



HCP

The Heart of a Christian Playwright

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THE COLOUR OF PERSEVERANCE

Original Stage Play

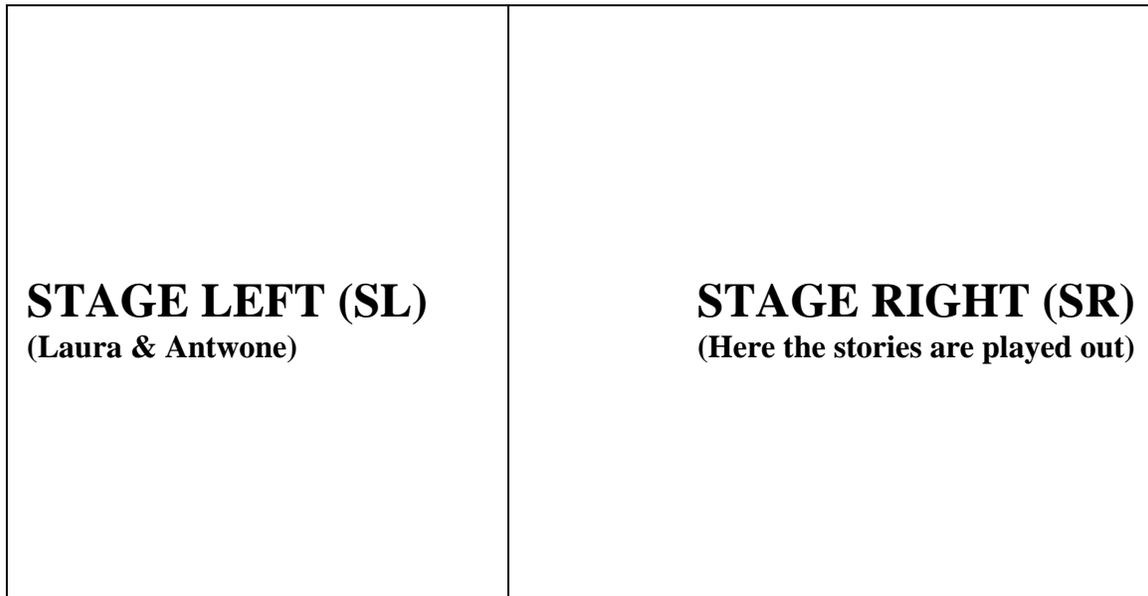
By

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LIST OF CHARACTERS

Antwone
Laura
Derrick
Taj
Shane
Kevin
Slave Master 1
Slave Master II
Kunta Kinte
Fiddler
Moses
Moses friend
Mr. Anderson
Mrs. Anderson
White Man

SETTING



AUDIENCE

SCENE 1

LIGHTS UP

Laura is on her phone walking across the stage.

Taj appears before Laura and blocks her path.

*She stops when she sees him. He pushes back his shirt to reveal a gun
In his waist.*

*She removes the phone from her ears and turns the other way but Kevin
appears. She stops and turns downstage but Shane appears DS and
Antwone also appears.*

They surround Laura threateningly.

TAJ: What have we here?

KEVIN: A sweet prize if you ask me.

ANTWONE: This is her right.

SHANE: Take her.

LIGHTS OUT

SCENE 2

LIGHTS UP

Laura struggles as she is tied to a chair.

LAURA: What do you want from me?

TAJ: Patience little flower. You will know in time.

SHANE: I think I heard a car pull up.

ATHWONE: About time.

A beat.

Derrick enters.

DERRICK: You boys finally did something right.

LAURA: Who are you?

Derrick looks at Laura for only a second.

DERRICK: Aren't you afraid?

LAURA: I'm used to people like you.

DERRICK: Somebody please gag this woman.

Shane tears a piece of cloth and ties her mouth.

DERRICK: Space.

Everyone heads for the exit. Derrick holds unto Antwone.

DERRICK: Not you.

ANTWONE: C'mon boss.

DERRICK: You're on watch. No arguments.

ANTWONE: This ain't fair.

DERRICK: The world ain't fair son.

Derrick leaves.

Antwone is stuck on watch duty.

LIGHTS FADE ON THIS SIDE OF THE STAGE

LIGHTS UP SR

Laura family s frantic.

Mrs. Anderson has her cell phone to her ears waiting.

She pulls it away and presses it hard.

MR. ANDERSON: Any luck.

MRS. ANDERSON: She's still not answering her phone.

MR. ANDERSON: Have you called Trish.

MRS. ANDERSON: Yeah, and Monique, and Kelly... I practically called everyone.

MR. ANDERSON: This not at all like Laura. She would have called by now.

MRS. ANDERSON: Something has happened. I know it. I just know it. We have to call the police.

MR. ANDERSON: We cannot file a missing person report till after 48 hours.

MRS. ANDERSON: Are we just gonna sit here and wait 48 hours? Do you know how much can happen in 48 hours?

MR. ANDERSON: What do you want me to do?

MRS. ANDERSON: You have the Mayors cell phone number in your wallet and you are asking me what I want you to do. You know what....

Mrs. Anderson exits.

Mr. Anderson sighs and takes out his cell phone.

LIGHTS OUT

SCENE 3

LIGHTS UP SL

Antwone is sitting quite agitated.

Laura tries to speak but because of the gag it comes out indecipherably. She continues making sounds and annoying Antwone even more.

ANTWONE: Lady, can't you shut up.

She makes even more noise.

In frustration he grabs the gag off.

ANTWONE: What?

LAURA: Why are you doing this?

ANTWONE: A man's gotta do what a man's gotta do.

LAURA: Oh so you think doing this makes you any more of a man. Have you got it twisted? This doesn't make you a man. This makes you a coward.

ANTWONE: Whatever.

Pause.

Laura thinks for just a moment and just starts to shake your head.

LAURA: When did we get here?

ANTWONE: Whatcha talking about lady.

LAURA: We blacks used to fight together not against each other.

ANTWONE: What are you? Some kinda Historian?

LAURA: I'm a teacher...but more than that I'm an activist.

ANTWONE: Oh great. I'm stuck here with a talker.

LAURA: You can gag me if you want.

ANTWONE: No...I think I rather hear what you are saying. Its less annoying.

LAURA: Let me tell you about real men.

LIGHTS COME UP ON SR.

A black man is walking with some real heavy bags on his shoulders.

A slave master stands over him with a whip.

LAURA: Real men persevered through hardships. They survived physical and verbal abuse as they patiently waited for their change to come. They fought long and hard so people like you and me could have our freedom. Many gave their lives for our freedom.

The man onstage is whipped.

LAURA: You want to talk about real men. Real men stood up for what is right in the face of adversity...they stood up for freedom.

Some other slaves appear and grab the slave master...but more slave Masters have come onboard to suppress the slaves.

The LIGHTS GO OUT on stage right.

LAURA: Real men would rather endure hardship than turn to a life of wrong.

ANTWONE: What do you know about life? My parents took me when I was two months old and placed me in a bag and dumped me like some trash. I grew up in the inner city. You were born with a gold spoon in your mouth.

LAURA: Are you kidding me?

ANTWONE: AM I lying?

LAURA: My great great grandfather worked in a cotton field. Do you know what that is like?

LIGHTS UP on STAGE RIGHT.

Slaves are moving through the cotton field in chains.

LAURA: Seven days a week they toiled in the scorching sun. No break. No rest. No food. Nothing to drink.

ANTWONE: What does any of that have to do with me?

LAURA: Real men work for what they want. You want to have an easy life. Take from those who worked hard for what they have.

ANTWONE: You think its easy to do that. We lay our life on the line everyday.

LAURA: You don't know what it means to lay your life down everyday.

LIGHTS UP SL.

Slave Master appears really upset. He grips his whip.

MASTER: Moses.

Moses turns and bows.

MOSES: Yes Master.

MASTER: You left the fodder in the rain. Why didn't you take it in?

MOSES: Master, I...

The Slave Master whips him over and over again.

MASTER: No more excuses. I am tired of you Negroes messing things up.

He finish flogging him and exits.

Another slave comes to try and help him.

MOSES: I can't do this anymore.

JOHN: We are but slaves.

MOSES: Slaves to whom. I serve one God and he can deliver us as he delivered the Israelites.

JOHN: You speak mightily for a man who bears so many scars.

MOSES: I speak from hope. It's the one thing they cant take from me...from us.

JOHN: I have no hope in this life.

MOSES: Then you are a miserable man.

JOHN: So you plan to endure to what end...your death maybe.

MOSES: I have endured much my friend. At the hands of my master I have been lashed a million times...at the hands of his wife I have been stripped of my clothes and beaten....I haven't come this far to give up now.

JOHN: I wish I had your courage. I look ahead and see only graves for us slaves. Nothing more.

MOSES: If you could be a free man tomorrow. What would you do?

JOHN: I don't know how to be anything else but a slave.

MOSES: Then you have much to learn.

*The slave master returns and Moses and John jumps back to work as
They are whipped a few more times.*

MASTER: You lazy good for nothing Negroes.

LIGHTS FADE SR and LIGHTS UP SL

LAURA: He worked until he could buy his own freedom.

ANTWONE: Do you ever shut up?

Enter Derrick.

DERRICK: Everything cool on this side.

ANTWONE: How much longer.

DERRICK: We talked to the parents. We setting up our business for tomorrow night.

ANTWONE: *TOMORROW!* I'm stuck with this woman till tomorrow. You gotta change shifts man. Find somebody else to do this man. Put me unto something real.

DERRICK: This is as real as it gets man. After tomorrow night you'll be set for life. Easy road from there on out...you see what I'm saying man.

ANTWONE: Yeah...I'm stuck here with her.

DERRICK: Good. Now I gotta go deal with some stuff. *(Derrick looks at Laura)* Why'd you take off the gag?

ANTWONE: She talks with or without it.

LAURA: Are you gonna kill me.

DERRICK: That depends on your parents.

LAURA: That's comforting.

DERRICK: Yeah, whatever.

Derrick exits.

Pause.

LAURA: Is this how you really want to live your life. Without meaning...without purpose.

ANTWONE: Yeah, pretty much.

LAURA: Don't you ever wish for more.

ANTWONE: No, not really.

LAURA: Think about Martin Luther King.

ANTWONE: He's dead. Everyone you're telling me about is dead.

LAURA: They left a legend behind. What will you leave behind when you die? Will you just be another statistic?

ANTWONE: Who says I plan on dying?

LAURA: It's the one sure thing in this life.

ANTWONE: Yeah anyway, dying is not one of my favorite topics of discussion so....

LAURA: I know another story you may need to hear.

LIGHTS FADE ON SL and COME UP ON SR

A White man stands with his whip.

WHITE MAN: Bring that nigger to me.

Another pulls a fighting man to the stage and throws him down at the foot Of the white man.

WHITE MAN: State your name nigger.

KUNTA: Kunta Kinte.

Pause.

WHITE MAN: You the one who keeps running away are ya.

KUNTA: Yes sir, I am.

WHITE MAN: Why do you run slave? Why do you run when there's no where to run to.

KUNTA: Only then do Kunta feel free...if only for a fraction of a second.

WHITE MAN: Your freedom will cost you 100 lashes slave. Was it worth it.

The white man starts raining blows on Kunta.

LIGHTS FADE

LIGHTS COME BACK UP.

Kunta is folded on the ground. Another slave Fiddler sits close by.

FIDDLER: When you gonna learn.

KUNTA: Kunta wants to be free.

FIDDLER: Kunta will die if he keeps running.

KUNTA: I'm waiting for these scars to heal. Then I will run again.

FIDDLER: You're a fool. Think about your children. Think about those who will follow you. What example are you setting for them?

KUNTA: They will run free too. I run free so they can run free too.

FIDDLER: The masters will kill you for running.

KUNTA: But I will be remembered for generations to come.

FIDDLER: You do this for glory.

KUNTA: No friend. For freedom.

FIDDLER: We are slaves.

KUNTA: We weren't born slaves. We were born free men...just like them...in a free country. They took us from our country. Brought us here and made us slaves.

FIDDLER: We are slaves.

KUNTA: We are free men forced to become slaves....denied the opportunity to run free...but Kunta will not deny himself his freedom. I will run free in these fields we are forced to toil day and night.

FIDDLER: Then I shall soon be without a friend.

Pause.

KUNTA: Is there nothing you want for yourself.

FIDDLER: What's the point of wanting what I cannot have?

KUNTA: Who decides what you cannot have.

FIDDLER: They do,

KUNTA: No my friend. You do.

FIDDLER: There is no reasoning with you.

KUNTA: Come with me Fiddler.

FIDDLER: Come where.

KUNTA: North. I run north. That's where freedom is.

FIDDLER: Slaves know no freedom.

KUNTA: God will give us freedom Fiddler. Believe with me.

FIDDLER: You better hush your mouth boy. Don't let the white man hear you owning up to their God.

KUNTA: God is for everybody. Not just the white man. Believe with me fiddler.

FIDDLER: I will sit with you no more. You bring nothing but trouble Kunta. There are rules. Rules we must follow.

Fiddler leaves.

Kunta stands to his feet.

KUNTA: Kunta will be free.

LIGHTS FADE SR and COME UP SL

Antwone stands looking over at the fading scene as if imagining it for real.

ANTWONE: I have heard bits and pieces of Kunta's story as a youth growing up...but I never heard how that story ends.

LAURA: Do you want to know?

Pause.

ANTWONE: Yes.

LIGHTS FADE SL and COME UP SR

Kunta is again brought before his Master.

MASTER: You are as stubborn as you are ugly slave. Seems lashing you has very little effect on you. Maybe we need to try something else.

KUNTA: You cannot break Kuntas spirit.

MASTER: Here you have no name. Here you are nothing and you will abide by my rules.

KUNTA: Kunta wants to be free.

MASTER: If you run again slave....I will take those precious legs away from you.

KUNTA: Kunta wants to be *FREE!*

Pause.

The Master considers.

MASTER: Remove those chains from his hands and feet.

The chains are removed.

The Master turns Kunta facing SR.

MASTER: Look there at the fields. You see yourself running free and unbound. (*Kunta nods*) There are no chains on your feet and hands. You can go as you please but bear in mind that if you set foot in those fields you will never run again. Is two minutes of freedom worth the great fate that awaits you at the end?

Pause.

Kunta Kinte takes off into the fields for the last time.

MASTER: Are all niggers this stupid.

LIGHTS FADE SR and COME UP SL

Antwone sits in silence for a beat.

ANTWONE: What happened?

LAURA: He lost his toes...almost his life.

ANTWONE: For a few seconds of freedom.

LAURA: Emancipation for us African Americans came at a great price. Our freedom cost people their lives and we could go on and on throughout the pages of history. They fought for what we have today. There are many like your self who are alive today and many more who have not yet been born who do not know the value of their freedom.... But who will tell them? Who will show them that amidst all the turmoil of this life, there is still hope.

Pause.

ANTWONE: Someone needs to tell them, I guess.

LAURA: What about you...Would you want your son to be like you as you are now or would you want your son be like the man you can become... a real man.. a truly free man.

Pause.

ANTWONE: So was Kunta Kinte ever free.

LAURA: No. But his children and grandchildren were and all the generations that followed.

Antwone is deep in thought for a moment...

ANTWONE: Do you really think that there is hope for people like me.

LAURA: Once there is life my friend there is hope. You just have to trust God as our forefathers did. Every black man and woman was born with greatness in their bones... a greatness that we have for years thrown away. For years the devil has blind folded us to the truth of who we are as a people. But you know as my grandmother once told me "the devil fights the most what he fears the most". You are an heritage of a great people. Like the children of Israel we have come through much trials and tribulations and too long have we taken up residence in the wilderness. It is time for us to arise. Like Joshua, you must lead the people into the promise land.

ANTWONE: Me??

LAURA: Yes you.

Antwone stands still for moment then makes a conscious decision to set Laura free. He looses her ropes and sets her free.

LAURA: If you let me go....they will kill you.

ANTWONE: Then you will remember me as the man who died so that you can run free. And besides a man's got to do what a man's got to do.....

LAURA: I pray that the lord will keep you and cause his face to shine upon you.

ANTWONE: You need to go right now.

Laura considers...then exits.

Antwone sits to await his fate.

Derrick enters the stage with Taj, Kevin and Shane.

DERRICK: Where's the girl?

ANTWONE: I let her go.

DERRICK: You what??? Somebody tell me that he did not just say that. Are you mad man? She was my ticket outta here... A mean our ticket. What am I gonna do now. She saw our faces. What were you thinking man.....

Derrick paces back and forth on the stage. He then stops suddenly and turns to Antwone.

DERRICK: You gonna pay for this... right fellaz.

KEVIN/TAJ/SHANE: Yeah.

ANTWONE: I am not afraid of you.

DERRICK: What did you just say boy.

ANTWONE: I am not a slave to any man. Not anymore. So go ahead take your best shot. No matter what you do I will always be a bigger man than you.

BLACKOUT