



Newport, Maine

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THE GYPSY TREE

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Cast of Characters (3F 3M)

JACQUELINE -- A Gypsy maiden who has lived on the road all her life. SHE is sixteen years old at the beginning of the play.

JEREMY -- A young woodcutter who has never been more than a few miles from his home.

GRANNIE -- an old Gypsy woman who works enchantments by summoning fairies with her magic book.

JACQUELINE believes GRANNIE to be her grandmother, but it is revealed that GRANNIE is actually JACQUELINE's mother, who was magically aged. GRANNIE's real name is "Isabelle".

OLD NATHANIEL -- An old Gypsy man who has been like a grandfather and a best friend to JACQUELINE.

GRANNIE has pledged JACQUELINE's hand in marriage to OLD NATHANIEL, but neither JACQUELINE nor OLD NATHANIEL desire to be married.

FLUTE -- A male fairy.

FLUTTER -- A female fairy. Like FLUTE, SHE must obey whomever possesses the magic book.

SCENE: Near a Gypsy caravan in the woods, not far from the village of Millerville.

TIME: A morning in springtime, once upon a time.

Premiere Production by **Highland High School** in Salt Lake City -- 1994

AWARDS:

- Winner of the 1993 Rocky Mountain Theatre Association - Doug Christensen Playwriting Award after a reading at **Western Wyoming Community College** in Rock Springs, Wyoming
- First Runner-Up in the 1991 Theatre Winter Haven Children's Playwriting Competition

THE GYPSY TREE by J.D. Newman with Words and Music by Jennifer Haycock Errand. 3m 3f. About 90 minutes. Period 1800s Fantasy costumes. Exterior setting. (*Perfect for Amateur, Professional, Educational groups as well as Youth/Teen theatres.*) Jacqueline is a Gypsy maiden who yearns to settle down in a village. She steals her grandmother's magic book and casts a spell on a large oak tree. Jacqueline hopes her "Gypsy Tree" will keep her rooted in the village where she has fallen in love with a young man. Jacqueline and her grandmother engage in a battle of magic, which changes their destinies and helps them to finally understand one another. This pastoral comedy is written in blank verse and rhyming couplets. PREMIERE PLAY FILE **Order # 3126**

J.D. Newman is a professor of theatre at Utah Valley University and the director of the Noorda Theatre Center for Children and Youth. He lives with his family in Sandy City, Utah. Dr. Newman became the first recipient of the Reba R. Robertson Award from the Children's Theatre Foundation of America. At UVU, Dr. Newman has directed *The Secret Garden*, *Princess Academy*, and *Androcles and the Lion* in the Noorda Theatre. He has also served as the director of the Noorda Theatre Summer Camp and has produced or co-produced touring productions including *A Village Fable*, *The Princess and the Goblin*, *Honk!*, and *Pedro's Magic Shoes*. As a playwright, he has adapted scripts for Newbery medalists including Avi, Paul Fleischman, and Richard Peck. Newman taught and directed at Highland High School for eighteen years, from 1991 to 2010 with a sabbatical to Texas in 1998-99. He served as Artistic Director of the Salt Lake School for the Performing Arts during the 2009-2010 school year. Newman earned his B.F.A. and M.Ed. from the University of Utah, his M.A. from the University of Texas, and his Ph.D. from New York University. With Judy Matetzschk-Campbell, he co-authored *Tell Your Story: The Plays and Playwriting of Sandra Fenichel Asher*. Dr. Newman chairs the Playwrights In Our Schools Project and served three years on the board of the American Alliance for Theatre and Education.

THE GYPSY TREE

OPTIONAL OPENING

(The six performers are located throughout the audience, partially costumed, like roving players working the crowd before a performance. On cue, SONG #1: NATURAL STATE begins, the performers rise and sing the opening section of the song.)

WE'RE GLAD TO MEET YOU IN OUR NATURAL STATE
ALLOW US TO GREET YOU BEFORE IT'S TOO LATE
FOR SOON OUR COSTUMES AND MAKEUP WILL HIDE
THE PEOPLE WHO ABIDE INSIDE
SO WHILE WE STILL CAN, LET US EACH BE YOUR GUIDE
TO OUR HOME IN THE THEATRE.

(During the musical bridge, the performers make their way to the stage, gather around a large trunk downstage center, don the final elements of their costumes, and grab their props. They can continue doing this as they continue to sing.)

OUR TRANSFORMATIONS ARE BRIEF
BUT FILLED WITH GRIEF
FOR MASQUERADING IS TOUGHER THAN THE TRUTH
BUT WERE WILLING TO SUFFER BECAUSE.
OUR FAMILY LIVES ON THE STAGE
OUR IDENTITY COMES FROM A MANUSCRIPT PAGE
AND WE HAVE A HOME
WHERE EACH SISTER AND BROTHER
CAN BECOME THEMSELVES
BY PORTRAYING ANOTHER ONE'S SOUL.
IT MAKES EACH OF US WHOLE
FOR OUR HOME IS THE THEATRE,

(The characters, on the last chord, clap simultaneously. They disappear quickly, almost mysteriously, taking the trunk with them.)

SCENE -- *There is a large, twisted oak tree center stage with several smaller trees in the background. The main tree is almost bare whereas the the background trees are dressed in light spring foliage. Gypsy folk music (SONG #2: FAIRY CHASE) is played.*

(Enter FLUTTER, skipping and humming playfully. SHE sees FLUTE approaching and hides herself in the tree. FLUTE enters, searching for FLUTTER. HE looks around the tree. FLUTTER tickles him with a leaf and hides. HE turns. FLUTTER tickles him with a leaf again and hides. FLUTTER turns. Finally FLUTE spies FLUTTER in the tree, pulls her down, and kisses her. FLUTTER runs and

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FLUTE chases her playfully, but they are soon interrupted by the approach of JACQUELINE.)
(Enter JACQUELINE, the Gypsy girl, through the audience, the bells on her wrists and ankles jangling as SHE goes. SHE is dressed in every color of the rainbow. Typical of her people, her hair is black and her skin is olive. In movement and manner, JACQUELINE is exuberant and full of life, though not particularly graceful. SHE carries an enormous book in one hand and a carpet bag in the other. SHE inspects the background trees and finally selects the large oak as her "Gypsy Tree". JACQUELINE plops herself down at the base of the tree, plunks the book into her lap, and flips furiously to find a spell. SHE pulls a large tambourine from the bag and, book in hand, dances around the tree to enchant leaves onto its branches. FLUTE and FLUTTER cause the remaining leaves to fall. JACQUELINE looks at the book again, turns it right side-up and does the same dance in the opposite direction. So flamboyant is her dance that FLUTE and FLUTTER deck the tree with huge, rainbow-colored leaves. Satisfied, JACQUELINE sits down behind the tree, stretches out her arms, and takes a nap.)

(Enter JEREMY, a robust young woodcutter, carrying an ax over his shoulder. HE moves toward the large oak which HE has decided to chop down. HE takes a swing and hears the tambourine jangle. HE looks around, scratches his head, takes another swing at the tree and hears the jangle again. Puzzled, HE shakes his ax like a rattle, thinking it may be the source of the jangle. The ax seems to jangle, as JACQUELINE shakes her tambourine. SHE emerges from behind the tree, book in hand, and begins to cast a spell, dancing and gesturing wildly and shaking her tambourine furiously. Finally realizing the source of the sound, JEREMY stares at JACQUELINE throughout her strange ritual. However, SHE does not see him until the very end of her dance, at which point JACQUELINE comes face to face with JEREMY and is so instantly enamored with him that SHE stares and drops her book and tambourine. The music ends abruptly.)

JACQUELINE: Of all die savage wonders of the woods ...

JEREMY: Who are you, colored creature?

JACQUELINE: Jacqueline!

(JACQUELINE offers her hand to JEREMY, who eyes her suspiciously. JACQUELINE senses his mistrust. SHE sets her book down at the base of the tree.)

JACQUELINE: *(pointing in a random direction)* I'm from a town not far from here.

JEREMY: Which town?

JACQUELINE: *(guessing confidently)* Saint-Joseph!

(JEREMY stares. JACQUELINE is less confident)

Near Saint Paul...

(JEREMY stares.)

It's near... Saint John!

JEREMY: Saint John is twenty miles from this woods.

JACQUELINE: *(feigns surprise)* It is? Well, then I must be lost.

JEREMY: Indeed.

(JEREMY lifts his ax. JACQUELINE steps in front of him.)

JACQUELINE: Take me to Saint John.

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JEREMY: *(pointing)* It's straight that way.

(JACQUELINE grabs his arm.)

JACQUELINE: I'd never get through all that timberland. The tangled trees all look the same to me.

JEREMY: No tree is like another. Look at them!

This ancient, twisted oak is nothing like

(HE breaks away and points to another tree.)

The straighter one that's sheltered from the winds.

Each tree is shaped by all its years of life...

JACQUELINE: *(grabs JEREMY's arm)* You know the trees, so take me to Saint John.

JEREMY: *(releases himself)* I've never traveled there.

JACQUELINE: It isn't far. It's only twenty miles, as you said.

(Pause.)

Where have you gone?

JEREMY: Up to that mountaintop, Down to the stream and to the valley's edge. And every hill...

JACQUELINE: I mean outside these woods.

JEREMY: I trade my timber in the village square.

JACQUELINE: The nearest village?

JEREMY: Yes, in Millerville. Where else would I need to go?

JACQUELINE: *(takes his arm again)* Saint John!

JEREMY: *(releases himself again, annoyed)* If you were from around here you would know That we do not go further than we must.

JACQUELINE: Don't you ever wonder what's beyond?

JEREMY: Beyond the village?

JACQUELINE: And beyond Saint John!

JEREMY: Of course I wonder.

(HE pauses, then raises his ax again.)

Better that I do Than find that there is nothing there at all.

JACQUELINE: *(tries to distract him from cutting her Gypsy Tree)*

Oh, there is much to see beyond these trees.

There's forests, deserts, beaches, mountain peaks,

Kingdoms, nations, castles, palaces...

JEREMY: *(stops in mid-swing)* How would you know?

JACQUELINE: I have been there.

JEREMY: *(curious)* Oh?

JACQUELINE: I've seen what's far beyond. It's glorious!

JEREMY: You called Saint John your home.

JACQUELINE: I didn't lie. Saint John is one of many homes I've had.

JEREMY: *(grows more and more intrigued)* You travel?

JACQUELINE: Constantly!

JEREMY: Where have you gone?

JACQUELINE: I couldn't count the town and villages, which, for a season, I have called my home. There's

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seven towns I've been through named Saint John, Ten Saint Peter's, two or three Saint Paul's.

(JEREMY stares with wonder.)

JACQUELINE: You've never met a traveler before?

JEREMY: My home is near a major thoroughfare. Many travelers have crossed my way But all of them are men.

JACQUELINE: No women?

JEREMY: None! And they all tell their tales of the world But men exaggerate in what they say. Tell me--.

(HE tries to recall her name.)

JACQUELINE: Jacqueline. You're...

JEREMY: *(smiles at her)* Jeremy!

(His expression changes. HE points far away.)

What is out there? Is it... wonderful?

JACQUELINE: *(hesitates)* It's diff rent, but it's very much the same.

JEREMY: You talk in riddles.

JACQUELINE: No, I speak the truth. The costumes and the customs change a bit, But ev'ry village has a flour mill, An inn and many houses warm with fire And gardens that regrow from year to year...

JEREMY: That's all?

JACQUELINE: That's everything that I could want.

JEREMY: *(sighs with disappointment)* You said that it was glorious.

JACQUELINE: It is. Just like the simple place you call your home

JEREMY: *(raises his ax)* The men created wonders with their tongues. I never should believe a word they speak.

JACQUELINE: *(stopping JEREMY again)* What do they say?

JEREMY: *(recalls the stories, laughing slightly)* One man told of a lady in a tent...

(HE holds out his palm)

Who saw his future written in his hand.

JACQUELINE: *(feels JEREMY's palm)* It's possible. It's very possible.

JEREMY: *(ignores JACQUELINE and pulls his hand away, laughing)* He didn't pay the lady for her time And so she grabbed her magic book of spells And waved her arms and changed him to a toad.

JACQUELINE: Then how did he escape to tell his tale?

JEREMY: *(laughs)* She changed him back so he could pay his bill.

He said he tipped her very handsomely.

JACQUELINE: *(hides her magic book)* That's unbelievable!

JEREMY: Of course it is!

The Rainbow People don't exist at all.

(JEREMY starts to swing but stops when HE notices the large rainbow-colored leaves.)

JACQUELINE: The "Rainbow People"?

JEREMY: *(approaches JACQUELINE)* That is what they're called. They dress in ev'ry color of the sun. They ring their bells and shake their tambourines.

JACQUELINE: Their real name is "Gypsies".

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JEREMY: Is that so?

JACQUELINE: (*squirms uncomfortably*) You're thinking I am one of them.

JEREMY: You are!

JACQUELINE: I was, but I have run away from home.

JEREMY: Gypsies run away all of their lives.

You have no home to run from, or run to.

(*HE raises his ax menacingly.*)

Be gone from here!

JACQUELINE: Are you afraid?

JEREMY: Be gone! You folks are mischief makers...

JACQUELINE: That's a lie!

JEREMY: You trick. You cheat. You work your magic spells.

JACQUELINE: We're honest people, but we must survive!

(*If vocal music is used in the production, SONG #3: JEREMY'S SUSPICION begins and JEREMY sings. If vocal music is not used, JEREMY should speak the lyrics, with or without musical underscoring.*)

JEREMY:

DRESSED IN WILD COLORS AND BELLS
YOU MOVE WITH RAGING UNDULATIONS
SINGING CRAZY INCANTATIONS
CASTING MAGIC SPELLS
UPON THE TOWNSFOLK
AS YOUR BONFIRES FILL THE SKY WITH SMOKE.
I'M NOT ONE YOU CAN DECEIVE. SO LEAVE.

Go tell your Rainbow People to depart!

JACQUELINE: (*Pause*) You are afraid of us!

JEREMY: (*becomes defensive*) I'm not afraid.

JACQUELINE: Are you afraid I'll cast some magic spell?

JEREMY: 'That is most of it out there is more.

JACQUELINE: Besides the magic, what else could you fear?

(*JEREMY refuses to look at JACQUELINE.*)

JACQUELINE: We're different from you. We are something new.

We haven't gained your trust or your respect.

We haven't spent a lifetime in your town.

We might bring changes to your Millerville.

JEREMY: If half of what we've heard of you is true,

Then we are justified to turn you out.

JACQUELINE: (*defiant*) Then we are justified to stand our ground!

(*SHE stands in front of the tree, her arms outstretched.*)

JEREMY: Go stand some other ground. I need that tree.

JACQUELINE: It's mine. I charmed it. It's my Gypsy Tree.

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JEREMY: Your "Gypsy Tree?"

JACQUELINE: You wouldn't understand.

JEREMY: You're right. Now move! The tree is coming down.

(JEREMY shoves JACQUELINE aside with his superior strength. HE holds her and makes her listen.)

JEREMY: This oak tree is the largest in these woods.

My father promised if I chopped it down

That he would then consider me a man.

JACQUELINE: The tree is vital to my life as well!

(JEREMY ignores JACQUELINE and prepares to chop the tree. JACQUELINE grabs the book and gestures wildly while shaking her tambourine at the tree. Distracted, JEREMY stares at JACQUELINE.)

JEREMY: And what, pray tell, were all those wild moves?

JACQUELINE: The tree cannot be chopped. It has been charmed.

(Ignoring the warning, JEREMY tries to chop but his hand is stopped by FLUTE, who is invisible to JEREMY.)

JACQUELINE: You shall not chop my tree!

JEREMY: What stops my arm?

(HE moves about, trying to move the ax, but it remains exactly where it is.)

JACQUELINE: My Gypsy Tree cannot be cut by you.

JEREMY: (HE half-believes her.) You've charmed it.

JACQUELINE: Yes, and I can charm you too!

(JACQUELINE looks in the book, shakes her tambourine in a specific way, and JEREMY finds Ids feet held to the ground by FLUTTER. HE struggles, but cannot move Its ax or Ids feet)

JEREMY: My feet won't move!

JACQUELINE: That's good. You'll listen now.

JEREMY: You fight unfairly.

JACQUELINE: And you don't yourself? You used your strength against me, did you not? I used my magic charm. We both used force. Now listen or I'll make your lips be still. I've cast a Gypsy charm upon this tree. My life is now determined by its fate. Do you understand?

JEREMY: I think I do... Whatever happens to your Gypsy Tree Will happen to yourself.

JACQUELINE: Exactly right!

JEREMY: So if the tree stays rooted in the ground

JACQUELINE: No one in the world can make me leave.

My Grannie shall not take me back with her.

JEREMY: And if the tree is carried off by me

JACQUELINE: Then I'd be carried off by you as well.

(SHE contemplates and realizes.)

Unseen fairies, let this man be free!

(FLUTE and FLUTTER release JEREMY. JEREMY stumbles.)

JEREMY: Thank you. Now I must be on my way

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(JEREMY tries to run away, but JACQUELINE uses the book to make FLUTE block his escape.)

JACQUELINE: *(approaches JEREMY)* Don't you want to chop the tree?

JEREMY: Why no! It's yours! I'd never chop your Gypsy Tree!

JACQUELINE: Your fitter will not say you are a man Until you chop the tree.

JEREMY: That's quite alright.

Who needs to be a man? I'm just a boy!

(JEREMY runs to the opposite side of the stage. JACQUELINE uses the book to make FLUTTER stop his escape.)

JACQUELINE: *(runs and embraces JEREMY)* Become a man! Become my husband!

JEREMY: No! I'd sooner be a donkey!

JACQUELINE: *(pulls away, offended and enraged)* Suit yourself!

(SHE reads from the book.)

Duvunay anon! Swataitoo cumyoolay!

(SONG #3: JEREMY's SUSPICION is played. FLUTE and FLUTTER place donkey ears on JEREMY and hooves on his hands. FLUTTER places a tail on JEREMY and FLUTE kicks JEREMY in the rump and JEREMY falls on all fours. JEREMY kicks up his heels, braying wildly. In anger HE chases JACQUELINE and tries to kick her. JACQUELINE dodges JEREMY, keeping the tree trunk between them. Finally JEREMY accidentally charges into the tree and collapses unconscious at its base. The music ends abruptly at the moment of impact.)

JACQUELINE: Peace, my little donkey. Be at peace. Perhaps I'll change you back. Perhaps I won't. Either be a man and chop the tree And carry it away and marry me Or be a beast forever. Make your choice.

(FLUTE and FLUTTER dance around JACQUELINE and chant JEREMY's words mockingly.)

FLUTE: Dressed in wild colors and befls...

FLUTTER: You move with raging undulations...

FLUTE: Singing crazy incantations...

FLUTTER: Casting magic spells...

JACQUELINE: Flute and Flutter! That's enough from you!

GRANNIE: *(From a ways off.)* Jacqueline!

JACQUELINE: Grannie! How'd she find me?

(To the FAIRIES.)

Hide me, fairies! Quick!

(FLUTE and FLUTTER refuse to help. JACQUELINE climbs into the tree with the book. SHE covers herself with the colorful leaves, which serve as a comical camouflage. GRANNIE enters. Everything about GRANNIE is tight and rigid. SHE walks across the stage stiffly and swiftly with an old, twisted walking stick in one hand and an empty birdcage in the other. Her colorful dress is tight in the sleeves and torso and tight as possible in the skirt. On her head SHE wears a hat with long, pink plume, her long hair tucked inside. SHE sees FLUTE and FLUTTER.)

GRANNIE: Where is Jacqueline?

(FLUTE and FLUTTER shrug.)

GRANNIE: You followed her.

(The FAIRIES ignore GRANNIE.)

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I demand you tell me where she is!

(The FAIRIES stick their fingers in their ears and give GRANNIE the “raspberry”. They run off behind the tree laughing. To the FAIRIES.)

I’ll curse you when I find my magic book!

(SHE calls sweetly.)

Jacqueline! My little Jacqueline!

I pray you, darling, come to me, my sweet.

(HER voice and manner change abruptly.)

And I’ll repay you for your cleverness!

(SHE calls sweetly again.)

Jacqueline!

(SHE looks curiously at the tree.)

This tree is charmed, quite poorly, I must say...

(SHE picks up JACQUELINE’s tambourine at the base of the tree and notices the carpet bag and JEREMY.)

... But Gypsy magic must have formed those leaves.

(SHE calls sweetly again.)

JACQUELINE: My eyes are dim, but surely you are there.

(JACQUELINE throws an acorn at GRANNIE. By the time GRANNIE looks up, JACQUELINE has re-hidden herself.)

You have no power. I am safe from you.

I’ve made charmed this oak into my Gypsy Tree.

As long as it stays rooted, I’ll stay put.

GRANNIE: *(speaking to an unseen JACQUELINE)* If you believe that, why do you still hide?

JACQUELINE: To keep the magic book out of your hands.

Without your magic book, you have no charms.

GRANNIE: You do not know what powers I possess!

JACQUELINE: The fairies work your magic.

GRANNIE: Spiteful child!

(Having noticed JACQUELINE’s foot sticking out, GRANNIE stealthily approaches the tree.)

I cannot chant and make you come to me...

(GRANNIE pulls JACQUELINE’s leg.)

... And so I’ll simply give your leg a yank!

(JACQUELINE stays in the tree, but the book falls into GRANNIE’s hands. JACQUELINE is completely exposed.)

GRANNIE: Aha!

(SHE searches for a spell in the book)

I’ll make you a canary for my cage And then we’ll see if you’ll escape from me!

JACQUELINE: Even if you change me to a bird, You cannot make me leave my Gypsy Tree.

GRANNIE: Little one, I know you all too well.

You will not dare to stay here in the woods

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By nightfall, you will choose to fly to me
And I will keep you safe inside my cage.

JACQUELINE: So go ahead and change me like before!

Although I plead, you always change my form
And make you any beast which meets your needs.
It's time to move; so I become a horse.
You need some wood; so I get beaver teeth.
You need an egg; you change me to a hen.

GRANNIE: And you complain? It's easier to be

An animal when you perform your chores.

JACQUELINE: But then there is your greatest spell of all,

Your only spell that hasn't worked on me.
You want to change your little Jacqueline
Into the charming lady that you were
When you were young like me.

GRANNIE: (*speaks sincerely*) Jacqueline, you do not understand. I do not want to make you as I was. I want to make you as I should have been.

JACQUELINE: You want to change your "Little Jacqueline" Into a bride for Old Nathaniel!

GRANNIE: 'Yes! You are sixteen...

JACQUELINE: He's sixteen times my age!

Old Nathaniel is my dearest friend
But I would never marry him.

GRANNIE: Why not?

It's not as if you have a lot of choice.
Don't think that you're the fairest girl in camp.
And when your plain and ordinary face
Has caught a suitor's gaze, you scare him off!
Your spunk and spirit frighten him away.
You've never learned to charm a young man's heart
And that is for the best. Young men are fools.

JACQUELINE: I'd rather be a bird than be his bride!

Change me as you will. You'll never change
My heart or mind. I'm independent now!

GRANNIE: (*tries a gentler approach*) Jacqueline, learn wisdom from my words.

Younger men will love you for a time
And then will seek adventures in the world.
'Your mother...

JACQUELINE: Yes, I know!

GRANNIE: Was left alone.

She gave you to my care and died of grief.
Old Nathaniel wouldn't run away.

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JACQUELINE: But when he dies, he'll leave me just the same.

GRANNIE: Better that you lose him to the earth Than lose him to the world.

(SHE speaks pleadingly.)

Please... marry him!

JACQUELINE: Go marry him yourself.

GRANNIE: *(becomes impatient)* Now Jacqueline...

(SHE takes a deep breath.)

I'll leave the choice to you, but either way...

(SHE holds up the cage.)

I'll teach you not to disrespect my words!

JACQUELINE: If I were free, I wouldn't disobey!

GRANNIE: *(shuts the book)* I've closed the book. Choose freely what you will.

Do you wish to be a Gypsy bride?

JACQUELINE: I'd rather be a Gypsy than a bird But honestly, I wish that I could be A village girl who never needs to move.

GRANNIE: A village girl? Why that's ridiculous! Your mother had the same...

(SHE speaks the word disdainfully.)

... romantic wish!

JACQUELINE: I make new friends in every town we pass And then I have to say goodbye and leave Knowing I won't pass their way again.

GRANNIE: So which town would you live in?

JACQUELINE: Millerville!

GRANNIE: We haven't even seen it yet.

JACQUELINE: So what? It's just like all the other towns we've seen.

GRANNIE: But what about the Gypsy caravan? What about your family in the clan?

JACQUELINE: You're my only family.

GRANNIE: *(with sudden vulnerability)* Yes I know. If you deserted me, I'd be alone.

JACQUELINE: If you loved me you would visit me.

GRANNIE: I felt the same as you, when I was young,

But listen to the wisdom of my years.

(If vocal music is used, MUSIC CUE #4: GRANNIE's LAMENT is played. If vocal music is not used, GRANNIE may-speak the lines, with or without underscoring.)

GRANNIE:

YOU'VE ALL THINGS TO LOSE AND NOTHING TO GAIN.

I'LL SPARE YOU THE PAIN

PLEASE UNDERSTAND.

I WAS NOT BORN WITH THESE WRINKLES

TIME GAVE ME THESE GREY HAIRS,

AND THE WORDS OF WISDOM THAT FALL FROM MY TONGUE

I ONCE, TOO, WAS YOUNG.

PERUSAL SCRIPT -- THE GYPSY TREE by J.D. Newman

I UNDERSTAND.

YOU WANT TO SLEEP IN THE SAME TOWN EACH NIGHT
AND AWAKE IN THE MORNING,
TO PEOPLE WITH FAMILIAR FACES
WHOSE VOICES HAVE COMFORTING SOUNDS
IN A TOWN THAT'S SOMETHING MORE THAN A NAME
I ONCE FELT THE SAME.

I UNDERSTAND.

(GRANNIE speaks softly.)

But none-the-less, you wouldn't be content.

Your home is on the road, not in a town.

You'd always be a stranger in their midst.

JACQUELINE: My life is not your life. I have to learn
Myself and see if what you say is true.

GRANNIE: *(feeling betrayed, hurt, and angry)* Despite my wisdom you won't trust my words.
You do not wish to be a Gypsy girl?

JACQUELINE: *(speaking calmly but firmly and decisively)* No.

GRANNIE: *(shouting vindictively)* Then be a Gypsy bird!

JACQUELINE: *(trying to shield herself)* Oh Grannie no!

GRANNIE: One way or other, I will keep you safe!

(GRANNIE opens the book and enacts the spell. Either JACQUELINE turns around to undo her outer costume, revealing a parrot costume underneath, or JACQUELINE disappears behind the tree so that SHE can be replaced by a puppet.)

GRANNIE: Sharp-tongued maiden,

Your tongue be still.

Repeat like a parrot!

No more from your bill.

(FLUTE and FLUTTER dance around the tree and enact the spell, assisting JACQUELINE as needed.)

GRANNIE: Perokay rabashay!

(The transformation of JACQUELINE into the PARROT is completed. JACQUELINE THE PARROT perches in the tree, looking at herself curiously.)

JACQUELINE: Craw!!!

GRANNIE: Obey my ev'ry word.

JACQUELINE: Ev'ry word! Ev'ry word!

(SHE whistles.)

GRANNIE: The sweetest sound I've heard.

JACQUELINE: I've heard! I've heard! Craw!

GRANNIE: Come down to me. Do not stay in the tree!

JACQUELINE: Stay in the tree! Awk! Awk! Stay in the tree!

PERUSAL SCRIPT -- THE GYPSY TREE by J.D. Newman

GRANNIE: Then perish. You will not find seed to eat.

JACQUELINE: Find seed to eat! Awk! Awk! Find seed to eat!

(JACQUELINE whistles.)

GRANNIE: Perhaps I'll make you be a diff'rent bird.

JACQUELINE: *(questioningly)* Diff'rent bird? Diff'rent bird?

GRANNIE: You've always been a clumsy sort of girl.

JACQUELINE: Clumsy girl! Clumsy girl!

(Her feathers droop.)

GRANNIE: Perhaps a bird that's graceful for a change.

JACQUELINE: *(curious)* Graceful? Graceful! Awk!

GRANNIE: With charm and poise how perfectly she'll dance.

I'll make her be a pink flamingo!

JACQUELINE: *(embarrassed)* Awk!

GRANNIE: *(reads from the book)* On whom this spell is cast...

JACQUELINE: *(repeating GRANNIE's words)* On whom this spell is cast. Awk!

GRANNIE: All charms be broken...

JACQUELINE: All charms be broken...

(FLUTE and FLUTTER remove the donkey ears, hooves, and tail from JEREMY.)

GRANNIE: All spells be gone...

JACQUELINE: All spells be gone..

GRANNIE: A pink flamingo...

JACQUELINE: A pink flamingo...

GRANNIE: From now on!

JACQUELINE: From now on!

GRANNIE: Mantenone enflamenrose!

JACQUELINE: Mantenone enflamenrose!

(GRANNIE sets down the book and laughs contentedly. FLUTTER pulls off GRANNIE's outer costume, revealing her wearing a tight flamingo costume. SHE still wears her hat with the pink plume. Feeling quite naked, GRANNIE tries to cover herself with her wings but finds them too small to do much good. FLUTE AND FLUTTER laugh impishly.)

GRANNIE: Oh dear! I my magic spell has been reversed!

The parrot spoke the words and now I'm cursed!

JACQUELINE: *(turning around in the tree, realizing with delight that SHE is restored to her normal form)*

I'm free again. I'm just as I should be!

GRANNIE: *(flutters about the stage looking for hiding place)* Quick! Grab the book and change me back again!

JACQUELINE: *(noticing GRANNIE for the first time and laughs)* Grannie! You are very elegant!

GRANNIE: I've never been transformed!

JACQUELINE: It's only fair.

You made me into ev'ry bird and beast!

(JACQUELINE climbs down from the tree.)

PERUSAL SCRIPT -- THE GYPSY TREE by J.D. Newman

GRANNIE: (*kicks at the book*) Girl, take the book. Restore my human form.

JACQUELINE: (*mockingly*) Return to camp. They'll love the way you look!

GRANNIE: There's not a person in the Gypsy camp

Who wouldn't laugh until their sides were sore.

(*SHE hides her head behind a tree like an ostrich.*)

JACQUELINE: Fly south!

GRANNIE: Which way is south?

(*FLUTE and FLUTTER point in contrary directions. Ignoring them, GRANNIE tries unsuccessfully to fly.*)

My wings won't fly!

JACQUELINE: Then go and find a chicken coop.

GRANNIE: Indeed! I'd never roost with hens.

(*SHE struts proudly across the stage.*)

I have my pride!

(*SHE looks at herself again and tries to cover herself with her wings.*)

JACQUELINE: You have no choice. You must return to camp.

GRANNIE: I'd rather die of hunger in the woods.

JACQUELINE: (*JACQUELINE comes down from the tree*) Return to camp and tell them who you are

And then apologize to each of them

For all the spells you've cast throughout the years.

GRANNIE: (shocked.) I won't obey a child!

JACQUELINE: (taking the book and pointing at the cage.) Very well.

I'll make you a canary for my cage

A pink canary ... what an oddity!

I'll carry you to camp myself.

GRANNIE: Alright!

(*SHE takes a deep breath, assumes a graceful posture, and heads for the Gypsy camp.*)

Be dignified! I must be dignified!

(*FLUTE and FLUTTER tease and torment GRANNIE as SHE exits. JACQUELINE and the FAIRIES laugh and their laughter begins to arouse JEREMY, whose spell was broken by GRANNIE'S last chant.*)

JACQUELINE: He's waking up! Entrance him, fairies! Quick!

FLUTE: (*HE taunts JACQUELINE*) Command us with the magic book or we will not obey!

FLUTTER: Be quick!

FLUTE: He's waking up!

FLUTTER: Don't let him see the light of day!

(*The FAIRIES dance around JACQUELINE and skip off behind the trees. JACQUELINE looks in the book for a spell but notices that it is too late; JEREMY is already awake. However, HE has not yet seen JACQUELINE.*)

JACQUELINE: Good morning, Jeremy.

JEREMY: Oh what a dream was here!

PERUSAL SCRIPT -- THE GYPSY TREE by J.D. Newman

JACQUELINE: What did you dream?

JEREMY: It couldn't have been real.

I dreamed that I was calmly chopping wood
When you...

(JEREMY sees JACQUELINE and jumps to his feet.)

It's you!

JACQUELINE: I'm who?

JEREMY: I'm sure of it.

It's you who made a jackass out of me!

JACQUELINE: *(feigning ignorance)* How strange a dream, my handsome gentleman.

JEREMY: And stranger yet, you tried to make me wed!

JACQUELINE: *(approaching JEREMY coyly)* The visions of your sleep have disappeared.

JEREMY: *(eyeing her suspiciously)* But if it were a dream, then who are you?

JACQUELINE: *(puts her arms around JEREMY's neck)* A village girl to whom you pledged your heart.

JEREMY: *(holding JACQUELINE at an arm's length)* You won't enchant me, Gypsy girl! Be gone!

JACQUELINE: I'm staying here.

JEREMY: Then I'll be gone. Farewell!

(JACQUELINE, using her tambourine and her book, causes the FAIRIES, unseen by JEREMY, to retain him.)

JACQUELINE: Jeremy, you shall not leave! Stay here!

JEREMY: *(tries unsuccessfully to leave)* Again you've trapped me with your Gypsy charms.

JACQUELINE: *(shaking her tambourine)* Go to sleep, my handsome Jeremy...

(FLUTE and FLUTTER stretch and yawn and JEREMY imitates them unwittingly.)

JEREMY: Make me stay here, make me fall asleep,

But you will never make me fall in love.

(FLUTE and FLUTTER lie down and JEREMY follows in imitation.)

JACQUELINE: *(staring at JEREMY)*

Your heart will be enchanted by my charm!

(SHE looks through the book.)

You'll take me to the chapel on your arm.

FLUTTER: *(To FLUTE, arising)* She's confident! She thinks she knows what powers we possess!

FLUTE: *(arises and laughs.)* The book can grant her ev'ry wish and bring her happiness!

(The FAIRIES dance around JACQUELINE.)

FLUTTER: She'll keep the man asleep until he's wrinkled up with age.

FLUTE: Maybe then he'll love her.

FLUTTER: Or she'll lock him in her cage!

JACQUELINE: Flute and Flutter, that's enough from you!

Sit down and I'll command you what to do.

(FLUTE and FLUTTER look at each other and pretend to be fearfully obedient.)

JACQUELINE: I want this man to fall in love with me.

Make him love me as he loved my tree.

PERUSAL SCRIPT -- THE GYPSY TREE by J.D. Newman

(FLUTE and FLUTTER look at each other and roll over laughing.)

FLUTTER: We fairies cannot move and change a human mind or heart.

FLUTE: We only change the outside. There's a limit to our art.

FLUTTER: The outside can be twisted into bird or beast or fish.

FLUTE: The inside, though, cannot be changed by someone else's wish.

JACQUELINE: Can you change me?

FLUTE: Certainly!

FLUTTER: *(reluctantly)* We'll make you what you please.

JACQUELINE: Then come and make me beautiful!

FLUTTER: *(pointing at JEREMY)* We'll change the face he sees.

(JACQUELINE eagerly searches for a beauty spell in the book.)

FLUTTER: But who can tell what beauty will enchant a young man's eye?

A thousand kinds of beautiful and which one would you try?

FLUTE: *(Whispering in JACQUELINE's ear.)* Your mother, in her time, was once the fairest in the land.

In ev'ry town a lover tried to win your mother's hand.

Your mother teased and tempted him until she left him there

Lamenting that he'd never find another maid so fair.

JACQUELINE: *(To FLUTE)* Tell me what she looked like.

FLUTTER: Flute, you've said enough! Now go!

JACQUELINE: I want to know.

FLUTTER: You're foolish, Jacqueline.

JACQUELINE: I have to know!

FLUTE: *(playing with JACQUELINE's hair)* Your mother's hair was long as wheat and golden as the grain.

It splashed across her milky shoulders like a summer rain.

JACQUELINE: But Gypsy hair is black as coal.

FLUTE: She made it gold and warm.

JACQUELINE: And Gypsy skin is dark as honey.

FLUTE: Hers was light as corn.

JACQUELINE: Did mother wear a colored gown?

FLUTE: She wore a peasant dress.

JACQUELINE: Then no one knew she was a Gypsy?

FLUTE: *(leans over JACQUELINE's shoulder and turns to a specific page)* Who would ever guess?

JACQUELINE: *(To FLUTTER)* They thought she was a village girl! She hid her Gypsy past!

FLUTTER: Now Jacqueline...

FLUTE: She's right, you know.

JACQUELINE: Obey me, fairies. Fast!

FLUTTER: Don't cast your spell in haste! You need some time to think it through!

FLUTE: You're old enough to make your choice, so tell us what to do.

JACQUELINE: *(chanting from the book, shaking her tambourine)*

Flute and Flutter, fairies who obey the magic book,

Come, as I command you, and transform the way I look.

PERUSAL SCRIPT -- THE GYPSY TREE by J.D. Newman

Change me to a maiden like the maidens that I know
Who spend their lives in villages and never have to go.
Remove all traces of my hated Gypsyhood from me
And let me now stay rooted like my special Gypsy Tree.

(FLUTE steals JACQUELINE's tambourine.)

JACQUELINE: Give me back my tambourine!

FLUTE: Your Gypsy tambourine?

A maiden from the village wouldn't play with such a thing!

JACQUELINE: Then take it and enjoy it! While you're at it, take my bells!

FLUTE: *(collects the bells from JACQUELINE's wrists and ankles)* You'll miss their jingle-jangles and their mystifying knells.

JACQUELINE: I want to see a mirror.

(FLUTTER pulls a hand-mirror from the carpet-bag and hands it to JACQUELINE.)

JACQUELINE: Look! My hair is just as black! I do not want this Gypsy hair!

FLUTE: Alright!

(FLUTTER pulls the wig of black hair from JACQUELINE's head, leaving her bald.)

JACQUELINE: Wait! Give it back!

(JACQUELINE chases FLUTE, who waves the wig in front of her.)

FLUTE: She's balder than a pumpkin!

JACQUELINE: Give me back my head of hair!

FLUTE: You said you didn't want it.

JACQUELINE: Give it back, but make it fair.

FLUTTER: Flute, that's quite enough! Go change it into golden locks.

FLUTE: I'll make it long and golden as the weeds between the rocks!

(HE exits, but not before shaking the wig in JACQUELINE's face one more time. JACQUELINE sits and looks at herself in the hand mirror.)

JACQUELINE: Flutter, come and make my Gypsy skin as white as snow.

FLUTTER: *(mixing a white concoction from the elements around her)* Yes, my former mistress, but there's something you should know.

This color will not wash away.

JACQUELINE: I never want it to.

FLUTTER: In the morning you'll regret your choice.

JACQUELINE: That isn't true!

FLUTTER: Then close your eyes. I'll paint your face.

(JACQUELINE takes one last look at her dark Gypsy face in the mirror, sets the mirror down, and closes her eyes.)

JACQUELINE: I'm ready.

17 more pages to the end