

PERUSAL SCRIPT



ONE HOUSE-DIVIDED

by
Agnes Stewart Broberg



ZION THEATRICALS
Newport, Maine

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ONE HOUSE -- DIVIDED

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Cast of Characters (5M 2W 2TB + ensemble)

JOSEPH -- A boy who cares deeply for all that surround him; 14,

HYRUM -- A young man searching for himself, 20.

ALVIN -- A young man, wise beyond his years; 22.

LUCY -- The mother of a prophet of God; 44.

JOSEPH SR. -- The patriarch to God's chosen, 46.

SAMUEL -- A boy filled with eagerness; 12.

EMILY -- A delicate young girl, sensitive to pain: 19.

REVEREND TOWNSEND -- A sincere Presbyterian minister preaching the road to salvation, 35.

REVEREND GREENWOOD -- A robust man trying to bring repentance to the common people; 47.

TOWNSPEOPLE

SYNOPSIS OF SCENES

Act I Scene 1: Sometime before.

Scene 2: Immediately following.

Act II Scene 1: Later the same evening.

Scene 2: Half an hour later; Emily Townsend's home.

Scene 3: Immediately following; the streets of Palmyra.

Act III Scene 1: The next evening.

Scene 2: Immediately following.

Scene 3: The next morning.

SETTING

THE TIME: Spring, 1820.

THE PLACE: The Smith farm; Palmyra, New York.

NOTE TO THE DIRECTOR

The play is a memory, Joseph's memory. Each event is seen through his eyes; all people are remembered in his mind. Therefore when a character is on stage and yet not directly involved with the action, he is on the fringe of memory. He should move and react as a shadow. All the memory builds to the final and total reality of the final line. It is at this point it where the circle of the play ends and a new circle begins.

In this scene, as in other previous scenes, when Joseph is thinking there is no need to freeze all movement on stage. Only the audio must cease. Also, these passages can be spoken, or taped or handled in any creative way the director imagines within the framework of the play.

NOTE TO THE DESIGNER

One House - Divided is a play of changing moods. The set should, therefore, be a playing area capable of total flexibility. The only conscious attempt at showing the period of the play should be made through properties, such as tables, chairs, etc. and costumes.

The lighting is the major binding force of the play. It must flow from scene, not in general areas, but in tight specials of high elasticity thus enabling the characters to move in and out of memory scenes without disturbing the focus on the scene. The nightmare scene should be a dark conglomeration of many colors and patterns where Joseph is more brightly illuminated than the other figures.

The costumes should reflect the styles of the period. However, they should reveal the inner characteristics of each personality more than the period costume.

The lighting should be more flexible than the set for it is on the lighting that the action of the play relies. It should follow closely the mood progression of the play so that it enhances the emotional impact on the audience.

The remainder of designer decisions are left to the artistic discretion of the designer.

ONE HOUSE -- DIVIDED by Agnes Stewart Broberg. 5M 2W 2 TB +8ensemble. Space setting with props. What happened before Joseph Smith's First Vision? Why did such a young man inquire so earnestly of the Lord as to which Church was true? This fine drama offers some possible answers to these and many more questions. A powerful and moving story about a family torn by religious differences and reunited by God's love. "A momentous achievement!" BYU DAILY UNIVERSE. 2hrs. Order #2049.

Agnes Broberg -- (BIO)

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ACT ONE

Scene One -- *As the curtain opens the dim glow of two lamps and a small fire illuminate the main room of the Smith home. JOSEPH SR. is reading as LUCY mends. HYRUM and ALVIN are at their father's desk, intent on something before them. As we hear JOSEPH SR's voice the stage gradually becomes brighter.*

JOSEPH SR: *(reading from the large family Bible)* Chapter five. And seeing the multitudes, he went up into a mountain: and when he was set, his disciples came unto him: and he opened his mouth, and taught them, saying blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are they that do mourn: for they shall be comforted. Blessed are the meek: for they shall Inherit the earth. Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled. Blessed are they ...

(The lights are now up full. He is stopped by the chiming of a clock on the mantle. It chimes but once.)

Time for bed.

LUCY: You look tired dear. You shouldn't work ...

JOSEPH SR: And you worry too much. Give me a kiss and run along.

LUCY: *(As she exits)* Goodnight boys. Sleep well.

HYRUM & ALVIN: Good night Mother.

JOSEPH SR: *(he turns to HYRUM & ALVIN)* Put away the books. They'll keep until tomorrow.

HYRUM: Father, would it be all right if we stayed up awhile longer? I'm in the middle of teaching Alvin a ...

(He hesitates searching for an idea)

... new method I learned.

JOSEPH SR: *(He turns down the lamp)* New Method? Well hurry. You need your rest. Goodnight boys.

HYRUM & ALVIN: Goodnight Father.

ALVIN: *(whispering)* New method?

HYRUM: Well, what else should I have said?

ALVIN: I don't like keeping this secret.

HYRUM: If we told anyone Joseph and Samuel would never let me hear the end of it.

(An inquisitive SAMUEL is seen at the top of the ladder leading to the loft where the boys sleep. He wonders why no one's in bed yet. Unnoticed, he listens to his brothers.)

ALVIN: Learning how to dance isn't that terrible.

HYRUM: Oh, It's not the dancing I'm worried about. It's Emily. You know their teasing.

(As HYRUM talks about Emily he shares with Alvin the secret joy of falling in love.)

ALVIN: I guess I understand. It Is rather amusing to think that you're working so hard and losing sleep over a girl you haven't even met.

HYRUM: We have.

ALVIN: When?

HYRUM: Last Monday.

ALVIN: When she and her father were moving in?

HYRUM: Yes.

ALVIN: Neither of you said a word.

HYRUM: But she smiled.

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ALVIN: And you jump to the conclusion that she likes you. One day you'll jump too fast and then you'll...

HYRUM: Be sorry. I know but with Emily it's different.

ALVIN: Hyrum, if I didn't know you better I'd say you were smitten.

HYRUM: She's beautiful.

ALVIN: You ought to know by now that beauty isn't everything that makes a man happy.

HYRUM: It helps.

ALVIN: I hope this dance isn't a disappointment for you.

HYRUM: What do you mean by disappointment?

ALVIN: Your hopes are so high and you're so eager. I...

(He hesitates)

HYRUM: *(tenderly)* Don't worry, please? Thank you, though.

ALVIN: *(after a pause)* Where did we stop?

HYRUM: I think it was the Grand March.

(Reading)

The couple chosen to lead the Grand March is , by precedent, the hostess and her escort or partner. If Emily is hostess how could I be her escort?

ALVIN: Ask her to dance.

HYRUM: *(bowing low and in an over elegant manner taking ALVIN's hand and kissing It as he would EMILY's)* Miss Townsend, this second meeting fills me with more happiness than I can express. Would you do me the distinct pleasure of ...

(SAMUEL unable to contain his amusement any longer; bursts out laughing. HYRUM and ALVIN wheel towards SAMUEL.)

SAMUEL: *(mimicking)* She smiled.

(he laughs again)

May I kiss your hand too, Alvin? You really don't look much like the type who'd...

(SAMUEL Is stopped by his brothers who grab him off the ladder.)

HYRUM: You little...

SAMUEL: *(chanting)* Hyrum's got a girlfriend. Hyrum's got a girlfriend .

(SAMUEL's chant is stopped by Hyrum's hand but Samuel wiggles free.)

SAMUEL: Let me go. I'll tell.

ALVIN: Oh, no you won't.

HYRUM: What do you say, Alvin, if we ...

(Before HYRUM has finished his sentence ALVIN has grasped the idea and they are both upon SAMUEL -- one trying to smother his cries for help and the other inflicting the punishment. SAMUEL Isn't one to be beaten.)

SAMUEL: *(through Alvin's fingers)* You ... I'll ... Fa ... ther!

HYRUM: Can't you keep him quiet?

ALVIN: I'm trying .

(SAMUEL grabs ALVIN's free hand and twists.)

ALVIN: Ow! Oh, that did it.

(And both HYRUM and ALVIN are on SAMUEL. It's all In fun--HYRUM and ALVIN are laughing. SAMUEL is shouting for help and threatening and laughing from being tickled. The

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tussle continues until the front door latch begins to move. The boys freeze. Then there is a quiet knock. ALVIN moves to the door)

Who's there?

(As HYRUM stands. SAMUEL remains on the floor.)

JOSEPH: It's me, Joseph. Let me in.

ALVIN: *(opening the door)* Where have you...

JOSEPH: It's sure cold tonight.

ALVIN: Where's your coat?

JOSEPH: I left it.

HYRUM: Where?

JOSEPH: Reverend Greenwood's.

SAMUEL: You're lucky Mother's not up. You'd catch it.

HYRUM: No one's going to...

SAMUEL: Oh, you...

(HYRUM takes a menacing step toward SAMUEL, who, sizing up the situation quickly moves to the ladder.)

SAMUEL: I'm going to bed. And you all better too.

(He goes up the ladder as if he were the victor.)

ALVIN: Can you beat that?

(JOSEPH moves to go up the ladder.)

HYRUM: *(moving to ALVIN)* Didn't I say that if he knew, we'd...

(He stops as JOSEPH quickly grabs the ladder for support. He is dizzy but it soon passes. They move quickly to JOSEPH's side.)

ALVIN: Are you all right?

HYRUM: You don't look well.

JOSEPH: *(as he mounts the ladder)* I'm fine.

(He stops climbing)

ALVIN: Joseph?

(Suddenly JOSEPH faints, falling into ALVIN's arms.)

Quick ... get some water Joseph? Joseph? Are you...

(HYRUM is in and out in half a minute.)

HYRUM: *(lifting JOSEPH's head and placing the cup to his lips)* Here. Drink this. Slowly now.

(JOSEPH is beginning to revive.)

JOSEPH: *(moving away)* What's that?

ALVIN: Easy, it's just water.

HYRUM: There now, just a little more.

ALVIN: Have you had anything to eat since breakfast?

JOSEPH: I don't remember,

ALVIN: That's what I thought.

HYRUM: What's on your mind? Skipping meals is your trick when you're thinking.

ALVIN: *(As Joseph begins to move back into the chair)* Here, let us help you. Don't you think you'd better ...

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JOSEPH: Really, I'm all right.

HYRUM: Doesn't this make the third night In a row you've been to visit Reverend Greenwood?

JOSEPH: I haven't counted.

ALVIN: Is there anything you want to talk over? You know we always ...

JOSEPH: No. It's nothing. I can manage.

HYRUM: Why don't you come to bed?

ALVIN: We'll help.

JOSEPH: No, I'll sit here awhile.

ALVIN: We'll wait.

JOSEPH: It's all right. Go ahead. I'll be all right.

ALVIN: Just the same. We'll wait.

HYRUM: We'll read.

ALVIN: You're sure you

JOSEPH: I'll call you. I promise.

HYRUM: All right.

(ALVIN and HYRUM move back toward the desk. As they move the clock begins to strike; one, two and through to ten. As it strikes three JOSEPH begins to think. His voice is heard. During these next few lines the scene has taken on an unreal atmosphere -- It is changing.)

JOSEPH: Three. I spent nearly three hours with him and what did I learn? He didn't answer one question.

Study, he said. Start by being a better person. Start by ...

HYRUM: Let's start by trying ...

(ALVIN and HYRUM begin to go through dance motions)

JOSEPH: (thinking) I'm trying ... I'm really ...

(Slowly the Smith home disappears and, to the strains of a Virginia Reel, the home of REVEREND TOWNSEND appears. It is crowded with people enjoying meeting the new minister. There are groups talking and couples dancing all in slowed action. JOSEPH and the REVEREND sit close together conferring about religion.)

REV T: It's been a very trying winter. But I'm hoping the good folk of your town will find my message more acceptable than those I taught this winter.

JOSEPH: What do you teach. Sir?

REV T: Why the Gospel, boy I You do know what that Is?

JOSEPH: The Lord's plan of salvation.

REV T: As contained In His Holy Scriptures. I trust you read your Bible, son?

JOSEPH: We've always read it, the whole family.

REV T: I can tell you come from a good God-fearing family.

EMILY: *(drawing close to them as she moves around the room-the perfect hostess)* Daddy, you're not preaching? This is supposed to be a party.

REV T: Not preaching dear, just getting acquainted. Emily, Mr. Joseph Smith. Mr. Smith, my daughter.
(Joseph rises and bows.)

JOSEPH: I'm very glad to meet you.

EMILY: Oh, I just met your brother, Hyrum. He's a marvelous dancer.

JOSEPH: I'm sure he'll be happy to know that.

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EMILY: Oh, you wouldn't tell him?

JOSEPH: It was just a figure of speech, Miss.

EMILY: Thank heaven.

REV T: (*as ALVIN and HYRUM move toward REV T and JOSEPH*) Could that possibly be your brother headed this way?

JOSEPH: Yes, sir.

REV T: Who's with him?

JOSEPH: My older brother, Alvin.

REV T: Fine looking family.

(As ALVIN and HYRUM approach)

Well, Emily, Introduce me to these fine lads.

EMILY: Father, this Is Hyrum Smith and Alvin Smith. My father.

ALVIN: Pleased to meet you, sir.

HYRUM: Miss Townsend's told us much about you.

REV T: All ready?

ALVIN: It's all been complimentary.

REV T: Of course, she's my daughter.

EMILY: Father!

HYRUM: it looks like our Joseph has already cornered-you.

REV T: I wouldn't exactly say cornered.

EMILY: it sounded the other way around.

REV T: We were just getting to know one another.

HYRUM: And that's what we're here for.

A VOICE FROM THE CROWD: (*announcing*) Virginia Reel!

HYRUM: Miss Townsend? Would you care to dance?

EMILY: I'd be delighted.

HYRUM: (*as they move off toward the main group of people*) Can I trust you, Alvin, to keep an eye on our little brother so that he does n't take up all the Reverend's time?

ALVIN: Of course.

(After they are gone and JOSEPH and the REV T have seated themselves.)

What were you talking about?

JOSEPH: The Bible.

REV T: And a very good subject at that. Do you realize that if we followed every admonition in that book we'd have a much happier life?

JOSEPH: But, sir, sometimes I read things I don't understand.

REV T: And that's just why the Lord has sent me to minister to you. I'm here to help you with your problems by clarifying what the scriptures teach.

JOSEPH: How do you know what they mean?

REV T: Such an inquiring mind. Our church Is set up with ministers who have been given the authority to determine the meanings of the Lord's sayings. It's for us

ALVIN: (*humbly but firm*) I don't mean to interrupt, sir, but you bring a question to mind. I'm no Bible scholar, like yourself, but in my reading ...

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REV T: From what Joseph tells me your family does a good deal of reading. Don't downgrade yourself, young man.

ALVIN: I was wondering, sir, where you get your authority?

REV T: From the main body of the Church.

ALVIN: And your knowledge of the scriptures?

REV T: I spent four years In the Princeton Theological School. Those were some of the best years of my life. It was my first experience with feeling the presence of the Lord.

JOSEPH: (*eagerly*) When did you feel His presence?

REV T: When I studied the scriptures and listened to those chosen men who taught me. They were ...

ALVIN: (*feeling uncomfortable*) You'll excuse me?

JOSEPH: Where are you going?

ALVIN: I thought I'd join the dancers for awhile.

JOSEPH: Don't leave without me.

ALVIN: I won't.

REV T: And we'll see you at the meeting.

(Turning back to JOSEPH)

I hope we see all your family there. You'd be a wonderful addition to any congregation.

JOSEPH: We'll try.

REV T: Good! Now, where were we? Oh yes. My days ...

(The center of focus and light shifts -- crossing to the group where HYRUM and EMILY stand.)

HYRUM: (*as ALVIN walks up to them*) Well, give up looking after Joseph?

ALVIN: He can take care of himself.

HYRUM: I take it their conversation wasn't too exciting?

ALVIN: I wasn't interested.

HYRUM: In what?

ALVIN: They were discussing religion.

HYRUM: In general?

ALVIN: (*he's disturbed*) In particular. If you'll excuse me, Miss Townsend? I've had a long day and am very tired.

EMILY: I understand.

ALVIN: Thank you for a lovely party. I've enjoyed myself.

(Turning to Hyrum)

Don't forget Joseph.

HYRUM: I won't.

ALVIN: And don't be too late. We've got fences to mend tomorrow.

HYRUM: We'll be right behind you.

ALVIN: Good night.

(As ALVIN leaves, the scene begins to shift again. The lights divide into three areas -- REV G in one. REV T in another; and JOSEPH in the last. The PEOPLE begin to drift into two groups. They move like a shadow; they are merely visions on the edge of a memory. As JOSEPH falls into thought the two ministers, REV G and REV T, take their places at the heads of their respective flocks. HYRUM, EMILY and ALVIN find themselves with REV T. JOSEPH wanders toward REV

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G's flock.)

EMILY: Good night.

(Turning back to HYRUM)

I hope he's not too tired.

HYRUM: He just worries about the farm too much. He's the oldest, you know.

EMILY: I see.

HYRUM: *(indicating the dancing)* Shall we?

(As they move)

Miss Townsend, I must admit...

JOSEPH: I see.

REV T: Good! You're a boy with a bright mind. You capture ideas quickly. Why someday I'd think you might even consider the ministry. Now there ...

JOSEPH: *(thinking)* There's the problem. Capture ideas. What ideas? He tells about the ministry. He tells me about ... about ... what are they talking about?

(At this point all are in their places for the following revival.)

REV G: *(to his flock)* Good people of Palmyra. Open your hearts to the words of the Lord. Let Him fill your soul--let yourself be filled with the faith.

(During the entire revival both ministers are preaching though they are only heard as they re-enter Joseph's memory. Two WOMEN standing near JOSEPH.)

WOMAN 1: Gracious heavens, I filled myself with so many pastries I know I won't eat for a week.

WOMAN 2: It was a very nice social.

WOMAN 1: But nothing's going to pull me away from the good Reverend there. Even some fancy to-do social.

WOMAN 2: I'm afraid some were won over though. They must not have...

WOMAN 1: Take the young Smith boy. Why a week ago you'd have thought...

(JOSEPH wanders on. HYRUM stands with EMILY listening intently to REV T. In the following exchanges JOSEPH's memory is jumping from remembering the conversations of the people around him to remembering the sermons of the ministers. The lighting should move with the memory first illuminating one area then another as JOSEPH wanders through the CROWD.)
(SOUND: Crowd rumble.)

WOMAN 2: Shhh. He's right there.

(WOMAN 1 follows the second's gaze and JOSEPH nods)

REV G: *(Quicker)* And there my friends is the road to follow. Throw away those foul habits, that whiskey bottle and those loose women. Step forward and join with those of us who have found salvation through living the Christ-like life. Step forward and give yourself.

(JOSEPH & ALVIN toward REV T.)

JEREMY: I tell you Matt, we've been giving into that there government long as we've been born. I for one is finished.

MATT: I know what you mean. Why only yesterday.

JEREMY: It'll be mighty nice when ol' Andy Jackson kicks that no good Clay outa Congress! Why he ain't...

WOMAN 2: Ain't you two gonna ever hush up?

WOMAN 1: Some of us is tryin' to listen to the new minister.

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JEREMY: An some of us minds our own business.

WOMAN 1: Now look here sir.

JEREMY: Now you look here lady--A man's got to be able

REV T: Wore enthusiasm at start) Look forward and be forwarned, dear friends of Palmyra% The day of the Lord's coming is nigh. No longer will old ways find acceptance ... And the only way to stave off destruction is by uniting with His Holy church. Good works won't save you. Putting by your evil ways isn't enough. Baptism! Wash away any false doctrine you may have heard and come to.

(Two MEN converse as JOSEPH passes near.)

MAN 1: That old farm of mine is jist about played out. I tell you. It's not gonna be long afore ...

MAN 2: I know exactly what yer a goin' through. It ain't been too long since I left my farm up near Quincy. Mostly rocks it were ... seemed like the Lord done forgot me.

MAN 1: Don't seem nowhere's right that some folks gets bad farms and others is blessed with gooduns.

MAN 2: I know what ya mean there too. Why I done seen that young Smith boy trapsin' all over town last couple days. Goin' from one preacher ta t'other. Don't seem right their farms so prosperous with them bein' such loafers. Why I works every day to scratch

MAN 1: Better keep yer voice down.

(Pointing at HYRUM and ALVIN as JOSEPH joins them)

If ya know what I mean?

(EMILY follows HYRUM.)

HYRUM: Where have you been? You're late.

ALVIN: Not that late.

HYRUM: You've missed the first of the Reverend's sermon.

JOSEPH: What has he said?

HYRUM: I'll have to tell you later. There's so much he knows. So many things I've never heard before. So many new ideas. He's the first man I've met who's been a man of God.

(Turns to REV T)

ALVIN: *(almost to himself)* Chosen of men.

HYRUM: *(still concentrating on the sermon)* What did you say?

ALVIN: Nothing. I'm going. I've got some work on the books to finish.

HYRUM: But he hasn't finished.

JOSEPH: Why not stay?

HYRUM: You haven't even heard the major portion ...

ALVIN: Hyrum I'm ... there's just a lot of work to do at home. You and Joseph stay. I'm going. Good night, Miss Emily.

HYRUM: You work too hard.

ALVIN: Someone has to.

(He exits)

JOSEPH: What did he ...

HYRUM: Nothing. I'm glad you stayed Joseph.

(Pulling Joseph toward the REV T.)

Now you'll know what's excited me so.

REV T: Now, friends, now is the time to open your hearts to a minister of the Lord. Let me baptize you and

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then see what joy you will find In this, the Church of the Lord. See what abundance of ...

EMILY: Hyrum, tell him.

HYRUM: Now? Here?

JOSEPH: Tell me what?

HYRUM: *(he looks at Emily and gaining strength from her)* I've decided to let Reverend Townsend baptize me.

JOSEPH: Why?

HYRUM: Why?

(He's taken aback)

Because I believe him.

JOSEPH: *(half to himself)* What'll Alvin say.

HYRUM: Oh he'll be excited. It won't be too long before he's baptized, too.

JOSEPH: When did he decide ...

HYRUM: *(filled with enthusiasm)* Oh, he hasn't, but he will.

EMILY: When are you going to talk to him?

HYRUM: As soon as possible.

JOSEPH: How can you be sure that ...

HYRUM: Why, Joseph, It's so simple. It's like ...

JOSEPH: *(thinking & confused)* Simple? So simple. Study ... Why does Hyrum feel it and I don't? Will Alvin and what will Alvin...

REV T: And what will you do my friends when that day comes? Will you be able to stand before the Lord knowing that you've failed to enter into his holy baptism. The only way is the church. Friend, if you fail ...

REV G: ...fail it, cleanse your souls of the wicked ways that drown it. Live the good life without drinking, swearing, and other wickedness and God will save you. You need only accept this righteousness. Who will promise to take upon him the ways of righteousness?

CROWD: Me! Here I am! Amen! Hallelujah! He's saved!

(During the next speeches this scene begins to fade. Within the same unreal atmosphere the CROWDS fade away and the Smith home reappears.)

JOSEPH: *(thinking)* Me! Why can't I understand. There are Hyrum and Alvin both so calm and assured of what ...

(The vocal fervor of the crowd intensifies as each minister reaches his conclusion.)

REV T: Be assured, good friends, I am here to lead you out of the darkness and into the light of the Lord's true church. I can bring you holy baptism in His church and into His salvation.

CROWD: *(with strong animation)* Glory be! Salvation's come at last! Hallelujah!

REV T: Won't you enter into His baptism and find ...

(CROWD exclaims again)

... the rest that your troubled heart ...

JOSEPH: *(thinking)* How could they find such certainty. I've tried and tried. And it's come so easily ...

(The CROWD drifts away. The scene is changed. It is morning and JOSEPH is seated at JOSEPH SR's desk with the Bible in front of him. HYRUM storms in the front door with a load of wood.)

HYRUM: *(heatedly)* It comes so easily to him!

(HYRUM moves into the kitchen and there is the sound of wood being thrown into the wood box.)

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LUCY: (*following Hyrum out*) What's the matter?

HYRUM: Nothing. Absolutely nothing!

LUCY: Now don't snap at me.

HYRUM: (*he softens*) I'm sorry, Mother.

(*As he moves to JOSEPH his anger returns.*)

Joseph, we're to go out to the barn immediately. Seems I forgot that I was told to mend the harness this morning.

JOSEPH: Before breakfast? But I was...

HYRUM: Put the book away. Big brother Alvin said to get a move on.

JOSEPH: But what about Samuel? Can't he...

HYRUM: (*unaware of the opening door and ALVIN's entrance*) No, he can't! Confound it, Joseph. Would you move?

ALVIN: No need to shout, Hyrum.

HYRUM: Excuse me.

ALVIN: And I did tell you last night. I'm sure...

HYRUM: You're always sure. Well, if you did tell me, then I guess I didn't listen. That's a nice switch isn't it?

ALVIN: I'm sorry if you didn't understand.

HYRUM: No, I don't understand. I'm supposed to listen to you and take your orders but you can't even spare one hour of even half-a-minute to listen to me.

ALVIN: I'm not ordering you. There are things on the farm that need to be done. It takes a lot of hard work from all of us.

HYRUM: But you do the deciding. "Go here" - "Go there" - "Jump here" - "sit down and listen to how sure I am right!"

ALVIN: Hyrum, we spent a whole evening...

HYRUM: And who did the talking? You!

ALVIN: Not completely. Listen, Hyrum, you don't...

HYRUM: "Listen, Hyrum." It's always listen Hyrum. One of these days, Alvin, I'm going to make you listen to me and you're not going to like what you hear!

(*HYRUM storms out of the room leaving LUCY and JOSEPH staring at ALVIN.*)

ALVIN: I'm going out to check on the stock.

LUCY: No, you're not. Not until I have an explanation.

ALVIN: Of what?

LUCY: What just happened.

ALVIN: There isn't any.

LUCY: That's no answer.

ALVIN: Mother, that's all I have.

LUCY: Why was Hyrum so angry?

ALVIN: I don't know.

(*A thought flashes across his mind*)

Maybe ...

LUCY: Maybe?

ALVIN: (*reconsidering*) I don't know. Will you call me when Father gets back from town? I want to go over the

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accounts with him as soon as possible. I'll send Samuel in to help you.

(He exits. JOSEPH moves toward the door.)

LUCY: Joseph?

(He turns)

I'm sure Alvin wouldn't mind if you finished what you were reading. Why don't you ...

JOSEPH: It's all right, Mother.

(Feeling the problem of what has happened.)

It's not important ... now.

(As he moves again SAMUEL comes racing through the door shouting.)

SAMUEL: Mother, Mother. Alvin said ...

(Cheerfully)

Morning Joseph. You going to the barn?

JOSEPH: Yes. Is Hyrum there?

SAMUEL: No. Guess he will be soon, though, 'cause Alvin said ...

JOSEPH: *(cutting SAMUEL off)* Thank you.

(He exits)

SAMUEL: Mother, Alvin said ...

(She's not listening to him)

Mother? Mother, what's the matter?

(She looks at him.)

LUCY: *(deeply worried)* I don't know.

(The lights fade.)

END ACT I Scene I

Scene Two -- *Inside the barn JOSEPH is seated on a stool with harness dangling idly from his hands. HYRUM enters.*

HYRUM: *(pulling a stool up beside JOSEPH)* You certainly do look busy. Where should I start?

JOSEPH: *(startled he begins to work)* Anywhere. There's a lot to do.

HYRUM: *(picking up one)* This looks like a good one. They certainly are in bad shape.

(They work for awhile in silence. Looking at JOSEPH)

Why so silent?

JOSEPH: What's to say?

(They fall once more into silence.)

HYRUM: Joseph? Do you think that you're going to miss school?

JOSEPH: I don't know.

HYRUM: Won't miss the work I bet.

JOSEPH: Oh, I didn't mind.

HYRUM: I used to miss my friends most.

JOSEPH: Nathan, Willy and Jeremy. I'll miss them. We used to have a lot of fun times.

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HYRUM: You'll get to see them at meeting on Sunday.

JOSEPH: No, I won't. You can say hello for me. They go with the Presbyterians.

HYRUM: You going to hear Reverend Greenwood again this Sunday? I thought Reverend Townsend had won you over with us Presbyterians.

JOSEPH: I'm going to stay home with Father and Alvin.

HYRUM: Who's idea was that? Alvin's?

JOSEPH: No, mine.

HYRUM: *(he's bitter again)* He must have a grand time with you on a Sunday morning; preaching against religion and trying to convert you to no church at all.

JOSEPH: What do you mean?

HYRUM: *(not wanting to make Joseph part of the argument)* Forget it. I didn't mean to say that. There must be a lot you both have in common.

JOSEPH: No more than you two.

HYRUM: There, you are mistaken. We have very little in common.

JOSEPH: It hasn't always been like that.

HYRUM: No it hasn't. He used to listen to me.

JOSEPH: That isn't fair, Hyrum. He listens to everybody.

HYRUM: *(he flares)* Does he?

(But again thinks of JOSEPH)

Let's forget it. All right? I'd rather not talk about Alvin. I've had enough of him today.

(HYRUM resumes his forgotten mending, while looking at JOSEPH, who is about to say something but thinks better of it and continues with his work. They work on in silence. Then JOSEPH stops, lays down his harness and moves toward the barn door. HYRUM seems to be unconscious of his movement. For a moment or two JOSEPH stands in the doorway. Then he turns and takes a dipper of water from a nearby bucket and drinks.)

JOSEPH: *(extending the dipper towards HYRUM)* Do you want a drink?

HYRUM: *(cheerfully)* I think I could manage.

(JOSEPH fills the dipper and crosses to HYRUM and hands him the water, which he drinks.)

That certainly tastes good.

(Evading the subject that is on both their minds.)

I wish Mother would hurry with breakfast.

JOSEPH: I'm not really hungry.

HYRUM: You've said that for days. But I have it on the best authority that Mother has fixed a breakfast this morning that no one could resist no matter how un-hungry they might be.

JOSEPH: Good.

(JOSEPH looks at HYRUM and then turns away. The scene begins to change. HYRUM drops his work.)

HYRUM: He used to listen to me. Listen to me.

JOSEPH: *(thinking)* Listening. Talking. Take me and talk. Hyrum's favorite saying. He said it so ...

(The scene has changed. It's summer on a green hillside outside of Palmyra. JOSEPH, HYRUM and ALVIN are lying in the tall grass.)

HYRUM: Everything's so beautiful in the summer.

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JOSEPH: It's almost as if winter had never come.

HYRUM: It makes you almost forget the cold mornings with frozen water, frozen clothes and hot mush.

ALVIN: Almost. We've been around long enough to know that autumn follows summer and then comes winter.
There's no ignoring it.

HYRUM: But wouldn't it be nice if just once there wasn't any winter?

ALVIN: Maybe it would.

HYRUM: Joseph, what does a day like today make you think of?

JOSEPH: *(with eagerness of a child)* Fishing!

HYRUM: And you, Alvin?

ALVIN: *(serenely)* Makes me grateful that the Lord saw fit to put me in such a beautiful country.

JOSEPH: *(softly, he's disappointed in himself)* That's what I should be thinking about.

ALVIN: *(without hearing Joseph)* And what are you thinking about Hyrum?

HYRUM: *(after thinking a moment)* Death.

ALVIN: On such a beautiful day? What ever for?

HYRUM: Haven't you ever wondered what it will be like to die?

ALVIN: Everyone wonders.

HYRUM: *(seriously thoughtful)* On days when the world is so wonderful it seems so close. We're so close.
You, Joseph, me. We think alike, act alike ...

(Laughingly)

... eat alike.

JOSEPH: *(interjecting)* Like the time you ...

HYRUM: Don't bring that up again. No, listen,
(The serious tone returns.)

Death will break those ...

ALVIN: *(gently and as a declaration of his love)* No, nothing can divide our unity - our love. Not even death.

HYRUM: *(looking with great love at Alvin as he agrees)* What will Mother and Father do when they die?

JOSEPH: What will we do?

ALVIN: Go on living. It's the way you look at the next life that makes the difference.

HYRUM: *(seeking ALVIN's wisdom)* How do you? I mean, what do you imagine?
(ALVIN thinks for a moment.)

ALVIN: *(humbly inadequate)* I don't really know. It's more a feeling of ...
(He searches)

... of what? I can't put it into words.

JOSEPH: *(simply)* It will be good for those who are good and bad for those who are bad.

ALVIN: *(looking at HYRUM)* The wisdom of a child.

JOSEPH: *(protesting)* I am not a child!

ALVIN: We know.

HYRUM: Why don't we go fishing? The day's far too perfect...

ALVIN: But with all that needs...

HYRUM: Another hour won't hurt will it? We've already wasted most of the afternoon.

ALVIN: I know.

JOSEPH: *(pleading)* Oh, please Alvin?

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ALVIN: If Mother says one word ...

HYRUM: I know; it was my idea and you had to go along to protect me. I don't know why I get blamed for everything.

JOSEPH: Because you generally start it.

ALVIN: Leave it to Hyrum to be the first one with a mischievous idea.

HYRUM: Just a minute ...

ALVIN: (*playfully - throwing a clump of grass at HYRUM*) Race you to the creek!

HYRUM: (*catching the Idea immediately*) Last one there has to clean the fish.

(*HYRUM and ALVIN speed off leaving JOSEPH somewhat bewildered for a moment.*)

JOSEPH: Come back here. Alvin! Hyrum!

(*As he begins to move*)

Oh, you wait till I get my hands on you!

(*Again we are in the barn. HYRUM is seated. JOSEPH stands.*)

HYRUM: (*pulling JOSEPH out of his thoughts and back to reality*) Joseph, would you hand me those shears?

This one could use some trimming.

(*He hands the shears to HYRUM then sits down for a moment and contemplates his brother.*)

JOSEPH: (*blurting out his thoughts*) Hyrum, why do you hate Alvin?

HYRUM: Why what?

JOSEPH: (*the innocent questioning of a child*) Why do you hate Alvin?

HYRUM: I don't. Really, Joseph, you're ...

JOSEPH: Then why?

HYRUM: You wouldn't understand. It's just something that ...

(*He is interrupted by the entrance of ALVIN.*)

ALVIN: (*a bit chidingly*) You look very busy, Joseph.

JOSEPH: (*resuming his task*) I guess I was daydreaming.

ALVIN: If we hurry we might get them done before breakfast.

HYRUM: We? And what should we do when we finish?

ALVIN: (*matter-of-factly*) Father will be home before breakfast's over. He'll tell you then.

HYRUM: You mean you don't know?

ALVIN: No, I don't.

HYRUM: That's new, Joseph. He admits he doesn't know something.

JOSEPH: Hyrum.

ALVIN: There are a lot of things I don't know.

HYRUM: And a lot you won't admit to.

ALVIN: What are you getting at?

HYRUM: It's too bad you can't admit you're wrong in your ideas about...

(*He searches for the right phrase*)

... important things.

ALVIN: Such as?

HYRUM: Religion.

ALVIN: (*strongly*) There's no need discussing ...

HYRUM: Why? Are you afraid you might be wrong, just once?

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ALVIN: No.

HYRUM: Then why don't you listen to me?

ALVIN: I have listened.

HYRUM: Once.

ALVIN: That was enough.

HYRUM: You didn't give it half a chance. You didn't try...

(Suddenly SAMUEL bursts into the barn.)

SAMUEL: *(running and shouting at the top of his lungs)* Breakfast! Mother says breakfast's gettin' cold! Break ... fast. Oh ... I guess you all heard me.

HYRUM: *(nonchalantly)* What's for breakfast?

SAMUEL: It smelled like hotcakes.

HYRUM: Did you have anything else to say, Alvin?

ALVIN: Did you?

HYRUM: Would It make any difference?

ALVIN: No.

(HYRUM and SAMUEL exit.)

ALVIN: *(turning to JOSEPH)* You coming?

JOSEPH: I'll pick up the things first.

ALVIN: Hurry.

(He exits. JOSEPH places the harness on the stool and then moves toward the door. He stops by the pail of water, picks up the dipper. He slowly lets the water pour over his hand as he pours it back into the pail.)

JOSEPH: *(thinking)*

ALVIN: Are you all right Joseph?

HYRUM: Here drink this?

ALVIN: Let us help ...

JOSEPH: *(emphasizing the "us" and "we")* Let us ... us ... let ...

ALVIN: We know.

HYRUM: Why don't we go fishing?

JOSEPH: We go ... why don't we ... we ...

JOSEPH: Why? Why are things so suddenly ... different?

(He exits.)

END ACT I

20 more pages in Acts 2 & 3