

# ELLA SHEPPARD

African-American, 18-22.

A brilliant musical prodigy, Ella is the visionary co-leader of The Fisk Jubilee Singers and the towering young heroine of this movie. From the opening scene to the last, *Steal Away* is Ella's story.

A reluctant beauty, she has a softly chiseled face, wide probing eyes, and beguiling if rarely seen smile. Though by appearances frail, looks are dramatically deceiving: Charged with saving African-American schools (the fledgling HBCUs) from supremacist destruction, she is a tireless warrior that takes no prisoners and suffers no fools, powered by a force of will that could stop a planet.

Yet haunted by the sins of her past, her deepest crusade is for redemption.

## DIRECTOR'S NOTE

Ella shouldn't be based on any performance you've ever seen. Take a chance and give us someone we've never seen before, someone quirky and full of nuance. Enchant us with a beguiling young woman we've never met.

*You introduce us to Ella Sheppard.*