

**“A House Divided”**  
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THANK YOU FOR UNDERSTANDING.**

**Act I**

**Civil War Music**

*(A slide show of the Civil War is shown on the scrim above the set or lights are focused on a still life scene, above the set, of a canon with American and Confederate flags during the music.)*

**Scene 1 – April 1** *(Jed is sitting on the front porch. A battle erupts, stage left, immediately after the music is finished. Use camera flashes at different locations, sound effects of battle, soldiers coming down the right and middle aisle, fighting on stage near woods, far stage left, etc. Jed jumps up and limps into the parlor as Annie and Nora enter from the kitchen. He grabs his gun off the wall.)*

**Jed:** Git upstairs, both o’ ya. Go in one of the bedrooms and push some furniture agin’ the wall.

**Nora:** What are ya goin’ to do?

**Jed:** I’m stayin’ here. If’n some Yankee tries to come in, I’ll shoot ‘em. If I didn’t have this bad leg, I’d be out there fightin’.

**Nora:** Please don’t go blamin’ Jeremy agin’ fer that accident, Jed.

**Jed:** I ain’t blamin’. Jest statin’ a fact. Now, hurry and git on upstairs – both of ya!

*(Nora and Annie exchange worried looks then hurry up the stairs and offstage. Lights start to dim as battle sounds fade. Lights down.)*

***Musical Interlude #1 – Civil War Music***

**Scene 2 – April 2, the next morning** *(Jed is coming down the stairs, fixing his suspenders. Nora enters from the kitchen.)*

**Jed:** Is Annie up yet?

**Nora:** No, poor dear. She had a hard time sleepin' last night after that fightin' yesterday. I reckon she's exhausted. Thought I'd let her sleep in a mite this mornin'.

**Jed:** That's good. I don't want the two o' ya goin' to church this mornin' anyway. Yer to stay in the house. We've never had fightin' so close. Sounded like it was down near the woods by the crossroads.

**Nora:** I thought they was gonna storm into the house any minute. I jest praise the Lord for keepin' us safe!

**Jed:** Don't you start in on me, Nora.

**Nora:** I wasn't, Jed. Just statin' a fact. *(pause)*  
You want some breakfast? I made some hoecakes.

**Jed:** Naw. Can't eat. Think I'll hitch up the wagon and go into Dinwiddie Court House and see if'n there's some news of the battle.

**Nora:** If it ain't safe fer us to go nowhere, it ain't safe fer you; I don't like the thought of ya bein' gone. Besides, they jest had a battle over that way two days ago.

**Jed:** I heard that General Pickett won that battle, Nora.

**Nora:** Who'd ya hear that from?

**Jed:** Wiley. He said it were General Pickett and General Fitzhugh Lee that led our men to victory.

**Nora:** That Wiley! How does he find out so much?

**Jed:** I don't know, but he's usually right.

**Nora:** Still, there could be Yankees left in them parts. Besides, with all the rain we've had, the road will be nothin' but mud.

**Jed:** *(pauses, sighs)* All right. Fer yer sake, I'll cut through the woods to Ford's Depot instead.

**Nora:** Yer goin' to walk?

**Jed:** It ain't that far, Nora.

**Nora:** But headin' towards the South Side Railroad... Oh, Jed, more than likely they's been fightin' there, too!

**Jed:** My guess is they've all headin' toward Petersburg, not the depot.

**Nora:** Ya don't know that fer sure. The Yankees will want control of the railroad. Ya said yerself, jest a few days ago, that it's the last supply line fer our soldiers in Petersburg and Richmond.

**Jed:** *(puts his hands on her shoulders, gently, reassuring)* Now, don't ya worry, Nora. I'll be careful. *(starts toward the door, pauses, then turns toward Nora)* Ya know, that son of yers could have been one o' them Yankees out yonder yesterday.

**Nora:** He's OUR son, Jed, not just mine.

**Jed:** No son o' mine would be a traitor to his kinfolk.

**Nora:** He done what he thought was best.

**Jed:** He could have killed Seth by now. Ya know that, don't ya.

**Nora:** Seth and Jeremy are both our sons, Jed. I love them both and I pray for them both.

*(Wiley and his wife, Elvira, enter from the back of the auditorium and walk quickly up the middle aisle.)*

**Wiley:** *(loudly)* Jed! Jedidiah Tucker, ya up yet?!

**Elvira:** If'n he weren't, he sure enough is now!

**Nora:** It's Wiley. I had me a feelin' he'd be showin' up here this mornin'.

**Jed:** *(crossing to the front porch)* Mornin', Wiley, Elvira.

**Elvira:** Mornin', Jed. Nora be about?

**Jed:** She's inside the parlor. Go on in. Make yerself to home.

**Elvira:** Thank ya, Jed. *(enters the house)* Mornin', Nora.

**Nora:** Mornin', Elvira. I made some fresh hoecakes. Care fer some?

**Elvira:** That would be jest fine, Nora. *(Elvira and Nora exit through the kitchen door.)*

*(Jed and Wiley remain on the porch.)*

**Jed:** That was some fightin' yesterday, weren't it?

**Wiley:** Sure was. Sounded like it was down near Five Forks. *(pauses)*  
I heard Nora say somethin' 'bout hoecakes.

**Jed:** I'm headin' into the depot to see if anyone knows anythin'.

**Wiley:** I'll head in with ya, Jed, *(pauses)* soon as I have some of them hoecakes.

**Jed:** Can't eat, Wiley. Been thinkin' 'bout Seth. We ain't heard from him in three weeks.

**Wiley:** I know. I ain't seen his name posted on any of the casualty lists. You ought to eat somethin', Jed. It'd be good fer ya.

**Jed:** Yer probably right. (*Jed starts toward door. Wiley follows. Jed thinks better of it and turns around abruptly, almost knocking Wiley over.*) Naw, I just can't.

**Wiley:** I think I could.

**Jed:** I've got to get goin'. You comin' with me?

**Wiley:** Sure 'nough, Jed. (*pauses*) Right after breakfast.

**Annie:** (*coming down the stairs, acting nervous, frightened*) Mama! Papa!

**Nora:** (*entering with Elvira from the kitchen*) Annie, I'm right here.

**Annie:** Oh, Mama, I didn't see no one. I got scared—thought somethin' happened to ya. I had such nightmares!

**Nora:** It's all right, honey. Everythin's all right now.

**Jed:** (*kisses his wife on the forehead*) I'll be back soon's I find out somethin'.

**Nora:** Be careful, Jed.

**Jed:** Wiley and Elvira walked over here from their place. Ya didn't see no signs of trouble, did ya, Wiley?

**Wiley:** No, but that don't mean there ain't some Yankees stalkin' 'round in them woods o' yers.

**Elvira:** Wiley!

**Wiley:** Well, ya never know. I'd be careful when yer outside, fer a couple o' days at least. Might be a few dead bodies layin' 'round for all we know.

**Elvira:** Wiley!

**Jed:** He's right. *(to Nora and Annie)* You two stay close to the house, at least fer awhile.

**Annie:** I will, Papa.

**Nora:** *(to Jed)* I'd feel better if'n ya did the same.

**Jed:** I'll be fine. I'll come back soon as I can. *(takes his gun with him)*

**Nora:** *(nods her head in agreement.)*

**Wiley:** *(over his shoulder)* Ya see any Yankees, you shoot 'em, Jed!

**Jed:** Don't worry, I will. *(Nora and Annie exchange nervous glances. Jed walks out to the front porch and down the side aisle.)*

**Wiley:** *(sniffing the air)* All this talk makes me hungry.

**Nora:** I have some fresh hoecakes I made this mornin'.

**Wiley:** Ya don't say!

**Nora:** Yer welcome to join us fer some breakfast, Wiley.

**Wiley:** Well, don't mind if I do.

**Elvira:** *(reacts with a "He's impossible" kind of look)*

*(Lights Down)*

***Musical Interlude #2***

**Scene 3 – April 2, towards evening** (*Annie is on the porch looking out toward the woods. Nora enters the house from the kitchen, sees Annie through the open door, and goes out to the porch.*)

**Annie:** Papa ain't come home yet, has he?

**Nora:** (*sighs, looks away*) No.

**Annie:** It don't take that long to walk to the depot and back. I hope he's not hurt or somethin'.

**Nora:** (*trying to convince herself*) The ground's muddy. Yer pa has trouble walkin.' It probably jest took him longer than usual, that's all.

**Annie:** Mama, you and I both know he drinks when he's away from home.

**Nora:** (*sighs*) I know. But, I doubt there's any liquor over at the depot.

**Annie:** He's got some hidden out back in the shed. I seen it.

**Nora:** It's his way of dealin' with his problems.

**Annie:** If'n he knew the Lord, he wouldn't need whiskey to deal with his problems.

**Nora:** I know. But yer pa ain't a man to be pushed.

*(Annie nods in agreement. They walk back into the house. Annie picks up a broom and starts sweeping. Nora sits down and picks up some knitting.)*

**Annie:** I wish Papa would be as concerned 'bout Jeremy as he is Seth.

**Nora:** (*sighs*) So do I. It hurt yer pa somethin' fierce to have one o' his boys side with the North.

**Annie:** It hurt his pride more than anythin'. He's so afeared everyone will be thinkin' less of him.

**Nora:** Well, ya can't hardly blame him. After all, his family dates back in Virginia all the way to Captain Smith's colony at Jamestown.

**Annie:** Still, it ain't right. Jeremy's his own flesh and blood.

**Nora:** I know, but there ain't much I can say to him.

**Annie:** I think it has somethin' to do with that huntin' accident.

**Nora:** Maybe. Yer pa's had a hard time facin' the reality that he's lame.

**Annie:** I can't help wonderin' if they was in that battle, Seth and Jeremy, wonderin' where they are and if'n they's still alive.

*(There is a lengthy pause.)*

**Nora:** *(nodding her head in agreement)* I know. I ain't been able to think of much else since then either.

**Annie:** It must be so hard on you, Mama.

**Nora:** *(choking back the tears)* It is. A mother's always thinkin' of her children's safety, 'specially when they's off to war. Seth and Jeremy—they're still jest boys. They ain't old enough to be...

**Annie:** Why, Mama? Why's this war happenin'? Why must we fight each other? This country's hardly more than a hundred years old, yet here we are—divided right down the middle!

**Nora:** I know. Hardly seems possible, does it?

**Annie:** *(pulls a chair up beside her mother and sits down)* Papa says it's because of states' rights. Jeremy says it's about freedom—'bout the evils of slavery.

**Nora:** I guess it jest depends on how ya want to look at it and which side o' the Mason-Dixon line yer on. The Constitution does give states the right to secede from the Union.

**Annie:** But why did we secede? So we could have slaves, right? I hate slavery. Papa hates slavery.

**Nora:** I know.

**Annie:** Then why...

**Nora:** Because he's a dyed-in-the-wool Virginian. Ain't nobody gonna make him do nothin' he don't want to do.

**Jed:** (*coming from behind rock wall, far right, enters the house in time to hear their conversation*) I ain't never said I was agin slavery. I'm agin those that treat their slaves mean, like Mr. Crawford and the Jenkins. They's others that are right nice to their slaves.

**Annie:** Would you want to be a slave, Papa? Would you want to be "owned" by another person?

**Jed:** Well—no...

**Annie:** Would you want to be dragged away from yer people and crammed on a ship, taken half way 'round the world to another country and sold on an auction block?

**Jed:** Course not.

**Annie:** Then why is it fine fer them and not fer you?

**Jed:** Because they—well, they ain't the same as us.

**Annie:** (*getting up from her chair*) Because the color of their skin is different? Why should those with light skin think they's better than those with dark skin? It was the same God Who made us all.

**Jed:** You and yer Ma are always draggin' God into everythin'.

**Annie:** (*crossing, goes to back of table*) Papa, it's the truth! I heard say that President Lincoln gave a speech back seven years ago when he became a senator...

**Jed:** (*putting his hands over his ears, speaks angrily*) I won't have ya mention that man's name in this house!

**Annie:** Ya need to hear what he said, Papa! He said, "A house divided against itself cannot stand."

**Nora:** Why, that's right from the Bible, in Matthew, I believe.

**Jed:** (*sarcastically*) Well, now don't that jest figure.

**Annie:** Papa, that don't go jest fer this country. That's true of us—right here in this house. Ya won't let us talk 'bout Jeremy.

**Jed:** He's a Yankee!

**Annie:** He's my brother!

**Nora:** He's yer son!

*(Lights Down)*

***Musical Interlude #3***

SCENES FOUR AND FIVE HAVE BEEN OMITTED IN THE SAMPLE SCRIPT.

***Musical Interlude #5***

**Scene 6 – April 3, late-afternoon** (*Jed is in the living room cleaning his gun*)

**Annie:** (*enters down the stairs. She is worried when she sees her father with the gun.*) What are ya doin', Papa?

**Jed:** Jest gettin' ready in case any o' those Yankees come back this way. I been thinkin'. I know I told ya there weren't no harm done with ya goin' down to the well, but from here on out, I think I ought to be the one what goes fer water. Folks over to Dinwiddie said they's a rumor they found

some wounded Yankees over to Carter's farm. Thought maybe I ought to have a look around.

**Annie:** But, Papa... *(fumbles, not knowing what to say, is cut off by Wiley)*

**Wiley:** *(running down the aisle)* Jed! Jed!

**Jed:** *(going out to the porch; Annie follows him)* Calm down, Wiley. What is it? What's happened? Have ya heard somethin' 'bout Seth?

**Wiley:** It's Richmond! They've taken it, Jed! 'Bout 8:15 this morning, the Confederate flag came down and the Union flag went up. The city's on fire!

**Jed:** *(bitterly)* The Yankees destroyed Richmond?

**Wiley:** *(shaking his head "No")* Word has it our own soldiers set fire to the warehouses so the Yankees couldn't get no supplies. The fire got out o' control, burned down most of the business district and hundreds o' houses! It were the Yankees that helped put the fires out.

**Jed:** Did President Davis git out in time?

**Wiley:** I heard he did. Don't rightly know. I was told there was such confusion what with everyone tryin' to git out of the city! I'll see ya, Jed. I gots to spread the word! *(starts to leave, then stops suddenly and turns toward Jed)*

**Wiley:** Oh, did Nora give you the message?

**Jed:** What message would that be, Wiley?

*(Concerned that Jeremy will be found out, Annie slips back quietly into the house to warn Nora.)*

**Wiley:** Here I am doin' a real neighborly thing and bringin' ya some water...

**Jed:** Now why would you be bringin' us water?

**Wiley:** I knew them women folk o' yers would be forgettin' to tell ya. If'n ya wants somethin' done right, ya needs to do it yerself; that's what I always say.

Now, mind ya, Jed, I ain't sayin' yer women folk weren't to be trusted to deliver a message. It's just that they's got lots on their minds, like cookin' and cleanin' and whatnot. Speakin' of cookin', that wife o' yers is a right good cook. You got any of that cherry pie left she give me yesterday?"

**Jed:** What was the messege, Wiley?

**Wiley:** What message was that, Jed? I done told ya 'bout Richmond.

**Jed:** Ya said ya give Nora a message. What was it?

**Wiley:** I sure could talk better over a piece o' that thar pie.

**Jed:** (*speaks very quickly*) The pie's all et up, Wiley.

**Wiley:** Now why didn't ya say so to begin with? I come all the way over here fer nothin'.

**Jed:** Weren't fer nothin', Wiley. Ya told me 'bout Richmond. Ya had somethin' more to tell me. What was it?

**Wiley:** I had somethin' more to tell ya? Oh, yeah. It's 'bout the woods. Don't be agoin' near the woods. Mr. Carter found some wounded Yankees over near his house.

**Jed:** I heard that over to town. Then it is true... (*glances toward the house, starting to suspect something*)

**Wiley:** I saw them Yankees with my own two eyes. He had them tied up right thar in his parlor.

Well, if'n ya don't have no more pie left, I reckon I'll leave. I've got lots of people I gots to tell 'bout Richmond! (*runs down other aisle*)

**Jed:** (*pauses, thinking, then turns and enters the house*) Annie! Nora!

**Nora:** (*Nora runs in from the kitchen, wearing an apron. Annie enters with a broom.*) What in the world's the matter, Jed?

**Jed:** Nothin' yet. It's jest that Wiley come by a few minutes ago.

**Nora:** (*hesitatingly*) I know. I could hear him carryin' on out there.

**Jed:** The Yanks has got Richmond.

**Nora:** They've taken Richmond!

**Jed:** (*after an awkward silence*) Why didn't ya tell me that Wiley brung ya some water this mornin' and that we wasn't to go near the woods?

**Nora:** I was thinkin' on it, Jed.

**Jed:** Shouldn't be nothin' to think about—less'n there's someone down there ya'll don't want me to know about.

That's why ya brung the dipper back up to the house, girl. Ya wasn't thinkin' straight on a kind o' ya done found some Yankee in the woods, some Yankee you's been feedin' and tendin' to. (*starts toward the door with his gun*)

**Annie:** (*rushes over to him, grabs his arm*) Don't hurt him Papa! Please don't hurt him!

**Jed:** I'll decide what's to happen to him after I sees him.

**Nora:** (*pleading, in a hushed whisper*) Jed, it's—it's Jeremy!

**Jed:** (*stage whisper, as if in shock*) What?

**Nora:** We jest found him this mornin', Jed. I was tryin' to think of a way to tell ya, but—I was afraid—afraid of what ya might do to him!

**Jed:** I ain't gonna hurt him, but this is war, and he's a Yankee.

**Nora:** He's wounded, Jed. He's hurt real bad!

**Jed:** (*nods his head toward the door*) Let's go.

**Annie:** (*putting her hand on the gun*) Ya won't be needin' that, Papa.

**Jed:** (*He thinks a moment, then nods his head, and replaces the gun above the mantle. He motions for them to leave. All exit the house and cross to the woods.*)

**Jed:** (*upon finding Jeremy*) Git up, boy!

**Jeremy:** Pa!

**Jed:** I said, git up! (*roughly pulls him to his feet*)

**Annie:** Papa, please... His leg's hurt—real bad!

**Jed:** (*Nora gets on Jeremy's other side to try and help make it easier to walk.*) Come on, let's go! (*Nora and Jed help Jeremy walk back to the house.*)

Set him down over there. (*nods his head toward the chair by the kitchen door.*)

**Nora:** Jed, he needs a doctor!

**Jed:** Won't be no doctors to be found, not with Petersburg and Richmond in the hands of the Yankees. (*pointing a finger accusingly at Jeremy*) And don't think this here war's over, boy, jest because o' that. General Lee ain't about to surrender! (*Jeremy says nothing.*)

I gots to have time to think on what I'm to be doin' with him. I need to keep him here somewheres till I can turn him over to the army.

**Nora:** Please don't let them send him to one of them prison camps. I done heard terrible stories 'bout them places!

**Jed:** That's fer the army to decide. (*pauses, thinking*)

I don't want Wiley findin' him here; he'd have the news all over Virginia in no time. We can't keep him in the parlor.

**Nora:** Well, we definitely can't keep him in the kitchen. That's one place Wiley's sure to go!

**Jed:** We'll have to keep him upstairs in his bedroom – his and Seth's. *(to Jeremy)* You know, we ain't heard one word 'bout yer brother in over three weeks. Likely as not, he could be dead by now, and it could a been yer bullet what killed him.

**Jeremy:** *(Every time Jeremy speaks, he should sound as if he were in great pain.)* No, sir. *(pauses)* It weren't.

**Jed:** *(in disbelief and anger)* What? *(pauses)* How do you know?

**Jeremy:** Because I saw him—fall.

**Jed:** *(pausing)* What are ya talkin' about?

**Nora:** *(sinking down on a dining room chair)* No, not my Seth. Not Seth! *(Annie tries to comfort her.)*

**Jeremy:** I was hopin' I'd be the one to tell ya.

**Jed:** *(livid with anger, Jed lifts his hand to strike Jeremy. Nora and Annie rush to Jeremy's aid. Jeremy puts his hands in front of his face to protect himself, speaks quickly.)*

**Jeremy:** Pa, he *wanted* me to tell ya, to tell Ma!

**Jed:** *(turns away from him, toward the audience, speaks softly, as if afraid to hear)* Go on.

**Jeremy:** *(sadly)* It was at Cedar Creek. The Confederates lost lots of men that day. I saw him, just before he—went down. I managed to crawl over to him and drag him into some bushes so he'd be protected from more gunfire, but...

**Nora:** Jeremy, please—please tell me he’s all right! Please tell me he’s still alive!

**Jeremy:** He is all right, Mama. He’s all right—now. That’s why he wanted me to be the one to tell ya—so you’d know.

**Annie:** Know what?

**Jeremy:** Know that, even though he weren’t comin’ home, he’d see us agin someday when **we** got home. He’s alive forevermore, Mama!

**Nora:** But Seth never...

**Jeremy:** He got saved a couple months ago. Said he’d seen so much—death all ‘round him, he knew he needed to be ready. He remembered the things ya taught him. He knew he needed to ask the Lord to forgive him of his sins, and...

**Jed:** (*angrily turns around and yanks Jeremy to his feet*) Git upstairs!  
(*Annie and Nora go to Jeremy’s aid.*)

**Nora:** Jed, please be careful with him!

**Jed:** I ain’t gonna hear no more! Now git ‘im out o’ my sight!

**Nora:** Ain’t there nowheres else he can stay, Jed? It’s gonna be hard fer him to walk up them stairs.

**Jed:** I know, but he can do it. (*bitterly*) I’ve had to do it fer the last seven years! (*Nora helps Jeremy up the stairs. Annie looks at her father with hurt, runs out to the porch and bursts into tears. Jed looks after her, disgusted, but also ashamed, then exits past her and offstage.*)

(*Lights Down*)  
**INTERMISSION**

**Act II**

*Musical Interlude #6*

**SCENE ONE OF Act II HAS BEEN OMITTED IN THE SAMPLE SCRIPT.**

*Musical Interlude #7*

**Scene 2 - April 10, late afternoon**

*(Jed is sitting in the living room reading a Bible, looking around from time to time to make certain no one sees him. Freddy Carter comes running in, down the right side aisle, knocks loudly on Jed's door. Jed quickly hides the Bible under the seat cushion, then gets up to answer the door. Nora enters from upstairs.)*

**Nora:** What's the matter?

**Jed:** No doubt it's Wiley. Sounds like his knock, though he ain't hollerin' like he normally does.

*(opens the door)*

What in the world, Wiley? Oh, it's you, Freddy. What's the matter? What's happened?

**Freddy:** *(out of breath)* Pa sent me over to tell ya...

**Jed:** Calm down, boy. Tell me what.

**Freddy:** Jest yesterday. It happened jest yesterday! *(Annie enters from the kitchen.)*

General Lee... *(pauses to catch his breath)*

**Jed:** *(anxiously)* What about General Lee?

**Freddy:** General Lee done surrendered to the Yanks! *(Annie and Nora exchange relieved glances).*

**Jed:** *(stunned)* He what?

**Fred:** He and General Grant met at Appomattox Court House in the dinin' room o' someone by the name o' McLaughlin.

Pa said the war's over. *(pause, then speak quietly)* We lost. He thought ya'd want to know. *(Freddy waves "goodbye" and exits down the aisle.)*

**Jed:** *(Jed stands in stunned silence for a few seconds)* Thanks, Freddy. *(He goes out onto the porch.)*

**Nora:** *(to Annie)* I'll go tell Jeremy the news. *(almost in tears)* Maybe we'll finally be able to be a family agin.

**Annie:** I hope so, Mama. *(Nora exits up the stairs. Annie watches her father, who is deep in thought and conviction, from the dining room window. She bows her head and prays silently, then searches the table for the Bible. Noticing the lump under the seat cushion, she retrieves the Bible, then glances back out at her father. It should be obvious to the audience that she realizes he's been reading it. Annie walks out onto the porch.)*

**Jed:** *(Jed glances toward Annie, notices that she's found the Bible. He looks out across the yard, away from her, and speaks softly.)*

"Been thinking about what you said the other day. You were right—'bout the war goin' on inside my heart. I have been a slave to sin. I don't want to be. I know what the Bible says about God sendin' His Son Jesus to die fer my sins. *(looks over at her and chuckles slightly)* You and yer ma done told me often enough. "Been readin' that verse ya got underlined, where the marker is. I've been readin' it over and over. *(looking away from her again)* I want that peace only Christ can give, I want Him to forgive me, to make me a new person... It's jest that..."

**Annie:** Jest what, Papa?

**Jed:** 'Guess I'm havin' a hard time surrendin.' I've been tellin' myself over and over agin that I need this salvation. I jest know that once I surrender to God... I guess it's my pride. I know I won't be in control o' my life no more. But then, I tell myself, I ain't really the one who's been in control. I know it's Satan, sin... I know I got to forgive Jeremy...

**Annie:** Papa, don't you suppose General Lee thought long and hard 'bout his surrender? Don't ya think he struggled? It took courage and humility fer him to admit defeat.

**Jed:** It's hard fer someone who's a self-made man to admit he can't do nothin' to save himself, nothin' but—surrender.

**Annie:** Ya know, Papa, surrenderin' to Christ is lots different than what General Lee had to do. It don't mean ya lost the battle; it means ya won the war. It means ya got the victory! *(pauses, then hands him the Bible)* I love ya, Papa. *(exits slowly to the dining room, sits in the stuffed chair and prays silently-dim light on Annie)*

**Jed:** *(reads aloud from the Bible)* "Fer God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life.

*(Jed sinks to his knees, looks up)* I surrender... to the Captain of God's army. I surrender... the battle's over. *(pause)* The war in my heart has ceased. I surrender... I surrender to the Christ Who died for me. *(pause)* Lord, please forgive me of my sin... and save my wretched soul!

*(Jed gets up slowly and goes back into the house after praying. Annie looks up from her prayer, hoping her father has good news to tell her.)*

**Wiley:** Jed! Jedidiah Tucker!

**Nora:** *(coming down the stairs)* Now **that's** Wiley!

**Wiley:** *(running up to the porch, out of breath, holding his stomach)* Jed, I got somethin' real important to tell you.

**Jed:** That General Lee surrendered to General Grant?

**Wiley:** How'd you know that?

**Jed:** Freddy Carter come by here not more than ten minutes ago. Told me about them signin' a peace agreement in the dinin' room o' some fellow's house by the name of McLaughlin.

**Wiley:** I knew I should o' come sooner! If'n ya want somethin' done right... It weren't in the Dinin' Room. It were in the Parlor and the man's name were McClean, not McLaughlin. Now see, if I'd been the one to tell ya, Jed, ya would have had all the facts straight.

*(Just then, Jeremy comes to the landing of the stairs)*

**Nora:** *(starts back up the stairs to help him, afraid that he'll hurt himself)*  
Jeremy!

**Jeremy:** I'm all right, Mama.

**Wiley:** *(looks up, gapes in astonishment)* How? What? Why? When?

**Jed:** Where?

**Wiley:** How'd he git here? Jed, you been harborin' the enemy?

**Jed:** No, Wiley, I ain't been harborin' the enemy. We found him in the woods. I've been holdin' 'im till I could turn 'im over to the army.

**Wiley:** And I didn't know nothin' about it?

**Nora:** Amazin', ain't it?

**Wiley:** Well, I am jest dumbfounded, that's all I got to say! How long's he been here? *(Jed starts to escort Wiley out the door.)* Was he in that thar battle down to Five Forks? Was he wounded? *(looking over his shoulder at Jeremy.)* Was you wounded, boy?

**Jed:** Wiley, let me ask *you* a question.

**Wiley:** Sure, Jed. What is it?

**Jed:** Is Elvira feelin' better these days?

**Wiley:** Oh, yeah, she's been up and about fer – oh, two or three days now, I'd say.

**Jed:** And I have me a feelin' she's been cookin' up a storm, ain't she?

**Wiley:** Oh, Jed, we had some hog jowls last night that would make a pig squeal. Well, actually, he done some squealin' afore we had the hog jowls. (*chuckles*)

**Jed:** What's she makin' fer tonight?

**Wiley:** I heard her say somethin' 'bout chicken and dumplin's.

**Jed:** Ain't that yer favorite, Wiley?

**Wiley:** Ya know it is!

**Jed:** Well, it's just about supper time, Wiley, and I got me a feelin' that Elvira is down at yer house jest a-ringin' that dinner bell with all her might!

**Wiley:** Ya think so?

**Nora:** I know so.

**Wiley:** Well, seein' as how ya already knows 'bout the surrender, I reckon I ought to be agoin' home afore it gits dark.

**Jed:** That'd be a fine idea, Wiley. Ya wouldn't want to miss out on them chicken and dumplin's!

**Wiley:** No, sir! And if Freddy Carter's goin' round tellin' everyone 'bout the surrender, why I reckon I can wait one more day. Then I'll jest go 'round and straighten out his story so's everyone's got their facts right.

**Jed:** Ya got a good plan there, Wiley.

**Wiley:** Well, I'll be seein' ya'll later! Bye now! *(He runs down the center aisle.)* Chicken and dumplin's! Oo-whee! We ain't had chicken and dumplin's fer near'y a month!

*(Jed goes into the house after Wiley is gone.)*

**Jed:** *(to Jeremy)* Guess yer free to go now, if'n ya want to.

**Jeremy:** *(timidly, a quiver in his voice)* Don't see no need fer it, Pa, less'n you do.

**Jed:** *(There is no sign of the old bitterness in his voice.)* Come here, son. *(Jeremy heads slowly, cautiously down the stairs.)* Yer leg's healed real good, ain't it? Not much of a limp. Young as ya are, hopefully there won't be no trace of... *(slight pause)*

**Jeremy:** It was an accident, Pa. I didn't mean to hurt ya.

**Jed:** I know, I know. *(embracing Jeremy, almost in tears)* Jeremy, I am so sorry, son! So sorry fer the bitterness I've had, the way I've treated ya!

**Jeremy:** I wasn't tryin' to hurt ya by joinin' up with the north, either. I jest had to do what I thought I should. I...

**Jed:** It's all right, son. It's over now. We don't need to be talkin' 'bout it no more. *(slight pause)*

We'll be...we'll be workin' together now. You can help me dig that well we've been needin' closer to the house.

**Jeremy:** I'd be glad to, Pa.

**Jed:** Fact is, I'm gonna be needin' help from all of ya 'cause we're gonna be needin' to build a new *house*, too.

**Annie:** A new *house*?

**Nora:** We jest built this house not more than five years ago, Jed. We don't need a new one.

**Jed:** (*cutting her off*) Yes, we do. We're gonna be buildin' us a house o' faith in the Lord!

*Musical Mood Music*  
**THE END**



