

PERUSAL SCRIPT



Script and Lyrics by
John D. Rather and Susan Rather

Music and arrangements by
Lynn Burton



Newport, Maine

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ONCE I LIVED IN COTTONWOOD

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ONCE I LIVED IN COTTONWOOD

CAST OF CHARACTERS 7male 6female + ensemble.

WILL LARSON, a farmer who has followed the LDS prophets from the eastern United States Missouri, Nauvoo, and on to the Salt Lake Valley, about 45 years old.

BONNIE LARSON, Will's intelligent, attractive wife.

JENNY LARSON, a pretty eighteen-year-old girl, daughter of Will and Bonnie.

FINN LARSON, their sixteen-year-old son.

JANE LARSON, their twelve-year-old daughter.

BISHOP TOM HICKS, an LDS bishop, a widower, friend of the Larson family.

LUKE, Jenny's boyfriend, a handsome boy about 19 years old.

FRED COOPER, a neighbor of the Larson family in Cottonwood and an acquaintance since the Missouri days. He is overbearing, loud, a flashy dresser.

MARY COOPER, Fred's energetic, outspoken wife, an editor of Exponent Magazine.

BALLAD SINGER

STAKE PRESIDENT

REBEKAH, friend of Jennys.

WANDA, Cottonwood neighbor.

IDA, Cottonwood neighbor.

ROBERT, Cottonwood neighbor, Ida's husband.

FRIENDS, teenage boys about Finn's age.

NEIGHBORS, a group of people, all ages, for the square dance and other musical numbers

The musical was a sensation in its premiere performances at Promised Valley Playhouse in Salt Lake City. The Salt Lake Premiere was Directed by Sterling VanWagenen and Marilee VanWagenen, with Choreography by Susan Dayton. Produced by the Cottonwood Fifth Ward at the Promised Valley Playhouse, Salt Lake City, September 1988

ONCE I LIVED IN COTTONWOOD Book and Lyrics by John D. Rather and Susan Rather. Music by Lynn G. Burton. Open staging. 7male 6female + ensemble. 2 hrs. Several Settings. Pioneer costumes. 'Once I Lived In Cottonwood' is a fictionalized historical account of life in the Cottonwood area of the Salt Lake Valley in the 1860's. The poem from which the title has been taken was written by George Hicks in 1862. He and his wife Betsey Jolley Hicks were called by Church authorities to leave their Cottonwood farm and settle in Washington, Utah. They accepted the Call, and, along with many others, endured the privations of the harsh Dixie environment, never quite forgetting the more pleasant circumstances of their former home. Hicks frequently sang his poem at Dixie gatherings to the tune of "The Georgia Volunteer." Shortly after the first company of pioneers arrived in the Salt Lake Valley in 1847, Brigham Young began calling the new arrivals to settle towns throughout the West. Given a choice, most of them would have stayed in the Salt Lake Valley. Harder yet, after having started a home in the valley, was being called to start over again away from Salt Lake. Perhaps the hardest of all was being called to Dixie in Southern Utah. 'Cottonwood' is about one family's feelings when being asked to leave their home in Cottonwood and go south to Washington County. In a more general sense it is a story about people who, because of their allegiance to a grand cause, stronger than any commitment to personal comfort and security, experience isolation and longings for home. **Order # 2046.**

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SYNOPSIS OF SCENES AND SONGS

ACT ONE

**#1 ONCE I LIVED IN COTTONWOOD
SEGUE TO**

Men's Quartet (recorded)

#1a OVERTURE

Scene 1 – LDS Meeting House – Spring of 1863

Scene 2 – A Pasture of Will Larson's farm

Scene 3 – Another pasture and the same pasture

#2 WHAT SHALL I DO?

Tom Hicks

#3 FEELING HUMBLE

Will Larson

Scene 4 – A continuation of previous scene

Scene 5 – The following day In the living room of the Larson Home.

Scene 6 – A continuation of previous scene

#4 WALTZ

Bonnie & Jenny

Scene 7 – Outside the Larson Home

#5 THE COTTON MISSION

Finn, Robert, Fred & Friends

Scene 8 – Somewhere on the Larson Farm

#6 I CAN LOOK OUT TONIGHT

Jenny & Luke

Scene 9 – Backyard of the Larson home

#7 WANDERERS

Tom & Bonnie

ACT TWO

Scene 1 – The Larson Barn

#8 SQUARE DANCE

Fred and Company

#9 SOAP

Fred, Will & Company

Scene 2 – The Cooper Kitchen

#10 MEN ARE ALL ALIKE

Bonnie, Malt & Women

Scene 3 – An orchard

Scene 4 The Larson Bedroom & home

#11 NIGHTMARE MUSIC

Instrumental

#12 WAS MISSOURI JUST A DREAM?

Bonnie & Will

Scene 5 – Yard of the Endowment House

#13 DOWN THE AISLE

Instrumental

ACT THREE

Scene 1 – “In One” – Fall of 1863

#14 MISSOURI

Bonnie

Scene 2 – The Larson Front Yard

Scene 3 – The Larson Yard

#15 COME COME YE SAINTS

Organ Underscore

Scene 4 – The Local LDS Ward House

#16 WHO'D CALL FRED?

Company

Scene 5 – The Cemetery

#16 WANDERERS

Bonnie, Tom, Jane, Luke, Finn & Jenny

A FEW NOTES ABOUT THE PLAY AND PRODUCTION

The characterizations and incidents portrayed in 'Cottonwood' are purely fictitious. However, the conflicts and emotions experienced by the players have, we hope, some sense of reality. The play deals with several issues and experiences common to those who participate in the activity of the Church – occurrences which fashion our feelings for the Church, its members, and ultimately with the Father.

There are three main themes in the play, They are:

Callings in the Church - This is the story of one family and their friends. Though skeptical of the methods and people through whom Church callings may be made, they nevertheless are faithfully determined to follow their perception of the right.

Leaving - 'Cottonwood' is about leaving one's home. No matter for what reasons, and there are many, leaving is always difficult. It generates strong emotions in those leaving as well as in their friends who would prefer they stayed. Death is the most final farewell known to man, but in the 1860's moving to a location several hundred miles away was almost as final.

Wanderers - This is a story about wanderers—people who, because of their allegiance to a grand cause, stronger than any commitment to personal comfort and security, experience isolation and longings for home.

The ANGELS

The young angels in the play sit quietly on stage with a purity of children observing the drama in the lives of the other characters. They know with a certain joy that earthly sufferings are "but a moment."

The Premiere Production

The authors are indebted to Sterling VanWagenen and Marilee VanWagenen, the directors of that production, for their substantial contribution to the development of the play, especially in the stage directions.

Production Notes

The play is performed with no curtain, no sets and simple props. The audience, upon entering the theatre, sees the empty stage half-lit. The Ballad Singer performs alone on the stage. Then the pre-recorded Overture begins while the audience still sees only the empty stage. Lights go out while the pulpit is placed down center stage and the action of Act One begins.

For the premiere, a large rear-projection screen was flown from a batten. It was raised and lowered as needed. Photos were projected onto the screen at times, suggesting the settings – trees, the moon, etc., and the figures of the nightmare sequence.

ONCE I LIVED IN COTTONWOOD

ACT ONE

PROLOGUE – if used, should begin 5 minutes before play starts.

MUSICAL #1 - ONCE I LIVED IN COTTONWOOD

QUARTET: (Recorded)

OH, ONCE I LIVED IN COTTONWOOD AND OWNED A LITTLE FARM,
BUT I WAS CALLED TO DIXIE, WHICH DID ME MUCH ALARM;
TO RAISE THE CANE AND COTTON, I RIGHT AWAY MUST GO;
BUT THE REASON WHY THEY CALLED ON ME, I'M SURE I DO NOT KNOW.

SEGUE TO

MUSICAL #1A – OVERTURE

Scene 1 – *The year is 1863. The scene takes place inside an LE meeting house. A spotlight is on the pulpit which is placed on the apron. Members of the cast are seated in the front rows of the house. The STAKE PRESIDENT is speaking.*

STAKE P: Callings to settle new towns are not given without knowledge the hardship that may be brought into your lives. I know its not easy to leave, your homes and friends and go settle a new town; in many cases the towns are not even started yet. You may be going with a group to start from the beginning. Now if I read your name, remember it is a calling from Go through the Prophet. The Calling is important, more so than most. Very few people are told by the Lord where to live, but, it is to your honor that He tell you. Consider it a great blessing to be told where your family is to liv Archer and Wanda Clayton, you have been called to go to Scipio. Harrison and Henrietta Pearce, you have been called to Leeds. Steve and Jan Plewe, you are called to Payson.

JANET: *(From the audience.)* Oh, no!

STAKE PRES: *(Looks up from his list of names on the pulpit, out into the audience to see who was speaking. Then looks down again and continues reading.)* Robert and Barbara Pixton - Monroe. Douglas and Sharon Marshall - Meadow

(Spotlight fades as the STAKE PRESIDENT's voice drops off. Chairs and pulpit am removed from the stage.)

(Lights out.)

Scene 2 – *WILL is laying rock at his half-finished wall when FRED approaches. Two wooden benches can be used for the wall. A step ladder is behind the wall. The four ANGELS are sitting to the side are watching the drama.*

WILL: Missed the Call again, huh, Fred.

FRED: *(laying down and sighting in the air with his rifle)* I don't think I'd go. I didn't want to leave Missouri.

WILL: *(indicating to FRED that he would like him to hand him a rock from the pile a few feet down stage.)* Rock.

FRED: *(reluctantly handing a rock to WILL. Not wanting to exert himself)* Think about Missouri, Will. There was a beautiful place.

WILL: It was beautiful.

FRED: It was a wonderful place, Will; a man could make a dollar there.

WILL: I didn't do too well.

FRED: You're not going to do too well anywhere, Will.

WILL: Rock.

FRED: Farming—how can you stand to be a farmer?

WILL: *(A bit offended.)* I can stand it.

FRED: Selling, Will, that's where the money is. You could sell anything in Missouri. Those travelers passing through would buy anything and by the time they decided they didn't need your merchandise, it was too late. They were 50 miles down the road and going the other way.

WILL: Rock.

(Standing to take the rock from FRED.)

Sell to the suckers, huh, Fred?

FRED: I never thought of them as suckers, Will, more like—uh—customers. People are too cheap here. It's tough selling here. Even if they want to buy, nobody has the money. I hate this place; it's too hard for an honest man to make a living.

WILL: It was hard for an honest man to make a living in Missouri, Fred.

FRED: I didn't have any trouble making a living there. I should have stayed there.

WILL: *(Crossing to well, stage right. Getting a drink.)* You should have, Fred. But, they wouldn't let us stay, remember?

FRED: Yes, I remember. The Missourians didn't want us and the prophet asked us to leave—follow the prophet and all that.

(Joins WILL at the well. Takes drink of water out of his hand.)

I think Brigham Young was nuts to stop here. We should have gone on to California. A man could get rich in California.

(WILL picks up a second cup and gets another drink and chokes on the water.)

WILL: I just do what the prophet asks, Fred. That way I can't get into too much trouble.

FRED: *(Hitting WILL on the back, perhaps too hard.)* And you're not going to go rich either.

WILL: Hey, I don't see you riding in a carriage, Fred.

FRED: *(Crossing to stage left thinking out loud.)* I'll think of something to sell here.

WILL: *(Picking up a piece of soap from a bucket near the well.)* How about soap, Fred?

(Absently throwing the soap over his shoulder to FRED.)

Sell us soap.

FRED: Soap, huh? Everybody needs soap. Not a bad idea, Will.

(WILL and FRED freeze)

(Lights out.)

Scene 3 – *Light on TOM in the audience, he moves on to the stage singing. WILL and FRED remain frozen.*

MUSICAL #2 – WHAT SHALL I DO?

TOM:

WHAT SHALL I DO?
WHAT CAN I SAY?
HOW DO I TELL THEM THEY REALLY CAN'T STAY.
THEY'LL HAVE TO LEAVE,
LEAVE COTTONWOOD
THE OLD PLACE FOR GOOD.
WON'T SEE THEM AGAIN
CAN'T TELL THEM TO STAY
CAN'T ASK THE LORD TO HAVE IT MY WAY.
THEY'LL HAVE TO GO,
LEAVE ALL THEIR FRIENDS
START OVER AGAIN.
I THOUGHT THE LORD WOULD NEVER ASK ME, TO
BE HARD ON THOSE I LOVE,
AND THOSE WHO LOVE ME.

JUST WHEN MY HEART SEEMED EASY TO PLEASE
COME DIFFICULT TIMES;
I'M DOWN ON MY KNEES.

(Lights up on stage)

TOM: Hello, Fred.

FRED: *(In a hurry to leave after seeing TOM)* Evening, Bishop. I've got to go. See you, Will.

TOM: Bye, Fred, evening, Will.

WILL: Bishop.

TOM: Will, do you believe that God controls your life?

WILL: *(Surprised by the subject change—a bit absent-minded from still thinking about his conversation with FRED.)* What?

TOM: What happens to you—that its God's will?

WILL: God's will, what are you talking about?

TOM: Come on. Answer my question.

WILL: *(Cautiously.)* God has His way in my life.

TOM: Can being obedient make you unhappy?

WILL: Can being obedient make me unhappy?

TOM: Right, can it?

WILL: No, no.

(Pause.)

Yes, I think it can, maybe sometimes. Sometimes God is very subtle, Tom—too subtle for me. And sometimes I misinterpret His message. I see harm and sadness where one of greater faith might feel hope.

TOM: Do you like it here?

WILL: *(Wondering what TOM is trying to say.)* Like it here?

TOM: Your friends, your home, the farm—are you happy here?

WILL: What are you getting at, Bishop?

(Threatening.)

TOM: And what would cause you to leave?

WILL: To leave?

TOM: To sell the farm, to leave, to move, go to another town.

WILL: I'm not going to sell the farm and I'm sure not going to another town. I'm here for the rest of my life, Bishop.

TOM: But what could make you leave Cottonwood? Persuade you to move?

WILL: Bishop, what are we talking about—sell, leave—what do you mean?

TOM: *(Blurting it out, finally.)* Will, God wants you to go to Washington.

WILL: *(Long pause. WILL's getting excited now.)* Washington! Honestly? Washington! I can't believe it!

TOM: Its a Calling to you, Will.

WILL: Really? This is the kind of opportunity a man dreams of. Washington ... and to be called. I can't believe it! I don't deserve it, Bishop.

TOM: Called of God, Will—through the mouth of His holy prophet.

WILL: Bishop, the prophet is truly a man of God, a man to follow—a great prophet. There are many men in the ward who could do the job better than I. I feel so humble. I never thought of myself as a politician.

(TOM realizing WILL misunderstands him, begins to laugh.)

Well, I just feel humble; the position is greater than the man. You know what I mean. Just imagine—me—representing the Utah Territory in Washington, D.C.

(TOM puts a hand on WILL's shoulder, wanting to say something to correct the misunderstanding, but stops as WILL begins to sing.)

MUSICAL #3 – FEELING HUMBLE

WILL: *(Climbing the ladder)*

WHAT DO YOU DO WHEN YOU'RE CALLED TO SERVE,
AND THE JOB THE LORD HAS IN MIND
ISN'T SOMETHING JUST ANYONE CAN DO,
BUT YOU KNOW THAT THEY SURE WOULD LIKE TO?
YOU FEEL HUMBLE.
THAT'S IT, YOU FEEL HUMBLE!

A MAN CAN TAKE A LOT OF PRIDE IN FEELING HUMBLE.
FEELING HUMBLE, FEELING PROUD
JUST WANT TO SHOUT IT OUT LOUD!

I CAN SEE THE VISION; THERE I AM
A CROWD OF FACES, WARM EMBRACES.
I STEP FORWARD TO SPEAK;
MY FIRST WORDS ARE:

I FEEL HUMBLE,
OH YES, I FEEL HUMBLE.
(One of the ANGELS exits)
FEELING HUMBLE, FEELING PROUD
JUST WANT TO SHOUT IT OUT LOUD!

WHEN YOUR BURSTING UP WITH PRIDE,
YOUR HEAD IS SWELLING INSIDE,
IT'S ALWAYS BEST TO SAY:
I'M FEELING HUMBLE.

TOM: Will, is Bonnie here?

WILL: Yes.

TOM: I think you'd better call here.

WILL: *(Excited. Yelling.)* Bonnie! Come out here; I've got something to tell you Bonnie?
(BONNIE comes outside from the house and WILL grabs her in bear hug and pulls her off the porch.)

Bonnie, I have the most exciting news, We've been ask to go to Washington, D. C.
(Two other ANGELS exit)

BONNIE: This is a joke, have you been talking to Fred?

WILL: No, listen to Tom, Bonnie.

BONNIE: Hello, Tom.

TOM: Bonnie, I think you'd better sit down.

BONNIE: *(Grabbing TOM's arm)* No, no. Whats the news, Tom?

TOM: Will and I have been talking, Bonnie, and - uh... I don't think Will has understood my exact meaning.

BONNIE: *(ToTOM, excited)* You're getting married again!

TOM: No, nothing like that, Bonnie.

(Still Hesitating)

The Lord wants you to settle Washington.

WILL: *(Wary.)* Washington's already settled.

TOM: Not Washington, D. C., Will. I'm not talking about Washington, D.C. I'm talking about Washington, Utah.

BONNIE: Why didn't President Brown call our names during the meeting?

TOM: It's just one of those things; he just neglected to read it.

BONNIE: Just neglected to read it!

WILL: Washington, Utah? Where on earth is Washington, Utah?

TOM: Uh I think it's a few miles north of St. George.

WILL: And God wants me to go there?

TOM: Well - uh - President Young wants you to go there.

WILL: *(Becoming dejected and then angry)* Oh, I should have known; Brigham Young wants me to go to Washington—not to be a politician, but to be a settler – again. He must be

(hits rock wall)

out of his mind.

BONNIE: No!

(BONNIE restrains WILL from approaching TOM.)

WILL: Bishop, call a younger man. I'm pioneered out.

TOM: The Call came to you, Will, and to you, Bonnie.

(TOM places the Calling in BONNIE's hand, she takes it with both hands and holds it close her.)

WILL: It's got to be a mistake; I don't want to go to Washington.

BONNIE: *(Glancing at the inside of the letter, then closing it back up.)* I don't want to leave Cottonwood.

TOM: *(Taking the letter from BONNIE)* I don't suppose the prophet Lehi liked the idea much either when he was told to leave Jerusalem.

BONNIE: But Jerusalem was going to be destroyed. Is Salt Lake going to be destroyed, Tom?

WILL: Answer that, Bishop.

TOM: I don't think so. The Prophet's just trying to expand the kingdom.

BONNIE: When we left Nauvoo it wasn't so hard. We left to escape wickedness. God's people – always running away from the world. What are we running away from this time?

TOM: You're not running from anything; you're just being asked to move.

BONNIE: Are you sure there is a difference?

WILL: That's a good question. Are we leaving wickedness?

BONNIE: No just our friends.

(Moves in front of TOM and looks him in the eyes.)

How can you ask us, Tom?

(Moves back WILL)

Will, I just can't do this again, I really can't.

(BONNIE runs off the stage.)

(Lights out.)

Scene 4 – *As the scene continues. One ANGEL observes.*

WILL: What does it matter to the Lord if we stay here? We don't want to go, Tom. Would you want to go to Washington?

TOM: It doesn't matter whether I want to go or not, you've been called and either you go or you're disobedient, ifs that simple.

WILL: Maybe somebody else would like to go to Washington, couldn't they at least ask for volunteers.

TOM: Will, when the brethren call, you do it. It's your duty to talk Bonnie into it, its your duty to talk your children into it and its your duty to quit complaining.

(TOM slaps the letter containing the call into WILL's hand and stomps out.)

WILL: You know what I think, I think it doesn't matter whether we go or not. Well, it matters - it matters that we're obedient, not that we go to Washington. I mean anybody could go to Washington, what difference does it make whether it's Bonnie and I or Fred and Mary or anybody. They just need fifteen or twenty families to head south and I suppose we were unlucky enough to be selected. Once your name's selected, that's it; the Calls been made and you% better do it don't know that it even matters that the Call is inspired by the Lord. Why does it have to be inspired. Do I require that God takes His time to make a special call to me? He probably has better things to do with His time. I doubt that it matters much to the Lord whether I represent the Territory in the halls of Congress or go kick dirt clods in Dixie. Yes, we'll go to Washington. We'll go because we want to go. That sounds funny, doesn't it We want to go to Washington! What we really want is to be able to look the Lord in the eye and know that we did what we were asked to do, whether He was the one who asked or whether it was one of the brethren who did the asking. We still did it. Then we can look Him in the eye. That's why well go.

(Lights out.)

Scene 5 – *The following day, in the living room at the Larson home. BONNIE is seated on the sofa, JENNY is seated on the sofa and JANE is seated on the floor. The four ANGELS are lying on the floor, propped on their elbows, watching.*

BONNIE: *(Very agitated)* Washington! Washington, Utah! I'm telling you they want us to go to Washington, Utah. There was no warning, nothing – just out of the blue we get ordered to Washington,

Utah...

JENNY: *(Gets up from the sofa and butts in on BONNIE)* Oh Mom, I don't want to go. I vote we don't go.

FINN: *(He walks on stage from behind the sofa and puts his foot on the cushion.)* And I vote we do!

BONNIE: Get your feet off that sofa!

JANE: And I vote we do, too.

JENNY: I can't believe this, just like that, somebody says, “move to Washington” and you two want to go, you'd think you were going on a vacation.

(Sits back down.)

FINN: It will be an adventure Jenny, don't you understand? An adventure.

JENNY: Well maybe I don't want any more adventure in my life. I just want to stay in Cottonwood and live a nice quiet life here with my friends.

FINN: *(Stays behind the sofa.)* Any friend in particular?

(JENNY lunges for FINN.)

BONNIE: *(Jumps up from sofa and grabs JENNY to restrain her.)* Hold it, hold it, you two. Jenny can have her reasons for wanting to stay. It doesn't matter what they are. I have my reasons. I'd like to stay. It is acceptable to want to stay. Even your Dad doesn't want to go. We're not –

(WILL enters)

– we don't have to go, do we, Will? Talk the Bishop out of it, Will.

JANE: *(Moves to WILL and puts her arm around him)* Why would you want to talk him out of it? I want to know when we're leaving?

WILL: It wouldn't do any good to talk the Bishop out of it; he doesn't want to see us go. He says we're his best friends. I don't think anybody really wants to see us go, but if they want to start a new town, somebody has to go there to stay.

(BONNIE and JANE both talk at the same time but, BONNIE gives way to JANE and turns away from WILL.)

BONNIE: But, why does it have to be us?

JANE: Why don't they just ask for volunteers, Dad?

WILL: *(Bear hugging JANE.)* Volunteers? No, that's not the way the church works, Jane.

JANE: *(Pushing away from WILL)* Well, I'd volunteer.

JENNY: Well good, you and Finn both volunteer, but count me out.

(JENNY moves in a threatening way toward JANE.)

JANE: Jenny!!

WILL: *(Moves to separate JANE and JENNY.)* Enough!! That settles it,

(Pointing to FINN and JANE)

Finn and Jane, you go,

(Putting arms around BONNIE and JENNY.)

and the rest of us stay here.

FINN: I can't wait to tell my friends. Come on.

(Motioning to JANE. FINN and JANE exit.)

WILL: *(Holding the letter)* This call from Brigham Young is really something.

JENNY: I know.

WILL: Your mother and I read through the whole thing very carefully last night.

JENNY: And?

WILL: And your not going to believe what it says.

JENNY: What does it say?

WILL: Let me read it and remember, it's signed by the prophet. "Greetings and congratulations on your new calling. The Lord has called you to help establish the town of Washington and extends His invitation to you and your family to begin making preparations to..." Etc., etc. Uh—let's see—oh, here it is. "Brother and Sister Larson, we greatly encourage all members of your family 18 years of age and older to take with them a spouse

JENNY: *(Pricks her finger with a needle.)* Ouch! A spouse!

WILL: In your case a husband.

JENNY: I'm supposed to bring a husband? Me? To Washington?

WILL: That's what it says.

JENNY: And how am I supposed to get a husband?

WILL: *(Smiling.)* Count your blessings, Jenny. At least it doesn't say whom you have to marry.

JENNY: I can't believe this is happening to me! Mom, what do you think?

BONNIE: I don't know what to say. I'm as confused as you are.

JENNY: *(Closes her eyes tightly.)* This isn't happening to me. This isn't happening to me!

BONNIE: *(Gets up and goes to WILL, puts her hands on his shoulders then pulls him up)* Will, why don't you let Jenny and I talk about this alone?

(Gives WILL a kiss on the cheek.)

WILL: Okay.

(All leave.)

Scene 6 – The same. A continuation of the previous scene.

BONNIE: *(Watches WILL leave and makes sure he is out of hearing range then begins talking.)* Oh Jenny, I don't want to go. I'm hoping we can get the Call changed. But just in case, it doesn't hurt to be prepared. How do you feel about Luke?

JENNY: I'm not sure.

BONNIE: Do you think you love him—enough to marry him?

JENNY: Maybe.

BONNIE: That's wonderful, sweetheart. I like him too—very much. I think maybe you need a little advice. It's not that hard, you know.

JENNY: What's not that hard?

BONNIE: To get a man's attention—not for a pretty girl like you.

JENNY: How much time do we have, anyway, before we're supposed to leave?

BONNIE: Three months.

JENNY: Three months? – to get Luke to propose and then get married—impossible! I've been trying for two years to get Luke to propose and all he can talk about are cows and hay fields.

BONNIE: Listen, Jenny, you're not doing it right. You're a woman now. You know what to do. You just need to practice a few things. Now imagine.

(BONNIE steps forward, thinking and speaking, almost as if to herself. JENNY steps to the back of the stage where LUKE is standing. They pantomime the behaviors described by BONNIE)

The two of you are dancing together.

MUSICAL # 4 – WALTZ

Now you're talking to each other. Cast your eyes shyly toward the floor. Then, after a minute or two, look up and gaze straight into his eyes, tilting your head just a little and smiling sweetly.

JENNY: *(Breaking from the scene with LUKE and coming forward toward BONNIE.)* Mother, you're joking! This will never work on Luke.

BONNIE: Yes it will. I know it sounds crazy, but it will work.

(JENNY moves back to LUKE.)

Now, stand very close to him, as close as you can get.

(JENNY moves close to LUKE)

But let him be the one to take your hand, or put his arm around you. Let him think it's his idea.

(LUKE does these things.)

And if he happens to say something even slightly romantic, act surprised at first.

(BONNIE demonstrates by putting her hand on her chest, straightening her posture, opening her mouth as if surprised, and fluttering her eyelashes.)

And say, "Oh, Luke, really." No, no, no, no—like this, r–e–ally.

JENNY: *(Stepping forward)* Mother, Luke is not this stupid. He will never fall for this.

BONNIE: Oh yes, he will. Now, say r–e–ally. Perfect! He may be embarrassed and try to change the subject, but don't let him. That's the secret; keep him going until he proposes. If he starts to talk about farming or wagons then interrupt him, take his hand, and persuade him to tell you how he feels about you. And if you happen to be sitting...

(BONNIE in front, and JENNY and LUKE in back, all sit.)

Sit gracefully. Cross your legs and put one arm on the back of the sofa. Let him see what a nice—uh—figure you have.

(LUKE pantomimes proposing to JENNY and she responds.)

That's Will and I; that's how I felt. I remember how I felt. Life was very sweet then. It was so easy when we were young.

JENNY: *(Coming forward again.)* Oh mother, this may have worked in your day, but not now.

BONNIE: I think it will work.

(Lights out)

Scene 7 – *The Larson porch. JENNY and BONNIE Larson are off-stage after blackout. JENNY is getting ready to go somewhere. FINN enters. Three of the ANGELS observe. JENNY enters, tying her bonnet.*

FINN: *(Sitting and peeling apples into a bowl.)* So, where are you off to 'Jenny'? Planning to see Luke tonight?

JENNY: It's none of your business

FINN: *(making fun of her)* Oh, Jenny r–e–ally.

(JENNY spins around and grabs the bowl of fish remains and dumps them on FINN's head and then stomps off stage. Then FINN turns and notices BONNIE standing near by.)

I didn't give her that hard of a time.

BONNIE: Yes, you did. Did you overhear Jenny and I talking?

(Gives FINN a hug as she scolds him)

FINN: *(Sits, imitating the pose of JENNY earlier.)* Why do you ask, m–o–ther?

(He smiles all the while cleaning himself off.)

BONNIE: *(As BONNIE begins to walk off stage.)* Finn, If you say one word about this, I'll never speak to you again.

FINN: All the way to Washington, and you're not going to speak to me? Come on, Mom.

BONNIE: I'm still not at all sure we're going.

FINN: Why would anyone not want to go–Washington–it's the stuff dreams are made of, Mom–hunting, Indians,...

BONNIE & FINN: ... fishing.

(FINN's teenage friends enter with ROBERT and FRED.)

FINN: When are we leaving? Hey, guys, guess who's going to settle Washington? The Larsons, no less. It's going to be great.

FRIEND: You lucky guy.

FINN: Maybe they'll name a new town after me–Larsontown. Or maybe Finnville. Has a nice ring to it.

JANE: Do they have schools in Washington?

FINN: No school?

(Contemplating the possibility.)

Maybe they don't have school. What a break that would be. Hey guys come on over.

(FINN and LDS friends participate in a lively number–gymnastic stunts.)

MUSICAL #5 – THE COTTON MISSION

FINN:

THIS COTTON MISSION SOUNDS JUST GREAT;

IT'S THE PLACE FOR ME.

WILD INDIANS, RED ROCKS-

IT'S THE PLACE FOR ME.

ROBERT: *(Spoken.)* They're our Lamanite brothers.

FINN:

ADVENTURE THERE AND FORTUNE,
A PLACE TO EARN MY FAME.
A TASTE OF WINE ON SUNDAYS
I CAN HARDLY WAIT.

ROBERT: (*Spoken.*) We produce the wine, not drink it.
(*MUSIC interlude*)

FINN:

I'LL FIGHT,

FRIEND:

HE'LL FIGHT,

FINN:

I'LL FIGHT THE INDIANS,
MAKE THE SETTLEMENTS SAFE.

FRIENDS:

HE'S STRONG; HE'S TOUGH; FIGHT THE INDIANS;

GIRL:

FINN, YOU ARE SO BRAVE.

ROBERT: (*Spoken.*) We don't fight our Lamanite brothers.
(*MUSIC interlude*)

FRED:

He'll get rich.

FINN:

I'll get rich.
Can you show me the way?

FRED:

Growing cotton, selling
I'll show you the way.
(*MUSIC interlude*)

FINN:

THIS COTTON MISSION SOUNDS JUST GREAT
AND I'LL BE THE HERO.

FRIEND:

THE HERO?

FINN:

THE HERO.
A REAL PIONEER MAN.
RESPECTED. ADMIRED.
THE HERO.

FRIEND:

THE HERO.

FRIENDS:

DRINK TO THE HERO.

A HERO IN OUR TIME.

(MUSIC interlude)

ALL: *(Shout)* The hero.

(Lights out)

Scene 8 – *JENNY and LUKE enter from side stage, walking slowly together they are on an empty stage except for two ladders that are off to the opposite side of the stage. They walk toward the ladders. During this scene LUKE knows that JENNY is vying to get him to propose marriage but he enjoys pretending to be ignorant of her intentions. The stage lights are dim except directly around JENNY and LUKE. One ANGEL observes.*

JENNY: I guess you've heard the news by now.

LUKE: Uh-huh.

JENNY: My family has been called to settle Washington.

LUKE: *(Stops walking.)* I'm not even sure where Washington is.

JENNY: A long way away, Luke.

(She stops but does not turn. They both begin walking slowly again.)

LUKE: Several days ride I'll bet.

JENNY: I may have to go with them.

LUKE: I hope your family doesn't have to go all that way.

JENNY: What else can I do, Luke?

(JENNY casts her eyes down, shyly.)

LUKE: If you do go, Jenny, what do you think you're going to do with the farm?

JENNY: Just when we were getting used to each other.

LUKE: Used to each other?

JENNY: You know what I mean.

LUKE: *(Facing JENNY, he places a hand upon each shoulder as if to get serious)* Jenny.

JENNY: *(Hoping the moment has arrived)* Yes.

LUKE: Do you think your father might sell the farm?

JENNY: *(Beginning to get frustrated that her overtures are not being responded to in the manner she expected.)* We may not see each other for a long time Luke.

LUKE: I don't like that idea.

JENNY: *(Surprised by his comment.)* Oh, Luke, really.

(Then remembering her mother's instructions.)

I mean r-e-ally?

LUKE: Yea, really. I don't like the idea of your family leaving – who's going to run the Larson farm if you go?

JENNY: *(Getting more frustrated by his answers.)* Let's talk about it over here.

(Leading LUKE to the ladders she turns facing away from LUKE.)

Luke, what do you think I ought to do?

(She turns and he is not behind her.)

LUKE: *(From the other side of the ladders.)* I think we'd better find out before he sells it to some stranger.

JENNY: *(Moving toward LUKE around the ladders.)* Luke, it's not the farm I hate to leave. You and I may never see each other again. Do you care?

(No answer from LUKE.)

Do you care!

LUKE: *(Moving around the ladders.)* About the farm?

JENNY: Luke will you be still about the farm!! I'm talking about us - do you know what I mean, "US?"

LUKE: *(Knowing all along what she was talking about.)* Us - oh, this hasn't been about your family's farm at all!

JENNY: Do you know what I've been talking about?

LUKE: *(moves next to JENNY and puts his arm around her shoulder)* I think so.

MUSICAL# 6 – I CAN LOOK OUT TONIGHT

(A LIGHT is cast on the scrim; it appears as the moon is framing the top of the taller ladder. JENNY begins to climb the taller ladder and is framed by the moon behind.)

JENNY:

I CAN LOOK OUT TONIGHT
AND SEE THE STARS ARE BRIGHT
AND KNOW THE MOON IS SOMEWHERE IN THE SKY.
IN SUMMER TREES ARE GREEN
AND NO ONE'S EVER SEEN
THE OTHER SIDE OF CLOUDS AS THEY GO BY.
I MOW A SMILING FACE
AND A GENTLE EMBRACE
MEANS SOMEONE'S GLAD TO SEE YOU ONCE AGAIN,
LIKE A CHILD ALL ALONE
WHEN HE FINALLY WANDERS HOME-
A MOTHER LOOKED, BUT DID NOT KNOW WHERE HE HAD BEEN.

(LUKE climbs up the other side of the ladder)

BOTH:

BUT HOW DO I KNOW, IF I LOVE YOU SO?
CAN I ANSWER WITHOUT A DOUBT?

OR HOW AM I TO TELL,
THINGS I DON'T KNOW WELL,
AM I TOO YOUNG TO KNOW WHAT LIFE'S ABOUT?

LUKE:

I KNOW WHEN I'M SAD
AND I FEEL LIKE I'VE HAD
TOO MANY DAYS, NOT SEEING YOU;
I THINK ABOUT YOUR FACE
A GENTLE, KIND EMBRACE,
THE THOUGHT ALONE HELPS GET ME THROUGH.

BOTH:

AND I KNOW THAT LOVE
PLEASES GOD ABOVE,
HE WANTS US ALL FEELING KIND TO EVERY ONE,
OR SO I'VE BEEN TOLD
BY THOSE WHO OUGHT TO KNOW-
BUT MY FONDNESS FOR YOU IS LIKE NO OTHER ONE.

BUT HOW DO I KNOW,
IF I LOVE YOU SO?
CAN I ANSWER WITHOUT A DOUBT?
OR HOW AM I TO TELL,
THINGS I DON'T KNOW WELL,
AM I TOO YOUNG TO KNOW WHAT LIFE'S ABOUT?

(Lights out.)

Scene 9 – *A rope is stretched across the proscenium opening as a clothesline. BONNIE is hanging bedsheets and TOM is talking to her. FOUR ANGELS observe.*

BONNIE: Tom ...

(Pause.)

All I can think about is that call.... Call, huh. More like an order. It ought to read, "You are hereby ordered to sell your home, pack your belongings, forget your friends, and leave town."

TOM: President Young has called you.

BONNIE: When we moved to Cottonwood, I knew Brigham was a prophet. It was June and the grass was still green and in the evening I could hear the rocks rolling in the creek. They were rolling and tumbling over themselves and it would put me to sleep at night. And it was cool. It had already started to heat up in town but it was cool here. It had been raining for two weeks before we moved here and it was so

green and I knew I wanted to die right here. But now we have to leave—its funny, but God seems to expect things from us that just aren't necessary—and they're the hardest things. Remember last Spring. It stayed cool through June and then one morning the sun came over the mountain with a vengeance. We all knew the Cottonwood Creek wouldn't hold the water. The snow was still deep. It flooded. You could see the creek rise 6 inches a day – over the bank it came. What could we do? There aren't enough of us here to raise the bank 6 inches every day. It was hard on us – the farms, the houses, the yards.

TOM: It did a lot of damage.

BONNIE: But I still love it here, Tom.

TOM: Bonnie, you're one of the few of my friends who still call me Tom. I've been Bishop so long it's become my first name. Ever since my wife died everybody just calls me Bishop – even my old friends call me Bishop, oh, I like being Bishop in Cottonwood – but – my old friends treat me differently. They tell me things I just wish I could forget. I guess that's part of the calling – forgetting all the bad things I hear,

(He smiles.)

like the time Sister Hansen and Brother Jarman oh!

(Kidding her.)

You don't want to hear that. I've married people in the Ward, counseled them and settled a lot of family problems. Some of them I haven't been able to settle. Sometimes they're tough. This is tougher – asking your family to leave. We've known each other for a long time, Bonnie.

BONNIE: I know, Tom.

TOM: And Will...

(pause)

not so long.

(pause)

Bonnie, do you remember reading that scripture in the Book of Mormon about how Jacob felt when he was old and he was remembering Jerusalem?

BONNIE: I think I know the scripture you mean.

TOM: *(Opens the Book of Mormon he has been carrying)* “The time passed away with us, and also our lives passed away like as it were unto us a dream, we being a lonesome and a solemn people, wanderers, cast out from Jerusalem, born in tribulation in a wilderness, wherefore we did mourn away our days.”

MUSICAL #7 – WANDERERS

TOM:

AND THE TIME PASSED AWAY AND ALSO OUR LIVES,
AS IT WERE UNTO US A DREAM;

BONNIE:

AND HERE I GO AGAIN, LEAVING HOME AGAIN –
FOR A PLACE I'VE NEVER BEEN.
TELL ME GOD EXPECTS US TO BE WANDERERS;

PERUSAL SCRIPT — **Once I Lived In Cottonwood** by *John & Susan Rather and Lynn Burton*

TO SMILE WHILE MOURNING OUT OUR DAYS.
IS GOD HIMSELF A LONESOME MAN, A STRANGER, A WANDERER;
AM I TO BE THE SAME?

TOM:

I KNOW GOD EXPECTS US TO BE WANDERERS;
DON'T KNOW WHY HE PARTS US FROM OUR OWN-
REMEMBERED KISSES AND SWEETNESS, FROM THE LOVE
WE ARE PARTED
TO BE WANDERERS, SOMETIMES ALONE.

BONNIE:

DARK THE VIEW, I CANNOT SEE THE WAY FROM HERE.
WHAT DOES HE WANT? WHAT MUST BE FOUND IN ME?
AS MYSELF, TO LOVE MY FRIEND; OBEY—TO LEAVE MY FRIEND?
WHO IS THE ONE I AM TO BE?

BONNIE & TOM:

AND THE TIME PASSED AWAY AND ALSO OUR LIVES
AS IT WERE UNTO US A DREAM;
AND HERE I/YOU GO AGAIN, LEAVING HOME AGAIN-
FOR A PLACE I'VE/YOU'VE NEVER BEEN.

(Enter WILL from upstage, pushes the clothesline down and peers over it.)

TOM: Good evening, Will.

WILL: What are you two talking about?

BONNIE: About wanderers, Will, about wanderers.

(Lights out.)

(End of ACT ONE)

ACT TWO

Scene 1 – *During lights out a table is placed center stage; FRED stands on the table. As the music begins all enter and FRED calls the Dance. Two dancing squares are formed-one with older people, one with children about 10-14 years of ago During the dance, the ANGELS and several other children run in and out of the squares and around the stage; several groups of people are standing, talking and watching the dancers. There could also be a group of instrumentalists augmenting or pantomiming the music.*

MUSICAL # 8 – SQUARE DANCE

FRED: *(called/chanted to the music)*

PROMENADE AROUND THE RING
COME ON HOME AND GIVE HER A SWING

TAKE YOUR PARTNER BY THE HAND,
PULL HER BY WITH A RIGHT AND LEFT GRAND.

BACK TO YOUR SWEETIE, THERE YOU GO
ROUND AGAIN WITH A DO-SI-DO. (CLAP, CLAP.)

LADIES GO LEFT, MEN GO RIGHT
PASS YOUR PARTNER OUT OF SIGHT
WHEN YOU SEE YOUR GAL, PRETTY LITTLE MAID,
GIVE HER A TURN AND PROMENADE.

ROUND THE SQUARE, HERE WE GO
COME ON HOME WITH A DO-SI-DO (CLAP, CLAP.)

HEAD COUPLES CROSS ON BY
SIDE TWO GIVE IT A TRY
HEADS BACK HOME, HEEL AND TOE,
SIDES DO THE SAME, HERE WE GO.

MEN TO THE CENTER, GIVE A SHOUT
TAKE HOLD OF HANDS AND BACK ON OUT
LADIES HANG ON, GO FOR A TRIP,
TOSS HER UP HIGH, BUT KEEP YOUR GRIP.

ONES GO OVER AND THREE DUCK DOWN
TWO SASHAY PAST FOUR TO TOWN

PERUSAL SCRIPT — **Once I Lived In Cottonwood** by *John & Susan Rather and Lynn Burton*

ONE AND THREE THE OTHER WAY BACK
TWO AND FOUR AROUND THE TRACK.

PROMENADE AROUND THE RING
COME ON HOME AND GIVE HER A SWING

TAKE YOUR PARTNER BY THE HAND
PULL HER BY WITH A RIGHT AND LEFT GRAND.

BACK TO YOUR SWEETIE, THERE YOU GO
ROUND AGAIN WITH A DO-SI-DO (CLAP, CLAP.)

LADIES GO LEFT, MEN GO RIGHT
PASS YOUR PARTNER OUT OF SIGHT
WHEN YOU SEE YOUR GAL, PRETTY LITTLE MAID,
GIVE HER A TURN AND PROMENADE.

ROUND THE SQUARE, HERE WE GO
COME ON HOME WITH A DO-SI-DO (CLAP, CLAP.)
SWING YOUR PARTNER FULL OF BLISS
AIN'T NO CRIME TO GIVE HER A KISS.

FRED: Aren't we having a wonderful time brothers and sisters. And now, while the band takes a short break, let me tell a few jokes. Hey, did you hear the one about the two Missourians ha, ha - it's so funny.

MARY: Spare me. Have you ever heard Fred's jokes? He calls them Missourian jokes. They're so insulting!

FRED: You'll really like this one. There were these two Missourians, Clef and Mike. Mike said to Clem, "Clem, when I was a boy I swam across the Missouri River." Mike said, "You did? That was daring." Clem said, "There were boats and logs and all sorts of things floating by, going real fast; jumped in and swam for all I was worth – it seemed like forever but I made it." Mike said, "And what did they say to you when you got to the other side?" "They said, 'Welcome to New Orleans, boy.'" What did I tell you funny?

(FRED laughs at his own joke)

And now folks for the big announcement – hold onto your hats.

(He laughs.)

Bonnie and Will have been called to settle Washington.

(FRED gets on the table, grabs BONNIE by the arm, leads her to the table and lifts her onto it and then jumps onto it himself.)

How lucky can you get? Washington.

(laughs)

Hey Will, maybe Brigham's mad at you. What did you do, wink at one of his wives? You could wear

your eyes out doing that.

(FRED laughs louder than anyone else.)

Bonnie, I understand when you move to Washington they provide you with a painting of the Jordan River.

CROWD: Why?

FRED: So you don't forget what water looks like.

(FRED laughs)

Also – did you know, they issue all the new settlers with a large boulder to set outside the door to the house?

BONNIE: What for?

FRED: The sun heats it up and you have something to cook on.

(He roars with laughter.)

MARY: Maybe Fred could go to Washington and I could stay here. That would be inspired.

(The band returns.)

FRED: *(turns to the band)* Hi guys, I'm glad to see your back.

DANCER: *(loud as a heckler)* Everyone's glad to see the band's back.

FRED: One more matter of importance to each of us folks. Wait just a minute now – Bonnie and Will leaving – that's important, but hey, when you're gone you're gone. But this is really important. Have any of you ever thought how dirty your clothes are and how clean mine are? Or how about these barn dances?

(Lifts TOM's arm and turns his nose to it and takes a whiff.)

Whew, I got just thing for you.

(Turns to the band.)

Okay guys, just the way we rehearsed it, one, two – one, two, three.

MUSICAL # 9 – SOAP

FRED:

SOAP - FABULOUS SOAP

(A large poster advertising "Fred's Fabulous Soap" is dropped in from above, behind FRED)

CHORUS: Soap?

FRED:

FRED'S EVERLOVING, EVERCLEANING SUPER FABULOUS SOAP

WILL: Oh, my goodness!

FRED: Fred's fabulous soap.

WILL: Soap? I was only kidding about selling soap.

CHORUS: Soap?

FRED: Yes soap - God's own product - to be clean is to be godly

(Smiling broadly, FRED takes bars of soap from a basket at his feet and hands them to

those gathered around him)

MARY: Soap? And this from a man that bathes once a month.

FRED: Come on out, girls.

(A few of the WOMEN enter as dancers in a line. The dance to a few bars of bass music and then do actions as FRED sings)

FRED:

IF YOU'RE A MAN AND YOU'RE DIRTY DON'T BE OLD

IF YOU'RE A WOMAN AND YOUR FEET SMELL

CHORUS:

FRED'S SO BOLD

FRED:

IF YOU'VE GOT RING AROUND THE COLLAR

AND YOUR WIFE DON'T GIVE A HOLLER THEN BUY ...

WOMEN:

FRED'S FABULOUS SOAP

AT THE END OF YOUR ROPE AND NO WAY TO COPE?

MAINTAIN YOUR HOPE.

YOU NEED FRED'S EVERCLEANING, EVERLOVING SUPER SOAP

FRED:

BUY FRED'S

WOMEN:

EVERLOVING, EVERCLEANING, SUPER, FABULOUS SOAP

Scene 2 – *FRED leaves the stage with the women's chorus following him, The curtain closes as downstage is set with tables, chairs and refreshments. MARY and BONNIE step forward and continue the scene without interruption. MARY is cutting vegetables at a table and BONNIE is standing by her, helping. MARY has a meat cleaver in her hand during this scene.*

MARY: I can't believe Fred. Wait till we get home. I'll put starch in his long-johns. Fred always wants to be the center of attention.

BONNIE: They will probably make him the Bishop.

MARY: That'll be the day. So, you're thinking of going to Washington; that's ridiculous.

BONNIE: I think Will is almost persuaded.

MARY: Men are all alike. They think they can tell us exactly what to do with our lives, and when to do it, and why.

BONNIE: Not my Will. But he feels it's his duty.

MARY: What about your feelings? What about the things you like to do, the things that ... establish your identity? What about your string quartet? I don't suppose you'll find many violinists who perform in

Washington.

BONNIE: Maybe not.

MARY: Washington! I just can't believe it, they'd call the cultural elite, like you and Will, to go to a place like Washington. I think it's mostly illiterate immigrants, people from the old country, living there, and I've heard that the climate is so hot and dry it will wrinkle you up

(picking up a prune)

like a prune.

(Begins to get all worked up and swings the cleaver.)

I'll bet that husband of yours hasn't given a thought to your feelings. Men are all alike, I'm telling you. Oh, I don't see how you can give up your home, your friends, your quartet, everything. If I weren't the editor of the magazine, or if they ask me to give that up, life would be practically unbearable. I'd be famished for culture. My mind needs...uh,

(Searching for words)

... a banquet each day, stimulation to make it soar – to reach out – to expand and fill the great voids in the universe...

(MARY looks at BONNIE and they both laugh at the pomposity of the words. MARY walks back to BONNIE and gives her a hug, backs aw, URN the cleaver)

...left by men.

(With the cleaver she vigorously cuts a squash in half as she speaks the line.)

What right does Brigham Young have to tell you to leave home, anyway?

BONNIE: How can I argue with a prophet?

(GIRLS with large wooden spoons in their hands enter.)

MARY: Oh yes, the prophet But prophets are supposed to be spiritual leaders, not secular dictators. I'm telling you, he thinks like a man. Men are all alike.

MUSICAL # 10 - MEN ARE ALL ALIKE!

MARY: Let's see-

THERE'S LYNN AND BILL AND VAL AND PHIL,
STERLING, JACK, AND MIKE.
THERE'S FRED AND FINN AND PETE AND WINN AND
MEN ARE ALL ALIKE!

CHORUS:

MEN AM ALL ALIKE!

BONNIE: (Spoken.) Except for Will!

MARY:

NO! WILL AND NED, CRAIG AND TED
AND ROGER, CHET, AND IKE.
AND JEAN AND PAUL AND JOHN AND ALL-
MEN ARE ALL ALIKE!

CHORUS:

MEN ARE ALL ALIKE.

BONNIE:

BUT WILL IS KIND AND LOVES MY MIND.

MARY:

IT AIN'T YOUR MIND, WHY WILL'S SO KIND;
MEN ARE ALL ALIKE!

CHORUS:

MEN ARE ALL ALIKE!

MARY:

THEY'LL TELL YOU HOW TO LOOK
AND WHAT TO WEAR
THEY WILL TELL YOU WHAT TO HATE AND LIKE,
WHO TO SEE AND WHAT TO SAY AND WHAT TO BE.
MEN ARE ALL ALIKE!

CHORUS:

MEN ARE ALL ALIKE!

(Girls' chorus pounds on the table with their spoons, and then exits.)

BONNIE: No more games, Mary; don't you think Callings are inspired?

MARY: Inspired! Think about it, Bonnie. If going to settle the southern territory is such a great idea, why doesn't Brigham Young himself go and do it? Why doesn't he ask his wives to leave their beautiful mansions on South Temple Street for huts on the Virgin River. Really, he has a lot of nerve, "calling" you to go. I think he's taking advantage of his position. You have your agency, your individual rights.

BONNIE: Do I? Do I really have my agency?

MARY: Oh! Bonnie, I hope you're not making a terrible mistake.

(JENNY enters.)

Oh hello, Jenny.

JENNY: You must have heard about the Call.

MARY: Oh yes, I heard all about it, including the part about you getting married.

(Shakes her head)

It's incredible.

JENNY: It's okay. Marrying Luke will give me something to get excited about, but he hasn't proposed to me yet.

MARY: Something to get excited about! Jenny, you need to find your own identity first.

(BONNIE walks up the back, preparing refreshments.)

JENNY: What do you mean?

MARY: *(Getting worked-up again.)* I mean, find out who you are.

JENNY: What?

MARY: Explore the meaning of life.

JENNY: *(Still puzzled.)* Luke will take care of me.

MARY: Oh yes, like Fred takes care of me – trying to make all my decisions. He's got great ideas about how I should organize my days to serve him better.

JENNY: Why shouldn't I wait on Luke, if he's my husband?

MARY: I guess it just depends on how much you like picking up the dirty socks and underwear he leaves lying around the house.

JENNY: *(Defensively.)* Luke's a hard worker.

MARY: So's Fred – at least, in his own mind.

JENNY: I think I love him.

MARY: Oh, I'm not at all sure what love is, Jenny, my young friend.

(Rebekah enters.)

REBEKAH: *(crossing behind MARY and JENNY.)* They're ready for refreshments in the other room.

JENNY: Oh, give me a few minutes.

REBEKAH: *(Turning and yelling as she continues off stage.)* Luke is in there looking for you.

(JENNY follows REBEKAH out to the square dance.)

MARY: Bonnie, let me be honest with you.

(She looks around to make sure FRED is not within hearing distance and then puts her arm around BONNIE's shoulders and walks to the front of the stage.)

Did you know that Will has already asked Fred to find a buyer for your farm?

BONNIE: A buyer? Are you sure?

MARY: Obviously, he's decided to go.

BONNIE: I guess so. Are you sure? He didn't tell me he was going to do that. Not yet.

MARY: Men are the decision-makers, Bonnie. They don't care about our ideas and feelings. I don't care whether it's Fred, or Brigham Young, or even your wonderful Will. Men are men.

(Lights out.)

Scene 3 – *Two ladders about center stage just in front of screen. Tree branches projected onto screen.*

Darkened stage; late evening. LUKE is on a ladder waiting for the Larsons after the square dance.

JENNY, JANE, FINN, BONNIE and WILL enter stage left humming a tune as they walk together. JANE shrieks.

WILL: Who's there?

(LUKE jumps down.)

BONNIE: *(As LUKE appears.)* Oh Luke, it's only you.

LUKE: Good evening. Sorry if I scared you. I was just wondering if I could have a word or two with Jenny.

WILL: *(Puts his arm around LUKE.)* Luke, you may have more than a word or two with Jenny.

(Family leaves. JENNY stays; FINN hesitates, stopping just before he gets off stage.)

JENNY: Finn, Don't even think about it.

(She waits until FINN leaves so that she is alone with LUKE.)

So, what did you want to talk about?

LUKE: How are you?

JENNY: Fine.

LUKE: *(He picks up an apple.)* Remember when we used to play this game? Eevy-Ivy-over.

(LUKE throws the apple to JENNY. She catches it.)

JENNY: We were pretty good at this.

(Throws the apple back to LUKE.)

Eevy-ivy-over.

LUKE: Eevy-ivy-over.

JENNY: Eevy-ivy-over.

LUKE: You know Jenny, we do make a pretty good team.

JENNY: I know; I've been trying to tell you that for quite a long time.

LUKE: Jenny, there's something I need to talk to you about.

JENNY: Yes.

LUKE: I've been thinking.

JENNY: Oh Luke, really.

(They both laugh.)

LUKE: Jenny, I'm trying to be serious.

(While he pauses to gather his wits, JENNY runs off up stage and hides behind a ladder.)

Jenny? Jenny? Come out. Do you hear me?

(No answer. He can't see her. He speaks toward audience.)

All right, Jenny. The truth is—I think I love you and I want to be with you always. I want to be wherever you are. And I want you to be wherever I am.

(Pauses, then shouts.)

Jenny, do you hear me?

(Frustrated, but determined to get his message out now that he has begun, even though he can't see JENNY.)

What I'm trying to say is—do you want to get married?

(Calling out.)

Jenny, do you want to get married?

JENNY: *(Looks out from behind ladder.)* Well, I'd say it depends on who I'd be marrying.

LUKE: What I mean is—do you want to get married to me?

JENNY: *(As if only beginning to understand.)* Oh—me marry you?

(Approaching from up stage.)

LUKE: Yes, you marry me.

(He sees her.)

JENNY: Yes. Yes!

(Embrace.)

(Lights out.)

Scene 4 – *The Larson bedroom. BONNIE is lying in bed. Her children are lying down stage left covered with a sheet, as if they were dead. The STAKE PRESIDENT is standing nearby. The room is darkened. Nightmarish photos such as skulls flash on rear screen.*

MUSICAL #11 – NIGHTMARE MUSIC

JANE: Mother, where are you?

JENNY: I'm lost, Mother.

(The calls are repeated with the music. BONNIE gets out of bed and searches blindly for her children, using her hands. She hears their calls but cannot find them. She is dreaming. Finally she discovers the bodies on the floor. Lifting a corner of the sheet, she gives a horrified scream.)

(Lights out.)

(Lights go up. BONNIE is in bed again. She gets up and goes to the wash stand to put water on her face. Fully awake now, she goes back to her bed.)

(Lights out.)

(BONNIE is still in bed, but not asleep. WILL enters stage left, sitting on a bench to remove his boots. He walks quietly across the room so as not to disturb his wife. At the wash basin he begins cleaning up, getting ready for bed.)

BONNIE: You're going to do it, aren't you, Will?

(WILL doesn't answer.)

You asked Fred to sell the farm?

WILL: We talked about it.

BONNIE: *(Sitting up in bed.)* Did you ask him to sell the farm?

WILL: Yes.

BONNIE: Why?

WILL: Because we're going.

BONNIE: *(Gets out of bed. Confronts WILL.)* Just like that? Why didn't you ask me first?

WILL: I didn't have to ask you; you knew we'd go, Bonnie.

BONNIE: You didn't have to ask me! Tell the truth. You were afraid I wouldn't go. You were afraid I'd make up my own mind and it wouldn't be just exactly what you wanted.

WILL: Well, maybe a little.

BONNIE: What if I say no? It's my farm, too.

(Takes towel WILL was using from his hands and throws it down.)

WILL: I know it's your farm and I know I probably should have asked you first, but I didn't.

BONNIE: You should have asked me, Will. You just should have asked first.

WILL: I know. I should have. I guess I haven't been thinking about you too much lately. I've been struggling with my own thoughts, Bonnie. I've been hoping I'd get some sign, some inspiration that God is pleased with me because I've decided to go. But I feel nothing. Just tired. Yes, I talked to Fred. I asked him if he would sell the farm for us. You know how Fred likes to make a dollar. I told him I'd pay him, but he said he didn't want to sell it.

BONNIE: How many times do we have to do this? I... Oh, Will! Is Washington going to be any less successful without us?

WILL: We might be able to do something useful in Washington, but that's not why we have to go.

BONNIE: Why do we?

WILL: The Bishop was right; we're wanderers. The people of God are always wanderers, strangers on the earth. He leads and we follow. Obedience. Jacob in the Book of Mormon was a wanderer—not because he liked it. He didn't like it. His heart was in Jerusalem, but he was willing to mourn out his days in a strange land.

BONNIE: I don't want to mourn out my days. It was different when we left Nauvoo. At least our friends went with us.

WILL: We can make new friends in Washington.

BONNIE: Can we? Can we replace the friends we've had? It's not just leaving those whom I love so much. Its leaving my friends who love me. Is there anyone in Washington who will love me, Will?

WILL: I'll be there. I will always love you, Bonnie.

BONNIE: Oh, that's what I need to hear. Do you really love me?

WILL: I love you very much.

BONNIE: Then I'll go.

(They embrace.)

MUSICAL #12 – WAS MISSOURI JUST A DREAM?

BONNIE:

WAS MISSOURI JUST A DREAM?
OH, HOW LONG AGO IT SEEMS,
WHEN YOU AND I WERE STARTING OUT,
DID WE REALLY HAVE A HOME THERE?
WILL OUR HOPES AND DREAMS JUST FADE?
HOW ABOUT THE PLANS WE MADE?
WERE ALL OUR YESTERDAYS JUST DREAMS?
THEY SEEM SO FAR AWAY.

WILL & BONNIE:

THEY ASK US NOW TO LEAVE AGAIN;
THEY TELL US WHAT THEY TOLD US THEN –
GOD WANTS US, WE ARE NEEDED THERE.

WHY CAN'T WE JUST STAY HERE?

DON'T TELL US NOW TO LEAVE AGAIN.

DON'T TELL US WHAT THEY TOLD US THEN-

GOD WANTS US, WE ARE NEEDED THERE.

WHY CAN'T WE JUST STAY HERE?

(Lights out.)

MUSICAL # 13 – DOWN THE AISLE

Scene 5 – *The ANGELS are watching. We are in the yard of the Endowment House. A June wedding. It is raining. A group of people with umbrellas are gathered around JENNY and LUKE who have just gotten married. Conversation is pantomimed. The group divides and LUKE and JENNY walk through, followed by their family and friends. Small groups of people leave the stage walking to the sides. BONNIE and WILL hug. WILL begins to exit SL with FINN and JANE. They are intercepted by two ANGELS who escort WILL the remaining distance off stage. BONNIE is left on stage alone)*

(Lights out)

(End of ACT TWO)

(If desired, the INTERMISSION should be placed here.)

ACT THREE

EIGHT more pages in ACT THREE