

IVANHOE, AMERICA

an adaptation of the novel by Sir Walter Scott

**skramer@bennington.edu
1 College Drive
Bennington, VT 05201
417-766-1627**

HISTORICAL NOTE

On a trip to America, Sir Walter Scott met a remarkable woman. Rebecca Gratz was famous for her beauty, her wealth, and her philanthropy. Whether he fell in love with Gratz or not is unknown, but he admired her enormously and was deeply affected by the encounter. When he returned to Scotland, he began work on what would become his most famous novel, *Ivanhoe*, patterning his Rebecca York after Gratz.

While most people today think of *Ivanhoe* as nothing more than a jousting epic, and Mark Twain denounced it for its elevation of warrior “virtues”, claiming that its effects on Southern manhood had actually caused the civil war, this is a misreading of the text. *Ivanhoe* spends much of the novel in bed, or being carried in a litter, after his jousting injuries make him too ill to walk. The virtues that are elevated are decency, kindness, generosity, and loyalty. In reality *Ivanhoe* was a profound and revolutionary work, written to undo some of the ill effects of anti-Semitism in the current English novels of the time, a trend which was influencing attitudes towards Great Britain’s Jewish population. Scott created a kind, compassionate Jewish money lender, Isaac York, to be a sympathetic double to literature’s most famous, venal Jew, Shylock.

In *Ivanhoe*, the Normans, who are the ruling class, act without honor. It is the disenfranchised classes—the Saxons, the Jews, the slaves, and the serfs—who display all the courage and nobility that traditionally had been ascribed to the knights in shining armor of England’s past. *Ivanhoe* asked readers at the end of the 19th century to see their country’s history and its embedded paradigms about class and religion in a new way.

All that is necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men to do nothing.

Edmund Burke

We come to run wide open.

Richard Petty

Anti-semitism is the second oldest profession.
unknown

SETTING

Nothing in the set is represented realistically. The only permanent set piece is the right foot of a huge, white, concrete statue of Christ--of which we see only the toes—perhaps the beginning of the ankles—far upstage, huge and suggestive of a statue that towers over everything. There are times when the shadow of the statue may cut across the stage.

This is Thomas Hart Benton territory. A huge copy of one of his landscapes could be hanging somewhere—perhaps standing in for the entire countryside itself. His painting of Persephone would be a good choice.

Cars may be represented as solidly or not as the design of the production calls for. The cars may be bits and pieces—one represented by a steering wheel, another by a windshield, a third by a seat, a fourth by all three—or the cars may be the most realist aspect of the set. The play is designed to be producible with a single car doubling for all the cars, being changed with a telling detail or two to indicated its identity--but this is not a necessity of the script, only a potential design element.

Music is a profound part of the world of the play, with a minimum of two fiddlers, who may be played by cast members. Banjos are also pretty essential. Certain aspects of the play—such as the cars, weather, and other outdoor elements—may be “described” as much through the use of the fiddles as they are by visuals.

Whenever fiddlers are playing, they are probably visible. They are dressed as hillfolk. They may occasionally wander on stage when they are playing. Delbert and Everett, the two chief hillmen, are fiddlers.

CHARACTERS

REBECCA YORK

A beautiful young medical student—23 years old. She comes back to Ivanhoe, Ark., to see her elderly father after he's been the victim of an anti-Semitic attack.

WILLIAM FREDERICK FRANKLIN—KNOWN AS IVANHOE

He joined the Marines after his father disinherited him. He has just come back from Vietnam. He has been very changed by the war, and is in deep disguise—long hair, hippie beads and threads. He's 25. He was the finest stock car racer in these here parts, before he went to war.

ISAAC YORK THE BANKER

Holocaust survivor, speaks with a slight German accent. Wife is dead. Only one child—Rebecca. The Order is pressuring him for more and more loans.

LUCAS JONES

A preacher. He's also a hate monger so vile, so dark, so rabid, that the John Birch Society wouldn't let him join. He hates blacks too, but Jews are his special passionate hatred. He is in his late 50's. He is a big, big man, with easy manners and a golden tongue. Called the American Hitler by Time Magazine. Of the generation that wore hats so well.

BRIAN GILBERT JONES

Jones' son. Back from the Vietnam War last year, with all the medals they make. High position in The Order. While Ivanhoe has been away, he's been the best stock car racer in the county.

IVA

WANDA

BESSIE

The hillwomen who work as maids in town. Iva is the York's maid, Wanda works for the Franklins, and Bessie works for Lucas Jones.

They have, to a lesser or greater degree—witching powers—Iva is certainly the most adept at charms and spells, but Wanda and Bessie know a thing about hill magic too.

EVERETT

DELBERT

The two chief hillman, who are the fiddlers.

ROWENA FRANKLIN

Blonde, beautiful, 25 years old. She is Ivanhoe's sister.

DOUBLED CHARACTERS

These characters can easily be doubled

WILLFRED CHARLES FRANKLIN

In his early 50's. Father to Ivanhoe and Rowena. Owns and runs the Ivanhoe Speedway, a half mile dirt track.

THE MYSTERIOUS STRANGER

A tall dark man from out of town, walks with a slight limp.

DAVEY HARRIS

16 years old. Classic small town boy. Spunky.

BILLY

Young member of the Order, 18 years old. Impressionable, naïve.

ALBERT McCORD

High officer of the Order. In his early 30's. Ambitious. Sly. Manipulative.

WILSON

Officer in the Order.

JENSON

The Passion Play's writer, director, designer, and lead actor. A theatrical type, in his late 30's. Not as talented as he thinks he is.

MARTY, the ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

Of the Passion Play. Frantic, overworked, high strung.

REAL ESTATE AGENT

A man who worships the almighty dollar.

BARBER

A man who doesn't.

ENSEMBLE

Can be doubled by anyone, they appear once or twice, and in scenes where these characters appear, as many people as possible can be used

Pilate

Lester

Shepherd

Dortha

Jurden

3 Men in Order Robes

Bert

Harold Rubenstein, FBI

ACT ONE

(The stage is dark. The sound of fiddles accompany the sounds of a loud, late model stock car, coming closer, and its wheels screeching to a halt.

It is night. The headlights of the car sweep across a street in Ivanhoe, Ark., a little town nestled in the steep Ozark Hills. The car—a souped up Camero—is visible for an instant, before the lights are switched off. We hear the sound of the car doors slamming.

Four men are visible, wearing their Order gowns (which are much like KKK gowns), carrying lanterns and cans of paint. They quickly paint something on the sides of a building, hard to see in the darkness. But one of the men, for a moment, is clearly visible in the lantern light--Brian Gilbert Jones.

There is, along with the punctuation of the fiddles, the occasional nocturnal bird sound or animal cry.

They finish their work and leave. The sound of the car, the tires squealing, as they peel away.

Morning birds begin to sing. Night fades into day. The sun rises on a swastika, dripping red paint. The fiddle music moves away.

Delbert and Everett, two hill men, carrying buckets and brushes, with their fiddles strapped to their backs, stroll down Main Street. When they get to the swastika, which is on the white stone wall front of the Ivanhoe Union National Bank, an impressive building on Ivanhoe's Main Street, they get out their brushes and begin to work scrubbing it. They have no luck at all.

As they work, the sun climbs higher and higher. Main Street

comes to life, a busy weekday morning. Isaac York, the banker, comes out of the bank and touches the swastika.)

*ISAAC

The stain does not go away. Three days you have been scrubbing. I am thinking it will never fade.

EVERETT

Way-all, we could try paintin' it over--

DELBERT

Naw, red paint is like blood, it alwas bleeds through, in a couple months it'll rise up on the surface agin.

(They rub at it the paint, with no effect.)

ISAAC

Then perhaps we should try to—chisel, to carve it out?

DELBERT

Naw, this is native limestone, you tap it, no matter how light, first tap, okay, second, okay, but the third--fractures all the way through.

ISAAC

But it's rock—shouldn't it be stronger than that—

EVERETT

Iffin it was solid blocks of it, we'd stand us a chance, but it ain't. It's only faced. Inch or two thick.

DELBERT

Maybe sandblast it, only thing.

ISAAC

Sandblast? Ah, yes, the whirlwind. Only, how do you call down the whirlwind?

EVERETT

Way-all, there's a firm up ta Carthage does purtty fair work—

ISAAC

(His hand on Everett's shoulder.)

I leave it to you. Call down the whirlwind. Tell them to get here soon.

(Isaac goes back into the bank.)

*BARBER

(Lights up on the Barber Shop, where the Real Estate Agent, a man in his late 50's, is just sitting down for a shave.)
A shame about Mr. York. You saw what happened over to the bank Saturday night?

REAL ESTATE AGENT

Yeah, I saw it. Jes some of the boys, havin' a little painting party after a race. Nothin' ta get the whole town in a twist about.

(The sound of a loud engine, very different from the one we heard before, and tires squealing to a stop.)

BARBER

A painting party. That's what you call it?

REBECCA

(A car pulls up in front of the bank. A beautiful girl, Rebecca, climbs out, shouldering her bag.)
Thanks for the lift.

(She hugs Delbert and Everett.)

Delbert—Everett—I've missed you—
(She hugs them.)

EVERETT

You're a sight for sore eyes--you growed up on us—look at you--

DELBERT

I swear you git prettier ever' year.

REBECCA

And you two always look exactly the same—Everett, how's the hand?

EVERETT

Still right as rain.

(He demonstrates, wiggling his fingers.)

REBECCA

(Then she sees the swastika, and her smile fades.)
I saw pictures of it in the New York papers—it's worse, seeing it for real.

DELBERT

Don't look at it, Beccy, it'll just make you sorrowful. You go on inside now, see your daddy, leave this ta us. We're taking care of it.

(Shaken, she goes in to the bank.)

EVERETT

But we ain't.

DELBERT

Yes, we are.

EVERETT

No we ain't. Look at it. Been working on it three days and it ain't changed!

DELBERT

One way or t'other, we're gonna take care of it.

REBECCA

(She embraces her father.)

Papa!!!

ISAAC

Rebecca--what are you doing here?

REBECCA

It was on the national news, papa. I got on the first plane I could and hitchhiked from Little Rock.

ISAAC

It was my prayer that you never see this. That you would live your life without seeing such a thing like this.

REBECCA

Do you know who did it?

ISAAC

Of course.

REBECCA

Lucas Jones? The man who won't repay his loans?

(He nods.)

ISAAC

Just a request for the interest results in a brick through the window.
(He shows her a brick, a pile of glass.)

BARBER

I knew the minute a man like Jones came to town there'd be trouble.

REAL ESTATE AGENT

Everythin' you don't like that goes on in town you blame on Lucas Jones. Well, the whole towns benefitin' from him coming here. He rolls into town, builds a giant statue of Jesus, and bam, Ivanhoe, Arkansas is back on the map.

BARBER

So as long as a man spreads his money around, he's okay by you, is that it?

REAL ESTATE AGENT

Lucas Jones did not paint that swastika!

BARBER

So? His son did.

REBECCA

It's blackmail, Papa. Extortion. We'll go to the law.

ISAAC

They are the law.

REBECCA

Have you talked to someone at the FDIC in Little Rock?

ISAAC

I call, I write letters every week.

REBECCA

And what do they say?

ISAAC

They say—a banker who makes too many bad loans will not be a banker much longer.

REBECCA

Then go in person, Papa. I'll stay here, and watch things, and—

ISAAC

I should leave you here alone?

REBECCA

Papa. There's Del and Everett—they've always looked out for us--and I've got Iva, at the house—

ISAAC

Oh, yes, sure, Iva, right. Iva can cast a spell on them with a dead chicken and a garlic clove.

*IVA

(Lights up on a tall, 60 year old hill woman in a clean, worn gingham dress, standing isolated in a pool of light.)
Somebody just said my name. I felt it passing over their lips.

WANDA

(Lights grow to include two other women, of similar type and dress, sitting in a kitchen, drinking tea, playing cards.)
Man or woman?

IVA

Left ear—burns--woman. Right ear burns—man.

WANDA

Well. Which one's burning?

IVA

Both.

WANDA

Stop making such a fuss. You knew Rebecca was coming home yesterday when you found that button in your soup.

ISAAC

You shouldn't have come back, Rebecca. It's not safe for you here.

REBECCA

If it's not safe for me, why is it safe for you? You can't fight Lucas Jones, Papa.

ISAAC

I am an old man. I do not pretend to be able to fight him. America will send someone to fight.

REBECCA

Stop it—you drive me crazy when you talk like this.

ISAAC

Then go back to New York so you don't have to listen to me.

REBECCA

This isn't a fairy tale. America will not be sending a knight in shining armor to save us.

ISAAC

You are wrong. America will not let us down. It will not be like it was in the old world.

REBECCA

Isn't it?

(She points to the swastika outside.)

Isn't it exactly the same?

(Isaac falters. Rebecca has reopened a deep, deep wound.)

Papa, I'm sorry, I didn't mean—most of the people in America are good, but here—it's just not safe.

ISAAC

You are right, I must speak to the authorities in Little Rock in person. I will go right away.

(He goes to get his hat and coat, embraces her, and goes.)

IVA

She shouldn'ta come back. Trouble's on the wind. Ever since a certain someone did some painting at the bank--

BESSIE

He's a fine boy, and a war hero, and I won't have you say a word agin him. Just 'cause the Jews you work for are having a little money trouble—

IVA

It's not just money trouble! It's lyin' and cheatin' and bullyin' trouble! And it all comes to nest with the poison mouthed preacher you work for!

BESSIE

Lucas Jones needs that money for the upkeep on the statue and the Passion Play he's gonna put on, for the Sacred Projects—

IVA

Ain't nothing sacred about what he does with that money and you're the only one in town don't know it.

ISAAC

(Outside on the street. To Delbert and Everett.)

I am off to Little Rock now.

DELBERT

I wouldn't go ta'day, Mr. York. No, the sign's ain't auspicious fer travel. You should 'a gone yesterday.

ISAAC

If you know a way for me to go yesterday—let me know. If not, I go today.
 (Isaac starts down the street. Delbert and Everett start packing up their brushes and buckets. He calls back to them.)
 Don't forget about calling down the whirlwind.

WANDA

I don't know who you don't quit him. The way he pays you is a sin.

BESSIE

It's Brian, I can't leave the boy. Poor motherless thing.

WANDA

Poor motherless thing? He's a 6 foot three war hero! He's responsible for practically every bit of trouble in this town.

BESSIE

Like you all work for saints. There's folks say the Jews you work for are practicing the dark arts!

IVA

Ah'm warning you, Bessie, don't get on my ugly side.

BESSIE

Your ugly side doesn't change the facts. Your raven haired Rebecca York had the powers even as a child. They say that's why her daddy sent her away.

IVA

He sent her away to get her clear of fools like you.

WANDA

Folks said she was the most natural power doctor they ever did see. By the time she was five years old, she could heal most any thing broke on humans, dogs, and cattle--but not insects, snakes, or toys.

BESSIE

Toys ain't alive. How she gonna heal a toy.

IVA

Not alive. Like you didn't spend all of 1964 afraid of a nutcracker 'cause you said it winked at you.

WANDA

You think she still has her powers, Iva?

IVA

She's got her MD now, she's learned how to be a regular city doctor, it's true, but there's no law says one cancels out the other, is there? City doctoring and power doctoring? If it was any business of yours. Which it ain't. Now, deal--
(They go back to their cards. Lights fade on the maids.)

BARBER

(The shave is finished. The real estate agent pays him.)
It breaks my heart to see this happening here. It's a damn shame.

REAL ESTATE AGENT

Look at it this way. We got two new restaurants going in, there's talk of a Best Western and a Holiday Inn—
(He goes out onto the street. The barber follows him. They look at the swastika.)

BARBER

Oh, and all it cost us is a couple swastikas on the bank, is that the way I'm supposed to look at it?

REAL ESTATE AGENT

Nothin' in this life is free, Ed.

BARBER

Easy for you to say, you're not the one paying for it.

REAL ESTATE

(Delbert and Everett shoulder their buckets and tools and start down the street.)

And the pageant he's doing—the Passion Play—we'll have tourists streaming in here by the busload. Think of the business he's bringing us.

BARBER

Think of the real estate commissions he's creating, you mean. I hear you sold the old Langly place for five times what it was worth.

REAL ESTATE AGENT

So I should be punished cause it's the perfect location for an A & W root beer stand right before the statue?

BARBER

They oughta put a sign up that says, Last Chance for a Chili Dog before you meet the Lord.

REAL ESTATE AGENT

This was a ghost town before, Ed. We were scraping to get by. Lucas Jones is spinning cotton into gold. A man'd be a damn fool to be against it.

BARBER

I'm against it. I'm against anything that man does.

REAL ESTATE AGENT

We been friends for a lotta years, Ed. I hate to see you on the wrong side of this.

BARBER

I don't care how many tourists he brings in. I wish he'd never come here.

(Everett and Delbert, passing close by.)

REAL ESTATE AGENT

He's not the devil, you know.

BARBER

Would it make any difference to you if he was?

REAL ESTATE AGENT

Well—maybe not. Cause if the devil himself came here and brought business and money to the town, I wouldn't complain.

(Delbert stops the door of Lucas Jones' radio station KXRK—
THE VOICE OF THE SAVIOR--to clean his pipe out. He
is listening to the Real Estate Agent carefully. So is Everett.)
I'd say, welcome, Devil. I'd say, put your feet up and stay awhile. Come on
in.

(The Real Estate Agent goes off down the street, and the
Barber goes back inside the Barber Shop.)

DELBERT

Way-all. That's that then. An open invitation.

EVERETT

As sweet an invite as I ever did hear.

DELBERT

Yep. We'd better warn folks.

EVERETT

The Old Boy will be here directly.

DELBERT

If he ain't here already. Instantaneous, like. The instant the invite is give, he
hears it and if he's of a mind to—

EVERETT

(They both look around cautiously, then go down the street
warily.)

He arrives. Without no warning. No heralds, nor trumpet blast nor
hullabaloo. And woe be ever' poor soul crosses his path.

(They carefully continue down Main Street. Lights

up on the small radio broadcast booth at KXRK.)

*LUCAS JONES

(Jones is speaking into the microphone.)

There is not one word in the Bible which condemns hate itself. Hate can be evil, but hate can also be righteous. It all depends upon the object hated.

We can no longer trust our government! Washington has become just a puppet of the Liberal Jew Machine! They are stealing your tax dollars, and they are plotting to steal your jobs and give them to immigrants and Negroes! But you can strike back! If all of you listening to the sound of my voice open your wallets and your pocketbooks, and dig deep, if you address envelopes to me, Reverend Lucas Jones, care of the Crusade, and put every dollar you can in the mail to me—they will not win!

(Bible/religious songs play over the air, under the contributors, and cross under Jones as well.)

\$10 WOMAN

(Lights up on an old woman putting money in an envelope.)

I am a widow on an income of 100 dollars a month. It is hard to scrape by, but I want you to know I tithed 10 dollars on the first of every month.

LUCAS JONES

Go without, if need be, but send us the money we need to do God's work, to save the soul of America!

\$30 WOMAN

(Lights up on a different woman, writing to Jones.)

Please accept this thirty dollars. They turned my electricity off last week, but I have been putting this money aside for you because I know the crusade is the true light of this world.

LUCAS JONES

You should not hesitate to send us all you have, because if we lose the fight against this Christ-hating conspiracy, the Jew bankers will own us all, the Negro will take over your homes and your wives and your daughters, and your life won't be worth ten cents.

\$5 YOUNG MAN

(Lights up on a poor young man, putting money in an envelope.)

In the past I have given you money that I should have spent on my wife and baby, and my wife says it is not right. She says the baby is too young to make the sacrifices necessary for our cause. Five dollars is all I can send you.

LUCAS JONES

We are all soldiers in this battle for the soul of America! When you are right, and you know you are right—you must be ruthless. God bless you all! Amen.

(A religious hymn begins to play. Lights fade on the contributors, and Jones goes into his office. He picks up the envelopes, counts the money.)

Ten thirty, five—that makes the total contributions this week—five hundred and ten dollars. How am I supposed to over-throw the government on five hundred and ten dollars?

(He sees a special delivery envelope, opens it. Reads. Smiles.)

At last. The last piece of the puzzle falls into place..

(He puts the pile of cash in his pocket, the letter in his shirt pocket, and heads out the door.

BLACKOUT)

ISAAC*

(Lights up on the woods, on a road outside of town. Isaac is futilely trying to start his stalled Chrysler.)

What a time for car trouble. Tommy Rayburn said it would run like a dream. Like a nightmare, he meant.

(From the bushes, a very scruffy young man, with full beard and long hair, in a dirty, rainbow colored poncho—think Clint Eastwood in A Fistfull of Dollars as a hippie—appears. There is a Marine Corps insignia patch or two stitched on the poncho.)

Oh, young man. The heavens have sent you. Could you help me, my car—it's--

IVANHOE

Glad to. I know a thing or two about cars.

(He takes off his poncho, and takes a look under the hood, tinkers around a bit. A medallion swings around his neck, catching the dying light of the day.)

ISAAC

Cars and me, we have never gotten along. I think there is a curse laid on me when it comes to automobiles. Most probably it was a Mr. Titus Johnson, back in '59, when I would not give him a loan to build that Taj Mahal of a bomb shelter.

IVANHOE

It's not a curse, Mr. York, it's the Rayburn brothers. They been putting dirt in your gas tank for twenty years.

ISAAC

Dirt?

IVANHOE

Not much. Not enough to clog things up at once. Just a pinch or two every time they filled it up.

ISAAC

But why?

IVANHOE

Didn't you ever wonder why it was always you and Mr. Rubenstein and Mr. Levine who had so much car trouble?

(A beat. Isaac slumps down on a tree stump.)

ISAAC

No. Please. I won't believe it—I can't believe it—not here—not in my America--how do you know this?

IVANHOE

I—I heard the Rayburns boasting about it.

ISAAC

You have especially good ears, if you can hear things that happened twenty years ago.

IVANHOE

(Ivanhoe puts his poncho back on.)

Look, we got to get moving.

(He pulls out a fan belt, shows it to Isaac.)

See? Your fan belt's cut. Not quite in half, so it'd tear the rest of the way a couple miles out of town. I overheard some of Lucas Jones' men talking about how they meant to rough you up a little, and leave you in the woods to get back the best you can.

ISAAC

Why should I trust you? You, a stranger, tell me for twenty years men who were my neighbors have been sabotaging my car, have crippled it on purpose—how do I know you are not also a man who works for Lucas Jones?

IVANHOE

Because I'm one of the good guys.

ISAAC

You know a lot of things for a good guy.

(He sighs.)

Well, I know one thing. A bad guy would never dress in such a fashion, if he wished someone to think he was one of the good guys.

(Ivanhoe hustles him off. They leave the car, and disappear into the woods.)

A split second after they are gone, we hear the sounds of the car we heard before the swastika incident, coming down the road. Lights down on the forest.)

*THE MYSTERIOUS STRANGER

(Lights up on the small storefront office of the IVANHOE TIMES, as The Mysterious Stranger, a tall, dark haired man who walks with a slight limp, knocks on the door.)

May I come in?

DAVEY HARRIS

(Davey Harris, an eager 16 year old, is the clerk.)

Sure, doors open, ain't it? Come on in.

(Ned enters.)

THE MYSTERIOUS STRANGER

Thank you, it is always nice to be invited. I'd like to place an ad.

(Davey writes it down as he speaks.)

Wanted: Mule footed hogs. Anyone still breeding these hogs or having any information pertaining is asked to contact me care of this newspaper.

DAVEY HARRIS

Mule footed hogs...never heard of them.

THE MYSTERIOUS STRANGER

They are a rare breed of hogs without a cloven hoof.

DAVEY HARRIS

Without a cloven hoof. But ain't that what makes a hog a hog? Like—the devil, without his cloven hooves, he wouldn't really be the devil anymore.

THE MYSTERIOUS STRANGER

Oh, he'd still be the devil, Davey—but he'd have shown that he was capable of change.

DAVEY HARRIS

How'd you know my name?

THE MYSTERIOUS STRANGER

You must have told me.

DAVEY HARRIS

I did?

THE MYSTERIOUS STRANGER

(Ned pays him.)

You must have. How else would I have known? The personal touch is so important, isn't it? You're doing a fine job, young man.

DAVEY HARRIS

(Handing The Mysterious Stranger his change.)

My mother said I was too young to do this job, but I said, how would I know if I didn't try?

THE MYSTERIOUS STRANGER

(Sighs)

I was too young for the job I took as well. But we never listen to our parents, do we? No, we don't. It's a story as old as time.

(Lights down on the Ivanhoe Times.)

*ISAAC

(Ivanhoe and Isaac thrash around in the back woods.)

You should know in advance young man, I cannot reward you for this kindness—

IVANHOE

Do I look like money matters to me, Mr. York?

ISAAC

I am a banker. If there is one thing a banker knows: Looks are one thing. Money is always another.

(They approach a farmhouse.)

Good work. You have brought us, as if by magic, straight to the home of my friend Wilfred Franklin. He will give us a ride into town—

(Rowena Franklin walks out on the front porch.)

Look, there is his daughter, Rowena. Rowena!

ROWENA

Mr. York? What on earth are you doing out here?

ISAAC

I am the victim of a plot. Or, almost one. Thanks to this young man here, who rescued me from— young man?

(He looks around, Ivanhoe is gone. Lights down on them.)

*IVANHOE

(Lights up on the Franklin's kitchen. Ivanhoe stands in the kitchen doorway, Wanda is handing him a plate of food.)

Thanks, ma'am. I haven't eaten in days.

(He eats hungrily.)

This is good.

WANDA

Don't act so surprised. Didn't they teach you any manners, where you're from?

IVANHOE

Well, you tried. But I don't know that you had much luck.

(He pushes the hair out of his face so she can see him.)

Hi Wanda. I'm back.

WANDA

(Throws her arms around him.)

Ivanhoe! Oh, my stars, you're home! Let me look at you!

(He holds him at arms length.)

No bones broken? No bullet wounds? The signs all said you was coming home, but there was something funny in 'em that none of us could read, some sort of shadow from the war like you was crippled or lamed! But you're fine! Here, have some more chicken--

IVANHOE

I gotta get out of here before my father recognizes me.

WANDA

Trust me, your own mother, god bless her soul, wouldn't recognize you.

IVANHOE

(He kisses her on the cheek.)

I can't take the chance.

(He hands his plate to Wanda, heads for the door.)

WANDA

And not see Rowena first? When her heart breaks ever' day over you?

IVANHOE

Tell her to meet me at Willow Spring.

FRANKLIN

(As he and Isaac and Rowena enter the kitchen.)

Wanda? Get Mr. York here something to drink before we drive him home, would you?

(Ivanhoe is caught before he can escape.)

ISAAC

Ah--my young rescuer. Allow me to introduce—I don't even know your name--

IVANHOE

(Keeping his head down, and his voice low.)

Name's not important, sir. What's important, got you here safe and sound.

ROWENA

(Touching the insignia on Ivanhoe's poncho.)

It's a Marine insignia, isn't it? And look, Daddy, it's Ivanhoe's regiment—

FRANKLIN

We will not discuss him, Rowena.

ROWENA

Did you know my brother? Wilfred Franklin? We called him Ivanhoe?

IVANHOE

(Shrugs)

Sorry.

ROWENA

But you must know him!!!

(Iva gives Isaac a glass of lemonade.)

FRANKLIN

The boy can't know every Marine in Vietnam, Rowena, now leave it! We're just very grateful for what you've done for Mr. York.

ROWENA

But he must have known Ivanhoe—

FRANKLIN

Rowena, that is enough. Mr. York, let's get you and your rescuer back to town.

(They leave Rowena and Wanda the kitchen. Wanda whispers in her ear. Rowena throws her arms around her, happily.)

*LUCAS JONES

(Lights up on the viewing area in front of the huge statue of Jesus. Lucas Jones enters talking to some engineers who are carrying construction equipment.)

What is the problem—there's practically a natural oval for the stage, with the rake for the grandstands already built in. See—

(Pointing)

ENGINEER

Yes, but there's too much rock. We've used two hundred pounds of dynamite, twice as much as we thought we'd need, and we haven't made a dent.

LUCAS JONES

(Clapping the engineer on the back.)

So? Keep blasting away. Just as long as you get the amphitheatre done on schedule. I'm not interested in excuses—you should have heard the nonsense I had to listen to when I raised up this statue.

(Gazing up at the statue, a man in love.)

I was trying to praise the Lord with this work of splendor and reverence and they talked to me about concrete setting time and load bearing supports. I told to forget about all that! And now look at it. Experts from all over the world have declared it superior to any previous depiction of Christ, including Michelangelo's! We have

tape recordings of Tennessee Ernie Ford and Kate Jones singing hymns all day to further—

(He realizes none are playing. Calls off.)

Jackson! The tape machine. The...tape...machine?

(Back to the engineer.)

And at night we light the whole thing up with lights--blue and violet and purple. It's glorious. Have you seen it at night?

ENGINEER

No, I always try to get home before dark to get dinner for my kids—my wife died last year, and—

LUCAS JONES

My condolences. But do not despair. The Lord gives everyone something that is too heavy to carry. But carry it we must. And so we do.

ENGINEER

Do you have something too heavy to carry, Mr. Jones?

LUCAS JONES

Of course. But the Lord gives his preachers two different baskets to help him carry the weight, and depending on which one he chooses, the load is heavy or light.

ENGINEER

And yours is--

LUCAS JONES

Light. Gargantuan—but light as air. Not that it always was. When I was a young man I preached love, and let me tell you--preaching love will wear a man down. Sure, love works when times are good. You can move a whole nation with love. But when times get hard, and they always do, love fails. Because the people have seen too many times--love is a lie. When time gets hard, love evaporates. Not hate. It does not evaporate.

(After a few false starts, Jackson has gotten the tape machine going. An inspirational Christian song begins to play.)

Because with hate—something bad happens and you know what that hate does? It grows.

(The engineer backs away from Jones, getting more and more space between them. Jones doesn't seem to notice.)

Hating is like a basket with no bottom. No end to the number of people you can fit in it. And the beauty of this basket is that you don't have to weave it--the people weave it for you. And then they put their children in it, and their wives, and their neighbors and their wives and children too. Like the miracle of the loaves and fishes, there's always room for one more. And that basket ever won't break, a basket of hate is strong cause the people have wove it themselves. Deep in their own hearts, in secret, they've been hating. They been rising up in the morning, hating, they been lying down in their beds at night, hating, hating all the things that humiliate 'em, hating all the things that they've been promised that they won't ever get. All that secret hate. So much their hearts are bursting with it. And then you come along. And you tell 'em, "There's nothing wrong with hate. There is not one word in the bible that says it's wrong to hate. You can be a Christian, a good Christian, and you can hate." Well, they're yours for life then. They'll never get over that. It's been eating them alive to have to hide all their secret hate. And then you give 'em permission. You give 'em permission to hate out loud—in the light.

(BLACKOUT)

*ISAAC

(Lights up on Isaac and Ivanhoe, outside the York house.)

Will you come in, share a meal with us? You must allow me to thank you for what you have done for me.

IVANHOE

Really, Mr. York.

(They enter the house.)

I told you I don't want your money.

ISAAC

That is fortunate. Mr. Lucas Jones has essentially bankrupted the bank and myself. Still, there is something that your heart desires—a fast car.

IVANHOE

(Startled)

How do you know?

ISAAC

(He reaches over and fishes out the medallion from around Ivanhoe's neck. It is made from the hood ornament of a Chevy.)

Only those who win the Ivanhoe Title Race wear these. You have worn this next to your heart all through the war, you have worn it across the ocean and back again. A

late model stock car, suited for racing so you may drive in the race tomorrow. Is what you require.

(He takes out a piece of paper, and writes.)

Fortunately for you, such a vehicle is virtually one of the last assets I retain. Just yesterday it was brought in to me on a defaulted loan.

(He hands Ivanhoe the paper.)

You can return it after the race.

IVANHOE

But—we don't race for prize money--we race for titles. If you win, you win the other guy's car, but if you lose...

ISAAC

If you lose—then that is God's will. But I think that you will not.

(Ivanhoe takes the paper and turns to go. Rebecca comes in.)

REBECCA

Papa—what are you doing back—

ISAAC

I ran into some trouble. Fortunately, this young man came to my aid.

(Rebecca looks at Ivanhoe. She is dumbstruck. Ivanhoe is too.)

My daughter, Rebecca. This is—well, I don't know his name, but--

IVANHOE

(But Rebecca and Ivanhoe are oblivious to everything except each other. She holds out her hand. Ivanhoe takes it.)

Rebecca.

(Does a soft glow surround them?)

REBECCA

Yes?

IVANHOE

Rebecca.

REBECCA

Yes?

IVANHOE

Hello Rebecca.

REBECCA

Hello.

(BLACKOUT)

*FRANKLIN

(We are at the track. The edge of the racetrack is visible, and dust and smoke will billow from it onto the stage. We see the grandstand from a sideways cross section vantage—the area beneath the stands is also visible.)

Jones and his party make their way to their seats.

Franklin is framed in the announcer's booth that is suspended over the area.)

Welcome, Ladies and Gentlemen, to the Twenty-Fifth Annual Ivanhoe Title Race! We've only got a few minutes to the start of another exciting race at the historic Ivanhoe Race Track. So what do you say, boys--come forward, carrying your car titles.

(Sounds of crowds cheering for their favorites.)

LUCAS JONES

Nice set up Franklin's got here. Nice grandstands. Good looking track.

McCORD

It's a hog wallow in the spring, and a dust bowl in the summer.

LUCAS JONES

Yeah, he should pave it, make it a faster track. Franklin could charge double the admission if he had a brain in his head.

McCORD

(We see Rowena taking her place in the stands. He points.)

There's Rowena Franklin. What do you bet Brian crowns her queen of the track after he wins the race?

WILSON

What makes you so sure Brian's gonna be the winner?

LUCAS JONES

He's got the best car, the best nerves—and he's won every race since he got back from Vietnam. Don't ever bet against my son, Wilson, not if you want to back a winner.

(Jones notices Rebecca and her father going to their seats.)

I heard the old Jew's daughter was in town—Jesus Christ, what a looker! Why is it that the women of that race are so damned attractive? God's way of teasing us?

McCORD

Give me a blonde any day.

ISAAC

I cannot believe I have allowed you to drag me to this savage pageant.

REBECCA

We're just keeping an eye on your investment, Papa.

FRANKLIN

(The trophy girl, a blonde in a skimpy dress stands under the announcer's booth, holding a large silver bowl.)

Come on boys, drop your titles in the silver bowl and let's get down to racin'!

LUCAS JONES

I might just tell my son to crown Rebecca York.

FRANKLIN

(As two young men put their titles in the bowl.)

That's two.

WILSON

Have him pick Rowena Franklin.

FRANKLIN

(Three more men put their titles in the bowl.)

That's five.

LUCAS JONES

Why is choosing her so much better? The Franklins are Catholics!

McCORD

That's not the same, and you know it.

LUCAS JONES

Catholic or Jew, dog or hog, what's the difference? I'm gonna have Brian choose the York girl, just to piss you sissies off.

(Brian Gilbert Jones drops his title in the bowl. Lucas points at him.)

Look at the way the boy carries himself. War did him good. Too soft before. Now—not an atom of weakness in him.

FRANKLIN

(Davey Harris, dressed in racing coveralls, drops his title in the bowl.)

Davey Harris! Your first race! Guess your mother didn't get her way on this either. Anybody else? Well, folks, that looks like that's it. So--

(Sound of a race car coming close, at high speed.)

No—there's one more—hello—it's a Chevy with—is that a Marine crest on the side—and a tree—with the roots dragged out—why, it's the young rescuer, a Knight in a Shining Chevy.

(Ivanhoe walks up to the area under the announcers booth.)

You gonna tell us your name now, boy?

(Ivanhoe shakes his head, no.)

IVANHOE

Call me—Disinherited by America.

FRANKLIN

Disinherited by America?

(Crowd starts booing. Ivanhoe puts his title in the bowl, and goes off.)

Ladies and Gentlemen, please, please—no throwing objects on the race track, ma'am, now I mean that—is that a bra?

(To invisible assistant.)

You ever see somebody throw a bra before?

(To the crowd.)

Stop throwing things or I will have you removed from the grandstand.

WILSON

Must mean discharged. Dishonorably discharged, I'll bet. Deserter, maybe. I hate a deserter.

FRANKLIN

GENTLEMEN! START YOUR ENGINES!!!

(Racing sounds spill into the space from the “track.” Loud noises of cars racing motors is at a high.)

AND—THE GREEN FLAG IS DROPPED--THEY'RE OFF!!

(The race begins, a festival of racing and audience noises.

Fiddlers will provide much of the racing noise, standing in, in some ways for the sound of the race itself.)

ISAAC

(The light focuses on Rebecca and Isaac.)

How fiercely that boy drives! Like a cat out of hell.

REBECCA

A bat, papa.

ISAAC

Bat, cat. He is a good kid. Pray he wins.

REBECCA

We shouldn't pray for things like that.

ISAAC

Why not? By the deeds of man, the world is made, and unmade every day.

REBECCA

By a stock car race?

FRANKLIN

Six laps down, and it's going to be a battle every inch of the way. That's little Davey Harris trailing, the front runners are about to lap him—Brian Jones is giving him a little tap on the bumper on turn two—there little Davey goes, floating up the corner, and the leaders zip by.

WILSON

Looks like the Marine is giving your boy a run for his money.

LUCAS JONES

Brian won't have any trouble, he's just teasing him, you wait and see.

FRANKLIN

Here come the leaders again, lapping the rest of the field for the third, count it, third time today as we pass the halfway point, that's twenty laps down, twenty laps to go, and Jones and the Marine are still driving like they're yoked together.

ISAAC

Give him a run for his money!

FRANKLIN

Here they go into turn three—it's Jones in the groove, he gives Lester in car number five a little tap to get him to move over—ohh, a little too hard, look at that rooster tail--there he goes, off into the swamp! Better luck next time, Les! Well, now that we're down to the last ten laps, I except we'll see the gloves come off and the real driving begin.

REBECCA

How can you stand to watch, Papa, it's barbaric.

ISAAC

Yes, yes, it is the gladiators, driving their chariots. A terrible thing to see.

(He stands.)

GO MR. DISINHERITED.

FRANKLIN

Jones tries to lose the Marine in the pack—but he's got the scent and he's coming on strong. Just two laps to go and anything can happen, they're coming up on little Davey Harris and the rest of the pack, they're three laps down. You know, Davey's just 16 years old today, and doing beautifully, I just hope he knows to get out of the way—no—he's holding—he's not moving—Jones is trapped, and the Marine has found a hole and he's poking through it! THE MARINE IS IN THE LEAD!

LUCAS JONES

Get out of there, boy, punch your way out if you have to, but catch him—

FRANKLIN

--there's the white flag, the Marine has got the white flag—one lap to go--it's down to the finish, Jones is still trapped, he's knocking on Davey's bumper--

(We hear a reasonable little bumping noise.)

--lettin' him know he wants around, but Davey's holding firm--

(A horrible smashing sound.)

My God—Jones is pushing Davey, he's literally pushing him off the track—Ladies and Gentlemen, I have never seen anything like it—a tap is one thing, but—

REBECCA

Papa, is that fair?

ISAAC

It is war, Rebecca. Nothing is fair. Everything is fair.

FRANKLIN

I don't know what the NASCAR rules are about this, but—

(Huge crashing sound.)

Oh my God--into the wall!

(Loud sounds of crowd shock and disapproval.)

He's pushed Davey Harris into the wall—

LUCAS JONES

That's my boy.

FRANKLIN

And now Jones is pouring it on, he's running the Marine down, but there's no way he can catch him—

(Huge screams from the crowd.)

AND THE MARINE TAKES THE CHECKERS!!!! What a race, ladies and gentlemen! Oh my god--the car's on fire—Davey's car is on fire!

(Lights up on Davey Harris' car, crushed into the stands, the engine billowing smoke.)

REBECCA

(Stands.)

I'm going down there, that boy may need help—

ISAAC

Sit down, this battlefield is no place for you.

FRANKLIN

The emergency crew is on its way but the Disinherited Marine has jumped out of his car and it looks like he's going to make it to the wreck first!

(He does. He grabs Davey. A huge cheer goes up from the crowd as Ivanhoe pulls Davey through the window.)

IVANHOE

Kid—you okay?

DAVEY HARRIS

Wow. Yeah. I'm fine.

FRANKLIN

He's out! He's got him out! Davey is walking away from it—thanks to the Marine who pulled him out—Ladies and Gentlemen, that car could have exploded at any moment, let's give the marine a big hand!

(A big hand.)

And Davey's giving us a wave, looks like he's okay too!

DAVEY HARRIS

(Waving)

Hey, Mom! I'm okay!

(To Ivanhoe.)

My mother said I was too young to race, but I said, how would I know if didn't try?

FRANKLIN

(More crowd enthusiasm.)

Ladies and Gentlemen, the judges have made their decision. Brian Gilbert Jones is black flagged and disqualified. And even if he weren't--the winner of the 25th Annual Ivanhoe Title Race—is Mr. Disinherited!

(The trophy girl gives Ivanhoe a crown of gold, laced with live flowers, and he goes to the stands.)

And now, as tradition dictates--our champion will crown his queen. Oh, the suspense is killing me! Who will our unknown hero pick? There's no lack of lovelies! Plenty to choose from!

(Ivanhoe walks past the grandstand. He approaches Rebecca, whose face shows how much she is longing to be crowned by him. He hesitates for a moment—but then he passes her by. Her face falls.)

Ivanhoe climbs up in the stands, to the place where Rowena sits. He puts the crown on her head, and kisses her. Rebecca watches, in despair that she tries to hide.)

A man after my own heart! Rowena Franklin, my own daughter, has been chosen Queen of the Track! Let's give her a big round of applause!

(The crowd does. Rowena throws her arms around him, filled with joy. Ivanhoe climbs down, and goes to the area beneath the announcer's booth, where Brian and the other drivers

are standing.

Hate glows in both their faces. The fiddlers come closer to the stage, playing the hate.

The trophy girl puts a new medallion around Ivanhoe's neck, and kisses him. Then she holds up the bowl, with the titles. Ivanhoe takes them, sorts through them, puts all but one back in the bowl. Hands the bowl to the trophy girl.)

IVANHOE

Tell the boys they can buy their cars back from me for 10 bucks each. (He holds up the single title. Which he throws in the dirt at Brian's feet. Brian glowers.)

BRIAN GILBERT JONES

Take it. You won it. Fair and square.

IVANHOE

But that's not the way you lost it.

BRIAN GILBERT JONES

You calling me a cheater—

IVANHOE

I'm not bothering to call you anything at all. (Gilbert Jones rushes at him, throws a punch. As Ivanhoe raises his hands to throw a punch back--)

IVANHOE

No—get away—it wasn't my fault—I didn't mean to—GET AWAY FROM ME!!!!

(He spins wildly in place, swatting at things that only he can see.

The fiddlers are playing fast and furious, the fiddles screaming.)

BRIAN GILBERT JONES

(Backs away from him.)

What that—

IVANHOE

LEAVE ME ALONE!!!!

(He starts sobbing, as he falls to his knees, protecting his head with his hands. Through the fiddles, we are hearing the sounds of screaming that Ivanhoe hears in his head. Brian stands there.)

BRIAN GILBERT JONES

What's the matter with you—you nuts?

LUCAS JONES

Who's he screaming at—there's nobody there—

BRIAN GILBERT JONES

You on something?

WILSON

The boy's haunted. He could even be possessed by demons.

LUCAS JONES

Oh, please, the boy's some kind of drug addict, that's all. Demons. Indeed.

IVANHOE

(Screaming)

YOU PROMISED ME!!!!

BRIAN GILBERT JONES

You're nothing but a hyped up junkie.

(He spits at Ivanhoe, and leaves.)

REBECCA

Come on, Papa, your rescuer needs rescuing.

(She and Isaac leave the grandstand and head for Ivanhoe.)

THE MYSTERIOUS STRANGER

(The Mysterious Stranger climbs down from the stands, approaches Ivanhoe, applauding him slowly.)

Congratulations. On your spectacular performance.

IVANHOE

Get away from me! You promised me—

THE MYSTERIOUS STRANGER

You must have me confused with someone else. I'm just a racing fan.
(Ned turns and walks away.)

Rebecca rushes up to Ivanhoe. The insane screaming gets louder and louder, until Ivanhoe screams and falls to the ground, clutching his head.

Silence. BLACKOUT)

*REBECCA

Iva!!!

(Lights up on the York house. Iva opens the door. Rebecca and Isaac half carry, half drag Ivanhoe into the living room. They get Ivanhoe on the couch.)

IVANHOE

(He swings at a demon.)

STOP IT!! LEAVE ME ALONE.

IVA

Let me handle this, Beccy, it's clear he's haunted, and it ain't a simple haunting, fer as I can tell, it--

ISAAC

The boy is not haunted, Iva. He's sick.

IVANHOE

I'll get you! I'll get you all.

REBECCA

He has posttraumatic stress syndrome.

(She opens her bag, takes out a hypodermic.)

IVA

Which is?

REBECCA

A form of shell shock, it's what happens when a man can't get free of what he's seen and done in war time.

IVA

Yes, haunted, that's what I said. No matter what fancy names you put on it now you've got your city doctor degree. A curse like this is way too dangerous for someone young as you, let me take care of him--

REBECCA

Iva, no. I know what to do—

IVA

Too dangerous, I said—

REBECCA

And I said I know what to do and I'm doing it.

IVA

Are you. Glad to know whose who is givin' the orders round here.

(She goes off in a semi-huff.)

ISAAC

You know better than to cross her, everything she cooks will taste like cardboard soaked in vinegar for a week. IVA!!

(He goes after her.)

REBECCA

Here we go. There's enough valium in this to calm down a squadron of marines or a host of demons.

(Rebecca gives Ivanhoe a shot.)

Shell shock or haunted--it should work either way.

IVANHOE

(Rebecca takes his pulse. He gazes up at her for several moments.)

You must be an angel.

REBECCA

You can do better than that, can't you?

IVANHOE

(Rebecca finishes checking his pulse.)

Please—don't let go. It makes me calmer, when you're touching me.

(Rebecca laughs.)

No, I mean it. Truly.

(Rebecca pauses for a second, then takes his hand.)

You think I'm crazy, don't you.

REBECCA

Lots of men can't free of this war, they get held hostage by the things they saw.

IVANHOE

Or the things they did.

REBECCA

That's what war is, right? Doing things you can't even stand to see? It makes sense to me to be haunted by it.

IVANHOE

You think it makes sense? Maybe you need that shot more than I do.

REBECCA

I ought to let Iva get her hands on you. Serve you right.

IVANHOE

I bet she's got some root teas that could take my head right off.

REBECCA

I'm going to write you a prescription. I know you don't want to tell anyone your name, but--

IVANHOE

I don't want my father to know I'm back. I'm not telling anyone, I'm camping out at Willow Spring, and--

REBECCA

I'm a doctor, you know, everything you tell me is privileged.

IVANHOE

You really don't recognize me?

REBECCA

No, should I?

IVANHOE

I'm Wilfred Franklin. Of course, so's my father. All the Franklins are called Wilfred, so they call us after the town we're born in, and I was born here, so I'm called--

REBECCA

Ivanhoe! You're Ivanhoe?

(She pulls his hair off his face, covers his beard with her hand)

Ivanhoe! I remember! Iva used to bring me over to play with you and your sister Rowena when--

(She stop, remembering something.)

Oh. Right. You and your sister, Rowena.

IVANHOE

Things aren't always what they seem, Rebecca.

REBECCA

That's your business, not mine.

(She won't meet his gaze.)

Here's the prescription.

IVANHOE

These won't stop him from coming, you know.

REBECCA

Stop who?

IVANHOE

The Old Boy. Every night, as soon as I closed my eyes, every horrible thing that happened to me in Vietnam happened all over again. Every night, in an endless nightmare. So I made a deal with the Old Boy that if he'd just keep the dreams away from me, I'd never raise my hand against another man again.

REBECCA

Most people—wouldn't they make that deal with God?

IVANHOE

Not the sensible ones. In the first place—most people have a lot more proof that deals made with the Old Boy end up getting kept. And the second—God didn't come offering me this deal. The Old Boy did.

REBECCA

My father's like you. Believes in deals. After what happened to him in Germany—my parents had been married to other people, they had sons, and daughters, and they lost them all in the camps. They met, married, and came to America. America, the miracle. He thought the miracle of America was repayment, for all the promises God had broken. My mother died when I was born, but she made my father swear that he wouldn't forget that. That they had survived, and found each other, and come to a place where they were free. So he still believes. There's no pill I know that can wipe his dream of America away.

IVANHOE

(Pause)

You and your father should get out of Ivanhoe now, while you still can. It isn't safe here.

REBECCA

I know. Deals with God don't stick. You'd think my father would have figured that out when Lucas Jones came to town, but he's so stubborn.

IVANHOE

You have to make him go!

REBECCA

Don't you think I've tried? But he says I have to believe in America. He says, America will send someone to fight.

(BLACKOUT)

*JENSON

(Lights up on the first rehearsal of the Passion Play. Quite a crowd, including The Mysterious Stranger.)

Thank you all coming. It is an honor to have so many prominent members of the business community among our cast. I will be playing Jesus, as well as directing. Now, after rehearsal with those of you playing the Jews today--

HEROD/REAL ESTATE AGENT

(Herod is played by the Real Estate Agent.)

Mr. Jenson?

JENSON

Yes?

HEROD/REAL ESTATE AGENT

Do I have to play a Jew?

JENSON

Well, someone has to.

HEROD/REAL ESTATE AGENT

Oh.

(Crestfallen.)

PILATE

(To The Mysterious Stranger, standing next to him.)

My hearing aids acting up, would you let me know when it's my cue?

THE MYSTERIOUS STRANGER

Of course.

JENSON

Now. Where was I—yes. We are dedicated to giving the audience as authentic an experience as possible. When the soldiers tie Jesus to the post and whip him with rawhide, the audience will feel it. When Jesus ascends to heaven, thanks to special ski lift cables from Switzerland—the audience will almost believe that they were there when our Lord joined his heavenly father. When--

THE MYSTERIOUS STRANGER

(Nudging Pilate)

That's your cue.

PILATE

His blood be upon you, and upon your children. I wash my hands of it.

JENSON

Uh—if you could just wait for your cue—

(Ned elbows Pilate.)

PILATE

(Louder, gives it a different reading.)

His blood be upon you, and upon--

JENSON

Please, wait for your cue!

PILATE

His blood be upon you, and upon your children. I wash my hands of it.

JEWISH SANHEDRIN-GROUP

(Picking up their cues, chiming in.)

Yes. Gladly.

JENSON

Wait, wait--

PILATE

His blood be upon you, and upon your children.

JEWISH SANHEDRIN-GROUP

Let it fall upon us, and upon our children.

THE MYSTERIOUS STRANGER

For 7 times 7 generations.

SINGLE JEWISH SANHEDRIN

We willingly accept responsibility.

PILATE and SHEPHERD and THE MYSTERIOUS STRANGER

His blood is upon you and on your children's children.

JEWISH SANHEDRIN-GROUP

His blood is upon us and upon our children.

(The cast turns toward Jenson, waiting for him to pick up his cue.)

His blood is upon us and upon our children?

JENSON AS JESUS

(He gives up. He throws down his clipboard.)

The kingdom of God will be taken from you and given to a nation bringing forth better fruits.

ALL THE ACTORS

A better people he will choose.

(BLACKOUT)

*BESSIE

(Lights up on Brian Gilbert Jones, working under his car. Bessie is standing over him, holding his supper. The car radio is on.)

But meatloaf is your favorite.

BRIAN GILBERT JONES

I told you, Bessie, I don't like it anymore.

BESSIE

Well you used ta. Why, you used to beg me to make it.

BRIAN GILBERT JONES

That was before. Hand me that wrench, would you?

BESSIE

Before what?

BRIAN GILBERT JONES

Before I—

(Pause)

Bessie, I just can't taste it anymore, okay? It just doesn't have any taste.

BESSIE

Maybe one of those Viet Cong put a hex on you to make you hate my cookin'.

BRIAN GILBERT JONES

For the love of—I just don't like it anymore, okay? I've changed.

BESSIE

Nobody changes like that. Sometimes, they start likin' what they didn't afore. But not the other way 'round. Tain't natural.

LUCAS JONES

(Enters, carrying another special delivery letter.)

Evening, Bessie.

BESSIE

Evening, Mr. Jones.

LUCAS JONES

We got the official confirmation. We're all set in Colorado and California. It's all happening next Saturday.

BRIAN GILBERT JONES

I'll double the patrols.

LUCAS JONES

Everything's falling into place, Brian. Just like we knew it would.

(Looks at the plate of food.)

Meatloaf. Your favorite. Bessie, you do spoil the boy.

BESSIE

But Mr. Jones, he ain't touched his it.

LUCAS JONES

He hasn't? Give me that.

(She does. He begins eating.)

Who you patrolling with tonight?

BRIAN GILBERT JONES

Billy Foster and a couple of the new recruits.

LUCAS JONES

Good, good. It's very important that our perimeter is secure. Can't afford anybody getting out.

(He eats.)

This is some very tasty meatloaf, Bessie.

BESSIE

Thank you, sir.

LUCAS JONES

What's wrong, why aren't you eating it? You sick?

BRIAN GILBERT JONES

I don't like meatloaf anymore.

LUCAS

Nonsense. You love it. Always have. A man who can't remember what he likes to eat is like a man who can't remember his own name.

BRIAN GILBERT JONES

(We hear a car horn, honking.)

That'll be Billy.

(He rolls out from under the car.)

LUCAS JONES

(Setting the plate, forgetting the letter under it, on the car fender.)

I'll go with you, meet the new recruits.

(Brian and Lucas exit. Bessie picks up the plate, sees the letter under it, picks it up too.)

BESSIE

Oh Mr. Jones, you forgot your—

(She gasps in pain, dropping the letter, as if it is burning her.)

She uses the hem of her apron to protect her from the letter, and picks up the letter again. She spreads it out so she can read it, but first she crosses her fingers and then holds her hands in front of her.)

BESSIE

Pulley bone holy ghost double yolk twice.

(She reads. She pulls charms out of every pocket as she finishes the letter, and then takes off her apron, and ties it around the letter and the charms, careful not to touch the letter again. Lights fade on her.)

IVA

(Lights up on Iva entering Rebecca's bedroom, just at the moment Rebecca is opening a huge piece of yellow silk by unfurling it in the air.)

And where do you think you're going tonight?

REBECCA

Just...out...for walk. In the woods.

IVA

To Willow Spring?

REBECCA

Well...maybe...

IVA

Uhhhhuh. Iffen I were you, I'd stay clear of a boy was in love with his own sister.

REBECCA

I bet she's really not his sister.

IVA

You been reading too many books.

REBECCA

Rowena and Ivanhoe don't look a thing alike. Maybe she's really his cousin, a distant cousin, adopted at birth, or--

IVA

Maybe she's a changling, put in the Franklin house by fairies. It don't change the salient fact. He's in love with somebody who ain't you.

REBECCA

Just because he was in love with her *before*, doesn't mean he can't be in love with somebody else *now*.

IVA

Don't matter iffien he is in love with you now. A man the Old Boy has marked for his own is not somebody you should pick for your jularky.

REBECCA

That's ridiculous, he has not marked him. And even if it were true--say he was marked—couldn't he be marked because there's something special about him, something good that the Old Boy fears?

IVA

You got the love logic bad. But it don't make no difference why he marks a man, darlin'. The Old Boy marks good men ever' day, and ever' day some of 'em fall.

REBECCA

What would you do, if you were me? Really?

IVA

And had the love eetch as bad as you? Well, when I was your age most of the girls put stock in swallowing raw chicken hearts. That's an in general kind of love charm.

REBECCA

(Laughing)

Iva, I do not need a love charm--

IVA

But iffen you're really serious--a drop of your flowers in the first thing a man drinks after the new moon is the best.

REBECCA

Put menstrual blood in his—not only is that disgusting, it's not safe.

IVA

No, it ain't. Cause just one drop will fix a man on you till the day he dies. There's no turning back. He's yours for life.

REBECCA

Thanks. I'll forego the charms.

IVA

Wise decision. Girl as pretty as you don't need love potions. Beauty's a powerful magic all on its own. Plenty dangerous as it is.

(Iva wraps the yellow silk around Rebecca, as a shawl.)

This was your mother's. Keep it close on you tonight, for protection. The moon's full, but there's darkness hiding in ever' little shader.

(Rebecca kisses her on the cheek and goes out the door.)

I'll send a spell to clear your way.

(Rebecca goes out into the night. Iva works a spell, taking a knife from her pocket, slicing it through the air.)

Shadders melt away.

Darkness part and fall

With this knife I cut a path

To cleave the night in two

With this knife I cut a path

That keeps away the creeping and the crawling

things that hide out in the nighttime
 in the woods and in men's hearts
 all you shadders, hear me
 Hide your selves, and let her walk
 In moonlight, unafraid.

(The moon breaks through the clouds and shines silver over
 the land, revealing the woods in their splendor.)

The fiddlers start to play. They will continue to play
 throughout the entire "moonlight sequence", as appropriate.)

*BILLY

(Lights up on Brian and Billy, a very young member of the
 Order, in another part of the forest, wearing their Order robes.)
 Seems kinda silly, wearing these in the woods.

BRIAN GILBERT JONES

You'll get used to them.

BILLY

(As he pulls his robe from a thorn bush.)
 But the skirts get caught in briars and things.

BRIAN GILBERT JONES

Don't call it a skirt.

(Brian takes his gun out from beneath his robes, checks it, puts
 it back in his holster.)

BILLY

I didn't know you were taking a gun, Brian

BRIAN GILBERT JONES

Billy, if one person makes it out of Ivanhoe, and makes it to the authorities, it's the
 end of our dream. The end of the new America. We do what we have to. Stop your
 whining.

(They hear someone coming in a hurry. They hide.)

Get down.

BESSIE

(Bessie, out of breath, is making her way through the woods in a

hurry. She is carrying the bundle with the letter in it.)
 Watch my way, watch my path, watch my footsteps. Watch my way, watch my path—

BRIAN GILBERT JONES

(Standing)

Bessie—what are you doing—you could have gotten yourself shot!

BESSIE

Brian? Like to scare me witless--I'm just—I'm just gathering some nettles under the full moon—

(She quickly bends down and grabs some things and stuffs them into her bundle.)

BRIAN GILBERT JONES

Go on home, it's not safe out here.

BESSIE

I'm not going home, I'm visiting Wanda.

BRIAN GILBERT JONES

You shouldn't be going to the Franklin place, Franklin and my father are enemies--

BESSIE

As if I can't go where I please, when I please!

BRIAN GILBERT JONES

All right. But be careful. I've got new patrols out here that might not recognize you.
 (Bessie hurries on.)

BILLY

Why'd you let her go? She's a witch.

BRIAN GILBERT JONES

Bessie? She's our housekeeper.

BILLY

If she's collectin' nettles, then she must be making a brew.

BRIAN GILBERT JONES

All the old women round here collect nettles, Billy, to make poultices and cures. The only danger you're in from them is if you actually take one of them. Then Lord help you.

(Lights up on Rebecca making her way through the forest.
As she nears Brian and Billy, they hear her.)

Stay out of sight.

(Brian pulls out his gun. They crouch down, hidden, as Rebecca comes into the clearing. The moonlight caresses her face, and fills up her flowing yellow silk wondrously.)

BILLY

Looks like an angel—or maybe—maybe a water woman that lives in the spring—
(Rebecca passes by a spring, where there is
a gourd hanging, to drink from.)

I heard about 'em, women made of the spirit of the water—they like to enchant a man and rob him of his juices--

(Brian is visible to us, but not to Rebecca, and he watches her, stunned by her beauty, as she drinks.)

BRIAN GILBERT JONES

No such thing as water women—

BILLY

Or she could be a panther taking female form to go stealing babies—

BRIAN GILBERT JONES

Shut up, Billy, she'll hear!

(Whisper)

She's the daughter of Isaac York, the banker. My God. She's beautiful.

BILLY

She's the Jew—the deadly power doctor? We'd better run while our legs still can!!
If she sees us she'll hypnotize us, freeze us to the spot, and leave us here for animals to feed on, a living death, while she--

BRIAN GILBERT JONES

Do you see the light, shining around her head?

BILLY

What light?

BRIAN GILBERT JONES

Like the darkness runs away from her.

BILLY

Lord Save us—she’s cast a spell on you already!!!

(Rebecca finishes drinking, and goes on. Brian stumbles out of his hiding place, puts his hand out, as if to stop her—Bill grabs his robe to pull him back.)

You can’t let her see you in your robes, Brian! Brian!

(Brian looks down at himself, at his robes. He drops his hand. He falls to his knees in the moonlight.

Lights fade on them. Rebecca continues on.)

*ROWENA

(Lights up Rowena and Ivanhoe, in the front seat of the Chevy, in a glade in the woods. It would be a very romantic scene, except for the fact that there are demons watching the couple. Or at least, Ivanhoe thinks there are. And maybe we can almost see some too—or is it just the play of the moon and the shadows?

Rowena is kissing Ivanhoe, but he isn’t responding. She gives up.)

Wanda told me not to see you yet, she said “give him time”, I said, I’ve promised to marry him, have children with him, lie in bed beside him till the day I die, that’s all the time I have in this world, and I’ve already given it to him.

(He grabs her, kisses her hungrily, then lets her go, too quickly.)

Won’t your demons even let you alone long enough to kiss me? You got no business carrying a curse this big. It isn’t fair.

IVANHOE

Rowena—I’m getting better, I am, but--

ROWENA

You got no business carrying this, Ivanhoe! You know better. I see a spoon on the road, I leave it, I know it’s been put there by a woman with household trouble, trying to get someone to carry off her bad kitchen luck, I don’t stoop down and take it into my home, to mess up my cakes and cookies and stews.

Why do you have to carry this curse! You can't carry the mistakes of a whole war, it's not fair! Let it lie, let it stay on the roadside, only a fool picks up a curse that's not his!

IVANHOE

Somebody has to carry it.

ROWENA

Says who!

IVANHOE

It wasn't so heavy at first. It was just sadness. That to get my men out of that trap I had to kill those—they were just boys, Rowena. Just boys. Fifteen, sixteen years old.

ROWENA

You had to do that, Ivanhoe, you had to.

IVANHOE

Did I?

ROWENA

You had to come home to me.

IVANHOE

(He sighs.)

Does Daddy ever talk about me?

ROWENA

Wanda and me aren't allowed to even say your name.

IVANHOE

I miss him. He doesn't look good, is he sick?

ROWENA

He and Lucas Jones have been at it for months, ever since Jones got him black balled at the Rotary Club.

IVANHOE

Bastard. Why?

ROWENA

Jones was getting the new highway built into town, which is a good thing, I guess, but the Jersacks wouldn't sell their land, so Jones had the town just take it, eminent domain, and Daddy was fighting him and—

IVANHOE

I should have been here to help him fight. Not a world away, doing...doing...
(If the demons have a visual or aural component, they
increase.)

I better take you home.

ROWENA

But we just got here—

IVANHOE

I'm not feeling that good, Rowena, and—

ROWENA

I thought you said you were better-

IVANHOE

I am. The doctor's helping me. Maybe it's the drugs too, but all I know is, when she's right next to me, I feel fine.

ROWENA

You're in love with her.

IVANHOE

What?

ROWENA

I've waited and prayed and almost died of loneliness for you and now you've come back and fallen in love with that Jew!

IVANHOE

Rowena! Don't say that.

ROWENA

Why not? It's true!

IVANHOE

Rowena—she’s a psychiatrist, of course I feel better when I’m with her, that’s her job.

(He kisses her. It’s a much better kiss.)

ROWENA

All right. Take me home.

(Ivanhoe puts the car in gear. Lights fade on it, as we hear the sounds of them driving away. Lights find Rebecca, watching them go. It’s clear she has been watching the whole scene.

The moonlight spotlights her. She stands there.)

*EVERETT

(Everett calls out from behind her.)

It still sings to me. When the moon is full.

REBECCA

(She turns, sees him. Smiles.)

Have you been following me?

EVERETT

You know we alwas’ keep an eye out on you.

REBECCA

Well, just so you know. Nerve damage does not respond to the cycles of the moon.

EVERETT

It doesn’t? Well, maybe it’s different in New York. But round here—if a thing doesn’t respond to the cycle of the moon—that means it’s dead.

REBECCA

(She takes his hand, there is a visible scar across his palm.)

It’s healed nicely, considering the knife cut all the way to the bone. I didn’t do too bad a job after all.

EVERETT

Thought I’d never play again.

(He takes up his fiddle, and plays a quick melody.)

Not a day goes by I don’t thank my stars you was here ta work the cure.

REBECCA

All I did was I apply pressure—

EVERETT

The instant you touched it, the bleeding stopped—

REBECCA

That's what happens when you apply pressure!

EVERETT

You said, “my hands know things. I'm gonna be a doctor when I grow up.” You were ten years old. And you took needle and thread from your mother's sewing kit, and said, “this will hurt,” only it didn't hurt. Ten years old. And you knew exactly what to do. I've looked after you and your daddy ever since, but I can't answer for your safety now. Jones is plannin' somethin' big.

REBECCA

I know, the Passion Play, they've got the governor coming in for the first performance.

EVERETT

That Passion Play's jes the duck blind. Somethin' else going on. Delbert and me been keep an eye on things in the woods, and we've been watchin' 'em stash guns an' ammunition upt near Fiddler's Cave.

REBECCA

Are you sure, Everett? Are you sure it isn't just props and rigging and things for the play?

EVERETT

Beccy, I'm sure. You got to git your father, and git out.

REBECCA

I can't get him to leave—

EVERETT

You ain't tryin' hard enough—

REBECCA

I am too—

EVERETT

If ya was tryin' hard 'nough, ya wouldn't be takin' no moonlight walk ta visit somebody camped at Willow Spring, now would ya?

REBECCA

I hate him!

EVERETT

No you don't.

REBECCA

His own sister!

EVERETT

There's some folks say she ain't really his sister.

(Pause)

And there's others that say she is. That she's Franklin's daughter by another woman, and that's why he adopted her. After all, Franklin disowned him when he found they two was messin' 'bout. So ah cain't say. But there's one thing Ah know is true. The Rayburn brothers weren't the only ones messin' with your father's cars all those years.

REBECCA

What?

EVERETT

All the boys took their turns.

REBECCA

No. Ivanhoe isn't like that. And even if he was--he's changed. He's the one who saved my father in the woods.

EVERETT

Mayall he's changed. And mayall he ain't. Mayall the war changed him. But it's a fact there's only so much goodness in the world, Beccy. And if he's got more of it, sure to find someone else has got less. Cause unlike with evil, with goodness there is not no inexhaustible supply.

(They hear a noise in the brush.)

Let's git you home.

(They go off. As soon as they are gone, the bushes part, and two men step out into the moonlight.)

It is The Mysterious Stranger, carrying a bag (the fiddles love him, and play accordingly), and the Real Estate Agent, who is playing King Herod, also carrying a bag. They start to cross Rebecca's path, The Mysterious Stranger finds he can't. Perplexed. The Real Estate Agent looks back at him.)

*REAL ESTATE AGENT

What's wrong?

THE MYSTERIOUS STRANGER

I find I cannot walk across that path.

REAL ESTATE AGENT

What path?

THE MYSTERIOUS STRANGER

You don't see the band of light, right there, where no shadow may fall?

REAL ESTATE AGENT

(Cocks his head to one side.)

Didn't take you for that committed a drinking man.

THE MYSTERIOUS STRANGER

Is there another way to rehearsal?

REAL ESTATE AGENT

Half a mile out of our way. Hurry, or we'll be late.

(They go off, following another path.)

*IVA

(The moonlight is shinning in the window of the Franklin's kitchen. Wanda and Bessie are there, with Jones' letter on the table. Iva comes in.)

What's so all important you put the call on me at this time of night?

(They indicate the letter. Iva sits down and reads it.)

BESSIE

(Bessie chants rapidly.)

Pulley bone holy ghost double yolk twice.

Pulley bone holy ghost double yolk twice.

WANDA

Oh, please, Bessie, shut up, that's for when a cat that might be a witch crosses your path.

BESSIE

It is? Well, it cain't hurt. Pulley bone holy ghost double yolk twice.

IVA

I wouldn't a believed it iff I hadn't read it.

WANDA

We can't go to the sheriff or the mayor—they're both in with Jones. We gotta get to somebody we can trust with this.

BESSIE

Why don't we just call a sheriff in Little Rock, and--

WANDA

What does the letter say about the phones, Bessie?

BESSIE

They can't all be bugged, can they?

WANDA

That's what the letter says.

IVA

Looks like it's time we called a meetin'.

(Wanda and Bessie nods.)

*PILATE

(Lights up on rehearsal, where actors, in partial bits of their costumes, are knitting while they wait for their scenes. Jenson, to one side, is blocking a scene.)

Way-all, you want my opinion, I think he's playin' Jesus like he's trying out fer the part of the lead ape in a Tarzan movie. What's he doing jumpin' around like a monkey, that's what I'd like to know.

(Ned and Herod enter, take out knitting from their bags, and join in.)

Pilate looks over to see how The Mysterious Stranger is doing.)

Now, see here, what did I tell you about ending off the pearl row?

(Corrects his row)

You're a fast learner, but you're sloppy.

SHEPHERD

Shore wish Mr. Jones'd let us play cards while we're waiting.

PILATE

Well, cain't blame him for not 'llowin gamblin' backstage on a religus' play. At least the knitting passes the time.

(They knit for a moment.)

SHEPHERD

You ever git any response to that ad of yurs about them pigeon toed pigs?

THE MYSTERIOUS STRANGER

Mule footed hogs.

(Sadly shaking his head.)

Not a one.

PILATE

You must be talkin' 'bout Pappy Cleary's pigs. Frank, you remember those funny lookin' pigs?

SHEPHERD

Shore do.

THE MYSTERIOUS STRANGER

So does this Pappy Cleary still live around here?

HEROD

Moved away winter of '59.

THE MYSTERIOUS STRANGER

And took his hogs with him?

SHEPHERD

Way-all, wouldn't you?

(Ned is heartbroken.)

JENSON

(Working with his assistant.)

Now, after Judas commits suicide--he will hang himself on a tree--a gang of Jews will tear out and eat his intestines.

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

His intestines?

JENSON

We'll use fried dough.

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

You think the Anti-defamation league will let us get away with that?

JENSON

Well, in the old text, the devil did it instead of the Jews, but we've cut the devil.

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

Then somebody better tell him.

(Indicating The Mysterious Stranger. Who indeed seems to suddenly look unmistakably like the devil—possibly he has stuck extra needles in his cap or hair, that look like horns.)

SHEPHERD

I et one onc't.

THE MYSTERIOUS STRANGER

You did? Was it delicious?

JENSON

He can't just keep coming here, expecting to go on. Haven't you told him?

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

I keep trying to, but every time I go over to talk to him, I kind of—end up on the other side of the room.

JENSON

You have to be firm with actors. That's rule number one.

SHEPHERD

Tasted like any other hog. Maybe a little tougher.

JENSON

I better talk to him.

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

Maybe you can use him to fill out the Sanhedrin. We're having a terrible time getting these people to stay cast as Jews.

SHEPHERD

So, when you find 'em—you looking to show 'em, sell 'em', or eat 'em?

THE MYSTERIOUS STRANGER

I just want to see one.

HEROD

Why?

THE MYSTERIOUS STRANGER

I was brought up to believe that like the leopard who cannot change his spots, the pig cannot change its cloven hoof. So for me—it's a quest of faith, you might say.

JENSON

(He goes over to him.)

Excuse me--

THE MYSTERIOUS STRANGER

(Looks up from his knitting, smiles.)

Yes?

JENSON

What's that you're knitting? A scarf? For yourself?

THE MYSTERIOUS STRANGER

Oh, my, no, it never gets hot enough for a scarf where I'm from. It's for Mr. Jones. I am an old friend of his.

JENSON

Oh—I had no idea.

THE MYSTERIOUS STRANGER

(He holds up the scarf and sighs.)

Of course, he won't get much wear out of it. Come next January he'll find that he has no need for scarves and mittens and heavy woolen coats.

JENSON

Oh, good, he and Kathleen are going to Arizona for the winter after all!

THE MYSTERIOUS STRANGER

Mmm. Something like that. Did you have something to tell me about my part?

JENSON

Me? Oh, yes, of course. You're doing a wonderful job as the devil.

THE MYSTERIOUS STRANGER

Thank you. I've put my soul into the role.

(Lights down on the rehearsal.)

Brian Gilbert Jones walks down Main street. The fiddlers play Brian closer to the York house. He looks in through the window at Rebecca. He draws his knife. The fiddlers accompany it. They play as appropriate through the end of act one.

Brian takes his knife, and stabs himself in the thigh with it. He makes a grunt, falls to the ground, and drags himself up to the York's front door. He pounds on the door.)

*REBECCA

Who—

ISAAC

Possibly it is the Disinherited Marine, back again?

REBECCA

(Excited for an instant that it might be.)

Yes—

(Then...)

Tell him I'm not home.

ISAAC

Rebecca—

REBECCA

Tell him I don't ever want to see him again. Tell him--

(The door crashes open. Brian is holding the knife. For an instant, she is frightened, then he falls into her arms.)

Papa—help me—

(The two of them get him over to the couch.)

Get me the kit—something to use for bandages—

(Isaac goes off to get the kit, Rebecca rips Brian's pant leg open.)

How'd you manage this?

BRIAN GILBERT JONES

(Drinking in her nearness, her touch.)

An accident. Knife slipped.

REBECCA

You're lucky. You missed the major tendons and arteries. But it's deep. If we can get it clean, close it up—

(Isaac is back with supplies.)

Thanks. Hold him, Papa. Now. This is going to--

(She pours an antiseptic on the wound. He barely flinches.)

--hurt. Hmm.

(She pours some more on. No response, really.)

Papa. Needle and thread.

(Isaac hands her needle and thread. She sews.)

There. That should do it. Now, if you'll just hold this compress—

BRIAN GILBERT JONES

Please--you hold it.

REBECCA

What?

BRIAN GILBERT JONES

Lay your hand on it.

REBECCA

Oh no, not you too.

(But she places her hand over the wound, and leaves it there. Perhaps a light glows? Around her hand?)

ISAAC
Here. The phone. Call.

BRIAN GILBERT JONES
Who?

ISAAC
Your people. To come and fetch you.

BRIAN GILBERT JONES
But I'm not ready to go yet—

REBECCA
I think somebody as big and strong as Brian Gilbert Jones could go any time now.

BRIAN GILBERT JONES
(A smile spreads over his face.)
You know my name?

REBECCA
Everybody in Ivanhoe knows your name. After all, everybody knows your father.

BRIAN GILBERT JONES
I'm not my father—it's not fair to judge me by him--

REBECCA
Well, I'd hate to be unfair. So tell you what. I'll judge you entirely on your own. I'll judge you on what you did to Davey Harris at the Ivanhoe Title Race.

(Brian's smile fades.)

BRIAN GILBERT JONES
That was—that was—that was an accident--a mistake. I'm sorry about it now, I didn't mean, I didn't know—I wouldn't do it now!

REBECCA
Well. That's a relief. Since you've already done it. Okay. Papa, let's get him to the door.

(They help him to the door. Rebecca picks up his knife, tries to hand it to him.)

Wait—you have to take your knife—

BRIAN GILBERT JONES

No, you have to cure it too. Both the wound, and the thing that made it.

REBECCA

I have to cure the knife?

BRIAN GILBERT JONES

Just by holding it you've started the cure. But the longer you keep it, the faster the wound heals—I can pick it up when I come back tomorrow—

REBECCA

You're not coming back tomorrow.

BRIAN GILBERT JONES

But—don't you have to take the stitches out, or put more in, or--

REBECCA

No. I don't have to do anything. This was an emergency, so I took care of you. But that's it.

BRIAN GILBERT JONES

But Rebecca—

ISAAC

You heard her, Mr. Brian Gilbert Jones. You and your kind are not welcome here. Don't come back. Goodnight.

(Rebecca and Isaac go back into the house, leaving Brian clutching his knife, eyes only for Rebecca. Lights fade on him.)

LUCAS JONES

(Lights up on the statue—it is dusk, and the lights on the statue click on—it is bathed in blue and purple lights. Jones gazes adoringly at it, as McCord enters.)

Have the guns arrived?

McCORD

And the mortars, machine guns, and small missiles.

LUCAS JONES

Excellent.

McCORD

We're bringing in the men we need here under cover of the grand opening of the Passion Play. The bulk of the troops are on their way to the missile silos in the western states, one regiment at a time, so we don't draw too much attention.

LUCAS JONES

Good, good, right on schedule. The world is about to change, Albert. By God, you can almost feel it, can't you? This time next week, we'll be living in the new, pure America.

McCORD

The new, pure America.

REBECCA

I'm frightened.

ISAAC

Don't worry, my treasure, he will not come back.

REBECCA

He's crazy. Papa, he did it to himself.

ISAAC

What?

REBECCA

The wound—I could tell from the way it felt. I'm frightened.

ISAAC

I told you, he will not—

REBECCA

Not of him, Papa. Of something else.

(Isaac embraces her, holding his daughter tightly to his chest.)

*EVERETT

(Lights up on the hills, where the last rays of the sun

wash over Delbert and Everett. They are at Willow Spring. Everett dips a gourd into the spring to drink, while Delbert takes his fiddle and fiddles a little tune. Everett spits out the water.)

Pisoned.

DELBERT

Naw. Cain't be. The water here at Willow Spring's the purest they is.

EVERETT

Try it yourself.

DELBERT

(He does. Spits it out.)

Iffen that ain't the very taste of evil—I don't know what is.

EVERETT

Youall know what it means when the springs turn bad.

DELBERT

Everybody knows what it means, Everett. What they don't know is what it means they gotta do.

EVERETT

How to do it.

DELBERT

When to do it.

EVERETT

And who to do it too.

(Lights fade on them, and Rebecca and Isaac and Lucas Jones and McCord.)

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

*LUCAS JONES

(Lights up at the statue. The sounds of blasting and construction. Lucas Jones marches over to where Brian, and another man, apparently, we can see his feet sticking out from under the car too, are working under Brian's Camero.)

Brian! BRIAN!! Get the hell out from under there boy, we've got more important things to do than mess with cars—

(Brian come out from under the car, the bandage still wrapped around his thigh.)

Goddamn it—you've been knife fighting again! If you've gone and gotten yourself torn up, just when the great moment has come, when I need you, when the Order needs you—

BRIAN GILBERT JONES

I'll be fine, it was a deep cut, but it's healing--

LUCAS JONES

Let me see—

BRIAN GILBERT JONES

No, don't touch it, it's healing fine--

LUCAS JONES

You're no good to me crippled, shut up and let me--

(He rips off the bandage. The cut is gone.)

What kind of sissy boy have you turned into?

BRIAN GILBERT JONES

(Amazed.)

It was three inches deep.

LUCAS JONES

What are you wearing a bandage for!

BRIAN GILBERT JONES

The blade was all the way in to the hilt—

LUCAS JONES

(He throws the dressing on the ground.)

Jesus. Brian—I don't know what's gotten into you, but you got to shape up now. The movement needs you. And I need you.

(He puts his hand on Brian's shoulder.)

BRIAN GILBERT JONES

Look, I need to talk to you about that. Something's happened to me, and I've changed the way I feel about—

LUCAS JONES

I know, son. You were worthless before, There were times I could barely believe you were my son! I know a father's not supposed to feel that way, but you had no backbone! What good were you, to me or anybody! But ever since you got back from the war—you've made me so proud! Don't let me down now.

BRIAN GILBERT JONES

I—I don't mean to, I don't want to, but—I've met—a girl--

LUCAS JONES

A girl? So that's what this is all about, a girl? Well, you're gonna have to forget about her for a few days. When it's all over, she'll be proud of you. Just a few more days. And you and me, we'll be the rulers of the new America.

BRIAN GILBERT JONES

(He turns away from his father, and gets under his car again.)

I got work to do on the Camero still.

LUCAS JONES

Don't you turn your back on me when I'm talking to you, Brian—Brian—

(The Engineer enters.)

ENGINEER

Mr. Jones — Mr. Jones —

LUCAS JONES

We'll finish this later.

(He walks over to meet the Engineer.)

LUCAS JONES

You're six days behind schedule.

ENGINEER

We've working as fast as we can, but—

LUCAS JONES

I don't want excuses, I want an amphitheatre for my passion play.

ENGINEER

Look Mr. Jones, I want that bonus a hell of a lot more than you want to pay it to me. But we're having trouble with the blasting, the dynamite's not acting right. Some of the men are refusing to work with it, they say it's witched.

LUCAS JONES

That's what we get for hiring white trash! Superstitious, backwoods white trash!

ENGINEER

If I could have gotten some fresh blasting powder that they could trust, we might have been able to get it done, but--

LUCAS JONES

Well why the hell didn't you!

ENGINEER

Barricades, bridges under repair, and what looks to me like a private militia blockading every road and gully out of here.

LUCAS JONES

(Pause)

What about the Ivanhoe Race Track?

ENGINEER

What about it?

LUCAS JONES

The grandstands are good—not as big as I wanted but--could you build the stage in the center of the oval by Saturday?

ENGINEER

Sure, but Franklin will never let you do that to his track.

LUCAS JONES

If he won't, then I guess it won't be his race track anymore.

(Jones leaves, and the Engineer returns to his work. Brian Gilbert Jones wheels himself out from under the Camero, and so does the other man—The Mysterious Stranger.)

BRIAN GILBERT JONES

Thanks for your help. You sure do know your way around an engine.

THE MYSTERIOUS STRANGER

I've always been a big fan of internal combustion.

BRIAN GILBERT JONES

(Shakes his head, claps him on the shoulder.)

You the best mechanic I ever saw, but you sure say some weird shit. What do I owe you?

THE MYSTERIOUS STRANGER

(Surprised)

Why, you've already paid me. Don't you remember?

BRIAN GILBERT JONES

I have?

THE MYSTERIOUS STRANGER

We made the deal. Last year.

BRIAN GILBERT JONES

But last year I was still in 'Nam—

THE MYSTERIOUS STRANGER

Exactly.

(He tips his hat, and is gone, leaving Brian confused and

troubled. He strolls down Main Street.

(Lights up on Main Street. As he walks down the street, he sees a vendor selling replicas of the concrete statue of Christ, some a few inches tall, some a few feet tall. They are truly ugly. We recognize them from the feet.)

Excuse me, can you tell me where I'll find the yarn and knitting shop? I believe it's called Sew Crafty?

VENDOR

End of the street, turn right.

THE MYSTERIOUS STRANGER

(Picking up a good sized replica.)

My, my, it's a hideous little thing. You sell a lot of these?

VENDOR

Yep.

THE MYSTERIOUS STRANGER

Doesn't look remotely like him.

VENDOR

Looks 'zactly like him, you want my opinion. Rumor is, he actually sat for the sculptor.

THE MYSTERIOUS STRANGER

Excuse me, but am I hearing you right? You believe that Jesus Christ actually—

VENDOR

Not Jesus. Jones. Lucas Jones. Turn it this way—imagine it with a hat on it--

THE MYSTERIOUS STRANGER

Of course! Lucas Jones! Built a monument to himself masquerading as a monument to Christ.

(He throws his head back, laughing.)

Oh my, my. I'll take—

(He ticks off, counting on his fingers.)

Father. Son. Holy Ghost. I'll take three.

(He is paying for the statues when Ivanhoe, walking by, sees him.)

IVANHOE

You! Leave me alone.

(The fiddlers may describe Ivanhoe's distress. Ivanhoe reaches into his pocket, takes out his pills with shaking hands, can't get the lid off the bottle.)

THE MYSTERIOUS STRANGER

(He hands Ivanhoe the statues, takes the bottle from Ivanhoe.)

Here, let me.

(He gives him a pill. Looks at the label on the bottle.)

Are you sure you should be taking these? They'll bind you right up. Constipation—now that's my idea of hell.

IVANHOE

Go away.

THE MYSTERIOUS STRANGER

I won't go away because you take a dozen pills, Wilfred. You just won't see me.

IVANHOE

Good enough for me.

(He takes another couple pills.)

VENDOR

(Giving The Mysterious Stranger his change, and a bag.)

That's 75, 80, 90, a dollar. Thank you sir.

(Ned takes the statues back from Ivanhoe, puts them in a bag, and he and Ivanhoe walk away from the Vendor.)

IVANHOE

I thought I was the only one who could see you.

THE MYSTERIOUS STRANGER

Obviously not.

IVANHOE

Well, yeah, he saw you but he didn't really see you.

THE MYSTERIOUS STRANGER

Because he didn't wail and scream and make the sign of the cross, the way you do?

(Sighs)
 Everybody can see me, Wilfred. They just choose not to recognize me, is all.
 (Ned “chucks” him under his chin, then walks on. Ivanhoe staggers, the fiddlers enhancing his desperation. He breaks out into a full run.)

*IVANHOE

(Ivanhoe, a desperate mess, makes it to the front door of the York home. He pounds on the door.)
 REBECCA! REBECCA!!! HELP ME! I saw him again! On main street! Help me. HELP ME.

REBECCA

(Rebecca opens the door, brings Ivanhoe in.)
 Come over to the couch—
 (She gets him over to the couch.)

IVANHOE

Walking down main street. Broad daylight. Just as pretty as you please.

REBECCA

And what would the Devil be doing on—

IVANHOE

Don't call him that! It's bad luck!

REBECCA

What would the Old Boy be doing on the main street of Ivanhoe, Arkansas?
 Buying souvenirs and yarn?

IVANHOE

Yes! How did you know?

REBECCA

Look, I understand you see things. But you've got to stop giving in to these back woods superstitions.

IVANHOE

Please—let me stay here—the Old Boy can't get at me when I'm with you--

REBECCA

I bet that's what you say to all the girls.

IVANHOE

It's true! You have the touch.

REBECCA

The touch?

(He grabs her hand and puts it over his heart.)

IVANHOE

The touch that wards off evil.

REBECCA

I think...I think that when you love someone—that's what your touch does.

IVANHOE

Rebecca I can't—you know I can't—Rowena and I--

REBECCA

Does her touch feel like this?

(He shakes his head.)

When you kiss her—does it feel like this?

(They kiss.)

IVANHOE

Rebecca, I promised Rowena—I promised her—

(Rebecca removes her hand from over his heart and stands.)

No!

(He pulls her back to him, but Rebecca won't kiss him.

She puts her hand over his heart. They sit there, gazing at each other, like this, as the lights fade.)

*DELBERT

(Lights up on barn. Rustic, but sturdy and clean.

Delbert, Everett, and as many Hillfolk as possible are gathered for a meeting.)

This here meetin' is here called to order. The subject—drivin' out Lucas Jones and tossing his blasphemous statue down.

BERT

No, it's too damn dangerous. We got no business messing with Jones, he's worse than the Old Boy.

DORTHA

Speaking o' which, the Old Boy has been making hisself awful familiar lately. I seen him three times.

LESTER

We gotta do somethin' bout that ugly pile of concrete soon. My cows ain't give any but sour milk since that graven image went up.

EVERETT

Let's take a vote. All those in favor.

(Everybody raises their hands except for Bert. Everett counts all round, out loud.)

Seven, eight, nine—where's Elroy Rupurt? Anybody seen him lately?

HILLFOLK

(General chatter, overlapping.)

JURDEN

Naw, not since Wednesday.

DORTHA

Didn't he go ta see his nephew over ta' Carhage?

JURDEN

That was last month.

LESTER

He's got a line of traps about fifteen miles north of here he was gonna bring in for the summer.

BERT

You mean a line of stills, don't cha?

EVERETT

Way-all, I'm sure he'll turn up the next day or two. Alwas does. So. We's agreed. Bert, you got enough giant powder to blow up that statue?

BERT

I hope so. I've helped myself to about half of what they got up there for blasting out the ampitheatre. Replaced it with rosin and ground up beech tree bark, can't tell the difference to look at it, but the mix shore do leave those boys of Jones' guessing and cursing at the way it reacts to a charge.

EVERETT

(Iva and Bessie and Wanda enter.)

Evenin', ladies. Nice o'the ones what called the meeting to attend it.

IVA

Evenin', Everett.

EVERETT

We just held the vote. Tomarra' night at midnight, we meet at the statue, and toss the blasphemous, milk curdling thing down.

IVA

We cain't.

JURDEN

We've tolerated Lucas Jones long enough. We're starting with the statue—it ain't nothing but a cut rate golden calf, and the money it's bringing to this town is sure to pison us all.

IVA

The money's the least of our worries. Dortha—you been to see your sister in Jasper recent?

DORTHA

Naw, they got the road thar blocked up, fer construction.

IVA

Bert, how's the fishin' up ta Elbow Shoals?

BERT

I ain't been able to git there lately, but they swore they'll get the bridge at Seymore fixed next week, and—

IVA

Anybody here made it more than a few miles out of town the last two weeks without a man in a silver uniform turns 'em back?

(Everybody looks around, nods their heads, no.)

What I figured. We got powerful proof Jones is brewing up true trouble. So, we can forget about the statue. We got bigger fish to fry, and we're gonna need everbody's help getting 'em into the batter.

(BLACKOUT)

*ISAAC

(The York living room. Isaac comes in. Rebecca and Ivanhoe are sitting as they were, Rebecca's hand over his heart, on the couch.)

Ah—my knight in shining armor. Welcome. It is good of you to visit us again.
(Ivanhoe stands up from the couch. If there is a visual or auditory representation of his demons, they are very diminished.)

IVANHOE

Evenin', sir. Rebecca was just helping me.

(He stands.)

That's the best I've felt since before I left for Vietnam—I can pretend I don't see them at all. You have the gift, Rebecca.

REBECCA

It's a start, Ivanhoe, but that's all. You keep taking the pills I gave you, and stay out of trouble and—

IVA

(Iva enters, in a rush.)

Mr. York—good, you're home. All right. You and Rebecca be packed, one small bag each. And I mean small, small enough you can carry it a long ways by yourself. Wear your most comfortable shoes, boots if you got 'em. Ivanhoe— you'll do as you are.

ISAAC

What are you talking about--

IVA

I don't have no time to explain. Just pack and don't tell no one. Gather up whatever money you got here at the house, hide it on you somewheres. Don't go to the bank, don't none of you step outside of this house. I'll be back after dusk.

REBECCA

But Iva, what—

IVA

(She moves toward the door.)

And no phone calls. Not to nobody here in town, or Little Rock or nowhere. Understand?

ISAAC

(Shaking his head, sadly.)

I understand. I have done such things once before.

(He turns to go, to get ready.)

REBECCA

Well I don't understand, what--

IVA

You're getting your wish, Beccy. You and your pa are leaving.

(BLACKOUT)

*REAL ESTATE AGENT

(Lights up on the Ivanhoe Race Track. Franklin, Lucas Jones, and the Real Estate Agent, and the engineer.)

It's a fair price, Franklin. I advise you to take it.

FRANKLIN

What's fair about it! I don't want to sell.

REAL ESTATE AGENT

Then you'll get nothing. He's got the legal right to take it, eminent domain. All signed and sealed by the mayor, the sheriff, the judge. Take the money, Franklin.

(Jenson and members of the cast, including The Mysterious Stranger, pass them on their way to rehearsal.)

And take it now, I've got to get to rehearsal.

JENSON

(Jenson is working with a megaphone.)

Okay, okay, now, cue the sheep. Shepherds, chase them across the stage.

(Three men with sticks run across the stage as if they are herding sheep. One of them runs off to the side as if chasing one that is straying.)

What the—what the hell are you doing?

SHEPHERD

Method acting. Just like you told us--I'm imagining that one of the sheep is strayin' like it'd do iffen it was real.

JENSON

Perfect. Method acting shepherds. Method acting sheep.

FRANKLIN

(Signing the papers.)

I'm gonna fight this.

LUCAS JONES

You're welcome to try.

(Franklin storms off, and the Real Estate Agent gets into his Herod costume. To the engineer.)

Get to work on the stage--and I want the track paved.

ENGINEER

Why?

LUCAS JONES

We'll have a race, a 500 mile race, before the play begins.

ENGINEER

But I don't know if it will have time to set—

LUCAS JONES

Do it.

JENSON

(Into the megaphone again.)

Thank you. We'll work with the real sheep day after tomorrow. Now, today we're going to work the Jews into this scene—

LUCAS JONES

(Jones storms over to the rehearsal.)

JENSON!!! JENSON!

JENSON

Mr. Jones! It's an honor to have you here at our rehearsal!

LUCAS JONES

I looked at the script last night. You changed it!

JENSON

You said you wanted it to be historically accurate—

LUCAS JONES

What do I want to make the people hate a dead Roman for? What good does that do me? What I need is for 'em to hate the Jews.

(Flinging the script down.)

I want the Jewish king, Herod—

(He grabs the Real Estate Agent, in costume, thrusts him at Jenson.)

--to order him flogged, not Pilate.

JENSON

But Mr. Jones--

LUCAS JONES

This play has been performed with the Jew King crucifying Jesus for 6 hundred years. 6 HUNDRED YEARS! That's a run would put any Broadway show to shame! That beats Oklahoma. Sound of Music—West Side Story--all of 'em. Hitler himself declared this play the greatest work of theatre ever written!

JENSON

I just thought, that where the script contradicted known historical fact—

LUCAS JONES

What does historical fact have to do with it? History is the ground on which people stand. And that makes it real estate. Who owns the ground all round here, Jenson? I do. That means history is mine, to do with as I choose.

I want Pilate dressed in white, the Jews in red, and I want them wearing horns.

JENSON

Mr. Jones, don't you think horns is going a little far?

LUCAS JONES

Are you a Jew lover, Jenson? Is that what this is all about?

JENSON

No! I mean, yes, I mean I—

LUCAS JONES

(Puts his arm around Jenson's shoulder.)

Look, son. I love the Indians, who doesn't, got a whole room in my house filled with Navajo jewelry, have to have you over to see it sometime. But I'm not going to run around, trying to prove that the people who ambushed Custer at Bull Run were Irishmen. I want the Jews wearing horns.

JENSON

But—

LUCAS JONES

If horns are good enough for Germany, they're good enough for us here.

(He turns to go.)

Oh, and do something about your voice.

JENSON

My...voice?

LUCAS JONES

I caught the tail end of the crucifixion scene the other day, I didn't believe a word of it. Your voice needs to be filled up with the weight of the world, got to show the strain of carrying that weight. And I would never believe that you were a man being crucified.

JENSON

Oh.

LUCAS JONES

So, fix it.

(He leaves.)

JENSON

(Crestfallen.)

Fix it. Yes sir.

(Picking up his megaphone.)

Cast. We are going back to the earlier version of the script.

(The cast moans.)

CAST WHINING ALL AT ONCE

PILATE

But I just memorized my part

SHEPHERD

I got more lines in this one

REAL ESTATE AGENT/HEROD

Do I enter in scene three or four now

PILATE

How am I gonna get from the Temple to the King's palace
in time for my entrance

JENSON

Jews—we'll fit you this afternoon at 2:30 for your horns. Now, as long as we're all
together, let's do the crowd scene at the end of scene eighteen.

THE MYSTERIOUS STRANGER

(As they take their places.)

This play is a work of literary genius. A Jew put to death by Romans becomes a
Christian put to death by Jews. While I can't take complete credit for it, it is some of
my best work. You have to admire the simple elegance of it.

REAL ESTATE AGENT/HEROD

Shhs, I want to hear my cue.

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

Take it from Pilate's line--

PILATE

I wash my hands of the blood of this just man.

(Jenson as Jesus is lead over to the Jews, who bind him and drag
him away.)

REAL ESTATE AGENT/HEROD and THE
MYSTERIOUS STRANGER

Away with you, Jesus
On the cross, you can relax
Death to the false prophet
The blasphemer must die

ALL ACTORS IN THE SCENE

Most glorious day
(BLACKOUT)

*REBECCA

(Lights up on the Sunset Drive-In.

Rebecca and Ivanhoe are parked in the Chevy, watching THE

GLASS BOTTOM BOAT, which fills the upstage wall.)
Do you like Doris Day?

IVANHOE
Rebecca, listen to me. It's going to be okay.

REBECCA
Of course you like her, she's a blonde.

IVANHOE
Isn't this what you wanted, to get your father to leave?

REBECCA
No! What I want is for this not to be happening! What I want is for a Knight in Shining Armor to ride in to the rescue! And what I especially want is to be able to find the crack, the hole in the world where all this evil is coming from, and be able to place my hand on it, and mend it, to cure it. So it stops coming for us. Once and for all.

IVANHOE
Come on, let's pretend to watch the movie, okay?

REBECCA
Right. We're just an ordinary couple at a drive-in movie.

IVANHOE
Right.

REBECCA
Anybody seeing us—they'll think, there's two ordinary young people, with their ordinary problems at the movie. They won't have any idea how wrong wrong wrong they are.

(He puts his arm around her.)
Don't.

IVANHOE
It's what two ordinary young people at a drive-in movie would do.

REBECCA
But we're not. We're not, and we can't ever be again--
(She starts crying. He pulls her to her.)

IVANHOE

Rebecca, Rebecca. It's going to be fine--

REBECCA

No it's not, my father--

IVANHOE

He's going to be okay too.

REBECCA

His America is not going to be okay and that's going to kill him, don't you see?
(She is sobbing. Ivanhoe holds her tightly.)

IVANHOE

Come on. We have to play our part. Come on. We're just an ordinary young couple watching a Doris Day movie at the Sunset Drive-In, with your father hidden in the trunk of the car.

(Rebecca can't help laughing through her tears. They're laughing together.)

They're kissing. It is not a short kiss.)

REBECCA

Don't—

IVANHOE

Why not. It's what any other young couple at the drive-in would do—
(They kiss again, then part. Both are a little scared of the kissing...they stop. They're calm now.)

REBECCA

(Pause)

So. Do you like Doris Day?

IVANHOE

(Shrugs)

She's okay.

REBECCA

I knew you had a thing for blondes.

IVANHOE

What is with you and this blonde thing you've got going?

REBECCA

Rowena. You're promised to Rowena. You're in love with me, but--

IVANHOE

You don't understand—

REBECCA

No, I don't.

IVANHOE

Rebecca, there are things a person does, not out of duty, but out of—who they want to be—or who they can't stand being, and—

REBECCA

And which one of you is it that wants to kiss me?

IVANHOE

That's not fair.

REBECCA

Well, here's a news bulletin. Nothing, as it turns out, is fair.

(They watch the movie, in silence for a few beats.)

IVANHOE

It's not fair because you know it's who I want to be. It's not fair because I still love Rowena, and will never abandon her. It's not fair because I'm half crazy half of the time, and full out nuts the rest, and whether it's the Old Boy with his claws deep in me or because my best buddy is in pieces in a rice field in a place I can't remember the name of it doesn't matter. I'm crazy and it isn't going to go away. And it's not fair because in just a few minutes this movie is going to end and we're going to drive out of here, up into the hills, where my father and Rowena are waiting for us, and we're going to climb out of the hills and walk all the way to Little Rock, and I'm never going to have the chance to kiss you again.

(They kiss again. Softly.)

It's also not fair because every time I see a Doris Day movie, until the day I die, I'm going to think of you.

(The movie ends, the credits start to roll.)

REBECCA

A blonde.

IVANHOE

Right.

REBECCA

At long last. A blonde is put to good use.

(The sounds of other cars' engines starting. Their lights come on, all around them. Ivanhoe starts up the car.

Suddenly, both the passenger and driver side doors are flung open.

Brian Gilbert Jones pulls Rebecca from the car, while McCord and Billy pull Ivanhoe out.)

REBECCA

What—let go of me—

IVANHOE

Let go of her, you bastard.

BRIAN GILBERT JONES

Hit him.

(Billy hits him.)

REBECCA

No, Ivanhoe, don't—

IVANHOE

I'm stronger now—you cured me—

(He hits Billy, Billy goes down. Ivanhoe stands strong.)

BRIAN GILBERT JONES

Well. Very interesting.

(He hands Rebecca to McCord, and faces off with Ivanhoe.)

REBECCA

Leave him alone, he's still sick—

BRIAN GILBERT JONES

Doesn't look sick to me.

(They start to fight. One, two blows, Ivanhoe gets into it, pummeling Brian—and as he starts to win, the demons return. Ivanhoe begins thrashing at them.)

IVANHOE

(To the air.)

Leave me alone! Please. PLEASE!! Let me do this! This is the right thing to do, it's something I have to do, LET ME. PLEASE!!

(He falls to the ground, shaking and thrashing.)

BRIAN GILBERT JONES

A new definition of the phrase, his own worst enemy.

(He kicks Ivanhoe while he's down.)

REBECCA

Leave him alone!

BRIAN GILBERT JONES

(He leaves Ivanhoe on the ground, and grabs Rebecca.)

Listen to me, Rebecca. Right now, a regiment of the Order is lying in wait for you and your friends at the four corners. Normally you would all be killed—do you hear me—we would kill all of you, that's been our orders for the last week, to kill anybody trying to get out. But I have given my men different orders. Tonight your friends will be captured where they wait for you, and they will be turned back, not killed. They will be spared. Do you understand me?

REBECCA

What are you talking about? Why would they be killed?

BRIAN GILBERT JONES

If you go with me now, Rebecca, quietly, and don't make a scene—the order I gave my men will stand.

REBECCA

I don't understand, what—

BRIAN GILBERT JONES

You don't have to understand. You just have to do it.

IVANHOE

(Still flailing on the ground.)

Rebecca—Rebecca--—

REBECCA

What about him, what about—

BRIAN GILBERT JONES

Sorry. Not part of the deal.

REBECCA

What?

BRIAN GILBERT JONES

Not part of the deal.

REBECCA

Not part of the deal? What do you mean?

(Brian says nothing.)

Because he beat you in that race, you're going to—

BRIAN GILBERT JONES

No. Not just because of the race.

(He reaches out and touches her lips, softly.)

REBECCA

What kind of a man kills another man for that!

BRIAN GILBERT JONES

What kind of man, Rebecca? You really don't know?

(He runs his hand across her cheek.)

Any man who can.

REBECCA

(Beat.)

Please. Don't kill him. I won't make a scene. I promise. My word.

IVANHOE

(Gasping as he tries to stand.)

No. Rebecca!

BRIAN GILBERT JONES

Deal. Billy. Put her in the car.

(Billy drags Rebecca off. To McCord.)

Don't kill him. Just—just make sure he can't hold a steering wheel or a woman, for a long, long time.

(He leaves. McCord raises his baseball bat.)

McCORD

Hold out your hands. It'll make it quicker.

EVERETT

(Out of the darkness.)

I wouldn't do that, iffen I was you.

McCORD

Mister, you better not meddle in things you don't understand.

EVERETT

(Everett appears)

I always thought there was an unnecessarily high premium placed on understandin'.

McCORD

Oh, you'll understand real good in about 2 minutes, make no mistake about that.

DELBERT

(Delbert appears.)

I'd like ta share in that understandin' too, iffen there's enough ta go 'round.

McCORD

Where the hell did you come from?

EVERETT

We been watching out fer her. Where is she?

McCORD

Too late. She's gone.

DELBERT

Were to?

McCORD

None of your business.

EVERETT

Oh, we're pre'pared to make it our business.
(They aim their rifles at McCord.)

McCORD

I don't know! I--shit.
(And he runs away.)

DELBERT

(He bends down to help Ivanhoe up.)
Son? You okay.
(He is still shaking and stuttering.)

IVANHOE

Quick—open the trunk—

EVERETT

Why, what's in the trunk--

IVANHOE

Mr. York!
(BLACKOUT)

*IVA

(Lights up on Iva, Wanda and Bessie in the York kitchen.)
Our plan was horse high, bull strong, pig tight, and goose proof. Wasn't no way nobody from the outside coulda sniffed it out.

Why'd you do it?

BESSIE

What are you talking about—

WANDA

Bessie, it don't make no sense to pretend. Not to us.

BESSIE

If I hadn't told Brian—you'd all be dead.

IVA

If you hadn't told Brian, we'd all be twenty miles from here by now.

BESSIE

No. Nobody goes more'n ten miles outside of Ivanhoe. Brian told me they got orders to shoot anybody tries to. That's why I told him.

IVA

Bessie, you told him cause you ain't got no spine.

BESSIE

What do you think happened to Elroy Rupert? You think he's just wandering around drunk somewhere? They shot Elroy Rupert three days ago. He was on his way out to check his traps.

WANDA

Elroy's dead?

BESSIE

So I done what I could, and helped you and yours. And now you gotta help my Brian.

I ain't saying the girl did it purposeful like. Maybe she had the spell set to catch Ivanhoe and with her looks, the spell just naturally spread. But it's gotta be broke. I tried, and I cain't.

IVA

There ain't no love spell.

BESSIE

You telling me she wasn't out hunting Ivanhoe?

IVA

She was hunting him, all right.

BESSIE

Well, the spell slipped and snared my Brian. That's all, it slipped.

IVA

No, she was hunting him, but not using spells. Just her looks. Which she cain't help.

BESSIE

You swear it?

IVA

I swear.

BESSIE

Cain't break a girl's looks. You sure you didn't throw down a love charm to help her?

IVA

No, I sent out just a chasing spell, to clear the way for her, to chase out demons and shadders. That's all.

BESSIE

You chased out all the shadders! Left my boy to be blinded by her, left him unprotected by the things he needs to lean on!

IVA

I had to chase out the evil to shelter her way!

BESSIE

Evil's the only truth he's got to hang on to! His father tried to beat it into him when he was a boy, but he fought him back. Then he went to Vietnam and the Old Boy was waiting for him, it was like ever'thing his father ever tried to beat into him, the war proved was right. Ever since he's come home he's been trying to put the world back into place, he's trying. Then you come along, pull the rug out from under him. Which spell did you use? Show me the charm!

(Iva makes a gesture in the air, the same as she did in act one.)

IVA

And then I said—

(She whispers a few words in Bessie's ear.)

BESSIE

(Pulls away from Iva, horrified.)

It's unbreakable. How could you a cast an unbreakable love spell--

IVA

It ain't no love spell! I didn't never mean for it to be a love spell!!!

BESSIE

What you mean and what you gets two different things. Unbreakable. Till the day he dies. Till his soul is cut in two.

(BLACKOUT)

*BRIAN GILBERT JONES

(Brian and Rebecca stand in a chamber in Fiddler's Cave. It is magnificent—filled with glorious stalactites and stalagmites. Now that they are alone, Brian's earlier bravado has vanished.)

I saved your life, Rebecca. I saved you all. You'd all be dead right now if it wasn't for me.

REBECCA

You want me to thank you for kidnapping me? If anything's happened to my father--

BRIAN GILBERT JONES

I should have had your father brought here too—I'm sorry, I wasn't thinking, I—I'll pass along the word that he's not to be transported.

REBECCA

What are you talking about?

BRIAN GILBERT JONES

Ivanhoe, Arkansas, will be the capitol of the new nation state of America—we can't have any Jews or Catholics or Negroes here, naturally, so--

REBECCA

You won't get away with this.

BRIAN GILBERT JONES

And who is going to stop us? I am Brian Lucas Jones, a captain in the new ruling militia of America. The world is about to change, Rebecca. After we take the Governor hostage on Saturday, we will reveal ourselves in thirty states, with forces strong enough to sway elections. America will never be the same. And now I have found someone to share this new world with me!

REBECCA

A world with your Order in charge of it—well, God has provided me an alternative to such a place.

(She climbs up the side of the cave before Brian can stop her, amid the beautiful stalactites (or mites, as the case may be.)
Stay where you are. My father told me stories of life when Germany was run by people like you and your Order. I will kill myself first.

BRIAN GILBERT JONES

Come down! I swear by earth, and sea, and sky, I will not touch you against your will. If not for yourself, then for your father's sake, believe me. I will be his friend, and in the new America he will need a powerful one.

REBECCA

I'd be a fool to trust you.

BRIAN GILBERT JONES

I have broken many laws, and many commandments. But my word--never.

REBECCA

A funny sense of priorities.

(He starts to climb up to her, and she climbs higher again.)

BRIAN GILBERT JONES

Please—come on back down, Rebecca—you might slip—

REBECCA

Then go back, now.

(He does.)

BRIAN GILBERT JONES

All right--stay up there. Sooner or later you'll come down.

You will come down, and you will share my life. We will be like royalty, Rebecca. The rulers of a new America. You'll see.

REBECCA

You say this to a Jew? You must be mad.

BRIAN GILBERT JONES

If I am mad...it is a madness I have prayed to God to give me.

(He goes.)

*LUCAS JONES

(Lights up on Lucas Jones in his office on Main Street. Isaac enters.)

I'm a busy man, what can I do for you?

ISAAC

(Throwing down a sheaf of important looking documents.)

Here. The deeds to my home, my car, the bank. Everything I own. Take it. Take it all,

LUCAS JONES

We can't have you on the roads, I thought that was made clear to you. Go home and wait for transport.

ISAAC

TAKE IT!

LUCAS JONES

You'll be treated fairly, the camps will be uncomfortable but humane, but you understand, don't you, that—

ISAAC

I UNDERSTAND NOTHING EXCEPT YOU HAVE MY DAUGHTER!!!

LUCAS JONES

Your daughter?

ISAAC

My daughter! My daughter! Don't torture me like this, give her back to me!

LUCAS JONES

I don't know anything about your daughter, Mr. York. Now, I am a busy man, I think you've wasted enough of my time.

(He walks past him, out of the room.)

ISAAC

She is held prisoner. In a place called Fiddler's Cave. Your son has taken her there!

(Jones stops.)

LUCAS JONES

Be careful what you say to me, Isaac York.

ISAAC

He has kidnapped her. He is sick in love with her, and--

LUCAS JONES

(Turns, and grabs Isaac and shakes him violently.)

WHO HAS TOLD YOU THESE LIES!!

ISAAC

He came to our house with a deep wound in his leg, but my Rebecca, she knew he had cut himself for an excuse to see her, with his own knife he had--

LUCAS JONES

Get away from me—out, get out—how dare you come in here, spreading your filth—if you come here again, I will have you horse whipped—don't think for an instant I won't! Wilson! McCord!!

(Wilson and McCord enter.)

THROW HIM OUT!! And find my son!

(The fiddles have augmented his screaming. They drag Isaac off. Lights down on Jones.)

*THE MYSTERIOUS STRANGER

(Lights up on The Mysterious Stranger, hurrying along with his knitting bag and his script, when something catches his eye. He gets on his hands and knees to look more carefully.)

What—can it be—I can't believe my eyes. At last. Here are the tracks. I am on the trail. For the first time in what feels like a thousand years. I have found them!!!

(He hurries along the trail.)

Delbert and Everett come from behind a building, where it's plain they were watching him. They shake hands, congratulating themselves for something. Lights down on Main Street.)

*LUCAS JONES

(Lights up on Lucas and McCord in a small cavern in Fiddler's Cave.)

How could you have let him bring the girl here—what were you thinking!

McCORD

I figured it was better to have him here than risk him running off with her.

LUCAS JONES

My God, you think it's gone that far—that he could run off and betray me like that? Only a Jewish sorceress could have turned my boy against me.

McCORD

Lucas—he hasn't turned against you—he's just got the itch for her, that's all. And she's not a sorceress, she's a physiatrist!

LUCAS JONES

Sorceress! How else do you explain what has happened to Brian? How else could so good a soldier as my son have fallen so far, except at the hand of a witch!

McCORD

Lucas—there's nothing supernatural about a boy falling for a girl as pretty as Rebecca York. You yourself were about to have her crowned Queen!

LUCAS JONES

You're on her side!

McCORD

What? No, Lucas, I only meant—

LUCAS JONES

Her power is strong, if she's bewitched a levelheaded man like you.

McCORD

She has not bewitched me.

LUCAS JONES

I hope to God she hasn't. Now, when the moment has come, if I can't trust you—

McCORD

You can, you know you can.

LUCAS JONES

She is a witch. If we let her go, she will surely enchant another. We have no choice. She must be tried, and sentenced, and locked away.

(We hear the fiddle playing.)

McCORD

But no woman has been tried as a witch in America for hundreds of years—

LUCAS JONES

Why should it matter to me how long it has been since God's laws have been upheld? Prepare the hall for the trial of the sorceress. And find out where that damned music is coming from!

(He exits.)

*ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

(At the Statue. Jenson is bound to a makeshift cross in the parking lot of the Statue. The Statue's shadow looms large and dark across the stage. The Assistant Director is trying to raise the cross and stabilize it. He is having some difficulty.)

I am not leaving you here for seven hours.

JENSON

How am I going to feel forsaken if you're here, ready to cut me down from this thing? I have to feel forsaken when I scream out "Why hast thou forsaken me."

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

I'll be back in three.

JENSON

Seven.

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

Five.

JENSON

Okay.

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

Five. Okay. I'm gone.
(He turns to go.)

JENSON

Didn't you forget something?

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

No, I'm not doing it.

JENSON

You promised.

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

(He picks up a whip.)

We were supposed to do it while you dragged the cross here, not now that you're already up on it.

JENSON

Better late than never.

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

(Whips him once, half heartedly.)

There. Consider yourself flogged.

(And he goes.)

IVANHOE

Even five hours is a long, long, time.

JENSON

Hello. Didn't see you there.

IVANHOE

(Indicating the Statue.)

I thought I'd see if I could find some peace, here.

JENSON

(The sound of hammering, and heavy machinery.)

Well, you're lucky if you can. They're still paving the track.

IVANHOE

They're dreaming. That track's never going to set in time.

JENSON

You don't know Lucas Jones and his time table.

IVANHOE

If the asphalt doesn't have time to cure properly, his time table won't mean a thing. Sure, it'll look smooth and fine. But the minute the cars get going on it, the track

will start coming up in chunks, it'll be like a mine field out there, everybody dodging the potholes and trying not to get clobbered with big pieces of flying asphalt. No way he's gonna open that race track in five days.

JENSON

He'll open it, all right. And the instant the race is over, we open. Oh, God, what was I thinking? So I directed Oklahoma in a barn in Indiana, why did I think I could do a Passion Play! The sheep look like they've got the plague, the camels never budge on cue, and the donkey I ride into Jerusalem bites me every time I get near it.

LUCAS JONES

(Strides into the parking lot.)

Jenson, you whining pussy! I stopped by the rehearsal to see if you'd fixed the script and they said you were here!

JENSON

I'm fixing it!

LUCAS JONES

Fixing what?

JENSON

My voice! Now, I'll know what it's like to be crucified!

LUCAS JONES

You've got a show to open in five days and this is how you spend your time?

JENSON

It's method acting. I want it to be real!

LUCAS JONES

It's not real, Jenson, it's a show.

JENSON

An actor has to believe it's real, Mr. Jones.

LUCAS JONES

What would be real, Jenson, would be if you had nails driven into your hands and feet. Frankly, if I had some handy, I'd be happy to demonstrate this fact to you. What would be real, would be if the man holding the whip--

(He picks up the whip the assistant director had dropped. He whips Jenson.)

JENSON

STOP! Please, in the name of God, STOP!!!!!!

LUCAS JONES

--truly had no more regard for you than if you were an animal, an insect, and he whipped you as hard as he could—

JENSON

STOP!!!!!! PLEASE--

(Ivanhoe wrestles the whip away from Jones.)

IVANHOE

That's enough, Mr. Jones.

LUCAS JONES

You again! Stop sticking your nose in my business! You are banned from the race on Saturday, don't try butting in. And you—get your ass back to that rehearsal.

(He cuts Jenson down from the cross. Jenson falls, and screams in pain as he breaks his leg.)

--and don't give me any more crap about what's real. You're in charge of a pageant. I'm in charge of what's real.

(BLACKOUT)

*BRIAN GILBERT JONES

(Lights up on the Jones' kitchen. Brian is sitting at the table, eating meatloaf with gusto. Bessie is sitting with him, her face shining with pleasure.)

This is the best you ever made, Bessie. Can I have some more?

BESSIE

You can have the whole pan. I knew you'd come back to me, Brian.

(She gets up to get him some more meatloaf.)

You're eatin'—you're smilin'--and I don't hear you screamin' at night, in your sleep anymore--you're yur own self agin.

(She serves him more meatloaf, he attacks it with relish. McCord bursts in.)

McCORD

Brian! I've been looking everywhere for you!

BRIAN GILBERT JONES

Albert, sit down, have some of Bessie's meatloaf. Best in the world.

BESSIE

Here you go, Mr. McCord, I'll set you a place--

McCORD

Thank you Bessie, I don't have time to eat—and neither do you! Brian, your father is tearing the place up looking for you.

BRIAN GILBERT JONES

I spent the morning with her. She is stubborn! But so am I! Really, this meatloaf is perfection, have some.

McCORD

Brian! We have to go!

BRIAN GILBERT JONES

You go. I'm in no hurry. Remember what it was like, McCord? When you were 16, 17? And it took you weeks to get a girl to let you even kiss her?

McCORD

What? Oh, my God, you mean you haven't even—

BRIAN GILBERT JONES

Not even a single kiss. But when she comes to me on her own—it will be worth the wait.

McCORD

I think your father is right, she has cast a spell over you.

BRIAN GILBERT JONES

Oh, so he's got you believing in all this mumbo jumbo too?

McCORD

It's no joke. He has denounced her as a witch.

BRIAN GILBERT JONES

Denounced her as a witch! Well, that's going to stand the world on its end.

McCORD

And he intends to try her as such, and when she is found guilty, have her locked away.

(Bessie, standing at the stove, puts her hand over her mouth, horrified.)

BRIAN GILBERT JONES

You're kidding.

McCORD

He is convinced that she has bewitched you.

BRIAN GILBERT JONES

This is not the dark ages, McCord, even my deranged father can't think the men will go along with such nonsense—

McCORD

Of course they will. That's what men with weak wills do, Brian. They yoke their desires to a man whose will is stronger.

BRIAN GILBERT JONES

Albert, you are my friend. You must help her escape.

McCORD

I have no intention of losing my rank in the Order over a girl. Use your head. When we have succeeded in our crusade, and you have your own territory to rule, we'll find a way to free your pretty little raven, or you can find another Jew to take her place. But until then--

BRIAN GILBERT JONES

I'd take her and run away from all this now if she gave me a single look, a word, a touch!

McCORD

Brian, women are nothing but toys, frail little jularkies we play with—they don't matter, in the end. Come on. And at the trial tomorrow night, you need to say that—

BRIAN GILBERT JONES

Tomorrow? So soon?

McCORD

Yes, justice moves rapidly when the judge has determined the sentence beforehand.
(McCord drags Brian along, lights down on them, as Bessie stands at the stove, terrified.)

*IVA

(The stage is dark. Gradually, the night sounds grow—owl and nocturnal birds, frogs, crickets, etc.)

The scale of the world has been changed—we see hillsides, coming into view, and we watch as a ghostly looking light shimmers, first in one place, then in another, on the ridges. They are gorgeous lights, with blue edges—unearthly looking. It should look as if a single light is jumping from ridge to ridge.

The light winks out.

Iva comes into focus as she lights her lantern—it has a thin cloth round contraption with a blue boarder over it—this is what gives the lights their special look. Bessie is next to her.)

Keep your eye on your watch. Not a second longer than ninety seconds this time.

FRANKLIN

(Lights up on Franklin and Isaac, perhaps perched on an alternative part of the theatre space. They also have a lantern, not lit.)

What time to do we—

ISAAC

In—

(Consults his watch.)

75 seconds. Do you think, Mr. Franklin, that this will work?

FRANKLIN

Never underestimate the power of superstition.

ISAAC

20 seconds, get ready.

BESSIE

20 seconds, get ready.

(Franklin gets out his matches.)

ISAAC/BESSIE

Five—four—three—two—

(Franklin strikes the match and lights the lantern, as, on the other ridge, Iva blows the lantern out.)

One.

IVA

(Looking at Franklin's light.)

Perfect. Come on, let's get going. Got to get to the tip of Slowback Ridge and we only got a twenty minutes to do it.

(She and Bessie take their lantern, and go off.)

FRANKLIN

How long this time?

ISAAC

A minute. Then it passes to Dortha and Lester.

FRANKLIN

It's a good plan, getting' Jones' men scared and anxious, keepin' 'em penned in.

ISAAC

Are ghost lights something to be frightened of?

FRANKLIN

Nope. But these city boy recruits of Jones' don't know that. Scared of their own shadows as they are, I imagine they--

(The sound of gun fire.)

Jesus—they're shooting at the lights. We're out of range, but--

(More gunfire.)

IVA

They're shooting. Good. Mean's it's working.

(Running into Lester and Dortha on the path.)

Lester—what are you doing—you're supposed to be on top of Peacock ridge, lighting your lantern in 5 seconds--

LESTER

Naw, it took a bullet, see? All the oil drained out.

IVA

Well, one light less won't be the end of the world, I 'spect, but--—

ISAAC

Three—two—one—

(Franklin blows out the light.

In the distance, another light comes right on time.)

IVA

Wait— who's on Peakcock ridge?—

LESTER

Nobody.

DORTHA

Well, somebody else musta went up, that's all.

LESTER

Ain 't nobody else could be up there.

IVA

(They all look at the light, beautiful and blue edged, floating there.)
Iva and Bessie look at each other.)

It's the Hornet.

BESSIE

The Hornet is back.

(BLACKOUT)

*BILLY

(Lights up on Wilson, Billy, and McCord in a small cavern in
Fiddler's cave. They are setting up for the trial.)

Did you see the ghosts lights tonight?

WILSON

No such things as ghost lights. Natural phenomenon. Swamp gas.

BILLY

They're the souls of dead Kickapoos, and you know it. Rumors is they're against us, they're gonna rise and put us down.

McCORD

Where'd you hear that?

BILLY

In town.

McCORD

Who from?

BILLY

I...I don't know. Somebody.

McCORD

I don't want to catch you talking to those hillfolk again, Billy.

WILSON

I don't know, Albert. Every good Christian believes in witches. If you give up on witches, you might as well throw away your bible.

McCORD

You believe in ghosts lights, Billy. Do you believe in witchcraft too?

BILLY

I—I—

WILSON

It's all right, Billy, you can say.

BILLY

Well, I—I guess—I guess most folks do. But actually branding one, at a trial? You'd need some powerful proof for that.

McCORD

That's where you come in.

BILLY

Me? But--

McCORD

The proof. It needs to be—manufactured.

BILLY

You mean—I don't know, Mr. McCord--

McCORD

You'll be made a lieutenant in the Order. With a salary double your current one.

BILLY

But she seems so nice--

McCORD

She's gonna be locked away no matter what, Billy. And after, you can be a private, like you are now, or a lieutenant. Won't your father be proud of you then?

BILLY

But won't the branding hurt her? The mark of the witch on her forehead—I hate to think of that--couldn't we just—banish her? Make her go away, and tell her she can't come back?

McCORD

Billy. What does a farmer do, he finds blight in his corn? Say he just finds one ear with it--does he banish it, does he send it where it can infect other farmers, and go merrily on?

BILLY

No.

McCORD

What does he do?

BILLY

(Softly)
He burns it all.

McCORD

He does what?

BILLY

He has to burn his whole crop so it won't infect his neighbor's. Even if he only finds one plant with the blight, he's got to burn the whole field. To the ground.
(Lights fade.)

*DELBERT

(Lights up on Delbert and Everett in the moonlight, using pigs legs to leave tracks leading up to a strange trap.)
Way-all. Come down to it, it's a lot more fright making than I 'spected.

EVERETT

You scart?

DELBERT

To my bones. You got the charms Iva made you?

EVERETT

Can't complain, we got the best protection there is. And still...

EVERETT

Never thought the day'd come we'd have to take him on direct like this.

DELBERT

The others got to bring down Lucas Jones. Of the Old Boy and Jones, who'd you rather tangle with?

EVERETT

Good pint. We got the easier job, it's true.

(A noise. Del and Everett sink back into the shadows.)

The Mysterious Stranger appears in the clearing, almost jumping for joy as he follows the trail.)

THE MYSTERIOUS STRANGER

Two—three of them—a family—a whole pack of them--they must have a nest right—
(Delbert and Everett spring the trap, a net, enclosed in a series of wires, with magical charms hanging all over it—and 7 or 8 of the pig legs with the doctored hooves.)

The Mysterious Stranger looks at them, stunned.)
You've got to be kidding me.

DELBERT AND EVERETT

(He and Delbert hold up a pouch and begin to recite together.)

Bide where you be
Where longing abides
In—

THE MYSTERIOUS STRANGER

Wait a minute, gentlemen. Do you know who I am?
(Delbert and Everett nod.)

DELBERT

We know.

THE MYSTERIOUS STRANGER

Then you know what happens to people who try this.

EVERETTE

Yep. But you can catch the devil himself--as long as you catch him in his own trap.

DELBERT

A trap of his own devisin'

THE MYSTERIOUS STRANGER

Enlighten me. How does this—
(He looks around him with disdain.)
--qualify ?

EVERETT

De-sire.

THE MYSTERIOUS STRANGER

What?

EVERETT

Trapped you with your own de-sire.
(Everett indicates the pig legs.)

THE MYSTERIOUS STRANGER

My mule footed hogs—my darlings, my precious--what have you done with them!

DELBERT

We ain't done nothin' to them, they's regular hogs we doctored the hooves to leave the tracks, and had some of our local conjure women cast a spell on 'em so you wouldn't sniff out the difference.

THE MYSTERIOUS STRANGER

(Ned inspects the hoof, and throws it down with disgust.)

Gentlemen, if the pigs aren't genuine, then the trap isn't either.

(He starts to get out of the trap.)

DELBERT

The pigs is fake.

EVERETT

But the de-sire for 'em is real.

THE MYSTERIOUS STRANGER

(He can't get out of the trap.)

Ah. Very clever. Very clever indeed.

(Lights fade. BLACKOUT)

(The Order members assembled for the trial are singing a psalm—their male voices echo through the caverns. The sound grows louder and louder.)

Lights up on the Tribunal Cavern, a wondrous cathedral of nature, stalactites and stalagmites, dancing in the shadows from the blaze of the torches. Lucas Jones is sitting in an elevated seat, wearing flowing white robes, holding the mystic staff. At his feet, a table with two scribes. All the assembled—all men--are wearing their ceremonial robes. The singing concludes.

Brian Gilbert Jones enters the cavern.)

*ORDER MEMBER AT TRIAL ONE

Look how pale he is!

ORDER MEMBER AT TRIAL TWO

They say he hasn't eaten since the first moment he saw her.

ORDER MEMBER AT TRIAL THREE

That's the first sign of bewitchment.

ORDER MEMBER AT TRIAL TWO

I can't believe my ears. Grown men, talking about witches. There's no such thing!

(Rebecca is lead into the cavern, to her place inside a boxed area.)

Oh my Lord.

ORDER MEMBER AT TRIAL ONE

No wonder he lost his head.

ORDER MEMBER AT TRIAL TWO

I'd fall under her spell, you give me half a chance.

ORDER MEMBER AT TRIAL ONE

You and every man here under the age of 100.

WILSON

Ooo-yez, oo-yez. The Grand Master will now address the Order.

(There is loud cheering and applause.)

LUCAS JONES

(Lucas uses his staff to thump three times to silence the crowd.)

What would you give to see America returned to the ideas and values that made America great? To see a white America, as our forefathers intended?

Would you give—your worldly goods? Your freedom? Your very life?

I am perfectly willing to burn that the bonfire of my bones may light the way for future generations. Of course, they say I am insane.

(Standing up to full height, he screams.)

Maybe I am insane, and will continue to be insane—insane enough to believe in the Bible and America First.

(The assembled cheer.)

I stand before you on the eve of our great moment. In three days our plan to purge America of corrupting influences will flower. We will purify our country, peacefully, if possible, but if not—we will lay down our lives for our dream of America. We will fight to the death any who oppose us and our God. And the unclean chaff that is strewn in our way—the Jew, the Negro, the immigrant--we will remove and cast out of the building of the Lord that is this country!

But before we enter into sacred combat, we must purge and purify ourselves.

Rebecca York, a Jew and a sorceress, has used dark and evil spells to bind my son to her with an unbreakable bond. For those of you who think there are no such things as witches and spells, think—why else would Brian Gilbert Jones have betrayed the Order at the moment of its greatest need, consorting with a Jew, a crime for which the punishment is excommunication? We must break the spell and purge ourselves of this witch. She must be marked, so that no other man may be bewitched by her, and locked away for a year to allow the fires she has lit in the hearts of the innocent to burn out.

McCORD

Brian Gilbert Jones, what do you say to these accusations?
(Brian says nothing.)

LUCAS JONES

Brian, did you hear the question? Brian, I command you to answer me!

BRIAN GILBERT JONES

If my honor is impeached, I will defend it. But reply to this nonsense—no.

McCORD

Brian Gilbert Jones is in the control of devils, and does not know what he says.

LUCAS JONES

Bring forth the evidence.

McCORD

Mr. Hank Yocum will give his testimony.

YOCUM

(Yocum is a very backwoods man.)
She poisoned our spring.

McCORD

And how did she do this?

YOCUM

With her flowers. Her monthly, you call it.

REBECCA

I can't believe this.

YOCUM

Only takes a drop of Jew blood ta do it. And iffen it's flowers—well, that's the worst blood they is, be twenty, twenty-five year before the spring'll run clear a'gin.

REBECCA

How can this be happening?

McCORD

You personally saw her do this.

YOCUM

(Hesitates. Then shrugs.)

Well, I saw her drink at the spring. Sure. Yep.

McCORD

Thank you, Mr. Yocum. The Tribunal calls Billy Clemens to the stand.

BILLY

I saw her bewitch Brian—in yellow silk—in the moonlight—

BRIAN GILBERT JONES

Billy, no—

BILLY

Oh, I was so frightened, I could tell she was a water woman or worse, 'cause the instant Brian looked at her he was lost. She tried to witch me too, but I had this charm with me—

(He shows the assembled a pouch with markings on it)

--that my granny give me, and that saved me from all harm. Which was a good thing, cause when she saw she couldn't put a spell on me too, she took the form of a milk-white swan, and flew away.

McCORD

Thank you. This is the evidence we have been able to gather, in such a short space of time.

LUCAS JONES

What have you to say against the sentence of condemnation, which I am about to pronounce?

REBECCA

I'm going to be locked away and branded a witch because you believe I turned into a milk white swan and flew away?

(She laughs, out of control for a moment.)

Who would have believed it could happen in America? The thing is so absurd. A swan! Of course, millions of Jews have died for less.

(She stops laughing, begins to sob.)

Brian, say something, please! If you're a man, say something.

(Pause. All eyes turn to Brian Gilbert. He is silent.)

Tell them none of this is true, tell them you kidnapped me against my will, tell them you're in love with me—tell them!!!!

LUCAS JONES

Answer her, son, if the demon that you're wrestling will allow it.

BRIAN GILBERT JONES

I won't stand for this nonsense another instant.

(He goes over to Rebecca before anyone can stop him, grabs her, and tries to make her go with him.)

Come on.

REBECCA

No, declare my innocence—

BRIAN GILBERT JONES

Reason with these lunatics? What for?

REBECCA

We'll never make it out the door—but if you'll stand up for me, tell them what happened—

BRIAN GILBERT JONES

Reveal my heart to this convocation of scum? Come on--

LUCAS JONES

Seize him!!!!

McCord

Idiot!

(Billy and McCord tackle Brian, throwing him to the floor.)

BRIAN GILBERT JONES

Go ahead. Lock her away! I'll free her! No matter what you do, I'll find a way!

LUCAS JONES

Poor boy! The victim of her dark arts is too deeply bewitched for a mere branding and imprisonment to cure. We must resort to the time honored way our predecessors cleansed themselves of such sorcery. Only the fire can cleanse us. Only the fire can make us pure. The witch will be taken out of the land by fire.

(The crowd gasps.)

REBECCA

What?

BRIAN GILBERT JONES

Rebecca—

(He tries to crawl to her, Billy keeps him back. McCord goes to Lucas Jones' side. The crowd has gone wild.)

WILSON

(Wilson tries to quiet the rabble.)

Silence! Silence!

McCORD

(Aside to Jones)

We can't burn someone at the stake—even if they are a witch, the law--

LUCAS JONES

The laws of America are flabby and weak. It is God's law that matters. What is the point of our uprising—if not this?

McCORD

Yes, but after we have secured the nation—not now, when we are vulnerable, what if word reaches Little Rock—

LUCAS JONES

Will you try to deny me, the Grand Master of the Order? I will judge and condemn. Bring the witch before me.

(Rebecca is dragged in front of him.)

Rebecca, you have one last chance before I pass sentence. Confess your witchcraft. Accept our faith and our God. I will take it upon myself to turn you from your evil faith.

REBECCA

Convert? After my parents walked through hell on earth to live, to survive, to come to this country? I couldn't live with myself, if I became unworthy of them.

LUCAS JONES

Then your fate is consigned to the flames.

BRIAN GILBERT JONES

(Struggling to speak)

Rebecca--demand a champion.

REBECCA

What—

BRIAN GILBERT JONES

Demand a champion! Say it, now!

REBECCA

(To Lucas Jones)

What would it mean, if I said I demand a champion?

LUCAS JONES

Your innocence or guilt would be decided by trial by combat. It is one of the Knights Templar's oldest traditions, and we are the direct descendents of those brave men.

REBECCA

And will you honor this tradition, even for a Jew?

LUCAS JONES

It is our law. But who, Rebecca, do you think will champion a sorceress?

REBECCA

I am not a sorceress!

LUCAS JONES

You will be tried by the arm of man and the will of God. It will not save you, but--so be it then.

ALL ASSEMBLED ORDER MEMBERS

Amen.

LUCAS JONES

And who will be the champion of the Order?

McCord

Our best warrior has been and continues to be—Brian Gilbert Jones.

BRIAN GILBERT JONES

NO—Albert, what are you doing--

WILSON

Brian Gilbert Jones—Captain in our Holy Order. It is our charge that you do battle manfully, in the name of the Order, that the good cause shall triumph.

BRIAN GILBERT JONES

No, you lunatics, I am going to be *her* champion—

McCord

To late. It is decided.

BRIAN GILBERT JONES

I'm going to fight for her and you can't stop me.

McCord

You have been chosen. If you step inside the arena, each blow you strike will be against her, no matter what you say.

BRIAN GILBERT JONES

(He lunges at McCord.)

Judas! Betrayer! And to think I ever trusted you!

WILSON

Rebecca York—you are charged to find a champion to defend your life on the field of combat. The combat will occur in two days, on Saturday, before the sun sets.

REBECCA

How am I supposed to find a champion in two days?

LUCAS JONES

Write a letter, we will send it to your father by messenger.

REBECCA

You have to give me more time—

LUCAS JONES

If God is on your side, you have nothing to fear. He will send you a champion in time.

WILSON

Oyez, oyez. In two day's time, Rebecca York's innocence will be determined by trial by combat, in the name of Heaven. The will of God will be done.

ASSEMBLED

The will of God will be done. Amen!

(BLACKOUT)

ACT THREE

*ISAAC

(Lights up on Main Street. Fiddles play us down the street and into the bank. Billy, Isaac, Rowena and Iva are in the front lobby. Billy hands Isaac Rebecca's letter.)

My Rebecca—accused of being a witch? How is that possible? We are back in the dark forests of Europe. Where the fires always find us.

(He sighs a deep groan.)

Child of my sorrow, I thought we were safe here. I thought I had found a place that was safe. Finish reading. I cannot.

(He hands the note to Rowena.)

ROWENA

(Reading)

What ever happens to me, leave here and go to England as soon as you can. If the Order is successful in its crusade you will have very little time to escape.

ISAAC

America. My America.

(He puts his head in his hands.)

IVA

As long as she's still alive, Mr. York, there's hope, and as long as there's hope--

BILLY

Her only hope's finding a champion.

IVA

(To Billy)

You find Ivanhoe. Tell him what's happened.

BILLY

I'll find him, but what good will it do?

ISAAC

The boy is right. Ivanhoe cannot fight, and who else will do battle for her?

IVA

Find him. Tell him. What will be will be.

ROWENA

If we could just get to Little Rock--but with the roads barricaded, the paths guarded--

BILLY

There is one road I don't reckon they've got guards on.

IVA

Where?

BILLY

You know the old McCormick place? The ridge that circles round the holler--

IVA

That road's been washed out for years, ends in a 200 foot drop into Jim River.

BILLY

Yeah, it use'ta. But just a few days ago--well, it's hard to figure how this kind of thing could happen, but it's washed back up.

ROWENA

The road. Has washed back up. You're telling me the--

ISAAC

Why should we trust you, you are one of them. Maybe there is a trap there--

BILLY

You can trust me. I feel bad about what I said at the trial. I didn't want to, but they said--they said she'd be branded anyway, and--

ISAAC

What did you say?

BILLY

I said—I said I saw her turn into a swan, and fly away. The first time I saw her I really did think she was a water woman or a she-panther, else how could she be so pretty? Never saw any girl as pretty as that. But now I'm thinking, I was wrong to talk the way I did. I mean, she was as pretty as a swan, it's true. But that don't make her one.

ISAAC

(Desperate whisper, he almost crumples to the ground.)

And now, she will burn. Because a child is blinded by her beauty.

IVA

Billy, spread the word around—ten thousand dollars to the man who agrees to be her champion.

BILLY

I will, but I don't suspect you'll get any takers. It's to the death.

IVA

What?

BILLY

The only way to prove who's in the right and who's in the wrong is by a trial of combat to the death. The man that lives—is the one who God has chosen.

ROWENA

So if Ivanhoe challenges Brian—even if he can't raise a hand to defend himself, he dies, no matter what?

(Billy nods.)

ISAAC

Madness piled atop madness.

ROWENA

No. I'll go for help. I'll try this washed back road of yours.

ISAAC

Why? You will have to walk out, at least twenty miles and then get someone to pick you up on the road—you will be days too late to save her—

ROWENA

If I could just sneak a car out of town—but there's no way to get one past the barricades—

ISAAC

Wait. This road near the McCormick place is not far from your father's farm is it not?

ROWENA

Yes, about a mile, but--

ISAAC

We may have a chance to save her after all.
(BLACKOUT)

*REBECCA

(Lights up on Rebecca, in the cavern, weeping in the candlelight, listening to the fiddle music. Brian enters.)

Get out of here, I have nothing to say to you!

BRIAN GILBERT JONES

Rebecca, please—

REBECCA

The sight of you makes me sick. The sound of your voice makes my skin crawl. GET OUT.

BRIAN GILBERT JONES

Can we call a truce, Rebecca? If I am to make this right—I will need to all my strength.

REBECCA

You had your chance, at the trial, but you didn't say a word!

BRIAN GILBERT JONES

It's McCord's fault. If it hadn't been for his damned interference I would have disguised myself and fought as your champion. Then you would have been found innocent.

REBECCA

How dare you boast to me about what you *would* have done. You have agreed to be their champion. Your choice is made.

BRIAN GILBERT JONES

No, Rebecca, the choice is yours to make. If you want to live, you must choose me, for there is no hope of any other help—this area is secured for 50 miles in every direction. Outside help is as unreachable as the moon. If you do not choose me, you will die.

REBECCA

STOP IT! STOP TAKING TO ME!

BRIAN GILBERT JONES

I have to make you see! Think, Rebecca. Even if I were the Devil himself, death is worse, and it is death who is my rival.

Measure my love by what I would sacrifice for you. Because if I choose you, I sacrifice mighty ambition, I destroy schemes built as high as the mountains—

(He throws himself at her feet.)

I will give it all up, all of it, if you will say that you love me. If you will let me love you.

REBECCA

If you mean that—if you really love me—go to Little Rock to the federal authorities--

BRIAN GILBERT JONES

I have the escape route all planned. We will go to the western states, where members of the Order are already tired of my father and these other stupid bigots. There are thousands who will follow me. And with you by my side we will over throw him--

REBECCA

That's just a dream, an empty vision of the night.

BRIAN GILBERT JONES

You are wrong. I have friends—

REBECCA

Friends who would turn me in without a second thought. But if you go to the authorities--

BRIAN GILBERT JONES

Betray the Order to the government, now, at the moment of success--turn traitor and throw it all away? Place the Order at the feet of the government, that nest of pride, that polluter of our nation? I may forsake the Order, but I will never betray it.

Please. Take my hand—trust my heart—

REBECCA

Trust you—when you won't do the one thing that could save me?

BRIAN GILBERT JONES

(A painful whisper.)

I have seen a woman burned alive before.

REBECCA

I am a doctor. I don't need you to tell me how horrible it is.

BRIAN GILBERT JONES

I could have turned away. I should have shot her, and released her from her pain. I did neither.

(Rebecca backs away from him.)

My orders said we had to make an example, for her village. So I gave the order. They tied her to the stake. I lit the match. I felt its sting.

And after that--I couldn't feel a thing. Not pain, not pleasure, not the taste of anything, no matter how bitter or sweet. Everything in life was ashes. And then I saw you in the woods, in the moon light, in your yellow silk—you looked like an angel. And something inside me split open. And the colors of the world started flooding back.

(Silence)

I am your fate, Rebecca. Accept it, and live.

(He turns to go.)

REBECCA

There is no such thing as fate, Brian. There are only the things we want and the choices we make. And the people who end up paying for them.

(He turns and leaves the cavern. When he gets outside, he falls to the floor.)

BRIAN GILBERT JONES

What is wrong with me? How many men long for a woman worth dying for? And she is worth dying for. So why do I hang on to these other things? Glory. Honor. Power. They mean nothing to me, compared to her. All I have to do is go to Little Rock, say three words to the FBI, and in a few hours they'll be here.

(He stands up. Takes a step. Stops.)

And throw all we have worked for away...without a second thought...Maybe the old idiot is right. Maybe there is a spell on me.

(Takes another step.)

If God...if God would just send her a champion—

(He shakes his head, and moves on quickly as guards walk by.)

BLACKOUT)

*ROWENA

(The sounds of the woods in the night—owls and nocturnal birds and frogs and insects—but with a slightly scary tone to it. Lights up on Isaac, Iva and Rowena, making their way through the woods. No moonlight.)

You sure you can remember where it is? What if somebody moved it.

ISAAC

If it's here, and it is God's will, we shall find it.

(They come around a corner, and there is Isaac's Chrysler.)

See?

ROWENA

Like magic. You sure you don't dabble?

ISAAC

No. I leave that to Iva and her friends.

ROWENA

Sure wish we'd remembered to bring a flashlight.

(She pops the hood, and pulls a new fan belt out of her pocket.)

She starts tinkering. It seems to get lighter.)

That's funny. Seems like it's getting lighter. I guess my eyes have finally adjusted.

(It gets lighter still. Rowena is busy fixing the car, and no one notices that a ghost light has floated closer. The light is a beautiful white light with blue fringes.)

Just, hold that there, I've got—nope, I've—

ISAAC

How do you know so much about cars?

ROWENA

My father owns—well, owned a race track, remember? There wasn't much to play with in our house that wasn't part automobile. Hold that there, I'll get this--I think we did it.

(She puts the hood down.)

Now, let's see if she'll turn...

(She sees the ghost light.)

...over.

(They all stand, as the light gets closer.)

Ghost light. Wow.

ISAAC

So. This is what it looks like, in person.

IVA

This one's the Hornet.

ISAAC

You are on a first name basis?

IVA

Same one that helped us out the other night on Peacock Ridge. You kin tell by the edges.

ISAAC

What do we do?

IVA

Nothing. It won't hurt us.

ISAAC

How do you know?

ROWENA

It helped us fix the car, didn't it?

IVA

Ghost lights is the souls of Indian braves, disturbed when they's burial grounds is dug up. They wander the earth, looking for rest. During the civil war, they's stories of how this one stayed all night with wounded soldiers. Ghost lights is known to take sides in a battle. And this one's on ours.

(The Hornet moves along the passenger side of the car. The sounds of the early summer night—crickets, frogs, birds—are now not at all spooky.)

ISAAC

It is all so beautiful, here. But I have believed in the beauty of this place, I have been fooled by it, and now my daughter pays the price.

IVA

Mister York, you cain't think like that, Ivanhoe Arkansas is filled with fine people, good people, it's jes Lucas Jones who's doing this.

ROWENA

That's not so, Iva. The way the boys always sabotaged Mr. York's and the other Jew's cars--Ivanhoe, Arkansas didn't need anybody bringing evil to it. Now it's just got its brights on.

(Rowena gets into the car, and so does the ghost light. It gets into the passenger seat. Rowena is a little spooked by this.)

Iva? What's it doing it the car with me?

IVA

The Hornet's always had a reputation for bein' smart. This way, you kin see to drive, without turning your lights on. You run into any of Jones' men, all they'll see is the Hornet and they'll run. You'll be able to glide right under their noses, safe and sound.

ISAAC

Godspeed you, my child.

(Rowena puts the car in gear and drives away.)

This is a normal occurrence for these ghost lights of yours, to just hop in a car?

IVA

Normal, Mr. York? No, sir. But in the natural world, evil has an effect on things—the order is disturbed, crops wither, water and milk go bad, all the parts stop working the way they oughta. So when it can, the natural world helps out. Roads don't wash back up ever' day, you know. When it has to, the world does what it can to set things right.

(BLACKOUT)

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

(The set for the Passion Play is a miniature, minimal Jerusalem—the Temple, Pilate’s Palace, and Herod’s Palace a tiny Holy Land Main Street. It may be the set for Ivanhoe’s Main Street, with alterations.)

The track is still being worked on, and we see a few men raking chat next to the blacktop on the part of the track that circles around the stage.

The cast is in full costume—those playing Jews are in red, wearing stylized hats that do indeed have horns. To the straggling cast members.)

This way, this way, everybody follow me--come on, come on. This is our last rehearsal--

(As Lester and Dortha and Wanda, in costume, pass him.)

Wait a minute—I’ve never even seen you at rehearsal before—who cast you—wait—wait—where is the other Virgin Mary—I’ve never seen you either—

(They push on to the stage. Runs down the steps and off stage.)

Marty. MARTY!!!

LUCAS JONES

(Jones and McCord enter.)

What do you mean, the perimeter is not secure?

McCord

The men won’t patrol at night anymore. They’ll stay inside the fences, but they won’t go out.

LUCAS JONES

And all because of some damn lights?

McCord

The locals say they’re spirits of the Indian dead, and that they’re out to get us.

LUCAS JONES

I cannot believe my ears. Grown men—acting like little babies—over some lights way off in the distance?

McCORD

You're the one that's got them believing in witches—

LUCAS JONES

You're going to be sorry you said that—

McCORD

Lucas—Lucas—I only meant--

(He hurries after him.)

JENSON

(Comes on, not wearing his Christ costume, with a cast on his leg, on crutches, the Assistant Director with him.)

Look, I don't know why half the cast dropped out at the last minute, I'm just thankful these hill people have stepped in to help! It lends an authentic air—some of them are actual shepherds!

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

Yes, sure, after all, they're practically living in Biblical times. I had to show Pontius Pilate how to use a flush toilet!

JENSON

Stop worrying, it's all going to be fine! This is the theatre! We always pull it together.

(Jenson goes off.)

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

Pull it together! To pull something together you have to have pieces to pull! We don't even have pieces! We have debris!

(Jurden and Bert enter in costumes, carrying their long shotguns.)

You cannot carry your guns with you!

BERT

Sure we can.

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

No you can't.

JURDEN

You wanna take 'em away from us?

(They all train their guns on the Assistant Director, who nervously shakes his head. Jurden and Bert go onstage, hiding their guns beneath their robes.)

JENSON

(In agony as he climbs the stairs to the stage. Wincing, he picks up the megaphone.)

Cast—welcome. As you can see, my leg has not healed from my unfortunate accident on the cross, and so we are very lucky that someone has volunteered to step into such a large and demanding role.

(Davey Harris, dressed as Jesus Christ, enters.)

DAVEY HARRIS

My mother said I was too young to play the Lord, but I said, how would I know if I didn't try.

JENSON

Thank you, thank you Davey, for agreeing to undertake this important part. Listen up, everyone. Here's the sequence.

(He points out a pile of sticks—the pyre, in Trophy Lane.)

During our set change between Act I and Act 2, there will be a Tableau, a famous scene from the Bible, as is the tradition. The Tableau will be—

(Consulting his clipboard.)

The Jewish Sorceress is put to the fire for the death of a young Christian boy, whose blood she used in her Cabalistic rituals. Well. Not a scene from the Bible I remember, but I've never actually read the whole thing, who has? Okay.

(Back to his cast.)

Today we're going to work in the new messiah, but first while we've got everybody on stage, let's do a publicity shot of the scene where the crowd calls out for the annihilation of the Jews.

(The cast rapidly goes to their places, Jews on one side, everybody else on the other. The Non Jews shake their fists, and the Jews cower.)

JURDEN and LESTER and DORTHA
and BERT

Strike down the Jews
Destroy this evil band
Who against thee now rise up
And to murd'rous league, in scorn
Almighty, let they thunder rumble,

Let thy righteous anger burn!
That they may feel revenge's terror
Strike them down into the dust.

(A photographer's flash flashes as they raise their fists in the air..)

BLACKOUT)

*EVERETT

(Lights up on Delbert and Everett and The Mysterious Stranger
in their trap. Delbert and Everett are playing a little on their
fiddles to pass the time.)

So, are ya sure these mule footed pigs really exist?

THE MYSTERIOUS STRANGER

Oh, there's no question. A breeder in Nebraska tried to use them as a tax scam, said it
was a not for profit venture because it would be an ecumenical event for Jews to eat
pork. The sheer originality of the fraud impressed me.

(They stop playing.)

Oh, please keep playing—I'm partial to fiddle music.

DELBERT

Yep. It's a well known fact. The fiddle's the Old Boy's instrument.

THE MYSTERIOUS STRANGER

You're very good.

DELBERT

Thank you kindly.

THE MYSTERIOUS STRANGER

But he's better.

DELBERT

Yep. Everett's the best thar is.

THE MYSTERIOUS STRANGER

A musician's soul is his music, is it not? And in Everett's case, that music is played
with a very special hand. May I see it?

(Everett and Delbert go pale. The Mysterious
Stranger looks at the scar on Everett's hand.)

Hmm. Tendons were sliced, weren't they?

EVERETT

Clean through.

THE MYSTERIOUS STRANGER

But they're healed—completely--and you play better than any fiddler I ever heard. Interesting, indeed. Anybody who cuts their tendons like this never picks up a fork ever again, much less a fiddle. Who worked the cure on it?

EVERETT

Rebecca York. She's a power doctor, had the gift when she was a child.

THE MYSTERIOUS STRANGER

If you can tell me how she did this—

EVERETT

Well—

DELBERT

Don't tell him, it's a trap.

EVERETT

A'course it's a trap, it's alwas a trap, you deal with the Old Boy.

DELBERT

He's the one's got to give somethin' to us, not the other way 'rout.

EVERETT

And soon. Tomarra's the day. No more time to jes sit around jawin'. So, if ya want outta this trap, you'd best offer us up something.

THE MYSTERIOUS STRANGER

Tell me what potion she used to cure your hand, and maybe I can help you.

DELBERT

What would help us if you'd jes save her yourself. We'd let you go, iff in you'd just promise to do that.

THE MYSTERIOUS STRANGER

Gentlemen, gentlemen. What do you expect me do to? Strap on a 6 shooter and save the damsel in distress? Is that really in my line of work?

DELBERT

Way-all then, strike down Lucas Jones for us.

THE MYSTERIOUS STRANGER

That is exactly what I intend to do. If you would let me go, I could contact my division, and ask them to arrive sooner and--

EVERETT

Wait--you got your demon's coming?

THE MYSTERIOUS STRANGER

I have arranged an impressive punishment for Mr. Lucas Jones, somewhere to the—south, shall we say, of here? But for that I require my minion.

EVERETT

Iffin he won't rescue her, and he won't strike the Joneses down, why'd we go to all the effort of trapping him?

THE MYSTERIOUS STRANGER

All right, don't tell me how she healed you. I'll find my way out of here sooner or later and ask her myself.

DELBERT

You cain't talk to her, iffen they burn her.

THE MYSTERIOUS STRANGER

What?

DELBERT

Don't pretend you don't know all about it.

THE MYSTERIOUS STRANGER

I've been so obsessed with finding my hogs—I thought he was just going to lock her up--

EVERETT

He's fixin' to burn her at the stake for a witch.

THE MYSTERIOUS STRANGER

But that's—oh my God--

DELBERT

Don't be blaspheming!

THE MYSTERIOUS STRANGER

All right. I'll help you. But there's a cost.

DELBERT

We know there's a cost, dabnabit, there's alwas a cost. But we're prepared to pay.

THE MYSTERIOUS STRANGER

Not you. Him.

(He points at Everett.)

Just him. A cost he'll have to pay the rest of his life. You still prepared to pay it?

EVERETT

I'll pay it. You help us save her, and I'll pay. Every day.

(BLACKOUT on the trap in the woods.)

*ISAAC

(Inside the bank. It is dawn. Isaac stands, looking out the window for the help that he knows will not come.)

I never thought I would live to see the sun rise on such a day. Such a day.

*IVANOE

(Lights up on the barn where the hill folk meet. Lester and Bert are helping Davey Harris, who is still wearing his Jesus costume, pack something into the engine compartment of his racing car. Ivanhoe enters.)

What are you doing? That's dynamite—

DAVEY HARRIS

We've got my Plymouth loaded with thirty pounds of TNT.

BERT

Rigged to go on impact.

IVANHOE

What? You're crazy, what if someone crashes into you--

DAVEY HARRIS

Your father is going to get Jones to let him announce the race, and he's going to keep the other cars away from me. The plan is I get out in front, and on the 10th lap, your father will tell the pace car to keep the rest of the field back. That's when I run it into the wall on turn three—jumping out, first, of course.

IVANHOE

Of course.

LESTER

The explosion will give us cover, and then me and Iva and the others who've taken the place of the actors in the play will rescue Rebecca and the Governor.

IVANHOE

There's no way this will work. You're gonna get yourself killed—you're crazy--

DAVEY HARRIS

(Shrugs, smiles.)

You ever met a race driver who wasn't? To hear my mother talk, a race car loaded with TNT isn't that much more dangerous than one without.

IVANHOE

I can't let you do it. It's my fight, not yours. I'm going to be her champion.

DAVEY HARRIS

How? You can't even hold a knife, which, in a knife fight, will be a definite disadvantage.

IVANHOE

But what if your plan doesn't work--

DAVEY HARRIS

Look, mister—you climbed into that burning car to save me. Was that crazy?

IVANHOE

No, it was---

DAVEY HARRIS

It was the right thing to do.

IVANHOE

What did your mother say when you told her you were going to do this?

DAVEY HARRIS

I—I didn't tell her.

IVANHOE

Of course you didn't. You're just a boy—you're too young to do this!

DAVEY HARRIS

Don't you think I know that? I'm way too young to do this, I don't need my mother to tell me that. But that don't mean I don't have to try.

IVANHOE

No, it's too dangerous. Lester, Bert—tell him he can't do it!

LESTER

We ain't the time for this. Any reason why you both cain't die fighting to save her?

DAVEY HARRIS

He can't fight! The whole town knows that if he even touches a knife, he practically passes out with despair!

LESTER

Lookie here, that despair he's carryin' he come by fair and honest, and mayall it'll lift up off him so he can fight the good fight an' save that girl. And mayall it won't, and he'll die. But it's his despair, and iffen he's gonna fight he's gotta take it with him.

BERT

True, true. Mayall it'll lift up. Mayall it won't. Up ta the fates, alwas is.

(Davey gets into his car, and starts up the engine, which roars to life. Lights down on the barn.)

IVA/BESSIE/WANDA

(Wanda, Iva, and Bessie are in a glade in the woods, standing in a circle, as the first shafts of morning sun pin spot them.)

He who wields the knife that splits the wind
 He who cuts the stars loose from the sky
 He who breaks the darkness and calls up the day
 For a debt unpaid
 Payment's made

(They each put a gold coin in the center of the circle.)

Call down the dust
 Call down the storm
 Call down the whirlwind
 Into the light

(The morning sun bursts full upon them, whitening the scene out.)

*ROWENA

(The sun has come up full. Isaac stands, waiting. Rowena opens the door to the Bank.)

Mr. York?

(She comes in, Isaac embraces her.)

ISAAC

My child, thank god you are safe, did you bring help?

ROWENA

Yes, sir. The whirlwind is here.

(Four men, in brown coveralls carrying lots of equipment enter the bank.)

They're gonna pretend to be the sandblasters from the Carthage Company you ordered. But they're really the FBI.

ISAAC

Bless you, bless you my child, you have saved her.

(Two of the men are already setting up sandblasting equipment to work on the swastika. Harold comes into the bank.)

HAROLD RUBENSTEIN

I'm Harold Rubenstein, Mr. York. Special Agent. We'll establish a command center here, pretending to work on the swastika—the bulk of my men will be here by sunset—

ISAAC

Sunset? That is too late. They will put my Rebecca to the flames in the middle the play--

HAROLD RUBENSTEIN

We were lucky to sneak these few men in without alerting them—

ISAAC

Sunset is too late. If no one comes to champion her, she will be burned at the stake.

HAROLD RUBENSTEIN

All right. It's suicide. But all right. Let's go.

(Lights fade on the bank as they walk down Main Street, passing the Barber Shop as they do.)

*BARBER

(Lights up on the Barber Shop. The Barber is giving the Real Estate Agent another shave. The Real Estate Agent's King Herod costume is carefully draped over the other chair.)

So. Tonight's the big night.

REAL ESTATE AGENT

Big is an understatement. Governor's gonna be there—drop the flag to open the race--and then the Passion Play--it's a shame you didn't want to take part. I think it would have changed your view of Lucas Jones, being a part of such an important play.

BARBER

Really?

REAL ESTATE AGENT

Really. I know we've had some harsh words—but I wish you could be a part of it. Playing King Herod has really changed my life.

BARBER

But isn't Herod a Jew?

REAL ESTATE AGENT

Yes, yes, but someone's got to play him

BARBER

I'm glad you feel that way.

(He takes the cloth covering the Real Estate and uses it to tie the Real Estate Agent to the barber chair.)

REAL ESTATE AGENT

Ed? What are you doing? ED!!!

(The Barber gags him with another cloth. Then starts dressing himself in the King Herod costume.)

BARBER

I've got some business to attend to.

(He takes his rifle from behind a counter, and hides it under his robes.)

I'll come back for you, don't worry. Eventually.

(He exits as King Herod. BLACKOUT on the squirming Real Estate Agent.)

*BRIAN GILBERT JONES

(Lights up on the race track. In Trophy Alley, Rebecca is sitting in a black chair, wearing a white gown. She is next to the stake, which has wood piled around it, ready to light.)

Brian Gilbert Jones, wearing his Order uniform—a sort of silver colored Nazi-brown shirt variation—comes up to Rebecca. He is pale, and hesitant.)

Rebecca?

(He clamps his hands over his ears.)

The sound of my voice is frightening in my ears. The chair—the stake—how can this be real?

REBECCA

Promise me something.

BRIAN GILBERT JONES

Anything!

REBECCA

You will not let my father...you will not let him see this. If he somehow comes here--

BRIAN GILBERT JONES

NO!! This must not happen. Nothing is real but the things I feel for you! I stand here, ready to rescue you—

REBECCA

Just keep my father out of here. That's all I want from you.

BRIAN GILBERT JONES

Don't you see, your fate has always been linked with mine.

REBECCA

My fate is in the hands of God.

BRIAN GILBERT JONES

Then let God rescue you.

REBECCA

Do you think he couldn't?

BRIAN GILBERT JONES

(Laughing)

I just think he won't. After all, he never does. Millions of innocent people die, year after year. All he has to do to stop it, is reach out his hand.

REBECCA

I see. So that's your excuse? It's all right to do evil, because God doesn't reach out his hand, and stop it?

WANDA

(Iva, Bessie, and Wanda, in Passion Play costumes, arriving with other Passion Play cast members, including the Barber, dressed as King Herod. They see the stake, the wood piled around it.)

Jesus, Mary, and Joseph, they're really gonna do it.

IVA

(They bring their bags of charms out from under their costumes, and begin sprinkling powder as they continue on.)

Come on. We got to get as much power working fer us as we kin.

(They climb up to the stage.)

BRIAN GILBERT JONES

Ever since I first saw you, I've wished with all my heart that you'd been born a Christian. But now I wish I had been born a Jew. Anything if it would change what's happening now

REBECCA

And if you had been born a Jew—how would it change this?

BRIAN GILBERT JONES

They'd let me be your champion! I was born to be your champion.

REBECCA

No. That role has been given to another.

(She looks to the east, to the entrance from the hills.)

BRIAN GILBERT JONES

He will not come.

REBECCA

He will.

BRIAN GILBERT JONES

He can do nothing but scream and rave, clawing at demons no one else can see.

REBECCA

I can see them.

(She turns to face him.)

I am looking at one now.

(He raises his hand to hit her—then stops, horrified that he was about to strike her.)

Why do you act so surprised? You think I can't tell the difference between a man and a demon?

BRIAN GILBERT JONES

Don't say that—

REBECCA

I know Ivanhoe is not the first man to come back from a war haunted by the dead, cursed by the weight of his crimes. But Ivanhoe is a man—he picks his demons up and carries them, no matter how heavy they are, and when he has to, he fights them. You have just become them.

It's not our religion that has kept us apart. It is your heart.

*FRANKLIN

(Lights up on Franklin, in the announcer's booth.)

Ladies and gentlemen, it is indeed an honor to welcome you to the inaugural run at the first mile paved track in Missouri! A special welcome to our Governor, who will drop the green flag to start the very first Ivanhoe 500!

*IVANHOE

(Appears at the opening of trophy alley. He is now clean shaven, and wearing racing overalls.)

Sometimes you can't run from things. Sometimes, you have to run toward them, and you have to run wide open.

(He makes his way with difficulty. Rebecca sees him. Her face lights up.)

REBECCA

Ivanhoe!

FRANKLIN

(Sees Ivanhoe. He gasps.)

My son.

(Into the microphone.)

Ladies and Gentlemen, welcome our champion—my son, Ivanhoe Franklin.

(Ivanhoe looks up at his father in the announcers booth, and nods his head.)

ORDER MEMBERS MURMUR

ORDER MEMBER PASSING BY #2

What's that?

ORDER MEMBER PASSING BY #1

A champion! A champion!

WILSON

What the hell's the matter with him?

WANDA

Ivanhoe—no, no, don't let him fight, he'll die—

IVA

(Iva and Bessie keep her from racing to Ivanhoe's side.)

If it's his fate, Wanda—it's his fate. But that don't mean we can't help him.

(They hold hands and close their eyes, chanting too softly to hear.)

LUCAS JONES

(Lights up on the box where Order officials are sitting--Lucas Jones, McCord, and Wilson in the center.)

A champion.

WILSON

The Disinherited Marine. I told you from the start he'd be trouble.

McCORD

He's no trouble. You blow on him, he falls down.

FRANKLIN

The Governor of the great state of Arkansas is making his way to the starting line. It's a crowded field today, and we expect to see racing at its best.

WILSON

State your business with this assembly.

IVANHOE

I have come to fight—

(At the word "fight" he flinches, as his demons grapple with him.)

--to fight...to fight--

LUCAS JONES

Go on home, boy, you don't stand a chance.

IVANHOE

To fight—to fight for Rebecca York, to prove the doom pronounced against her to be false and truthless, and to prove that Brian Gilbert Jones is a traitor to America, a cheater, and a liar, as I will prove with my body against his, by the aid of God.

WANDA

NO!!! He'll be killed!

(Iva and Bessie hold her back.)

BRIAN GILBERT JONES

I will not fight you like this. Look at you! You're a basket case.

IVANHOE

Coward!!

BRIAN GILBERT JONES

Ivanhoe, you couldn't protect yourself from a fly--

IVANHOE

I said, coward!

BRIAN GILBERT JONES

Because it is beneath me to fight you, I've ignored your insult twice. But if you call me a coward a third time, I swear I will fight you to the death.

IVANHOE

Yellow. Bellied. Coward.

BRIAN GILBERT JONES

(He takes out his knife, and touches it to his lips.)

To the death.

IVANHOE

Does the Grand Master accept my challenge?

LUCAS JONES

Yes.

WILSON

Then the combat will begin.

REBECCA

No! Ivanhoe, I can't let you, he'll kill you—

IVANHOE

I have no choice.

(The fiddle is heard.)

REBECCA

NO!!!—why should you die too?

(Ivanhoe and Brian go up to the stage set for the Passion Play.)

WILSON

None on peril of instant death, should dare, by word, cry, or action, to interfere with this fair combat.

FRANKLIN

And now—the Governor will make the starting call.

GOVERNOR'S VOICE

Gentlemen—START YOUR ENGINES!

(The sounds of the engines, roaring to life.)

FRANKLIN

Ladies and gentlemen, here they come on the newly paved track—they're lining up in qualifying order behind the pace car—they're coming up the starting line--

(Louder engine starting noise.)

--the Governor has dropped the green flag and THEY'RE OFF!!!

(Even louder engine sounds, coupled with great billowing clouds of smoke.)

*BRIAN GILBERT JONES

(Brian and Ivanhoe stand, in the Main Street of Jerusalem, each holding one end of a twisted piece of blue cloth with one hand, and a knife with the other.

Clustered around them on the stage are Wanda, Iva, and Bessie And the Barber as King Herod. Separated from them by the racetrack are Lucas Jones and his supporters, wearing their Order robes.

The front stretch is between the audience and the stage, but the racing cars will be represented primarily with a sense of speed and sound, impossible to see in all the dust and smoke.

If possible, it should in some way seem as though the Passion Play set is surrounded by a whirlwind.)

So.

IVANHOE

So.

BRIAN GILBERT JONES

I'm amazed you're even standing.

IVANHOE

So am I.

FRANKLIN

I've seen plenty of dusty tracks, Ladies and Gentlemen, but this one takes the cake. Hard to see much of anything going on out there.

BRIAN GILBERT JONES

Why did you come? You know I'm going to kill you.

IVANHOE

Stupid question. You know I had to come.

BRIAN GILBERT JONES

You're in love with her.

IVANHOE

No.

BRIAN GILBERT JONES

You wouldn't be here if you weren't.

IVANHOE

I don't have to be in love with her to fight for her.

BRIAN GILBERT JONES

Then you're a fool.

IVANHOE

If you love her, then why do you—

BRIAN GILBERT JONES

Why do I fight?

(He makes a wild stab at Ivanhoe.)

Why do I fight?

(Another wild stab.)

Why do I fight?

(Another wild stab. Ivanhoe has still not raised his knife, but only concerns himself with avoiding Brian's blade.)

Because I'm a coward.

(He drops his end of the cloth.)

FRANKLIN

And they've completed the first lap! Davey is making his move to get to the front of the pack, even though his mother said he was too young to run--he's moving up the inside—no, he's falling back a bit—it's hard to see exactly what's happening. What's that, a chunk of asphalt—the track's breaking up—there goes another one—pace cars—take the track--

BRIAN GILBERT JONES

A coward.

(He takes a step back from Ivanhoe.)

Well? Come on, Ivanhoe, now is your chance!

IVANHOE

You know I can't even raise my knife against you.

BRIAN GILBERT JONES

Then how do you plan on killing me?

IVANHOE

I don't know.

FRANKLIN

Well, ladies and gentlemen, it looks like they've completed the second lap, although you couldn't prove it by me. It seems like there's some sort of activity on the set for the Passion Play, scheduled for right after the race—hard to see anything—

BRIAN GILBERT JONES

The two of us. Quite a pair.

LUCAS JONES

(Calling through the dust.)

Brian! Brian! What are you doing, boy? Kill him!

BRIAN GILBERT JONES

My father. Always happiest at the sight of his enemy's blood, a true man of God. All right, father. I'll give you a drop or two, to keep you interested.

(He grabs Ivanhoe's arm, and tries to stab Ivanhoe. It's as if his knife, at the last second, is turned away.)

What the—

(He starts to laugh.)

Of course. Of course! My knife can't touch you—Rebecca cured it, it can't harm anyone she loves.

(Beat.)

Anyone she loves.

(He drops his knife, and grabs Ivanhoe around the neck, trying to strangle him.)

*DELBERT

(Lights up on Delbert and Everett trudging up a hill, far from the race track.)

There it is. Still fifteen miles away. With the barricades an' all, this is as close as we can git.

(Everett, no longer carrying his fiddle, gets out his rifle.)

How did it come to this?

EVERETT

(Sighting with his rifle.)

We should a seen the signs—

DELBERT

We saw the signs—

EVERETT

We should a read 'em better—

DELBERT

That's one mess of smoke and dust coming out of the racetrack. How you gonna see to aim?

EVERETT

Don't need to see.

FRANKLIN

Ladies and Gentlemen, if this dust gets any worse, we're gonna have to call the race—I don't see how the drivers are staying on the track as it is.

BRIAN GILBERT JONES

What's wrong with you? If you don't kill me, she dies. You've still got your knife, use it--

IVANHOE

I can't—

BRIAN GILBERT JONES

The one person on earth who most wants to kill me and who has the chance to kill me is the one person on earth who can't.

(He lets Ivanhoe go.)

DELBERT

Are you sure it ain't gonna be for naught? That track's over fifteen miles away.

EVERETT

He said I got one shot.

DELBERT

He meant it rhetorical, that's all, we all have one shot, you know how the Old Boy works, he talks in riddles—

EVERETT

One shot. I'm gonna make it count, rhetorical or not..

BRIAN GILBERT JONES

I suppose you could push me onto the track. Throw me into the whirlwind.

FRANKLIN

It is with great regret that I call this race on account of zero visibility—ladies and gentlemen, the race is called, follow the pace car into the pits as safely as possible--
(The sound of the cars begins to fade, the madness of the smoke seems to diminish a bit.)

IVANHOE

What lap were they on?

BRIAN GILBERT JONES

Seven? Eight? Shortest five hundred mile race in NASCAR history.

FRANKLIN

Looks like Davey is still going to run—give him room, boys, let him, let him run—I know the race has been called, but get out of his way and let him--all right. Davey is running wide open. He's rounding the second turn. He's on his way to the—
(The sound of a thud, not a crash.)

Damn. He's gotten stuck in a huge pothole. No way out. He's climbing out of his car. He's asking for help pulling his car out of the hole—he wants to finish the race, let's help him—boys, let the crowd on the track--all right, on three--one, two, three—they're pushing his Plymouth out like it's nothing at all, Davey is back behind the wheel—but it looks like the axle's bent—it's broken. That's it. It's over.

Davey tried. But it's over.

(Franklin slumps down in the booth, in despair.)

DELBERT

Everett, I want to save her jes as much as you. But you cain't even see to aim.

DELBERT

I know 'xactly what I'm aiming at. I'm aiming for Lucas Jones' heart.
 (He fires the rifle. The bullet is the sound of a high pitched
 note on a single string of a violin. It will continue until the
 bullet strikes home.)

My hand.

(His hand is now clenched in a claw.)

I can't open it—all the healing's used up.

DELBERT

The Old Boy said they'd be a cost. Does it pain you, Everett?

EVERETT

Somethin' awful. All those years of pain I didn't never feel, they all come back at
 oncet.

IVANHOE

There's got to be a way to save her!

BRIAN GILBERT JONES

It's not really up to us, Ivanhoe.

IVANHOE

Of course it is.

BRIAN GILBERT JONES

Not in trial by combat. In trial by combat, it's the will of God.

DELBERT

All that goodness she gave you, it's packed into that bullet now.

EVERETT

It's right to spend it back on her. But fifteen miles that bullet's gotta fly on that
 goodness. I hope it's enough.

DELBERT

How long to you think it will take for the bullet to hit?

EVERETT

About now.

BRIAN GILBERT JONES

(The note on the violin peaks, and the string breaks. The sound of a small thud. Brian's hand goes to his heart. He looks surprised— then he smiles.)

Well. What do you know? God reached out his hand, after all.

(He falls to the ground. Bessie rushes to his side.)

*BESSIE

My boy—my Brian—

REBECCA

What's happened! Ivanhoe!

LUCAS JONES

NO!!!!

(Lucas Jones runs across the racetrack.)

IVANHOE

Brian—what—

LUCAS JONES

(Lucas Jones has climbed up the stage, and is at his son's side.)

It's a trick—what have you done to him—

IVANHOE

I didn't lay a hand on him.

LUCAS JONES

What is it Brian, what's happened—

BRIAN GILBERT JONES

The will...of god...

LUCAS JONES

(Whispering to himself.)

The will of god. The will of god.

IVANHOE

Jones! Declare her innocent! Jones!

(He grabs Lucas Jones, shakes him.)

Do it! Now!

LUCAS JONES

YES, YES! I pronounce her free and guiltless.

(Iva is already at her side, cutting Rebecca free.

There is the sound of gunfire.)

McCORD

(McCord has rushed up to Lucas Jones' side.)

Sir—there's a body of men broke through our lines, they've gotten away with the Governor.

LUCAS JONES

Get away from me.

(Lucas stumbles off the stage. McCord follows him.)

REBECCA

(Rebecca rushes up on the stage. She goes to Brian's side.)

Where are you hurt--let me see--

BRIAN GILBERT JONES

It's a release. I'm glad to be freed. God has heard my prayers.

McCORD

(Running after Lucas Jones)

Sir! This changes nothing. We are ready to strike. We must strike now!

LUCAS JONES

It changes nothing? My son, struck down by the hand of God and it changes nothing?

McCORD

It was a trick, one of the hill people shot him, you know they all carry guns, my god, Lucas, you don't actually believe that God would reach out and strike Brian down? That's crazy.

LUCAS JONES

Is it? IS IT??

REBECCA

Lie still. Help's on the way.

(She touches his chest, he winces.)

BRIAN GILBERT JONES

Yes. The Lord has sent it. All my life, my father said, the Lord will provide. And now he has. He has provided escape from my weakness.

McCORD

Lucas! Think! The new, pure America! Will you let the dream of a new America die because of a few treacherous hillbillies?

LUCAS JONES

But—Brian—

McCORD

Is a soldier. He dies the noble death, he dies a martyr to our cause.

LUCAS JONES

Yes. A martyr. My son will not have died in vain. We must strike now. We must not waiver.

REBECCA

(She lays her head on his chest.)

Brian? There's a hole, a tear in your heart, I'm going to fix it--

(She lays her hands on his chest, a light starts to surround them.

He screams.)

BRIAN GILBERT JONES

(Tries to twist away from her.)

No—stop it—

REBECCA

Lie still, I can help you--

BRIAN GILBERT JONES

NO!!!!—this is my escape--

(He pushes her away, gasping.)

Do you know what a life like mine has been like? To have a wicked father? To know it. And to never have the strength to stop being his son, to stop begging him to love me. My nature, Rebecca. My weakness. That was my wickedness. And now, I am free of it. I'm free of not being strong enough to be who I wanted to be.

I'm so cold, Rebecca. So cold. One kiss, Rebecca?
(He dies, as she places her lips on his.)

BESSIE

(Screaming)
My Brian! BRIAN!!!!
(She throws her body over Brian's, weeping. Billy runs on stage. Iva, Billy, Bessie, and Wanda carry Brian's body off.)

LUCAS JONES

(Lucas Jones and McCord walk quickly away from the track.)
Nothing has changed, we go forward as planned, just a little ahead of schedule. Grab the Governor and take him to Fiddlers Cave, then—

*HAROLD RUBENSTEIN

(Rubenstein, Rowena, and Isaac appear in front of them.)
Too late. We have the Governor safely stashed away. I arrest you, Lucas Jones, on the charge of conspiracy to overthrow the government.
(Isaac and Rowena hurry on toward the stage.)

LUCAS JONES

Who dares to arrest the Grand Master of the Order on his own property?

HAROLD RUBENSTEIN

Harold Rubenstein. FBI.

LUCAS JONES

Are you mad? There are a thousand of my faithful here, all trained, all ready!

HAROLD RUBENSTEIN

Party's over, Jones. Look up--there, the American flag floats over your racetrack instead of your banner! Look—

(The hill folk, wearing Passion Play costumes, aiming their guns.)
They say these old timers can hit a pimple on a baby's butt at 50 yards. I wouldn't want to test them.

LUCAS JONES

I will appeal to Washington—the second amendment clearly states that—

HAROLD RUBENSTEIN

It gives no man the right to raise an army against the United States. You will dissolve your Order, and all those who are not listed here below will depart, now, or will remain, to share our hospitality, and behold our justice.

IVANHOE

(Rebecca stands up. She and Ivanhoe face each other.)

Rebecca, I—

ROWENA

(Rowena and Franklin come hurrying up the stairs of the stage.)

Ivanhoe!

(She throws her arms around him.)

Thank God, you're safe!

FRANKLIN

My son—

(He and Ivanhoe embrace.)

ISAAC

(Isaac hurries up the stairs. Embracing Rebecca.)

My treasure, you are returned to me. The sun sets, the Sabbath ends, and the miracle of America still stands.

HAROLD RUBENSTEIN

(Directing people in a line, checking off their names.)

You--free to go. You, on the truck. You—free to--oh, anybody seen a tall guy, walks with a limp, obsessed with finding mule footed hogs?

THE MYSTERIOUS STRANGER

(Materializing out of nowhere, with Everett's fiddle hanging from a strap on his back.)

You looking for me, Harold?

(Herod and the other hill folk melt away.)

HAROLD RUBENSTEIN

I don't know how you do it. Walk out of a nest of snakes, without a hair out of place.

THE MYSTERIOUS STRANGER

Well, Mr. Lucas Jones. We meet again.

LUCAS JONES

And who the hell are you?

THE MYSTERIOUS STRANGER

You don't recognize me?

(Flipping open his badge in his wallet.)

Internal Revenue Service. It is my pleasure to send you to the Federal penitentiary in Pensacola, Florida, to await trial, Mr. Jones. Famous as the hottest place in the federal system. Rubenstein, hand me the chains.

HAROLD RUBENSTEIN

We go through this every time, you know we don't have chains. We have handcuffs.

THE MYSTERIOUS STRANGER

Chains would be better.

(Lucas Jones is cuffed, and taken away. The Mysterious Stranger goes down the track.)

FRANKLIN

(Comes over to Isaac, holding out his hand.)

Well, Mr. York. Looks like we did it.

ISAAC

(They shake hands, using both hands.)

We are blessed to find ourselves alive and on the side of the line where goodness still reigns over the land.

FRANKLIN

That, and the bad guys lost, and the good guys won.

ISAAC

Thanks to you and your family. I am in your debt. Rowena—

(He embraces her.)

Ivanhoe—

(He embraces him.)

Your bravery has returned what was stolen, what was consigned to the flames. You are forever in my prayers. Rebecca—

(He turns, to see Rebecca looking longingly at Ivanhoe. And Ivanhoe looking back. Rowena sees it too. She starts to go to him.)

FRANKLIN

Rowena? Let's let them say what they have to say. Mr. York?

(The three of them leave the Passion Play stage, leaving Rebecca and Ivanhoe alone on the Passion Play stage, as the sun begins to set behind Jerusalem.)

REBECCA

I don't know what to say or how to say it.

IVANHOE

You saved me first, Rebecca. It was only fair.

REBECCA

I'm not interested in fair. Nothing's fair, remember?

IVANHOE

I'm sorry. I wish—I want—I—

REBECCA

Sorry?

(A beat.)

You're sorry. All right. I'll be going back to New York.

IVANHOE

Rebecca—

REBECCA

No.

IVANHOE

I—

REBECCA

If you love me enough to hand your life over to save me, and you still love her more, then what is there to say?

IVANHOE

It's not a matter of love. I would have saved you no matter what.

REBECCA

Don't be an idiot. Of course you wouldn't.

IVANHOE

It's not a matter of love.

REBECCA

It's never a matter of anything else. Nobody gives their life except for love. A woman, a country, a God, people die for those things out of love, and nothing else. Would you have come as a champion to save my father?

IVANHOE

Of course I would have—

REBECCA

Don't be ridiculous. You would have gone for help, maybe you would have risked your life in a plan to save him, but walk in here to fight to the death, knowing you could not raise your hand? Done that for an old Jew, whose cars you and your friends used to sabotage with dirt and sand?

IVANHOE

That was a long time ago—I was kid, I've changed.

REBECCA

Brian Gilbert Jones loved me too. He couldn't change. You love me. You can't change either. What's the difference?

IVANHOE

If everything I've done hasn't convinced you—

REBECCA

Then choose me.

IVANHOE

I can't. I'm promised to her—my whole life—

REBECCA

Yes, your whole life. Which, I remind you, you were willing to throw away. For me. Not her, me.

IVANHOE

Everything I am—how can you want me to turn my back on that? As much as love, it's what made me walk in here to be your champion.

REBECCA

Duty? You want me to be happy about taking second place to duty? After I have faced the flames, and been saved by love, you want me to be content to live the rest of my life without you because of duty?

IVANHOE

Not duty. Faithfulness. And promises. I have kept all the promises I ever made.
(He kisses her. They step apart. Lights fade on them, as they part and go down different staircases from the stage to join their families.)

ROWENA

(Looking at Ivanhoe.)

Are you sure?

IVANHOE

(He and Rowena kiss. There are no demons around him.)

I swear it.

(Ivanhoe, Franklin, and Rowena go off stage.)

ISAAC

(Isaac embraces Rebecca, while she weeps.)

Oh, Rebecca. My pearl. My one and only. Your heart has chosen fairly, but the world—the world is not always fair.

(His arm around her, they go off stage.)

THE MYSTERIOUS STRANGER

(Davey Harris, with his Jesus cloak thrown over his racing coveralls, is smoking a cigarette on the Temple steps, watching them. The Mysterious Stranger joins him.)

There you are. Been looking everywhere for you. May I?

(He bums a cigarette from him.)

Did you ever get an answer to my ad?

DAVEY HARRIS

Sorry, we never did.

(They smoke as they stroll down the Holy Land Main Street, as the sunset burns crimson over Jerusalem.)

THE MYSTERIOUS STRANGER

I'll find 'em, eventually.

DAVEY HARRIS

You think so?

THE MYSTERIOUS STRANGER

Sooner or later.

DAVEY HARRIS

Just because you want a hog to change don't mean he can.

THE MYSTERIOUS STRANGER

He can. I'm sure of it.

DAVEY HARRIS

Can don't mean he will.

THE MYSTERIOUS STRANGER

But he could.

DAVEY HARRIS

Okay, but my mother says--

THE MYSTERIOUS STRANGER

Let's leave your mother out of this, Davey. My father says—well, I can't go home until I find them. As proof. Call me an eternal optimist, but I believe that someday, the hog will change his hooves, the leopard will change his spots. The lion will lie down with the lamb. I believe it will happen. It will.

(They walk off down the Main Street of Jerusalem, into the setting sun.)

The main street of Jerusalem merges back into the main street of town.

They pass the bank, as the swastika on the bank fades away.)

LIGHTS FADE TO BLACKOUT