

The Way Up

(A Hidden Herald musical)

Text by Marge J. Buckley

Music by Laurel Armstrong

Location:

Landmark Plaza / 5th street / Skyway
(with view of SPCPA)

CAST (in order of appearance)

HERALD...*a pigeon*

LUKE (Alex)...*Dance student. Perfectionist, anxious.*

SCOUT (Anna)...*Clowning student. Sort of hippie genderqueer.*

PRINCIPAL WATERS (Peggy)...*School principal. Supportive.*

CASEY (Matt)...*Acting student. Ambitious.*

Highlight key

Yellow = Character melody

Green = Repeated chorus

HERALD

Take a look up at the sky:

because in the 22nd century St. Paul goes vertical,
and high overhead are towering structures, elevated streets, and a vast web of tunnels and trains.

The Twin Cities have become a world-renowned destination for the performing arts;

Heck, the Ordway now has eighteen theater spaces across fourteen floors!

And do you see the SPCPA sign on 5th street?

Well: in this not-so-distant future,

The Saint Paul Conservatory for Performing Artists has evolved into a medium-sized skyscraper.

Looks like a couple of teens are getting on the elevator up to class...

Hey, why do I hear music?

Oh god...these sci-fi theatre kids are about to start singing, aren't they?

This better be good...

(Ding! LUKE and SCOUT enter.)

SCOUT

Hi Luke.

LUKE

Hi, Scout.

SCOUT

Wow, you look terrible. What's up?

LUKE

I didn't sleep last night.

SCOUT

Why not?

LUKE

it's my Modern Dance Showcase on Thursday and I do not feel ready at all

Will I freeze, will I stumble, or fall?

Will my thoughts go on racing,

Will I fail to lock-in,

Will I embarrass myself in the Hall?

Or will I hit on that spark where the world falls away

and my body can express it all?

But I'll probably just screw it up.

SCOUT
you're not gonna screw it up.

LUKE
and if I screw it up I won't get into a top dance school-

SCOUT
you'll hit on that spark where the world falls away.

BOTH
five thousand performing arts students, and all of us on our way up!

LUKE
Anyway...how's Casey?

SCOUT
Hey, shut up!

LUKE
I didn't say anything!

SCOUT
Yeah, but you sure did imply something.

LUKE
But I did hear you guys went on a date...something about a puppet show?

SCOUT
See?!

(Ding!)

SCOUT
this is me.
eight a.m. clowning, and we're working with props
In eight a.m clowning the fun never stops
Devising a piece where I balance three mops.
See you later!

(SCOUT exits. The elevator starts moving again.)

LUKE

I gotta get some sleep tonight.
So I don't freeze, or stumble, or fall.
Gotta drink a lot of water.
Gotta stretch.

(Ding! PRINCIPAL WATERS enters.)

PRINCIPAL WATERS

good morning, Luke.

LUKE

hi Principal Waters.

PRINCIPAL WATERS

are you ready for the Dance Showcase?

LUKE

Kind of.

PRINCIPAL WATERS

What do you mean?

LUKE

I didn't sleep that good last night.

PRINCIPAL WATERS

Oh, that's the worst.

(Ding!)

LUKE

Gotta go...bye.

PRINCIPAL WATERS

Bye, Luke.

Try reading a book before bed!

(LUKE exits.)

PRINCIPAL WATERS

**Out the window there's a city
Full of dreamers filled with dreams
And the youngest of those dreamers
Are the ones I'm shepherding
Who'd guess this was my calling
To guide the future towards the young?
But I've arrived here and I see it:
Why this is the place I've come.
Five thousand performing arts students, and all of them on their way up.**

(Ding! CASEY enters.)

CASEY

Hi Principal Waters.

PRINCIPAL WATERS

Hello, Casey!

I thought you were really good in Uncle Vanya.

CASEY

Ah, you're just saying that.

My energy was all off.

Maybe I should give up.

Maybe I just should give up,

And go to college for business or math.

PRINCIPAL WATERS

You can't go to college for business. Math, okay.

But you're an excellent actor, and we need actors.

They reflect our lives back to us.

And your performance reminded me how deeply that text still resonates!

What was that line... "our forests need rescuing-"

CASEY

"Our forests need saving because industry treats them as expendable."

PRINCIPAL WATERS

Exactly! I mean: Chekhov was, what? The early 1900s?

And now it's 2155 and still these lunatics want to mine in the Boundary Waters.

(Ding!)

PRINCIPAL WATERS

This is me.

CASEY

Bye, Principal Waters.

Thank you.

(PRINCIPAL WATERS exits.)

SCOUT *(down the hall)*

Hold the door!

CASEY

okay!

(SCOUT enters, panting.)

CASEY

Woah. Hi Scout.

SCOUT

Hi Casey.

CASEY

Why are you so out of breath?

SCOUT

Cuz I ran up the stairs.

CASEY

Why'd you do that?

SCOUT

I didn't want to wait for an elevator.

CASEY

Right, but why?

SCOUT

I got there for clowning, Ms. Gareth was late
And I found myself thinking
About our puppet date
And how I wanted to kiss you
But I was too scared to say
And I thought I might find you
Up on floor forty-eight
But I guess I got lucky
Cuz you're right here in wait.

CASEY

Take a breath, take a breath,
I'm right here, there's no rush.

SCOUT

And I'm feeling a rush

CASEY

And I'm feeling a rush

SCOUT

Should we touch?

CASEY

We should touch.

SCOUT

That's nice.

CASEY

It is nice.

I wanted to, too.

SCOUT

Well now here's your chance.

(They kiss. Ding!)

SCOUT

Wow. Okay. I gotta get back down there...to clown.

CASEY

Cool.

SCOUT

Come and find me after class!

By the way: I really liked you in the play.

CASEY

Thank you! That means a lot.

SCOUT

Gotta go. I'll see ya later?

CASEY

Bye.

(SCOUT exits.)

CASEY

"By the way: I really liked you in the play."

"Actors...reflect our lives back to us..."

Look down at the city below

the throngs of the people, the skyways and trains,

everyone playing

their role in this game...

one day they're all gonna know my name.

ALL

five thousand performing arts students, and all of us on our way up!

(End.)