

GCN 2011

A TIMELESS HOPE - FROM RICHMOND TO BETHLEHEM

THEME: Redemption/Restoration (people/situations) -- Beauty for Ashes/Secure Hope in Christ

SCRIPTURE: Hebrews 10:23 NIV

Let us hold fast unswervingly to the hope we confess, for He who promised is faithful.

PERSPECTIVE: Told from the perspective of 1993 Richmond, remembering the past and looking, with hope, towards the future -- through the eyes of four generations of middle-class Richmond women (each remembering Richmond when a child or teen), two generations of working-class Richmond men, and myriad others with their own stories to tell.

SYNOPSIS: Four generations of women, continuing a family tradition, have attended the closing performance of the Christmas 1993 run of the Nutcracker at the Carpenter Center. As the street clears of patrons, our ladies remain -- waiting for the father/son to bring the car around. The younger girl comments on the suddenly-evident deterioration of once vibrant Downtown Richmond. Thus begins a journey of remembrances back through decades of happier times for the City -- a journey that introduces the audience to a cast of characters (past and present) each struggling to find hope beyond their circumstances.

Setting: Corner of 6th and Grace Streets, Richmond. SL is Loews/Carpenter Center. Center -- SR of Center is M&R (prominent in 1953 and 1976 scenes is the M&R Window with a scene of angels declaring the good news to the Shepherds on Bethlehem's hillside -- symbolizing that God/His love are unchanging in an ever-changing world). The layout of the street was:

Broad Street						
5th	Woolworths 5 & 10 Rountrees	M&R	6th	Lowes/ Carpenter Center	Thalhimers	7th
Grace Street						

The future layout proposed is something like this:

Broad Street						
5th	Hotel - Port Cochere Entrance	M&R Hotel	6th	Carpenter Center	Theatre Complex	7th
Grace Street						

PRIMARY CHARACTER SNAPSHOTS:

Name	In 1993	General Description
Clara Davison	Deceased	Grace's Mother. Appears in 1928 (Shopping in Richmond - played by Sarah actress). Note: Ruby Jordan was her favorite baker.
Grace Baskerville	73ish	Great-grandmother of the 4 generations – and Hope's lifelong friend. 8ish in 1928 (Shopping in Richmond – played by Noel actress) and 18ish in 1938 (Tantilla Gardens – played by other actress). In 1993, she is the family matriarch. Note: Ruby Jordan was her mother's favorite baker and she became Grace's favorite baker as well.
Marian Roberson	54ish	Grandmother in the 4 generations. 14ish in 1953 (West End/Southside Number – played by Rebekah actress). In 1993, she is taking over responsibilities as functional matriarch of the family as her mother is less able. Note: Ruby Jordan was still baking when she set up housekeeping and Marian kept up the tradition of having Ruby bake for her special events.
Sarah	34ish	Mother of the 4 generations. 17ish in 1976 (70's Scene – played by Rebekah actress). In 1993, she's in midst of challenging/wonderful, years of child rearing.
Rebekah Noel Timmy	15ish 8ish 6ish	Youngest of the 4 generations. 1993 Rebekah is Sarah's 15ish year old daughter. Youngest of the 4 generations. 1993 Noel is Sarah's 8ish year old daughter. 1993 Sarah's son – her youngest child.
Moses Jordan	Deceased	Samuel's father, Ruby's son. Appears as Doorman at M&R in 1928 (Shopping in Richmond) and in 1953 (Richmond Christmas Eve). Retired M&R in 1954 when Samuel took over his job.
Samuel Jordan	73ish	Character who exemplifies the hope from hopelessness theme. 8 in 1928 (Shopping in Richmond – played by child actor) and 18 in 1938 (Tantilla Gardens – played by teen actor). Returns from Korean War at 33ish in 1953, marries his childhood sweetheart, Hope, and takes his father's job as M&R doorman in 1954. In 1976, Samuel is still working as a doorman at M&R when his best friend is killed in a confrontation near 6 th & Grace. Hope dies shortly after. In 1990, his job ends when M&R closes. Although he is presented throughout as a man of faith, when we see him in 1993 he is beaten down by the cumulative events of his life.
Hope Jordan	Deceased	Samuel's wife. 8 and Samuel's playmate in 1928 (Shopping in Richmond – played by child actress) and 18 and Samuel's girlfriend in 1938 (Tantilla Gardens – played by teen actress). She is working as a waitress at Woolworths in 1953 (I Didn't Do It) and she and Samuel become engaged later that night (Richmond Wishes/Proposal). She marries Samuel in 1954 and dies prior to 1993.
Ruby Jordan	Deceased	Samuel's MeMaw. 42ish in 1928 (Shopping in Richmond) and also appears in 1938 and 1953 scenes. Ruby had a real knack for baking and turned this talent into a lucrative business. For decades she was a preferred baker and caterer for events all over Richmond.
Thomas	56ish	A Biblical parallel to Samuel. Thomas is a Shepherd who struggles, against a mundane and oppressive life, to hold on to his lifelong hope to see the coming of the Messiah. Through his own rebirth of faith in seeing the fulfillment of his hope in the Manager, Thomas becomes the visual representation of the rebirth of faith in Samuel, as Samuel, in reflecting on the first Christmas, the faith of his grandmother, Ruby, and God's faithfulness in his own life, rediscovers the timeless hope embodied in the Christ of Christmas.

Act 1/Transition Dialogue 1: 1993 Family Dialogue (1993 Family) ***

Place: *Corner of 6th & Grace Streets; Picture of downtown Richmond at Christmastime 1993.*

Players: **Paul** (*Marian's husband*)
Grace (*great grandmother; spirited*)
Marian (*grandmother; kindly, even-keeled, wise*)
Sarah (*mother; gentle and sweet, sometimes a little flustered*)
Rebekah (*Sarah's typical teen daughter*)
Noel (*Sarah's typical elementary-aged daughter*)
Timmy (*Sarah's son; all boy and likes to tease his sisters*)
Wendy (*Marian's youngest daughter/Sarah's unmarried sister*)
John (*Wendy's "almost" fiancé*)

***** BEGIN 1993 Family Dialogue (1993 Family) *****

Marian: (*looking at Wendy's ring*) So, the last of my babies is getting married. You'll want a June wedding of course . . . so we'll need to book the Country Club right away . . .

Wendy: Mom . . . right now, we've got to scoot. John's Mom is expecting us for dinner.

Sarah: (*Christmas Eve . . . 6:00 at our house . . .*)

John: (*exiting with Wendy*) We'll be there.

Marian: Come early and we can talk.

Rebekah: Hey, Mom. Check this out . . .

Paul: Okay, Mama Grace. I'm going to turn you over to your daughter here while I go get the car. Since I had to park half way to Charlottesville, it may take a while.

Timmy: Paw Paw. Do I have to stay with the girls?

Paul: No way, buddy. If I run into any bad guys, I want you on my team!

Noel: I'll go with Paw Paw, too.

Timmy: No way.

Noel: Yes, way.

Sarah: Can we lower our voices, please . . . ?

Marian: Noel, let's go check out that nutcracker necklace you were wanting.

Noel: Ok, Nana

Sarah: You make sure you hold tight onto Paw Paw's hand, Timmy. (*To Paul*) Things are "different" around here these days, Daddy . . .

Paul: Sarah, I wasn't born yesterday.

Timmy: Yeah, he wasn't born yesterday!

Sarah: Young man!

Paul: I think we'd better go, tiger.

Timmy: Women!

Noel: Nana? Is it true that, when you were a kid like me, this place was like a mall?

Rebekah: Like a mall? I doubt it.

Marian: No. Not like a mall . . . it was better than a mall!

Rebekah: But . . . it's dirty.

Marian: When I was a child, Noel, downtown was beautiful . . . full of life . . . and at Christmastime, it was magical!

Sarah: Oh, it was . . . still when I was a girl. I guess it's hard to imagine.

Marian: I've seen a lot of changes.

Grace: You've seen changes? I remember coming downtown with my mother to get her hair done at Costello's (*points*) over there. She'd give me a nickel to get a peach ice cream cone at White's -- (*points*) it was over there. Why, I remember the day this theatre opened its doors -- on April 9, 1928. The movie starred that handsome William Haines. You kids today would call him a "hottie."

Marian: (*Aghast!*) Mother!

Grace: Well, he was . . . That was the same year my mother decided that 8 years old was old enough to accompany her to the Holiday Fashion Show. Back in those days, on the Saturday after Thanksgiving, Richmond ladies made their way to Miller and Rhoads Tea Room to get a first look at the cutting edge fashions for the season.

ACT I/Scene 2: 1928 Shopping in Richmond (1928 Shopping)

***** BEGIN 1928 Shopping in Richmond (1928 Shopping) *****

Players: **Newsie** (*speaking*)
Mr. Neville (*fastidious Loews theatre manager*)
Miss Parker, (*Loews ticket girl –not up-to-date with the current fashions*)
Mr. Jamison (*handyman for the Loews*)
Moses (*doorman at M&R*)
Samuel (*his young son*)
Clara (*Grace's mother*);
8 year old Grace (*played by the Noel actress*)
Millie (*flapper girl*)
Effie (*a flapper girl*)
Hattie (*flapper girl*)
Goldie (*flapper girl*)
Mason Chapeaux (*hat designer for Fashion First House of Couture*)
Miss Maner (*prim and proper – but cutting edge -- buyer for the Ladies' Dept at M&R*)

Newsie: Extra, Extra. Read all about it rising hemlines, glitz and glamour set the style in Tea Room Christmas fashions!

Mr Neville: (*Inspects work of Miss Parker who is washing the Lowes ticket window*) Miss Parker, you missed a spot, right there.

Ms Parker: Sorry, Mr. Neville. (*As she turns back to her work, she finds Mr. Jamison cleaning the window for her*) Why, thank you, Mr. Jamison.

Jamison: Jimmy.

Ms Parker: . . . Jimmy . . .

Mr Neville: I don't pay you to wash windows Don Juan. Help unload those boxes around back.

Ms Parker: I break for lunch at noon . . .

Jamison: Noon . . . okay . . .

Mr Neville: NOW!

Moses: (*to Samuel*) MeMaw must be dawdlin' at the butcher's yet, Samuel. You're gonna have to sit over there, real quiet like, 'til she comes to get you.

Samuel: But, Pop . . .

Moses: Don't, "but, Pop" me. And, while you're waiting . . . (*gives him a yoyo*) . . . see if you can get the knot out of this string for me, will you?

Samuel: Sure!

Clara: (*Gives Grace money*) For the kettle . . . Always share your blessings with the less fortunate, Grace. (*Grace puts the donation in the kettle.*)

Clara: Morning, Moses. Lovely day, isn't it?

Moses: Yes, Mrs. Davison. *(then to Grace)* And, Miss Grace. That's a mighty pretty coat you're wearing . . .

Grace: Thank you, Moses. We are on our way to the Tea Room.

Moses: For the big Holiday Fashion Show . . .

Grace: Yes, sir . . . because I'm 8 years old you know . . .

Moses: Yes, Miss Ruby told me you turned 8 just last week.

Grace: She made me this scarf, and sewed a G here . . . for Grace. And, she baked my favorite cake - chocolate with white icing and pink roses!

Clara: Your mother is so thoughtful, Moses . . . and all my friends agree she is hands down the best baker in Richmond. Why, last week at bridge, Susie Jo Snellings served eclairs she bought from that new French pastry chef – they couldn't hold a candle to your mother's.

Moses: I'm a bit partial to mama's cookin' myself, Miss Davison –maybe a little too partial *(referring to his waistline)*, if you know what I mean.

Clara: I do indeed. Which is why I'll having the Chef Salad today –

Moses: *(Distracted by Samuel who has gotten up to come show his Dad something)* Samuel, you sit right back down there, you hear.

Clara: He looks more like you every day, Moses. And, he's such a polite boy.

Moses: Yes, Mrs. Davison, I have to say, I'm mighty proud. *(As Clara and Grace enter M&R)* You enjoy the Fashion Show, now.

Clara: I'm sure we will, Moses. *(Grace)*

Mason: My marvelous fashions, sir, have arrived.

Mason: No doubt Miss Maner is fretfully awaiting our arrival.

Moses: I'll get her for you. *(He goes into the store)*

Millie: *(Squeaky, high pitched voice)* Mr. Chapeau?

Mason: Yes?

Millie: I just want you to know that I am your number one fan!

Hattie: *(Another squeaky, high pitched voice)* Don't be silly, Millie. Everyone knows that I am Mr. Chapeau's number one fan!

Millie: I just bought your Classic Cloche in Fire Engine Red in honor of the holiday. . .

Hattie: Well, I have your Classic Cloche in every color in the rainbow. And, your red-sequined, hanky-hemmed turned every head at the Starlight Ball.

Mason: *(taking a box from a gal who is trying to peek inside)* Nice try, ladies! You'll get to see it all at the fashion show this afternoon.

Goldie: I can't wait 'til then! I need to know what to wear *now!*

Effie: Yeah, I'm still wearing a dress from *last* season.

Millie: Oh, Mr. Chapeau, how do you *do* it – keep coming up with such sensational fashions?

Goldie: Ooh, what's your secret, Mr. Chapeau?

Mason: Ladies, ladies! Please!

Ms Maner: Well, if everyone has had their fill of fashion frolic, may I suggest, Mr. Chapeau, that you direct your gentlemen to get these hats inside? Since our show begins in . . . less than 30 minutes. And, you must see Tootsie right away. She needs instruction on how to wrap the gold mesh turban.

Act 1/Transition Dialogue 2: 1928 Sam's Family Dialogue (1928 Sam's Family)

Players: **Moses** (*Samuel's father – M&R Doorman*)
Ruby (*Moses Mother, Samuel's MeMaw*)
Samuel (*child Samuel*)
Hope (*Samuel's childhood friend*)

Ruby: (*Rushing in*) I'm sorry it took me so long, Moses. I had to deliver a cake for the Baxter wedding. Then, I stopped by Ms. Bailey's to take a casserole . . . three of her children is down with the mumps this week! And by Doc Elkins' to pick up some of that liniment for my arthritis . . . it's been botherin' me something fierce ever since I planted them new rose bushes, Moses!

Moses: You should've called me, Maw.

Ruby: Then I scooted over to the old folks home . . . 'cause I had been promising that sweet Mr. Tyler a little jar of my damson preserves for the longest time. And then the line at the butcher's was . . . well, Mrs. Conway was "hand-selecting" her pork chops . . .

Moses: Don't worry Mama. Samuel's been well occupied.

Ruby: That Hope and our Samuel go together like mashed potatoes and gravy! (*To Samuel, crossing Moses*) Time to go, Samuel. We have to be at church before noon.

Samuel: (*Church AGAIN? It's always the same . . . it's boring . . .*)

Moses: Don't backtalk your MeMaw, Samuel.

Ruby: It seems boring now. But, when you grow up, Samuel, you'll come to a day when you find your faith is all you have . . . that's when you'll discover that your faith is all you need. Let's go.

Ruby: We're havin' pot roast for supper-- so don't be late.

Samuel: (*To Hope*) And, I'll see you tomorrow, Hope?

Hope: I'll be here.

Ruby: Oh, I almost forgot. I made you something . . . I made it blue – because I know that's your favorite color – and I put an H for Hope.

Hope: Thanks, Miss Ruby.

Ruby: You're welcome, sweetie pie. Now run along home. (*to Samuel*) And, I brought you something, too. (*Hands Samuel a lollipop.*)

Samuel: MeMaw, you're the best!

Ruby: Thank you, sweetie.

ACT 1/Transition Dialogue 3: 1938 Family Transition Dialogue (1938 Family)

Players: **Grace** (*great grandmother*)
Marian (*grandmother*)
Sarah (*mother*)

Grace: Every time winter rolls around, I pull out my scarf and think of our sweet Ruby.

Marian: Me, too (*indicating her scarf, then Sarah's*). She made that for you when you were just a baby, Sarah. Ruby was so special to all of us.

Grace: Samuel was too. Sometimes, he'd stay at our house while his mother, Ruby, delivered her "world famous" baked goods from one end of town to the other. Samuel, your great Uncle Timmy and I would play together for hours on end! Once we reached our teens, we saw each other less often. Samuel's friendship with Hope blossomed into a lovely romance. And then, in 1938 -- (*to Sarah*) when I was just a little younger than your newly-engaged sister, Wendy, is now -- (*to Marian*) I met your daddy -- (*to Sarah*) your granddaddy -- (*to Rebekah/Noel*) your great granddaddy . . . and my mind was off of old friends and on to dancing . . . because that man of mine could cut a rug!

Sarah: That means Great Granddaddy was a really great dancer!

Grace: Every night we could, we went to Tantilla Gardens . .

Marian: "The South's most beautiful ballroom!" And it was still "the place to go" when I was dating your PawPaw. They had live band music and a rooftop that rolled away for dancing under the stars.

Grace: My favorite memory of Tantilla was the Friday after Thanksgiving in 1938. My Daddy rented the whole place for my 18th birthday party. All my friends, including Samuel and his sweet Hope, were there! It was such a fun night!

ACT 1/Scene 3: 1938 Tantilla Gardens (1938 Tantilla)

Players: **Newsie**
Hope (*Samuel's teenaged friend*)
Samuel (*teenage Samuel*)
Announcer (*emcee of Tantilla*)
Nathaniel (*teenage Nathaniel*)
Grace (*teenage Grace*)

Newsie: Extra, extra. Read all about it. Tantilla Gardens, "The South's Most Beautiful Ballroom", boasts record crowds this holiday season.

Inside Tantilla

Hope: Having fun?

Samuel: I always have fun when I'm with you . . .

Hope: (*Hinting*) I can think of a way to have MORE fun! (*indicating the dance floor*)

Samuel: You know dancing is not my thing?

Hope: Come on . . . I'll teach you!

Samuel: Ok . . .

Announ: And now, ladies and gentlemen, put your hands together and your feet on the dance floor as we bring back the swinging sound of Glen Gray and his Casa Loma Orchestra!

AFTER THE SONG

Samuel: (*Looking at his watch*) Whoa! Time to go, if I'm going to get you home by 11:00.

Hope: Just a few more minutes?

Samuel: I need to stay in your Pap's good graces — because I may need to ask him for a favor . . . someday.

Nathaniel and Grace approach Hope and Samuel.

Grace: Hope, Samuel, it's been so great to have you here! I've missed seeing you around.

Samuel: I've missed you, too.

Grace: (*To Samuel*) How is Miss Ruby today?

Samuel: Her fever broke last night, so she should be back to work tomorrow — just in time to bake your favorite birthday cake.

Grace: Tell her not to worry about the cake, Samuel, if she needs a couple more days to rest. (*suddenly, remembering her manners*) Oh, I'm sorry. You haven't actually met . . . Hope, Samuel, this is Nathaniel.

Nathaniel extends his hand and he and Samuel shake hands.

Nathaniel: It's nice to finally meet you, Samuel. Grace says you're a good friend!

Samuel: As she is to me!

Grace: Hey, maybe the four of us can catch up after the New Year!

Samuel: Sounds great . . . but for now, I've got about *(checking watch again)* 15 minutes to get this pretty lady home.

Hope: Thanks again, Grace. And, Happy Birthday!

Grace: Thanks. It's been pretty happy so far . . .

***** END 1938 Tantilla Gardens (1938 Tantilla) *****

ACT 1/Transition Dialogue 4: 1953 Family Transition Dialogue (1953 Family)

Players: **Grace** (*great grandmother*)
Marian (*grandmother*)
Sarah (*mother*)
Rebekah (*teenager*)

Grace: Nathaniel and I were married that Spring. But not Hope and Samuel — because Samuel was determined to finish college before they tied the knot. He spent 12 years getting a 4-year degree from Virginia State – fitting in classes while he worked to help support his family. Then, just when Hope was on the fast track to marrying her fella, along came Uncle Sam saying I want you, and Samuel went off to fight half way around the world.

Rebekah: That would have been in the Korean War, right?

Marian: That's right, Rebekah.

Grace: Samuel boarded the train for Camp Pickett – along with another Richmond boy . . . now what was his name? Oh, yes. Ecclesiastes. Strange name . . . but a nice young man . . . and he always seemed particularly fond of Samuel. Then, they came back into town on the same day – and, on the same bus. Hope and Ruby were on the top of the world – knowing Samuel would be arriving that day.

Marian: And they weren't the only ones who were excited that day. It was Christmas Eve, 1953, and teenagers . . . like I was . . . had made their way downtown to this very spot, anticipating the arrival of (*dreamily reminiscent*) Old Blue Eyes . . .

Grace: Yes, and that was also the day that (*to Rebekah and Noel*) your Nana missed getting carted off to jail by the skin of her teeth.

Sarah: My mother?

Rebekah: My grandmother?

Grace: Oh, yes.

Sarah: I don't think you've told us this story, Mom . . .

Grace: Well, it was like this . . .

ACT 1/Scene 4: 1953 West End/Southside (Confrontation)

Players: **Newsie**

Buffy (snooty teenaged debutante; President of Frank Sinatra's West End Fan Club)

Mary Katherine (Buffy's friend)

Mayor Haddock (Richmond's Mayor – dignified)

Marian (at 14 years old and played by the Rebekah actress)

Ellie (a Southside teenaged gal – Marian's best friend)

Body Guard (Frank Sinatra's)

Reginald (a really snooty West End teenaged guy)

Frank Sinatra (himself)

Sergeant Walton (local policeman)

Buffy: Mary Katherine, you're sure the shrimp is on ice and the punch is (indicating "spiked") "punchy?"

Mary K: Absolutely, Buffy. Mary Dell is icing the shrimp. And, Reginald here has personally guaranteed the "punchiness" of the punch.

Haddock: (to Buffy) Miss St. Clair.

Buffy: Mayor Haddock. So good to see you again.

Haddock: You are looking particularly lovely today.

Buffy: Why, yes, I am . . . aren't I?

Haddock: And, Mary Katherine. Your parents are keeping well?

Mary K: Quite well, thank you sir. (whispers to Reginald) Did you hear his daughter just missed getting accepted at UVA?

Marian: Here he comes! It's him, Ellie, it's really him.

BG 1: Give him room to breathe, ladies.

Mar/El: (Together) Drop dead, nosebleed!

Marian: (to Sinatra) I love you , Frank.

Frank (Takes the book) With love to . . .

Marian: Marian.

Frank: Marian.

Ellie: I'd follow you "From Here to Eternity," Frank.

Frank: Cute!

Haddock: Mr. Sinatra. It's an honor to welcome you to our fair city. My secretary has reserved you a room at the Jefferson and a limo is waiting just around the corner.

Frank: Thank you, Mayor, it's great to be back.

Haddock: Mr. Sinatra, may I present Miss Buffy O'Hara, President of your West End Fan Club.

Frank: I bet you've got "the world on a string," Miss O'Hara.

Buffy: You'll absolutely adore The Jefferson, Frank. We simply must have our photo taken on the staircase . . .

Buffy: Reginald. Be a dear and dispose of these gatecrashers for me, will you? *(She heads off with Frank)*

Reginald: Sorry, ladies. This bash is by invitation ONLY. And, we don't recall posting any to nowheresville.

Mary K: Besides, the Jefferson requires a certain attire that . . . umm . . . let's just say your closet is obviously lacking . . .

Marian: At least my closet isn't full of brooms, you West End Witch.

Mary K: Brooms? What brooms? Oh, yes, you mean the ones your mama uses when she cleans my house?

Marian: Hey, Ellie, how about we help mama out and clean witchie's clock?

Ellie: Yeah, we could use that mop on her head to finish off the job!

Reginald: Forget them, Mary Katherine, they aren't worth it. The only class they have is Auto Mechanics 101 . . . I mean they are so low rent they think Miller & Rhoads is an intersection . . .

Mary K: You're right, Reg. I think it's time these greasers go back to Oilville . . .

S. Walton: Okay. Let's see if we can remember we're young ladies here . . .

Mary Katherine decides to take a swing at Marian and, instead, hits the policeman in the nose.

S. Walton: That's it. Miss . . .

Mary K: St. Claire.

S. Walton: Well, Miss St. Claire, we're going for a ride downtown.

Mary K: I don't think so, Officer . . .

S. Walter: Walton. Sergeant Walton.

Mary K: Sergeant Walton, do you realize who my Daddy is?

S. Walton: I could care less "who your Daddy is," miss. *(taking her off)* Marian, Ellie . . . try to stay out of trouble for the rest of the afternoon, will you.

Newsie: Extra, extra, read all about it. Mary Katherine St. Claire arrested for assaulting an officer.

ACT 1/Scene 5a: 1953 Woolworth's Didn't Do It (WW Didn't)

Players: **LaVerne** (a seasoned, rough around the edges waitress)

Marian (teenage)

Ellie (teenager – Marian's friend)

Ellie: (Imitating Mary Katherine) Sergeant Walton, do you realize who my Daddy is?

Marian: I mean, I would like to be a fly on the wall when "Daddy St. Claire" comes to bail his baby girl out of the slammer.

LaVerne: (Coming from behind the counter) What are you girls going on about now?

Marian: Well, LaVerne, you know Frank Sinatra is in town today?

LaVerne: Yea?

Ellie: Well, the West End witch club turned out in full force — led by Miss Nose-In-The Air St. Claire?

LaVerne: That brat, Mary Katherine.

Marian: Yes. We ended up in a little . . . confrontation . . .

Ellie: You mean, cat fight!

Marian: Mary Katherine tried to sock me one . . .

Ellie: Marian ducked. . . and guess where Miss Mary K's very unlucky punch landed . . .

LaVerne: Okay, I'll bite. Where?

Ellie: She clipped none other than our very own Sgt. Walton right smack in the kisser.

LaVerne: No?

Marian: He was mad as a hornet!

LaVerne: I can imagine!

Marian: Oh . . . it gets better. Miss St. Claire resisted arrest. And, the good old Sarge hauled Missy Prissy to the station . . . slung over his shoulder like a sack of Idaho's best.

Ellie: Why, they are probably fingerprinting the little lady as we speak.

Marian: Before they drag her off to face hanging Judge Sours

Ellie: Can't you just see it now?

Marian: Sourpuss Sours enters the courtroom approaches the bench and takes his seat. As the jurors file in into the box. ~~He~~ calls the courtroom to order.

LaVerne: As an over-pompous — and overpaid — attorney escorts Jailbird St. Claire to the witness box . . . and turns to address the judge.

Your Honor, this sweet young girl is a mere child, a tragic victim of terrible circumstance. I appeal to the Court's mercy, the Court's infinite patience and understanding in these matters; the Court's sense of propriety and respect for the long line of west end luminaries from whence this girl comes.

Ellie: Please, Perry Mason, may I say a word in my own defense?

ACT 1/Scene 6: 1953 Samuel Comes Home (1953 Homecoming)

Players: **Ecclesiastes** (*Samuel's guardian angel*)

Samuel (*33ish*)

Ecclesiastes: I'm going to miss seeing that mug of yours every day, Sam, my man.

Samuel: Yeah. What are the chances we would be stationed together on every assignment from Richmond to Korea and back? You've been a good friend!

Ecclesiastes: And you to me . . . how about I buy you a burger.

Samuel: I'll have to take a rain check on that. I need to get on over to Schwarzschild's before they close.

Ecclesiastes: Well then, take care of yourself.

Samuel: You, too. And, if you find yourself back in the area, look me up at Miller & Rhoads. My mother sent me an ad for a job that's come open. It's not in the executive offices . . . but, it'll be a start . . . I hope.

Ecclesiastes: Hope's key, brother . . . but what's more important, is the source of that hope. So keep looking up, keep hoping, and believe God for your miracle – but in His way and His time.

Samuel: Travel safe.

Ecclesiastes: That's my hope. Oh, and, good luck with that girlfriend of yours . . . what's her name?

Samuel: Hope.

Ecclesiastes: Hope. Well, I hope she says yes . . .

Samuel: Yeah. (*showing just a touch of nervousness*) Me, too. Me, too.

ACT 1/Scene 7a: Christmas Wishes

Players: **Moses** (*Samuel's Father, still the Doorman at M&R*);
Grace (33, played by Sarah actress);
Marian (14 played by Rebekah actress)
Teacher (elementary school choir director)
Jack (*Marian's little brother*)
Ruby (*Samuel's grandmother*)
Hope (31, *Samuel's girlfriend and will be his wife, just got off work at Woolworths*)
Samuel (33, *just returned from the Korean War, planning to propose to Hope*)

Moses: (to Grace – 33 – played by Marian actress) Good evenin', Miss Grace. And Merry Christmas to you!

Grace: Good evening, Moses. I know it's going to be a particularly Merry Christmas for you -- with Samuel coming in and all.

Moses: Yes, mam, havin' my boy back home sure will put the Merry in our Christmas this year.

Ruby: And, thanks to Miss Grace givin' me a hand with my baking orders, I got Samuel's favorite pot roast cookin', rolls risin', and a pumpkin pie right ready to go in the oven. But, I just had to take a break and scoot on down here for Jack's big solo . . .

Grace: Oh . . . here they come now. That's my son, Jack . . . in the red sweater. He's got the solo.

Marian: Whew! We just did make it, Ellie. Mom and Miss Ruby are over there.

Teacher: Ladies and gentlemen, we are so excited that you are here tonight to be part of this special celebration. But, before we sing, let me ask you boys and girls . . . are you ready for Christmas?

Kids: Yes!

Teacher: Are you tired of waiting for Christmas?

Kids: Yes!

Teacher: Then you have something in common with your Forest View friends. Jack and Lily, come on and tell these folks what's on your mind.

AFTER THE SONG

Grace: (To Jack) You did a wonderful job. I'm so proud of you. (Indicating Ruby) And look who made a special trip downtown to see you.

Jack: Thanks, Ruby.

Ruby: I wouldn't have missed it for the world, Jack. But, now, I have to hurry on home and finish making my supper.

Grace: We need to get going ourselves. So . . . we will see you day after tomorrow. Be sure to give Samuel our best.

Ruby: I sure will do that, mam.

Grace: *(handing Jack coins)* For the less fortunate, Jack.

Marian: You did alright, little brother.

Hope: *(Entering)* Mr. Jordan, I didn't miss Samuel did I?

Moses: No sign of him yet, Hope. I'm not sure what's keeping the boy. I hope he'll be along soon *(he exits)*

Hope: Hope . . . that's what I've been holdin' on to

Samuel: Long time no see, Miss Armstrong.

Hope: **It feels like I've been waiting for you . . . forever**

Samuel: Four years . . .

Hope: Lots of letters . . .

Samuel: I saved every one.

Hope: I've kept your picture . . . right here.

Samuel: Hope . . . will you marry me?

Hope: Oh, Samuel . . . of course I'll marry you!

Samuel: We've got so many plans to make.

ACT 1/Transition Dialogue 5 – 1976 FAMILY TRANSITION DIALOGUE (1976 FAMILY)

Players: **Grace** (*great grandmother*);
Marian (*grandmother*)
Sarah (*mother*)

Grace: Reverend Martin married them that spring. And, those two were as devoted as any couple I've seen before or since.

Marian: How many children did they have?

Grace: Five. Samuel, Jr. – he was awarded a scholarship to play ball for RPI (*thinking*) . . . Jonathan Moses – named after Samuel's Daddy . . .

Marian: then the twins, Andrew and Benjamin . . . Benjamin was killed in Viet Nam . . .

Grace: Yes. Broke poor Samuel's heart that did.

Marian: and, Ruby Kate . . .

Grace: Yes, after all those years, Hope finally got her girl.

Marian: Samuel's Daddy retired not too long after Hope and Samuel's wedding, I recall . . .

Grace: . . . and Samuel took over his Daddy's job at Miller & Rhoads.

Sarah: I remember Samuel. He had the most wonderful smile . . .

Marian: Yes, he did . . .

Sarah: But you know what I remember most about Samuel? It was something he said. It was in . . . must have been '76, because we had been to D.C. that 4th of July before -- for the Bicentennial. Mama had been too sick with the flu to go shopping, so she sent us downtown to find a present for Dad.

ACT 1/Transition Dialogue 6 – 1976 FAMILY TRANSITION DIALOGUE (1976 FAMILY)

Players: **Newsie** (*youth paper salesman*)
Tice (*elderly shopper*)
Mrs. Rudd (*Miss Tice's elderly sister*)
Samuel (*56ish*)
Grace (*grandmother age*)
Sarah (*teenager*)
Josiah (*Samuel's friend – 56ish*)
Youth 1 (*a gang member*)
Youth 2 (*a gang member*)
Officer (*local policeman*)

Newsie: Extra, extra. Real all about it. Holiday matinee showing today of the sensational – Rocky! Odds on bet to win the Oscar for Best Picture of '76.

Two middle-aged sisters, Radie Tice and Lucy Rudd, exit M&R.

Miss Tice: (*In conversation with her sister, Mrs. Lucy Rudd*) I still need to find something for Alice . . . and Jimmy.

Miss Rudd: I bet we can find something for Alice at the Jewel Room.

Samuel: Miss Tice. Mrs. Rudd. Enjoy your lunch?

Miss Tice: We always do, Samuel. I *enjoyed* the Brunswick Stew today – with a popover of course.

Mrs. Rudd: The Deviled Crab was yummy – as always! And, you're never too old for Rudolph cake!

Samuel: I know that to be true.

Miss Tice: Oh, (*digging in her purse*) I almost forgot. Here's a little something for the holiday, Samuel.

Mrs. Rudd: . . . from the both of us.

Samuel: Why, thank you, ladies. (*As they exit*) And happy and blessed Christmas to you both.

Sarah: (*To her grandmother as they enter*) Like I was saying . . . What Dad really wants is a CB Radio, or he might like . . .

Moving on to M&R, they encounter Samuel.

Samuel: Mrs. Grace. And, Miss Sarah.

Grace: Mornin, Samuel.

Samuel: Looking for something particular today?

Sarah: Something for Dad. Granny wants to get him a suit . . . I say he'd rather have a CB radio. What do you think, Samuel?

Samuel: (*Teasing*) I always say the best gift you can give a man . . . is just a little peace and quiet.

Grace: Well, he doesn't get much of that these days with Sarah and her friends around. (*Looking at her watch*) Oh, my goodness, Sarah, we've got to get going. It's nearly 5:00 and if we don't get to the pageant by 6:30, we won't get a decent seat.

Sarah: Church again. Sorry, Samuel. Sometimes . . . church can be, you know (*dramatically*) a little boring.

Samuel: When I was your age, Miss Sarah, I thought the same. But, let me tell you something my Grandma Ruby said to me. "One day, Samuel, she said, **when you find your faith is all you have . . . that's when you'll discover that your faith is all you need.**" And, as I've grown to be a very OLD man, Miss Sarah, I must say I've found that to be true. (*to Grace*) You'll find suits on the first floor . . . (*Speaking to Sarah*) and CB radios in the basement.

Grace: Samuel, you are incorrigible.

Samuel: Incorrigible? I'm not sure that's a compliment.

Enter, Josiah "Snake" Wilson, and an entourage of congregants to set up for an outdoor concert.

Samuel: (*Samuel recognizes an old friend*) Snake? Snake Wilson? I haven't seen in you since . . .

Josiah: Since before I had that "Blessed Assurance" . . . Since...before I felt that (*sung*) "Amazing Grace" . . . Um-um-um . . . Yes, sir. I once was lost, but now am found . . . I got me a new name written down in glory! A new name Brother Jordan, This man you see before you is a Ssssssssssssnake no longer! Because 'my God' . . . is in the beauty from ashes business.

Samuel: Yes He is. Yes He is.

Josiah: Yes Lord, July 4th, 1976 was the night I saw the light! When that preacher man pointed to me off the TV and said... "**Tonight is the night**" I knew he was right. I heard His holy callin'. As a matter of fact, I can still hear it now . . . He said, "**Walk this way, walk this way . . .**" And so I did. Found myself on the steps of Mount Zion Church. And then I said 'Lord, Lord' how can you uuuse a wretch like me? And that's when I heard Him say, '**You Don't Have to Be a Star, Baby to be in my show**' And now, Brother Samuel, I am balessed to be the Pastor for that very same Church. Mindblower ain't it man?

Samuel: Pastor Josiah? But . . . didn't I hear not too long ago that you were teaching disco lessons to blue hairs over at . . .

Josiah: Dude ...dude ...be smooth man! You don't really think I can afford these righteous threads on just a preacher's pay now do you?

(2 youth enter, running into each other)

Youth 1: Hey, watch where you're goin', loser.

Youth 2: Who you calling a loser, man?

Youth 1: I think that would be you . . . brother.

Youth 2: I ain't no brother of yours, man.

Josiah steps into the middle trying to head off trouble.

Josiah: Dudes...dudes...what's with the bad vibes? Let's have a little peace on earth on Christmas Eve...dig?

Youth 1: Well, well...what have we here? We got us a real live jive preacher freak.

Samuel: *(Trying to draw Josiah away)* Josiah, let's just step aside here . . .

Youth 1: Mind your own business, Jive Turkey.

Samuel: Jive Turkey?

The gangs move in to surround Josiah and Samuel. Officer enters.

Officer: Is there a problem here, gentlemen?

Josiah: *(Showing grace.)* No, Officer. No problem.

Youth 2: Yeah . . . no problem. We were just movin' along. Right boys?

Youth 1: *(sinister)* We'll be seein' you around, preacher man.

Officer: *(To Josiah)* You keep playin' with fire, Evel Knievel, you're gonna' get burned.

Josiah: Not me, officer. My "fire insurance" is all paid up.

Officer: Yeah. Well, if I were you, I'd be doing some serious praying, preacher. **Times have changed. It's dangerous out here. And, not likely to get better any time soon**

Josiah: **We don't battle against flesh and blood . . .**

Officer: Yeah, I hope you're right preacher.

Josiah: It's just one of the hopes I hold on to, Officer. *(to Samuel as officer exits)* Well, I'll be seein' you around, big guy . . .

Samuel: Watch your back, Josiah.

Josiah: I told you, my friend, my fire insurance is all paid up.

ACT 1/Scene 9: 1993 Samuel's Struggle (1993 Struggle)

Players: **Grace** (great grandmother)
Marian (grandmother)
Sarah (mother)
Samuel (73ish)
Officer (local policeman)
Paul (Marian's husband)

Grace: You know, Samuel never seemed quite the same after that.

Marian: It was the beginning of some sad times. I think it was . . . a loss of innocence . . . for Samuel and for the City.

Grace: Yes it was.

Marian: The Loews closed just three years later . . .

Grace: It was sad to see that beautiful old Wurlitzer rise up out of the floor for the last time.

Marian: But then, Miller & Rhoads closed in 1990. I remember old Samuel standing there -- still trying to smile -- as he opened the door for the last customers.

Sarah: Thalhimers wasn't far behind. And, since then, things just seem to be spiraling out of control.

Grace: The crime rate's gone through the roof --

Marian: But, as bad as it seems, they'll give it another try -- holding onto the hope that something good can come out of this . . . mess!

Grace: -- because some things are just too important to give up on.

Marian: Yes, they are.

Samuel enters onto the scene. Grace recognizes him and calls to him.

Grace: Samuel? Oh, my goodness, Samuel. Is that really you? Why, we were just talking about you . . .

Samuel: (*Seeing/recognizing her*) Mrs. Baskerville? Miss Marian? **Certainly** not Miss Sarah?

Grace: (*Nodding*) That's right.

Samuel: I can hardly believe it . . . Why, it's like turning back time . . . (*sadly*) . . . to a better time.

Grace: I heard about Hope, Samuel . . . I'm so sorry. She's . . .

Samuel: (*bitterly*). . . in a better place?

Grace: What I was going to say . . . is that she's certainly been missed over at the Mission House. I can't imagine the void it's left in your life. When I lost Nathaniel . . .)

Samuel: (*Softening*) Well, we just try to press on don't we . . .

Officer: *(enters - to Samuel)* **Okay, old man, move along** These ladies don't need to be bothered on their evening out.

Samuel: Leave it be, Miss Marian.

Paul: *(enters)* Good news, I found the car. Bad news, wearing heels was not a good idea . . . because the street's closed for off for two blocks down . . . *(Notices Samuel)* Everything okay here?

Grace: Yes, Paul. Mr. Jordon is an old friend.

Paul: Well, I hate to rush you, then -- but . . . I'm parked in a tow away zone.

Marian: Oh, dear. We are going to have to hurry, Mama. Merry Christmas to you, Samuel,

Grace: Merry Christmas, Samuel.

Samuel: Merry Christmas, Mrs. Baskerville . . .

Grace: Please . . . after all these years . . . it's Grace.

Samuel: Grace.

ACT 2/Scene 10: Bethlehem Hillside (Hillside)

Players: **Jake** (*shepherd leader*)
Matt (*shepherd*)
Mark (*shepherd*)
Zach (*shepherd*)
Eli (*shepherd*)
Jude (*new shepherd on the hill*)

Jake: Oh, I stepped right in it!

Eli: And it's a really smelly pile, too.

Jake: Thomas, you off dreaming again? (*To others*) Man, he's hopeless!

Matt: Aw, forget him. Come on, it's midnight. Let's eat

Eli: Yeah. I'm starving!

Zach: What the little lady pack for ya tonight, Matt?

Matt: Hmm. Leftover lamb chops -- again. Three nights in a row. Anybody wanna trade?

Zach: Naw. I got lamb chops, too. Hey, Mark, whatcha got?

Mark: Uh, can't tell really. I think it used t be shepherd's pie -- or something like it

Eli: Yeah, well eat your hearts out, fellas, 'cause I got me a (*growls*) LAMB-burger combo -- supersized! (*seeing Jude*) Hey, fella, you're new here. How' you get stuck workin' graveyard shift? (*poking fun*) You lose somebody's sheep or something.

Jude: No. But my father . . . he was a shepherd just like his old man . . . told me the best way to break into the field -- no pun intended -- was to work the night shift.

Matt: And, 30 years from now, you'll still be working the night shift.

Zach: Well, welcome then. I'm Jake.

Jude: Uh, hi. I'm Jude.

All: Hey, Jude!

Jude: Hey, guys. But, ya know, to be honest, I'm not sure about this whole shepherd career track. Don't you guys ever get . . . well, you know . . . don't' you ever get just a little sick and tired of all these sheep?

Mark: What are you crazy?! Sheep are our life!

All: (*Chanting, fists in the air*) Baa, baa!

Matt: Without sheep, we'd be out of a job!

All: Baa, baa!

Eli : Why I was practically raised on sheep!

All: Baa –

Jake: So, then, tell him guys. We're not sick of sheep, are we?

All: *(They look at Jake, then at Jude, and say resignedly)* Yeah!

ACT 2/Scene 11: Storm Before the Calm (Storm)

Players: **Naomi** (*Innkeeper Wife*)
Nathaniel (*Innkeeper*)
Sarah (*mother of lost child*)

Setting: *Huge wind is blowing.*

Nathaniel: (*Trying to lash up the awning – to Naomi*) Hand me the rope.

Naomi: I can't hear you.

Nathaniel: The rope! Hand me the rope.

Sarah: (*Rushing on*) Have you seen Abigail?

Naomi: Yes, it is . . . quite a gale!

Sarah: (*Shouting*) No, I said, have you seen Ab-i-gail?

Naomi: Oh! No, not since before nightfall.

Nathaniel: Strangest thing I've ever seen. Wind like this blowin' and not a cloud in the sky.

Nathaniel: (*To Naomi*) Naomi, where are you going with that . . .

Naomi: That sweet young girl out there . . . (*accusingly*) the one YOU sent off to the stable . . . is about to deliver a baby, Nathaniel . . . and in this weather! (*looks Heavenward*) Lord save us!

Wind stops abruptly when Baby cries.

Nathaniel: Well, I'll be. Never seen anything like it . . .

Naomi: No. And, it sounds like we have a new arrival . . . (*calling into house*) Tabitha, come quickly . . . and bring another blanket.

Nathaniel: (*Shaking his head*) No, never seen anything like it . . .