

## ACT ONE

- Scene 1. Catfish Row  
Scene 2. Catfish Row  
Scene 3. Catfish Row

### Intermission

## ACT TWO

- Scene 1. Kittiwah Island  
Scene 2. Catfish Row  
Scene 3. Serena's Room

### Intermission

## ACT THREE

- Scene 1. Catfish Row  
Scene 2. Catfish Row  
Scene 3. Catfish Row

## ACT I

### Scene 1

#### CATFISH ROW

*(It is a summer evening. Catfish Row is quiet. Jasbo Brown is at the piano, playing a low-down blues and some couples are dancing in a slow, almost hypnotic rhythm.)*

#### DANCERS

Da-doo-da. Da-doo-da.  
Wa-wa, wa-wa  
Da-doo-da. Da-doo-da. Da-doo-da.  
Wa-wa, Doo-da, O wa-do-wa, etc.

*(The stage lights now find Clara with her baby in her arms, rocking it back and forth.)*

#### CLARA

Summertime and the livin' is easy,  
Fish are jumpin' and the cotton is high.  
Oh, your daddy's rich, and your 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.

#### 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 like 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' 'bout 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 with grunt)*

#### JIM

*(Enters)*

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

#### JAKE

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

#### JIM

That suit me. This cotton hook done swung 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. ...

#### CRAP SHOOTERS

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' ...

#### CRAP SHOOTERS

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

#### CLARA

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

#### CRAP SHOOTERS

O! man seven come down from heaven!

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)

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,  
An' she'll tie you to her apron string,  
Then she'll shame you and she'll blame you till yo' woman comes 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,  
Then she'll 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)

Here come de honey man.  
Yes m'am, dis de honey man.  
You got honey in de comb?  
Yes m'am, I got honey in de comb.  
An' is yo' honey cheap?  
Yes m'am, 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 sof' on Crown's Bess.  
(Men laugh)

PORGY  
I ain't nebber 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 Gawd fearin' ladies and the Gawd damnin' men that gal ain't got a chance.

JAKE  
Ain' I tells you Porgy sof' on her?

PORGY  
No, no, brudder, Porgy ain't sof' 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.)

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.

CROWN  
Pay him, Bess.

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

JAKE  
Drunk again!

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

CROWN  
That damn whiskey'-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-devils.

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 done 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 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, Sportin' 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 cockeyed drunk, he can't tell dice from a watermelon;  
Crown cockeyed drunk, he can't tell dice from wa--

## CROWN

Shut up!

## SPORTING LIFE

Six to make!  
(Shoots again)

## JIM

Seven!

## MINGO

Crapped out!

## JAKE

Seven, Seven!  
Porgy shoots now.

## PORGY

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)

## MINGO

Li'l Joe.

## JIM

Little 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, laughs, 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 but 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. Serena screams)

## JAKE

Jesus, he killed him!

(Serena flings herself upon the body)

## BESS

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 pulls together.

## BESS

Some man always willin' to take care of Bess.

## CROWN

Well, get this: whoever he is, he's temporary. I'm 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.)

## 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 his hand to her. Shuddering away from Serena and the body, she goes to Porgy's door. Porgy reaches for Bess' hand. She enters his room)*

## CURTAIN

## ACT I

Scene 2  
SERENA'S ROOM  
*(Robbins' body lies on the bed, a saucer on his chest. The room is filled with mourners who drop money in the saucer.)*

WOMAN  
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.  
Oh, he's gone  
Robbins is gone, gone, gone, gone, gone.

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  
Overflow, overflow,  
Fill up de saucer till it overflow.

JAKE  
Yes, my Jesus, overflow.

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 soffen 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 risin' 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  
Um! A saucer-burial setup, I see. You're 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 killed Robbins an' I'm gonna 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)*

You. You saw it too. Come on, 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 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' 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 be 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, gone.

SERENA  
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,  
Lynin' 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.

BESS  
*(Suddenly jumping up)*  
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', etc.,  
Let it roll . . .  
Until we meet out brudder in the Promise' Lan'.  
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', etc.,  
Let it roll . . .  
Until we meet our brudder in the Promise' Lan'.  
In the Promise Lan'.  
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',  
til we meet our brudder in the Promise' Lan'.  
In the Promise' Lan'.

CURTAIN

## ACT II

### Scene 1

CATFISH ROW  
*(It's a month later. Jake and fishermen repair netting, swaying  
to the rhythm of a rowing song.)*

JAKE  
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 settin' 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'.

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, mens. 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 de college education, if I  
don' work hard an' make money?

PORGY  
*(At window, laughing)*  
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 dey 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, 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 hol' her down.

## SPORTING LIFE

*(saunters over to Maria's table)*

Hey, how you doin' there, 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'.

## MARIA

*(Grabs Sporting Life by the throat and picks up carving knife.)*

Frien' wid you low-life, hell, no!

*(Threatening him)*

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 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 cuts 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' to 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!

*(Everybody laughs)*

## 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, a 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' understan' what name you say.

## 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.... 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

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 Augus' 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 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

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.

## 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'  
Hmmm. . . 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.

## 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, hmmm.  
Oh, my Porgy, my man Porgy,  
From dis minute I'm tellin' you, I keep dis vow;  
Porgy, I's yo' woman now.

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

## ALL

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's is dandy, got de licker 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 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!

## CURTAIN

## ACT II

## Scene 2

## KITTIWAH ISLAND

*(It's evening. Some of the people are dancing, some play mouth organs, combs, bones. There is general gaiety.)*

## ALL

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

Ha da da, Ha da da, etc.

## SPORTING LIFE

It ain't necessarily so,

## SPORTING LIFE AND 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!

## SPORTING LIFE AND 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!

## SPORTING LIFE AND CHORUS

Wadoo—Zim bam boodle-oo,  
Hoodle ah da wa da — Scatty wah.

## SPORTING LIFE

Yeah! Oh, Jonah, he lived in de whale,

## SPORTING LIFE AND CHORUS

Oh, Jonah, he lived in de whale

## SPORTING LIFE

Fo' he made his home in  
Dat fish's abdomen.  
Oh, Jonah, he lived in de whale.  
Li'l Moses was found in a stream,

SPORTING LIFE AND 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  
Wa-doo — Zim bam boodle-oo,  
Hoodle ah da wa — Scatty wah.SPORTING LIFE  
Yeah! It ain't necessarily so,SPORTING LIFE AND CHORUS  
It ain't necessarily so,SPORTING LIFE  
Dey tell all you chillun  
De debble's a villun  
But 'tain't necessarily so.  
To get into Hebben,  
Don' snap for a sebben!  
Live clean. Don' have no fault.  
Oh, I takes dat gospel  
Whenever it's possible,  
But wid a grain of salt.  
Methus'lah lived nine hundred years,SPORTING LIFE AND CHORUS  
Methus'lah lived nine hundred years,SPORTING LIFE  
Say, but who calls dat livin'  
When no gal'll give in  
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 so.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  
*(whistles from thicket)*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 gots 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  
fur 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 be just 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, an' 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, less'en 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 other women.CROWN  
What I wants wid other woman? I gots a woman an' dat's you,  
see!BESS  
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 its 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 wants 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 goin' take my woman from me.  
You got a man tonight an' that is Crown, yes, Crown, yes  
Crown.  
You're my woman, Bess, I'm tellin' you, now I'm your man.  
*(Pressing her very close)*BESS  
What you want wid 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 knows you ain' change — wid you and me it always be the  
same. Git in dat thicket.*(Bess backs into woods; Crown follows.)*

CURTAIN

## ACT II

## Scene 3

## CATFISH ROW.

*(It's just before dawn, a week later. Bells herald the new day.  
Fishermen loll about sleepily.)*JAKE  
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 fishermens,  
it's time to trabble.NELSON  
All right, Jake.JIM  
All ready, Jake, we hes' be off.MARIA  
Goodbye, boys.JAKE  
Goodbye, Maria.NELSON  
It looks to me like it's goin' storm today.JAKE  
Don't you know dat ain' de way to talk 'fore my woman.  
So long, Clara, gangway for de Sea Gull.  
*(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' 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)*  
Oh, doctor Jesus, who done trouble de water in de Sea of  
Gallerie.

PORGY  
Amen!

SERENA  
An' likewise who done cas' 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 you' 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 up 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  
Oh dey's so fresh an' fine,  
An' dey's jus' off de vine,  
Strawberry, strawberry, strawberry,  
Oh, dey's so fresh an' fine  
An' dey's just off de vine,  
Strawberry, strawberry, strawberry.

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,  
She 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.  
*(Maria picks crab, counts out money, pays Crab Man, who  
then leaves.)*

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.  
*(Bell chimes five times.)*

PORGY  
Now de time, oh Gawd, now de time.

BESS  
*(Within the shanty)*  
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's 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' want you to go. How things stan' between  
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' muscle 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 say here, but I ain't worthy.  
You is too decent to understan'.  
For when I see him he hypnotize me.  
When he take 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  
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.

SIDE FIVE  
*(Clara enters)*

MARIA  
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!

CURTAIN

ACT II

Scene 4

SERENA'S ROOM. STORM.  
*(It is dawn of the following day. Everyone huddles in fear from  
the tremendous storm outside. They try to drown out the  
storm with singing.)*

SECOND SOPRANO SOLO

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 deserving.  
Oh, Hev'nly Father, hab mercy on we  
when de clouds an' de storms start raisin' hell upon dis earth.  
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' chillen. 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 ease the rocky way,  
we's been trabin' 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' misable  
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

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

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. Cries of terror.  
More knocks — the door shakes violently. Men leaning  
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!

#### SERENA

Who' frien' is you?

#### CROWN

I's yo' frien', Sister.  
*(Sees Bess)*  
Oh, here's de woman I's lookin' fo'. Why you ain' 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' 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.

#### SERENA

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!

*(Excited ad libs)*

#### WOMAN

*(On knees)*  
Oh, de Lawd shake de Heavens an' de Lawd rock de groun'

#### 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 all the way from Kittiwah  
to sit up wid no corpses.  
Dem dat is in such a hurry to meet de Judgement,  
All dey 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'?

A red-headed woman makes a cho-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's gonna take you wedder you're  
White, yellow or black.  
But show me the red-head 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's 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!

## CURTAIN

## ACT III

## Scene 1

## CATFISH ROW

(*The storm has ended. It's the next night.*)

## CHORUS

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.  
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 men. 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*)

(*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 to the ground. Crown staggers upright  
as Porgy leans from window and closes both hands around  
Crown's 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!

## CURTAIN

## ACT III

## Scene 2

## CATFISH ROW

(*It is the next afternoon.*)

## 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*)

Huh! 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  
your 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

(*Shouting with rage*)

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 there, 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 'round'here long time ago.  
But I ain' care none'bout seein'him.



MARIA

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

PORGY

I ain'axin'yo' opinion.  
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

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

Noo York.

PORGY

I hear you say Noo York. Where dat?

MINGO

A thousand mile from here.

PORGY

Which way Noo York?

MARIA

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

PORGY

Bring my goat!

MARIA

What you wants 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 Noo 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)*

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'.

END OF OPERA