

# I HEARD THE BELLS

*A Christmas musical set in the 1930's*

written by  
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for the Creative Arts Ministry at Christ Community Church  
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THIS IS A SAMPLE OF THE SCRIPT. IT INCLUDES SCENE ONE, SCENE THREE AND SCENE SIX FROM THE PRODUCTION. FOR A FULL SCRIPT AND PIANO/VOCAL SCORE, ORDER A PREVIEW COPY OF THE MUSICAL.

## **TIME**

1933

## **SETTING**

Chicago, Illinois

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# SYNOPSIS

Charlie Preston is a reporter for the Chicago's American. He and Liv Baldwin have been dating but do not see eye to eye on a number of issues, particularly those of regarding faith. Liv and her father struggle to keep up with the bills and expenses to live. Charlie has uncovered a big news story about the local soup kitchen run by Frankie "Bells" Burton, a gangster. If Charlie goes public with the story, it is certain that Frankie will do whatever it takes to stop the story. Liv pleads with Charlie to drop the story but he feels a responsibility to the people who are being exploited by Frankie.

After losing many of their furnishings, Liv is concerned about her father and what he might do. Mr. Baldwin sees his only option is to go to the soup kitchen and try to secure a job with Frankie. Meanwhile, Charlie has gone down to the soup kitchen dressed as one of the people on the street in order to get more information about what Frankie is really doing. Vincent and Tony, two of Frankie's thugs find out that Charlie is there and they carry out Frankie's orders.

Liv is left alone to fulfill Charlie's only wish, that she attend church with him on Christmas Eve. Liv can not go inside the church and instead "has it out with God, right there on His doorstep." An older lady, Grace, helps Liv come to grips with her desperate situation.

In the end, Liv still does not understand everything God is doing but she does see her need for Christ in her life and begins the long journey of faith ahead of her. Charlie does survive and is welcomed with a big celebration on the day he returns to the American for work. Frankie Burton has been convicted and sentenced to Alcatraz.

It is very difficult to see God in the midst of tragedy but all that He asks is that we willingly come to Him. We do not need to be able to explain everything or even have all the answers for people to respond. We simply need to faithfully share with people how God has impacted our own lives. "I Heard the Bells" does not preach the gospel to the audience, instead we have attempted to use a story to show the audience how God is real, even in the tough times, and He will be there for them if they simply "come."

~Kevin & Tami Boesiger

# CAST OF CHARACTERS

**\*CHARLES PRESTON** is a reporter for the American. He is a strong Christian who uses his faith to help him through the tough times in life. He is falling in love with LIV. He is a man of integrity and is concerned about others.

**\*LIV BALDWIN** is the secretary to the editor of the American. She is falling in love with CHARLIE but does not share his faith. Her father and her struggle to keep their heads above water. She has spunk.

**\*DONALD ABBOTT** is the editor of Chicago's The American. He is a domineering boss and no one crosses his path. He is all about selling newspapers.

**MR. BALDWIN** is LIV's father. He is a proud man and struggles with his current living situation.

**\*FLORA FLANDERS** is a gossip columnist who has just joined the staff at the American. She is flirtatious and flamboyant. She is interested in CHARLIE.

**EDITH "SCOOP" BARKER** is a tomboy on the street who always has a story she thinks should be reported.

**\*GRACE** is an older woman who befriends LIV after the tragedy.

## ADDITIONAL ROLES

**ROBERT** is a reporter

**JAMES** is a reporter

**BOY** is a delivery boy

**BILL** is a janitor

**CLEANING LADY**

**MAN #1** repossess the Baldwin's furnishings

**MAN #2** repossess the Baldwin's furnishings

**VINCENT** is one of Frankie's thugs

**TONY** is one of Frankie's thugs

**\*THE CHORUS**

\*Indicates singing roles

# MUSICAL SELECTIONS

SONG #1: *1933 Overture* (Orchestra)

SONG #2: *Good Morning, American* (Company)

SONG #3: *Lookin' for that News* (Abbott & Company)

SONG#4: *Is This Love?* (Charlie & Liv)

SONG #5: *Selling the Truth* (Abbott, Flora, Charlie & Company)

SONG #5a: *The Bells* (Orchestra)

SONG #6: *Hard Times* (Company)

SONG #7: *For Whom the Bell Tolls* (Orchestra & Singers)

SONG #8: *It Came Upon the Midnight Clear* (Company)

SONG #9: *Come Just As You Are* (Grace & Liv)

SONG #9a: *The Bells* (Orchestra)

SONG #10: *I Heard the Bells* (Grace)

SONG #11: *Finale* (Company)

SONG #12: *Exit Music* (Orchestra)

## TIME

1933

## SETTING

Chicago, Illinois

SONG #1: *1933 Overture*

## SCENE ONE: *The Newsroom & The Street*

*The scene opens in the main office of the Chicago's American. We see one janitor sweeping the floor.*

SONG #2: *Good Morning, American*

*BILL begins **sweeping** the floor. Another Janitor enters **sweeping** from the other side of the room. Next we see a cleaning lady coming and she starts to **empty** the trash cans at each desk.*

CLEANING LADY      Good morning.

*Finally we see the first reporter, ROBERT, who comes in and **pulls** out the chair at his desk and begins to **tap** his pencil. Another reporter, THOMAS, enters, goes to his desk and begins to **type**. The rest of the reporters and chorus enter and add to the commotion of the newsroom.*

*Actions in bold indicates things that are done in rhythm.*

REPORTERS      GOOD NEWS.  
                    BREAKING NEWS.  
                    BAD NEWS, OH!

                    GOOD NEWS.  
                    BREAKING NEWS.  
                    BAD NEWS, OH!

**SONG #2:** *Good Morning, American (cont.)*

**REPORTERS**      GOOD NEWS.  
                          BREAKING NEWS.  
                          GREAT NEWS, WOW!

                          GOOD NEWS.  
                          BREAKING NEWS.  
                          GREAT NEWS, WOW!

*Everything comes to a dead stop when DONALD ABBOTT, the editor for The American, enters the room. There is tension for a brief moment and then everyone busts into a frenzy to the end of the song. As the song ends the three reporters type out their stories. On the final beat of the song they rip their papers out of the typewriters and hand them to ABBOTT.*

**ABBOTT**            *(he looks at each of the papers)* No, no, no! You call these stories. These aren't even good enough for the afternoon edition. *(he crosses to the first reporter)* What is this?

**ROBERT**            A news story, sir.

**ABBOTT**            This isn't news.

**ROBERT**            Well, no news is good news, right?

**ABBOTT**            No! No news is no jobs! *(he crosses to the next reporter)* You call this a headline?

**ROBERT**            Yes, short, concise and to the point. "Man Saves Dog."

**ABBOTT**            No one will buy this. No one wants to read about a dog. Try this, "Man Risks Life to Save Another." Now that will sell papers.

**ROBERT**            But he didn't risk his life.

**ABBOTT**            Listen, anytime someone goes up against a wild animal, he puts his life at risk.

**ROBERT**            The dog was Pekingese.

**ABBOTT** *(moving on to JAMES)* And what about this story. “Adolf Hitler Named Chancellor of Germany”? *(he yells at BILL across the room)* Hey, Bill, what’s the name of this newspaper?

**BILL** Chicago’s - The American.

**ABBOTT** That’s right! The American. *(back to JAMES)* No one here wants to hear about news in Germany. They want stories about Americans. Besides in 20 years no one will even remember the name Adolf Hitler.

*ABBOTT looks at all the staff who are talking amongst themselves.*

**ABBOTT** Alright, quiet down people, quiet down. *(The staff stop talking and listen to ABBOTT)* As you are all well aware, the Chicago Tribune continues to scoop us on almost all the important stories. If the American has any chance of keeping up, we’re going to have to rise to the challenge!

**JAMES** We’re doing the best we can.

**ABBOTT** Then your best isn’t good enough. We can’t afford to get scooped on every story. You’re going to have to work harder.

**ROBERT** So... we take pay cut after pay cut and you expect us to work harder and harder for the little money you pay us?

**ABBOTT** It’s a matter of principle. Do you like being second best everyday?

**CHARLIE** No one likes being second best, it’s just that the Chicago Tribune is always a step ahead.

**ABBOTT** It’s called sources people, sources. You have to hit the streets and listen to what they’re telling you. The news is not going to come to you, you have to go to the news. Who are our sources? Who can we rely on?

**JAMES** *(timidly)* Edith?

**ABBOTT** You mean “Scoop?”

**JAMES** Yeah.

**ABBOTT** No wonder the Trib is kicking us all over town. That gal never has a decent story to report. *(getting frustrated and upset)* You all have to get out there today and dig something up! I won't have another edition go out without a headline that doesn't stop traffic. Now get out there and find those stories.

*The staff react and ad lib as they start to leave to begin the day's tasks. FLORA FLANDERS clears her throat loudly as a reminder to ABBOTT she has not been introduced.*

**ABBOTT** Oh, yeah. Hold on a minute, people. I need to introduce you to our latest staffer. Apparently, people all over the country are interested in what happens in Hollywood. Why, I'll never know, but anyway the Trib recently acquired a columnist like Hedda Hopper to cover the latest gossip... *(he starts to say gossip but then catches himself)* I mean news from Hollywood. We have to stay competitive so we've asked Flora Flanders to join our staff as our Hollywood correspondent.

**JAMES** You mean after all the cut backs in wages, not to mention the people the American has let go - they are adding another reporter to the staff?

*All other staff ad lib agreement with the JAMES.*

**ABBOTT** Quiet down, people. Quiet down!

**FLORA** Trust me, I will make it worth the while of this paper to have me on staff. Everyone out there wants to know all about Hollywood. Why my column alone will increase this paper's circulation by at least 50%.

**CHARLIE** How can you be so sure?

**FLORA** *(flirtingly)* Oh I'm sure. In fact, I am sure of many things. Uh... I didn't catch the name...

**CHARLIE** I didn't drop it.

**ABBOTT** Knock it off! Look it's not your business to decide who the paper hires. It's your business to report the news, which the last time I checked doesn't wait around for you. Every minute we wait to get out there I guarantee is another minute the Trib has already been out there. Now put your heads together and find those stories!

**SONG #3:** *Lookin' for that News*

*The music starts as ABBOTT delivers the following line.*

**ABBOTT** Stories about what's going on in business. Stories about people, Stories about life. There are stories all around you. Get on the street and start listening. You can find a story around every corner.

**ABBOTT** LISTEN TO THE STREET, THAT CRAZY BEAT.

**CHORUS** GOOD NEWS, BAD NEWS.  
LOOKIN' FOR THAT NEWS!

**ABBOTT** STORIES COME FROM EVERYONE YOU MEET.

**CHORUS** SAD NEWS, HAPPY NEWS.  
LOOKIN' FOR THAT NEWS!

**ABBOTT** BREAKING NEWS IS NEVER FAR AWAY.

**CHORUS** LOOKIN' FOR THAT NEWS!  
LOOKIN' FOR THE HEADLINES OF THE DAY.  
BIG NEWS, BREAKING NEWS.  
LOOKIN' FOR THAT NEWS!

LISTEN TO THE STREET, THAT CRAZY BEAT.  
GOOD NEWS, BAD NEWS.  
LOOKIN' FOR THAT NEWS!  
STORIES COME FROM EVERYONE YOU MEET.  
SAD NEWS, HAPPY NEWS.  
LOOKIN' FOR THAT NEWS!

### SONG #3: *Lookin' for that News (cont.)*

**CHORUS**            BREAKING NEWS IS NEVER FAR AWAY.  
LOOKIN' FOR THE HEADLINES OF THE DAY.  
BIG NEWS, BREAKING NEWS.  
LOOKIN' FOR THAT NEWS!

*Dance Break*

LISTEN TO THE STREET, THAT CRAZY BEAT.  
GOOD NEWS, BAD NEWS.  
LOOKIN' FOR THAT NEWS!  
STORIES COME FROM EVERYONE YOU MEET.  
SAD NEWS, HAPPY NEWS.  
LOOKIN' FOR THAT NEWS!  
BREAKING NEWS IS NEVER FAR AWAY.  
LOOKIN' FOR THAT NEWS!  
LOOKIN' FOR THE HEADLINES OF THE DAY.  
BIG NEWS, BREAKING NEWS.  
LOOKIN' FOR THAT NEWS!

## SCENE TWO: *The Newsroom & The Street*

*Newsroom is calming down after the big production number in the last scene and all the reporters leave the building except CHARLIE and FLORA. She follows him as he wanders over to LIV'S desk. CHARLIE and LIV are sweethearts.*

**CHARLIE**            Good morning, Liv, uh, I mean, Miss Baldwin.

**LIV**                    *(smiling broadly)* Good morning, Mr. Preston. I see you've met Miss Flanders.

**FLORA**                *(batting her eyes at him and offering her hand)* We've not been formally introduced.

**LIV**                    *(squinting her eyes suspiciously)* Miss Flanders, meet Charles Baldwin, reporter.

**CHARLIE**            *(shaking FLORA'S hand)* Nice to meet you, Miss Flanders.

**SCOOP** Do some nosing around for yourself. See what you can find.

**CHARLIE** I think I will. Hey, do me a favor and stay away from there till you talk to me, okay? (*looks down at sandwich and gives him the whole thing*) Thanks, Scoop.

**SCOOP** Whatever you say, buddy. Glad I could help. Thanks, Charlie. (*takes a bite of the sandwich*)

## **NEWSREEL: *Highlights of 1933***

### **SCENE THREE: *The Baldwin Home***

*CHARLIE, LIV and MR. BALDWIN come out the front door.*

**CHARLIE** (*shaking Mr. Baldwin's hand*) It was nice seeing you again, Mr. Baldwin. Thank you for dinner.

**MR. BALDWIN** Don't mention it, Charlie. It's always a pleasure to see you. I only wish we had more to offer you.

**CHARLIE** No need for any apologies. Dinner was great. Thank you.

**MR. BALDWIN** Thanks to my Liv. Don't stay out too long now, Liv. You'll catch a death of a cold.

**LIV** I'll be fine, Daddy. I know how to take care of myself.

**MR. BALDWIN** (*sadly*) Don't I know it. (to CHARLIE) Don't be a stranger, Charlie. Good night.

**CHARLIE** Good night, Mr. Baldwin.

*MR. BALDWIN exits into the house.*

**CHARLIE** He loves you, you know.

**LIV** (*looking wistful*) Yes, I know.

**CHARLIE**           What is it?

**LIV**                I'm worried about him, Charlie.

**CHARLIE**           Why?

**LIV**                The depression has been hard on him. They keep cutting his wages at the plant. If it weren't for my job at the paper, we wouldn't be able to survive. We're barely scraping by. It's humiliating for him, you know. He's worked hard his whole life and has nothing to show for it. He can't even support our small family on his own. It's taking a toll on him. His shoulders sag more every day.

**CHARLIE**           Things are going to change, Liv. It will get better.

**LIV**                I want to believe that, Charlie, I really do, but I'm not so sure.

**CHARLIE**           God hasn't abandoned us, Liv. He's watching out for us.

**LIV**                How can you know that? I don't see Him here. Do you?

**CHARLIE**           We're still eating, aren't we?

**LIV**                That's about all we're doing. *(sighs)* What else can we talk about? *(she snuggles into CHARLIE)* What were you working on today? What's the big story that's had you running all day?

**CHARLIE**           Oh, it's nothing.

**LIV**                Nothing?! Why, you were an absolute jitterbug!

**CHARLIE**           Naw, just had too much coffee, that's all.

**LIV**                *(looking him in the face)* Charles Preston, you're not telling me something, I can sense it. What's going on?

**CHARLIE**           Nothing. Take it easy.

**LIV**                I will most definitely NOT take it easy until you tell me what you're working on.

**CHARLIE** Okay, calm down, it's just a story about a soup kitchen.

**LIV** A soup kitchen. Which soup kitchen?

**CHARLIE** (*squirming*) The one over on Carlisle.

**LIV** Carlisle. . .the one Frankie Burton runs?

**CHARLIE** Yep, that's the one.

**LIV** He's been running that for years. What's the story?

**CHARLIE** It's just a short feature, something to fill the paper.

**LIV** Charlie, I know you better than that. You don't get all worked up over a community spotlight piece. Don't treat me like a lame-brain. What's the story?

**CHARLIE** (*sighs, hesitates*) I have reason to believe he uses the soup kitchen to recruit people to do his dirty work.

**LIV** And by dirty work you mean?

**CHARLIE** Thugging, gunrunning, illegal trafficking, that sort of thing.

**LIV** You're sure about this?

**CHARLIE** Yes. (*there is a pause as it all sinks in*) It's awful, Liv. These poor people have been through so much already. They come in for a meal and before they know what hit 'em, they find themselves involved with gangsters.

**LIV** But why would Frankie use amateurs like that?

**CHARLIE** Authorities don't suspect down and outers. They provide a good cover for "Bells." Besides, they're desperate. They'll do anything for a buck. They've got families to take care of.

**LIV** But, Charlie, you can't report this. Frankie won't take this lying down. He has eyes and ears all over the city.

**CHARLIE** If we don't report it, he'll continue to take advantage of the vulnerable.

**LIV** I don't like it, Charlie. It's not safe. You're probably already a marked man.

**CHARLIE** I can't let him ruin people's lives.

**LIV** And what about YOU, Charlie? What about US? Doesn't that count for anything?

**CHARLIE** I can't look the other way. It's not right, Liv.

**LIV** Is it such a bad thing he's doing, really? He's feeding them and giving them work, helping them restore their dignity.

**CHARLIE** You can't honestly believe that, can you?

**LIV** Why not? He's helping them get back on their feet.

**CHARLIE** It's like making a deal with the devil, Liv.

**LIV** Why does everything have to be right or wrong with you, Charlie? Can't you see it isn't that simple? People need to eat, Charlie. They need to be able to buy clothes for their children and heat their homes. How do you propose they do it?

**CHARLIE** There are better ways.

**LIV** Are there? Do you have an alternative for those people? Are YOU going to find them a job?

**CHARLIE** No, I can't, but God can get them through it.

**LIV** God? Where is God, Charlie? Where was God when the Wilsons were kicked out of their apartment? Where was God when those workers were beat up in the picket lines? You see first hand every single day the state our world is in. How can you believe there is a God?

**CHARLIE** I have to believe. If there were no God I couldn't get up each morning. He gives me the strength I need to keep going. He brings me peace, even in the middle of something like this. I can't drop the story, Liv. To think of my personal safety more than that of others would be selfish.

**LIV** Selfish?! Selfish?! What about me, Charlie? What am I supposed to do when you get yourself killed? Did you think of that?

**CHARLIE** That's not going to happen, Liv.

**LIV** You can't know that. I suppose you think God's going to protect you?

**CHARLIE** He might.

**LIV** He MIGHT?! Are you hearing yourself, Charlie? (*she stares at him intently*) I don't get you, Charles Preston. Who are you?

**CHARLIE** Look, there's nothing to be afraid of. God may choose to protect me and He may not. If He does, great. If not, I go on to a much better life. I can't lose.

**LIV** But I can!! What about me, Charlie? I lose you. Don't you care about me at all?

**CHARLIE** (*inching in closer*) Liv, you know I do. It's just that this is bigger than us. (*taking her hands*) Someone has to fight for these people.

**LIV** (*softening*) Why can't they fight for themselves?

**CHARLIE** They're beaten down. They're tired of fighting. If I've been placed in a position to help, I have an obligation to do so.

**LIV** I'm not so sure it does help them. Where else will they find work?

**CHARLIE** I'm not sure. We have to trust God for that one.

**LIV** Yeah. . . right.

**CHARLIE** Don't dismiss it, Liv. He's real.

**LIV** Um hmm.

**CHARLIE** He has a plan for you, Liv. You can't imagine what He has in store for you.

**LIV** *(being polite)* Sure.

**CHARLIE** I wish I could make you see it. I wish I could help you understand.

**LIV** Yeah, me too.

*There is an uncomfortable pause in the action as they consider their differences. CHARLIE breaks the silence.*

**CHARLIE** Christmas is coming up. That's a happy subject, right?

**LIV** Is it? There's no money for gifts, no way to show people how much you care.

**CHARLIE** There's only one thing I want for Christmas and it doesn't cost a thing.

**LIV** Oh yeah, what's that?

**CHARLIE** Come to church with me on Christmas Eve. Bring your dad along. It will be a wonderful evening.

**LIV** I don't know, Charlie. Church is not my thing.

**CHARLIE** Do it for me. Say you will, Liv. Please?

**LIV** It's not going to revolutionize my life, you know.

**CHARLIE** Maybe not, but I'd be so proud to have you on my arm.

**LIV** We'll see.

*Another pause. LIV stares at the ground, deep in thought, unable to look at CHARLIE.*

**LIV** It's getting cold. We better call it a night.

**CHARLIE** Yes. You're right. . .I didn't mean to upset you, Liv.

**LIV** I know.

*CHARLIE lifts LIV's head to look into her eyes.*

**CHARLIE** I know we don't see eye to eye on things, but it doesn't change how I feel about you.

**LIV** Me either.

**CHARLIE** Can we work through this?

**LIV** I'd like to think so, Charlie, but I don't know.

**CHARLIE** One day at a time then. Good night, Liv. *(He kisses her cheek, places a silver cross in her hand and starts to walk away.)*

**LIV** *(holding her hand out)* What's this?

**CHARLIE** A reminder that you are loved. Good night.

**LIV** Good night, Charlie.

**SONG #4: *Is This Love?***

**LIV** MY MIND'S A BLUR,  
CAN'T SEEM TO UNDERSTAND.  
HOW CAN I BE SHOOK UP  
ESPECIALLY BY A MAN?  
SO MUCH IN COMMON,  
YET SO FAR APART.  
I NEED TO KEEP MY HEAD STRAIGHT  
BEFORE HE STEALS MY HEART.

**SONG #4: *Is This Love? (cont.)***

**LIV** IS THIS LOVE?  
THE WORLD STOPS WHEN HE'S NEAR.  
IS THIS LOVE?  
CAN'T EXPLAIN THE WAY I FEEL.  
EACH MOMENT I AM WITH HIM.  
I WISH THE TIME WOULD NEVER END.  
IS THIS LOVE?  
IT MUST BE LOVE.

**CHARLIE** MY MIND'S A BLUR,  
CAN'T SEEM TO COMPREHEND.  
THIS WOMAN HAS ME WONDERING.  
HOW WILL THIS STORY END?  
SO MUCH IN COMMON,  
YET SO FAR APART.  
LORD. HELP ME SEE YOUR WILL IN THIS,  
PLEASE DIRECT MY HEART.

IS THIS LOVE?  
THE WORLD STOPS WHEN SHE'S NEAR.  
IS THIS LOVE?  
CAN'T EXPLAIN THE WAY I FEEL.  
EACH MOMENT I AM WITH HER.  
I WISH THE TIME WOULD NEVER END.  
IS THIS LOVE?  
IT MUST BE LOVE.

**BOTH** IS THIS LOVE?  
THE WORLD STOPS WHEN SHE'S/HE'S NEAR.  
IS THIS LOVE?  
CAN'T EXPLAIN THE WAY I FEEL.  
EACH MOMENT I AM WITH HER/HIM.  
I WISH THE TIME WOULD NEVER END.  
IS THIS LOVE?  
IS THIS LOVE?  
IS THIS LOVE?  
IT MUST BE LOVE.  
IT MUST BE LOVE.  
IT MUST BE LOVE.

**CHARLIE**            *(keeping her hand)* I should go. He may need you.

*LIV nods.*

**CHARLIE**            It's gonna to be okay, Liv. God will get us through this.

**LIV**                    If you say so.

**CHARLIE**            Good bye.

**LIV**                    Bye.

*CHARLIE rises and slowly lets go of LIV's hand so that both their arms are outstretched before he releases it.*

## **SCENE SIX: *The Street***

*The scene opens as people are getting in line at Frankie Burton's soup kitchen. MR. BALDWIN is in line as well, hoping to get a job from Frankie. We hear the sound of a Christmas carol.*

### **SONG #6: *Hard Times***

**SINGERS**            I HEARD THE BELLS ON CHRISTMAS DAY  
THEIR OLD FAMILIAR CAROLS PLAY,  
AND WILD AND SWEET THE WORDS REPEAT  
OF PEACE ON EARTH, GOODWILL TO MEN.

**CHORUS**            HARD TIMES, TOUGH DAYS.  
NO END IN SIGHT FROM THE FEAR.  
THE DAYS KEEP GETTIN' LONGER,  
NIGHTS KEEP GETTIN' COLDER.  
HARD TIMES.  
EVERY DAY IT'S GETTIN' HARDER TO SEE  
WHEN THERE WILL BE SOME  
GOOD TIMES

**SONG #6:** *Hard Times (cont.)*

HARD TIMES, ROUGH NIGHTS.  
NO JOY AND CHEER IN THE AIR.  
WITH CHRISTMAS ALMOST ON US,  
HOW CAN WE BE HAPPY?  
HARD TIMES.  
EVERY DAY IT'S GETTIN' HARDER TO SEE  
WHEN THERE WILL BE SOME  
GOOD TIMES

*Dance Break*

HARD TIMES, HARD DAYS.  
CAN'T GET A JOB ANYWHERE.  
WE'VE GOT NO HOMES, NO MONEY  
GOT NO HOPE JUST SADNESS  
HARD TIMES  
EVERY DAY IT'S GETTIN' HARDER TO SEE  
WHEN THERE WILL BE SOME  
GOOD TIMES

HARD TIMES, TOUGH DAYS  
HARD TIMES, ROUGH NIGHTS,  
HARD TIMES.  
EVERY DAY IT'S GETTIN' HARDER,  
EACH NIGHT IS GETTIN' LONGER,  
EACH YEAR IT'S GETTIN' TOUGHER TO SEE  
WHEN THERE WILL BE SOME  
GOOD TIMES.  
HARD TIMES.

*As the song ends VINCENT & TONY, Frankie Burton's thugs come out and make an announcement to the people waiting in line at the soup kitchen.*

**VINCENT**      Excuse me, if I could have your attention. We have a slight delay in the kitchen today. We will open the doors in about 15 minutes. Mr. Burton thanks you for your patience.

*There is a mumble among the people in line. CHARLIE enters followed closely by SCOOP. He stops at the front of the line as if to ask where the line starts and the person points to the end of the line. As CHARLIE walks to the back of the line, he notices MR. BALDWIN and stops to talk to him.*

**CHARLIE** Mr. Baldwin? What are you doing here?

**MR. BALDWIN** What else can I do? Where else can I go?

**CHARLIE** If you need food, I can help.

**MR. BALDWIN** It's not the food.

**CHARLIE** *(hushed)* Mr. Baldwin, I know what's going on here. You don't want to do this. You don't want to work for Frankie.

**MR. BALDWIN** Charlie, I appreciate your concern, but I have no other choice. I need to pay our way. I won't rely on Liv to get us through. I've run out of options.

**CHARLIE** You know what Frankie does? If this doesn't work out, you don't just quit. You can't walk away.

**MR. BALDWIN** *(getting annoyed)* How else can I provide for Liv? I know what I am doing. If this doesn't work out, Liv is better off without me anyway. I can't live like this *(he motions to the people around him)*. Give me a shred of dignity. Let me take care of my family!

**CHARLIE** *(he turns to SCOOP)* Go get Liv. Maybe she can help me talk some sense into him. *(SCOOP exits and CHARLES turns back to Mr. Baldwin)* I'm not trying to take away your dignity, just let me help. No one has to know. *(there is a pause and CHARLIE moves in closer to MR. BALDWIN)* You and Liv are important to me. Let me help you.

**MR. BALDWIN** I don't want help. I want to do it myself.

*A guy behind them in line realizes that CHARLIE has been there a while and tries to get him to move to the back of the line.*

**MAN** (to *CHARLIE*) Hey buddy! I've been patient with you while you've been consoling gramps here but the end of the line is back there.

**CHARLIE** Look, when the line starts moving I'll get out of your way.

**MR. BALDWIN** I'm sorry, sir, were done here anyway. Go ahead, Charlie, we have nothing more to talk about.

**CHARLIE** Please, Mr. Baldwin.

**MAN** You heard him, Charlie, move on!

**CHARLIE** (to *MAN*) Stay out of this.

*VINCENT and TONY have been noticing the small disturbance and head over to see what's going on.*

**MAN** Times up. The old man is done with you and you need to get to the back of the line.

**VINCENT** Is there a problem?

**MAN** Yeah, this guy's trying to cut.

**VINCENT** Sir, I'm going to have to ask you to move to the back of the line.

*SCOOP comes running in.*

**SCOOP** Charlie, Liv's on her way.

**MR. BALDWIN** Liv?! Charlie Preston, how dare you drag her into this!

**TONY** (*hushed to VINCENT*) Vince, that's Charles Preston. He's our man.

**CHARLIE** I don't want any trouble here. I'm going.

*CHARLIE moves to the back of the line to avoid making more of a scene and VINCENT and TONY move to the other end to discuss their next move.*

**TONY** Charles Preston is here! Perfect.

**VINCENT** How are we supposed to carry out a hit in the middle of a crowd?

**TONY** Listen. These people are already getting restless. All we need to do is stir the pot a little and the crowd will do the rest.

**VINCENT** What if he leaves?

**TONY** He won't leave. He's connected to that older fella. Maybe if we show an interest in him, Mr. Preston will not be inclined to leave.

*As the music begins VINCENT and TONY split and go to opposite sides of the stage. As the music builds the chaos on the street becomes more fevered. At the high point of the chaos CHARLIE and VINCENT are at center stage.*

**SONG #7: The Street**

**TONY** Are you Charles Preston?

**CHARLIE** *(realizing what is about to occur, he takes his stand with conviction and answers him)* I am.

**TONY** The bell tolls for you.

*As TONY pulls his gun we see LIV entering.*

**LIV** NO!!

*TONY shoots and as CHARLIE falls to the ground LIV rushes to his side. There are cries and screams from the crowd as the lights go black.*

**SINGERS** AND IN DESPAIR I BOWED MY HEAD  
"THERE IS NO PEACE ON EARTH, " I SAID  
"FOR HATE IS STRONG AND MOCKS THE SONG  
OF PEACE ON EARTH, GOODWILL TO MEN.

*We hear the faint sound of the Christmas carol "I Heard the Bells on Christmas Day" in the darkness. The lights slowly come up on LIV and CHARLIE. She is kneeling on the ground with CHARLIE'S head laying in her lap. She is distraught and crying.*