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THE HARLEM RENAISSANCE TIME TRAVELER'S DIARY

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THE HARLEM RENAISSANCE
TIME TRAVELER'S DIARY

written by

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Synopsis

West Barrington, a musician from 1926 Harlem, seems to have everything going for him, but when West awakens after falling asleep on the eve of 1927, he realizes that he has been thrown into a world far beyond 1927 after he discovers that he has awakened in 2016 Harlem.

Cast of Characters

WEST BARRINGTON	1920s jazz musician who time travels to the future
LANNA GOLD	West's girlfriend, singer
RON MALLANS	Nightclub owner
SILK	Gangster, loan shark
MAN #1	Silk's crew
MAN #2	Silk's crew
BOBBY J. BLUES	West's friend, jazz musician from New Orleans
CARL	Maintenance man who helps West in the future
HOMELESS MAN	
SIMMY DAY JONES	Jazz musician
MAUREEN	Simmy Day Jones' girlfriend, singer
STEVIE C. FOX	Jazz musician
POLICE OFFICER	
DETECTIVE MILLERS	
JIMMY THE WAITER	
MUSICIAN	
JOHNNY BARRINGTON	West's great-grandson
HOST	

Place

Harlem

Time

1927 and 2016

Director Notes

Based on the book *The Harlem Renaissance Time Traveler's Diary* from (The Time Traveler's Diary Series) by Author Lashonda Beauregard

ACT I

Scene 1

Setting: a nightclub on New Year's Eve, 1926, Harlem

At Rise: WEST walks out the backstage backdoor of the nightclub. He pulls out his pocket watch and sees that the time is 10:07 p.m. WEST sees SILK and RON in an argument. From the sound of the argument it's clear that the dispute is over money.

RON MALLANS

I don't have the money Silk!

(SILK pulls out a gun and points it at RON.)

SILK

Nobody crosses me Ron. Time is money, and money is time. Which I'm sorry brother, you're out of.

(sound of a gun going off)

(WEST looks stunned, shocked. RON falls to the ground as SILK'S CREW walk towards SILK. WEST turns around away from what he had just seen. He puts his head back against the cold brick wall of the building. He can hear SILK and his CREW discussing how they will cover up the crime that just took place.)

MAN #1

Don't worry boss. We'll take care of it.

MAN #2

Yeah, just like we always do.

(WEST peeps around the building once more as his pocket watch falls to the ground and make a noise. He grabs it quickly as SILK and his CREW stop talking and look around. WEST starts to run back to the nightclub door hoping that SILK and his CREW or no-one else will see him. WEST reaches for his pocket handkerchief, but it's nowhere to be found. He notices that he still has his pocket watch.)

Scene 2

Setting: same as prior scene

At Rise: WEST continues to walk down the hall backstage; BOBBY J. BLUES walks up to him. MUSICIAN and LANNA are also backstage.

MUSICIAN

Good show tonight West.

WEST BARRINGTON

Thanks.

BOBBY J. BLUES

Are you okay man?

WEST BARRINGTON

I'm fine.

BOBBY J. BLUES

Well okay. I guess I'll see you at tomorrow night's show. Right?

WEST BARRINGTON

No doubt.

(WEST sees LANNA backstage as she's getting ready to go out on stage and perform that night.)

LANNA GOLD

West are you coming back out to watch us perform?

(WEST and LANNA welcome each other with a kiss as LANNA sees that WEST is still in shock.)

LANNA GOLD

Are you okay West? What's wrong?

WEST BARRINGTON

Nothing. It's just that I've had a long night. I've been working hard on my next music selection. I've been spending a lot of time getting my music sheets together for me and the band.

LANNA GOLD

Well, won't you take a break from writing and come watch us perform later.

WEST BARRINGTON

Okay. I wouldn't miss it for the world.

LANNA GOLD

Bye.

(LANNA walks away.)

Scene 3

Setting: the interior of the nightclub

At Rise: WEST playing the piano, performing Duke Ellington's "Louisiana" with his band. As WEST is performing on the piano, he happens to see SILK walk through the nightclub. He grows nervous. SILK turns to look towards the stage and WEST acts like he doesn't see SILK as he looks out towards the rest of the audience. WEST finishes performing, then thanks the audience for coming tonight. As he walks off the stage he can hear the audience applauding. LANNA comes up to WEST, hugs him and congratulates him on his performance.

LANNA GOLD

I'm going to rehearse with the other singers for our performance tomorrow night.

WEST BARRINGTON

Okay. I'm going to work on my music piece as well.

(The two tell each other bye. LANNA exits.)

(WEST is working on his sheet music when he feels his eye lids grow tired.)

Scene 4

Setting: a music school, New Year's Day, 2016, Harlem

At Rise: WEST wakes up the next morning.

WEST BARRINGTON

(talking to himself)

I must've fallen asleep again at my piano. Where's my music sheets?

(WEST notices that his piano is different. He notices the time on a clock, a strange clock like he'd never seen before. There's no hour and minute hand on this clock, only numbers. It's 8:17 A.M. The room is different. The furniture has a different style than he'd seen before. WEST gets up from the piano bench. WEST sees a man who he doesn't recognize walking towards him.)

CARL

Excuse me Sir! How did you get in here and who are you? Why are you dressed like that?

(WEST is still wearing his suit that he'd performed in last night. He notices how strangely CARL is dressed also.)

WEST BARRINGTON

I'm West. Who are you?

CARL

I'm Carl the maintenance man for this building. Can I help you with something?

WEST BARRINGTON

Well I was practicing for my show here at the nightclub tonight.

CARL

Sir there hasn't been a show or a nightclub here in years. This is a music school.

WEST BARRINGTON

A music school? What are you talking about? Is this some kind of joke? Why does the backstage area look so different? Where is my band? Where is Bobby J. Blues? Where is Lanna?

CARL

Sir I don't know what you're talking about. Sir you apparently seem confused or maybe you've been through something.

(WEST looks confused, lost because his surroundings are different. Everything looks different and strange to him.)

CARL

Look, calm down. Everything is going to be okay. Whatever you've been through last year it's a thing of the past. It's over with. Happy New Year.

WEST BARRINGTON

That's right. It's a new year.

(CARL pats WEST on the back.)

CARL

I hope 2016 is better for you young man.

WEST BARRINGTON

2016? It's 1927.

CARL

What are you talking about? It's 2016; now stop joking around young man.

WEST BARRINGTON

It's 1927.

CARL

It hasn't been 1927 in years. Those days are gone, history.

WEST BARRINGTON

It can't be 2016, I've never heard of such a year. What happened to the 19? It was just December 31, 1926. I performed with my band here at the nightclub last night. Where is everyone?

CARL

Well, it's Saturday, the school is closed.

WEST BARRINGTON

School? There was just a nightclub here.

CARL

Sir, I don't know what you're talking about. I know things get a little crazy for New Year's. Maybe you've had too much to drink. Did you party too much?

WEST BARRINGTON

I went to sleep at my piano at the nightclub where I performed last night. What's going on? It still has to be 1927. It can't be the year 2016. It can't, that's impossible.

CARL

It's 2016, yesterday it was December 31, 2015.

(WEST and CARL walk a little further down the hall to a small table with a newspaper on it.)

CARL

I can prove to you that it's 2016.

WEST BARRINGTON

I just read the newspaper yesterday at my house. It was December 31, 1926.

(CARL hands WEST the newspaper. WEST is in awe, shock as he looks at the date on the newspaper. Right above the headlines the newspaper reads Happy New Year, January 1, 2016.)

WEST BARRINGTON

This newspaper says January 1, 2016.

CARL

See the proof is right here, its 2016. Sir I don't know why you think or believe you are from 1926. You seem confused. Maybe you should take a walk to clear your head. It's New Year's. You should be with your family.

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ACT II

Scene 1

Setting: 1927 Harlem

At Rise: WEST awakes at his piano and with his music sheets before him.

WEST BARRINGTON

I'm back in 1927. I'm back.

(LANNA enters.)

LANNA GOLD

West!

(WEST runs up to LANNA with open arms.)

LANNA GOLD

West you seem so happy to see me. You act like you haven't seen me in years.

WEST BARRINGTON

It felt like it.

LANNA GOLD

You just saw me last night.

WEST BARRINGTON

Well, It felt like forever.

LANNA GOLD

I'm going to put the finishing touches on my new song. Me, my group, and the band are going to rehearse for the show tonight. See you later West.

(She exits. SIMMY and MAUREEN enter and walk up to WEST.)

SIMMY DAY JONES

Hey West. How's it going man?

WEST BARRINGTON

It's going okay. How you doing Maureen?

MAUREEN

I'm doing good. I can't complain.

WEST BARRINGTON

Simmy have you seen Bobby J. Blues?

SIMMY DAY JONES

Well, I saw him earlier. He said he was going to go get some breakfast and hang out at the coffee shop with Duke.

WEST BARRINGTON

How long ago was that?

SIMMY DAY JONES

That's been almost an hour ago. He's probably still there hanging around. You know Bobby, he can talk for hours.

WEST BARRINGTON

Thanks, I'll see you later for practice.

SIMMY DAY JONES

Alright man. See you later.

Scene 2

Setting: a cafe

At Rise: WEST is on stage talking to STEVIE C. FOX. BOBBY J. BLUES is sitting at a table.

STEVIE C. FOX

Hey congratulations on the tour that you and Bobby J. Blues have coming up. That was a good show you put on the other night man.

WEST BARRINGTON

Thanks Stevie.

STEVIE C. FOX

You know with this tour you all have coming up your music careers might really take off. Good luck man. Sky's the limit.

(STEVIE C. FOX walks away. WEST sees BOBBY J. BLUES sitting at the table. WEST walks up to the table.)

BOBBY J. BLUES

What's going on West? How are you?

WEST BARRINGTON

I'm doing alright. Look Bobby I need to talk to you about something.

BOBBY J. BLUES

What's up man? Lay it on me.

WEST BARRINGTON

Bobby, I need to talk to you about Silk man.

BOBBY J. BLUES

What about Silk?

WEST BARRINGTON

Bobby have you ever got into it with Silk about anything?

BOBBY J. BLUES

No. Why are you asking this West? I mean you show up out of the blue to this coffee shop and now you're asking me about Silk. I think we should be worried about tonight's show and not to mention the tour we've got coming up in less than a couple weeks.

WEST BARRINGTON

Bobby, are you sure there's no conflict between you and Silk over anything?

BOBBY J. BLUES

Well, me and Silk haven't really gotten into any major conflict over anything, but I did borrow some money and make some business deals with Silk a little while back.

WEST BARRINGTON

Bobby, you know better than to do business with someone like Silk man. Silk doesn't play fair, and he's a loan shark. Bobby, I don't know what kind of business deals you've made with Silk, but I've got a bad feeling it's not going to go well. Actually, I'm sure it's not going to go good with this business deal you've got with Silk.

BOBBY J. BLUES

How do you know? I mean why do you believe it's not going to go well with Silk?

WEST BARRINGTON

I can't tell you how I know, but I know. Bobby, Silk is dangerous. He hurts people who cross him. You shouldn't have done business deals with Silk. Everyone knows Silk and his crew don't play. Silk did something bad.

BOBBY J. BLUES

What did Silk do?

WEST BARRINGTON

I can't tell you what it is right now, but I need you to not tell anyone about this conversation and stay away from Silk, and most of all don't do business with him. If you owe him money pay him and don't do anymore business deals with him. Okay?

BOBBY J. BLUES

Okay.

WEST BARRINGTON

I'll see you later at the nightclub.

BOBBY J. BLUES

Alright, later man.

Scene 3

Setting: the police department

At Rise: WEST goes to the police department. He walks up to the front desk where the POLICE OFFICER is.

WEST BARRINGTON

Hello. I need to talk to someone about the murder of Ron Mallens.

POLICE OFFICER

Detective Millers is working on the case. He's in his office right now. I can let you talk to him, follow me.

(The POLICE OFFICER brings WEST into the DETECTIVE's office.)

POLICE OFFICER

I've got a young man here who wants to talk to you.

DETECTIVE MILLERS

Good morning. How can I help you?

WEST BARRINGTON

My name is West Barrington, and I need to talk to you about a murder. I have some information about the murder of Ron Mallens.

DETECTIVE MILLERS

What kind of information?

WEST BARRINGTON

I witnessed the murder of Ron Mallens.

DETECTIVE MILLERS

Who killed Ron T. Mallens?

WEST BARRINGTON

Silk, Silk K. Turner. I witnessed Silk and Ron get into an argument over money. Ron owed Silk money. Then Silk shot him.

DETECTIVE MILLERS

You’re a key witness in this case of the murder of Ron Mallens. We’ll be in touch with you and thank you for coming forward Mr. Barrington.

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Scene 5

Setting: the nightclub

At Rise: WEST and LANNA are backstage.

WEST BARRINGTON

Lanna.

LANNA GOLD

West. I'm so glad to see you.

WEST BARRINGTON

I need to talk to you. Can you take a break from rehearsals?

LANNA GOLD

Okay. Sure.

(WEST gets down on one knee and kisses LANNA's hand.)

WEST BARRINGTON

Will you marry me?

LANNA GOLD

Yes.

(WEST picks LANNA up and kisses her as he holds her in his arms. Everyone congratulates them.)

SIMMY DAY JONES

I guess tonight is an engagement party as well. Congratulations man. I knew she was the one.

WEST BARRINGTON

She's the only girl for me.

LANNA GOLD

Awe West, it's our special night. I love you.

WEST BARRINGTON

I love you too.

HOST

Ladies and gentleman I'd like to thank you all for coming tonight. Closing the show tonight is the very talented West Barrington. It's also a very special night for West, he just proposed to the very lovely Lanna Gold. Congratulations. Take it away West.

(The main lights began to dim, the spotlights brighten. WEST starts to perform as SILK makes his way through the nightclub. He has a suspicious look in his eyes. He looks right at WEST as he's performing on stage. WEST tries to keep calm and act like everything is cool. SILK rolls his eyes at WEST before he turns away. WEST sees BOBBY J. BLUES out on the floor across the room. He sees SILK heading towards BOBBY J. BLUES. It's about this time that a group of cops come into the nightclub.)

DETECTIVE MILLERS

I'm looking for a Silk Turner.

JIMMY THE WAITER

(JIMMY points towards SILK.)

There's Silk.

(DETECTIVE MILLERS and the POLICE OFFICER make their way through the crowd.)

POLICE OFFICER

Freeze!

(The music stops as the main lights come back on.)

DETECTIVE MILLERS

Silk Turner you're under the arrest for the murder of Ron Mallens.

(DETECTIVE MILLERS handcuffs SILK. DETECTIVE MILLERS and the POLICE OFFICER take SILK away.)

(The End)



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