

I-7-46

REN
Yes, ma'am.

(She crouches, arms extended: REN gives her a shove and BETTY glides offstage.)

BETTY
Thank you!

(REN and ARIEL are left alone.)

ARIEL
You are either very brave or very stupid.

REN
Which do you think?

ARIEL
I haven't made up my mind. Wanna see something?

REN
Don't you have a curfew?

ARIEL
(Mock serious.)
Ooh, you're right!

(Scoffs.)
Please. My daddy invented it. But don't you think rules are made to be broken? Come on!

(SOUND CUE: A TRAIN WHISTLE approaches and then fades as ARIEL pulls REN along on his skates. NOTE: A snare-drum "train" – gradually building, then diminishing in volume – can enhance this sound cue.)

Scene 7: The Great Plains of Bomont

(The night sky is empty except for a crescent moon. As the whistle gets louder, ARIEL wails, long and loudly, joining her voice with the whistle as it races by and fades.)

START

ARIEL
Aah-h-h-h-h-h-h-h-h--...!

REN
What are you doing?

ARIEL
I'm answering the train. I'm saying, "I can't wait for the day when I get onboard and leave Bomont!" Try it.

REN
No, thanks. I just ate. You are really something.

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Whaddya mean?
ARIEL

I mean the whole package. Minister's kid, Chuck Cranston's girlfriend.
REN

Guilty.
ARIEL

Just a church goin' gal with some bad-ass red cowboy boots.
REN

My daddy hates me wearing these boots.
ARIEL

(REN sits on the ground; ARIEL eventually sits nearby.)

And you love that, don't you? Getting up in his face?
REN

That way he'll notice when I'm gone.
ARIEL

Where're you gonna go?
REN

College, for starters. I've applied to some places my daddy doesn't even know about. I wanna speak five languages and see the world. He wants me to teach English Lit in Baylor County.
ARIEL

(Beat.)
They don't even speak English in Baylor County.

I can't picture you as a teacher.
REN

Thank you. Neither can I. I'll leave that to my daddy.
ARIEL

He's a preacher, not a teacher.
REN

When you're good at it, it's the same thing. And he used to be real good.
ARIEL

What changed?
REN

His mind. He closed it.
ARIEL

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REN

I noticed.

ARIEL

He used to be so open, so inspiring. I've seen him give people hope when hope was gone. I've watched him change lives.

REN

If you love him so much, why do you wanna tick him off?

ARIEL

I didn't say I love him.

REN

Boy, do I know what you mean! My dad...

(He shakes his head.)

ARIEL

Yeah, what happened there?

REN

He walked out. One day he just walked out the door. No 'good-bye'. Nothing.

ARIEL

Whew. I bet you've got lots to say to him.

REN

Lots.

ARIEL

Like what?

REN

(Suddenly self-conscious.)

No, I couldn't...

Tell it to the train. I do.

(REN considers her suggestion. Then, in imitation of ARIEL'S earlier wail, he throws his head back, chases after an imaginary train and screams.)

REN

Aah-h-h-h-h-h-h-h...! How can you be so stupid to leave Mom and me? I... hate... you!

(Spent, he drops to the ground near her; neither speaks.)

MUSIC 7: THE PLAINS OF BOMONT