

STRONG WINGS FLY

A Musical

Original Text and Lyrics by Kevin Cook

Original Music and Musical Arrangements by Denis Kashoid

Contributing Authors

Abraham Lincoln  
Chief Joseph  
William Shakespeare  
John Keats  
William P. Duvall  
General Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna  
Fyodor Dostoyevsky  
Frederick Douglass  
William Barret Travis  
Cree Indians  
Sara Pierce  
Hiram Pierce  
Luzena Wilson  
Mason Wilson  
Belle Boyd

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## Principal Characters

Lorraine  
Jeb  
Narrator 1  
Narrator 2  
Otho  
Susanna  
Abraham Lincoln  
Mrs. Randolph Davenport  
Johnny  
Mama  
Mary Todd

## Ensemble Characters (Ensemble members play multiple roles.)

Reel Caller  
Ann Rutledge  
Susanna's Father  
James Rutledge  
George  
Abigail  
Dot Bell  
Marcie Long  
Chief Joseph  
Elizabeth Todd Edwards  
Easton Townspeople  
Reverend Miller  
Mourners  
Citizens of Rochester, NY  
City Leader  
Mrs. Knight  
Molly Travis  
Sara Pierce  
Hiram Pierce  
P. Duvall  
General Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna  
Newspaper Seller  
Mason Wilson  
Luzena Wilson  
Frederick Douglass  
White Fawn  
Lisa  
Evelyn  
Confederate Recruiter  
Union Soldiers  
Confederate Soldiers  
Maude Sanders  
Tess Sanders  
Belle Boyd  
Agents

## SONGS

COUNTRY REEL	...	Citizens of Easton, IN
OLD DAN TUCKER	...	Citizens of Easton, IN
OH SUSANNA/YANKEE DOODLE	...	Johnny, Otho, Company
HEAR OUR PRAYER	...	Mourners
GOLD IN CALIFORN-I-0!	...	Citizens of Easton, IN
MY COUNTRY 'TIS OF THEE	...	Citizens of Rochester, NY
PASS LOVE ON	...	Mama, Lorraine
DIXIE	...	Belle Boyd, Soldiers
WHEN JOHNNY COMES MARCHING HOME	...	Susanna, Soldiers
BATTLE HYMN/DOWN BY THE RIVERSIDE	...	Citizens of Easton, IN
STRONG WINGS FLY	...	Citizens of Easton, IN

Set: A cemetery in Easton, Indiana, USA, a prairie town in the 1800's represented by a single universal set. There are tombstones. Multiple levels are created by various platforms.

Cast Size: May vary, medium to large, 18 or more. Each ensemble member may play several different characters.

Score Requirements: Piano only or piano, bass, guitar, violin, drums

Costumes: Period, 1837-1865, mostly poor, prairie pioneers

Intended Audience: Ages 12 to adult, rating: PG-13

All non-original text in this musical is in public domain. A bibliography is on the next page and referenced numerically in the script. All musical arrangements are original.

Songs are either original or folk songs in the public domain with new musical arrangements. Some lyrics have been changed in the folk songs.

STRONG WINGS FLY was developed as a class acting project for students ages 12 to 21 from The Dallas Summer Musicals Academy of Performing Arts in Dallas, TX. The vocals included with this submission are from a amateur recording of the class presentation.

Principal character descriptions at the start of the musical follow:

Narrators 1 & 2 - Omnipotent storytellers. They watch the action.

Other characters do not see them.

Susanna (Soprano) - Teen pioneer girl, wanting to find love

Otho (Tenor) - Older teen, soon to be wealthy, gets what he wants

Johnny (Baritone) - Teen poet, educated, a charming dreamer, drifter

Mama (Mezzo Soprano)- Susanna's mother, determined to create the best life for her daughter

Lorraine (Soprano) - 29, fears becoming an old maid

Jeb (Baritone) - 32, poor farmhand, uneducated

Abraham Lincoln - Young lawyer, hopes to join the U. S. Congress

Mary Todd - Young, ambitious socialite

Mrs. Randolph Davenport- Near 30, raised on a Southern plantation, entitled

## Bibliography

- (1) p. 7 Generally credited to Abraham Lincoln
- (2) p. 10 Abraham Lincoln
- (3) p. 15 Abraham Lincoln
- (4) p. 15 Chief Joseph, leader of the Nez Perce Indians
- (5a) p. 16 From Abraham Lincoln's Lyceum address
- (5b) p. 16 From Abraham Lincoln's Lyceum address
- (5c) p. 17 From Abraham Lincoln's Lyceum address
- (5d) p. 17 From Abraham Lincoln's Lyceum address
- (5e) p. 17 From Abraham Lincoln's Lyceum address
- (5f) p. 17 From Abraham Lincoln's Lyceum address
- (5g) p. 18 From Abraham Lincoln's Lyceum address
- (5h) p. 18 From Abraham Lincoln's Lyceum address
- (5i) p. 18 From Abraham Lincoln's Lyceum address
- (5j) p. 18 From Abraham Lincoln's Lyceum address
- (5k) p. 18 From Abraham Lincoln's Lyceum address
- (6) p. 19 William Shakespeare, Measure for Measure
- (7) p. 20 Often attributed to Abraham Lincoln
- (8a) p. 25 John Keats, letter to Fanny Brawne
- (8b) p. 25 John Keats, letter to Fanny Brawne
- (8c) p. 26 John Keats, letter to Fanny Brawne
- (9) p. 27 Fyodor Dostoyevsky
- (10) p. 31 Frederick Douglass, Narrative of a Life of Frederick Douglass
- (11) p. 32 Abraham Lincoln, letter to Henry Herndon
- (12) p. 32 Abraham Lincoln, speech in the U. S. House of Representatives
- (13) p. 33 William P. Duwall, letter to Gen. Sam Houston
- (14) p. 33 Abraham Lincoln, letter to Henry L. Pierce
- (15) p. 33 Abraham Lincoln, speech in the U. S. House of Representatives
- (16a) p. 33 Abraham Lincoln, speech in the U. S. House of Representatives
- (16b) p. 33 Abraham Lincoln, speech in the U. S. House of Representatives
- (17) p. 34 William Barret Travis Lieutenant Colonel, Commandant
- (18a) p. 35 General San Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna
- (18b) p. 35 General San Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna
- (19) p. 41 Sara Pierce, exchange taken from her letters
- (20) p. 41 Hiram Pierce, exchange taken from his letters
- (21) p. 41 Mason Wilson, exchange taken from his letters
- (22) p. 41 Luzena Wilson, exchange taken from her letters
- (23) p. 42 Frederick Douglass
- (24) p. 44 Cree Indian prophecy
- (25) p. 46 Frederick Douglass, Rochester, NY speech.
- (26a) p. 47 Frederick Douglass
- (26b) p. 47 Frederick Douglass
- (26c) p. 47 Frederick Douglass
- (27a) p. 49 Abraham Lincoln, A Proclamation
- (27b) p. 49 Abraham Lincoln, A Proclamation
- (28a) p. 55 Belle Boyd
- (28b) p. 55 Belle Boyd
- (29) p. 66 Abraham Lincoln, 2nd Inaugural Address

A CEMETERY IN THE PRAIRIE TOWN OF EASTON, INDIANA, USA, 1837

In darkness, a fiddler plays a  
country reel.

MUSIC CUE: COUNTRY REEL  
LIGHTS UP/DAY

Deceased citizens of Easton sing  
and dance on their graves.  
Narrators 1 & 2 are watching.

REEL CALLER

NOW ALL TO THE MIDDLE CRIES A WHINING FIDDLE.  
DON'T WORRY IF YOU'RE MAN OR WIFE.  
DON'T WORRY IF YOU'RE BLACK OR WHITE.  
NOW STEP TO YOUR BROTHER. DIP DOWN TO ANOTHER.

ALL

OH ME, OH MY, WE'RE HYPNOTISED.  
WE'RE GOIN' UP. FLYIN' SO HIGH.  
OH ME, OH MY, GOT BUTTERFLIES  
'CAUSE WHAT WE FEEL IS THE COUNTRY REEL!

REEL CALLER

LET ALL YOUR SORROWS HANG ON 'TIL TOMORROW.

LORRAINE

NO TROUBLE IF YOUR STEP AIN'T RIGHT.

JEB

(to Lorraine)

NO TROUBLE IF YOUR TEETH AIN'T WHITE.

LORRAINE

(to Jeb)

JUST SLIDE YER TAIL OVER. BE MY FOUR-LEAF CLOVER.

ALL

OH ME, OH MY, WE'RE HYPNOTISED.  
WE'RE GOIN' UP. FLYIN' SO HIGH.  
OH ME, OH MY GOT BUTTERFLIES.  
'CAUSE WHAT WE FEEL IS THE COUNTRY REEL.

DANCE BREAK

LORRAINE

OH ME, OH MY, HOW TIME FLIES BY.

JEB

WE'RE DANCIN' GOOD LIKE SHOO-FLY PIE.

LORRAINE & JEB

OH ME, OH MY, DON'T SAY GOODBYE.  
I NEED TO FEEL YOUR COUNTRY REEL.

JEB  
All righty then!

Jeb dances with Lorraine. Others  
join.

DANCE BREAK

ALL  
OH ME, OH MY, WE'RE HYPNOTISED.  
WE'RE GOIN' UP. FLYIN' SO HIGH.  
OH ME, OH MY, GOT BUTTERFLIES.  
'CAUSE WHAT WE FEEL IS THE COUNTRY REEL.  
LIFE'S IDEAL WITH A COUNTRY REEL!

BLACKOUT

Funeral BELLS toll. FOG rolls in.

LIGHTS UP/HAUNTING

Susanna, fifteen years old, kneels  
in front of a small tombstone,  
frozen.

NARRATOR 1  
(addressing the audience)  
June 9th.

NARRATOR 2  
(addressing the audience)  
1837.

The narrators are omnipotent. They  
address the audience and each  
other as well as watching the  
action. They are ever-present.

OTHO (OFF)  
Susanna!

NARRATOR 2  
There's Otho.

OTHO (OFF)  
Susanna!

NARRATOR 1  
Otho was born here in Easton, Indiana seventeen  
years ago.

OTHO (OFF)  
Susanna!

SUSANNA  
(coming to life)  
I'm in the cemetery.

NARRATOR 1  
(looking at Susanna)  
This is Susanna.  
(addressing the audience)  
She is fifteen and Otho plans to marry her.

A quiet Ann Rutledge enters  
followed by eager Abraham Lincoln.  
Ann looks around the graveyard.  
Lincoln catches up with her.

ABE LINCOLN  
May I make your acquaintance?

ANN RUTLEDGE  
Rutledge.

NARRATOR 2  
Ann Rutledge is twenty years old.

ABE LINCOLN  
Miss Rutledge, I'm Abe Lincoln.

NARRATOR 2  
Abraham is twenty-four.

ANN RUTLEDGE  
It's a pleasure.

Otho enters, rattled.

OTHO  
Susanna, Pa is gravely ill.

SUSANNA  
Otho, I'm so sorry.

Dialogue weaves. Couples are  
unaware of each other.

ANN RUTLEDGE  
What do you do, Mr. Lincoln?

ABE LINCOLN  
Soon to be a lawyer.

ANN RUTLEDGE  
Here's Daddy's grave.

OTHO  
Daddy transferred the farm into my name.

Ann looks at the wilted flowers on  
her father's grave.

ANN RUTLEDGE

The blooms have faded. Please excuse me, Mr.  
Lincoln, but I need to buy flowers down the  
road.

ABE LINCOLN

May I escort you?

OTHO

I'll never manage the work alone.

ANN RUTLEDGE

Yes. I suppose. Thank you.

Ann and Lincoln exit.

SUSANNA

Your daddy will live, Otho. Ma and I will come  
this evening.

OTHO

May I escort you to town?

SUSANNA

I want to pray awhile with my father.

OTHO

May peace be yours.

SUSANNA

And yours as well.

Otho exits. Susanna returns to her  
father's grave. Jeb, a thirty-two  
year old farmhand, enters. He is  
followed by the twenty-nine year  
old pioneer spinster, Lorraine who  
is flustered.

LORRAINE

Jeb, marry me.

JEB

I can't.

LORRAINE

Reverend Miller told my ma we should marry.

JEB

Reverend Miller don't know 'bout my trouble.



LORRAINE

How can there trouble when I'm here?

JEB

You're a fragrant flower, Lorraine.

LORRAINE

And?

JEB

You are beautiful even if no one can tell.

LORRAINE

Jeb.

JEB

Lorraine, I need to tell you something.

LORRAINE

I need to tell you something! I'll soon... I'll soon be thirty.

JEB

I don't judge an old horse.

Lorraine sighs.

You know I love old horses. Don't pout. I think you're as sweet as shoo-fly pie.

LORRAINE

Jeb, shoo-fly pies attract flies.

JEB

That's how I find you. I follow the flies and there's Lorraine.

Susanna talks to her father in the grave.

SUSANNA

Daddy, I do not love Otho.

LORRAINE

Grow old with me.

JEB

I can't right now.

LORRAINE

You do not love me?

SUSANNA

Otho wants a wife for chores.

JEB

I do love you.

SUSANNA

Is love a chore?

LORRAINE

I don't believe you.

SUSANNA

Or a burden?

JEB

I always smell the air to see if you're upwind.

SUSANNA

Can't it be sweet?

JEB

If it smells sweet like morning, I know you're in front of me.

SUSANNA

Pray with me, Daddy.

From behind the tombstone,  
Susanna's father appears.

JEB

Your face is as lovely as a field of cows.

LORRAINE

Jeb.

JEB

I love how cows look.

SUSANNA'S FATHER

My daughter, love is beyond here.

JEB

I love you more than my dog, Lorraine.

SUSANNA'S FATHER

Beyond the horizon.

LORRAINE

I love you more than Ma's pie.

JEB

Does she have any?

LORRAINE

I saw flies swarming the porch this morning.  
Let's go!

JEB  
All righty then!

Jeb and Lorraine exit.

SUSANNA'S FATHER  
Listen to me, my child. Your love will come at dawn. It will take you high and set you free.

Susanna's father disappears.  
Susanna exits.

NARRATOR 1  
Some say we need less love and more storms with thunder, wind and lightning. Meet Mrs. Randolph Davenport.

Mrs. Davenport enters with upscale attitude.

MRS. RANDOLPH DAVENPORT  
I taught him his A B C's. I did not know my lessons would unleash such an anger in his tiny heart. The alphabet I taught formed words in his mind and the words became ideas that fought in his head. Oh, how I feared his ten-year-old eyes.

Mrs. Davenport exits. Ann Rutledge enters with flowers and kneels at her father's grave.

NARRATOR 2  
In the end it's not the years in your life that count, it is the life in your years.\*(1) Ann Rutledge would never hear Abe Lincoln say these words. Tragedy was sneaking up on her.

ANN RUTLEDGE  
Dear father, how I remember your tavern.

MUSIC CUE:  
OOKPIK WALTZ UNDERSCORES  
A riotous holiday every night. There was always a smile and a waltz.

Waitresses, bartenders and patrons enter along with James Rutledge, Ann's father. Patrons create a bar, chairs and tables from barrels and planks in the cemetery.

JAMES RUTLEDGE  
Welcome everyone! Welcome to my tavern!

Otho, Susanna, Jeb and Lorraine  
enter the tavern.

Put friends where you want 'em. Keep drinks  
where you need 'em. Stay long enough to fall in  
love and leave before your wife shows up!

The crowd laughs. George, a  
patron, stands on a barrel.

GEORGE

(to waitress)

Abigail! Abigail! Firewater!

He waves to Abigail, a saucy  
waitress.

Rum for everyone! Tell me the damages!

Cheers and revelry erupt as the  
bartender waves a bottle of rum.  
Lincoln enters followed by Johnny,  
a good-looking young man, fifteen  
years old. Abigail stops at Jeb  
and Lorraine's table.

ABIGAIL

What will it be?

Jeb hesitates.

Come now, you know with rum a better future  
comes.

JEB

Rum it is.

LORRAINE

We can serve it at our wedding.

ABIGAIL

Rum's a coming, love-doves.

Otho glares at Johnny as he  
circles Susanna. Lincoln steps  
behind Ann.

ANN RUTLEDGE

(to Lincoln)

You stalk me.

ABE LINCOLN

I admire you.

ANN RUTLEDGE

Admire the waltz. It's more interesting.

ABE LINCOLN

It seems odd in a tavern.

ANN RUTLEDGE

It's a thrill in a tavern.

ABE LINCOLN

May I have the honor of this thrill?

ANN RUTLEDGE

My father is watching.

ABE LINCOLN

(whispering)

Be fearless.

ANN RUTLEDGE

He owns the place.

ABE LINCOLN

You live, but once.

ANN RUTLEDGE

You die, but once.

ABE LINCOLN

Choose.

Johnny whispers in Susanna's ear.

JOHNNY

Does your love arrive by day or night?

SUSANNA

My love arrives at dawn and sets me free.

JOHNNY

Not at night?

SUSANNA

No. Dawn.

Susanna walks away from Johnny. He follows her. Otho pursues Johnny.

ANN RUTLEDGE

I assume your intentions are honorable.

ABE LINCOLN

I can tell you I will do the very best I know how.\*(2) And your intentions, Miss Rutledge?

ANN RUTLEDGE

To dance.

The music swells. Lincoln and Ann waltz. Others join the swirling movement.

DANCE BREAK

From behind, Johnny presses his lips to Susanna's ear.

JOHNNY

Dance with me. Your heart is safe. It's night, not dawn.

SUSANNA

(transfixed)

True. The stars are out.

JOHNNY

Then let me guide you through the night dodging the stars as we dance.

Susanna and Johnny waltz.

ANN RUTLEDGE

Mr. Lincoln, what do you intend?

ABE LINCOLN

I intend to be persistent.

JEB

Lorraine, don't look at me like I'm perfect. I'm a thistle.

LORRAINE

(transfixed)

A rose has thorns.

JEB

Abigail, more rum!

ABIGAIL

Coming, ye ole thistle!

Patrons laugh.

JOHNNY

(to Susanna)

I've been watching you ever since I arrived in Easton.

SUSANNA

And when was that?

JOHNNY

Three weeks ago. Have you watched me?

Susanna's mother, weathered and feisty, Mama, enters. She carries a shotgun. Mama hunts for Susanna. Her eyes zero in on Johnny.

SUSANNA

For two days.

JOHNNY

Only two?

SUSANNA

You have looked my way for three weeks and two days.

JOHNNY

So you have watched me.

MAMA

I'm watching you.

Johnny, Susanna and the others stop dancing as Mama aims her shotgun at Johnny.

SUSANNA

Mama.

JOHNNY

(rushing to Mama)

Good evening, ma'am. I'm Johnny Gale.

Mama backs Johnny up with her rifle.

MAMA

It's time for my daughter to be home, Mr. Gale.

JOHNNY

I'm happy to escort her-

MAMA

I'm happier to escort her.

Mama lowers her rifle.

(to Johnny)

I'll wait outside for one minute. After that, I'll be back to show you how I shoot a gun.

Mama exits.

SUSANNA

(to Johnny)

I need to go.

JOHNNY

Do you have a hatbox?

SUSANNA

I don't wear hats.

JOHNNY

Where do you keep your love letters?

SUSANNA

I don't have any.

Johnny dangles a letter in front  
of Susanna.

JOHNNY

You do now.

SUSANNA

I must go.

JOHNNY

Would you like to hear the first sentence?

SUSANNA

If you must.

JOHNNY

Death and love are alike.

SUSANNA

Death has nothing to do with love.

JOHNNY

I've sealed it so your mama won't read it. I've  
written something on the back. Go on, take it.

Susanna takes the letter and reads  
the back of the envelope.

SUSANNA

Those are terrible words to write.

Susanna drops the letter. Johnny  
picks it up.

NARRATOR 1

Love can be swift.

Susanna tries to leave.

JOHNNY

(stopping her with a shout)

I love you.



Patrons laugh.

NARRATOR 1

Or slow.

JOHNNY

(holding out the letter)

Please take it.

Susanna accepts the letter.

SUSANNA

I'm leaving.

JOHNNY

Thoughts of you will bring sweet repose!

Mama enters.

MAMA

Until I wake you.

JOHNNY

Ma'am?

MAMA

And shoot you.

SUSANNA

I'm coming, Mama.

Susanna exits. Mama slowly raises her shotgun toward Johnny. Others become nervous. Mama cocks the trigger. Pandemonium. Mama fires.

BLACKOUT

MAMA

(in darkness)

Damn it! I missed!

MUSIC CUE: OOPAK PLAYOFF  
LIGHTS UP/AFTERNOON/GLOOMY

The tavern is gone. Lincoln kneels at a grave. The tower clock strikes three times.

NARRATOR 2

(looking at Lincoln)

To test a man, take away love.

Ann Rutledge steps into view.

ANN RUTLEDGE

I found myself beneath the ground at age twenty-two. I, Ann Rutledge, was brought here by typhoid. No. That is a lie. God brought me here as punishment. I strayed. I was engaged to John MacNamar, but I fell in love with Abraham Lincoln. I lived without fear of tomorrow while in the arms of Abraham until I died yesterday.

Ann exits. Dot and Marcie, Ann's friends, enter and watch Lincoln.

DOT BELL

Ann was such a dear friend. Did you know at our last quilting bee, Mr. Lincoln sat beside her and whispered words of love into her ear.

MARCIE LONG

In public?

DOT BELL

Everyone watched. We couldn't help ourselves. I thought I'd fall off my chair when he kissed her hand. Then I choked as he slid his lips upon her neck. She became so excited that she started shaking and the stitches on her quilt became long and irregular.

ABE LINCOLN

My heart is buried in this grave.

MARCIE LONG

(looking at Lincoln)

He loved her so.

DOT BELL

John MacNamar didn't even come to the funeral.

MARCIE LONG

He must of heard about the quilt.

Dot and Marcie exit.

ABE LINCOLN

Whether I shall ever be better I can not tell. But to remain as I am is impossible; I must die or be better.\*(3)

Lincoln exits.

NARRATOR 1

People move in and out of Easton, but no one leaves the cemetery.

## NARRATOR 2

Before Easton was around, there was the tribe  
of Chief Joseph.

Chief Joseph enters.

## CHIEF JOSEPH

The earth is the mother of all people and all  
people should have equal rights upon it. Treat  
all men alike.\*(4) I wish my people had a  
chance to grow old here in Easton, but all you  
Dan Tuckers came and got in the way.

Chief Joseph exits.

MUSIC CUE: OLD DAN TUCKER

Easton townspeople enter clapping,  
singing and rejoicing.

## EASTON TOWNSPEOPLE

HE COMES TO TOWN THE OTHER NIGHT,  
TO HEAR THE NOISE AND SEE THE FIGHT,  
THE WATCHMAN WAS A RUNNIN' ROUN',  
CRYIN' OLD DAN TUCKER'S COME TO TOWN.

GET OUT OF THE WAY, OLD DAN TUCKER.  
YOU'RE TOO LATE TO GET YOUR SUPPER.  
GET OUT OF THE WAY, OLD DAN TUCKER.  
YOU'RE TOO LATE TO GET YOUR SUPPER.

YES OLD DAN, HE'S COME TO TOWN.  
TO SWING THE LADIES ROUND AND ROUND.  
HE SWINGS ONE EAST. HE SWINGS ONE WEST.  
HE SWINGS WITH THE ONE HE LOVES THE BEST.

GET OUT OF THE WAY, OLD DAN TUCKER.  
YOU'RE TOO LATE TO GET YOUR SUPPER.  
GET OUT OF THE WAY, OLD DAN TUCKER.  
YOU'RE TOO LATE TO GET YOUR SUPPER.

DANCE BREAK

NOW OLD DAN TUCKER SAT ON A TRUNK  
AND FELL IN THE FIRE AND KICKED UP A CHUNK.  
RED-HOT COAL FALL DOWN IN HIS SHOE  
OH MY STARS, HOW THE ASHES FLEW.

GET OUT OF THE WAY, OLD DAN TUCKER.  
YOU'RE TOO LATE TO GET YOUR SUPPER.  
GET OUT OF THE WAY, OLD DAN TUCKER.  
YOU'RE TOO LATE TO GET YOUR SUPPER.  
GET OUT OF THE WAY, OLD DAN TUCKER!

VOICE (OFF)

Jeb! Come quick! Lorraine's buying a wedding dress!

Easton townspeople exit with brouhahas. Lincoln enters. He paces.

ABE LINCOLN

(to himself, agitated)

Their gambling was far from being forbidden by the laws.

Lincoln's irritation increases.

Unaware of Lincoln, Mary Todd and her sister, Elizabeth, enter.

(as if addressing a crowd)

It was actually licensed by an act of the state and yet they hung all those men.\*(5a)

MARY TODD

(ignoring Lincoln)

I have heard, dear sister, that I am an ambitious socialite.

ELIZABETH

You are, Mary.

MARY TODD

How lovely.

ABE LINCOLN

Strangers traveling on business--\*(5b)

MARY TODD

Who is that man babbling?

ELIZABETH

A state representative.

ABE LINCOLN

-black and white, all dead dangling from trees upon every road side;

Curious citizens enter and slowly gather around Lincoln.

And in numbers almost sufficient to rival the Spanish moss that drapes the forests of the South.\*(5c)

MARY TODD

He speaks so boldly.

ABE LINCOLN

Citizens. I implore you to listen.

ELIZABETH

He is ambitious.

MARY TODD

Is he?

More citizens gather.

ABE LINCOLN

In St. Louis, a single man was sacrificed.\*(5d)

MARY TODD

I like ambition.

Mary studies Lincoln.

ABE LINCOLN

A man, by the name of McIntosh, was seized in the street, dragged to the suburbs, chained to a tree and burned to death and all within a single hour from the time he had been a freeman attending his own business.\*(5e)

CITIZEN

He was a murderer!

ABE LINCOLN

[Perhaps] when innocent men take it in their heads to kill, in the confusion, they will be as likely to kill someone who is neither a gambler nor a murderer as one who is. That injustice could happen to any of you.\*(5f)

Citizens bicker with ad-libs.

CITIZEN

What can we do?

ABE LINCOLN

Do not violate the law.\*(5g)

CITIZEN

Sometimes we need to violate the law.

MARY TODD

(to Elizabeth)

I need someone rich.

ABE LINCOLN

If we do, we trample on the blood of our forefathers.

(MORE)

ABE LINCOLN (CONT'D)

The struggle of today, is not altogether for today -- it is for a vast future also.\*(5h)

There is uproar. Some citizens disperse.

CITIZEN

Some laws are bad.

ABE LINCOLN

Yes and they should be repealed.\*(5i)

CITIZEN

Laws are a grievance.

ABE LINCOLN

There is no grievance that is a fit object for mob law. Let reverence for the laws, be breathed by every American mother, to the lisping babe, that prattles on her lap - let it be taught in schools, in seminaries, and in colleges.\*(5j)

ELIZABETH

He sounds like a president.

ABE LINCOLN

Let it be written in Primers, spelling books, and in Almanacs; let it be preached from the pulpit, proclaimed in legislative halls, and enforced in courts of justice.\*(5k)

Citizens applaud, disagree and discuss Lincoln's words as they exit.

MARY TODD

And presidents have treasuries. Do you know him?

ELIZABETH

We've met.

MARY TODD

Introduce me.

ELIZABETH

Of course. Mr. Lincoln, oh, Mr. Lincoln, it's Elizabeth Todd Edwards. Your words ignite and inspire. Please meet my sister, Miss Mary Todd.

ABE LINCOLN

(making sure she is single)

Miss?

MARY TODD

Miss.

ABE LINCOLN

Mary Todd.

MARY TODD

I hear you're a state representative.

ABE LINCOLN

More a lawyer.

MARY TODD

Dear Shakespeare mentions law more than any other profession.

ABE LINCOLN

Good counselors lack no clients.\*(6)

MARY TODD

Ah, Measure for Measure. Very good.

ABE LINCOLN

Do you waltz, Miss Todd?

MARY TODD

The waltz leads to consequences.

ELIZABETH

Mr. Lincoln, in your opinion is abiding by the law a moral issue?

MARY TODD

Dear sister, if it were a moral issue, we'd shoot the lawyers.

ABE LINCOLN

Lawless are those who make their own laws, moral or not.

MARY TODD

You should run for a national office.

ABE LINCOLN

I will if you accept my invitation to the cotillion next week.

MARY TODD

My card. Call with details.

ABE LINCOLN

Very well. Mrs. Edwards, please give my regards to your husband.

Mary Todd and Elizabeth exit.

ELIZABETH

Certainly.

ABE LINCOLN

(watching Mary as she exits)

Things may come to those who wait, but only the  
things left by those who hustle.\*(7)

(to himself)

I shall call within the hour, Miss Todd.

Lincoln exits. Susanna enters. She  
holds a buckwheat cake, but is not  
interested in it. Johnny enters.

JOHNNY

Susanna, I found you. I went to your house-

SUSANNA

Johnny-

JOHNNY

Your mama wasn't there, but I'm going back to  
find her if you say yes. You see, I, well, want  
to ask her about us going out. You and me.

SUSANNA

It won't do any good.

JOHNNY

Because you're not sixteen yet?

Otho enters.

SUSANNA

No, because-

OTHO

You're a Southerner.

Susanna turns away upset.

JOHNNY

Is that true, Susanna?

Susanna nods yes.

That's okay. Your mama doesn't know Johnny  
Gale.

MUSIC CUE:

OH SUSANNA/YANKEE DOODLE DANDY

OH SUSANNA, DON'T YOU CRY FOR ME,  
I COME FROM-



OTHO

Alabama. Susanna's mama likes Yankee boys not  
Southern cowards and I'm a Yankee through and  
through.

FATHER'S NAME IS ALEXANDER.  
MOTHER'S NAME WAS ANN MARIA.  
YANKS THROUGH AND THROUGH,  
RED, WHITE AND BLUE.

Easton townspeople start to enter.

FATHER IS SO YANKEE-HEARTED,  
WHEN THE REVOLUTION STARTED,  
HE SLIPPED ON A UNIFORM AND HOPPED UPON A PONY.

Hey, there's a Southern boy up here!  
MY MOTHER'S MOTHER WAS A YANKEE TRUE.  
MY FATHER'S FATHER WAS A YANKEE TOO.

More townspeople enter.

THAT'S GOING SOME FOR THE YANKEES, BY GUM!  
OH, SAY CAN YOU SEE ANYTHING  
ABOUT MY PEDIGREE THAT'S PHONY?

JOHNNY

I HAD A DREAM THE OTHER NIGHT WHEN EV'RYTHING WAS STILL.  
I DREAMED I SAW SUSANNA DEAR A CRYING ON THE HILL.  
A BUCKWHEAT CAKE WAS IN HER MOUTH.  
A TEAR WAS IN HER EYE 'CAUSE I CAME HERE FROM THE SOUTH.

Some townspeople ad-lib in favor  
of Johnny.

SUSANNA, DON'T YOU CRY.

OTHO

(to townspeople)

Help me out!

Easton townspeople in favor of  
Otho join him.

OTHO AND FRIENDS

HE'S A YANKEE DOODLE DANDY,  
A YANKEE DOODLE, DO OR DIE.  
A REAL LIVE NEPHEW OF HIS UNCLE SAM  
BORN ON THE FOURTH OF JULY.  
HE WANTS A YANKEE DOODLE SWEETHEART.  
SHE'LL BE HIS YANKEE DOODLE JOY.  
YANKEE DOODLE COMES TO TOWN JUST TO WIN SUSANNA.

OTHO

I AM THAT YANKEE DOODLE BOY!

JOHNNY

OH, SUSANNA, DON'T YOU CRY FOR ME.

JOHNNY'S FRIENDS

'CAUSE HE COMES FROM ALABAMA WITH A BANJO ON HIS KNEE.

OTHO AND FRIENDS

I'M A YANKEE DOODLE DANDY. (HE'S A YANKEE DOODLE DANDY.)  
A YANKEE DOODLE DO OR DIE. (A YANKEE DOODLE DO OR DIE.)

JOHNNY

OH, SUSANNA, WON'T YOU FALL FOR ME?

JOHNNY'S FRIENDS

'CAUSE HE COMES FROM ALABAMA WITH A BANJO ON HIS KNEE.

OTHO AND FRIENDS

A REAL LIVE NEPHEW OF HIS UNCLE SAM  
BORN ON THE FOURTH OF JULY.

JOHNNY

OH, SUSANNA, WON'T YOU FALL FOR ME?

JOHNNY'S FRIENDS

'CAUSE HE COMES FROM ALABAMA WITH A BANJO ON HIS KNEE.

OTHO

I WANT A YANKEE DOODLE SWEETHEART.

OTHO'S FRIENDS

SHE'LL BE A YANKEE DOODLE JOY.

OTHO AND FRIENDS

YANKEE DOODLE COMES TO TOWN, JUST TO WIN SUSANNA.

OTHO

TAKE ME, THE YANKEE DOODLE BOY!

JOHNNY

OH, SUSANNA, WON'T YOU FALL FOR ME?

OTHO

She's not gonna fall for you. You have one day  
to get out of town. I'll see you and your ma  
tonight, Susanna.

(to his friends)

Why don't you write her another letter?

Ad-libs. Laughter. Otho and  
friends exit.

JOHNNY

Would your mama let you read a letter from me?

SUSANNA

I suppose.

JOHNNY

I'll write one straightaway down by the river.

Johnny exits. Susanna turns the buckwheat cake over and over in her hands. Mama enters.

MAMA

How long does it take to eat a buckwheat cake?

SUSANNA

I don't want it.

MAMA

Your chores want you.

SUSANNA

I'll get on 'em.

Susanna exits. After a moment, Mama looks toward the river and see Johnny (off).

MAMA

Well, what do I see? Somebody writing away trying to be Shakespeare.

Mama shoots her shotgun in Johnny's direction.

JOHNNY

What the dickens are you doing?

MAMA

Come here, Shakespeare!

JOHNNY

No!

MAMA

Stop acting all upper-class or I'll shoot your ass.

JOHNNY

Can I finish this?

Mama fires here rifle again toward Johnny.

MAMA

There's your answer.

JOHNNY

Blazes! What the hell's in your head? You trying to kill me?

MAMA

Maybe. Come here, Shakespeare.

JOHNNY

I have one sentence left.

MAMA

Better write fast.

Mama shoots.

JOHNNY

How can I write with you shooting at me?

MAMA

This time I'm going to aim.

Mama cocks her rifle.

JOHNNY

All right! All right!

Johnny enters.

I'm here!

MAMA

Did you finish, Shakespeare?

JOHNNY

It's done.

MAMA

Good. Now, stand still and let me put an X on your forehead.

JOHNNY

What for?

MAMA

It's how I mark the dead.

JOHNNY

What?

MAMA

Mortality stinks. That's good. Write that down. I said write it down.

Johnny writes.

Read it back to me.

JOHNNY

Mortality stinks.

MAMA

Look up.

With coal from her apron, Mama  
puts an X on Johnny's forehead.

Where you from?

JOHNNY

Alabama.

MAMA

What are doing here?

JOHNNY

Looking for work.

MAMA

No work for poets around here.

JOHNNY

(holding out his letter)

Would you give this to Susanna?

MAMA

Depends what it says. Read it.

JOHNNY

Dear Susanna.

Johnny hesitates.

MAMA

Go on.

JOHNNY

(reading)

I almost wish we were butterflies and liv'd but  
three summer days - three such days with you I  
could fill with more delight than fifty common  
years could contain...\*(8a)

MAMA

What else?

JOHNNY

I am sailing with thee through the dizzy sky!  
How beautiful thou art...\*(8b)

MAMA

Glory be, you do write like Shakespeare, don't  
ya? Hand over the letter. I'll give it to her.  
Come back in three years or I shoot you right  
now.

JOHNNY

Three-

MAMA

If you come back, I'll know those fancy words  
aren't crap.

JOHNNY

But-

MAMA

(raising her gun)

Don't make that X mean something.

JOHNNY

May I write her?

MAMA

Nope. You write me, Shakespeare. I'm the only  
one who gets to decide if your stinking poetry  
is good enough for my daughter. Now get.

JOHNNY

Can't I-

MAMA

Nope!

Mama raises her shotgun. Johnny  
exits. Mama looks at the letter.

(reading)

You cannot conceive how I ache to be with you;  
how I would die for one hour... I will imagine  
you Venus tonight and pray, pray, pray to your  
star like a Heathen.\*(8c)

(to herself)

Venus and a heathen. What a bunch of shit.

Mama exits.

LIGHTS SHIFT/EVENING

NARRATOR 1

Pa finally dies and Otho is rich.

MUSIC CUE: HEAR OUR PRAYER

Mourners enter and stand near the  
cemetery's only mausoleum. Otho,  
Mama and Susanna are among the  
mourners.

SOLOIST

HOLD ON NO MORE TO THE COMING DAWN.  
HOLD ON NO MORE, MY SON.

THE DAY HAS COME TO SAY GOODBYE,  
TO LET YOUR SOUL SAIL ON.

GOODBYE, MY SON, TO YOUR EARTHLY LIFE.  
GOODBYE, MY SON, GOODBYE.  
THE NIGHT IS GONE SO FEAR NO MORE.  
GOD'S LIGHT WILL GUIDE YOU ON.

ALL  
TAKE HIM UP TO THE PEARLY GATES.  
TAKE HIM UP. HE CAN'T WAIT.  
LET HIM IN TO THE PROMISED LAND.  
LET HIM IN. LEND A HAND.  
LET HIM SHARE IN YOUR BOUNDLESS LOVE.  
LET HIM SHARE HIGH ABOVE.  
TAKE HIM UP FOR ETERNAL REST.  
OH, FATHER, HEAR OUR PRAYER.  
TAKE HIM UP. HEAR OUR PRAYER.

REVEREND MILLER  
This was a good life for Albert Sherman and  
death has delivered everlasting life to him in  
heaven. Otho Sherman, Albert's son, offers the  
final reflection.

OTHO  
The darker the night,  
The brighter the stars,  
The deeper the grief,  
The closer is God.\*(9)

REVEREND MILLER  
Friends and family, go and rejoice in the  
memory of Albert Sherman.

MUSIC CUE:  
HEAR OUR PRAYER UNDERSCORES

Family and friends give their  
respect to Otho, mingle and exit.  
Susanna approaches Otho.

SUSANNA  
Your father was dedicated to this town and to  
you. I'm truly sorry.

OTHO  
Thank you.

Mama steps to Otho.

SUSANNA  
Mama, I'll wait down by the river.

MAMA

I'll be right there.

(to Otho)

Your father was the founder of Easton who raised a hardworking son. God bless you both.

Mama starts to leave.

OTHO

Mrs. Thomas, Susanna and I are-

MAMA

Only friends. Right?

OTHO

Right.

MAMA

You may court my Susanna in eight months when she's sixteen. Until then, work your land. Now give your thoughts to your father and not my daughter. Win her heart before Shakespeare returns. Agreed?

OTHO

Agreed.

Mama exits.

NARRATOR 2

Once Susanna turned sixteen, Otho called on her every week. Mama received hundreds of letters from Johnny.

Mama is seen reading a letter. She looks up.

MAMA

(to God)

My dear Father in heaven, I now know why you make poets. When they write about hope, I dream. When they write about forever, I see eternity. When they write about love, I feel the touch of my husband's hand.

(to herself)

Hell, this boy could write about a biscuit and I'd smell it.

(praying)

Lord, I might be wrong to give my Susanna these letters, but they are too much for one heart to hold. It's June 3rd, 1840. Today marks three years since we've seen him. Now, you know, I've never asked for anything and I'll understand if you don't bring him around here ever again. No I won't understand.

(MORE)



MAMA (CONT'D)

Damn it, God, Easton needs a poet. Everyone needs a good poet in their life. Anyway, I'm sorry I didn't kill him 'cause this is a lot for an old woman to handle. Thank you. God, have a good day.

Mama exits.

NARRATOR 1

That afternoon Johnny knocked on Mama's door. They celebrated with beer and sweet words when Susanna and Johnny married on a hot day in July 1842.

NARRATOR 2

Mary Todd said yes to Abraham Lincoln the same year.

NARRATOR 1

Johnny created quite a stir when he posted a note in the center of town on July 7, 1846.

Mrs. Davenport enters with a letter and a parcel.

It was the shortest note he ever wrote.

MRS. RANDOLPH DAVENPORT

It's from my sister, Evelyn.

NARRATOR 1

Johnny wrote, 'My heart cannot be bothered with words today. Our son is here and those are words enough.'

MRS. RANDOLPH DAVENPORT

Oh, how I miss her and South Carolina.

(reading)

Oh, my heavens. That little boy has run away. Ever since he learned his A B C's, he has prayed for this. I know he has. He sure stopped praying and used his legs this time. He's the devil on earth.

Jeb and Lorraine enter.

JEB

Lorraine, I have the solution.

MRS. RANDOLPH DAVENPORT

(reading)

Oh, Evelyn, no.

LORRAINE

I've been telling you, I'm your solution.

MRS. RANDOLPH DAVENPORT  
(reading)  
He wrote a book...

JEB  
Well, yes and no.

MRS. RANDOLPH DAVENPORT  
A book that's threatening my father's  
plantation.

JEB  
I'm going to war.

MRS. RANDOLPH DAVENPORT  
It could start a war and if he succeeds, there  
will be far-flung unemployment-

LORRAINE  
Instead of war...

MRS. RANDOLPH DAVENPORT-  
-uprisings...

LORRAINE  
I'll be your princess in a castle.

MRS. RANDOLPH DAVENPORT  
-chaos...

JEB  
But I'm not a prince.

MRS. RANDOLPH DAVENPORT  
-revolt...

JEB  
I'm a pauper who wants to be a soldier.

MRS. RANDOLPH DAVENPORT  
-bloodshed.

LORRAINE  
You've gone mad.

MRS. RANDOLPH DAVENPORT  
He's gone mad.

Mrs. Davenport reads the book.

LORRAINE  
Nobody would shoot at you. You're too old.

JEB  
I won't marry you until I can support you.

LORRAINE

You're looking at smallpox, cholera, and yellow fever.

JEB

The army pays.

LORRAINE

Please don't come home dead.

JEB

I can't afford to die.

Lorraine and Jeb exit.

I'm leaving in the morning.

LORRAINE

My heart breaks tonight.

MRS. RANDOLPH DAVENPORT

(reading from the book)

The fatal poison of irresponsible power was already in her hands and soon commenced its infernal work. That cheerful eye... soon became red with rage; that voice, made all of sweet accord changed to one of harsh and horrid discord; and that angelic face gave place to that of a demon.\*(10)

(looking up)

He's writing about me. Who does he think I am? Some blurry eyed dreamer? He's the dreamer. His ideas are farfetched. My life is kind and wise. My face is not that of a demon. He shall see who I am.

Mrs. Davenport exits.

NARRATOR 2

Jeb never went to war, but America did-

MUSIC CUE:

MEXICAN WAR THEME UNDERSCORES

-with Mexico.

Ad-libs, pro & con, are heard.  
Lincoln, Mary Todd and Elizabeth  
enter followed by an agitated  
crowd.

ABE LINCOLN

Allow the president to invade a neighboring nation, whenever he shall deem it necessary to repel an invasion, and you allow him to do so whenever he may choose - so you allow him to make war at pleasure?\*(11)

CITIZEN 1  
This is unconstitutional!

Mary Todd and her sister,  
Elizabeth, enter and observe the  
debate.

CITIZEN 2  
(talking to a friend)  
We tried peace.

CITIZEN 3  
(in Congress)  
We were invaded!

CITIZEN 4  
Mexico shed American blood on our soil!

CITIZEN 5  
Shameful.

CITIZEN 6  
(to Lincoln)  
This is Polk's war!

CITIZEN 7  
(to Lincoln)  
Impeach the president!

CITIZEN 8  
No! God bless our president, James Polk!

During the agitation, Mary Todd  
and Elizabeth separate from the  
crowd.

CITIZEN 9  
Let Abe speak.

ABE LINCOLN  
Even though I am a new member of the House of  
Representatives, I do not hesitate to proclaim  
that the war with Mexico is unnecessarily and  
unconstitutionally commenced by President  
Polk.\*(12)

CITIZENS 1 & 6  
Hear, hear!

CITIZEN 2  
We're defending our national security.

CITIZEN 6  
We're stealing.

P. DUVALL

I am sending two of my three sons, B. H. Duval and John Duval, to join the cause of President Polk!\*(13)

ABE LINCOLN

Those who deny freedom to others deserve it not for themselves.\*(14)

P. DUVAL

You are evil!

Ad-libs pro and con.

ABE LINCOLN

The true rule, in determining to embrace, or reject anything, is not whether it has any evil in it; but whether it has more of evil, than of good.\*(15)

P. DUVAL

You have more than your share.

MARY TODD

I fear my husband is going to lose reelection because he opposes this war.

ABE LINCOLN

There are few things wholly evil.\*(16a)

MARY TODD

Perhaps if I dressed in more costly materials.

ABE LINCOLN

Or wholly good.\*(16b)

MARY TODD

The nation would like us.

ABE LINCOLN

I leave this war to Polk.

WILLIAM P. DUVAL

You're a traitor!

The crowd disperses in uproar.

ELIZABETH

(to Mary Todd)

People do judge us. We're rich.

ABE LINCOLN

Mary, please wait.

Lincoln joins Mary and Elizabeth.  
Others exit.

ELIZABETH  
Always stirring words, Mr. Lincoln.

ABE LINCOLN  
General Santa Anna judges harshly.

ELIZABETH  
And you do not?

ABE LINCOLN  
I do and that defines who I am and who they are  
not. May I escort you ladies?

MARY TODD  
Please.

Mary, Elizabeth and Lincoln exit.

NARRATOR 1  
Mrs. Knight lives down the road. Her daughter  
Molly stayed with her through the war.

Molly Travis and Mrs. Knight  
enter.

MOLLY TRAVIS  
Mom, my husband writes from the Republic of  
Texas.

MRS. KNIGHT  
Molly, what does our Bill say?

MOLLY TRAVIS  
(reading)  
I am besieged by a thousand or more of the  
Mexicans under General Santa Anna. I have  
answered with canon shots. I shall never  
surrender or retreat... Victory or death!\*(17)

MRS. KNIGHT  
I pray these words are not his memorial. I'm  
sorry. You should take time to write him. I'll  
tend to supper.

Molly and Mrs. Knight exit.

NARRATOR 2  
Molly never received another letter from her  
husband, Bill.

General Santa Anna enters.

GENERAL ANTONIO LÓPEZ DE SANTA  
ANNA

Did I die in battle?\*(18a)

NARRATOR 1

Victory is all too often defeat in disguise.

GENERAL ANTONIO LÓPEZ DE SANTA  
ANNA

No. Was I wounded in battle? No. I am Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna, General in Chief of the Mexican Army, Presidente' of Mexico eleven times, unofficially five, officially six. Greater than Polk until I lost his war with my Mexico. Polk got all of the wild west, but I'm still greater. I am the Napoleon of Mexico, dictator. Three days before the treaty was signed with Polk, gold was discovered in the far west, but I didn't know in time or I would have fought harder and won.\*(18b)

General Santa Anna exits.

NEWSPAPER SELLER

Yellow metal found in upper Californ-i-o! Gold!

MUSIC CUE: GOLD IN CALFORN-I-O!

Jeb enters rushing to the newspaper seller.

JEB

Did my ears hear you right?

NEWSPAPER SELLER

Gold discovered in upper Californ-i-o!

JEB

Gold?

Townspeople enter.

TOWNSPERSON 1

Gold?

NEWSPAPER SELLER

Gold!

TOWNSPEOPLE

Gold!

SEVERAL TOWNSPEOPLE

GOLD!

JEB

Lorraine! Gold! Lorraine, get here quick!

NEWSPAPER SELLER

Read all about it! Gold!

TOWNSPEOPLE

GOLD! GOLD!

Lorraine enters.

NEWSPAPER SELLER

Regular folks picking it up off the streets!

LORRAINE

Jeb, what on earth is it?

JEB

They found gold in the west!

TOWNSPEOPLE

GOLD! GOLD! GOLD!

NEWSPAPER SELLER

Folks are becoming rich with gold!

JEB

Did they bite it?

NEWSPAPER SELLER

You bet! It's soft and it's real.

TOWNSPEOPLE

FOUND IN UPPER CALIFORN-I-O!

LORRAINE

My stars!

Townspeople purchase newspapers.  
Others gather.

NEWSPAPER SELLER

Carpenter found gold flakes in the dirt.

Johnny enters. Excited ad-libs  
continue.

JOHNNY

Flakes?

NEWSPAPER SELLER

And nuggets that glow!



TOWNSPEOPLE

GLOW!

NEWSPAPER SELLER

Treasure in the west! Yellow metal everywhere!  
Hearts are thumping 'cause it glows!

TOWNSPEOPLE

GLOW! GLOW!

JOHNNY

Susanna! Little John! Mama!

NEWSPAPER SELLER

The hills glow in Californ-i-o with pieces  
bigger than the balls in pool halls!

TOWNSPEOPLE

GLOW! GLOW! GLOW!

NEWSPAPER SELLER

American dream is alive and shines outside  
Sacrament-i-o!

Susanna, Little John and Mama  
enter.

SUSANNA

Johnny, what's wrong?

Otho enters.

JOHNNY

They've found gold!

TOWNSPEOPLE

HOW IT SHINES IN SACRAMENT-I-O!

JOHNNY

It's everywhere out in the upper west.

OTHO

(grabbing a newspaper)

Let me see that.

JEB

I'm going.

LORRAINE

No!

TOWNSPEOPLE

GO!

OTH0  
Seems like life is mighty good out west.

JOHNNY  
I'm going.

SUSANNA  
What?

OTH0  
Go.

TOWNSPEOPLE  
GO! GO!

JEB  
We'll go together.

JOHNNY  
Yes!

SUSANNA  
No!

LORRAINE  
You're not going.

TOWNSPEOPLE  
GO! GO! GO!

JEB  
For six months.

LORRAINE  
No!

NEWSPAPER SELLER  
Gold is found in the hills, rivers and streets.

OTH0  
Let Shakespeare go.

SUSANNA  
No!

TOWNSPEOPLE  
THERE'S GOLD IN CALIFORN-I-O!

JEB  
This is the map to our future.

LORRAINE  
You can't read a map!

JOHNNY

This answers our prayers.

TOWNSPEOPLE

ROLL!

JOHNNY

We can get off your Mama's land, build a bigger home... for Little John.

SUSANNA

How you gonna get there?

JOHNNY

With Jeb.

TOWNSPEOPLE

ROLL! ROLL!

JEB

I'm going with Johnny.

LORRAINE

You have no sense of direction.

SUSANNA

And no way to get there.

TOWNSPEOPLE

ROLL! ROLL! ROLL!

OTHO

I'll lend you boys some mules. I have plenty.

MAMA

Take my wagon.

SUSANNA

Mama!

TOWNSPEOPLE

WAGONS OVER COLORAD-I-0!

JEB

When I get back, I'll buy you a diamond ring.

LORRAINE

Is that a proposal?

JEB

Yes. No, I have to find gold first.

TOWNSPEOPLE

GO!

LORRAINE

I accept. You're going! You'll need a pan and a pick.

NEWSPAPER SELLER

Some have found more than \$5,000 dollars in gold!

TOWNPEOPLE

GO! GO!

JOHNNY

Let me try.

OTHO

Every dream begins with action.

NEWSPAPER SELLER

Some found \$25,000 in gold!

TOWNSPEOPLE

GO! GO! GO!

MAMA

I'll have the wagon ready by morning.

SUSANNA

No.

OTHO

My mules are ready now. Time to pack your pick.

TOWNSPEOPLE

TO CALIFORN-I-O!  
GOLD! GOLD! GOLD!  
FOUND IN CALIFORN-I-O!  
GLOW! GLOW! GLOW!  
HOW IT SHINES IN SACRAMENT-I-O!

LORRAINE AND JEB

GOLD DUST ON EV'RY ROAD, ON EV'RY HILL. IT'S FREE!

JEB

WITH GOLD I'LL BE A KING!

LORRAINE

I'LL BE A QUEEN!

LORRAINE AND JEB

AND SOON OUR DREAMS WILL GLEAM  
LIKE A BEAM OF GOLD! GOLD! GOLD!

TOWNSPEOPLE  
FOUND IN CALIFORN-I-O!  
GLOW! GLOW! GLOW!  
HOW IT SHINES IN SACRAMENT-IO!

DANCE BREAK

GOLD! GOLD! GOLD FOUND IN CALIFORN-I-O!  
GOLD! GOLD! GOLD! GOLD! GOLD!

BLACKOUT  
LIGHTS RESTORE

NARRATOR 1  
Should I rush for the gold or should I stay?  
These two questions were discussed by everyone  
everyday including blacksmith Hiram Pierce and  
his wife, Sara.

A provoked Sara enters. An excited  
Hiram follows.

SARA PIERCE  
No!\*(19)

HIRAM PIERCE  
Sara, I'm going.\*(20)

SARA PIERCE  
(to Hiram)  
We have seven children.

HIRAM PIERCE  
I will send money back.

NARRATOR 2  
Farmer Mason Wilson answered the two questions  
by telling his wife-

Mason Wilson and Luzena, both  
forceful, step into view.

MASON WILSON  
Luzena, I'm going.\*(21)

LUZENA WILSON  
Husband, where you go, I go and where I go my  
little toddling babies go. Fortune will come to  
us together.\*(22)

HIRAM PIERCE  
If I don't succeed in the time agreed, I will  
be back.

LUZENA WILSON

Goodbye, Easton.

Luzena and Mason Wilson exit.

SARA PIERCE

Goodbye, husband.

Sara and Hiram exit. Mrs.  
Davenport enters.

MRS. RANDOLPH DAVENPORT

I received his 2nd book.

(reading)

The table groans under the heavy and blood-  
bought luxuries gathered with painstaking care,  
at home and abroad... Immense wealth... fill  
the great house with all that can please the  
eye, or tempt the taste.\*(23)

(looking up)

He is writing about my family's home in South  
Carolina as if it's improper. Like it's arsenic  
in his blood. I do not take this as a joke,  
fancy writer. We'll see who holds the poison.

Mrs. Davenport exits. Luzena  
Wilson enters.

LUZENA WILSON

Ahead, as far as the eye could reach, a thin  
cloud of dust marked the route of the [wagon]  
trains. Behind us, like the tail of a great  
serpent, it extended to the edge of  
civilization.

Luzena exits as Susanna enters.

SUSANNA

Mama! Mama! Come here!

Mama enters.

Johnny wrote me!

MAMA

I miss reading his poetry. Does he write  
anything about Venus and the heathens?

SUSANNA

Mama! Listen.

(reading)

We are nearing the land of gold and have been  
among the lucky in our wagon train along the  
California trail. No sickness, no broken wheels  
and none of Otho's mules have died.

Hiram Pierce enters.

HIRAM PIERCE

I have arrived in the land of gold.

SUSANNA

(reading)

They say the short route ahead is hilly with tumbling streams. And I say what's better than a babbling brook lined with sage?

HIRAM PIERCE

Could I feel and know that my family is well and happy, it would lift a heavy cloud.

Hiram exits as Sara enters.

SARA PIERCE

How I wish you were here, Hiram. I must try to be as patient as I can, but, oh, how long time seems.

SUSANNA

(reading)

When we get past the Indians, I'll write more. Your love guides me to gold.

SARA PIERCE

Do come home as soon as possible.

Sara exits.

SUSANNA

Let's celebrate, Mama!

MAMA

I'll get my rifle! We can shoot it by the river in honor of Johnny!

Mama and Susanna exit. Luzena Wilson enters.

LUZENA WILSON

We reached the end of our journey in Sacramento. The night before I had cooked my supper on the camp fire, as usual, when a hungry miner, attracted by the unusual sight of a woman, said to me, "I'll give you five dollars, ma'am, for the biscuit." ...and laid a shining gold piece in my hand.

Hiram enters.

HIRAM PIERCE

Rose early and walked to the diggings. All of us got much less than an ounce.

LUZENA WILSON

Great, brawny miners ...stood knee-deep in icy water, and washed the soil from the gold.

HIRAM PIERCE

I rather fear for the future. Prospected and dug... and got nothing.

Hiram exits.

LUZENA WILSON

In my dreams that night I saw crowds of bearded miners striking gold from the earth with every blow of the pick, each one seeming to leave a share for me.

White Fawn enters.

WHITE FAWN

When all the trees have been cut down, when all the animals have been hunted, when all the waters are polluted-

LUZENA WILSON

Every one scarcely had time to breathe.

WHITE FAWN

-when all the air is unsafe to breathe, only then will you discover you cannot eat money.\*(24)

LUZENA WILSON

A pinch of gold dust was accepted as a dollar, and you may well imagine the size of the pinch very often varied...

WHITE FAWN

We must fight.

White Fawn exits.

LUZENA WILSON

I was a queen.

Luzena exits as Sara enters.

SARA PIERCE

You would laugh to see me at work.

In the background, Susanna enters reading a new letter.



I am my own thinker, have set nine fruit trees,  
mended my own stove grate in the oven, moved  
the front-room stove out alone, in fact, I am  
kept very busy here.

Hiram enters.

HIRAM PIERCE

I feel most deeply to regret that I have earned  
nothing to enable me to make any remittance.

SARA PIERCE

My dear husband, if I can get you back, I  
should be willing to live on very small fare.  
Your presence here is far better than gold.

Sara exits.

HIRAM PIERCE

I'm coming home poor.

Hiram exits.

SUSANNA

(reading)

There was nothing I could do. They knocked me  
down and I rolled. By the time I came to my  
senses, I ran to the highest peak and from  
there, I could see the charred remains of  
Mama's wagon. That was 10 days ago and I'm  
still looking for Jeb. Pray, Susanna, pray.

Susanna runs and exits.

NARRATOR 2

Sara's husband made it home and like most  
miners, his pockets were empty. Johnny had  
empty pockets as well when he came home two  
years later. It was the same day Mrs. Davenport  
left town mumbling something about arsenic in  
the blood and Rochester, New York.

MUSIC CUE:

MY COUNTRY 'TIS OF THEE

Citizens of Rochester, New York  
gather singing My Country, 'Tis of  
Thee. Mrs. Davenport enters and  
watches at a distance.

MY COUNTRY 'TIS OF THEE,  
SWEET LAND OF LIBERTY,  
OF THEE I SING.  
LAND WHERE MY FATHERS DIED,  
LAND OF THE PILGRIMS' PRIDE,

FROM EV'RY MOUNTAIN SIDE  
LET FREEDOM RING!

Rochester City Leader steps  
forward.

CITY LEADER

And closing this mornings' Fourth of July  
celebration, again please welcome the very  
person who escaped slavery to become a best  
selling writer and international speaker, Mr.  
Frederick Douglass.

Frederick Douglass steps to the  
podium.

FREDERICK DOUGLASS

What, to the American slave, is your 4th of  
July? To him, your celebration is a sham...  
There is not a nation on the earth guilty of  
practices more shocking and bloody than are the  
people of the United States at this very hour.

(pause)

[In closing] ...I do not despair of this  
country. There are forces in operation which  
must inevitably work for the downfall of  
slavery. ...That day will come, all feuds to  
end, and change into a faithful friend each  
foe.\*(25)

The audience erupts with  
enthusiastic applause. Mr.  
Douglass steps down and is  
congratulated by citizens. Mrs.  
Davenport stares at him until he  
notices.

MRS. RANDOLPH DAVENPORT

(introducing herself)

Mr. Frederick Douglass, Mrs. Randolph  
Davenport.

FREDERICK DOUGLASS

Mrs. Davenport from my childhood. It's good to  
see you.

MRS. RANDOLPH DAVENPORT

You seem to be doing well without the  
protection of your master. I have read your  
books and you write with no grace regarding my  
father's plantation.

FREDERICK DOUGLASS

The white man's happiness cannot be purchased  
by the black man's misery. (\*26a)

MRS. RANDOLPH DAVENPORT

Ah, but slavery makes for a more stable society unlike the shaky North where I happen to now dwell.

FREDERICK DOUGLASS

I am free like you.

MRS. RANDOLPH DAVENPORT

Your freedom does not benefit the civilized world.

FREDERICK DOUGLASS

You want crops without plowing up the ground yourself.\*(26b)

MRS. RANDOLPH DAVENPORT

You want freedom for your people without having the right to freedom.

FREDERICK DOUGLASS

No man can put a chain about the ankle of his fellow man without at last finding the other end fastened about his own neck.\*(26c)

MRS. RANDOLPH DAVENPORT

Is that a threat, Mr. Douglass?

FREDERICK DOUGLASS

More like a declaration of war, Mrs. Davenport.

MRS. RANDOLPH DAVENPORT

War? If you were to win such a war then the theory of slavery would be wrong.

FREDERICK DOUGLASS

You're right, Mrs. Davenport. I wish you well.

Frederick Douglass exits.

MRS. RANDOLPH DAVENPORT

(to herself)

What a shame I taught you your A B C's.

Mrs. Davenport exits.

NARRATOR 1

Frederick Douglass spent his life fighting for the freedom of slaves. By 1861 he was a superstar.

NARRATOR 2

It's been eleven years since Otho's wagon was burned by Indians near Goose Creek, California. Mama took Lorraine in.

Lorraine enters carrying a basket  
of fresh vegetables. Mama follows.

MAMA

Lorraine, wait. You know I appreciate  
everything you do around here. You do know  
that, right?

Lorraine nods her head yes.

Oh child, I wish you would whine a little. Cry,  
stomp, scream, something, anything! You haven't  
said much in ten years. I pray your silence  
lets you hear the voices in the world that need  
help. I'll see you at supper.

Mama starts to exit.

MUSIC CUE: PASS LOVE ON

LORRAINE

I hear the voices, but I don't have the  
courage.

MAMA

LIFE CAN BE AS HATEFUL AS THE STORM  
THAT COMES AND GOES WITH A WIND THAT BLOWS,  
TEARING LEAVES FROM HELPLESS TREES,  
CRUSHING HOPES AND FANTASIES.

STILLNESS COMES AND SHADOWS DISAPPEAR  
AND PAIN IS GONE LIKE THE MOON AT DAWN,  
BRINGING PEACE IN LITTLE WAYS,  
LEAVING LOVE TO GIVE AWAY.

LORRAINE

I feel broken.

MAMA

You must find strength.  
DAY BY DAY WORK TO STAY STRONG  
THROUGH THE PAIN, THROUGH THE CALM,  
NOT FOR ONE, BUT FOR EACH OTHER.  
EV'RY SISTER, EV'RY BROTHER  
STAY STRONG AND PASS LOVE ON.

YEAR BY YEAR, FIGHT TO STAND TALL  
REACHING OUT, CATCHING ALL,  
NOT JUST ONE, BUT ONE ANOTHER.  
EV'RY FATHER, EV'RY MOTHER  
STAY STRONG AND PASS LOVE ON.

WHEN ALL IS DONE AND DEATH IS VERY NEAR,  
MAY WE REJOICE BY THE CHOICE WE'VE MADE,  
HELPING ALL IN HOURS OF NEED,  
STOPPING NOT TIL LIFE IS COMPLETE.

DAY BY DAY WORK TO STAY STRONG  
THROUGH THE PAIN, THROUGH THE CALM,  
NOT FOR ONE, BUT FOR EACH OTHER.  
EV'RY SISTER, EV'RY BROTHER  
STAY STRONG AND PASS LOVE ON.  
YEAR BY YEAR, FIGHT TO STAND TALL  
REACHING OUT, CATCHING ALL,  
NOT JUST ONE, BUT ONE ANOTHER.  
EV'RY FATHER, EV'RY MOTHER  
STAY STRONG AND PASS LOVE ON.  
AND ON AND ON. PASS LOVE ON.

Mama and Lorraine exit as Lisa,  
young daughter of a plantation  
owner, enters.

LISA

I know my aunt, the lovely Mrs. Randolph  
Davenport, has wrinkled her brow with worry  
because Papa says President Lincoln is  
destroying the South.

MUSIC CUE: HAIL TO THE CHIEF

President Abraham Lincoln enters  
surrounded by a crowd. Mrs.  
Lincoln and Elizabeth are nearby.

ABE LINCOLN

Now, therefore, I, Abraham Lincoln, President  
of the United States, in virtue of the power in  
me vested by the Constitution and the laws  
\*(27a)

LISA

Papa says the Union is crumbling.

ABE LINCOLN

-have thought fit to call forth ...the  
Militia... of 75,000, in order to... cause the  
laws to be duly executed. The details for this  
object will be immediately communicated to the  
State authorities through the War  
Department.\*(27b)

Outcries, pro and con, are  
shouted.

LISA

I wish I lived with my Aunt. Alabama is  
frightful.

MARY TODD

(to Elizabeth)

I'm so torn over this. Do I side with my husband or with daddy?

ELIZABETH

You are the daughter of a Southern slave-owner. Blood first, Mary.

Lincoln exits followed by Mary Todd, Elizabeth and others.

LISA

Papa says it's a war.

Lisa exits. Newspaper Seller enters.

NEWSPAPER SELLER

The president blocks the Southern seaports! It's war for the Union!

Otho enters and buys a newspaper. Others follow including Susanna, Mama and Lorraine.

SUSANNA

Oh, Mama, is this the right thing to do?

MAMA

We have fought for our freedom in 1776. It's their time.

Johnny enters.

NEWSPAPER SELLER

Guns fire! It's war!

OTHO

Hey, Johnny. Who's side you gonna let your son fight on? Mine or yours?

JOHNNY

He's only fifteen.

OTHO

They'll take him.

NEWSPAPER SELLER

Extra! Extra! Illustrated news about the declaration of war!

OTHO

Old men are joining. You're not 40 yet. You and Little John could fight on the same side. After all, cotton is king, right?

MAMA

What is it with you today, Otho?

OTHO

Don't like Southern boys around here.

SUSANNA

He belongs here as much as you.

OTHO

I don't like where he sleeps.

JOHNNY

It's my home. I built it.

OTHO

What about your Ma's home in Alabama?

JOHNNY

I'll see her straightaway.

SUSANNA

Johnny, you're not-

JOHNNY

I got word this morning that my brother has died. He ran my mother's farm. My duty is to make sure she is okay.

SUSANNA

She can come here.

MAMA

I'll make room for her.

JOHNNY

She wants to keep her farm and slaves.

SUSANNA

Johnny, I didn't-

JOHNNY

I'm going to Alabama.

OTHO

Need a mule?

JOHNNY

My horse will do.

SUSANNA

What about building our new home?

JOHNNY

It can wait a few weeks.

SUSANNA

Johnny.

JOHNNY

Things are too mixed up for the war to start before I get back. I'll be fine. Besides, you knew-

Susanna turns away. Johnny teases her.

(a cappella)

I COME FROM ALABAMA WITH MY BANJO ON MY KNEE.

Upset, Susanna exits followed by Mama.

OTHO

You're sure not a Yankee doodle dandy, but I am.

Otho laughs.

JOHNNY

You'll never have what you want, Otho. Susanna is mine. Never yours. Never!

OTHO

Wanna bet?

Otho exits.

JOHNNY

Never!

Johnny lunges for Otho and exits.

NARRATOR 1

Johnny arrived in Greene County, Alabama two and half weeks later.

DIXIE UNDERSCORES

A small table and two benches are in the cemetery which become Johnny's family home in Alabama. Olivia, Johnny's mother, enters studying a ledger book. Reluctantly, Johnny enters.



JOHNNY

Mother.

OLIVIA

Johnny! My Johnny! You've come home to save me. Oh son, the workers are all gone. Not a blanket, pillow or chair is left in their quarters. They are wandering the streets, I'm sure.

JOHNNY

I'll see to the farm until we can hire hands. Is there money?

OLIVIA

A small amount.

Olivia shows Johnny her books. Even if I had money, there are no hands to hire. You can keep the vagrants from stealing things while you get the rice in the barn. I thought your wife's North was too far away to invade my peace. Every hour of this horror adds to my distress. I think older men should serve, Johnny. You can send back money. Up until now, I've had no use for it since I grew everything I needed on my land.

JOHNNY

I'm not qualified for the army.

OLIVIA

Farmers are joining. You'll be fine. Take my gold lace if you're worried. It brings luck.

JOHNNY

I'm not joining.

OLIVIA

I've spoken to Randal Peters and you can enter as a First Lieutenant. Age and friendship have their advantages.

JOHNNY

I won't.

OLIVIA

You are Southern and you will fight for the cause of your family.

JOHNNY

I have a-

OLIVIA

I paid for your good education. That's why those ornate sentences swim around in your head. You owe me. You're hanging your mother if you lose this war.

Olivia exits. Johnny follows.  
Confederate Recruiter takes focus  
as a crowd gathers. The recruiter  
hands out small Confederate flags.

CONFEDERATE RECRUITER

Your country calls! Shall we wait until our homes are laid desolate; until sword and gun have visited them?

CROWD

Never!

CONFEDERATE RECRUITER

They are trying to drive us from our land! We must immediately raise an infantry to defend ourselves!

CROWD

Yes!

CONFEDERATE RECRUITER

Then send all able bodied men to join and fight! Who of you is so vile not to fight for our native land?

CROWD

No one here! Not me! Not my son!

CONFEDERATE RECRUITER

Free men, to arms! To arms!

Ad-libs. Cheers and much excitement as the recruiter exits followed by the crowd. Susanna enters running with a letter in her hand.

SUSANNA

Mama! Mama! Johnny's joined the Confederate army! He's in the 21st Alabama! Mama! Oh, dear God, Mama!

Susanna exits.

NARRATOR 1

Most soldiers promised to write their sweethearts everyday. Maude's boyfriend did.

(MORE)

NARRATOR 1 (CONT'D)

After all, she was the most beautiful girl in town.

Maude Sanders enters.

MAUDE SANDERS

My boyfriend joined the Union army. He said he would write everyday. After six months, I wrote him and said I was marrying someone else. I never wrote him again, but he wrote to my sister and asked who I was going to marry.

Tess Sanders, Maude's sister, enters.

TESS SANDERS

Yes, I wrote the poor fellow and told him the truth.

Maude exits.

My sister is marrying the mailman.

Tess Sanders exits.

NARRATOR 1

She wore a Rebel soldier's belt around her waist, and a velvet band across her forehead with the seven stars of the Confederacy.

A flirtatious Belle Boyd enters.

The only additional ornament she required to render herself perfectly beautiful was a Union noose encircling her neck.

BELLE BOYD

This Virginia girl only wanted to help people of the Confederacy. I became a spy for my beloved South... Without being beautiful, I was very attractive ...quite tall ...a superb figure ...and dressed with much taste. I made friends with Northern soldiers.\*(28a)

Northern soldiers enter. Belle flirts with each of them. They swoon.

I am indebted to their withered flowers ...and important information. If it is a crime to love the South... then I am a criminal. Oh, how I love my Dixie!\*(28b)

(to a soldier)

Where you from?

NORTHERN SOLDIER

Easton, Indiana.

BELLE BOYD

Ohhh, how I love my Yankees.

NORTHERN SOLDIER

I wish I could always be here.

BELLE BOYD

Would you live and die here for me?

NORTHERN SOLDIER

Yes, ma'am.

BELLE BOYD

Boys?

VARIOUS NORTHERN SOLDIERS

Yes, ma'am. We love our Belle!

MUSIC CUE: DIXIE

I WISH I WAS IN THE LAND OF COTTON,  
OLD TIMES THERE ARE NOT FORGOTTEN.  
LOOK AWAY! LOOK AWAY! LOOK AWAY, DIXIE LAND!  
IN DIXIE LAND WHERE I WAS BORN  
IN EARLY ON ONE FROSTY MORNIN'  
LOOK AWAY! LOOK AWAY! LOOK AWAY, DIXIE LAND!  
HOORAY! HOORAY! IN DIXIE LAND I'LL TAKE MY STAND  
TO LIVE AND DIE IN DIXIE.  
AWAY, AWAY, AWAY DOWN SOUTH IN DIXIE.  
AWAY, AWAY, AWAY DOWN SOUTH IN DIXIE.

JUST HOE IT DOWN AND SCRATCH YOUR GRAVEL,  
TO DIXIE LAND I'VE GOT TO TRAVEL.  
LOOK AWAY! LOOK AWAY! LOOK AWAY, DIXIE LAND!  
THERE'S BUCKWHEAT CAKES AND INJUN BATTER.  
MAKES YOU FAT OR A LITTLE FATTER.  
LOOK AWAY! LOOK AWAY! LOOK AWAY, DIXIE LAND!  
I WISH I WAS IN DIXIE. HOORAY! HOORAY!  
IN DIXIE LAND I'LL TAKE MY STAND  
TO LIVE OR DIE IN DIXIE.  
AWAY, AWAY, AWAY DOWN SOUTH IN DIXIE.  
AWAY, AWAY, AWAY DOWN SOUTH IN DIXIE.  
AWAY, AWAY, AWAY DOWN SOUTH IN DIXIE.  
AWAY, AWAY, AWAY DOWN SOUTH IN DIXIE!

BLACKOUT  
LIGHTS UP/DAY/HOT

Mrs. Davenport enters reading a  
letter.

MRS. RANDOLPH DAVENPORT

The Yankees filled all our wells with dead  
hogs. Barrels of molasses were poured down our  
staircase and into the front hall.

Drums of war sound.  
They threw pounds of rice on top of that and  
then feathers from the mattresses on top of  
that. Broke the windows. Cut the carpets.  
Killed our livestock. Our Southern black  
workers saved us. If it weren't for these good  
African people, we all would be dead. Evelyn.

Mrs. Davenport exits.

MUSIC CUE:  
WHEN JOHNNY COMES MARCHING HOME

Susanna enters among the graves in  
Easton dreaming of Johnny's  
return.

SUSANNA  
WHEN JOHNNY COMES MARCHING HOME AGAIN, HURRAH, HURRAH!  
WE'LL GIVE HIM A HEARTY WELCOME THEN, HURRAH!  
THE MEN WILL CHEER AND THE BOYS WILL SHOUT.  
THE LADIES THEY WILL ALL TURN OUT  
AND WE'LL ALL FEEL GAY WHEN JOHNNY COMES MARCHING HOME.

The scene splits to Alabama.  
Johnny and Corporal Chapman, a  
Union soldier, enter. They aim  
their rifles at each other as they  
duck and dart between other Union  
and Confederate soldiers who are  
fighting. Rifles fire. Men fall.  
There are screams and smoke.

SOLDIERS  
WITH DRUMS AND GUNS AND GUNS AND DRUMS, HURRAH, HURRAH,  
WITH DRUMS AND GUNS AND GUNS AND DRUMS, HURRAH, HURRAH,  
WITH DRUMS AND GUNS AND GUNS AND DRUMS,  
THE ENEMY NEARLY SHOT YA.  
OH, OH, OH, OH, OH, THE ENEMY NEARLY GOT YA!

In the smoke of the gunfire, the  
fighting seems slow motion as  
Susanna dreams of Johnny's return.

SUSANNA  
THE OLD CHURCH BELL WILL PEAL WITH JOY, HURRAH, HURRAH!  
TO WELCOME HOME OUR DARLING BOY, HURRAH! HURRAH!  
THE VILLAGE LADS AND LASSIES  
SAY WITH ROSES THEY WILL STREW THE WAY,  
AND WE'LL ALL FEEL GAY WHEN JOHNNY COMES MARCHING HOME.

The fighting escalates. Men are  
wounded, dying or dead.

## SOLDIERS

WITH DRUMS AND GUNS AND GUNS AND DRUMS, HURRAH, HURRAH,  
WITH DRUMS AND GUNS AND GUNS AND DRUMS, HURRAH, HURRAH,  
WITH DRUMS AND GUNS AND GUNS AND DRUMS,  
THE ENEMY NEARLY SHOT YA.  
OH, OH, OH, OH, OH, THE ENEMY NEARLY GOT YA.

The fighting becomes terrific.  
Johnny falls. Corporal Chapman  
cocks the trigger of his rifle and  
jabs the barrel into Johnny's  
cheek. He hands Johnny his  
canteen. Johnny drinks letting the  
water spill from his mouth. He  
closes his eyes. Suddenly Corporal  
Chapman screams. He is shot in  
the leg. He staggers. Johnny runs.

## SUSANNA

LET LOVE AND FRIENDSHIP ON THAT DAY, HURRAH, HURRAH!  
THEIR CHOICEST PLEASURES THEN DISPLAY. HURRAH! HURRAH!  
AND LET EACH ONE PERFORM SOME PART  
TO FILL WITH JOY THE WARRIOR'S HEART  
AND WE'LL ALL FEEL GAY WHEN JOHNNY COMES MARCHING HOME.  
HURRAY! HURRAY!

Corporal Chapman scoots on his  
back between the wounded and dead.  
He exits with his rifle aimed at  
Johnny. Johnny stumbles out of  
view with his rifle aimed at  
Corporal Chapman.

## SOLDIERS

OH, OH, OH, OH, OH!

## SUSANNA

WHEN JOHNNY COMES MARCHING HOME.

A rifle fires (offstage). Corporal  
Chapman shrieks (off).

WHEN JOHNNY COMES MARCHING HOME.

A 2nd rifle fires (offstage).  
Johnny wails (off).

## JOHNNY (OFF)

Dear God, no!

BLACKOUT

Lights slowly reveal friends of the Underground Railroad entering with lanterns. They make sure no one is following them.

LIGHTS UP/SHADOWY

NARRATOR 1

By the end of 1862, Lorraine had helped 48 slaves travel to Canada. She did this by meeting with friends behind Johnny's barn in secret. Susanna served punch. Mama brought cookies.

LORRAINE

Do we have bundles of wood soon?

AGENT 1

Four. Tomorrow night.

In the hazy distance, a dark figure approaches.

LORRAINE

Who can get them to the next house?

Ad-libs. Several hands go up.

AGENT 2

I'll see to it.

The figure steps closer and closer.

LORRAINE

Be careful. There's a bounty hunter in town. The bundles will be under a load of potatoes by this barn-

(seeing the figure)

Run! Everyone run!

All except the figure run.

THE FIGURE

Stop! Please! I pray for you stop! Please.

The figure falls weeping. Slowly the others return. The sobbing becomes great.

LORRAINE

(to the figure)

Oh my, dear child, are you a fugitive? You're safe. Breathe. God has brought you to us.

(MORE)

LORRAINE (CONT'D)  
(rocking the figure in her arms)  
For the love of Christ, you are safe.

Lorraine pulls the hood from the  
figure's face.

Mrs. Davenport!

MRS. RANDOLPH DAVENPORT  
Please, I beg you not to be alarmed.

LORRAINE  
But you are against-

MRS. RANDOLPH DAVENPORT  
Please listen. I've come to realize that my  
family's plantation should not exist because of  
the suffering of others. If I can help to free  
one slave then I can begin to unchain my heart.

LORRAINE  
Can you be here tomorrow night?

MRS. RANDOLPH DAVENPORT  
Yes.

LORRAINE  
Come prepared to work fast. We have four  
bundles, four slaves, arriving.

MRS. RANDOLPH DAVENPORT  
I will work fast. Bless you. Thank you.

LORRAINE  
Who else can help?

Hands go up. Ad-libs.  
Good. Now go. Be watchful.

Mrs. Davenport and others exit.

MAMA  
I'll bring cookies for the bundles.

LORRAINE  
Thank you.

SUSANNA  
Good night.

Mama and Susanna exit.

JEB (OFF)  
Hello, Lorraine! Hello!

Lorraine freezes. Jeb enters.



There you are! Sorry, I took so long, the Indians kept me for years, but I'm just fine. Look what I brought you.

Jeb drops two bags of gold.  
Gold. I have over a hundred bags like this. I hid 'em in the mountains before they got me! I got 'em now hid in Mama's house.

LORRAINE  
I can't believe it! I can't- Jeb, how, how, how did you find your way back?

JEB  
The Indians showed me how to track like a hawk, hop like a rabbit and sleep like a possum. They didn't know it, but they taught me how to get back to you.

LORRAINE  
Oh, Jeb... oh, Jeb... times have changed me.

JEB  
For me too.

Jeb raises his hat. He is bald.  
They scalped me. Want to rub it?

Lorraine rubs Jeb's head.  
No. My dang hair just fell out all by itself. Does my bald head hurt your eyes?

LORRAINE  
No. You still have a most attractive body.

JEB  
Lorraine.

LORRAINE  
(blurting it out)  
Jeb, I help slaves to their freedom.

JEB  
My stars, you are as beautiful as a field of cows and a pack of dogs rolled together. Can I kiss you, Lorraine?

LORRAINE  
I suppose you should.

Lorraine and Jeb kiss.

JEB  
You still smell like shoo-fly pie.

LORRAINE

It's Mama's cookies.

JEB

No. You smell like molasses and buttermilk with a wet bottom.

LORRAINE

Jeb!

JEB

Buttermilk always makes your bottom wet. However, I smell like I've been locked up in an outhouse without any tissue.

LORRAINE

I have tissue.

JEB

I have a question.

LORRAINE

Ask me, Jeb.

JEB

Will you marry me?

LORRAINE

Oh my, yes. I might cry, Jeb.

JEB

Beat you to it.

Lorraine and Jeb exit holding each other. Susanna enters reading a letter. She stops, then collapses dropping the letter. Otho enters just in time to catch her.

OTHO

Oh, no, Susanna. Here, hold on to me. Susanna. I need help! Help! Help me! Mama!

(shaking Susanna)

Susanna! Come around.

(desperate)

Anyone? Help! Come on, Susanna, come on! Help! I need help!

Townspeople enter.

Get Mama! Tell Dr. Phillips. Hurry! Bring smelling salts! Wake up, Susanna. Do you hear me?

During the confusion, Mama, Jeb and Lorraine enter.

Mama picks up the letter and reads  
the first sentence.

Oh dear, God. She's not coming around much!  
Mama, what should I do?

MAMA  
Is she breathing?

OTHO  
Yes.

MAMA  
Take her to my house.

OTHO  
She's too weak.

MAMA  
Take her! Now! Go!

Jeb and Otho carry Susanna off.  
With shaking hands, Mama gives the  
letter to Lorraine and exits.  
Lorraine reads the letter and  
begins to tremble. Townspeople  
rush to comfort her. Narrator 2  
kneels over a tombstone. Narrator  
1 approaches.

NARRATOR 1  
Are you all right?

NARRATOR 2  
This part is the most difficult.

LORRAINE  
(reading the letter)  
It is painful to inform you that Lieutenant  
John L. Gale died three weeks ago while  
protecting Mobile Bay, Alabama from Union  
forces. He fought bravely for the Confederacy  
for two years. It is assumed his remains are  
buried in a mass grave in Greene County. A belt  
buckle with his name scratched on it was found  
and given to his mother. With regret, General  
F. Buchanan

MUSIC CUE:  
BATTLE HYMN/DOWN BY THE RIVERSIDE

MALE TOWNSPERSON SOLOIST 1  
MINE EYES HAVE SEEN THE GLORY  
OF THE COMING OF THE LORD.  
HE IS TRAMPLING OUT THE VINTAGE  
WHERE THE GRAPES OF WRATH ARE STORED.

HE HATH LOOSED THE FATEFUL LIGHTNING  
OF HIS TERRIBLE SWIFT SWORD.  
HIS TRUTH IS MARCHING ON.

## FEMALE TOWNSPERSON SOLOIST 2

I HAVE SEEN HIM IN THE WATCH FIRES  
OF A HUNDRED CIRCLING CAMPS.  
THEY HAVE BUILT FOR HIM AN ALTER  
IN THE EVENING DEWS AND DAMPS.  
I CAN READ HIS RIGHTEOUS SENTENCE  
BY THE DIM AND FLARING LAMPS.  
HIS DAY IS MARCHING ON. MMMM. HIS TRUTH IS MARCHING--

## TOWNSPERSON 3 SOLO

I'M GOING TO LAY DOWN MY BURDEN DOWN BY THE RIVERSIDE,  
DOWN BY THE RIVERSIDE. DOWN BY THE RIVERSIDE.

## TOWNSPERSON 4 SOLO

I'M GOING TO LAY DOWN MY BURDEN BY THE RIVERSIDE.  
I AIN'T GONNA STUDY WAR NO MORE, STUDY WAR NO MORE.  
AIN'T STUDY WAR NO MORE, NO MORE.  
I AIN'T GONNA STUDY WAR NO MORE, STUDY WAR NO MORE.  
I AIN'T STUDY WAR NO MORE.

## ALL

NO MORE. NO MORE!  
I'M GONNA LAY DOWN MY SWORD AND SHIELD  
DOWN BY THE RIVERSIDE. DOWN BY THE RIVERSIDE.  
DOWN BY THE RIVERSIDE.  
I'M GONNA LAY DOWN MY SWORD AND SHIELD  
DOWN BY THE RIVERSIDE. DOWN BY THE RIVERSIDE.  
I AIN'T GONNA STUDY WAR NO MORE, STUDY WAR NO MORE.  
I AIN'T STUDY WAR NO MORE, NO MORE.  
I AIN'T GONNA STUDY WAR NO MORE, STUDY WAR NO MORE.  
I AIN'T STUDY WAR NO MORE, NO MORE, NO MORE.  
I'M GONNA LAY DOWN MY BURDEN DOWN BY THE RIVERSIDE,  
DOWN BY THE RIVERSIDE. DOWN BY THE RIVERSIDE.  
I'M GONNA LAY DOWN MY BURDEN DOWN BY THE RIVERSIDE,  
DOWN BY THE RIVERSIDE.  
I AIN'T GONNA STUDY WAR NO MORE. STUDY WAR NO MORE...

## NARRATOR 2

My name is John Thomas Gale. My father came  
here from Alabama with a banjo on his knee and  
fell in love with my mother, Susanna. My  
favorite story was when she came to this  
cemetery and read the letter my father gave her  
in the Rutledge tavern when they were both  
fifteen years old. He had scribbled on the  
outside of the envelope, 'Open when I die.'

Susanna enters, opens a sealed  
envelope and reads.

SUSANNA

Death and love are alike. Both take your breath away. Neither has a schedule. Both are illusive. Either can be mean or gentle. Both teach you how to live and both are true. It is also true that I will die loving you.

Susanna exits.

NARRATOR 1

When Mama died in 1864, everyone thought that Susanna was coming down with Prairie Madness, the disease of loneliness. Little John found purpose by helping Otho on his farm. One evening Otho invited Susanna to dinner.

Susanna and Otho enter.

SUSANNA

Thank you for dinner.

OTHO

Susanna-

SUSANNA

It's a nice night.

OTHO

We're going to lose out here on this prairie alone. We need each other to keep our sanity. I think we should get married. I don't have any debts. Do you?

SUSANNA

A few.

OTHO

I will pay them off. We don't need to sell your Mama's land. What do you say?

SUSANNA

Yes.

OTHO

I'll take you home. I'll make arrangements with the minister.

SUSANNA

No big ceremony.

OTHO

Of course. Susanna-

SUSANNA

I'm not going mad.

OTHO

No. I'll get the carriage.

Otho exits. Susanna slowly follows.

NARRATOR 2

In spring of 1865, Susanna gave birth to a baby girl she named Lillie.

Susanna's father appears.

SUSANNA'S FATHER

Birds with strong wings fly high-

NARRATOR 1

The child was three days old when Susanna was found at dawn on March 23rd... her wounds still bleeding.

SUSANNA'S FATHER

-high where they are free never to be caged.

NARRATOR 2

There was a knife next to her stilled body.

SUSANNA'S FATHER

Your love will come at dawn and set you free.

Susanna's father disappears.  
Abraham Lincoln enters followed by Mary Todd.

MARY TODD

Are you ready?

ABE LINCOLN

I do believe I am. How does this sound? With malice toward none; with charity for all... let us strive on to finish the work we are in; to bind up the nation's wounds; to care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow, and his orphan to do all which may achieve and cherish a just, and a lasting peace, among ourselves, and with all nations.\*(29)

MARY TODD

It's good enough for a rainy day. Your umbrella.

Mary Todd and Lincoln exit.

NARRATOR 2

Thousands stood in mounds of oozing mud to hear Lincoln's 2nd inaugural address. In just over a month, he would be dead.

NARRATOR 1

(looking at tombstones)

I am buried here by my father, Otho Sherman, and my mother, Susanna.

NARRATOR 2

(to Narrator 1)

I'm buried by you, my half-sister, Lillie.

NARRATOR 1

Folks in Easton said I never blurred the fact that I acted like my mother. I have never wondered who I was or battled myself for who I am. My life is my mother's story traveling on.

NARRATOR 2

He rose at his usual time, 7 a.m. on April 14, 1865. That afternoon, Mr. Lincoln took his wife for a drive. At 5 p.m., he did something unusual by asking for a bodyguard for his visit to Ford's theatre. At 8:30 p.m., the Lincolns arrived to see the play Our American Cousin. At 10:10, Booth pulled the trigger.

A derringer fires.

BLACKOUT

MUSIC CUE: STRONG WINGS FLY

BELLS TOLL

FOG ROLLS IN

LIGHTS UP/DAWN

One by one townspeople and friends of Easton enter.

VARIOUS

IT'S AS IF ONLY SHADOWS FALL  
ON THE EYES OF MEN IN A WORLD OF SIN.  
COULD IT BE EV'RY PERSON STANDS  
IN THE DARKNESS THAT HE ALONE HAS MADE?

IT'S AS THOUGH ONLY EVIL REIGNS  
IN A TIME OF PAIN FULL OF HATE AND SHAME.  
IS IT TRUE THAT THE WORLD COULD CHANGE  
IF WE ACT TODAY IN A BETTER WAY?

WE COULD WALK DOWN THE ROAD OF LIFE  
WITH THE PURPOSE TO GUIDE THE LOST TO LIGHT.  
WE COULD MEET EV'RY ANXIOUS FACE  
WITH A HEALING HEART FULL OF LOVE AND GRACE.

FOR THE WORLD TO BE WHAT WE SEE,  
THE FIRST STEP BEGINS WITH ME.  
THERE'S A NEW SUN RISING WITH A NEW LIGHT TO BRING.  
SHINING BRIGHT. FEEL THE CHANGE. SEE THE LIGHT.  
THERE'S A NEW WIND BLOWIN' AND A NEW SONG TO SING.  
TURN THE SAILS. LOSE THE SHORE. HEAR THE CALL.  
THERE'S A NEW CHANCE WAITING FOR A NEW PEACE FOR ALL.  
WE'RE THE CHANGE, YOU AND I. STRONG WINGS FLY.

IN THE END EV'RY DREAMER KNOWS  
THAT A DREAM IS WON WHEN THE WORK IS DONE.  
THERE'S A NEW SUN RISING WITH A NEW LIGHT TO BRING.  
SHINING BRIGHT. FEEL THE CHANGE. SEE THE LIGHT.  
THERE'S A NEW WIND BLOWIN' AND A NEW SONG TO SING.  
TURN THE SAILS. LOSE THE SHORE. HEAR THE CALL.  
THERE'S A NEW CHANCE WAITING FOR A NEW PEACE FOR ALL.  
WE'RE THE CHANGE, DO OR DIE. STRONG WINGS FLY.  
STRONG WINGS FLY. STRONG WINGS FLY!

BLACKOUT  
THE END