

CD 1

ACT ONE

1 Introduction

Scene 1

Catfish Row

(Evening, Catfish Row is quiet. Jasbo Brown is at the piano, playing a low-down blues while half a dozen couples dance in a slow, almost hypnotic rhythm.)

Group

Da-doo-da. Da-doo-da.

(as a rhythmic chant)

Wa, wa, wa, wa. Da-doo-da. Da-doo-da.

(Lights find another group on stage, in the center of which Clara sits with her baby in her arms, rocking it back and forth.)

Clara

- 2 Summertime and the livin' is easy,
fish are jumpin', and the cotton is high.
Oh yo' daddy's rich, and yo' ma is good lookin',
so hush, little baby, don' yo' cry.

(Girls of chorus sing "Ooh" behind Clara.)

One of these mornin's you goin' to rise up
singin',
then you'll spread yo' wings an' you'll take the
sky,
but till that mornin', there's a-nothin' can harm
you
with Daddy and Mammy standin' by.

(Lights come up on still another group, this time a crap game.)

Mingo

Oh, nobody knows when the Lawd is goin' to
call.

Men

Roll dem bones, roll.

Sporting Life

It may be in the summertime and may be in
the fall.

Sporting Life and Men

Roll dem bones, roll.

Sporting Life

But you got to leave yo' baby and yo' home
an' all,
so —

Sporting Life and Men

Roll dem bones, oh, my brudder, oh my
brudder, oh my brudder
roll dem bones, roll dem bones, roll, roll.

(The stage grows lighter and Catfish Row takes up its normal life; children pass, couples walk about, the crap game continues.)

Jake *(rolling dice)*

Seems like these bones don't give me nothin'
but boxcars tonight.
It was the same two weeks ago, an' the game
broke me;
I don't likes that kind o' luck!

Sporting Life *(Sporting Life produces own dice, but Mingo grabs them.)*

Damn you, give me dem bones!

Mingo

What do you say to these, Jake?

Jake

Them's the same cock-eyed bones
what clean the game out last Saturday night;
if they rolls in this game, I rolls out.

Serena *(to Robbins)*

Honey boy!

Jake

Come on down, Robbins, we're waitin' for you.

Serena

Honey, don't play tonight. Do like I say.

Robbins *(to Serena)*

I been sweatin' all day. Night time is man's
time. He got a right to forget his troubles.
He got a right to play.

Serena

If you hadn't been drinkin' you wouldn't talk to
me that way.
You ain't nebber hear Lord Jesus say nuttin'
about got to play.

Robbins

There you go again. Lissen what I say.

I works all the week; Sunday got to pray.
But Saturday night a man's got a right to play.

Group

A man's got a right to play.

Robbins

Yes, sir, that's right. That ole lady of mine is
hell on savin' money to join the buryin' lodge.
I says spend it while you is still alive and kickin'.
(picks up dice and throws)

Jim *(enters)*

Lord, I is tired this night. I'm done with cotton.

Jake

Better come along with me on the Seagull. I
got room for another fisherman.

Jim

That suit me. This cotton hook done swing its
las' bale of cotton. Here, who wants a cotton
hook?
*(throws cotton hook to center of floor, children
dive for it; scramble)*

Clara *(walking with baby)*

Summertime and the livin' is easy.
Fish are jumping etc.

Crapshooters

Seven come, seven come to pappy! Throw
that beautiful number! Come seven to me!
Yeah, man! I'll bet yo' wrong. I'll bet he's
right! Gettin' hot!

Clara

Oh, yo' daddy's rich and yo' ma is good lookin'...

Crapshooters

Come, seven! Shoot! Made it! He made it!

Clara

So hush, little baby, don't yo' cry!

Crapshooters

Ol' man seven come down from heaven!

Clara

Don't yo' cry.

Jake *(to Clara)*

What, that chile ain't asleep yet? Give him to
me. I'll fix him for you.
(Jake takes the baby from Clara.)

- 3 Lissen to yo' daddy warn you,
'fore you start a-travelling,
woman may born you, love you and mourn you,
but a woman is a sometime thing,

yes, a woman is a sometime thing.

Mingo

Oh, a woman is a sometime thing.

Jake

Yo' mammy is the first to name you,
and she'll tie you to her apron string,
Then she'll shame you and she'll blame you till
yo' woman come to claim you,
'cause a woman is a sometime thing,
yes, a woman is a sometime thing.

Sporting Life

Oh, a woman is a sometime thing.

Jake

Don't you never let a woman grieve you
jus' cause she got yo' weddin' ring.
She'll love you and deceive you, take yo'
clothes and leave you
'cause a woman is a sometime thing.

All

Yes, a woman is a sometime thing.
Yes, a woman is a sometime thing.
Yes, a woman is a sometime thing.

Jake

There now, what I tells you; he's asleep
already.

(Baby wails. Men at crap game laugh.)

Clara

He got better sense than to listen to that
nonsense.
(carries baby out)

Robbins

Come back, Jake, you make a better crap
shooter.

Peter *(entering)*

Honey man! Honey man!

- 4 Here come de honey man. Yes mam, dis
de honey man. You got honey in de comb? Yes
mam, I got honey in de comb. An' is yo honey
cheap? Yes mam, my honey very cheap. Here
come de honey man.

All

Hello, Peter.

Lily

Well, here come my ol' man.
(takes tray from his head)

Now gimme the money! Now go sit and rest.

Maria

You Scipio! Here come Porgy. Open the gate for him.

(Scipio opens one side of iron gate. Porgy enters in goat cart; crowd greets him.)

Jake

Here's the ol' crap shark!

Mingo

Now we'll have a game!

Porgy

Evenin' ladies, hello, boys! Luck been ridin' high with Porgy today. I got a pocket full of the Buckra money, and it's goin' to any man what got the guts to shoot it off me.

Mingo

Get on down, son, we'll take it.

Sporting Life

Lay it down.

Robbins

All right, mens, roll 'em. We done wait long enough.

Jim

You bes' wait for Crown. I see him comin', takin' the whole sidewalk, and he looks like he ain't gonna stand no foolin'.

Porgy

Is Bess with him?

Jake

Lissen to Porgy. I think he's soft on Crown's Bess.

(Men laugh.)

Porgy

I ain't nebbber swap two words with Bess.

Maria

Porgy got too good sense to look twice at that liquor guzzlin' slut.

Serena

That gal Bess ain't fit for Gawd fearin' ladies to 'sociate with.

Porgy

Can't you keep yo' mouth off Bess. Between the Gawd fearin' ladies and the Gawd damnin' men that gal ain't got a chance.

Jake

Ain' I tell you Porgy soft on her?

Porgy

No, no, brudder, Porgy ain't soft on no woman; they pass by singin', they pass by cryin', always lookin'. They look in my do' an' they keep on movin'. When Gawd make cripple, He mean him to be lonely. Night time, day time, he got to trabble dat lonesome road. Night time, day time, he got to trabble dat lonesome road.

(Crown shouts off stage, frightening children who scatter, yelling.)

Crown

Out of my way, God damn it!

Mingo

Here comes Big Boy!

Jake

'Low, Crown.

Jim

'Low, Bess.

(general greetings)

Crown

Hi, boys! All right, Sporting Life, give us a pint and make it damn quick.

(Sporting Life pulls out flask and hands it to Crown who takes a long drink.)

Crown

Pay him, Bess.

Jake

Drunk again!

Porgy

He sure love his liquor, but some day she's
gonna throw him down.

Crown

That damn whiskey's jus' as weak as water.
(*passes bottle to Bess*)

Serena

See that hussy drinkin' like any man!

Bess (*offers bottle to Robbins*)

Here, Robbins, have one to the Gawd fearin'
ladies. There's nothin' like 'em, thank Gawd.

(*Robbins drinks.*)

Crown (*snatching bottle*)

Oh, no, you don't. Nobody ain't drinkin' none
of my lickin'.

(*throws down money*)

All right, mens, I'm talkin' to you. Anybody
answerin' me?

(*All throw money down.*)

Robbins (*throwing*)

Boxcars again.

Mingo

Cover 'em, brother, cover 'em.

Robbins

Cover hell! I goin' to pass 'em along and see if
I can break my luck.

Mingo

Robbins' lady ain't allow him but fifty cent and
he can't take no chances with bad luck.

(*All laugh.*)

Bess

That's all right, honey boy, I'll stake you when
yo' four bits done gone.

Serena

Go ahead an' play. You don't need no charity
off no she-devil.

Bess

See what I gets for you. Yo' woman is easy
when you know the way.

Jake (*throws*)

Crapped out!

(*passes dice to Mingo*)

Porgy (*to Robbins*)

Don't you ever let a woman grieve you
'cause she got yo' wedding ring.

Bess

'cause she got yo' wedding ring.

Porgy and all

She'll love you and deceive you, take yo'
clothes and leave you.

'Cause —

Porgy

A woman is a sometime thing.

All

Yes, a woman is a sometime thing.

Serena

That gal ain't need to worry 'bout no man
marryin' her.

Bess

Some women got to marry a man to keep him.

Crown

Shut yo' damn mouth!
You don't give Mingo a chance
to talk to the bones.

Mingo

Fade me.

(*All throw down money.*)

Old snake-eye go off an' die.

Old man seven come down from heaven.

(*throws*)

Seven!

(*scoops up dice*)

Crown

I ain't seen that seven yet.
You done turn 'em over.

Mingo

What I throw?

Sporting Life

Seven.

Seven.

Porgy

He throw seven.

Crown

Well there's more than one big mouth to meet his Gawd for pullin' 'em in before I reads 'em, see! An' I'm sayin' it over tonight.

Mingo

Yo' mammy's gone and yo' daddy's happy.
Come home little bones, come home to pappy.
(throws)
Four to make. Come four!
(throws)

Porgy

Crapped out!

Crown *(picking up dice)*

I shoots like that.
Come clean you little blackeyed bitches.
(throws)

Mingo

Six, six!

Sporting Life

Six to make!

Jake

Six to make!

Crown *(produces rabbit's foot)*

Kiss rabbit foot
and show these tin horns how to hit.
(throws)

Sporting Life

Crapped out, come to your pappy.

(Crown brushes Sporting Life back.)

Robbins

Crown too cock-eyed drunk to read 'em.
What the dice say, Bess?

Bess

Seven.

Crown

I ain't drunk enough to read 'em.
That is the trouble. Ha ha, ha ha, ha ha!
Licker ain't strong enough.
Give me a pinch of happy dust, Sportin' Life.

(Sporting Life produces small paper from hat band.)

Bess

Don't give him that stuff, Sporting Life. He's ugly drunk already.

Crown

Pay him an' shut up.

(Takes paper from Sporting Life and inhales. Bess pays Sporting Life.)

Peter

Frien' an' dice an' happy dust
ain't meant to 'sociate...
You mens bes' go slow.

(Crown draws fist to Peter.)

Jake

Leave Peter be, let him alone.

Mingo

He ain't mean no harm.

Sporting Life *(throwing)*

Huh, seven! Huh, seven! Huh, seven! 'Leven
come home, Fido!
(Whistles, pulls pot in. All ante.)

Crown

God damn it, I ain't read 'em yet.

Men

Crown cock-eyed drunk, he can't tell dice from a watermelon;
Crown cock-eyed drunk, he can't tell dice from wa—

Crown

Shut up, God damn it!

Sporting Life

Six to make!
(shoots again)

Jim

Seven!

Mingo

Crapped out!

Jake

Seven, Seven!
Porgy shoots now.

Porgy

6 Oh, little stars, little stars, roll, roll, roll me some light,
(throws)

'leven little stars, come home, come home.
(pulls in pot, all ante)
 Roll dis poor beggar a sun an' a moon, a sun
 an' a moon.
(shoots)

Jim
 Li'l Joe.

Mingo
 Li'l Joe.

Porgy
 Oh, no, my brother, that ain't little Joe.
 They is the mornin' and the evenin' stars. An'
 just you watch 'em rise and shine for this poor
 beggar.

(Crown grabs his arm.)

Turn me loose.
(shoots)

Jim
 Made 'em!

Crown
 Roll up that bastard's sleeve.

(Porgy pulls in pot, rolls up sleeve.)

Well, you got them damn dice, conjer them.

Porgy
 Boy, boy, boy, I'm a crap shootin' idiot.
(rolls)

Sporting Life and Jake
 Crapped out!

Mingo
 Rolled out!

(Robbins takes up bones, shoots.)

Robbins
 Nine to make, come nine!
(throws again)
 Read 'em. Nine spot! Nine right!

(Sweeps up money, Crown seizes his wrist.)

Crown
 Touch that money an' meet yo' Gawd!

Robbins
 Take yo' hand off me, you lousy houn'. Han'
 me that brick behin' you.
(pulls out of Crown's grasp)

Crown
 Nobody's gettin' away with Crown's money.
 I'm goin' kill dat bastard!
(lunges at Robbins)

Mingo
 Looks like trouble to me; he made his nine, he
 made his nine.

Maria
 There's gonna be a fight, look out!
 Hold him back, somebody hold them back,
 Crown got murder in his eye!
 Somebody hold them back!

Porgy
 Crown's drunk, Robbins bes' take care, take
 care, Robbins take care. Look out Robbins!

Jim
 Dat's right.
 Some one will sure get hurt.

Sporting Life
 Robbins ain't got a chance wid Crown, he's
 too big.

*(Crown and Robbins fight fiercely as crowd
 holds Serena back.)*

Serena
 Oh, stop them! Don't let them fight!
 I warned him, oh! Won't somebody stop them,
 won't somebody stop them now!
 Oh, stop them! etc.

Bess
 Someone will surely get hurt, so stop, won't
 somebody stop them! Come on Crown, stop
 it. Oh! I'm so afraid! I'm so afraid! Stop
 Crown! stop dem, make 'em cut it out!

Maria
 Ain't you men got better sense? Such fools!
 Liquor always make trouble; better put a stop
 to this fighting, it's awful, it's simply awful!
 Someone stop the fight, he will surely kill
 dat man!

Porgy

Crown is drunk, there's goin' to be some trouble.
 Robbins, take care!
 Oh, Lawd have mercy an' don' let Crown hurt Robbins!
 This is de worst fight yet.

Mingo

Look out, be careful!
 Someone is gonna get hurt!
 He'll kill 'im! He'll kill 'im! Crown's had too much,
 Crown is like a debbil when he's drinkin' like a fool.
 Stop!

Sporting Life

Crown cock-eyed drunk, he don' know what he's doin'.
 Yes sir, Crown has had a little bit too much.
 Crown's had too much, Crown is like a debbil etc.

Jake

This looks like a real fight, Robbins done for.
 Oh, Crown is actin' very bad, bad, bad.
 Come on, let's stop dem now, come on, let's stop dem!
 Dis Crown is like a debbil etc.

Women

Oh, stop them, someone will get hurt!
 Why must people fight?
 Crown is a bad, bad bizness when he's drunk!
 Why mus' they fight, won' somebody please goin' an' stop dem now!

Men

Crown is drunk! Robbins got no chance,
 Oh Robbins got no chance!
 Crown is a bad, bad bizness when he's drunk!
 Something mighty bad is boun' to happen!
 Hold dem back! Won't some one hol' dem back,
 some one hol' dem back!

(Crown throws Robbins down. They fight fiercely; Crown jerks out his cotton hook.)

Women

Can't anybody make Crown stop,
 can't anybody make Crown stop?
 Lawd, please make dem stop!

Men

Robbins is gone, yes, suh!
 He's got no chance! No suh!

Lawd, please make dem stop!

(Suddenly Crown stabs Robbins with cotton hook. Robbins falls dead.)

Mingo

Jesus, he killed him!

(Serena screams and flings herself upon the body.)

Bess

7 Wake up an' hit it out. You ain't got no time to lose.

Crown

What the matter?

Bess

You done kill Robbins and the police will be comin'.

(She shakes him to his senses. The entire crowd disperses in various directions.)

Crown

Where you goin' hide? They know you an' I's pulls together.

Bess

Some man always willin' to take care of Bess.

Crown

Well, get this: whoever he is, he's temporary. I's comin' back when the hell dies down.

Bess

All right, only get out now. Here, take this.

(She takes money from stocking and gives it to him. He disappears. Bess runs — senses Sporting Life behind her.)

That you, Sportin' Life?

Sporting Life

Sure, and I's the only friend you got left.

Bess

For Gawd's sake, give me a touch of happy dust. I shakin' so I can hardly stand.

(He gives her powder.)

Sporting Life

Listen, I'll be goin' to New York soon. I'll hide

you out and take you with me. Why you an' me will make a swell team.

Bess

I ain't come to that yet.

Sporting Life

Well, the cops ain't goin' find me here for no woman.

(Slinks out. Bess looks for shelter, knocks at doors. They are locked or slammed in her face.)

Bess

Somebody please help me.
Will somebody let me in?
I'm gonna get caught if you don't help me.
Open up the door.
Please, please, somebody help me.
Please, please open the door.
Look, the cops are coming, let me in,
come on, please help me.

Maria

You done bring trouble enough, get out before the police come.

Bess

You wouldn't have a heart and let me in?

Maria

Not till hell freeze!

Bess

Who live over there?

Maria

That's Porgy, he ain't no use to your kind, he's a cripple and a beggar.

Bess

Come on, please let me in!

(Bess moves toward the gate. As she reaches it, a police whistle sends her back. She turns back, frightened — Porgy's door opens. Porgy stretches out hand to her. Shuddering away from Serena and the body, she goes to Porgy's door. Porgy reaches for Bess's hand. She enters his room.)

Scene 2

Serena's room

(Robbins's body lies on the bed, a saucer on his chest. The room is filled with mourners who drop money in the saucer.)

Woman

8 Where is brudder Robbins?

All

He's a-gone, gone, gone, gone, gone, gone, gone.

Woman

I seen him in de mornin' wid his work clo'es on.

All

But he's gone, gone, gone, gone, gone, gone, gone.

Man

An' I seen him in the noontime straight and tall,
but death acome awalkin' in the evenin' fall.

All

An' he's gone, gone, gone, gone, gone, gone, gone.

Woman

An' death touched Robbins wid a silver knife.

All

An' he's gone, gone, gone, gone, gone, gone, gone.

Man

An' he's sittin' in de garden by de tree of life.

All

An' he's gone, gone, gone, gone, gone, gone, gone.
Robbins is gone, gone, gone, etc.

Serena

Who's dat acomin' climbin' up my steps?

Maria

It's Porgy, an' Bess is ahelpin' him.

Serena

What's dat woman comin' here for?

(Porgy and Bess enter. Bess advances toward bier, money in hand.)

Serena

I don't need yo' money for to bury my man.

Bess

Dis ain't Crown's money. Porgy give me my money now.

Serena

All right, then. You can put it in the saucer.

(Bess puts money in the saucer.)

Woman

Come on, sister, come on, brudder, Fill up the saucer till it overflow.

Group

9 Overflow, overflow.

Fill up de saucer till it overflow.

Jake

Yes, my Jesus, overflow.

First Woman

'Cause de Lawd will meet you, yes, de Lawd will meet you at the court-house do'.

All

Court-house do', court-house do', de Lawd will meet you at the court-house do'.

Jake

Yes, my Jesus, court-house do'.

Peter

How de saucer stand now, my sister?

Chorus

Oh, he's gone, gone, gone, etc.

Serena

Fourteen dollars an' fifty cent.

Maria

Dat's a-comin' on, sister, you can bury him soon.

Serena

What am I goin' to do if I ain' got the money?

Porgy

Gawd got plenty of money for de saucer.

Serena

Bless de Lord!

Porgy

An' he goin' to soffon dese people heart for to fill de saucer till it spill all over.

All

Amen, my Jesus!

Porgy

De Lawd will provide a grave for his chillen.

Clara

Bless the lord!

Porgy

An' he got comfort for de widder.

All

Oh, my Jesus!

Porgy

An' he goin' feed his fadderless chillen.

All

Yes Lawd, truth Lawd!

Porgy

An' he goin' raise dis poor sinner up out of de grave.

Jake

Allelujah!

Porgy

An' set him in de shinin' seat ob de righteous.

Serena

Amen, my Jesus!

All

Overflow, overflow, oh fill up de saucer till it overflow.

Everybody helpin' now — sendin' our brudder to heaven,

Lawd, oh Lawd, send down your angels!

Robbins is rising to heaven!

Porgy

Oh, sufferin' Jesus! You knows right from wrong.

You knows Robbins was a good man, an' now

he's weary an' he's goin' home. Reach down

yo' lovin' han' an' take our brudder to yo'

bosom. Thank you, Lawd, bless you Lawd.

Lawd will fill de saucer, over, overflow, oh!

All

Overflow, overflow, oh Lawd will fill de saucer.
Ev'rybody helpin' now *etc.* Robbins is risin' to
heaven! *etc.* — till it overflow, oh!

(Detective enters with policeman.)

Detective

10 Um! A saucer-burial setup, I see. You his widow?

Serena

Yes, suh.

Detective

He did not leave any burial insurance?

Serena

No, boss, he didn't leave nuttin'.

Detective

Well, see to it he's buried tomorrow.

(to Peter)

You — you killed Robbins an' I'm going to
hang you for it!

Lily

He ain't don um!

Peter

What he say?

Lily

He say you kill Robbins.

Detective

Come along now!

Peter

'Fore Gawd, boss, I ain't never done um!

Detective

Who did it, then? You heard me, who did it?

Peter

Crown done it, boss. I done see him do it.

Detective

You're sure you saw him?

Peter

I swear to Gawd, boss, I was right there close
beside him.

Detective *(laughs)*

That's easy. I thought as much.

(to Porgy)

Oh, you saw it too. Come, out with it.
I don't want to have to put the law on you.
Look at me, you damn dummy!

Porgy

I don't know nuttin' 'bout it, boss.

Detective

That's your room in the corner, isn't it?

Porgy

Yes, boss, dat's my room.

Detective

The door opens on the court, don't it?

Porgy

Yes, boss, my door opens on the court.

Detective

An' yet you didn't see or hear anything?

Porgy

I don't know nuttin' 'bout it, boss. I been
asleep inside, and my door been closed.

Detective

You're a damn liar.

(indicating Peter)

He saw the killing; take him along and lock
him up as a material witness.

Policeman

Come along, uncle.

Peter

I ain't never done it, boss.

Maria

How long you goin' lock him up for?

Policeman

Till we catch Crown.

Porgy

I reckon Crown done loose now in de
palmetto thickets, an' dere ain' no rope long
enough to hang him.

Detective

Then the old man's out of luck. Remember,
you've got to bury that body tomorrow or the

board of health will take him an' turn him over to the medical students. Come on, get the old man in the wagon.

Peter

I ain't never done nuttin', boss.

(They drag him off.)

I swear to Gawd I ain't never done nuttin'.

(The sound of the wagon's bell fades away in the distance.)

Porgy

I can't puzzle this thing out. Peter was a good man, but dat lousy Crown was a killer and forever gettin' into trouble.

Jake

That's the truth, brother.

Porgy

And there go Peter to the lock up like a thief.

Jake

Like a thief.

Porgy

An' here be Robbins with his wife and his fadderless chillen, an' Crown done gone his ways drinkin', gamblin', swearin', — to do the same thing over and over somewheres else.

All

Gone, gone, gone, gone, gone, gone.

Serena

- 11 My man's gone now,
ain't no use alistenin'
for his tired foot-steps
climbin' up de stairs. Ah!
Ole Man Sorrow
come to keep me comp'ny,
whisperin' beside me
when I say my prayers. Ah —
ain't dat I min' workin'.
Work an' me is travellers,
journeyin' togedder
to de promise land.
But Ole Man Sorrow's
marchin' all de way wid me
tellin' me I'm ole now
since I lose my man.

All

Since she lose her man.

Serena

Since I lose my man.

All

Ah!

Serena

Ole Man Sorrow sittin' by de fireplace,
lyin' all night long by me in de bed.
Tellin' me de same thing mornin', noon an'
eb'nin',
that I'm all alone now since my man is
dead. Ah —
since my man is dead!

All

Ah —

Serena

Ah —

Undertaker *(entering)*

How de saucer stan' now, my sister?

Serena

There ain't but fifteen dollar.

Undertaker

Hum! Can't bury him for fifteen dollar.

Jake

He got to be buried tomorrow or the board of health will take him and give him to the medical students.

Undertaker *(kindly)*

Life is hard, brudder, but we all got to live.
It cos' money for to bury a grown man.

Serena

Oh, for Gawd sake, bury him in the grave yard... Don't let the students take him to cut up an' scatter. I goin' to work on Monday, an' I swear to Gawd, I goin' pay you ev'ry cent.

Undertaker

All right, sister, wit the box an' one carriage, it'll cos' me more'n twenty-five, but I'll see you through.

Porgy

Jesus bless you, my brudder.

Undertaker

You can all be ready tomorrow mornin'. It's a long trip to the cemetery.
(*He leaves.*)

Group

Oh, he's gone, gone, gone, gone, gone, gone, gone.

Bess (*suddenly jumping up*)

12 Oh, the train is at the station
an' you better get on board
'cause it's leavin' today.

All

Leavin' today, leavin' today.

Bess

Oh, the train is at the station
an' you better get on board,
'cause it's leavin' today,
an it's headin' for the Promise' Lan'.

All

Headin' for the Promise' Lan'.

Bess

Oh, we're leavin' for the Promise' Lan'
leavin' for the Promise' Lan'.

Bess and all

Keep that drivin' wheel arollin', rollin'...
let it roll...
until we meet our brudder in the Promise' Lan'.

Bess

Oh, I got my ticket ready
an' de time is gettin' short,
'cause we're leavin' today.

Bess and all

Leavin' today, leavin' today.

Bess

Oh, I got my ticket ready
an' de time is gettin' short,
'cause we're leavin' today,
an' we're headed for the Promise' Lan'.

All

... headed for the Promise' Lan'.

Bess

Oh, we're leavin' for the Promise' Lan',
leavin' for the Promise' Lan'.

Bess and all

Keep that drivin' wheel arollin', rollin'
let it roll...
until we meet our brudder in the Promise' Lan'.

All

Oh, we're leavin' for the Promise' Lan',
an' you better get on board,
all you sinners, oh, you better get on board,
'cause we're leavin' etc.
'cause we're leavin' for the Lan', oh!
Keep that drivin' wheel arollin', rollin',
until we meet our brudder in the Promise' Lan'.

CD 2**ACT TWO****Scene 1**

Catfish Row

(*Jake and fishermen repair netting, swaying to the rhythm of a rowing song.*)

Jake

1 Oh, I'm agoin' out to the Blackfish banks
no matter what de wedder say,
an' when I say I'm goin' I means goin',
an' I'm leavin' at de break o' day.

Jake and Men

It take a long pull to get there, huh!
It take a long pull to get there, huh!
It take a long pull to get there,
but I'll anchor in the Promise' Lan',
in de Promise' Lan'.

Jake

An' Lawdy, if I meet Mister Hurricane
an' Hurricane tell me no,
I'll take ole Mister Hurricane by the pants
an' I'll throw him in de jailhouse do'.

Jake and Men

It take a long pull to get there, huh!
It take a long pull to get there, huh!
It take a long pull to get there,
but I'll anchor in the Promise' Lan'.
In de Promise' Lan'.

Jake

I got a blister on my sittin' down place,
I got a blister in my han,
but I'm goin' row dis little boat, trust me Gawd,

Till I anchor in de Promise' Lan'.

Jake and Men

It take a long pull to get there, huh!
It take a long pull to get there, huh!
It take a long pull to get there,
but I'll anchor in de Promise' Lan'.
In de Promise' Lan'.

Annie

Mus' be you mens forgot about de picnic. Ain'
you knows dat de p'rade start up de block at
ten o'clock?

Jake

That's right, men. Turn out tomorrow mornin'
an' we'll push de Seagull clean to de Blackfish
banks 'fore we wet de anchor.

Clara

Jake, you ain't plannin' to take de Seagull to
de Blackfish banks, is you? It's time for de
September storms.

Jake

How you think dat boy goin' get a college
education, if I don' work hard an' make
money?

Porgy (at window, laughing)

- 2 Oh, I got plenty o' nuttin',
an' nuttin's plenty fo' me.
I got no car, got no mule, I got no misery.
De folks wid plenty o' plenty
got a lock on de door.
'Fraid somebody's agoin' to rob 'em
while dey's out amakin' more.
What for?
I got no lock on de door,
(Dat's no way to be)
dey can steal de rug from de floor.
Dat's okeh wid me,
'cause de things dat I prize
like de stars in de skies
all are free.
Oh, I got plenty o' nuttin',
an' nuttin's plenty fo' me,
I got my gal, got my song,
got Hebben de whole day long!
No use complainin'!
Got my gal, got my Lawd, got my song.

Women

Porgy change since dat woman come to live
with he.

Serena

How he change!

All

He ain't cross with chillen no more, an' ain't
you hear how he an' Bess all de time singin' in
their room?

Maria

I tells you dat cripple's happy now.

Chorus

Happy.

Porgy

I got plenty o' nuttin',
an' nuttin's plenty fo' me.
I got de sun, got de moon, got de deep
blue sea.

De folks wid plenty o' plenty,
got to pray all de day.
Seems wid plenty you sure got to worry
how to keep de debble away, away.
I ain't afrettin' 'bout hell
till de time arrive.

Never worry long as I'm well,
never one to strive to be good, to be bad,
what de hell, I is glad I's alive.

Oh, I got plenty o' nuttin',
an' nuttin's plenty fo' me.
I got my gal, I got my song,
got Hebben de whole day long.

No use complainin',
got my gal, got my Lawd, got my song!

Chorus

Got his gal, got his Lawd.

Maria

Lissen there, what I tells you.

Serena

Go 'long with you, dat woman ain't de kin'
for to make a cripple happy.
It take a killer like Crown to hold her down.

Sporting Life (saunters over to Maria's table)

Hey, how're you doin' now, ole lady?

(Maria seizes his hand and blows white
powder from his palm.)

What you t'ink you doin'?

Dat stuff cos' money.

Maria

Lissen here, I ain' say nuttin',
no matter how drunk you get dese boys
roun' here on rotgut whiskey,
but nobody ain' goin peddle happy dust 'roun'
my shop.

Does you hear what I say?

Sporting Life

Oh, come on now, ole lady,
le's you an' me be frien's.

Maria (*grabs Sporting Life by the throat and
picks up carving knife*)
Frien's wid you low-life, hell, no!
(*threatening him*)

- 3 I hates yo' struttin' style,
yes sir, and yo' god damn silly smile
an' yo' ten cent di'mons an' yo' fi' cent butts.
Oh, I hates yo' guts.
Somebody's got to carve you up to set these
peoples free
an' de writin' on the wall says it's a goin' to
be me.
Some night when you is full of gin an' don't
know I's about,
I'm goin' to take you by de tail an' turn you
inside out.
Frien's wid you, low-life! hell, no!
Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha! I's figgerin' to break
yo' bones.
Yes sir, one by one.
An' then I'm goin' to carve you up an' hang
you in de sun.
I'll feed yo' meat to buzzards an' give 'em
belly aches.
An' take yo' bones to Kittiwah to pizen
rattlesnakes.
Frien's wid you, low-life?
I fears I mus' decline!
I sooner cut mah own throat 'fore I calls you a
frien' of mine!

(*Sporting Life runs off. Lawyer Frazier enters.
Maria sees him and follows after him.*)

Maria

Mornin', lawyer, lookin' for somebody?

Frazier

Porgy live here, don't he?

Maria

He sho' do, right over there's his room.
Here, Porgy, here's Lawyer Frazier to see you.

Frazier

Mornin', Porgy.

Porgy

Mornin', Lawyer.

Frazier

Ain't that Crown's Bess in yo' room?

Porgy

No, sir, she ain't, she's Porgy's Bess.

Frazier

Ah ha, ah ha, Porgy's Bess, eh? Den I guess
she'll be wantin' divorce.

Porgy

Huh?

Frazier

Ef de woman livin' wid you now, she got to
have divorce from Crown or else it ain't legal.
(*takes document and shows it to Porgy*)

Porgy

How much dat t'ing cost?

Frazier

One dollar. Dat is, if there ain' no
complications.

Porgy

Bess, you likes to have divorce?

Bess

What you think, Porgy?

Porgy

I'm agoin' buy you a divorce.
(*hands Frazier money*)

Frazier

Wait a minute, it ain't legal yet.
Yo' name?

All

Bess!

Frazier

Yo' age?

Bess

Twenty year.

All

Lord, Lord, listen what she say.
Dat girl's thirty if she's a day!

Frazier

You desire to be divorce from dat man Crown?

All

Sho' she do, sho' she do,
Yes suh, yes suh, sho' she do!

Frazier

I'm askin' you.

Bess

Yes, boss, dat's true.

Frazier

Address the court as "Yo' honor".

All

Yes, yo' honor. Yes, yo' honor. Yes, yo' honor.
Yes, yo' honor.

Frazier

When was you an' Crown marry?

Bess

I don't rightly remember, yo' honor.

Frazier

One yeah, five yeah, ten yeah, what?

Lily

Dat gal ain' never marry!

Frazier

Ah, dat's a complication!

All

Dat's a complication. Dat's a complication,
Lord, Lord —

One man

Dat *is* a complication.

Porgy

You can't sell her divorce, gimme back my dollah!

Frazier

'Course I sells divorce. You got no right to laugh, but it take expert to divorce woman what ain't marry, an' it cos' you, ahem, dollar an' a half.

Bess

Don't pay him, Porgy. Don't let him take you in.

Frazier

All right, go on livin' in sin.

(Porgy counts out money and gives it to Frazier, who signs and seals paper and hands it to Bess.)

Good day to you, Missis Porgy. Only dollar an' a half to change from woman to lady.

All

Woman to lady, woman to lady, Lord, Lord,
woman to lady!

Scipio

Dey's a Buckra comin'.

Annie

What he say?

Serena

A w'ite gen'man.

Archdale *(entering the courtyard)*

Boy. Come here, boy!
I'm looking for a man by the name of Porgy.
Which is his room?
Come, don't you know Porgy?

Scipio

No, suh.

Archdale *(goes to Clara)*

I'm looking for a man named Porgy; can you direct me to his room?

Clara

Anybody here know a man name Porgy?

Archdale

Come. I'm a friend of his, Mister Archdale,
I have good news for him.

Serena

Go 'long and wake Porgy. Can't you tell folks when you see 'em?

Clara

Oh you mean Porgy!
I ain' understand' what name you say.
I

Mingo

Oh, de gen'man mean Porgy.

Jake

Dat's him, boss, dat's ole Porgy. Glad to serve you boss.

Clara

Wake up, Porgy, a gen'man come to see you.

Porgy

How you does, boss?

Archdale

Good morning. I've come to tell you about your friend, Peter, who got locked up on account of the Robbins murder.

Porgy

How you come to care, boss?

Archdale

His folks used to belong to my fam'ly and I just heard he was in trouble.

Porgy

He sho' got plenty of trouble.

Archdale

Well, you can tell all of Peter's friends I'll go his bond. He'll soon be back home again.

Porgy

Thank you, boss. Gawd bless you, boss, bless you, bless you!

Frazier

Good mornin', Mister Archdale.

Archdale

Good morning, Frazier, hope you're not selling any more divorces.

Porgy

He jus' made a lady out of Bess for a dollar an' a half.

Archdale *(reading)*

I, Simon Frazier, hereby divorce Bess an' Crown, for the charge of one dollar an' fifty cents cash, signed Simon Frazier... Now look here, Frazier, this divorce mill must close or I'll have to put you in jail. I won't report you this time. Good morning.

Frazier

Gawd bless you, boss. Gawd bless you.

Porgy

Good mornin', Mister Archdale.

(At this point a great bird flies low, frightening everybody.)

Porgy

4 Look out, dat's a buzzard!

Chorus

Drive um off, don't let um light, chase away dat buzzard!

Archdale

What is it, what's the matter?

Porgy

Boss, dat bird mean trouble.
Once de buzzard fold his wing an' light over yo' house,
all yo' happiness done dead.
Buzzard keep on flyin' over, take along yo' shadow.

Ain' nobody dead dis mornin',
livin's jus' begun.

Two is strong where one is feeble;
man an' woman livin', workin',
sharin' grief an' sharin' laughter,
an' love like August' sun.

Trouble, is dat you over yonder
lookin' lean an' hungry?

Don' you let dat buzzard keep you
hangin' round my do'.

Ain' you heard de news this mornin'?

Step out, brudder, hit de gravel;

Porgy who you used to feed on,

don' live here no mo',

ha, ha, ha, ha! Buzzard, on yo' way!

Ole age, what is you anyhow,

nuttin' but bein' lonely.

Pack yo' things an' fly from here, carry grief
an' pain.

Dere's two folks livin' in dis shelter,

eatin', sleepin', singin', prayin'.

Ain' no such thing as loneliness.

An' Porgy's young again.

Porgy and Chorus

Buzzard, keep on flyin',

Porgy's young again.

(All move off to their various rooms, leaving Bess alone. Sporting Life enters, sneaks up to Bess.)

Sporting Life

'Lo, Bess, goin' to de picnic?

Bess

No, guess I'll stay home.

Sporting Life

Picnics is all right for these small town suckers, but we is use to the high life, you know. You an' me, we understands each other. I can't see for the life of me what you is hangin' roun' this place for; why, with your looks, Bess, an' your way with the boys, there's big money for you, an' me in New York.

Bess

I can't remember ever meetin' a nothin' what I likes less than I does you.

Sporting Life

Oh, come on, now, how about a little touch of happy dus' for old time sake?

Bess

I's through with that stuff!

Sporting Life

Come on, give me yo' han'.

(Porgy opens door and listens unobserved.)

Bess

I tells you, I's through!

Sporting Life

Just a pinch, not enough to hurt a flea.

Bess

No, no, I done give up dope.

Sporting Life

Tell that to somebody else, nobody ever gave up happy dus'.

(Porgy reaches out and seizes Sporting Life's wrist.)

Leggo, you dam' cripple! Gawd, what a grip for a piece of a man!

Porgy

Sportin' Life, you keep away from my woman, or I'll break yo' damn neck!

Sporting Life

I'd like to see a lousy cripple, like you, break my neck.

Porgy

If I get my hands on you once more, you'll see quick enough.

Bess

Go 'long now.

Sporting Life

All right, yo' men frien's come an' they go, but remember ole Sportin' Life an' de happy dus' here all along.

Porgy

Get out, you rat, you louse, you buzzard!

(Sporting Life scuttles off. Jake and Clara come out dressed for the picnic.)

Jake

Honey, we sure goin' strut our stuff today! Be sure to come 'long to de picnic, Bess.

(They leave. Bess and Porgy are left alone.)

Porgy

5 Bess, you is my woman now, you is, you is! An' you mus' laugh an' sing an' dance for two instead of one.

Want no wrinkle on yo' brow, no how. Because de sorrow of de past is all done done. Oh, Bess, my Bess, de real happiness is jes' begun.

Bess

Porgy, I's yo' woman now, I is, I is! An' I ain' never goin' nowhere 'less you shares de fun.

Dere's no wrinkle on my brow, no how, but I ain' goin'! You hear me sayin', if you ain' goin', wid you I'm stayin'. Porgy, I's yo' woman now, I's yours forever. Mornin' time an' evenin' time an' summer time an' winter time.

Porgy

Mornin' time an' evenin' time an' summer time an' winter time, Bess, you got yo' man.

Bess

Porgy, I's yo woman now, I is, I is!
 An' I ain' never goin' nowhere
 'less you shares de fun.
 Dere's no wrinkle on my brow, no how.
 But I ain' goin'! You hear me sayin',
 if you ain' goin', wid you I'm stayin'.
 Porgy, I's yo woman now! I's yours forever.
 Mornin' time an' evenin' time an' summer
 time an' winter time, hm-m-m-m-m-m.
 Oh, my Porgy, my man Porgy,
 from dis minute I'm tellin' you, I keep dis vow;
 Porgy, I's yo' woman now.

Porgy

Bess, you is my woman now an' forever.
 Dis life is jes' begun.
 Bess, we two is one now an' forever.
 Oh, Bess, don' min' dose women.
 You got yo' Porgy, you loves yo' Porgy,
 I knows you means it, I seen it in yo' eyes, Bess.
 We'll go swingin' through de years a-singin'
 Hm-m-m... Mornin' time an' evenin' time an'
 summer time an' winter time.
 My Bess, my Bess, from dis minute I'm tellin'
 you, I keep dis vow;
 oh, my Bessie, we's happy now,
 we is one now.

(Catfish Row crowd comes out attired in their lodge regalia, singing and dancing, ready for the picnic.)

All

- 6 Oh, I can't sit down.
 Got to keep agoin' like de flowin' of a song.
 Oh, I can't sit down,
 Guess I'll take my honey an' her sunny smile
 along.
 Today I is gay an' I's free
 jes' abubblin', nothin' troublin' me.
 Oh, I's gwine to town,
 I can't sit down.
 Happy feelin', in my bones astealin',
 no concealin' dat it's picnic day.
 Sho' is dandy, got de lickin' handy.
 Me an' Mandy, we is on de way
 'cause dis is picnic day.
 Oh, I can't sit down,
 got to keep ajumpin' to de thumpin' of de drum!
 Oh, I can't sit down.
 Full of locomotion like an ocean full of rum!
 Today I is gay an' I's free.
 Jes' abubblin', nothin' troublin' me!
 Oh, I's gwine to town,
 I can't, jes' can't, sit down!

(Crowd leaves. Maria goes to Bess.)

Maria

What's de matter wid you, sister? Ain't you
 know you goin' be late for de picnic?

Bess

I stayin' with Porgy.

Maria

Sho' you goin'. Ev'rybody goin'. You got to help
 me wid my basket. Come now, where's yo' hat?
(gets her hat from Porgy's room)
 What's dis talk about stayin' home when
 ev'rybody's goin' to de picnic?

Bess

Porgy, I hates to go an' leave you all alone.

Porgy

Bess, my honey, I so glad to have you go, I
 been wantin' you to be so happy here in
 Catfish Row.

Bess

Yes, Porgy, I know.

Porgy

Go, chile, go.

Maria

Come on, chile! Get into dese clo'es. You stay
 roun' here an' you'll die of de lonesome blues.
 Come on now, hurry up. We'll be late for dat
 boat.

Bess

Goodbye, Porgy.

Porgy

Goodbye, honey.

(Maria and Bess leave.)

Bess

Goodbye, Porgy, goodbye.

Porgy

Oh, I got plenty o' nuttin',
 an' nuttin's plenty fo' me,
 I got my gal, got my Lawd, got Hebben de
 whole day long.
 Got my gal, got my Lawd, got my song!

Scene 2

Kittiwah Island

(General gaiety — all well-fed — some few well-liquored. Some dancing.)

All

- 7 I ain' got no shame doin' what I like to do!
I ain' got no shame doin' what I like to do!
Sun ain' got no shame; moon ain' got no shame.

So I ain' got no shame, doin' what I like to do!!

Ha da da, ha da da, *etc.*

Sporting Life

- 8 It ain't necessarily so,

Chorus

It ain't necessarily so.

Sporting Life

De t'ings dat yo' li'ble
to read in de Bible,
it ain't necessarily so.
Li'l David was small, but oh my!

Chorus

Li'l David was small, but oh my!

Sporting Life

He fought big Goliath
who lay down an' dieth,
li'l David was small, but oh my!

Chorus

Wadoo — Zim bam boodle-oo,
hoodle ah da wa da — scatty wah.

Sporting Life

Oh, Jonah, he lived in a whale,

Chorus

Oh, Jonah, he lived in a whale.

Sporting Life

Fo' he made his home in
dat fish's abdomen.
Oh, Jonah, he lived in a whale.
And Moses was found in a stream,

Chorus

Li'l Moses was found in a stream,

Sporting Life

He floated on water
till Ole Pharaoh's daughter
she fished him, she says, from dat stream.

Sporting Life and Chorus

Wadoo — Zim bam boodle-oo,
hoodle ah da wa — scatty wah.

Sporting Life

It ain't necessarily so,

Chorus

It ain't necessarily so.

Sporting Life

Dey tell all you chillun
de debble's a villun
but it ain't necessarily so.
To get into Hebben,
don' snap for a sebben!
Live clean. Look at me! Don' have no faults.
Oh, I takes de gospel
whenever it's pos'ble,
but wid a grain of salt.
Methus'lah lived nine hundred years,

Chorus

Methus'lah lived nine hundred years,

Sporting Life

But who calls dat livin'
when no gal'll give in, honey,
to no man what's nine hundred years?
I'm preachin' dis sermon to show
it ain't nessa, ain't nessa, ain't nessa, ain't
nessa...

Sporting Life and Chorus

Ain't necessarily so.

Sporting Life and Chorus

I'm preachin' dis sermon to show
it ain't nessa, ain't nessa, ain't nessa, ain't
nessa,
ain't necessarily —

Serena (breaking into circle)

Shame on all you sinners.
You call yourselves Church-members,
you goes on a decent picnic of
The Sons an' Daughters of Repent Ye Saith
the Lord.
An' when the Christians turn their back
you start behavin' like Sodom an' Gomorrah.

It's a Gawd's wonder de Lord don't sen' His
 livin' fire
 to burn you offen de face of de earth.
 An you, Jake, always so loudmouth at
 church-meeting,
 tell me when did you start workin' for de
 devil?
 Take them baskets an' get on de boat.
 All you wicked chillen of de devil!

(Steamboat whistle sounds in the distance.)

Hear what I tell you, it's high time you was
 goin'.
(calls to Maria)
 You bes' hurry up, you goin' miss dat boat.

Maria

If dat boat go without me,
 there's gonna be some blue lightning
 in Catfish Row when I gets home.

(Boat whistles.)

Hey there! Hold yo' holt. I's acomin'!

(Boat whistles.)

Hurry up, Bess! Dat boat's gettin' de whoopin'
 cough.

(Bess enters, hurrying after Maria.)

Crown *(calls from thicket)*

Pst! Hey! Bess!

Bess

Crown!

Crown

You know very well dis Crown.
 I seen you lan' an' I been
 waitin' all day for see you.
 I mos' dead on this damn island.

Bess

You ain' looks mos' dead, you bigger'n ever.

Crown

Oh, I got plenty to eat, bird egg, oyster an' such.
 But I mos' dead of the lonesome
 wid not one Gawd' person to swap a word wid.
 Lord! I's glad you come.

Bess

I can't stay, Crown, or de boat'll go without me.

Crown

Damn dat boat! Got any happy dus' wid you?

Bess

No, Crown, no mo' happy dus'.
 I done give up dope, an' besides, Crown,
 I got something for to tell you.

Crown

You bes' lissen to what I's got to tell you.
 I waitin' here till de cotton begin comin' in.
 Den libbin'll be easy.
 Johnny'll hide you an' me on de ribber boat
 far as Savannah. Who you libbin' wid now?

Bess

I livin' wid de cripple Porgy.

Crown

Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha.
 You sho' got funny tas' in men, but dat's yo'
 business.
 I ain' care who you takes up wid while I's away.
 But membuh, what I tol' you. He's temporary.
 I reckon it'll just be a couple ob weeks now
 'fore I comes for you.

Bess

Crown, I got something to tell you.

Crown

What dat?

Bess

I... I livin' wid Porgy now, and I livin' decent.

Crown

You hear what I tol' you,
 I say in a couple ob weeks I's comin' for you,
 an' you is goin' tote fair, lessen you wants to
 meet yo' Gawd, you gets dat?

(Boat whistles.)

Bess

Take yo' han's off me, I goin' miss dat boat.

Crown

You tellin' me dat you'd rather have dat cripple
 dan Crown?

Bess

It's like dis, Crown, I's the only woman Porgy
 ever had, an' I's thinkin' now, how it will be
 tonight when all these others gets 'em go

back to Catfish Row. He'll be sittin' an' watchin' the big front gate, accountin' 'em off, waitin' for Bess. An' when the las' woman goes home to her man an' I ain' there.

(Crown laughs.)

Lemme go, Crown! You can get plenty of other women.

Crown

What I want wid other woman? I gots a woman an' dat's you, see!

Bess

9 Oh... What you want wid Bess?

She gettin' ole now;
take a fine young gal
for to satisfy Crown.

Look at this chest

an' look at these arms you got.

You know how it's always been with me,
these five years I been yo' woman,
you could kick me in the street,
then when you wanted me back,
you could whistle, an' there I was
back again, lickin' yo' hand.

There's plenty better lookin' gal than Bess.

Can' you see, I'm with Porgy,
now and forever

I am his woman, he would die without me.
Oh, Crown, won't you let me go to my man,
to my man.

He is a cripple an' needs my love, all my love.

What you want wid Bess? Oh, let me go to
my man...

Crown

What I want wid other woman,
I gots a woman, yes,
an' dat is you, yes, dat is you, yes,
I need you now an' you're mine jus' as long as
I want you.

No cripple's goin' take my woman from me.

You got a man tonight an' that is Crown,
you're my woman, Bess, I'm tellin' you, now
I'm your man.

(pressing her very close)

Bess

What you want with Bess?

(Boat whistles.)

Lemme go, Crown, dat boat, it's goin' without
me!

Crown

You ain't goin' nowhere!

Bess *(weakening)*

Take yo' hands off me, I say, yo' hands,
yo' hands, yo' hands.

(Crown kisses her passionately.)

Crown

I know you ain' change — wid you and me it
always be the same. Git in dat thicket.

(Bess backs into woods; Crown follows.)

Scene 3

Catfish Row

*(The court before dawn. Bells herald the new
day. Fishermen loll about sleepily.)*

Jake

10 Honey, dat's all de breakfast I got time for. It's
gettin' late, the weather's fine. I'm on my way.
Come on, you fishermen, it's time to trabble.

Nelson

All right, Jake.

Jim

All ready, Jake, we bes' be off.

Maria

Goodbye, boys.

Jake

Goodbye, Maria.

Nelson

It looks to me like it goin' storm today.

Jake

Don't you know dat ain' de way to talk 'fore
my woman.

So long, Clara, gangway for de Seagull.
(kisses Clara)

Jake and Men

It take a long pull to get there, huh!
It take a long pull to get there, huh!
It take a long pull to get there, but
I'll anchor in de Promise' Lan',
in de Promise' Lan'.

(Group continues singing as they go off.)

Bess

(deliriously... in Porgy's room)

Take yo' han's off me, I say. Yo' han's, yo' han's, yo' han's!

Serena

She still out of her head.

Bess

Eighteen mile to Kittiwah, eighteen mile to trabble,
Lord, what a long road, ain' nobody to help me.
Ain' nobody to help me!

Maria *(seeing Peter enter courtyard)*

Well, if it ain' ole Peter!

Peter

De white folks put me in
an' de white folks take me out,
an' I ain' know yet what I done,
what I done, done, done...

Bess

Oh, there's a rattlesnake in dem bushes,
oh, Lord, ain' nobody to help me.

Peter

What's de matter?

Maria

Porgy woman very sick more'n a week now;
she gone to the picnic an' get los' in de jungle.
She ain' come home for two day.

Porgy *(comes out)*

I think dat maybe she goin' to sleep now; a
whole week gone now an' she ain' no better.
Hello, Peter, welcome back home, ole frien'.

Peter

I advise you to send her to de white folks
hospital.

Porgy

Oh, Gawd, don' let 'em take Bess to the
hospital!

Serena

Hospital! Mus' be you is all forget how I pray
Clara's baby out of the convulsions. There ain'
never been a sick person or corpse in Catfish
Row dat I has refused my prayers.

Porgy

Dat's right, sistuh, you pray over her.

Serena *(kneeling)*

[11] Oh, Doctor Jesus, who done trouble de water
in de Sea of Gallerie.

Porgy

Amen!

Serena

An' likewise who done chase de devil out of
de afflicted time an' time again.

Porgy

Time an' time again.

Peter

Oh, my Jesus!

Serena

Oh, doctor Jesus, what make you ain' lay yo'
han' on dis po' sister head?

Lily

Oh, my father!

Serena

An' chase de devil out of her down a steep
place into de sea like you used to do time an'
time again.

Porgy

Time an' time again. Oh, my Jesus!

Serena

Lif' dis po' cripple out of de dus'!

Porgy

Allelujah!

Serena

An' lif' up his woman an' make her well time
an' time again, an' save us all for Jesus sake,
Amen.

Porgy and Peter

Amen.

Serena

All right, now, Porgy, Doctor Jesus done take
de case.
By five o'clock dat woman goin' be well.

*(It is now full morning and Catfish Row is full
of activity with street vendors calling.)*

Strawberry Woman

- 12 Oh dey's so fresh an' fine,
an' dey's jus' offen de vine,
strawberries, strawberries, strawberries,
oh, dey's so fresh an' fine
an' dey's just offen de vine,
strawberries, strawberries, strawberries.

Peter

Here come de honey man,
yes mam, this de honey man.

Woman

Oh, honey man, honey man!

Peter (*not hearing her, keeps walking*)

You got honey in the comb.
Yes mam, I got honey in the comb.

Woman

Hey there! I wants some honey!

Peter

An' is yo' honey cheap?

Annie

Peter, honey man!

Peter

Yes mam, my honey very cheap,
here come de honey man.

Annie

Gawd amighty, I's jus' wasting my breath on you,
'cause you ain' never goin' to hear no how.

Crab man

I'm talkin' about devil crabs,
I'm talkin' about devil crabs,
I'm talkin' about de food I sells,
he crab, she crab.

Porgy

On yo' way, brother.

Crab man

Devil crab!

Maria

Hey, crab man!

Crab man

I'm talkin' about de food I sells
when I done talkin' about de food I sells,
talkin' about devil crab.

Now I's talkin' about yo' pocketbook,
I'm talkin' about devil crabs, she crab, she crab,
devil crab, I'm talkin' about de food I sells.

*(Maria picks crab, counts out money, pays
Crab man, who then leaves. Bell chimes
five times.)*

Porgy

Now de time, oh Gawd, now de time.

Bess (*within the shanty*)

- 13 Porgy, Porgy, dat you there, ain' it?

Porgy

Thank Gawd, thank Gawd!

(Bess appears in the doorway.)

Bess

I lonesome here all by myself, it's hot in there,
let me sit here with you in the cool.

Porgy

Oh, Bess! Bess!

Bess

I been sick, ain't I?

Porgy

You been very sick. But now I got you back,
Bess.

Bess

How long I been sick?

Porgy

Over a week now. You come back from
Kittiwah with eye like fireball, an' Maria get
you into bed, an' you ain' know me.

(She sobs.)

What is de matter, Bess?

Bess

I guess I ain' know nuttin' wid de fever, or I
ain' come back at all.

Porgy

Dat's all right, honey, don't you worry, honey, I
know you been with Crown.

Bess

How you know?

Porgy

Gawd give cripple to understan' many thing he ain' give strong men.

Bess

You ain' want me to go 'way?

Porgy

No, no, I ain' wants you to go. How things stan' 'tween you an' Crown?

Bess

He's comin' for me when de cotton comes to town.

Porgy

You goin'?

Bess

I tell 'im, yes.

Porgy, Gawd, man!

Why yo' muscles pull up like that?

It make me afraid.

Porgy

You ain' got nuttin' to be afraid of;

I ain' try to keep no woman what don't want to stay.

If you want to go to Crown, dat's for you to say.

Bess

I wants to stay here, but I ain't worthy.

You is too decent to understan'.

For when I see him he hypnotize me,

when he takes hold of me with his hot hand.

Someday I know he's coming back to call me.

He's goin' to handle me an' hold me so.

It's goin' to be like dyin', Porgy,

deep inside me —

But when he calls, I know I have to go.

Porgy

If dere warn't no Crown, Bess, if dere was only jus' you an' Porgy, what den?

Bess

I loves you, Porgy, don' let him take me,

don' let him handle me an' drive me mad.

If you kin keep me, I wants to stay here

wid you forever, an' I'd be glad.

Porgy

There, there, Bess, you don' need to be afraid no mo', you's picked up happiness and laid yo' worries down. You goin' to live easy, you goin'

to live high. You goin' to outshine every woman in dis town. An' remember, when Crown come, that's my business, Bess!

Bess

14 I loves you, Porgy,
don' let him take me,
don' let him handle me
with his hot han'.

If you kin keep me

I wants to stay here wid you forever.

I got my man.

Porgy

What you think I is, anyway,

to let dat dirty houn'dog steal my woman?

If you wants to stay wid Porgy, you goin' stay.

You got a home now, honey, an' you got love.

So no mo' cryin', can't you understan'?

You goin' to go about yo' business, singin' 'cause you got Porgy, you got a man.

(Clara enters.)

Maria

15 Why you been out on that wharf so long, Clara?

You got no cause to worry 'bout yo' man.

Dis goin' be a fine day.

Clara

I never see de water look so black.

It sits there waitin', holdin' its breath,

list'nin' for dat hurricane bell.

Maria

Hurricane bell! Lawd chile, dere ain' goin' be no hurricane.

I's gettin' ole now an' I ain' hear dat bell, but fo' time in my life.

Go 'long to de baby now an' quiet down.

(The wind rises. Heads appear at windows and faces show terror. People pass, shouting warnings. The deep ominous clang of a bell is heard. It keeps striking. Wind increases — clouds deepen — people from court move about in terror.)

Clara *(falling in a faint)*

Jake! Jake!

CD 3

Scene 4

Serena's room. Storm.

(Everyone huddles in fear from the tremendous storm outside. They try to drown out the storm with singing.)

Second soprano solo

- 1 Oh, Doctor Jesus, look down on me wit' pity.
 Put Yo' lovin' arms thru de roof of dis house
 an' lif' me to Yo' bosom till de storm is over.
 Oh, Doctor Jesus, look down on me
 why is You angry wit' dis po' sinner?
 Why is You cryin' dose tears,
 an' mumblin' dat thunder
 when I ain' got nuthin' but rev'rence in me
 heart for You, Lawd.
 Oh, Doctor Jesus, look down on me.
 If You is lookin' down on me wit' disfavor
 I ain' know what to do,
 'cause if worshippin' You ain' stoppin' dose
 tears an' dat thunder,
 Lawd, I ain' know jes' what to do, Lawd.
 Oh, Doctor Jesus, look down on me I's
 beseechin' You
 to look down on me wit' pity
 an' I's hopin' You's about to put Yo' lovin' arms
 thru de roof of dis house an' lif' me to Yo'
 bosom, Amen

Tenor solo

- Oh, Lawd above, we knows You can destroy,
 but we also knows You can raise,
 an' we's beseechin' You to raise Yo' fallen chillen.
 Oh, Lawd above, You got de pow'r to feed us,
 you got the pow'r to clothe us,
 an' You can lead us out of de wilderness.
 Yes, Lawd, but we's not hungry now, an' we's
 got clo'es
 but we is askin' You to lead us out of de
 wilderness
 Oh, Lawd above, lead us out of de wilderness,
 into de Golden Meadows an' de Silvery Streams.
 Oh, Lawd above, we know You can destroy,
 but we knows You can raise, too,
 an' we's askin' You for Yo' assistance in dis
 time of storm an' thunder an' lightnin'.
 Oh, Lawd above, we warrants Yo' assistance
 an' we's beseechin' You to raise Yo' fallen
 chillen, Amen.

First soprano solo

- Oh, Hev'nly Father, hab mercy on we,

- look down wit' grace an' sympathy,
 You whose po' chillen we is, show we how
 You can protect Yo' chillen when dey is
 deservin'.
 Oh, Hev'nly Father, hab mercy on we
 when de clouds an' de storms start raisin' hell
 upon dis eath.
 We knows dat You can fix 'em,
 'cause You is de great fixer,
 oh my Father fix dat Satan,
 tie up his hands an' his feet an' t'row him back
 where he belong.
 Oh, Hev'nly Father, hab mercy on we,
 'cause we is Yo' deservin' chilled. Amen
 Oh, Hev'nly Father, hab mercy on we,
 wit' grace an' sympathy
 an' understandin' of which we knows You got
 plenty.
 Oh, my Lawd, Amen.

Alto solo

- Professor Jesus, teach Yo' ignorant chillen
 how to combat de fires an' torments
 of dat black visitation from below.
 We leans on You, Professor Jesus, what die on
 Calbery.
 Dispense Yo' blessings on Yo' needful an' Yo'
 grateful followers.
 Cast away dose black clouds an' de darkness
 an' show we de golden sunshine gleaming once
 again.
 Professor Jesus, teach Yo' ignorant chillen, cast
 away dose black clouds, etc.,
 an' show we de golden sunshine
 shin' on de fields an' de meadows
 an' de mountains an' de plains, Amen.

First bass solo

- Oh, Captain Jesus, find it in Yo' heart to save us,
 I's given You six chillen to add to Yo' legions,
 my po' wife is now wid You three year dis
 October,
 oh, Captain Jesus, but we is seven left to tell dat
 Satan man where he get off at.
 We has all lived sweetly an' sweetly we is willin'
 to die for You.
 Oh, Captain Jesus, we knows how sweetly You
 treats
 Yo' soldiers, when You opens the gates for dem.
 Oh, Captain Jesus, find it in Yo' heart to save
 us worshippers
 'cause there is no truer followers of de Lawd
 den what's prayin' to You now.
 Oh, Captain Jesus, we has all lived sweetly
 an' sweetly

we is willin' to die for You, Amen.

Second bass solo

Oh, Father, what die on Calbery, we's
dependin' on You
we's leanin' on You to case the rocky way,
we's been trabblin' de straight an' narrow path
dat ends in glory.
Oh, Father, what die on Calbery, darkness has
descended,
we all knows it's temporary, Lawd,
but de sooner it disappears, de sooner we
gets goin' to You, Lawd.
Oh, Father, what die on Calbery, maybe we is
po' mis'able sinners,
but we certainly tries all de live long day
to follow Yo' teachings.
Lawd, oh, Father, if we ain' been doin' jus'
what You is wishin' us to do,
it ain' because we ain' been tryin',
'cause we is been tryin' to follow Yo' sacred
teachin's all de live long day, Amen.

Chorus

Lawd, hab mercy.

All

- 2 Oh, de Lawd shake de Heavens an' de Lawd
rock de groun'.
Ah — An' where you goin' stand, my brudder
an' my sister,
when de sky come atumblin' down.
Oh, de sun goin' to rise in de wes'.

Man

My Jesus.

All

An' de moon goin' to set in de sea —

Woman

My Saviour.

All

An' de stars goin' to bow befo' my Lawd,
bow down befo' my Lawd Who died on
Calvarie.
Oh, de Lawd raise de water an' de hypocrite
drown
an' where you goin' stand, etc.

Porgy

Clara, come sing wid us, sister, ain' you know,
song make you forget yo' trouble. An' lif' up
dat burden of sorrow offen yo' heart.

Clara

I 'mos' lose my mind wid yo' singing only dat
one song over an' over since daylight yesterday.

Serena

We got to be ready singin' praises to de Lawd
when Gabriel soun' dat trumpet an' de
graveya'ds spew up de dead.

Sporting Life

We had storm befo', I ain't so sure this is
Judgment Day.

Serena

Well, anyhow, it ain' no time fo' takin' no chances.

*(There is a sudden burst of wind, lightning and
thunder.)*

Clara (holding her baby close)

One of dese mornings you goin' to rise
up singin',
den you'll spread yo wings an' you'll take
de sky,
but till dat morning dere's a nothin' can
harm you
wid Daddy an' Mammy standin' by.

Chorus

Lawd hab mercy on our soul.
Oh, de sun goin' to rise in de wes' etc.

Porgy

What make you so still, Bess,
you ain' sayin' nuttin'.
You ain' afraid, is you honey?

Bess

I jus' thinkin', an' you know what I's thinkin' about?

Porgy

You's thinkin' what dis storm mus' be like
atramplin' over de sea islands,
dese waves mus' be runnin' clean across
Kittiwah.
Ain' nobody could live on dat damn island in a
storm like dis.

Bess

I guess you got me for keeps, Porgy.

Porgy

Ain' I tell you dat all along?

(Lightning flash and the roar of storm drown)

out singing. There is fearful screaming and shouting.)

All

- 3 Oh, dere's somebody knockin' at de do',
oh, dere's somebody knockin' at de do',
oh, Mary, oh, Marta, dere's somebody
knockin' at de do'.
Oh, dere's somebody *etc.*

Peter

I hear Death knockin' at de do'.

Lily

What you say, Daddy Peter?

Peter

I hear Death knockin' at de do'.

Lily

It mus' be death or Peter can't hear 'im. He
can't hear no livin' pusson.

Mingo

He ain't hear nuttin', ain' nobody knock.

Peter

Death knockin' at de do'.

Maria

Open de do', Mingo, an' show Peter dere ain'
nobody dere.

Mingo

Open um up yo'self.

Maria

All right, I'll show you.

*(Suddenly — several sharp knocks on door.
The door shakes violently. Men lean against it.)*

Woman

Dat ain' no use, if he's Death, he comin' in
anyway.

Maria

Oh, Gawd, Gawd, don't let 'im in.

*(The door slowly gives way inward, pushing
men back. Wind, shrieks, prayers, men fall
back. Crown enters.)*

Crown

You is a nice parcel of Christians! Shut a friend
out in a storm like dis!

Seren

Who' frien' is you?

Crown

I's yo' frien', Sister.

(sees Bess)

Oh, here's de woman I's lookin' fo'. Why ain'
you come an' say hello to yo' man?

Bess

You ain't my man!

Crown

It's sho' time I was comin' back for you, sweet
Bess! You ain't done much for yo'self while I
been gone. Ain' dere no whole ones left?

Bess

You keep yo' mouth off Porgy.

Crown

Woman, do you want to meet yo' Gawd?
Come here!

Bess

Porgy my man now!

Crown *(laughs)*

Well, for Gawd sake, does you call dat a man?
Well don' you min', I got de forgivin' nature an'
I goin' to take you back.

*(He grabs Bess. Porgy rises to defend her, but
Crown throws him back to the floor.)*

Porgy

Turn dat woman loose!

Bess

Keep yo' han' off me.

Seren

You bes' behave yo'self in dis storm! Don' you
know, Gawd might strike you dead!

Crown

If Gawd want to kill me, He had plenty of
chance 'tween here an' Kittiwah Island. Me an'
Him havin' it out all de way from Kittiwah, firs'
Him on top, den me on top. There ain' nothin'
He likes better den a scrap wid a man. Gawd
an' me is frien'!

(thunder)

Hear dat? Gawd's laughin' at you!

Woman (*on knees*)

Oh, de Lawd shake de Heavens an' de Lawd
rock de ground.

All

Ah, ah, ah,
an' where you goin' stan', my brudder an'
my sister,
when de sky come tumblin' down, etc.

Crown

Here, cut dat out! Stop it!
I didn't come here all the way from Kittiwah
to sit up wid no corpses.
Dem dat is in such a hurry to meet de
Judgment, all dey's gots to do is kiss
dereselves goodbye an' step out dat door.
Daddy Peter, here's yo' chance.
De Jim-crow's leavin' an' you don' need no
ticket.
(to Serena)
How about you, ole lady? What, dere ain' no
travellers?
Don' you hear Gawd a mighty laughin' at you?
Dat's right, Gawd laugh an' Crown laugh back.
Ha, ha, ha, ha! Dat's right, drown 'em out,
don' let 'em sing. Ha, ha, ha, ha!
How 'bout dis one, Big Frien'?

- 4 A red-headed woman makes a choo-choo
jump its track.
A red-headed woman she can make it jump
right back.
Oh, she's jus' nature's child,
she's got somethin' dat drives men wild.
A red-headed woman she can take you
wedder you're white, yellow or black.
But show me the redhead that kin make a fool
of me!
Oh, she ain' existin' on de lan' or on de sea.
Oh, you kin knock me down
if dey don't fall for Brudder Crown.
Oh, show me de redhead dat kin make a
goddam fool of me.

All

Lawd, Lawd, save us, don't listen to dat
Crown, Lawd,
Jesus, oh, pay no min' to dat Crown,
oh, Lawd, strike him down, strike him down.
Oh, Lawd, don't listen to dat Crown.

Crown

Oh show me de redhead that can make a fool
of me,
oh, she ain't existin' on de land or on de sea.

Oh you kin knock me down if they don't fall for
Brudder Crown.
Oh, show me de redhead dat can make a
goddam fool of,
I said a fool out o' me!

(Clara, at the window, screams and falls back.)

Bess

Jake's boat in de river, upside down!

Clara

Jake! Jake!
(turns to Bess)
Bess, keep my baby for me till I get back!

(Bess reaches out for baby.)

(Clara rushes out.)

Bess

Clara oughtn't to be out dere all by herself.
Won't somebody go to Clara?
Ain't dere no man here?

Crown

Yeah, where is a man? Porgy, what you sittin'
dere for? Ain't you hear yo' woman callin' for a
man? Looks to me like dere ain' only one man
'roun' here! All right, I'm goin' out to get Clara,
then I'm comin' back to get you.

Porgy

No, you don't!

Crown

All right, Big Frien', we're on for another bout!

(Crown opens door and plunges out. Roar.)

Singers

Oh, Doctor Jesus, look down on me wit'
pity, etc.
Oh, Lawd above, we knows You can destroy, etc.
Oh, Captain Jesus, find it in Yo' heart to save
us, etc.
Professor Jesus, teach Yo' ignorant chillen, etc...
Oh, Father what die on Calbery, etc...
Oh, Hev'nly Father, hab mercy on we, etc...
Amen!

ACT THREE

Scene 1

Catfish Row

(The storm has ended. It is dusk.)

Chorus

- 5 Clara, Clara, don't you be downhearted,
Clara, Clara, don't you be sad an' lonesome.
Jesus is walkin' on de water.
Rise up an' follow Him home.
Oh, Lawd, oh my Jesus,
rise up an' follow Him home.

Jake, Jake, don't you be downhearted,
Jake, Jake, don't you be sad an' lonesome, etc.

[Crown, Crown, don't you be downhearted,
Sporting Life *(laughs under Serena's stairs)*
Ha, ha, ha, ha.

Maria

You low-lived skunk, ain' you got no shame,
laughin' at those po' womens what's singin'
for their mens los' in the storm!

Sporting Life *(laughs)*

I ain't see no sense in makin' such a fuss over
a man when he's dead; when a gal loses her
man dere's plenty o' men still livin' what likes
good lookin' gals.

Maria

I know it ain' dem gals you is after, ain' you
see, Bess got no use for you, ain' you see she
got a man?

Sporting Life *(laughs)*

I see more'n dat, Auntie, I see she got two
men.

Maria

What you mean by dat? Bess got two mens.
Crown dead, ain' he?

Sporting Life *(laughs)*

I ain' tellin' you nothin', but a woman who got
jus' one man, maybe she got him for keeps,
but when she got two mens, there's mighty
apt to be a carvin', den de cops comes in an'
takes de leavin's. An' pretty soon she ain't
got none.

(Maria enters shop. Sporting Life goes off.)

Bess *(singing to Clara's baby at window)*

Summertime an' the livin' is easy,
fish are jumpin' an' the cotton is high.
Oh yo' daddy's rich an' yo' ma is good lookin',
so hush, little baby, don' you cry, ah.

(Bess leaves window.)

- 6 *(Crown enters the empty courtyard and picks his way stealthily across the court. Dropping to his hands and knees he crawls toward Porgy's door. Above Crown, the shutter opens slowly. An arm is extended, the hand grasping a long knife. The arm descends, plunging the knife into Crown's back. The knife is withdrawn and hurled into court. Crown staggers upright as Porgy leans from window and closes both hands around his throat. They struggle at the window, and Porgy kills Crown, hurling the body into the courtyard.)*

Porgy *(laughing triumphantly)*

Bess, Bess, you got a man now, you got
Porgy!

Scene 2

Catfish Row

- 7 **Introduction**

Detective *(appears at gate with coroner)*

Wait for us at the corner, Al. We'll put the
widow through first.

(climbs steps to Serena's window, knocks and descends to court)

Come on down, Serena Robbins, and make it
damn quick!

(Slight pause. Then shutter pops open.)

Annie *(at the window)*

Serena been very sick in her bed three day an'
I been here with her all de time.

(pops back in — closes shutters)

Detective

The hell she has. Tell her if she don't come
down I'll get the wagon and run her in.

(Serena appears at the window. Groans.)

Detective

Where were you last night, Serena Robbins?

Serena

I been sick in dis bed three day an' three night.

Annie

An' we been nursin' her all dat time.

Lily

Dat's de Gawd's truth.

Coroner

Would you swear to that?

All

Yes, boss, we swear to that.

Coroner

There you are, an air-tight alibi.

Detective

Just two months ago right here Crown killed your husband, didn't he?

(pause)

Answer me, you'll either talk here or in jail.
Did Crown kill you husband, yes or no?

Women

We swear to dat, boss.

Detective

And last night Crown got his right here, didn't he?

Annie *(laughs)*

Go 'long, boss, ain' dat gentleman say we is "alabi"?

Detective

Was Crown killed here — yes or no?

Serena, Annie and Lily

We ain' see nuttin', boss. We been in dis room three day an' night an' de window been closed.

Detective

Look at me, Serena Robbins. Do you mean to tell me that the man who killed your husband was bumped off under your window, and you didn't know it?

Serena, Annie and Woman

We ain' see nuttin' Boss. We been in dis room three days an' nights.

Detective *(exasperated)*

Three days and nights!

Annie

An' de window been closed.

(They close shutters.)

Detective

You needn't do that one again.
Oh hell! You might as well argue with a parrot, but you'll never break their story.
But I'll get you a witness for your inquest.
Step over here an' I'll put the cripple through.
(goes to Porgy's door and kicks it open violently)
Come out here both of you, step lively now!

(Bess helps Porgy to the doorstep, then she stands by him, the baby in her arms. Sporting Life enters court and silently watches.)

Coroner

What is your name?

Porgy

Jus' Porgy. You knows me, boss, you done give me plenty of pennies on Meetin' Street.

Coroner

Of course — you're the goat man, I didn't know you with no wagon.
I'm the coroner, not a policeman.
Now this dead one, Crown, you knew him by sight, didn't you? You'd know him if you saw him again?

Porgy

Yes, boss, seems like I remember him, when he used to come 'roun' here long time ago.
But I ain' care none 'bout seein' him.

Detective

Well, you've got to see him anyway. Come along.

Coroner

You needn't be afraid. All you've got to do is to view the body as a witness, and tell us who it is.

Porgy *(terror-stricken)*

I got to go an' look at Crown's face...

Coroner

Yes, that's all.

Porgy

With all dem white folks lookin' at me?

Coroner

Oh cheer up. I reckon you've seen a dead body before.
It'll all be over in a few minutes.

Porgy

There ain' goin' be nobody in dat room 'cept me?

Detective

Just you an' Crown, if you can still call him one.

Porgy

Boss, I couldn't jus' bring a woman with me? I... I couldn't even carry my woman?

Detective

No! You can't bring anyone. I'll send an officer to help you out.

Porgy

Boss, boss...

Detective

Now get this... I have summoned you an' you have to go. Or you'll go to jail for contempt of court.

(Leaves with Coroner. Porgy turns to Bess.)

Porgy

Oh, Lawd what I goin' do?

Bess

- 8 You've got to go, Porgy, maybe you can jus' make like to look at him, an' keep yo' eye shut.
You goin' be alright, Porgy.
You only goin' be a witness.

Sporting Life *(who has been enjoying it)*

I ain' so sure of that. All I know is that when the man that killed Crown go in that room — an' look at him, Crown' wound begin to bleed!

Porgy *(terror-stricken)*

Oh, my Jesus!

Sporting Life

That's one way the cops got of tellin' who killed him.

Porgy

I can't look at Crown's face,
oh Gawd, what I goin' do?

Policeman *(entering with a second policeman)*

Hey, you there, come along!

(They start dragging Porgy to the gate.)

Porgy

I ain' goin' look on his face!

Policeman

Oh, you'll look all right.

Porgy

Turn me loose, turn me loose — you can't make me look on his face! Ain't nobody can make me look on Crown's face!

(He is dragged out.)

Bess

Oh, Gawd! They goin' make him look on Crown's face!

Sporting Life *(laughs)*

Sister, that Porgy ain' goin' be no witness now. They goin' lock him up in jail.

Bess

Lock him up? Not for long, Sportin' Life!

Sporting Life

Not for long. Maybe one year, maybe two year, maybe just like I tol' you, ain' nobody home now but Bess and ole Sportin' Life.

(He takes her hand.)

But cheer up, sistuh, Ole Sportin' Life givin' you de stuff for to scare away dem lonesome blues.

Bess

Happy dus'! I ain' want none of dat stuff, I tells you. Take dat stuff away, Buzzard!

(Sporting Life almost forces Bess to take the dope. She suddenly yields and claps her hand over her mouth.)

Sporting Life

That's the thing, ain' it? An' membuh there's plenty more where that come from. Listen:

- 9 There's a boat dat's leavin' soon for New York.
Come wid me, dat's where we belong, sister.
You an' me kin live dat high life in New York.
Come wid me, dere you can't go wrong, sister.
I'll buy you de swellest mansion
Up on upper Fi'th Avenue
an' through Harlem we'll go struttin',
we'll go astruttin',
an' dere'll be nuttin'
too good for you.
I'll dress you in silks and satins,
in de latest Paris styles.
And de blues you'll be forgettin',
you'll be forgettin',
there'll be no frettin',
jes nothin' but smiles.
Come along wid me, hey dat's de place,
don't be a fool, come along, come along.
There's a boat dat's leavin' soon for New York.
Come wid me, dat's where we belong, sister,
dat's where we belong! Come on, Bess!

Bess

You low, crawlin' hound! Get away from my door I tells you, leave it, you rattlesnake. Dat's what you is, a rattlesnake!

(Sporting Life hands her a second paper. She knocks it out of his hand and runs to her door and inside.)

Sporting Life

Don't want take a second shot, eh! All right, I'll leave it here. Maybe you'll change yo' mind.

(Sporting Life tosses paper with dope on the doorstep. He smiles, lights a cigarette, starts sauntering off blowing smoke rings, sure that Bess will come back for the dope.)

Scene 3

Catfish Row

- 10 Introduction

(It is one week later.)

Man

- 11 Good mornin', sistuh!

Woman

Good mornin', brudder.

Men

Good mornin', sistuh!

Women

Good mornin', brudder.

(Everybody waves.)

All

Good mornin', good mornin'.
How are you dis very lovely mornin'?
How are you dis very lovely mornin'?

Children

La, la, la, la, la, la. Sure to go to Heaven,
yes, you boun' to go to Heaven, sure to go to Heaven.
If yo' good to yo' mammy an' yo' pappy,
wash yo' face an' make dem happy.
Den you'll be St. Peter's loveable chile.
La, la, la, la, la, la, la, la.

All

How are you dis mornin'?
Feelin' fine an' dandy.
Tell me how are you dis mornin'?
Feelin' fine an' dandy.
Tell me how are you dis mornin'?
Feelin' fine an' dandy.
Tell me how are you on dis lovely
mornin' —
How are you dis lovely day?

(Clang of patrolwagon is heard.)

Mingo

It's Porgy comin' home.

(Crowd breaks up into groups and gazes apprehensively at the gate.)

Porgy

Thank Gawd I's home again!

Chorus

Welcome home, Porgy. We're all so glad you is back again.

Porgy *(crossing over to Maria's table)*

- 12 Dem white folks sure ain' put nuttin' over on this baby. Ain' I tell you, I ain' goin' look on Crown's face.

Lily

You ain' look on um Porgy?

Porgy

No, no, no, no, I keep dese eyes shut in dat room 'til they done put me in jail for contemp' of court.

(not noticing any of the embarrassed behavior of his friends)

Sh... Don' anybody let on I's home again.

I got a surprise for Bess. Sweet Bess, an' I ain' wants her to know, 'til I get ev'rything ready.

Bring dem bundles here, Scipio!

Here, boy, look what I brought for you.

Throw away that ole mouth organ you got an' start on this one.

See, it got a picture of a brass band on it.

Work on that an' the firs' thing you know, you'll be playin' wid de orphans.

(still not noticing how the crowd is sneaking away)

Lily Holmes, Lily Holmes!

Here gal, hol' up yo' head. Dat's right.

I never did like dat ole funeral bonnet Peter buy for you... Get down, sistuh; *(presenting her with a gorgeous feather-trimmed hat)*

Dere now, get underneath dat, an' make all de redbird an' de bluejay jealous. *(unwrapping a dress)*

Now dat's de style for my Bess.

She's one gal that always look good in red. *(noticing how his friends are leaving, he tries to pull them back with an interesting story)*

Listen to this, ev'rybody; I reckon I's de firs' fella roun' here what go to jail po' and leave there rich.

All de time I got my lucky bones hid in my mouth, see,... An' I jus' got t'ru dem other crap-shootin' polecats like Glory Hallelujah! Now, ain' dis de thing?

'Course de baby ain' big enough to wear a dress like dis yet, but he goin' grow fast. You watch, he goin' be in dat dress by de first frost. An' now it's time to call Bess. Bess, oh, Bess, here Porgy come home! *(aside to Maria)*

Jus' you wait till dat gal see me. Oh, Bess! Here Mingo, what's de matter wid you all? Where you goin'? What kind of a welcome is dis for a man what's just been in jail for contempt of court?

(seeing Serena holding Clara's baby)

Why, hello, if dere ain't Serena.

You sho' work fast, sistuh.

I jus' been gone a week, an' here you are wid a new baby.

(seeing who the baby is)

Here, hol' on, let me see dat chile, dat's Bess' baby ain' it, where you get it? Where Bess anyhow? She ain' answer me.

(Porgy crawls to his door and enters.)

Bess, ain' you here? Bess!

(comes out of his door, frantic)

Maria, Maria, where's Bess, tell me quick where's Bess, tell me quick — Where's Bess. Where is Bess! Oh, Bess!

Maria

Ain' we tell you all along, Porgy, dat woman ain' fit fo' you?

Porgy

I ain' axin' yo' opinion.

13 Oh, Bess, oh where's my Bess, won't somebody tell me where? I ain' care what she say, I ain' care what she done, Won't somebody tell me where's my Bess? Bess, oh, Lawd,

my Bess! I want her now,

widout her I can't go on.

I counted de days dat I was gone

till I got home to see her face.

Won't somebody tell me where's my Bess?

I want her so, my gal, my Bess,

where is she?

Oh Gawd, in Yo' big Heav'n

please show me where I mus' go,

oh give me de strength, show me de way!

Tell me de truth, where is she, where is my gal,

where is my Bess!

;

Maria

Dat dirty dog Sportin' Life make believe

dat you lock up for ever.

He tol' her dat you would be gone

for de rest of yo' days.

Yo' woman been very low in her mind,

she believe ev'rything Sportin' Life say to her,

dat's how it was.

She been very low, yo' woman misunderstand,

she t'ink you never come back to her;

Sportin' Life fool her, fool yo' Bess.

She is gone.

Man, don't you let it break yo' heart 'bout dat gal.
 We told you all along dat dat woman ain'
 worthy of you.
 She was no good, Porgy,
 or she'd never go 'way.
 Try forget 'bout Bess.

Serena

She gone, but you very lucky;
 she gone back to de happy dus'.
 She done throw Jesus out of her heart.
 Bess dat kin' of gal,
 I told you dat all along,
 Porgy, you is better off
 widout dat woman hangin' 'roun' an' makin'
 trouble.
 She give herself away to de debbil.
 Porgy, you is better off
 widout dat woman hangin' 'roun';
 there's plenty better gals than Bess.
 Bess is gone, she worse than dead, Porgy,
 she gone back to de happy dus',
 she gone back to de red eye wid him
 an' she's headin' fo' Hell.
 Thank God she's out of yo' way.
 Try forget 'bout Bess.

Lily

14 Bess is gone. An' Serena take dis chile
 to give 'im a Christian raisin'.

Porgy

You ain' mean Bess dead?

Serena

She worse than dead, Porgy.
 She gave herself to de debbil,
 but she still livin', an' she gone far away.

Porgy

Alive, Bess is alive!
 Where Bess gone?

Mingo

New York.

Porgy

I hear you say New York. Where dat?

Mingo

A thousand mile from here.

Porgy

Which way New York?

Maria

It's way up North pas' de custom house.

Porgy

Bring my goat!

Maria

What you want wid goat, Porgy?
 You bes' not go any place.

Porgy

Bring my goat!

Serena

You better stay wid yo' frien', Porgy,
 you'll be happy here.

Porgy

Won't nobody bring my goat?

Maria

Ain't we tell you, you can't find her, Porgy?

Serena

For Gawd sake, Porgy, where you goin'?

All

Where you goin', Porgy?

Porgy

Ain't you say Bess gone to New York? Dat's
 where I goin', I got to be wid Bess. Gawd help
 me to fin' her.

*(Mingo leads goat and cart over. Porgy holds
 up arms and is helped into cart.)*

I'm on my way.

(Cart is led off.)

15 Oh Lawd, I'm on my way.

Porgy and all

I'm on my way to a Heav'nly Lan',
 I'll ride dat long, long road. If You are there to
 guide my han'.

Oh Lawd, I'm on my way. I'm on my way to a
 Heav'nly Lan' —

Oh Lawd, it's a long, long way, but You'll be
 there to take my han'.

Libretto

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