RIFF (other jets may be asked to read this too)

RIFF

But what?

TONY

You won't dig it.

RIFF

Try me.

TONY

O.K. Every single damn night for the last month, I wake up and I'm reaching out.

RIFF

For what?

TONY

I don't know, it's right outside the door, around the corner. But it's comin'!

RIFF

What is? Tell me!

TONY

I don't know! It's — like the kick I used to get from being a Jet.

RIFF

(Quietly)

...Or from being buddies.

TONY

We're still buddies.

START

RIFF

The kick comes from people, buddy boy.

TONY

Yeah, but not from being a Jet.

RIFF

Well, without a gang you're an orphan. With a gang you walk in twos, threes, fours. And when your gang is the best, when you're a Jet, buddy boy, you're out in the sun and home free home!
TONY

I've had it.  
(Pause)

RIFF

Tony, the trouble is large: the Sharks bite hard!  
We got to stop them now and we need you!  
(Pause. Quietly)

I never asked the time of day from a clock, but I'm asking you:  
Come to the dance tonight...  
(TONY turns away)

... I already told the gang you'd be there.  

TONY

(After a beat, turns to him with a grin)

What time?

RIFF

Ten?

TONY

Ten it is.

RIFF

Womb to tomb!

TONY

Sperm to worm! And I'll live to regret this.

RIFF

Who knows? Maybe what you're waitin' for'll be twitching at the dance!  
(HE runs off)
ANITA
She has a mother. Also a father.

BERNARDO
They do not know this country any better than she does.

ANITA
You do not know it at all! Girls here are free to have fun. She-is-in-America-now.

BERNARDO
(Exaggerated)
But Puerto-Rico-is-in-America-now!

ANITA
(In disgust)
Ail

BERNARDO
(Cooing)
Anita Josefina Teresita —

ANITA
It's plain Anita now —

BERNARDO
(Continuing through)
Beatrice del Carmen Marguerita etcetera etcetera —

ANITA
Immigrant!

BERNARDO
(Pulling her to him)
Thank God, you can't change your hair!

PEPE
(Fondling CONSUELO'S bleached mop)
Is that possible?
Tony

**BERNARDO**

Television!

Compatible color!

And a king-sized bed.

*(Grabs ANITA)*

Come on.

**ANITA**

*(Mimicking)*

Come on.

**BERNARDO**

Well, are you or aren't you?

**ANITA**

Well, are you or aren't you?

**BERNARDO**

Well, are you?

**ANITA**

You have your big, important War Council. The Council or me?

**BERNARDO**

First one, then the other.

**ANITA**

*(Breaking away from him)*

I am an American girl now. I don't wait.

**BERNARDO**

*(To CHINO)*

Back home, women know their place.

**ANITA**

Back home, little boys don't have war councils.
BERNARDO

You want me to be an American?

(To the boys)

Vaminos, chicos, es tarde.

(A mock bow)

Buenas noches, Anita, Josefina del Carmen, etcetera, etcetera, etcetera.

(EXIT with BOYS)

ROSALIA

That's a very pretty name: Etcetera.  end

# 7 — America

(Anita, Rosalia, Shark Girls)

ANITA

Ah!

CONSUELA

She means well.

ROSALIA

We have many pretty names at home.

ANITA

(Mimicking)

At home, at home. If it's so nice "at home," why don't you go back there?

ROSALIA

I would like to —

(A look from ANITA)

just for a successful visit.

(SHE SINGS)

PUERTO RICO...
YOU LOVELY ISLAND...
ISLAND OF TROPICAL BREEZES.
ALWAYS THE PINEAPPLES GROWING,
ALWAYS THE COFFEE BLOSSOMS BLOWING...
DOC

(Unhappily)

Good-evening, Lt. Schrank. I and Tony was just closing up.

SCHRANK

(Lifting a pack of cigarettes)

Mind?

DOC

I have no mind. I am the village idiot.

SCHRANK

(Lighting it)

I always make it a rule to smoke in the can. And what else is a room with half-breeds in it, eh, Riff?

(BERNARDO'S move is checked by RIFF.

SCHRANK, pleasantly:)

Clear out, Spics. Sure; it's a free country and I ain't got the right. But it's a country with laws: and I can find the right. I got the badge, you got the skin. It's tough all over. Beat it!

(A second. Then RIFF nods once to BERNARDO who nods to his
GANG. Slowly, THEY file out. BERNARDO starts to whistle "My
Country 'Tis of Thee" as he EXITS proudly. His GANG joins in,
finishing a sardonic jazz lick OFFSTAGE.

SCHRANK, pleasantly)

From their angle, sure. Say, where's the rumble gonna be? Ah, look: I know regular Americans don't rub with the gold-teeth otherwise. The river? The Park?

(Silence)

I'm for you. I want this beat cleaned up and you can do it for me. I'll even lend a hand if it gets rough. Where you gonna rumble? The playground? Sweeney's lot?

(Angered by the silence)

Ya think I'm a lousy stool pigeon? I wanna help ya get rid of them! Come on! Where's it gonna be? ... Get smart, you stupid hoodlums! I oughta fine ya for litterin' the streets. You oughta be taken down the station house and have your skulls mashed to a pulp! You and the tin horn immigrant scum you come from! How's your old man's DT's, A-rab? How's the action on your mother's mattress, Action?
(ACTION lunges for him but is tripped up by RIFF. SCHRANK crouches low, ready for him.

Quiet now:)

Let him go, buddy boy, just let him go.

(ACTION starts to his feet but DIESEL holds him)

One of these days there won’t be nobody to hold you.

(RIFF deliberately starts for the door, followed by the OTHERS, except TONY.

As they go:)

I’ll find out where ya gonna rumble. But be sure to finish each other off. Because if you don’t I will! — END

(RIFF has stayed at the door until the OTHERS have passed through. Now he just looks at SCHRANK and cockily saunters out. Silence.

SCHRANK looks at DOC)

Well, you try keepin’ hoodlums in line and see what it does to you.

(EXITs)

DOC

It wouldn’t give me a mouth like his.

# 88 — Under Dialogue And Change Of Scene (Orchestra)

TONY

Forget him. From here on in, everything goes my way.

(Starts to clean up, turn out lights)

DOC

You think it’ll really be a fair fight?

TONY

Yeah.

DOC

What have you been taking tonight?
Maria, in a smock, is hand-sewing a wedding veil as Anita whirs in whipping off her smock)

Anita

She's gone! That old bag of a bruja has gone!

Maria

Brava!

Anita

The day is over, the jail is open, home we go!

Maria

You go, querida. I will lock up.

Anita

Finish tomorrow. Come!

Maria

But I am in no hurry.

Anita

I am. I'm going to take a bubble bath all during supper: Black Orchid.

Maria

You will not eat?

Anita

After the rumble — with 'Nardo.

Maria

(Sewing angrily)

That rumble, why do they have it?

Anita

You saw how they dance: like they have to get rid of something quick. That's how they fight.

Maria

To get rid of what?
ANITA

Too much feeling. And they get rid of it: after a fight, that brother of yours is so healthy! Definitely: Black Orchid. **END**

*(Knock at rear door and TONY ENTERS)*

TONY

Buenas noches!

ANITA

*(Sarcastically, to MARIA)*

"You go, querida. I'll lock up."

*(To TONY)*

It's too early for noches. Buenas tardes.

TONY

*(Bows)*

Gracias. Buenas tardes.

MARIA

He just came to deliver aspirin.

ANITA

You'll need it.

TONY

No, we're out of the world.

ANITA

You're out of your heads.

TONY

We're twelve feet in the air.

MARIA

*(Gently taking his hand)*

Anita can see all that.

*(To ANITA)*

You will not tell?
(SHE follows CONSUELA into the parlor as CHINO ENTERS from OFFSTAGE. His clothes are dirty and torn from the fight; his face is smeared. THEY shake their heads at him and flounce out. HE closes the outer door)

CHINO

Maria...?

MARIA

I'm in here. I was just getting ready to —

(SHE is hurriedly trying to put a bathrobe over her dress. CHINO comes in before she can finish, so that she leaves it over her shoulders, holding it closed with her hand)

CHINO

Where are your parents?

MARIA

At the store. If I had known you were — You have been fighting, Chino.

CHINO

Yes, I am sorry.

MARIA

That is not like you.

CHINO

No.

MARIA

Why, Chino?

CHINO

I don’t know why. It happened so fast.

MARIA

You must wash up.

CHINO

Maria —
MARIA

You can go in there.

CHINO

In a minute. Maria... at the rumble —

MARIA

There was no rumble.

CHINO

There was.

MARIA

You are wrong.

CHINO

No, there was. Nobody meant for it to happen...

MARIA

...Tell me.

CHINO

It's bad.

MARIA

Very bad.

CHINO

(Nods)

You see...

(Moves closer to her, helplessly)

MARIA

It will be easier if you say it very fast.

CHINO

(Nods)

There was a fight —

(SHE nods)

And 'Nardo —
(SHE nods)

And somehow a knife — and 'Nardo and someone —

(HE takes her hand)

MARIA

Tony, What happened to Tony?

(The name stops CHINO. HE drops her hand: the robe opens, showing that she is dressed)

Tell me!

(Crudely, CHINO yanks off the robe, revealing her dressed to go out)

Chino, is Tony all right?!

CHINO

He killed your brother. END.

(HE walks into the parlor, slamming the door behind him. A moment, then:)

MARIA

You are lying.

(CHINO has started to leave the parlor, but turns back now, swiftly searches behind furniture and comes up with an object wrapped in the same color as BERNARDO'S shirt. From the bedroom, louder:).

You are lying, Chino!

(Coldly, CHINO unwraps a gun which he puts in his pocket. There is the SOUND OF A POLICE SIREN at distance. HE goes out. During this, MARIA has knelt before the shrine on the wall. SHE rocks back and forth in prayer, some of it in Spanish, some of it in English:)

Make it not be true... please make it not be true... I will do anything: make me die... Only please — make it not be true.

(As she prays, TONY appears at the fire escape window and quietly climbs in. His shirt is ripped, almost half-torn off. He stands still, limp, watching her. Aware that someone is in the room, she stops her prayers. Slowly, her head turns; she looks at him for a long moment. Then, almost in one spring, she is on him, her fists beating his chest as:)

Killer killer killer killer killer —
(SHE nods)
And somehow a knife — and 'Nardo and someone —

(HE takes her hand)

MARIA

Tony. What happened to Tony?

(The name stops CHINO. HE drops her hand; the robe opens, showing that she is dressed)

Tell me!

(Crudely, CHINO yanks off the robe, revealing her dressed to go out)

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Start— Make it not be true... please make it not be true... I will do anything; make me die... Only please — make it not be true.

(As she prays, TONY appears at the fire escape window and quietly climbs in. His shirt is ripped, almost half-torn off. He stands still, limp, watching her. Aware that someone is in the room, she stops her prayers. Slowly, her head turns; she looks at him for a long moment. Then, almost in one spring, she is on him, her fists beating his chest as:)

Killer killer killer killer killer —
# 13 — Under Dialogue

(But her voice breaks into tears, her arms go about him, and she buries her face in his chest, kissing him. She begins to slide down his body. He supports her as, together, they go to the floor, he cradling her body in his arms. He pushes her hair back from her face; kisses her hair, her face between the words that tumble out:)

**TONY**

I tried to stop it; I did try. I don’t know how it went wrong... I didn’t mean to hurt him; I didn’t want to; I didn’t know I had. But Riff... Riff was like my brother. So when Bernardo killed him —

*(She lifts her head)*

‘Nardo didn’t mean it, either. Oh, I know he didn’t! Oh, no. I didn’t come to tell you. Just for you to forgive me so I could go to the police —

**MARIA**

No!

**TONY**

It’s easy now —

**MARIA**

No...

**TONY**

Whatever you want, I’ll do —

**MARIA**

Stay. Stay with me.

**TONY**

I love you so much.

**MARIA**

Tighter.

**TONY**

We’ll be all right. I know it. We’re really together now.

**MARIA**

But it’s not us! It’s everything around us!
TONY

(His voice gradually rising into song)

Then we’ll find someplace where nothing can get to us; not one of them, not anything.

# 13A - Ballet Sequence  (Tony, Maria)

AND I’LL TAKE YOU AWAY,
TAKE YOU FAR FAR AWAY OUT OF HERE,
FAR FAR AWAY TILL THE WALLS
AND THE STREETS DISAPPEAR,

MARIA, TONY

SOMEBEERE THERE MUST BE A PLACE
WE CAN FEEL WE’RE FREE,
SOMEBEERE THERE’S GOT TO BE
SOME PLACE FOR YOU AND FOR ME.

(As they sing, the walls of the apartment begin to move off, leaving city walls surrounding them moving in on them)

# 13B - Transition To Scherzo  (Orchestra)

# 13C - Scherzo  (Orchestra)

Then the apartment itself goes and the two LOVERS begin to run, battering against the walls of the city, breaking through as chaotic figures of the gangs, of the violence flail around them. But they do break through and suddenly — they are in a world of space and air and sun. They stop, looking at it, pleased, startled as BOYS and GIRLS from both sides come on. And they, too, stop and stare, happy, pleased.

Their clothes are soft, pastel versions of what they have worn before. They begin to dance, to play: no sides, no hostility now; just joy and pleasure and warmth. More and more join, making a world that TONY and MARIA want to be in, belong to, to share their love with. As they begin the steps of a gently love dance, a GIRL is heard SINGING:)
You make this world lousy!

ACTION

That's the way we found it, Doc.

DOC

Get out of here!

(Slowly, THEY start to file out as the LIGHTS fade)

END OF SCENE FOUR

SCENE FIVE

(Cellar.

Cramped: a box or crate; part of stairs leading to the drugstore above; a door to the outside.

TONY is sitting on a crate, whistling “Maria” as DOC comes down the stairs, some bills in his hand)

TONY

Make a big sale?

DOC

No.

TONY

(Taking the money DOC holds out automatically)

Thanks. I’ll pay you back as soon as I can.

DOC

Forget that.

TONY

I won’t; I couldn’t. Doc, you know what we’re going to do in the country, Maria and me? We’re going to have kids and we’ll name them all after you, even the girls. Then when you come to visit —

DOC

(Slapping him)

Wake up!
(Raging)
Is that the only way to get through to you? Do just what you all do? Bust like a hot water pipe?

TONY

Doc, what’s gotten –

DOC

(Over-riding angrily)
Why do you live like there’s a war on?

(Low)
Why do you kill?

TONY

I told you how it happened, Doc. Maria understands. Why can’t you?

DOC

I never had a Maria.

TONY

(Gently)
I have, and I’ll tell you one thing, Doc. Even if it only lasts from one night to the next, it’s worth the world.

DOC

That’s all it did last.

TONY

What?

DOC

That was no customer upstairs, just now. That was Anita.

(Pause)
Maria is dead. Chino found out about you and her — and shot her.

(A brief moment. TONY looks at DOC, stunned, numb. HE shakes his head as though he cannot believe this. DOC holds out his hands to him but TONY backs away, then suddenly turns and runs out the door. As he does, the set flies away and the stage goes dark. In the darkness, we hear:)

end