

PERUSAL SCRIPT
12 player version



**A MUSICAL PLAY BY SUSAN MCCLOUD
AND MARVIN PAYNE***

**MUSIC BY K. NEWELL DAYLEY
LYRICS BY MARVIN PAYNE**

**BASED ON THE BOOK
"CHARLIE'S MONUMENT" BY BLAINE YORGASON**

***With generous contributions from Roseanna Weeks Ungerman,
James Arrington, Lyle Mortimer and William Shakespeare.**

First Western States Tour directed by Charles Metten



Salt Lake City

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CHARLIE'S MONUMENT

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CAST OF CHARACTERS

5M 5W 1 B 1 G plus chorus

Charles Langly, (Charlie) -- a cripple

Nellie Reeves -- his wife

Anna Langly--their daughter

Charles Langly, (Little Charlie)--as a child

Faith Langly-- Charlie's mother

George Reeves -- Nellie's father, a banker

Richard "DOC" Hardy--the Doctor

Jake Sorensen--the Mayor

Lillie-Belle Sorensen -- his wife, also the schoolteacher

Joseph Adams--the deputy sheriff

Mary Ames--a widow

Clara Davis--her friend

If desired there may be a chorus added to enlarge the townspeople scenes, but they will be infrequently used through the play.

CHARLIE'S MONUMENT *Book by Susan McCloud and Marvin Payne. Lyrics by Marvin Payne. Music by Newell Dayley.* 5M 5W 1girl 1boy + ensemble. Unit Set. 2 hrs. It is the frontier! It is 1890. He has only one arm and a twisted foot. He stands on the mountain bravely watching over the town that cast him out -- piling stones in some frail hope that he'll be remembered. Then he is loved by one who sees and mirrors the bright spirit inside him. He is fulfilled, awakened, renewed. But then he is wounded, called to be tried and when all but love is stripped away, he is triumphant. Charlie is the tender, crippled man ostracized by his fellow citizens and it is Nellie's love and faith that restores Charlie's self-esteem and ultimately saves his life. This award-winning and heartwarming musical is based on the popular, best-selling book by Blaine Yorgason. This show may be performed in many variations: by one man and one woman doing all the roles or the roles can be divided up among twelve players or you can add as large an ensemble as you wish. (A Two-person version is available only on a limited basis. Please specify) No Piano-Vocal score. Performance-Traks CD included in royalty.

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MARVIN PAYNE is an actor, writer, songwriter, and recording artist living in Alpine, Utah. After attending BYU on Music Performance and Creative Writing scholarships, he released a dozen albums of original songs and toured the country extensively as a solo concert artist throughout the decade of the seventies. In the early eighties, his career expanded into the world of theatre and film, where he became the Man who Searches for Happiness, Sweeney Todd, El Gallo, and the Phantom, but is most often recognized in the mall as the guy behind daddy's nose in *Saturday's Warrior*. His acting has shown up on the Disney Channel, the major networks, and PBS. He is a familiar lead at Sundance. He is an inventor of *Scripture Scouts* (he is Boo Dog!) and the *Allabout Family*, and in the nineties focused increasingly on creative projects for children, which include writing and performing in *Alexander's Amazing Adventures* and directing for MacMillan/McGraw Hill their *Share The Music* series, two hundred audio episodes for teaching musical principles to the nation's elementary school children. He co-authored the musical plays *The Planemaker*, *Sweet Redemption Music Company*, *Charlie's Monument*, *Utah*, *Wedlocked*, *The Trail Of Dreams*, and *Take the Mountain Down*, all of which have enjoyed extensive production. Along the way, he wrote *Love And Oranges* (The Love Book), *Vivian*, *The Prodigal*, a series of historical novels, and published some prize-winning poetry. In the new century, he is combining previous pursuits, recording and concertizing again. He is the father of eight children, all of whom follow their art professionally (except the babies), and the husband of Laurie Koralewski, a teacher, director, and actress.

Newell K. Dayley His parents bought a piano when he was four-years-old. Mother was determined. But Newell wasn't, even though he kept up piano lessons through the 6th Grade. Guitar? No. Violin? No. He had a wonderful band teacher in 7th Grade who got Newell started on the cornet, and he never stopped. After receiving a B.S in Music Education from BYU, a Masters in Music from USC, he received his Doctorate of Arts from the University of Northern Colorado.

He is *Professor Emeritus* of Music at BYU, where he also served as an Assistant Professor and a Professor and Chairman of the Music Department and Dean & Associate Dean of the College of Fine Arts and Communications. He also found time along the way to direct the Entertainment Division for 5 years. He is currently the Dean of Humanities and Fine Arts at Utah Valley University. Dayley joined the BYU faculty in 1967. Dayley was the first director of the BYU jazz ensemble, Synthesis. He also directed the brass ensemble and other organizations as well as many musical theatre productions. He has taught classes from trumpet to music theory and from film scoring to music business.

On the trumpet Dayley has performed with the Utah Symphony and many professional ensembles. He also has performed as a soloist with the Mormon Tabernacle Choir.

Hundreds of recognizable musical compositions including: *Faith In Every Footstep*, *Lord, I Would Follow Thee*, *Lengthen Your Stride*, *I Feel My Savior's Love*, and *May My Life Reflect Thy Will*. He wrote *This Is Polynesia*, presented continuously from 1983 to 1991 at the Polynesian Cultural Center, accumulating approximately 2500 performances to a combined audience of about 6.5 million.

Two of his many awards are: 2002 Legacy Award – Faith Centered Music Association (FCMA), and the 1998 Pearl Award from Faith Centered Music Association (FCMA) for the song Faith in Every Footstep as recorded by the Mormon Tabernacle Choir in commemoration of the 1847 Mormon Pioneer Sesquicentennial.

His scores for the theatre include: *Brigham* (with Arnold Sundgaard), *Life ... More Sweet Than Bitter* (with Pat Davis), *Kirtland* (with John Cameron), *Moroni* and *III Nephi* (with Ralph G. Rodgers), *Don't Forget to Remember* and *Above All Other Lands* (with Pat Davis & Ralph G. Rodgers), *Charlie's Monument* (With Susan McCloud, Marvin Payne & Blaine Yorgason), and *Let It Ring* (with Margaret Smoot & Michael McLean).

He currently resides in Provo with his wife, Diane, after having served a service mission to BYU-Idaho to teach in the Music Department there. They have eight children.

SYNOPSIS OF SCENES AND MUSICAL NUMBERS

ACT ONE

#1 PROLOGUE	Orchestra
SCENE ONE -- PROLOGUE	
#2 PRETTY NEARLY PERFECT PLACE TO LIVE	ENSEMBLE
#2A UNDERSCORE	Orchestra
SCENE TWO -- THE TOWN COUNCIL	
#3 WHAT'LL WE DO WITH CHARLIE?	ENSEMBLE
#3A UNDERSCORE	Orchestra
SCENE THREE -- A FRIEND.	
SCENE FOUR -- THE MOUNTAIN (AND A MEMORY)	
#3B Underscore	Orchestra
#4 A WORLD OF OUR OWN	FAITH & CHARLES
#5 LETTING HIM GO	FAITH
SCENE FIVE -- THE MOUNTAIN, AGAIN	
#6 ON THE OUTSIDE	CHARLIE
SCENE SIX -- PAYDAY.	
SCENE SEVEN -- THE MOUNTAINTOP (HIDE AND SEEK)	
#7 HIDE AND SEEK	FAITH
SCENE EIGHT -- CONVERSATIONS	
SCENE NINE -- COULD SHE LOVE ME?	
#7A UNDERSCORE	Orchestra
#8 COULD SHE LOVE ME?	CHARLIE & NELLIE
SCENE TEN -- PEOPLE ARE TALKING	
SCENE ELEVEN -- GOSSIP!	
#9 I NEVER GOSSIP	CLARA, WIDOW AND LILLY-BELLE
SCENE TWELVE -- BRIBERY	
SCENE THIRTEEN -- PLAYING HOUSE	
#10 IN A WORLD OF OUR OWN	CHARLIE & NELLIE
#10A IN A WORLD OF OUR OWN (Reprise)	FAITH

ACT TWO

SCENE FOURTEEN -- MIRACLE	
#11 CALL HER A MIRACLE	NELLIE & CHARLIE
SCENE FIFTEEN -- GRAMPA.	
SCENE SIXTEEN -- ANNA'S DEATH	
SCENE SEVENTEEN -- HARD WORLD	
#12 FIRST WE GAVE LOVE	NELLIE & CHARLIE
#1 2A Underscore	Orchestra
SCENE EIGHTEEN -- SERVICE MONTAGE	
#13 PRETTY NEARLY PERFECT PLACE TO LIVE (Reprise)	ENSEMBLE
SCENE NINETEEN -- BABY AGAIN	
SCENE TWENTY -- NELLIE'S DEATH.	
SCENE TWENTY-ONE -- THE CHOICE	
# 14 DOING ALL I CAN	CHARLIE
SCENE TWENTY-TWO -- FATHERS	
#15 FIRE	Orchestra
SCENE TWENTY-THREE -- PARABLE	
#16 A WORLD OF OUR OWN (Reprise)	CHARLIE & NELLIE
#17 Curtain Call (optional)	Orchestra

ACT ONE

MUSICAL # 1 --PROLOGUE

Scene One -- Prologue -- CHARLIE, NELLIE & FAITH are setting up the stage. ENSEMBLE characters filter in.

MUSICAL # 2-- PRETTY NEARLY PERFECT PLACE TO LIVE

ENSEMBLE

NOTHIN' COMPLICATED HERE.
FOLKS ARE SIMPLE AND SINCERE.
RIGHT AND WRONG ARE ALWAYS CLEAR IN THIS TOWN.
WE'VE GOT NOTHIN' HERE TO HIDE.
WE'VE GOT STRENGTH AND WEVE GOT PRIDE,
AND WE'VE GOT ANGELS ON OUR SIDE IN THIS TOWN!
THIS IS A PRETTY NEARLY PERFECT PLACE TO LIVE,
A PRETTY NEARLY PERFECT PLACE, MY FRIEND.
BETTER KINDS OF FOLKS ARE HATCHED
HERE IN HEAVEN'S GARDEN PATCH
A NEARLY PERFECT PLACE TO LIVE.
WELL, I GUESS WE'VE GOT OUR PROBLEMS,
LIKE OTHER PLACES DO.
BUT WE JUST CLOSE OUR EYES,
AND DROP OUR HEADS AND PUSH ON THROUGH.
THIS IS A PRETTY NEARLY PERFECT PLACE TO LIVE
A PRETTY NEARLY PERFECT PLACE, MY FRIEND.
BETTER KINDS OF FOLKS ARE HATCHED
HERE IN HEAVENS GARDEN PATCH-
A NEARLY PERFECT PLACE TO LIVE,
A PRETTY NEARLY PERFECT PLACE TO LIVE!

(ENSEMBLE friezes on stage as CHARLIE, NELLIE & FAITH come to speak to audience.)

FAITH: Well, it was a pretty nearly perfect place.

NELLIE: It's embarrassing to admit, but in fact it isn't even here any more!

CHARLIE: Oh, the place is, but the town we lived in finally dried up and blew away around 1930.

NELLIE: All that's left these days is that pile of rocks on the edge of the mountain.

(Turns and gazes)

CHARLIE: Uh, it's imaginary. You have to imagine the pile of rock

FAITH: We're dead.

(Motioning to ENSEMBLE)

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All of them are dead, now, too.

NELLIE: Some more than others.

CHARLIE: Don't be alarmed! Getting dead is the end of being old.

NELLIE: And the beginning of being forever young! So, pretend you're in Charity Bend, in 1890.

Come back with us.

CHARLIE: We need you! There's a town council meeting about to begin, and it would be shamefully undemocratic to hold it without a few other than the normal representatives

(Gestures to audience)

of the town.

Scene Two -- *The Town Council -- The meeting is in progress and has been for a few hours. Those present are bored, tired, fidgety and argumentative. LILLIE-BELLE forges on, oblivious.*

LILLIE: *(Standing, gesturing with zeal)* Buns! Hot buns! Wouldn't that make a body feel good?

MAYOR: Lillie-Belle, we've been up one side of this and down the other! Folks don't need 'em!

LILLIE: When we moved here, nobody warmed up any buns for us! No welcome at all! No jam, no ham, I felt left out for years. Let's have a committee to welcome the newcomers.

(General disapproval from those present)

Why, there could be a wagon ... we'd pull up to the doors of the folks movin' in. A... a... a Welcome Wagon!

(Groans from all)

MAYOR: Lillie-Belle, we can't spare a wagon. This is the frontier, woman! We use 'em to work all day. At night we use 'em to gather up dead cows and drunks.

(DOC stumbles in)

DOC: Sorry t'be late, Gentlemen.

MAYOR: See what I mean?

REEVES: You're always late. You're also drunk again, Doctor!

DOC: And is that MY fault Mr. Big Important Bank President? I am not intoxicated, just pleasantly . . . relaxed, my friends.

(DOC spits a wad of tobacco juice and hits the spittoon with a ping)

JOSEPH: You're just in time for the last item of business, Doc. This matter of Charles Langly.

LILLIE: I think we ought to settle the Welcome Wagon Committee first.

MAYOR: Dumb, Lillie-Belle. Dumb! It's growing late, gentlemen. I suggest we draw these proceedings

JOSEPH: There is one last item, Your Honor, and you know it. I've tried to bring this up for the last three meetings. And I'll keep bringing it up. You might as well stop ignoring it.

DOC: I wish you'd leave the matter be, Joseph.

LILLIE: That's right! I hate to be the one to say it, Jake, but why is Charlie our problem?

MAYOR: Things that can't be cured must be endured!

(With emphasis MAYOR spits and misses the spittoon hitting the DOCTOR's foot. LILLIE is appalled)

JOSEPH: Just who else is there? Who else'll help him?

MUSICAL #3--WHAT'LL WE DO WITH CHARLIE?

LILLIE: But what do you do with a thing like Charlie?

MAYOR

MEN, WE GOTTA FACE REALITY.
WE GOT A PROBLEM ON OUR HANDS.
BUT Y'KNOW WE'RE A MUNICIPALITY--
CAN'T JUST KICK THE BOY RIGHT OUT OF THE BAND!
WE GOT DECENCY! WE GOT CIVIC PRIDE!

LILLIE

I CAN SEE YOU WANT TO KEEP THE KID OUTSIDE.

MAYOR

VERY WELL, WE CAN'T JUST SIT ON THE FENCE.
WE GOTTA THINK ABOUT ALL THEM CONSTITUENTS!

LILLIE

WE GOT VOTERS
SEEM TO THINK THE POOR BOY'S GOT ODORS.

MAYOR

WELL, I'M NOT SURE ABOUT THAT,
BUT I KNOW WE CAN'T LEAVE THE POOR BOY FLAT
LIKE A SOWBUG ON THE ROAD.
WE GOTTA HANDLE THIS EPISODE LIKE STATESMEN
NEVER HESITATIN' TO DEFEND THE RIGHT.

LILLIE

'COURSE WE ALL NIGHT GET IMPEACHED A BIT
OVER THAT KINDA HASTY OVERSIGHT
'CAUSE ALL WE GOT THAT'S GOVERNMENTAL
WE GOT IS ON THIS AWKWARD RENTAL.

MAYOR

SO MEN, WE GOTTA HAVE SOME GREAT IDEAS!
GREAT AMERICAN BRAINSTORMS!

LILLIE

NOT WHAT YOU'D DO FOR A PERFECTLY SANE
AND NORMAL SORT OF GUY.

MAYOR

BUT HECK THE KID HIMSELF'LL VOTE SOMEDAY
'N COME WHAT MAY WE GOTTA MEET HIM ON HIS TERMS.

REEVES

WHO HAD TO OPEN THIS CAN O'WORMS?

MAYOR

BUT WAIT! I CAN FEEL IT COMIN' TO ME!
A WAY TO GET THIS BODY FREE O' GUILT.
'N I CAN GUARANTEE IT'S BUILT
ON THE ROCK O' DEMOCRACY,
LIKE A FORTRESS FOR THE BOY!
LIKE A HAVEN ON THE NOISY BEACH OF LIFE!

LILLIE

CORNER THE BOY SO HE CAN'T ANNOY,
CAN'T CAUSE NO STRIFE.

MAYOR

EMPLOYMENT! I SAY GIVE HIM A JOB!
ANY OLD THINGUMABOB NEEDS DOIN'.

LILLIE

ANY OLD THING TO KEEP THE BOY FROM RUIN.

MAYOR

WHY, IT'S EASY!
OILIN'THE WHEELS OF FATE,
AND OUR HANDS AIN'T EVEN GREASY!

MAYOR AND LILLIE

AH, BUT WHAT KINDA JOB!

REEVES

WHAT KINDA JOB?

DOC

WHAT KINDA JOB?

ALL

WHAT KINDA JOB?
WHAT'LL WE DO WITH CHARLIE?
WHAT'LL WE DO? WHAT'LL WE DO?
LET'S GET DOWN AND PARLEY. WHAT'LL WE DO?
WHAT'LL WE DO WITH CHARLIE?
WHAT'LL WE DO? WHAT'LL WE DO?
LET'S GET DOWN AND PARLEY. WHAT'LL WE DO?
WHAT'LL WE DO? WHAT'LL WE DO? WHAT'LL WE DO? WHATLL
WE DO? WHAT'LL WE DO?

LILLIE: How about a Town Greeter. A handshake man in front of the hotel!

(Disapproval)

JOSEPH: Charlie could milk someone's cows.

REEVES: That's fine, Joe-if you don't mind waiting all day for the milk!

(Agreement)

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DOC: He could work as a tarbender!

ALL: Tarbender?!

DOC: I mean bartender

JOSEPH: How about a waiter?

("Nos" from those assembled)

MAYOR: Now men-and ladies--we must strike while the iron is hot. There must be something Charity Bend needs that it doesn't have.

DOC: A good Mayor, for one thing.

LILLIE: I've got just the job! The town lookout!

DOC: Town cookout? What do ya wanna have a town cookout for? We were talkin' about

LILLIE: Town lookout! To climb clear to the top of Old Baldy every day-come rain, storm or sun blisters-- watchin' out!

MAYOR: Watchin' out fer what?

LILLIE: Fires! Indians! Crickets! Floods! Bandits! Banshees! Pirates! I don't know!

(Righteously)

A regular salary! Security!

REEVES: I don't think he can do it.

LILLIE: Ah, in no time he'll be doin' this job with one hand tied behind his back! All in favor of makin' Charlie the town lookout, manifest by the usual sign.

(JOSEPH visibly abstains)

MAYOR: *(Chagrined at the usurpation, repeats deliberately)* All in favor say "Aye!"

(ALL vote again, wearily)

Splendid! Now, Joseph, I delegate you to approach Charlie tomorrow morning with our offer.

JOSEPH: *(Disgusted)* I'll be out in the south pasture before dawn. Have to be somebody else.

(Takes spittoons off with him, holding them at arms length)

MAYOR: Doctor?

DOC: You're the official one, Jake, the one with all the high-fallutin' language. I think it oughtta come from you.

MAYOR: George?

(Immediately repulsed by a glance from REEVES)

Well, maybe I should be the one-yes-I'll do it, I should be the one-yes. Meeting adjourned!

(ALL exit except REEVES, MAYOR & DOC)

DOC: I gotta see you, George. I got a need.

REEVES: It's "Mr. Reeves" to you, and I'll be with you in a moment, "Doctor."

(Crosses to MAYOR)

Jake, this "town lookout" idea is good. You know why?

MAYOR: Well, Charlie'll have a living. And who knows? Maybe there is some danger he can warn us of.

REEVES: Jake, let Adams and the rest think that. You know it's hogwash.

MAYOR: I do?

REEVES: Jake, you're a cut above these folks. That's why we've got you in this job. You're smarter than the rest.

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MAYOR: I am?

REEVES: You and I know this lookout thing'll keep the freak off the streets, away from decent folks, and that's worth tax dollars any day. You see to it that he takes the job!

(REEVES crosses to DOC, leaving MAYOR to exit. REEVES produces a flask of liquor and leads DOC off, as if with a carrot on a stick. Lights fade)

Scene Three -- *A friend -- The next day. On the street of Charity Bend. CHARLIE is alone. A crying child enters, senses CHARLIE's presence, quiets, crosses to him. CLARA DAVIS enters, snatches child away, scolding. REEVES enters, ignoring CHARLIE as he passes. Similar shunning as other townsfolk pass. JOSEPH enters, spots CHARLIE and crosses to him.*

JOSEPH: Hello, Charlie!

(No response)

How've ya been feelin'?

(Still none)

Well, shoot reckon it's pretty hard on a fella. I can't pretend to know how you feel. Such a freak thing, like a stray bolt strikin' outta the blue.

(No response)

I just want you to know, Charlie, if there's anything I can do

WIDOW AMES: *(Crossing nearby with CLARA, whispering loudly)* It's a nightmare, Clara! Faith Langly killed on her own front step!

CLARA: And that Charlie! Why does he insist on coming to town? Parading around like

WIDOW: Clara Davis! I heard that'll be taken care of soon! He won't be in town no more.

CLARA: Well, it seems he has no respect for normal folks!

(They exit)

JOSEPH: Charlie, you know they're not worth listening to.

CHARLIE: Maybe not, but they make sure I hear 'em.

JOSEPH: *(After a pause)* What now, Charlie?

CHARLIE: Dunno, Joseph. Can't hardly look ahead, for lookin' back.

JOSEPH: Got tomorrow to think about, Charlie. Gotta keep on livin'.

CHARLIE: If I just had someone to help

JOSEPH: *(Nervously, but sad)* Yeah. Well, gotta finish this law book. See you later, Charlie?

CHARLIE: Joseph? Nice of ya to ask.

(Enter MAYOR. He nervously approaches CHARLIE)

MAYOR: Charlie, could I speak to you a moment?

CHARLIE: You--speak to me? Sure.

MAYOR: It's on behalf of the Town Council. We'd like to offer you a job.

(LIGHTS fade as MAYOR and CHARLIE exit. Slow sunrise transition with lights, over mountain music.)

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Scene Four -- *The Mountain (And a memory)* -- CHARLIE has been struggling up the back of the mountain. He emerges over the top, crawling, exhausted.

CHARLIE: Well, here I am... "disposed of." If I don't learn to climb this mountain any better than that, I may be more "disposed of" than the good town fathers ever dared hope for! I think there's more of my skin on those rocks back there than there is left on me! What's this?? A trail?! Oh, no! (Laughs)

MUSICAL # 3A-- UNDERSCORE

(Kneeling--looking down slope)

I'm glad you're on this mountain, Mama. It's a lovely grave, really, down there under that twisted hawthorne, with the sound of the creek. And I can kind of check in on you. Nobody else! Just you and me and the birds, Mama. Oh, I miss you, Mama. I miss you with a fierce missin'.

FAITH: *(appears on the valley floor with LITTLE CHARLIE)* Charlie?

CHARLIE: Mama?

FAITH: *(Seeing LITTLE CHARLIE)* Charlie why aren't you in school?

BOTH CHARLIES: What, Mama?

FAITH: *(To LITTLE CHARLIE)* All the other children will be in school. You'd better hurry. Charlie?

(CHARLIE is watching now, amazed and touched)

CHARLIE: *(Remembering the long-past conversation)* But, Mama, I didn't wanna go to school.

FAITH: But Charlie, you love school.

LITTLE C.: Mama, did those kids hurt me and make fun of me because I don't have two arms?

FAITH: *(Thoughtfully, not evasive)* Charlie, what's that picture you're drawing there in the dust?

BOTH CHARLIES: It's a deer.

FAITH: Is that all?

LITTLE C.: Well, theres an Indian over there behind that rock. This line's an arrow he just shot. It's gonna hit that deer, and then the Indian'll have food for his family.

BOTH CHARLIES: He's the Papa, you know.

FAITH: I see. That's a very good picture, Charles. I wish your Papa could see it. Did you do that other one?

LITTLE C.: Sure! There's the Indian dragging the deer to camp. See over there? That's his little boy running out to meet him. He sure is proud of his Papa right now!

FAITH: I'm sure his Papa is proud of him, too. Charlie, I... I can't tell you for sure why you have only one arm while all the other children have two. But I'd say God gave you only one arm because that's all He felt you needed.

LITTLE C.: What do you mean, Mama?

FAITH: Why, just look at these two fine pictures you drew with your one hand. I suppose there aren't many people with two hands who could do as well. Charlie, God never makes mistakes. He made you different, but He made you special. And He expects something special from you.

LITTLE C.: Well, He knows what He's doing, doesn't He?

MUSICAL # 4 -- IN A WORLD OF OUR OWN

FAITH: Yes, Charlie, He does. You can do anything in this world that really matters. And as long as we remember that, we don't have to worry about the rest of the world.

I GUESS THE WORLD IS THROUGH WITH US,
FORGETTING ALL THEY KNEW OF US.
BUT WE DON'T CARE, AND WE WON'T SCARE,
AS LONG AS THERE ARE TWO OF US.
HAPPY TOGETHER, WE'LL MAKE OUR OWN WEATHER.
WE'LL SING UP A SUNRISE AND CRY DOWN SOME RAIN.
AND IF WE GET BOTHERED, OR OVERLY WATERED,
WE'LL LAUGH UP RAINBOW AROUND US AGAIN.

(Teaching)

IN A WORLD OF OUR OWN,

LITTLE C.: *(repeating)*

IN A WORLD OF OUR OWN,
FAITH WE CAN LET GO AND FLY.

LITTLE C.: *(repeating)*

WE CAN LET GO AND FLY.

BOTH:

IF IT'S FUNNY, WE LAUGH.
IF IT'S LOVELY, WE CRY.
IF WE REACH FOR A STAR,
THERE YOU ARE,
HERE AM I
IN A CLOSE, QUIET WORLD OF OUR OWN.

(LITTLE CHARLIE rises and gallantly invites his mother to dance. BIG CHARLIE follows dance, remembering)

BOTH CHARLIES & FAITH

IN A WORLD OF OUR OWN,
WE CAN LET GO AND FLY.
IF IT'S FUNNY, WE LAUGH. IF IT'S LOVELY, WE CRY.
IF WE REACH FOR A STAR, THERE YOU ARE, HERE AM I
IN A CLOSE, QUIET WORLD OF OUR OWN.

CHARLIE

IN A CLOSE, QUIET WORLD OF OUR OWN.

FAITH: Oh, I love you, Charlie.

LITTLE C.: I love you, too, Mama.

FAITH: Do you feel like you can go to school, now?

LITTLE C.: I'd rather stay home and play with you, Mama.

CHARLIE: They don't teach songs like that at school, Mama.

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FAITH: They have lots of songs for you to learn at school. You teach me one tonight. Runners at your mark!
Ready! Steady! Go!

LITTLE C.: 'Bye, Mama!

(LITTLE CHARLIE runs off. BIG CHARLIE follows, pauses just before exit)

CHARLIE: *(Speaks more thoughtfully, more softly)* 'Bye, Mama.

MUSICAL #5-- LETTING HIM GO

FAITH

I COULD SHELTER HIM IN,
NEVER LET HIM AWAKE,
LIVE MY OWN LIFE THROUGH HIM,
KEEP HIM HOME FOR MY SAKE.
BUT STILL I BELIEVE
THAT I'LL SOMEHOW MAKE HIM GROW
BY LETTING HIM GO.
I COULD OPEN HIS DOORS.
I COULD PULL ON HIS STRINGS.
BUT I CAN'T LIVE HIS LIFE
I CAN'T SPREAD OUT HIS WINGS.
AND SO I REFUSE
THOUGH THE HARDEST THING I KNOW
IS LETTING HIM GO.
MAYBE HE'LL BEND, MAYBE HE'LL BREAK.
MAYBE THE WORLD WILL SHAKE HIS SOUL.
ALL OF MY ACHING IS NOT GONNA MEND HIM
OR MAKE HIM WHOLE.
I WON'T OPEN HIS DOORS.
I WON'T PULL ON HIS STRINGS.
I WON'T THINK OUT HIS THOUGHTS.
I WON'T FLY ON HIS WINGS.
I'LL KEEP TO MYSELF,
AND WHEN SORROWS SPRING AND FLOW
KEEP LETTING HIM GO.

FAITH: *(As narrator)* He was always drawing something, building something-just trying to make something nice. He wasn't up there too many days before he started making ... well ... something.

(Exits)

Scene Five--*The Mountain, again*

CHARLIE: *(Turning from pantomimed adjustment of "stones" on a small pile)* Well, I guess a mountaintop's as good a place as any to grow a pile of rocks. Can't grow parsnips. Don't like 'em anyway.

(Concocting an idea)

Ah, but if I could grow the world's biggest parsnip--the tallest, the fattest, standing bold against the summer sky! A monumental parsnip! Then they'd remember me! Charlie's parsnip! Hey, down there! If you knew what I was growin' up here, I couldn't keep you off this mountain! You'd be up here in hundreds! ... dozens? ... pairs? So, nobody'd come.

MUSICAL #6--ON THE OUTSIDE

CHARLIE: It's all right, I tell ya. I'll just grow my ... pile o' rocks.

TOSSED ON THE OUTSIDE, I'M PUT IN MY PLACE.
LOCKED ON THE OUTSIDE, I'M OUT OF THE RACE.
BUT IT'S SO QUIET HERE, AND THE AIR IS CLEAR,
AND THE OUTSIDE'S NEARLY IN ME.
HERE ON THE OUTSIDE, AT LEAST I'M ALONE.
HARD TO EXPLAIN IT--I FEEL LIKE I'M HOME.
IT FEELS SO DIFFERENT NOW, LIKE IT'S TURNED AROUND,
AND I'M ON THE INSIDE SOMEHOW.
MAYBE I'LL BLOSSOM WHERE I'M PLANTED.
COULD THIS BE MY PLACE, CLEAR AND FREE?
IT'S FULL OF DAYS AND FULL OF DREAMS, AND FULL OF ME!
TOSSED ON THE OUTSIDE, I'M PUT IN MY PLACE.
LOCKED ON THE OUTSIDE, I'M OUT OF THE RACE.
BUT IT'S SO QUIET HERE, AND THE AIR IS CLEAR,
AND I'M ON THE INSIDE, SOMEHOW!
I'M GONNA BLOSSOM WHERE I'M PLANTED.
'CAUSE THIS IS MY PLACE, CLEAR AND FREE!
IT'S FULL OF PROMISES AND DREAMS, AND FULL OF ME!
LEFT ON THE OUTSIDE, I'M GLAD THAT I'M HERE!
HERE ON THE OUTSIDE I CAN SEE MY WAY CLEAR!
SO LET ME TASTE THE LIGHT-LET ME FEEL THE FLIGHT,
HERE ON THE INSIDE, SOMEHOW!

(A transition of time. CHARLIE descends the mountain and crosses to "Town". He is stopped by MAYOR)

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Scene Six--Payday.

MAYOR: Charlie, my boy, don't run off now. It's that time again.

(Proudly pulls out an envelope and hands it to CHARLIE)

There you go, boy--money well earned. You oughtta give yourself a hand, Charlie. Why, you've done great things up there! How long has it been now?

CHARLIE: Two-hundred-seventy-three

(Looks at the sun)

and one half days.

MAYOR: *(Looks at the sun, puzzled)* That's capital! Job's workin' out well, isn't it?

CHARLIE: Capital sir! But with all due respect, sir, there just aren't ...

MAYOR: Now, Charlie, "well begun is half done," I always say. You're doing a good job up there. By the way, what's that pile of rocks doing up there on the edge of the cliff?

CHARLIE: *(Nervously evasive)* Gettin' ready to jump?

MAYOR: *(Blankly)* Well, Charlie, some folks think it's sort of ... different.

CHARLIE: Well, if you really want to know, it's just ...

MAYOR: *(Trying to remember)* Maybe "eyesore" is the word they used ... But you're doin' the town a service and don't you forget it! "Our safety is in your hands!"

(MAYOR crosses off leaving CHARLIE alone to exit. REEVES enters on the MAYOR's side and stops him)

REEVES: Well, Jake, trying to give the boy a hand?

MAYOR: Oh, no, he's doin' the job all by himself, George.

REEVES: And has he reported huge parties of murderous Indians?

(MAYOR is puzzled)

Well, it may be too hard to see them through the daily forest fires.

(Exiting)

They just don't make disasters like they used to.

(MAYOR stands there puzzled)

Scene Seven--The Mountaintop (Hide and Seek) -- *CHARLIE is lying on his stomach scanning the valley floor through a telescope.*

CHARLIE: Where is she? Not on the porch, not in her window, or the garden. It's a beautiful day. She's probably off on a picnic with some boy. I reckon the meanest thing George Reeves ever did was to send his daughter away to school. She's changed. I know she's changed. Back three days and even from here, I can tell the years have changed her. She was a friend,

(Composing)

"My Smiling Angel!" Now she's ... a lady. Sprouted out all over. Ah, but if I had Nellie Reeves all to myself, just the two of us, alone together, I'd take her hand, gently, and help her over the rough places. I'd tell her

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that her eyes were like summer stars. I'd say a dozen clever things to make her laugh. And she'd tell me she couldn't remember when she'd had such a good time. We'd sit quietly together then, and she'd slip her hand back into mine, and I'd tell her she was the loveliest vision... the loveliest vision my eyes had ever...

NELLIE: *(Has appeared behind CHARLIE)* Mr. Langly!

(CHARLIE spins. NELLIE starts)

I expect you'd stand in the presence of a lady!

(He does. Frantically)

You know you're practically legendary. I'm surprised you're not ten feet tall! I've been away to school for years, and now that I'm back I thought I might like to meet a legend. I think it's such a victory for you to even be up here. Even I could hardly make it. But here you are, every day, watching over this town like some kind of Guardian Angel.

(First light for CHARLIE, through the amazement and confusion)

And these rocks! Such a creative thing to do! Of course, what else could ... I mean ... well, if I were up here--uh, instead of you--I'd probably just waste all my time, oh, listening to waterfalls, collecting sunsets, reading ... writing ...

(turning away)

memorize something ...

(Diminuendo)

... anything ...

(to herself)

the Sears and Roebuck Catalog!

(Trying again)

But these rocks! They're really so... so ... interesting. Such a remarkable person! Such challenges, such courage--and you grew up right here in Charity Bend! ... It's funny I don't remember you. That is, not very well. One's childhood memories tend to pale against the bright world out there.

(As if to take her leave)

Well, Mr. Lang...

CHARLIE: I remember you. Nellie Reeves, the prettiest little girl in school.

NELLIE: *(Awkwardly)* Oh, you do? Fancy that!

CHARLIE: I remember you walking home along the lilacs.

NELLIE: *(Nervous now, backing away)* Is that right?

CHARLIE: And how you waited for me, once.

NELLIE: *(Frightened at the sudden intimacy--crosses hastily)* The view is ... breathtaking ... I never realized there was such a view up here!

CHARLIE: *(Offering telescope)* Here, try this.

(Coaxing. She gingerly accepts it. He places strap around her neck)

Don't drop it.

(Pointing)

Right about there.

NELLIE: There's my father!

CHARLIE: He's closing the bank for the afternoon.

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NELLIE: He's scowling!

CHARLIE: He always scowls--keeps people respectful of him that way.

NELLIE: It's incredible. I can see every detail. Why, there's my ...

(Realization)

window.

(Giving CHARLIE the benefit of the doubt)

It's almost like having your own crystal ball!

(CHARLIE has been leaning in toward NELLIE, gazing at her. She turns her head toward his. Their eyes meet and they both panic. She hands him the telescope and tums quickly away, nearly strangling herself on the strap. He frantically extricates her and they spring apart)

My goodness, what the town would do if they knew... Uh, may I sit down?

(CHARLIE jumps to offer her a place to sit, spilling books from his shoulder satchel)

Books?

(Grabs a red book he is holding. He doesn't let go. Gentle tug-of-war)

You read?

CHARLIE: Write.

NELLIE: You read, right?

CHARLIE: Wrong, I write.

NELLIE: Write?

CHARLIE: My journal. The red one's my journal.

NELLIE: *(Lets go)* Oh.

(Picks up another)

Shakespeare?

CHARLIE: I made it through the Sears and Roebuck Catalog a long time ago.

NELLIE: *(Chastened, recovers)* Do you know "Midsummer Night's Dream?"

CHARLIE: *(At last feeling an opportunity to shine, recites awkwardly)* "I'll follow you, I'll lead you about around, through briar;"

(Checks for approval, gets it, continues, accelerating)

"Sometime a horse I'll be, sometime a hound, A hog, a headless bear, sometime a fire; And neigh, and bark, and quint, and roar, and burn!..."

NELLIE: *(Applauding)* My turn! This is the way Miss Higgins taught all the girls at school.

(With broad sweeping gestures, very affected)

"Over hill, over dale, Through brush, through briar, Over park, over pale, Through flood, through fire, I do wander everywhere, Swifter..."

(She forgets)

CHARLIE: *(Helping)* ... than the moon's sphere.

NELLIE: "... than the moon's sphere!"

CHARLIE: Like horse...

NELLIE: Hound ...

CHARLIE: Hog ...

NELLIE: Bear ...

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CHARLIE: Fire...

NELLIE: At every turn!

(They laugh, greatly relieved and honestly delighted. A bonding has taken place. NELLIE suddenly feels "maybe too much bonding" and turns to the book again)

YOU must have a favorite. Here's one you've underlined.

(Reads theatrically)

"But I that am not shaped for sportive tricks Nor made to court an amorous looking glass; I, that am rudely stamped and want love's majesty To strut before a wanton ambling nymph; I, that am curtailed of this fair proportion,

(Begins to appreciate meaning)

Cheated of feature by dissembling nature, deformed ..."

(Chokes on this word)

CHARLIE: Deformed "...deformed, unfinished, sent before my time Into this breathing world, scarce half made up, And that so lamely and unfashionable That dogs bark at me as I halt by them." (it sinks in) Boy, am I glad I'm not like him!

(Sees she is confused, still troubled)

Miss Reeves, do you know what I do when life gets dark, and narrow, and close?

NELLIE: What?

CHARLIE: Well, I think I'm gonna choke sometimes. Then I imagine a window somewhere high in a wall, with light coming through, and sometimes music even ...

NELLIE: *(Looking into the air at his illustration, as if remembering)* ... and sweet smells ...

CHARLIE: *(Stunned)* ... like moist earth ...

NELLIE: ... and a baby's breath.

CHARLIE: *(After a long moment, amazed)* Same window.

NELLIE: Have you found it?

CHARLIE: *(Letting go of the trance)* ... No. But that's what I like about this mountain. It feels a little like that window ... in my mind.

NELLIE: I'd like to know about these rocks. They must mean something to you.

CHARLIE: Well, they ... I guess I'm just trying to make something nice. I bring a stone up everyday-the prettiest one I can find.

NELLIE: That's nice. I should have expected it.

CHARLIE: *(Eagerly pointing out a rock in the waist-high pile)* Pretty, don't you think? See that streak of silver running through?

NELLIE: Nice! No ... beautiful. My father's throwing a homecoming party for me next week. The invitations are all out. I ... I know you didn't get one ... But I wish you could come .. I'd better go. Thank you, Mr. Langly. Really ... thank you.

CHARLIE: Anytime! Got lots of time.

NELLIE: *(Retreats, returns, offering him the flower she has been carrying)* Here ... Charles.

CHARLIE: *(Grinning)* Charlie.

NELLIE: Charlie!

(She grins broadly, turns away and calls back from several paces down)

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Bye Charlie!

(Exits)

MUSICAL #7--HIDE AND SEEK

FAITH

YOU MIGHT CLOSE YOUR EYES AND COUNT TO A MILLION
COUNT OUT A LIFETIME AND NEVER DARE PEEK.
BUT FINALLY YOU OPEN THEM, KNOWING SHE'S OUT THERE,
AND WILLING TO PLAY YOU AT HIDE AND SEEK

Scene Eight -- Conversations -- CHARLIE is engrossed in the flower. NELLIE re-enters, different costume, while the music is still decaying. She is below, he above, in separate conversations.

NELLIE: *(To herself)* Shakespeare! Who would have dreamed it? I'll bet every rock has a story inside. Maybe they're written in that journal. I can't believe I almost wrestled it from him! I would have opened it, I know. His journal! He's different ... almost like ... a rude, rough box left outside. And I opened it. And there were jewels! I wonder ...

CHARLIE: Miss Reeves, you're back! I didn't think ...
(Receiving)

Oh, how lovely ... I have a box where I keep special things. I'll put this right in there! I keep it back ...

NELLIE: Mr. Langly, do you ever get lonely? Do you carry a lunch up every day? I mean, with hardly any shelter at all, you ...

CHARLIE: Why just since you were up here last I've saved this town from forty-three buzzards, *(scratching)* about fifty-thousand mosquitoes--and three stray dogs. I've captured eighteen fierce lizards--singlehanded. You wanna see the prisoners?

NELLIE: Oh, Charles, you can't tell him that! Nobody really knows what makes warts go away! Last Tuesday, when you told me about ...

CHARLIE: So I finally complained to the Mayor, and he said, "Why son, there's nothin' you can't do with a willin' heart and two good hands!" No fooling, sometimes I feel ...

NELLIE: But Charlie, she died. She died. She wasn't three years old! She couldn't even say my name right ...

CHARLIE: My mother always said God doesn't make mistakes. Nellie, it was just a bump on the head, but the boy can't see anymore. They led him up here, to me. I tried to tell him his world won't ...

NELLIE: Why Charles, it's tame as a kitten! Have you named it? Where's it's mother? Is it the only

CHARLIE: For a long time I've been counseling the animals for free. But just yesterday Mrs. Sorensson came up here and traded me a perfectly good turkey pie for some of that same advice! Where are these people coming from? The path up this mountain is turning into...

NELLIE: Of course the Town Council is confused, but couldn't they see that whenever you put up a wall around something, people will scramble over, just to see what's in there?

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CHARLIE: Nellie, will I see you again tomorrow?

NELLIE: Oh, I'd love to see them, Charlie. Race you to the river!

(Exits)

Scene Nine -- *Could She Love Me* -- *Conversation has been going on as CLARA DAVIS laboriously follows CHARLIE up the mountain.*

CLARA: Charlie, how do you make it up here without losing your breath?

CHARLIE: *(Grinning, self-satisfied)* Practice.

CLARA: It's tough on a lady!

(Stiffly, but honestly)

But Charlie, I ... I appreciate you taking this time with me. I think your ideas will help.

CHARLIE: Well, I hope so.

CLARA: I've tried everything to reach those boys. They act like I'm speaking Swahili. But you, Charlie, they listen to you ... They've begun to learn! Somehow you make them respect themselves.

CHARLIE: *(shyly)* Oh

CLARA: Can I send more to you--the younger ones?

CHARLIE: I reckon so.

CLARA: Well, thank you, Charlie.

(PAUSE)

You know, people wonder about this... this construction of yours. Charlie, would you mind telling

CHARLIE: *(Hesitating)* Well, it's just something I do. They remind me of some good days ... some dark days... things that have happened to me. Things I've felt. But mostly--maybe someday people in this town will look up at my pile of rocks ... and remember I lived.

CLARA: *(touched)* People will remember, Charlie. Good bye. And thank you.

(Exits)

CHARLIE: Goodbye, Mrs. Davis.

FAITH: *(Entering, near her grave site)* My son, the sage.

(CHARLIE is alone on the mountain, kneeling at it's edge, looking down on FAITH's grave.

FAITH listens and reacts, then gets tender and exits as CHARLIE discusses NELLIE)

CHARLIE: Strange, Mama, how easy it is to help folks. Dick Fisher came to me the other day--wanted to know how to tell his old maid sister he's getting Married and moving out. You know, I think Nellie's telling folks I'm some kind of cross between Robinson Crusoe and P12tO. Why Can't it be so simple with myself, Mama? I'm not even the Same person since Nellie. One minute I'm dizzy with happiness, feel like I could soar with the eagles up there, light and free. Then, suddenly I'm swallowed up in doubt and depression. And fears ... fears I can't even put 2 name to, Mama. Maybe I don't have any right to feel happy--to think I can live like ... like other men--that Nellie could ever give her heart to me.

MUSICAL #8--COULD SHE LOVE ME?

CHARLIE:

COULD SHE LOVE ME?
OH, I KNOW SHE WOULD BE KIND
AND TRY TO CARE FOR ME,
AND EASE MY MIND-
BUT COULD SHE LOVE ME?
NOT AS ONE MIGHT LOVE A CHILD
OR LOVE A SINGING BIRD,
ALONE AND WILD.
COULD SHE HOLD ME AND MOLD ME
LIKE A WOMAN MOLDS A MAN?
COULD SHE LOVE ME
FOR THE SIMPLE THING I AM?
I'VE BEEN KIND TO MYSELF,
LIKE SHE'S BEEN TO ME.
NOW IT'S KIND OF A HARD PLACE I'M IN.
I'VE BEEN KIND TO MY HEART
JUST BY LETTING IT FLY-
AND NOW IT'S LOST ON A RISING WIND.

(NELLIE enters valley floor, unheard by CHARLIE, who is kneeling, looking for her through the telescope)

NELLIE

COULD HE LOVE ME?
OH, I KNOW HE CAN BE KIND
AND LOVES TO CARE FOR ME,
AND EASE MY MIND--
BUT COULD HE LOVE ME?
NOT LIKE ROSES IN THE SPRING
OR LIKE A SINGING BIRD, A RHYMING WORD.
COULD HE HOLD ME AND MOLD ME
LIKE A WOMAN MOLDS A MAN?
COULD HE LOVE ME FOR THE SIMPLE THING I AM?

(Facing audience, NELLIE pantomimes seeing CHARLIE and waves excitedly. He springs to his feet and, facing audience, waves back)

CHARLIE

I'VE IMAGINED MYSELF BEING HELD BY HER. NELLIE
I'VE IMAGINED THE FLAME I WOULD FEEL. BOTH
I'VE IMAGINED MY LIFE FADING OUT LIKE A DREAM
UNLESS HE/SHE TAKES ME AND MAKES ME REAL.

NELLIE

COULD HE LOVE ME?

CHARLIE

COULD SHE LOVE ME?

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OH, I KNOW HE CAN BE KIND
AND LOVES TO CARE FOR ME,
AND EASE MY MIND-
BUT COULD HE LOVE ME?
NOT LIKE ROSES IN THE SPRING
OR LIKE A SINGING BIRD,
A RHYMING WORD.
COULD HE LOVE ME?

COULD HE LOVE ME?
COULD HE LOVE ME?

COULD SHE EVER LOVE ME,

MORE THAN A LONELY

FRIGHTENED

CHILD?
COULD SHE LOVE ME?
COULD SHE LOVE ME?
COULD SHE LOVE ME?

(NELLIE emerges onto mountaintop over last measures of accompaniment. CHARLIE is musing, pocketing his telescope. At last chord, he turns, their eyes meet, and they freeze close, face-to-face for applause. They then assume a casual pose on the ground, as if a visit is just ending)

NELLIE: Oh, I almost forgot. I brought your journal back.

(NELLIE produces the book from a basket)

CHARLIE: *(Takes it shyly, expectantly)* Well? What did you think?

NELLIE: *(Her turn to be shy)* Here's my journal.

(Gives him another book)

CHARLIE: Nellie! Yours?

NELLIE: *(Rising)* Oh, isn't it a lovely day? I wish you could see the lilacs down by the river, Charlie--banks of them, tumbling over each other.

(CHARLIE is engrossed in her journal. She notices, and during the next line crosses quickly over and shuts the book lying open on the ground)

Oh, Charlie, I'm so happy when I'm up here!

CHARLIE: Must be the scenery and the fresh mountain air.

NELLIE: Widow Ames would say it's because you have bedeviled me.

CHARLIE: And your father? What would your father say, Nellie?

NELLIE: You don't want to hear what my father would say! And neither do I.

CHARLIE: He's a powerful man.

NELLIE: He's a good man!

CHARLIE: He has this town by the throat.

NELLIE: People respect him, that's all.

CHARLIE: This town can make life very hard, Nellie. I know.

NELLIE: This town doesn't care about you and me!

CHARLIE: I care about you and me! Nellie, I ...

REEVES: *(Offstage)* Nellie! Nellie! Nellie!

NELLIE: *(Hearing REEVES' approach, stills CHARLIE)* My father?!

(REEVES enters)

REEVES: Nellie!

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CHARLIE: Mr. Reeves.

(REEVES gestures curtly for NELLIE to join him)

NELLIE: Father, don't treat me like this!

CHARLIE: *(Boldly)* Mr. Reeves, I don't think ...

NELLIE: It's all right, Charlie.

CHARLIE: Mr. Reeves, you're welcome to use my mountain to talk to your daughter, alone. That's what I use it for. Goodbye, Nellie.

(Exits)

Scene Ten -- *People are talking -- NELLIE is talking to her father.*

REEVES: It really is quite a view, Nellie.

NELLIE: Yes, it is.

REEVES: Do you enjoy yourself up here?

NELLIE: Of course. That's why I come.

REEVES: *(Uneasy pause)* Nellie, people are talking.

NELLIE: People talk, Father.

REEVES: You know I've forbidden you to come up here!

NELLIE: So you've come after me, like some naughty little child--to drag me home? Well, I'm not a child any longer, Father.

REEVES: Be reasonable, Nellie. Why, a young lady like yourself, fresh out of finishing school, you could have any man you wanted! Monsieur DuBonais has written three times from New Orleans. His father has written me from Chicago! Even Joseph Adams is building some kind of future! But you throw yourself at this, this ...

NELLIE: Daddy!

REEVES: They're laughing at you, Nellie!

NELLIE: And that bothers you?

REEVES: Bothers me? Of course it bothers me! Have you no pride?

NELLIE: Pride? Pride!

REEVES: What kind of a lady behaves like this? You're making it very uncomfortable in town for both of us, Nellie. You've always been spirited--I don't mind that. But you've never been openly disobedient before. I won't have it!

NELLIE: *(Addresses him directly then turns and gets carried away)* Father, you don't know him! In this whole town there are maybe a dozen people who've begun to know him. And do you know who they are? The people who can't get anyone else to listen--old people put out to pasture, boys who sit in the back of the schoolhouse believing everything their parents tell them about how stupid they are--those boys come up here and Charlie wrestles with them, laughing and tumbling, and they beat him of course. And in that split-second when they think they're worth something, Charlie'll teach them a verse out of the Psalms! Can you imagine that? He draws ducks for little children and makes them laugh. Animals come out and feed at his

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hand ...

REEVES: Are you through?

NELLIE: There's one more thing, Father. He listens to me. He knows my heart.

(Eagerly)

I've even tried not to keep a list of all the magic things that happen, rhymes we both loved as children, dreams we've kept about little houses filled right up with color and kindness, windows into light and peace

REEVES: Nellie! This is insane!

(Roughly grabs her arm)

You're losing your

NELLIE: *(Wrenching away)* And I love him!

REEVES: You come to your senses, girl! And the sooner the better!

(He exits. NELLIE looks after REEVES' departure and screams exasperatedly)

Scene Eleven -- Gossip -- CLARA, LILLIE-BELLE & WIDOW AMES enter with bench and sewing.

WIDOW: Girls! Wait 'til you hear the latest! George Reeves, Nellie's own Father, went up the mountain himself today. Said it was about time he took matters into his own hands. Dragged Nellie home!

CLARA: Did she oppose him?

WIDOW: Screamed and carried on the whole way down.

MUSICAL #9 -- I NEVER GOSSIP!

LILLIE: Disgraceful! Poor Nellie!

CLARA: Poor George! Can you imagine what people will say?

(WIDOW AMES and LILLIE-BELLE sing the verses, with CLARA never quite catching the spirit)

WIDOW

THOSE TWO UPON THAT HILL--WE'LL NEVER KEEP THIS UNDER WRAPS.

LILLIE-BELLE

THIS TOWN'LL POKE AND PRY AND GAB AWAY LIKE SIXTY.

SOME PEOPLE CAN'T KEEP STILL SOMETIMES, AND I DON'T MEAN PERHAPS.

WIDOW

ESPECIALLY WHEN THE PLOT'S SO DEEP AND STICKY!

ALL

I NEVER GOSSIP! I NEVER GOSSIP!

I NEVER GOSSIP! I JUST TRY TO PAY ATTENTION.

I NEVER GOSSIP! I NEVER GOSSIP!

I NEVER GOSSIP! I JUST PASS ON INFORMATION.

WIDOW

CAN YOU BELIEVE THE WAY THOSE TWO BEHAVE UPON THAT BUTTE?

LILLIE-BELLE

THE HONEST TRUTH DEAR, BUT YOU REALLY MUSN'T SHOUT IT.

WIDOW

THERE'LL BE LUST FROM HECK TO BREAKFAST,
AND A LOVE AFFAIR TO BOOT.

LILLIE-BELLE

I KNOW! AND THERE'S JUST NO TWO WAYS ABOUT IT!

ALL

I NEVER GOSSIP! I NEVER GOSSIP!
I NEVER GOSSIP! I JUST TRY TO PAY ATTENTION.
I NEVER GOSSIP! I NEVER GOSSIP!
I NEVER GOSSIP! I JUST PASS ON INFORMATION.

CLARA

I DON'T UNDERSTAND. I LIKE TO SAY WHAT'S NICE.
I THINK LOVE IS GRAND. PERHAPS I NEED ADVICE.

LILLIE-BELLE

DON'T WORRY NONE, MY DEAR.

WIDOW

JUST TRY HARD TO REFLECT,

LILLIE-BELLE

HOW CAN WE KEEP THE PECKING ORDER,

LILLIE-BELLE AND WIDOW

WHEN WE ALL REFUSE TO PECK?

WIDOW

BELIEVE YOU ME, WHEN PEOPLE TALK, I TURN AWAY AND YAWN.
'CAUSE THERE'S MORE GOSSIP HERE THAN YOU CAN SHAKE A STICK AT.
EACH RUMOR THAT I HEAR, I ASK THEM NOT TO PASS IT ON.

LILLIE-BELLE

BUT AREN'T THERE FOLKS YOU'D LIKE TO THROW A BRICK AT?

ALL

WE NEVER GOSSIP! WE NEVER GOSSIP!
WE NEVER GOSSIP! WE JUST TRY TO PAY ATTENTION.
WE NEVER GOSSIP! WE NEVER GOSSIP!
WE NEVER GOSSIP! WE JUST PASS ON INFORMATION.
WE NEVER GOSSIP! WE JUST PASS ON INFORMATION.

(Blackout)

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Scene Twelve -- *Bribery* -- *The next day. CHARLIE'S home. REEVES enters, crosses to house. Knocks. CHARLIE opens the door and, stunned offers REEVES a seat. REEVES authoritatively returns the gesture to CHARLIE, who sits, immensely uneasy)*

REEVES: So this is where you intend to bring my daughter!

(CHARLIE is surprised)

It's not quite what she's used to, you know.

(Touches table, flicks dust off his fingers)

Or perhaps you wouldn't. I don't know what you've done to entice her, Mr. Langly, but I do know that young girls often maintain romantic feelings about hardship ... until they're faced with it. How do you suppose a girl who's been used to everything she's wanted could adjust to living like ... like this? How long do you think a girl whose pride has made her the best, could maintain an infatuation ...

CHARLIE: *(rising)* Infatuation?

REEVES: Infatuation with half a man?

(CHARLIE sits as if struck)

If you had any feeling for her at all you'd not let her make this hideous error--shackling herself to someone like you!

CHARLIE: Wait!

REEVES: Whatever you've promised, whatever unholy expectations you've aroused, whatever pitiful pleadings ...

CHARLIE: *(rising in disbelief)* Mr. Reeves! I've asked her nothing! Promised her nothing.

REEVES: *(Losing control)* Come on. Charlie! The child says she loves you!

(CHARLIE reacts. He has not heard this before)

Curiosity, pity, whatever, she wouldn't say such a bizarre thing if you hadn't

CHARLIE: Mr. Reeves ...

(softly)

nothing.

REEVES: *(crossing away in disgust)* What will it take?

(CHARLIE is puzzled)

... to disappear, to walk out of Nellie's life?

CHARLIE: *(To REEVES' back)* Mr. Reeves!

REEVES: Well, how much?

CHARLIE: Money?!

REEVES: Of course.

CHARLIE: Mr. Reeves, I ... GET OUT!

REEVES: *(Perfectly composed, though with great effort)* Very well.

(Nearly exits, turns)

One more thing. If you really loved Nellie, as you profess, you would consider the offspring such a union would produce ... if indeed there could be any. Just think it over, Mr. Langly. Good Day.

(REEVES exits. CHARLIE collapses in the chair)

Scene Thirteen -- *Playing house -- CHARLIE'S house. Immediately after.*

NELLIE: *(Offstage)* Charlie! Charlie!

(Enters)

Oh, I'm so glad you're home. Look what I found down by the river. New lilacs! Where do you think I should put them? Here's a nice spot.

(On the table)

No, there isn't enough light. This would be better.

(On CHARLIE's head)

What do you think, Charlie? Charlie?

CHARLIE: *(Rising)* We're just playing house, that's what I think. And when the playing is done, you go home to glass windows and white curtains, chandeliers and a grand piano. Nellie, what would happen if this were your house?

NELLIE: *(Suddenly breathless at the faint implication of "Proposal")* Oh.... I think, it's ...

CHARLIE: Have you ever seen your breath frozen on a blanket? Have you seen snow gathered inside the door? There's as much daylight comin' through the walls as through the window. Do you see that line snakin' along that rafter? That's where the rats run at night.

NELLIE: Charlie, stop it.

CHARLIE: I don't think you should come here, Nellie.

NELLIE: I want to. I like to be with you.

CHARLIE: Your father was here.

NELLIE: *(Darkened)* I know. What did he say?

CHARLIE: He says I've deceived you.

NELLIE: What?

CHARLIE: Enticed you!

NELLIE: NO!

CHARLIE: He said I'm half a man!

NELLIE: That's not true! You're more of a man ...

CHARLIE: He said you love me!

NELLIE: *(pauses)* That's true.

(She is amazed she has said it. CHARLIE is stricken with hope, then despair)

I do, Charlie.

CHARLIE: Oh, no. No, no, no, no, no! Nellie, look at me!

(He takes her hand and firmly places it on his armless shoulder)

Please ... see me!

NELLIE: *(Very gently)* I do, Charlie. I see more than you think I see. I see you clearly.

CHARLIE: But Nellie ...

NELLIE: *(More firmly)* I see past the shell to the man inside--the man God made so well. I know you ... a spirit that stretches tall to gather dreams, and bends low to comfort wounded things. You're beautiful.

CHARLIE: You're beautiful.

NELLIE: Then look at me. Look, Charlie. I reflect you. How does it feel?

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CHARLIE: *(After a long, revealing look)* Beautiful.

NELLIE: *(Lighter)* Yes, this house is in deep trouble. I'm amazed it hasn't been condemned! Needs a little ... work, that's all. I could fix it up! I'd give the kitchen a good scrubbing.

(Takes CHARLIE by the hand and begins pulling him firmly after her)

And I'd plant flowers in the window boxes where your mother had them. A picture on the wall right here ... and another one there.

CHARLIE: Over the cracks!

NELLIE: Over the cracks! I'd make myself indispensable to you! I'd wash your clothes and mend your shirts ...

(Suddenly insecure)

What kind of a cook are you, Charlie?

CHARLIE: Pretty poor kind.

NELLIE: Oh, good! And you've had time to forget your mother's cooking, I hope?

CHARLIE: Wait! You can't really do all this unless we're marr ...

(Chokes)

NELLIE: What?

CHARLIE: Well, you know, m..., m ...

NELLIE: M, hm?

CHARLIE: *(With the inflection of "Uh, Oh!")* Um, m!

(Long moment of realizing he has just become engaged)

What do we do now?

NELLIE: Hold me-in your ... arm!!

(Embrace, release)

How do you feel?

CHARLIE: *(A moment of breathless expectation, then whoops, hollers, leaping around)* How do I feel? I'm Wakin' up! Clean! Brand new!

(Another whoop)

Thank you! You've given me the greatest day of my life, the greatest day! ... the first day.

NELLIE: It will be wonderful.

MUSICAL #10 -- IN A WORLD OF OUR OWN--Reprise

I can hardly wait: Introducing Mr. and Mrs. C. Langly!

CHARLIE: Nellie Langly!

IT SEEMS SO STRANGE AND NEW TO US,
BUT DREAMS ARE COMING TRUE FOR US.
IS IT TOO MUCH TO THINK THAT SUCH
A LOVE MIGHT TOUCH THE TWO OF US?

NELLIE

HAPPY TOGETHER, WE'LL MAKE OUR OWN WEATHER.
WE'LL SING UP A SUNRISE, AND CRY DOWN SOME RAIN.

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CHARLIE

AND IF WE GET BOTHERED, OR OVERLY WATERED,
WE'LL LAUGH UP A RAINBOW AROUND US AGAIN.

(teaching)

IN A WORLD OF OUR OWN,

NELLIE

IN A WORLD OF OUR OWN.

CHARLIE

WE CAN LET GO AND FLY.

NELLIE

WE CAN LET GO AND FLY.

CHARLIE

IF IT'S FUNNY WE LAUGH.

NELLIE

IF IT'S LOVELY, WE CRY.

BOTH

IF WE REACH FOR A STAR
THERE YOU ARE, HERE AM I -
IN A CLOSE, QUIET WORLD OF OUR OWN.
IN A CLOSE, QUIET WORLD OF OUR OWN.

(They kiss. Quick fade to black)

MUSICAL # 10A -- IN A WORLD OF OUR OWN (Reprise #2)

(CHARLIE and NELLIE and ENSEMBLE pantomime a wedding. Then NELLIE and CHARLIE, a domestic scene, in which a bundle representing a baby is introduced. All the time FAITH is watching and smiling and singing)

FAITH

IN A WORLD OF OUR OWN
WE CAN LET GO AND FLY
IF IT'S FUNNY, WE LAUGH.
IF IT'S LOVELY, WE CRY.
IF WE REACH FOR A STAR,
THERE YOU ARE, HERE AM I
IN A CLOSE, QUIET WORLD OF OUR OWN.
IN A CLOSE, QUIET WORLD OF OUR OWN.

(Then, slow fade.)

(INTERMISSION, IF DESIRED)

(If there is no intermission, continue play and have FAITH remain on stage, as the others exit or set the next scene)

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14 more pages in ACT TWO

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