

# *Sonia*

## **Synopsis**

### **ACT ONE**

#### **Scene 1**

New York. Present day. In a borough of New York City, SONIA and her parents live in a house. SONIA arrives home late from a night of work. She walks in on yet another night of fighting between her parents. As she ignores this monotonous routine, she enters her room and prepares for bed. When she has finished changing into her pajamas, she prepares for her adventure. She sets out her readily packed suitcases and lays out a plane ticket she's had in safe keeping. She is hopping a plane in the morning to Rome, Italy. She is apprehensive, excited, frustrated, and anxious to get away from the turmoil of her family and life in New York.

**(Track 01: "I Wonder")**

#### **Scene 2**

Early that morning. An alarm clock sounds in the darkness until MOTHER enters the room and turns it off. She flips on a switch to reveal an empty bed and note. The note is from SONIA to her parents telling them she has run away.

#### **Scene 3**

That evening. Lights come up to reveal SONIA outside a door with suitcases in hand, and a slip of paper with an address. She has arrived at her destination. It is an apartment with a vacant room. She takes in her surroundings.

**(Track 02: "It's You")**

She knocks. GAETANO answers the door. He is the son of the owner of the apartment. He is an over-the-top, obnoxious, gorgeous Italian man who doesn't speak a lick of English. He manages to decipher that SONIA is interested in renting the room, and calls to his PAPPÀ for approval. Despite his reservations, PAPPÀ agrees SONIA can spend the night in the apartment.

#### **Scene 4**

New York. 5 days later. 4:00 am. MOTHER is awake and agonizing over the disappearance of her daughter and the absence of her husband, who has been out all night, on one of his usual secret escapades. She sings "Not Giving Up the Fight".

#### **Scene 5**

Rome. 2 weeks later. After 2 weeks of living and not paying rent, GAETANO confronts SONIA. He comes to her room to ask for money, and is embarrassed by his poor English skills. SONIA devises a plan to barter. She will give him English lessons, if he agrees she can live in the apartment for free. GAETANO agrees. He's been wanting to get to know her since she's arrived, and now it's his chance to make a move. He can't tell his PAPPÀ the truth about this barter, so GAETANO covers for SONIA and pays the rent each week to his PAPPÀ. It is a small price to pay to get to know the girl he's been admiring from afar.

#### **Scene 6**

Rome. That same afternoon. GAETANO goes to SONIA's room for their first lesson.

#### **Scene 7**

New York. Weeks later. It is a month since SONIA has been gone, and MOTHER and FATHER are at odds. MOTHER sits alone, another late night, waiting for her husband to return. FATHER is on his way home, on a darkened street, contemplating his life with his wife and family. They both feel they're torn apart at the seams.

**(Track 03: “In More Ways than One”)**

**Scene 8**

Rome. That evening. SONIA is outside on the steps of the apartment building preparing for another lesson with GAETANO. He emerges from the building on his cell phone. PAOLA enters. She is a surprising love interest of GAETANO that SONIA didn't know existed. SONIA is visibly jealous by this and cancels her lesson with GAETANO.

**Scene 9**

Moments later. SONIA is back in her room. She is fired-up and jealous. She begins throwing things around her room in a rage.

**(Track 04: “What Am I Chasing?”)**

**Scene 10**

Rome. That night. An alarm clock sounds with no one to shut it off. GAETANO enters SONIA's room, flips on the light, and turns off the alarm. Her bed is empty, with no note left behind. Lights come up to reveal SONIA sitting in a cafe. It is late at night, and she is pensive. She begins to second guess her decision to be away from her family and the life she knew in New York.

**(Track 05: “Where We Begin”)**

**Scene 11**

Rome. Moments later. With a sudden sense of determination and clarity, SONIA returns to her room to find GAETANO asleep outside her door. After questioning his presence there, he reveals he was worried about her, and waiting for her to return. It is the first time she realizes that GAETANO really does care for her. She invites him in to rest, and he accepts.

## **ACT TWO**

**Scene 1**

New York. One week later. A Doctor's office. MOTHER is sitting in the office with her DOCTOR as they await the arrival of FATHER. He is late for this appointment. When he finally arrives, we see Doctor give the traumatic news that MOTHER is terminally ill.

**Scene 2**

Moments later at MOTHER and FATHER's house. SONIA's MOTHER laments about SONIA's absence and the big, empty house they're left with. FATHER assures that SONIA's dream was something that could not be held back. We finally see a tinge of support from FATHER to MOTHER for the first time.

**Scene 3**

Rome. SONIA's bedroom. PAPPÀ yells to GAETANO from offstage as he is searching for him. When SONIA opens her door, the scene PAPPÀ walks in on falsely insinuates SONIA and GAETANO spent the night together. PAPPÀ visibly disapproves of this prospect. Out of respect for his Father, GAETANO hurries out of SONIA's small bedroom.

**(Track 06: “Big House/Strano il mio Destino”)**

**Scene 4**

New York. Several weeks later. MOTHER's condition has visibly deteriorated since the last time she was seen. She is in bed dictating a letter to SONIA that FATHER transcribes. When the phone in the other room rings and FATHER goes to answer it, MOTHER finishes her heartfelt letter to her daughter. MOTHER sings a reprise of “I Wonder”.

### **Scene 5**

Rome. GAETANO and PAPPA sit at a table opening letters that have been arriving for SONIA which GAETANO has been concealing. The letters are the ones from SONIA's Mom expressing her longing for SONIA's contact and return. GAETANO fears losing SONIA, so he justifies hiding the letters from her. PAPPA exits and GAETANO strums a tune he's been secretly writing for SONIA. PAOLA enters the scene, hears him singing, and wants a private concert. They relocate the scene to outside where GAETANO begins to sing "Taught Me How to Fly". PAOLA exits frustrated with GAETANO's devotion to learning English, and SONIA emerges from the apartment building, astounded by GAETANO's serenade.

### **Scene 6**

New York. FATHER, a DOCTOR, a NURSE and a PRIEST surround MOTHER's bed. They are hovered over what seems to be her body. MOTHER's spirit appears to the side of this scene, as she looks onto the action.

**(Track 07: "I Was Afraid")**

### **Scene 7**

Rome. Morning. SONIA is awakened by her alarm clock, and GAETANO sitting on the edge of her bed. GAETANO hands her a box of letters. As SONIA begins to read them, she is shocked by the support and love her parents were expressing to her. She turns angry at GAETANO for hiding these letters from her. He explains he was fearful of her leaving him if he gave them to her. This argument ends when GAETANO convinces SONIA he had no ill intentions. She actually feels loved. GAETANO sits SONIA down, and hands her the final letter. The news in it discloses the death of her MOTHER. She weeps in GAETANO's arms.

### **Scene 8**

Rome. Several hours later. SONIA and GAETANO are outside the apartment building sitting with luggage around them. She is leaning on him as they wait for a taxi. They sing a reprise of "Big House/Strano il mio Destino", until a taxi arrives and honks its horn relentlessly.

### **Scene 9**

New York. Morning. The obnoxious taxi horn continues to honk as we hear SONIA's MOTHER call down to her room. SONIA has overslept, and she jumps out of bed. It is the morning of the day she is to board her flight to Rome, Italy. As she slowly comes to her senses, she realizes she has had a vivid dream about what her travels could entail. A knock at the door reveals the taxi driver who has been sent upstairs to get her luggage. When he removes his hat, he strangely resembles GAETANO from her dream. SONIA is in shock. Her MOTHER comes into her room to see if she's ready to go. When SONIA asks for a moment to prepare herself, she realizes she is faced with a huge decision before her. Should she embark on this adventure? After all, dreams are where we all begin.