**“BROADCAST”**

**CHARACTER and SETTING BASICS**

**Story begins the day World War II ends, August 15, 1945 (VJ Day).**

**Story takes place in New York, NY.**

**Main Setting is the stage of WVAM – Home of “Victory America Hour” radio show. The revolving set or change in signage with the same permanent background (curtains or Mylar) would indicate which radio station stage we are at, either WVAM or its competitor, WHTS. The two stations should each have a different feel. There is a small side stage plus audience aisle action that feels like it is outside on a busy New York Street. (Traffic sound effects, scenery). There is a sign that says, “Stage Door This Way” that hangs on Stage Left near the wing.**

**Characters**

JACK DRUMMOND - 35 year-old Band Leader for the WVAM Victory America Hour radio show, former career Army Air Corps (US Air force) injured while parachuting into France in the war. Ended up in a hospital in England where he fell in love with the Irish nurse, MARGARET (PEG) O’MALLEY, who took care of him there. His last communication with her was a letter 6 months ago, responding, “Yes!” to his letter asking her to come and marry him in America after the war. She is now MIA after the hospital where she worked was bombed in an air raid. He pines for her as he redefines himself as a musician after being disabled in the war. He walks with a cane or metal leg brace and feels the stigma of not being “whole.” Kind-hearted, noble, good sense of humor, deep feelings, wise, a man of good character.

LACEY LAMONT – 20 year-old home-town girl next door type; sweet, cheerful and kind, working as a costume and prop mistress at WVAM, brought there by her older brother LUKE LAMONT, the stage manager at WVAM, after their parents went overseas to work with the Red Cross. LUKE and LACEY are now essentially orphaned and LUKE is looking out for her. She has raw talent that has not yet been discovered. She is personal assistant to the show’s diva, VERONICA BLAKE, and remains kind and helpful no matter how she is treated or what loss she has suffered. She has a nice, sisterly friendship with BUDDY PHELPS in whom she sees the qualities everyone else misses. By the end of the story, and because of her interactions with BUDDY and coming into her own maturity and self-dignity, she makes a transformation from being a wallflower (glasses, smock, hair up in a bun) to being a star quality performer whose talent and potential is finally realized – through no bragging of her own, of course. She is good friends with the HARRISON SISTERS trio, who are the jingle girls for the radio show - also three very down to earth girls.

BUDDY PHELPS – “BUDDY. P. HELPS!” – Outwardly a goof-ball but occasionally coming through with surprisingly smart moves or solutions, he is the comedian partner of the crooner, STEVE VALENTINE. Funny physically and verbally, BUDDY is often “minimized” and sometimes mistreated because of his goofiness and child-like appearance, which will transform somewhat by the end of the story. Innocently crushing on the Diva, VERONICA BLAKE, BUDDY is always wishing he was the “romantic lead” type. He keeps his hopes and spirits up even when disappointed or mistreated, because he is a genuinely good guy and full of love. BUDDY always seems to accidentally find himself in situations that un-hide secrets and push the story along without meaning to. He is oblivious to LACEY LAMONT’S talent or cuteness until an unexpected dance opportunity opens his eyes. Their new friendship and conversations cause a chain reaction that reveals some secrets of the plot.

STEVE VALENTINE - His name is really Stefano Valentino, which he tries to hide to be less ethnic and more marketable. He is the handsome but shallow crooner, “lead” partner of the STEVE and BUDDY duo. Publicly known to be in a romantic relationship with the Diva, VERONICA BLAKE, he privately can’t stand her. STEVE and BUDDY became friends growing up in the multicultural neighborhoods of New York. He noticed early on BUDDY’s gift for humor and attracting attention, and the duo was soon formed. He minimizes BUDDY as the “not really necessary half” of the partnership, sometimes treating him condescendingly, but deep down he knows that even though he’s a talented singer, in the competitive world of Show Biz, his novelty act with BUDDY makes him uniquely hirable, so he keeps BUDDY “in his place” but close enough that BUDDY won’t leave. Basically, he is using his young and willing friend, but there is a genuine friendship between them, nonetheless.

VERONICA BLAKE - Glamorous Diva of WVAM. We may or may not actually hear her sing. Or we may only hear her sing offstage. VERONICA is a phony, pretending for publicity’s sake to be in a relationship with STEVE (Stefano), pretending to be loyal to the radio station, pretending to be a patriotic American when, in fact, she hates STEVE, is in negotiations with the rival radio station for lead singer position, and, worst of all, was, in fact, a spy for the Axis of Evil during the war and is now a spy for the Russians. VERONICA is being “recruited” by the rival radio station, WHTS, which adds to her diva attitude and mistreatment of everyone at WVAM.

LUKE LAMONT - Busy but easy going stage manager, big brother to LACEY Lamont. Honest, hard-working, enthusiastic, shy, slightly awkward, and protective of little sister. Has great respect for (and a bit of a crush on) the oldest sister of the HARRISON SISTERS, CONNIE.

VIOLET DUBOIS - Soulful, older female lead singer, heart of gold, came up from Harlem the hard way and is now a well-respected vocalist, former star of the Victory America Hour, until she was shoved in to second place by VERONICA BLAKE. She is still a part of the show, has her suspicions about VERONICA, and remains classy and rather “mother-hen” over the rest of the cast, especially the young people (BUDDY, the HARRISON SISTERS, LACEY). She is very good friends with JACK. Her insight and patient watchfulness will help the others expose VERONICA’s secrets and bring LACEY to the point of being discovered. She noticesthings and has the patience to wait until the best opportune moment to use the info to accomplish good and expose evil.

KING ROYALE - Soulful male lead singer, (Nat King Cole type) cousin to VIOLET, he is one of the stars at the rival radio station, WHTS. Not in competition with VIOLET, they are both just grateful to be in show biz. They, along with the help of SKIP, CHESTER, and BUDDY, help each other expose VERONICA’s wickedness.

SKIP ADAMS and CHESTER JONES – Jingle Boys (along with BETTY JEAN HUNTER) at WHTS. They are talented enough and have the drive to be a main act, but are undiscovered at first. They are an Abbot and Costello type comedy team, friends with KING ROYALE and his cousin VIOLET, BETTY JEAN HUNTER, KATE WILLIAMS, and GIL GILBERTO. They get fired from WHTS for trying out their comedy routine on the streets of New York City and eventually get scooped up by GRUNDY for WVAM, where their help is enlisted in exposing VERONICA. Their knack for quick banter and CHESTER’s history as a spy catcher in the war is woven into the unexpected exposure of VERONICA’s secret.

MARGARET (PEG) O’MALLEY - 35 year old nurse, girlfriend of JACK. Took care of her ailing parents in Ireland until they passed away, just before the war. Became a nurse in war-time England, working in a hospital in London. JACK is her first true love, as she is his. PEG shows up at precisely the wrong moment (right before intermission as it so happens) and sees VERONICA BLAKE with her arms around JACK, through no fault of JACK’s. VERONICA was being sassy and manipulative but PEG doesn’t know what preceded the scene and is heart-broken. A similar misunderstanding occurs in Act 2. Several Characters including KING, VIOLET, and CONNIE try to help PEG and JACK get back together.

BENJAMIN GRUNDY - Late 40s, WVAM Radio Show Producer. Demanding, grouchy, impatient, but kind of loveable in the end. (Think a less wealthy Daddy Warbucks). He is a long-time rival to MELVIN SKINK because they both liked the same girl back in their shared home town, during World War I, in which they served together in the Army. GRUNDY won the girl who became his wife, but she died very young and this contributes to his grouchiness.

MELVIN SKINK – Late 40s, WHTS Radio Show Producer. Competitive, and a bit of a smooth con-artist type. Wants what he wants. Was friends with GRUNDY but the two have been in rivalry for years. Not winning the girl they both liked has turned SKINK into a “grabber,” and is part of the reason why he wants to beat GRUNDY. SKINK is determined to steal VERONICA BLAKE. Through a series of events, including VERONICA turning out to be a spy, his show, career, and reputation are ruined. GRUNDY enlists his old friend SKINK’S help when it is needed to catch VERONICA. They begin to rekindle their old friendship.

GIL GILBERTO – Latin Crooner at WHTS. Good natured, charming. Friends with SKIP, CHESTER, KING, KATE, and BETTY JEAN. Helps SKIP and CHESTER get their new comedy career going. Helps PEG find JACK when she first comes to the city. Helps “corral” VERONICA for the “sting.”

KATE WILLIAMS – Mature, patriotic singer for WHTS. The Grand Dame of the radio show business. Senses she will soon be replaced by VERONICA BLAKE so has no problem helping with the sting. Encourages LACEY in her singing debut.

CONNIE HARRISON –Big sister of two other jingle girls. CONNIE is the nurse who is caught by the Sailor in the opening scene. She becomes good friends with PEG who she helped get a job at the hospital where she also works. CONNIE is aware of LUKE’S crush on her but feels responsible to keep her sisters on task and safe and so cannot sacrifice the time to be more than friends with LUKE. CONNIE finally helps JACK and PEG get together and winds up with LUKE in the end.

JOY and ALICE - The younger HARRISON SISTERS trio of jingle singers. JOY, who is also a salesgirl, and ALICE, who is also a waitress, are dependent on big sister, CONNIE. She is the level-headed one, keeping them on task in their budding singing career – a typical big sister.

BETTY JEAN HUNTER- WHTS Jingle girl with SKIP and CHESTER. Seasoned performer, already been on the road, would be okay if she went back to her home town, but got SKIP and CHESTER started in show business by convincing SKINK to include them in the jingle trio. Encourages SKIP and CHESTER to go for it with their comedy. Sees SKINK and BLAKE for who they really are.

The Sailor (ala LIFE magazine) – Only in opening scene. Sailor can play a Groupie, Reporter, Photographer or City Folk Later, or even a lead part like Skip or Chester if a disguise is used.

Reporter – In “spy cahoots” with VERONICA BLAKE

Photographer (optional if Reporter cannot coordinate also taking pictures while writing)

Extra Swing Dancers/Groupies for the big production numbers. (2 – 10)