

Revolutionary Gentleman

THE ROCK OPERA

A Tragic-Comedy in Two Acts

Book, Music and Lyrics

by

Steven W Rodgers

A satirical, behind-the-scenes look at the American Revolution
as seen through the eyes of Benedict Arnold

Additional lyrics by Wendy Christopher & Carolyn Tracy

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Musical Numbers

ACT ONE

1. REVOLUTIONARY GENTLEMAN [instrumental] (1:57).....Orchestra
2. THE GREATEST HERO (2:15)Ben & Company
3. JUST ANOTHER PRETTY FACE [instrumental] (0:39)Orchestra
4. REVOLUTIONARY GENTLEMAN (3:51).....Ben & Company
5. DESPICABLE (2:00)Emily
6. I CAN LIVE WITH THAT (2:59).....Reed, Josephine & Muses
7. JUST ANOTHER PRETTY FACE (3:09)Washington & Company
8. HONEYMOON GUITAR [instrumental] (1:44)Orchestra
9. BACKUP LOVER (4:05)Ben, Emily, Muses
10. FLAME IN THE DARK (4:01).....Ben & Peggy
11. WE HAVE A CRISIS (2:08).....Reed, Josephine & Washington
12. THE HONEYMOON (1:34) Ben, Peggy & Emily
13. DAY OF RECKONING (3:26)..... Josephine
14. WHEN THE MOMENT IS RIGHT (1:49).....John & Peggy
15. ALTERNATIVE FACTS (4:09)Ben, Reed, Josephine, Emily & Muses
16. THE VERDICT (1:32).....Ben, Josephine, Emily, Muses & Washington
17. JURORS' REMORSE (1:55)Ben, Emily & Muses
18. THE AMERICAN WAY (4:17) Ben, John & Peggy

ACT TWO

19. GIMME THAT ADDRESS [instrumental].....Orchestra
20. PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE.....Reed & Josephine
21. UP A CREEK (2:47)Emily, Ben, Peggy & John
22. MIDNIGHT RIDE /Peggy & John
23. GIMME THAT ADDRESS (5:44)John, & Muses
24. GENERAL ARNOLD'S DEMISE (2:53)Reed & Josephine
25. PEGGY'S DREAM (2:21)Orchestra
26. WITHOUT HIM* (2:52)Peggy
27. DOWNWARD SPIRAL (3:02)Ben, Peggy, Emily & Muses
28. WHO'S TO SAY? (2:09)Emily
29. RATHER BE IN JAMAICA (2:37) Emily & Peggy
30. INESCAPABLE (2:08)Washington, Peggy, Reed & Josephine
31. I'VE COME UNDONE (4:07)Ben, Reed, Emily & Josephine
32. FINALE (2:43)Ben & Company

All songs music & lyrics by Steven W Rodgers, except:

'Flame in the Dark,' Music by Steven W Rodgers, Lyrics by Wendy Christopher
'Who's to Say?' Music by Steven W Rodgers, Lyrics by Steven W Rodgers & Carolyn Tracy

Cast of Characters

4m,6w (w/doubling)

EMILY, 20s, General Arnold's English Nurse

BENEDICT ARNOLD, 40s, Popular hero of the American Revolution

MR. REED, 50s, The sniveling, peevisish President of the Supreme Council

JOSEPHINE, 30s, Reed's sassy, incorrigible Chief Advisor

PEGGY SHIPPEN ARNOLD, 20s, A loyalist, a spy for England, and Major Andre's lover

MAJ. JOHN ANDRÉ, 20s, Head of British Intelligence

3 ETHEREAL MUSES

GEN. GEORGE WASHINGTON, 40s, Head of the Continental Army

Setting

JULY, 1801. LONDON, ENGLAND. THE HOME OF BENEDICT ARNOLD.

*Along with Washington and John, the muses play a variety of minor roles, including Judge, hot dog seller, movers, party-goers, spectators, guards, soldiers, jurors, revelers, pedestrians

ACT ONE

[*Instrumental: Revolutionary Gentleman*]

(As music subsides, lights come up dimly on the bedroom of General Arnold, London, England, 1801. Rather sparsely furnished... just a bed with a gleaming brass frame and an ornate desk and chair. Ben is tossing and turning in bed. At the moment, he in his nightgown. He sits up in bed, troubled).

[*Song: The Greatest Hero*]

Ben

IT'S HARD TO SAY
WHAT COULD HAVE BECOME OF ME
IF I HADN'T BEEN SO LOYAL TO HIS MAJESTY
NOW I FIND NO ONE REALLY WANTS ME
IT SEEMS AS IF MY FRIENDS
HAVE ALL ABANDONED ME FOREVER

Onlookers

(popping up from behind furniture, etc.)

WELL WHO COULD BLAME THEM
CONSIDERING YOUR CRIME?
NO ONE WANTS TO BE SEEN
WITH THE GREATEST TRAITOR OF OUR TIME!
(onlookers proceed to dance about, taunting)
YOU'RE NOTHING BUT A BENEDICT ARNOLD
A TRAITOR THROUGH AND THROUGH
THAT'S ALL YOU'LL EVER BE
THAT'S ALL ANYONE WILL SEE

Ben

WHY IS IT NO ONE CAN RECALL
I WAS THE GREATEST HERO OF THEM ALL
(Peggy pops up in bed next to him)
I CAN'T BELIEVE THIS MESS YOU'VE GOT ME IN

Peggy

WELL HOW WAS I TO KNOW
THE WRONG SIDE WAS GONNA WIN?

Ben

NOW I FIND NO ONE REALLY WANTS ME
NOW I FIND NO ONE SEEMS TO CARE ABOUT ME

Onlookers + Peggy

WELL, WHO COULD BLAME THEM
 CONSIDERING YOUR CRIME?
 NO ONE WANTS TO BE SEEN
 WITH THE GREATEST TRAITOR OF OUR TIME!

YOU'RE NOTHING BUT A BENEDICT ARNOLD
 A TRAITOR THROUGH AND THROUGH
 THAT'S ALL YOU'LL EVER BE
 THAT'S ALL ANYONE WILL SEE

Ben

WHY IS IT NO ONE CAN RECALL
 I WAS THE GREATEST HERO OF THEM ALL?

*(During the brief instrumental, they all dance playfully
 around Ben, continuing to taunt him).*

Onlookers

SORRY THAT WE HAD TO DO IT

Ben

DON'T KNOW WHY YOU PUT ME THROUGH IT

Onlookers

SORRY THAT WE HAD TO DO IT...TO YOU!

*(The song ends. The onlookers, including Mrs. Arnold,
 scurry off, leaving Ben standing on his bed, in his nightgown,
 his musty old continental jacket draped over his shoulders.
 Mary, the Cockney maid (one of the muses), enters, carrying
 a basket of laundry. Ben sees her and points to her with his
 cane).*

Ben

Halt! You there!!!

Mary

(screams, startled, almost dropping the basket)

Me, sir?

Ben

You're out of uniform, soldier. Is that any way for a patriot to dress?

Mary (confused)

But...this *is* what I normally wear, Sir.

Ben

Are you ready to storm the fort at Ticonderoga?

Mary (*meekly*)

I? Storm the fort at Ticonderoga? Beggin' the general's pardon, sir, but I got laundry to do!

(Ben spots his old continental uniform at the top of the laundry Basket and grabs it before she turns away. He eagerly puts it on over his nightgown, then sits to put on his army boots.

Emily, Ben's English nurse, enters suddenly, and is annoyed to see BEN getting dressed. Charming, confident, exuberant, sarcastic at times, always expressive, she helps narrate the action and, like other characters, portrays various reincarnations of figures from Ben's past)

Emily (*alarmed*)

General! General Arnold! Just what do you think you're doing out of bed in your condition?

Mary (*whispering*)

Oh, Miss Emily. I'm afraid he's off his noodle again. He wanted me to storm the fort at Ticonderoga!

Emily

That's not bloody likely! We're far too busy today. Speaking of which, ain't you got a shepard's pie in the oven?

Mary (*alarmed, running off*)

Oh, bugger, I 'ope I ain't burnt it this time! The missus is liable to cook my goose!

Emily (*approaching Ben gently*)

Now General, You know what the doctor said! Do I have to call Mrs. Arnold again?

Ben (*alarmed*)

God, woman! Where is your coat?

Emily

My what, sir?

Ben

Your coat, damn it! Your coat! That's no way to dress in this kind of weather!

Emily

Ha! Today's a scorcher if you ask me! It's got to be 90 degrees already, and here it isn't but noon yet!

Ben

Well....here. Here—at least take my blanket.

(He pulls a blanket off his bed and runs to her, draping it over her shoulders)

Ben (*Cont*)

We must continue the march on Quebec! If we can reach the fort in time, we may be able to convince the Canadians to join our gallant cause!

Emily

Ah, I see, we're back in Quebec again, are we? Now, General, please get back into bed ... and give me that silly coat!

(Emily reaches for the coat Ben is wearing but he holds tight)

Ben

No! Not my coat. At least let me have that!

(He looks at his coat, despondently)

God forgive me for ever putting on another.

Emily

Mrs. Arnold! He's at it again! Mrs. Arnold!!!

(She runs offstage as light dim and music swells)

BLACKOUT

[*brief instrumental: Just Another Pretty Face*]

The music fades and lights slowly come up on his gleaming brass bed which now sits among a grove of trees, shrouded in fog in the early dawn, as Ben begins to lose his grip on reality. In Ben's mind, he is now back in Colonial America, in the early years of the Revolution. We see him as he is now, but he sees himself the way he was those many years ago, when he was so full of promise, as one of the greatest generals of the American Revolution. The division between reality and imagination becomes increasingly blurred as he struggles against the delirium that besets him during his inglorious final moments on Earth. Lights dim except for a single spot on Ben, as a cold wind blows. It begins to snow)

[*Song: Revolutionary Gentleman*]

Ben

IT'S TIME TO START A REVOLUTION
 IF I JUST KNEW HOW
 ALL I SEE SURROUNDING ME ARE FACES OF DESPAIR
 IS IT POSSIBLE FOR ME TO KEEP THEIR HOPES ALIVE
 WHEN DEATH IS EVERYWHERE?
 AM I A REVOLUTIONARY GENTLEMAN
 JUST LIKE ALL THE PAPERS SAY,
 OR CAN IT BE I'M JUST AN ORDINARY MAN?
 CAN I CARVE US OUT A NATION ONE DAY?

(Dim lights reveal figures of Ben's past, as he struggles to walk, with a cane)

Ben (Cont)

WOULD THESE SUNSHINE PATRIOTS
KNOW HOW TO FIGHT A WAR?
OR AT THE SOUND OF ENGLISH CANNON
WOULD THEY ALL RETREAT?
WHO AM I TO LEAD THEM ALL
AGAINST A MIGHTY POWER
AND SAVE THIS NATION FROM DEFEAT?
I'M NOT A REVOLUTIONARY GENTLEMAN
AS ALL THE HISTORY BOOKS WILL SAY
I'M NOTHING MORE THAN JUST A MAN CONTENT TO KNOW
A GRATEFUL NATION WILL REMEMBER HIM SOME DAY.

(Lights come up full as the figures of his past are fully revealed. They gather around Ben encouragingly)

Company

WE WOULD NOT HAVE SURVIVED WITHOUT YOU
(NEVER WOULD HAVE MADE IT WITHOUT YOU)
NONE OF US HERE WOULD BE ALIVE WITHOUT YOU
(NEVER WOULD HAVE MADE IT WITHOUT YOU)

JUST LOOK AT WHERE WE ARE
WE NEVER WOULD'VE MADE IT THIS FAR
WITHOUT YOU....WITHOUT YOU...

NEVER WOULD'VE MADE IT
NEVER WOULD'VE MADE IT
NEVER WOULD'VE MADE IT WITHOUT YOU
(WITHOUT YOU), etc.

... 'CAUSE YOU'RE A REVOLUTIONARY GENTLEMAN
JUST LIKE ALL THE PAPERS SAY
WITH YOU TO LEAD US
WE KNOW WE'LL SOON BE FREE
YOU'LL BE KNOWN THROUGHOUT THE WORLD SOME DAY.

*(The ghosts of the past disappear, except Emily, who approaches Ben)
He climbs back into bed and Emily comes downstage to address the audience)*

[Song: **Despicable**]

Emily

YOU LIKELY THINK THAT BEN'S A TRAITOR
 BUT ALL OF THAT WOULD COME MUCH LATER
 HE'D NOT YET BEGUN TO HATCH HIS PLAN
 YOU MIGHT BE SURPRISED TO FIND
 BENEDICT HAD BEEN ASSIGNED
 TO BECOME THE MILITARY'S SECOND-IN-COMMAND

STILL SOME PEOPLE CAME TO HATE HIM
 WANTED TO ANNIHILATE HIM
 ALWAYS HATEFUL THINGS TO SAY
 DIDN'T WANT HIM STANDING IN THEIR WAY

ENVY AND GREED WERE ALL PERVASIVE
 MANY HAD HOPED TO TAKE THE PLACE OF
 THIS LIKELY COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF
 GAVE HIM NOTHING BUT GRIEF

BEN COULD BE UNSAVORY, TOO
 BUT WHAT'S ALL THAT TO DO WITH YOU?
 HE SURELY WASN'T LOYAL TO THE KING!

FURTHERMORE, HERE'S THE LATEST:
 BEN COULD HAVE BEEN THE GREATEST
 PATRIOT THIS COUNTRY HAD EVER SEEN, BUT...
 THE LOCAL HEAD AUTHORITY
 MADE IT HIS PRIORITY
 TO UNDERMINE THE MAN
 DIDN'T WANT HIM IN COMMAND AT ALL
 REED WAS THE MASTER OF CORRUPTION
 HE WOULDN'T TOLERATE DISRUPTIONS
 TO HIS MASTER PLAN
 A DESCPICABLE MAN.

(As the song ends, lights come up on Mr. Reed, the sniveling, peevish President of the Council, and his efficient, if rather sassy Chief Advisor, Josephine, giving him a massage. The muses are gathered around offering various services, fanning him, feeding him grapes, etc.)

Reed

Ahhhh!!!!!! Ohhhhhhhh! You know, Josephine, in all these years as my Chief Advisor, you may have been the most ineffectual, molly-coddled ingrate it's ever been my misfortune to employ...but...as a masseuse....you are the crème de la crème!

Josephine

Oh! Flatterer!

Reed

I uh... I don't suppose you ever had the chance to, uh... ply your trade on.... Benedict Arnold?

Josephine

Sir, this unhealthy obsession with General Arnold has to stop. It's keeping you up at night. It's keeping me up at night....Well.... I hear you moaning endlessly in bed.

(Getting flustered)

You in your bed. Me in my bed, of course. What would I be doing in your bed? But through the walls, don't you see?

Reed

Josephine, what a peculiar manner of speaking you've adopted. Simply answer my question.

Josephine

Well, yes, sir. I did meet the General...once...but, sir...he was no gentleman.

Reed

You don't mean--?!?!?

Josephine

Oh, no, sir, nothing like that....but he called me vile names...reprehensible names!

Reed

General Arnold? Are you sure?

Josephine

He bumped into me, and said, quite plainly, mind you, "Pardon me, Madam." I? A 'madam'? I'd never been so insulted in all my life! I'm only 26! I still have most of my teeth!

(Josephine sits at the desk and looks at the newspaper headlines)

[*Song: I Can Live With That*]

Reed

WHAT HAVE YOU GOT IN THE PAPERS?
YOU NEVER HAVE ANYTHING GOOD!

Josephine

SIR, DON'T BLAME THE MESSENGER!
I DID THE BEST THAT I COULD!
GENERAL ARNOLD'S HORSE WAS SHOT

Reed

IS THAT ALL YOU'VE GOT?
IF YOU'D ONLY TELL ME
ARNOLD WAS SHOT TOO!

Josephine
THE GENERAL SURVIVED THE ENCOUNTER

Reed
JUST MY LUCK, OF COURSE

Josephine
HE WAS SHOT, TOO

Reed (*Hopeful*)
WAS IT FATAL?

Josephine
AT LEAST IT WAS FOR THE HORSE!

Reed
THIS IS ALL SO DEVASTATING!
NO ONE IS COOPERATING

Josephine
BUT HE MAY NEVER WALK AGAIN!

Reed
NOT DEAD, BUT CRIPPLED!
MMM...NOT BAD!
I CAN LIVE WITH THAT!

Josephine
YOUR GENEROSITY IS WHERE IT'S AT!

Reed
I CAN LIVE WITH THAT

Muses
MAYBE NOW PEOPLE WON'T TREAT YOU LIKE A DOORMAT

Reed (*Backed by the Muses' oohs and ahhs*)
JOSEPHINE, HAVE YOU SEEN
HOW I NEVER GET A BREAK?
HOW MUCH MORE'S A MAN TO TAKE?
BUT...I CAN LIVE WITH THAT

Josephine
WATCHING PEOPLE SUFFER IS WHERE IT'S AT!

Reed
GENERAL ARNOLD'S DOWN AND OUT!

Muses

SURVIVAL OF THE FITTEST IS WHAT IT'S ALL ABOUT

Reed

JOSEPHINE, IF YOU COULD SEE
HOW HARD THIS WAR HAS BEEN ON ME!

Muses

AND THOUGH YOU'RE GETTING OLDER
YOU STILL COULD BE A SOLDIER
THOUGH WITH ALL THAT THEY GO THROUGH
JUST BE GLAD IT'S NOT STILL HAPPENING TO YOU!

(Instrumental interlude)

Reed

SOME MEN ARE JUST BORN LUCKY
FOR ME, LIFE IS SO UNFAIR
WHEN THEY SIGNED THAT FAMOUS DECLARATION
SADLY, I WASN'T THERE.
THEY FORGOT TO INVITE ME
AND THEN, JUST TO SPITE ME
JOHN HANCOCK SIGNED HIS NAME SO BIG
THERE WAS NO ROOM LEFT FOR MINE! BUT....
I CAN LIVE WITH THAT
ALL MY LIFE, I HAVE BEEN REJECTED

Muses

DON'T COMPLAIN, SOMEDAY
YOU'D LIKE A STATUE OF YOU TO BE ERECTED

Reed

JOSEPHINE, DO YOU FEEL
I HAVE AN IRRESISTIBLE APPEAL?

(Sound of crickets)

Josephine *(Laughing hysterically)*

Oh, you were serious?

Reed *(Shrugging)*

I CAN LIVE WITH THAT

Muses

EVEN THOUGH HE'S FEELING QUITE DEJECTED

Reed

I CAN LIVE WITH THAT

Muses

AFTER ALL, HE'S COME TO EXPECT IT

Reed

(w/ backing 'oohs' and 'ahhs' from muses)

JOSEPHINE, IF YOU COULD SEE
HOW HARD MY LIFE HAS BEEN FOR ME

Josephine

YOU MUST BE OPTIMISTIC

Muses

...AND A LITTLE LESS SADISTIC

All

THEN SOMEWHAT BETTER DAYS
MAY BE ON THEIR WAY!

(Sounds of fireworks and shouting in the street)

Josephine

Yo, yo yo! Ya wanna keep it down? The President of the Council is highly sensitive to noise.

Muse #1

But haven't you heard?

Muse #2

The Rebels have finally driven the English out of the city! They're on the run!

Muse #3

And Washington's just appointed Benedict Arnold military governor!

(Reed and Josephine exchange glances and sigh. Excited crowd noises as light comes up on the ballroom. The Muses excitedly gather round Ben, offering him champagne)

*[Instrumental underscoring: **Honeymoon Guitar**]*

Muse #1

General! I brought you a nice cold glass of champagne!

Muse #2

I did, too!

Muse #3

I thought of it first!

Ben

How kind of you all to have noticed that I was...exceptionally thirsty this evening!

(He takes a sip from each glass. They giggle)

You'll forgive me for not getting up...

(Pointing to his left leg with his cane)

... this nearly fatal injury has sidelined me momentarily...though, I must say, it was an honor and a privilege to have received in the defense of you ladies' sweet liberties...

Muses *(Dreamily)*

Oh, General!

Josephine

I think I'm going to be ill.

Muse #1

General, how did you hurt your leg?

Ben *(With feigned modesty)*

Oh, I don't think you want to hear about that.

Muses

Oh yes we do, yes we do!

Ben *(Without missing a beat)*

It was a blustery winter's day. The morning frost clung to the withered blades of grass....

Josephine

Skip it!

Ben *(Embarrassed)*

Er, yes....well, at any rate, I was leading my men into battle, where the heaviest fighting was going on?—

Muse #2

General! You don't mean to say that you were —out in front?—leading the charge?

Ben

Madam, with me it was never "Go, lads, go!" It was always "Come on lads, follow me!"

Muse #3

It must have been awfully dangerous!

Ben

I had my hat shot clean through nine times! Then suddenly, my horse was shot out from underneath me. I tried to jump clear, but it was too late—my foot was caught in the stirrup and my leg was crushed beneath the beast. More to my immediate concern, however, was what to do about the blasted Redcoat who had chanced to come upon me at this rather inopportune moment. He ran up to me, and pointing his musket in my face, said "You're my prisoner!"

Muse #1 (*Covering her ears*)

I don't want to hear any more!

Muse #2 and #3 (*excitedly*)

What happened next?

Ben

I looked him square in the eye and said "Not yet!" Then I drew out my musket and—

(Using his cane as a weapon, Ben "Fires" and a loud, resonant "boom" is heard. Lights come up on Washington addressing the crowd. Ben excuses himself and goes to join Washington. His fans follow).

[Song: **Just Another Pretty Face**]

Washington

GENERAL ARNOLD'S THE MAN OF THE HOUR
THANKS TO HIM, WE'RE FIRMLY BACK IN POWER
(Placing a key to the city on a chain around Ben's neck)
I'M PLEASED TO HONOR HIM TONIGHT
HE MAY BE DOWN AND OUT
BUT HE'LL SOON REJOIN THE FIGHT

Ben

Thank you, your excellency. I assure you, your confidence in me will not be misplaced

Washington

DON'T BE FOOLED, BEN NEEDS NO CONSOLATION
WATCH HIM REBOUND
HE'S THE FUTURE OF OUR NATION
SOME DAY, THIS MAN IN FRONT OF YOU
MAY WELL BE LIVIN' ON PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE!

Josephine (*To Reed*)

Oh! He did not just say that!!

Washington

OH, YEAH!!

Josephine

You've got to be kidding me! That's an insult is what that is!

Muses

WE THINK THAT YOU
SHOULD HAVE A STATUE
YET HOW COULD THEY CAPTURE
SOMEONE OF YOUR STATURE
IT'S A MYSTERY!

Josephine (*To Reed*)
SUCH GREAT REVIEWS!

Reed (*Sulking*)
For him!

Josephine
IT'S REALLY KINDA FUNNY
LOOK AT YOU!

Reed
It's rather grim.

Josephine
THEY ONLY PRAISE YOU FOR YOUR MONEY
WE MUST KEEP HIM IN HIS PLACE
IT'S TIME THEY FOUND OUT HE IS NOTHING
BUT ANOTHER PRETTY FACE!

Reed
Look at those people surrounding him, seemingly repulsed by my very presence!

Josephine
Seemingly, sir?

Reed
Josephine, remind me to take my semi-annual bubble bath, will you not?

Josephine
With great pleasure, sir.

Muses
AND WE TRUST YOU
BUT IF YOU MUST, YOU
WILL REJOIN THE FIGHT
YOU'RE OUR GUIDING LIGHT
WE ADMIRE YOUR LOYALTY!
HE'LL SOON BE BACK
IN THE HEAT OF BATTLE. WHOA!!! YEAH!

Washington
OH, WHOA....

The front lines is where this man belongs, people!

Ben
You're too kind.

Josephine

It won't happen soon enough for me, lemme tell ya!

(Music ends. Reed approaches Washington, glass in hand)

Reed

General Washington, do you really think that this...Arnold fellow was a particularly wise choice to be our new military governor?

Washington

I was told you might be coming around to see me about that.

Reed

It's not that I'm objecting, you understand, it's just...Well...you know how people talk, and, well, quite frankly, when my subordinate told me he'd seen English officers coming and going from Arnold's home, well.... I told him, 'no, stop, I refuse to listen to idle gossip!'

Washington

There must be some mistake.

Reed

Oh, your Excellency, if only you know how much I wished that were true. When the reports on Arnold's associations came out, I hoped and prayed they were nothing more than idle conjecture...rumors by low-lives with an axe to grind, but upon repeated insistence from members of my council, I looked into the reports and, regrettably, found them to be true.

Washington

Reed, you don't mean to imply, do you, that there's anything more going on than just...*socializing* with the English?

Reed

Oh, absolutely not!

Washington

Good. I'd hate to think you'd make accusations against a man to whom we all owe our very lives.

(pause)

Still, I suppose I should speak to him about hisassociations....for appearance's sake....

Reed

That's my only concern, too, your Excellency.

(WASHINGTON walks off in disgust. A celebration ensues. John Andre, a dashing British officer, appears with Peggy, an English loyalist and his one-time lover. They dance, and kiss, as Emily looks on with interest on the opposite side of the stage. The music begins with a light waltz as John and Peggy dance, which segues into Back Up Lover)

[Song: **Back Up Lover**]

Emily (*To Ben*)

PEGGY'S OVER THERE
ALWAYS LOOKED SO GLAMOROUS
SHE'S WITH JOHN
THEY'RE BOTH ACTING AWFULLY AMOROUS

Ben

THAT WAS LONG BEFORE THE TWO OF US HAD MET
EVEN I WAS KNOWN TO HAVE MY TETE-A-TETES

Emily

No! Really sir?

Ben

Oh, yes. I had three children by a previous marriage!

WHEN MY WIFE DIED
I WAS BESIDE
MYSELF WITH GRIEF
FILLED WITH GLOOM
LOCKED UP IN MY ROOM

Muses

DIDN'T COME OUT TILL DINNER TIME
YEAH, YEAH, YEAH!

Ben

THEN SHE APPEARED
BETSY DUBOIS WAS THE ANSWER TO MY PRAYERS

Emily

AS IF SHE CARES!

Ben

I SPENT DAYS ON A LETTER SURE TO WIN HER HEART
'YOUR CHARMS, MADAM,
HAVE LIGHTED A FLAME IN MY HEART'

Muses

SHOO BE DOO WAH, WAH, SHOO BE DOO WAH

Ben

'DON'T WANNA SPEND ANOTHER MOMENT APART!
WHEN WILL OUR COURTSHIP FINALLY START?'

Muse #1 (*As Betsy Dubois, reading letter*)

WELL, THAT'S SO SWEET
BUT HE'LL HAVE TO TAKE A BACK SEAT

Muse #2 and #3

HE'S ALL THE RAGE!

Muse #1

BUT HE'S TWICE MY AGE!
YOU'VE HEARD THE TALK
HE CAN HARDLY WALK
AND MAY STAY THAT WAY

(She crumples the letter and throws it down.

Ben rushes to pick up the letter, trying to smooth it out)

Ben

THANK GOODNESS, SOMEHOW
THIS LETTER STILL IS INTACT

Muses

SHOO BE DO WAH, WAH, SHOO BE DO WAH

Emily

JUST DON'T GIVE IT TO ANOTHER
ONLY AN ASS
WOULD BE SO CRASS

Emily and Muses

TO USE THE SAME LINES ON A BACK UP LOVER

Ben

Sorry, but those heartfelt words of love were too good to use only once. Now, then,let's see...

(Looking around, he suddenly spots Peggy)

Ah, yes. Dear.....Peggy!

(Hurriedly scribbling)

Your heavenly image is too deeply impressed ever to be erased!

(Lights dim as Ben approaches Peggy. He cuts in and John exits)

[*Song: Flame in the Dark*]

Peggy

IS THIS HOW IT STARTS,
WITH A GAME OF HEARTS
PASSED LIKE A GIFT OF GOOD WILL BETWEEN MEN?
OUR LOVE'S SO UNORTHODOX
I'M LIKE MY LITTLE MUSIC BOX
OPEN UP MY HEART AND I WILL PLAY FOR YOU AGAIN

Ben

YOU RUN FROM THE NIGHTS FULL OF SHADOWS
I AM YOUR FLAME IN THE DARK

Peggy & Ben

CLOSE ALL THE DOORS AND HOLD IN THE LIGHT
THE REST OF THE WORLD CANNOT TOUCH US TONIGHT
SOMEDAY YOU'LL BE...FOREVER WITH ME

Peggy

I KNOW ALL TOO WELL
MORNING WILL BREAK THE SPELL
DUTY WILL CALL AND THEN I'LL LET YOU GO
YET HERE YOU'RE SAFE FROM ALL THE LIES
AND WHEN I LOOK INTO YOUR EYES
THERE THEY ARE, THOSE SECRETS
ONLY WE WILL EVER KNOW

Ben

WHEN THE DAY IS OVER AND THE SUN GOES DOWN
LOOK FOR A FLAME IN THE DARK

Peggy & Ben

CLOSE ALL THE DOORS AND HOLD IN THE LIGHT
THE REST OF THE WORLD CANNOT TOUCH US TONIGHT
SOMEDAY YOU'LL BE.....FOREVER WITH ME

Peggy

YOU WILL STAY SAFE AND WARM
LYING HERE IN MY ARMS
NOBODY SEES THROUGH THE WINDOWS
WE ARE JUST FLAMES IN THE DARK...IN THE DARK

Peggy & Ben

CLOSE ALL THE DOORS AND HOLD IN THE LIGHT
THE REST OF THE WORLD CANNOT TOUCH US TONIGHT
SOMEDAY YOU'LL BE FOREVER WITH ME

(They kiss. Reed and Josephine look on, disgusted)

Reed

So...it is true, after all! Benedict Arnold is engaged to Peggy Shippen—the daughter of a loyalist judge—some say—may I be so bold?—a spy! I'd be very interested to see what General Washington has to say about this!

Josephine

So would I! General Arnold is nearly twice her age!

Reed (*Shaking his head in disbelief*)

Imbecile! I was referring to her association with the British.

Josephine

But it's no crime to be a loyalist. God knows you certainly are, when it suits your purpose!

Reed

But all we need do is plant the seeds of doubt in Washington's mind.

Josephine

Mmm...you may be right. And if what you say isn't altogether true, well...that can't be helped. We make mistakes. We're only human!

Reed

We'll say he can't be trusted.

Josephine

We'll say he's been acting suspicious of late.

Reed

We'll say he's a traitor!

Washington (*Storming in*)

Aren't you blowing this out of proportion?!

Reed

But, sir....if you'll just look at the evidence.

(Reed brandishes a paper in his face, which he dismisses)

Washington

I have! And I've seen nothing to shake my faith in my most trusted general.

Reed

With all due respect, Your Excellency, your devotion to Arnold is...increasingly suspect.

Washington (*Seething*)

How dare you question my loyalty to the cause!!

(He approaches Reed, who cowers slightly)

Josephine

Oh, oh. Here it comes.

Washington

I seem to remember a young officer under my command, during the French and Indian Wars, who crossed enemy lines to negotiate a settlement with the French...behind my back!!!

Reed (*With an embarrassed laugh*)

Now, sir...please understand.... I was only doing what I thought best at the time...and that's all I'm doing now. You are in a position to prevent this from turning into a catastrophe!

[*Song: We Have a Crisis*]

Reed

WE HAVE A CRISIS
ITS NAME IS BENEDICT
WHAT ROCK DID HE CRAWL OUT FROM UNDER?
HE IS NOTHING BUT A DERELICT
HE'S GETTING MARRIED TO AN ALLY OF THE KING
RUMOR NOW HAS IT SHE'S ALREADY EVEN HAD A FLING

Josephine

SHE'S BEEN SNEAKIN' OUT LATE AT NIGHT
TO SOME ENGLISH OFFICER'S DELIGHT
HOW LONG BEFORE
HE WANTS EVEN MORE
HOLD ONTO YOUR SEATS
THE SPARKS ARE ABOUT TO IGNITE

Washington

YOU CAN'T BE SERIOUS

Reed

YOU MUST BE DELIRIOUS

Washington

THESE RUMORS ARE SLANDER
HE'S OUR BEST COMMANDER

Reed

STAVE OFF THE BLEEDING
SAVE THIS NATION WHILE YOU CAN

Washington

I'VE NEVER DOUBTED HIM
HE HAS ALWAYS BEEN MY RIGHT-HAND MAN!

Reed

BUT WE HAVE A CRISIS,
AS OF NOW, IT'S NOT TOO LATE
WHEN YOUR RIGHT HAND'S DISEASED
YOU HAVE NO CHOICE BUT TO AMPUTATE!

Josephine

HE ENTERTAINS THE ENGLISH EVERY NIGHT

Josephine (*Cont*)

FOR ENEMIES, THEY SEEM RATHER TIGHT
WHAT UNDENIABLE RAPPORT!
SOMEONE NEEDS TO TELL THEM
WE'RE SUPPOSED TO BE AT WAR!

Reed

YOU ARE NAÏVE IF YOU BELIEVE
HIS SUSPICIOUS BEHAVIOR MEANS

Reed & Josephine

NOTHING AT ALL
AS LONG AS HE'S STANDING
WE'RE ALL DOOMED TO FALL

[*Song: The Honeymoon*]

*(They exit as we hear the sound of wedding bells and crowds cheering.
Ben and Peggy enter, followed by wedding guests, who are promptly
ushered away. Emily stands by the bed)*

Emily

ON THE DAY BEN AND PEGGY WED

*(Emily turns down the bed for them, revealing John, in his nightclothes,
who sits up in bed, stretching and yawning)*

THEY CAME HOME TO FIND JOHN ASLEEP IN THEIR BED
AND ALTHOUGH SHE SAID:

Peggy

HE MEANS NOTHING TO ME

Ben (*Aside*)

STILL I COULDN'T GET IT OUT OF MY HEAD

*(Peggy crosses to desk and writes a letter, as John casually pours
himself a cup of tea)*

Emily

MORE THAN ONCE, HE SAW HER WRITE
A LETTER TO JOHN IN THE DEAD OF NIGHT; SHE SAID:

Peggy

IT'S MY MOTHER, POOR DEAR IS DYING

Ben (*Aside*)

BUT SINCE SHE WAS ALREADY DEAD
I KNEW SHE MUST BE LYING!

Emily
STILL, HE TRIED HIS BEST TO PLEASE HER

All
WHICH WASN'T AN EASY THING TO DO

Ben
THIS HOUSE COST MORE THAN I CAN AFFORD
(Muse #3, as Delivery girl, brings in boxes of shoes)

Ben & Emily
AND EVERY DAY SHE'D BUY ANOTHER PAIR OF SHOES

Oy, vey!

Emily
THOUGH PEGGY FELT SHE HAD IT BAD
THEY DID WHAT THEY COULD
ON WHAT LITTLE THEY HAD

All
IF WE/THEY RAN OUT OF MONEY
WE'D/THEY'D BORROW MORE

Emily
TILL THE CREDITORS CAME KNOCKING AT THEIR DOOR.

*(Music ends. A knock at the door. John exits, Josephine and Reed enter.
Reed is wearing overalls with the words 'Colonial Moving Co., LTD')*

Reed
Colonial Moving Company.

Josephine
We're here to repossess for nonpayment.

Peggy
Couldn't you give us more time?

Josephine
Oh, goodness, gracious, no.

Reed
What if everyone were to do the same? Can you imagine what would happen if your government acted so irresponsibly? There'd be pandemonium! Why, someday our national debt could well be in the...the hundreds of dollars!

(Workers begin in earnest to cart off their possessions)

[Song: **Day of Reckoning**]

Josephine

WE'RE NOT INTERESTED IN EXTENDING
LOANS TO FOOLS LIKE YOU
DON'T MEAN TO BE SO UNBENDING
BUT YOUR BILLS ARE ALL PAST DUE
YOU'VE BEEN SPENDING TWICE WHAT YOU EARN
YOU GOTTA PAY UP NOW
OR YOU'RE GONNA GET BURNED, OH YEAH
SOME FOLKS NEVER LEARN, OH NO!
WHEN YOU CAN'T PAY UP
WE'RE GONNA MAKE A FUSS

(Peggy frantically tries to hide some money)

'SCUSE ME, HONEY
ANY MONEY
NOW BELONGS TO US

(Josephine grabs the cash as Peggy cries)

IT WON'T WORK TO PLAY THE MARTYR
NEXT TIME YOU'LL JUST HAVE TO PLAY IT SMARTER, OH YEAH
WE DON'T REALLY MEAN TO SEEM TOO OVEREAGER
RUDELY BARGING IN LIKE THIS, TO REPOSSESS
THOUGH YOUR FURNISHINGS MAY NOT BE NEW
WE'LL MAKE DO
WE'LL SELL WHAT WE CAN
AND THEN WE'LL BURN THE REST

(A family on vacation, somewhat bewildered, are ushered to their seats. They have pennants that say "Reed, D.C.", hot dogs, and bags of popcorn, as they watch the proceedings).

WHEN YOU CAN'T PAY UP
WE'RE GONNA BRING YOU DOWN
WE DON'T SELL MANY TICKETS
BUT IT'S THE HOTTEST SHOW IN TOWN
WORK ALL YOUR LIVES
COLLECT YOUR PAY
JUST TO SEE IT VANISH IN A DAY, OH YEAH. OHHH....

NORMALLY WE'D ALL BE TERRIBLY ECSTATIC
SEEING FOOLS LIKE YOU

Josephine (Cont)

SPENDING MORE THAN THEY EARN
 BUT THERE COMES A DAY OF RECKONING
 AND YOU MUST PAY
 WHEN WILL YOU LEARN
 YOU CAN'T SPEND TWICE AS MUCH AS YOU EARN?
 WHEN YOU CAN'T PAY UP
 WE'RE GONNA MAKE A FUSS
 SORRY SIR,
 BUT ALL THE FURNITURE
 BELONGS TO US

(Ben tries to sit down, and Josephine snatches the chair from under him)

YA WORK ALL YOUR LIVES FOR A BIT OF CASH
 JUST TO SEE IT VANISH IN A FLASH, OH YEAH, etc.

(Music ends. Lights go down on this scene and come up on John, reading a letter from Peggy, as she sings offstage)

[Song: When the Moment is Right]**Peggy (offstage)**

I NEVER THOUGHT I'D SEE
 A LIFE OF MISERY
 DO YOU DREAM AS I DO
 HOW OUR LIVES COULD BE?

(John picks up a quill and starts to write a reply)

John

DON'T THINK ABOUT WHAT MIGHT
 HAVE HAPPENED ON THAT NIGHT
 I WAS FORCED TO FLEE

Peggy

BUT YOU DIDN'T TAKE ME

*(Peggy suddenly enters and comes up behind John.
 Pleased to see her, he stands, they embrace)*

John

REBELS HAD US ON THE RUN

Peggy

SO I MARRIED BEN
 I KNEW EVEN THEN
 I LIKELY WOULDN'T SEE YOU AGAIN

John

BUT I KNEW WHEN THE MOMENT WAS RIGHT

John & Peggy

I'D (YOU'D) BE RIGHT BACK WHERE I (YOU) BELONG

John

NOW THAT YOU ARE THERE, BY HIS SIDE
PERHAPS YOU CAN PERSUADE HIM
TO HELP US TURN THE TIDE

Peggy

HE'D NEVER AGREE
TO SUCH DISLOYALTY
YOU CAN'T IMAGINE HOW,
IN MY DREAMS, I'VE TRIED

John

WHO'S TO SAY
THAT TODAY
WHAT HE THOUGHT WAS WRONG
MAY WELL BE
JUST WHAT HE'D
BEEN THINKING ALL ALONG?
WHEN THE MOMENT IS RIGHT
HE WILL SHOW US ALL
THE MAN HE LONGS TO BE!

(Music ends. Blackout. Lights come up on Reed and Josephine. Reed is looking at papers on his desk)

Reed

(At his desk, shaking his head)

Oh, dear, oh dear, oh dear... Josephine, why must you always disappoint me?

Josephine

You didn't seem to have any complaints last night as I recall.

Reed

I was referring to your shoddy workmanship. It's been quite a disappointment as of late.

Josephine

Oh, believe you me, I know. It's a disappointment most of the time.

Reed *(ignoring her)*

I ask for smut on General Arnold, and this is the best you could come up with? He was late getting in his paperwork?? He once asked a corporal to go and ...fetch a barber?!

(Tossing down the papers in disgust)

Josephine

It's all true!

Reed

It's all boring!! I give you three weeks to discredit the general, and instead, what do I find?—his popularity is increasing with every passing moment!! The entire city is raving about him, while they all seem to think I'm some sort of a...a....

Josephine (*Matter-of-factly*)

A bastard, sir?

[*Song: Alternative Facts*]

Reed & Josephine

WE MUST FIND A WAY TO BRING HIM DOWN
TIRED OF PLAYING SECOND FIDDLE
WHILE HE'S THE TALK OF THE TOWN

Josephine

STILL, WE MAY HAVE TO FACE FACTS
ARNOLD MAY BE ABOVE REPROACH

Reed

LUCKILY, THERE ARE QUALITIES
OF EVIL TO BE FOUND IN EVERY MAN

Now what have you got in your notes for me?

Josephine

HE BORROWED AN ARMY WAGON

Reed

IN MY BOOK, THAT'S CALLED 'THEFT'

Josephine

SOLDIERS DIED UNDER HIS COMMAND
LEAVING SO MANY YOUNG WIDOWS BEREFT

Reed

ANYTHING CAN SEEM UNDERHANDED IF YOU...

Reed

.... ONLY TRY!!!

Josephine

HE WENT OUT ONE NIGHT, TO HAVE A DRINK

Reed

WE'LL TELL EVERYONE HE'S A DRUNK!
HIS FOLLOWERS WILL TURN AGAINST HIM
WHEN THEY SEE HOW LOW HE'S SUNK

Josephine

YOU ARE THE MOST PATHETICALLY EVIL MAN
I'VE EVER KNOWN

Reed

NO TIME FOR COMPLIMENTS RIGHT NOW...I'M ON A ROLL

Reed

HE BURNED THE LOYALISTS OUT OF THEIR HOMES
KEPT THEM LOCKED UP IN A CAGE
WE HAVEN'T SEEN SUCH BARBARITY,
NOT SINCE THE MACHIAVELLIAN AGE

(Ben enters angrily)

Ben

REED, THESE CHARGES ARE TRUMPED UP
FAKE MEDIA'S AT IT AGAIN!

Reed

SEE HOW HE ACTS?
WHY, THEY'RE NOT LIES—THEY'RE JUST.... UH...

(Looks to Josephine for help)

Josephine

.... ALTERNATIVE FACTS!

Reed & Josephine *(To Ben)*

YOU ARE THE ONE WHO DEMANDED
A HEARING FOR YOUR CRIMES
COULDN'T STAND TO THINK
WHAT WE'D BE SAYING BEHIND YOUR BACK ALL THE TIME

Josephine

YOU WANTED THIS TRIAL,
YOU COULDN'T LET IT REST
THAT WOULDN'T BE YOUR STYLE

Reed

SO NOW YOU'RE OUR CAPTIVE GUEST

Ben

I would not be stung to death by insects!

(Lights come up on the courtroom)

I COULDN'T LET IT GO WITHOUT PUTTING UP A FIGHT
MY SILENCE WOULD BE DEAFENING
PEOPLE MIGHT START TO BELIEVE YOU WERE RIGHT

(Muse #2 is now sitting at the desk in a judge's robe)

Reed *(To Muse #2)*

YOUR HONOR, THIS MAN
WAS OFFERED COMMAND
OF THE LEFT WING OF THE ARMY
THAT REALLY ALARMED ME!

Josephine

WE MUST WORK DILIGENTLY TO PREVENT
GENERAL ARNOLD FROM BECOMING OUR FIRST PRESIDENT

Reed, Josephine & Emily

THOUGH IT SEEMS UNLIKELY
CAN YOU JUST IMAGINE?
SOME DAY IN THE FUTURE
EVEN STRANGER THINGS MAY HAPPEN!

Muse #2 *(as Judge)*

(Banging her gavel)

Silence! There will be no more outbursts in my courtroom!

Reed

A Thousand pardons, Your Honor.

Josephine

Forgive our exuberance, Your Lordship, but the President of the Council has always just been so damned passionate to see that justice is done.

Judge

Very well, Counsel. For you, I will overlook it. Now let's get on with it.

[*Song: The Verdict*]

Ben

REED, YOU'VE ALWAYS HARRASSED ME
WHAT ARE YOU AFRAID THEY'LL SEE?
COULD IT BE WITHOUT ME AS YOUR SCAPEGOAT
THEY'D SEE YOU QUITE DIFFERENTLY?

Ben (*Cont*)

WE KNOW YOUR TYPE OF POLITICIAN
ON A MERCENARY MISSION
IF YOU COULD, YOU'D CHARGE ADMISSION
TO YOUR FUNERAL

Reed

The prosecution rests, your honor.

Emily

I'M SURE THEY'LL SOON PROCLAIM
YOU'RE NOT TO BLAME AT ALL

Ben

BUT I SHOULD BE OUT THERE LEADING MY MEN

Josephine

AND YOU COULD WITH ENOUGH ALCOHOL

Muse #2

GENERAL ARNOLD, PLEASE RISE

Ben

I DON'T MEAN TO CRITICIZE
BUT I HAVEN'T HAD MY TURN JUST YET

Muse #2

I'M AFRAID THAT'S ALL YOU GET
IF IT'S ALL THE SAME,
YOU'VE HAD YOUR FIFTEEN MINUTES OF FAME
THE JURY'S FOUND THAT YOU'RE TO BLAME

Muses

YOUR CAREER WILL NEVER BE THE SAME

Washington (*Entering*)

GENERAL, WE'RE ALL IN YOUR DEBT
SO I SAY THIS WITH REGRET:
THIS IS NOT A GAME
THIS TRIAL HAS DISGRACED YOUR NAME

Muses

WE CAN'T FIND SOMEONE ELSE ON WHOM TO BLAME IT

Emily

EVEN THOUGH YOU ALMOST OVERCAME IT

Washington

PUBLICLY, I HAVE TO STATE
YOUR PROMOTION NOW WILL HAVE TO WAIT
YOU DIDN'T HAVE TO DO THIS
I WOULDN'T HAVE PUT YOU THROUGH THIS

Washington + Muses

WE KNOW YOU'VE DONE YOUR BEST
BUT CONGRESS IS UNIMPRESSED

Ben

But...Your Excellency! These were all such trivial charges! I don't understand why there was no acquittal!

Washington (*Pulling BEN aside*)

Ben, on a personal note—I know this may not help much—but I do realize these were very petty charges, and I'll—I'll do what I can.

Ben

Your Excellency, what about—well, what I mean is...this won't affect my being given command of the Left Wing, will it?

Washington

Oh, I uh....I'd been meaning to talk to you about that, Ben.

Ben

You're not giving it to me, are you.

Washington (*Flustered*)

Oh, no, I—well, it's just that I have some...particulars to discuss with the Congress...

Ben

Never mind. I have my answer!

Washington

Damn it, Ben! Congress is on my back! Reed has some very influential friends, and this trial didn't help matters any. He has them convinced that you don't have the country's best interests at heart.

Ben

But, Your Excellency...

Washington

Now, I know differently, and you know differently, but...

Ben

Your Excellency, I am awaiting your instructions! I have completed my tenure as military governor; I am once again restored to perfect health—tell me now! What is to be my command?

Washington

All right, Ben. You'll have command of—

(Clears throat, lowers voice)

of, uh... West Point.

Ben *(In disbelief)*

West Point?! An administrative position?! You want a field commander guarding the federal arsenal?

Washington

I know it doesn't sound very prestigious to an able commander such as yourself...

Ben

It's little more than a glorified secretarial post, and you know it!

Washington

West Point is crucial to our nation's defense!

Ben

Don't patronize me!

Reed *(Taunting)*

Guilty, guilty, guilty!

(Derisive laughter)

Washington

That will be all, General Arnold!

(Ben salutes. Washington exits. Ben turns to the jury)

[*Song: Jurors' Remorse*]

Ben

IF YOU ONLY KNEW
WHAT I WOULD DO
YOU MIGHT NOT HAVE BEEN
QUITE SO QUICK TO CONDEMN

Jury

A CURIOUS SIGHT
YOU COMING HERE TODAY TO FIGHT
THE CHARGES WERE SUCH TRIVIALTIES

Ben

I WAS CERTAIN THAT YOU WOULD BE ON MY SIDE
YOU DIDN'T FIND ME INNOCENT

Jury

OH WELL, WE TRIED...
YET EVERYONE HERE (EVERYONE HERE)
IS WONDERING WHY

Ben (*Overlapping*)

I'M LEFT WONDERING WHY

Muses

YOU ALLOWED YOURSELF TO BE CRUCIFIED

Ben (*Overlapping*)

I'M BEING CRUCIFIED!

Jury

IF YOU LET IT GO
EVERYONE WILL KNOW
YOU'RE THE HERO THAT YOU'VE LONGED TO BE

Ben

THAT'S NOT DONE SO EASILY.

Muses

BUT IF THIS IS A REASON
TO COMMIT SOME KIND OF TREASON
A REDCOAT IS THE ONLY THING THEY'LL SEE.

(Jurors exit. John and Peggy join Ben)

Peggy

Ben, don't worry. You've made the right choice.

Ben

You really think so.

John

No one could ever find fault with you, merely for following the dictates of your own conscience.
You have my word on it.

Ben

I gave them every chance.

Peggy

We know that, dear.

Ben

Well, at least I will do the honorable thing. I will see Washington tomorrow and resign my commission in the Continental Armed forces.

Peggy (*Jumping up, alarmed*)
You'll do no such thing!

Ben
What? Why not?

John
No, Peggy's right, Ben. You're much more valuable to us if you stay right where you are. And besides....Washington did the same thing. No more, no less.

Ben
That's different. He resigned his position. Everyone knew which side he was fighting for.

John
And you can resign, too, if that's all that's worrying you. All we're asking is that you wait for two weeks—then it will all be over.

Ben
Two weeks? What's in two weeks?

Peggy
Ben...the British plan to attack West Point, now that Washington's put you in command—the entire federal arsenal confiscated, Ben! Just think of it!

John
...And it will absolutely ensure our success, if, when we attack West Point...you see to it that Washington is there with you...so that he can be arrested, and hanged for treason.

(Ben turns away in disgust. John and Peggy exchange glances. She approaches Ben as he turns his back in disgust)

[*Song: The American Way*]

Peggy
I THINK I SENSE SOME HESITATION
TELL ME, WHAT'S THE COMPLICATION?

Ben
IT'S NOT THAT EASY TO AGREE
TO BETRAY A MAN WHO'S PUT HIS TRUST IN ME

Peggy
THIS IS NO TIME FOR SENTIMENT,
YOU KNOW THAT HE.... MUST BE PUT DOWN,
SO THAT WE ALL CAN STAY STANDING
SO THAT WE ALL CAN STAY STANDING

John

NOW THAT WEST POINT IS UNDER YOUR COMMAND
IT'S TIME FOR YOU TO LEND A HELPING HAND

Peggy

AND WITH YOU FIRMLY IN PLACE THERE
THE BRITISH WOULDN'T HAVE
ANY DANGER TO FACE THERE

John

BEFORE THE FIRST SHOT'S FIRED,
YOU CAN JUST ANNOUNCE THAT
YOU'RE SO HOPELESSLY OUTNUMBERED,
YOUR MEN WOULDN'T STAND A CHANCE!

Peggy

JUST REMEMBER THAT WE'RE ALL IN THIS TOGETHER
WE CAN WEATHER THE STORM IF WE HANG TOGETHER

John

...OR SURELY WE WILL ALL HANG SEPARATELY

Peggy

...FROM A TREE

John, Peggy & Ben

YES, SURELY WE WILL ALL HANG SEPARATELY...
FROM A TREE...EEE.....EEE...HEE!

Peggy

AND IN A HUNDRED YEARS OR SO
JUST THINK OF ALL THE STORIES
THAT WILL BE TOLD
ABOUT THE MAN WHO AGREED
TO HELP HIS COUNTRY OUT...

Ben

...FOR TEN THOUSAND POUNDS IN GOLD!

John

JUST SURRENDER WEST POINT—WE'LL PAY!
DON'T YOU KNOW?—

Peggy & John

THAT'S THE AMERICAN WAY
YEAH, THAT'S THE AMERICAN WAY!

(John stuffs some cash in Ben's hands).

John

WE CAUGHT ON FAST, WE LEARNED JUST HOW IT'S DONE
IN FACT, NEARLY ALL OUR UNDER-HANDED WAYS,
WE LEARNED FROM AMERICANS!

Peggy

YOU'LL BE SOME KIND OF HERO

Ben

...WITH PAY!!

Peggy (*Laughing*)

You catch on fast!

Peggy and John

THAT'S THE AMERICAN WAY!
YEAH, THAT'S THE AMERICAN WAY!

John

OUR DAY FOR RETRIBUTION'S COME AT LAST

Ben

THE DAY I DREAD, I FEAR WILL COME TOO FAST.

Peggy

THIS IS OUR GREATEST MOMENT YET
THE KING WILL BE FOREVER IN OUR DEBT!

Ben

BUT WHEN IT'S OVER HOW WILL I FORGET?
WILL I BE DOOMED, ALWAYS TO REMEMBER
I TURNED MY BACK ON MY NATION.... FOREVER?

BLACKOUT

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

[*Instrumental: Gimme That Address*]

(*Music fades. Lights rise on Reed & Josephine*)

[*Song: Pennsylvania Avenue*]

Josephine

WE'VE GOT TO CHANGE A SERIOUS SITUATION
WE'VE ENDURED FOR FAR TOO LONG
YOU SHOULD BE THE HERO OF THIS NATION
BUT YOU'RE NOT
WHAT WENT WRONG?

WHAT WILL IT TAKE FOR THEM TO REALIZE
THE KIND OF MAN YOU ARE
YOU'VE PROVED TIME AND TIME AGAIN
THAT YOU'RE AMERICA'S RISING STAR
IT'S TIME THEY TREAT YOU THAT WAY

IT'S AWFULLY HARD TO GET AHEAD IN LIFE
WITH SO MANY BETTER PEOPLE HANGING AROUND
BUT IF I HAVE MY SAY
WE CAN PUSH THE MORE IMPORTANT PEOPLE
OUT OF THE WAY
AND THAT WILL PAVE THE WAY FOR YOU

Both

TO LIVE WITH ME ON PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE

Reed

OUR NEW NATION'S CAPITAL WILL BE
NAMED AFTER ME, JOSEPH REED, D.C.

(Reed stops bewildered passersby with a collection can, into which they deposit coins, under a sign that reads "Street Walking 5 pence." Little girl is wearing a T-shirt that says "My parents visited Reed, D.C. and all I got was this lousy T-shirt!")

Josephine

AND IF YOU WANT TO STROLL ALONG THE STREET
WE'LL CHARGE A NOMINAL FEE

Reed

NOTHING WILL BE FREE

Josephine

JUST IMAGINE HOW RICH WE'LL BE
 EMBEZZLING FROM THE U.S. TREASURY
 HARD TO KEEP MY HANDS AWAY
 WITH SO MUCH MONEY IN THE TILL,
 BUT STILL...
 IT'S AWFULLY HARD TO GET AHEAD IN LIFE
 UNLESS YOU GOT A LOT OF TALENT

Reed

OR AN OVERBEARING WIFE

Josephine

BUT IF I HAVE MY SAY
 WE CAN PUSH THE MORE IMPORTANT PEOPLE
 OUT OF THE WAY
 AND THAT WILL PAVE THE WAY FOR YOU

Both

TO LIVE WITH ME ON PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE

Josephine

WITH ME ADVISING YOU,
 WHAT COULD GO WRONG?
 WE'VE GOT IT MADE
 IT WON'T BE LONG BEFORE I'M WALKIN'
 DOWN PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE... WITH YOU
 NO IT WON'T BE LONG BEFORE WE'RE LIVIN' HIGH ON THE HOG
 ON PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE

(Song ends)

BLACKOUT

(Lights up as John and Ben enter from opposite sides of the stage and pantomime action in melodramatic fashion).

[Song: **Up a Creek**]

Emily

WELL FINALLY CAME THE DAY
 WHEN TREASON WOULD PAY
 AND JOHN DROPPED IN ON BEN
 FOR A FINAL MEETING

(Peggy enters. Loud explosions can be heard and the three rush to look out the window).

Emily (Cont)

THEN PEGGY JOINED THE BOYS
AND THEY ALL HEARD A NOISE
AND THEY LOOKED OUT THE WINDOW
TO SEE JOHN'S SHIP RETREATING

Emily & Peggy

AMERICANS WERE FIRING ON THEM
THEIR SENSE OF TIMING
COULDN'T HAVE BEEN WORSE!

Emily

AMERICANS WERE STRUTTING THEIR STUFF
DECIDED IT WAS TIME TO FINALLY GET TOUGH
AND NOW THEY WERE CLEARLY
ENGAGING THE BRITISH IN BATTLE
JOHN'S SHIP WAS HIT, AND IT WENT DOWN

Peggy (To John)

THAT SHIP WAS YOUR RIDE OUTTA TOWN!

Emily

NOW HE WAS UP A CREEK WITHOUT A PADDLE!
JOHN HAD NO CHOICE BUT TO GO BY LAND
HE HOPED PEGGY WOULD UNDERSTAND
BUT HE CLEARLY HEARD THE BATTLE CRY
AND PUBLIC TRANSIT WAS IN SHORT SUPPLY

Ben (To John)

NOW THERE IS JUST ONE THING LEFT TO DECIDE:
WHAT COLOR COAT YOU SHOULD WEAR ON YOUR RIDE
THAT RED COAT WILL BE SEEN A MILE AWAY!

Peggy

WHY NOT WEAR ONE OF BEN'S COATS INSTEAD?
YOU'RE A SITTING DUCK ... WEARING BRIGHT RED!
I DON'T WANT YOU TO

Peggy & Emily

LOSE YOUR HEAD!

John

IT MAY BE TRUE
THAT IF I WEAR BLUE
BEN'S UNIFORM WILL HELP ME TO GET BY...

Peggy and Emily

...THE AMERICANS!

John

BUT IF INSTEAD
I WEAR RED
THEN IF I'M CAUGHT
I WON'T BE THOUGHT A SPY

All

...AND WE ALL KNOW THE PENALTY FOR THAT!

John

WHEN YOU'RE CAUGHT BY THE CHARMS
OF A BEAUTIFUL WOMAN IN YOUR ARMS
THERE'S NO REFUSING ANYTHING SHE ASKS OF YOU!
WHO COULD RESIST A GIRL WITH SUCH PRETTY EYES?

Ben

EVEN IF IT MEANT HIS EARLY DEMISE

All

SO JOHN GAVE IN AND WORE BEN'S COAT OF BLUE

John

SHE WANTED ME TO!

Ben

YET I CAN'T HELP BUT WONDER WHAT ROLE I PLAYED

All

OR HOW I'LL (HE'LL) BE PORTRAYED.

(Ben enters Washington's office. Washington is working at his desk)

Ben

Your Excellency?

Washington

Come in, Ben! Come in!

Ben

I, uh...I just wanted to apologize for the way I behaved at the trial the other day. It was most uncalled for.

Washington

Not at all, Ben, not at all.. I understand completely! You were treated very unfairly and not given nearly the credit you deserve. And that's why I made a special trip to Congress on your behalf. "Ben is too good a Soldier to be cooped up behind some desk" I said. "A man like Arnold deserves to be out on the field of battle with his men" I told them. And Ben.... I'm happy to say they came around to my way of thinking!

Huh?
Ben (*Worried*)

Washington
 They acquiesced. Ben? Did you hear me? The left wing is yours!

Not—West Point?
Ben (*Frantic*)

Washington
 But Ben! I thought this was what you'd always wanted!

Ben
 Oh, it is---I...I, uh...your Excellency...I am truly grateful for all you've done on my behalf...and I accept your gracious offer. Oooooooh!

(Ben suddenly grabs his leg, limping around the room).

Washington
 Ben, are you all right?

Ben
 Oh, don't concern yourself with me, your Excellency. It's nothing, really. It comes and goes.

Washington
 Well, you are in good enough health to take the post, aren't you?

Ben
 Your Excellency, please don't tell me that my services are no longer needed. That would be worse than death.

(Ben starts limping around again).

Look! I can still hobble as fast as any man!

Washington
 Well now, Ben, we don't have to make a hasty decision on this. If you think it might be wiser to hold off for a few weeks, the position will still be there for you.

Ben
 Well, if...if you're sure it wouldn't inconvenience you.

Washington
 Not at all, not at all. But, Ben—until your leg is better, would you mind...that is, would you still consider taking command of West Point?

Ben
 Your Excellency, for you, I will make that sacrifice.

[Song: The Midnight Ride]

(The clock strikes Twelve. John and Peggy kiss goodbye in the moonlight.)

Peggy

THE MIDNIGHT RIDE IS DRAWING NEAR
THE MOMENT I FEARED IS SUDDENLY HERE
SUDDENLY HERE
AND WHAT WILL HISTORY HAVE TO SAY
WHEN YOU HAVE LONG SINCE

Peggy and John

GONE AWAY....

John

WHEN I'VE GONE AWAY.

Peggy

WHAT WERE WE DREAMING OF?
HOW CAN WE KEEP OUR WORLDS FROM CLOSING IN SO FAST?
LIFE IS SUCH A SAD DREAM
ILLUSIONS THAT WERE NEVER MADE TO LAST

John

THE MIDNIGHT RIDE MAY BE MY LAST
THE MOMENT I FEARED HAS NOW COME TO PASS

Peggy

IT'S COME AT LAST.

John

IRONICALLY
THIS NIGHT WILL BE
A MINOR FOOTNOTE

Peggy & John

IN HISTORY

Peggy

BUT NOT FOR ME
HONEY ... IT'S FUNNY
IT SEEMS ALMOST LIKE I'M SAYIN' GOODBYE
FOR THE LAST TIME
BUT IT'S PAST TIME

Peggy & John

TO GO...SO...GOODBYE

Peggy

I HOPE I SEE YOU SOME DAY SOON

(Handing him a lunch pail emblazoned with Revolutionary War figures)

WELL HERE'S YOUR LUNCH

NOW DON'T FORGET TO STOP AND EAT AT NOON

AND DON'T YOU TALK TO STRANGERS ON THE WAY

NO, DON'T YOU TALK TO NO STRANGERS, OH, YEAH.

DON'T LET ME CATCH YOU TALKIN' TO NO STRANGERS!

[Dance interlude. Peggy leaves. Midnight ride segues to....]

[Song: **Gimme That Address**]

John

IT'S GONNA BE A LONG AND LONELY RIDE

LORD, I ONLY WISH I KNEW WHICH SIDE

YOU WERE ON, IN THIS WAR

THEY SAY THAT ENGLAND WILL WIN

BUT WHO REALLY KNOWS?

ONLY YOU CAN GUARANTEE HOW IT GOES

WHO ARE YOU FIGHTING FOR?

John

I'M JUST A REDCOAT

WHO COULD USE A LITTLE REST

IF YOU KNOW A PLACE I CAN GO

TO ESCAPE THIS HELLISH MESS

THEN GIVE ME THAT ADDRESS,

WHOA, YEAH

GIMME THAT ADDRESS, WHOA

GIMME THAT ADDRESS, WHOA,

OH...OH YEAH

IF YOU COULD FIND

ANOTHER POOR SOUL

WHO'D MAKE THE RIDE

AND WHO'D DO WHAT HE'S TOLD

WELL THEN, I'D HARDLY OBJECT

JUST SAY THE WORD

AND I'LL STEP ASIDE

I'D LET MY OWN GRANDMOTHER

MAKE THIS LONG RIDE

I'M AN EMOTIONAL WRECK

Muses

HE'S JUST A REDCOAT

DO YOU KNOW WHERE HE CAN GO?

WHAT'S THAT ADDRESS?

WHAT'S THAT ADDRESS?

WHAT A MESS

GIVE HIM THAT ADDRESS

TOO MUCH STRESS!

HE COULD USE A HOLIDAY!

YOU NEED TO FIND HIM

SOME POOR SOUL

NO ONE WOULD OBJECT

FIND HIS GRANDMA

John (Cont)

I'M JUST A POOR MAN
 WHO COULD USE A LITTLE REST
 IF YOU KNOW
 A PLACE I CAN GO
 TO ESCAPE THIS HELLISH MESS
 THEN GIVE ME THAT ADDRESS
 GIMME THAT ADDRESS, OH YEAH
 GIMME THAT ADDRESS WHOA
 GIMME THAT ADDRESS
 OH YEAH

OH, DEAR LORD, GOD ABOVE
 ONLY YOU KNOW
 WHAT A MAN WILL DO FOR LOVE
 I DIDN'T HAVE TO COME HERE TONIGHT
 BUT WHAT ELSE COULD I DO?
 SHE WAS THE LOVE OF MY LIFE
 I'VE NEVER MINDED
 HELPING DAMSELS IN DISTRESS
 BUT SAVING A NATION
 IS JUST A LITTLE BIT HARDER, I'D GUESS

I'M STILL WAITIN' FOR THAT ADDRESS!
 GIMME THAT ADDRESS, WHOA
 GIMME THAT ADDRESS!

Muses (Cont)

HE'S A POOR MAN
 WHO COULD USE A LITTLE REST
 IF YOU KNOW
 A PLACE THAT HE CAN GO

OH YEAH
 WHOA

OH YEAH

OOH, etc.....

HE'S NEVER MINDED
 DAMSELS IN DISTRESS
 SAVING A NATION
 GIVES HIM TOO MUCH STRESS
 SHOO BOP, SHOO DING-A-LING!

GIVE HIM THAT ADDRESS

BLACKOUT

[*Song: General Arnold's Demise*]

*(Darkness except for a thin blue light from the moon through the windows.
 A cello plays a lullaby as Mr. Reed snores. Josephine enters, with a candle,
 waking him up)*

Josephine

SIR, I DON'T MEAN TO DISTURB YOU

Reed

THIS HAD BETTER BE GOOD
 I NEED MY SLEEP TO LOOK ENTRANCING

Josephine

OH, IF ONLY YOU COULD!
 WE CAUGHT A REDCOAT ON THE BORDER
 GENERAL ARNOLD SIGNED THE ORDER
 NO MORE CAN THEY TURN A BLIND EYE
 WE'VE CAPTURED A SPY!

(The muses as guards, bring in John)

Reed

CAN THIS BE TRUE?—
I STUMBLED ON A WAY
TO SABOTAGE THEIR RENDEVOUS?
GENERAL ARNOLD'S DEMISE
IS LONG OVERDUE
AND BEST OF ALL
WASHINGTON WILL HAVE TO PAY ME A LITTLE CALL
WHEN HE FINDS OUT I WAS RIGHT AFTER ALL
WHAT A THRILL IT'LL BE TO SEE HIM CRAWL!

Josephine *(To John)*

AND LET'S NOT KID OURSELVES
THINGS AREN'T LOOKING BETTER FOR YOU
WE DON'T USUALLY PUT ENGLISH SPIES TO DEATH
BUT THERE'S ALWAYS AN EXCEPTION TO THE RULE
AND WE'D BE HAPPY
TO MAKE THE EXCEPTION FOR YOU.

Reed

THESE PAPERS THAT YOU'VE GOT
ARE THE ONLY THINGS THAT WE NEED
TO ABORT THEIR SORDID PLOT
WE FINALLY HAVE THE CHANCE TO WATCH YOU BLEED

Josephine

WHAT A LUCKY BREAK FOR US
THAT YOU'VE BEEN CAUGHT

Reed

AND NOW IT'S CLEAR
ARNOLD'S NOT A RISK
TO MY ONCE FLOURISHING CAREER
THEY MAY NAME THE CAPITAL FOR ME
WHAT A THRILL TO VISIT REED, D.C.

Josephine

PEOPLE WILL BE STOPPING YOU ON THE STREET
JUST TO GET YOUR AUTOGRAPH
YOU CAN SAY THAT
YOU'RE UNDESERVING OF ALL OF THIS FAME

Reed

BUT I'LL CHARGE THEM FIFTEEN SHILLINGS, ALL THE SAME

(Reed excitedly skips with the hangman's rope)

Reed (Cont)

OH LAH DEE DAY....etc.

Reed & Josephine

GENERAL ARNOLD'S DEMISE IS OVERDUE! OLE!

BLACKOUT**[Instrumental: Peggy's Vision]**

In this dream ballet, John is led to the gallows as a motley crew of spectators looks on. Peggy dances with John, but he is pulled away from her. Music reaches a climax as they close in on John and put a hangman's Noose around his neck. Sudden BLACKOUT. Eerie sounds are heard, then fade away as a single spot comes up on Peggy in bed, waking up from her dream.

[Song: Without Him]**Peggy**

NO TEARS TONIGHT
NO STRENGTH TO FIGHT
ANOTHER NIGHT....WITHOUT HIM

I LOVED HIM SO
HE SCARED ME, THOUGH
WHAT DID I KNOW.....ABOUT HIM?

HE TOOK ALL THE LOVE I COULD GIVE
BUT WHAT DID THAT LEAVE ME WITH?

I MUST BE STRONG,
WAS I SO WRONG?
THE NIGHTS ARE LONG
WITHOUT HIM

I'LL LIVE THIS LIE
UNTIL I DIE
YET HERE AM I
WITHOUT HIM

SHARED LOVE IS HALF A LOVE
AND HALF A LOVE'S NOT GOOD ENOUGH

HE SAID HE LOVED ME
BUT COULD NOT SEE
I'D ALWAYS BE

Peggy (Cont)

WITHOUT HIM
 AND NOW IT'S LATE
 YET STILL I WAIT
 THIS IS MY FATE
 WITHOUT HIM
 WHERE CAN I GO
 NOW THAT I KNOW
 I'LL ALWAYS BE...SO
 LOST WITHOUT HIS LOVE?

BLACKOUT

[Song: **Downward Spiral**]

Emily

COME GATHER ROUND, LISTEN TO A SAD TALE
 THE DAY BEN FOUND OUT HIS GAME PLAN HAD FAILED
 IT'S NOT ALWAYS EASY TO ADMIT DEFEAT
 THE DAY YOU BECOME OBSOLETE!
 IF THINGS ARE AS BLEAK AS THEY APPEAR
 HE REALLY SHOULD CHOOSE ANOTHER CAREER
 WHO WANTS TO BE HANGIN' AROUND
 A MAN WHO'S BEEN CROWNED
 "TRAITOR OF THE YEAR"?

Ben (Entering with Peggy)

I MUST CONFESS, DEAR
 THAT THINGS AREN'T LOOKING GOOD
 AND I FEAR
 NOTHING'S TURNED OUT AS IT SHOULD

Emily

AMERICANS HAVE WON
 THEY'VE GOT YOU ON THE RUN
 YOU HAVE NO TIME TO LOSE

Ben

I FEAR JOHN ANDRE'S
 SOMEHOW BEEN FOUND OUT
 HIS PART IN THIS
 SEEMS NO LONGER IN DOUBT
 NOW WASHINGTON'S MEN
 ARE ON THEIR WAY TO SEE...
 IF THEY CAN PIN THIS ON ME

Muses

NOTHING'S TURNED OUT
 AS HE PLANNED IT

THEY ARE ON THE RUN
 NO TIME TO LOSE!

Peggy

WE WON'T STAND A CHANCE
SURELY THEY WILL KNOW

Muses (Cont)

YOU WON'T STAND A CHANCE

Emily

SO FOR NOW, PACK YOUR BAGS,
IT'S TIME TO GO

SO PACK YOUR BAGS

Peggy

BUT JOHN COULD WELL BE DEAD

IT'S TIME TO GO

Ben

LET'S THINK OF US, INSTEAD

Peggy

MY GOD, WHAT LIES AHEAD!?

WHAT LIES AHEAD?

(Peggy has worked herself into a frenzy and faints in Ben's arms. He lays her on the bed and tenderly holds her hand)

Ben

IT'S NOT THE KIND OF LIFE
I WAS ALWAYS DREAMING OF FOR YOU
I ONLY DID WHAT I HAD TO DO
SLEEP NOW, MY LOVE,
UNTIL ANOTHER DAY
SURELY NO ONE WILL SUSPECT
THE ROLE YOU PLAYED
BUT I WOULDN'T BE
TREATED MERCIFULLY
IF I STAYED!

HE WOULDN'T BE
TREATED MERCIFULLY
IF HE STAYED!

(Ben has packed his bags by this time and starts to leave).

Emily

WHAT KIND OF GENERAL
WOULD LEAVE HIS TROOPS BEHIND?

WHAT KIND OF GENERAL

Ben

IT WILL BE ALL RIGHT,
I'M THE ONE THEY WISH TO FIND

LEAVES HIS TROOPS BEHIND?

Emily

AND JOHN'S ALREADY DEAD

JOHN'S ALREADY DEAD

Ben

SO I'LL SAVE ME, INSTEAD

Ben & Emily
TO FIGHT ANOTHER DAY

Ben
I ONCE KNEW A MAN
WHO'D ALWAYS CHOOSE
TO DIE MANY DEATHS
BUT NEVER TO LOSE
GOD ONLY KNOWS
HOW I COULD HAVE DONE
ANYMORE
BUT NOW,
WHAT WAS EVERYTHING FOR?

Muses (Cont)
SO SAVE YOURSELF INSTEAD

HE WOULD CHOOSE
NEVER TO LOSE
EVEN GOD DOESN'T KNOW
ANYMORE
WHAT IT WAS ALL FOR!?
WHAT WILL YOU DO NOW?
YOU MAY BE THROUGH NOW.

(Muses exit. Emily sits down at the campfire, roasting marshmallows. As Ben crosses upstage, she speaks to him without looking behind, all the while gazing into the fire. He stops)

Emily
That was heartless of you to have left her like that!

Ben *(Crossing to her)*
What else could I possibly have done?

Emily
Do you really think after all you've done to General Washington, that her safety could be entrusted to him?

Ben
All right, all right, I'll tell you what I'll do. I will write Washington a letter, pleading on Peggy's behalf.

Emily
Well, that's big of you!

Ben *(Handing Emily a quill)*
Would you mind?

Emily
You're pushin' it.

(She takes the quill and gives the marshmallow roasting stick to Ben. Ben speaks and Emily takes dictation)

Ben

Dear General Washington: By now you will have learned of my hasty departure. I have no favor to ask for myself. I do have one small favor to ask, however, on behalf of Mrs. Arnold. She had no part in any of this, and I ask that you see to her safety and security.

(Lights come up on Washington on the other side of the stage, reading the letter)

Washington

...in any event, would you please send me the clothes and other belongings I did not have time to pack. Your humble and obedient servant...

(Through clenched teeth)

Benedict Arnold!

(In a rage, Washington crumples up the letter and throws it on the ground. He starts to storm off when Ben points to the letter with his cane)

Ben

P.S.!

(Washington scurries back to the stop, and uncrumples the letter to read the rest)

Would you also please send me the three and half weeks' back pay I have coming.

(Washington angrily throws the paper away and storms off)

[Song: **Who's to Say?**]

Emily

WHAT MAKES SOMEONE DECIDE TO SWITCH
FROM ONE TEAM TO THE NEXT?
THE REASONS FOR IT SOMETIMES CAN BE QUITE COMPLEX
BUT IF YOU COACH THE WINNING TEAM
YET NOBODY HOLDS YOU IN HIGH ESTEEM
IT MAY FINALLY SEEM
THE TIME'S COME TO SAY GOODBYE

TRY NOT TO LET IT GET YOU DOWN
PUT OUT YOUR CHIN AND STAND YOUR GROUND
AFTER ALL, YOU MUST HAVE HAD A REASON
EVEN THE BEST OF US MAY FIND
OFTEN IT'S BEST TO CHANGE OUR MINDS
WHO'S TO SAY WHAT IS OR ISN'T TREASON?

YOU'VE BEEN SET UP AND BEEN PUT DOWN
NOBODY'S BEEN MORE PUSHED AROUND
WHO REVERES YOU FOR YOUR ACHIEVEMENTS?

Emily (Cont)

YOU WON THE BATTLES THAT YOU FOUGHT
 YOU DARED TO GO WHERE MOST WOULD NOT
 HOW COULD IT BE
 THEY REFUSE TO BELIEVE IN YOU?
 TRY NOT TO LET IT GET YOU DOWN
 PUT OUT YOUR CHIN AND STAND YOUR GROUND
 AFTER ALL, YOU MUST HAVE HAD A REASON
 EVEN THE BEST OF US MAY FIND
 OFTEN IT'S BEST TO CHANGE OUR MIND
 WHO'S TO SAY WHAT IS OR ISN'T TREASON?

WELL SUPPOSE A BRIDE HAS MADE
 A SOLEMN PROMISE TO BE WED
 BUT HE'S BROKE AND SO SHE LEAVES HIM
 FOR A WEALTHY MAN, INSTEAD

OR SHE NEEDS A BETTER JOB
 AND QUILTS THE ONE SHE'S GOT
 DON'T THINK THAT YOU'D DO ANY DIFFERENTLY
 'CAUSE....YOU WOULD NOT!

WELL WHO IS WRONG AND WHO IS RIGHT?
 THINGS DON'T ALWAYS COME IN BLACK AND WHITE
 OFTEN IT'S A MATTER....OF PERSPECTIVE

SO IF YOU THINK YOU'RE OFF THE HOOK
 GO TO THE MIRROR AND TAKE A LOOK
 DON'T SLANDER SOMEONE'S NAME
 UNLESS YOU KNOW YOU KNOW
 YOU'D NEVER DO THE SAME!

(The song ends. Peggy enters)

[Song: **Rather Be in Jamaica**]

Emily (To Peggy)

SAY HAVE YOU HEARD THE NEWS?
 WASHINGTON'S NOT AMUSED
 BEN CAUGHT THE LAST BOAT OUT OF TOWN
 YOU MUST FEND FOR YOURSELF
 HE'S LEFT YOU ON THE SHELF
 HE'S THE CAPTAIN OF THE SHIP BUT
 HE'S NOT GOIN' DOWN!

(During the instrumental interlude, Emily helps Peggy pack what they are able to, rushing around in a panic)

Peggy

IF THEY SHOULD ASK ME DEEP, PROBING QUESTIONS
THEY WON'T GET MY CONFESSIONS!
I'LL SAY THAT I WAS SHOCKED AND DISILLUSIONED
THAT MY HUSBAND COULD HAVE DONE THIS TO ME!

IF THEY COME FOR ME
IT WON'T BE A TRAGEDY
I'LL TRY TO KEEP MY COMPOSURE

Emily

SOMEHOW MAKE IT PLAIN
YOU'VE MERELY GONE INSANE
ONE OF MANY LOYAL PATRIOTS
WHO JUST WENT NUTS

Emily

IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY
WOMEN WEREN'T SUPPOSED
TO KNOW MUCH
THEY HAD TO ACT NAÏVE
UNEDUCATED
EVEN IF SUCH HIDEOUS BEHAVIOR
MAKES US NAUSEATED
IF THEY ACCUSE YOU
TELL THEM HOW HE USED YOU
OOOH...
HERE'S YOUR CONFESSION:

"I LOVE MY COUNTRY
MORE THAN LIFE ITSELF!" OH----

Peggy

LONG TIME, NO SEE

OUT OF TOUCH

OUT TO LUNCH

MAKES US NAUSEATED

I NEVER WANTED TO BETRAY ANYONE
THAT IS WHAT I'LL GLADLY
CONFESS TO ANYONE

"I LOVE MY COUNTRY
MORE THAN LIFE ITSELF!" OH---

Peggy

IF I HAD GONE AWAY
I'D BE THE FIRST TO SAY
"GOOD-BYE, BEST REGARDS, FROM JAMAICA"

Peggy

I'D RATHER GET A TAN
FIND ME THE KIND OF MAN
WHO WOULD BE CONTENT

Emily

A LITTLE BIT OF SUNCREAM'S
ALL YOU NEED
TO SUCCEED
MEN WOULD PLEAD

Peggy and Emily

TO COME ALONG AND SAY "I'LL TAKE YA!"

Peggy

ALL THINGS CONSIDERED, IF IT WERE UP TO ME ...

Both
WE'D RATHER BE IN JAMAICA!

(Peggy starts to exit and runs into Washington as he enters)

[Song: **Inescapable**]

Peggy *(Startled)*
Your Excellency!

Washington
Mrs. Arnold...

Peggy
I KNOW HOW THIS MUST LOOK TO YOU

Washington
TO THINK OF ALL HE'S PUT YOU THROUGH

Peggy
I ADMIT THAT I WAS BESIDE MYSELF WITH GRIEF
DIDN'T THINK MY HUSBAND WAS CAPABLE
IS MY FATE INESCAPABLE?

Washington
AT LEAST, I'M PLEASED TO SAY
WE'VE CAPTURED JOHN ANDRE
THOUGH IT WON'T HELP MUCH
I'M SURE YOU'RE RELIEVED

Peggy *(Aside)*
DID MY EARS DECEIVE ME NOW
I'VE GOT TO MAKE IT THROUGH, SOMEHOW
WHAT MUST I DO TO ENSURE I'M BELIEVED?

(Peggy gasps for air and faints dramatically on the bed. Washington rushes to her aid, cradling her head in his arms just as Reed and Josephine enter)

Washington
I CAN SEE CLEARLY YOU ARE STUNNED
BUT HE WILL PAY FOR ALL HE'S DONE

Reed
WHAT A SIGHT THIS IS!
I NEVER WOULD HAVE KNOWN
THE THINGS YOU DO WHEN YOU'RE ALONE

Josephine (*To Washington*)
 DOES HER HUSBAND KNOW
 OF YOUR DEVOTION TO HER?

(Peggy regains consciousness. Washington scrambles to get off the bed)

Reed
 AT LEAST I'M PLEASED TO SAY
 JOHN ANDRE'S CONFESSED TODAY

Washington & Peggy
 WE'RE BOTH AWARE OF HIS PARTICIPATION!

Reed
 BUT DID YOU ALSO KNOW...

Josephine
 ...WHAT SHE'S TRIED NOT TO SHOW

Reed & Josephine
 SHE HAS COLLUDED EACH STEP OF THE WAY?!

Peggy (*Abruptly sitting up in bed*)
 That's a lie!

Josephine
 IF YOU DON'T BELIEVE WHAT WE SAY
 YOU CAN ASK HIM ON VISITING DAY

Reed
 BUT DON'T DELAY
 THERE'S NO TIME LIKE TODAY

Josephine
 YOU WON'T HAVE LONG

Reed, Josephine & Peggy
 FOR SOON HE WILL BE GONE!

Washington
 Reed, get back to West Point and await my instructions. I'll deal with you later.

Reed (*Amused*)
 Is that supposed to frighten me?!

Washington (*Flustered*)
 You have your orders.

Reed

Who are you kidding? You have no jurisdiction over me!

Washington (*Ready to explode*)

Reed! Get the hell out!

Reed

Just wait until we tell everyone how you knew about Arnold from the very beginning, and yet you stood by and did absolutely nothing!

Josephine

We'll see to it that you never hold a prominent position again!

Washington

Ha!!

(Emily, is helping Ben into bed, as his elusive grip on past events is eroding, and reality sets in. He is now only a shadow of his former self. Rain can be heard pouring outside the open window)

[Song: I've Come Undone]

Ben

IT'S NOW BEEN THREE WEEKS
WHAT'S TAKING THEM SO LONG?
I CAN'T HELP WONDERING IF
SOMETHING HAS GONE WRONG!

Emily

I'M SURE HE'S JUST BUSY
GENERAL BURGOYNE'S AN IMPORTANT MAN

Ben

AND I'M NOT?
THE MAN WHO FOUGHT
SO VALLIANTLY
THEY ALL SHOULD FALL AT MY FEET

(Knock on door)

(Music underscores the following dialogue):

Emily

There! You see? That must be him, now. What did I tell you? Everything will be all right now.

(Reed enters, arm-in-arm with Josephine. He is wearing a red British officer's coat)

Ben

Reed! What the hell?!

Reed (*In an affected British accent*)

I'm sorry, I'm afraid you're mistaken. I am General Burgoyne of his majesty's armed forces.

Ben (*Rubbing his eyes in disbelief*)

Forgive me, Your Excellency, I thought for a moment...that is, I...you look just...

Reed

Yes, I understand. You're...overwrought. These past few weeks must have been....difficult.

Ben

Oh, your excellency, if you only knew. I'll tell you, I...

Reed (*Impatiently*)

Yes, yes, yes!!

WHY DID YOU WANT TO SEE ME?

Ben

I'M ANXIOUS FOR A COMMAND

Josephine

IT'S HARD TO SEE THAT HAPPENING
YOU DON'T HAVE TOO MANY FANS

Reed & Josephine

NO ONE SEEMS WILLING TO LOWER HIMSELF
TO FIGHT UNDER SOMEONE LIKE YOU.

Reed

FIVE HUNDRED SOLDIERS SUDDENLY

Reed & Josephine

CAME DOWN WITH A BAD CASE OF THE FLU

Josephine

It's a veritable epidemic is what that is!

Ben

I DON'T UNDERSTAND WHY NO ONE WILL SERVE!

Reed

I'M AFRAID THAT'S RATHER COMPLEX
NO ONE KNOWS EXACTLY WHOM
YOU MAY TURN YOUR BACK ON NEXT

Reed & Josephine

YOU'VE BEEN BLACKLISTED
GIVEN THE BRUSH OFF!
YOU SEEM TO HAVE LOST YOUR ALLURE!

Reed

YOU CAN'T ERASE YOUR PAST MISTAKES
THEY'RE ALL DETAILED IN OUR FULL COLOR BROCHURE

(Displays the brochure as Josephine looks on)

Oh! They've captured my good side, too! How lovely!

Ben

I CAN'T GO FORWARD AND I CAN'T GO BACK!

Emily

I GUESS IT'S JUST AS WELL YOU HAVEN'T YET UNPACKED

Ben

I'M AS GOOD AS HOMELESS

Reed

CLEARLY YOU HAVE BEEN DETHRONED!

Ben

I'M IN A HAZE

Emily

SEEN BETTER DAYS

Ben, Josephine & Emily

NO COUNTRY

Ben

TO CALL MY OWN!

Reed

It's a right awful predicament!

Josephine

AMERICANS WOULD HANG YOU
AS SOON AS YOU WALKED THROUGH THE DOOR
THE BRITISH JUST IGNORE YOU

Reed

YOUR WIFE DOESN'T NEED YOU ANYMORE

Ben

AS LEADER, I WAS NEXT TO NONE

Emily

BUT NOW THEY'VE GOT YOU ON THE RUN

Ben

I'VE COME UNDONE!! YEAH!!
WHAT ABOUT MY MONEY?
10,000 POUNDS IN GOLD!

Reed

THOSE RECRUITING OFFICERS
WILL SAY ANYTHING, I'M TOLD!

Josephine

YOU'RE LUCKY YOU'LL GET ANYTHING!

Reed

HOW CHEEKY!

Josephine

WHAT GALL!

Reed, Josephine & Emily

QUITE A PRINCELY SUM
FOR DOING NOTHING MUCH AT ALL

Reed

You know, I asked one of our American prisoners this morning what would happen to you, if we were ever to turn you over to them. And do you know what he said? He said your left leg would be severed from your body and buried with full military honors. The rest of you would be hanged from the nearest tree.

(Ben is stunned as Reed pauses to let it sink in)

Josephine

Now if you'll excuse the general. Terribly sorry, but the sight of you sickens him.

(Wind. Josephine shivers. Reed places his coat around her as they exit)

[*Song: Finale*]

Ben

NOW I FIND NO ONE REALLY WANTS ME
IT SEEMS AS IF MY FRIENDS
HAVE ALL ABANDONED ME FOREVER

Company

WELL WHO COULD BLAME THEM

Company (Cont)

CONSIDERING YOUR CRIME
 NO ONE WANTS TO BE SEEN
 WITH THE GREATEST TRAITOR OF OUR TIME
 YOU'RE NOTHING BUT A BENEDICT ARNOLD
 A TRAITOR, THROUGH AND THROUGH
 THAT'S ALL YOU'LL EVER BE
 THAT'S ALL ANYONE WILL SEE

Ben

WHY IS IT NO ONE CAN RECALL
 I WAS THE GREATEST HERO OF THEM ALL?

(Company sings ethereal oohs and ahhs, underscoring the following):

Emily

Madam, madam, come quickly. Something's the matter with him! I came into his room a few moments ago, and he tried to throw a blanket over me. He said I wasn't dressed properly for this kind of weather. "This kind of weather?!" I thought. "What could he mean by that? It's the middle of July!" Shall I get the doctor, mum?

Peggy

No, it's too late!

Ben

Too late? But no one knows what really happened yet! Everyone thinks I was disloyal, but they've got it all wrong! It was all of you who forced me to do what I did! But... I want you to know, I've learned to forgive you for what you've done to me! I forgive you all!

I WAS A REVOLUTIONARY GENTLEMAN
 JUST LIKE ALL THE PAPERS SAID
 BUT NOW IT LOOKS AS THOUGH NO ONE WILL RECALL
 THAT I WAS THE GREATEST HERO OF THEM ALL!

(The entire company sings ethereal oohs and ahhs as angels descend from heaven)

BLACKOUT

END OF PLAY