

EXTRA CALLBACK #2

Johnny, Cioffi, Belling, Georgia, Carmen, Bambi, Oscar, Niki

BOBBY

(taking over)

MAYBE IT'S TIME ... MAYBE IT'S HIGH TIME!
YOU WERE THINKING OF YOU ...

GEORGIA

THINKING OF ME ...

GEORGIA & BOBBY

TOO.

(THE COMPANY applauds.)

BELLING

Well done, Georgia.

BOBBY

(admiringly)

Gee. I finally hear how that song was meant to go.

START

AARON

Listen, Chris, if you say something's been wrong with that tune since our first rehearsal, you'll have to tell me what.

BELLING

It's that we ever allowed Jessica Cranshaw to sing it.

(to Company)

Now look here, everyone: I think it's a crying shame our leading lady collapsed at tonight's performance. She might have done it weeks ago and saved us a month of misery. But the cavity that Jessica has created must be appropriately filled –

NIKI

May I speak? As Jessica's understudy, I'd feel terrible taking over under these circumstances –

BELLING

No need to feel terrible, Niki.

NIKI

But –

BELLING

No need because you're still going to be the understudy. To Georgia.

(COMMOTION, and overlapping:)

AARON

Georgia?

OSCAR

I thought she just did words.

BOBBY

Best idea you've ever had!

BAMBI

She hasn't danced in years!

RANDY

Anything's better than Jessica.

GEORGIA

I ... I don't know, Chris.

BELLING

You know the score and script better than anyone else, you sing the songs from your heart because that's where the words came from. I realize it's been quite some time since you traded in your tap shoes for a rhyming dictionary but –

BAMBI

Excuse me, but speaking for those of us in the chorus, I really think *Niki* should get the role. She's talented, and dedicated –

BELLING

And since you're *Niki*'s understudy, if she gets the lead, you get *her* part.

BAMBI

– well yes, that too.

BELLING

Nice try, *Bambi*. But either *Georgia* is in or I'm out. What do you say, *Oscar*?

OSCAR

Chris, I'll put my money where your mouth is.

BELLING

Launder it first. *Aaron*, I assume this move more than meets with *your* approval?

AARON

I, uhm ... no, to be honest, it doesn't.

GEORGIA

Thanks for the vote of confidence.

AARON

I have my reasons.

GEORGIA

You always have.

AARON

Besides, this entire debate is pointless if *Jessica* shows up tomorrow.

BOBBY

Heaven help us, her performance was worse than ever this evening.

(CARMEN BERNSTEIN has returned.)

CARMEN

Jessica Cranshaw will *never* be better than she was this evening.

BOBBY

But she was horrible.

CARMEN

I know. But she'll never be better. She's dead.

(GASPS from the COMPANY.)

That was the hospital on the phone. In terms of future performances, Jessica Cranshaw now has a conflict.

GEORGIA

What ... what happened?

CARMEN

They wouldn't tell me.

GEORGIA

Chris, do you want to say something to the company about Jessica?

BELLING

Well, shall we observe a minute of silence, to match the audience's response to Jessica's first number?

AARON

Chris!

BELLING

Well alright, let's all form a semi-circle, boy-girl-boy-girl

(THEY shuffle around)

tallest on the inside –

(THEY re-shuffle around again)

No Bambi, you're blocking the entire right side of the house!

(he clears his throat)

People: Jessica was part of our Company and now we part company ... but I'm sure we'll remember her in our thoughts and in our resumes. And as thespians, I know you all would like to display your sorrow, as both a tribute and as an acting exercise. Sasha: F Sharp Minor.

#5 The Woman's Dead

COMPANY

OOOOOOOOOOO! OOOOOOOOOOO! OOOOOOOOOOO!

GEORGIA

THE WOMAN'S DEAD, THE WOMAN'S DEAD

AARON

GO TELL HER FANS TO CHANGE THEIR PLANS, THE WOMAN'S DEAD

NIKI
WOULD SOMEONE CARE TO SAY A PRAYER?

BOBBY
WHO MIGHT THAT BE?

BELLING
DON'T LOOK AT ME!

GEORGIA, AARON, NIKI, BOBBY
THE WOMAN'S DEAD.

COMPANY
OOOOOOOOOOO! OOOOOOOOOOO! OOOOOOOOOOO!
THE WOMAN'S DEAD.
SHE'S DEAD AND DONE

JOHNNY
SHE'S FLOWN THE COOP
AND NOW OUR TROUPE IS MINUS ONE ...

NIKI
SHE SANG EACH WORD.
THE ANGELS HEARD.
THEY CLOSED HER MOUTH
AND SHIPPED HER SOUTH.

NIKI & JOHNNY
THE WOMAN'S DONE.

COMPANY
OOOOOOOOOOO! OOOOOOOOOOO! OOOOOOOOOOO!

WOMEN
THE WOMAN'S DEAD,
THE WOMAN'S DEAD,

MEN
THE WOMAN'S DEAD
THE WOMAN'S DEAD

SHE WAS A WITCH

BAMBI

AND UNDER-PITCH

BELLING

AND NOW SHE'S DEAD

BAMBI

OUR STAR IS DEAD!

MEN

BOBBY
SHE HAD NO VOICE

OSCAR
SHE READ NO BOOKS

CARMEN
SHE HAD NO BRAINS, SHE JUST HAD LOOKS

BOBBY, OSCAR, CARMEN
AND NOW SHE'S DEAD

WOMEN
THE WOMAN'S DEAD,

MEN
THE WOMAN'S DEAD

WOMEN
THE WOMAN'S DEAD

MEN
THE WOMAN'S DEAD

WOMEN
THE WOMAN'S DEAD.

JOHNNY
SHE'S TAKING TEN 'TIL GOD KNOWS WHEN,
THE WOMAN'S DEAD

WOMEN
THAT'S RIGHT, SHE'S DEAD!

MEN
THE SKIES ARE BLUE

NIKI
HER LIPS ARE TOO

COMPANY
CAN'T BLOW HER NOSE, CAN'T SHAKE HER HEAD,
SEE FOR YOURSELF IT'S LIKE I SAID
THE WOMAN'S DEFINITELY
POSITIVELY –

*(CAST hears the US door opening and turns to see
LIEUTENANT CIOFFI ENTER.)*

START **CIOFFI** Excuse me, I'm Lieutenant Frank Cioffi of the Greater Boston Police. I'm assigned to the Homicide Division and oh – it's an honor to be standing on the same stage with each and every one of you.

COMPANY
DEAD!
DEAD!
DEAD!

CIOFFI

Sorry if I've interrupted a rehearsal but let me assure you that I don't want my own work to delay your production from reaching the home on Broadway it genuinely deserves. I happened to see *Robbin' Hood* in previews and may I say that, with the exception of the deceased Miss Cranshaw, you're all just such wonderful performers.

(PLEASED COMPANY MUMBLINGS)

And what a great score.

AARON

Well I appreciate that, Lieutenant.

GEORGIA

On behalf of *my* half of that compliment, thanks as well.

CIOFFI

You're more than welcome. I've, well, I've done a little community theater myself –

(Polite "How nice" and "Oh's" from COMPANY)

– oh, no, nothing that fancy, although my Billy Bigelow at the Brookline Barnhouse got a favorable review ... and in "A Midsummer Night's Dream," my Bottom was very well-received.

BELLING

Wait one moment. You say you're from *Homicide*?

CIOFFI

Ah, well, yes. Based on a preliminary autopsy, it's clear that Jessica Cranshaw was murdered.

(SHOCK from the COMPANY.)

BELLING

And, and what are they doing with her killer? I mean, does he get some sort of trophy, or a Pontiac convertible...?

GEORGIA

Chris.

BELLING

Sorry, pure reflex.

GEORGIA

What ... what killed her?

CIOFFI

Hydrocyanic acid, commonly used in electroplating, as well as the gas chamber at San Quentin. It was in capsule form, which is why no one realized she'd been poisoned until the capsules dissolved in her stomach, starting a chemical reaction that created her own personal gas chamber, internally ...

GEORGIA

Horrible.

CIOFFI

Working backwards from when the capsules dissolved, we know she swallowed them in the very final minutes of this evening's performance.

AARON

Couldn't she have poisoned herself?

CIOFFI

Trauma at the back of her throat suggests she didn't take the capsules voluntarily. Now may I ask who's in charge here, other than myself?

BELLING

Permit me, Lieutenant. I'm the critically-acclaimed director Christopher Belling and I'll be blocking your investigation.

CIOFFI

I hope that's not the case. But if you need to wrap things up with your cast, please go right ahead.

BELLING

Company! I know you'll give Georgia your support as she steps into the late Miss Cranshaw's shoes –

CARMEN

That's brilliant!

BELLING

As one would expect from me. All those ready to press forward with *Robbin' Hood* and Georgia, give me a show of hands.

END

(CARMEN, NIKI, OSCAR, BOBBY, and BAMBI raise their hands.)

CARMEN

That's it? Listen, people, life is full of setbacks and disappointments. But with Georgia taking over the lead, we've got ourselves a real shot. This show is going on! Are you with me, gang?

(A beat.)

RANDY

You know if we leave now, we can make the last train back to New York.

COMPANY

So much to pack. / I don't owe anyone nothing. / That's that. / Anyone want to share a ride? / etc.

CARMEN

Stop –!

#6 Show People