

## **JUDY AND THE GENERAL**

A musical by Rosemary FrisinoToohey

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CHARACTERS 2 females, 3 males.

MAID...female, any age, any race. Mezzo. Narrator. Knows all, sees all, heavy on attitude.

JUDITH...female, 20s. Soprano. Beautiful, intelligent, strong-willed.

MALE #1...20s-30s. Tenor. MANASSEH, Judy's hubby.

Also, HOLOFERNES, Assyrian general, a big guy, an alpha male.

MALE #2...any age, any race. Baritone. The go-to-guy for any work to be done.

SERVANT to the King,

Also, ADVISER to the Head Man in the town,

a WORKMAN harvesting barley,

& a SOLDIER in Holofernes' army.

MALE #3...40s-60s. Baritone. DAD, easy-going and wise.

Also, the KING, who sees himself as emperor of the world,

the HEAD MAN, a town elder,

& a CAPTAIN in Holofernes' army.

TIME First Century BCE

SETTING Various, all minimally suggested. An abundance of props.

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ACT ONE

*(Lights up on MAID)*

MAID

Life lived on the periphery. That's how it was for me. Always on the outside looking in. But I didn't mind. Being on the outside gives you a chance to watch the show, size up the players and pick the winner. Funny thing though, even when you're close to the game, even when you're sure you've got it all figured out, sometimes people surprise you. Case in point: Judith and Holofernes. He was a mighty general and she was a beautiful woman.

*(singing)*

WE'RE GONNA GO WAY BACK IN TIME,  
BACK TO SOMEWHERE NEAR PALESTINE,  
BUT DON'T GET ALL CAUGHT UP IN THE DETAILS,  
'CAUSE IT HAPPENED LONG AGO.

IT'S NOT ABOUT THE HISTORY,  
IT'S NOT ABOUT GEOGRAPHY,  
IT'S REALLY THE STORY OF A HE AND SHE  
IN FIRST CENT'RY B C E

GOT A TALE THAT MUST BE TOLD  
'BOUT A GIRL WHO BROKE THE MOLD.  
SHE WENT TO FACE THE UNKNOWN  
FIGHTING A POWERFUL GEN'RAL ALONE.  
HE HAD TO BE STOPPED, THAT MUCH IS TRUE  
SHE HAD NO WEAPONS SO WHAT COULD SHE DO?

*(MAID singing)*

HE WAS A STUD AMONG MEN,  
WON BATTLES TIME AND AGAIN.  
THAT GAME PLAN KEPT HIM ALIVE,  
BUT ONE LOOK AT HER AND HIS DEFENSES DIED.  
HOW DID SHE CONQUER HIM? THAT YOU WILL SEE...  
TURNS OUT THAT SHE WAS JUST SMARTER THAN HE.

*(spoken)*

Oh, you can find pictures and sculptures of Judith and Holofernes in museums and churches all over the world. They're on the doors of the cathedral at Chartres in France. They're even up there on Michelangelo's ceiling of the Sistine Chapel in Rome. But our story doesn't begin in any of those places. Our story begins in a little shop in a small town called Bethulia. And it starts with...a chicken.

*(Sound of a chicken squawking. JUDY enters quickly. She looks grimy with messy hair & she holds a big knife. More chicken squawking. JUDY runs across stage and exits.)*

I know. She doesn't look like much now. But under all that dirt there's a star waiting to be born. Judy worked alongside her father in their humble shop and they lived pretty close to the edge. They sold pots to make a few pennies and they butchered chickens to make a few more. Dad had a bad arm so Judy took care of the chickens.

*(MAID exits. More chicken squawking. JUDY enters with the knife, still on the hunt for the chicken and runs to a different exit. DAD enters.)*

DAD

Who's winning the chase, daughter? You or that chicken?

*(JUDY enters out of breath)*

JUDY

I'm working on it, father.

DAD

Remember, Eliab's wife is waiting for it.

JUDY

Do you think Eliab will pay what he owes us tonight?

DAD

Maybe he will and maybe he won't. But he's a good man. Don't worry. Just deliver the chicken and the good Lord will provide.

*(More chicken squawking.)*

JUDY

Why can't the good Lord provide us with slower chickens?

*(JUDY exits on the run)*

DAD

Remember, Judith, you are higher up in the pecking order than that bird. Though I suppose the Almighty could have given you wings as well.

*(Loud chicken squawking. The chicken has met its fate. JUDY enters, wiping her bloody knife on her dirty skirt.)*

JUDY

Done.

DAD

Good work, daughter. Now, let's find out how much we earned today.

*(DAD takes the money box & counts coins.)*

Let's see, one...two...three...Here, you count it.

JUDY

Yes, it's only three. But this one...it's not real.

DAD

Not real, you say?

JUDY

You sold one of the pots while I was at the spring and they must have given you a fake coin. They cheated you, Father. Again!

DAD

Now, now, daughter, I would rather have no coins at all than have my daughter think ill of another person. Remember, money's the least important thing of all. The world is filled with good people doing good things.

JUDY

But what about us? We're good, aren't we? Why are we so poor? Poor yesterday, poor today...

DAD

Oh, yesterday's done and gone. We got through it, didn't we? And today's almost at an end.

JUDY

And what about tomorrow?

DAD

Somebody's got to be poor, daughter. Those folks walking around in fine robes, they wouldn't know how to manage. Us? We're good at it. Anyway, it's no big deal. Nishtkefelecht.

JUDY

How can you say that?

DAD

Nishtkefelecht? Nisht-ke---

JUDY

You know what I mean. There's only a bit of bread for our supper.

DAD

You have it. I've eaten lots of bread in my lifetime.

JUDY

I won't have it either then.

DAD

Should we save it for the next plague of locusts?

JUDY

How can you joke about this?

DAD

Easy, daughter. I'm old. Now eat the bread. And don't forget to say your prayers. Remember to thank the Lord.

JUDY

*(under her breath)*

Oh, I'll thank him all right.

DAD

And then you can ask him for what's closest to your heart.

JUDY

If he knows everything, doesn't he know what's closest to my heart?



DAD

He wants you to ask, Judith. He's like a shepherd boy. He takes care of the sheep all day long but once in a while he'd like a little back-and-forth.

JUDY

Maybe things would be better if we lived someplace else. There's nothing here but locusts and sand.

DAD

No, Judith, this is our home. It's where we belong. And when we wake up tomorrow, we'll look up and see...

JUDY

*(She's heard all this before)*

I know. The sun will shine, the sky will be blue.

DAD

Bluer than blue, daughter. That's our gift. Now I'm going up to watch for your mother's star to appear.

JUDY

I wish...

DAD

Yes, I wish she were here too. But her work was done. It was her time. That's all.

JUDY

Be careful up there, father.

DAD

I'm only going up on the roof. What can happen?

JUDY

There's a hole in the roof, remember?

DAD

You worry too much, Judith.

*(DAD exits.)*

JUDY

*(singing)*

THE SUN WILL SHINE.  
EVERYTHING IS FINE.  
BUT THAT'S JUST NOT HOW I FEEL.  
WHAT I SEE  
DOESN'T WORK FOR ME.  
I KNOW WHAT'S REALLY REAL.  
NOTHING LOOKS GOOD.  
I'M MISUNDERSTOOD,  
WHERE IS THIS BLUE SKY I HEAR ALL ABOUT?  
I NEED A BLUE SKY INSIDE WHERE IT COUNTS.

THE BAD STUFF,  
THE SAD STUFF,  
THE THINGS THAT MAKE ME MAD STUFF,  
WHEN WILL THEY DISAPPEAR?  
I'M OUT OF TOUCH.  
I WORRY TOO MUCH.  
WHEN WILL I SEE THINGS CLEAR?  
WHAT DO I DO?

*(JUDY singing)*

HAVEN'T A CLUE,  
WHERE IS THIS BLUE SKY I'M HEARING ABOUT?  
I NEED A BLUE SKY INSIDE WHERE IT COUNTS.

AM I WRONG TO FEEL THIS WAY?  
I NEED A CHANGE OF HEART.  
WHERE TO FIND A BRAND NEW DAY?  
HOW TO MAKE A START?

IS THIS A DREAM?  
ARE THINGS NOT WHAT THEY SEEM?  
AM I SOMEWHERE LOST IN A CLOUD?  
I TRY MY BEST.  
BUT I COULD USE SOME REST  
TO DEAL WITH THE HERE AND NOW.  
NEED A NEW WAY,  
A HOW TO SEE-IT-THROUGH WAY,  
WHERE'S THIS BLUE SKY THEY'RE TALKING ABOUT?  
A BLUER THAN BLUE SKY SO I CAN HOLD OUT...  
I NEED TO FEEL BLUE SKY...DEEP INSIDE ME...WHERE IT COUNTS

*(JUDY exits. MAID enters)*

MAID

Well, some things take time, know what I mean? Speaking of which, it's time to bring on the next big player, a really big guy, the King. The King of what, you ask? Well, we could go into a detailed history of the ancient civilizations of Mesopotamia but who cares? He's a king, all right? And like a lot of people in power, he had the idea that he was the big cheese of the whole planet. Why are there always guys like this? Often enough he didn't know his own mind. His long-suffering servant wondered whether he even *had* a mind...

*(MAID exits. SERVANT enters, pulling or pushing KING on throne.)*

KING

Don't put me here, put me over there.

SERVANT

Yes, highness.

KING

No, wait, it's too bright over here. Move me over there.

SERVANT

Of course, your majesty.

KING

Nope. No good. Take me there.

SERVANT

Right away, sire.

*(SERVANT wheels KING back to original spot.)*

KING

Ahh, yes. This should do for the next ten minutes.

SERVANT

Glad to hear it, my king.

KING

Now bring all my stuff. You know I like to see all my, ah, ah...

SERVANT

Your appurtenances, sire.

KING

Yes. I like to see all that around me.

SERVANT

Naturally, mighty, ruler.

*(SERVANT exits.)*

KING

That's a big word. *(He snaps his fingers.)* What was it again?

*(SERVANT enters, burdened with trinkets.)*

SERVANT

Appurtenances, sire.

KING

Oh, yes. I like that word. I know words. I have the best words. And that's a great word.

SERVANT

Yes indeed, my lord. A heavy word.

*(SERVANT drops stuff & exits to fetch more.)*

KING

*(singing)*

YOU DON'T FIND ME CAPTIVATING?

ALL YOUR STUFF I'M CONFISCATING,

THAT'S BECAUSE THEY CROWNED ME THE KING.

*(KING singing)*

NO ONE'S GOT THE NERVE TO BEAT ME,  
NO ONE HERE WOULD DARE DEFEAT ME,  
THAT'S THE WAY IT WORKS WHEN YOU'RE KING.

WHEN YOU'RE ROYALTY, THERE'S A LOYALTY  
YOU HAVE TO GIVE ME EVERY MINUTE OF THE DAY.  
YOU BOW DOWN TO ME, YOU KOWTOW TO ME,  
OR YOU'RE JUST NO MORE.

IT'S A LAW ACROSS THE NATION,  
I AM ALWAYS ON VACATION,  
THAT'S THE DEAL I'VE GOT 'CAUSE I'M KING.

I HOLD ALL THE CARDS, I'VE GOT ALL THE GUARDS,  
IS THERE ANY DOUBT EXACTLY WHO'S IN CHARGE?  
YOU DON'T THINK I'M SWELL? YOU WANT TO REBEL?  
WELL, I CAN MAKE YOUR LIFE ONE LIVING HELL.

EV'RY DAY I COUNT MY TREASURE,  
JUST DON'T BRING ON MY DISPLEASURE,  
YOU DON'T WANT TO ANGER THIS KING.

*(spoken)*

So how are my construction projects going?

SERVANT

The slaves are building your newest monument, sire. It's almost finished.

KING

Yeah. And when it's done, I'll have to go look at it, won't I? Cut the ribbon, listen to speeches...

SERVANT

Maybe you could delay all that, gracious ruler.

KING

How?

SERVANT

Ahh...tell them you want it twice as big. That 'll take a couple more years.

KING

Good idea. (*Beat.*) It was my idea, right?

SERVANT

Absolutely, lord of all.

KING

Then, that's what I'll do. What about re-naming the streets? Has that been done?

SERVANT

Yes, mighty king. Finished last week. Every street in the kingdom is now King Street.

KING

Good.

SERVANT

Though I do have to point out, fearless leader, that this has generated some confusion.

KING

How?

SERVANT

Now that all the streets have the same name, it's a little hard to get packages delivered. And folks trying to meet up at the corner of King and King can't figure out where to go. But the biggest problem seems to be that people don't seem to know where they live anymore, since everyone lives on King Street.

KING

If they don't know where they live, maybe they don't deserve to live. I can take care of that.

SERVANT

Oh, ruler of all, please, I'm sure they'll figure it out in time.

KING

They better. What about the new...what's it called? The...

SERVANT

The King Library. It's coming along, mighty sovereign. Your name is big, the building's big...although somebody pointed out that a library really needs to have, ah, books.

KING

Books? Books about what?

SERVANT

I don't know, powerful one.

KING

Well, if it's the King Library, the books ought to be about me, right?

SERVANT

I guess you're right.



KING

You guess?

SERVANT

Slip of the tongue, majesty. Of course, you're right. The books should be about you.  
But who's going to write---

KING

Get the people to write them. If each one of my subjects wrote a book about me, the library...  
would be filled with books, right? How complicated is this?

SERVANT

Ahh, just one minor point, your royalness, the people...some of them don't know how to write.  
Not many know how to read either---

KING

Is this my problem? I mean, do I have to do everything around here? Tell them to get working on  
it. I want the library filled with books about me by the end of the year.

SERVANT

Your demand is my command, oh mighty one.

KING

Great. Time for lunch. Or is it dinner?

SERVANT

Your choice, your majesty.

KING

I know! I'll declare it midnight and have a midnight snack.

*(SERVANT & KING exit. MAID enters.)*

MAID

Meanwhile back in Bethulia, it turns out there was an unexpected bonus to Judy's poultry business. One wonderful day, she went to the home of a wealthy landowner to deliver a chicken. And not only was he rich, he was young, and he was handsome. He just couldn't see very well.

*(JUDY enters, still disheveled, carrying a basket with a chicken. MANASSEH enters. His nose is buried in a tablet.)*

MAID

The name of this myopic stud? Manasseh.

*(MAID exits)*

JUDY

I've brought your chicken.

*(MANASSEH looks up, distracted, doesn't seem to see her)*

MANASSEH

My...chicken? Where is it?

JUDY

Right here.

*(JUDY holds up the chicken.)*

MANASSEH

Can you bring it closer? My eyes aren't very good.

*(JUDY moves closer.)*

MANASSEH

Can you come closer?

*(JUDY moves directly in front of him.)*

JUDY

How's this?

MANASSEH

Oh, that's...that's just...great.

*(MANASSEH drops the tablet, JUDY drops the chicken. It's love at first sight.)*

JUDY

*(singing)*

IT WAS APRIL  
ONLY APRIL  
TO BE YOUNG AND LOSE YOUR HEART  
IN LOVELY APRIL.

MANASSEH

*(singing)*

AND THERE WAS RAIN  
SOFT GENTLE RAIN  
FALLING DOWN.  
SOFT LIKE THE RAIN

YOUR EYES

STRONG LIKE THE RAIN

YOUR ARMS

ALL AROUND.

ALL AROUND.

WE KNEW, ALL AT ONCE WE KNEW

WE KNEW WE'D BE

TOGETHER FOREVER, EVER.

*(JUDY singing)*

NO WAY, THERE WOULD BE NO WAY  
OUR LOVE COULD EVER SEVER.

*(MANASSEH singing)*

NO WAY, NO WAY

JUDY

Can the world really change so quickly?

MANASSEH

Apparently. If two people see in each other what I see in you.

*(WORKMAN enters with a basket of flower petals & sprinkles them with petals as they speak.)*

JUDY

And look, flower petals. Aren't they lovely?

MANASSEH

Beautiful. They're falling like snow.

JUDY

What is snow?

MANASSEH

Another question yet to be answered. But we've got time.

JUDY

How much time?

MANASSEH

If we're together, maybe forever.

JUDY

And ever?

MANASSEH

We can try to make it so.

*(WORKMAN, bored with the whole thing, stops abruptly & exits.)*

*(JUDY singing)*

IT WAS APRIL

*(MANASSEH singing)*

MY LOVE

ONLY APRIL

MY DOVE

AND OUR EYES WERE OPENED WIDE  
IN LOVELY APRIL

EYES WERE OPENED WIDE  
IN LOVELY APRIL  
EVERYTHING CHANGED  
NOTHING THE SAME  
ALL AROUND.

BLUE LIKE THE SKY

YOUR EYES

WARM LIKE THE SUN

YOUR SMILE

SHINING DOWN.

SHINING DOWN

WE KNEW, ALL AT ONCE WE KNEW

WE KNEW WE'D BE

TOGETHER FOREVER, EVER.

NO WAY, THERE WOULD BE NO WAY  
OUR LOVE COULD EVER SEVER.

NO WAY, NO WAY

TAKE ALL MY TOMORROWS

I AM YOURS FOREVER

*(JUDY singing)*

HERE'S MY HAND FOR ALWAYS

MY HEART,

AND YOURS ARE AS ONE.

*(MANASSEH singing)*

I WILL LEAVE YOU NEVER

WE ARE ONE.

*(MAID enters.)*

MAID

Yup, it was true love all right. They were as happy as two young, beautiful people in love with one another can be. It happens that way sometimes. Even in real life.

*(JUDY & MANASSEH exit, beaming at one another)*

MAID

Yes, aside from his lousy eyesight, Manasseh was quite a catch. And so they were married. Dad even got his own room in their house. And everybody lived happily ever after. End of story.

*(Pause)*

Just kidding. It's only the end of the beginning of this story. This is when I came into the picture. I became Judy's maid.

*(MAID sweeps up the flower petals)*

Everybody ought to have a maid, right? Now as jobs go, being a maid isn't so terrible. I wasn't hauling two-ton stones into place building a pyramid. Mostly I was carrying things from here to there and back again. But I was at the beck and call of a young woman who had gone from rags to riches in a heartbeat. Get the picture? First thing she did was give me a name. You see, back in the day, they didn't pay you, they just named you. She decided to call me Fallacia. Fallacia? Sounds like a disease, right? "His health was good until he was stricken with a terminal case of Fallacia." Anyway, she was so happy with my name she used it. A lot.

JUDY  
*(offstage)*

Fallacia.

MAID

Yes, mistress?

JUDY  
*(offstage)*

Did you sew the trim on my new robe?

MAID

Of course, mistress. It's right there.

JUDY  
*(offstage)*

Oh, and Fallacia?

MAID

Yes, m'am?

JUDY  
*(offstage)*

Be sure to pick up my sandals at the shop.

MAID

Right away, madame.

JUDY  
*(offstage)*

And while I'm bathing, Fallacia, I'd like you to re-arrange my jewelry, so I can see my baubles,

JUDY (*cont'd.*)

bangles and, ah ...

MAID

Beads?

JUDY

(*offstage*)

Yes. And don't forget to line up my scarves, Fallacia.

MAID

I wouldn't dream of it, mistress.

(*Pause*)

Working for the nouveau riche is such a pain. If only I had a kindred spirit out there. Someone else in servitude who could understand what this is like.

(*SERVANT enters.*)

SERVANT

You think rich people are rough, try dealing with royalty.

MAID

Why does it have to be this way?

SERVANT

You mean...?

MAID

Why are they the ones giving the orders and we're...



SERVANT

Damned if I know.

*(SERVANT singing)*

I'M SMARTER THAN HE

*(MAID singing)*

I'M BRIGHTER THAN SHE

WHY IS MY LIFE SO UN-IMPORTANT  
THAT I AM HUMAN DEBRIS?

HER INGRATITUDE

HIS INEPTITUDE

EVERY DAY IT'S A BITTER STRUGGLE  
TO LIVE IN THIS SERVITUDE

GOT A QUESTION IN MY MIND THAT  
BUGS ME LIKE AN ITCH

GOT A QUESTION IN MY MIND THAT  
BUGS ME LIKE AN ITCH

LIFE IS SO UNFAIR

UNFAIR

OH, WHY CAN'T WE SWITCH?

WHY NOT SWITCH?

THERE'S NO UNION SHOP

WE WORK 'TIL WE DROP

WE'RE WAY DOWN ON THE BOTTOM RUNG  
AND A FOOL IS UP ON THE TOP.

WE DON'T GET A BREAK

CAN'T MAKE A MISTAKE

THINGS FOR US ARE SO OUT OF KILTER

WE NEVER GET A FAIR SHAKE

SEEMS TO ME THE WORLD'S OKAY  
BUT ONLY IF YOU'RE RICH

SEEMS TO ME THE WORLD'S OKAY  
BUT ONLY IF YOU'RE RICH

LIFE IS SO UNFAIR

UNFAIR

OH, WHY CAN'T WE SWITCH?

WHY NOT SWITCH?

I'D BE SUCH A BEAUTY

*(MAID singing)*

IF I SPENT ALL DAY ON MY HAIR

MY MISTRESS IS A LADY  
BUT SHE CAN BE A WITCH

*(SERVANT singing)*

PUT A CROWN ON MY HEAD  
AND I'D BE SO DEBONAIR

THE KING WAS BORN TO RULE  
BUT HE'S A SON OF A B---

KING

*(offstage)*

Servant, I'm tired of looking at this wall. Turn my chair around.

SERVANT

Of course, oh great one. Be right there.

JUDY

*(offstage)*

Fallacia.

MAID

Yes, mistress.

JUDY

There's a knot in my hair.

MAID

Coming, madame.

*(singing)*

WHO CAME UP WITH THESE RULES?

*(MAID singing)*

WHY CAN'T WE SWITCH?

*(SERVANT singing)*

WHY CAN'T WE SWITCH?

IT'S NOT RIGHT, JUDGE JUDY

WHY CAN'T WE SWITCH?

WHY CAN'T WE SWITCH?

THERE'S A SCREWUP SOMEWHERE

WHY-Y CAN'T WE SWITCH?

YOU'VE GOT SOME 'XPLAINING TO DO JUDY.

*(MAID exits. SERVANT wheels in the KING)*

KING

You know, I'm feeling a little, well...something's missing. I mean, it's great to be king and all but...a person needs a reason to get out of bed in the morning, know what I mean?

SERVANT

Your majesty is bored?

KING

Did you call me a board?

SERVANT

No, powerful one. I was only trying to name the malady from which you might possibly be suffering.

KING

And what is it?

SERVANT

Boredom, mighty ruler. It's the state of being weary and restless through lack of interest.

KING

That's me all right. It's okay to be the ruler of a country but after a while...where's the kick?

SERVANT

The kick?

KING

When you've brought all the subjects to heel, raised taxes a dozen times, tortured the rebels, I mean, what's left?

SERVANT

I don't know, sire.

KING

You don't? I'm looking for ideas here.

SERVANT

I see that, your majesty. But---

KING

Maybe I need a new idea man. I mean, if you can't come up with anything...

SERVANT

Oh, but I can, sire, I definitely can.

KING

Okay. What?

SERVANT

Well...right now you're the ruler of one country, true?

KING

I know that.

SERVANT

What if you were the ruler of more than one country?

KING

More than one? Hmmm. Let's see. There's one and then there's...ah...ah.

SERVANT

Two, sire.

KING

Oh, two. That's a good number, isn't it?

SERVANT

It's a great number, your majesty.

KING

So, if it's good to rule one country, ruling ahh, ahh...

SERVANT

Two.

KING

Two, yes, ruling two should be twice as good, right?

SERVANT

Absolutely, my king.

KING

Whew. You know, it's tiring coming up with all this stuff. I think I need a nap. Take me to my napping place.

SERVANT

Without further ado, sire.

*(SERVANT wheels KING off. MAID enters.)*

MAID

Meanwhile back at the ranch, everything was peachy for Judy and Manasseh.

*(MAID exits. JUDY & MANASSEH enter. She is now beautifully dressed.)*

JUDY

I'm so happy, Manasseh.

MANASSEH

I hoped I could make you happy.

JUDY

You have. And our beautiful home...and all the land you own...

MANASSEH

Yes, it stretches just about as far as the eye can see. Of course, I can't really see it but that's what they tell me. It's beautiful, isn't it?

JUDY

It never seemed beautiful to me before. It's mostly rocks and sand.

MANASSEH

But it gives us all our necessities. Sheep and goats that provide us with wool and milk, bees that give honey, olive trees in abundance...

*(singing)*

THIS LAND THAT IS MY HOMELAND  
GIVES US EV'RYTHING WE NEED  
ITS GREEN AND LOVELY VALLEYS  
ROLLING FROM THE HILLS DOWN TO THE SEA.

LAND OF MILK AND HONEY  
LAND OF SAND AND SUN  
LAND WHERE WATER'S PRECIOUS  
LAND WHERE SHEEP CAN RUN.

THIS LAND THAT IS MY HOMELAND  
IS THE FINEST LAND I KNOW  
I HOPE THAT EV'RY MAN AND WOMAN  
FIND A LAND TO CALL THEIR HOME  
A LAND TO CALL THEIR HOME.

JUDY

You really believe that, don't you?

MANASSEH

Of course. We're the lucky ones. We're blessed to be here and have so much.

*(MAID enters, followed by HEAD MAN & ADVISER.)*

MAID

Sir, the town elders are here to see you.

MANASSEH

Welcome, gentlemen.

*(MAID exits.)*

HEAD MAN & ADVISER

Greetings.

MANASSEH

This is my wife, Judith. What can I do for you?

HEAD MAN

It's about your land. You see...well...

ADVISER

Manasseh, we all know your eyesight's no good.

MANASSEH

You've come all the way out here to tell me that?

ADVISER

It's clear to us that maybe because of your poor eyesight, there are things you don't know.

MANASSEH

Ahh. So, you are here to enlighten me. By all means, gentlemen, go ahead.

*(ADVISER gestures to HEAD MAN.)*



HEAD MAN

You want me to tell him?

ADVISER

Well, you *are* the chief elder of Bethulia.

HEAD MAN

So I am. The fact is, your workers are not harvesting all of your crops.

MANASSEH

And that means...?

ADVISER

When you leave rows of crops still standing, un-harvested, that's an open invitation to those who don't own land at all, to come and help themselves. Everybody who doesn't own so much as a spade-ful of earth can just take the crops for free.

HEAD MAN

Yes indeed. Every Tom, Dick and Hodaviah.

MANASSEH

And you think this is...?

HEAD MAN

Well, we don't think it's right. Do we? I mean, surely, you must see---

MANASSEH

Are you talking about my eyesight again?

ADVISER

What he means is, you must be aware of the fact that to allow such a thing to happen is wrong.

HEAD MAN

Completely wrong. Right?

ADVISER

Absolutely right. The fact that it's wrong, I mean.

MANASSEH

According to...

ADVISER

Him, obviously.

*(Pointing to HEAD MAN)*

HEAD MAN

And him, too.

*(Pointing to ADVISER)*

MANASSEH

Because?

ADVISER

Because it just is.

MANASSEH

Well, gentlemen, my land, my crops, my choice.

HEAD MAN

But surely, you can see---

MANASSEH

There you go again.

ADVISER

You must understand that this kind of thing draws attention. Consider how it makes the other landowners look.

MANASSEH

Ah, yes. The other landowners.

JUDY

Who are these other landowners?

*(HEAD MAN & ADVISER are annoyed at her intrusion.)*

Do you know any of them?

ADVISER

Well, yes. Ah...

*(ADVISER gestures toward the HEAD MAN.)*

JUDY

And is *he* also one of these landowners?

*(JUDY points to ADVISER. HEAD MAN nods yes.)*

JUDY

So, you want my husband to stop his acts of charity because it makes you two look bad?

ADVISER

Well...

MANASSEH

Gentlemen, I want to thank you for paying me a visit.

HEAD MAN

Does that mean you're going to---

MANASSEH

And we bid you good day.

*(HEAD MAN & ADVISER exit.)*

JUDY

You knew all along what they were going to say, didn't you?

MANASSEH

I had a pretty good idea. Those of us who own land are very fortunate. It only makes sense to share it with those who don't have enough. All that barley, you plant it and three months later there it is, waving in the wind. The guys are out there harvesting it right now.

*(WORKMAN enters with a scythe, crosses to "fields" & gets to work.)*

But I must admit I've let things slide a bit since you and I met. Time for me to go and check out what the men are doing.

JUDY

Will you be gone long?

MANASSEH

No, I'll be back soon. All I do is watch. The men do all the work.

*(MANASSEH starts to exit.)*

JUDY

Manasseh?

MANASSEH

Yes, Judith?

JUDY

Just be careful. Remember when we met?

MANASSEH

Of course, darling.

*(singing)*

IT WAS APRIL

ONLY APRIL

AND OUR EYES WERE OPENED

WIDE IN LOVELY APRIL

EVERYTHING CHANGED

NOTHING THE SAME

ALL AROUND

BLUE LIKE THE SKY

*(JUDY singing)*

YOUR EYES

WARM LIKE THE SUN

YOUR SMILE

SHINING DOWN

SHINING DOWN

I AM YOURS FOREVER

TAKE ALL MY TOMORROWS

I WILL LEAVE YOU NEVER

HERE'S MY HAND FOR ALWAYS

WE ARE ONE.

MY HEART,

AND YOURS ARE AS ONE.

MANASSEH

I'll be back soon. I promise.

*(MANASSEH crosses to WORKMAN. MAID enters.)*

MAID

Yeah, his heart was in the right place but sad to say, Manasseh just wasn't the outdoorsy type. He goes out there in the midday sun to watch the men cut barley, but did he remember to put on sunblock? Nope.

*(MANASSEH staggers and collapses. WORKMAN rushes to him & drags him off.)*

He got sunstroke and in no time at all, that was the end of him. And Judy? Judy was heartbroken.

*(MAID exits. DAD enters.)*

JUDY

Father, why did this have to happen? Manasseh was young and strong and...

DAD

And he was your beshérit, your soulmate.

JUDY

Yes. If only he hadn't gone out to the fields...if only he hadn't done that, maybe he'd---

DAD

Now, now daughter. It's not for us to know the reasons why things happen. Only the Almighty knows the timing of our comings and our goings.

JUDY

But how do I accept it? How can I understand---

DAD

The only answer I have is that Manasseh's work here on earth was done.

JUDY

But what about me?

DAD

Clearly, there is a plan the Creator has in mind for you.

JUDY

I can't make sense of it.

DAD

Of course, you can't. Not now. But there is something...some work that you alone must do, Judith. One day you will know what it is. That's all I can say. The rest...you'll have to find out on your own.

JUDY

One thing I've already learned, Father.

DAD

What's that?

JUDY

It's like you said. The money's not important.

*(DAD nods & shuffles out.)*

JUDY

*(singing)*

GONE NOW  
FROM MY SIDE HE IS GONE NOW.  
NOT A LOOK, NOT A SOUND  
NOT A BREATH OF HIM HERE ON THIS EARTH.  
NO MORE  
WILL I SEE HIM BEFORE ME.  
NOT A SHADOW, A SIGH  
OR THE SCENT OF HIM EVER AGAIN.  
ALL AROUND ME I SEE  
EV'RYTHING HE GAVE ME  
BUT WHAT GOOD IS IT NOW...HE'S...GONE?

BROKEN  
NOT A WORD CAN BE SPOKEN  
NOT A THING I CAN SAY  
THAT WOULD BRING HIM BACK INTO MY LIFE.  
COLD HERE  
I HAVE NO ONE TO HOLD HERE  
SO MY ARMS ARE AS EMPTY  
AND BARREN AND BARE AS MY BED.

HE LIVES ON IN MY DREAMS  
BUT THINGS AREN'T WHAT THEY SEEM  
HE'S A SHADOW AND THEN...HE'S...GONE.

LONELY  
FOR THE TOUCH OF HIM ONLY  
I MUST LEARN HOW TO BREATHE  
AND TO LIVE IN THIS WORLD ALL ALONE...ALONE...ALONE.



*(JUDY starts to exit slowly. MAID enters.)*

MAID

Can I get you anything, mistress?

*(JUDY shakes her head “no.”)*

MAID

You sure there’s nothing I can bring you?

JUDY

No. Nothing.

*(JUDY exits.)*

MAID

Yeah, she really loved the guy. She was well off, but like she said, that didn’t seem to help. She went into seclusion. And I’m talking deep seclusion. Want to know something funny? I kind of missed the old Judy, you know, the one who was always calling for me. She had a room built for herself at the top of the house. She went in there and stayed all alone. After a while, it was as if everybody forgot her...

*(Pause)*

Meanwhile, remember the King? You know if you give an empty mind nothing to focus on for a while, eventually something comes out of it, and it’s usually not good. Yes, the King had some new tricks up his sleeve. World events were about to take a dramatic turn. For the worse.

*(MAID exits. KING & SERVANT enter.)*

KING

I’ve been thinking...

SERVANT

Did it hurt?

KING

What?

*(SERVANT pretends to remove a bit of dirt from the King's robe.)*

SERVANT

Just a speck of dirt, oh, wonderful one.

KING

As I was saying, if it's good to rule one country, ruling two should be twice as good, right?

SERVANT

Absolutely, my king.

KING

But why stop at two? I mean, once you gear up, why not keep going?

SERVANT

Ahh, sure, why not?

KING

All right, then. I'll get my army to conquer everybody else. That'll do it. A little conquering here, a little conquering over there, and pretty soon, I'm king of the world.

SERVANT

Sounds like a perfect plan, majesty.

KING

Of course, it's a perfect plan. I thought of it, didn't I? Who's my top general these days?

SERVANT

That would be Holofernes, most powerful one.

KING

Who?

SERVANT

Ho-lo-fer-nes, my lord.

KING

Can you spell that? Using the referential king alphabet of course?

SERVANT

Absolutely, your majesty. Holofernes. H, as in highness, O as in oh, mighty one, L as in... Leader of the pack, O as in omnipotent, F as in...I'll come back to that, E as in expialadocious, R as in rex, regent, rajah, N as in nobody-ever-better, E as in exceptionally perfect being, S as in superior sovereign.

KING

Didn't you skip one?

SERVANT

Yes. F, as in...f...f...ing, no, F, as in fine like sparkling wine, fearless first person.

KING

Well, go get what's-his-name in here.

SERVANT

Right away, sire. Holofernes!

*(HOLOFERNES swaggers in, perhaps doing fist bumps with audience members.)*

KING

So, you're my top general. I guess that means you're pretty good with a sword.

HOLOFERNES

That's me, mighty king. I slice 'em, I dice 'em, I sacrifice 'em.

KING

Here's the deal. I'm the best there is, right?

HOLOFERNES AND SERVANT

*(un-enthusiastically)*

Right, sire.

KING

I said...I'm the best there is, right?

HOLOFERNES AND SERVANT

*(loudly)*

Right, Sire!

KING

Okay, then. There are a couple of dozen countries out there that don't call me king. Go conquer them.

HOLOFERNES

We're talking war?

KING

Didn't we just have a war a couple of months ago? Maybe we could call it something else.

SERVANT

If I might, sire---

KING

Yes?

SERVANT

You could say you have... a bone to pick with these other countries.

KING

A bone to pick. I like that. My idea, wasn't it?

SERVANT

Yes, as usual, all powerful one.

KING

So, are you up to the job?

HOLOFERNES

I'm up for just about anything, sire, but I'm always up for war.

KING

Okay, take some men, say, a hundred and twenty thousand, along with some bow and arrow types, maybe twelve thousand of them. And whatever else you need, you know, donkeys, goats, sheep, chariots, RVs, tents, barbecue grills, Coleman lamps, coolers, everything a bunch of guys need to go camping.

HOLOFERNES

Got it, oh powerful one. Just a couple of questions before we take off. What do you want me to do if folks surrender?

KING

Surrender? What does that mean?

HOLOFERNES

It's a real pain but sometimes the wimps just give up. They throw themselves at my feet and plead for mercy. It's annoying. You gear up for battle, you want to fight somebody, know what I mean? Anyway, how do you want to handle it?

KING

Oh, just punish them. No need to knock yourself out, maybe burn half the town, maim a couple of hundred. But leave enough healthy ones to bring back as slaves.

HOLOFERNES

Especially if they're pretty, right? As for the rest, burning and maiming, got it. And what if they decide to resist? I mean, I guarantee you they won't win, but...

KING

Just get rid of them, throw their bodies in the river and plunder, pillage and loot the place.

HOLOFERNES

Sounds good. You're the boss.

KING

I want the feet of my soldiers to cover the earth.

HOLOFERNES

Consider it a done deal, my king.

KING

Great. Now that I've got that settled...you know...I don't think I've had any donuts today. Why is that?

SERVANT

I don't know, mighty leader. But you can rectify that situation.

KING

So be it. I want the ones with chocolate sprinkles.

*(KING & SERVANT exit.)*

HOLOFERNES

All right then! Nothing like a little aggression to make a guy feel like a real guy. Bugles, battles, blood, what on earth can beat it? The smoke, the fire, the war...that's what a real man lives for. Ain't it the truth, soldier? Soldier? Come on now. You don't want to be late for the war, do you?

*(SOLDIER enters on the run)*

SOLDIER

Oh, no, sir.

HOLOFERNES

We haven't lost a battle yet, have we?

SOLDIER

Not the last time I looked, sir.

HOLOFERNES

Where's the captain?

*(CAPTAIN enters on the run)*

CAPTAIN

Right here, sir.

HOLOFERNES

All right then, into the breach!

SOLDIER

What exactly is...the breach?

CAPTAIN

No worries. We'll find it.

HOLOFERNES

You bet we will. You know what they say...there's nothing like the smell of napalm in the morning.

CAPTAIN

Oh, yeah.

SOLDIER

What is...napalm?

HOLOFERNES

I'm not sure. But I've missed it.

HOLOFERNES, SOLDIER & CAPTAIN

*(singing)*

WE'RE GONNA PLUNDER, PILLAGE AND LOOT  
ALL THE WAY TO BEIRUT.



*(HOLOFERNES, SOLDIER & CAPTAIN singing)*

WE'RE GONNA CONQUER, SACK AND DESTROY

SOLDIER

*(spoken)*

How far?

HOLOFERNES

*(singing)*

FROM HERE TO THE CITY OF TROY.

*(HOLOFERNES, SOLDIER & CAPTAIN singing)*

WHEN YOU'RE A SOLDIER, THE PAY'S NOT GREAT  
SO WE PICK UP TRINKETS TO COMPENSATE  
THAT'S WHY WE PLUNDER, PILLAGE AND LOOT  
AND TAKE STUFF BACK HOME.

FOLLOW ORDERS THROUGH THICK AND THIN,  
IT HELPS TO HAVE A THICK SKIN.  
WE DON'T HAVE A WHOLE LOT OF GEAR

CAPTAIN

*(singing)*

ONLY A RUSTY OLD SPEAR.

*(HOLOFERNES, SOLDIER & CAPTAIN singing)*

WE'RE SO SICK AND TIRED AT THE END OF THE DAY  
THERE'S NO PRETTY GIRLS AND THERE'S NOT MUCH PAY  
THAT'S WHY WE PLUNDER, PILLAGE AND LOOT  
AND TAKE STUFF BACK HOME.

*(HOLOFERNES, SOLDIER & CAPTAIN singing)*

IT'S A JOB WHERE YOU DON'T VOLUNTEER  
TRY AND STAY IN THE REAR.  
YOU DON'T NEED TO HAVE LOTS OF BRAINS  
BUT YOU DO HAVE TO HANDLE THE PAIN.  
YOU GET HURT IN A BATTLE THEY LEAVE YOU BLEED  
THE KING JUST FIGURES ONE LESS MOUTH TO FEED  
YEAH, LIFE'S PRETTY MUCH A CRAPSHOOT...

CAPTAIN

You know, ours is the world's second oldest profession.

SOLDIER

Yeah, and it's got a lot in common with the first.

*(HOLOFERNES, CAPTAIN & SOLDIER singing)*

THAT'S WHY WE PLUNDER PILLAGE AND LOOT.  
AND TAKE STUFF HOME TO MOMMY...  
THAT'S WHY WE PLUNDER, PILLAGE AND  
THUNDER THROUGH THE VILLAGES  
PLUNDER, PILLAGE AND LOOT.

END ACT ONE

## ACT TWO

*(Lights up on MAID)*

### MAID

Since last we met, three long years have passed. While you were wolfing down candy bars, goldfish and checking your email, Holofernes and his army have been mowing down everything in sight. His reputation has grown, and not in a good way. This was one mean dude.

Couple of weeks ago he and his army came to a town way up in the hills, reachable only by a narrow mountain pass, so the townspeople could resist an attack. The only hitch? The water supply is way down in the valley. So, Holofernes and his buddies set up camp near the water, and put the town under siege. The name of this place? Bethulia. Remember Bethulia? That's where Judy and I lived.

Now, you remember the old Judy, "Fallacia, get me this, Fallacia, get me that." Young, beautiful, but seriously needy, twenty-four-seven? Big change though after her husband died. For the last three years she's hidden herself away up in that room. No shopping trips, no wild parties, not even out to pick up a pizza on a Saturday night. What's she been doing? Your guess is as good as mine. Dealing with her grief, communing with the Almighty, who knows? Of course, I kept her up to date on what was going on in the outside world. And then one day, she emerged from her room.

*(JUDY enters, dressed plainly, no jewelry)*

### MAID

I know what you're thinking. A woman locks herself up for a couple of years, she's going to let herself go, pig out on chips and nachos every night, right? Not Judy. She was still a beauty. I

MAID (*cont'd.*)

always said the woman could have been a movie star, if they'd had movies back then...

(*to JUDY*)

Did you want something, mistress?

JUDY

(*quietly*)

I've been thinking...

MAID

(*aside*)

This ought to be good. She's been at it three years.

JUDY

I want you to take all my gowns, jewelry, sandals, perfume, everything, and give it all away to the poor.

MAID

Seriously?

JUDY

I have no further need of all that.

MAID

But all those things are so beautiful. And if I may say so, you look beautiful in them.

JUDY

What's the point of looking beautiful? The Lord doesn't care what I look like.

MAID

You're really sure you don't want any of it?

JUDY

Why would I? There's no need for me to adorn myself to catch a man's eye. There's no man's eye I want to catch.

MAID

Okay. If you say so, mistress. By the way have I told you the latest about the Assyrian army? Looks like there may be a break in the siege.

JUDY

What kind of a break?

MAID

Word is the town elders plan to surrender if we don't get some rain this week.

JUDY

Surrender to the Assyrians?

MAID

That's what I hear. The head man of the town says if God really cares about us, he'll bring us a downpour. And if he doesn't, then we should give up on him and ---

JUDY

Give up on God?

MAID

Right. And worship the Assyrian king.

JUDY

But that would be blasphemy. And surrendering to this general...if we do that, if his army conquers Bethulia, then all of Judea will be lost.

MAID

Well, the elders don't seem to have any other ideas. Anyway, there's like a hundred and thirty-two thousand soldiers out there. And I hear they're fiercely loyal to Holofernes---that's the general's name---they'd follow him anywhere. I don't know anything about armies and generals but I guess the only way to get rid of that mob would be to get rid of him. And who's going to get close enough to him to pull that off? Anyway, I hear the town elders are going to give it 'till the end of the week and if there's no rain by then...

JUDY

What else do you know about this general, this...Holofernes?

MAID

They say he's afraid of nothing. They also say he's a big guy with...big appetites, if you know what I mean.

*(JUDY looks thoughtful. WORKMAN enters quickly holding a lightbulb at the end of an electric cord. He holds it over her head. He lights the bulb. She blinks. WORKMAN exits.)*

JUDY

Fallacia, fetch me my cloak.

MAID

Your cloak, mistress? You're going out?

JUDY

Yes. Oh, and, remember what I said about getting rid of my things? Hold off on that.

*(JUDY exits.)*

MAID

So. Off she went to see the town elders, a couple of real heavyweights in the brain department.

*(MAID exits. HEAD MAN & ADVISER enter.)*

ADVISER

Every jar, water bottle and sippy cup in sight is dry. We've got to do something.

HEAD MAN

Yeah, we're out of options. It's probably best to give in before everybody gives out.

ADVISER

You know, when you get right down to it, it's a silly name for a town. What if we re-named it?

HEAD MAN

How's that going to help?

ADVISER

Maybe the general would go easy on us if we put out the welcome mat for him, know what I mean?

*(JUDY enters.)*

JUDY

Good evening, gentlemen.

ADVISER

Who are you? We can't just let anybody in here.

JUDY

My name is Judith. Manasseh was my husband.

HEAD MAN

Manasseh? Oh, yes. Been a couple of years since he...

JUDY

Yes, and as his widow I pay taxes. I came because I understand you're making a plan to end the siege.

HEAD MAN

Well, you are our largest property owner. I guess there's no harm if you listen in as we menfolk decide what to do. So long as you only listen.

*(JUDY nods.)*

ADVISER

As I was saying, the people want action. What if, instead of Bethulia we were to re-name the place...Holofernestown? Or possibly...Holofernesville?

HEAD MAN

Holofernes Heights, maybe?

ADVISER

That works. We could have a party for him, pop the cork on the good wine, crack open the best olive oil...

HEAD MAN

You're talking about the consecrated stuff, that we're not supposed to touch?

ADVISER

Exactly. I mean, all those religious laws, how important are they really?

HEAD MAN

I see where you're going. We could throw a big feast in his honor.



ADVISER

Right. Music, games, good eats.

HEAD MAN

We could even get some of our younger, female residents to, you know, dance a little, play hostess, make the guys feel at home, know what I mean?

ADVISER

And so what if they want us to bow down to their king? What's the harm in that?

HEAD MAN

My feelings exactly. What difference does it make whether we worship our god or their guy?

ADVISER

We could even make some coins. Holofernes' name on one side, the king's name on the other...

HEAD MAN

I like it!

ADVISER

All we have to do is loosen up the rules a little. Anyway, the people will have our heads on a platter if we don't do something.

HEAD MAN

Let's give it five more days. If God doesn't come through with some rain by then, we give Holofernes the keys to the town and then---

JUDY

I can't believe this! Who are you to give God a deadline?

ADVISER

Really now, we said you could listen, but this is a problem for us guys to solve.

JUDY

But you're making no sense---

HEAD MAN

Who asked you? Anyway, it's the only plan we've got.

JUDY

Maybe someone else has a plan.

ADVISER

Like who?

JUDY

Well...me.

HEAD MAN

A woman with a plan?

ADVISER

Who ever heard of such a thing?

HEAD MAN

And what exactly is this "plan"? We'd need to know before we put men into action.

JUDY

Why are men the ones who go into action? What if I were to do it?

ADVISER

You? Incredible.

HEAD MAN

Ridiculous.

ADVISER

Unbelievable.

HEAD MAN

You're wasting our time.

JUDY

Just give me a chance. A few days is all I ask. Let me and my servant leave through the town gate tomorrow morning, and then---

ADVISER

Give us a moment while we confer.

HEAD MAN

In private.

*(He shoos her out. JUDY exits)*

*(HEAD MAN singing)*

A WOMAN WITH A SCHEME IS SCARY

WHO KNOWS WHAT SHE'LL DO?

*(ADVISER singing)*

THAT'S WHEN THINGS GET HAIRY

WHAT ENDS SHE'LL TAKE IT TO?

*(HEAD MAN & ADVISER Together)*

BEWARE A WOMAN WITH A SCHEME.

*(ADVISER singing)*

A FEMALE WITH A PLAN IS DAUNTING

*(HEAD MAN singing)*

SHE'S LIKE A WITCH OUT HAUNTING

AND UNDER ALL THAT HAIR

THERE'S REALLY NOT MUCH THERE

*(Together)*

WHAT GOOD IS A FEMALE WITH A PLAN?

WHEN SHE GETS A NOTION IN HER LITTLE BRAIN,

GETTING HER TO DROP IT WILL MAKE YOU GO INSANE.

A WOMAN WITH A SCHEME IS FRIGHT'NING

IT'S LIKE BEING STRUCK BY LIGHTNING.

IT COMES OUT OF THE BLUE

THERE'S NOTHING YOU CAN DO

*(Together)*

LOOK SHARP WHEN A WOMAN HAS A SCHEME.

ONCE THERE IS AN IDEA IN THE FEMALE MIND

CHAOS AND CONFUSION CANNOT BE FAR BEHIND.

A WOMAN WITH A PLAN MIGHT THINK

WHEN SHE SHOULD BE AT THE KITCHEN SINK

WHAT HORRORS WILL UNFOLD?

WHAT TERRORS TO BEHOLD?

I THINK I REALLY NEED A DRINK.

STAY CLEAR OF A WOMAN WITH A PLAN

BEWARE OF A WOMAN WITH A PLAN

*(Together)*

IT'S ENOUGH TO PANIC ANY RED-BLOODED MAN

THERE'S NO DEALING WITH A WOMAN WITH A PLAN.

ADVISER

*(calling to JUDY)*

How many days are you asking for?

*(JUDY enters)*

JUDY

Four. If I'm not back by then---

HEAD MAN

But the town fathers cannot be held responsible.

ADVISER

Exactly. If something untoward should befall you, we are not to be held liable for any damages.

Do you agree to that?

JUDY

Yes, of course.

HEAD MAN

*(conspiratorially to ADVISER)*

So, if she doesn't come back and we don't get the rain?

ADVISER

We go with plan A, right?

HEAD MAN

*(to JUDY)*

Very well. We've decided that you can...

ADVISER

Graciously, we've agreed to allow you to proceed with your...

HEAD MAN

Whatever-it-is.

JUDY

My plan.

ADVISER

You may thank us now.

JUDY

You're very kind.

HEAD MAN

We know.

ADVISER

What have we got to lose?

*(HEAD MAN & ADVISER exit.)*

JUDY

*(singing)*

THE WAY THE WORLD IS DRIVEN.  
WHO CAME UP WITH THIS PLAN?  
IS THERE SOME KIND OF REASON  
THEY HAVE THE UPPER HAND?  
WHY IS THE STATUS QUO  
MEN GET TO RUN THE SHOW?  
YES, THEY HAVE LOTS OF MUSCLE  
THEY'RE STRONG, THEY CAN WIN FIGHTS

*(JUDY singing)*

THEY KNOW HOW TO HUSTLE  
THEY CAN MAKE THINGS RIGHT  
BUT WHY DO THEY GET THE PRIZE  
JUST 'CAUSE THEY'RE THE GUYS?

THESE REGIMENTED GUIDELINES  
KEEPING WOMEN ON THE SIDE LINES  
HOW DOES THAT MAKE ANY SENSE?  
THE UNDERVALUATION  
OF HALF THE POPULATION,  
IT'S AN OPEN AND SHUT CASE  
AN OUT-AND-OUT NUTCASE

THERE'S NO JUSTIFICATION  
FOR MALE DOMINATION.  
IT'S A GROSS MISCALCULATION  
WITH NO NEGOTIATION.  
WHY IS THE STATUS QUO  
MEN GET TO RUN THE SHOW?

*(spoken)*

Fallacia?

*(MAID enters.)*

MAID

You rang, your beautifulness?

JUDY

Fetch some honey cakes, candy bars, trail mix, whatever, enough food for three or four days and put it all in a bag.

MAID

No beef jerky?

JUDY

Please! I'm vegan now. Oh, and get hold of a wineskin.

MAID

Why? There's nothing left to drink, remember? The town's under siege.

JUDY

We're going where there *is* something to drink.

(JUDY exits.)

MAID

We?

JUDY

(offstage)

We're taking a little trip. Now, I want you to pack my best sandals, my best gowns, the jewelry, my perfume, all the good stuff.

MAID

Where are we going?

JUDY

(offstage)

The general's camp.

MAID

You mean Holofernes? That general? The one who's been conquering and smiting and pillaging?



JUDY  
(offstage)

He's the one.

MAID

Us and who else?

JUDY  
(offstage)

Just us.

MAID

You do know he has a hundred and thirty thousand men with him?

JUDY  
(offstage)

Relax. Righteousness is on our side.

MAID

Oh. That's good to know.

Naturally, I had a few questions about this little excursion. What exactly was her plan? Did she even *have* a plan? But of course, I wasn't supposed to ask, or take her to task. That's just how it went. To say that I was worried was putting it mildly, but it was a little late in the game to look for a new job. And would the day ever come when I'd get to manage my own life? Who knew? Anyway, just like she said, the next day we were off to see the wizard.

*(JUDY enters, beautifully dressed)*

As soon as we were out of sight of the town, a soldier appeared.

*(SOLDIER enters.)*

SOLDIER

Who are you and where do you think you're going?

JUDY

We're fleeing the town. Word is, it will soon be yours. Thought we'd visit the general.

SOLDIER

Why do you want to see him?

JUDY

Look, handsome, anybody can read the writing on the papyrus. Bethulia is about to be conquered. There's nothing to drink, lousy service in the restaurants, shops closing early, who wants to stick around? Besides, I have some very important information for your boss.

SOLDIER

What kind of information?

JUDY

Oh, that's for his ears alone. Will you take us to see him? Pretty please?

SOLDIER

You sure you wouldn't like to hang out with me for a while? I'm a lot more fun than he is.

JUDY

That's tempting, but...maybe later.

MAID

The news of our coming spread quickly through the camp and the crowds gathered as they led us off to see the big guy. All the soldiers wanted to get a look at the vision of Judy passing before

MAID (cont'd.)

them. I mean, who could resist? Finally, we got to the big guy's tent. By now I was in a real panic.

*(Lights up on HOLOFERNES in his tent.)*

HOLOFERNES

Hello, hello. Who do we have here?

SOLDIER

The lady's come from the town. Says she's got something for you.

HOLOFERNES

Yeah, I can see that. What's your name, sweetie?

JUDY

Judith, but my friends call me Judy. And I hope that's what you'll call me...when you call me.

HOLOFERNES

Right.

JUDY

I have come to bring you tidings of great joy. Actually, that's another story altogether, but I do have some wonderful news for you. Lord knows we've had a very long walk. Is it all right if I sit down, mighty general?

*(HOLOFERNES snaps his fingers & the SOLDIER brings a cushion.)*

And if you don't mind, I need a place for my maid to rest. Somewhere safe so no harm will come to her.

*(HOLOFERNES snaps his fingers and MAID exits with SOLDIER.)*

HOLOFERNES

How about a bite to eat? Leg of lamb, maybe, or some chicken wings?

JUDY

No thanks. I'll eat later if it's all the same to you. I'm vegan, you see...

HOLOFERNES

No problema, doll, whatever you say. So, what's the story?

JUDY

Well, back at the town, where I used to live, they're fresh out of ideas. Because of the siege, they've decided to...cave.

HOLOFERNES

Cave?

JUDY

Pop the cork on their best wine, not to mention their finest olive oil, the extra virgin stuff. You see, all these things are consecrated and they're governed by important religious laws. I don't know if you're familiar with that sort of thing?

HOLOFERNES

Mostly I make up my own laws. But go on.

JUDY

It's a little complicated but you see, they are forbidden to break these laws. Now, when they actually start to do these things, they will be ready, psychologically speaking, for you to just march in and destroy them.

HOLOFERNES

And you came all the way out here to tell me this?

JUDY

Oh, when I learned this, I had to leave. I cannot abide in a town of un-righteous people.

HOLOFERNES

You can't, huh?

JUDY

No possible way. Plus, I'm kind of thirsty. Not to mention a little dusty. Not being able to take a bath, gracious, who wants to live like that?

HOLOFERNES

So, you want to have a drink and take a bath? Sweetcakes, you came to the right place.

JUDY

That's divine. Can I go on?

HOLOFERNES

I'm all ears, honey. You don't mind if I call you "honey" do you?

JUDY

Not at all. Can I call you "Holly"?

HOLOFERNES

Well, you would be the first to do that.

JUDY

As I was saying, I am a very devout woman. I am so devout that I talk to the Lord every single night of my life.

HOLOFERNES

Does he...talk back?

JUDY

Oh, yes. And he has made it known to me that he will tell me when the sinners of my town have committed these awful, terrible sins. Do you know what will happen then?

HOLOFERNES

You've got my undivided attention, sweetheart.

JUDY

When he tells me, I will reveal it to you.

HOLOFERNES

No sh---that's mighty nice of you.

JUDY

Yes. You see, we have heard how...wonderful you are. Everyone knows of your adroitness of mind, your genius, your skill. They say you have no rival for ability, for brilliance in waging war and other...manly things. And I have come here to, speaking plainly, engage in acts with you which will frankly...astonish the world. I promise you, general, people as yet unborn, people in lands yet to be discovered will know your name and remember it, all because of what is going to happen here just between us. Is it okay if I stick around a while so we can get to know one another?

HOLOFERNES

A gorgeous thing like you? Why not? Things were getting kind of dull around here until you walked in, but now...you sure you brought enough of your food?

JUDY

Oh, all of this is going to be wrapped up in a couple of days. Just one teensy-weensy little thing. As I said, every night I speak to the Lord. So, when the sun goes down, I must prepare myself to do that. You and I can chat it up all day long but it's important that I am able to take a stroll after sunset and commune with the almighty. To do this, my maid and I will need to leave your camp. This is when God will let me know when the people of Bethulia have broken His laws. And as I said, as soon as I know, I will deliver the information to you. Then you can march right in there and take over the town without losing one single, solitary soldier. I will even lead you there singing your praises so everyone will know what a great and mighty general you are. What do you think about that?

HOLOFERNES

Cool.

*(HOLOFERNES snaps his fingers. SOLDIER appears.)*

HOLOFERNES

Hands off when they go for a walk every night. Got it?

SOLDIER

Yes-siree, general, sir.

*(SOLDIER exits.)*

JUDY

Oh, fiddle-de-dee, I am simply exhausted from our long walk to get here. Would you mind if I took a little rest and washed up a bit?

HOLOFERNES

Mi casa e su casa, babe.

JUDY

Actually, I think it would be best if we had our own little place. Nothing too fancy, of course.

HOLOFERNES

I'll get my men right on it.

JUDY

That's just grand. See you later...Holly.

HOLOFERNES

I'll be right here...honey.

*(JUDY exits his space)*

Man, I think I've died and gone to heaven.

JUDY

*(Aside)*

All in good time.

*(singing)*

WHAT AM I DOING?

WHAT AM I FEELING HERE?

WHY AM I TREMBLING?

WHAT IS IT THAT I FEAR?

HE'S OVERWHELMING

I'M BREATHLESS WHEN HE'S NEAR

CAN I DO WHAT I MUST TO MAKE THIS WORK?

HOLOFERNES

*(singing)*

WHY DID SHE COME HERE?

WHAT TRICKS ARE UP HER SLEEVE?

SOMETHING ABOUT HER MAKES ME



*(HOLOFERNES singing)*

QUESTION WHAT I BELIEVE

WHAT IS SHE AFTER?

WHAT DOES THIS WOMAN WANT?

SHE'S NOT LIKE ANY OTHER GIRL I'VE KNOWN.

*(JUDY singing)*

NEVER HAVE I

FELT QUITE LIKE THIS

WHEN A MAN IS NEAR ME

I MUST USE MY WITS

TO MAKE HIM BELIEVE IN ME

SOMETHING'S HAPP-NING

SOMETHING SCARY

AM I PLAYING WITH FIRE?

THERE'S NOT A MOMENT TO LOSE

CAN I SUCCEED WITH THIS RUSE?

IS SHE BUT A

TRAP SENT BY THOSE

PEOPLE TO DECEIVE ME?

BUT I WANT HER

I MUST HAVE HER

HER EYES SPELL DESIRE

I WILL TAKE MY TIME

TO TURN THAT FLAME UP HIGHER

IF IT'S A SHELL GAME WE PLAY

I KNOW I'LL CARRY THE DAY

HER BEAUTY DAZZLES MY EYES

HOLOFERNES

*(spoken)*

But she's only a woman.

*(JUDY singing)*

AND WILL I WIN?

*(HOLOFERNES singing)*

AND I WILL WIN.

*(JUDY crosses to MAID)*

MAID

Look, I know I'm only the hired help here, but do you know what you're doing? I get that he's taken with you, that's no surprise, but what's the deal?

JUDY

Relax, Fallacia. Everything's going to be fine. I think.

MAID

So she said. Later on, she went back to see El generalissimo and then, after the sun went down, we went for a stroll in the valley. We could just see the distant lights of the town. We walked right past the soldiers, but nobody bothered us...much.

SOLDIER

Hey, you know, anytime you get lonely, I'm still here.

MAID

Good to know, but right now we're in touch with a higher power.

SOLDIER

Suit yourself.

MAID

After our little jaunt we returned to camp. I have to admit it was nice to have water for a change. And I couldn't complain about the accommodations, but with a hundred and thirty thousand guys on the next beach blanket, who can sleep? Next day, just like clockwork, Judy went to see Numero Uno again. I could tell they were getting pretty cozy.

*(JUDY crosses to HOLFERNES. They laugh together.)*

So, this little game goes on for three days. Judy and he spent most of each day hanging out together and everybody's playing by the rules. But I've been around the track a few times and I

MAID (*cont'd.*)

figure that pretty soon, the big guy is gonna want more than just sparkling conversation. If you get my drift.

(*MAID exits.*)

HOLOFERNES

Hey, hon, I thought I'd throw a little party later on tonight. What do you say?

JUDY

Tonight?

HOLOFERNES

Yeah. It's the anniversary of one of my big battles and it's always cool to celebrate these things. Makes everybody feel good to, you know, party on once in a while.

JUDY

Who's going to be there?

HOLOFERNES

It's a pretty short guest list. Couple of the guys. Then there's you. And there's me.

JUDY

Oh. I see.

HOLOFERNES

You wouldn't stand me up now, would you?

JUDY

Of course not. Never in a million years.

HOLOFERNES

I'll get my guys to go overboard on the menu and the drinks and for you, there'll be a special seat of honor right here. You'll be treated like one of the ladies in waiting in the palace of the king.

JUDY

How nice.

HOLOFERNES

Yeah, I figure we'll party and then I thought you and me could...party a little more. Know what I mean?

JUDY

Who am I to resist a mighty warrior like you?

HOLOFERNES

I hoped you'd see it that way. I think it's time we really got friendly. I'd like to know what melts your butter.

JUDY

Me? Well, it's pretty simple. What about you?

HOLOFERNES

Nothing complicated here.

JUDY

I'll be happy to tell you all about me, just as long as you do the same. You see...

*(singing)*

I LIKE ROMANCE

*(HOLOFERNES singing)*

I LIKE SEX

*(JUDY singing)*

GIVE ME FLOWERS AND MUSIC

PRETTY CLOTHES ARE MY DELIGHT  
HOLDING HANDS IN SOFT MOONLIGHT

I LIKE MUSEUMS

*(HOLOFERNES singing)*

I'LL TAKE SEX

I LIKE WATCHING A FIGHT IF I'M  
HOLDING A BEER.

I'LL TAKE SEX

HOLOFERNES

*(spoken)*

How 'bout lions at the coliseum?

JUDY

I'll take a raincheck.

*(singing)*

ALL THAT BLOOD AND ALL THAT GORE

*(HOLOFERNES singing)*

GETS THE HEART PUMPIN' FOR SURE  
FOR A MAN LIKE ME THERE'S JUST  
SEX, BOOZE, AND WAR.

JUDY

*(spoken)*

Really?

HOLOFERNES

Pretty much.

*(JUDY singing)*

I'LL BET THAT WE CAN FIND  
A MEETING OF OUR MINDS ON  
SOMETHING ELSE FOR SURE

*(HOLOFERNES singing)*

ITS NO BIG MYSTERY  
LOOK AT THE HISTORY  
SINCE ADAM FOUND EVE.

YOU KNOW YOU TEND TO SIMPLIFY

IS THAT A PROBLEM?

HOLOFERNES

*(spoken)*

I'm a guy.

*(JUDY singing)*

IT'S REALLY SO MUCH MORE COMPLEX

*(HOLOFERNES singing)*

NOT WHEN I'M FIXED ON SEX.

THAT'S ENOUGH OF THIS TALK

CAN'T AGREE WITH YOU MORE.

JUDY

You know, since it's a special night, I'm going to need a little extra time to prepare. I'd like to wear something really nice. Know what I mean?

HOLOFERNES

Wear anything you want, hon. Just not too much.

JUDY

Yes, well, ta-ta. 'Til later.

HOLOFERNES

Countin' on it.

*(JUDY exits his space.)*

*(JUDY singing)*

WELL, HERE WE ARE

I MUST TAKE HEART

I SHALL MOVE RIGHT ALONG

I HAVE GOT TO BE STRONG

*(HOLOFERNES singing)*

I'VE SET THE SNARE

SHE'S IN MY LAIR

I'LL HAVE HER IN MY BED  
BEFORE MIDNIGHT I SWEAR.

*(MAID enters.)*

MAID

How goes it?

JUDY

Well...I'm a little stressed.

MAID

Really? I wonder why?

JUDY

Let's just say I thought I could accomplish my goal without, you know.

MAID

Come on, honey, you know how guys are.

JUDY

More than that, I still don't know how I'm going to pull it off.

MAID

Pull what off?

JUDY

Killing him.

MAID

You're going to kill him?

JUDY

I have to. It's the only way out.

MAID

*That's* your plan?

JUDY

Before we got here, I thought...

MAID

What? That he'd hold out his hands and say, "tie me up and stick a knife in my ribs"?

JUDY

I know, I know, but if I don't manage it...



MAID

We're lost.

JUDY

Along with the town. And all the rest of Judea. Basically, we haven't got a prayer.

*(Pause.)*

MAID

That's the answer! We'll pray.

JUDY

We're going to ask God to help me kill somebody?

MAID

It's all in the approach. Let me give it a shot.

*(singing)*

OH, LORD, SHE NEEDS YOUR HELP TO KILL HIM  
GIVE HER STRENGTH TO CARRY OUT A PLAN.  
SHOULD SHE STAB HIM OR GARROTE HIM?  
FOR SHE HAS TO EXECUTE THIS MAN.  
IT'S NOT HIS MURDER SHE'LL ENJOY  
OH, NO, ALTHOUGH HE IS A BEAST  
THAT'S WHY HE MUST BE DESTROYED  
WE CAN'T REST UNTIL HE IS DECEASED.  
HE MUST DIE, HE HAS TO GO, THERE IS NO OTHER WAY.  
HE MUST DIE, HE HAS TO GO AND IT MUST BE TODAY.

YES, HOLOFERNES IS A MONSTER,  
A MAN SHE MUST EXTERMINATE  
NOW WE NEED TO FIND AN ANSWER

*(MAID singing)*

SHOULD SHE SUFFOCATE HIM OR ASPHYXIATE?

HE MUST DIE, HE HAS TO GO, THERE IS NO OTHER WAY.

HE MUST DIE 'CAUSE HE'S GOT TO GO AND IT HAS TO HAPPEN TODAY.

TO BUMP HIM OFF WITHOUT A PRAYER

WE KNOW THAT'S WRONG TO SEND HIM TO DAMNATION

THAT IS WHY WE TRULY SWEAR

TO PRAY

*(spoken)*

Now and then...

*(singing)*

FOR HIS SALVATION.

HE MUST DIE BECAUSE HE HAS TO GO

AND THERE REALLY IS NO OTHER WAY.

*(JUDY singing)*

THERE'S NO OTHER WAY.

HE MUST DIE BECAUSE HE HAS TO GO

*(Together)*

AND SO IT HAS TO HAPPEN

TODAY

IT MUST BE TODAY

REALLY THERE'S NO OTHER WAY.

THERE'S NO OTHER WAY

IT HAS TO HAPPEN

TODAY

IT MUST BE TODAY

IT HAS TO HAPPEN TODAY.

*(Lights up on HOLOFERNES, CAPTAIN & SOLDIER in his space)*

HOLOFERNES, CAPTAIN & SOLDIER

*(singing)*

WE STORMED THE TOWNS, LAID THE COUNTRY WASTE  
BURNING CITIES, LEAVING NOT A TRACE  
WHO'S THE GUY WE'D FOLLOW ANYPLACE?  
HOLOFERNES IS THE MAN.  
WE WIPED OUT HAMLETS ACROSS THE LAND  
SETTING FIRES AND FIGHTING HAND-TO-HAND  
SACKING EVERYTHING AT HIS COMMAND  
HOLOFERNES IS THE BEST.  
HE'S THE ONE WHO HAS THE STRENGTH OF TEN  
HE PUTS FEAR INTO THE HEARTS OF MEN  
WITH OUR GENERAL WE ALL STAND TALL  
HOLOFERNES CONQUERS ALL.

*(MAID helps JUDY put on a beautiful robe & jewelry & takes up a bag.)*

*(JUDY & MAID singing)*

OH, LORD, IT'S COURAGE THAT SHE/I NEEDS NOW  
AND A KNIFE TO BRING ABOUT HIS DEATH  
SO SHE/I CAN SLICE HIM ALL TO RIBBONS  
AND THEN HE WILL TAKE HIS FINAL BREATH.

*(HOLOFERNES, CAPTAIN & SOLDIER singing)*

FROM THE MOUNTAIN PASS  
DOWN TO THE COASTAL PLAIN  
TAKE NO PRISONERS IS OUR REFRAIN  
SO LET'S LIFT A CUP  
LET'S ALL RAISE A CHEER  
HOLOFERNES HAS NO FEAR.

*(HOLOFERNES, CAPTAIN & SOLDIER singing)*

WHEN WE FIGHT IT'S A BLOODY BRAWL  
WE PUT PANIC IN THE HEARTS OF ALL  
WE MARCH WITH HIM AND WE ALL  
STAND TALL  
HOLOFERNES IS THE BEST  
FROM THE MOUNTAIN PASS TO THE  
COASTAL PLAIN  
WE SET FIRES  
LEAVE HUNDREDS SLAIN  
COAST TO COAST WE CAN BOAST  
OUR GEN'RAL TOPS THE REST  
HOLOFERNES IS BEST

HOLOFERNES IS THE BEST.

*(JUDY & MAID singing)*

OH, LORD, WE'RE CALLING  
FOR YOUR HELP NOW  
GIVE US EXPERTISE  
SHOW US HOW TO KILL HIM  
  
HOLFERNES IS A BEAST  
NOT A THING CAN GO WRONG  
FOR HE MUST DIE  
THIS VERY NIGHT  
  
TAKE AWAY THE FEAR WE FEEL  
  
WE NEED NERVES OF STEEL  
LORD, HELP HER/ME OUT  
IN THAT TENT TONIGHT.

MAID

Judy's now looking extra beautiful. I'm not sure how that's going to help, but like I said, I'm not in charge. So, we head to the general's tent.

*(HOLFERNES, CAPTAIN & SOLDIER are drinking & laughing.)*

Sounded like the guys had already made a few trips to the punchbowl.

JUDY

Give me the bag. And wait right here, okay?

MAID

You got it.

HOLOFERNES

Welcome, honey, come right in.

*(He pours her a glass of wine.)*

Here's to the most gorgeous girl in the world.

JUDY

And here's to the greatest general in the world!

HOLOFERNES

Another round for everybody!

JUDY

Holly, hon, is it okay if we go out into the valley tonight? Later on, I mean? After...

HOLOFERNES

Of course, sweetcakes. Remember, guys, don't interfere when the lady goes for her walk.

SOLDIER

Righto, sir.

JUDY

What victory are we celebrating tonight?

HOLOFERNES

Which is it, Captain?

CAPTAIN

We celebrate all the general's victories, naturally. Because the great and mighty Holofernes has never been defeated.

JUDY

Never?

CAPTAIN

Never. That's why his name is known the world over.

SOLDIER

Let's drink to that.

JUDY

May I fill your cup?

HOLOFERNES

That'll make it taste all the better. And then I'll fill yours.

SOLDIER

To the great and mighty Holofernes.

JUDY

I'd like to hear about his most recent victory.

CAPTAIN

It was unbelievable.

SOLDIER

Incredible.

CAPTAIN

We marched in, slew them all, and then marched back out!

SOLDIER

That's how it was.

CAPTAIN

That's how it always is.

JUDY

And where was this? What land?

HOLOFERNES

Who cares about the land? Doesn't matter where I am, so long as I have a place to bed down at the end of the day and somebody beautiful beside me. You know, I think it's time to get to the main attraction. Guys?

SOLDIER

Yes, general?

HOLOFERNES

Get lost.

SOLDIER

Right away, general, sir.

*(SOLDIER exits.)*

CAPTAIN

Me too?

*(HOLFERNES pulls out his scimitar)*

HOLOFERNES

Unless you want to stay and have a taste of my scimitar.

CAPTAIN

Consider me gone.

*(CAPTAIN exits.)*

JUDY

You know, I've never seen one of those up close. Would you let me hold it? Just for a minute? Pretty please?

HOLOFERNES

Sure. It's kind of heavy, but ...

*(He puts it in her hands. She holds it a moment & hands it back.)*

JUDY

Thank you, that was thrilling.

HOLOFERNES

I've got other things you can hold that are even more thrilling.

JUDY

Yes, well...shall I serve you something more to eat?

HOLOFERNES

It's not food I'm hungry for. You know, I've been waiting for this since I first laid eyes on you.

JUDY

I too have waited, general.

HOLOFERNES

Do you not fear me, woman?



JUDY

A righteous woman fears only the Lord.

HOLOFERNES

I have heard it said that the righteous are bold as a lion. Or a she-lion in this case. So, tonight, are you ready to---

JUDY

Oh, I am ready, general. Absolutely ready. And I promise it will be my ever-loving joy 'till the day I die. You see, I am about to do for you what no woman on earth has ever done.

HOLOFERNES

That's saying a lot, babe.

JUDY

But it's true. Every word. All you have to do is close your eyes.

HOLOFERNES

That's the one thing I never do. Unless I'm alone. How do you think I've managed to stay alive so long?

JUDY

But surely you don't imagine you're in danger. How could I, a defenseless woman, harm you? Do you see any weapons about me?

HOLOFERNES

Come closer so I can be sure. Yes, you are looking extra beautiful tonight. You're the most beautiful thing I've ever seen.

JUDY

I hoped my appearance would delight you.

HOLOFERNES

It does. So, what game do we play, my beauty?

JUDY

Oh, it's no game, I assure you. Tonight, I promise to bring you fame, fame that will never die.

HOLOFERNES

I'm already famous. You heard my men. I've conquered every town across Mesopotamia.

JUDY

But I promise you more. And all you have to do is close your eyes.

HOLOFERNES

Tell me why?

JUDY

So, I can take you to a special place, a place where you have never been. The great and mighty Holofernes, the man who is said to swallow his enemies in a mouthful...he is not...afraid, is he?

HOLOFERNES

You dare speak of fear to my face? I've had men skinned alive for less.

JUDY

But that's not what you want of me. Is it, general?

*(He pulls her close.)*

HOLOFERNES

Have you been with other men? Tell me the truth.

JUDY

I have been with only one man. My husband. But he died.

HOLOFERNES

And was he brave? Was he fearless?

JUDY

He was noble, compassionate, generous. He owned much land and he gave of his crops to the poor.

HOLOFERNES

So, he was soft. Like a woman.

JUDY

No, not soft. Admirable. And fine. Very fine.

HOLOFERNES

And did you love this giver of alms, this...farmer? The truth, now. Did you love him?

JUDY

Yes. I loved him. But he is gone.

HOLOFERNES

Tell me again why you came here.

JUDY

As I said. To tell you when the people of Bethulia have broken their covenant with the Lord. When they do, I will lead you there and---

HOLOFERNES

Is that the truth?

JUDY

Why do you think I lie?

HOLOFERNES

I have been with many women. And this I know. A woman's voice is sweetest when she lies. Only in her eyes does a man see the truth.

JUDY

Then look deep into mine. Tell me what you see.

HOLOFERNES

I see beauty, the likes of which I've never seen before. It would be easier to believe you, were you not so fair.

JUDY

Then...then here.

*(She looks about for his dagger and grabs it.)*

Take this. Use it. Scar my face, if that will make you believe me.

*(He throws the knife aside.)*

HOLOFERNES

Come here, she-lion.

*(He kisses her.)*

JUDY

This I swear to you...by the god in heaven above, the name of Holofernes will live forever. People in lands far away, people not yet born in ages yet to come will know your name because of what happens between us this night. All I ask is one thing. Just close your eyes.

HOLOFERNES

Before I do, will you look at me the way you looked at him? That noble farmer you loved so much...

*(She kisses him.)*

JUDY

Do you believe me now? I promise, I promise to take you to a place of glory, the likes of which you have never seen.

HOLOFERNES

Glory, is it?

JUDY

Close your eyes. And then you will see. Very soon you will see.

*(He leans back and closes his eyes)*

HOLOFERNES

Oh, Judy, Judy, Judy.

*(She picks up his scimitar and raises it high above his head.)*

JUDY

I am about to take you...out of this world.

*(JUDY brings down the scimitar...BLACKOUT.)*

*(Pause. Lights up. JUDY crosses to MAID, carrying the bag.)*

MAID

What's in the bag? Leftovers or a party favor?

JUDY

A little of both.

*(JUDY pulls HOLOFERNES' head out of the bag)*

MAID

Oh, geez!

JUDY

Sssh! Come on.

MAID

And then, just like always, we went out into the valley. As usual, nobody bothered us. Except this time, we keep on going and headed back into town, straight to the town elders.

*(HEAD MAN & ADVISER enter.)*

JUDY

Behold! I bring you the head of Holofernes, general of the Assyrian army.

*(JUDY displays the head.)*

ADVISER

Ew! Praise to you, smart lady, strong warrior, sturdy Amazon!

HEAD MAN

How did you pull this off?

JUDY

Never you mind, but I am proud to say he never even got to first base. Do you doubt my word?

HEAD MAN

No way.

ADVISER

But man, what a waste!

JUDY

Now, here's what must happen. We must put his head up on the gate and get ready. When the sun comes up, every able-bodied man must take up arms and leave town as if he meant to march down the plain to battle the Assyrians. Why do you stand here? Take this and go!

*(HEAD MAN & ADVISER exit.)*

When they see our men planning for action, his soldiers will go to the tent of Holofernes. And that's when they will find him...dead. When they see their mighty general, their fearless leader, the man who has led them to conquer dozens of towns, taught them to spill the blood of thousands all through the country...when they see that man not only dead, but headless as well... there will be a panic in that camp like you wouldn't believe. And then, all our men have to do is give chase...and they will wipe out his soldiers as they run away.

MAID

And you know what? It happened just about like she said. At daybreak, all the men in town went out to the slopes of the mountain. When the Assyrians saw this, they went to rouse Holofernes.

*(SOLDIER & CAPTAIN enter HOLOFERNES' tent.)*

CAPTAIN

General, the townspeople look like they're planning to attack.

SOLDIER

It's not many of them but we still need to defeat them, don't we, sir?

CAPTAIN

Sir?

SOLDIER

General?

*(They approach his bed.)*

CAPTAIN

What the---it's him, but what happened to his head? Whoa, Nellie!

SOLDIER

What's she got to do with it?

CAPTAIN

And what do we do now?

*(CAPTAIN & SOLDIER panic & exit.)*

MAID

Yup. The Assyrians were completely bent out of shape. They ran around in circles and finally took off after which our side looted the whole camp. Judy got the big man's tent, his furniture, his silver tea service and everybody danced and sang and whooped it up for days and days... Right after that, Judy set me free. Even gave me a nice pension. And then? She just went home.

*(JUDY enters.)*

Of course, the line of guys trying to hook up with her didn't stop. But she sent them all away. I think she finally knew what she really wanted.

*(MAID exits.)*



JUDY

*(singing)*

SOME PEOPLE HAVE TO GO WANDERING  
TO FIND A PLACE THEY CAN CALL HOME  
THAT'S NOT FOR ME  
I'M WHERE I SHOULD BE  
I HAVE NO NEED TO ROAM  
THIS LAND THAT IS MY HOMELAND  
IS THE ONLY PLACE FOR ME  
ITS GREEN AND LOVELY VALLEYS  
ROLLING FROM THE HILLS DOWN TO THE SEA  
LAND OF MILK AND HONEY  
LAND OF SAND AND SUN  
LAND WHERE WATER'S PRECIOUS  
LAND WHERE SHEEP CAN RUN

I STAND HERE IN MY HOMELAND  
ON THE GROUND I KNOW AND LOVE  
AROUND ARE MIGHTY MOUNTAINS  
RISING TO THE STARS THAT SHINE ABOVE  
LAND OF MILK AND HONEY  
LAND OF SAND AND SUN  
LAND WHERE WATER'S PRECIOUS  
LAND WHERE SHEEP CAN RUN

THIS LAND THAT IS MY HOMELAND  
IS THE SWEETEST LAND I KNOW  
I PRAY THAT EV'RY MAN AND WOMAN  
FIND A LAND TO CALL THEIR HOME...  
A LAND TO CALL THEIR HOME.

*(DAD enters)*

JUDY

I think I've finally found the answer, Father.

DAD

What was the question?

JUDY

Where to abide...where to live...how to live...

DAD

Oh, daughter.

*(DAD singing)*

LIVING IS NOT ALL THAT DIFFICULT  
LOOK AT A DOG OR A CAT  
GO RIGHT ON BREATHING IN AND OUT  
'TILL YOU'RE OLD AS JEHOSEPHAT

JUDY

That's it?

DAD

In a nutshell.

*(MAID enters)*

MAID

*(MAID singing)*

NOW THAT I'M FREE IT'S A BRAND, NEW DAY

*(MAID singing)*

I GET TO CHOOSE MY OWN GAME  
I WANT TO START BY TELLING THE WORLD  
MONA IS MY NAME

*(DAD & MAID singing)*

LIFE'S NOT A RIDDLE THAT YOU CAN SOLVE  
IT'S NOT AS TOUGH AS ALL THAT  
GIVE IT YOUR ALL EVEN WHEN YOU FALL  
THAT'S ALL THERE IS TO THAT.

*(MALE #2 enters)*

*(MALE #2 singing)*

FIGHTING ALL THE WARS AND REAPING CROPS  
DRAGGING THE KING ALL AROUND  
SUNUP TO SUNDOWN MY WORK NEVER STOPS  
WHEN CAN I SIT DOWN?

*(MALE #2, DAD & MAID singing)*

LIFE'S NOT A RIDDLE THAT YOU CAN SOLVE  
IT'S NOT AS TOUGH AS ALL THAT  
GIVE IT YOUR ALL EVEN WHEN YOU FALL  
THAT'S ALL THERE IS TO THAT.

*(MALE #1 enters)*

*(MALE #1 singing)*

I'VE GOT GOOD ADVICE FOR ALL YOU GUYS  
WHO WANT TO LIVE A LONG LIFE  
SLAP ON LOTS OF SUNBLOCK EVERY DAY  
AND DON'T GIVE A PRETTY GIRL YOUR KNIFE.

*(ENTIRE COMPANY singing)*

LIFE'S NOT A RIDDLE THAT YOU CAN SOLVE  
AND IT'S SURE NOT AS TOUGH AS ALL THAT  
GIVE IT YOUR ALL EVEN WHEN YOU FALL  
THAT'S ALL THERE IS TO THAT.

*(JUDY singing)*

AND THAT'S ALL THAT THERE IS

*(MAID singing)*

AND THAT'S ALL THAT THERE IS

*(MALE #1 singing)*

AND THAT'S ALL THAT THERE IS

*(MALE #2 singing)*

AND THAT'S ALL THAT THERE IS

*(DAD singing)*

AND THAT'S ALL THAT THERE IS.

END OF PLAY