

2017 BAPTIST YOUTH ENCAMPMENT
DRAMATIC THEME EMPHASIS: "PROCLAIMING PEACE"

SCRIPTURE: PHILIPPIANS 4: 7

"IN THE MIDST"

"AN ORIGINAL BY MARTHA M. GRAY_ WRITTEN EXCLUSIVELY FOR PRESENTATION AT BAPTIST
YOUTH ENCAMPMENT (2017)

NARRATOR

GOOD EVENING, FELLOW CAMPERS. IT IS MY (OUR) DISTINCT PLEASURE TO SERVE AS YOUR NARRATOR (S) FOR THIS YEAR'S ENCAMPMENT DRAMATIC THEME EMPHASIS, "PROCLAIMING PEACE." MARTHA GRAY'S TAKE ON THE THEME IS ENTITLED, "**IN THE MIDST**"

WE ARE LIVING IN TIMES OF GREAT TURMOIL AND UNREST. IT IS THOUGH PEACE IS NONEXISTENT IN OUR WORLD. EVERY CORNER OF THIS WORLD IS RAVISHED BY SO MUCH TROUBLE....NORTH, SOUTH, EAST, NOR WEST HAS A HIGHWAY TO PEACE. AN OLD BLACK GOSPEL SONG BY WALTER HAWKINS SAYS IT SO WELL: " EVERYWHERE YOU GO THERE IS TROUBLE....EVERYWHERE YOU GO THERE IS STRIFE." BUT OH HOW HE SPEAKS **HOPE** WHEN HE SAYS, "OH, BUT MY GOD IS STANDING BY."

THAT GREAT GOD WHO IN HIS OMNISCIENCE AND OMNIPRESENCE IS STANDING BY BECAUSE HE KNOWS THAT THIS WORLD HAS NOT THE PEACE WE NEED..... THE PEACE THE WORLD GIVES IS SO TRANSIENT AND SHORT- LIVED THAT IT SATISFIES NOT. BUT GOD DECLARES THAT HE GIVES US PEACE...NOT AS THE WORLD GIVES....HE GIVES THE PEACE THAT IS SO GREAT AND SATISFYING THAT IT SURPASSES ALL UNDERSTANDING.

IN THE MIDST OF PRESENT DAY LIFE, THERE ARE SO MANY OF US WHO ARE RESTLESS AND STRESSED....TORN APART BY LIFE'S DILEMMAS. SOME OF US ARE IRRITABLE AND ANGRY....OTHERS OF US ARE WITHDRAWN AND SILENT...SOME OF US LASH OUT AT WHOEVER GETS IN OUR WAY OR TRIES TO HELP US. TOO MANY OF US TAKE DRASTIC MEASURES TO VENT BY FIGHTING, BY STABBING AND SHOOTING THOSE WE FEEL HAVE CONTRIBUTED TO OUR DISTRESS.

IN OUR DRAMATIC EMPHASIS, WE WILL ENCOUNTER SOME YOUNG PEOPLE WHO HAVE NO PEACE IN THEIR LIVES, AND HAVE NO THOUGHT AS TO HOW TO RID THEMSELVES OF THE PAIN. EVENTUALLY, THEY DISCOVER THAT PEACE WITHIN COMES FROM A VERY UNEXPECTED SOURCE, AND BY MEANS SO SIMPLE THAT MANY OF US MISS OUT ON IT.

PLEASE OBSERVE CAREFULLY. FOR, SOMEONE OUT THERE WHO MAY BE PRESENTLY “**IN THE MIDST**” JUST MAY LEARN A SERIOUS LESSON OF LIFE FROM OUR CAST OF CHARACTERS WHO ARE::

SHELBY AND SHELTON LEWIS: SIBLINGS WHO HAVE THE SAME IRONIC TWIST OF MISERY. THEY HAVE NO PEACE, AND HAVE NO IDEA HOW TO FIND PEACE. IRONICALLY, THEY SEEM NOT INTERESTED IN THE SEARCH FOR PEACE. THE PARTS ARE BEING PLAYED BY _____ AND _____.

FRAN DAVIS: A FREE SPIRIT, NOT GIVEN TO FRIVOLOUS THINGS EVEN THOUGH SHE HAS NOT THE THINGS THAT THE AVERAGE YOUNG LADY HAS....NOR DOES SHE YEARN FOR SUCH THINGS. HER FOCUS IS ON THINGS OF HIGHER VALUE. THE PART IS BEING PLAYED BY _____.

BRANDEN SMITH: FRAN’S GOOD FRIEND WHO SEES FRAN AS THE BEST FRIEND ANYONE COULD HAVE. HE PLACES GREAT VALUE IN THESE GREAT CHARACTER TRAITS THAT FRAN VERY HAPPILY DISPLAYS, THE PART IS BEING PLAYED BY _____.

TEDRICK (TED) GREELY: A RATHER CAREFREE GUY WHO FITS IN WELL WITH ANY PRESENT CROWD OR SITUATION . HE IS A REAL “NO-FUSS” KIND OF GUY WHO QUITE OFTEN SPEAKS A BIT OF SUBTLE WISDOM. THE PART IS BEING PLAYED BY _____.

SHAYLYN (SHAY) FISHER: SHE MEANS WELL IN WHAT SHE SAYS OR DOES, BUT IS OFTEN SHALLOW AND MEANINGLESS IN HER CONVERSATION. THE PART IS BEING PLAYED BY _____.

JOEY MALONE: THE EPITOME OF ONE WITH THE PEACE OF GOD WITHIN HIM. ON THE SURFACE, IT WOULD SEEM HE HAS EVERY REASON TO BE MISERABLE AND UNHAPPY, BUT FAR FROM IT. HE IS SIMPLY AND QUIETLY AT PEACE AS HE INVOLVES HIMSELF WITH LIFE. THE PART IS BEING PLAYED BY _____.

AND I AM (WE ARE) YOUR NARRATOR (NARRATORS): _____ **(OR NARRATORS)** _____ **AND** _____.

WITHOUT FURTHER DELAY, I (WE) PRESENT OUR 2017 YOUTH ENCAMPMENT DRAMATIC THEME EMPHASIS WHICH MRS. M. GRAY ENTITLED, “**IN THE MIDST.**” AT THE ONSET, WE MEET SEVERAL OF THE CAST WHO HAVE JUST LEFT THE WEEKLY YOUTH MEETING AT THEIR LOCAL CHURCH. MS. MERRYWEATHER, THEIR YOUTH DIRECTOR, HAS GIVEN THEM A SPECIAL ASSIGNMENT. I WONDER WHAT THAT ASSIGNMENT IS ALL ABOUT, AND I AM JUST AS CURIOUS TO KNOW WHAT THEIR RESPONSE TO THE ASSIGNMENT IS..... SURELY YOU ARE ALSO. LET US LISTEN IN:

SCENE 1

BRANDEN

OUR YOUTH DIRECTOR HAS REALLY CHALLENGED US TODAY.

FRAN

I DON'T THINK THE ASSIGNMENT IS TOO BAD....SHE JUST WANTS US TO LOOK AT OUR LIVES AND DO SOMETHING THAT WILL PUT SOME CREDIBILITY IN OUR LIVES.

TED

MAYBE SHE WANTS US TO SEE IF WE CAN MEET A CHALLENGE.

SHELBY

SHE CAN COUNT ME OUT.

SHELTON

I WAS NEVER IN....I HAVE ENOUGH CHALLENGES IN MY LIFE ALREADY....MORE THAN ENOUGH.

SHAY

I AM NOT GOOD AT MEETING CHALLENGES...CHALLENGES MAKE ME SO NERVOUS BECAUSE I AM ALWAYS SO SCARED THAT I WILL NOT DO THE RIGHT THING.

TED

WELL, LIKE THEY SAY IF YOU TRY AND FAIL, TRY AGAIN.

FRAN

MY GRANDMA ALWAYS SAYS NOTHING BEATS A FAILURE BUT A TRY...TRY AND TRY AGAIN.

BRANDEN

THE MALE CHORUS SINGS A SONG, THAT HITS THIS ASSIGNMENT RIGHT ON TAP.... "CLEAN UP WHAT YOU MESSED UP....TRY ALL OVER AGAIN."

SHELBY

I AM NOT GONNA WASTE MY LIFE DOING AGAIN WHAT I HAV ALREADY FAILED ...CAUSE I FAIL AT A LOT OF THINGS.

TED

THAT IS A BAD ATTITUDE TO HAVE, SHELBY. MY GRANDFATHER TOLD ME THE SAME THING FRAN'S GRANDMOTHER TOLD HER.... THAT THE ONLY PROBLEM WITH FAILING IS NOT TRYING AGAIN.

SHELTON

SHELBY AND I ARE TRUE-BLOODED SIBLINGS, CAUSE I AM STANDING HERE THINKING WHY DID I LET BRADEN TALK ME INTO COMING TO THIS MEETING...I AM NOT INTERESTED IN ALL THIS SPIRITUAL STUFF....IT HAS NEVER WORKED FOR ME.

SHELBY

YEAH, MRS. LEE MERRYWEATHER ALWAYS HAS A GREAT IDEA FOR US TO DO SOMETHING THAT WILL MAKE OUR LIVES BETTER...AS SHE PUTS IT.

SHELTON

OUR LIFE IS A MESS....NO JOY...NO PEACE.

SHELBY

AND NO MATTER WHAT WE DO OR WHERE WE GO, OUR LIVES ARE STILL A BAG OF WIND...JUST **NOTHING!!!**

TED

BUT IT IS UP TO YOU TO FILL YOUR BAG WITH WORTHWHILE STUFF.

SHAY

WHAT BAG? WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT, TEDRICK GREELY?

FRAN

BUT EVEN THE WIND IS REFRESHING TO OUR LIVES.....THE BIBLE SAYS THAT WE KNOW NOT FROM WHENCE THE WIND COMES OR...

BRANDEN

I HAVE HAD ENOUGH BIBLE TALK FOR THE DAY, FRAN...SO PLEASE...

SHELBY

I AGREE....BIBLE TALK DOES NOTHING FOR US.

FRAN

WHY DON'T YOU TRY IT, IT MIGHT HELP...

SHELBY AND SHELDON

GIRL, PLEASE...

SHELTON

YOU HAVE BEEN AROUND OLD SISTER MERRYWEATHER TOO LONG.

SHELBY

GIRL, YOU ARE TOO YOUNG TO ACT SO OLD...SO HOLY...GET REAL.

BRANDEN

OH THAT IS SO UNFAIR AND UNKIND TO TALK TO FRAN LIKE THAT....FRAN IS JUST A TRUE-HEARTED...

SHELTON

I BELIEVE SHE IS...BUT SHE ALWAYS COMES ON SO STRONG WITH HER BIBLE TALK.

SHELBY

YEAH, LIKE THE BIBLE HAS THE SOLUTION...THE CURE-ALL FOR THAT AILS **EVERYBODY**.

SHAY

FRAN DOES NOT MEAN ANY HARM...SHE IS JUST ...JUST...WELL...AH...SOLD ON THE BIBLE.

TED

FRAN IS COOL IN MY BOOK....SHE MEANS WELL.. IT MIGHT BE WORTH YOUR WHILE TO AT LEAST HEAR WHATEVER SHE HAS TO SAY.

BRANDEN

FRAN IS WONDERFUL...ALWAYS HAS BEEN KIND AND HELPFUL IF YOU LET HER .

SHELTON

I BELIEVE THAT FRAN IS A GREAT PERSON. IT'S JUST THAT SHE CANNOT POSSIBLY HAVE THE SLIGHTEST IDEA ABOUT HOW TO FIX **MY** LIFE...HOW TO TAKE AWAY THIS PAIN INSIDE OF **ME**. I AM SO EMPTY INSIDE....AND HURTING...

FRAN

SHELDON, I DON'T CLAIM THAT I CAN FIX YOUR LIFE...I DON'T HAVE A FORMULA FOR PUTTING SOME PEACE AND JOY IN YOUR LIFE...BUT I KNOW WHO CAN.

SHELTON

I ALREADY KNOW THAT YOU ARE GOING TO TELL ME ABOUT **JESUS**.....EVERYBODY TELLS ME TO TRY **JESUS**....WELL, WHY DIDN'T **JESUS** STOP OUR OLD MAN FROM WALKING AWAY AND LEAVING OUR MAMA AND HIS CHILDREN.....WE DON'T HEAR FROM HIM. DON'T KNOW WHERE HE IS... IT'S LIKE HE HAS DISAPPEARED FROM THE EARTH.

SHELBY

OUR MAMA HAD TO WORK **THREE JOBS** SO WE COULD MAKE IT....AND WE BARELY DID. SHE OVER- WORKED HERSELF INTO A STROKE. THAT REALLY DID IT FOR OUR FAMILY. **YOU CANNOT IMAGINE WHAT BEING ON WELFARE IS LIKE...THE HUMILIATION AND ...AND...**(SHE BEGINS TO SOB..)

SHAY

OH, THAT IS BAD...I FEEL SORRY FOR BOTH OF YOU.

BRANDEN

SHELBY, WELFARE IS JUST WHAT IT SAYS...IT EXISTS FOR YOUR **WELFARE....FOR YOUR WELL-BEING.** WHAT HAS HAPPENED IN YOUR LIFE HAS LEFT A NEED THAT IS NOT EASILY MET, ESPECIALLY WITH YOUR MOTHER'S HEALTH CONDITION....SO THE GOVERNMENT IS DOING WHAT IT SHOULD DO.....NO NEED TO FEEL HUMILIATED..

TED

I CAN IMAGINE HOW BOTH OF YOU FEEL....BUT YOU KNOW IT SEEMS **EVERYBODY** HAS A BAD SITUATION LURKING SOMEWHERE IN HIS LIFE.

FRAN

RIGHT ABOUT THAT. ONE DAY I WILL TELL YOU MY STORY....BUT RIGHT NOW I HAVE TO GET HOME. MY NEIGHBOR IS WAITING FOR ME TO CLEAN HER KITCHEN AND BATHROOM.....AND HOMEWORK IS WAITING TOO.

SHELBY

YOU GONNA CLEAN YOUR NEIGHBOR'S KITCHEN **AND BATHROOM** ?????

SHELTON

AT THIS TIME OF THE EVENING???

SHELBY

I CAN SEE CLEANING HER KITCHEN....BUT HER **BATHROOM** ???

FRAN

I DO IT EVERY WEEK....SHE NEEDS THE HELP....SHE LIVES ALONE AND SHE HAS HAD SURGERY..

SHAY

SHE MUST PAY YOU A LOT OF MONEY.

FRAN

NO, SHE OFFERS MONEY, BUT I DO NOT TAKE IT.

SHAY

YOU DON'T TAKE THE MONEY?...I SURE WOULD.

TED

SHAY, THERE ARE SOME THINGS IN LIFE THAT DO NOT HAVE A PRICE TAG HANGING ON THEM.....WELL, ON THAT THOUGHT, I THINK I NEED TO BE GETTING HOME....I BELIEVE ALL OF US HAVE HOMEWORK ...RIGHT?

SHELTON

YOU KNOW MR. GREELY ALWAYS GIVES HOMEWORK....IT'S LIKE HE GETS A KICK OUT OF MAKING US WORK.

SHELBY

HE SURE DOES. DON'T YOU SEE HIM GRIN WHEN HE WRITES THE ASSIGNMENT ON THE BOARD?

BRANDEN

MR. GREELY LIKES TO CHALLENGE US, THAT'S ALL....SAYS HE WANTS TO MAKE SCHOLARS OF US.

SHELBY

MAYBE MAKE SCHOLARS OF YOU AND FRAN...MY AVERAGE IN MATH IS 72.....I'M TRYING HARD JUST TO PASS.

BRANDEN

I JUST DON'T LIKE DOING MATH....ESPECIALLY HAVING TO DO THOSE UNNECESSARY LONG RUBRICS JUST TO GET A SIMPLE $2+2=4$ ANSWER.

SHAY

I DON'T NEED ALL OF THAT MATH WITH WHAT I DO AT BURGER KING.

TED

BUT YOU ARE NOT GOING TO BE AT BURGER KING ALL OF YOUR LIFE....I HOPE.

FRAN

I KNOW MY FRIEND HAS BIGGER PLANS FOR HER FUTURE....SO LET'S GO TACKLE MR. GREELY'S MATH.

SHELTON

FRAN, I'LL BE WAITING TO HEAR YOUR LIFE'S STORY. ALTHOUGH I KNOW IT IS NOTHING LIKE OUR UNFORTUNATE STORY.

FRAN

YOU WILL BE SURPRISED.....SEE YOU GUYS.

BRANDEN

DON'T FORGET THE CITY IS HAVING SOMETHING AT THE PARK TOMORROW FROM 4:00 o 7:00.

ALL

WE'LL BE THERE.

NARRATOR

WELL, WE HEARD THEM: SHELBY AND SHELTON HAVE EXPERIENCED AN UNFORTUNATE SITUATION IN THEIR LIVES. THEY ARE BITTER AND UNHAPPY. THEY HAVE NO PEACE WITHIN. BUT, AS TED SO RIGHTLY SAID, ALL OF US HAVE EXPERIENCED SOME MISFORTUNE OF A SORT. AS A RESULT, ARE WE BITTER AND RESTLESS?

THE BIBLE TELLS US THAT IN THIS LIFE, WE WILL HAVE TRIBULATIONS. HOWEVER, WHEN TRIALS AND TRIBULATIONS COME, WE MUST NOT LEAN TO OUR OWN UNDERSTANDING, BUT IN ALL OUR WAYS ACKNOWLEDGE HIM WHO IS OUR ALMIGHTY GOD AND HE WILL DIRECT US...HE WILL LEAD US. HE WILL GIVE US A SENSE OF **PEACI IN THE MIDST** OF OUR HARD TIMES.

SADLY ENOUGH, HOWEVER, THOSE TWO SIBLINGS DO NOT WANT TO HEAR ABOUT THE BIBLE NOR THE JESUS ABOUT WHOM THE BIBLE SO RICHLY PROCLAIMS TO BE OUR LIGHT AND OUR SALVATION. HOW LONG WILL THEY WALK IN THE DARKNESS OF ANGER AND LONELINESS, WE CANNOT SAY. WHAT WE CAN SAY, HOWEVER, IS THAT GOD HAS A WAY OF BRINGING HIS CHILDREN TO THE SHINING LIGHT OF UNDERSTANDING AND PEACE. HOW AND WHEN THIS MOMENT OF TRUTH WILL COME INTO THE LIVES OF SHELBY AND SHELTON WE KNOW NOT....BUT IT WILL COME....IT WILL SURELY COME.

AS WE JOIN THEM AGAIN, THEY ARE AT THE PARK WAITING FOR THE AFORE- MENTIONED **"SOMETHING"** THAT THE CITY IS SUPPOSE TO BE HAVING AT THE PARK. LET'S TUNE IN ON THEM.

SCENE 2

SHELTON

WHAT IS SUPPOSE TO BE GOING ON OUT HERE THIS EVENING?

BRANDEN

SOMETHING THE CITY IS SUPPOSE TO BE DOING TO PROMOTE WHAT THEY CALL, COMMUNITY AWARENESS.

SHELTON

LOOKS LIKE THE ONLY THING I AM AWARE OF IS THAT NOTHING IS GONNA BE GOING ON OUT HERE TODAY.

SHELBY

NOBODY IS OUT HERE BUT US.

FRAN

MAYBE GOD JUST WANTED US TO COME AND GET AWAY FROM THE CLUTTER OF LIFE.

TED

YEAH, AND BREATHE SOME FRESH AIR.

SHELBY

I COULD BREATHE FRESH AIR ON MY FRONT PORCH.

SHAY

(TAKES SWEATER FROM AROUND HER WAIST AND PUTS IT ON) THIS AIR IS TOO FRESH FOR MY BLOOD.

TED

YOU ARE ALWAYS COLD. ...WHEN WE ARE SWEATING AND FANNING, YOU ARE WRAPPED UP LIKE A NEW BORN BABY. ARE YOU ANEMIC?

SHAY

I DON'T KNOW IF I AM ANEMIC. MY MOM IS TAKING ME TO THE DOCTOR NEXT WEEK.

BRANDEN

MAYBE WE GOT THE DATE WRONG FOR THIS COMMUNITY ACTIVITY. SO I GUESS WE CAN GO OR WE CAN JUST HANG OUT HERE FOR A WHILE.

SHELTON

THAT FELLOW OVER THERE IN THAT WHEEL CHAIR MUST HAVE GOTTEN THE DATE WRONG TOO. WHO IS HE? I SEE HIM EVERYWHERE ROLLING THAT CHAIR REAL FAST.

FRAN

OH, THAT IS JOEY.....JOEY MALONE.

BRANDEN

HE CALLS HIMSELF MEPHIIBOSHETH (MUH-FIB-UH-SHETH). (LAUGHS JOKINGLY).

SHELTON

MUH- FIB.....WHAT?

BRANDEN
MUH- FIB-UH...

SHELTON
FORGET IT, MAN. WHAT KIND OF NAME IS THAT? AND WHAT KIND OF MAMA WOULD NAME
HER CHILD MUH- FIB-UH...WHAEVER?

FRAN
HIS MOTHER NAMED HIM JOEY...JOEY MALONE. HE JOKINGLY REFERS TO HIMSELF AS...
"MUH-FIB- UH-SHETH."

SHELBY
BUT WHY...THAT'S A STUPID NAME.

SHAY
I SURE WOULD NOT GIVE MYSELF A NAME LIKE THAT...SOUNDS CRAZY.

TED
YOU CAN'T SAY IT IS CRAZY WITHOUT KNOWING WHY HE CALLS HIMSELF THAT.

BRANDEN
HE HAS AN INTERESTING STORY TO GO ALONG WITH HIS NAME. I'LL CALL HIM OVER SO YOU
CAN GET TO KNOW HIM.

SHELTON
NO, MAN, I WOULD RATHER HEAR FRAN'S STORY....AT LEAST SHE HAS A NAME THAT MAKES
SENSE.

SHELBY
SURE AIN'T ANYTHING LIKE MUH FIB...WHATEVER'

TED
WHAT'S IN A NAME? JULIET SAYS A ...

SHAY
...A ROSE BY ANY OTHER NAME IS JUST AS SWEET.

TED
WELL...WELL, SHAY, YOU ARE NOT SO SHALLOW AFTERALL.

FRAN
OF COURSE SHAY IS NOT SHALLOW....ONLY A BIT SHY.

TED
I GUESS STILL WATER DOES RUN DEEP.

FRAN
AH, TEDRICK GREELY.... COME ON, SHELTON,AND MEET JOEY....SEEMS THAT HE HAS ALREADY
GOTTEN YOUR CURIOUS ATTENTION ANYWAY....I PROMISE YOU THAT HIS STORY IS DEEPER
THAN MINE.

BRANDEN
OKAY, IF YOU SAY SO. I'LL PUT YOUR STORY ON HOLD 'TIL A LATER DATE.

BRANDEN
(HAVING ALREADY GONE TO BRING JOEY OVER, NOW ARRIVES WHERE THE GANG IS)
HEY, YA'LL, JOEY IS JOINING US IN THIS EVENING OF DISAPPOINTMENT.

JOEY
HI...BRANDEN TOLD ME THAT YOU ALSO CAME OUT HERE LOOKING FOR SOME CITY-WIDE
ACTIVITY ... QUITE DISAPPOINTING.

FRAN
BUT THAT'S OKAY. YOU KNOW HOW WE ENJOY BEING TOGETHER. WE'LL JUST ENJOY THE
COOL BREEZE.. MAYBE WE CAN TALK ABOUT MS. MERRYWEATHER'S ASSIGNMENT WHICH IS
DUE NEXT WEEK.

SHAY
NEXT WEEK??? I THOUGHT THIS WAS DUE RIGHT BEFORE FINAL EXAMS....YOU ARE RIGHT, WE
SHOULD TALK ABOUT THAT ASSSIGNMENT....RIGHT NOW.

TED
WHERE HAVE YOU BEEN, JOEY? HAVENT SEEN YOU AROUND LATELY.

JOEY
MAMA SUE TWISTED HER ANKLE....HAD TO STAY CLOSE SO SHE WOULD NOT TRY TO DO SO
MUCH....YOU KNOW SHE IS A BUSY WOMAN.

FRAN.
SHE IS A BUSY BODY....I THOUGHT IT STRANGE I HAD NOT SEEN HER AROUND FOR SEVERAL
DAYS.

BRANDEN
YOU TWO ARE ALWAYS DOING ONE THING OR ANOTHER...GOOD SAMARITANS FOR SURE.

JOEY

THERE IS ALWAYS SOMEONE NEEDING HELP....AND YOU KNOW MAMA SUE...AGE NEITHER SICKNESS STOPS HER .

SHELTON
IS SHE YOUR MOTHER ????..... GRANDMOTHER???

JOEY
SHE IS MY EVERYTHING....MY LIFE AND MY JOY....

BRANDEN
AND YOU ARE HER EVERYTHING. SHE TELL EVERYBODY WHAT YOU MEAN TO HER.

FRAN
IT IS LIKE GOD PUT YOU TWO TOGETHER FOR A REASON.

SHELTON
WHAT DO YOU MEAN...GOD PUT THEM TOGETHER?...THEY ARE NOT RELATED?

JOEY
NO, WE ARE NOT RELATED BIOLOGICLY....OH BUT, SPIRITUALLY, WE ARE BONDED CLOSER THAN KIN.

SHELTON
YOU CALL HER "MAMA" YET YOU SAY YOU ARE NOT RELATED....I DON'T UNDERSTAND....

JOEY
EVERYBODY CALLS HER MAMA SUE...CAUSE SHE FUSSES OVER EVERTBODT LIKE A MAMA HEN....ESPECIALLY US YOUNG PEOPLE. WHEN SHE FOUND ME, SHE LOVED ME AND CARED SO MUCH FOR ME....I COULDN'T FIND A BETTER MAMA....SO I CALLED HER MAMA SUE, AND EVERYBODY ELSE STARTED CALLING HER MAMA SUE.

SHELBY
WHAT DO YOU MEAN, SHE FOUND YOU??? WERE YOU LOST??

JOEY
IN A SENSE, I WAS LOST.....I WAS HERE IN THE HOSPITAL IN A CITY OF PEOPLE I DID NOT KNOW, AND NOONE KNEW ME.

SHELBY
WAIT A MINUTE...NONE OF THIS IS MAKING ANY SENSE.

SHELTON
NO CONNECTION....NOTHING ADDS UP.

BRANDON

LET HIM FINISH HIS STORY...IT WILL MAKE SENSE.

TED

LIKE I TOLD YOU EARLIER: YOU CANNOT JUDGE UNTIL YOU HEAR THE WHOLE STORY.

SHELTON

OKAY , MAN,, TELL YOUR STRANGE STORY....I AM WAITING TO HEAR ABOUT MUH FIB AH...
WHATEVER THEY SAY YOU CALL YOURSELF.

JOEY

(LAUGHING) OH ...YOU WANT TO KNOW WHY I CALL MYSELF MEPHIBOSHETH (MUH FIB A
SHETH)? IT IS REALLY KIND OF A JOKE....BUT IT IS TRUE. OUR LIVES ARE KIND OF PARALLEL.

SHAY

JOKE AND TRUTH JUST DO NOT GO TOGETHER, JOEY....AND PARALLEL IS A MATHEMATIC
TERM....NONE OF THIS MAKES SENSE.

TED

LET JOEY FINISH HIS STORY PLEASE. I PROMISE YOU THAT IT WILL MAKE SENSE.

BRANDEN

IT SURE WILL...

FRAN

MAKES AS MUCH SENSE AS MINE, BUT IT IS FAR MORE COMPLICATED.

SHAY

LOOKS LIKE EVERYBODY KNOWS HIS STORY BUT ME A...N...D..YA'LL (MOTIONS TOWARD
SHELTON AND SHELBY).... I HAVE OFTEN WONDERED ABOUT JOEY AND OLD MS. LANDRY....I
MEAN MAMA SUE...BUT...

TED

THEN, PLEASE LET THE MAN TELL HIS STORY.....AND WE WILL ALL KNOW THE TRUTH. ...GO ON,
JOEY....YOUR LIFE STORY INSPIRES ME MORE AND MORE EVERY TIME I HEAR IT.

JOEY

THANK YOU, TED. WELL, AS I WAS SAYING, I WAS IN THE HOSPITAL.IN THIS STRANGE
TOWN....ALL ALONE...FIVE YEARS OLD AND ALL ALONE.

SHELBY

WHY WOULD A FIVE YEAR OLD BE HERE ALL ALONE? ...YOU WERE JUST A BABY, JOEY.....

JOEY

RIGHT....IT IS STRANGE.....BUT THE STRANGEST THING IS WHAT HAPPENED TO BRING ALL OF THIS ABOUT: WELL, IT SO HAPPENED THAT MY PARENTS WERE TAKING ME ON A VACATION, AND WE HAD TO PASS THROUGH MANY TOWNS AND CITIES. IT WAS SO EXCITING...INCLUDING THIS TOWN OF FERRYVILLE....I THOUGHT, MAYBE WE WILL HAVE TO RIDE ON A FERRY...I WAS SO EXCITED...., BUT THAT IS THE LAST HAPPY THOUGHT I WOULD HAVE...THE NEXT THING I KNEW I WAS IN THIS BUILDING WITH WHITE WALLS AND EVERYBODY DRESSED IN WHITE. I WAS SCARED...SO SCARED. I CRIED OUT FOR MAMA AND DADDY...I SCREAMED AS LOUD AS I COULD....BUT MAMA NEITHER DADDY CAME TO SEE ABOUT ME. THE DOCTOR CAME AND MADE ME DRINK SOMETHING ...I MUST HAVE GONE TO SLEEP REAL FAST. WHEN I WOKE UP, THIS STRANGE LADY WAS KNEELING BY MY BED....SH-SH- SHE WAS PRAYING ...CALLING THE NAME OF JESUS. FOR SOME REASON, I WAS NOT SCARED OF HER...THERE WAS SOMETHING ABOUT HER THAT MADE ME FEEL BETTER.....I WAS IN THE HOSPITAL FOR TWO WEEKS AND SHE CAME TO SEE ME ~~EV—ER—RE~~ ..DAY.

SHELTON

WHAT HAPPENED TO YOUR PARENTS?

JOEY

THEY WERE KILLED... I WAS TOLD THAT A BIG EIGHTEEN WHEELER PLOWED INTO US AND OUR CAR WAS FORCED OFF THE ROAD INTO A DEEP RAVINE.

SHAY

HOW IS IT YOU ARE ALIVE?.....I MEAN...HOW DID YOU SURVIVE?.

JOEY

THE STORY IS THAT PEOPLE SAW MY MOTHER THROW ME OUT OF THE CAR BEFORE IT WENT DOWN INTO THAT DEEP RAVINE.....MY MOTHER WAS SAVING MY LIFE.

SHAY

BUT, YOU COULD HAVE DIED BY HER THROWING YOU OUT OF THE CAR.....

SHAY

SHE HAD NO WAY OF KNOWING THAT YOU WOULDN'T DIE.

FRAN

I THINK SHE WAS TRUSTING IN THE PROVIDENCE OF GOD.

BRANDEN

YEAH...I THINK SHE TRUSTED IN JESUS TO SHIELD THE FALL.

JOEY

I BELIEVE THAT I MUST HAVE LANDED IN THE ARMS OF JESUS!

SHELTON
BUT YOU ARE IN A **WHEEL CHAIR!!!!**

JOEY
BUT THAT IS ALL GOOD TOO....IAM NOT IN MY GRAVE.....AND I NEVER WENT TO LODEBAR.
THANKS TO MAMA SUE..

SHELBY
NOW WAIT A MINUTE.....WHERE IN THE WORLD IS LODEBAR?

FRAN
I CAN UNDERSTAND HOW ALL OF THIS IS CONFUSING. LET ME EXPLAIN: MEPHIBOSHETH IS A PERSON IN THE BIBLE AND LODEBAR IS A PLACE HE ENDED UP AFTER BEING CRIPPLED WHEN HIS NURSE WAS RUNNING AWAY WITH HIM TO SAVE HIS LIFE, AND SHE FELL AND DROPPED THE BABY.

BRANDEN
LODEBAR WAS A PITIFUL PLACE OF GREAT NEED.....IT WAS WHAT WE CALL A GHETTO.

TED
EVERYBODY HERE HAS SEEN A GHETTO....RIGHT??

SHAY
I KNOW WHAT A GHETTO IS ...THEY SAY WHERE I LIVE IS A GHETTO.

FRAN
SHAY, YOU KNOW WHERE YOU LIVE IS NOT A GHETTO....IT IS THE OLD PART OF TOWN....NO NEW DEVELOPMENT, BUT IT IS CLEAN AND REALLY NICELY PAINTED HOUSES AND EVERY YARD IS WELL KEPT AND HAS BEAUTIFUL FLOWERS GROWING.

SHAY
BUT THEY STILL TELL ME THAT I LIVE IN THE GHETTO.....SOME OF THEM CALL ME GHETTO GIRL.

TED
HAVENT YOU HEARD: "DON'T DO **THEY**....DO **YOU**." DO YOU THINK YOU LIVE IN A GHETTO?

SHAY
NO, I DO NOT !!

SHELTON
SO, JOEY, THAT IS WHY YOU CALL YOURSELF MUH FIB....?

JOEY

YEAH, LIKE I SAID, I NEVER LIVED IN LODEBAR...MAMA SUE ATTENDED TO ME IN THE HOSPITAL SO WHEN I WAS RELEASED FORM THE HOSPITAL, SHE TOOK ME TO HER HOUSE....SHE HAD DONE LEGAL RESEARCH WHICH ENABLED HER TO ADOPT ME . I HAVE NEVER EXPERIENCED POVERTY....ALWAYS HAD FOOD CLOTHES, MEDICAL HELP, AND LOVE THAT IS SO REAL.

SHELTON

DO YOU EVER THINK ABOUT WHAT HAPPENED TO YOU?.....MUST HAVE BEEN FRIGHTENING.

JOEY

I WISH MY PARENTS HAD LIVED TO RAISE ME, BUT THEY DID NOT... SO INSTEAD OF MOANING WHAT COULD HAVE BEEN, I CHOOSE TO JUST BE THANKFUL FOR WHAT I HAVE....LIFE IS GOOD. SO I FILL MY LIFE WITH DOING WHAT I CAN TO HELP OTHERS... ESPECIALLY DOING ALL I CAN FOR MY PRECIOUS MAMA SUE.

SHELBY

SHELTON, DO YOU THINK THIS IS WHAT OLE MS. MERRYWEATHER'S ASSSIGNMENT IS MEANT TO DO?

SHELTON

JOEY, YOU HAVE HAD GREAT MISFORTUNE IN YOUR LIFE, BUT YOU SAY ALL THAT IS BEHIND YOU AND YOU ARE HAPPY JUST BEING ABLE TO HELP OTHERS LIKE THIS MS. LANDRY (.OR MAMA SUE, AS YOU SO CALL HER) DID FOR YOU.

JOEY

THAT IS RIGHT. KEEPING BUSY HELPING OTHERS GIVES ME FULFILLMENT....I NEVER HAVE AN IDLE OR DULL MOMENT. AT NIGHT, I SLEEP LIKE A BABY. (HIS PHONE RINGS AND HE ANSWERS IT.)THAT WAS MAMA SUE.... GOT TO GO. SHE SAYS WE HAVE TO GO AND SEE ABOUT A LITTLE BOY WHO GOT EXPELLED FROM SCHOOL.....SEE YOU LATER. (HE STARTS TO WHEEL AWAY.)

SHELBY

WAIT A MINUTE, JOEY.....HOW DO ME AND MY BROTHER GET INVOLVED WITH GIVING OF OURSELVES TO OTHERS?

SHELTON

YEAH..HOW? PEOPLE IN THIS TOWN ACT LIKE ME AND MY SISTER ARE POISON IVY.

JOEY

YOU HAVE TO SHOW YOURSELF TO BE FRIENDLY.....IT SEEMS TO ME YOU AVOID PEOPLE. GO TO CHURCH AND GET INVOLVED..... AND PRAY.....GOD WILL PROVIDE A WAY....IT JUST MIGHT BE THAT YOU START WITH SEEING HOW YOU CAN HELP SOMEBODY....OR SOMETHING....CARE OF A DOG....LOTS OF DOGS ARE WAITING TO BE ADOPTED...NO COST.

SHELBY AND SHELTON
ADOPT A DOG?

SHELTON
NOT IN THIS LIFE.

JOEY
JUST A SUGGESTION FOR BEGINNERS.....SEE YOU LATER.

SHELBY
YOU KNOW...I HAVE ALWAYS WANTED A DOG. MAYBE...

SHELTON
WELL, YOU CAN KEEP ON DREAMING.....A DOG IS JUST ANOTHER HUNGRY MOUTH WHICH WE DO NOT NEED TO FEED.

TED
JOEY TOLD YOU THAT GOD WILL PROVIDE....JUST WAIT ON PROVIDENCE PERHAPS....

BRANDEN
I DON'T KNOW ABOUT GOD'S WAYS OF PROVIDING....HE IS SUPPOSE TO BE SO WISE. THEN HE KNOWS BETTER THAN TO PUT A DOG IN MY LIFE.

FRAN
ONLY TIME WILL TELL.

BRANDEN
YES, TIME WILL SURELY TELL....WELL, I HAVE TO GO .

TED
ALL OF US SHOULD BE GOING....HOMEWORK IS WAITING.

FRAN
JOEY SURE HAS GIVEN US ALL SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT.

SHAY
HE HAS ??? I MUST HAVE MISSED IT BECAUSE I STILL HAVE NO IDEA ABOUT HOW TO DO MS. MERRYWEATHER'S ASSIGNMENT.

TED
MAYBE YOU WILL GET IT WHEN YOU GET HOME....LET'S GO EVERYBODY.

NARRATOR:

OFF THEY GO AGAIN...GOING HOME TO WORK ON ASSIGNMENTS....ESPECIALLY MS. MERRYWEATHER'S ASSIGNMENT ON ENRICHING ONE'S LIFE. SURELY WE ALL NEED TO TAKE AN ACCOUNT OF OUR LIVES FROM TIME TO TIME AND SEE IF THERE BE NEED TO DO SOMETHING THAT WILL MAKE US BETTER,

IT IS A SAD THING WHEN ONE NEVER STOPS TO THINK ABOUT THE STATUS OF HIS LIFE, BUT GOES ON HOLDING TO PRESENT CONDITIONSESPECIALLY SAD CONDITIONS...WHICH IS THE CASE WITH SHELBY AND SHELTON INTO WHOSE LIFE MISFORTUNE HAS SO GREATLY ENGENDERED....RESULTING IN A STATE OF DISAPPOINTMENT, BITTERNESS, AND ABOVE ALL ANGER.

AS TED HAS SO EMPHATICLY STATED, " EVERYBODY HAS MET WITH SOME FORM OF HURT AND DISAPPOINTMENT ALONG THE WAY," BUT WE SHOULD NOT ALLOW CIRCUMSTANCES TO MOLD US INTO LIFELESS AND STIFLED BEINGS THAT ARE OVER WHELMED WITH BITTERNESS.

JOEY MALON, WHO CALLS HIMSELF MEPHIBOSHETH (muh-fib-uh- sheth), IS A PRIME EXAMPLE OF ONE WHO OVERCAME THE DARK SHADOW OF HURT AND DISAPPOINTMENT AND ALLOWED THE LIGHT PEACE AND JOY TO FILL HIS LIFE.

WHEN JOEY WAS INTRODUCED TO SHELBY AND SHELTON, HE BECAME THE SOURCE THAT SHED LIGHT UPON WHAT THE OTHER YOUNG PEOPLE WERE TRYING TO GET THESE TWO HURTING AND ANGRY SIBLINGS TO SEE AND UNDERSTAND..... THAT **IN THE MIDST** OF DIFFICULT TIMES WHEN PEACE SEEMS NON-EXISTENT, ONE MUST STOP LOOKING AT THE PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES OF HIS LIFE, AND FOCUS ON GIVING OF HIMSELF TO OTHERS, AND THUS FIND THAT HE, HIMSELF HAS FOUND PEACE.

GOD SURELY DOES WORK IN STRANGE WAYS....AND HE DOES SPEAK TO HIS SHEEP. GOD HAS SPOKEN THROUGH THE MOUTH OF JOEY MALONE WHO ASSURES SHELTON AND SHELBY THAT THEY MUST GET BEYOND THE BITTER MEMORIES OF YESTERDAY AND SEEK TO LOOK BEYOND THEMSELVES AND "DO UNTO OTHERS" AND FIND PEACE FOR THEMSELVES.

JOEY HAS SHOWN HOW TO FIND PEACE. DESPITE HIS PHYSICAL IMPAIRMENT....HIS SPIRIT IS FREE AND FILLED WITH JOY. HE SAYS THAT WHEN WE SEEK PEACE WE MUST GIVE OURSELVES TO HELPING OTHERS....EVEN IF WE START BY ADOPTING A HOMELESS DOG...YES, A DOG !!!! DOES THAT SEEM STRANGE TO ANY OF US ??? IT CERTAINLY WAS STRANGE TO SHELTON WHO DECLARED THAT FOR HIM, "NO DOG IN THIS LIFE." WELL, WE SHALL SEE...WE SHALL SURELY SEE.

AS WE JOIN THEM, SEVERAL WEEKS HAVE PASSED, AND WE FIND THEM AT THE PLACE WHERE WE FIRST MET THEM....OUTSIDE OF THE CHURCH AS THEY APPROACH THE TIME OF THE

MEETING WHERE THEY WILL SHARE MS. MERRYWEATHER'S ASSIGNMENT ON FINDING MEANS OF ENRICHING THEIR LIVES.

WHEN WE WERE LAST IN THEIR PRESENCE, IT SEEMS THAT SHELBY AND SHELTON WERE THE TWO PERSONS OUT OF SORTS WITH THE CIRCUMSTANCES IN THEIR LIVES. THEY HAVE BEEN SET ABACK BY SOME MISFORTUNE IN THEIR LIVES, AND THEY ARE ANGRY AND HURTING. THEY HAVE NOT THE FORTITUDE TO OVERCOME . THEY HAVE NO PEACE AND HAPPINESS, AND, SADLY ENOUGH, THEY LACK THE STRENGTH TO OVERCOME. THEIR FRIENDS TRY TO ADVISE THEM BUT TO NO AVAIL.

BY SOME ACT OF PROVIDENCE, THEY MEET JOEY MALONE WHO BY FAR HAS EVERY REASON TO FEEL LIKE LIFE HAS DEALT HIM SOME VERY HARD BLOWS. YET, IN JOEY, WE SEE AN AMAZING, UNDAUNTED OUTPOUR OF PEACE AND JOY.

IT IS JOEY WHO TELLS SHELTON AND SHELBY HOW TO OVERCOME HARDSHIPS BY GIVING OF THEMSELVES INSTEAD OF FOCUSING ON HOW THEIR LIVES HAVE BEEN SO DISRUPTIVE THAT THEY FEEL THEY HAVE THE RIGHT TO BE HURT AND BITTER. THE SOLUTION SEEMS OUT OF TOUCH WITH REALITY TO THE BITTER SIBLINGS. BUT WE ALL KNOW THAT TIME CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN MANY CASES, AND THAT GOD HAS STRANGE WAYS OF DEALING WITH HIS CHILDREN. CAN WE SUPPOSE THAT TIME HAS MADE A DIFFERENCE IN THE LIVES OF SHELBY AND SHELTON?...HAS GOD SHONE UP AND SHONE OUT?...WHO KNOWS !!! LET US JOIN THEM IN THIS FINAL SCENE AND SEE JUST WHAT THE SITUATION IS. WE FIND BRANDEN, FRAN, TED, AND JOEY WAITING OUTSIDE THE CHURCH. THEY ARE SHARING THEIR ASSIGNMENT WITH EACH OTHER.....LATER SHAYLYN FISHER RUSHES IN.

*******SCENE THREE*******

SHAY
OOOH...I'M GLAD I 'M NOT LATE.....JUST COMPLETED MY ASSIGNMENT.

TED
WHY WOULD YOU WAIT UNTIL THE LAST MINUTE TO COMPLETE AN ASSIGNMENT THAT WAS GIVEN TWO WEEKS AGO?

SHAY
I DID MOST OF IT. I JUST COULD NOT GET THE ENDING....THEN THIS EVENING, IT ALL CAME TO ME.

TED
SO YOU HAD A SUDDEN RUSH OF INSPIRATION....GOOD FOR YOU.

SHAY

I KNOW NOTHING ABOUT AN INSPIRATION....ALL I KNOW IS I PRAYED AND ASKED GOD TO HELP ME DO THIS. SO, I HAVE MY ASSIGNMENT FOR MS. MERRYWEATHER, AND I THINK IT IS GOOD.

FRAN

THAT IS WONDERFUL, SHAY. NOT ONLY DO YOU HAVE YOUR ASSIGNMENT...YOU HAVE A GREAT TESTAMONY.

SHAY

I DO? WHAT IS A TESTAMONY?

FRAN

WHEN GOD DOES SOMETHING AMAZING IN YOUR LIFE, YOU ARE SO HAPPY TO TELL OTHERS, AND GIVE GOD PRAISE.

JOEY

I WILL SAY AMEN TO THAT.....IT IS GOOD TO HAVE A STORY TO TELL ABOUT THE GOODNESS OF THE LORD, AND.....

*******SHELBY AND SHELTON COME RUSHING IN.*******

*****EACH IS CARRYING A PUPPY.**

SHELBY AND SHELTON

(WITH AN EXCITEMENT NEVER BEFORE DISPLAYED) HI, EVERYBODY....WE ARE HERE.

SHELTON

GLAD WE ARE NOT LATE.

BRANDEN

THIS IS A HAPPY SURPRISE.....DIDN'T THINK YOU WOULD COME TO ANOTHER YOUTH MEETING.

SHELTON

I DIDN'T EITHER.

TED

WHAT MADE YOU COME?

SHELTON

NOT **WHAT**....BUT **WHO**....NONE OTHER THAN **JOEY MALONE**.

SHELBY

AND **ROSE BUD AND MUFIB**.

FRAN
WAIT A MINUTE...AM I REALLY HEARING WHAT I THINK...

BRANDEN
I AM ALSO TRYING TO BELIEVE THAT WHAT I AM HEARING IS REALLY WHAT I THINK I AM HEARING.

SHELTON
YOU SAID GOD WORKS IN STRANGE WAYS, RIGHT?

TED
HE SURE DOES.....AND I THINK WE ARE ACTUALLY WITNESSING A STRANG AND WONDERFUL THING...RIGHT BEFORE OUR EYES.

JOEY
SO YOU FOUND THE WAY TO PEACE AND CONTENTMENT !!!

SHELBY
YOU SAID WE WOULD FIND PEACE BY TAKING OUR MINDS OFF OUR PRESENT SITUATION AND GIVING OF OURSELVES TO OTHERS.

SHELTON
YOU SAID WE COULD START SMALL BY TAKING CARE OF A DOG IN NEED....WHICH TO ME WAS TOTALLY RIDICULOUS....I HATED DOGS.

JOEY
AND NOW ???

SHELBY
I ALWAYS WISHED I HAD A DOGI THINK A DOG IS REALLY A GOOD FRIEND.....BUT I KNEW WE COULD NOT FEED AND CARE FOR IT.

SHAY
THEN WHY ARE YOU STANDING THERE CUDDLING TWO PUPPIES?

SHELTON
IT IS A LITTLE STRANGE, SHAY....BUT A FEW DAYSS AGO, OUR MOM TOLD US TO CLEAN THE FRONT YARDWHICH ANGERED US BECAUSE IT WAS HOT OUTSIDE....I WAS SO ANGRY, I GOULD HAVE PASSED OUT. SUDDENLY, TWO CARS COLLIDED RIGHT IN FRONT OF OUR HOUSE...

SHELBY

IT WAS A BAD WRECK....THE POLICE CAME. THEY CALLED TWO AMBULANCES AND TWO TOW TRUCKS.

SHELTON

VERY QUICKLY EVERYTHING WAS CLEARED AWAY. SHEL AND I WENT BACK TO CLEANING THE YARD....THEN WE HEARD SOME STRANGE SOUNDS COMING FROM THE OTHER SIDE OF THE STREET.

SHELBY

WE WENT TO SEE AND THERE WAS A SACK WITH SOMETHING MAKING THE NOISE WE WERE HEARING....I WAS SCARED AND I BACKED AWAY....BUT

SHELTON

I WAS CURIOUS SO I CAREFULLY OPENED THE SACK AND GUESS WHAT?

JOEY

THE TWO PUPPIES WERE INSIDE, RIGHT?

SHELTON

RIGHT...AND STRANGELY ENOUGH....I FELT A DEEP NEED TO PICK THEM UP AND TAKE THEM INSIDEWE GAVE THEM SOME WATER AND SOME LEFT-OVER SCRAPS OF FOOD MOM HAD PUT IN A BOWL.

SHELBY

I DON'T KNOW WHY MOM WAS SAVING THE SCRAPS....IT WAS NOT ENOUGH TO FILL ANYBODY'S STOMACH.

FRAN

BUT IT WAS ENOUGH FOR THE PUPPIES, I BET.

JOEY

OF COURSE I WAS.....THAT IS WHY YOUR MOM SAVED THE SCRAPS IN THE FIRST PLACE.

SHAY

YOU ARE TELLING ME THAT THEIR MOM SAVED THE FOOD FOR THE PUPPIES ?....JOEY, SHE DID NOT KNOW THE PUPPIES WOULD END UP IN HER HOUSE.

JOEY

BUT GOD KNEW !!!

SHAY

YOU ARE REALLY MESSING WITH MY MIND....ALL OF THIS IS STRANGE.

TED

NO MORE STRANGER THAN GOD GIVING YOU THE ENDING FOR YOUR ASSIGNMENT FOR MS. MERRYWEATHER....RIGHT?

SHAY

I GUESS....MAYBE GOD DOES WORK IN STRANGE WAYS.

BRANDEN

(LOOKING AT THE TIME ON HIS PHONE.)...WE WILL CONTINUE WITH THIS BEAUTIFUL STORY AFTER THE MEETING....IT IS TIME TO GO IN.

SHELTON

YOU THINK MS. MERRYWEATHER WILL LET US TELL OUR STORY TONIGHT?

SHELBY

OH, I HOPE SO.....WE PROMISE TO WRITE IT UP AND TURN IT IN AT THE NEXT MEETING.

JOEY

KNOWING MS. MERRYWEATHER LIKE I DO, SHE WILL BE MORE THAN HAPPY TO LET YOU TELL YOUR STORY ABOUT ROSE BUD AND MR. MEPHIBOSETH.

TED

JOEY, I GUESS YOU, OF ALL PEOPLE, CAN UNDERSTAND THEIR STORY.

JOEY

ISN'T IT AMAZING HOW THEY RESCUED THOSE PUPPIES JUST LIKE MAMA SUE RESCUED ME AND MADE MY LIFE SO GOOD.

SHELTON

THE GREATEST THING IS THAT SHEL AND I HAVE FOUND PEACE AND HAPPINESS. THESE LITTLE RASCALS KEEP US SO BUSY...BUT, JOEY, IT IS ALL GOOD.

SHELBY

I THANK ALL OF YOU FOR PUTTING UP WITH US AND OUR ANGER FOR SO LONG.

JOEY

WHAT MATTERS IS YOU HAVETHE PEACE OF GOD.....

BRANDEN

WHICH, I AM SURE THAT YOU MAY NOT FULLY UNDERSTAND ALL THE THINGS THAT BROUGHT IT ABOUT.

FRAN

BUT YOU KNOW IT IS REAL AND ALL GOOD.

JOEY

GOD IS AN AWESOME GOD. HE HAS GIVEN YOU TWO WONDERFUL TESTAMONIES.

SHELBY

THIS IS MORE THAN I COULD HAVE EVER IMAGINED...THE LEWIS KIDS WITH A TESTAMONY...

SHELTON

AND HAPPY ABOUT IT.....LETS GO TELL MS. MERRYWEATHER.

******AS THEY EXIT**, SOMEONE OFF STAGE STARS
SINGING:" _____"
AND EMERGE ON THE SCENE TO END THE SONG.