

OUT OF STOCK

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DRAFT

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DRAFT

OUT OF STOCK

RULES OF THE WORLD

All characters are meta anthropomorphic personifications of common musical theatre, story elements or participants. Our primary characters are Stock Character Types/archetypes/tropes. When a stock character type 'grows into themselves'/comes of age and is deemed ready, they are given a Name (and an official 'Name Card'). B and A are young stock characters and have not yet been Named. The other stock characters have been. The musical world they work in is called *Sing, Story, Sing!*

Musical Shows we see in this show, thinly concealed:

- Phantom of the Opera - "The French Gothic Romance"
- Dear Evan Hansen - "The Sad Lonely Boy Show"
- Sweeney Todd - "The Cannibal Revenge Epic"
- Waitress - "The Diner Story"

Other shows referenced as throwaway lines:

- Sound of Music (Climb all the hills), Avenue Q (The Puppet Profanity Thing), Les Mis (Hair Hag), Little Shop of Horrors (plant gunk), Guys and Dolls/Show Boat (gambling addict)

Locations

- A & B's apartment
- The Hub - where all story elements meet up before being sent off to their stories for the day
- The various stories (which resemble the musicals they're based on in some recognizable way)

Characters

B – Our protagonist. Often cast in the tropes and stock character types like: sassy friend, side female character, quirky comedic relief, token minority, magical minority, tragic doomed transgressor female etc. (Nessarose in Wicked, Alana in DEH, Carrie in Carousel, Urchin 1 in Little Shop, Meg in Phantom, Eponine? In Les Mis. Would grow up to be cast as a Julie in Showboat. Is deeply burned out, but doesn't realize it yet. Very close friends with A, they are roommates grew up together as stock characters and also there is a codependency there. She/her.

A – Protagonist's best friend and roommate. Very close to being Named. Christine in Phantom, Cosette in Les Mis, Julie in Carousel, Glinda in Wicked, every Disney princess lead, Elle in Legally Blonde, Magnolia in Show Boat, Chloe in Dear Evan Hansen. Resents the limitations of the young ingenue roles. Roommates and best friends with B. She/her.

Gran – The kindly older lady archetype. Gran in Into the Woods, Madame Morrible in Wicked, Madame Giry in Phantom, Hair Hag in Les Mis, Mother Abbess in Sound of Music, Bird Lady in Poppins. Took a long time to be Named, as she was the younger trope equivalent of the taller/deeper voiced girl in theatre school who constantly gets cast as old ladies. She/her.

Angster – Angsty contemporary sad boy stock character. Evan in DEH, Phantom in Phantom, Boq in Wicked, Jeremy in Be More Chill, Pierre in Natasha Pierre, Seymour in Little Shop. He/him/they/them.

Gallant – Leading romantic young lead stock. Raoul in Phantom, Marius in Les Mis, Fiyero in Wicked, Anatole in Natasha Pierre, so many hard to count. Lots of sexual tension with Angster. He/him.

Clerk – A lower level admin who represents the powers that be and relays messages from the writers. Function is to enforce cultural rules/trends in storytelling, preserve normative stability, and keep the oiled machine of the Hub running. Deadpan. Personal life seems to be hanging by a thread. They/them.

SCRIPT STYLE NOTES

Parentheticals and stage directions are marked (*like so*).

Sung text is

Centered

Dialogue is stylized at times to highlight suggested delivery style (i.e. wordsthatrunonlikethis are an extra fast run through text, sentences with low affect are likely to miss proper punctuation and mostly be dotted with periods.)

Underlined stage directions are to be read out loud for readings.

OUT OF STOCK

DAY 1 - SCENE 1 "Sing, Story, Sing!"

[MUSIC CUE 1 - Early Morning]

(Early morning. An apartment. A is drinking an espresso in the kitchen and going over her lines for the day. She is in some sort of French late-19th century ballet outfit, sans tutu, but maybe with a fuzzy bathrobe on overtop.)

B

"He's here. The phantom of the opera!"

"He's here. The phantom of the opera!"

Hmm.

(B flips forward a few pages.)

"Where in the world have you been hiding?"

"Where in the world have you been hiding?"

(B flips forward a few more pages. Muttering some of Meg's lines from Phantom at rapid speed.)

B (con't)

"SheNeededRest" *(flip)*

scream *(flip)*

"comewithmemonsieur" *(flip)*

morescreaming *(flip)*

(Very quickly, no more lines. She Italian-mimes holding up the mask at the end as she reads the final stage direction.)

B (con't)

Oh that's it.

(She downs the espresso and pours the rest in a separate cup for A. She checks the time. She's up before the house alarm again.)

B (con't)

5...4...3...2...1.

(The alarm rings. B covers her ears.)

A *(offstage, sleepy, whining, guttural)*

WHYY-

B

I already let you sleep in! Five minutes, get dressed!

(A brief beat. B picks it up, tempted to drink it, and puts it back down.)

B

There's coffee.

A *(offstage, clearly out of bed but miserable about it)*

FIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIINE

(A bursts into the kitchen, a gorgeous ray of perfectly kempt sunshine, dressed in a white nightgown¹ with bouncy curls. She grumpily holds out her hands, and B hands her the cup. B pulls on a french ballet tutu, a la Degas girls circa late 19th century².)

B

Your bag's packed and your script's in it!

B (con't)

Rise and shine, another day.

A story waits. There's parts to play.

You're crucial to the show.

Caffeine, and then let's go.

A

Another vapid ingenue,

who gasps, and goes, "What do I do?!"

Soprano song and tears,

until some *guy* appears.

¹ The classic Christine nightgown.

² What Meg wears in Phantom Act I mostly.

B

Well hey, it's better than getting eaten by a plant yesterday?

A

Ugh, that was disgusting. I was in the shower for two. whole. hours. washing plant gunk off. At least you got to hang outside and sing with those gals.

B

...Yeah. *(Beat.)* K time's up let's go.

A

Ugh, this job. Ugh, these mornings. *(downs cup with grimace)* Why no dairy?

B

You've got that high E today.

A

Oh Jesus fucking ffffffff-

[End of MUSIC CUE 1]

[MUSIC CUE 2 - One Step Closer to a Name]

(As A continues to curse, B ushers them to the door and throws it open. The second the door opens, A changes demeanor into a peppy ingenue.)

A *(peppy)*

-unnnnnnnn! Good moooooorning, SingStorySing!

A, B, ANGSTER, GALLANT, GRAN, CLERK

Sing, Story Sing

Sing, Story Sing!

Ohh

(SingStorySing. The Hub. An administrative looking gathering space in which archetypes, tropes, stock characters report for duty for the day, and go off to play their roles in certain stories. CLERK is checking things off a list, taking attendance, etc. GRANNY, ANGSTY, and GALLANT mill about, greeting A and B.)

B *(waving to the others)*

Good morning!

A *(also waving to the others)*

Hi!

(to B under her breath) Kill me now.

B

Morning roll call, we assemble and ascend,
getting ready for assignments 'round the bend.

Off to work, to serve and sing inside a tale;
ev'ry element in tandem, without fail.

It's hectic and it's hard,
but we're working for that Card,
so play the game

Ev'ry story's one step closer to a Name.

(They go to stand in line, awaiting attendance. Other stock characters join them progressively.)

GRAN *(walking up, carrying a huge ballet mistress staff³)*

Girls! Check out this sweet cane! *(banging it on the ground)*

B

Hey Gran! That's pretty sweet.

A

A big step up from last week's hair hag, huh?

GRAN

Hey that was fun! Much more than the usual
fairy-godmother-wise-woman-climb-all-the-hills crap. But little Angster's the one with the
big part today.

ANGSTER *(walking up in a cloak, mask in hand⁴)*

Indeed...The time of the complex, sad boy is upon us. Today, a mask, tomorrow a cast.
Prepare for belty, high tearsssss week, y'all.

GALLANT *(strolling up in a Napoleonic military jacket)⁵*

³ Mme Giry, Phantom.

⁴ Classic Phantom of the Opera costume.

⁵ Raoul's Act II Masquerade costume.

Psh, whatever.

B

What's up, Gallant.

GALLANT

Princes, virility, thick necks, thick pecs, and life-ruining fatal flaws never go out of style. Every lady wants to be with one, and every guy wants to be *in* one. Make 'em cry all you want Angster, but at the end of the day, you know what these 'ceps can do.

ANGSTER

Oh do I?

GALLANT

Yeah you do.

(Sexual tension mounts.)

ANGSTER

You gonna show me later?

GALLANT

I'll show you *my* later.

(Sexual tension heats.)

ANGSTER

That doesn't make sense. Meathead.

GALLANT

Moper.

ANGSTER

Himbo.

(Sexual tension simmers.)

GALLANT

Tenor.

ANGSTER

Gambling addict.

(Sexual tension reaches boil.)

A

Omigod, please stop.

GRAN

No, please don't stop!

B

What a motley crew of characters they are
Kind of random how we work so well--

A

--so far.

B

All so very clear on who they're meant to be

A & B

The only ones without their Names are you and me

A

And it's draining ev'ry day
To be cast the same old way

B

But all the same,

A & B

Ev'ry story's one step closer to a

(CLERK approaches, and they straighten up. GRAN, ANGSTER, GALLANT pull out their Name Cards and hold them up reverently.)

A, B, GRAN, ANGSTER, GALLANT

Name.
Everybody wants a Name.
It tells you who you are,
what you do, and why you came
to the stories that you're in.
When you grow into your skin,
into your traits and all your tropes,
When you've learned all the ropes,
they'll let you claim
Your Name
Card.

GRAN (*nudging A & B*)

Any day might be *your Name Day* day, ehrrrrh?! Oh, and B. (*chortles at own pun*)

(*CLERK steps up to do their morning announcement and attendance. They are as deadpan and low-affect as always.*)

CLERK

Good morning, beloved Stock Characters. How are you doing this fine morning oh good glad to hear it. oh me? never been better my partner of fifteen years left me last night but that's life. woo. Ok, today many of you will be doing the *French Gothic Suspense Romance*, some are heading off to do the *Puppet Profanity* thing, and some of you are off to do another musical version of *Romeo and Juliet But with Chainsaws*. Anyway, starting with those in the *French Gothic Suspense Romance*, let's take attendance.
Gran?

GRAN

Here, dear.

CLERK

Gallant.

GALLANT

Yep.

CLERK

Angster.

ANGSTER

Dramatically present.

CLERK

Unnamed Stock A.

A

Present.

CLERK

Unnamed Stock B.

B

Present and ready to work!

CLERK

What a delight. You peppy jerk. Continuing on.

(CLERK continues to take attendance. A leans over to B and sighs.)

A (to B)

Don't *you* ever feel like you want more?

B

Huh?

A (to B)

Don't *you* ever feel like you're not seen?

B

Not so loud.

A (to B)

Like you could walk right out some door

To see what else might lie in store

Like there's a chance to be a *you* that's more than you have ever been?

GRAN

What's that you're yammerin' about, dear?

B

Nothing, Gran. She's...just...gassy. (to A) Oh my God, you're going to get us demoted to MimeLand!

A

Sorry, just woke up on the wrong side of the bed. I'm being a bad sport. You do so much more than everyone, with so much less, and you're always so...*fine* with your parts.

B

I...I'm sure it'll get better when we get Named. Any day now.

A

...Yeah. I bet you're right.

(They cross their fingers and do some sort of friendship bump.)

CLERK

Ok that's attendance. Before you all leave, there's one more thing. You know The Diner story in two days? There's an opening. The last Stock Ingenue, Adorkable, has aged up, so she's gonna be playing secretaries and teachers for the next fifteen years.

GRAN

Ya passed your prime, gotta do the tiiime.

CLERK

...Anyway, we need a new lead. Apply by saying it in my face by end of tomorrow.

A chance to earn your stripes,
Especially the Nameless Types,
You can do
something New.
Show us You.

Woo.

(They all read the breakdown.)

B *(reading the breakdown)*

“Woman in the lead
Smart and capable, but needs
To make a change in her life
To be more than a wife
Through her world of cakes and pies,
she shows to everyone’s surprise that
She can grow. She can grow. She can grow.”

(A bell rings. It’s time to ship them off to their stories.)

CLERK (con’t)

Ok bye bye have a good work day off you go.

Time to do your thing
For *Sing, Story, Sing!*

A, B, GRAN, GALLANT, ANGSTER

Time to do our thing
For *Sing, Story, Sing!*

(They head off to work. Vignette of their job for the day: The French Gothic Thriller Romance⁶.)

B (as Ballet Best Friend)

Wow, your voice is amazing who’s teaching you?

A (as Wide-Eyed Ingenue)

My dead Dad’s ghost.

B & GRAN *(B dancing while Gran bangs her cane gleefully, and A wanders around in the background looking dazed/confused.)*

Dancing in a ring
For *Sing, Story Sing!*

(Later in the day. ANGSTER pulls on a rope, cackling, and a chandelier comes crashing down)

⁶ Phantom of the Opera.

A (as *Wide-Eyed Ingenue*)

Help me pleaaase, it's coming down!

GALLANT (as *Dashing Heir*)

Watch the hair!

(A garrote swings in and grabs GALLANT, trying to hang him midair.)

GALLANT (hanging from a noose, choking but singing full voice)

Swinging on a string

For Sing, Story Sing!

(Later in The French Gothic Romance Thriller.)

ANGSTER (as *Man in Mask*)

Priiiistine, priiiistine, priiiistine. You sing pristine, all thanks to me, so stay with me.

GALLANT (as *Dashing Heir*)

No, Pristine! I'm rich and hot, so in *this* plot you come with me!

A (as *Wide-Eyed Ingenue*)

One's committed murder more than once

And one's bratty spoiled dunce,

What do I dooooo?!

Help me out, dead daddy!

(The three run off chasing each other. B walks to downstage center and picks up/holds up the mask so it can be caught by a tiny spotlight.)

B (as *Ballet Best Friend*)

Le End.

(Bell rings, signifying end of the day. They break character and relax.)

A, B, GRAN, GALLANT, ANGSTER (+ CLERK TO THE SIDE)

Another story done in

Sing, Story,

Sing, Story

Sing, Story,

Siiiiing

(They head back to the Hub, decompress and drop some of their character props off with CLERK over the next verse).

A, B, GRAN, GALLANT, ANGSTER (+ CLERK TO THE SIDE) (con't)

The day is over, one more story sung and gone.

A & GRAN

Time to punch the clock, and get my cocktail on!

B, GRAN, GALLANT, ANGSTER

And tomorrow, guess we'll do it all again,

A, B, GRAN, GALLANT, ANGSTER (+ CLERK TO THE SIDE)

In a diff'rent, yet familiar "where" and "when".

B

And though sometimes we get tired,

A

So tired.

B

We can get ourselves inspired

A & B

To keep our aim, 'cause
Ev'ry story's one step closer to a Name
To a Name, To a Name

GRAN, GALLANT, ANGSTER, CLERK

Sing, story Sing, story,
Sing, story, sing!

A & B

To a Name!

[End of MUSIC CUE 2]

SCENE 2 "At the Center"

[MUSIC CUE 3 - At the Center]

(A and B in their apartment, takeout boxes in hand. A sets about immediately eating straight out of some of the containers and venting, still standing.)

A

...Omg have you flipped through the stuff for tomorrow? It's another Angster-Central show. I think he's getting a big head.

B *(to herself while A eats/chews/swallows)*
Don't you ever feel like you want more?

A

And have you seen our parts? I mean, you're going to be amazing in yours. But mine's another mopey girl who inexplicably falls for the hero.

B *(to herself while A cheats/chews/swallows another bite)*
Don't you ever feel like you're not seen?

A

At least your character is smart and accomplished. I think you've got it better than me, actually.

(A sits down and pulls out the script, eating sporadically while also flipping through the pages.)

B *(internally)*
Look to the left.
Hi. To the side.
I never complain
I try to take pride
in what I do, when I do what I do.
But I don't get to be you.
What's it like to be you?

A

Hey, do you mind helping me run lines later? There's a lot. I'll help you run yours too.

B

You're at the center of it all.
I'm at the edges, staying small.
But what would it do
for my heart, for my soul,
to be a little more true,
a little more whole?

A (*reviewing music*)

Ooh my songs are gorg though.

B

You're in the middle of the room
I'm there behind you, with the broom
I'm helping you grow
We're friends, and I care
But nobody
Notices me there

A (*flipping through to middle of piece*)

Oh nice, you get a small solo too.

B

What if just once
I'm not so polite?
Take up more space,
Be less out of sight?
I have a well
of beauty, and pow'r
that glows in the night...
But I could shine in the light...

(*In their own musical minds:*)

B

At the center of it all.
Standing prouder, standing tall.

A

Always almost there
At the center of it all
Ohh...

Where I can be flawed,
And make a mistake,
Be fearless, and odd,
Be someone...awake.

He gets to be flawed,
To make a mistake
To be odd
Be someone...awake

B & A

At the center of it all. At the center of it all.

B

Hey. Um.

I'm...thinking of putting myself forward. For that Diner Story. In two days.

A

You're already doing that one, aren't you? As the nerdy best friend? You're gonna be so cuuute--

B

--No. No.

Um. For the lead.

A

Oh.

Shit.

(A beat.)

Honestly?

(Short beat.)

You'd be amazing in it.

(A moment of being seen for B. End of song.)

[End of Music Cue 3]

DAY 2 - SCENE 3 "So Many Feelings, So Few Words"

[MUSIC CUE 4 - So Many Feelings]

(The next morning.)

A, B, GRAN, ANGSTER, GALLANT, CLERK

So many feelings!

(The HUB. Angster is excitedly putting on a cast and a blue polo. He's preening, and delighted this day has come. As he sings, the others come in, file in, and CLERK is taking attendance.)

ANGSTER

It's a day of celebration.
Time for riffy domination!
The moment's come, to hear me belt up to the sky-y-y-y!

Time to get my big ovation,
Watch 'em shake with devastation,
Lonely, little sad boys make the audiences cry-y-y-y

A, B, GRAN, ANGSTER, GALLANT, CLERK

So many feelings!
So few words!

ANGSTER

Ohhhh.

CLERK

Aaand that's attendance. Great. Unnamed A, Unnamed B, Angster, you're off to the *Sad Lonely Boy Show*⁷. Gran, you're playing a Beggar Lady in the *Cannibal Revenge Epic*⁸. Gallant, you're off today why are you here.

GALLANT

Just seeing if Angster can live up to handling a story without me carrying him the whole way, hyuk!

ANGSTER (*suddenly sincerely touched*)

Wow. You came on your day off.

GALLANT (*under his breath*)

It's not cause I'm proud of you or anything.

⁷ Dear Evan Hansen

⁸ Sweeney Todd

ANGSTER

I don't know what to say.

(A beat. Romantic tension rises.)

CLERK

Get out.

ANGSTER & GALLANT

Yep.

(They disperse. A squeezes B's arm.)

A (to B)

Good luck.

(B hangs back to talk to CLERK.)

B (to CLERK)

Hey. About the Diner Story tomorrow...

(Crosscut to the Stories. We see ANGSTER, and A getting ready for the Sad Lonely Boy Show. In a different space, GRAN is getting set to be Beggar Lady in the Cannibal Revenge Epic show.)

ANGSTER

It's a time for sympathizing,

GRAN

Agonizing,

A

Compromising.

ANGSTER

Well-meaning fabrications,

GRAN

Watching people *die!*

A

Grief-laden family dinners,

ANGSTER

Moving speeches,

GRAN

Eating sinners!

ANGSTER, GRAN

Sing from my hoo-ha, let the feels and spittle fly!

A, B, GRAN, ANGSTER, GALLANT, CLERK

So many feelings!

So few words!

(At the Hub.)

CLERK

Ok. I'll see what I can do. No promises.

B

Seriously? Thank you thank you thank you.

CLERK

Hey listen. I get it. We all deserve a chance to try things. I let my cat cosplay as a dog last year. *(A beat.)* Anyway, no one else has put themselves forward, so it looks like a good chance.

B

OMG thank you so much. I promise I won't let you down. Say hello to your cat for me!

CLERK

...Wussy Pillow died chasing a mail truck.

B

Oh. I'm so sorry for your loss. Ok. I'm gonna- Yeah.

(B joins the others at work, a bounce in her step.)

ANGSTER *(in character as Lonely Boy)*

Lonely lows,
Belty highs!

A *(in character as Grieving Sister)*

I'm a moody little daughter.

ANGSTER *(in character as Lonely Boy)*

Drowning slow in
Pretty lies!

A *(in character as Grieving Sister)*

Wow. You've never been hotter.

A, B, GRAN, ANGSTER, GALLANT, CLERK

So many feelings!

(About to enter for a scene, B walks up to GALLANT, who's watching from the side.)

B

Hey Gallant. Was wondering if I could get your advice as a leading player-

(She notices he is crying.)

B

Uh. Are you ok?

GALLANT *(sobbing)*

He really HAS never been hotter!

A, B, GRAN, GALLANT, CLERK

So few words!

(Back to the Story. B enters.)

B *(as Bookish Overaccomplished Nerd) (to ANGSTER)*

Hi. I uploaded your private emails to the internet.

Because it needed to happen for the Story. (*Small beat.*) Bye.

ANGSTER (*in character as Lonely Boy*) (*riffing*)

Nooooooooo!

A, B, GRAN, ANGSTER, GALLANT, CLERK

So many feelings!

GRAN (*in character as Beggar Lady*) (*sniffing the air*)

London is on fire!!!

ANGSTER (*in character as Lonely Boy*)

I'm sad, and I'm sorry,

I'm sorry, I was bad.

I just wanted more belonging

For the longing that I had

So many feelings

And so few words...

A (*in character as Grieving Sister*) (*increasingly frustrated*)

It's ok. Look. An orchard.

(*Her frustration mounts and she breaks character.*)

A

Sorry. I'm sorry. It's just - what? What?! I just forgive him?

B

Uh oh.

ANGSTER

I've redeemed myself.

A

HOW? WHAT ACTUAL SELFLESS THING HAS YOUR CHARACTER DONE?

ANGSTER

...He felt bad, and sang about it.

B (*trying to get A to calm down*)
Hey, maybe we should-

A
Sorry, I just don't think I can - I need a moment.

(CLERK pops into the room.)

CLERK
Pardon me, pardon me. I just got a "Archetype-Gone-Rogue" alert. What's going on?

GALLANT
She (pointing at A) shamelessly attacked my boyfriend!

(CLERK runs over to talk to A while Gallant holds Angster protectively.)

A, B, GRAN, ANGSTER, GALLANT, CLERK

So many feelings. So many feelings.
So many feelings. So few

GRAN

Actually my story has an awful lot of text,
And there's lots of bloody murder and you never know what's next.
So although I'm still around, and I've been singing along,
For the kind of story I'm in? Yup. Wrong song.

(GRAN picks up a barber's razor and slits her own throat.)

(Meanwhile, A finishes talking to Clerk, appearing a little calmer.)

GRAN, ANGSTER, GALLANT, CLERK

So many feelings. So many feelings. So many feelings.

(A & B head back home.)

B

So many feelings, So few words.

[END of MUSIC CUE 4]

SCENE 4

(B pours A a cup of tea.)

B

How're you feeling now?

[MUSIC CUE 5 - I'm Proud of You]

A

Ok now. Thanks. Sorry. For back there. Hey, uh, do you want a cookie?

B

Uh, always.

(A gets up and quickly passes B a cookie from...a jar in the kitchen? Her bag? Wherever.)

B (con't) *(mouthful of cookie)*

Mm yum. So richth. What flavour ith thith?

A

Emotional Turmoil from Narrative Suffocation. And Chocolate Chip.

B *(still chewing happily)*

Shtho delictiouth.

(Beat to swallow the cookie) So... Do you wanna talk about it?

A

No. No, I'm ok. I'll just gotta get some sleep and I'll be fine.

B

Totally. Cool. And hey, about tomorrow: I talked to the Clerk this morning and they said it's pretty much a sure thing, which, yayyyybutbut. I know it's your day off and you're exhausted, so don't feel like, obligated to come watch--

A

Hey. Listen-

B

Yeah?

A

Just- (*A beat*). I'm proud of you and I think you're awesome. No matter what, k?

B

Aww. You too. To tomorrow?

A

To tomorrow.

(*They cheers with their mugs.*)

[END of MUSIC CUE 5]

DAY 3, SCENE 5

[MUSIC CUE 6 - A Name]

(*Morning. B is heading out the door for work.*)

B

Ev'ry story's one step closer to a Name,

(*A comes out of her room, to B's pleasant surprise.*)

A

Ev'ry story's one step closer to a Name,

(*They open the door and step into the Hub together.*)

B

Ev'ry story's one step closer to a Name,

(*The HUB. A & B run in and join the attendance lineup. B is excited. A is subdued.*)

ANGSTER and GALLANT walk in holding hands. Everyone notices. ANGSTER & GALLANT look at A with glowing, magnanimous eyes.)

ANGSTER & GALLANT (to A) (*as if they are Saints*)

...We forgive you.

(*A gives them a fake smile and a half-thumbs up.*)

CLERK

So it's a special day here at Sing, Story, Sing.

B

At the center of it all,

A, GRAN, ANGSTER, GALLANT

Name

Everybody wants a Name
It tells you who you are
What you do, and why you came

CLERK

We've got the Diner Story up today, which, as you all know, needed a new lead.

B

Standing prouder, standing tall.

A, GRAN, ANGSTER, GALLANT

to the stories that you're in.

When you grow into your skin,
Into your traits and all your tropes
Once you've learned all the ropes

CLERK

That role has been cast. *(holding up a sealed envelope)* And we have some new Names to give out.

B

At the center of it all,

A, GRAN, ANGSTER, GALLANT

Name

Everybody wants a Name
Everybody wants a Name

CLERK

And our new lead is... *(unseals envelope)*

B

At the center of it all...!

A, GRAN, ANGSTER, GALLANT

Everybody wants a Name
Everybody wants a Name
Everybody wants-

CLERK

A!

(The others applaud. A acknowledges them with some guilt. She can't look at B.)

CLERK *(pulling Name cards out of the envelope and reading them)*

We're also pleased to give A her Name Card: Congratulations, you are our new spunky heroine ingenue type, "Audacity".

Um. Playing the nerdy control freak is...B. And we're pleased to also award B her Name Card: the loyal friend type, "Bestie".

(They are handed their cards, as well as some cooking aprons. Smattering of applause from the others. A puts her apron on. B does not put hers on.)

CLERK (con't)

K go to work.

(GALLANT, GRAN, ANGSTER, head off. A, B, and CLERK linger.)

CLERK (con't)

(to B) Hey, um. I tried. Really.

...Last minute submission. The Writers just felt she was a better...'fit'.

(CLERK leaves. B slowly turns to look at A. A beat.)

[END OF MUSIC CUE 6]

A

I'm really sorry.

(Beat.)

I really did want this for you. I hope you believe that.

(Beat. B gives a small nod. She does not look at A.)

A

...I just *needed* it for me.

B

(Beat.) You'll be great in it.

A

You would have been too.

B

I know.

(A pauses, trying to think of something else to say. She eventually turns to leave. B is alone in the Hub.)

[MUSIC CUE 7 - "Turn the Page"]

B

Nothing changes.

Nothing's new.

There's the center,
and here's you.

You turn the page.

People promise,

Try to grow.

But their limits

Start to show.

So you turn the page.

And the stories change but stay the same

And all you do is age

The rules and structures guiding you
have turned into a cage

Your manners and your patience

fall away into your rage

And you rage.

...Then turn the page.

(B pulls out her new Name Card. "Bestie", regarding it a bit like it's poison, or a horrible embarrassing childhood memory; something confining, something that feels like anathema.)

And you wonder

what you're for.
Where's your answer?
Where's the 'more'
past this page?

One more page.
One more page, one more page.

And you realize that things don't change by
waiting to engage.
The stories that you wanna tell aren't
coming to your stage.
And you can't know what your options are,
until you leave your cage.

Leave the page.
And walk away...

From the center of it all
To find a center for *your* 'all'.

To find your all.
...To *be* your all.

(B rips up her Name Card. A fourth wall of some sort breaks. B looks and sees her opening.)

You write a page.

(B leaves the Hub, and the world of Sing, Story, Sing! Behind⁹. She does not look back.)

(The End.)

[END OF MUSIC CUE 7]

⁹ Though whatever fourth wall opening she sees earlier. Walking into the audience? Out a different door? To discuss.