

# MY SHOT

LAURENS: Ooh,  
Who are you?

MULLIGAN: Ooh,  
Who are you?

LAFAYETTE: Ooh,  
Who are you?

MULLIGAN, LAFAYETTE, LAURENS: Ooh,  
who is this kid? What's he gonna do?

HAMILTON: I am not throwing away my shot!  
I am not throwing away my shot!  
Hey yo, I'm just like my country,  
I'm young, scrappy and hungry,  
And I'm not throwing away my shot!  
I'm 'a get a scholarship to King's College  
I prob'ly shouldn't brag, but dag, I amaze and  
astonish.

The problem is I got a lot of brains but  
no polish  
I gotta holler just to be heard.<sup>1</sup>  
With every word, I drop knowledge!  
I'm a diamond in the rough, a shiny piece  
of coal  
Tryin' to reach my goal. My power of speech:  
unimpeachable.

Only nineteen but my mind is older.<sup>2</sup>  
These New York City streets get colder,  
I shoulder

Ev'ry burden, ev'ry disadvantage  
I have learned to manage, I don't have a gun  
to brandish.

I walk these streets famished.<sup>3</sup>  
The plan is to fan this spark into a flame  
But damn, it's getting dark, so let me spell out  
the name,  
I am the—

HAMILTON, LAFAYETTE, MULLIGAN,  
LAURENS: A-L-E-X-A-N-D-E-R—we are—  
meant to be . . .<sup>4</sup>

HAMILTON: A colony that runs independently.  
Meanwhile, Britain keeps shittin' on us endlessly.  
Essentially, they tax us relentlessly,  
Then King George turns around, runs a  
spending spree.<sup>5</sup>  
He ain't ever gonna set his descendants free,  
So there will be a revolution in this century.  
Enter me!

LAFAYETTE, MULLIGAN, LAURENS:  
(He says in parentheses.)<sup>6</sup>

HAMILTON: Don't be shocked when your  
hist'ry book mentions me.  
I will lay down my life if it sets us free.  
Eventually, you'll see my ascendancy,

HAMILTON:  
And I am not  
throwing away my  
shot.  
I am not throwing  
away my shot.  
Hey yo, I'm just like  
my country,  
I'm young, scrappy  
and hungry

LAURENS:  
My shot!  
My shot!

And I'm not throwing  
away my shot.

And I'm not throwing  
away my shot.

HAMILTON, MULLIGAN, LAURENS,  
LAFAYETTE: I am not throwing away my shot.  
I am not throwing away my shot.  
Hey yo, I'm just like my country,  
I'm young, scrappy and hungry  
And I'm not throwing away my shot.

*They drink.*

<sup>1</sup> And Tupac responds, "Holla if ya hear me."

<sup>2</sup> Mobb Deep's greatest lyric, revisited here.

<sup>3</sup> This is the Big Pun effect: stacking internal rhymes into lyrics so densely and making them feel conversational.

<sup>4</sup> This cadence is used by The Notorious B.I.G. in "Going Back To Cali" when spelling his own name: I'm calling on all the East Coast rap gods in this verse.

<sup>5</sup> Some have pointed out that I also rhymed "spending spree" in *In The Heights*. Totally accidental, but true. What is it with me and spending sprees?

<sup>6</sup> Stage direction humor.

**HAMILTON, MULLIGAN, LAURENS,  
LAFAYETTE:** It's time to take a shot!

**LAFAYETTE:** I dream of life without a monarchy.<sup>7</sup>  
The unrest in France will lead to 'onarchy?  
'Onarchy? How you say, how you say, "anarchy?"  
When I fight, I make the other side panicky.  
With my—

**HAMILTON, LAURENS, LAFAYETTE,  
MULLIGAN:** Shot!

**MULLIGAN:** Yo, I'm a tailor's apprentice,  
And I got y'all knuckleheads in loco parentis.<sup>8</sup>  
I'm joining the rebellion cuz I know it's my chance  
To socially advance, instead of sewin' some pants!  
I'm gonna take a—

**HAMILTON, LAURENS, LAFAYETTE,  
MULLIGAN:** Shot!

**LAURENS:** But we'll never be truly free  
Until those in bondage have the same rights  
as you and me.  
You and I. Do or die. Wait till I sally in  
On a stallion with the first black battalion.  
Have another—

**HAMILTON, LAURENS, LAFAYETTE,  
MULLIGAN:** Shot!

**BURR:** Geniuses, lower your voices.  
You keep out of trouble and you double  
your choices.  
I'm with you, but the situation is fraught.  
You've got to be carefully taught:<sup>9</sup>  
If you talk, you're gonna get shot!

**HAMILTON:** Burr, check what we got.<sup>10</sup>  
Mr. Lafayette, hard rock like Lancelot,  
I think your pants look hot,  
Laurens, I like you a lot  
Let's hatch a plot blacker than the kettle callin'  
the pot . . .  
What are the odds the gods would put us all in  
one spot,

Poppin' a squat on conventional wisdom,  
like it or not,  
A bunch of revolutionary manumission  
abolitionists?  
Give me a position, show me where the  
ammunition is!  
Oh, am I talkin' too loud?  
Sometimes I get overexcited, shoot off at  
the mouth.

I never had a group of friends before,  
I promise that I'll make y'all proud.

**LAURENS:** Let's get this guy in front of  
a crowd.

**HAMILTON, LAURENS, LAFAYETTE,  
MULLIGAN, ENSEMBLE:** I am not throwing  
away my shot.

I am not throwing away my shot.  
Hey yo, I'm just like my country,  
I'm young, scrappy and hungry  
And I'm not throwing away my shot.

I am not throwing away my shot.  
I am not throwing away my shot.  
Hey yo, I'm just like my country,  
I'm young, scrappy and hungry.  
And I'm not throwing away my shot.

**LAURENS:**  
Ev'rybody sing:  
Whoa, whoa, whoa  
Hey!  
Whoa!  
Wooh!!  
Whoa!  
Ay, let 'em hear ya!  
Let's go!

I said shout it to the  
rooftops!  
Said to the rooftops!  
Come on!  
Come on, let's go!

**HAMILTON,  
LAFAYETTE,  
MULLIGAN:**  
Whoa! Whoa! Whoa!  
  
Whoa!  
  
Whoa!  
  
Yea!  
**COMPANY:**  
Whoa! Whoa! Whoa!

Whoa!  
Whoa!  
Yea!

<sup>7</sup> I love writing for Lafayette because it allows me to indulge something I have found to be true in my own life: Those for whom English is a second language are capable of fantastic, outside-the-box thinking with our language.

<sup>8</sup> Latin humor.

<sup>9</sup> This is a shout-out to "You've Got To Be Carefully Taught" from *South Pacific*, a Rodgers and Hammerstein classic about racism. As Laurens and the boys rap about equality, Burr comes in with some cold reality.

<sup>10</sup> And here's Hamilton, synthesizing everything his friends have said and going further. This song took years to write, and here's why: We have to systematically prove that Hamilton is the most fearsome intellect in the room, not just by saying so, but by demonstrating it.

<sup>11</sup> This lyric used to be Laurens yelling, "Don't this sh\*t make my people wanna rise up?" A nod to Busta Rhymes's refrain in "Pass The Courvoisier." Once we learned that clearing this sample was fiscally prohibitive, I built the new lyric around Anthony Ramos's voice. He's a crooner at heart, and his bravado is unmatched. I'm really glad I got to suit it to his strengths.

<sup>12</sup> This verse took the better part of a year to write. It's the Rosetta Stone of Hamilton's brain, and the first line of it is the most autobiographical thing I've ever written. It's what I feel I have most in common with Hamilton: The ticking clock of mortality is loud in both our ears, and it sets us to work. In this verse he goes from nihilism to a list of what needs to be done to hope towards tomorrow, and he takes himself there through one uninterrupted train of thought.

LAURENS: Rise up!  
 When you're living on your knees,  
 You rise up.<sup>11</sup>  
 Tell your brother that he's gotta rise up.  
 Tell your sister that she's gotta rise up.

LAURENS AND ENSEMBLE:  
 When are these colonies gonna  
 Rise up?  
 When are these                   Whoa! Whoa! Whoa!  
 colonies gonna rise up  
 When are these                   Whoa!  
 colonies gonna rise up  
 When are these colonies   Whoa!  
 gonna rise up?  
 Rise up!                           Rise up!

*Hamilton alone.*

HAMILTON: I imagine death so much it feels  
 more like a memory<sup>12</sup>  
 When's it gonna get me?  
 In my sleep? Seven feet ahead of me?  
 If I see it comin' do I run or do I let it be?  
 'Is n' like a 'best without a melody?  
 See, I never thought I'd live past twenty  
 Where I come from some get half as many.  
 Ask anybody why we livin' fast and we  
 Laugh, reach for a flask,  
 We have to make this moment last, that's plenty.

*Hamilton joins the group, and we see that he is now speaking to a larger crowd.*



HAMILTON: Scratch that,  
This is not a moment, it's the movement  
Where all the hungriest brothers with something  
to prove went.

Foes oppose us, we take an honest stand,  
We roll like Moses, claimin' our promised land.

And? <sup>13</sup> If we win our independence?  
'Zat a guarantee of freedom for our  
descendants?

Or will the blood we shed begin an  
endless

Cycle of vengeance and death with no  
defendants?

I know the action in the street is excitin',  
But Jesus, between all the bleedin' 'n fightin' I've  
been readin' 'n writin'.<sup>14</sup>

We need to handle our financial situation.

Are we a nation of states? What's the state of our  
nation?

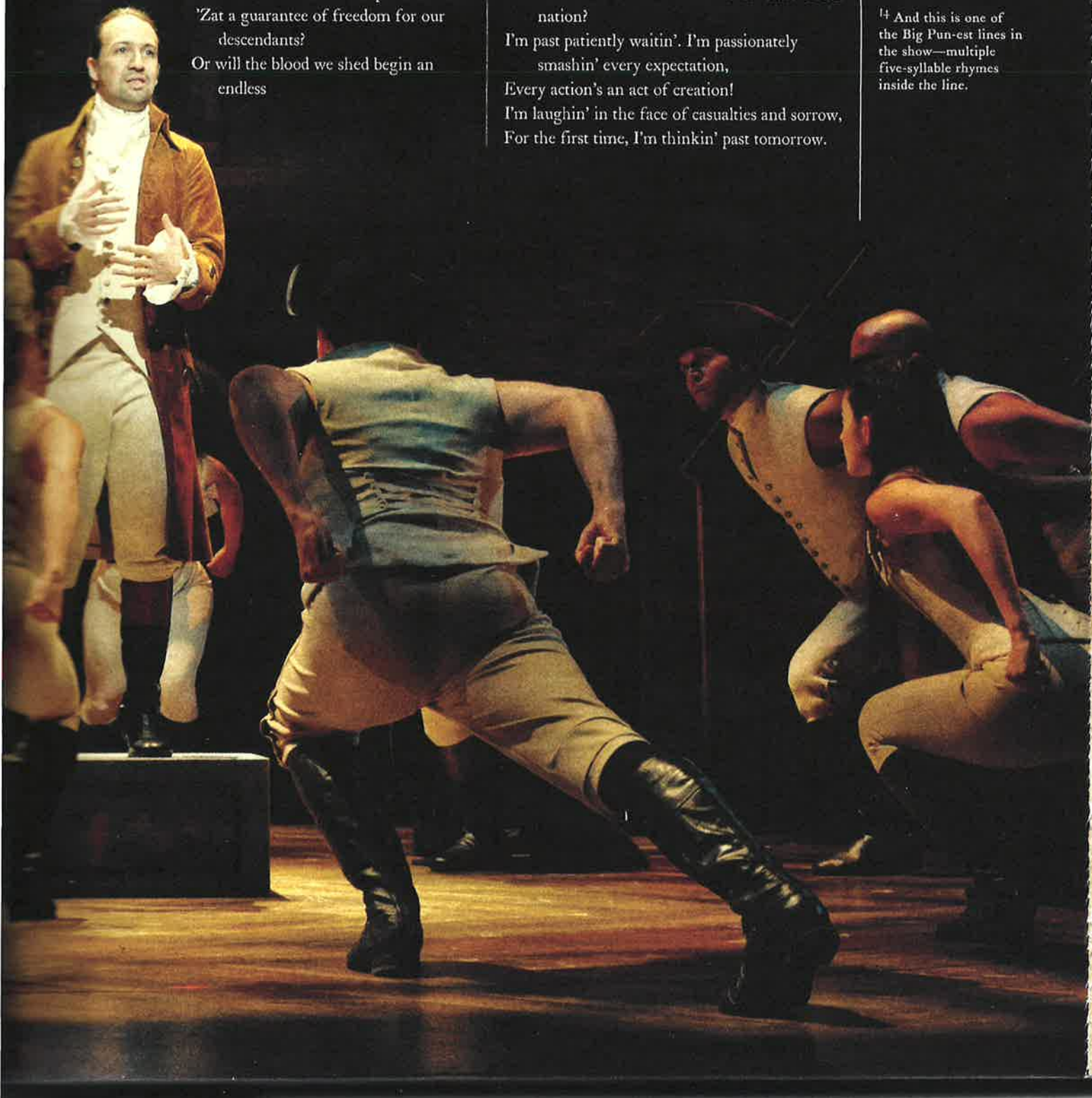
I'm past patiently waitin'. I'm passionately  
smashin' every expectation,

Every action's an act of creation!

I'm laughin' in the face of casualties and sorrow,  
For the first time, I'm thinkin' past tomorrow.

<sup>13</sup> Continuing the rhyme  
at the top of the next  
line—this is what Big  
Pun does so well. It  
knits all his rhymes  
together. I play with it  
a lot in this show, and  
this is my favorite one.

<sup>14</sup> And this is one of  
the Big Pun-est lines in  
the show—multiple  
five-syllable rhymes  
inside the line.



HAMILTON: *The Revolution*

**HAMILTON AND COMPANY:** And I am not  
throwing away my shot  
I am not throwing away my shot.  
Hey yo, I'm just like my country,  
I'm young, scrappy and hungry  
And I'm not throwing away my shot.

**HAMILTON,  
LAURENS, LAFAY-  
ETTE, MULLIGAN:** **ENSEMBLE:**  
We're gonna rise up! Not throwin' away  
Time to take a shot! My shot.

We're gonna rise up! Not throwin' away  
Time to take a shot! My shot.  
We're gonna We're gonna  
Rise up!  
Rise up!

**HAMILTON:**  
It's time to take a shot!<sup>15</sup>  
Rise up!

**HAMILTON,  
LAFAYETTE,  
MULLIGAN,  
LAURENS:**  
It's time to take a shot!

Rise up!  
Take a shot! Rise up!  
Shot! Ri-ri-ri  
Shot!

A-yo, it's  
Time to take a shot! Time to take a shot!  
Time to take a shot! Time to take a shot!  
And I am— And I am—

**HAMILTON, LAFAYETTE, MULLIGAN,  
LAURENS:** Not throwin' away my—

**COMPANY:** Not throwin' away my shot!

*End of song. Hamilton, Laurens, Mulligan  
& Lafayette are back in the tavern, after  
several drinks.*

<sup>15</sup> So how do you build an ending like this? *Endless conversations with Tommy, Alex Lacamoire, and Andy Blankenbuehler.* Seriously, so many versions of different counterpoints to build to just the right finish. In these meetings, I find I'm more the editor than the writer—Alex will have 50 musical ideas, Andy will have 50 staging ideas, and Tommy and I will sift them in the middle. It's like this for most of the buttons in the show.

