

CHARACTER SIDES

Grandmother

*GRANDMOTHER (70), Black, a frail elder with the strength of spirit that can only be born from hardship. Our storyteller.*

*(1913. A black GRANDMOTHER, (72), sits at the end of the long room in a rocking chair. She is frail and hunched, but has a strength in her that could only come from living through a tragedy. She sings quietly to herself.)*

GRANDMOTHER

WE SLAVE AWAY ON MASTER'S LAND...

CHOIR (O.S.)

LET MY PEOPLE GO...

GRANDMOTHER

OPPRESSED SO HARD, WE CAN NOT STAND...

CHOIR (O.S.)

LET MY PEOPLE GO...

GRANDMOTHER

STOLEN 'WAY TO A FOREIGN LAND.  
LED AWAY, CHAINS IN HAND.  
SOON TO HATCH A CAREFUL PLAN TO...

GRANDMOTHER

LET MY PEOPLE GO.

*(GRANDMOTHER picks up a Negro newspaper next to her, it reads: HARRIET TUBMAN DIES.)*

GRANDMOTHER

HARRIET IS DEAD AND CARRIED HOME.  
HEAVEN IS WHERE HER SOUL BELONGS.  
SHE MAY BE DEAD, BUT SHE IS NOT GONE.  
Her story, I WILL LET MY PEOPLE KNOW.

*(RUBY, 10, her strong-willed granddaughter, enters the room)*

RUBY

It's late granny. Why you out here all by yo'self?

GRANDMOTHER

Come, come child.

RUBY

Aren't you tired?

GRANDMOTHER

I got my mind fixed on somethin' else. Sit down and let me talk to ya.

RUBY

Granny... Its time for bed.

GRANDMOTHER

Child, I said sit down. We hadn't spoken 'bout this before. But, its time you learn.

GRANDMOTHER

WE NEED NOT ALWAYS WEEP AND MOURN...

CHOIR (O.S.)

LET MY PEOPLE GO...

GRANDMOTHER

AND WEAR THESE SLAVERY CHAINS FORLORN.

CHOIR (O.S.)

LET MY PEOPLE GO...

GRANDMOTHER

GO DOWN MOSES,  
WAY DOWN IN EGYPT'S LAND.  
TELL OLD PHARAOH,  
TO LET MY PEOPLE GO.

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