

Maria

Written by Elyssa Catalfano

17 scenes in 1 Act

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Setting: Paris, France, late 19<sup>th</sup> century.

Characters:

Sergio (20s), guitar player.

Serene (20s), ballerina prodigy.

Erenzo (20s), juggler, jester, Sergio's friend from plaza.

Jean de Louis (50s), banker, strict, perfectionist.

Dina (20s), Sergio's childhood friend and lover.

Gabriel (20s), Serene's childhood friend and lover.

Guests (40s-80s), party guests, ball gowns and tuxedos.

Mayor (50s), arrogant, sleazy, greedy.

Mayor's wife (50s), vile, egotistic.

Duke (50s), stuck up, narrow minded, falsely kind.

Duchess (50s), obnoxious, snippy, gluttonous.

Anna (20s), Serena's friend and loyal fan, ballerina.

Instructor (50s), teacher, strict, Russian.

Ballerinas (20s), envious, gossipers, adoring fans.

Author Servavo (40s), Serene's manager, self-important, prejudiced.

Raphael (20s), famous male dancer, pompous, vain.

Maria- (5), daughter of Serene and Gabriel.

Ticket booth can be double or triple.

Cart can be double or triple.

Crowd can be double or triple.

Servants can be double or triple.

Street Performers can be double or triple.

Musicians can be double or triple.

## Synopsis

A struggling guitarist happily plays in the Paris plaza, trying to prove to his banker father that being a musician is a worthy profession. A prima ballerina longs to dance but despises being known as a prodigy. These two artists never meet. Never fall in love. Yet through happenstance, inspire one another to be true to themselves.

### Production Notes:

The proscenium stage holds a backdrop of Paris that can change from morning, afternoon, to night.

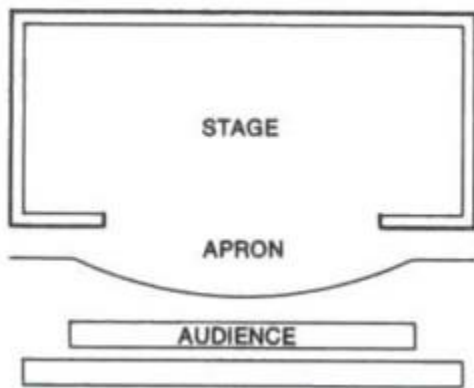
Windows will extend from the ceiling and show the inside of a building or the alleyway.

Benches will be used to signify the plaza and train car.

A large black platform, which takes up part of the stage for Serene to dance on, will either be rolled or extended as a thrust from the stage to signify the balcony.

The (/) in the dialogue is an interruption.

The (...) is a pause in the dialogue.



### Songs:

Sergio's guitar solo in Scene 5 needs to be very upbeat and a song Serene can dance to on a platform.

### Pronunciation:

Scavanwits = Scav-an-wits

Jean de Louis = John de Louie

Dina = Dee-na

Act 1  
SCENE 1

*(Curtain Rises.)*

*(Setting: Paris, Plaza.)*

*(Rise: SERGIO enters stage with a guitar case. His back faces the audience as he sets up.)*

*(STREET PERFORMERS and ERENZO enter.)*

*(SERENE enters. She walks across the plaza. She looks around at all the street performers. They do magic, juggle, sing and play music.)*

*(Serene exits.)*

*(Sergio turns and plays a song.)*

SERGIO

Come one, come all. Come to these streets of Paris and listen to me strum you a song.

*(Sergio sings a street ballad.)*

*(Erenzo jumps down onto the bench next to Sergio.)*

ERENZO

Ouch, my friend! My sister can come up with a better tune than that.

SERGIO

Shut up, Erenzo.

*(Sings)*

Bonjour, my lady. Do you care for a song? It will not cost you much just an ear to hear me sing.

ERENZO

Terrible just terrible. Stick a knife in me now. Actually, I have one right here.

SERGIO

*(Sings)*

Please, monsieur, madame. Do not let this crazy jester scare you away. He just has a few screws loose in his head.

ERENZO

Hey!

SERGIO

*(Sings)*

I cannot apologize enough. I tried to get him to see a physician but he refuses. So maybe a psychoanalyst is better. I hear they are doing some kind of new testing for people just like him.

*(The small CROWD forms and gives a cheer. They put coins inside the guitar case. Sergio stops playing. He bows.)*

SERGIO

Thank you, thank you. My court jester and I will be here all week.

*(The crowd disperses. Sergio and Erenzo sit on one of the park benches.)*

ERENZO

So, my friend. How many coins have you brought in?

SERGIO

Not enough to get my father's approval.

ERENZO

That bad. One day you have to introduce me to the man. I can put a smile on anyone's face. But first, might I suggest a new act?

SERGIO

I only have my guitar and voice. I have no other talents.

ERENZO

Can you juggle?

SERGIO

No.

ERENZO

Dance?

SERGIO

Not very well.

ERENZO

Pull a rabbit out of a hat?

SERGIO

What?

ERENZO

Maybe you can shine shoes?

SERGIO

Enough, jester, I want to sing!

ERENZO

Okay, okay. You want to sing. Maybe you need to play a different kind of music. How about some jazz? Or some sweet classical music? I hear the mademoiselles love the waltz.

SERGIO

No, no, no. I want to play my music.

ERENZO

But your music is so tedious and boring.

SERGIO

My father says that, as well...

ERENZO

You seem to have a lot of father issues. Come, my friend. Tell your friend, Dr. Scavanwits, all about it.

*(Sergio stares at Erenzo in disbelief. He then looks at the audience. He puts up his hands and shakes his head.)*

SERGIO

What do I have to lose?

ERENZO

Your dignity, pride, I do not know, the list can go on depending on the story.

SERGIO

Thank you, Dr. Depression.

ERENZO

You are welcome. I try very hard. So tell me, when did all of this start?

SERGIO

I guess the day I told my father I wanted to be a musician.

ERENZO

I am guessing your father did not take it very well.

SERGIO

He threw The Bible at me.

ERENZO

Hmmm. Was it the soft or hard leather version?

SERGIO

What does that have to do with my father?

ERENZO

Most abuse cases can lead to scarring and murderous intent. My friend, I adore you but I am not going to be a good witness at your trial. If I get on that stand I will point to you and say, he did it!

SERGIO

I am talking to... an idiot.

ERENZO

Hey, hey. No need for name-calling. So your father threw a book at you.

SERGIO

Yes, that is one way to put it.... I just love to sing. And did you know my grandfather was the one who taught me how to play?

ERENZO

Oh bien, there is more to the story.

SERGIO

Even after he died I still loved playing my guitar. I would sit on the doorstep to our house and, Sainte Maria, could I bring in a crowd.

ERENZO

I notice you do that a lot.

SERGIO

What?

ERENZO

That "Sainte Maria" thing. You always say it as if it were, "Oh my God, hold the carrots!"

SERGIO

That is one way of putting it. I guess it is a trait my father passed down to me.

ERENZO

Mon Dieu, all I got is this big thing between my// legs.

SERGIO

Thank you, but I do not need to hear all that! But listen, my father thinks being a street performer is ludicrous.

ERENZO

So do my parents and every performer from here to Rue Clair. What is your point?

SERGIO

I just want to sing. To play my guitar for all to hear.

ERENZO

And we are back to the beginning.

SERGIO

And now I have to go to this stupid banquet my father is hosting.

ERENZO

Wait, banquet? Food? Need an escort?

SERGIO

My father would not be happy if I brought you along.

ERENZO

Not be happy with me. How can anyone not adore me? I am charming. Great with kids. And I am fabulous// at parties.

SERGIO

My father is Jean de Louis.

ERENZO

You're the son of "the banker"! The very one who wants to turn our lovely little plaza into a giant grand magasin? I knew you had father issues, but I never thought you were the son of that tyrant.

SERGIO

Unfortunately.

ERENZO

Okay, now I'm depressed. And you have to go to dinner with this man.

SERGIO

And fifty more who are just as narrow-minded as he is. I am telling you, Erenzo. This party is going to be boring with a capital B.

*(Sergio packs away his guitar.)*

ERENZO

Well, you never know. Things may turn out better than you think.

SERGIO

Not possible, my friend. Not possible.

*(Sergio slams guitar case. Sergio and Erenzo exit.)*

*(Lights down.)*

SCENE 2

*(Setting: Party.)*

*(Rise: SERVANTS set up. They have trays filled with drinks and appetizers.)*

*(JEAN DE LOUIS enters. He is dressed in his finest suit. He looks at each tray to make sure all the dishes are perfect.)*

*(Sergio enters. He struggles with his black tuxedo jacket.)*

SERGIO

I am sorry... I am late.

JEAN DE LOUIS

Even when you live here you are late. I told you to be in this room by six o'clock and it is already eight... So, tell me my son, did you bring in enough money to live on your own?

SERGIO

No, but// I did make enough.

JEAN DE LOUIS

Exactly! You are twenty years old and you are still living with your parents. You should be in University, learning the trades// of a businessman.

SERGIO

Of a businessman, I know.

*(whispers)*

And you will not let me forget it.

JEAN DE LOUIS

That is because I want the best for you, son. I came to France with nothing. Nothing. I worked my way up from clerk to manager to being a man on the board. And did I go around wooing girls with my guitar? No. I worked. And I want you to work just as hard as I did.

SERGIO

Yes, sir.

JEAN DE LOUIS

Good. Now then. Clean yourself up. We have guests to invite in and people to chat with.

*(Jean de Louis crosses to Sergio. He straightens his bowtie.)*

JEAN DE LOUIS

And please, Sainte Maria, try to behave yourself.

*(GUESTS that range from wealthy clients to politicians enter. Jean de Louis greets each one. They dance and chat amongst themselves.)*

*(Sergio greets each Guest. He hides from his father. He tries to get a drink. He is stopped by the MAYOR and his WIFE. Both are dressed in expensive clothing and jewels.)*

MAYOR'S WIFE

Well, if it isn't little Sergio.

SERGIO

Bonsoir, madame. I did not see you there.

MAYOR'S WIFE

Yes, well, we don't really come to these parties unless for a special reason.

SERGIO

And what is the special reason for you to come to my father's party?

MAYOR

Jean wants to talk about that God-awful plaza in front of the De Marke. It's so unbearable to look at.

MAYOR'S WIFE

And all those unrefined peddlers standing around and asking for money. So uncivilized.

SERGIO

I heard they perform entertainment for passersby. They even have a great musician play there, as well.

MAYOR

It's just another cirque act, if you ask me. He probably sounds horrible.

*(Sergio clenches his fists in anger.)*

JEAN DE LOUIS

Monsieur Mayor and Madame. My friends. I hope my son was not boring you.

MAYOR'S WIFE

We were having a lovely chat about that tarnished plaza that you promised to make into a beautiful store.

JEAN DE LOUIS

I am working with the designers now. But you know how government can be. Oh, is that you Duke? I thought you would be at that fundraiser for the Opera House.

*(A servant passes Sergio with glasses of champagne. He reaches for a drink and misses. He goes after the servant and reaches for the last drink. At the same time, a female reaches for it. He looks up to see DINA.)*

*(A spotlight shines on them. Everyone but Sergio and Dina freeze. They quickly pull their hands away. Spotlight off, everyone moves again.)*

SERGIO

Sainte Maria.

DINA

It has been a while, Sergio.

SERGIO

I cannot believe my eyes. Dina. My, you have grown into a beautiful woman. For when I last saw you, you were covered in dirt and climbing trees with me in the countryside when we were children.

DINA

Still the poet, I see. Tell me Monsieur Poet, what brings you here to this long and drawn out snooze fest?

SERGIO

You forget who my father is.

DINA

I know who he is, silly man. I am asking, what are you doing here? Your clothes look as if you are trying to impress but your stature says I really wish I was somewhere else.

SERGIO

Good deduction. I am guessing you are an inspector or something. Though not many women take this as a job.

DINA

Nope. Shall I allow you another guess?

SERGIO

Do you work in a bridal shop perhaps? It is kind of funny since you would hate your Sunday best.

DINA

Those dresses were much too frilly and the corsets were much too tight. I prefer this gown to that horrid thing.

SERGIO

And it makes you look perfect.

DINA

You make me blush, monsieur.

SERGIO

Will you allow me one more guess?

DINA

I might as well tell you. If I do not, we will be here all day if I don't.

SERGIO

Says the one who is leading me by a rope.

*(Dina throws out her forearm. She makes a melodramatic stance.)*

DINA

Oh, how cruel your words are to me.

SERGIO

Fine, I understand. It is quite annoying when I speak that way. But it is kind of hard to stop when your head is filled with Euterpe's voice.

DINA

The muse of song and poetry. So I guess you are keeping up with your grandfather's practice in music?

SERGIO

Yes, I hope one day to play in front of the world! Or just in front of a large crowd will do.

DINA

It must be tough. Especially, if I recall, your father did not take to you playing music.

SERGIO

He hates it more now than he did before. For now I play in the plaza street with other performers. My father badgers on and on about how horrid it is for his only son to be a musician than a businessman. I wish that one day I could just prove him wrong.

DINA

At least you are living your dream.

SERGIO

I cannot argue with that. But what about you Di, have you become a bride?

DINA

No ring or man. Some do not find it amusing when a fine lady such as myself works in retail at Le Bon Marché.

SERGIO

I thought I heard the tone of a sales worker. Tell me, does my jacket look too big for my small arms?

DINA

The jacket is lovely. I just cannot say the same for the man under it.

*(They laugh.)*

SERGIO

Oh, how I miss this. Someone to talk to who is not questioning my life choices.

DINA

And a man who does not run from a working girl is something for me to rejoice about.

SERGIO

How dare they run in fear of you!

DINA

It is not fear Serge, it is the fact that I wish to keep on working until I reach the top.

SERGIO

My father would have loved you for a daughter.

DINA

You mean if I were a son. It is the same for my father for he thinks I should be wed just as my sisters have. But no, I wish to be a manager.

SERGIO

I would very much care to see that, Manager Dina. "Mademoiselle, can you point me to the manager, for I have a complaint!"

DINA

What seems to be the problem, monsieur?

SERGIO

I cannot seem to find any cuff links for my suit.

DINA

That is because you are in the woman's department.

SERGIO

Strange, I must have taken a wrong turn at the perfume station. You must get a handle on those girls of yours. They almost rendered me blind.

DINA

I am so sorry. But at least you smell pretty.

*(They laugh and banter. The party ends. Everyone but Dina and Sergio exit.)*

*(Lights down.)*

SCENE 3

*(Setting: Plaza.)*

*(Rise: Sergio has his guitar. Dina has an apron on. They cross.)*

*(The performers and Erenzo set up. They juggle, perform magic, sell balloons, and sing. The crowd enters and mingle.)*

*(Serene and GABRIEL enter and watch the performers. They cross and exit.)*

*(Sergio pulls Dina in for a kiss. They pull apart.)*

DINA

I have to go.

SERGIO

But I do not want you to leave. Can you not go, just for one day?

DINA

My naughty little écolier. I cannot miss work if I want that promotion.

SERGIO

They should give it to you. You are the best sales person there.

DINA

Not true. Many of the girls I work with are far more superior.

SERGIO

That is because they go after the rich customers. You on the other hand make sure all customers are treated as if they are royalty.

DINA

Well, in the eyes of a seller, everyone is treated with respect.

SERGIO

When you speak those words, I want to buy what you are selling.

DINA

Let us just hope the customers today feel that as well. If I can get enough people buying, this will turn the owner's head in my direction.

SERGIO

Just make sure he does not turn his head too much. He would probably become an owl if he did that.

DINA

Stop with your farce and save it for the crowd. You need to get to work just as much as I// or your father will have your head.

SERGIO

Or my father will have my head. I understand. Why can he not be supportive like you, Di?

DINA

The same goes for my family, as well. Do you ever wonder what would happen if we lived differently?

SERGIO

Not for a moment, because then I would not be with you.

DINA

Oh, poet. You make my heart soar.

*(Sergio and Dina kiss again. She exits.)*

*(Sergio sets up. He waves to the other performers.)*

*(Erenzo climbs on bench next to Sergio.)*

ERENZO

Someone has reached cloud nine.

SERGIO

It feels as if I am more on cloud ten. Oh, my favorite court jester, I am in bliss.

ERENZO

Paris has done it again. The City of Love. But I must warn you my friend, what comes up...

*(Erenzo juggles one ball. It falls into his hand.)*

ERENZO

Must come down.

SERGIO

I hate to tell you this, but I think you are wrong. My life has become better with Dina. She is my shining gold star that gleams in the night.

ERENZO

Oh, here it comes. The minstrel shall perform his love song for us. Oh, how my ears weep.

*(Sergio plays a love song. A crowd forms.)*

*(A TIGHTROPE WALKER enters and sets up a giant rope. He ascends the rope. A large crowd surrounds him. They give a gasp and cheer.)*

*(Sergio is drowned out. He plays his music louder. He stops. He looks at the Tightrope Walker.)*

ERENZO

I am sorry, my friend. It just isn't our day.

SERGIO

How can it not be our day, when it has just gotten started?

ERENZO

That is life. As I said, the higher you rise, the harder you fall.

SERGIO

But isn't that supposed to be a cliché?

ERENZO

And where do you think expressions come from? People have always risen to many heights. But in the end, happiness is similar to this ball.

*(Erenzo raises one of his juggling balls in front of Sergio. He makes it disappear.)*

ERENZO

It can disappear on you in a matter of seconds. But...

*(Erenzo's ball reappears from behind Sergio's ear.)*

ERENZO

It might not be where you think.

SERGIO

I still want to try. Even if there is just a small crowd around me, I want to try.

ERENZO

I wish you good luck, my friend. But even I know when to quit for the day and try again tomorrow.

*(Sergio plays until the crowd gets too big. He is forced to move to the side. He stops.)*

*(The sound of the crowd becomes louder.)*

*(Spotlight on Sergio. Sergio watches the crowd applaud in glee at the Tightrope Walker. He packs up his guitar in sadness.)*

*(Crowd and Street Performers exit.)*

*(Lights down.)*

SCENE 4

*(Setting: Alleyway under balcony.)*

*(Rise: Spotlight on Sergio. There is a platform that represents the balcony. It takes up half the stage.)*

*(Sergio kicks his feet. He stumbles down the alleyway. His head hangs low and shoulders are slumped forward. He stops and raises his fist into the sky. He falters. He continues to cross with his head down.)*

SERGIO

Here I am walking down this dirty alleyway. My hopes and dreams are once again shattered by my father's words.

*(Spotlight on Jean de Louis as he enters.)*

JEAN DE LOUIS

I told you, son. A musician does not bring home the bacon. My father was just the same. He, too, was a street performer. And did he make any coins? No. You need to get a grip and fulfill your true potential. Mark my words, son, stop this now or you will end up penniless.

*(Jean de Louis exits.)*

SERGIO

And now a Tightrope Walker that was just down the street has come to destroy my hopes and dreams.

*(Sergio raises his hands above his head.)*

SERGIO

I sing and play my old guitar as I try to remember why I am doing this. To perform in front of a crowd. To sing my heart out as my voice sounds close to sweet honey to all that hear. But here I am again, wallowing in my misery of hate and disgust. Dina was right, I am a poet. I better stop or else I will just keep going as if I am Greek. Or worse, a thespian.

*(Spotlight on Serene as she enters.)*

*(Sergio's head perks up when he hears the soft sound of classical music. He looks up and sees Serene on the platform through the balcony window. She dances, alone.)*

*(Serene stumbles and crashes to the floor. She rises, dances, and falls three times. She is tired and conflicted.)*

SERGIO

Poor little dancer. She reminds me of myself. Unable to find the smallest happiness in this dark cruel world.

*(Serene looks up in determination. She rises to her feet. She performs the routine flawlessly. Serene smiles and jumps around.)*

*(Sergio's hand covers his mouth. He stares at her.)*

*(Serene exits.)*

SERGIO

Sainte Maria! What have my eyes gazed upon?

*(Sergio looks down at his guitar. He looks at the window.)*

SERGIO

I won't give up. I will keep moving forward.

*(Sergio runs across the stage. He exits.)*

*(Lights down.)*

SCENE 5

*(Setting: Plaza.)*

*(Rise: Street performer's act out each of their talents. They juggle, sing, and perform magic. The crowd watches.)*

*(Serene and Gabriel dance and smile. They pull into a kiss. They pull apart and exit.)*

*(Sergio and Dina enter and are happy. She gives him a kiss.)*

DINA

Are you going to tell me why you are so happy?

SERGIO

Let us just say I am inspired by a muse.

DINA

You and your Greek muse. If I am not careful you may run off with her.

SERGIO

Trust me, chérie, you are the only girl for me.

*(They kiss again.)*

DINA

Sainte Maria. I think I am seeing stars.

SERGIO

You have seen nothing yet. Tonight, I am going to take you to the best restaurant in town.

DINA

I would rather go to a nice cafe. Fancy food is just too rich for me after a long day in the perfume department.

SERGIO

Okay. Cafe de Monte it is.

*(They kiss once more. Dina exits.)*

*(Sergio plays with more enthusiasm in his corner and sings his heart out. Crowd stops. They listen to him. They put a few coins in guitar case. He bows to them. He exits.)*

*(The scenery changes from day to night.)*

*(Sergio and Dina enter. They sit on bench. They look up at the sky. He brings out a single red rose and gives it to her.)*

SERGIO

This is for you.

DINA

It must have cost a fortune.

SERGIO

I got it for cheap. Let's just say, the angel of love is looking out for us.

*(Dina accepts flower. They kiss. They exit.)*

*(The scenery changes to morning.)*

*(Sergio and Dina enter. They cross the stage and kiss. They pull apart before Dina exits.)*

*(Sergio goes to his corner and sings. The crowd around him grows bigger. Tightrope Walker has no one near him.)*

ERENZO

This is amazing, Sergio. You sound better than ever.

SERGIO

I just cannot help it. I just want to sing my heart out.

ERENZO

Then sing, minstrel. Sing until your voice gives out, for these people want a show!

SERGIO

Then I will give them everything I have!

*(Sergio sings an enthusiastic street ballad.)*

*(Jean de Louis enters and watches. He hides, unseen, in the crowd.)*

*(Serene enters behind a scrim. A light is on her as she dances to Sergio's song.)*

*(Song ends and Serene exits.)*

*(The crowd throws money into Sergio's guitar case. The crowd loudly applauds. Sergio bows. A bell from the church is heard. Crowd disperses.)*

*(All, except Sergio, Erenzo and Jean de Louis, exit.)*

*(Sergio looks inside guitar case. He pulls out a coin purse and puts the money inside it.)*

*(Jean de Louis angrily approaches. He slams his cane into the stage into mockery.)*

JEAN DE LOUIS

Bravo, bravo.

SERGIO

Father. I did not see you. Did you enjoy the show?

ERENZO

You must be Sergio's father.

*(Erenzo holds out his hand.)*

JEAN DE LOUIS

Leave.

ERENZO

Good luck, my friend.

*(Erenzo exits.)*

*(Jean de Louis strides to Sergio. He scans him up and down.)*

JEAN DE LOUIS

It was... amusing to say the least.

SERGIO

What was so "amusing" about it?

*(Jean de Louis stops. He raises his cane.)*

JEAN DE LOUIS

That my son was performing as if he were a dancing monkey.

SERGIO

I sang my heart out, Father!

JOHN DE LOUIS

And you made nothing for it!

SERGIO

I made enough// money.

JEAN DE LOUIS

Enough for what? To live on your own? To support your would-be-wife who is slaving away in a grand magasin?

SERGIO

She is happy. I am happy. Why can't that be enough for you?

JEAN DE LOUIS

Because that is not how the world works. You have to be the man. You have to think about your soon to be family. Not... this.

SERGIO

And why can I not be happy and have a family with this career that I have chosen?

JEAN DE LOUIS

Because the world does not revolve around a man supporting his family with lamentable tunes. You need to give up these silly fantasies. I did when I met your mother. I left everything behind. My hopes and dreams to take care of my family. If you do not stop this foolishness...

*(Jean de Louis tightens his hand on his cane. He raises it in anger. He stops and SIGHS.)*

JEAN DE LOUIS

Then you better not come home anymore. I can no longer support a "boy" like you anymore.

*(Jean de Louis exits.)*

*(Sergio holds his head. His body shakes as he paces.)*

SERGIO

My father has finally done it. He has finally gotten rid of me. Disowned me. Forcing me to live on my own. With the little money I have I'll be living on the streets. And what about Dina? Dina... What am I going to tell her?

*(Dina enters. She spots Sergio and runs to him.)*

DINA

Sergio. I have been looking everywhere for you.

SERGIO

Not now, Dina.

DINA

But I really need to talk to you.

SERGIO

I just need to think for a moment.

DINA

But this will only take a second.

SERGIO

If I could just// think for a moment.

DINA

I got the job!

SERGIO

You got the// job?

DINA

Yes. The position. I got it.

SERGIO

I cannot believe this.

DINA

Neither can I! When Monsieur Savard asked me to come to his office I was worried. He had just fired Mademoiselle Modisette and I thought I was next. But, no. He offered me a position as a female manager.

SERGIO

That is wonderful news.

*(He twirls her in the air before he hugs her.)*

DINA

There is just one problem, though.

*(Sergio pulls away from Dina.)*

SERGIO

Problem? This is wonderful news! What could possibly be the problem when you have got the job?

DINA

I did get the job... But I did not specify where I will be working.

SERGIO

Dina... what are you telling me?

DINA

The job is in Marseille.

SERGIO

That is// far away.

DINA

That is 7 hours away by train, I know. But my boss says that the large population there will be a great opportunity for the company to open a new store there. And since I have the experience, he says I should be the one to go. And I heard they have a wonderful plaza for you to play your music. Just like here.

*(Sergio falters. He covers his mouth with his hand.)*

*(Dina touches Sergio's shoulder.)*

DINA

Sergio.... Will you come with me?

*(Sergio still has his hand over his mouth.)*

DINA

Why will you not answer me? Isn't this what we both wanted? To live our life the way we wanted to. Sergio, answer me.

SERGIO

I am sorry, Dina. I just need to... I just need to think.

DINA

Why? Sergio// please.

SERGIO

Please, Dina. This is happening to me all at once!

DINA

Serge.

SERGIO

I just need to think.

DINA

Okay. I'll be at the station if you change your mind.

*(Dina crosses and stops.)*

DINA

Just promise me that you will not give up on your music. I cannot live with myself if I force you to be something you are not.

*(Dina exits.)*

*(Lights down.)*

SCENE 6

*(Setting: Alleyway)*

*(Rise: Sergio trudges down the alleyway. He stops and raises his hands like a scale.)*

SERGIO

Do I do it? Do I say yes? What does a man do in this situation? If I stay, I will be forced to become a businessman and would still live with my parents. And be under my father's thumb for all eternity.

*(Sergio shakes his head.)*

SERGIO

No. Or... I can live on the streets and keep playing my music for coin. No. Or... I can go with Dina and live in this new city and..

*(Sergio rubs his hands on his head in frustration. He looks up at the window. He turns his head slightly to peer inside.)*

SERGIO

Can you answer my question, my angel?

*(Spotlight on Serene. She sits on the platform. She cries.)*

SERGIO

What... what is this?

*(Sergio stumbles backward.)*

SERGIO

My angel is in tears. But why? Why would heaven above do that to my muse? She has always done her best to help me with my problems. Given me answers to questions that I have asked day by day. Sainte Maria, I am so sorry. Sorry that I have put too much pressure on you. You cannot feed my thoughts or quench my inspiration. My father was right about one thing. I need to stop being a boy and become a man. Choices are never easy but someone needs to make them.

*(Sergio takes out his guitar and he strums.)*

SERGIO

So this will be my song to you, Maria.

*(Lights dim.)*

*(Curtain falls.)*

SCENE 7

*(Setting: Curtain.)*

*(Rise: Erenzo enters. He tries to calm the angry audience with his own private show.)*

*(A second spotlight shines as ANNA enters. She dances and upstages Erenzo.)*

*(The spotlight on Erenzo dims. He exits.)*

*(Curtain rises.)*

*(Setting: Dance Studio)*

*(Rise: INSTRUCTOR, three BALLERINAS and Serene watch Anna dance.)*

INSTRUCTOR

Enough! I cannot stand to watch this. You dance as if you were a duck and less resembling a swan.

ANNA

I thought we were// dancing to Giselle?

INSTRUCTOR

Do not interrupt! Village girl number three. That is your role, now get back in line. Serene! Show these adolescents what a true professional dancer is.

*(Serene dances Giselle's part.)*

INSTRUCTOR

Good... Nice... Excellent form... You see that girls? That is what separates the village girls from the maiden. Elegance. Beauty. And a heart of a genuine dancer. Brava, my ballerina.

*(All the Ballerinas watch and whisper.)*

BALLERINA #1

Look how she dances.

BALLERINA #2

Such grace. It is no surprise she is prima ballerina.

BALLERINA #3

And that beauty of hers. She makes all the male dancers swoon to be her partner.

BALLERINA #1

Wish I could dance with her poise.

BALLERINA #2

Not on your life with those meaty drumsticks.

BALLERINA #1

Hey! I have tried to// lose weight.

INSTRUCTOR

Silence!

*(The music and Serene stop. Everyone looks at Instructor.)*

INSTRUCTOR

I did not raise you, ballerinas, to act as if you were filles d'école. This is the professional class. We are the elite. The ones everyone wants to be. And if you cannot keep up, then leave. Is that understood?

EVERYONE

Yes, Maître!se!

INSTRUCTOR

Good. Serene. I am giving you the role of Giselle. Do not let me down.

SERENE

Yes, Maître!se.

INSTRUCTOR

Class dismissed.

*(Everyone packs up.)*

ANNA

You were wonderful, Serene.

SERENE

I stumbled a little bit.

ANNA

What are you talking about? You performed your dance perfectly. I wish I could dance that beautifully.

SERENE

It is not hard, Anna. I just practice.

ANNA

Of course, you do. That must be why you could perform that grand jeté// very well.

*(AUTHOR SERVAVO enters. He looks around.)*

AUTHOR SERVAVO

Serene, there you are. I have been looking everywhere for you.

SERENE

I was in class, Monsieur Servavo.

*(Anna waves goodbye to Serene. She and the other Ballerinas exit.)*

AUTHOR SERVAVO

I told you many, many times to call me Author. But I am glad that you are taking your classes seriously. Is that not right, Maitresse?

INSTRUCTOR

Oh, of course. Serene is the best ballerina I have ever taught. Ever since she came here when she was eight, she has grown from an ugly duckling who tripped over her feet to a beautiful and elegant swan.

AUTHOR SERVAVO

Yes, she has blossomed and has become a prodigious ballerina.

SERENE

Is there something you need from me Monsieur... Author?

AUTHOR SERVAVO

Yes! I wanted to make sure you have an exceptional gown for tonight.

SERENE

Tonight?

AUTHOR SERVAVO

The ball. For the grand fund-raiser we are hosting to bring money in for the école.

SERENE

Oh, oui. I have been so busy with practice that I almost forgot.

AUTHOR SERVAVO

If you are in need of a dress I have a wonderful dressmaker who will make you the most lavish gown.

SERENE

I was actually going to wear one of my old dresses from last year's ball.

AUTHOR SERVAVO

Last year! Are you certain, mademoiselle? I can get Madame Bonnaire to make you a fine// dress.

SERENE

No, no, Author. I am sure. I have only worn that dress once and I don't want it to go to waste.

AUTHOR SERVAVO

If you are sure. Because I can get you a dress at a moment's// notice.

SERENE

Yes, I am sure. I will see you tonight, Author.

AUTHOR SERVAVO

Oui, mademoiselle, but tonight will be a night you will never forget.

SERENE

Is the Queen of England attending the ball?

AUTHOR SERVAVO

No, no. Nothing as grand as that. But something just as good. You will love it. I am sure.

SERENE

You know, I do not favor any surprises, Author.

AUTHOR SERVAVO

Trust me, my princess. You will be dancing over the moon after tonight.

*(They exit.)*

*(Lights down.)*

SCENE 8

*(Setting: Serene's Apartment above Alleyway.)*

*(Rise: Serene walks onto the platform and classical music plays.)*

SERENE

One, two, three, and...

*(Serene dances, stumbles, and falls three times.)*

SERENE

Come on Serene, they are all counting on you. Remember, dancing is a part of you. It's what makes you, you. No matter what people say. You are a dancer.

*(She dances perfectly.)*

SERENE

Oui, I did it.

*(Sergio enters and plays.)*

SERENE

Oh, how I love it when that guitar sings into my window. It sounds so pretty and magical. It just makes me want to...

*(Serene dances. She stops in front of window.)*

SERENE

Sometimes I wish that this would never end. That I could feel this way all the time. Too bad a prima ballerina can only dream of freedom when all she is, is slavery to her craft.

*(She tilts her head upwards.)*

SERENE

Please, my muse of dance. Let tonight be the night that will change my life. My destiny.

*(They exit.)*

*(Lights down.)*

SCENE 9

*(Setting: Party.)*

*(Rise: Servants cross the stage with trays full of appetizers and drinks. Author Servavo makes sure everything is perfect.)*

AUTHOR SERVAVO

There are so many things that need to be done. No, those glasses go over there. The food must not come out until ten minutes after the first guest has arrived or the food will be room temperature.

*(Everyone but Serene enters.)*

AUTHOR SERVAVO

Welcome, welcome one and all. I hope today's evening does not disappoint you.

*(Serene enters.)*

AUTHOR SERVAVO

Serene, you are here. Good. I have some guests here who want to meet you. Serene this is the Duchess of Remone.

DUCHESS

My word, Author, is this the ballerina you were talking about?

*(Serene curtsies. She opens her mouth to speak.)*

AUTHOR SERVAVO

Yes, Duchess, this is Serene, the ballerina// princess.

DUCHESS

Tut, tut. I do not need an introduction from you. My darling, I hear you are quite the dancer.

AUTHOR SERVAVO

Yes, she is. The best dancer in all of Paris.

DUCHESS

Then she would not mind showing off her dance moves tonight.

*(Serene raises her hand.)*

AUTHOR SERVAVO

Of course, she does not mind. And I have the perfect partner for her to dance with.

DUCHESS

Lovely, just lovely.

DUKE

Why don't we go over here and let them talk.

SERENE

I do not think that is wise.

DUKE

Nonsense. Those two are so enveloped by their conversation that they will not notice us walking away.

SERENE

If you are sure.

DUKE

Tell me, my girl. Where do you come from?

SERENE

My family lives in a small town, far from here.

DUKE

Is that true? Author told me that you came from a prestigious family.

SERENE

My arrière grand-mère was very wealthy, but my real family owns a tavern. We have an abundance of local customers so we get by. I used to work as a server before I won the contest.

DUKE

It must have been a blessing to become something so grand when you won.

SERENE

The truth is, as long as I can dance, I will always be happy. Even if it's not on stage. I will always be a dancer.

DUKE

But you must love to dance in front of people.

SERENE

But of course. Even in front... of thousands.

DUKE

I can see it in your eyes that you do not believe that.

SERENE

Unfortunately, Terpsichore's gift can also be a curse.

DUKE

Ah, the muse of dance. She can be a fickle little minx.

*(Everyone whispers.)*

GUEST #1

Is that her?

GUEST #2

The little star.

GUEST #3

Quite a beauty.

GUEST #4

Wish I had that gorgeous body.

*(Serene becomes flustered and looks for an escape.)*

SERENE

I am sorry, Duke, but I see my friends calling for me. Excusez-moi.

*(Serene is halted by Author Servavo and RAPHAEL.)*

AUTHOR SERVAVO

Serene, there you are.

SERENE

Monsieur Servavo.

AUTHOR SERVAVO

See, did I not tell you?

RAPHAEL

Yes, you// did.

AUTHOR SERVAVO

I know, right? Why don't you show Serene to the dance floor. Spice things up a bit. Dance. Ball. Waltz. I will get the musicians to play a romantic tune.

*(Author Servavo walks towards the MUSICIANS.)*

SERENE

I am so sorry about this. Author can be rather// impulsive.

RAPHAEL

No, no. It is fine. I am just glad to finally meet the ballerina princess.

SERENE

I do not think people call me that.

RAPHAEL

I love that about you. Modesty. It is hard to come by in our profession.

SERENE

I am just being myself. Just as my Papa has always taught me to be.

RAPHAEL

Are your parents not here?

SERENE

No. They are far away. I came to Paris all by myself when I was eight.

RAPHAEL

That is quite young.

SERENE

Yes, I won a contest to dance in the Paris Opera House for ballet. And have been dancing here ever since.

RAPHAEL

Mon Dieu. I guess we are a match. When my mother found out about my talents, I began my lessons when I was four.

SERENE

So young.

RAPHAEL

Indeed, but so worth it. I have never looked back at a commoner's life again.

SERENE

But maybe a commoner's life is better.

*(Musicians play ballroom music.)*

RAPHAEL

Shall we, mademoiselle?

*(Serene and Raphael dance as the center of attention.)*

BALLERINA #1

Look at her, is she not so fine?

BALLERINA #2

She is dancing with him.

ANNA

She is so lucky.

BALLERINA #3

Raphael the Remarkable. I guess some girls just have it all when they are the golden goose.

GUEST #1

My, don't they look glorious?

GUEST #2

Splendid, indeed.

GUEST # 3

Elegant and refined.

GUEST #4

Wish I was her.

EVERYONE

Wish I were Serene the Ballet Princess.

*(Serene pushes Raphael away from her.)*

SERENE

I am sorry. I need some air.

*(Serene exits first before everyone exits.)*

*(Lights down.)*

SCENE 10

*(Setting: Behind Building.)*

*(Rise: Serene is out of breath. She tries to calm down. She breathes in and out. She tilts her head upward with a smile.)*

SERENE

What a beautiful night.

*(Serene closes her eyes and spreads out her hands.)*

*(Gabriel enters. He tries to light a cigarette. He notices Serene.)*

GABRIEL

Bonsoir.

SERENE

Bonsoir.

GABRIEL

What are you doing out here, Mademoiselle?

SERENE

Trying to get some air.

GABRIEL

Is it that stuffy in there? I thought it was just the people.

*(Serene laughs.)*

GABRIEL

Bien, I got you to laugh. That is good. Girls usually run from me. As I recall, there was this one girl who...

*(Gabriel stops and looks closer at Serene.)*

GABRIEL

A girl, I once knew... a long time ago.

SERENE

Gabriel?

GABRIEL

I do not believe it. Sere. How long has it been?

SERENE

Ten years, I recollect.

GABRIEL

Mon Deiu. Time sure does fly. You look good.

SERENE

And you look... well.

GABRIEL

What do you mean, well? I think I look very dashing.

SERENE

You remind me of my Papa.

GABRIEL

Well, he did teach me.

SERENE

To wash dishes?

GABRIEL

What makes you think that?

SERENE

There is soap in your hair.

*(Gabriel tries to get the suds out of his hair.)*

GABRIEL

Well, that is embarrassing.

SERENE

I thought it was cute. All those white puffy clouds in your hair.

GABRIEL

You really know how to charm a lad.

SERENE

Not as good as you, with your silver tongue.

*(They laugh.)*

GABRIEL

So... have you achieved your dream of being a dancer?

SERENE

Have you not heard? I am the talk of the town.

*(Serene sits on the floor. She does not care that her dress will get dirty.)*

SERENE

Serene, the Honorable Ballerina. Princess of the Ballet.

GABRIEL

Fancy. Nice to meet you, Your Highness. I am Gabriel, the Chef.

*(Gabriel sits down next to Serene.)*

SERENE

The chef cleans dishes?

GABRIEL

I am only working here part time. I needed the extra coin and, unfortunately, their line cooks were already filled up. The best of the best for those snooty, high society know-it-alls.

SERENE

I would rather eat some beef bourguignon and some French onion soup. Oh, my Papa's soufflés were the best.

GABRIEL

I am guessing you don't get to eat those types of food often?

SERENE

Not if I want to perform a perfect grand jeté without landing on my derrière.

GABRIEL

Sounds as if you have been deprived. I could never pass up on a good chocolate soufflé.

SERENE

Now my stomach is rumbling for food.

*(Serene and Gabriel laugh. They get closer to each other. They kiss.)*

*(Lights down.)*

SCENE 11

*(Setting: Plaza.)*

*(Rise: It is nighttime. Musicians, ACROBATS, JUGGLERS, and MAGICIANS are performing in front of a crowd.)*

*(Serene pulls Gabriel's arm as they enter. They look at all the performers.)*

SERENE

Look at that.

GABRIEL

Sacré bleu! I can do that.

SERENE

No, I don't believe you can.

*(Sergio and Dina enter far from Serene and Gabriel. Both couples do not notice each other.)*

GABRIEL

Want to get some food? I know a really lovely cafe close by.

SERENE

Sure.

*(Serene and Gabriel exit stage.)*

*(Everyone exits.)*

*(Lights down.)*

SCENE 12

*(Setting: Dance Studio.)*

*(Rise: The Instructor, Anna, and Ballerinas enter stage. They begin to warm up as the Instructor looks out the window.)*

*(Serene and Gabriel enter.)*

SERENE

That was wonderful.

GABRIEL

Fantastic, you mean.

SERENE

Will you be here after class?

GABRIEL

I shall wait for you as I do every day.

SERENE

I, too, will be waiting.

*(Serene and Gabriel kiss.)*

GABRIEL

Wish me luck. I have that interview today.

SERENE

I hope you get the position.

GABRIEL

Me, too. For today things can only go upwards.

SERENE

Do not jinx it, you fool.

GABRIEL

Sorry princess, but this jester wants to make a fool of himself in front of you once more.

*(Serene and Gabriel kiss one last time.)*

*(Gabriel exits.)*

ANNA

You are lucky. Two men at once.

SERENE

What are you talking about?

ANNA

Gabriel and Raphael.

SERENE

There is nothing going on between Raphael and me.

ANNA

But Author said you two were a// couple?

INSTRUCTOR

All right, girls. Let us begin from scene one. Giselle, time to// shine.

*(Author Servavo enters.)*

AUTHOR SERVAVO

Sorry to interrupt, Madame, but I must speak with Serene.

INSTRUCTOR

I've told you once, I've told you a thousand times. Not while we are practicing!

AUTHOR SERVAVO

This cannot wait.

SERENE

Is something wrong?

AUTHOR SERVAVO

I do not know. I was reading the paper this morning when a little birdie told me you were seen with that dishwasher again.

SERENE

His name is Gabriel.

AUTHOR SERVAVO

He may have the name of an angel but he surely isn't one. Raphael on the other hand is a fine// prince.

SERENE

Raphael doesn't understand me. He sees me as a princess but Gabriel... He sees me as...

AUTHOR SERVAVO

As what?

SERENE

Me. Me! A regular girl not some glorified performer. I am a person with thoughts and feelings.

AUTHOR SERVAVO

I know all of that but I want what is best// for you.

SERENE

Do you? I feel as if I am more like a dancing monkey than a ballerina. A dancer!

AUTHOR SERVAVO

Serene. You signed up for this... Are you telling me you are going to give it all up? For this, boy?

SERENE

If I have to.

AUTHOR SERVAVO

You'll give up your dream? Your dream to dance? Is that what you are telling me? You want to live like a// housemaid?

SERENE

No! I love to dance!

AUTHOR SERVAVO

Then prove it. Prove it to the world. Because if you stick with that boy, you will lose everything that makes you, you.

*(Author Servavo exits.)*

*(Serene holds herself and tries not to cry.)*

*(Lights down.)*

SCENE 13

*(Setting: Plaza.)*

*(Rise: Serene holds herself and looks at the ground. She crosses.)*

*(Gabriel enters.)*

GABRIEL

Serene! I have been looking everywhere for you.

*(Serene looks up at Gabriel.)*

GABRIEL

You were not there after class.

SERENE

I was... trying to clear my head.

GABRIEL

Is... something wrong?

SERENE

Author spoke with me today.

GABRIEL

Oh. What did he say?

SERENE

That we shouldn't be together.

GABRIEL

Of course, he did.

SERENE

He says I should be with Raphael. That we would be good together.

GABRIEL

That pompous ass.

SERENE

We are superior dancers, he and I. The perfect duo.

GABRIEL

I am guessing for those pirouettes?

SERENE

This is not funny!

*(He hugs her.)*

GABRIEL

I know and I am sorry.

*(He raises her head.)*

GABRIEL

I have some good news. I won the position.

SERENE

Vraiment? Are you sure?

GABRIEL

Oui. It is a dream come true. But...

*(He rubs her tears away.)*

SERENE

But?

GABRIEL

It is in a restaurant.... outside of the city.

SERENE

How far outside of town?

GABRIEL

Five towns over to be precise.

SERENE

Gabriel, I do not know. I have people relying// on me.

*(Gabriel puts his finger over Serene's lips.)*

GABRIEL

Serene. Don't overthink it. Just come with me and we can make both our dreams come true.

SERENE

Gabriel. The Ballet. I can't quit. I made a commitment. I have a// show.

GABRIEL

Do you really want this, Sere?

SERENE

In the beginning, yes, but now it is// different.

GABRIEL

A world filled with people pressuring you into being something you are not? You are a magnificent dancer, Serene, but not when you are out there performing as if you were a dancing monkey.

*(Serene is startled by Gabriel's last sentence.)*

SERENE

That is... I have to... I'm not sure if I can// leave.

GABRIEL

Then be sure, Serene. There are many ways to be a dancer. You do not need to be on stage for everyone to see you. Do not be afraid because you think you have only one road to follow. I am not afraid of where this road takes me. I will await for your response.

*(Gabriel exits.)*

*(Lights down.)*

SCENE 14

*(Setting: Apartment above Alleyway.)*

*(Rise: Serene walks on platform and cries before she falls to her knees.)*

SERENE

What do I do? Do I stay or leave? I don't want to give up on my dream. I want to be a dancer. But I do not want Gabriel to leave me. Is it true, like Author said? I can only have one and not the other?

SERENE

Please, someone, hear my voice. I beg of you. Give me a sign.

*(Sergio enters. He looks up into window and plays.)*

SERGIO

*Maria, my angel, my goddess, my muse...  
Why do you cry up there on your windowsill...  
Your tears hurt me as if they were fire that  
burns my soul when I look upon you...  
Maria, do not cry now, please get up, for you  
inspire me to sing again...  
Maria do not cry, just fly...  
Fly high in the sky above your fears...  
Please, my angel, do not fret...  
Nothing can hurt you for you were created to  
dance along this moonlit night...  
Oh Maria, just fly...  
Fly high, as no one shall harm your delicate  
wings, just step to this song...  
One, two, and three...*

*(Serene gets up and dances to the song.)*

SERGIO

*My Maria, look how you fly...  
So high in the sky...  
Dance, Maria...  
There is no need for tears for you bring joy to  
this weary musician...  
An inspiration to all...  
An inspiration to me...  
So please, my angel, my goddess, my muse...  
Dance Maria...  
Dance so you can fly...*

*(Serene and Sergio come to an end. Serene looks  
down at Sergio. He looks up at her. They both  
stare at each other.)*

*(They raise their heads and let out a GASP. They  
exit.)*

*(Lights down.)*

SCENE 15

*(Setting: Train Station.)*

*(Rise: A train whistle blows. Crowd crosses. There is a tall TICKET BOOTH in the middle.)*

*(Serene enters stage right.)*

*(Sergio enters stage left.)*

*(He goes up to the Ticket Booth on its left side. She goes up to the Ticket Booth on its right side.)*

SERGIO

One ticket to Marseille.

SERENE

One ticket to Arles.

*(Serene crosses behind Ticket Booth and exits left. At the same time, Sergio crosses in front of Ticket Booth and he exits right.)*

*(Lights down.)*

SCENE 16

*(Setting: Train Car.)*

*(Rise: Sergio sits on bench across from Dina.)*

DINA

I am so glad you came.

SERGIO

Me, too. Did you ever doubt me?

DINA

If I did... would you think differently of me?

SERGIO

Not as much as I would in myself.

DINA

You really are a poet.

SERGIO

Maybe I should use that in my resume.

DINA

Or... You can just teach?

SERGIO

Teach? Are they hiring in this new city we are going to?

DINA

Actually...

*(Dina pulls out a piece of paper.)*

SERGIO

What is this?

DINA

It is the flat we are going to live in. It has a lovely little shop underneath.

*(Dina hands paper to Sergio.)*

DINA

It is a little rundown but I think we can make it work. I know it's not like being on stage and singing in front of a crowd but you can still play// your music.

SERGIO

My music. Dina. Do you have wings?

DINA

Why do you ask?

SERGIO

Because you are my angel.

*(Dina laughs as cart with food, drinks, and newspapers comes by. She pays the SERVER and takes a newspaper. She opens it and reads.)*

*(Sergio looks at the front of the newspaper. He points at the article.)*

SERGIO

What is this?

*(Dina looks at article.)*

DINA

Oh, isn't it sad? The star prima ballerina has fled Paris with a commoner.

*(Sergio falls back into the seat. He gives a giant laugh.)*

SERGIO

No, my angel. She has run off to be free.

*(Curtain falls.)*

SCENE 17

*(Setting: Curtain.)*

*(Rise: MARIA plays with the curtain as she crosses.)*

MARIA

*Maria, my angel, my goddess, my muse...  
Why do you cry up there on your windowsill...  
Your tears hurt me as if they were fire that  
burns my soul when I look upon you...*

SERENE (O.S.)

Maria!

MARIA

I am here, Maman!

*(Serene enters.)*

SERENE

How many times have I told you not to run off like that?

MARIA

This many!

*(Maria holds up her hands)*

SERENE

You are your father's daughter.

MARIA

Nuh uh. Papa says I am just like you.

SERENE

True. You do have my grace.

*(Serene performs an Arabesque. Maria copies.)*

SERENE

Come, my little ballerina. Class will be starting soon and our students are waiting.

MARIA

Will I one day be a great ballerina like you, Maman?

SERENE

One day, my little angel. Just remember// do not let anyone stop you from being you.

MARIA

Do not let anyone stop you from being you.

SERENE

That is right.

*(Serene takes Maria's hand.)*

SERENE

Now, let's hurry. Your father promised chocolate soufflés after class.

MARIA

Yay!

*(Maria lets go of Serene's hand and exits.)*

*(Serene looks at audience.)*

SERENE

I don't know where you are or how many times I've said this to the heavens, but merci. Thank you... my minstrel.

*(Lights down.)*

*Le Fin.*