

Musical contributions for the Rupam Sarmah Film

One Little Finger

by © Stephen Melillo, IGNA 2017-2020

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Libretto at [stormworld.com \(resources/digital libretti\)](http://stormworld.com/resources/digital-libretti)

1M1-The Baby	1:38
1M2-The Story of Young Den	2:18
1M3-Don Bosco School	4:28
1M4-Unfortunate Scene of Bullying	0:32
1M5-Raina's 1st Call.....	0:52
1M6-Niladri's Poem.....	1:24
1M7-8-Angel is Sad, Remembering Someone.....	1:10
1M9-Den Ventures Forth.....	1:16
1M10-11 Den Got a Job	6:04
1M12-Sofia Looks Up.....	0:51
1M13-Kids' Practice Session	0:50
1M14-Looking for Friends	3:24
1M15-Summation	2:06
1M16-Together We Stand (with Love).....	3:17
1M17-Let Me Be Brave, feat. Jann Klose	2:56
1M18-Never Never Never Give Up Part 1	4:09
1M19-Never Never Never Give Up Part 2.....	5:39
bonus: Disfigured, I am Human	3:09
bonus: a Waltz for Father, from Reckoning of Darkness.	3:13

MUSICAL CONTRIBUTIONS
FOR THE RUPAM SARMAH FILM



BY STEPHEN MELILLO, COMPOSER

“One Little Finger is not just a film; it is a movement to break the barriers of stigma in disability. All it takes is a change in perspective, a change in our mind-set! Disability is what we perceive. Ability is everything that we believe! Using film media as a platform, we are allowing persons with various disabilities to act in this film alongside local and international celebrities to promote inclusion and diversity.”

– Dr. Rupam Sarmah

One Little Finger

Ability in Disability

**A cast of over 80 children
and adults with disabilities**

**Based on real-life stories
of persons with disabilities**

Written and Directed by Rupam Sarmah

Running time: 105 min

Genre: Drama

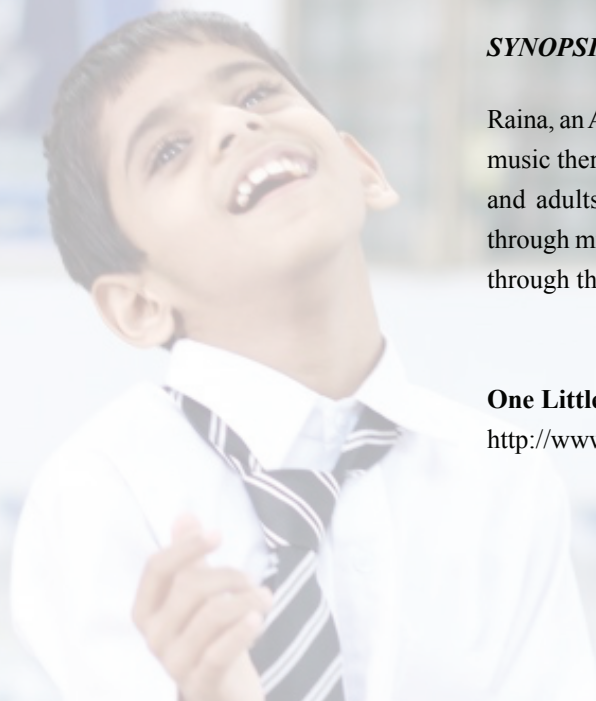
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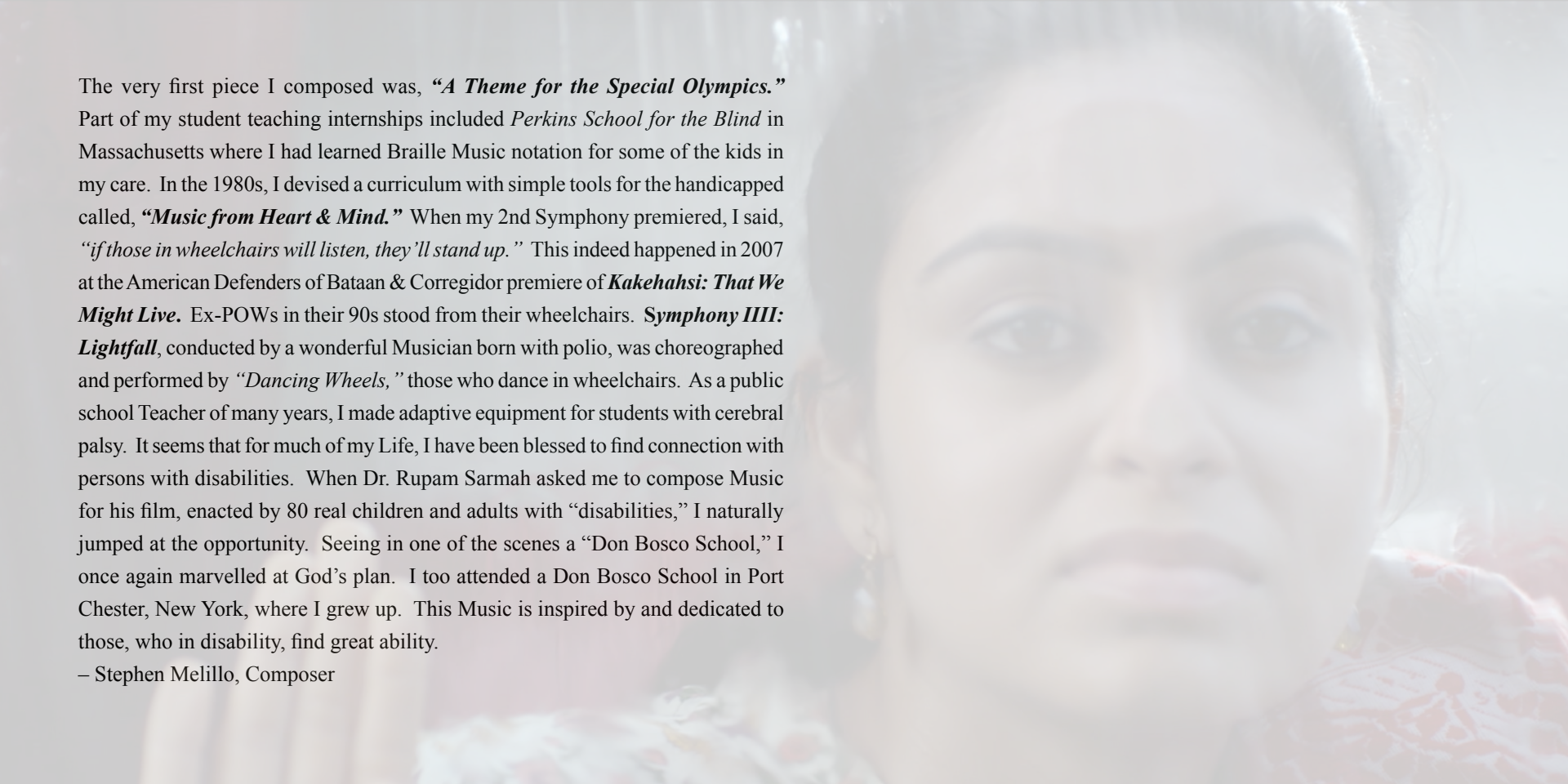
SYNOPSIS:

Raina, an American neurologist, uproots her life to research music therapy in India and finds herself teaching children and adults with disabilities. By bringing them together through music and inspiring them to challenge themselves through their abilities, their lives are transformed.

One Little Finger Global Foundation:

<http://www.OneLittleFinger.org>





The very first piece I composed was, “*A Theme for the Special Olympics.*” Part of my student teaching internships included *Perkins School for the Blind* in Massachusetts where I had learned Braille Music notation for some of the kids in my care. In the 1980s, I devised a curriculum with simple tools for the handicapped called, “*Music from Heart & Mind.*” When my 2nd Symphony premiered, I said, “*if those in wheelchairs will listen, they’ll stand up.*” This indeed happened in 2007 at the American Defenders of Bataan & Corregidor premiere of *Kakehahsi: That We Might Live*. Ex-POWs in their 90s stood from their wheelchairs. *Symphony III: Lightfall*, conducted by a wonderful Musician born with polio, was choreographed and performed by “*Dancing Wheels*,” those who dance in wheelchairs. As a public school Teacher of many years, I made adaptive equipment for students with cerebral palsy. It seems that for much of my Life, I have been blessed to find connection with persons with disabilities. When Dr. Rupam Sarmah asked me to compose Music for his film, enacted by 80 real children and adults with “disabilities,” I naturally jumped at the opportunity. Seeing in one of the scenes a “Don Bosco School,” I once again marvelled at God’s plan. I too attended a Don Bosco School in Port Chester, New York, where I grew up. This Music is inspired by and dedicated to those, who in disability, find great ability.

– Stephen Melillo, Composer

**1M1
The Baby
1:38**

We are introduced to “Angel.”



**1M2
The Story of Young Den
2:18**

Given the choice of using professional actors, Rupam instead chose 80 children and adults with disabilities. As you will see later in the libretto, many of these real-life actors became personal heroes and provided much Inspiration for the Music.



1M3
Don Bosco School
4:28

When I saw this frame in the film, I immediately called Rupam. I was surprised to see a “**Don Bosco**” sign at the Indian school yard! I grew up in Port Chester, New York, where we had our own *Don Bosco Center*. At Corpus Christi School, the Sisters and Priests were *Salesians*, an order founded by Don Bosco. Needless to say, I felt an instant affinity with the kids. In this scene, I first sketched the theme, “*Let Me Be Brave!*”



1M4
Unfortunate Scene of Bullying
0:32

An unfortunate scene of bullying. But Den has an uncrushable spirit and so does the person playing Den, *Mr. Sayomdeb Mukherjee*.



1M5
Raina's First Call
0:52

Raina, played by Tamela D'Amico (*how fitting a name for this character!*) is a Teacher to the kids. This scene is where Raina makes her first contact with school officials.

In this scene, an *Angelic Voice* is reading the *"Thoughts" Poem* written by Niladri, a 12 year old boy who died of Leukemia.



Jeeja shows Niladri's Poem to Raina

1M6
"Thoughts" Poem
1:24

In this scene, the voice of *"Thoughts"* is in the background, as if coming from heaven, and representing Niladri's voice. The Music serves to score the poetry. The smiling boy sitting in the photo is Niladri.

Thoughts

(Original in Bengali By Niladri;
translated by Jeeja Ghosh)

The childhood days of sheer bliss
Yet sickness crossed my threshold as I grew older
Worries like mist cloud in my mind
They haunt me, making me ponder –
Will I be able to pursue my dreams – my studies?
The significant others both young and old
Cheer me up, ensuring,
Yes you can, of course you can.
As I look into the vastness of the evening sky
And watch the birds returning to their nests
I am once more lost in the realm of my thoughts



1M7-8
Raina is Sad, Remembering Someone
1:10

I had written several different sketches for this scene. We settled for the *Bansuri* flute and Strings, a mix of cultures. Pictorially, the rain merges with the actor's tears...



1M9
Den Ventures Forth
1:16

As the title of the cue suggests, Den ventures out to prove to himself that he can follow, and then attain his dreams.





1M10-11
Den Got a Job
6:04

Several scenes
comprised this cue:
Den, finding work
as a mail clerk, and
various interspersed
action scenes.



1M12
Sofia Looks Up
0:51

Connected to the scenes prior, Sofia looks up. The metaphor called for
new Music.



1M13
Kids' Practice Session
0:50

More action with interspersed cuts to the kids practicing Music.



1M14
Looking for Friends
3:24

In this scene, some of our heroes are looking for their friends.



1M15
Summation
2:06

Raina's story
is summarized.



1M16
Together We Stand!
3:17

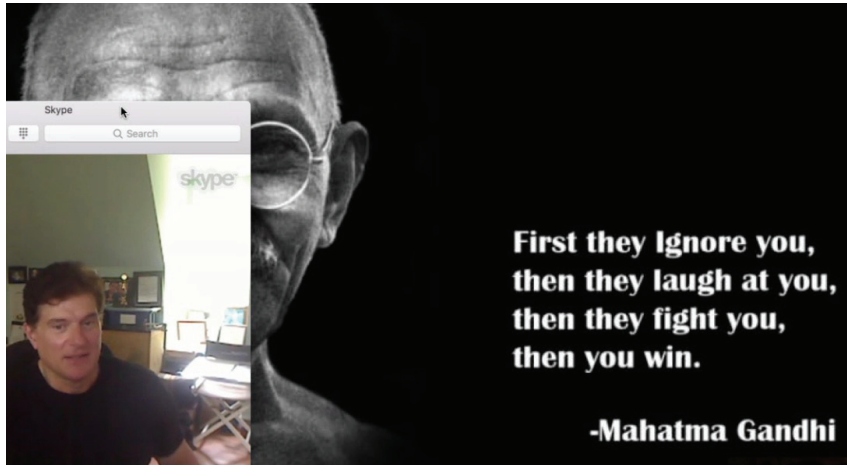
This song was written for possible inclusion into the film. Though it didn't make the film, Rupam has expressed interest in including the work on a new production we'll be working on in the not-too-distant future.

Together We Stand!
Music & Lyrics by
© Stephen Melillo, IGNA 4 July 2017

Together we stand as one
Together for Peace
As Brothers the day is done
When together the world is won!
When the time is now, and it always is
We can change the world...

1M17
Let Me Be Brave!
featuring Jann Klose, Vocalist
3:17

The inspiration for this song, born of themes explored for the character, Den, came from a Skype session with Rupam Sarmah. This screen shot caught my eye. I made use of Gandhi's words to create the introduction in the lyrics.



LET ME BE BRAVE!

© Stephen Melillo, IGNA 10 October 2017, 2-3 Millennium,
Lyrics by Stephen Melillo, inspired by Mahatma Gandhi

First they ignore you
Then they laugh at you
Then they fight you
And do it all again...
Then they ignore you, again
Then they laugh at you, again
Then they fight you
Then you Win!

Let me be Brave
Let me be Strong
Let me be wrong
If I'm gonna be wrong
But let me be Brave
All on my own
Let Me Be Brave!

I never asked for help from you
All I needed was some Love from you
And I thank you for your hand on the road ahead
You wanted someone who could stand alone
Climb a mountain with a wall of stone

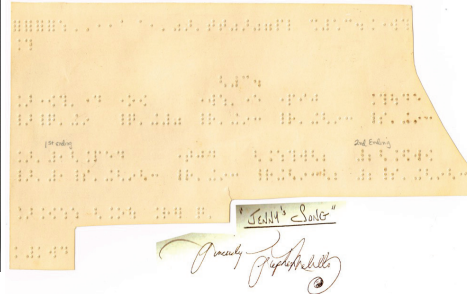
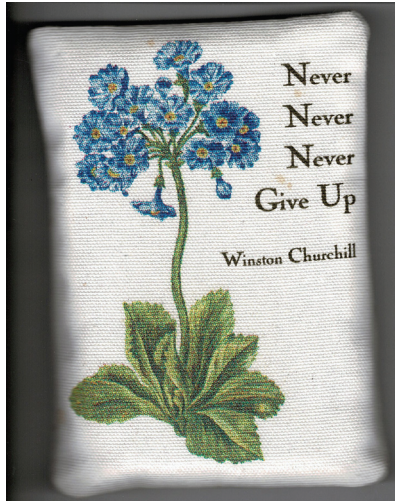
Now I'm ready
To be Free!

Let me be Brave
Let me be Strong
Let me be wrong
If I'm gonna be wrong
Let Me Be Brave!
If there's a Soul to save
Let Me Be Brave!

Let me be Brave
Let me be Strong
Let me be wrong
If I'm gonna be wrong
Let Me Be Brave!
If there's a Soul to save
Let Me Be Brave!
Let Me Be Brave!

1M18-Never Never Never Give Up, Part 1: 4:09
1M19-Never Never Never Give Up, Part 2: 5:39

We began this project in the first anniversary of my Dad's passing. One of the things he left me was the bean bag you see below. Churchill's quote and my Dad's undying message became the inspiration for titling this Music. The title and Music also embodied the unyielding spirit of those in the film. Enjoy & Godspeed! S



Rupam Sarmah during an early spotting session.

The Music on this album is composed, orchestrated, and produced by

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Mastering is by
Roland Stuppin



bonus: Disfigured, I am Human
Music by © Stephen Melillo, IGNA 7 May 2016
Inspired by Jeeja Ghosh

In conjunction with a UNESCO project spearheaded by Rupam Sarmah in 2016, I received these words from Jeeja Ghosh. Jeeja is one of the actors in *“One Little Finger.”* The piece is included in this album because of its connection to Jeeja, Rupam and all who took part in the project. Here are the words by Jeeja that inspired the Music. Enjoy & Godspeed! Stephen Melillo

Disfigured

By Jeeja Ghosh (a person with Cerebral Palsy)
Action Moves People United (UNESCO USA)

There we sat, he and I
Face to face, eyes lost in reflection of eyes
Hands bound, voices mute
Near yet far with a sigh
Then why this distance, cries the heart
Two souls united by love and warmth



Yet torn apart by the apathetic world
That knows not to honor love
Inner beauty and lust
Undesired, taunted and tormented
The disfigured bodies discarded as soulless
Devoid of tender feelings and love
The perfect perfection looms large
Bound by the boundaries of the metallic wheelchairs
The two souls continue to love
The world cries harsh and hard
You are the sinners, the wicked souls
You who have dared to cross your bounds
Face your faith and perish
Disquieted, agitated yet chained by the unconcerned world
The souls called disfigured then stand up to rise
Breaking away from the shackles of the world so indifferent
They climb the unreasonable barriers of society's forbidden purview
With the new found energy, firm and grit
They soar high in their vigorous joy
Self-confident, fortitude and the power to challenge
They learn the mantra of silent revolution
Breaking open the doors of internalized oppression
They start a journey anew

bonus: "a Waltz for Father"
from The Christopher Kulikowski Film,
Reckoning of Darkness
Music by © Stephen Melillo, IGNA 21 May 2018

STORM aficionados will recall that in 1990 and then resurrected in 2016, I composed a 2 hour musical prayer, *SON of the STORM*. In this new look at Mary Shelley's characters, William, the 11 year old son of Victor Frankenstein witnesses the birth of the *Creature*, a creation who ultimately becomes the "Messiah."

In 2018, Christopher Kulikowski created his own film version of the Shelly aftermath story and asked me to contribute a score with Krystoff Penderecki.

In this scene, "a Waltz for Father," the *Creature* plays an old keyboard. I tried to match the actor's speed and proximity to notes on the piano. This work comes from that inspiration conjoined with the *Creature's* loneliness and searching.

