

# **Homelands**

A Musical Fable, Dramatized in Five Acts

By Clyde Coreil

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### Characters

Bernard.....	Brave hearted young sparrow who sings wonderfully but can't fly. He is grumpy and often out-of-sorts.
Beamy.....	Even-headed young female caterpillar who fears she is dying.
Toolie.....	Human being of about 35 years, a foolish trickster whose redeeming virtue is his deep love for Angelina
Angelina.....	Human being of about 30 who was locked up in a mental ward because she could communicate with animals.
Nose.....	Toolie's good-hearted male hound dog (played by a young woman) who is always stumbling over himself.
Pablito.....	Male Caribbean frog who has a casually formal approach to life and a profound love of all female frogs.
Dr. Crow.....	Faust-like crow who has entered into contract with the unseen Master Eagle to get characters to give up their dreams.
Ellie.....	Shy female mouse who can tell the future of people if they ask.
Blackie.....	handsome, matinee idol-ish but little seen friend of Beamy
Rosa de la Noche.....	Pablito's latest sexy companion.
Bertha.....	Beautiful sparrow, the love of Bernard. She departs with flock.
Burton.....	Rough male sparrow lout.
Elder John.....	Sparrow on final migration, fears the loss of songbirds.
Bastamos, Keyralike, Zebulon..	Hooded underworld figures.

*All are singing roles.*

*A Synopsis for **Homelands***

As the curtain rises, we see Bernard, a sparrow who can sing marvelously, struggling unsuccessfully to fly. His sweetheart must leave with the migrating flock and, devastated, he sings "If Ever." Vowing to follow her via the Mississippi River, he encounters a caterpillar named "Beamy" who saves his life when a human being, "Toolie," and his crazy hound dog "Nose" show up. Toolie is a likeable ex-convict and bird watcher whose beloved, Angelina, left him some years before. Toolie and Nose still miss her and sing "Starlight Dreams." It turns out that Bernard is a rare singer whom Toolie would like to capture. The grand chase down the River that results is an important motif.

Beamy's parents passed away before telling her who she was and about the cocoon she would develop. She thought that that cocoon was a sign that she would soon disappear and probably die, as did Blackie, a fellow caterpillar whom she loved deeply. Aboard a homemade raft, Beamy and Bernard meet Pablito—a kindly male frog who falls in love with every female frog he sees. He thinks that Beamy is sick and suggests that they seek refuge at the small residence of Angelina on the banks of the River. (Because she communicated with animals, Angelina had been put in a mental institution from which she escaped and made a home of an isolated, abandoned cabin.) Feeling the proximity of what she interprets as death, Beamy asks Bernard to solemnly promise to take her remains to her homeland near "the mouth of the Mississippi, and she sings "Dreaming of Dreams" before being encapsulated during the night.

Upon awakening, Bernard encounters Angelina who learns that Toolie is chasing him with Nose. Angelina is still in love with Toolie but she is also fearful of the devastation that follows him and his love of gambling. She flees down river, and Bernard and Elite sing "Requiem for Beamy" in front of the cocoon which he thinks contains his friend's body. Elite, a mouse who can foresee the future if asked, warns him that the mouth of the Mississippi is very, very far away and suggests that with the cocoon, he has no chance of getting there. However, Bernard is unrelenting in his commitment to the quest of burying Beamy in her homeland.

Earlier in the play, we met Dr. Crow who transforms creatures from what they are to what they want to be. The price he extols consists of something intertwined with their hopes and dreams. He offered Bernard the power of flight in exchange for his ability to sing: Bernard declined, without knowing that songs such as his were necessary to the navigation of his migrating flock. Because of man's encroaching "civilization," all of the flock's songbirds have become fat and lazy and had been killed. It was Bernard alone who could teach the young songbirds the necessary songs.

After a great deal of difficulty, Bernard finds Beamy's homeland and discovers that she has become a beautiful butterfly. Flushed with success, he accepts Dr. Crow's offer and learns to fly, which is the most exhilarating thing he has ever done. Learning of his flock's situation, however, he forces the reversal of the transformation. His beloved Bertha has married another, and again he cannot participate in the northward migration.

He does, however, teach the young songbirds to sing and to navigate successfully. He is sad and lonely, but he has followed his quest and done his duty. In the grand finale song "Homelands", all of the characters express their deep affection for Bernard.

## ACT ONE

## Scene One

*The stage is sparsely flushed. Upstage is the Mississippi River and a small crude raft with lengths of wood to serve as paddles. There is a tree upstage center left and a stone about the size of a small stool down center right. A box of wood or cardboard downstage left represents a small cave. There are bushes scattered about. It is autumn, and a chilly wind is blowing. Offstage calls are heard from a flock of flying birds. Bernard, who had been standing behind the tree, makes himself visible. He is dressed in clothes that represent plumage. The character is indeed a bird and not an idiosyncratic human being.*

*Bernard looks up at the tree solemnly. He begins to step toward it, stops, puts his head in his hands, manages to shake off his fear, and climbs to a low branch. He takes a deep breath, spreads his wings in a grand fashion and prepares to take off. At the last minute, he begins to tremble all over and his take-off stance weakens-He folds his wings for a moment. Expectant calls from the birch overhead. Again, he assumes the Byronesque pose inflating his lungs to the fullest and bending his knees in preparation for a great leap into the sky. He jumps up and beats his wings furiously, but again collapses. The calls from the sky become angry. Ignoring them, he crosses dejectedly to the stone and sits down.*

*Bertha, a beautiful young woman-bird, enters from upstage right in a semi-run that indicates that she had just landed. She speaks with a care and enthusiasm that only the young and healthy are capable of.*

BERTHA

Oh, Bernard! I thought for a moment that you were going to make it.

BERNARD

Thanks, Bertha. So did I.

BERTHA

Really? You felt that you could do it?

BERNARD

Yeah. (EXCITED BY BERTHA'S PRESENCE) I could almost feel the wind rushing through my feathers. It was great...just great.

BERTHA

(APPROACHES HIM, BECOMES RADIANT) Go on...Tell me how you thought it would feel.

BERNARD

It would have been like nothing I've ever known before. The tips of my wing feathers fluttering but responding to my every command when I banked and dove. And the whole face of the beautiful earth would pivot and wheel and rush to me and away from me. I had to catch my breath as I went up and up and up and became one with the enormous blue of the sky.

BERTHA

That's beautiful, Bernard. Like the songs you sing so well.

BERNARD

(BLUSHING FOR A MOMENT) It's nothing. But thanks....I didn't tell you, but I did write a song for...(A CLOUD COMES OVER BERNARD, AND HE BECOMES TROUBLED)

BERTHA

For who...Me?

BERNARD

It doesn't matter. I can't fly...no matter how much I want it. And that makes everything else a lie.

*BIRD CALLS START UP AGAIN. THEY ARE INTENSE AND IRRATE.*

BERTHA

Oh, Bernard. (GESTURING TO SKY) They're ready to leave. I might be able to get them to wait for a couple of hours if I could convince them that there's nothing wrong with you. Once you begin, you'll get the hang of it fast, really fast. You're talented. Very talented. If only you'd give yourself a chance.

BERNARD

Talented? Me? I can sing all right, but what good is that when you can't even get off the ground.

BERTHA

Only because you won't try.

BERNARD

(DESPERATELY) I do try, Bertha. Every day I try. Again and again. I lift my wings and tighten my muscles.... and then my back starts trembling and my head starts shaking. L..(HALTS)

BERTHA

Does it hurt?

BERNARD

(QUICKLY) Worse than you can ima....(DENYING PAIN) No....nothing I can't handle. But I can't control the trembling. I try as hard as I can....but I can't.

BERTHA

I know you can. Trust me. (SHE LEADS HIM BACK TO THE TREE.) Now, get on the branch. (HE POSITIONS HIMSELF.) Spread your wings. That's it. Now jump off and beat them very hard and very fast. Jump! (BERNARD DOES SPREAD HIS WINGS BUT BEGINS TREMBLING WHEN THEY ARE EXTENDED. HE GRITS HIS TEETH AND THEN BEATS HIS WINGS AS HARD AS HE POSSIBLY CAN HE ATTEMPTS TO HIDE AN EXPRESSION OF EXCRUCIATING PAIN AS HE TUMBLES TO THE GROUND. BERTHA HELPS HIM STAND UP. SHE FEARS THAT HE MIGHT HAVE HURT HIMSELF.) Bernard! Are you all right?

BERNARD

(BRUSHING HIMSELF OFF) What's the use. I'll never make it.

BERTHA

(SEEING THE HOPELESSNESS OF THE SITUATION) Do you...want to try again?

BERNARD

No....Have a good trip.

BERTHA

Try once more. Once you...

BERNARD

Will you think of me?

BERTHA

Maybe—if I didn't leave—the two of us could make it through the winter—if we...

BERNARD

No. You can't stay. There's no question there.

BERTHA

But I don't want to leave you here alone.

BERNARD

(WITH FORCE YET UNSEEN) No. That's not the way it works. (TENDERLY) You know that's not the way it works. I'll lean on my own and catch up with you and the flock later. (BERNARD AND BERTHA, WHO IS NOW NEAR TEARS, EMBRACE BURTON, THE STRONG YOUNG GOLDEN BOY OF THE FLOCK, LANDS AND' RUSHES ONSTAGE. ELDER JOHN, AN OLDER AND WISER SPARROW LANDS AND HOBBLER ONSTAGE. THEY STOP AS THEY SEE BERTHA AND BERNARD IN THEIR PARTING EMBRACE.)

BURTON

(SCORNFULLY) It's time.

BERTHA

I'll always think of you. No matter what...(BURTON TAKES HER ARM TO GUIDE HER OFFSTAGE, BUT SHE SHRUGS HIM OFF AND STEPS AWAY.) No Burton-.I said "No!" (ELDER JOHN-STEPS IN AND GUIDES BURTON AWAY)—Thanks, Elder John...Bernard, I wasn't-It's not the right thing to say, but I have to say it now—We might never meet again—.I love you, Bernard. I love you and your very beautiful songs-You're brave and kind. Will you sing for me? Every day this winter? (BERNARD IS SILENT.)...Promise me. Promise me, please!

BERNARD

I promise.

*BURTON TAKES HER AGAIN BY THE ARM. AGAIN, SHE PULLS AWAY BUT REALIZES THAT SHE MUST DEPART IMMEDIATELY. SHE KISSES BERNARD FULL ON THE MOUTH. BERNARD IS LEFT BREATHELESS BERTHA AND BURTON RUN OFFSTAGE TO TAKE OFF. FRUSTRATED BERNARD WATCHES THEM. HE IS SEIZED BY JEALOUSY AND HUMILIATION. ELDER JOHN SEES BERNARD IN HIS DESPERATION AND GOES TO HIM.*

ELDER JOHN

Don't pay any mind to that swaggering young lout, Burton. He and his kind are increasing-but they will soon be dealt with, and we'll have a flock of the character it once was—And don't be too hard on yourself, Bernard. We all know that if it were possible, you'd be flying now.

BERNARD

Oh, it's possible alright-except for cowards. I'm afraid—.Everyone knows that. Even me. Afraid to fly. A disgrace to the flock. A ridiculous disgrace.

ELDER JOHN

Listen to the wisdom of the songs you sing so well. It's very, very important to listen in ways you have never even imagined. Those songs will get you through this time of darkness. Please. Do not give up hope.

BERNARD

(SARCASTICALLY) Ha! Hope? You'd better be going. Hope is the only thing I'm fool enough to have left.

ELDER JOHN

Your heart is strong and steadfast. Don't let failure take that from you. (EMBRACES BERNARD)

BERNARD

Thanks, Elder John. Goodbye. (ELDER JOHN EXITS. BERNARD WATCHES A FEW MOMENTS, AND THEN IN A FINAL BURST OF FRUSTRATION AND DESPERATION, RUSHES TO THE TREE.) I can do it! I know I can!

*BERNARD CLIMBS ONTO THE BRANCH; BEATS HIS WINGS MADLY. BEGINS TREMBLING AND GRIMACING-THEN STUMBLES TO THE GROUND AGAIN. HE PICKS HIMSELF UP TO A DYING-GAUL POSITION LOOKS UP, THEN FALLS AGAIN, TOTALLY DEJECTED. AFTER A FEW MOMENTS, HE DUSTS HIMSELF OFF, SITS ON THE ROCK, AND LOOKS SADLY SKYWARD AS HE BEGINS SINGING IF EVER.*

**If Ever**

Words and Music by Clyde Coreil © 1999

If ever I find her  
 up there in the blue blue  
 I'll dive and I'll climb high-  
 It all would come true.

If ever I see her  
 again in this world,  
 I will sing rainbows  
 whirling round round suns.

Till then I must struggle  
 and not wish to die  
 for feathers that can't fly  
 to my days of sunshine—  
 to my dreams of her.

**II**

I'll go down roads  
 that wind and dwindle down  
 to empty fields of dust  
 and hopelessness.

Until I find that gate,  
 the narrow path  
 that leads me to your side  
 that joyous hour  
 When we both fly  
 to rainbow's end  
 beyond the sky.

**III**

Till then I must struggle  
 and not wish to die  
 for feathers that can't fly  
 to my days of sunshine—  
 to my dreams of her.

END OF SCENE ONE

## Scene Two

*WHILE BERNARD IS SINGING, DR. CROW ENTERS SILENTLY AND WATCHES HIM. DR. CROW IS MAGNIFICENTLY DRESSED IN DARK CLOTHES WITH A LARGE SILVER PENDANT, WHICH HE FREQUENTLY TOYS WITH, AND A HIGH-COLLARED CAPE, WHICH HE HANDLES SOMEWHAT OSTENTATIOUSLY. WHENEVER WE SEE DR CROW IN THIS AND THE FOLLOWING SCENES, HE IS CARRYING HIS LEATHER-BOUND GILT-EDGED "BOOK OF FAVORS" LIKE A PREACHER MIGHT CARRY HIS ' BIBLE. WHEN HE IS NOT HOLDING IT, HE PUTS IT IN A LARGE POCKET INSIDE HIS CAPE. HIS MAKEUP MAY SUGGEST BIRD-LIKE FEATURES BUT THEY ARE MERELY HINTED AT-NOTHING LIKE A REAL BEAK HE IS MENACING BUT OTHERWISE EXPRESSIONLESS. WHEN THE SONG IS OVER, HE APPLAUDS VERY SLOWLY AND SARCASTICALLY. BERNARD IS STARTLED BECAUSE HE THOUGHT HE WAS ALONE.*

BERNARD

Who are you? What do you want?

DR. CROW

You sing mighty pretty, sweetheart. Do you do anything else for her?

BERNARD

You have no right to say anything about her. And don't call me "sweetheart."

DR. CROW

I have the right to do whatever I like....(SARCASTICALLY)... "sweetheart." What's her name?

BERNARD

None of your business.

DR. CROW

(GRABS BERNARD, SHOUTS IN HIS FACE) My business is mashing sissies who can't fly. Can you fly? (BERNARD DOESN'T ANSWER) The answer is "no " (PUSHES BERNARD AWAY) Oh, you can sing about flying, but you can't do anything else....(DR. CROW ADOPTS ANOTHER TONE OF VOICE ) I could" make you fly...(BERNARD GRUDGINGLY SHOWS INTEREST. DR. CROW IS TEMPTING.) Of course, I'd have to break your backbone and your beak (DR CROW SNAPS HIS TEETH AT BERNARD.) There'd be a moment of agonizing pain.....And a couple of other.... conditions. But then it'd be bye, bye Bernie. Ready to join the migration to the alligator lake down in "Looziana."

BERNARD

What kind of.... "conditions"? How do you know where the flock is heading?

DR. CROW

You couldn't sing.....How do I know about your flock in particular? Let's just say that I make it my business to know a lot about a lot of things.

BERNARD

Why couldn't I sing?

DR. CROW

You'd be welcome to try....They all try....But it would come out like this...."Caw caw caw." (DR. CROW MAKES HIS UGLY CALL AND THEN LAUGHS INSANELY.)...Ha, ha, ha. Even we crows hate the sound of our voice. Why couldn't you sing? I don't know....and I don't care. It happens, that's all....I've performed lots of transformations lots of times....If you want something, you've got to give something....! would enter our transaction in my "Book of Favors." (HOLDS UP BOOK) A mere formality required by..... "Master Overseer." You wouldn't have to deal with him. It would be between you and me.

BERNARD

May I see that beautiful cover?...(INSPECTS COVER WHILE DR. CROW IS HOLDING THE BOOK.) But I could fly?

DR. CROW

With the proper contract, you could do almost anything you wanted..... except sing.

BERNARD

(IT'S A LOVELY BOOK GENTLY TAKES IT FROM DR. CROW TO FURTHER ADMIRE IT) And what would you get out of it?

DR. CROW

You'd owe me.

BERNARD

What would I owe you?

DR. CROW

Nothing serious....The Master is an avid collector of dreams....or fervent wishes....You could even start by telling me her name.

BERNARD

No. Never. Never. (READS FOR A MOMENT, DR. CROW DOESN'T NOTICE IT FOR A FEW SECONDS.) Hey, give me that. (SHUTS BOOK, TAKES IT)

DR. CROW

Okay, okay....So we'd agree on something else. Something that wouldn't give you so much....(SARCASTICALLY) "trouble." (SEES BERNARD'S HESITATION) Okay. Forget about it for now....I'll be around. And you' never mistake my call..."Caw, caw, caw."..... How about it? I could do it right now. A quick hit to the backbone and one to the top of your head...and to your beak.

BERNARD

No!.....I...I'm not sure.

DR. CROW

Afraid?

BERNARD

Yes....But it's also the singing. I don't know how I would feel....

DR. CROW

Isn't she worth it?

BERNARD

Of course, she is. But I don't know if I have the right....It's part of me.

DR. CROW

Ha! You and your rights. You have the right to do whatever you like.

BERNARD

It's not so simple.

DR. CROW

I have better things to do than wait while you decide whether or not you have the "right" to fly.

BERNARD

You're twisting things. You...

DR. CROW

(INTERRUPTING) Ha, ha, ha....I'll be around if...when you change your mind Caw caw, caw. (RUNS OFFSTAGE TO TAKE OFF) —change your mind. Caw,

BERNARD

(SHOUTING) It's not fair to offer someone a choice like that. (HE IS ANSWERED BY A "CAW, CAW, CAW" IN THE DISTANCE. BERNARD SITS DOWN AND HOLDS HIS HEAD. AFTER A FEW SECONDS, HE HEARS SOMETHING RUSTLING THE LEAVES AND HE SCURRIES INTO THE BUSHES.

END OF SCENE TWO

## Scene Three

*IT IS TOOLIE THAT BERNARD HAS HEARD. HE IS AMATEUR BIRDWATHER, WEARING A SET OF FIELD KHAKIS, A JACKET WITH EPAULETS, AND A PITH HELMET. TOOLIE IS A COMBINATION OF INTELLIGENT AND LIKEABLE THOUGH SLIGHTLY NAÏVE WIMP, CROOK TOUGH POOL SHARK, AND CHARMING AND FASHIONABLE MAN-ABOUT-TOWN. HE ENTERS FROM STAGE RIGHT WITH BINOCULARS TO HIS EYES LOOKING SKYWARD AT THE DEPARTING FLOCK. (NORMALLY, THEY DANGLE FROM AROUND HIS NECK.) HE TAKES THEM DOWN, SPOTS BERNARD WHO IS ATTEMPTING TO HIDE. BERNARD INTERESTS HIM GREATLY, BUT HE DOESN'T WANT TO FRIGHTEN THE BIRD. HE UNOBTRUSIVELY RAISES HIS BINOCULARS FOR A FEW MOMENTS, MOVES THEM TO BERNARD, BECOMES FASCINATED BUT CONTROLLED, AND LOWERS THE GLASSES. DISCREETLY, HE REFOCUSSES ON THE DEPARTING FLOCK OVER THE MISSISSIPPI RIVER. THEN HE TURNS TOWARDS THE AUDIENCE AND SPEAKS HIS THOUGHTS WITHOUT ESTABLISHING DIRECT CONTACT.*

*TOOLIE HAS A SPEECH IRREGULARITY-HE OCCASIONALLY REVERSES THE FIRST LETTER OF WORDS OF A PHRASE. FOR INSTANCE, INSTEAD OF "CHOOSES HIS SPOTS," TOOLIE MIGHT SAY, "SPOOSES HIS CHOTS." WHEN HE DOES THIS, HE IS EMBARRASSED AND GRIMACES SLIGHTLY. HE IS NEVER AMUSED AT THIS DIFFICULTY, YET THE AUDIENCE MIGHT FEEL FREE TO CHUCKLE*

## TOOLIE

And away they go. Hawk-tailed bush sparrows. Unimpressive at first glance but formidable migrants. Every year, on or about the first of September they begin their journey from here in Missouri to Lake Chicot in South Louisiana, which is about 50 miles from Lafayette, a college town you might have heard of. Of course no one knows just why they have sposen that chot—I mean chosen that spot. Least of all, them--I would imagine. I mean does a leopard spoose his chots-choose his spots?

(AFFECTING AN ENGLISH ACCENT AS HE MOCKS THE PURCHASE OF SPOTS) "And two more of those shiny round fellows in the corner and we'll be done Oh, one last item is that lovely pair of eyes you've got in the window." Ha, Ha Ahem I hey will return on the 15th of April, having lost more than half of their flock to exhaustion, predators, disease, etc. They will breed here and lay their eggs hatch them, teach the young to fly and then, like clockwork, leave in the late evening in early September. They are very curious in that only about a dozen of the brood of several hundred will ever learn the complete hawk- tailed melody. Most of this dozen will die m fights before the migration. (LIGHTNING STARTS FLASHING OCCASIONALLY. TOOLIE RESPONDS TO THE DAMP WIND AND FALLING TEMPERATURE BY PRESSING THE COLLAR OF HIS JACKET.) The "singers " as they are called, seem to be sated by their hiblings-hated by their siblings.

These sparrows take great pleasure in flying and are, by nature, extremely shy to human beings. I guess that's why I was so surprised to find that one there (INDICATES BERNARD, HUDDLED BEHIND A BUSH) scurrying like a quail instead of flying off as I approached. I was intrigued. He seemed to be uninjured and in perfect health. I was surprised for another reason. (SHARES A SECRET WITH THE AUDIENCE, LEANING TOWARD THEM TO AVOID BEING OVERHEARD). I think that he might be a singer—which would make him very valuable indeed. My suspicions are based on the fact that I heard the second "verse" if you will, of the hawk-tailed melody a few moments before I saw him. And I didn't see any others around. They have begun the migration. I must admit I had a passionate urge to catch him and take him home. Not that I would have sold him—as I most certainly could....and for a handsome price.

But no! Just to possess a bird like that, even for only a few days--that would have been...I can't describe it. Truly and amazingly wonderful! If you are a committed birdwatcher, you might understand. Or a committed anything, I imagine. It would be like possessing a Van Gogh, a hot Van Gogh. You wouldn't tell anyone about it--not if you have any sense. But that wouldn't make any difference. You could keep it in a special, secret room--secret room. When you are all alone, you can turn on a soft light and bask in the awareness that you are in control of and responsible for something that is exquisite and that in all of the created universe there is only one and there it is before you.

But (SIGHS WISTFULLY), I don't do that anymore. Serve a little time in the state prison. Drive a very, very good woman bananas. When you get out, you find yourself taking up something more.... "innocent," something like birdwatching Which I have recently done. First thing I did when I got home was I destroyed the plates. At least the Washingtons. The Lincolns are a different story—a true work of art Interchangeable serial numbers all set on little clicking wheels by a Swiss craftsman. First-rate art. Destroy something like that and the NEA and NEH would have a dozen heart attacks. They were made by a superb engraver and carpenter Had a passion for making tiny secret trapdoors and things like that. Anyway, that shameful past is behind me. No more of that for me...At least not for a while.

Now if Angelina should come back, it'd be different! I'd walk the straight and narrow forever....Oh, where are you. Angel. I don't deserve it, but I need you like heaven needs harps and bat fiddle loys—fat little boys.

Anyway, for now...it's the birds. Especially valuable birds like hawk-tailed singers. (HE BEGINS GENTLY PRYING THE BRANCHES APART, LOOKING FOR BERNARD. HE SPOTS HIM.) Aha. Ware you tar.....I mean, there you are. (FRIGHTENED, BERNARD RUNS A FEW STEPS AND BEATS HIS WINGS AGAINST THE GROUND.) Don't be scared, little one. Uncle Toolie won't hurt you. (TOOLIE TREES TO SHOOSH HIM UP.) Nope. Can't fly. What extraordinarily good fortune! A flightless singer. I know all about you. Defective spine and beak contributing to the exceptional quality of song. You are a rare bird.

(BERNARD ELUDES CAPTURE REPEATEDLY BY SPINNING AND HOPPING. LIGHTNING HAS INCREASED. RAIN BEGINS.) I should have taken my umbrella. Lots of stormy weather predicted.... (PERSISTING WITH HIS SEARCH FOR BERNARD.) I've got a nice warm bed for you, little one. There you are....and .....(TOOLIE LUNGES, MISSES BERNARD, FALLS. THE STORM HAS BECOME WORSE. COLD AND WET, HE DECIDES TO LEAVE THE CHASE.) You win this time, nittle lerd... little nerd. But I know where you are and that you can't fly. I'll be back. (EXITS)

BERNARD

Thank God for the rain. It seems that every creature I see wants to use me for his own selfish ends. And that guy'll be back. If only I could fly. I wouldn't have to worry about people like that or (A DISTANT "CAW, CAW, CAW" IS HEARD BRIEFLY. BERNARD SPOTS ANOTHER MOVEMENT IN THE BUSHES.)...or every thing that moves.

END OF SCENE THREE

## Scene Four

*BERNARD BACKS TOWARD THE TREE FOR PROTECTION. BEAMY, A CATEPILLAR, ENTERS IN WORM-LIKE, SNAKE-LIKE MANNER CARRYING A FEW POSSESSIONS IN A HANDKERCHIEF TIED TO THE END OF A SHORT POLE . IT IS NOT CLEAR WHETHER BEAMY IS MALE OR FEMALE, BUT BERNARD WILL REFER TO BEAMY AS "HE" UNTIL HE IS CORRECTED. BEAMY LOOKS AROUND AND SEES BERNARD, THEN TURNS AND CONTINUES FOR A FEW FEET AND STOPS.. BERNARD WANTS TO MAKE CONTACT BUT IS AFRAID AND SHY.*

BERNARD

(NOT ADDRESSING ANYONE DIRECTLY) Lovely weather we've been having.

BEAMY

(AFTER LOOKING HARD AT BERNARD) AH depends.

BERNARD

On what?

BEAMY

On whether you're a tiny snake who can swim like a fish or a tiny worm who is driven out of his comfortable hole in the ground by a quick thundershower.

BERNARD

(FOR A SECOND, BERNARD'S EYES WIDEN AT THE MENTION OF THE WORD "SNAKE." HE EXPRESSES A MOMENTARY SURGE OF APPREHENSION WHICH IS, HOWEVER, WELL CONTAINED THIS SURGE IS ACCOMPANIED BY A SLIGHT HOP.) Oh?

BEAMY

Yes. (PAUSE) If you're a worm, you run a terrible risk of being snapped up by a bird and never heard from again. (PAUSE. THEN IN THE TONE AND PACE OF A LEARNED APHORISM) ..."A lot of birds fly around when the weather is nice.".... That's what my friend used to say....before he disappeared on a beautiful day in August.

BERNARD

I guess all that exercise makes 'em pretty hungry. (HE GIVES TWO IRREPRESSIBLE HOPS.)

BEAMY

But if you're a tiny snake, you just lift your head and nip 'em under the wing and they're done for in ten minutes. Probably less. Never knew what hit 'em.

BERNARD

(BERNARD GASPS SLIGHTLY AND TAKES ONE SHORT HOP BACK) You....Did you ever do that?

BEAMY

I don't think so.

BERNARD

(GIVING ANOTHER SLIGHT HOP) Glad to hear... (HALTS).....So, you're...ahem....not a tiny snake.

BEAMY

Well, probably not.

BERNARD

(APPREHENSIVELY) "Probably?" You must know who...what you are?

BEAMY

I know I'm me....but I don't know exactly what that means.

BERNARD

You sure are a curious wor....(STOPS)...individual.

BEAMY

You were going to say "worm," weren't you?

BERNARD

What if I was?

BEAMY

Nothing. (PAUSES)...It's just that being a snake is a lot more....honorable....than being a worm. If you're a worm, you're a wimp. At least, that's what everyone thinks. That's just the way things are.

BERNARD

Hey. (PUTS HIS ARM LIGHTLY AROUND BEAMY'S SHOULDER) There's nothing wrong with a guy being a worm. It beats being a bird sometime.

BEAMY

How would you know?... (STARTLED) You're not a bird-are you? (BERNARD IS SILENT) Birds live up there. (POINTS TO THE SKY) They shake their wings and swoop down and do terrible things.

BERNARD

Says who?

BEAMY

Said who. My friend, that's who. I trunk they came down and got him.

BERNARD

He sounds like an interesting fellow. What was his name?

BEAMY

(PUTS THE POLE AND BAG DOWN, INDICATING THAT SHE IS SOMEWHAT MORE COMFORTABLE) Blackie. At least that's what I called him. Because he was dark and getting darker. Beautiful silky lines across his face and body, don't you know. He was a little older. Began to get tired often. He'd take long naps. I think he was sleeping when they saw him and came down. Terrible thing, those birds.

BERNARD

Not all of them are bad.

BEAMY

Just the one's that fly around.

BERNARD

(UNCOMFORTABLE) Why don't you know what you are? Didn't your parents tell you?

BEAMY

I'm an orphan. I think it was the birds who got my parents when I was very, very young. Probably too young to understand anything. Since then, I've been terribly lonely and just barely surviving....Well, it was nice talking to you. (PICKING UP POLE AND BAG) Beamy's the name. A least that's what my friend used to call me because "You're as pale as a moonbeam," he would say....I sure do miss him.

BERNARD

(SHAKING HANDS) Bernard. Glad to meet you...(BEAMY BEGINS TO DEPART. BERNARD DOES NOT WANT BEAMY TO LEAVE YET) I...I'm sorry about your folks.

BEAMY

(STOPS) Thanks. It's kind of you.....Well, see you around.

BERNARD

(STEPS QUICKLY, HALF-BLOCKING BEAMY'S PATH) Do you remember them at all?

BEAMY

(PUTS DOWN POLE AND BAG, AND SAYS REFLECTIVELY AFTER A FEW MOMENTS) There's only one thing I remember, and I'm not sure if they were there. It's more like a dream. (PAUSES)

BERNARD

Can you tell me about it?

BEAMY

It's not clear now. It seems a little crazy. There were these....angels...hundreds, thousands of angels, beating their wings slowly in the morning sunshine...being propelled up and forward and then sinking for an instant before the next thrust of their large, very beautiful wings...They were colored...like rainbows, their wings were. It was very quiet-only the slight sound of the air being fanned.

BERNARD

How wonderful!

BEAMY

And then they were gone. I mean that I went to sleep for a little while and when I woke up, they were all gone. Maybe I was sick, and it was all my feverish imagination. Maybe I slept for a long time.

BERNARD

And you were all alone.

BEAMY

Yes....Except for Blackie.

BERNARD

He—wasn't an angel?

BEAMY

No...He was like me. About my age I think, but he knew a lot about everything. I don't know where he learned it all. He just came up and said, "It looks like all of the angels are gone." Without him, I probably would not have survived. After a few days, he started getting dark. More of those beautiful lines like dark grey silk. His face had more and more of them in it. Then one day, he wasn't there.

BERNARD

And you haven't seen him since?

BEAMY

No....Have you?

BERNARD

Me? No. Never.

BEAMY

(PICKING UP THE POLE AND BAG) Well, it was nice talking to you.

BERNARD

Uhh, where are you going?

BEAMY

(POINTING) That way. Do you know the name of that direction?

BERNARD

Sure. That's south.

BEAMY

"South." That's where Blackie said to go. "South."

BERNARD

That's where I'm headed. It's very far away. Maybe....maybe we could travel together.

BEAMY

(ASTOUNDED) You mean you want to....(SURPRISED, BEAMY DROPS BAG AND POLE, PAUSES.)

BERNARD

Yes. We might keep each other company. (NOTICES BEAMY IS TROUBLED) But if you prefer not, then I certainly would understand.

BEAMY

Yes...I mean no. I mean I would like to travel with you very much. It's just that....no one ever asked me anything like that. (DEEPLY GRATIFIED, EXCITED) Oh, yes. It seems like I've been walking alone, forever.

BERNARD

Well, are you ready?

*BEAMY BENDS DOWN TO GET BAG AND POLE. SUDDENLY, WHEN SHE IS NEAR THE GROUND, SHE SEEMS TO HEAR SOMETHING. SHE LIES DOWN AND PRESSES HER EAR TO THE EARTH. BERNARD STARTS TO ASK WHAT IS IT, BUT BEAMY PUTS HER FINGER TO HER LIPS AND LISTENS CAREFULLY FOR A FEW MORE SECONDS.*

BEAMY

I think it's that guy with the hat. He's coming back. Something is with him. (BEAMY HURRIEDLY TAKES A SMALL PACKET FROM HIS BAG AND SHAKES A FEW GRAINS INTO BERNARD'S HAND. BEAMY BEGINS TO DEMONSTRATE.) Spread these around like this. I think he's got a dog. This'll make him sneeze and he won't be able to smell us. Now let's hide. (BEAMY AND BERNARD HIDE IN THE CAVE DOWNSTAGE.)

END OF SCENE FOUR

## Scene Five

## TOOLIE

(ENTERS WITH AN ACTRESS WHOSE COSTUME INDICATES CLEARLY THAT SHE IS A MALE DOG. THE ACTRESS WEARS A "DOG HEAD" WITH A SNOOT BUT WITH THE MOUTH CUT AWAY. THE DOG'S NAME IS "NOSE." HE SNIFFS AROUND AND THEN BEGINS SNEEZING UNCONTROLLABLY.) Nose, you are supposed to use your almost legendary ability to sniff out the critter, not to go around sneezing with. Now come on, you mongrel, sniff. (NOSE CONTINUES TO SNEEZE.) Oh you pitiful wretch. Your mother must have been a poodle. (TOOLIE GOES UPSTAGE AND NOSE FOLLOWS HIM. THE MAN COMMANDS THE ANIMAL TO SIT.) Sit. Sit, Nose. Good dog, sit. (NOSE DOESN'T SIT TOOLIE PUSHES AND PULLS HIM TO A SITTING POSITION.) Trick dog, that Nose. (BRUSHES HIMSELF OFF.) Now for the second line of attack. (TOOLIE TAKES A SILVER TUNING WHISTLE FROM HIS SHIRT POCKET.) A little whistle that yours truly developed in his teens, and perfected during those long days in the can. I call it a "Toolie-Loolie Lure." Catchy name, I thought "Loolie" rhymes with my name, "Toolie," don't you know. It will prove immensely attractive to any bird smaller than a plump pigeon. Until my patent comes through, I keep it hidden. Now...(TOOLIE GIVES IT A SHORT WARM-UP BLOW, TAKES IT FROM HIS UPS WHICH HE EXERCISES. AND BLOWS IT AGAIN, PRODUCING A LONG MOURNFUL SOUND. AS HE DOES SO, BERNARD RESPONDS AND BEGINS TO SWOON. BEAMY NOTICES THIS AND GRABS ON TO HIM.) Used to call birds every afternoon and all day Sunday. They'd flock to me. No feed, no seed-only the whistle.

## BEAMY

(IN A HUSHED VOICE) No, Bernard. Stay still. If Toolie or Nose see you, you're finished. Please, Bernard. Don't move.

## BERNARD

It's so very lovely! I just want to see it.

## BEAMY

That's what he's counting on. (BEAMY TAKES BALLS OF COTTON FROM HIS BAG AND HOLDS THEM OVER BERNARD'S EARS.)

## BERNARD

No. I have to see it, whatever it is. (TOOLIE BLOWS THE WHISTLE AGAIN. BERNARD STRUGGLES TO BE FREE OF THE COTTON. BEAMY QUICKLY AND DEFTLY TRIPS HIM WITH THE POLE, PLUGS HIS MOUTH WITH COTTON, AND TIES HIS HANDS WITH STRING FROM THE BAG. TOOLIE CONTINUES TO BLOW THE WHISTLE. NOSE STARTS HOWLING AND CROONING WITH HIS HEAD EXTENDED UPWARD.)

## TOOLIE

(TO NOSE) Quit that, you stupid animal. (TOOLIE LIGHTLY SLAPS NOSE'S CHEEK. NOSE IS REPENTANT. TOOLIE STARTS THE WHISTLE AGAIN, AND NOSE STARTS HOWLING AGAIN. TOOLIE WHACKS HIM AGAIN, BLOWS WHISTLE AGAIN, AND NOSE STARTS HOWLING AGAIN.) They ought to give me an academy award: irresistible to small birds and stupid hound dogs. (NOSE SULKS. ALTHOUGH HE DOES NOT SEE BERNARD, TOOLIE ADDRESSES HIM

ANGRILY.) You won again, you good-for-nothing punctuation mark hawk-tailed singer. But I'll be back—without this worthless hound. You can count on that. And if you push me too far, you'll be singing from my frying pan. (STOMPS HIS FOOT) Understand? (EAGER TO BE FORGIVEN, NOSE LETS LOOSE WITH A COUPLE OF FIERCE BARKS. BOTH EXIT.)

BEAMY

(REMOVING COTTON AND STRING FROM BERNARD) It's okay now. That was a close call, though.

BERNARD

What happened? I tried to go to him, didn't I?.....But you stopped me. He would have kept me forever, but you didn't let that happen. You risked your life for me!

BEAMY

I didn't think about it. It was...I don't know....an automatic reaction, I suppose.

BERNARD

I'll always be grateful. (FALLS TO ONE KNEE) I'd rather be dead than caught and put in some sort of a cage. Thank you, Beamy. It was the most considerate thing ever done for me. (RISES)

BEAMY

You're very welcome. (BERNARD EMBRACES BEAMY.) Hey, let's not get carried away. (PUTTING THE COTTON AND STRING BACK INTO THE BAG, WHICH BEAMY SLINGS OVER HER SHOULDER) Are you about ready?

BERNARD

(TAKES A SMALL SATCHEL FROM BEHIND THE TREE, THE BRANCHES OF WHICH HE TOUCHES FONDLY) Do we have a minute?

BEAMY

I think so. Toolie won't be back until tomorrow at the earliest. I think that basically, he's a very lazy fellow.

BERNARD

"Toolie"? Do you know him? "Lazy"?

BEAMY

(SITTING DOWN) My friend told me about him....and about his dog, "Nose." Blackie said that Toolie was very clever but had a way of falling all over himself. Like keeping the dog. That animal belongs in a mental ward.

BERNARD

(JOINING BEAMY) Did Blackie know him?

BEAMY

I'm not sure. But Blackie knew everything, it seems. We'd talk like this in the evening until very late. Once, we even saw the sun rising. I didn't know if the stories he told were true or not. It didn't make any difference. But when he was talking about real things, you knew he wasn't making it up. Like the way south. How do you know it?

BERNARD

I'm not sure. (POINTS TO STAGE RIGHT) I heard some guys talking. They said, "Just follow the river."

BEAMY

Yeah. Blackie knew. He said that there's another side over there. (POINTS) You just go to the middle and head south, no matter what. When the land vanishes after you've been traveling a long, long time, you turn left and you're there.

BERNARD

You're where?

BEAMY

You sure do ask a lot of questions. "There" is there. It's like "here" only it's where you should be.

BERNARD

It's where you should be.

BEAMY

That's what I said.

BERNARD

I mean it's not where I should be.

BEAMY

And where might that be?

BERNARD

Head south and fly at night when the sky is clear and the stars are bright. That's what the older guys said. Turn right when you see the big dipper sink before dawn.

BEAMY

What older guys?

BERNARD

You know. The guys I grew up with.

BEAMY

Fly. So they were fliers?

BERNARD

(HESITANTLY) In a way.

BEAMY

(WITH INCREASING ALARM) They were birds!

BERNARD

(DESPERATELY DODGING THE ISSUE) There are other kinds of fliers. And not all birds are terrible.

BEAMY

Are you a bird?

BERNARD

I...(RESIGNEDLY) I'm not sure...(BEAMY IS SILENT. BERNARD BECOMES FRUSTRATED.) I have feathers and a beak and anyone but a simpleton like you would call me a bird without giving it a second thought. But they'd be wrong. Why? Because I can't fly. All birds can fly, but I can't—Now go on and say the worst things you can think of because they will fit like a glove on a pitiful, pathetic creature like me. (BERNARD LIFTS HIS WING.) Or nip me under the wing and put me out of my misery.

BEAMY

So that's your story.

BERNARD

(NASTILY) Yeah, that's my story.

BEAMY

You're feeling miserable because you can't fly, not because you gobble down caterpillars like they were going out of fashion.

BERNARD

Caterpillars? Are you a caterpillar? (NO ANSWER) I've never gobbled down anything but seeds.

BEAMY

So you can't fly. So?

BERNARD

It's....Not so simple. The flock left me behind. And I'll never see Bertha again. She wanted to stay with me, but of course I said no. We don't do things like that. She's strong and she flies well, but she couldn't make it with all of the snow and ice they have here in the winter.

BEAMY

Were you—close?

BERNARD

We had never made...you know. But she would listen to me; and I, to her. We understood each other. I liked so much just being around her. She—right before she left...she....(HALTS)

BEAMY

Were you in love with her?

BERNARD

I...I...Yes. Very much. She-kissed me when she left-like never before. We had never talked about how we felt about each other. I wanted to, but-(PAUSES)

BEAMY

"If you talk about something, then it changes. It's different. And if you talk about the change, then it changes again." That's what Blackie used to say. "The only thing that's real is a secret."

BERNARD

I think you're just being kind. But that is a very nice thing to say.

BEAMY

(BECOMING A LITTLE DIZZY, SLIGHTLY SWAYING) I sure do miss Blackie.

BERNARD

Are you alright?

BEAMY

I'm fine. I just need to sit down for a few seconds. (BEAMY SITS AND TAKES A COUPLE OF DEEP BREATHS.) There. It's passed. (SHE ABSENTLY REMOVES A DARK THREAD FROM HER FACE AS SHE STANDS UP.) I should introduce you to my boat.

BERNARD

To your what?

BEAMY

It's just a raft, actually. A few branches tied together. Blackie told me how to make it strong. It'll support both of us, I think. You'll get a chance to test your friend's theory about moving at night.

BERNARD

But it's not flying—and it's not my theory. Maybe the guys were wrong.

BEAMY

(WITHOUT EMOTION) Maybe they were right about you.

BERNARD

What are you talking about?

BEAMY

About your not flying—You don't sound exactly like a fearless loner desperately hungry for his beloved.

BERNARD

You don't have a right to say that.

BEAMY

Do you want to come, or do you want to stay?

BERNARD

I don't want to be arguing with you all the way.

BEAMY

If you want to come, get your tight-feathered ass on that raft and shut up. If you don't want to come, stand aside.

BERNARD

(MIFFED, BERNARD TAKES HIS SACHELL AND GETS ON THE RAFT.) There was never any question.

BEAMY

Just my luck. Bitch, bitch, bitch. (AS SHE IS ABOUT TO SHOVE OFF, SHE LOWERS HER BODY TO INCREASE THE FORCE. SHE HEARS SOMETHING. SHE RAISES HIS HAND FOR QUIET, THEN JUMPS ABOARD AND HANDS BERNARD A PADDLE.) It's him. Quick, paddle. (BERNARD AND BEAMY EXIT PADDLING.)

END OF SCENE FIVE

## Scene Six

## TOOLIE

(TOOLIE ENTERS HOLDING HIS SAFARI HELMET. MORE RELAXED HE SAUNTERS UPSTAGE. NOSE IS NOT WITH HIM. NOTICING SOMETHING ON THE RIVER, TOOUE BRINGS UP THE BINOCULARS .) And away they go. (TURNS DOWNSTAGE) If you can't fly, then, by Jove, you gotta take the next best route. In the morning, I'll be off after them. But not now. (THE LIGHT BECOMES A LITTLE DIM AND ROMANTIC.) This was Angelina's favorite time of day. I can almost feel her, walking slowly, gazing out over the river. A rose in her hair. She would talk to them, don't you know—roses, flowers, squirrels, dogs. I never heard her talk to a stone, but it's possible. Me? The only things I talked to were a deck of cards and a pair of dice.

(THE MISTY SPIRIT OF ANGELINA APPEARS ONSTAGE, BUT TOOLIE PERCEIVES HER ONLY IN HIS MEMORY.) I tried to quit like she wanted, but that young Dack of Jiamonds—Jack of Diamonds—sings a mighty pretty song—Woke up one morning, and she was gone. No big argument, no nothing. Poof. And I knew that she was right. God, did that hurt. It wasn't long after that that they caught me. I think I wanted them to catch me—Maybe I'll run into her one day if I keep searching—I don't really believe that, but I have to pretend. Otherwise, what's the point of anything. (NOSE COMES ONSTAGE, SNIFFING AROUND.) Nose, come over here. And don't be sniffing too much or you'll start sneezing again. (NOSE COMES AND SITS BESIDES TOOLIE TO ENJOY THE EVENING AIR THE ACTRESS PLAYING NOSE TAKES THE DOG'S HEAD OFF AND INHALES DEEPLY. TOOLIE DOES NOT RESPOND TO THIS ACTION.) If I pretend long enough with all my might—maybe it'll all come back. (A FEW MOMENTS PASS, AND TOOLIE STARTS SINGING. THE ACTRESS PLAYING NOSE JOINS TOOLIE SINGING **"STARLIGHT DREAMS"** AS INDICATED:

**Starlight Dreams**

Music and Lyrics by Clyde Coreil © 1999

I

(Toolie)

I had never seen such starlight  
Fall so wide across the waves-  
A-changing every moment  
To brightly colored dreams.

II

When I was a young lad  
As innocent as moonbeams,  
I think I met an angel  
Who laughing called my name.

(Toolie and Actress playing Nose)

Soon I had no time for angels;  
I was aiming at the stars.

But on these nights as still  
As countless empty days,  
I can hear her laughter,  
Her voice upon the wind;  
I remember starlight  
Falling on the waves.

III

(Toolie)

Now I look upon the river.  
That dark sky's as wide as years;  
I would give my life itself now  
Just to see those Homelands  
In her eyes, once more.

(Actress playing Nose)

I had never seen the dark rose  
Glow so red upon her hair;  
I had never heard the swallow's  
Song so light upon the air  
As that yesterday.

(Toolie and Actress harmonize)

Now I look upon the river,  
That dark sky's as wide as years;  
I would give my life itself now  
Just to see those Homelands  
In her eyes, once more.

*THE ACTRESS PLAYING NOSE DISCREETLY PUTS THE DOG'S HEAD BACK ON AND BEGINS SLOWLY MOVING AROUND, SNIFFING LIKE A DOG.*

TOOLIE

Come on, Nose. Let's go home before you find more trouble to get into. We gonna find that hawk-tailed singer—and maybe, just maybe-Angelina. (TAKES SMALL BOX WITH A HANDKERCHIEF OUT OF HIS JACKET POCKET.) I doubt that you can smell anything after so long, but it's all I've got of her. (NOSE SMELLS IT CAREFULLY.) Now you go dream of that fragrance-.(NOSE LOPES OFF THE STAGE)-like I do every night. (TOOLIE TAKES A LONG AND DEEP BREATH OF THE HANDKERCHIEF, PUTS IT CAREFULLY BACK IN THE BOX WHICH HE RETURNS TO HIS JACKET. NOSE LOPES BACK TO HIM. THEY EXIT TOGETHER.) Now let's get some sleep. We're gonna take the motor-boat out tomorrow. (NOSE BARKS, LOOKING FORWARD TO THAT OUTING.) Between your incredible nose and my intuition, we'll locate those rascals. (NOSE EXITS BARKING, FOLLOWED BY TOOLIE.)

END OF SCENE SIX

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO  
Scene Seven

(Scenes are emmerated consecutively throughout. That is, the numbering of scenes does not start with "One" at the beginning of each act.)

*IT IS NIGHT. THE RAFT IS DOWN CENTER LEFT, HAVING DRIFTED ONTO THE BANK BERNARD AND BEAMY ARE SLEEPING. BERNARD WAKES UP AND JUMPS AFTER A FEW SECONDS.*

BERNARD

Beamy, wake up. We're on the bank. I guess I went to sleep. Beamy....Beamy, are you okay?

BEAMY

(SITTING UP GROGGILY. WEAK AND NOTICEABLY DARKER, SHE REMOVES A SILKY DARK THREAD FROM HER FACE.) I don't feel so well.

BERNARD

Maybe it's the motion of the raft. My stomach is upside down.

BEAMY

Maybe. I know that I've never been on the water before.

BERNARD

Do you have any idea of where we are

BEAMY

None. The moon is coming up. That might help us.

BERNARD

I think we should be away from the bank. It'd be safer, I think....(BEAMY TRIES TO GET UP TO HELP HIM, BUT SHE IS WEAK) Easy there. You lie down. I'll handle it. (BEAMY LIES DOWN AGAIN. BERNARD LOOKS AROUND FOR A PADDLE BUT BOTH HAVE DISAPPEARED.)

*PABLITO HAS BEEN WATCHING THE TWO FROM DOWN RIGHT, PARTLY HIDDEN FROM THEM. HE IS A GREEN FROG AND OFTEN MOVES IN LONG LEAPS. THERE IS A CARRIBBEAN LILT IN HIS ACCENT. PABLITO LEAPS WITH ONE OF THE PADDLES TO A PLACE NEAR THE RAFT. HE LAYS THE PADDLE DOWN CAREFULLY AS THOUGH BERNARD WERE ROYAL AND THE PADDLE WERE A PRECIOUS GIFT.*

BERNARD

(SURPRISED) Who are you?

PABLITO

(BOWING WITH A FLOURISH) Pablo Gonzalez Gomez y Alba. For short, Pablito. I am at the service of you and your friend.

BEAMY

(WITHOUT MUCH ENERGY) Is that our paddle?

PABLITO

It is very likely yours. It washed ashore and was followed by this one. (PRODUCES SECOND PADDLE) One paddle can go astray from far away. Two paddles tell me that there's a boat nearby So I came looking and found you. Perhaps it would be best if I were to come aboard and help out? (TO BEAMY) You don't seem to be too well, Amiga.

BERNARD

It's probably the motion of the water.

PABLITO

(LEAPING ABOARD WITH BOTH PADDLES) I think you spoke with much wisdom when you suggested that the middle of the river is safer than the sides. There is a big brown water snake that lives (POINTING) about 50 yards that way. I think that's just about close enough for him to get the delicious taste of you on the long skinny tongue with which he licks the air. (PABLITO LIFTS UP THE PADDLE AND OFFERS TO PUSH THE RAFT AWAY FROM THE SHORE.) With your permission, senior.

BERNARD

O...kay. I guess it would be okay. What kind of creature are you?

PABLITO

(PUSHES OFF AND BEGINS PADDLING WITH BERNARD) Me? Well, for a very long time, I thought I was a fish. But then my fins began turning into legs and arms. I understand that I am now called a frog. Tomorrow, who knows? Maybe I'll be a rabbit. I've seen rabbits, and they hop like I do. I rather hope that I don't because I love the water and the waves. But even better, I love the fish and the way we used to move with a flick of the fins. Most of all, however, I love the female frogs. That and that alone is my supreme calling-to appreciate those lovely creatures. My dear old mother told me to control myself. I tried. It didn't work. (PABLITO SINGS *LOST ONCE AGAIN*)

### Lost Once Again

Words and music by Clyde Coreil © 1998

#### I

Yes I locked my heart in a cage,  
And I put the key in ajar;  
Then I hid the jar near the blue sea,  
and I thought that at last I'd be free.

That night a wind and a rain came along,  
And swept the jar so far out to sea;  
There a mermaid saw it in moonlight,  
And she followed the sea back to me.  
Now I'm lost once again in the waves;  
I don't want to ever return;  
I'm at home in the foam and the high tides  
and the taste of the salt on her tongue.

#### II

*(During this part of Pablito's song, the elusive Rosa very subtly joins Pablito..)*

*(Pablito and Rosa)*

You and me,  
The sea makes three;  
Evening skies,  
The clouds make five.

*(Rosa)*

Big fat moon  
Will be here soon,  
And the catfish and  
All of their friends  
From the deep.

And then we'll start to party,  
We'll sing of times gone by,  
Remember precious hours,  
See faces flash in the sky.

*(Pablito)*

Then we'll sail  
To islands new;  
Witches wild  
With eyes of fire-

*(Rosa)*

Laughing at the way we love  
all day feeling our hearts  
beat as one in the waves.

*(Pablito and Rosa)*

Then we'll all start to party,  
We'll sing of times gone by,  
We will sway in sunshine  
Until the moon comes along.

*(After the song, Rosa takes a quick bow and disappears offstage.)*

BERNARD

It looks like we're in the middle of the river, more or less.

PABLITO

Aye, that it does. Well out of range-even sniffing range of Mr. Snake....Are you heading north or south?

BERNARD

South. And you?

PABLITO

Me? I go where the pretty frogs are, and they are all along this river. So, you wanna go south, south it is. We'll just let the current carry us downstream. We only have to guide this raft and look out for logs and such.

BERNARD

It's very kind of you to help us, but where are you going really?

PABLITO

Me? I don't really know, mon; but I got to go...can't stop now. Get in trouble for sure if I stop. Important thing is you gotta keep moving. It's when you stop dat your old friend Mr. Trouble, he finds you. Mr. Snake is always sniffing the air with his skinny tongue. (LOOKING AT BEAMY WHO IS SLEEPING) How about him...or her...Which is it?

BERNARD

(ATTENDING TO BEAMY) Beamy? I don't even know if he...or she is a snake or a caterpillar. Much less if he's a she, or she's a he....She seems like a girl.

PABLITO

Whatever She's sound asleep. I think you got a very sick friend, Amigo. We have to let her rest a whole lot...So...south. How far south?

BERNARD

I—I'm not sure.

PABLITO

In other words, you got a direction but no destination...better than a destination but no direction. At least with da former, you keep on moving.

BERNARD

You might say something like that.

PABLITO

However-and no offense intended-but if you don't know where you're going, how will you know when you get there?

BERNARD

It's not so simple. The guys I grew up with said to fly...(CATCHES HIMSELF) move at night when the sky is clear and the stars are bright. Head south until you feel the urge to go west...to turn right. Eventually, you'll see a lake that's shaped like an alligator...

PABLITO

Do you know what an alligator is?

BERNARD

I've never seen one. The guys said they're very large and long and have short arms and legs and a lot of teeth.

PABLITO

And they're big and very quiet and look like a log and are very clever and very, very fast. We'll probably see one along the banks when we get further south. (NOTICES THAT BEAMY IS MOVING A LITTLE) What are you doing awake?

BEAMY

I feel so strange....so dizzy. But I can't sleep...! can't even lie down....My shoulders ache.

PABLITO

Are you headed for this lake too?

BEAMY

(SITTING MORE UPRIGHT) No. My friend and I are just traveling together for a while. (LOOKING OVER THE RIVER) My goodness, but it's beautiful. And we're headed in the right direction, Bernard. I can feel it. (BEAMY REMOVES TWO SILKY THREADS FROM HER FACE AND ARMS.)

PABLITO

What are those?

BEAMY

Silky dark threads.

PABLITO

They're very attractive, *senorita*.

BEAMY

The wind brings them, I think. Maybe they're things like Blackie used to have....I believe. Blackie and all that seem so long ago. Something's happening to me, Bernard. I feel...like something inside me is...I don't know—There's something going on inside.

BERNARD

(COMFORTING BEAMY) Rest is what you need. Sleep for a long time, and you'll feel like a new person.

BEAMY

If there's anything I can do, please ask. I have to help.

BERNARD

You've already done your share—with the hat man...Toolie. You can hardly stay awake. We've got a good raft and a good friend, Pah...something Alba.

PABLITO

Call me (BOWS GRACIOUSLY) "Pablito." At your service, always.

BEAMY

I don't know what my real name is...A friend I used to have called me "Beamy" because I was as pale as a moonbeam. I'm glad to make your acquaintance, Mr. Pablito. (BEAMY EXTENDS A HAND, WHICH PABLITO SHAKES.)

PABLITO

And I, yours.

BEAMY

(BEAMY LOOKS AT HER OWN HAND AFTER PABLITO RELEASES IT.) My hand—seems to be getting a little dark. Bernard, is my face getting dark too? (PRESENTS FACE TO BERNARD.)

BERNARD

Not that I can tell. When the moon gets higher, everything'll seem lighter. Besides, dark is nice. Darker is nicer. Now go to sleep and don't worry about anything. We'll be fine.

PABLITO

(TAKING UP MUSICAL INSTRUMENT SUCH AS A GUITAR) Pablo Gonzalez Gomez y Alba will see to that. (PABLITO BEGINS STRUMMING SOFTLY AN IMPROVISATION TO "LOST ONCE AGAIN.") Now listen to the words of this song and before I'm finished, you will be asleep.

BEAMY

(INTERRUPTING) Bernard, are there lines in my face?... (BERNARD LOOKS BUT DOES NOT SPEAK.) Please tell me....I know there are. I think I caught whatever Blackie had before he disappeared.

BERNARD

Nonsense. If you rest enough, it'll all go away.

BEAMY

Bernard, if I...disappear, could you...take...what's left of me to the place I told you about...When you can't see land anymore, turn left, go straight and you're there. And if you happen to run into a tall, dark, handsome guy, ask him if he's Blackie and tell him what happened to me.

BERNARD

That's nonsense. Beamy. All you need is rest.

BEAMY

Please, Bernard. Promise. (BECOMING WEAKER AND MORE DESPERATE) Make him promise, Pablito. Please.

BERNARD

You don't need to ask him. And I don't need to promise. You know that I would never in a million years fail to take you—But if you need to hear me promise, then...."I promise to search for your home as long as there is life in my body and to take you there." (IN THE DISTANCE, THERE IS THE "CAW, CAW, CAW" OF DR. CROW. BERNARD NOTICES IT, BUT BEAMY DOESN'T. AT FIRST, PABLITO ALSO FAILS TO NOTICE IT, BUT DOES WHEN HE SEES BERNARD'S FACE.)

BEAMY

Thank you, Bernard. Now I can rest.

*THE FEMALE FROG SLIPS ONSTAGE TO JOIN PABLITO IN SINGING THE CHORUS OF "LOST ONCE AGAIN".*

Chorus of  
"Lost Once Again"

II

(Pablito and Rosa)

You and me,  
The sea makes three;  
Evening skies,  
The clouds make five.

(Rosa)

Big fat moon  
Will be here soon,  
And the catfish and  
All of their fiends  
From the deep.

And then we'll start to party,  
We'll sing of times gone by,  
Remember precious hours,  
See faces flash in the sky.

(Pablito)

Then we'll sail  
To islands new;  
Witches wild  
With eyes of fire—

(Rosa)

Laughing at the way we love all day feeling our hearts beat as one in the waves.

(Pablito and Rosa)

Then well all start to party,  
We'll sing of times gone by,  
We will sway in sunshine  
Until the moon comes along.

*(As before, Rosa quietly disappears offstage.)*

BERNARD

She's asleep. Thanks, Pablito.

PABLITO

My pleasure, Senor....I see you've met Dr. Crow.

BERNARD

(NERVOUSLY) Doctor Who?

PABLITO

We all meet him sooner or later—He offered to change me back into a fish.

BERNARD

I don't know what you're talking about

PABLITO

Dr. Crow knows each of our weaknesses. Verdad?

BERNARD

(FLUSTERED. SLIGHTLY UPSET) Where I come from, each of us minds his own business. Goodnight.

*BERNARD LIES DOWN AND GOES TO SLEEP.*

END OF SCENE SEVEN

## Scene Eight

*THERE IS THE SOUND OF FLAPPING AND "CAW, CAW, CAW." THEN DR. CROW ENTERS FROM STAGE LEFT.*

PABLITO

What do you want here?

DR. CROW

Now, now, Pablito. What have I done to warrant such a rough tone of voice?...(NO RESPONSE FROM PABLITO)....Have you thought about returning to the beauty of being a fish?

PABLITO

I am happy being what I am now.

DR. CROW

But surely you have thought—haven't you? About how wonderful it is to flick a fin and feel yourself shoot through the cool water....Who is there among us who has not dreamed of the sweetness of some forbidden fruit? You are no different in dreaming, which I know you have done. Yet I could make that dream come true. (NO RESPONSE) Is our feathered friend here happy with his troubled life?

PABLITO

Leave him alone, Dr. Crow. There is magic I learned in the Caribbean that would make your life even more miserable than it already is.

DR. CROW

Never would I dream of even touching people who do not wish to be touched. (NO RESPONSE) Fine, then. But I want to stay here for a little while. You are free to take a swim or to go to sleep. I will cause no mischief now. You know that I do not deceive. I seduce, but do not He. (DR. CROW BEGINS TO VERY SUBTLY TURN HIS MEDALLION IN HIS FINGERS.) I am skillful, but no match for sleep, which is often the most seductive mistress in the world. Sleep. She strokes our heads and touches our eyes with gentle fingers. Sleep. (PABLITO CANNOT KEEP HIS EYES OPEN. HE GOES TO SLEEP. DR. CROW LOOKS OUT OVER THE WATER AND UP AT THE STARS. HE SINGS.)

## Shadows

Music and Lyrics by Clyde Coreil © 1999

Once I could sing like  
 wind in the hills,  
 and I could feel love  
 in my heart;  
 and I could glide high  
 in the sky  
 without a care with her,  
 flying by my side and  
 sleeping under my wings—  
 I remember those times,  
 I remember her.

Then I wanted more of  
 everything I had and  
 everything I saw—  
 and thought of only that.  
 I asked for all the things  
 that shined so out of reach,  
 that seemed more precious than  
 all that I had; yes I  
 wanted all the world  
 no matter what the cost,  
 ignoring all the danger,  
 it would all be mine.

Then came the dark day  
 when I saw my empty  
 shadow in the river;  
 there was nothing there—  
 no songs, no love, no laughter.

So I called on Master Eagle  
 and asked for a bargain:  
 I would give him the pure hearts;  
 he would give a clear song  
 for a moment only  
 to remember all I lost.  
 I needed that so badly,  
 I said yes I would.

Now I look for true hearts

and offer them a deal-  
I deliver something,  
but I take their dream.

I can then remember  
what I threw away,  
what I lost by wanting  
what I didn't need,.

*DR. CROW STRETCHES WIDE HIS CAPE WHICH SERVES HIM AS WINGS, AS HE  
CROSSES LEFT AND EXITS.*

END OF SCENE EIGHT

## Scene Nine

*THE SWOOSH OF DR. CROW'S WINGS WAKES BEAMY.*

BEAMY

Bernie.

BERNARD

(WAKING) What?...Who's there?...Beamy. Are you alright?

BEAMY

I'm cold. I feel so strange. (PULLING THREADS FROM HER FACE) These threads are everywhere. I can hardly move.

BERNARD

(TRYING TO GET BEAMY FREE) I'm trying. (REMOVES A HANDFUL OF THREADS) There. They're all gone. It must have been something from the river.

BEAMY

Thanks. I feel a lot better. Now I can sleep. (BEAMY PRETENDS TO FALL ASLEEP. BERNARD LOOKS AT THE SKY AND YAWNS.)

BERNARD

It's all so very sad and confusing. None of us seem to know who we are or what we're doing or where we're going or when we'll get there or even if we will get there with everybody chasing us-Toolie and that goofy hound dog and Mister Snake and that evil Dr. Crow and who knows what else. The only steady thing I have found is this beautiful river and the thousands of stars that all seem ready to explode and flood the sky with light. Those and the memory of Bertha...! wonder...will I ever...(BERNARD FALLS ASLEEP.)

END OF SCENE NINE

## Scene Ten

## BEAMY

(OPENS HER EYES, CHECKS TO MAKE CERTAIN THAT PABLITO AND BERNARD ARE SLEEPING.) It's so very lovely out here. Never in a million years would I have imagined it. (SHE TAKES A THREAD FROM HER FACE.) Bernard wonders if he will ever see his true love again. *I* wonder if *I* will ever see this beautiful sky and water again after tonight. Something's ending inside me. I can feel it...Who knows? Maybe I'll become an angel. Maybe I'll become the wind. Maybe I'll become a dream looking for a dreamer, and then together we'll be on this river and under that sky,

*AS BEAMY BEGINS SINGING, SHE IS ALONE, SOON TO BE JOINED BY THE MYSTERIOUS BUT HANDSOME SPIRIT OF HER FRIEND "BLACKIE" WHO APPEARS OUT OF THE MIST. HE IS WEARING A BLACK TUXEDO AND LOOKS VERY CHARMING BUT ALOOF. HE AND BEAMY BEGIN RELATING BUT IT ISN'T UNTIL THE THIRD VERSE THAT HE TAKES HER HAND AND THEY BEGIN WALTZING. AT THE END OF THE SONG, HE DISAPPEARS.*

**Dreaming of Dreams**

Music and Lyrics by Clyde Coreil © 1999

*(Beamy)*

We'll dream of dreams forever  
On magic nights like this,  
When fairies ride the night-fall  
And angels lean to kiss.

*(Beamy and Blackie)*

It's rare but time sometimes  
Like now rolls backwards  
To heal our spirit's wound,  
To keep our stars from falling  
In morning's mourning rise.

*(Blackie)*

So now you must imagine  
Music in moonbeams,  
And take my hand  
As though we'll waltz  
Forever on the waves.

*(Beamy and Blackie)*

Then when sun's past holding,  
Our limbs grow strangely still,

We'll lie and drift past east winds,  
And dream that our dreams will end.

END OF SCENE TEN

END OF ACT TWO

## Scene Eleven

*Angelina's hut on the banks of the Mississippi River. It can be represented by something as simple as a large cardboard box, located downstage left. A more elaborate structure would seem lovingly put together by an amateur carpenter. Nearby, there is an accumulation of whatever flotsam and jetsam seem appropriate to her life. She is a youngish human woman who several years before escaped from a mental hospital. Although she cannot function in a highly regulated society, she is not really psychotic. She occasionally hears voices and often talks to herself, but she does communicate with animals very well. She is somewhat lonely in her solitary life, but incomparably happier than she would be in a hospital or city in the USA-or any other industrialized setting. She has only a few rags covering a slight body. Her manner is innocent and straightforward. All in all, she is a lovely person.*

*As the scene opens, we see only Angelina's hut stage left which has been closed for the night. The sun has not yet lightened the horizon. She opens a door or hatch or whatever and steps out. Angelina stretches to indicate that she has just awakened. She picks up a basket for collecting flowers, a small flute, and a paddle. She crosses to her raft which is up left and puts the paddle on it. She crosses to downstage, seats herself on a box, and begins to play and sing.*

**Morning Glory**

Words and Music by Clyde Coreil © 1997

## I

Oh, Mister Sun,  
Come on up,  
Don't be shy.

We're waiting now  
For our day and our light.

Oh, Mrs. Moon  
Help us please-  
Tell that old  
Man of yours  
To shake a leg.

## II

Miss Morning Glory is  
Hiding her eyes  
Till she can see  
The beauty of the trees  
And of the paths  
That ramble aimlessly  
And then lose themselves

Like the clouds above-  
 Transforming forms  
 To what we find  
 In our own minds;  
 Change dreams to real-  
 Like movies in the night,  
 Where one fancies  
 Dancing light,  
 And hopes the hero wins,  
 The villain gets his due-  
 All this and so much more  
 Depends on your  
 Giving us the sky.

## III

So grant me this  
 Request I make of you  
 For all the things that live  
 In seas and mountains high  
 And in valleys green  
 And on rolling plains  
 Beneath Sahara's sands.

## IV

And now  
 We'll say goodbye  
 To the cool  
 Night air,  
 To the heaven full  
 Of the star's last light  
 Falling free.

Goodbye,  
 To moonlit waves  
 That the sun knows not  
 But that would not be  
 Without his love.

*After her song, Angelina begins picking flowers, a task that takes her offstage right. Lights come up very faintly on Pablito's raft which has drifted to the shore up center right with Bernard and Pablito having fallen asleep. A third shape represents Beamy: it is cylindrical, shiny, dark gray, and about 30 inches long and nine inches in diameter. The outer surface suggests many layers of string-like covering. Actually, it is a cocoon, and Beamy is inside undergoing transformation into a butterfly. The seductive, dreamlike,*

*elusive figure of Rosa appears for a few moments. Her white dress is loosely fitting and thin. When Bernard speaks, she disappears.*

BERNARD

(THE DISTANT SOUND OF MISTER DR. CROW OVERHEAD. BERNARD GROGGILY WAKES UP. HE LOOKS AROUND. SUDDENLY, HE IS ALARMED)....Pablito, Pablito! Wake up!

PABLITO

Wha...wha...What is it? The brown snake?

BERNARD

No, but.....

PABLITO

Is it the alligator?

BERNARD

No, but....

PABLITO

(REARRANGING HIS HEAD) I was dreaming of an absolutely lovely frog. Maybe she's still around. Excuse me. (TRIES TO GO BACK TO SLEEP)

BERNARD

(SHAKING PABLITO'S SHOULDER) It's Beamy.

PABLITO

It's discreet I am. You and she carry on, and I won't even remember you told me (PABLITO BEGINS HUMMING "LOST ONCE AGAIN.")

BERNARD

Beamy's gone...(PABLITO IS ALREADY COMFORTABLE IN HIS DREAM BERNARD SHAKES HIM AGAIN. PABLITO SITS UP.)

PABLITO

You turned that scrumptious frog into a nasty old toad.

BERNARD

I'm sorry. I really am. But Beamy's gone!

PABLITO

(QUICKLY SITS UP) What? Fallen overboard? (RUSHES TO EDGE OF RAFT SEARCHES WATER)

BERNARD

No. At least I don't think so. I woke up and she wasn't here.

PABLITO

Maybe she went ashore to...you know...use the bathroom.

BERNARD

But that's dangerous.

PABLITO

Aye, that it is, but....

BERNARD

(INTERRUPTING) I'm going to find her.

PABLITO

(PUTS A HAND ON BERNARD'S SHOULDER) Them Mister Brown Snakes find little birds as tasty as caterpillars. And they're fast, very fast. I think we should just wait here for a little while—Please, Bernie.

BERNARD

A little while—Then I'm going.

PABLITO

If you go, I have to go.... I know what to listen for on the shore. You don't.

BERNARD

Beamy didn't worry about that when she saved my life.

PABLITO

If you go, I go. Period.

BERNARD

It's not fair.

PABLITO

Grow up, Bernard. If you have to risk your life to save your friend, that's one thing. To risk your life for tile sake of making a show is stupid....no offense intended.

BERNARD

(ANGRILY) You have no right to say those things! (BEGINS TO LEAVE RAFT. PABLITO RUSHES TO STOP HIM BUT STUMBLES OVER BEAMY'S COCOON AND FALLS ONTO BERNARD.)

BERNARD

Get away. Get away!

PABLITO

(LOOKS AROUND, SPOTS BEAMY'S COCOON) What is that?

BERNARD

I...I don't know....Look, there's her bag!

PABLITO

(INSPECTS THE COCOON) I've never seen anything like it.....I'm afraid, Bernard.

BERNARD

What? You know about the shore and the river. What is it?

PABLITO

I...I don't know for certain....but I think it might be....your friend.

BERNARD

Beamy? How could that thing be Beamy?

PABLITO

I don't know how....but I think it might be. Things happen when someone dies. I don't know....Beamy was very sick, Amigo.

BERNARD

No. It's impossible. She was just with us....Where are we? How lone had I been sleeping?

PABLITO

I think that we all fell asleep and slept all night. During that night. Beamy passed away.

BERNARD

But how did she get all that stuff-those threads around herself. (IN DENIAL) Maybe whatever that is not Beamy at all. Maybe she went off (POINTS TO THE BANK)

looking for some plant or other. I think we should search for her instead of standing here like a couple of boobs. (STARTS TO EXIT)

PABLITO

(GRABBING BERNARD) Wait. Bernie, wait! There's no sense in running around like that. (PAUSE) Beamy's not out there. She's right here. She knew....She asked you to care for her remains.

BERNARD

She...(SITS DOWN) Maybe you're right.... It's just that I owe everything to her....She risked her life for me back there with the man with the hat...And she was my friend.

PABLITO

And you should never forget that. Each of us has a great value in the world. Often we tend to focus more and more on one problem and to forget about our great value.

BERNARD

Are you talking about Beamy?

PABLITO

Beamy didn't know who or what she was. Yet she had great value.

BERNARD

And what was that?

PABLITO

She saved your life.

BERNARD

But there's no great value to my life. I'm not worth the dust on a shoe.

PABLITO

So Beamy's enormous effort was....useless?

BERNARD

I.. I hadn't thought of it that way.

PABLITO

She risked everything. The gift that she made of your life—to you....was very probably the most precious thing she has ever given anyone. And now you have no right to look down your nose at yourself.

BERNARD

(DEFENSIVELY) I wasn't looking down my nose at myself.

PABLITO

You said that your life wasn't worth the dust on a shoe.

BERNARD

(IRRITATED) Okay, okay.....Did you.....ever feel like I do—about yourself, I mean.

PABLITO

Oh yes, my friend.

BERNARD

(CHALLENGING) Like when?

PABLITO

Like when I used to be a fish. I felt something slowing me down when I was swimming. I finally asked my friend the catfish to look and see if he could take off anything that might have attached itself to my body—When you're a fish, you can't really see all parts of your body, don't you know.....Anyway, he looked and he said some feet were growing out of

my stomach. At first, I thought he was joking. When I realized it was true, I was scared to death! Then, I felt ashamed and wanted to be completely alone. I wanted to die. I was terrified that someone was taking over my body. I couldn't think of anything but my problem, which turned out not to be a problem at all. Which I realized when I saw my first female frog. It...was....wonderful!

BERNARD

I know about that. I met the most wonderful sparrow in the world. But I.....(BERNARD HALTS.)

PABLITO

(REACHING OUT TO BERNARD) What is it, my friend?

BERNARD

(TURNING AWAY) Nothing.

PABLITO

I might not be smart, but I listen very well.

BERNARD

You're a snoop. That's what you are. You ought to mind your own business. (PABLITO IS SILENT, WAITING) Okay, okay. So I'm a bird, but I can't fly—Are you happy now?.....Maybe I'm changing into a frog, too. But I don't think so. And I doubt that I'd be very happy if I were.

PABLITO

Have you found out what you can do very well?

BERNARD

No.

PABLITO

No? Not one thing?....Everyone alive can do one and only one thing very well. To spend a lot of time on the rest is like turning yourself into junk".

BERNARD

(HALF UNDER HIS BREATH) Maybe.

PABLITO

And what's that?

BERNARD

(IMPATIENTLY) Sing—sing, sing, sing. So what? I can't fly. I'm a bird, but I can't fly so I'm a freak—a singing freak. What I wouldn't give to be able to soar high and free in the sky! (DISTANT SOUNDS OF "CAW, CAW, CAW")

PABLITO

A singing freak—My goodness, what a load of nonsense. I hope it's not a frog you turn into—..You've got the makings of an excellent snake. Just wait for your tongue to get skinny and you're in business-A singing freak. Well, I think you might be right about that, but no self-respecting song would let itself come out of that nasty beak of yours.

BERNARD

Do you think I'm lying?

PABLITO

You say you can sing. I haven't heard you do anything but complain.

BERNARD

I can sing. But not to prove something to a stupid frog. You want to hear a song? Well you sing it.

PABLITO

You really are pathetic, you know. Couldn't you sing for Beamy, at least We don't have much time It's morning and I expect that that guy with the hat is trying to get that lazy dog of his to wake up so they can get in some kind of automatic boat and come after us...But first, we should have some ceremony for Beamy. She was your friend. But if you're all stuffy and say no, then I'll sing.

BERNARD

No. It's not for you to do...This is different. I'll sing, but please don't comment on it one way or the other.

PABLITO

Agreed.

BERNARD

What...What do I do? I don't know about...ceremonies.

PABLITO

(LIFTS BEAMY'S COCOON TO A SMALL ELEVATION SUCH AS A ROCK AND SEEMINGLY PRAYS SILENTLY.) like this. I am praying silently...Start singing when you're ready.

*AS BERNARD BEGINS TO SING, THE SOUND OF AN OUTBOARD MOTOR IS HEARD VERY FAINTLY AT A GREAT DISTANCE. ANGELINA ENTERS FROM STAGE RIGHT WHEN SHE HEARS THE SINGING.*

**If Ever**

If ever I find her up there in the blue blue  
I'll dive and I'll climb high-  
It all would come true.

PABLITO (JUMPS BACK, INTERRUPTS BERNARD) What...(RUBS HIS EYES; SEES ANGELINA)What ho? Is that you, Beamy?

ANGELINA

No. My name is Angelina. I live there. (MOTIONS TO HER CABIN, OFFERS PABLITO HER HAND, AND LOOKS AT BERNARD) I'm sorry. I didn't mean to interrupt you...(BERNARD DOESN'T RESPOND BUT IS IRRITATED. SHE TURNS TO PABLITO WHO IS SPEAKING.)

PABLITO

I'm Pablito, currently a frog. (THEY SHAKE HANDS.) You look exactly like a (CROSSES HIMSELF) man, but men don't speak. At least not to animals.

ANGELINA

Ha! Some do. (BERNARD WAKES UP AND LISTENS, FASCINATED) I am a female man, if you will, a "woman." And actually, I live here because other men and women saw

me talking to animals. They said I was crazy and locked me up in a terrible place where I almost forgot who I was.

BERNARD

Why did they do that?

ANGELINA

Do you know any men or women?

BERNARD

Yes. One. He blew a magic whistle and I lost my judgment. If it hadn't been for Beamy, I could not have resisted.

ANGELINA

(VISIBLY SHAKEN) A magic whistle—did he have a dog with him?

BERNARD

Yes. A rather stupid dog—but very dangerous.

ANGELINA

(SHE IS SO SURPRISED THAT SHE SITS DOWN TO AVOID FALLING DOWN.)  
Toolie!

BERNARD

Yes. That's what Beamy called him. Do you know this guy with the silly hat?

ANGELINA

Yes—Once I was very much in love with him. In ways, he was wonderful and kind. But too clever for his own good. I'm afraid he loved outsmarting people more than he loved me.

PABLITO

You are still in love with him, no?

ANGELINA

(NERVOUSLY) No—I—no.

PABLITO

Two "no's" make a "yes", Senorita.

ANGELINA

(SLIGHTLY STIFFY) The frogs I know are gentlemen.

PABLITO

(PUTS A GENTLE HAND TO HIS HEART IN APOLOGY, ATTEMPTS TO CHANGE TOPIC OUT OF COURTESY.) You are an exceptionally gracious human. Why would another human want to lock you up?

ANGELINA

There are some humans who give a lot of money and time and effort to lock other humans up. Toolie was not a bad man, but he was something of a clever fool who tried to print money. Anyway, they locked him up and I became very sad. All of the animals I sang for and talked to every day visited me to cheer me up. They even brought a crow, somber and totally cynical: he offered to turn me into a female crow so I could fly in to see Toolie when I wanted. But he said that only he could turn me back into a human. So I said no. The neighbors saw me talking to birds, and especially to the crow. They called the police, and the police called the doctors, and the doctors locked me up—Just like Toolie. (IN THE DISTANCE, THE SOUND OF A MOTORBOAT GETS FAINTER AND THEN GRADUALLY STRONGER. PABLITO IS AWARE OF IT.)

One morning, however, I was awakened by a small mouse named Elite. She was whispering into my ear. She was worried, very worried. She said that Andrew McMouse had been caught by the hospital people. It seems that he used to sing in the morning to bring up the sun. She was afraid that if no one sang, the sun would get as lonely as she was and stop rising, and she just couldn't bear that. She said she would teach me her friend's song, but that we both had to leave that awful place. She was a very clever mouse and hopped into the pocket of a white lab coat that was hanging nearby. I saw what she had in mind, and I put on the coat and slowly walked out. The guard was half- sleeping, so I said as I passed, 'You had better wake up before all of those crazies get out of this hospital and your name will be mud.' He fell all over himself as he unlocked the gate. I walked for about 300 yards past the entrance, threw the coat down and then walked the other way for about ten hours. I found a deserted place on the river (MOTIONS TO HER DWELLING) and moved in. That was about three years ago. I've been here since. (PAUSE. PABLITO PUTS HIS EAR TO THE WATER. ANGELINA LOOKS AT BERNARD) I don't believe we've met.

BERNARD

Bernard—My friends call me "Bernie".

ANGELINA

Bernie, I heard you from up there. (MOTIONS OFFSTAGE) You sing very, very well— (BERNARD LOOKS DOWN.) —Did I say something to offend you?

PABLITO

He's sensitive about his singing.

BERNARD

(SHARPLY) That's enough, Pablito.

ANGELINA

We're all sensitive about something, Pablito.

PABLITO

Of course, we are. That's why—Senor Toolie—..

ANGELINA

(INTERRUPTING) Pablito, that's enough!—I do not wish to talk about Senor Toolie.

PABLITO

Neither does Bernard. But I think both of you will soon have no choice. (MOTIONS TO BOTORBOAT) I suggest that we get on our rafts and travel next to that tall grass by the shore. (ANGELINA TAKES A TELESCOPE FROM HER POCKER, EXTENDS IT. AND LOOKS TOWARD THE WATER.)

ANGELINA

Oh, my god. There is a dog-You could be right-(SHE IS SHAKEN.) ...Yes-It's him—I can't just leave— but—No-I-I-I can't stay. Toolie would destroy my life here-I know he would. He wouldn't want to, but he would—How did he find you? If he stops here and goes into the cabin, he will know I was here. And who knows who he will tell.

BERNARD

It's me he's after. I'll lead him away from the cabin and away from you.

PABLITO

That's not the way we do things.

BERNARD

(PICKING UP BEAMY'S COCOON) Making a show of risking your life is cheap and tawdry, Pablito. Maybe I'll find you later. (SEES ANGELINA ON HER RAFT) The woman is ready to leave. Go with her...

PABLITO

I.I...(MOTORBOAT GETS CLOSER. A COUPLE OF BARKS FROM NOSE IS HEARD IN THE DISTANCE.)

BERNARD

Please! No argument. You must know someplace you can go that's safe. You must!

PABLITO

(CROSSING TO EXIT) Where will we find you?

BERNARD

I'll show up.

PABLITO

You're a very good man, Senor Bernard. Adios. (EMBRACES BERNARD BRIEFLY BUT WARMLY AND THEN EXITS)

END OF SCENE ELEVEN

## Scene Twelve

*CARRYING BEAMY'S COCOON, BERNARD SPRINKLES SOME OF BEAMY'S POWDER AROUND HIMSELF AND HIDES STAGE RIGHT, AWAY FROM THE CABIN. THE SOUND OF THE MOTORBOAT QUICKLY GETS VERY LOUD AND STOPS, AND WE HEAR NOSE BARKING ENTHUSIASTICALLY. THAT DOG LOPES ONTO THE STAGE FOLLOWED BY TOOLIE.*

TOOLIE

So you think that they were around here?

NOSE

(ANSWERS WITH AN ENTHUSIASTIC YELP) Haruup!

*TOOLIE POKES AROUND THE STAGE AND IS SOMEWHAT DISAPPOINTED. THEN NOSE GOES AROUND TO THE BACK OF THE HUT AS TOOUE EXITS UPRIGHT, POKING AROUND FOR SOME EVIDENCE OF BERNARD. WE HEAR NOSE MOVING AROUND THE CABIN, CREATING WHAT MUST BE HAVOC. AT ONE POINT, HE LETS OUT A HOWL OF GREAT FRIGHT AND FEAR. WHEN NOSE ENTERS, HIS FACE IS COVERED WITH FLOUR AND HE HAS, BETWEEN HIS TEETH, ANGELINA'S SCARF WITH A METAL PIN IN THE SHAPE OF AN ELEPHANT. BOTH OF THESE OBJECTS WERE GIFTS FROM TOOLIE. HE SETS THEM DOWN, PUTS A FEW YARDS BETWEEN HIMSELF AND THE HOUSE AND BEGINS BARKING URGENTLY AND THEN SNEEZING. SOMETHING IN THE CABIN HAS FRIGHTENED HIM. TOOLIE ENTERS FROM UP RIGHT.*

TOOLIE

What is it? Good god, what have you been into? They're gonna call the police, which is exactly what I don't need. Let's get out of here. (CROSSES TO EXIT. NOSE BARKS PICKS UP THE SCARF WITH HIS TEETH, TAKES A FEW STEPS AND HALTS.) Well, what is it now? Drop that rag and come on....(NOSE BACKS AWAY FROM HIM.) Nose, have you gone crazy? Let me see that—(EXAMINES SCARF) It looks like one I gave Angelina four years ago. No, it can't be. (PUTS IT TO HIS NOSE TO SMELL IT.) Oh my god! (BURIES HIS FACE IN IT TO SMELL IT AGAIN, NOTICES PEN.) The elephant! Yes, it is hers. (HE ENTERS CABIN THROUGH FRONT DOOR, RE-ENTERS STAGE AFTER A FEW MOMENTS.) There a pot of hot water over some ashes. She left less than an hour ago. (EMBRACING NOSE) Oh Nose, forgive me for ever thinking of the dog pound for you. (NOSE RESPONDS WITH A WARM BARK AND A FEW QUICK PANTS.) Let's see if we can find a scent or some footprints—(NOSE BEGINS SNIFFING, STARTS SNEEZING AGAIN. TOOLIE FINDS PRINTS NEAR THE RIVER'S EDGE.) We're almost there—Angelina!—I can't believe it—Here—it looks like there were a few animals with her. She must be in a boat—Let's go. Nose. This just might be the best day in my life. (TOOLIE AND NOSE EXIT FOR THE BOAT, AND WE HEAR A MOTOR START UP.)

BERNARD

Wow! That was a close call.

ELLIE

(ELLIE THE MOUSE APPEARS IN THE DOORWAY OF THE CABIN WEARING A SHEET AND CARRYING A SMALL BAG. SHE LOOKS SPOOKY.) Hoooh, hoooh. I will catch you and lock you in my magic box if you don't fly away right now!

BERNARD

(FRIGHTENED) Who are you?

ELLIE

(TAKING OFF SHEET, REVEALING FORTUNE-TELLER DRESS) Don't bother about that—You must fly away. It's your fault that that terrible animal just broke up our house. His master was looking for you. Fly away!

BERNARD

How do you know that How?

ELLIE

Sometimes I can see things—Usually I can see them only if someone asks.

BERNARD

What else can you see about me?

ELLIE

(CLOSES HER EYES, MEDITATES) I can see—.Changes-Things change when you come around.

BERNARD

What kind of changes?

ELLIE

Serious changes. Like with Angelina—She won't be able to live here anymore. I love her dearly, and I would like nothing better than to be here with her. But I won't. In an instant, everything changes.

BERNARD

Is it my fault?—I didn't want to hurt her.

ELLIE

No. (SEES HIS SINCERITY) It's not your fault. Not at all. Possibly, it's your destiny. Do you want me to read your aura?

BERNARD

Yes—I guess so. I don't understand exactly what an aura is—.What do I have to do?

ELLIE

Sit down and relax.....(TAKES A CRYSTAL BALL OUT OF HER BAG)—Don't think about anything—just gaze into the crystal ball with me—That's it—(LOOKING DEEPLY INTO BALL) I see a lot of shadows—and I see a figure among the shadows—Maybe it's you—Maybe it's someone else. You keep trying and trying but you can't—

BERNARD

(INTERRUPTING SHARPLY) No!

ELLIE

(SURPRISED AT HAVING BEEN INTERRUPTED) What?

BERNARD

(NERVOUSLY) No reading of auras—I changed my mind.

ELLIE

—you have very deep feelings, you are very loyal, you are trustworthy, but your danger lies in attempting what you cannot do—

BERNARD

I said stop!

ELLIE

If you didn't want the answer, you shouldn't have asked the question—.

BERNARD

I said I changed my mind—I'm sorry.

ELLIE

(PUTTING THE CRYSTAL BALL AWAY) There's nothing to be sorry for—A first reading is always very general—.It is not until you ask the specific question that I can see the specific answer—If I can see it at all.

BERNARD

Does the other person know the answer when he asks you the question?

ELLIE

Deep inside he or she knows. But often he will not know that he knows. Sometimes he will search his whole life for an answer that was right in front of him all the time. Like you...

BERNARD

What about me?

ELLIE

Your spirit can learn to fly as high as the sun—.

THERE IS A DISTANT CRY OF "CAW, CAW, CAW."

BERNARD

But my body can't—

ELLIE

No one can do everything. It's wrong to expect that of yourself.

BERNARD

What kind of animal are you? Can you fly?

ELLIE

A mouse. No. I scurry about here and there.

BERNARD

So no one expects you to fly.

ELLIE

When you look for things to worry about, you certainly will find them—What are you carrying?

BERNARD

I thought you'd know.

ELLIE

You didn't ask about it.

BERNARD

It's my friend—She's—dead—At least I think it's my friend and I think she passed away last night when we were on a raft in the river.

ELLIE

She died just before dawn?

BERNARD

I—I think so. Does that make any difference?

ELLIE

Dawn comes before the sun, who never gets tired of chasing her. She is a helpful spirit, getting things right before the sun comes burning away the magic of the shadows. Your friend is in good hands, I'm sure—Are you taking her somewhere?

BERNARD

Yes. To her homeland—very far away.

ELLIE

And you—Is that where you're going on your journey?

BERNARD

No. But my destination is near her homeland. Near where the river becomes the sea.

ELLIE

My goodness, but that is very, very far away. I went there once-on a riverboat Why don't you leave her here—There is very little chance that you'll ever make it. With the burden other, there's no chance.

BERNARD

She's no burden. And there is no choice—I made a promise.

ELLIE

I don't know even know your name, but if I can help you in any way, don't hesitate to ask—Do you want to ask about—..?

BERNARD

Her name was "Beamy." But no. She saved my life. There is nothing more I need to know.

ELLIE

Very well.

BERNARD

Well, there is one thing you can do and then I must be on my way—And my name is Bernard.

ELLIE

Glad to meet you. I'm Ellie. (THEY SHAKE HANDS.) And what might that be?

BERNARD

My friend, Pablito, said that a ceremony should be conducted for Beamy. We had started to sing—but I don't really know what else to do.

ELLIE

I know about ceremonies— You say you can sing?

BERNARD

Yes—.A little.

ELLIE

That makes it much easier. We'll sing a song together, and that song will be our prayer—  
and our ceremony.

BERNARD

Thank you very much. Is there somewhere special we should go?

ELLIE

Wherever you are at a particular moment *is* very special. Here and now are special: Angelina helped the sun to rise, and because of that, we can see the beautiful distance of the water, the heavy clouds already gathering. (SHE GETS A CARDBOARD BOX.) Here, she will be comfortable here. (BERNARD SETS BEAMY TO REST ON THE BOX. ELLIE STARTS TO SING AFTER MEDITATING A FEW MOMENTS.)

### **Requiem for Beamy**

Music and Lyrics by Clyde Coreil © 1999

(Ellie)

Dawn has come  
for her, my friend.  
You must let her go,  
it's ended.

Precious time gone by  
will be no more,  
so you must turn  
and part

(Bernard)

I remember so well,  
when I dreamed  
I would fly away  
in skies that were free,  
when all that I'd need  
were wind in my wings  
and friends in the air.

Then faces turned  
and I knew  
no one and all alone,  
no hope, no dreams-  
unexpectedly I  
found a friend on the  
road who asked for no  
favours but gave me

with no thought  
 that most precious of gifts-  
 Love, not like lovers know  
 as they try to hold  
 what can never be owned-  
 Love, that comes naturally,  
 giving every day  
 just wherever you are-  
 Love, most magnificent  
 grace, one person can  
 light a nightful of stars  
 in endless rivers of fantasies.

Close your eyes  
 and see the suns  
 illumined in the sparkling  
 purples, rose, red and gold  
 of here and now and  
 in her voice and  
 in the silence of her mind  
 opening doors to take you  
 through millions of yesterdays-  
 tomorrow's wonders  
 in a light deep inside yourself  
 and others nearby.

We see that we are  
 all only but one  
 a-lost in this world,  
 a-needing the touch  
 of friends in the night  
 to find out which road  
 we now have to take.

(Ellie)

Dawn has come  
 for her, my friend.  
 You must let her go,  
 it's ended.

Precious time gone by  
 will be no more,  
 so you must turn  
 and part.

BERNARD

(AFTER A PAUSE) Is the ceremony finished?

ELLIE

Yes. Her spirit is at rest.

BERNARD

(BERNARD LIFTS THE COCOON. WE SEE THAT HE IS TIRED AND THAT HE IS PUSHING HIMSELF.) I know you want me to leave her, but I can't.

ELLIE

I have dug a comfortable hole for myself in the long hill beside the river. I could make a special niche for her—You'll never make it all the way down the river. You aren't strong enough—Alone—I doubt it—but maybe.—

BERNARD

(INTERRUPTING) I'm very young, but I know that my life is over, finished. What's left belongs to the promise I made to her—.(STOPS)

ELLIE

There's something else—Isn't there?—Another promise maybe?

BERNARD

How did you know?—...It's none of your business.

ELLIE

Sometimes seeing things that people don't want to see w my business....(BERNARD IS SILENT. SHE SPEAKS AS A FRIEND.) Every part of life is made of promises—To others, to ourselves, to those who have gone before, to those who will come later.—What other promise were you thinking of just now?

BERNARD

I think it's best if we say goodbye before we start arguing. Thanks for the ceremony. (STARTS TO EXIT)

ELLIE

There was another promise, wasn't there?

BERNARD

(PAUSE, WITH RESIGNATION) Yes—So long ago that it seems forever—

ELLIE

(CLOSING HER EYES) You were in love with her—Not her (MOTIONS TOWARD BEAMY) —Your love is far away.

BERNARD

In the South by now. I promised to get to her...but I can't. I don't know where to go or how to get there. (BERNARD STARTS TO LEAVE BECAUSE HE DOESN'T WANT ELLIE TO SEE HIM BECOME EMOTIONAL.)

ELLIE

Bernard—wait—I understand—I'll go with you—

BERNARD

You have commitments here.

ELLIE

Angelina's a smart lady. She won't come back here. At least not soon. I hate being lonely more than anything. And I think I like you.

BERNARD

Why? What is there to like?

ELLIE

(A BIT IMPATIENTLY) Maybe you'll grow up one day. There might be more to like then—Frankly, I don't know why I'd go with you. You're so selfish and grumpy. Like a big wart on the behind. But I don't want to see you hurt. (BERNARD RESUMES HIS CROSS TO EXIT.) Will you try to walk to the South?—It would take you twenty lifetimes or more—I've got a raft. There's some food on it. Enough for both of us.

BERNARD

I—I can't do it.

ELLIE

Do what?

BERNARD

Take you with me. It's very, very kind of you. But you're settled here. Angelina's house—your place on the long hill. If—when she does come back, it would be wrong for you not to be here. You know I'm right. Don't make me convince you. I don't have the energy.

ELLIE

(PAUSE) Okay—but take my raft—I can put another one together with no difficulty—It's terribly impolite to refuse. (BERNARD NODS AGREEMENT ) It's tied right around that bend. I'll help you off.

BERNARD

No. Let's say goodbye here.

ELLIE

(AFTER GIVING HIM A LONG, EMOTIONAL HUG.) May the spirit of the dawn look after you and keep you well, Bernard. When you reach Beamy's homeland, think of me. And when you reach your true love, think of me. I'll be there. (ELLIE SINGS TO MELODY OF "REQUIEM FOR BEAMY" AS BERNARD EXITS.)

Dawn has touched

Your heart, I see.

You will find

Your dream, I pray.

Precious time gone by

Might be once more;

But now, the sky

Is dark.

*THE SOUND OF DR. CROW'S "CAW, CAW, CAW" A FEW MOMENTS LATER CLOSES THE SCENE.*

END OF SCENE TWELVE

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR  
Scene Thirteen

*THE MOURNFUL CRY OF A HOUND DOG IN PAIN IS HEARD IN THE DISTANCE. LIGHTNING FLASHES ACROSS THE STAGE FOLLOWED BY THUNDER. ANGELINA AND PABLITO ENTER RUNNING FROM THE RIVER. SHE EXTENDS A SHEET OF PLASTIC TO COVER PABLITO, WHO WANTS TO FROLIC IN THE RAIN.*

ANGELINA

No, Pablito. I know you love the rain, but the lightning sees you when you hop around and is terribly accurate with the bolts he throws down. That's why we had to come in off the water.

PABLITO

You're very kind and all, but I don't like being told what to do. Especially by someone who doesn't know what she's doing or where she's going.

ANGELINA

I don't see any chains and locks. If you want to leave, leave. But you are like my child. If you stay, I'll say things like that today, and I'll say them tomorrow.

PABLITO

Okay, okay. But god do I like the rain and the air when it is drenched like it is now. (IN THE DISTANCE, WE HEAR "CAW, CAW, CAW." AND FROM THE OTHER DIRECTION, THE FAINT, MOURNFUL HOWL OF NOSE.)

ANGELINA

Listen! Do you hear that?

PABLITO

That's my friend, Dr. Crow. Don't pay him any mind and he won't be able to make any trouble.

ANGELINA

No, I mean the dog. It sounded like a dog in pain and misery.

PABLITO

(LISTENS) Sorry, Amiga. All I hear is the beautiful rain.

ANGELINA

(FAINT HOWLING SOUND AGAIN) There! You must have heard it.

PABLITO

Yes. (POINTS OFFSTAGE LEFT) From over there.

ANGELINA

(REFERRING TO SHEET OF PLASTIC) You keep this—I've got to see if I can help.

PABLITO

What about Mr. Lightning? Besides, you'll get drenched. My skin was made for water.

ANGELINA

You're right. But see what it is and come back quickly. Please.

PABLITO

(HAPPILY) Con mucho gusto, Senorita. (AS PABLITO EXITS, THERE IS A BRIGHT BOLT OF LIGHTNING THAT BRINGS DOWN THE LIGHTS IMMEDIATELY. THIS IS FOLLOWED BY A THUNDEROUS CRASH OF THUNDER.)

END OF SCENE THIRTEEN

## Scene Fourteen

*DOWNSTAGE. NOSE IS IN AGONY. HE HAS INADVERTENTLY STEPPED ON A TRAP FOR FUR-BEARING ANIMALS AND IS UNABLE TO FREE HIMSELF. UPSTAGE IS THE RIVER. PABLITO RUSHES IN AND STOPS WHEN HE SEES NOSE.*

PABLITO

Cayyai, yai. Amigo, you are in serious trouble, verdad?

NOSE

Yes. But I'm afraid that you can't help me. The trap is very strong. I'm so thirsty. I have been trying to drink the rain, but it's not enough.

PABLITO

(FASHIONING CUP OUT OF BIG LEAVES, HE GOES TO THE RIVER AND BRINGS BACK SOME WATER. NOSE DRINKS.) How long have you been here like this?

NOSE

A week.—Two weeks. It seems like forever—There was a terrible storm.

PABLITO

Did your owner do this?

NOSE

Oh, no. My owner is looking for a woman. I was trying to find her for him when it started raining harder and harder with powerful winds, and I couldn't smell anymore—.I got lost. I don't know where he is now. He's a very good master, and I love him dearly. If he knew where I was, he'd do anything to get me out of here—.Have you seen a man around here by any chance?

PABLITO

A man? No. But I am in the company of a woman—a woman who is unlike any you can imagine. She talks to animals. Should I ask her to help you?

NOSE

(INTERESTED DESPITE AGONIZING PAIN) Does she sing and is her spirit beautiful?

PABLITO

Yes. As beautiful as the rainbow.—But we have a small problem. It was you who messed up her home, and it was your master she was so afraid of that she left a lovely life hidden on the river bank. Now she doesn't know where she is going. For me, that's the way I always live. But for her, she loves her home and now doesn't have one.

NOSE

Why doesn't she go back. My master wouldn't hurt her.

PABLITO

That'd be Toolie. She knows he wouldn't want to hurt her, but it seems that he's a....pardon the expression... "fool" and would wind up revealing her house to those who locked her up because they thought she was crazy because she talked to animals—.I will get her no matter what because you need help—but please understand.

NOSE

Tell her what you found. Tell her that my master is crazy in love with her even after all this time. Tell her all that, but if she is still afraid of my master, tell her to forget about me and him.

PABLITO

But you need help badly.

NOSE

My master will find me. I know he will.

PABLITO

(SALUTING NOSE) Aye, aye, capitan.

END OF SCENE FOURTEEN

## Scene Fifteen

*ANOTHER PLACE NOT TOO FAR FROM THE KIVERBANK. DISHEVELED AND DIRTY, TOOLIE IS STUMBLING. HE IS DELIRIOUS WITH FEVER AND LONLINESS. HE CALLS OUT. THERE IS LIGHTNING AND THUNDER AND RAIN.*

TOOLIE

Nose! Nose—..Angelina! Angelina!—It hurts so much to go on alone. I'm burning up Fever. My boat. Where is my boat? The river. How can you lose a whole river? Nose! Nose!—What happens now? Lost in some god-forsaken snot-nosed dung-heap of a swamp. Do I lie down and begin to die? No one will even know that I'm dead, least of all, me. God, what would I give just to see Angelina once more? To hear her say my name. But that ain't gonna happen. Water. If I drink this foul brew, I'll be dead in 12 hours or less. But god, I'm thirsty.

DR. CROW

(ENTERS, FOLDING HIS CAPE AS THOUGH HE HAD JUST DESCENDED FROM A TREE.) Good afternoon. I've been watching you.

TOOLIE

Who are you? A buzzard? Am I talking to a buzzard? Ha. Angelina would be proud of me talking to a dove or a fox....but a buzzard?

DR. CROW

(IRRITATED) I am not a buzzard—I am Dr. Crow. I would be pleased to make your acquaintance—.

TOOLIE

Well, I wouldn't. Why don't you have a little decency and fly back to your tree-top and wait for me to die like a good buzzard.

DR. CROW

I told you that I am not a buzzard—but you are a very sick man.

TOOLIE

Not a buzzard, a fortune teller.

DR. CROW

I can help you—I am not called Doctor Crow without reason. Although my degree is in metaphysics, not medicine.

TOOLIE

And what might be your fee. Doctor Crow?

DR. CROW

Who is this—"Angelina?" (TOOLIE BECOMES ANGRY AND SILENT).—Never mind—I would simply inscribe your name in my "Book of Favors" (WHICH HE REMOVES FROM HIS CAPE) and when I need something, I will ask.

TOOLIE

And would I have a choice? (COUGH, COUGH) As though that makes any difference.

DR. CROW

Oh, yes. You would always have the option of saying no. I find, however, that most people want to do what's right. If you're not one of them, then it's my loss.

TOOLIE

What would I have to do?

DR. CROW

Just lie down and sleep. I will do the rest. When you wake up, you won't even remember me. But it will be written here. (POINTS TO BOOK OF FAVORS, AND THEN HOLDS UP THE SILVER MEDALLION AND TURNS IT IN A MANNER VAGUELY REMINISCENT OF A HYPNOTIST. THIS MAKES TOOLIE GROGGY)

TOOLIE

(FORCING HIMSELF TO WAKEFULNESS) No. No one does something for nothing except the angels—And you ain't no angel, Private Buzzard.

DR. CROW

(REACTING TO INSULT) Not Buzzard-Doctor Crow—Do you prefer to die here and have your ghost wander this stinking swamp forever?

TOOLIE

You go fool some innocent young maidens. You don't con Toolie, even if he is half-dead and out of his mind and shaking with fever. Got it, Buzzard?

*ENRAGED, DR. CROW LIFTS HIS ARMS AND ANOTHER BLINDING LIGHTNING BOLT FOLLOWED BY THUNDER ENDS THE SCENE.*

END OF SCENE FIFTEEN

## Scene Sixteen

*THE SUN IS ABOUT TO RISE. BERNARD IS SLUMPED OVER THE FALLEN BRANCH OF A TREE. THE STORM HAS DRIVEN HIM ASHORE HE LOOKS VERY TIRED AND WET WHEN HE COMES AROUND AFTER A FEW MOMENTS. HE PANICS WHEN HE FINDS THAT THE COCOON IS GONE.*

## BERNARD

How long have I been unconscious? It seems like days. Where is Beamy? Oh, no. I've let her remains get lost among all of these stumps and bushes. Oh god, what a wretch I am. Wait! (HE LOCATES THE COCOON AFTER SEARCHING FOR A FEW MOMENTS.) This looks like her—but it's so much lighter. Her body must have fallen out of all these strings. (HE CONTINUES TO LOOK FOR BEAMY'S BODY.) Can anyone be more miserable? Maybe she fell into the water! Yes. That's it! Maybe I can find her before something awful happens and I won't ever be able to keep my promise to her.

## DR. CROW

(STUDYING BERNARD, SLOWLY ENTERS) Well, what have we here? I stay away a week or two, and you fall apart—But then, birds weren't meant to be river rats, were they?—Or does that interest you? It would be challenging, but I think I could find a way.

## BERNARD

Don't you ever get tired? Why don't you quit bothering people?

## DR. CROW

Do you know how far a sparrow—a normal sparrow—can fly in a single day?—About 300 miles. Do you know how far such a sparrow can see from 100 feet up? About four miles. Did you know that, when times are hard, sparrows make high-pitched whistles that bounce off small branches and that they use the echo for avoiding branches and for catching insects—

## BERNARD

How do you know so much about sparrows?

## DR. CROW

(DODGING) I know about everything—The point is that you could find what you're looking for so, so much easier from up there than you can from down here.

## BERNARD

Why do you keep on trying to get us to change into something we're not? Why?

## DR. CROW

We all have to change. Why not into something we want to be? Almost always we change into things we don't want to be.

## BERNARD

I can sing.....I can, you know.

## DR. CROW

If you couldn't, I wouldn't be here. There would be nothing for my beautiful book, would there?—"Bernard Songbird, traded a song in order to keep two solemn promises—one to a friend, one to a lover." That's how the entry would read. You'd be sacrificing something for other people.

BERNARD

What's that all about, anyway? Why do you write those things in your stupid old book?

DR. CROW

(SEVERELY) It's not your business—.(BERNARD LOOKS AT HIM. DR. CROW'S VOICE IS UNEMOTIONAL BUT CRACKS A BIT AS HE SPEAKS.) I have no choice—(HE LEANS DOWN INTO BERNARD'S FACE.)—But I do understand the frailty of being alive and making decisions.

BERNARD

She wasn't my lover.

DR. CROW

Not that it makes any difference whatsoever—Or rather, it wouldn't if you had no song to trade—or if you were not interested—Which I do not believe is the case.

BERNARD

(ANGRY AND FRUSTRATED) I don't want to change. (ANGRILY BECAUSE HE IS BEING DRAWN TO DR. CROW'S BARGAIN.) I want you to leave. Now! Get out!

*DR. CROW FLASHES HIS OWN ANGER AS HE EXTENDS HIS CAPE OUT AND OVER HIS HEAD AND BACKS OFFSTAGE AS HE BRINGS HIS HANDS TOGETHER TO HIDE HIS FACE. BERNARD HALF-COLLAPSES AND PUTS HIS FACE IN HIS HANDS FOR A FEW MOMENTS. THEN HE SLOWLY COLLECTS HIMSELF, PICKS UP THE LIGHTEENED COCOON AND PUTS IT CAREFULLY IN HIS BAG. AS HE WALKS TO HIS RAFT, HE IS LOOKING AROUND FOR THE REMAINS OF BEAMY.*

BERNARD

Oh, Beamy, Beamy—Mornings used to bring some kind of new spirit. Now it seems that night and day are only beat-up and artificial——parts of a mask that misery wears to fool herself into thinking that everything is not.....utterly.— impoverished. (EXITS ON RAFT.)

END OF SCENE SIXTEEN

## Scene Seventeen

*BERTHA IS HANGING OUT A FEW RAGS TO DRY ON A LINE THAT IS SUSPENDED BETWEEN TREES. SHE IS PREGNANT AND HAS LOST THE GIRLISH CHARM AND BEAUTY THAT WAS HERS AT THE BEGINNING OF ACT ONE. HER HAIR IS IN ROLLERS COVERED BY A KERCHIEF. HER CHEAP DRESS AND APRON COMPLETE THE DEPRESSING IMAGE. A JOYLESS ELDER JOHN IS SITTING IN THE BACKGROUND, CHIN-IN-HAND, DEEP IN THOUGHT. BURTON SAUNTERS IN LOOKING AS THOUGH HE HAD NOT SLEPT THE NIGHT BEFORE.*

BURTON

Not a word. Please.

BERTHA

Oh come off it. Why do you even bother to come back? Why don't you simply move in with that girl? I'm serious. Her parents could not care less.

BURTON

I said, "Not a word."

BERTHA

(PAUSE) Those days are gone.

BURTON

What are you talking about?

BERTHA

Right after we got together, you could have told me to stand in the rain for three hours and I would have done it without even thinking of saying no. I trusted you. Completely. Now I know what a good-for-nothing lout you are. You lack everything a woman could possibly want in a man—So when you tell me to shut up, just know that it's like talking to a brick wall.

BURTON

Not you too. Everybody's hacked off and arguing. Everything's falling apart. This whole flock is going to hell. Now the elders are saying that we won't be able to get back here next fall—or maybe even get home in the spring.

BERTHA

Why not?

BURTON

Because there're no more of them fag singers—Ha!—The last one bought it yesterday when he was so fat that he couldn't get out of the way of one of those two-wheeled motors. The elders say that without someone to teach the songs to the young birds, we won't be able to find our way out of this swamp. I don't understand, but they swear it's true.

BERTHA

(TO THE THOUGHTFUL OLDER BIRD) Elder John,...Is there anything to that?  
ELDER JOHN (JARRED FROM HIS MEDITATIONS) To what? (BURTON EXITS WHEN HE SEES ELDER JOHN'S ATTENTION BEING DIRECTED HIS WAY.)

BERTHA

Burton here says that without any singers, the flock won't be able to migrate any more.

ELDER JOHN

I'm afraid he's right—It won't make much difference to me personally since I'm too old and weak to make the big flight north—.But the young birds born down here in the summer need to learn—so that they can teach the birds born up there in the spring—teach 'em all sorts of things, including what they are...and the sense of loyalty and responsibility—and sacrifice if necessary—Some folks don't know it, but those things are hidden inside the songs. This new generation will have songbirds in it, but they won't know what the songs are—It makes me sad to think of what will happen—It hurts to even talk about it.

BERTHA

What can we do?

ELDER JOHN

I don't know—I don't know if anyone knows.

BERTHA

(PUTS HER HANDS ON HER BELLY) So—these children will never learn the songs—or even hear them? (ELDER JOHN GOES TO CONSOLE HER.) That's horrible—(PUTS HER FACE IN HER HANDS)...Horrible! I hate this place now with all of the human beings and automobiles and smoke and guns to kill us for their entertainment. And we've forgotten how to do anything but beg those monsters for food. It wasn't like this before. (ELDER JOHN SEES BURTON APPROACHING AND EXITS.)

BURTON

Some guys were talking about leaving all of these bums. Start our own group. If you want to come with us—well, you can.

BERTHA

Have you found an even more decadent area?

BURTON

It's not big enough for the whole flock—but it might save us from making those absurd migrations.

BERTHA

They're not absurd. The elders spent a lot of time explaining the meaning of each part of them.—Where is this new paradise of yours?

BURTON

I'm not gonna tell you if you're not gonna come.

BERTHA

Oh, so it's down to that, is it.

BURTON

Okay, okay. It's about half an hour northwest from here—near the brown water. There're some human beings who live in metal houses they attach to their automobiles. They never leave. I mean some do, but others come. Food is no problem.

BERTHA

Thanks for telling me. But no. It sounds worse than here.—(SARCASTICALLY) And don't worry. I won't tell anyone.

BURTON

Thanks. The other guys are leaving today.

BERTHA

"The other guys"—(WITH A GLIMMER OF HOPE FOR THEIR RELATIONSHIP)  
Does that mean you're not going?—Because I won't go?

BURTON

(EMBARRASSED, LONG PAUSE BEFORE SPEAKING) No—I—I gave my word.

BERTHA

I see. And noble guys keep their word—.(NO RESPONSE FROM BURTON)-Goodbye,  
then. I do hope that I never see you again.

BURTON

It's okay?—I mean the kids when they come and all—

BERTHA

Just do me a great big favor and don't come back no matter what, okay?

*BURTON IS IRRITATED AND RUNS OFFSTAGE AS HE TAKES OFF. BERTHA SITS  
AND STARTS TO CRY AS THE SCENE ENDS.*

END OF SCENE SEVENTEEN

## Scene Eighteen

*NOSE IS UNCONSCIOUS, STILL ATTACHED TO THE TRAP. PABLITO AND ANGELINA ENTER FROM UPSTAGE RIGHT. PABLITO LEADS THE WAY AND GETS TO THE UNCONSCIOUS NOSE.*

ANGELINA

He isn't-dead? Is he?

PABLITO

(PUTS HIS EAR TO NOSE'S CHEST) No. Senorita.

ANGELINA

(SHAKING HIS HEAD GENTLY AND TALKING TO HIM) Nose—Nose! It's Angelina. Can you hear me? (NOSE ANSWERS "YES" GROGGILY AND VERY WEAKLY.) We are going to take you out of the trap. It might hurt, but we're trying to help you. If you understand, nod your head. Once is enough. (NOSE NODS WEAKLY.) That's a good fellow. Pablito, get us some water and some gum tree leaves....There, that's a gum tree. We'll have Nose back in shape before you can bat an eye—(PABLITO EXITS UP LEFT, AND ANGELINA GRABS THE TRAP AND USES A LOT OF EFFORT TO OPEN IT AND TAKE IT FROM NOSE'S LEG.) There—it's a nasty wound but nothing's broken. A few days rest and we'll have you back to normal.

NOSE

(WEAKLY) Thank you, Angelina. Thank you very much. (TRIES TO WALK-FALTERS)

ANGELINA

Take it easy, guy. Pablito's getting some water, and I've got some food for you. (SHE TAKES A PACKET FROM HER POCKET. NOSE EATS SLOWLY AT FIRST, THEN GRADUALLY WITH MORE AND MORE VIGOR.) You had a close call, but you'll be alright.

NOSE

(COMING AROUND A LITTLE) It's not Toolie's fault. I ran off to look for you, and the wind and the rain got worse and I got lost. You've got to go back to him, Angelina. You've got to. He got out of jail, and he's different. (PABUTO ENTERS WITH A PAIL OF WATER AND A HANDFUL OF LEAVES, WHICH HE GIVES TO ANGELINA)

ANGELINA

Take it easy. Here's Pablito with the water. The leaves will take out the toxins and infection and ease the pain. (ANGELINA CRUSHES THE LEAVES, PUTS THEM ON THE WOUND, AND BANDAGES IT WITH STRIPS OF CLOTH WHICH SHE TAKES FROM HER BAG.)

NOSE

(WITH MODERATE INTENSITY) I mean he's still Toolie but he's more—peaceful. He misses you so very much, Angelina. He's always singing songs to you. You've been gone for three years, and it seems like three days, he says. Come back and live with us, Angelina. Please! He won't make trouble. He's more peaceful.

ANGELINA

Don't talk. You'll get excited and sores don't heal when you're excited. You've.....

NOSE

(INTERRUPTING. INTENSITY INCREASES.) Then agree to come back, please.

ANGELINA

I can't. You say he's changed, yet right now he's chasing a little sparrow who's scared out of his mind. That's why you're on the river—isn't it?

NOSE

I said he's changed and he has. I also said that he's still Toolie. If you come back, he'll change more.

ANGELINA

Forget about that. Pablito and I will make you a nest and then be off to get some things from our camp. We'll be about three hours. This is an extract of sweet potatoes. (SHE TAKES EXTRACT FROM HER BAG.) Eat it and you will be able to sleep. We'll set up camp here and you'll be running around within a week.

NOSE

(WORRIED, INTENSELY) But what about Toolie? He gets lost easily. And if he's in trouble, he'll panic and get despondent.

ANGELINA

I see that you know your master very well. If he's in trouble, it's probably trouble he made. He's a grown man. He can take care of himself.

NOSE

He should...but he can't. There's too much of the confused little boy in him.

ANGELINA

Well that's not really our problem, is it. After you're well, we will look for him. I promise. Now go to sleep and let Pablito and me fix a nest around you. (ANGELINA AND PABLITO BEGIN ARRANGING BRANCHES AND LEAVES TO FORM A NEST.

NOSE

(WITH SURPRISING STRENGTH) No! That food and those leaves have brought me around. I can't be "resting in my nest" while Toolie's out there lost. Please...I'll be okay. (NOSE BEGINS TO STIR AND THEN TO RISE. HE IS SHAKY AT FIRST AND THEN MANAGES A STABLE LIMP.) I can't run, but I can let out a holler that can be heard for miles....at least a long way.....(HE HOWLS VERY LOUDLY.) Too...Jie.....Too...Jie. (ANGELINA AND PABLITO PUT THEIR HANDS OVER THEIR EARS. NOSE WANDERS OFFSTAGE, HOWLING TOOLIE'S NAME.)

PABLITO

That dog is loco en la cabeza. Fifteen minutes ago, he was dying and now he's getting lost again yelling his master's name....Nose. Hey, Nose! (PABLITO GOES AFTER HIM. WE HEAR PABUTO OFFSTAGE.) For goodness sake, Mon. Cool it. (NOSE ENTERS PANTING, FOLLOWED BY PABLITO.)

NOSE

(TO ANGELINA) If you won't go looking for him, I will. If you want to stop me, put that trap back on me.

ANGELINA

(AFTER GIVING THE MATTER SERIOUS THOUGHT) Okay. I'll go to the camp and pack up. Pablito will stay here to see that you don't wander off and get lost again. We'll be off in the morning. If we find Toolie and he's sick or injured, we'll take care of him until he's well enough to make it on his own. But please don't be playing "matchmaker." Pablito, I'm talking to you as

well as to Nose. (NOSE STARTS HOWLING AND BARKING.) ...Enough of that, Nose. You're giving me a headache. You really are a stupid hound, you know that?.....(NOSE BEGINS TO SULK.) Okay, okay, Nose. I'm sorry....Nose, I said I'm sorry. (NOSE GOES TO ANGELINA AND LETS HER PET HIM.) Now you get some rest. If Toolie's out there, we'll find him. That's a promise.

NOSE

Okay—and thanks so very much, Angelina. You've...(ANGELINA PUTS HER FINGERS TO HER UPS AND PLACES THEM AGAINST THE SIDE OF NOSE'S HEAD. NOSE SIGHS AND RELAXES AND LETS HIMSELF FALL ASLEEP.)

PABLITO

(PABLITO SEES HIS ELUSIVE FRIEND OF THE EVENING LURKING ABOUT SENSUOUSLY AT THE SIDE OF THE STAGE.) Goodnight, Nose and Angelina. I'm going to get some rest early.

ANGELINA

I noticed your friend earlier. Just be here at sunrise or we'll leave you behind. Got it, Romeo? (PABUTO NODS AND EXITS.)

END OF SCENE EIGHTEEN

## Scene Nineteen

*TOOUE IS DELIRIOUS AND WEAKENED BY HUNGER AND SICKNESS HE IS SHOUTING, "NOSE, NOSE." HE TAKES A PISTOL FROM HIS BAG AND FINALLY IS ABLE TO COCK THE HAMMER. HE FIRES INTO THE AIR AND THEN DROPS THE PISTOL AND STUMBLES. HE FALLS AND RISES AND THEN FALLS AGAIN. BERNARD GUARDEDLY ENTERS, STUDYING TOOLIE FROM A DISTANCE.*

BERNARD

He got what he deserved. Lost and sick. At least that stupid dog doesn't seem to be with him.

TOOLIE

Eh? Someone there? (HE SPOTS BERNARD.)....So it's you, you twittle lit...little twit. I thought for a moment it was that evil buzzard come to wait for me to die. Maybe he sent you. If he did, the answer's still the same..."No." What are you going to do? Sing for me?..... "In the sweet, by and by." Don't answer, because if I understand, I'll know I'm very, very far gone.

BERNARD

Where's your dog?

TOOLIE

Ha! (LOOKS AROUND WEAKLY) Ha! It's you who said that. What creature is sent to lead me to the eternal flames? Ha! The little twit. Ha! Heaven must be full of imbeciles doing stand-up comedy.....It's far too late to repent now. Use up too much valuable time. Might as well enjoy it. Fever, fever. Burning up. Where's my dog? Now that's a good question. If I knew, I'd probably go and shoot him. Yeah, if I didn't love that fool hound so much. Nose and Angelina. You can have all the money and servants and Van Gogh's and ten-dollar plates in the world, just give me those two creatures, and I'd be the most missed ban-blessed man- on the face of this nut-house planet....But it's not in the cards.....

BERNARD

The name's "Bernard." (EMPHASIS ON FIRST SYLLABLE)

TOOLIE

(LAUGHS, THEN THE LAUGHTER BECOMES LESS; THEN IT INCREASES MORE THAN BEFORE, THEN LESSENS; THEN IT INCREASES TO AN EVEN HIGHER PITCH. WHEN IT LESSENS A BIT, TOOLIE SPEAKS.) Are you sure it isn't "Bernard"? A-ha-ha-ha....Monsieur Bernard, seducer of Cajun ladies and King of Casinos....(BERNARD IS SILENT. TOOLIE'S DERANGED HUMOR PASSES.) ...Sorry, old man....No ridicule intended. It's just that I've been going in circles and passing out and coming to again for days and days. I can't find the river. It keeps hiding. Boxyfooger...foxybooger, that river. And now I'm talking to buzzards and sparrows....The weird thing is that they answer me. Now if they didn't, I'd think there was some hope of seeing Nose and Angelina again, somewhere.

BERNARD

It's okay to laugh at me, but I'd prefer if you left Angelina out of this. It's because of you that she lost her beautiful life on this river.

TOOLIE

Me? How dare you make such a foul-mouthed charge! If I could walk, I'd catch you, you flightless twit, and make you swallow your beak.

BERNARD

(WHILE BERNARD SPEAKS, HE GATHERS STRAW FROM VARIOUS PARTS OF THE STAGE AND PILES IT BEFORE TOOLIE.) You don't even know, do you? You don't know what a selfish old fool you are. Always getting in trouble with the law because you want to show everyone that you're more clever than they are. Well, you might have been when you were a little boy which you still are, but where are you now, Oh Great Smart One? Busted on your butt, that's where. Why do you think Angelina ran away from you and her beloved little cabin? Because she knew that you'd mess up her life again. She loves you dearly, but she hated being locked up in that horrible hospital that's fit only for creatures like you and that crazy hound of yours. Not for Angelina.

TOOLIE

So what do you want me to do? Blow my head off? I'd be glad to oblige if you would shove that pistol here.

BERNARD

I will, but I don't want you to do that. I heard that dog howling last night. You shot your pistol once just now. If you shoot it again into this, I believe the straw's just dry enough to catch fire. I think the shot and the smoke will get them here. But I beg you, wait for half an hour. I don't want any part of that loco hound of yours.

TOOLIE

No—Wait. It'll be okay. Please. Don't leave me!

BERNARD

I've got something to do. One half hour. That's the best I can do. Good luck. (EXITS)

TOOLIE

No, Bernard...No.....I don't know if I will pass out again....Maybe if I count, I can stay awake. (TOOLIE REALLY TRIES.) One, two, three, four, fourteen, eighteen, twenty-eight, twenty-nine, thirty. (TOOLIE FIRES INTO THE PILE OF STRAW WHICH BEGINS TO SMOKE.) Yes! Nose! Angelina, if you can possibly hear me. Nose! Angelina...Ange....(LOSES CONSCIOUSNESS)

END OF SCENE NINETEEN

## Scene Twenty

*IT IS ABOUT TWENTY MINUTES LATER. TOOLIE IS LYING UNCONSCIOUS NEXT TO THE STRAW WHICH HAS ABOUT BURNED ITSELF OUT. IN THE DISTANCE, WE HEAR NOSE HOWLING AND BARKING. HE GETS CLOSER AND CLOSER UNTIL HE ENTERS UP RIGHT. HALF-LIMPING HALF-RUNNING, HE GOES TO TOOLIE AND STARTS LICKING HIS FACE TOOLIE STARTS TO COME TO AND IS IRRITATED BY THE LICKING.*

## TOOLIE

(BEFORE OPENING HIS EYES) Aaagh. Get away you giant snail...(OPENS EYES) Nose! Is that you? (NOSE BARKS TWICE AND HOWLS.) Good god but it's great to see you here. (EMBRACES NOSE DEARLY. SEEING NOSE'S BANDAGED LEG) What happened. Old Nose? Who put the bandage on? I'm sick too. Nose. It's all I can do to sit up. (TOOUE IS VERY WEAK AND SHAKY BUT IS STILL EXPRESSING GREAT JOY AT SEEING NOSE. HE EMBRACES HIM, WHEN HE BECOMES AWARE OF THE PACKAGE THE DOG HAS TIED TO HIS NECK.) What's this? Water and food....and a paper napkin. Nose, this seems like Angelina's doing. (HUNGRILY EATING FOOD AND DRINKING WATER) Tell me it is, please. (NOSE BARKS.) Go make certain that she finds me. Go, please. (NOSE SITS SMILING.) Nose, you gotta go, boy. Even if Angelina's not there, let me hope for a little longer. (NOSE BARKS A COUPLE OF TIMES BUT REMAINS SITTING.) You're as stupid as I am, you dumb animal...(NOSE'S SPIRITS BEGIN TO SAG.) But I sure do love you, prob'ly because you're as worthless as I am.

## ANGELINA

(APPEARS STAGE LEFT BEHIND TOOLIE. SHE IS DRESSED AS BEFORE BUT NOW CARRYING HER FOUND BAG CONTAINING MEDICINES.) You're right, about that, you know.

## TOOLIE

Who said that? Was it you, Nose? First a buzzard, then a sparrow and now you' (NOSE BARKS.) Am I hallucinating?

## ANGELINA

You tell me.

## TOOLIE

(TURNS AROUND IN HIS SITTING POSITION AS QUICKLY AS HIS AILING BODY WILL PERMIT.) Angelina! Is that you? Tell me I'm not dreaming. On second thought, if I'm dreaming, let me dream and never wake up.

## ANGELINA

You were in trouble when I left, and you're in trouble again.

## TOOLIE

No. Not any more. Good lord, it's gonna be the straight and narrow for me from now on. I promise on my Daddy's grave. Is it really you?

## ANGELINA

(CROSSING SLOWLY TO TOOUE) Yes, it's really me. And I will stay with you until you're strong enough to get back to your place...But I'm promising nothing else.

## TOOLIE

Of course not. Not one thing. But you're here now. That's all I could ask for in a thousand years. A few minutes ago, I really thought I would die out here....hungry, thirsty....alone....so alone....Hold my hand, Angie. Please. I need you like heaven needs angels and bat little foys....fat little boys.

## ANGELINA

It might be just for now and I might well have to go, but at this moment, I sure do love you, Toolie....old fool Toolie...and his fool dog Nose. (THEY HOLD HANDS AND KISS. NOSE GOES TO THE SIDE OF THE STAGE AND GETS A ROSE FROM A BUSH, AVOIDING THE THORNS. HE BRINGS IT TO TOOLIE WHO ARRANGES IT IN ANGELINA'S HAIR. HE PULLS HIMSELF UP SITTING ON A NEARBY LOG. TOOUE SINGS **Starlight Dreams**, THIS TIME WITH ANGELINA. THEY DIRECT THE SONG TO EACH OTHER, AND TO NOSE, WHO IS EMBARRASSED BUT ABSOLUTELY DEUGHTED.)

**Starlight Dreams**

Music and Lyrics by Clyde Coreil © 1999

## I

(Toolie and Angelina)

I had never seen such starlight

Fall so wide across the waves-  
A-changing every moment  
To brightly colored dreams.

## II

(Toolie)

When I was a young lad  
As innocent as moonbeams,  
I think I met an angel  
Who laughing called my name.

Soon I had no time for angels;  
I was aiming at the stars.  
But on these nights as still  
As countless empty days,  
I can hear her laughter,  
Her voice upon the wind;  
I remember starlight  
Falling on the waves.

## III

(Angelina—to Nose)

Now I look upon the river,

That dark sky's as wide as years;  
 I would give my life itself now  
 Just to see those Homelands  
 In her eyes, once more.

(Toolie-to Angelina)  
 I had never seen the dark rose  
 Glow so red upon her hair;  
 I had never heard the swallow's  
 Song so light upon the air  
 As that yesterday.

(Toolie and Angelina and Nose in costume)  
 Now I look upon the river,  
 That dark sky's as wide as years;  
 I would give my life itself now  
 Just to see those Homelands  
 In her eyes, once more.

*THE SONG ENDS, AND NOSE DASHES OFF-STAGE LEFT.*

TOOLIE

Nose. Nose! (HE STANDS, STARTS TO CROSS AND STUMBLES FROM WEAKNESS.)

ANGELINA

Toolie, no. Let him go. He knows what he's doing.....More or less. (EXAMINING HIS ARMS.) You're full of fleas, a tick-bites and who knows what. (OPENS HER BAG AND TAKES OUT A CONTAINER OF WATER AND BANDAGES.)

TOOLIE

God. Some people get older.....You get more more beautiful.

ANGELINA

All of this is stuff I found on the river. Boiled it. (SHE NOTICES ELUE LURKING OFFSTAGE, CALLS TO HER.) Ellie...(TO TOOUE) Ellie's a very dear friend. She's also awfully shy. She lived with me in my cabin on the river....She caught up with us....Ellie was waiting at our camp...(TO ELUE) Come here, please. There's someone I want you to meet. Ellie, Mr. Toolie. Mr. Toolie, Elite. (THEY BOW TO EACH OTHER.) She awfully clever and eternally helpful. I'm so glad she's with us. (TO TOOUE) Say a few words. You can't understand her, but she can understand you.

TOOLIE

(ASIDE TO ANGELINA) I feel like a fool, but nevertheless...(TO ELLIE)...! am deeply honored to make the acquaintance of a friend of Angelina. I hope you enjoy your visit and will stay with us forever.

ANGELINA

(ELUE WHISPERS IN ANGELINA'S EAR.) She says that she's equally delighted..... (ELUE TAKES OVER ANGELINA'S WORK OF CLEANING TOQUE'S ARM.) .....I left

my house with nothing. I was afraid that a fool would get me thrown back in that mental asylum. It's terrible in there. Absolutely horrible. All they do is give you drugs and punish you if you talk to a stray cat or mouse. Those animals have so much to tell us.. ...if we would only listen. Most people couldn't understand everything they said....but a lot would come across.

TOOLIE

I've changed, Angle. I'm not going to ask you not to leave again, but I want you to know that I'm hoping very hard.

ANGELINA

How long were you in prison?

TOOUE

Three years. Time off for good behavior.

ANGELINA

You got a job?

TOOLIE

I'm.....Now don't jump to conclusions because its all done proper and correct...but I'm an investor....in the stock market. I put half our savings into a very modest system I developed, and it works....! spend about five hours a day on it.....The capital has increased about 25 times. The parole people wanted to see my receipts so I showed them. They are willing to recognize it as legitimate self-employment. W.J. Toolie, P.I., Private Investigator....Ha! Fat chance. Private Investor. (THERE IS A SOUND OF SCUFFLING AND MOVEMENT COMING FROM THE WOODS. NOSE ENTERS HOLDING BERNARD GENTLY IN HIS MOUTH BY THE BACK OF THE NECK. BERNARD IS CARRYING THE COCOON IN A CONTAINER.)

ANGELINA

(JUMPING TO BERNARD) My god, Nose. Let him go! (NOSE LETS GO.)

BERNARD

(SHOUTING SO THAT NOSE CAN HEAR.) God, is his breath awful. He ought to brush his teeth or gargle or something!

TOOLIE

It's the little tw.....(CATCHES HIMSELF).....songbird. He had talked to me earlier. (SARCASTICALLY) Can you understand me now, little feller? (NO RESPONSE) Well, thank goodness for that.

ANGELINA

When we're very weak, our huge human egos quieten down, and we can hear many things.....(TO BERNARD) Are you....still carrying the remains?

BERNARD

Yes. (TOOUE CANNOT UNDERSTAND ANGELINA AND BERNARD, THEREFORE HE IGNORES THEIR "CONVERSATION.")

ANGELINA

Do...you still intend to take them to the South?

BERNARD

If I had not been ambushed by that stupid dog, I would have reached my raft and been long gone. And that wretch Toolie...I helped him with the smoke, and he promised not to shoot until thirty minutes later, and he breaks that promise and shoots after about 15 seconds....Will I be allowed to leave now?

ANGELINA

If I told you something, would you believe it?

BERNARD

I suppose so.

ANGELINA

Wait...(TO TOOUE) Toolie, your boat's about a mile back. Everything seems intact. I'm on the verge of promising Bernie here that we will help find his friend's home somewhere near the mouth of the Mississippi.

TOOLIE

A bird's nest in that enormous swamp? That's absurd. We'd never find it.

ANGELINA

You have a set of maps in the boat. I saw them. Bernard said if you're in the middle of the river heading south, when the land on the left falls away, turn left and go straight.

TOOLIE

I'd go to hell for you, Angelina. And that's where we will be with the snakes and mosquitoes and alligators. We'd waste a lot of fuel on that wild goose chase. A lot of fuel. Will Monsieur Bernard pay for that?

ANGELINA

You wouldn't be going for Bernard. You'd be going for me. (BECOMING STIFF) And if you'd prefer not, well I'll just go take the boat and leave. There's other ways to get gas.

TOOLIE

And what about me? Would you leave me to starve?

ANGELINA

No. You'd have Nose here to help you. And we might stop by on the way back to see if you've had your fill of snails.

TOOLIE

My daddy used to always say, if you can't say "no," say "yes" like a gentleman...like a gentleman. (STRAIGHT-KNEE BOW, AND FLOURISH OF HELMET.) Yes.

ANGELINA

Bernie, Toolie volunteered to take us in his motorboat. We'll check the maps for a destination to match your description. Toolie should be back to strength in a couple of days. I would imagine that within two weeks, we should be there.

BERNARD

My god, you will do it!...(ANGELINA NODS.) But....if we can't find it....

ANGELINA

Oh, we'll find it. Make no mistake there. Trust me—and yourself....Look.... Pablito had a little.... "adventure" with his girlfriend. He didn't show up by the time we left this morning. Maybe you could look around for him.

BERNARD

Will he be coming with us?

ANGELINA

If he wants to, which I think he will. Pablito's got to keep moving. He knows that. If he doesn't, he'll get into big trouble. And Ellie and you are acquainted, I believe.

BERNARD

(GREETES ELLIE) I'm glad you changed your mind. (ELLIE ACKNOWLEDGES BERNARD AND RETURNS TO HER TASK. HE ADDRESSES ANGELINA.) How

did you know that about Pablito....about his moving? He told me—exactly what you're saying. Did he tell you too?

ANGELINA

He didn't have to.... Now get along. Nose'll go with you. He needs to run a little for that leg. But he'll be very careful to protect you. Won't you, Nose? (NOSE BARKS A COUPLE OF TIMES AND HEADS INTO THE WOODS, FOLLOWED BY BERNARD WHO IS STRUGGLING TO KEEP UP.)

TOOLIE

Angelina, come here, darlin'. I can't believe what has happened. (ANGELINA GOES TO TOOLIE, LETS HIM TAKE HER GRACEFULLY IN HIS ARMS AND SING A COUPLE OF VERSES OF Starlight Dreams. HE REARRANGES THE ROSE IN HER HAIR.)

*(Toolie)*

I had never seen the dark rose  
Glow so red upon your hair;  
I had never heard the swallow's  
Songs so light upon the air  
As they are today.

*(Angelina)*

Now I look upon the moonlight,  
That dark sky's as wide as years;  
I would give my life itself now  
Just to feel those Homelands  
As I do, right now.

END OF SCENE TWENTY

END OF ACT FOUR

ACT FIVE  
Scene Twenty-One

*The motorboat trip down the Mississippi is completed, and Ellie is following Bernard, who is still carrying Beamy's cocoon. The rest of their party-Toolie, Angelina, Nose, Pablito, and the Female Frog-is also searching nearby for evidence of Beamy's homeland.*

*The stage is set to reflect the more organic nature of the lower delta. Fallen logs and bushes are more in abundance, and Spanish moss hangs from the branches of trees.*

ELLIE

Bernie....Berme! Wait. For heaven's sake, stop! (SHE GRABS HIM.)

BERNARD

We're almost there. I can feel it.

ELLIE

That's what you said a week ago. We're all exhausted,...You more than anyone Please sit down. (BERNARD LOOKS AT HER DISDAINFULLY BUT SITS ON A LOG.) Please. You have no right to continue doing this....We helped you...God knows we've helped you. Toolie and Nose are still weak from their terrible experience of being lost in the storm. Especially Toolie. But he came all the way down the Mississippi and for the past week has helped you search for any sign that this is the place that Beamy called home. Angelina and Nose and Pablito and Pablito's friend....and I....are the same.

BERNARD

I told all of you three times to leave....Go back up the River. Is it my fault if you refuse?

ELLIE

Yes, it is. You know we can't simply leave you. But we can ask you to quit. Your duty to Beamy has been more than fulfilled. If you insist on searching one minute more for you have no idea what, it will have stopped being a quest, and it will have turned into a blind obsession.....with something that could well cost the health and well-being of the only people in the world who care for you.

BERNARD

There's a part of me that knows that you're right. There's another part that wants to drive on and on and on.....

ELLIE

You want to drive on and on and on, to lose yourself in an impossible mission that is insanely appealing because it is impossible to achieve.

BERNARD

Enough, Ellie!

ELLIE

Can't you see? You're trying to punish yourself for something that's not your fault.

BERNARD

You go scurry about here and there and find some other jerk who'll give you a nickel for his fortune. (NOSE ENTERS STAGE RIGHT AND TAKES A COUPLE OF STEPS AND BEGINS A LOW GROWL. A BIT CAUTIOUS, BERNARD STEPS AWAY FROM HIM.)

ANGELINA

(ENTERS DOWN RIGHT) Be quiet, Nose.

ELLIE

If you won't consider us, then consider the harm you're doing to yourself.... Any "quest," it is either unattainable and endless.—.or else one day the steam goes out and everyone quits, goes home and eats supper..... Come home, Bernie. It's suppertime.

BERNARD

(LONG PAUSE) Okay.....Okay.....You win.....But I need to be alone for a while.

ANGELINA

Take all the time you need.....Nose, Ellie.....Bernard wants to be alone now.  
(ANGELINA, NOSE AND ELLIE EXIT.)

BERNARD

(PUTS THE COCOON ON A SURFACE LIKE A TREE STUMP AND ADDRESSES THE MEMORY OF BEAMY) Beamy, they're wrong. But I love 'em and I can't ask 'em to do more. I know you understand. This particular "quest" made me realize more than ever before, the seriousness of a promise.....But what is there left for me? Nothing. It was easy enough to look for your homeland. Looking for my own is different.—.Why? Because there's always the chance of finding it.—and then what do I do. Flap my wings and yap a song? And most of all. Bertha's there. The humiliation would be enormous. The only thing worse would be to go back to the North for suppertime at Toolie's.....But all that makes little difference as far as my respect for you, for what you were and what you gave to me....I don't know exactly how, but this whole experience has given me the opportunity to grow up a little. Not a lot, but a little. It's like Elder John said about the songs—"you can sing them a million times, but you never know what's inside the song and what might be transforming some part of you. All you can do is sing them."

*BERNARD CROSSES DOWN RIGHT AND TURNS FULL TOWARD THE AUDIENCE. HE STARTS SINGING WITH HIS EYES CLOSED AND OPENS THEM IN THE SECOND PART OF THE SONG ("I REMEMBER SO WELL..."). TO A SMALL DEGREE, HE IS RELATING TO THE AUDIENCE.*

*A FEW MOMENTS AFTER BERNARD CROSSES DOWNSTAGE, BLACKDE REVEALS HIMSELF. ALTHOUGH STILL DRESSED IN THE TUXEDO WE SAW HIM IN EARLIER, HE IS ALSO IN THE PERSONNA OF A BUTTERFLY WITH LIGHT GREY WINGS. BLACK3E PROCEEDS TO EXECUTE THE BEGINNING OF A CHOREOGRAPHED VERSION OF "REQUIEM FOR BEAMY."*

*IN THE SECOND PART OF THE SONG, BEAMY ENTERS IN THE PERSONNA OF A MAGNIFICENT BUTTERFLY, WHOSE MAIN COLOR IS WHITE. HERS IS TRULY THE GRAND ENTRANCE OF A RADIANT CREATURE. ALTHOUGH BLACKIE RE-JOINS BEAMY AT THE END OF THE SONG, THE DANCE IS HERS. BERNARD IS DOWNSTAGE AND FACES THE AUDIENCE—HE IS NOT AWARE OF THE DANCE BY BLACKIE AND BERTHA.*

**Requiem for Beamy**

## I

*(Bernard)*

Dawn has come  
 for you, my friend.  
 I must let you go,  
 it's ended.  
 Precious time gone by  
 will be no more,  
 so I must turn  
 and part

## II

I remember so well,  
 when I dreamed  
 I would fly away  
 in skies that were free,  
 when all that I'd need  
 were wind in my wings  
 and friends in the air.

## III

Then faces turned  
 and I knew  
 no one and all alone,  
 no hope, no dreams-  
 unexpectedly I  
 found a friend on the  
 road who asked for no  
 favors but gave me  
 with no thought  
 that most precious of gifts-  
 Love, not like lovers know  
 as they try to hold  
 what can never be owned—  
 Love, that comes naturally,  
 giving every day  
 just wherever you are-  
 Love, most magnificent  
 grace, one person can  
 light a nightful of stars  
 in endless rivers of fantasies.

## IV

Close your eyes  
 and see the suns  
 illumined in the sparkling  
 purples, rose, red and gold  
 of here and now and

in her voice and  
 in the silence of her mind  
 opening doors to take you  
 through millions of yesterdays-  
 tomorrow's wonders  
 in a light deep inside yourself  
 and others nearby.

We see that we are  
 all only but one  
 a-lost in this world,  
 a-needing the touch  
 of friends in the night  
 to find out which road  
 we now have to take.

*BERNARD SITS ON A TREE STUMP OR A LOG DOWNSTAGE AFTER THE SONG. BEAMY CREEPS UP BEHIND HIM AND BLOWS ON THE BACK OF HIS EAR. HE SWATS WHAT HE THINKS IS A MOSQUITO. A FEW MINUTES LATER, SHE BLOWS ON THE BACK OF THE OTHER EAR. HE SWATS MORE VIGOROUSLY. THEN SHE BLOWS ON THE TOP OF HIS HEAD AND HE SWIRLS AROUND, HAVING BEGUN TO EXPRESS IRRITATION.*

BERNARD

You nasty little vermin, get out of.....(SEEING BEAMY AND NOT RECOGNIZING HER IMMEDIATELY)....here.....Oh, I'm sorry. I thought you were a mosquito.

BEAMY

No, not quite. Maybe I'll change to one one day, but I rather hope not. I'm delighted to be a butterfly.

BERNARD

Is that what you are...You're gorgeous. I had never seen a butterfly before.

BEAMY

That's odd. Because I was certain I had seen you before.

BERNARD

You had seen me?

BEAMY

Yes. And a terrible dog named Nose and a courtly frog named Pablito who provided paddles and was always after a female or two.

BERNARD

Beamy! Is that you inside that beautiful butterfly? (STUDIES HER MORE CLOSELY)  
 My god, it is! How very very wonderful! Stupendous! (THEY EMBRACE.)

BEAMY

Not so much one inside the other as a .....transformation.

BERNARD

You haven't been making deals with Dr. Crow, have you?

BEAMY

No. Everything on the up and up....Blackie says we should watch out for Dr. Crow.... I'm sorry I wasn't able to wait for you to wake up when I came out of the cocoon, but Blackie had come for me and warned me of the coming storm.....But let's have a look at you, Bernard.....You've gotten taller....and more handsome.....Whyever did you come here? Not that I am not overjoyed.

BERNARD

A promise is a promise.....

BEAMY

I insisted that you promise....! remember. I thought I was passing from this world.....Maybe in a way, I was.

BERNARD

God, Beamy. Nothing in the world could have made me happier at this moment than seeing you, not only alive but with beautiful wings and with your Blackie.... (TO BLACKIE) She spoke of you every day. You're a lucky fellow. A very lucky fellow.

BLACKIE

She also spoke of you....(HUMOROUSLY) a lot!

BEAMY

How did you make the trip? Did you learn to fly?

BERNARD

No. (HERE BERNARD'S PARTY BEGINS SHOWING UP.) Toolie here took me on his motorboat... Toolie, I'd like you to meet Beamy, an old friend.

ANGELINA

Toolie, Bernard would like you to meet Beamy, an old friend.

TOOLIE

My pleasure, Ms. Beamy.

BEAMY

Toolie! Yes, I remember very well.....Things were a little.... different then.

ANGELINA

I'm Angelina...(THEY SHAKE HANDS.) Yes, they were. We have been somewhat successful in reforming our gentleman.

ELLIE

I'm Ellie...(THEY SHAKE HANDS.) Bernard and I held a ceremony when we thought we had lost you.

BEAMY

I heard it very well and appreciated it deeply. I thought I had reached heaven. It was lovely... .Bernard just sang it again.

PABUTO

This is Carmen del Playo... A thousand pardons, Maria. This is Maria Verazon.

ROSA

Rosa de la Noche....Glad to meet you....

BEAMY

You must forgive Pablito, Rosa. His heart is very good. I'm so glad you came with him and Bernard....Isn't someone missing?

ANGELINA

Yes....Nose...Come out here. (NOSE CAUTIOUSLY STEPS ONTO THE STAGE) Nose is awfully shy at times.

BEAMY

I'm very glad to make your acquaintance, Nose. (THEY SHAKE HANDS.)

NOSE

You're so beautiful now.

BEAMY

Why thank you, Nose.....I would like all of you to meet Mr. Blackston Grey....My "Blackie." He has protected me since we were children together.

PABLITO

One, TWO, THREE....One, TWO, THREE....One, TWO, THREE...(TO BEAMY)...On the raft....remember....You thought we were all asleep.

BEAMY

Yes....Very well. The river and the sky were magic then.....I wasn't sad about dying but about leaving them behind....(SHE BEGINS SINGING. TOOLIE BEGINS DANCING WITH ANGELINA; BEAMY WITH BLACKIE; PABLITO WITH ROSA: ELLIE WITH BERNARD. THE ACTRESS PLAYING NOSE TAKES OFF HER DOG'S HEAD AND PICKS UP SINGING THE SECOND VERSE, WHEN BEAMY BEGINS DANCING WITH BLACKIE.)

### **Dreaming of Dreams**

*(Beamy)*

We'll dream of dreams forever  
On magic nights like this,  
When fairies ride the night-fall  
And angels lean to kiss.

*(NOSE)*

It's rare but time sometimes  
Like now rolls backwards  
To heal our spirit's wound,  
To keep our stars from falling  
In morning's mourning rise.

So now you must imagine  
Music in moonbeams,  
And take my hand  
As though we'll waltz  
Forever on the waves.

Then when sun's past holding,  
Our limbs grow strangely still,  
We'll lie and drift past east winds,  
And dream our dreams will end.

END OF SCENE TWENTY-ONE

## Scene Twenty-Two

*After the song, most of the characters slowly leave the stage except Beamy, Bernard and Angelina. Bernard is in unusually high spirits.*

BEAMY

So, Bernard. Now that you've fulfilled your promise to a frightened caterpillar, will you return to the North and leave peacefully as a legendary hero?

BERNARD

Me? A hero? Ha! I'm flattered but no. I must find my flock—and the one that I love.

ANGELINA

Bernard.....Come home with us. Leave this flock business alone—And your lady friend is undoubtedly spoken for by now.

BEAMY

She's right, you know.

BERNARD

Oh, I agree. That would make much more sense.....But logic and sense are not exactly my strong points.

ANGELINA

And you would be on your own.....I couldn't ask Toolie.....

BERNARD

And I couldn't accept.....All of you have done so very much for me. One day, you'll look out of your window and see a familiar sparrow....One day....not now.

ANGELINA

Whatever you say. Is there any way we could help you now?

BERNARD

We passed a wide bend about twenty-five miles north of here. I felt an awful strong urge to veer right. I know that was the place I must leave the river and go west for about seventy-five more miles. If Toolie would let me out at that bend, I'd be grateful.

ANGELINA

Toolie would be glad to oblige. We'll leave in about half an hour. That way, we'll be able to get you to the bend in the river, find a comfortable place to spend the night. (ANGELINA EXITS.)

BEAMY

How can I ever thank you enough for finding my homeland. I will toll the tale of your noble valor and adventure to my children and my children will tell theirs...forever.

BERNARD

Blackie's waiting for you. Maybe our destinies will bring us together again. I hope so. (THEY EMBRACE; BEAMY EXITS. BERNARD IS STILL EXCITED AND IN HIGH SPIRITS.)

END OF SCENE TWENTY-TWO

## Scene Twenty-Three

*AS BERNARD THINKS OF THE DAY'S TRIUMPHS, HE ALMOST GLOWS WITH PRIDE AND PROMISE. FOR THE FIRST TIME IN HIS LIFE, HE FEELS THAT THERE IS NOTHING THAT HE CANNOT DO. BERNARD SITS ON A ROCK OR TREE STUMP DOWN CENTER RIGHT. WE SEE THE SHADOW OF DR. CROW FLYING TO OFFSTATE LEFT. HE ENTERS, FOLDING HIS CAPE-WINGS.*

**BERNARD**

You never know when fate will be on your side...(SEES DR. CROW) Well look what the cat dug up and drug in!

**DR. CROW**

(WITH GOOD HUMOR) I don't believe I've ever seen you radiate so much energy. It becomes you, Bernard.

**BERNARD**

After much searching, we found a friend that we thought was dead. She was really radiant and in the best of spirits.

**DR. CROW**

Delighted to hear it. You are very generous to become truly happy because of her good fortune.

**BERNARD**

(WITH UNUSUAL ENTHUSIASM) Thanks, Dr. Crow. I can't say I've seen you in a less cunning mood.

**DR. CROW**

I beg your pardon?

**BERNARD**

What's your problem, Old Buddy?

**DR. CROW**

No problem. What are you talking about?

**BERNARD**

Your spirits seem to be flagging...(DR. CROW IGNORES COMMENT.) Are you still performing transformations?

**DR. CROW**

Among other things...but only at the explicit request of the individual concerned.

**BERNARD**

The first time I met you, you were dying to make me able to fly.

**DR. CROW**

At the price of a song.....If I were you, I would keep on singing.

**BERNARD**

You seem reluctant.

**DR. CROW**

What do you want me to do-attempt to seduce and convince you that you would do better flying than singing and then have you shout "No" and show me the fortitude in your golden character? Do you enjoy resisting temptation? You find some other crow.....I'm not into that game. (BEGINS TO EXIT. BERNARD STOPS HIM.)

BERNARD

I do believe that you've lost your powers.....(PAUSE)....Well, have you?...(ANOTHER PAUSE).....Could you make me able to fly?

DR. CROW

Do you want to become a crow? I could see the Master about that if you're interested.

BERNARD

Ha! Me...a crow. No, I will leave that to sleazy older gentlemen who buy fashionable clothes in an attempt to hide their age.

DR. CROW

(HIDING IRRITATION) Well, you certainly are in good form today...."Sleazy older gentlemen...." My word. I think you had better go back to the sparrow leagues than mess around with transformers and transformations.

BERNARD

Why is that?

DR. CROW

I like you, Bernard. There is much that is admirable about you. But if you insist on playing with fire, you should be able to dodge the flames.

BERNARD

And you don't think that I am able to "dodge the flames" as you so nicely put it.

DR. CROW

(BEGINNING TO SEDUCE) Complaining about being flightless is quite a bit easier than actually flying....Some say that singing is an incidental skill of little consequence.

BERNARD

Would I be able to fly....immediately and as far as I wanted?

DR. CROW

Certainly. With a few hours practice for difficult maneuvers, and maybe a couple of days to build the proper muscles. That's not nearly so important as the courage to fly.....If you have that, then everything else falls into place.

BERNARD

Courage.....Courage is more important than willingness to give up singing?

DR. CROW

That's for you to decide.

BERNARD

No seducing argument?

DR. CROW

If you want to fly, then fly. Don't be looking for someone to seduce you. I don't lie, but neither do I enjoy seducing and painting rosy pictures about courage and how everyone has it somewhere deep inside.....Possibly, you don't. And if that's the case, you should resign yourself to the far safer perspective of the ground.

BERNARD

If I wanted to fly, could you do it? Yes or no?

DR. CROW

Yes.

BERNARD

With one condition?

DR. CROW

What's that? The pain of having your backbone and beak pecked? No problem. That's something I tell newcomers. It would not be necessary.

BERNARD

It's not that. I want to sing a few more songs after I am able to fly.

DR. CROW

A few?....No. One..... I do have a reputation to maintain.... and I am accountable.

BERNARD

I could fly... and sing one song.

DR. CROW

Yes.

BERNARD

(PAUSE) Then I want to fly. (AS BERNARD SPEAKS, THE STAGE BECOMES DARKER AND DARKER. LIGHTNING AND THUNDER ARE HEARD IN THE DISTANCE.) What do I have to do?

DR. CROW

(SLOWLY) Sign the Book of Favors. Intone your wish slowly and clearly three times, and the transformation will be complete. But son, think on it for a while.

BERNARD

I am tired of thinking....Do I sign now?

DR. CROW

YES. (OPENS BOOK, SELECTS CORRECT PAGE, CLOSSES HIS EYES IN SPIRITUAL COMMUNICATION, AND HANDS BERNARD THE WRITING PLUME) Here....(BERNARD SIGNS.) And here.....(BERNARD SIGNS AGAIN.) Now, intone your wish slowly and clearly. Repeat it three times. (WITH EACH UTTERANCE OF BERNARD'S WISH, THE LIGHTNING AND THUNDER GROW LOUDER AND CLOSER. AND THE SOUND OF WIND AND LASHING RAIN ARE HEARD. DR. CROW IS ALARMED.) L...want to fly.....I want to fly.....I want to fly. (WHEN BERNARD IS FINISHED, THE SKY CLEARS AND THE LIGHTNING AND THUNDER ROLL AWAY.)

DR. CROW

(HE HAS TAKEN THE BOOK OF FAVORS AND IS WRITING. WHEN HE IS FINISHED, HE PUTS THE BOOK INTO HIS CAPE.) The transformation is done I wish you good luck. (HE STARTS TO FLY TO EXIT, BUT IS STOPPED BY BERNARD.) Bernard, our transaction is concluded. I must report to my Master. If you try to fly, you will have no difficulty. I guarantee it. (EXITS)

BERNARD

(BERNARD IS PROUD OF HIS COURAGE AND FULL OF HIMSELF. HE MOUNTS A LOG AND TRIES TO TAKE OFF. HIS OWN REACTION AND THE STAGE LIGHTS INDICATE THAT THE TRANSFORMATION HAS WORKED. HE SINGS "NOW I FLY." DURING THESE MOMENTS, BERNARD IS OVERWHELMED BY A SENSE OF SATISFACTION AND ACCOMPLISHMENT.)

**Now I Fly**

Words and Music by Clyde Coreil © 1999

## I

Now I fly to my dreams;  
I can go where I was meant to-  
Watching earth fall away.  
Watching sky become my home.

Now at last,  
I am without shame,  
I am without blame.  
I shout on new wings,  
no weak excuse  
each of my days,  
those lovely nights  
alone.

## II

When I met you  
as a child,  
every night  
your wings were mine—  
We would soar  
to all the stars,  
encircle moons,  
entwine our songs,  
entangle dreams,  
of what would be  
one day.

Now that day  
has come at last,  
we can find  
reality  
in our dreams  
of yesterday-  
Tomorrow's come,  
we'll realize  
what never was  
in each the other's skies.

END OF SCENE TWENTY-THREE

## Scene Twenty-Four

*THE MIGRATION DESTINATION IN SOUTH LOUISIANA. BERTHA IS HANGING OUT CLOTHES. BURTON AND ELDER ARE HAVING A SOMEWHAT HEATED DISCUSSION.*

BURTON

Ha! We go where we want, when we want. We don't ask the permission of the elders. Those days are gone. I don't know and I don't care about the rest of the flock, but we will have food throughout the year down here....What kind of flock is it if you can't even migrate? We all like you, Elder John. But now it's like a friend...,not like a member of a ruling body or something....Got it?

ELDER JOHN

Loud and clear. (BERTHA HAPPENS TO LOOK AT THE SKY. SHE SHADES HER EYES AND TRIES TO SEE WHAT IT IS. ELDER JOHN SEES HER.) What is it? (LOOKS WHERE SHE IS LOOKING)

BERTHA

There's something in the sky. It's one of us, but it's flying all over like a drunkard.

ELDER JOHN

I'm afraid I can't be of much help. My eyesight's fading.

BURTON

(LOOKING UP) Maybe that crazy kid from next door has found a camphor ball tree,

BERTHA

Wait....He doesn't seem to be drunk....His dives and banks are too even. Would you go see who it is, Burton? He doesn't seem to be aware that he's awful close to Blue Jay territory.

BURTON

Me? No. I don't give a hoot who it is or what happens to him. Damn fool will get what

BERTHA

(REALIZING WHO IT MIGHT BE) Oh my god!.....Bernard.

ELDER JOHN

Bernard?....Bernard's long dead. Bertha.

BURTON

Bertha's fantasizing. Bernard. Ha! Let the Jays hit his ghost.

ELDER JOHN

But if it's Bernard...He's a songbird. A slim chance is better than none-(EXITS HOBLING TO TAKE OFF.)

BURTON

Old fool. The Jays'll get him too.

BERTHA

He's seen Elder John....they're coming down.

*ELDER JOHN HOBBLING ONSTAGE, FOLLOWED BY BERNARD IN ALL OF HIS GLORY.*

BERNARD

Bertha! It's me, Bernard. Guess what?...I can fly!

BURTON

(MOCKING)Oh, Bertha! It's me, Bernard. Guess what?...I can fly! (BURTON IS SEIZED BY A CRUDE LAUGHING FIT.) Guess what, he can fly! (ELDER JOHN GUIDES BURTON AWAY FROM BERTHA AND BERNARD.)

BERTHA

(MODESTLY RETURNS BERNARD'S EMBRACE) Oh, Bernard. We had all thought you died in the North. It's so nice to see you.....How....

BERNARD

(CONFUSED AT COOL RECEPTION BY BERTHA) Practice....and luck.....Are you alright, Bertha?...(NO RESPONSE)....Bertha?....(GOES TO TAKE HER IN HIS ARMS) I've come so far....if it hadn't been for you, I would have given up. I know I would. (BERTHA AVOIDS HIM SUBTLY. HE NOTICES THAT SHE IS EXPECTING.) You....Of course, you found someone else. I mean the chances of my turning up were less than zero.....

BERTHA

(PUTTING ON A JOYFUL FACE) Burton and I are expecting a couple of little ones in a few weeks.

BERNARD

(SHOCKED) You and....

BERTHA

I'm so sorry, Bernard. None of us thought....we would ever see you again.

BERNARD

(STIFF UPPER LIP AS BURTON IS SWAGGERING SLOWLY TO HIM AND BERTHA) Well, congratulations.....to both of you. I am certain that they'll be....

BURTON

(IGNORING BERNARD WHOM HE INTERRUPTS) You have a nest to clean, woman. (BURTON STARTS TO EXIT.)

BERTHA

Welcome home, Bernard...I...hope you won't be too critical of me. (BURTON GRABS HER ARM AND RUDELY FORCES HER OFFSTAGE.)

ELDER JOHN

I will call a meeting this evening to inform the others. Your homecoming is almost a miracle, Bernard.

BERNARD

I showed up....That's hardly a miracle. I mean for me, it is. But not for anyone else.

ELDER JOHN

You have a fascinating story to tell, don't you?

BERNARD

Passingly interesting would be more accurate.

ELDER JOHN

It's more than that. It's very important. The young and the old will listen to you.....Bernard, our flock has fallen on very bad times. No one listens to anyone else. Everyone thinks he has the right to do as he pleases without seeking the approval of

anyone else. They might respect you because of your experiences....The chances are very sum, but it's all we've got.

BERNARD

Chances for what?

ELDER JOHN

For saving us from utter ruin....The loss of the traditions and values of the flock as they have been from time immemorial. The situation is very grave. If we could get back to the North in several weeks, I think our chances would be improved immeasurably. The migration itself is a powerful lesson, and life is more severe up there.

BERNARD

What's stopping you?

ELDER JOHN

Everyone has grown fat and lazy.....most of all the songbirds. They are especially sensitive, you know. They've allowed themselves to get into fatal encounters with the Blue Jays and Mocking Birds. They've been slaughtered by the two-wheeled motors because they were sleeping in the road or else they were too slow to get out of the way. In short, there are no more songbirds here! And in their songs is the information we need for a successful migration...which is no simple matter. (ELDER JOHN GETS MORE AND MORE CARRIED AWAY.) We don't understand....ifs something like the harmonics of the progressions encode navigation tools. That's how you were able to find us. Those harmonics are part of you.....

BERNARD

(INTERRUPTING) Easy now, Elder John. You're sounding a little like Dr. Crow.

ELDER JOHN

(PAUSES. EYES BECOME FURROWED AT MENTION OF DR. CROW) What's that? What do you know of Dr. Crow?

BERNARD

Take it easy....He was part of the experience.....Do you know him? (ELDER JOHN IS SILENT AND TROUBLED.) Well, do you? (AGAIN, SILENCE) Look, you're asking me to appear before an assembly of the whole flock and tell them what it was like to come down South on the surface, tell them a tale that will demonstrate the importance of trusting and helping your neighbor. I'm willing to risk humiliation for me—and possibly another....by exposing some very personal memories, but you won't even tell me what you know about Dr. Crow. I'm not some sort of simpleton, you know.

ELDER JOHN

(PAUSE) You're right, of course....(WITH DIFFICULTY)....Dr. Crow....was one of us.

BERNARD

What do you mean, "one of us"?

ELDER JOHN

A sparrow....like me, like you. A wonderful singer named (PRONOUNCES SLOWLY) "Roger Dodger"... "Roger Dodger, a timid lad....but with a great hunger for power. Some very strange birds began visiting his nest. One day, there was a great storm near his place, with all sorts of lightning and thunder. Next day, we discovered that Roger's feathers were becoming black and shiny. He almost died. When we had nursed him back to health, the strange birds came back and took him away. We didn't understand. But we knew that it was very serious—very serious indeed.

BERNARD

(SITS DOWN IN SHOCK) Could he....

ELDER JOHN

What?

BERNARD

Could he.....sing?...After?

ELDER JOHN

(PAUSE, WITH GREAT SADNESS) Awwww, Bernard. Tell me it's not so (BERNARD IS SILENT) No, he couldn't sing. All he could say is a hideous, rasping "caw, caw, caw." .....Bernard, can you still sing?

BERNARD

Caw, caw, caw....(HE STARTS CRYING.) I gave him my song in order to fly here. I knew of no other way! I had promised Bertha! I could have told the flock a dozen tales, each of which would have shown them the way. Now, I can tell them nothing....nothing! All of my life, I have wanted to do something great and good, something true and whole that would have justified all my failures. I could have shown the songbirds how to sing...now I dare not show my face.

ELDER JOHN

(TAKING BERNARD IN HIS ARMS LIKE HE WOULD A BABY) It's not your fault, Bernard.....You must never forget that.

BERNARD

(GRADUALLY DRYING HIS EYES AND SLOWLY GATHERING STRENGTH) That's what he would have wanted, that damned Crow. He wanted to break me. And all the time, I thought he only wanted to rob people of their dreams, which he did countless times and which god knows is pathetic. No.-he also wanted me to say exactly that...."If not my fault." Well, whose is it if not mine?.....Leave me, Elder John. I do appreciate your good will. But now I have to see his shiny black highness.

*ELDER JOHN EXITS. BERNARD BRINGS HIS HANDS UP AND FORWARD IN A PROFOUND MANNER. THE LIGHT BECOMES DIMMER. BERNARD PULLS BACK: HIS HANDS AND EXTENDS THEM SUDDENLY. THERE IS LIGHTNING AND THUNDER. SUDDENLY, THE STAGE BECOMES DARK.*

END OF SCENE TWENTY-FOUR

## Scene Twenty-Five

*Darkened stage. A spotlight slowly comes up on Dr. Crow, who is comfortably seated in a captain's chair.*

DR. CROW

You called? (NO ANSWER FROM BERNARD, WHO IS STANDING A FEW FEET FROM DR. CROW.) What "i" did I fail to dot? Which "t" did I fail to cross? None. You flew—very well, I might add....to your flock. You sang your final song on your first flight. The contract was flawlessly executed.

BERNARD

(EVER SO SLIGHTLY INTIMIDATED) It isn't that.....

DR. CROW

(IN A RAGE, HE FLIES OUT OF HIS CHAIR AND POUNCES AROUND THE STAGE.) Then what is it? How dare you cast aspersions on my name in front of Elder John...."He wanted me to say exactly that, 'It's not my fault.'".....What kind of adolescent doo-doo is that?.....I do nothing wrong....It's you milk sops who want magic to fill a huge, yawning gap in your soul or your will. And then you have the nerve to summon me with lightning and thunder!....This is the world, Little Bernie. And we each and every one of us does "business" to survive. Sometimes it's nice business sometimes it stinks to high heaven. That's the way the world is. Little Bernie like it or not.

BERNARD

Don't call me "Little Bernie"....I find it offensive.

DR. CROW

A thousand pardons. Mister Bernard. A thousand pardons.

BERNARD

Where is your flock? (DR. CROW NARROWS HIS EYES AND COCKS HIS HEAD SIDEWAYS TO INDICATE THAT HE DOES NOT FOLLOW.) Your flock...Where is it? All birds have flocks.

DR. CROW

After a certain point in life, one moves beyond the "flock."

BERNARD

Even though it goes to hell! You have your lofty position. Who cares about those poor slobbs feeding at the trough. Even though the honorable men and women who allowed you to have time to think and study and equip you for your....present status...Well, honor has its price, doesn't it. If they were fool enough to be honorable and pay it, it's not your fault. Dr. Crow. Is it?

DR. CROW

This is getting tedious, Mister Bernard.

BERNARD

(EXPLODING AS DID DR. CROW) *It's not your fault, is it?*

DR. CROW

(ANGRILY) *No...It's not.* Frankly, it has nothing to do with me. It is not part of my calculus.

BERNARD

Your calculus. What is the value of your calculus. If you could make the moon itself explode into millions of luminescent droplets...how would that change one iota the things that you have to do and to keep from doing in your life. We all have roots whether we like it or not. And you are no stronger than your roots—If they begin to rot, you begin to rot.....(THESE WORDS GIVE DR. CROW PAUSE.) Responsibility does exist. Things can be "our fault" no matter how high we rise or how low we fall. No matter how shiny the lustrous black clothes we wear, we still rot if bad things are our fault. Look at this flock....It is rotting. And when it falls to the ground to be eaten by maggots, you, All-Powerful Dr. Crow, will fall with it because your roots are here. I am part of this flock, and I can't give them what they need to survive....Simple songs that I took for granted....! traded them for glorious flight....and it was glorious and how I wish....I wish.....I wish that I could forget about everything and climb and dive all the moments of my life and forget about broken hearts.

DR. CROW

There isn't one single creature that hasn't regretted his or her transformation sooner or later.

BERNARD

Flying for the sheer sake of flying is the most wonderful thing that's ever happened to me. I enjoyed singing, but flying is sheer beauty.

DR. CROW

Then what are we talking about?

BERNARD

You have to give me back my song.

DR. CROW

Welcome to the crowd. They all want it back—but they never want to give up what they got in return. Do you?

BERNARD

No....But if that's what it would take...*Yes.* (THE SPEAKING OF THIS WORD "YES" BRINGS DISTANT THUNDER—

DR. CROW

(SLIGHTLY NERVOUS) I believe we have a bit of posturing here. Something to make you forget about guilt when you climb and dive like a teenager in love (DR CROW PAUSES, THEN BECOMES DEADLY SERIOUS.).....If I were to offer it to you here and now, you would say "No."

BERNARD

Try me. (A CLOSER CRASH OF LIGHTNING FOLLOWED BY THUNDER.)

DR. CROW

This is not some kiddy show-off.... You have absolutely no idea of the awesome size of the dark powers you are tempting. I advise you to quit now while you're ahead.

BERNARD

Make your offer.

DR. CROW

You should *let it be.* (TURNS, STARTS TO EXIT, THEN CURIOUSLY, STOPS AND STARES AT BERNARD)

BERNARD

(GRABS DR. CROW'S ARM AND SHOUTS) I said "Try me."

DR. CROW

You are leaving me no choice but to do something we both will regret immediately and for as long as we live.

*THE DISPLAY OF LIGHTNING AND THUNDER INCREASES AND CARE MUST BE TAKEN SO THAT IT DOES NOT INTERFERE WITH THE AUDIENCE'S UNDERSTANDING OF WHAT THE CHARACTERS ARE SAYING.*

BERNARD

Are you afraid for yourself or for me.

DR. CROW

I fear nothing.....That's what I gave up...*fear*...I used to be afraid of everything...The opposite of fear is power. That is who I am now. Power. I drink it like fine wine. I feast on it. I know the consequences of what you are fooling around with, and they are awesome, but I no longer know fear.

BERNARD

(WITH THE SLIGHTEST WAVER) What—what are the...consequences?

DR. CROW

(WITH SLIGHT RELIEF) Do you really think I would tell you?

BERNARD

(PAUSE. THEN WITH GREAT DELIBERATION) I want to reverse the transformations that have occurred with Dr. Crow and myself, Bernard the sparrow. (POWERFUL LIGHTNING, RAIN AND THUNDER)

DR. CROW

(ANGRILY) What are you doing? You dare to try to speak for me! Stop! (CATCHES BERNARD, PUTS HIS HAND OVER BERNARD'S MOUTH. BERNARD FIGHTS FREE.)

BERNARD

I say for a second time, I want to reverse the transformation of Dr. Crow and Bernard. (AGAIN, POWERFUL LIGHTNING, WIND AND LASHING RAIN, THUNDER.)

DR. CROW

(TAKES OUT HIS "BOOK OF FAVORS" AND OPENS IT OSTENTATIOUSLY TO A CERTAIN PAGE. HE READS WITH LIFTED LEFT ARM) I call on Bastamos, Keyralike and Zebulon, spirits and shadowy beings of the underworld, to come forth and put a swift end to this attempted reversal of an ultimate transformation. (THE THREE FIGURES WITH HEAVY ROBES AND HOODS COVERING THEIR FACES ENTER AS THEIR NAMES ARE CALLED. AFTER THEY HAVE MADE THEIR IMPRESSIVELY SLOW ENTRANCE, THEY ATTEMPT TO CAPTURE BERNARD. THEY ARE RELATIVELY SLOW MOVING AND HE PUSHES THEM AWAY. WHEN HE DOES, THEY FALL AND ARE SLOW TO RISE.)

BERNARD

I call on Bastamos, Keyralike and Zebulon to cease and desist from their efforts to stop the proper exercise of the will of a living being to effect reversal of the full and complete

transformation of Dr. Crow and me, Bernard. (THE HOODED FIGURES ARE DRIVEN TERMBLING FROM BERNARD AND FROM DR. CROW, BUT DO NOT EXIT.)

DR. CROW

Bernard....You don't know what you are doing! Don't let your ignorance condemn us both to a living hell. Once the reversal has occurred, it cannot itself be reversed.

BERNARD

I say for the third and final time, I wish to effect the reversal of the transformation of myself.....from a being who can fly to one who cannot fly, and from a being who cannot sing to one who can sing as before. And reverse Dr. Crow from a being of supernatural power to a sparrow who can fear as any other. These I command.

*THERE FOLLOWS A CRESCENDO OF LIGHTNING WIND RAIN THUNDER, AND STRANGE, DISCORDANT SOUND EFFECTS DRCROW IS SEIZED AND TAKEN OFFSTAGE BY THE FIGURES OF THE UNDERWORLD. INCREMENTALLY, THE SOUND EFFECTS BECOME HARMONIOUS BERNARD TRIES TO FLY, BUT QUICKLY SEES THAT HE CANNOT.*

*FOR A FEW MOMENTS THE SOUNDS AND LIGHT EFFECTS ARE INTENSE. THEY EVERYTHING BECOMES SILENT. THERE IS PLAYED THE BEGINNING OF A "NOW I CAN FLY" WITH BERNARD SINGING, CAUTIOUSLY AT FIRST, NOT SURE THAT HE CAN SING.*

### Now I Fly

I

Now I fly to my dreams;  
I can go where I was meant to-  
Remembering earth fall away,  
Remembering sky become my home.

*SEVERELY WEAKENED BY THE EXPERIENCE HE HAS IT 1ST TWEM THROUGH, BERNARD SINGS ONE MORE VERSE TO THE SONG.*

But now at last,  
I am without shame,  
I am without blame.  
I shout on new wings,  
no weak excuse  
each of my days,  
those lovely nights  
I'll share.

*DR. CROW IS DUMPED BY THE HOODED FIGURES ONTO THE STAGE. THE THREE OF THEM EXIT. DR CROW HAS BEENDEFROCI^DTCO^ THE LEAST.*

*HIS ONCE-BEAUTIFUL ROBES ARE NOW SINGED AND TORN AND THERE IS A LITTLE SMOKE STILL RISING FROM HIM. THE PAGES HAVE BEEN RIPPEED FROM HIS BOOK. THE COVERS ARE SMUDGED WITH ASH, AS IS HIS FACE. HIS LOFTY, ELEGANT DEMEANOR IS GONE. BERNARD IS INTACT AND PEACEFUL. THE WEATHER HAS BECOME CALM. BERNARD RUSHES OVER TO DR. CROW TO CARE FOR HIM. DR. CROW CRINGES, FEARFUL OF WHAT BERNARD MIGHT DO.*

DR. CROW

OOhhh. I hurt all over. How...how did you know what to do?

BERNARD

I didn't. I guessed....! had read a couple of lines on reversal ...and got lucky....So. You need some mending. I am forever in your debt. Dr. Crow.

DR. CROW

How can you say that?

BERNARD

You could have turned around and walked out....I know you could. But you didn't. I got the strong sense that you needed help.....

DR. CROW

Now that it's done, I'm relieved.....But I never in a thousand years could have given it all up.

BERNARD

If I can convince the flock to migrate, I will ask them to start getting ready immediately. That includes you, I suppose. Elder John and I will hold down the fort.

ELDER JOHN

(ELDER JOHN ENTERS WITH A SOMEWHAT PALE AND SUBDUED BURTON.)  
The whole flock saw what happened. It struck deep fear into all of our hearts. Convincing them not to migrate would be the job now. You two (BERNARD AND DR. CROW) will come with me, and I will nurse you back to health. You will never know what you have done for your flock...and for yourselves, Bernard and Dr. Crow...or is it "Roger Dodger" again?

DR. CROW

"Roger Dodger" forevermore. I want no credit whatsoever. I was not strong enough to break out alone. (PUTTING WEAK HAND ON BERNARD) It all belongs to this strong and steadfast heart to whom I owe a debt of everlasting gratitude.

BERTHA

(ENTERS AND RUSHES TO BERNARD) I knew you would do it, Bernard. (THEY EMBRACE.) But I had no idea of what you would have to go through. Thank you, Bernard. Thank you. You are now and will remain our most prized hero. Legends will be started and they will grow

BERNARD

And in one of them, Bernard will be able to fly....as high as the sun and the stars....in a sky full of diamonds set in a universe of emeralds and sapphires, with dawn spreading her golden clouds everywhere. (THE WHOLE CAST SLOWLY ASSEMBLES ONSTAGE TO SING "HOMELANDS.")

### Homelands

Music and Lyrics by Clyde Coreil

#### I

*Crow (Rodger-Dodger)*

He's found what he did not know  
That he was looking for—

*Toolie and Pablito*

A place in our hearts, our memories  
In songs we'll sing forever more.

#### II

*Bernard (standing with Bertha and Burton, steps forward)*

Now that I near the rainbow,  
At last I'm free of dreams.  
I've found what I did not know  
That I was looking for—

*Beamy and Nose*

A place in our hearts, our memories  
In songs we'll sing forever more.

*Bernard*

I've found this precious homeland  
I never knew was mine.

#### III

*Toolie and Pablito (standing with Elder John)*

When our journey's ending,  
We might think that we're free;

*Beamy (with brilliance)*

But put two stars in night skies,  
A thousand dreams will come true. (*Many bits of tin foil are released from above.*)

*Angelina, Ellie, Rosa (standing with Bastamos, Keyralike, and Zebulon)*

Some new, some old, all magic-  
The man waves wide  
His golden wand, (*spotlight on pianist or conductor*)

*Nose and Blackie*

And shows us precious homelands  
We never knew were ours.

IV

*Crow, Pablito, Toolie*

Now that you've listened kindly,  
Now that our story's told;

*Nose*

Go out and look at heaven  
And find us in your heart-

*Angelina, Ellie, Blackie, Rosa*

You'll see all the diamonds shining  
In songs you sang so long ago.

*Bernard and Beamy*

You'll find a precious homeland  
You never knew was there.

V

*Bernard, Beamy, Toolie, Angelina, Nose, Pablito, Crow, Ellie, Blackie, Rosa*

We have found our rainbow (*arms extended to audience*)

In your hearts full of dreams.  
The starlight makes of night a dawn,  
A day of endless time-  
When past is present, future,  
No fortune teller's needed.  
Deep in our hearts we knew that (pause)  
This precious land is ours.

CURTAIN