

SIDE

HELVETICA (BUD). Words?!

(GUTENBERG pushes her out of his way.)

GUTENBERG (DOUG). Words!

~~AH! NOW THAT I'M DONE
 GET READY TO READ!
 THIS WILL BE GOING DOWN IN HISTORY
 REMEMBER MY FACE!
 NOW THERE'S A GLIMMER IN SCHLIMMER..
 AND THAT GLIMMER IS ME!
 G-U-T-E-N-B-E-R-G!
 (Spoken in rhythm.) YEAH!~~

(After applause, BUD and DOUG address the audience:)

DOUG. History!

← START *

BUD. I'd just like to say, it was pretty scary setting the most important moment in history to music.

DOUG. Well, you did a great job.

BUD. Well, you wrote me a great story.

(Beat of mutual admiration. DOUG is overwhelmed and goes "off-script.")

DOUG. (To BUD.) This is awesome!

BUD. (To DOUG.) We're doing it!

DOUG. I just want to say - I'm gonna go off-script for a second.

BUD. Do it. Go off-script.

DOUG. (To the audience.) I'm going off script. I just want to say that when I'm singing that song, I'm singing about this giant moment for Gutenberg, but I'm thinking about - (To BUD.) Do you know what I'm thinking about?

BUD. I have no idea and I don't want to guess.

DOUG. The day of our miracle!

BUD. Miracle -? Oh boy, that's not -

DOUG. (*To audience.*) Bud brought a dead lady back to life.

BUD. Oh no, I didn't.

DOUG. He did! Here's the story - Bud and I used to work at a nursing home.

BUD. We still do.

DOUG. Yes. But we used to do these lip sync concerts for people in wheelchairs.

BUD. They are such a great audience.

DOUG. It's mostly the classics - ya know, Frank Sinatra, James Brown, Cynthia Lauper -

BUD. But we take requests!

DOUG. Yes! And one day, from the back of the room, this poker named Fran McCallister -

BUD. Wait, Doug, they don't know what a poker is, you have to tell them.

DOUG. Oh, right - In nursing home lingo, we call someone a "poker" if you have to "poke her" to make sure she's still alive.

BUD. Fran McCallister was our oldest poker.

DOUG. She had not said a single word in over a *year*. She just sat there in her wheelchair, grippin' those arms with her face frozen like GRRRRRRR -

BUD. She was praying for death.

DOUG. Oh, clearly. So - there we are, asking for requests when suddenly, out of nowhere, comes this voice that sounds like it's from the pit of hell -

BUD. "DOOOON'T CRYYYYY FRENCHY!"

DOUG. It was Fran McCallister!

BUD. I thought she was possessed by the devil.

DOUG. I still think she might have been. But she was requesting a song, so I looked up "Don't Cry Frenchy" and...it's from *World War One*.

BUD. The original.

DOUG. Now, of course, we didn't have a lip-sync track for "Don't Cry Frenchy." And even if we did -

BUD. It was probably racist.

DOUG. Yes. Most old songs are racist. So - there I am, about to tell this woman who *never* talks, and has no hope left, that we are not going to be able to lip-sync to her favorite ancient racist song when Bud, outta nowhere, starts *singing* -

BUD. I don't know what it was. Something came over me.

DOUG. He *made up* a song! Out of *nothing*. He just made it up! Sing it, Bud. Just like you did that day. You be you and I'll be Fran McAllister.

(**DOUG** sits and acts out being immobilized in a wheelchair as **BUD** sings - to the tune of "We Eat Dreams" - "Where our little lives," etc.)

[MUSIC NO. 5A - DON'T CRY FRENCHY]

BUD.

PLEASE DON'T CRY MY LITTLE FRENCHY,
PLEASE DON'T CRY
DON'T YOU WORRY, LITTLE FRENCHY,
YOU WON'T DIE
WELL NOT TODAY

- skip next page

~~(As BUD sings, DOUG - as old Fran McAllister - dramatically starts to move, then to clap and then he stands, clapping -!)~~

BUD.

'CAUSE WE'RE HERE FROM THE U-S-A!

~~(DOUG - still as Fran - applauds wildly. Then, he turns to the audience, excited -)~~ ***START***

DOUG. She *stood up!* Out of her wheelchair! Bud *healed* her! His music healed her!

BUD. Briefly.

DOUG. Yes, she died two days later, but she died *happy*. And it was all 'cause of Bud.

BUD. No.

DOUG. Yes! It wasn't even the song she asked for! It was something new - something she wanted and she didn't even know it yet. That's what made it a miracle.

BUD. It wasn't a miracle.

DOUG. Well it was a miracle for me, 'cause when Bud made up that song - I knew right then and there that things were gonna change. And not just change - they were gonna get better. For both of us.

BUD. And hey...look at us now. We wrote a musical! Even Johann Gutenberg couldn't do that.

DOUG. (*Affectionate.*) Well, he never tried...'cause they hadn't invented pianos.

(*Then, pivoting out.*) Okay, I'm going back on script.

BUD. Do it. Go back on script.

DOUG. Now - you're probably sitting there and thinking to yourself: "Wait a minute, a wine presser invented the printing press?"

BUD. Makes sense! He was already familiar with *pressing* things.

DOUG. (*Question and answer for the audience's benefit.*)
What is the difference between a wine press and a printing press? One makes you drink, the other makes you think.

BUD. And that was almost a lyric.

DOUG. I think it should have been.

BUD. Meh. Now, Gutenberg is amazing, but unless I'm crazy, he's not the only character in this show.

DOUG. You're not crazy! (*Stage direction.*) Scene Five: The Streets of Schlimmer.

— **STOP!**
[MUSIC NO. 6 - I CAN'T READ (REPRISE)]

BUD. (*Stage direction.*) The sky is sad and the air smells like trash. Young Monk is walking in the rain.

~~(**YOUNG MONK (DOUG)** still has the pencil sticking out of his chest. **DOUG** simply holds it there. **BUD** creates rain over his head with a spray bottle.)~~

~~**YOUNG MONK (DOUG).** (*Walking in place.*)~~

~~I'M JUST TOO DUMB TO UNDERSTAND
WHY HE TREATS ME LIKE A DOG
AND LIKE A DOG~~

~~I - I CAN'T READ
BUT IF I COULD READ
I COULD GET A DIFF'RENT JOB
WHY CAN'T SOMEONE TEACH ME HOW TO READ?~~

~~[MUSIC NO. 6A - BOOTBLACK SHOP
UNDERScore]~~

~~**BUD.** (*Stage direction.*) Young Monk enters the Bootblack shop.~~