#

Libretto

JACOB & KIN

A Musical in Two Acts

by

SMSMITH



Note about the Music / Lead Sheets

(contained in a separate book)

A word to artistic & musical directors:

- In the tradition of Girolamo Mei, this composer believes the greatest power of music in this work will arise in the use of a single, non-harmonic melody (solo or unison). ("vo" in the text means "vocal only; r = rhythm.")
- The music is intended to be simplistic, as in the bard or nomadic narrative tradition, where the words and rhythms of speech drive the music and where much of the singing arises "spontaneously" out of heightened emotion, without instrumental accompaniment.
- When accompaniment is used, it is intended to be a solo wind instrument, perhaps an ocarina or a nay-type flute, and should not be distracting to the vocals. (Incidental wind solos are to be played one octave higher than written.)
- Rhythmic accompaniment will flow naturally from several songs. For a few notes on middle-eastern drumming rhythms, see page 78 of the Lead Sheets.
- **Please remember**: the songs are not intended to follow the classic Broadway or popular song formats; rather they are narrative driven without the artificiality of an "orchestra in the desert," and are meant, in several cases, to "push" the ear.
- For those interested in views on the antiquity of the 7-note diatonic scale, see Robert Fink's *The Origin of Music* or read his theories and research on the web.

LIBRETTO

JACOB & KIN

A Musical in Two Acts

by

SMSMITH



ZANTHYM HOUSE
Mountain View•AB•CA

Published by Zanthym House
PO Box 115 Mountain View, AB
Canada T0K 1N0

Text, lyrics, music, & logo © 1998, 2013, 2026
by Susan M. Smith

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED. No part of this publication may be copied, reproduced, transmitted, recorded, or stored, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopy, or otherwise, without prior written permission from the author or publisher.

Professionals and amateurs are advised that this musical play, being fully protected under the Copyright Laws of Canada and all other countries of the Berne and Universal Copyright Conventions and World Trade Organization, is subject to a royalty. All rights including, but not limited to, professional or amateur performance, recording, motion picture, recitation, lecturing, public reading, radio and television broadcasting, and the rights of translation into foreign languages are expressly reserved.

The playwright acknowledges the contribution of Alberta Playwrights Network (APN) in the final phase of script development; and expresses appreciation to Alberta Foundation for the Arts (AFA) for financial assistance in the final stages of music exploration.

First available as a PDF ebook at Scribd.com (2013/05/15)

ISBN: 978-0-9918690-8-4 (ebook)

Text Font:	Shannon™	DO:	1986/09/12
Title Font:	Hobo	DC:	1987/12/10
Logo:	with assist of Nano Banana 2 - 2026-10-15	DMC:	1989/11
		DLR:	2026/09
		DP:	2026/10

NOTICE

OBTAINING PERMISSION TO PERFORM ♦ The right to license dramatic presentation is administered through ZANTHYM HOUSE, PO Box 115, Mountain View, AB Canada T0K 1N0 in the form of a written contract. Submit inquiries to ZanthymHouse@gmail.com.

PRODUCTION COPIES NOT FOR SALE ♦ Ebooks (or copies made therefrom) used in dramatic production are considered to be rented only and remain the property of ZANTHYM HOUSE, P.O. Box 115, Mountain View, AB Canada T0K 1N0.

REVISIONS PROHIBITED ♦ Revisions, including deletions, additions, amendments, reordering, etc. of scenes, text, lyrics, or music for performance are not authorized and constitute a violation of contract.

▪ ▪ ▪ ▪

The playwright/composer/lyricist is a **lifetime member*** (as of 2018) of The Dramatists Guild of America, Inc., and supports Guild-approved minimums.
(*Was an associate member from 1988-2018)

COPYING PROHIBITED except upon the following conditions:

- You must have signed a written contract with the author or her publisher ZANTHYM HOUSE to perform this work and are in good standing respecting all your covenants therein;
- You make NO MORE than the number of photocopies or digital copies authorized in your contract, all of which must contain this notice and the copyright page. Such copies are for your authorized performance use only, and become and remain the property of ZANTHYM HOUSE;
- These limited photocopies or digital copies must be made from the original ebook rented by you: i.e., photocopies or digital copies from a copy are prohibited;
- Every photocopy is recovered at the end of your performance run and either SHREDDED or mailed to ZANTHYM HOUSE along with your "Copy Report" which forms a part of your contract. Digital copies are to be deleted from all devices of every kind and also notated on the "Copy Report."

Thank you for honouring copyright law and for respecting the work of the playwright/composer.

CONTENTS

Brief Research Note i

Cast of Characters iii

Character Descriptions iv

Time & Place vi

Musical Synopsis viii

Act One 1

Scene 1 1
Scene 2 5
Scene 3 19
Scene 4 23
Scene 5 31
Scene 6 37
Scene 7 39
Scene 8 52
Scene 9 56
Scene 10 60

Act Two 69

Scene 1 69
Scene 2 78
Scene 3 85
Scene 4 91
Scene 5 92
Scene 6 97
Scene 7 107
Scene 8 110
Scene 9 111
Scene 10 112

CONTENTS

(continued)

Appendix: **121**

Stage Map 122

Set Synopsis 123

Props List 126

Costume List 130
(Includes age & hairstyle references)

Character Grid - Men 136

Character Grid - Women 137

Research Notes 138

▪ ▪ ▪ ▪

Music / Lead Sheets

contained in a separate 8½"x11" ebook

▪ ▪ ▪ ▪

Duration

about two & one-half hours
(; includes a *14-minut*e intermission ;)
(being a nod to Jacob's 2X7 years contract with Laban)

BRIEF RESEARCH NOTE

All events are based on the following sources:

1. Louis Ginzberg, *The Legends of the Jews*, Vols. I-VII. Trans. by Henrietta Szold, 1968.
2. *The Book of Jasher*. Pub. by J. H. Parry & Company, 1887.
3. *The Old Testament*. King James Version
4. *Josephus*: Complete Works. Trans. by William Whiston, 1960.
5. *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*. Edited by James H. Charlesworth, 1983.
6. *The Book of Jubilees*. R.H. Charles.

Selection was by personal preference where the above sources did not agree about a particular point or description.

Digressions from the recorded accounts are:

1. The age of Jacob. Most sources put him at about 77 years of age when he made the trip to Haran. For the story's appeal, he is cast in his late thirties. This also of necessity makes Esau younger by about forty years. And probably also Laban.
2. Rachel and Leah's mother. The few references to her indicate she had died before Jacob's arrival. For the story line of the play, she is still living.
3. Rachel's reference to a dream in Act One, Scene Five. There is no recorded reference to this.

4. Reuben's assistance to his father in Act Two, Scene Nine. There is no recorded reference to this.
5. Laban & Beor's return to the site of Jacob and Esau's reconciliation in Act Two, Scene Ten. There is no recorded reference to this.

An appendix is attached with detailed reference notes respecting the various scenes.

▪ ▪ ▪ ▪

Please include this **Author's Note** in your programs:

Author's Note: The events in this musical which go beyond the familiar story in Old Testament Genesis have source in *The Legends of the Jews*, *The Book of Jasher*, *Josephus*, *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, and *The Book of Jubilees*. The author hopes this musical rendition of the oft-amusing, yet moving accounts contained in the old sources, will lift your soul.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(In order of and at first appearance)

	AGE*
Old Patriarch	80's
Esau (elder twin brother of Jacob)	39
Eliphaz (son of Esau)	15
Jacob	39
Shepherd One	70
Shepherd Two	50
Shepherd Three (Naahyem)	21
Rachel (2nd daughter of Laban–twin)	21
Laban (uncle to Jacob)	60
Leah (1st daughter of Laban–twin)	21
Servant One (female)	older
Servant Two (female)	young
Servants (male & female)	various
Wedding Guests (male & female)	various
Bilhah (maid to Rachel)	28
Zilpah (maid to Leah)	26
Reuben (son of Leah)	13
Simeon (son of Leah)	12
Levi (son of Leah)	11
Judah (son of Leah)	10
Dan (son of Bilhah)	10
Naphtali (son of Bilhah)	09
Gad (son of Zilpah)	09
Asher (son of Zilpah)	08
Issachar (son of Leah)	08
Zebulun (son of Leah–twin)	07
Dinah (daughter of Leah–twin)	07
Joseph (son of Rachel)	06
Beor (son of Laban)	17

MAIN CHARACTER DESCRIPTIONS

(In order of and at first appearance)

ESAU, a large, hairy, strong man of 39 years; has dark reddish hair; short bearded.

ELIPHAZ, age 15; a large strapping youth with mid-neck length reddish hair.

JACOB, a strong, tall man of 39; dark hair is neck-length and layered; short bearded. At first appearance, he is a man who has been robbed and has managed to find covering with a tunic & baggy pants in such worn condition that they might have been rejected by a beggar.

His character is one of firmness and determination, yet he lacks the faith to fully trust the God of his fathers'. His motives, despite outward appearance, are well-intentioned, but in acting on those motives he has often taken things into his own hands with disastrous results. His self-confidence is not manifest in any degree of pride or arrogance. He is a man we genuinely like—a hero figure. Throughout the play, we watch him struggle to accept and trust the workings of his God in his life.

SHEPHERD ONE, a healthy 70, easygoing and peace loving; shoulder-length white hair; bearded.

SHEPHERD TWO, about 50, plumpish; a jovial fellow; longish dark hair; has a beard.

SHEPHERD THREE (Naahyem), age 21, with hair similar in fashion to the others, but he has no beard until perhaps Act Two, Scene Three; is a plain, awkward-sort of brash boy, but quite likable and clever in his way.

RACHEL, age 21 and quite beautiful, though she is not conscious of it; is natural and does not act coy, flirtatious, or shy; has long, dark hair.

LABAN, about 60; a braggart, a bully, and a schemer, though he does have a grudging affection for his daughters; loves to put on airs, but not in a heavy-handed comic manner; plays his role straight; is bearded; has grey, longish hair.

LEAH, very much like RACHEL, both in dress and appearance. They are twins, but Leah is plainer, more practical and somewhat of a worrier. Leah's eyes have some redness (from too much weeping?).

***Age of Characters**: Since the play covers a period of twenty years, the ages represent that of first appearance with appropriate aging as the play progresses; except for the children, whose age represents that of the year in which they leave Haran. Remember that Old Testament characters lived longer lives, e.g. Jacob's life is recorded at one-hundred-forty-seven years. An **age reference for the various scenes** can be found in the "Costume List" section of the appendix.

Humor: In the author's opinion, subtle, underplayed humor is far more effective than buffooned humor. Please resist the temptation to buffoon Laban or any other character.

TIME & PLACE

ACT ONE

SCENE	TIME	PLACE
ONE	Some night circa 1755 B.C.	Split:1) SL: Edom 2) SR: Several days walk SW of Haran
TWO	Noontime—several days later	A well near Haran
THREE	Immediately following	In front of Laban's dwelling
FOUR	Immediately following	The well
FIVE	Immediately following	A field near Haran
SIX	One month later	Inside Laban's dark house
SEVEN	A few days later–early morning	The field
EIGHT	Seven years later	The well
NINE	Three days later—the wedding day (Beginning of year 8)	The field
TEN	Several hours later—nighttime	The field

*For the nature of Haran and its **unique "beehive" houses**, see "Abraham, the Friend of God," by Kenneth MacLeish in *National Geographic*, Vol. 130, No. 6, Dec. 1966, p. 757, and *Travelers in Ancient Lands* by L. Vaczek & G. Buckland, p. 108, or search online.

ACT TWO

SCENE	TIME	PLACE
ONE	Early next morning	In front of new tent in the Field
TWO	Years 12 through14	In front of wives' dwellings
THREE	Beginning of year 15	The well
FOUR	Sometime late in year 16	Inside Laban's dark house
FIVE	End of year 20	Well/Field/Tents/Haran, etc. in sequence
SIX	3 through 10 days later	Well/Laban's House/ Caravan route & Mt. Gilead in sequence
SEVEN	A few days later	Mount Seir in Edom
EIGHT	A few days later	Near brook of Jabbok/south side
NINE	Early next morning	Near brook of Jabbok/north side
TEN	Later that same day	Near brook of Jabbok/south side

MUSICAL SYNOPSIS

(Vocal Reference)

Act One

A LITTLE BIT OF TROUBLE . . . . . JACOB & ESAU
YOU'LL GET FLEECED . . . . . SHEPHERDS ONE & TWO
I PRAY IT'S THE PLACE . . . . . JACOB
WHY HAS IT TAKEN SO LONG? . . . . . LABAN
I WISH I WERE A MAN . . . . . LEAH
HE'S COME TRUE . . . . . RACHEL
IMPOSSIBLE (I) . . . . . JACOB
OH, WHAT A SIGHT . . . . . THREE SHEPHERDS
SOMETIMES . . . . . LEAH & RACHEL
HALIA . . . . . WEDDING GUESTS

Act Two

IMPOSSIBLE (II) . . . . . JACOB
THERE'S A LITTLE BIT OF TROUBLE . . . . WOMEN SERVANTS
SOMETIMES (Brief Reprise) . . . . . OLD PATRIARCH
REMEMBER HER . . . . . JACOB FAMILY
SIX MORE YEARS . . . . . THREE SHEPHERDS
SAYING, GOODBYE . . . . . JACOB FAMILY
WE HAVE MARCHED . . . . . THE ESCORT
MAN OF PERFECTIONS . . . . . LABAN & ESCORT
WHO IS YOUR BROTHER? . . . . . ELIPHAZ
IT'S WORTH A LITTLE TROUBLE . . . . . ESAU, JACOB FAMILY, ELIPHAZ, & COMPANY

(Location Reference)

Act One

Music #		Page # Text	Page # M/Book
2	A LITTLE BIT OF TROUBLE	3	6
4	YOU'LL GET FLEECED	7/8	9
5	I PRAY IT'S THE PLACE	11/12	13
6	WHY HAS IT TAKEN SO LONG?	21	15
9	I WISH I WERE A MAN	33	18
10	HE'S COME TRUE	35	21
14	IMPOSSIBLE (I)	41	24
16	OH, WHAT A SIGHT	52/53	27
19	SOMETIMES	57	31
22	HALIA	63	36

Act Two

24	IMPOSSIBLE (II)	70	46
28	THERE'S A LITTLE BIT OF TROUBLE	79	49
33	SOMETIMES (Brief Reprise)	81	52
37	REMEMBER HER	84	54
41	SIX MORE YEARS	92	57
43	SAYING, GOODBYE	95	59
45	WE HAVE MARCHED	100	63
46	MAN OF PERFECTIONS	101	64
51	WHO IS YOUR BROTHER?	114	69
54	IT'S WORTH A LITTLE TROUBLE	117	73

Act One

ACT ONE

Music 1: OVERTURE (Single wind instrument)

Scene 1

TIME: Some night circa 1755 BC*

PLACE: Split scene with black void between:
SL: A desert wasteland in Edom;
SR: A clustering of mountainous rock several days walk SW of Haran.

(OLD PATRIARCH/MUSICIAN wanders onto the set playing the overture [MUSIC 1A]. HE has an old sheepskin about his shoulders, some clothing draped over his arm or shoulder, and sandals hanging from his belt/girdle. HE pauses in the shadows at SL. ESAU strides angrily in at SL [MUSIC 1B]. ELIPHAZ, his son, follows)

ELIPHAZ

I am sorry, father. We took everything he had—like you said—but I just could not—

ESAU

Do not tell me what you did not do.

ELIPHAZ

But father, he said (that)—

ESAU

He, is a liar and a thief, and while he lives, I have no birthright. Did you not understand this?

ELIPHAZ

But you've said, so many times, the birthright was a pain—you were glad to be free of (having to)—

ESAU

That is not the matter. Had he confined himself to the foolish traditions, I had no quarrel, but he played me and your grandfather for the fool. … He has left me with nothing of my birthright. And you did not understand this!

ELIPHAZ

That is what I was telling. We left *him* with nothing. It is not possible he can live, but, of myself, I just could not—

ESAU

Out, of my sight. … Get you to your grandfather's house … till I can bear this.

(ELIPHAZ exits. ESAU unsheathes his knife, paces & dwells upon his anger. OLD PATRIARCH resumes playing [MUSIC 1C] & moves to SR as MOONLIGHT reveals JACOB amongst the rocks, shivering in the desert's cold, naked except for under-breeches. Lost in the shadows DSR, OLD PATRIARCH puts the sheepskin, clothing & sandals upon a rock and exits)

JACOB

(Glances heavenward; heavy sigh)

How could I have …. So … so foolish.

Music 2: A LITTLE BIT OF TROUBLE (vocal only till bar 43, then add solo wind instrument)

JACOB & ESAU

A LITTLE BIT OF TROUBLE
IS HOW THIS ALL BEGAN.
'TWAS JUST A LITTLE TROUBLE
UNTIL I WENT WITH A HASTY PLAN.
(UNTIL HE WENT WITH A THIEVING PLAN.)

AND NOW I'M IN SORE TROUBLE
(I HOPE HE DIES IN TROUBLE)
ALONG THIS (THAT) HARAN WAY,
FOR WHAT I DID, HE GAVE ME BACK
(FOR WHAT HE DID, I GAVE HIM BACK)
RIGHT IN THE LIGHT OF DAY.

ESAU

(As he stands, angrily sheaths his knife, and exits)
Right in the light of day. I should have seen to it myself.

JACOB

(Looking heavenward, shivering in the cold)
I'M IN THIS DIRE TROUBLE
WITH NOTHING BUT MY NAME,
AND HARDLY HOPE OF GETTING
ACROSS THIS ROCKY PLAIN.

YET, SOMEHOW IN THESE TROUBLES,
I DON'T SEEM QUITE THE SAME.
SO TIRED OF THESE TROUBLES,
I'LL NOT GIVE CAUSE AGAIN.

If I can but live. … If, please, I can but live. … Oh, Father, if thou wilt give me bread to eat and clothes to put on, and keep me in this way that I go, I shall live to serve thee forever. … I shall seek never again to offend, neither Thy face nor the face of my brother, if please … I can but live.

(… A MOONBEAM reveals the sheepskin & clothing. In awe and wonder JACOB proceeds to clothe himself, to wrap the sheepskin about himself, and to settle amongst the rocks for the night)

How much I thank thee.

I VOW TO NOW REMEMBER …

[Add solo wind instrument: Bar 42]
THE LAW IN TIME OF TROUBLE
IS NEVER GIVE OFFENSE.
THE LAW IN TIME OF TROUBLE
IS TRUST IN PROVIDENCE.

THERE'S HOPE IN ALL THIS TROUBLE
IF SOMEDAY SOON I CAN
RETURN UNTO MY FATHER'S HOUSE
AT PEACE WITH GOD AND MAN.
(As voice fades toward a weary rest)
AT PEACE WITH GOD AND MAN.

(Hums to music. Then a deep sigh / groan)
I must believe there is hope … even for me.
(Asleep, breathing deeply)

Dim to BLACKOUT as the moon
vanishes behind a cloud

Music 3: SCENE CHANGE TO 2
(Well near Haran)

Scene 2

TIME: Noontime—several days later

PLACE: A well near Haran

CURTAIN RISES to reveal a multiple setting (Well, Haran, Field) described in the Set Synopsis.

(Onstage are SHEPHERDS ONE & TWO. SHEPHERD ONE, sitting with his back against the well, is breathing in the rhythm of Jacob's breathing in the prior Scene. SHEPHERD TWO, seated on the covering of the well, is braiding leather strips. SHEPHERD ONE rouses and looks around, yawning)

SHEPHERD ONE

Where is Naahyem?

SHEPHERD TWO

Some errand, he said.

SHEPHERD ONE

(Immediately understanding; disappointed)
You did not do it—did you?

SHEPHERD TWO

Me!

SHEPHERD ONE

You said you would—

(SHEPHERD THREE, Naahyem, enters from right or from audience & pauses to nuzzle a lamb)

(Continues in a harsh whisper)

You, said you would tell him.

SHEPHERD TWO

Ho, no—I said, one of us should … meaning you. You tell him how foolish to forever (be)—

SHEPHERD THREE

I am not a fool.

(SHEPHERD TWO gives a "go-ahead" and turns to his braiding)

SHEPHERD ONE

Naahyem, no. He means—it is no use—all these errands for Laban. He does not intend giving his daughters to—

SHEPHERD THREE

Laban likes me. He said so.

SHEPHERD TWO

(With a snorting huh; glancing heavenward; thumbing toward Shepherd One)

He should live so long.

SHEPHERD ONE

Listen to me, I tell the truth. You think our crafty Laban settles for some poor shepherd—whose kin works him for next to nothing?!

SHEPHERD THREE

I shan't always be poor.

SHEPHERD TWO

We should all live so long.

SHEPHERD ONE

As God wills, Naahyem—but listen. Laban has long had his arrangements for these daughters—his rich nephews.

SHEPHERD THREE

So, they have never come.

SHEPHERD ONE

It does not mean they never will.

SHEPHERD TWO

What it means? Word has traveled—they hear our Laban's reputation. For that they do not come.

SHEPHERD THREE

Well, 'tis different with me. I have nothing to lose.

SHEPHERD TWO

Ah, my! Innocence is such a gift … chiefly to Laban.

SHEPHERD ONE

Listen, please—to the plain words of poor shepherds.

Music 4: YOU'LL GET FLEECED (v+r)

SHEPHERDS ONE & TWO

LIKE A SHEEP BEFORE THE SHEARER
IF YOU LET THAT OLD MAN NEARER
YOU'LL GET FLEECED.

AND YOU'LL NEVER BE RELEASED;
NO, YOU'LL NEVER BE RELEASED,
FOR HE'LL PLAGUE YOU TILL YOU DIE
HE'LL TRY EV'RY SLY SURPRISE,

IF YOU LET OLD LABAN NEARER,
WE CAN'T SAY IT ANY CLEARER;
YOU'LL GET FLEECED.

SHEPHERD THREE

(Exerts his strength against the heavy stone covering of the well. It does not budge)

What's to lose? In full truth, I have less than nothing.

SHEPHERDS ONE & TWO

YOU WILL BE AMAZED AT WHAT,
HE CAN FIND IN WHAT IS NOT,
IF YOU LET HIM ANY NEARER,
AND WE'VE NEVER BEEN SINCERER,
YOU'LL GET FLEECED.

SHEPHERD ONE

AND IF YOU'VE GOT NO FLEECES,
HE'LL BE TAKING FUTURE LEASES
ON YOUR HIDE.

SHEPHERD TWO

AND IF YOU'VE GOT NO TROUBLE,
HE'LL MAKE MORE THAN SURE YOU'RE DOUBLE
QUALIFIED.

SHEPHERD THREE

Laban does not scare me.

SHEPHERDS ONE & TWO

YOU SHOULD BE SCARED, MY FRIEND,
'CAUSE HE'LL KNOT AND SPIN AND BEND,
TILL YOU'RE TWISTING IN THE BREEZE
AT HIS EVERY COUGH AND SNEEZE.

SHEPHERD THREE

I am not some boy!

SHEPHERD ONE

SO IF YOU WANT SOME WEDDIN'
WE SUGGEST YOU NOT BE HEADIN'
LABAN'S WAY.

SHEPHERD TWO

AND IF YOU LIKE YOUR FREEDOM,
YOU BETTER NOT BE NEEDIN'
LABAN'S PAY.

SHEPHERDS ONE & TWO

IT'S WORSE THAN LOSING ALL,
'CAUSE FROM THE BOTTOM YOU CAN CRAWL,
BUT WITH SUCH A CUNNING PA
LAYING DOWN THE LAW,
YOU'LL FIND YOUR SKIN AND BONE AND LIMB
BELONG TO HIM.

(SHEPHERD THREE ignores them as he tests his strength against the unyielding stone covering of the well)

SHEPHERDS ONE & TWO

WE CAN'T SAY IT ANY CLEARER,
LIKE THE SHEEP BEFORE THE SHEARER
YOU'LL GET FLEECED.
WE HAVE NEVER BEEN SINCERER,
YOU'LL GET FLEECED.

SHEPHERD ONE

This is truth, Naahyem.

SHEPHERD THREE

(Pushing / tugging against the stone)

So, then one takes care.

SHEPHERD TWO

The whole of Haran has taken care—and what are we?
Fleeced—that is wh(at)—

(With attention caught by something in the distance)

Uhmm … it looks, we get company.

(SHEPHERDS ONE and THREE peer into the distance. The audience does not see Jacob yet)

SHEPHERD ONE

Do we know him?

SHEPHERD TWO

Alone he travels?! … Not wise in these evil days.

SHEPHERD THREE

Looks like, some beggar.

SHEPHERD ONE

I would say … he comes from the north—from Ankuwa.

SHEPHERD TWO

Ho, no! I say, from the south—this side of Egypt.

SHEPHERD THREE

Without even a sack! He will be from these parts.

SHEPHERD TWO

No, no. Not from these parts.

SHEPHERD THREE

(Indicating the well)

A wager then—for first rights.

SHEPHERD TWO

Whoa. He is first, who got here fir(st)—

(At the beginning of the above speech, JACOB enters right or through audience. The old sheepskin hangs loosely off one shoulder because of the heat. HE does not see the Shepherds at first, but excitedly, sees the town in the distance and drops to his knees)

SHEPHERDS ONE, TWO & THREE

Ho!

Music 5: I PRAY IT'S THE PLACE (vo)

JACOB

I PRAY IT'S THE PLACE
I'VE BEEN SEARCHING FOR.
I PRAY IT'S A PLACE I CAN REST.
I PRAY IT'S A HAVEN AND HARBOR
FROM THE TROUBLES I'VE HAD IN THE WEST.

I PRAY IT'S A PEACEFUL OASIS,
FROM THE ENDLESS CHAOS I'VE SEEN.
I PRAY THAT I CAN BEGIN
TO MEND ALL MY TROUBLES AND STRIFE.
TO FORGIVE AND NEVER OFFEND.

A PLACE TO START ALL OVER,
TO ACT WITH MORE PATIENCE AND TRUST.
TO LEAVE THE SORTING TO HEAVEN,
AND LIVE AS A PEACEFUL MAN MUST.
(Rises)

YES, I VOW IN THIS PLACE
THAT I'LL TRUST MORE.
I VOW IN THIS PLACE TO DO RIGHT.
TO LEAVE THE SORTING TO HEAVEN
SO REGRETS WILL PLAGUE ME NO MORE.

TO MAKE GOD MY HAVEN AND HARBOR,
SO REGRETS WILL PLAGUE ME NO MORE.
(Gazes briefly in the direction he has come)
… SO I CAN RETURN HOME IN PEACE.

SHEPHERD THREE

Come, let us find who he is.
(Calling out, waving to JACOB)
Yoooh-hooo.

(JACOB spies the SHEPHERDS and approaches)

JACOB

Ah, good men—are you of this place?

SHEPHERD ONE

Aye, 'tis named Haran, just there.

JACOB

Ahh, such relief. Then you would know a Laban of this place? He—

SHEPHERDS ONE, TWO & THREE

Wh-who, you say?!

JACOB

Laban, son of Bethuel—descended of Nahor.

SHEPHERD TWO

Ho—you speak of our neighbor Laban, and, 'tis remarkably strange, but we were just, this very—

JACOB

He is well?

SHEPHERD TWO

Well worth avoiding if the tru(th were)—

SHEPHERD ONE

(Attempting to distract Jacob)

Ho, he but jests. Yes, this Laban is well—quite well. Indeed he has a daughter—Rachel by name—comes here soon—same time every day.

SHEPHERD THREE

(To Jacob, smiling shyly; patting the well cover)

She has place here—when we are done.

JACOB

Place here? You gather here—you wait in this heat—at high day?

SHEPHERD TWO

We see, you are not from these parts? …

JACOB

A truth but, why not water these—go and feed them?

SHEPHERD ONE

'Tis the law—we cannot draw this well till all the assigned flocks are gathered.

JACOB

Assigned—to this well?

SHEPHERD ONE

For the cause of drought. There is precious little these days. You see these lengths—

(Pointing to the rope; circling his finger downwards)

—week by week. 'Tis no longer free for the taking.

SHEPHERD THREE

Even three men cannot budge this stone.

JACOB

My friends—I have just endured endless flooding storms in your mountains. It surely portends change—perhaps already.

(JACOB slides the heavy stone off. His great strength is evident. The SHEPHERDS are awed)

SHEPHERD THREE

(Touching his own muscles)

Great stars!

JACOB

(Dusting his hands and clothes)

Your flocks look in great need, and what with others to come, I—

SHEPHERD ONE

(Glances heavenward. Draws items from his scrip; offers his water skin)

My good man. Come—rest yourself. Have some bread—some water.

(As SHEPHERD THREE peers into the well, then withdraws as if the waters rise before his very eyes)

JACOB

Ah, I do thank you. It has been some time that I—

SHEPHERD THREE

(Reaching in; pulling out a wet hand and sleeve)

Eeyieh!

(Dips both arms in; pours water out of his cupped hands, with his sleeves dripping, dancing about)

Eeyieh, yieh, yieh!

SHEPHERD TWO

(Dipping his hand into the well, smelling and licking the water. Amazed—)

My! 'Tis even sweet! … Not a whit brackish!

(SHEPHERD ONE goes to see the miracle. With attention upon his food, JACOB does not pay attention to the SHEPHERD'S harsh whispering)

SHEPHERD THREE

Who IS he?!!

SHEPHERD ONE

Some strangeness—you ask me.

SHEPHERD THREE

(Motioning toward heaven)

Could he be … ?

SHEPHERD TWO

They—asking for Laban?! I think not.

SHEPHERD THREE

We should warn him then—you know …

SHEPHERD TWO

Well, 'tis not like I (did not)—

SHEPHERD ONE

Listen, first, we discover who he is, and then—

SHEPHERD THREE

Ehhh, she comes!

SHEPHERD ONE

Ah!

(To Jacob)

There, my friend, you see coming, as I said—your Laban's daughter.

(RACHEL enters with a small flock of sheep. SHEPHERD ONE hurries to intercept her)

This great man asks for your father. Come—

(RACHEL is puzzled as SHE approaches JACOB who seems strangely familiar to her)

JACOB

You are Rachel!—daughter of Laban?

(A still puzzled RACHEL nods)

Ah, my dearest sister!

(JACOB kisses HER on both cheeks. RACHEL is startled; the SHEPHERDS are surprised. SHEPHERD THREE is torn between his admiration for this strong man and his own interests)

SHEPHERD THREE

Ehhh! Ehh, eh!

JACOB

Ah, I beg forgiveness—I should have said. I am Jacob—her father's kin—his sister Rebekah's son. Ah, Rachel, it is so good to be here.

RACHEL

JJJ-Jacob?! You are really Jacob?

(JACOB nods)

SHEPHERD THREE

(Aside to the other Shepherds)

He's, of the r-rich nephews?!

SHEPHERD TWO

(Plucks at his own clothing)

'Tis proof—news of our Laban has, indeed traveled.

RACHEL

Ohhh … JJ-Jacob …

(Rushes off, toward and into Laban's house)

Papa … Papa …

SHEPHERD ONE

You are Jacob—son of our dear Rebekah? Why, I know your mother—some years ago it was when—

(JACOB'S focus is with the vanished Rachel)

Ah, not to worry, my friend. She returns. Come—tell us, of your journey—of yourself, of—

SHEPHERD TWO

(To Shepherds One and Three, then to Jacob)

Listen, you—you, water in my place. I am good to wait—I have no hurry. Come, rest your weary feet.

SHEPHERD THREE

No, no. My kin's place is third.

SHEPHERD ONE

My place, too, it can be—whenever.

SHEPHERD THREE

I insist. I am third. I shall *not* take out of place.

(The THREE SHEPHERDS all stand back from the well refusing to be first)

JACOB
I should like to attend these of mine uncle, if … ?

SHEPHERDS ONE, TWO & THREE
Yes, yes. This is good. We shall help you.

(JACOB begins to draw water for the trough)

JACOB
Bring even yours—the God of all gives plenty.

(THEY water sheep as)

LIGHT & fcus shift to SCENE THREE

Scene 3

TIME: Immediately following

PLACE: In front of Laban's dwelling

(RACHEL pulls LABAN through the doorway. It is apparent HE has been napping as his hair is sleep-matted. SHE carries his girdle, sandals, and aba)

RACHEL
Come Papa, come!
(RACHEL tries to get the aba on him)

LABAN
I insist you tell this—I have no time to—

RACHEL

Oh, Papa, it's a surprise.

LABAN

(Struggling against RACHEL'S efforts)

At this hour of heat, I should want such a—? Not this one, I shear today.

RACHEL

(Persisting, finger-combing Laban's hair)

Papa, you must. This is so … good.

LABAN

Then, tell it, my child. I shall not come otherwise.

RACHEL

Oh, Papa. … Jacob is come.

LABAN

Jacob?! My sister's son! Here? Where?

RACHEL

At the well. I saw him at the well.

LABAN

Well, … well, well … finally. At last. … Is Esau come too?

RACHEL

There was only Jacob and … he is sooo … good.

LABAN

(Putting his aba on)

I told you, your Papa's plan was a good one. Now, if your sister would cease crying against that Esau I could—

(Removing the aba and handing it back)
No—get me my best one—you know.

RACHEL

(Trying to get the aba back on Laban)
Papa, please. This one is good enough—really, it is much better.

LABAN

(Sternly)
Daughter, I have said—my best one.

RACHEL

(Embarrassed, pleading)
Oh, Papa, not your best one, please. He himself is not so …

LABAN

I look to our best interests. Just *do* it.

(RACHEL gives LABAN his girdle & sandals, then enters the house with the rejected aba. LABAN commences to put on his girdle. As HE sings HE will swing between anticipation and grumbling)

Music 6: WHY HAS IT TAKEN SO LONG? (vo)

OH, WHAT A GLORIOUS DAY.
OH, WHAT A DUST IN THE SKY.
HIS CAR'VAN MUST CARRY A FORTUNE. …
JUST WHY HAS IT TAKEN SO LONG?

I'LL SOON HAVE THE RICHES OF ABRAM.
I'LL SOON BE THE MAN OF MY DREAMS.

EVERY WRONG OF MY LIFE WILL BE RIGHTED. …
JUST WHY IS SHE TAKING SO LONG?

(RACHEL comes out and gives LABAN a fine aba.)

RACHEL

Papa, maybe you go first—I'll come soon—with Leah.
(Runs out, not waiting for Laban's answer)

LABAN

(While dressing / touching up his appearance)
HIS GOLD AND HIS SILVER I'LL KEEP.
THE RAIMENT, THE JEWELS, AND THE JOY.
AND SHOULD HE HAVE SHEEP AND GOATS,
I'LL REAP WHILE THE GOING IS GOOD.

THIS MUST BE AN ANSWER TO PRAYER.
THERE'S … CAMEL DUNG IN THE AIR.
AND THE THRONG AT THE WELL
WAITS MY WELCOME. …
JUST WHY DID IT TAKE THEM SO LONG?

WE'RE NOT SO VERY FAR FROM CANAAN,
SO WHY DID IT TAKE THEM SO LONG?
SO VERY LONG.

(With renewed optimism)
Well, at least one of them has come.

YES, REAP WHILE THE GOING IS GOOD.

Music 7:	**TRANSITION TO SCENE 4 (The Well)**

(LABAN proceeds with confidence and a slight swagger to the well site)

Scene 4

TIME: Immediately following

PLACE: The well

(SHEPHERD ONE draws JACOB'S attention to LABAN'S approach. SHEPHERDS TWO and THREE sit on the well as if to obscure it from Laban's eyes. THEY will wait to tell Laban about the full well. On seeing the oddly clad Jacob, LABAN hesitates, then pulls his dignity together, trying to brave things out, not understanding why there is no crowd at the well, or why Jacob is so poorly dressed)

LABAN

(Hesitantly, looking around)
Ahhh, y-you would be … J-Jacob?

JACOB

Yes, Isaac and Rebekah's child.

LABAN

Well, … my sister's ss-son.
(Hugs JACOB with confused, excessive pleasure)
At last, you are come.

JACOB

It has been quite a journey.

LABAN

(Briefly & subtlety fingering Jacob's attire)

'Twould seem so, but … have you no companions? … Not even a single camel?

JACOB

I am come, as you see.

LABAN

… A h-hundred times welcome, but … My sister's child.

(Embraces JACOB again awkwardly—patting him as if to find a girdle of concealed money. HE remains confused, looking around)

Surely, you must carry something?

JACOB

I am deeply sorry but, I have nothing, just myself.

LABAN

(Striking fingers to forehead)

But of course. You have come on—ahead, of the rest …

JACOB

I did begin with much—with very much, but … sadly everything is gone.

LABAN

Gone! S-surely you mean—behind you—t-to follow you?

JACOB

I wish it were so, but all I had is truly gone.

LABAN

Gone, how? You cannot have l-lost it?!

JACOB

In ransom.

LABAN

Ransom?! For what?

JACOB

For my life.

LABAN

I do not hear this. … This cannot be. We must raise a troop. We must avenge. Get it returned.

JACOB

No, mine uncle. My father must not hear of—

(Hesitates, aware of the hovering SHEPHERDS)

LABAN

'Tis all right. They go.

(Gestures toward the Shepherds)

Look to my sheep too, till Rachel comes, yea?

(The THREE SHEPHERDS grudgingly exit with the sheep as LABAN sends them off)

(To Jacob)

So, what is all this—?

JACOB

(Sighs)

In coming here, I was waylaid by one called Eliphaz—my brother Esau's son. Esau had instructed him to … well, to kill me.

LABAN

You mean … dead!

JACOB

We've had some troubles.

LABAN

But cause—to leave you nothing?

JACOB

Thankfully, my life.

LABAN

This is, not possible.

JACOB

For a time, it truly felt so. But I have my life, in part, because of the prophecies.

LABAN

… Prophecies?!

JACOB

My grandfather Abraham, his prophecies—about slavery in a strange land.

LABAN

Slavery?! Shades this to my house?!

JACOB

It concerns my father's house. You see, … it was my last hope. I advised Eliphaz that without me, his father's house would be left to bear all the prophecies. It was for that,

Eliphaz left me alive. But … else wise, they took everything—even down to my very raiment.

LABAN

This is, not bearable. To come so far—for nothing. 'Tis …

(A disturbing thought strikes him)

'Tis possible … this Esau, this son Eliphaz, you say?—should come, also here?

JACOB

Not here. They will not come here.

LABAN

(Becoming the bravado again)

In such cowardice then, we shall go to them. I have words your brother should not forget.

JACOB

No, mine uncle, it must be forgiven and forgotten.

LABAN

Forgiven! Forgotten! How can you say this?!

JACOB

I have vowed a vow—I shall not offend my brother again for any cause.

LABAN

Offend your brother! 'Twas he, robbed you—naked!

JACOB

But I am alive, and bearing the hope that—

LABAN

This is a dreadful day—I knew it. My son, you have come with nothing to a place with nothing. This land parch-dry and the well—nigh gone. I cannot think you should stay for this. Perhaps, if you could go and … well, I don't know, perhaps … you could go and come again.

JACOB

(Half-motions to the well, then stops himself)

I feel I must stay as long as God wills.

LABAN

Of course, as the gods will but …

(Paces, moping his brow, then)

Is it true what we heard—how your brother—this, Esau—sold his birthright to you?

JACOB

(Sighs)

Yes, it is true.

LABAN

Why ever would one do such a thing?

JACOB

Because Esau claimed there was no future world. He vowed he preferred food, gold, and other things without waiting for a day that would never come, he said. For that, we made an exchange. He received numerous things. He even boasted of his gain.

LABAN

… Yes, and yours, with a little patience, is the doubled, birthright portion—yes.

JACOB

No, mine uncle, I did not do it for some future double portion. I cared—that Esau not play the priest, when he despised the divine service. That was why. But even so, I shouldn't have done it. I should have trusted (that)—

LABAN

I say, what's *done is done*. Esau cannot deny that. The double portion must be yours when— … My, my—here you are—and I have not even asked. How is your father, your mother, too?

JACOB

Father is quite well, considering his age and all. And mother? Well, she never seems to age.

LABAN

Yes, dear Rebekah. … Well, my son, I tell you, truly. We have next to nothing here—so, there seems little purpose your staying overlong what with—

JACOB

Mine uncle, I, too, regret this circumstance, but I am not without strength—I can do much.

LABAN

(With a touch of suspicion)

Wait. … If they robbed everything—what did you do for food, for drink and, where did you come by … by this?

(Flicks at Jacob's attire)

JACOB

In my dire need, I told God I needed bread to eat and clothes to put on and, He provided.

LABAN

(Indicating Heaven and Jacob's clothes)

Your God … provided this!

JACOB

As much and when I needed.

LABAN

What you needed! … More warning—less providing.

JACOB

No, I have learned many things in this experience.

LABAN

At a price too, too high, I say!

(Shakes his head; sighing)

I remember—as yesterday—your grandfather sending for your beloved mother. Ho—that Abram, your grandfather, he was a gen'rous man. Eyeh. … eyeh. … Well, I suppose for now, we just have to make the best of it.

(Gazing at Jacob's attire)

Ayeh, you ever sheared sheep? … This is good. In truth—you are perfectly attired to it. Come—first we shall eat—then, it shall be a full day.

Music 8: EXIT & TRANSITION TO SCENE 5 (The Field)

(JACOB and LABAN exit into Laban's house)

Scene 5

TIME: Immediately following

PLACE: A field near Haran

(RACHEL enters pulling LEAH)

RACHEL

Come, come.

LEAH

(Pulling back)
Rachel, please …

RACHEL

Leah, I tell you—it is Jacob.

LEAH

How can you know this for sure?

RACHEL

He told me he was.

LEAH

Where then is, Esau?

RACHEL

Oh, Leah, Papa will not force you to marry Esau.

LEAH

If this is truly Jacob, he is come for you—and for that—
Papa shall send me to Esau. I know it.

RACHEL

Papa would not—if you did not want it.

LEAH

Oh, yes he would!

RACHEL

Not for sure. We can ask Jacob about Esau and—

LEAH

We shan't, even whisper Esau!

RACHEL

We'll ask carefully. Besides, Esau's probably not so bad—you know how stories are.

LEAH

I do not care what they agreed—what anyone says. I shall not marry Esau. I should rather die.

RACHEL

(With ecstasy)

Ho! … I nearly did. I tell you—Jacob is exactly like the one I saw in my dream, only now in real life, (he's)—

LEAH

I shall not do this.

RACHEL

Leah, stop worrying. If Esau is not right, we shall find someone who is.

LEAH

Who? … See—you cannot name anyone.

RACHEL

(With sympathy)

I am thinking. … Leah, if you weren't forever off crying about Esau, there might be someone.

LEAH

Who? … Just name one.

RACHEL

… Things change, Leah. I did not know Jacob was the one in my dream till just now—so you see! … And you know what Mama says. Trust in God. He will provide. He will.

LEAH

What if He has and it's, Esau?

RACHEL

Oh, Leah, it's not all so bad. If you had seen him!

LEAH	**RACHEL**
If you feel right in this, you are so favored—believe me. I wish I were a man.	*(Becoming lost in her dream)* He is so right.

*(***MUSIC 9***—LEAH, and* **MUSIC 10***—RACHEL, will be SUNG AT THE SAME TIME — vocal only)*

Music 9: I WISH I WERE A MAN (Leah – vo)

YOU CAN DO AS YOU PLEASE
AS A MAN

(MUSIC 10: RACHEL begins here*—vo)*

I'D BE DONE WITH BENDING MY KNEES
TO THE PAST AND THE WAYS OF TRADITION.

I WOULD CHANGE THINGS.
REARRANGE THINGS.
I WOULD FLOUT THEM.
I'D OUT-SHOUT THEM.
AND I'D DO AS I PLEASED
AS A MAN.

I'D BE DONE WITH HIDING ME.
I COULD SAY WHAT I THOUGHT,
NOT JUST WHAT I OUGHT;
'CAUSE, AS A MAN
YOU CAN SAY WHAT YOU PLEASE.

I'D BE SO STRONG AND BRAVE.
I'D TELL THEM WHERE TO GO
AND THEY'D KNOW,
THEY'D BETTER NOT STEP ON ME,
FOR I'D HAVE A MIND OF MY OWN.

I'D BE DONE WITH CARVINGS IN STONE
TO THE PAST AND THE WAYS OF TRADITION.

I WOULD SHATTER THEM.
NEVER FLATTER THEM
WITH SUBMISSION,
'CAUSE AS A MAN
I COULD DO WHAT I PLEASED.

NO ONE WOULD CHOOSE FOR ME
'CAUSE YOU SEE,
AS A MAN

YOU CAN DO AS YOU PLEASE.
AS A MAN
YOU CAN SAY WHAT YOU PLEASE.
AS A MAN
I'D BE FREE AS THE BREEZE.
I WISH, I WISH,
I WERE A MAN.

Music 10: HE'S COME TRUE (Rachel – vo)

LIKE THAT DREAM
BUT MORE THAN A DREAM,
HE'S COME TRUE.
HE'LL BE MINE.
FOREVER AND EVER BE MINE.
HE'S SO DIVINE
LIKE THAT DREAM,
THAT WONDERFUL DREAM
THAT'S COME TRUE.

HE'S SO STRONG,
SO INCREDIBLY LIKE I'D SEEN,
AND LOVING AND KIND.
SO PERFECTLY RIGHT
THE SIGHT OF HIM
MADE ME LOSE
ALL THOUGHT BUT OF HIM.

I WOULDN'T CHANGE THINGS
OR REARRANGE THINGS,
'CAUSE MY DREAM
OF THIS MAN
HAS COME TRUE.

HE'S SO TALL,
SO INCREDIBLY ALL
I EVER IMAGINED.
SO PERFECTLY RIGHT,
THE SIGHT OF HIM
MADE ME KNOW
HE WAS THE ONE.

OH, PLEASE LET THIS BE.
FOREVER AND SOLELY BE MINE.
LOVE SO DIVINE BEYOND DREAM,
FOR HE'S COME TRUE.

(Speaking, still lost in her dream)
Ho, Leah, life with Jacob will be so wonderful. Ho, right away—we shall hire someone for the sheep and w(e)—
(HER eyes fly open)
The sheep! Ho, no, I forgot the sheep! OHHH, Jacob will think I'm some …

LEAH
Jacob! These are Papa's sheep.

RACHEL
Oh, Papa! …

LEAH
Rachel, listen, I have decided—since Jacob is here and since there is no one for me … I have decided—I shall not marry. I do not care what tradition says.
(Conclude **MUSIC—vo—***at* **9A***)*
I'LL TRAVEL TO FAR AWAY PLACES,
I'LL STUDY THE HISTORY OF RACES
I'LL BUILD ME A SHIP OF REEDS
AND BECOME FAMOUS FOR DARING DEEDS.

And Papa shall just have to accept it.

RACHEL

There is hope in that?!

(Shaking her head)

… Listen, I tell you, things will work out. We shall trust in God—like Mama says. So come—we shall find the sheep and then—oh, when you see him.

(As LEAH and RACHEL hurry to the well and then exit in search of the sheep)

Music 11: EXIT & SCENE CHANGE TO 6 (Inside Laban's dark house)

Dim to BLACKOUT

Scene 6

TIME: One month later

PLACE: Inside Laban's dark house

Music 12: INCIDENTAL (to candle lighting)

(In the DARKNESS, LABAN enters with a candle. HE lights other candles before teraphim, i.e., small household idols. HE kneels and offers incense)

LABAN

(Grumbling; arising and moving about as needed)

Oh my sweet gods—why always me? One month I feed this fellow—and for what? For that Esau's greed! May his camels die. May all his children be … daughters. Why always me? One daughter is good—but no, for me they come twins! And then—nothing. Nary a son. And now, this man with nothing. And mine firstborn, Leah—"I shall not marry," she says. Speak, my sweet gods. What is to do with this Jacob? With my Leah? … What is to do with this dreaded lot? …

(Arises, slowly paces and ponders)

Who spoke that? … Jacob's God gives me good fortune while Jacob remains?! What do you mean, good fort— … Ah, , yes—the well waters did return about then, but …

(Addressing his gods)

Is such to be the whole of it? Just, sweet water in a well?!

The teraphim CANDLES flame out in a startling burst and LABAN is in the dark except for his ONE CANDLE.

—Eiyeehhh!

(Holds candle high, confused as to the source of the display; sighs, paces, argues with that inner voice)

Well, yes, he does toil the whole day for me, but … All right and yes, some of the night but, *that* is my woe. My neighbors shall plot to steal his employ less I pay some wage; and worse even—I hand my Rachel to him for nothing?

(Last CANDLE flames out)

Ayieh! … All right. All right. But, I feel to say, if this voice be Jacob's God, what, are my solutions? … What is to do with mine firstborn, my Leah? … With your Jacob? … Why now this silence? Such troubles!

(Muttering in the darkness)
I merely seek … what I deserve.

LABAN exits in the BLACKOUT

Music 13: EXIT & SCENE CHANGE TO 7 (The field)

Scene 7

TIME: A few days later—early morning

PLACE: The field near Haran

(JACOB and RACHEL are mid-conversation. JACOB is now dressed in the Syrian/ Turkish style)

RACHEL
He won't consent to it, Jacob—not till Leah is married. And there seems to be no one now—not with those things about Esau.

JACOB
There has to be a way to resolve this. Has not your father said anything?

RACHEL
… Well, yesterday he said, he may have someone in mind for Leah. … Don't you see—you must take great care.

JACOB

Great care? For what?

RACHEL

Papa is more than clever. He could trick *you* to marry Leah.

JACOB

(Between shock and disbelief)

Rachel!

RACHEL

You do not know him. He says that Leah, as firstborn, must marry first—so you see …

JACOB

He knows I cannot marry Leah. She is promised to Esau.

RACHEL

Esau does not care.

JACOB

Ho, he would care. You cannot imagine what he might do. Besides … I cannot offend Esau again if I am ever to return to my father's house. Your father knows this—

RACHEL

I know, my father.

JACOB

Rachel, even should he want it—he could trick me in this?! Deceive me?

Music 14: IMPOSSIBLE (1) (vo)

'TWOULD BE IMPOSSIBLE, MY LOVE
IMPOSSIBLE,
I'D NEVER BE DECEIVED
FOR I WOULD KNOW TO SEE
THESE EYES, THIS FACE,
THE ENCHANTING GRACE OF YOU.
SUCH IS MY LOVE.
'TWOULD BE IMPOSSIBLE
TO BLIND THESE LOVING EYES.

AND I WOULD RECOGNIZE, MY LOVE,
YOUR NEARNESS, YOUR EMBRACE;
HOW WHEN YOU'RE BY MY SIDE
THIS WORLD'S A DIFFERENT PLACE.

SUCH IS MY LOVE.
'TWOULD BE IMPOSSIBLE
TO FOOL MY LOVING HEART.

YOU MUST BELIEVE, MY LOVE,
I WOULD KNOW,
FOR THERE IS SOMETHING CHANGED IN ME,
AND TIME FORGETS TO COUNT FOR ME
WHEN I'M WITH YOU.

DON'T YOU SEE
HOW IMPOSSIBLE IT WOULD BE
TO DECEIVE ME?
YOU MUST BELIEVE
'TWOULD BE IMPOSSIBLE
NOT TO KNOW.
IMPOSSIBLE.
JUST IMPOSSIBLE.
(Speaking)
Impossible.

RACHEL

I know what you believe, but … We must agree on a sign for when we marry. … No, three signs. I shall …

(Demonstrates signs)

I shall touch your right toe, … your right thumb and your right ear—just in case—

JACOB

Rachel, this seems a bit—

LABAN (OFFSTAGE)

Jaaaa—

RACHEL

Haa-aa!

LABAN (OFFSTAGE)

coooob …

RACHEL

He will try something. I know it.

(Starts her exit)

LABAN (OFFSTAGE)

(Closer)

Jaaa—coooob.

RACHEL

I know what I say. Please …

JACOB

Not to worry. I shall be careful.

(RACHEL exits. LABAN enters, hands at his mouth)

LABAN

Jaaa … Ah, my dear Jacob. … I have been thinking, we should talk for you are as my brother but … well, this does not mean you need keep laboring in my house for nothing. So plainly put, we must talk a wage for you.

JACOB

I did not come for a wage, mine uncle—others have offered, but … what I should like, I think you know. I should like Rachel to wife—according to my mother's agreement with you.

LABAN

Ho, 'tis such a dilemma. I ask you, … for Rachel's sake—her reputation—how could I give her for nothing? And the loss. Why, these many years, she tends my flock; if I were to lose her, I …

JACOB

You could gain me! This could be the way! I have no things to give for her, but I could give my labors for her—whatever is fair.

LABAN

(Aside)

…Ho, his labors. This might resolve both the neighbors and the wage! Yes! … except …

(To Jacob, manifesting intent to give Leah to him)

Ho, my son, I have this other dilemma. You see, … well, tradition demands I give mine firstborn first for surely she—

JACOB

No, no—'tis not possible for me. You must remember, she is the promised of Esau, and you know, I have vowed a vow never to offend him again. Besides, my love is for Rachel.

LABAN

If Esau wishes Leah, he should have come—long ago. … Is there not some way you yourself could— … Well then, if we speak solely of my beautiful Rachel … surely for her, I should expect not less than the years … let us say, fourteen.

JACOB

Mine uncle, please hear me. She is worth to me a hundred hundred years, but, I say a week of years is more than fair.

LABAN

… Twelve? … Ten?

JACOB

Seven is more than good. More than fair.

LABAN

(Deliberating)

… All right, seven; better you than some stranger, I suppose, but you understand, your labor must come first, before …

JACOB

Mine uncle—on my word, I promise (I will)

LABAN

No, Jacob, you must know, the dowry price is always paid first. Besides, I need time to arrange for my Leah, so that's the deal, seven full years: take it or leave it. I shall not be persuaded otherwise.

JACOB

What choice do I have?

LABAN

Simple, my son. Yea or nay.

JACOB

(Deep sigh, then firm, serious)

… All right, yes, but I feel to say, for the sake of perfect understanding: I serve these seven years for Rachel, not Leah, nor some other named Rachel.

.

LABAN

My son, … I … What are you saying—some other Rachel?!

JACOB

I just think to be precise.

LABAN

Yes, but—my, my, my …

JACOB

Also, I feel to say—without offense. If, for any reason hereafter, your daughter's names become exchanged—well, these years shall be for your second-born daughter—as of this day.

LABAN

My son!!—I scarce believe you would …

JACOB

Then, the old birth agreement is good?

(JACOB holds his hand out, palm up)

LABAN

(Resignedly places HIS palm upon Jacob's)

'Tis good, at least for Rachel's part—but what you expect me to sort out for mine firstborn is—

JACOB

(As he exits; first to Laban / then to self)

Something will work out. / Oh Rachel! Not such good news.

LABAN

Eyieh!

(Groaning)

Ho, blight that ol' birth agreement. …

(A light dawns)

Ho, indeed, … the birth agreement! … My firstborn Leah. Rebekah's firstborn by *Jacob's* birthright purchase! Makes it birthright to birthright, firstborn to firstborn—the very words, or nigh the very words! I think, I have no dilemma.

(LEAH enters in the direction of Laban's entry)

LEAH

Papa …

LABAN

(In relieved tone)

Why, my dearest firstborn.

LEAH

Papa, could we talk?

LABAN

Always, my child. What would you?

LEAH

(A little despairingly)

What is to become of me?

LABAN

My dearest child, whatever do you mean?

LEAH

I mean, what is obvious—Rachel and Jacob. What do you intend with me?

LABAN

(In a dismissing manner)

What I've always intended, you know—firstborn to firstborn.

LEAH

Papa, I cannot marry Esau!

LABAN

Whoa, my child—I am agreed, if this Esau proves not so—well, so first rate, we shall find some other with birthright. There is no hurry—much can pass in seven years.

LEAH

Seven years? What is seven years?

LABAN

Jacob has agreed to work seven years for me—to mete out the birth agreement; to provide the dowry. So, you see … no need to hurry things. We just wait it out.

LEAH

Papa, even seventy years shan't change me about Esau.

LABAN

We shall not talk more of Esau. Your papa has work to do. And he shall do—what he shall do.

(LABAN exits, humming jauntily to "MUSIC #4")

LEAH

You worry me, Papa. But … seven years—I thank Thee, God. I do thank Thee.

(RACHEL enters excitedly)

RACHEL

Oh, Leah. I don't know to laugh or cry. Papa consents I marry Jacob—but … in *seven years.* He does not care it is all the fault of Esau and he—

LEAH

Esau! What of Esau—has Papa … ?

RACHEL

No, no. It's not about you and Esau. It's about Papa. He insists he get a goodly something—like when Aunt Rebekah left to marry Isaac. How oft we've heard that tale of plenty. But now, Jacob arrives with nothing and …

LEAH

So, what is the fault of Esau?

RACHEL

The fault!—because Esau robbed Jacob of everything when Jacob was coming here.

LEAH

Wh-what?!

RACHEL

That is why we wait SEVEN years. Yes, Esau stole all the things meant for father, for my dowry.

LEAH

This happened—you did not tell me?!

RACHEL

Mama said, not to. You worry too much.

LEAH

This proves it—I was right about that Esau. Oh, Rachel, don't you see, God IS providing. I have seven years and—I'm sorry, I am …

RACHEL

Seven years feels so impossible,

(Sighs)

but Jacob says, it is the only way. You were so right about that Esau.

LEAH

For a firstborn, he is a dreadful disappointment.

RACHEL

Things are, even worse than you know.

LEAH

What else haven't you told me?!

RACHEL

Well, Jacob isn't proud of this but—just before he came here—he pretended he was Esau and … well, Jacob got the firstborn blessing, too.

LEAH

Pretended, he was Esau!! … To deceive his father?!

RACHEL

He had to. The firstborn blessing was not Esau's. He'd sold his birthright to Jacob just like we heard and then later—Esau pretended the first blessing was still his. He doesn't deserve firstborn anything.

LEAH

But Jacob. How could he—deceiving his father!

RACHEL

Well, Esau did worse.

LEAH

That's no reason, Rachel! You know what Mama says—it's not who does worse, it's who does wrong. No one escapes that.

RACHEL

Maybe, it had to be.

LEAH

Rachel, this I believe—whatever Esau did, and that is bad enough—if Jacob did wrong too, he will have to face it in some way—at some time. What we think or want, won't change that.

RACHEL

Jacob is a good man.

LEAH

I know. I am fond of him, too—he is one of the best. But if he did wrong in this—he will have to pay the price at some time. That is just the way things are.

RACHEL

No one knows enough to judge him, Leah.

LEAH

He deceived his father. How could he do that?

RACHEL

(Subdued)

I don't know everything—but I do know Jacob has suffered for this. In truth, I think God will forgive before Jacob even forgives himself.

LEAH

Then, as Mama says—let us leave it to God. Perhaps these seven years are part of that.

RACHEL

It is so hard.

LEAH

Seven years will go quickly—you will see. Solutions will come—they have to.

RACHEL

(As much to comfort herself)

Yes, we must trust. Things will come out right.

LEAH

Come then, let us tell Mama. She will know what is best.

Music 15: EXIT & SCENE CHANGE TO 8 (Well near Haran)

(As RACHEL and LEAH, with arms about each other, exit into their, i.e., Laban's house)

Dim to BLACKOUT

Scene 8

TIME: Seven years later

PLACE: The well near Haran

(The THREE SHEPHERDS, deep in thought, are around the well. THEY are seven years older, and are better dressed as things have improved for them. ONE and TWO have shepherd staves. The rope and well cover are gone)

SHEPHERD THREE

I say—we warn Jacob.

SHEPHERD TWO

I say—we keep, out of this.

SHEPHERD THREE

At the least—tell Laban what we—

SHEPHERDS ONE & TWO

(In shocked unison)

Laban!

SHEPHERD THREE

Maybe it would stop him.

SHEPHERD TWO

I should prefer to live. … Yes and besides—

Music 16: OH, WHAT A SIGHT (v+r)

SHEPHERDS ONE & TWO

OH, WHAT A SIGHT
WE'D MAKE IN MIDST OF A FIGHT.
WITH OUR YEARS AND THESE SPEARS,
WE'D BLEED LESS FROM CUTS
THAN FROM JEERS.
YOU MUST BE LOSING YOUR HEAD,
TO THINK TO INSTILL ANY DREAD,
WITH JUST WE THREE IN DEFENSE,
WHERE IS YOUR SENSE?

SHEPHERD THREE

Then … warn Jacob, like I said.

SHEPHERDS ONE & TWO

AND WHAT DO WE SAY?
SUGGEST THAT HE FLEE AWAY?
THAT SEVEN YEARS OF HIS PRIME
WAS TOO LONG A TIME?
THAT HE'S MADE LABAN RICH AND SEDATE
FOR A MATE HE MIGHT NOT EXPECT?

SHEPHERD THREE

Oh, who's to say?

SHEPHERDS ONE & TWO

WHO'S TO SAY?!
WITH LABAN THERE'S ALWAYS A WAY,
FOR NOW THAT THE TIME IS NIGH COME
WITH LEAH STILL PART OF THE SUM,
WE BELIEVE—THERE'S MORE UP HIS SLEEVE
THAN JUST SKIN AND NAIVE.
WE THINK THERE'S A PLAN TO EXTEND
JACOB'S STAY BY SOME CUNNING PRETEND.

SHEPHERD THREE

There you see, it falls to us—like it or not.

SHEPHERDS ONE, TWO & THREE

WITH WATERS SO HIGH IN THE WELL,
SINCE JACOB HAS COME HERE TO DWELL.
WHEN SONS HAVE BEEN BORN IN THAT HOUSE
(Mimics rocking a baby, perhaps using their Shepherd staves)
TO LABAN'S LONG-SUFFERING SPOUSE.
WHEN PEST IN THE CATTLE HAS CEASED;
WHEN MORE JACOB THAN SHEEP HAVE BEEN FLEECED.
HOW CAN—

(The THREE SHEPHERDS break off singing to watch LABAN and JACOB enter near the well and cross the stage in conversation.)

LABAN

Yes, yes, I must insist, yes—the sheep moved today and sheared by morning. What with that tradesman coming, there is (no time)—

JACOB

There is only so much one man can—

LABAN

We, but meet your agreement. Now, about that lower field where the—

JACOB

Mine uncle, surely I have fulfilled my days. I must ask that—

LABAN

Patience, my son. 'Tis yet three days by my count. And I assure—not to worry—'tis planned, as was long agreed. Though, I remind, in the meantime, much work yet to do.

JACOB

There always is, but—

LABAN

So, come, about that lower field, I was telling? With steady work, piling the stones of it should not be taking so long. And repairs to the side wall, too …

(LABAN and JACOB exit before the speech ends)

Music 17: OH, WHAT A SIGHT (conclusion)

SHEPHERDS ONE, TWO & THREE

SO HOW CAN HE LET JACOB GO
ALONG WITH HIS FUTURE TRADE FLOW?
HE'LL NEVER ALLOW SUCH A THING,
FOR BEFORE HE GETS STUNG, HE'LL STING.

SO WHAT CAN WE DO
TO PROTECT THIS TRUSTING NEPHEW
FROM WHAT LABAN HAS DONE
AND IS LIKELY TO DO?
ALMOST CERTAIN TO DO.

WE DO NOT DOUBT
WE KNOW HIM TOO WELL.
WE DO NOT DOUBT
BUT WHAT CAN WE DO?

SHEPHERD ONE
Come, we have got to think of something.

Music 18: EXIT & SCENE TRANSITION TO 9 (The Field)

(The THREE SHEPHERDS exit, leading their sheep)

LIGHTS dim for time passage

Scene 9

TIME: Three days later—mid-morning of the wedding day

PLACE: The field near Haran

(LEAH enters, crying. SHE kneels as RACHEL enters, but RACHEL is not seen by LEAH. RACHEL overhears LEAH'S prayer)

LEAH
Dear Father, I shall do anything—please. … Even to marry Esau, if I must—but please, please—not this. … Thou knowest I have come to love Jacob, too, but—Rachel loved him first, so please … change Papa's heart. Please.

(RACHEL struggles to control her emotions, while LEAH remains kneeling unaware, until)

Music 19: SOMETIMES (vo)

RACHEL

(Striving to control her own griefs)

SOMETIMES IN DESPAIR,
WE THINK WE'RE ALONE.
DARKNESS SEEMS ALL AROUND.
WE'RE LOST IN THE CROWD
OF A THOUSAND FEARS,
IN A WORLD THAT SEEMS NOT TO CARE.

RACHEL & LEAH

SOMETIMES IT FEELS THAT THE HEART
MUST BREAK, NEVER TO BE HEALED.
TO HIM WE CRY OUT,
WE NEVER AGREED TO THIS PART.

(LEAH rises. SHE and RACHEL embrace)

SOMETIMES WE'RE AFRAID
THAT HE DOES NOT SEE,
THAT HEAVEN IS TOO FAR AWAY.
WHAT MORE CAN WE SAY?
HOW LONG ON BENDED KNEE?

SOMETIMES WE'RE AFRAID
THAT IN WEAKNESS WE MIGHT,
FORSAKE WHAT WE KNOW,
OR TRADE ALL AWAY
WHILE LIVING WITH VEILED SIGHT.

LEAH

This seems—like some terrible dream.

RACHEL

Leah, we are not alone. We must remember what Mama says.

LEAH & RACHEL

SOMETIMES WE FORGET
THAT THE DARKEST NIGHT
PRECEDES THE DAWNING DAY.
THAT THE TEST IN LIFE IS FOR YOU AND ME
TO TRUST GOD WHEN NOTHING SEEMS RIGHT.

SOMETIMES WE FORGET
WHAT HAS GONE BEFORE,
OR THE PROMISE OF WHAT CAN BE.
FOR THE FIRE THAT TEMPERS THE LOWLY CLAY
IS THE WAY OF THE MENTOR DIVINE.
THE WAY OF THE MENTOR DIVINE.

LEAH

Oh, Rachel, how can we do this?

RACHEL

Because we must—because God requires it for some reason. … Leah, I suspected long ago Papa would try this. I even made plans against it. But then I knew—long before Papa spoke today, I knew in my heart what God required in our case. And even in my mind, it came so clear. … But for a long time I denied it all, hoping, hoping that—

LEAH

But why? Why in this way?

RACHEL

Seven years ago, I said we should trust—that is what we must do.

LEAH

I cannot do this—it is too much. … It is to hurt you both.

RACHEL

There is no other way, Leah. Jacob will not knowingly offend Esau again. And you know what Papa said; what Papa would—

LEAH

We could find another way.

RACHEL

No, not when this is the way required.

LEAH

No, I could marry Esau. If I kept him away, Papa might consent. He might.

RACHEL

Leah, we both know what is required. However hard, however painful … for some reason, God requires this.

LEAH

But what if this divides us? If you regret this after and—

RACHEL

We have to trust … and we must never, EVER forget— we loved each other before any of this. … Come, we must prepare. … I must tell you, too. Jacob and I agreed on a sign—on three signs.

(Touches Leah's right toe, thumb, and ear)

If he has any doubts—you will need to know.

LEAH

I am so afraid he will hate me forever for this.

RACHEL

(Reflecting her own concerns)

I know. I know.

Music 20: EXIT & SCENE CHANGE TO 10 (The field)

(RACHEL & LEAH, with arms about each other, exit into Laban's house)

Scene 10

TIME: Several hours later—nighttime

PLACE: In the field area near Haran

LIGHTING is mostly moonlight

(SERVANTS are making final preparations in setting up and furnishing a new tent—in the field. Two female SERVANTS are completing a bed of sheepskins and coverings)

SERVANT TWO

Can you believe it?!

SERVANT ONE

Me! Not me—not a word of it.

SERVANT TWO

But it explains—the feasting first, and so late! And Leah, suddenly vanished—excused for sickness!

SERVANT ONE

Of course, she is sick, for the shame of it all. What is tradition coming to?

SERVANT TWO

That's why we're in the dark!

SERVANT ONE

We're always in the dark with Laban.

SERVANT TWO

Not at festive times.

SERVANT ONE

You shall not convince me. Switching girls, indeed.

Music 21: WEDDING PARTY ENTRANCE

(A smallish WEDDING PARTY, accompanied by two MUSICIANS, enters to walk/dance behind JACOB, LABAN, and a heavily-veiled LEAH. They will proceed to set their candles in/on a candle-holding devise near the tent)

Look. As if he could not tell Rachel from Leah!

SERVANT TWO

Where is everyone?!

SERVANT ONE

'Tis late—you said yourself.

SERVANT TWO

That is more proof—he sent them away. And where is their mother?

SERVANT ONE

Where a good mother would be at this hour—with her sick child. Nonsense.

SERVANT TWO

He did it. That is Leah.

SERVANT ONE

(Handing SERVANT TWO an empty basket)

Off with your foolishness.

SERVANT TWO

(As SHE exits)

You shall see! You shall see!

SERVANT ONE

(Exits with her empty basket)

Poor Leah—this whole business—so shameful.

LABAN

(To the GUESTS in a jovial manner)

Ah, my friends—this has been excellent. Now as I've said—several times—'tis late—so again I thank you—thank you for coming. As well, I remind—you are welcome to rejoin us, tomorrow noon. We shall have the usual—

(SHEPHERD TWO motions to LABAN as THE GUESTS ready themselves. LABAN begrudgingly accedes his prior promise)

Haah? … Ah, yes, right—I nigh forgot.
(To Jacob while stifling a yawn)
Sorry for this. I tried before to send them off—but … one last song and dance—they quite insisted.

JACOB

Some of your customs seem … rather unusual.

LABAN

Oh, no, no. They serve us well—a long time.
(To the Guests)
Well, you are ready?
(To Jacob with feigned shock as JACOB and LEAH move, on invitation, to join the dancers)
Oh, no, no. Such is not custom. You watch—enjoy.

Music 22: HALIA

(An impatient LABAN stands between Jacob and Leah. The GUESTS begin dancing. THEY do not act comic)

Come, come, the song—'tis late.

THE WEDDING GUESTS

HA LI, HI LO, HI LUP UP UP,
HA LI, HI LO, HI LUP.
AROUND WE GO
TO GET COURAGE UP.
HA LI, HI LO, HI LUP.

THE WEDDING GUESTS (CONT.)
HOW DARE WE SPEAK
WHAT NEEDS TO BE SPOKE?
WE HAVE TO DO IT,
WE'VE COME THIS FAR NOW.
WE HAVE TO, WE HAVE TO,
YES, TELL HIM WHAT'S DONE.
JUST HOW, OH HOW DARE WE?

SHEPHERDS ONE, TWO & THREE
WE MUST.

THE WEDDING GUESTS
HA LI, HI LO, HI LUP UP UP,
HALIA, HI LO, HILIA, HI LUP.
WE'LL CIRCLE THIS WAY
FULL ROUND AGAIN,
HALIA, HI LO, HIILIA, HI LUP.

SINCE NO ONE HAS HEARD—
WE'LL SING IT AGAIN;
HALIA, HI LO, HILIA, HI LUP.
UNFORTUNATE DAY, IT SEEMS THAT HE'S DEAF;
HALIA, HI LO, THIS IS LEAH, HI LUP.

HA LI, HI LO, HI LUP UP UP
HALIA, HI LO, THIS IS LEAH, HI LUP.

JUST LOOK AT OLD LABAN WITH SKIN SO RED,
AND THICK AS HIS NEW SON'S NODDING HEAD.
HA LI, HI LO, HI LUP UP UP
HALIA, HI LO, SHE IS LEAH, HI LUP.

IT CAN'T BE SAID MORE PLAIN TO HIS HEAD.

SHEPHERD TWO
IF LABAN GETS THIS WE'RE DEAD.

WEDDING GUESTS
WE'VE DONE ALL WE DARE
TO SORT OUT THIS PAIR,
HALIA, HI LO, SHE IS LEAH, HI LUP.

WE GAVE IT A TRY,
AND TOO SOON, HE'LL FIND WHY
WE SING,
HALIA, HI LO, SHE IS LEAH, HI LUP
HALIA, HALIA, HALIA, HI LUP.

THERE'S NOTHING MORE WE DARE SAY,
JUST HALIA, HALIA, HALIA,
TILL OUR TIME IS UP.
HALIA, HALIA, HALIA

LABAN
YOUR TIME IS UP.

WEDDING GUESTS
HALIA, HI LUP.
WE WISH YOU …
(Intimidated by LABAN)
GOOD NIGHT.

LABAN
(Insensible to what has just been sung)
That was just lovely. Well, 'tis done. Thank you for coming.

(GUESTS take candles as they exit past Laban)

LABAN (CONT.)
Yes, yes. Have a good night. Remember, tomorrow noon—my house, yes. Thank you. Thank you. Come again. Yes, tomorrow, noon-ish, anytime. Good night. Good night.

(LABAN leads JACOB and LEAH to the new tent now lit almost solely by moonlight. One CANDLE remains near the tent doorway)

Ho, it seems we had the whole of Padan-aram here. Why, if they all come tomorrow, I—

(JACOB reaches for the remaining CANDLE. LABAN stops him)

Ho, no, no, my son. We *never* take light into the nuptial tent—'tis a, another custom, here. 'Tis, bad luck—means no son—s-sons. Trust me—no sons for the longest time. So, good night, my son.

(LABAN kisses JACOB and LEAH on both cheeks)

JACOB
Good night.

LABAN
Good night, my child. So pleased. Go on now.

(JACOB and LEAH exit into the tent. LABAN closes the tent flap, takes the remaining light and with a slight spring in his step, takes up the tune)

Music 22A: BRIEF REPRISE - HALIA (vo)

HA LI, HI LO, HI LUP UP UP
HALIA, HI LO, SHE IS LEAH—

(Beat)

… Aahh!

(Beat. HE turns to stare at the tent. HIS startled recognition changes to satisfaction as HE realizes with half-anger / half-amusement that JACOB didn't understand either)

… Uuh.

(Finishes the tune to "la-la", as HE proceeds towards his house. At the doorway, HE turns and subtlety salutes the Jacob/Leah tent with his candle, then blows it out)

BLACKOUT to

INTERMISSION

Act Two

ACT TWO

Music 23: ENTR'ACTE - Reprise - HALIA
(Patriarch wanders thru set playing wind solo)

Scene 1

Music 23A: OPENING: Curtain Rises

TIME: Early next morning

PLACE: In front of the new tent—all evidence of festivity is gone.

(In the DAWNING LIGHT a small CROWD silently gathers to sit outside the new tent as if some quiet business requires them. Suddenly THEY sense a sound and fix upon the tent door. JACOB, in a state of shock, raises the tent flap to exit. HE and the CROWD stare at each other without expression. There is a glimpse of LEAH, deeply asleep. Then JACOB drops the tent flap to conceal himself. THE CROWD calmly resumes their busy work. LABAN, entering from his house, is startled to see the gathering. HE quietly, but hastily, herds them off, exiting too, with the Patriarch following)

LABAN

Come, come—away. Give the man peace; 'tisn't noon yet.

(A dejected JACOB enters from the tent and goes to sit wearily on the stone wall of the field)

Music 24: IMPOSSIBLE (II) (vo)

JACOB

(With deep feeling)

THIS IS IMPOSSIBLE.
I CANNOT YET BELIEVE,
I DID NOT KNOW TO SEE
ANOTHER'S WALK;
SOME OTHER GRACEFUL FORM.
IT IS IMPOSSIBLE
THAT I COULD SEE AND SAY,
YOU ARE MY LOVE.

THIS IS IMPOSSIBLE.
HOW COULD I BE SO NAIVE?
I DID NOT KNOW TO HEAR
ANOTHER'S STEP,
THAT TIMID, TREMBLING VOICE.
IT IS IMPOSSIBLE
THAT I COULD HEAR AND SAY,
YOU ARE MY LOVE.

I HELD THOSE HANDS I'D HELD BEFORE.
I KISSED THAT SWEET AND CHERISHED FACE.
AND KNEW SHE WAS MY LOVE.
HOW WAS IT POSSIBLE?
HOW COULD THEY SO DECEIVE?
THAT GOD WOULD LET THIS BE?
HOW COULDST THOU LET THIS BE? …

I CANNOT YET BELIEVE,
HOW THE IMPOSSIBLE
WAS IMPOSSIBLY POSSIBLE.
AND HOW CAN I BEAR
THE IMPOSSIBLE.

(LABAN enters briskly into the field, not expecting to encounter Jacob there)

LABAN

HHO … ho, my son. What a morning—I was just …
(Motions a hurried exit)

JACOB

I *must speak* with you.

LABAN

Of course—later—if you must. I have much—

JACOB

It *must—be—now*.

LABAN

You are not well?

JACOB

What is this you have done?

LABAN

But you knew, surely. She is mine eldest—my firstborn.

JACOB

I did not agree to marry your eldest!

LABAN

But surely you did. Perhaps you forget—'tis the old agreement, same as you asked. And words clear as clear—first to first, second to second. My Leah did not sell her place. You acquired your brother's. Thus, we are, surely, as agreed—firstborn, to acquired firstborn.

(JACOB is left speechless)

Besides, they are so alike, being twins, it—

JACOB

This is not what we agreed!

LABAN

Perhaps not precisely as first imagined but as (I was)—

JACOB

This cannot be!

LABAN

But, my son, this surely is for—things have happened. … Well, I really must be going.

JACOB

So then must I. And it shall be alone because whatever you justify, this was not to have been.

LABAN

My son, my son, think on this—what is, IS. And when Esau hears of it—which we cannot help—news traveling as it does—I should think it best to be, rather here than there.

JACOB

This was not my doing.

LABAN

Perhaps at the first, but no(w)— … I say no more—save this. … to allay concerns, surely your second-placed brother would happily accept my second-born in—

JACOB

No! No, no. That is one thing I know without doubt—that I insist beyond every— … Rachel was and is promised to me.

LABAN

… Perhaps then, we could work it this way. With you being—well, firstly, you were the second-born; but now by purchase, you are also the firstborn. So it seems quite sensible to me that you keep the entire birth agreement. Yes, we give you both my daughters. I like this. You fulfill Leah's week—then I give you Rachel, on the same terms.

JACOB

Haaa!!! … You mean, another seven years!?

LABAN

I do not see in fairness how—

JACOB

I have served my seven years!

LABAN

For one wife, my son, which you have. Surely you recognize—to be fair—to allay problems—my daughters must—without fail—receive the same. How could it possibly be otherwise? Surely you see. You promise seven more, it is done—Rachel is yours.

JACOB

I am to trust this!

LABAN

What's not to trust? 'Tis the agreement.

JACOB

An agreement which in your recent words could give Rachel to Esau. This I do not trust.

LABAN

Did I not say? I am agreed, most generously, on account of Esau, that she be yours in seven days—before the seven years. I do not doubt you in the least—you promise seven more, Rachel is yours in seven days—at the end of Leah's week. Otherwise, who can assure what may come.

JACOB

(In desperation, to no one in particular)

What choice do I have?

LABAN

Choice?! My son, you have them both!

JACOB

I shall be forever outcast.

LABAN

In a good land, Jacob. A better land, I would say. … Well, we are agreed, or not?

JACOB

(Resignedly, too in love for his own good)

… Only, if this is accomplished in seven days.

LABAN

'Tis good as done. … Ho, it looks to be a glorious day.

(Pats Jacob on the back)

Listen, my son—not to worry. Leah shall prove an excellent wife. She is the image of her good mother—none better. Well, I must be going.

Music 25: EXIT OF LABAN

(LABAN la-da's "Halia" as HE exits. JACOB is lost in thought. LEAH enters from the new tent)

LEAH

Jacob, there are things—

JACOB

How could you do this?

LEAH

(Urgently)

No, Jacob. The question is, why. Why would I do this? Was it not my birthright? And if I disguised myself for it—did I not but do as you did?

JACOB

It is not the same!

LEAH

(Gently)

I knew God required this for some reason, Jacob. Is that our difference? … I do not accuse you. I know only that God provides when we allow Him. And if it is not what we expect or even want, He has still provided. …

(JACOB turns away as if HE cannot bear to hear)

LEAH (CONT.)
Listen, please. I could not have done this, save I knew in my heart, as did Rachel, that this was the order God required in our circumstances. And we could not ask you to knowingly break your vow to never again offend Esau. It was all so complicated. All we ask, is the pattern of your father—to accept what has been allowed. … Jacob, if this is some required return for what you did in haste, I promise you, I shall never give you cause to regret this day.

JACOB
(His struggle to accept is evident)
… I need to tell you, Leah. I am to marry Rachel in seven days. … Do you not see? I know my union with her is right. And it's not just a matter of accepting you. It goes beyond that. It is knowing, Esau shall never forgive this. I shall be an outcast from my father's house forever. And I have spent these seven years pleading in my heart for some sign of forgiveness and hope, of returning home. And now this.

LEAH
Jacob, this very experience tells you—things are not always as they seem.

JACOB
I do not know if I can go on like this.

LEAH
The only way is to keep trusting— to let things go.

JACOB
I have loved you as a friend—as Rachel's sister, but nothing more. And you know what I feel for her—I cannot pretend with you otherwise.

LEAH

I do not ask that.

JACOB

… If only I knew what was to come in all this.

LEAH

God intends good, Jacob. Only good.

JACOB

… I can but try to do right by you. I cannot promise more.

(A small CROWD drifts in—clustering in and about Laban's house. JACOB & LEAH watch the gathering for a moment. JACOB sighs and motions in the direction of gathering)

This noon's festivity—is it a true custom?

LEAH

Yes—but listen, you need not face them now if you would prefer not.

JACOB

(With a resigned sigh)

I shall have to sometime—might as well be now.

Music 26: EXIT & SCENE CHANGE TO 2 (Wives' dwellings)

(As JACOB & LEAH move toward the gathering)

Dim to BLACKOUT

Scene 2

Music 27: UNDER SCENE - Solo wind

TIME: Circa year twelve through year fourteen

PLACE: In front of the wives' dwellings

JACOB'S FAMILY TENTS are arranged in the field near Haran. RACHEL'S tent is left of LEAH'S.

[NOTE: In this scene, all children, except Joseph, are presented at the age they were on leaving Haran, being the 20th year of Jacob's sojourn.] (As the scene begins, OLD PATRIARCH is sitting on the stone wall playing a wind solo. Off to one side, several WOMEN SERVANTS are busy with various jobs. LEAH is sitting on a goatskin-covered stool near her tent, with REUBEN (age 13), SIMEON (age 12), LEVI (age 11), and JUDAH (age 10) sitting in a semi-circle in front of her playing a "pick-up-sticks" game. LEAH watches her sons play, as she sews)

LEAH

Good play, Levi. That ties you with Reuben and Simeon. ... All right, Judah let's beat them all.

(RACHEL enters; she's having a hard time. LEAH pauses as if to speak to her, but does not. RACHEL proceeds to sit alone beside her tent door to sew)

Music 28: THERE'S A LITTLE BIT OF TROUBLE (verse 1)

WOMEN SERVANTS

THERE'S A LITTLE BIT OF TROUBLE IN OLD HARAN.
A LITTLE BIT OF TROUBLE IN THE JACOB CLAN.
FOR SOME SEEM FAVORED AND SOME DO NOT.
NO ONE KNOWS WHY, THOUGH THE REASON IS SOUGHT.

Music 29: UNDER SCENE

(Handmaid BILHAH enters with two children, DAN [age 10] and NAPHTALI [age 9] followed by handmaid ZILPAH with GAD [age 9] and ASHER [age 8]. Three of them suddenly tag Leah's sons—ASHER will piggy-back on REUBEN—as a friendly, yelping, tag-chase erupts. THEY chase each other off-stage and then return all marching in order behind REUBEN who leads carrying mandrakes in his hand like a victory torch. THEY weave through the singing servants)

Music 30: THERE'S A LITTLE BIT OF TROUBLE (verse 2)

WOMEN SERVANTS

CHILDREN ARE COMING, EXCEPT TO ONE.
JACOB, POOR JACOB, SAYS, HE'S NOT TO BLAME.
CAN'T RACHEL BE HAPPY; HE LOVES HER SO.
YET SOMEHOW THAT'S NOT ENOUGH TO KNOW.

Music 31: UNDER SCENE

(REUBEN presents the mandrakes to LEAH)

LEAH

Thank you, Reuben.

(The CHILDREN gather their game and go aside to play it together. ZILPAH & BILHAH supervise)

RACHEL

Leah, could I have of those mandrakes?

LEAH

You begrudge me—even my son's gift?

RACHEL

Can I help Jacob loves me? Twice seven years he gives for me.

(LEAH shuts Rachel out and goes back to her work)

I'm sorry, I did not mean … Please—if I could have of them— just this time. It is not for what you think.

(LEAH still ignores her)

RACHEL

(Angrily)

All right, I shall send him to you, for the mandrakes.

(LEAH is silent until RACHEL begins to turn away, then LEAH offers the mandrakes without looking at Rachel. RACHEL takes them and goes, crying silently. LEAH watches her and then steps forward)

LEAH

Rachel, please, can't we just …

(RACHEL stiffens, then walks on ignoring LEAH'S overture. LEAH, torn by uncertainty, gives up and resumes her work. RACHEL pauses in grief)

Music 32: THERE'S A LITTLE BIT OF TROUBLE (verse 3)

WOMEN SERVANTS

THERE'S A LITTLE BIT OF TROUBLE IN OLD HARAN.
A LITTLE BIT OF TROUBLE IN THE JACOB CLAN.
FOR SOME SEEM FAVORED, AND SOME DO NOT.
NO ONE KNOWS WHY, THOUGH THE REASON IS SOUGHT.

RACHEL

(To the Old Patriarch, handing him the mandrakes)

Please … would you make an offering for me? Would you pray for me?

OLD PATRIARCH

Child, why do you weep? You must remember—

Music 33: Brief Reprise - SOMETIMES (vo)

SOMETIMES WE FORGET THAT THE DARKEST NIGHT
PRECEDES THE DAWNING DAY.
THAT THE TEST IN LIFE IS FOR YOU AND ME,
TO TRUST GOD WHEN NOTHING SEEMS RIGHT.

RACHEL

It is too hard.

OLD PATRIARCH

We must keep trusting … remembering …

RACHEL

She does not remember.

OLD PATRIARCH

She does. You shall see.

(HE accepts the mandrakes and exits)

(RACHEL turns and watches with tears as ISSACHAR [age 8] emerges from Leah's tent. LEAH hugs him)

LEAH

Oh, Issachar, you are my recompense.

(ISSACHAR proceeds to join the other children. RACHEL dries her tears, gathers resolution, but just as she turns to approach Leah, ZEBULUN and DINAH [twins, age 7] emerge from Leah's tent, holding hands. RACHEL struggles with control. LEAH embraces her twins)

LEAH

Ah, my sweet twins. Zebulun. Dinah. You are a double blessing to me.

(The TWINS proceed to the Children's area. Then RACHEL, with humbled determination, goes forward, but is intercepted by a few mocking WOMEN SERVANTS)

Music 34: THERE'S A LITTLE BIT OF TROUBLE (verse 4) vocal only

MOCKING SERVANTS

LA, LA, LEAH HAS SEVEN; THAT'S QUITE A FEW.
ZILPAH, HER MAID, HAS ANOTHER TWO.
BILHAH HAS THE SAME, SO CUTE AND SMALL,
BUT RACHEL HAS NONE, NOT ONE AT ALL.

(Over-speaking to each other—like gossips)

Some sin not confessed. / Oh, she acts pious all right. / It is otherwise or God would give her children. / A truth for the others bear easily. / 'Tis a sign. / She is not what she seems.

(THEY exit in a gossiping huddle. RACHEL is devastated)

LEAH

Do not listen to them, Rachel—they do not speak what is true. And I … I have not been true to you either. I have need, of your forgiveness.

RACHEL

(With breaking voice)

God does not see.

LEAH

He loves you. And I, I love you, so much. I don't understand either.

(SHE leads a grieving RACHEL to Rachel's tent, comforting her. The PATRIARCH reenters near the stone wall. RACHEL exits into her closed tent. LEAH kneels in prayer beside the tent)

Music 35: THERE'S A LITTLE BIT OF TROUBLE (verse 5)

WOMEN SERVANTS

DESPITE ALL THE THINGS THEY TRY TO DO
IT'S STILL NOT THE SAME AS BELONGING TO.
THEY'VE ALL AGREED TO TAKE HER PART;
TO SEEK RELIEF FOR HER GRIEVING HEART.

Music 36: UNDER SCENE

(JACOB enters, the SERVANTS exit. JACOB, BILHAH, ZILPAH, & 11 CHILDREN join LEAH to form a kneeling arch from the entrance to Rachel's tent. JACOB & LEAH will be the closest to the entrance of Rachel's tent)

Music 37: REMEMBER HER

JACOB FAMILY

GOD OF OUR FATHERS
HEAR THIS OUR PRAYER.
THERE IS ONE AMONG US
WHO FEELS IN DESPAIR.

PLEASE, OF THY GRACE IMPART.
SUCCOR THOU HER GRIEVING HEART.
REMEMBER HER, THIS LOVING WIFE;
PLEASE GRANT HER BLESSINGS OF NEW LIFE.

REMEMBER HER, WE ASK THEE;
REMEMBER HER, WE LOVE.
PLEASE MAKE OF HER A FRUITFUL BOUGH,
WE PLEAD, OUR FATHER ABOVE.

LIGHTS dim briefly

(FAMILY **repeats** *last line above in dimness. As light returns, RACHEL enters from her tent with a bundled baby and kneels with the group)*

RACHEL

This is our Joseph—and he shall be added upon.

JACOB FAMILY

FATHER, OUR FATHER ABOVE,
WE THANK THEE FOR THY LOVE,
NOW AND FOREVER, WE THANK THEE,
O GRACIOUS FATHER ABOVE.

Music 38: UNDER SCENE

(JACOB cradles JOSEPH; LEAH embraces RACHEL)

Dim to BLACKOUT

Scene 3

TIME: Beginning of year fifteen of the Haran sojourn

PLACE: The well near Haran

(SHEPHERDS TWO and THREE are sitting upon or near the well. THEY are glum and have aged about seven years. SHEPHERD ONE enters)

SHEPHERD ONE

There is trouble?

SHEPHERD TWO

You should ask?!

SHEPHERD THREE

You shall not believe it.

SHEPHERD TWO

Not one goat to Jacob's name in fourteen years—and now this.

SHEPHERD THREE

You shall not believe it.

SHEPHERD TWO

How could he do this!

SHEPHERD ONE

Who? Do what?

SHEPHERD THREE

We witnessed it—did we not?

SHEPHERD ONE

Witnessed what?

SHEPHERD TWO

Jacob! He asked provisions to return to Canaan—to his father's house. That is how it started.

SHEPHERD THREE

You shall not believe.

SHEPHERD TWO

So, you know what Laban gives? …Not so much as what Jacob came with.

SHEPHERD ONE

So, maybe God keeps him from that brother of his.

SHEPHERD TWO

Keeps him! Not with this wage agreement.

SHEPHERD THREE

From bad to worse.

SHEPHERD ONE

He has a wage, at last?! What is so bad in this?!

SHEPHERD TWO

(To Shepherd Three)

You be Jacob; I shall be Laban. He shall witness, as we.

(Mimics Laban in some way, e.g., beard-stroking)

Dear Jacob, I confess—yes, yes, your years are fully fulfilled, and yes, what you say, may be a little true, but—send you all away—'twould be so far away!

SHEPHERD THREE (AS JACOB)

(Mimics Jacob in some way)

Mine uncle, in these fourteen years, you have increased a multitude, but I—somehow in our agreement, I have not even a single goat to milk to provide for mine own house. Not even a tent to call mine own. And what with eleven sons and a daughter I have to find some (means to)—

SHEPHERD TWO (AS LABAN)
But send you away? I love you, my daughters, my children. And truly you cannot go—destitute with such a household?

SHEPHERD THREE (AS JACOB)
I shall repay whatever you give—sufficient merely to get to Canaan—that is all. I feel such longing for my father's house.

SHEPHERD TWO (AS LABAN)
Neither wise nor advisable, my son. You must remember—Canaan is a dangerous place. So, to keep you happy, I can, perhaps, give a little for your wants. There is no need to—

SHEPHERD THREE (AS JACOB)
My father is an old man—he could die at any time.

SHEPHERD TWO (AS LABAN)**)**
As could you—by the hand of that Esau.

SHEPHERD THREE (AS JACOB)
Then, if God wills it, I must be prepared for it.

SHEPHERD TWO (AS LABAN)
Indebted to me—you would die?

SHEPHERD THREE (AS JACOB**)**
My father would assuredly repay, if I could not.

SHEPHERD TWO (AS LABAN)
In his grief—how could one ask? 'Tis not good. Not good. … So, let us talk, for truly, I am not in a place to let you go, therefore tell me straight— what more must I give to keep you?

SHEPHERD THREE (AS JACOB)
… If I must stay yet awhile, it shall not be on account of any more giving … But this I will do. I will tend your flocks again—for a time—if for my HIRE, I receive the speckled and spotted cattle and the black sheep.

SHEPHERD TWO (AS LABAN)
What is this—no more giving, if I give of my cattle, my sheep?

SHEPHERD THREE (AS JACOB)
I do not mean the spotted or black you now have. They are few and they are yours. Your sons shall keep them separate and apart. But this I propose. I shall tend the rest of your flocks—your plain ones—only your plain ones. None of the speckled, spotted or black. But if any of your plain ones have speckled, spotted, or black offspring, that shall be my wage. Is this agreeable?

SHEPHERD ONE
What is Jacob saying?

SHEPHERD TWO (AS LABAN)
Let me see if I see this?! From here on, if any of my plain cattle have speckled or spotted offspring, or if any of my white sheep bear black lambs, that is your sole wage. In simple words, only speckled from plain! Black from white!

SHEPHERD ONE
This is true?

SHEPHERD TWO
Yea, worse.
(Motions to Shepherd Three to continue)

SHEPHERD THREE (AS JACOB**)**
In strict fairness, I shall always keep my spotted cattle separate from your plain cattle. Thus, I shall never receive except spotted from plain; black from white.

SHEPHERD ONE
This cannot be true! 'Twill be scarce enough to count—in a week of years!

SHEPHERD TWO
We told you, 'twas bad.

SHEPHERD ONE
He sees—he knows what they produce—he says only black from white!

SHEPHERD TWO
'Tis the agreement. No more provisions by Laban. Jacob's now got his wage.

SHEPHERD ONE
So, the gist of it?—they starve—or they eat into endless payback.

SHEPHERD THREE
We told you it was bad. … So, what's to do this time?

SHEPHERD ONE
I think we just … pray.

(The THREE SHEPHERDS gaze heavenward)

To BLACKOUT

Music 39: EXIT & SCENE CHANGE TO 4 (Laban's Dark House)

Scene 4

TIME: Sometime late in Year Sixteen

PLACE: Inside Laban's dark house

(In the BLACKNESS a candle suddenly appears revealing the face of LABAN. HE paces, then kneels before his teraphim to complain bitterly)

LABAN

My sweet gods, do you care what is out there? … 'Twas you said—least I think 'twas you—of plenteous new flocks, but I was thinking, for me, not him. This is not right. They bear what *he* says, against nature— against reason. I say—something must be done. One cannot bear this. You hear, I—

The CANDLE sputters weakly into BLACKOUT

I will not take this. … Troubles, troubles. Endless troubles.

Music 40: EXIT & SCENE CHANGE TO 5 (Well, Field, etc.)

Mumbling his last words, LABAN exits in BLACKOUT)

Scene 5

TIME: End of Year Twenty

PLACE: The well, the field, the tents, Haran, etc. in sequence

(THE THREE SHEPHERDS are arriving at the well as daylight comes up)

Music 41: SIX MORE YEARS (v+r)

THE THREE SHEPHERDS

SIX MORE YEARS, DEAR JACOB HAS WORKED
WHILE LABAN HAS GOTTEN INCREDIBLY IRKED.
TENFOLD TIMES, THE WAGES HE'S CHANGED;
HE'S FLUSTERED; HE'S BLUSTERED;
HE'S ACTED DERANGED.

BUT JACOB NOW HAS CONSID'RABLE WEALTH
WHICH LABAN'S SONS SAY IS STOLEN IN STEALTH.
EVEN THEY SAY, HE HAS TOO MANY WIVES,
AND AN EASE OF CONDITION IN WHICH HE THRIVES.

THEY DO NOT EXPLAIN, JUST HOW THAT ARRIVES
WHEN HE GIVES HIS BEST FOR
OUR SICK AND OUR POOR.

HIS GAIN IS SO GOOD WE CAN HARDLY BELIEVE,
HOW MUCH IN SIX YEARS, HIS GOD COULD ACHIEVE.
SO, PLEASE, WE PRAY, JUST LET THINGS BE;
(Motioning heavenward)
AND HOPE THAT HE, WITH US, WILL AGREE;
AND HOPE THAT HE—

(JACOB enters—right; LEAH and RACHEL enter —left and cross to the field to meet JACOB)

—EEE

SHEPHERD THREE

You see that?

SHEPHERD TWO

My advice? We not look that way.

SHEPHERD ONE

Come, come, it shall prove best this way.

(The THREE SHEPHERDS exit with their sheep)

JACOB

(To Leah and Rachel)
We must decide.

LEAH

Jacob, he treats us now as strangers, too. He has quite devoured our inheritance.

RACHEL

Whatever our father has lost to you by his own agreements—that can be ours and our children's.

LEAH

We shall do whatever God has told you.

RACHEL

We shall.

JACOB

You must understand—it means leaving here—perhaps never returning. … As well, I know not what awaits us—what Esau might do.

LEAH

(Trying to be brave)

Whatever we are to do, we shall be all right.

JACOB

I wish I knew the end of this. … One thing I do know—we must prepare quickly—if your father returns early, he shall prevent your going.

LEAH

He's to be gone three days—we have that much.

RACHEL

But still, we must take care. Papa has his ways and means. He might discover our course, if—

LEAH

Come, we must hurry.

RACHEL

But papa swears his gods tell him every little—

Music 42: UNDER SCENE (D.S. al Fine 2)

(No one has heard. RACHEL remains agitated as the JACOB FAMILY [includes 6-year old JOSEPH] & SERVANTS enter to commence a busy scene of packing-up tents and belongings)

RACHEL

… Oh, what is to do?

(Being too stressed to wait for an answer, SHE snatches up a cloth, and runs into her father's house, returning with a cloth-wrapped bundle . SHE puts it in a small reed chest to be carried between two servants. SHE glances heavenward)

'Tis done. Right or wrong, 'tis done.

(As preparations proceed, RACHEL and LEAH look around from their separate places of activity at all the familiar sights they are leaving)

Music 43: SAYING, GOODBYE (vo)

LEAH

WHY
DO I FEEL LIKE CRYING,
JUST IN SAYING, GOODBYE?
WHY
WHEN I KNOW I MUST GO,
AND I DO WANT IT SO?

LEAH & RACHEL

WHY
NOW IT'S COME TO GOODBYE
DO I PAUSE
TO REMEMBER ONCE MORE,

WHAT I LOVED;
WHAT I BORE IN THIS PLACE
BEFORE SAYING, GOODBYE?

JACOB

WHY
DO I FEEL THIS WAY,
NOW IT'S COME TO SAYING, GOODBYE,
TO THIS HOME;
TO THIS PLACE I HAVE COME TO LOVE?

WHY
WHEN I KNOW I MUST GO,
AND I DO WANT IT SO?

JACOB, LEAH & RACHEL

DO I KNOW WHERE I'M GOING?
DO I KNOW WHAT'S IN STORE?
CAN I TRUST THERE'S MORE
IN SAYING, GOODBYE
THAN IN STAYING TO TRY
AND LIVE OUT MY DAYS IN THIS PLACE?

CAN I TRUST? YES, I MUST.
IT'S JUST THAT I'M AFRAID
OF WHAT I CAN'T SEE;
OF WHAT'S REQUIRED OF ME;
AND FOR THE CHILDREN.

CHILDREN

BUT IT'S GOING TO BE FUN
WITH SO MUCH TO SEE
AND THINGS WE'VE NEVER DONE.
SO WHY CAN'T WE BE ON OUR WAY?
(JOSEPH takes his mother, Rachel's hand)

JACOB, LEAH & RACHEL

YES, IT'S TIME TO SAY,
GOODBYE, GOODBYE,
GOODBYE, DEAR HOME, GOODBYE.

JACOB CARAVAN

GOODBYE. GOODBYE. GOODBYE.

(The JACOB FAMILY and their SERVANTS exit as the word, goodbye echoes and fades)

Music 44: TRANSITION TO SCENE 6 (Well, Caravan Route, etc.)

LIGHTS dim for time passage

Scene 6

TIME: Three through ten days later

PLACES: The well, Laban's house, the caravan route, and Mt. Gilead in sequence

(The THREE SHEPHERDS enter, dejectedly. SHEPHERD THREE carries the long rope with the leathren pouch attached and plops it beside the well. LABAN rushes in. Some SERVANTS enter behind him. BEOR, LABAN'S son, is amongst them. LABAN rushes to the well, kicks at the rope and peers in)

LABAN

When did this begin?

SHEPHERD TWO

Three days ago, or so.

LABAN

And now you tell me!

SHEPHERD TWO

We were—thinking it should come back.

LABAN

(Starts in disgust toward his house)

Which route did they take?

SHEPHERDS ONE, TWO & THREE

Th-they?

LABAN

(Pointing to rope and well)

You know as well as I what this means.

SHEPHERD THREE

N-no one spoke of—

SHEPHERD TWO

We did not see—how could one—

LABAN

There are ways and means.

(With frustrated rage, rushes into his house)

SHEPHERD ONE

He is going to pursue them.

LABAN

(Rushing from his house, then exits R in frustration)

They have stolen my gods! They have stolen my gods!

BEOR

They shall be brought back. My father and I shall see to it.

(Rushes after his father)

SHEPHERD TWO

One of us must go along.

SHEPHERD THREE

'Tis not for me. Laban does not like me so much these days.

SHEPHERD TWO

Nor me—actually ever.

SHEPHERD ONE

… Do not look to me!

SHEPHERD TWO

You are the only neighbor he endures.

SHEPHERD THREE

He might listen to you.

SHEPHERD TWO

Surely, for Jacob's sake. You must—we have no choice.

SHEPHERDS TWO & THREE

You must!

SHEPHERD TWO

Besides, who knows best of us the ways of Jacob's God.

SHEPHERD ONE

… All right, I shall go—for Jacob's sake.

(SHEPHERDS TWO & THREE exit. A few SERVANTS enter with cloth bundles slung over their shoulders. As THEY & SHEPHERD ONE march downstage the SCENE CHANGES to a caravan route. Scene Change can be accomplished by marching Extras)

Music 45: WE HAVE MARCHED (v+r)

THE ESCORT

(Chanting)
WE HAVE MARCHED IN SUN.
WE HAVE MARCHED IN RAIN.
WE HAVE MARCHED IN LINE.
AND WE'VE MARCHED IN PAIN.

(Sinking down to rest)
SEVEN LONG DAYS
UPON THESE FEET,
(Using head cloths to create shade)
EVEN IN THE SHADE,
THERE'S TOO MUCH HEAT.

BUT THEN LAST NIGHT,
LABAN HAD A FRIGHTFUL DREAM.
IT COOLED HIM SOME,
YET HE WON'T RETREAT.

(LABAN enters subdued, hands clasped behind. BEOR follows but does not sing. LABAN begins his argument with Jacob's God)

Music 46: MAN OF PERFECTIONS (vo)

LABAN
I AM A MAN OF PERFECTIONS.

THE ESCORT
IN NEED OF ENDLESS CORRECTIONS.

LABAN
I AM A MAN OF ESTEEM.

THE ESCORT
AND OF EV'RY UNSAVORY SCHEME.

LABAN
I GAVE THEM EV'RY BLESSING.

THE ESCORT
LIKE GIVING AND THEN, REPOSSESSING.

LABAN
I WAS GEN'ROUS TO A FAULT.

THE ESCORT
IN MAKING LIFE DIFFICULT.

LABAN
(Glances heavenward)
SO WHY MUST YOU THREATEN—TAKE HEED?

THE ESCORT
HE'D RATHER PROCEED WITH HIS THREATS.

LABAN
AND IT'S NOT THAT I'M SCARED IN THE LEAST.

THE ESCORT
EXCEPT TO BE DECEASED.

LABAN
I'LL ACT POLITE TO HIS FACE 'CAUSE I CHOOSE.

THE ESCORT
JUST IN CASE HE COULD LOSE.

LABAN
BUT THEN I'M FREE FROM COMMAND.

THE ESCORT
TO DO WHATEVER HE'S PLANNED.

LABAN
(Prods the resting ESCORT to resume the journey)
TO DO AS I PLEASE.
FOR I AM A MAN OF PERFECTIONS.
I AM A MAN OF ESTEEM.
I GAVE THEM EV'RY BLESSING.
I WAS GEN'ROUS TO A FAULT.
SO WHY MUST YOU THREATEN—TAKE HEED?
AND IT'S NOT THAT I'M SCARED IN THE LEAST.
I'LL ACT POLITE TO HIS FACE 'CAUSE I CHOOSE.
BUT THEN I'M FREE FROM COMMAND.
TO DO AS I PLEASE.

SOUND: of Jacob's sheep / caravan

TO DO AS I PLEASE.

(JACOB'S CARAVAN enters. As the groups confront at Mt. Gilead, RACHEL moves apart, covers the reed chest with a goat skin, and rests on it. JOSEPH is holding JACOB'S hand, but as LABAN & JACOB face off, JACOB sends JOSEPH to be with RACHEL)

LABAN (CONT.)
What have you done—deceiving me? Stealing my children like captives? You might have had my blessing—but no, you steal away. That was foolish, my son, for I could do you hurt, … if I choose.

JACOB
In Haran you might have—but you will not choose it here.

LABAN
I choose what I choose. So when the God of your fathers spoke to me yester-night, I said I would not.

JACOB
Why then, these threatenings?

LABAN
Why? Why! Because you have stolen my gods—that is why.

JACOB
We do not worship your gods. You may search—to the centre—and if you find any thief in this, you may punish him even unto death.

(LABAN and ESCORT commence their search)

RACHEL
Forgive me, Papa. I do not feel very well.

LABAN

(To Rachel as if to a fellow conspirator)

Who has them—surely there has been talk?

RACHEL

Honest, papa, there has been no talk.

JOSEPH

Grandpapa, if they talk, like you say, just call their name.

LABAN

They are here somewhere. And it's not that simple, my too talkative little Joseph

JOSEPH

(Taking Laban's hand)

Come, come, I shall help you look—though Papa is right. You shouldn't believe in them.

(LABAN and JOSEPH get lost in the crowd)

RACHEL

(Whispering to Shepherd One)

How did you find us—so soon?

SHEPHERD ONE

(As HE flips at the goat skin)

You cannot hide fears in a basket. My dear child, you really must leave outwitting your father to—

(Motions heavenward)

Should you not know this by now?

(RACHEL bows her head in shame. LABAN finishes his search very frustrated)

JACOB

I told you—we are not thieves. For twenty years, I served you without trespass. Now you come, seeking cause to take everything. Well, you have not found so much as a needle.

LABAN

I was not looking for needles.

JACOB

If you did not fear the God of Abraham, I believe, you would even now, without excuse, send me away empty. Well, God has rebuked you and for good cause.

LABAN

I fear no one. These are my daughters. These, my children. These cattle are mine. All you see is mine. And if you provoke me …

(Still too conscious of the warning of Jacob's God, HE soon turns away to his Escort)

Fetch us stones.

(To Jacob, but not meeting JACOB'S gaze)

We shall make a covenant of peace—everyone here.

(JACOB and LABAN add to the cairn. LABAN hastily takes BEOR'S stone and places it himself)

This shall stand betwixt us as a witness—never to pass it for harm, for any cause.

JACOB

I would never do so.

LABAN

So, … it has come to this—the taking of my beloved little ones?

JACOB

Father Laban, I know we have differences, but, at least rest the night with us—it will soon be dark. Our camp is being prepared ahead, and if you would join us for the night, we could have our proper good-byes.

LABAN

(Long pause, then nods)

… I shall consent, but only for the sake of the children. You go on. We shall follow shortly.

LEAH & RACHEL

Goodbye for now, father.

CHILDREN

See you later, grandfather. / Goodbye, grandpapa. / See you. / See you. / Goodbye, papa.

(After watching JACOB'S GROUP make their exit, LABAN motions for his son, BEOR, to join him. SHEPHERD ONE quietly observes)

LABAN

Beor, my son, listen—I must get a message to Esau. Yes, I shall get my little ones back—so listen carefully—I want you to remember the precise words.

BLACKOUT

Music 47: EXIT & SCENE CHANGE TO 7 (Mount Seir in Edom)

Scene 7

TIME: A few days later

PLACE: Mount Seir in Edom

(BEOR is standing before ESAU. SHEPHERD ONE is near and a FEW MEN with ESAU)

BEOR

My lord, this completes my father's message (and he)—

ESAU

Get, my son, Eliphaz—he is to come IMMEDIATELY.

(As ONE OF HIS MEN leaves, ESAU paces angrily, then to Beor)

Where do I find this brother of mine?

BEOR

They took the Gilead route—he should be nearing the brook of Jabbok.

(ELIPHAZ enters hurriedly)

ELIPHAZ

What is it, father?

ESAU

Now we see what comes by your sparing of that—that usurping brother of mine.

(Focus split: to Beor, to Eliphaz, to Beor)

Come—our Laban's son—repeat your father's words.

BEOR

To my esteemed brother, eldest and most belo(ved in his)—

ESAU

Not all that!—just the part—about my brother.

BEOR

(Mumbling as HE finds his place in memory)

… ah, here, I think. … I, Laban, send word to my beloved Esau how his younger brother came to me naked and destitute. I did not know the just cause, so I took him in with honor and made him great. He took my daughters to wife—even she, who was promised to Esau. And then my youngest. And when I had given him all, he stole away taking my children captives, and stealing my gods. He lacks naught—yet goes now to claim double inheritance in his father's house. I tell my Esau this for I seek deeply the return of my beloved children. I desire my good Esau to—

ESAU

Enough. Did I not tell you, he would some day return. Well, now, we shall do what should have been done. You shall arm my men … and the Children of Seir. I want four-hundred. I shall erase the memory of (him from)—

ELIPHAZ

Father!—

ESAU

No. You shall say nothing. You shall DO.

ELIPHAZ

I will also speak, father. You had forgotten—forgiven all this. You must think before—

ESAU

I do not wish to think—I wish to do. And YOU shall come, but do not imagine your tongue will change anything.

ELIPHAZ

It is not my tongue, father—it is your heart. It was changed until this boy spoke his lies.

BEOR

I never d(id)—

(Quelled with one look / motion from ELIPHAZ, but HE is clearly worried, as is SHEPHERD ONE)

ESAU

Some things I know—things that should not be forgotten.

ELIPHAZ

Things that should not be remembered, father.

ESAU

If you must talk—you can do it later. For now, there is time only for doing. Come. We shall end this.

(ESAU & ESCORT exit one way, A frantic SHEPHERD ONE hurries out another way after colliding with a frantic BEOR who rushes out opposite exclaiming)

BEOR

Four-hundred men! Oh, what have we begun?! Oh, no, no!

Music 48: EXIT & SCENE CHANGE TO 8 (Brook of Jabbok/Southside)

Dim to BLACKOUT

Scene 8

TIME: A few days later

PLACE: Near the brook of Jabbok/south side

(SPOTLIGHT reveals SHEPHERD ONE wearily plodding to the shadows of centrestage)

SHEPHERD ONE

(Addresses Heaven)

I hope I have done right. I think 'tis known already, but I've come to make report as I'm told that's how 'tis done.

(Deep sigh)

First thing, I did rush the dreaded news to dear Rebekah. 'Twas so good to see her; save straightway she hastens me back to Jacob. "My son," she pleads, "Conceal nothing from Esau. Supplicate him. Honor him as your elder brother." Then from Jacob back to Esau, I was sped, explaining the truth of it all. And Esau? Well, he did not take it so good as I explained it. … Now, back to Jacob's encamp I am come— with petitions flooding through from every place. From that Edom route, too—if good Eliphaz holds true. So please, God of Jacob, if this could come out right. I feel too old for all this rush, and worry. Too, too old. And Rebekah, too. Too old to lose two sons in a single day.

Music 49: EXIT & SCENE CHANGE TO 9 (Brook of Jabbok/Northside)

Dim to BLACKOUT

Scene 9

TIME: Early next morning—dawning light

PLACE: Brook of Jabbok/north side

(JACOB struggles to a sitting position. HE is in obvious pain. REUBEN enters)

REUBEN

Father, we worried when you did not— You are hurt!

JACOB

Ah, Reuben. It is my thigh. A little … ah … out of joint. Ahh, if you could reach my …

(REUBEN retrieves his father's staff and helps JACOB to rise, supporting him on one side)

Ah, yes. Thank you, my son. And I would— … ummh—yes, thank you.

REUBEN

What happened?

JACOB

Perhaps in time, my lad, I will be able to speak of it—but for now, it is too soon. … Besides, we must go immediately and prepare the camp.

REUBEN

Shall we be all right?

JACOB

(With deep calmness)

Yes, Reuben—whatever happens, it shall be all right. … Remember this place, my son. It is to be called Peniel.

REUBEN

(Puzzled)

The face of God? What does this mean?

JACOB

… How do I tell you, my son? This much I can say. It means, to persevere till God prevails. And someday, my lad, I hope you—I hope each of my children—will find their own Peniel. But for now, it is enough that we go—that we face, whatever comes.

Music 50: EXIT & SCENE CHANGE TO 10 (Brook of Jabbok/Southside)

(JACOB and REUBEN exit, with JACOB leaning heavily on REUBEN)

Scene 10

TIME: Later that same day

PLACE: Near the brook of Jabbok/south side

(ESAU enters to sit on a rock with his head in his hands. ELIPHAZ enters)

ELIPHAZ

Father, we see him now. He comes on, alone.

(Silence)

What do I tell the men?

(ELIPHAZ and ESAU stare at each other)

ESAU

Why do I listen?

(Wryly)

I should blame your grandfather, I suppose.

ELIPHAZ

It was you who sent me to him, father. I merely learned what grandfather taught.

ESAU

And what I did not learn from him, you think to teach me now?

ELIPHAZ

It is not too late, father.

ESAU

What is the use? Even could I forget, too many will remember—I have made certain of that. Besides, I am so easily reminded. What does it matter, if it cannot last?

ELIPHAZ

It matters—don't you see. After all we did—he still pursues peace—and he gives—you have seen the droves—beyond imagining. It matters—just to try.

(Silence)

Father—

Music 51: WHO IS YOUR BROTHER? (vo)

WHO IS YOUR BROTHER
BUT HE WHO NEEDS YOUR LOVE?
WHO IS YOUR BROTHER
WHOSE GOOD IS NOT ABOVE YOURS?

AND WHO IS ANOTHER
WHO NEEDS TO CALL YOU FRIEND?
WHO MORE THAN BROTHER
SHOULD YOU WANT TO FORGIVE AND DEFEND?

AND WHERE CAN PEACE BE FOUND
WHEN FAMILY IS LOST TO YOU?
HOW CAN YOUR CONFLICT CEASE
WITHOUT GIVING AS YOU WOULD RECEIVE?

THERE WILL NEVER BE ANOTHER
IF TO HIM YOU WILL NOT SPEAK.
YOU'VE LOST MORE THAN A BROTHER
WHEN HIS COUNSEL YOU WILL NOT SEEK.

AND WHO CAN REALLY KNOW
HOW YOU FEEL?
HOW LONELY IT'S BEEN?
AND WHO CAN EVER FORGIVE
FOR THE HEARTACHE, YOU'VE CAUSED AND FORE-
SEEN?

WHO BUT THIS BROTHER,
WHO COMES TO MAKE THINGS RIGHT?
WHO BUT THIS BROTHER
RETURNING FROM OUT OF THE NIGHT?

WHO BUT YOUR BROTHER
RETURNING TO MAKE THINGS RIGHT.

It's been twenty years. He is the only brother you have.

ESAU

With all we have done … how do we ever forget?
(HE puts his head in his hands)

Music 52: UNDER SCENE

(JACOB enters, supported by a staff, limping slightly. HE kneels with his head to the ground)

ELIPHAZ

(Touching his father's shoulder)
Father, it is time.

(ESAU rises. JACOB rises. THEY pause, then THEY both stride, JACOB limping a bit. THEY embrace each other, both are shedding tears)

JACOB

I scarce believed this was possible.

ESAU

I knew it was not … and then, I saw your face.

JACOB

And your face—it is to me, my brother, as God's face, for I had believed my offenses were too many.

ESAU

I know, but my son here claims—a man can be forgiven. Things can be forgotten. You remember my son—Eliphaz?

JACOB

I well remember Eliphaz. He seems considerably changed from last I saw him.

(Responding to ELIPHAZ'S contrition)

Yes, Eliphaz, you are long forgiven.

ESAU

He is quite a son. He claims any man can change—even his old father.

JACOB

Even his father's brother.

(JACOB & ELIPHAZ embrace, then to Eliphaz)

Twice now, it seems, has God preserved my life through you. I thank you.

Music 53: UNDER SCENE

(JACOB'S WIVES and CHILDREN enter in the order of ZILPAH, BILHAH, LEAH and RACHEL last. Their possessions have been left offstage. THEY bow to ESAU, then DINAH pushes through to JACOB'S side and takes his hand. HE lifts HER up in his arms)

ESAU

All these are yours!

JACOB

Eleven sons and my little Dinah. They are worth everything.

ESAU

Well, did not our father say?—Troubles well endured are worth the trouble.

JACOB

We did not trust our father well, did we?

ESAU

True, but my son here, is far far better than I ever was or will be, so perhaps there is hope.

JACOB

I have great hopes, as well.

ESAU

Then, we need not fear. Our father's words shall live on— if in but two or three.

(To the Children)

Listen—these are your grandfather's words. Believe them.

Music 54: IT'S WORTH A LITTLE TROUBLE

ESAU & JACOB

A LITTLE BIT OF TROUBLE—
IT COMES TO EVERYONE.
IT SEEMS THERE'S ALWAYS SOMETHING
SOMEONE HAS SAID OR DONE.

BUT LIFE IS WORTH ITS TROUBLE.
FROM TROUBLES YOU CAN LEARN.
BUT YOU MORE THAN DOUBLE SORROWS
WHEN YOU GIVE IT IN RETURN.

LEAH

Remember these, too—your grandmother's words.

LEAH & RACHEL

THINGS AREN'T ALWAYS AS THEY SEEM.
MOST TIMES YOU HAVE TO TRUST,
YOUR TROUBLES HAVE A PURPOSE,
THOUGH AT FIRST THEY SEEM UNJUST.

SEE, THERE'S MORE THAN MEETS THE EYE
IN WHAT YOU WILL ENDURE.
YOU'LL KNOW IT'S WORTH THE TROUBLE,
WHEN YOU'RE BETTER THAN YOU WERE.

ESAU, JACOB, LEAH & RACHEL

SO NOW WE'VE COME TO SAY,
LIKE FIRE IS TO CLAY,
WE HAVE TO FACE SOME TESTS IN LIFE
AND TROUBLE SEEMS THE WAY.

NOW WE KNOW OUR TEST'S NOT OVER.
WE'RE LEARNING STILL TO TRUST
THAT WHAT WE WANT AND WHAT WE GET
WILL IN THE END PROVE JUST.

SO REMEMBER THAT MOST TIMES
YOU GET BACK WHAT YOU GIVE.
SO LEARN FROM WHAT YOU'VE SEEN
TO BE BETTER THAN WE'VE BEEN.

FOR WE SEE THE WORTH OF TROUBLE,
TO TRUST IN PROVIDENCE.
BUT NOT THE KIND OF TROUBLE,
WHEN WE GIVE AND TAKE OFFENSE.

(Remainder of the CARAVAN, with sheep, enter upstage to join in singing to the Children)

COMPANY (EXCEPT CHILDREN)
THAT'S WHAT IT'S ALL ABOUT;
LEARNING TO WORK THINGS OUT.
AND THOUGH SOME MIGHT REFUSE,
YOU STILL ARE FREE TO CHOOSE.

COMPANY (INCLUDING CHILDREN**)**
THAT LIFE IS WORTH ITS TROUBLE,
FROM TROUBLES WE CAN LEARN,
BUT WE MORE THAN DOUBLE SORROWS
WHEN WE GIVE IT IN RETURN.

IT'S WORTH A LITTLE TROUBLE,
LET PAST OFFENSES GO.
IT'S WORTH A LITTLE TROUBLE,
AND A LOT OF WHAT WE OWE.

(Little JOSEPH is lifted to ESAU'S shoulders as the COMPANY focuses their joy on the youngest child)

FOR THERE'S MORE THAN MEETS THE EYE
IN WHAT WE SHALL ENDURE.
WE'LL KNOW IT'S WORTH THE TROUBLE,
WHEN WE'RE BETTER THAN WE WERE.

JOSEPH
SO MUCH BETTER THAN WE WERE.
(Becomes shy as COMPANY laughs & applauds)

(Remainder of CAST bursts in upstage led by a frantic, stick-waving, repentant LABAN. Long beat as everyone mentally sorts out the scene. Then LABAN issues a

huge, almost sobbing sigh and sinks to his knees with the help of BEOR & SHEPHERD TWO)

CHILDREN

(Flocking to Laban)

Grandfather! / Grandpa! / Grandpapa / Papa!

LABAN

Oh, my dear ones, you are alive! You are safe!

(JACOB, LEAH & RACHEL extend welcome as a few CAST make joyful noises while the rest of the)

CAST

(Turns joyful **focus** *to the reunion) [DO NOT sermonize this to the audience]*

THAT'S WHAT IT'S ALL ABOUT,
LEARNING TO WORK THINGS OUT,
AND THOUGH SOME MIGHT REFUSE,
WE STILL ARE FREE TO CHOOSE.

FORGIVENESS OVER TROUBLE
IS WORTH A WHOLE LOT MORE.
FORGIVENESS USUALLY DOUBLES
OUR JOY TENFOLD AND MORE.

YES, IT'S WORTH FOREVER GIVING,
IT'S WORTH ALL THIS AND MORE.
IT'S WORTH ALL THIS AND MORE.

[Suggestion for cast recognition: Create two revolving ovals at R & L with cast funneling down the center led out by the sheep]

FINAL CURTAIN

APPENDIX

Stage Map 122
Set Synopsis 123
Properties List 126
Costume List 130
Includes age & hairstyle references
Character Grid - Men 136
Character Grid - Women 137
Research Reference 138

(The Appendix is included as an aid to production.)

Upstage
Town of Haran backdrop
(Act 1:2–10; Act II:1–6)
During Act II:6 prior sets vanish to be replaced by a caravan backdrop / set that will frame the rest of Act II.
R
L
(Tent added:Act 1:10)
(Tents: Act II:2)
low rock wall
Field
sheep
Well
trough
Downstage
(Sheep are on for every well scene, except II:6)

SET SYNOPSIS

For most of the play, the stage is a multiple setting of a well (L), a field (R), and the town of Haran (upstage). At rise of curtain (Act I: Scene 2) the audience should see:

- A well & trough area (downstage-L). The well is covered by a large, heavy, flat stone.

- The Town of Haran backdrop (upstage) with Laban's "beehive-style" house forming a 3- dimensional extension from the backdrop.

  [*For the nature of Haran and it's unique "beehive" houses, see "Abraham, the Friend of God," by Kenneth MacLeish in *National Geographic*, Vol. 130, No. 6, Dec. 1966, p. 757, and *Travelers in Ancient Lands* by L. Vaczek & G. Buckland, p. 108.]

- A field where a stacking of stones into a low wall about 3 feet (1 meter) long (downstage-R) defines the boundary of an otherwise open, treeless area.

ACT ONE

Scene 1: Circa 1755 B.C. Split: 1) SL: Edom desert; 2) SR: Enroute to Haran near a clustering of mountainous rock; Moon / cloud effect (perhaps with LIGHT)

Scene 2: Well near Haran
Focus — downstage-L

Scene 3: In front of Laban's dwelling
Focus — upstage-C

Scene 4: Well near Haran
Focus — downstage-L

Scene 5: Field near Haran
Focus — downstage-R

Scene 6: Inside Laban's dark house
Spotlight centrestage on an otherwise darkened stage. Teraphim are on a low stone table.

Scene 7: Field near Haran
Focus — downstage-R

Scene 8: Well near Haran
Focus — downstage-L

Scene 9: Field near Haran
Focus — downstage-R

Scene 10: Field near Haran
Focus — downstage-R
New tent being set at centrestage-R

ACT TWO

Scene 1: In front of new tent dwelling in field
Focus — centrestage-R

Scene 2: In front of wives' tent dwellings in field
Focus — centrestage-R
Rachel's tent is next to Leah's. Two wings can extend out, as needed, for the lesser wives, Zilpah and Bilhah.

Scene 3: Well near Haran
Focus — downstage-L

Scene 4: Inside Laban's dark house (with teraphim)
Low spotlight centrestage on an otherwise darkened stage

Scene 5: Well/Field/Tent/Haran etc. in sequence
Focus — shifts in sequence from ds-L to ds-R to cs-R to us-C to cs-R.

Scene 6: Well/Caravan Route/ Mt. Gilead in sequence
Focus — begins downstage-L. Then previous sets vanish as a bleak caravan route appears which will form the backdrop for the balance of the scenes.

Scene 7: Mt. Seir in Edom
Focus — downstage-L

Scene 8: Near brook of Jabbok/south side
Focus — to a spotlight at downstage-C

Scene 9: Near brook of Jabbok/north side
Focus — downstage-R

Scene 10: Near brook of Jabbok/south side
Focus — centrestage

PROPERTIES LIST

ACT ONE

Scene 1: Some night - circa 1755 B.C.
Enroute to Haran

OFFSTAGE-L
- knife for Esau
- worn tunic, baggy trousers, sandals & sheepskin—for Old Patriarch to carry; also flute for him to play

ONSET–R:
- moon & cloud (unless done with LIGHTING)

Scene 2: Several days later
Well near Haran

OFFSTAGE–L:
- leather strips for braiding for Shepherd Two
- a scrip (pouch) containing a hunk of flatbread for Shepherd One
- sheep for Rachel

ONSET–L:
- water in well
- long, knotted rope with leathern pouch attached
- sheep of Shepherds

Scene 3: Immediately following
In front of Laban's dwelling

BACKSTAGE–C: (from costuming)
- girdle
- everyday aba
- best aba

Scene 4: Immediately following
Well near Haran
- NIA*

Scene 5: Immediately following
Field near Haran
- NIA

Scene 6: One month later
Inside Laban's dark house

OFFSTAGE–R
- 1 candle (that can flame out)

ONSET–C:
- 4 candles (that can flame out)
- teraphim (small idols–see Book of Jasher, Chp. XXXI:43) on a stone table
- incense

Scene 7: A few days later—early morning
Field near Haran
- NIA

Scene 8: Seven years later
Well near Haran

OFFSTAGE–L:
- shepherd staves (3)

ONSET–L:
- sheep

Scene 9: Three days later—midmorning of the wedding day
Field near Haran
- NIA

Scene 10: Several hours later—late evening
Field near Haran

OFFSTAGE–L:
- candles in holders (10-15)

ONSET–R:
- tent
- sheepskins & other bedding
- large woven baskets (2)
- candle-holding device

(*NIA = nothing in addition)

ACT TWO

Scene 1: Early next morning
In front of new tent dwelling
OFFSTAGE–L
- sewing items, leather strips for braiding, bowl of seeds for cleaning, whittling items, etc. for "busy" group

Scene 2: Years 12 through 14
In front of wives tent dwellings
ONSET–R:
- 2 goatskin covered stools

OFFSTAGE–R:
- windpipe
- sewing items, bowl & pestle for grinding grains, etc. for women
- sticks game for children
- mandrakes

Scene 3: Beginning of year 15
Well near Haran
ONSET–L:
- sheep

Scene 4: Sometime late in year 16
Inside Laban's dark house
OFFSTAGE–L:
- candle (that can sputter out)

ONSET–C:
- teraphim on stone table

Scene 5: End of year 20
Well/Field/Tent/ Haran etc. in sequence
ONSET–L:
- sheep

ONSET–IN TENT:
- cloth for Rachel to conceal teraphim
- reed chest
- packed bundles, etc. for journey

BACKSTAGE–C:
- "teraphim" cloth bundle

Scene 6: 3 through 10 days later
Well/Caravan Route/ Mt. Gilead in sequence
OFFSTAGE–L: · long coiled rope with leathern pouch attached
· bundles for escort's journey
OFFSTAGE–R: · sheep of Jacob's
· sheep or goat skin for Rachel's use to cover reed chest
· stones for memorial
FROM PRIOR: · packed bundles, baskets, etc. for JACOB family's journey

Scene 7: A few days later
Mt. Seir in Edom
· NIA

Scene 8: A few days later
Near brook of Jabbok/south side
OFFSTAGE–L: · shepherd stave

Scene 9: Early next morning—dawning light
Near brook of Jabbok/north side
ONSET–R: · Jacob's walking staff

Scene 10: Later that same day
Near brook of Jabbok/south side
ONSET–L: · rock for Esau to sit on
OFFSTAGE–R&L: · staves for Laban's defenders

Notes: · Sheep of the middle-east differ somewhat from western sheep.
· Perhaps some of the sheep could be motorized in some way.
· The author discourages the use of children as sheep as this introduces an element of fantasy not in character with the rest of the play.)

COSTUME LIST

(Includes age & hairstyle references)

Time: circa 1755 - 1735 B.C. (Old Testament times)
Place: in and around Haran (present day, Turkey)

For ideas on costuming and appearance of Biblical characters, the author recommends viewing The New Media Bible: King James Version video entitled, Isaac and Jacob, Parts 3, 4, & 5. This video, produced by a nondenominational agency, the Genesis Project, is available through: the Distribution Center of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in Salt Lake City, Utah; LDS Bookstores; and perhaps through other Christian Bookstores. (**Note** however that filming of the Haran segment was not done in Haran, so the scenery does not reflect the Haran landscape or architecture.)

Remember:

- Biblical characters apparently aged much more slowly than present day.

- It is recommended that most costumes, even when not specified, have a pair of simple under-trousers for ease of movement.

(In Order of Appearance)

OLD PATRIARCH/ MUSICIAN: Calf-length tunic & simple trousers of like fabric; headgear, if desired. Patriarch is bearded.

ESAU: hairy, dark-red hair & beard

ACT ONE **Age 39**
Scene 1: tunic; girdle; animal skin cloak; sandals; leather wristbands

ACT TWO **Age 59**
Scenes 7, 10: similar to previous clothes

ELIPHAZ: reddish hair

ACT ONE **Age 15**
Scene 1: tunic; girdle; aba; sandals, wristbands

ACT TWO **Age 35**
Scenes 7, 10: similar to previous clothes

JACOB: dark, mid-neck length hair & bearded

ACT ONE
Scenes 1, 2, 4: **Age 39**
breech-cloth; (the following to be put on onstage:) very worn knee-length tunic & baggy pants; large sheepskin; sandals
Scene 7: new tunic; girdle; head-band
Scene 8: **Age 46** - similar to above
Scene 10: similar except with aba & ankle-length tunic (wedding attire).

ACT TWO
Scene 1: same as prior act
Scene 2: **Age 53** - similar to above but workday (calf-length) tunic

Scenes 5, 6: **Age 59** - similar to above but new and finer
Scenes 9, 10: similar

SHEPHERD ONE: white, neck-length hair & bearded
ACT ONE
Scenes 2, 4: **Age 70**
tunic of coarse, plain cloth; girdle; aba; sandals
Scenes 8, 10: **Age 77** - similar but newer
ACT TWO
Scene 3: **Age 84** - similar
Scenes 5, 6, 7, 8: **Age 90** - similar

SHEPHERD TWO: dark, longish hair & bearded
ACT ONE
Scenes 2, 4: **Age 50**
tunic of coarse, plain cloth; girdle; sandals
Scenes 8, 10: **Age 57** - similar, but newer
ACT TWO
Scene 3: **Age 64** - similar
Scenes 5, 6: **Age 70** - similar

SHEPHERD THREE: dark, longish hair, no beard until Act II: Scene 3
ACT ONE
Scenes 2, 4: **Age 21**
tunic of coarse, plain, cloth; girdle; sandals; headband
Scenes 8, 10: **Age 28** - similar but newer
ACT TWO
Scene 3: **Age 35** - similar
(now has a close-cut beard)
Scenes 5, 6: **Age 41** - similar

RACHEL: long, dark hair

ACT ONE

Scenes 2, 3, 5, 7: Age 21,
ankle-length tunic; girdle; sandals; padded fillet

Scene 9: **Age 28** - similar

ACT TWO

Scene 2: similar

Scenes 5, 6, 10: **Age 41** - similar

LABAN: greying, longish hair & beard

ACT ONE

Scenes 3, 4, 6: **Age 60**
tunic; girdle; sandals; everyday aba; best aba

Scene 7: similar, but with everyday aba

Scene 8: **Age 67** - similar

Scene 10 ankle-length tunic & best aba

ACT TWO

Scene 1: same as above

Scene 4: **Age 74** - similar (everyday)

Scene 6: **Age 80** - similar

LEAH: long, dark hair & tender-eyed

ACT ONE

Scenes 5, 7: **Age 21**
ankle-length tunic; girdle; sandals;

Scene 9: **Age 28** - similar

Scene 10: wedding attire: veiled with a spangled cap of coins & jewellery

ACT TWO

Scene 1: similar to previous, non-wedding attire

Scene 2: similar

Scenes 5, 6, 10: **Age 41**- similar

FEMALE—SERVANTS/GUESTS:

ACT ONE

Scene 10: calf- or ankle-length tunics; girdles; & perhaps some over-shawls; (head-cloths for some servants)

ACT TWO

Scenes 1, 2, 5, 6, 10: similar to above, but work-day

MALE—SERVANTS/GUESTS: some with beards

ACT ONE

Scene 10: ankle-, calf-, or knee-length tunics; girdles; some abas, cloaks, or rectangular shawls; sandals; & some head-coverings

ACT TWO

Scenes 1, 2, 5, 6, 7, 10: similar to above, but work-day - Esau's will have head cloths (7)

BILHAH & ZILPAH: long, dark hair

ACT TWO

Scene 2: Age: mid-twenties
ankle-length tunics; girdles; sandals; head-cloths

Scene 5, 6, 10: **Age: circa early 40's** - similar

CHILDREN:

Reuben (13), Simeon (12), Levi (11), Judah (10), Dan (10), Naphtali (9), Gad (9), Asher (8), Issachar (8), Zebulun (7), Dinah (7), Joseph (infant; later age 6)

ACT TWO

Scenes 2, 5, 6, 10: tunics; girdles; some sandals

Scene 9: Reuben - same as above

BEOR: dark hair, no beard

ACT TWO

Scenes 6, 7: **Age 17**
tunic; girdle; sandals
(add aba for Scene 7)

. . . .

Tunic: shirt-like garment of wool or linen worn by both men and women. Length: may be ankle-, calf- or knee-length. Longer lengths were used more for ceremonial occasions or to indicate status. Sleeve length may be long, medium, short, or sleeveless. Colors were derived from dye's out of nature. Some could be patterned through weaving of different colored threads.

Aba: a loose over-garment of wool or linen

Girdle: a belt of cloth, or soft leather that wraps around the waist.

JACOB & KIN Character Grid – MEN

Character	ACT I										ACT II										
Scene	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Finale
Old Patriarch	X											X								X	X
Esau	X																X			X	X
Eliphaz	X																X			X	X
Jacob	X	X	OS	X			X	X		X	X	X			X	X			X	X	X
Shepherd 1		X	OS	X				X		X			X		X	X	X	X		X	X
Shepherd 2 & 3		X	OS	X				X		X			X		X	X					X
Laban			X	X		X	X	X		X	XX			X		XX					X
Servants											X	X			X	X	X				X
Wedding Guests										X	ptn									X	X
Reuben												X			X	X			X	X	X
10 other sons												X			X	X				X	X
Beor																XX	X				X
Sheep		X	OS	X				X					X		X						X

OS = onstage but not in the scene; ptn = portion of; XX = more than one entrance

JACOB & KIN Character Grid – WOMEN

Character	ACT I										ACT II										
Scene	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Finale
Rachel		X	X		X		X		X			X			X	X				X	X
Leah					X		X		X	X	X	X			X	X				X	X
Servant One										X											X
Servant Two										X											X
Servants											X	X			X	X				X	X
Wedding Guests										X	ptn										X
Bilhah												X			X	X				X	X
Zilpah												X			X	X				X	X
Dinah												X			X	X				X	X

OS = onstage but not in the scene; ptn = portion of

Research Reference

Most references are corroborated in the other sources, too.

ACT I

Scene 1

Esau's robbery of Jacob	Legends I:345-6
Possible reference to destitution	Genesis 28:20

Scene 2

Rachel (and Leah's) age of 21 (twins) (calculated re references to Jacob's age)	Legends I:327
Haran's severe water shortage	Legends I:353
Jacob's great strength	Legends I:354
Rising of well waters to the top	Legends I:354; V:293

Scene 4

Laban's desire for finding gifts	Legends I:355-6
Incident with Eliphaz (Esau)	Legends I:345-6
Jacob's escape	Legends I:348, 356
The selling of the birthright	Legends I:319-21

Scene 5

Leah's fears re Esau	Legends I:359

Scene 6

Laban and his teraphim	Legends I:356-7
Teraphim	Legends I:371
	Jasher XXXI:41,**43**

Scene 7

Parental marriage arrangements	Legends I:359
Rachel warns Jacob—3 signs	Legends I:357; V:294
Jacob's agreement with Laban	Legends I:358

Scene 8

Sons born to Laban	Legends I:370
Pest in the cattle ended	Legends I:369-70
Laban blessed re Jacob	Jasher XXX:19

Scene 9

Rachel reveals the 3 signs to Leah	Legends V:299

Scene 10

Singing of Halia (Heleah)	Legends I:360 Jasher XXXI:7
Use of darkness	Jasher XXXI:2

ACT II

Scene 1

Jacob intended to leave	Legends I:361
Leah's talk with Jacob	Legends I:361

Scene 2

Timing of the births is a variation on that given in The Pseudepigrapha (II:110). This timing will allow for the birth of 12 children in 7 years. (See also, Jasher XXIX–XXXI)

Mandrake story	Legends II:202
Zebulun and Dinah twins	Pseude. II:110
Criticism of Rachel	Legends I:368
All pray for Rachel	Legends I:368

Scene 3

Genesis, chapter 30 can be read to support this interpretation. In verse 31, Jacob says, "Thou shalt not give me anything." Then it appears that all the marked cattle were sent with Laban's sons and Jacob relied on marked offspring born subsequently from Laban's plain cattle.

Scene 5	
When Jacob leaves, well water drops	Legends I:372
Why Rachel took the Teraphim	Legends I:371
	Jasher XXXI:44
Scene 7	
Laban's message to Esau	Jasher XXXI:54-6
	Legends I:376
Eliphaz's righteousness	Legends I:421; V:322
Scene 8	
Messages back and forth	Jasher XXXI:69-77
	XXXII:1,13
Scene 10	
Jacob's feelings of unworthiness	Genesis 32:10; 33:10
	Legends I:381
Esau's true feeling of love	Legends V:309
	Josephus 43:XX:3

(Genesis & Jasher references are to chapter and verse, not to volume and page.)

▪ ▪ ▪ ▪

Legends = Louis Ginzberg, *The Legends of the Jews*, Vols. I-VII. Trans. by Henrietta Szold, 1968.
Jasher = *The Book of Jasher*. Pub. by J. H. Parry & Company, 1887.
Genesis = *The Old Testament* - King James Version
Josephus = *Josephus, Complete Works*. Trans. by William Whiston, 1960.
Pseude. = *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*. Vol. II, Edited by James H. Charlesworth,1983.
The Book of Jubilees. R.H. Charles. 1913

Notes:

Watch for

A new a cappella musical about Joseph in Egypt
(from the same sources as *Jacob & Kin*)



Joseph
Down in Memphis Town

Zanthym House
Mountain View•AB•CA