm fine.

ELIZABETH'S DAD

You're wearing that?

ELIZABETH

No, I'm changing in the car on the way there.

ELIZABETH'S DAD

You need to make a good impression. Holes in your jeans scream community college.

ELIZABETH

I am who I am.

ELIZABETH'S DAD

Well that's not good enough.

ELIZABETH'S DAD freezes.

ELIZABETH

Growing up that's all I heard.

ELIZABETH'S DAD

Sit up straight. Smile.

ELIZABETH

I was supposed to be--

ELIZABETH'S DAD

Perfect.

ELIZABETH

I was going to be--

ELIZABETH'S DAD

Perfect.

ELIZABETH

I was in every activity he could find: gymnastics, swimming, piano, tuba, soccer, softball, choir, debate, junior French honor society--

ELIZABETH'S DAD

Hurry up. We're going to be late.

ELIZABETH

I don't speak French, I've never taken French, and I was in the junior French honor society.

ELIZABETH'S DAD

We can fit in Girl Scouts tonight after karate--

ELIZABETH

I especially hated karate.

ELIZABETH'S DAD

Sensei Lee was disappointed with your effort today, Elizabeth.

ELIZABETH

And what did I want to do.

ELIZABETH'S DAD

If you didn't have me you'd sit around the house all day.

ELIZABETH

That's exactly what I'd do. Nothing.

ELIZABETH'S DAD

How would that look on your college applications?

ELIZABETH

I don't care, Dad.

ELIZABETH'S DAD

You'd never get into Yale without extracurriculars.

ELIZABETH

I don't care, Dad.

ELIZABETH'S DAD

And then where would you be? Without college?

ELIZABETH

I don't care, Dad.

ELIZABETH'S DAD

Grades aren't enough. You need to be well-rounded.

ELIZABETH

My dad has spent so much time rounding me that I feel like a circle. Dad, what part of "I don't care" don't you understand! I don't want to be in the show, I don't want to go to Yale, I don't want to be the manager for the water polo squad! I just want to do--

ELIZABETH'S DAD

Nothing.

ELIZABETH

Yeah. But I never said that to her. Instead I said, "Okay, Dad."

ELIZABETH'S DAD
Good.

ELIZABETH
Whatever you say. I'll go to Yale. I'll marry a doctor.

ELIZABETH'S DAD
Who cares about marrying a doctor? *Be a doctor.*

ELIZABETH
Okay, I'll be a doctor.

ELIZABETH'S DAD
Be a dermatologist. They never get sued and they don't have to do anything disgusting.

ELIZABETH
Fine. I'll go to Yale. I'll be a doctor. For you. I'll live in a great big house--

ELIZABETH'S DAD
Four thousand square foot, minimum.

ELIZABETH
And have a great big life.

ELIZABETH'S DAD
Two kids or three?

ELIZABETH
For you. Because I'm--

ELIZABETH'S DAD
Perfect.

ELIZABETH
And when my kids are growing up, you know what I'm going to make them do? Nothing.

ELIZABETH'S DAD
We don't have time for that. We need to go.

ELIZABETH
Yes, Dad.

ELIZABETH'S DAD
You're going to have a wonderful audition.

ELIZABETH
I know.

ELIZABETH'S DAD

You need a lead part if you're going to impress the admissions people.

ELIZABETH

I know.

ELIZABETH'S DAD

You know, you could stand to be a little more independent. That's what they're looking for.

ELIZABETH and her DAD leave. ALISON enters.

ALISON

Hi there. I'm Alison Bass. Of course you know that. Let's see... experience... last year I was Anna in *Anna and the King*. The year before that I was Belle in *Beauty and the Beast*. The year before that I was the Crucible in *The Crucible*. Well okay I wasn't the crucible, that's not really a role, but if there was a role for the crucible, that would be me. And when I was a little kid I played Annie. In *Annie*.

MS. TORRANCE

That's pretty impressive, Alison.

ALISON

I know, isn't it? That was a joke. Look, um... do I really have to audition? I mean who are we trying to fool here, right? I know when everyone's here you can't make it look like you're going to give a part to a certain person, but... come on, we both know what's going to happen. (*Short pause.*) Does that make me sound conceited?

ALISON exits. SARAH enters.

SARAH

Can I audition with somebody else? Is that possible?

MS. TORRANCE

I'm going to need to hear you sing--

SARAH

Okay, but for the acting, can I bring in a partner?

MS. TORRANCE

I guess.

SARAH

Can my partner be Tommy?

MS. TORRANCE

Sure, why not?

SARAH

You don't know how much that means to me.

MS. TORRANCE

Josh, can you get Tommy?

STAGE MANAGER exits to get TOMMY.

SARAH

Can I tell you something? Tommy doesn't know he's going to do a duet with me.

MS. TORRANCE

Well--

STAGE MANAGER brings in TOMMY.

TOMMY

I thought my audition time wasn't for another twenty minutes.

SARAH

Hi.

TOMMY

Hey, Sarah.

SARAH

What's up?

TOMMY

I'm auditioning for the show.

SARAH

I know. Me too. Isn't that awesome?

MS. TORRANCE

I don't have all day, people.

SARAH pulls TOMMY aside.

TOMMY

What's going on?

SARAH

Looks like they're pairing us up for a duet scene. Are you ready?

TOMMY

What duet scene?

SARAH

Oh, here's the script.

She hands him a copy.

TOMMY

Is this even in the play?

SARAH

They're thinking about adding it. And I overheard them talking earlier: they want passion.

TOMMY

Passion?

SARAH

Passion.

TOMMY

Okay.

SARAH

You can do it. Are you ready?

TOMMY

I haven't even read the-

SARAH

Let's go.

(She pulls TOMMY back to center stage.)

Hi, my name is Sarah Arlen and this is Tommy Hartley and we're going to be auditioning for you now.

(She gets into character. TOMMY reads from the script. SARAH has it memorized.)

TOMMY

I don't know if I love Anne any more.

SARAH

How can you say that?

TOMMY

I think there's somebody else I love more.

SARAH

Gregory, please don't. Please. You can't mean me.

TOMMY

I do. You see, Anne is...ugly. She has bad hair and wears too much makeup around the eyes. It makes her look like a llama ran through a department store. Also, I hate her high, whiny voice. It's like when she talks all the dogs in the neighborhood come running. And she smells like bacon all the time. I don't know why. Why did I ever start going out with her?

SARAH

You were crazy.

TOMMY

I was, but now I see you.

SARAH

You do?

TOMMY

Yes, compared to you, my current girlfriends is a bloated dead octopus washing up on the shore with the worst case of acne anyone has ever seen. But you--

SARAH

Yes.

TOMMY

Yes are the most beautiful girl in the world. You are a star, a diamond star, you are the cherry on top of my sundae, you are the whipped cream in my hot chocolate, you are the teeth in my mouth. I want to kiss you. And not just a regular kiss, a super kiss, the kind of kiss where it's like you've been hit in the head with the brick of love and you're bleeding out the side of your head where you got hit with that brick, and even the blood that's oozing down your hair is beautiful. Like that.

SARAH

Kiss me then, you sad, wonderful fool.

(TOMMY stops. SARAH whispers to him loudly.)

It says you're supposed to kiss me.

TOMMY

I know, I'm just-

SARAH

You need to kiss me to get the part. He wants passion.

TOMMY

Okay, um...

MS. TORRANCE

That's enough, thank you.

TOMMY

Thank you, I need to go.

(He leaves, relieved.)

SARAH

So is there like a romantic duo we could be cast as?
Did you see that chemistry?

(Lights change.)

STAGE MANAGER

Break for the day!

(The actors appear, each headed home in different directions. CARRIE settles downstage.)

CARRIE

My life: by Carrie.

(CARRIE'S MOTHER enters wearily and sits.)

CARRIE'S MOTHER

What are you doing this time?

CARRIE

I'm practicing

CARRIE'S MOTHER

For what?

CARRIE

There's a musical at school.

CARRIE'S MOTHER

Oh.

CARRIE

I'm auditioning for it.

CARRIE'S MOTHER

Can you practice somewhere else? I'm trying to watch TV.

CARRIE

Don't you want to know what the show is?

CARRIE

I'm sure it's fine.

(*Short pause.*)
 Fine. What's the show?

CARRIE
 A Chorus Line.

CARRIE'S MOTHER
 Okay.

CARRIE
 It won a Pulitzer Prize.

CARRIE'S MOTHER
 I'm sure it did.

(*CARRIE'S MOTHER sighs heavily.*)

CARRIE
 Are you feeling okay?

CARRIE'S MOTHER
 No I'm tired because I had a long day. I just want to sit here and relax. Is that all right with you?

CARRIE
 Do you want something to eat? I could make dinner.

CARRIE'S MOTHER
 No.

CARRIE
 Can I make myself some dinner?

CARRIE'S MOTHER
 Do whatever you want. Just quit bothering me.

CARRIE
 Okay.

Carrie approaches the audience again.
 My life: by Carrie. My life is the most wonderful thing.

(*She stops.*)
 My life is the...when I was ten years old I got cast in the school play. We were doing this play our teacher wrote about Winnie the Pooh. I was Tigger. Probably because I was pretty hyper. I even got to sing a song about Tiggers. I was so excited I stayed after school every day, and I learned my lines in the first week, and every night at home I'd sing my song about Tiggers and how they were made out of rubber and everything. Our school didn't have a lot of money, but my friend's

(MORE)

CARRIE (cont'd)

mom made me a costume and we had a lot of fun. And I felt really good about it. I mean, I felt...amazing. It was like my whole life I was looking for something I was good at, and then all of a sudden here it was, I was good at being Tigger. I couldn't run fast, I wasn't good at math, I couldn't even spell, but when I sang that Tigger song, I was proud. So the day of the show came, and I was backstage in my Tigger costume, and I was really nervous, I had to pee like every five minutes, and then I went out there on stage, and the lights were really bright, and I could see the outline of all these heads out there, and I could hear them, and I did my song--and I just put everything I had into it, and I wasn't nervous anymore, I was happy, and when I finished...the whole audience applauded for me. For me. I had never been applauded for anything in my whole life. And then after the show, all the parents were coming up and hugging their kids, even the kids who played trees, I remember this dad came up and he was like, "you were the most realistic tree of all of them" and everyone was there. And everyone was getting hugged. And there were all these flowers. And I looked around for my Mom...and I kept looking for her...and I kept looking. And then everyone started to go home. And I was still there. And I was still in that stupid Tigger costume. I asked her later why she didn't come to my show, and she said, "what show?"

(Pause.)

I was really good, too.

(Lights change.)

(ACTOR 5 enters.)

ACTOR 5

(Extremely quiet)

Hi, my name is Marissa.

MS. TORRANCE

What?

ACTOR 5

(just as quiet)

Marissa Leon.

MS. TORRANCE

Can you be louder, please?

ACTOR 5

What?

ELIZABETH

Hi. My name is Elizabeth Walker and I'll be performing the role of Hamlet.

MS. TORRANCE

Isn't that for a guy?

ELIZABETH

I think it was meant for a woman.

MS. TORRANCE

That's fine, Elizabeth.

(ELIZABETH performs the monologue. She's very good.)

ELIZABETH

I have of late--but wherefore I know not--lost all my mirth, foregone all custom of exercises; and indeed it goes so heavily with my disposition, that this goodly frame the earth seems to me a sterile promontory, that most excellent canopy the air, look you, this brave o'er-hanging firmament, the majestical roof fretted with golden fire, why it appeareth to me nothing but a foul and pestilent congregation of vapors. What a piece of work is man, how noble in reason, how infinite in faculties, in form and moving how express and admirable, in action, how like an angel, in apprehension, how like a god: the beauty of the world, the paragon of animals. And yet to me, what is this quintessence of dust? Man delights not me.

MS. TORRANCE

Thank you, Elizabeth.

(CARRIE enters as ELIZABETH exits.)

CARRIE

Hi. I'm Carrie. Do you mind if I sing a song?

MS. TORRANCE

Please do. This is a musical, people! You're going to have to sing!

(ACTOR 3 enters.)

ACTOR 3

But there are non-singing roles, right?

MS. TORRANCE

A few.

ACTOR 3

Can I have one of the non-singing roles?

MS. TORRANCE

Please wait for your turn.

ACTOR 3

Oh.

(ACTOR 3 exits.)

CARRIE

Okay. Um...

(CARRIE presses an accompaniment CD in a boom box and presses play. She sings.)

(Productions may choose whichever audition song they would like. CARRIE should be an excellent singer and performer.)

(Lights down on her. The STAGE MANAGER enters.)

STAGE MANAGER

Call-backs are up. Call-backs are up.

(The ACTORS stream onto the stage. Some are delighted. Some are sad.)

YUMO

YES! YES! YES! YES!

ACTOR 1

Why don't they love me? Why don't they love me?

ACTOR 6

I made it! Oh my gosh!

ACTOR 5

My life is complete!

SARAH

Did you make it? Did you make it?

TOMMY

They want to see me again.

SARAH

They want to see us again. I have a whole new scene for us--I think you should come over to my house and rehearse it.

TOMMY

I'm sorry. I'm grounded.

SARAH

I'll come over to your house, then.

ACTOR 3

How many people made it?

ACTOR 4

How many parts are there?

ELIZABETH

Oh darn it.

CARRIE

Did you make it?

ALISON

There must be some kind of mistake here.

ACTOR 6

They LOVE me! I knew it! They LOVE me!

ALISON

Wait a minute. Hold on.

ACTOR 3

It's only call-backs, it's only call-backs.

ACTOR 2

I'm so getting a part in this show.

ALISON

Wait! Hold on! Wait! SHUT UP EVERYONE!

(Everyone stops.)

UM...WHY ISN'T MY NAME ON THE LIST?

(Everyone slinks off.)

This is a mistake, right?

(She exits. STAGE MANAGER enters.)

STAGE MANAGER

Come back tomorrow, everyone.

(ALISON'S FATHER enters as the STAGE MANAGER leaves.)

ALISON'S FATHER

Is Mr. Torrance here? IS MS. TORRANCE HERE?

MS. TORRANCE

I'll be right there.

ALISON'S FATHER

What is the meaning of this?

(MS. TORRANCE enters.)

MS. TORRANCE

I'm not sure what you're talking about.

ALISON'S FATHER

I'm Alison's father.

MS. TORRANCE

Nice to meet you.

ALISON'S FATHER

I realize you're new this year and trying to change things-

MS. TORRANCE

Well, Alison didn't really even give an audition-

ALISON'S FATHER

Can I finish? That girl sings like an angel. All right? All these other kids sound like monkeys being shot. My girl is beautiful, she's talented, and she's amazing.

MS. TORRANCE

I'm sure she is, but-

ALISON'S FATHER

Can I finish? That girl has more talent in her left foot than you've ever seen in your life. When she did Belle, the audience was weeping for joy. Weeping. And old woman had a heart attack she was so good. And she kept watching the show, okay? This woman is dying and she's happy because she's watching my girl on stage.

MS. TORRANCE

She's welcome to audition next year-

ALISON'S FATHER

Are you not listening to me? Do you have some kind of brain problem? Put Alison in the show.

MS. TORRANCE

No.

ALISON'S FATHER
Put Alison in the show.

MS. TORRANCE
I can't do that.

ALISON'S FATHER
YOU ARE A MORON AND I WILL DESTROY YOU!!!

MS. TORRANCE
You need to calm down, sir!

ALISON'S FATHER
I WILL CALM DOWN WHEN YOU ARE DEAD OR ALISON IS IN THE
SHOW!!

MS. TORRANCE
I'm not putting Alison in the show!

ALISON'S FATHER
Let's go! Let's go!

(ALISON'S FATHER raises his fists.)

MS. TORRANCE
I think you're taking this a little overboard.

ALISON'S FATHER
Come on! Let's see what you got!

MS. TORRANCE
I'm not going to fight you.

ALISON'S FATHER
THEN YOU WILL BE DESTROYED!

*(ALISON'S FATHER attacks. He does a few karate
moves. MS. TORRANCE runs. Finally he turns around
and pushes ALISON'S FATHER, who immediately
collapses.)*

Aaaaaaarrggggghgh!

MS. TORRANCE
What? I didn't even-

ALISON'S FATHER
Ow, my hip! My hip! You broke my hip!

MS. TORRANCE
I barely touched you.

ALISON'S FATHER

You assaulted me! I've been battered and assaulted! I'm barely alive! I need to go the hospital. It's going dark. Why? Why?! What did I ever do to you?!

MS. TORRANCE

You said you were going to destroy me.

ALISON'S FATHER

I didn't mean it. Oh...this is the end...I'm dying...I'm not going to make it. Goodbye cruel world. I'm coming for ya Papa. I'm coming...

(ALISON'S FATHER passes out. MS. TORRANCE looks around.)

MS. TORRANCE

Um...help?

(ALISON'S FATHER wakes up slightly.)

ALISON'S FATHER

Please...I have to tell you...something...Come closer...

MS. TORRANCE

Um...

ALISON'S FATHER

Please...closer...

(MS. TORRANCE leans in close.)

MS. TORRANCE

What?

ALISON'S FATHER

I'm suing you.

MS. TORRANCE

I'm still not putting Alison in the show.

ALISON'S FATHER

Fine.

(He gets up and leaves. The STAGE MANAGER enters.)

STAGE MANAGER

Okay, everyone out here.

(The ACTORS emerge, ready for call-backs.)

I need you in two lines. We need to test your dancing ability-

YUMO

Yes!

(YUMO takes a center position.)

STAGE MANAGER

Here's the move: kick kick step kick shuffle spin kick. Got it? Everyone. Kick kick step kick shuffle spin kick. Again. Kick kick step kick shuffle spin kick. Again. Kick kick step kick shuffle spin kick. Rows switch!

(The first and second row switch.)

Kick kick step kick shuffle spin kick. Moving on. Twirl twirl stomp kick step kick. Again. Twirl twirl stomp kick step kick. So the whole thing: kick kick step kick shuffle spin kick twirl twirl stomp kick step kick. Rows switch.

(The first and second row switch.)

Kick kick step kick shuffle spin kick twirl twirl stomp kick step kick.

(The first and second row switch.)

(YUMO steps forward.)

YUMO

Then we add: sashay sashay work it work it work it! Everybody!

STAGE MANAGER

Wait no-

YUMO

Sashay sashay work it work it work it! Then shake it shake it shake it work it shake it work it shake it! Yeah! Yeah! Everybody!

ACTORS

Sashay sashay work it work it work it! Then shake it shake it shake it work it shake it work it shake it! Yeah! Yeah!

STAGE MANAGER

Stop stop stop!

YUMO

(to SARAH)

Um...Are you aware that you stink?

STAGE MANAGER

Yumo! You are not the dance captain!

YUMO

Oh really? Maybe it's time for a dance-off.

STAGE MANAGER

It's not time for a dance-off.

YUMO

That's cause you can't bring it.

STAGE MANAGER

Oh stop it.

ACTOR 4

Aw no you di'in!

(The ACTORS look at her.)

Is that not appropriate right now? I'm not sure. Should I have said, "aw snap"? I can never figure out the difference between the two.

MS. TORRANCE

The cast list is up.

(The ACTORS surge to the side of the stage.)

SARAH

I'm girl number seven! I'm girl number seven! I've always wanted to be girl number seven! What part are you?

TOMMY

I'm boy number seven.

SARAH

It's fate.

TOMMY

I have to go.

(TOMMY escapes.)

ACTOR 3

I'm boy number 2? But I'm a girl.

ACTOR 4

I didn't get it.

ACTOR 5

I have one line! One line!

ELIZABETH

I'm the understudy? Darn it.

GINA

Was there something wrong with my audition?

(Lights change. CARRIE is left onstage alone.)

CARRIE

Mom!

(CARRIE'S MOTHER is sitting in the chair.)

CARRIE'S MOTHER

What?

CARRIE

I got the lead!

CARRIE'S MOTHER

In what?

CARRIE

In the musical.

CARRIE'S MOTHER

Oh. Good.

CARRIE

It's so cool. I have two songs, and then I get to...

CARRIE'S MOTHER

Wait a minute, when you are rehearsing this thing?

CARRIE

After school.

CARRIE'S MOTHER

Which days after school?

CARRIE

Every day after school. It's only about two hours a day, though.

CARRIE'S MOTHER

You're going to be at school an extra two hours a day?

CARRIE

Yeah, but it won't be a problem.

CARRIE'S MOTHER

When are you going to do your homework?

CARRIE

At night.

CARRIE'S MOTHER

I thought you were going to get a job.

CARRIE

I never said I was getting a job.

CARRIE'S MOTHER

You were going to apply at the grocery store.

CARRIE

When was that going to happen?

CARRIE'S MOTHER

You need to get a job.

CARRIE

Why?

CARRIE'S MOTHER

I don't know, Carrie. For fun. Why do you think people have jobs?

CARRIE

But when was-?

CARRIE'S MOTHER

You need to help out around here. I pay for your food. I pay for your insurance. It's not cheap. Where do you think money's gonna come from for you to go to college?

CARRIE

I can work at night-

CARRIE'S MOTHER

That's not enough.

CARRIE

I'll get a job when the show's over-

CARRIE'S MOTHER

I don't think so-

CARRIE

And then in the summer, I can work plenty-

CARRIE'S MOTHER

And what are we going to do for money until then?

CARRIE

What have we been doing for money before now?

CARRIE'S MOTHER

You want to see my credit card bill? You want to? I need you to work. I don't need you to waste your time with this thing.

CARRIE

I'm the lead role.

CARRIE'S MOTHER

They'll find somebody else. You weren't the only one who auditioned, right?

CARRIE

No, there were lots of people who auditioned and I got the part-

CARRIE'S MOTHER

Then they'll put one of them in. End of discussion. Go in tomorrow and tell your teacher.

(She goes back to watching television. CARRIE waits there.)

CARRIE

(under her breath)

You probably wouldn't have come, anyway.

CARRIE'S MOTHER

What?

CARRIE

I want to do this.

CARRIE'S MOTHER

I know you do and I'm sorry but there's nothing I can do.

CARRIE

What do you mean there's-

CARRIE'S MOTHER

I'm tired of talking about it.

CARRIE

I'm sorry, am I taking up too much of your laying around time?

CARRIE'S MOTHER

I'm tired.

CARRIE

You're always tired!

CARRIE'S MOTHER

Cause I work twelve hours a day, that's why! And if you don't want to be like me, you better work now so you can go to college.

CARRIE

Mom. I'll make the money somehow but I'm going to do this show.

(Her MOTHER is about to say something.)

Just listen to me for a minute, okay? I'm going to college and I'm not going to be like you. You understand that? I'm not like you. And you know what that means? That means when I have a child I'm going to love them and support them and I'm going to take an interest in their life. And when my kid is in a show I'm going to be there every single night cheering for them. Do you understand that? I've stopped waiting for you to appreciate me. I appreciate myself. And maybe that's not everything, but it's enough.

(Pause.)

CARRIE'S MOTHER

(Getting up)

Maybe you should go live on your own then.

CARRIE

That's not what I want-

CARRIE'S MOTHER

Where'd you get those clothes? Where'd you get those shoes? What did you have to eat today? Do I charge you rent? I don't really have anyone helping me out here, kid. Your father isn't around to do it. And you got all that stuff from me. From me. So don't sit there and say I didn't give you anything. I gave you everything you own.

(CARRIE'S MOTHER leaves.)

CARRIE

Being a mother is about more than that.

(CARRIE sits. She sings a part of her audition song softly to herself.)

(She stops and cannot continue.)

(Lights change back to the auditorium. The STAGE MANAGER enters.)

STAGE MANAGER

All right! Let's take it from the top!

(All the ACTORS cast in the show come marching out in two lines. There is a hole in the line where CARRIE should be.)

MS. TORRANCE

I want smiles! Big smiles! Keep those heads up! Soleil. Doing great. And kick! Kick! Kick! I want to see you believe it! Everybody should have a big face! Big face! Sarah big face!

(SARAH creates a "big face.")

Tommy, get close to her! Act like you like her!
Sarah...

(SARAH acts like she likes TOMMY.)

And the music is going, the music is going, we're singing-

(YUMO begins to break out of line.)

Yumo, stay in the line! Don't say anything just stay in the line! And big finish! Big finish! Sell it sell it Elizabeth sell it! And curtain. Everybody loves you.

STAGE MANAGER

Two minutes!

ACTORS

Thank you two.

(The ACTORS break out of character and wander off.)

MS. TORRANCE

Elizabeth, hold up.

ELIZABETH

Yeah?

MS. TORRANCE

If Carrie can't make it, I want you to do her part.

ELIZABETH

...Okay

MS. TORRANCE

Good.

(Short pause)
By the way, you're terrific.

(MS. TORRANCE walks off. ELIZABETH remains for a moment, smiling. CARRIE enters in a rush.)

CARRIE
Hey. Where is everybody?

ELIZABETH
On break.

CARRIE
I can do the show.

ELIZABETH
Really?

CARRIE
Yeah. I just got word-I ot a scholarship.

ELIZABETH
That's awesome.

CARRIE
Thanks! I couldn't believe it. I was like, are you kidding me! I gotta tell Mr. Torrance--hey do you know who they were gonna have do my part?

ELIZABETH
Yeah. Me.

CARRIE
Oh, that makes sense.

ELIZABETH
Why?

CARRIE
Cause you woulda been great. By the way, I'm gonna try and get some people to go out to IHOP after rehearsal tonight, you wanna come?

ELIZABETH
I hate IHOP. They're disgusting. I when there one time and I wanted to get blueberry pancakes you know, and everybody knows that blueberry pancakes actually have blueberries in the batter...but you know what they do, they just dump blueberry pie filling on top. I mean what is that? Did I order pancakes with blueberry pie filling dumped on top? No. If you're going to call yourself the International House of Pancakes, you should know how to make blueberry pancakes. That's all I'm saying.

CARRIE

Okay. Well, um...maybe some other time then.

ELIZABETH

No, I'll still come.

CARRIE

Great.

(CARRIE runs off.)

Mr. Torrance! Mr. Torrance, I can be in the show!

(The STAGE MANAGER returns.)

(Major scene transition: Jump to Opening Night.)

STAGE MANAGER

All right, let's do it again, people! With the singing this time!

ACTOR 5

Is it okay if I just lip synch? I'm just really not a good singer.

ACTOR 3

It's true. She's horrible.

STAGE MANAGER

Everybody sings! You just sing quietly.

MS. TORRANCE

Places!

STAGE MANAGER

Places!

MS. TORRANCE

And...showtime!

(Lights down.)

END OF PLAY