

SCENE NINE

Bernardo or Sharks character - read his lines

(Under the highway.

A dead end: rotting plaster-and-brick walls and mesh wire fences.

A street lamp.

It is nightfall. The almost-silhouetted GANGS come in from separate sides: climbing over the fences or crawling through holes in the walls. There is silence as they fan out on opposite sides of the cleared space. Then BERNARDO and DIESEL remove their jackets, handing them to their seconds: CHINO and RIFF)

BERNARDO

Ready.

CHINO

Ready!

DIESEL

Ready.

RIFF

Ready! Come center and shake hands.

BERNARDO

For what?

RIFF

That's how it's done, buddy boy.

BERNARDO

More gracious living? Look: I don't go for that pretend crap you all go for in this country. Every one of you hates every one of us and we hate you right back. I don't drink with nobody I hate, I don't shake hands with nobody I hate. Let's get at it.

RIFF

Okay.

BERNARDO

(Moving toward CENTER)

Here we go.

(DIESEL begins to move toward him. There are encouragements called from each side. The "fair fight" is just beginning when.)

TONY

Hold it!

(HE leaps over a fence and starts to BERNARDO)

ACTION

Your old man says what?

BABY JOHN

My old man says them Puerto Ricans is ruinin' free ennaprise.

ACTION

And what're we doin' about it?

(Pushing through the gang comes a scrawny teenage girl, dressed in an outfit that is a pathetic attempt to imitate that of the JETS. Perhaps we have glimpsed her in the fracas before the police came in. Her name:)

ANYBODYS

Gassin', crabbin' --

ACTION

You still around?

ANYBODYS

Lissen, I was a smash in that fight. Oh, Riff, I was murder!

RIFF

Come on, Anybodys --

ANYBODYS

Riff, how about me gettin' in the gang now?

A-RAB

How about the gang gettin' in -- ahhh, who'd wanta!

ANYBODYS

You cheap beast!

(Lunges for A-RAB but RIFF pulls her off and pushes her out)

RIFF

The road, little lady, the road.

(In a moment of bravado, just before she goes, ANYBODYS spits -- but cautiously)

Round out!

(This is RIFF'S beckoning of the gang, and THEY surround him)

We fought hard for this territory and it's ours. But with those cops servin' as cover, the PRs can move in right under our noses and take it away. UNLESS we speed fast and clean 'em up in one all-out fight!

MARIA - read Maria

Female ~~MARIA~~ ^{Sharks} read ANITA

SCENE SEVEN

(Bridal Shop.

Not late afternoon sun coloring the work room. One or two sewing machines. Several dressmaker dummies, male and female, in bridal party garb.

MARIA, in a smock, is hand-sewing a wedding veil as ANITA whirls 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. No shower tonight. I'm taking over the bathroom for a long hot bath during supper.

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?

Schränk

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WEST SIDE STORY - SCHOOL EDITION

KRUPKE

Knock it off! Settle down.

SCHRANK

All right. Kill each other! ...But not on my beat.

RIFF

(Such innocence)

Why if it isn't Lt. Schränk!

SEVERAL JETS

(Dancing class manners)

Top of the day, Officer Krupke.

SCHRANK

Pitiful what you Puerto Ricans have done to this neighborhood.
Which one of 'em clobbered ya, A-rab?

(A-RAB looks to RIFF who takes over with great helpful seriousness)

RIFF

As a matter of factuality, sir, we suspicion the job was done by a cop.

BIG DEAL

Two cops.

A-RAB

Oh, at least!

KRUPKE

Impossible!

SCHRANK

Didn't nobody tell you there's a difference between bein' a stool pigeon and cooperatin' with the law?

RIFF

You told us the difference, sir. And we all chipped in for a prize for the first guy who can figure it out.

ACTION

(Indicating SCHRANK)

Maybe buddy boy should get the prize.

SCHRANK

Don't buddy boy me, Action! I got a hot surprise for you: you hoodlums don't own the streets. There's been too much raiding between you and the PRs. All right, Bernardo, get your trash outa here.

TONY

(TONY releases him and climbs back up)

Now go play nice with the Jets. TONY

The Jets are the greatest! RIFF

Were. TONY

Are. You found something better? RIFF

No. But — TONY

But what? RIFF

You won't dig it. TONY

Try me. RIFF

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

For what? RIFF

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

What is? Tell me! RIFF

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

(Quietly) RIFF

...Or from being buddies. TONY

We're still buddies. RIFF

The kick comes from people, buddy boy.

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Remove Jet character - read anybody

ACTION

(Eagerly)
A rumble!
(A jabbing gesture)
Chung! Chung!

RIFF

Cool, Action boy. The Sharks want a place, too, and they are tough. They might ask for bottles or knives or zip guns.

BABY JOHN

Zip guns... Gee!

RIFF

I'm not finalizing and saying they will: I'm only saying they might and we gotta be prepared. Now what's your mood?

ACTION

I say go, go!

BIG DEAL

But if they say knives or guns --

BABY JOHN

I say let's forget the whole thing.

SNOWBOY

What do you say, Riff?

RIFF

I say this turf is small, but it's all we got. I wanna hold it like we always held it: with skin! But if they say switchblades, I'll get a switchblade. I say I want the Jets to be Number One, to sail, to hold the sky!

DIESEL

Then rev us off:

(A punching gesture)
Voom-va-voom!

ACTION

Chung chung!

A-RAB

(Gesture)
Cracko jacko!