

"CYNTHIA HARMON"

Written by:  
Jim Boston

1312 N. 48th Ave., #324  
Omaha, NE 68132  
402 556-3340  
Huskercyclone@netzero.net  
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FADE IN:

EXT. CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL/COLLEGE OF THE CITY OF DETROIT - DAY

SUPER: DETROIT, MI, 9-4-1924

It's a large, Romanesque, four-story building.

Books and all, CCD students CYNTHIA HARMON (20, determined, poised) and JOSIAH WEAR (20, supportive; say "WEER") join OTHER CCD ENROLLEES in filing out of the building.

GROUPS OF HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS walk or jog out of the place on this warm, somewhat-misty Thursday.

Josiah breathes a sigh of relief.

JOSIAH

Cynthia, I can't wait 'til Central High finally gets its own building...and CCD can have this building all to itself.

CYNTHIA

But we'll have graduated from here by the time Central gets its own building.

Cynthia and Josiah stop in their tracks...only to move out of the way of STILL OTHER STUDENTS.

MAIN TITLES APPEAR OVER ACTION.

JOSIAH

It's just that things have gotten too crowded on campus.

CYNTHIA

I've gotta admit you're right, Josiah.

EXT. CASS AVENUE - DAY

Josiah and Cynthia slow their walk to a leisurely pace while a few cars tool down the street.

JOSIAH

Don't you have to get home?

Cynthia's nod is slow.

CYNTHIA

I sure wish I didn't have to...I mean, I'd rather walk into a room filled with mustard gas than come home and face Aunt Johnanne.

JOSIAH

Oh...her.

CYNTHIA

Yeah, Josiah. Her.

Josiah shakes his head up and down.

CYNTHIA (CONT'D)

Aunt Johnanne makes the wicked stepmother in "Cinderella" look like the Virgin Mary.

JOSIAH

Huh...huh?

CYNTHIA

Or somebody like that.

Now Josiah nods in slow motion.

CYNTHIA (CONT'D)

Ever since my parents died two years ago in that freak accident at the Timken Detroit factory and Aunt Johnanne adopted me, she's treated me like her personal maid.

Cynthia shifts her books around for comfort.

CYNTHIA (CONT'D)

If I'd've known I was gonna be the family maid, I would've had her buy me a maid's uniform...no, she would've had me buy it myself.

EXT. WOODBURYS' HOUSE - DAY

This one's a boxy, new-looking two-story house in the Motor City's Dexter Linwood area.

JOHNNANNE WOODBURY (41, cagey, cutthroat, jealous) and her oldest daughter CARRIE (20, bashful) reach the house's front stairs at the same time.

JOHNNANNE

Carrie, it's your turn to open the door. I did it yesterday.

CARRIE

Oh, all right, Ma.

Carrie fishes through her purse and dredges up her copy of the house key.

INT. WOODBURYS' PARLOR - DAY

While Johnanne bursts through the door to this heavily-furnished space, Carrie saunters in.

Johnanne cringes.

JOHNNANNE

Where's Cynthia?

CARRIE

She's on her way home from classes.

JOHNNANNE

Hmph.

Johnanne brushes pillows off a sofa and sits down there.

CARRIE

Ma...Cynthia's a junior at the College of the City of Detroit. She just got offered a music scholarship.

Johnanne growls.

CARRIE (CONT'D)

Until last year, it was Detroit Junior College. But now, it's a four-year school. And Cynthia was one of the first to get a music scholarship to stay at CCD.

Carrie watches her mother motion her into a seat on the sofa.

CARRIE (CONT'D)

(sitting down)

She's a better musician than all four of us.

JOHNNANNE

Hmph.

CARRIE  
Combined.

JOHNNANNE  
You're telling stories.

CARRIE  
No, I'm not, Ma. In fact, Cynthia's  
looking to break into vaudeville.

Johanne gestures her disbelief.

Carrie's sisters, books in hands, burst through the parlor  
door: DAISY (16, levelheaded, a peacemaker) and EADWINA (15,  
stagestruck, a go-getter).

Johanne jumps from her seat and points at Eadwina and Daisy.

JOHNNANNE  
Did you two hear what your oldest  
sister said about Cynthia?

EADWINA  
No, Ma.

Daisy gravitates toward the family piano...a 1900-24 upright.

DAISY  
(sits down at piano)  
What did Carrie say about Cynthia?

JOHNNANNE  
That she's...Cynthia's...a better  
musician than the four of us in  
this room.

Dead silence...for a few seconds.

DAISY  
Carrie's right.

JOHNNANNE  
Daisy Mae Woodbury, have you been  
drinking the suds again?

DAISY  
Ma, you know I don't drink!

JOHNNANNE  
I mean your own bath water.

Eadwina bursts into laughter...but Carrie, Daisy, and  
Johanne stare her into silence.

EXT. HARRISON STREET - DAY

Cynthia and Josiah walk on until they reach:

EXT. HARRISON STREET PUB - DAY

The two CCD students stroll toward a small, lengthy, two-story building marked by a circular entrance.

The pub adds spark to its residential neighborhood.

Once the door opens from inside, Josiah holds it for Cynthia, who nods with a smile.

INT. HARRISON STREET PUB BARROOM - DAY

The twosome amble inside a space that features an enormously-long bar (plus, across the aisle, tables for foursomes).

A built-in bench rests on a wall near the front entrance.

Cynthia's and Josiah's arrival triggers cheers from the place's owner, TOM "WINKY" HEILEMANN (42, jovial), who cleans glasses from behind the bar.

Three CCD enrollees show elation from a table: RUTH NALLIN (20, White), ELMER SCHULTE (19, White), and NARVIN RAY MCKINLEY (21, resourceful, Black). All three nurse Cokes.

WINKY

(to Cynthia and Josiah)

Welcome back, you two! Glad you could make it!

CYNTHIA

Thanks, Winky!

JOSIAH

That goes double.

WINKY

What can I get you two?

While Josiah joins Elmer, Narvin Ray, and Ruth at their table, Cynthia starts for an 1880-1909 upright piano at the back of the barroom.

CYNTHIA

(along the way)

Nothing for me yet. Right now, I just wanna bang out some tunes I've written.

Cynthia's four classmates applaud.

ELMER

Speaking of tunes, Cynthia...you  
oughta perform 'em at the  
Cinderella Theater.

Cynthia sets her books on top of the piano, then takes a seat  
at the instrument's stool.

CYNTHIA

That new place way out on East  
Jefferson Avenue?

RUTH

(nodding)

Opened up back in January.

Winky, Narvin Ray, Ruth, Josiah, and Elmer watch Cynthia pull  
out a notebook. Johnanne's niece extracts some sheet music  
from the notebook and spreads it out on the music rack.

NARVIN RAY

Yeah, Ruth. They're having a talent  
show at the Cinderella this  
Halloween...last Friday in October.

JOSIAH

And Cynthia, you won't have to  
dress up like a pumpkin.

Josiah's fellow students laugh.

CYNTHIA

Anyway...I've been thinking a lot  
about my ma and pa...and I've been  
working on a little song about 'em.

Cynthia wallops out five or six introductory bars...then an  
arpeggio. The piano's honky-tonky sound brings a smile to  
Josiah's, Narvin Ray's, and her faces.

Now she slows the music down to set up the first verse.

CYNTHIA (CONT'D)

(singing, too)

*Edward and Eleanor were  
lovers./They met at the ol' axle  
plant./They made quite a team  
stampin' out the gears./They had  
the biggest love a twosome could  
have.*

At the bar, a delighted Winky pours cola into two glasses. He hands one glass to Josiah and the other to Cynthia.

INT. WOODBURYS' KITCHEN - DAY

Eadwina, Daisy, Carrie, and a livid Johnanne lift canned goods from a shelf in this cozy, well-furnished spot.

JOHNNANNE

This oughta be Cynthia's job.

Johnanne slams a can to the kitchen table.

CARRIE

Ma...we can do it, too.

Johnanne's daughters place their canned items onto the table while Carrie absorbs a withering look from Johnanne.

CARRIE (CONT'D)

Just...this once.

EADWINA

Carrie...are you out of your mind?

CARRIE

No, Eadwina. No.

Eadwina drapes an arm around Carrie's shoulders.

EADWINA

But think about how--

CARRIE

No...you think about this: You or Daisy or I might get married someday.

Daisy and Johnanne race to a kitchen cabinet.

CARRIE (CONT'D)

And even if we don't, being able to cook is a basic survival skill.

Middle Daughter holds Mother at arm's length while Eadwina removes her arm from Carrie's shoulders.

DAISY

Allow me.

Daisy takes a can opener from a cabinet drawer...Carrie grabs sauce pans from another drawer in the cabinet.



CARRIE

Eadwina...we're gonna have to learn  
how to cook.

Daisy opens a can and empties its contents into a pan, then puts the pan on the range. Her sisters and their ma follow right along.

JOHNNANNE

(pointing at Daisy)

Let me ask you something: Who's the  
mother in this house?

Carrie, Eadwina, and Daisy sit at the kitchen table.

DAISY

You are.

Eadwina and Carrie shake their heads "yes."

DAISY (CONT'D)

I was afraid you were gonna grab a  
knife instead of a can opener.

Johanne stares in anger at Daisy.

INT. HARRISON STREET PUB BARROOM - NIGHT

IT'S NOW A PACKED HOUSE!

Cynthia continues to put on quite a show at the barroom's old upright...whose music rack has now been removed.

She treats the patrons to a rollicking, self-written rag.

Most of the new customers are CCD students; most drink Cokes or what passes for beer or what masquerades as whiskey.

Ruth and Elmer turn to Narvin Ray.

RUTH

Narvin Ray...Elmer and I can't wait  
'til we get to be your age.

ELMER

So we can drink whiskey.

RUTH

Or beer.

NARVIN RAY

You mean to tell me you wanna drink  
that crap that's been thrown at us  
these last four years and eight  
months...instead of the real thing?

A chuckling Josiah eyeballs Elmer and Ruth.

JOSIAH

He's got a point.

Now Cynthia brings her rag down the home stretch...and at the  
bar, A MAN (60s) nurses a fake beer while talking with Winky.

MAN

Who's that on the piano? She's  
playin' like she's about to go to a  
fire!

WINKY

Cynthia Harmon. She goes to the  
(pointing eastward)  
College of the City of  
Detroit...she's a music student.

MAN

I wish she'd come to the Cinderella  
Theater.

Winky's nod is enthusiastic.

MAN (CONT'D)

She'd burn that place up!

WINKY

Let me get you another...almost  
beer.

The man with the fake beer shakes his head up and down while  
Cynthia wraps up her ragtime contribution.

When strong applause breaks out, Cynthia bows and bows before  
she takes a sip of Coke.

CYNTHIA

Thanks so much, everybody!

JOSIAH

(to Cynthia)

What was that tune you just got  
through playing called?

Cynthia takes another sip, then turns to Josiah.

CYNTHIA  
Well...I think I'll call it "The  
Glass Slipper Rag."

Applause rings out again. When it dies down:

NARVIN RAY  
You know, Cynthia...I know a man  
who knows a man who knows a man who  
knows Eubie Blake.

Cynthia's eyes light up.

NARVIN RAY (CONT'D)  
Somebody big oughta tell the world  
about you.

ELMER  
(standing up)  
I'll drink to that!

While other customers click their glasses, Elmer downs the  
rest of his Coke.

CYNTHIA  
By the way...I think I'll enter  
that talent show next month.

ELMER  
I'll drink to that!

But Elmer realizes his glass is empty.

INT. WOODBURYS' KITCHEN - NIGHT

With dinner out of the way, Johnanne finishes putting the  
dishes away; Eadwina, Daisy, and Carrie (she holds a dish  
cloth) stand behind her.

JOHNNANNE  
Sit down, you three.

Johnanne's daughters gravitate to the kitchen table while  
Johnanne herself goes to another kitchen drawer...to pull out  
a deck of playing cards.

JOHNNANNE (CONT'D)  
(sits down at table)  
We're gonna play poker.

DAISY  
Not again!

CARRIE

Yeah, Ma...you always win.

JOHNNANNE

You've just gotta concentrate.

Eadwina nods...but draws cross looks from Carrie and Daisy.

EADWINA

We might as well play poker  
tonight.

(eyeballing Daisy)

It's the only way you and I are  
gonna get an allowance.

Carrie flings that dish cloth toward the sink...and earns a  
withering look from Johnanne.

SAME SCENE - A BIT LATER

At the kitchen table-cum-poker table, Johnanne, Eadwina,  
Daisy, and Carrie stare at their cards (when not looking at  
the stack of money in the middle).

Now a sly look crosses Johnanne's face.

JOHNNANNE

Be right back.

Johnanne grabs her cards and leaves the table.

SAME SCENE - A MINUTE LATER

Cynthia's aunt holds her cards in one hand...and a box of  
cigars (maybe White Owls or Wm. Penns) in her other hand.

All four poker players are seated.

JOHNNANNE (CONT'D)

(sets her cards down)

Everybody grab a cigar.

CARRIE

You've gotta be kidding.

DAISY

Ma, I'm only sixteen! And Eadwina's  
only fifteen!

Johnanne places the cigar box on the table.

JOHNNANNE  
 You know how old I was when I  
 started smoking?

CARRIE  
 Ma...I don't wanna know.

JOHNNANNE  
 Twelve.

EADWINA  
 That's how old I was when I started  
 smoking!

Carrie and Daisy stare at a grinning Eadwina.

SAME SCENE - STILL LATER

As the poker game continues tight, Johnanne and Eadwina puff  
 away on their cigars as if Mark Twain or Amy Lowell.

JOHNNANNE  
 That's it!

Johnanne throws a dollar into the pot.

Daisy and a coughing Carrie struggle with their own stogies.

DAISY  
 Yuck!

CARRIE  
 I've had it!

Carrie puts her cigar in an ashtray, then bolts out of her  
 seat to grab a glass from the cupboard.

CARRIE (CONT'D)  
 I wish this glass were the size of  
 Lake Superior!

Daisy places her own cigar in the same ashtray.

EADWINA  
 Carrie...grab your cards!

The oldest Woodbury daughter fills her glass with tap water.

CARRIE  
 But I've got a losing hand!

Carrie lets out one more cough before she sips from her  
 glass...just when THE FRONT DOOR OPENS O.S.

Cynthia arrives home...and reaches the kitchen.

She notices the Woodburys' smoke-filled poker exhibition...and heads out the front door again.

CYNTHIA  
(shakes her head "no")  
I'm outa here.

JOHNNANNE  
Cynthia Mae Harmon, you get back in  
this house! Right now!

Cynthia shrugs on her way up the stairs.

CYNTHIA  
I will, Aunt Johnanne...but I've  
homework to do!

JOHNNANNE  
You're telling the truth! Put your  
damn books down and grab a broom!

Johnanne gains stares from her biological daughters while  
Cynthia jogs up the stairs with her books.

MONTAGE SEQUENCE

INT. CYNTHIA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Cynthia sets her books on her bed in this modestly-furnished  
space. She sprints out of there and goes to:

INT. WOODBURYS' KITCHEN - NIGHT

While Carrie, Daisy, and Eadwina TEAM UP O.S. ON PIANO,  
Cynthia sweeps the floor, cleans the table, and empties the  
ashtray(s)...while shaking her head sideways.

INT. CARRIE'S/DAISY'S/EADWINA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

In this cramped-but-lavishly-adorned room that features bunk  
beds and a third bed, Cynthia sweeps away.

On Eadwina's and Daisy's bunk-bed side, Cynthia...shakes the  
former's cigar butts from an ashtray into a wastebasket!

INT. JOHNNANNE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Cynthia sweeps the best-looking bedroom in the house...and  
rids its ashtray of cigar butts.

INT. WOODBURYS' BATHROOM - NIGHT

Now Cynthia polishes the mirror before she cleans the toilet.

INT. WOODBURYS' PARLOR - NIGHT

While her daughters continue to pound the ivories, Johnanne listens from her favorite chair and puffs another stogie.

Cynthia listens, too...and flashes a "sure wish I could help my cousins" look.

Johnanne's niece settles for feeding the family goldfish.

INT. CYNTHIA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

She sweeps her own space.

EXT. WOODBURYS' HOUSE - NIGHT

Cynthia empties the contents of all the wastebaskets into a trash barrel.

END MONTAGE

INT. CYNTHIA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

An exhausted Cynthia grabs her alarm clock and finds it reads 10:00 PM...too late for homework.

She sets her books on her desk, then grabs her pajamas from a chest of drawers.

EXT. CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL/COLLEGE OF THE CITY OF DETROIT - DAY

Josiah and a glum-looking Cynthia (books and all) saunter toward the building on this nippy Friday morning.

JOSIAH

You look like you're the one who  
lost the battle to get America to  
join the League of Nations.

CYNTHIA

I sure could've used their help  
after I got home last night.

The twosome reach the front door.

CYNTHIA (CONT'D)

Aunt Johnanne made me do chores all  
night long after I got home.

Josiah holds the front door for Cynthia.

JOSIAH  
What time'd you get done?

CYNTHIA  
Ten.

She goes inside first...he follows.

INT. CENTRAL HIGH/CCD FIRST FLOOR HALLWAY - DAY

Cynthia notices a flyer on the bulletin board: "TALENT SHOW!  
FRIDAY, OCTOBER 31, 7:30 PM, AT THE CINDERELLA THEATER, 13305-  
09 E. JEFFERSON AVE."

In smaller letters: "YOU DON'T HAVE TO DRESS UP LIKE A  
PUMPKIN...OR WITCH...OR DRACULA. JUST BRING YOUR TALENT."

She turns to Josiah.

CYNTHIA  
That's the show Narvin Ray McKinley  
was talking about last night.

Cynthia reads on.

CYNTHIA (CONT'D)  
Says here that first prize is ten  
dollars, a silver cup, and...a  
weekend engagement at the  
Cinderella Theater itself!

JOSIAH  
Cynthia...tell me you still wanna  
enter.

CYNTHIA  
(pointing to Josiah)  
I intend to win it hands down.

Cynthia and Josiah hug...while GROUPS OF OTHER STUDENTS pour  
into the hallway.

INT. CENTRAL HIGH/CCD AUDITORIUM - DAY

Cynthia struggles with a rather tricky, rather demanding  
classical piece on a grand piano onstage in this cavernous,  
formidable space.

TEN OTHER CCD STUDENTS (all male) join with the instructor,  
LOUIS AZNAVOUR (40s), as they stand around the piano.



Louis gestures Cynthia into a halt to her music.

LOUIS  
More forceful, Miss Harmon! More  
forceful!

Cynthia rests her hands on her lap.

CYNTHIA  
I'm trying my best, Mr. Aznavour.

A few of Cynthia's classmates laugh.

Louis comes over to Cynthia's side.

LOUIS  
I worry so much about you this  
morning. You've played better than  
this...are you all right?

CYNTHIA  
Well, it didn't help that my Aunt  
Johanne piled a ton of chores on  
me as soon as I got home.

LOUIS  
From...

Cynthia looks at the other students, then at Louis.

CYNTHIA  
The Harrison Street Pub.

Louis' face freezes...until CLINT HUSING (19) eyeballs him.

CLINT  
Hey, I've been there. And I've seen  
Cynthia--

LOUIS  
WHAT?

CLINT  
I didn't go there to drink, Mr. A.  
I went there to hear Cynthia--

LOUIS  
(pointing at Clint)  
Mr. Husing, you skate on thin ice!

A few students laugh...but Louis wheels around to gesture the  
laughers into silence.

CYNTHIA

I go there because they've got a  
swell old upright there.

Louis' nod is slow.

CYNTHIA (CONT'D)

The action in that old upright's  
just like the one at home...nice  
and easy.

Cynthia tries that troublesome piece again...for a staff.

CYNTHIA (CONT'D)

My sixteen-year-old cousin...the  
weightlifter...would love this  
piano here.

CLINT

He would, Cynthia?

CYNTHIA

She.

(plays an arpeggio)  
Cousin Daisy lifts weights 'cause  
she found out it helps her own  
piano playing.

Students stare at each other in shock...Louis eyeballs  
Cynthia in his own brand of consternation.

LOUIS

Miss Harmon...perhaps you should  
also make with the barbells and  
dumbbells.

A smiling Cynthia puts the piano through a glissando.

EXT. FIRST NATIONAL BUILDING - DAY

PEDESTRIANS hurry inside this twenty-six-story downtown icon.

INT. HALLWAY OUTSIDE THE JOHNSON AGENCY - DAY

Johanne puts a death grip on her purse as she hurries toward  
a door whose handpainted sign reads: "THE JOHNSON AGENCY."

With one hand on her purse, she muscles the door open with  
her other hand.

INT. JOHNSON AGENCY LOBBY - DAY

Receptionist Carrie types away behind her desk in this plush, well-furnished space...where THREE PEOPLE (one a man who totes a trombone case) doze off in wooden chairs.

Carrie and the sleepers snap to attention when Johnanne bursts into the lobby.

CARRIE  
Ma...you left with three other  
agents and Jerome.

Johnanne lunges toward Carrie's desk.

JOHNNANNE  
That's right.

CARRIE  
What happened?

JOHNNANNE  
Now you know they can't keep up  
with me.

Carrie shakes her head "yes" in a tired manner.

CARRIE  
Emil's here...and he wants to  
audition for you.

EMIL FILIPSKI (30s), the man with the trombone case, waves at Johnanne. He jumps out of his seat.

JOHNNANNE  
You're Emil?

EMIL  
Well, I'm sure not Ty Cobb.

Johnanne's face lights up.

JOHNNANNE  
Come with me.

Emil follows Johnanne out of the lobby.

JOHNNANNE (CONT'D)  
And you better make that horn talk.

INT. JOHNNANNE'S OFFICE - DAY

In this sparsely-adorned office, a seated Johnanne props her feet against her desk while Emil remains erect.

JOHNNANNE

Like I said...you better make that horn talk.

Emil opens his trombone case and yanks out...an iron torch!

Johnanne almost falls out of her seat.

EMIL

Johnanne, I'm not a musician.

JOHNNANNE

I'll be a damn--

EMIL

I'm a fire eater.

JOHNNANNE

You want fire...you got fire!

Now Johnanne pulls a big cigar out of a box and dredges her lighter from her purse.

She fires up the torch and the stogie at the same time.

EMIL

You see, ma'am, I heard about this talent show they're gonna have at the Cinderella Theater this Halloween.

JOHNNANNE

AND YOU DIDN'T EVEN TELL ME?

Emil can't answer.

He's launched his fire-eating act.

INT. WOODBURYS' PARLOR - DAY

Eadwina, Cynthia, and Carrie watch Daisy, who sits at the old upright, work with hand weights.

EADWINA

(to Cynthia)

What are you doing here?

CYNTHIA

I thought that if I worked with hand weights, it would help my own playing.

A huge smile forms on Daisy's face.

DAISY

Be my guest.

Daisy passes one hand weight to Cynthia, who follows along with Daisy...who continues on with the other weight.

DAISY (CONT'D)

And besides...all four of us are family.

CYNTHIA

Thanks so much, Daisy.

CARRIE

Wouldn't it be keen if all four of us could get together and work together--

Eadwina charges toward Carrie until they're face to face.

CARRIE (CONT'D)

It was just a thought, Eadwina.

The front door bursts open...and reveals Johnanne, who enters with a shopping bag that bulges with sheet music.

JOHNNANNE

Cynthia, get in the kitchen!

A shrugging Cynthia hands that hand weight back to Daisy, who resumes her two-weight workout.

JOHNNANNE (CONT'D)

Now!

Cynthia scampers off to the kitchen as Johnanne tosses the shopping bag onto a coffee table. Some music sheets fall out of the bag and onto the table.

JOHNNANNE (CONT'D)

Carrie...Daisy...Eadwina...you've got work to do before dinner.

DAISY  
 (heads for kitchen)  
 You know, I wouldn't mind helping  
 Cynthia out--

JOHNNANNE  
 Not that kinda work!

Johnanne gestures Daisy back to the parlor.

JOHNNANNE (CONT'D)  
 I found out from a fire eater at  
 the agency this afternoon that  
 there's gonna be a talent show this  
 Halloween at the Cinderella  
 Theater.

Three young heads nod.

JOHNNANNE (CONT'D)  
 Any of you three know anything  
 about it?

Daisy and Carrie shake their heads "no."

INT. WOODBURYS' KITCHEN - DAY

Cynthia shakes her head up and down while she puts spaghetti  
 into a boiling pan...and overhears the parlor conversation.

INT. WOODBURYS' PARLOR - DAY

Johnanne zeroes in on Eadwina.

EADWINA  
 Ma...I saw a flyer on the bulletin  
 board at school.

JOHNNANNE  
 Why didn't you tell me?

EADWINA  
 I...I wasn't ready.

JOHNNANNE  
 Don't gimme that!

EADWINA  
 I wasn't ready to enter...a talent  
 show.

JOHNNANNE

Don't you dare gimme that, Eadwina  
Marie Woodbury! The way you play  
piano and trombone, you're ready!

INT. WOODBURYS' KITCHEN - DAY

A grinning Cynthia grabs canned goods from a cupboard.

INT. WOODBURYS' PARLOR - DAY

Johanne points to the sheet music on the coffee table, then  
gestures her three daughters toward the coffee table.

JOHNNANNE

You three are gonna learn some  
songs for the talent show this  
Halloween. And you're gonna win  
that thing!

Eadwina, Daisy, and Carrie browse the sheet music.

JOHNNANNE (CONT'D)

Hands down!

INT. WOODBURYS' KITCHEN - DAY

Cynthia chuckles as she opens a can of corn.

CYNTHIA

(pours corn into pan)  
I wish Aunt Johanne would let me  
help them.

She sets the now-full pan on the stove.

INT. WOODBURYS' PARLOR - DAY

Johanne smirks while she watches Daisy, Eadwina, and Carrie  
examine that sheet music.

JOHNNANNE

There's a copy for each of you.

Daisy's eyes sparkle.

JOHNNANNE (CONT'D)

Another thing: I found you the song  
that's sweeping the country.

Daisy holds up her copy of "It Had to Be You."

JOHNANNE (CONT'D)

That's the one I'm talking about.

DAISY

Ma, I love this song...especially  
the way Isham Jones and His  
Orchestra do it.

JOHNANNE

I'm glad you like it. You three are  
gonna learn it...up and down, left  
to right, side by side, forward and  
backwards.

EADWINA

Don't worry, Ma. We will!

Carrie and Daisy shake their heads in the affirmative.

JOHNANNE

You better!

But Carrie cringes when she finds three copies of "Sleep."  
She grabs her own "Sleep" copy and holds it for all to see.

CARRIE

Hate to tell you this, Ma...but I  
hate this song.

JOHNANNE

LEARN IT!

Eadwina and Daisy shrug as Carrie sets her "Sleep" copy back  
on the coffee table.

SAME SCENE - FOUR HOURS LATER

Cynthia jazzes up "Sleep" at the family piano while Carrie,  
Eadwina, and Daisy watch.

Daisy and Carrie look impressed...Eadwina's exasperated.

When Cynthia ends "Sleep" with a bang, Eadwina strides over  
to her.

EADWINA

Don't you have some cleaning to do?

CYNTHIA

No, but I've got some homework.

Cynthia moves off the piano bench and goes toward her room.



CARRIE  
 (applauding)  
 Great job of playing, Cynthia!

CYNTHIA  
 (along the way)  
 Thanks so much, Carrie!

With the three Woodbury daughters now the parlor's only occupants, Eadwina moves in on Carrie, who grabs a ukelele.

EADWINA  
 Ma doesn't want us fraternizing  
 with the help.

DAISY  
 Eadwina...she's our cousin, not the  
 help!

CARRIE  
 And I really like the way she plays  
 "Sleep."

Carrie tunes her ukelele while she turns to Eadwina.

CARRIE (CONT'D)  
 Cynthia really has some good ideas--

Eadwina and her oldest sister now stand face to face.

CARRIE (CONT'D)  
 Well...I like to think so!

EADWINA  
 You want some good ideas, Carrie?  
 Wait here!

And Eadwina runs upstairs...

SAME SCENE- STILL LATER

...and she returns to the parlor with a banjo in her hands.

EADWINA (CONT'D)  
 Put that uke down and wrap this  
 around you.

Carrie sets her ukelele aside and grabs the banjo.

EADWINA (CONT'D)  
 A uke won't carry all the way to  
 the back rows at the Cinderella.  
 You'll do better with that banjo.

CARRIE  
 (straps banjo on)  
 Okay. I'll give it a try.

EADWINA  
 Daisy...go to the piano.

DAISY  
 Okay!

While Daisy takes a seat at the family upright, Eadwina wrestles a trombone out of a case.

Johanne gravitates her way to the parlor.

EADWINA  
 I wrote a real stomper...and it oughta work with a banjo, a piano, and a trombone.

DAISY  
 (to Eadwina)  
 Where'd you put it, Winna?

EADWINA  
 Open up the bench, you strong one, you!

Daisy jumps off the piano bench and pulls three copies of Eadwina's stomper from the bench. The family weightlifter hands a copy to each sister.

Johanne sets a music rack in front of Eadwina, then does the same for Carrie.

Each Woodbury sis sets the music in front of herself.

JOHANNNE  
 (sits on sofa)  
 Whatcha three got?

EADWINA  
 Something I wrote called..."Woodbury Stomp."

Johanne rubs her hands in delight.

JOHANNNE  
 See? Cynthia ain't the only one in this house who can write a song!

A beaming Eadwina puts her trombone together.

JOHNANNE (CONT'D)

She thinks she can do everything we  
can do...only better.

CARRIE

Ma...she can.

DAISY

You've gotta admit she's a better  
musician than any of us.

JOHNANNE

That's a load of applesauce!

Daisy, Carrie, and Eadwina eyeball each other.

JOHNANNE (CONT'D)

Why don't you three show her who's  
really in the money?

Eadwina holds her trombone with one hand and snaps the  
fingers of her other hand for a medium downbeat.

EADWINA

(to her sisters)

One! Two! One, two, three, four!

Daisy, Eadwina, and Carrie launch into Eadwina's stomper.

Johanne likes what she hears...even if "Woodbury Stomp"  
needs serious work.

EXT. CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL/COLLEGE OF THE CITY OF DETROIT - DAY

The rain beats down as Josiah and Cynthia stroll toward the  
dual-purpose building on this second Monday in September.

The twosome share his umbrella.

In front of them, CHS STUDENTS and THEIR CCD COUNTERPARTS  
strain to get inside.

CYNTHIA

How're your classes coming?

JOSIAH

Well...not too bad. But that new  
instructor they've got in domestic  
art's got me between a rock and a  
hard place.

Josiah closes his umbrella...and the two inseparables go  
inside at last.

INT. CENTRAL HIGH/CCD MUSIC CLASSROOM - DAY

With lots of time left before class begins, Cynthia walks into an empty classroom...and sits right down at a pre-1924 upright piano at the front of the class.

She bats out the first verse of "California, Here I Come."  
Clint enters the room by the time Cynthia reaches the chorus.

Halfway through the song's chorus, Cynthia stops the music.

Johanne's niece pulls out a sheet of music paper...and works out a similarly-paced tune.

CLINT

Cynthia, why'd you stop?

CYNTHIA

I just wanted to come up with my own take on "California, Here I Come."

Clint sits down alongside Cynthia at the piano.

CLINT

I know you're itching to get away from that no-good aunt of yours.

CYNTHIA

(with a big smile)

Not only that...I keep thinking about this saying my ma used to have.

Cynthia scribbles notes onto her sheet music.

CYNTHIA (CONT'D)

She used to motivate herself by saying: "Slowly but surely, I'm getting better each and every day."

Clint's nod is slow as the classroom fills with MORE STUDENTS FROM CCD.

CLINT

You gonna use that at the talent show next month?

CYNTHIA

If I'm not, then we're not going to college in a growing city in Michigan.

Now Cynthia tries out some more notes.

CLINT

Just one thing: Keep that song away  
from Mr. A.

Louis bounds into the room...and Cynthia hurries to put her budding tune away.

EXT. THIRD AVENUE BAR AND GRILL - DAY

Here's a small, lengthy, two-story downtown building marked by a black-and-orange awning.

INT. THIRD AVENUE BAR AND GRILL BARROOM - DAY

This space also houses an enormously-long bar...as well as, across the aisle, tables for foursomes.

The barroom's half full of CUSTOMERS...mostly business types.

Johanne and fellow agents CLYDE SPEARS (46), ABE KRUMHOLZ (62), and SETH DONALDSON (45) sit, eat lunch, and nurse drinks at one of those tables.

At a table in back of theirs: JEROME JOHNSON (44), the man who runs the Johnson Agency...and who, today, eats as if he's got no tomorrow.

CLYDE

(eyeballing Jerome)  
Mr. Johnson, you really must be  
hungry.

JEROME

And not just hungry for acts.

Two or three agents laugh.

SETH

(takes a bite)  
Well, if it'll help, I'm trying to  
get Baby Peggy to come to Detroit  
to promote her upcoming picture.

Jerome turns around to point at Seth.

JEROME

You mean "The Family Secret?"

SETH  
 Opens on the twenty-eighth of this  
 month...and if things work out,  
 Baby Peggy should be here a week  
 later.

Abe, Clyde, and Jerome look impressed.

Johanne just stews.

ABE  
 Seth Donaldson, you shrewd son of a  
 gun--

SETH  
 Thanks a bunch, Abe!

Seth and Abe click their glasses.

JOHANNNE  
 That's nothing!

Clyde and Jerome drop their forks while Johanne sips away at  
 her drink.

ABE  
 So, Johanne...who you tryin' to  
 land? Buster Keaton? Doug  
 Fairbanks? Clara Bow?

JOHANNNE  
 Amy Lowell.

Four men stare in puzzlement at Johanne.

CLYDE  
 Amy Lowell's a poetess...not an  
 actress.

JOHANNNE  
 Poet!

Johanne points at Clyde with her knife.

JOHANNNE (CONT'D)  
 Poet! Poet! POET!

CUSTOMERS AT THE BAR gaze at Johanne.

JOHANNNE (CONT'D)  
 Damn it, she's a poet!  
 (puts her knife down)

JOHNANNE (CONT'D)

And she's my favorite poet...okay,  
person who writes poems.

(takes a bite)

And she and I both like the same  
brand of cigars.

Jerome and Seth go back to eating.

ABE

Whatcha gonna book her to?

JOHNANNE

Orchestra Hall.

Clyde breaks out in convulsive laughter.

JOHNANNE (CONT'D)

Listen, Clyde: She'll clear out the  
Cinderella Theater if I book her  
there.

CLYDE

You're better off booking your  
three kids into Orchestra Hall.

SETH

Johanne, maybe you'd better book  
those kids of yours into the  
Cinderella Theater instead.

A huge grin decorates Johanne's face.

JEROME

(through bites)

You guys...our agency's reputation  
is at stake.

Jerome receives a withering look from Johanne.

INT. CENTRAL HIGH/CCD FIRST FLOOR HALLWAY - DAY

Josiah and Cynthia stroll toward the exit when Daisy,  
Eadwina, and A FEW OTHER CHS ENROLLEES spot them.

All tote schoolbooks...Daisy and Josiah tote their umbrellas.

CYNTHIA

Don't worry, Eadwina and Daisy.  
I'll be home as soon as possible.  
Got schoolwork to polish up.

DAISY

(nodding at Cynthia)

It's all right. Take your time.

Eadwina stares in anger at Daisy.

EADWINA  
No, it's not all right!

Daisy and Eadwina watch Cynthia and Josiah leave the combination high school/college.

DAISY  
Eadwina...Cynthia's in college.

EADWINA  
So?

DAISY  
College has more homework than high school.

The two youngest Woodburys stroll toward the exit.

DAISY (CONT'D)  
For some people, college is the next step on the road to being on your own.

EADWINA  
Carrie didn't need college.

Daisy opens the door for Eadwina...but A FEW OTHER STUDENTS beat Eadwina to the exit.

At last, Eadwina catches up to Daisy.

EXT. CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL/COLLEGE OF THE CITY OF DETROIT - DAY

Daisy and her cigar-loving sister walk on in the rain.

DAISY  
(opens her umbrella)  
Think how much better a musician Carrie would be if Ma hadn't put her foot down and made Carrie go work at the Johnson Agency as a receptionist.

EADWINA  
At least Carrie's bringing money home.

DAISY  
And she's gotta hide it from Ma.



EXT. HARRISON STREET PUB - DAY

Josiah holds the front door for Cynthia; he closes his umbrella and follows her into the watering hole. (Both continue to tote their books.)

JOSIAH

That instructor in domestic art's  
gonna be the bee's knees after all.

Cynthia nods.

INT. HARRISON STREET PUB BARROOM - DAY

Cynthia and Josiah walk inside...and receive cheers from Clint, Elmer, Narvin Ray, and Ruth (who sit at a table for foursomes).

Winky washes an empty glass...but sets it aside to clap for Johnanne's niece.

WINKY

Hey, Cynthia! Glad you're back to  
liven this place up!

OTHER CUSTOMERS bring the pub to one-fourth capacity.

CYNTHIA

Thanks, Winky!

Josiah and Cynthia sit down at a table in back of the one their CCD buddies occupy.

CYNTHIA (CONT'D)

Been waiting all day to come back  
here.

NARVIN RAY

That makes seven of us.

Narvin Ray points to himself and his six fellow collegians.

SAME SCENE - A BIT LATER

THE PLACE IS NOW FULL OF CUSTOMERS!

While most of the newcomers drink bogus beer or fake whiskey, Clint, Cynthia, Elmer, Josiah, Narvin Ray, and Ruth eat pizza and sip Cokes.

Josiah breaks out a notebook (maybe a Big Chief tablet) and a pencil...to sketch the Harrison Street Pub crowd.

RUTH

Josiah, I've never seen you bring  
your sketch pad in here before.

JOSIAH

Well, I've got a reason now.

ELMER

(through bites of pizza)  
Wouldn't bringing a Brownie camera  
in here and just snapping a picture  
get the job done faster?

CLINT

Tell you what, Elmer: You bring  
that Brownie camera in here next  
time.

ELMER

I've gotta buy one first!

Elmer's tablemates bust out in laughs.

Cynthia rises from her seat.

NARVIN RAY

(to Cynthia)

How's that Cinderella Theater act  
of yours coming?

CYNTHIA

Narvin Ray, we're about to find  
out.

And Cynthia strides over to that 1880-1909 upright piano.

When she sits down and hits the opening chords to  
"Charleston," the pub explodes in applause.

Between the song's first verse and the tune's chorus, Cynthia  
flashes a huge grin...and jumps off the piano stool to  
attempt to do the Charleston while she continues to play.

Josiah turns to a clean sheet of paper...to capture Cynthia  
in her dual role.

When Cynthia's turn as a piano-playing hooper heats up, the  
crowd's applause kicks back in.

Elmer hoists his glass as he turns to Ruth and Narvin Ray.

ELMER

You know me...

His table buddies watch Elmer down his cola.

INT. WOODBURYS' PARLOR - DAY

In a suit, slacks, and bow tie, Eadwina sits at the family piano...where she scribbles out a George Gershwin-like tune and smokes a cigar.

Carrie and Daisy walk into the parlor...only to look puzzled.

CARRIE

Well, if that doesn't beat all.

Eadwina turns around to look at her two sisters.

EADWINA

I figured: "If I'm gonna write like George Gershwin...I need to look like him."

CARRIE

Uh...huh.

EADWINA

And we still need some material for next month's talent show...in case the stuff Ma bought us doesn't work.

DAISY

(with a slow nod)

Winna...what you're writing does sound pretty good.

EADWINA

We've all heard of "Rhapsody in Blue."

Daisy and Carrie shake their heads "yes" while Eadwina takes a long puff.

EADWINA (CONT'D)

Well, I'm calling my number..."Adagio in Red."

CARRIE

Oh...kay.

EADWINA

Don't worry, Carrie. I know an adagio is a slow number.

Carrie leads Daisy into the kitchen...but Eadwina (cigar and all) runs after them.

EADWINA (CONT'D)  
Come on, you two! Have I ever failed you?

INT. WOODBURYS' KITCHEN - DAY

Daisy and Carrie sip a glass of water each while Eadwina WORKS O.S. on "Adagio in Red."

CARRIE  
I still can't get over Eadwina acting like George Gershwin.

DAISY  
I know George Gershwin is one of the best composers around today...but what in the world's he got against lollipops?

Eadwina's two sisters chuckle.

INT. JOHNNANNE'S OFFICE - DAY

In her seat at her desk, Johnanne props her feet up while SADIE MCGONIGLE (25) and VIOLETTA COOPERMAN (26) stand next to the office's 1910-19 upright piano.

JOHNNANNE  
Okay, you two. Give.

SADIE  
Violetta and I work downstairs at the bank.

VIOLETTA  
Sadie and I are secretaries.

Johnanne shakes her head "yes."

SADIE  
When the rest of the staff at the bank saw our act, they kept begging us to enter next month's talent show at the Cinderella Theater.

VIOLETTA  
On top of that, they asked us to find an agent.

SADIE

And that's why we're here.

Sadie and Violetta lock arms.

JOHNNANNE

So...what do you two do?

VIOLETTA

Sadie and I sing and play the piano.

JOHNNANNE

So do my three daughters. And my niece.

SADIE

Well, Mrs. Woodbury...wait 'til you hear this.

Arm in arm, Violetta and Sadie stroll over to the piano, sit down, and tickle out "School Days, When First We Met."

The two bank employees play a treacly eight-bar, waltz-timed intro, then add their own vocals:

SADIE, VIOLETTA

*Parting brings a lot of things, / While sunshine of youth is a blaze.*

SADIE

*I recall the best of all--*

VIOLETTA

*The scenes of my dear school days.*

An arpeggio from the twosome brings the tune into the chorus.

Johanne looks unimpressed.

SADIE

*I met you in school days.*

VIOLETTA

*And I can never forget.*

SADIE, VIOLETTA

*We were kids together then--*

SADIE

*And parting was my one regret.*

SADIE, VIOLETTA  
*Though we've drifted through the  
 years--*

VIOLETTA  
*You're in my memory yet.*

SADIE  
*Oh, take me back to childhood days--*

Violetta stops playing...only to break down in racking, hysterical sobs.

An infuriated Johnanne and a bewildered Sadie (the latter quits playing) eyeball Violetta.

VIOLETTA  
 (still in tears)  
 I'm so sorry...it's just that this  
 song always makes me puddle up...

Sadie tries her best to console her buddy.

JOHANNNE  
 Don't you two know any "up" tunes?

SADIE  
 We do...but they're just not as  
 fun.

Johnanne jumps out of her seat...Sadie and Violetta remove themselves from the piano bench.

JOHANNNE  
 You two bring me an "up" tune...and  
 I'll represent you two.

Violetta and Sadie saunter away from the office.

SADIE  
 Okay.

VIOLETTA  
 (drying her eyes)  
 Thank you for the opportunity.

Sadie shuts the door when she and Violetta leave the room.

Johnanne sits back down, stuffs a cigar between her lips, and grabs her phone.

JOHANNNE  
 All right, Seth. You win.

Johanne places the phone's cradle on the desk and lifts the receiver to her ear.

EXT. CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL/COLLEGE OF THE CITY OF DETROIT - DAY

At last...a sunny day in the Motor City!

INT. CENTRAL HIGH/CCD FIRST FLOOR HALLWAY - DAY

Between classes, Daisy walks alongside classmates RUDY CULVER (16) and THEDA KELLEY (17).

RUDY

Sure, Daisy, sure. You're a weightlifter.

THEDA

(pointing to Daisy)

If you're a weightlifter, then Warren Harding never died.

RUDY

Take it from me: Girls don't lift weights. My sister proves that hands down. She's so darn weak.

THEDA

Girls aren't strong enough to lift weights...and that's all there is to it.

DAISY

You don't think I lift weights? Watch this!

All three stop in their tracks when Daisy spots Clint, the first male she finds afoot.

Daisy hands her books to Theda and Rudy.

After a bit of effort, Daisy lifts Clint off his feet.

Clint's mouth flies open while he's in flight.

Daisy's two classmates watch in puzzlement.

DAISY (CONT'D)

Don't worry. I'll be gentle.

Theda and Rudy eye each other in shock before they turn their attention back to Clint and Daisy.

SOME MORE STUDENTS stop to watch Daisy's exhibition.

With the utmost of care, Daisy puts Clint back on his feet.

CLINT  
 (eyeballing Daisy)  
 So...you're Cynthia Harmon's  
 weightlifting cousin.

DAISY  
 Well...you're right.  
 (offers Clint her hand)  
 I'm Daisy Woodbury.

CLINT  
 Clint Husing.

Clint and Daisy shake hands.

CLINT (CONT'D)  
 Cynthia and I take music at CCD.

Theda and Rudy look even more bewildered. Nonetheless, they give Daisy her books back.

DAISY  
 Clint...meet classmates Rudy Culver  
 and Theda Kelley.

While OTHER STUDENTS walk by, Clint, Rudy, and Theda shake hands with each other.

CLINT  
 Nice to meet you two.  
 (heading off)  
 I've got a class to go to...see you  
 later.

Clint heads in one direction and Theda, Rudy, and Daisy the opposite way.

RUDY  
 Daisy...you could've tried to lift  
 a Central High student instead of  
 one from CCD.

THEDA  
 (to Rudy)  
 Do you know of a good clairvoyant?

Rudy looks puzzled.

THEDA (CONT'D)  
 Somebody who can hold a seance?



The three Central High enrollees reach their destination:

INT. CENTRAL HIGH/CCD ENGLISH CLASSROOM - DAY

The busily-furnished classroom fills with MORE STUDENTS when teacher CLARA SCHOOLMASTER (50s) approaches Daisy, who just about finds her seat.

CLARA  
Daisy...the principal handed me a  
note to give you.

Clara gives the note to Daisy, who accepts it.

DAISY  
Mrs. Schoolmaster...is it bad?

CLARA  
(with a slow nod)  
Open it up.

A reluctant Daisy unfolds the note.

CLARA (CONT'D)  
Your younger sister Eadwina  
received the same note.

Daisy reads the note...and shakes her head sideways.

DAISY  
Oh...boy...

CLARA  
It's all right. You're excused for  
the remainder of the day.

The other students watch Daisy wince out of the room.

EXT. CASS AVENUE - DAY

The Central High/CCD complex is far in the background as Daisy and a distraught Eadwina lug their books home.

EADWINA  
I can't believe it! I just can't  
believe it! Carrie's dying!

DAISY  
She was in the best of health this  
morning.

The two teenagers watch cars roll down the street.

DAISY (CONT'D)  
 Maybe that cigar Ma made her smoke  
 when we were playing poker caught  
 up with her.

EADWINA  
 Nonsense!

DAISY  
 What I don't get is: Why didn't Ma  
 tell Cynthia that Carrie's dying?

With her free hand, Eadwina points at Daisy.

DAISY (CONT'D)  
 Just a thought, Eadwina.

Carrie's two sisters walk on.

DAISY (CONT'D)  
 Anyway, I'm surprised we've gotta  
 meet Carrie at the agency.

EADWINA  
 Daisy...Ma told me there's a doctor  
 on one of the middle floors of the  
 First National Building.

DAISY  
 Yeah...maybe she's there.

Daisy and Eadwina stop, rearrange their books, and link arms  
 to resume their stroll.

DAISY (CONT'D)  
 Here's another thing I'm trying to  
 wrap my brain around: Ma wants you  
 to bring your trombone and me my  
 accordion.

Eadwina forces a smile onto her face.

EADWINA  
 Maybe she wants us...to play a  
 dirge for Carrie...

Daisy tries to hug her little sister.

INT. JOHNSON AGENCY LOBBY - DAY

The piano from Johanne's office now rests in the middle of  
 the lobby...and a radiant-looking Carrie sits at it. (Her  
 banjo rests next to the piano.)

Cigar in hand, Johnanne herself sits next to Jerome; they, Seth, Clyde, and Abe occupy the chairs meant for clients.

At the receptionist's desk: PUNI PANOKE (a woman of 25; Asian)...who looks amused by the show about to happen.

JEROME

Johanne, what in the world have you got against cigarettes?

Jerome receives a withering look from Johnanne.

JOHANNNE

Do you like drinking beer out of a shot glass?

Clyde and Puni laugh.

JEROME

You mean real beer or the kind they've been forcing on us these last four years and eight months?

Abe and Seth join Puni and Clyde in laughter.

Daisy (with her accordion case) and Eadwina (trombone case in tow) burst into the lobby, where they spot Carrie.

Puni eyeballs the two youngest Woodburys...and earns shocked looks in return.

PUNI

What can I do for you two?

EADWINA

We're...we're Carrie's two sisters.

DAISY

Yeah.

Eadwina and Daisy put their instrument cases next to Carrie's banjo, then turn to Johnanne.

EADWINA

Ma, you said Carrie was dying!

JOHANNNE

She is!

Daisy turns in a grin...but Eadwina does a slow burn.

JOHNNANNE (CONT'D)  
She's dying to audition alongside  
the both of you.

A smiling Carrie points at Johnanne.

ABE  
(pointing to Johnanne)  
That was pretty sneaky.

SETH  
Abe, we've gotta talk about the  
definition of sneakiness.

Puni looks at Carrie's two sisters.

PUNI  
Go ahead, you two...let's hear how  
you and Carrie sound together.

Daisy and Eadwina open their cases and pull out their  
respective instruments.

CLYDE  
All right, you three Woodbury  
sisters, whatcha got?

CARRIE  
Here's our version of...Paul  
Whiteman's "Linger Awhile."

EADWINA  
And we hope you'll sit back and do  
what the song's title says.

Clyde and Puni laugh...Daisy nods at Eadwina...a huge smile  
decorates Johnanne's face.

Pianist Carrie bangs out an eight-bar intro that leads  
accordionist Daisy into soloing the next sixteen bars (a  
verse) while trombonist Eadwina toots a countermelody.

So far, Jerome looks impressed with "Linger Awhile's" nice,  
easy, steady beat.

Puni and Clyde study Cynthia's cousins hard.

Abe and Seth cast hopeful looks at each other.

And Johnanne's face features an I-told-you-so look.

INT. WOODBURYS' PARLOR - DAY

Books, bags, and all, Josiah and Cynthia enter the house.

CYNTHIA

It's been a long time since I came home to an empty house.

Josiah looks around.

JOSIAH

Maybe your cousins and their ma went shopping.

CYNTHIA

If that's the case, Josiah, Aunt Johnanne's spending my cousins' money.

Cynthia and Josiah place their books on the coffee table.

CYNTHIA (CONT'D)

I remember when Carrie got her first paycheck from the Johnson Agency.

JOSIAH

I know Carrie had to find that really keen.

CYNTHIA

It was...until Aunt Johnanne took Carrie's first paycheck and spent it at Foley's over on Woodward.

Cynthia and her guest sit on the sofa.

CYNTHIA (CONT'D)

And spent every cent of Carrie's money on a box of every brand General Cigar Company makes.

Josiah bolts out of his seat.

JOSIAH

Speaking of Johnanne...I've got an idea.

A wide grin decorates Cynthia's face.

JOSIAH (CONT'D)

Since she's not home...and your  
cousins aren't home...let's get  
this house ship-shape.

CYNTHIA

(claps her hands)

Fine with me.

(standing up)

You take the upstairs...and I'll  
take the downstairs.

JOSIAH

Copacetic!

Cynthia heads for the kitchen while Josiah goes upstairs.

He comes back downstairs...where she hands him a broom.

INT. JOHNSON AGENCY LOBBY - DAY

Carrie plays banjo, Daisy tums the old piano, and Eadwina  
remains on trombone in a "Woodbury Stomp" that moves along a  
bit faster than before...but is still not yet a barnburner.

Jerome still looks impressed...Puni and Abe like what they  
hear...and for Johanne, the Woodbury Sisters can do no  
wrong. Period.

Puni catches Seth's skeptical look.

PUNI

C'mon, Seth. They're just warming  
up.

Seth watches Clyde shrug at Puni.

INT. WOODBURYS' BATHROOM - DAY

Josiah polishes the mirror, cleans the sink, and removes the  
dirt from the bathtub.

Next: Yep...the toilet.

INT. WOODBURYS' KITCHEN - DAY

Cynthia transfers the last of the kitchen dirt from the  
dustpan into a wastebasket...then grabs a few cans from the  
shelf in an effort to start dinner.

INT. CARRIE'S/DAISY'S/EADWINA'S BEDROOM - DAY

Josiah sweeps the floor...then looks aghast when he finds an ashtray. He grimaces as he dumps Eadwina's cigar butts from the ashtray into the wastebasket.

INT. WOODBURYS' KITCHEN - DAY

Lard melts in a frying pan under medium heat...and Cynthia unwraps a package of pork chops.

INT. JOHNNANNE'S BEDROOM - DAY

Josiah's face stays in frown mode: He dumps cigar butts from this room's ashtray into the room's waste receptacle.

INT. WOODBURYS' KITCHEN - DAY

Sauce pans and the frying pan cover up all four burners on the stove as Cynthia continues to cook.

INT. JOHNSON AGENCY LOBBY - DAY

Abe, Clyde, Jerome, Johnanne, Puni, and Seth watch Daisy, Eadwina, and Carrie (left to right) pound out a rollicking six-hand, one-piano version of "Yes! We Have No Bananas."

Of the six Johnson Agency staff members, only Seth doesn't look convinced...and Johnanne stares in anger at him.

Daisy jumps off the piano bench; Eadwina and Carrie move over so that Daisy occupies Carrie's old spot...and the threesome take "Yes! We Have No Bananas" through one final chorus.

Johnanne's daughters play a crude glissando before one crashing, six-handed chord ends the song.

Puni joins Johnanne in boisterous applause.

Jerome breaks into a huge smile.

JEROME

Carrie, would you and Daisy and Eadwina excuse us for a minute?

CARRIE

Of course, Mr. Johnson.

EADWINA

(to Puni and the agents)  
We would've played my "Adagio in Red," but it works better if the three of us played a piano each.

CLYDE  
I'll buy that, Eadwina.

Jerome gestures Clyde into joining him; Johnanne, Seth, and Abe grow the huddle into a quintet.

PUNI  
Mr. Johnson...may I join up?

JEROME  
Sure, Puni. Come on over.

Puni jogs into a spot in the employees' huddle.

SAME SCENE - A BIT LATER

Eadwina, Carrie, and Daisy watch from the piano bench as Jerome, his agents, and Puni break the huddle.

SETH  
Carrie, Daisy, and Eadwina...you three do have some things to work on in order to be a top-notch vaudeville act.

JOHNNANNE  
(pointing at Seth)  
Watch it!

SETH  
But then...even Al Jolson has some things he's gotta work on.

Abe and Jerome look dumbfounded.

CLYDE  
Seth, how long you been with us?

Jerome takes a step toward Eadwina, Daisy, and Carrie.

JEROME  
Welcome to the Johnson Agency family of acts.

The Woodbury Sisters whoop it up from the piano bench...Johnanne dances in place in ecstasy.

When the cheering dies:

EADWINA  
We're very, very, very happy to join your roster.



DAISY  
My sisters and I ask just one  
thing.

Seth and Abe shrug.

JEROME  
What can we do for you three?

CARRIE  
We'll gladly join your roster of  
acts...as long as you let Clyde or  
Abraham or Seth represent us.

Johanne's fellow agents nod at each other.

JOHANNNE  
NOT ON YOUR LIFE!

Eight sets of eyes stare at Johanne.

JOHANNNE (CONT'D)  
I mean...not on your THREE lives!

Carrie looks at the piano's keys...Eadwina rests her chin on  
her fists...Daisy manages a shrug.

INT. WOODBURYS' KITCHEN - NIGHT

Cynthia (now dressed like a flapper) washes Josiah's and her  
dirty dishes and Josiah dries them before he kisses her.

CYNTHIA  
Thanks for all your help, Josiah.

JOSIAH  
Glad to do it, Cynthia.

The two lovers head toward:

INT. WOODBURYS' PARLOR - NIGHT

While Cynthia walks toward the family piano, Josiah reaches  
into his bag and...pulls out a Brownie camera.

JOSIAH  
That was some dinner you put  
together.

CYNTHIA  
Thank you!  
(sits at piano)

CYNTHIA (CONT'D)

As long as the food doesn't get cold when Carrie, Daisy, Eadwina, and Aunt Johnanne get back.

Cynthia rearranges the sheet music on the upright's music rack...only to turn around to spot Josiah and his camera.

JOSIAH

Elmer had a point about a camera.

CYNTHIA

That's the great thing about him: He's so full of surprises.

Johnanne's niece pulls out a copy of "It Had to Be You." She opens it up and spreads the copy on the music rack.

Josiah positions himself closer to Cynthia and the piano.

JOSIAH

Whaddya say you go from one kind of cooking to another kind?

CYNTHIA

I'm all for that!

SAME SCENE - A BIT LATER

Under Cynthia's hands, "It Had to Be You" is a sensuous, passionate, slow-tempo number.

CYNTHIA (CONT'D)

(singing, too)

*It had to be you./It had to be you./I wandered around and finally found the somebody who/Could make me true, could make me blue,/And even be glad just to be sad, thinking of you.*

Josiah snaps as many pictures as possible of his musically-talented girlfriend.

CYNTHIA (CONT'D)

*Some others I've seen might never be mean,/Might never be cross, or try to be boss, but they wouldn't do,/For nobody else gave me a thrill. With all your faults, I love you still.*

Now Josiah sits next to Cynthia on the piano bench.

CYNTHIA (CONT'D)  
*It had to be you, wonderful you, it  
 had to be you.*

Cynthia delivers an arpeggio or two to end the tune.

JOSIAH  
 You know...you oughta play that at  
 the talent show next month.

Josiah studies Cynthia's slow nod.

CYNTHIA  
 Why not?

Cynthia's boyfriend sets his camera atop the piano; the  
 twosome hold hands.

CYNTHIA (CONT'D)  
 Josiah Joshua Wear...I'm glad it  
 had to be you.

JOSIAH  
 And Cynthia Mae Harmon...I'm so  
 glad it had to be you, too.

The two CCD students lock lips and hug each  
 other...when...the front door opens.

Johanne, Eadwina, Daisy, and Carrie troop into the parlor.

Johanne fumes once she sees Cynthia and Josiah make love.

JOHANNNE  
 (gesturing)  
 Get upstairs, you three!

While her daughters trudge up the stairs, Johanne reaches  
 into a closet...and pulls out a rifle.

She points the weapon at Josiah, and...

JOHANNNE (CONT'D)  
 YOU! GET OUT!

...BANG! Johanne shoots at Josiah (and the bullet hits a  
 vase instead of him).

CYNTHIA  
 Aunt Johanne! What's the big idea?

Josiah hurries to grab his bag, books, and camera. He scurries out of the house and shuts the front door...to the tune of another gunshot that misses him and hits a wall.

Eadwina, Carrie, and Daisy sneak a peek...but:

JOHNNANNE  
GET BACK UPSTAIRS!

Cynthia's three cousins scurry back upstairs.

Johanne chases Cynthia around the parlor with the rifle.

CYNTHIA  
Don't start this again! I'm not gonna pay for the fact that you and Ma couldn't get along with each other!

JOHNNANNE  
You're just like her!

CYNTHIA  
What did I ever do to you that you've gotta chase my boyfriend out of the house? I mean, I've got a life that includes more than cooking and cleaning--

BANG! Johanne fires another shot...Cynthia barely ducks and the bullet hits the sofa.

JOHNNANNE  
This is MY house! And you've got the kinda life I'm gonna give you!

That's enough for Daisy, Carrie, and Eadwina...who run down the stairs.

Carrie and Eadwina try to shield Cynthia while Daisy sneaks behind Johanne.

CARRIE  
Stop it, Ma!

JOHNNANNE  
STAY OUTA THIS, CARRIE!

As Johanne sets to launch one more shot, Daisy barely lifts her off her feet.

DAISY  
Ma...put the rifle down!

JOHNNANNE

I'm your mother! Put me down!

EADWINA

Ma, drop the rifle!

Johanne throws her rifle to the floor.

Carrie teams up with Daisy to carry Johanne to her favorite chair. Cynthia and Eadwina breathe relief.

JOHNNANNE

I'm not through with you, Cynthia.

Cynthia, Carrie, Eadwina, Daisy, and Johanne attempt to recline on chairs or the sofa.

JOHNNANNE (CONT'D)

I saw you and that...that...

CYNTHIA

His name is Josiah.

JOHNNANNE

Yeah, and you and he were showing off at the piano. You were singing him those damn songs of yours!

CYNTHIA

(with a slow nod)

And some of the songs Daisy, Eadwina, and Carrie are learning.

(to her cousins)

I really love "It Had to Be You."

Daisy beams.

CYNTHIA (CONT'D)

I found that if I slow it down to about half the tempo of Isham Jones' version--

Johanne bolts out of her favorite chair. She moves to a spot inches away from Cynthia.

JOHNNANNE

You're trying to horn in on that talent show at the Cinderella Theater next month.

CYNTHIA

That's right. I've entered.

Now Johnanne goes after her rifle...but her daughters jump up to block her path.

CYNTHIA (CONT'D)

Same contest that Carrie, Eadwina, and Daisy have just entered.

JOHNNANNE

Just remember, Miss Harmon: If you set foot on that Cinderella stage, you ain't gonna live to tell about it!

Dead silence...for a few seconds.

CYNTHIA

I'll just have to take that chance.

Johnanne reaches back to slap Cynthia...only to return to her favorite chair instead.

CYNTHIA (CONT'D)

I might end up having a ninety-minute vaudeville career...but at least I'll die happy.

Cynthia's remark draws smiles from Carrie, Daisy, and Eadwina...and a slow burn from Johnanne.

EXT. WOODBURYS' HOUSE - DAY

TWO KIDS pedal bikes down the street on this sunny Saturday.

INT. WOODBURYS' PARLOR - DAY

Cynthia tends to the goldfish while Eadwina, Daisy, and Carrie dance to A RECORD playing on the family Victrola.

Johnanne reclines at her favorite chair again as she puffs a cigar...and looks unimpressed by the dance routine.

JOHNNANNE

Pick it up! Pick it up!

Carrie, Eadwina, and Daisy try to step livelier.

CYNTHIA

Aunt Johnanne, is it all right to make a suggestion?

JOHNNANNE

NO!

Johanne's daughters stop hoofing.

DAISY  
Would've been nice to hear  
Cynthia's suggestion.

Eadwina and Carrie AD LIB their agreement with Daisy.

CYNTHIA  
I've heard Daisy and Carrie and  
Eadwina play lots of times...and I  
know that making music is their  
strong suit.

Johanne bolts out of her seat. She points to Cynthia.

JOHANNNE  
Go cut the grass!

CYNTHIA  
It's still too moist. It rained  
yesterday...remember?

JOHANNNE  
Cut the damn grass!

A shrugging Cynthia stalks out of the parlor.

DAISY  
Ma...Cynthia's right.

JOHANNNE  
No, Daisy. I'm right.

CARRIE  
Don't you remember, Ma? The three  
of us had a ball making music at  
the Johnson Agency.

The Woodburys HEAR the back door slam shut.

JOHANNNE  
Do you three wanna win that talent  
show or not?

CARRIE  
Of course we do!

EADWINA  
But we're not gonna win it if we  
add that dance routine you've been  
trying to get us to do.

Eadwina, Daisy, and Carrie gravitate to the piano bench. All three sit down.

EADWINA (CONT'D)  
We're musicians...not dancers.

JOHNANNE  
You're what I say you are!

DAISY  
We don't have what Cynthia's got!

JOHNANNE  
You're gonna get what Cynthia's got! No ifs, no maybes, no buts!

Johnanne takes a long puff from her stogie while her daughters eyeball each other.

JOHNANNE (CONT'D)  
(zeroes in on Daisy)  
And if you ever pick me up again like a sack of potatoes, I'm gonna cut off your head and bake it!

Eadwina titters.

EADWINA  
Don't forget to cut her hair off, Ma.

Daisy and Carrie shoot dirty looks toward Eadwina.

INT. HARRISON STREET PUB BARROOM - DAY

Winky pours Cokes behind the bar...a bar Clint, Cynthia, Elmer, Josiah, Narvin Ray, and Ruth occupy.

Cynthia's face shows grim determination.

WINKY  
Cynthia, you look like you're ready to graduate to bootleg.

CYNTHIA  
It's bad, Winky...but not that bad.

Each young bar occupant receives a Coke from Winky.

CYNTHIA (CONT'D)  
I don't care if it's hooch or the real thing...I don't wanna touch it.



CYNTHIA (CONT'D)

(taking a sip)  
That's what killed my Uncle  
Ulysses...Aunt Johnanne's husband.

NARVIN RAY

(nodding)  
Yeah. I remember that. He died a  
couple of years ago this May.

Clint sips his Coke, then eyeballs Cynthia.

CLINT

You always tell me your Aunt  
Johnanne's enough to make anybody  
drink.

JOSIAH

Clint...Cynthia's telling the  
truth.

CYNTHIA

Uncle Ulysses died four months  
before my own ma and pa died in  
that freak accident at the axle  
plant.

RUTH

(sipping her Coke)  
Yeah, Winky. Cynthia's uncle died  
on the way home from her high  
school graduation party.

WINKY

Did he get ahold of some bad hooch?

CYNTHIA

Not only that...after he and Aunt  
Johnanne got in an argument, he  
drove off and ran into a power  
pole.

Elmer picks up his Coke glass...only to set it back down.

CYNTHIA (CONT'D)

And of course, it could never be a  
family get-together without Aunt  
Johnanne arguing with Ma.

NARVIN RAY

(to Cynthia)  
And that's why Ulysses drove off.

A glum look crosses Elmer's face.

WINKY  
Elmer...is your Coke all right?

ELMER  
Can you give me a glass of water,  
too, please?

WINKY  
You bet.

ELMER  
I can sure use a double.

Winky pours water into a glass, then hands Elmer the glass.

ELMER (CONT'D)  
Thanks, Winky.  
(to Josiah)  
It's not enough that that witch  
wants to bump Cynthia off for  
entering the talent show...that  
witch tried to pick you off.

JOSIAH  
Yeah...Cynthia and I wanna graduate  
from CCD first.  
(to Winky)  
May I have a glass of water, too,  
please?

WINKY  
Absolutely, Josiah.

Now Winky grabs a glass, pours water into it, and gives  
Josiah the glass.

JOSIAH  
Thanks a bunch, Winky.

CYNTHIA  
You know what, everybody?

Her CCD barmates eyeball Cynthia.

CYNTHIA (CONT'D)  
I'm more determined than before to  
do that talent show.

Clint, Narvin Ray, Ruth, Elmer, and Josiah cheer.

CYNTHIA (CONT'D)

(taking another sip)  
And I don't care if it kills  
me...I'm gonna get a chance to not  
only coach my three cousins...but  
also make music alongside 'em.

RUTH

Cynthia...you've got guts.

NARVIN RAY

More guts than Harry Houdini, I'll  
tell you that.

ELMER

That does it!

Elmer raises both his glasses...Josiah elevates his two  
glasses...Ruth, Clint, Cynthia, and Narvin Ray lift their  
individual glasses.

Winky pours Coke into a glass...then hoists that glass.

ELMER (CONT'D)

Let's all drink to Cynthia  
Harmon...the most determined young  
performer about to break into show  
business!

Glasses click all across the bar.

ELMER (CONT'D)

Whether or not she gets a sheepskin  
from the College of the City of  
Detroit!

The six CCD students and Winky click glasses again...then the  
seven at the bar guzzle away.

CLINT

Hey, everybody...wouldn't it be  
peachy keen if we could find Harry  
Houdini's handcuffs and slip 'em on  
Johnanne Woodbury?

The gang breaks out in laughter.

ELMER

I'd drink to that...if my two  
glasses weren't empty.

As Elmer's buddies guffaw, Winky fills one of Elmer's glasses  
with Coke and the other with water.

INT. JOHNNANNE'S OFFICE - DAY

That 1910-19 upright piano's back in Johnanne's office...and a switchblade-wielding Johnanne uses it as a target!

The Johnson Agency's sole female agent proves lousy with a knife, too.

Johnanne HEARS a knock on the door just as she retrieves the switchblade from its landing point (not the piano, for sure).

JOHNNANNE

COME IN!

Purse in her grip, Puni enters Johnanne's office...and does a doubletake when she spots the knife in the latter's hands.

PUNI

Uh, Johnanne...what're you doing?

JOHNNANNE

I'm trying out for the 1928 Olympics.

Puni's mouth hangs open.

JOHNNANNE (CONT'D)

This year's Olympics already finished up.

PUNI

Since when did knife throwing become an Olympic event?

JOHNNANNE

You just never know.

Johnanne shoves her knife into a desk drawer.

JOHNNANNE (CONT'D)

Whatcha need, Puni?

PUNI

I need to give you a letter.

Puni opens her purse and pulls out an envelope. Johnanne snatches the document out of Puni's hands.

Johnanne reads the upper-left corner of the envelope: "AMY LOWELL, BROOKLINE, MASS."

Puni watches a gleeful Johnanne strut around the office.

PUNI (CONT'D)  
Aren't you gonna read the letter?

JOHNANNE  
Are you kidding? Not now!

Johanne kisses the letter!

EXT. WOODBURYS' HOUSE - DAY

A car speeds by on this first Saturday in October.

INT. CYNTHIA'S BEDROOM - DAY

Up much earlier than usual, Cynthia finishes dressing herself. After she dons her shoes, she grabs her banjo case, tiptoes out of her room, and...

INT. HALLWAY OUTSIDE CARRIE'S/DAISY'S/EADWINA'S BEDROOM - DAY

...taps on the door to the cousins' bedroom.

The door opens...and Daisy gestures Cynthia in.

INT. CARRIE'S/DAISY'S/EADWINA'S BEDROOM - DAY

Cynthia comes inside...and breathes relief when she finds Daisy, Eadwina, and Carrie already dressed.

The foursome whisper their strategy.

CYNTHIA  
Are you ready to do this?

Carrie and Daisy nod...but Eadwina looks perplexed.

CYNTHIA (CONT'D)  
If we don't do this now, we'll never do it. It's do or die.

EADWINA  
Cynthia, did you have to say "die?"

DAISY  
(to Eadwina)  
Well, I'm dying to do this...and I know Cynthia is, too.

EADWINA  
We haven't eaten yet!

CARRIE  
No problem. We'll eat at school.

CYNTHIA

Yeah, Eadwina. Carrie and I sneaked off and made us some sack lunches to take with us.

DAISY

Only they're sack breakfasts.

CYNTHIA

We'd better get going...before Aunt Johnanne catches us.

A few heads nod.

Eadwina grabs her trombone case, Daisy her accordion case, and Carrie her banjo case. The threesome follow their banjo-toting cousin out of the room...in the utmost of quiet.

INT. CENTRAL HIGH/CCD AUDITORIUM - DAY

Carrie, Cynthia, Daisy, and Eadwina stand onstage, their instrument cases on the stagefloor.

Also on the stage, left to right: A reed organ, an 1890s upright piano, an upright piano from the 1900-09 period, an upright out of the 1910s, and...a harpsichord.

The hammers stand exposed on all three pianos.

Clara, Clint, Elmer, Josiah, Louis, Narvin Ray, Rudy, Ruth, and Theda sit in the first row of seats. (Louis and Clara tote notepads.)

CYNTHIA

Mr. Aznavour...Mrs. Schoolmaster...thank you so much for letting us use this auditorium this early in the morning.

LOUIS

The pleasure is ours, Miss Harmon.

EADWINA

And Josiah and...let's see...Clint, Elmer, Narvin Ray, and Ruth...thank you all for helping us move these three old pianos in here.

NARVIN RAY

Glad to do it.

Narvin Ray's CCD buddies AD LIB their agreement or nod.

DAISY

Theda and Rudy...thanks a bunch for helping me move that pump organ into the auditorium.

RUDY

(panting)

You're...welcome.

DAISY

See, Theda? You've got muscles after all.

Theda flexes her muscles...and invites whoever's next to her to feel those newly-acknowledged muscles.

THEDA

See that, Rudy?

Rudy looks embarrassed.

CARRIE

Anyway, ladies and gentlemen, Cynthia has offered to help my sisters and me capture some of her own musical magic so we don't embarrass ourselves this Halloween.

EADWINA

Better yet...all of that magic.

Clara and Louis perk up as they pull out pens or pencils.

SAME SCENE - A BIT LATER

Carrie sits at the reed organ, Eadwina rests at the 1900s piano, Cynthia sits at the 1910s piano, and Daisy leans on the harpsichord.

CYNTHIA

Carrie, hope you don't mind working with a reed organ. I couldn't find a place that had a pipe organ they'd let us use.

CARRIE

Oh, that's all right. It's still an organ.

CYNTHIA

By the way...you've told me and your sisters you don't like "Sleep," by Fred Waring.

Carrie's nod is slow.

CYNTHIA (CONT'D)

Tell you what: If you three jazzed it up the way I played it back at the house, how would you feel?

CARRIE

Well...I could go for that.

Eadwina and Daisy nod their approval.

CYNTHIA

Go ahead and play the intro and the next thirty-two bars in waltz time, like on the sheet music.

DAISY

Okay.

CYNTHIA

Then...you come back and play those thirty-two bars like a fox trot. And keep the fox trot going the rest of the way.

EADWINA

Got it!

Eadwina pounds out "Sleep's" six-bar intro in march time. Daisy and Carrie join her in playing the next thirty-two bars in waltz time.

After eight bars of waltz time, Clara raises her hand...and the Sisters Woodbury stop the music.

CYNTHIA

Uh, yes, Mrs. Schoolmaster?

CLARA

You're playing jazz on a harpsichord?

DAISY

Absolutely. We just wanted to give "Sleep" a sweeter sound.

The two instructors nod at Daisy...then Louis turns to Clara.

LOUIS

Johann Sebastian Bach would do the same thing if he were here today, Clara.



CLARA

Perhaps so.  
 (to the Woodbury Sisters)  
 Take it from the top.

EADWINA

Gladly!

Carrie, Daisy, and Eadwina bang out "Sleep" again.

SAME SCENE - STILL LATER

In "Adagio in Red," Carrie plays the 1890s upright, Daisy tickles the 1900s upright's keys, and Eadwina pounds the 1910s upright's ivories.

Cynthia watches it all from her seat at the harpsichord. She looks impressed.

So do Josiah, Ruth, Narvin Ray, Clint, and Elmer.

JOSIAH

(to those around him)  
 Cynthia told me Eadwina wrote this.

CLINT

I could've sworn that was George Gershwin's piece.

ELMER

Huh?

RUTH

Kinda adds up, Elmer. You can't have "Adagio in Red" without "Rhapsody in Blue."

NARVIN RAY

I don't care who wrote this...as long as those three up there make it work. And they do!

Theda and Rudy sit in openmouthed shock.

CLARA

Louis...in a way, I wish Central High didn't have to get its own building.

LOUIS

But...

CLARA

Having Central High and the College of the City of Detroit share the same building does have some advantages.

Cynthia's cousins bring "Adagio in Red" to a powerful end...and trigger thunderous applause from their spectators.

EXT. WOODBURYS' HOUSE - DAY

Halloween 1924 is here!

SOME COSTUMED CHILDREN stroll the street, bags ready to fill.

INT. WOODBURYS' PARLOR - DAY

Cynthia looks after purse-wielding Johnanne (in her business attire) and the Woodbury Sisters (all dressed like flappers).

EADWINA

Ma, you've gotta admit...that time me and Carrie and Daisy spent working with Cynthia at the school helped so doggone much.

JOHNNANNE

I didn't like the four of you sneaking off like that.

DAISY

But it paid off...especially when Mrs. Schoolmaster and Mr. Aznavour gave all four of us extra help in polishing up our acts.

Johnanne puts a hand on Cynthia's shoulder.

JOHNNANNE

Too bad you ain't gonna be able to see all that hard work pay off tonight.

CYNTHIA

(with a slight grin)  
I know. I'm grounded.

JOHNNANNE

(to her daughters)  
Grab your instruments. We've gotta be at the Cinderella by six. Show starts at--

CARRIE  
Seven thirty.

EADWINA  
Sharp.

Eadwina, Daisy, and Carrie lift their respective instrument cases off the floor, then follow a slightly-limping Johnanne to the front door.

CYNTHIA  
Aunt Johnanne...you've got a bulge  
in your stocking.

JOHNNANNE  
I'll manage!

Johnanne holds the front door for Daisy, Carrie, and Eadwina.

CARRIE  
Ma, you'd better let me drive.

Cynthia watches Carrie, Daisy, Eadwina, and Johnanne head for a 1923 Duesenberg touring car.

When the Four Woodburys take off, Cynthia closes the door...and heads for:

INT. CYNTHIA'S BEDROOM - DAY

Cynthia dons a tuxedo and grabs her banjo case.

She stuffs a harmonica into her suit pocket and heads out of her bedroom.

Johnanne's niece snaps her fingers, returns to her bedroom, and...grabs a mask.

INT. WOODBURYS' PARLOR - DAY

Before she reaches the door, Cynthia slips her mask on.

EXT. WOODWARD AVENUE - DAY

Banjo case and all, a masked Cynthia boards a streetcar...but slips the mask off before she pays the fare.

EXT. EAST JEFFERSON AVENUE - DAY

Cynthia jumps off the Woodward streetcar and reaches the Jefferson one.

INT. JEFFERSON STREETCAR - DAY

She gets off a sigh of relief when she finds a space to stand in a streetcar teeming with PASSENGERS.

Cynthia hugs her banjo case with all her might.

EXT. CINDERELLA THEATER - DAY

This two-story, white-brick building not only shines...it attracts PEOPLE who file inside.

INT. CINDERELLA THEATER LOWER LEVEL - DAY

This enormous place is half full of CUSTOMERS...who watch A SILENT MOVIE. And the accompaniment comes not from an organ, but from A SMALL ORCHESTRA in the pit.

INT. CINDERELLA THEATER BACKSTAGE - DAY

The organ (a three-manual Mighty Wurlitzer) rests in silence backstage...and Carrie and Daisy squeeze onto its bench.

A shrugging Eadwina finds a bucket to sit on while Emil, Sadie, and Violetta shoot the breeze with JOHNNY OSTERMUELLER (30s). All four adults stand off to the side.

A STAGEHAND teams up with emcee MARTIN SALSNESS (40s) to count heads.

STAGEHAND

Martin, we're supposed to have eight acts tonight. I see seven.

MARTIN

(nods at stagehand)  
And two of the acts just signed up.  
(looks out at throng)  
Where are the Tucker Brothers?

BOOKER TUCKER (23, Black) and brothers FREDERICK (22), LINCOLN (21), and WASHINGTON (20) raise their hands at another place in the room.

BOOKER

Right here.

FREDERICK

Yeah. We just signed up to be in the show a few minutes ago.

MARTIN

Good...who's Desdemona Smith?

Not too far from the organ, DESDEMONA SMITH (13, Black) watches MARIO CELERI (25, White) juggle a trio of balls.

DESDEMONA  
(waving at Martin)  
Me! I signed up a few minutes ago,  
too.

MARTIN  
Uh huh...I understand you're only  
thirteen years old.

DESDEMONA  
Yes, that's right.

A shocked Mario lets his three balls drop to the floor.

MARTIN  
(to Mario)  
And you must be the juggler.

MARIO  
Uh...yes. Mario Celeri.

Those who retrieve Mario's balls hand them back to him.

MARIO (CONT'D)  
(accepts his balls)  
And I signed up a month ago today.

Martin nods at Mario, then at the stagehand.

MARTIN  
So...Desdemona's here, Mario's  
here, Emil the Fire Eater's here,  
along with the Tucker Brothers and  
the Woodbury Sisters.

STAGEHAND  
And Johnny's here to sing. And  
Sadie and Violetta.  
(checks his watch)  
It's a few minutes to six...and if  
Cynthia doesn't show up, she can't--

Cynthia (banjo case and all) sprints into the backstage area...and sets off cheers from all other talent-show competitors except Eadwina.

EMIL  
Finally...some real fireworks!

LINCOLN  
Glad you could make it, Cynthia.

CYNTHIA  
(catching her breath)  
Thanks. Glad you're here, too.

WASHINGTON  
(points to Cynthia)  
Narvin Ray told us so much about  
you.

Violetta, Johnny, and Sadie gravitate toward Cynthia.

SADIE  
You're Cynthia Harmon...our agent  
told me and Violetta about you.

CYNTHIA  
You must be a client of my Aunt  
Johanne.

Violetta shakes her head "yes."

CYNTHIA (CONT'D)  
How much cursing did she do?

VIOLETTA  
She didn't cuss...she just grabbed  
a knife and said she was trying out  
for the 1928 Olympics.

JOHNNY  
Can't wait to hear you sing and  
play.

Johnny and Cynthia shake hands.

Eadwina walks toward her two sisters.

EADWINA  
Ma's got a bullet with Cynthia's  
name on it.

DAISY  
Eadwina...don't start that again.

CARRIE  
Yeah. Not at a time like this.

Daisy and Carrie try to make room for Eadwina on the bench.

INT. CINDERELLA THEATER STAGE - NIGHT

Now that the movie's OVER and the screen's up, THE NOW-PACKED HOUSE looks out at a stage that features, left to right, the theater's Wurlitzer, an upright piano from the 1890s, one from the 1900s, one from the 1910s, and a harpsichord.

The harpsichord and the three upright pianos differ from the ones at the Central High/CCD complex.

The hammers stand exposed on all three Cinderella pianos.

First up: Tap dancers Booker, Frederick, Lincoln, and Washington...who put on a flamboyant show that, at times, includes the hoofers dancing around the onstage instruments.

INT. CINDERELLA THEATER LOWER LEVEL - NIGHT

Left to right, Abe, Clyde, Jerome, Johanne, and Seth sit in the front row...alongside OTHER AGENTS.

They all enjoy the Tucker Brothers' showmanship.

Clara, Louis, Puni, Rudy, and Theda (all sit in the middle) look captivated by the opening act, too.

INT. CINDERELLA THEATER BALCONY - NIGHT

So do Clint, Elmer, Josiah, Narvin Ray, and Ruth. (Narvin Ray's the only member of this quintet not in Halloween garb.)

Narvin Ray's face shows plenty of pride.

INT. CINDERELLA THEATER STAGE - NIGHT

Carrie plays the theater organ, Eadwina tums the 1900s upright piano, and Daisy's at the harpsichord on "Sleep."

Eadwina's six-bar, march-timed intro leads to the threesome playing the next thirty-two bars as a waltz.

A second later, the pit orchestra leads the Woodbury Sisters into a fox-trot beat...and Johanne's progeny add vocals to their own playing:

CARRIE, DAISY, EADWINA  
*Sleep, sleep, sleep./How we love to  
 sleep/At the close of the day,/When  
 the joys of the day fade away and  
 the memories sweet/Of the day  
 repeat./In our dreams they  
 creep/While we sleep, sleep, sleep.*

INT. CINDERELLA THEATER LOWER LEVEL - NIGHT

Proud, proud Johnanne elbows Seth and Jerome.

INT. CINDERELLA THEATER STAGE - NIGHT

A glissando from Eadwina leads to Daisy's vocal solo:

DAISY

(deep, basslike voice)

*It seems that daytime was just made  
for laughter and song./Evening  
brings romance to lovers as they  
stroll along.*

INT. CINDERELLA THEATER LOWER LEVEL - NIGHT

Theda's mouth flies open; Rudy snickers...until Theda elbows him into silence.

INT. CINDERELLA THEATER STAGE - NIGHT

Carrie activates the organ's chimes before she takes over as the singer.

CARRIE

*Nighttime brings rest to the  
weary,/Soothes all the hearts that  
are dreary--*

Daisy launches an arpeggio while Eadwina sings:

EADWINA

*Leaves us alone with our  
daydreams,/Brings back sweet,  
golden dreams while we--*

CARRIE, DAISY, EADWINA

*Sleep, sleep, sleep./How we love to  
sleep/At the close of the day,/When  
the joys of the day fade away and  
the memories sweet/Of the day  
repeat.*

INT. CINDERELLA THEATER BALCONY - NIGHT

Ruth tries to rouse a sleepy Elmer while the Woodbury Sisters plow through "Sleep."



INT. CINDERELLA THEATER STAGE - NIGHT

On "Linger Awhile," Carrie (at the 1910s piano) plays the song's eight-bar intro; Daisy's sixteen-bar accordion solo follows...backed by Eadwina's trombone countermelody.

INT. CINDERELLA THEATER LOWER LEVEL - NIGHT

Jerome and his four agents nod their approval.

ABE  
Just like back at the office.

CLYDE  
Only better.

INT. CINDERELLA THEATER STAGE - NIGHT

Now it's "Adagio in Red," where Carrie tickles the 1890s piano's ivories...and Daisy and Eadwina play the 1900s piano and the 1910s one, respectively.

All three siblings pound away as if their lives depend on it.

INT. CINDERELLA THEATER LOWER LEVEL - NIGHT

Clara, Puni, Theda, Louis, and Rudy look ecstatic.

LOUIS  
Just like back at the school.

Clara shoots Louis a correcting look.

LOUIS (CONT'D)  
I mean the two schools.

CLARA  
Only better.

INT. CINDERELLA THEATER BALCONY - NIGHT

Narvin Ray looks mesmerized...and Clint grows dizzy as he tries to follow all those piano hammers at work.

INT. CINDERELLA THEATER STAGE - NIGHT

Carrie strums her banjo, Daisy pounds the 1890s piano's keys, Eadwina blows her trombone...and the pit orchestra helps the threesome turn "Woodbury Stomp" into a total barnburner.

Eadwina and Carrie strut from one end of the stage to the other while still playing.

Daisy stomps in place while she plays those keys.

INT. CINDERELLA THEATER LOWER LEVEL - NIGHT

Puni turns to Louis and Clara.

PUNI  
Just like back at the...no, it  
isn't! This is better!

Theda's feet pat to the beat...but Rudy rises from his seat  
to dance in place!

He arouses the ire of CUSTOMERS BEHIND HIM.

IRATE CUSTOMERS  
DOWN IN FRONT!

RUDY  
(sits back down)  
Sorry. Couldn't help myself.

INT. CINDERELLA THEATER BALCONY - NIGHT

Those flanking Josiah catch his megawatt smile as "Woodbury  
Stomp" barrels toward the end.

JOSIAH  
Cynthia's cousins did it...they  
made it peppy!

INT. CINDERELLA THEATER STAGE - NIGHT

The Woodbury Sisters and the pit orchestra bring "Woodbury  
Stomp" to a rousing end...and bring on crowd applause.

Daisy, Eadwina, and Carrie link arms...then the threesome bow  
and bow and bow.

INT. CINDERELLA THEATER LOWER LEVEL - NIGHT

Jerome and Johnanne stand as they clap.

JOHNNANNE  
If that doesn't net my daughters  
the grand prize, then Calvin  
Coolidge ain't in the White House!

Seth's mouth hangs open.

INT. CINDERELLA THEATER STAGE - NIGHT

Mario's mouth hangs open, too, as he holds a baseball in one hand and a roll of bathroom tissue in the other.

MARIO  
Ladies and gentlemen...how do you  
follow four tap-dancing brothers  
and three energetic, musical-  
instrument-playing sisters?

IRATE CUSTOMERS (O.S.)  
WE DON'T KNOW!

MARIO  
Well, let's see...how about this?

Mario sends the roll of tissue aloft, then tosses the baseball upward.

He continues to juggle the items on the way to a small table...where he spots a celery stalk.

MARIO (CONT'D)  
Might as well live up to my name...

While he keeps the baseball and the roll of bath tissue aloft, Mario grabs the celery stalk (and triggers laughs).

The crowd's laughs become applause when Mario keeps all three items in the air.

SAME SCENE - A BIT LATER

Desdemona stands onstage, where she points to each upright.

DESDEMONA  
Eeny, meeny, miney, mo...which  
piano should I play?

Her "eeny-meeny-miney-mo" game ends when she sits down at the 1900-1909 upright.

Desdemona bangs out "Grandpa's Spell" or a similar rag...and energizes the audience.

Sixteen bars or so into the number, the orchestra jumps in...only to fail to keep up with Desdemona.

INT. CINDERELLA THEATER LOWER LEVEL - NIGHT

THE ORCHESTRA LEADER (a man in his 40s) waves his musicians into silence and leaves the tune's remainder to Desdemona.

INT. CINDERELLA THEATER STAGE - NIGHT

Tuxedo-clad Johnny stands front and center at a mike as the orchestra launches "Come to the Fair."

After a sixteen-bar intro, Johnny adds vocals to this waltz-timed number:

JOHNNY

*The sun is a-shining to welcome the  
day./Hi, ho! Come to the fair!/The  
folks are all singing so merry and  
gay./Hi, ho! Come to the fair!*

Johnny waves his arms toward the orchestra...the music stops.

JOHNNY (CONT'D)

Mr. Conductor, we need to get hot!

ORCHESTRA LEADER

Uh...okay!

INT. CINDERELLA THEATER LOWER LEVEL - NIGHT

As the orchestra turns "Come to the Fair's" intro into a fox trot, Johnanne turns to Seth.

JOHNNANNE

Johnny and I are going places.

SETH

That was my...you stole my client.

JOHNNANNE

Why didn't you treat him better?

INT. CINDERELLA THEATER STAGE - NIGHT

Sadie (on harpsichord) and Violetta (at the Mighty Wurlitzer) sail through a stomping "Limehouse Blues."

When the two secretaries end the tune with a bang, the audience pours on the applause.

Violetta eyeballs an equally-ecstatic Sadie.

VIOLETTA

Who said we don't like doing "up"  
tunes?

The crowd explodes in applause.

SAME SCENE - A BIT LATER

Sadie plays the 1890-99 upright piano and Violetta its 1910-19 counterpart on a heartfelt "My Buddy."

SADIE, VIOLETTA  
(singing, too)  
*Nights are long since you went  
away./I think about you all through  
the day,/My buddy, my buddy,/No  
buddy quite so true.*

SADIE  
*Miss your voice, the touch of your  
hand--*

VIOLETTA  
*Just long to know that you  
understand,/My buddy, my  
buddy,/Your buddy misses you.*

The twosome look out at the audience...and find some customers dab moist eyes or sit there in tears.

VIOLETTA (CONT'D)  
(choking up)  
*My buddy...*

Sadie eyes Violetta...and bursts into tears.

SADIE  
*My...buddy...*

Violetta and Sadie bawl their eyes out as both women run from their pianos and meet at center stage, where they hug.

SADIE (CONT'D)  
*Violetta...something told me  
we...shouldn't've done this song...*

As a hush falls over the crowd, the two performers continue to hug...and continue to weep.

SAME SCENE - STILL LATER

Emil brandishes his iron torch and eyeballs the audience.

EMIL  
*Anybody got a light?*

INT. CINDERELLA THEATER LOWER LEVEL - NIGHT

Many patrons look dumbfounded.

And then...there's Johnanne, who's livid.

INT. CINDERELLA THEATER STAGE - NIGHT

Iron torch in one hand, Emil pulls a lighter from his shirt pocket with his other hand.

EMIL  
Just kidding, ladies and gentlemen!

The crowd cheers as Emil fires up his torch before he launches his act.

SAME SCENE - A BIT LATER

Cynthia sprints to a seat at the 1890s piano, where she bats out her "California, Here I Come" offshoot.

During Cynthia's eight-bar intro...

INT. CINDERELLA THEATER LOWER LEVEL - NIGHT

...Seth and Jerome eyeball an incensed Johnanne.

JOHNNANNE  
I grounded that little--

JEROME  
Johnanne...relax.

SETH  
Cynthia might be the best act up there tonight.

Johnanne bristles at Seth.

SETH (CONT'D)  
Or the worst.

INT. CINDERELLA THEATER STAGE - NIGHT

Cynthia adds a vamp, then:

CYNTHIA  
(adding vocals)  
*When my mama was a little  
girlie,/She had to face, to face  
the neighborhood bully./She knocked  
Mama down./She knocked Mama down.*

INT. CINDERELLA THEATER BALCONY - NIGHT

Clint and Josiah nod in understanding as they, Elmer, Narvin Ray, and Ruth applaud.

INT. CINDERELLA THEATER STAGE - NIGHT

Eadwina tries to sneak a peek while Cynthia jams.

CYNTHIA

*Then one day, she said she'd had enough./She told her folks: "I've got to, got to get tough."/My mama found a way./My mama found a way.*

INT. CINDERELLA THEATER LOWER LEVEL - NIGHT

Louis and Clara listen with all their might.

INT. CINDERELLA THEATER STAGE - NIGHT

Daisy joins Eadwina in attempting to watch Cynthia from backstage.

CYNTHIA

*She worked very hard, oh so very hard./She got stronger and looked the part./And she looked in the mirror and said:/"Slowly but surely, in every single way,/I'm getting better each and every day."*

Johnny and Carrie replace Eadwina and Daisy as she sneaks from backstage.

SAME SCENE - A BIT LATER

Johnanne's niece keeps it rousing by playing "Charleston" on the theater's 1900s piano...from an erect position and with musical backing from the pit orchestra.

When she reaches the song's chorus, Cynthia tries to do the Charleston while she continues to tickle the keys.

On the second verse, Cynthia leaves the 1900s upright, pulls out her harmonica, and toots away along with the orchestra in addition to hoofing.

INT. CINDERELLA THEATER LOWER LEVEL - NIGHT

Johnanne sneaks into her purse, yanks out her switchblade, opens it, and...fires it toward the stage.

She comes nowhere near hitting Cynthia...but she nails the orchestra leader, who slumps, the knife in his chest, onto the podium.

No more music from the pit...because the musicians tend to their now-bloodied boss.

INT. CINDERELLA THEATER STAGE - NIGHT

Cynthia's back at the 1900s upright...but sits at its bench, her back to the keys, while she strums her banjo.

CYNTHIA  
(also singing)  
*Edward and Eleanor were  
lovers./They met at the ol' axle  
plant./They made quite a team  
stampin' out the gears./They had  
the biggest love a twosome could  
have.*

INT. CINDERELLA THEATER LOWER LEVEL - NIGHT

Johanne burns.

She reaches into her purse for a revolver...but Jerome reacts in time to gesture her out of the act.

INT. CINDERELLA THEATER STAGE - NIGHT

At the 1910s piano, Cynthia tickles out "It Had to Be You's" four-bar intro, then looks out at the audience.

CYNTHIA  
Josiah...this one's for you.

She blows Josiah a kiss...

INT. CINDERELLA THEATER BALCONY - NIGHT

...and he stands up to blow Cynthia a smooch of his own.

INT. CINDERELLA THEATER STAGE - NIGHT

Now Cynthia adds an arpeggio before she warbles:

CYNTHIA  
*Why do I do just as you say? Why  
must I just give you your way?/Why  
do I sigh? Why don't I try to  
forget?/It must've been that  
something lovers call "fate," kept  
on saying I had to wait.*

Eadwina, Daisy, and Carrie try to watch from the wings.



CYNTHIA (CONT'D)  
*I saw them all. Just couldn't fall  
 'til we met.*

The Woodbury Sisters' cousin plays another arpeggio, then:

CYNTHIA (CONT'D)  
*It had to be you./It had to be  
 you./I wandered around and finally  
 found the somebody who/Could make  
 me be true, could make me be  
 blue,/And even be glad just to be  
 sad, thinking of you.*

INT. CINDERELLA THEATER BALCONY - NIGHT

Everybody up there looks spellbound...

INT. CINDERELLA THEATER LOWER LEVEL - NIGHT

...as do most of the folks down here.

Jerome and Seth grip the hands of a squirming, cringing  
 Johnanne. (Her purse is now underneath her seat.)

INT. CINDERELLA THEATER STAGE - NIGHT

Cynthia's set ends at the Mighty Wurlitzer, where she plays  
 "The Glass Slipper Rag."

Her stomping feet and flying fingers dazzle Carrie,  
 Desdemona, Johnny, Sadie, and Violetta...who try to watch  
 from the wings.

INT. CINDERELLA THEATER LOWER LEVEL - NIGHT

The man from the Harrison Street Pub looks impressed, along  
 with most of the customers at the lower level.

MAN  
 (to those around him)  
 Didn't I tell you? She's burnin'  
 this place up!

Rudy moves as if to stand up...but he settles for tapping his  
 feet to the beat, a la Theda.

INT. CINDERELLA THEATER BALCONY - NIGHT

When "The Glass Slipper Rag" ends, strong applause breaks  
 out...and Ruth, Narvin Ray, Josiah, Elmer, and Clint give  
 Cynthia a standing ovation.

INT. CINDERELLA THEATER STAGE - NIGHT

Cynthia waves to the still-cheering crowd, then bows.

Martin jogs to center stage, where he meets Cynthia.

MARTIN  
(into mike)  
Let's hear it once more for Cynthia  
Harmon!

The applause heats up...and Cynthia bows again.

MARTIN (CONT'D)  
Stay right there, Miss Harmon.

Cynthia nods.

MARTIN (CONT'D)  
(into mike)  
Let's bring all the other acts back  
out here!

Under audience cheers, Desdemona, Emil, Johnny, Mario, Sadie, and Violetta come back out to flank Cynthia and Martin.

Booker, Carrie, Daisy, Eadwina, Frederick, Lincoln, and Washington find their way back onto the stage and round out the contestant group around Martin.

MARTIN (CONT'D)  
(into mike)  
If you're just tuning into WCX,  
you've just missed a tremendous  
Halloween talent show here at the  
Cinderella Theater!

The emcee and the contestants soak up the crowd applause.

MARTIN (CONT'D)  
To entice more performers to enter  
the contest, two new prizes have  
been added...so that ten dollars  
will no longer be the grand prize.

Contestants eyeball each other...audience members gasp.

MARTIN (CONT'D)  
Ten dollars is now the third  
prize...along with a weekend  
engagement here at the Cinderella.

Cynthia and her three cousins look shocked.

MARTIN (CONT'D)  
 Our third-place winner  
 tonight...Carrie, Daisy, and  
 Eadwina...the Woodbury Sisters!

While the customers applaud, Eadwina, Carrie, and Daisy stroll toward Martin...who hands Carrie an envelope that houses the third-place money.

CARRIE  
 (accepting the loot)  
 Thank you so much, Mr. Salsness.

DAISY  
 Pleasure to be here.

Daisy, Carrie, and a glum Eadwina shake hands with Martin. As the crowd cheers and the Sisters Woodbury return to their old spot onstage...

INT. CINDERELLA THEATER LOWER LEVEL - NIGHT

...Theda, Rudy, Puni, Louis, and Clara clap their hands raw. And Seth and Jerome nod in enthusiasm...while they continue to hold an angry Johnanne down.

INT. CINDERELLA THEATER STAGE - NIGHT

Cynthia and a few other performers congratulate Eadwina, Daisy, and Carrie.

MARTIN  
 Our second-place act will receive twenty dollars...and a five-night engagement here at the Cinderella Theater.

The remaining seven acts look at each other.

MARTIN (CONT'D)  
 Let's congratulate our second-place winner...Booker, Frederick, Lincoln, and Washington...the Tucker Brothers!

Mouths fly open all over the place as applause breaks out again...and Washington, Lincoln, Frederick, and Booker jog toward Martin, who gives Booker an envelope with the second-place money.

BOOKER  
 (accepts the dough)  
 WOW! Thanks!

FREDERICK  
 Mr. Salsness, we didn't expect to  
 be here...

LINCOLN  
 But we're glad to be here tonight.

WASHINGTON  
 Thank you for this chance!

The Brothers Tucker shake hands with Martin (and set off gasps from the nonetheless-applauding crowd).

INT. CINDERELLA THEATER BALCONY - NIGHT

Narvin Ray and his CCD cohorts don't gasp.

He and his costumed buddies cheer wildly.

INT. CINDERELLA THEATER STAGE - NIGHT

Lincoln, Frederick, Washington, and Booker walk back to their previous spot onstage...and earn kudos from other performers.

MARTIN  
 (into mike)  
 And now, ladies and  
 gentlemen...it's time to announce  
 our grand-prize winner...the winner  
 of thirty dollars and a full week  
 here at the Cinderella.

The crowd buzzes...so do the other six acts.

MARTIN (CONT'D)  
 The winner of the Cinderella  
 Theater's first annual Halloween  
 talent show is...

Sadie and Violetta look at Mario...Mario eyeballs  
 Cynthia...Cynthia turns to Emil, who looks at Johnny.

And Johnny waves at a shrugging Desdemona.

MARTIN (CONT'D)  
 Cynthia Harmon!

The audience goes wild as Cynthia approaches Martin, who hands her an envelope that's got the thirty bucks in it.

MARTIN (CONT'D)  
 Congratulations, Miss Harmon! Great  
 job tonight!

CYNTHIA  
 (accepts the money)  
 Well, thank you, Mr. Salsness. It's  
 just a pleasure to be up here and  
 perform alongside these great acts.

Daisy, Carrie, Johnny, and Booker nod.

CYNTHIA (CONT'D)  
 Any one of the other acts could've  
 won tonight.

The stagehand enters with a silver cup. He hands it to  
 Martin, who presents the cup to Cynthia while the now-  
 awestruck stagehand backs his way off the stage.

INT. CINDERELLA THEATER LOWER LEVEL - NIGHT

Seth nods in agreement with Cynthia, who accepts the cup from  
 the emcee.

Jerome and his male agents watch in pride...but Johnanne  
 looks fit to be tied.

MARTIN (O.S.)  
 Miss Harmon, this silver cup is  
 emblematic of your success in this  
 year's talent show.

CYNTHIA (O.S.)  
 Thank you...thank you so very much.

JOHNNANNE  
 Seth, Jerome, I need to fix my  
 stockings. Let me go!

Jerome and Seth eyeball each other.

JEROME  
 All right, Johnanne. Go ahead.

While Martin and Cynthia AD LIB, Johnanne wrestles herself  
 away from Seth and Jerome, stops in the middle of the aisle,  
 and...pulls a snubnose from her stocking.

INT. CINDERELLA THEATER STAGE - NIGHT

Mario (somehow) watches Johnanne aim her snubnose at the  
 Cinderella stage.

MARIO  
LOOK OUT!!

Johanne fires at Cynthia...fifteen people scurry.

She continues to fire at (and miss) her niece.

Washington, Sadie, Eadwina, Daisy, Carrie, and Booker barely make it to safety behind the three upright pianos.

Johanne empties her gun...but not before she kills Johnny...and Emil...and Martin.

Cynthia, Desdemona, Frederick, Lincoln, Mario, and Violetta sprint toward the wings.

INT. CINDERELLA THEATER LOWER LEVEL - NIGHT

When they realize Johanne means business, Seth and Jerome grab her by the arms.

SETH  
DROP THE GUN!

Johanne throws her snubnose down.

Customers sprint out of the theater while Clyde and Abe assist Jerome and Seth.

JEROME  
(to Abe and Clyde)  
Grab her legs!

The stagehand and AN USHER hurry toward the front row as Abe and Clyde grasp the still-angry Johanne's legs. Jerome and Seth continue to hold Cynthia's aunt by the arms.

STAGEHAND  
What the hell happened?

USHER  
Let's go to the office and find out.

The stagehand picks up Johanne's snubnose and the usher grabs the killer's purse from off the floor.

INT. CINDERELLA THEATER OFFICE - NIGHT

Johanne and Seth sit in the only two chairs in this cluttered, almost-cozy space.

Jerome, theater manager HERSCHEL GLOVER (40s), and PHILLIP SPINNER (30s; a police officer) hover over them.

HERSCHEL

(to Johnanne)

You know, we have several other witnesses that saw you shoot down those three performers...I mean two performers and an emcee!

JOHANNNE

And I wanted to bump off the winner...my stuck-up niece!

(smirking)

Speaking of winners...will I get out in time to see Amy Lowell when she comes to Orchestra Hall next January?

Jerome shakes his head "no."

PHILLIP

She'll have to visit you...at the state penitentiary.

JEROME

And it's all because I fell for the "I need to fix my stockings" trick.

SETH

Well, I did, too, Jerome!

HERSCHEL

This theater's been in business for nine months now...and this had to happen!

Four sets of eyes stare at Johnanne.

HERSCHEL (CONT'D)

Instead of great entertainment, our theater's gonna be known for three people dead...and dead air on WCX!

PHILLIP

Four, Mr. Glover.

Phillip grabs a towel from the desk. He opens the towel and reveals...Johnanne's switchblade.

PHILLIP (CONT'D)

Mrs. Woodbury, the stagehand on duty tonight found this switchblade in the orchestra pit.

(shows knife to Johnanne)

This is the knife that was found in James Delahanty's chest.

Herschel smacks his own forehead.

JEROME

The orchestra leader.

PHILLIP

(zeroes in on Johnanne)

Know anything about this knife?

JOHNNANNE

Officer Phillip...I was just trying out for the 1928 Olympics.

Nobody cracks a smile...except Johnanne.

Jerome and Phillip trade places as the latter folds the knife back inside the towel.

JEROME

You know what, Johnanne Felton Woodbury? Your blind jealousy brought you here!

Johnanne rises up to slap Jerome...but points to him instead.

JOHNNANNE

DON'T EVER USE THE NAME "FELTON" AGAIN!

SETH

Johnanne, your husband's been dead for two years. What's wrong with using your maiden name?

JOHNNANNE

(sits back down)

It was my sister's maiden name, too!

Seth looks incredulous.

INT. CINDERELLA THEATER STAGE - NIGHT

A few contestants shed tears in an otherwise quiet space.



Markings outline the spots where Martin, Johnny, and Emil passed away.

Mario, Violetta, Cynthia, Desdemona, Frederick, and Lincoln emerge from the wings to join (and embrace) their fellow surviving hopefuls.

CYNTHIA  
(to her cousins)  
I'm glad you're all right.

CARRIE  
Cynthia...I'm so glad you're all right, too.

DAISY  
Me, too.

EADWINA  
(nodding)  
Congratulations on your win.

The stagehand returns to the platform...and watches Carrie, Cynthia, Daisy, and Eadwina form a group hug.

STAGEHAND  
Contestants...it's now safe for you to leave.

Some performers breathe relief.

STAGEHAND (CONT'D)  
The suspect is no longer in the building.

MARIO  
Good.

Daisy, Cynthia, Carrie, and Eadwina break their embrace. Daisy and Carrie slowly nod.

EADWINA  
(shakes Cynthia's hand)  
I know you've got some celebrating to do with your friends.

CYNTHIA  
Well...uh...

DAISY  
We'll be all right.

CYNTHIA  
Eadwina...you and Daisy and Carrie  
have celebrating to do, too.

Cynthia's three cousins eyeball each other.

CARRIE  
Maybe we do...

DAISY  
But it doesn't involve hooch.

The foursome break out in laughter.

INT. CINDERELLA THEATER LOBBY - NIGHT

Clint, Elmer, Josiah, Narvin Ray, and Ruth wait near the  
concession stand.

RUTH  
Josiah...just give Cynthia a few  
more minutes. She'll be here.

JOSIAH  
Okay, Ruth.

CLINT  
Narvin, you really cleaned up  
tonight...especially with those  
Tucker Brothers.

NARVIN RAY  
Thanks.

Elmer and Narvin Ray shake hands.

NARVIN RAY (CONT'D)  
Yeah...that business class where we  
were supposed to find some people  
and mentor them really paid off.

Abe and Clyde enter the lobby...and find the quintet.

ELMER  
That Desdemona Smith would be a  
great solo performer.

ABE  
(eyeballing Elmer)  
You got that right!

ELMER  
Are you sure she's only thirteen?

CLYDE  
Narvin Ray McKinley...you're just  
the young man we wanna see.

Narvin Ray's mouth flies open.

CLYDE (CONT'D)  
We've now got an opening at the  
Johnson Agency.

NARVIN RAY  
Well, Mr. Spears...I wasn't looking  
to be a janitor, but if--

CLYDE  
No, no, no, no, no!

ABE  
(pointing to Narvin Ray)  
Cynthia told me and Clyde you're  
gonna graduate from CCD this June.

Five young sets of eyes light up.

ABE (CONT'D)  
We'd like you to join the Johnson  
Agency after you come out of CCD.

CLYDE  
As an agent, Narvin Ray! An agent!

Narvin Ray looks stunned.

ABE  
You'd be making history.

Josiah, Ruth, Clint, and Elmer AD LIB a still-shocked Narvin  
Ray into an answer.

NARVIN RAY  
Sign me up!

Cheers break out...just as Cynthia arrives in the lobby.

JOSIAH  
Cynthia, meet the Johnson Agency's  
newest agent...Narvin Ray McKinley!

CYNTHIA  
Congratulations!

The cheers grow in intensity.

CYNTHIA (CONT'D)  
 (shakes Narvin Ray's hand)  
 As long as you don't carry a  
 switchblade like Aunt Johnanne,  
 you'll be all right!

NARVIN RAY  
 I can't even stand switchblades!

The cheers turn into laughs.

EXT. HARRISON STREET PUB - NIGHT

SOME CUSTOMERS wait outside for the front door to open.

INT. HARRISON STREET PUB BARROOM - NIGHT

THIS PLACE IS PACKED!

At the tables, folks (some in Halloween outfits) drink Cokes  
 or near beer or fake whiskey.

Behind the bar, Winky washes glasses while he gabs with  
 Clint, Cynthia, Elmer, Josiah, Narvin Ray, and Ruth...all on  
 the other side of the bar, where they nurse Cokes.

NARVIN RAY  
 Ruth, that was really clever of you  
 and the guys to sneak up to the  
 balcony in costumes.

RUTH  
 (beaming)  
 Well, I figured: "If we're gonna  
 see Cynthia and her cousins  
 perform, there's no need to break  
 up the gang."

Those who flank Ruth pat her on the back.

WINKY  
 Cynthia, show 'em your silver cup!

Cynthia holds up her silver cup for all to see.

Result: Cheers...applause.

CLINT  
 (to Cynthia)  
 You did it...you beat the odds. You  
 lived to tell about being a  
 contestant in the Cinderella  
 Theater talent show.

RUTH  
 (pointing to Cynthia)  
 What's more, you won the  
 thing...hands down!

Johanne's niece is all smiles.

ELMER  
 You know me...I'll drink to that!

Elmer downs his cola, then turns to Winky.

ELMER (CONT'D)  
 Uh...can I get a double, please?

WINKY  
 You sure can!

Winky pulls out a second glass; he fills that and Elmer's first glass with Coke.

ELMER  
 Thanks again!

Elmer grabs both glasses and sips from each.

JOSIAH  
 Cynthia...have you thought about  
 what you're gonna do with the money  
 you've just won?

Six expectant sets of eyes gaze at Cynthia.

CYNTHIA  
 I don't really know...I've never  
 really thought about that.  
 (takes a sip)  
 Maybe make a down payment on a set  
 of drums...maybe do something to  
 help my cousins...

Those flanking Cynthia and Josiah lean closer.

INT. CARRIE'S/DAISY'S/EADWINA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Daisy lifts barbells as Eadwina and Carrie sit on the bottom bunk bed.

Carrie studies sheet music...Eadwina buries her head in her own hands and tries to lean on the bed.

Daisy sets her barbells down...

DAISY

Winna, are you gonna be okay?

...and kneels next to her little sister.

DAISY (CONT'D)

You look like you fell off a can of Clabber Girl baking powder...and dropped the plate of biscuits, to boot.

Eadwina sits up openmouthed, wipes a tear from her eye, and looks at Daisy.

EADWINA

The three of us went to the theater with a mother...and now, we're back home without a mother.

CARRIE

We had a mother...until Pa died.

EXT. DETROIT POLICE HEADQUARTERS - NIGHT

A few cars tool down Beaubien Street in front of this already-iconic seven-story structure.

INT. DETROIT POLICE HEADQUARTERS INTERROGATION ROOM - NIGHT

Phillip and DPD detective GROVER STREET (30s) hover over a seated Johnanne in this smallish space.

GROVER

Miss Felton--

Johnanne growls.

GROVER (CONT'D)

Mrs. Woodbury...we know you killed four people, none of them the one you wanted to kill.

JOHNNANNE

Yep.

PHILLIP

Detective Street wants to know why.

Grover nods at Phillip.

PHILLIP (CONT'D)

And so do I...straight.

JOHNANNE

Well, it all started back home in Overland Park, Kansas...

PHILLIP

Grover...maybe you better sit down for this.

GROVER

Uh...okay.

SAME SCENE - A BIT LATER

Grover's, Johnanne's, and Phillip's seats barely fit inside this office.

JOHNANNE

I hated my sister Eleanor. She'd always had it better than me.

Grover takes notes while Phillip sips from a coffee cup.

GROVER

Did you try to kill her?

JOHNANNE

Lots of times! Matter of fact, she had a better name than me.

PHILLIP

Huh?

JOHNANNE

After Eleanor came along, my ma and pa wanted a son. They were gonna name him John...but instead of calling me Jane, they gave me this name I'm stuck with.

GROVER

I still think your name is beautiful.

Phillip glowers at Grover.

JOHNANNE

Anyway, we both left the family farm on the outskirts of Overland Park in 1901...and we both caught a train right here to Detroit. And we fought on the train.

GROVER

Uh huh.

JOHNNANNE

I was looking for a husband...she was looking for a job in the automobile industry...and had the nerve to tell me: "Johanne, I'll look for a husband later!"

SAME SCENE - STILL LATER

Phillip watches Grover slide into a stupor.

PHILLIP

Stay awake!

GROVER

Phil, I'm trying!

Grover's notes are a mess!

JOHNNANNE

Anyway, I had to kill Cynthia because she disobeyed me. I told her not to go to the Cinderella Theater tonight.

GROVER

(to Phillip)

You did tell me she said that.

JOHNNANNE

And I still needed to make Cynthia pay for laying some horsefeathers on my oldest daughter Carrie when they both were little.

Phillip and Grover eyeball each other in victory.

INT. WOODBURYS' PARLOR - NIGHT

Carrie reads today's "Detroit Free Press" while in Johanne's favorite chair, Daisy sits at the piano and lifts dumbbells, and a now-happy Eadwina studies sheet music from the sofa.

Three glasses of lemonade rest on the coffee table.

CARRIE

What do you think we oughta do with the ten bucks we won tonight?



EADWINA  
 (puts music on table)  
 How many cigars will ten bucks buy?

DAISY  
 Eadwina, Carrie means we oughta buy  
 something all three of us can  
 really use.

The Woodbury Sisters (Carrie with her paper in tow and Daisy  
 down to one dumbbell) grab their lemonade glasses and sip.

CARRIE  
 Anyway, I saw this ad in the "Free  
 Press" where S.S. Kresge's got  
 harmonicas on sale.

DAISY  
 Which one?

CARRIE  
 I assume--

The front door opens...and Cynthia walks through.

Her three cousins cheer themselves hoarse.

CARRIE (CONT'D)  
 Cynthia...what do you think we  
 should do?

CYNTHIA  
 Well, there's one thing I should  
 do...

DAISY  
 Have a seat, Cynthia. I'll grab you  
 a glass of lemonade.

EADWINA  
 (gesturing to Cynthia)  
 Any seat you like.

While Daisy enters the kitchen to pour a glass of lemonade,  
 Cynthia goes to the sofa.

CYNTHIA  
 (sitting down)  
 Carrie, while I was on my way home,  
 I got to thinking about the time we  
 were both ten...and each of us sang  
 a song and played it on the piano  
 at Ma's and Pa's house.

Carrie's nod is ever-so-slow.

CYNTHIA (CONT'D)  
And I made fun of you because you  
fluffed a few notes.

CARRIE  
Cynthia...

CYNTHIA  
Ma gave me a good talking-to about  
that...even if Aunt Johnanne went  
to war with Ma about that.

Daisy returns with the glass of lemonade. She hands the glass  
to Cynthia...who places it on the coffee table.

CYNTHIA (CONT'D)  
Thanks, Daisy.

DAISY  
You're welcome.

CYNTHIA  
(standing up)  
Carrie...I humbly apologize for  
what I put you through.

Carrie and Cynthia saunter toward each other.

CARRIE  
Cynthia, you've already  
apologized...and I still forgive  
you.

Cynthia and Carrie engage in the warmest of hugs.

CYNTHIA  
I don't want anything to come  
between us...all four of us.

Eadwina and Daisy turn the embrace into a group hug.

EADWINA  
I've got an idea for another  
song...

EXT. WOODBURYS' HOUSE - DAY

TWO CHILDREN ride bikes on this nice first November Monday.

INT. WOODBURYS' PARLOR - DAY

Carrie (with her banjo), Cynthia (at the piano), Daisy (holding a two-foot harmonica), and Eadwina (trombone in tow) tune up.

Cynthia's cousins use music stands that house a new composition each.

CYNTHIA

Daisy, I'm glad you're bringing in a mouth harp...especially that two-footer.

DAISY

Thanks. We can always use some extra bottom.

EADWINA

And Cynthia, I'm glad that you insisted all four of us contribute lyrics.

CARRIE

Well, I'm ready to get started on "Nothing Can Tear Us Apart."

Cynthia gives a downbeat before she and Daisy play a bluesy eight-bar intro. A four-bar vamp brings Carrie and Eadwina in with their instruments.

CYNTHIA

(during the vamp)

Eadwina, why don't you sing the first verse?

Eadwina nods at Cynthia.

EADWINA

*We fought so hard to get together, / Share our love in any kinda weather. / We--*

A KNOCK on the front door ends the foursome's jam session.

CARRIE

(sets her banjo down)

I've got it.

Eadwina, Cynthia, and Daisy abandon their instruments and follow Carrie to the front door.

Carrie opens the door...and reveals CECILIA WILLOUGHBY (40s).

CARRIE (CONT'D)  
Come in. What can we do for you?

CECILIA  
I'm Mrs. Cecilia Willoughby...from  
the state welfare department.

Cynthia gestures Cecilia inside.

DAISY  
It's okay, Mrs. Willoughby. Have a  
seat.

As Cecilia takes a seat at the sofa, Daisy, Carrie, and  
Cynthia slowly nod before they find places to sit.

And Eadwina looks mortified.

DAISY (CONT'D)  
Eadwina...make yourself  
comfortable.

EADWINA  
I can't! She's here to split up the  
act!

Four young mouths fly open. Eadwina covers her own mouth.

CYNTHIA  
(to Cecilia)  
You must've listened to the talent  
show they held at the Cinderella  
Theater last Friday night.

CECILIA  
I did...right down to the dead air  
over WCX.

Eadwina sits down at last...at the piano.

CECILIA (CONT'D)  
The point is: I came here to inform  
you that your maternal grandparents  
from Overland Park, Kansas, have  
been informed that your mother has  
been charged with the murder of  
four people at the Cinderella.

CYNTHIA  
Aunt Johanne in my case.

CECILIA  
And right now, she's in the Wayne  
County Jail awaiting trial.

EADWINA  
That's for sure.

CECILIA  
And your maternal grandparents have  
discussed gaining custody of Daisy  
and Eadwina.

Dead silence takes over.

CECILIA (CONT'D)  
Actually...all four of you.

Carrie shakes her head "no."

CECILIA (CONT'D)  
A father figure and a mother  
figure...I mean a grandfather  
figure and a grandmother figure.

CARRIE  
Mrs. Willoughby...would it help to  
say that this morning, the  
Cinderella Theater offered me a job  
as one of its organists? And that I  
start tonight?

CYNTHIA  
And that I've got one year left to  
go as a student at the College of  
the City of Detroit?

DAISY  
(staring at Cecilia)  
You see, Cynthia's a fantastic  
student at CCD...and she's already  
launched her own vaudeville career.

CARRIE  
Eadwina, Daisy, and I have gotten  
our own separate vaudeville career  
off the ground. We're a trio.

Cecilia nods slowly...Eadwina looks mortified.

DAISY  
Anyway...Mrs. Willoughby, I turned  
seventeen on September fifteenth.

CARRIE  
 Would it help if I mentioned that  
 I'll be twenty one on January  
 first, 1925?

Carrie studies Cecilia's smirk.

EADWINA  
 It's the truth, Mrs. Willoughby!

CYNTHIA  
 I'll also turn twenty one next  
 year...on April eleventh.

CECILIA  
 Carrie...are you certain you can  
 handle the responsibilities  
 expected from the head of a  
 household?

Daisy, Eadwina, and Cynthia point to Carrie while all four  
 eyeball Cecilia.

DAISY  
 Carrie's proven more responsible  
 than Ma, that's for sure.

CARRIE  
 For two years, I was a receptionist  
 at the Johnson Agency...and I  
 learned to put my earnings in a  
 savings account.

CYNTHIA  
 Aunt Johnanne took Carrie's first  
 paycheck and went to Foley's on  
 Woodward and spent it on  
 cigars...by the box.

CECILIA  
 Jumping frogs!

CARRIE  
 Well, anyway...Ma never got hold of  
 my paychecks again.

Eadwina jumps off the piano bench.

EADWINA  
 Mrs. Willoughby...do you realize  
 what it'd mean if the four of us  
 had to move to Kansas?

CECILIA  
A more stable situation.

EADWINA  
I'd have to switch from cigars to  
pipes!

While Cecilia's mouth hangs open, Eadwina covers her own.

CYNTHIA  
Both Grandpa Felton and Grandma  
Felton smoke pipes.

Cecilia rests her chin on her fists.

EXT. CINDERELLA THEATER - NIGHT

A line of PEOPLE forms in front of the theater.

INT. CINDERELLA THEATER LOWER LEVEL - NIGHT

CUSTOMERS occupy three out of every four seats.

The crowd enjoys A SILENT FILM ("THE FAMILY SECRET")...and  
this time, Carrie (at the organ; it's off to the side  
onstage) provides the music.

The remaining members of the small orchestra from the talent  
show fidget from the pit as they (try to) watch the movie.

Theda, Rudy, Puni, Louis, and Clara don't fidget...and  
neither does Clara's husband SHERMAN SCHOOLMASTER (50s).

CLARA  
Sherman, you're in for a  
treat...wait 'til the organist's  
two sisters come out to perform  
alongside her.

SHERMAN  
I hope you're right, Clara, dear.

PUNI  
(to Sherman)  
Take it from me: Clara's right.

INT. CINDERELLA THEATER BALCONY - NIGHT

Desdemona and parents MOSES and MIRIAM SMITH (both 40s) watch  
the movie...and Carrie.

MOSES

Desdemona...you sure you really  
wanna be an organ player?

DESDEMONA

I sure am sure, Daddy.

Sadie and Violetta (in men's suits, hats, and fake beards)  
slide into the two empty seats next to the Smiths.

MIRIAM

Are you really sure?

DESDEMONA

Mama, I've got my mind made up.

Desdemona turns to Violetta and Sadie.

DESDEMONA (CONT'D)

Oh, hi! I remember you two from the  
talent show!

The two secretaries rip the bogus beards from their faces.

SADIE

(shakes Desdemona's hand)  
Glad to see you again...glad you  
weren't fooled by our fake beards.

VIOLETTA

It was the only way Sadie and I  
could come up here and sit  
alongside you.

Violetta shakes Desdemona's hand as Miriam looks amused.

INT. CINDERELLA THEATER LOWER LEVEL - NIGHT

Now the movie ENDS...the audience claps its approval...the  
screen disappears.

The same three upright pianos from the talent show stand on  
the stage (as does an upright from the 1920-24 period).

And the hammers on all pianos stand exposed.

INT. CINDERELLA THEATER STAGE - NIGHT

Carrie sprints from the Mighty Wurlitzer to the 1920s piano  
and Daisy emerges from backstage and sits at the 1890s piano.

Eadwina runs from backstage to sit at the 1900s upright.



The Woodbury Sisters eyeball each other before they bang out a fast-paced "Yes! We Have No Bananas."

INT. CINDERELLA THEATER LOWER LEVEL - NIGHT

Clara's ecstatic...Sherman looks stunned.

CLARA

This is what you missed on Halloween.

SHERMAN

Why in the world did I have to become a fireman?

In the front row: Abe, Cecilia, Clint, Clyde, Cynthia, Elmer, Herschel, Jerome, Josiah, Ruth, Seth, and...Narvin Ray.

All twelve look gleeful.

INT. CINDERELLA THEATER STAGE - NIGHT

Eadwina (on trombone), Daisy (at the 1910s piano), and Carrie (who strums her banjo) wrap up a rollicking version of "Say It with Music."

The small orchestra backs up the Woodbury Sisters. And this time, the conductor is...none other than...PEGGY-JEAN "BABY PEGGY" MONTGOMERY (6)!

Somehow, all the musicians make it work...

INT. CINDERELLA THEATER LOWER LEVEL - NIGHT

...and the audience roars its approval.

INT. CINDERELLA THEATER STAGE - NIGHT

As the applause dies, Carrie moves to a center mike.

CARRIE

(into mike)

Thank you so very much, ladies and gentlemen!

Eadwina and Daisy stroll to center stage to flank Carrie.

DAISY

(into mike)

And now...we'd like to introduce tonight's guest conductor...star of screen...here to promote the picture you just saw...

EADWINA  
 (into mike)  
 Baby Peggy!

The customers register shock that morphs into total approval.

EADWINA (CONT'D)  
 C'mon up and take a bow, Peggy!

When Baby Peggy saunters onto the stage to bow alongside the Sisters Woodbury, the applause heats up.

INT. CINDERELLA THEATER LOWER LEVEL

Jerome, Narvin Ray, Clyde, and Abe congratulate Seth.

JEROME  
 You did it!

SETH  
 Well...it was a month later than  
 promised...

ABE  
 But you did it, you ol' son of a  
 gun!

A smiling Seth nods.

INT. CINDERELLA THEATER STAGE - NIGHT

Eadwina sits at the 1890s upright, Daisy takes to the 1900s piano, and Carrie addresses the crowd from the center mike.

CARRIE  
 Daisy, Eadwina, and I wouldn't be  
 up here tonight if it weren't for  
 this next performer we'd like to  
 bring up here tonight.

Carrie catches the hopeful look of some front-row occupants.

CARRIE (CONT'D)  
 Ladies and gentlemen, it's our  
 pleasure to introduce...our  
 cousin...Cynthia Harmon!

INT. CINDERELLA THEATER LOWER LEVEL - NIGHT

Applause breaks out again while a shocked Cynthia heads for the Cinderella stage.

JOSIAH  
Go get 'em, Cynthia!

The two lovers wave at one another.

INT. CINDERELLA THEATER STAGE - NIGHT

Cynthia meets Carrie at the center mike...both hug.

CARRIE  
Cynthia...thank you so very much.

CYNTHIA  
Thank you, Carrie Jeanne!

CARRIE  
I know all four of us are ready to  
really kick some splinters...as  
long as you call the tune.

Daisy and Eadwina watch Carrie and Cynthia banter.

CYNTHIA  
Uh...let's see...how about "That  
Old Gang of Mine?"

CARRIE  
That's a plan!

Arm in arm, the two twenty-year-olds stroll to the two unoccupied pianos. Carrie gestures Cynthia to a seat at the 1910s upright, then seats herself at the 1920s upright.

The four cousins' "That Old Gang of Mine" opens with a treacly chorus...that leads to a fast-paced first verse.

INT. CINDERELLA THEATER LOWER LEVEL - NIGHT

Clara, Louis, and Sherman snap their fingers to the beat. Theda claps to the cadence...Puni bobs her head to the music...and Rudy dances in his seat.

RUDY  
Sorry...I just can't help it.

THEDA  
It's okay, Rudy.

LOUIS  
That does it!

And Louis dances in his own seat!

EXT. WAYNE COUNTY JAIL - NIGHT

A formidable-looking granite building downtown.

INT. WAYNE COUNTY JAIL CELL - NIGHT

Johanne shares a cell with BRUNHILDE STEINER (30s), a hulk of a woman. Both sit on a bed.

JOHANNANNE

So...Brunhilde...you're here on account of bootlegging.

BRUNHILDE

And I killed someone. With my bare hands.

Johanne's mouth drops open.

BRUNHILDE (CONT'D)

He wanted all the hooch to himself. I don't work that way.

(points to Johanne)

Now you gotta tell me why you're here.

JOHANNANNE

(nods with a grin)

I killed four people at the Cinderella Theater on Halloween.

Brunhilde rises up from the bed.

JOHANNANNE (CONT'D)

I needed to pick off my niece...but she's too damn slippery.

Johanne catches Brunhilde's incredulous look.

JOHANNANNE (CONT'D)

I told her not to go to the theater.

Now Brunhilde chases Johanne around the cell.

JOHANNANNE (CONT'D)

I told Cynthia she wasn't gonna live to tell about entering that talent show.

BRUNHILDE

You'd kill your own flesh and blood over a talent show?

Brunhilde swings for Johnanne's head...only to miss.

Johnanne goes after Brunhilde's head...and misses.

Brunhilde pins the former theatrical agent to the wall.

BRUNHILDE (CONT'D)  
 You selfish little...I heard  
 Cynthia on the radio on Halloween.  
 (strengthens her grip)  
 She's got the goods!

Johnanne fights Brunhilde's grip and escapes from it...but not for long.

Brunhilde pins Johnanne to the wall again.

BRUNHILDE (CONT'D)  
 AND DON'T YOU FORGET IT!

JOHANNANE  
 GET...OFF...ME!

But Brunhilde shakes her head "no."

EXT. CINDERELLA THEATER - NIGHT

Snow marches through Detroit on this mid-December Sunday.

INT. CINDERELLA THEATER LOBBY - NIGHT

Cynthia (back in her tuxedo) and Josiah hold hands not far from the concession stand as CUSTOMERS (bundled up for winter) make their way into the theater.

She clutches her banjo case with her free hand.

JOSIAH  
 Cynthia...I hope you don't end up  
 dropping out of CCD and...

CYNTHIA  
 I hear what you mean, Josiah. And I  
 don't know how Eadwina would take  
 it...she wouldn't take it if she  
 and Daisy and Carrie and I couldn't  
 perform together.

Josiah nods with a smile.

JOSIAH

Yeah. Last time we were here, you four cousins had a...you were the berries!

CYNTHIA

And you're the berries, too...and whatever happens to me and my cousins, it's no good if you're not in it with us.

Cynthia puts her banjo case between her legs...then she and Josiah hug and kiss.

INT. CINDERELLA THEATER STAGE - NIGHT

The stage is set up the same way as during the Woodbury Sisters' stand here...except the harpsichord is back.

In fact, Cynthia plays that harpsichord as she turns "You Tell Her- I Stutter" (or a similar novelty) into a rollicking, freewheeling instrumental.

That small orchestra gives Cynthia musical support from the pit...with Clint as tonight's guest conductor.

INT. CINDERELLA THEATER LOWER LEVEL - NIGHT

Seth, Herschel, Jerome, Abe, Narvin Ray, Ruth, Elmer, Clyde, Josiah, and Cecilia watch from the front row.

This time, Violetta, Sadie, Desdemona, Miriam, Moses, Carrie, Daisy, and Eadwina (the last three in tuxedos!) join them.

Behind the eighteen of them, Louis, Mario, Rudy, Theda, Puni, Clara, Sherman, and OTHER PEOPLE fill up half the remaining seats. (And everybody enjoys the show!)

INT. CINDERELLA THEATER STAGE - NIGHT

Cynthia abandons the harpsichord to pick up her banjo...to pluck out the next verse and the ensuing chorus.

She pounds a chorus on the 1910s upright before taking to the theater's Mighty Wurlitzer for a final chorus or two.

Result: Strong, strong applause.

SAME SCENE - A BIT LATER

The orchestra jams in the background as Cynthia becomes a tap dancer...who matches steps with Booker, Frederick, Lincoln, and Washington.

INT. CINDERELLA THEATER LOWER LEVEL - NIGHT

Mario turns to Louis.

MARIO

That does it...I'm gonna take up  
tap dancing. Or something.

LOUIS

I want to join you.

Around them, the lower level breaks into pandemonium.

INT. CINDERELLA THEATER STAGE - NIGHT

Cynthia stands front and center.

CYNTHIA

(into mike)

Let's hear it for the Tucker  
Brothers! Weren't they great?

She eyeballs all those keyboard instruments behind her as  
applause for the Tuckers breaks out.

CYNTHIA (CONT'D)

Let's see: A Mighty  
Wurlitzer...four pianos...a  
harpsichord.

(walks around stage)

I've got an idea: My cousins...the  
Woodbury Sisters...are here. Let's  
bring 'em up!

Applause fires up as Daisy, Eadwina, and Carrie strut to the  
Cinderella platform and gather around Cynthia.

CYNTHIA (CONT'D)

Last time they were here, they tore  
this place up!

The crowd's kudos heat up.

EADWINA

(into mike)

No reason for the four of us to hog  
all the fun.

A grinning Cynthia nods.

CARRIE  
 Winna's right about that.  
 Desdemona...Sadie...Violetta...come  
 on up!

Under strong cheering, Violetta, Desdemona, and Sadie come onstage to join their fellow keyboard players.

But Daisy looks worried.

DAISY  
 Six keyboards for seven keyboard  
 players...  
 (heads offstage)  
 Be right back.

SAME SCENE - A BIT LATER

The stagehand and Daisy muscle a reed organ onto the stage.

When the amazed stagehand exits, Daisy takes a seat at the reed organ, Violetta goes to the harpsichord, Eadwina sits at the 1920s piano, and Sadie takes to the 1910s piano.

It's Carrie at the 1900s upright, Cynthia at the 1890s piano, and...Desdemona at the theater pipe organ.

CYNTHIA  
 Who'd like to call the tune?

Dead silence...for a few seconds.

DESDEMONA  
 Hey, everybody! Let's do "Twelfth  
 Street Rag!"

General agreement reigns onstage.

Desdemona receives a cue from her fellow musicians to start the tune; after her intro, all seven performers take "Twelfth Street Rag" for a rollicking ride.

The front-row occupants go wild!

EXT. WOODBURYS' HOUSE - DAY

Snow cover blankets the Motor City.

INT. WOODBURYS' KITCHEN - DAY

Cynthia, Daisy, Carrie, and Eadwina sit at the breakfast table, where they gobble and gab.



CYNTHIA  
Great job last night, everybody!

DAISY  
Well, you, too!

The four cousins click their milk glasses.

EADWINA  
Cynthia...I want you to know  
that...I'm sorry I ever failed you.  
(pushes plate aside)  
I'm sorry I ever thought of you as  
just the help and not our cousin.

CYNTHIA  
You're very much forgiven, Eadwina.  
(taking a bite)  
And I want all three of you to know  
that I'm very proud of you, and--

A KNOCK on the front door interrupts Cynthia's message.

EADWINA  
(rising from table)  
I've got it!

ANOTHER KNOCK leads to A STRONGER KNOCK.

INT. WOODBURYS' PARLOR - DAY

Eadwina opens the door, and...Johanne (in a winter coat over her prison garb) barges in.

Carrie, Cynthia, and Daisy jog into the parlor.

JOHMANNE  
(to her daughters)  
GET UPSTAIRS!

EADWINA  
NO!

JOHMANNE  
I SAID FOR YOU TO--

CARRIE  
We're not going upstairs!

JOHMANNE  
I'm your mother! And you're gonna  
do what I say!

Johanne runs to the closet to grab her rifle.

She aims at Cynthia...but the rifle's empty...so Johanne comes at Cynthia and swings the rifle at her.

Cynthia ducks...then grabs Johanne's legs and brings her down while Daisy, Eadwina, and Carrie converge upon Johanne.

CYNTHIA  
Somebody grab the rifle!

Daisy snatches the weapon from Johanne and returns it to the closet while Carrie and Eadwina hold Johanne's arms down.

CYNTHIA (CONT'D)  
Aunt Johanne, all of us need to  
get something straight! Right now!

Cynthia continues to hold Johanne's legs down; Daisy scurries to join her in pinning Johanne down.

JOHANNNE  
LET...ME...GO!

Johanne strains to fight the quadruple hold...but her daughters and niece continue to shackle her.

DAISY  
We spent too many years watching  
you and Aunt Eleanor constantly  
fight and constantly bicker.

EADWINA  
And we saw how it drove Pa away  
from you!

CARRIE  
And Ma, no matter how hard you try,  
you're not gonna turn Cynthia,  
Daisy, Eadwina, and me against each  
other!

CYNTHIA  
Another thing, Aunt Johanne: I've  
already apologized many times to  
Carrie for making fun of her.

POLICE SIRENS blare outside the house.

CARRIE  
And I've already forgiven her!

EADWINA

And that's the sober truth!

The five females HEAR several knocks on the front door.

CARRIE

I've got the door, Winna.

Eadwina grabs both of Johnanne's arms as Carrie gets the door. On the other side: TWO POLICE OFFICERS.

CARRIE (CONT'D)

Come on in, Officers. We're so glad to see you.

OFFICER #1

An all-points bulletin went out when the warden at the Wayne County Jail found your mother had escaped.

OFFICER #2

Someone tipped us off that Miss Felton...Mrs. Woodbury...might want to come back here.

JOHNNANNE

DAMN IT...LET...ME...

Cynthia and her cousins release Johnanne, who tries to swing at them...but the two officers handcuff the former agent.

EXT. OLD WAYNE COUNTY BUILDING - DAY

This ragtime-era structure features a pink granite base and a tower that makes the place look more like a capitol building.

INT. OLD WAYNE COUNTY BUILDING - COURTROOM - DAY

A heavily-shackled Johnanne sits across from parents ABIGAIL and HOMER FELTON (both 70s) in A PACKED COURTROOM.

Carrie, Cecilia, Cynthia, Daisy, and Eadwina sit between Johnanne and her folks.

No Harmon or Felton or Woodbury cracks a smile.

As he examines his papers, SALMON HALL (60s), the presiding judge, grits his teeth.

SALMON

Miss Felton...

Johnanne glowers.

SALMON (CONT'D)

Mrs. Woodbury...you had everything going for you...only to throw it all away. Your insane jealousy brought you to this point.

In the back of the room, Jerome nods.

SALMON (CONT'D)

A jury of your peers finds you not only guilty of the murders of James Delahanty, Emil Filipski, John Ostermueller, and Martin Salsness...but also of escaping from the Wayne County Jail.

Homer and Abigail shake their heads sideways.

SALMON (CONT'D)

Four consecutive life sentences...plus seven more years.

HOMER

Johnanne, how could you do this?

SALMON

Plus: Effective Thursday, January first, 1925, Carrie Woodbury becomes the legal guardian of Cynthia Harmon, Daisy Woodbury, and Eadwina Woodbury.

Cheers ring out...until Salmon gavels the crowd silent.

SALMON (CONT'D)

I saw Cynthia and the Woodburys perform...they're the berries.

The cheering kicks back in...and Cecilia and Abigail approach the four cousins.

Josiah does, too. He and Cynthia hug.

JOSIAH

Congratulations on a new beginning.

CYNTHIA

Thanks, Josiah.

It's kissing time for the two lovers.

ABIGAIL

Good luck, you four.

CECILIA

Now that you're a family, what will  
the four of you do to celebrate?

EADWINA

Well...we're gonna take turns  
cooking...and cleaning...and...

FREEZE FRAME as Eadwina continues to explain.

FADE OUT.

THE END