

Betwixt and Between

Based on the novel "Hobberdy Dick" by K.M. Briggs

Book: Kate Hanenberg and Ned Paul Ginsburg

Music: Ned Paul Ginsburg

Mary Lloyd-Butler

Additional music: Kate Hanenberg

Lyrics: Kate Hanenberg and Ned Paul Ginsburg

Betwixt and Between

SUMMARY

"Betwixt and Between" is a musical adaptation of the novel "Hobberdy Dick" written in 1955 by K.M. Briggs, the author of "The Encyclopedia of Fairies" and other scholarly works. Miss Briggs is widely credited with making the study of folklore a respectable one, and is said to have been an important influence on J.R.R. Tolkien, among others.

The story takes place in Gloucestershire, England in 1652 in the aftermath of the English Civil Wars. Many Royalist families have been forced into exile as a result of Cromwell's victory; among them are the Culvers, who have left Widford Manor and its guardian spirit Hobberdy Dick behind. Our story begins as the Widdisons, a Puritan family from London, take possession of the Manor. Samuel Widdison remains devastated by the death of his beloved first wife; neither his sons Joel and Jonathan, nor his second wife Rachel can penetrate the wall he has built around himself. George Batchford, the overseer of the estate, takes Samuel's elder son Joel under his wing, while Joel's lonely little brother Jonny soon becomes a favorite of the unseen Hobberdy Dick.

George and Dick believe that the continued prosperity of the Manor is rooted in a deep respect for the old folk traditions, which are anathema to Samuel and his kind. The existence of the Manor is further threatened by the presence of the mysterious Mother Darke who seeks the Manor's rumored treasure for herself. She finds a willing accomplice in Samuel's stepdaughter Diligence.

The future of the Manor is bleak, but Hobberdy Dick sees hope for its future in Anne Seckar, an impoverished gentlewoman who becomes a servant in the household. Through Dick's efforts, each member of the family learns to appreciate the different ways in which faith is manifested, and Widford Manor becomes a place of peace and plenty for all time.

Betwixt and Between

CAST OF CHARACTERS:

GEORGE BATCHFORD, Estate overseer

SAMUEL WIDDISON, Merchant of London

MRS. DIMBLEDY, Mother of Samuel's first wife; grandmother to Joel and Jonathan

JOEL WIDDISON, Samuel's elder son, early twenties

JONATHAN WIDDISON, Samuel's younger son, nine

RACHEL WIDDISON, Samuel's second wife; stepmother to Jonathan and Joel

DILIGENCE GRIMSBY, Rachel's daughter, 16

URSULA, the Widdisons' servant

MOTHER DARKE, wanderer, late thirties

MADAM FETTIPLACE, neighbor (double cast Ursula)

ANNE SECKAR, gentlewoman, twentys

MR. STOUT, businessman (double cast Mrs. Dimbledy)

Chorus (1 woman; 2 men) as Villagers, Culver family; Soldiers

Betwixt and Between

TIME & ACTION:

The play takes place in 1652 at Widford Manor and its environs in Gloucestershire, England.

ACT ONE

- Scene 1: Yard, Widford Manor, early October
- Scene 2: Samuel and Rachel's bedroom, a few weeks later, night
- Scene 3: Yard, the next morning, All Hallow's Eve, October 31
- Scene 4: Same, immediately following
- Scene 5: Hall/Kitchen/Yard, immediately following
- Scene 6: Yard, that evening
- Scene 7: Anne's attic bedroom. later that night
- Scene 8: Yard/Attic, just before midnight

ACT TWO

- Scene 1: Shed/Mrs. Dimbledy's bedroom,, Christmas Eve
- Scene 2: Yard/Mrs. Dimbledy's bedroom, early the next morning
- Scene 3: Hall, the next day
- Scene 4: Yard, a few months later, May Day
- Scene 5: Same, immediately following
- Scene 6: Samuel's office, London, the same evening
- Scene 7: Mother Darke's cave, that night
- Scene 8: Lane/Yard , the next morning

Betwixt and Between

SONGS

Act I

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. Peace and Plenty | Samuel, Rachel, Joel, Jonny, Diligence, Ursula,
George, Mother Darke |
| 2. Enough | Rachel, Samuel |
| 3. Chores (<i>chanted</i>) | Ursula |
| 4. Betwixt and Between | George, Jonny |
| 5. Peace and Plenty Reprise 1 | Mother Darke |
| 6. Music and Light | Joel, Anne |
| 7. Read Between The Lines | Rachel, Ursula |
| 8. Chores Reprise 1 (<i>chanted</i>) | Ursula, Jonny |
| 9. A Fine Lady | Diligence, Mother Darke |
| 10. Fireflies | Samuel |
| 11. Quiet Morning | Anne, Culvers |
| 12. Little Lost One | Mother Darke, Mrs. Dimbledy |
| 12. Peace and Plenty Reprise 2 | Mrs. Dimbledy |

Act II

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. Riddle | George, Anne, Jonny, Ursula, Villagers |
| 2. Feathers | Mrs. Dimbledy, Joel, Anne |
| 3. This House Isn't Fit For A Man of Sober Habits | Samuel, Rachel, Joel, Jonny,
Diligence, Ursula, George |
| 4. Chores Reprise (<i>chanted</i>) | Ursula |
| 5. One Flower | Villagers, Diligence, Jonny, Mother Darke |
| 6. Hollow Hills | George, Anne, Joel, Rachel |
| 7. Enough Reprise | Samuel |
| 8. Quiet Morning Reprise | Mother Darke, Anne |
| 9. Music and Light Reprise | Joel, Anne |
| 10. Love Is a River | Samuel, Rachel, Joel, Anne, George |
| 11. Finale: Peace and Plenty Reprise 3 | Company |

Betwixt and Between

TRACKS

Act I

- TRACK #1 Peace and Plenty, Act 1, Scene 1, page 3
The Widdison family arrives at Widford Manor.
- TRACK #2 Enough, Act 1, Scene 2, page 11
Samuel and Rachel are in their bedroom a few weeks after their arrival.
- TRACK #3 Betwixt and Between, Act I, Scene 3, page 18
George explains the world of the spirits to Jonny.
- TRACK #4 Music and Light, Act I, Scene 4, page 28
Joel Widdison, who is on his way back to London, meets Anne Seckar.
- TRACK #5 Read Between The Lines, Act I, Scene 4, page 37
*Rachel asks her Hessian housekeeper Ursula for marital advice.
Ursula recommends Bible study.*
- TRACK #6 Fireflies, Act I, Scene 6, page 52
Samuel remembers his beloved first wife.
- TRACK #7 Little Lost One, Act I, Scene 8, page 57
Mrs. Dimbledy and Mother Darke battle over a lost soul.
- TRACK #8 Peace and Plenty Reprise #2
Exhausted by the confrontation with Mother Darke, Mrs. Dimbledy sings to Anne.

Act II

- TRACK #9 Feathers, Act II, Scene 2, page 10
Joel and Anne bid farewell to Mrs. Dimbledy
- TRACK #10 This House Isn't Fit For A Man of Sober Habits, Act II, Scene 3, page 15
*After a series of unexplained episodes involving the spirit Hobberdy Dick,
Samuel finally reacts.*
- TRACK #11 Hollow Hills, Act II, scene 5, page 26
George, Rachel, Joel and Anne go in search of the kidnapped Jonny.
- TRACK # 12 Enough Reprise, Act II, Scene 6, page 29
Intervention from the spirit world causes Samuel to reverse his decision to sell the Manor.
- TRACK # 13 Music and Light Reprise
United for the rescue of Jonny from Mother Darke, Joel and Anne sing of their love.
- TRACK # 14 Peace and Plenty Finale
The future of the Manor is assured.

Betwixt and Between

ACT I

I-1-1

Scene 1: *The curtain opens on a winding country lane. Along one side is a stone fence into which is set a wooden gate. Beyond the fence is Widford Manor, a gabled Tudor house with a chimney clearly silhouetted against the sky. MOTHER DARKE, a figure in a ragged cloak, emerges from the hedges opposite the fence and tries to open the gate. It does not budge. SHE continues to try as GEORGE BATCHFORD comes downstage on the lane. HE watches her and then steps forward to the gate. SHE shrinks back into the hedges.*

GEORGE

Here, Mother! Let me help you!

(HE touches the gate, and beckons to MOTHER DARKE).

Come in! Come in!

(HE looks from the gate to the lane, but MOTHER DARKE has vanished).

Poor thing. So many forced to roam the countryside in the aftermath of the cruel wars. It could be any one of us. Such a terrible, terrible time.

(HE touches the gate again, but it remains firmly shut. HE struggles a bit to open it, then speaks to Dick).

Well, then, Hobgoblin Dick, I am sure you have your reasons, but don't you recognize me? Why, man, it is me, George Batchford! *(The gate creaks slightly)*. Just like my father George Batchford who was here before me, and his father George Batchford before him. *(The gate creaks more loudly)*. And both of them saying what I know is true: that you have been watching over Widford Manor since time itself began. *(The gate swings open and GEORGE enters and bows)*. Thank you. It is just as I remember. As fresh and green as Eden on the day the earth was born. *(The gate swings shut behind him)*. Yes. Hobberdy Dick. *(HE looks around the yard)*. You must have been lonely here without a family. Three years since the Culvers were sent into exile. And three years since I left as well. A long time, indeed, without anyone to share your days. But that is about to change! *(The sound of a cart is heard in the lane)*. Listen! Do you hear that? The Widdisons are on their way!

(HE leaves the gate, and enters the lane).

That's their cart! It's been a long journey- all the way from London. What will it be like to have city folk among us?!

(The gate creaks loudly and closes behind GEORGE).

Now, they might not be all bad. Show a little open-mindedness!

(The gate opens slightly).

Even if they are merchants...

(The gate bangs shut).

And Puritans.

(The gate is slammed shut twice in a row).

Come, now, man, what am I supposed to do? Tell them that they are not wanted here?

(The Widdisons arrive in the lane. GEORGE shrugs).

Fine, then, have it your way. And you will be all alone again. I can picture you at your usual place by the hearth, sitting there, stirring the dead embers, staring into the cold grate. Sitting and stirring and staring. No, you are right. They are not worth the warmth of the fireside. Not sir, nor madam, nor the others. Not even that little boy who cannot wait to get here. He looks to be around...eight?

(JONNY runs down the lane, and stops at the gate, which swings wide open when HE approaches).

Now, then, that's better. *(GEORGE stands by the gate as the family approaches).*
Welcome.

SAMUEL

Thank you, Mr. Batchford. I have heard good reports of you, and I am glad that you have come back to work on the farm.

GEORGE

Oh, sir, I am glad as well. And so, I think, is-

SAMUEL

-the rest of my family!

(Music in. JONNY rushes in; JOEL follows, looking around with delight. DILIGENCE gathers her skirts with an air of disgust and enters the yard. GEORGE helps the other adults down from the cart).

TRACK #1: SONG 1: PEACE AND PLENTY

JONNY

WHAT WILL WE SEE HERE?

DILIGENCE

WHY MUST WE BE HERE?

SAMUEL

ARE THE DARK DAYS BEHIND?

RACHEL

YEARS OF DESTRUCTION AND WAR

URSULA

YEARS OF GREAT HARDSHIP UND FEAR

JOEL

BUT HERE, WHAT WILL WE FIND?

MRS. DIMBLEDY

WE'LL FIND A PLACE OF PEACE AND PLENTY
OH, PLEASE, NOW LET THIS BE THE DAY
WHEN WE WERE SHOWN THE WAY TO A PLACE OF
PEACE AND PLENTY

(A puff of smoke rises from the chimney, and a HEN cackles. GEORGE smiles and nods approvingly).

SAMUEL, RACHEL, DILIGENCE, JOEL, JONNY, URSULA
WHO COULD HAVE LIT IT?

GEORGE

I KNOW WHO DID IT!

SAMUEL

WE WON'T STAND SUCH EXCESS!

DILIGENCE

YET IT IS FRAGRANT AND SWEET

URSULA

LET US ENJOY IT TONIGHT

RACHEL

BUT MIGHT WE DO WITH LESS!

MRS. DIMBLEDY and GEORGE

OH, BLESS THIS PLACE OF PEACE AND PLENTY
THIS HOUSE THAT STANDS SO STILL AND STRONG

MRS. DIMBLEDY

A HOME WHERE WE BELONG.

MRS. DIMBLEDY and GEORGE

YES, A PLACE OF PEACE AND PLENTY

(The FAMILY enters the house as MOTHER DARKE emerges from the hedges.)

GEORGE

MOTHER DARKE

AND HOBBERDY DICK, YOU'RE THE ONE WHO STANDS SENTRY
PROTECTING THIS HOUSE, EACH LEAVING AND ENTRY
FOR MANY A CENT'RY THE SOURCE OF ITS LUCK
THEY CALL YOU A GOBLIN, HOB, OR PUCK
YOUR HOUSE STANDING EMPTY
IS SAD INDEED

SO WELCOME THE WIDDISONS
THEY'RE JUST WHAT YOU NEED

THEY MIGHT NEVER SEE YOU,

BUT THEY'LL SENSE THAT YOU'VE BEEN THERE
A GLIMPSE OF A SHADOW

VANISHING INTO THIN AIR

THEY'LL KNOW THAT IT'S YOU –
A LOW HUMMING SOUND-
A ROOM THAT SMELLS SWEETLY,
LOST ITEMS FOUND
AND ALL THOSE AROUND YOU
DWELL IN GOODNESS AND GRACE
FOR THE MANOR IS A VERY LUCKY PLACE.

*(SAMUEL emerges from the house, followed immediately by the OTHERS.
MOTHER DARKE retreats).*

SAMUEL

Mr. Batchford, that is quite the fire blazing away inside!

GEORGE

My apologies, sir. It was our way of welcoming you.

SAMUEL

Our way?

GEORGE

Mine, sir. Mine.

SAMUEL and RACHEL

NOW THAT WE'VE COME HERE

JOEL, DILIGENCE, JONNY, URSULA, MRS. DIMBLEDY
WHAT WILL BECOME HERE

AH---
MIGHT NEVER
SEE YOU

AH----
GLIMPSE OF A
SHADOW

AH---

JOEL

ARE THERE BRIGHT TIMES AHEAD?

DILIGENCE

ALL KINDS OF RIBBONS AND LACE

JONNY

PIPING HOT BISCUITS AND PIE

SAMUEL

BUT TRY THIS BOOK INSTEAD!

(SAMUEL takes out his Bible, as RACHEL peers over his shoulder).

RACHEL and SAMUEL

WE'VE READ THAT WE'LL HAVE PEACE AND PLENTY
WHEN WE RENOUNCE EACH EARTHLY BIND
THROUGH FAITH WE'RE SURE TO FIND
OUR TRUE PLACE OF PEACE AND PLENTY

QUARTET

JOEL, MRS. DIMBLEDY, GEORGE, MOTHER DARKE
BUT HERE, THERE'S PLENTY, PEACE AND PLENTY

WHERE LOVE AND HAPPINESS ABOUND

TRIO

URSULA, JONNY, DILIGENCE
PEACE AND
PLENTY
AH---

GEORGE

THERE'S MUCH THAT CAN ASTOUND

ALL

IN A PLACE OF PEACE
AND PLENTY,
PLENTY,
PLENTY!

SAMUEL

Why, we shall be the Widdisons of Widford! *(HE laughs at his own joke, expecting others to join in).* The name itself is providential!

DILIGENCE

Why would Providence lead me *here*?

MRS. DIMBLEDY

It must be hard for you, my dear. A new place; a new family. (*To GEORGE*) But it is good to be away from London and its troubles at last.

SAMUEL

Mr. Batchford- Mrs. Dimbledy, the mother of my wife.

RACHEL (*sadly*)

Oh, Samuel. Your *late* wife.

SAMUEL

Of course, Rachel. (*To GEORGE*) My wife. (*RACHEL nods to GEORGE as JOEL enters from the fields*).

JOEL

Oh, father- it is the most beautiful place I have ever seen!

DILIGENCE

This? Beautiful?

GEORGE

Perhaps the young master could help around the farm, sir.

JOEL

Oh, I would like that, father!

SAMUEL

We will see. But, Joel, you know very well that you must use this time to prepare yourself. (*To GEORGE*) We still have our shop in London, you see. And someday soon, this young man will be running it!

GEORGE

I am sure he will do a fine job.

RACHEL

Oh, yes. We expect him to approach all that he does with dedication and diligence.

JONNY

Diligence!!!!

DILIGENCE

NO! Mother! Make him stop!

RACHEL

Now, Diligence- I am sure Jonathan doesn't mean anything.

DILIGENCE

To be away from London is bad enough, but to have to be here with them! (*SHE points to JOEL and JONNY*). How could you, mother, how could you?

GEORGE

Sir, madam- and, of course, Miss Diligence- we should set up the house before it gets dark.

SAMUEL

Thank you, Mr. Batchford.

(GEORGE opens the door and the FAMILY files in. GEORGE looks around for DICK).

GEORGE

Widdisons of Widford, indeed. In ten years, I'll lay you, they'll be saying as how the place was named for them, and that Widdisons have been at Widford since time itself began. Eh, what they don't know is that a place doesn't belong to you; you belong to it and this has ever been a source of great good fortune to those who care for it.

Well, Dick, let's hope that they'll come to learn our ways. Be gentle with them, Dick; keep them safe from harm.

(The gate closes, creaking softly).

Good man!

(HE leaves. The HEN appears on the gatepost. MOTHER DARKE emerges from the shadows, and looks longingly at the house. SHE approaches the gate. The HEN chirps and MOTHER DARKE retreats. Blackout).

Scene 2: A few weeks later, SAMUEL and RACHEL's bedroom. Evening, late October. RACHEL is at the window. Samuel searches for papers at a table in the room. Another room, a small study, is adjacent to the bedroom.

RACHEL

There he goes again! Your son Joel, back from another day in the fields with George Batchford. I believe he is beginning to look exactly like him- great, muddy boots and all.

SAMUEL (looking up from his papers)

He is very much like his mother, then. How my Meg loved the countryside.

(HE turns back to his papers. RACHEL looks at him for a minute, then looks out the window again).

RACHEL

But, Samuel! Are you not concerned that he has missed morning prayers *and* evening prayers yet again!

SAMUEL

I shall speak to him about that.

RACHEL

We do need Joel to set a good example. Samuel, I have tried very hard with both your sons.

SAMUEL

Certainly. Now, the reports from London are in and I must get to them tonight.

RACHEL

How difficult it must be for you. To get this farm going again while keeping an eye on the shop.

SAMUEL

One or the other must support this family. When the court left London, there I was, with my shelves filled to the ceiling with frills and fripperies that nobody wanted.

RACHEL

I am sure that King Charles and his Cavaliers could never find such fine lace in Oxford.

SAMUEL

While we had a warehouse of the stuff. And embroidered gloves. And remember those ridiculous hats with the curling feathers?

RACHEL

“Plumes”, the gentry called them.

SAMUEL

The somber men of Parliament weren't about to purchase those! Of course, I agree with them that overly lavish display is wicked. And it has been justly punished. We will hear no more talk of the divine right of kings. But what was good for our cause was bad for our business.

RACHEL

But won't Cromwell's men need new things now that the war is over?

SAMUEL

You're right. And we do have plain gloves, and buckles that aren't so very shiny. When all of you are settled, I will go back to sell them. They should do well now.

RACHEL

Oh, Samuel, you should be here. With...us. Perhaps Joel could return to London. Someday soon. Wouldn't that be a great help to you?

SAMUEL

Hmmm. Joel was always to take over when he was a little older. But I will consider it. Perhaps our head clerk can guide him. Now, I think he has sent me all the papers that I need. A month's worth of receipts and invoices! I will look them over in my study.
(Music under)

RACHEL

But, Samuel, you must be very tired.

SAMUEL

I am.

RACHEL

Stay a little.

SAMUEL

I shouldn't.

TRACK #2: SONG 2: ENOUGH

RACHEL

THERE'S A NICE BIG CHAIR

SAMUEL

BUT IT'S BY A DRAFTY WINDOW
I CAN FEEL THE COLD
CREEPING IN BETWEEN THE CRACKS

RACHEL

Yes, those cracks!

SAMUEL

IT'S AN EARLY FALL

RACHEL

I DON'T EVEN NEED MY SHAWL

SAMUEL

SO MANY THINGS TO PONDER
I WILL WORK A FEW MORE HOURS
IT WOULDN'T DO TO STALL

RACHEL (*resigned*)

IT WOULDN'T DO AT ALL. (*Samuel exits to study; lights up: RACHEL stays in bedroom*)

SAMUEL

WILL ONE CANDLE BE ENOUGH
TO SEE ME THROUGH THIS EVENING?
SO MANY PILES OF PAPER
BEFORE IT IS SNUFFED OUT.
CANDLES ARE EXPENSIVE
EVERYTHING COSTS MONEY.
HOW CAN I BE SURE WE
WILL ALWAYS HAVE ENOUGH?
ENOUGH!
WILL THERE EVER BE
ENOUGH?

LET THEM LOOK TO ME
MAY I NEVER HEAR
SHADES OF DOUBT AND FEAR
THAT I HAVE NEVER GIVEN THEM ENOUGH. (*Lights down on study; up on
bedroom*).

RACHEL

WILL ONE CANDLE BE ENOUGH
IF I STAY UP THIS EVENING?
WILL HE RETURN EXHAUSTED
OR WILL HE TAKE A CHANCE?
SHOULD I WASTE A CANDLE
ON THIS FOOLISH FANCY
NEVER KNOWING IF HE
WILL SEE I AM ENOUGH
ENOUGH!
WILL I EVER BE
ENOUGH
LET HIM LOOK AT ME
NO MORE DOUBT AND FEAR
MAY I SOMEDAY HEAR
THAT I HAVE ALWAYS GIVEN HIM ENOUGH (*Lights up on study and
bedroom*).

SAMUEL

LET THE WINTER WINDS BLOW AND BLUSTER
I WILL KEEP US WELL-SUPPLIED

RACHEL

HE'S GOT A WIFE- WHY CAN'T HE TRUST HER
TO BE WILLINGLY AT HIS SIDE

SAMUEL

NO CHALLENGE, NO FIGHT DETERS ME
NO SMOLDERING WAR NOR STRIFE

RACHEL

WILL THE MOMENT COME WHEN HE PREFERS ME
TO THE MEM'RY OF HIS DEPARTED WIFE

SAMUEL
ENOUGH!
WILL THERE EVER BE
ENOUGH?
LET THEM LOOK TO ME

RACHEL
ENOUGH

AH

SAMUEL and RACHEL

WHAT ELSE CAN I DO?
ONE MORE DAY IS THROUGH
PLEASE LET ME ALWAYS GIVE TO THEM/HIM

RACHEL
ENOUGH!
DOES HE JUST NOT CARE
ENOUGH ?
CAN'T HE KNOW I'M THERE?

SAMUEL
ENOUGH

AH

SAMUEL and RACHEL

ONCE AGAIN I PRAY

SAMUEL
I WON'T HEAR THEM SAY
THAT I HAVE NEVER

NEVER

GIVEN THEM ENOUGH

WILL ONE CANDLE BE ENOUGH

TO SEE ME THROUGH THIS EVENING?

RACHEL
I WILL HEAR HIM SAY

THAT I HAVE ALWAYS

ALWAYS
GIVEN HIM ENOUGH

WILL ONE CANDLE BE ENOUGH

TO SEE ME THROUGH
EVENING?

(With a sudden impulse, they each blow out their candles. Blackout).

Scene 3: Yard, the next morning, October 31. URSULA stomps across the yard. JONNY circles the tree, looking up at the leaves. MRS. DIMBLEDY is on a bench outside the house, her Bible open in her lap.

SONG 3: CHANT: CHORES

URSULA

Ahhhhhhggggg.

TAKING PAILS FROM THE DAIRIES
MAKING ALES FROM THE BERRIES
ACHING DAILY, IT'S NOT FAIR-WE
NEED AN EXTRA PAIR OF HANDS
THE FARMYARD'S FULL OF STUMPS- SEE
TURNIPS TURN UP LUMPY-
PARDON ME, I'M GRUMPY-
BUT NO ONE UNDERSTANDS!

(URSULA storms into the house as JONNY continues to circle the tree, making cackling sounds. After a while, HE goes to the kitchen window).

JONNY

Ursula- do you think I could have another piece of cake? Just a little one?

URSULA

Again? Ever since we came here, you have tried to coax that chicken down from the tree. How many weeks has it been?

JONNY

Please. I know she wants to be my friend. I am sure she comes down when I am not watching, because the cake is always gone when I turn around. It is very, very good cake. Sometimes I taste it first to make sure that she will like it.

URSULA

You are supposed to be helping me, not wasting our food on some creature. Especially when my mistress is trying so hard to please your father with her thrift und prudence! Ah, Mr. Widdison is so different from her first husband! Captain Grimsby.

JONNY

Diligence says her father was very brave.

URSULA

Ja. Und mein own Heinrich was a bold soldier too, coming all the way from Saxony to fight alongside the captain. But not for your ears! Now, no more food for das chicken, Jonathan!

JONNY

Oh, Ursula, couldn't I be "Jonny"? Gram says that was what my mother would have called me.

URSULA

Jonny...well, then, Jonny, I suppose one last piece of cake would be all right. But it is getting too cold for you to be standing out in the yard all day long.

JONNY

Too cold! *(HE has an idea)*. Oh, Ursula! Thank you!

(HE leaves the piece of cake under the tree and goes off. GEORGE enters as URSULA leaves the kitchen to rail at the HEN. MRS. DIMBLEDY is on a bench under the tree).

URSULA

I will see that you end up in the pot!

MRS. DIMBLEDY

Jonny's friend?

URSULA

Not his friend! His supper! *(A shower of acorns falls from the tree, and URSULA backs off. The chicken cackles gleefully)*. Ah, you will be very sorry very soon!

GEORGE

Oh, ma'am. I've been in these parts all my life, long enough to know when there's something special about. Mind and give yon hen plenty to eat, and never lay a hand on her.

MRS. DIMBLEDY

I have heard that there are those about who make good neighbors when they're treated right.

URSULA *(whispering)*

Acch . Are you are talking about das fairies?

MRS. DIMBLEDY

We will make sure that the little hen is well taken care of. She shall have all the little cakes she wants. Won't she, Ursula?

URSULA

As if I didn't have enough to do around here! (*SHE runs off*). Das fairies!
Das chickens! Das fairy chickens!

GEORGE

Madam? Oh, forgive me- I thought perhaps that your sort might not approve of the old ways-

MRS. DIMBLEDY

My sort?

GEORGE (*gesturing at her Bible*)

You know- you and the others.

MRS. DIMBLEDY

Oh, I see. I have never been sure of what my sort is, exactly. But if the old ways are good ways, I will follow them with all my heart.

GEORGE

I am glad. They *are* good ways. (*THEY smile at each other*).

MRS. DIMBLEDY

And tonight is All Hallow's Eve.

GEORGE (*surprised*)

It is.

MRS. DIMBLEDY

You will need to make the turnip lanterns. (*HE looks at her, questioningly*). I know;
I lived in the country once, and so did my Meg when she was young. Perhaps, if he helps you, Jonny will come to know a little about her.

GEORGE

But the master might not approve.

MRS. DIMBLEDY

You must do what is right for the place. And, I pray, for him.

(SHE nods at JONNY, who runs in carrying a box, lined with Diligence's brown cape).

JONNY

Mr. Batchford, Gram! Look, such a nice warm nest! Perhaps she'll like it. *(To the HEN)* Come here! See what I have made you! *(HE places the box gently on the ground)*. Oh, come down, please! *(With a polite chirp, the hen comes down from the tree to settle herself in the "nest")*.

GEORGE

That is a kind thing, lad. Blossom seems quite happy.

JONNY

Blossom. Such a pretty name. You know her?

GEORGE

I do, indeed. And I think she likes you.

JONNY

How do you know?

GEORGE

Well, the cake is all gone.

JONNY

I didn't eat it!

GEORGE

Of course not! It means that Hobberdy Dick trusts you.

JONNY

Hobberdy Dick?

GEORGE

What do they teach you in London? Why, he's one of the Old Ones, of course-the hobs and goblins who live alongside us in farm and household. And, sometimes-often- Dick and his sort don't want to be bothered with us humans. And I can't say that I blame him. But there is plenty that he wants to tell us- to those who will listen,

GEORGE (*continued*)

that is- and he needs someone to help him out. (*Chirp*) So Blossom is here at Widford, and I think that Old Grim in the Stowe churchyard has a cat. A very black cat. Give that one some cream if you see her. Because the more we keep to the old ways, the luckier the place.

JONNY

Our place! Hobberdy Dick is here with us! Will I see him? And the others?

GEORGE

Why, lad

Track #3: SONG 4: BETWIXT AND BETWEEN

GEORGE

IN EARTH AND WATER, IN FIRE AND AIR
FAIRY FOLK ARE EVERYWHERE
SELDOM HEARD AND SELDOM SEEN
THEY DWELL IN PLACES IN-BETWEEN

JONNY

WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY IN-BETWEEN?

GEORGE

THINK OF A LANDING
WHEN YOU'RE CLIMBING A STAIR
FOR A MINUTE YOU'RE STANDING
BETWEEN HERE AND THERE
LINGER A LITTLE
CLOSE YOUR EYES AND YOU'LL SEE

JONNY

A WHOLE OTHER WORLD IS WAITING FOR ME

GEORGE

IMAGINE A BRIDGE
WHEN YOU'RE CROSSING A STREAM
ON ONE SIDE WHAT IS
ON THE OTHER WHAT'S DREAMED
STAY SILENT AND STILL
AND LET YOUR HEART TRUST

JONNY

THE WHOLE OF THE WORLD IS WAITING FOR US

GEORGE

LISTEN FOR ECHOES
BETWEEN HERE AND AWAY
WATCH WHEN THE SKY GLOWS
BETWEEN NIGHT AND DAY
FOR THOSE SELDOM HEARD
AND THOSE SELDOM SEEN

GEORGE and JONNY

LOOK FOR THE OLD ONES
BETWIXT AND BETWEEN

(GEORGE takes the HEN from the tree and places her in Jonny's arms. Together, they place the HEN in the "nest". SHE chirps happily).

JONNY

She likes it!

MRS. DIMBLEDY

She does. *(GEORGE and JONNY are about to leave. SHE scoops up a bunch of turnips from the ground, and hands them to GEORGE).* Mr. Batchford, don't forget your turnips!

(Lights fade to black).

Scene 4: *Immediately following. RACHEL and MRS. DIMBLEDY are in the yard, each with her Bible. DILIGENCE, bored, plies at her needlework. MOTHER DARKE is in the lane. SHE is dressed in rags, with her face heavily veiled.*

SONG 5: PEACE AND PLENTY REPRISE 1

MOTHER DARKE

I SEE A PLACE OF PEACE AND PLENTY
SOME DAY, I'M SURE TO FIND MY OWN
WITH WANT AND NEED UNKNOWN IN A PLACE OF
PEACE AND PLENTY

(DILIGENCE tosses her needlework aside; MOTHER DARKE listens closely as she speaks).

DILIGENCE

How I wish that we had never come here! No one has come to visit us. And Madame Fettiplace is only a stone's throw away, just across the river at Swinbrook. She travels right past here almost every day, but never stops. Never. Oh, Swinbrook, with your beautiful tall windows.

MRS. DIMBLEDY

I am afraid that the gentry does not look kindly on those who bought their land from Parliament. They have their world, and we have ours.

DILIGENCE

I would so like to be part of it!

RACHEL *(flipping through the Bible)*

And I would like to be the Queen of Sheba!

(DILIGENCE leaps up as SHE sees JONNY approaching the fence, carrying BLOSSOM and lanterns made out of turnips. MOTHER DARKE retreats).

DILIGENCE

What is that boy doing now? And what is that creature?

MRS. DIMBLEDY

She is called Blossom.

DILIGENCE

I cannot believe this. I cannot believe that I am living with named poultry!

JONNY

Look, Diligence! Look *(to RACHEL)* ma'am. Turnip lanterns for All Hallow's Eve! Aren't they pretty? Mr. Batchford and I made them!

RACHEL *(with motherly concern)*

All Hallow's Eve? *(SAMUEL and GEORGE enter from the fields, followed by JOEL).*

SAMUEL

So, Mr. Batchford, thank you for showing me the hay barn. It seems there is a good supply for the winter.

GEORGE

Aye, sir. And with the help of the young master, we will have even more. The lad is green-fingered, sir, green-fingered. I can't wait until spring when he will learn to till the soil!

SAMUEL

I'd much rather see him learn to toil at the till! Toil, till? *(HE laughs at his own joke).*
Pause. HE catches sight of the lanterns). What is happening here?

JONNY

Oh, father, look what we did! And later, there will be a great big bonfire at Burford. Mr. Batchford says that it can be seen for miles and miles!

SAMUEL

Mr. Batchford, please assure me that you are not part of some sort of pagan rite. Or equally pernicious- papist rituals! You know that Parliament does not condone such acts.

GEORGE *(to Dick)*

Pagan! Papist! Parliament! *(SAMUEL looks at him quizzically).* Politics! I was afraid, sir, that you might not approve, but it *is* All Hallow's Eve.

SAMUEL

Mr. Batchford?

GEORGE

Yes, and we must do what we can to keep the Manor safe. Just as we have always done. The lanterns keep the evil spirits at bay.

SAMUEL

Not anymore!

MRS. DIMBLEDY

Samuel...

GEORGE

Aye, sir, we must. This is the night when the gates between Heaven and Hell are opened. Many are the lost souls searching for their resting place. And the witches—why, they will do what they can to capture those poor, poor souls.

SAMUEL

I have told you that this is a Puritan household, and we will not tolerate such practices. You may mean well, but *we* must not engage with those dark forces that are waiting always to ensnare us.

GEORGE

But, sir.

SAMUEL

This must not happen again. If it does, you will find yourself far away from Widford Manor. Do I make myself clear?

GEORGE

Sir.

SAMUEL

Then go and remove those abominations. At once. (*GEORGE leaves*). And, Jonathan, you will help Mr. Batchford.

DILIGENCE

Is he to be punished? Can we get rid of that ridiculous chicken?

RACHEL

Diligence!

JONNY

No!

RACHEL

Go along, both of you.

SAMUEL (*turning to Joel*)

Now, son, I am deeply disappointed. You have spent more than enough time gallivanting around the countryside with George Batchford. Your stepmother is right: it is time for you to take a more active role in the shop.

RACHEL

Yes, the shop. (*Suddenly annoyed by unseen pinching*). Ouch! Something is pinching me! Ouch!

SAMUEL

It must be your imagination.

RACHEL

I have no imagination!

JOEL

But the instant I saw this place, I knew I had to stay. It is cruel that I who love it here so much, will be sent back to a market stall in Cheapside. And miss the spring plowing. Please, father.

SAMUEL

Your help is needed in London. I will hear no more about it.

JOEL

Gram?

MRS. DIMBLEDY

Oh, my dear. I know it is hard, but your father is only doing what he thinks is best for you.

DILIGENCE

Mother, can't we all go back to London? That would be best for me.

RACHEL

Perhaps we should. Ouch! Ouch! Ouch! What is that poking? (*GEORGE, hearing RACHEL's repeated cries, enters surreptitiously, with JONNY hiding behind him*). Samuel, we must all go back!

SAMUEL

Perhaps, one day we will. But meanwhile, here is another sign of Providence! Joel, Joan! (*HE laughs at his own wit as HE takes JOEL aside*). Do you remember Alderman Peto? He lived near us in London. (*JOEL nods*) Then surely you remember his daughter Joan as well? Joan, Joel! (*HE laughs*). How comely she is, and how rich! Oh, think of how far you might go with her beside you! Perhaps you will be an alderman yourself one day. (*HE leads JOEL back to the others*).

JOEL

But, father -

SAMUEL

-No, Joel. You must go at once! An alderman's daughter! You shall be on the very next coach! Now, go and get your things! (*JOEL returns to the house as SAMUEL is poked*). Ouch!

DILIGENCE

Did you hear that? London! We might all go back to London! I can hardly wait!

GEORGE (*to Hobberdy Dick*)

Now, Dick, if you're there, hear me out. To leave the house empty again? 'Tis a sad thing, is it not, Dick, when a house is left empty?

(A HEN's cackle is heard; then the sound of horses neighing loudly. There is a loud crash, and the gate is flung open. GEORGE runs into the lane, and returns with MADAM FETTIPLACE. SHE limps first on one leg, then the other, though it is clear that she is unhurt).

Well, that's one way of doing it! Visitors at last! Madam Fettiplace, are you all right? Whatever could have happened? I think I'd better see to your horses! Come, Jonny! (*GEORGE and JONNY exit*).

DILIGENCE

Madam Fettiplace of Swinbrook! Here! In our yard! A dream come true!

MRS. DIMBLEDY

What a terrible accident!

DILIGENCE

I mean- what a terrible accident!

MADAM FETTIPLACE

A curse on all coaches, say I! New-fangled, rackets contrivances! I don't know what ailed the horses to make for your gate like that, but if they are all right, we shall be moving on. (*SHE shouts into the lane*). Anne! Could you not gather up our things a little more quickly. I will not have casual observers taking inventory of our belongings! And then, we must be on the road at once!

RACHEL

Oh, no, no. It will not be said that I failed in my duty to help the injured. Pray come in and rest.

MADAM FETTIPLACE

We do not require any assistance. We will not come in. Thank heaven that I am not a young person- they seem to be made of glass nowadays; they break if you look at them.

SAMUEL

Please, Madam? We were about to bid farewell to my son Joel when this dreadful thing happened. He is leaving today for London and our shop.

(JOEL leaves the house, bowing to MADAM FETTIPLACE and SAMUEL).

MADAM FETTIPLACE

To your shop! I have seen such people within those places, of course, but never thought to see one outside. You are a little pale perhaps, but that is to be expected, I suppose. Are you sure that boy is your son? He looks positively ruddy.

SAMUEL

Yes, madam, I am quite sure.

(*DILIGENCE urges MADAM FETTIPLACE to enter the house*).

DILIGENCE

Just a little supper- I mean *repast*- nothing much, but stay. Please stay.

RACHEL

It is a simple meal, for we live plainly here. I am sure it is not what you are used to. (*SHE takes DILIGENCE aside*). Diligence, do stop gawking! Diligence!

MADAM FETTIPLACE

A most unusual name. I do hope that she grows into it someday.

SAMUEL

Madam- will you not come in?

MADAM FETTIPLACE

Well, then- I see I have no choice.

RACHEL

Diligence! I will need some assistance with our unexpected guest....

MADAM FETTIPLACE

Or, perhaps, that her name is overly optimistic.

(*DILIGENCE, crestfallen, holds the door open as SAMUEL escorts MADAM FETTIPLACE inside, followed by MRS. DIMBLEDY and RACHEL. DILIGENCE enters as JOEL leaves the house, carrying a small satchel. HE opens the gate to the lane as ANNE approaches, carrying various articles of clothing. THEY stand outside the gate*).

JOEL

Here- let me help you.

ANNE

Thank you.

JOEL

Are you hurt?

ANNE

Oh, no. I am fine.

JOEL

Are you sure?

ANNE

I am.

SAMUEL (*offstage*)

Joel- you must hurry or you will miss your coach.

JOEL

Yes, father. How I hate to leave this place.....

ANNE

I understand.

JOEL

Farewell-

ANNE

Anne. Anne Seckar.

JOEL

Anne. Welcome.

ANNE

Farewell-

JOEL

Joel. Joel Widdison.

ANNE

Joel.

JOEL (*about to go down the lane, but turns back*).

Anne- should you find yourself here again, there are a few things that might need attention.

ANNE

Yes, Joel? What would those be?

TRACK 4: SONG 6: MUSIC AND LIGHT

JOEL

THE SAPLING THAT I SOWED HERE
IS NOW A LITTLE TREE
BUT HOW TALL WILL IT GROW HERE-

ANNE

OH, VERY TALL- YOU'LL SEE!

JOEL

THE ROBIN'S EGGS I RESCUED
WHEN ROUGH WINDS SHOOK THEIR NEST
MIGHT NEVER FLY UNLESS YOU-

ANNE

I WILL WATCH FOR THEM

JOEL

I GUESSED.
THE COWS I MILKED STOOD QUIET
MY HANDS UPON THEIR FLANKS
IF I TEACH YOU, WILL YOU TRY IT?

ANNE

I WILL INDEED

JOEL

MY THANKS.
THE LOVED ONES THAT I LEAVE HERE
BECAUSE I HAVE TO GO-
WOULD SOMEONE LOVE THEM IN MY STEAD

ANNE

I AM SURE I COULD-

JOEL

I KNOW.
DO YOU HEAR ALL THE SOUNDS
OF EACH BIRD AND EACH TREE
DO YOU KNOW THAT THE MOOING
IS MUSIC TO ME?

ANNE

DO YOU SEE THE SUN CLIMB
WHEN IT REACHES ITS HEIGHT
IT BURNISHES THE FIELDS
THE GOLDEN, GLOWING YIELDS
ISN'T THAT A BEAUTIFUL SIGHT?

JOEL

WHERE WE ARE IS MUSIC

ANNE

WHERE WE ARE IS LIGHT

JOEL

WILL YOU LISTEN EACH DAWN
AS THE MORNING BELLS CHIME

ANNE

WE WILL COUNT THE SAME HOURS
AND KEEP THE SAME TIME

JOEL

WHEN YOU SEE THE NEW DAY
DO YOU THINK THAT YOU MIGHT
BE WATCHING CLOUDY SKIES
TURN BLUE BEFORE YOUR EYES
MORNING LARKS ASCENDING IN FLIGHT

ANNE

WHERE WE ARE IS MUSIC

JOEL

WHERE WE ARE IS LIGHT
AND, OH, THE MUSIC I HEAR
MOVES ME AS NEVER BEFORE
YES, NOW THE LIGHT IS SO CLEAR
LET IT SHINE EVERMORE

SAMUEL (*offstage*)

Joel! Right now, or you will miss your coach!

JOEL

I must go.

ANNE

You must go.

SAMUEL

Now! (*JOEL leaves. HE and ANNE are at opposite sides of the stage, out of each other's earshot.*)

JOEL

WHEN THE EVENING BELLS TOLL

ANNE

AND THE STARS ARE SO BRIGHT

JOEL AND ANNE

WILL MOONLIGHT'S SILVER BEAMS
SOON LOOK UPON MY DREAMS
AM I IN HER (HIS) DREAMS THROUGH THE NIGHT

JOEL

WHERE WE ARE, IS MUSIC

ANNE

WHERE WE ARE, IS LIGHT

JOEL

WHERE SHE IS, IS MUSIC

JOEL AND ANNE

WHERE SHE/HE IS, IS LIGHT

(JOEL runs offstage to his coach; ANNE continues down the lane, looking for bits of clothing. GEORGE and JONNY enter from the opposite direction, laughing as they find ribbons and stockings on the hedges. GEORGE is carrying a cloak. HE sees MOTHER DARKE emerge from the shadows to look at the house. SHE is shivering and coughing).

GEORGE *(to JONNY)*

Poor thing- there she is again. Some would call her sort witches, and hang them from the branches of the trees, but these days, anyone of us could be suffering as she is.... I wish there were something we could give her. Go, lad, and see if Ursula can find her something. *(JONNY leaves.)*

(GEORGE taps MOTHER DARKE gently on the shoulder. SHE turns, frightened).

MOTHER DARKE

No! Leave me alone! Do not hurt me- please, I beg you! Do not hurt me!

GEORGE

Oh, mother- you have nothing to fear from me.

(MOTHER DARKE fingers a piece of black ribbon that she has taken from her pocket).

I see that you have a bit of beauty. Is it left to you from happier times?

MOTHER DARKE

It was mine. Before the soldiers came.

GEORGE

Thank heavens that the war is over at last. But its marks are still all around. *(SHE does not answer. HE offers her the cloak).* Here, take this. *(HE puts it around her shoulders).* I think you need it more than milady does. Mother?

MOTHER DARKE

Mother... *(SHE turns away and looks at the ribbon in her hand, improvising a surname).* Darke. *(SHE puts the ribbon in her pocket and heads down the lane as GEORGE watches).*

GEORGE

Ah. What a world this can be. What a harsh, cold world.

(HE leaves as ANNE comes down the lane. SHE stops in front of the gate and stares up at the house. The gate swings opens, allowing ANNE to step inside. MRS. DIMBLEDY opens the door of the house).

MRS. DIMBLEDY

Welcome, my dear, welcome.

(The door closes quietly and a blue light begins to shine faintly at the attic window. The light draws MOTHER DARKE out of the shadows. SHE stares at it, then retreats as voices are heard. Fade to black. Lights up as MADAM FETTIPLACE leaves the house, escorted by RACHEL, DILIGENCE and MRS. DIMBLEDY).

MADAM FETTIPLACE

Must we protract this any longer? Come, Anne, let us be off! Now where has she gotten to? I believe our cousin is not so eager to leave her old house.

DILIGENCE

This was her house?

MADAM FETTIPLACE

She lived here with the Culvers when she was a girl, though she was just a poor relation to them. As she is to me- she seems to be making quite a career out of it. *She* might want to stay, but I cannot wait to get away! Though it never has been the nicest house. Not like our Swinbrook. Swinbrook is quite, quite beautiful. I am sure that you have noticed it. You might stop there sometime.

DILIGENCE

Oh, I should love to see Swinbrook!

MADAM FETTIPLACE

The best way to see it is right after the turn- then there is a good glimpse of it through the trees, if you have your horses slow down. That is, if you keep horses, of course.

DILIGENCE

Yes- and *ours* are a matched pair.

RACHEL

Not that things like that would matter much to us. But still, they are a matched pair.

MADAM FETTIPLACE

Humpph! But, look ye here! I know of another matched pair as well. Here is this young miss called Dilly, while our cousin seems to dally away her days. Do you see! Dilly and Dally! Hah, hah, hah! Now, if I could only get Anne to giddy-up, we will all be off to Swinbrook. And not a moment too soon!

MRS. DIMBLEDY

I saw her heading to the fields.

MADAM FETTIPLACE

She ought not to be indulged. We could hardly pry her away after we found out that Richard Culver and his family had been taken. Out of nowhere they came! Soldiers! Cromwell's men! Oh- I am so terribly sorry-how could I have forgotten where your sympathies must lie.

RACHEL

It was a brave army with much work to be done. My late husband was a martyr to the cause.

MRS. DIMBLEDY

Such hard times on both sides.

MADAM FETTIPLACE

The Culvers gone, and then dead of the plague in Bristol. All of them. And suddenly we had another mouth to feed. Still, the girl is our family, and will do for a gentlewoman, if one is not too exacting.

DILIGENCE

A gentlewoman!

MADAM FETTIPLACE

If you can call her that! Standards are certainly different than when I was a girl. Sometimes I am glad that my son has followed the court to France; at least he does not have to witness such a decline.

RACHEL

As he plots the return of another Charles! (*Combatively, her patience lost*). But it is futile! Does your prince want to lose his head as well?

MADAM FETTIPLACE

That is enough! We will be off at once! Where is Anne? That girl is never around when she is needed.

DILIGENCE (*to RACHEL as SAMUEL enters*)

Oh, mother- could she not stay here with us- Mother, could we not have a gentlewoman?

SAMUEL

A gentlewoman? What would we need with a gentlewoman? I am afraid that we cannot afford such extravagances.

RACHEL

And we have scarcely set eyes on her.

DILIGENCE

Oh, please!

MRS. DIMBLEDY

Mistress Seckar was just a young girl during the war, and it seems as if she has suffered greatly. During the war- and after. Perhaps Madam will let her stay here with us.

SAMUEL

It is what Meg would have wanted, is it not, Mother?

MRS. DIMBLEDY

It is. My daughter was goodness itself.

SAMUEL

Yes. (*SAMUEL turns to Madam Fettiplace*). Well, madam, if you can spare her, Mistress Seckar is welcome here.

MADAM FETTIPLACE

Well, then! Let me think! All right, it is settled. Such a dreadful accident, but it appears that it has worked out well. Let bygones be bygones, and all that, especially when they save me so much money! Bid Anne adieu for me, and tell her that she is always welcome to visit. If, of course, she lets me know beforehand. How I dislike surprises! Now, farewell. Farewell at last!

(MADAM FETTIPLACE walks to the gate. DILIGENCE turns to RACHEL)

DILIGENCE

Oh, thank you! Thank you! (*SHE gives RACHEL a peck on the cheek and curtseys to Samuel*). I will go tell Mistress Seckar the news! (*Pause*) To think! My very own gentlewoman!

MRS. DIMBLEDY

(SHE opens her Bible). "So, these three; but the greatest of these is love." Samuel, Rachel- you have done a good thing. (RACHEL frantically looks through her Bible. MRS. DIMBLEDY gently turns the page). Corinthians.

RACHEL

I would have found it.

MRS. DIMBLEDY

I know you would have, my dear.

SAMUEL *(to MRS. DIMBLEDY)*

Come now, mother, let me take you inside.

RACHEL

Let me help you, Samuel. *(RACHEL leaps up; her BIBLE falls to the ground near SAMUEL. HE picks it up and hands it back to HER).*

SAMUEL

Thank you, but no need. I am sure there are things you must attend to here. *(SAMUEL offers his arm to MRS. DIMBLEDY and THEY enter the house as a dejected RACHEL dusts off her Bible. URSULA enters from the fields, carrying a basket of apples).*

RACHEL

Corinthians!

URSULA

Yes, madam?

RACHEL

Oh. *(Pause)* Nothing.

URSULA

Uh-huh. *(Pause)* I shall go to put away the apples.

RACHEL

No, wait....*(uneasily)* Your husband Heinrich. What was he like?

(URSULA puts the basket down).

URSULA

Mein Heinrich, rest his soul.... Well, he was a decent man- except when he was falling-down drunk. And he was very good at taking care of the money, what was left, after he gambled most of it away. And I would say that he was a quiet man when he wasn't brawling, but even when he lost his eye-

RACHEL

-Lost his eye?!

URSULA

Yes, his eye- from the brawling- even then, he could still see well enough. Especially at night, if you know what I mean. (*SHE winks*). A very eager man.

RACHEL

Eager!

URSULA

Ja! (*SHE makes a vulgar gesture to clarify Heinrich's eagerness*).

RACHEL

I see.

URSULA (*gingerly and suggestively*)

And your Samuel, madam, how is he?

RACHEL (*caught off-guard, and oblivious*)

Samuel?! Well, he too is a very decent man. Sober-always sober- so he can think of new ways to be thrifty- very thrifty! And so disciplined! Why, he is so industrious that he frequently works all hours. Even into the night. A fine, fine man!

URSULA

I see the problem. (*Pause*) Perhaps, Madam, I could give you some advice.

RACHEL

Advice!

URSULA

It is something that I learned from Heinrich.

RACHEL

I hardly think that advice from Heinrich would be very helpful!

URSULA

Madam, what is the book that you are always reading? (*RACHEL takes out her Bible*).
Well, the Good Book was Heinrich's favorite book. And very soon after we were
married, it became mine as well.

RACHEL

This book?

URSULA

Ja, madam. Heinrich and I spent many a long evening grappling with the testaments,
all the ins and outs. There's much more in the Good Book than what meets the eye.
(*SHE points to her eye, and leers*).

TRACK #5: SONG 7: READ BETWEEN THE LINES

URSULA

YOU CAN FULFILL HIS DESIGNS
WHEN YOU READ BETWEEN THE LINES.
HERE'S THE STORY OF OUR PARENTS
ADAM FIRST, THEN EVE
A PARADISE SO VERY NICE
THEY DIDN'T WANT TO LEAVE
WHAT DID THAT COUPLE DO ALL DAY
WITH LITTLE WORK AND TIME FOR PLAY?

RACHEL

I DON'T THINK THAT I CAN SAY-

URSULA

-THEN READ BETWEEN THE LINES.

(Short musical interlude #1)

AND WHAT YOU WISH, HE DIVINES
WHEN YOU READ BETWEEN THE LINES.

NOW WE GO TO JACOB'S TALE, HE
LOVED HIS RACHEL SO.

RACHEL

Yes.

URSULA

BUT LEAH WENT INTO HIS TENT.
DID HE MAKE THAT SISTER GO?

RACHEL

No.

URSULA

WHAT TO MAKE OF THAT CARESS
IN DESERT HEAT AND SULTRINESS?

RACHEL

OH, I THINK THAT I CAN GUESS!

URSULA

YA, READ BETWEEN THE LINES.

(Short musical interlude #2)

WHEN YOU LEARNED AT SCHOOL
TO RECITE THE GOLDEN RULE,
YOU THOUGHT YOU WERE OBEDIENT AND TRUE.
THE OUTCOME OF SUCH PIETY
IS, IN FACT, IMPROPRIETY.
'CAUSE WHEN YOU DO UNTO OTHERS,
THEY DO DO UNTO YOU!
YOU SEE THAT NO ONE DECLINES
WHEN YOU READ BETWEEN THE LINES.

LET US TURN OUR THOUGHTS TO NOAH
AND HIS FLOATING ZOO
IN THE ARK, IT WAS SO DARK
THE BEASTS GAVE HIM HIS CUE
WHAT TO DO WHEN HE ALIGHTS
FROM FORTY DAYS AND FORTY NIGHTS

RACHEL *(her version of letting loose)*

OH, HE MUST HAVE REACHED THE HEIGHTS!

URSULA and RACHEL

READ BETWEEN THE LINES.

(THEY laugh together).

URSULA

SO LETTING LOOSE FROM ONE'S CONFINES

RACHEL

I'LL READ BETWEEN THE LINES
AND PUT IN PLACE A PERFECT PLAN
FOR OUR CONJUGAL BLISS.
EV'RY DAY, WE'LL FIND SOME WAY
TO READ.

URSULA

YA, GENESIS!

RACHEL

THEN AT NIGHT, WE WILL IMMERSE
OURSELVES IN CHAPTER, TEXT AND VERSE

URSULA

IT COULD GO FROM BED TO WORSE.

URSULA AND RACHEL

READ BETWEEN THE LINES.

*(Over the final musical interlude, URSULA hands RACHEL an apple, and
RACHEL bites lustily into it).*

READ BETWEEN THE LINES (PART TWO)

URSULA

OH, LET US RAISE OUR SHTEINS
WHEN THE LEARNED PAIR RECLINES.

RACHEL

I WILL THANK YOU ENDLESSLY
FOR ALL YOU HAVE BEGUN
WHEN HE READS—

URSULA

—HE'LL KNOW WHAT DEEDS
ARE NEEDED TO BE DONE.

RACHEL

DON'T LEAVE ME YET! I TREMBLE NOW!
I PRAY I STILL REMEMBER HOW!

URSULA

IT COMES RIGHT BACK TO YOU, MEIN FRAU;
I WILL HELP YOU LEARN YOUR LINES.
UND I WILL RECOGNIZE THE SIGNS
WHEN I HEAR "YAS", NOT "NEINS!"

*(Over the next musical phrase, RACHEL looks at URSULA blankly,
as if she doesn't "get it").*

URSULA

READ BETWEEN THE LINES!

(Blackout)

Scene 5: *Immediately following. DILIGENCE leads ANNE into the hall, where MRS. DIMBLEDY is sitting. ANNE looks around, smiling to herself, touching the mantelpiece, and the plaster walls. A few seconds pass with ANNE in quiet contemplation. Then, DILIGENCE points to the bare wall.*

DILIGENCE

I have told Mother that we could improve this, perhaps with a hanging or a tapestry, but she won't hear of it. Maybe you might suggest something to her. She will listen to a gentlewoman, someone who has lived at Swinbrook.

ANNE

Oh, no. This house is perfect the way it is.

DILIGENCE

This house?

ANNE

Yes. Perfect. It is exactly as I remember it.

DILIGENCE

Well, then, a looking glass? There- above the mantel?

ANNE

No. Nothing.

DILIGENCE

Nothing?

MRS. DIMBLEDY

Now, my dear.

DILIGENCE

I think my mother has made a terrible mistake!

. *(DILIGENCE storms off as JONNY enters, carrying BLOSSOM in one hand and the "nest" in the other).*

JONNY

Look, Gram! She leapt out of her nest and ran straight here! I couldn't keep her out!

ANNE

Blossom! It is you! Oh, I never thought to see you again! How you've grown!

JONNY

I am allowed to feed her.

ANNE

And that is why she is so big and strong. She always liked-

JONNY and ANNE

-Cake!

JONNY

But how do you know?

ANNE

I lived here with my uncle Richard when I was a little girl, after my parents died.

JONNY (*quietly*)

Were you lonely?

ANNE

Oh, yes, at first, but my uncle was very kind. And there was a governess for me, but she left just as the war began. And soon, Uncle Richard married Elizabeth, and she came to live here, and my cousin Timothy was born, and it was never a lonely house again. Not with him around. He liked to be called Timmy.

JONNY

I am Jonathan. But I like to be called Jonny.

ANNE

Timmy would have been your age now. Just about eight?

JONNY

Almost nine! But why did he leave? I would never leave, not as long as Blossom were here.

ANNE

You know about the wars of course?

JONNY

Oh, yes.

ANNE

Someone told the Puritan commanders that Timmy's family was loyal to the king. They were captured, all of them, and sent into exile. *(SHE covers her face with her hands).*

JONNY

Exile. It is an ugly word.

MRS. DIMBLEDY

And an uglier thing. But you are here now. With us.

(SHE opens her arms to ANNE. JONNY brings BLOSSOM to comfort her. DILIGENCE comes in, calling back to RACHEL).

DILIGENCE

You might want to have a word with your gentlewoman! *(SHE catches sight of the "nest")*. What is this? What is this! My cape?! I wondered where it had gone-- how could you? My good cape- and that- that fowl- has been laying eggs on it? Oh, you will be sorry for this!

(SHE chases JONNY and BLOSSOM out of the house. There are sounds of shrieks and cackling offstage).

RACHEL *(offstage)*

Children! Oh, Ursula- please make sure that we keep order here.

URSULA *(offstage)*

Ja, madam.

MRS. DIMBLEDY *(to ANNE)*

You will see, my dear. Things will get better in the morning. Come now, let me show you upstairs.

(SHE leads ANNE up the stairs where the blue light glimmers at the attic door).

ANNE

My old room! *(Music under)*

(Immediately following. Scene shifts to the kitchen, where URSULA is looking around, tapping angrily with a wooden spoon).

URSULA

So many chores, and what does my mistress do? She hires a gentlewoman! I hope that this Anne Seckar does not turn out to be some useless lay-a-bed, but time will tell. Enough! Now, where to start? Oh, I know, I know...the same as always...

SONG 8: CHANT: CHORES REPRISE 1

URSULA

THE SETTING OF THE PUDDING
AND THE GETTING OF THE WOOD
AND THE PUTTING UP THE KETTLE TO WHISTLE ON THE HOB
THE CHURNING OF THE BUTTER
AND THE TURNING OF THE BATTER

(JONNY runs into the house with Blossom, looking behind to make sure that Diligence is not following him. The chanting is faster and faster, becoming a dance as URSULA and JONNY discover that the chores have been done).

JONNY

BUT NO BURNING OF THE BATTER
THOUGH THE BAKER'S OFF THE JOB

URSULA

THE THREADING OF THE SPINDLE
WHILE THE WOOD SUPPLY HAS DWINDLED
I'LL STOP TO GET THE KINDLING

JONNY

BUT IT'S SET OUT ON THE TILE

URSULA

AND THE ONIONS NEEDED HACKING
AND THE LUNCHES NEEDED PACKING
AND THE LAUNDRY NEEDED STACKING

JONNY

BUT HERE IT'S NEATLY PILED

URSULA

THE SPINNING OF THE LINENS
AND THE TRIMMING OF THE RIBBONS
AND THE PINNING THEM TO PINAFORES
TO GET A PROPER FIT
AND THE MENDING OF THE GARMENTS
AND THE TENDING OF THE GARDENS
AND THE SENDING OFF TO MARKETS
FOR SOMETHING WE MUST GET
AND THE CLOCKS THAT NEEDED WINDING
AND THE TOTS THAT NEEDED MINDING
AND THE SOCKS THAT NEEDED FINDING

JONNY

ARE SOMEHOW NOW IN PAIRS

URSULA

AND THE FLOWERS HAVE BEEN POTTED
THE FLOOR'S NO LONGER SPOTTED
IT SEEMS THE CREAM IS CLOTTED

JONNY

AND SOMEONE'S SWEPT THE STAIRS!

(Action focuses on the yard. DILIGENCE holds the cape in front of her, picking off bits of straw. MOTHER DARKE is in the lane, staring at the house).

DILIGENCE

It is ruined! The only beautiful thing I have ever owned! How could he?

MOTHER DARKE

Arabella-

DILIGENCE

It sounds like dancing. *Arabella.* But who are you?

MOTHER DARKE

A friend. Mother Darke. And the instant I saw you, I knew who you must be.

DILIGENCE

Yes... *(SHE looks at MOTHER DARKE suspiciously; MOTHER DARKE adjusts her veil)*

MOTHER DARKE

Oh, my dear, this is just a precaution against the plague. But let us not think of such unpleasant things. Here, let me help you.

(SHE takes the cape, and begins to clean it up. SHE leans over the fence and gives it back to DILIGENCE, who puts it on. MOTHER DARKE adjusts the collar).

DILIGENCE

So much better. Thank you.

MOTHER DARKE

If I were your gentlewoman, just think what I could do.

DILIGENCE

Oh, Mother Darke- I wish you had come sooner! We have a new gentlewoman, but she is not what I had hoped for. She is as plain and as ordinary as her name- Anne. Not even Annabella. Anne Seckar. *(MOTHER DARKE smooths DILIGENCE's hair. SHE stops abruptly at the mention of Anne's name).*

MOTHER DARKE

Anne Seckar. I see. Come out into the lane, my dear. It is not fitting that you- you, of all people-should be in this *(pause)* this barnyard. *(DILIGENCE enters the lane).* Now, tell me. About this Anne Seckar. Did she look at the place as if it were hers?

DILIGENCE

Oh, yes.

MOTHER DARKE

I am not surprised. I can trust you, Arabella, can't I? *(DILIGENCE nods. Music under as MOTHER DARKE puts her arm around her and leads her further away from the house as if an important secret is about to be shared).* There is a story that the Culvers buried a great treasure at the Manor.

DILIGENCE

A treasure? Here?

MOTHER DARKE

Oh, yes. Many of the great families did the same, in case they were... sent away. The treasure would be waiting for them when they returned! Poor fools. Now I am sure that Anne Seckar knows this story quite well. That must be the reason that she has come back. To claim the treasure as her own. Well, it is too bad. There are others who deserve it far more than she does.

DILIGENCE

If I had it, I know what I would do with it. A new cape, first of all.

MOTHER DARKE

Yes. Another brown one!

DILIGENCE

Oh, no. One in every color of the rainbow. Vermilion, and violet-

MOTHER DARKE

-And emerald green to match your eyes. And then, you will need someplace to wear them. Let's see! What would be a fitting setting for a girl with such a colorful collection?

DILIGENCE

London?

MOTHER DARKE

Too many pretty girls with pretty clothes there. But, perhaps, Madam Fettiplace might invite you to Swinbrook. Which cape would you wear there?

DILIGENCE

I will never set foot in Swinbrook! Madam called me Dilly.

MOTHER DARKE

Madam will call you milady once you buy the only place where you belong. Imagine, Arabella, if Swinbrook were *yours*.

DILIGENCE

Mine!

MOTHER DARKE

It will be. When you and I find the treasure. Before Anne Seckar does.

DILIGENCE

Swinbrook!

MOTHER DARKE

(The following song is in a gentle waltz tempo, and the women may sway or dance as the moment may require).

SONG 9: A FINE LADY

MOTHER DARKE

YOU WILL BE A FINE LADY
YOU WILL LIVE IN A GRAND PLACE
AND STAND AT THOSE WINDOWS
SO NARROW AND TALL
OF SPARKLING GLASS
AND ALL THOSE WHO PASS
WILL SEE SUCH A ONE LIVES THERE
THEY'LL RUSH TO DELIVER
ENGRAVED INVITATIONS
ON TRAYS MADE OF BRASS.
YOU'LL COLLECT SOME, AND SPURN SOME,
ACCEPT SOME, AND BURN SOME,
REJECT SOME, RETURN SOME,
WAX SEAL INTACT.

DILIGENCE

I WILL SEND THEM RIGHT BACK

(spoken)

Or...

(sings:)

I SHALL WRITE MY REGRETS
IN A BEAUTIFUL HAND
WITH GREAT LOOPING SPIRALS
ON IVORY PAPER.
I WILL DIP A QUILL PEN
INTO INDIGO INK

DILIGENCE (*con't*)

AND THEY WILL ALL THINK THAT THEY
SHOULD HAVE KNOWN BETTER,
BUT THEY'LL STILL SEND THEIR LETTERS
AGAIN AND AGAIN
TO THIS LOVELY LADY
WHO IS TOO FINE FOR THEM.

DILIGENCE

I WILL BE A FINE LADY
I WILL LIVE IN A GRAND PLACE
AND STAND AT THOSE WINDOWS
SO NARROW AND TALL
OF SPARKLING GLASS
AND ALL THOSE WHO PASS
WILL SEE SUCH A ONE LIVES THERE;
THEY'LL RUSH TO DELIVER
ENGRAVED INVITATIONS
ON TRAYS MADE OF BRASS.

AND SPURN SOME,

AND BURN SOME,

RETURN SOME
WAX SEAL INTACT!

MOTHER DARKE

YOU WILL BE A FINE LADY-----

FINE LADY!----

AH-----

AH-----

YOU'LL COLLECT SOME

ACCEPT SOME,

REJECT SOME,

WAX SEAL INTACT!

MOTHER DARKE

Arabella, listen carefully. When it is safe for you and me to go exploring, (*SHE indicates the house and its environs*) take this ribbon out and fasten it to the gate. (*SHE gives her the ribbon*). I will come at once. And remember, not a word to anyone. The treasure is ours alone.

DILIGENCE and MOTHER DARKE
BUT THEY'LL STILL SEND THEIR LETTERS AGAIN AND AGAIN
TO THAT LOVELY LADY
WHO IS TOO FINE
FOR THEM
A FINE LADY!

(Over the final beats of the music, DILIGENCE finds a proper place within her outfit to hide the ribbon, and shows it to MOTHER DARKE. The women rejoice in their newfound partnership).

Scene 6: *Later that night. GEORGE is placing the lanterns on the fence. The lights glow, and SAMUEL rushes in from the house.*

SAMUEL

I have warned you, Mr. Batchford! I told you before that I will not allow such ungodly practices! What are you doing?

GEORGE

I am sorry, sir, but it is for the good of the place.

SAMUEL

I think that I know better what is good for the place! Mr. Batchford, you have disobeyed me. I will ask you to leave the Manor at once!

GEORGE

Sir. I will. But let me show you first where the wood is stored. I wouldn't want anyone to suffer, and it is likely to be a very cold winter. Only the end of October, and already there is snow.

SAMUEL

I see what you mean.

GEORGE

And the rest of the firewood still needs to be cut. We usually bring it in from the Burford forest, but sometimes we go up to Taunton Woods-

SAMUEL

-All right, Mr. Batchford- we will wait until spring! But only if there is no more of this sacrilege-do you understand?

GEORGE

I do, sir, I do.

SAMUEL

Well, then. That will be all. I will take a walk through *my* property to make sure there are no other transgressions. Good night, Mr. Batchford. Good night.

(GEORGE takes away the lanterns, and leaves).

All is in order now. Its proper order. *(HE looks up at the first few flakes of snow).*

RACHEL (*calling from their bedroom*)

Samuel?

SAMUEL

If everything were in its proper order.... (*whispering*) Meg.

TRACK 6: SONG 10: FIREFLIES

NOW IN SNOW
REMEMBER LONG AGO
WE SEARCHED THE SUMMER SKIES
TO FIND THE FIREFLIES

IN THAT TIME
WHEN DAY WAS LEFT BEHIND
AND EVEN A QUIET SIGH MIGHT
DISTURB THE TWILIGHT

FIREFLIES FLICKERED PAST OUR WONDERING EYES
SO QUICKLY THAT WE SOON MIGHT
LOSE THEM IN THE MOONLIGHT.

THE SURPRISE WHEN EVERY TREE BORE FIREFLIES
LIGHTS PULSING LIKE A HEART DOES
SEARCHING FOR ITS TRUE LOVE.

YOU AND I
LISTENED AS THE NIGHT WENT BY
THAT SILENT LANGUAGE SPOKEN
OF PROMISES UNBROKEN

SHE AND I
TOGETHER AS THE DAYS WENT BY
SO MANY HOPES UNSPOKEN
BUT PROMISES ARE BROKEN
ARE BROKEN
HOW COULD WE
HAVE KNOWN THAT SHE'D LEAVE ME
TO WATCH THE WINTER SKIES
AND DREAM OF FIREFLIES

(HE walks away from the house towards the fields).

Scene 7: ANNE's attic bedroom, later that night. SHE is in her nightdress as SHE picks up a hairbrush from the dresser and begins to brush her hair. Next to the brush is a small chest. SHE opens it up, looks at it thoughtfully, and takes out a handful of stone. There is a knock on the door: it opens and the blue light appears. ANNE puts the stones away and goes towards the light, The following scene is a **flashback** as the blue light becomes the figure of Timothy Culver. ANNE is dressed for day.

ANNE

Oh, Timmy! Come in. What do you have there? (HE hands HER a letter). It is addressed to your father. Has he read it? (TIMOTHY nods and ANNE takes the letter from the opened envelope). And he says that I should read it to you? (TIMOTHY nods again). I know that handwriting! Even after seven years. (As ANNE reads, the voice of another, older woman recites the words with HER).

ANNE and MALKIN FERRISHER

"My dearest Richard. It has been a long time since we last saw each other and there is much to say. Thanks to you, I have changed, and am no longer the prideful young woman I once was". Oh, Timmy, she was so beautiful. And she goes on: "I have heard about your pretty wife, and your child"-

ANNE

- that would be you, Timmy-

ANNE and MALKIN FERRISHER

"and I am glad with all my heart for you. I would like so much to meet them. And I should like you to meet my family as well. My fine husband, and our little baby. I hope that you don't mind that I called him Richard, after you. He is a bonny boy. Please come to our house in Burford this afternoon, and bring Anne as well. She will remember her governess with fondness, I hope. Malkin Ferrisher.

ANNE

Imagine. Malkin Ferrisher! It is too bad that George Batchford has gone to the cattle auction in Witney, and will miss her. But he felt that it was a good time to go. There haven't been any Puritan soldiers around for weeks. (SHE goes to the window). Now, we must hurry. Your parents are already at the gate, waiting for us.

(Flashback shifts to the gate of the house. Richard and Elizabeth Culver appear. ANNE and TIMMY join them; the gate closes behind the Culver family. BLOSSOM is on the fence, chirping faintly when they leave. TIMMY runs back to pet her and then re-joins the group).

SONG 11: QUIET MORNING

RICHARD and ELIZABETH

ON THIS PERFECTLY QUIET MORNING
LET EACH PERFECT HOUR UNFOLD
NO BREEZE TO RIPPLE THE RIVER

(TIMOTHY hands a river stone to ANNE)

ANNE

DO YOU SEE HOW IT SPARKLES?

TIMOTHY

LIKE GOLD!

RICHARD and ELIZABETH

ON THIS PERFECTLY QUIET MORNING
EACH MOMENT'S A TREASURE IN WHICH
OUR HEARTS AND OUR MINDS ARE TOGETHER

RICHARD

IS EVERYONE HAPPY?

ANNE and TIMOTHY

WE'RE RICH!

ALL

LOOK BACK AT OUR HOUSE AS IT STANDS THERE
LOOK UP AT THE ROOF SHARP AND CLEAR
WE'LL TELL HER IT'S JUST AS SHE LEFT IT
WE'LL TELL HER...WAIT!

ELIZABETH

A RUSTLE THAT ISN'T THE OAK LEAVES

RICHARD

A FOOTFALL THAT ISN'T A DEER

ANNE

A CRACKLE THOUGH THERE'S NO THUNDER

ELIZABETH, RICHARD, ANNE

DO YOU HEAR?

ELIZABETH and RICHARD

DO YOU HEAR THEM COMING?

ANNE

I HEAR THEM COMING

ELIZABETH and RICHARD

DO YOU HEAR THE BEAT OF THE DRUM?

ANNE

THE BEAT OF THE DRUM

TIMOTHY

COULD THAT BE SOLDIERS DRUMMING?

ALL

HERE THEY COME, HERE THEY COME.

RICHARD

RUN!

(MUSIC under: Soldiers arrive, subdue Richard, who has tried vainly to shield his family from attack. Elizabeth is easily caught, as is Timothy. Anne has managed to successfully hide, and remains hidden until the area is clear).

SOLDIER #1

Have we got them all?

SOLDIER #2

There is no one else.

(The soldiers leave. ANNE emerges from the trees and picks up the stones that TIMMY has dropped. Lights off. Lights on in the attic, where the grown-up ANNE goes to the dresser and takes a handful of stones from the box on the chest).

ANNE

'T WAS A PERFECTLY QUIET MORNING
AS PERFECT AS I'VE EVER KNOWN
SINCE THEN, NO DAY CAN BE PERFECT.
HOW COULD IT, WHEN I AM ALONE?

(Blackout).

Scene 8: *Immediately following. DILIGENCE ties the ribbon on the gate and looks anxiously around. A few seconds later MOTHER DARKE approaches. DILIGENCE opens the gate.*

MOTHER DARKE

So, I am here at last. (*SHE hesitates, as if expecting to hear something, then sails into the yard*). And nothing can stop me. Nobody can stop me. Oh, Arabella, the treasure will be ours. Just think. Once we have it, nothing will be the same again. For either of us.

DILIGENCE

I shall have Swinbrook! And you? (*SHE pays no attention to a possible answer*). Where shall we begin? The place looks even bigger by moonlight.

MOTHER DARKE (*to herself*)

Where did he hide it? Where would Richard Culver hide his gold? In the yard, perhaps, or maybe in the fields. Where? (*MOTHER DARKE looks up at the attic where the blue light glows*) The attic.

DILIGENCE

Did you say something?

MOTHER DARKE

We will look in the attic first. Come, Arabella. You will wait downstairs in case anybody comes.

(Scene shifts to the landing outside the attic, where the blue light is shining. MRS. DIMBLEDY opens the door, and goes towards ANNE's bed. SHE takes the stone from ANNE's hand and looks at it; she then looks around and speaks quietly and calmly to the ghost).

MRS. DIMBLEDY

Dear child. Dear Timothy Culver. You have done what you came for, to see Anne back home again. Now she is safe, and you can leave to find your peace at last.

(A creak on the landing is heard, and SHE goes to open the attic door).

Who's there? What do you want?

MOTHER DARKE

Him! Over there- that poor ghost.

MRS. DIMBLEDY

It is time for him to leave.

MOTHER DARKE

Come to me. Tell me where the treasure is. Tell me.

MRS. DIMBLEDY (*to the ghost*)

Go!

MOTHER DARKE

And lose the chance to ever see Anne again.

TRACK 7: SONG 11: LITTLE LOST ONE

MOTHER DARKE

LITTLE LOST ONE, STAY WITH ME
AND YOU'LL HAVE ETERNAL COMPANY
YOU AND I WILL SPEND OUR DAYS
TOGETHER IN MY CRYSTAL CAVE
FEAR NO LONGER ENDLESS NIGHT
WHEN TREASURE'S SHINING ALL IS BRIGHT
LOVE FORFEITED WHEN HOPE GROWS COLD
CAN ONLY BE REPLACED BY GOLD

MRS. DIMBLEDY

CAN NEVER BE REPLACED BY GOLD

MOTHER DARKE

CAN ONLY BE REPLACED BY GOLD

MRS. DIMBLEDY

CAN NEVER BE REPLACED BY GOLD
YOU WHO ARE STANDING
BETWEEN ABOVE AND BELOW
AS IF ON A LANDING
BETWEEN STAY AND GO
LINGER NO LONGER

MRS. DIMBLEDY (*con't*)

BETWEEN HOPE AND FEAR
ANOTHER WORLD'S WAITING
I PROMISE IT'S HERE.

MOTHER DARKE

WHEN ALL THAT'S GOOD BECOMES FORBIDDEN
I MUST HAVE THE GOLD THAT'S HIDDEN

MRS. DIMBLEDY

OF GREATER GOOD THAN ANY GOLD
IS THE VALUE OF THIS SOUL

OF GREATER GOOD THAN ANY GOLD
IS THE VALUE OF THIS SOUL

MOTHER DARKE

I MUST HAVE THE GOLD

I MUST HAVE THE GOLD

I MUST HAVE THE GOLD

THAT'S HIDDEN

THINK OF A RIVER
THAT YOU NEVER DARED CROSS
BETWEEN DAMNED AND FORGIVEN
BETWEEN FOUND AND LOST
STAY HERE NO LONGER
SELDOM HEARD, SELDOM SEEN.....
LEAVE NOW, FOREVER,
THIS PLACE IN-BETWEEN

(MRS. DIMBLEDY opens the window.)

Go, now, Timothy! You can go!

(MOTHER DARKE runs to the window.)

MOTHER DARKE

Stay! Stay!

*(As SHE runs past MRS. DIMBLEDY, MOTHER DARKE accidentally
knocks her against the window. The blue light fades away).*

DILIGENCE *(in a loud whisper)*

Is everything all right? Have you found the treasure?

MOTHER DARKE *(to Mrs. Dimbledy)*

What have you done? Mark my words- I will be back again, and next time, I will not fail!!

*(MOTHER DARKE leaves the attic, slamming the door behind her
At the sound of the slamming, ANNE stirs in her sleep. MRS. DIMBLEDY
rises to her feet with difficulty).*

TRACK #8: SONG 12: PEACE AND PLENTY REPRISE 3

MRS. DIMBLEDY

Oh, my dear....

I PRAY YOU MAY KNOW PEACE AND PLENTY
LEAVE LOSS AND SORROW FAR BEHIND
SOME DAY, I KNOW YOU'LL FIND A TRUE PLACE OF
PEACE...

(SHE slumps, exhausted, in a chair by the open window).

End of Act I

ACT II

Scene 1: *Shed, Christmas Eve. ANNE, URSULA, JONNY and VILLAGERS decorate the shed with wreaths, garlands, and a ball of mistletoe as the MUSICIANS tune up. As THEY finish, a great knocking is heard at the shed door, and GEORGE appears. HE is dressed as the King of the Revels in a red robe lined with white fur, and a garland of holly around his head. HE signals for the festivities to begin. "The Riddle Song" is also a dance, a traditional country reel.*

SONG 14: RIDDLE

GEORGE

I'VE A LITTLE RIDDLE I BID YOU CONSIDER:
WHAT IS BOTH COLD AND WARM?

ENSEMBLE

BOTH COLD AND WARM!

GEORGE

I BEG YOU REMEMBER, JUST THINK OF DECEMBER
DEAR GUESTS, GIVE YOUR GUESSES WHILE I WATCH YOU PERFORM.

ENSEMBLE

WHY, WHY, WHY DO YOU TRY US
IN THIS ICY CLIMATE OF WIND AND OF STORM
WHY, WHY, WHY NOT SURPRISE US?
SUPPLY US THE ANSWER:
WHAT IS BOTH COLD AND WARM?

GEORGE

THE ANSWER IS WINTER: THOUGH IT'S COLD AND MAY STORM
EACH HEART IS A HEARTH AND THE HEARTH KEEPS US WARM

ENSEMBLE

EACH HEART IS A HEARTH AND THE HEARTH KEEPS US WARM

GEORGE

I'VE A PRETTY PROBLEM THAT NEEDS SOME RESOLVING:
WHAT IS BOTH DARK AND LIGHT?

ENSEMBLE

BOTH DARK AND LIGHT!

GEORGE

ONTO THE NEXT THING; PERHAPS IT'S PERPLEXING
BUT FRIENDS, WHEN THE SONG ENDS, ALL OF YOU WILL BE RIGHT!

ENSEMBLE

PLEASE, PLEASE, PLEASE DO NOT TEASE US
THROUGHOUT THIS LONG SEASON OF BLEAKNESS AND NIGHT
PLEASE, PLEASE GIVE US THE REASON
APPEASE US AND ANSWER: WHAT IS BOTH DARK AND LIGHT?

GEORGE

THE ANSWER IS WINTER: THROUGH THE DARK AND DEEP NIGHT
EACH LIFE IS A BEACON; EACH BEACON SHINES BRIGHT

ENSEMBLE

EACH LIFE IS A BEACON; EACH BEACON SHINES BRIGHT

MALE ENSEMBLE

IS OUR SONG STILL AS STRONG IF ONE VOICE IS MISSING?

FEMALE ENSEMBLE

'TIS ONLY WRONG IF THE SONG IS NOT SUNG

GEORGE

WHY DOES MISTLETOE GROW IF NO-ONE IS KISSING?

URSULA

(SHE dances GEORGE to the mistletoe and kisses HIM on the cheek).
ALL THAT I KNOW IS THE MISTLETOE'S HUNG.

GEORGE

HERE'S A SUGGESTION, ANOTHER GOOD QUESTION-
WHAT IS BOTH NEW AND OLD?

ENSEMBLE

BOTH NEW AND OLD!

GEORGE

WELCOME THE DANCERS AS THEY HAVE THE ANSWERS:
IT'S A TRUE TALE THAT MUST ALWAYS BE TOLD.

(ALL dance together. Scene shifts to MRS. DIMBLEDY's bedroom where SAMUEL offers HER a cup of a steaming liquid. Music continues under).

SAMUEL

Oh, mother, it is good to see you sitting up. Here, take this. Mistress Seckar made it for you, and it is still warm. She says that a posset will help you to gain strength. That night in the attic took its toll on you.

MRS. DIMBLEDY

All I can remember is waking up near the open window. *(Shakily, SHE takes a sip of the drink).* Thank you. And thank the little mistress for me.

SAMUEL

(HE takes the cup from HER). Is there anything else I can get you?

MRS. DIMBLEDY

You are very kind, my dear. If it is not too much trouble, I would dearly love to see Joel.

SAMUEL

That you shall, Mother. I will find out how our work is and if we are not too pressed, he shall come down. But you do seem stronger. I am sure you will recover. *(HE watches as SHE drifts off to sleep).* I will write to Joel and have the letter ready to send if it is necessary.

(HE sits down at the desk in the room to write as the music from the shed is heard faintly. He seals the letter and puts it in his pocket. As the music becomes stronger he leaps from the desk and flings open the window).

What! It can't be! They can't be celebrating Christmas! Are they disobeying me once again?

(HE grabs his coat and hat. HE leaves the house and heads for the shed, battling the wind and clutching his hat tightly to his head. DILIGENCE is at the gate. The black ribbon is on the gate and MOTHER DARK is hurrying down the lane. As SAMUEL approaches, DILIGENCE is startled. SHE quickly unties the ribbon, hiding it behind her back).

SAMUEL *(cont'd)*

Diligence! Go home at once! Go home! I fear that there is mischief afoot, and I will not stand for it! Does George Batchford think that I cannot hear the music? Celebrating Christmas! I have told him time and time again what *we* believe: that no one day is holier than another. How dare he!

DILIGENCE

Yes, sir. *(SHE turns to MOTHER DARKE and whispers).* Watch for this again. *(SHE holds up the ribbon, and MOTHER DARKE nods, then heads off down the lane).*

SAMUEL

Do not disobey me as well! Do not! *(DILIGENCE runs toward the house, dropping the ribbon as she goes. Scene shifts back to the shed).*

GEORGE and ENSEMBLE

HAND IN HAND
WE STAND WITH A CANDLE
AND ALL THOSE WHO GLANCE HERE
ON THIS WINTER NIGHT
SEE THAT WE ARE THE HOPE
WE ARE THE ANSWER
EACH HEART IS A HEARTH AND EACH LIFE IS A LIGHT.

FOLLOW THE STAR
IT IS THE ANSWER
LIFT UP YOUR VOICE
AND REJOICE IN THE SONG.
LIFT UP YOUR VOICE
AND REJOICE IN THE SONG

(At the song's end, GEORGE and the COMPANY chatter together as the MUSICIANS continue to play softly. Samuel arrives at the shed and pulls at the door).

SAMUEL

Mr. Batchford! Are you determined to disobey me? You have had your last chance!

(As HE is continues to tug at the door, a great wind comes, slamming the door and hurtling Samuel away from the shed. He spins round and round in the wind; his hat flying off. The music comes to a stop. A few seconds later, there is a brief triumphant cackle. All exit the shed as shouts of "Happy Christmas" are heard).

Scene 2. Early the next morning. GEORGE is in the yard.

GEORGE

Ay, Dick, that was a strange night! I have never seen a storm come up so suddenly. And on this night when all should be calm and still, and even the cattle hold their breath as if they knew what the morning would bring....but not this Christmas. This one was different indeed- but we did get to keep it, thanks to you! Now, let me find some treat for Blossom. She does deserve it, and there are sure to be some lady apples still in the shed.

(HE is about to go to the shed, when he sees the black ribbon lying in the snow).

Now, what is this?

(HE picks it up as DILIGENCE enters. SHE stops cold for a second as SHE sees him with the ribbon and then strides up to HIM).

DILIGENCE

Oh, Mr. Batchford, I know what that is! It belongs to that poor old woman who is sometimes around here.

GEORGE

Yes. I have seen it before.

DILIGENCE

Let me return it to her. It is the only thing she has to remind her of happier days.

(SHE holds out her hand, and GEORGE gives her the ribbon. HE watches as SHE enters the house).

GEORGE

Well, Dick, there may be more to the girl than I thought. *(A chirp is heard).* All right, then- than *we* thought! But perhaps she has learned a little about suffering. *(Cackle).* Perhaps not. But what about the master? Don't you think *he* has suffered enough? It is bitter cold. *(HE waits for a response).* No? Well, Dick, misguided as he may be, Mrs. Dimbledy needs him now, and she is growing frailer and frailer with each passing hour. *(The gate swings open, and SAMUEL totters into the yard, hatless, with his cloak inside out).* Sir! *(SAMUEL does not answer).* Wait! Let me help you! *(GEORGE goes to SAMUEL and supports him as HE stumbles toward the house).* Now, sir. Turn your cloak inside out and the spell is broken.

SAMUEL (*weakly*)

No talk of spells, Mr. Batchford. (*GEORGE reverses the cloak and leads SAMUEL to a seat outside the house, where SAMUEL sits, dazed*). I thought I saw lights.

GEORGE

The stars did shine tonight.

SAMUEL

And then I thought I heard music.

GEORGE

Music?

SAMUEL

But it must have been the wind. Such a wind. It took my hat away as well. That wind. (*RACHEL comes to the door*).

RACHEL

Samuel! Where have you been? You've been gone all night long.

SAMUEL

I have? All night? Is Mother all right? Is she any better?

RACHEL

Oh, Samuel, I fear not. (*GEORGE helps SAMUEL inside. Voices are heard from upstairs*).

JONNY

Can I come in?

ANNE

In a little while, dear.

(*SAMUEL rushes up the stairs to MRS. DIMBLEDY's room, RACHEL behind him. ANNE is at the bedside*).

SAMUEL

Mother! You must get better, you must! I don't know what we would do without you.

MRS. DIMBLEDY

Oh, my dear. You have been a good son to me always, but ever since that night in the attic, I feel that I am on my way somewhere else. Come and say good-bye to me. (*To RACHEL*). It has not been easy for you. For either of you. But you have made me glad, and I bless you for that.

(SAMUEL and RACHEL each stand at the side of the bed for a second, holding MRS. DIMBLEDY's hand).

Now, I think that I shall need a little rest before Joel comes. (*SHE closes her eyes*).

SAMUEL

How can I tell her that I never sent the letter?

RACHEL

I don't know. (*RACHEL leaves, wiping her eyes with her handkerchief. JONNY is outside the door*).

JONNY

May I go in now? (*RACHEL nods, and JONNY enters*). Oh, she is sleeping. (*MRS. DIMBLEDY opens her eyes*).

SAMUEL

Your grandmother needs to rest- I fear that she is growing even weaker.

JONNY

No! Oh, Gram... don't go... please don't go ...

MRS. DIMBLEDY

Oh, my sweet boy. Do not be sad. I am ready to go- though I was so sure that Joel would come.

JONNY

Oh, Gram.

(JONNY goes to the bed. HE sees a few feathers on the floor; he picks them up and blows on them; they float through the air and land under the mattress).

ANNE

Look, Jonny! Do you see that? Feathers! There is an old custom in these parts, that tucking a bunch of feathers under the mattress can keep the spirit here until it is ready to go. And here they are.

MRS. DIMBLEDY

Yes, and because of you, I can stay a little longer- just until Joel arrives.

JONNY

Is Joel really coming?

SAMUEL

Oh, Mother, Joel has missed the chance to say good-bye. I haven't sent the letter. It is right here. (*HE pats his pocket. It is empty.*) It *was* right here.

MRS. DIMBLEDY

I am sure he will come. Jonny? Will you go downstairs and wait for him? He will be cold and tired.

JONNY

Oh, yes! I will be there when he comes! (*JONNY is about to leave.*)

MRS. DIMBLEDY

And, Jonny-

JONNY

-Yes?

MRS. DIMBLEDY

You have always been my brave, sweet boy. (*JONNY goes to her bed, and SHE kisses him gently.*)

JONNY

Oh, Gram.

MRS. DIMBLEDY

Now then, go and watch for Joel.

(*JONNY leaves the room and shouts from downstairs.*)

JONNY

A horse! I see Joel's horse!

SAMUEL

How is he here? It is not possible...Joel! Joel!

(HE rushes downstairs. RACHEL and GEORGE join HIM in the hall. ANNE remains with MRS. DIMBLEDY).

JONNY

Here he is! I knew he would come! I knew it! *(JONNY opens the door to JOEL).*

JOEL

Jonny! *(HE sweeps him up in a big hug).* You have gotten so tall! *(JONNY stands straight up).* I am sure you have been taking care of everything while I was gone!

JONNY

Oh, yes, Joel.

SAMUEL

Joel?

JOEL

I came as soon as I heard the news- your letter was on my doorstep last night. Thank you, father, thank you for bringing me home.

GEORGE

That, Dick, was a very powerful wind! *(GEORGE leaves).*

SAMUEL

But, Joel-

JOEL

-Just a minute, father. Excuse me. *(HE runs upstairs. SAMUEL gets up to follow him).*

RACHEL

Now, Samuel- we have had our chance. Sit down; sit down and rest.

(SAMUEL sits down, shaking his head, and still looking in his pocket)

SAMUEL

But I never sent it. I know I never sent it.

(JOEL enters the bedroom. ANNE rises from her chair).

JOEL

Gram.

ANNE

She knew you would come. She has been waiting for you.

MRS. DIMBLEDY

Joel. Anne. I am so glad that you are both here. Come. Let me look at you for one last minute. *(JOEL and ANNE stand side-by-side at the bed).*

TRACK # 9: SONG 15: FEATHERS

MRS. DIMBLEDY

LET LOOSE THE FEATHERS
THE LAST FRAGILE TETHERS
UNTIE THE FEATHERS
THAT ARE BINDING ME HERE
LAST WORDS ARE SPOKEN
THE WINDOW IS OPENED
OH...

ANNE

LET LOOSE THE FEATHERS
TO FLOAT IN THE AIR
SEE HOW THEY'RE READY
TO WHIRL IN THAT EDDY
AS IF THEY ARE EAGER
AND WANTING TO GO
LIGHT AS A BREATH
AND QUIET AS DEATH
THE WINGS OF AN ANGEL
WILL MIX WITH THE SNOW

JOEL

UNBIND THE FEATHERS
THAT KEEP US TOGETHER
THE TEARS WILL COME LATER
WHEN WE ARE ALONE

ANNE AND JOEL

SOFT THE SNOW'S FALLING
THE ANGELS ARE CALLING
NO TEARS FOR THE SPIRIT
SO NEAR TO ITS HOME.

(JOEL and ANNE reach for each other's hands. Blackout).

Scene 3: *Hall, the next day. MADAM FETTIPLACE sweeps in. RACHEL and SAMUEL greet her somberly. DILIGENCE curtsseys. GEORGE is stacking wood at the hearth.*

MADAM FETTIPLACE

I am here to give what comfort I can.

SAMUEL

Thank you. We will miss her sorely.

MADAM FETTIPLACE

Yes. (*SHE pauses*). Well, then, I have done what I came for and will be off. I considered going with you to the churchyard today, but I see no point in additional people catching chills and dying. We would not want an epidemic.

DILIGENCE

Would you not like a word with Anne Seckar while you are here? Surely you will not leave without seeing her. She must be somewhere about. She is probably out with Jonathan. playing.

RACHEL

Playing, Diligence? Surely you said praying!

DILIGENCE

No. Playing.

RACHEL

Samuel, what are we to do? This is a house of mourning!

DILIGENCE

And I am sure that Joel is with them as well. They are always off together- Anne and Joel.

MADAM FETTIPLACE

Anne and Joel?

DILIGENCE

Oh, yes –talking about saplings, and milking, and ...flanks.

MADAM FETTIPLACE

Flanks! Oh, that is not....decent. To think of our cousin engaging in such activities- and with this... *(Pause to laugh as SHE is tickled)*... this shopkeeper!!

SAMUEL

There is nothing humorous in keeping a shop, Madam.

MADAM FETTIPLACE

That might be your notion. But it is not mine! *(Laughter)*

GEORGE

Now, Dick-

MADAM FETTIPLACE *(gathering her dignity)*

We shall not be disgraced by such a connection! I will not have an unsuitable match in my family! *(Laughter. She continues speaking faster and faster in the hopes of finishing a sentence without laughing again).* One cannot be too careful! *(Full-blown laughter)*

SAMUEL

Madam! This is unseemly!

MADAM FETTIPLACE

Not as unseemly as some things I shudder to think of! I will not hear any more of them! Flanks! Go, Diligence, and fetch my cousin! I am leaving this house immediately.

(DILIGENCE leaves. MADAM FETTIPLACE continues to speak, pausing to see if she will be tickled again).

It is clear that you at the Manor do not have any. *(Pause)* Manners! Do you see? *(Pause)* No manners at the Manor!

(DILIGENCE returns with ANNE, JOEL and JONNY).

Cousin Anne! We are leaving!

ANNE

Madam?

MADAM FETTIPLACE

Do you think that I can stand still while you are about to ruin us! To bring shame on us with such an association!

ANNE

Do you mean Joel?

MADAM FETTIPLACE

I hardly care what his name is! Come!

SAMUEL

I have other plans for Joel.

MADAM FETTIPLACE

What! Are we are not good enough for you? You- you upstart!

(MADAM FETTIPLACE takes ANNE by the arm and marches her away. ANNE looks sadly back at JOEL. GEORGE follows them out. SAMUEL watches them go. As they are about to exit the gate, MADAM FETTIPLACE is tickled again).

Mr. Batchford- you will *(Pause)* bring us our coach! *(Hysterical laughter)*

(SHE exits. SAMUEL lets out a roar of laughter. HE mimics MADAM FETTIPLACE'S squirming and looks around at his FAMILY. ALL laugh).

SAMUEL

Wait! This is not funny! *(The FAMILY stops)*. Not at all! Oh, I knew there was something about Widford Manor that is not right.

JOEL

Not to me.

JONNY

What do you mean, father?

TRACK # 10: SONG 16: THIS HOUSE ISN'T FIT FOR A MAN OF SOBER HABITS

SAMUEL

THIS HOUSE ISN'T FIT FOR A MAN OF SOBER HABITS
NOR IS IT SUITABLE FOR HIS KITH AND KIN
FROM THE INSTANT THAT WE CAME,
NO ONE HERE HAS BEEN THE SAME.
NO, THIS HOUSE ISN'T FIT FOR ANY WIDDISON WITHIN.

FIRST, THERE WAS THAT CHIMNEY
SMOKING INEXPLICABLY
WHO HAS HEARD OF HEARTHFIRES
THAT NO-ONE NEEDS TO STOKE?
BUT THAT WAS JUST A TOKEN OF
MANY ODD OCCURENCES—
THE PINCHING AND THE POKING
MY BADLY TWISTED CLOAK
OH!

THIS HOUSE ISN'T FIT FOR A MAN OF SOBER HABITS
NOR IS IT PROPER FOR CREATURES GREAT AND SMALL
WAS THE CARRIAGE FORCED OFF COURSE
BY A CHICKEN OR A HORSE? (*URSULA enters and struggles to understand*).
OH, THIS HOUSE ISN'T FIT FOR ANY WIDDISON AT ALL.

WHAT ABOUT THAT LETTER,
GONE SOMEHOW INVISIBLY?
AND TELL ME HOW A LETTER
CAN FLY LIKE FAIRY FOLK?
AND THAT LAUGHTER UNPROVOKED, YES
THAT MADAM JUST EXHIBITED—
WHEN HAS MADAM FETTIPLACE
EVER STOOPED TO JOKE?

NEVER!

THIS HOUSE ISN'T FIT FOR A MAN OF SOBER HABITS (*GEORGE enters the house*).

RACHEL, DILIGENCE, JOEL, JONNY

THIS HOUSE ISN'T FIT FOR A MAN LIKE HIM

SAMUEL

AN UNSEEMLY SETTING FOR ALL MY KIN AND KITH

RACHEL, DILIGENCE, JOEL, JONNY, URSULA
A PERFECT SETTING

SAMUEL

AND OF COURSE YOU ALL AGREE

RACHEL, DILIGENCE, JOEL, JONNY, URSULA
(shaking their heads no)

Hm...hmmm

SAMUEL

WE'RE IN UNANIMITY
SEE, THIS HOUSE ISN'T FIT FOR ANY WIDDISON FORTHWITH!
WHY SHOULD A PURITAN
TOLERATE THIS HELL
CAN I END IT? SURE I CAN!
THAT'S WHY I MUST SELL!

RACHEL

Sell!

(Overlapping dialogue from the FAMILY as GEORGE rushes out).

RACHEL: But our studies! We must get them underway!

DILIGENCE: Swinbrook! What about Swinbrook?

URSULA: Und the chores are so easy these days.

JOEL: To leave Anne? To leve Widford?

JONNY: What about Blossom?

SAMUEL

Stop!

NO MORE OF THIS HOUSE FOR A MAN OF SOBER HABITS
NO DECENT DWELLING FOR CHILDREN AND A SPOUSE
BUT THE DAMAGE IS UNDONE:
YES, IT'S FAREWELL, EVERYONE
CAUSE I'M OFF TO LONDON

RACHEL, DILIGENCE, JOEL, JONNY, URSULA
HE'S OFF TO LONDON?!

SAMUEL

YES, I'M OFF TO LONDON!

RACHEL, DILIGENCE, JOEL, JONNY, URSULA
DON'T GO TO LONDON!

(SAMUEL swoops up various belongings, and stuffs them in his pockets).

SAMUEL

GOOD RIDDANCE TO THE WIDDISONS' HOUSE

(HE is about to leave, when GEORGE enters with SAMUEL'S coat).

GEORGE

Sir! Your coat!

(SAMUEL takes the coat, jams his arms into the sleeves, and exits. Blackout).

Scene 4: Yard, early evening, May Day. GEORGE is in the yard.

GEORGE (to DICK)

See! I told you there was no need to worry. Almost five months since the Master went up to London, and no word of a buyer. Not one. I think I can go ahead with plans for the fall harvest. We will need to repair the bushel baskets, certainly.

(URSULA enters, holding out an almost-empty basket. JONNY is with her, carrying Blossom).

URSULA

And what do you think you will be putting in your bushel baskets? There hasn't been much of anything, not since Anne Seckar left. Just a few currants, maybe.

SONG 17: CHANT: CHORES REPRISE 2)

NO LAYING OF THE CHICKENS
COWS BRAYING LIKE THE DICKENS
NERVES FRAYING TIL I'VE SICKENED
EACH DAY'S BECOME A CHORE.
THESE LAST MONTHS AN ETERNITY
THE FIRE WILL NOT BURN FOR ME
THE MILK'S COMPLETELY TURNED, I SEE
WHAT ELSE CAN BE... IN STORE?

(JOEL runs in, an opened letter in his hand, DILIGENCE comes in behind him).

JOEL

Oh, Mr. Batchford! It has happened! My father will be coming here soon, with a man who wants to buy the place. He is going to sell Widford after all!

GEORGE

No!

JOEL

Yes. And wait- there is even worse news!

JONNY

Worse than leaving here?

JOEL

He has met with Alderman Peto! About Joan. Joan Peto – and me! He asks me to find the ring he gave my mother when they were young. (*HE takes the ring from his pocket*), Here it is. I am never without it.

JONNY

It is so pretty.

JOEL

It is. I remember her wearing it.

URSULA

And what are you doing with it in your pocket when it belongs on somebody's finger! (*SHE looks at JOEL's stricken face.*) Must I explain everything to you as well? *Anne's* finger!

JOEL

Oh, Ursula! You are right! I shall give it to Anne. If only she will have me! I shall ask her right away! (*He rushes out*).

GEORGE (*looking around for Dick*)

Well, then, go ahead and say it. (*Blossom chirps harshly*). There. I was wrong. But, Dick, there must be a way to save Widford. There must. (*HE shakes his head and goes off*).

JONNY

Ursula- perhaps you can use those currants to make a cake for me! For me and Blossom? See how sad she is?

URSULA

Humph! Get on with you, now. So much to do with Anne Seckar gone. I do hope that she comes back soon.

(URSULA goes off, grumbling. JONNY and BLOSSOM sit glumly in a far corner of the yard. DILIGENCE ties the black ribbon onto the gatepost. A few seconds later, MOTHER DARKE appears).

DILIGENCE

Oh, I am so glad to see you. My stepfather has found someone to buy this house! We must find the treasure before that happens.

(SHE unties the ribbon and opens the gate. MOTHER DARKE enters) .

MOTHER DARKE

And so we shall. *(SHE catches sight of JONNY and BLOSSOM)*. Those two- are they always together?

DILIGENCE

They are inseparable!

MOTHER DARKE *(instantly hatching a plan)*

Oh, Arabella, we won't need to look for the treasure after all. It will come to me- to us. Listen, my dear. Don't you hear the music? It's the Maying! Let's get Jonny and join them.

(Scene shifts to VILLAGERS and Maypole Dance)

SONG 18: ONE FLOWER, SUNFLOWER (a capella)

FIRST VILLAGER

ONE OF US, NOT ENOUGH

SECOND VILLAGER

TWO OF US

THIRD VILLAGER

STILL NOT MUCH

THREE BEGIN WEAVING A TRIBUTE TO MAY

ALL VILLAGERS

FOUR'S FOR THIS ANCIENT FORM

FIVE PLIES THE LIVELY TIES

SIX IS THE SILKEN MIX

TWISTED ARRAY

SEVEN ENCOUNTERS EIGHT

STRAIGHTENS THE RAINBOW PLAIT

NINE BINDS THE CLIMBING LINES

TWINING DISPLAY

TEN'S FOR THE TENT WE MADE

BLENDING EACH HUE AND SHADE

RENDERED OF RIBBONS AND TENDERED TO MAY

(MOTHER DARKE shrinks back, as DILIGENCE calls for JONNY. HE enters, carrying BLOSSOM).

DILIGENCE

Ah, I think I see. Jonathan- Jonny- come! The Maying! Do let's go! Come, Jonny, let's gather the flowers and bring them to George Batchford!

JONNY

You, at the Maying?

DILIGENCE

Oh, Jonny, yes! It will be so lovely!

(THEY sing as they gather the flowers).

SONG 18: ONE FLOWER, SUNFLOWER (continued)

DILIGENCE

ONE FLOWER

JONNY

SUNFLOWER!

DILIGENCE

TULIPS

JONNY

WITH DEW ON IT!

DILIGENCE

THREE SEES THE-

JONNY

PEONIES

DILIGENCE

THAT'S WHAT WE'LL BRING
FOUR'S FOR

FORSYTHIA
JONNY

FIVE I'VE A
DILIGENCE

HYACINTH
JONNY

SIX PICKS THE
DILIGENCE

CROCUSES
JONNY

READY IN SPRING.
DILIGENCE

JONNY and DILIGENCE
SEVEN I'VE LAVENDER
EIGHT MAKES A DAISY CHAIN

NINE FINDS THE
DILIGENCE

VIOLETS
JONNY

DILIGENCE
QUIET AND BLUE
TEN IS FOR TENDERLY
HOW VERY TENDERLY
TIED WITH A RIBBON
AND GIVEN TO YOU.

(Unseen by JONNY, MOTHER DARKE returns and steps in to take DILIGENCE's place).

MOTHER DARKE

ONE FLOWER
SUNFLOWER!
TULIPS
WITH DEW ON IT

DILIGENCE

THREE SEES THE
PEONIES

DILIGENCE, MOTHER DARKE

THAT'S WHAT WE'LL BRING

DILIGENCE, MOTHER DARKE, JONNY

FOUR'S FOR
FORSYTHIA
FIVE
I'VE A HYACINTH
SIX PICKS THE
CROCUSES
READY IN SPRING.
SEVEN I'VE LAVENDER
EIGHT MAKES A DAISY CHAIN
NINE FINDS
THE VIOLETS
QUIET AND BLUE
TEN IS FOR TENDERLY
HOW VERY TENDERLY
TIED WITH A RIBBON (*MOTHER DARKE ties the flowers up with the black ribbon*).

DILIGENCE and JONNY
AND GIVEN TO YOU

MOTHER DARKE
AND GIVEN TO (*shouted*) **YOU!**

(MOTHER DARKE takes her shawl, and throw it over JONNY's head, preventing him from calling out. SHE grabs him and runs out the gate).

DILIGENCE

What are you doing! Wait! Wait! Where are you taking him? The dancing is over there!
(*SHE runs after them, as BLOSSOM cackles loudly*).

Scene 5 : *Immediately following. RACHEL and URSULA rush in from the house as GEORGE comes from the fields. BLOSSOM continues to chirp loudly).*

RACHEL

What is that racket! I have never heard such a noise!

GEORGE

Something must be amiss- Blossom would never carry on like that.

URSULA

Ja, dat hen has an eye out for the boy. But where is he? And where is Diligence?

(URSULA, GEORGE, RACHEL and BLOSSOM call out for the children, There is no answer. GEORGE picks up the bunch of flowers from the ground, and looks carefully at the black ribbon).

GEORGE

I should have known.

URSULA

Jonny asked for a cake this very day- and I told him he could not have any. Now I wish I hadn't been so harsh to him. I can see his face now- such a sad, sad face. What if that was the last cake he ever asked for? *(SHE begins to cry into her apron).*

RACHEL

What are you saying? The last cake?

GEORGE

Oh, madam- I fear the boy has been taken.

RACHEL

Taken! I don't understand-

GEORGE

I am afraid I do. That woman- Mother Darke- that was her black ribbon, but I have seen Diligence with it as well. *(Pause)* Perhaps she has been able to enter the gates; perhaps she has even been inside the house. There were no lanterns that night, the night Mrs. Dimbledy fell ill. Oh, madam, nothing will stop that woman from searching for the Culver treasure.

RACHEL

Treasure?

GEORGE

I thought it was just a story...how could I have been so wrong?

RACHEL

Do not blame yourself. How shall we find the children?

GEORGE

Why, we will look for Mother Darke, of course. And when we find her, I am sure that we will find Diligence and Jonny as well. I wish Anne Seckar were here. She knows the ways of this place. She is our best hope.

RACHEL

I pray that you are right...I shall go at once and ask her to come back. We will find the children! Ursula-start making cakes! Make hundreds of cakes!

(RACHEL goes down the lane to find Anne; URSULA goes into the kitchen).

GEORGE

Now is all strength wanted, and all belief. Listen to me, Dick. We need you more than ever- you and all of the Old Ones, the fairy folk. Please come. Please. *(Music under)*.

Tell them all, let them be warned
Gather all before the dawn
We'll scour empty barrows til
We find the lad in the hollow hills.
Phooka, killmoulis, and all
Silkies, gruagachs- hear our call
Fendarees, boggarts, tiddlies, wisps
Kelpies, yarthkins, join the list
And if you don't know what this is
Consult the work of K. M Briggs.

(As GEORGE speaks, ANNE hurries down the road. RACHEL and JOEL are beside her).

GEORGE (*con't*)

And know ye well, each sprite and elf
Humankind can aid itself
With help that comes, unheard, unseen,
Look to the places betwixt and between
(*Music out. Spotlight out.*)

The moon has risen- it is time to go. Most likely the lad is beneath a mound; the countryside is full of such places where our old fathers buried their dead. And when a gentle spirit leaves such a place, an evil one is certain to possess it.

TRACK #11: SONG 19: HOLLOW HILLS
GEORGE, RACHEL, ANNE, JOEL

NOW WE MUST FOLLOW
AND SEARCH THE HOLLOW HILLS
THE EMPTIED BARROW
SOON WILL BE FILLED.
THERE EVIL DWELLS
A LITTLE CLOSER TO HELL

(*Lights down Lights up on DILIGENCE running through the woods after MOTHER DARKE and JONNY. Lights up on singers.*)

GO FIND THE GALLOWS
CRESTING THE HOLLOW HILLS
WHERE THE UNQUIET DEAD
ARE RESTLESS STILL
HELP US, THEY SIGH,
AS WE PASS BY.

IF YOU WOULD GO
OUT TO THE HOLLOW HILLS
THE PATH THAT YOU TAKE
IS THE ONE CLEARLY MARKED
BY TREES THAT ARE TWISTED
WITH DRY, BLISTERED BARK
BY VAST, LONELY MOORS
BY PONDS STAGNANT AND STALE
WHERE EVIL WAS LOOSED
THE EARTH TELLS THE TALE

(Lights down Lights up on MOTHER DARKE descending with JONNY into the cave, DILIGENCE following. Lights up on singers).

AND THERE EVIL DWELLS
A LITTLE CLOSER TO HELL.

(GEORGE, RACHEL, JOEL and ANNE follow a cloud of brightness in their search for MOTHER DARKE).

Scene 6: SAMUEL'S office, London. HE is with MR. STOUT, the prospective buyer of Widford.

MR. STOUT

Well, then, Mr. Widdison. It appears that the matter is almost settled. Now that it is spring, I shall go down to inspect Widford Manor as we discussed, and if all is satisfactory- which I am sure that it will be- we can conclude our business.

SAMUEL

Absolutely. I am sure you will find everything to your liking. Good country air. Shall we go over the terms of the sale again? It will include the cattle. Good milk. And the poultry as well. I can't say that I won't miss these when I am back at the shop full time. (*SAMUEL'S hat- the one that HE lost at Christmas- flies in through the window and lands on the cloak stand as HE stops speaking and watches in amazement*).

MR. STOUT

Mr. Widdison! Whatever is the matter! You look as if you have seen a ghost!

SAMUEL

Yes...no....let's go on. Very good poultry! And turnips. Many, many turnips. I hope you are fond of those?

MR. STOUT

Why, yes, very.

SAMUEL

Well, then, all is good. So, Mr. Stout, you will write that the sale is concluded contingent upon your inspection, and we will both sign it, and then we are done! (*SAMUEL hands him the pen and MR. STOUT starts to read the document slowly*). Mr. Stout! Sir! It is very late. Please sign. (*MR. STOUT signs. SAMUEL sits down to sign the paper. HE takes the pen and begins to write, when his hand begins to wobble uncontrollably*). It is my house! I can do what I want with it. Now leave me alone!

MR. STOUT

Mr. Widdison! What is the matter?

SAMUEL

You do like turnips?

MR. STOUT

I have already said that I like them a great deal.

SAMUEL

Then you shall have them! And the sooner the better! Now, I shall sign! (*He is unable to sign it and speaks to the pen*). I told you- I have had enough of your sly ways! Now leave me alone! Be off!

MR. STOUT

But, Mr. Widdison-

SAMUEL

Be off!

MR. STOUT

Very well, sir. Good night!

SAMUEL

Wait! Not you. I was not speaking to you. I was speaking to....something right over there. That hat.

MR. STOUT

Sir! I will not be confused with an article of clothing. If this is your idea of how to conduct business, I am afraid that it isn't mine. I do hope that you will find somebody else to purchase Widford Manor, though turnips are not that all that popular. Sir, good night.

(HE leaves. SAMUEL wobbly hand stops shaking. HE stands and takes the hat from the rack).

SAMUEL

Now, listen here, whoever you are. You have followed me here and I will not stand for one more minute of this! I am the Master of my house. It belongs to me and not to you! (*Pause*) I will find someone else to buy it! Though, perhaps it is true. Turnips are not very popular. Not very popular at all. Lumpy little things, out to trip you every time. Oh, how angry Ursula was with them. (*HE laughs to himself*). Though Ursula is often angry! But not so often now. And never with Jonathan. No, never. Not like I was, when he and George Batchford made them into lanterns. Lanterns! How could they taunt me and mock me! All Hallow's Eve, indeed!

SAMUEL (*cont'd*)

All Hallows Eve. The night Mrs. Dimbledy fell ill...and there weren't any lanterns. No lanterns at all. I made them do that. Extinguish all the lanterns. What else have I done? What else? What haven't I done?

(Bright beams of starlight fill the room).

Now, when have there been so many stars! So many and they all seem to be gathering there- there in the direction of Widford! I have never seen anything quite so bright. Perhaps Joel has taken Jonathan-Jonny- outside to show him this; and Diligence is probably thinking of diamonds, and Rachel....I am not sure.

TRACK #12: SONG 20: ENOUGH REPRISE

ENOUGH!
DID I EVER GIVE
ENOUGH?
THEY ARE WHY I LIVE
I MUST LET THEM KNOW
I MUST TRY TO SHOW
THAT THEY HAVE ALWAYS GIVEN ME ENOUGH.

(SAMUEL begins to rush out, but stops short before fully exiting. HE comes back, gently takes the hat from the cloakstand and looks at it. HE claps it on his head and leaves).

Scene 7: MOTHER DARKE'S cave. MOTHER DARKE paces back and forth. JONNY lies on a rock outcropping.

DILIGENCE

You are not going to harm him, are you? You would never do anything to hurt Jonny, would you?

MOTHER DARKE (*ignoring her*)

Now, where is he? Why hasn't he come?

DILIGENCE

You said that the treasure would come to us.

MOTHER DARKE

And so it will.

DILIGENCE

But you never said that we would need to- to kidnap Jonny. You never said that.

MOTHER DARKE

I said the treasure will come to us. And that should be enough for you to know. No harm shall come to the boy. You do believe me, don't you, Arabella?

DILIGENCE

Yes, yes- of course.

MOTHER DARKE

Just think, my fine lady, just think of Swinbrook.

(MOTHER DARKE opens a curtain, and a great wall of crystal is exposed).

DILIGENCE

Oh! I have never seen a looking glass like this- here I am, again and again, and again. Look! Look at me!

MOTHER DARKE

Oh, my dear. You- you are- my true reflection. Who could resist such beauty? *(SHE watches as DILIGENCE spins in front of the mirror. Suddenly, the entrance to the cave is illuminated).*

MOTHER DARKE (*cont'd*)

Ahhh. He is here at last! I knew that he would come!

DILIGENCE

Who? Who is there?

MOTHER DARKE

Why, Hobberdy Dick, of course-

DILIGENCE

Hobberdy Dick-

MOTHER DARKE

He will be here any second. I have waited so long! Now, let's see what kind of bargain we can make! It is very, very simple. He shall give me the treasure, and I shall give him the boy! See how he protects those he loves? Time after time, believing that he has kept them safe within the bounds of Widford Manor! But what happens when that gate has closed behind them? (*SHE laughs to herself, as DILIGENCE shrinks back*). What happens then?

DILIGENCE (*anxious*)

So he is coming?

(*Footsteps are heard, and MOTHER DARKE looks up at the entry*).

MOTHER DARKE

He is here!

(*SHE stands before JONNY as GEORGE, ANNE, JOEL and RACHEL descend into the cave*).

You!!! How did you get here? How did you find me?

GEORGE

There are those about who have a kindly eye on the boy-

RACHEL

-Is he all right? Is Jonny all right?

JOEL

Let us take him home-

MOTHER DARKE

-Not without the treasure.

RACHEL

Give him to me!

MOTHER DARKE

Hush! Do you want to wake him? Or do you want me to give him this? A few drops of this will put him to sleep forever! (*SHE holds up a vial perilously near to JONNY's face*). I must have the Culver treasure. It was to be mine once. He loved me. Richard Culver loved me.

ANNE

He loved his Elizabeth...nobody else.

MOTHER DARKE

But I was there first, before he even met her. Was she beautiful? Tell me! Was she?

ANNE

To him, she was.

MOTHER DARKE

But he turned *me* away. That night, when I came to him, ribbons in my hair, a dress that shimmered like moonlight, and stood before him, tall and proud. And he looked at me and sent me out of the house and into the path of the soldiers. Did you see them? Did you, Anne?

ANNE (*whispering*)

No.

MOTHER DARKE (*demanding*)

Try. Try hard to remember. It was just after the war began.

SONG 21: QUIET MORNING REPRISE

ANNE

A RUSTLE THAT WASN'T THE OAK LEAVES
A FOOTFALL THAT WASN'T A DEER
A CRACKLE THOUGH THERE WAS NO THUNDER
DID YOU HEAR?

ANNE and MOTHER DARKE

DID YOU HEAR THEM COMING?
DID YOU SEE THE GLEAM OF EACH GUN

MOTHER DARKE

COULD IT BE MY HEART THAT WAS DRUMMING
WHEN THEY WERE DONE
THEY WERE DONE

(Music under as GEORGE approaches MOTHER DARKE. HE holds out the black ribbon. SHE grabs it from HIM).

MOTHER DARKE

It is all that I have left of that day. To remind me of what should have been mine.

GEORGE

It was you! You, Malkin Ferrisher! *(ANNE clutches JOEL's arm).*

ANNE

Malkin Ferrisher. But he bore you no ill will. He wished you well.

MOTHER DARKE

He sent me away! And because of him.... *(SHE removes her veil to reveal a hideously scarred face. The others gasp and shrink away)*... the soldiers. Our soldiers. This is their work. Their words and their knives were sharp. Their laughter was cruel when they left me, bloody, beyond tears, alone by the side of the road. And then, the wandering began. The endless, lonely wandering.

ANNE

But the letter! It said that we would see your home; that we would meet your husband and the little baby. You called him Richard, after my uncle. You said that he was a bonny boy-

MOTHER DARKE

-There would be no home for me, no love, no child. The soldiers made sure of that. And there would be none for Richard Culver! I made sure of that!

GEORGE

So the letter you wrote- it was a trap! Because of you, they were sent into exile.

MOTHER DARKE

Because of him, because of this -(*SHE points to her face*) they deserved to be! And I have been waiting ever since- to come back here and to get what is rightfully mine. (*SHE tightens her grip on JONNY*). The Culver treasure. Not yours, Anne Seckar. Mine.

GEORGE

With Diligence's help.

MOTHER DARKE

Yes. With Diligence's help.

RACHEL

No! Give him to me!

MOTHER DARKE

Only when I have the treasure! Ah. Hobberty Dick you have disappointed me! Diligence! Hold him! (*SHE is about to force the vial into JONNY'S mouth*).

DILIGENCE

No! Stop! You promised not to hurt him!

MOTHER DARKE (to JONNY)

No one can save him now! Nothing! No magic, nothing in your book! Not faith, nor hope-

RACHEL

But...the greatest of these is love.

*(The cave entrance is illuminated again, and sounds of footsteps are heard.
SAMUEL comes into the cave, carrying the treasure chest from the attic.)*

MOTHER DARKE

Love!

RACHEL and JOEL

Samuel! Father!

SAMUEL

Is this what you wanted? (*SAMUEL holds up the treasure chest*).

MOTHER DARKE

I knew it! I knew that it was there all along! Give it to me!

SAMUEL

When you give me my son. (*MOTHER DARKE takes a step closer to him*).

MOTHER DARKE

Let me see it. (*SAMUEL opens the chest and MOTHER DARKE is blinded by a bright light*).

At last! (*The light fades. MOTHER DARKE takes something from the box*). Stones! Is that all! Where is the gold!

(In her anger, she takes the box and slams it to the floor. DILIGENCE pushes JONNY out of MOTHER DARKE'S way and into the arms of SAMUEL. RACHEL is behind SAMUEL).

JONNY

Father! Mother!

SAMUEL

Quickly! Go! Everybody out. (*The OTHERS file out of the cave, leaving SAMUEL alone with MOTHER DARKE*).

MOTHER DARKE

Go, then. Take your treasure. There is nothing for me here. Nothing. (*SHE hands him the chest. SHE sits on a stone, opposite the crystal mirror, staring at her reflection, and tracing the hideous scar on her face. SAMUEL comes behind HER and is about to speak to HER, but SHE shakes her head, as if to say no. SAMUEL nods gravely, picks up the box, and leaves the cave. SHE continues to stare*).

Scene 8: Immediately following. SAMUEL is holding the treasure box; RACHEL has one arm around JONNY, and one around DILIGENCE as they come down the lane. ANNE and JOEL follow.

SAMUEL

Now, Jonny, are you feeling all right? Are you hungry? (*JONNY nods*).
Well, I do know that Ursula has been making cakes. Quite a lot of them, it seems.
At least there were a lot of them when I was at the house last night.

JONNY

May I have one?

RACHEL

Why, of course, my sweet. You may have as many as you want. (*JONNY runs to the house and RACHEL turns to SAMUEL*). You were at the house?

SAMUEL

Oh, yes. I came from London.

RACHEL

But, Samuel, why? Did you sell the house?

SAMUEL

I can never sell it. Why, we are the Widdisons of Widford!

RACHEL

I don't understand.

SAMUEL

I am not sure I do, either. (*Pause*) But I rode all through the night. Ursula told me about the kidnapping, and suddenly the cloud of lights was at the attic window- the same cloud that led me here- and that hen started chirping-

RACHEL

-Blossom.

SAMUEL

Yes, Blossom. So I ran up, and there she- Blossom- was. Standing on the chest, and chirping as if her heart would break. So I took it, and followed the lights to you- it seemed as if that was what I was supposed to do. I did have one cake, though. And it was very good.

RACHEL

Samuel, I never knew you liked cake.

SAMUEL

Neither did I. Until now. *(HE takes her hand and kisses it).*

RACHEL

Samuel! *(HE puts his arm around HER. Lights up on ANNE and JOEL walking down the lane. THEY stop at the gate; JOEL opens it to let ANNE enter).*

JOEL

Here we are, Anne. Right here, where we first met.

ANNE

I remember every minute of that day. And look....

TRACK #13: SONG 22: MUSIC and LIGHT REPRISE

ANNE

THE SAPLING THAT YOU SOWED HERE
IS NOW A LITTLE TREE
AND HOW TALL DID IT GROW HERE-

JOEL

WHY VERY TALL, I SEE!

Anne, I didn't have a chance to ask you this before, but I wonder, would you, do you think, take this ring? Please.

ANNE

Yes, Joel.

JOEL

AND, OH, THE MUSIC IS HERE
SWEETER THAN EVER BEFORE

AND, NOW THE LIGHT IS SO CLEAR
LET IT SHINE EVERMORE

ANNE

SWEETER THAN EVER BEFORE

LET IT SHINE EVERMORE

JOEL

AND WE'LL LISTEN EACH DAWN
AS THE MORNING BELLS RING

ANNE

WE WILL LISTEN TOGETHER
TO HEAR THE WORLD SING

JOEL AND ANNE

AS THE SETTING SUN FADES
DO YOU THINK THAT YOU MIGHT
DELIGHT WHEN DAY HAS PASSED
AND WE'RE ALONE AT LAST
BUT NEVER ALONE THROUGH THE NIGHT?

JOEL

WHERE WE ARE, IS MUSIC

ANNE

WHERE WE ARE, IS LIGHT

JOEL

WHERE YOU ARE, IS MUSIC

JOEL AND ANNE

WHERE YOU ARE, IS LIGHT

SAMUEL

I think I'd better go talk to these two.

RACHEL *(smiling)*

I think so. *(GEORGE enters with JONNY and DILIGENCE).*

SAMUEL

Mr. Batchford. Thank you for everything you've done. And here- *(HE hands GEORGE the treasure chest).* Keep this. I only wish that it were real. Then you should have your share.

GEORGE

That would be kind of you sir, but I wouldn't take any of it. It is the Culver treasure and it belongs to the last of the Culvers.

SAMUEL

I suppose it does. But go, down to the river, and try skipping a few of the stones across.

RACHEL

Be careful not to hit the windows at Swinbrook!

DILIGENCE *(laughing)*

Who cares about Swinbrook! *(DILIGENCE, holding hands with JONNY, exits with GEORGE. SAMUEL and RACHEL approach JOEL and ANNE)*

SAMUEL

Joel, a word with you.

JOEL

Yes, father.

SAMUEL *(feigning sternness)*

I can't help but notice that Anne is wearing your mother's ring.

JOEL

Yes, father. I know it is not what you wanted for me.

SAMUEL

No.

JOEL

I love Anne, and she loves me. So we will leave Widford, and make a new life for ourselves somewhere else. We must, though I am sorry to disappoint you.

SAMUEL

Disappoint me? Rachel, do you hear the boy?

SONG 23: LOVE IS A RIVER

SAMUEL

YOU THINK LOVE'S A BOAT
THAT YOU CHOOSE TO FLOAT
YOU FILL IT WITH HOPE
AND LAUNCH IT DOWNSTREAM
YOU THINK YOU KNOW
JUST WHERE THAT BOAT MAY GO
BUT THE RIVER MAY FLOW
IN WAYS YOU CAN'T DREAM
AND LOVE'S NOT A BOAT
IT'S A RIVER

RACHEL

DON'T STAND ON THE SHORE
WHEN WHAT IS IN STORE
MAY BE SO MUCH MORE
THAN THE COURSE THAT YOU'VE SET

SAMUEL AND RACHEL

SOON YOU'LL BE LEARNING
EACH TWISTING AND TURNING
YOU FIND ON THE JOURNEY
YOU'LL NEVER FORGET
AND LOVE'S NOT A BOAT
IT'S A RIVER

RACHEL

SOME DAYS YOU'RE ALONE

SAMUEL

ADRIFT ON YOUR OWN

RACHEL and SAMUEL

AWAY FROM YOUR HOME
NO SHORELINE IN SIGHT
BUT FAITH IS THE STAR

RACHEL and SAMUEL *(cont'd)*

THAT WILL CARRY YOU FAR
WHEREVER YOU ARE THERE IS LIGHT

(JONNY comes running with the chest, the OTHERS behind him, shouting and laughing. URSULA comes out of the kitchen).

GEORGE

I don't think you want to throw these stones in the river, sir.

JONNY

Look, father, look! Gold! *(HE opens the box, and takes out a handful of gold coins).*

JOEL, DILIGENCE, RACHEL, URSULA

Gold!!!!

ANNE

Timmy's gold!

SAMUEL *(taking the chest)*

Ahh. Anne Seckar, you are the last of the Culvers, and the treasure belongs to you.

ANNE

Oh, sir, everything I have, I will share with Joel. Here at Widford.

SAMUEL

Yes. Here at Widford,

RACHEL

Samuel, are you sure?

SAMUEL

I am.

COMPANY

AND LOVE'S NOT A BOAT
IT'S A RIVER
AND THE JOURNEY'S THE GIFT OF THE GIVER
HOW WILL IT END
WHAT TWISTS AND WHAT BENDS

WITH LOVERS AND FRIENDS
NO-ONE KNOWS
BUT TRUST IN THE RIVER
TRUST IN ITS FLOW
LOVE IS THE RIVER
LET YOURSELF GO.

SAMUEL

Well, then, Anne and Joel will stay here at Widford. Now, let me ask the rest of you a question. (*THEY look at him expectantly*) What if we all stayed at Widford? For good.

RACHEL

And never return to London?

SAMUEL

Correct. Jonny, what do you think?

JONNY

May I keep Blossom? For good? (*SAMUEL nods*). Then, of course!

SAMUEL

Diligence? (*SHE pauses*). You will be a fine lady wherever you are. The finest- and the bravest.

DILIGENCE (*without qualification*)

Yes, I will stay!

(SHE smiles happily, and runs to him for an embrace. He turns to RACHEL, semi-privately, but within earshot of URSULA).

SAMUEL

What do you think, Rachel? If Anne and Joel were to stay here at the Manor, where both of them belong? And we... sold the shop-

RACHEL

-Sold the shop?

SAMUEL

We are with Widford now. Only, who would buy our shop?

JOEL

Yes. Who in their right mind would buy the blasted shop?

(Mr. Stout enters unexpectedly).

MR. STOUT

Young man, I am in my right mind.

SAMUEL

Mr. Stout, what are you doing here?

MR. STOUT

Upon consideration, I realized that I am not suited to country life. However, the prospect of running your haberdashery is greatly appealing.

SAMUEL

I am speechless. *(He turns to the others to explain).* Mr. Stout, my London "buyer".

MR. STOUT

Of course, I *will* need a monthly supply of turnips.

RACHEL

How remarkable that you should turn up!

SAMUEL

Turn up! Turnips!

(The family finally laughs at a joke of Samuel's.)

Now, Rachel, see, we can build ourselves a new Manor, there up on the hill. Perhaps it will be ready in time for...Mr. Batchford, what is our next holiday?

GEORGE

Why, sir, that would be Midsummer's Eve.

SAMUEL

And what do we do then?

GEORGE

Why, sir, we light the fires signaling that the shorter days are approaching.

SAMUEL

Well, then, that shall give us plenty of light for studying.

RACHEL

Studying?

URSULA (*jumping in and whispering to RACHEL*)

Read between the lines!

TRACK # 14: SONG 24: FINALE

COMPANY

OH, BLESS THIS PLACE OF PEACE AND PLENTY
THIS HOUSE THAT STANDS SO STILL AND STRONG

SAMUEL

A HOME WHERE WE BELONG.

(MOTHER DARKE walks down the lane and looks in at the gathering. She stands at the gate as a burst of smoke erupts from the chimney and Blossom cackles. The family, laughing, turns toward the house as MOTHER DARKE continues to look on. The gate slowly opens and MOTHER DARKE is about to enter. SHE touches the gate, wonderingly, but slowly shuts it. SHE gathers her cloak around her and turns around, away from the house. SHE walks up the lane as the WIDDISONS enter the house).

COMPANY

YES, A PLACE OF PEACE AND PLENTY,
PLENTY,
PLENTY!

(Curtain).