

LONG WAY DOWN

A NEW MUSICAL BY JASON KISARE

BASED ON THE NEW YORK TIMES

BEST SELLING BOOK BY JASON REYNOLDS

AUDITION PACKET

BOOK SYNOPSIS:

Will's older brother, Shawn, has been shot. Dead. In their neighborhood, there are "street rules" which Will is expected to follow. So, he is expected to go after the murderer of his brother. However, Will is conflicted, and trying to decide if he is truly prepared to commit murder. After finding his brother's gun, he explores this dilemma in the long elevator ride down from their eighth-floor apartment. Along the way, he is visited by the ghosts of influential people from his life that seek to guide his decision.

SIXTY SECONDS
SEVEN FLOORS
THREE RULES.
ONE GUN

Think *A Christmas Carol* meets *Boyz N the Hood*.



THE MUSICAL:

This musical adaptation aims to breathe new life into this story by using music, specifically hip hop and r&b, as a lens to uplift the voices of these brothers and sisters around the country stuck in an endless cycle of violence. There has never been a musical that addresses this aspect of the Black experience, and it's time. This show most specifically explores themes of revenge, grief, loyalty, and Black masculinity.

CONTENT WARNING:

This show discusses gun/gang violence, murder, and death. If cast, it is likely that your character will sing/speak about these topics, and you will be hearing other people speak about them.

Also, a prop gun and prop cigarettes will be used in the show.

SAMPLE OF MUSICAL:

<https://tinyurl.com/yhvkm3rp>

LINK TO THE BOOK BY JASON REYNOLDS:

<https://tinyurl.com/45k4dpxt>

CHARACTERS (7)

Main Character

WILLIAM [WILL] HOLLOMAN (he/him) : 15 years old. Black.
Potential voice part: Tenor

- Protagonist and narrator of the story. Will is sensitive, perceptive, and loves language,—but he also desperately wants to grow up and be a man like his dad, [Pop](#); his [Uncle Mark](#); and his big brother, [Shawn](#), all of whom died because they followed the neighborhood “Rules” of revenge killing.

Ensemble Characters

BUCK (he/him) - Shawn's "big brother," late 20s. Black.
Potential voice part: Tenor/Baritone/Bass

- Buck was [Shawn](#)'s mentor after [Pop](#) died. He's tall and slim, has no facial hair, and wears gold chains around his neck. The ghost of Buck gets on the elevator with Will on the [7th floor](#).

DANI (she/her) - Will's childhood best friend, 16. Black.
Potential voice part: Alto/Tenor

- Dani was [Will](#)'s childhood best friend until she was accidentally killed at eight years old in a revenge shooting gone wrong. The ghost of Dani gets on the [elevator](#) with Will on the [6th floor](#).

UNCLE MARK (he/him) - Will and Shawn's Uncle, Pop's older brother. 40s. Black. Tenor/Baritone/Bass

- Uncle Mark died sometime when Will was a toddler. As Pop's older brother, Uncle Mark was the one to pass on “the Rules” of the neighborhood to Pop. In life, Uncle Mark was an aspiring filmmaker. The ghost of Uncle Mark gets on the [elevator](#) with Will on the [5th floor](#).

POP [MIKEY HOLLOMAN] (he/him) - Will and Shawn's father, 40s. Black. Potential voice part: Tenor/Baritone/Bass

- Pop died when Will was three years old and Shawn was seven. In life, Pop was a romantic and a jokester, though he started out life as an extremely uncool kid. The ghost of Pop gets on the [elevator](#) with Will on the [4th floor](#).

FRICK (he/him) - Buck's murderer, late 20s to early 30s. Black. Potential voice part: Tenor/Baritone/Bass

- Frick seems like a generally kind and soft man who wanted to be seen as tough, which is why he got involved with the Dark Suns gang. Frick was shot and killed by [Shawn](#) in retaliation for Frick killing [Buck](#). The ghost of Frick gets on the [elevator](#) with Will on the [3rd floor](#)."

SHAWN HOLLOMAN (he/him) - Will's older brother, about 19 or 20 years old. Black. Tenor/Baritone/Bass

- Dies in a gang-related incident the day before the story begins. Will idolizes Shawn. Shawn was cool and considered the king of the neighborhood." The ghost of Shawn gets on the [elevator](#) with Will on the [2nd floor](#).

AUDITIONS

TIMELINE:

SATURDAY, **JANUARY 21 (AUDITIONS)**

11 AM - 1 PM (INDIVIDUAL AUDITIONS) *IN WLH 210*

SUNDAY, **JANUARY 22 (AUDITIONS)**

12 PM - 2 PM (INDIVIDUAL AUDITIONS) *IN BROADWAY REHEARSAL LOFTS
(BRL), ROOM 205*

CALLBACK NOTIFICATIONS BY JAN 24

THURSDAY/FRIDAY, **JANUARY 26-27 (CALLBACKS)**

6 PM - 8 PM *IN BRL, ROOM 205*

SUNDAY, **JANUARY 29 (CASTING DAY!)**

WHAT TO PREPARE:

**1. 16-32 BARS OF A CONTEMPORARY POP/R&B SONG
OF YOUR CHOICE THAT SHOWS OFF RANGE. TO BE
SUNG
A CAPPELLA.**

**2. PICK AND PREPARE ONE OF THE ATTACHED
CHARACTER SCENES.**

THERE WILL BE A READER AT AUDITIONS TO DO IT WITH.

**(LOCATED IN THIS FOLDER: [HTTPS://TINYURL.COM/
347WNCWJ](https://tinyurl.com/347WNCWJ))**

AUDITION FORM:

Please fill it out before your audition!

<https://tinyurl.com/yfxy29sh>

PERFORMANCE DATES:

APRIL 6, 2023 - 8PM

APRIL 7, 2023 - 8 PM

APRIL 8, 2023 - 2 PM

APRIL 8, 2023 - 8PM

TIME COMMITMENT EXPECTATIONS:

In order to successfully put this original work on its feet, the cast would need to be willing to make this show a priority this semester, so we can have the necessary time to get it in the best shape possible!

REHEARSALS: Expect a few rehearsals each week, including a 3 hr ish block on weekends. Rehearsals will begin the week of *Jan 30!*

TECH WEEK: The week leading up to the show, expect rehearsal 6-11 pm everyday.

QUESTIONS?

If you have questions about anything or are interested in getting involved on the creative side, email our producers Elsie (elsieharrington@yale.edu) and Serena (serena.feniger@yale.edu)!

CREATIVE TEAM



Kayodè Soyemi
Director



Jason Kisare
Composer/
Musical Director



Kemar Jewel
Choreographer



Austin Riffelmacher
Dramaturg



Jason Reynolds
Book Author



**Soomin Kim and
Emily Liushen**
Orchestrators



Elsie Harrington
Producer



Serena Feniger
Producer



Lula Talenfeld
Stage Manager