

SUSANNA (CONT'D)

HAVE YOU NEVER FELT THE STRENGTH OF TEMPTATION
BATTLING WITH ANGELS FOR YOUR SOUL?

THOSE WITHOUT SIN
MAY CAST A STONE.
BUT FLESH AND BLOOD
WILL KNOW THEIR OWN.
YOUR FAULTS MUST PLEAD HIS PART.
SO PLEASE, BEFORE YOU START.
LOOK IN YOUR HEART. LOOK IN YOUR HEART.
WHAT'S IN YOUR HEART?

GOVERNOR

Sheriff, would you leave us two alone?

SHERIFF

Hmm...? Sure.

He exits.

GOVERNOR

Sister Mary Jo, I'll own
The strong emotion coursing through your plea
Has had a most profound effect on me.
Therefore, I will grant you your petition
To free your brother under one condition.

SUSANNA

Name it.

GOVERNOR

As I said, I've made a vow
To render order to this land somehow;
To end this spree of violence and killing.
But just suppose this one time I were willing
To break my promise for your brother's sake,
Is there one vow of yours that you would break?

SUSANNA

I don't know what you mean.

GOVERNOR

I think you do.
To gain your brother's pardon, I want you
To... undertake whatever I may say.

SUSANNA

Act as your servant, you mean?

GOVERNOR

In a way.
You must serve my passion for one night.

SUSANNA

You want me to cook for you?

GOVERNOR

Not quite.

This appetite of mine craves more than food.

Perhaps your words may explicate my mood.

Takes her hand.

(singing)

HAVE YOU NEVER FELT THE STIR OF EMOTION
THREATENING YOUR SELF-CONTROL?
HAVE YOU NEVER FELT THE STRENGTH OF TEMPTATION
BATTLING WITH ANGELS FOR YOUR SOUL.

SUSANNA

I'm still not...

GOVERNOR

(exasperated)

How much clearer can I be?

Your brother's freedom for your chastity.

Music stops.

SUSANNA

My what?

GOVERNOR

Your chastity.

SUSANNA

You can't be serious?

GOVERNOR

Oh but I am.

SUSANNA

You're patently delirious.

You can't get away with this.

GOVERNOR

How so?

SUSANNA

You're governor for heaven's sake.

GOVERNOR

I know.

Precisely why in my analysis,

I can and I will get away with this.

SUSANNA

I'll tell them all, the whole town what you said.

GOVERNOR

If you think that will help you, go ahead.
I'll deny your claim emphatically.
In fact, I'll say you propositioned me,
And when I turned you down, you grew irate.
You're just a woman in a desperate strait,
Who'd hazard any action or excuse
To save your brother from the hangman's noose.

SUSANNA

Oh horrid, monstrous, evil wickedness.
Was ever sin more sinister than this?
I'd rather be stripped naked in the heat,
Lashed to a cactus, left for buzzard meat,
Than yield my body to your loathsome sighs.

GOVERNOR

If that's your wish, then fine. Your brother dies.

SUSANNA

People like you, governor, are why
I turned my back upon this world. Goodbye.

Exits. Music starts up.

GOVERNOR

Why Governor, whatever have you done?
That you who claim to be the champion
Of law and order could prove so unjust.
But righteousness is overmatched by lust.

(singing)

THOSE WITHOUT SIN
MAY CAST A STONE.
BUT FLESH AND BLOOD
WILL KNOW THEIR OWN.
BEFORE YOU RUSH TO BLAME,
WOULD YOU NOT ACT THE SAME?
LOOK IN YOUR HEART.

Lights fade.

SCENE 4

Lights up on cell. JOHNNY is looking out window; Priest is still sleeping. SHERIFF opens door to room and ushers SUSANNA in.

SHERIFF

(quietly)

Take all the time you need. I'll be nearby.

He exits.

SUSANNA

Johnny, is that you?

JOHNNY

What's that?

(turning around)

Oh my!

Now he's even throwin' nuns in jail.

Watcha'do? Steal cookies from the church bake sale?

Or did ya eat once without sayin' Grace?

SUSANNA

Oh, Johnny. Don't you recognize my face?

JOHNNY

Should I? You don't look like anyone...

I... Wait...! Susanna? Sister!

Hugs her through bars.

You're a nun?

SUSANNA

I will be soon. A few days from this date,

I finish my two-year novitiate,

And take my vows as Sister Mary Jo.

JOHNNY

Our mother's name?

SUSANNA

The same.

JOHNNY

Well, wadya know?

Look, Sis, I guess you know what you're about.

Still, never thought of you as bein' devout.

SUSANNA

When Father passed on, I was stung by grief,

And for a time, I struggled with belief.

But ever since I found my true vocation,

God has been my rock and consolation.

JOHNNY

(to sleeping priest)

Did you hear that? Her rock and consolation.

PRIEST snores.

SUSANNA

Is that a priest?

JOHNNY

Don't pay him never mind.

He's a hopeless drunk. How did you find

Out where I was and watcha' doin' here?

I thought you's mad at me.

SUSANNA

Let me be clear:

I'm furious with you. But when I heard

That you might be... I came to have a word

With the governor and ask for clemency.

JOHNNY

You're speakin' to the governor? For me?

SUSANNA

We have already spoken.

JOHNNY

Glory be!

Tell me, is he gonna set me free?

SUSANNA

Not exactly.

JOHNNY

What? Did he refuse?

SUSANNA

My brother, I'm afraid I have bad news.

JOHNNY

He turned you down.

SUSANNA

No, it was worse than that.

JOHNNY

What could be worse than bein' turned down flat?

SUSANNA

He told me he would grant you clemency...

Only if I... well, if I agree...

I don't know how to tell you what he said.

JOHNNY

Try.

SUSANNA

He will free you if I... share his bed.

JOHNNY

What?

SUSANNA

If I give my body for one night,
Surrender to his lustful appetite,
Then and only then will you be freed.

JOHNNY

But that's

(excited for a moment)

...that's awful, terrible.

SUSANNA

Indeed.

JOHNNY

Disgustin'. Loathsome. For one night, you stated?

SUSANNA

One horrid night.

JOHNNY

And then I'm liberated?

SUSANNA

You would be, yes, but at what dreadful cost?
My sacred chastity forever lost.

JOHNNY

Well, you won't do it, Sis.

SUSANNA

Of course I won't.

JOHNNY

Don't want that on my conscience.

SUSANNA

No, you don't.

JOHNNY

If you believe that chastity's essential,
Then even though you're holdin' the potential
To save my life, no reason why you should.

SUSANNA

My thought exactly.

JOHNNY

Still, Sis, if I could,
It's not a thing most women care about.

SUSANNA

(loudly)

What's that!!?

PRIEST

(waking up)

Oh, my head!

JOHNNY

Just pointin' out.

There are some women out there, quite a few
Less attached to chastity than you.

SUSANNA

Are you suggesting I should give my virtue
To save your neck?

PRIEST

Please!?

JOHNNY

Would it really hurt you?

As much as stranglin' by a noose would, say?

PRIEST

Could you speak a little softer, pray?

SUSANNA

You call yourself my brother, yet you would
Accept my ruin for your fleeting good.
Coward!

PRIEST

Please, my head throbs when you holler.

JOHNNY

I ask this priest, this man a' God, this scholar
As has a theological degree.
Padre, tell us, please, does chastity
Have any special meaning, any worth
Up in heaven or down here on earth.

PRIEST

None at all. This cult of chastity
Is pietistic nonsense.

JOHNNY

There. You see.

PRIEST

There is no...

Puts hand over PRIEST's mouth.

JOHNNY

Thank you, father. That will do.

JOHNNY (CONT'D)

Well?

SUSANNA

You said he's a hopeless drunk?

JOHNNY

That's true.

But also an informed and holy priest.

PRIEST mumbles "Thank you."

And then you must agree with this at least:

Chastity is some abstract ideal.

Whereas death is very, very real.

I understand your feelings, Sis, I do.

But try to see this from my point of view:

SONG #5: IT'S GOOD TO BE ALIVE

SEE THAT HERD OF BIRDS,
RIDING THROUGH THE BLUE.
CAN'T YOU HEAR THEIR WORDS
CALLING OUT TO YOU?
LIFE IS SHORT, THEY SING.
STILL WE RUSH AND STRIVE,
FOR WE KNOW ONE THING:
IT'S GOOD TO BE ALIVE.

CACTUS ON THE PLAIN
WRASSLE WITH THE DUST.
PANTING FOR THE RAIN
JUST BECAUSE THEY MUST.
STILL SOMEHOW THEY GROW,
STILL SOMEHOW THEY THRIVE.
COULD IT BE THEY KNOW,
IT'S GOOD TO BE ALIVE?

I'M NOT SAYING LIFE IS ALL SUNSHINE AND ROSES.
SOMETIMES IT'S HARD TO LIVE.
BUT YOU MUST ADMIT IT'S A BIT MORE APPEALING
THAN THE ALTERNATIVE.

HEAR THE COYOTES BAY
IN THE DESERT NIGHT.
SHADOWING THEIR PREY.
LUSTING FOR A FIGHT.
BRAWLING TOOTH AND CLAW.

SCENE 6**BELLA'S DRESSING ROOM**

BELLA is in a robe, eating a piece of pie. There's a knock on the door.

SHERIFF

Hey, Bella, are you decent?

BELLA

Heavens, no.

So come on in.

SHERIFF and SUSANNA enter.

Hey, Sheriff.

SHERIFF

Liked your show.

BELLA

Why, thanks. I didn't break no laws, did I?

SHERIFF

If not, it weren't because you didn't try.

They laugh.

SUSANNA

Sheriff?

SHERIFF

This here's Sister Mary Jo.

BELLA

A friend of yours?

SHERIFF

Uh, not exactly, no.

She has a business offer to propose

BELLA

Really? Have a seat.

SUSANNA

Thank you. Miss Rose...

BELLA

Bella, please. Don't often get a visit

From a sheriff and a nun. What is it?

A business offer of some sort, you said...

SUSANNA

Well...

BELLA

No point bein' bashful. Go ahead.

SUSANNA

We want to hire you to... perform in bed.

BELLA

With both of you?

SUSANNA

What? No! No! God forbid.

I meant with someone else.

BELLA

You did?

SUSANNA

I did.

BELLA

Let me get this straight: I'm gettin' paid
To sleep with someone else?

SUSANNA

And I'm afraid,

As part of this unpleasant situation,
We must include one further stipulation:
You'll have to... well... to dress up like a nun.

BELLA

The novice or the reverend mother one?

SUSANNA

I'm sorry?

BELLA

Makes a difference in the price.
The reverend mother always takes near twice
The effort as the novice does.
But there are men who favor that because...

SUSANNA

Never mind! So you've done this before?

BELLA

Got the costumes hangin' up next door.

SUSANNA

The world's a wicked place.

BELLA

Well, if it's not,
I'm in the wrong profession.

She and SHERIFF laugh again.

SUSANNA

Novice!

BELLA

What?

SUSANNA

A novice nun. That's what you have to be.
In fact, you have to make believe you're me.

BELLA

You want me pretendin' that I'm you?

SUSANNA

Yes, and that's not all you have to do.
You must sleep with the governor.

BELLA

Again?

SUSANNA

You've slept with him already?

BELLA

Now and then,
Afore he got appointed head of state.
What's this all about?

SUSANNA

The reprobate
Will spare my brother's life, if I agree
To share his bed and yield my chastity.

BELLA

Your brother isn't Johnny Blood?

SUSANNA

He is.

BELLA

Well, who'd a' dreamed that some sister a' his
Would be a sister.

SUSANNA

Now about your fee,
I don't have much.

BELLA

Oh Lord, I'll do it free.

SUSANNA

What?

BELLA

I'd do anything for Johnny. See,
It's kinda my fault that he's set to hang.

SUSANNA

You?

BELLA

When he shot Big Swede, the whole shebang
Took place 'cause they were fightin' for my hand.
And then I'm fond a' Johnny, understand.
I always hoped that someday he and I...
Well, let's just say I don't want him to die.

SUSANNA

There's just one caution: if you're being me,
You must conduct yourself appropriately.

BELLA

I didn't realize there were rules in place
For how a nun acts when she's...

SUSANNA

In this case,
There are. If you're performing as my stand-in,
You can't behave with crudeness or abandon.
No "reverend mother." Are we clear so far?

BELLA

She just abolished half my repertoire.

SUSANNA
(to Sheriff)

I told you this idea was a mistake.

Starts to leave.

BELLA

I'm teasin'. I'll behave.

SUSANNA hesitates.

For Johnny's sake.

SUSANNA

All right. I'll have to trust you. Now let's talk
About more obvious problems. Like your walk.

BELLA

My walk? What's wrong with that?

SUSANNA

Each time your stride,
Your hips sway blatantly from side to side.

BELLA

And that's bad.

SUSANNA

If you're imitating me,

SUSANNA (CONT'D)

Your walk must manifest propriety.

BELLA

Propriety?

SHERIFF

(through a mock cough)

Big word.

SUSANNA

Let me explain

My chain of thought in language less arcane.

SONG #8: THE WAY THAT YOU FEEL

THE WAY THAT YOU FEEL ON THE INSIDE
AFFECTS THE WAY YOU APPEAR.
IF YOU WANT TO LOOK RIGHT ON THE OUTSIDE,
YOU HAVE TO FEEL RIGHT IN HERE.

BELLA

I HAVE TO FEEL RIGHT IN HERE.

SUSANNA

WHEN YOU WALK,
THINK OF ANGELS.
THINK OF HEAVEN.
THINK ABOUT A PLACE OF JOY AND LIGHT.

BELLA

JOY AND LIGHT.
HOW'S THIS? IS THIS BETTER?

Music as she walks.

SUSANNA

NO, NOT QUITE.

SHERIFF

Mind if I try?

(singing)

WHEN YOU WALK,
THINK OF CACTUS.
THINK OF CORSETS.
THINK OF STANDIN' UP IN A CANOE.

BELLA

A CANOE.
HOW'S THIS? IS THIS BETTER?

Music as she now walks properly.

SUSANNA

THAT WILL DO.

TRANSITION SCENE

Lights up on SHERIFF in street outside governor's office. Hums a little of "Stop There." Checks his pocket watch.

SHERIFF

I HELPED HER BROTHER,
AND NOW SHE'S GRATEFUL.
THAT DOESN'T MEAN THAT SHE COULD EVER CARE.
AND YET SHE SEEMED LESS COLD,
MORE THAN A BIT LESS COLD,
I WONDER IF SHE'D EVER...

SUSANNA enters in high dudgeon.

SUSANNA

Well, I hope you're satisfied!

SHERIFF

(to himself)

Nope! Stop there.

SUSANNA

You and your "take a side" and "long, hard ride."
Of all the brainless, ill-considered plans.

SHERIFF

What's that?

SUSANNA

Involving me with courtesans,
Endangering our lives. Did you once pause
And contemplate the harm this scheme might cause?
Of course not. No, you launched your grand design
And "reckoned" everything would turn out fine.
Poor Johnny, with his hopes now raised so high.

SHERIFF

I get the sense that somethin' went awry?

SUSANNA

Awry? Oh no. Why everything is splendid.
Your little plan worked just as you intended.
In fact, the governor was so delighted
With our night of love, he's now decided
The only way my brother will go free,
Is if I marry him immediately.

SHERIFF

Marry him?

SUSANNA

Or Johnny will be hanged
Today as scheduled.

SHERIFF

Well, I'll be danged.
Never saw that comin'.

SUSANNA

Oh, I knew
It was foolish, listening to you.
I never should have vacated the mission,
Put myself in this depraved position,
Acquiesced so meekly to your plot.

SHERIFF

Yeah, I guess you're right.

SUSANNA

Of course I'm... what?

SHERIFF

Too bad it didn't work. Now you go pack
While I scare up a friend to drive you back.

SUSANNA

Drive me back? Whatever do you mean?

SHERIFF

Think we oughta spare your eyes the scene
Of Johnny hangin'.

SUSANNA

Do you mean that's it?
One minor hitch and you're prepared to quit?

SHERIFF

Didn't you just tell me I was wrong?

SUSANNA

You were, but now that I'm involved headlong,
You need to think of some way to atone.

SHERIFF

No, we should just leave bad enough alone.
After all the sufferin' I cost,
We oughta lick our wounds, admit we lost.
It's clear involvin' you was a mistake.

SUSANNA

Fine. If that's the tack you want to take,
Go ahead. I'll handle this alone.
I'll come up with a new plan of my own.

SHERIFF

Well now, if you're sure that's how you feel,
And I'm not forcin' you against your will,
I do have one thought we might give a go.

SUSANNA

Do I shoot the governor?

SHERIFF

Heck, no.

SUSANNA

Too bad. That was my plan.

SHERIFF

You don't say?

SUSANNA

Sneak up behind and blow his brains away.
If you think it would help, I'm still quite willing.

SHERIFF

Ain't there somethin' in the bible 'bout not killin'?

SUSANNA

Is there? I must have missed that in my study.

SHERIFF

Never mind. My plan's a bit less bloody.
First, I need you to send a telegram.

SUSANNA

Me?

SHERIFF

You said you're keen to help?

SUSANNA

I am.

But who would I write to? What would I say?

SHERIFF

Stop fussin'. I'll explain along the way.

They exit as lights fade.

33

34 35 36

Those with - out sin may cast a stone But flesh and blood will know their own. Your

E E/D# E/D A/C#

37 38 39 40

faults must plead his part so please be - fore you start

rit.

Am/C E/B A(add9) E/G#

Bs

41 42 43 44

Look in your heart Look in your heart What's in your heart?

a tempo

Amaj9 A/B E

Vln

45 46 47

rit.

E/D# E/D A/C# Am/C

70

71 72 73

reach - ing This need to touch him? Why does joy com - pete with fear ev - 'ry mo - ment that he's near?

Dmaj9/A Gmaj7 Em7 C Asus7 A

-Gtr

74 75 76 77

Could this be what they're speak - ing of? When they say that word

+Gtr *cresc.*

Em7 A D/F# Gmaj7 A D/F#

+Bs.

78

79 80 81 82

That word they toss a - round That sim - ple sil - ly sound Could this be

rit.

Gmaj7 A D/F# Gmaj7 A D/F# Bm7

83

84 85

Go a - head and say it It does - n't hurt to say it You know you want to say it

a tempo *rit.*

Em9 *cresc.* D/F# Gmaj7 D/F#

10

86 **a tempo**

87 88 89

Love _____ Could this be

A/G G A/G G A/G G G

f *rit.*

90 **a tempo**

91 92 *rit.* 93

love? _____ Oh God. It's

D/F# D/F# G maj7 Asus7

-Gtr, Bs

94 95 96 97 98

love _____

Vln

Guitar

+ Gtr, Bs

D G6/D D G6/D

Bass

APPLAUSE SEGUE

DESPERATE MEASURES

Piano/Conductor

08

The Way That You Feel

(Susanna, Bella, Sheriff)

Music by David Friedman
Lyrics by Peter Kellogg
Orch. by David Hancock Turner

SUSANNA Let me explain My chain
of thought in language less arcane.

Colla voce **SUSANNA:**

1 2 3 4 5

The way that you feel on the in - side af -

6 7 8 9

fects the way you ap - pear If you

10

11 12 13

want to look right on the out - side You

14 15 16 17 **BELLA:** 18 19

have to feel right in here I have to feel right in

20

21 22 23 SUSANNA:
here. When you
+ Gtr. Bs Violin

24 25 26 27
walk think of an - gels Think of hea - ven ____

28 29 30 BELLA: 31
Think a - bout a place of joy and light Joy and light How's

32 33 34 35 SUSANNA:
this? Is it bet - ter? No not

36

37 38 39

quite

SHERIFF:

Sher: "Mind if I try?"

When you

Violin

Ab Bbm Ab/C

40

41 42 43

walk think of cac - tus Think of cor - sets

Db Db/Ab Db Db/Ab

44 45 46 47

BELLA:

Think of stan - din' up in a can - oe A ca - noe? How's

Db Db/Ab Ebm7 Ab7

48 49 50 51 52 53

SUSANNA: BELLA:

this? Is this bet - ter? That will do I get it now! The

Ebm7 Ab7 Db Db Ebm Db/F

57 58 59 60 ALL:

8
rant till I'm blue a-bout what I will do But the truth is I real-ly don't know

C F/C C F/C Am G/B C

61 A cappella

62 63 64

think you know what's com-ing and then you re-al-ize in

BAND TACET

65 66 67 68 69 rit.

ways you nev-er fa-thomed Life

Am7

p +Bass, Vln