CAN I DANCE OR WHAT?

FADE IN:

INT. HOTEL CONVENTION ROOM - PRESENT DAY

The large, carpeted convention room is crowded with young people wearing numbered tags. Some are seated on folding chairs, but most are on the carpet practicing dance moves.

Young people work on their best cutting edge hiphop/contemporary dance moves: back flips, twist flips, etc.

Inexplicably, one well-dressed young couple practices a ballroom waltz.

Even more inexplicably, two young blonde girls work on their pop diva vocal runs, complete with finger tracking motions.

A sharply-dressed Italian man (SULLY RUSSO), mid-thirties or so, quietly moves about the room. He wears shades. He grimly gives the young dancers the once-over.

CONVENTION ROOM PODIUM - MOMENTS LATER

A young man steps to the podium, speaking into the microphone:

AUDITION OFFICIAL Can I have everyone's attention please?

The room quiets down. All eyes turn to the front of the room.

AUDITION OFFICIAL

Welcome to opening day auditions for, CAN I DANCE OR WHAT?

There is wild applause.

AUDITION OFFICIAL

Before you go in to face "the firing squad", so to speak, there's someone I'd like to introduce.

Sully Russo, standing behind AUDITION OFFICIAL, removes his sun glasses. There are audible gasps throughout the room.

AUDITION OFFICIAL He's here to impart some words of wisdom to you. He needs no introduction. Let's give it up for... Sully Russo!

Sully Russo steps to the podium. His expression is one of dead seriousness.

SULLY

The name of the show says it all. "I Can Dance--That's What I'm Sayin'". And that's what each of you gotta believe. Otherwise, you got no chance.

There are nods of agreement throughout the room.

Sully steps out from behind the podium. He roams.

SULLY You got the moves? Great. You can smoke? So what. It ain't about that, Boo!

SHOT: LOOK OF SHOCK ON HIP HOP DANCERS' FACES

SULLY

Dancin' is about heart. (points to his heart) Dancin' is about the mind. (points to his head) Dancin' is about feelin' the love. The love of dance!

There is applause.

SULLY

You ain't got the heart, you ain't got the wisdom, you ain't got the love-- baby, you ain't got a prayer! Not in the world of dance.

A few dancers pack up their duffle bags, quietly slink out.

'Cause when I broke into dance back in the day-- it wasn't about the paycheck. It was about the love. Most of all, it was about dignity. I look around this room, I see the moves. I see the cut abs.. but I ain't seein' the dignity. I ain't seein' the heart.

Sully paces the room, looks over the nervous dancers.

SULLY

This is your chance. You got what it takes? You got the love for dance? You got mad <u>respect</u> for dance? Hey, let me tell you my story.

Sully halts. He fixes a hard look on his audience.

SULLY 'Cause for me-- right from the start-- it was about heart. Respect.

FADE TO:

EXT. CITY STREET - DAY - 1998

Twenty year-old Sully Russo struts down the bustling city street. He bops to the beat of the Beatles' BAD BOY, or some such number. His hair is perfectly coiffed. His pants are tight. On his face, a cocky sneer.

Every so often, Sully stops to do an impromptu shimmy, shuffle or shake. He is oblivious to the stares. He is completely into the music, himself.

Finally Sully ducks down a side alley and enters the back kitchen area of a fast food joint.

INT. BACK KITCHEN AREA

The back door swings open. In struts Sully. A nerd-ish teen, decked out in apron and dweeby hat, greets Sully.

NERDISH TEEN

Hey, Sully! Workin' hard or hardly workin'?

SULLY Hey, I'll show you hardly workin'!

With that, Sully pulls the hapless boy's paper hat down over his eyes. Now, Sully snatches up a bottle of ketchup and a bottle of mustard. He squirts the contents all over the poor kid.

Sully isn't done. He grabs a bag of flour, rips it open, and dumps the entire bag over the nerd-ish teen. His work done, Sully bops on his way.

INT. COUNTER - FAST FOOD JOINT

Sully is now decked out in HIS dweeb-ish paper hat. He approaches the counter. An impatient-looking man awaits.

CUSTOMER How long I gotta stand here?

SULLY Who are you, my mother?

CUSTOMER Your moth..?! Listen pal, I'm SIR to you!

SULLY Yeah? You're sorta what?

CUSTOMER You got a problem?

SULLY

You got a hairpiece?

CUSTOMER

Don't get wise!

SULLY

(dumb smirk on his face) Hey, what'sa matter? You don't like my smile?

CUSTOMER

I want your name!

SULLY

So what?! I give you a fake one!

The Customer leans forward, reads Sully's name tag.

CUSTOMER

"Sully Russo." Got it!

SULLY

All right, already! So order somethin'!

CUSTOMER How much is the burrito wrap?

SULLY I got your burrito wrap right here!

CUSTOMER

Come again?!

SULLY

Aw, talk to my hair!

CUSTOMER

It's "talk to the hand", jerk face! Now step out from behind that counter, punk. Me and you are gonna have a serious talk!

SULLY

I got your counter right here!

CUSTOMER

Aw, that's it. That's IT!

SULLY

Talk to my nose! No, wait.. How did that go?

The MANAGER approaches the counter.

MANAGER Is there a problem here?

CUSTOMER

Yeah, there's a problem! This punk is givin' me nothin' but lip!

SULLY Hey, now he's lyin'! I ain't put my lips on nobody!

The Manager rips off Sully's hat.

MANAGER That's it. You're gone. Goodbye. I'll mail you your check.

SULLY All right already! What time I come in tomorrow?

MANAGER Read my lips! You're fired!

SULLY That don't count! Your words come out!

The Manager chases Sully out the back door.

MANAGER Don't you come back either!

SULLY Aw, you couldn't PAY me to work here!

MANAGER You're a loser! I knew you were a loser the first time I laid eyes on you!

SULLY

Talk to my hair!

The Manager shoves Sully out the back door.

MANAGER One word of advice: GROW UP, JERK!

Sully stumbles into the alley. He kicks a trash can in frustration.

At that moment, BRENDA, Sully's girl, comes running up.

BRENDA Sully! I'm glad I caught you!

She catches up with Sully.

BRENDA

Here's your watch. You left it at my place last night.

SULLY Aw, keep it. I don't need it here no more.

BRENDA Sully, what happened?!

SULLY

I scare them! I'm a threat to them! I got big dreams! I got big ideas!

BRENDA You got fired, didn't you?!

SULLY

You know why I'm a threat to them?! 'Cause I got ambition!

BRENDA You got fired, didn't you!

SULLY Yeah, maybe. So what?

Brenda lets out an angry scream.

BRENDA

I KNEW it!

SULLY Hey, it could happen to anybody.

BRENDA Sully, it was your first DAY!

So you're mad at me or what?

Brenda groans loudly, turns her back.

SULLY

Me and you, we'll go out tonight. You'll feel better.

BRENDA

Maybe I don't wanna go out with you tonight, Sully.

SULLY

Hey, what do you want me to do?!

BRENDA

I want you to stop blaming everyone else for your failures! You call THEM losers?! For once, take a look in the mirror!

SULLY

(feels around his head) You're lookin' at my hair. It's all messed up, ain't it?

BRENDA

How does someone get fired in one hour?!

SULLY

Aw, I don't care no more.

BRENDA

Why am I not surprised? You don't care about being responsible. You don't care about your future. You don't care about yourself. You don't care about me...

SULLY

Hey, that ain't...! Uh...

BRENDA

What, Sully?!

SULLY

I forgot. You got me mixed up with all them different I-don't-cares.

BRENDA

Never mind, Sully. It's over.

SULLY Aw, c'mon Brenda! You mean the whole world to me, maybe!

BRENDA

Sully, do you have any clue right now as to how I feel?

SULLY

Ok, ok- don't tell me nothin'. Uh, you feel like men are from Mars or somethin'.

Brenda turns to walk away.

BRENDA

Later, Sully.

SULLY (waves dismissing hand at her) Awwwwww!

INT. RUSSO HOUSE - DAY

Shot of the Russo family living room. Seated in his usual recliner chair is Sully's father, PAPA RUSSO. He is a rough, gruff Italian man in his fifties or so. An exlongshoreman.

Behind Papa Russo are stairs leading to the second floor of the house.

Sully bursts in through the front door, making a bee-line for the stairs.

PAPA

Hey! How did work go?

Sully stops mid-way up the stairs. He turns to Papa Russo.

SULLY

How did work go? You wanna know how did it go? <u>Great!</u> That's how work went for me. Work was GREAT for me! PAPA

(studying Sully)

You're lyin'.

SULLY

Oh, I'm lyin'?!

Sully reaches into his pocket and pulls out his wallet. He pulls a bill out of his wallet.

SULLY You see this? I got five dollars here says I got a raise today!

PAPA

A raise.

SULLY

Yeah! A raise!

For a moment, Papa says nothing. Then, he pulls out his own wallet, pulls out a bill. He holds it up for Sully to see.

PAPA

I got fifty here says you got canned.

SULLY

Awww, keep your money! I got too much self-respect to take it!

Sully bounds up the stairs to his room. Papa hollers up after him.

PAPA

There, you see?! I was right! You got canned! And you know why? 'Cause you got too much attitude! Always too much attitude! What is it with this attitude?!

Sully slams his bedroom door shut. Enter JANET, Sully's eleven year-old sister.

JANET What's the matter, Daddy?

PAPA Your brother's got attitude again.

JANET

Oh WELL!

PAPA

But he's gonna make it someday. You watch. And you know why? 'Cause he's tough. He's got attitude. He's a good boy, your brother.

INT. SULLY'S BEDROOM

Sully paces his room restlessly. Finally, he pops a CD into his boom-box. A rocking number booms forth from the speakers. Sully comes to life.

He does an animated, electrifying dance performance to the music, letting out all his pent-up aggressions through accented gyrations.

As Sully dances, Janet pushes open the door to Sully's room. She watches. When the number finally ends, Sully shuts off the CD player. He now hears Janet clapping. He whirls around.

SULLY

Hey, don't you knock?!

JANET You're an awesome dancer!

SULLY

Yeah, yeah. What are you doin' here?!

JANET

Daddy says come down for supper.

INT. RUSSO DINING ROOM

Sully, Papa Russo and Janet are seated at the dinner table.

PAPA

(to Sully) So you gonna look for a job tomorrow?

<u>Still</u> you don't believe I got a raise! OK, I make you happy. I'm gonna quit the job I got now, and go get me a BETTER one tomorrow! Just to make you happy!

PAPA

What kind of job you gonna get?

SULLY

I'll get me a nice office job.

PAPA

Yeah? And when they ask what are you qualified to do, what are you gonna say? You gonna dance for'em?

SULLY

If I have to.

JANET

Sully's got all the moves!

PAPA There ain't no future in dancin'!

SULLY

I'm gonna make big bucks as a dancer someday!

PAPA

You know what dancer makes big bucks? Michael Jackson. That's the only one! And how many o'them Broadway dancers got dental benefits? You tell me that!

SULLY

I'll bet TOO they got dental benefits!

PAPA You tell me who pays their dental benefits!

JANET They probably got a Broadway Dancers Union.

PAPA No way them guys got a union!

Yeah? Why?

PAPA

When's the last time you seen one o'them dancers on a picket line?!

SULLY

You think all dancers are pansies!

PAPA Not all dancers. The swing. The jitterbug. THAT was dancin'!

JANET

Swing is big now!

SULLY

(to Papa) Aw, what do you know about modern dance?!

> PAPA know about modern danc

What do I know about modern dance? What do YOU know about real life?!

SULLY

I know plenty.

Papa stands to his feet.

PAPA

Oh, you know about real life. Let's see. Stand up.

SULLY

Hey, what are you gonna do?!

PAPA

Just stand up!

Sully stands to his feet, warily eyeing his father.

SULLY

Just watch the hair!

Papa motions to Sully's chair.

PAPA

Sit back down.

SULLY

What, are you nuts?! You just told me to stand up!

PAPA

Sit down, I said!

SULLY

All right, already!

Sully starts to sit down. But at the last second, Papa Russo pulls the chair out from under Sully. Sully crashes to the floor.

SULLY

Hey, what's the idea?!

PAPA

Lesson: you think anybody's gonna hand you somethin'? That's when they pull the chair out from under ya!

Janet laughs.

SULLY Hey, you know I could've brained myself!

PAPA

Aw, sit down and eat your supper.

Sully picks himself up off the floor. Again, he starts to sit down. Papa yanks the chair out from under Sully again. Sully crashes to the floor.

> PAPA Lesson Two: you think they're done screwin' ya? Wrong! They're just getting' started!

SULLY (pulling himself up off the floor) Hey, C'MON! PAPA That's enough. Sit down already.

(picking himself up off the floor) Aw, I'm on to you now! Know what I'm gonna do? I'm goin' over to this chair over here..

Sully moves around the table to a chair near Janet.

SULLY

..and I'm gonna sit down in this chair right here.

Sully crouches to sit. Papa gives a nod to Janet. Janet yanks the chair out from under Sully. Sully crashes to the floor.

PAPA

Lesson three! You get past the first two guys, there's <u>another</u> guy standin' in line to screw ya!

SULLY

(picking himself up off the floor)
Aw, I'm getting' TIRED of this!

Sully dashes across the room to the sofa chair. Before he can sit down, Papa dashes over and pulls the chair out from under Sully. Sully crashes to the floor.

Sully leaps to his feet, races to another chair-- this time Janet does the honors.

This pattern occurs about half a dozen times more as Sully dashes from chair to chair in his attempts to sit down. Papa and Janet thwart him at every turn. Finally:

> SULLY (picking himself up off floor) Aw, that's it! I'm outta here!

PAPA

You ain't finished your casserole!

SULLY Forget it! I got indigestion eatin' here!

Sully storms out the door.

PAPA

(to Janet)

There, you see? You didn't cook the meat long enough. Now he's got indigestion!

JANET

Your lessons are real good, Papa. You make'em real easy to remember.

PAPA Yeah. It'll do him some good. He's a fast learner, your brother.

EXT. DOWNTOWN - NIGHT

Sully paces the sidewalk outside a diner. Brenda appears.

BRENDA Ok, Sully, I'm here. What's so important?

SULLY

Hey, I knew you'd come. You're awesome! Look, I'm goin' crazy nutso here! I need inspiration! I gotta get back! Know what I'm sayin'?

BRENDA I take it you wanna hit Planet Gemini.

SULLY

Yeah, yeah! Planet Gemini! Let's go. Me and you! C'mon, I want you with me!

BRENDA

(heavy sigh) All right, Sully.

INT. PLANET GEMINI

Sully and Brenda enter the club. The music is bass-heavy 90's rap. They find a table above the dance floor.

SULLY AND BRENDA'S P.O.V. - DANCE FLOOR

The dance floor is packed with inner-city kids in baggy clothes. The dancing is mostly 90's minimal-movement: heads bob, a few arms and elbows raised, lazy shuffling.

SHOT: MIDDLE-AGED DANCING MAN

In the midst of the young dancers is a pepper-haired man with a neatly-trimmed beard. Unlike the young people around him, he throws himself into the music.

His movements are grandiose. He leaps, does ballet-like twirls; he makes grand sweeping motions with his arms; his hands swirl about in expressive motions.

BACK TO SCENE

SULLY

Yeah! There he is!

SULLY AND BRENDA P.O.V.

The bearded middle-aged man continues to dance.

BACK TO SCENE

SULLY

Man, that guy is my inspiration! He's the one who turned me on to interpretive dance! Just watchin' him do his thing, aw, it's magic time!

BRENDA

Yeah. He's pretty good.

SULLY

Pretty good?! He's awesome! I've been watchin' him do his thing for years! Man, disco, New-Wave, hip-hop, he's been through it all!

BRENDA

So go over and say hello.

SULLY

Aw, I couldn't. I wouldn't know what to say! He's the reason I wanna BE a dancer!

EXT. CITY SIDEWALK - NIGHT

Sully and Brenda walk together.

Hey, I feel better now. I'm charged!

BRENDA

That's nice, Sully. But you know what? Not once tonight did you ask me how my poetry reading went yesterday.

SULLY

Oh yeah. How'd that go?

BRENDA

Fine. Just fine, Sully. You know, I kinda thought you'd come and see me.

SULLY

Oh, I'm sorry babe. I'll make it up to you! Swear!

Sully kisses her. Brenda gets choked up.

BRENDA

Listen, Sully, I'm gonna try and support you all I can in your dream to be a dancer. But I got dreams too! And it would be nice if you could show just a little support sometimes!

SULLY

Ok, ok-- I got the message. I'm gonna support you from now on. I'm gonna be your Rock Of Jim Brawler! I'm gonna be the wind beneath your weeks!

BRENDA

Thank you, Sully.

SULLY

Hey, you got a tie I could borrow? I gotta go look for a job in the morning.

INT. SULLY'S BEDROOM - MORNING

Sully jerks awake as the alarm clock goes off.

QUICK SHOT: SULLY IN SHOWER

QUICK SHOT: SULLY SHAVING

QUICK SHOT: SULLY COMBING HIS HAIR JUST RIGHT

SHOT: SULLY DECKED OUT IN SUIT AND TIE, CHECKING HIMSELF IN THE MIRROR

SULLY

Man, you are lookin' sharp!

EXT. DOWNTOWN - DAY

Sully struts down the crowded city sidewalk, beaming with confidence.

INT. MANAGER'S OFFICE - DAY

The OFFICE MANAGER looks over the resume in his hand. He sets it down.

OFFICE MANAGER

So. Mr. Russo. What do you have to offer our company?

SULLY

What are you talkin' about?! I ain't got no money!

EXT. CITY STREET - A LITTLE LATER

Sully walks to another interview, still looks confident.

INT. COMPANY OFFICE - DAY

A WOMAN MANAGER interviews Sully.

WOMAN MANAGER

I do things a little differently, Mr. Russo. Instead of me asking YOU questions, I'm going to let you ask ME the questions.

SULLY Hey, what for?! I don't wanna know nothin'! EXT. CITY STREET - A LITTLE LATER

A miffed-looking Sully heads to his next interview.

INT. COMPANY OFFICE

Another INTERVIWER interviews Sully.

INTERVIEWER How do you handle pressure, Mr. Russo?

SULLY

What, are you kiddin'?! I go crazy nuts!

EXT. CITY STREETS - A LITTLE LATER

Sully is pounding the pavement again.

A series of shots follow, all showing Sully getting rejected at job interviews.

INT. CAFÉ - LATE AFTERNOON

Sully and Brenda sit together at a table.

SULLY

Nothin' went right. Nobody would give me no chance!

BRENDA

Well, Sully, what do you expect? You got no education. You got no experience.

SULLY

Aw, it's who you know!

BRENDA

You could have taken those vocational classes, but you didn't want to.

SULLY Those guys treat me like a loser.

BRENDA

So everybody treats you like a loser, is that it?

SULLY

Yeah! And so do you!

BRENDA

What are you sayin' to me?!

SULLY

It's true! Not once do you invite me over to your place for dinner! You don't even show me to your folks!

BRENDA

Well.. you know.. it gets kinda busy and everything...

SULLY

Yeah, yeah--save it!

BRENDA

All right, Sully, you're invited to my house for supper. You happy?

SULLY

Hey, now you're talkin'! You wait! I'll show your parents their daughter is goin' out with a classy guy!

BRENDA

Wonderful.

INT. LIVING ROOM - BRENDA'S HOUSE - NIGHT

BRENDA'S FATHER is seated in his chair, reading the newspaper. Back in the dining room, BRENDA'S MOTHER, apron tied around her waist, scurries back and forth getting dinner ready.

Near Brenda's Father is a rocking chair, behind which is the fireplace. Atop the fireplace mantle is a set of fine China plates. The doorbell rings. Brenda emerges from the dining room, looking nervous.

BRENDA

Oh, he's here. (to her father) He's really a nice guy, Daddy. Honest. He's just a little rough around the edges.

BRENDA'S FATHER

If he's your guy, he's ok with me. Go on, answer the door.

Brenda opens the door. Sully stands in the doorway, hands behind his back.

SULLY Hey, sweet cakes! You like flowers?

BRENDA

I love flowers!

Sully hands Brenda a bunch of coupons.

SULLY

Check these out! Fifty percent off at Al's Flower Shop. All day Tuesday!

Sully struts inside, leaving Brenda holding a handful of coupons.

BRENDA

Daddy, this is Sully.

Brenda's Father extends his hand.

BRENDA'S FATHER Welcome to our home, Sully.

They shake hands.

SULLY

See that? That wasn't no limp fish handshake There! You give them kind of handshakes, you ain't got no class. Maturity is why I know that kind of stuff. I got maturity! BRENDA'S FATHER I'm sure you do. Please, have a seat. (motions to an empty chair)

SULLY (braces himself) Hey, don't try nothin'!

BRENDA'S FATHER

Excuse me?

Sully quickly leaps into the rocking chair.

SULLY Too late! Hey, I knew what you was gonna do!

BRENDA

SULLY...!!

Brenda's Mother enters.

BRENDA'S MOTHER You must be Sully Russo.

SULLY Oh, YOU can't be Brenda's mother! You gotta be her daughter!

Sully smiles, clearly pleased at his own charm. There is an embarrassed silence from everyone else.

BRENDA'S MOTHER

Well.. How sweet. Um, it'll be about another forty minutes before we eat. The roast is still...

SULLY

Hey, what's with this forty minutes? You say be here at six, I'm here at six. You ain't got the food ready--what's up with that? Forty minutes-- you cookin' it over a cigarette lighter or what?

Somewhat dazed, Brenda's Mother returns to the kitchen. Brenda steps forward.

BRENDA

Say, Sully, maybe I can get you a plate of something while you're waiting.

SULLY

Hey, now you're talkin'!

Brenda calmly walks over to the fireplace and picks up one of the China plates. She walks up behind Sully and in one quick motion, breaks the plate over Sully's head. Pieces of China fly everywhere.

SULLY

OWWW!! HEY, watch the HAIR!! (turning to Brenda's Father) Hey, you know you got a psycho for a daughter!

Brenda's Father chuckles, shakes his head.

BRENDA'S FATHER So, Sully, how is the job hunt going?

SULLY Aw, they don't offer me enough money.

BRENDA'S FATHER

Really.

SULLY

Yeah. "Don't call us, we'll call you." Yeah, right. You watch. They call, I ain't gonna answer! Bunch o'losers!

BRENDA'S FATHER

You know, it's interesting that you're so into dance.

SULLY

Oh yeah?

BRENDA' FATHER

Well, nowdays, it seems everybody is into Swing.

SULLY Hey, don't even go there!

BRENDA'S FATHER Oh? You don't like Swing?

SULLY

I'm gonna bust a rhyme for ya: "Swing's in play, but I don't play." Hey wait, that don't sound right. I gotta make it longer maybe..

TOMMY, Brenda's nine year-old brother, enters the living room. He wears a baseball cap. In his hand, he carries a small Little League trophy.

> TOMMY Hey, Sully, look at my trophy!

SULLY

What's this you're bringin' me here? (examines the trophy) Trophy, huh? Some trophy. Look at what that says on there. Read me what it says.

TOMMY

(reading)

"Third Place."

SULLY

Yeah, Third Place. And how many teams you got in your league?

TOMMY

Four.

SULLY

Third place outta four teams-- that's lousy. That stinks! What's with this trophy you're bringin' me here? Say, what's your batting average? I bet you don't even hit .200!

Tommy lowers his head.

BRENDA'S FATHER

Say, Tommy, why don't you show Sully your school science project?

Tommy nods. He exits the room, sniffling.

SULLY

(laughing stupidly) Don't even hit .200! What'd he do? Strike out on the T-ball?

BRENDA'S FATHER So what are your long term goals, Sully?

SULLY

I wanna be an interpretive dancer on Broadway. If that don't work out, I wanna teach dance to little kids. I think I can encourage'em real good.

Tommy reappears, this time holding his science project. It's one of those circular-coiled metal contraptions with a crank that produces electricity. It resembles a miniature heater.

SULLY What's this, your other trophy?

TOMMY Put your hand on the knob. Watch what happens!

Sully places his hand on the metal knob.

SULLY What, you gonna send me Back to the Future, or somethin'?

Tommy cranks the handle, at once sending surges of electric volts through Sully's fingers and body. Sully howls.

SULLY

(recovering) Oh, I'm gonna kill you kid! That's it! Me and you! Outside! After dinner! Aw, you're dead!

Tommy and Brenda's Father laugh heartily.

Brenda's Mother enters.

BRENDA'S MOTHER

Well, the roast isn't ready, but I think we can probably sit down and start on the first course.

SULLY See, now I like that kinda thinkin'. That's a creative mind, there!

Everyone makes their way to the dining room. They take their seats around the table. Sully sits next to Brenda.

Once everyone is seated, Brenda's Father says a brief grace. This done, dishes are passed around the table.

BRENDA'S FATHER How long have you been dancing, Sully?

SULLY

Me, I've always been dancin'. But my interpretive dance, just two years.

BRENDA'S MOTHER

That's a very expressive kind of dance, isn't it?

SULLY

(between mouthful of food)
Hey, what is this, Twenty Questions?!
I'm EATIN' here!

BRENDA

(seething) Sully, would you like some lasagna?

SULLY Oh, yeah! Pass it over here!

BRENDA

Hold out your hands.

Stupidly, Sully holds out both hands. Brenda places the searing hot pan of lasagna on Sully's outstretched hands. Sully howls in pain. Everyone laughs good-naturedly.

Hey, you know if you guys don't watch it, I ain't even gonna EAT your food!

TOMMY

(giggling) Can you pass the potatoes, Sully?

SULLY

Hey, I saw you laughin', punk! You ain't
getting' NOTHIN'!

BRENDA

(to her Mother)
The food is really delicious tonight, Ma.
 (elbowing Sully)
Ma did a good job tonight, DIDN'T she, Sully!

SULLY

OH, yeah, yeah! Sure! You think I got no class?

(to Brenda's Mother) Yeah, this is good stuff here. Good stuff.

BRENDA'S MOTHER

Thank you, Sully.

SULLY

This bread, though, what's with this bread here? There ain't hardly no butter on this bread. You guys on butter rations or what? This is like your cereal without your milk. What's with that? You got all this bread here and hardly no butter— it don't make no sense to me. This is like Unsolved Mysteries or somethin'. You gotta call the F.B.I to find the butter on this bread!

Brenda fixes a look on Sully that says "kill." Brenda's Father calmly rises to his feet.

BRENDA'S FATHER

Sully. Go.

For a moment, Sully looks puzzled. Then, he gets to his feet and does and impromptu dance right on the spot. Brenda grabs Sully's arm, stopping him.

BRENDA

No, Sully. He meant ... GO!

Sully stops dancing. He looks shocked.

SULLY Aw, some hospitality I get in THIS house! Hey, you know what? I'm outta here!

Sully storms out the door. Brenda follows him.

EXT. STREET OUTSIDE BRENDA'S HOUSE - NIGHT

BRENDA You IDIOT! You insulted my family! You humiliated me! You.. You..!

SULLY Aw, I really blew it, huh?

BRENDA

YES!! YOU DID!!

SULLY

Your folks-- I don't know, you think they like me, maybe?

BRENDA

It's over, Sully. That's it. You and me, we're hopeless!

SULLY C'mon Brenda, you don't mean that!

BRENDA I do, Sully. This is goodbye!

SULLY

Aw, great, you know? It's like-- you know, like I'm goin' crazy nuts here! I can't take it no more! I gotta bust out! With that, Sully rushes over to his car and turns on the stereo. A rollicking Jerry Lee Lewis number starts blaring out of the speakers.

As Brenda looks on, Sully does an frustrated dance-strut to the music. When it's over, a huffing, puffing Sully approaches Brenda.

BRENDA

You're crude, you're rude, you're offensive, and you're a walking head case. But I like to watch you dance.

SULLY

So you gonna give me another chance?

BRENDA

If only for this, Sully: I think you got what it takes to make it as a dancer. And if you ain't got somebody like me to kick you in the butt every day, you ain't gonna make it!

SULLY

Yeah, yeah, that's right- you gotta KICK my butt! I gotta make it!

BRENDA

Well you ain't gonna make it dancin' in your room or dancin' at the club all the time. You gotta take a chance! You gotta go out and audition!

SULLY

Auditions?! That's for losers!

BRENDA

I give up. Goodnight, Sully!

SULLY

Yo, hold up! All right, all right! Tell me more, tell me more!

Brenda heaves a sigh, reaches into her pocket and pulls out a folded-up piece of paper. She hands it to Sully.

BRENDA

I was debating whether I ought to show this to you.

Sully holds it up to his eyes, reads it.

BRENDA I wondered if you had the maturity and guts to act on it.

SULLY It says here they're lookin' for dancers.

BRENDA Right! They're holding auditions. <u>Open</u> auditions! This Saturday at the Discovery Theatre on Tenth Street!

SULLY

Yeah, so?

BRENDA

So you're gonna get your lazy butt out of bed this Saturday and go down there!

SULLY

Hey, you know somethin', you got an idea there! Hey, this could be my big chance!

BRENDA

Duh! How bad do you want it?

SULLY

Oh, I want it REAL bad! I'm gonna DO it! I'm gonna be a dancer! I am there!

INT. SULLY'S BEDROOM - MORNING

Sully is sound asleep in his bed. The phone next to his bed rings loudly. He bellows, rolls over, picks up.

SULLY

Yeah?!

[BEGIN INTER-CUTS]

BRENDA

Tell me you're not still in bed!

SULLY Hey, what are you wakin' me up so early for?! Are you crazy nuts?! I'm tryin' to sleep here!

BRENDA

Gee, Sully, I was just wondering if you might have forgotten something. Something that rhymes with, "auditions."

SULLY

What, you makin' up a poetry poem?

BRENDA

GET OUT OF BED!!!

The impact of Brenda's voice practically lifts Sully airborne. He leaps out of bed.

INT. DISCOVERY THEATRE - DAY

Dancers are huddled together on the stage of the empty theatre house. DIRECTOR and CO-DIRECTOR enter the stage area. The excited chatter of the dancers subsides.

The Director, an intense bearded man in his early forties or so, strides up and down the stage, giving the gathered dancers a good once-over.

The Director comes to a halt. His manner is haughty, demanding.

DIRECTOR

So you think you know what it takes to be a dancer. I can assure you this is a total delusion on your part.

Worried murmurings.

DIRECTOR

You got perfect rhythm, pinpoint timing. You've mastered the latest and hippest steps. You can do triple somersaults and back flips without breaking a sweat!

(dramatic pause)

Well, children, if you think that's what I'm lookin' for in a dancer, you might as well pick up your stuff and head right out that door, 'cause you're wastin' your time and you're wasting my time!

SHOT: SULLY

Sully leans over to the dancer next to him.

SULLY

DIRECTOR

The name of this production, in case you didn't know, is INTEPRETIVE DANCE! It ain't about spins and somersaults. It ain't about razzle dazzle and double axles. Interpretive Dance is about EXPRESSION! It's about baring your <u>soul</u> through dance!

SHOT: SULLY

SULLY

(to dancer beside him)
Hey, I ain't getting' naked!

DIRECTOR

I want each of you to do something! (dramatic pause) I want you to take a look at the person on your left.. Now look at the person on your right.

The dancers do as ordered.

DIRECTOR

Before the day is out, one of those two people will be gone. Finished. Done. Unable to hack it in the Brave New World of interpretive dance!

SHOT: SULLY

(to dancer next to him) He must be one of them psychics or somethin'!

The Director overhears Sully. He comes over to Sully.

DIRECTOR

You. What's your name?

SULLY

Sully Russo!

DIRECTOR

Well let me tell you something, Sully Russo. You got an attitude. And I don't like attitude. I don't like your face. I don't like your hair. And I most definitely don't like your approach to dance!

SULLY

So what's wrong with my hair?!

DIRECTOR

Know what? I don't think you got what it takes to be a dancer. Know what I think? I think you should quit. Right now. Quit. Go back to sweepin' the street or whatever you were doing before you crawled in here under the illusion that you had anything to offer the world of interpretive dance!

SULLY

No way! You're wrong!

DIRECTOR What makes you say that, Mr. Russo?

SULLY

'Cause I got heart!

For a few moments, the Director says nothing.

DIRECTOR

All right, Sully. I'll give you another chance. But this isn't over. Not by a long shot.

The Director turns, claps his hands sharply.

DIRECTOR

Dancers! Take your places!

All dancers get in formation. The music starts, a super funky number. The dancers are grooving, shaking, strutting.

Every few seconds, the Director dismisses a small group of disappointed dancers who must stop what they're doing, pick up their bags, and head out the exit.

There is a second number. Again, the dancers do their thing. Again, every few seconds, dancers are dismissed, two by two.

At last, the Director signals to cut the music. He waves the remaining dancers to center stage. Sully is among them.

DIRECTOR

You that are left, count yourselves lucky. You made it through the first cut.

The dancers celebrate, squeal, yell with delight.

DIRECTOR Don't get a big head just yet. Cuts aren't over. Go home, get a good night's sleep, then report back here tomorrow, 9 A.M sharp!

The Director exits, leaving the dancers to celebrate more.

SULLY BADA BOOM, BADA BIN!!

Sully runs off the stage excitedly.

INT. LIVING ROOM - RUSSO HOME - DAY

Papa Russo is seated in his usual chair watching TV. Janet is sprawled on the floor, doing her homework.

Sully bursts in through the front door. He bounds up the stairs, but halfway up, he stops, turns to his father and does a triumphant gyration dance.

SULLY

Ha-cha-cha! Ha-cha-CHA!

With that, Sully bounds up the stairs to his room.

PAPA

(turning to Janet) Just like that. My day. Ruined.

INT. SULLY'S ROOM

Sully dials Brenda. Brenda picks up on the other end.

[BEGIN INTER-CUTS]

SULLY

Baby, I'm in! I made the first cut! I'm on my way!

BRENDA

That's really great, babe, but don't get your hopes up just yet. It's just the first cut.

SULLY Yeah, but I got a good feeling about this!

BRENDA Well, I know how we can celebrate.

SULLY

Yeah? How?

BRENDA

There's a poetry slam at the Coffee House tonight. Some of the hottest poets in the city are going to be there, and I have a spot! This could be MY big chance! And I want you there for support!

SULLY Oh, you got it, baby! Big time!
BRENDA

Pick me up 7:30?

SULLY I am there! 'Bye! (hangs up)

INT. RUSSO FAMILY LIVING ROOM

Sully comes bounding down the stairs.

SULLY (announcing loudly) You are looking at the next big star of Broadway!

PAPA

What's that supposed to mean?

SULLY I auditioned to be a dancer today. I made the first cut!

Papa waves a dismissing hand. Janet cheers.

JANET

Way to go, Sully!

SULLY I'm on my way to the stars!

PAPA Yeah, well get washed up. Time for supper!

SULLY

No can do. I'm takin' Brenda to her poetry readin' tonight, so I am going to be... indisposable!

Sully triumphantly exits the house. Papa turns to Janet.

PAPA You see that? Already he's got a swelled head. Now he's using big words in front of his father.

I'm proud of him!

PAPA

You know, when I was growin' up, I had an attitude like him. Then I joined the Marines and I got MORE attitude! I don't know where he gets this attitude. You can't have an attitude and do that kinda dancin'. It ain't healthy. He needs to see a doctor.

INT. COFFEE HOUSE - NIGHT

Shot of two intense-looking young men (LAKOTA and GORDON) doing their thing on the tiny stage of the smoky and crowded Coffee House club.

LAKOTA I am not ALLOWED to smoke marijuana!

GORDON Newt Gingrich built the House Of Pain!

LAKOTA

I am not ALLOWED to dance naked in the Lobby of the Waldorf-Astoria!

GORDON Newt Gingrich built the House Of Pain!

QUICK SHOT: SULLY AND BRENDA IN AUDIENCE; SULLY REACTS

BACK TO SCENE

LAKOTA

I am not ALLOWED to urinate on the corner of Fifth Street and Main!

GORDON Newt Gingrich built the House Of Pain!

LAKOTA

Do you even see me?!

GORDON

Scum!

LAKOTA

Do you even hear me?!

GORDON

Shut your face, scum!

LAKOTA

I asked for bread. You thrust a red-hot poker up my privates!!

GORDON

ENJOY, scum!

LAKOTA

I wash my hands of you. I wash my hands of you.

There is polite applause as Lakota and Gordon exit the stage. The HOST steps up to the mike.

HOST Lakota Jones. Gordon May. Give it up!

Applause dies down.

HOST

Our next poet is no stranger to the Coffee House. And we're delighted to have her back again. Ladies and Gentlemen, give it up for..Brenda Grimani!

Audience applauds as Brenda takes the stage. Sully stands up, applauding wildly, whistling. Brenda adjusts the mike.

BRENDA

Sparks to flame, flame to fire. What's the difference? I have eyes, same as you. Yeah, we see the same colors. But your rainbow is stale. That's ok-- you got it on sale!

SHOT: SULLY

SULLY

(to fellow at next table)
I don't get it.

BRENDA

Did your momma tell you not to come? Well I got news for ya: she was right! You should have never left the house! 'Cause when you walked out that door, You walked right into... life! And let me tell ya, That's when you stepped in it. And you've been spreadin' it ever since!

SHOT: SULLY

SULLY

(to fellow next to him)
Aw, she can't rhyme for nothin'!

BRENDA

We're all just waves, Dude. We crash on the rocks, And EVERYBODY sees it! Then it's all over, honey babe. We fade to… foam.

Brenda bows her head. The audience erupts into applause. The Host bounces up onto the stage, hugs Brenda. Brenda acknowledges the applause, then steps down.

SHOT: SULLY

SULLY Aw, I can do WAY better'n that!

Sully bounds up to the stage.

SULLY

(to Host) Hey, listen, I got a poem too. One from the heart!

HOST Ok. That's what we're all about.

SULLY

Yeah, yeah. Get outta here.

The Host steps down, leaving the stage to Sully. The audience quiets.

SULLY I'm the King of Interpretive Dance! 'Cause I've got fire in my pants!

The music really makes me feel good! Everybody knows when SULLY'S in the hood!

Every time I hear the music groove, I just gotta gotta move!

Hey, let me tell you what, When the chicks see me dance, They all go crazy nuts!

SHOT: BRENDA'S HORRIFIED EXPRESSION

SULLY

I can do the Jerk, I can do the Tango Hustle! Man, I got more moves than MJ and Bill Russell!

I say beggars can't be choosers! If you can't feel my dancin' Then you're all a bunch of losers!

Sully steps away from the mike. The audience immediately erupts into wild applause.

With that, we hear the opening chords of RUN THROUGH THE JUNGE (or some such bass-driven number). Sully strikes a pose. Now the music breaks into a throbbing rhythm. Sully starts to move.

At first the audience just cheers him on, but soon, everyone is out of their seats, joining in, following Sully's lead.

Brenda angrily runs out. Sully sees her, runs after her.

EXT. COFFEE HOUSE CLUB - NIGHT

SULLY

Brenda! Brenda! What's wrong?! What are you mad for?!

BRENDA

Don't even talk to me you jerk! You KNEW how important this night was for me! And you ruined it! Deliberately!

SULLY

Hey, c'mon baby, I just went a little crazy nuts!

BRENDA Yeah, well you've driven ME crazy nuts for the last time! Goodbye! Forever!

Brenda storms away.

SULLY

(calling after her)
Hey, let me walk you home! I get you
an onion bagel maybe!

Brenda keeps goings. Fast. Sully gives up.

SULLY

AWWWWWWW!

EXT. CITY PARK - DAY

A lonely-looking Sully walks forlornly in the park. He gazes sadly at the couples walking or sitting together.

EXT. RUSSO HOUSE - NIGHT

Shot of Sully returning home.

INT. SULLY'S ROOM

Sully rushes to his phone, frantically dials Brenda's number. He listens anxiously as the phone rings.

SULLY

Hey, Brenda? Hey, baby, listen... No, just listen to me! Oh c'mon, just talk to me for one second... Brenda... !

There is a click on the other end.

SULLY

Awwwwwwwwwwww!

INT. DINER - DAY

A dejected-looking Sully sips coffee at the diner counter.

SULLY (to man behind counter) She wouldn't even talk to me!

MAN BEHIND COUNTER She's probably just found someone else to love with all her heart.

EXT. CITY STREET - DAY

Sully is walking the city streets again. This time he spots a church. Sully hurries inside.

INT. CHURCH

FATHER AL DAGNOLI comes up the aisle to greet Sully.

FATHER AL Sully. How ya doing? Good to see ya.

SULLY Hey, Father, I got big problems. I gotta talk.

FATHER AL (motions to a nearby pew) Absolutely, Sully. Absolutely.

They sit in a church pew.

FATHER AL

What's on your mind?

SULLY

I don't know, Father. I thought me and Brenda had somethin' special, you know? Now it's like she don't even want nothin' to do with me no more. It's like I ain't good enough no more. But I can't stop thinkin' about her for nothin'! I'm always thinkin' about all those times me and her went out dancin' or the movies or somethin'. Man, those were special times, you know? Now she don't even talk to me no more. It's like.. aw, man..!

Sully lowers his head.

SULLY

Everywhere I look, I see her pretty face! Them sweet lips and those baby blues!

FATHER AL

Sully. I want you to look at me.

Sully just quickly glances up at Father Al then lowers his head again.

FATHER AL

No, Sully. LOOK at me.

Sully lifts his head, looks at Father Al.

Father Al pauses, then, draws an invisible bow across the strings of an imaginary violin; he whistles a warbling dirge.

SULLY

Aw, WOW! Some help YOU are! I'm outta here!

INT. DISCOVERY THEATRE

The auditions continue. The dancers move to a bouncy pop number. Sully bounces, struts, slithers with the rest. SHOT: DIRECTOR AND CO-DIRECTOR

CO-DIRECTOR So what do you think of that Sully Russo kid? Think he's got talent?

DIRECTOR

Some. Marginal at best. But he's got attitude. And that's the elusive ingredient we've got to have if we're going to pull this thing off.

CO-DIRECTOR

Something about him- just makes you wanna put the smack down.

DIRECTOR

He's a punk. I can't stand him. But you have to love him.

DIRECTOR'S P.O.V. - SULLY DANCING

INT. DISCOVERY THEATRE - A LITTLE LATER

The dancers huddle together at center stage. The Director, clipboard in hand, addresses the troops.

DIRECTOR

You all did good. But we've only got seven spots. If you're selected, you'll be notified tomorrow afternoon. That's all I have. Thanks for coming.

The dancers start gathering their things. Their manner is hushed, subdued.

SULLY

(to another dancer) Man, I gotta make the cut! I don't know what I'm gonna do if I don't make it! You know, just once in my life I want somebody to say to me, "Hey, you're good enough!"

DANCER Here's wishing us both luck.

SULLY

Aw, you ain't got NO chance!

The dancer reaches into his duffle bag, pulls out a jock strap, tosses it at Sully.

DANCER Hey pal, wash my jock strap!

Dancer storms out.

SULLY (shouting at Dancer) Aw wow! That's class! That's real class there!

EXT. CITY STREETS - EVENING

A tired-looking Sully walks home from rehearsals. He totes a duffle bag in one hand.

Sully stops. He hears something. It's music—and it's coming from a darkened old warehouse nearby. Sully follows the sound of the music.

INT. ABANDONED BUILDING - NIGHT

Sully creeps in quietly through an ajar door. He squints, trying to peer in through the darkness. A heavy guitarriff is blaring out from a boom box a few feet away.

Then, Sully sees him: a shadowy figure in a heavy jacket and hood. The figure is moving to the music-- sharp, whipping movements, graceful ballet-like turns, lightningquick head snaps.

SHOT: MESMERIZED, AWE-STRUCK SULLY

SULLY'S P.O.V. - SHADOWY FORM OF DANCER

At the last the music comes to a stop. The dancer walks it off, breathing heavily.

BACK TO SCENE

SULLY

(steps forward) Aw, MAN! You are GREAT!

The shadowy figure wheels around, spotting Sully. In a split second, the shadowy figure swipes the boom box and disappears out the back exit. Sully tries to pursue, but it's no use.

SULLY Hey, no! Come back! I just wanna talk to ya!

The mysterious dancer is gone, leaving Sully standing in the darkness, frustrated.

INT. RUSSO HOUSE - DAY

Sully is seated on the couch, crouched forward, staring at the phone on the coffee table.

Papa and Janet are nearby, newspaper spread on the floor, painting a couple of chairs with red paint. Papa looks over at Sully.

PAPA

All morning you're staring at that phone. How many times I gotta tell ya, they don't want OUR kind on Broadway!

JANET

Aw, Daddy, look! You're making a mess! You've got red paint all over your hands!

PAPA

(to Janet)

A painter what ain't got paint on him ain't no painter! You see anybody hirin' a guy with a clean shirt to paint for'em? If they don't get paint on themselves, how they gonna get it on the walls?

JANET

Oh, Daddy.

The phone rings. Sully grabs it.

S ULLY

Yeah..? Yeah..Aw, YEAH! Hey, THANKS! (slams down the receiver, leaps to his feet) WHOOO HOOO! Bada Boom Bada BIN! I MADE IT! I MADE THE CUT! I'M A DANCER!

JANET

Yeah! Sully! You did it!

Sully proceeds to do an impromptu dance around the room. Papa confronts him.

PAPA

Mark my words: this is a big mistake! There ain't no future in doin' that interpreter dance!

SULLY

It's INTERPRETIVE dance! How you know so much about it?! You can't even say it!

PAPA

I know this much- that kinda dancin' is for sissies and girly-men!

JANET

Hey, Daddy, if Sully is such a sissy, how come he gots all them muscles?

SULLY

Yeah! That's right!

Sully rips off his shirt, strikes a muscle pose.

SULLY

Check out the biceps, baby! What do you think o'THAT?!

PAPA

(waves a dismissing hand) Get outta here.

SULLY

When was the last time YOU looked like this?! You been outta shape for years!

Sully strikes another muscle pose.

JANET

Do the Hulk Hogan, Sully! I like it when you do Hulk Hogan!

Sully grits his teeth, hunches over like Hulk Hogan.

SULLY

Da Pythons, baby! Da Pythons!

Sully gets up in Papa's face.

SULLY It's <u>Sully Russo</u> time, baby! And I got the FEVER!

PAPA You got a fever? Let me feel your forehead.

With the flat part of his paint-covered palm, Papa gives Sully a resounding SMACK on his forehead, leaving a distinct hand-shaped red imprint.

> SULLY OW!! Hey, I think you done that on purpose!

JANET (giggling) You're silly, Daddy!

The doorbell rings.

PAPA

(to Sully) I gotta go answer the door. This discussion ain't over.

Papa Russo opens the front door. Standing in the doorway is CHARLIE, a tough-looking man in his mid-fifties or so. Charlie's hair is shaved in a Marine buzz cut.

Charlie stands there, hands on his hips, glaring at Papa.

CHARLIE

After twenty-five years, you still look like the foulest refuse I wouldn't even flush down my toilet.

PAPA

How'd you find me?!

CHARLIE

It wasn't hard. All I had to do was follow the stench!

PAPA

You got a lotta nerve showin' up on my doorstep! You was a no good slimy bum loser then, now you're an OLD no good slimy bum loser! You wanna bum a quarter? The bus station's that way!

CHARLIE

(pulls off his sneakers)
Do something for me, will ya?
 (pulls off his black socks)
Bend down and kiss my stinking sweaty FEET!

PAPA It's better than kissin' your sister!

Charlie steps inside the house, looks around.

CHARLIE So this is your place, huh Frankie?

PAPA

That's right! I built it myself! It reflects my personality!

CHARLIE Yeah. All the screws are loose.

PAPA

Oh, I suppose YOU got a mansion!

CHARLIE

Yeah! I got a nice place! I made good investments!

Charlie gets right in Papa's face.

CHARLIE

Twenty-five percent I invest in real estate. Twenty-five percent in rare coins. Twenty-five percent in the Money Market. Twenty-five percent in a Mutual Fund!

PAPA

And ZERO percent in the mouthwash!

Charlie flips Papa a quarter.

CHARLIE Here's a quarter. Go buy yourself some class!

Papa turns his posterior to Charlie.

PAPA Why don't YOU take a look in the mirror here!

Now the two men belly up to each other. There is a long stare-down. Then, slowly, smiles come to their faces.

CHARLIE Frankie, you ol' son of a gun!

PAPA

Charlie Ward!

CHARLIE Been a long time, eh Frankie?

PAPA

Charlie! How you been ?!

The two men burst out laughing, do a quick macho embrace. There are back slaps, shoulder punches. Sully and Janet look on, puzzled. Sully still has the red hand-print on his forehead.

> PAPA Hey, kids! This is CHARLIE here! Me and him was in 'Nam together! This guy saved my life at Dong Lao!

CHARLIE

Dumbest thing I ever did!

PAPA

'Cept when you married that wife o'yours!

Both men guffaw.

PAPA

I love this man! Hey, Sully, take a good look! This here's a <u>real</u> man! He's got a Purple Heart, he's got a Congressional Medal of Honor! You name it, he's got it!

CHARLIE

Aw, I ain't no saint. You got a thing or two yourself over in 'Nam.

PAPA

Yeah! The runs!

Both men guffaw.

PAPA

Charlie, can you believe this? My son, he wants to be one of those pansy dancers!

SULLY

Hey, I'm proud o'my dancin'!

PAPA

Believe that? My own son doin' that sissy jigglin' and wigglin' in Peter Pan tights!

CHARLIE

Oh.. wow. You don't say.

PAPA

You see that? My friend Charlie here, he's seen it all over in 'Nam. Never once did I see him speechless. 'Till right now!

SULLY

Hey, Charlie, tell my old man there ain't nothin' wrong with me dancin'!

Charlie clears his throat. He laughs nervously.

CHARLIE Aw, you know me, Frankie. I don't get involved in no family quarrels.

Charlie reaches into his pocket, pulls out a pen and paper. He scribbles on it.

CHARLIE

Tell you what though, me and the wife are livin' up in White Plains now... (hands slip of paper to Papa) Call me. We'll get together.

PAPA What's this?! Charlie is back stateside now?! Aw, too much! And right up the road too!

CHARLIE

Gotta run, Frankie. But you and me, we'll get together. Talk about the old times!

PAPA You kids hear that?! Charlie's BACK!

Charlie laughs, departs. Papa turns and glares at Sully.

SULLY Hey, what?! What'd I DO?!

PAPA How dare you look upon his face!

INT. DISCOVERY THEATRE -DAY

Shot of dancers in rehearsal. They work through a funky dance number. They sweat, strut, move.

The agitated-looking Director paces in front of them.

DIRECTOR C'mon! I want intensity in those turns!

The dancers keep at it. The Director continues to pace, scowling.

Sully is really throwing himself into it.

DIRECTOR

(to Sully)

Quit with the improvisation, Sully! When you get it down, THEN you can be creative! Until then, don't improvise! JUST PLAY THE NOTES!

The dancers keep at it. The Director is still unsatisfied.

DIRECTOR HEAD SNAP! CUT LEFT! Now, SLINK! SLINK! C'MON PEOPLE!!

The dancers continue on. Finally, the Director signals to cut the music. Everything comes to a sudden stop. The Director singles out a trembling young lady dancer.

DIRECTOR

(to YOUNG GIRL) What's with the genteel white-bread Pollyanna crap?! What did I say at the outset?! Streetwise! I want STREETWISE! You call that cutting edge?! Looks more like Mother Goose Does Swan Lake! Let me tell you something, Love, you have all the grace and timing of an ostrich doing a pale imitation of The Brady Bunch!

The Young Girl breaks down in tears.

DIRECTOR

Yeah, you see yourself now? <u>That</u>, princess, is how I felt watching your performance!

The Young Girl sobs, runs offstage.

DIRECTOR

Oh, you gonna run out on me? Is that how it is, sweetheart? Well let me tell you something, sunshine-- you wanna be in the dance biz, you better get yourself some talent and a thicker skin!

The Director turns back to the rest of the cast.

DIRECTOR

You thought I was hard on your little cupcake friend there. Well let me tell you something, you're ALL pathetic! Not one of you has a clue about interpretive dance! As artists, our job is to convey FEELING! The audience is to SHARE, indeed, PARTAKE of that feeling!

Director paces angrily. He scans the faces of the dancers.

DIRECTOR None of you get it, do you? Tell you what, sit this one out. Everybody. Park it!

The dancers take a seat on the stage floor.

DIRECTOR This is watch and learn time, kids.

The Director makes his way to center stage, then turns, facing the dancers. He stands erect, both hands on his hips. He gives a head nod to unseen person offstage.

"The Entertainer" or some such dippy bouncy number starts up. At once, the Director's face breaks out into a ridiculous "happy face."

The Director starts to dance: he bounces, strolls, struts in time to the music. Each movement is punctuated with a ridiculous facial expression. The dancers watch, awestruck, impressed.

The number comes to an end. The "happy face" vanishes as the Director claps his hands sharply.

> DIRECTOR All right, show's over! Get back in formation! PLACES!

EXT. CITY STREETS - EVENING

Shot of Sully heading home from rehearsals. Again, he hears the sound of dance music. It's coming from the same alley, the same abandoned warehouse. Sully hurries towards the abandoned warehouse.

INT. ABANDONED WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

Sully creeps in quietly.

SULLY'S P.O.V. - HOODED DANCER

The mysterious hooded dancer is doing his thing again.

BACK TO SCENE

Sully watches, mesmerized, as the hooded dancer jumps, twists, struts to the funky music coming from the boom box.

When the number comes to an end, Sully leaps out from his hiding place.

SULLY

Hey! Who are you?!

At the sound of Sully's voice, the Hooded Figure snatches up his boom box and flees in a panic.

> SULLY Hey, I just wanna TALK to ya!

The Hooded Figure is too fast. He vanishes into the night.

INT. SULLY'S ROOM - NIGHT

Sully lies on his bed, staring up at the ceiling. Finally, he reaches over to the phone, dials. A voice answers at the other end.

SULLY Hey, baby cakes! I give you three guesses who this is!

There is a click at the other end.

SULLY YEAH?! So maybe I don't wanna talk to you neither! Sully leaps off the bed, storms out of his room

INT. JANET'S BEDROOM

Sully bursts into Janet's room. Janet is seated is seated on her bed, looking at a teen magazine.

SULLY

Women make no sense to me! No sense at all! You tell me, why don't women make no sense to me?!

Sully flops down on a nearby chair.

SULLY

Brenda won't even talk to me! What is it with chicks?! You're the only one I got to talk to. How come I don't get nowhere with Brenda?

JANET Why don't you try being nice to her?

SULLY Aw, that don't even work!

JANET

Don't you read no magazines, Sully? They all say the same thing. A girl wants to be treated like a princess. A girl wants to be swept off her feet. Romanced, and all that stuff! Girls want somebody like, you know, Leonardo DiCaprio!

SULLY

Aw, what's so great about him?!

JANET Because he's romantic! His heart goes on!

SULLY

Yeah? Well who says I ain't got it goin' on?!

JANET

You ever get romantic with Brenda?

SULLY

No. But she's always on my mind.

JANET

Aw, Sully, that is REALLY lame! But I know what we can do to help you.

Janet reaches over and grabs a clean sheet of paper.

SULLY

What're you gonna do?

JANET

My teacher says when you've got big problems, you gotta step back and evaluate. So I'm gonna evaluate you.

SULLY

Hey, I ain't tellin' YOU none o' my innermost personal thoughts!

JANET

(writing) No, dummy, we're gonna list your good and bad qualities. Then we'll evaluate them. (reading as she writes) "Good Qualities.... "Things You Gotta Work On." (to Sully) Ok, here we go. First we write down your good qualities. And I'll put down the first one. (reading as she writes) "Gots all the best dance moves." There.

SULLY Yeah! That's a good one! That's right!

JANET

Ok, what's another one?

Sully and Janet think a moment.

SULLY Hey, you know, I look pretty good.

Yeah, ok, we can put that down. (reading as she writes) "Looks pretty good." There.

SULLY

Yeah! And you know what else? I'm dangerous! I got attitude!

JANET

Hmmm, I guess so. (writes it down) "He's got attitude." Ok.

Sully and Janet think some more. Finally:

JANET

All right. Now we'll write down the things you gotta work on.

SULLY Already we're done with my good stuff?!

JANET We'll put more down when we think of some.

SULLY

Yeah, yeah. Ok.

JANET First thing you gotta work on: sensitivity. You got no sensitivity at all. (jots that down)

SULLY

Hey, don't give me that! Last year Brenda got her hair done. I said it wasn't half bad!

JANET

Yeah, but do you notice the little things? Do you?!

SULLY Hey, what am I, Sherlock Holmes?!

That's another thing you gotta work on: you got too much attitude.

SULLY

Who cares?!

JANET

Brenda, that's who! How can you be sweet and loving with your attitude?!

SULLY

Sweet and loving?! You're only ten years old! Who teaches you them sick thoughts?!

JANET

You want me to help you get Brenda back or not?

SULLY

All right. All right!

JANET

Next thing you gotta work on: you aren't sentimental either.

SULLY

That's for WUSSIES!

JANET

Yeah? Well them sentimental wussies get all the girls! Every magazine says so! Women like sentimental men! That's why they all went to see "GHOST"!

SULLY

Yeah, all right. How do I get sentimental?

JANET

Think about your good times with Brenda. You two ever laugh together?

SULLY

Aw, yeah! There was that time I was drivin' her back from the carnival!

What happened?

SULLY

Aw, it's too personal.

JANET

If you wanna get sentimental, you gotta start to practice now! So go on. Tell me!

SULLY

Well it was like this: we run out of gas on the way home. So there we are, just sittin' by the road. I look over at Brenda and she says to me, "What are you lookin' at me like that for?" And I say, "Because I just know you wanna yell at me for not puttin' enough gas in the car before we left. So go ahead. Yell at me!" But she don't say nothin'.

JANET

Yeah?

SULLY

She just reaches down in the back seat and pulls out a can of gasoline. She says to me, "I knew you'd run out of gas again, so I made sure I brought this along!" Man, me and her, we sat there laughin' for a whole hour!

JANET

See?! That's GOOD! You can USE that!

SULLY

How?

JANET

You call Brenda up and you remind her of that story! It shows her you're sentimental and you like to think of the good times you had together! Then SHE'LL think of all those good times too. Pretty soon, you two are in love again!

SULLY

Oh, YEAH! That is GREAT! Aw, YEAH! So you think it'll work?

Sure it will! Call her! Right now!

SULLY Aw, I don't know about this.

JANET

Don't chicken out on me, Sully! Call her! Here, use my phone.

Sully nervously takes the phone in his hands. He looks over at Janet, then nervously punches in Brenda's number. He waits, listens to the phone ring.

Finally, someone picks up on the other end.

SULLY

(stammering nervously) Uh. Yeah..Brenda.. Hey, uh..You remember that time..uh..I was lookin' at you in the car and you..uh.. you gave me gas?

There is a loud CLICK at the other end.

SULLY

AWWWWWWWWW!!!!

INT. DISCOVERY THEATRE - DAY

The dancers rehearse onstage. The Director is again pacing, frowning, shaking his head.

DIRECTOR No! NO! Your limbs are all over the place! Tighten it!

The dancers keep at it.

DIRECTOR (to dancer) Eric, what IS that?! It's not.. (claps his hands sluggishly) da..da..da.. It's.. (claps in sharp rhythm) Da! Da! Da! Da! C'MON! Get with it! The dancers keep at it. The Co-Director approaches the Director, jotting notes down on a clipboard.

Sully does a twirl, crashes into the pretty-boy MALE LEAD. The Male Lead whirls around, confronts Sully.

MALE LEAD

Hey, watch it, punk!

SULLY

Hey, maybe YOU oughtta watch it!

MALE LEAD

Oh, that's brilliant, Brooklyn boy! Where did you study dance? Neanderthal High?

Sully rushes Male Lead. Dancers quickly step between them.

DIRECTOR

All right, that's it! Sully, hit the showers! Cool off! Report back here tomorrow.

SULLY

Hey, he started it!

DIRECTOR

And don't give me that attitude! If you'd gone over the routine beforehand like I told you, you wouldn't have screwed up! Next time, come prepared!

Sully storms off. The Male Lead smirks.

DIRECTOR

(to Male Lead) And don't think you're off the hook! You've been screwing up as much as anybody! You better get YOUR act together, Sonny Jim!

MALE LEAD

How do you expect me to perform when I have to share the stage with these unpolished... street urchins!

DIRECTOR

Let me tell you something, Twinkle Toes, those street urchins have drive! They have hunger! They have anger! And yes, they've got attitude! That counts for more than any of that mechanical dance academy stuff you're showin' me! If I were you, pal, I'd sweat a little!

The Director storms off, leaving the Male Lead standing there, looking highly insulted.

INT. CITY DINER - DAY

Charlie and Papa sit at the counter, sipping coffee.

PAPA You know, all my life I raise Sully to be a man. What happens? I got Jack-Be-Nimble for a son.

Charlie chuckles, shakes his head.

PAPA

I'll tell you what's wrong with kids these days. They don't listen to their old man. They got attitudes.

CHARLIE

C'mon Frankie, you didn't do everything your old man told you to do. You and me, we did our share of rebelling when we were Sully's age.

PAPA

Yeah, but we didn't do it wearin' them Tinker Bell tights.

CHARLIE

Well, you can't live their life for them, Frankie. Everybody has to find their own way in this world.

PAPA

What's with this dancin' stuff? He could join the Marines like you and me done.

CHARLIE

We didn't exactly join, Frankie. We were drafted.

PAPA

I'll tell you this, if they still had the draft, Sully wouldn't be doin' no interpreter dancin'!

CHARLIE

Yeah, well.. maybe.

PAPA

You got something on your mind, Charlie. Talk to me.

CHARLIE

(fidgeting) I dunno, Frankie, maybe.. maybe you're being a little hard on the boy.

There is a pause of silence as Papa drinks in Charlie's words. Then, Papa breaks out into a guffaw.

PAPA

(to anyone within earshot) I love this man! Always there with the laughs! This is a great man!

Papa slaps Charlie on the back. Charlie forces a smile.

INT. DISCOVERY THEATRE - DAY

The dancers are in the midst of rehearsal. The Director and Co-Director look on.

CO-DIRECTOR I think they've got it nailed down.

DIRECTOR

It's not happening. Something's missing. What I'm seein' out there, it doesn't move me. No passion. No fire!

MALE LEAD and FEMALE LEAD take center stage, doing their spotlight dance.

DIRECTOR

(to Co-Director) It's the leads. Rob and Tina. The chemistry ain't there. They're giving me Broadway-by--numbers. I'm sorry, I have a funkier vision.

CO-DIRECTOR

Tina, I like. But Rob, yeah, he kinda seems to be somewhere else.

Director steps forwards, stops the music.

DIRECTOR

That's enough. Everyone stop! Take five. This just isn't happening, folks. If anyone has suggestions as to how we can bring this thing to the next level, please, let me know.

The Director shuffles away, lights a cigarette. Rob, the Male Lead, comes running up to the Director.

MALE LEAD

Hey, Hal, if you have a problem with my dancing, just say it!

DIRECTOR

Oh, NOW you're showing some intensity! Welcome to rehearsals, Rob! Now take a break.

Sully breaks out from the pack of dancers. He hurries up to the Director.

SULLY

(to Director) Hey, I wanna go for it! Give me a shot at the lead! I can do this!

Director looks shocked. Male Lead glares angrily at Sully.

DIRECTOR

YOU, Sully?!

SULLY

Yeah! Yeah! I can do real good! Gimmie a chance!

MALE LEAD (to Director) Can you believe this punk?!

DIRECTOR (to Sully) I'll think about it. Now go on. Get ready for the next number.

Sully clenches his fist excitedly. He runs off.

MALE LEAD You're not seriously considering giving that street hood a shot at MY spot?!

DIRECTOR Nobody's irreplaceable, Jack! The sooner you learn that, the better off you'll be.

MALE LEAD Yeah, RIGHT! I don't have to take this!

The Male Lead haughtily storms off. The Director fumes for a moment, then goes over to the dancers.

DIRECTOR (clapping his hands) All right! Places everybody! NOW! (turning to Male Lead) Rob, sit this one out.

MALE LEAD What do you MEAN, sit this one out?!

DIRECTOR You know what I mean.

MALE LEAD

No, I don't!

DIRECTOR

Sure you do.

MALE LEAD

No, I DON'T!
 (suddenly crumples in anguish)
Oh, God, I DO!
 (breaks down into sobs)

DIRECTOR SULLY! Front and center!

Sully bounds up to the front of the stage.

DIRECTOR So you wanna try for the lead? All right. Let's see what you can do.

SULLY

BADA BOOM, BADA BIN!

Sully bounces over to the front of the stage, where his none-too-happy co-lead, Tina, awaits:

SULLY

(to Tina) Hey sugar plum, it's me and you! Bada Bad Bin! (grabs Tina around the waist) Hey, you know the Tango Hustle?

Tina slaps Sully.

TINA

Get your paws off me, cretin!

The music starts. It's an up-tempo Cajun number. The dancers start moving, stepping, hopping. Sully is perfect, until near the end of the number. He accidentally whirls Tina into the curtain, sending her sprawling.

Tina regains her feet. She is spitting fire. She storms over to the director.

TINA I refuse to dance with this amateur half-wit!

DIRECTOR

Well get used to it, Sunshine, 'cause I'm giving him Rob's spot!

TINA

What if I said I'll quit if you do?!

DIRECTOR

I'd say, "Nice knowin' ya, sweetheart! There's the door!"

(turns to the rest of the cast) Let's get something straight, children! I'm going to get some PASSION into this production if it kills me AND you! If that means moving you out of your comfort zones, so be it! A word of advice for those of you who don't like it: LUMP IT! End of lecture. Be here tomorrow at eight sharp!

The dancers disperse. Sully approaches the Director.

SULLY He, that was really cool! You told them losers what time it is!

Sully walks off. The Director seethes, but restrains himself.

INT. TV STUDIO

A Ricki Lake-like host speaks into the camera.

HOST

Today we're talking with guests who say, "My Son Is A Pansy-- And He Thinks He's All That."

Talk Show Host turns to her guests, Sully and Papa.

HOST

(to Papa) Mr. Russo, you've stated in no uncertain terms that your son is a "pansy."

PAPA Did I stutter, or what? HOST

Because of his dancing.

PAPA

The jitterbug, the hully-guy-- that was dancin'. His dancin' ain't dancin'. It's prissy prancin' around in Robin Hood tights.

SULLY

You see that?! He's all suppressed `cause he don't understand interpretive dance!

HOST

Mr. Russo, what is so terrible about your son's love for dance? A lot of parents would be proud of that!

Audience applauds. Sully does a little victory dance.

PAPA Proud of that wiggle jigglin'? It looks like he's got gas!

SULLY

You see that?! He disses my interpretive dance! You know why?! 'Cause HE ain't got the moves! I got the moves!

HOST

Mr. Russo, take a look at your son right now.

As if on cue, Sully lowers his head in a blatant play for sympathy. The audience goes, "Awwwwwwwwww.."

HOST

Look at him! See how he's hanging his head? Does that tell you something? When was the last time you put your arm around Sully and told him you loved him?

Audience applauds. Papa turns to Sully.

PAPA Son. Let me touch you in a meaningful way. With that, Papa smacks Sully on the back of the head. The SMACK echoes loudly. Sully's 'do is knocked out of whack. The audience groans.

SULLY

There! You see THAT?! He don't respect my hair!

HOST

Mr. Russo... Why?!

SULLY

Hey, I'll tell you why! He's lookin' at his future and he don't see nothin'! Me, I look at MY future and I see STARS!

The audience applauds. Papa turns to Sully.

PAPA You see stars in your future.

SULLY (gets in Papa's face) Yeah! STARS!

PAPA Here's a preview of coming attractions.

Papa smacks Sully's forehead with the flat of his palm.

SULLY

OW!!

CUT TO:

LIVING ROOM

A Jerry Springer look-alike is watching the show. A bald bouncer-type in a black T-shirt, sits next to him.

> SPRINGER LOOK-ALIKE Know what? I think I'VE seen the future!

CUT BACK TO:

RICKI LAKE-LIKE SHOW

HOST

(to guest psychologist) I give up. Dr. Berman. Help me out here.

DR. BERMAN

What I think we're seeing here is not so much a lack of communication, but a lack of constructive communication...

As Dr. Berman drones on, Shot quickly cuts to:

INT. RUSSO HOME - DAY

Sully and Papa are seated in their living room, along with numerous neighborhood friends. Everyone is drinking cokes, munching chips, as they watch the delayed broadcast of the show.

Sully and Papa guffaw as they watch the show, even as Dr. Berman can be heard droning on.

INT. STORE - DAY

Sully browses the greeting cards section. He picks up cards, reads them. At last, one really catches his eye.

SULLY Aw, yeah! This is great! This is real classy! YEAH!

Sully hurries up to the counter to purchase the card.

EXT. CITY STREET - DAY

Sully hurries up to a sidewalk flower vendor. He buys a long-stemmed rose. Sully hurries off with card and rose in hand.

EXT. BRENDA'S HOUSE - DAY

Sully strides confidently up the walk to Brenda's front door. He rings the doorbell.
Brenda answers. Sully holds up his rose in one hand, and with the other, raises his card to his eyes to read.

BRENDA

Sully!

SULLY Hold on a second here, I gotta read this to ya. (fumbles with card) Ok.. ok.. (starts to read) "This rose will fade and die. But you my dear, Will smell forever!"

Brenda slams the door in Sully's face. Sully storms off.

SULLY I KNEW she don't like death poems!

INT. RUSSO HOUSE - DAY

A dejected-looking Sully sits at the table. Papa and Janet hover over him.

SULLY You try to be classy. It don't get you nowhere!

JANET

(to Papa) Daddy, Sully needs romance lessons.

SULLY Hey, I don't need nothin'!

PAPA Him, romance lessons? Pearls before swine!

SULLY Aw, like YOU was some Romeo!

PAPA

Yeah. I was! The dame wasn't born I can't make her knees melt like butter. You know why? 'Cause I give her that look of love. Then I serenade'em with a little Sinatra.

JANET

Oh, Daddy! You would sing to them?

PAPA

Yeah. I had a good voice. But I can only sing in the shower. So I'd make'em stand out in the hallway while I take a shower. Then I'd sing songs of love. That's how I won the heart of your sainted mother.

JANET

Now THAT'S romantic!

SULLY

Aw, that's nuts.

PAPA

It ain't nuts. You get'em both ways. The more you sing, the cleaner you smell.

SULLY

I'll let Brenda watch me dance in the shower.

(laughs stupidly)

JANET

Aw, GROSS!!

Papa smacks Sully on the back of the head.

PAPA

(to Janet) You see?! Pearls before swine!

INT. DISCOVERY THEATRE - DAY

The dancers are going through the exaggerated steps to a bouncy pop number. The Director paces intensely as always. Finally, the number comes to an end.

DIRECTOR (to dancers) All right. Not half bad that time. (to dancer) Travis, you're still out of synch on the shoulder rotation! It's not.. (singing, shaking shoulders wildly) "Steal away, steal away!" It's.. (singing, rolling seductively) "STEAL a-way, steal a-way.." Like THAT! (claps his hands) Tina! Sully! Front and center!

Sully and Tina take center stage. The music starts.

Sully and Tina do their sinewy synchronized dance. When the number ends, Tina turns to Sully.

TINA Not bad, Attitude Boy. Listen, I'm going to be alone at my apartment tonight. Care to come over?

SULLY

Oh, hey, thanks-- but I better not, you know? I'm kinda tight with my girl and I don't wanna loser her. Know what I'm sayin'?

Tina's smile disappears.

TINA

Fine. I understand.

SULLY

Hey, thanks! You was dancin' really good yourself!

TINA

Thanks.

Sully starts to walk away.

TINY Oh, Sully. There's one more thing. Sully stops, turns to face Tina. Tina saunters up to Sully, fixes a wicked glare on him.

TINA

You don't have it.

Sully goes ballistic. He throws his head back, lets out a primal scream. He runs around the stage, rips down curtains. He throws stage props.

Everyone stops what they're doing to watch the tirade. The Director watches the tantrum with great interest.

At last, Sully runs up to Tina, gets in her face.

SULLY

DON'T YOU SAY I DON'T GOT IT! I DO SO GOT IT! WHERE DO YOU GET OFF SAYIN' I DON'T GOT IT?! YOU'RE THE ONE DON'T GOT IT! DON'T YOU SAY I DON'T GOT IT!!

Sully runs offstage, yelling in agony.

BACKSTAGE AREA

The Director comes running up after Sully.

DIRECTOR

Sully!

Sully stops, turns to face Director.

SULLY

WHAT?!

DIRECTOR

Practice ain't over!

SULLY

It is for me! I can't take it no more! I'm outta here!

DIRECTOR

You walk out that door, Sully, you're through here! You ain't comin' back!

SULLY

SO WHAT!

DIRECTOR

I'll tell you so what! You walk out that door, you're a loser! A loser with no heart! No soul! No passion for interpretive dance! THIS is your chance, Sully! You ain't gonna get another chance like this again in your life! I know it and YOU know it!

SULLY

Aw, what do you care?!

DIRECTOR

Me? I don't have to care! You think I have to put up with your attitude?! No way! I took a chance on you because you have anger! You've got attitude! You take it to the edge! You dance close to the FIRE!

SULLY

(puzzled) I don't see no fireplace.

DIRECTOR

I thought you had the love. I guess I was wrong.

SULLY

So maybe I am a loser.

DIRECTOR

That's up to you. You can split now or you can turn around, come back, and give it 110 percent. I'm done talkin'.

The Director turns and storms off.

SULLY I do SO got the love! But you gotta pay me more money!

DIRECTOR (without turning around) Stuff it, Sully!

EXT. CITY STREET - NIGHT

Sully bursts out of the back stage exit door onto the streets. It is night. Wired up, frustrated, Sully heads down the street.

EXT. PLANET GEMINI CLUB - NIGHT

Sully makes a bee-line for the front door.

INT. PLANET GEMINI CLUB - NIGHT

The crowd parts as Sully bops into the club. Ignoring the admiring looks of the regulars, Sully struts onto the dance floor. The dance floor crowd parts as Sully takes over.

"MARCERENA" or some such Latin number plays. Sully does a solo spotlight, complete with SLO-MO and Speed-Up Shots of Sully in action.

When his solo is done, Sully struts right out of the club to a huge ovation, out into the night.

EXT. CITY STREETS - NIGHT

Sully bops down the street, looking more confident.

Once again, he comes to the same alley. Again he hears music blaring from the direction of the abandoned warehouse. Sully rushes into the alley.

INT. ABANDONED WAREHOUSE

Sully quietly enters the darkened interior of the warehouse.

SULLY'S P.O.V.

Again, hard-driving rock blares out. At the far end of the space, the figure of a dancing hooded man can be seen.

The figure does quick head snaps-right, left, right, leftto the music.

BACK TO SCENE

Sully watches from the shadows. He stays hidden. He inches closer to the hooded dancer. Slowly, Sully reaches into his coat pocket. He pulls something out.

At last, the song ends. The dancer stops to catch his breath. Suddenly, Sully leaps out from behind a post. He flashes the hooded figure with his flashlight.

SULLY

HEY!

The hooded figure wheels around, kicking the boom box off his foot. His sudden movement causes his hood to fall, revealing his identity:

SULLY

Charlie! YOU!

Charlie's expression is sad, sheepish-it's the face of a man who knows the game is up.

INT. COFFEE SHOP - NIGHT

Sully and Charlie sit together at the counter, sipping coffee and having a heart to heart.

CHARLIE

I guess being raised all my life to be a soldier, it just wasn't accepted. I had to be a man. I had to be a fighter. I had to be a MARINE! How could I admit to anybody that I had the love for dance?

SULLY

Wow, Charlie, I can't believe it, you know? How long you been dancin' like that?

It started at Woodstock. I was there with a bunch of guys from my platoon. Frankly, we were there to bust some heads. Somehow, I got separated from the guys, and there I was, in the midst of a crowd of wild-looking hippies.

SULLY

Oh hey, this is like real history or somethin'!

CHARLIE

I can still remember it like it was yesterday. Sly and The Family Stone was onstage, and I mean, they were layin' it DOWN!

SULLY

Yeah, me too-- I like the Stones!

CHARLIE

Anyway, I looked around me at these dancing long hairs, how they let the music dictate those free-flowing body movements. It was unlike anything from my experience. Before I knew it, I was dancing right along with them, just letting the rhythm move in me ways the Marine Corps would never allow.

SULLY

Wow, that's kinda creepy, you know?

CHARLIE

And when Sly started sayin', "I WANNA TAKE YOU HIGHER!" well...

SULLY

What?

CHARLIE

He took me higher.

SULLY

Aw, too MUCH!

I've been hooked on dance ever since. But I've kept it a secret all these years. I couldn't jeopardize my career in the Corps. Hey, I'm a Green Beret! Me, let on about this? Not on your life!

SULLY

Hey, you know why it's great you're tellin' me this? 'Cause I can relate! Wait 'till I tell Pop that you...

CHARLIE

NO! Don't you tell nobody nothin'! My wife knows, now you know. That's enough.

SULLY

Aw, no! This is all wrong! I seen you! You got real talent! You gotta let the world see what kinda dancer you are!

CHARLIE

It's too late for me, Sully. But YOU can make it! You can go to the top!

SULLY

How do you know?

CHARLIE

I snuck into the Discovery Theatre. I saw you in rehearsals.

SULLY

Aw, yeah! You're a Marine! You know how to sneak in where you don't belong!

CHARLIE

And I can help you. You got talent, but you need more: grits, guts, determination. That's what got me through 'Nam. That's what'll propel you to dance stardom.

SULLY

Hey, that kinda makes sense maybe!

You prepared to go for it?

SULLY

Aw, yeah!

CHARLIE You got the guts? You got the drive?

SULLY

Oh, YEAH!

CHARLIE You got the heart?! The will?!

SULLY

You know it!

CHARLIE Then we can work together.

SULLY (clenching his fist) Aw, yeah! YEAH! (suddenly more subdued) Only one problem maybe. I kinda quit today.

Charlie stares at Sully, shaking his head.

EXT. GRASSY HILL - DAY

Shot is of the crest of a high grassy hill. The background is a driving rock number like "CUT ACROSS SHORTY" or some such number.

Suddenly a profusely sweating Sully comes into view, huffing and puffing up the steep grassy hill. Jogging beside him is Charlie, decked out in his Marine drill sergeant instructor uniform and sunglasses.

Charlie barks into Sully's ears.

CUT TO:

EXT. PARK - DAY

Shot is of Sully doing push-ups. Charlie is down on the ground with him, barking orders.

CUT TO:

INT. ABANDONED WAREHOUSE - EVENING

Charlie steps Sully through various dance moves.

CUT TO:

EXT. CITY ROOFTOP - NIGHT

Charlie and Sully do a synchronized rooftop strut, their figures silhouetted against the moon.

CUT TO:

EXT. GRASSY HILL - DAY

Sully is running up another steep hill, this time carrying a full bucket of water in each hand. Charlie jogs alongside the suffering Sully, barking orders into his ears.

CUT TO:

INT. ABANDONED WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

Charlie and Sully work on more dance moves.

CUT TO:

EXT. BEACH - DAY

Charlie stands on the beach with a stop-watch in his hand. In the next instant, Sully sprints past at full speed. Charlie clicks the stop-watch, nods approvingly.

CUT TO:

INT. ABANDONED WAREHOUSE - DAY

Charlie and Sully do more synchronized spins and twirls.

[END SERIES OF SHOTS]

EXT. CITY STREET - DAY

Sully and Charlie walk together down the street. Sully looks worried.

SULLY

Hey, I don't know if I can do this.

CHARLIE

Well you're gonna! You were the one who walked out, remember? He gave you a shot and you let him down. Now it's up to YOU to take the initiative and show him you really want this!

SULLY

Yeah, yeah. I know. I dunno though.

CHARLIE

Guts. Will. Determination. This is where it starts.

Sully and Charlie arrive at the Discovery Theatre. They go inside.

INT. BACKSTAGE AREA - DISCOVERY THEATRE - DAY

Sully and Charlie enter the backstage area. The cast is in the midst of rehearsal.

Pretty-boy, Rob, is again the male lead. Sully seethes when he sees this.

The Director continues his usual haranguing of the dancers. Then, stopping Sully, he comes over.

DIRECTOR

Well, Sully. This is a surprise!

SULLY

Uh.. I shouldn't have done what I done, you know? Maybe you give me another chance, maybe.

The Director says nothing for a moment. Finally:

Sorry, Sully. I just don't think you have the maturity. Or the desire. Good luck.

With that, the Director turns and returns to the cast. Sully is stunned. Finally, Sully turns and runs out. Charlie follows after him.

EXT. ALLEY BEHIND THEATRE - DAY

Once outside, Sully throws a tantrum. He picks up a garbage can and hurls it against a nearby wall. He kicks trash up in the air. He flails his arms and screams. Charlie grabs Sully by the arm.

CHARLIE

What's your problem?!

SULLY

He said I don't want it enough! He says I ain't got no maturity! Who does he think he is, Mr. Big Shot, sayin' I got no maturity?!

Sully rips off his shirt, runs over to pick up an empty crate. He hurls it. Charlie grabs Sully by the ear and drags him over to an empty garage.

INT. EMPTY GARAGE - DAY

CHARLIE

Now that's ENOUGH outta you, boy! You don't get what you want and you throw a fit! Is that how it is?!

SULLY

YEAH!

CHARLIE I got one word for you, Sully!

SULLY

WHAT?!

COOL!

This stops Sully in his tracks. For a moment, he is speechless. He ponders this for a moment.

SULLY

Cool?

CHARLIE

Cool!

SULLY (as if in a trance)

Cool.

CHARLIE

(circling Sully) You been runnin' into brick walls all your life, boy! You been shootin' yourself in the foot! You've blown every break that's come your way! You wanna know why? 'Cause you lack that one certain thing!

SULLY

Leather pants!

CHARLIE

COOL!

SULLY Yeah! That's it! Cool!

Charlie snaps his fingers in rhythm.

CHARLIE

Boy, boy, crazy boy! Get cool, man, really COOL!

Sully starts snapping his fingers in time, his eyes closed, lost in that "cool" feeling. Sully and Charlie snap in rhythm.

Suddenly, Sully loses it—he whirls about, pumps his fists into the air.

SULLY

I wanna ROCK!

Charlie stands fast, points his finger at Sully.

CHARLIE

Rock COOL!

SULLY (throwing air punches) I wanna BOP BOP BA!!

CHARLIE

Bop COOL!

Sully calms down, snapping his fingers in time with Charlie. But a moment later, Sully freaks out again, leaping manically into the air:

SULLY

I WANNA BUST!!

CHARLIE

Bust COOL! Boy, boy, crazy boy, get cool, man, really cool!

Sully is finally getting it. Snapping in rhythm, the twosome start to step coolly in time. Like so, they stroll out of the garage.

EXT. CITY PARK - A LITTLE LATER

Sully is strolling through the city park by himself. He is still in "cool" mode, snapping his fingers, strutting in time, hardly aware of his surroundings.

A sharply dressed young executive, mid-thirties or so, observes Sully walking by. The executive, ED PHILLIPS, follows Sully.

EXT. ANOTHER PART OF CITY PARK - A LITTLE LATER

Sully is still strutting "cool". ED PHILLIPS continues to follow a few paces behind, looking on with great curiosity.

Finally, the young executive catches up with Sully.

Excuse me. Hi!

SULLY

(wheels around) Hey, what're you buggin' me for...?! (catches himself) Hold it. Hold it!

Sully closes his eyes, takes a deep breath.

SULLY

(to himself)

Cooooool.

Sully opens his eyes, warily shakes Ed's hand.

SULLY

Yeah? What do you want?

ΕD

Hi. My name is Ed Phillips. I've been watching you for a while...

SULLY

(backing off in alarm) Hey! WHOA!

ΕD

No, no, it's not that! See, I'm in the advertising business. (hands Sully his card) Our firm just landed a big contract with Graham Candies..

SULLY

Oh yeah! They make them chocolate twisters!

ΕD

Right. Anyway it's like this: Graham Candies wants to expand their market to appeal to "Generation X", if you will. I'm in charge of making that happen. I have to come up with a hot TV ad campaign-- one with an edge!

ΕD

SULLY

Yeah? So what?

ΕD

Well, look, I graduated high school in '78, you know? I'm not exactly up on the latest 4-1-1.

SULLY

Yeah, so what do you want me for?

ΕD

HELLO! How would you like to join my advertising staff? I think you could bring a lot to the table.

SULLY

Aw, I don't do them office potlucks.

ΕD

That's what I'm talkin' about. You're young. You're streetwise. You're kind of a punk. And I sense a lot of attitude there. Attitude sells.

SULLY

That's right! I got attitude!

ΕD

What do ya say? We pay well. Who knows, maybe it'll work into something permanent.

SULLY

You mean.. this would be like me workin' on Madison Avenue and stuff?

ΕD

You got it.

SULLY

Hey, I am THERE!

ΕD

Great! (pointing to business card in Sully's hand) Show up at that address Monday morning at 9 A.M sharp. As Ed departs, Sully pumps his fists into the air.

SULLY

BADA BOOM, BADA BIN!

EXT. RUSSO HOUSE - DAY

Sully tears up the sidewalk to his house.

INT. RUSSO HOUSE - DAY

Sully bursts in through the front door, zooms up the stairs to his room.

SULLY'S ROOM

Sully excitedly dials his phone.

[BEGIN INTER-CUTS]

Charlie picks up on the other end.

CHARLIE

Hello?

SULLY

Hey, Charlie, it's me! You was right! I'm cool for just one hour, and already I got me a job on Madison Avenue!

CHARLIE

What?!

SULLY

Yeah, I'm walkin' in the park and some guy says I got attitude and he gives me a job! I'm startin' Monday!

CHARLIE

Sully, you can't do this! What about the show?! What about your love for dance!

SULLY

Aw, who needs that. I'm a big shot Madison Avenue guy now!

Sully, I beg you-- don't do this!

SULLY Hey, thanks anyway Charlie. You really helped me out, you know? See ya.

Sully hangs up.

[END INTER-CUTS]

INT. LIVING ROOM - RUSSO HOME - MORNING

Papa is seated in his usual chair, reading the paper. Sully comes walking down the stairs decked out in a business suit and carrying a briefcase. Papa looks up.

PAPA

What's with you? This ain't Halloween.

SULLY You can't get under MY skin! I'm goin' to work at my new job on MADISON AVENUE!

Sully departs.

INT. AD AGENCY - DAY

Shot of the plush waiting room of Ed Phillip's ad agency. Sully bursts in through the front door. He walks right up to the attractive RECEPTIONIST.

SULLY

Hey, I'm here to see Ed Phillips. I work here now. Me and him is doin' a commercial. Hey, you want my phone number?

The leery receptionist pages Ed. Ed appears at once.

ED Sully! Good to see you!

SULLY Yeah, yeah. Hey, when's break? Ed laughs.

ED Ready to get started?

SULLY Aw, yeah, I'm psyched. (motions to Receptionist) Hey, you think she likes me, maybe?

Ed laughs again.

ED C'mon. Let's go make advertising history!

[BEGIN SERIES OF SHOTS]

As music plays, there is a series of Shots showing Ed and Sully hard at work on their ad campaign.

SHOT: SULLY DOES DANCE MOVES; ED LOOKS ON, NODS

SHOT: ED GOES OVER CHARTS WITH SULLY AND AD STAFF

SHOT: SULLY GESTURING WILDLY DURING PRESENTATION TO STAFF

SHOT: SULLY AND ED BURNING THE MIDNIGHT OIL, HARD AT WORK

SHOT: SULLY AND ED SNAPPING FINGERS AND WALKING "COOL"

[END SERIES OF SHOTS]

INT. AD AGENCY MEETING ROOM - DAY

The agency meeting room is filled with Graham Candies reps, all seated around the meeting room table.

Ed and Sully enter the room. Ed goes to the front of the room, Sully sits down amongst the Graham Candies execs.

SULLY (to exec next to him) Aw, this is gonna knock you guys out! ΕD

(addressing the room)

Good morning. As you know, Graham Candies has historically appealed to the age seven to ten demographic. While that has been a somewhat lucrative market, it's clear there is room for profit growth.

SHOT: SULLY

SULLY

(to exec next to him) Yeah, what are you guys tryin' to do? Them little punks ain't got no money!

SHOT: ED

Ed points to graph behind him.

ΕD

By making a concentrated effort to appeal to the teen market, we here at The Harlow Agency, believe Graham Candies can see an 83% profit increase over a five-year incremental period.

SHOT: SULLY

SULLY

(to exec next to him) You know what he's talkin' about? Me neither.

SHOT: ED

ΕD

We feel we've come up with a television ad campaign that can indeed appeal to that elusive, but lucrative, teen demographic market. So without further ado, gentlemen..

Ed signals for the ad to be played onscreen.

SHOT: GRAHAM CANDIES COMMERCIAL

The first image is of an old, uptight schoolmarm.

SCHOOLMARM (speaking into camera) Young people should be quiet, dignified, upstanding citizens.

There is a sudden burst of heavy thrash metal, followed by a whirlwind of wild Generation X images—kids going ballistic on bikes, rollerblades, head-banging. The final image is of Sully shaking his face in the camera, making gibberish noises.

> VOICE-OVER Graham Candies is..EXTREEEEEEEME!!!

The commercial ends abruptly on that note.

Beaming with pride, Ed steps back to the front of the room. Sully rocks triumphantly in his chair. The Graham Candies execs look stunned.

ΕD

Comments!

INT. ED PHILLIP'S OFFICE - DAY

Shot of Ed packing his things into a box. Sully comes walking in.

SULLY

Hey, Ed, how'd we do?

ΕD

Well, Sully, take a good look at what I'm doing, and draw your own conclusions.

SULLY

I don't get it.

ED

They didn't like the ad. So I'm gone.

SULLY

Aw, wow, I feel bad! Hey, I'm gonna miss ya. You was really cool!

Well you don't have to miss me, Sully. 'Cause you're gone too.

SULLY

Hey, what FOR?!!

ED Well, there's no more me, so now there's no more you. We were a package deal.

SULLY

AWWWWWWWW!

(pauses) So can I still come here and eat though?

EXT. BRENDA'S HOUSE - DAY

Sully comes sneaking up to the side of Brenda's house. He scurries up a tree at the side of her house.

INT. BRENDA'S ROOM

Brenda sits on her bed, brushing her hair. She hears a knock at her window. She turns around with a start. She sees Sully on the ledge outside her window.

SULLY Hey, baby, you gotta talk to me!

BRENDA

Go away!!

SULLY

Aw, c'mon, I NEED you!

BRENDA

Sully, I don't wanna talk to you. I'm goin' to the bathroom now, so just go on home! Goodbye!

Brenda closes the blinds on Sully. With a huff, she heads down the hall to the bathroom.

UPSTAIRS HALLWAY

ΕD

Brenda heads to the upstairs bathroom. He father dashes in ahead of her.

BRENDA Daddy! I need to take a shower!

BRENDA'S FATHER Emergency, honey. I won't be long.

Brenda's Father closes the door behind him.

INT. BATHROOM

Brenda's Father takes a seat on the throne. Picks up a magazine to read.

EXT. BRENDA'S HOUSE

Sully tip toes towards the upstairs bathroom window.

INT. BATHROOM

As Brenda's Father sits and reads, he suddenly hears a voice coming from the window above him.

SULLY (singing falsetto, to The Who's "See Me, Feel Me") Seeeeeeee meeeeeeee! Touch mee-eee-eeeee!

Brenda's Father's eyes widen in horror. He looks up, sees Sully's chin at the window, though Sully can't pull himself high enough to look down.

SULLY

(singing)

Feel meeeeeeee (pause, now he speaks) Hey sugar cakes. I feel really good Bein' close to you like this. I can Heeeeear you in there...!

BRENDA'S FATHER (bellowing) I'm GONNA KILL YOU! CUT TO:

SHOT: SULLY TUMBLING DOWN FROM TREE, SCURRYING AWAY

INT. DINER - DAY

A dejected-looking Sully plays pinball on the diner's Roy Orbison Pinball Machine. Sully puts in a quarter, out come the balls. He shoots.

Each ball misses its target, disappears down the chutes. When the last ball disappears, Roy Orbison's operatic voice blares out from the machine:

> ROY ORBISON VOICE (singing) It's over, it's over It's o-o-o-o-over! (pause) It's O-O-O-O-OVERRRRR!!!!

Sully pulls out another quarter, puts it in. A ball comes out. He shoots, it misses everything. The machine lights up and Roy's voice blares out.

> ROY ORBISON VOICE (singing) It's over, it's over It's o-o-o-o-over! (pause) It's O-O-O-O-OVERRRRR!!!!

Sully slumps. Charlie enters the diner.

CHARLIE I thought I'd find you here.

SULLY

Yeah, so what?

CHARLIE

You lost your job. You lost your girl. And you lost your place in the dance production. That's quite an accomplishment.

SULLY

Aw, it's over. I'm a loser.

CHARLIE

You know Sully, I've been knocked down, punched out, beat up, kicked in the teeth, chewed up, torn apart and spit out.

SULLY

Wow, you must be some kind of wimp!

CHARLIE

But it's at those moments when I pick myself up off the floor and say to myself those three magic words.

SULLY

I give up?

CHARLIE

The match.. starts... NOW!

SULLY

(as if in a trance) The match..starts.. now.

CHARLIE

That's right. The match starts now.

SULLY

Aw, yeah! (turns to Charlie) I don't get it.

CHARLIE

You wanna turn your life around? You can! It's up to you!

SULLY Yeah, but what do I do?

CHARLIE

It's not too late to get your spot back in the show. You got the guts to go for it? SULLY

Yeah. I do! I got the guts!

CHARLIE

Let's do it!

INT. DISCOVERY THEATRE - NIGHT

The house is packed for opening night.

SHOT: PAPA AND JANET IN SEATS

PAPA What we gotta come here for?

JANET Sully said for us to come, that's why!

PAPA What for? He ain't even in the show!

The lights dim.

JANET

Quiet, daddy!

AUDIENCE P.O.V. - STAGE

Dim, soft lighting on dancers crouched on the floor. They rise slowly, like pods coming to life. Their movements are glacial, dramatic.

WALTER CRONKITE-LIKE NARRATOR (V.O.) For centuries, man has been constantly striving to communicate his thoughts, his wishes, his longings. With that desire for expression came.. The Dance.

SHOT: PAPA AND JANET

PAPA Ho, give me a break! JANET

Hush, Daddy. It took someone a long time to write that!

AUDIENCE P.O.V. - STAGE

The dancers still move slowly, rising to their feet.

WALTER CRONKITE-LIKE NARRATOR (V.O.) Through times of peace, prosperity, wars and famines, the dance has been man's megaphone to the universe. The Dance says, "I exist. I have worth. And I yearn to move free."

The dancers start making howling noises.

WALTER CRONKITE-LIKE NARRATOR (V.O.) But with every act of man's inhumanity to man, The Dance is diminished. With each callous act of violence to our planet, The Dance is diminished. With each mean-spirited piece of legislation by a Republican-led Congress to take away funding for the arts, The Dance is diminished.

SHOT: PAPA AND JANET

PAPA Are they gonna do somethin' or what?

AUDIENCE P.O.V. - STAGE

WALTER CRONKITE-LIKE NARRATOR (V.O.) But tonight, The Dance is here! Ladies and Gentlemen, sit back, relax, and let your spirit become one with... The Dance!

At once the stage lights go up, and the dancers break out into a super funky hip hop dance. The audience erupts.

Rob and Tina take center stage, leading the dancers through their number.

THEATRE DOORS

The doors at the back of the auditorium burst open. In march Sully and Charlie. They march right up to the front of the stage.

SHOT: PAPA AND JANET

JANET

Daddy, look!

PAPA Sully! And Charlie with him!

The Director intercepts Sully and Charlie at the front of the stage. The show temporarily grinds to a halt.

DIRECTOR What do you think you're doin' here?!

SULLY I want my spot back in the show!

DIRECTOR

(to Charlie) And who are YOU?!

CHARLIE

I'm Charlie. I'm here to vouch for Sully. He knows the routine. I've been workin' with him. He's good.

DIRECTOR

(to Sully) And what makes you think I should just give you the lead spot on opening night?!

SULLY

'Cause I got heart! I got electricity!

The Director is torn, he is speechless. Finally, he turns towards the stage.

DIRECTOR Rob. Sit this one out.

MALE LEAD What are you sayin' to me?!

You heard me. Take the night off. (snaps his fingers)

At that moment, floor elevator lowers under Male Lead's feet, taking him down under the stage. He is gone.

DIRECTOR All right, Sully. You got the lead. And you better not screw up!

The Director goes off to the wings.

CHARLIE (to Sully) Just like we practiced.

Sully bounds onto the stage.

SHOT: JANET AND PAPA

Janet bounces in her seat, cheers wildly.

AUDIENCE P.O.V. - STAGE

Sully bounds up to Tina, grabs her.

SULLY Here we go! Me an' you!

The music starts up, the dancers move. Sully and Tina start dancing together, but just a few steps in, Sully spins Tina around, hurls her into the wings.

Sully goes into an electrifying solo dance. The crowd comes alive.

SHOT: DIRECTOR AND CO-DIRECTOR WATCHING FROM WINGS

DIRECTOR

What's he doing?!

CO-DIRECTOR He's taking over!

He's going off the script! He's free lancing! He's destroying everything I dedicated my entire life to build! (pause)

I LOVE IT!!

AUDIENCE P.O.V. - STAGE

Sully continues his amazing solo: he struts, twirls, shimmies, he takes a flying leap...

Sully lands on his ankle. He crumples to the floor, howling in pain. The music stops abruptly. The crowd gasps.

The Director runs out.

DIRECTOR What's goin' on?! What happened?!

SULLY I think I twisted it!

DIRECTOR

Oh no! The show is over! I got no male lead!

At that moment, Charlie steps out from the wings.

CHARLIE

Sir. I can do it.

DIRECTOR

YOU?!

CHARLIE

I know the routine. Sully and I have been working on it for weeks.

SULLY

Aw, yeah! Charlie here is great! He danced at Woodstock!

The Director just stares at Charlie, aghast. Finally:

All right. You got the lead. But you better show me something, soldier boy! Or you're out!

The Director struts off to the wings. The dancers take their places again. The music starts.

Charlie struts to center stage, stripped down to his Tshirt and fatigue pants. He starts to move. He struts, he twirls, he breaks. Charlie electrifies the crowd!

SHOT: PAPA AND JANET

PAPA Charlie! Say it ain't so!

AUDIENCE P.O.V. - STAGE

Charlie dazzles, completely brings the house down.

SHOT: DIRECTOR AND CO-DIRECTOR WITH HANDS OVER HEARTS

CO-DIRECTOR

The few.

DIRECTOR

The proud!

AUDIENCE P.O.V. - STAGE

When the number ends, Charlie strikes a final pose to a standing ovation. Sully applauds wildly.

At that point the applauding audience parts, and Brenda is standing there in the aisle.

SULLY

Brenda!

The crowd quiets.

BRENDA You done good, Sully. I'm impressed.

SULLY

Aw yeah! Me and you can get together! I'm a big hot-shot now!

Brenda folds her arms, shakes her head.

BRENDA You still don't get it, do you, Sully?

Brenda turns and starts walking back up the aisle.

SULLY No, baby, don't go! Aw, NO! What can I do?!

At that moment, a black man in his fifties or so steps out of the audiences and confronts Sully.

> R & B SINGER Son, I'm gonna spell it out for ya.

With that, the music of 8th Day's 1971 R & B hit "Crawl Before You Walk" starts up. The man starts to sing, addressing Sully directly:

R & B SINGER

I got a story to tell you about a little girl I loved when I wanted to Once I stayed away too long And when I showed up again this is what she put me through

And she said You've got to crawl before you walk back into these arms of mine That's what she said You've got to crawl, before you walk back into these arms of mine

Sully starts to go after Brenda, pleading with her.

R & B SINGER But oh, my pride was much too strong And I couldn't get down on my knees and say that I was wrong! She said, break down! At this point, Sully and Brenda are virtually acting out the lyrics. The singer continues:

> R & B SINGER You've got too much pride for one man So I swallowed my pride Yes, I did, yes I did And I broke down on my left knee

Sully drops to his left knee before Brenda. Singer continues:

R & B SINGER And I kinda looked around, to see if anyone was lookin'

As if on cue, Sully looks around to see if anyone is looking. Singer continues:

 $$\rm R\ \&\ B\ SINGER$$ Then I broke down on my right knee

Sully falls to his right knee.

R & B SINGER And you know what I did? I CRAWWWWLED...!

DANCING CAST (singing background) Before you walk, Back into my baby's arms...

As the song closes out, Sully and Brenda are in each other's arms. Audience and cast members alike continue to dance.

FADE OUT