

MORE THAN THIS

A MUSICAL ABOUT THE VOICES WITHIN THE AFRICAN DIASPORA

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ACT I

SCENE 1

-SCENE STARTS 10YRS EARLIER.

-CURTAIN OPENS TO THE 4 YOUNG GIRLS DAYDREAMING IN SONG.

Mukisa and her mom are in Mukisa's room talking as her mom is getting ready for work.

Mukisa's Mom: Mukisa!

Young Mukisa: Wangi!

Mukisa's Mom: I'm going to work right now but make sure you do your homework, 'kay?

Young Mukisa: Already done!

Mukisa's Mom: Everything? Did you study?

Young Mukisa: Yeeessss, and I made the honor roll too!

Mukisa's Mom: Oooh Congs'! You will make a fine doctor one day.

Young Mukisa: Yea a "fine doctor" *unenthusiastically*

Young Mukisa: Are you working tomorrow?

Mukisa's Mom: Yes I am, I have these 16hr shifts all week...

Young Mukisa: Well don't forget my award ceremony is on Wednesday!

Mukisa's Mom: Of course not! Mhhmmm, my daughter will do amazing things! Mukama Akuume~

Young Mukisa: May God bless you too, Mommy.

Switches to Arraweelo's family

Arra's Mom: Why are you reading this kind of book?

Young Arra: Because I want to be the smartest in the world!

Arra's Mom: That's nice but you know women in our culture do not go to college. That is not our role.

Young Arra: But I like school!

Arra's Mom: I know. School is important, yes, but only the basics until college. **That one** you won't need to do because of your duties.

Young Arra: *whispers to self* My duties do not follow your traditional duties *raspberry sound*

Switches to Ajani's family

Ajani's Mom: 'Jani we gotta go, okay? Just get your backpack ready for school.

Young Ajani: Mamma I don't wanna go to school...*tough whining*

Ajani's Mom: Since when???

Young Ajani: Since I found out I can make my own dough with **my own smarts**.

Ajani's Mom: And how you gon' do that?

Young Ajani: You'll see! All I have to do is use my smarts and talk like this *basic white girl imitation* Why

thank you for giving me the best reader award of the year!

Ajani's Mom: And why are you talking like that?

Young Ajani: Since they told me I be talkin' the "wrong english?" **she asks in frustration** How'd you teach me the **wrong english!?**

Ajani's Mom: 'Scuse me miss??? Your english is just fine.

Young Ajani: So then why they be sayin' I talk "ghetto"?

Ajani's Mom: Because they ignorant. It's called ebonics- it's **our** dialect.

Young Ajani: So do all black people speak like us? **with enthusiasm**

Ajani's Mom: Ajani. Black and African-American are two different people.

Young Ajani: But we all look the same-

Ajani's Mom: Yes, but it's our histories that are different. Listen, in this world you gotta know your roots. We didn't choose to be in this country and like I said before, there is a reason we speak the way we do. That's why it's so important to keep learning or the system will get you.

Young Ajani: The system???

Young Ajani: That's right baby we in- but we gotta save that for another time. Now get yo backpack please, we gonna be late.

Switches to Angela's family

ANGELA's Mom: *struggling to do Angela's hair* I'm just trying to get this little curly in place.

YOUNG ANGELA: Mommy that hurts!

ANGELA's Mom: I know but your hair is just so thick and curly.

YOUNG ANGELA: Ow! Mommy can we just straighten it?

ANGELA's Mom: Hmm but no! I've been reading books and asking my friends how to take care of it *as she continues to struggle doing Angela's hair.

YOUNG ANGELA: But it's not working. Ow! *continues to complain*

ANGELA's Mom: All done!

YOUNG ANGELA: Aaahhh! Mommy no! This looks like a bird's nest!

ANGELA's Mom: Really? I think it looks hip and cool!

YOUNG ANGELA: Ohhh, Mommy no...and it's picture day *sulking*

OPENING SONG: ONE DAY.....MUKISA, AJANI, ANGELA, ARRAWEELO

YOUNG ARRAWEELO: *spotlight* One day, I'll be on the top of the world! So that my parents can see me for me..

YOUNG ANGELA: *while playing dolls (one black; one white) plus spotlight* One day, I hope to not feel "different" anymore. Like "What are you?"..why do people need to ask me **that** question.

YOUNG AJ: *spotlight* OOOO WEEEE, imma be a boss so that means one day imma be so rich; it'll be raining dough everywhere I walk.

YOUNG MUKISA: *spotlight* One day Mommy won't have to work hard anymore because I'm going to be famous.

ALL

ONE DAY I'LL BE FREEEEEE

YOUNG MUKISA

ONE DAY WE WILL BE A BIG, HAPPY FAMILY
THIS I'LL ALWAYS BELIEVE

YOUNG ANGELA

ONE DAY, I WON'T BE ASKED IF I'M WHITE OR JUST BLACK.
SOMEDAY PEOPLE WILL JUST SEE ME

YOUNG Arraweeolo

AND IT'S ALL ABOUT WHERE I'M FROM;
REPRESENTIN' FOR THE ONES WHO CAN'T BE HERE

YOUNG AJANI

AND THE DAY THEY SEE WHAT I'M ABOUT
THEY'LL NEVER QUESTION WHERE I'M MEANT TO BE

ALL

ONE DAY, IT'LL BE OUR TIME TO SHINE.

YOUNG MUKISA

NO MORE TEARS

YOUNG AJANI

AND NO MORE LIES

YOUNG ANGELA/YOUNG ARRAWEELO

WHEN THAT DAY COMES, NO MORE FIGHTS

TRANSITIONING TO PRESENT-DAY

ALL:

They'll never believe it,
They'll never know it
They'll never see...until I achieve!

AJANI

ONE DAY, ANY DAY NOW
WILL BE MY TIME TO SHOW OUT,

*JUST GOTTA BELIEVE
THAT IT'S S'POSED TO BE ME NOW*

ARRAWEELO:

*TODAY IS THE DAY I-
FIGHT FOR MY OWN LIFE
TO BE FREE, TO LIVE AS ME*

MUKISA

*AND MAYBE I'LL FINALLY FIND THE LIMELIGHT;
A STEP TOWARDS MY DREAM TO SING "Well I think?"*

ANGELA

*OR I HOPE THIS WILL OPEN DOORS TO FOUND OUT
WHERE MY PURPOSE IS SUPPOSED TO LEAD ME*

MUKISA/AJANI

*even though in reality-
it's not where I want to be
'Though it's a great university" but-*

ANGELA/ARRAWEELO

*I STRUGGLED ON MY OWN SO WHY SHOULD I FEAR
CUZ ALL MY LIFE'S BEEN DOWN TO THIS
AND ALL MY LIFE
I MUST ADMIT THAT*

ALL:

*IT'S ONE STEP CLOSER
TO GETTIN' OUTTA HERE*

ALL:

*Someday maybe one day
We will feel who we s'posed to be
And I know that this don't feel clear now*

Angela/AJANI:

But we just gotta believe

Arraweelo:

I just have to believe

ALL:

I need to believe, in me

Arraweelo/Mukisa: One day, we will be a big, happy family...

ANGELA: One day, I won't be asked if I am white or just black...

AJANI: One day, someday...(on repeat)

ALL:

ONE DAY IT'LL BE OUR TIME TO SHINE!

SCENE 2

-CURTAIN OPENS TO PRESENT-DAY (10YRS LATER)

-MUKISA IS SITTING IN HER ROOM GATHERING THE LAST OF HER LUGGAGE BEFORE MOVING TO UNIVERSITY

MUKISA: That's it! I'm packed! Goodbye suburbs of the Bay Area, hello University!

MOMMY: Are you sure you have everything?

MUKISA: Yes, I'm sure Mommy.

MOMMY: *Luganda* Andaleya! Muyamba mwuno with her stuff in the car. .

ANDREW: *w/ african accent* Help Mukisa with her stuff??Eh-eh-eh Okay Mama. *starts to carry luggage* How long is the drive again?

MUKISA: 5 hours.

KUSASIRA & ANDREW: UGGGHHHH

MUKISA: You guys better enjoy it because it will be the last time you see me in 3 months.

Kusasira: Oh yeaaa, okay not so bad anymore.

ANDREW: Still UGHGGHHGHGH.

Spotlights switch to AJ and her mom

MS. JOHNSON: AJ! AJ!

AJ: Yes mama, I'm ready, I'm ready.

MS. JOHNSON: Ooo i can;t believe you is goin' to college. You are gonna do great.

AJ: Yea as long as they not weird ya know.

MS. JOHNSON: As long as **you** don't catch it we good. *both laugh* Now let me look at the list one last time: bedding, electronics, oo yo bible- you better pray every morning and evening- you hear?

AJ: Yes ma'am. HE the only one who would be able to hold me back from all them whack a**-

MS. JOHNSON: You said what now--

AJ: hmm? Nothin', nothin. I'mma start packing the car.

Spotlights switch to ANGELA and her mom

FRANCINE (ANG'S MOM):Have you finished packing yet Ang?!

ANGELA: Oh! Um almost! *Shoves everything in the suitcase as she struggles to close it* Almost- got- it- closed! Pheww, got it.

FRANCINE: Oh baby bear, I'm going to miss you so much! You know
it is still not too late to go to the state
college right over here-

ANGLEA: I love you mom but issa no.

Bob (step-dad) enters

BOB: alrighty, is this the last one?

ANGELA: yup! Thank you.

BOB: oh! You changed your hair...

ANGELA: Yea, just wanted it to be out of the way since i'm
moving my whole life across the state.

BOB: no, yea, it..umm..it looks nice.

ANGELA: nice...

BOB: Don't want to stand out **too** much though amiright? *with a
slight chuckle*

ANGLEA: *whispers to self* Just a few more hours Angela then you
can breathe.

Spotlights switch to ARRA and her mom

ARRAWEELO: Finally the day is here! Freedom. Freeeeeedom! I am so
ready to get out of this house.

ARRA's mom: Arraweelo! You need to help your siblings and finish
the laundry.

ARRAWEELO: After I fold this one last bin of laundry that is.