

*I Am a Dreamer
Who No Longer
Dreams*



Synopsis

Jorge Sosa, Composer
Cerise Lim Jacobs, Creator & Librettist

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ACT 1

Scene 1 At the Jail

Singa, Rosa's attorney, visits Rosa in the jail after her arrest at the March for Dreams she organized. Rosa refuses to talk to her. Singa explains that she has been charged with felony-murder: A firefighter died fighting the fire started during the demonstration. The law provides that a death occurring during the commission of a felony (arson) is felony-murder. If convicted, Rosa faces life imprisonment.

Rosa is shocked out of her silence. She protests that the fire was started by neo-Nazis.

The women realize that they both came to America when they were 10 years old – Rosa from Mexico and Singa, from Indonesia. But Rosa is a Dreamer, an undocumented immigrant, and Singa has a green card, something that makes a world of difference in the trajectory of each of their lives.

Scene 2 Childhood

[The scene fades to the memories of Rosa and Singa as they recall the events precipitating their migration.]

Young Rosa and her family are threatened by drug gangs who demanded "protection" money. If they didn't pay up, they would be forced to work in the cartels' poppy fields.

Similarly, Singa and her family are threatened by gangs who demand "protection" money to keep their shop open.

Left alone at home one day, the children are confronted by a gang member who brandishes a gun at them and puts a bullet through the wall of their home. Their parents knew then, that they had to leave.



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Scene 3 At the Jail

[The scene transitions back to the jail.]

Rosa tells Singa that she has to stay in America, the country she now calls home. Singa's cell phone rings, interrupting their conversation. It's Singa's mother telling her that her father wants her home to change his bandages. Singa protests that she's at work.

Rosa desperately snatches Singa's phone. She calls her daughter, Sol, and tells her that she won't be coming home any time soon. She reminds Sol of the drill they practiced for this eventuality.

Scene 4 Leaving Home

[The scene transitions back to the girls' childhood memories. They recall the day they left their old homes.]

Neither Rosa nor Singa wants to leave their homes. Rosa's mother comforts her by singing a childhood song about Carandai, a Mayan princess, who refused to sing for the tyrant king.

Singa's mother comforts her by singing one of her favorite songs – the Seventh Fairy, who is allowed to meet her beloved once a year in the middle of the Milky Way.



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Scene 5 At the Jail

[The scene transitions back to the jail.]

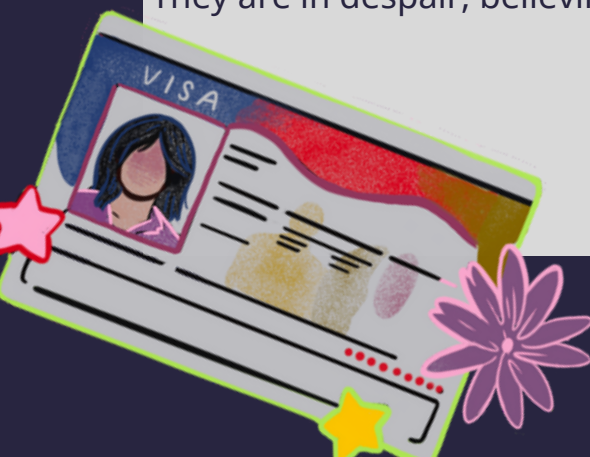
Rosa recounts the many incidents when ICE seized her friends going to work, to supermarkets, laundromats, etc. On the day she doesn't come home, she's instructed Sol to retrieve a list of names hidden in their apartment and call one of the names on the list to come to get her. The only problem is: All the people on the list have been deported – there is no one left for Sol to call.

Singa is appalled at the way Rosa and other immigrants like her live in fear every day. She feels guilty, as a fellow immigrant, for being so blind to her fellow immigrants' plight. She realizes that "there but for the grace of God, go I." The "grace of God" is her socio-economic class which enabled her family to purchase education, lawyers and a green card.

Scene 6 First Days In America

[The scene transitions to Rosa and Singa's memories of their first days in their new country, America.]

The girls sob as homesickness overcomes them. They sing of the warm sun, the red desert roses, the Flame of the Forest, their church choir, their own beds . . . They are in despair, believing America will never be home.



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Scene 7 At the Jail

[The scene transitions back to the jail.]

Singa and Rosa remember their first days in school where they learned the Pledge of Allegiance. They note, not without irony, that they believed every word in the Pledge, giving themselves wholeheartedly to their new country, as children can, without realizing that they were not citizens and that the country they grew to love did not love them in return.

Their reveries are interrupted when the Prosecutor arrives. She offers Rosa the deal of a lifetime – give up the names of her fellow activists and walk out of jail a free woman. As an added bonus, the Prosecutor will not inform ICE that she has Rosa in custody.

Rosa is torn between her desire to save herself and Sol and stay in America; and, her desire to save the 29 other families whom the Prosecutor is asking her to give up. When Singa tries to comfort her, she rejects Singa's overtures, believing them to be mere platitudes: Singa can't possibly know what it's like to give up a child. Singa confesses to Rosa that she gave up her daughter, Yong Yuan, a baby she had with her Caucasian boyfriend when she was in college. Her family would not tolerate an illegitimate "half-breed" child. Not a day passes that she does not think of her child.

Rosa is overcome by shame. She encourages Singa to reach out to her daughter. She tells Singa that she cannot justify destroying 29 families to save her own and asks Singa to take Sol, to care for her as her own.

Scene 8 At Rosa's Home

Singa enters Rosa's home. She sees Sol standing in the fading light from the small basement window. She tells Singa that her mother sent her. As Singa moves to embrace Sol, other children slowly emerge from the darkness into her embrace.

