

ACT ONE - SCENE ONE

As the OVERTURE ends, the stage is dark - dark and tranquil. A SPOTLIGHT slowly rises center stage. In it stands a tall, proud man, looking dapper in an early nineteenth century frockcoat with walking stick. HE is black and bears the scars of a weathered life, but HIS bearing indicates great dignity and sense of purpose. HE is Paul Jennings - although we shall know HIM as OLD PAUL.

OLD PAUL

Greetings and salutations. My name is Paul - Paul Jennings - and I'm here to tell you a story. It's a story about me - and a story about him.

OLD PAUL gestures to another SPOTLIGHT. A 15-year-old black teenager wearing simple slave clothes jumps into the LIGHT and presents HIMSELF theatrically - tada! - in a show-off pose. HE is a young version of OLD PAUL - YOUNG PAUL.

OLD PAUL

That young whippersnapper is me when I was but fifteen years old. Just look at me - full of life and full of...

YOUNG PAUL blows the audience a raspberry.

OLD PAUL

...sass. Specifically, this story is about how that boy there became a man - how he became me and how we both became free. I was, you see, born a slave to James and Dolley Madison in Montpelier, Virginia - but when Master Madison became President of these here United States, he chose yours truly to go with him to the White House as a house servant.

YOUNG PAUL

Get on wit it ol' man - you's takin' too long!

OLD PAUL

(Annoyed, trying to ignore HIM.)
Now to tell a story really properly, you've got to go back to one place - and that's the beginning. For our purpose, the beginning is in August, 1814. We find ourselves amidst one of Dolley Madison's famous salons, better known as a "squeeze." Here, members of Congress contemplated the pressing issues of the day with reflective, reasoned, and rational discourse.

ACT ONE - SCENE TWO

PLACE: The Oval Drawing Room in the
White House

TIME: Early Afternoon, August 19, 1814

There are a number of CONGRESSMEN in a
state of panic. THEY are MARCY, SIMON,
SMITH, HASTINGS, RICHARDS, BURKE and
the imperious RUFUS KING of NEW YORK.
THEY are babbling nervously amongst
THEMSELVES.

SONG - "It's the End"

ALL CONGRESSMEN

OH, GOD SAVE US.
OH, GOD HELP US.
THERE'S A NAVY OFF THE COAST...

MARCY

MANY WARSHIPS FROM THE ENGLISH!

SMITH

MORE AND MORE SHIPS FROM THE ENGLISH!

MARCY

'TIS OUR FREEDOM...

HASTINGS

FREEDOM!

SIMON

FREEDOM

ALL CONGRESSMEN

THAT THEY'RE ACHING TO EXTINGUISH.

SIMON, MARCY

OH, GOD SAVE US.

MARCY, HASTINGS, RICHARDS,
BURKE, SMITH, KING

OH, GOD HELP US.

ALL CONGRESSMEN

SOON OUR LAND WILL BE A GHOST...

RICHARDS

FOR THE EVIL ENGLISH SO BURN...

SIMON, MARCY

TO UNLEASH UPON US COCKBURN!

MARCY, HASTINGS, RICHARDS,
BURKE, SMITH, KING
NO, NOT...

SMITH
COCKBURN!

SIMON, MARCY, HASTINGS,
RICHARDS, BURKE, SMITH, KING
COCKBURN!

KING
COCKBURN!

BURKE
AFTER DEATH, HE'LL DOWN BELOW BURN.

SIMON, KING
HE'S THE TERROR OF THE SEAS...

MARCY, HASTINGS, RICHARDS, BURKE
WHO BRINGS NATIONS TO THEIR KNEES...

KING
WITH SO RAVENOUS A FURY...

SIMON, SMITH
EVEN GOD CANNOT APPEASE...

ALL CONGRESSMEN
AND WITH SUCH A HORROR OFF OUR SHORES
EACH ONE OF US AGREES...

KING
IT'S THE END!
IT'S THE END!
THERE'S NO DOUBT THAT IT'S THE END
FOR THE FOE HAS COME TO SLAY US
AND SPREAD ANARCHY AND CHAOS.
NO CONTRITION
OR SUBMISSION
NOW CAN SAVE US FROM PERDITION.

HASTINGS
IT'S THE END!

SIMON, MARCY
IT'S THE END!

SMITH
CENT'RIES AFTER WE SHALL SPEND...

RICHARDS
RECOLLECTING HOW OUR HOME HAD...

SIMON, MARCY
A GOOD PILLAGING LIKE ROME HAD...

KING
DEVASTATION
FOR THE NATION
PASSED A MONGOL'S CONTEMPLATION.

ALL CONGRESSMEN
NO SANE MAN CAN DISMISS
THAT WE'RE ON A PRECIPICE
FOR THE SIMPLE FACT IS THIS:
WE ARE FACING CERTAIN DEATH.

KING
AND THE AUTHOR OF OUR MESS
IS JEMMY MADISON, NO LESS.
THANKS TO HIM, OUR INDEPENDENCE
WILL NOT LAST FOR OUR DESCENDENTS.

DOLLEY MADISON swoops in, elaborately turbaned, eminently attired, exuding a tremendous light, and carrying a box of snuff, from which SHE liberally sniffs as SHE enters. A nasty, yellow-and-blue macaw is on HER shoulder - Uncle Willy. JEAN PIERRE SIOUSSAT, the stiff, French-accented Master of Ceremonies at the White House, enters behind DOLLEY.

DOLLEY
IT'S THE END!
IT'S THE END!
YES, IT JUST MUST BE THE END -
EITHER THAT OR I'M SURMISING
TIS BUT HASTY EULOGIZING.
IT'S THE END?
HARDLY THAT.
HOLD YOUR TONGUE.
HANG YOUR HAT.
COME, RELAX.
(Speaking.)
Come and chat.

MARCY
(To SIMON.)
Here comes Madame Presidentress... that snuff-snorting Amazon!

KING
Afternoon it is, Mrs. Madison - but whether it's "good" for most of the land is debatable.

DOLLEY

Granted, yes, Senator King, every time Congress is called into session, the nation does tend to tremble.

KING

Happier would we all be if there were no reason to convene, Mrs. Madison, considering the circumstances.

Uncle Willy squawks viciously: "Damn silly bastard!"

DOLLEY

(To Uncle Willy.)
Oh, Willy... for shame.

CHARLES CARROLL, a former politician with an aristocratic bearing, has come to DOLLEY's aid.

CARROLL

I have faith that we will carry the day.

DOLLEY

(To KING.)
You see? And Mr. Carroll is no great fan of the war.

KING

In that at least, he is wise, considering that Cockburn and his fleet have been prowling our coast for over a year.

DOLLEY

In that case, they're not "prowling" - they're loitering. Is this dreaded Cockburn an admiral or a woman choosing a hat? I can only assume he and his sailors are too afraid to land and confront our troops.

KING

ALL THOSE SHIPS
KILL OUR TRADE.

DOLLEY

YOU MIGHT FEAR THAT BARRICADE
BUT I HARDLY THINK THAT DOOM IS
WHERE A LACK OF FRENCH PERFUME IS.

KING

YOU WON'T LAUGH
WHEN THEY'RE HERE.

DOLLEY

NOR SHALL I COLLAPSE WITH FEAR
LIKE A MAN WHO BUYS A COFFIN
IF HE SNEEZES ONCE TOO 'OFFEN.'

MARCY

IT'S THE END!

SIMON

(To SMITH and HASTINGS - more of a question.)
IT'S THE END?

DOLLEY

(To SIMON.)
FOR THE BRITISH, YES, MY FRIEND.

The OLD PAUL emerges surreptitiously through the CROWD. A FEW SERVANTS enter properly from among the CROWD - two white (CHARLES, PHOEBE), three black (PRESTON, LOUIS, SUKEY). The very last of the bunch is a YOUNG MAN - the YOUNG PAUL JENNINGS ("YOUNG PAUL"). HE is dressed to the nines, looking proper and wearing a nondescript expression. YOUNG PAUL, now center-stage, stops and turns to us as the other SERVANTS walk off into the CROWD and begin to pour and distribute glasses of wine.

YOUNG PAUL

DEY ALL SAYS
IT'S THE END
TILL I'S PUTTIN' IN THEIR 'HEND
ONE MORE GLASS 'A DIS MADEIRA...
DEN, OH, BOY, DO DEY THINK 'CLEARA!'

Annoyed, SIOUSSAT claps HIS hands aggressively to get PAUL's attention.

OLD PAUL

Back then, there were many of us in the White House - all of us, at the center of history, but not yet a part of it. I was there with many other servants - men like Henry - who looked then much like I look now.

The OLD PAUL reaches into HIS pocket, removes some long, white gloves, and puts them on - becoming HENRY.

YOUNG PAUL

(Smacking OLD PAUL (HENRY), gesturing to SIOUSSAT.)
Step up, Henry! Dat ol' frog over there wants us to get a move on. You take da horse doovers and follow me. Be sure to smile it up, too - even if you ain't gots teeth.

YOUNG PAUL and OLD PAUL walk among the CONGRESSMEN, offering hors d'oeuvres.

CHARLES, PHOEBE, PRESTON, LOUIS, and
SUKEY depart.

YOUNG PAUL
You's not keepin' up, old man!

OLD PAUL (HENRY)
I don't have young legs like yours.

YOUNG PAUL
Well, dey sure ain't for sale, so you's stuck with the ones you
got and you gotta make the most of 'em.
(Gesturing grandly to the CONGRESSMEN.)
That's what Missy Madison says about dat lot.

YOUNG PAUL starts to push the OLD PAUL
from behind to get HIM to move.

OLD PAUL (HENRY)
Hold up now! Who's I suppose to serve first?

YOUNG PAUL
Oh, wow! You acts like you jus' left the plantation.

OLD PAUL (HENRY)
I did.

YOUNG PAUL
Well, look, I's been here five years - since Massa Madison was
elected - and I knows things. You serve da loud ones, da angry
ones, an' da stupid ones - in dat order... which don't much
matter because dey's usually all the same people anyway. Da more
rowdy dey get, da more you feed 'em. If dey don't end up chokin'
to death, at least you can shush 'em up for a bit.

SIOUSSAT passes by YOUNG PAUL and gives
HIM a glare - "get to work." YOUNG PAUL
smiles, but then, when SIOUSSAT's back
is turned, raises HIS foot as if to
kick HIM. Instead, PAUL pauses and
stares at the shoe on HIS foot.

YOUNG PAUL
Dat reminds me, I gots to get new shoes.

OLD PAUL (HENRY)
Da ones you done got look fine to me.

YOUNG PAUL
Dat's cause you just stepped off the plantation! Any ol' slave
ain't wearin' good shoes, ya know. Good shoes, deys all worn by
da free people, an' dats d truth. You wants to know if a man is
free, jus' looks at his feet.

OLD PAUL (HENRY)

You done act like you know everything.

YOUNG PAUL

I do, so shut up! Look here...

(Turning and pointing out MARCY.)

DAT ONE'S

SENATOR MARCY

FROM TENNESSEE...

STRONG AS A MULE

AND ALMOST AS SMART.

(Pointing at SIMON.)

DAT ONE'S

SENATOR SIMON

FROM DELAWARE...

SPEAKS FIVE LANGUAGES

AN' CAN'T TELL DA TRUTH

IN ANY OF 'EM.

ALL CONGRESSMEN

OH, GOD SAVE US!

OH, GOD HELP US!

YOUNG PAUL

(Pointing at KING.)

AN' LAST

AN' SURE AS HECK LEAST -

DAT DARE'S SENATOR KING

OF NEW YORK...

HIS OPINION OF HIMSELF IS SO HIGH

YOU CAN ONLY SEE IT THROUGH A TELESCOPE.

A MESSENGER in a torn uniform enters.

MESSENGER

IT'S THE END!

IT'S THE END!

YES, I TELL YOU - IT'S THE END!

I'VE A MESSAGE TO CONVEY, SIR,

SO PLEASE GET OUT OF MY WAY, SIR!

(Speaking.)

Please, I need to see the President!

SIOUSSAT

(In a heavy, French accent.)

Bonjournee. I am the President's Master of Ceremonies.

MESSENGER

THE BRITISH HAVE LANDED

IN BENEDICT, MARYLAND!

THEY ARE APPROXIMATELY

TWENTY-FIVE MILES AWAY.

WE BELIEVE THEY AIM

TO MAKE FOR WASHINGTON.

ALL CONGRESSMEN

NO EXCUSES!
NO MORE LIES HERE!
DEFEAT AWAITS US!

KING

(Turning to the CROWD.)
You see, my friends, how treachery reveals itself, despite
hiding beneath this garb of... tinsel.

KING grabs a nearby curtain and tears
it with one great flourish.

DOLLEY

(Outraged, barely holding in HER fury.)
You should take your leave, Senator.

KING

I will, madame, when the President takes his.

KING grandly turns towards the portrait
of George Washington on the wall.

KING

(To the CONGRESSMEN.)
What a disgrace, gentlemen, for any visage of Washington to
witness the death of what he himself worked so hard to build. We
face the most powerful nation on Earth, led by Admiral Cockburn,
the vilest monster of the age... and we do so unprepared!

JAMES MADISON has entered. HE is a
small, frail-looking, colorless and
introverted man, aged about 60.

MARCY

(Pointing accusatorily.)
There's the President!

MADISON

I'm sorry I'm late, gentlemen, but I have arrived just in time
to quell your doubts. Your presumptions of demise are premature.
I have already conferred with Generals Wilder and Armstrong this
afternoon about the defense of the capital and...

KING imperiously raises HIS hand to
silence MADISON, as the CONGRESSMEN
start to shout in protest.

KING

We have had enough of your false promises, Mr. President! It is
well passed time for your lies!

(To the CONGRESSMEN.)
Come, gentlemen... we are leaving!

DOLLEY

Senator King! Gentlemen!

DOLLEY reaches out HER arms in vain as KING leads the OTHER CONGRESSMEN downstage. The White House recedes into the background as THEY storm out of it. The front door of the White House is rolled on towards the side of the stage, through which PAUL appears, shouting after the CONGRESSMEN.

MARCY, SIMON, SMITH, RICHARDS

THERE ARE WARSHIPS OFF THE COAST -
MORE AND MORE SHIPS OFF THE COAST -
LED BY COCKBURN...
COCKBURN...
COCKBURN!

YOUNG PAUL

Ah, to hell with dat ol' Cockburn!

YOUNG PAUL

ME?
I AIN'T SCARED -
THOUGH MY FEET
SHO' AIN'T PREPARED.

SMITH

OH, GOD,
SAVE US!

KING

OH, GOD,
HELP US!

YOUNG PAUL

WHILE DA BRITS ARE FIN'LLY LANDIN'
I GOTS NO GOOD SHOES
TO STAND IN.
NOW DAT'S TROUBLE
TIMES A DOUBLE -
DAT AN' CONGRESS BURNT
TO RUBBLE.

ALL CONGRESSMEN

DOOM!
DEATH!
DOOM!
DEATH!
DOOM!
DEATH!
DEATH, DEATH!

HASTINGS, RICHARDS, BURKE

WE ARE FACING A RETREAT.

KING

WE ARE STARING AT DEFEAT.

YOUNG PAUL

WELL, "DA FEET" SHO' NEED NEW SHOES NOW!

SIMON

WATCH AS AGONY
ENSUES NOW

GOD, PLEASE
SAVE US ALL!
GOD, PLEASE
SAVE US ALL!

MARCY

AGONY
ENSUES NOW!

IT'S ALL OVER!
DOOM AWAITS US!
IT'S ALL OVER!
DOOM AWAITS US!

HASTINGS, RICHARDS, BURKE

WATCH AS AGONY
ENSUES NOW

FOR DEAR
GOD, PLEASE
SAVE US ALL!
GOD, PLEASE
SAVE US ALL!

YOUNG PAUL

(Over the above.)

OH, JUS' SHUT UP!
OH, JUS' SHUT UP!
IT AIN'T OVER!
IT AIN'T OVER!

YOUNG PAUL

EV'RYWHERE'S HERE
LOTS 'A PRAYERS HERE
CALL GOD TO OUR SIDE.
WHY, I BETS DAT GOD
EVEN CRIES OUT "LAWD,
I NEEDS
SOMEWHERE
I CAN HIDE!"
YEAH, I SHO' NEEDS ME
SOME SHOES
BUT NOW COCKBURN'S
MAKIN' NEWS
SO NO ONE'S CARIN'
'BOUT MY FEET
CAUSE DARE'S SOME CRUM-
MY BRITISH FLEET
AN' "IT'S DA END"...
"IT'S DA END"...
"IT'S DA END!"

ALL CONGRESSMEN

HELP US! SAVE US!
HELP US! SAVE US!
HELP US! SAVE US!
HELP US! SAVE US!
HELP US! SAVE US!
HELP US! SAVE US!
HELP US! SAVE US!
HELP US!
FOR OUR TIME'S
RUNNING OUT
AND OF THAT THERE
IS NO DOUBT
AND ONLY DOOM NOW
LIES IN WAIT
AND OF THAT FACT THERE'S
NO DEBATE
FOR IT'S THE END!
IT'S THE END!
IT'S THE END!

The LIGHTS fall on YOUNG PAUL and the CONGRESSMEN. A SPOTLIGHT shines on the side of the stage, lighting up OLD PAUL, who has been watching from afar.

SONG - "Until the City Died - Five More Days"

OLD PAUL

SO THERE IT WAS -
THE HELL BEGUN
WITH NOWHERE LEFT
FOR US TO RUN
SAVE HOPE WE MIGHT
THE BRITISH SMITE
LIKE DAVID DID GOLIATH
AND I SO YOUNG
WITHOUT A CARE
BUT SHORT-
LY TO BE TOO AWARE
OF LIFE WHEN HOPE'S DENIED.
'T WAS FIVE MORE DAYS
UNTIL THE CITY DIED.

ACT ONE - SCENE THREE

PLACE: The State Dining Room in the
White House

TIME: Early Afternoon, August 20, 1814

DOLLEY is center stage watching as
YOUNG PAUL balances unsteadily on a
ladder held by SUKEY. HE holds a long
measuring stick in HIS hand and is
standing up against the large window
whose curtain was torn by Senator King
in the prior scene. The servants
CHARLES, PRESTON, PHOEBE, and LOUIS are
huddled towards the back, performing
various cleaning functions - sweeping
this, dusting that. A double door
stands in the back of the room.

DOLLEY

What does it read, Paul?

YOUNG PAUL

It's 'bout near eight feet, Missy Madison.

DOLLEY

"Bout near" is not quite near enough, unless we want people
treading on the new curtains.

YOUNG PAUL

'Bout near seven, then.

A man in military attire (GENERAL VAN
NESS) bursts in, followed by HASTINGS,
RICHARDS, and BURKE.

DOLLEY

(Understanding what THEY want.)
He might be free to chat... tomorrow.

(Extending the snuff in HIS direction.)
In the meantime, perhaps I could offer you some refreshment?

SONG - "Senators Demands (Part One)"

GENERAL VAN NESS

Put that damn stuff away, Mrs. Madison!

(Singing.)

YOU'LL NEED ALL YOUR WITS ABOUT YOU
WHEN THAT DAMN COCKBURN COMES KNOCKING.
BEFORE HE DOES, I'M GOING TO SEE THE PRESIDENT
AND THERE'S NOT A DAMN PERSON WHO CAN STOP ME!
STAND ASIDE NOW!

HASTINGS, RICHARDS, BURKE
STAND ASIDE NOW!

GENERAL VAN NESS
STAND ASIDE NOW!

HASTINGS, RICHARDS, BURKE
STAND ASIDE NOW!

GENERAL VAN NESS	HASTINGS	RICHARDS	BURKE
I'VE A FEW WORDS	LET'S GO!	LET'S GO!	
FOR YOUR HUSBAND!	LET'S GO!	LET'S GO!	LET'S GO
LET'S GO!	LET'S GO!	LET'S GO!	SEE HIM!

GENERAL VAN NESS rushes to the door,
but YOUNG PAUL rushes to kick HIM.

DOLLEY
Paul! Don't!

Dead silence descends, as GENERAL VAN
NESS turns and glares at YOUNG PAUL.

GENERAL VAN NESS
You need better control over your niggers.

Distraught, DOLLEY has sat down to take
another smidgen of snuff. YOUNG PAUL
uncertainly approaches SIOUSSAT.
SIOUSSAT removes a book from HIS coat
and shows it to YOUNG PAUL.

SIOUSSAT
Do you recognize zis book, Paul?

YOUNG PAUL
It's hard to tell. All books sho' look "zee" same to me.

SIOUSSAT
Zis is book from zee library. I found it under your bed.

YOUNG PAUL
Ohhhh, yeah - "zat's" right! Missy Madison done give it to me.

SIOUSSAT scoffs and slaps YOUNG PAUL
over the head with the book. YOUNG PAUL
stumbles and, enraged, smacks the book
out of SIOUSSAT's hand. SIOUSSAT,
surprised and fearful, backs away.

PAUL
Don't you touch me! I ain't gonna take this anymore!

SIOUSSAT

You're a thief, Paul - a thief!

PAUL heads towards SIOUSSAT as if to hit HIM - but seeing this, DOLLEY shoots up from HER daze.

DOLLEY

Paul! French John! Stop this at once! If this is true, French John, you are right to chastise - chastise, but no more.

(To the SERVANTS.)

The President and I trust you - all of you - and will not tolerate any stealing!

(To YOUNG PAUL.)

That includes you, as well, Paul - do you understand me?

(To SIOUSSAT, suddenly a bit sweeter.)

In this case, however, there will be no need for punishment. I told Paul he could have the book. It is a biography of General Washington.

(To SIOUSSAT and the SERVANTS.)

I would like to talk to Paul, alone.

SIOUSSAT and the SERVANTS exit. DOLLEY and YOUNG PAUL sit, as DOLLEY takes a skein of yarn and a ball winder from a chair. SHE ties one end of the yarn to the winder and puts the remaining skein between and around YOUNG PAUL'S hand.

DOLLEY

Why did you take the book, Paul?

YOUNG PAUL

I takes it, but I means to bring it back!

DOLLEY

Yes, but, Paul, what use is the book to you?

YOUNG PAUL

Why, I's tryin' to done do better with my readin'.

DOLLEY

You're very smart, very bright, Paul - but you're quick to temper and you lie. You lie and you cause trouble and it's too much - too much. I don't need anymore difficulties - not now - not with all that's going on.

YOUNG PAUL

Oh, but, ma'am, that Massa Soo-sat, he jus'...

DOLLEY

The yarn is drooping, Paul!

YOUNG PAUL

Yes, Missy Madison, but Massa Soo-sat...

DOLLEY

He is in charge and you must show him respect! You would do well to read about General Washington and learn from his example. They say, when he was young, he refused to tell a lie.

YOUNG PAUL

Oh, yeah - an' he sho' gots shiny shoes!

DOLLEY

I remember him well.

YOUNG PAUL

You knew the General?

DOLLEY

I did, yes - for many years - him and his shoes.

YOUNG PAUL

You know, ma'am, they says the shoes makes da man.

DOLLEY

I've never heard that.

YOUNG PAUL

They says it quietly.

THEY begin to spin the yarn around the winder as SHE sings.

SONG - "The Shoes on Your Feet"

DOLLEY

All this talk about shoes! And what are they, Paul...?

(Singing.)

THE SHOES ON YOUR FEET

DON'T DETERMINE THE STEPS THAT YOU TAKE.

YOUNG PAUL

Aw, shucks, now what's wrong with lookin' swell while takin' 'em? If you's askin' me...

DOLLEY

THE SHOES ON YOUR FEET

DON'T DETERMINE THE JOURNEY YOU MAKE.

YOUNG PAUL

Well, I's gonna be goin' places an' I's gonna be goin' dare in style! With some nice shoes on my feet...

DOLLEY

THE SHOES ON YOUR FEET

DOLLEY (CONT)

DON'T DEFINE WHERE YOU'RE STANDING
NOR, IF YOU FALL DOWN,
ON WHICH SPOT YOU'LL BE LANDING.
THE SHOES ON YOUR FEET
DON'T DETERMINE
WHAT'S IN YOUR HEART.
THEY PLAY NOT ONE PART.

(Spoken to PAUL, as HE starts to droop.)
Posture, posture! Watch your posture!

YOUNG PAUL stands straight, as DOLLEY
winds the yarn more aggressively.

DOLLEY

THE SHOES ON YOUR FEET
DON'T DETERMINE YOUR VALUE OR WORTH.
THE SHOES ON YOUR FEET
MERELY STOP YOU FROM DIRT'ING THE EARTH.
THE SHOES ON YOUR FEET
ARE NOT MEANT FOR PARADING
OR STEPPING ON THOSE
WHOM YOU THINK WORTH DEGRADING.
THE SHOES ON YOUR FEET
DO NOT MAKE YOU
MIGHTY AND TALL
FOR WHEN HELL ASSAILS YOU
NO WHIT DO THEY MATTER AT ALL.

COME WHAT MAY WHEN
COME THE DAY WHEN
YOU RETREAT,
WHO CARES
WHAT SOMEONE WEARS
DOWN ON THEIR FEET?

RETREAT
STILL IS DEFEAT
ALTHOUGH
THE SHOES
YOU WEAR
FROM HEEL
TO TOE
SURRENDER THEIR GROUND
WHILE "BEEN" LEATHERBOUND
AND OH

YOUNG PAUL

But don'tcha think...

DOLLEY

SO SLEEK

YOUNG PAUL
But ain't it true dat...

DOLLEY
AND CHIC.

YOUNG PAUL has started to slouch,
missing up the hank of yarn.

YOUNG PAUL
Why do all the other men 'round here get to wear stylin' shoes,
but not me?

DOLLEY
(Putting HER hand to HIS mouth.)
Paul, enough!

YOUNG PAUL
Yeah, but I tinks dat...

DOLLEY
(Pulling YOUNG PAUL up with one hand.)
...you're slouching again!

DOLLEY
INSTEAD OF YOUR SHOES,
YOU SHOULD FOCUS ON
WHO YOU COULD BE.

INSTEAD OF YOUR SHOES,
YOU SHOULD FOCUS ON
HOW FAR YOU SEE.

INSTEAD OF YOUR SHOES,
YOU SHOULD START EXERCISING
YOUR TALENT FOR FALLING
AND SPEEDILY RISING.
INSTEAD OF YOUR SHOES,
YOU SHOULD TREASURE
THAT WHICH IS GOOD.

YOUNG PAUL

NOW WHAT'S WRONG WITH SHOES
IF DARE LOOKIN' GOOD ON
LITTLE ME?

I'M FOCUSIN' REAL GOOD
ON WHAT I NEEDS UN-
DER MY KNEE.

I'LL RISE MUCH FASTER
WITH GOOD SHOES DEN
ANY MAN COULD.

DOLLEY
THOUGH A BUCKLE
WITH SOME LUCK'LL
STROKE YOUR PRIDE,
ITS FINE
AND FANCY SHINE
CAN'T BE YOUR GUIDE.

YOUNG PAUL
AT LEAST DA SHINE CAN LIGHT MY WAY.

DOLLEY
FOR THAT, IT'S GOD TO WHOM YOU PRAY

DOLLEY (CONT)

BUT IF SHOES CONSUME YOU
THEY ONLY WILL DOOM YOU
TO STRAY.

(Spoken.)

You are soon going to become a man, Paul. It is high time you
behave like one.

YOUNG PAUL

Well, as I sees it, I's the special servant to the President,
an' it don't look good for the special servant to wear just any
ol' shoes!

DOLLEY

The President has been wearing the same pair of shoes for a very
long time!

YOUNG PAUL

Yeah, so I can sets a good example for him!

DOLLEY

Paul, why are you always so incorrigible?!

YOUNG PAUL

I'll answer dat after I looks it up.

DOLLEY

Really, Paul...!

YOUNG PAUL

LISTEN, M'AM, SEE,
TRUE I AM, SEE,
MERELY ME
BUT HECK
I WANTS RESPEC'
FOR WHO I BE.

DOLLEY

RESPECT REQUIRES NOT A SHOE.

YOUNG PAUL

YOU'S RIGHT - YOU NEEDS NOT ONE, BUT TWO.

DOLLEY

IF YOU WANT RESPECT, NOTHING MORE YOU REQUIRE THAN...

YOUNG PAUL

BEIN' A SHOE-WEARIN', SHARP, NICE-ATTIRE MAN...

DOLLEY

BEING SO GOOD THAT YOUR SOUL WILL INSPIRE MAN...

DOLLEY

AND OH SO TRUE

YOUNG PAUL

BEIN' REAL STYLISH

DOLLEY (CONT)
NO MAN'S MORE TO ADMIRE THAN
YOU...
THAN YOU...

THAN YOU!
WE'RE THROUGH!!

YOUNG PAUL (CONT)
AN' SWELL AN' ON FIRE AN'
LOOKIN' REAL GOOD AN'
REAL FINE LIKE A SQUIRE MAN

LIKE EACH HIGH-FLYER
MAN DO!

By now, the yarn is all tangled, so
DOLLEY snatches it from YOUNG PAUL.

DOLLEY
Goodness, Paul - we have made no progress at all!
(Handing HIM the yarn.)
Here, I trust you can wind it yourself. I must go see how the
President is fairing with his visitors. When I return, we will
have no more talk of shoes, hats, or anything in-between.

DOLLEY exits through the door. As SHE
does so, SIOUSSAT enters and glares at
YOUNG PAUL. He whistles, prompting
CHARLES, PRESTON, PHOEBE, LOUIS, and
SUKEY to enter and continue their
cleaning. SIOUSSAT glares at YOUNG PAUL
and exits. YOUNG PAUL huffs, sits under
the portrait of Washington, and starts
to wind the yarn around HIS hands.
Sensing HE is being watched, HE looks
up at General Washington.

YOUNG PAUL
Button yo face, George! I done see you starin' up dare, thinkin'
me some big ol' thief. Well, I sho' wouldn't be judgin' me if I
were you, 'cause you don't know who's yo' dealin' with. I's Paul
- Paul Jennings, Esquire... one day - and now I's be starin' at
you for a change. How d'ya like dat? In dis world, you's either
gonna be stomped on or you can go an' do da stompin'.

GENERAL VAN NESS bursts through the
door in a huff, followed by HASTINGS,
RICHARDS, and BURKE.

SONG - "Senators Demands (Part Two)"

GENERAL VAN NESS
THAT MAN'LL BE OUR UNDOING!
WE NEED SOME BACKBONE, STRENGTH, AND SPINE!
WE NEED A SOLDIER, NOT A DAMN PHILOSOPHER!
TO HELL WITH WORDS, HOPES, AND PROMISES!
TIME FOR ACTION!

HASTINGS, RICHARDS, BURKE
GIVE US ACTION!

GENERAL VAN NESS

TIME FOR ACTION!

HASTINGS, RICHARDS, BURKE

GIVE US ACTION!

GENERAL VAN NESS	HASTINGS	RICHARDS	BURKE
GIVE US ACTION, ACTION, ACTION!	ACTION!	ACTION!	ACTION, ACTION!
ACTION!	ACTION!	ACTION!	

A disturbed MADISON enters through the door, accompanied by CARROLL.

MADISON

General Van Ness, please!

CARROLL

Come back into the room, sir!

GENERAL VAN NESS

That damn boy Winder couldn't even storm even an anthill! How dare you appoint him to defend the capital over me!

MADISON

THERE IS STILL TIME TO DISCUSS!

GENERAL VAN NESS

DAMN IT, WE'VE RUN CLEAR OUT OF TIME!
THE BRITISH ARE COMING -
AND WHEN THEY DO,
THE PEOPLE WILL HAVE YOUR HEAD!

GENERAL VAN NESS, HASTINGS, RICHARDS,
BURKE

Aye! Cockburn will spare us no mercy!
There's no hope in saving us now!
I can't take this anymore!

GENERAL VAN NESS, HASTINGS, RICHARDS,
BURKE, DOLLEY, MADISON, and CARROLL freeze.

YOUNG PAUL

(To GENERAL VAN NESS, HASTINGS, RICHARDS, and BURKE.)
Oh, shut up!

(To us, gesturing at THEM.)
Look at dos fools over dare - so fine-lookin' an' yet dummer den a rock... an' here's little ol' me, smart as a whip an' not getting' no respect!

SONG - "Give 'Em A Kick"

YOUNG PAUL (CONT)

DOS CONGRESS BRAINS AIN'T BIG AS MINE
BUT 'CAUSE DARE SHOES AN' BUTTONS SHINE
DARE GETTIN' BOTH DARE FEET KISSED AN' ASS, TOO.
NOW DEM, DEY TINKS I'S NOTHIN' BIG
BUT WITH NEW SHOES, A SWORD, AN' WIG
I'D ALSO BE A MAN DEY'D RAISE DARE GLASS TO.

The SERVANTS come alive in YOUNG PAUL's
mind and start to fawn over HIM.

YOUNG PAUL

AT LEAST SOME BRANDNEW SHOES
IS A BEGINNIN'
AN' WHEN I MEETS DOS FOOLS
I'D BOW 'N GRIN 'N...

YOUNG PAUL mimics kicking GENERAL VAN
NESS and HASTINGS, RICHARDS, and BURKE.

YOUNG PAUL

GIVE 'EM A KICK
HARD AN' QUICK.
RIGHT FOOT OR LEFT,
TAKE YOUR PICK.
SHINE UP YA OL'
BLACK LEATHER SOLE
AN' DEN
DATS WHEN
YOU TAKES CONTROL.

GIVE 'EM A KICK
IN DA FACE.
WHACK DAT OL' NOSE
OUTTA PLACE.
HE GOTTA KNOW
YOU RUN DA SHOW
'AN OOO
ONE SHOE
WILL TELL 'EM SO.

NOW NICE SHOES
DEY TAKES A NOTHIN', POOR MAN
AN' MAKES HIM LOOK
LIKE HE GOTS HIS OWN DOORMAN
AN' ME, WELL
I AIN'T ONE TO IGNORE, MAN,
'CAUSE WITH SOME SHOES
I'LL MAKE SOME NEWS
AN' GIVE 'EM ALL HELL!
YOU JUS' WATCH ME!

YOUNG PAUL

GIVE 'EM A KICK

HMMMM...

SERVANTS

YOUNG PAUL (CONT)
IN DA PANTS.
KICK 'EM SO DEY
LAND IN FRANCE.
DARE AIN'T A LAW
I'S EVER SAW

...
...
...
AH...
AH...

SERVANTS (CONT)

DAT FEET
CAN'T MEET
NO SKIN OR JAW!

YOUNG PAUL

YOUNG PAUL
GIVE 'EM A WHACK
RIGHT ON DA NOSE.
STOMP LIKE A ROCK
ON ALL 'A HIS TOES...

WHACK!
WHACK!
WHACK!
STOMP!

SERVANTS

(Stomping.)
BA-DA-DA-BANG!
BA-DA-DA-BANG!

SERVANTS

AN' SOON
DAT GOON
IS 'LIST-E-NANG!'

YOUNG PAUL

YOUNG PAUL
FINE OL' SHOES
TO ANY SMALL MAN
MAKES 'EM LOOK LIKE
HE'S A TALL MAN.
ME...
IS I A TALL MAN!

SERVANTS
HM...
SMALL MAN, (SMALL MAN)...
HM...
TALL MAN, (TALL MAN)...
HE'S A TALKER!
WOW, WOW!

YOU'D BE A FOOL
IF YOU WOULD DOUBT IT!
AIN'T NO IFS
OR BUTS ABOUT IT!
Bam!

HE'S A TALKER!
WOW, WOW!
TALK, TALK, TALK!
HE CAN TALK, TALK, TALK!

Bam!
Bam!
Bam! Bam! Bam!

IN HIS MOUTH
STICK A SOCK, SOCK, SOCK!

GIVE 'EM SOME SHOES...

SERVANTS

WAIT AN' SEE!

YOUNG PAUL

NO MORE WILL THEY...
SERVANTS

LAUGHS AT ME!
YOUNG PAUL

AIN'T NO ONE WHO'S
BETTER DEN YOU'S...
SERVANTS

WHEN YOU
GOTS TWO
NEW SHINY SHOES!
YOUNG PAUL

YOUNG PAUL
BELIEVE IT!
KICK, KICK!
YOU'D BETTER
BELIEVE IT!
KICK, KICK!
YOU'D BETTER
BELIEVE IT!
KICK!
YOU'D BETTER
BELIEVE IT!
KICK, KICK!

KICK!

KICK!

SERVANTS
BELIEVE IT!

BELIEVE IT!

BELIEVE IT!

BELIEVE IT!
KICK, KICK!
LORDY, HE THINKS
THAT THE'S THE MASTER
TIME FOR THAT BUST
'A IN HIM PLASTER!
HE HAS BRAINS AN'
WANTS TO SHOW 'EM
AN' HE THINKS THAT
GOD'S BELOW 'EM!

WATCH ON ME, WORLD,
'CAUSE I'S A-COMIN'!
SOON YOU'LL BE MARCH-
IN' TO MY DRUMMIN'!
YOUNG PAUL

YOU JUS' CAN'TS
TIE HIM DOWN!
NO, SUH!
SERVANTS

YOUNG PAUL
YA'LL TINKS I
IS HERE FOR HATIN'...
MY FEETS'LL DO
SOME EDUCATIN' -
AN' WIT SOME KICKS
DA LESSONS STICKS!

SERVANTS
THAT'S CAUSE YOU ARE!

YOUNG PAUL (CONT)

TIME FOR KICKIN'
 KICKIN'
 KICKIN'
 AN' FOR LICKIN'
 ALL 'A YOU!
 I'LL SHO' WHACK 'EM
 WHACK 'EM
 WHACK 'EM
 AN' I'LL SMACK 'EM -
 ONE AN' TWO!
 TIME FOR KICKIN'
 KICKIN'
 KICKIN'
 AN' FOR LICKIN'
 ALL 'A YOU!
 I'LL SHO' WHACK 'EM
 WHACK 'EM
 WHACK 'EM
 AN' I'LL SMACK 'EM -
 ONE AN' TWO!
 GIVE 'EM A KICK,
 SHOW WHO'S BOSS.
 YOU AIN'T A MAN
 DEY SHOULD CROSS.
 MAKE 'EM FORGET
 YOU EVER MET
 AN' SCHOOL
 DAT FOOL
 TO NOT FORGET
 DAT THOUGH YOU'S SMALL
 AS ANY FLEA
 JUS' ADD SOME SHOES
 AN' MY OH ME
 DEY'S CALLIN' YOU
 "YO MAJESTY!"
 DEY'LL LEARN REAL QUICK!
 JUS' GIVE 'EM A KICK!
 GIVE 'EM A KICK!
 GIVE 'EM A KICK!

SERVANTS (CONT)

TIME FOR KICKIN'
 KICKIN'
 KICKIN'
 AN' FOR LICKIN
 ALL 'A YOU!
 LET'S GO WHACK 'EM
 WHACK 'EM
 WHACK 'EM
 AND GO SMACK 'EM -
 ONE AND TWO!
 TIME FOR KICKIN'
 KICKIN'
 KICKIN'
 AN' FOR LICKIN
 ALL 'A YOU!
 LET'S GO WHACK 'EM
 WHACK 'EM
 WHACK 'EM
 AND GO SMACK 'EM -
 ONE AND TWO!

 LOOK AT HIM GO!

 WHAT DOES HE KNOW?
 SMALL AS AN ELF
 AN' YET FULL OF HIMSELF!

 FROM SUNSET TIME
 UNTIL THE DAWN
 THAT BOY KEEPS GO-
 ING ON AND ON
 AND LORDY IT'S ALL
 JUST A LAWN!

 GIVE 'EM A KICK!
 GIVE 'EM A KICK!
 GIVE 'EM A KICK!

The LIGHTS dim, as OLD PAUL is revealed
 off to the side, again surveying the
 action. HE turns to us and sings.

Song - "Until the City Died - Four More Days"

OLD PAUL

ANOTHER DAY
 HAD UP AND GONE
 AND US NO CLOS-
 ER TO THE DAWN
 FOR ALL BEFORE
 OUR EYES WAS WAR

OLD PAUL (CONT)

AND POSSIBLY OUR ENDING
SO FEARING THUS
ALL MEN UNFURLED
THEIR WORST
INSTINCTS UNTO THE WORLD
TILL ALL GOD'S ANGELS CRIED.
'T WAS FOUR MORE DAYS
UNTIL THE CITY DIED.

OLD PAUL stays and observ