

THE AUDITIONS

WRITTEN BY

ANDREA ORTIZ

1. INT. LOBBY-DAY-TOWARDS THE GROUND

1.

We hear muffled conversation behind CAMERA A, which faces the ground. The people behind the camera whisper excitedly at the new arrival. CAMERA A faces up to see DION with a backpack walking into the performance hall, and CAMERA A tries to catch up to them, but as DION opens the doors to the performance hall, CAMERA A bumps into DION and they give the camera a mean side eye.

2. INT. PERFORMANCE HALL-DAY-ON DION'S BACK

2.

DION makes their way into the performance hall as STALKER 1 focuses on the students already in the room.

ALAN is doing yoga on stage. VANESSA wears a soccer uniform and runs up and down the stairs, soccer ball in hand. PETER is sleeping on a silk pillow with a night mask and a cozy blanket on. SAM wears all-black medieval Shakespearean attire with a hat/helmet to his side. He paces back and forth between the isles repeating to himself:

SAM
Cheated of feature by dissembling
nature, deformed, unfinish'd, sent
Before my time...

We switch to CAMERA B, placed in the audience chairs. DION waves unenthusiastically to ALAN, who excitedly motions for them to join him on stage. DION takes their backpack off and joins ALAN. CAMERA A sees one student crossing themselves and praying the rosary. Immediately in front of them, another student with a ouija board prays to whoever may be listening. VANESSA goes to sit besides LEO, who whispers:

LEO
You okay? Wanna go outside with me and ease some of
those nerves?

LEO makes a smoking gesture.

VANESSA

Oh I don't need that. I'm not even nervous.

LEO

(looking her up and down) Uh huh... sure.
I'll be back then.

LEO gathers his things and gestures for VANESSA to scooch over as he exits. VANESSA waits to make sure he's gone and takes out a MAGIC 8 BALL from her backpack. She whispers to the ball:

VANESSA

Will I get the part?

VANESSA furiously shakes the ball.

INSERT:MAGIC 8 BALL which reads, "ASK AGAIN LATER."

VANESSA groans and rubs her head. LEO heads back to his seat. She notices him and rushes to hide the MAGIC 8 ball. LEO sits back down and grabs an inhaler from his backpack, quickly breathing it in.

MISTER PROFESSOR rushes in from backstage with ITZY right behind him. He has a binder and a coffee in his hands. ITZY is in full black attire, wearing a backpack and she types into her laptop.

MISTER PROFESSOR

Hello everyone!

The students stop what they're doing and begin to take their seats. ITZY heads to the casting table as MISTER PROFESSOR remains on stage.

MISTER PROFESSOR

Well it's good to see all of you today.
Did you guys have a great week?

SAM

Well, actually my week was kinda-

MISTER PROFESSOR

Alright back to me. Well, it's time for us
to
begin our auditions for Sweeney Todd!

Everyone CHEERS.

MISTER PROFESSOR

Yes, yes, very exciting. Now, I will
explain how this will work. You can
audition for whatever part you want,
regardless of the gender identity of
the character. As you wait in the lobby
I will call each of you one at a time.
Once you are done you may leave. Is that
clear to everyone?

Everyone agrees.

MISTER PROFESSOR

(to the students)

Alright my fellow thespians! Let's get
started!

The students cheer and exit the performance hall. CAMERA B
focuses on ITZY taking a big swig of coffee. She then opens
another coffee and chugs it.

CUT TO BLACK

3. INT. LOBBY-SAME DAY

3.

CAMERA A and CAMERA B are now in the lobby with the students.
SAM stares at the wall and repeats his Shakespeare soliloquy,
the opening to Richard the Third, to himself. LEO and VANESSA
sit together on the lobby chairs. LEO does silent vocal warm
ups, typing away on his laptop. VANESSA tries to warm up her
voice, but it doesn't sound very good.

LEO

(patting VANESSA)

Oh sweetie... I guess some of us are
just born tone-deaf.

CAMERA A follow ALAN comes back from the bathroom, still drying his hands. He notices DION staring out the window with a nervous energy. ALAN looks through the window to see PETER wearing a duck hat and looking around, donuts in hand.

PETER

Here ducky ducky...
Heerreee ducky ducky.

ALAN sits next to DION and points outside.

ALAN

What is he doing?

DION

Peter thinks the school ducks
are his lucky charm. That if he
gives the ducks donuts then he's
guaranteed to have a good day.

CAMERA B then pans to a sign, right beside PETER that says:
NOTICE: PLEASE DO NOT FEED THE DUCKS. CAMERA A focuses back on ALAN.

ALAN

Do you think that's true?

DION

If it makes him feel better then
why not?

A small silence as they stare out the window.

DION

Alan, do you think I'll get
Sweeney Todd?

ALAN

Of course you will! I don't think
there's anyone better for the part.

DION gives a small smile.

ALAN

Do you think I'll get Mrs. Lovett?

DION

If you don't then I might have
to riot.

They both chuckle as ALAN puts his arm around DION.

ALAN

Remember what we told each other.
Let's aim for Mars-

DION

And make it for Saturn.

They laugh. Suddenly we hear a voice hit a loud high note. DION and ALAN turn to see LEO doing loud vocal warm ups, seemingly unaware of all the attention on him. VANESSA looks at the camera, annoyed.

VANESSA

Leo! Could you be any louder?

LEO

(smirking)

Oh trust me, I've been louder.

VANESSA

(disgusted)

If you're going to be so loud go
the bathroom or something!

LEO

Ugh! Fine. If I must.

LEO puts his laptop aside to head to the bathroom.

DIION

Hey Leo, do you still have one of those throat lozenges?

LEO

Yes!

LEO takes a red candy out of this backpack, hands it to DIION and leaves the room.

CAMERA A sees SAM going over his soliloquy louder than before. VANESSA irritably rubs her temples, eyes closed.

VANESSA

Sam.

SAM gets a bit louder, ignoring VANESSA.

VANESSA

Look, I tried to ignore it, but you're being so fucking loud. What the heck are you even saying? And why the hell are dressed like that?

SAM keeps ignoring VANESSA, getting louder. VANESSA groans.

VANESSA

Sam!

SAM stops and slowly turns to face VANESSA, trying to stay calm.

SAM

Well if you had at least one fucking braincell, then you would know that I was doing Shakespeare, the greatest playwright to have ever lived.

VANESSA

(snorts)

Oh please, Shakespeare is not
the greatest playwright.

SAM

Oh really? If not him then who?

VANESSA

(smiling)

Andrew Lloyd Webber! Who created the
(MORE)

VANESSA (CONT'D)

greatest musical ever, "The Beautiful
Game." And I'm going to convince Mister
Professor to let us do that instead of
Sweeney Todd.

SAM scoffs.

ALAN

What's wrong with Sweeney Todd?

VANESSA

Nothing, I just think my choice is
far superior to Mister Professor's.

SAM

(laughing)

"The Beautiful Game." That one soccer
musical? Is that why you dressed in that
ridiculous costume?

VANESSA

Ridiculous costume? Says the guy dressed
like the grim reaper.

SAM laughs angrily and says:

SAM

(threateningly)
How about you go fuck yourself.

VANESSA AND SAM start arguing loudly as DION walks in, holding a small red candy.

DION

Hey guys! Did any of y'all want this throat lozenge? Leo gave me one and I realized that I don't really want it-

SAM and VANESSA immediately stop.

SAM VANESSA
Yes please- Oh thank you-

SAM and VANESSA stare intensely at each other, a silent challenge. They both lunge for the throat lozenge. DION yelps. SAM and VANESSA start physically fighting over the lozenge, trying to grab it out of each other's hands.

SAM

THEY ASKED ME FIRST—

NO! THEY ASKED ME FIRST-

SAM
JUST GIVE IT TO ME-

VANESSA
OH FOR FUCK'S SAKE-

VANESSA gets a hold of the lozenge and tilts her head back.

SAM
NO! NO! NO! NO! NOOOOOO!

SAM desperately tries to stop VANESSA as she forces the lozenge in her mouth and loudly swallows it down. SAM lets go of her and ITZY peeks her head through the door.

ITZY

Vanessa! You're next!

ITZY disappears behind the door. VANESSA triumphantly bites her thumb and flicks it out at SAM.

VANESSA

Good day to you, sir.

VANESSA leaves as LEO returns from the bathroom. SAM approaches him.

SAM

Hey Leo, do you have any more of those throat lozenges?

LEO

Yes, let me look.

LEO takes a red candy out of his backpack. He takes a closer look at it when realization dawns on him.

LEO

Dion! Did you already eat that candy I gave you by chance?

DION

Oh no I didn't-

LEO

Oh thank god-

DION

Vanessa ate it.

LEO

(in shock) She what!?

Everyone stares at LEO as he realizes everyone's attention on him. LEO gives a nervous giggle and starts running towards the

performance hall. The others look at each other and decide to follow suit.

INT. PERFORMANCE HALL-SAME DAY

Everyone follows behind VANESSA as she confidently strides towards the stage. MISTER PROFESSOR and ITZY are sitting at the casting table.

MISTER PROFESSOR

(Upset) Hey, hey, hey! What's going on here?

The group stays beside the audience. VANESSA takes her place on stage, looking at her hands strangely.

VANESSA

Mister Professor, I think you should change your mind about doing Sweeney Todd and instead take my recommendation of doing "The Beautiful Game" instead.

MISTER PROFESSOR

Vanessa, I heard you loud and clear the first time, and I also listened to you the second time.

VANESSA

But Mister Professor-

MISTER PROFESSOR

But no. You will either audition for Sweeney Todd or find something else to do for the next couple of weeks. I won't hear it from you again.

VANESSA stands awkwardly, but she raises her head high.

VANESSA

Well... if you won't hear it from me... Then I will just have to show you.

VANESSA starts dribbling the ball around the stage. The students groan in protest. ITZY makes way for MISTER PROFESSOR who tries to get VANESSA'S attention.

MISTER PROFESSOR

Alright Vanessa, that's enough. Now come down from the stage before you end up hurting someone.

VANESSA gets more confident and shows off with some tricks. The commotion begins to rise. ITZY goes towards the stage to take the ball from VANESSA. VANESSA sees this and in a rush of panic and adrenaline, she starts becoming more intense with the ball. PETER cheerily enters the performance hall.

PETER

Hey guys! I was wondering where everyone went-

VANESSA gives out a yelp and kicks the ball towards the audience. It hits PETER right in the face, knocking him out. The ball bounces back to the stage and ITZY tries to grab it. VANESSA panics and kicks the ball towards the audience again. MISTER PROFESSOR gets hit in the face and collapses backwards onto the table, which falls from the stage, along with all its contents. The room is silent.

ITZY looks wide eyed at MISTER PROFESSOR and VANESSA covers her mouth with her hands. MISTER PROFESSOR is sprawled across the audience chairs. The students run to check on him. ITZY rushes down from the stage in panic and pushes everyone out of the way to get a look at MISTER PROFESSOR. VANESSA looks at the camera wide eyed. She then looks strangely at her hands and walks slowly towards the backstage door. ITZY sees MISTER PROFESSOR bleeding from his nose and her eyes go wide.

ITZY

Blood...

ITZY'S eyes roll back and she faints. Everyone stares in shock before leaning down to check on her.

CUT TO BLACK

INT. PERFORMANCE HALL-SAME DAY

Auditions are back on track. STALKER 1 sees the end of PETER's audition. He now has a black eye. Everyone claps from the back of the auditorium. MISTER PROFESSOR is sporting a black eye and a cold pack on his forehead and ITZY wearing a wrapped bandage around her head. MISTER PROFESSOR writes something down as PETER exits the stage.

MISTER PROFESSOR

(to ITZY) Call in Dion next.

ITZY exits and MISTER PROFESSOR puts his ice pack on the table. DION enters the room and as they take their place on stage, we hear ALAN cheering for them from the back of the room.

MISTER PROFESSOR

Well hello Dion.

DIION

Hello Mister Professor.

MISTER PROFESSOR

Alright we will start with the monologue and then your song... whenever you're ready.

DIION closes their eyes and takes a deep breath.

INT. LOBBY - THE NEXT DAY, FRIDAY, ALMOST NOON

Cut to DIION rushing in the lobby as the Richland Theater students wait anxiously for the results of yesterday's auditions. ALAN immediately gets up from his seat.

DIION

Is the cast list up, yet?

ALAN

No, but it should be up any minute now.

ITZY walks down the hallway with a piece of paper in her hands. Everyone hurries to see if ITZY indeed holds the cast list. ITZY tapes her paper to the door and suddenly a crowd of roaring

students surround her and the paper. We see ITZY's hands reach for freedom until she is completely swallowed by the circle of chaos. The students read the cast list and we see ITZY crawling towards freedom. She lays on the floor to catch her breath.

VANESSA

(excitedly) Oh, I got Johanna!

LEO

(relieved) Yes, I got Anthony!

SAM turns around with his hands up in victory.

SAM

Judge Turpin!

VANESSA

(amazed) Wow, I should take more edibles!

DION is left staring at the list with ALAN right beside them. Suddenly it gets quiet, DION points at a name on the list, frozen.

ALAN

Oh... Dion...

DION

Peter got Mrs. Lovett...

VANESSA comes over to DION and ALAN.

VANESSA

Hey, what's wrong?

ALAN

Dion...

DION

Peter got Mrs. Lovett... and you got Sweeney...

DION is distraught, pacing without reason and ALAN looks at them with worry. The others begin to notice. VANESSA goes to the cast list, as LEO and SAM try to comfort DION.

VANESSA

Hey, it's not so bad. You got chosen to be the Beggar Woman!

LEO

Yes because that's everybody's dream role.

SAM softly hits LEO on the arm.

LEO

Ow!

SAM

You're not helping.

VANESSA goes to comfort and hug DION. ALAN stands awkwardly to the side.

VANESSA

Oh Dion. You know this is not a reflection of who you are as an artist. Don't think for any second that Mister Professor didn't choose you for Sweeney because he thinks you weren't good enough. You are good enough!

DION gets out of VANESSA's embrace and wipes away a tear.

DION

You're right... Mister Professor didn't choose me as Sweeney because he didn't think I was good enough...

DION glares at ALAN and angrily points at him.

DION

IT'S BECAUSE YOU STOLE THE PART FROM ME!

DION launches himself at ALAN, knocking him to the ground. DION tries to hit ALAN and he blocks them with his elbows. VANESSA, LEO, and SAM yell at DION to stop and try to separate them from ALAN, but DION is holding on with a vengeance. MISTER PROFESSOR comes sprinting down the hallway with ITZY panicking behind him. MISTER PROFESSOR moves VANESSA, LEO, and SAM out of the way. And grabs tells DION to stop fighting. Fed up with the chaos, ITZY, who looks a mess, grabs DION and pushes them away from ALAN, and loudly yells:

ITZY

STOOOOOOOPPPPP IIIIIITTT!!!!

Everyone stops and gets quiet, shocked as they look at ITZY, a little bit scared. ITZY fixes their hair and clothes and says more calmly:

ITZY

Thank you... (to the camera) Fucking actors.

CAMERA B then watches as ITZY exits the building while CAMERA A watches the group watching her leave.

MISTER PROFESSOR, still trying to process ITZY's outburst, says dazedly:

MISTER PROFESSOR

Dion, come into my office.

DION follows MISTER PROFESSOR and they leave.

VANESSA, LEO, and SAM look at ALAN, who decides to follow behind DION and MISTER PROFESSOR. Trying to catch their breath, SAM says:

SAM

What the fuck.

INT. MISTER PROFESSOR'S OFFICE - RIGHT AFTER THE CASTING CALL INCIDENT

CAMERA A, already inside MISTER PROFESSOR's office, watches MISTER PROFESSOR opening the door as he gestures for DION to enter. DION enters and sees CAMERA A and gets upset.

DION

(pointing at the camera) Does this not bother you?

MISTER PROFESSOR

(looking at the camera) Oh them? Not if they're getting my good side.

DION stares at MISTER PROFESSOR and he gets the message. He gestures for CAMERA A to leave, and while we don't really see the person behind CAMERA A leave, we see the camera left behind, angled to look at DION. CAMERA B is placed right outside the office, focused on MISTER PROFESSOR.

MISTER PROFESSOR

So Dionysus, my little songbird. Would you care to explain yourself? Any... grievances you'd like to address?

DION

(They scoff) No.

MISTER PROFESSOR

(Nodding) Well, okay-

DION

It's just that-

MISTER PROFESSOR

Oh here we go.

DION pauses for a bit, thinking about their next words.

DION

The musical has been something I've been waiting to do for like... what seems like forever. I chose my songs and monologues, practiced them over and over again, and I beat myself up every single day trying to make

myself better than before, even when I wanted to stop. To take a break. But I didn't. I pushed myself to my limits and... I did fucking amazing. Even better than how I thought it was going to be. I... I was phenomenal. But then with the cast list, it felt like... a punch to the gut. It felt like everything I did, every single drop of sweat that I shed meant nothing. I didn't get the part I wanted. Hell, I didn't even get a lead. I got the scraps and... I felt like... I feel like I don't matter. And honestly... I need to know why you did that. Why did you put me there when you know my audition was great. Why did you... I just need to know why.

MISTER PROFESSOR processes what DION just said. He leans back and nods, pondering their question. After a moment he puts his hands into his lap and looks at DION.

MISTER PROFESSOR

Do you know how hard it is to play the Beggar Woman, Dion? Sure, she's not a lead. But whenever she's on stage, she easily takes the spotlight. The Beggar Woman needed to be someone who not only could handle such a demanding role, but someone who stands out amidst the chaos of this story. Someone who could be the lightning during the thunderstorm. And that's you Dion, you are the lightning the thunderstorm needs. You are who I need in order to make this story work. Sure, the Beggar Woman may not have many lines, but she is the vital part to Sweeney's story. She's the one who brings it all together. Without her... well, it's just simply not the same.

DION processes this and looks down at their hands in shame and a bit of embarrassment.

MISTER PROFESSOR

In this industry, you are in for a journey of disappointments. You are going to go to a lot of auditions, you will have practiced for these moments for hours on end, and 9 times out of 10 you are going to be rejected. It's just the reality of being an

actor. But if you let those rejections define you, then you will never make it as an actor. That's just the truth.

MISTER PROFESSOR leans forward. DION looks up at him.

MISTER PROFESSOR

But if this is truly the life you want to live, then I suggest you suck it up, work hard, and do your job, because this is a very depressing and lonely industry. Only the toughest get to see beyond it's cruelty. Only the toughest find it's beauty.

DION nods. MISTER PROFESSOR stands and walks to the door.

MISTER PROFESSOR

C'mon my songbird. Let's make you into lightning.

DION follows MISTER PROFESSOR out the door. Before they exit, DION turns around and gives MISTER PROFESSOR a big hug. He is stunned by this sudden affection and doesn't hug them back, but he gently pats their shoulder. They walk down the hall where ALAN is waiting for them. DION runs down the hall to ALAN and gives him a big bear hug, which he returns.

DION

I'm so sorry for what I did.

ALAN

It's okay.

DION breaks off the hug, still holding ALAN in their arms.

DION

No, it's not okay. I got upset and put it out on you. And you didn't deserve that.

ALAN

(smiling) Apology accepted.

DION hugs ALAN again.

ALAN

We aimed for Mars?

DION

(smiling) Let's make it to Saturn.

PETER runs down the hall with panic, yelling out as he runs.

PETER

I FORGOT THE DONUTS! I FORGOT THE DONUTS! RUN! RUN!

PETER runs past them. MISTER PROFESSOR, DION, and ALAN look down the hallway. Their eyes widen as they realize what PETER is running from. They bolt down the hallway.

Cut to a montage of the students rehearsing for Sweeney Todd in the Blackbox with cheesy epilogue music playing in the background. During the montage the following captions can be found on screen.

CAPTIONS:

RICHLAND COLLEGE PRESENTED SWEENEY TODD: THE DEMON BARBER OF FLEET STREET THAT SPRING AND RECEIVED RAVING REVIEWS FROM CRITICS AND PATRONS

LEO WENT ON TO CREATE A HIGHLY SUCCESSFUL MARIJUANA BUSINESS

VANESSA BECAME A THERAPIST FOR FAILED SHAKESPEAREAN ACTORS

SAM HAS VANESSA AS A THERAPIST

PETER WENT ON TO BECOME A DUCK FARMER, DEDICATING HIS LIFE TO RAISING DUCKS

ITZY BECAME A PROFESSOR AT RICHLAND COLLEGE, STILL HAVING TO PUT UP WITH FUCKING ACTORS

ALAN IS IN HOLLYWOOD RIGHT NOW, STARRING IN HIS 13TH BOX OFFICE HIT

DION JUST WON THEIR THIRD TONY, AND IS CURRENTLY ON BROADWAY STARRING IN A CRITICALLY ACCLAIMED REVIVAL OF SWEENEY TODD

AND MISTER PROFESSOR STILL WORKS AT RICHLAND COLLEGE, FINDING MORE SONGBIRDS THAT STAND OUT IN THE CHAOS

CUT TO BLACK

THE END