

Audition Materials For

JACK KELLY



About the Character: The charismatic leader of the Manhattan newsies, is an orphaned dreamer and artist who yearns to get out of the crowded streets of New York and make a better life for himself out West. Fiercely protective of his best friend, Crutchie, and very loyal, Jack isn't afraid to use his voice to attain better conditions for the working kids of New York City. We're looking for an actor who can command the stage with ease, possesses strong vocal abilities, and can exude Jack's tough-guy exterior and his big heart.

Gender: Male

Grade: rising 6th-9th

Vocal range: B3-F5

Total Lines: 204 ; Solos: 6

Audition Song: Santa Fe

Pages: 2 (Prologue: Alley); 85-87 (Scene 12)

PROLOGUE: ALLEY

(JACK, a charismatic boy, sits in the alley. Using a broken pencil and a piece of yesterday's newspaper, he sketches a landscape from his imagination. CRUTCHIE, a scrappy kid with one leg weakened from polio, rises and walks with the aid of a makeshift wooden crutch.)

JACK

Hey, Crutchie, where you going? Morning bell ain't rung yet. Get back to sleep.

CRUTCHIE

I wanna get there before everybody. Ever since I got the polio, it takes me extra time to warm up my leg.

JACK

That bum pin of yours is a gold mine! You know how many newsies fake a limp for sympathy? That's why they calls you "Crutchie," 'cause they wish they had one too!

CRUTCHIE

Yeah, "pretend" is one thing, but Snyder gets the idea I can't make it on my own for real, they'll lock me up in The Refuge for good.

JACK

Don't worry about nuthin', I got your back. What d'ya think of my latest creation?

(JACK reveals his drawing. CRUTCHIE is impressed.)

CRUTCHIE

Jack, you're a regular Nickelangelo Dervinci! But how come you always drawing pictures of mountains and stuff?

JACK

(rolls up drawing and tucks it away)

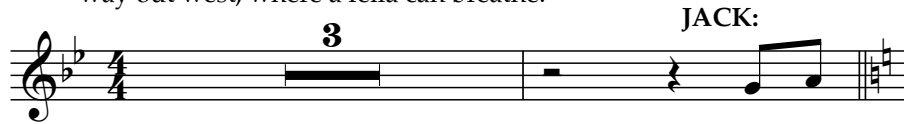
These streets sucked the life right outta my old man. Well, they ain't doin' that to me. You can keep your small life in the big city.

(# 2 – SANTA FE – PROLOGUE.)

SANTA FE (PROLOGUE)

(JACK): Give me a big life in a small town
way out west, where a fella can breathe!

JACK:



They say

5



folks is dy-in' to get here. Me, I'm dy-in' to get a -

8



way to a lit-tle town out west that's spank-in' new.

12



And while I ain't nev-er been there, I can see it clear as

16



day. If you want, I bet-'cha you could see it too.

20



Close your eyes... Come with me where it's

23



clean and green and pret-ty, and they went and made a



(JACK takes the stage as DAVEY heaves a sigh of relief.)

JACK

(quieting the NEWSIES)

All right. Pulitzer raised the price of papes without so much as a word to us. That was a lousy thing to do. So we go on strike.

(The NEWSIES cheer.)

But we gotta be realistic. How many days can you go without makin' money? However long, believe me, Pulitzer can go longer.

(DAVEY and the NEWSIES look to each other, confused by what JACK is saying. The NEWSIES boo. MEDDA and KATHERINE confer and rush offstage.)

Mr. Pulitzer has personally given me his word: If we disband the union, he will not raise prices again for two years. I say we take the deal.

(The NEWSIES boo.)

All we need to do is vote "NO" on the strike. Vote "NO"!

(#23 – JACK'S BETRAYAL. The boos overwhelm JACK as the NEWSIES storm out of the theater. BUNSEN appears from the wings.)

BUNSEN

Here's your money, Jack. You should feel very proud of yourself.

(JACK pockets the money as BUNSEN leaves. KATHERINE runs back on, holding several of Jack's drawings.)

KATHERINE

That was some speech you made.

JACK

What d'ya you care? And who said you could look at my drawings?

KATHERINE

Medda gave them to me.

JACK

Give 'em back!



KATHERINE

(turning away to look more)

These are drawings of The Refuge, aren't they? Is this really what it's like in there: three kids to a bed and vermin everywhere?

JACK

Why should I tell you anything? You double-crossed us to your father. Your father!!

KATHERINE

Joseph Pulitzer may be my father, but I wanted to make my own way, without his help. I told you my professional name was Plumber, and it is.

JACK

I don't know what to believe no more.

KATHERINE

Jack, believe me, I'm on your side, but I need to know you didn't turn your back on your friends just for the money.

JACK

I ain't gonna see no more of my pals beat up and tossed into jail. No matter how many days we strike, your father ain't givin' up. I don't know what else we can do.

KATHERINE

Ah. But I do.

JACK

No, I'm through. No way.

KATHERINE

Really, Jack? Really? Being boss doesn't mean you have all the answers – just the brains to recognize the right one when you hear it.

(JACK is at a loss for words.)

JACK

Okay, I'm listening.

KATHERINE

The strike was your idea. The rally was Davey's. And now my plan will take us to the finish line.

(KATHERINE takes a piece of paper from her pocket and hands it to him.)

JACK

(reading)

"The Children's Crusade"? Now, there's a headline!

KATHERINE

(snatches it back and reads)

"For the sake of all the kids in every sweatshop, factory, and slaughterhouse in New York, I beg you... join us." With those words, you challenged our whole generation to help each other!

JACK

I can't believe it, I mean people like you would never give me the time of day, and here you are, taking up the banner. Why?

KATHERINE

We all need something to believe in, Jack. I believe in this story. I believe in you. And so do the newsies.

JACK

We gotta let your father know the next century belongs to us.

KATHERINE

Exactly! If we publish my words with your drawings – and if every worker under twenty-one read it and stayed home from work... or better yet, came to Newsie Square and actually joined the strike – even my father couldn't ignore that.

JACK

Only we got no way to print it. Your father controls all the printing presses in town.

KATHERINE

Right. But I know where there's a printing press that no one would ever think we'd use!

JACK

Then why are we still standing here?

KATHERINE

Follow me, come on!

*(KATHERINE and JACK exit. #24 – SEIZE THE DAY –
REPRISE.)*

