







Anita	Maria
Chico	Riff
Bernardo	Tony
Inspector	Criminal
Dagger	Poison

Gun

Candelar

Rope

Knife

Tool

Annexe 2 bis:





Annexe 3:

'West Side Story': Love, Hate and the Immigrant Experience



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Welcome to **THIS IS AMERICA** in VOA Special English. I'm Steve Ember. And I'm Shirley Griffith. Today we complete the story and songs from the American musical play "West Side Story."

Some of the greatest artists in American musical theater worked together to create "West Side Story" in nineteen fifty-seven. Choreographer and director Jerome Robbins, who developed the idea. Arthur Laurents, who wrote the play's words. And Stephen Sondheim, who wrote the words to the songs.

However, Leonard Bernstein -- who wrote the music -- usually is considered the main creator of "West Side Story. " Although the play is fifty years old this month, his music remains fresh today.

As we said last week, "West Side Story" is a story about young people in a poor part of New York City in the nineteen fifties. Two groups of teenagers fight each other for control of the streets.

Members of the local gang -- the "Jets" -- were born in New York. They hate the Spanish-speaking people who have begun to move to the city from Puerto Rico. The young Puerto Ricans, members of the "Sharks" gang, hate the Jets in return.

The Puerto Ricans have the mixed feelings of any group of immigrants. They are divided between loving their old home and being glad to have left its problems behind.

The song "America" makes fun of some things in their new land, even as it seems to praise it. The Puerto Rican girls joke that everything is free in America ... if you pay for it. Our music is from the original recording of the play.

Seventeen-year-old Maria is the sister of Bernardo, the leader of the Sharks. She has arrived recently from Puerto Rico. She is to marry Chino, another member of the Sharks. But at a dance, Maria falls in love with Tony, a former leader of the enemy gang, the Jets.

Maria and Tony hope the hatred between the gangs will ease. They no longer understand this hatred. But the Jets and Sharks are making plans for a big fight. The Jets want to push the Sharks out of their area.

The gangs agree to fight the next night. They will put the best fighter from the Sharks against the best fighter from the Jets. The winner, and his gang, will take all the street territory.

The next night, Maria is at home. She is getting dressed to meet Tony. She is very happy and excited. Carol Lawrence sings the part of Maria.

Everyone is nervous, waiting for the big fight. Everyone except Maria and Tony. They are waiting only to see each other.

The gangs meet for the fight. Tony has promised Maria that he will try to stop it. As he does, the action suddenly turns violent. Tony's friend Riff and Bernardo begin fighting each other with knives.

In a moment, Tony's friend Riff is dead -- killed by the brother of the woman Tony loves. Not thinking, Tony strikes back. He kills Bernardo. The gangs run away. Tony stands in horror over the bodies of his friend and Maria's brother.

Maria knows nothing of what has happened. Then Chino, the man she is supposed to marry, goes to her apartment. He tells Maria that her lover has killed her brother. Chino gets a gun. He goes to search for Tony, to kill him.

Maria is praying when Tony climbs in the window of her room. Tony explains that he did not mean to kill her brother. He asks her to forgive him. She does.

Together, Tony and Maria imagine a life free of group hatred. The walls of Maria's room move away, and they dance. For a brief time, Tony and Maria are "somewhere" -- in the peaceful place they imagine. But they both know there will now be war between the gangs.

Tony must hurry away when Maria's friend Anita comes in. Anita is mourning Bernardo, whom she loved. She is angry with Maria for loving Tony. Anita tells Maria that "a boy like that" -- not her own kind - - will only cause her pain. The part of Anita is sung by Chita Rivera.

Finally, Maria makes Anita understand that she loves Tony, even though he has killed Bernardo.

Anita goes to the Jets' hiding place to warn Tony that the police are looking for him. But the Jets are cruel to her and will not listen to her. They treat her so badly that, finally, she tells a lie in anger. Anita says Maria is dead, killed by Chino. Tony runs into the street, calling for Chino to come kill him, too.

Maria appears. She and Tony hold each other for a moment. There is a shot. Chino has found them. Tony is hit by the bullet. He dies in the street as Maria holds him.

The play has ended sadly, but with some hope: together, the Jets and two Sharks carry Tony's body away. We end with "Somewhere," sung by Carol Lawrence.