

PERUSAL SCRIPT

The Brothers

A Dramatic Portrayal
of the Lives of
Joseph and Hyrum Smith

by
Christie Lund Coles



Newport, Maine

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THE BROTHERS

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THE BROTHERS

Cast of Characters -- 15 men 3 women 2 teenboys 1 teengirl 2 boys, plus extras

JOSEPH SMITH JUNIOR as a man, a teenager and a boy

HYRUM SMITH as a man, a teenager and a boy

BROTHER GOODING

LUCY MACK SMITH

JOSEPH SMITH SENIOR

DR. STONE

2ND SURGEON

3RD SURGEON

SOPHRONIA SMITH

ALVIN SMITH

REVEREND MADDOX

EMMA HALE SMITH

ELIZA R. SNOW

ORRIN PORTER ROCKWELL

STEPHEN MARKHAM

JOHN TAYLOR

DR. WILLARD RICHARDS

JOHN S. FULLMER

DAN JONES

GOVERNOR FORD

GUARDS and the MOB

THE BROTHERS by Christie Lund Coles. 15 M, 3 W, 2 teenboys 1 teengirl 2 boys, plus extras. Space setting with wing and drop or set pieces. Hunted and persecuted, Hyrum Smith and his brother, Joseph hide, wait and watch. Mobs of unruly men are searching for them thinking of nothing but death. But the Lord watches over his chosen; they have safety, and a time to reflect. "When will it end? Where did it all start? Why? Where will it lead?" A deeply moving play about "The Brothers". 1hr 45mins. ORDER # 2041.

Synopsis of Scenes

ACT ONE

Scene One --a Nauvoo city street and Brother Gooding's home --1839

Scene Two -- Flashback, Lebanon, New Hampshire -- about 1814

Scene Three -- Flashback, Lebanon, New Hampshire -- 3 weeks later

Scene Four -- Flashback, Lebanon, New Hampshire -- 3 days later

Scene Five -- Nauvoo, Brother Gooding's home -- next morning

ACT TWO

Scene One -- Nauvoo, Mansion House -- 1843

Scene Two -- Same a few hours later

Scene Three -- Same, late that night

Scene Four -- Flashback to Palmyra, New York -- 1820

Scene Five -- Flashback to Palmyra, New York -- an hour later

Scene Six -- Nauvoo, the Mansion House -- later that night

ACT THREE

Scene One -- Nauvoo, a grassy spot near the river -- June 23, 1844

Scene Two -- Carthage Jail, the eve of the martyrdom

Scene Three -- Governor Ford's office -- next morning

Scene Four -- Carthage Jail -- that afternoon

Christie Lund Coles was born in Salina, Utah, in 1906 but had resided many years in Provo, Utah, until her death in 1991, where she was a housewife and a free-lance writer. Widely published, Mrs. Coles has poems in such periodicals as Dialogue, BYU Studies, Western Humanities Review, Saturday Review, Ladies' Home Journal, McCalls, Saturday Evening Post, the New York Times, the New York Herald-Tribune, and the LDS Church Magazines. She has published three volumes of verse: *Legacy* (1958), *Some Spring Returning* (1958), and *Speak to Me* (1970). Mrs. Coles wrote plays, short stories, and poems which won numerous contests. She has served as president of the League of Utah Writers, State fine arts chairman for the State Federation of Womens Clubs, and for the Women's Council of Provo. An active member of the LDS Church. She served in the Relief Society, Primary and Young Women's programs. She won many state and national contests, including the Eliza R. Snow Poetry contest. Member of the Sonneteers, and Fine Arts clubs. She is the author of the play, *The Brothers*, and two musicals, *The Red Plush Parlor* and *The April of Our Seasons*.

THE BROTHERS

A play in Three Acts
by Christie Lund Coles

ACT ONE

Scene One –NAUVOO, ILLINOIS. A narrow city street on a dark night. Watch the spring it is of the year 1839. JOSEPH and Hyrum SMITH, two caped figures dart furtively into a dark alley. In the distance can be heard the murmuring of angry voices, footsteps, moving about, then receding it has a voice cries:

VOICE: I'm sure they went this way!!

(More noise as it grows fainter.)

JOSEPH: *(lowering the hood from his cape slightly so that his fine face can be seen even in the darkness)* Oh, Hyrum, could the moon stay shielded by this cloud 'til we can find a refuge?

HYRUM: Heaven has stayed the purpose of our foes before, surely now we shall find some protection. Brother Gooding's house lies beyond the corner. Go first, I'll shield you from behind.

JOSEPH: *(covering his head with his cloak)* Why are you always there to shield me?

HYRUM: *(Almost severely)* I have no time to answer now. Precede me, it will give my spirit light even to follow you.

JOSEPH: Could you still perhaps out run me? I may have been the stronger but you were the more lithe, more quick. Let's try.

(They run. Stage dims in blackout. There is a knock at the door and it opens.)

Brother Gooding, could you bed us down?

GOODING: Of course. Yes. I heard the mob in the street. Come in!

(Lights come up dimly to show the two young men in bed. JOSEPH has his arms folded behind his head—his eyes are open.)

JOSEPH: I feel that sleep, though wooed will not be one. The raveled sleeve of care is still my lot. Hyrum, do you recall us wrestling in our yard in Lebanon?

HYRUM: Indeed. But, I remember too the day you first began that last illness. It was then, I think, that I knew you were destined for some unusual purpose of the Lord. Do you remember, Joseph—

(The lights dim.)

Scene Two – Flashback. The scene shows the two boys, JOSEPH (Age 10) & Hyrum (slightly older). JOSEPH is swinging. Hyrum is leaning against a tree.

JOSEPH: If I tried hard I could go over the top—into the sky.

HYRUM: Well, don't.

JOSEPH: But I could.

HYRUM: I think you could if you put your mind to it. I suppose you could do anything.

JOSEPH: (*Laughing*) Even get you down?

HYRUM: Maybe.

JOSEPH: Dare me?

HYRUM: Dare you!

JOSEPH: All right—run, run, Hyrum—run!

(*JOSEPH jumps from the swing into the grass, gives a grimace which Hyrum, striking a stance, does not see. They run. They begin to wrestle. After several moments, JOSEPH has Hyrum's shoulders pinned.*)

JOSEPH: Give up?

HYRUM: (*Breathing heavily*) As usual, you've bested me, but you fight fair. You never hurt me. You're just stronger. Half the boys in Lebanon are afraid to fight you.

JOSEPH: Perhaps. But, I don't want them to be scared. And it really isn't that I'm stronger, Hyrum—I just know when I'm going to win.

HYRUM: You're pretty sure of everything. Do you have insp... inspir... inspiration—as mother calls it? I've tried...

JOSEPH: Some call it intuition. It comes swiftly. I don't try... unless you'd call praying "trying."

HYRUM: Why, we all do that. You ponder so, Joseph. You should have been the eldest in the family.

JOSEPH: No. You and Alvin are great. I'm just like mother, I suppose. She has the gift of knowing—of dreaming.

HYRUM: And she's mostly right.

JOSEPH: Yes.

(*Pause*)

She's seems so tired lately

HYRUM: No wonder, nursing Sophronia through the typhus, getting settled here. How could you and Mother be so sure she was going to get well? I was scared.

JOSEPH: (*Meditatively*) Mother taught me once:

The heart has no room for both fear and faith:

Faith dispels fear as sun the morning mist.

Has He not told us to believe?

Fear dispels faith and is the demon, dark,

That would surely conquer and deceive.

We must kneel often. And believe.

HYRUM: I wonder you can be so wise at 10 years old.

JOSEPH: Ah... I just grow quiet. I think... and I listen.

HYRUM: I grow quiet and I fall asleep.

(*Staring at JOSEPH*)

But Joseph, when you're in a crowd you can be so much fun.

JOSEPH: I like people, all people. But I like being alone, too. And perhaps my gaiety gets me away from my own seriousness. It frightens me. Can I tell you something?

HYRUM: You know you can.

JOSEPH: When Grandfather Smith said that one of his descendants would change the world of religion, I felt it might be me.

(JOSEPH cringes)

HYRUM: But how?

JOSEPH: I don't know that. It's not that I want to... it's just a feeling.

(JOSEPH cringes once again. This time Hyrum notices.)

HYRUM: What is it? Did I hurt you?

JOSEPH: No, I'll be all right.

HYRUM: But you look red in the face. You're sick.

JOSEPH: It will go away. I'm fine.

(He rises. His right hand pressing against his left shoulder.)

I'm just tired. Promise you won't tell Mother?

HYRUM: I promise. But, if you get sick I will nurse you myself.

JOSEPH: Yes. But I'm feeling better already.

HYRUM: Your face is still red.

JOSEPH: Yours is too.

(He sinks to the ground again.)

The worst thing about the typhus coming was that we had to quit school. You were just getting started at the Academy and us others at the neighborhood school. I liked it.

HYRUM: But there is not much they could teach you. How many times have you read the Bible?

JOSEPH: I haven't counted.

(Still pressing this shoulder, yet talking as though he is trying to divert Hyrum, and his own thoughts.)

Ask something out of it. Go ahead and ask me.

HYRUM: Can't think of anything I haven't asked you already... well... where was St. Paul when he had his vision?

JOSEPH: On the road to Damascus. Do you think he was frightened?

HYRUM: I don't know. I know I would be. Especially if I'd preached against God.

JOSEPH: And worried that it might have been a dream. Do you think people believed him right off?

HYRUM: I never thought of that. I guess they didn't. People--most of them--never believed the Prophets.

JOSEPH: Think how wonderful it must have been though. To hear the voice of God?

(His voice lowers, he bends over.)

Hyrum, I think I am going to be sick.

HYRUM: Oh, Joseph. Here, let me help you. I'm afraid it's the typhus. They've been expecting us to get it. I hope I don't so I can take care of you.

JOSEPH: My head's whirling. I'll lie down. Don't look so scared. I'll soon be getting you down again.

HYRUM: I hope so. But, I really don't like to fight you, even in fun. You're my best friend!

JOSEPH: And you are mine. Is that why you let me win?

HYRUM: I don't! I fight hard!

JOSEPH: I know, maybe I'm gifted as much as you say.

(Laughs)

HYRUM: It's true sometimes I'm almost jealous of you.

JOSEPH: Almost. Hyrum, you'll stay with me, won't you? We won't worry mother?

HYRUM: Of course. Take it easy-up now. Oh, Joseph, you're burning with fever. Let's get to the house.

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(JOSEPH's head falls on HYRUM's shoulder; he nods but does not speak.)

Scene Three—Three weeks later. All small anteroom in a bedroom. DR. STONE and two other surgeons are conferring with JOSEPH SR and LUCY. Hyrum is nearby.

STONE: We've opened up the leg twice before. The last time we went very deep. This time it may even have reached the bone. We've agreed now there is nothing left to do but amputate.

SURGEON 2: It's quite necessary. But we shall need to take him to the hospital for that. He must be prepared.

JOSEPH SR: But the nearest hospital is fifty miles from here.

STONE: We know. We'll arrange for him to be transported there.

LUCY: *(Imploringly)* Can't you make one more try? Can't you cut closer to the bone? Perhaps it will again heal over. You cannot take his leg off without one more try. I can't let you.

JOSEPH SR: We must leave it in their hands, Mother. And in the hands of the Lord.

LUCY: I know it is the Lord's will that his leg be saved.

SURGEON 2: I am in favor of amputation.

SURGEON 1: I, too.

STONE: You do not know these people's faith. You do not know the power of intuition -- call it what you will -- that this woman has. If she says it is not the Lord's will, well ...

(He shrugs, moves toward the other two and they retire to the side of room where they converse briefly. They return.)

Since he is my patient, they have agreed to operate one more time. We will do it here, with your good help. Perhaps if we scrape the bone, nature may heal over it.

JOSEPH SR: How could we guess that the infection could go into the leg. But it is too late now.

LUCY: I have the water on the stove, sheets prepared.

STONE: You must have been quite sure of our decision.

LUCY: Through the years you have been a kindly man to us, Doctor. I did not think you would fail us now.

STONE: Please God, I will not have to.

(They enter the bedroom which may have been adjoining and in darkness. JOSEPH is lying in bed and looks up. His eyes are heavy, his hair mussed)

JOSEPH: You've come again?

STONE: Yes, my boy. We have come again

(He takes JOSEPH's hand)

JOSEPH: You've not come to remove my leg?

STONE: No. We're going to try one more time. It is the wish of your parents and your brother here.

SURGEON 1: The boy should leave the room.

LUCY: Yes, Hyrum.

HYRUM: I would rather stay. Perhaps I can help. And I promised him.

JOSEPH: *(Heavily)* Mind Mother, Hyrum.

STONE: You can help your father obtain some cord for binding him.

JOSEPH: *(Rousing)* No, you cannot do that.

SURGEON 1: You must be confined while we work.

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JOSEPH: No, I can bear it.

SURGEON 2: You will drink some brandy, then.

JOSEPH: No.

SURGEON 2: Some wine? You must take something or you cannot bear the pain.

JOSEPH: I will not. Let my father sit on the bed and hold me. I can do what I must.

HYRUM: He can, Doctor, he can.

(STONE says something about deadening it somewhat to other doctors)

STONE: It will be severe. You may lose consciousness.

JOSEPH: All right, then.

(Looking at LUCY, tears in his eyes)

Mother, you must leave the room. Father can stand it. You have had . . . so much . . . you're worn out.

LUCY: No, let me be with you this one more time.

HYRUM: *(Putting his arm around her shoulder)* Come with me. I'll take care of her. Be brave, Joseph.

JOSEPH: Yes. The Lord is with me.

LUCY: Oh, my boy. We'll be praying for you. Father, let us pray now.

STONE: If you will excuse us we will be washing up.

LUCY: I will show you . . .

STONE: We know the way. Remember, this is the third time we have been here. I hope it will be the last.

(As he moves to the door he pauses)

You must have been quite sure to have had the water ready.

LUCY: He's a very special boy. His legs must let him run many, many miles.

JOSEPH SR: Come, Hyrum.

(JOSEPH appears to be asleep)

HYRUM: If he could only sleep through it all.

(They nod. JOSEPH SR touches LUCY's cheek with his finger.)

LUCY: You must be very strong to hold him. Had he known your tender heart as I do, he might not have asked this.

(The three near the bed and drop to their knees.)

JOSEPH SR: I'm glad he did.

Scene Four -- *The same bedroom several days later. JOSEPH is propped up in bed, his leg is bandaged and on a pillow. HYRUM is sitting at the foot of the bed, his hands clasped tightly about JOSEPH's ankles.*

HYRUM: Does this help, Joseph? Does it relieve the pain?

JOSEPH: Indeed it does. Your pressure is so strong, so sure, even as your faith that I grow well.

HYRUM: My faith is but a shadow of your own and Mother's. My doubt is shamed by it.

JOSEPH: Do the Doctors now believe I shall be well and walk and run and wrestle you again?

HYRUM: Yes, and you will best me then, as usual. But, father says you must first go away. You are to visit Uncle Jesse.

JOSEPH: Oh Hyrum -- the one who lives in Salem -- by the sea? Will you come too?

HYRUM: No, I must help father out here. The work piles up. Grow sturdy quickly, Joseph. This will be the

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first time we have parted.

(JOSEPH winces)

Did I press too hard? I saw you wince.

JOSEPH: *(Almost impatiently)* It was the thought of separation... from this new-found home, and from you, Hyrum. Yes, from you.

(He hesitates then says haltingly, almost in unbelief)

When I was lying ill, it seemed I heard mother say there was a special work for me to do. Do you believe she knows -- or only hopes it might be true?

HYRUM: Mother knows many things. I have no doubt. No doubt at all? Do you?

JOSEPH: No, Hyrum, I have known it quite as well as she. Remember, once, I spoke of it to you? The thought is not unknown; it bears weight as well as joy. Oh, brother, will you be with me then also? Will your hands see me through?

(JOSEPH leans over and places his own hand over HYRUM's)

HYRUM: Need you ask me that? My life and heart are true in all that you may ask, or need. Does this pressure do you good, now? Tell me ...

JOSEPH: Press hard Hyrum. Give me all your strength.

HYRUM: Oh, little brother, I would give my life for you.

(The lights dim on this memory)

Scene Five -- *We return to BROTHER GOODING's bedroom where JOSEPH & HYRUM are hiding from the mob. The lights are still low.*

FIRST MOB: Someone said they saw them come in here

SECOND MOB: Let's search the place!

THIRD MOB: Yeah!

GOODING: There is no-one here save my two nephews. They are asleep. They were very tired. Please don't disturb them.

HYRUM: Should we not hide under the bed?

JOSEPH: There is no place to hide. Brother Gooding admitted there were two young men here. Close your eyes, Hyrum. Pretend the sleep of exhaustion. Pull the covers high and do not speak.

HYRUM: *(Pulling the covers up and ruffling his hair as JOSEPH does)* We need not pretend to that exhaustion. I think I could not bear the mob's thrashing tonight.

JOSEPH: I think we will be safe. Hush.

(The door is pushed open and the three burly men enter, one holds a torch and moves near the bed)

FIRST MOB: Here they are. Two young men. His nephews ... They're asleep -- real tired like.

SECOND MOB: *(Coming forward belligerently)* Maybe they're just pretending. Let me look at 'em.
(He gazes at the calm faces)

THIRD MOB: Let's wake 'em up. That's the way to find out -- question em. Ol' Joe'll say he had a vision if we ask him. Then we'll have him dead to rights. His brother's just as guilty as he is, always followin' him -- believin' in him.

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(GOODING has pushed through the door; he stands, frightened, yet firm)

GOODING: I told you -- it's my brother's boys -- stopped here on their way west. They're tired to death.

SECOND MOB: How'd they come -- walk?

THIRD MOB: Yeah! Where's their horse?

GOODING: I took it to the livery stable to be bedded for the night. You can check there tomorrow.

THIRD MOB: Tomorrow's too late. We want 'em tonight. And we're ready for 'em.

(HE moves toward the bed but the FIRST stops him)

FIRST MOB: This one hardly stirs in his sleep. Would guilty men sleep sound as this? Those demons never looked like this. They would have been up, wrestling with us and giving us the slip again. These two ... well, they might almost be my brother's boys, or one of our own. Not some mad men possessed of super human powers who claim to talk to heaven. Come on, let's leave 'em be.

SECOND MOB: *(Looking more closely)* They do be kinda young ... and not too devilish lookin'. Those dark fiends have given us the slip again. But not for long, I tell you. Not for long!

THIRD MOB: *(Still hesitating)* I still say wake 'em up. Talk to 'em.

FIRST MOB: They'd think we was off our base. Come on.

GOODING: It's kind of you sir. My brother, who is a wealthy merchant, would not have appreciated my inhospitality had I let anything happen to them. May I see you out?

(ALL leave, reluctantly, rather ashamed. GOODING closes the door after them, leans against it, breathing heavily. When all is quiet, he speaks softly)

Heaven forgive my lies, but it was the only way.

JOSEPH: Heaven be thanked for your ingenuity. And it will not be forgotten.

HYRUM: It is strange they could not hear my heart pound. It was so loud it almost deafened me.

JOSEPH: My own heart, too. But calm yourselves. I say the time has not yet come for their villainy. Faith conquers fear. We must rest a little and then, while it is still dark, be on our way. The Son of Darkness moves most treacherously to destroy this thing of God which I have found. Let us rest here together and leave the morning to His invisible hands. Goodnight.

HYRUM: Goodnight.

GOODING: *(Going through door quietly)* Goodnight. Would I could run part of your course for you.

(Lights dim)

(END OF ACT ONE)

ACT TWO

Scene One -- *The living room of the Mansion House in Nauvoo. It is well furnished, clean, spacious. It is about 1843. EMMA SMITH, a portly, handsome young woman is arranging flowers and seeing to last minute details -- as housewives will -- before a party. JOSEPH SMITH hurries in.*

EMMA: Here, let me knot your tie.

JOSEPH: *(Smiling boyishly)* Indeed Mrs. Smith, it was for that reason that I came charging into this room. Hurry, I hear footsteps coming.

EMMA: *(Tying tie, smiling)* A man who can speak with angels and decipher hieroglyphics...and cannot tie his own tie.

JOSEPH: Think how you, gracious lady, would miss the opportunity were I to acquire that tedious ability.

EMMA: Tedious indeed.

(Finishes, pushes his hair back with her hand)

You are a handsome man. There is a rumor that certain women are growing fond of you.

JOSEPH: There is a rumor attached to every move I make. Believe in me, Emma.

EMMA: *(Putting her head against his shoulder)* I do. My life shall end when you leave me.

JOSEPH: *(Trying to be jovial, yet with power)* Do not attach your faith to any human being. Attach it to truth. All men are heir to weakness

(A knock at the door)

EMMA: Probably Hyrum and Mary. Surely he has attached himself to you.

JOSEPH: Yes, but to truth as well.

EMMA: Perhaps I should be jealous of him?

JOSEPH: *(Nodding thoughtfully)* Anyone might be jealous of his loyalty, his goodness.

(Looking into her eyes)

But you must not be jealous of anyone, Emma. It is an ugly emotion. You must just believe. And be happy. God himself has said through Lehi, that man is that he might have joy.

EMMA: *(Smiling)* And are you happy?

JOSEPH: Why not? Look at this -- Mansion House -- so beautiful, so fine. Look at the city of Nauvoo. The most beautiful city in Illinois. And you, my wife, my children ...

(Knock at door)

... I have so much.

(As he goes to door he leaves by the one through which he entered)

Save the first dance for me, whatever it is. And the first polka. I love the way that curl on your neck lifts and falls with each motion.

EMMA: Oh, you dear man. So human, yet so filled with divine dreams and power. This is all so wonderful. I am afraid it cannot last. My first real home ...

(opening door)

Come in Brother Hyrum and Sister Mary. Oh, and Sister Eliza, how are you?

(There is a hint of coolness in her voice)

How pleasant to see you all.

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(A group of party goers including DAN JONES comes in all talking and laughing at the same time)

HYRUM: *(The noise dies down)* Sister Eliza Snow has written a beautiful new hymn. Why not have her play it?

MARY: But not until Joseph comes ...

JOSEPH: *(Entering)* Joseph is here. What is it you would do?

HYRUM: Hear Sister Eliza's song, "Oh, My Father."

ELIZA: *(Flushing as JOSEPH's eyes look on her)* It is such a serious song. Much too sober for such a festive gathering.

JOSEPH: *(Moving toward her)* Since when did poets need be festive? Play it for us.

ELIZA: No, no. Some other time, It is a sacred song.

JOSEPH: *(Almost indignantly)* We must surely not be sacreligious even in our joy. But, it is up to you.

ELIZA: *(Nearing piano)* I did not mean to be disagreeable. I will play a few bars. It is the words ... I cannot ...
(She sits on stool and plays and sings melody of "Oh, My Father." EMMA pretends to be busy rearranging flowers on a table, but her eyes glance in the younger woman's direction with a look of suspicion and jealousy)

DAN JONES: *(When it is finished)* Now, where is the dance music? I am anxious to swing my partner.

(He seizes the pretty young girl who has come in with him and the group. And they do a few steps of a lively polka. Music begins and JOSEPH moves toward EMMA)

JOSEPH: I believe this was ours.

(EMMA does not look at him. JOSEPH lifts her chin with his finger, starts to speak, then stops. They begin to dance. Lights out)

Scene Two -- *The same. After the party. EMMA & JOSEPH, still dressed in their best clothes, are standing together. He is before a mirror, loosening his cravat. EMMA is touching a nice chair gently, thoughtfully.*

EMMA: Oh, Joseph, how happy I am to have my own home at last.

JOSEPH: It does seem that we have found a place. Our enemies grow quiet.

(pause)

The party was a great success.

EMMA: Thank you, Joseph. A woman likes these things--a home, friends, music, her own things about her.

JOSEPH: You were bred to them, my dear. I am sorry they have been so long in coming.

(He turns and studies her for a moment, then speaks softly)

But, we must not become too enamored of these things. Money, power, possessions, these are the things that in the end destroy.

EMMA: Not if they are used wisely. You have said as much yourself. I myself love this place almost with a passion. This lovely city -- the Mississippi River on three sides of us, the land rich and fruitful. But, it was not always so. By your great industry and hard work you transformed a swampland into a garden of Eden. Indeed. An island of sanctuary in an ocean of hatred and persecution.

JOSEPH: This beautiful home that has been termed "The Mansion House" -- Emma, already our own people murmur with envy ...

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(JOSEPH lets EMMA untie his tie)

I am still a man.

EMMA: And such a dear man. Because I love you so there is something I must tell you ...

JOSEPH: Not bad news, I hope. Not tonight.

EMMA: It would be difficult tomorrow. And I so seldom see you alone lately. You are constantly busy.

JOSEPH: Something about the family? One of the twins?

EMMA: *(She moves away from him, sits down, fingering her handkerchief)* No, it's about you. I heard today that hatred and hostility was rising against you in the cities. They feel you are overstepping your rights ... imposing your own importance ... in taking part in politics. People are frightened by the militia.

JOSEPH: Do you think I'm wrong?

EMMA: No, but it would seem that religious problems would be enough.

JOSEPH: Would you compromise with the evil on all sides of us, submit as we have submitted, without any defense?

EMMA: No, but there must be some middle ground.

JOSEPH: We cannot submit. As long as a man can be locked in a prison called "Liberty Jail" while he's as innocent as a lamb, I'll fight for freedom.

EMMA: But, surely we have been persecuted enough. I thought here ... where we have been given our charter, we could live in peace, have a home.

JOSEPH: *(Going toward her, speaking seriously)* Emma, Emma, you are not beginning to doubt me, too, are you? You are not beginning to crave the comforts of security rather than the ways of the Lord? You knew it would not be easy. When your father turned against me you remained true. When others failed, you were steadfast. But even the elect, even those who have been the closest to me, have failed me. I would have staked my life on Oliver Cowdery and Sidney Rigdon. And how I longed to save them.

EMMA: What will happen to them now?

JOSEPH: I don't know as to this life. I only know that all the gifts and powers which would have been Oliver's in the life to come have been lost to him. I have conferred them to my brother Hyrum who has been loyal from the beginning.

EMMA: Why, then, wasn't he chosen to be one of the first Three Witnesses?

JOSEPH: It was not my will. And even if it had been, there would have been more doubt among the inquirers. They would have said, "Can we take his word? He is his brother. Naturally ..."

EMMA: Will Oliver and Sidney reverse their testimony that they have seen the plates, handled them? Oliver was even with you.

JOSEPH: No, they're men of honor. They cannot refute what they have seen and touched -- and heard. But, they are human, and they can't help it if their humanness turns them against seeming errors. But, I swear to you, that neither they nor any of the eleven will go to their graves denying the truth of this work, and the book. To deny the power of God and his existence ... would mean damnation forever.

EMMA: I'm not really strong, Joseph. You are my strength and hope. I fear constantly that something will happen to you and the children.

JOSEPH: You don't fear too much for yourself or you wouldn't have sat alone in the buggy while I climbed the hill to get the plates.

EMMA: I was afraid. I'm still afraid. The thought of Alvin dying and his wife crossing the river carrying those two children haunts me. I ask myself over and over, "What would I do?"

JOSEPH: Poor Emma. Poor everybody whose life has been attached to mine. Forget our words.

EMMA: *(Rising with dignity)* I will. And will you, for my sake, and for the sake of the children, try to be a bit more discreet?

JOSEPH: Yes, perhaps there is some truth in what you say. Because we dared repeat that the Lord had revealed that Jackson County was to be ours the mobsters believed we were there to disinherit them all. Perhaps I can yet ease them. Their time is not yet.

EMMA: You make me very happy.

(EMMA starts toward the door, hears a noise outside, turns toward the window simultaneously with JOSEPH and both see the painted faces of two MOBSTERS, one hammers upon the window and a small pane crashes.)

FIRST MOB: Here he is!!

EMMA: *(Running from the room, crying)* Oh, Joseph ... they've come again. The baby's sick.

JOSEPH: *(Running to the closet to seize his Militia rifle, and darting back to a chair with it)* Do not be alarmed. Our soldiers are thick around the place. Hear that noise and the scuffling? They'll not harm us this time. We are protected. Do you hear?

(EMMA has run from the room and a cold breeze comes through the door, indicating that she has run outside with the infant. There is no more window-breaking or signs of a break-in. A quick "one-two-three" is heard on the outside door. JOSEPH is sure it is one of his men but is still cautious)

Who is there?

DAN JONES: Dan Jones, sir.

JOSEPH: *(Unlatching door)* Come in, my boy. Are they gone?

DAN JONES: Yes sir. We think it was only two or three scouts who had been drinking and thought they might do something on their own. They've arrested them.

(JOSEPH moves to door where EMMA exited)

Emma! Emma, where are you? Dan, she ran into the night ... and took the baby with her. We must find her ... merciful Heaven, she was so frightened.

(JOSEPH starts outside but DAN seizes his coat which was thrown over the back of the chair and gives it to him)

Take your coat, sir. You can't get sick. Who would lead us then?

JOSEPH: *(Patting DAN's shoulder)* You're a good lad. Hurry now and tell the others to look to my wife. She may be hiding anywhere.

(Going through the door)

Emma? Emma ... come back!

(The room is silent for a moment, then from the other door, EMMA comes rushing in, breathlessly, the baby in her arms)

EMMA: Joseph, Joseph, where are you? Where are you?

(She whirls about desperately glancing at the child, lifting it to her cheek, putting her face against his, then drops to her knees on the floor, sobbing)

Oh, Dear God, not again. How much more must we endure?

(As she finishes her sentence JOSEPH comes rushing in, his hair blown, his cheeks ruddy)

JOSEPH: Emma, what is it?

(She stares at him bleakly, wordlessly)

Emma?

(LIGHTS out)

Scene Three -- Mansion House. JOSEPH is alone in the room. The lights are dim. Only one lamp burns back of him, making his figure almost a silhouette. He is still, his hands clasped behind him.

JOSEPH: *(Taped voice)* The light grows dim, the wick is burning low. My heart is desolate beyond relief of tears. So like a light that has flamed clear and true in white intensity, my life that now seems void. And lonely as the wind that howls the night rapping the windows and my very soul with it's dark desolation. Oh, my Father whose very voice has spoken to my soul, whose pristine presence has appeared to me ... a boy, not different than other boys have been, yet more intense, perhaps, wanting to know, destined somehow, to run this chosen path. Difficult, most hazardous to the soul, and blessed ... and almost cursed ... I think, to know truths that the purest of angels gave to me, why must I stand here now, alone, entombed within the darkness of my pain, my loss? Have you forsaken me, removed your arm that has sustained me?

JOSEPH: *(live)* I must not think so blasphemously.

(He drops to his knees)

Forgive me Father, and give me strength to bear all things that come, all loss, all grief. There have been many hours even as now, when to deny the things these mortal eyes have seen and marveled on, would have been easy, would have been the way to peace of mind, to rest, to a surcease of the torment of the crowd, to the jeers of those who saw and mocked me; the accusations of even those who should be dear ... Now, even the elect have turned aside. Sidney and Oliver, of the chosen few who held within their hands the promised book; hefted it, touched its gleaming plates, and swore that they had seen it and must bear a solemn witness to that truthfulness.

(Rising slowly, goes toward window, pauses there, as the lamp finally flickers out.

Moonlight streams in the window)

But why should I be more select than those who have preceded me: Isaiah, and Moses. Moses! Orphan, Prince, Prophet. He gave you Aaron, Moses, even as He has given me Hyrum, trusted, faithful, wise. Still, it was you who was lifted in a cloud. You, who saw the finger writing on the stone. I think of you Moses, out of my own loneliness -- an old man, who saw the promised land and never entered it. Will it be so with me? Will I not lead my people on? Must I seal my testimony of this thing with tears, even with my blood? Would that I could deny it all, most sinful creature that I am, could go this moment to my wife, and find in her arms my reassurance, and my hope. Oh, heaven, unaware of things this truth has written on my soul, as though by lightning etched forever. Should she go, should she leave me too, as many others have, her conscience and self-pity guiding her, I must be true, with God's help, must run this course until the end.

(He turns and he hears a knock upon the door. He steps toward it)

Who is it? Who's there?

HYRUM: Joseph, it's mother and Hyrum.

JOSEPH: *(Opens the door swiftly, pulling them in from the cold)* Mother, why have you come?

LUCY: One of the guards brought us news of the child. Poor Emma, she must be broken and distraught. Have

you no fire here?

JOSEPH: (*Going apologetically*) Forgive me. A fire still burns on the hearth in here. I shall light a lantern for you.

(JOSEPH opens the door into an adjoining room and leads LUCY in gently. HYRUM is alone in the room. He moves toward the lamp as he meditates to himself. Slowly, thoughtfully, he turns up the wick of the lamp as he speaks, and re-lights the lamp.)

HYRUM: The guard spoke of Emma's shock, her bitterness even against Joseph. Poor soul, to love someone so greatly and to know his love must ever be not yours alone -- always divided, bent toward even a greater, more enduring love: the love of God. Many of us have shared his knowledge, have believed, yes, almost known. Yet, have not seen the radiance of God, not heard his voice. Oh, I remember well the day he came from praying in the wood -- his young strength was spent, yet in his eyes there lingered fragments of celestial things which he had witnessed.

(The lamplight flares up for a moment almost symbolically. Then the stage darkens.)

Scene Four -- *The Smith main room about 1820 in Palmyra, New York. The room is simply furnished. JOSEPH about fifteen is facing a younger LUCY, JOSEPH SR, HYRUM, ALVIN and SOPHRONIA, his sister.*

JOSEPH: Mother, Father, I swear by everything sacred to us all, that it is true: I saw three figures, white beyond belief, standing in a sky that suddenly was opened, and had endless depth and width. The brilliance of the scene was so intense that my eyes could not behold it, and I fell to the ground. You must believe me. For then, then they spoke.

LUCY: Who spoke, son? Go on.

JOSEPH SR: Do you suppose the lad is mad or ill?

LUCY: He has not ever seemed more well. His eyes are clear and bright and full indeed of this this vision, or manifestation he has seen ...

JOSEPH: Oh, you are quite right, I am well. Though it is indeed a wonder that I am after the terrible struggle I have known.

HYRUM: What struggle, Joseph? Did someone harm you? Did they see it too? Is that ... ?

JOSEPH: (*Interrupting with a bitter little laugh*) Yes, I am quite sure that they saw it too, they were aware of it. That is why they strove to blur my vision--encompass me with utter darkness. But, what strength, what power, my own strength was as a willow in a winter wind ... until ... until ...

HYRUM: Tell me who. Where are they now? What do you mean, "until ... ?"

(JOSEPH sinks into a chair, putting his head in his hands. LUCY touches his head with her hand)

LUCY: Take your time, son.

ALVIN: Yes, Hyrum, don't press him so. You know that he is trying. In his own good time he will reveal it to us.

SOPHRONIA: But, I am over-eager, my flesh is cold as if I were walking out doors. No one around here can match strength with him. It must have been a stranger...

JOSEPH: (*Lifting his head, looks at her, almost pityingly*) It was no stranger. It was one of whom we each must be on guard both day and night.

(Pause)

It was the Power of Darkness, come to keep my unworthy eyes from beholding the divine vision that was before, above, all about me. Let me begin at the beginning: I had gone into the grove to ask the Lord which one of the many sects preaching and shouting here was really true. I had read in the Bible the words that if you lacked wisdom, ask in faith and knowledge would be given you. I gathered my faith as I have never done before. I knelt and prayed aloud, with power and fervency out of an overflowing heart.

HYRUM: Aloud, Joseph? I have never heard you pray though I have not ever questioned your faith.

JOSEPH SR: He said, "Aloud", Hyrum. Let us hear him through.

JOSEPH: *(Running his hand through his hair; looking about at his family)* I did not want to be in disagreement with you who had seen fit to join the Methodists. Yet, they did not quite satisfy my soul, and neither did the Presbyterians, though I was leaning toward the sect. Their minister has been most kind. So ... child-like, I suppose, I took the Lord at his own word and went to Him ... in faith. I asked ... which ... one was ... true ... and now and now ... I know.

(All in the room lean forward)

LUCY: You know, Joseph? Were you told ... is that it? Then tell us, we will join. It is a good as done.

JOSEPH: *(Rising, moving toward the fireplace. A light beams upon his lifted face)* None of them are true. Everyone of them are false!

ALVIN: Then we are lost. Confusion reigns upon the earth, as surely it has reigned here for many days.

HYRUM: Let him finish. About the attack, Joseph? Tell us?

JOSEPH: As I prayed aloud, an invisible power -- so mighty that my strength was as a child's -- fell upon me, wrestled me. And when I had but breath enough to speak, but still prayed on ... for strength to overcome this thing, for knowledge such as I had thirsted for ... I suddenly was loosed, the evil passed, the heavens opened before my eyes and I beheld two beings. I trembled and it was as though I was transported from this mortal flesh wherein I could behold this vision and partake the glory that enveloped me. I heard a voice not like the voice of any I have heard, speaking, filling the earth and sky with power and with a gentle, pure intensity. The voice said, "Joseph, this is my Beloved Son, hear Him"

(Pause)

I am the one. Mother has dreamed dreams and known of things not given ordinary men to know. And, Father, you have told us often of the words once said by Grandpa Asahel Smith.

JOSEPH SR: *(Bewildered, elated, moved)* Yes, yes, that one of his descendants would come forth to promulgate a work which would revolutionize the religious world.

JOSEPH: *(Pausing briefly)* I know that I am the one. I would tell the minister who has told me of his Church and its doctrines. I believe he will be pleased. Will not all men? Or will they doubt my simple story?

(They crowd around him; are pressed close.)

Please, let me rest. I'll be all right.

(LIGHTS dim. ALL touch JOSEPH's bent head as they leave and he sinks onto a cot. Then slowly, quietly each leaves the room. HYRUM is the last. He hesitates at the door; stares at JOSEPH. LIGHTS dim to black.)

Scene Five -- *When the LIGHTS come up it is an hour later. JOSEPH has been asleep. He is just stirring when HYRUM comes into the room in some excitement.*

HYRUM: *(Waking JOSEPH)* Joseph, Reverend Maddox is coming up the path. Do you suppose he has heard?

JOSEPH: Not unless one of you has told him. I have told none else. He said he would drop by.

HYRUM: Do you want me to stay here while you tell him?

JOSEPH: No, I think it would be best if we were left alone.

HYRUM: I'll be near.

JOSEPH: I know. I know. Almost my shadow, Hyrum.

(There is good humor in his words)

Bring him in and trust that I may find the words that will convert his heart as he has striven so to convert mine.

(REVEREND MADDOX comes into the room. He takes JOSEPH's outstretched hand)

MADDOX: Well, my son, I hope you have come to a happy conclusion. Your manner seems more sure.

JOSEPH: My manner indicates my mind's great peace.

MADDOX: I trust you have arrived at this through prayer?

JOSEPH: *(Startled)* That was the way. I think I knelt to pray as I have never prayed before, with faith, unquestioning, undoubting. My prayer was answered far beyond my hope. I think ... I scarce ... can ... find the words to tell ...

MADDOX: No need, boy. No need. You are known about as a lad of great wisdom for one not yet a man. Do you suppose your folks will follow you and join our congregation? We could arrange baptism for you all immediately. Let me go and tell the others that you are soon to come.

JOSEPH: Wait. It is not your faith I can accept. I have been shown a vision, have been told from heaven itself that your beliefs cannot be my beliefs.

MADDOX: How so? You lead me to believe one thing then fling this ... this infamy upon me. Your parents, no doubt, have pulled you to their way.

JOSEPH: *(Quietly)* No sir. The Methodists are quite as wrong as you. All of you lack the authority of Jesus Christ.

MADDOX: Why, you presumptuous puppy, you. Teaching me principles of religion which I have studied about for years in seminary -- and taught.

(Pauses. Then proceeds cleverly)

And if this authority is lost, just what do you propose to do about it? Did the heavens reveal that to you, too? Will you ascend to heaven, bring it back?

JOSEPH: *(Simply)* No, but an angel shall be sent and bring back the knowledge that has been lost for many years.

MADDOX: You ... upstart boy ... you...

JOSEPH: A boy? Yes, I am. Yet, I am not entirely unlearned in His word. Who was David? Who was Samuel? Who was ... Joseph? I know it seems presumptuous, I know I am unworthy. But, I have been told. These truths will be revealed to me. It is the truth. I swear to you. The truth.

MADDOX: You are the victim of delusions. You are possessed. Out of my way.

(MADDOX rushes from the room. JOSEPH remains unmoving, watching him go. After a moment HYRUM returns.)

The Brothers -- Christie Lund Coles

HYRUM: He seems enraged. Was he so indifferent then?

JOSEPH: Indifferent and angry. Why, he was almost as that power that overcame me in the grove.

HYRUM: Perhaps you should not tell about it for a while.

JOSEPH: More than ever now, I know it must be told. Are you afraid now, Hyrum? Afraid of men?

HYRUM: You know I will stand by you. I am afraid only for you.

(HYRUM puts his arm around JOSEPH's shoulder)

JOSEPH: Dear Hyrum, do not be. The heart has no room for both fear and faith. We must kneel often, and believe ... believe.

(LIGHTS dim)

Scene Six -- *The Sitting room at the Mansion House a few moments after JOSEPH and LUCY have left.*

JOSEPH returns with lamp, sees the one HYRUM has lighted and sits his on the table.

JOSEPH: Mother must warm her hands, her slender body. Then, I will take her to Emma who sorely needs whatever words of comfort she can give.

HYRUM: Poor mother has had a most difficult role. Yet, she has proven herself again and again.

JOSEPH: She has indeed been worthy and I would to God I could have spared her -- spared you all.

HYRUM: Do not let your mood be darkened by what has happened. Now is when we must each gird ourselves, remembering the miracles. You yet will be triumphant.

(He refers to LUCY in the other room)

Mothers of Prophets have not ever found it easy, I suppose. Mother of Moses, giving up her son, all his tender years, his youth, his manhood and his kingly pride. Think of the mother of our Savior, who bore so much ignominious despair, knowing always he was his tormentor's King and could have called the wrath of heaven forth upon his assailants.

JOSEPH: And I am such a sinning man, in favor perhaps, only so long as I am an obedient vessel. But what ... what of me Hyrum ... if I fail? If I succumb to the weakness of the flesh? Do not prevail unto the end?

HYRUM: You must not yield to this mood of bitterness and doubt. Self searching does reveal us each as a knave, unworthy of His mercy. But should we be over-come by that self-doubt and that self-pity, if you will, then all men fail without attempt at achieving. Hear me Joseph, give in to this and you have lost the battle to the one who could not down your flesh ... not stay your prayer before.

(LUCY enters)

JOSEPH: *(Not convinced)* Mother, it grieves me to disturb you. You are so frail.

LUCY: *(Standing erect)* My flesh. But, that is not the issue now. My spirit is not frail. One cannot help the things that befall the flesh, but he can tend the fires of the soul and keep them burning brightly. But, when adversity comes, what then? The ever robust protest to the gods, they build the towers of strength that they must defend. They weep and wail while the frail willows only bend.

(Turns aside, pauses)

I came to bring comfort. Now, where is Emma? I lost two sons, a daughter, a husband --- I know the necessity of tears of healing. I must tell her too, that she must rise again for those who are not lost. Joseph, I have seen your eyes. I know your desperation. But remember ... you have been chosen. You cannot fail. You will not. Hyrum will take care of your soul.

(END OF ACT TWO)

Ten more pages in Act Three