

Belles of the Mill

A Musical Drama

Book by Rachel Robin Ladutke

Music by Jill Marshall-Work

Lyrics by Jill Marshall-Work

Adapted from the stage play *The Belles of the Mill*

By Rachel Robin Ladutke

SYNOPSIS OF SCENES AND MUSICAL NUMBERS

ACT ONE

Prologue: The weave room of the Everett Mills. Thursday, January 11, 1912. Late afternoon.

1 "Pennies In Our Pay".....Women

2 "We Strike".....Women, Collins

Scene 1: Stern's Grocery on Common Street. Friday, January 12. Late afternoon.

3 "Hurry Home".....Hiram

4 "No Easy Answers".....Anna, Lucia, Sarah, Bridget

5 "A Time For Action".....Sarah

Scene 2: Father O'Connor's sacristy at St. Mary's Church. Saturday, January 13. Noon.

**6 "Stop The Strikers".....Father O'Connor, Chief Monaghan,
William Wood**

Scene 3: Stern's Grocery. Thursday, January 18. Afternoon.

7 "Get The Picture".....Sarah, Bridget, Collins

8 "My Kind Of Hero".....Bridget, Jacob

Scene 4: Broadway, near the Arlington Mills. Directly following.

Scene 5: Stern's Grocery. Saturday, January 20. Afternoon.

9 "Cossacks In The Night".....Hiram, Sarah

Scene 6: St. Mary's Church. Sunday, January 21. Afternoon.

10 "Finding My Place".....Bridget

Scene 7: Union Street, near the Everett Mills. Monday, January 29. Evening.

11 "Give Us Hope Today".....Strikers

12 "No More To Give".....Bridget, Sean

SYNOPSIS OF SCENES AND MUSICAL NUMBERS

ACT TWO

Scene 1: Stern's Grocery. Monday, February 12. Dawn.

**13 "No Place Is Safe".....Sarah, Josefina, Lucia, Bridget,
Collins**

Scene 2: Lawrence Train Station. Saturday, February 24. Late morning.

14 "Hurry Home" (Reprise).....Hiram

Scene 3: Lawrence Police Station. A few hours later.

Scene 4: William Wood's office. Tuesday, February 27. Afternoon.

15 "Negotiation Rag".....Wood, Elizabeth

Scene 5: St. Mary's Church. Immediately following.

16 "Twenty Thousand Strikers".....Strikers

17 "No More To Give" (Reprise).....Strikers

Scene 6: Stern's Grocery. Tuesday, February 27. Afternoon.

Scene 7: Lawrence Police Station. Tuesday, February 27. Evening.

18 "Another Chance To Meet".....Sean, Bridget

19 "Women Who Lead".....Elizabeth, Sarah, Bridget

Scene 8: Congressional Hearings, Washington, DC. Saturday, March 2. Afternoon.

20 "It Could Have Been Me".....Bridget

Epilogue: Stern's Grocery. Monday, March 11. Noon.

21 "My Kind of Hero" (Reprise).....Jacob

22 "One Day".....The Company

CHARACTERS

JOSEFINA PRAZKA*: a Polish mill worker. 40s.

ANNA LO PIZZO*: an Italian mill worker. 30s.

LUCIA COGNOSCI*: an Italian mill worker. Quick-tempered.
Pregnant. Early 30s.

ALBERT COLLINS*: an English mill official, who will never be
mistaken for intelligent. 40s.

HIRAM STERN: a Russian-born Jewish shopkeeper. Early 30s. Walks
with a limp.

SARAH WEISSMANN: Hiram's sister-in-law. Midwife to many
immigrant women. 36.

JACOB STERN: Hiram's oldest child. Feisty, intelligent, and
impulsive. 12.

BRIDGET GALLAGHER*: an Irish mill worker. Strong-willed and
courageous. 17.

FATHER PAUL O'CONNOR*: head priest of St. Mary's Church and
Bridget's uncle. 40s-50s.

WILLIAM WOOD: President of American Woolen Co. 40s-50s.

PATRICK MONAGHAN: Lawrence Chief of Police. 50s-60s.

OFFICER SEAN RYAN: a policeman. Charming, well-meaning, and not
at all cerebral. 20s.

ELIZABETH GURLEY FLYNN: an I.W.W. organizer. Charismatic and
fiery. 21.

KATARINA, GRETA, and JACQUELINE: mill workers.

*denotes a character who speaks with an accent

ACT ONE, PROLOGUE

SETTING: Thursday, January 11, 1912. Late afternoon. The weave room at Everett Mills in Lawrence, Massachusetts. Noise begins as a low whirr, steadily but slowly rising to a deafening level.

AT RISE: Red lights come up, back-lighting many WOMEN miming their motions as they work at their looms.

Song 1: "Pennies in Our Pay" - Mill Workers

ANNA, WOMEN (PART
III)
THE MACHINES ARE
ALWAYS GOING,
NEVER PAUSING,
NEVER STOPPING.

ANNA, WOMEN (PART III)	LUCIA, WOMEN (PART II)
THE MACHINES ARE	OPERATE THE SHUTTLE,
ALWAYS GOING,	IN, OUT,
NEVER PAUSING,	OPERATE THE SHUTTLE
NEVER STOPPING.	ALL DAY.

ANNA, WOMEN (PART III)	LUCIA, WOMEN (PART II)	JOSEFINA, WOMEN (PART I)
THE MACHINES ARE	OPERATE THE SHUTTLE,	WEAVING AT THE LOOM WITH
ALWAYS GOING,	IN, OUT,	CAREFUL CONCENTRATION,
NEVER PAUSING,	OPERATE THE SHUTTLE	WEAVING AT THE LOOM FROM
NEVER STOPPING.	ALL DAY.	MORNING UNTIL NIGHT
THE MACHINES ARE	OPERATE THE SHUTTLE,	WEAVING AT THE LOOM WITH
ALWAYS GOING,	IN, OUT,	CAREFUL CONCENTRATION,
NEVER PAUSING,	OPERATE THE SHUTTLE	WEAVING AT THE LOOM FROM
NEVER STOPPING.	ALL DAY.	MORNING UNTIL NIGHT

BRIDGET
I COME TO WORK, TO SLAVE AWAY, IMPRISONED IN THIS ROOM
AS DAYLIGHT COMES AND GOES EACH DAY I SHIVER IN THIS GLOOM

LUCIA
I TRADE MY LIFE FOR MEAGER PAY AS I PLY MY TRADE AT THE LOOM.

JOSEFINA
THE THREAT OF DANGER'S ALWAYS THERE, BUT WHILE MY LABOR'S CHEAP
IF THIS MACHINE SHOULD CATCH MY HAIR, THE PRICE I PAY IS STEEP
I CHANT MY SONGS, I STAY AWARE, I CAN'T RISK THAT I'LL FALL
ASLEEP.

BRIDGET
THE WATER IS UNFIT TO DRINK, AND YET I HAVE TO PAY FOR IT.

ANNA
I WORK 'TIL I CAN HARDLY THINK
AND STILL I GAIN NO BENEFIT BUT PENNIES FOR MY DAY,

ALL WORKERS
PENNIES IN MY PAY.

ANNA
THE FOREMAN'S POWER IS TOO GREAT, HE SLAPPED ME IN A RAGE

LUCIA
IF I ARRIVE ONE MINUTE LATE, I LOSE AN HOUR'S WAGE

LUCIA, ANNA, JOSEFINA
I'D LEAVE THIS PRISON IF I COULD, BUT I HAVE NO KEY TO THIS CAGE.

JOSEFINA
WHEN DO I REACH MY LIMIT? WHEN IS IT MORE THAN I CAN BEAR?
HOW DO I KEEP ON GOING WHEN THERE IS NOTHING BUT DESPAIR
AND PENNIES FOR MY DAY...

ALL WORKERS
PENNIES IN MY...

JACQUELINE
Quiet! He's coming!

ANNA
Foreman on the floor!

(Quickly, the women go back to their machines and resume work. During the following music, sung sotto voce, the manager, ALBERT COLLINS, enters. He is a swarthy Englishman in his 40s. Nobody will ever mistake him for a man of superior intelligence. He strides through the room, handing out envelopes.)

COLLINS (very bored, mangling the names)
Cognosci...Lo Pizzo...Prazka...Gallagher...

(He lingers on BRIDGET menacingly; he would probably call it flirting. Then he continues across stage and exits. JOSEFINA tears open her envelope and counts the money several times, as though she can't believe her eyes.)

(The three-part verse continues, sotto voce, under following dialogue until JOSEFINA begins to sing "Our hours..." at conclusion of dialogue below.)

WOMEN (PART III)
THE MACHINES ARE
ALWAYS GOING,
NEVER PAUSING,
NEVER STOPPING.

WOMEN (PART III)	WOMEN (PART II)
THE MACHINES ARE	OPERATE THE SHUTTLE,
ALWAYS GOING,	IN, OUT,
NEVER PAUSING,	OPERATE THE SHUTTLE
NEVER STOPPING.	ALL DAY.

WOMEN (PART III)	WOMEN (PART II)	WOMEN (PART I)
THE MACHINES ARE	OPERATE THE SHUTTLE,	WEAVING AT THE LOOM WITH
ALWAYS GOING,	IN, OUT,	CAREFUL CONCENTRATION,
NEVER PAUSING,	OPERATE THE SHUTTLE	WEAVING AT THE LOOM FROM
NEVER STOPPING.	ALL DAY.	MORNING UNTIL NIGHT

JOSEFINA (outraged)
Short pay! Just as I thought. (raising her voice) Everyone!
Stop work! Count your wages!

(Having counted her envelope, ANNA rises and comes to stand with JOSEFINA.)

LUCIA (disgusted)
Anna, you too?

ANNA (to JOSEFINA)
Mine too.

JOSEFINA
This is the end! Maybe I leave now. (growing angrier) Maybe we should all leave together.

BRIDGET (impatiently)
You're wasting time!

LUCIA
You make trouble if you want! Me, I'll run your looms along with mine.

ANNA
You think you can keep up this pace? How long till you faint? Or lose your baby?

LUCIA (to JOSEFINA)
You really gonna quit, because we got to work two hours less?

JOSEFINA

Haven't you noticed? The machines, they go faster now. The amount of work, it is the same. The mill owners, they do not lose money. But we lost two hours of wages! Go on, count it!

LUCIA

They wouldn't dare... (she rips her envelope open and counts it)

ANNA

So?

LUCIA (reluctantly)

It is short. Two hours. And also...not the bonus which was due me.

JOSEFINA (sings)

OUR HOURS WERE CUT BACK THIS WEEK,
AND LOOK WHAT THAT DID TO OUR PAY!

ANNA

WE JUST MAKE ENOUGH TO SURVIVE...

JOSEFINA, ANNA

WE CAN'T LET THEM TAKE IT AWAY!

JOSEFINA, ANNA

OUR HOURS WERE CUT BACK THIS WEEK,
AND LOOK WHAT THAT DID TO OUR PAY!
WE JUST MAKE ENOUGH TO SURVIVE,
WE CAN'T LET THEM TAKE IT AWAY.

LUCIA, BRIDGET, WORKERS

OUR HOURS HAVE BEEN CUT THIS WEEK,
AND SEE HOW THAT AFFECTS OUR PAY?
WE BARELY MANAGE AS IT IS
WITH ONLY PENNIES IN OUR PAY.

ALL

THEY MUST NOT TAKE AWAY ANY PENNIES IN OUR PAY...
NOW IS THE TIME TO STRIKE!

COLLINS (returning, indignant)

Now, what's the meaning of this? Ladies! Get back to your machines!

Song 2: "We Strike" - Josefina, Anna, Collins, Ensemble

JOSEFINA (sung)

SHORT PAY,

ANNA (sung)

WE STRIKE TODAY.

ALL WOMEN

WE CAN'T STAY ALIVE ON WHAT YOU PAY.

COLLINS

Oh, is that so? Well, you can't strike!

JOSEFINA

Why not?

ANNA
Who says?

JOSEFINA
(sings) SHORT PAY, WE STRIKE!

ANNA
TODAY WE STRIKE. AT LAST...

JOSEFINA
AT LEAST...

ALL WOMEN
WE'LL HAVE OUR SAY TODAY.

COLLINS
BUT HOW WOULD YOU FEED YOUR FAMILIES?
THEY CAN'T MAKE A MEAL OF AIR.

JOSEFINA
WELL, HOW COULD WE FEED OUR FAMILIES
WHEN THE WAGE YOU PAY IS BARELY THERE?

COLLINS
WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE? TWENTY-FIVE CENTS OR SO?

JOSEFINA
IT'S 32 CENTS, THAT'S MORE DIFFERENCE THAN YOU COULD EVER KNOW!

ANNA
SHORT PAY, WE STRIKE

JOSEFINA, ANNA
TODAY WE STRIKE,

WOMEN
WE NEVER WILL SURVIVE...

COLLINS
Now, ladies, please...

JOSEFINA
We deserve answers, Mr. Collins!

ANNA
Why pay is short?

LUCIA
Two hours short!

COLLINS (sings)
GO PUT ALL THE BLAME ON GOVERNMENT.
THE MILL DOESN'T MAKE THE LAWS.
FORGET ALL THIS CRAZY TALK ABOUT WALKING OUT
WHEN THERE'S NO BLOODY CAUSE

JOSEFINA
THE GOVERNMENT CUT THE HOURS WE WORK BY TWO

ANNA
BUT WHEN WE CAN'T LIVE ON THE PAY YOU GIVE

ALL WOMEN
WE PUT THE BLAME ON YOU!
SHORT PAY, WE STRIKE, TODAY WE STRIKE,
WE NEVER WILL SURVIVE...

WOMEN
OUR HOURS WERE CUT BACK AND THAT AFFECTS
OUR PAY
HOW CAN WE LIVE ON FEWER PENNIES FOR OUR
DAY?
OUR HOURS WERE CUT BACK AND THAT AFFECTS
OUR PAY
HOW CAN WE LIVE ON FEWER PENNIES FOR OUR
DAY?

COLLINS
BACK TO WORK OR YOU WILL
PAY

YOU WILL LIVE TO RUE THIS
DAY

WOMEN
OUR HOURS WERE CUT BACK AND THAT AFFECTS
OUR PAY
HOW CAN WE LIVE ON FEWER PENNIES FOR OUR
DAY?

BRIDGET
IF WE CHOOSE TO JOIN THIS
STRIKE,
OUR WAGES WILL BE LOST

WOMEN
OUR HOURS WERE CUT BACK AND THAT AFFECTS
OUR PAY
HOW CAN WE LIVE ON FEWER PENNIES FOR OUR
DAY?

LUCIA
WITH FAMILIES IN NEED OF
FOOD,
WE HAVE TO WEIGH THE COST

WOMEN
OUR HOURS WERE CUT BACK AND THAT AFFECTS
OUR PAY
HOW CAN WE LIVE ON FEWER PENNIES FOR OUR
DAY?
OUR HOURS WERE CUT BACK AND THAT AFFECTS
OUR PAY
HOW CAN WE LIVE ON FEWER PENNIES FOR OUR
DAY?

JOSEFINA
LET US MAKE A STAND,
MARCHING HAND IN HAND
BOLD SOLIDARITY!
WILL YOU COME ALONG WITH
ME?

WOMEN
OUR HOURS WERE CUT
BACK
AND THAT AFFECTS OUR
PAY
HOW CAN WE LIVE ON
FEWER PENNIES FOR
OUR DAY?

COLLINS
BACK TO
WORK

OR YOU WILL
PAY

BRIDGET
IF WE CHOOSE TO JOIN
THIS STRIKE,
OUR WAGES WILL BE
LOST

ANNA
OUR HOURS WERE CUT
BACK THIS WEEK
AND LOOK WHAT IT DID
TO OUR PAY

JOSEFINA
LET US MAKE A
STAND,
MARCHING HAND IN
HAND
BOLD SOLIDARITY!

OUR HOURS WERE CUT
BACK
AND THAT AFFECTS OUR

YOU WILL
LIVE

LUCIA
WITH FAMILIES IN
NEED OF FOOD,
WE HAVE TO WEIGH THE

WE JUST MAKE ENOUGH
TO SURVIVE
WE CAN'T LET THEM

WILL YOU COME
ALONG

ACT ONE, SCENE ONE

SETTING: Stern's Grocery store on Lowell Street in Lawrence.
Friday, January 12. Late afternoon.

AT RISE: SARAH WEISSMANN, a woman in her mid-30's, is sweeping the floor. HIRAM STERN, the store owner, her brother-in-law, is taking inventory.

HIRAM

Thank you for all your help, Sarah. I'm so glad you've come.

SARAH

I only hope Hannah has an easier time of it for the rest of her term.

HIRAM

I'm most worried about her. She wants this baby so badly. We both do. But she refuses to rest.

SARAH

My sister has never been one to know her limits. If I hadn't put a scare into her, I doubt she'd be willing to stay in bed another minute.

HIRAM

It seems to be very noisy out there.

SARAH

There are people picketing all through the streets.

HIRAM

Whatever could be keeping Jacob? School was out over an hour ago!

SARAH

I'm sure he's fine, Hiram. (She finishes sweeping) There. What else needs to be done?

HIRAM (sitting)

I'm going to rest a minute. My leg is hurting me.

SARAH

Shall I look at it?

HIRAM

No, thank you. There's nothing you could do for such an old complaint.

(JACOB, HIRAM's 12 year old son, runs in from the street.)

JACOB (excitedly)

Father, everyone in the streets is so angry!

SARAH

What's going on out there, Jacob? What did you see?

JACOB

Oh, there's lots of people marching around. Gotta be thousands of 'em. They're yellin' all kinds of stuff. I didn't understand too much 'cause most of them weren't speaking English. But it looks like there's more people outside picketing the mills, than inside workin' at them. It's bitter cold. And everybody's just gettin' madder all the time.

SARAH

That does sound dangerous.

HIRAM

Did I not tell you to come straight to the store?

JACOB

Yes, Father, but I...

HIRAM

No excuses, Jacob. I was getting very worried. It's dangerous out there. It'll soon be dark. And I need you helping here, not running wild all over Lawrence.

Song 3: "Hurry Home" - Hiram

HIRAM (sings)

HURRY HOME, MY SON, FOR I CAN'T DO WITHOUT YOU
YOU'LL BE SAFE AT HOME, THERE IS DANGER IN THE STREET
HURRY HOME, MY CHILD, HOW I WORRY ABOUT YOU.
I AM FRIGHTENED OF THE TROUBLE YOU MIGHT MEET.

THE POLICE ARE GETTING ROUGHER, AND THE CROWD IS GETTING WILD,
THERE'S SHOUTING, SHOVING, FIGHTING. IT'S NO PLACE FOR A CHILD
I KNOW IT SOUNDS EXCITING TO BOLD YOUNG LADS LIKE YOU
BUT BE CAREFUL OF THE PATH THAT YOU PURSUE
I WAS ONCE A BOY FACING DANGER, TOO.

IN MY CHILDHOOD BACK IN RUSSIA,
HOW I THRILLED TO TROUBLE IN THE STREET
I DREAMED OF TAKING VENGEANCE
ON THE COSSACKS I WOULD MEET

THEN I GOT MY CHANCE TO THROW MY STONES
AT EV'RY COSSACK I COULD SEE.
I KEPT IT UP UNTIL MY UNCLE TOOK THE BULLET MEANT FOR ME.
IT PASSED RIGHT THROUGH HIS HEART, LODGING IN MY KNEE.
MY UNCLE'S DYING WORDS ARE STILL SO CLEAR.

HURRY HOME, DEAR BOY, THERE IS NO NEED FOR CRYING.
I ESCAPE THIS LIFE, ALL MY TROUBLES DISAPPEAR.
HURRY HOME, STAY SAFE, CAN'T YOU SEE THAT I'M DYING?
THERE IS NOTHING TO BE GAINED BY STAYING HERE.
GO AWAY BEFORE THE COSSACKS RE-APPEAR.

AND THE PAIN WITHIN MY SHATTERED HEART
AND PAIN THAT'S IN MY SHATTERED LEG
REMAIN REMINDERS TO THIS DAY.
SO LISTEN, JACOB, WHEN I SAY,

HURRY HOME, MY SON, FOR I CAN'T DO WITHOUT YOU.
JUST IGNORE THE CROWD, YOU MUST HEED YOUR FATHER'S PLEA.
HURRY HOME, MY CHILD, HOW I WORRY ABOUT YOU.
HURRY HOME, DEAR BOY, TO ME.

JACOB
Father, I didn't mean...

HIRAM
You were supposed to be watching your sisters. From now on, if
you're not in the store or at school, I want you at home as well.

JACOB
Yes, sir.

HIRAM
That's a good boy. Now, help your aunt mind the counter. I need
to finish the inventory.

(HIRAM exits to the back room of the store, his limp a
bit more pronounced.)

JACOB
Nothing bad's gonna happen, is it, Aunt Sarah? Do you think
anyone's going to get hurt?

SARAH
I hope not, Jacob.

JACOB
I wish I could march too. I wish I didn't have to go to school
all day.

SARAH
Jacob, listen to me. You don't get a second chance to be young.
Enjoy it while it lasts.

ANNA (entering)
Doctor Sarah! I hope I find you here.

SARAH
Anna? What's wrong?

ANNA
Everything. Everything is all wrong.

SARAH
Jacob, would you go help your father, please?

JACOB

Aw, why does everyone send me away just when things start happening?

SARAH

Jacob...

JACOB

I'm goin', I'm goin'. (He exits to the back room.)

ANNA

He is a good boy, no?

SARAH

Most of the time.

LUCIA (entering)

Sarah, there is much trouble. (seeing ANNA; not pleased) I did not think to see you here.

SARAH

What is it? The baby?

LUCIA

No, no, the baby is fine. This one, he will be the first in the family to be born in America! Of this we are very proud. No, it is the wages which are the trouble

ANNA

Si, the new law, we can only work fifty-four hours now. But the machines, they speed up. So we do the same amount of work, but we are paid for two hours less. This time we do not follow. We strike!

LUCIA

Such foolish ideas she has.

ANNA

I tell you, it is not only my idea! Already thousands are out of the mills. More will follow. Rocco and the other men down at the Brotherhood, they send cable to New York. The Industrial Workers of the World, they are coming here. Maybe even tonight.

LUCIA

I hear this too. They will bring trouble with them. I try to tell the men, this is not good idea. But they do not listen.

ANNA

Never do they listen to women. Still we must do something. We can meet and talk here, Doctor Sarah?

SARAH

But why can't you meet on the Common?

ANNA

It is so cold. This dreadful winter...so much snow!

LUCIA

I tell you, Anna, you are not fair to ask such things.

SARAH (after a beat)

It's all right, Lucia. Of course, you're welcome to talk here. I don't see what harm it would do.

ANNA

Oh, thank you, Doctor Sarah! And you, how are you?

SARAH

I've been better. My sister is not having an easy time with this pregnancy. And I've been called before the Medical Board next month. It looks as though I'm about to lose my license.

LUCIA

For what does this happen?

SARAH

They say it's because doctors have better training and midwives aren't skilled enough to practice. But only five of us have been called before the Board. So we believe the real reason is that we've been trying to get women the right to vote. They're trying to scare us into keeping quiet.

LUCIA

But this is not fair!

SARAH

I agree, but I don't have much choice. I'm not allowed to practice until this has been decided.

ANNA

There, you see, Lucia? And I have no choice but to join the strike. I can no longer keep quiet.

Song 4: "No Easy Answers" - Anna, Lucia, Sarah, Bridget

LUCIA

WHAT CAN WE DO WHEN THERE'S NO EASY ANSWERS?
WHATEVER WE CHOOSE, THERE'S A PRICE TO PAY.

ANNA

WE MADE A CHOICE WHEN WE CAME TO THIS COUNTRY,

LUCIA

AND NOW WE MUST PAY THE PRICE EACH DAY.

ANNA

JOINING THE STRIKERS

LUCIA
OR FEEDING OUR CHILDREN. SUCH A DECISION WE HAVE TO MAKE!

ANNA
STANDING TOGETHER,

LUCIA
OR EARNING OUR WAGES,

ANNA, LUCIA
WHICH IS THE ROAD TO TAKE?
WHAT DO WE DO WHEN THERE'S NO EASY ANSWERS?
WHATEVER WE CHOOSE THERE'S A PRICE TO PAY.

LUCIA
STAY OUT OF TROUBLE,

ANNA
OR THINK OF THE FUTURE
THE KIND OF A WORLD THAT WE WANT FOR OUR CHILDREN
CAN ONLY BE FOUND IF WE SHARE
THIS TERRIBLE BURDEN OF MAKING OUR CHOICES

ANNA, LUCIA
WHEN THERE ARE NO EASY ANSWERS THERE.

JACOB (running in)
Aunt Sarah, there's another lady here to see you. She's kinda pretty. (at the front door) The police are watching the front entrance.

LUCIA
There, you see? You see? We bring trouble to these people! It is your fault!

ANNA
My fault? Don't blame this on me!

SARAH
Ladies, please! This has nothing to do with either of you. You ought to leave, now. And Jacob, please send the girl out here.

JACOB
Yes, Aunt Sarah. (to LUCIA and ANNA) If you go out the back, they won't see you. It's clear. C'mon, I'll show you. (He exits to the back room.)

ANNA (moving to follow)
So helpful and polite. A lovely boy.

SARAH
I agree, but don't let him hear you say that.

ANNA (amused)
Si...good evening, Doctor Sarah. (exits out the back)

LUCIA (following)
Good evening, Doctor Sarah.

(As LUCIA exits, BRIDGET passes her and enters the front of the store.)

BRIDGET
You're Sarah Weissmann? The midwife?

SARAH (wryly)
I was. At the moment, that's under debate. And you are...

BRIDGET
Oh, Jaysis, I'm sorry! I'm Bridget. Bridget Gallagher. I need your treatment.

SARAH
What is your complaint?

BRIDGET (this is very difficult)
I'm not certain, but I think I may be...with child.

SARAH
And you're not married.

(BRIDGET shakes her head. SARAH takes a careful pause.)

What is it you want me to do?

BRIDGET
If I'm right...I would need to...

SARAH
End the pregnancy. (BRIDGET nods.) Why did you come to me?

BRIDGET
One of the other women at Everett. She said she had a problem like mine, and you helped her. Sarah, I don't know what to do.

SARAH
I wish I could help you. But I'm not allowed to perform terminations right now. I'm not allowed to practice at all. If I do, I could be arrested.

BRIDGET
And if I hadn't left Ireland, sure I'd have been married off by now, with at least two kids. I couldn't bear that. I don't know if I ever want babies, but I can't have one now, that's sure.

SARAH
Maybe you should have thought of that before...

BRIDGET
Before Collins forced himself on me?

SARAH

Who?

BRIDGET

Albert Collins. My boss at Everett. (pause) I'm not thick. I've seen what happens to girls who... like being looked at. They get into trouble. But I came to Lawrence to help my family and to make something of myself. And all I've had is trouble even so. You're my last hope. I was sure...

BRIDGET

(sings) WHAT CAN I DO WHEN THERE ARE NO EASY ANSWERS,
WHEN EITHER CHOICE ENDS IN DISGRACE FOR ME?
HAVING A CHILD WHEN I AM NOT EVEN MARRIED
OR ENDING THIS SHAMEFUL PREGNANCY?
HAVING A BABY I CANNOT TAKE CARE OF,
OR BEARING THE GUILT OF A MORTAL SIN?
SHAMING MY FAM'LY, OR BREAKING COMMANDMENTS?
WHAT A FINE MESS I'M IN.

BRIDGET

WHAT CAN I DO WHEN THERE ARE
NO EASY ANSWERS?
WHATEVER I CHOOSE THERE'S A
PRICE TO PAY.

SARAH

WHAT CAN WE DO WHEN THERE ARE
NO EASY ANSWERS?
WHATEVER I CHOOSE THERE'S A PRICE
TO PAY.

BRIDGET

WHAT WILL I DO IF I MUST FACE THIS DECISION?

SARAH

PERHAPS WE COULD LEARN TO SHARE
THIS TERRIBLE BURDEN
OF MAKING THESE CHOICES
WHEN THERE ARE NO EASY ANSWERS
THERE,
NO EASY ANSWERS.

BRIDGET

LEARN TO SHARE
THIS TERRIBLE BURDEN
OF MAKING THESE CHOICES, CHOICES...
WHEN THERE ARE NO EASY ANSWERS,
NO EASY ANSWERS.

SARAH

You poor girl.

BRIDGET

It's your treatment I'd be needing, Sarah, not your pity. He forced himself on me. I swear it.

SARAH

I believe you. But isn't there anyone you can talk to? Family? Friends?

BRIDGET

I've two great useless brothers in Boston. And my uncle. If he finds out, he'll have me head.

SARAH

Your uncle?

BRIDGET
Father O'Connor. Over at St. Mary's.

SARAH
Not Paul O'Connor?

BRIDGET
The very one.

SARAH
I've heard him called the Holy Terror. By his own congregants,
yet.

BRIDGET (dryly)
'Twas I coined the phrase.

SARAH
Bridget, how old are you?

BRIDGET
I'm seventeen. How old are you?

SARAH
I'm...eighteen. Times two. (smiles)

BRIDGET
Ah, you're messin'! My Mum's not much older than you, and she
looks sixty.

SARAH
Are you in good health?

BRIDGET
Aye. At least, I was.

JACOB (running in)
Aunt Sarah! Father says... (stops) Hello, miss...

BRIDGET
Call me Bridget. If I can have your name in return?

JACOB
Jacob Stern. (he shakes her hand)

BRIDGET
Pleased to meet you.

JACOB
I ain't...I mean, I've never heard anyone talk like you before.
Where are you from?

BRIDGET
From the green hills of Ireland, Master Stern.

JACOB

Jacob, please. Or Jake. My friends call me Jake.

SARAH

Did you need something...Jake?

JACOB

Oh. Yeah. Father needs your help.

SARAH

I'll be there directly! Leave us, Jacob.

JACOB

Nice to meet you...Bridget. (exits to the back room)

BRIDGET

He's a charming one.

SARAH

I guess he's growing up.

BRIDGET

I've a wee brother his age. They do surprise you. (beat) I'd better leave so.

SARAH

Go out the back way. Oh, and Bridget...can you join us for supper tomorrow?

BRIDGET

Aye, but what for?

SARAH

Let's take one thing at a time. We don't even know if you are expecting. If I'm going to look after you, I need to examine you first. Come by at five. We can talk after you've eaten.

BRIDGET (tensely)

And you'll help me?

SARAH (with growing determination)

Yes, I'll help you, Bridget. I think you need someone on your side.

BRIDGET

Praise God! (she exits)

Song 5: "A Time For Action" - Sarah

SARAH (watching BRIDGET go)

(sings) I WON'T TURN MY BACK WHEN THERE IS SOMEONE WHO NEEDS ME
ALTHOUGH I'M AWARE THERE'S A PRICE TO PAY.
WHAT ELSE CAN I DO WHEN THERE ARE NO EASY ANSWERS
BUT DO WHAT I MUST EACH DAY.

THIS IS A TIME FOR ACTION.
THIS IS A TIME TO PAY MY DUES.
THIS IS NOT THE TIME TO HESITATE OR BEND OR LOOK THE OTHER WAY.
THERE IS NO TIME TO LOSE.
THIS IS THE TIME AND I MUST CHOOSE.

THIS IS A TIME FOR ACTION.
THIS IS A TIME TO FOLLOW THROUGH.
THIS IS NOT THE TIME TO TAKE THE EASY ROAD
OR SECOND-GUESS MYSELF.
THIS IS THE TIME TO DO.

EV'RYONE FACES DECISIONS THAT DEFINE THE PERSON THEY CAN BE.
NOW IS THE TIME FOR SUCH A DECISION FOR ME.

NOW IS MY TIME FOR ACTION.
I MUST DO WHAT I KNOW IS RIGHT.
SO HELL WITH THOSE WHO WANT TO PUT ME OUT OF ACTION,
MAKE ME COMPROMISE.
THEY HAVE NO CAUSE, THEY HAVE NO RIGHT.
I CAN'T BE PARALYZED BY FRIGHT.

NOW IS THE TIME TO SHOW WHAT I'M MADE OF.
THIS IS MY DUTY AND MY RIGHT.
NOW IS THE TIME TO COME OUT OF HIDING.
NOW IS MY TIME TO FIGHT!

LIGHTS FADE - END SCENE ONE

ACT ONE, SCENE TWO

SETTING: The sacristy of FATHER PAUL O'CONNOR, head of St. Mary's Roman Catholic Church. Saturday, January 13. Noon.

AT RISE: FATHER O'CONNOR is seated at his desk. WILLIAM WOOD, President of American Woolen Company, a huge man in his 40s, strides around impatiently.)

WOOD

I expected Chief Monaghan would be here ahead of me.

FR. O'CONNOR

He rang me a little while ago, he's had his hands full down in the Plains. He'll be along soon.

WOOD (snorts)

Soon as he's had his dinner, more likely. I'm glad we can talk here. I can't get a bit of work done for all the noise outside my office windows. It just goes to show you, double-paned glass isn't worth the expense.

FR. O'CONNOR

'Tis a shame.

WOOD

So, Paul, what's the word down here at St. Mary's?

FR. O'CONNOR

Quiet, Bill. Strangely quiet. There was less than half the usual attendance at Mass this morning. It worries me, I don't mind saying.

(PATRICK MONAGHAN, Lawrence Chief of Police, enters.)

MONAGHAN

Paul, sorry I'm late. I've had one hell of a night. (coldly) Bill.

WOOD (attempting joviality)

Come now, Chief, you mean to tell me Lawrence's finest can't keep a few bohunks in line?

MONAGHAN

It's not that simple. The I.W.W. is involved, now! They're speaking at the Franco-Belgian Hall right this minute. There's even a woman in the group. Flynn, or something like that.

WOOD

Not Elizabeth Gurley Flynn?

MONAGHAN

That sounds right.

WOOD

Blast it! She's been here before. Came last spring, right after that Triangle fire. She's a dangerous young harridan. Gets the women all riled up. Why didn't you arrest them, you fool?

MONAGHAN

Last time I looked, the city was signing my checks, not American Woolen.

WOOD

Oh? Is there a difference?

FR. O'CONNOR

Gentlemen? Instead of arguing, hadn't we better start thinking of a plan?

Song 6: "Stop the Strikers" - Monaghan, O'Connor, Wood

MONAGHAN

WHAT ARE WE GONNA DO? HOW DO WE STOP THE STRIKERS?
THIS ANGRY MOB IS GROWING IN STRENGTH AND SIZE.
WHAT ARE WE GONNA DO? HOW DO WE STOP THE STRIKERS
BEFORE THIS ALL EXPLODES BEFORE OUR VERY EYES?

WOOD

Well, I think...

FR. O'CONNOR

GENTLEMEN, AS THE SHEPHERD OF THE FLOCK,
I'LL PREACH THE WORD, BESEECH THEM WELL
WITH THREATS OF ETERNAL HELL.
THEY KNOW MY SACRED WORD IS LAW.
(he preaches) "THY DUTY'S CLEAR, THOU SHALL NOT SHIRK.
IT'S TIME TO GO BACK TO WORK,"
SO SAYS THE SHEPHERD OF THE FLOCK.

WOOD

But that's not enough, Paul. You can't reach them unless they're in here.

FR. O'CONNOR

Then what do you propose?

MONAGHAN

Words aren't enough. We need to use force to keep them in line.

FR. O'CONNOR

Well, I think...

MONAGHAN (sings)

GENTLEMEN, AS THE KEEPER OF THE PEACE.
MY MEN ARE ARMED, THEY'RE ON PATROL.
THEY KNOW HOW TO KEEP CONTROL.
I'LL SEE THAT ORDER IS RESTORED.
MY WORD IS LAW, MY DUTY'S CLEAR.

THIS TROUBLE WILL DISAPPEAR.
SO SAYS THE KEEPER OF THE PEACE.

WOOD (speaking)
This is more than you can handle. You said so yourself. And what about my business? We've already lost two full days of work.

MONAGHAN
Believe it or not, Mr. Wood, I've bigger concerns than your revenue!

FR. O'CONNOR (to Wood)
WHAT DO YOU WANT TO DO? HOW WOULD YOU STOP THE STRIKERS?
THIS ANGRY MOB IS GROWING IN STRENGTH AND SIZE.
WHAT DO YOU PLAN TO DO? HOW SHALL WE STOP THE STRIKERS?
WE MUST RESTORE THE PEACE BEFORE SOMEBODY DIES.

WOOD
GENTLEMEN, AS THE OWNER OF THE MILL,
I'VE GOT A PLAN TO DO WHAT'S BEST FOR US AND FOR ALL THE REST.
GENTLEMEN, AS THE LEADERS OF THIS TOWN.
WE NEED TO ACT, THE TIME IS HERE. WE'LL PUT THEM IN MORTAL FEAR.
SO SAYS THE OWNER OF THE MILL.

MONAGHAN
I'll be damned if you tell me how to do my job!

WOOD
If you'd do it properly, I wouldn't have to!

FR. O'CONNOR
Don't you see, there are no easy answers here. We all have to do what we can.

WOOD
You're right, Paul.

MONAGHAN
Well, I think..

WOOD
(sings) HERE'S WHAT WE HAVE TO DO: WE'LL UNDERMINE THE STRIKERS.
THIS RABBLE-ROUSING RIOT IS DOOMED TO FAIL.
WE WILL IMPOSE NEW LAWS, CALL IN THE STATE MILITIA,
(points to O'Connor) CONDEMN THEIR SOULS TO HELL,
(points to Monaghan) AND HAUL THEM OFF TO JAIL.

FR. O'CONNOR
What about the Mayor? What will he say?

WOOD
Don't worry about that. He'll do as I say. This town is nothing without the mills. And he's nothing without our support.

FR. O'CONNOR

All the same, it sounds risky.

WOOD

Of course it's risky! I didn't get where I am without taking risks!

MONAGHAN

Of course not! You got where you are by marrying the boss' daughter!

FR. O'CONNOR

GENTLEMEN, AS THE LEADERS OF THIS TOWN, LET'S MAKE OUR PLANS.

ALL

WE'LL DO WHAT'S BEST FOR US AND FOR ALL THE REST.

FR. O'CONNOR

WE HAVE RESPONSIBILITIES.

MONAGHAN

LET'S CUT THOSE STRIKERS DOWN TO SIZE

WOOD

AND SOON THEY WILL REALIZE WHO HAS THE POWER IN THIS TOWN.

ALL

FOR WE ARE THE LEADERS OF THIS TOWN!

WOOD (handing cigars to the others)

To the end of the strike!

MONAGHAN

Hear, hear!

FR. O'CONNOR

Amen! (There is a knock at the door.) Come in!

(OFFICER SEAN RYAN, an earnest young policeman, enters.)

SEAN

I'm lookin' for the Chief? They said I could find him here.

MONAGHAN

Yes, yes, what is it?

SEAN (importantly)

Sir, the mob just came out of the Hall, and it looks like they're heading for the Common!

MONAGHAN (squinting at RYAN's name badge)

Thank you...Ryan. I'm on my way.

(SEAN doesn't move.)

Dismissed, Officer! Wait outside.

SEAN (a bit disappointed)
Yes, sir. (he exits)

MONAGHAN (relieved as well as vigilant)
Well, my men will be needing me. I'd best be on my way.

WOOD
I'm going to speak with the Mayor about my ideas. I'll call on you later to discuss matters.

MONAGHAN (coldly)
If you insist. (he exits)

WOOD
And remember, Paul...keep your congregation in line. (exits)

(FR. O'CONNOR sits and sniffs the cigar contentedly. There is a knock. He doesn't answer. A second, firmer knock.)

(irritated) Yes, yes, come in.

BRIDGET (entering, cautiously)
Uncle Paul? You wanted to see me?

FR. O'CONNOR
Ah, Bridget. I did, yes. Have a seat.

(BRIDGET sits, uneasily. He clears his throat. A pause.)

BRIDGET (hopefully)
Perhaps I'd better come another time?

FR. O'CONNOR
No, no, child. No time like the present. (pause) Bridget, I am disturbed by your conduct lately. You haven't taken Communion in weeks. And you seem distracted. Have you anything to tell me?

(a pause; she begins to squirm and lowers her head)

Unburden your soul, Bridget. And I can help you seek God's forgiveness.

BRIDGET
Forgiveness? I've done nothing wrong!

FR. O'CONNOR (rising)
I want you to see something. Rise and come here.

(nervous and confused, BRIDGET joins him; together, they look out a 'window')

Do you see that? Look out there, Bridget! Unrest in the streets today, thousands of people neglecting their responsibilities. They do not work, they do not worship...they only march.

BRIDGET (nearly fainting with relief)
The strike. You're talking about the strike.

FR. O'CONNOR
Don't call it a strike! It is not a strike! It is anarchy! It is madness. Tell me, what is the point of all this? What do they hope to accomplish?

BRIDGET
Do you see me marching? I've better things to do than walk around in freezing weather like an eejit, waving a silly stick of wood! I'd be at work now but the machines have all been smashed, and there's no sense trying to get through that mob.

FR. O'CONNOR
So you don't know anything about this? (sighs) I must admit, I'm relieved to hear that. But I was rather hoping you might know what's going on. There's more rumors flying around than there are sheep in County Mayo.

BRIDGET
I saw the police outside. Is there going to be trouble?

FR. O'CONNOR
I'd say so, yes. There's a group called the Wobblies...the I.W.W. They call themselves a union. Really, they're nothing but a group of common criminals, who'd as soon blow you up as look at you. You may recall, some of them spoke on the Common last summer. Well, they're back in force. Ettor, Thompson...there's even a woman in the group. An Irish woman, more's the pity.

BRIDGET (interested now)
Is there really?

FR. O'CONNOR
Aye, Irish in name, though she's pure New York radical. Flynn is her name. Elizabeth Gurley Flynn. It's her special trick to get the women all riled up. Worse than a Suffragist, even. See you stay far away from them, now, Bridget. Especially that Flynn woman.

BRIDGET
Yes, Uncle, of course. But you, what are you going to do?

FR. O'CONNOR
This congregation depends on me. They worship my word. Tomorrow I'll give a sermon that will have them rushing back to work.

BRIDGET (slyly)
I was taught that the people are only to worship the word of God,

and not His messenger.

FR. O'CONNOR

Mind your tongue, Bridget. One day it may be your undoing. Now, I believe our dinner is waiting.

BRIDGET

I'll be along directly. I'd like to pray for a little while.

FR. O'CONNOR

Very well. (pause) Bridget...there's to be no secrets between us. Is that clear?

BRIDGET

Yes, Uncle.

(FR. O'CONNOR exits. BRIDGET kneels and crosses herself.)

BRIDGET

Dear Jesus, I don't know what's going to happen next. It sounds as if my problems don't amount to much. But thank you for not letting Uncle Paul find out about my trouble. I have to take that as a sign that I'm doing the right thing. That you're on my side. At least a little bit. Aren't you?

LIGHTS FADE - END SCENE TWO

ACT ONE, SCENE THREE

SETTING: The grocery store. Thursday, January 18. Afternoon.

AT RISE: BRIDGET reads a pamphlet. SARAH fiddles with a Brownie camera and paces.

BRIDGET

Sarah, listen to this. "I declare to you that woman must not depend upon the protection of man, but must be taught to protect herself, and there I take my stand."

SARAH

What is that from?

BRIDGET

It's a leaflet I got on the street today. (reading) Susan Anthony. What do you think?

SARAH

I think it makes a great deal of sense. Have you ever heard of her?

BRIDGET

No. Does she live in Lawrence?

SARAH (laughs)

No, not at all. I believe she died a few years ago. She thought women should be able to vote and own property, just as men do. Once she even tried to vote in a presidential election.

BRIDGET

Sure and she didn't! What became of her?

SARAH

She was put in jail and given a fine. And all her life, she refused to pay the fine.

BRIDGET

But was she ever freed?

SARAH

Oh, yes. She had quite a bit of influence. I heard her speak once, when I was about your age. I admired her a great deal. Of course, she also believed terminations were a crime.

BRIDGET

But you still admired her?

SARAH

Everyone is entitled to her own opinions, Bridget.

BRIDGET

Aye, and she must have been fierce brave, Sarah. If I was in

jail, I'd be scared half to death.

SARAH

I'm rather nervous myself, at the moment. Do you think Collins will take the bait?

BRIDGET

He will, of course. You've naught to be nervous about. 'e's nothing but a thick auld windbag.

SARAH

So, if I can get a good picture of him going after you, we can threaten to show it to his wife, and his boss, and really put a scare into him. (beat) So Collins doesn't know about your...condition?

BRIDGET (sobering)

I hope so. Something's got to.

SARAH (gently)

You mustn't worry so. There's still a chance you're not pregnant, Bridget, a good chance.

BRIDGET

Less chance every day. (sighs) He won't give a tinker's damn. I'd lay even money on that.

Song 8: "Get The Picture" - Sarah, Bridget, Collins

SARAH

Never you mind, Bridget. We'll take care of him.
(sings) I WILL GET THE PICTURE SO HE WILL GET THE PICTURE
THAT HE CAN'T HAVE HIS WAY WITH YOU.
WE HAVE TO GET A MESSAGE THROUGH
THAT YOU ARE A VICTIM AND HE'S A DISGRACE.

I WILL GET AN IMAGE, SO HE WILL GET THE MESSAGE
THAT WE HAVE PLANS TO FOLLOW THROUGH.

BRIDGET

I CAN'T WAIT TO PICTURE THE LOOK ON HIS FACE
WHEN OUR LITTLE PHOTO PUTS HIM IN HIS PLACE

SARAH

SO I WILL GET THE PICTURE, A MOST REVEALING PICTURE,

BRIDGET

SO HE WILL GET THE PICTURE, TOO.

SARAH

ABUSING HIS STATION WILL NOT BE ALLOWED.
HE CAN'T TAKE HIS PLEASURE BY FORCE.
WE'LL THREATEN TO VOICE ALL HIS VICES OUT LOUD,
UNLESS HE EXPRESSES REMORSE.

BOTH
WE WILL GET A PICTURE, A MOST REVEALING PICTURE,
SO HE WILL HAVE TO MEND HIS WAYS.
AND HE WILL BE IN SHOCK FOR DAYS,
SINCE WE'VE TURNED THE TABLES AND TAKEN CONTROL.

BOTH
WE WILL GET THE PICTURE, SO HE WILL GET THE PICTURE
THAT HE WILL BE THE ONE WHO PAYS.

BRIDGET
I'LL NEVER RECOVER THE VIRTUE HE STOLE.
BUT OUR LITTLE PICTURE COULD TAKE QUITE A TOLL.

SARAH
SO I WILL GET THE PICTURE, SO HE WILL GET THE PICTURE
THAT HE CAN'T HAVE HIS WAY WITH YOU.

BOTH
AND HE WILL GET THE PICTURE, TOO!

BRIDGET (giggles)
He won't know what hit him!

COLLINS (at the door)
'ello? Anyone 'ere?

BRIDGET
Just a minute!

SARAH
Remember, get him in an awkward position first...wait until he
grabs you or something like that, and then the minute you say "I
mean it" out I come with the camera. I promise.

(SARAH hides behind the counter as BRIDGET admits
COLLINS.)

COLLINS
Well, well. So it was you that sent for me. I thought it might
be a trick. It wasn't very smart to meet me here alone, what?
You might get swept away in your passions, and then where would
we be?

BRIDGET
That's not likely.

COLLINS
'Ere, you're up for a little slap-and-tickle, eh?

BRIDGET
No! I need to talk with you.

COLLINS
About what? What have you got to say to me that's so bloody

important?

BRIDGET
I'm...expecting a child.

COLLINS
Oho! You'll be sacked, my girl!

BRIDGET
So will you, when I tell them it's yours.

COLLINS
And how are you so sure?

BRIDGET (stung)
I'm sure!

COLLINS
Look, you have no claim on me. Surely you can't expect me to...

BRIDGET
It's not you I want, you *amadán!** I want you to see to your responsibility.

COLLINS
You see to it. 'ere. (reaches in his pocket) How much does that cost, to get rid of it?

(He holds out some money; BRIDGET slaps his hand away.)

BRIDGET
And if I don't?

COLLINS
Don't tell me it hasn't crossed your mind. A bright young thing like yourself. Don't want to be tied down too young, do you? Oh, Bridget, you're a dime a dozen.

BRIDGET
You don't know me!

COLLINS
I know you. I see you every day. Or Margaret, or Annie, or Eileen...it doesn't matter. A dime a dozen, I tell you. But you don't have to be. You could be somebody.

BRIDGET
I am somebody, you gobshite!

COLLINS (moving in on her)
Now see here, my fine young thing. You're going to have to change your approach.

* Pronounced: "AHM-a-don." Meaning: "Fool."

(COLLINS tries to kiss BRIDGET. She struggles.)

BRIDGET
You'll be sorry. I mean it!

COLLINS (overlapping)
That's rich, that is.

(SARAH pops out and takes a picture. COLLINS, startled, releases BRIDGET.)

What the bloody hell...who are you?

SARAH
I'm Sarah Weissmann. We've met before. Several times. I'm a midwife. I delivered all four of your children.

COLLINS
Oh...well. Fine job you did.

SARAH (dryly)
Thank you.

COLLINS
But it don't give you the right to scare me half to death! What do you want with me, eh?

BRIDGET
Proof was what we wanted, and we've got it, now!

COLLINS
Proof of what, you lying mick? (to SARAH) I never touched the girl! You can't prove a thing.

SARAH
Well, they'd have to believe the picture, wouldn't they? They'd have to wonder why you came here to meet with her. I wouldn't have to say anything about the other matter.

COLLINS
You'll show that to no man.

(SARAH and BRIDGET pass the camera between them. COLLINS staggers around, trying to follow its path and grabbing for it periodically.)

COLLINS
I WILL TAKE THAT PICTURE, 'CUZ NOW I GOT THE PICTURE,
AND BLACKMAIL'S NOT MY CUP OF TEA.
YOU'LL NEVER GET A DIME FROM ME.
IF YOU WANT TO THREATEN, YOU BETTER THINK TWICE.

I KNOW HOW TO MANAGE ONE LITTLE PIECE OF BAGGAGE,
AND I DON'T MEAN BY PLAYING NICE.
SO DO YOU GET THE PICTURE, YOU BETTER GET THE PICTURE,

OR YOU WILL HAVE TO PAY THE PRICE.

BRIDGET

You don't scare me.

COLLINS

Oh, no? We'll see!

BRIDGET

YOU'RE MEAN WHEN YOU'RE DRUNK. WHEN YOU'RE SOBER, YOU'RE WORSE.
YOU SWAGGER, YOU SLOBBER, YOU SMELL!
THE DAY I MET YOU IS A DAY THAT I CURSE.
I WISH YOU A QUICK TRIP TO HELL!

COLLINS

You stupid little tramp!

BRIDGET

Limey bastard!

COLLINS

YOU GIVE ME BACK THAT PICTURE, OR SHOULD I DRAW A PICTURE?
I'LL BATTER UP THAT PRETTY FACE, AND PUT YOU IN YOUR PROPER PLACE
WRITHING BENEATH ME, LAID OUT ON THE FLOOR.

BRIDGET

YOU WILL NEVER GET ME

COLLINS

I WILL CUZ YOU WILL LET ME. THERE WOULDN'T EVEN BE A CHASE.
YOU'RE ONLY A SLUT WHO WAS BEGGING FOR MORE.
WHAT WILL THE PRIEST THINK OF A NIECE THAT'S A WHORE?
SO DO YOU GET THE PICTURE?

BRIDGET

IT'S ME THAT HAS A PICTURE YOU DON'T WANT ANYONE TO SEE...
SO YOU HAD BETTER NEVER LAY A HAND ON ME!

(COLLINS corners BRIDGET. She tries to slap him.
COLLINS grabs her wrist, and the camera falls to the
floor. COLLINS kicks it away while still holding her.)

SARAH

Don't hit her!

JACOB

Let her go!

(COLLINS, distracted, glances away. JACOB is beside
the counter, holding a pistol. COLLINS releases
BRIDGET, who runs to SARAH.)

SARAH

Jacob!

JACOB

Go on, get out of here!

COLLINS

Listen, son...

JACOB

I'm not your damn son! Don't you hurt Bridget! Or Sarah! Or anyone in my family! No more!

COLLINS

I'm leaving! I'm leaving! All right? You're bleedin' lunatics, the lot o' ye. You'll be sorry! You haven't heard the last of this! (he edges past JACOB carefully, and runs out.)

SARAH

Jacob!

JACOB (beginning to cry)

I thought he was going to hurt you!

BRIDGET

We're fine, Jacob. See? Why don't you put that down now?

JACOB

Oh. Yeah. (He sets the gun down on a barrel)

SARAH

Where did you get that, Jacob?

JACOB

Father keeps it under the register. It's a secret though. Mother wouldn't like it.

SARAH

I didn't know you'd seen it.

BRIDGET

And glad I am of it.

SARAH

Bridget! Jacob, it isn't a toy, understand? It might have gone off by accident.

BRIDGET

Right into your man Collins. Wouldn't that have been a shame? (she laughs, weakly)

JACOB

It's not funny! I wouldn't ever hurt anyone, Aunt Sarah. Please don't tell Father I...

SARAH

If you promise not to touch it again.

JACOB

I promise. Thank you, Aunt Sarah.

SARAH

All right. Now we'll put *this* back where it belongs.

(Gingerly she lifts the gun, places it under the register, and exits with the camera.)

BRIDGET

Jacob. I, for one, am glad you knew where your father hides the gun.

JACOB

I'm sorry. (starts to cry again) I wanted to help.

BRIDGET

Aye, and help you did. He'd have hurt us both, to be sure, if not for you.

JACOB

It's wrong to hurt people. Bridget... (tries to stop crying)

BRIDGET

What is it? What's the matter?

JACOB

I'm scared. What if he comes back? What if he tries to hurt me too?

BRIDGET

Now hear me, Jacob. As long as there's a breath in my body, I'll not let anyone hurt you.

Song 9: "My Kind Of Hero" - Bridget, Jacob

BRIDGET (sings)

YOU'RE MY KIND OF HERO, ME BOY-O, ME LAD.
 YOU SAW WHAT HAD TO BE DONE, AND DID WHAT YOU HAD TO DO.
 YOU PROVED YOURSELF A FRIEND, INDEED,
 SO I'LL BE THERE WHEN YOU'RE IN NEED.
 WHATEVER MAY COME, TOGETHER WE WILL SEE IT THROUGH.

YOU'RE MY KIND OF HERO, ME BOY-O, ME LAD.
 YOU'RE LOADED FULL 'O THE CHARM, YOU'RE NEVER WITHOUT A GRIN.
 IN ALL YOU ARE, YOUR HEART IS TRUE. SO YOU'RE WITH ME, AND I'M
 FOR YOU.
 IF TROUBLE SHOULD COME, WE'LL FACE IT AND WE WON'T GIVE IN.

BOTH

TOGETHER WE ARE BETTER THAN JUST YOU OR ME.
 TOGETHER WE CAN WEATHER THE STORMIEST SEA.

BRIDGET

SO I WILL BE A BEACON TO GUIDE YOU THROUGH THE STORM.

I'LL SEE THAT YOU GET BACK HOME WHERE IT IS SAFE AND WARM.

JACOB

YOU'RE MY KIND OF HERO, ME "GIRL-O", ME FRIEND.
TOGETHER WE WILL TAKE ON THE DANGERS WE CHANCE TO SEE.
I'LL GUARD YOUR BACK, AND YOU'LL GUARD MINE,
TOGETHER WE WILL DO JUST FINE.
IF TROUBLE SHOULD FIND YOU, LOOK BEHIND YOU, YOU'LL FIND ME.

BOTH

TOGETHER WE'LL STAND AND FACE THE TROUBLE, YOU AND ME.

BRIDGET (speaking)

Now, you'll be grand. (shrugs into her cloak)

JACOB

Where are you going?

BRIDGET

I'm going out to see what's happening now! (she runs out)

JACOB

Bridget! Wait for me! There's a meeting at the Starr! (he runs out after her)

LIGHTS FADE - END SCENE THREE

ACT ONE, SCENE FOUR

SETTING: The bridge across Broadway, near the Arlington Mills.
Immediately following.

AT RISE: JOSEFINA and ANNA are marching, carrying signs and chanting.

ANNA (calling out)
Strike now!

JOSEFINA (the same)
All out!

ANNA
All out!

JOSEFINA
Strike now!

ANNA (pausing to rub her hands together)
The wind, she is hard today. But it is even colder down at the canal.

JOSEFINA (hugging herself)
Soon, perhaps, it will snow again.

ANNA (calling out)
Strike now!

JOSEFINA (the same)
All out!

(LUCIA enters with a lunch pail. Seeing her, JOSEFINA and ANNA stop marching and move to block her path.)

JOSEFINA
Turn around! Go back home!

ANNA
Going to work? Not tonight!

JOSEFINA
There's a strike, hadn't you heard?

ANNA
And if you don't join us, you're on their side!

LUCIA
I no work! I only try to bring my husband some food! That's all.

ANNA
He cannot work either! We need everyone's help.

JOSEFINA

Don't turn your back on your neighbors!

ANNA

On your friends in the picket line!

JOSEFINA

On our children.

LUCIA

We got kids to feed too, see? My husband, he got to work.

ANNA

You think you're the only one with a family? My parents depend on me, sure. That don't mean I got to let them work me to death.

LUCIA

I don't try to stop you from striking. Why don't you just let me be?

JOSEFINA (jabbing her with a hairpin)

Traitor!

ANNA (doing the same)

Scab!

LUCIA

Ow! Ouch! I've had enough of this! (She pushes her way past them and exits)

ANNA (calling after her)

We are all workers! We must stand together!

JOSEFINA (calling out)

Strike now!

ANNA (the same)

All out!

JOSEFINA (suddenly seeing something)

Look at that! They are turning hoses on the strikers! On the bridge!

ANNA (squinting)

Who? The police?

JOSEFINA

No, it is not the police! Some young men, they wear uniforms...And they have guns. With knives on them - how you say...bonnets?

ANNA

*Che stupido!** Bassinets.

* Pronounced: "Kay Stoopido." Meaning: "What an idiot!"

JOSEFINA (nodding)

Bassinets.

(LUCIA returns, without the lunch pail. She is dripping wet and shivering.)

LUCIA

Dear God in Heaven! Do you see that? Savages, they are. They stab people on the bridge. They spray everyone with hoses. They do not care who they hit! Even the ones who try to get in to work, they are wet too.

JOSEFINA

Too bad for them, the lousy scabs!

ANNA (still watching)

Some of the men are giving up, going to work. Others are going home.

JOSEFINA (suddenly)

Do you suppose, if we threw some ice at those men with the hoses..

ANNA

It might stop them. For a little while at least.

JOSEFINA

Maybe we shouldn't do this. It could be dangerous.

ANNA

This is all dangerous.

(JOSEFINA and ANNA begin to scan the ground for chunks of ice. After a beat, LUCIA joins them. When one of them finds a piece, she throws it offstage.)

JOSEFINA (bitterly)

What you want to help for? Go on, go home where you will be safe!

LUCIA

This, it is not a fair fight. It is so cold. And the men, they have no protection, no warm clothes. I will help.

ANNA

Missed!

JOSEFINA

So close! I got one!

LUCIA

Right in the arm! Good shot!

JOSEFINA

You too!

(They throw a few more pieces. SEAN runs in.)

SEAN
All right, what's going on here?

(SEAN is hit by a stray piece of ice. Maybe it is an accident, maybe not.)

Ow! Cut that out. Now, ladies. Which one of you started this?

JOSEFINA, LUCIA, and ANNA (in unison)
I did.

SEAN
Come with me. You're under arrest.

JOSEFINA
Which one of us?

SEAN
I don't care which one...OK, you.

ANNA
If you arrest her, you arrest me too.

LUCIA
And me.

SEAN (warily)
That's fine with me. Come along, then.

(ANNA, LUCIA and JOSEFINA look at each other, and begin to exit in front of SEAN. At the exit, they turn, grab him and pull him out.)

SEAN (offstage)
What are you doing? How dare you? Let me go! Help! HELP!

(A splash is heard. The women run in and pick up their signs.)

LUCIA (laughing)
See how the boy likes being wet, eh?

(JOSEFINA hands LUCIA a picket sign. The three women march.)

JOSEFINA
Strike now!

ANNA
All out!

LUCIA (inspired)
No wages, no work!

(ANNA and JOSEFINA stare at her for a moment. Then:)

ANNA, LUCIA, JOSEFINA (in unison)
No wages, no work!

LIGHTS FADE - END SCENE FOUR

ACT ONE, SCENE FIVE

SETTING: Stern's Grocery. Saturday, January 20. Afternoon.

AT RISE: HIRAM and SEAN are in the store. From the back room come sounds of crashes, breaking glass, and voices.

SEAN

Let's go over this one more time. (taking out the pamphlet BRIDGET was reading earlier)
I found this on the floor, under the cash register. Now, Mr. Stern. Where did you get this?

HIRAM

What? (glances at it) I've never seen it before.

SEAN

Well, I have. Look, if you don't cooperate, we'll have to take you in.

HIRAM

I've done nothing wrong! Leave me alone already!

SEAN

Did someone give this pamphlet to you? (pause) Sir, answer the question, please.

HIRAM

You're the one that should be answering questions!

Song 10: "Cossacks In The Night" - Hiram, Sarah

HIRAM (sings)

WHY WOULD THIS HAPPEN, HOW COULD THIS BE?
THIS IS A PLACE WHERE WE SHOULD BE FREE.
YOU HAVE NO REASON, YOU HAVE NO RIGHT,
MARCHING IN LIKE COSSACKS IN THE NIGHT.

SEAN (speaks)

Look, I'm only trying to do my job.

HIRAM (sings)

OPENING CARTONS, BASHING MY DOOR.
DUMPING MY FOOD BINS, TRASHING MY STORE.
WHAT ARE YOU SEEKING, PICKLES AND BEER?
NOTHING OF IMPORTANCE IS HERE.

SEAN (speaks)

Mr. Stern...

HIRAM (sings)

THIS IS THE REASON WE CAME TO THIS COUNTRY,
TO ESCAPE THIS KIND OF PERSECUTION.
WE WANTED SAFETY, LOOK WHAT YOU GIVE US.

I DEMAND SOME KIND OF RESTITUTION!
YOU HAVE NO REASON, YOU HAVE NO RIGHT.
MARCHING IN LIKE COSSACKS IN THE NIGHT.

SEAN

We had a tip. We were searching for evidence.

HIRAM

Evidence? What evidence? Cans of soup are evidence now?
Bottles of milk are clues? This is crazy talk! I run a grocery
store!

SEAN

Sure, and you harbor striker meetings here in this grocery store
of yours. Isn't that right? (pause) You should be more careful
who you let in here.

HIRAM

Any customer of mine is always welcome. I can't afford to turn
away business.

SEAN

Some of your customers are known trouble-makers, sir. You'd just
better hope we don't have to come back. If we do, you'll be
sorry. Remember, you've been warned.

(SEAN looks around, shakes his head, and exits. HIRAM
crosses to the door and yells after him.)

HIRAM

You, warn me? Ha! Let me warn you. I refuse to let you, or
anyone else, cow me or tell me what to do. So the next time you
come back, you'd better be prepared for one hell of a fight.

SARAH (from the back room, offstage)

Hiram? Jacob?

HIRAM (raising his voice)

Back here!

SARAH (entering)

HIRAM, WHAT HAPPENED? TELL ME WHO DID THIS!
HAVE YOU CALLED POLICE TO FIND THE VANDALS?

HIRAM

THAT IS WHAT HAPPENED, THAT IS WHO DID THIS!
THE POLICE PERPETUATE THE SCANDALS.
THEY HAVE NO REASON, THEY HAVE NO RIGHT.
MARCHING IN LIKE COSSACKS IN THE NIGHT.

SARAH

The *police* did this? Why?

HIRAM

They said there were secret meetings held here. The whole thing is mad. I don't know anything about secret meetings, and pamphlets, and whatever else they were talking about.

SARAH

THERE IS A REASON, MAYBE A RIGHT.
SOME OF THE STRIKERS MEET HERE AT NIGHT.
THEY NEEDED SHELTER, THEY SOUGHT REPRIEVE.

HIRAM

DID THEY NEVER THINK TO ASK MY LEAVE?

SARAH

THEY COULD GET WARM BY COMING INSIDE.
SOMEWHERE TO MEET AND SOMEWHERE TO HIDE
THEY ASKED PERMISSION, I LET THEM STAY.
THEY'VE BEEN MEETING NEARLY EV'RY DAY.

HIRAM

SARAH, HOW COULD YOU?

SARAH

HIRAM, I'M SORRY.

HIRAM

IN THIS MATTER I SHOULD HOLD DOMINION.
THIS IS MY HOME, MY SHOP, AND MY FAM'LY,
SO PERHAPS YOU'D CARE FOR MY OPINION.

SARAH (speaks)

I didn't think you'd mind. You had no complaint when Hannah and I held those suffragist meetings here last summer.

HIRAM

Those meetings did not jeopardize our livelihood, Sarah! Those meetings were no kind of secret! (pause) All the same, I won't be told who to allow or not to allow in my own store.

(sings) THEY HAVE NO REASON, THEY HAVE NO RIGHT.
I WON'T GIVE UP, I'LL PUT UP A FIGHT.
NEXT TIME THE STRIKERS KNOCK AT MY DOOR.
TELL THEM THEY ARE WELCOME AT MY STORE.

SARAH (speaks; puzzled)

Hiram?

HIRAM (sings)

I'LL NOT ALLOW THOSE COSSACKS TO WIN.
THEY CAN PLAY ROUGH, BUT I WON'T GIVE IN.
WELCOME THE STRIKERS, URGE THEM TO STAY.
YOU ARE NEVER EVER TO TURN THEM AWAY.
IT IS MY DUTY, IT IS MY RIGHT
TO DEFY THOSE COSSACKS IN THE NIGHT!

SARAH (startled)
Are you sure about this?

HIRAM (low)
Just be careful, nu? (pause) Let's begin with the broken jars,
I suppose.

SARAH
Hiram, I've got some money saved. I want you to have it.

HIRAM
No, I can't do that. Enough is already too much.

SARAH
I insist. After all, it's partly my fault this happened.

HIRAM
Well, I can't argue with that. (pause) All right, thank you. I
accept. (chuckling ruefully) Good thing I've got shipments
coming Monday, eh? And to think I was worried about where we
could fit everything.

(He exits into the back room. SARAH goes to follow.
BRIDGET enters.)

BRIDGET
Sarah, I have some wonderful news! (she takes in the store,
shocked) What on earth happened?

SARAH (startled)
It's a long story. What did you want to tell me? We could use
some wonderful news.

BRIDGET
You were right, Sarah. I'm not...expecting...after all.

SARAH
Oh, Bridget, you must be so relieved.

BRIDGET
I feel like I've been given a second chance. I'm only not sure
what to do next.

SARAH
You'll think of something.

HIRAM
What? What are we thinking of? Good afternoon, Bridget.

BRIDGET
Oh, Mr. Stern. I'm so sorry about the store. Can I help you
clean up, please?

HIRAM
You could start maybe by fetching Jacob and Naomi down to help.

Rebecca can stay and keep Hannah company. She's too little to do much good anyway.

BRIDGET

I'll be back directly. (she exits)

LIGHTS FADE - END SCENE FIVE

ACT ONE, SCENE SIX

SETTING: St. Mary's. Sunday, January 21. Afternoon.

AT RISE: BRIDGET enters. An organ plays softly in the background throughout the scene. She kneels, crosses herself and looks at the crucifix on the fourth wall.

Song 11: "Finding My Place" - Bridget

BRIDGET (sings)

FINDING MY PLACE. WHERE DO I FIT IN?
WHICH WAY DO I FOLLOW? WHERE DO I BEGIN?
FINDING MY FAITH. WHAT DO I BELIEVE?
WHEN SHOULD I STAY IN THE FOLD, AND WHEN SHOULD I LEAVE?

FINDING MY PATH. WHERE I WANT TO GO.
FOLLOWING MY INSTINCTS, TESTING WHAT I KNOW.
FINDING MY PLACE, WHO I WANT TO BE.
ASKING WHAT'S IMPORTANT TO ME.
I'M FINDING MY PLACE IN THE WORLD.

SHOULD I TAKE THE NARROW PATH, NEVER TO DEPART
FOLLOWING THE FAITH THAT'S INGRAINED IN MY HEART?
BUT POSSIBLY THE NARROW PATH IS FOR A NARROW MIND.
I DON'T WANT MY BELIEFS TO BE BLIND.

FINDING MY PATH. FINDING MY WAY.
CAN I FIND MY FAITH AGAIN? HELP ME, LORD, I PRAY.
FINDING MY VOICE, WHAT I WANT TO SAY.
LORD, GIVE ME THE WISDOM EACH DAY
FOR FINDING MY PLACE IN THE WORLD.

(FATHER O'CONNOR and BRIDGET enter the confession booths.)

BRIDGET

Bless me, Father, for I have sinned. It's been...nine weeks since my last confession.

FR. O'CONNOR

That long? (pause) Yes, my child. What is your confession?

BRIDGET (hesitantly)

I have told untruths, and half-truths. I have contemplated evil actions. Father, I received poor treatment at the hands of one I was led to trust. For some time I was filled with pain, sorrow, and confusion. I was not able to take Communion while I struggled with this. Now, it seems that my prayers have been answered. And still I feel only doubt, and anger.

FR. O'CONNOR

Your prayers have been answered, and yet you cannot offer thanks to God? Do you doubt His love? Or His power?

BRIDGET

No, Father. But all around me I see people starving, beaten, and mistreated. How can He let such things go on? Do these people deserve what is happening to them? Did I?

FR. O'CONNOR

These are difficult questions, I will not say otherwise. But you must be patient. How can you be sure God's hand is not guiding these events? After all, we cannot hope to understand all of His plans for us. But it is because He loves us that we are strong enough to endure all that we must. And it is for His love that we endure it gladly. For who would He have loved more than His own son? And who among man has been asked to endure more than our good Lord Jesus Christ?

(BRIDGET slides open the door and confronts him face to face.)

BRIDGET

Do you expect me to reap love from hatred and anger and pain? Uncle Paul?

FR. O'CONNOR

Now, Bridget. You must not lose faith.

BRIDGET

I vow that my faith is not at issue here. It's guidance I seek. But I won't stay where I'm not welcome. Will you give me absolution, Father?

FR. O'CONNOR

What meaning would it have to you? You must find the love of God in your heart before you can truly repent. And until you do, I cannot in good faith welcome you back into His flock.

BRIDGET

Very well. You may choose to stand by and do nothing. That doesn't mean I must do the same.

FR. O'CONNOR (heavily)

You take too many liberties, my girl.

BRIDGET

Aye, well, someone's got to. People are suffering, and the Church is meant to be a haven.

FR. O'CONNOR

You know nothing of the people, my child! You know nothing of life.

BRIDGET

I know a great deal more than you'd think, Uncle. And what I don't know, I'll learn. There are many who feel as I do, you must know that. The women I have spoken to..

FR. O'CONNOR

It's trouble you're looking for, sure it is. And you shall have it. Do not be led astray by these radicals. Their problems are not yours.

BRIDGET

How do you know what my problems are? Am I not part of this struggle? Part of this community?

FR. O'CONNOR

Take me at my word, Bridget. A good woman does not interfere in such matters.

BRIDGET

Then perhaps I'm not a good woman.

FR. O'CONNOR

Need I remind you, I am still responsible for your conduct? Don't force me to send you back.

BRIDGET

You wouldn't dare. I can't go back. I'll die first!

FR. O'CONNOR

Then you must not shame me further.

BRIDGET

So that's your true concern. Not my soul, but your own reputation!

FR. O'CONNOR

They are both my concerns, child.

BRIDGET

I'd like to believe that. But I must follow my conscience. As you won't give me penance, I'll say nine Hail Marys and return on St. Brigid's Day.

FR. O'CONNOR

In two weeks' time. A pagan feast day. You still mark it.

BRIDGET

Aye, February 1st. It's also the day I turn eighteen. Meanwhile, I will contemplate and pray. But you should know, Uncle, your rejection of your own sister's child will not go unnoticed.

FR. O'CONNOR

Do you dare threaten me now, you impudent girl?

BRIDGET

I would not presume to threaten you, Uncle. Instead, I will turn the other cheek. I absolve you.

FR. O'CONNOR

You? Absolve me? Of what, you rude child?

BRIDGET

Of your indifference to your flock. And of forgetting where you came from.

FR. O'CONNOR

Out! I will not be spoken to in this way. Out of my church!

BRIDGET

And I always thought it was the Lord's church.

[Underscore music of "Finding My Place" begins]

Good day, Uncle. Perhaps I'll see you on the picket line.

(Music swells as she exits with a defiant toss of her head. He is left fuming.)

LIGHTS FADE - END SCENE SIX

ACT ONE, SCENE SEVEN

SETTING: Garden and Union Streets, near the Everett Mill.
Monday, January 29. Evening.

AT RISE: STRIKERS are marching with signs. BRIDGET is now among them.

Song 12: "Give Us Hope Today" - Strikers

STRIKERS (sing)

WE STRIKE FOR BETTER WAGES, IS THAT A HOPELESS TASK?
SOME SHELTER, FOOD AND CLOTHING, IS THAT TOO MUCH TO ASK?
SOME BREAD TO FEED OUR BODIES, SOME HOPE TO FEED THE SOUL.
IF HUNGRY, COLD AND HOPELESS, OUR BURDENS TAKE THEIR TOLL.

(BRIDGET begins to cough. ANNA removes her shawl and hands it to her.)

ANNA

Here, put this on. The nights, they are bad now.

BRIDGET

I can't take that from you.

ANNA

We can take turns wearing it. And next time you will cover up better, eh?

BRIDGET (accepting it)

All right. Thank you.

JACOB (running in)

Bridget! There you are.

BRIDGET

Oh, Jacob! What are you doing here?

JACOB

I followed you after supper. Promise you won't be mad? I want to help.

BRIDGET

If your da hears about this, he'll be very angry. With both of us.

JACOB

He won't find out. And if he did, I'd tell him the truth. It was all my idea.

BRIDGET

If anything happens to you, he'll never forgive me.

JACOB

Aw, c'mon, let me stay. I helped you, didn't I? Please, Bridget, just this once?

ANNA

This boy, he is brave. *Va bene*, you walk with us. We will sing.
(sings)

BETTER TREATMENT OF THE WORKERS, LISTEN TO OUR PLEA...

STRIKERS (sing)

MORE RESPECT FOR ALL THE WORKERS, GRANT US DIGNITY...

(SEAN enters and signals the STRIKERS to be silent.)

SEAN

What's going on? All right, come on, break it up.

STRIKERS (sing)

BETTER WAGES FOR THE WORKERS, HEAR THE WORDS WE SAY.
GREATER POWER TO THE WORKERS, GIVE US HOPE TODAY.

SEAN

You can't stay here. Move it along, now.

JOSEFINA

These are our streets! We don't have to move!

LUCIA

We no want any trouble. But we no move now.

SEAN

Look, we don't want no trouble either. We don't want to have to take you in.

ANNA

Why not? Afraid of us? Of arresting women? (All the STRIKERS laugh)

SEAN (fingering his nightstick)

You'd better watch your step, understand?

ANNA

So? You hit a woman? So brave!

SEAN (taking a step towards them)

Easy, now. Listen, why don't you just clear out and we can make like this never happened?

STRIKERS (sing)

WE STRIKE FOR BETTER WAGES, IS THAT A HOPELESS TASK?

(Unseen by SEAN, JACOB throws a piece of ice, which hits SEAN squarely.)

SEAN

Ow! Who threw that? (silence) All right, that's enough!
Disperse! (he raises his club)

ANNA (approaching him with a smile)

Come, now. You wouldn't hurt us.

SEAN (nervously)

Don't come any closer.

(Trembling, SEAN pulls his gun. As ANNA advances, SEAN takes a step back, loses his footing on the ice, slips and falls. As he falls, his gun fires. ANNA is hit and falls. The STRIKERS scatter; some exit, some cry out. SARAH rushes in.)

JACOB

Bridget?

SARAH

Jacob! (she sees him and pulls him back towards her)

BRIDGET

Lucia?

LUCIA

Anna! *Madonna mia...*

JOSEFINA

What happened?

SARAH (at ANNA's body)

She's dead!

SEAN (stunned)

Oh, dear God.

BRIDGET

Why did you kill her?

LUCIA

Murderer!

SEAN (desperately)

It was an accident!

(Realizing he is still holding his gun, SEAN quickly puts it away. MONAGHAN enters.)

MONAGHAN (speaking to SEAN)

What's going on here, Officer? I heard a shot. Are you all right?

SEAN (gesturing)

I am, sir. But that poor woman...my gun went off...

MONAGHAN (inspecting ANNA's body)
I see. Well, I'm sure it couldn't be helped.

SEAN
But, Chief Monaghan...

MONAGHAN (with gravity)
It couldn't be helped, Ryan. Do you understand?

SEAN (with an edge of resentment)
Yes, sir.

MONAGHAN (to the remaining onlookers)
All right, that's enough! No meetings. No groups. You know the law.

SEAN (more softly)
Please, don't make trouble. No more trouble. Go home, now.

(SARAH takes JACOB's hand and pulls him out. The others slowly exit.)

Song 13: "No More To Give" - Bridget, Sean

BRIDGET (sings)
WHAT MORE CAN YOU DO TO US? WHAT MORE CAN YOU TAKE FROM US?
WE ONLY WANT TO FEED THE FAMILIES WHO NEED US.
WHAT MORE CAN YOU ASK OF US? WE HAVE NO MORE TO GIVE.
WE STILL HAVE DIGNITY, WE DON'T SEEK CHARITY, WE ONLY SEEK TO LIVE.

(BRIDGET moves to exit but instead hides in the shadows and watches the men.)

MONAGHAN (alone with SEAN)
Ryan, see to the body. I'm going to check on the other night patrols. We'll talk at the station.

(SEAN nods. MONAGHAN exits, leaving SEAN alone onstage with ANNA's body. SEAN kneels to cross himself. BRIDGET, emerging, sees this. Surprised and moved, she hesitates slightly before crossing to ANNA, removing her shawl.)

BRIDGET
Excuse me. I want to leave this with Anna.

SEAN (abashed)
Miss, I...

BRIDGET (moving closer)
If you please.

(Together they cover ANNA's body with the shawl.
BRIDGET kneels, crosses herself and lowers her head.)

SEAN rises. Looking back at BRIDGET, he sings.)

SEAN
SUCH GRACE AND VITALITY, DESPITE OUR BRUTALITY.
IF ONLY I COULD BE A MAN WHO COULD PROTECT HER.
SHE'S LOST HOPE AND INNOCENCE TO VIOLENCE TOO REAL.
IF ONLY I COULD SEE A WAY THAT I MIGHT BE
THE ONE TO HELP HER HEAL.

(SEAN looks at BRIDGET, who remains on her knees by
with ANNA's body.)

BRIDGET	SEAN
WHAT MORE CAN THEY DO TO US?	WHEN...WHEN...
WHAT MORE CAN THEY TAKE FROM US?	WILL IT END?
SHE CAME HERE CHASING DREAMS,	THIS STRIKE, THIS STRIFE,
BUT NOW IT SEEMS SO HOPELESS.	THIS LOSS OF LIFE?
WE'VE PAID WITH ONE PRECIOUS	NOW, HOW
LIFE.	WILL SHE MEND?
A LOSS WE CAN'T FORGIVE.	AND SOME WAY
THE PAIN IS MUCH TOO DEEP.	ONE DAY
THE PRICE IS MUCH TOO STEEP.	CAN SHE FORGIVE?
WE HAVE NO MORE TO GIVE.	

LIGHTS FADE - END ACT ONE

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