



Dreamgirls Synopsis

Act I

Act one opens with *I'm Looking for Something, Goin' Downtown*, and *Takin' the Long Way Home* performed at the Apollo Theatre's 1967 talent contest where a famous artist, James "Thunder" Early's, back up vocalists quit before his tour. A

musical trio featuring Effie, Deena, and Lorrell hurry in late for their spot, ready to earn fame. They perform, as The Dreams, singing *Move (You're Stepping on My Heart)* and catch Jimmy Early's manager, Marty's, eye. Curtis, an aspiring businessman, fixes the competition so that the Dreams don't win to impress Marty, who then approaches the trio to perform as back up singers on Jimmy's tour. Effie, the lead singer, outraged at the contest loss refuses his offer, but soon agrees and the girls go on tour with Jimmy (*Fake Your Way To The Top*).

On the tour Jimmy decides he needs new material to keep his act alive, Curtis senses this as a time in to move in on Marty's client and hires Effie's brother C.C. to write songs. C.C. writes *Cadillac Car* for Jimmy, which rises in the charts. The success is short lived, however. It falls victim to the music industry's tactics when a more mainstream pop band covers the song (*Cadillac Car- Reprise*). Curtis, furious that the success he planned failed, vows to never let it happen again and illegally pays every DJ to play Jimmy Early's song *Steppin' to the Bad Side*, which rises to number 1 on the charts.

As the group celebrates its success singing *Party, Party*, Curtis reveals his next goal for the group: to become the first African American group to play at Miami's Atlantic Hotel. (Marty looks upon the proposition skeptically, but just as Curtis starts a relationship with Effie the Miami contract got signed). Jimmy and the Dreamettes perform *I Want You Baby*.

The next step in Curtis' master plan involves moving the Dreams from back up to an act of their own. Effie instantly elated by the idea of her dream as a lead singer coming true, gets knocked down when Curtis chooses Deena and her more mainstream appearance to be the lead singer. The group expresses through *Family* that Deena is the best thing for the group, and Effie will get her chance- later. Although she believes the best thing for the group is her talent, a jealous Effie steps out of the limelight for now.

The Dreams play Cleveland, Ohio, solo to much success singing *Dreamgirls*, and Curtis plans to make the group *especially* Deena a huge star. Effie's concerns get shoved into the background, while Curtis spends most of his time on Deena fine-tuning her image (*Press Conference*). Finally Effie can't take it anymore and starts acting up (*Heavy* and *Heavy- Reprise*). Conflict arises when a new Dreamette Michelle replaces Effie during *It's All Over*. In response, Effie reaches out through *And I'm Telling You I'm Not Going*, but Curtis rejects her and The Dreams continue on their rise to stardom (*Love Love You Baby*) leaving her behind.

Act II

Five years have passed and Deena and the Dreams are now at the high point of their career (“**Dreams**” **Medley**). In Chicago, Effie starts all over again with Marty. Frustrated with her difficult behavior, Marty helps her swallow her pride (***I Am Changing***).

As Effie’s life improves, The Dreams face more challenges (***One More Picture Please***). Deena, who has married Curtis, longs to be in movies, but Curtis will not allow it (***When I First Saw You***). Tensions also develop between C.C. and Curtis over one of C.C.’s song ending with him leaving. Things come to a head at a performance (***Got To Be Good Times***) between Lorraine and Jimmy who have been dating for seven years when Lorraine sings ***Ain’t No Party*** finally leaving him for good even with him begging (***I Meant You No Harm***). Jimmy and The Dreams perform the ***Quintette***, then Jimmy misbehaves at a concert and performs ***The Rap*** to which he is instantly fired.

C.C. and Effie meet up for the first time in years (***I Miss You Old Friend***), when he gives her the song ***One Night Only***. This proves to be Effie big break and the record rises on the charts. Curtis, furious at them, releases a disco version of The Dreams covering the song sinking Effie’s career (***One Night Only- Reprise***). Marty uncovers Curtis’ illegal business practices and brings a lawyer to settle the affair. The Dreamettes reunite for a farewell concert (***I’m Somebody***) and with ***Faith in Myself*** Effie joins them for the last number ***Hard to Say Goodbye, My Love***.

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