

ACT ONE

The stage is dark at first - until, very gently, the LIGHTS rise on the stage and illuminate some tall, green stalks of FOLIAGE. They appear almost eerie, surrounded by the darkness, as if reaching their way towards a Heaven that we cannot see. They are corn stalks - proud and tall and straight - and they almost shine a brilliant green in the intense light. They make up the FOLIAGE we shall come to know as a demarcation of the season and the crop field of this lonely spot of earth.

A moment later, the FOLIAGE parts and through it walks a MAN - WILLIAM BRADFORD. HE is about thirty years in age - not much more - with a plain complexion and plain attire and plain everything else. There is nothing particularly remarkable about the man, but, despite this, some great, if indeterminate, fortitude manages to make itself known. This fortitude co-exists uneasily with a foreboding sense of loneliness that hangs over HIS head like an invisible cloud.

Pensively, BRADFORD examines the bright green FOLIAGE - and HIS mind remembers.

BRADFORD

(To us.)

When I look back upon it now, I marvel at how the Lord brought us to this place. I marvel at the blessings He poured into the unworthiest of hands. I marvel at the forgiveness He dropped into the sinfulness of laps. Marvel I still that we survived the days at all - but, as we did, it was by faith alone... for what else is faith but the water and the sun upon the seeds God plants for our lives? Without it, the seeds cannot sprout and the plant cannot grow. Faith is what kept us alive - faith in God above all and in man, too, besides. If we be made in God's image and we have faith in Him, so should we also have faith in each other - or else what is faith for?

DOROTHY

For us, William - for you and me.

A pretty, upright young woman enters from the side of the stage - DOROTHY BRADFORD. SHE is BRADFORD'S wife. SHE appears carefree, joyous, gay, radiantly enshrined in a dream-like light. We sense from HER a level of purity that mere mortals cannot attain.

BRADFORD

Aye, Dorothy, it is true.

DOROTHY

How else would you know me?

BRADFORD

It is through God alone that I know you - before, and now.

DOROTHY

And forever after.

BRADFORD

Yes.

DOROTHY

Although, you did waver once.

BRADFORD

Twice.

DOROTHY

Twice.

BRADFORD

Aye - but that is another story...

BRADFORD looks off into the distance, as if searching for a memory deep in HIS mind. DOROTHY quietly exits into the dark stillness of the stage. BRADFORD turns to talk to HER and then notices SHE is gone. Thoughtfully, HE turns back to us, to tell us a story.

BRADFORD

We set sail from Plymouth in the year of Our Lord 1620 - barely one hundred souls - for "souls" we were. As men, we were nothing, and treated as such, in a land that wished us to vanish - and so we obliged and so we vanished. We were looking for an Eden of rest - land to till in peace, with only the sky between us and God - no man, no priest, no king. In time, we landed here, and here we have stayed. We left our home to find another - though we knew not where that might be. A man leaves many things when he leaves his home - the ground he tills, the house

BRADFORD (CONT)

he built, the friends he knew... and, wher'ever he goes, there must he find each of them anew - ground, house, and friends.

Some DRUMS and TRUMPETS sound - none too many in number and rather pathetic in their lack of majesty. The rich FOLIAGE is rolled offstage to reveal frayed, frail stalks, leftover from a rather nasty winter. Various PILGRIM MEN of New Plymouth Colony are arrayed across the stage in stark Puritan dress. Among THEM stand MYLES STANDISH and EDWARD WINSLOW. STANDISH is a hearty forty-year-old, military leader of Plymouth Colony, wearing a rather sad-looking coat of armor but with a determined visage that more than makes up for it. WINSLOW is a spry youth, barely 20, who exudes an aristocratic, refined air, filled with youthful optimism, but devoid of pretentiousness. Together, the MEN face a cart, on which lies a dead body covered by a white cloth. BRADFORD solemnly approaches the MEN.

BRADFORD

I would like, my friends, to begin with a word about Master Carver. I have not enough for him to merit what he deserves, except to say he was lost to us too soon. I am unworthy to walk in his steps. The trust you have placed in me is greater than my own - and trusting, as I do, that it is far the wiser, I will endeavor not to fail you. I have never been before a governor of man, let alone of men - but here I stand as such. I know our view is bleak, as it was when he set sail from Plymouth but six months ago, but it is none so bleak as the view of other men who have not made greater of it.

WINSLOW

(Smiling, proud.)
Aye, he speaks truth.

A PILGRIM MAN

(Pointing up and offstage at some distant hill.)
Look there! Natives!

EVERYONE immediately turns and stares off into the distance at some unseen man on an unseen hill. STANDISH takes out a sword and rushes offstage to catch a better glimpse of the person.

PILGRIM MEN

It's another one!
There must be a hundred!
There must be ten!
Dear God, we are doomed!

BRADFORD

Calm, friends... calm. We can have no greater enemy than our trepidations.

STANDISH has returned.

STANDISH

They are gone.

BRADFORD

(Emphasizing to the CROWD.)
Aye, they are gone.

PILGRIM MEN

For how much longer?
They will be back!
We're already starving!
There's no hope of food!

WINSLOW

(Noticeably stepping up.)
There is always hope, if there be faith.

BRADFORD

Aye - and, of that harvest, there be plenty... if we sew it.

This seems to calm the CROWD.

STANDISH

(Changing the subject.)
Meantime, Master Carver is yet to be rested.

BRADFORD

(Turning to WINSLOW.)
Then I would ask Brother Winslow to see to him.

WINSLOW nods and exits with the CROWD.

BRADFORD

I feel a fraud.

STANDISH

You should not.

BRADFORD

I know not why they chose me. I was a step behind Master Carver, as ready to totter into the grave.

STANDISH

Aye - but you steadied well, and here you are. We need a steady man, and you surely be that.

BRADFORD

I am too quiet of voice. Your voice is better suited.

STANDISH

Ah, I am too loud!

BRADFORD

I think we could use such noise.

STANDISH

In politics, loud men make tyrants.

BRADFORD

Perhaps - but, in war, they make great soldiers. We are fortunate to have you.

STANDISH

You are fortunate to afford me.

BRADFORD

God delivers salvation in many ways.

STANDISH

And this? Is this salvation?

BRADFORD

It will be... soon.

STANDISH

Aye - but how soon? We cannot survive, back to the sea, surrounded by those who wish our death.

BRADFORD

We know not what they wish.

WINSLOW enters again.

WINSLOW

Master Carver is rested.

STANDISH

Aye - and what of the rest?

WINSLOW

They have quieted some. Still, Master Carver has more hope than they - and he's dead.

STANDISH

There is ever less reason for it.

BRADFORD

The foraging this day went well.

WINSLOW

It could make good for twenty.

STANDISH

Twenty rabbits.

WINSLOW

Where there is some, there could be more.

STANDISH

If we can find it. The land is ragged with stone and the soil rebels against us.

WINSLOW

In such places, God hides His wonders.

STANDISH

Aye - very well.

BRADFORD

When you foraged, did you see any natives?

WINSLOW

Twice, in the distance.

STANDISH

They ran, as they always do.

BRADFORD

Pray one day it will be towards us, with arms well open.

By now, as BRADFORD and STANDISH are engaging in their back-and-forth, a young man has emerged from the side of the stage - imperceptible almost, so quietly does HE enter. HE is a native, dressed in bare native attire - some simple cloth, a bright feather - and, bold as brass, HE strolls into town. HIS name is SAMOSET and HE wears a perpetual grin on HIS face.

Meanwhile, STANDISH continues:

STANDISH

Ah, we cannot depend on anyone but ourselves! If there be faith, let there be faith in that and let us use it well. We came as one hundred and we stand now as fifty - and tomorrow, there could be fewer still. We will try to forage again on the morrow and the morrow after that and the morrow after that.

STANDISH (CONT)

(To WINSLOW, pointedly.)

If God doth hide wonders here, we will be sure to find them.

BRADFORD notices the native man watching and gestures. STANDISH turns, as does WINSLOW, and freezes. There is instant silence, as EVERYONE stares at SAMOSET intriguingly. Silence - silence - more silence - and then, no more.

SAMOSET

(Marvelously cheery, raising HIS hands in exclamation.)
Hello, English!

The loudness of this welcome causes BRADFORD, STANDISH, and WINSLOW some discomfort. PILGRIM MEN hear the loud sound and begin to filter onstage during the below. SAMOSET talks like a loud, happy bullhorn.

STANDISH

Good God.

SAMOSET

Yes, very!

BRADFORD

You speak English.

SAMOSET

I try speak.

BRADFORD

Who are you?

SAMOSET

I am very well!

STANDISH

What is your name?

SAMOSET

Samoset.

WINSLOW

Samoset?

SAMOSET

Welcome to you English!

BRADFORD

You know, then, we are English.

SAMOSET

Yes! I have seen many English. You come here and take fish.

BRADFORD

Oh?

SAMOSET

Yes. There was an English man, Hunt - big ship.

BRADFORD

Yes - John Hunt. We know of him well in England.

SAMOSET

John Hunt, yes! Very bad man! He take many fish - and people. He pretend to trade and then he take some of our men. Many, many here do not like you English.

BRADFORD

We feel your pain - but know we do not sail with this man Hunt.

WINSLOW

His actions, we suppose, are why there are so few people here.

SAMOSET

No, no - they are dead. Bad sky - four years ago - lay on top and take them all away... whiiiiish!

STANDISH

(To BRADFORD.)

A plague.

SAMOSET

It is well now, but all others die. They say Hunt came and bring plague sky to kill the many.

BRADFORD

We are sorry to hear of all your suffering. Knoweth, above all, that we wish no one any harm.

SAMOSET

I have seen this. That is why I am here.

BRADFORD

You have been watching us?

SAMOSET

Yes, I watch you very well!

BRADFORD

Who told you to watch us?

SAMOSET

Massasoit - King of the Pokanoket.

BRADFORD

Massasoit? Where is this Massasoit?

SAMOSET

He is far away - two days - in village of Nemasket.

BRADFORD

How do you, then, come from so far?

SAMOSET

Not so far! Massasoit is the lord of many - many people, many lands - many, many, many things. The people from far and wide bow to him. No one is greater than Massasoit. Others, they are jealous - but he defeat them and then they vanish... whiiiiiiish! Massasoit worse than plague sky!

STANDISH

Can we meet this Massasoit?

SAMOSET

Yes! He would like meet you.

WINSLOW

How many of you speak English?

SAMOSET

Not many - only few. There is a man who was took by Hunt, but he run away and now he is one with us. He speak English better than I speak - better than any! I will show you him! I will show you Massasoit! I will show you everyone! I will bring them here to you and you can speak to them.

STANDISH

We would prefer to meet with your king on other ground.

SAMOSET

Point, then, the ground.

(Pointing to the ground.)

This?

(Pointing to another spot.)

This?

STANDISH

(Pointing off into the distance.)

This.

SAMOSET

(Grinning - HE was joking.)

I know.

STANDISH

(To BRADFORD.)

Ah, he plays games.

SAMOSET
Now where do I sleep?

WINSLOW
Where do you sleep?

SAMOSET
It is night. I sleep now.

BRADFORD
Would your people not worry of you?

SAMOSET
No! I told them you would take care for me.

WINSLOW
(Discretely, to BRADFORD and STANDISH.)
We could let him stay aboard the ship and watch him well.

STANDISH
This be mad!

BRADFORD
No, it be just.
(To SAMOSET.)
My friend, we will find you a place for the night.

SAMOSET nods and smiles.

SAMOSET
Now what to eat?

STANDISH
What to what?

SAMOSET
It is night. I am hungry.

BRADFORD
We will feed you, of course.

SAMOSET
I am also very thirsty.

BRADFORD
We will let you drink, too.

SAMOSET
I would like beer.

BRADFORD
(Gesturing offstage.)
We will give water.

WINSLOW approaches and throws a coat over SAMOSET.

WINSLOW

Here. It is a late hour and the wind is chilly.

SAMOSET

Thank you! Very nice English!

WINSLOW takes SAMOSET and leads HIM out. The PILGRIMS exit, as well, curious of this new man who has come into their world. STANDISH is left behind in brooding thought.

STANDISH

I like it not.

STANDISH exits with a huff. The LIGHTS fall slightly and remain on BRADFORD.

BRADFORD

(To us.)

It was a Friday when Samoset came to us - and, as he wished, he stayed the night. We gave him water, a biscuit, butter, cheese, pudding, and a piece of mallard, all which he liked well and had tasted before from the English. He told us more about the people of the land - the Nausets, the Narragansetts, the Massachusetts - names that did but flow like water off the tongue. On Saturday morning, we gave him a bracelet and a ring as a gift and he promised within a day or two to come again and to bring with him the great king, Massasoit, at a spot near to town.

The LIGHTS rise generally again. New FOLIAGE is rolled back onstage - giant tree limbs, barely blooming. STANDISH and WINSLOW are standing, peering off intently into the distance, with muskets in hand. We are in the middle of a forest. STANDISH seems especially on edge, looking about very ferociously. HE wears a small trumpet around HIS neck.

WINSLOW

Pray, your head does not twist off.

STANDISH

Better twist off than chopped off.

BRADFORD

It is early still, Standish. Have patience.

STANDISH

Methinks it's a trap.

BRADFORD

If so, thus have you seen the town is well-defended by others.
We three take the risk.

A CRACK sounds from some twig in the woods. BRADFORD, WINSLOW, and STANDISH stand at attention. Deathly silence falls on the stage. Some MEN slowly emerge from the FOLIAGE - MEN of the POKANOKET tribe. ONE POKANOKET MAN comes - then ANOTHER - then ANOTHER - then SAMOSET enters with HIS usual grin. HE holds up another piece of FOLIAGE and a grand, tall, strong-looking man enters - about forty - with the chiseled features of an Easter Island statue. This is MASSASOIT. HE wears a slightly bigger feather than the rest and dominates the stage with HIS poise and bearing. Behind HIM walks another equally impressive-looking man, a little smaller in build, a little less grandly attired, but HE stands out in HIS own way. We shall soon know HIM as SQUANTO. HE has a certain regal bearing, although HIS attire is plain - a king, perhaps, in disguise.

SAMOSET

Hello, English!

BRADFORD

Hello, Samoset. We are glad to see you again - and honored to meet your king.

SAMOSET

I told him you treat me well.

BRADFORD

As we treat all who are our friends.

SAMOSET

Yes! Now, the King wishes you speak first - thank you.

BRADFORD nods and steps forward slightly. This causes the POKANOKET to move closer to the King. MASSASOIT, perhaps annoyed by the impression this gives of a man incapable of defending himself, angrily beckons THEM away - and so THEY step back. HE then turns to

face BRADFORD - "Well?" As BRADFORD speaks, SQUANTO whispers in MASSASOIT's ear - clearly translating.

BRADFORD

I have thought, Great King, how best to speak to you when there is little we can do to speak as one - for a translator can only do much, when words come from the heart. I hope our actions will make for what words cannot. I am Bradford, Governor of these English people. This is Master Standish and Master Winslow. We have been told by your loyal servant, Samoset, that you have men you trust, who advise you, called "pniese." These men are my pniese and they will honor you, as do I.

MASSASOIT considers WINSLOW and STANDISH and nods approvingly. WINSLOW and STANDISH nod back.

BRADFORD

As you know, Great King, we have come from very far, but we are in search of peace - for sometimes peace is found in the furthest place of all. We condemn the acts of any English who do not wish it so and pledge that they do so without sanction. We come, too, from another peace-loving king - King James. He salutes you with words of love and desires you as his friend and ally. We desire naught but this - to truck with your people and to confirm a lasting peace.

MASSASOIT smiles slightly. BRADFORD gestures to WINSLOW, who brings over some items.

BRADFORD

(To SAMOSET.)

I would like to give your king some gifts.

MASSASOIT, understanding, gestures to SQUANTO to go to BRADFORD. SQUANTO approaches BRADFORD and gives HIM a smile. BRADFORD hands over a few items. SQUANTO returns to MASSASOIT and presents the items to HIM. MASSASOIT picks them up, one by one. First, HE picks up a large dagger, to which HE nods approvingly. Second, HE picks up a small, but bright jewel, at which HE stares with confusion.

WINSLOW

It is for the ear.

SQUANTO translates. MASSASOIT smiles at this favorably. HE then picks up another item - biscuits. HE considers

this item as strangely as the other items.

BRADFORD

Those are biscuits.

SAMOSET

Yes... very, very tasty!

MASSASOIT looks at the biscuits and feels them, perhaps perturbed by their hardness. HE then takes a bite, chews - and thinks. Slowly, HE nods some level of approval. BRADFORD and WINSLOW smile in return at the pleasure the King receives from their gifts. MASSASOIT hands the gifts to SQUANTO and then spies something of greater interest, staring intently at the trumpet around STANDISH's neck. MASSASOIT points at it commandingly. STANDISH seems perturbed by this.

SAMOSET

Massasoit would like see.

BRADFORD understands and goes to STANDISH with HIS hands outstretched. STANDISH seems less than enthusiastic, but slowly removes the trumpet from HIS neck and hands it to BRADFORD. BRADFORD goes to MASSASOIT slowly - no one stops HIM - and hands over the trumpet.

BRADFORD

This is now yours, Great King.

MASSASOIT takes the trumpet and looks at it for a moment. Unsure of what it does, HE hands it back to BRADFORD: "show me this." BRADFORD blows on the trumpet, emitting a loud sound. MASSASOIT and the POKANOKET stare back with amusement. MASSASOIT gestures - "again" - and BRADFORD again blows on the trumpet. Again, MASSASOIT and the POKANOKET are delighted. MASSASOIT then reaches out HIS hand - "please, give me" - and BRADFORD hands over the trumpet. MASSASOIT takes it, thinks, and abruptly hands the trumpet to a nearby POKANOKET MAN. The POKANOKET MAN uncertainly takes the trumpet and tries to mimic BRADFORD and blow on it - with

pathetic results. MASSASOIT laughs loudly. HE gestures hurriedly to another POKANOKET, who, in turn, comes and blows on the trumpet - also a failure. MASSASOIT laughs again and repeats the procedure again with yet another POKANOKET MAN, who fails, as well, to make the trumpet sound. With that, MASSASOIT takes back the trumpet, breathes deeply, and blows on it, emitting the loudest, grandest sound of ALL. HE laughs delightedly, as do the other POKANOKET, as do BRADFORD, WINSLOW, and even STANDISH. Mighty pleased, MASSASOIT hands the trumpet back to BRADFORD - "yours again" - and steps forward slightly. HE raises HIS hands grandly in the air.

MASSASOIT

Kah nate nont paswee nuppooan, quohtash matchesenat kah unnehteauwash kummatcheseonk!¹

BRADFORD

(To SAMOSET.)
What sayeth your king?

SAMOSET

Great Massasoit say he, too, come with gifts.

MASSASOIT gestures imperiously to the POKANOKET MEN. THEY come forward with furs, groundnuts, and knives. THEY begin to move towards BRADFORD and present HIM with the items.

BRADFORD

Thank you, Great King - but, of greater value than any object would be your knowledge. We desire to sow and to reap - to tame such wilds as no Englishman has tamed. As we aim to be friends, so shall we be honest. There is much we need from you, but also much we can give in return. You know this land better than any and it is that knowledge we seek. In return, we will defend you against your enemies, where'er they may be.

SQUANTO has been translating. MASSASOIT appears to be in deep thought over this request. HE then gestures commandingly to SQUANTO and points at BRADFORD. SQUANTO steps forward.

¹ "I welcome you to this, our land, and wish also to bestow gifts."

MASSASOIT

(Pointing at the furs.)

Pahkee koowauoh namunat.²

(Pointing at the groundnuts.)

Samppdowash ne wanegkuk.³

(Pointing at SQUANTO - barely scraping out the English.)
"Knowledge."

BRADFORD looks at SQUANTO, surprised.

BRADFORD

(To SAMOSET.)

I do not understand.

SAMOSET

Massasoit gives you him... for now.

BRADFORD

We do not believe in owning any man.

SAMOSET

Massasoit does! If a man pledged honor, he is owned...

(Touching HIS heart.)

...here.

BRADFORD turns in surprise to STANDISH
and WINSLOW, who nods encouragement.

BRADFORD

(To MASSASOIT.)

Thank you, Great King. We accept your most generous gifts and
will take good care of your servant.

Now SAMOSET is whispering to MASSASOIT,
who smiles back approvingly.

WINSLOW

What is his name?

SAMOSET

His name be Squanto.

BRADFORD

(Looking at HIM, setting the name in HIS mind.)

Squanto.

SAMOSET

I tell you about him before. He speak English better than me!

MASSASOIT raises HIS hands.

² "I give you furs."

³ "I give you food."

MASSASOIT
Ussish toh anee anoonumuk!⁴

BRADFORD
What is this?

SAMOSET
Now, Massasoit go.

BRADFORD
When shall we see him again?

SAMOSET
Soon. He will tell you when and you will meet.

BRADFORD
We look forward to that day - and pray, then, a peace will be agreed.

MASSASOIT calls ambiguously to the
POKANOKET and gestures. THEY depart
through the FOLIAGE again.

MASSASOIT
(Saluting grandly.)
Good-bye!

MASSASOIT exits.

SAMOSET
(Delighted.)
I teach him!

SAMOSET grins excitedly and exits.
BRADFORD, STANDISH, and WINSLOW are
left alone with SQUANTO.

WINSLOW
We must make him feel welcome.

STANDISH
I tell you, it be but a trap.

WINSLOW
A trap?

STANDISH
Aye! He could come among us, only then to turn on us - or, if
not so, to spy.

⁴ "Later, we shall meet again."

WINSLOW

Samoset has already been among us.

STANDISH

Perhaps to make us ease our doubts.

BRADFORD

Your suspicions are just, Standish - but stifling.

BRADFORD approaches SQUANTO.

BRADFORD

Hello, Squanto. As you heard, my name is Bradford. I am Governor of our people.

(Indicating STANDISH.)

This is Captain Standish, a great soldier.

(Indicating WINSLOW.)

This is Master Winslow, a great scholar.

SQUANTO nods at THEM each, ever so slightly.

BRADFORD

We hope to make you comfortable among us and anticipate your knowledge. You will be well taken care of by us - housed and fed - and surely may come and go as you please. You are not a prisoner, but a guest. We hope you will forever feel as one, so great shall be our hospitality.

Slowly, SQUANTO manages a smile and nods. The LIGHTS slowly fall on EVERYONE but BRADFORD.

BRADFORD

(To us.)

When Massasoit left that day, he and his men did not venture far, but lay all night in the woods not above half an English mile from us. They said that within eight or nine days they would come and set corn on the other side of the brook and dwell there all summer, which was hard by us. The following days, we found more and more natives came over to us - some to greet, some to eat, and some to blow on our trumpets.

Just then, DOROTHY appears off to the side of the stage. BRADFORD notices HER and betrays a peaceful, relieved smile.

DOROTHY

You look better.

BRADFORD

Aye - I feel it, too.

DOROTHY

I was worried I might lose you.

BRADFORD

No - never again.

DOROTHY

I believe you. There seems now to be a harvest.

BRADFORD

There is - but of hope, not yet of the ground. The very soil has faith now.

DOROTHY

Even faith to match ours, in each other?

BRADFORD

Never that great... but faithful still.

DOROTHY looks into the distance.

DOROTHY

Massasoit's men are back again.

BRADFORD

As they have been many a day.

DOROTHY

It is good.

BRADFORD

Aye - we cannot yet conceive, but that the natives be willing to have peace with us. They have seen our people sometimes alone two or three in the woods at work and yet have offered them no harm, as they might easily have done.

DOROTHY

Is this the peace we so often have missed?

BRADFORD

It dependeth on what peace - inside or out.

DOROTHY

Inside or out, peace must be everywhere, or else it is not peace... like love.

BRADFORD

It is true - as true as you are to me.

The LIGHTS rise slightly upon the back of the stage. New FOLIAGE has been rolled in - stalks of corn - small, but growing. SQUANTO is revealed to be tending them, planting sod around THEM,

lovingly and carefully. STANDISH, WINSLOW, and other PILGRIM MEN watch HIM intently, as if bystanders watching Michelangelo carve the David. BRADFORD watches SQUANTO intently for a moment, too, with similar care and pleasure.

DOROTHY

He has been quiet.

BRADFORD

He has, for one who speaks so well.

DOROTHY

He is always with you now, almost as I.

BRADFORD

He lives with us, aye, but says little.

DOROTHY

Pray, talk to him, and make him at home. It is not good to be alone.

BRADFORD

To me, he seems well content.

DOROTHY

I was not speaking of him.

BRADFORD

Oh?

DOROTHY

I feel as if you speak only to me.

BRADFORD

I speak to others.

DOROTHY

Aye - of business.

BRADFORD

I am governor.

DOROTHY

Governor and man - and the second is the greater.

BRADFORD turns and looks towards SQUANTO again. DOROTHY departs into the darkness, as the LIGHTS rise in full. BRADFORD approaches SQUANTO tending the corn stalks. SQUANTO has just finished laying down some sod. BRADFORD smiles kindly and makes to start a

conversation - soon interrupted.

SAMOSET'S VOICE

Hello English!

SAMOSET enters, all grins, munching on biscuits - one in each hand. WINSLOW enters alongside HIM, evidently having supplied said biscuits.

SAMOSET

(To BRADFORD.)
Greetings, Bradford!

(To STANDISH.)
Greetings, Standish!

(Saluting with the biscuits.)
Greetings from Massasoit! He ask of you, so I come.

BRADFORD

Greetings, yes, my friend. You visit us many times. Is your king so friendly, or are you so hungry?

SAMOSET

Both! Food makes friend.

WINSLOW

He brought some groundnuts.

SAMOSET

(Admiring the corn stalks.)
Ah! Squanto do better. He makes corn rise, like hands pull from sky!

BRADFORD

Aye, and we are grateful - for him and your groundnuts.

A TRUMPET weakly sounds off in the distance. SAMOSET holds HIS ears in pain.

SAMOSET

Ah! They know nothing! They try and try and still no better!
(To WINSLOW.)
Come, we show them.

SAMOSET grabs WINSLOW and hurries offstage with HIM. STANDISH snorts glumly.

STANDISH

He'll eat us out of any harvest.

BRADFORD

Aye - but another plants us into one.

STANDISH

I tell you, we are too free with them.

BRADFORD

How else can we be... with friends?

STANDISH

Friends? I see no treaty - and, until then, there be no "friends."

STANDISH shakes HIS head and wanders off to the side to chat with other PILGRIMS. BRADFORD is left standing in thought, watching SQUANTO. Slowly, HE approaches HIM again. SQUANTO barely pays BRADFORD any heed, but we can tell HE feels the former's presence.

BRADFORD

You have been good to us, Squanto.

SQUANTO thinks a moment, perhaps surprised BRADFORD is addressing HIM. HE eventually looks up.

SQUANTO

I have done what my king has asked.

BRADFORD

You have done that for us - and more.

SQUANTO

Massasoit has asked for that - and more.

SQUANTO smiles wryly and returns to HIS planting. BRADFORD ponders HIM another moment before speaking again.

BRADFORD

I assume you long for your home, to be away from it so.

SQUANTO

Here, I am home.

BRADFORD

It is kind of you to say.

SQUANTO

No. This land - it is my home. I was born here and, here, I lived, for many years.

(Watching BRADFORD's face.)

You are confused.

BRADFORD

I understood a plague took everyone away.

SQUANTO

(A slight smile.)

Not everyone.

BRADFORD

In that case, you are blessed.

SQUANTO

(Amused, rather dismissively.)

Ah, there is no blessing here.

BRADFORD

How is it, then, that you lived?

SQUANTO

(Playfully - coyly.)

By not being blessed. You know of the man Hunt?

BRADFORD

Aye - Samoset has told us. He greatly mistreated your people.

SQUANTO

He did - and me among them. He took me away - very, very far - and he sold me to men in Spain. He took away many of my people, but he left many more still. They, they were the "blessed," because they were left behind - but now... Now, they are dead, and I am alive... alive and "unblessed."

BRADFORD

Yet, ultimately, you were blessed.

SQUANTO

Ah, that is what you think now. The people in my village, that is what they think then. Then came the plague and they all die. Now you look back and you think I am blessed... but tomorrow? There could be another plague. There could be another Hunt. Who is blessed then... is Hunt blessed?

BRADFORD

All men are blessed.

SQUANTO

All men not worthy.

BRADFORD

Aye - but, still, we are blessed.

SQUANTO

But why, English?

BRADFORD

Because God is merciful.

SQUANTO

If He is merciful, then why is there Hunt?

BRADFORD

Because God gives men free will and trusts we will come to Him.

SQUANTO

Why should we, if he can't save us from Hunt?

BRADFORD

Because there is a world beyond this one.

SQUANTO

Ah, called Spain - and it is not worth it.

BRADFORD can't help but smile.

BRADFORD

Do you have faith in nothing?

SQUANTO

I have seen much and so I believe what I see.

BRADFORD

Perhaps, then, you just see less than there is.

SQUANTO

I see what I can touch. If you see something that you cannot touch, it is ghost.

BRADFORD nods slightly, rather amazed by this person.

BRADFORD

You speak English better than most.

SQUANTO

I spent many years in England, too.

BRADFORD

And yet... here you are.

SQUANTO

And here you are, Bradford. We two travel well.

BRADFORD looks at SQUANTO for a moment and slowly smiles. SQUANTO smiles back at HIM. Just then, a LOUD TRUMPET BLARE sounds and startles BRADFORD and SQUANTO. Some CHEERS sound from offstage in appreciation of the

magnificent sound. SAMOSET enters again with WINSLOW in tow. HE is mighty proud of HIMSELF.

SAMOSET

Samoset knows how to blow!

STANDISH

Aye - and how to eat.

SAMOSET is about to exit and turns.

SAMOSET

(Cheekily - as if HE just thought of it.)
Ahhh, yes, English - I have message from Massasoit. Great king would like to make treaty of peace. He ask you to come tomorrow - same spot.

(Grandly waving.)
Goodbye, English!

BRADFORD discretely glances at STANDISH, who, receiving this information seems intrigued. WINSLOW and STANDISH exit with SAMOSET.

BRADFORD

You must tell me how you came here.

SQUANTO

It is a long story.

BRADFORD

I trust so. God never writes miracles on just one page.

The LIGHTS slowly fall, until only a SPOTLIGHT remains on BRADFORD.

BRADFORD

(To us.)
When you asketh of the Lord and your heart is true, He will provide - and so he provided us. He provided us not with an extra day of sun or a richer soil or a gentler rain - but with men - good men. Sometimes, the Lord best works His miracles thus. Massasoit was one such man - Samoset was another - and Squanto, the greatest still. Soon, they were more than just good men... they were friends and allies.

The LIGHTS rise slightly on the stage. New FOLIAGE has been rolled on - ever taller stalks of corn. On one side stands STANDISH, WINSLOW, and a few PILGRIMS, facing into the stage. On the other side stands MASSASOIT and a few POKANOKET MEN, also facing into the

stage. Mid-ground stands SAMOSET and SQUANTO. Together, THEY engage in the background in a pantomime ritual. SAMOSET is making a grand speech - gesturing grandly, loudly proclaiming peace. POKANOKET MEN come forth, meeting STANDISH and WINSLOW in turn, presenting THEM with arrows and furs, while the PILGRIM MEN produce gifts of trumpets and cloth.

Throughout, BRADFORD narrates:

BRADFORD

Shortly thereafter, we met Massasoit and his men again and we pledged to each other an undying peace. First, that neither one or the other of us should injure or do hurt to any of our people. Second, that, if any one of us do hurt unto the other, the one should be sent to the other, that he might be punished. Third, that, if any did unjustly war against one of us, the other would come to his aid - and proclaim this so to all.

MASSASOIT gives a great exclamation.

SAMOSET

It is done!

A LOUD TRUMPET and DRUM sound.
MASSASOIT and the POKANOKET move to embrace STANDISH and WINSLOW. BRADFORD embraces MASSASOIT and then goes to SQUANTO.

BRADFORD

Thank you, Squanto.

SQUANTO

Don't thank me, Bradford.

BRADFORD

You are an author of this day. Without you, our stomachs would be too bare for us to stand. I know, too, you have talked to Samoset well about us - and, through him, to Massasoit. They trust you - I trust you - and so we are here.

SQUANTO

Man should trust no one.

BRADFORD

You are not just "no one."

SQUANTO

No, I am yours still - yours to use. Your peace with Massasoit will take you far. You will be protected and others will now set

SQUANTO (CONT)

down to deal with you. There is much you have to learn and many people you have to meet - the Nausets, the Massachusetts, the Narragansetts... and still more.

BRADFORD

We do not know where they are or how to approach them.

SQUANTO

That is why I am here, Bradford.

BRADFORD

(Rather surprised.)
You would do so for us?

SQUANTO

I would.

BRADFORD

You will show us to others?

SQUANTO

I will.

BRADFORD

Is that not dangerous for you?

SQUANTO

In life, there is always danger - and never more when there is peace. Before Hunt, I was living in my village and there was calm. The loudest sound was the call of a bird, until I turn and see Hunt and his men. The day they came, I could see no danger - and, when I saw, it was too late. Peace, Bradford, is the true danger, for it makes you rest when you should be watching. He who stands in the dark with his eyes open is more safe than he who rests in the light with his eyes shut.

BRADFORD

And here, you will be our eyes?

SQUANTO

Yours and mine - for, on this day, they are both one. Your safety is my safety.

BRADFORD

We aim to make you feel so. You are one of us now, as if you came with us on the journey.

SQUANTO

Oh, I did, Bradford - but on separate ship.

BRADFORD

Aye, you never told me how you came back home.

SQUANTO

It was after I escape from Spain and flee to England on a ship. There, I live with a man, who take me to a land very far north - very much cold - where I meet another man, named Dermer. I join him on his ship as he sail the coast of this land, until, one day, I look up and I see I am home. He let me stay - and then... that is when I learn my people are gone. I was alone - and so Massasoit welcome me and give me food.

BRADFORD

We, too, were taken from our home - pushed out, more so than dragged. After, we hoped to return - if not to a purer home, than to a new one entirely.

SQUANTO

Yet, for me, my home was destroyed.

BRADFORD

As was ours - at least, in its soul.

SQUANTO

So then, together, we are here - still without a home.

BRADFORD

No, Squanto. We are home. Although foreign it might seem, this place is as much ours as are clouds to the sky or waves to the ocean. It is a home of our making, built from the best of what has come before and free from the chains of the past - like an old man born again to his life. His wisdom is ripe, yet his limbs are renewed - and both well to use.

SQUANTO

Ah, but, Bradford, I have built no home.

BRADFORD

Perhaps your home is here - with us.

SQUANTO

(Smiling in understanding.)
New Plymouth.

BRADFORD

New Patuxet.

BRADFORD and SQUANTO smile at EACH
OTHER, when:

MASSASOIT

Squanto, guttoohohkon!⁵

MASSASOIT is calling SQUANTO. SQUANTO

⁵ "Squanto, come now!"

smiles at BRADFORD and goes to MASSASOIT. BRADFORD watches HIM for a moment in deep thought. WINSLOW, from a near distance, notices BRADFORD being thoughtful and approaches HIM.

WINSLOW

You admire him a great deal.

BRADFORD

I admire him for his gifts.

WINSLOW

There is no doubt that we eat because of him and Massasoit.

BRADFORD

Aye - and there is still more he is willing to do. He will speak for us, Winslow, with the other natives. He will go with us into the unknown and shine a light in the dark. He is willing to do this, even though it must be at risk to him. Life is too fickle in these forests for it to be otherwise.

WINSLOW

He is a brave man.

BRADFORD

What's more, he is willing to sacrifice - for us.

WINSLOW

What has been promised him in return?

BRADFORD

I have promised nothing.

WINSLOW

Then he is sent by God.

The LIGHTS fall generally until only a SPOTLIGHT remains on BRADFORD.

BRADFORD

(To us.)

Thus, a treaty was proclaimed - a treaty of peace, for a new world, a new life. We, who had known so much suffering, would suffer no more. The Pokanoket, too, who had known so much suffering, could trust in our support - and did. The treaty came at a time most promising, for, soon after it was proclaimed, we were called upon to obey it. Squanto and Samoset had gone to the village of Nemasket, to meet with Massasoit on our behalf, as he often dwelled there - but that day, no more.

SAMOSSET'S VOICE

English! English!

The LIGHTS rise abruptly. The FOLIAGE stalks of corn have grown ever greater, ever grander. SAMOSET soon comes running through them in clear terror. The PILGRIMS begin to rush onstage at the sound of HIS voice. WINSLOW and STANDISH are among THEM.

SAMOSET

Hurry, you must help!

BRADFORD

Why? What is wrong?

SAMOSET

Massasoit in danger!

BRADFORD

In danger? From whom?

SAMOSET

Corbitant - very bad man, like Hunt!

WINSLOW

We do not know of this man "Corbitant."

SAMOSET

He is a lord under great Massasoit - very greedy, very angry. He now rule in Nemasket with his men.

STANDISH

You mean the village is captured?

SAMOSET

Yes - but Massasoit not there. Squanto and I learn this on our way to Nemasket, but we go to see for ourself.

BRADFORD

Where is Squanto now?

SAMOSET

(Almost crying.)
He is dead, Bradford! They kill him!

BRADFORD

(Astonished.)
They've killed him?

WINSLOW

Dear God in Heaven.

STANDISH

Damn fool, this Corbitant!