

THE SANTA FE OPERA

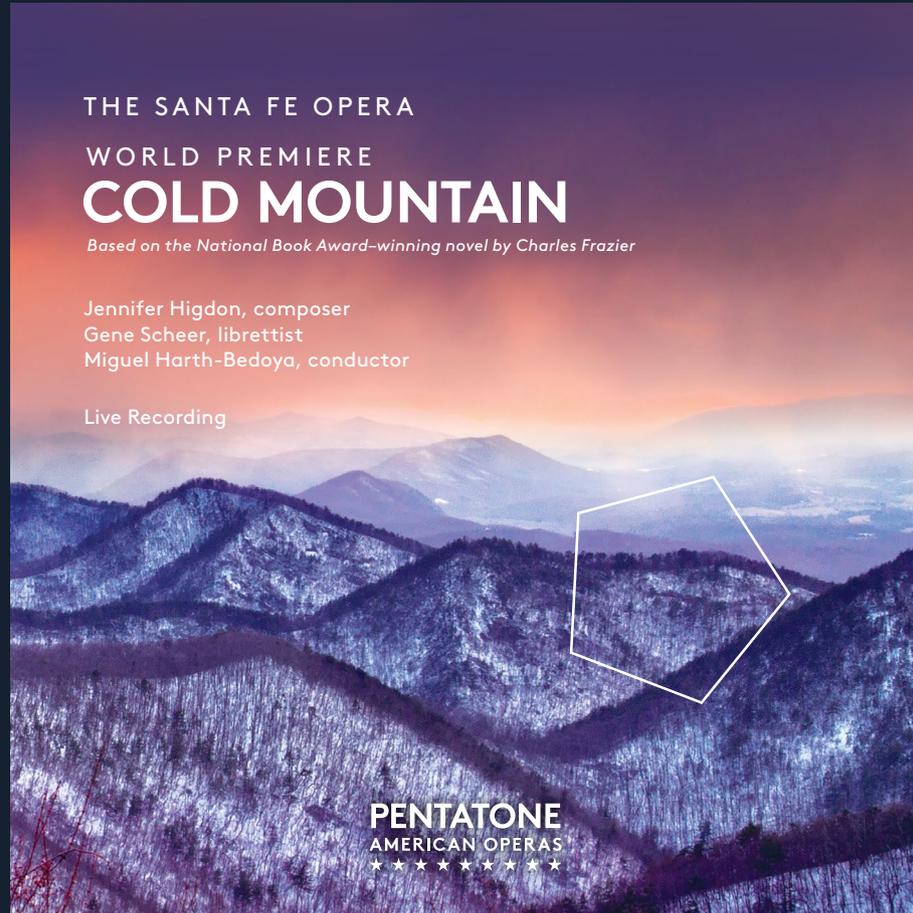
WORLD PREMIERE

COLD MOUNTAIN

Based on the National Book Award-winning novel by Charles Frazier

Jennifer Higdon, composer
Gene Scheer, librettist
Miguel Harth-Bedoya, conductor

Live Recording



PENTATONE
AMERICAN OPERAS
★★★★★★



THE SANTA FE OPERA

Content

The Santa Fe Opera	6
Track Information	8
Cast	10
Author's Note	12
Composer's Note	14
Librettist's Note	16
Biographies	18
Synopsis	22
Libretto	24
Acknowledgements	103
<i>American Operas Series</i>	104
Premium Sound and Outstanding Artists	106

Cold Mountain

Jennifer Higdon, Composer
Gene Scheer, Librettist

The Santa Fe Opera's production was co-commissioned and co-produced with Opera Philadelphia and Minnesota Opera, in collaboration with North Carolina Opera

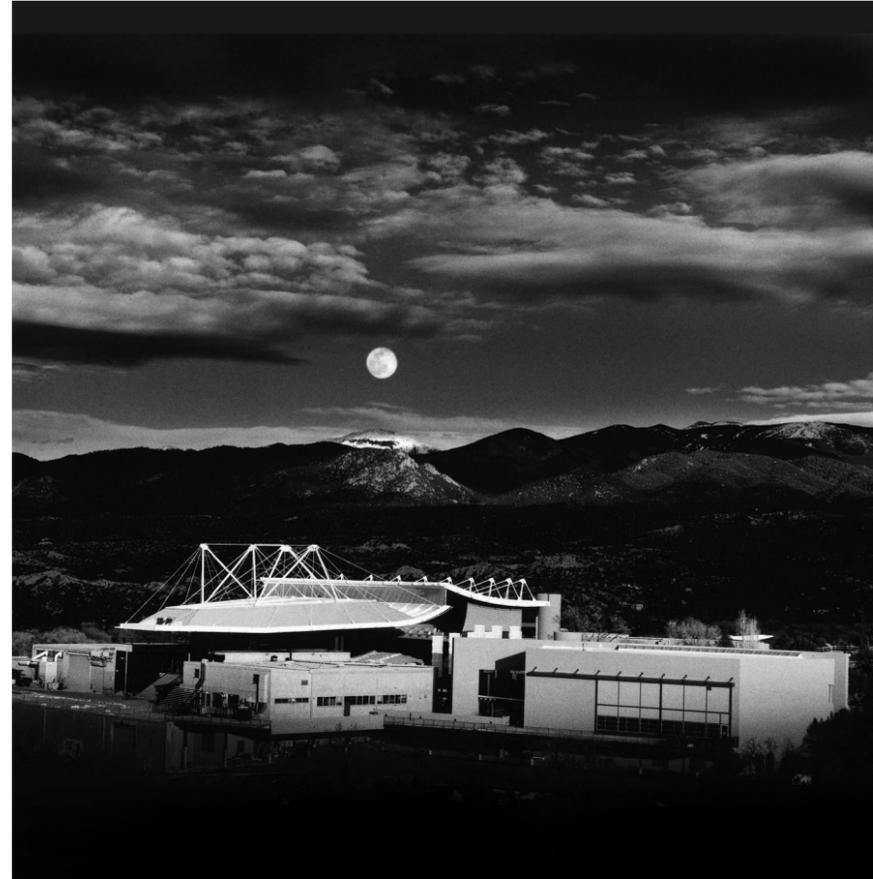
The Santa Fe Opera Orchestra
Miguel Harth-Bedoya, Conductor

Chorus – Members of The Santa Fe Opera Apprentice Program for Singers
Susanne Sheston, Chorus Master

Leonard Foglia, Stage Director
Robert Brill, Scenic Design
David C. Woolard, Costume Design
Brian Nason, Lighting Design
Elaine J. McCarthy, Projection Design
Rick Sordelet, Fight Director

This recording has been made possible, in part, by Jane Stieren Lacy and an anonymous donor. The world premiere production of *Cold Mountain* was underwritten by deeply appreciated grants from:

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The Santa Fe Opera

From the unlikelyst of beginnings — an opera company located hundreds of miles from any major city, featuring American singers in a wide-ranging and challenging repertory, and treating theatrical and musical values as equally important in its productions — The Santa Fe Opera has grown to become recognized as one of the world's leading cultural festivals.

Every summer since 1957, opera lovers have been drawn to the magnificent northern New Mexico mountains to enjoy productions at The Santa Fe Opera. Here, the company's dramatic adobe theater blends harmoniously with the landscape. It is this fusion of nature and art that leaves such an enduring impression on all who visit. More than half the audience comes from outside New Mexico, representing every state in the union as well as dozens of foreign countries, creating a significant impact on the economy of the State of New Mexico.

The Santa Fe Opera's mission is to advance the operatic art form by presenting ensemble performances of the highest quality in a unique setting with a varied repertoire of new, rarely performed, and standard works; to ensure the excellence of opera's future through apprentice

programs for singers, technicians and arts administrators; and to foster and enrich an understanding and appreciation of opera among a diverse public. More than 2,000 performances of 164 different operas have been given here, including fourteen world premieres and 45 American premieres.

The company was founded by the late John Crosby, a young conductor from New York, who had an idea of starting an opera company to give American singers an opportunity to learn and perform new roles in a setting that allowed ample time to rehearse and prepare each production. Crosby was succeeded as founding General Director by Richard Gaddes in 2000. During his tenure in Santa Fe he implemented a wide range of new programming, including community-based productions in the off-season and simulcasts to Albuquerque and a park in downtown Santa Fe. He retired following the 2008 season when Charles MacKay became the third General Director in The Santa Fe Opera's history. Under MacKay's leadership, the Opera has maintained a balanced budget through a tumultuous economic period and continues to present bold and innovative repertory.

Track Information

CD 1 ACT I (PTC 5186 524)

1	Scene One: Bill Owens' farm <i>"Peaches In The Summertime"</i>	4. 33
2	Scene Two: Confederate hospital, Raleigh, North Carolina <i>"What Was His Name?"</i>	6. 08
3	Scene Two: Inman's aria <i>"The Metal Age"</i>	6. 09
4	Scene Three: A churchyard on Cold Mountain <i>"I Don't Like That Man"</i>	4. 30
5	Scene Four: Black Cove Farm - Ada meets Ruby <i>"Who Ya' Talkin' To?"</i>	4. 01
6	Scene Five: A gorge along a river <i>"We Once Lived In A Land Of Paradise"</i>	6. 44
7	Scene Six: Early morning, Black Cove Farm <i>"Sun's Up. You'll Eat Later..."</i>	2. 32
8	Scene Six: Ruby's aria <i>"My Only Teacher Was Hunger"</i>	6. 34
9	Scene Six: Ada and Inman duet <i>"Why Can't We?"</i>	3. 35
10	Scene Seven: Cape Fear River <i>"Mister, How Much To Ferry Me Across?"</i>	2. 36
11	Scene Eight: The next morning, along the banks of the river <i>"Look At Me, I'm Floating"</i>	6. 07
12	Scene Nine: Black Cove Farm <i>"Listen"</i>	8. 08
13	Scene Nine: Teague's aria <i>"A Fence Is A Good Thing"</i>	3. 37
14	Scene Ten: The Chain Gang <i>"I Told You. I'm A Preacher!"</i>	2. 47
15	Scene Ten: Ada and Inman duet <i>"Come Back To Cold Mountain"</i>	4. 58

Total playing time CD 1: 73.10

CD 2 ACT II (PTC 5186 525)

1	Opening	0. 58
2	Scene One: Lucinda and Inman duet <i>"Is That All You Got?"</i>	7. 08
3	Scene Two <i>"Interlude: Inman Walking"</i>	1. 09
4	Scene Three : Ada and Inman duet <i>"Orion"</i>	2. 46
5	Scene Four: Stobrod's campsite <i>"Bless You, Ruby"</i>	6. 13
6	Scene Five: Sara's cabin <i>"Your Baby Sick?"</i>	6. 31
7	Scene Six: Black Cove Farm <i>"Funny Lookin' Scarecrow..."</i>	4. 31
8	Scene Seven: Sara's cabin <i>"Get Up! Quick!"</i>	2. 32
9	Scene Eight: Quintet <i>"I Should Be Cryin' But I Just Feel Numb"</i>	2. 41
10	Scene Nine: Stobrod's campsite <i>"Howdy, Strangers... Keep Playin'..."</i>	4. 51
11	Scene Ten: Walking up Cold Mountain <i>"Our Beautiful Country"</i>	4. 17
12	Scene Ten <i>"Ada's aria"</i>	4. 40
13	Scene Eleven: Deep in the woods on Cold Mountain <i>"I'm Lost"</i>	3. 30
14	Scene Twelve: Ruby and Ada's campsite <i>"You Just Need To Rest. We'll Talk Later."</i>	6. 31
15	Scene Twelve: Chorus <i>"Tell Her"</i>	11. 39
16	Scene Thirteen: Black Cove Farm <i>"Epilogue, nine years later"</i>	2. 20

Total playing time CD 2: 72. 30

Cast

Teague Jay Hunter Morris	Solomon Veasey Roger Honeywell	Stobrod Thewes Kevin Burdette	Charlie Daniel Bates
Owens Robert Pomakov	Laura Andrea Núñez	Lucinda Deborah Nansteel	Ethan Robert Pomakov
Owens' Son Adrian Kramer	Lila Bridgette Gan	Pangle Anthony Michaels-Moore	Thomas Tyler Putnam
W.P. Inman Nathan Gunn	Katie Heather Phillips	Reid Roy Hage	Birch Nicholas Ottersberg
A Blind Man Kevin Burdette	Olivia Shabnam Kalbasi	Sara Chelsea Basler	Ada's Daughter Cadence Dennis
Ada Monroe Isabel Leonard	Claire Megan Marino		
Monroe Anthony Michaels-Moore	Junior Daniel Bates	The Santa Fe Opera Orchestra Miguel Harth-Bedoya , Conductor	
Ruby Thewes Emily Fons	Chain Gang Guards Roy Hage Anthony Michaels-Moore Robert Pomakov	Chorus – Members of The Santa Fe Opera Apprentice Program for Singers Susanne Sheston , Chorus Master	

Back to Cold Mountain

Charles Frazier, Author

Autumn 1989, I went to Jackson Hole, Wyoming for a sort of writer's retreat. I was working on a novel set in the contemporary world. The main character drove a black Audi. Sometime during that trip, the image of two women appeared out of nowhere in my mind. It was like looking at a painting. They stood together on a cold day by a fire in the backyard of an Appalachian farmhouse. Their clothes suggested the nineteenth century and that one woman was more refined than the other. I didn't know who they were, and they had nothing to do with the book I was working on, but I wrote a page describing that static scene.

A month later, back in North Carolina, my father shared a bit of family history

about W.P. Inman's journey home and his death at the hands of Teague's Home Guard near the end of the Civil War. Within a week I abandoned the previous book and started writing *Cold Mountain*. In my original conception, the book would have been brief, intensely violent, and hopeless. But that idea didn't last long because Ada and Ruby stepped out of that painting, off that page of description to save me and the book.

Twenty-six years later, sitting in the audience for the premiere of the opera in Santa Fe, seeing and hearing that story and those characters through the eyes and ears of artists as gifted and accomplished as Jennifer Higdon and Gene Scheer, was an overwhelmingly gratifying experience. I won't try to write about the music and the voices; I don't have the technical vocabulary. I'll just say that the music, the voices

and the luminous physical presences of Nathan Gunn, Isabel Leonard, Emily Fons, Jay Hunter Morris, Kevin Burdette, and Roger Honeywell brought Inman and Ada and Ruby, Teague and Stobrod and Veasey back to me with a very simple feeling: Old friends long parted, happily meet again under different circumstances.

Leading up to the premiere, I was often asked by journalists and others about my thoughts concerning adaptation for film and opera. A frequent assumption was that I surely wanted as much control over the final product as possible, and that I would particularly dislike any change, however minor, from my novel. People sometimes failed to believe my answers. For example, I think that a sure way to make a bad adaptation of almost all novels is to try for absolute faithfulness. Movies

and operas and novels are very different beasts; some bits of anatomy are transplantable, but many are not. And as for control, I use that at the very beginning. Somebody wants to adapt my work, I talk with them, and go by instinct. Yes or no. After that, when artists like Higdon, Scheer, and Anthony Minghella are engaging with my work to create something of their own, I think my role is to answer questions, ask a few, and offer support and encouragement. And also to enjoy the adventure of learning more about the process of making art by watching other artists with different tools than mine reimagine and revive these characters and scenes in wonderful new ways.

Journey to Cold Mountain

Jennifer Higdon, Composer

After years of searching for a story that would be the focus of my first opera, I read the first several pages of Charles Frazier’s award-winning *Cold Mountain* and realized this was it. The novel resonated in a profound manner: the characters, the physical setting, the poetic structure of Frazier’s written lines. It didn’t occur to me at the time that the most likely reason for such an immediate attraction was the familiarity of everything about the book. It wasn’t until my fourth time through the novel that I became aware of the map in the front. Staring at the jagged line denoting the real Cold Mountain’s location to the western edge of North Carolina, I suddenly flashed on the realization that the farm where I spent most of

my youth in East Tennessee was very close to that line. Looking to confirm my suspicion, I checked and discovered that the family farm was a mere 60 miles, as the crow flies, from Cold Mountain. Writing this opera would be a recollection of the landscape of my formative years...a familiarity that I would welcome in a new-to-me genre.

How to capture the journey of these characters, while musically painting their landscape? I had the heavenly task of figuring out how Inman, Ada, and Ruby would sound, especially in contrast to the less-than-savory Veasey and Teague. I searched to find the collective pain of soldiers — living, dying, and gone. And along the way I encountered several women who were marking each day in a journey of survival (Lucinda and Sara), and the questionably-changed Stobrod. Each person carried their own worries,

exhaustion, fear, love, and grief. At first, the composing was slow...trying to find the harmonies, melodies, tempos, and orchestral coloring that each character demanded. It was like feeling my way through darkness, but each discovery provided a spot of light. By the time we completed the workshop of the first act at The Curtis Institute of Music, I started to gain confidence in the musical lines that had been committed to the page. The second act came easier, almost as if the characters themselves were convinced of what their music should say, and they were adamant that I follow their wishes. There were twists and turns that I had not anticipated, and which I first resisted. But giving in, I discovered that the characters’ needs were different from what I had thought. For the more than two years of composing, they were living in my head, day and night. So it was

a surprise, as I embarked on the final scenes, to find that various characters were leaving the stage of my mind, and that as I was writing the final measures, there literally remained only Ada. Putting a double bar at the end of the last measure, I could see her leaving the room, and closing the door behind her. There was silence...a very loud, lonely silence. As I sat there, I said a little prayer of thanks, to each and every person that had guided me, and for the author, Charles Frazier, for sharing and for the musicians who would bring it all to life and for you, the audience, who would grant us the grace of your hearing. Thank you.

Ascending Cold Mountain

Gene Scheer, Librettist

In his essay “Why Read the Classics?,” Italo Calvino defines a classic as “a book that has never finished saying what it has to say.” Having spent almost two years distilling Charles Frazier’s *Cold Mountain*, into a libretto, I still find myself surprised by the ways that it continues to resonate deeply, how it continues to have something to say.

At the start of the project, when Charles and I drove up to Cold Mountain, I explained that my goal was to produce the scaffolding around which Jennifer Higdon could re-imagine the story through her inspired music. When adapting something for an opera, my starting thought is “how can I enable music to explore

the feelings woven into the marrow of the source?”

Thus the first question is not what to cut or include, but rather: what is it about this story that music can communicate on its own? How can the narrative be structured to allow music to reinvent the experience?

It may seem self-evident, but this is why opera exists. We come to opera for the unique catharsis that only music can provide.

Running counter to that imperative is the strong gravitational pull I feel of wanting to include all of the details that make up the source. I’ve often worked for days wondering: “How can I not include that?” It all seems essential because, in the written form, all of the details of a great literary work are essential.

But the written elements of an opera are a different matter. And, curiously, transforming narrative art into an active theatrical form doesn’t mean that the narrator no longer exists. Rather, the narrative voice in opera is reborn in the voice of the composer.

Later that night at dinner, as glasses of bourbon were consumed, the topic eventually returned to how the transformation from page to stage takes place. I explained that I wanted to structure the story in a way that made it as active as possible.

By “active” I did not mean frenetic, or even physical. Nor was I looking for “choices” that result in histrionic confrontations. What I intended to convey is that the transformative journeys that Inman, Ada, and Ruby undertake result from acts of their will. The drama is not about what the

war does to them; it is about how they respond, how they choose to grow and to endure.

After nearly five hours of food, drink, and conversation with the Fraziers, the dinner was over. The next day I set off for an inn just off the Appalachian Trail to begin writing the piece. Amazingly, I discovered that the inn was an old farmhouse that had been run by women during the “War of Yankee Aggression.”

Sitting at my writing table, I felt like I could hear Ruby and Ada outside on the porch. I still hear their voices; sometimes they are speaking and now, after the wonderful premiere at Santa Fe, they’re sometimes singing, but they’re still out there. It seems certain they will never finish saying what they have to say.



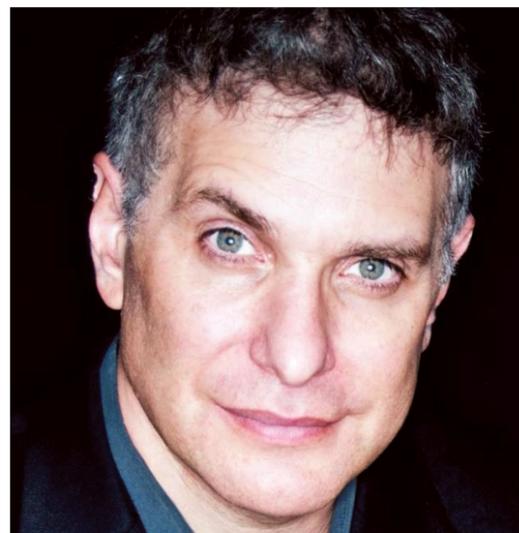
Jennifer Higdon

Jennifer Higdon (b. Brooklyn, NY, December 31, 1962) taught herself to play flute at the age of 15 and began formal musical studies at 18, with an even later start in composition at the age of 21. Despite this challenge, Higdon has become a major figure in contemporary classical music and is one of America's most frequently performed composers.

Higdon's list of commissioners is extensive and illustrious and includes, among others: The Philadelphia Orchestra, the Cleveland Orchestra, the Chicago Symphony, and the Minnesota Orchestra. Solo artists who have commissioned and premiered her works include baritone Thomas Hampson, violinists Hilary Hahn and Jennifer Koh, and pianists Yuja Wang and Gary Graffman.

Higdon is the recipient of the Pulitzer Prize for her *Violin Concerto*, a Grammy for her *Percussion Concerto*, and has also been awarded a Guggenheim Fellowship, a Koussevitzky Fellowship, a Pew Fellowship, and two awards from the American Academy of Arts and Letters. She has served in the capacity of composer-in-residence at various festivals, universities, and orchestras around the country. Her works are recorded on more than 60 cds. Higdon holds the Rock Chair in Composition at The Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia.

For more information, visit www.jenniferhigdon.com



Gene Scheer

Mr. Scheer's work is noted for its scope and versatility. With the composer Jake Heggie he has collaborated on many projects, including the critically acclaimed Dallas Opera world premiere of *Moby-Dick*, starring Ben Heppner; *Three Decembers* (Houston Grand Opera), which starred Frederica von Stade; and *To Hell and Back* (Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra), which featured Patti LuPone. Other works by Scheer and Heggie include *Camille Claudel: Into the fire*, a song cycle premiered by Joyce DiDonato. Mr. Scheer worked as librettist with Tobias Picker on *An American Tragedy*, which premiered at The Metropolitan Opera in 2005 as well as *Therese Raquin*, written for the Dallas Opera in 2001. Other collaborations include the lyrics for Wynton Marsalis's

It Never Goes Away, featured in Mr. Marsalis's work *Congo Square*. With Steven Stucky, Mr. Scheer wrote the Grammy-nominated oratorio *August 4, 1964*. With Joby Talbot, Mr. Scheer wrote the opera *Everest*, premiered by the Dallas Opera. Also a composer in his own right, Mr. Scheer has written songs for singers such as Renée Fleming, Stephanie Blythe, Denyce Graves, and Nathan Gunn. Ken Burns prominently featured Mr. Scheer's song "American Anthem" (as sung by Norah Jones) in his Emmy Award-winning World War II documentary for PBS entitled *The War*.

For more information, visit www.genescheer.com

Synopsis

ACT I

Teague, the leader of the local Home Guard, is hunting down Civil War deserters.

W.P. Inman, a Confederate soldier, decides to desert and return home to his beloved Ada. On his journey, Inman meets Solomon Veasey, whom he stops from committing murder. Meanwhile, the once-privileged Ada lives a life of deprivation at Black Cove Farm until she meets Ruby, a mountain woman who teaches Ada about farming and surviving.

Inman reenounters Veasey near a river while fleeing the Home Guard, and bargains with him for passage across the water. Fate and weather conspire against the pair, who capsize and drift downriver. The next morning, Lila and her three sisters stumble upon

the two men. Lila's husband drugs Inman and Veasey before giving them up to the Home Guard. The men are put on a chain gang of deserters.

Back at the farm, Ruby finds her estranged father Stobrod trying to steal food. She wants nothing to do with him, despite his assertions that he has changed. When Teague approaches, Ruby hides her father, but later orders him to stay away.

Meanwhile, Inman starts an insurrection, but the guards shoot the entire chain gang and leave. A wounded Inman is the lone survivor. He relives the day he bid Ada farewell, but the memory dissolves to the gruesome reality of the war: Inman, chained to six dead men, loses consciousness.

ACT II

Lucinda, a runaway slave, is rifling through the pockets of the dead prisoners when Inman stirs and startles her. She frees him, and Inman continues his journey.

Back at Black Cove Farm, Stobrod and his travelling companion Pangle are still relying upon Ruby and Ada for sustenance. Stobrod tries to convince Ruby that he is a new man, but she remains skeptical.

Inman now happens upon Sara, a war widow, who is trying desperately to comfort her baby. Inman helps her, gains her trust, and is invited to spend the night.

At Black Cove Farm, Teague appears. He has brought a copy of the newspaper that lists the names of

deserters. Ruby sees her father's name, as Teague intended. The next morning, Inman and Sara must react quickly when Union soldiers appear.

At a campfire in the woods, Teague and his men confront Stobrod and Pangle. Both men are shot and left for dead.

Ada goes hunting deep in the woods, where she and Inman finally reunite. Although both are deeply altered by the war, they manage to promise themselves to each other — but Teague is not done pursuing deserters. And the next morning when they wake, they are unaware that it will be the last morning they spend together...

Libretto

ACT I

SCENE ONE: Bill Owens' farm

Lights up on Bill Owens' farm. Late afternoon. There is a large hole and piles of dirt where a stump has just been removed. From the distance, we hear Teague singing a song to himself as he approaches. Bill Owens, an old man, hears Teague's voice and comes outside holding a rifle and, in a panic, quickly loads it.

Teague

Peaches in the summertime,
Apples in the fall.
If I can't have me that girl,
I don't want none at all. *(Teague enters)*
I wish I had a banjo string,
Made of gold and twine,
And every tune I'd play on it,
I'd wish that girl was mine...

Owens

Who's there?

Teague

Who am I?

1

Owens

Teague.

Teague

How 'bout that! You ask questions ... already know the answers. So tell me why'd I make my way, all the way out here?

Owens

I don't know.

Teague

That loaded gun tells me you've a notion.

Owens

You're Home Guard. Lookin' for outliers...

Teague

How 'bout that ... You're a seer ... a prophet ... Hallelujah!
Blessed with vision... Hallelujah!
You know what people are thinking?
So ... what am I thinking? Tell me, Owens...

Owens

I haven't seen a soul.

Teague

I best just go back to town then. Is that what you are saying?

(He examines the hole in the ground and sees many tools lying about)

Four feet of fresh dirt! That's a big job for one old man. I know your boy's here, Owens!

Owens points his gun at Teague. Suddenly from hidden positions Teague's cohorts appear. Each has a rifle pointed at Owens.

Teague

Drop it...

(Owens does so)

Can't have it! Deserters hidin' in the hills...
With our brave boys riskin' their lives
fightin' Yankees. Now where's your boy?

(Pause)

After all, you can see the future ...
Tell me, old man, what am I going to do?

Owens

If he were here ... I'd beg 'im.
Stay away ... Run away...
Never, never come out...

Teague

I could wait for him...
But I'm tired and I just don't want to.
Hallelujah. Amen!

"Hallelujah, amen" is the signal for his men. One of Teague's men suddenly stabs Owens. Teague motions to his cohorts and Owens, who is bleeding to death, is thrown into the hole in the ground. Two men start burying Owens alive.

Teague

Peaches in the summertime,
Apples in the fall,
If I can't have me that girl,
I don't want none at all.

Owens (To his son still hidden)

I'm beggin' ya'...
Stay away ... Run away ... Stay away ...
Run away... Never, never come out...

Owens is now silenced, covered with dirt and we hear Teague alone as his men fill the hole.

Teague

I wish I had a banjo string,
Made of gold and twine,
And every tune I'd play on it,
I'd wish that girl was mine!

Owens' son enters from where he has been hiding. He is wildly swinging an axe, which is quickly taken out of his hands. Crazed with grief, he tries to grab a shovel out of the hand of one on Teague's men.

Owens' Son

No! No! Father! Father! Leave him alone!
Get him out! It's my fault ... Father! Father!

Unable to get a shovel he starts digging frantically with his hands to free his father. He is held back, tied up and gagged by Teague's men. The boy's muffled screams continue as the men fill the hole.

Owens' Son

He has been gagged. The words are muffled, unintelligible.
...Oh, God! Oh, God!
Please ... Please ... No, no, I beg you!
Father! No! No!

Teague

It's your fault. All of this ... But it will be over soon. He's fightin' it out with his maker. Come on...

SCENE TWO:

**Confederate hospital,
Raleigh, North Carolina**

2

All exit. A musical transition drives to a sudden change in location and mood. The lights come up on a Confederate hospital. It is late at night. The men are up watching orderlies come in to take away

Balis, a soldier who has died in the night. As Balis is slowly put on a stretcher, a chorus of wounded wmen sings.

Chorus

What was his name?
What was his name?
Buried. Buried. Buried and forgotten.
When will this end?
What waits for me now?
When will this end?
What waits for me?
Richmond, Charlotte, Atlanta.
Oh, to be home, and safe...
Beyond reveille's reach.

Inman

Die here or return to the trenches...
What lingers with the dawn?
Do I want to know?
Close my eyes. When will it end?

Chorus

What were their names?
Buried, Buried, Buried and forgotten.
When will it end?
What were their names?
Buried, Buried, Buried and forgotten.
What was his name?
When will it end?

Kevin Burdette (*Blind Man*) and Nathan Gunn (*Inman*)



Inman, has walked with a cane, to a large window. He reads from Balis' notebook.

Inman

"The comeliest order on earth is but a heap of random sweepings."

All go back to sleep. The room is once again still. Inman looks out the large window. A blind man enters pushing a cart, selling boiled peanuts. Inman, who is getting over severe injuries, makes his way out the window and approaches the blind man. He is limping severely. His cane and the dragging of his leg form a cadence that the blind man recognizes.

Blind Man

Inman ... W.P. Inman...

Inman

Are you sure you're blind?

Blind Man

There's a rhythm to everything. From the sound of the wind in the poplars, to the crackle of green hick'ry in a fire... to the gait of a man walkin' with a cane, who no longer needs one...

Inman

Shit, glad you're not the doctor. My legs are gettin' stronger ... My neck's raw. But if I can walk ... they'll send me back.

Blind Man

I believe they will...

He takes a piece of newspaper forms a cone with it and places boiled peanuts inside which he hands to Inman.

Inman

Balis died last night. I found his journal: "We mark some days as fair, some as foul 'cause we don't see the character of every day is the same."

Blind Man

You believe that?

Inman

I believe a man's spirit can be blasted away. I'm a hut of bones ... nothing more. When you lost your eyes, you must of felt that too.

Blind Man

I didn't lose 'em ... never had 'em.

Inman

What would you pay right now to see? What would you pay for even ten minutes of sight? Plenty, I bet.

Blind Man

I'd not give a cent. I fear it might turn me hateful.

Inman

It's done that to me. Plenty I wish I'd never seen.

Blind Man

You said ten minutes. It's having a thing and the loss I'm talking about. Come on, cite me one instance where you wish you were blind.

Inman

Malvern Hill. Sharpsburg. The trenches in Petersburg. A morning like this. I dipped a crust of bread in a cup of broth. Turned my face to feel the sun... Suddenly, beneath our feet, dynamite thundered. Arms, shredded fingers, pieces of legs with boots still on them showered the earth... The metal age has come. And the crust of bread, clenched in my fist was drenched in blood. The metal age has come. Thousands and thousands in bright blue, shiny, factory made uniforms. We shot them and loaded. Shot them and loaded. For five hours, thousands and thousands of men.

3

And when we charged a General exclaimed: "They'll fall like rain dripping down from the eaves of a house." No ... there was nothing poetic, nothing as pure as a drop of water. Just bile and stench ... And there in the middle of it... A drummer boy crying, bleeding, dying... 'Let me help you, boy. Let me help...' Afraid, even of kindness... He shot me in the neck. The metal age has come. With the crust of bread, clenched in my fist, drenched with blood. The metal age has come.

Lights up on Ada, on another part of the stage in the churchyard. A rooster has just scratched her. When the lights come up on her she is wiping away the blood. In a disheveled state, she is crawling in the bushes trying unsuccessfully to reach an egg that's under a bush.

Ada

Shoo, shoo...

Teague and his cohorts enter. Walking by the graveyard. Teague sends him men on ahead.

Inman

After their retreat ... I lay there ... others rifled through pockets, and pulled boots off corpses...

All I could think about was a woman I knew.
Ada Monroe ... what are you doing now?

Teague

I nearly shot you! Thought you was a cat in the bushes.

Ada

You make a habit of shooting cats?

Teague

Mountain cats ... Wild mountain cats ... They're dangerous.

Ada

Do I look dangerous?

Teague

You look like you need lookin' after.

Inman

Ada Monroe ... what are you doing now?
Brushing your hair ... sketching a bouquet of lilacs.

Teague

Miss Monroe, what are you doing? Why are you on the ground?
But you'll clean up all right...

Inman

Oh, the scent of lilacs, I can hardly remember...

Teague

Let me help you...

Teague gets down on his knees and goes about getting the egg.

Ada

I'm sure there's just the one egg ... just overlooked it.

Blind Man

Heard the army is lookin' for deserters. If one were to disappear ... sooner than later seems prudent... Be careful, Inman...

The Blind Man exits.

Teague

Heard about your father. I reckon you'll be sellin' Black Cove farm...
(He gives her the egg) All alone don't work out here...

(Unctuously) Especially, for one ... as fine as you...

Inman

What are you doing, Ada Monroe?
Playing music and reading to your father...

Ada

Oh, you found it. Well, thank you.

Inman

Brushing your hair. Sketching a bouquet of lilacs...

Teague

Anytime... My name's Teague.

Ada

I know who you are...

Teague exits.

SCENE THREE
A churchyard on Cold Mountain 4

Imman exits. Ada sits down on the ground and leans on a gravestone. Monroe appears, among the gravestones.

Monroe

I don't like that man... *(Referring to Teague)*

Ada

Nothing to like. Not like Charleston here on Cold Mountain.
Everything is vertical.
Hard to keep a foothold.
Fallin' ever since we came.

Monroe

God will catch you. "That which shows God in me, fortifies me..."

Ada/Monroe

"...That which shows God out of me, makes me a wart and a wen..."

Ada

Back in Charleston I heard you preach that many times.

Monroe

God will feed the soul...

Ada

It's my stomach needs the feeding now. I should have married a man in Charleston.

Monroe

You didn't fall in love in Charleston. You fell in love in our church here.

Ada

Why Daddy ... I might have slipped... but I did not fall ... not that day...

Monroe

A congregation of faces buried in their hymnals. And a man not singing a word but looking at you with wonder...
Like the moon had suddenly appeared bright in the morning sky.

Inman appears. His appearance is completely altered. It is years before. He is dressed handsomely for a Sunday morning service. Ada is conjuring this memory.

Inman

I understand you are from Charleston.

Ada

Yes, I am. *(A lengthy, awkward pause)*
Just one question? Nothing more? *(Pause)*
Yes, I am from Charleston.

We came to the mountains for the air. Father was not well, so he took the church here. We're living at Black Cove farm. I value conversation. It's how the Good Lord sews us together.
I saw you lookin' at me all through the sermon. Surely you prepared more than one question. Questions unlock the world. So, you've only just one? Nothing more? *(Pause)* I believe that's like hunting with one bullet. If you miss, I fear the rest of the hunt will be a lackluster affair.

Inman

I'm not hunting you.

Ada

Then what are you doing?

Inman

You dropped your fan, and I thought you might like to have it back.

He hands it to her.

Ada

Thank you. *(Stuttering)* I am ... I ... I mean...

Inman

Out of bullets? *(Pause)*

Ada

I think it would show an amplitude of spirit, if you were to say something, anything right now.

Inman

You've been the subject of much speculation.

Ruby enters and watches the end of Ada's conversation with Inman. To Ruby it appears that Ada is talking to thin air.

Ada

Like a novelty?

Inman

No.

Ada

A challenge?

Inman

Not at all.

Ada

Well, then, you supply the simile.

Inman

Like grabbing a chestnut burr, at least thus far.

Ada

Like grabbing a chestnut burr, you say?

SCENE FOUR
Black Cove Farm,
Ada meets Ruby 5

Ruby is full of energy and chatters on and on while Ada tries to get an understanding of who this person is and what is being offered.

Ruby

Who ya' talking to? Have you gone crazy? 'Cause if you're crazy, I don't see how ... this'll ever work!

Ada

Pardon?

Ruby

That seems crazy to me. Nothing but crazy...

Talking to no one. *(Inman exits)*
And what's a "simile?"

She does not even wait for the answer. She's got a million things to say.

Ada

Pardon me, who are you?

Ruby

Old lady Swanger told me you're all alone and need help with the farm...

Ada

Pardon me. Please tell me...

Ruby

My name is Ruby. Help? You need ... a miracle. That's a fact.
Well, here I am. I have looked it over. If you could barter weeds, you'd be a rich woman.

Ada

I'm sorry. I'm confused ... Help?
But you're a woman!

Ruby

What's your point?
This is good land for corn and taters, but you've got one or two seeds in the ground! It's like you're sittin' on a whale, fishin' for guppies.



Ada
That's a simile.

Ruby
Oh, so it's a story with a point. Well, the point of the story here is you need help.

Ada
I do ... but rough work.

Ruby
Number one, if you've a horse we can plow all day.

Ada
Plow?

Ruby
Then we'll plant.

Ada
Plant?

Ruby
Then we'll harvest. Get this farm running.

Ada
I believe I need a man-hand for the job.

Ruby
Number two, every man worth hiring is off and gone. It's a harsh truth but it's the way of things.

Emily Fons (*Ruby*)

(She sees the egg that Ada has found)

Whatcha doing walkin' around a graveyard with an egg?

Ada
Found it under that bush. Had to shoo a rooster to get near it. He scratched me pretty bad. I was hungry.

Ruby shakes her head in disbelief.

Ruby
I heard about your daddy ... I am sorry...

Ada
I can't ever imagine the hurt going away.

Ruby
Mine was killed in the war. He knew two things. Number one: How to drink. Number two: How to pretend I didn't exist.

Ada
Your mother?

Ruby
Died when I was born...

Ada
We have something in common...

35

Ruby
Something in common?

Ada
Can you really run a farm? Can you keep us from going hungry? I could use some company... Who knows how long the war will last... The future's like a clock without any hands.

Ruby
Is that a "simile?"

Ada
It's a story with a point.

(Ruby sees and hears the rooster)

That's him, isn't it? I hate a floggin' rooster.

She goes after him.

Ada
Be careful. He's horrid.

Ruby breaks the neck of the rooster.

Ruby
Supper. We can talk about an arrangement while he's stewin'.

Ada
But I can't pay you.

36 Act I Scene Five

Ruby
Don't want no pay. I want to be your partner.

Ada
Can this work?

Ruby
It might ... Just don't ask me to empty your nightjar. Come on...

SCENE FIVE A gorge along a river

6

Veasey carries Laura, who is unconscious, to a cliff over-looking a river. He weeps for what he is about to do.

Veasey
Oh, Lord. Oh, Lord. Oh, Lord! We once lived in a land of paradise.

Inman enters. He's heard Veasey's plaintive cries, but does not want to approach him, to get involved. He quietly walks in the opposite direction, trying to remain unnoticed.

Veasey
We once hoped to be spared and redeemed.

Roger Honeywell (*Veasey*) and Andrea Núñez (*Laura*)



When Inman hears the following he cannot walk away. Though torn, he turns around and climbs up the cliff where Veasey stands. As Veasey sings the following, he picks Laura up and holds her body over the cliff.

Veasey

Oh, my angel. I am sorry for what I am about to do... But there's no other way. Oh, my angel. I'm sending you to a better world.

Inman climbs up the cliff and pulls out his gun just before Veasey drops Laura's body into the river.

Inman

Set her down ... Step away from her. Get over here where I can see you.

Veasey

You're a message from God.

Inman

Is she dead?

Veasey

No...

Inman

What's the matter with her?

Veasey

She's somewhat with child. And...

Inman

And...?

Veasey

...drugged with sleeping powders.

Inman

And you're the Daddy?

Veasey nods.

Veasey

You are a message from God.

Inman

So the plan was to pitch her in the gorge?

Veasey

But you're a message from God!

Inman punches Veasey who goes sprawling on the ground.

Veasey

I accept the merit of that.

Please! Don't kill me, I am man of God.

Inman goes over to Laura and examines her. His gun is still drawn and pointed at Veasey.

Inman

Some say we all are.... Marry her.

Veasey

You miss the tangle. I am already betrothed. I now believe when I took to preaching I answered a false call. I believe...

Inman

If you want me to beat you, keep talking.

Veasey

Under these circumstances, I will hold my tongue.

Inman is examining Laura who remains unconscious.

Inman

Can you hear me?

Veasey

Her name is Laura. A sweet name for a sweet girl. She was so lovely, my ange!! All through the summer we crept about the nightwoods... And our romantic rendezvous were...

Inman

Spare me.

Veasey

What are you going to do with me?

Inman

Your church is near?

Veasey

Over the ridge ... in the town.

Inman

People come by here?

Veasey

Every morning on the way to the river.

Inman has found a pistol and a handkerchief in Veasey's saddle bag — He places them in his pocket.

Veasey (With urgency)

I'll be needing that pistol...

Inman ties Veasey's hands and feet.

Inman

Why? You're a preacher.

Veasey

There are ... challenges ... There are ... demons ... There are...

Suddenly to an orchestral accompaniment Home Guard is heard and seen searching the forest. As we see this action taking place, Inman holds Veasey at gunpoint. Laura is now many yards away. Again, Laura quietly moans.

Inman (Whispered to Veasey)

One word ... I'll shoot you.

Inman silently darts across to where Laura is lying on the ground. While pointing his pistol at Veasey, he cradles Laura and gently places his hand over her mouth. The home guard enters and to an extended, energetic ostinato-like refrain they search the woods for Inman.

Home Guard

Over here! Look. Over here! Find him. Nothing here. Keep looking! Nothing here.

The sound of the home guard men recedes into the distance. Laura, still in a haze, wakes up.

Laura (Spoken)

Who are you?

Inman

A strong dream urging you to put that preacher behind you. Laura, the preacher does not speak for God. No man does. He means you no good. Laura?

She has fallen asleep.

Veasey

Well, deserter,

What are you going to do with her?

I can only imagine. Wait!

(Inman ignores him. He has found paper and pen and is writing out a note)

What are you writing? You're writing what I've done!

Inman

I'm writing what you've done!

Veasey (In a panic)

You cannot do that.

Inman

I can and I am.

Veasey

God damn you to hell.

Inman

God would if I moved on knowing you'd soon be back here ready to finish what you began. I won't let you ruin her life!

Veasey

God damn you to hell! My congregation will lynch me! We have church members for playing a fiddle in their homes! You will ruin my life.

Inman

It's her life that I care about.

Veasey

Shoot me now. You don't understand.

Inman

I do understand!

Veasey

Just shoot me now. It's all the same.

Inman threatening Veasey with his pistol, stuffs a handkerchief in his mouth.

Inman

Not the same to me.

**SCENE SIX
Early morning, Black Cove Farm**

7

Lights up on Ruby who is hard at work. There is a pile of wood that she has already chopped. She has been at this for some time. She chops a few more pieces and now, clearly exasperated, cries out.

Ruby

Ada! Ada!

Inman picks up Laura and walks off — Ruby continues her work.

Ruby

Ada Monroe!

Ada enters. She has just gotten up but already has an old letter from Inman in her hands, which she has been reading.

Ada

Breakfast?

Ruby

Too late. Sun's up. You'll eat later. You need to write things down.

You got paper?

(She sees the letter in Ada's hands)

Got something to write with?

Ada

I can't write on this. I've got my journal...

Ada puts the letter in her pocket and pulls out her journal.

Ruby

What do you keep in there?

Ada

Ideas, poems, sketches ...

Ruby
Good. Nothing important. Number one:

(Ada writes Ruby's lists furiously in her journal)

Lay out a garden for cool season crops...
Cabbage, turnips, lettuce, greens.
Number two: Buy clay crocks for tomatoes and beans. Number three: Patch the shingles on the barn roof. It leaks...

Ada
Why'd you sleep there, last night, Ruby?
Plenty of room in the house.

Ruby
I'm used to bein' by myself.

Ada
You're not by yourself anymore.

Any act of intimacy makes Ruby uncomfortable. She quickly changes the subject.

Ruby
Number four: Hayfields need to be cut.

Ada
But I can't do that.

Ruby
You got arms? You got legs?
I know you're hungry. What's the plan?

Crawl around when the snows come looking for eggs?

Ada reads from her journal, impressing Ruby with her sudden vigor and intensity.

Ada
"Lay out a garden. Crocks for tomatoes and beans. Patch the shingles. Cut the hay..." Ruby, Ruby... *(Looking for approval)*
the orchard is in bloom. The fruit will come in soon. I was sketching trees the other day.

She shows Ruby her sketch. Ruby is surprised, impressed by Ada's attempt to engage in the process. She is also intrigued by the sketch, which she is now studying.

Ruby
Your daddy teach you this?

Ada
How to draw, how to speak French, how to play the piano... Back in Charleston, I was raised to be a lady ... not to survive. You know how the world runs, Ruby. Who taught you such things?

Ruby
My only teacher was hunger.
The only companion who never turned his head. Need is a pretty sharp knife.

When it's in your hands long enough, you can whittle anything down to the truth. My truth was... Stay alive. My daddy only cared for moonshine. He'd go off days at a time and leave me to puzzle out finding food and staying warm. I remember when I was four years old, all alone, tangled in a blackthorn tree. Stuck and shivrin' and crying, calling out for help. Daddy's drinkin' friends used to say, "They's panthers on Cold Mountain. Oh, they carry little girls away." I cried until I could hardly breathe.

For comfort, I counted every star in the sky that night. I know that look in your eye. Empty as a starless night. You realize you're all alone. But you are here for a reason. And so am I... I do not intend to let you fail. That's what I know. That's my truth. Tell me, Ada, what's your truth?

Ada
I should have gone back to Charleston. But I can't, Ruby.

8 *Ada hands Ruby the letter in her pocket from Inman. Ruby takes some time looking at it and it slowly becomes apparent that she cannot read. She hands it back to Ada.*

Ada
It's a letter from a soldier.
His name is Inman. W.P. Inman.

Ruby
What's it say?

Ada
"I am coming home one way or another, and I do not know how things might stand between us."

Lights up on Inman in the forest.

Ada/Inman
"I thought to tell you all I've done and seen. But I'd need a page as broad as the blue sky to write that tale. I miss you Ada. I do not trust anyone, anything anymore ... not even words to convey what is in my heart..."

Inman
...but what is there is infinite
And leads me back to you. I miss you so."

Ruby
He might be dead.

Inman
Do you recall that rainy night...

Ada
I know.
Again, the intimacy emerging makes Ruby uncomfortable and she changes the subject.

Ruby
Need to put a trap in the corncrib...

Inman
Right before Christmas four years ago...

Ruby
Animals are stealin' corn at night.
I'm certain. Come on.

Ruby and Ada exit.

Inman
Everyone was in the parlor. But you sat by me in the kitchen by the stove. And placed your head on my shoulder. It is a bitter surety in my heart that if you knew what I have seen and done, it would make you fear to do such a thing again. Ada, I'm coming for you on a hard road. I thought this cause worth fighting for. Now all I want is a cabin so high on Cold Mountain that not a soul but the nighthawks passing across the clouds in autumn could hear us whisper...

Inman has conjured this memory of Ada. She appears. She is dressed beautifully, as she was the night of the Christmas party being described. Ada approaches Inman.

Ada
I'm glad I found you alone.
Father's about to start leadin' the carols.

Inman
Want to join them?

Ada
Not yet ... not until I find a way to express how sorry I am for the way that I acted when we first met.

Inman
You've been most kind since then.

Ada
A new year is about to start. 1861. I'd like to apologize for my prideful language. There's too much right now. Some say war will soon be upon us. So many boastful, prideful words... thrown around as if honor was at stake.

Inman
Don't you believe in honor?

Nathan Gunn (*Inman*) and Isabel Leonard (*Ada*)



Ada

I do but it won't be found on a battlefield.
My heart does not see the world divided...
Are we not all blossoms on the same tree?

Inman

Forgive me if I think some blossoms
are more beautiful than others.
(Pause) Have you ever had so much to
say that the words won't come out?

Ada/Inman

You don't have to say anything.
It is enough. Why can't we just be here
together? All words cast shadows on what
I'm feeling. It is enough just being with you.
Oh, could we just be here forever...
Oh, if we could just close our eyes...
Stay ... stay here forever...

*She leans her head on his shoulder.
Thunder booms in the distance.*

*Inman wakes out of his dream and sees
men off in the distance coming for him.
He picks up his pack and runs off.
Ada stands and-- not in the urgent tempo
of the scene but rather-- in the ethereal
mood of Inman's memory sings plaintively.*

Ada

Are we not all blossoms on the
same tree?

**SCENE SEVEN
Cape Fear River****10**

*Ada exits and the lights suddenly come up
on Inman who is standing on the banks of
the Cape Fear River. He is in a panic. He
knows that the Home Guard is close behind.*

*The storm is now becoming stronger. Inman
sees a man in a boat just off the shoreline
and calls out to him.*

Inman

Mister! Mister! Over here!
Mister! How much to ferry me across?

*A coat that is over his head obscures
Veasey's identity. He is using it to protect
himself from the rain that has begun to fall.
He turns around in the boat and pulls the
coat off his head revealing both who he is
and the fact that his hair was shorn off.*

Veasey

Good God! Just the man I'm looking for!

Inman

You? How did you get that boat?

Veasey

The same way you got my pistol. I found it!
My lord. My lord. My lord...
I've asked and I have received...

Inman

I have to get across...

Veasey

"A hot-tempered man stirs up dissension,
but a patient man calms a quarrel."

Inman

So, what do you want?

Veasey

I want my pistol back.

Inman

I could shoot you right now.

Veasey

It's not your way or you would have done
it before. Oh, and I want your gun too.

Inman

Damn it! Alright ... A storm's coming ... I
gotta get across...

*Inman gets in the boat, He gives both guns
to Veasey.*

Veasey

"Give to the one who begs from you, and
do not refuse the one who would take from
you." My, you're in a rush.

Inman

Give me that paddle.

(Inman start paddling energetically)

What happened to your face?

*Veasey cannot resist his inclination to
blather on. As Inman paddles vigorously,
Veasey, with great enthusiasm, tells his
story.*

Veasey

When they found me and your note, the
deacon and others gave me a fair beating
and cut off my Samson-like locks.

I was lucky to get away. You see, that's
the thing about me... I have this lucky star
that always manages to watch over me.
Why, here I am with a boat, two pistols a
man ferrying me across the Cape Fear
river on an unexpected odyssey.
I believe I might move on to Texas ...
All you need to start a life in Texas is guns ...
and look I've now got two!

*The Home Guard men who have appeared
on the shoreline, start shooting at the boat,
which is now in the middle of the river.*

Veasey

Damn ... what the hell!

Inman

Home Guard! Where's your lucky star now?

Veasey

I'll shoot 'em...

Inman

Too far away ... They got rifles!

More gunfire.

Inman

The boat's been hit. We're sinkin' fast.
We'll turn it over ... Use it as a shield.

Veasey

What?

More gunfire.

Inman

We're going in either way! Come on!

Veasey/Inman

Now!

*They flip the boat. To a thrilling
orchestral interlude, the current carries
the boat away. The boat disappears
as the lights fade.*

SCENE EIGHT**The next morning, along
the banks of the river****11**

*The next day. The sun is shining.
The lights come up on Lila, who is
floating in the river looking up in the clouds,
talking to her three sisters who are washing
clothes along the banks of the river.*

Lila

Look at me, I'm floatin' ... Light as a
Cottonwood seed. Blown by the four winds
... Oh, sisters ... Oh, sisters...
Come on, look at me...

Sisters

Not gonna look at you.

Lila

Come on, sisters, look at me!

Sisters

No!

Lila

Please!

Sisters

No!

Lila

Please!

Sisters

No!

Lila

East, West, North, South...
Oh, Lord, you up there ... sittin' in that
cloud... Take me, take me where you will...

Claire/Olivia/Katie

There's work to do!
What makes you so special?

Lila

...You gotta watch me...

Lila/Claire/Olivia/Katie

...We're not gonna watch you...
You gotta watch me. Floatin' ...
light as a Cottonwood seed...
Blown by the four winds...
East, West, North, South...

Claire/Olivia/Katie

Oh, sister ... Oh, sister!

Lila

Oh, sisters ... Oh, sisters!

Claire

Let's get her.

*A fun chase ensues in which the sisters
chase Lila. Ultimately, the circuitous chase,
to an orchestral accompaniment leads the
women to the spot where Inman and
Veasey are suddenly revealed. They have
washed up on the banks of the river. Both
men are unconscious. The women examine
both of them slowly. All four are much
more interested in Inman and surround him.
Lila sits down and cradles Inman's head in
her arms. She kisses him.*

Lila

He's breathin'.

Olivia

Fine lookin thang.

Katie

Bet he draws women like dog hair
draws lightening.

Claire

I wish he'd hug me 'til I grunt.

Lila

He's mine. I found him.

Claire

You gotta man.

Lila (*Spoken*)

Junior ain't a man... He's a husband...

Lila/Olivia/Claire/Katie

Wake up. Wake up... Tell me you can hear my voice. Wake up. Wake up. Wake up. Tell me who you are... Where have the four winds brought you from? Wake up. Wake up...

(Inman slowly wakes)

Tell me ... Tell me ... Tell me ... Tell me... Where are you from?

Inman

Cold Mountain ... Cold Mountain... Where am I now?

Lila/Olivia/Claire/Katie

You're with me.

Veasey wakes up and sees the women gathered around Inman. The women remain much more interested in Inman.

Veasey

Am I in heaven? *(Pause)*

(Veasey, trying to get the women's attention)

Oh, you beautiful visions! I'm alive too! Come over here. I'm not so bruised that I can't share with you my story, my plight, my journey ... I am the Rev'rend Veasey.

Claire *(To Inman)*

Does he always talk so much?

Inman

'Fraid so...

Katie goes to Veasey. Junior enters. He's carrying an open liquor bottle. He's overheard the last part of the conversation.

Junior

Wherever you come from you're lucky to be alive, Rev'rend. Saw your boat in pieces down river. My name's junior. This here's Lila, my wife... These hussies are her sisters...

Inman starts to get up ... but is still too unsteady to do so. Junior begins pouring drinks from a jug in his pack.

Inman

We were off fishin' ... Got caught by the storm. I should be gettin' home.

Lila/Olivia/Claire/Katie

Wait ... Wait ... Don't you want to stay here with us?

Veasey

That does seem prudent...



Nathan Gunn (*Inman*) with Bridgette Gan (*Lila*), Heather Phillips (*Katie*), Shabnam Kalbasi (*Olivia*), and Megan Marino (*Claire*)

Katie

We'll make a fire.

Olivia

Cook up some food.

Lila/Katie/Olivia/Claire

A picnic by the river. A celebration! *From the jug in his bag, Junior pours two cups and gives them to Inman and Veasey. He pretends to pour some of the brew into his own cup.*

Junior

To survivin' the storm....

He lifts his glass, all toast and drink.

Veasey

Thank you, sir.

Junior

You can thank me later. I've some traps nearby. I'll be back real soon. *(He exits.)*

Inman stands and is suddenly unsteady on his feet as numbness overcomes him. He is feeling the first effects of the drug that Junior poured in his cup.

Lila

You need to rest ... Big man like you... *(To the others) I'll stay with him...* You three take the Rev'rend off and look for some firewood.

Veasey

Let me be the first to thank the good Lord for what I pray I'm about to receive.

Olivia lingers for a moment ... jealous of Lila's proximity to Inman.

Lila

Shoo...

Olivia exits. As Lila sings the following, she slowly starts to take off her clothes. Inman is disoriented, feeling ever increasingly the effects of the drugs.

Inman

I'm dizzy...

Lila

Just overwhelmed by my beauty. Look at me, I'm floatin'...

Inman

Who are you?

Lila

Light as a Cottonwood seed...

Inman

My head is spinning.

Lila

Blown by the four winds... Oh, mister ... Oh, mister ... Come on...

Inman

I can't...

Lila

Look at me...

Inman

I'm dizzy.

Lila

Look at me ... East, West, North, South... It'll be like sitting in a cloud... Take me, take me, take me where you will...

Just as Lila approaches Inman, Junior arrives with two men with shotguns from the Home Guard. They have arrived with a chain gang of five deserters.

Junior

Get off of him, Lila ... There he is! Don't make a move or I'll blow your head off.

A third man from the Home Guard leads Veasey on stage.

Veasey

I am not a deserter! You are making a terrible mistake!

Veasey is struck across the face with the handle of a shotgun and collapses on the ground.

Junior

You're not the first one I've snared. I get five dollars a head for every outlaw I turn over. Get up ... time to march ... back to the war!

Inman stands and before he is taken away, as Junior counts his money, Lila comes over to Inman and hugs him tight.

Lila

Bye-Bye.

Inman and Veasey are chained to a group of men and begin the march back east. Lights fade.

SCENE NINE
Black Cove Farm

12

Black Cove Farm. The lights come up on Ruby standing behind Ada who is seated. Ruby cups her hands over Ada's eyes. They had been eating some biscuits and there are still some in a basket on the ground.

Ruby
What do you hear?
You say you want to know the running of this land. Listen ... Listen...

Ada
I just hear sounds. Wind, bird songs... Nothing ... just sounds...

Ruby
Can't you hear how the world sounds different each day?
Listen ... Listen ... It's alive. It's growin' and dyin'...and it whispers something' new all the time.

Ada
Wind in the trees...

Ruby
And...

Ada
There is a dry, brittle rattle...

Ruby
And...

Ada
I hear the dry, brittle rattle of dying leaves. I hear trees.

Ruby
Trees? Trees? Just trees?
You've a long way to go.

Ada
I'm trying.

Ruby
Until you can tell the sound of the poplar from the oak, You haven't started to know a place. Name me four plants on the hillside that in a pinch you could eat. Name me two things blooming now, two things fruiting. How many days to the next full moon?

Ada
I do know the sky, Ruby. I do know the sky! Last night I saw the waxing crescent... So, I'd say about twenty days. Oh, Ruby, my head's been in the clouds my whole life. It's down here on earth where I get lost.

Ruby
Come on, let's try again.

Kevin Burdette (Stobrod) and Isabel Leonard (Ada)



Ruby/Ada
Hear how the world sounds different each day. Listen... Alive and growing and dying, whispering something new all the time. What is the story? The trees, the sky... Every moment is changing. Moments are alive. Hear how the world sounds different each day. What do you hear? Listen.

Once again she places her hands over Ada's eyes. Ada hears the sound of the wind. This time it is combined with the quiet wail of Stobrod whose arm is caught in the trap Ruby placed in the corncrib.

Ada
You hear that?

Ruby
Somethin's caught in that trap!
Go get the gun!

Ada runs off and gets a shotgun. Lights slowly come up on the corncrib and Stobrod whose arm is caught in the trap. He is quietly moaning, as he tries in vain to release his arm. He does not want to make any noise, but because of the pain and frustration he can't help but quietly moan and curse.

Stobrod
Oh ... Oh ... Oh...
Damn ... Damn ... Damn it to hell...
Ada gives the gun to Ruby. Ada retreats to a safe position.

Ruby
You stay back...

Ruby cautiously approaches Stobrod, who slowly, turns and reveals his face to Ruby. They are both shocked to see each other.

Stobrod
Damn! Hell fire!

Ruby
So, you're not dead?

Stobrod
Not yet ... long night a kneeling here trapped.

Ruby
No doubt ... So you ran off from the fighting...

Stobrod
I was owed a furlough ... being a hero...

Ruby (Sarcastically)
Right.

Stobrod
Every battle I was in, I led the charge. You gonna let me out of this thing?

Ruby
I'm thinking about it.

Ada calls from the distance.

Ada
Ruby, we catch something?

Ruby
Yeah, (Pause) my Daddy.

Ruby releases Stobrod from the trap as the scene proceeds.

Ada
Pardon?

Ruby
Stobrod! He's made it home from the war. But dead or alive he's of little matter to me. Some biscuits and send him on his way. (Aside) Shoot!

She goes to get the basket of biscuits.

Ada
My name's Ada.
You got someplace to go?

Stobrod
I been staying up in the mountain ... in a cave... (Pause) with a group of...

He hesitates.

Ada
Deserters?

Ruby
I told ya'.

Stobrod
Had enough of fightin'- Oh!

In pain — Stobrod flexes his hand. Ada notices his concern.

Ada
Your hand hurt?

He moves it around.

Ruby
I bet it's fine. Bet you can still dance with a bottle in your hand!

Stobrod
No, Ruby. I'm changed. I need my hands to fiddle. Some say I fiddle like a man wild with fever. Music's changed me.

Ruby *(Sarcastically)*
Right...

Stobrod

There is an invisible world, Ruby...
Like a fire behind a wall ... Can't never
see it... But you can feel the heat ...
That's what music does. That's what
happened to me.

Ada

Do people change?

Stobrod

War changes everyone into somebody else.

Ada

Everyone?

Ruby

People might change, but not you.
You eat this ... then get ... You go dippin'
our corn again, I might put a barrel of shot
in you, and I don't load salt!

*Teague is heard, approaching from
the distance.*

Teague

Peaches in the summertime,
Apples in the fall.
If I can't have me that girl,
I don't want none at all.

Ada

Home Guard! Hide him.

Ruby

Damn you. Not gonna die for you.
(She hesitates for brief moment)

Ada

Hide him ... Now...

Ruby

Damn you to hell. Come on.
(She helps him to hide)

Teague

I wish I had a banjo string made of
gold and twine.
And every tune I'd play on it, I'd wish that
girl was mine. Shady grove, my little love.
Shady grove, I know. Shady grove,
my little love, I'm bound for Shady grove.
Some come here to fiddle and dance.
Some come here to marry.
Some come here to find romance.
I come here to marry...

Ada

Why, Mister Teague, what finds you up
this way?

Teague

Don't need no reason. Ain't you being
here enough of one.

(Admiring the farm) Your farm's doin'
better.

Ada

That's because of Ruby.

Teague

Who?

Ruby enters

Ruby

Me.

Teague *(To Ada)*

So, you got an employee?

Ruby

A partner...

*Birch, a twelve-year-old boy, who has been
traveling with Teague now enters and runs
up to him.*

Ada

And you've got a boy...

Teague

No, this here's Birch.

*Birch starts to wander around, looking at
things with great curiosity. While the scene
proceeds, he comes dangerously close to
where Stobrod is hiding.*

Ada

Where's his daddy?

Teague

Killed in Fredericksburg. Don't have a
mama.

Ada

You lookin' after him?

Teague

Teachin' him what matters. Right, boy?

(The boy nods)

Teachin' him about the Nigger lovin'
traitors and cowards hidin' out in these hills.

*Ruby sees Birch approaching Stobrod's
hiding place. She calls him over.*

Ruby

Hey boy, you hungry?

*The boy nods. She feeds him some of the
biscuits from the basket.*

Teague

Home Guard's goin' round to let folks
know — You see somethin' ... you speak up.
I came here to tell you myself...
See what you might need...

Ruby

She don't need nothing.

Teague

What she needs you can't give her.

*Teague inadvertently approaches where
Stobrod is hiding. Ada, trying to divert his
attention, calls out to him—even a little
flirtatiously to get him away from Stobrod.*

Ada

Mr. Teague, do you see this fence?
Come on over here.
(Teague walks over to Ada) I built this...

Teague

You? (He laughs) Really?

Ada

Well, me and Ruby.

Teague *(He looks it over)*

I'll show you how it's done. You'd like that,
right?

Ruby

Nothing wrong with it. We'll do it ourselves.

Ada

Ruby, you stay and watch that boy.
(To Teague) I'd so love it if you'd show me
how it's done.

*Ada is concerned that if the boy
(who has shown great curiosity, inspecting
everything) is not occupied by Ruby he will
stumble upon Stobrod's hiding spot. There
are fence lengths that need to be fixed with
a hatchet and then placed on the fence
poles. As Teague sings the following he
fixes the fence with Ada. Ada shows that
she is up to the task.*

Teague

A fence is a good thing. 13
You build it right, nothing's gonna move
it or change it... Miss Ada, all we're tryin
to do in this war is build a fence.
Keep those people up North from comin'
down here and tellin' us how to live our lives.
A Fence is a good thing. Marks what's yours
... and what's not... Even after your gone...
Some borders can't be crossed,
Some wounds will never heal. Some things
you can't forget. Hearts buried beneath
regret. Who you are the war reveals.
Yes, a fence is a good thing.

Ada

What is bein' revealed right now?
Does anyone ever change?

Ruby

Can I forgive?
No one really changes.

Teague/Stobrod

And what can never be...

Ada

Do they change?

Ruby

Nobody can really change.

*Ruby and Stobrod's eyes meet as the
quartet is sung, wondering if their troubled
past can be set right. Clearly the words
mean different things to each character
but they unite them all in the understanding
that the war has become the defining
moment of their lives.*

Teague/Ruby/Ada/Stobrod

Some borders can't be crossed,
Some wounds will never heal,
Some things you can't forget.
Hearts buried beneath regret.
In the end, how will I feel?
Who you are the war reveals....

Ada

What do you do then?

Ruby

What doesn't change?

Teague

What doesn't fade?

Stobrod

What will you choose?

Teague

A fence is a very good thing.

Ada

I see something; I'll let you know.
Shall I walk you to the foot of the hill?

Teague

Why, I'd like that.

Ada

Ruby, you stay up here and get that
fire started!

*She acts gruff as if she is her boss for
Teague's benefit. Ruby plays along.*

Ruby

Yes, ma'am.

Teague

Birch, come on.

*Ada, Teague and Birch exit. Stobrod comes
out from his hiding place.*

Stobrod

I know Ruby... I know!

Ruby
You don't know shit.
This woman's been good to me.
Anything happened to her because of you...
I swear, I'd...

Stobrod
You saved me, Ruby. You didn't have to.

Ruby
Did no such thing.

Stobrod
You did. People change, Ruby.
I have, I swear ... I'll show you, I will.

Ruby
Get.

Stobrod
Bless you, Ruby. Gonna write you a tune
and call it: "Bless you, Ruby."

Ruby
Get!

*He exits. Lights fade and come up on
the final scene of the act.*

SCENE TEN
The Chain Gang 14
*To a musical accompaniment we see
Inman, Veasey and the other deserters
who have all been chained together
walking under armed guard. We see how
weary they are from the long trek they've
already endured.*

Veasey
I told you. I told you. I told you.
I'm a preacher! You are makin' a terrible
mistake! I'm not a deserter ... not like these
men! You gotta let me go.

*As Veasey continues, the sound of his
voice is woven together with the sound
of a large chorus of Federal troops from far
off in the distance humming softly.
At first it goes unnoticed ... just a distant,
almost indiscernible sound.*

Veasey
Look at me. Look at me.
Listen to what I'm sayin'...
I swear ... I am guilty of many things ...
But not of betraying the cause...

Home Guard Man
A preacher? (Sarcastically) Right.

Home Guard Men
All preachers, right? Keep movin'...

Veasey
You gotta let me go. It's the right thing.

*Veasey is viciously struck by the Home
Guard and collapses on the ground. While
the others try to pull him back up onto his
feet, the sound of the Federal troops gets
louder and more present ... though still
quite a distance away.*

Federal Chorus
(Still distant, but getting closer)
God has closed his eyes
But ours are open wide.

*The Home Guard has noticed the sound
of the Federal troops off in the distance.*

Federal Chorus
We know that where we're going
They'll have no place to hide.

Home Guard Man
I'll scout ahead. Keep 'em here!

Federal Chorus *(Getting closer)*
We all know what is coming.
We all know what to do.
The sooner that the fight begins,
The sooner it is through.

*The Home Guard scout runs back on
stage in a panic.*

Home Guard Scout
Feds! Down! Everyone down! Quiet!

Federal Chorus *(Getting closer)*
Marchin' into the fury...
Marchin' with my brother...

Home Guard Scout
Quiet!

Federal Chorus
I only know we're going home...
One way or another!

*At first the men do as instructed and
huddle together.*

Inman *(To the chain gang)*
Listen, they can't use those guns.
Feds'll be on 'em. Gotta be now.

*(They indicate they're with him) Now!
While the federal chorus sings and gets
closer and closer, the men follow Inman
and a vicious brawl ensues. It is made more
complicated and interesting by the fact
that the men are chained together. During
the fight, the chain gang men are able to
corner the Home Guard. The Home Guard
is afraid of using their guns and alerting the
Federal troops to their presence.*

Fight Interlude combined with Federal



Chorus
God has closed his eyes
But ours are open wide.
We know that where we're going
They'll have no place to hide.
Marchin' into the fury...
Marchin' with my brother...
I only know we're going home
One way or another!
One way or another!
I only know we're going home...

*A gun shot. Despite the threat of the
federal troops, in the heat of the moment,
a Home Guard man fires a shot. Once one
shot is fired, the Home Guard men shoot
everyone on the chain gang. The Federal
Troops hear the gunshots. The prisoners try
to make a run for it, but linked together,
stumble into a big pile of corpses. One of
the Home Guard men is shot dead in the
melee. The federal troops rush onto the
stage. The interlude continues. A number
of federal troops go after the two Home
Guard men who ran off. The other federal
troops examine the pile of bodies. Inman,
who is on the bottom of the pile, unnoticed
by the audience is able to leave the stage.
After concluding that all in the pile are
dead, the remaining Federal soldiers run
off after the Home Guard.*

Isabel Leonard (Ada)

*The lights now come up on Ada sitting
outside. We enter the memory of 1861, on
the eve of Inman's departure for the war.
Ada is beautifully dressed. She studies
the daguerreotype of Inman in her hands.
Inman enters. He is dressed well and looks
strong and handsome.*

Ada 15
Oh, Inman ... the picture's not complete.

Inman
Shall I take it back?

Ada
I mean the picture in my mind.
Who are you, Inman?
We hardly know each other. Not really.
We both know that.
And yet there's something...
Something pulling just like a star
holds the moon with invisible thread.

Inman
I believe in the invisible, the spirit world.
I have to. I want to believe that while
I'm away, You'll be right out there
beside me...

Ada
I'll be right out there beside you....

Inman
Even if just out of my reach.

Ada
Even if just out your reach.

Ada
I had this made for you.

She hands him a daguerreotype and he studies it.

Inman
Beautiful. I wish you were smiling.

Ada
I'll smile when you return.

He looks up in the sky.

Inman
See Orion's belt?
Those three stars are just about to leave the sky until November.

The stars and I will return together and every question will be answered, not with words but with something more enduring.

They kiss for the first time.

Inman
The war won't last six months.

Ada
Are you afraid?

Inman
Would you think me a coward if I said, "Yes?"

Ada
I want you to say "yes."
I want you say you'll not do anything foolish.

Inman
I'll not do anything foolish.

Ada
I want you to come back to Cold Mountain.
I want you to promise.

Inman
I will come back. I promise.

(Inman starts walking slowly towards the pile of dead men on stage)

The war won't last but six months.

Ada
Come back to me. Come back to me is my request.

Inman, who has peeled off layers of his costume as he returns to the pile of dead men, once again appears in his chain gang garb. He resumes his position among the dead men. As Ada finishes her lines, she disappears from the stage. A short interlude plays at the end of which Inman stirs, discovers that he has been shot but has survived. He discovers he is the lone survivor. He tries to stand, but is still connected to the chain gang. He tries in vain to pull away and then collapses, unconscious, on the ground. The lights fade to black.

ACT II

OPENING

SCENE ONE Lucinda and Inman duet

The lights come up on the pile of bodies in the same position as in the end of Act One. Lucinda, a runaway slave, enters. Desperately hungry, she looks through the pockets of the fallen.

Lucinda
Is that all ya got?
That and blood... So much blood...
Chained? Why?
Lord, they even shoot their own.

(She finds a letter in one of the prisoner's pockets and sounds out the first words)

"To ... my ... An ... gel..." *(Pause)*
Better be an angel or ain't gonna see her again.

(She pulls off some hats and looks in the brims, pulls them apart looking for hidden food. She then starts taking shoes off of the soldiers and inspecting them for some hidden bounty. She takes Inman's shoe off. He is still unconscious. She then takes off his hat and in the brim discovers a picture of Ada that he has hidden. She studies the picture.)

1 Look at her ... she got everything...
Not a care in the world...
I bet that brooch is made of gold.
That dress, that fabric looks like silk...
2 I once sewed a hem on a dress like that...
Smooth ... softer than a butterfly's wings.

Inman begins to stir.

Look at her. She got everything.

Inman
You're wrong.

Lucinda is startled. She pulls away suddenly. At first because of the hat she is wearing, Inman does not see her face. Lucinda turns and Inman, at first, is crestfallen when he sees that she is black.

Inman
Please don't go.
You're hungry, right?

Lucinda
You ain't got nothin'.
I been through your pockets.

Inman
Not here ... over there ... another man...
Over there ... seen him ... He's Home Guard.

Lucinda
Is he?

Inman
I'm sure he's dead. Before all the shootin' began, I saw him put cornbread in his pocket. Go on.

Lucinda runs across the stage and finds the home guard man. She finds the corn bread and sits down and begins to devour it.

Inman
What's your name? *(Pause)*

Lucinda
Lucinda. You shot?

Inman
Grazed by a bullet. Knocked me out.

Lucinda
You lucky.

Inman
We're both runnin' ... Lucinda.

Lucinda
With that chain, you ain't runnin' nowhere.

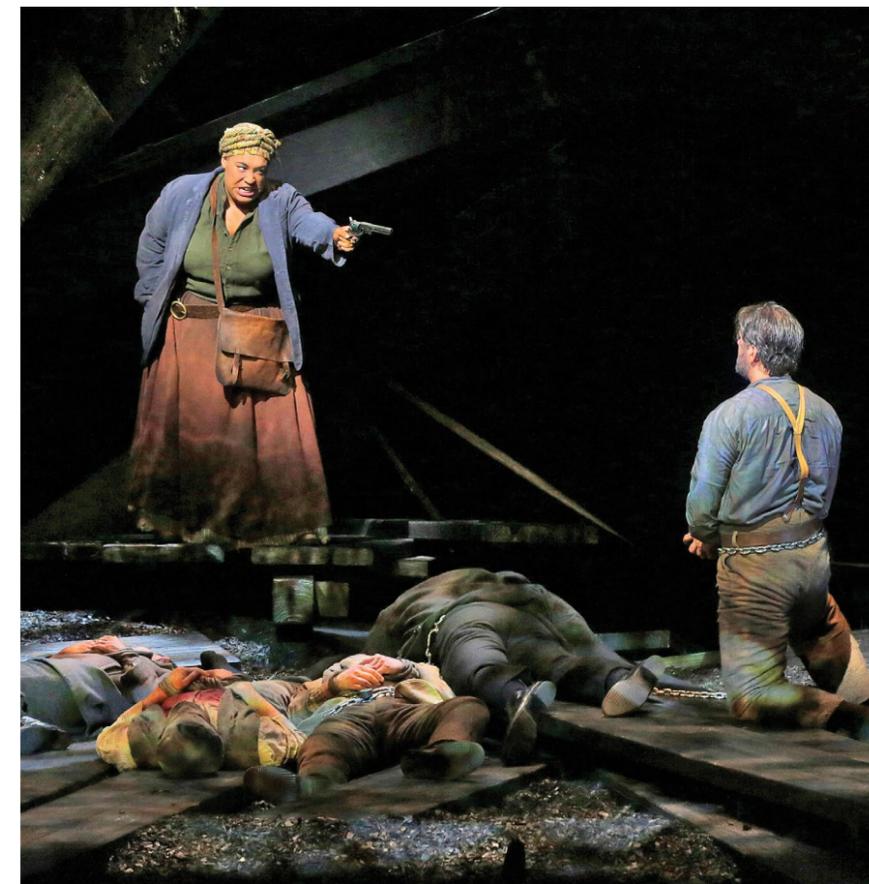
Inman
I know how you feel ... how you felt...

Lucinda
You know how I feel ... how I felt?

Inman
Chained. Chained.
I don't mean you no harm.
No harm. No harm.

Lucinda
Chained? Chained?
You don't mean me no harm?
No harm? No harm?
You're either blind or stupid.
Of course you do. You all do.

Deborah Nansteel (*Lucinda*) and Nathan Gunn (*Inman*)



Lucinda/Inman

I am runnin,' runnin,' runnin,'
Runnin,' out of time.

I am runnin', runnin' runnin'
to another world.
And I'm tired ... so tired...

Inman

I can't hardly feel if there's anything left
in my heart.

Lucinda

Wanna know what's deep in my heart?
If I could pull one trigger... and kill every
white person in the world.... I'd do it in a
second.

Inman

That man's gotta gun. Go look.
You can't kill all of us.
But you can get started with me...

Lucinda

Is this your wife?

*She shows him the picture. He slowly
breaks down. He begins weeping
uncontrollably. Lucinda watches him
fall apart. She is moved enough by his
sincere show of emotion that she asks
another question.*

Lucinda

Why'd they shoot you all?

Inman

Lucinda, Lucinda...

Because I don't want to fight anymore
... that's why... I just want to marry that
woman. I have been gutted ... and all
that's left is the hope of her.
Without her, I am a broken branch.

Lucinda

We all broken branches...
We all slowly dying. When I die, at least
I'll die free... that's why I run.
I'm gonna keep runnin'.

Inman

Lucinda, are you alone?

Lucinda

I got the stars in the sky.
And they are leadin' me to Chicago.

Inman

I hope you get there, Lucinda.
I really do.

*Lucinda walks across the stage and takes
the dead Home Guard's jacket off and puts
it on. She carries his pistol in her hands.
She walks back over to Inman and points
the gun at him.*

Lucinda

I do not trust you. And I never will never
trust you. And I've gotta gun. Don't forget
it. *(Pause) Lucinda reaches into the pocket
of the jacket and pulls out the keys to the
chain attaching Inman to the six dead
bodies.*

Lucinda

Don't forget it.

*Lucinda tosses the keys to Inman and
runs off quickly. Inman unlocks the chain.*

SCENE TWO

*As an orchestral interlude plays, we see
Inman walk on and on as all the
phases of the moon are sequentially,
beautifully depicted in the sky above him.
Finally, after walking for 28 days, the
waning crescent dissolves into the
complete darkness of the new moon.
The stars now illuminate the heavens.
The stage is filled with stars. Inman spots
Orion in the sky and begins to sing.*

SCENE THREE**Ada and Inman duet****Inman**

Orion ... Orion... *Lights up on Ada who
is also looking up at the sky.*

Ada

Orion ... Orion...

Ada/Inman

Orion ... Orion...

Four Novembers have come and gone...
You've returned but I have been...

Inman

Swallowed ...

Ada

I'm drifting...

Inman

Sinking...

Ada/Inman

...like a stone in a stream.

Ada/Inman

...past what might have been.
Oh, Ada/Oh, Inman....

Ada/Inman

Orion ... Orion....
Four Novembers have come and gone...

Ada/Inman

Everything has changed, I'm a mystery
to myself... So much time has passed
And I have changed.
I don't know myself.



But I still believe... in the invisible...
in something more... Hidden in the
shadows, in the sky above,
A secret realm... a mystical spark...

Inman

Oh, Ada!

Ada

Oh, Inman!

Ada/Inman

Are you still out there in the dark?

Ada/Inman

Four Novembers have come and gone...
Can you tell me ... who I am now?
What is left of who I was?

Ada

Oh, Inman, would you even know me?

Inman

Ada, will you even know me?

SCENE FOUR**Stobrod's campsite**

*Inman exits. The lights come up on
Ruby and Ada who have made their way
to Stobrod's campsite. They have brought
some food and two of Monroe's coats.
Ada stands near Stobrod and Pangle, and
listens to the fiddle tune that Stobrod plays.
Ruby stands off a fair distance.*

Ruby

Just give him the stuff and let's get...

Stobrod

Well, there's Miss Ruby...
Bless you, Ruby.

Why, bless you Ruby, let me sing you
this song. Bless you, Ruby, the world
goes 'round... Bless you, Ruby, what's lost
is found... Bless you, Ruby, I've a heart that
knows ... The garden is wrapped in ice,
but I still smell the rose.

Stobrod/Pangle

Bless you, Ruby.
Bless you, Ruby.

Stobrod

Bless you, Ruby the snows are coming.
The nights are long.
The world keeps hummin'
I sing this song.

Stobrod/Pangle
Bless you, Ruby. Bless you, Ruby.

Stobrod
My heart knows the garden might be wrapped in ice, But I still smell the rose.

Ruby
Come on, Ada! Let's go...

Ada
That was so fine ... almost made me forget where I was... everything that's happening...

Pangle
You're in the woods. We just played a song.

Stobrod
She means the war, Pangle.
Don't mind him. He's ... kind of "gentle" in the mind.

Pangle
You're pretty... I'm hungry.
(*To Stobrod*) Is now the time to ask her if she brought something for me and Georgia boy to eat?

Ada
You can talk right to me, Pangle.
I brought two of my daddy's coats.
Winter is coming. Who's Georgia boy?

Ruby
Shouldn't have come at all.
Won't be any mercy if we're found helpin' you. Come on, Ada, let's get.

Ada
Who's Georgia boy?

Reid enters carrying firewood.

Reid
I am.

Stobrod
Not his fault that he's from Georgia.

Ruby
Shoot ... another mouth to feed.
Enough of this ... Come on, Ada...

Ada
What you played is so pretty.
You learn this in the war?

Stobrod
I always played ... but preferred holding a quart moonshine to a fiddle...

Ruby
Finally the truth.

Stobrod
It was fun ... nothing special...

But once near Richmond ... a man come runnin' in... Lookin' for a fiddler. His daughter had poured coal oil onto kindlin'. It touched live coals and a fire exploded... ...burned her bad. She was dying and asked for a fiddler to play her out. I played the few tunes that I knew. And she said ... "That all you got? Make me up one!" I had to try ... had to ... and I did...

Stobrod plays the song and Pangle joins in.

Stobrod/Pangle
'If I knew why, I'd tell you./I'd tell you. But there are some things that no one knows./That no one knows. So all I can do is sing to you./I'll sing to you. In time we'll find out how it goes./How it goes. How it goes.'

Stobrod
When I was done, she said,
"Now that was fine," and then she died.
I haven't stopped playing since then.
Lookin' for notes that work.
You see, a tune that works is like habit,
It gives order to a day's end.

Ruby
Come on, let's go.

Stobrod
Ruby, I need caring for.

Ruby
Has your liquor give out?

Stobrod
Ruby...

Ruby
Eat roots, Drink muddy water.
Sleep in hollow log.

Stobrod
I know you've got more feeling than that for your Daddy.

Ruby
You don't know shit.
I've dined on many a root when you were off roundering.
Slept in worse places than hollow logs.

Stobrod
I did my best by you.
Times was hard.
I ain't who I was...

Ruby
Well, I am ... Come on ... Ada...

*Ruby marches off ahead of Ada.
Stobrod stops Ada.*

Stobrod
I have changed, Miss Ada.

Ada
(*She nods*) I know you were in the barn the other night.

Stobrod
You tell Ruby?

Ada
No, but that Teague's been around.
Best stay away...

Ruby yells to Ada from off stage.

Ruby
Ada!

SCENE FIVE
Sara's cabin

Ada runs off after Ruby. The lights come up on Inman in the woods. He hears the sound of a baby crying. He sees Sara pacing back on forth on the porch of her cabin trying in vain to calm her baby boy.

Inman
Your baby sick?

Sara
Who are you? (*The baby cries during the following exchange*) Hush, baby.

Inman
A man goin' home.

Sara
I ain't got nothin' ... mister.
Best be on your way...

Inman
Just wanted to pay for some food.

Sara
Confederate scrip? (*To the baby*)
Hush... I ain't got nothing'...

He turns to walk away.

Sara
Hush, baby ... Please, baby...

*The baby cries some more.
Inman turns back.*

Inman
Might try a few drops of whiskey on the end of a cloth ...

Sara
Really? Never heard of that. He's been at it for hours...

Inman
Want to try?

Sara
Hush ... Hush... (*Pause ... she nods*)

Inman collects the piece of cloth prepares it using the few remaining drops of whisky in his flask. While Sara continues to try and comfort her child the dialogue continues.

Inman
Name's Inman. Yours?

Sara
Sara ... Hush, baby...

Inman
All alone?

Sara
My man, John went off for the fighting. They killed him in Virginia.
He never saw his boy. Hush, child...
And it's just the two of us now.

Inman
You got any help?

Sara
Not a lick.

Inman
Then how do you make it?

Sara
Gotta push plow ... a kitchen garden ... a few chickens... Had a cow but the raiders, they took it away... (*The baby cries out*)
Hush, baby ... they burned down the barn. There's a hog out back...
Countin' on it to get us through winter...

He hands Sara the cloth and Sara puts the wound end in the baby's mouth.

Sara
Hush-a-bye, Honey child...

Inman takes over singing, improvising lyrics to a lullaby as Sara rocks the baby. Slowly the baby calms down.

Inman
Hush-a-bye, Honey child.
Hush-a-bye, Honey child.
You're mama's ... doing ... all she can.
It's time ... for you to ... close your eyes...
with dreams as sweet as...
(*He can't think of a word*)

Sara
Blackberry jam?

Inman
As blackberry jam ... and...

Sara
...strawberry pies...

Inman
And strawberry pies.
Your mama's doin all she can.
Hush-a-bye, close your eyes.

The baby has fallen asleep.

Sara
I can't believe it. *(Pause)*

Without him there'd be nothing holding me to this world. There's a pone of cornbread and pinto beans. Go on...

Inman
I'll pay.

Sara
You just did.

Inman devours food, eating loudly in gulps.

Inman
Sorry, not taken food in days--
Just cress and creek water.

Sara
How far you mean to go?

Inman
Cold Mountain. *(Pause)*

Sara
We got mountains here. *(Pause)*
If I had a barn I'd let you sleep there.

Inman
This porch'll do ... I'll be gone first thing.

Sara
All right then ... Goodnight.

She takes the baby inside the cabin and closes the door. She unbraids her hair and begins getting ready for bed. After considering for some time she comes outside and approaches Inman.

Sara
If I was to ask you to do something would you do it? If I was to ask you to come in and lay in bed with me but not do anything else, could you do it? Could you? *(He nods)* I believed you could or I'd have never asked.

Inman takes off his boots and gets into bed. After some time, Sara begins to cry.

Inman
I'll go if that would be better.

Sara
Hush. I just want to pretend that things are all right. Just want to pretend that I'm not alone.

The lights fade on the two frozen in their positions in bed. Lights suddenly come up on Black Cove Farm. Ruby is in the field fixing the scarecrow, which has been outfitted in one of Ada's nice dresses. Teague calls out.

SCENE SIX Black Cove Farm

Teague
Funny lookin' scarecrow ...

Ruby
Ada won't use her Daddy's clothes...
Says it's like seein' a ghost...
I think it's a waste a fabric.

Teague
Lots bein' wasted these days. She around?

Ruby
In town.

Teague
(A bit suspiciously) Well, I must of missed her? Ain't that right, Ruby Thewes?
Oh, I know who your Daddy is...

Ruby
He's dead.

7

Teague
Well, his name's here in the paper.
That's why I come up here...

Ruby
He's dead!

Teague
Wanted to show it to Miss Ada...
so she could read it to you...
Show her what kinda man your Daddy is...

Ruby
I can read now ... Ada's teachin' me.

Teague
Really? Let's see you find your Daddy's name!

Teague hands her the paper and points to the article in the paper.

Ruby
"Ca ... su ... al ... ties..."

Teague
Not there.

Ruby
"Killed" ... *(Pause)*

Teague
Not there...

Ruby
"Hay ... wood County De ... serters."

She looks down the list. Teague comes over and points at her father's name.

Teague/Ruby
Stobrod Thewes.

Ruby
I ain't got nothin' to do with him.
I get by on my own...
Always have!

Ruby is stunned, trying to figure out the ramifications of this development. Teague takes the paper back.

Teague
You don't get by on your own.
Look at you here on Miss Ada's Black Cove farm... You got it good. Sleepin' in the big house... Thinkin' you're so special... Walkin' around this farm like you own it... Ain't that right? And she teachin' you to read? Shit! What a waste of time, Like planting seeds on a rock in winter. Only thing you'll ever need to read is your daddy's name on this list of traitors! That's all that matters. I promise you. The war's gonna kill him ... or I will. You better hope we don't find him here.

Ruby
I don't care about him.
Can I have the paper ... show Ada...?

Teague
Sure, read her your daddy's name.
Over and over! "Haywood County Deserter." She's in town, you say? Why, I might meet her all alone on the road... Wouldn't that be nice ... awful nice? Some man's gonna sweep her up and sweep you out.

He exits. Ruby frantically studies the newspaper trying to find Inman's name.

Ruby
Inman, don't let me find your name here!
Don't tell me she taught me readin' so I could read your name and be the one to break her heart. Don't let me find your name. Not here... *(Pause)* Not yet...

A sudden light change and we are instantly in Sara's cabin. She stands at the window. Inman is still asleep in the bed. Sara sees three Federal troops approaching. She urgently calls out to Inman.



SCENE SEVEN
Sara's cabin

8

Sara
Get up! Quick! Feds! Get out...

Inman crawls out the window and hides along the side of the house. Sara walks out onto the porch. Three armed Federal soldiers approach Sara's cabin.

Sara
I don't got nothing! Raiders took all I had.

Ethan/Thomas/Charlie
We're hungry. You know you got something.

Sara
Please. I told you.

Ethan
And I said we're hungry. Don't lie to me!
(To the others) Grab her.

Thomas and Charlie restrain Sara. Ethan enters the cabin.

Sara
No! I ain't got nothing. Please mister. Please!

Ethan comes out with her baby, removes the blanket it is wrapped in and places it on the frozen ground.

Ethan
Tie her up.

The men tie her to the porch post.

Sara
My baby! My baby! What are you doing?
No! No!

Thomas
Told you. We're hungry.

Sara
No! No! What are you doin'?

Ethan
We got all day! But your baby ain't got time...

While Sara is pleading the men casually dangle their legs off the edge of the porch. Ethan and Thomas are unmoved. Charlie wants to pick up the baby, but won't dare to do so.

Sara
My boy! He's shiverin'!
If I had something I'd give it to you.
I've got some chickens. Take 'em.
My boy's shakin'! Have you no shame?
He'll die ... No? (Pause) I've got a hog!
I've got a hog! It's out back.

Ethan
(To Thomas) Check it out.

Thomas runs around back and looks for the pen in which the hog is located.

Sara
Take it ... But if you do,
You might as well kill us now...
'Cause it'll all come out the same.

Thomas looks into the hog pen and is surprised by Inman who sneaks up behind him and with some rope strangles Thomas. Thomas is not able to cry out while being suffocated, but it takes some time — 20 seconds or more — for him to be killed. While this is happening the scene in the front of the cabin continues.

Sara
It'll all come out the same!
He's shivering. He's just a baby! Take me inside; I'll do anything you want!
Please.

Ethan, who is clearly the leader, signals that Charlie can do so.

Ethan
Anything I want?

(He unties her)

Charlie'll take care of the baby...

Charlie cradles the baby in his arms and tries to comfort it. Ethan takes her into the cabin. Inman runs around the side of the house. He has Thomas' pistol, which he is pointing at Charlie.

Inman
Call him! Now!

Charlie
Ethan! Ethan! Quick.

Inman
Again!

Charlie
Ethan! Rebs comin up the road!
They're armed. Ethan!

Inman is now standing on the porch by the door. Ethan comes running out onto the porch. Inman kills Ethan. Sara runs out, steps over Ethan's body and goes to get her baby from Charlie. She takes the child back inside. While she does this, Inman continues forlornly.

Inman
What am I going to do with you?

Charlie
I'll go away. Won't come back. I promise.
We were hungry. That's all.
I just want to go home.

Sara comes outside with a shotgun. She walks up to Charlie.

Charlie
We were hungry.

Sara pulls the trigger and kills Charlie. She walks back into the cabin. Inman, weary from so much killing, sits down on the steps. Lights come up on Stobrod and Pangle, playing a tune by a campfire. This fiddle/orchestral interlude extends for some time and we see Inman forlornly trying to process the all of the accumulated horror he has witnessed. Lights now come up on Ada who is placing flowers by her father's grave. Lights up on Ruby who still studies the newspaper and reflects on the many names listed, and her troubled history with her father.

SCENE EIGHT
Quintet

9

Ada/Ruby/Inman
I should be cryin', but I just feel numb....
Like every root's been pulled or severed...
Is the world one big grave?
Will the fightin' be forever?
Fightin' to remember ... Fightin' to forget...
Oh, Daddy.../Oh, Ada.../Oh, Inman...
What would you ask of me now?

Lights come up on Stobrod playing the fiddle in the woods.

Quintet
Stobrod/Pangle
If I knew why, I'd tell you.
But there are some things
That no one knows.
So all I can do is sing to you.
In time we'll find out how it goes.

Ruby/Ada/Inman
You've/He's/I've been gone too long.
Gone so long...
And I just don't know why,
I've no tears left to cry.

As the lights fade on Ruby, Inman and Ada, Stobrod and Pangle continue playing the song "Gone too long". Teague and his men approach the campfire.

Isabel Leonard (Ada)



SCENE NINE

Stobrod's campsite

10

Teague

Howdy strangers ... Keep playin...
We're just gonna warm up by the fire.

*Stobrod and Pangle continue playing.
Teague and his cohorts including Birch sit around the fire.*

Teague

Say, we're after a bunch of outliers said to be in a cave ... been robbing folks.
If a man knew where that cave was it'd be in his favor to tell me.

*Reid enters carrying some firewood.
He quickly senses the threat and hides and, unobserved, watches the exchange.
Teague, at first, is not overly threatening.
He is trying to get additional information.*

Stobrod

I don't rightly know. Some say...
backside of the mountain.
Close on Bearpen Branch.

Pangle

Why that's not even close to it.
It's this side. Over on Big Stomp,
up Nick Creek, through some hick'ries to a rock slide.

There's a hollow in the cliff, as big as a great barn loft.

Teague

Well, much obliged.
Well, ain't you, Stobrod Thewes?

Pangle

(Innocently) Y'all friends?

Teague

You stayed in Ada Monroe's Barn two nights ago. In this snow! Shoot ... your tracks were easy to follow. *(Pause)*
You know your kin don't care if you live or die.

Pangle

Ain't true. Ruby and Miss Ada give us these coats and food to eat too.
You want some?

Stobrod

Pangle! He's simple minded ... confused...
The fault is not his ... and not those girls...

Teague

Oh, I think there's plenty a fault to go round. Tell you what... Why don't you go and stand up against that big poplar.

*Lights come up on Ada and Ruby.
Reid turns and moves across the stage and begins to explain to Ada and Ruby what happened to Stobrod and Pangle. As he does so the scene with Teague, Stobrod and Pangle continues.*

Reid

I seen it all done. Seen it all.

Ruby

Tell me like it happened. Don't leave nothin' out.

Reid

So he says:

Reid/Teague

Go on ... you too, boy!

Ruby/Ada

Oh, that poor boy.

Teague/Reid

Compose yourself to die. Quit your grinnin'!
There ain't nothing funny here.

Teague/Ada/Ruby/Reid

Compose yourself to die!

Ruby

I told y'all not to stay in that barn!
In this snow might as well ...

Teague

Quit grinnin'!

Ruby

...have tied red ribbons in the trees.
All the way up Cold Mountain.
He's a fool. Lived a fool. Figures he'd die a fool.

Teague/Reid

Now, take off your hat.

Ruby

And I'm a fool for ever thinkin' he could change... Or care about anyone.

Teague/Reid

And hold it over your face.

Pangle places his hat over his face.

Ruby

I will not cry one tear for him.

Teague

Hallelujah, amen....

The Home Guard shoots Pangle and Stobrod.

Teague

Y'all go on now.

Teague is talking to Birch. Ada is talking to Reid.

Teague/Reid

There's a pot a beans on.

*Reid exits into the house. Teague's men exit.
Teague sits down at the campfire and eats the beans with Birch. The lights slowly fade on them.*

Ada

I'm so sorry, Ruby.

Ruby

I'm just sorry I brought this trouble on you.

Ada

You didn't bring it. It just came.

Ruby

Still feel tangled in that blackthorn tree.

Ada

You're not.

Ruby

Well ... we gotta go find them.
You got britches in the house?
Gotta go put 'em on.

Ada

Men's trousers?

Ruby

You wear what you want.
But I don't want no wind blowin' up my dress.

Ada

What about that Georgia boy?

Ruby

Don't need to travel with no deserter.
We do all right on our own. Right?

Ada

We do...

*Ruby and Ada exit. It begins to snow.
A chorus made up dead soldiers slowly appears.*

SCENE TEN

Walking up Cold Mountain

11

Chorus Of The Dead

Buried ... Buried and forgotten.
In the fields ... under trees.
In valleys and on the mountains,
we will sing their elegies.
What will echo from our song,
from this land of toil and pain?
What will grow from this scarlet soil?
We are soldiers, sons, civilians...

the unnamed tributaries of our nation's blood, the rivers of our nation's blood. *(Ruby and Ada, dressed in men's trousers, carrying supplies, and shovels walk slowly up Cold Mountain. As they make their way up the mountain to bury their dead, they walk through the ghosts of soldiers and civilians who have died in the war.)*

Buried and forgotten, in our beautiful country where we lie buried.
We rest beneath every step you take, in the dust, in the ground on which you tread.
Oh, beautiful country!

Hear the echo of our song
and feel the shadow from our pain and toil.
Across the valleys spread in scarlet soil,
Our elegies echo loudly...

Ruby finds Pangle.

Ruby

Ada, it's Pangle. He's here!

Chorus

Hear the brittle snap of twigs,
Encased in winter's blackest bark.
The plumb line of our soul's been cracked,
as one by one the stars go dark
in our beautiful country...

Ada finds Stobrod.

Ada

Ruby, he's here...
Stobrod ... He's still breathing!

Ruby

Daddy, can you hear me?
Go get blankets! Damn fool!
We gotta keep him warm.
I gotta get some roots, spider webs...
golden seal to make a poultice.
I think I saw some down the hill.
Damn fool! Nothin' but trouble...

Chorus

Buried ... Buried and forgotten.
In the fields ... under trees.
In valleys, and on the mountains,
we sing their elegies.
Bury them on Cold Mountain.

Ruby runs off. Ada wraps Stobrod in blankets and after some time begins to sing an aria to Stobrod who remains unconscious.

Ada

I feel sorry for you. Not because your eyes might never open, But because your eyes were closed so long...
How much you missed, how good your daughter is... how virtuous, how smart and dignified and loving she is.
While you were off numbing yourself to life's tangles,

12

She was learning the name and purpose of every bird, of every weed and berry. Surviving on her own by finding the ways life weaves so wondrously together. I feel so sorry for you. I feel so sorry for you because your eyes were closed for so long. How much you missed. So much you missed. Do you have any idea how good your daughter is? And you could not find a connection to your only child. I tell you, if I ever see Inman again, I will kiss the narrowest hinge in his hand. Nothing will go unnoticed or unvalued. For that is what Ruby has taught me... That's what I know... And she would have taught you if you'd only opened your eyes soon enough.

Ruby enters with herbs and roots she has found.

Ruby

Ada, take the shotgun. Wild turkeys are by the creek. If he lives, we're gonna be here for a while.... Let me tell you, turkeys can disappear on you ... So move slow... Go on...

Ada walks away from the Cherokee cabin. It is snowing. She sees turkeys off in the distance, prepares the shotgun and walks off stage in pursuit of them.

The lights come up on Inman who examines Stobrod's fiddle, which he just discovered lying on the ground. He notices the holes in it. Perhaps he lightly plucks a string as he tries to deduce what happened. From off stage we hear the sound of Ada's shotgun. Inman is startled and takes out his LeMat's pistol and cocks both hammers. He unsuccessfully tries to hide behind some rocks or a tree, moving awkwardly due to profound exhaustion and hunger. Ada appears with a few of the birds she has just killed. Through the snow she sees what appears to be a stranger pointing a pistol at her. She drops the birds and quickly and efficiently pulls the shotgun into position and points it at Inman. For an extended moment they each point their guns at each other.

SCENE ELEVEN Deep in the woods on Cold Mountain

13

Inman

I'm lost. And besides we don't know each other well enough to start killing one another yet.

Ada

Lower your gun.

Inman hears her voice and is surprised.

Inman

You're a woman.

Ada

But I shoot like a man. So don't get any ideas. Lower your gun, mister.

Inman lowers his gun. Ada continues to point her shotgun at Inman. Slowly, Inman begins to wonder if he has recognized Ada's voice.

Inman

I know you. Ada ... Ada Monroe?

Ada is slightly confused and lets the barrel of her gun drop from Inman's face to his chest. She looks at him but is unable to recognize him.

Ada

I don't know you.
I don't want any trouble.
But if it comes, I'm ready.

Inman

I believe I've made a mistake.
Nothing is the same anymore.
I'm just a fool who thought the war would only last six months.
I'm sorry; I've made a mistake...

Inman turns to go away.

Ada

Inman? Inman?

Inman

Ada.

Ada takes a few steps towards him. He is a man ravaged by the war and by his efforts to return home. He is starving and shattered.

Ada

Oh, Inman...

Inman

It's me ... what's left of me.

Ada

I see you now. I see you...

Inman

Ada, I've been coming to you on a hard road...

Ada

Oh, Inman...

(She takes his hand ... She feels how thin and ravaged his body has become)

When did you last eat?

Inman

Three days or four ... Four I think...

Ada

Last time you slept?

Inman

Don't know.

Ada

Come with me.

Inman stumbles. Ada calls Ruby for help.

Ada

Ruby! Ruby, come quickly! Ruby!

Ruby enters.

Ada

Ruby ... this is Inman...

Ruby

Come now ... Lean on me ... Come on...

Inman supported by both women is taken to the camp. Inman collapses by the fire. He's given food, which he devours. Nothing is spoken while he eats. When he is finished, Ada gives him a blanket.

SCENE TWELVE Ruby and Ada's campsite

14

Inman

Thank you ... I do believe I need ... to...

Ada

You just need rest. We'll talk later.

He falls asleep.

Ruby

He's out ... I'm gonna check on Daddy...

She moves to exit.

Ada

Ruby, nothing's changed between us...

Ruby

We can do without him.
You might think we can't, but we can.
We're just starting. I've got a vision in my mind of how that cove needs to be.
There's not a thing we can't do ourselves.
You don't need him.

Ada

I know I don't need him. But I think I want him.

Ruby

Well, that's a different thing. I'll be back.

Ada walks back into the cabin and sits on a chair and watches Inman sleep. After some time she begins to sing.

Ada

Are you dreaming of a secret?
Is it the same as mine?
Is who we were just melted snow...
...an echo lost long ago?
Inman, I am not who I was ... and what about you? What you must have endured...

Inman stirs.

Inman

Ada ... Some water?

Ada gives him a cup of water.

Ada

More?

She pours another glass. (Pause)

Inman

Remember when we first spoke?
...that day in church...

Ada

I fear, I did not make it ... easy... *(She smiles)*

Inman

There were some thorns around the flower...

(He smiles)

How is the Reverend?

Ada

You get my letters?

Inman

I got two.

Ada

My father died...

Inman

I'm so sorry.

Ada

(Pause) Oh, Inman, I sent you a hundred letters... And tore up two for each one sent... *(Pause)*

Inman

Why?

Ada

Because they were filled with things...
Things that people just say...
"I am thinking of you."
"Do not worry about me."
When my only real thought was:
I'm so afraid ... please...



Inman Ada

Do not forget me... The war took away all I knew ... and all I had...

Ada

It was Ruby who taught me to survive and grow in ways I never imagined. But, Inman ... I feared forgetting who I was... For it is what connected me to you...

Inman

Ada, I could never forget you. But if you knew all I'd seen and done... All I did ... I fear you'd not care to know me... I fear I'm ruined beyond repair...

Ada

I don't believe that...

Inman

War chisels your soul with fear and bitterness into something dark and strange. Hard to find your way back in so much darkness, from so much pain.

Ada

Oh, Inman, you found me....

Inman

Ada, I want to tell you everything... ... What has happened, who I am. I hardly remember who I was.

Nathan Gunn (*Inman*) and Isabel Leonard (*Ada*)

Ada

Are there threads not torn in tatters That we can follow back to where we began?

Ada

I know people can be mended. Why not you?

Inman

Why not me?

Ada

Tell me everything.

An ensemble emerges. Lights come up on each of the people that Inman met during his experience of the war and during his journey home. He is remembering them all. There is an abstract quality to the scene. The lighting and the music weave the impression that time is elapsing.

CHORUS

Tell her of the slave you met. How I freed you, Tell her what I said...

Inman/Ada

I want to tell you everything...

15

Veasey/Chain Gang

Tell her how the boat went down...

Ada/Inman

...What has happened, who I am.

Veasey/Chain Gang

How all the rest of us lie dead...

Ada/Inman

I hardly remember who I was.

Lila/Olivia/Claire/Katie

Tell her of the riverbank...

Ada/Inman

Can you hear the voices...

Lila/Olivia/Claire/Katie

The siren song that you denied...

Ada/Inman

...whispering what truly matters:

Sara

Please, tell her how you saved my child...

Ada/Inman

There must be threads not torn in tatters...

Sara

How you eased the tears he cried...

Ada/Inman

Threads that we can follow back to where we began.

Soldiers

Tell her how you ran away... How Balis died, and then you left And you were gone.

Ada

I know people can be mended. Why not you?

Inman

Why not me?

Soldiers

Tell her how you fought... The slaughter that went on and on...

All but Inman and Ada sing the following. Time is suspended as the chorus envelops Ada and Inman.

All

Tell her ... Tell her everything. Tell her ... tell her ... who we were... How the past is not the past, But from now on, all time's a blur... A fog of memories, death, killing and sin... Tell her everything ... Tell her ... Tell her... If war is ever to end ... It is here it must begin...

(Pause) The ensemble disappears.

Inman

Ada, we both know ... before the war,

Ada Inman

...we hardly knew each other...

Inman

That's right ... but that's not the truth...

Ada Inman

It was enough... It was enough...

Inman

Ada, I want to marry you.

Ada

Oh, Inman ... I do too. I do.

Inman

I do.

Inman Ada

I do.

During a musical interlude, Ada begins to get undressed.

Ada

Would you turn around?

Inman

Not for every gold dollar in the Federal Treasury.

They embrace. The action switches to Ruby watching her father sleeping. It is early the next morning. Ruby sings the song that Stobrod made up for the dying girl. Inman enters and unobserved listens to Ruby sing to her father.

Ruby

If I knew why, I'd tell you. But there are some things that no one knows. So all I can do is sing to you. In time we'll find out how this all goes.

Inman

How's he doin'?

Ruby

Doesn't seem to want to die... We gotta be gettin' home... I mean to Black Cove farm...

Inman

Ruby, Black Cove is your home. Only question is whether you'll let me make it mine too.

Ruby

You don't need my permission.

Inman

Yes, I do.

Ruby

Well ... *(Pause)* You work hard?
(He nods ... Pause)
Be warned ... I got lots of plans
and not much patience...

*Inman smiles to himself noting that
Ruby has shown nothing but patience
and forgiveness in how she is treating
her father.*

Inman

Only plans I got are to go North ... become
a Yankee prisoner. Ada and I thought it
through — Best way to survive.
War'll be over by summer...

Ruby

Then you come home...
And don't waste no time. I got plans...

Ada enters.

Ada

You got plans?

Ruby

Gonna have another mouth to feed.
Someone's gotta make plans.

Ada

Well ... we're ready to go. But the fire's
still burning.

*A bit of an awkward pause in which
Ada and Inman are embarrassed to kiss
in front of Ruby.*

Ruby

What are you waitin' for?
Shoot, just kiss' em and let's go.

Ada and Inman kiss.

Ruby *(Calls out)*

Georgia boy! Georgia boy!
(Reid enters)
You done packin'?

Reid

...Just like you told me.

Ruby

Good. Come on...

*While Reid answers Inman's question he
starts, with Ruby's help, picking up Stobrod
to begin the trek back to Black Cove.*

Inman

Who's this?



Reid

Name's Reid. I was with Ruby's daddy...
been waitin' at Black Cove Farm.
When the ladies didn't come back
I figured I'd see why... before headin' back
to Georgia.

Ruby

Well, let's go.

*Ada, Ruby and Reid exit, carrying Stobrod
off stage. Inman is at the fire, starting
to extinguish it when Teague, Birch and
Teague's men enter. Their guns are drawn.*

Teague

You're a lucky man, W.P. Inman.
She's a fine looking woman...
I wonder what she'll...

*Suddenly Inman shoots one of Teague's
men. A shoot out/fight takes place. Birch
runs away and hides. Inman kills all of
Teague's men and then kills Teague with a
knife in a dramatic fight. Inman knows that
Birch is hiding and has a rifle. Inman grabs a
weapon from one of Teague's fallen men.*

Inman

Come on out of there. *(Pause)*
Come on, kid, I'm not asking again.
Throw out what arms you've got and
you can go on home. *(Pause)*

Damn it, I'm looking for a way not to
hurt you. I want to walk away but can't do
it wonderin' if you'll shoot me when my
back's turned. Come on out of there...

*(Pause) Birch throws his rifle on the ground.
Inman walks over and picks it up.*

Inman

Smart boy.

*As Inman bends over to pick up the gun,
Birch comes out from behind the trees.
Birch shoots Inman with the small pistol
in his hand.*

Birch *(Spoken)*

Hallelujah, amen.

*Birch runs off and Ada runs on.
She cradles Inman in her arms.*

Ada

Inman! Inman! No! No!
Oh, Inman. Come back to me.
Inman! No!

Inman dies in her arms.

**SCENE THIRTEEN
Black Cove Farm,
Epilogue, nine years later**

*1874. The orchestral music makes an
extended transition to the Epilogue.
The orchestra stops playing as a nine year
old girl walks on stage holding a music
box which plays the Orion love duet theme.
The orchestra picks up the theme. The
nine-year-old girl comes down stage and
is soon surrounded by Ruby's three children
who run on stage and come up and listen
and admire the music box. Ruby enters
with Reid and Stobrod. They are carrying a
basket and blanket. It is getting dark and
they are all returning from a picnic.*

Ruby

Come on, children. Already dark out.
Time for bed. Grandpa'll play you some
tunes. *(To Reid)* And Daddy's got some
chores to do. *(She gives him a quick kiss)*
So, let's get going.

*All, but the nine-year-old girl, exit the
stage. She is studying the sky. Suddenly she
believes she sees a constellation emerge.*

Girl *(Calls out — spoken)*
Mama! Mama, look!

16

*Ada walks on stage and embraces her
daughter. Ada studies the sky.*

Ada

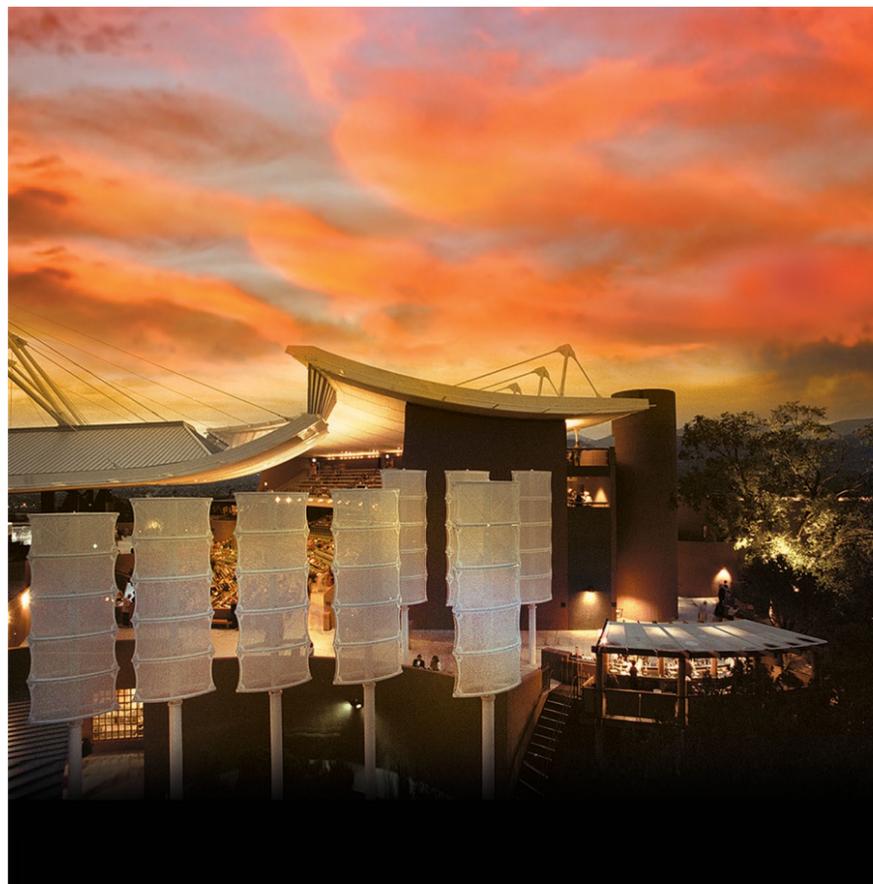
You're right. It's come back.
Now go catch the others.

*Suddenly the entire theater is
filled with stars.*

Ada

Orion ... Orion ... I still believe
...in the invisible...
...in something more...
Hidden in the shadows,
in the sky above ... A secret realm...
a mystical spark...
Oh, Inman!

Lights fade.



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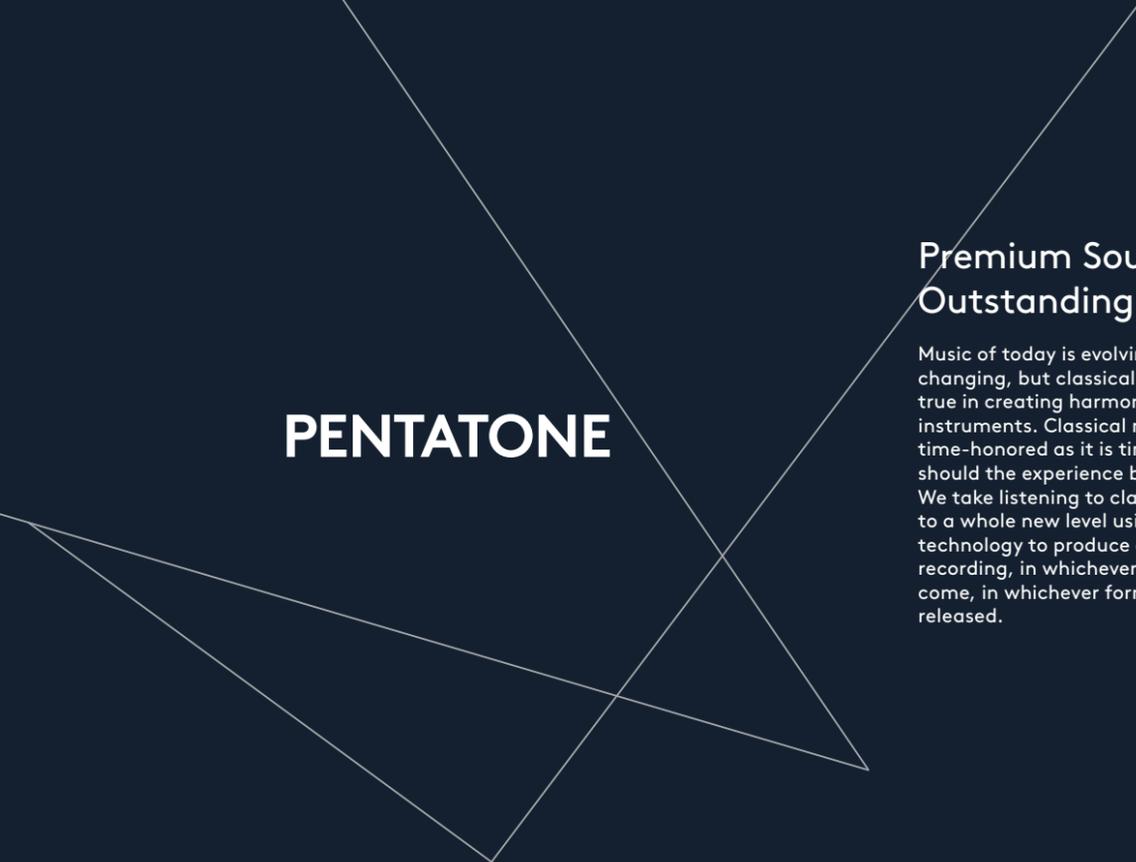
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