

PERUSAL SCRIPT

STRANGERS IN NAUVOO

**Book, Music and Lyrics by
Mark Stoddard**

with additional music by
**M. Ryan Taylor
Kim Stoddard
Eric Stoddard**

FOR READING PURPOSES ONLY!



Newport, Maine

© 2014 by Mark Stoddard
ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

CAUTION:

Professionals and amateurs are hereby warned that

STRANGERS IN NAUVOO

being fully protected under the copyright laws of the United States Of America, the British Empire, including the Dominion Of Canada, and the other countries of the Copyright Union, is subject to royalty. Anyone presenting the play without the express written permission of the Copyright owners and/or their authorized agent will be liable to the penalties provided by law.

A requisite number of script and music copies must be purchased from the Publisher and Royalty must be paid to the publisher for each and every performance before an audience whether or not admission is charged. A performance license must first be obtained from the publisher prior to any performance(s).

Federal Copyright Law -- 17 U.S.C. section 504 -- allows for a recovery of a minimum of \$250 and a maximum of \$50,000 for each infringement, plus attorney fees.

The professional and amateur rights to the performance of this play along with the lecturing, recitation, and public reading rights, are administered exclusively through ZION THEATRICALS without whose permission in writing no performance of it may be made. For all other rights inquiries may be made to the authors through ZION THEATRICALS Any adaptation or arrangement of this work without the author's written permission is an infringement of copyright. **Unauthorized duplication by any means is also an infringement.**

FOR PUBLIC PERFORMANCE RIGHTS YOU MUST APPLY TO THE PUBLISHER OR YOU ARE BREAKING THE LAW!

The possession of this SCRIPT whether bought or rented, does not constitute permission to perform the work herein contained, in public or in private, for gain or charity. Proper prior application must be made and license granted before a performance may be given. Copies of this SCRIPT and all other rehearsal materials may be bought and/or rented from:

ZION THEATRICALS
PO Box 536, Newport, Maine 04953-0536
www.ziontheatricals.com
Printed in the United States Of America

THIS NOTICE MUST APPEAR IN ALL PROGRAMS, ON ALL POSTERS AND PUBLICITY MATERIALS AND INTERNET ADVERTISING/WEBPAGES FOR THE PLAY:

“*NAME OF PLAY* is presented through special arrangement with Zion Theatricals (ZT). All authorized materials are also supplied by ZT, www.ziontheatricals.com”

In all programs and posters and in all advertisements under the producers control, the author’s name shall be prominently featured under the title.

NOTE: Your contract with Zion Theatricals limits you to making copies of this document for persons directly connected with your production. Do not distribute outside of your cast and crew. Following your performance run you must destroy all photocopies, preferably by shredding them. If we sent you the document in printed format, you must return that document to us. If we provided you with an electronic PDF file, simply trash that on your computer so that it cannot be recovered and destroy any copies made from it.. The electronic document may only exist on ONE computer -- it may NOT, itself, be duplicated. This is also a part of your contract with Zion Theatricals.

Cast of Characters 17M 9W 2TB 1TG + dancers and an ensemble of adults and children

Major Roles who speak and sing:

Abigail Swenson	Age 18. Social debutant in New York City in love with JM
JM or Joshua Montgomery	Age 20. A rising star performer in New York City in love with Abigail
Captain Dunn	Age 40. A slave trader in search of the grand children of his runaway slaves
Elijah Abel	Age 40. A runaway slave who was ordained to priesthood and served as a General Authority of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints.
Clara Swenson	Mother of Abigail. A strong willed socialite in New York City
John Swenson	Father of Abigail. A strong willed banker in New York City
Emma Smith	Age 43. Leader in Nauvoo, Il, and devoted wife of Joseph Smith
Joseph Smith	Age 42. A prophet

Supporting Roles with speaking parts:

Thug 1	A large, brutal employee of Capt. Dunn
Thug 2	A strong but smaller employee of Capt. Dunn
Mr. Davis	Brash gentleman at New Orleans hall bidding on slaves
Kim Cornelia Davis	Mr. Davis's star-struck wife
Woman #1 in Dance Hall	Star-struck woman of New Orleans
Woman #2	Star-struck woman of New Orleans
Fairbanks	Great Bellum Circus Master in New Orleans to buy a slave
Heber	Friend and counsellor of Joseph Smith
Mayor Bennett	Strong willed Mayor of Nauvoo
Matthew	Age 14. A youth of Nauvoo and friend to all
Allison	Friend of Emma. Nauvoo citizen none too thrilled to see dangerous strangers
Young Joseph Smith	Age 14. An inquiring and devoted young man.
Sheriff	A sheriff determined to arrest Joseph Smith
Rev. Sol. Stoddard, Rev. Cotton Mather, Rev. Jonathon Edwards	Famous preachers of New England
Brigham Young	Age 35. A convert to the Book of Mormon
Zackary	Age 40. A husband who explains his reasons for becoming religious
Sarah	Age 16. A young woman who explains to her father her religion
Samantha, Ella	Age 30-40. Friends of Emma Smith
Girls 1-3	Age 18. New friends in Nauvoo of Abigail

Supporting Roles who perform in non-Chorus roles:

Ballroom Dancers	Stylish, excellent ballroom dancers in New York City.
Dance hall girls	The enthusiastic dancers in the New Orleans entertainment & slave hall
Disciples of Legion	Disciples of Legion seeking to tempt JM away from his faith.

Children's Parts

Fishermen	Children of Nauvoo fishing off the pier.
Whittlin' Whistlin' Brigade	Youth of Nauvoo who whistle the presence of strangers
Children at the Picnic	Children who attend a picnic with Joseph and Emma.

Chorus members:

Citizens of New Orleans
Citizens of Nauvoo

Historical Notes and Scriptural Foundations

Ephesians 2:19-20

Now therefore ye are no more Strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens of the household of God; and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief cornerstone.

Official Declaration 2

The Book of Mormon teaches that “all are alike unto God,” including “black and white, bond and free, male and female” (2 Nephi 26:33). Throughout the history of the Church, people of every race and ethnicity in many countries have been baptized and have lived as faithful members of the Church. During Joseph Smith’s lifetime, a few black male members of the Church were ordained to the priesthood. Early in its history, Church leaders stopped conferring the priesthood on black males of African descent. Church records offer no clear insights into the origins of this practice. Church leaders believed that a revelation from God was needed to alter this practice and prayerfully sought guidance. The revelation came to Church President Spencer W. Kimball and was affirmed to other Church leaders in the Salt Lake Temple on June 1, 1978. The revelation removed all restrictions with regard to race that once applied to the priesthood.

Historical Notes

To better understand the musical, here are some historical notes that contribute to the story. This is a fictional story with elements and characters of a historical significance.

Fiction main characters in Strangers in Nauvoo

JM -- an energetic performer about to make his starring performance at the Christy Minstrels in New York.

Abigail Swenson -- a New York debutant from a high society family

John and Clara Swenson -- Abigail's strong and demanding parents

Historical Figures in Strangers in Nauvoo

Elijah Abel, a former slave who had been ordained an Elder and member of the First Quorum of Seventy. (More on Elder Abel below.)

Joseph Smith -- Prophet of the Restoration

Emma Smith -- first president of the Relief Society, wife of Joseph Smith

Heber C. Kimball -- close friend of the Smiths and an apostle.

Captain Dunn -- a leader of the Missouri/Carthage mobs that helped to arrest Joseph Smith and execute him.

Brigham Young -- an apostle, devout friend to Joseph and later the 2nd President of the LDS Church

Whittlin' Whistlin' Brigade -- see description below

Mayor Bennett -- mayor of Nauvoo

Friends of Emma -- she had many.

Cotton Mather, Solomon Stoddard and Jonathan Edwards -- all fiery and famous New England preachers

The Christy Minstrels were the hottest show in New York City in 1843. To be the lead singer was the same equivalent to being Brad Pitt in Hollywood today.

Marauders Thugs were employed from the slave states to go into the free states to bring back runaway slaves as well as their children and grandchildren, many of which had been born in the free states. The Dredd-Scott Decision by the Supreme Court held that African Americans, whether slave or free, could not be American citizens and therefore had no standing to sue in federal court. It gave marauders legal standing, but they still captured their prey in clandestine actions.

Slavery and Offensive Language In writing a story set during this time period the author has attempted to bring enough authentic language into the dialog to accurately portray some of the appalling ways people have treated each other, particularly the way slaves were treated. But, it is hoped we used enough language to capture the intensity of the hatred

without using language that is offensive to the ears and hearts of people in the 21st century. Indeed, the language we use would have been part of the normal lexicon of the 1840's. Of particular note: slaves and free black people were called Negroes in those days just as whites were called Caucasians. No offense was meant. However, when the southern dialect said the word "Negro" it came out "Nigra" or "Nee-graw" and carried a neutral meaning. The degrading use of other variations such as the contemptuous "N-word" are studiously avoided in the play. The offensive word would serve no other purpose than shock value.

The Slave Trade was roaring in the 1840s. Joseph Smith ran for the US presidency with a platform to abolish slavery. Joseph Smith was much beloved by converts from African descent like Jane Manning and Elijah Abel. Nauvoo had a significant African descent population at the time of the Prophet's death. Much of the hatred of Mormons in Missouri came from their opposition to slavery. New Orleans was famous for its slave markets as portrayed in Act One. Slaves were not considered people but chattel or property. The slave trade era is a tragic and sad reality of America's past. Fortunately the Abolitionists prevailed and Abraham Lincoln officially ended the practice in the U.S.A.

1/8 Rule. Those who had at least one grandparent who was a black slave were still considered "Nigra" and therefore still slaves, regardless of their features or skin color.

Elijah Abel was one of the first Africans ordained to the Melchizedek Priesthood, authorized by Joseph Smith. He was born in slavery on July 25, 1808 in Maryland. As a young adult he escaped from slavery to the northern free states. After converting to Mormonism he eventually was the first **black Elder** and **Seventy** in the LDS faith. He served a mission in New York City in 1843, during the time our fictitious family, the Swensons were there and in the story he is recognized as the Elder who converted them.

Elder Abel remained faithful to Joseph Smith and the Church after the prophet's martyrdom. He went west with the pioneers and managed a hotel in Salt Lake City. He remained a Seventy and served his final mission in 1884 during which time he became ill. Upon his return to Salt Lake City he died December 25, 1884. He is buried in SLC Cemetery.

New Orleans A popular destination for wealthier converts to the LDS faith from New York and many other US cities and Europe as it afforded a more comfortable ship's passage to the bustling New Orleans docks where they could easily connect with a riverboat up the Mississippi River to Nauvoo, Illinois. The author's great, great grandfather emigrated from Liverpool to New Orleans and took the riverboat to Nauvoo in 1847.

Nauvoo Dock When riverboats were scheduled to arrive, many inhabitants of Nauvoo greeted not only friends and family, but the Strangers as well. One of the frequent citizens to come welcome immigrants was the prophet Joseph Smith. He is noted to often just welcome people, never putting on airs so much that he'd neglect to introduce himself. He felt like one of the group and saw no need to impress or flaunt his position. Strangers often left the dock with a friend or family member asking them if they knew that the person who just welcomed them was the Prophet. They were shocked and pleased.

Whittlin' Whistlin' Brigade Young boys in Nauvoo were organized to keep an eye on strangers. When they detected possible trouble from a stranger they'd whittle to be inconspicuous and whistle a tune to tell the other boys to pass the message that a stranger is coming. Many of the boys were mischievous while being helpful -- no surprise there.

A Poor Wayfaring Man of Grief When in Carthage Jail, John Taylor who later became the 3rd President of the LDS Church, sang this song. Originally James Montgomery wrote the words as a poem in 1826 in England. A few years later a New York preacher, George Coles set the poem to music. John Taylor heard the song while on a mission to England and included it in his Manchester Hymnal in 1840. After the death of Joseph and Hyrum, John Taylor decided the music too plain and asked Ebenezer Beesley to write a new tune which he did. That is the tune that is in the current LDS hymnal and that is the version sung in Strangers in Nauvoo.

Biographies

Mark Stoddard's first taste of theater came in a co-starring role at the Rudolph Steiner Theatre in London's West End. He's quick to point out it wasn't much of a production, but it gave him a feel for theater life and wished to studiously avoid it. But, like the name of the production, Not to Be, Stoddard's end of theater magic was premature. He went to Brigham Young University for a BA in English and History, and Master's work in English and Theater Arts. He wrote a one-act comedy, "An English Toffee in American Molars" which was selected for production at the BYU Mormon Festival of Arts.

But he left a potential university teaching career and become a General Contractor in California with his father and brothers. During this time he was asked by Michael Girlikhes, creator of Disney on Parade and the Polynesian Cultural Center production, to be his stage manager of the 10 stages of the Los Angeles Street Scene Festival.

Mark went on to a career in business and marketing. He's written 17 books on starting businesses, marketing and advertising. One book was translated into Russian and Mark was invited by the deputy minister of Higher Education to come to the USSR to teach Soviet government groups the fundamentals of the free market. Mark was the first foreigner to address the Supreme Soviet of Ukraine and BeloRusse, and consulted with Pres. Boris Yeltsin's cabinet.

As a life-long member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, he has served in numerous bishoprics, high councils, Sunday Schools, Primaries and as a full-time missionary in Australia.

He is currently a managing partner in a technology commercialization firm when he's not writing more plays, music and books.

M Ryan Taylor

has written operas, dozens of choral works, art songs, song cycles, pop songs, children's songs, hymns (are you noticing a trend toward vocal music?) as well as other works of chamber music . . .he's also a hiker, recipe hacker, a multi-media artist, a choral conductor, a performing baritone, an ukulele/tuba/piano/pennywhistle and once-upon-a-time bassoon player, a son, a friend, a husband, a father, a sci-fi and Tolkien fan, a poet, a book-lover, a hymn-arranger, a gardener, a church organist, a some-time animator, a party-thrower, a concert-producer, a web-builder, a collector of music toys and oddities. These are some of the things that inform and shape his music.

Strangers In Nauvoo A musical by Mark J. Stoddard with additional music from M. Ryan Taylor, Eric Stoddard and Kim Stoddard. 17M 9W 2TB 1TG + ensemble of adults and children. (*For production by LDS Wards, Stakes and Community theatres.*) This original musical follows the challenges of a young New York City singer and his bride-to-be as they journey from the glamor of New York City to a slave-market in New Orleans where the young man is about to be sold as a slave. A daring escape aided by Elder Elijah Abel lets them travel to the bustling new city of Nauvoo. In the process they discover what really matters as they confront Joseph Smith and learn of the Restored Gospel from several surprising sources during the last week of the life of Joseph Smith; June 23-27, 1844. **Order # 2066**

SYNOPSIS OF SCENES AND MUSICAL NUMBERS

PRESHOW MUSIC

#1 -- OVERTURE

ACT ONE

Scene One -- A Ballroom, New York City, early 1840s

#2 -- SUPERIOR -- Abigail and JM

Scene Two -- A Ballroom, New York City

#2a -- SUPERIOR (Reprise) -- JM

#3 -- ABIGAIL'S LAMENT -- Abigail

#3a -- Pizzaz Man underscore

Scene Three -- New Orleans Dance Hall

#4 -- PIZZAZ MAN -- JM & GIRLS

Scene Four -- New Orleans Dance Hall

Scene Five -- New Orleans Dance Hall

#5 DEEP DOWN BELOW -- JM & Abigail

Scene Six -- New Orleans Dance Hall

#6 -- MASTER'S CHAIN -- JM & Elijah

Scene Seven -- New Orleans Dance Hall

#7 -- WANNA SING LIKE YOU -- Elijah

#8 -- IS THERE LIGHT IN DISTANT SHADOWS -- JM

Scene Eight -- New Orleans Dance Hall

#9 -- YES, THERE'S LIGHT -- Elijah

INTERMISSION

#10 -- Entreacte --

#10a -- Underscore

ACT TWO

Scene One -- The Grand Pier of Nauvoo, Illinois, 1844

#11 -- WHERE IS HE? -- Emma, Allison, Heber

#12 -- NAUVOO! -- Mayor and Company

Scene Two -- The Grand Pier of Nauvoo, Illinois

#13 -- IF HE LIVES, HE'LL INFLAME -- Dunn

Scene Three -- A Street near the pier

#14 -- WHITTLIN' WHISTLIN' BRIGADE -- Boys and Girls

Scene Five -- A street near the pier

#15a -- Which One Is True Underscore

Scene Six -- Palmyra, New York -- 1820

#15b -- WHICH ONE IS TRUE -- Young Joseph

Scene Seven -- A street near the pier, 1844

Scene Eight -- Harmony, Pennsylvania, 1830

#16 -- HEAVENLY FATHER LOVES YOU -- Children

Scene Nine -- A street near the pier, 1844

Scene Ten -- A street near the pier, 1844

Scene Eleven -- A street near the pier, 1844

#17 -- Though Deepening Trials Underscore

Scene Twelve -- A street near the pier, 1844

#18 -- MISSISSIPPI SWIRL -- Joseph

#18a -- MISSISSIPPI SWIRL -- JM & Abigail

Scene Thirteen -- A street near the pier, 1844

#19 -- CALM AS A SUMMER'S MORNING -- Joseph and Company

Scene Fourteen -- A street near the pier, 1844

#20 -- MIREN IN THE MUD -- Chorus

Scene Fifteen -- A street near the pier, 1844

#21 -- EMMA'S SONG -- Emma

#22 -- A Poor Wayfaring Man of Grief Scene Change

Scene Sixteen -- A street near the pier, 1844

#23 -- Though Deepening Trials Underscore

Scene Seventeen -- A street near the pier, 1844

#24 -- A POOR WAYFARING MAN OF GRIEF -- Joseph

#25 -- ETERNAL JOY -- Elijah & Company

Strangers in Nauvoo

by
Mark J. Stoddard

ACT I

PRESHOW MUSIC (If desired: Mississippi Swirl, Superior, Emma's Song (total of 9 minutes that begin 15 minutes before the play opens).

Welcome from Master of Ceremonies.

MUSICAL #1 -- OVERTURE (Calm As a Summer's Morning (last 2 verses) and Abigail's Waltz beginning with measure 38 to the end and repeated).

Scene 1 -- *The lights come up bright with a grand playing of Abigail's Waltz. At least 10 couples in the finest gowns and formal attire of the 1840's New York City style are dancing. They fill the stage and the aisles. ABIGAIL Swenson is center stage, dancing with a young man. JM taps the young man on the shoulder and takes over dancing with Abigail. Another gentleman taps JM to break in. ABIGAIL is pleased. JM is not. He dances with another young woman so as to be near ABIGAIL.*

JM: Keeping up with you is exhausting.

ABIGAIL: Oh... I leave you breathless?

(The dance continues. JM lets a man cut in on his partner and he immediately goes to cut in on Abigail's partner who dodges, twirls and avoids. JM is relentless and boxes the couple in, bows and takes Abigail's hand. The other man objects but JM stares him down and sends him away.)

JM: I thought he'd never leave.

ABIGAIL: He did ask me first.

JM: And I asked you last. Now, won't you come with me to get some fresh air, away from these stuffed shirts.

ABIGAIL: I thought I left you breathless.

(The other dancers slowly go off stage providing an illusion that JM is going outside the dance palace. Some other couples are loitering on the garden as well.)

JM: *(walking with her to a balcony)* And not just from your grace as a dancer. Your eyes race my soul.

ABIGAIL: The silver tongue. Does such flattery work on Patricia and Clementine?

JM: My conscience is clear, and that means...

ABIGAIL: You have a bad memory.

JM: No. Everything I say is real. From the first time I saw you six months ago I've been in loftier spheres, places I've never known.

ABIGAIL: So why did you take me away from the dance? So many gentlemen had already asked me for the next dance that my dance card is full. They're wondering where I am.

JM: Let them wait. But I must have your answer. Will you be my...

(Abigail gives rapt attention)

... be my... honored guest for my opening night at the Christy Minstrel show?

ABIGAIL: (*exasperated*) That's your big question?

JM: Did you ask your father if that's permissible for a daughter of such notoriety?

ABIGAIL: He approved provided he and mother chaperone. It's only proper.

JM: It would be a great honor

(Music Begins.)

I LOOK IN YOUR EYES...

(Music ends)

ABIGAIL: My parents hold themselves to be quite sophisticated. Maybe they won't like the music or you?

JM: Not love me? Of course they will. And my mother will be there too. You'll finally get to meet her.

MUSICAL #2 SUPERIOR

I LOOK IN YOUR EYES AND I WARMLY SEE, MY FUTURE, MY....

(Music ends)

ABIGAIL: But your mother is in Boston.

JM: (*now he's exasperated*) She's here already. She won't miss my opening night. She so wants to meet you.

I've told her all about you.

ABIGAIL: What have you told her?

JM: That you are famous for interrupting me when I'm trying to tell you how much I love you.

ABIGAIL: Oh that's what you're trying to say.

JM: Yes, if you'd let me finish!

ABIGAIL: Waiting for you is exhausting. So. What, pray tell, are you trying to tell me... or... ask me?

JM: Only that the stars and moon are out tonight and they are jealous that I have someone so superior with me.

ABIGAIL: Flattery again. Please continue.

JM: You are superior to all stars combined. We belong together. Forever.

ABIGAIL: I thought you'd never ask.

(Music Begins.)

JM:

I LOOK IN YOUR EYES AND I WARMLY SEE

MY FUTURE, MY LIFE, AND MY DESTINY.

BECAUSE...

(She starts to interrupt)

Wait...

(Puts his finger gently to her mouth as Music Continues)

just a second...

YOU REALLY ARE SUPERIOR, IN EVERY SINGLE WAY

THEY CAN'T COMPARE, AND WILL NOT DARE, AND FAR BEHIND THEY'LL STAY.

YOU REALLY ARE SUPERIOR, YOU CAME TO IT BY BIRTH

UNCULTURED ARE INFERIOR, NOT MERELY IN NET WORTH

ABIGAIL:

YOU REALLY ARE THE PERSON THAT MEN WISH THAT THEY COULD BE
FOR NONE CAN MATCH YOUR STYLE, THEY'RE IN DENIAL, YES!

(She tears up her dance card)

TOGETHER: *(addressing the other couples who are offended)*

WE REALLY ARE THE PEOPLE THAT THEY WISH THAT THEY COULD BE.
THEY'LL CLIMB A TREE, THEY'LL SKIN THEIR KNEE, YOU'RE ALL THAT I CAN SEE!
THE WORLD WILL FINALLY SEE THE TRUTH
ABOUT OUR STAR FILLED MISSION
NO OTHERS CAN COMPARE WITH OUR LUMINOUS AMBITION.
THEY'LL CRY, OR BE DISMAYED,
THIS IS OUR GLORY-AW-SHIOUS DAY

(They soft shoe dance for two measures)

WHEN THE LEARN THAT THEY'RE STUCK IN LAST PLACE,
AND COULD NEVER COMPETE IN YOUR RACE.
BECAUSE...

JM:

YOU REALLY ARE SUPERIOR, FIRST PLACE IN EVERY WAY

ABIGAIL:

YOU REALLY ARE SUPERIOR, A PEACOCK ON DISPLAY

TOGETHER:

YOU REALLY ARE SUPERIOR, IT'S CLEAR FROM MILES AND MILES
SO CLEAR THE AISLE, GIVE US A SMILE, PLEASE DON'T REVILE –
AND LOVE US FOR OUR STYLE. SUPERIOR!!

JM: We are the masters of New York City and 1843 is our year of years. All the world's our stage. Now, come, let us take a carriage ride around Central Park because...

ABIGAIL: Shouldn't you at least meet my parents? Uh oh. Did I just interrupt you again?

JM: I didn't notice. Just pardon my manners for not insisting on meeting your parents.

ABIGAIL: When do I get to meet your mother? Should we go see her tonight?

JM: She was coming here tonight to meet you. It's curious. I expected her by now. She wanted to meet you.

ABIGAIL: Wait here while I get my parents and then they can meet each other. No doubt father is negotiating a deal with someone. Making money is his heart's desire...but he'll come when I ask. I see mother is with him, so wait right here.

JM: Right here? This spot? Or this one? Do I dare stray?

ABIGAIL: *(Playing with him.)* Don't you dare. Right here. Not there. Here. Here. Now stay.

JM: Yes master. I am your slave and I shall wag my tail until we meet again.

ABIGAIL: Incurable.

(Exits)

Scene 2 -- same location

JM: That girl makes me forget myself.

(He walks over to a bench and takes off his long jacket to cool off. He sings the ending of Superior and does soft shoe-style dancing)

MUSICAL #2a -- SUPERIOR (REPRISE)

SHE REALLY IS SUPERIOR, I FINALLY GOT MY CHANCE,
SHE REALLY IS SUPERIOR, HER MIND, HER WIT AND GLANCE
SHE REALLY IS SUPERIOR FIRST CLASS IN EVERY WAY
GIVE HER THE DAY, SHE'LL GUIDE MY WAY AND BY HER I'LL STAY...

(Before JM can finish singing, some thugs gag him with DUNN's dark handkerchief, repeatedly hit him, and tie ropes around him. ELIJAH ABEL is walking up to the hall when he sees the commotion and retreats into the shadows to wait for a chance to help.)

DUNN: *(Holding a black hood meant for JM.)* Yes, he's the one, boys. Oh yes, Mr. Joshua. Been tracking you from Maryland to Boston to Manhattan for months. You think your white skin hides the fact you are nothin' but another runaway slave. Well, tonight your mammy concealed your whereabouts till we squeezed her tight. Pride kept getting' in her way till she bragged on how we couldn't take you, cuz you was becoming big theater star. Them's her last words.

THUG 1: Didn't mean to squeeze her so tight.

DUNN: Ah, don't matter. Couldn't be helped. But, ma or no ma, star or no star, you're my property! You uppity trash. You'll soon learn your place when we take you back to the plantation.

ELIJAH: *(stepping forward, dressed smartly as a missionary)* Perhaps I'm the one you're looking for? Why don't you let that boy go?

(ELIJAH is attacked and nearly repels them, but DUNN swings a club and knocks ELIJAH to the ground with a glancing blow to the head that draws blood. He wipes his head with his handkerchief and it comes back bloodied.)

DUNN: Mind your manners, boy, or you will be next. As we say down home in N'Orleans, 'Votre place est avec les cochons.'

THUG 1: What? You start talkin' Cajun and you lose me.

DUNN: You can't hear plain English. Alons-y... get moving!

THUG 1: Let's take him too. Should get some dollars for him.

DUNN: No. Too many blacks up here have free papers. This boy will bring a great reward down south. Now get him out of here.

(Bends down to ELIJAH)

Course I could always sell you along the way for beaucoup l'argent. You best keep to your place. One word

and we'll come back for you.

(They exit. ABIGAIL and parents JOHN and CLARA enter. ELIJAH is on the ground and pulls himself into the shadow.)

ABIGAIL: Yes, Father, he asked specifically for you. My beau is needing you now and bankers can wait.

CLARA: Behave yourself John Swenson. If Abigail says meeting her beau is important, it's important.

JOHN: One of you I can stand firm against, but the two of you together, impossible. So, where is this beau who is so important?

ABIGAIL: *(looking everywhere and calling out JM's name)* JM? Joshua Montgomery? He must be nearby.

JOHN: Not very impressive. About what I'd expect from an actor.

CLARA: Mind your manners, John, I'm sure he's near.

(To ABIGAIL rather gruffly.)

He is near isn't he, dear?

ABIGAIL: He wouldn't leave Mother. Father, something is wrong. He would NOT just leave. He loves me Father. He does. Oh father...

(Begins to cry)

JOHN: *(he melts)* Oh my dear Abigail. It will be alright. Let's just give him a moment, shall we? He might be looking for us back in the dance. Shall we go look for him?

ELIJAH: *(He speaks articulately although sometimes he slips into the lexicon in which he was raised, usually just for the effect.)* Maybe I can help. There was a young fellow all dressed up fine and dandy...could he be the gentleman you are looking for?

JOHN: What business is that of yours?

ELIJAH: None of mine for now, but some dangerous fellows did take him away all hooded and tied.

ABIGAIL: He's been kidnapped. Father you must get the police.

JOHN: I'll send for them right now. This cannot happen, even to an actor.

(Begins to exit.)

CLARA: Wait, John.

(To ABIGAIL.)

I'm so sorry, dear. We'll do all we can. And thank you good...sir...

ELIJAH: Elijah Abel at your service. I am well acquainted with the police and perhaps I can help.

JOHN: That's nice but I know the chief of police.

(JOHN exits)

CLARA: Give him my regards.

(Back to ELIJAH)

Oh thank you. My but you are so well spoken. Do you work for this dance palace?

ELIJAH: No, no, no.

CLARA: Then why are you here?

ELIJAH: I am but a humble servant of the Lord Jesus Christ sent by His prophet. I was headed home when I felt I needed to be here. Felt it strong. I am at your service.

CLARA: *(Indifferently)* A prophet you say? How nice. Well, perhaps later we may assist you. But now, let us be swift to JM's aide.

ELIJAH: Perhaps after I describe to the police what I saw I may call at your home to assist further and share a message of hope and salvation with you?

CLARA: Yes, of course. Hope is what we lack and salvation is what that boy needs right now. It will be our honor to welcome you into our home. Such kindness.

ELIJAH: It is my honor to serve you.

(turns to ABIGAIL)

Mademoiselle... be strong and may the Lord be with you. Adieu.

(CLARA exits the hall and ELIJAH exits to the city.)

MUSICAL #3 -- ABIGAIL'S LAMENT

ABIGAIL: Oh JM... In a dream, we were stars, how we danced.

WE TWIRLED IN A DREAM SO SUBLIME, IN OUR TIME.

IT WAS GRAND AT THE BALL, WE WERE STARS EVER MORE.

WE WERE STARS EVER MORE, THEN THE MUSIC DIED.

WE WERE FOREVER, SUCH STARS,

DANCING BY MOON LIGHT, NOW HE'S GONE, HE'S GONE.

WE WERE STARS, OF OUR SKY.

THE MUSIC'S DIED.

(She stops feeling sorry for herself and pulls herself together with the grit and determination that is her character.)

OH WHERE CAN YOU BE, OH WHAT TYRANNY,

COULD TEAR YOU FAR AWAY,

THAT IT CANNOT BE, THAT IT MUST NOT BE,

WE WILL NOT SUCCUMB TO MISERY.

THIS I SWEAR TO BLACKENED SKIES.

(She now shakes her fist at fate with a triumphant finale.)

THOUGH FATE MAY TRY, I WILL NOT LET YOU DIE,

FROM MY HEART I WILL TRIUMPH O'ER TRAGEDY.

FOR VICTORY IS OUR DESTINY, VICTORY IS OUR DESTINY,

VICTORY! IT'S OUR DESTINY, OUR DESTINY!

BLACKOUT

MUSICAL #3a -- PIZZAZZ MAN UNDERSCORE

Scene 3 – *New Orleans --The curtain opens showing a lively entertainment hall of New Orleans. An audience is gathering. The dance hall GIRLS are walking down the aisles handing out fliers announcing the Slave*

Auction and Entertainment to the real audience and asking them if they brought cash to buy their slaves and shouting out to DUNN that they found a bidder. DUNN is quick to be glad-handing the wealthy in the audience. It is a raucous atmosphere. On the side of the hall is ABIGAIL with her parents, JOHN and CLARA Swenson. To one side of the stage is a Bourbon Street-type setting. On the opposite side is an ominous looking area where a slave auction is to be held with posts for chaining slaves.

DUNN: Ladies and gentlemen. Mesdames and Messieurs. Stop the music!

(The music keeps playing so he goes over to the orchestra.)

I said stop your playin' or I'll sell you all as slaves.

(They suddenly stop.)

Ladies and gentlemen. Your attention please!

(Audience becomes quiet.)

Welcome to New Orleans's finest musical extravaganza on this beautiful June day in this the year of our Lord One thousand eight hundred and 44. You'll soon experience spectacular dance, marvelous singing, unbelievable juggling and acrobatics.

(He continues speaking with great gestures.)

ABIGAIL: *(An aside)* Father this is NOT the French Quarter.

JOHN: Perhaps I took a left when it should have been a right.

DUNN: To conclude today's matinee we have a special treat, an entertainer, nay, the very pinnacle of entertainers who sings, dances and juggles your heart.

ABIGAIL: *(holding a handbill)* This says this is just the preliminary entertainment to... a slave auction. We must leave immediately. I'm not happy with either of you. Ever since you and Mother became Mormons you've not been yourselves. This humility and meekness from you is... new.

JOHN: For the better, I hope. Elijah gave us peace to our souls and softened my heart.

CLARA: And mine too. If it is too much for you, dear, we'll make it to Nauvoo on our own and you can go back to New York. But we do love having you escort us.

ABIGAIL: Of course, mother. Father, forgive my insolence. But we'd better leave this cesspool. I feel evil all around.

JOHN: Yes. Come, Clara. I'll hail a jitney immediately. My apologies to the both of you for bringing you here.

DUNN: At the conclusion of our show you can bid to own this marvel of the theater whose act stunned and delighted the crowds of the world famous Christy Minstrels!

(JM is brought on stage.)

ABIGAIL: Father! That is JM.

JOHN: You must be mistaken.

ABIGAIL: No, Father. That is JM. They are about to auction him as a slave!

CLARA: But he's not a Negro. He can't be sold as a slave!

DUNN: Cast your eyes upon this. Though his skin be light, his heart is dark. I present to you the White Darkie singing his own musical invention.

MUSICAL #4 -- PIZAZZ MAN

JM:
I WAS BORN TO A BEAT AND A TUNE THAT WAS SWEET
WITH MY MOMMA SINGIN' SO SAD.
THEY TOOK ONE LOOK AT ME AND THEY COULD NOT DISAGREE
WHEN SHE WAILED, HE'S GOT PI-ZAZZ!
(JM is joined by the four show girls.)

GIRLS:
HE'S GOT PI-ZAZZ MAN, PI-ZAZZ RIGHT IN HIS SOUL,
HE'S GOT PI-ZAZZ, MAN...

JM:
AND THE MUSIC JUST SEEMS TO ROLL.
FROM INSIDE MY HEART THE GOOD MUSIC STARTS,
LOVE IT KEEPS ON ROLLIN' ALONG.
I CAN'T MISS A BEAT CUZ GOT PI-ZAZZ IN MY FEET, AND IT'S TATTOOED TO MY SOUL.

GIRLS:
HE'S GOT PI-ZAZZ MAN, PI-ZAZZ RIGHT IN HIS SOUL,
HE'S GOT PI-ZAZZ, MAN... THE MUSIC JUST SEEMS TO ROLL.

GIRLS: (singing behind the conversations that follow)
AND IF YOU DON'T LIKE PI-ZAZZ, PI-ZAZZ, PI-ZAZZ,
IF YOU DON'T DIG PI-ZAZZ, PI-ZAZZ, PI-ZAZZ,
WELL YOU FEEL THE SAD WITH ME,
YEAH YOU MIGHT FEEL THE SAD WITH ME.
SAD, SAD, SAD, SAD, DO, DO, DO, DO,
YEAH YOU MIGHT SING THE SAD WITH ME.
(As the GIRLS dance, JM starts to play with the crowd. He see ABIGAIL, is shocked but stays in character.)

MR. DAVIS: Pi-zazz??? Never heard of such a thing. What nonsense.

KIM CORNELIA: But it is rather...fun. And such a beautiful young man.

MR. DAVIS: Put your tongue back in your mouth, Cornelia. It's unbecoming.

ABIGAIL: JM. We feared you were dead.

JM: Don't say a word. For your sake and mine.
CAUSE I'M PI-ZAZZ MAN, AM I MAKIN' MY SONG SOUND CLEAR?
I AM PI-ZAZZ MAN, COULDN'T BE MUCH MORE SINCERE
FROM INSIDE MY HEART, THE GOOD MUSIC STARTS
AND IT KEEPS ON ROLLIN' ALONG.
I CAN'T MISS A BEAT, GOT PI-ZAZZ IN MY FEET, AND IT'S TATTOOED TO MY SOUL.
(Gets some of the audience to join in)
AND I'VE GOT PI-ZAZZ, PI-ZAZZ, PI-ZAZZ MAN... GET PI-ZAZZED!

(Applause and adulation from the ladies.)

OLDER MAN: What was that young man? Never heard of this calamitous commotion.

YOUNG WOMAN #1: Nor I. I say young man, what kind of music was that?

WOMAN #2: Yes, it was so loud and raucous. But, I kind of liked it.

JM: Something very ahead of my time. Give it time to grow on you. Your kids may just love it.

DUNN: *(tells his thugs to take him away)* Tell it to your next owner. Now get him outta here.

Scene 4

ABIGAIL: Father, we must do something, and do it now!

JOHN: Yes. First, I'll hail that jitney. I won't have you or your mother stay through this travesty. And I'll care for JM.

(DUNN crosses in front of them enroute to the auction, leading some of the audience.)

DUNN: Avec plaisir, Monsieurs. L'argent achète votre privilege. Attention: the auction for Mandingos and house-help now begins. Our special today -- one amazing talent. Jason,

(Off stage)

stand them up and let these good people see the goods they be buyin'. Premier l'argent!

JOHN: Monsieur. Monsieur! Monsieur!! I am John Swenson, Esquire, of New York City. A tragic mistake is about to happen.

DUNN: No mistakes. 'sides, in N'Orleans we send our mistakes to Congress. Does this look like Congress?

ABIGAIL and CLARA: But he...

JOHN: *(holding his hand up requesting their silence)* May I humbly say, that entertainer, good sir, is a New York gentleman, not a slave. He attended the New York City Grand Ball with my daughter. His name is Joshua Montgomery. The brightest act of the Christy Minstrels. A rising star of New York City!

DUNN: I know his stars. My Pa owned his granmammy for she stealed off and runaway. Chased her to New York. She tried throwin' me off the scent by marryin' a white boy, but ah got her back but had to hunt his mammy to Boston and then New York, but they's both dead -- couldn't be helped. But I've got his papers - all proper and legal. He's my property.

JOHN: It cannot be. He's white!

DUNN: To your eyes he may be cream in the coffee, but one drop of coffee makes him a niggra. Law says one eighth niggra makes him my property. Now step back. All is well folks, step this way and show me your money. Seulement liquide monnaie!!

(Exits to the auction pit taking JM with him.)

JOHN: I shall lodge a suit of redress, you Cajun scoundrel.

(He turns to ABIGAIL.)

Forgive my caustic demeanor. I haven't quite repented of my less-than-humble worldly ways. But,

(shaking his cane)

he makes me furious!

(JOHN starts to go back to CLARA but stops, looks at the playbill in his hand, pulls out his steamboat ticket and thinks. He gets an idea and then starts to walk back quickly to CLARA and ABIGAIL. From off stage we hear the auction proceeding with boisterous bidding.)

DUNN: Going once, going twice, sold to the Great Bellum Circus Master. Yes sir-ee and s'il vous plait, Mr. Fairbanks. You have a talented entertainer!

ABIGAIL / CLARA: *(very agitated)* Oh father/John, whatever, heaven forbid...

JOHN: Don't fret. I'll hurry and deal with this scoundrel auctioneer.

(To Abigail while holding his steamboat ticket.)

Take your mother back to the hotel. Finish packing. The stevedores will be coming for our trunks early tomorrow for our steamer to Nauvoo. And... there's someone who will meet you in our room that I've not told you about. He'll know what to do.

(He proudly proclaims)

I have a plan! Now go. I'll join you soon. This cannot, this will not, this must not happen.

(He exits to the auction.)

CLARA: Your father may be repentant but he's still my Jousting John. Still up for a fight. He'll solve this.

(Clara starts to leave. JM is brought in chains and tied to a post where he sits.)

ABIGAIL: Mother. Please take the jitney back to the hotel. I need to speak to JM.

CLARA: *(hesitantly after pausing)* Abbi, be careful. Promise you'll be back before dark.

ABIGAIL: I promise. This is something I must do.

(Clara exits and ABIGAIL crosses over)

Scene 5

ABIGAIL: JM... I can't believe I'd found you again.

(JM says nothing. She reaches for his arm but he angrily rejects her and tries to move away.)

Let me help you.

JM: *(very angry and trying to get away from her)* Leave. They'll beat me for talking to a white girl.

ABIGAIL: You said words to my heart I'll never forget. And then you disappeared. Have you forgotten?

JM: Of course I remember what I said, and how you looked and spoke... but...go. My new master comes. They catch you with me and they'll whip me near death.

ABIGAIL: You are a free man. They can't whip you!

JM: Abbi, Abbi. In the past year I've been nearly whipped and beaten to death daily. My last night of freedom was with you. When you left they jumped me, hog-tied me, threw me on a ship. Master Dunn has had me singing and dancing for his shows when he doesn't have me digging sewers.

ABIGAIL: But, you aren't a Negro.

JM: My grandmamma was...she escaped. Followed the drinking gourd north.

ABIGAIL: The drinking gourd?

JM: A star constellation used by runaway slaves headed north. Grandma made it to Boston where she married Grandpapa Philips. She died when momma was born. Grandpapa never told me about her being a slave. Never told Papa or Mama either. Dunn killed momma, Abigail. He beat and squeezed her until she told them I was with the Christie Minstrels. She died the night they came and got me. He killed her! Now leave.

ABIGAIL: I'm so grieved for your mother. It hurts, but, father's gone for help. Your future...

JM: I have no future. I'm a slave.

ABIGAIL: I can help.

JM: You're white. You're dead to me like the rest of your race. Go. You're a vision in a nightmare.

MUSICAL #5 DEEP DOWN BELOW

(ABIGAIL joins in but he rebuffs her and pushes her away. She reluctantly leaves and JM sings the rest of the song.)

JM: *(singing quietly at first)*

DEEP DOWN BELOW, SOON MY FUTURES ALL FLOW
AS THE CURRENTS OF FATE, SEAL MY HEART IN THEIR HATE.
BY LOOKING MY WAY, YOU CAN'T KEEP HELL AT BAY!
TAKE YOUR FLIGHT NOW FROM HERE, OR THE PRICE WILL BE DEAR
AS "MASSA'S" WHIP TEARS ME APART.

ABIGAIL:

NO MISSISSIPPI DANCE CAN KEEP YOU DOWN
OUR LIVES ARE PLANTED ON THE SHORE,
I'M NOT THAT FOOLISH GIRL, I KNOW THE WEB LIFE TWIRLS.
NO DIVIDE, OUR LOVE WILL STAY ALIVE.

(He pushes her away, several times, more angry each time.)

I'LL FIND A WAY. YOU WILL BE FREE. YOU WILL BE FREE. YOU WILL!

JM: Leave now!

(She reluctantly leaves in tears. He sings.)

DANCE FOR ME BOY, YOU'RE NOW MINE AND MY TOY,
NOW GO STAND ON YOUR HEAD,
BRING MY DRINK,

(Shouted)

Not that one, Never think,

(DUNN has come behind him and has listened.)

THE MISSISSIPPI DANCE GIVES NO CHOICE AND NO CHANCE;
CURRENTS DRAG ME FROM SHORE, BE A SLAVE EVER MORE
I CANNOT CROSS THIS GREAT DIVIDE, NOT WHILE I'M ALIVE!

Scene 6 -- same location

DUNN: A pity boy.

JM: You offer me pity?

DUNN: None for you. But for the fool that's just bought you. You sing a good song, but what a wretched soul you'd be... if you had a soul.

JM: You've beaten it out of me... Massa!

DUNN: Don't call me Massa and no more uppity talk. You ooze contempt. Now stifle it and sit here while your new Master gets his money.

(He locks up JM. Colonel FAIRBANKS walks into the hall.)

FAIRBANKS: I'll be right back with... what did you call it, l'argent? And thank you Mr. Dunn for your recommendation. Now, JM, don't you go runni' off boy, ya'hear? There's a great future on my steamboat. Folks will pay me good money to hear you sing. So rest up. Yes siree you are goin' ta make me some l'argent.

(FAIRBANKS laughs contemptuously.)

DUNN: Get your cash. I'll draw up property transfer papers and this young entertainer will be yours to enjoy.

FAIRBANKS: My you are light. You could pass as a real person.

(FAIRBANKS exits.)

DUNN: *(aside to JM)* Eyes down, boy. Don't look at him with contempt. You're just living the life meant for you. Your mamma was so proud you were a star, and now you're a star again. Kinda funny. Got nothin' to say? Just fine. You rest up cuz you'll be journeyin'. To keep you from runnin' like your granmammy you'll be in chains, and in chains you belong.

(All exit except JM. He is joined by ELIJAH Abel who sits close by and puts some chains around him to appear like he's locked up too. ELIJAH plays with JM and lightens the mood, mirroring his every movement. Back and forth they go.)

JM: Where'd you come from?

ELIJAH: They think I'm senile and a less than malevolent beggar.

JM: Malevolent?? They beat those kind of words out of slaves.

ELIJAH: They tried. But my new Master appreciates my heart over my speech. But I'd best be shufflin' inta ma slave speech. Shhhh don't tell 'em.

JM: Who are you?

ELIJAH: Just think a' me as an angel.

JM: Don't be absurd. Leave me alone.

ELIJAH: Not thy will, child. Be still and know the preacher.

JM: Chains I know, and neither of us are going free. We're all black to the preachers down here for they preach we were born to be a slave and remain one.

ELIJAH: Ahh, you are a slave indeed, but to more than chains I fear. I am a free man, good sir, wishing you only the happiness of God. Count me as your friend.

JM: Friend?

(Sarcastically)

We've never met.

ELIJAH: Oh, we have. In passing a year ago, and then long ago, long before your remembrance. Your destiny is bright as His Son.

JM: Look around. See the darkness, and with Master Fairbanks my destiny is darker, indeed.

ELIJAH: Your horizons have just begun. A true master awaits; you'll be a man free to God's power. Bright as His Son!

JM: Don't speak of God or freedom or horizons...

MUSICAL #6 -- MASTER'S CHAIN

IN THE SLIME HERE TODAY, NOT A MAN BUT A SLAVE,
LITTLE HIGHER THAN CATTLE AND GRAIN,
DEGRADATION AND PAIN RIPS MY HEART, HEAPS ON SHAME,
BUT THE WORST IS A THE SLAVEHOLDER'S CHAIN.
YET COME PEER THROUGH THE DIN,
SEE A MAN WITH FOUR LIMBS WHO'S NOT HOBBLING AND SHACKLED WITHIN.
I'LL STRIKE AND I'LL FIGHT, ANY DAY, ANY NIGHT,
FOR THE RIGHT OF MY OWN SAIL TO TRIM.

HUMANITY SMOTHERS MY DREAMS TODAY, NO LIBERTY LIGHTS MY WAY.
PALTRY MY CHANCES OF BECOMING SOMEONE, DEEP IN THIS MADDENING MAZE.

ELIJAH:

MY FRIEND DON'T LET THE HATE, BRING A QUICK AND SAD FATE
TO THE SPIRIT THAT'S BURSTING INSIDE.
THERE IS MORE TO YOUR LIFE, THAN TO FIGHT THE SLAVE'S FIGHT,
CATCH THE HIGHER POWER'S GLISTENING TIDE.

JM: *(shouted)* No power I see, In this hu-manity, only liars and scoundrels and thieves!

ELIJAH

LOOK NOT TO THEIR EYES, FOR THE POWER OF THE WISE,
LETS YOU SOAR TO THE LOFTIER SKIES.
DEITY LIGHTS OUR DREAMS EACH DAY, ITS LIBERTY LIGHTS MY WAY.
HIS LIBERTY CALLS ON OUR HEARTS TO SOAR,
FAR FROM THIS MADDENING MAZE.

JM:

CAN'T YOU SEE ALL AROUND, THEY AREN'T SAINTS, THEY ARE CLOWNS!

ELIJAH:

TIS A MESSAGE OF TRUTH. COME AND SEE YOUR WAY THROUGH!

JM:

I'M HUMANITY'S JOKE, GOD'S A BEAM NOT A MOTE!

ELIJAH:

TAKE THE TRUTH TO YOUR HEART, FEEL THE SPIRIT IMPART!

JM:

GOD HAS PAINTED AN EVIL DARK SLATE.

IN A SLAVE'S WRETCHED STRUGGLE FROM HATE.

ELIJAH:

FEEL THE GOOD IN YOUR HEART SWELL WITHIN,
AND TAKE HOLD OF A NEW MASTER'S HAND!

JM: *(he strains to part from ELIJAH, then sings to himself)*

CAN IT BE, THAT HE STIRS, A COOL CHALICE OF HERBS,
TO QUENCH MY HOT CAULDRON OF HATE?

ROILING RIVERS INSIDE HAVE BEGUN TO SUBSIDE,
CAN I LEAVE THE DREAD MASTER OF FATE?

YOU ARE LIGHTING MY WAY WITH THE WORDS THAT YOU SAY,
'TIS YOUR SPIRIT THAT BURNS BACK MY STRIFE.

I DON'T UNDERSTAND BUT I DO COMPREHEND THAT I'M SEEING A NEW BETTER LIFE!

BOTH:

DIETY LIGHTS MY DREAMS TODAY, IT'S LIBERTY LIGHTS MY WAY,
HIS LIBERTY CALLS ON MY HEART TO SOAR, FAR FROM THIS MADDENING MAZE.
HIS LIBERTY... HIS LIBERTY... LIGHTS OUR WAY! LIGHTS OUR WAY!

Scene 7

DUNN: *(walks in and yells at JM)* Stop hollerin' out here. And who's this niggra? Don't matter. I'll sell him next. Make a good "step and fetch it" boy.

(DUNN turns to go but ELIJAH has wrapped chains around his feet. ELIJAH gives a pull.

DUNN turns, falls and hits his head on a post.)

ELIJAH: Those chains done taught him a lesson that Elijah Abel's no boy and only slave to the Son, my Eternal Master.

JM: *(panicked)* You killed him. They'll think I did it. We're both dead.

ELIJAH: He'll live. Elijah will take care of him. Now stop talkin' and start listen' to your heart.

JM: Who are... What do you want? Where'd...?

ELIJAH: So many questions make a man's head hurt.

JM: You have a name?

ELIJAH: *(laughs)* Just poor old Elijah. Just as long as I'm Able.

(Serious)

Elder Elijah Abel at your service.

JM: Your words are deep, but why are you here?

ELIJAH: I was once a poor wandering slave boy like you. Caught the Underground Railroad north. A Baptist preacher, sure enough, saved my soul teachin' me the Bible even though he said ah barely had enough soul worth savin'.

JM: You fill the air with wasted words and stories Mr. Preacher.

ELIJAH: Stories save souls.

JM: Little good with the master and his whip coming.

ELIJAH: The Massa's whip don't mean much compared to the touch of the Master's hand. Preacher wanted powerfully to baptize me. So I said to him, "Preacher" said I, "You gots de everlastin' priesthood?"

JM: What are you rambling on about? See that body...!

ELIJAH: Well that ol' preacher admits he didn't have the everlastin' priesthood... I left that preacher in the water and lit off runnin north. In my runnin' up north I met him. The prophet. He taught me all the mysteries. Puzzle came together. Didja know, Mr. JM, we were brothers even for we got born? And angels gave that prophet that everlasting priesthood the Bible promised.

JM: He a slave too, this prophet?

ELIJAH: He a slave alright. But his Master is yours and mine. Our Eternal Father.

JM: Big thoughts for a darkie, that prophet.

ELIJAH: He's not dark. He is tall and white as the snow itself. First time I met him was a wintry day and he just looked like snow with clothes on.

JM: Impressive. So he has a whole section in his church for coloreds?

ELIJAH: You mind your mouth young entertainer. The prophet have no sections for no body in the Church. And it ain't his Church. It's the Father's that He done gave him to restore! In fact, he made me a preacher and gave me that everlastin' priesthood – they laid hands on me and ordained me an Elder in the Melchizedek priesthood just like he have. I am a top fella in God's church, and teach and preach to whites and coloreds alike.

JM: Settle down, old fella. You've cotton in your brain and so does he. That prophet will get hissself...himself killed doing that in these parts. And us along with him.

ELIJAH: Prophet don't live down here. Lives in Illinois.

(Looks over at the near-dead DUNN.)

He still don't stir. You best run way.

(He produces a key and unlocks the chain.)

I'll say words o'er him. He'll be fine.

JM: I'd ask you where you got that key but you'd ramble off onto a one hour story. Just the same, I'm not running any more. I'm going to stand and fight.

ELIJAH: Didn't you feel that fire inside when I spoke God's truth? Yes indeed. Don't that Fire inside teach you no better than to talk "stand and fight" nonsense?

JM: I'll... be fine. Thanks for unlocking me and I can run, hide and dress white again. But what of you? Black man and a dead white man don't mix.

ELIJAH: Go on. Skee-daddle. Ah's got work to do.

(Kneels over DUNN, places his hands on his head and prays silently.)

MUSICAL #7 -- WANNA SING LIKE YOU

(While there is music for this, it is best if the actor feels the words and creates his own Negro spiritual for his heart.)

ELIJAH:

WANNA SING LIKE YOU, LORD, LORD. WANNA SING LIKE YOU, O LORD,
TILL THERE'S NOTHIN' LEFT TO DO.

WANNA SING LIKE YOU, OH YEA WANNA SING LIKE YOU, DEAR LORD,
TILL THERE'S NOTHING LEFT TO DO.

(After singing, he smooths the head of Dunn.)

That's done. He'll be fine.

(DUNN begins to stir.)

JM: How do you... What did you do?

ELIJAH: God's will. Now, you head north to free country. Right now young man. Get those fine clothes and you'll fit in. I'll slip away for when he peels them eyes open he'll think ill of me.

JM: He's evil white.

ELIJAH: He's a good man with evil baggage.

JM: He's born white.

ELIJAH: Feel the fire within. Does it teach you to hate a man for his skin? If it do, he's same as you.

MUSICAL #8 -- IS THERE LIGHT IN DISTANT SHADOWS (Flute and violin accompany)

JM: *(turns away from ELIJAH)*

IS THERE LIGHT IN DISTANT SHADOWS, WILL THE SKY BE BRIGHT AS PLANNED?
TORN BY HATE AND TREPIDATION, CAN I BE A FAITHFUL MAN?

CAN A LARK BE HEARD IN THUNDER, IS THERE MUSIC IN THE DARK?

WILL MY HEART SOON SWELL WITH SINGING, CAN THIS ENDING BE MY START?

ELIJAH: *(stuffs an envelope in JM's pocket)* Inside's your ticket for de steamboat. Good people are waitin' on board the ship going to Nauvoo. Money too for clothes. But the fire you feel inside will guide your way. When you meet the Prophet listen to your heart. But let's keep that good heart alive. Go to Nauvoo.

(JM starts to object to the money but exits.)

Scene 8 -- ABIGAIL comes in but too late to see him.

ABIGAIL: He's gone. Will I ever see him again?

ELIJAH: His heart is free. Abigail, have faith God will let you meet again. (Whimsically) And actually, with the money and steamboat ticket I stuffed in his pockets -- that your father gave me -- I 'spect you may see him real soon and you'll have a whole week on that steamboat to dance your heart's delight. Go quick.

ABIGAIL: My Father did this? And where did you come from?

ELIJAH: Would you believe a miracle?

ABIGAIL: A miracle made by John Swenson for sure.

ELIJAH: I just told him I was walkin' back to Nauvoo with my mission bein' over. Your father insisted on buying me a sailing ship ticket on your ship. Course I was down below with the other coloreds.

ABIGAIL: My, my. Can't out guess father. I can never thank you enough, Elijah Abel. Mother and Father believed your words. God bless you for coming to New York on your mission. But I don't understand your religion.

ELIJAH: Be patient. You ain't saying "No" to the Master, just "Not yet." Now go find that boy you love so much.

(ABIGAIL kisses ELIJAH on the cheek and then exits.)

I love the Gospel and especially the Gospel of love.

(FAIRBANKS comes in with his thugs. ELIJAH quickly sits down, wrapping himself in chains away from DUNN who has awakened and is groggy.)

FAIRBANKS: Where is my white slave? What happened to Dunn?

(ELIJAH ignores him and stares off into space, humming mindlessly to himself.)

You heard me niggra. Where did JM go and what's with him? You saw it all.

ELIJAH: Oh, massa, ah's just a lowly fella don't know nothin', don't see nothin' cuz whatev' would the likes of me know what ta' do with sometin' No siree, not seen nothin' 'tall. (Humming to himself.) Just ole' Elijah singin' ta da Lord. Oh Lordee, Lord...

FAIRBANKS: Shut up you ignorant savage.

(DUNN fully wakes up.)

What happened to you?

DUNN: *(sits up and looks around)* I... I don't know. But I after that white boy sassed me and I turned around...

I don't recall anything. Except... yes, I saw angels. I sure floated away. Heaven bound.

FAIRBANKS: What are you blabbering about? Wake up! My white slave has runaway after trying to kill you.

DUNN: Angels, I tell you.

FAIRBANKS: Devil more like. Stay here and play daft, but my money is tied up with that boy. Quick, (talking to his thugs), you go down Bourbon Street, you go to the livery stables, and I'll go to the docks and see if he tries to board a steamboat.

(FAIRBANKS exits.)

ELIJAH: He didn't leave by no horse or buggy or paddle wheel.

DUNN: So you did see him leave.

ELIJAH: He leave, dat boy. Oh, yes massa. He done leave and scared poor 'Lijah.

DUNN: How? Where? Speak up now.

ELIJAH: He moved his shoulders this way and that and grewed wings and... poof... he gone. Gone to heaven,

I 'spect.

DUNN: Ahhh. Babble on ole fool. But I'll find that boy no matter where. To hell and back if needed.

ELIJAH: 'Spect that's a one way ticket.

(Disgusted, DUNN rushes out.)

Oh Brother JM, there is hope in your life. You go north and find your life. Deep within my soul the Gospel light burns and in that light can all of us be free!

MUSICAL # 9 -- YES, THERE'S LIGHT (Full orchestra accompanies.)

YES THAT LIGHT IS HEAVEN'S SIGNAL, IT'S THE SINGING OF THE HEART,
AS THE GLORY OF THE FATHER, CASTS HIS JOY AND CLOUDS DEPART.
SING AN ANTHEM TO HIS PEOPLE, SING A JOY TO ALL MANKIND,
AS WE RISE AGAIN TOMORROW, IN HIS GLORY FOR ALL TIME.
O, FOREVER IS OUR ANTHEM, JOIN HIS PATH AND END THE STRIFE.
WE'RE ALL CHILDREN OF OUR FATHER, AND OUR CAUSE ETERNAL LIFE.

Fade to Blackout

INTERMISSION

24 pages in Act Two