

ROSE'S WAR

Written by

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Lyrics by

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EPISODE 1

EXTERIOR - PARKRIDGE HOMES - WILLOW RUN NEAR DETROIT - DAWN

It's the summer of 1944. WWII is Raging. Green grass is on either side of a sidewalk that runs between two story apartments built by The Ford Motor Company to house colored workers and their families for Willow Run, a factory that produces B24 Bombers. Workers at Willow Run built a staggering 8,685 B24 Liberators; one came off the plant's assembly line every 55 minutes.

Sunbeams quiver through filthy bronze air as THE CAMERA TRACKS LOW DOWN the sidewalk, between the buildings, across the grass, and into one of the apartment's windows through polka dotted sheers. ...

INTERIOR - ROSE AND DAHLIA'S APARTMENT - DAWN

... In a single iron-framed bed the light dapples two sweaty women in white cotton night gowns. ROSE LELAND, 20, caramel skin aglow, wounded eyes flickering, shudders from the fitful wheezing struggling out of her mother, DAHLIA LELAND, 40, who's furthest from the window. So translucent is Dahlia's white skin that her life can be seen through it, making preparations to pass on.

A provocative original tune (to be written) in the spirit of **NATURE BOY** by Miles Davis springs from Rose in a hum, like a salve for weary souls. She rolls over and caresses one of Dahlia's cheeks. Dahlia's eyelids flutter, but don't open, and the wheezing stops. A smile of relief graces both their faces. From under Dahlia's pillow Rose eases out a 22-caliber pistol and slips out of bed.

DAHLIA

You going to put me out of my misery?

ROSE

No, mama. And that's not at all funny.

DAHLIA

Time to go to work?

ROSE

Almost. You can sleep some more.
I'll wake you up.

DAHLIA

I love you, baby. You be careful
with that pistol.

Dahlia's eyes flutter closed. Rose rolls out of bed, pistol in hand. On a chest next to the bed is an open letter. She puts the barrel of the pistol under the letterhead of Decca Record. She's inclined to pull the trigger, but uses the gun to follow what's written as she reads the letter.

ROSE (V.O.)

"Dear Miss Leland, Thank you for
your newest song submission."

Dazed, she looks out the window. Courier font appears floating and disappearing in the sky.

ROSE (V.O.)

"I like ROSIE THE RIVETER. It's a
fine tune with clever lyrics, but
not for us at this time. You're
talented! Keep writing. Best
wishes."

With the barrel of the gun she drags the letter into the top drawer of the chest into a mess of rejection letters.

ROSE (V.O.)

You all don't know what you're
missing.

She clutches the gun to her chest and peers out the window. In the magical realism of her imagination thousands of letters swirl in revealing THE MUSES, three glamorous colored Harlem showgirls with plumed head dresses - JUDY WILSON, 35, RITA LA PORTE, 25, and LUCINDA "SMOKY" JEFFERSON, 20. Their gazes rivet Rose. For Rose, The Muses are vanguards; they guide and guard her. They are exceptional, dignified, charismatic and unstoppable. With them she dreams. They give her hope. The Muses dramatically and elegantly begin **DANCE 1. BLACK FACTORY WORKERS** (Rosie the Riveters and their male counterparts) emerge from apartments "heading to work" and are drawn into the dance. **NATURE BOY** swells into full orchestration. The dance is elegant and raw, full of anguish and hope. The Muses and the Workers are survivors and pioneers, powerful forces to be reckoned with.

At her window Rose is beaming, but, then shaken as A B24 BOMBER COMES IN LOW.

The Muses and the Workers stop dancing and look up in awe as the B24 ROARS in like a tornado and carries them all away. Rose recoils gripping the pistol. As she gazes at her wheezing mother she fears abandonment.

ROSE

Mama. Time to get up!

Dahlia awakens smiling at Rose.

DAHLIA

What are you doing with that gun?

ROSE

Putting it away. You know I don't like you putting it under your pillow.

DAHLIA

Well, I sleep better with it close by.

Rose lays the pistol in the drawer and shuts it.

ROSE

(striving to be positive)
It's a beautiful sunny day!

INTERIOR - SCREENING ROOM AT THE WILLOW RUN B24 FACTORY

A Ford Motor Company promotional documentary in black and white **UNDERScoreD WITH PATRIOTIC MUSIC** shows-off the immensity of its B24 bomber factory. Rose and Dahlia are watching the film with a couple dozen BLACK WOMEN RIVETERS. A B24 Liberator bomber rolls off an over a mile long assembly line every 55 minutes. It takes 42,000 men and women, including the first Rosie the Riveters to build them. Most of the workers are white. The riveters do the precision tasks needed to shoot 700,000 rivets into every B24. When a clip appears featuring Rose and Dahlia next to each other riveting a wing of a B24, SOME OF THE BLACK WOMEN RIVETERS GO WILD WITH POSITIVE HOOTS AND HOLLERS, BUT SOME OF THE REACTIONS ARE DEROGATORY.

FRANCINE

(sarcastically)
Hallelujah! I thought they was leaving us out completely!

JUNE

(angrily)
Oh, I must have blinked! One of us was in there?

CORA
You all hush!

OPAL
It's better than not being in the
movie at all!

JUNE
(aggressively)
Is it?

FRANCINE
Of course for their star they
picked the whitest colored girl in
the whole damn plant! And the only
one with a white mama!

Rose scrambles over the women in the aisle in front of her and tackles large FRANCINE into the aisle. In the fracas others try to separate the fighters, but, Francine, who's a head taller than Rose, lays-out Rose with a fist to the side of her head. Dahlia squeezes through the women to cradle Rose. Everyone feels awful. Rose shakes it off and smiles wryly at Francine. The film on the screen and its **PATRIOTIC SCORE** ends.

ROSE
We win the war, yet?

FRANCINE
(regretful)
Not yet.

Opal gives Rose a hand up. Cora helps Dahlia up.

ROSE
Francine's right. They shouldn't
have used just me. They
photographed like all of us.

FRANCINE
(bitter)
That's called morale boosting.

JUNE
(smart-alecky)
I was looking good that day; had on
my brand new red lipstick, my hair
was all pressed and shiny.

CORA
You was looking too damned good,
June Bug.

OPAL

If they'd used you no one would
have noticed all your riveting.

LAUGHTER AMONG THE WOMEN. WANDA cracks open the door to the screening room and A BIG USO BAND can be heard playing the music to **THE HARLEM HOP**. Rose's eyes light-up.

FRANCINE

(tenderly)

I'm sorry honey. Be glad I clocked
you on the side of your head. No
shiner. No broken nose. You're
still looking nice and pretty for
the dance!

JUNE

(excited)

Come on! The band has started!

ROSE

Come on! Let's go!

Rose grabs her hand bag and chases the excited Riveters out of the screening room.

Cora waits with Dahlia.

CORA

Come on, Mrs. Leland. Let's take
our time. I'm not much of a dancer,
anyway.

Dahlia appreciates Cora's sensitivity. Arm in arm they head up the aisle towards the exit.

EXTERIOR - WILLOW RUN AIRFIELD/USO STAGE - DAY

A stage has been erected on the airfield adjacent to dozens of newly built B24's. A USO BAND is jamming to **THE HARLEM HOP**. A FEW HUNDRED MALE WORKERS and WOMEN WORKERS, and AIRMEN are digging the rehearsal. DANNY CAPUCCI, 25, Italian-American, in an Army Air Corps pilot's uniform, is leading the band from an upright piano. Rose and the Black Women Riveters eagerly enter. They form a circle with their backs to Rose, so she can change clothes. It's a charged moment for Rose. The world around her slows down as she transforms from a riveter to a performer in an adorable dress and pumps, and the finishing touch of some lipstick. She breaks open the circle, grabs Francine and leads the others into **DANCE 2**. And, man can they all dance. Other Men Workers, Women Workers, and some Airmen join the dancing. Danny and the Band are impressed. Danny can't take his eyes off Rose.

She knows he's watching and pours it on. Eventually Francine throws Rose up on the stage. Boldly Rose goes up to Danny on his piano bench and shouts into his ear so he can hear her over the Band.

ROSE

You're Danny Capucci aren't you?

Danny gestures to Rose to sit next to him on the piano bench as he plays.

DANNY

Who wants to know?

Coyly, Rose holds back her name.

ROSE

I love The Harlem Hop! I recognized you from the record's jacket cover.

DANNY

Really?

ROSE

How'd you get to write with Cecil Clay?

DANNY

You know, Cecil?

ROSE

My mother knew him back in the day. He's from Detroit you know?

DANNY

Yeah, I know. I just went to his club in Harlem ...

ROSE

The Pair o' Dice.

DANNY

... and talked him into letting me play some with him.

ROSE

Oh, it's just that easy?

DANNY

It was lucky, I guess.

ROSE

My mother sang in his first band.

DANNY
(intrigued)
Really!?

ROSE
I'm a singer, too. And a
songwriter.

Danny's smitten and she knows it.

DANNY
Triple threat, huh!?

ROSE
(enticing)
What's my third "threat"?

DANNY
(like there's a lot to
choose from)
Hmmm. ...

He studies her. She's anxious, but plays it cool.

DANNY (CONT'D)
...I was thinking your dancing.

ROSE
Well, you're not blind.

DANNY
No. I'm not blind!

ROSE
You're not here with the USO. You
picking-up a plane?

DANNY
In 30 minutes.

ROSE
Well, then we've got time to sing
your song.

DANNY
We?

ROSE
Sure, why not? I know it backwards
and forwards. Come on! You won't
regret it!

DANNY

Okay. What the hell! You good to come in on "sparks will fly", Miss ...?

ROSE

Leland. Rose Leland. On "sparks will fly". I'll be waiting!

DANNY

Okay boys, mind if Rose Leland and I sing this thing!

The Band is game. Danny escorts Rose over to a microphone that's center stage.

DANNY (CONT'D)

You sing from here. I'll be back.

Danny returns to the piano, cues the Band, and starts singing **THE HARLEM HOP**.

DANNY (CONT'D)

THERE'S A NEW RHYTHM ON THE STREET.
GOTTA THANK HARLEM FOR THE BEAT.
FEELS LIKE LAVA UNDER YOUR FEET,
GOTTA HOP HIGH TO CHEAT THE HEAT.

The Black Women Riveters are ecstatic! Rose is dying to sing **CHORUS 1**, but resists joining the Factory Workers and Airmen.

DANNY, BLACK WOMEN RIVETERS, FACTORY WORKERS AND AIRMEN

IT'S THE HARLEM, HARLEM, HARLEM HOP.
IT'LL LIGHT YOUR FIRES.
IT'S THE HARLEM, HARLEM, HARLEM HOP.
IT'LL CROSS YOUR WIRES.

Danny SHOWS-OFF ON THE PIANO.

Dahlia arrives with Cora, who's immediately infected by the music's beat. But, Cora sticks with Dahlia, who's loving that Rose is in the limelight. But then, like a dark cloud, DOMINIK MANKOWSKI, a big, tough-looking Polish guy in a suit and tie, sidles up next to Dahlia. He's scary to her, but she plays polite. Cora despises Mankowski, but also is polite. He's obviously a big shot and clearly he and Dahlia share some history. Danny cues SOLOS FROM THE BAND. Rose moves beautifully to the beat.

DOMINIK MANKOWSKI
So much talent in your little
family.

DAHLIA
Yes, there is.

CORA
(sacrificing herself to
get him away from Dahlia)
Shall we dance, Mr. Mankowski?

Mankowski chuckles; can't conceal his bigotry.

DOMINIK MANKOWSKI
Mrs. Leland promised me a dance?

DAHLIA
(to Mankowski)
I just want to watch.

DOMINIK MANKOWSKI
Then I'll watch too.
(about Rose)
Rose is real easy to watch.

Danny cues Rose.

ROSE

SPARKS WILL FLY WHEN YOU DO THE HOP.
YOU'LL FORGET ALL ABOUT THE CLOCK.
DIDN'T COME DOWN FROM NO MOUNTAIN TOP.
'FRAID THIS DANCE IS OL' SATAN'S PLOT.
YOU HAVE TO HOP TO KEEP FROM FRYIN'.
YOU MUSTN'T STOP OR YOU'LL BE CRYIN'.
MOVE THEM SHOES AND FEEL THE GROOVES,
AND NEVER NO, NEVER NO, NEVER NO, NEVER NO
NEVER EVER EVER RUN OUT OF MOVES,
OR YOU'RE GONNA GET ALL BURNED UP.
YOU'RE GONNA GET SINGED AND SCORCHED
AND CHARRED AND TORCHED,
WE'RE TALKING CRAZY HEAT UP THERE,
ON THE HARLEM STREETS BEWARE.

Rose shouts to Danny.

ROSE (CONT'D)
DANCE BREAK?

DANNY
DANCE BREAK!

DANCE BREAK - **DANCE 2** continues. THE BAND'S PIANO PLAYER replaces Danny on the piano. Danny leaps off the bandstand, beckons Rose to leap into his waiting arms, and fearlessly she does. Rose and Danny's dancing makes the tarmac smoke. Wild dancers surround them; it's competitive and acrobatic. *Rose beams at her mother!* As the break is ending Danny throws Rose back up onto the bandstand, and joins her at the microphone.

ROSE & DANNY

THEY'RE FLOWIN' WITH LAVA.
 THAT'S RED HOT LAVA.
 IT'LL MAKE YOU DIP, DIVE, JIG, JIVE,
 FLIP FLOP, BEEP BOP,
 DIP AND DIVE, AND,
 JIG AND JIVE AND,
 FLIP AND FLOP AND,
 BEEP AND BOP AND,
 DANCE FOREVER. HOP FOREVER.
 'CUZ YOU CAN NEVER STOP THE HARLEM HOP.

EVERYONE

'CUZ YOU CAN NEVER STOP THE HARLEM HOP.
 'CUZ YOU CAN NEVER STOP THE HARLEM HOP.

HOOTS, HOLLERS and APPLAUSE.

DANNY

Ladies and gentlemen! Let's hear it
 for Rose Leland!

THE CROWD GOES WILD.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXTERIOR - AIRFIELD - ALMOST SUNSET

From the knees down a crew of 5 Airmen strides briskly across the tarmac. Below the bottom of the "5th Airman's" dress coat are bare legs in overly large flight boots.

A B24 roars down the runway and takes off.

INTERIOR - B24 - SUNSET

Danny's at the controls next to CO-PILOT WALWORTH. NAVIGATOR BISHOP and RADIOMAN are at their stations. Rose wears headphones and is white knuckling a 50 caliber machine gun in the clear plexiglass and aluminum nose turret.

It feels like there's nothing between her and the ground thousands of feet below. Danny and the crew communicate via the plane's inter-phone system of throat microphones and headsets.

DANNY

Think we got ourselves a good bird,
boys! How's it look from where
you're sittin', Leland?!

Below Rose Willow Run and the bombers parked on its airfield look like toys.

ROSE

(lowering her voice to
sound like an airman)
Everything's ship shape down here,
Captain.

DANNY

Ever been on a rollercoaster,
Leland?

ROSE

Yes, sir. Love them!

DANNY

Well then, you'll love this!

Danny banks the bomber and dives for the airfield. Rose holds her breath and hangs on for dear life to her 50 caliber machine gun. The B24 buzzes by the tower. The TOWER CREW relish their view of Rose's legs in the Liberator's nose.

TOWER OPERATOR

Careful there B246660. Looks like
your nose gunner shaves his legs.

Rose is irked at Danny; she covers her legs with "her" overcoat.

DANNY

Thank you Tower. I'll look into
that.

TOWER OPERATOR

Good luck with that, Captain.

DANNY

B246660 requesting permission to
land?

TOWER OPERATOR
B246660 cleared for landing.

Danny banks hard and circles back over the airfield. Rose is fuming and exhilarated.

EXTERIOR - PARKRIDGE HOMES - NIGHT

MUSIC (to be written)- A MELANCHOLY MUTED TRUMPET AND A PIANO - UNDERSCORE A DRONE CAMERA'S SLOW MOTION VIEW ABOVE EXPLODING BOTTLE ROCKETS that are being shot-off by PARKRIDGE'S BLACK RESIDENTS and THEIR CHILDREN. THE CAMERA SWOOPS DOWN AND THROUGH THE ROCKETS to the celebration. LAUGHTER AND EXCITED YELLING MIXES WITH THE BLASTS FROM THE BOTTLE ROCKETS AND SPARKLERS. Rose and Danny absorb the gazes from the Residents and the Children; there's acceptance, bemusement, and disapproval. Rose stops in front of the apartment where LUCILLE, a young mother wearing Rosie the Riveter garb, is impressively **PLAYING THE MUTED TRUMPET**. Inside Lucille's apartment **GRANDDADDY PLAYS AN OLD UPRIGHT PIANO**.

DANNY
So, we're here? You weren't kidding?

He checks his watch.

DANNY (CONT'D)
It's been 27 minutes. ... Not one peep out of you since we left the airfield. ... I've said I'm sorry like a million times.

ROSE
(playing irked)
3 times.

DANNY
At least, now you know what a Liberator can really do; what all your hard work has produced.
(like she's really lucky)
That's a sensation very few people will ever experience. I wanted you to have that.

She really likes him; but continues to give him "the cold shoulder", and isn't saying goodnight. Danny's intoxicated by her. The fireworks glisten on her bare shoulders and in her eyes. To lighten things up Danny shifts his focus to Lucille.

DANNY (CONT'D)
 Man, that gal can play! She from
 St. Louis?

ROSE
 How'd you know that?

Danny keeps Rose in suspense. RUBY, 9, PEARL, 7 and SAPPHIRE, 5 run out of Lucille's apartment with sparklers GIGGLING AND SQUEALING, running circles around Rose and Danny, seriously giving them the once over.

DANNY
 (to Ruby)
 Is that your mama?

RUBY
 Yes, sir.

PEARL
 She blows a mean trumpet don't she?

SAPPHIRE
 Yes she does!

LUCILLE STOPS PLAYING HER TRUMPET, then GRANDDADDY STOPS PLAYING.

DANNY
 (loud enough for Lucille
 to hear)
 I'm from St. Louis.

RUBY
 We're all from St. Louis. Me. I'm
 Ruby.

Ruby reaches out to shake and Danny obliges. Pearl and Sapphire offers Danny their hands and he shakes them.

PEARL
 Pearl.

SAPPHIRE
 Sapphire.

DANNY
 Pleasure to meet you ladies. I'm
 Danny.

RUBY
 Our daddy's from St. Louis, too.

PEARL
He works the night shift.

SAPPHIRE
He's a welder.

Granddaddy starts an artful version of **THE ST. LOUIS BLUES ON HIS PIANO.**

LUCILLE
GRANDDADDY'S STILL IN ST. LOUIS!

PEARL
He plays with his black and white
friends all day long.

ROSE
That's what he calls his piano
keys.

DANNY
I knew that.

SAPPHIRE
How'd you know that?

DANNY
There my friends, too..

GRANDDADDY
That right?

DANNY
Yes sir! You're a serious player.
Your friends are lucky to have you.

GRANDDADDY
Yes, they are!

LUCILLE
He claims his purpose in life is to
make sure all his friends get
along.

GRANDDADDY
That's the truth.

DANNY
That's a noble purpose.
(to Ruby, Pearl &
Sapphire)
Isn't it ladies!?

The sisters ponder it, then together.

RUBY, PEARL & SAPPHIRE
If you say so! Suppose so. Safe to say.

ROSE
Danny Capucci here has a hit record.

LUCILLE
I saw you two this afternoon. That was something! Really something!

Danny shakes Lucille's hand.

DANNY
Well thank you. Coming from someone who blows a horn as well as you, that's a real compliment. Danny Capucci. Happy 4th of July.

LUCILLE
Lucille Harper. Feel like playing something for us?

DANNY
Only if Granddaddy'll share the bench with me?

LUCILLE
Oh, he's big on sharing. Aren't you, Pop?

GRANDDADDY
More hands on my friends the better!

DANNY
(to Rose, wanting to respect her wishes)
We have time?

ROSE
(politely)
Sure.

THE 3 Little Girls SQUEAL WITH DELIGHT and run to round-up other Residents.

DISSOLVE TO:

INTERIOR - LUCILLE'S PARKRIDGE APARTMENT - NIGHT

Grand Daddy's hands caress a soulful version of **THE ST. LOUIS BLUES** from the keyboard. Danny's hands join Granddaddy's for some killer four-handing.

The apartment is packed with Residents and kids. Rose is squeezed between folks on a couch. SATISFIED EXPRESSIONS spill out of the crowd, but then, ...

RUBY

Not the slow stuff Granddaddy!

PEARL

We wanna dance!

SAPPHIRE

Yeah, we wanna dance!

Granddaddy winks at Danny!

DANNY

I'll try to keep up!

GRANDDADDY STARTS A WILD **ST. LOUIS BLUES**. THE 3 Little Girls start seriously "cutting the rug", **DANCE 3**. Exuberantly Lucille joins in on her trumpet. Rose is amazed at how effortlessly Danny mixes with everyone, and his collaboration with Granddaddy is "off the charts"! Rose is used to being the center of attention; feels removed from the action. From her point of view the scene goes into slow motion down. Sapphire, while she dances, watches Rose wrestle with her issues? Dahlia, in her robe, hair in curlers, looking like she's been awakened, and stifling a cough, cordially squeezes through the crowd. A YOUNG MAN next to Rose graciously let's Dahlia have his place. Rose is embarrassed by Dahlia's appearance, but everyone is fine with it and having a blast. As the song climaxes Sapphire's grand finale dance move knocks a drink out of Dahlia's hand. It spills all over Rose. Rose is unnerved by it. Sapphire knows what's she's done isn't cool, but is trying not to giggle. Lucille swoops in.

DAHLIA

(to Sapphire)

It's okay, precious.

(to Lucille)

No harm done. It'll wash right out.

LUCILLE

(To Rose)

I'm so sorry!

(to Sapphire)

(MORE)

LUCILLE (CONT'D)
 Say you're sorry! Where are your
 manners?

Dahlia starts coughing. It's scary to Sapphire.

SAPPHIRE
 Sorry, Rose.

Dahlia's cough deepens and is clearly painful. She coughs
 blood into her hand.

DAHLIA
 (to Rose)
 I should go.

The wind comes out of the occasion's sails. Danny feels for
 Rose and Dahlia; gives Dahlia his handkerchief. Feeling
 everyone's stares, Rose rises off the couch and pulls her
 mother with her. Lucille helps them navigate the crowd, the
 Little Girls run outside as everyone disperses leaving only
 Danny and Granddaddy.

DANNY
 It was a pleasure playing with you,
 sir! Thank you!

GRANDDADDY
 No thank you! I'm Clarence.
 Clarence Harper. ... You come back
 from that war and we'll play some
 more.

DANNY
 I'd like that.

They shake hands.

DANNY (CONT'D)
 I better check on Rose.

GRANDDADDY
 (with a twinkle)
 You'd be a damn fool if you didn't.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXTERIOR - ROSE AND DAHLIA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Lucille comes out through the screen door as Danny arrives.
 Dahlia can be heard COUGHING from her bedroom.

LUCILLE

Rose is good to her mama. Dahlia's always apologizing for her coughing. Last night, bless her heart, she coughed all night long. She told me she got it from years of painting trucks and cars, for Mr. Ford. Breathed in too many nasty fumes. She needed the work though; had a child to feed.

Dahlia's COUGHING STOPS.

LUCILLE (CONT'D)

Mankowski, a big Ford honcho, keeps her employed. About 10 years ago he heard her singing in a joint in Detroit and took a liking to her. I never asked her what that really meant. White woman raising a colored child all by herself, well, she needed all the help she could get. He fixed her and Rose up here at Parkridge; couldn't put 'em in the all white apartments. So Dahlia wouldn't be around them paint fumes he got 'em jobs riveting. But since she's been sick I haven't seen hide nor hair of him around here.

Lucille realizes she's said too much. Rose comes out of the bedroom closing the door in a nice new dress.

LUCILLE (CONT'D)

(to Danny switching the subject)

Well, you take care of yourself.

DANNY

I will. You too. And, keep blowing that horn.

Rose comes outside.

LUCILLE

(to Danny)

When you come back you're going to be a big star, Danny Capucci.

(to Rose)

Isn't he?

ROSE

He already is.

LUCILLE

Well, I'll say good night then.

The 3 Little Girls' faces are pressed against their screen door.

LUCILLE (CONT'D)

Get your hiniies in the hay! Right this instant!

Lucille disappears into her apartment chasing the 3 GIGGLING Little Girls.

DANNY

(to Rose)

Your mother going to be okay?

ROSE

(gravely)

Nobody thinks so.

Danny wants to comfort her, but she moves on.

ROSE (CONT'D)

Who taught you how to play like that?

DANNY

My folks and I lived on a beautiful farm, just north of St. Louis, right on the Mississippi River. Clara, our cook-housekeeper taught me.

ROSE

I'm guessing Clara was colored?

DANNY

I always thought she was blue. Her skin was like a deep deep indigo. Everyone in her very large indigo blue family played or sang the blues.

ROSE

(serious)

I'll bet they did.

DANNY

When I was seventeen I was coming home from school. I was in mud up to my ankles. It was raining like hell. Clara was waiting for me ...

(MORE)

DANNY (CONT'D)

(the story gets tough to
tell)

... at the top of the hill that overlooked our farm. We watched the river carry off our cattle and chickens, then our barn, and then our house. My mom and dad were on the roof of the house with my dog, Rascal. He was barking at us. Mom and Pop were just waving. And then the mighty Mississippi swallowed them all up.

ROSE

Oh, Danny.

DANNY

Clara took me in with her husband, and her 6 kids. But, after a few months ...

ROSE

... you left for New York.

DANNY

That's right.

The 3 Little Girls are in their underwear faces pressed against the screen door eavesdropping.

DANNY (CONT'D)

Listen, I'm going to tell Cecil all about you. I'm going to be in New York before I go overseas. I have a week long furlough. Maybe you could come visit?

Rose is touched and tempted.

ROSE

Really?

DANNY

You'd kill it in New York! I'd pay for your train ticket. Cecil's got an empty apartment above the Pair o' Dice. And I'll cover your meals.

ROSE

I can't leave Mama. She's real sick.

She'd love to kiss him, but extends her hand for a shake. The minute she does it, she knows it's a silly gesture.

ROSE (CONT'D)

Thank you, though.

He takes her hand and pulls their hands up to where they can really look at them. Their fingers interlace.

DANNY

I'm going to come find you, after the war.

Rose realizes she may never see Danny again.

ROSE

I'm pretty sure I'd enjoy kissing you?

Sapphire is pushed-out of their apartment by her sisters. Embarrassed, she yanks on the screen door to get back in, but Ruby hooks it. Sapphire pivots towards Rose and Danny.

SAPPHIRE

(boldly)

Well, what are you waiting for?

ROSE

(to the girl)

Excuse me? I believe it's passed your bedtime, young lady.

SAPPHIRE

I'll go after you kiss him.

DANNY

She drives a hard bargain.

Showing-off for the Little Girls, Danny pulls Rose in for a big cinematic kiss. Rose eagerly plays along. Sapphire's face says, this is a moment she'll never forget! Ruby and Pearl jump for joy ECSTATICALLY GIGGLING. The kiss goes on and on till it's interrupted by Lucille.

LUCILLE

(off-camera, irritated)

Get your hiniies back in that bed before I blister you!

Rose and Danny struggle not to giggle! Little Pearl covers her fanny with her hands and inches by Lucille. Ruby unhooks the screen door and streaks past Lucille. Sapphire goes inside cowering, sure she's going to get a spanking.

SAPPHIRE

They pushed me out there.

LUCILLE
Keep moving.

With her hands covering her fanny Sapphire eases past Lucille.

SAPPHIRE
And locked the door!

OFF-CAMERA DAHLIA'S COUGHING starts again.

ROSE
I need to tend to Mama.

DANNY
Course.
(smitten)
You're amazing.
(more businesslike)
And an amazing talent.

ROSE
(knows he's smitten)
You too. You stay safe.

DANNY
You too.

Rose disappears into her apartment. Danny walks away into the night. At the screen door Rose watches him disappear.

DAHLIA
(half asleep)
That one's a keeper, huh?

Rose climbs into bed with Dahlia.

ROSE
(disconsolately)
He's long gone now.

DAHLIA
He'll be back. He knows a prize
when he sees it.

Rose nestles into Dahlia.

DAHLIA (CONT'D)
Wish your daddy had seen you on
that stage today!

ROSE
 (a little unsure)
 He's going to hear all about me,
 from Danny.

DAHLIA
 You told him, Cecil's your father?

ROSE
 No. I just told him you sang in his
 first band.

DAHLIA
 (proudly)
 I sure did.
 (remorsefully)
 I should have told Cecil, about
 you. Please forgive me for that?

ROSE
 You don't need to be forgiven. You
 did the right thing.

DAHLIA
 (remembering fondly)
 He didn't know all he was leaving
 behind.

Dahlia spits blood into Danny's handkerchief. Rose looks
 away, so Dahlia can hide it from her.

DAHLIA (CONT'D)
 I hope he'll forgive me, for not
 telling him about you.

ROSE
 Oh, mama. He abandoned us.

DAHLIA
 (like Rose is a blessing)
 He thought he was saving my life.
 Because of Cecil, I have you.

Dahlia nestles into Rose; places her hand on Rose's heart.

DAHLIA (CONT'D)
 We can be blessed by forgiveness.
 ... You know I will always be in
 your heart whenever you need me?

ROSE
 (whispering)
 I know, Mama. And I'll always be in
 yours.

DAHLIA
 (drifting off to sleep)
 Maybe you can write some songs with
 Danny?

ROSE
 How would I do that?

DAHLIA
 (whispering)
 Letters.

Rose ponders the advice as she caresses Dahlia to sleep.

DISSOLVE TO:

INTERIOR - ROSE AND DAHLIA'S LIVING ROOM - SUNRISE

Rose is exhausted, in her nightgown, searching for the right chord progression for **RUN AWAY** on her piano. Lucille, dressed for work, comes to the screen door; watches Rose sing and holding back tears.

ROSE

 MAMA, YOU ALWAYS TOLD ME,
 YOU'LL BE IN MY HEART WHEN I NEED YOU,
 TO ANSWER ALL OF MY QUESTIONS,
 TO HELP ALL MY DREAMS COME TRUE.
 I NEED YOU NOW. I MISS YOU SO.
 MAMA, PLEASE TELL ME WHAT TO DO!

Rose notices Lucille crying.

ROSE (CONT'D)
 Mama thought the world of you!

Lucille sits with Rose on the piano bench and consoles her.

LUCILLE
 I thought the world of her.

ROSE
 Do I call an undertaker?

LUCILLE
 I'll help you with all that, honey.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXTERIOR - GRAVESITE - DAY

Lucille, Granddaddy, the Black Women Riveters, a Black Preacher and Dominik Mankowski, watch Rose tossing pink and white rose petals from a basket down into a hole onto Dahlia's simple wooden coffin. Everyone nods their condolences and heads for their cars, except Lucille and Dominik and Rose. Lucille approaches knowing Rose doesn't want anything to do with Dominik.

LUCILLE
(to Rose)
Ready to go?

ROSE
Mr. Mankowski's going to give me a
ride.

Lucille looks sternly at Rose, hopes she'll change her mind.

ROSE (CONT'D)
It's fine.

Against her better instincts Lucille leaves them.

DISSOLVE TO:

INTERIOR - DOMINIK'S FORD BUSINESS COUPE - DAY

Dominik and Rose are cruising down a lushly wooded road.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXTERIOR - LAKE - DAY

The coupe pulls-up close to a small, secluded lake.

DOMINIK MANKOWSKI
So, this is it.

ROSE
It's beautiful.

Rose gets out of the car and walks to the lake's edge.
Mankowski follows her.

ROSE (CONT'D)
Lots of picnics, huh?

DOMINIK MANKOWSKI
And lots of swimming.

ROSE
I love swimming, too.

DOMINIK MANKOWSKI
Your mother and I were very close.

ROSE
So how close do you and I have to
get for me to kept like you kept
mama.

Mankowski's pleasantly surprised.

DOMINIK MANKOWSKI
(titillated)
Aren't you the little negotiator?

ROSE
You have no idea.

She kicks-off her shoes and drops her dress next to her hand bag. In a slip and panties she enters the water.

ROSE (CONT'D)
Come on. We can negotiate some more
in here.

Mankowski strips down to his underpants and starts into the water.

ROSE (CONT'D)
You won't need your skivvies.

Excited he sheds his skivvies and wades cockily into the lake. She lures him into deeper water. But, then she disappears under the surface. He treads water titillated by "her game", expecting her to pop-up next to him. She resurfaces close to the shore, and scrambles out of the water. He anxiously swims towards her. She pulls Dahlia's pistol from her purse, and aims it at him. He stops waist high in the water.

DOMINIK MANKOWSKI
I gave her that peashooter, for
protection.

ROSE
(seething and cynical)
So, she'd be all safe and sound for
you to do whatever it was you did
to her, whenever you wanted to do
it to her. ... Till she got sick?

Rose is ready to shoot him.

DOMINIK MANKOWSKI
Don't go doing something crazy.

RITA
You think your wife and your little
boys will miss you?

DOMINIK MANKOWSKI
(pleading)
Okay, okay. I'll cover your
apartment and you can have all of
her perks. I'll even give you her
supervisor position at the white
pay scale. No problem. I was good
to your mother and it was good for
you.

He moves cautiously towards her.

ROSE
Did I say you could come out of
there?

DOMINIK MANKOWSKI
How about I throw in another 50
bucks a month?

ROSE
I want \$500/month. No strings
attached. Till I don't want it any
more.

DOMINIK MANKOWSKI
No strings attached?

ROSE
No strings attached.

DOMINIK MANKOWSKI
Okay. I get it. No strings
attached.

She lowers the gun.

ROSE
I'm a better negotiator than my
mama, huh?

He chuckles, swaggers towards her exposing his junk.

DOMINIK MANKOWSKI
Not sure. You're leaving an awful
big prize on the table.

She shoots him in the thigh. He's appalled and in pain.

DOMINIK MANKOWSKI (CONT'D)

Jesus!

ROSE

Back-up into that water. You're disgusting.

He backs up and drops to his knees clutching his thigh. She gathers her clothes and his.

DOMINIK MANKOWSKI

I'm bleeding like a stuck pig!

ROSE

You are a stuck pig!

She throws the clothes in the car and gets behind the wheel.

DOMINIK MANKOWSKI

What are you doing? I could bleed to death.

ROSE

I'll take that chance.

She starts the car. He rises-up out of the water. She aims the pistol at him.

ROSE (CONT'D)

Back on your knees pig!

He obeys her.

ROSE (CONT'D)

I'll leave the car on the street near my place. The keys'll be under the mat. And I'll let you know where you can send me my perks.

DOMINIK MANKOWSKI

At least leave me my clothes?

ROSE

Oh, no! I'm going to wash and press them real nice. And I'll return them to your wife if you ever come-up short on our deal!

Rose drives-off. Mankowski's hurting bad in the bloody water.

DOMINIK MANKOWSKI
 Crazy nigger bitch. You're good as
 dead.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXTERIOR - PASSENGER TRAIN - NIGHT

A romantic blues instrumental to **SONG 3 - OH, MY!** underscores Rose staring out a train's window at a full moon's splendor on a great lake. She shifts her look onto a book on her lap. Hand painted on its cover is Dahlia's Diary. Rose opens it to - "First song with Cecil". The song's lyrics are there. Rose gazes back out the window, imagining.

DISSOLVE TO:

Standing on the lake's glistening moonlit surface are Dahlia at 20, vivacious, dressed to kill, fronting THE CECIL CLAY COMBO. CECIL CLAY, 30, dapper and intense, intimately engages her with his trumpet. The Muses in full showgirl plumage are swaying, ready to sing back-up.

DAHLIA

WHEN I SAW YOUR EYES REVEALING
 THAT I'M WELL BEYOND SO FINE,
 I KNEW IT WOULDN'T BE LONG BEFORE
 WE WERE SWOONING ON CLOUD NINE.

AND WHEN I FELT YOUR SMILE DECLARING
 THAT I'M WELL BEYOND DIVINE,
 I KNEW IT WOULDN'T BE LONG BEFORE
 ALL THE STARS WOULD SOON ALIGN!

THE MUSE JUDY

OH, MY!

THE MUSE RITA

OH! MY!

THE MUSE SMOKY

OH, MY! MY! MY!

DAHLIA & THE MUSES

OH, MY! MY! MY! MY! MY! MY!... OH, MY!

THE INSTRUMENTAL OF **SONG 3 - OH, MY!** CONTINUES ...

DISSOLVE TO:

EXTERIOR - THE PAIR O'DICE (A HARLEM NIGHTCLUB) - SUNSET

It's an intimate club with a blue neon sign that wraps-up onto the wall of a rooftop apartment. On its marquee is "The Cecil Clay Combo".

... Rose is wide-eyed in the back of a cab pulling-up to the club. IN SLOW MOTION with reverence, The Muses open the cab's door and help Rose out. The Muse Smoky grabs her bag. Excited LOCALS crowd-round as The Muses escort Rose like she's a celebrity towards the club's door. In the crowd is Dahlia; beaming, so proud of Rose! Rose sees her, and the Muses let their eyes connect. Rose senses that Dahlia is at peace, in heaven, and happy for her. And then, The Muses pull Rose into the club.

CUT TO:

INTERIOR - THE PAIR O' DICE

It's smoky. There are twenty tables with chairs, a bar, a tiny bandstand and a tiny dance floor. The wall behind the bandstand is covered in green felt like you'd find on a craps table adorned with "Lady Lucky" blowing on a large pair of dice.

... THE INSTRUMENTAL OF **SONG 3 - OH, MY!** CONTINUES. Alone Rose enters with her suitcase; awestruck. From behind the bar ALVIN FARMER warmly motions for her to take a seat at the bar. On the bandstand sharing a microphone are the Pair o' Dice girls, Judy, Rita, and Smoky (who were also The Muses). They're in street clothes, not at all glammed-up. THE BAND consists of CLARENCE, African American, on drums, PETE, Cuban, on bass, ODELL, African American, on saxophone, and HENRI, white and French, on accordion. The piano bench is unoccupied. The Pair o' Dice Girls assess Rose like she's a threat, ... competition. Rose fixes on Cecil. He's middle-aged, now, worn, but still dapper.

CECIL PLAYS A MOURNFUL SOLO ON HIS TRUMPET. In **DANCE 4** Judy, Rita and Smoky step off the bandstand and mark their territory for Rose.

From backstage, without noticing Rose, snazzily dressed Danny runs in, lands at the piano and directs the Band.

DANNY

Come on, gentlemen! Let's turn-up
the heat!!

Judy pulls Alvin into the dance. Rita and Judy pair-off. Danny sees Rose and is excited, but keeps playing. Cecil motions to Judy to join him at his microphone.

CECIL & JUDY

AND WHEN OUR VOICES MINGLED,
ACROSS THE MUSICAL STAFF WE'D RACE.
IN SEARCH OF PERFECT HARMONY
TOGETHER WE WOULD CHASE.

Like a moth to a flame, Rose moves through the dancers towards the bandstand intensely gazing at Cecil. Cecil's unnerved by her.

CECIL & JUDY (CONT'D)

THE QUEST WOULD SEND US FLYING,
WILDLY UP INTO THE SKY,
TWO SONGBIRDS LONGING TO EMBRACE
WE'D SOAR AND COO AND CRY.

Rita and Smoky hustle back to the bandstand.

JUDY, RITA & SMOKY

OH, MY! ... OH! MY! ... OH, MY! MY! MY!

CECIL, JUDY, RITA & SMOKY

OH, MY! MY! MY! MY! MY! ... OH, MY!

CECIL & JUDY

WE WERE SEARCHING FOR A HIDING PLACE
ON A CLOUD WAY UP ON HIGH,
WHERE A PAIR LIKE US COULD SAFELY DARE,
TO GIVE OUR LOVE A TRY!

JUDY, RITA & SMOKY

OH, MY! ... OH! MY! ... OH, MY! MY! MY!

CECIL, JUDY, RITA & SMOKY

OH, MY! MY! MY! MY! MY!
OH, MY, MY! ... OH, MY! MY! MY!
OH, MY!

With a TRUMPET FLOURISH Cecil finishes **SONG 3 - OH, MY!**

DANNY

(to Cecil)

This is her! The girl, from Willow
Run!

Cecil's mesmerized by Rose.

ROSE

(to Cecil)

I'm Rose, Dahlia Leland's daughter.

CECIL

(rattled)

Your mama could sing like a lark!
(to everyone)
Her mother toured with my first
band. Talented, gutsy, and crazy
beautiful! But, white. White girls
just didn't sing with negro bands
back then. It lead to nothing but
trouble.

ROSE

I just came in on The Wolverine.

SMOKY

The Wolverine?

CECIL

It's the train from Detroit to New
York. It crosses into Canada in two
places, so you're looking at an
international traveler!

RITA

(to impress)

I've been to Paris! I'm Rita.
Married me handsome Frenchman. Take
a bow, Henri!

HENRI
Salut! Welcome to Harlem!

ROSE
Merci beaucoup!

Danny's impressed that Rose tries French.

SMOKY
Danny tells us you're a quadruple
threat.
(mocking Danny)
Dancer, ...

RITA
Singer, ...

SMOKY
Songwriter, ...

RITA
And a sight to behold!

CECIL
(to Rose sarcastically)
Danny'd make you a fine manager!
Too bad he's going off to get
himself killed.

JUDY
Cecil Clay! Don't you ever say that
again!

RITA
What's wrong with you!

SMOKY
That just ain't right?

CECIL
(angrily)
Let's not kid ourselves. A full
bird colonel was in here the other
night; all liquored up; said one
out of four airmen on those bombing
missions don't make it. Anybody
here like those odds?

DANNY
(to Cecil)
I always beat the odds. What were
the odds I'd get to make music with
an irascible cat like you?

CECIL
(humored, but ignoring
Danny, back to Rose)
So if everything he says about you
is true I guess this could be my
lucky day!?

ROSE
(all business)
Mama was sure you'd give me a shot!

CECIL
Was she now?

ROSE
I've got a good feeling about this
place!

CECIL
(discouraging Rose)
I've had nothing but bad luck with
flowers. Ladies named after flowers
that is. Dahlia's a perfect
example. She broke my heart bad!

ALVIN
(to Rose)
The bad luck with flowers thing is
real. One of our girls, Violet,
OD'd on smack.

SMOKY
Violet was before my time, but what
about Gladiola getting mixed up
with that mobster?

RITA
Anthony Grillo. Couple of no class
rats with Tommy guns snuffed out
little Gladys and her greaser
boyfriend right there at the bar.

SMOKY
Oh, that was a mess. A terrible
mess.

JUDY
Don't forget Buttercup.

SMOKY
Oooh! That Buttercup loved to
dance!

RITA

But she was wild as a hare.

SMOKY

Got all caught-up in cocaine.

ALVIN

It drove that precious thing
insane.

JUDY

Buttercup hung herself back there
in our dressing room.

CECIL

You best go back to your mama. The
Pair o' Dice ain't no place for a
rose.

Everyone freezes as Rose haunts Cecil with **SONG 4 - I DESERVE
THAT MUCH FROM YOU.**

ROSE

WHAT ABOUT THE FLOWER YOU BEGUILLED?
DID YOU KNOW YOU LEFT BEHIND A CHILD?
WHERE'S THE TALE ABOUT THE WAY YOU FLED?
YOU HAD PROMISED MAMA YOU WOULD WED.
I'M YOUR FLESH AND BLOOD TOO BAD YOU NEVER
KNEW.
THERE'S A REASON I AM HAUNTING YOU.
HERE'S YOUR CHANCE TO DO WHAT'S RIGHT,
LEAD A FLOWER TO THE LIGHT.
LET ME SHINE IN HERE AT NIGHT.
I DESERVE THAT MUCH FROM YOU.

Rose pulls her pistol from a holster on her thigh.

ROSE (CONT'D)

SEE THIS PISTOL, DON'T GET IN MY WAY.
LET ME SING, OR I WILL MAKE YOU PAY.
DON'T YOU DARE TO STOP ME
I DESERVE A SHOT.
*WHEN I SING I'LL BE BREATHTAKING.
ALL MY MOVES WILL BE EARTHSHAKING.
ALL TABOOS I'LL BE FORSAKING.
HELP ME MAKE MY DREAMS COME TRUE.*

*YOU'VE BEEN TOLD THAT I CAN SING AND DANCE.
NOW'S THE TIME COME ON GIVE ME A CHANCE.
SPOTLIGHTS BRIGHT AND SIZZLING NEED TO
SHINE ON ME.*

I'LL BEDAZZLE 'TIL,
 EVERY CROWD I FACE IS GRINNING,
 UNDERDOGS AT LAST ARE WINNING,
 TROUBLED ONES WILL STOP THEIR SINNING,
 THIS LIL' FLOWER'S GONNA BLOOM.
 HERE'S YOUR CHANCE TO DO WHAT'S RIGHT,
 LEAD A FLOWER TO THE LIGHT.
 LET ME SHINE IN HERE ALL NIGHT.
 I DESERVE THAT MUCH FROM YOU.

Rose slips the pistol back in its holster and the action unfreezes. Cecil shakes off the trance.

ROSE (CONT'D)
 So, when do I start?

CECIL
 Smoky, give her the tray, ... and your outfit.

SMOKY
 You firing me?

CECIL
 NO! What the hell! We'll have 3
 Pair o' Dice Girls!

Smoky jumps for joy; hands-off the cigarette tray to Rose. Judy and Rita help Smoky strip out of her dress.

CECIL (CONT'D)
 (to Rose)
 You keep all the tips you can charm
 out of the customers, and I'll
 throw in a room upstairs.

ROSE
 When will I get to perform?

Smoky, in just her underwear, flings her dress to Rose.

CECIL
 First, let's see if you can sell
 some smokes. Judy, please show Rose
 to the dressing room.

SMOKY
 What do I wear?

CECIL
 I could live with that.

JUDY
(irritated with Cecil)
Shame on you.

RITA
(to Smoky, miffed at
Cecil)
Come on darling. We'll make you
outfits just like ours.

Judy and Rita take Smoky "backstage."

CECIL
Rose, you go on with them.

JUDY
(to Rose)
Come on, honey.

DANNY
Why do you have to treat them like
that?

CECIL
Those girls got it good here. They
aren't going nowhere. You're the
only one running out on me.

DANNY
I'll be back before you know I was
gone.

CECIL
Will you? I'd be a fool to bet on
that.

EXTERIOR/INTERIOR - THE PAIR O' DICE ROOFTOP - NIGHT

*The Pair o' Dice's blue neon sign
glows into Danny's studio
apartment from his street-side
exterior wall. There's a vacant
studio across the rooftop. An old
steel glider couch sits between
the two studios. Adjacent
apartments have a fire escape
that empties onto the rooftop.*

It's a hot and muggy. After a hard first night of work Rose is on the glider couch in her cigarette girl outfit watching Rita and Smoky in their Pair o' Dice girls' outfits make-up her bed in the vacant studio. Judy, in a robe, comes down the fire escape of the adjacent building with towels for Rose.

JUDY

(to Rose, but loud enough
for Rita and Smoky to
hear)

Aren't they done, yet?

SMOKY

(in disbelief)

TWELVE DOLLARS AND FIFTY-FIVE CENTS
IN TIPS?

ROSE

Is that a lot?

RITA

AND ON A TUESDAY NIGHT!

Smoky comes out on the rooftop.

SMOKY

Your room's ready, Princess! I
never made that much in tips. Not
even on a Friday night!

ROSE

Beginners luck!

Rita comes out of "Rose's Room" carrying a bucket with rags and a mop.

RITA

(cynical, but meant to be
funny)

It's because she's new meat.

Danny comes onto the roof into the awkward silence; decides to stay on course into his studio. On the piano he starts emotional/romantic **MUSIC TO SONG 5 - WE DARE LOVE ON.**

SMOKY

Oh, I love this one.

RITA

Sappy.

JUDY

You just wish he'd let you sing it.

ROSE
What is it?

JUDY
It's a big secret is what it is.

Judy hands Rose the linens and leads her into her studio.

JUDY (CONT'D)
Sweet dreams to you.

Judy gestures to Rita and Smoky to head-up the fire escape.

SMOKY
(mostly meaning it)
Welcome to the Pair o' Dice.

RITA
(seriously)
Don't let the bedbugs bite.

Rose looks worried.

JUDY
(warmly)
Don't worry. We don't have bedbugs.

The girls disappear up the fire escape into their apartments.
Rose can't resist crossing the rooftop to Danny's open door.

ROSE
It's beautiful.

He stops playing.

ROSE (CONT'D)
Got a title?

DANNY
WE DARE LOVE ON.

ROSE
Love that. Lyrics?

DANNY
Yep.

ROSE
Need someone to sing it?

DANNY
Hey! You wanna see something
amazing?

ROSE

Sure.

DANNY

You got a nice dress?

Rose looks worried.

ROSE

How nice?

DISSOLVE TO:

EXTERIOR - PAIR O' DICE ROOFTOP - NIGHT

Cecil and Judy are on the fire escape peering down at Rose and Danny's dark studios. Cecil's got his trumpet.

JUDY

They went out. Come to bed.

CECIL

(grumpily)

Where'd they go?

JUDY

I don't know everything.

CECIL

Now there's a revelation.

Seductively she nibbles on his ear.

JUDY

I'm full of revelations. You know that!

CECIL

You know where they went?

JUDY

Oh, come on! They went out. They're young and crazy about each other.

CECIL

They're in for nothing but trouble.

JUDY

They're in love. Leave 'em be.

CECIL

Nothing but trouble.

JUDY

Leave the whining to that ol'
trumpet of yours. Come on.

CECIL

Go on, I'm coming.

JUDY

I won't be holding my breath.

Judy goes through a window into their apartment.

Cecil gazes into an ominous cloudy night sky and on his trumpet starts a melancholy bluesy **SONG 6 - BLACKBIRDS.**

DISSOLVE TO:

EXTERIOR - RURAL DETROIT BUS STOP - SUNSET

Murmuring blackbirds swirl across a painfully colored cloudy sky. There is little traffic on the weathered two-lane road. Cecil, at 30, paces, bundled-up against a cool wind mesmerized by the blackbirds. Nearby, CHARLES, a bass player, and CLEAVON, a drummer, are leaning against a well-worn station wagon smoking. **A "music video" documents** Dahlia and Cecil meeting, and the bliss and the despair they experience on their tour with Charles and Cleavon.

CECIL

A STREETCAR WAS COMING,
AND IT WAS CARRYING MY GIRL
A GUTSY LITTLE WARBLER,
WHO WAS WHITE AS A PEARL.
THE BIGOTS WOULD BE WAITING
AT EVERY STOP ON THE ROAD.
I WAS SCARED AND I KNEW THAT IT SHOWED.

AND THE BLACKBIRDS THEY CIRCLED ROUND US
TIL THEY FILLED-UP THE SKY,
AND THEY ALL HAD THE SAME FRIGHTENED CRY.

A TOUR WITH THIS SONGBIRD
WOULD LEAD TO BLOOD SPILLED.
I SHOULDA KNOWN BETTER,
SHE COULD GET US ALL KILLED.

AS SHE STEPPED-OFF THAT STREET CAR
 THE BIRDS STAYED AT BAY,
 BUT THEY SWOOPED IN TO CATCH
 EV'RY WORD THAT SHE'D SAY.

SHE SAID, "I'M DAHLIA, HEY,
 ARE YOU GONNA BLINK?"
 THIS GIRL IS THE ONE,
 IS ALL I COULD THINK.
 WITH THIS DOLL I SURE COULD HAVE IT ALL!
 BUT FOR LOVE WE WOULD BOTH TAKE A FALL.

IN NEGRO HOTELS WE WERE REQUIRED TO STAY.
 BUT, AT LEAST THERE OUR BODIES COULD DO COME
 WHAT MAY.
 UNDRRESSED, POSSESSED, OUR LOVE CONFESSED,
 WE TORE-UP THE HOURS.
 WE PLAYED AT JOINTS AND DIVES
 WHILE HATERS, THEY MADE US PAY!

DISSOLVE TO:

EXTERIOR - THE PAIR O' DICE ROOFTOP - NIGHT

Cecil's soul searching on the rooftop.

CECIL

THE BLACKBIRDS, THEY KNEW.
 AS THEY CIRCLED ABOVE.
 WE WERE DOOMED ME AND YOU.
 EVEN WITH OUR TRUE LOVE.
 CAN YOU EVER FORGIVE ME,
 I'M SO SORRY I FLED.
 IN MY DREAMS WE KEPT ENDING-UP DEAD.

AND THE BLACKBIRDS THEY CIRCLED ROUND US
 TIL THEY FILLED-UP THE SKY,
 AND THEY ALL HAD THE SAME FRIGHTED CRY.

SHE SAID, "I'M DAHLIA,
 HEY, ARE YOU GONNA BLINK?"
 THIS GIRL IS THE ONE,
 IS ALL I COULD THINK.

WITH THIS DOLL I SURE COULD HAVE IT ALL!
BUT FOR LOVE WE WOULD BOTH TAKE A FALL.

On his horn Cecil mournfully echoes the last line.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXTERIOR - THE IVORY - NIGHT

Danny and Rose, nattily dressed, stand hand in hand in front of The Ivory, a world renowned night club.

ROSE
(nervous & blown away)
Your meeting's here, at The Ivory?
I'm not dressed-up enough! Who you
meeting with? What's it about?

Danny reveals nothing, rings the doorbell.

ROSE (CONT'D)
You shouldn't be dragging me in
there. I'll just be in the way.
I'll wait in that coffee shop back
there on the corner.

DANNY
Don't be silly. You gotta see it.
You're going to be playing this
joint!

ROSE
(doubtful)
Uh, huh.

The door opens. GEORGE FREEMAN, black, handsome and nattily dressed, smiles, but is less welcoming than Danny expected.

GEORGE
Danny?

All of them are thinking bringing Rose wasn't the best move.

GEORGE (CONT'D)
I'm George.

Danny shakes his hand.

DANNY
Nice to meet you. This is Rose
Leland. Mr. Freeman is the Ivory's
manager.

Nervously, but trying to look confident, Rose extends her hand and George shakes it.

ROSE
It's a pleasure to meet you, Mr. Freeman.

GEORGE
The pleasure's mine.

DANNY
She's from Detroit. It's her first night in New York and she's already landed a gig at the Pair o' Dice.

GEORGE
(impressed)
Singer?

ROSE
And a songwriter.

DANNY
And man can she dance! I wanted her to see the Holy Grail.

GEORGE
She's going to have to enter through the stage door.

Rose is gutted. Danny's embarrassed.

DANNY
(hoping)
It's after hours?

GEORGE
(sorry)
I don't make the rules.

Danny backs away from the entrance pulling a reluctant Rose with him.

DANNY
It's down the alley, right?

Rose goes with Danny, but refuses to look away from George who's stepped out onto the sidewalk to feel her pain and his own till Rose disappears down the alley with Danny.

EXTERIOR - IVORY ALLEY/STAGE DOOR - NIGHT

Rose shakes loose of Danny's hand and stops.

ROSE
 (angry with herself)
 I should have known it would be
 restricted.

DANNY
 Things are changing. The Pair o'
 Dice isn't restricted. The Ivory's
 at least showcasing all kinds of
 colored talent.

ROSE
 As long as the darkies don't dance
 or drink with the patrons!

DANNY
 I don't like it either.

They're outside the kitchen door.

ROSE
 And enter through the back door!

Rose recoils, starts backing up the alley.

DANNY
 Look! Sophie Hudson wants to record
 one of my songs. I need to go in
 there.

ROSE
 WE DARE LOVE ON?

Danny nods.

ROSE (CONT'D)
 She's going to make you rich and
 famous.

Over Danny's shoulder Rose makes eye contact with KITCHEN
 WORKER #1, 60, a weathered African American man as he drags
 out a barrel of trash. Danny turns to see him mopping his
 brow, catching his breath and watching to see what Rose and
 Danny will do.

DANNY
 (to Rose)
 I want you to go in there with me.
 But, if you won't, neither will I.

Rose is moved by Danny's gesture. There is a longing for
 change in the old guy's eyes. Rose steels herself. Her reply
 to Danny is directed at Kitchen Worker #1.

ROSE
Okay. I'm in.

Danny stretches out his hand to her. She refuses it.

ROSE (CONT'D)
I'm not going in there holding your
hand.

From Rose's POV the scene goes into SLOW MOTION. Danny gestures to Rose to go in first. Kitchen Worker #1 opens the screen door for them with a broad smile. They share a bitter history and a hunger for a better future. Rose smiles back at him, armored-up and enters. Danny nods gratefully at Kitchen Worker #1 and follows Rose in.

INTERIOR - THE IVORY KITCHEN - NIGHT

*The kitchen is sweltering and
sticky.*

THE KITCHEN WORKERS are sweaty and busy getting the kitchen in ship shape, but they can't resist making eye contact with Rose. They've seen hundreds of performers in their kitchen, but they sense something special about Rose. On the other side of the kitchen where the backstage hallways begin George appears, reading everyone's emotions He escorts Rose and Danny into ...

INTERIOR - THE IVORY'S BACKSTAGE HALLWAYS - NIGHT

... THE SLOW MOTION CONTINUES as Rose and Danny and George move down a hallway looking into dressing rooms. IVORY GIRLS, African American waitresses, are removing masks and in different stages of changing out of sexy waitress outfits into street clothes. They're exhausted and curious about Rose and Danny and vice versa. Some of the girls smile, others can't be bothered. George leads Rose and Danny through the wings onto The Ivory's stage.

INTERIOR - THE IVORY

*Everything feels like a black and
white movie. The club's luxurious
decor bespeaks colonial Africa.
There's Zebra upholstery on the
banquets, elephant tusks, deco
murals of African nubile
beauties.*

Rose is agog. ARTIE JONES, 50, the club's white owner, is at the bar, tired and tipsy. He's in a tuxedo, but his bow tie is loose. THE SLOW MOTION STOPS.

ARTIE
(charming)
Welcome Mr. Capucci.
And Miss Leland.

Rose is uneasy but projects an air of confidence. She wants the focus on Danny.

SOPHIE HUDSON, lily white, blonde and gorgeous, steps into the wings unseen sizing-up Danny and Rose.

ARTIE (CONT'D)
(to Rose)
Aren't you something sweet? So
you're talented, too?

ROSE
(charming)
Well, I'm no Danny Capucci.

Sophie steps out of the wings.

SOPHIE
(playfully)
Never mind, Artie! He only owns the
joint!

Rose's jaw practically drops as Sophie "takes the stage". Danny's thinking he's the luckiest man alive.

SOPHIE (CONT'D)
Not a bad joint though, huh?

DANNY
No. Not a bad joint at all.

SOPHIE
(projected to Artie)
It's very old fashioned though. I'm
sorry you couldn't come in through
the front door.

She offers her hand to Rose.

SOPHIE (CONT'D)
I'm Sophie Hudson.

ROSE
Rose Leland. Pretty sure I've sung
every song you've ever recorded!

SOPHIE
(tooting her own horn)
That's a lot of songs!

Sophie extends her hand to Danny. He takes it; infatuated.

SOPHIE (CONT'D)
Nice to finally meet you, Danny
Capucci.
(to Rose with a wink)
He's been playing hard to get.

Sophie takes Rose by the arm and leads them all to the bar.

SOPHIE (CONT'D)
George, get these two a drink.

George goes behind the bar.

GEORGE
What'll it be, Miss Leland?

ROSE
(like she's ordered a lot
of whiskeys)
I'll take a whiskey.

Danny raises an eyebrow.

GEORGE
(trying not to blow her
front)
What's your heart's desire?

Danny's attention darts between Rose and Sophie. Sophie knows she's casting a spell on Danny. And, Rose is jealous.

ROSE
What would you guess I'd like?

ARTIE
(helping her)
I'll bet she's a Wild Turkey
drinker?

ROSE
How'd you know?

ARTIE
Cause it's tasty and expensive.
I'll join her.

SOPHIE
What about you, Danny?

DANNY

I'll have some seltzer. I'm still
on the clock.

SOPHIE

Oh, that's right. We should get
down to business.

(to George)

I'll have seltzer, too. Bring ours
over to the piano, will ya, George?

GEORGE

You know I will.

Sophie leads Danny to the piano. He pulls sheet music from
his sports jacket's inside pocket and lays it out.

ARTIE

(apologizing, but not
really)

The entering through the back door
thing, it's not personal. We just
have certain standards.

ROSE

Mr. Jones, I've lived with certain
standards my whole life.

George supports Rose, to Artie's chagrin.

GEORGE

The standards will be changing.

Sophie starts **SONG 5 - WE DARE LOVE ON.**

SOPHIE

THEY SAY ALL'S FAIR IN LOVE AND WAR.
BUT HOW CAN THEY CONNECT THE TWO
WHEN LOVE ALONE IS SO MUCH MORE.
LOVE, WHEN MY LOVE'S NOT THERE.
LOVE, LOVE IS EVERYWHERE.
LOVE, THERE'S NO HEART PREPARED FOR LOVE.
YET WE DARE, YES, WE DARE, LOVE ON.

THE SKIES THAT SPRAWL ABOVE US
COULD BRING A SILVER PROMISE,
OR RAIN DOWN WRATH UPON US,
LET THE SKIES BE KIND!
IF BIRDS AND BUTTERFLIES SURVIVE COME RAIN
OR SHINE,
COULD WIND-BORNE LOVERS BUILD A FORTRESS IN
THE SKY?

OH, LOVE, WHEN MY LOVE'S NOT THERE.
 LOVE, LOVE IS EVERYWHERE.
 LOVE, THERE'S NO HEART PREPARED FOR LOVE.
 YET WE DARE, YES WE DARE, LOVE ON.

A CANDLE BURNING BRIGHTLY,
 LEFT IN MY WINDOW NIGHTLY,
 COME HOME AND HOLD ME TIGHTLY,
 SHIELD ME FROM THE STORM.
 YOUR ARMS AROUND ME
 AND YOUR KISSES KEEP ME WARM.
 SAY YOU'LL COME BACK,
 THEN I'LL HAVE SOMETHING I CAN LIVE FOR.

(Sophie gets cozy with Danny on the piano bench.)

LOVE, WHEN MY LOVE'S NOT THERE.
 LOVE, LOVE IS EVERYWHERE.
 LOVE, THERE'S NO HEART PREPARED FOR LOVE.
 YET WE DARE, YES, WE DARE, LOVE ON.

SOPHIE (CONT'D)
 Well, shall we record it?

DANNY
 Fine by me.

George crosses with their seltzer waters. Sophie stands and grandstands.

SOPHIE
 I want to record it right away. I
 just signed-up for a USO tour.
 How'd you like to come along, play
 in my band?

ARTIE
 (irate)
 You gotta be kidding me!

SOPHIE
 Our boys need me, Artie!

ARTIE
 We're overflowing with troops in
 here every night. You're needed
 here!

SOPHIE
 (to Artie)
 It's a fait accompli. I'm leaving
 for London in two weeks.

ARTIE

Christ!

Artie hurls his shot glass into the bottles behind the bar and storms out of the club.

SOPHIE

After London, who knows? Hopefully Paris, Rome, Berlin, Tokyo!

DANNY

It's an amazing offer! But, I joined the Army Air Corps. I'm off to England tomorrow morning.

Sophie deflates; she's used to getting what she wants.

ROSE

He's a pilot. Just picked-up his B24 last week, at Willow Run. That's how we met.

DANNY

Rose was a riveter.

SOPHIE

Is there anything she can't do?

ROSE

I can't get through the front door of The Ivory.

SOPHIE

Touché! Hats off to both of you!

DANNY

I'm going to be based pretty close to London. Maybe on one of my furloughs I can sit in with your band?

SOPHIE

I'd like that. You're okay with me recording the song without you?

DANNY

Of course.

SOPHIE

I think the world needs it. George has a contract for you.

Sophie extends her hand and both Rose and Danny shake it.

SOPHIE (CONT'D)
 Good night, Rose. And Danny, you
 stay safe.

Sophie sashay towards the backstage area. Right before
 disappearing into the wings she turns.

SOPHIE (CONT'D)
 Oh, and Danny, I'll see you in
 London.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXTERIOR/INTERIOR - THE PAIR O' DICE ROOFTOP & DANNY'S STUDIO
 - SUNRISE

Rose, in the same dress she wore to The Ivory, is at Danny's
 piano playing the melancholy melody to **MUSIC TO SONG 7 -**
CARAMEL. Her back is to Danny as he changes into his uniform.

DANNY
 I'm loving that one.

ROSE
 No lyrics, yet; gonna call it
 CARAMEL.

DANNY
 Autobiographical?

ROSE
 Maybe?

DANNY
 Thanks for staying up with me.

ROSE
 Wouldn't have missed it for the
 world.

DANNY
 So what do you think?

He stands at attention fully uniformed. She swivels off the
 piano bench to look him over.

ROSE
 (kidding him, like it's no
 big deal)
 I've already seen you in uniform.

DANNY
Oh, that's right.

She grabs his airman's cap off the top of the piano.

ROSE
You forgot the cap.

He lets her put his cap on.

ROSE (CONT'D)
Almost irresistible.

She brushes past him out onto the rooftop, sits on the glider, and checks her watch.

ROSE (CONT'D)
You've got six minutes?

He comes out of his studio with his duffle bag.

ROSE (CONT'D)
The others are going to be really mad you didn't let them see you off. Why'd you tell them you were leaving at noon.

DANNY
It's better this way.

ROSE
Let me go get them?

DANNY
The girls and Alvin would be sobbing. And Cecil, he's already furious with me. It would make him even madder.

ROSE
You mean sadder.

DANNY
Yeah. I guess.

ROSE
My mama thought you and I should write some songs together?

DANNY
I'm game for that!

ROSE
 (getting emotional)
 Through letters.

DANNY
 How 'bout we write each other every
 day?

Rose tears-up. Danny starts **SONG 7 - I WILL WRITE YOU EVERY DAY.**

DANNY (CONT'D)

YOU'RE NOT ALONE.
 YOUR MOM'S STILL HERE BY YOUR SIDE.
 HER LOVE'S ALIVE.
 YOU'RE STRONG, LET LOVE BE YOUR GUIDE.
 UP HERE IT'S PEACEFUL.
 HERE ROSES CLIMB FREELY.
 THEY WANT THE SUN.
 UP HERE I FOUGHT AND I WON.

ROSE

LET'S DREAM OF FAME.

DANNY

DREAM OF CLUBS WE'LL PLAY.

In **DANCE 5** they are like dreaming kids.

ROSE

MARQUEES WILL HAVE MY NAME.

DANNY

HOW 'BOUT ON BROADWAY?
 WE BEAT THE ODDS, THEY WILL SAY.

ROSE

FEAR NOT, YOU'LL MAKE IT HOME!

DANNY

FIGHT FOR FREEDOM, LIONHEARTED,
 INTO BATTLE WE WILL FLY!

ROSE

WE MUST BE BRAVE.

DANNY

DRAGONS MUST BE SLAYED.

ROSE

SUCH EVIL HAS TO DIE.

DANNY

DON'T WANT YOU TO CRY.

ROSE

PLEASE DUCK THE ARROWS!

DANNY

PLEASE DON'T BE TERRIFIED.

ROSE

MY FEARS I CANNOT HIDE.

DANNY

WE WILL BE TRIED.

ROSE

BUT YOU'LL COME HOME I KNOW.

DANNY

I'LL WRITE TO YOU.

ROSE

EACH DAY YOU'LL HEAR FROM ME.

DANNY & ROSE

CAN'T LET OUR FEARS GET IN THE WAY.
WE WILL WIN THE DAY.
I WILL WRITE YOU EVERY DAY!

Rose is shivering.

DANNY
You've got goosebumps, well, all
over.

She tenderly kisses him. The kiss goes on and on ...

FADE TO BLACK.

END OF EPISODE 1

**WORK IN PROGRESS 9/19/22 SONGS/MUSIC - 32 PIECES - 23
EXIST, 9 NEED TO BE WRITTEN**

SONGS in **REGULAR BOLD CAPS** can be found at www.roseswar.com.
NEW PIECES in *ITALICS* need to be written.

EPISODE 1 - 9 Songs & 3 Music Pieces & 5 Dances

MUSIC 1 (To Be Written)- *Miles Davis vibe of Nature Boy - Fantasy with MUSES/POD GIRLS and letters of rejection. - DANCE 1*

SONG 1 - THE HARLEM HOP (Rose & Danny and Willow Run Workers)
DANCE 2 & CHORUS 1

MUSIC 2 (To Be Written) - *Parkridge Homes during fireworks. (Lucille plays melancholy trumpet with Grandpa on piano.)*

MUSIC 3 (To Be Written) - **THE ST. LOUIS BLUES** (Grandpa, Danny & Lucille) - **DANCE 3**

SONG 2 - RUN AWAY (short section)

SONG 3 - OH, MY! (To Be Written) - *(Romantic Blues Music - Dahlia, then Cecil with Judy, Rita and Smoky)* **DANCE 4**

SONG 4 - I DESERVE THAT MUCH FROM YOU (Rose)

MUSIC 4 OF SONG 5 - WE DARE LOVE ON

SONG 6 - DAHLIA, FORGIVE ME (Cecil)

SONG 5 - WE DARE LOVE ON (Sophie)

MUSIC 5 TO SONG 8 - CAMEL (instrumental)

SONG 7 - I WILL WRITE YOU EVERY DAY (Rose & Danny) **DANCE 5**

EPISODE 2 - ?? Songs or Music Pieces & ? Dances

SONG 8 - DO YA LIKE WHATCHA SEE? (1st verse) (Rose)

MUSIC of SONG 8 - DO YA LIKE WHATCHA SEE? DANCE 6 (w/ Muses & Airmen)

SONG 8 - DO YA LIKE WHATCHA SEE? (Rose & Airmen) DANCE 7 & CHORUS 2

NEW MUSIC 10 - BIG USO LONDON BAND - DARK & FRENZIED DANCE 8 (USO peeps)

SONG 11 - LOOK WHAT WAR CAN DO (Rose, Danny & Sophie)

MUSIC & SONG 12 - ACCORDION BLUES (Rita & Henri) DANCE 9 (POD peeps)

SONG 13 - ROSIE THE RIVETER (Rose & Ivory Girls) DANCE 10 & CHORUS 3

SONG 14 - GETTIN' A BREAK! (Rose, Buck & Chuck)

MUSIC 15 - HEAVY JAZZ (Judy scats)

SONG 16 - SCREW MEN (Rose, Judy, Rita, Smoky & Alvin) DANCE 11

MUSIC of SONG 17 - WAR FX (Vet hospital)

SONG 18 - THE ARMY AIR CORPS (Sophie, Carla, Nancy Injured Vets & Nurses) CHORUS 4

MUSIC 19 - SWING MUSIC (Judy, Rita & Smoky) DANCE 12 (POD Patrons)

SONG 20 - CAMEL (Rose)

MUSIC OF SONG 19 - WAR FX (fight at Pair o' Dice)

EPISODE 3 - 9 Songs & 5 Dances

SONG 19 - WAR FX (Danny) **DANCE 13** (Rose)

SONG 21 - I CAN BE YOUR FRIEND (Rose)

SONG 22 - GOOSEBUMPS (Rose & Danny) **DANCE 14** (Rose & Danny)

SONG 23 - LIVING IN COLOR (Smoky, Rita & Judy)

SONG 24 - BAD NEWS (Cecil, Rose, Judy, Rita, Smoky & Alvin)

SONG 25 - LOVELY PEOPLE (Rose, Danny, Buck & Chuck, Sophie, Cecil, Artie, George & Ivory Girls) **DANCE 15 & CHORUS 5**

SONG 26 - YOU THINK YOU KNOW (Rose & Danny) **DANCE 16**

SONG 27 - SOPHIE'S PRAYER (Sophie, Carla & Nancy)

SONG 28 - RAP TAP (George, Sophie, Rose, Judy, Rita, Smoky & Alvin) **DANCE 17**

EPISODE 4 - 12 Songs & 4 Dances**SONG 22 - GOOSEBUMPS** (short segment) (Rose)*SONG 29 - SOPHIE NEW SONG* (Sophie)*SONG 30 - with the vibe of LOVE IS IN THE AIR* (Montage/Rose)**SONG 31 - I CAN'T EVER FALL OUT OF LOVE WITH YOU** (Danny)**DANCE 18** (Danny)**SONG 32 - LIVING IN COLOR** (Smoky, Judy & Rita)**SONG 9 - DO YA LIKE WHATCHA SEE?** (short piece) (Sophie) **DANCE 19****MUSIC 6 - WE DARE LOVE ON** (Short piece)**SONG 11A - LOOK WHAT LOVE CAN DO** (enhanced reprise of SONG 11 - LOOK

WHAT WAR CAN DO) (Rose, Danny & Sophie)

MUSIC SONG 20 - CAMEL (Cecil solo trumpet) **DANCE 20** (Rose & The Muses)**SONG 26 - YOU THINK YOU KNOW** (a shortened reprise with variations.) (Rose & Danny)**SONG 6 - WE DARE LOVE ON** (Last 4 lines of song.) (Sophie, Carla & Nancy)**SONG 32 - LIVING IN COLOR - FINALE** (EVERYONE)**DANCE 21 & CHORUS 6**