



**How  
Broadway  
Entered  
My Soul**

**By Jenny Dee**

*I remember the exact moment my love affair for Broadway took hold of my entire heart and soul. It was Christmas, 1990, and after opening all of our presents, there in the tree was a single white envelope with my name on it. Enclosed, a single ticket to Les Miserables in New York City.*

*I was over the moon with excitement—excitement which grew exponentially when my Nanny found a matching white envelope in her tree with her own ticket. I was going to Broadway with Nanny, my most favorite person in the entire world, and I just couldn't believe it.*

*I'll never forget entering the fancy theater with its golden ropes and red velvety seating and décor. Lights were strung throughout the hall and theater-goers lined the seats with anxious anticipation.*

*I had no idea what to expect; I just knew that whatever Les Mis, as they called it, was about, I was ready to fall in love.*

*And I did. Seeing a story come to life with music, dance and dramatic interpretation was more than my heart could take. Nanny was equally moved by the awe of it all, and I'm still not sure if it was the show or the company (or both), but it was hands down, one of the greatest memories of my entire life.*

*I have since been to over 30 Broadway and off-Broadway shows, ranging from Disney masterpieces to little known plays. I still get the goosebumps whenever I see a live performance—and I have since realized that this love goes deeper than watching.*

*Ever since that first show, I wanted to be on that stage.*

*Now, realistically, I had neither the singing chops nor the talent to pull that off. Being on Broadway wasn't actually a "dream," but I was mesmerized about being in the spotlight, shining on stage somehow. I'd since come to wish I could be part of the drama*

*department in high school, but too many fears and insecurities kept me from even trying to be on stage somehow.*

*As I grew older, and found myself managing meetings for my company, slowly but surely, I was forced into a state of at least complacency and compliance having to give speeches to my work crowd. But a little hope and passion was growing inside me; I came to love that little bit of spotlight the professional meetings gave me.*

*Fears dwindled and a spark ignited as I was encouraged to fully run and host these meetings, and then star in an online astrology “show,” After Dark. I was an actual talk show hostess for that, where I designed the show themes, gathered guests and conducted interviews once a week. There was no going back for me after that; the video bug had bit, and I wanted more than anything to be present and a part of something bigger.*

*Cue my move to California, and my daughter’s own love for musical theater, and I soon found myself in a place I never expected: on stage in a parent show.*

*I remember the first night so vividly. I almost threw up at home and called the whole thing off. I literally had to force myself to show up to the first rehearsal, with a song ready to audition with, in front of people I didn’t know. Not a single soul, and it was both petrifying and exhilarating at the same time.*

*I’m glad I pushed myself outside of that comfort zone, because that single experience has led to a full-on love affair of performing. My very first role was Gingy from Shrek, and when I tell you I had that voice down, and delivered the most dramatic performance of “not my gumdrop buttons!” to the audience’s satisfaction, I’m not kidding. I soaked it in. The costumes. The lights. The music. Okay, not the dancing so much, but I’m working on becoming better at that. But the people—oh the kindred spirits I got to play with!—they made the experience even more magical than I ever expected.*

*I've since been cast as Charity in The Greatest Showman (meh), the store manager and elf in Elf (smiling's my favorite—no, work is your new favorite), Genie in Aladdin (how u doin', Al?) and Mrs. Gloop in Wonka Jr. (like, who wouldn't love to dress up in German garb and yodel??), and each experience has been extraordinary beyond my wildest dreams.*

*You don't always know where or why a passion of yours surfaces, or where that road would lead you. But I can tell you this: when you follow your bliss, it's unimaginable the opportunities that pop up that bring you into your truest of hearts.*

*Shine on, readers <3 And don't be touching my gumdrop buttons 😊*