

FADE IN:

INT. HIGH SCHOOL THEATER - DAY

A large room with a stage complete with the draping red curtains. The darkened audience is full of high school students who don't want to be there.

In the audience sits KORNELIUS KONRAD (15), scrawny, socially oblivious. People talk on either side of him, but he is alone in the crowd, shuffling intently through a deck of trading cards.

DEAN (O.S.)

Next we have a rising artiste, the
future pride of Broadway...

Kornelius glances up as DEAN ZAPPA (38), the paunchy, nerdy-t-shirt wearing drama teacher, speaks into the microphone.

DEAN (CONT'D)

Give it up for... Bianca Barbet!

Dean bows and, while still bent over, walks backwards offstage. He's a weirdo. There are a few scattered claps.

BIANCA BARBET (16), a pretty brunette who pronounces 'Barbet' with a French accent, stands centerstage. Kornelius is about to return to his cards when she starts to sing...

BIANCA

*Trapped, here at the core
Always wanting so much more*

Kornelius focuses on the stage, cards forgotten.

BIANCA

*My heart is hollow
Why did I follow*

He leans forward; bewitched, fascinated, enraptured - this is the most incredible thing he's ever seen...

BIANCA

*My impossible love...
Lonely. Lonely. Lonely.*

As Bianca fades, the spell breaks. Kornelius slumps back, exhausted.

He's just fallen in love for the first time.

INT. SCHOOL HALLWAY - DAY

Kornelius lingers near the theater door as students filter through. Dean walks out, speaking to a group of students. His refined announcer's voice has been replaced by an overly casual tone for a teacher.

DEAN

This saturday? Would the Deaner miss a party?

Kornelius calls out without regard for the other students.

KORNELIUS

Hey Dean!

DEAN

(to students)

Just drop off the liquor order by end of day.

Dean does his stupid bow again to leave the students.

DEAN

Ho Kornelius, did I not say you would enjoy the showcase? With this year's plethora of talent my musical will be the best yet!

KORNELIUS

I actually really enjoyed it.

DEAN

Yeah, it was amazing--

Kornelius cuts him off as Bianca walks out.

KORNELIUS

(pointing)

Who's that?

DEAN

Bianca. Isn't she in your class?

KORNELIUS

I've never seen her before.

DEAN

Uh yeah, you totally have. She's in every one of my musicals...

Dean trails off as Kornelius wanders away towards Bianca.

DEAN (CONT'D)
 Kornelius! What the heck? Fine,
 I'll just destroy you in card club
 later, ya brewb!

Dean looks around and realizes he's surrounded by students.
 He puffs himself up and tries to look important.

INT. SCHOOL HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Kornelius approaches Bianca, who is speaking with two
 friends, MAY (16), full-figured and popular, and EMILY
 (16), dark haired and quiet.

MAY
 Bianca, that was incredible the
 way you --

Kornelius stands in front of the girls - he's not shy, just
 socially oblivious.

MAY
 Uh, hi.

KORNELIUS
 (to Bianca)
 Hi.

BIANCA
 Hello.

KORNELIUS
 Um... Do you like Brouhaha?

BIANCA
 I'm... not sure what that is.

KORNELIUS
 Oh.
 (beat)
 You have an amazing singing voice.

Bianca starts to smile.

KORNELIUS (CONT'D)
 I always thought you had to be fat
 to be that good of a singer - like
 opera singers - but you're not
 that fat.

The smile disappears.

MAY
 (stepping in)
 Ah okay, thanks for stopping by --

KORNELIUS
 (to May)
 You're welcome. You look like
 you'd be a good opera singer.

May does not take that as a compliment.

MAY
 You can't say stuff like that.
 Goodbye Kornelius.

KORNELIUS
 You know my name?

MAY
 Yeah, obviously.

KORNELIUS
 But I just - It's just -

Kornelius turns back to Bianca. He struggles to articulate the feelings of amazement he felt.

KORNELIUS (CONT'D)
 It's just so - *impressive* because
 you have such a small neck.

MAY
 Goodbye Kornelius!

He stands in a daze.

KORNELIUS
 But--

INT. CLASSROOM - CARD CLUB - DAY

DEAN
 Kornelius!

Dean and Kornelius sit in a classroom empty of people. They have pushed four desks together to make a table. A trading card battle game is spread out over the table.

At the moment, Dean is studying a notebook full of sketches of fantasy characters.

DEAN (CONT'D)
 These are great!

KORNELIUS

When she came on I had no idea she would sing like that!

(beat)

The way she moved around was, like... like magic!

Dean holds up a page of sketches, very excited.

DEAN

Kornelius! You nailed Mina the Shifter!

The sketch is of a super babe elf dressed as a superhero.

DEAN (CONT'D)

She's a super babe!

(beat)

This'll be ready by opening night, right?

KORNELIUS

You really like them? Should I show them to Bianca?

DEAN

Bianca? Who cares about Bianca!

Dean flips the page and holds up the notebook, pointing to a picture of an alien in battle armour.

DEAN (CONT'D)

This is the kind of stuff that will get you ahead in life, not females.

(beat)

I'm telling you Korny, you finish these cards and your future will be paved with dreams.

Dean tosses the notebook back to Kornelius.

KORNELIUS

Yeah, I know. It's just--

DEAN

It's just nothing! Picture it Korny...

As Dean talks, Kornelius starts to doodle, which become DOODLE ANIMATIONS on the screen. The characters are overlaid with the live action.