

Callback

Written by

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ACT ONE

1 INT. COMEDY THEATER STAGE - NIGHT

1

The stage is set up for a normal improv show. There is a spotlight shining on the main microphone. MEL (early 40s, flustered) takes the stage. SHAWN (mid 20s, bright-eyed), DANNY (early 30s, chill), VIC (early 20s, focused), other IMPROVISERS (varied), CASEY (late 30s, tired), and KIERAN (late teens, excited) are standing in the audience area.

MEL

Good evening everybody! Thanks so much for coming out to our humble little theater on this beautiful Cleveland night. We have a great show coming up for you, but first, I have to go over some housekeeping items. Please silence your cell phones and refrain from flash photography (unless something really funny happens). Uh, make sure to clap and laugh if the show is good - actually you should do that even if you don't think it's good (it will make them feel better). You all know all this stuff. Bathrooms are to your left, and the bar is to your right.

SONG 1: ALT COMEDY THEATER

MEL (CONT'D)

*Get a drink at the bar  
The bartender knows your order by  
heart*

Casey hands an ice-cold Miller High Life to Shawn, who takes a sip.

MEL (CONT'D)

*Livin' the high life on Lorain  
Avenue  
Every weekend night and sometimes  
weeknights too*

SHAWN

*It's pretty comfortable here  
Drinkin' the champagne of beers  
Warm smiles on all the faces you  
see  
But there's somewhere else you'd  
rather be*

Shawn, Vic, Danny, and the other improvisers take the stage. Mel hops off.

## ENSEMBLE

*Alt comedy theater  
 In a mid-size rust-belt city  
 Guaranteed at least a couple of  
 laughs  
 And only sometimes out of pity  
 Alt comedy theater  
 Sit back and enjoy the show  
 It's an intimate audience  
 experience  
 You're probably here to see someone  
 you know*

## DANNY

*Okay, can I get a suggestion of  
 something you WOULDN'T wear to the  
 Prom?*

## KIERAN

*Pineapple!*

## DANNY

*Alright, I think heard "Chuck E.  
 Cheese costume."*

The performers start pantomiming an over-the-top improv scene.

## KIERAN

*I'm a Level One improv student  
 And I think this is really good*

## MEL

*I'm their Level Three improv  
 teacher  
 And they aren't sweeping scenes as  
 quickly as they should!*

## CASEY

*I've seen so many shows that I  
 don't even know  
 How to tell what's good anymore  
 Standup, improv, and sketch, must  
 be funny, I guess  
 If I hear them laughing through the  
 door!*

Casey runs off through the door back to the bar area.

## ENSEMBLE

*Our stakes are low  
 Our crowds are small  
 We do our best  
 And laugh through it all*

DANNY

*Alt comedy theater  
In a mid-size rust belt city  
Everyone knows everyone  
Our community is itty bitty*

SHAWN

*Alt comedy theater  
It's not the place you really wanna  
be  
If you long for something bigger  
If you're anything like me*

ENSEMBLE

*Alt comedy theater  
All our best bits on display  
Here is where we live and we love,  
and  
We laugh our lives away*

ENSEMBLE (CONT'D)

*BLACKOUT!*

Lights black out in time with the music as the song ends.  
Mel comes back on stage and the house lights come up.

MEL

And that's our show! Go to our  
website "altcomedy.biz" for  
information about all our upcoming  
shows and workshops. And please hang  
out and grab another drink. Have a  
good night!

Light music starts playing and there is chatter in the  
crowd. People mingle on the stage, including Shawn and  
Danny.

DANNY

Hey, great set.

SHAWN

Thanks, you too.

DANNY

Really solid object work. I mean I  
truly believed there was a trash can  
with a flip lid out there.

SHAWN

Yeah? I wasn't sure if anyone got  
that.

DANNY

Well it helped that you said it out  
loud.

SHAWN  
Hey, I know the rules, and  
therefore, I can break them.

DANNY  
You are really good at that.

SHAWN  
Good at what, you mean?

DANNY  
You are good at not being  
conventionally good.

SHAWN  
Not sure if that's a compliment or  
not, but I'll take it. At least I  
know I'm better than you.

Shawn looks over at Mel and grabs their attention.

SHAWN (CONT'D)  
Right Mel?

MEL  
What's that?

SHAWN  
I'm better than Danny at improv,  
right?

MEL  
Oh, come on, guys. It's not about  
better or worse. You're both great.  
I did have some notes though...

DANNY  
Okay, let's hear them.

MEL  
I just think you can do more to  
ground your characters. For example,  
the scene where...

Mel checks their notes.

MEL (CONT'D)  
You were a capo in the clown mob?

DANNY  
Right! With the silly string  
garrote.

MEL  
Yeah. That was fun, but I wanted you  
to get to the emotional truth of the  
scene.

DANNY

You didn't like the red nose?

MEL

Listen. A clown nose dyed red from the blood of your enemies is funny. I just didn't see the *why* behind it.

DANNY

I was a harlequin mobster! What more could I have said?

MEL

I would have liked to see a little more humanity.

DANNY

Alright, note taken. That's fair.

MEL

Now, Shawn...

SHAWN

What? I am always extremely human and emotional.

MEL

Um, right. Maybe sometimes... too much? Like the scene where...

Mel checks their notes again.

MEL (CONT'D)

You were an octopus at the tailor.

SHAWN

Right, classic.

MEL

You could have joked about eight-legged clothing, or ink stained underwear, or anything else, but you mainly talked about your fraught relationship with your mother?

SHAWN

Yeah I thought that was funny.

MEL

Right, but maybe you could have leaned into the comedy a bit more.

SHAWN

Okay I disagree but thank you.

Mel runs their hand through their hair frustratedly.

MEL

You people...

Mel gets a far-off look in their eye.

MEL

Actually... show idea. American Idol but improv, so I can judge you live on stage.

DANNY

That sounds like a dangerous idea...

SHAWN

Yeah, because I would win for sure. Right Mel? Because I'm better at improv than Danny?

MEL

You both have your strengths.

SHAWN

I knew I was your favorite.

DANNY

Careful there, Shawn. Your "Former Gifted Kid" syndrome is showing.

Vic struts past them.

DANNY (CONT'D)

And hey, speaking of former gifted kids. Great job tonight, Vic.

VIC

(snidely)

I do the best I can with what I'm given.

SHAWN

What's that supposed to mean?

VIC

Oh, nothing. We can talk about it later.

SHAWN

(to Mel)

Any notes for Vic?

MEL

Um... just a general note... really funny overall, but you could be a more supportive scene partner in some situations.

VIC

Well, maybe these two could support me a bit more.

MEL

Yes, more support is always good.

VIC

I gotta go.

Vic walks off-stage in a huff.

DANNY

I swear, that kid is the most serious comedian I have ever met.

MEL

Is that a bad thing?

DANNY

No. I don't know.

Kieran sheepishly approaches the stage.

KIERAN

Hi, I'm Kieran. I just wanted to say you are amazing, that was so funny.

DANNY

Why thank you! I don't think I've seen you around before, you taking a class or something?

KIERAN

Yep, just about to finish Level One. I started doing stand-up way back when (almost six months ago), but I LOVE improv.

SHAWN

Well you're in the right place. Everybody here does every type of comedy.

DANNY

Stick with improv though, it's the best. And hopefully we'll see you up here someday.

KIERAN

That would be an honor.

SHAWN

It's really not th-



KIERAN

To grace this stage... that would be a dream come true.

SHAWN

I feel like you should set your sights a little higher.

KIERAN

Oh, I don't know, I think this is great. You're all so wonderful.

SHAWN

I'm going to get another drink.

Casey peeks through the lobby door.

CASEY

Bar's closing! Don't make me literally kick you out.

SHAWN

And I guess I'll be getting that drink somewhere else.

DANNY

Sixth City Backgammon?

SHAWN

Sure.

DANNY

(to Mel)

Sixth City Backgammon?

(to Keiran)

Sixth City Backgammon?

MEL

I've gotta go home.

KIERAN

Me too.

DANNY

Well, let's go, Shawn.

All exit.

**2 INT. SIXTH CITY BACKGAMMON - NIGHT**

**2**

Later that night. Shawn and Danny are sitting and playing backgammon at a table, empty glasses on either side.

SHAWN

Why do we always end up at bars like this?

DANNY  
I like it. Backgammon is fun.

SHAWN  
I think it's time to go home.

DANNY  
Aw, come on! It's no fun without you here.

Shawn looks extremely sad.

DANNY (CONT'D)  
Hey, you alright?

SHAWN  
I'm fine.

DANNY  
Then why do you look utterly devastated right now?

SHAWN  
No, I'm good.

DANNY  
You had a good show, you made fifteen whole dollars, and you beat me at backgammon like five times. It's been a fun night!

SHAWN  
A good show. Not a great show.

DANNY  
It was good! It was really good!

SHAWN  
But it wasn't *great*. I could have been better.

DANNY  
Why do you want to be great?

SHAWN  
I don't want to be great. I **HAVE** to be great.

DANNY  
Okay, why do you **HAVE** to be great?

SHAWN  
(hesitant)  
I can't--

Danny comes over to Shawn's side of the table and kneels down next to them.

DANNY (CONT'D)

You gotta learn to love yourself more. If you could see yourself through my eyes--

SHAWN

I don't care. That's not going to make me any better at comedy.

DANNY

That's not the point! Don't you want to be happier?

SHAWN

I'd rather hate myself and be great than love myself and be mid.

Danny stands back up, exasperated.

DANNY

Oof, that is not healthy Shawn. Did you get that promo code for BetterHelp I sent you?

SHAWN

The one you got from the Slugslop Fatboys Podcast?

Danny shakes his head because it's irrelevant where he got the promo code.

DANNY

Did you use it?

SHAWN

Yeah. I did a live messaging session.

DANNY

How did it go?

SHAWN

Apparently I'm supposed to have gratitude for my stupid wonderful intricate life.

DANNY

That sounds reasonable.

SHAWN

I have gratitude! I do! I just... I want more. I wanted tonight to be better.

Danny begins to pace around the stage while Shawn continues to sit there.

DANNY

What did you expect? That you'd have a performance so earth-shatteringly good that by the end, in hysterical fits of laughter, the entire audience would give you a ten minute standing ovation?

SHAWN

I mean...

DANNY

That they would tell all their friends, including everyone you went to high school with, that you are spectacular and fabulous and terrific beyond measure? And that you would gain five hundred thousand Instagram followers overnight because someone had secretly recorded your set and posted it to Reels and it went viral?

SHAWN

That would be cool.

DANNY

And that that would, in turn, lead to a lifelong career in entertainment more successful than that of Taylor Swift and Beyoncé combined? Is that what you expected? Is it?!

SHAWN

I mean, kinda, yeah. Some little part of me always expects that.

DANNY

Exactly that, all that that I just said?

SHAWN

Something like that. Something unfathomably, impossibly good.

Shawn stands up.

SHAWN (CONT'D)

That's what I want.

DANNY

Oh, Shawn.

SONG 2: THE BEST OF ALL TIME

## SHAWN

*I require  
 Universal acclaim  
 Unbelievable fortune  
 And indescribable fame  
 Stadiums full of people  
 Cheering and chanting my name  
 All around the world  
 I want to hear them all proclaim  
 Shawn, we adore you  
 Shawn, we'd do anything for you  
 Shawn, we would never ignore you  
 Shawn, you're the best of all time  
 I don't want them to love me  
 Unconditionally  
 I want rigid conditions  
 That I easily meet  
 I want them to know me  
 Complete and totally  
 And seeing me entirely  
 I want them to decree  
 Shawn, we adore you  
 Shawn, we'd do anything for you  
 Shawn, we would never ignore you  
 Shawn, you're the best of all time  
 I know that I am not deserving of  
 their love  
 But I'm pining for it every day  
 And even though I know I'll never  
 be enough  
 I still hope someday they will say  
 Shawn, we adore you  
 Shawn, we'd do anything for you  
 Shawn, we would never ignore you  
 Shawn, you're the best of all time*

Disembodied heads appear and join in the chorus.

## ENSEMBLE

*Shawn, we adore you  
 Shawn, we'd do anything for you  
 Shawn, we would never ignore you  
 Shawn, you're the best of all time*

## SHAWN

*Shawn, you're the best of all...*

A moment of pause. Shawn weeps softly, crumbling to the floor. Danny squats down and hugs them.

## SHAWN

*Crying in a backgammon bar. Not a good look, huh?*

## DANNY

*Don't worry. I've cried in worse places.*

Fade out.

**3 INT. HOLLYWOOD OFFICE - DAY**

**3**

There are palm trees through the window outside. The office is adorned with comedy show posters and plants. Phyllis (30s, businessy) is pacing around the room, talking on the phone. JESSE (20s, businessy) sits at a desk and stays quiet.

PHYLLIS

(on phone)

Alright, but--

Yes, I know, and I will, I just--

You don't think we can find that here in L.A.?

(deep breath)

Okay. I understand.

Phyllis hangs up the phone.

JESSE

Bad news?

PHYLLIS

Is there any other kind?

JESSE

We're not...

PHYLLIS

No, no. Not yet.

JESSE

What is it then?

PHYLLIS

Well, you know how we have quarterly viewership targets?

JESSE

And how we always fall short of them by a large margin?

PHYLLIS

Right. Well, last quarter... let's just say it's looking worse than usual. It's looking existentially bad.

JESSE

As in...

PHYLLIS

As in this company may cease to exist if we don't do something before Q3.

JESSE

No! A streaming service exclusively for comedy nerds is an evergreen business model! Chuckle Plus can never die.

PHYLLIS

I'm afraid it might. Our show where dogs re-enact current events has not been well received.

JESSE

The Puppy Post?? I love that show! HotMilkGirly394 even reposted a clip of it on TikTok!

PHYLLIS

It wasn't enough. It's failing. And I was the one who gave it the green light.

JESSE

What about our legacy shows?

PHYLLIS

Improvised City Council is steady, but... Naked Millionaire has been slipping.

JESSE

Oh no! That show was your baby.

PHYLLIS

I know, Jesse. And it was...

(wistful)

captivating, subversive, even beautiful when it started... but times have changed. We need to do what's best for the business.

JESSE

So what are we going to do?

PHYLLIS

We need something big. Everett wants us to cast a wider net, so to speak.

JESSE

So what are we looking for?

PHYLLIS

Literally anything. If it's comedy, we gotta see it. All the casting directors are going all over the country for this. We have to find someone really spectacular. And if we don't...

JESSE

Then...

PHYLLIS

Yep.

JESSE

So where are we going?

PHYLLIS

Well...

(deep sigh)

We're going to Cleveland.

JESSE

Cleveland, OHIO?

PHYLLIS

Apparently Everett has some connection. I know it doesn't sound good on paper, but... I believe in us. We were born to do this.

Jesse looks hesitant.

JESSE

I mean, I think I was born to make viral YouTube Shorts about the emergent psychology of earthworms, but...

PHYLLIS

But nothing! We have a chance here to do something truly special. To discover someone with the power to turn our little online video outfit into a juggernaut of entertainment. To finally achieve the success in business for which I... for which we have been striving.

JESSE

And we're going to find that someone in Cleveland?

PHYLLIS

At least we're not going to Youngstown.

JESSE

Hey! My glue-addicted step-cousin is from Youngstown.

PHYLLIS

Yes, Jesse. Everyone has a glue-addicted step-cousin from

(MORE)



PHYLLIS (CONT'D)  
 Youngstown. Cleveland is different.  
 Cleveland... rocks! Drew Carey!

JESSE  
 (nodding)  
 Drew Carey. I guess the Mistake on  
 the Lake's not so bad.

PHYLLIS  
 It's our only hope. If we don't find  
 someone there... that's it for us.

SONG 3: CLEVELAND

PHYLLIS (CONT'D)  
 Cleveland  
 Give me something to believe in  
 Something in which to believe  
 Something hiding up your sleeve  
 Save us from fiscal devastation  
 Cleveland  
 I need a superstar next season  
 You can give me what I need  
 I want so badly to succeed  
 And Cleveland, you can be the  
 reason  
 I've gotta find  
 A diamond in the rough  
 Any neighborhood will do  
 West Park, Tremont, or Hough  
 They tell me that in Cleveland you  
 Have got to be tough  
 So I know there must be someone  
 there  
 Who's got the right stuff

ENSEMBLE  
 In Cleveland  
 Protect our service from deletion  
 Quibi got it pretty quick  
 And we know Seeso couldn't stick  
 But maybe we can keep on streamin'  
 If we go to Cleveland  
 Even though we might be freezin'  
 Amidst the potholes and the ice  
 We'll find a Great Lakes paradise  
 From which we'll pull our next  
 sensation

JESSE  
 We'll find someone hot  
 Like a river on fire

PHYLLIS  
 Someone to make the ladies laugh  
 And all the boys perspire

JESSE  
*Someone with pure midwestern charm*

PHYLLIS  
*And also cutting satire*

JESSE  
*Someone to take our lowly ratings  
 And make them higher*

PHYLLIS  
*Not sure if I know  
 Exactly why-oh  
 But I know I-oh  
 I just have to fly-oh  
 Straight to Ohio  
 And more specifically...  
 Cleveland  
 Give me someone to believe in  
 Someone in whom to believe  
 Someone hiding up your sleeve  
 Save us from fiscal devastation*

ENSEMBLE  
*Oh, Cleveland  
 We need a superstar next season  
 You can give us what we need  
 We want so badly to succeed  
 And Cleveland, you can be the  
 reason  
 It's Cleveland  
 And the Greater Cleveland region  
 Gave us Big Chuck and Lil' John  
 Travis Kelce and LeBron  
 I just need one more great  
 comedian  
 I'm begging you  
 Cleveland  
 Best location in the nation*

PHYLLIS  
*You're my last and only shot  
 Please tell me that you've got  
 Someone to lead us to salvation  
 Someone from Cleveland*

PHYLLIS (CONT'D)  
*Pack your bags, Jesse. The forest  
 city awaits.*

**4 INT. COMEDY THEATER CLASS SPACE - DAY**

**4**

Back in Cleveland, this time in a rehearsal/class space. An improv class is taking place, led by Mel. Vic is present. There are notebooks and bags on the floor. Danny and Shawn are acting out a scene in the stage area. Danny

melodramatically crawls around on all fours, trying (and failing) to stifle laughter.

MEL

(exasperated)

Seriously, this is improv four. No breaking! You're acting like level one up there. Danny, swap with Vic. Your new location is... uh... a drawing room.

Vic goes up and Danny sits down to watch. Shawn centers themselves. Vic sits down facing away from Shawn and leafs through an imaginary book.

VIC

One.

SHAWN

Two.

Vic slams the invisible book shut and stands up. Shawn twists an imaginary ring on their finger. Vic turns to face Shawn.

VIC

Three.

SHAWN

Four.

Vic throws the book down.

VIC

Five!

Shawn looks at the book on the floor, and starts rifling through imaginary drawers, pulling things out and throwing them around.

SHAWN

Six!

Vic faces Shawn with their back to the audience of other class students.

VIC

Seven!

MEL

Remember to cheat out.

Vic adjusts to face the audience, while still looking at Shawn.

SHAWN

Eight!

They rush toward each other, their faces separated by barely an inch of air. They hold the position, gazing into each other's eyes with intensity. After a few seconds, they turn away from each other in perfect synchronization. Vic slumps to the floor, facing away from Shawn, and begins to weep.

VIC

Nine.

Shawn unsheaths a giant imaginary sword, then kneels down next to Vic and mimes stabbing them in the back emotionally.

SHAWN

(through tears)

Ten.

Vic falls over fake dead, and Shawn sits there still. After a second, Mel starts clapping weakly, and the rest of the students sort of do too.

MEL

Alright, thank you, thank you. So what do we think was going on in that scene?

SHAWN

I was thinking "Scorned Lover Gets Revenge."

VIC

I thought we were brothers.

DANNY

Maybe both.

VIC

Gross.

Mel takes a look at their watch.

MEL

Well, on that note, class is over! The next class will be here any minute so we gotta get outta here. See you all next week, great job today everyone.

The improv students start to pack up their belongings and start to chatter.

DANNY

Your scenes with Vic always seem to get so dark. What's up with that? You... you good?

SHAWN

Yeah I'm fine. It's just that my philosophy is that good comedy should not be funny.

DANNY

I think that's just straight up incorrect.

SHAWN

No, you see, it's absurd, and it is humorous, but not-- I can't explain it.

Danny, Shawn, and Vic head for the door. Kieran enters, ready for class.

MEL

One last thing: someone from Chuckle Plus is going to be here this weekend holding local auditions for a new show.

KIERAN

Oh my God.

VIC

*THE* Chuckle Plus?

MEL

The one and only Chuckle Plus. They must've heard we've got talent here in Cleveland.

SHAWN

(dreamily)

Yeah. Yeah...

MEL

I don't really get all of their shows, but...

DANNY

Chuckle Plus is great! They have a show where they give someone a makeover and then make them freestyle rap.

MEL

People do seem to like them.

KIERAN

More like love them.

MEL

I guess we could start doing some  
(MORE)

MEL (CONT'D)  
 shows like that. What about...  
 improvised... slam poetry...  
 cosplay...

DANNY  
 We should probably leave that sort  
 of thing to Chuckle Plus. They do it  
 up well over there.

SHAWN  
 Danny's right, Chuckle Plus is  
 great.

VIC  
 I love Chuckle Plus.

KIERAN  
 I have a parasocial relationship  
 with every cast member.

DANNY  
 Well hey, maybe you'll get to have a  
 regular-social relationship with  
 them now!

SHAWN  
 What are they looking for?

MEL  
 It's sounds like they'll take  
 anything adjacent to comedy.  
 Characters, impressions, performance  
 art, mime stuff... they seem pretty  
 desperate.

Mel starts putting up a sign on the class bulletin board.

SHAWN  
 Oh wow.

DANNY  
 Wow.

KIERAN  
 Wow.

VIC  
 Wow.

SHAWN  
 This... this is a sign.

DANNY  
 You mean the sign Mel's putting up  
 that says "AUDITIONS THIS WEEKEND"?

SHAWN

Yes. I've gotta get ready.

DANNY

What are you thinking?

SHAWN

Maybe a quick character scene? Or I could improvise something?

VIC

A fully improvised audition could be impressive.

DANNY

I don't know. You are such a fantastic writer. I think you should prepare a little bit.

SHAWN

Thanks, you're right. I don't want to mess this up. This could be my destiny.

VIC

This could be *my* destiny.

DANNY

Heck, I'll throw my hat in the ring.

KIERAN

This... this could be it.

SONG 4: THIS COULD BE IT

ENSEMBLE

(whispered)

*This could be it  
This could be it  
This could be it  
This could be it  
This could be it  
This could be it  
This could be it  
This could be it*

SHAWN

*I've gotta show them what I've got  
I'm gonna write a brand new sketch  
And when they witness what I've  
wrought  
I hope they'll think that I'm the  
best*

ENSEMBLE

*This could be it*

VIC

I've got a character up here  
 That's sure to sweep them off their  
 feet  
 I'm gonna have my dream career  
 I don't care who I have to beat

ENSEMBLE

This could be it  
 Been waiting my whole life for  
 something like this  
 Somebody to tell me this is why you  
 exist  
 This is my shot, and I know I can't  
 miss  
 This could be it

SHAWN

This could finally open the door

VIC

To my big break and to so much  
 more

KIERAN

I'm gonna leave it all on the  
 floor

ENSEMBLE

This could be it

DANNY

I've got some accents sure to  
 please  
 Oui mon francais, il est tres bien  
 I say ze french, zey smell like  
 cheese  
 But it's cool 'cause I'm a quarter  
 french

ENSEMBLE

This could be it

KIERAN

I've got a notebook full of bits

ENSEMBLE

(whispered)  
 This could be it  
 This could be it

KIERAN

One joke I'm really psyched about



## ENSEMBLE

(whispered)

*This could be it  
This could be it*

## KIERAN

*I'm hoping when the punchline hits*

## ENSEMBLE

(whispered)

*This could be it  
This could be it*

## KIERAN

*It's strong enough to knock them  
out*

## ENSEMBLE

*This could be it  
Been waiting my whole life for  
something like this  
Somebody to tell me this is why you  
exist  
This is my shot and I know I can't  
miss  
This could be it*

## SHAWN

*They said I was gifted when I was a  
kid  
Then after fourteen, I don't know  
what I did  
I wanna be great, I don't wanna be  
mid  
This could be it  
And what if this is it?  
What if this is all there is?  
I think this might be it*

## ENSEMBLE

*This could be it  
Been waiting my whole life for  
something like this  
Somebody to tell me this is why you  
exist  
This is my shot and I know I can't  
miss  
This could be it*

Ensemble repeats the chorus while Shawn and Vic sing their previous choruses.

## SHAWN

*They said I was gifted  
when I was a kid  
Then after fourteen, I  
(MORE)*

## VIC

*This could finally open  
the door  
To my big break and to so  
(MORE)*

SHAWN (CONT'D)  
 don't know what I did  
 I wanna be great, I don't  
 wanna be mid

VIC (CONT'D)  
 much more  
 I'm gonna leave it all on  
 the floor

ENSEMBLE

*This could be it!*

After the song, everybody scatters with gusto - ready to go home and prepare for the auditions.

**5 INT. COMEDY THEATER STAGE - DAY**

**5**

It's the big audition day. Mel enters, leading Phyllis and Jesse behind.

MEL

(overly chipper)

You get in okay? How was the flight?

PHYLLIS

(flat, down-to-business)

It was fine.

They approach the stage and Mel gestures grandly.

MEL

And here's the stage. Anything I can do to help? Anything you need?

PHYLLIS

We've got it from here.

MEL

You sure? Coffee, Kirkland-brand sparkling water, anything? Anyone have any dietary restrictions?

JESSE

Oh, actually I *am* doing the 15 Musketeers diet.

MEL

Ooh, sounds fancy! Is that an L.A. thing?

PHYLLIS

It's not fancy. It just means they eat nothing but 3 Musketeers bars.

JESSE

I have to eat exactly five per day.

MEL

Well, we don't have 3 Musketeers, but we do have Milky Way bars if that works!

JESSE

No, not at all. It's fine, I have my own supply.

Jesse pulls out a bag with like twenty 3 Musketeers bars in it.

MEL

Well I'm happy to run out and grab more! Or pick up something else for lunch, or do your laundry, or help you with your taxes...

PHYLLIS

We're good, thank you.

MEL

Great! I'll be right over here if you need anything. The performers should be arriving any minute.

Mel hops to the side of the stage and starts fiddling with a laptop.

PHYLLIS

(quietly to Jesse)

Is everyone in the midwest this over-the-top nice?

Phyllis and Jesse begin to setup their table and camera.

JESSE

All I know is, Uber is very cheap here.

PHYLLIS

It's cheap for a reason, Jesse. I grew up in a town like this. Nothing to do, nothing going on.

Mel turns to look at them on the stage.

MEL

Actually, there's a ton of stuff to do here! In Cleveland, we've got world-class experiences without the world-class ego.

PHYLLIS

What's that?

MEL

With three major sports teams, the second-largest theater district in the country, a Big Five orchestra, and a FREE top-of-the-line art

(MORE)

MEL (CONT'D)  
 museum, it's harder to find things  
 not to do!

PHYLLIS  
 Are you just reciting copy from the  
 Cleveland tourism website?

MEL  
 Not at all! This is all from the  
 heart. If there's one thing to love  
 about Cleveland, it's...  
 (tearing up)  
 the authenticity of our people.  
 Folks are salt of the earth here.  
 (back to chipper)  
 Actually, Lake Erie is a  
*freshwater* lake, so... fresh of  
 the earth! This is THE LAND!

JESSE  
 People from Cleveland really have a  
 lot to say about Cleveland, don't  
 they?

MEL  
 Just speaking my truth. Okay, I'll  
 let you get back to setting up. I'll  
 just... wait in the lobby.

Mel leaves.

JESSE  
 Okay I don't know what all that was  
 about, but I do know you shouldn't  
 give up on Cleveland yet.

PHYLLIS  
 I guess you're right. Can't lose the  
 faith. I just do not have high  
 expectations for this day.

Phyllis rubs her forehead to show that she is tired. They  
 finish setting up.

JESSE  
 Well, that's the key to happiness,  
 right?

PHYLLIS  
 Huh?

JESSE  
 Low expectations, the--

PHYLLIS  
 (shouting)  
 Alright, bring 'em in!

Kieran, Vic, Shawn, Danny, and other improvisers enter and stand off to the side of the stage.

PHYLLIS (CONT'D)  
 Let's get through this as quickly as possible. You each have five minutes. Up first is...

Phyllis looks at her notebook.

PHYLLIS (CONT'D)  
 Kieran Allen-Johnson.

KIERAN  
 Wish me luck, guys!

Danny gives Kieran a big thumbs up as they step on stage.

PHYLLIS  
 Let's see it.

KIERAN  
 These are some jokes I wrote.

They pull out a notebook and read from it directly.

KIERAN (CONT'D)  
 What was the cat doing in the bag in the first place?

No reaction.

KIERAN (CONT'D)  
 If you add insult to injury you get insjultury.

No reaction, but Kieran continues unfazed.

KIERAN (CONT'D)  
 If you had a bookstore that was also a farm for exclusively female cattle, it would be called Barns and No Bull.

Again, no reaction. Keiran has put on a pair of sunglasses and taken out a mobility cane.

KIERAN (CONT'D)  
 I'm a duck hunter. Whenever I go hunting, everybody has to duck!

Cringes from the audience. Kieran stands there.

PHYLLIS  
Is that all?

KIERAN  
Oh, yes, sorry!

Kieran runs off-stage. Phyllis writes notes in their notebook. Vic and Shawn stand on the side of the stage.

VIC  
How many more of these do we have to take?

SHAWN  
I don't know, I didn't think that was so bad.

VIC  
The one where they pretended to be a low-vision person?? That is not okay.

SHAWN  
Okay, that was problematic, but they can learn!

VIC  
Well, the good news is I'll have no problem beating this sorry excuse for a comic.

DANNY  
Oh come on. You should be more supportive, they're new. They're trying their best.

VIC  
Their best is awful. I am so much better.

SHAWN  
Why not just be the best you can be?

DANNY  
Yeah, like the US Army.

Shawn ignores Danny and continues talking to Vic.

SHAWN  
Why do you have to belittle others?

VIC  
Comedy's a competition, Shawn.

Phyllis has finished taking notes.

PHYLLIS

Next up, we have... Vic Nixon.

Vic steps up to the stage.

PHYLLIS (CONT'D)

What have you got for us, Vic?

VIC

This is a character called Canadian  
Gangster.

SONG 5: COMEDY'S A COMPETITION

ENSEMBLE

*Comedy's a competition  
Comedy's a competition  
Comedy's a competition  
Comedy's a competition*

VIC

*I was raised in this  
Watchin' Whose Line from birth  
You could search  
Every corner of the earth  
You won't find anybody  
Who's as funny as me  
Not in L.A., not in Chicago  
Not in N.Y.C.  
I'm puttin' C.L.E.  
On the M.A.P.  
All around the globe  
Three hundred sixty degrees  
Fahrenheit, I could scorch y'all  
With all this heat  
This is the roast of everybody  
And I'm the emcee*

ENSEMBLE

*Comedy's a competition  
Comedy's a competition  
Comedy's a competition  
Comedy's a competition*

VIC

*Comedy's a competition  
And I'm winnin'  
Comedy's a competition  
And I'm winnin'  
Comedy's a competition  
And I'm winnin'  
Comedy's a competition  
And I'm winnin'  
I can make you laugh  
Even if you're anhedonic  
Just me on the mic*

(MORE)

VIC (CONT'D)

*But I still sound symphonic  
Orchestrating punchlines  
Like a joke philharmonic  
Words from every angle  
Like it's stereophonic  
When I say I'm laconic  
You know I'm being ironic  
I'm verbose and sardonic  
Make Einstein look moronic  
I am chronically iconic  
And quicker than supersonic  
Need a tonic, 'cause I'm an  
Iller killer than the bubonic  
Plague*

Vic pauses, seemingly rethinking.

VIC (CONT'D)

*Maybe all of this is just a defense  
mechanism  
Maybe deep down inside I yearn for  
recognition  
Because my dad never loved me  
without condition  
Maybe that's the source of all of  
my ambition  
And maybe comedy could be more to  
me  
Like community instead of rivalry  
Maybe I should change my position*

Vic's demeanor changes back to how it was before.

VIC (CONT'D)

*Just kiddin'*

ENSEMBLE

*Comedy's a competition*

VIC

*And I'm winnin'*

ENSEMBLE

*Comedy's a competition*

VIC

*Since the beginnin'*

ENSEMBLE

*Comedy's a competition*

VIC

*I keep 'em grinnin'*

ENSEMBLE

*Comedy's a competition*



VIC  
*Never lost, I'm always winnin*

ENSEMBLE  
*Comedy's a competition  
 And I'm winnin'  
 Comedy's a competition  
 And I'm winnin'  
 Comedy's a competition  
 And I'm winnin'  
 Comedy's a competition*

VIC  
*And I'm winnin'*

Phyllis applauds enthusiastically.

PHYLLIS  
*Wonderful! I loved the bit about  
 the crooked mounties. Thank you.*

JESSE  
*Not too bad, huh?*

PHYLLIS  
*Not too bad.*

Phyllis takes some quick notes.

PHYLLIS (CONT'D)  
*Next is... Shawn Carpenter.*

Vic steps off stage as Shawn steps up.

VIC  
*See if you can top that.*

Shawn looks distressed. They nervously turn to face Phyllis and Jesse.

SHAWN  
*(Italianly)  
 Oh, mamma mia, the meat-a-ball! I--*

Shawn cuts off.

SHAWN (CONT'D)  
*(normal)  
 I-- okay, I can't do this. New plan.  
 I'm going to improvise something  
 based on Vic's audition.*

Phyllis looks exhausted.

PHYLLIS  
*Wonderful. Improv is always good.  
 Let's hear it.*

SONG 6: COMEDY'S A COMPETITION (REPRISE)

SHAWN

Comedy's a competition  
 I guess I compete against myself  
 But now I'm here at this audition  
 Wishin' I could be somebody else  
 I'm just trying to be  
 A better version of me  
 I have low self-esteem  
 But I'm in therapy

SHAWN (CONT'D)

Oh, it's comedy  
 Self-deprecating comedy  
 Self-doubtulating comedy  
 This is humiliating  
 comedy

ENSEMBLE

Comedy  
 Comedy  
 Comedy  
 Comedy

SHAWN (CONT'D)

I'm not conventionally funny  
 That's what they tell me all the  
 time  
 They also say I'm not  
 conventionally attractive  
 Which seems irrelevant but I guess  
 it's fine  
 I don't want to be conventional  
 I want to be multi-dimensional  
 I wanna get weirdly emotional  
 And maybe start to cry  
 Is this still...

SHAWN (CONT'D)

Comedy?  
 Yeah, it's just  
 reprehensible comedy  
 It's just inaccessible  
 comedy  
 Deeply personal comedy,  
 you see

ENSEMBLE

Comedy  
 Comedy  
 Comedy  
 Comedy

SHAWN (CONT'D)

I don't want to compete  
 I just want to connect

ENSEMBLE

I don't want to compete  
 I just want to connect

SHAWN

I don't want to compete  
 I just want to connect

ENSEMBLE

I don't want to compete  
 I just want to connect

SHAWN

*I don't want to compete  
I just want to connect*

ENSEMBLE

*I don't want to compete  
I just want to connect*

SHAWN

*I don't want to compete  
I just want to connect*

PHYLLIS

*I don't want to compete  
I just want to connect*

SHAWN

*I just want to connect*

Phyllis stands up, moved by the performance. Shawn starts to go sing again, but realizes Phyllis is singing and stops.

PHYLLIS

*Comedy's a competition  
For me, it's been reduced to  
nothing more  
I used to laugh with reckless  
abandon  
Now I'm taking notes and keeping  
score  
How I yearn to return  
To the way I was before  
When I'd L.O.L. and R.O.T.F.L.  
That stands for rolling on the  
floor  
Laughing at...*

PHYLLIS (CONT'D)

*Comedy  
Oh, any sort of comedy  
I was in love with comedy  
Bring me back to comedy*

ENSEMBLE

*Comedy  
Comedy  
Comedy  
Comedy*

PHYLLIS (CONT'D)

*Comedy  
Any sort of comedy  
I was in love with comedy  
Bring me back to comedy*

SHAWN

*Oh it's comedy  
I want to touch the deeply  
absurd  
Doing comedy  
Like no one's ever heard  
Oh it's comedy  
To be alive with love and  
mirth  
I need comedy*

SHAWN (CONT'D)  
*Your laughter's my self-worth*  
*Oh, comedy*

Shawn floats off stage.

JESSE  
 Wow. I have never seen Phyllis do anything like that before.

VIC  
 (through grit teeth)  
 Good job.

PHYLLIS  
 Bravo, bravo, bravo. Wow. I truly cannot believe I was so emotionally moved by a scene with a moose in the mafia. Okay, next... Danny Bernadakis.

Danny steps up to the stage.

DANNY  
 This is a character called Boston Mark.

DANNY (CONT'D)  
 (Bostonly)  
 Hey, kid! How's your mum? You got your Dunkies? How about them Sox? Tom Brady. Tom Brady. Tom. Brady.

Phyllis is laughing heartily, her heart opened by Shawn's performance. Danny's audition continues and fades out.

**6 INT. COMEDY THEATER LOBBY - DAY**

**6**

Casey, Mel, and Kieran are hanging out in the lobby.

MEL  
 So you literally just google the word "news" to get your news?

CASEY  
 I cannot think of a better way.

KIERAN  
 There are *only* better ways. You know Google has a news tab, right?

CASEY  
 I don't know, that doesn't feel right.

MEL  
 Just download any app.

CASEY

Eh. I don't care enough about the news.

KIERAN

Wait, let me see that.

Kieran grabs Casey's phone.

KIERAN (CONT'D)

You just google the word "weather" to get your weather?

Casey grabs their phone back.

CASEY

It works for me!

KIERAN

No wonder you never know what's going on.

MEL

That gives me an idea for a show... Improv based on people's search history.

KIERAN

Oh, that's good. I would see that for sure.

CASEY

As long as you don't use mine.

Kieran pulls out their phone and begins to check it.

CASEY (CONT'D)

I don't need to be on blast like that. I search for some pretty out-there stuff.

Kieran's eyes widen.

KIERAN

Hold on. Guys. Guys. I just got an email from Chuckle Plus.

MEL

Ooh, what does it say?

KIERAN

I... didn't get it.

CASEY

Tough luck, kid. You're young though, you'll have plenty more chances.

KIERAN

Sure, I... I gotta go.

They hold back tears as they exit.

MEL

Oof. That first big rejection always hurts, doesn't it.

CASEY

Sure does. They all do. Until they don't.

MEL

Here's to that.

Mel and Casey clink their bottles.

MEL (CONT'D)

Anyway, another show pitch - drunk improv. What do you--

Danny and Shawn enter, continuing a conversation.

SHAWN

No way. 150 gallons of breastmilk?

DANNY

I'm telling you. At least 150 gallons. Every day. And it's like toothpaste. Hey Casey. Hey Mel.

Everybody greets each other.

CASEY

So, did you check your emails? Kieran just got one from Chuckle Plus.

Shawn's face is flush with excitement and nervousness. They shakily pull out their phone.

SHAWN

Oh my God.

DANNY

What is it?

SHAWN

I got a callback.

DANNY

That's great!

MEL

Congratulations.

CASEY  
We should celebrate! I'll google  
"pizza."

SHAWN  
Yeah, I... I can't do it.

Danny checks his phone as well, and sees that he also got  
a callback.

DANNY  
Why not? I'll be there. Look at  
this!

Danny shows Shawn his phone.

SHAWN  
It's, uh... I can't miss my cousin's  
briss.

DANNY  
Isn't your whole family Catholic?

SHAWN  
Yeah... it's a Catholic briss...

DANNY  
I know your family. None of your  
cousins are younger than 15.

SHAWN  
Yeah he's actually... just getting  
it touched up...

DANNY  
Shawn, Shawn, Shawn. Stop making  
excuses.

MEL  
This is a once-in-a-lifetime  
opportunity, Shawn.

SHAWN  
A once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to  
get my dreams crushed, maybe. I  
can't keep getting my hopes up. The  
CEO of Chuckle Plus is not going to  
understand me. I'm too weird.

MEL  
You're unique!

SHAWN  
I'll just embarrass myself and it  
will all be for nothing.

CASEY

Okay, worst case, yes. It goes terribly, terribly wrong.

DANNY

Sure.

CASEY

Like, really horrendously, tragically wrong.

DANNY

Okay, that's enough. Even if it does go terribly, terribly wrong. It's worth it to try.

SHAWN

I can't do this.

DANNY

Listen. If anyone can do this, it's you.

SONG 7: IF ANYONE CAN DO THIS

DANNY (CONT'D)

*I don't know what's gonna happen  
This could be a huge mistake  
But if you wanna live like you were  
meant to live  
It's a mistake you've gotta make  
There's something special inside  
you  
You've gotta give it all you've got  
to get it out  
You might not be sure that you're  
the one for this  
But me, I have no doubt  
Me, I have no doubt  
If anyone can do this it's you  
If anyone can do this it's you  
If anyone can do this it's you  
If anyone can do this it's you  
It's you  
I don't know what's gonna happen  
But whatever does, you've gotta let  
it  
And if you have faith without  
expectation  
I know for sure you won't regret  
it  
You gotta show them exactly who you  
are  
I'm telling you, this is your time  
to shine  
You've gotta be vulnerable, if you  
(MORE)*



DANNY (CONT'D)

wanna be the best  
 You've gotta put yourself on the  
 line  
 You've gotta put yourself on the  
 line  
 I know you're scared  
 But I know you're strong  
 And I'll be right there  
 With you all along  
 I know it's hard  
 What you've gotta do  
 But believe me when I say  
 If anyone can do this it's you  
 If anyone can do this it's you  
 If anyone can do this it's you  
 If anyone can do this it's you

ENSEMBLE

If anyone can do this it's you  
 If anyone can do this it's you  
 If anyone can do this it's you  
 If anyone can do this it's you

DANNY

It's you

SHAWN

Alright, I guess I have to do this.

DANNY

That's the spirit.

Shawn and Danny hug.

**7 EXT. STREET OUTSIDE THE THEATER - DAY**

**7**

Vic is alone, pacing back and forth outside the theater, nervously pacing back and forth, refreshing their phone.

VIC

Come on, come on... I'm outside, I  
 should have service!

They refresh their phone again, and see a new email appear. They quickly scan it.

VIC (CONT'D)

Yes! I knew it. Yes, yes, yes!

They continue pacing, now more excited.

VIC (CONT'D)

Okay. I got this. Smooth sailing  
 from here. As long as... well,  
 there's really only one person who  
 (MORE)

VIC (CONT'D)  
could beat me. If they don't make it, I'll be good. If they do... I'll figure it out. I just really hope they didn't give a callback to...

Shawn comes out onto the street. Vic's demeanor changes to an overly-exuberant facade of friendliness.

VIC (CONT'D)  
Shawn! Hey buddy.

SHAWN  
Hey Vic. What are you doing out here?

VIC  
Oh, you know me. Just here early for the show tonight. Punctuality! My only vice.

SHAWN  
Oh yeah. Mine's ice cream.

VIC  
Hahaha, you're so funny.

SHAWN  
Thanks. Hey, speaking of that... did you hear from Chuckle Plus?

VIC  
Oh, of course! I did get one. And, you...?

SHAWN  
Yep, somehow I did.

Vic's facade of joy breaks a little bit.

VIC  
And you're planning to go?

SHAWN  
Danny convinced me.

VIC  
Oh, wonderful! Hey, I've got an idea. Let me book our flight. I'm a rewards member for every airline, I can get us a great deal.

SHAWN  
Yeah, I guess that could--

VIC  
We can sit together! It will be so fun!

SHAWN  
Alright, sure.

VIC  
Great. I'll do it right now. You can pay me back whenever.

SHAWN  
Okay, I guess that's...

Vic pulls out their phone again and quickly taps away at a flight booking website.

VIC  
Done! I just forwarded you the confirmation email.

Shawn pulls out their phone to check.

SHAWN  
That was really fast.

VIC  
That's my other vice.

SHAWN  
Ha, yeah. Well, thanks. What a whirlwind. How much was--

VIC  
Oh, don't worry about it. We'll sort all that out later. You just get ready for the big audition.

SHAWN  
Yeah, you too!

VIC  
May the best comedian win.

SHAWN  
Right.

Shawn departs, leaving Vic alone on stage again. Vic sneers menacingly, and begins to laugh. They put their fingers together like Mr. Burns.

VIC  
Yes, yes. The "best" comedian. Ha ha ha. I'll make sure there's only one "best" comedian. Ha ha ha.

SONG 8: BAD BAD BADDIE

## VIC (CONT'D)

Comedy's a competition  
 And I'm a villain  
 I'm gonna do whatever it takes  
 To stay winnin'  
 I might do something nice  
 But it's all just an act  
 When you turn around  
 You'll get stabbed in the back  
 I'm a bad bad bad  
 Bad baddie  
 I'm a bad bad bad  
 Bad baddie  
 Who's your dad dad dad  
 Who's your daddy?  
 I'm a bad bad bad  
 Bad baddie  
 I'm a cartoon villain  
 Cruella De Vil  
 Make a coat out of you  
 On stage when I kill  
 I'm so Divine  
 I inspired a sea witch  
 I'm Ursula, baby  
 And I'm leavin' you speechless  
 Call me a Captain  
 'Cause you're gonna get hooked  
 Maleficently  
 You're about to get cooked  
 Need a round of applause  
 Make way for Jafar  
 You're gonna get the claws  
 If you're messin' with Scar  
 I'm a bad bad bad  
 Bad baddie  
 I'm a bad bad bad  
 Bad baddie  
 Who's your dad dad dad  
 Dad daddy?  
 I'm a bad bad bad  
 Bad baddie  
 I'm gonna be on top  
 Get out of my way  
 No one's gonna stop me  
 From having my day  
 I'll get what I want  
 No matter the cost  
 If you're up against me  
 You've already lost  
 I'll dupe and I'll con  
 I'll trick and I'll cheat  
 I'm not above treachery  
 Fraud or deceit  
 I'll beat anybody  
 Do what I've gotta do  
 Even if I

(MORE)

VIC (CONT'D)

*Have to sabotage you  
 I'm a bad bad bad  
 Bad baddie  
 I'm a bad bad bad  
 Bad baddie  
 Who's your dad dad dad  
 Who's your daddy?  
 I'm a bad bad bad  
 Bad baddie  
 I refuse to lose  
 Under any circumstance  
 I'll eliminate each threat  
 No one else will stand a chance  
 I'm a bad bad bad  
 Bad baddie  
 Oh, I'm a bad bad bad  
 Bad baddie  
 I said who's your dad dad dad  
 Who's your daddy?  
 I'm a bad bad bad  
 Bad baddie  
 Ha ha ha ha, ha ha ha ha, ha ha ha*

Vic takes out their phone, dials it, and puts it to their ear.

VIC (CONT'D)

*Hi, I recently booked two tickets  
 for a flight, and I'd like to cancel  
 one of them. Ha ha ha. No sorry I'm  
 just laughing maniacally. Ha ha ha  
 ha-- yes I'll hold. Ha ha ha ha ha!*

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

8 INT. AIRPORT - DAY

8

It's early in the morning at the airport. TINA (older, severe) sits at a boarding pass booth while Shawn waits in line.

TINA

Next.

Shawn approaches.

SHAWN

Hi! Beautiful morning, huh?

TINA

I.D. and boarding pass.

SHAWN

Sure thing!

Shawn takes out their I.D. and their phone with the boarding pass. Tina scans it.

TINA

It's not going through.

SHAWN

What's that? Oh, let me turn my brightness up...

TINA

It's not your brightness. Your ticket was cancelled.

SHAWN

It was-- what? No.

TINA

I'm sorry. Next!

SHAWN

Wait, I--

Tina looks at him stone-faced.

SHAWN (CONT'D)

Can I get another ticket?

TINA

You can try customer service. But good luck finding another flight to LAX this weekend.

SHAWN

Okay, can you just--

TINA

Next!

SHAWN

Please, just-- I need to get there today, they're not going to hold my spot--

TINA

That is not my problem. This line's gotta keep moving. Next!

Shawn's frustration bubbles over. Midwest emo music begins as he rants.

SHAWN

Please just have one tiny modicum of empathy for me here!

TINA

Excuse me?

SHAWN

I'm sorry, I know, I'm sure your job is a lot and I don't mean to take my frustration out on you but can you just feel something, can you try to understand! This is the most pivotal moment of my life and I'm just so-- it's like I'm on a rollercoaster, I get my hopes up and believe for a second that something good is going to come along, and then it never does because I'm never good enough, I'll never be worthy of anything good, I never should've-- and you are so mad at me just for existing, and again, I know, this does not look like a fun job and I'm sure emotional labor is draining but do you see that I'm another person here, my whole life I have been trying to express myself and connect and relate and I just never can, and you will never understand me, and I just--

Shawn begins to sing, and Tina looks even more exhausted.

SONG 9: I'M SO TIRED

SHAWN (CONT'D)

*I don't think I can do this  
I can't do this anymore  
All the times I've been through  
this*

(MORE)

SHAWN (CONT'D)

*What am I doing it for?  
I'm so tired  
I'm so tired  
I'm so tired  
I'm so tired  
Existing is so exhausting  
Why do I have to be me?  
I don't know why I keep trying  
I'll never be who I want to be*

TINA

*I understand what you're saying  
I'm tired all of the time  
But you're not really helping  
When you hold up my line*

ENSEMBLE

*I'm so tired  
I'm so tired  
I'm so tired  
I'm so tired*

SHAWN

*I just want to be free from all  
identity*

By the end of the song, Tina has been moved (ever so slightly).

TINA

*I'm sorry, honey. Next!*

9 INT. HOLLYWOOD OFFICE - DAY

9

Vic is on the makeshift stage, just finishing up an audition in front of EVERETT (40s, gravitous), Phyllis, and Jesse.

VIC

*This is my destiny  
They'll be obsessed with me  
If you're in the same room as me  
You're blessed to be  
No one can jest like me  
There's no one left to see  
You can forget about the rest  
Because the best is me  
I'm the best*

Vic bows. Everett applauds enthusiastically.

EVERETT

*Splendid. Really, really good.  
(to Phyllis)  
See? I told you Cleveland had  
talent.*



PHYLLIS  
You were right. Just wait. You can  
go now, Vic.

EVERETT  
We'll be in touch.

VIC  
Thank you so much, it was a  
privilege.

Vic slowly starts to walk away, but lingers in the room.

PHYLLIS  
Okay, our next performer... ah yes.  
Shawn.

Phyllis smiles widely.

PHYLLIS (CONT'D)  
(to Jesse)  
Can you--

JESSE  
Yes, well - apparently Shawn isn't  
here yet.

Vic sneers.

VIC  
Oh, yes, unfortunate. I think there  
might have been some sort of mix-up  
with the airline.

PHYLLIS  
Oh, no. I really think... well...  
shoot.

EVERETT  
We're on a schedule here. If Shawn  
couldn't be here on time, that's it.

PHYLLIS  
Well, maybe...

EVERETT  
No second chances. Besides, we have  
an... *excellent* pool of candidates  
already.

Everett winks at Vic.

PHYLLIS  
Of course.

Vic is still standing there, kind of awkwardly smiling and  
trying to not seem evil.

PHYLLIS (CONT'D)  
 Okay, seriously Vic, you can go now.

10 INT. COMEDY THEATER LOBBY - DAY

10

Danny is hanging out at the theater, and Shawn enters.

DANNY  
 Shawny! Back from LA already? I was just getting ready to leave.

SHAWN  
 I never left.

DANNY  
 What happened?

SHAWN  
 My plane ticket was cancelled somehow.

DANNY  
 You think Vic--

SHAWN  
 I don't know. It doesn't matter. Nothing matters.

DANNY  
 Well can you reschedule? Get another flight?

SHAWN  
 No flights. No rescheduling. This was it.

Danny sighs. There is a moment of pause between them.

DANNY  
 Take mine.

SHAWN  
 You want me to--?

DANNY  
 Take my slot. Take my plane ticket.

SHAWN  
 Danny. I can't do that. What about you?

DANNY  
 (wistful)  
 I was never...  
 (accepting)  
 I'm good here. This is where I belong. And you...

Danny looks at Shawn, feeling a strange cocktail of emotions - love, fear, pride, longing, confusion.

SHAWN  
I'm nothing.

DANNY  
(quietly)  
You're everything.

SHAWN  
What was that?

DANNY  
You're everything to me.

SHAWN  
Danny, shut up. Don't say that. I'm not anything to anyone.

DANNY  
(exasperated)  
Shawn, you shut up. Listen.

SONG 10: THE BEST OF ALL TIME (REPRISE)

DANNY (CONT'D)  
*Shawn, you have got  
To build some self-worth of your  
own  
I've been trying to help you  
But I can't do it alone  
No one else gives you your value  
You've gotta find it within  
So I'll just say this once  
And then I won't say it again  
Shawn, I adore you  
Shawn, I'd do anything for you  
Shawn, I put no one before you  
Shawn, you're the best of all time*

SHAWN  
You really think that?

DANNY  
I know you're at least the best  
*friend* of all time.

SHAWN  
Oh, Danny, no, you are.

DANNY  
You are.

SHAWN  
You are.

DANNY

Okay we don't have time for this.  
My-- your flight leaves in forty  
minutes! You have to go. Now!

Shawn kisses Danny on the cheek and runs off.

**11 INT. HOLLYWOOD OFFICE - DAY**

**11**

Phyllis, Jesse, and Everett are watching the end of another audition. BLAKE (early 20s, extremely handsome, with dog ears) is on all fours.

BLAKE

Woof! Woof!

Blake takes off the dog ears and stands up (playing another character).

BLAKE

Alright, Chester, one last time.

Blake pretends to put a record on a record player. Dance music plays. Blake gets back down on all fours, puts on the dog ears, and starts to dance as a dog. They do this for approximately ten seconds before being interrupted.

JESSE

Okay, that's your time. Thank you!

Blake crawls off stage, still as a dog.

EVERETT

Oof. That one was rough.

PHYLLIS

I don't know, I thought it was--

EVERETT

Of course you liked it. But it wasn't marketable.

Phyllis complete's Everett's sentence.

PHYLLIS

Marketable, I know. I know.

EVERETT

We need people who are TikTokable.  
Right, Jesse?

JESSE

Yes. Our performers have to have the precisely perfect amount of brainrot. The dog person either didn't have enough or they had way too much.

EVERETT

Exactly. We need people like... what was that one named? Vic?

PHYLLIS

Vic Nixon.

EVERETT

Right! People like Vic. You should be ecstatic! Vic was your pick!

PHYLLIS

Vic was *one* of my picks.

EVERETT

You did it! Vic could be the savior this company needs, and you found them. Isn't that what you wanted?

PHYLLIS

That's what I thought, but... what about the art? What about truly, deeply moving performances? When did it become all about the business? Show business, it's... Jesse, help me out here, how did I articulate this?

Jesse checks their notes.

JESSE

Right. You said "We toil at the mercy of..."

PHYLLIS

Oh yeah. I remember.

SONG 11: THAT'S SHOWBIZ

PHYLLIS (CONT'D)

*We toil at the mercy of this  
merciless machine  
The almighty dollar, the all-holy  
green  
Creating "content" for a four point  
five inch screen  
With an aspect ratio of nine by  
sixteen  
All these poor saps come to L.A. to  
chase their dreams  
They pour their hearts out on the  
stage just to be seen  
But if the market finds no value in  
them to redeem*

The lights go out when the music goes out. Phyllis changes into a glamorous costume with a sparkly top hat.

PHYLLIS (CONT'D)  
*We crush their aspirations into  
 smithereens  
 That's showbiz*

When the bass drops, a strobe starts. Phyllis does jazz hands and other dramatic showy gestures.

PHYLLIS (CONT'D)  
*That's showbiz  
 All I know is  
 That's showbiz*

Back to a sort of normal stage.

JESSE  
*I moved here thinking I would find  
 my perfect niche  
 This job's alright, but it doesn't  
 scratch that itch  
 I'm not fulfilled, but I guess that  
 I'm content  
 It's not my calling, but I've gotta  
 pay the rent*

PHYLLIS  
*That's showbiz*

EVERETT  
*Some say I only care about the  
 bottom line  
 But I'm just trying to keep this  
 company alive  
 If we want to keep making shows,  
 our business has to thrive  
 If we don't make money, we won't  
 survive*

The strobe is back.

ENSEMBLE  
*That's showbiz  
 That's showbiz  
 All I know is  
 That's showbiz*

Additional lights flash on the stage.

ENSEMBLE (CONT'D)  
*That's showbiz*

PHYLLIS  
*They turned comedy  
 Into a commodity*

ENSEMBLE  
*That's showbiz*

PHYLLIS  
*I don't think it oughta be  
 But it isn't up to me*

ENSEMBLE  
*All I know is*

PHYLLIS  
*Art is more than just a byproduct  
 of business*

ENSEMBLE  
*That's showbiz*

PHYLLIS  
*Somebody save me from this  
 industry!*

ENSEMBLE  
*That's showbiz*

EVERETT  
*That is showbiz, you know. It's not  
 called "showcharity" is it?*

PHYLLIS  
*No.*

EVERETT  
*Vic is the best for business. For  
 someone to beat Vic, their  
 performance would have to be...  
 metamorphic.*

PHYLLIS  
*You're right. It's not going to  
 happen.*

**12 INT. AIRPORT - DAY**

**12**

Tina is in the TSA check-in booth. Shawn enters.

TINA  
*You again? My luck.*

SHAWN  
*I triple checked this time. My  
 friend transferred their ticket to  
 me. My boarding pass is all good to  
 go.*

Shawn hands over the boarding pass/phone and ID.

TINA  
*It's not scanning.*

Shawn panics for a second.

SHAWN  
No, no, um... check the  
brightness...

Shawn grabs the phone and turns the brightness up.

TINA  
Alright, it went through. You're all  
set.

SHAWN  
Phew. I was about to have a heart  
attack.

Tina is still mostly stone-faced, but has a glint of  
lightheartedness.

TINA  
As long as I don't have to listen to  
another rant from you.

SHAWN  
Oh, I really am so sorry about that,  
really, I...

TINA  
It's alright. Go get 'em, honey.

SHAWN  
Thanks. Thank you.

Shawn rushes off onto the jetway.

**13 INT. HOLLYWOOD OFFICE - DAY**

**13**

Everett, Phyllis, and Jesse are waiting for Danny to show  
up. They're sitting behind the audition desk with some  
papers on it.

EVERETT  
We should just call it a day. No use  
waiting.

PHYLLIS  
I suppose you're right. We--

Shawn bursts through the door, chest heaving.

SHAWN  
I'm here... to audition... for  
Chuckle Plus.

Everett looks down at the folder in front of him.

EVERETT  
Are you Danny? You don't look like--



PHYLLIS  
No, this is Shawn.

SHAWN  
Please, I... just... elevator...  
broken... stairs? ... please...

EVERETT  
I don't have time for this. We  
already found our guy. I want to go  
home. Family Feud is on in five  
minutes.

SHAWN  
I need to do this. Please.

Shawn looks at Phyllis.

PHYLLIS  
(to Everett)  
Please. This could be the one.

EVERETT  
Alright, but this better be good.  
And QUICK. I will NOT miss Family  
Feud.

PHYLLIS  
Can't you just stream it on-demand?

EVERETT  
I like to watch it live.

PHYLLIS  
But isn't it just reruns at this  
point?

EVERETT  
I like to watch the reruns live.

JESSE  
Have you seen those TikToks with the  
hamsters dressed as Steve Harvey?

EVERETT  
No, but that sounds adorable. You  
know, Steve Harvey is from  
Cleveland.

JESSE  
No way! Cleveland really does have  
some--

PHYLLIS  
Okay, shouldn't we...?

EVERETT

Right! Let's get a move on.

Jesse sets up the camera to make sure it's ready to record the audition.

JESSE

Just go ahead slate with your name and what you'll be performing for us.

Shawn takes a deep breath and calms down a bit. As they speak, a spotlight begins to appear and the rest of the stage fades into darkness. Music begins softly and builds until the singing starts.

SHAWN

My name is Shawn Carpenter, and I'll be... I'll be doing a character called...

Shawn takes a deep breath.

SHAWN (CONT'D)

"Guy Who Just Flew For Several Hours On A Spirit Airlines Flight And Then Sprinted Up Seventeen Flights Of Stairs To Get To A Callback For What Could Be His Big Break But He's Super Nervous And Worried That His Bit Will Be Too Experimental And He's Kind Of Generally Overwhelmed By Emotion As He Attempts To Separate Himself From His Hopelessly Fragile Ego And Reconnect To The Joy He Initially Sought To Bring Through His Performance, Trying To Recapture That Feeling, That Feeling Of Pure Comedy Brought About From The Purest Form Of Love, Grief, Like That Barenaked Ladies Song That Has That Line About Laughing At A Funeral, That Feeling When You Can't Keep The Giggles In Your Mouth Because Your Brother Just Accidentally Drank Holy Water And You're Supposed To Be Sad Because Your Dad Just Died But You And Your Brother Can't Stop Giggling And Your Mom Gives You A Stern Look But You Can Tell She's Fighting Back A Smile Too And You See The Whole Pew Trying To Hold It In, Your Sister And Your Nephews And Your Uncle And Everybody Even Your Sister-In-Law Who Is Known For Her Severe Demeanor And You Think About

(MORE)

## SHAWN (CONT'D)

Your Dad And You Know You're  
 Supposed To Be Sad And You ARE Sad  
 But Somehow The Sadness Makes It  
 Even Funnier And Now You're Fully  
 Cracking Up And You're Crying, Not  
 In Spite Of The Laughter But Because  
 Of It, Because The Funniness Makes  
 It Even Sadder Because You Know He  
 Would Have Found It Funny Too And  
 You Think About All The Years You  
 Had With Him That Seemed To Go By In  
 An Instant, In One Single Instant,  
 And You Miss Him And You Love Him  
 But Also The Priest Looks Kind Of  
 Mad So You're Really Trying To Keep  
 It Together But It's Just So Funny  
 Because It Comes From The Deepest  
 Part Of You That Feeling, That Is  
 The Feeling That This Poor Guy Is  
 Somehow Going To Try To Bring To His  
 Audition, And He's Looking At The  
 Panel With Their Cold Business Faces  
 And He Thinks About All The Other  
 Comedians They've Already Seen Who  
 Are Probably Funnier Than Him And He  
 Just Wants To Express All Of This,  
 Somehow Make Them Understand,  
 Somehow Make Them Feel This Feeling,  
 Somehow, Make... Them...

SONG 12: LIVE & LAUGH & LOVE

## SHAWN (CONT'D)

*Laugh a little more  
 Louder than before  
 Saddled by the weight of time  
 progressing  
 Every stupid moment is a blessing  
 Funny 'cause it's true  
 All there is to do  
 In the face of existential  
 nonsense  
 Is to sop it up before it's gone  
 and...  
 Laugh and live and love  
 All of the above  
 Feel as deep as feelings can be  
 feeling  
 Feel it from the floor up to the  
 ceiling  
 Love and live and laugh  
 Half and half and half  
 Greater than the sum of each  
 component  
 Somewhere in the sum of every  
 (MORE)*

## SHAWN (CONT'D)

*moment*  
*There's an experience he's*  
*desperate to explain*  
*It's more than one small dumb*  
*audition can contain*  
*It's everything, it's life, it's*  
*silly, it's profound*  
*In grave absurdity, there's meaning*  
*to be found*  
*Reaching out his hand*  
*Hopes they understand*  
*He is not expecting adulation*  
*All he really wants to do is make*  
*them...*  
*Laugh and maybe cry*  
*Both at the same time*  
*He has got to make it happen some*  
*way*  
*Also he's a mime and so he can't*  
*say*  
*Words*

## JESSE

Marker.

The music continues. Shawn looks down for a second, then looks up and just shrugs and does an Urkel "Did I Do That?" type of silly expression. The music concludes, and Shawn steps out of character. Everett stands up and looks at Phyllis.

**14 INT. COMEDY THEATER LOBBY - NIGHT****14**

Danny, Casey, Mel and Vic are chatting. Mel is facing away from the entrance.

## DANNY

So his first name has always been Michael?

## MEL

Michael Caine? Yes! What else would it have been?

## DANNY

I don't know, it feels like it used to be something else.

## CASEY

You're messing with us.

## VIC

No way you are actually this dumb.

## DANNY

No, I just--

Shawn enters looking glum. Casey, Danny, and Vic stop talking.

MEL

He has been Michael Caine since at least the 60s! He's--

Mel sees the looks on their faces.

MEL (CONT'D)

What?

Mel turns around.

MEL (CONT'D)

Oh, hi Shawn.

SHAWN

Hey Mel. Casey. Danny.

Shawn pauses for a moment.

SHAWN (CONT'D)

Vic.

VIC

Shawn, listen, I--

SHAWN

It's alright. It's alright. You were right. Comedy is a competition.

Another dramatic pause.

SHAWN (CONT'D)

And I won.

DANNY

You mean you--

SHAWN

I got it.

Danny, Mel, and Casey cheer.

MEL

Yay!

DANNY

I knew you could do it.

CASEY

Good job, kid.

VIC

Well, I guess... the best. Comedian. Won.

Vic storms off, sad and angry.

CASEY  
What was...

SHAWN  
I'll tell you about it later.

MEL  
Well this is just wonderful. When do you leave?

SHAWN  
Tomorrow. They want me back tomorrow.

Danny projects happiness for Shawn, but a glint of mourning peeks through his expression.

DANNY  
Amazing. Incredible. Fabulous.

CASEY  
This calls for something more special than our typical fare.

SHAWN  
What, are you gonna google "champagne"?

CASEY  
Don't need to. I've been saving this...

Casey pulls out a Miller High Life Champagne Bottle, which is a real thing that really exists.

MEL  
Crack it open!

Casey passes out champagne flutes and pops the bottle. Shawn grabs a glass and holds it up for Casey to fill.

CASEY  
Okay, first, one condition. When you get back there, you've gotta say hi to Everett for me.

SHAWN  
Sure.

Casey pours the glass, and continues to pour the rest of the glasses while talking. No one drinks yet.

DANNY  
What, you know him?

CASEY

Sure. We grew up together.

MEL

Wait, Everett Barrington grew up around here?

CASEY

North Collinwood, born and raised.

MEL

I feel like I should have known that.

CASEY

Why else you think Chuckle Plus would have held auditions in Cleveland of all places?

MEL

I don't know, I thought someone there just really liked Mr. Hero.

DANNY

So what happened? You still stay in touch?

CASEY

Now and then, not too often. We're Facebook friends. But after high school he got out of Ohio as fast as he could.

SHAWN

That's kind of... sad.

CASEY

It is sad. But it's alright. Things change. People leave all the time.

SHAWN

Why did he leave?

CASEY

Folks with big ambitions don't tend to stick around here long. And, well... now you're one of those folks.

There is a moment of pause, everyone reflecting on the time they've shared.

DANNY

Okay, can we drink now?

MEL

One more thing. A toast. Casey?

They all raise their glasses.

CASEY

Okay. To my big brother George. The richest man in town.

MEL

Come on, do a real one.

CASEY

Alright, alright. To those who leave. And to those who stay.

Everybody clinks glasses.

SONG 13: LEAVIN' CLEVELAND

CASEY (CONT'D)

*That's one thing about Cleveland  
Everybody's always leavin'  
Somewhere better to go  
Tryna get away from the snow  
It's hard to say goodbye  
Always feels a little like death  
I know you're still alive  
We're just gonna miss you after  
you've left  
You've gotta go spread your wings  
And fly from the midwest  
You've always been a fledgling  
Now it's time to be full-fledged  
That's one thing about Cleveland  
Everybody's always leavin'  
Somewhere better to go  
Tryna get away from the snow  
You've got big dreams to follow  
And I hope they all come true  
Just remember us when you're  
famous  
We won't forget about you  
Lookin' back on all the laughs  
Makes it harder to be movin' on  
You never know you're livin' in the  
good ol' days  
Until the good ol' days are gone  
That's one thing about Cleveland  
Everybody's always leavin'  
Somewhere better to go  
Tryna get away from the snow*

SHAWN

Well, speaking of leaving... I gotta go pack. I'll see you all around.

DANNY

Make us proud, Shawn.



SHAWN  
I'll do my best.

Everybody waves as Shawn exits.

15 INT. COMEDY THEATER STAGE - NIGHT

15

Ten years later. There is a calendar that says the year "2034" or whatever. The stage is decorated for Christmas - it's a "Home for the Holidays" type of show. Kieran is setting things up. Shawn enters.

KIERAN  
Oh my God. Shawn Carpenter! *THE*  
Shawn Carpenter!

SHAWN  
Hey Kieran.

KIERAN  
Oh my God. You remember me!

SHAWN  
Of course. What, am I here early?  
Where is everybody?

KIERAN  
They'll be here. Wow, I wasn't sure  
if you'd actually show!

SHAWN  
I wouldn't miss it. How are the  
classes coming?

KIERAN  
Well, I'm up to level four now...  
and I LOVE teaching.

SHAWN  
You always had the relentless  
enthusiasm for it.

Mel enters.

MEL  
Hey, Shawn! I guess I should act  
starstruck.

SHAWN  
Nah, you taught me everything I  
know.

MEL  
And yet, you didn't thank me during  
your Oscars speech.

SHAWN  
You got your thanks during my  
Grammys speech.

MEL  
Pshh. Grammys.

Casey enters.

CASEY  
Shawn!

SHAWN  
Hey, Case.

CASEY  
Hey, big star like you, you want a  
drink on the house?

SHAWN  
Sure. What can I get?

CASEY  
Anything you like! As long as you  
still like High Life.

SHAWN  
Sure, I do.

CASEY  
Coming right up.

Casey goes back to the bar area.

SHAWN  
The place is looking great, Mel.  
Better than I remember.

MEL  
Thanks. It's a labor of love.

Casey returns with a High Life and hands it to Shawn.

CASEY  
Here ya go, kid.

SHAWN  
Perfect. Hey, you happen to know  
what the Cavs score is?

CASEY  
Give me one second.

Casey pulls out their phone. Shawn looks over at it.

SHAWN

You just googled the word  
"basketball" didn't you?

CASEY

Look, it knows exactly what I mean!  
Cavs are up 49 to 40. See, it works  
for me!

SHAWN

Love it. Some things never change.

MEL

It sure is great having you back in  
town. You know, this gives me an  
idea...

SHAWN

Another show pitch?

MEL

Yeah! A "Cleveland Homecoming" type  
of show where folks who have left us  
come back and perform here again.

KIERAN

Mel, that is literally what  
tonight's show is.

CASEY

You've officially come full circle  
and pitched every single possible  
show.

MEL

There will always be more shows to  
pitch. What about... a show where  
a... lizard... uh...

SHAWN

I've missed you guys.

MEL

We've missed you too.

SHAWN

Hey, Vic's not coming, are they?

CASEY

Vic? That jerkbag is not welcome  
here ever again after what they did  
to you.

SHAWN

It's okay. I've forgiven them.

CASEY

Still nice as ever. Guess you can take the kid out of the midwest, but you can't take the midwest out of the kid, huh?

SHAWN

Oh, that reminds me. I actually just pitched a show with Phyllis. It's called Midwest Battle Rap. It's sort of like a reverse battle, where--

MEL

Where instead of insults they compliment each other?

SHAWN

That's it!

MEL

I had the exact same idea.

CASEY

You did.

MEL

I was this close to getting it produced too. Well, now it'll get to shine with you as the star!

SHAWN

I'm not a star. I'm the same person I always was. Just got some perspective. All thanks to...

Shawn looks off into the distance and sees Danny. Danny hops onto the stage.

MEL

Hey, Danny!

DANNY

(to Shawn)

Well, well, well. If it isn't the prodigal non-binary child.

SHAWN

Well, well, well. If it isn't the non-prodigal slightly older child.

DANNY

I don't think you know what "prodigal" means.

SHAWN

I don't think it means anything.

(MORE)

SHAWN (CONT'D)

It's like one of those made-up words.

DANNY

Sure, one of those made-up words.

SHAWN

Hi Danny.

DANNY

Hi Shawn.

Danny and Shawn hug.

SHAWN

It's good to be back. So, how've things--

KIERAN

Alright, come on. Show's starting. Get off!

Everybody jumps off to the side of the stage, except for Kieran. A spotlight shines on the main microphone.

KIERAN (CONT'D)

Good evening everybody! Thanks so much for coming out tonight. Couple of housekeeping items... please silence your cell phones and refrain from flash photography (unless something really funny happens).

SHAWN

(whispered to Danny)

That bit's still in the intro script, huh?

DANNY

I know, sad, right?

SHAWN

No. I love it.

KIERAN

Bathrooms are to your left, and the bar is to your right.

SONG 14: ALT COMEDY THEATER (REPRISE)

KIERAN (CONT'D)

*Get a drink at the bar  
The bartender knows your order by heart  
Livin' the High Life on Lorain  
(MORE)*

## KIERAN (CONT'D)

Avenue  
Every weekend night and sometimes  
weeknights too

Shawn jumps up on stage.

## SHAWN

*I feel at home when I'm here  
Drinkin' the champagne of beers  
All my old friends welcoming me  
And there's nowhere else I'd rather  
be*

Every cast member gets up on stage.

## ENSEMBLE

*Alt comedy theater  
In a mid-size rust-belt city  
Guaranteed a whole boatload of  
laughs  
If you're here, you'll be feeling  
giddy  
Alt comedy theater  
We hope you enjoyed the show*

## DANNY

*And raise your hand if there's  
someone up here  
In the cast whom you personally  
know*

## SHAWN

*Alt comedy theater  
The only place you really  
wanna be*

## ENSEMBLE

*Alt comedy theater  
Live, love, and laugh our  
lives away*

## SHAWN (CONT'D)

*If you're anything, if you're  
anything  
If you're a-ny-thing like me!*

## DANNY

*Like me!*

## CASEY

*Like me!*

## ENSEMBLE

*Like me!*

## ENSEMBLE (CONT'D)

**CALLBACK!**

At the end of the song, the ensemble shouts "CALLBACK!" and the lights black out in time.

THE END