

SHOWBIZ, BABY!

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A Broadway diva has her first (and last) lead role stolen from her
by a terminally-ill child.

Address
Phone Number

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

In a crowded apartment, a TV plays a rerun of a late night show. Crowds CHEER.

HOST

And now, ladies and gentlemen, the little performer that captured the hearts of America: Ginger!

INT. THEATER - DAY

On stage, SASHA (43), unnaturally blonde, on the cusp of washed-up, sings like her life depends on it stretching out the final note of a big solo tune.

Holding for applause and not receiving any, she notices her producer BRADFIELD (22) with the show-stealing newcomer: GINGER (12), almost entirely bald and a total ham. She locks eyes with Sasha in a strangely tense stand-off.

BRADFIELD

Sasha? A word in my office?

INT. OFFICE - AFTERNOON

Sasha, fuming, sits opposite Bradfield at her desk.

BRADFIELD

You wouldn't have to back out of the performance entirely, just-

Sasha rummages through her bag and SLAMS down a folder.

SASHA

Do you know what this is?

BRADFIELD

Your...contract?

SASHA

How long is it good for?

BRADFIELD

20 years.

SASHA

When does it expire?

BRADFIELD

Three months.

SASHA

Then can you tell me why, in 20 years of tenure, I have been cast as the lead ONCE, and why now, you're asking me to GIVE IT UP?

BRADFIELD

We just want to give Ginger an opportunity-

SASHA

Give her the role of Annie in community theater if she wants an opportunity. This is fucking Broadway! She's not fighting her way to the top like I did.

BRADFIELD

She's busy fighting against whatever terminal illness she has!

Instead of replying, Sasha simply rolls her eyes and groans.

BRADFIELD (CONT'D)

Look. Make-A-Wish sent the kid, and they sent the check. Unless you can offer more-

Sasha stands from her chair with a loud metallic SCRAPE.

SASHA

At least make me the understudy for when she kicks the bucket.

INT. STAGE - NIGHT

Now in costume, an ACTOR and Ginger bask in the spotlight. Ginger squeaks out a sharp high note. Backstage, Sasha converses with KYLIE (32), an optimistic fellow actress.

KYLIE

She is just the cutest little kid.

SASHA

She's not a little kid. She's just underweight for a 12 year old.

KYLIE

My God, she's going to hear you!

SASHA

Not over the sound of her own wretchedly immature vocals.

KYLIE
She's dying.

SASHA
Hopefully that means this song will
be over faster.

Off their duet, Ginger and another ACTOR join Sasha and Kylie
in the wings.

ACTOR
Ginger, I can confidently say, I
have never shared the stage with a
performer that talented!

GINGER
HMPH! I'm never gonna get that high
note! Stupid, stupid, stupid!

She pouts like a toddler, storming off.

SASHA
"Never shared the stage with a
performer that talented?" What
about our duet last season? Did
that mean nothing to you?

ACTOR
Sasha, I'm just trying to make her
feel special-

SASHA
No one ever bothered to protect my
ego in this industry.

KYLIE
She doesn't have as long as you in
this industry! The terminal illness-

SASHA
"Terminal illness." Yeah right. I
graduated with a BFA in Acting, and
I know a liar when I see one.

The Actor and Kylie stare at Sasha, absolutely appalled.

INT. BACKSTAGE - LATER

By a clothing rack, Sasha tugs a blue dress over her clothes,
observing her reflection. The dress is a bit too tight. Beat.

GINGER
What are you doing?

Sasha swivels to see Ginger watching her from the stage door.

SASHA

I like to come backstage on the last rehearsal. It's an old theater trick for good luck.

GINGER

Can you teach it to me?

SASHA

You wouldn't get it.

Sasha lights a cigarette.

GINGER

Please. I don't have that much time left to be in the spotlight.

Sasha blows a puff of smoke at Ginger.

SASHA

Neither do I.

INT. STAGE - NIGHT

Opening Night. The crowd roars, but we only focus on Ginger as she steps into the spotlight, wearing a blonde wig and the blue dress, too large and mature to fit her feeble frame.

KYLIE

Mrs. Lily! Come in for dinner!

Kylie and the Actor are seated at a prop dinner table.

GINGER

(monotone)

Dr. Stork. Thank you for having me.
Your home is wonderful.

The crowd coos. Backstage, Sasha squeezes her eyes shut.

ACTOR

Well, look who it is. You're late.

Ginger delivers her line anticipating the laughs to follow.

GINGER

Sorry, I was late because I didn't want to go!

The audience erupts into uproarious laughter. Backstage again, Sasha cringes and chugs a handle of alcohol.

KYLIE

Mrs. Lily, where is your husband?

Silence onstage. Someone has forgotten their line. We focus on Ginger, sweating under the lights. The audience whispers.

GINGER

Um...Line?

ACTOR

(quietly)

Mr. Lily couldn't-

SASHA

Mr. Lily couldn't make it tonight,
I'm afraid! Haha!

CRASHING onto stage in a similar blue dress, bursting at the seams with crazed energy to deliver the line. Hesitant silence. Sasha stumbles in front of Ginger, concealing her.

SASHA (CONT'D)

You know how busy he gets!

KYLIE

Sasha, you look ridiculous.

GINGER

Um, I'm confused. You don't come in
until scene 4!

Sasha ignores this criticism, enveloped in her character.

AUDIENCE

Get that girl's mom off the stage!

Sasha's head snaps towards the heckler, eyes widening.

SASHA

I am NOT her mom. Look! She's not
even a natural blonde!

She reaches and YANKS Ginger's wig. Audience gasps. Sasha LUNGES towards Ginger as Kylie and the Actor hold her back. She squirms, trying to bite Kylie. Lively piano music begins.

AUDIENCE

LEAVE THAT SICK LITTLE GIRL ALONE!

SASHA

You idiots are falling for her
Cindy Fucking Lou Who act? She's
12! A sentient, conniving 12 year
old BITCH that stole my show!

Bradfield SPRINTS out from the wings and TACKLES everyone.

SASHA (CONT'D)
I DESERVE A BREAK!

The curtains close hurriedly over the utter chaos. CHEERING.

INT. STUDIO - NIGHT

Pickup applause. On a camera monitor, we see a dashing late night HOST (40) sitting across Ginger, beaming, and Sasha, not beaming, but at least maintaining composure.

HOST
And we also have her co-star, uh...
(checking notecard)
Sasha Stylenski.

SASHA
My stage name is Sasha Style.

HOST
My apologies, "Miss Style."

The crowd cackles.

HOST (CONT'D)
We've all seen these ladies' incredible performances. I mean, we hadn't seen a visual gag that hilarious since...five seconds before, when Sasha "STYLE" walked on stage in that dress?

Canned laughter. Sasha's composure slips. A picture of Ginger and Sasha in the same dress flashes behind them.

HOST (CONT'D)
Who wore it better, America?

GINGER
I think it looked better on me!

HOST
I would have to agree.

SASHA
I'd really like to discuss my extensive tenure in show business-

HOST
Ginger, I understand suffer from a very rare terminal illness.

SASHA
And the undeniable nuances I
brought to the role of-

GINGER
It's called Ginger's Disease.

The crowd gasps. Sasha rolls her eyes, exasperated.

HOST
And yet, you never let that stop
you from putting on a show.

GINGER
I'm a little girl that loves to
sing and dance and play!

The crowd "awws." Sasha nearly breaks.

HOST
Ginger, we actually have a very
exciting guest for you today.

DOCTOR (45) enters stage and sneaks up behind Ginger. The crowd gasps. Ginger turns.

DOCTOR
Ginger, your test results just came
in. YOU'RE CURED.

Ginger's face shifts into utter elation. The Host is basking in this media moment. Sasha's composure entirely drops.

HOST
You're going to be a star!

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

The TV pauses on Ginger's elated expression on screen. We see the reverse of Sasha, only more deflated since her last onstage appearance. She rewinds.

HOST
You're going to be a star!
(rewind)
You're going to be a star!

The light from the TV illuminates Sasha's face, smeared from layers of stage makeup it seems she hasn't bothered to remove. Her brunette roots are showing. She grabs the remote and clicks the TV off.

FADE TO BLACK.