

**Samples from “In Due Season”**

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**Thank you for understanding.)**

**SCENE ONE - TOWN - (Music - fife and drum - “Drum Intro./Haydn’s March”** – The information about obtaining the Colonial music is found in the Director’s Notebook.)

**Sarah:** *(enters stage right, walking along reading her journal; suddenly notices audience)* Hello. I didn’t see you at first. Welcome to the year 1776. My name is Sarah, Sarah Chowning. This is my town---Williamsburg, Virginia. Beautiful, isn’t it? I love a quiet day like this when I can just stroll along the cobblestone streets, smell the crisp fresh air, and look at all the shoppes and houses...and remember. That’s why I write in my little journal. I want to keep the events and people that are so dear to me close to my heart forever.

Perhaps you’d like to share in my memories. I don’t usually allow anyone else to see the contents of my diary, but there’s a special story, about the people who live in this house, *(points to Richardson house)* that I’d like you to hear. *(looks through book to find the right page)*

Let’s see. I probably ought to start in April of 1774. That was when Elizabeth’s family left England, boarding a ship for the colonies. Mr. Farrington, Elizabeth’s father, was a cobbler by trade, and had always dreamed of coming to Williamsburg to open a boot shoppe.

Only three months out to sea, however, a terrible plague swept through their ship, causing the death of ten passengers. Among them were two by the name of Farrington. Elizabeth was an orphan, alone on a sea of water that was carrying her to a place she had never been, to people she had never met.

**(Flashback: Dock scene)**

**Mrs. McCloud:** *(Mrs. McCloud enters stage right. Elizabeth is seated on a barrel. She is looking very lonely and sad. People are shouting orders in the background, carrying packages, etc.)* There ye be, lass. I’ve been lookin’ all over fer ye. Come, dear, come and let me comfort ye. *(lifts Elizabeth up and hugs her)*

**Elizabeth:** I’m all right now. Thank you. You’ve been so kind to me, Mrs. McCloud.

If you hadn't befriended me, I don't know what I would have done. How can I ever repay you?

**Mrs. McCloud:** There's nothin' to repay, lass. Yer a bonnie girl, Elizabeth, and it breaks me heart to see ye grieven' so. Won't ye come with me to Berkley, dear? T'is a lovely plantation, and I know the Harrisons will be ever so glad to welcome ye there. Ye could be a big help to me in the kitchen.

**Elizabeth:** Oh, no. I couldn't do that. I'm certain they're just as fine as you say they are, but, well, it may seem foolish...but Williamsburg was my father's and mother's dream...

**Mrs. McCloud:** I understand, lass.

**Elizabeth:** Oh, Mrs. McCloud, that dream is all I have left of them! (*Elizabeth bursts into tears. Mrs. McCloud gives her a handkerchief.*) I'm sorry. I didn't want to cry.

**Mrs. McCloud:** There, there, dear. Cryin' is good fer a body now and then. The good Lord gave us tears fer a reason. But don't ye fret none, lass. Ye have a whole lot more o' yer fine parents with ye, for ye have the sweet memories of them in yer heart, and the blessed hope that ye'll see them again one day.

**Elizabeth:** Oh, Mrs. McCloud. What would I have done without you? (*gives her one final hug, then dries her tears*) I'll be fine, now.

**Mrs. McCloud:** I'm sure ye will, lass. But mind ye, if ye ever change yer mind, come to Berkley.

**Elizabeth:** I will. I promise. (*Mrs. McCloud exits stage right as Elizabeth follows her with her eyes. Adjusting her cloak around her more tightly, she resolutely picks up her carpet bag, and motions for someone to carry the barrel. Exits. Lights off scene.*)

**Sarah:** Elizabeth boarded a carriage for Williamsburg that very day. She spent the next evening at my family's inn, where I first met her. Father often has me wait on tables. As I was serving her dinner, she and I struck up a conversation and a friendship.

The following day she came here, to the Boot Shoppe. She had thought it would be best to sell her father's tools, hard as it would be to part with them. They were a part of him, a part of the only life she'd ever known, a part of the memories. Money

would be of more use to her now, however.

**End Scene - Lights**  
**(Music-fife and drum - “Fanfare”)**

**SCENE FOUR - DINING ROOM - August 5, 1774.** *(Elizabeth is standing in front of a mirror in Rebekah’s room, combing her hair. She gives herself a disapproving look, straightens her skirt, and sighs. Quietly, so as not to awaken Rebekah, she tiptoes out of the room, and begins to walk down the stairs. Bradley is yelling at John in the dining room.)*

**Bradley:** John, can’t you, for once, make hoecakes without burning them!  
*(Elizabeth enters the dining room.)*

Oh, Miss Farrington, perhaps you’ve arrived just in time.

**Elizabeth:** In time, sir?

**Bradley:** Yes. Surely you can do something to salvage this breakfast from the disaster it’s destined to be. *(He waves his hand toward the burnt stack of pancakes on the platter John is holding.)*

**Elizabeth:** *(sniffing the air as if delighted with the smell)* Mmm. Smells wonderful!

**Bradley:** *(turning away disgustedly)* Oh, please!

**John:** *(repressing the urge to laugh)* It’s no use trying to stand up fer me, mum. It’s nothin’ short o’ the truth that I’m the worst cook in Williamsburg.

**Mr. Richardson:** *(entering during John’s lines, using a cane and walking with a limp)* You’re the worst cook in the world, if you ask me. *(extends his hand to Elizabeth)* You must be Miss Farrington.

**Elizabeth:** *(somewhat cautiously taking his crippled hand in hers)* Yes, sir.

**Mr. Richardson:** I am Mr. Richardson. *(withdraws his hand, looks her steadily in the eyes)* Bradley tells me that you are going to be our housekeeper and companion for Rebekah.

**Elizabeth:** *(glancing over at Bradley, who is turned away from them, poking at a log in the fireplace)* I hadn’t given your son a definite answer yet, Mr. Richardson.

**Mr. Richardson:** Well, I am sorry to hear that. You look as if you'd be fit for the task. You're alone, I believe.

**Elizabeth:** *(grasping the back of a chair, pausing)* Yes...I'm alone.

**Mr. Richardson:** Then it's settled. *(sits down at the table)* It would be utterly preposterous for you to turn your back on such a position, what with no family to speak of.

**Elizabeth:** *(She closes her eyes, breathes deeply, looks over at Bradley. He is leaning against the fireplace mantel. He has a smirk on his face and a triumphant twinkle in his eyes. Elizabeth glances back at Mr. Richardson. She grips the back of the chair again, looks down.)* I--I suppose you're right.

**Bradley:** Does that mean you'll take the challenge, Miss Farrington?

**Elizabeth:** Yes, sir. I guess it does.

**Mr. Richardson:** Splendid! You may begin by transforming these --*(pauses; takes a biscuit off the platter, bangs it on the table, tries to bite it)* these rocks into something edible! John, show the young lady to the kitchen house.

**John:** Yes, sir.

**Elizabeth:** *(follows John outside to the garden; pauses, sits down on a bench and begins to cry)* I--I'm sorry.

**John:** It's all right, mum. I know 'ow yer feel.

**Elizabeth:** I don't know why I said I'd stay; it's the last thing I want to do.

**John:** Both of 'em 'ave a way of gettin' others to do what they want.

**Elizabeth:** How long have you been here?

**John:** Three years.

**Elizabeth:** Three years! How do you endure it? I mean, I've seen the way they treat

you...

**John:** Don't see that I 'ave much choice, mum. (*smiles*) Wot say we forget that now and try to make the best o' things.

**Elizabeth:** (*sighing*) On one condition.

**John:** Yes, mum?

**Elizabeth:** That you stop calling me mum, and call me Elizabeth.

**John:** Does that mean we're friends?

**Elizabeth:** Yes. The Lord knows I need one just now.

**John:** So do I.

**End Scene - Lights**  
**(Music - fife and drums)**

**SCENE EIGHT** - TOWN - October 6, 1774. (*Fronts of buildings should be displayed. Elizabeth and John are coming out the front door.*)

**Elizabeth:** I still can't believe Bradley gave you permission to show me around town.

**John:** (*shrugs his shoulders*) Someone should 'ave taken the time to show yer everything a month ago. Besides, Sunday afternoons should be free. It's against the law to work on Sundays, yer know.

**Elizabeth:** Could you get in trouble with the law when he has you work on Sundays?

**John:** (*sighs*) Don't know. I suppose so, if I were caught.

**Elizabeth:** But--wouldn't it be Bradley's fault?

**John:** Elizabeth, do yer really think 'e'd admit it was 'is idea?

**Mrs. Peterson:** (*half walking, half running down the street to catch up with them*) Yoo-hoo! You, there--John! (*John rolls his eyes and looks away. He puts his hat in front of his face, trying to stifle a laugh.*)

**John:** Yes, mum?

**Mrs. Peterson:** Is this the new girl who's come to work at the Richardson's? (*John starts to answer, but Mrs. Peterson keeps rattling on. She takes Elizabeth's hand and shakes it heartily.*) Well, of course she is! How do you do...

**Elizabeth:** Elizabeth.

**Mrs. Peterson:** (*dragging her over to a bench as she talks*) Elizabeth. So that's your name. I tried to find out what your name was from a friend of mine, but she had no idea. I have heard nice things about you, though. I'm Mrs. Peterson, by the way. My husband is the jail keeper here in Williamsburg. It's quite an exciting life that we live, actually; we meet all sorts of characters. Why, do you know that some of Blackbeard's men were imprisoned there once? I could go on and on, and tell you story after story about some of the people who have stayed there at one time or

another.

**Elizabeth:** *(smiles weakly at her)* I'm sure you could.

**Mrs. Peterson:** My husband also plays the organ at Bruton Parish on Sunday mornings. You must have seen him. *(laughs heartily)* It may seem ironic that the town's jailer is also the church organist, but the arrangement actually works quite well. You see, my husband gets very fatigued locked up at the time and lets them do the pumping. You watch some Sunday, you'll see.

**John:** *(politely trying to get away from her)* Well, Mrs. Peterson. It was nice to see yer again. I'm glad yer 'ad a chance to meet Elizabeth. We'll 'ave to excuse ourselves, now, mum. We were just goin' for a short walk so I could show Elizabeth around town.

**Mrs. Peterson:** Well now, isn't that a coincidence! I just happen to be going for a walk myself, and I would love to have company! *(John forces a smile; looks helplessly at Elizabeth, who returns the look.)*

**Mrs. Peterson:** *(as they start walking)* Actually, it's fortunate for you that I've decided to come along on your walk. I know a great deal of the history of the town. *(They walk along as she talks.)* The population is about 2,000, although at Publick Times, it swells to 5,000! Can you imagine it? Five thousand people in this little town. The inns are just as crowded as can be! And all the activities! You never saw such a bustling about in your life. Of course, my husband and I simply love Publick Times. In fact, for the last few years, he's be in charge of bringing the Theater Troupe here; they always do a Shakespearean play. There's races, and food. Oh, so much food. Why, there's...

**Elizabeth:** *(trying to change the subject)* Uh, Mrs. Peterson, what's that building over there? It's such an odd shape.

**Mrs. Peterson:** Oh, that! That's the Magazine--where the militia keeps all it's weapons. We had a man who broke in there once. Stole five guns, mind you! But, he was caught with the goods. He was put in jail for two years. I personally felt it should have been longer, but no one ever thinks to ask my opinion.

Oh, now there's the capitol.

**Elizabeth:** Where?

**Mrs. Peterson:** (*pointing*) Right over there, dear. See the cupola on top? Patrick Henry, that young orator--my can he make a speech, or so I've heard. Anyway, he made a speech there not long ago. (*dramatically*) "Caesar had his Brutus, Charles I had his Cromwell, and George III may profit by their example!" It's a wonder he didn't get himself hung. Oh, well, he may yet.

Oh, I must show you the Governor's Palace. Have you seen that yet?

**Elizabeth:** I passed by it when the carriage...

**Mrs. Peterson:** Well, you simply MUST see the Governor's Palace. No tour of Williamsburg would be complete without it. Oh, how I would love to see inside. I've heard they have the grandest parties! (*in a stage whisper to Elizabeth*) I've been trying to figure out for years how to get invited to one. (*speaking loudly again*) Oh, behind that fence over there is a maze made out of bushes, mind you! I've peeked through the fence on several occasions and seen it myself!

Well, here we are at the jail. Did I tell you that Blackbeard's men were imprisoned here once? (*Elizabeth looks at John for him to answer.*)

**John:** Yes, mum.

**Mrs. Peterson:** You do know who Blackbeard was, don't you?

**Elizabeth:** Oh, of course, he was a notorious pirate.

**Mrs. Peterson:** Right you are! Captain Teach was his real name, and they say he had long hair that he braided with ribbons! Can you picture that?

**Elizabeth:** It does seem rather out of place for a pirate, doesn't it?

**Mrs. Peterson:** Well, I should say so! But, now listen to this! They also say that he'd light matches and put them under his hat--terrify people, he would! Actually, it's amazing that he didn't catch his hair on fire. He certainly must have been a strange creature to behold.

**John:** (*politely trying to end the conversation*) Yes, mum. Well, thank yer for yer company, but we really ought to be gettin' 'ome now.

**Elizabeth:** (*abruptly*) John's right. We should be starting back.

**Mrs. Peterson:** Well, I must say I've thoroughly enjoyed talking with the two of you. You both seem like very nice young people. I do hope that I might join you again sometime. (*John and Elizabeth both smile weakly.*)

**Mrs. Peterson:** Goodbye! (*John and Elizabeth say goodbye and head toward the garden. Once inside, they both burst into laughter at the same time.*)

**Elizabeth:** I never in my life heard anyone talk so much!

**John:** I am sorry, Elizabeth. I 'ad 'oped we could 'ave a nice, quiet walk together. It was such--a peaceful day.

**Elizabeth:** Well, it means just one thing.

**John:** Wot's that, mum?

**Elizabeth:** We'll just have to do it again sometime.

**John:** (*looking towards the direction of the gaol*) Aye--when Mrs. Peterson's out o' town.

**End Scene - Lights**  
**(Music - fife and drum)**

**SCENE NINE - GARDEN** - the day before Christmas, 1774. (*John is stacking wood. Elizabeth enters the garden from the dining room. Bradley is in the shop. Mr. Richardson is seated at the dining room table reading the newspaper. Rebekah is in the Parlor.*)

**Elizabeth:** (*to John*) Oh, there you are, John. Before I forget it, I wanted to tell you that Mr. Richardson said you were to join the rest of the family tomorrow for Christmas dinner.

**John:** Good. I'll be lookin' forward to it. (*John starts to pile some wood in his arms to take inside the house.*) The day should be extra special wot with Rebekah takin' part in it.

**Elizabeth:** If only that were true. (*sits on the bench*)

**John:** Yer mean she don't plan to be with the rest o' the family tomorrow? I thought...

**Elizabeth:** That she was making progress? So did I. At least she'll come out of her room occasionally now.

**John:** Then why not tomorrow?

**Elizabeth:** (*sighs, shrugs her shoulders*) I don't know. I was certain she wouldn't go to church in the morning, but I thought she'd at least eat dinner with all of us.

**John:** (*shakes his head sadly*) If only she could get past 'er own 'urt and realize all the good things there are in life fer 'er to enjoy. If yer ask me, wot she really needs is the Lord. "E'd 'elp 'er through 'er trials, I know. "E's 'elped me through a lot o' 'ard times.

**Elizabeth:** (*pauses; her face brightens with an idea*) I'm glad to hear you say that, John, because I've been thinking...

**John:** (*a little warily*) Thinkin' what?

**Elizabeth:** That maybe you ought to talk to her.

**John:** Me!

**Elizabeth:** Yes.

**John:** No, mum, I can't.

**Elizabeth:** Why? You'd be the perfect one. You just said yourself that the Lord's helped you through a lot of hard times. Perhaps if you shared that with her.

**John:** I can't, Elizabeth.

**Elizabeth:** *(getting a little exasperated with him)* But why not? You're such an easy person to talk to. You always seem to know the right thing to say at the right time. You've been a great encouragement to me.

**John:** I can't tell yer why.

**Bradley:** *(from the door of the shop where he has been listening for a short time)* I can. *(John looks at him, then turns away and stares at the ground. Bradley saunters into the garden, then leans against the shop, his arms crossed victoriously in front of him.)*

**John:** *(trying to get away from them)* I 'ave to get this wood inside.

**Bradley:** I want you here for this, John.

**John:** *(embarrassed)* Please, sir.

**Bradley:** You heard what I said. Put the wood down. *(The audience should be able to tell that John is struggling with his emotions. He pauses, then obeys. He should keep his back toward both Elizabeth and Bradley during the rest of their conversation. He must react to what is being said, clench his fist occasionally, breathe heavily, etc.)*

**Bradley:** Has John ever told you much about his past, Elizabeth?

**Elizabeth:** No sir, not much. But then, I don't suppose it's any of my business.

**Bradley:** Well, I think it is. It may help you to understand why I will not allow him

to associate too closely with my sister. (*pauses--looks over at John, smirks*) Have you ever heard of a workhouse, Elizabeth?

**Elizabeth:** Yes, sir.

**Bradley:** Tell me, what do you know of them?

**Elizabeth:** I've--I've never been inside one, but I've heard that they're horrible places.

**Bradley:** Mmm. Nonetheless, they provide a place for England's paupers. Keeps them off the streets, you know. The result is far less crime and beggary--not a bad idea, to my way of thinking. In any event, it seems there was this woman who came to just such an institution--in London, I believe. She gave birth to a child shortly after she arrived. However, the mother died, poor thing, leaving no name, nor any idea of who the father was and where he could be located. The matron of the poorhouse decided to simply call the baby, "John." (*sarcastically*) Quite a distinguished heritage, wouldn't you say so, Miss Farrington?

**Elizabeth:** I don't think someone's worth should be judged by their family background.

**Bradley:** You don't.

**Elizabeth:** No, sir.

**Bradley:** Well, now, that's where you and I would differ. You see, I believe that you can determine quite a lot about an individual by his background. One's station in life is of utmost importance; (*looks at John with contempt*) someone who grew up in a workhouse is from the very lowest social class.

**Elizabeth:** But God's Word says we're not to have respect of persons. Wouldn't that make your kind of reasoning...

**Bradley:** (*cutting her off*) Wrong?

**Elizabeth:** Well, yes, sir.

**Bradley:** (*shrugging it off nonchalantly*) Perhaps, but then, I don't live much

according to the Bible, I suppose; never saw the need to.

Allow me to finish John's story. (*Elizabeth looks sympathetically at John; starts to ask Bradley not to continue, but he cuts her off.*) John was a very disagreeable, roguish sort of fellow. He hated the workhouse and ran away whenever he had the opportunity, during which times he would make his living from pick-pocketing and thievery. He was always arrested, however. After being beaten for his crimes or spending a short time in prison, he'd be returned to the workhouse--where he'd remain until he'd manage to run away again.

When he was fourteen, however, he escaped for good, stowing away on board a ship bound for Virginia. He was discovered, and later sold upon his arrival in the colonies, as an indentured servant--in order to pay for his passage. That is how he came to be here. When his indenture is over he will, no doubt, return to his old ways.

**Elizabeth:** I don't believe that; John's a Christian now.

**Bradley:** (*sarcastically*) Oh, John's a Christian now.

**Elizabeth:** Yes, sir. He told me he was saved about three years ago.

**Bradley:** (*cynically*) So that changes everything, does it?

**Elizabeth:** Yes, sir, it does. The Bible says that when someone accepts Christ as his personal Savior, he becomes a "new creature." The old way of life is gone; all things are new--you become a different person than you were before.

**Bradley:** Different. (*pauses--glances at John then looks back at Elizabeth*) You may believe what you want, Miss Farrington, but I have informed John, as I now inform you, that he is a servant in this household, nothing more. He is not to become my sister's friend or confidant. She already thinks too highly of him, regards him as her equal. Well, he's not! (*pauses*)

I must go see the cooper for a few minutes. (*starts to leave, stops, looks over at John, says tauntingly*) You may take the wood in now, John. (*Bradley exits.*)

**Elizabeth:** (*Elizabeth gets up and goes over to John who is slowly picking up the pile of wood. He is struggling very hard to control his emotions. Elizabeth hesitates for a moment, not knowing what to say.*) John, I...

**John:** (*still turned away from her*) Please, Elizabeth, don't say anything. (*Elizabeth turns slowly away and walks toward the kitchen, sympathetically looking back once or*

*twice. John walks inside to the dining room, his head down. He turns to look back and accidentally knocks into Mr. Richardson. The logs fall everywhere.)*

**Mr. Richardson:** *(angrily)* John!

**John:** *(kneeling down to pick up the wood)* I—I'm sorry, sir. I didn't see yer.

**Mr. Richardson:** Well, it's no wonder, unless you have eyes in the back of your head! Next time, please watch where you're going!

**John:** Yes, sir. *(starts past him towards parlor)*

**Mr. Richardson:** Just a moment, John. I'd like to speak to you about something.

**John:** Yes, sir?

**Mr. Richardson:** Well, come here. *(John comes closer. Mr. Richardson lowers the volume of his voice so Rebekah will not hear.)* It's about Rebekah. She's in the Parlor. This would be the perfect opportunity for you to talk to her.

**John:** *(hesitantly)* Talk to 'er about what, sir?

**Mr. Richardson:** Why, about tomorrow, of course.

**John:** Tomorrow, sir?

**Mr. Richardson:** Why, yes. Oh, of course, you don't know what I'm referring to. Elizabeth and I were the only ones in the parlor last night when we were discussing it.

**John:** *(slowly, as if he's afraid to hear the reason)* Discussing what, sir?

**Mr. Richardson:** Well, none of us has been able to persuade Rebekah to take part in any of our holiday activities tomorrow. Elizabeth suggested that you might be able to convince her. *(with feeling)* I would be grateful to you if you could; it won't seem like Christmas without her.

**John:** I—I'd like to, sir, but I—I can't.

**Mr. Richardson:** *(upset with his response)* What do you mean, you can't?

**John:** *(pauses, searching for the right words to say)* Your—your son told me I couldn't.

**Mr. Richardson:** *(trying to hold back his anger)* My son. *(pauses, takes a deep breath, says firmly)* My son is impetuous! He has also had the grave misconception, since my illness, that, because I can no longer master the shop, I am no longer the master of this household! *(His anger grows steadily, though he still keeps his voice low, so as not to be heard by Rebekah.)* Well, that's not true! Do you hear me?!

**John:** *(softly)* Yes, sir.

**Mr. Richardson:** You are indentured to me; my name is on that document, not Bradley's. It is correct that you are to do what he says, but only if it does not contradict MY orders. Is that clear?!

**John:** Yes, sir.

**Mr. Richardson:** *(calming down somewhat)* Good. Now that we understand each other I suggest that you obey me at once!

**John:** Yes, sir. *(John turns and walks slowly into the hall, then the parlor. He glances nervously at Rebekah who is seated on the loveseat. She immediately senses that someone is in the room. John puts the logs in the fire; Rebekah turns her head toward the sound.)*

**Rebekah:** Bradley, is that you?

**John:** No, Miss, it's me—John.

**Rebekah:** Oh.

**John:** *(stalling)* I—uh—was just puttin' some more wood in the fire. *(There is an awkward silence. John should nervously run his fingers through his hair, shake his head, etc., as if trying to decide how to start and wishing he could somehow get out of the situation.)*

**Rebekah:** Is something wrong, John?

**John:** Uh—no, mum, at least I 'ope not. Wot I mean is...

**Rebekah:** Was there something you wanted to tell me?

**John:** Uh, no, mum. I mean, yes, mum. Wot I mean is...

**Rebekah:** What DO you mean, John?

**John:** (*blurting it out quickly*) I wanted to talk to yer about Christmas.

**Rebekah:** (*suspiciously*) Christmas?

**John:** Uh—yes, mum.

**Rebekah:** Father sent you here, didn't he?

**John:** (*hesitates*) Yes, mum.

**Rebekah:** John, I appreciate what everyone is trying to do...

**John:** (*boldly, without thinking*) No, mum, yer don't appreciate wot everyone is tryin' to do. Yer don't appreciate anything or anyone. All yer care about is yourself!

**Rebekah:** (*taken back; with controlled shock, not loudly*) How dare you speak to me like that!

**John:** (*apologetically*) I—I'm sorry, Mum. I didn't mean to say that. Wot I meant was—well, yer've been actin' like a spoiled child.

**Rebekah:** (*with a gasp*) John!

**John:** (*realizing he's getting himself in deeper, but isn't certain how to get out*) That's not wot I meant to say either. If—if yer just weren't so stubborn. (*Rebekah starts to cry softly.*) Oh, please, mum, don't cry. I'm sorry. I didn't mean to upset yer. It's just that...

**Rebekah:** (*with controlled anger*) I think you've said enough, John.

**John:** (*to himself*) I think I've said more than enough. (*Rebekah starts crying again.*) Please, mum, I'm sorry.

**Rebekah:** Leave me alone, John.

**John:** I...

**Rebekah:** (*firmly, but not yelling*) Leave me alone!

**John:** Yes, mum. (*He backs out of the room and knocks into Mr. Richardson, who is now seated at the dining room table.*)

**Mr. Richardson:** John!

**John:** (*running his fingers nervously through his hair*) I'm sorry, sir.

**Mr. Richardson:** I see you're beginning to make a habit of this, John. Well, at least this time you didn't drop a load of wood on me! Don't tell me you're finished speaking with Rebekah already.

**John:** (*using a play on words*) Uh—yes, sir, I'm finished.

**Mr. Richardson:** (*looks puzzled, listening*) Is she crying?

**John:** (*with a sheepish grin*) Yes, sir.

**Mr. Richardson:** Whatever did you say to her?!

**John:** Uh...(He hesitates, wondering how to get himself out of the situation. Just then Rebekah enters from the parlor and starts up the stairs.)

**Mr. Richardson:** Rebekah, my dear, what is it? (*John sees his chance for escape and heads quickly to the shop.*)

**Rebekah:** (*as she goes up the stairs, crying*) I just want to be left alone. (*Mr. Richardson looks after her, bewildered, then glances around for John. He shakes his head as if confused, then puts his head in his hands. Elizabeth comes out of the kitchen as John is entering the shop. Noticing that he is upset, she follows him inside.*)

**Elizabeth:** John, what is wrong with you?

**John:** Oh, Elizabeth, I've done it now!

**Elizabeth:** Whatever are you talking about?

**John:** The things I said to 'er! (*sits down at the cobbler's bench and puts his head in his hands*)

**Elizabeth:** You went and talked to Rebekah about tomorrow after what Bradley said? (*John says nothing, but shakes his head, "Yes."*)

**Elizabeth:** Why?

**John:** (*looking up at her and being a bit sarcastic*) Actually, it was yer idea. Thank yer very much.

**Elizabeth:** My idea?

**John:** Yer told Mr. Richardson...

**Elizabeth:** (*remembering*) Oh, no!

**John:** Oh, yes!

**Elizabeth:** John, I'm sorry. That was before...

**John:** (*looking up at her*) I know, I know. I'm not blamin' yer. But when Mr. Richardson finds out wot I said...

**Elizabeth:** Oh, John, it couldn't have been all that terrible. (*John says nothing but gives her a look as if to say, "Oh, really?"*) John, I've known you for almost five months now. I've never heard you say anything cross or mean. (*John looks away from her and shakes his head.*) What DID you say to her, John?

**John:** (*turning to her*) I told 'er she was being stubborn and selfish and actin' like a spoiled child.

**Elizabeth:** (*clasping her hand over her mouth in shock*) Oh, John, you didn't!

**John:** Oh, yes, I did.

**Elizabeth:** You're right, Mr. Richardson is going to be furious. (*She pauses. Bradley comes to the door just then, unseen by both John and Elizabeth.*) What do suppose Bradley will do when he finds out that you talked to Rebekah against his wishes?

**John:** I'm afraid I know all too well what 'e'll...(*John notices Bradley standing in the doorway of the shoppe.*).. do.

**Bradley:** (*angrily*) Get up, John!

**John:** (*rising, backing away*) Please, sir, I can explain.

**Bradley:** (*coming closer to him*) It had better be good.

**John:** I—I 'ad no choice.

**Bradley:** (*unbelievably*) No choice. (*pushes him against the wall*) You liar! (*gives him a stage punch in the stomach*)

**Elizabeth:** Please, let him explain!

**Bradley:** (*grabbing him by the collar*) All right, John, explain!

**John:** Yer father told me I 'ad to try to talk to 'er.

**Bradley:** And did you think to tell him that I had forbidden you to?

**John:** Yes, sir.

**Bradley:** And...?

**John:** 'E said that 'e was the master of this 'ouse and that 'is word was final.

**Bradley:** (*pausing momentarily, then slowly*) I see. (*roughly releases John's collar, walks away from John as if thinking what he will do*) Well, Father's right, of course. However, (*looks threateningly back at John*) just so you don't think you can ignore what I say, you will spend the entire day tomorrow here in this shop—without any meals! Is that understood?!

**John:** *(sighs)* Yes, sir.

**Bradley:** Come along, Elizabeth. *(Elizabeth starts to protest, but John nods for her to leave. Once Bradley and Elizabeth are gone, John sits down at the cobbler's bench and rams his fist into it, then buries his head in his hands.)*

**Bradley:** *(when he and Elizabeth reach the garden)* I suppose you thought I was being too harsh.

**Elizabeth:** *(finding it difficult to say anything to him)* Tomorrow is Christmas, sir.

**Bradley:** *(with a smirk)* I know.

**End Scene - Lights**  
**(Music - Minuet in g minor by J.S. Bach**  
**from the Anna Magdalena Bach Notebook**  
**first part only; take all repeats)**

**SCENE TEN - PARLOR - December 25, 1774.** *(It is Christmas day. Elizabeth is sitting in a chair working on a counted cross-stitch sampler. Mr. Richardson is in another chair reading a book. Bradley is seated on the loveseat reading the "Virginia Gazette." John is alone in the shoppe.)*

**Bradley:** It's going to come to war, Father. I'm certain of it.

**Mr. Richardson:** Nonsense. You must have just read all that foolishness about the colonies gripes with England.

**Bradley:** Yes. You've read it already?

**Mr. Richardson:** *(turns towards Bradley)* Yes, I have. And I don't agree. The Stamp Act, the Boston Massacre, that ridiculous, so-called "Tea Party" in Boston's harbor last December—they're all a thing of the past. Not much has happened as of late. The "Gazette" is only stirring up trouble that's not there.

**Bradley:** It is there, Father. It's just not surfacing at the moment. Nothing has been resolved, and nothing short of war will resolve it.

**Mr. Richardson:** *(thoughtfully)* I don't think the colonies have any valid reason to go against their king.

**Bradley:** *(looking up at him)* You'd be a loyalist then, Father?

**Mr. Richardson:** *(realizing that this puts one more wedge between him and his son, yet determined to prove he is right)* Yes, I would.

**Bradley:** Well, I wouldn't. *(lays the paper down beside him)* I could use some excitement, some entertainment.

**Mr. Richardson:** I would hardly consider war to be entertaining. Besides, I need you here to oversee the shoppe.

**Bradley:** The shoppe! I care very little about the shoppe, Father!

**Mr. Richardson:** *(angrily closing his book)* That shoppe has provided you with respectable work and money in your pocket!

**Elizabeth:** *(feeling uncomfortable listening to them, says to Mr. Richardson)* If you'll excuse me, sir, I need to go make a few more preparations for dinner.

**Mr. Richardson:** Of course, Elizabeth.

**Bradley:** (*sarcastically*) I can't imagine why you should want to leave now; we're having such a wonderful time. It's almost as exciting as when all the guns fired early this morning to remind us that it was Christmas! (*Elizabeth gives him a disgusted look, sighs, and opens the door to the hall. Rebekah comes down the stairs at that moment.*)

**Elizabeth:** Rebekah.

**Bradley:** Rebekah--come in. Here, sit over here. (*leads her to the loveseat, then sits down beside her*)

**Mr. Richardson:** Rebekah, I can't tell you how much this means to me.

**Rebekah:** I hope I'm not too late for dinner.

**Mr. Richardson:** No, not at all. Elizabeth was just about to finish the preparations.

**Rebekah:** Please, wait just a moment, Elizabeth. I have something to say that I want all of you to hear, especially you, John. (*Mr. Richardson and Elizabeth look at Bradley; he glances away.*)

**Rebekah:** I want to apologize for the way I've been acting.

**Mr. Richardson:** No apology is necessary, my dear. We all know how hard things have been for you.

**Rebekah:** That's just it. You've all been so sympathetic, so kind, and I deeply appreciate it—but I guess I really needed to hear what John had to say. (*both Bradley and Mr. Richardson take notice, Elizabeth shows nervousness*)

**Bradley:** What, exactly, DID he say, Rebekah?

**Rebekah:** (*sensing that something's not right*) John, do you mind if I tell them?

**Mr. Richardson:** (*taking a deep breath and looking crossly at his son*) I'm afraid John's not here at the moment, but I'm certain he wouldn't mind.

**Rebekah:** (*laughs softly*) Poor John. He was so nervous. The more he tried to say the right thing, the worse it sounded. I was so angry at first, angry and hurt.

**Bradley:** *(trying to hold back his anger)* What DID he say, Rebekah.

**Rebekah:** He told me I was being selfish, and stubborn, and acting like a spoiled child.

**Mr. Richardson:** He what!?

**Bradley:** *(getting up and crossing to the front of the stage)* I'll make him pay for those words!

**Rebekah:** Bradley, please! Please don't do anything to hurt John! Don't you see! Those words were exactly what I needed to hear.

**Bradley:** He had no right to talk to you like that!

**Rebekah:** He was only trying to help. He told me the truth, something everyone else has been afraid to tell me. *(pauses)* He was right. *(starts to cry)* He was right. I'm so sorry for what I've put you all through.

**Mr. Richardson:** *(comfortingly)* There, there, dear. It's all right. Think no more about it.

**Rebekah:** *(stops crying)* Father, *(pauses)* I—I'd like to play the piano-forte. *(gets up and feels her way to it)* I know it's been almost a year, but...

**Mr. Richardson:** I'd love nothing better. *(Bradley starts towards the door, anger in his eyes. He is to give the audience the idea that he is going to the shoppe to see John. Mr. Richardson notices.)*

**Mr. Richardson:** *(firmly)* Bradley, sit down. I think your sister would enjoy your company while she plays. I'm sure you're as anxious as I am to hear her again.

**Bradley:** *(struggles with the order)* Of course. *(crosses back to loveseat, sits down defiantly, picks up paper and begins reading)*

**Mr. Richardson:** *(kindly)* Elizabeth, perhaps you'd better go now, if we're going to be able to eat tonight yet.

**Elizabeth:** *(curtsies)* Yes, sir.

**Mr. Richardson:** Oh, Elizabeth, *(pauses, looks directly at Bradley)* tell John that he

may join us for dinner.

**Elizabeth:** *(curtsies and smiles victoriously at Bradley)* Yes, sir! *(Bradley looks up, rolls his eyes, and drops his newspaper. Rebekah begins to play “Greensleeves” on the piano-forte. She stops after Elizabeth arrives at the Boot Shoppe.)*

**Elizabeth:** Merry Christmas, John.

**John:** *(looking away, there is resentment in his voice)* Elizabeth, that’s not funny.

**Elizabeth:** *(sincerely)* I’m sorry. It wasn’t meant to be funny. You’re to come to dinner in about an hour.

**John:** Elizabeth, I don’t dare. Yer ‘eard wot Bradley said.

**Elizabeth:** I know, John, I know. *(pauses, smiling)* Rebekah is in the parlor right now—playing the piano-forte.

**John:** Wot?

**Elizabeth:** God was with your words more than either of us realized.

**John:** But ‘ow...?

**Elizabeth:** She said she needed to hear what you told her about herself; she needed to hear the truth.

**John:** *(afraid of the consequences he may face)* She didn’t... she didn’t tell them...

**Elizabeth:** I’m afraid so. *(John rolls his eyes as if to say, “Oh, no!”)* I don’t think you have anything to worry about, though. Bradley was furious, of course, but Mr. Richardson put him in his place.

**John:** *(facetiously)* Well, now, there’s a comfort.

**Elizabeth:** *(smiles)* I need to get to the kitchen, but first, well—I have something for you. *(pulls a small package out of her apron pocket)*

**John:** Somethin’-- fer me?

**Elizabeth:** Yes, it’s a Christmas present. *(She hands it to him. He looks at it as if he can’t believe it’s real.)* I know Christmas gifts are more for children, but...(John looks away from her, deep in thought, struggling with his emotions.) John, is

something wrong?

**John:** No, no, o' course not. It's just that... *(pauses)* Well, no-one ever gave me a present before.

**Elizabeth:** Not in your whole life?

**John:** No, mum. *(looks thoughtfully at the gift as if it were a priceless treasure)* I 'ardly know wot to do with it.

**Elizabeth:** *(softly)* Open it, John.

**John:** *(opens the gift carefully)* A Bible. Elizabeth, that must 'ave cost yer a lot.

**Elizabeth:** I thought perhaps I could teach you how to read.

**John:** *(with much feeling)* I'd like that. Thank yer.

**Elizabeth:** *(smiles)* Well, I suppose I'd best get to that dinner or none of us will eat tonight.

**John:** *(reaching under his cobbler's bench)* Wait, please. I 'ave somethin' fer yer, too. It's not much. I didn't 'ave any money to buy yer nothin'. *(He hands her a carved wooden horse.)*

**Elizabeth:** Oh, John, thank you.

**John:** I wanted to carve yer a lit'le governor's mansion, but, well, 'orses are the only things I can whit'le.

**Elizabeth:** It's beautiful, John. I'll always treasure it.

**John:** *(smiles slightly)* Merry Christmas, Elizabeth.

**Elizabeth:** Merry Christmas, John. *(She turns and leaves as lights fade.)*

**End Scene - Lights**

**Intermission**

**ACT II/SCENE FOUR - BOOT SHOPPE - May 10, 1775.** (*John and Bradley are working. Patrick Henry enters.*)

**Bradley:** (*trying to make an impression*) Mr. Henry! It's an honor, sir. What may I do for you this fine day, sir?

**Patrick Henry:** I would like to order a pair of shoes. As you can see, the winter's harshness has left me in some need.

**Bradley:** Yes, sir! Won't you sit down, please? (*Mr. Henry sits on a stool. Bradley begins fitting him for shoes.*) I read in the "Gazette" about the speech you made in Richmond the other month, sir. You made quite a stir, asking for liberty or death.

**Henry:** I meant every word of it. These colonies cannot exist at the price of slavery.

**Bradley:** I admire your courage, sir. I understand that shots were fired in Lexington and Concord, Massachusetts on the eighteenth of last month. Are those reports true, sir? Are we at war?

**Henry:** We are indeed. There's no way to tell when it will reach Virginia, but I have no doubt that it will eventually. (*sighs*) Liberty will not be attained by war, however. It is so fragile that it must be guarded and contended for every day of our lives. Nor does liberty apply only to the physical. Man must have liberty of soul, as well.

**Bradley:** (*finished with the fitting*) I'm not certain I understand, sir.

**Henry:** (*sighing deeply*) Forgive me. (*gets up slowly*) I have something on my mind that's been troubling me greatly. As you may know, I've defended many religious dissenters in court. I felt we had made some gains, but just last week, in Winchester, a man was beaten, fatally beaten, for preaching in unlicensed facilities. It was an indefensible reproach upon all of us who declare we stand for liberty!

**Bradley:** Your shoes should be ready in a few days, sir.

**Henry:** Thank you. (*starts to leave*)

**John:** (*glancing nervously at Bradley, says hesitantly to Mr. Henry, as if he's afraid he already knows the answer*) Excuse me, sir. This preacher—

yer wouldn't 'appen to know 'is name, would yer? (*Bradley eyes John suspiciously as he picks up his own waistcoat and prepares to exit the shoppe.*)

**Henry:** Let me think for a moment. (*pauses*) Yes, yes, I believe it was Hathaway, Nathaniel Hathaway. (*John closes his eyes against the shock, bows his head sorrowfully.*) It was rumored that he'd held a few services in this area—in the woods, I believe. (*with concern*) Why? Did you know him?

**John:** (*quietly; looks away, trying to avoid Bradley's angry look*) Yes, sir. (*sighs sadly*) I did.

**Henry:** (*compassionately*) I'm sorry. (*John tries to answer, but can't. Henry exits.*)

**Bradley:** (*with controlled anger, tossing his coat down on the cobbler's bench*) This Mr. Hathaway, John. He wouldn't happen to be the preacher that you and Elizabeth took Rebekah to see, would he?

**John:** (*head down; softly*) Yes, sir.

**Bradley:** (*grabbing him roughly and throwing him up against the wall*) You knew all along! You knew who he was! You knew I wanted him arrested, but you didn't tell me, did you?! (*Bradley punches John in the stomach. Unknown to Bradley and John, Frederick Hansel and Mary Hamilton are just outside the door of the shoppe.*)

**Mary:** (*to Frederick, in a whisper*) Perhaps we'd better leave. (*Frederick shakes his head, "no".*)

**John:** (*as if in pain*) If yer'd asked me if I knew 'is name, I would 'ave said, "yes," but I never could 'ave told yer wot it was, no matter wot yer did to me. 'E was like a father to me--like the father I never 'ad. I couldn't 'ave betrayed 'im. (*Bradley grabs John by the front of his shirt and raises his hand to strike him across the face, but is stopped by Frederick's voice.*)

**Frederick:** Ahem! (*Bradley turns toward the sound, his hand still raised.*) By all means, Bradley, don't let us stop you. Give the rogue what he deserves.

**Bradley:** (*to John, under his breath*) I'll take care of you later. (*releases his grip on John's shirt, says to Frederick, with disgust in his voice*) What are you doing here?

**Frederick:** (*sarcastically*) Well, most people come here to buy shoes, so I suppose that would be a good enough reason. We'll each need a pair of the finest shoes you can make. You see, they're for our wedding. Oh, I'm sorry, I'd forgotten you hadn't met my fiancée. Allow me to introduce Miss Mary Hamilton.

**Mary:** (*sweetly*) How do you do, sir?

**Bradley:** (*brushing angrily past them; looks at Frederick with contempt, then speaks to Mary*) My sympathies, Madam! (*Bradley storms out the door. Mary looks after him, bewildered.*)

**Frederick:** (*looking shocked and insulted*) Well!

**End Scene - Lights**  
**(Music - Sonata by Clementi - section in minor)**

**ACT II/SCENE SIX - TOWN -** September 10, 1775, later the same day.  
*(Elizabeth walks slowly from the house to the gaol. Once there, she knocks cautiously at the door. Mrs. Peterson answers.)*

**Mrs. Peterson:** May I help you?

**Elizabeth:** I hope so, Mrs. Peter...

**Mrs. Peterson:** Would you like to take up harpsichord lessons?

**Elizabeth:** Harpsichord lessons?

**Mrs. Peterson:** The spinet, perhaps?

**Elizabeth:** Well, no, ma'am...

**Mrs. Peterson:** My husband gives both, you know. He's the organist at Bruton Parish. I'll go get him for you.

**Elizabeth:** No, wait, please. I didn't come here to take lessons, Mrs. Peterson.

**Mrs. Peterson:** Oh, of course. You'd like some information about our upcoming performance of "Romeo and Juliet!" Such a shame that we can't have a professional theater company from London this year, what with this horrible war going on. At least, I've heard it's horrible. We, here in the south, are quite fortunate that it hasn't reached our shores, as of yet, although I'm certain it will eventually. Don't misunderstand me, our players really are doing exceptionally well for amateurs. My husband is directing it. A man of many talents, he is! I'm making all the costumes. It's quite an endeavor, if I do say so myself.

**Elizabeth:** Please, ma'am...

**Mrs. Peterson:** Now then, how many of you will be attending?

**Elizabeth:** I'm not interested in seeing the play, Mrs. Peterson.

**Mrs. Peterson:** *(taking her by the shoulders and gently shaking her)* But, my dear, you really should avail yourself of such a tremendous cultural experience. Have you

ever acted before?

**Elizabeth:** Uh, no, ma'am.

**Mrs. Peterson:** Well, perhaps you should give it a try. We are still in need of an understudy for Miss Landers. She's playing the part of Juliet. Quite an opportunity for you, my dear!

**Elizabeth:** Thank you, but, actually, I came to visit one of the prisoners.

**Mrs. Peterson:** (*shocked*) One of the prisoners! And how is it that YOU are associated with one of the "ne'er-do-wells" confined within these walls? (*softly, looking around to make certain no one else is listening*) You're not an accomplice to some crime, are you? It's all right, dear. You can confide in me, dear. I won't tell a soul.

**Elizabeth:** No, Mrs. Peterson, I'm not an accomplice to some crime. However, the prisoner is a good friend of mine. You know him yourself; his name is John.

**Mrs. Peterson:** Just a moment! I thought I recognized you! Aren't you the girl that works for the Richardson's?

**Elizabeth:** Yes, ma'am.

**Mrs. Peterson:** You know, it's such a pity that I was never able to accompany you on another walk.

**Elizabeth:** (*smiles weakly, as if she'd like to agree, but can't*)

**Mrs. Peterson:** Although, now that I realize what that young apprentice of theirs is like, perhaps it was for the best. I said to myself that day, I said, "This boy has a shifty look about him! He'll come to no good, to be sure!" Stealing food right from under his master's nose!

**Elizabeth:** It wasn't food, ma'am, it was money... What I mean is—I don't think he stole anything. I think he was falsely accused.

**Mrs. Peterson:** Ah-ha! (*points her finger in Elizabeth's face*) Did he or didn't he? THAT is the question! THAT will ALWAYS be the question, will it not? And so the plot thickens, and from such plots, might I add, come great works of art such as have

been bequeathed to the world by such reputable and talented men as William himself!

**Elizabeth:** William, ma'am?

**Mrs. Peterson:** Shakespeare, my dear, Shakespeare! Which brings me back to our previous subject. Are you certain you wouldn't like to know more about our production?

**Elizabeth:** Yes, ma'am, I'm sure.

**Mrs. Peterson:** Tsk, tsk. T'is a real pity. (*shakes her head sadly*) But, to each his own, I always say. I'll ask my husband to send this—friend of yours down. You may wait out here in the courtyard.

**Elizabeth:** (*relieved to be finished with the conversation*) Thank you, Mrs. Peterson. (*A few moments pass, the door opens--John enters. She notices that his hands are shackled.*)

**Elizabeth:** (*timidly*) Hello, John.

**John:** (*embarrassed, looks away*) Elizabeth, yer shouldn't 'ave come 'ere.

**Elizabeth:** I'm sorry. I didn't mean to cause you any embarrassment. I found your Bible in the shoppe. (*holds it out to him*) I thought it might—encourage you.

**John:** (*a tinge of bitterness in his voice*) I don't want it.

**Elizabeth:** John, you don't mean that.

**John:** Yes, I do! God 'as turned 'is back on me.

**Elizabeth:** That's not true.

**John:** Isn't it?! (*turns back to her, angry and hurt*) I work as 'ard as I can. I do wot I'm told. I don't fight back, even though sometimes...(*pauses, thinking of Bradley's cruelty towards him*)--and this is wot I get in return! (*showing her his shackles*) I'm innocent, Elizabeth! I didn't take that money! I'm not a thief anymore!

**Elizabeth:** I know that, John.

**John:** That's strange. I don't remember 'earin' yer say anythin' to defend me!

**Elizabeth:** John, I'm sorry. I wanted to say something; you don't know how much I wanted to say something. But, I couldn't. It all happened so fast. The words just wouldn't come. I didn't think it would make any difference anyway.

**John:** Yer could 'ave at least tried. Rebekah did that much.

**Elizabeth:** John, I'm sorry. Please forgive me...

**John:** *(turns away from her, says brokenly, reflectively, a great deal of hurt in his voice)* They're gone. Everythin' I ever 'ad or 'oped to 'ave—gone. First, God took Mr. 'athaway from me. I'd thought at one time that maybe, when me indenture was over, I'd travel with 'im fer awhile; that I'd learn from 'im—maybe even preach some meself. I pictured us ridin' around the countryside, talkin', sharin' our thoughts, our 'opes, our sorrows, our joys. I thought about 'im preachin' to groups of people 'ere and there and introducin' me to them as 'is—as 'is son. *(pauses, almost breaks down into tears)* I'd even let meself think that maybe someday, maybe someday, when I was free, that I could prove meself to Mr. Richardson. Maybe 'e'd see that I could provide fer 'is daughter, that maybe one day I'd be worthy of 'er. Foolish dreams--to think that the likes o' me could ever marry Miss Rebekah.

Now, Mr. Richardson probably 'ates me as much as Bradley does. The testimony I've tried to live before 'im—it's gone, too. It's all gone... *(pauses again, choking up; says quietly)* Please, Elizabeth, go 'ome. Don't come back 'ere again.

**Elizabeth:** *(feeling badly for him, wanting to help but not knowing how; speaks softly)* All right, John, I'll leave. *(Music starts and continues through the end of the scene. Elizabeth places the Bible on the ground and walks slowly away. John turns around to go back into the prison and notices the Bible. He looks down the road after Elizabeth, then starts to go back inside. When he reaches the door, he thinks again about the Bible, turns back and slowly picks it up, runs his fingers over the cover, looks back down the road again, then goes into the gaol, taking the Bible with him.)*

**ACT II/SCENE 8** - PARLOR - December, 1775. (*Fife and Drum Music- “Yankee Doodle”*. Bradley is dressed in his uniform and is packing things in a sack to take along. Mr. Richardson is on the couch. He should cough a lot. John is standing by the desk. Rebekah is standing in back of her father; Elizabeth is standing beside her.)

**Mr. Richardson:** Well, Bradley, (*coughs*) you finally got your wish, “your entertainment,” as you put it.

**Bradley:** (*stands up*) Father, I am fighting for freedom.

**Mr. Richardson:** Ha! Others may be fighting for freedom of body and soul, but you are fighting for freedom from me and the responsibilities of work! (*coughs a lot*)

**Rebekah:** Father, your cough sounds much worse today. Please, don’t get yourself excited.

**Mr. Richardson:** I am not excited, Rebekah. I am angry and disappointed that my son would turn traitor to his king!

**Bradley:** And you, sir, (*turns toward his father and points an accusing finger at him*) are a traitor to your country!

**Mr. Richardson:** (*starting out of his seat*) How dare you...(He starts to cough. Rebekah reaches out and grabs him by the shoulders. He sits back down, as if exhausted.)

**Rebekah:** Father, don’t. Bradley, you promised.

**Bradley:** I’m sorry, Rebekah. (*looks angrily at his father*) I suppose if I’m to leave, I’d better leave quickly.

**Rebekah:** How long are you going to be gone?

**Bradley:** I don’t know. We’re headed to Norfolk. There are some British warships that have gathered off the coast. If they strike, the militia there will be outnumbered; we’re going to help support them.

**Rebekah:** Please, Bradley, be careful.

**Bradley:** *(reassuringly)* I'll be all right, little sister. *(grabbing his gun)* I can take care of myself.

**Rebekah:** Please, Bradley, take this with you. *(She hands him a Bible. He looks at it skeptically, then looks back at her.)* I'd feel better.

**Bradley:** *(trying to sound appreciative)* Thank you, Rebekah. *(puts it in his sack)* Elizabeth...

**Elizabeth:** Yes, sir.

**Bradley:** I entrust my sister to you. I know you'll take good care of her and the house. John, I hope you learned your lesson well this fall and that there will be no trouble while I'm gone.

**John:** *(looking him squarely in the eyes, trying to hold back his anger and hurt)* Everything will be in order when yer return, sir.

**Bradley:** I hope so—for your sake. I want Elizabeth to check all your work before it leaves the shoppe, as well as keep an account of the money that's taken in—just to be sure. I need to go. *(Begin fife and drum music—"Hey! Johnny Cope." Bradley grabs his things and runs out the door, through the hallway and dining room to the garden. There he takes a minute and removes the Bible from his sack, hiding it in the bushes. He proceeds down the center aisle and out the back door.)*

**End Scene-Lights**

**ACT II/SCENE NINE - PARLOR - December 20, 1775. (*Music plays softly through entire scene. John is in the parlor, waiting. He should look upset, concerned. Elizabeth comes slowly down the steps and enters the parlor.*)**

**John:** ‘Ow is she?

**Elizabeth:** As well as can be expected, I suppose. She’s taking it pretty hard. She loved her father very much.

**John:** (*nodding*) I know.

**Elizabeth:** I just hope nothing happens to Bradley. (*smiles, chuckles*) You know, it’s strange, but—I actually miss him. (*John looks at her as if to say, “You can’t be serious.”*) I realize that may be hard for you to understand.

**John:** Aye, mum, it is.

**Elizabeth:** I’m not sure I understand it myself. (*pause*) Oh, John, where do you suppose he is now?

**John:** Bradley?

**Elizabeth:** No, no—Mr. Richardson.

**John:** (*sadly*) I think we both know the answer to that.

**Elizabeth:** (*nodding in agreement*) I don’t want to think about it.

**John:** I know. God gave ‘im a chance to accept ‘is salvation, but...’e rejected it of ‘is own free will.

**Elizabeth:** (*almost in tears*) We can still hope, though, can’t we? We can still hope that he called out to the Lord in his heart and asked him to save his soul just before he...(pauses) I found the Bible that Rebekah gave to Bradley before he left.

**John:** I thought ‘e took it with ‘im.

**Elizabeth:** No. I found it in the garden, in one of the bushes.

**John:** (*shaking his head sadly*) Yer can't tell 'er that—not now. We need to pray fer Bradley, that 'e'll make it back safely, not just fer 'is sake—but fer Rebekah's.

**End Scene - Lights**