

PERUSAL SCRIPT

The Ballad of Parley P!

A background illustration featuring a treble clef, a musical staff with several notes, and a line drawing of an acoustic guitar. The title 'The Ballad of Parley P!' is overlaid on the musical staff.

The Life and Times of Parley P. Pratt

A MUSICAL

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THE BALLAD OF PARLEY P!

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CAST OF CHARACTERS

All characters (except for the Balladeer) can be played by 5 men and 2 women, doubling or tripling where necessary. Or the roles can be cast with as many actors as desired.

IN ORDER OF APPEARANCE

MALE

ZANDER

JEREMY, A STAGEHAND

OBEDIAH

BILLY

BALLADEER

GEORGE HIGGINSON

YOUNG PARLEY (10)

SCHOOL TEACHER

STUDENTS (4, AGES 10-16)

WILLIAM PRATT

HECTOR McLEAN

JAMES CORNELL

AMASA HOWELL

HYRUM SMITH

OLIVER COWDERY

PETER WHITMER

ZIBA PETERSON

SIDNEY RIGDON

BYINGTON, A MAGISTRATE

A JUDGE

FALSE WITNESSES (4?)

PEABODY

STU-BOY (PEABODY'S DOG)

KING FOLLETT

MORRIS PHELPS

LUMAN GIBBS

ORSON PRATT

MARSHALL

DEPUTY

GUARD WITH COFFEE POT

JOSEPH SMITH

3 or more GUARDS AT RICHMOND JAIL

MOB MEMBERS

JUDGE OGDEN

JUDGE OGDEN'S BAILIFF

FEMALE

MEL

AUNT LAVINA VAN COTT

THANKFUL HALSEY (LATER PRATT)

ELEANOR McLEAN

ELIZABETH BROTHERTON PRATT

GROUPS:

RIGDON'S FOLLOWERS

COURTROOM SPECTATORS

SETTING

The play takes place in many different locations. None need be realistic: if two chairs and a table will do, that is fine. Though beginning on what should look like the portable stage of a traveling theatrical company of the late 1800's, the action of the play need not be constrained to such a small space. It is only a jumping off point. Subsequent scenes can expand to other parts of the real stage, or all of it, if the scene requires it.

Even though the play is divided into scenes, that doesn't mean the action should come to a halt at the end of one scene and then begin again. Just the opposite, actually: when one scene is ending on one part of the stage, the next scene can begin at another part of the stage. Scenes should flow from one to another when at all possible.

Despite the sometimes detailed scene descriptions in the script, please do not feel bound in any way to follow those details. Let budget and the taste of the director and scene designer dictate the intricacy of the set.

THE SET

A platform upstage left and facing the unseen audience somewhere downstage. This platform is draped with colorful banners, the most prominent of which is draper across the back and emblazoned with the words: "DOWN IN THE SOUTH."

Members of the Company are dressed in an equally colorful array of costumes that testify to the cliched understanding of Southern America prevalent in the late nineteenth century. Members of the Company are dressed in an equally colorful array of costumes that testify to the cliched understanding of Southern America prevalent in the late nineteenth century: prominent are a SOUTHERN MAN and SOUTHERN WOMAN, he in cut-off pants, disheveled hair, and barefoot, and she, blonde, also barefoot, wearing a patchwork skirt, stenciled freckles across the bridge of her nose.

Also in the crowd could be a SOUTHERN PAPPY with a gray wig, a corn-cob pipe, with a SOUTHERN MAMMY, similarly bedecked. Somewhere there is a TOOTHLESS MAN or TOOTHLESS WOMAN. There could be TWO MEN IN A HORSE COSTUME, and whatever other costumes and set pieces might convey that what we are about to witness are the final few lines of what has been an unfunny and embarrassingly amateurish musical about the South as it never was.

TIME

Late 1800's. The scenes within the play have their own designations between 1807 and 1857.

LIST OF SONGS

ACT ONE

- #1 – Overture (Orchestra)
- #1a – Down In The South (Company)
- #2 – At Curtain Rise (Zander, Mellie)
- #3 – We Had A Great Run! (Zander, Mel)
- #4 – The Ballad of Parley P. (The Balladeer)
- #4a – When Shall We All Meet Again (tag) (Balladeer)
- #5 – The Ballad of Parley P.-Siblings (The Balladeer)
- #6 – The Ballad of Parley P. -Fictitious Charges (The Balladeer)
- #7 – Serenity (Parley)
- #8 – The Unwritten Law (McLean)
- #9 – The Ballad of Parley P. -Education (The Balladeer)
- #10 – Like Parley (Parley, Students, Teacher)
- #11 – I'm Thankful (Thankful Halsey)
- #12 – What Will I Say? (Thankful, Parley)
- #13 – The Ballad of Parley P. -Wedding (Balladeer)
- #14 – Why Can't We Call it Love? (Parley, Thankful)
- #15 – Who Can Tell? (Sidney Rigdon and Congregation)
- #16 – A Book/True Religion (Parley)
- #17 – O, How Happy Are They (Parley, Higginson)
- #18 – Stu-Boy and Parley (The Balladeer)
- #19a – Condemnations (Parley, Joseph)
- #19b – Majesty (Parley)

ACT TWO

- #20 – Ballad of Parley P. -Escape From Columbus (Balladeer)
- #21 – How Long? (Parley, Follett, Phelps, Gibbs)
- #22 – Faith (Mel and Company)
- #23 – Fly! (Parley)
- #23a – Underscore
- #24 – Humble Man (Parley)
- #25 – Will I Ever...? (Eleanor)
- #26 – Called To The Fight (McLean)
- #27 – My Prophet! My Friend! (Parley)
- #28 – The Unwritten Law (reprise)
- #29 – Jubilee (Parley)
- #30 – Afraid To Die (Parley)
- #31 – Ballad of Parley P. martyred (Balladeer)
- #32 – My Husband! My Love! (Eleanor)
- #33 – When Shall We All Meet Again (Company)

ACT ONE

MUSICAL #1 – OVERTURE

SEGUE TO:

MUSICAL #1b – DOWN IN THE SOUTH

1 – A PLATFORM ON THE MAIN STAGE – The COMPANY, their arms raised, sing with obviously faked enthusiasm [after all, “The show must go on”]. We view the last few lines of a closing number.

COMPANY

... WHERE THE GATORS GO DEEP
AND THE TATERS ARE FRIED.
WHERE THE AUNTIES JUST WEEP
WHILE THE UNCLES GO HIDE.
WAY DOWN, DEEP DOWN – DOWN IN THE SOUTH!

(The acting abilities of this ragtag group of players are put to the test as they hold for applause and receive the adulation from perhaps six people in the unseen audience. A nice touch could be a few tomatoes thrown from off stage accompanied by derisive laughter. As the actors leave the platform stage, it turns or shifts with them, so now we are looking:)

2 – BACKSTAGE – Costume racks, props, dressing rooms, trailers. A picnic table, downstage center to where some of the actors converge, while stage hands strike the set. ZANDER and MEL [the SOUTHERN MAN and SOUTHERN WOMAN] move to the picnic table while removing wigs or outer parts of the costumes, to fall exhausted into the seats. OBEDIAH [actor who played the SOUTHERN PAPPY] approaches the table with a few bottles of liquid refreshment for everyone. Zander opens a bottle and gives it to Mel then opens one for himself. OBEDIAH joins them.

OBEDIAH: I don’t know about you two, but I am certainly glad this run is over.

ZANDER: I would hardly call it a “run” based on our last dozen or so audiences. More like a “slow, stumbling amble toward death.”

(Takes a drink)

Thanks, Obed. This almost makes tonight’s torture worth it.

OBEDIAH: *(to all)* Anybody count how many tomatoes people threw at us tonight?

A STAGEHAND: *(passing by)* Fifty-seven.

OBEDIAH: Fifty-seven! A record!

(OBEDIAH and ZANDER touch bottles in celebration of at least one good thing having happened tonight. OBEDIAH turns to Mel.)

What about you, Amelia?

MEL: Obediah, how many times have I told you not to call me by my stage name? Off stage, I'm just Mel Laughton.

ZANDER: So, Mel Laughton, give us some insight into what feelings are flying around in that pretty little head of yours? Relief? Longing?

MEL: Well, Alexander Morrison—

ZANDER: How many times have I told you that Alexander is my real name? Offstage, I'm just Zander.

MEL: Zander, if you must know, I'd say "relief."

ZANDER: Relief that we don't have to endure another night of this soporific script and its insipid tunes?

MEL: Relief that I no longer have to endure that love scene with you at the end of Act Three.

OBEDIAH: (*laughs*) She got you there, Boy-O! She got you real good.

ZANDER: Hardly. Any idea on our next production? Billy hasn't been forthcoming of late.

OBEDIAH: He's busy counting up tonight's box office. I'll ask him when he comes out of hibernation.

ZANDER: Well, I don't care what it is. Insipid script or no, I just love being on the stage, portable or no.

MEL: Don't we all?

OBEDIAH: Are we crazy to do this? We're lucky if we barely break even. We endure all kinds of abuse if our performances aren't up to the audience's expectations. And, at least in my case, marriages are ruined...

MEL: You'll see her again some day, Obediah.

ZANDER: (*still in his own world*) There's nothing like it – the stage. Nothing in the world.

MUSICAL #2 – THERE'S NOTHING LIKE OPENING NIGHT

ZANDER:

AT CURTAIN RISE
WHEN ALL THE EYES
OF THE AUDIENCE LOCK ON US.
A HUSH WILL FALL—
THE HOUSE IN THRALL
AND EVERYONE WAITS

COMPANY:

FOR THE FIRST LINE TO BE SAID,
THE FIRST NOTE TO BE SUNG.
AND A NIGHT AT THE THEATRE – HAS BEGUN!

ZANDER:

THERE'S NOTHING LIKE OPENING NIGHT!

OBEDIAH:

THE THRILL OF THE CROWD.

MEL:

THE CURTSIES...

OBEDIAH:

THE BOWS...

ALL THREE:

THERE'S NOTHING LIKE OPENING NIGHT!

MEL:

THE COSTUMES, THE SETS!

ZANDER:

THE MAKEUP..

(LIGHTS UP on a nearby trailer where a frazzled BILLY, the Company Manager sits at a table with a pile of papers in front of him and a nineteenth century adding machine next to him.)

BILLY: *(speaks, in rhythm)* The debts! ...

ALL FOUR:

THERE'S NOTHING LIKE OPENING NIGHT!

COMPANY:

WHAT CAN COMPARE TO THE THRILL IN THE AIR
AS WE'RE WAITING BACKSTAGE FOR THE CURTAIN TO RISE?
FACES AGLOW WITH THE FRUIT THAT THEY THROW!
IT'S A LIVING, AT LEAST.
FAMINE OR FEAST WE GO
ON WITH THE SHOW!

THERE'S NOTHING LIKE OPENING NIGHT!
THE THRILL OF THE CROWD.
THE CURTSIES... THE BOWS...
THERE'S NOTHING LIKE OPENING NIGHT!
THE COSTUMES, THE SETS!
THE MAKEUP, THE DEBTS!
WE EITHER HAVE FUN OR GO ON THE RUN!
THERE'S NOTHING LIKE OPENING NIGHT!

(MUSIC OUT. ENTER BILLY HUNTER, the Manager. Stands up on the picnic table, gesturing, a stack of paper in his hand.)

BILLY: Hey, gang, listen up.

(COMPANY gathers round, looking at each other. "What's the matter?" Conversation buzzes among them.)

Okay, everyone, settle down. I've got some good news and I've got some bad news.

OBEDIAH: Give us the good news first.

BILLY: The good news: I'll be able to pay everyone through the end of the week. The bad news is: After that, we're totally broke. The show is just not bringing in audiences anymore.

COMPANY MEMBER: It doesn't help any when you book us into Pocatello¹ four times in the same year!

ZANDER: So what does that mean? Are we out of business altogether?

BILLY: Unless we can find a new show – a better show– guaranteed to bring in people who want to pay money to see it, and in less than a week then, yes, I'm sorry, but Captain Billy's Traveling Theatre Company will be out of business. We've got enough money to get to Provo but then we'll have to disband. Sorry, guys. It's been great.

(Exit BILLY, trying to be stoic but we can sense he is very disappointed.)

OBEDIAH: So, I guess "the show must go on –"

ZANDER: "– if you have enough money."

OBEDIAH: Ah, my fake beard was getting itchy anyway. Hey, everyone, it's been fun, that's all I can say.

(OBEDIAH exits. The rest of the COMPANY exits, eventually leaving ZANDER and MEL alone on stage.)

MUSICAL #3 – "WE HAD A GREAT RUN"

ZANDER:

WE HAD A GREAT RUN –
DIDN'T WE?
YOU AND I.

MEL:

IT SURE WAS FUN –
WASN'T IT?
YOU AND I.

ZANDER:

ALL THE DIFFERENT PARTS WE PLAYED

MEL:

AT THE PITTANCE WE WERE PAID

TOGETHER:

I'LL MISS IT ALL...

MEL:

I WILL, TOO.
WE PLAYED SOME GOOD PARTS,
DIDN'T WE?
YOU AND I.

ZANDER:

WE BROKE OUR HEARTS–

MEL:

BUT ON THE STAGE.

¹ insert the name of your city or town

ZANDER: (speaks) Of course.
 ON THE STAGE.
 ALL THE LOVE SCENES WE PERFORMED
 AND THE LOVERS WE PORTRAYED?

MEL:
 I READ MY LINES.
 AND YOU READ YOURS.
 NOTHING MORE THAN THAT.

ZANDER: (speaks) Really?
 ALL THE DIFFERENT PARTS WE PLAYED

MEL:
 AT THE PITTANCE WE WERE PAID

TOGETHER:
 I'LL MISS IT ALL...

MEL:
 I WILL TOO.

ZANDER:
 BUT MOST OF ALL
 I WILL MISS... YOU.
(MUSIC out. MEL looks away. ZANDER is stunned.)

MEL: You said it.

ZANDER: Yes. Yes, I did. So what happens now?

MEL: *(quickly changes subject)* What do you mean? The show is over. We go our separate ways, don't we?

ZANDER: Yeah. I suppose we do. Unless, by some miracle, we can, like Billy said, "find a new show – a better show."

MUSICAL #4 – "BALLAD OF PARLEY P."

(Is it too corny to have a flash of light from off-stage, commensurate with: Enter BALLADEER strumming a guitar. As he sings, the Company is drawn back on stage, mesmerized.)

BALLADEER:
 O, GATHER ALL, NOW HAVE YOU HEARD?
 I'LL TELL THE STORY FREE
 OF HIM WHO SPREAD THE HOLY WORD
 THEY CALLED HIM PARLEY P.
 OF HIM WHO SPREAD THE WORD OF GOD
 HIS NAME WAS PARLEY P!

(OBEDIAH runs off stage, brings BILLY on to listen to this great story.)

ONE PARLEY PARKER PRATT: HIS NAME,
 A POET, PREACHER BOLD!

A MAN WHO SOUGHT NO WORLDLY FAME,
 WHOSE STORY MUST BE TOLD.
 HE WAS BORN IN BURLINGTON, NEW YORK,
 IN EIGHTEEN AND AUGHT FIVE.
 I'LL TELL HIS STORY LIKE HE'D WANT,
 IF HE WERE STILL ALIVE.

(LIGHTS change to suggest the passage of time. Now every member of the COMPANY is on stage, mesmerized by this wonderful story. We catch the BALLADEER singing the final line from the 'Finale'.)

**SEGUE TO:
 MUSICAL #4A – WE'LL MEET AGAIN (TAG)**

BALLADEER:

IN THE CLOUDS... WE'LL MEET... AGAIN.

(Final strum. At first nothing, everyone is so overcome. Then they all break into loud applause.)

OBEDIAH: *(to Billy)* What do you think? Is this the show you're looking for?

BILLY: It was... quite amazing.

(to Balladeer)

This... Parley Pratt... he was a real person?

BALLADEER: Indeed, he was.

OBEDIAH: So what do you think, Billy? Is that the kind of story that'll bring people back to the stage?

(A slight pause. BILLY looks at his COMPANY, who all seem very enthusiastic about the possibilities.)

BILLY: I think it is!

(COMPANY bursts out in simultaneous cheering and applause.)

Obed, you work on the script, and...

(Looks at the Balladeer.)

I don't think I know your name...

BALLADEER: Archer.

BILLY: Archer? Just that? Archer?

(BALLADEER doesn't answer. BILLY recovers with:)

Mel, you work with... Mister Archer... on the music. All right, everybody. It looks like we have ourselves a show!

(Company runs off happily in every direction, the BALLADEER going with Obediah.)

3 – ANOTHER AREA OF THE BACKSTAGE – LIGHTS up. BALLADEER sits on a stool, the COMPANY sitting around him. OBEDIAH is off to one side, writing frantically on pieces of

parchment. BALLADEER is teaching the song, "THE BALLAD OF PARLEY P! (SIBLINGS)" to the COMPANY.)

MUSICAL # 5 – BALLAD OF PARLEY P! (SIBLINGS)

BALLADEER:

NOW PARLEY P: THE THIRD OF FIVE
FROM JARED AND CHARITY.
THE ELDEST: ANSON, NELS THE LAST.
AND ORSON, WILL, WHO ROUNDED OUT
THE SIBLINGS OF PARLEY P.

(Change in tempo as COMPANY joins the Balladeer on stage.)

COMPANY:

THE WORD IS OUT, THEY ROUNDED OUT
THE SIBLINGS OF PARLEY P!

MEL: All right, everyone. I think we've got it. How's that script coming, Obed?

OBEDIAH: Hang on...

(OBEDIAH scribbles, others watch.)

almost there...

(OBEDIAH scribbles some more.)

Here it is! Copies for everyone. So, here's the first scene, based on the information our dear friend, Mr. Archer, has shared with us, of a play I am calling "The Ballad of Parley P." Everyone, please read the script as written while I and Jeremy lay out the approximate position of props and furniture.

(OBEDIAH and JEREMY, a stagehand, start laying out the "props" and "furniture:" boxes, stools, etc.)

BALLADEER: *(speaks to audience)* Soon after the final extract from his journal...

COMPANY MEMBER 1: ... President Parley P. Pratt left St. Louis, Missouri, for Arkansas...

COMPANY MEMBER 2: ... where he was followed by three men...

(The next three COMPANY members are the same three who will portray the characters they name.)

COMPANY MEMBER 3: ... James Cornell...

COMPANY MEMBER 4: ... and Amasa Howell...

COMPANY MEMBER 5: ... Hector McLean...

COMPANY: *(in unison)* ... who had previously declared their intention to kill him.

MUSICAL # 6 – "BALLAD OF PARLEY P! (FICTITIOUS CHARGES)"

BALLADEER:

THEY FIBBED A LOT
TO AID THEM IN THEIR DEVILISH DESIGNS,
A PHONY OLD CITATION CAME

AND HE COULDN'T PAY HIS FINES;
WAS ARRESTED IN THE MEANEST WAY
AND THRUST INTO A CELL!
WITHOUT A TRIAL!
ANOTHER HELL AND THAT'S WHERE HE AWAITS:

(speaks)

... hopefully...

VINDI... CA... TION.

4 – VAN BUREN JAIL

BALLADEER: *(speaks)* A jail. Van Buren, Arkansas, May 13, 1857.

(BALLADEER exits. PARLEY (portrayed by Zander) sits at a desk, writing with a pen in his journal. He writes a bit, then notices how dark it is. He finds a fake match in his pocket, strikes it against the table, and lights a lantern. ELDER GEORGE HIGGINSON (another Company member) is pacing back and forth nervously. PARLEY blows out the fake match and starts writing again. Without looking up, he speaks to Higginson. OBEDIAH, acting as director, remains on stage.)

PARLEY: Really, Higginson, surely you have something better to do than to pace back and forth like a caged animal?

HIGGINSON: But aren't we like caged animals, forced into this... this cage... not knowing our final outcome?

PARLEY: Yes, yes. You're right. We are rather like caged animals, aren't we? I apologize, brother. I suppose I am more used to incarceration than are you.

(OBEDIAH maneuvers the BALLADEER and some MUSICIANS into place.)

MUSICAL #7 – SERENITY

(When the singing begins, they play the first few lines but this can blend into a full orchestra. OBEDIAH sits nearby but not in direct light, watching the performances.)

PARLEY:

HOW LONG HAS IT BEEN?
 HOW MANY TIMES HAVE I BEEN IMPRISONED?
 THERE'S RICHMOND IN MISSOURI...
 AND COLUMBIA, BOONE COUNTY...
 AND LET US NOT FORGET OUR DEAR VAN BUREN –
 THAT'S THE ONE THAT YOU'RE IN.

WHEN I FIRST ACCEPTED JOSEPH'S CALL
 TO PREACH THE TRUTH TO ONE AND ALL,
 I KNEW THERE'D BE TRIAL AND TRIBULATION.
 JUST WHY SHOULD IT BE AN EASY TASK
 FOR ME WHEN HIS SERVANTS OF THE PAST
 GAVE THEIR LIVES TO BRING US TRUE SALVATION?

I NEVER THOUGHT THAT I WOULD BE
 FREE FROM ALL ADVERSITY.
 BUT SOMETIMES... I JUST WISH...

JUST WISH...
 THAT I COULD HAVE SOME SMALL...
 SOME SMALL...
 SERENITY!

HOW LONG HAS IT BEEN
 HOW MANY TIMES HAS IT BEEN
 THAT I'VE LIVED WITHIN A PRISON WALL?

OBEDIAH: Looking good, everyone. Let's take a break at this point. We're going to have a run-through in two days – I'll figure out the best place to insert that song. We still won't have all the props but I expect you to be off book. Can I get a promise from everyone?

COMPANY: *(as they leave)* "Promise." "Yeah." "I don't know about the others but I can." Etc.

5 – ANOTHER AREA OF THE STAGE

OBEDIAH: Elias, Henry, and Amos, can you stay behind for just a minute?

(ELIAS, HENRY, and AMOS, [the three actors who will portray Parley's three murderers] remain behind while the other members of the Company EXIT. Some stay behind just to watch.)

I wanted you three to stay behind because I've re-written your scene.

ELIAS: That's all right. None of us has the lines memorized anyway.

(ELIAS, HENRY, and AMOS share a slight laugh. OBEDIAH is not amused.)

OBEDIAH: It's important because your scene establishes why Parley is in jail in the first scene. So Elias, you're playing Hector McLean, the estranged husband of Parley's last wife. Here are your new lines.

(OBEDIAH hands out lines to all three.)

ELIAS: *(re: Amos)* Is Mel gonna play his wife?

OBEDIAH: Yes, but he don't have any love scenes together. He's the villain, after all.

(The OTHER TWO ACTORS rib Elias for this. He looks at them and THEY shut up.)

Anyway, here's the thing: Your character blames Parley for brainwashing his wife, leaving you, and marrying Parley. In reality, she left you because you are one mean task master. You've beat her. You treat her like a slave.

HENRY: Perfect casting, I'll tell you that much.

OBEDIAH: You and your two cohorts in crime, James Cornell, and Amasa Howell have been chasing Parley across the country. Your goal – at this point in the story, at least – is to find Parley Pratt and take him back to Missouri where there's an outstanding warrant for his arrest which you, McLean, were able to procure but only on the lesser charge of "theft of clothing." We learn in this scene that your real goal is to kill Parley Pratt for cuckolding you. All right, you're all gathered around a

campsite. It's morning. You're cooking breakfast over the campfire.

(pause)

Begin!

(Amos [playing CORNELL] pantomimes cooking over a campfire with one hand, his script in the other. The other two actors sit next to him.)

McLean is busy reading some letters and hardly pays attention to you two. Elias, I forgot to tell you. McLean is a Scotsman so I want to hear an accent.

(CORNELL begins the scene.)

CORNELL: He's sure got a funny name, I'll tell you that much. Parley P. Pratt. Ain't that a funny name?

McLEAN: *(to Cornell)* No funnier 'n yours.

CORNELL: What's so funny about James Cornell?

McLEAN: It's funny to me.

CORNELL: *(miffed)* It ain't funny to me.

HOWELL: I think it's funny, too.

CORNELL: *(to McLean)* So what happens if the judge don't find him guilty?

McLEAN: Let's find Pratt first. Then we'll worry about that.

CORNELL: But we're getting close, ain't we?

McLEAN: I can smell him, we're so close. Just got word from a source that he's made his way to Texas. When we find him, we just take him back to Missouri.

HOWELL: A fugitive from justice!

McLEAN: Yep. Between us and the Marshall, we'll find 'im.

HOWELL: But "theft of clothes?" You couldn't a come up with something better 'n that? They should string 'im up! Stealin' another man's wife!

CORNELL: Wife in name only. She ain't lived with you for three or four years.

(McLEAN goes nuts, grabs Cornell by the lapels, knocks him against a wall.)

McLEAN: She's my wife and she always will be until I say different! Understand?

CORNELL: I... I understand.

McLEAN: See that your understanding stays that way.

CORNELL: Yeah, yeah... Okay.

McLEAN: Okay.

CORNELL: Sure.

McLEAN: We almost had him in Saint Louie. And with the Marshall lookin' for 'im, too, we'll find him, lads. We'll find him.

HOWELL: But, but what if we don't?

CORNELL: And what if we do find him, but the judge lets him go?

(McLEAN pulls out a revolver from his holster and puts it on the table.)

McLEAN: The Unwritten Law.

MUSICAL #8 – THE UNWRITTEN LAW

McLEAN:

WE'LL GET 'IM, BOYS!
 GET 'IM IN OUR SIGHTS!
 WE'LL GET 'IM, BOYS!
 GET 'IM DEAD TO RIGHTS!
 IF THEY CAN'T KEEP HIM;
 IF THEY LET HIM GO,
 WON'T LOSE NO SLEEP!

CORNELL:

I HEAR ROPE IS CHEAP!

McLEAN:

WE'RE AFTER HIM UNTIL
 WE STRIKE THE FINAL BLOW.

WHEN JUSTICE FAILS
 THERE'S NO GOOD JAILS!
 BUT SOMEHOW
 THERE WILL ALWAYS BE...
 THE UNWRITTEN LAW.

WE'LL GET 'IM BOYS!
 HE WON'T GET AWAY!
 WE'LL HAVE HIM BOYS!
 IN OUR GRASP SOMEDAY!
 WHEN THAT DAY COMES
 WE'LL TAKE IT IN OUR HANDS.
 WHEN THAT OL' SCUM'S
 UNDER ALL OUR THUMBS,
 WE'LL FETCH THAT TAR AND FEATHERS
 RIGHT TO WHERE HE STANDS.

ALL THREE:

WHEN JUSTICE FAILS
 THERE'S NO GOOD JAILS!
 BUT SOMEHOW
 THERE WILL ALWAYS BE...
 THE UNWRITTEN LAW.

McLEAN:

THE UNWRITTEN LAW
 IS THE FINAL STRAW
 IF THE COURTS DON'T RULE
 THE WAY YOU WANT THEM TO.
 WHEN ONE MAN TAKES ANOTHER MAN'S WIFE
 HE HAS THE RIGHT TO TAKE HIS LIFE.

AND THAT'S JUST WHAT I'LL DO!

WE'LL GET 'IM, BOYS!

CORNELL & HOWELL:

GET 'IM IN OUR SIGHTS!

McLEAN:

WE'LL GET 'IM, BOYS!

WE'LL GET 'IM DEAD TO RIGHTS!

ALL:

HE'LL PAY JUST LIKE
THOSE OTHER MORMONITES!
HE'LL RUE THE DAY
THAT HE CAME OUR WAY.
WE'LL FILL HIM UP UNTIL
HE'S HAD HIS FILL OF LEAD.
WE'LL GET 'IM DEAD!

6 – BACKSTAGE (MUCH LATER) – Enter OBEDIAH.

OBEDIAH: All right, everybody. Rehearsals've been going well. We're gonna to start the run-through in five minutes.

(OBEDIAH exits. ZANDER and MEL find each other on the stage.)

ZANDER: *(to Mel)* What do you think?

MEL: About what?

ZANDER: The new play.

MEL: I like it a lot. That Parley P. Pratt fellow was quite an interesting guy.

ZANDER: Twelve wives he had.

MEL: Not all at the same time.

ZANDER: Excuse me. Ten at the same time. More power to him, that's all I can say. I think it's hard enough handling one woman, let alone ten.

MEL: That scene, where you talk about Thankful, Parley's first wife, and her death... Well, it's very touching.

ZANDER: And you're doing an excellent Thankful. All right, let's talk about it.

MEL: Talk about what?

ZANDER: You know what about. Our undeclared love for each other.

MEL: Oh, is that what it is?

ZANDER: We were going to go our separate ways until we found a show. We found a show. We'll be together through the end of the summer at least.

MEL: True, and like I said, we're both doing great—

ZANDER: Mel, I love you! If this were a play, my dialogue wouldn't have been so mundane. I would

have danced around everything and not said the word. But this is real life. And in this real life, Mel Laughton, I am in love with you. Have been for quite a while.

MEL: Zander... I...

ZANDER: What?

MEL: I...

ZANDER: You don't want to hurt my feelings.

MEL: Something like that.

ZANDER: That's okay--

MEL: Zander, I--

ZANDER: No, it's all right. All right. I can wait.

MEL: But, like I said, I really like the way you're portraying Parley.

(pause)

What do you think about him?

ZANDER: Very interesting. Well-written character. Flamboyant--

MEL: No, I mean, the man himself. His message?

ZANDER: You mean his religion? Bunch of nonsense.

MEL: Is it?

ZANDER: Mel, he believes in this Joseph Smith guy, who claims to have received this Golden Bible and translated it. Are you telling me you believe that?

MEL: I... don't know.

OBEDIAH: All right, everyone, time to start the run through. Remember. Off script.

(Zander stays on stage. Mel leaves. Actor playing Higginson sits on a stool before Zander.)

7 – VAN BUREN JAIL – PARLEY (Zander) reads to HIGGINSON from his journal.

PARLEY: Parentage. Childhood. Youth. Education. I was born on April twelve, eighteen aught seven, in Burlington, Otsego County, New York. Of my youth I will say but little... except that, through the efforts of my sainted mother, and through limited formal education, I always had a book in my hands!

MUSICAL #9 – BALLAD OF PARLEY P! (EDUCATION)

(LIGHTS up on BALLADEER, entering.)

BALLADEER:

NOW PARLEY PRATT, SO SOME HAVE CLAIMED
WAS WISE BEYOND HIS YEARS.

WHENCE CAME HIS THIRST FOR KNOWLEDGE GAINED?
FROM SHE WHO LOVED HIM FIERCE!

(BALLADEER exits.)

8 – AUNT LAVINA’S FARM

PARLEY: In the sixteenth year of my life, I boarded out to one of my aunts–

Enter AUNT LAVINA and YOUNG PARLEY, 10. She is very prim and proper, hair in a bun, that sort of thing. Young Parley squirms as she buttons up his winter coat and fastens a hat to his head, concurrent with the following dialog.

– my father’s sister – by the name of Lavina Van Cott. She was an excellent and kind-hearted woman,

Aunt Lavina hears “kind-hearted woman,” turns to Older Parley, narrating, smiles, then goes back to getting Young Parley ready for winter.

And acted as a mother to me, the winter I boarded there. I spent most of my time in school, and it was my last opportunity to improve my education by any means, except my own unaided exertion.

YOUNG PARLEY runs off to become part of the next scene and AUNT LAVINA exits.

While at this school, and by close application, I made such extraordinary progress that the teacher often spoke of me to the whole school.

9 – PARLEY’S SCHOOL**MUSICAL # 10 – LIKE PARLEY**

(Enter SCHOOL TEACHER and STUDENTS surrounding YOUNG PARLEY, who is already there, all bringing on their own chairs and desks. Chair face upstage, TEACHER faces downstage. TEACHER sings to the audience as if they were the students also in the classroom.)

TEACHER:

IF ALL OF YOU COULD LEARN... LIKE PARLEY,
AND CEASE YOUR CURRENT COURSE... LIKE PARLEY.
YOU CAN TURN YOUR LIVES AROUND
AND BE MEN OF GREAT RENOWN.
REFRAIN, YOU’LL REMAIN
UN-LIKE PARLEY.

STUDENTS: WE... HATE PARLEY!

(TEACHER turns to see if he heard correctly. STUDENTS act as if nothing has happened.)

TEACHER:

TO DO IMPORTANT THINGS... LIKE PARLEY,

JUST REFRAIN FROM MISCHIEF, ALL... LIKE PARLEY.
 BUT IF NOT, YOU'RE SURE TO FIND
 THAT THE WORLD WILL STEAL YOU BLIND.
 IF YOU DON'T,
 YOU'LL END
 NOT LIKE PARLEY!

STUDENTS:

WE... HATE PARLEY!
 PARLEY WON'T LAUGH AT A DIRTY JOKE.
 GIVE HIM A PIPE AND HE WON'T SMOKE.
 WON'T TAKE A SWIM IF HE'S WEARING HIS BIRTHDAY SUIT.
 PARLEY WITH A GUN? O, MY!
 HE'LL SHOOT OUT YOUR EYE.
 SO PARLEY GETS THE BOOT.

WE DO NOT WANT TO LEARN...
 LIKE PARLEY,
 WE LIKE OUR CURRENT COURSE...
 (UN)LIKE PARLEY.
 YOU WON'T TURN OUR LIVES AROUND
 'CAUSE WE'D RATHER ACT THE CLOWN
 REFRAINING, REMAINING,
 UN-LIKE PARLEY.

TEACHER: (at the same time as STUDENTS)

TO DO IMPORTANT THINGS...
 LIKE PARLEY,
 JUST REFRAIN FROM MISCHIEF ALL,
 LIKE PARLEY.
 BUT IF NOT, YOU SURE TO FIND
 THAT THE WORLD WILL STEAL YOU BLIND.
 REFRAINING, ABSTAINING,

THE PAIN WILL REMAIN,
 UN-LIKE PARLEY!

STUDENTS:

NO! NO!
 NOT LIKE PARLEY!
 OH NO!
 NOT LIKE PARLEY!
 OH COULD YOU SEE US?
 YOU'D HATE TO BE US!

THE PAIN OF ABSTAINING,
 THE PAIN OF REMAINING
 LIKE PARLEY!

(Exit TEACHER and STUDENTS.)

10 – AUNT LAVINIA'S FARM

PARLEY: When Spring returned, I commenced assisting my cousin William Pratt—

(Enter WILLIAM PRATT with farming tools which he uses underscoring Parley's dialogue.)

– in the cultivation of my Aunt's farm until September, and then worked for the next three years, endeavoring to earn enough money to pay for a seventy-acre farm that Will and I had bought.

(Exit PARLEY. WILLIAM "cultivates" for a while. PARLEY enters, carrying some papers in his hand. Upon seeing this, WILLIAM gets excited, sets his hoe aside.)

WILLIAM PRATT: Is that it? Have the papers come?

PARLEY: Don't get so excited, Cuz. Let's open it first.

(PARLEY leads them to an overturned bucket, sits, stares at the letters.)

WILLIAM PRATT: Don't sit there like a log. Open it.

PARLEY: Don't get your hopes up, that's all I'm saying.

WILLIAM PRATT: Well, I'm saying, "Open the letter and let's go cash the check so we can finish paying for this farm."

PARLEY: All right, here goes nothing.

(He opens the letter. WILLIAM reads it over Parley's shoulder. His enthusiasm fades quickly. He picks up his hoe, pats Parley on the shoulder, and exits.)

11 – VAN BUREN JAIL

PARLEY: *(to Higginson)* And so it was that on the Fourth of July, eighteen hundred and twenty-seven, at the age of twenty, I resolved to return to my native country, from which I had been absent several years. For there was one there whom my heart had long loved, and from whom I would not have been so long separated, except by the gravest misfortune.

12 – ON THE ROAD HOME -- *Members of the COMPANY enter, face the audience, as PARLEY moves to another part of the stage. Each sentence is said by one member of the company while facing the audience, after which they turn and exit.*

COMPANY MEMBER 1: Eighteen twenty-seven.

COMPANY MEMBER 2: Revisit Canaan, New York.

COMPANY MEMBER 3: Interesting meeting.

COMPANY MEMBER 4: Description of my wife -- Thankful Halsey Pratt.

(COMPANY MEMBER 4 hands Parley a bouquet of flowers and exits. PARLEY exits.)

13 – THANKFUL’S HOUSE**MUSICAL #11 – I’M THANKFUL**

(LIGHTS up on THANKFUL (Mel), at a dressing table, fixing her hair.)

THANKFUL:

WHEN I THINK
OF ALL THE BLESSINGS
THAT FILL MY LIFE EACH DAY

I SCARCE CAN KEEP
MY GRATITUDE AT BAY.
AND OF SUCH
THERE ARE SO MANY
MORE THAN I’LL EVER NAME,
BUT TODAY I CAN
WITH GRATEFULNESS PROCLAIM:
I AM THANKFUL!

(Enter PARLEY, who knocks on the door.

SFX: KNOCKING ON DOOR.

THANKFUL takes a brush to fix her hair, etc. PARLEY, pacing, nervous.)

MUSICAL #12 – WHAT WILL I SAY?**THANKFUL:**

WHAT WILL HE SAY?
IF HE ASKS FOR MY HAND.
WHAT SHOULD I SAY?

THANKFUL:

WHAT WILL HE DO?
WHEN HE TELLS ME OF HIS PLAN?
WHAT WILL I DO?
YES! YES!
OF COURSE I’LL SAY, “YES!”
HOW CAN I NOT?
HE’S SUCH A PERFECT MATCH
I’VE LOVED HIM LO,
THESE THREE YEARS GONE
HE’S SUCH A PERFECT CATCH!

PARLEY:

WHAT WILL SHE SAY?
IF I ASK FOR HER HAND.
WHAT WILL I SAY?
WHAT SHOULD I DO?

PARLEY:

WHAT WILL SHE DO?
WHEN I TELL HER OF MY PLAN?
WHAT WILL SHE DO?
YES! YES!
OF COURSE SHE’LL SAY, “YES!”
HOW CAN SHE NOT?
I’M SUCH A PERFECT MATCH
I’VE LOVED HER LO,
THESE THREE YEARS GONE
I’M SUCH A PERFECT CATCH!

PARLEY:

THANKFUL IS TALL, OF A SLENDER FRAME,
HER FACE OF AN OVAL SHAPE.
HER EYES ARE LARGE AND THEIR COLOR DARK.
HER SKIN AS SMOOTH AS A GRAPE.
I'LL NOT FORGET THAT LONG BLACK HAIR
THAT SHINES IN THE STAR-FILLED NIGHT.
HER INDUSTRY, AND HER CHEERFULNESS
ARE BOUNDLESS, WIDE AS THE SKY.

THANKFUL:

HIS EYES ARE BROWN, WITH A GENTLE GLANCE THAT SAYS
THERE'S NOTHING BENEATH HIS GAZE.
I'VE NEVER MET A MORE INTELLIGENT MAN
AND PROB'LY WON'T IN ALL MY DAYS.
AND WHEN PARLEY SPEAKS, THE THINGS HE SAYS
I CAN HARDLY GRASP THEM ALL.
HE HAS THE GIFT OF GAB FOR SURE
AND ALWAYS I'M ENTHRALLED.

THANKFUL:

HOW WILL I ACT?

PARLEY:

HOW SHOULD I ACT?

BOTH:

WILL I LIVE TO RUE THE DAY
HOW WILL I ACT?
WHAT WILL I SAY?

(By now, THANKFUL has made her way to where PARLEY waits nervously. PARLEY sees her, stands, practically drops his bouquet. He offers her a seat. Sits next to her, then suddenly rises, walks a few steps away.)

THANKFUL: You've... changed.

(PARLEY turns to look at her, realizes she is talking about the addition of facial hair.)

PARLEY: You mean this? The beard? I grew it to look more mature. But, if you don't like, off it goes.

THANKFUL: You look like your father.

PARLEY: Then it's gone... as soon as I get my hands on sufficient funds to pay a barber. You've changed as well, but all for the better, I now see.

THANKFUL: Why, thank you. Uh, Parley?

PARLEY: Y- yes?

THANKFUL: *(pointing)* The flowers?

(PARLEY looks at the bouquet of flowers as if he's never seen it before.)

PARLEY: Oh, yes. Yes!

THANKFUL: They're gorgeous. I'll put them in a vase momentarily. So, your time away? Did you

succeed in making your “station in life.” I think that’s what you called it before you left.

PARLEY: No, not completely, as I’m sure you’ve been able to ascertain from all the letters I’ve been writing you during this time. Who am I fooling? I’ve completely and utterly failed. I shall never own a farm.

THANKFUL: Farms. I’ve never had much fondness for farms.

PARLEY: That’s good. That’s good. It didn’t appeal to me too much, either. But though I may be currently a poor man, I have very solid prospects.

THANKFUL: Go on.

PARLEY: Yes. My prospects. I plan to... uh... take up the trade of Tin Peddler.

THANKFUL: Tin. Peddler. I admit to being somewhat nonplussed as to the kind of profession it is.

PARLEY: It is the kind of profession that requires a certain amount of travel. One obtains a certain amount of tinware from the larger cities, outfits a horse and buggy with them, and travels from town to town... peddling... tin.

THANKFUL: And if one doesn’t yet possess a horse and buggy?

PARLEY: Oh, no problem at all. One fills a back pack and... uh...

THANKFUL: ... walks...

PARLEY: ... walks... with a pack... peddling tin.

THANKFUL: How does one procure enough money to buy the tin that one peddles?

PARLEY: That... that’s the best part! One doesn’t have to actually buy the tin. One represents the real owner – the manufacturer in most cases – sells the tin and then returns to settle accounts with the original owner. I realize it is not an ideal profession for someone wishing to start a family—

THANKFUL: You’re wishing to start a family?

PARLEY: Uh, yes... Eventually...

THANKFUL: And with whom do you plan to start a family?

PARLEY: If you still love me and desire to share my fortune, you are worthy to be my wife.

THANKFUL: And what if I’m not “worthy” to be you wife?

PARLEY: If not, we will agree to be friends forever; but part to meet no more in time.

(THANKFUL can’t hide it any longer; laughs.)

THANKFUL: I have loved you during three years’ absence and I never can be happy without you.

(PARLEY rises, takes her in his arms, swings her, and when she comes down they are both in a different scene:)

14 – PARLEY’S FIRST MARRIAGE – Enter ELDER PALMER. PARLEY and THANKFUL move in front of ELDER PALMER, who opens a Bible. BALLADEER enters.

MUSICAL #13 – THE BALLAD OF PARLEY P. (FIRST MARRIAGE)

BALLADEER:

AND SO IT WAS, SEPTEMBER NINE,
IN EIGHTEEN TWENTY-SEV’N

THEY TWO WERE MARRIED, THOUGH FOR TIME
AND JUST A GLIMPSE OF HEAV'N.
THEY TWO WERE MARRIED, THOUGH FOR TIME
BUT JUST A GLIMPSE OF HEAV'N.

(LIGHTS out abruptly, except on PARLEY, as everyone exits. LIGHTS up on:)

15 – VAN BUREN JAIL

PARLEY: After waiting eleven years to give birth to our first child ... a son ... she died but a scant three hours afterwards.

(THANKFUL and TWO CHILDREN ENTER and act out Parley's dialogue.)

PARLEY: How often in my sleeping visions do I see my beloved wife, or my playful children surrounded with the pleasures of home in our sweet little cottage, or walk with them in some pleasant grove or flowery field, as in years past.

MUSICAL #14 – WHY CAN'T WE CALL IT LOVE

(CHILDREN exit. THANKFUL freezes, facing forward.)

PARLEY:

IF ALL WE HAVE
IS HERE AND NOW,
WHY CAN'T THAT BE ENOUGH?

THANKFUL:

IF ALL WE KNOW
ARE THE THINGS WE SEE . . .
WHY CAN'T WE CALL IT LOVE?

PARLEY and THANKFUL:

IF GOD CAN GIVE
US OUR THERE AND THEN
IF ONLY TEMPORARILY,
THEN LET US MAKE
OF THIS MOMENT NOW
OUR OWN ETERNITY.

PARLEY:

MUST EVERYTHING LAST FOREVER?
IS THERE NO BEAUTY IN A DYING ROSE?

THANKFUL:

MUST ALL WE LOVE BE OURS
FOR NOW AND EVER?
WHY CAN'T WE FIND FOREVER IN THE MELTING SNOWS?

PARLEY and THANKFUL:

IF ALL WE KNOW
IS HERE AND NOW
WHY CAN'T THAT BE ENOUGH?
IF ALL WE HAVE
ARE THE THINGS WE SEE . . .
WHY CAN'T WE CALL IT LOVE?

(THANKFUL slips into darkness and PARLEY is left alone in the Van Buren Jail.)

16 – OHIO – PRATT HOME – PARLEY starts reading from his journal but then members of the COMPANY take over and he is drowned out. The journal entries are read by COMPANY MEMBERS who then stay on stage to become part of Parley's scene with Rigdon.

PARLEY: August eighteen-thirty. Our Home...

COMPANY MEMBERS: *(together)* ... New Sect. Progressive Religious Views. Forsake My Home. Journey to New York. Public Ministry. Strange Book. First Interview with a Latter-day Saint.

(PARLEY closes journal.)

PARLEY: Some eighteen months after our marriage, when my wife and I had repaired to Ohio there to commence our life together, there came into our town an itinerant preacher by the name of Sidney Rigdon.

(SIDNEY RIGDON in the attitude of preaching from an open Bible to a FOLLOWERS made up of other Company members. PARLEY hovers near the edge of the crowd.)

At length we went to hear him speak, and what was my astonishment when I heard him preach...

MUSICAL #15 – WHO CAN TELL?

RIGDON:

OH WE MIGHT SEE HIS COMING.
YES, WE MIGHT SEE THE DAY
WHEN WE MIGHT SEE HIS HEAVEN, LORD,
YES WE MIGHT SEE THE DAY!

FOLLOWERS:

OH, WE MIGHT SEE HIS COMING.
YES, WE MIGHT SEE THE DAY!
YES, WE MIGHT SEE HIS COMING, LORD,
HOLY JESUS IS HIS NAME!

OH, WE MIGHT SEE HIS COMING.
YES, WE MIGHT SEE THE DAY!
YES, WE MIGHT SEE HIS COMING, LORD,

HOLY JESUS IS HIS NAME!

OH, WE MIGHT BE COMIN' ON OUR WAY TO GLORY!
 YES, WE MIGHT BE COMIN', WHO CAN TELL?
 YES, WE MIGHT BE COMIN' ON OUR
 WAY TO GLORY,
 YES, WE MIGHT BE COM-IN', WHO CAN TELL?
 WHO CAN TELL?
 WHO CAN TELL?
 WHO CAN TELL?

RIGDON and FOLLOWERS:

THAT WE MIGHT BE COMIN' ON OUR WAY TO GLORY,
 IF WE LEARN TO LIVE BY GRACE ALONE! (GRACE ALONE!)
 YES, WE MIGHT BE COMIN' ON OUR WAY TO GLORY!
 HOPE AND PRAY THAT WE ARE NOT ALONE!

RIGDON: (simultaneously with FOLLOWERS)

THAT WE MIGHT BE COMIN'
 ON OUR WAY TO GLORY,
 IF WE LEARN TO LIVE BY
 GRACE ALONE!
 YES, WE MIGHT BE COMIN'
 ON OUR WAY TO GLORY!
 HOPE AND PRAY THAT
 WE ARE NOT ALONE!

FOLLOWERS:

OH, WE MIGHT
 SEE HIS COMING.
 YES, WE MIGHT
 SEE THE DAY!
 YES, WE MIGHT
 SEE HIS HEAVEN, LORD,
 HOLY JESUS
 IS HIS NAME!
 WHO CAN TELL?

WHO CAN TELL?

WHO CAN TELL?

WHO CAN TELL?

WHO CAN TELL?

WHO CAN TELL?

(MUSIC out. RIGDON and FOLLOWERS freeze. Tableau: RIGDON, hands aloft, Bible in one hand; the FOLLOWERS in various stages of religious ecstasy: hands above their heads, others clasping their hands, some in the attitude of prayer. PARLEY speaks to the frozen Rigdon.)

PARLEY: Peter proclaimed this gospel, and baptized for the remission of sins, and promised the gift of the Holy Ghost, because he was commissioned so to do by a crucified and risen Savior. But who ordained you? Why, the Baptists of course! And you have left them because they did not administer the true gospel. It might be said, then, with propriety: "Peter I know, and Paul I know, but, Sidney Rigdon, who art thou?"

(RIGDON and FOLLOWERS unfreeze and exit as PARLEY finishes addressing HIGGINSON. Scene changes so that they are both now on:)

17 – A FERRY BOAT

PARLEY: However, we were thankful for even the forms of truth, as none could claim the power, and authority, and gifts of the Holy Ghost – a least so far as we knew. About this time I too it upon myself to impart to my neighbors, both in public and in private, the light which I had received from the Scriptures concerning the fulfillment of the things spoken by the holy prophets. I claimed no authority as a minister; I felt the lack in this respect but I felt in duty bound to enlighten mankind, so far as God had enlightened me. In accordance with this determination, in August, eighteen thirty, I closed my business, and we bid adieu to our wilderness home and never saw it afterwards. On settling up, at a great sacrifice of property, we had about ten dollars left in cash. With this tidy little sum, we launched forth into the cold, cruel, world, determining first to visit our native place, and then such other places as I might be led to by the Holy Spirit. Arriving at Rochester, a trip which cost us all our money and some articles of clothing, I informed my wife that–

(HIGGINSON exits. THANKFUL enters.)

Our... our trip has been paid through the whole distance.

THANKFUL: Yes, I understand that.

PARLEY: So, surely, you shouldn't mind that... that I... uh... that I stop awhile in this area and... and... uh... preach.

(THANKFUL is speechless.)

Why, I know not, only that it has been manifest to me by the Holy Spirit.

THANKFUL: Let me see if I understand this correctly. You wish to leave me alone on this boat filled with total strangers, to take the rest of our trip by myself, without any money, while you, also without any money, want to stay here a while and preach, neither of us knowing when we will see each other again?

PARLEY: That is exactly it.

THANKFUL: If you accompany me as far as Newark, I will agree.

(LIGHTS out on Thankful.)

PARLEY: *(to Higginson)* I accompanied her as far as Newark, a small town upwards of one hundred miles from Buffalo, and then took leave of her.

18 – NEWARK, NEW JERSEY – HAMLIN'S HOME – PARLEY walks to a different part of the stage.

PARLEY: It was early in the morning, just at the dawn of day, and I walked ten miles into the country, and stopped to breakfast with a Mr. Wells.

(Enter MR. WELLS, accompanying Parley as he describes.)

I proposed to preach in the evening, so Mr. Wells readily accompanied me through the neighborhood to visit the people, and to circulate the appointment.

(Enter DEACON HAMLIN, an old man in his 60's, carrying a short stool on

which he sits. He cuts some pieces of tobacco with a pen knife, puts a piece in his mouth, starts to chew.)

In the course of so doing, we visited an old Baptist deacon by the name of Hamlin. After hearing of our appointment for evening, he began to tell of...

HAMLIN: A book, a STRANGE BOOK, a VERY STRANGE BOOK!

(Spits out a long string of imaginary tobacco juice into the pitcher, now acting as a spittoon.)

This here book, or so says the young feller what sold it to me, was written on plates o' gold, by a branch of the tribes of Israel. And these plates, they was discovered and translated by a young feller out Palmyra way, in the State of New York, by the aid of visions!

(Just hearing this seems to hit PARLEY between the eyes.)

PARLEY: Where may I obtain a copy of the book?

(HAMLIN looks PARLEY up and down.)

HAMLIN: Well, you look to be a fine young feller. You come back tomorra, I reckon I'll give ya a gander at it.

PARLEY: *(to Higginson)* The next morning I called at his house, where, for the first time, my eyes beheld the Book of Mormon.

(Pause, retrieves a Book of Mormon from his bag.)

MUSICAL #16 – A BOOK / TRUE RELIGION

PARLEY: I thanked Deacon Hamlin for the book, walked directly into the forest, sat down on the first tree stump I could find and commenced the book's contents by course.

THIS BOOK! THIS BOOK!
 A MAN GAVE ME A BOOK.
 WHEN I READ IT, I INSTANTLY WAS FREED!
 WHERE I HAD BEEN BLIND BEFORE, NOW I COULD SEE!
 ALL DAY I READ IT; READ PAST THE TWILIGHT,
 FORGETTING MY PLIGHT,
 GOD HAD SENT ME WHAT I NEED.
 THE WORDS OF MOTHER ECHOED OFF THE PAGE
 LIKE NOTHING HAD BEFORE.
 EV'RY WORD I FOUND THERE
 MADE ME ACHE FOR MORE!

TRUE RELIGION.
 TRUE RELIGION.
 AT LAST I'D FOUND IT;
 THIS BOOK THAT WORKED A CHANGE IN ME.

FOR AS I READ, THE SPIRIT CAME
 AND WHISPERED IN MY EAR CHRIST'S NAME.

I KNEW FOR SURE FROM WHENCE THIS BOOK HAD COME.
 TRUE RELIGION.
 TRUE RELIGION.
 AT LAST I'D FOUND IT:
 A BOOK HAD CHANGED MY LIFE – AGAIN!

I'D READ THE BIBLE, LOVED THE LORD,
 AND NOW HE GAVE ME THIS REWARD!
 I USED TO THINK GOD'S SPEAKING WAS ALL DONE.
 I LEARNED THAT HE RETURNED TO EARTH
 TO MY CONTINENT OF MY BIRTH
 TO GIVE TO ALL HIS PLAN.
 SO, WITH THE WINGS OF MORNING NOW
 THERE WERE NO BARRIERS TO HIM.
 HOW HE TOOK THE WINGS OF MORNING
 SHINING AS CREATION!

AND AGES PASSED, AS AGES MUST,
 WHILE NATIONS SLUMBERED IN THE DUST
 THE HOLY BIBLE LOST ITS SIMPLE, PLAIN TRANSLATION.
 THE BOOK OF MORMON DID REVEAL
 THE GOSPEL'S TRUTH: THAT CHRIST IS REAL.
 IT SPEAKS WITH THUNDER, NOW TO EACH AND EV'RY NATION.

IT SPEAKS OF JESUS, AND NEW APOSTLES,
 OH, HOW I LOVE THEM MORE THAN I HAD EVER KNOWN!
 I LOVE THE MASTER.
 MY LIFE IS HIS AGAIN
 AND ALL BECAUSE
 THERE WAS
 THIS BOOK!

(MUSIC out.)

19 – VAN BUREN JAIL – PARLEY addresses HIGGINSON.

PARLEY: I soon determined to meet the young man who had been instrumental in the book's discovery and translation. I accordingly visited the village of Palmyra and inquired as to the residence of Mr. Joseph Smith. I found it some two miles out of town, and as I approached it toward evening, I overtook a man driving some cattle.

20 – PALMYRA – Enter **HYRUM SMITH**. **PARLEY**, with the *Book of Mormon* in hand, moves to meet him.

PARLEY: Excuse me, Sir, could you direct me to the residence of Mr. Joseph Smith, the translator of the Book of Mormon?

HYRUM: I'm sorry, Sir but he is in Pennsylvania for the next few weeks.

PARLEY: Pennsylvania? But that's over a hundred miles from here. Is any of his family nearby? His father perhaps--?

HYRUM: I'm his brother, Hyrum Smith.

PARLEY: You're his brother? This is indeed an honor, Sir-- Wait! Wait! Hyrum Smith, did you say?

(PARLEY opens the Book of Mormon to the front pages.)

The same Hyrum Smith who says herein that he saw the gold plates and handled them?

HYRUM: One and the same.

PARLEY: Then I am doubly honored, Sir! To receive such a blessing!

HYRUM: Have you read the book?

PARLEY: Oh, yes, and I believe the book. I read it straight through in a single sitting and know it to be the word of God. I have come all this way that I may meet Joseph Smith and learn more of the book.

(Some chairs are brought in and they sit. HYRUM has a Book of Mormon from which he pantomimes preaching to Parley.)

He welcomed me to his house, where he laid before me the particulars of the discovery of the book; its translation; the rise of the Church of Latter-day Saints, as it was then called, and the commission of his brother Joseph, and others, by revelation and the ministering of angels, by which the apostleship had been again restored to the earth. After duly weighing the whole matter in my mind I saw clearly that these things were true; and that myself and the whole world were without baptism, and without the ministry and ordinances of God; and had been in this condition since the days that inspiration and revelation had ceased – in short, that this was a new dispensation to prepare the way before the second coming of the Lord.

(Exit HYRUM.)

In the morning, I was compelled to take leave of this worthy gentleman and his family as I had to hasten back some thirty miles on foot to fulfill an appointment to preach that evening.

(PARLEY takes the Bible, preaches to an imaginary crowd.)

“Men and brethren, what shall we do?” And Peter answered them, saying, “Repent and be baptized.” This is the way of the Gospel, my friends! Do not continue to embrace your dead religions with their dead ordinances. For, verily, they are a “form of godliness, but deny the power thereof.”

(to himself)

“The power thereof” ... There's the difference. I may believe from now till doomsday, but I have no power. Surely my preaching is as tinkling cymbals, signifying nothing. I must have this power!

(to Higginson)

I then returned immediately to Hyrum Smith's house and demanded baptism at his hands. I tarried with him that night, and the next day we walked some twenty-five miles...

(They “walk” 25 miles to the residence of Mr. Peter Whitmer, in Seneca County.)

21 – WHITMER’S HOME – SENECA LAKE

PARLEY: We rested that night, and on the next day, being about the first of September, eighteen thirty, I was baptized by an Elder of the Church named Oliver Cowdery. This took place in Seneca Lake, a beautiful and transparent sheet of water in Western New York.

(Enter COMPANY who act out in pantomime what Parley describes.)

A meeting was held the same evening, and after singing a hymn and prayer, Elder Cowdery and others proceeded to lay their hands on me in the name of Jesus, for the gift of the Holy Ghost. After which I was ordained to the office of an Elder.

(Exit COMPANY.)

I had found the missing link! The chain was now complete!

22 – VAN BUREN JAIL – Parley reads from the journal.

PARLEY: “October, eighteen thirty. Mission to the Western States. Wonderful Success in Kirtland. Imprisonment. Mock Trial. Ingenious Escape.”

(PARLEY puts away the journal, rummages in the bag for a copy of the Doctrine and Covenants, opens it to read to Higginson.)

“And now, concerning my servant Parley P. Pratt, behold, I say unto him that as I live I will that he shall declare my gospel and learn of me, and be meek and lowly of heart. “And that which I have appointed unto him is that he shall go with my servants, Oliver Cowdery...

(Enter OLIVER COWDERY, who stands and faces the audience.)

... and Peter Whitmer, Junior...

(Enter PETER WHITMER, JR, who stands next to Cowdery, facing the audience.)

...into the wilderness. And Ziba Peterson...

(Enter ZIBA PETERSON, who stands next to Peter Whitmer, Jr., the three of them forming a straight line facing the audience.)

... also shall go with them; and I myself will go with them and be in their midst... and nothing shall prevail against them.”

(to Higginson)

Making arrangements for my wife in the family of the Whitmers, we took leave of our friends and the church late in October, and started on foot.

23 – SIDNEY RIGDON’S HOME – PARLEY leads the group a few steps across the stage. Enter SIDNEY RIGDON, opposite end of stage. RIGDON and COMPANY act out the story that Parley recounts.

PARLEY: At length we called on Mr. Rigdon who received us cordially. He soon came to believe in the truth of our message. We proceeded to ordain Sidney Rigdon, Isaac Morley, John Murdock, Lyman Wight, Edward Partridge and many others to the ministry; and, leaving them to take care of the churches and to minister the gospel, we took leave of the saints and continued our journey.

(Picks up the Book of Mormon)

24 – SIMEON CARTER’S HOME

PARLEY: We had stopped for the night at the house of Simeon Carter, by whom we were kindly received, and were in the very act of reading to him and explaining the Book of Mormon, when there came a knock at the door...

(SFX: POUNDING ON DOOR.)

and an officer entered...

(Enter BYINGTON.)

with a warrant from a magistrate by the name of...

BYINGTON: Byington. I’m here to arrest you on a very frivolous charge.

(PARLEY pantomimes the actions in this next paragraph.)

PARLEY: I dropped the Book of Mormon in Carter’s house...

(drops the Book of Mormon)

And went with him some two miles, in a dark, muddy road...

25 – ON A DARK AND MUDDY ROAD – Parley pantomimes walking in deep mud, while his three companions stand by, watching. Parley, stops, glares at Ziba Peterson.

PARLEY: ...Ziba Peterson accompanying me.

(ZIBA realizes he missed his cue, so jumps in to pantomime the trek with Parley. COWDERY and WHITMER shrug, then exit.)

26 – THE PLACE OF TRIAL

PARLEY: We arrived at the place of trial late in the evening; found false witnesses in attendance.

(Enter FALSE WITNESSES and a JUDGE.)

... and a Judge who boasted of his intention to...

JUDGE: ... thrust you into prison, for the purpose of testing the powers of your apostleship...

PARLEY: ... as he called it; although I was only an Elder at the time. The judge boasting thus, and the witnesses being entirely false in their testimony, I concluded to make no defense, but to treat the whole matter with the contempt it deserved. I was soon ordered...

JUDGE: ... to prison, or to pay a sum of money...

PARLEY: ... which I had not in the world. It was now a late hour, and I was still retained in court, tantalized, abused and continuously urged to...

JUDGE: ... pay the money, pay the money...

PARLEY: ... to all of which I made no reply for some time. This greatly exhausted their patience. It was near midnight. I now called on brother Petersen to sing a hymn in the court. We sung:

MUSICAL # 17 – “O, HOW HAPPY ARE THEY”

(PARLEY tries to get the imaginary court to join with him, to no avail.)

PARLEY and PETERSEN:

O HOW HAPPY ARE THEY
WHO THE SAVIOR OBEY,
AND HAVE LAID UP THEIR TREASURE ABOVE!
TONGUE CAN NEVER EXPRESS
THE SWEET COMFORT AND PEACE
OF A SOUL IN ITS EARLIEST LOVE.

PARLEY: *(speaks)* This exasperated them still more, and they pressed us greatly to settle the business, by paying the money. I then observed as follows: “May it please the court, I have one proposal to make for a final settlement of the things that seem to trouble you. It is this: if the witnesses who have given testimony in the case will repent of their false swearing, and the magistrate of his unjust and wicked judgment and of his persecution, blackguardism and abuse, and all kneel down together we will pray for you, that God might forgive you in these matters.”

(PARLEY bows his head, closes his eyes. Pause. He opens one eye, looks around, then both eyes. Smiles.)

Needless to say, my proposal was not entertained with any great enthusiasm by the court...

(Exit JUDGE and WITNESSES.)

27 – AMHERST, MISSOURI – A PUBLIC HOUSE – Enter PEABODY, limping, who walks over to Parley, grabs him by the arm, directs him to a different area of the stage, throws Parley in a “jail” and walks away.

PARLEY: ... and I was conducted to a public house over the way, and locked in till morning ...

MUSICAL # 18 – STU-BOY AND PARLEY P!

(BALLADEER enters. PARLEY and two actors playing PEABODY and STU-BOY can act out the lyrics, or it could be done as a solo.)

BALLADEER:

IN AMHERST MO, THEY TELL THE TALE
OF STU-BOY AND PARLEY P!
A DOG WHO WAGGED A WICKED TAIL
AND HE WHO SET HIM FREE.

THE TRIAL WAS O’ER, THE COURT ADJOURNED.
OLD PAR THEY TOOK AWAY–
A DOOR WAS SHUT, A LOCK WAS TURNED.
HE SPENT THE NIGHT IN JAIL.
WHEN MORNING CAME, THE KEEPER SHOWED
TO TAKE OUR PAR TO EAT
A BREAKFAST LIKE HE SELDOM KNOWED
AT THE INN ACROSS THE STREET.
WITH BREAKFAST DONE, THEY SAT A SPELL
FOR PRISON TO ABIDE.
THE FIRE IN THE INN DID SWELL...
PAR ASKED TO STEP OUTSIDE.
HE WALKED OUT TO THE PUBLIC SQUARE,
THE OFFICER IN TOW.
THEY BREATHED IN THE MORNING AIR,
THEN PARLEY ASKED HIS FOE:

“PEABODY, SIR,” HE ASKED HIS GUIDE,
“WHAT THINK YOU OF A RUN?”
“A FOOT RACE? NO,” PEABODY CRIED.
“NOT SINCE THE WAR. I’M DONE.”

“BUT MY BIG DOG, OL’ STU-BOY HERE,
THOUGH CHASING’S NOT MY GAME,
THE DOG’S BEEN TRAINED, SO HAVE NO FEAR,
TO TAKE DOWN WHO I NAME.
DON’T GET THE THOUGHT YOU MIGHT ESCAPE,
I’LL KNOW WHICH WAY YOU WENT.
YOU WON’T GET A FOOT AWAY
‘FOR STU-BOY’S ON YOUR SCENT.”

“WELL,” PARLEY SAID TO PEABODY,

WITH CHAR'CTERISTIC ZEAL
"I'VE PREACHED AND SUNG, YOU'VE GIVEN ME
GOOD LODGING AND A MEAL.
"BUT NOW I MUST MY JOURNEY TAKE.
COME JOIN ME IF YOU WANT.
THANK YOU FOR MY KINDLY STAY."
AND HE BEGAN HIS JAUNT.

THE FURTHER FROM THE PLACE HE GOT,
PEABODY'S MOUTH AGAPE.
HE STOOD AMAZED, AND THEN HE THOUGHT
HE'S TRYING TO ESCAPE!

OLD PARLEY TURNED AND URGED HIM ON:
"COME RACE, MY FRIEND, WITH ME!"
AND PEABODY STILL COULDN'T MOVE,
BUT WATCHED HIS PRIS'NER FLEE!
PARLEY THEN INCREASED HIS SPEED
TO NEAR THAT OF A DEER.
WHEN HE'D GAINED TWO HUNDRED YARDS
PEABODY TOOK THE REAR.

HE'D LEAPT A FENCE, I DO DECLARE
TOWARD A WOODS RIGHT OUT OF TOWN!
PEABODY CAME HALLOO-ING THERE:
"GO STU-BOY! TAKE HIM DOWN!"
NOW STU-BOY WAS THE LARGEST HOUND
OL' PARLEY'D EVER SEEN.
AND QUICKLY STU WAS GAINING GROUND.
HIS SPEED WAS EVER KEEN.

"STU-BOY, STU-BOY, LAY HOLD OF HIM, YOU CAN!
HE'S JUST A SCRAWNY MAN!"
WHILE POINTING AS HE RAN.
"STU-BOY! STU-BOY, OH DOWN WITH HIM, YOU DOG!
HE AIN'T NO MAN.
AIN'T NO MAN CAN
BE LEAPIN' LIKE A FROG!"

THAT DOG WAS FAST AND GAINING GROUND
AND PARLEY THOUGHT AS HE FLEW,
HE'D NOT OUTFLEW THIS BIG OL' HOUND!

SO HE TRIED SOMETHING NEW!
 HE COULD ASSIST SIR PEABODY
 IN SENDING STU-BOY FORTH
 TOWARD THE GATHERING OF TREES
 JUST SLIGHTLY TO THE NORTH.
 SO PARLEY STOPPED AND POINTED AT
 THE TREES NOT FAR EN MASSE,
 “STU-BOY! STU-BOY!” CLAPPED HIS HANDS.
 THE DOG DID HASTEN PAST.

AND WITH SUCH SPEED OL’ STU-BOY RAN
 TOWARD TREES OF BIRCH AND ASH
 ALL BEING URGED TO GET HIS MAN
 BY PEABODY ... AND PRATT!

28 – VAN BUREN JAIL

PARLEY: The Book of Mormon, which I dropped at the house of Simeon Carter, when taken by the officer, was by these circumstances left with him. He read it with attention. It wrought deeply upon his mind, and he went fifty miles to the church we had left in Kirtland, and was there baptized and ordained an Elder. He then returned to his home and commenced to preach and baptize. A church of about sixty members was soon organized in the place where I had played such a trick of deception on the dog.

(laughs)

I suppose it is due to occurrences such as these that I have become known as “Preposterous Parley P.!” by my enemies, and by some of my more reticent friends. But as the revelation says, “With some I am not well pleased, for they will not open their mouth, but they hide the talent which I have given them, because of the fear of men. Wo be unto such, for mine anger is kindled against them.” Now, Higginson, I do not know about what it means exactly to have the anger of the Lord kindled against one, but neither am I in too great a haste to discover it! But only because... because I have sat many times in the presence of Joseph Smith and know to be true this work which he, as an instrument in the hands of God, has instigated in these latter days.

29 – RICHMOND JAIL

COMPANY MEMBER 1: November eighteen thirty-eight.

(COMPANY MEMBER 1 moves to a part of the stage, picks up a rifle and becomes a RICHMOND GUARD. Other COMPANY MEMBERS enter, deliver

their lines, and then move to become other GUARDS or other PRISONERS. Enter COMPANY MEMBER 2.)

COMPANY MEMBER 2: The Prisoners in Richmond.

(Enter COMPANY MEMBER 3.)

COMPANY MEMBER 3: The Conduct of the Guards.

(Enter COMPANY MEMBER 4.)

COMPANY MEMBER 4: The Rebuke by Joseph Smith.

(PARLEY lays on the floor next to Joseph.)

MUSICAL # 19a – CONDEMNATIONS

PARLEY:

IN ONE OF THOSE TEDIOUS NIGHTS,
WE HAD LAIN AS IF ASLEEP
TILL THE HOUR OF MIDNIGHT PASSED.
OUR HEARTS HAD ALL BEEN PAINED.
WE HAD LISTENED HOURS ON END
TO THE OBSCENE JEST,
THE HORRID OATHS, THE DREADFUL BLASPHEMIES
AND FILTHY LANGUAGE OF OUR GUARDS,
RECOUNTING TO EACH OTHER
THEIR DEEDS OF...

FIRST RICHMOND GUARD:

...RAPINE...

SECOND RICHMOND GUARD:

...MURDER...

THIRD RICHMOND GUARD:

...ROBBERY...

ALL THREE GUARDS:

...TREACHERY...

PARLEY:

WHICH THEY HAD COMMITTED AMONG THE MORMONS,
BOASTED OF COMMITTING ON MORMONS...

ALL GUARDS:

...DEFILING WIVES, DAUGHTERS, AND VIRGINS...

PARLEY:

... AND OF...

ALL GUARDS:

... SHOOTING OR DASHING THE BRAINS OF MEN,
WOMEN AND... CHILDREN.

(MUSIC continues under.)

PARLEY: *(speaks)* I had listened till I become so disgusted, shocked, horrified, and so filled with the

spirit of indignant justice that I could scarcely refrain from rising upon my feet and rebuking the guards; but had said nothing to Joseph, although I lay next to him and knew he was awake. On a sudden he arose to his feet, and spoke in voice of thunder, as the roaring lion:

(MUSIC changes.)

JOSEPH: SILENCE, ye fiends of the infernal pit! In the name of Jesus Christ I rebuke you, and command you to be still; I will not live another minute and bear such language. Cease such talk, or you or I die THIS INSTANT!

(JOSEPH freezes during PARLEY's following song, though the guards do the actions described. PARLEY looks up at Joseph, and sings.)

PARLEY:

HE CEASED TO SPEAK.
HE STOOD ERECT
IN TERRIBLE MAJESTY.
HE HAD NO GUN,
BUT HE WAS CALM
AN ANGEL! AN ANGEL!
HE LOOKED UPON THE QUAILING GUARDS,
WHOSE WEAPONS WERE
DROPPED TO THE GROUND;
WHOSE KNEES SMOTE
WHO SHRANK INTO A CORNER,
CROUCHING AT HIS FEET...
BEGGING HIS PARDON.

(LIGHTS slowly dim on JOSEPH.)

SEGUE TO:

MUSICAL #19b – MAJESTY

PARLEY:

I HAVE SEEN THE MIGHTY JUDGES,
CLOTHED IN MAGISTERIAL ROBES
AND THOSE ARRAIGNED BEFORE THEM
IN THE COURTS OF ENGLAND OLD.

I'VE BEEN PRESENT AT A SESSION
OF OUR CONGRESS WHEN CONVENED,
PASSING LAWS THAT WILL AFFECT US
EACH, AND EVERY NATION'S CHILD.

OF KINGS I'VE TRIED TO CONTEMPLATE
OF ROYAL COURTS AND THRONES.
OF EMPERORS ASSEMBLED

TO DECIDE THE FATE OF NATIONS...

BUT DIGNITY AND MAJESTY
HAVE I SEEN BUT ONCE
AS IT STOOD. IN. CHAINS!
(END OF ACT ONE)

*27 more pages make up Act Two of this exciting new musical
See 'list of songs' to get an idea of Act Two*

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