

When We Get There

A Full-Length Musical

Music and Lyrics by
Charlie Barnett

Libretto by
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And
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CAST OF CHARACTERS

ROSE SHAPIRO, 60, Jewish widow from Ridgewood, NJ - Soprano

MARY JACKS, 38, Rose's Black housekeeper - Alto

DAWN JACKS, 16, Mary's Black daughter - Soprano

TERRANCE WITT, 44, Rose's Black driver and handyman - Baritone

GAS STATION ATTENDANT, White, 30s

LUTHER, 30S, Black Motel Clerk

DARYL J. DAVIS, 30S, White South Carolina State Trooper

SHERRY, White State Patrol Dispatcher (offstage)

MAJOR JOHN CLOUD, 40s, White Alabama State Police Commander
(offstage)

HOSPITAL SECURITY GUARD, White, 40s

DOCTOR JAMES, Black (30s)

Note: Gas Station Attendant, State Trooper, Hospital
Security Guard and Major John Cloud will be played by same
actor

Note: Luther and the Doctor will be played by same actor

Synopsis

It was Rose Shapiro, a Jewish widow, and Dawn Jacks – an idealistic African American teenager – to get her mother, Mary Jacks and handyman Terrance Witt, to pile in Rose's 1960s Buick and drive to Selma, Alabama. The reason? Join Dr. Martin Luther King's march from the Edmund Pettus Bridge to Montgomery, the state capital to demand voting rights from Negroes from Gov. George Wallace himself. After Rose's husband, Nathan, a diamond merchant and racketeer, passed on, his employee Terrance, a WWII Army vet, remains loyal to and employed by Rose as her chauffeur/handyman. So does Mary, Rose's maid, in a home located the solidly White, middle-class town of Ridgewood, New Jersey. Gassed up, sandwiches and drinks packed, Green Book at the ready, and hearts full of hope, the foursome heads South even as America, particularly the South, remains hostile to its Black and Jewish citizens. Dawn takes the wheel. Rose rides shotgun, and clutching the purse strings. Excited, Dawn encourages optimism, and Mary sings to cover her trepidation. Encounters with racists – a White gas station attendant and a state trooper – reveal the dangers of "traveling-while-Black-with-a-Jewish-woman-in-the-back-seat." Arriving in Selma, the four join hands and head into the march. Multiple tear gas bombs explode. Stench and smoke fill the stage. Sounds of police dogs attacking, billy clubs smashing heads, screams and chant-like prayers are heard. Injured, the four run for their lives. This day will live in infamy as Bloody Sunday.

Act II opens as the four – injuries oozing blood, dazed, disoriented – stumble back to the car and make their way back north. The show ends as a new, if fragile, understanding of what a family – and just maybe what a country – can be.

Track Listings

Act I

1. A Really Great Idea
2. Dammit I Can
3. When We Get There
4. Sleep, Little Child, Sleep
5. What I Have Seen
6. Nathan: A Soliloquy
7. The Terrance Delano Witt Jazz Tour.
8. I Think I Get it Now
9. Fine, Fine, Fine, Fine
10. Closer to the Flame
11. When We Get There (Reprise)
12. Hurt
13. Mad As Hell
14. Sleep, Little Child, Sleep (Reprise)
15. Choices
16. Family
17. When We Get There (Finale) - Curtain Call

SETTINGS

Shapiro Home, Ridgewood, New Jersey

Rose's 1963 Buick Electra

Cities Service Gas Station, Danville, Virginia

McGowan Boarding House, Charlotte, North Carolina

Edystone Hotel Restaurant, Selma, Alabama

Edmund Pettus Bridge, Selma, Alabama

Mercy Hospital, Charlotte, North Carolina

SCENE 1

TERRANCE blows his whistle.

TERRANCE

Fall in

ROSE

Rose Shapiro reporting for duty.

DAWN

We are ready to march from Selma to Montgomery.

MARY

And march we will.

It suddenly dawns on Mary,
Terrance and Dawn, that they
could go to prison.

TERRANCE

Focus in. If we stick to the plan, we have a better chance of
staying out of trouble. Dawn?

DAWN

Yes, sir, Uncle Terrance. Now, when we reach Montgomery,
we'll stay at the famed Ben Moore Hotel.

ROSE

And I've arranged for us to be bussed back to Selma to pick
up our car for the triumphant ride back home.

TERRANCE

Roger that. Most important. We stick together at all times.

DAWN

This is gonna be fun.

MARY

I don't know 'bout fun. An adventure? A time to remember?

TERRANCE

A mission's more like it.

TERRANCE (CONT'D)

We have a plan, and we are going to stick to that plan.

He lifts it with difficulty.
Terrance is unprepared for the
weight. He grabs his back.

TERRANCE (CONT'D)

Oww.

Mary goes to him, quickly
followed by Dawn and Rose.

MARY

Oh, no. What happened?

TERRANCE

Back gave way again.

ROSE

Can you still drive?

TERRANCE

Ain't that bad.

He struggles to his feet, takes
a step and goes right down
again.

TERRANCE (CONT'D)

Can't drive. Dawn, you gon' have to drive.

DAWN

Me? No. No way. Auntie Rose?

ROSE

I haven't driven in years.

MARY

Don't look at me. I am well known as a person who takes public
transportation.

TERRANCE

Dawn, you can do this.

DAWN

Uh-uh.

TERRANCE

I taught you, didn't I?

DAWN

On back roads.

TERRANCE

And on the turnpike.

DAWN

I'm nervous.

MARY

You're nervous?

TERRANCE

You'll have to apply everything I taught you. Why I remember
when my daddy taught me to drive...

DAWN

OK, OK, Uncle Terrance, you have to sit right next to me.
And grab the wheel if I make a mistake.

TERRANCE

I will do that.

MARY

Dawn, Rose, let's pack up this trunk.

Mary and Dawn each take a side
of the suitcase, load it into
the trunk and slam the lid down.

SONG 01: A REALLY GREAT IDEA

DAWN AND ROSE
THIS IS A GREAT IDEA

DAWN
THIS IS JUST WHAT WE NEED TO DO.
IF MY BROTHERS AND SISTERS
ARE IN SELMA TO MARCH WELL I CAN GO TOO.
THIS TRIP'S GONNA MAKE MY YEAR

TERRANCE
WE ARE A TEAM. IS THAT CLEAR?

DAWN
I CAN'T BELIEVE THEY ALL SAID OKAY!
I MEAN, NEW VOTING LAWS ARE A
MEANINGFUL CAUSE.
AND LOOK! WE'RE ON OUR WAY.

ROSE
SINCE NATE PASSED AWAY
I'VE SPENT DAY AFTER DAY IN TEARS

MARY
OH ROSE SHAPIRO

ROSE
(to Dawn)
NOW WE'VE DECIDED TO GO
I'LL FEEL BETTER, I KNOW.

DAWN AND ROSE
IT IS SUCH A GREAT IDEA

TERRANCE
THIS ONLY SUCCEEDS ONE WAY.
WE WORK AS A TEAM AND I LEAD THE WAY.

MARY
SERGEANT, YOU'RE NO LIAR,
WE'RE HEADED INTO A FIRE.

TERRANCE
WHEN WE GET INTO THE FRAY.

DAWN AND ROSE
WHAT A FANTASTIC TRIP.

TERRANCE AND MARY
OH REALLY.

DAWN
OH STOP YOUR GRUMBLING.
YOU'LL BE FINE
PLUS, LIKE IT SHOULD,

IT'LL DO SOME GOOD.
YOU CAN DEPEND ON IT.

ROSE
I REALLY MUST ADMIT
IF NATHAN WAS HERE, I COULD NOT GO
HE'D DECLARE I MUST STAY
AND ALL HE'D SAY IS
THAT'S THE END OF IT.

DAWN, MARY AND TERRANCE
THAT'S THE END OF IT.

ROSE
SINCE NATHAN DIED
I HAVE BEEN LANGUISHING HERE.

MARY
ROSE SHAPIRO YOU'VE BEEN GRIEVING.

DAWN
NOW YOU'LL GET OUT OF YOUR SHELL

ROSE
YOU'RE RIGHT, WHAT THE HELL!

ROSE, DAWN AND MARY
THIS IS SUCH A GREAT IDEA.

TERRANCE
THIS IS A TRIP THAT YA'LL NEED ME TO LEAD.

MARY
YEAH, THIS IS A MARCH WHERE PEOPLE COULD GET HURT.

TERRANCE
IT WILL BE ROUGH ON THOSE STREETS.

MARY
YEAH THOSE COPS PLAY FOR KEEPS

TERRANCE
SELMA'S A TOWN WHERE SHIT GOES DOWN FOR REAL.

MARY
YOU KNOW I GREW UP IN MISSISSIPPI
DAMNED IF I LET MY CHILD GO THERE ALONE

TERRANCE
WE COULD GET PUNCHED IN THE MOUTH

MARY
THAT'S WHAT YOU GET IN THE SOUTH.

ROSE
WE'LL BE MARCHING THERE FOR YOUR RACE

MARY
IT'S A DANGEROUS DANGEROUS PLACE

TERRANCE
STICK WITH OUR SCHEDULE AND WE'LL BE SAFE
SO IF WE FOLLOW OUR PLAN
IF WE DO, WE STAND A CHANCE

MARY
This could be dangerous.

ROSE
(overhearing)
Mary, there's "Nothin' to fear, but fear itself!"

DAWN AND ROSE
THIS IS A GREAT IDEA

ROSE, MARY AND DAWN
GETTING THE HELL AWAY FROM HERE

DAWN
WE'LL MEET DR. KING

ROSE
AND THAT'S A BEAUTIFUL THING

ALL
IT'S A GREAT IDEA.

Music ends.

DAWN

Except me driving.

ROSE

You are plenty old enough, Dawn. Seventeen is the perfect age.

DAWN

We'd better get on the road.

TERRANCE

When you get tired, I'll take over. Maybe by then my back'll be better. Why don't you take a minute to go over everything we learned.

DAWN

I'm thinking of the time I ran over Mr. Bailey's trash can.

MARY

What?

TERRANCE

It wasn't nothing but a thing.

He pauses.

TERRANCE (CONT'D)

I'll give you a minute.

DAWN stands by the side of the car. The music for **Dammit, I Can** begins

SONG 02: DAMMIT I CAN

DAWN

CAN I EVER BE THAT GIRL?
CAN I? WHY CAN'T THAT BE ME?
IS THERE THE SLIGHTEST
POSSIBILITY THAT I COULD
STILL BE MYSELF, BUT CONFIDENT AND SURE,
THAT I COULD STILL BE ME,
BUT NEVER INSECURE?
STILL BE WHO I AM,
BUT GROWN UP AND MATURE?
COULD I?
CAN I?
I CAN!

DAWN gets in the driver's seat,

DAWN (CONT'D)

I CAN, OF COURSE!
WHY CAN'T I BE IN CHARGE?

MARY

But...

DAWN

(to MARY)

CHILL OUT, 'CAUSE I'VE GOT A PLAN.

(to herself, checking the gear shift)

IT'S JAMMED. IT'S NOT.
WHOO BOY, THIS THING IS LARGE.
WHO SAYS THAT I CAN'T DRIVE THIS
FOUR DOOR SEDAN.
THERE'S DRIVE. REVERSE.
THE BLINKERS AND THE BRAKE.
I GOT AN "A" IN THIS CLASS.
THE HORN, THE FAN.
HEY, WE ARE IN GREAT SHAPE
SO BUCKLE UP 'CAUSE WE'LL BE
HAULIN' SOME ASS.

Dawn laughs.

MARY

YOU'RE CERTAIN THAT YOU KNOW THIS STUFF?
THAT YOU CAN DRIVE?

DAWN

I AM ALL YOU'VE GOT. UNDERSTAND?

TERRANCE

OH MAN.

MARY
ALABAMA IS A LONG WAY
CAN YOU GET US THERE ALIVE?

DAWN
CAN I?
I CAN.

TERRANCE
WHAT'S GOING ON?
WHY YOU GIVING MY GIRL GRIEF?

DAWN
I'M YOUR PILOT

TERRANCE
(to Mary)
BE QUIET.

MARY
OH LORDY, WE'RE IN TROUBLE

DAWN
RELAX. WE'RE COOL. OKAY?

MARY
I GUESS WE ARE.

DAWN
DON'T THINK THAT I CAN'T DO THIS,
'CAUSE DAMMIT, I CAN.

TERRANCE
Let's go, girl! Line up the hood ornament with the line at
the edge of the highway. Keep yo'self in the middle of the
lane.

DAWN
Thanks, Uncle Terrance.

Dawn drives off the road and the
car bumps and swerves

TERRANCE
Steady now.

MARY
(Singing)
YOU'RE CERTAIN THAT YOU KNOW REVERSE
FROM PARK OR DRIVE.

DAWN
I'M THE DRIVER NOW, UNDERSTAND?

TERRANCE
OH MAN

MARY
ALABAMA IS A LONG WAY, CAN YOU
GET US THERE ALIVE?

DAWN
CAN I? I CAN.

ROSE
SHE'S FINE.

MARY
SHE'S NOT.

DAWN
WILL YOU TWO PLEASE SHUT UP?

ROSE
SHE'S DRIVING

MARY
YEAH, DRIVING ME NUTS.

ROSE
OH MARY

DAWN
YOU THINK I CAN'T
BECAUSE I'M NOT A MAN!
DON'T THINK THAT I CAN'T DO THIS
'CAUSE DAMMIT, I CAN.

MARY
THIS WAS NEVER PART OF THE PLAN

DAWN
DON'T THINK THAT I CAN'T DO THIS.
CAUSE DAMMIT, I CAN!

Music continues into Scene 2,
indicating time passing, up to
the "Dinging" of the gas pump.

SCENE 2

TERRANCE

Dawn, you need me to take over drivin'? Back's feelin' better.

DAWN

Let me just get us to the service station. I'm getting pretty good at this, aren't I?

TERRANCE

That you are.

DAWN

(to Mary)

Long trip, though. Mama, sing us a song.

MARY

Why me? Everybody here can sing.

DAWN

All right, all right. We'll all sing. I'll start and ya'll jump in.

SONG 03: WHEN WE GET THERE

DAWN (CONT'D)
SOMEDAY I WANT TO LEAVE NEW JERSEY

ROSE
And who could blame you?

DAWN
AND LIVE SOMEWHERE, ANYWHERE BUT THERE.

MARY
Amen to that.

DAWN
What's on your mind, Uncle Terrance?

TERRANCE
Ha.

TERRANCE (CONT'D)
I WANT A GARAGE OF MY OWN, CALLED "TERRY'S AUTO ZONE"
AND WE ADVERTISE "TOTAL CAR CARE."

ROSE
Alavei!

TERRANCE
Olive what?

ROSE
Alavei! It's like Amen! So should it be!

TERRANCE
OK then, Rose. You're up. What's your deep desire?

ROSE
Oh my.

ROSE (CONT'D)
I JUST WANT TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE, MAYBE MAKE A CHANGE
BEFORE MY TIME HERE IS THROUGH

ROSE (CONT'D)
I guess it's to you, Mary.

MARY
I JUST WANT A GOOD LIFE
FOR MY BIG-DREAMIN' DAUGHTER
AND FOR ALL OF HER WISHES TO COME TRUE

DAWN
All right Mama. Tell it, now.

MARY

WHEN WE GET THERE
WHEN WE GET THERE
WHEN WE GET THERE
WAIT AND SEE

WHEN WE GET THERE
WHEN WE GET THERE

ALL

WHEN WE GET THERE
WE'LL BE FREE.

DAWN

IF YOU'RE WONDERIN' WHAT YOUR PATH IS
AND WHICH WAY YOU ARE GOING?
BE PATIENT AND YOUR
QUESTIONS WILL BE ANSWERED.

TERRANCE AND MARY

ANSWERED

DAWN AND MARY

DO THE RIGHT THING AND THE KIND THING
AND THOUGH YOUR PATH IS WINDING
ALL WILL BE REVEALED TO YOU
WHEN YOU GET THERE.

ALL

WHEN WE GET THERE
WHEN WE GET THERE
WHEN WE GET THERE
JUST WAIT AND SEE.

WHEN WE GET THERE
WHEN WE GET THERE
WHEN WE GET THERE
WE'LL BE FREE

DAWN

IF YOUR LOAD IS HEAVY
IF YOUR BACK IS TIRED
YOU'LL RECEIVE ASSISTANCE
WHEN WE GET THERE.

MARY, ROSE AND TERRANCE

GET THERE

DAWN

NO MATTER WHAT THE DISTANCE, YOU'VE GOT
FRIENDS YOU CAN ENLIST.

DAWN AND

AND DON'T FORGET THE HOPE YOU FIND
IN THE POWER OF PRAYER

ALL

WHEN WE GET THERE
WHEN WE GET THERE
WHEN WE GET THERE
JUST WAIT AND SEE.

WHEN WE GET THERE
WHEN WE GET THERE
WHEN WE GET THERE
WE'LL BE FREE

WHEN WE GET THERE
WHEN WE GET THERE
WHEN WE GET THERE
JUST WAIT AND SEE.

WHEN WE GET THERE
WHEN WE GET THERE
WHEN WE GET THERE
WE'LL BE FREE

DAWN drives while TERRANCE rides shotgun in the seat next to her. In the back, MARY knits while ROSE dozes. The car stops for gas in Danville, Virginia.

TERRANCE
Ashland Oil. Here's our first stop. 730 Piney Forest Road, Danville, Virginia.

DAWN
Good thing, we're about empty.

TERRANCE
Gas cap's on the left. Pull in right there.

A WHITE GAS STATION ATTENDANT in no particular hurry saunters over to the car. He walks slowly, suspiciously all the way around the car staring in each window. Finally he stops at the driver's side door.

ATTENDANT
'Do fer ye?

DAWN
Fill 'er up, please.

ATTENDANT
Regular or ethyl?

TERRANCE
Ethyl.

The Attendant saunters over to the gas pump, then stops, comes back to DAWN.

ATTENDANT
See yer money first.

Dawn looks to Terrance, who addresses the Attendant levelly.

TERRANCE
We on our way to Selma. Green Book says a lot of our folks get gas here.

ATTENDANT
Don't care where you're headed. Certain folks been known to drive off without payin'.

ROSE
I don't like your attitude. These people are in my employ,

This comment elicits
disappointed looks, which the
other three share with each
other.

ROSE (CONT'D)

And I have money. Now you fill that tank up.

ATTENDANT

(suddenly polite, tipping his cap to
Rose)

Yes, ma'am.

The Attendant moves with sudden
alacrity, inserts the gas nozzle
in the car.

ROSE

And when you're done, please check under the hood, right,
Terrance?

The attendant moves to the
front, raises the hood. He pulls
out the dipstick, wipes it, puts
it back in and pulls it out,
scrutinizing it. Every few
moments the pump DINGS
musically, rhythmically.

ATTENDANT

Oil's OK. Still full.

TERRANCE

Thank you.

ATTENDANT

You're welcome.

He replaces the dipstick, then
slams the hood down and returns
to the pump.

The DINGING stops and the
Attendant replaces the nozzle
and approaches Dawn.

ATTENDANT (CONT'D)

That'll be five twenty-two.

ROSE counts the money out
carefully, then hands it to the
Attendant.

ROSE

Keep the change.

ATTENDANT

Thank you. Bunch o' ya'll already come through here headin' to Selma. Somethin' goin' on down there?

ROSE

We're going to march for the right to vote.

ATTENDANT

Ask me -- and I know ya ain't -- ya'll are driving into trouble.

TERRANCE

We're prepared.

ATTENDANT

Uh-huh. Well, thank you for stoppin'. Y'all drive careful.

He walks off.

TERRANCE gets out of the car, raises the hood, pulls the dipstick out. The Attendant comes over, a growing threat in each step.

ATTENDANT (CONT'D)

Hey. Who you to double check my work?

TERRANCE slides the dipstick back in, slams the hood shut.

TERRANCE

Just making sure.

ATTENDANT

Where you're goin', lot of people won't be as nice as me.

Terrance never takes his eyes off the Attendant as he gets back into the car.

ATTENDANT (CONT'D)

What's this country comin' to?

Dawn starts the engine and drives off. MARY finally exhales.

ROSE

He was so insulting to you, Terrance.

TERRANCE

Nothin' unusual, Rose.

DAWN

If it's like this in Virginia, what do think it'll be like when we get to Alabama?

TERRANCE

We 'bout to find out. White people down here don't take well to being corrected.

MARY

And the farther south we go, the more touchy it's gonna....

ROSE

We're taking this trip exactly for this reason. A little gas station kerfuffle is not gonna stop us.

MARY

Well, we sure don't want to get ourselves arrested. That would stop this trip cold.

TERRANCE

That's why we gotta stick to the plan, play by the rules...until we can change 'em.

Mary is not convinced, but her maternal pride is kicking in.

MARY

I just hope we can stay safe, do what we gotta do, and get back home safe. It's gettin' late. We on schedule?

DAWN

Yes, ma'am.

SCENE 3

Terrance at the wheel and Dawn rides shotgun. The car moves smoothly out onto the highway.

MARY remains in the back seat with Rose.

Dawn opens the map, rattles it noisily.

MARY
Can't you be quiet?

DAWN
I'm navigating.

MARY
We're about to pull over an' sleep anyway, ain't that right, Terrance?

TERRANCE
Five miles outta Charlotte. But I need directions.

DAWN
See? Stay on Highway 49.

MARY
I see that your poor eyes are bloodshot, and that you're yawnin' like you did when you were a little baby.

DAWN
I'm not tired.

MARY
Maybe but you're scared

DAWN
No I'm not.

The music for SLEEP LITTLE CHILD, SLEEP begins.

MARY
Rest your eyes, baby. Terrance can manage without you for awhile.

TERRANCE
Yeah, I'm good.

MARY leans over the front seat, caresses her daughter.

SONG 04: SLEEP, LITTLE CHILD SLEEP

MARY

SLEEP LITTLE CHILD SLEEP
SLEEP LITTLE CHILD SLEEP
LET THIS TRAVELING SOOTHE YOU
LET YOUR MAMA COO AT YOU
DANGER LIES AHEAD.
IT'S NOT HERE JUST YET
REST YOUR PRETTY HEAD AND
SLEEP. LITTLE CHILD, SLEEP.

BECAUSE WE ARE
HEADED INTO WHO KNOWS WHAT
I FEAR THAT HARM WILL BEFALL US
THE KLAN, THE POLICE AND
WORST OF ALL THE
GOVERNOR, GEORGE WALLACE.
MOBS WHO'LL GREET US ARE
TOTALLY LAWLESS.
HOSES TURNED ON US,
DOGS TRAINED TO MAUL US.
BUT SOMETHING DEEP AND
POWERFUL CALLS US.
YOU WILL NEED ALL YOUR STRENGTH
THIS WILL TEST YOU
THIS MIGHT BRING OUT THE
BEST IN YOU...SO
SLEEP. LITTLE CHILD

MARY, ROSE AND TERRANCE

SLEEP

ROSE AND TERRANCE

LITTLE CHILD

MARY, ROSE AND TERRANCE

SLEEP

MARY

LITTLE CHILD

MARY, ROSE AND TERRANCE

SLEEP

ROSE AND TERRANCE

LITTLE CHILD SLEEP

MARY

THERE ARE TROUBLES SET BEFORE YOU
LET A GOOD NIGHT'S SLEEP RESTORE YOU
THERE'S A REASON WHY WE'VE COME
YOU'LL NEED ALL YOUR STRENGTH, AND SOME
CLOSE YOUR EYES, YOUNG ONE
AND SLEEP

ROSE AND TERRANCE
SLEEP LITTLE CHILD SLEEP.

Music out.

Mary rests her head on the seat,
closes her eyes.

TERRANCE
Navigator Dawn, I need your help.

DAWN
Yes, sir, Sergeant T.

TERRANCE
I was afraid with that lullaby that you--

DAWN
Nah. Mama just sung herself to sleep.

TERRANCE
We're just on the outskirts of Charlotte.

DAWN looks at the map.

DAWN
Turn left here at Oaklawn.

TERRANCE
Look for McGowan's. 811.

DAWN
Should be right up....There it is!

TERRANCE pulls over, exits the
car and opens the rest of the
doors, helping the ladies out.
Mary and Dawn join him at the
trunk and start to unload the
luggage.

TERRANCE
We'll figure out what we need for the night, Rose, if you'd
like to go on in.

ROSE walks into the motel, goes
up to the unmanned desk and
rings the bell. The young, black
male clerk, LUTHER, arrives.

ROSE
Hello?

LUTHER
Evenin', ma'am. Are ya lost? I can direct you some
accommodations that might be more to your liking--

Terrance, Mary and Dawn come
through the door with the
luggage.

ROSE

No, we're in the right place. All of us.

LUTHER

You wouldn't be with them Freedom Riders came through here past few days? We been full as a tick on a dog.

ROSE

Yes, we are.

LUTHER

Your names please?

ROSE

I'm Rose Shapiro. This is Mary and her daughter, Dawn Jacks. And Terrance Witt.

LUTHER

Pleased to meet ya'll. Name's Luther. How long ya'll be stayin'?

ROSE

One night. We leave first thing in the morning to march with Dr. King for Negroes' voting rights! You should be down there with us!

LUTHER

With all due respect, ma'am, just like a good Christian don't choose to go down into the flames of hell, I try to stay up here where I know my devils. And I would strongly suggest ya'll just stay the night, and then turn right back around and head home.

ROSE

Thank you for your advice, which we do not plan to take. Now could you please show us to our rooms?

LUTHER

Right this way. Now, Missus Shapiro, you'll be in here. Our biggest and best room.

He opens the door for her and she looks in.

ROSE

That should be for Mary and Dawn. There are two of them, after all.

LUTHER

Uh, yes. Ladies, right this way. Missus Shapiro, you'll be the next room. Also very fine.

MARY and DAWN head into their room.

LUTHER (CONT'D)

Now, about the payment...

ROSE

How much do we owe you, sir?

LUTHER

Lemme see. Three times ten fifty, carry the five...

ROSE

Here.

She hands him thirty-one fifty.

LUTHER

Thank you ma'am. Now let's get you situated, Terrance. You, my brotha, will be in here.

He ushers Terrance to his door.

LUTHER (CONT'D)

Ya'll have a good night.

TERRANCE

Thank you.

Luther leaves.

We hear a shriek from ROSE's room. Music starts.

TERRANCE dashes to ROSE's room and knocks.

SONG 05: WHAT I HAVE SEEN

ROSE

EEEEK!
NO,NO,NO,NO!
IT'S A MOUSE. IT'S A MOUSE.
SOMEONE, QUICK.
THERE'S A MOUSE IN MY ROOM.
HELP TERRANCE. HELP
MARY PLEASE!
HE IS UNDER THE BED

TERRANCE

Rose?

ROSE opens the door and runs
into TERRANCE's arms. The
awkward intimacy of the moment
does not escape anyone. Lawrence
beats a hasty exit.

ROSE quickly lets go.

ROSE

Oh, it's terrible, Terrance!

TERRANCE

What is?

ROSE

There's an infestation of vermin!

TERRANCE

How many?

ROSE

Just one.

TERRANCE

Oh. I'll grab that desk clerk, maybe he can get you another
room!

ROSE

No, no...it's getting late. If you could just...kill it...I
could go to sleep.

TERRANCE

OK.

ROSE

Thank you.

TERRANCE enters ROSE's room. He
takes off a shoe and hunts
around for the mouse.

He finally finds it underneath
the bed, and slams it dead with
his shoe.

ROSE screams again, which brings
MARY and DAWN to her room.

ROSE (CONT'D)
Did you kill it? Is it dead?

MARY
Rose?

DAWN
Are you OK?

ROSE
I'm fine now. Thanks to Terrance.
(to Terrance)
Must be nice never being afraid.

TERRANCE
I've been afraid of plenty.
Is everything all right now, Rose?

ROSE
Yes, it's fine, Terrance. Thank you and good night.

TERRANCE
Good night now.

DAWN
What about us?

TERRANCE
That mouse ain't coming back.

DAWN
In biology we learned there can be eight mice in a litter.

TERRANCE
Little Dawn, all that knowledge in your head does not exactly
put you at ease. For all you know, the other seven already
dead or run away.

DAWN
They breed ten times a year. There have to be more. I don't
know if I want to go in my room.

MARY
I'll be with you, baby.

TERRANCE
You just need some time to settle down, there's nothing to
fear now.

DAWN

I wish. But...

Terrance, Mary and Dawn stand
outside their rooms.

DAWN (CONT'D)

I HAVE DREAMS
I HAVE DREAMS
I HAVE NIGHTMARES THAT KEEP ME AWAKE
THEY ARE STRANGE
I AM FALLING FROM UP IN THE SKY
I WAKE UP IN A SWEAT AND I HAVE TO CRY

DAWN (CONT'D)

Mama, do you have bad dreams? Do you, Terrance?

MARY

I DON'T DREAM
I DON'T HAVE TO
I'VE MEMORIES TO KEEP ME AWAKE
THEY ARE REAL
THEY ARE WORSE THAN THOSE DREAMS THAT ARE FAKE
I WOULD GIVE ANYTHING
GIVE WHATEVER IT TAKES TO HAVE WHAT I HAVE SEEN ERASED.

WHAT I HAVE SEEN
WHAT I HAVE WITNESSED WITH MY OWN EYES
I HAVE SEEN
GROWN MEN AND PROUD MEN
SAYING YES SUH AND NO SUH
AND SHUFFLING LIKE MINSTREL CLOWNS

SWEET JESUS CHRIST
WHAT I HAVE SEEN
WHAT I'VE SEEN MAKES ME ACT LIKE I DO
I HAVE SEEN MOTHERS WITH CHILDREN STARVING AT HOME
LEAVE TO SERVE WHITE FOLKS' MEALS IN TOWN

MARY AND TERRANCE

THAT'S NOT A LIFE

TERRANCE

I HAVE SEEN BLACK SOLDIERS BLEED FOR THEIR COUNTRY AND
COME HOME TO HELL.
THEY PUT THEIR LIVES ON THE LINE
FOR A LAND THAT DESPISES OUR RACE
I HAVE SEEN COLORED MEN
SAVE JEWS FROM THE DEATH CAMPS AND FASCISM'S BOOTS
AND COME HOME TO A NATION THAT "THANKS" THEM
WITH SPIT IN THEIR FACE.
THAT'S WHAT I HAVE SEEN

MARY
IN MISSISSIPPI WHEN JUST A GIRL.
MY COUSIN BEATEN TO DEATH
FOR LOOKING UP 'STEAD OF DOWN

TERRANCE
BUT MOSTLY FOR BEING BROWN

MARY
OH YES

MARY AND TERRANCE
IN A WHITE MAN'S WORLD
THIS I HAVE SEEN

MARY
THIS I HAVE SEEN

MARY AND TERRANCE
THIS I HAVE SEEN

End music.They go to their
rooms, turn out their nightstand
lights, the music ends, and we
go to BLACKOUT.

SCENE 4

The next morning. They are back on the road, DAWN driving, MARY once again in the passenger seat, fidgety, worried-looking.

The music underscore for A REALLY GREAT IDEA begins.

TERRANCE

We're right on schedule.

DAWN

Yes, Sir.

DAWN glances down at the map spread out on the seat between them.

DAWN (CONT'D)

South Carolina, then a little piece of Georgia and finally...Alabama.

ROSE

I can't wait to get to the march. I wish Nathan were with us.

DAWN

I bet you really miss him.

ROSE

I really do.

Rose begins to daydream about Nathan. She sings the solo.

SONG 06: NATHAN: A SOLILOQUY

ROSE (CONT'D)

NATHAN, I MISS YOUR DUMB, CORNY JOKES
NATHAN I MISS YOUR SMILE.
I MISS THE WAY YOU HELD THE DOOR
WHEN WE WENT OUT FOR THE EVENING.
EVEN WHEN WE WERE POOR, YOU HAD SUCH STYLE.
WHEN WE HAD NOTHING, YOU SAID, "ROSE, WAIT.
WE'LL GET THERE.
MEANWHILE JUST ENJOY THE RIDE."

Rose steps out of the car to
continue the solo.

NATHAN YOU ALWAYS MADE ME FEEL SAFE.
NOW I'M FACIN' A WORLD WITHOUT YOU AS MY GUIDE.
YOU LOVED YOU FRIENDS,
AND THEY LOVED YOU.
YOU GAVE THEM SUCH A GRAND FEELING.
AND I WAS SO PROUD TO BE YOUR WIFE.
YOU WERE GOOD AS A HUSBAND.
NO. NOT GOOD, BUT GREAT.
BUT MOST OF ALL
YOU WERE GOOD AT JUST BEING ALIVE.

IT'S THE LITTLE THINGS
THAT I MISS A LOT.
LIKE THE WAY WE'D MAKE UP
WHENEVER WE FOUGHT.
OH GOD I TELL YOU
I MISS THOSE DAYS
I MISS THOSE NIGHTS.
I MISS THE SIMPLE FACT OF YOUR BEING.
I MISS THE WAY THAT I FELT
WHEN YOU LOOKED IN MY EYES.

Rose gets back in the car.

BUT MOSTLY,
I MISS YOU BEING ALIVE

Music ends, and the journey
continues.

TERRANCE

Four more hours to Selma.

DAWN

How about an Uncle Terrance special, to pass the time.

TERRANCE

I thought you were tired of my stories.

MARY

Only the ones you've told a million times before. Tell her the one about outside the jazz club.

TERRANCE

Oh, that's a good one.

Music in.

MARY

So, you know what a jazz nut Terrance is?

ROSE

He and Nathan both. They used to go the jazz clubs in the city almost every week.

TERRANCE

That was me and Nathan's favorite pastime. I miss him.

ROSE

Me too, Terrance.

SONG 07: THE TERRANCE DELANO WITT JAZZ TOUR

TERRANCE

WHEN WE WAS IN NEW YORK
WE'D START AT THE SPOTLIGHT
THEN MOSEY ACROSS FIFTY-SECOND STREET.
THE MARQUEES WERE BLINKING
THE MUSIC WAS SWINGING
IMAGINE ALL THIS TO A DOUBLE TIME BEAT
IT WAS A TRIP
MAN, IT WAS HIP.
WE WAS ALIVE AS WE COULD BE.

Terrance gets out of the car,
freestyle dances, while singing.

OH BABY, WE HEARD THINGS
LIKE DIZZY GILLESPIE.
AND THAT CRAZY HORN HE BLEW THROUGH.
THAT BAND THAT HE HAD THEN
WAS SOME KIND OF BAD THEN
I REALLY FELT IT
YOU WOULD HAVE MELTED
WAS IT A GAS?
YOU BET YOUR ASS.
IT WAS THE COOLEST THING I EVER KNEW.

DAWN, MARY AND ROSE

OOH WAH
OOH WAH WAH WAH POW
POW POW
OOH WOP
BOP BOW

TERRANCE

THERE WAS THE THREE DEUCES.
AND THEN THERE'S THE ONYX
AND ON TO THE FAMOUS DOOR.
AND IF WE COULD MANAGE
TO STAY UP LATE ENOUGH,
WE'D GO TO MINTON'S.
THEY STAYED OPEN 'TIL FOUR
THEN HOME WE WOULD CRAWL
BUT WE HAD A BALL
THAT WAS TERRANCE DELANO WITT JAZZ TOUR

Terrance gets back in the car.

DAWN, MARY AND ROSE

THE TERRANCE DELANO WITT JAZZ TOUR

DAWN

Wow, that sounds like fun.

TERRANCE

Not always.

DAWN

What do you mean?

TERRANCE

One night, I was comin' out of a club, 'bout two a.m. The jazz combo came out too. All brothas. And we was sayin' goodnight and backslappin' all round, when some white clowns -- in the city on vacation I guess -- came up to us, callin' us all kinda names.

DAWN

Oh no.

TERRANCE

And then they started movin' on me, cornering me.

DAWN

Where was Uncle Nathan?

TERRANCE

I went alone that night.

MARY

What Mr. Modesty here is not sayin' is that he wailed on those boys till they were beggin' for mercy.

DAWN

Where were the cops?

Suddenly we see flashing red and blue lights illuminate them.

TROOPER DARYL J. DAVIS

(on megaphone)

This is the police. Pull over and stop the vehicle.

They quickly pull over.

MARY

God fucking damn it.

DAWN

What did you say?

TERRANCE

Everybody stay cool.

ROSE

We didn't break any laws.

TERRANCE
We already guilty.

ROSE
Of what?

TERRANCE
Traveling while Black.

South Carolina State Trooper
DARYL J. DAVIS swaggers over to
the car.

In the Buick, our Freedom Riders
are terrified, and angry

The Trooper stands next to the
driver's window, hand on his
holster. He addresses Terrance,
who is behind the wheel.

TROOPER DARYL J. DAVIS
Mighty nice vehicle you got here, boy. You steal it?

ROSE
No, officer. It belonged to my husband.

TROOPER DARYL J. DAVIS
Oh, and does he know y'all are out joyriding in his
property?...From New Jersey?

ROSE
He passed away and I never had the registration put in my
name.

TROOPER DARYL J. DAVIS
Let me see the registration.

Rose hands it to him.

TROOPER DARYL J. DAVIS (CONT'D)
This here car is registered to one Nathan Shapiro.

ROSE
Yes, sir. That's what I tried to tell you.

TROOPER DARYL J. DAVIS
Shapiro. That's a Jew name, isn't it?

ROSE
Jewish.

DAWN
She's his widow.

MARY
(under her breath)

Shh!

TROOPER DARYL J. DAVIS
I say you could talk?

DAWN
No, sir, but --

TERRANCE
(under his breath)
Dawn, hush.

TROOPER DARYL J. DAVIS
A Jew and three nigras driving a dead man's car. Where y'all headed?

ROSE
To Selma, to march with the great Dr. King.

TROOPER DARYL J. DAVIS
Bullshit. Y'all are under arrest.

TERRANCE
Please, officer. We don't want any trouble.

TROOPER DARYL J. DAVIS
What did you just say?

TERRANCE
Just let us be on our way and we'll get out of your hair.

MARY
Sir, you can't do this.

TROOPER DARYL J. DAVIS
You resisting arrest?

TERRANCE
Sir, please. She didn't mean what she said.

The Trooper suddenly crouches,
ready for action -- just like he
was trained -- unsnaps the
leather strap on his gun
holster, grips the pistol butt --
ready to pull the gun at the
slightest provocation...or whim.
DAWN screams.

TROOPER DARYL J. DAVIS
You marchin' for Dr. King? Now you march for me. Over behind
them bushes.

ROSE
Officer, what is the meaning of this?

TERRANCE
(under his breath)
Rose, no.

TROOPER DARYL J. DAVIS
Out of the car!

TERRANCE
Sir, please. She didn't mean to question you.

TROOPER DARYL J. DAVIS
Well good. Because I don't answer questions from nigras and Jews.

ROSE
I don't see what the problem is here, officer. I've shown you my husband's valid registration. We haven't broken any traffic laws. We've done nothing wrong.

TROOPER DARYL J. DAVIS
Just your kind bein' here is wrong. Know what we do with folks like you in South Carolina?

A crackling transmission from
the Trooper's cruiser.

DISPATCHER
(o.s)
All units, all units, we got
a overturned fuel truck,
junction of US 29 and South
Carolina 5. Reported
casualties. All units
proceed to the scene
immediately.

TROOPER DARYL J. DAVIS (CONT'D)

Think you're gettin' off? My
brothers in Alabama are
waitin' for you. And they got
dogs.

He rushes back to his car, roars
away.

The four, stunned and
traumatized, slowly make their
way back to the car. This
should take as long as it takes,
during which time the audience
has an opportunity to imagine
how they must be feeling after
coming within moments of being
shot down in cold blood.

SCENE 5

The four are back on the road,
Terrance behind the wheel, Dawn
riding shotgun.

Lighting cue.

ROSE
Oh my God. I can hardly breathe.

TERRANCE
You did great, Rose.

ROSE
I was terrified. Are you all right, dear?

DAWN
I'm still shaking.

ROSE
I had no idea what I was doing or saying. I was terrified.

DAWN
You did great. We all did great.

Rose shifts gears.

ROSE
The things he was saying...

DAWN
Auntie Rose...

That's why we're taking this trip, isn't it?

ROSE
Please, tell me. Have I ever been like that cop, even in a
little way?

MARY
All white folks say hurtful things to us...

DAWN
...whether they realize it or not.

Terrance and Mary walk over to
them.

ROSE
Oh my goodness, I hate to think... You are my family. Now,
more than ever.

SONG 08: I THINK I GET IT NOW

ROSE (CONT'D)

IT'S EASY IN NEW JERSEY
TO TALK ABOUT EQUALITY.
IT'S EASY TO SEE WHAT EVERYBODY
THINKS THEY KNOW ABOUT BEING FREE
BUT HERE IN ALABAMA
IT'S LIKE NOTHIN' I'VE EVER SEEN

ROSE (CONT'D)

I THINK I GET IT NOW
I THINK I GET IT NOW
I THINK I GET IT NOW
I THINK I GET IT NOW

DAWN, MARY AND TERRANCE

I THINK YOU GET IT NOW
I THINK YOU GET IT NOW
I THINK YOU GET IT NOW
I THINK YOU GET IT NOW

ROSE (CONT'D)

ALL THOSE INNUENDOS.
THOSE LITTLE THINGS I SAID
I WISH THAT I COULD TAKE THEM BACK
AND DO ANYTHING ELSE INSTEAD
THOSE THINGS, THEY'RE LIKE A CANCER
AND I JUST LET IT SPREAD-

ROSE (CONT'D)

I THINK I GET IT NOW
I THINK I GET IT NOW
I THINK I GET IT NOW
I THINK I GET IT NOW

DAWN, MARY AND TERRANCE

I THINK YOU GET IT NOW
I THINK YOU GET IT NOW
I THINK YOU GET IT NOW
I THINK YOU GET IT NOW

MARY

YOU GROW UP LIKE YOU GROW UP
WITH THAT NONSENSE IN YOUR HEAD
YOU DIDN'T KNOW
THOSE WORDS WOULD GO AND
HURT ME LIKE THEY DID

MARY AND ROSE

I THINK YOU/I GET IT NOW
I THINK YOU/I GET IT NOW
GET IT NOW
I THINK YOU/I GET IT NOW
I THINK YOU/I GET IT

DAWN AND TERRANCE

I THINK YOU GET IT NOW
I THINK YOU GET IT NOW
I THINK YOU GET IT NOW
I THINK YOU GET IT

With a new sense of purpose,
Rose leads them back to the car.

ROSE

Let's get to Selma.

SCENE 6

The four travelers dine on biscuits and gravy in a booth at the restaurant in the Edystone Hotel in Selma.

Other patrons and waitstaff (perhaps played by the two minor actors and/or band members) come and go, and chatter, to create a bustling restaurant atmosphere full of expectancy for the march in the morning)

The four travelers laugh together as the scene begins.

TERRANCE

Um. Um. Almost as good as mine.

MARY

You cannot make biscuits good as these, Terrance Witt.

TERRANCE

I fed our whole platoon on 'em when our C-rations ran out.

DAWN

Even I know that's a tall tale.

TERRANCE

You'll see, I'll make 'em for you when we get home.

ROSE

And I'll bet they'll be as light and flaky as these.

MARY

Flaky is right!

They burst out laughing again.

TERRANCE

All right now. What you don't know is that an army could march on my biscuits.

MARY

Yeah, cuz they're tough as boot leather. We could use 'em on this march.

ROSE

I'm so proud of all of us for having the courage to take this journey. I just hope I'm up to the task.

TERRANCE

Uh, olive oil, right, Rose?

ROSE

Close enough.

DAWN

You are. We all are. We made the decision to go, and we're gonna see it through. If we stick together as a family, and look out for each other, everything's gonna be fine.

Music begins for "Fine, Fine,
Fine"

MARY

It'd be fine if you could go to any college in the land.

DAWN

It'd be fine if you could shop in any store on Fifth Avenue.

TERRANCE

It'd be fine if I could have the life I was promised when I fought for this country. Yeah, that'd sure be fine.

(Perhaps during the song the two
minor actors and the musicians
join in the singing)

SONG 09: FINE FINE FINE FINE

MARY
IT WOULD BE SO

DAWN, MARY AND TERRANCE
FINE FINE FINE FINE FINE

DAWN
TO HAVE SO MUCH

DAWN AND TERRANCE
IT WOULD BE SO

DAWN, MARY AND TERRANCE
FINE FINE FINE FINE FINE

TERRANCE AND MARY
JUST TO HAVE ENOUGH

MARY
IT WOULD BE SO

DAWN, MARY AND TERRANCE
FINE FINE FINE FINE

MARY
TO NEVER HAVE TO WORRY

TERRANCE
IT WOULD BE SO

DAWN, MARY AND TERRANCE
FINE FINE FINE FINE
TO NEVER HAVE IT ROUGH

TERRANCE
YEAH I WOULD SMOKE A FAT CIGAR

MARY
I WOULD BUY A FANCY CAR.

DAWN
I WOULD DATE A MOVIE STAR

MARY
YOU WILL DATE NO ONE.

DAWN
OH MOM.

MARY
I WOULD ORDER STEAK TARTARE
AND FIND OUT WHAT CAVIAR.

DAWN
I WOULD LEARN TO PLAY GUITAR

TERRANCE
SAY AU REVOIR TO EVERYTHING THAT ISN'T

ALL
FINE FINE FINE FINE FINE

MARY
I'D USE THE SUNDAY CHINA
FOR EVERY SINGLE MEAL.
AND IF A PLATE GETS CHIPPED I'D THROW IT OUT.
I WOULD HAVE SILVER FORKS AND SPOONS AND KNIVES
THAT SOMEONE ELSE WOULD POLISH
AND SOMETIMES JUST FOR FUN I'D ORDER TRUFFLES WITH MY
TROUT

TERRANCE
EVERY SUIT I HAD WOULD BE SO SHARP
IT'D CUT YOU LIKE A KNIFE.
AND THE LADIES WOULD LOOK ONCE AT ME
AND THEN THEY WOULD LOOK TWICE.
MY SHOES WOULD BE TWO-TONED ONES,
AND BUFFED UNTIL THEY SHINE.
IF YOU'VE GOT THE DOUGH A MAN CAN LOOK SO

ALL
FINE FINE FINE FINE FINE

DAWN	MARY AND TERRANCE
I'D WANT TO GET MY HAIR DONE.	SO FINE
DONE ANY WAY I WANT.	SO FINE
I'D WANT SOME BRAND NEW MAKE- UP	SO FINE
AND A DRESS BY MARY QUANT.	SO FINE
I'D WANT TO HAVE MY OWN ROOM.	SO FINE
A PLACE THAT'S ONLY MINE.	SO FINE
AND A DATE WITH MARVIN GAYE	SO FINE
'CAUSE HE'S SO	
FINE FINE FINE FINE	

ALL
FINE FINE FINE FINE FINE

MARY
HE IS GOOD LOOKING

ALL
FINE FINE FINE FINE FINE

TERRANCE
THAT GUY IS SHARP

MARY
IT WOULD BE SO

DAWN, MARY AND TERRANCE
FINE FINE FINE FINE FINE

DAWN
TO NOT HAVE TO WORRY

TERRANCE
IT WOULD BE SO

DAWN, MARY AND TERRANCE
FINE OH SO FINE

TERRANCE
TO BE FINE WITH HOW THINGS ARE

DAWN
ALL THE RECORDS THAT I WANT

TERRANCE
I WOULD BE A BON VIVANT

MARY
FOR BREAKFAST EGGS WITH A CROISSANT.
THAT'S FRENCH FOR MUFFIN

TERRANCE
ZUTALORS

DAWN
I'D HAVE BOYFRIENDS COME TO CALL

MARY
I'D STOP 'EM COLD RIGHT IN THE HALL

TERRANCE
EVERY NIGHT I'D HAVE A BALL. What? DAWN

MARY
(to Dawn)
YOU THINK I'M BLUFFIN'?

DAWN, MARY AND TERRANCE
IT WOULD BE FINE FINE FINE FINE FINE

ROSE
IT'S NOT ALL IT'S CRACKED UP TO BE

DAWN, MARY AND TERRANCE
SO FINE FINE FINE FINE

TERRANCE
LET ME TRY AND THEN WE'LL SEE.

DAWN
IT WOULD BE SO

ALL
FINE FINE FINE FINE

DAWN
TO NEVER HAVE TO WORRY.

TERRANCE
IT WOULD BE SO

ALL
FINE FINE FINE FINE

DAWN, MARY AND TERRANCE
TO NEVER HAVE IT ROUGH.

TERRANCE
IT WOULD BE SO

ALL
FINE FINE FINE FINE FINE
YEAH SO FINE FINE FINE FINE FINE

The music for FINE FINE FINE
FINE ends.

TERRANCE

Well, we better get to bed.

They get up. Dawn takes her
mother's hand.

MARY

'Night, ya'll.

ROSE

See you in the morning.

DAWN

Reveille, oh six hundred.

Instrumental music: "When We
Get There", indicating passage
of time.

SCENE 7

As they walk toward the march
site, the tension builds.

DAWN

I can hardly wait.

TERRANCE

Remember, we all stay together. With me in front.

DAWN

Yes, sir.

ROSE

We'll all march together, hand in hand.

MARY

By each other's sides.

TERRANCE

That's right. We stay together, 'cause we are heading into a
heated situation.

DAWN

A little fire might be what makes us stronger.

SONG 10: CLOSER TO THE FLAME

DAWN (CONT'D)

THE CLOSER TO THE FIRE
THE HARDER GETS THE STEEL
IF WE GET CLOSER TO THE FLAME
WE'LL FORGE A CHAIN
THAT KEEPS US STRONG THROUGH THIS ORDEAL
OUR POWER COME FROM PRESSURE
IT TURNS A CHUNK OF COAL TO DIAMOND.
DIG DEEP ENOUGH, YOU'LL FIND A
JEWEL IN EVERY MINE.
IT JUST TAKES TRYIN'.
THE CLOSER TO THE FIRE
THE HARDER GETS THE STEEL
THAT IS THE ONLY WAY
WE CAN TAKE A DREAM
AND MAKE IT REAL.

DAWN (CONT'D)

THE DEEPER YOUR DESIRE
THE MORE YOU CAN ATTAIN.
SO LET'S BE DRAWN IN
AND GET CLOSER TO THE FLAME.

ROSE, MARY AND TERRANCE

DEEPER DESIRE
OOOH
DRAWN IN
CLOSER OOH

DAWN (CONT'D)

I am ready, Uncle Terrance. Bring it on, whatever is waiting for us.

TERRANCE

You stay close.

DAWN

AN OAK TREE JUST GETS STRONGER
AS IT WEATHERS EVERY STORM
AND LIKE THE OAK TREE AS BEE STRESSED
WE HAVE ALL BEEN TESTED

DAWN (CONT'D)

SINCE WE'RE BORN.
CLOSER TO THE FIRE
THE HARDER GETS THE STEEL
THAT IS THE ONLY WAY
WE CAN TAKE A DREAM
AND MAKE IT REAL.
THE DEEPER YOUR DESIRE
THE MORE YOU CAN ATTAIN.
SO LET'S BE DRAWN IN
AND GET CLOSER TO THE FLAME.
SO LET'S BE DRAWN IN
AND GET CLOSER

ROSE, MARY AND TERRANCE

AH
CLOSER FIRE
HARDER GETS THE STEEL
OOH
OH
DEEPER DESIRE
MORE YOU ATTAIN
DRAWN IN
DRAWN IN
AND GET CLOSER

DAWN (CONT'D)

TO THE FLAME.

The music for CLOSER TO THE
FLAME ends.

TERRANCE

This is it. We're here.

Mary, grabs Dawn's hand.

The danger is becoming apparent to Dawn. She takes her mother's hand.

Rose grabs Terrance's hand. Then Mary grabs Terrance's other hand and the four of them walk forward together.

We hear the sounds of a peaceful protest march of hundreds of people. The marching feet, the singing, perhaps a speech far away -- indistinct, but with the cadence of hope.

SONG 11: WHEN WE GET THERE (REPRISE)

ROSE
I DIDN'T KNOW I'D BE THIS NERVOUS

MARY
YEAH, THOSE PEOPLE WANT TO HURT US

TERRANCE
JUST STAY WITH ME AND
SOMEHOW WE'LL GET THROUGH THIS.

MARY
I'M THINKING TWICE ABOUT THIS IDEA.

ROSE
DO YOU THINK THAT WE COULD DIE HERE?

DAWN
WE'VE COME THIS FAR. WE
MIGHT AS WELL STICK TO THIS.

MARY
(to Dawn)
WALK STEADY, AND DON'T HURRY.

TERRANCE
THEN WE CAN GO BACK TO NEW JERSEY

ROSE
I'M GOING TO CLOSE MY EYES. TERRANCE,
TELL ME WHEN WE GET THERE.

ALL
WHEN WE GET THERE
WHEN WE GET THERE
WHEN WE GET THERE
WAIT AND SEE

WHEN WE GET THERE
WHEN WE GET THERE
WHEN WE GET THERE
WE'LL BE FREE.

They begin to walk together and are joined by the two minor characters, who flank them.

MAJOR JOHN CLOUD (O.S.)

I am Major John Cloud of the Alabama State Troopers, and this is an unlawful assembly. This demonstration will not continue. Disperse and go home or to your churches. I order you to disperse.

The four continue to walk forward, hand in hand.

MAJOR JOHN CLOUD (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Troopers advance.

The six keep walking, picking up the refrain.

At the last word "Free" a tear gas bomb goes off and smoke floods the stage. We hear nightsticks, bullwhips hitting flesh. Screams. Horses breaking into a gallop, dogs snarling.

And more screaming. Terrible screaming.

The four stumble and then run.

They try to hold each other's hands but become separated and fall, get up and turn and run back the way they came.

They are obscured by tear gas and the horrible sounds continue as they disappear in the clouds of tear gas smoke (and exit the stage)

As the smoke clears, a badly-injured ROSE, MARY, DAWN and TERRANCE stumble back on stage.

Their stumbling is choreographed into a short sequence, as they try to support each other.

Terrance has a cut on his head and seems a bit disoriented. His back must have taken a hit and he limps painfully.

MARY has a cut on her arm and is covered with blood.

DAWN limps, her knee bloodied, clothes torn.

ROSE is the worst off. Her bloodied arm hangs by her side. Wincing in pain, she is soon helped to the car by TERRANCE and MARY on either side of her. She is confused and is clearly suffering from a concussion.

The music for HURT begins.

SONG 12: HURT

TERRANCE
MAYDAY MAYDAY

ROSE
Somebody, help us!

MARY
Help us? Ain't nobody gon' help us.

DAWN
(She sings.)
I'M HURT.
MAMA, I'M HURT
NEVER HURT LIKE THIS BEFORE
MAMA, I'M BROKEN. MAMA, THERE'S BLOOD.
I'M HURT
I'M HURT.

MARY
WE'RE ALL HURT

DAWN
I'VE NEVER SEEN HATE LIKE THAT
OH MAMA, MY RIBS ARE SORE

MARY
LET ME SEE

DAWN
THEY KICKED MY HEAD
SOMEONE USED A CLUB.

I NEVER DREAMED
I COULD WONDER IF I WOULD DIE
OR IF I'D LIVE
AND I NEVER SCREAMED
LIKE I DID ON THAT BRIDGE.

TERRANCE
RETREAT RETREAT

He tries to be the brave
soldier, but Terrance is badly
hurt. Mary ministers to Terrance
tenderly.

MARY
You here. We gon' get you home. Back where it's safe.

DAWN
THERE'S PAIN MAMA.

MARY
IT'S JUST A SCRATCH.

DAWN
I'VE NEVER FELT PAIN LIKE THIS

MARY
WHERE DOES IT HURT?

DAWN
THERE'S PAIN IN MY HEART
NO, IT'S MY BRAIN.
NO, IT'S MY SOUL.
I ACHE

MARY
WE ALL ACHE

DAWN
I FEAR I WON'T HEAL FROM THIS

MARY
AND WE ALL HEAL

DAWN
MAMA, MY KNEES ARE BLOODY

MARY
(feeling her leg)
IT'S NOT A BREAK

DAWN
THERE'S CUTS ON MY SKIN.
AND WOUNDS THAT WON'T SHOW
I NEVER KNEW THAT MY
WARRIOR'S BLOOD COULD
RISE UP LIKE IT DID
AND I NEVER KNEW
THAT MY RAGE
MATCHED THEIR RAGE
UNTIL I SET FOOT ON THAT BRIDGE.
OH MAMA, I'M HURT.

The music for HURT ends.

MARY helps TERRANCE into the back seat. DAWN is about to help ROSE in the back seat next to him.

MARY

Uh-uh, Dawn.

DAWN

She needs to rest.

MARY

She can't be back here with a black man. You forget where we are.

DAWN gets it, helps ROSE into the passenger seat. MARY gets in the back seat next to TERRANCE. DAWN Heads for the driver's seat.

TERRANCE lays his head against the back door window, mumbling incoherently.

TERRANCE

Incoming. Incoming.

MARY

It's over now, Terrance. You rest.

ROSE moans.

MARY (CONT'D)

We need to get Rose to a hospital. Now.

TERRANCE

Field hospital. Should be about two clicks south, back toward the coast. --

MARY

Terrance. We are in A-merica. The war is o-ver.

TERRANCE

The war is just beginning.

DAWN

A white hospital down here isn't gonna let us in the parking lot.

MARY

We have to try.

Dawn pores over the map.

DAWN

St. Joseph Hospital's down this road. About five miles. But wait, don't we need a hospital for Uncle Terrance too? He's not doing very well.

MARY

The way he's talking, we gotta get him to one of our hospitals back home. Not here.

TERRANCE

I'm fine. We got to get our commanding officer treated.

DAWN

OK. Going to St. Joseph's.

DAWN puts the car in drive and hits the gas.

Music to **Mad As Hell** starts.

SONG 13: MAD AS HELL

DAWN (CONT'D)

LOOK OUT YOUR WINDOW, Y'ALL
WHAT DO YOU SEE?
SHARECROPPER'S SHACKS WITH NO
ELECTRICITY.
NO INDOOR PLUMBING (SNIFF SNIFF)
CAN'T YOU TELL?

MARY

THAT SMELL!

DAWN

HOW CAN YOU NOT BE
MAD AS HELL?

DAWN AND TERRANCE

YOU THINK US NEGROES GET A
DOCTOR'S CARE

DAWN

IF WE GET SICK WE
GOT NO PRAYER.

MARY AND TERRANCE

PRAYER

ROSE AND DAWN

THERE IS NO HOSPITAL WHERE
WE'LL GET WELL

ROSE, DAWN AND MARY

HOW CAN YOU NOT BE

ALL

MAD AS HELL

DAWN, MARY AND TERRANCE

MY BLOOD IS BOILING.

DAWN

AIN'T YOURS TOO?

TERRANCE

MINE IS TOO

DAWN

MARY AND TERRANCE

MY FISTS
ARE SPOILING FOR A FIGHT.

OOH

MARY AND TERRANCE (CONT'D)

BRING IT ON! DAMMIT
BRING IT ON

DAWN
MY HEART IS POUNDING
LIKE THE CLAPPER OF A BELL

MARY AND TERRANCE
DING, DING DONG

DAWN
AND THAT BELL

DAWN, MARY AND TERRANCE
IS SOUNDING THE ALARM

DAWN
THAT NOTHING'S WELL

MARY AND TERRANCE
NOT WELL NOT WELL
NOT WELL NOT WELL

DAWN
AND I'M MAD AS HELL

MARY
YOU THINK THESE FOLKS WE'RE SEEING
CAN CAST A VOTE?
ANY HOPE OF THIS IS
SOME KIND OF JOKE.

DAWN
YOU LIVED HERE, MAMA.
REMEMBER HOW IT FELT?

DAWN AND TERRANCE
DIDN'T IT MAKE YOU

ALL
MAD AS HELL.

ALL (CONT'D)
MY BLOOD IS BOILING.

DAWN
AIN'T YOURS TOO?

MARY AND TERRANCE
GOD-DAMNED RIGHT

DAWN
MY FISTS
ARE SPOILING FOR A FIGHT.

MARY AND TERRANCE (CONT'D)
OOH

MARY AND TERRANCE (CONT'D)
BRING IT ON, DAMMIT, BRING IT ON

DAWN
MY HEART IS POUNDING
LIKE THE CLAPPER OF A BELL

MARY AND TERRANCE
DING, DING DONG

DAWN
AND THAT BELL

DAWN, MARY AND TERRANCE
IS SOUNDING THE ALARM

DAWN
THAT NOTHING'S WELL

ALL
AND I'M MAD AS HELL

MARY AND DAWN
YOU THINK THESE FOLKS CAN FIX THIS
BY THEMSELVES?

ROSE AND DAWN
YOU THINK THAT THEY DON'T NEED SOME HELP?

DAWN
FROM HERE ON OUT I'M GOING TO
KICK AND SCRATCH AND YELL.

ALL
DON'T KNOW 'BOUT YOU BUT I AM
MAD AS HELL
DON'T KNOW 'BOUT YOU BUT I AM
MAD AS...

The song is interrupted buy a
SIREN, growing ever louder.
Flashing red lights illuminate
the back of the car, growing
brighter by the second.

MARY

Pull over, Dawn. And sit quiet, hands on the wheel.

Dawn pulls the car over. The
four brace themselves for
another emotional impact. As
the siren reaches a deafening
pitch and the lights dye them
all blood red, an ambulance
flies by. They all exhale.

Dawn pulls back out onto the
highway.

DAWN

Auntie Rose, you doin' OK?

ROSE

My arm, I can't move it.

DAWN

WE're almost at the hospital, hang in there. Mama, how's
Terrance doing?

MARY

Terrance is asleep for now.

They arrive at the hospital.
TERRANCE is drifting in and out
of consciousness in the back
seat. MARY gets out of the car.

A WHITE SECURITY GUARD
approaches him.

WHITE SECURITY GUARD

Ya'll gonna have to move along now.

DAWN

But this White woman is hurt badly. Her arm's not working.

WHITE SECURITY GUARD

All right.

The Security Guard comes over to
ROSE's side of the car.

WHITE SECURITY GUARD (CONT'D)
Come on out, ma'am. Or do you need a wheelchair?

ROSE
I can make it.

She can't get out of the car on
her own. DAWN gets out, opens
the passenger door and helps a
very weak ROSE out of the car.

WHITE SECURITY GUARD
I'm getting you a wheelchair.

ROSE
My family can help me in, and they're going to need medical
attention too.

WHITE SECURITY GUARD
They can't come in, ma'am.

ROSE
Can't you see how bad they are? Especially Terrance.

WHITE SECURITY GUARD
Hospital policy.

ROSE
Let's go.

Rose turns back toward the car.

MARY
But Rose.

ROSE
I'd rather die than give in to this.

DAWN
What?

MARY
Sir, is there a colored hospital down this way?

WHITE SECURITY GUARD
Wouldn't know about that. Get along now.

DAWN
We have to get to a hospital.

MARY
It's getting dark, Dawn. Let's get to the motel Luther'll
tell us where the nearest colored hospital is in the morning.

DAWN

But they need a hospital tonight.

MARY

We don't know our way around here and the sun's going down.
We have to get to the motel for tonight.

They help Rose back into the car
and get in.

Crossfade.

SCENE 8

DAWN helps a very weak ROSE and
MARY helps a disoriented
TERRANCE into the lobby where
they're greeted by Luther, the
clerk.

LUTHER

Good evening and welcome--oh you all. Whoo-ee! Looks like
Selma marched on you.

MARY

Luther, is there a colored hospital near here?

LUTHER

It's about twenty miles up the road, but you don't wanna be
driving there at night.

MARY

I know. We need to keep an eye on them tonight, so can you
put us all in one room?

LUTHER

You're in luck. We only have one room.

TERRANCE

You the QM?

LUTHER

The what?

TERRANCE

The Quartermaster.

LUTHER

Uh, I guess so, yeah.

LUTHER leads them to the room.

LUTHER (CONT'D)

Here are your quarters. Be right back with some iodine and
bandages.

He heads off.

Mary surveys the room. There are
two twin beds.

MARY

This'll be all right for one night. Dawn, put Rose in that
bed right quick.

DAWN

Like one big happy family.

MARY

That's one way of putting it.

Luther returns with bandages and
a bottle of iodine.

LUTHER

Here ya'll go. Lucky we have any left, given how many other
folks back here and beat all to hell.

TERRANCE

Morphine syrettes. Sulfa powder. Salt tablets.

DAWN takes MARY aside.

DAWN

Mama, what is going on with Uncle Terrance?

MARY

He's hurt worse than he thinks.

TERRANCE

Didn't you hear me, Private? This is an order. Morphine
syrettes, sulfa powder, salt tablets.

LUTHER

Uh, I think we got some aspirin.

MARY

Bring that aspirin, please.

LUTHER

Yes ma'am.

He takes off.

MARY

Come on, soldier

TERRANCE

Boy, they sure got some good lookin' nurses here.

DAWN

Nurses?

MARY helps TERRANCE into the
other bed, tucks him in, and
starts dressing his wounds. He
is moaning, mumbling, anxious.

DAWN (CONT'D)

Soon as we get back, and we know everyone's OK, I'm goin'
back down there. Join another march.

MARY

Dawn, baby. I can appreciate your idealism. But look what happened to us.

DAWN

So, don't even try? Don't even hope? This fight is not over.

TERRANCE

Puttin' you in for a promotion, medal.

MARY

It's you that deserves the medal, Sergeant Terrance. Now let's clean you up an get you some rest.

Rose is sound asleep.. TERRANCE
groans painfully on his bed.

The music for SLEEP, LITTLE
CHILD - REPRISE begins.

SONG 14: SLEEP LITTLE CHILD SLEEP (REPRISE)

TERRANCE's moaning gets worse.
MARY comes over to him, begins
to sing TERRANCE a lullaby.

MARY (CONT'D)
(She sings.)

SLEEP

DAWN
YOU'RE SAFE HERE

MARY
LITTLE CHILD, SLEEP

DAWN
YOUR PLACE HERE IS RIGHT BESIDE ME

MARY
SLEEP

DAWN
I'LL SMOOTH YOUR FACE HERE

MARY AND DAWN
LITTLE CHILD SLEEP

MARY
THE HARDEST DAY IS BEHIND US

DAWN
NOT A SOUL COULD FIND US

MARY
WE WERE BRUTALIZED
I DON'T KNOW JUST WHY

MARY AND DAWN
CLOSE YOUR TIRED EYES,
AND SLEEP LITTLE CHILD, SLEEP.

DOCTOR JAMES (Black) helps Rose out, her arm in a cast. She looks weak, but very slightly improved. DAWN and MARY come to her.

DOCTOR JAMES

Well, looks like you can make it home in one piece now.

DAWN

Thank you, Doctor James. Is she going to be OK?

DOCTOR JAMES

I set the break, which should ease the discomfort, but, Mrs. Shapiro, you should see a rheumatologist when you get home, because of the severe nerve damage. But let's remain hopeful.

DAWN

Hopeful?

ROSE

I may lose the use of my arm.

MARY and DAWN help ROSE onto a bench.

The Doctor heads back into the hospital.

DAWN

Oh no, Auntie Rose, that's horrible. I'm so sorry. I never thought things would turn out this way.

MARY

None of us did.

ROSE

No, none of us did.

MARY

Well, I guess we better get back on the road.

A beat.

The DOCTOR, laughing to himself, brings TERRANCE out in a wheelchair.

DAWN

What are you laughing about?

TERRANCE

Oh, I just told him about the time when I hit a grand slam and we beat the White team for the city championship.

MARY AND DAWN

Terrance is back.

DOCTOR

Yes, but he's going to need a lot of rest. And he is not to drive till you get home and he sees a specialist.

TERRANCE

Yea, I'm back. The one I'm worried about is you, Rose.

ROSE

Nonsense, Terrance. I'll be fine and as soon as we get back, you're going to stop driving this old lady around and you're going to start your auto shop. And what about you, Mary? You've put off your dreams for so many years.

DAWN

Yeah Mama. What are your dreams?

MARY

You. I chose you.

Music for Choices begins.

SONG 15: CHOICES

MARY (CONT'D)

(She sings.)

WE MAKE CHOICES
WE CHOOSE THIS OR THAT
WE MAKE CHOICES.
EVERY DAY
CAN'T AVOID THIS
YOU MOVE FORWARD OR BACK
THERE'S NO OPTION
FOR JUST STANDING PAT.
THOUGH THEY DESTROY US,
WE MAKE CHOICES.

WE MAKE CHOICES
WE SAY YES OR NO.
WITH OUR VOICES
THAT'S HOW IT GOES.
WE SURVIVE
YES, WE ALL STAY ALIVE
BY DECIDING
WHAT IS BEST FOR US. WELL,
THAT'S WHAT I DID.
I CHOSE WHAT'S BEST FOR YOU

YES I MADE CHOICES
NOW YOU'VE FINALLY ASKED.
I CHOSE YOU OVER ME.
MY LIFE FOR YOURS
YOUR FUTURE OVER MY PAST

DAWN

Oh, Mama.

MARY

YES, I MADE CHOICES
AND I'M GLAD I DID
THEY TURNED OUT WELL
YOU ARE SUCH A GREAT KID
IF YOU FORCED ME
TO ONCE AGAIN CHOOSE

IN A MINUTE
I WOULD KNOW WHAT TO DO.
AND MY CHOICE?
EVERY TIME I WOULD.
EVERY DAMN TIME I WOULD
CHOOSE YOU.

The music for CHOICES ends.

Blackout.

SCENE 9

Mary helps Rose into the back seat, sits next to her.

Terrance gets in the front passenger seat. DAWN gets behind the wheel. She pores over the Green Book.

TERRANCE

What's our course heading, Private Dawn? No, wait a minute. *Corporal* Dawn.

DAWN

Corporal?

TERRANCE

Field promotion for conspicuous bravery in facing the enemy.

MARY

You sure you're OK Terrance?

TERRANCE

Yes, I am. Now, we have to complete our mission. What's our heading?

DAWN

U.S. 15 North to Richmond where we gas up at Ashland Oil on US 250 before spending the night at the Eggleston Hotel. Following morning, oh eight hundred, we head home.

ROSE

Home.

MARY

Sounds good, don't it.

TERRANCE

Sure does.

The music for FAMILY begins.

SONG 16: FAMILY

DAWN

(She sings.)

WHEN YOU'VE GOT A FAMILY
NOT JUST FLESH AND BLOOD
IT MIGHT INCLUDE A
LONG LIST OF AUNTIES AND UNCLES
AND CHILDREN YOU CALL CUZ.
HOWEVER YOU GET IT

ALL

GET IT. YOU GET IT

DAWN

DON'T MATTER TOO MUCH

ROSE, MARY AND TERRANCE

HMM HMM HMM

DAWN

'CAUSE FAMILY STANDS WITH YOU
THAT IS WHAT FAMILY DOES.

ROSE, MARY AND TERRANCE

OOH

MARY

WHEN YOU'VE GOT A FAMILY
THERE'S NO END OF STRIFE

DAWN

Are you talking about me?

MARY

EVERY PART OF IT
WILL BREAK YOUR HEART
FOR THE REST OF YOUR LIFE.

TERRANCE

NO, NO, NO MATTER WHO'S IN IT

ROSE, DAWN, MARY

IN IT OOH

TERRANCE

HERE'S ONE THING I KNOW,

ROSE, DAWN AND MARY

OOH

TERRANCE (CONT'D)

YOU'LL ALWAYS TURN TO THEM
WHEN LIFE HANDS YOU
YOUR SHARE OF

TERRANCE (CONT'D)

TROUBLE AND WOE

ROSE, DAWN AND MARY

TROUBLE AND WOE

ROSE

I NEVER HAD FAMILY.
JUST NATHAN AND ME.
I NEVER KNEW WHAT I WAS MISSING.
BUT FINALLY I SEE.

ALL

HOW EVER YOU GET IT

DAWN

HOWEVER YOU GET IT

ALL

DON'T MATTER TOO MUCH
CAUSE FAMILY STANDS WITH YOU
THAT IS WHAT FAMILY DOES.
HOW EVER YOU GET IT
DON'T MATTER TOO MUCH
CAUSE FAMILY STANDS WITH YOU
THAT IS WHAT FAMILY DOES.

The music for FAMILY ends.

The music for WHEN WE GET THERE -
(FINALE) begins.

SONG 17: WHEN WE GET THERE (FINALE) - CURTAIN CALL

ALL (CONT'D)

WHEN WE GET THERE
WHEN WE GET THERE
WHEN WE GET THERE
WAIT AND SEE.

WHEN WE GET THERE
WHEN WE GET THERE
WHEN WE GET THERE
WE'LL BE FREE

OH YES
WHEN WE GET THERE
WHEN WE GET THERE
WHEN WE GET THERE
WAIT AND SEE.

WHEN WE GET THERE
WHEN WE GET THERE
WHEN WE GET THERE

MARY

WE'LL BE

ALL

FREE.

CURTAIN.