

JERICO ROAD

A Musical Event

Written & Composed by Lindsay Morton

Orchestrated & Conducted by Oliver Doyle

Orchestrated & Produced by Emily Dorrough

Directed by Laura Mitchell

Originally performed at Avondale College of Higher Education,
with the support of Avondale College Church, Wahroonga SDA
Church, Manifest Creative Arts Festival and the Institute of
Worship.

Characters

LEILA

A strong, independent woman who is grounded in her faith, Leila faces the ultimate challenge when she marries Jacob Carver. Leila is a calm, gentle person - often seen as shy - she doesn't like to be up the front but would rather lead out in small prayer groups instead. Leila is a relatable and inspirational character.

JACOB

Jacob is a charismatic young man, a trained mechanic who is aspiring to be a musician full-time. He's charming, good-looking, sings and plays guitar - the ladies love him. Jacob is ultimately flawed by his lack of control. He doesn't understand how his small, daily decisions can affect his life in a huge way. Jacob quickly falls in love with the beautiful Leila and marries her without a second thought. Troubled by his single-parent upbringing and a negative relationship with his father, Jacob struggles to believe in his ability to love and would rather get out than face the problems. While Jacob is at times seen as the villain of the story, his struggles are all too human and resonate uncomfortably with the audience: the frustration of routine, the loss of honeymoon-love, the terrifying responsibility of becoming a parent, sacrificing your dreams to provide for your family, and seeking a distraction/relief from the mundane in dangerous new places.

AMALIA

When Jacob and Leila have been married for just 12 months, they fall pregnant with a beautiful baby girl - Amalia. Her name means "work", and she proves to be just that for Jacob and Leila's marriage which is still finding its feet. Amalia is first played by a baby doll (see all character references to BABY AMALIA) and by the time she appears on stage she is five years old. Too young to understand what is going on behind closed doors, Amalia loves both of her parents very much and showers them in affection. She is confused at why her dad isn't around much, and often asks the hard questions no parent wants to explain. Overall, Amalia is a joy to all who meet her and lightens up Leila's life in her darkest hour.

PASTOR MATT

The serving pastor of Jacob and Leila's local Seventh-day Adventist church, Pastor Matt not only marries the pair and dedicates Amalia but also counsels Jacob through certain hardships. He, along with his wife and five children (unseen characters), are good friends with the Carver family, who are actively involved in their church. Pastor Matt is a sensible man who is active in and sure of his faith, but is unwilling

to give Jake easy answers. He is seen as a warm mentor for the characters, Jacob especially.

TIM

A member of Jacob's basketball team, who also attends the same church. Tim is involved in the worship band with Jacob and Zac, the three are all around the same age and good friends. Tim likes to keep things light-hearted and upbeat.

ZAC

Also a member of Jacob's basketball team and the church worship band. Zac and Tim both adore Jacob and Leila as a couple, and are concerned when Jacob starts to skip sports and music practices. Zac in particular is plagued by the thought that he could have done more, could have cared more and been a better friend, but missed the opportunity to do so before it was too late.

BEC

A good friend of Leila's. Bec attends Leila's small group and adores her daughter Amalia. She is hurt and distressed about the marriage break down, and helps Leila pack up their family home before moving.

JESS

Leila's sister. They are close in age and close friends, more connected than Leila's other girlfriends. She is confused when Leila doesn't mention the deteriorating state of her marriage, and doesn't know how to support her big sister.

TOM

Often the comic relief of the musical, Tom is wildly confident and very animated. He initially tried to hit on Leila at a party before being tossed aside and ran into Liz, his new target, who later becomes his wife. Tom was friends with Jacob first, and admired him for his bravery and masculinity. The Carvers' marriage breakdown challenges his faith.

LIZ

A close friend of Leila's. Liz begins dating Jacob's friend Tom around the same time that Leila and Jacob get together. Not only are the women and men close friends with each other, but they are close as couples too, and often go on double dates. Liz adores Leila and is completely grief stricken by the separation.

JACOB'S MOTHER

A firm, strong woman who finds joy in rituals and family traditions. She loves Leila and supports Jacob of his choice to marry her. Jacob's Mother holds Sabbath Dinners on Friday nights with candles and the works. Jacob's father left her

while the kids were young, and while she has forgiven him and made peace with God, Jacob has not. Jacob's Mother only appears at their wedding and baby dedication.

UNCLE MIKE

Jacob's Mother's brother. Uncle Mike is a bit dorky, and is constantly trying to step up as a male mentor in Jacob's Father's place - but Jacob won't let him. Uncle Mike is extremely proud of Jacob and believes that Leila will be "good for him". Uncle Mike is seen at family affairs with a huge smile and disposable camera, getting in the way.

LEILA'S FATHER

Loves his daughter beyond measure. Leila's father walks her down the aisle and vows to always be there for her. He is caring and compassionate, but Leila is a very independent person who doesn't lean on her parents too much. Leila's father is seen at family functions, supporting her in her journey, and invites her and Amalia to move back home when Jacob leaves her.

ELLIE

Jacob has an affair with Ellie, a beautiful young woman he met at one of his music gigs. Ellie falls head over heels for Jacob and the two have a very affectionate romance. Ellie is a non-Christian and encourages Jacob to leave his wife and life with her instead. It is unclear as to when their romance began, but Ellie is crushed when she discovers that Jacob regrets leaving Leila.

WAITRESS

Appears once to serve coffees to Pastor Matt and Jacob while they're in a café. Helps create movement and set the scene. Can be played by a stage hand.

COORDINATOR

Appears once to direct musicians in to auditions. The Coordinator is frustrated with Jacob for dawdling on his phone instead of running inside when she calls "Next!". Can be played by a stage hand.

Director's Message

Playwright's Message

The *Jericho Road* journey began, as many stories do, in response to a 'personal emergency.' After being immersed in the music from Jason Robert Brown's *The Last Five Years*, I found myself wondering what that story would have looked like if its characters had both been Christians. Clearly, I thought, they would have had their problems, but surely they would find clarity, forgiveness and resolution. But reflecting on the experiences of family and friends, I realised that life is rarely—if ever—that neat. The question: *What does it mean to be faithful?* suddenly became urgent, and I spent the next eight years trying to figure it out.

I wish I could say the answer can be found in the story you're holding in your hands, but that wouldn't be true. Maybe the closest it gets is recognising that no matter what our situation, Jesus has lived out the consequences of faithfulness, and when we're trying to figure it out, looking at Him is the place where we need to start. But for now, we will be telling a story that provokes more questions than offers answers, and I think that's how it should be.

Thank you for being part of the journey down *Jericho Road*. I hope that together we can tell Jacob and Leila's story passionately and compassionately, bravely and humbly, and bring everything we can to whatever role we hold, because most of all this musical is for the glory of God. In Him, faithfulness is not just a characteristic – it's His name (Revelation 19:11).

ACT I

Scene 1

Altar begins to play. *LIGHTS UP* four bars into song.

The scene opens in JACOB & LEILA's Home. LEILA is standing alone in the middle of the stage. She is surrounded by packing boxes, with sentimental items scattered throughout: AMALIA's teddy bear, Esther storybook, LEILA's camera, wedding veil, and a family photo in a frame.

As she sings, LEILA walks around picking up these items, musing over them for a moment one by one before packing them into the large open packing box at the front of the stage.

ALTAR

LEILA

Brick by brick, stone by stone

Look what I'm building

I'm building an altar to You

Lest I forget where You've brought me this far or

The place that You're leading me to

Tear by tear, pain by pain

Look what I'm leaving

I'm leaving my burdens with You

Lest I forget what You've carried so far or

The cross that You've carried it to

I know You're leading and watching and waiting

To see if I'll carry through

But right now I can't hear or see through these tears

So I'll wait

I'll wait

I'll wait

I'll wait

To hear from you

LEILA freezes mid-stage. LIGHTS DOWN. LEILA exits.

LIGHTS TRANSITION to the two side stage islands. LIZ is standing stage right, BEC is standing stage left. They are speaking together to address the audience - the third person in the conversation.

LIZ

The day we helped Leila pack up her house was one of the saddest days of our lives. The removal truck had been booked for the next day, so we all pitched in to help. Kitchen, bathroom, laundry, guest room... most of Jake's stuff was already gone. Just a few boxes left in the corner with his name on them. There was an address we were supposed to send them to.

BEC

We stacked Leila's and Mali's boxes in the lounge room. When it was done, no one knew what to say, or how to leave. It was heart-breaking.

LIZ

I think everyone expected Lei to fall apart, but somehow she was calmer than any of us. Half way through the morning she found me crying while I was packing up the kitchen, and gave me a hug!

BEC

Right from the beginning Jake and Leila were an odd couple. But somehow it worked.

LIZ

Yeah, Jake was one of those guys who walked into a room and owned it. He wasn't cocky or arrogant - there was just something about him, you know? Maybe it was his stage presence - he was a musician - and he was really good. *(Pauses, thinking)* He still is, I guess.

BEC

Jake was not the kind of guy we thought Leila would end up with. She was shy - she didn't like attention, and I guess we always thought she'd marry the boy next-door. But I'd seen Lei all the way through high school - she might have been quiet but she was determined and got what she wanted. From the moment she saw Jake, she knew he was the one. We laughed about that later - it's such a cliché - but she *knew*.

LIZ

After they got married, we saw them at church most weekends, and a few times we went out to see Jake's band play. He took shift work to make ends meet. And then Mali came along - a beautiful baby girl. After a few bumps in the road, everything seemed to be coming together. They didn't have a lot of things, you know? But the way they loved each other... well, it was beautiful.

BEC

I don't understand how it's ended up like this. With boxes. And bubble wrap. And a piece of paper that says their marriage is over. I feel so useless. No one should have to go through this, but especially Lei. She was so right for him, and he was so good for her... Even from the night they met, they couldn't take their eyes off each other!

LIZ

(Reminiscing) We had to do some fast talking to get Lei to that party, remember? But in the end she put on a dress and came out with us.

BEC

She was gorgeous!

LIZ

It was the funniest thing, there was this joker there who saw her first, and it was on, but he didn't have a chance while Jake Carver was in the room...

LIGHTS DOWN.

He's / She's Mine begins to play over the scene change.

Scene 2

Party lights on. The stage has been cleared completely, and is now covered in all members of the chorus (except JACOB and LEILA's parents, and PASTOR MATT). They are holding plastic cups and chatting happily in social clusters.

*LEILA is on the island stage right, talking on her phone.
LIGHTS UP on stage right island only - transitioning to full stage lighting as she starts to walk into the party.*

LEILA

(Nervous, excited) I don't know! I don't know I don't know! It just...happened! (Pause) Yep, this weekend. I'm going to meet his mother... (Pause) I told you, I hardly know anything about him, but when you know, you know...(Pause) Yes, we said we'd never say that... but it's true! (Pause) What? You wanna hear the story...?

LEILA continues talking on the phone while she walks up to her sister JESS at the party.

HE'S / SHE'S MINE

LEILA

Well I guess we met in the usual way

JESS

(spoken) Such a cliché!

LEILA

At a friend's party

The music's loud - got the usual crowd - so I'm trying to look happy

When in walks this guy and he kinda reminds me of a PI-type of James Dean

It's so hard to breathe - does he look like he's leaving? - I've got to make him see me

And I say:

"Who's that vision?"

JESS

(spoken, warning) Don't you go there girl,

He's a musician

LEILA

Gotta find a clever way to meet this guy and make him stay

And maybe down the road I'll hear him say

"She's mine"

LIGHTS UP on stage left island, where JACOB is standing on the phone to his MOTHER.

JACOB

Hey, Mum? It's Jake. (Pause) Yep, I know, I'm sorry, I've just been a bit busy lately. But Mum, you know how you said if I ever meet someone special that I need to bring her home for Friday night dinner? Well...is next Sabbath okay? (laughs) Yes! Yep - her name's Leila. (Pause) How did we meet?? Umm...

As JACOB enters the party, all the CHORUS light up and rush to greet him (especially the men) with high fives, hugs, secret handshakes, etc.

JACOB

Well I'm out with my friends when I'd rather be spending a night with cable TV

The music's loud - not my usual crowd - but I'm trying to look happy

Everyone seems like they're having fun - everyone that is except me

When out of the whirl steps this beautiful girl and she starts walking towards me

And I say:

"Who's that vision?"

As JACOB finishes greeting his friends and notices LEILA, TOM also notices her and saunters over with an extreme amount of confidence, obviously hoping to woo her. TOM is standing in between LEILA and JACOB, oblivious to JACOB's presence and using big hand actions to try and entertain LEILA.

TOM

An apparition?

JACOB

Gotta find a clever way to meet this girl and make her stay and maybe down the road I'll hear her say

"He's mine"

TOM continues to talk at LEILA, while she and JACOB are leaning either side of him to glance at each other.

LEILA

How do I get this guy to look at me?

JACOB

With this clown standing right in front of me

JACOB & LEILA

Can you believe this size of this guy's ego

I think it's time for me/him to throw the elbow

JACOB pushes TOM out of the way and he goes flying dramatically and comically into LIZ - his new target for flirting. TOM and LIZ chat together in the background as LEILA and JACOB talk over the music instrumental.

JACOB & LEILA

She will / He will

Be mine

LEILA

Whoa, is that guy okay?

JACOB

(Laughing) Ah, that's my mate Tom - he looks like he's landed on his feet... in more ways than one!

LEILA

He's lucky. I'm Leila.

JACOB

I'm lucky too. I mean...I'm Jake! So, Leila, did you come here with anyone?

LEILA

Well, yeah, my friends kind of dragged me here - that's Liz over there -

LEILA sees TOM has cornered LIZ and is talking her ear off.

LEILA

Actually, she looks like she might need some help...

JACOB

Let's wait a minute - Tom has a habit of making himself indispensable. So - you don't like parties...what do you like to do, Leila?

LEILA

(Visibly nervous) Well...I like to read - I mean, I like hanging out with my friends too, but just in smaller groups - you know, more *intimate gatherings*...

JACOB

(Musing) I can do intimate...I mean - ! *(Nervous, stuttering)* Okay, that didn't come out right... I mean - I know what you mean. My mum still cooks dinner every Friday night for all of us kids - we have candles and roast vegetables - you know - the works.

LEILA

(Genuinely) That sounds nice.

JACOB

You should come! I mean, you know, sometime, in the future...if you wanted to... *(Aside, to himself)* Argh - what is wrong with me??! We only just met!

LEILA

And what about you Jacob? What do you do?

JACOB

Just call me 'Jake'. Well, I'm a mechanic, but I'm working towards playing music full time. My band has a regular gig in the city, so, we're getting somewhere...

LEILA

Wow! I'd love to come and see you some time. I mean, the band - see the band, hear the music... *(Aside, to herself)* What is wrong with me? I only just met the guy!

JACOB

Great! I'll - um - can I get your number? And I can give you some dates...

LEILA

Sure - let me just get my phone...

JACOB and LEILA swap phones and turn back to back, singing as they enter their contact details in to one another's phones. They take sneaky glances over their shoulders at each other while they're not looking.

JACOB & LEILA

She's/He's so perfect

JACOB

Eyes like diamonds!

LEILA

Arms like fireman's!

JACOB & LEILA

*I just found a clever way to meet this guy/girl
another day so maybe down the road I'll hear him/her
say*

"He's/she's mine"

*LIGHTS DOWN. "He's / She's Mine" riff continues to play over
scene transition.*

*DIRECTOR'S NOTE: It is easiest to set up for Scene 4 (House 1,
proposal set) during this transition.*

Scene 3

*LIGHTS UP on stage right island, where LIZ is standing in the
same position as she was in Scene 1.*

TOM walks in on lights up to an unsuspecting LIZ.

*DIRECTOR'S NOTE: It is super important that TOM and LIZ
address the audience as a united front - they are the safe and
happy couple, a striking comparison to the instability and
foreshadowing of JACOB and LEILA.*

*While a lot of TOM and LIZ's dialogue seems like bickering, it
is meant to be fun, flirtatious and funny. To create intimacy
in this setting, ensure the two actors stand close to one
another and touch occasionally - this direction is applicable
to all TOM and LIZ scenes.*

TOM

Um, excuse me - did I just hear you calling me "a joker"?

LIZ

*What? No... You never listen to me properly. I said...
(grasping for words) that it was... Oh well yes, of
course I said it! (flirtatious) What are you gonna do?*

TOM

*Riiiiight! And did you happen to mention to these fine
people that you ended up marrying that joker?*

*TOM holds LIZ's hand up to the audience, pointing to her
wedding ring. LIZ laughs.*

LIZ

(half apologetic) Well, they know that now...

TOM

(To Liz) Thanks for the introduction. *(To audience)* My name is Tom, short for Thomas, and this is Liz - short for Traitor.

LIZ

Oh come on, you fell all over Leila that night! What were you talking about, anyway?

TOM

You will never know. Besides, what does it matter? You did pretty good out of that party... *(chuffed with himself)*

LIZ

(Rolling her eyes) It's true, it's true...

TOM

And just to be clear - I was only talking to Leila to make *you* jealous.

LIZ

If you say so...

TOM

Moving on!

LIZ

We had so much fun in those early days. We were all hanging out, we started dating at the same time... Jake's gigs gave us a place to meet up and we were pretty sure he was really going to make it with his band.

TOM

Then about six months in, Jake calls and tells me he's going to ask Leila to marry him. Whoa! They were the first of our group of friends - he's a brave man.

LIZ

It's not that hard, Tom.

TOM

(Defensive) You're right, Liz, plucking your heart out of your chest and putting it at someone's feet where there's a chance - even a slight one - of having it stomped all over... Walk in the park! Day at the beach!

LIZ

Okay, okay, so it took some courage. Good work, you.

TOM

(Seriously) You know, I'm not sure I would've been brave enough if Jake hadn't have gone first. Although he set a pretty high bar...

LIZ

I'll say! Although the competition thing didn't seem to work for you...

TOM

What's that supposed to mean?!

LIZ

Let's just say *McDonald's* does not constitute a restaurant...

TOM

(Indignant) Hey! It's the thought that counts.

LIZ

(Laughing) Yeah, you're right, it is the thought that counts...

LIGHTS DOWN.

Scene 4

LIGHTS UP on JACOB's House - same set as House 1, and including a table cloth and romantic table candles.

Hidden under the table and table cloth is a gift bag with three items: camera, gardening gloves and a tea towel.

LEILA is seated at the table, having just finished a meal. JACOB is behind the house walls. He emerges with a tea towel and plate, drying the dishes.

LEILA

Are you sure I can't help with the dishes?

JACOB emerges from behind the house wall, drying a plate with a tea towel.

JACOB

I'm sure! I got this. You just relax.

LEILA

Jake, that was absolutely delicious. Thanks so much for dinner.

JACOB

You're welcome.

LEILA

We've been dating for six months now, and all this time I had no idea how talented you are in the kitchen!

JACOB

Yeah, well, after I left home, my mum taught me how to... ah... *(sheepish, looking away)* pick up the phone and ask her to drop something around...

LEILA

(Laughing) Right! So. My birthday dinner was provided by... your mother?

JACOB

(Embarrassed) I just wanted it to be memorable, you know... In the *right* way.

LEILA

Well please say thank you to her for me. She's the sweetest. I love your family Jake - all of them. And your friends. It's hard to remember what my life looked like before we met.

JACOB sits down at the table.

JACOB

I know exactly what you mean. And hey, the night's not over yet - I got you a birthday gift.

LEILA

(Pretending to be surprised) You got me a gift?!

JACOB

It's your birthday.

LEILA

(Deadpan) I know. I've been waiting.

JACOB

Well, it's actually a few things, but in order to get to the next gift you'll have to answer a question first.

LEILA

Answer a question?

JACOB

Do you accept the challenge?

LEILA

Mmm...sure. Let's do it.

JACOB pulls out the gift bag from under the table.

JACOB

Okay. Just reach in here and pull out the first thing you touch.

LEILA is excited. She reaches in and pulls out a tea towel.

LEILA

(Confused) A tea towel?

JACOB

Yes. And here's your question: if I wash the dishes, will you do the drying?

LEILA

Jake! I already offered and you said no! Of course I will help if you - *(standing up)*

JACOB

(Cutting her off) No, no, honey, sit down - this is present time. Remember? *Present* time.

LEILA

(Still confused) Right. Well in that case, yes. If you wash the dishes, I can dry them for you.

JACOB

Great. Next gift...

LEILA reaches into the bag again pulls out a pair of gardening gloves.

LEILA

...Gardening gloves?

JACOB

If I do the digging, will you help me weed?

LEILA

You mean....

JACOB

It's a metaphor Lei - stay with me babe! *Metaphor.*

LEILA

Metaphor. Of course. And, yes, if you have a garden I'll help you out with it.

JACOB

(Aside, to himself) Two yesses in a row. This is good!
(To LEILA) Next gift...

LEILA reaches in again, pulls out a camera. She gasps.

JACOB

When we go on holidays, will you be our photographer?

LEILA

(Standing up, she can't contain herself) We're going on a holiday? Jake! That's awesome! Where's the ticket? Where are we going?! Hawaii? No! I bet it's Fiji - or Vanuatu? Oh Jake, this is the best gift ever...

JACOB

(interrupting) Lalita - again - think: metaphor. C'mon now.

LEILA

(realising) Oh - I'm so sorry... There's... no holiday?

JACOB

No holiday. Not yet.

LEILA

Okay. *(pause)* But do I get to keep the camera?

JACOB

Yes Lei, you get to keep the camera. Happy birthday.

LEILA

(squeals with excitement) I love it! Thank you so much...

*LEILA starts fiddling with the controls of her new camera but
JACOB interrupts again.*

JACOB

We're not quite finished yet.

LEILA

Really? There's more? But there's nothing else in the bag...

While LEILA looks into the gift bag, JACOB walks around the other side of the table, pulls an engagement ring out of his pocket and gets down on one knee.

JACOB

Leila, if I am faithful to you, will you be faithful to me? If I am Adam to you, will you be my Eve? If I am ever away from you, will you be the place I come home to? Leila, will you be my wife?

*LEILA stands up, excitedly ready to say yes - then hesitates.
Build the tension.*

LEILA

(skeptical) Is this another metaphor?

JACOB

What? No, babe, I'm serious! Marry me?

LEILA

(Laughing) Yes! Of course, Jake - yes!!

JACOB and LEILA embrace, lights out.

Scene 5

LIGHTS UP on stage left island, where JACOB is getting dressed for his wedding day. His UNCLE MIKE and MOTHER are in the room with him. His MOTHER hands him a small corsage for his jacket.

MOTHER

Here Jacob, don't forget this.

JACOB

Thanks, Mum.

UNCLE MIKE

We're so proud of you, Jake. I wish your father was here to see you as a man, getting ready on your wedding day.

JACOB

Yeah, well, he didn't stick around long enough to earn that privilege, did he?

MOTHER

Jacob, don't speak of your father in that way. He had his reasons for leaving us, and he made his peace with God before the end.

JACOB

Pretty convenient wasn't it...

UNCLE MIKE

Hey - Jake. That's enough. We're here, and we love you, and we love Leila - she's God's gift to you. You make sure you look after that girl. She's very special.

JACOB

I know. And I will.

MOTHER

Come on, Mike, let's get going and let Jake finish up here. Jake, don't be too long. You don't want to keep your bride waiting...

JACOB

I won't Mum. And thank you both again...

*JACOB and his MOTHER embrace as the lights transition.
JACOB walks to centre stage, where there is a large tree.*

PASTOR MATT is standing under the tree ready to officiate the wedding ceremony. UNCLE MIKE and MOTHER join the CHORUS, who are standing stage right in a choir formation (appearing to be the congregation/audience of the wedding).

LIGHT TRANSITION: lift house lights slightly, while remaining dim on stage. Song "Jericho Road" begins to play. LEILA appears at the end of the aisle with her FATHER. She is in her wedding dress and they are ready to start walking.

FATHER

Are you ready, sweetheart?

LEILA

Yep, I'm ready. But I'm nervous - I'm glad I can hold on to your arm.

FATHER

You are beautiful Lei, and you know that your mum and I will support you and Jake in every way we can?

LEILA

I know, thanks Dad.

FATHER

Okay, let's do this!

LEILA

Let's do this...

JERICO ROAD

JACOB

We're no Adam and Eve

And this garden ain't no Eden

But as we are standing here under this tree

It occurs to me we're close to Heaven

LEILA

*You reached out for my hand
And suddenly life had new meaning
All my questions and doubt and fear all disappear
The moment you promise I do*

JACOB & LEILA

*So God bless our walk down Jericho Road
When the walls fall down help us stand tall
We're watching and waiting and knowing in awe
As You go before us
Down Jericho Road*

LEILA

*There'd be no distance at all
Even with oceans between us
Cause part of you is part of me- oh can't you see
You're in my heart
Till death do us part*

JACOB & LEILA & CHORUS

*So God bless our walk down Jericho Road
When the walls fall down help us stand tall
We're watching and waiting and knowing in awe
As You go before us
Down Jericho Road*

BRIDGE (ALL)

Down Jericho Road

When the walls fall down help us stand tall

Down Jericho Road

When the walls fall down

Down Jericho Road

When the walls fall down help us stand tall

Down Jericho Road

Oooo...

LEILA

If somewhere down the road

You should let go of my hand, dear

Know I'll be waiting and praying for you

JACOB

You know I will, faithfully, too

(repeat chorus)

JACOB & LEILA

We're no Adam and Eve

We're no Adam and Eve

We're no Adam and Eve

We're no Adam and Eve

LIGHTS DOWN.

Scene 6

*LIGHTS UP on stage left island. TOM is standing by himself,
addressing the audience.*

TOM

Yes, yes, yes, it was all very beautiful, the bride was radiant, the groom was handsome, the music was... unexpectedly good! The music was unexpectedly good, right? *(Prompting audience, pause for applause)* Okay, you can stop your gushing now.

We all know that weddings are lovely events, but there are four little words that can break the magic, just like that. First. Year. Of. Marriage. Right? You know what I'm talking about. Those niggly little things that were so annoying with housemates are somehow cute and completely excusable with your new life-partner... for the first couple of months. Then, they go from an occasional cricket chirping outside your window to the annoying whine of a mosquito buzzing around your ear. You start by playing it cool, hoping it'll go away, but then end up slapping yourself in the face trying to get the thing to die! *(miming)* You do know what I'm talking about, don't you! Toilet seats and unpaid bills and crumbs on the bench and sorry-dear-I-forgot-to-take-the-garbage-out-again...

TOM is raving. LIZ enters on the line "You do know what I'm talking about" and looks amused. She finally interrupts him.

LIZ

Well at least he's honest about his faults, I'll give him that...

TOM

Liz! I - ah - didn't see you standing there.

LIZ

Clearly.

TOM

I was just - ah - telling these good people how... *incredible* the first year of marriage is.

LIZ

(Dry) Yes - that literally *is* incredible. *(Curious)* But Tom, did you really think our first year was that bad?

TOM

No, it wasn't *bad*. (*Seriously*) But it was difficult. And not just for us. Looking back, Jake and Leila must have found it hard too, although you'd never know...

LIZ

Well *you* would never know, but Leila did occasionally tell me that she didn't know how to talk to Jake. About problems. Sometimes little stuff, sometimes big. It's hard to know which battles to fight, and when it's the right time to talk about them.

TOM

There's a right time?

LIZ

Let's put it this way: There are lots of wrong times.

TOM

But we're not supposed to not let the sun go down on our anger, so how does that work?

LIZ

I think most of us have to figure it out for ourselves as we go. There's no rule book for this kind of stuff.

TOM

Is that where you think Jake and Leila went wrong? They didn't deal with problems? Jake was never much of a talker...

LIZ

...and Lei hated conflict. That's the bit they forget to tell you about when you're all starry-eyed: how to fight fair. But no, in that first year, I think it was just more a case of figuring it out. It takes time.

TOM

Yeah, it takes time.

LIGHTS DOWN.

Scene 7

LIGHTS UP on JACOB and LEILA's House (set 1). JACOB is sitting at the table working on his laptop, and LEILA is folding the washing. The washing basket is sitting on a chair and she is folding each item into a pile on the table as she talks.

LEILA

(Exasperated) Jake, we've been over this already. That weekend is your grandparents' 40th anniversary. Please don't schedule a show on Saturday night...

JACOB

(Nonchalant) Leila, it's fine. We'll catch their 50th.

LEILA

Can you please be serious?

JACOB

I'm completely serious. I'll put it in my calendar now. C'mon. *(Laughs)* What do you think they're going to do if we don't turn up?

LEILA

(Rolling her eyes) You mean if you don't turn up. I'm going with or without you.

JACOB

(Suddenly shocked and serious) And not support me at the biggest gig I've played in months? Leila, I need this.

LEILA

Well *I* need you. Your *family* needs you. Please come to the party. You work so much and I hardly see you...

JACOB

(Frustrated) This again? Lei I thought we agreed that while we're starting out, we could use the extra money.

LEILA

We did, but now I'm not so sure that was the best plan for us. What's this great house if we never get to spend any time in it together?

JACOB

You're overreacting.

LEILA

You're stubborn.

JACOB

(Stands up) You're trying to manipulate me.

LEILA

You're not listening!

JACOB

You're - ! *(Turns around to look closely at her)* Crying. Leila. Leila, babe, come on...

LEILA has exited the room and is standing on stage island left. JACOB goes to follow her but decides against it, frustrated. He mills around the room clearly angered as she sings.

STRONGER IN THE BROKEN PLACES

LEILA

Here again

I'm closing down-

Losing ground

Looking 'round to see

If there is another way

To escape this pain

Can you see me?

I'm holding out

*Hoping that you
Won't see the truth
Make it all go away
Deal with another day
But I will lay down my pride and surrender
When I remember
That we're stronger in the broken places
When we lift our faces
And look each other in the eye
Don't let this moment pass us by
Cause when I speak the truth and let you see
The darkest places in me
I find out how deep your grace is
And we're stronger in the broken places*

JACOB

*Here again
I'm closing down-
Losing ground
Looking 'round to see
If there is another way
To escape this pain
Can you see me?
I'm holding out
Hoping that you
Won't see the truth*

*Make it all go away
Deal with another day
But I will lay down my pride and surrender
When I remember
That we're stronger in the broken places
When we lift our faces
And look each other in the eye
Don't let this moment pass us by
Cause when I speak the truth and let you see
The darkest places in me
I find out how deep your grace is
And we're stronger in the broken places*

JACOB & LEILA

*You and I are learning how
You and I are learning how
You and I are learning how to love
And to be loved
You and I are learning how
Come on baby, show me how
You and I are learning how to love
And to be loved (repeat)*

*Cause we're stronger in the broken places
When we lift our faces
And look each other in the eye*

*Don't let this moment pass us by
Cause when I speak the truth and let you see
The darkest places in me
I find out how deep your grace is
And we're stronger in the broken places
Cause we're stronger in the broken places*

(Key change and repeat chorus)

*You and I are learning how
You and I are learning how
You and I are learning how to love
And to be loved
You and I are learning how
Come on baby, show me how
You and I are learning how to love
And to be loved*

LIGHTS DOWN.

Scene 8

*LIGHTS UP on stage island right.
TIM and ZAC address the audience.*

TIM

Jake first brought Leila to our church a few years ago,
and since day one, it was like she'd always been there.

ZAC

I guess they were both leaders, but in different ways. Jake led the worship band, and Leila helped out with the youth group.

TIM

I learned so much from watching the way Leila was with people. She wasn't up the front much, but when she prayed it was like... I don't know - like Jesus was *in the room*. After that first year, we couldn't have imagined the group without her.

ZAC

And then they made their big announcement - Leila was pregnant! It wasn't exactly planned - they had only been married for, *(To TIM)* what, a year? *(To audience)* But it was Jake and Lei! They were a *great* couple and we knew they'd make it work.

TIM

Jake, though, was in a bit of shock I think. He didn't say much, he was quieter at music practice *and* at basketball, so I suggested to Pastor Matt that he might want to sit down with Jake and have a chat about becoming a dad.

TIM and ZAC freeze. LIGHTS DOWN on stage island right. LIGHTS UP on stage island left, which has been dressed to look like a cafe. JACOB is sitting by himself, anxious. PASTOR MATT enters on lights up. He and JACOB greet each other (in a manly way) and sit down at the table.

PASTOR MATT

So, Jake. Everyone's thrilled to hear your news. How are you feeling about it?

JACOB

(Nervous, avoiding the question) Yeah... it's amazing. We didn't quite expect a baby so soon, but what can I say? Like you said, everyone's excited about it.

PASTOR MATT

Yep, it's a blessing. But, Jake, how do you feel about it?

WAITRESS/WAITER enters with two cups of coffee. The two men acknowledge her/him and use these cups to drink from and create movement in the scene.

JACOB

(Rubbing his neck) Ah - yeah. Look, I mean I'm really happy about it. I just hope she takes after Leila...

PASTOR MATT

(Excited) It's a girl then?

JACOB

Yeah, yeah, it's a girl. We're going to call her Amalia.

PASTOR MATT

Great name! Strong name...

JACOB

Yeah, I think so too. Lei chose it - then we looked it up and it means "work" - so at least I know what I'm up for.

PASTOR MATT

(Laughing) Yep, there'll be a lot of that. Especially when she's a teenager...

JACOB

Teenager?!

PASTOR MATT

Yeah, they grow up, you know!

JACOB

That's the least of my problems right now.

PASTOR MATT

So, seriously, what's the biggest of your problems, Jake?

JACOB

(Trying to convince himself) I don't know. I'm happy about this, I really am. It's just that... In some ways, it just feels unfair for the baby. I mean, Leila and I are adults. We chose each other. We got to make a decision. But Amalia's going to be born into this family, and she has no choice at all in it.

PASTOR MATT

I see... *(He doesn't really see at all)*

JACOB

Leila's going to be the best mum - she already is! She's reading all these books, she spends ages talking to her mum on the phone about what to eat and what not to eat, and what to expect in the first few months... She's amazing.

PASTOR MATT

And you, Jake?

JACOB

(Long pause) Well, the baby doesn't get to choose me.

PASTOR MATT

And you don't think you're going to be a good dad?

JACOB

It's not that... Okay, so maybe it is that. I already love her - as I'm watching Leila get bigger, I feel like my heart is growing, too. But how can I know what's best for her? When she's hungry? Or how to calm her down? This is a whole little person we're talking about, and I know nothing about bringing up kids.

PASTOR MATT

Jake, I hear you. I remember the last few weeks before Jackson was born. I was panicking - reading manuals for baby monitors and car seats and memorising water temperatures... Kate had to tell me to settle down or she'd move in with her mother! It's natural to be nervous. It's *completely normal* to have these kinds of

thoughts. Especially if your own dad wasn't around much when you were a kid...

JACOB

Yeah. Well, there's that.

PASTOR MATT

Jake, you are going to be an excellent father. You and Leila are both stronger than you know, and as soon as that baby arrives, you'll feel things click into place. Trust me. After five kids, I should know! *(Laughs)* And if things are harder than you thought, or you need support in any way, you've got your mum, and Leila's parents, and our whole church is behind you, Jake. You just need to ask and you'll have reinforcements at your front door in no time with more food than you can eat in a year...

JACOB

Thanks Pastor Matt... I really appreciate this.

PASTOR MATT

No worries Jake. You know I'm here any time.

PASTOR and JACOB stand and hug, then JACOB exits. LIGHTS DOWN on stage island left. LIGHTS UP on stage island right, where TIM and ZAC are still standing together.

TIM

Pastor Matt called it. Jake was going to be a great dad. As soon as Amalia arrived, everything clicked into place.

LIGHTS DOWN on stage island right. LIGHTS UP on centre stage where JACOB and LEILA's House is set up (House 2).

*Music for **Overflowing** starts on lights up.*

JACOB enters, holding BABY AMALIA. He walks around, rocking it to sleep as he sings.

OVERFLOWING

JACOB

My heart's overflowing

*Now that you are here
All my fears are going
Now that you are near*

*If there were any questions that needed an answer
It's here in my arms, here in my arms
Some cosmic puzzle that's missing a piece
Well I found it right here in my arms*

*My heart's overflowing
Now that you are here
All my instincts knowing
There's no need to fear*

JACOB sits in a chair, then he and the baby fall asleep.

LIGHTS DIM SLOWLY and eventually go out completely. LEILA enters and hides behind the house walls. Wait five long seconds. LIGHTS UP.

JACOB is sound asleep on the couch, with BABY AMALIA in his arms. LEILA enters on lights up.

LEILA

Hey, sleepy head! Time to wake up.

LEILA takes BABY AMALIA from JACOB gently.

JACOB

(Groaning sleepily) What?

LEILA

The service starts in fifteen minutes! Come on - I need to get Amalia ready.

JACOB

Service?

LEILA

It's the dedication today. Remember? Jake! Everyone's coming, we can't be late!

JACOB

(Shocked awake) Oh - of course! Give me five minutes...

JACOB runs off stage. LEILA coos over BABY AMALIA.

LIGHTS DOWN.

*Music for **We Bring Blessings** begins on lights down.*

Scene 9

LIGHTS UP on centre stage. PASTOR MATT is standing stage left, addressing the church congregation (CHORUS) all clustered together on stage right.

PASTOR MATT

(Addressing his congregation cheerily) Good morning, everyone! We're here today for Baby Amalia's dedication...though it looks like the Carver family is running a little late! Easily forgivable, of course, with a new baby in the house... *(fumbling, killing time)* Oh, here they are!

JACOB and LEILA come racing in from stage right, apologising. They go straight through the congregation to get to the front with PASTOR MATT.

PASTOR MATT

Well, family and friends, today we are here for a very special occasion...

PASTOR MATT fades out, LEILA starts to sing.

WE BRING BLESSINGS

LEILA

*Oh these tiny hands
Oh this beating heart
The smell of your skin and the curve of your chin
I am melting in wonder*

JACOB

*Oh these trembling hands
Oh this pounding heart
Know that there's nothing that I wouldn't do
To protect you*

JACOB, LEILA & CHORUS

*We bring blessings
We sing blessings over you
In the name of our Heavenly Father
We bring blessings
We sing blessings
We bring you
To the feet of our Heavenly Father
Amalia - we bring you*

PASTOR MATT

*See His wounded hands
Feel His breaking heart
Know that is nothing He wouldn't do
To redeem you (repeat chorus)*

As the first chorus starts and the CHORUS joins in, they slowly start to wander over and surround the family, singing, smiling and cooing over BABY AMALIA.

During the song, BABY AMALIA is passed around to JESS and JACOB'S MOTHER before being handed back to the parents. Each soloist needs to hold the baby as they sing their part (LEILA, JACOB, PASTOR MATT).

On the final "We Bring You" line, all characters place a hand on the person in front of them and bow their heads, as if praying over the family in a big prayer cluster.

LIGHTS DOWN.

Scene 10

LIGHTS UP on stage right and stage left islands. JESS is standing stage left, and BEC is standing stage right. They address the audience.

DIRECTOR'S NOTE: It is important that JACOB and LEILA are aware of their voice over cues, and also aware that their microphones will be ON this entire scene. They will possibly need to deliver these lines mid-costume-change. Stage Manager will need to cue them and provide lines.

BEC

The first sign that anything was wrong with Jake and Lei wasn't really a sign at all. We just started seeing less of Jake. There was always a reason: he had a big gig the night before and was sleeping in, or he was working on a new project. It didn't seem unusual at the time.

LIGHTS DIM. Cue voiceovers.

JACOB

(Voiceover) Babe don't wait for me for dinner. I'm gonna be late home.

LEILA

(Voiceover) Again? It's your turn to put Mali to bed - you promised you'd be here.

JACOB

(Voiceover) I know, but we're demo'ing a new track and it's going really well - I need to be doing this. Don't wait for me, okay?

LIGHTS UP on JESS and BEC.

JESS

I didn't think to ask. Leila's my big sister - but she's only two years older than me - so we've always been close and shared everything.

BEC

Surely she would've said something... but then, maybe she didn't know what was really happening, either.

LIGHTS DIM. Cue voiceovers.

JACOB

(Voiceover - mimic voicemail) Hi you've reached Jacob Carver, please leave a message.

LEILA

(Voiceover - distressed) Hey Jake, it's Lei. Mali's running a temperature. I don't know where you are. Can you call me?

LIGHTS UP on JESS and BEC.

BEC

I took them to the hospital when Mali was five and came down with the chicken pox. It was a pretty bad case. Lei must have been beside herself, but she kept calm for Mali, and I stayed until Jacob finally turned up at the emergency room.

JESS

Mali was an absolute joy. I was there for a few of her firsts...her first birthday, her first steps - I missed her first tantrum - I've seen a few since! *(Laughs)* But they are few and far between. Lei was a fantastic mum, and Jake was so sweet with Mali.

BEC

They had a really special tradition for opening Sabbath. They'd light the candles, put quiet music on, eat a lovely dinner, then sit around talking - and sometimes singing.

JESS

One night Jake surprised Lei with a song he'd written to open Sabbath. It was so sweet - just a little song - but it was something they could sing even if they were spending Sabbath apart. And as Mali got older, that happened more and more...

LIGHTS DOWN. LEILA and AMALIA walk on stage and hide behind the house walls. LIGHTS UP.

JACOB enters on lights up from front stage left. He is carrying a guitar case, and has obviously just come home from a gig.

JACOB

I'm ho-ome! Hello? Mali?

AMALIA

Daddy!

AMALIA comes running out from behind the house walls, wearing her pyjamas. She runs and jumps into JACOB's arms.

JACOB

Hello, sweetheart. How are you?

AMALIA

Good!

JACOB

Did you have a good day?

AMALIA

Mmm hmm!

JACOB

And what did you have for lunch?

AMALIA

Peanut-butter sandwich!

DIRECTOR's NOTE: This dialogue can be improvised, whatever will get a good (excited, happy, laughing) response from the child actor. JACOB continues to ask questions to AMALIA while carrying her around in his arms until LEILA calls out.

LEILA

Amalia! Time for bed!

AMALIA looks sheepish and JACOB gives her a cheeky look, a finger over his lips. He carries her to the couch.

*Cue music for **Sabbath Prayer**.*

JACOB

Alright, just quickly, why don't you practice the song I taught you? Let's practice for church this week. Stand up nice and straight, are you ready?

SABBATH PRAYER

AMALIA

Our Sabbath prayer is that You're there

In every moment we share

When we're alone, that we'll still know that You're near

Be there to guide us and show us the way

On this and on each Sabbath day

This is our Sabbath prayer

AMALIA & JAKE

We're one in heart

Though we're apart

Right to the end from the start

These Sabbath hours a special blessing we share

ALL

You're there to guide us and show us the way

On this and on each Sabbath day

This is our Sabbath

(LEILA) You are our Sabbath

(ALL) This is our Sabbath prayer

LEILA

Okay, now it really is time for bed!

AMALIA

Awww! Night Daddy...

JACOB and LEILA smile and pat AMALIA affectionately (on the head, or a pat on the back) as LEILA leads her offstage to bed.

LIGHTS DOWN.

Scene 11

LIGHTS UP on TIM and ZAC who are standing together on stage island right.

TIM

Jess might not have known what was going on with Leila and Jake, but over time Zac and I started noticing that Jake was changing.

ZAC

Not, like, huge crazy changes or anything, he just seemed... quieter. More frustrated than anything else.

TIM

Yeah, but sometimes it was like he was angry or something.

ZAC

Yeah. You remember that night he blew up when you asked him about missing basketball practice? That was so weird!

TIM

I know, right? I'd just asked him to turn up to practice so we could all learn a new play, and he nearly hit the roof! Something about how he was already juggling two jobs - and if he got injured he wouldn't be able to work. And he was yelling...it was so not him.

ZAC

Yeah. We were like: chill, man, we were just asking!

TIM

Zac here made the mistake of asking if "everything was okay"...

ZAC

He just packed up his marbles and left.

TIM

Big mistake.

ZAC

What was?

TIM

That question.

ZAC

Are you sure? I mean, don't you ever think things might have worked out differently if we followed him out that night, and asked him to tell us what was really going on?

TIM

I dunno mate. I suppose we'll never know what he was thinking, or the answer to any of the 'what ifs...?'

LIGHTS DOWN. TIM and ZAC exit. The CHORUS and JACOB walk on stage and line up. They are wearing winter clothes - main

characters disguised by beanies and scarves - and they are all waiting in line for an audition.

LIGHTS UP on centre stage. Music for "Everybody's Chasing Me" begins on lights up.

DIRECTOR'S NOTE: Please refer to videos for choreography of this scene.

JACOB is meant to be standing first in the line, but he's in front of it instead, pacing. He's on his phone trying to call and text people - he's meant to be picking up AMALIA from school, but doesn't want to miss his big shot.

Enter COORDINATOR, dressed professionally and carrying a clipboard. He/She has a lot of attitude and is very firm with JACOB.

COORDINATOR

Jacob Carver? You're up next.

JACOB

Perfect. I'll be there in just a sec.

COORDINATOR

...We're waiting for you...

JACOB

Yep - I'm coming, I'm coming...

COORDINATOR

If you don't come now you're going to miss your spot - I'm not gonna hold it for you.

JACOB

Look, there's something I've just got to organize - my daughter was expecting me to... - *(frustrated)* can't you just wait?

COORDINATOR

Look mate, everyone's got issues - are you coming or not?

*JACOB, frustrated, run his hands through his hair, trying to
decide what to do.*

EVERYBODY'S CHASING ME

CHORUS

*Life is slipping away through my hands through my
arms*

Life is slipping away with its bells and its charms

And it's pushing me over the edge

Pushing me over the edge

So it seems (repeat & do do dos)

JACOB

Everybody's chasing me

Everyone's reminding me

Everybody's taking everything from me

Gotta be a good guy

Gotta be the nice guy

God I wish you'd just leave this

Man alone

You're pushing me over the edge

Pushing me over the edge

Everybody's chasing me

Everyone's reminding me and

Everybody's taking everything from me

Leave the past behind me

There it can't remind me

Who I was or what I was

Won't you let me go

Please just let me go

You're pushing me over the edge

Pushing me over the edge

*See there are times when I feel like I'm the one at
the wheel*

*And that the car that I'm driving's flying out of
control*

And I am heading for somewhere

But I don't want to go there

So I've got to move on

*Then there are days when I know that things are
moving too slow*

*And this small town I live in's not getting me
anywhere*

And I don't want to get old here

I don't wanna grow cold here

So I've got to move on

I've got to move on

Everybody's chasing me

Everyone's reminding me and

Everybody's taking everything from me

Leave the past behind me

There it can't remind me

Who I was or what I was

Won't you let me go

Please just let me go

You're pushing me over the edge

Pushing me over the edge

I'm falling over the edge

On this final line, JACOB moves back to his position in front of the line-up.

COORDINATOR enters, furious.

COORDINATOR

(Yelling) Jacob Carver!

JACOB hesitates for a moment, looking at the EXTRA, then down at his phone, then across to stage right. He rushes after the EXTRA, obviously choosing his career over his daughter.

LIGHTS DOWN.

Music continues to play over the scene transition.

Scene 12

LIGHTS UP on JACOB and LEILA's House (Set 1). It's late at night. LEILA is in her dressing gown and slippers, waiting up at the kitchen table.

JACOB enters.

LEILA

Jake... you're home. Where were you?

JACOB

(Avoiding her eye contact, and her question) Yeah, I'm home. Where's Mali?

LEILA

It's eleven o'clock, she was in bed hours ago. Liz dropped her off, actually... she told me that you asked her to pick Mali up from her music lesson today?

JACOB

(Defensive) Yeah, well, I'm sorry, but it worked out fine didn't it?

LEILA

(Quietly) I guess so.

JACOB tenses.

JACOB

Right. I hear you, Lei.

LEILA

What? I just said -

JACOB

(Cutting her off) I know what you *said*, Lei. I also heard what you *didn't* say.

LEILA

(Accusing) That's not fair, Jake. This is the third time *this month* that you haven't shown up when you were supposed to. Can I even trust you to show up at all?

JACOB holds his hand up to LEILA without looking at her ("talk to the hand") to signal that he is done talking about this. He walks back to the table and sits down, opening his laptop.

LEILA, still front stage, takes a deep breath and tries again, with a gentle tone.

LEILA

What I mean to say... is that I missed you tonight. Mali missed you. *(Pause)* We've been missing you for a long time... Do you miss us?

JACOB

(Annoyed) Of course I do, but I've also got to pay the bills.

LEILA sits down at the table across from him during her line.

LEILA

(Anxiously trying to make peace) Alright well I'm back at work now, remember? So maybe you could pull back on the shows for a while. We'll be okay -

JACOB

(Ranting) Okay? What is okay? I don't feel like "okay" is ever good enough. Everyone seems to want more from me than I can give!

LEILA

(Surprised) Who are you talking about?

JACOB stands up suddenly.

JACOB

(Angry) You! Tim! Zac! The guys in the band! Everyone!

LEILA

No one's asking you to do any more than what you can...

JACOB

Whatever, Lei.

JACOB walks away (to front stage), his back is to LEILA. Long pause as LEILA gathers herself to address the issue again.

LEILA

(Stern) Jake. I need you to tell me what's going on.

JACOB

(Defensive) What?!

LEILA

We *know* how to do this. We're not newlyweds anymore. I just need you to look me in the eye and tell me what is going on for you.

JACOB struggles but eventually turns to look at LEILA's face.

JACOB

(Vulnerable, sad) When did our lives get so small, Lei? We used to have such big dreams, and now, it's like...

LEILA

(Offended) Like what?

JACOB

(Ranting) Like - we're constantly busy, but we're not *doing* anything. Like the bigger it gets out there, the smaller it gets in here.

LEILA

(Shocked pause, hurt) Is that really what you think, Jake? That we're living a "small life"? *(Another pause, frustrated)* I feel like you're saying we're not enough for you.

JACOB

(Frustrated) That's not it, Lei. I just mean that I didn't choose this - the mortgage, the routine, the school pick-up line, the annual holiday, the predictability... we're not *going* anywhere.

Tension increases.

LEILA

You didn't *choose* this? Well how do you think we got here, then? We have been choosing *this life* every day since we got married. This isn't some trap, Jacob. We're building a life together!

JACOB

Yeah? Well I feel like there are walls and ceilings around me and I can't get out!

Pause. Hold the tension.

LEILA

(Stunned, hurt) Do you... Do you want out?

JACOB

(Turning away from her again) I don't know what I want.

Pause. Hold the tension.

LEILA

You are not your dad, Jake.

JACOB

(Quietly, almost to himself) Aren't I? I'm starting to wonder.

LEILA

(Stern) You are *not* him. Everything he did was selfish. He didn't believe in anything bigger than himself. But you and I Jake, we know that this life is not our own! You *know* that, Jake. *(Pause)* Well at least... you used to know that.

JACOB

What do you want from me, Leila?

LEILA

I'm just asking you to be here. You're not, you know. Even when you're in the house, with us, you're off somewhere else in your head! Where do you go Jake? In your mind?

JACOB

I'm done talking about this.

JACOB walks back to the table and opens his laptop again, ignoring LEILA.

LEILA

Well I'm not! *(Aside, almost to herself)* We have left this way too long... *(To JACOB)* Okay. I'm going to bed, but we are going to talk about this in the morning. When

we've both calmed down, and we're less emotional. Okay?
Jacob?

JACOB

(Just to humour her) Yeah, whatever Lei.

*LEILA walks through the house walls and hides behind them.
LIGHTS DIM slowly until they are as low as possible. JACOB
still sits at the table, the bright screen of the laptop
shining on his face. Wait 5 long beats.*

*Suddenly, the LIGHTS come all the way UP again.
LEILA enters on lights up.*

LEILA

Jake, I -

*JACOB hears/sees her and slams the laptop closed, stands up
and walks away (to front stage). He runs his fingers through
his hair - awkward, frustrated, guilty.*

*LEILA takes a moment to compose herself after what just
happened, and remember the real reason why she came out here.*

LEILA

Jake, it's so late... Please come to bed. I'm sorry about
what I said before. I don't want to argue. That stuff - I
mean, it's all important, but it's not the *most* important
thing...

*Music for **Overflowing** begins on LEILA's line "come to bed".*

JACOB

(Exhausted. Teary) Yeah? What is?

OVERFLOWING

LEILA

My heart's overflowing

Now that you are here

All my fears are going

Now that you are here

If there were any questions that needed an answer

It's here in my arms, here in my arms

Some cosmic puzzle that's missing a piece

Well I found it right here in my arms-

LEILA circles Jacob slowly as she sings to him. On her last line "in my arms" she gently reaches out and holds on to his left arm as he faces the audience.

JACOB

Stop!

*Music changes to **Warning**.*

JACOB flings his arm to shake LEILA off. She stumbles backwards, and freezes. JACOB sings the first half of "Warning" to a still-standing LEILA, as if frozen in time.

JACOB paces as he sings, then begins to slowly walk in circles around LEILA, the opposite way that she walked around him (undoing the covenant).

WARNING

JACOB

This is the time the magic conspires

Clearing all sense from my mind

This is the hour the chemistry lies

And tells me that everything's fine

This is the way the blood starts to race

And feelings fly out of control

This is the way the wave starts to break

And floods through the depths of my soul

*But I'll break your heart in the daylight
I'll strip you of all that is you
I'll turn you around
Throw your heart to the ground
I'll break me and then I'll break you
Consider this a warning*

*This is the time the temperature rises
Making a mess of my mind
This is the hour the Enemy lies
And tells me that she is still mine
And this is the way the heart starts to race
And reason flies out of control
This is the way the dawn starts to break
And lights up dark in my soul
(repeat chorus)*

*I'll bend
And I'll burn
And I'll break you Leila*

LEILA

*I'll bend
And I'll burn
But you can't break me*

JACOB & LEILA

I'll bend (I will bend)
And I'll burn (I will burn)
And I'll break you Leila (But you can't break me)
I'll bend (I will bend)
And I'll burn (I will burn)
And I'll break you Leila (But you can't break me)
I'll bend (I will bend)
And I'll burn (I will burn)
And I'll break you Leila (But you can't break me)
We'll bend
And we'll burn
And I'll break you Leila / But you won't break me

LEILA

Cause you didn't make me Jake...

Both step back to corners. On the lead up to the final chorus, both march back to the front of the stage and stand toe to toe. JACOB is aggressive, LEILA is strong but pleading.

JACOB & LEILA

I'll break your heart in the daylight
(You can't break me Jake)
I'll strip you of all that is you
(I will not leave you Jake)
I'll turn you around throw your heart on the ground
(See my heart's on the ground)
I'll break me and then I'll break you
(Jake can't you see I want/love you) (repeat)

Consider this

Consider this

Consider this

Consider this a warning

Consider this a warning

*JACOB exits. LEILA is left, distraught,
standing in her living room.*

LIGHTS DOWN.

Scene 13

*DIRECTOR'S NOTE: LEILA will have to completely change outfits
before getting back on stage for lights up.*

*LIGHTS UP on stage island right, where TOM and LIZ are
standing together. They are grief-stricken.*

TOM

We... we started hearing some rumours, through mutual
friends. Nothing worth paying attention to - Jake's band
was playing a lot, and he's a charismatic guy! I mean, of
course there are going to be rumours.

LIZ

And whether we thought about it or not, I think we
preferred not to know. It was easier.

TOM

By the time we had any kind of confirmation, though, it
was too late.

*LIZ breaks down during TOM's final line. She leans her head on
her husband's shoulder for support, and he embraces her.*

*LIGHTS DOWN. LEILA enters and sits at the table in her House
(Set 1). She is reading a Bible.*

LIGHTS UP.

FAITHFUL

LEILA

*I think You're asking me to be faithful
But I don't know what that means
Or what that looks like
I think You're asking me to be faithful
But I don't know how that feels
Or what that sounds like
My name is not Ruth, it's not Esther
I don't have the wisdom of Solomon
Or the patience of Job
So I'm here on my knees
Cause I need you to see
How unfaithful my heart wants to be
I think You're asking me to be faithful
But I don't know what that means
Or what that looks like
I think You're asking me to be faithful
But I don't know how that feels
Or what that sounds like
No I'm not my mother the warrior
I don't have the grace of my grandma
Or their courage and hope
But I'm down on my knees
Cause I'm trying to be*

*Just as faithful as You've been to me
I know You're asking me to be faithful
But I don't know what that means
Or what that looks like
I know You're asking me to be faithful
But I don't know how that feels
Or what that sounds like*

JACOB and ELLIE enter stage left. They are dressed up - they've just been to one of JACOB's gigs. He is carrying his guitar case. They walk on stage and stand just outside the living room - an imaginary front door.

JACOB and ELLIE are very affectionate with each other, in their stance and tone of voice. Obviously in love.

JACOB

Thanks for dropping me home - sorry about my car, it's...

ELLIE

Not a problem. You guys were amazing tonight!

JACOB

I was singing for you. You know that, right?

ELLIE

Jake, it's over between you and her. It has been for ages. Just come home with me.

JACOB

I know, I just - I need some time to figure it all out. How to tell her about...

ELLIE

Well, you know where to find me.

JACOB

Yeah, I know...

ALL

You're all I want

You're all I've ever needed

At the end the of the day all I need is

You to be faithful to me

You'll make me faithful / I'll make you faithful

Cause when I am faithful / Cause when I am with you

I'm free

I'm free

JACOB walks in to his house on the final "I'm free". He pauses, looking over at LEILA, as if he is about to say something, then changes his mind. He leaves his guitar case on the floor and walks behind the House Walls.

LEILA

I think You're asking me to be faithful

And You've shown me what that means

And what that looks like

I think You're asking me to be faithful

And You've shown me how that feels

And what that sounds like

It looks like abandoned, forsaken

It means choosing to stay on ground that's shaking

When you're brought to your knees

And it sounds like a scream

And it feels like "My God

Why have You forsaken me?"

LEILA falls to her knees, crying. JACOB walks in from behind the House Walls. He is carrying a large duffel bag, and a backpack. He picks up his guitar case as well.

JACOB

Leila. (Pause) Lei. Leila! Are you listening to me?

No response from LEILA. She can obviously hear him but can't bring herself to face him.

JACOB

Lei. You won't even look at me? (Frustrated) I'm moving out. Did you hear me? I want a divorce.

JACOB leaves with his bags and guitar.

Music swells.

LEILA

I know You're asking me to be faithful

And You've shown me what that means

And what that looks like

I know You're asking me to be faithful

And You've shown me how that feels

A door slams, loudly and shockingly. See score for cues.

LEILA

And what that sounds like

Wait 2 long seconds. LIGHTS DOWN.

INTERMISSION

Bring up house lights. Show on PowerPoint that it is intermission for ten minutes, and there are drinks and nibbles available in the foyer.

Stage hands wait 5 minutes and then clear the stage, ready for Act 2.

Act 2

Scene 1

LIGHTS UP on CHORUS. They are dressed in all black, in a choir formation that faces stage right (toward conductor).

LEST WE FORGET

CHORUS

*Lord we seek you at sunrise and midnight
At bedsides and high tides when flood waters rise
High above our thresholds of pain
Lord remind us, remind us again
Lest we forget
That You meet us in foxholes, at funerals
At bedsides and high tides when flood waters rise
High above our thresholds of pain
Lord remind us, remind us again
Lest we forget*

*As summer turns to autumn turns to winter turns to
spring*

We turn to You our God

And the good things that come from Your hand

We do not understand (repeat)

As the light falls and pain calls and faith falls

Deliver, deliver us Oh Lord

Lest we forget the hurting ones

*Lest we forget the risen Son
Lest we forget Your kingdom comes
In foxholes, at funerals
Remind us, remind us, oh Lord
Lord we seek you at sunrise and midnight
At bedsides and high tides when flood waters rise
High above our thresholds of pain
Lord remind us, remind us again
Lest we forget
Lest we forget
Lest we forget*

LIGHTS DOWN.

*Music for **Lest We Forget** continues over scene change.*

Scene 2

LIGHTS UP on LEILA and AMALIA (House Set 2). They are sitting on the couch together as LEILA reads AMALIA a bedtime story on Esther.

LEILA

(Reading) ...So the evil Haman's plans were thwarted, because the King set Esther and all of her people free. And up until this day, their descendants still celebrate the victory God gave them over their enemies. The End.

AMALIA

I want to be like Esther when I grow up. She was beautiful, and brave, and really smart, wasn't she mummy?

LEILA

Yes Mali. I want to be like her, too. Okay, let's pray, then it's time to go to sleep.

AMALIA

Mummy, you know how daddy said we can sing our special song anytime we feel sad? Can we sing it now? I miss daddy.

LEILA

Okay baby. Let's sing it.

SABBATH PRAYER

LEILA & AMALIA

Our Sabbath prayer is that You're there

In every moment we share

When we're alone,

That we'll still know that You're near...

LEILA chokes up and can't finish the verse. AMALIA sings the last line alone.

AMALIA

Are you crying?

LEILA

It's OK Mali-bear, I'm just a bit sad. C'mon, let's pray.

AMALIA

Mummy, why don't we pray for daddy anymore?

LEILA

(Struggling) Oh Honey, you prayed for him just last night. Don't you remember?

AMALIA

Yes, but we don't pray for him *together* any more. *(Pause)*
Do you think he misses us?

LEILA

You know he does Mali. He tells you every time he calls and visits.

AMALIA

Do you think he's happy?

LEILA

(Pause) I don't know.

AMALIA

Can we pray for him now?

LEILA

Of course. *(Trying to hold it together for her daughter)* Why don't you start, and I'll finish.

AMALIA

Okay. Dear Jesus, tonight we pray for Daddy. Wherever he is, if He's sad, please make him way way way way sadder, so when he misses us too much, he'll come home. Amen.

LEILA

(Unsure whether to laugh or cry) Dear Jesus, I agree with Mali. We love you, amen. You are so precious to me, Mali. What would I do without you? Come on now, time for bed...

Music starts as LEILA says "What would I do without you?" - this song has a long introduction. LEILA walks AMALIA off stage affectionately, with a hand on her back or holding hands. AMALIA leaves her bear on the couch.

LEILA returns before her verse starts, wandering around the room distressed. She is exhausted, (surviving not thriving) and doing everything she can to be strong for her daughter. She is conflicted by AMALIA's mention of prayer, and starts reflecting on her own relationship with God in this tough time.

DARE TO DREAM

LEILA

I used to dream that I was lost

Waiting for my prince to come and carry me away
We'd live together - till kingdom come
And my forevers would start that day
But that dream has passed
Now it's gone away
I live for yesterday
Now my life has changed
I'm no longer young
My dreams just fade away

Cause I forgot how to dream
When I forgot how to pray
But if you cling to me - if we both believe
If we dare to dream away
We can start forever that day

And now I know that I am lost
Waiting for my King to come and carry me away
We'll live forever-finally one
And my forevers will start that day
For that dream is strong
My Lord I hope I pray
Now my life has changed
I'm forever young
My dreams are here to stay

*For she taught me to dream
When I forgot how to pray
And if you cling to me-if we both believe
If we dare to dream away
We will start forever that day*

*For He taught me to dream
When I forgot how to pray
And if you cling to me - if we both believe
If we dare to dream away
We can start forever today*

LIGHTS DOWN.

Scene 3

LIGHTS UP on ELLIE's House. PASTOR MATT and JACOB are sitting at the table, in an intimate conversation.

DIRECTORS NOTE: It is important to get the lines delivered correctly and clearly in this scene - it is crucial to the message of the play. There is no black and white in this issue, and all of our choices - even the little ones - define our life's journey.

PASTOR MATT

Are you sure about this mate?

JACOB

I'm not sure about anything... except that I've made a huge mistake. I still love her.

PASTOR MATT

(Long exhale) It's almost been a year, Jake. The house has just sold. Leila and Mali are moving next week - how do you see this playing out?

JACOB

(Half joking, half serious) I was hoping you could help me with that one.

PASTOR MATT

(Serious, firm) I don't know Jake. You've burned a lot of bridges, and not just with Leila... a lot of people have been affected by this in some way or another, including Ellie. This is her house, right? Have you talked to her about this at all?

Upon hearing her name, ELLIE pokes her head around the corner. Confused and curious, she slowly begins to walk in to the scene over the next few lines, listening.

JACOB

Not yet - I'm trying to find the right time. Wait... are you saying I should *not* try to make it right with Leila?

PASTOR MATT

No, I can't tell you what to do. I'm just asking - what does "right" look like to you?

JACOB

You're my pastor - aren't you supposed to tell me?

PASTOR MATT

It doesn't work like that, Jake. And sometimes it's not a matter of right or wrong. Maybe you need to figure out what it means to be faithful to your vow to love her.

JACOB

It's too late for that...

PASTOR MATT

Think about it: Love is patient, love is kind. It is not proud, isn't self-seeking. Love always protects. What does that look like, Jake? Right here and now?

JACOB

I've really stuffed everything up.

ELLIE

(Hurt) Yeah, you really have.

JACOB

(Shocked) Ellie! I didn't hear you come in -

ELLIE

Obviously. And you are?

During the delivery of PASTOR MATT's line, he attempts to force a smile and give her a warm handshake, which ELLIE bravely accepts.

PASTOR MATT

I'm Matt. I'm Jake's... pastor.

ELLIE

Pastor? *(Realising)* So Jake, you're a Christian?

JACOB

Yes, well - I was - I used to be... Ellie, I'm so sorry. I - I really didn't realise you were there... How much did you hear?

ELLIE

Enough. Enough for the past few weeks to finally make sense. I should've guessed...

JACOB

Ellie, I'm so sorry...

ELLIE

So...it's true? You're leaving?

JACOB

I never meant to hurt you...

ELLIE

No one ever means to hurt anyone, Jake, but you chose this, all of it. And now it looks like you have one more choice to make. Are you going back to her? Jake? Answer me.

*Music for **Never Knew** begins on Ellie's line: "You chose this Jake, all of it."*

JACOB stares straight out at the audience, lost. He walks to the front of the stage and sings. ELLIE and PASTOR MATT are standing frozen in their positions, watching him. As their verses start, they walk down either side of him (ELLIE stage left, PASTOR MATT stage right) and sing at him, while JACOB always faces the audience.

NEVER KNEW

JACOB

Broken hearted, torn apart

I'm none of these, I'm just a failure

Self-defeated, so afraid

There's no excuse for my behaviour

Never knew I-never knew I ever needed anyone before

Never knew I-never knew I ever needed anyone before

ELLIE

Broken hearted, torn apart

And now he sees he's just a failure

He's defeated, tired and afraid

There's no excuse for his behaviour

He never knew-he never knew he ever needed anyone before

He never knew-he never knew he ever needed anyone before

PASTOR MATT

*Broken hearted, torn apart
And he believes he's just a failure
He's defeated, tired and afraid
He needs someone, he needs a Saviour
He never knew, he never knew he ever needed anyone
before
He never knew, he never knew he ever needed anyone
before*

ALL

*Never knew I, never knew I ever needed anyone before
Never knew I, never knew I ever needed anyone before*

JACOB

*I've never gone this far before
I turned and face a closed door
But now I know He wants to have my life
If only I could turn and see the grace His blood has
bought for me
Can He help? Save? Raise?
Or have I gone too far this time?*

ELLIE

*You've gone too far this time
Don't lift your head or you'll be blinded
By the light don't try to find Him
No one can help you, save you raise
You've gone too far this time*

PASTOR MATT

He's standing with you

*Here beside you
He's the One to change your life
His mercy calls you
Grace implores you
He can help you, save you raise
You haven't gone too far this time
Broken hearted, torn apart
I need someone, I need a Saviour*

ELLIE

You know what? Let me make this easy for you. Just leave.

JACOB

Ellie, I'm so sorry...

ELLIE

I mean it Jake, get out!

ELLIE, so hurt, angrily points toward the door.

*LIGHTS DOWN. **Never Knew** Reprise plays over scene change.*

Scene 4

LIGHTS UP. A park bench is placed in the centre stage. LEILA and AMALIA enter from stage left, wearing walking clothes and carrying umbrellas.

As they come across the park bench, LEILA directs AMALIA to sit down.

LEILA

Hey Mali, let's take a seat here. I have something important to talk to you about.

AMALIA

Okay Mummy.

LEILA

(Struggling, not sure how to break the news) So, you know how we had to keep the house clean for all of those people to come and look through it?

AMALIA

Uhuh...

LEILA

Well, a family has bought our house, and we're going to be moving somewhere new.

AMALIA

We're moving?

LEILA

(Faking positive) Yes, first we're going to move in with grandma and grandpa, that will be fun, won't it?

AMALIA

I guess...

LEILA

Just till we find a new place, and then we'll find you a new school with new friends.

AMALIA

Will we have to find a new church too?

LEILA

No honey, we'll drive back over here on the weekends.

AMALIA

Mummy, why do we have to move house? I like it here.

LEILA

Well... (deep breath) our lives are kind of like a book, and books have lots of chapters, right? Well, when we move, it's like we're turning over a page and starting a new chapter.

AMALIA

What's it called?

LEILA

What do you mean Mali?

AMALIA

The chapter? What's its name?

LEILA

That's a good question. I'll have to have a think about it...

*Orchestra begins to play introduction to **Sing In The Rain**, complete with thunder- and rain-like noises. LEILA holds out her hand to the sky.*

SINGERS enter and stand on stage island left. LIGHTS UP on stage island left.

LEILA

Oh no, I think it's starting to rain...

AMALIA

It's okay mummy - we have umbrellas!

DIRECTORS NOTE: In the original production we had the AV team turn off AMALIA and LEILA's microphones, then turn them back on for their lines in the instrumental, then turn them back off again. We did this because our lead actress had to instruct our child actress what to do next (ie. "now let's jump in some puddles / go around the other way now," etc).

LEILA and AMALIA put up their umbrellas. AMALIA starts to play by herself, running around the chair and jumping in puddles. LEILA looks drained, half-heartedly watching her daughter.

A few lines into the song, AMALIA runs up and tugs at LEILA's arm, in a "Mummy, come play with me!" way. LEILA holds AMALIA's hand as they jump in puddles together, chase each other around the chair, twirl their umbrellas, etc.

SING IN THE RAIN

SOLOIST 1

*When dark clouds drive in from a western sky
The wind tries to blow you off your feet
When lightning strikes at the very heart of you
And thunder shifts the ground beneath your feet
Lift up your head
Let raindrops stream down your face
It's in this moment you'll know His amazing grace
Then just sing in the rain
Just sing in the rain
When trouble flies like fury to your door
And your clock strikes midnight every hour
When you can't see the road through a flood of tears
And fear seems to take away all your power
Lift up your head
Let mercy stream down your face again
It's in this moment you'll know His amazing grace
Then just sing in the rain
Just sing in the rain...*

LEILA

Hey Mali, I think I know what we're going to call the next chapter - singing in the rain!

LIGHTS DOWN.

Scene 5

LIGHTS UP on the two side stage islands. LIZ is standing stage right, BEC is standing stage left. They are speaking together to address the audience - the third person in the conversation.

Mimic of Act 1, Scene 1.

LIZ

The day we helped Leila pack up her house was one of the saddest days of our lives. The removal truck had been booked for the next day, so we all pitched in to help. Kitchen, bathroom, laundry, guest room... most of Jake's stuff was already gone. Just a few boxes left in the corner with his name on them. There was an address we were supposed to send them to.

BEC

We stacked Leila's and Mali's boxes in the lounge room with the furniture. When it was done, no one knew what to say, or how to leave. It was heart-breaking.

LIGHTS DOWN.

ACT 3

Scene 1

Alternative Ending #1.

*LIGHTS UP on LEILA, who is standing at the back of the stage.
She walks forward, picking up items on the way and starts
packing into a box: children's toys, photos, a veil...*

Mimic of Act 1, Scene 1.

ALTAR REPRISE

LEILA

Brick by brick, stone by stone

Look what I'm building

I'm building an altar to You

Lest I forget where You've brought me this far or

The place that You're leading me to

Tear by tear, pain by pain

Look what I'm leaving

I'm leaving my burdens with You

Lest I forget what You've carried so far or

The cross that You carried it to

I know You're leading and watching and waiting

To see if I will carry through

*But right now I can't hear or see through these
tears*

So I'll wait

I'll wait

I'll wait

To hear from You

*JACOB walks on to the stage, watching LEILA pack.
She doesn't notice him until he starts to sing.*

JACOB

*Word by word, note by note, look what I'm writing
I'm writing a love song to you
Lest we forget where He's led us this far or
The place that He's leading us to--*

JACOB & LEILA

Us to

Us to

Us two

Music swells to a crescendo - in the last six bars, JACOB holds his hand out to LEILA who starts to lift her hand towards Jacob, then pulls back. This happens three times (you'll hear the rise and fall in the music) and finally, she lifts her hand to the sky, leaving Jacob with his arm outstretched towards her, and her own posture reaching to God.

LIGHTS DOWN.

ACT 4

Scene 1

*As ending #1 but **Altar** becomes **Warning** as Leila, remembering the past, sings it back to Jacob. Jacob echoes her in a duet.*

LIGHTS UP on LEILA, who is standing at the back of the stage. She walks forward, picking up items on the way and starts packing into a box: children's toys, photos, a veil...

ALTAR REPRISE

LEILA

Brick by brick, stone by stone

Look what I'm building

I'm building an altar to You

Lest I forget where You've brought me this far or

The place that You're leading me to

Tear by tear, pain by pain

Look what I'm leaving

I'm leaving my burdens with You

Lest I forget what You've carried so far or

The cross that You carried it to

I know You're leading and watching and waiting

To see if I will carry through

But right now I can't hear or see through these tears

So I'll wait

I'll wait

I'll wait

To hear from You

*JACOB walks on to the stage, watching LEILA pack.
She doesn't notice him until he starts to sing.*

JACOB

*Word by word, note by note, look what I'm writing
I'm writing a love song to you
Lest we forget where He's led us this far or
The place that He's leading us to--*

JACOB & LEILA

Us to

Us two

Us two...

*Music changes to **Warning**.*

WARNING

LEILA

*But I'll break your heart in the daylight
I'll strip you of all that is you
You turned me around threw my heart on the ground
Jake how can I trust you?*

LEILA

You broke my heart in the daylight

JACOB

I won't break you Lei...

LEILA

Your stripped us of all that is true

JACOB

I will not leave you Lei...

LEILA

You turned me around threw my heart on the ground

JACOB

See my heart's on the ground...

LEILA

How can I ever trust you?

JACOB

Please let me prove it to you...

This chorus is repeated two times, building.

AMALIA enters from backstage in her pyjamas, looking scared. She stands centre stage watching the fight. The music comes to an abrupt stop as the parents realise that she has been watching this final chorus.

JACOB

It's okay baby, come here...

AMALIA runs to JACOB who picks her up and holds her while LEILA is looking away, crying.

LEILA

I just don't understand.

JACOB

Understand what? What do you mean?

LEILA

There's no distance at all

But it feels like there's oceans between us

*Orchestra swells as it plays the chorus of 'Jericho Road' while JACOB takes AMALIA off stage and puts her back to bed. He re-enters at the end of **Jericho Road**, taking one step at a time towards LEILA as he sings. As she sings her reply, she takes a step backwards, shaking her head.*

JACOB

We're no Adam and Eve

LEILA

We're no Adam and Eve

JACOB

We're no Adam and Eve

LEILA

We're no Adam and Eve

LIGHTS DOWN.

ACT 5

Scene 1

As ending #2 with Altar/Warning reprise. Instead of Mali walking in, LEILA interrupts the song herself (at the same point, after three choruses).

LIGHTS UP on LEILA, who is standing at the back of the stage. She walks forward, picking up items on the way and starts packing into a box: children's toys, photos, a veil...

ALTAR REPRISE

LEILA

Brick by brick, stone by stone

Look what I'm building

I'm building an altar to You

Lest I forget where You've brought me this far or

The place that You're leading me to

Tear by tear, pain by pain

Look what I'm leaving

I'm leaving my burdens with You

Lest I forget what You've carried so far or

The cross that You carried it to

I know You're leading and watching and waiting

To see if I will carry through

*But right now I can't hear or see through these
tears*

So I'll wait

I'll wait

I'll wait

To hear from You

*JACOB walks on to the stage, watching LEILA pack.
She doesn't notice him until he starts to sing.*

JACOB

*Word by word, note by note, look what I'm writing
I'm writing a love song to you
Lest we forget where He's led us this far or
The place that He's leading us to--*

JACOB & LEILA

Us to

Us to

Us two...

*Music changes to **Warning**.*

WARNING

LEILA

*But I'll break your heart in the daylight
I'll strip you of all that is you
You turned me around threw my heart on the ground
How can I ever trust you?*

LEILA

You broke my heart in the daylight

JACOB

I won't break you Lei...

LEILA

Your stripped us of all that is true

JACOB

I will not leave you Lei...

LEILA

You turned me around threw my heart on the ground

JACOB

See my heart's on the ground...

LEILA

How can I ever trust you?

JACOB

Just let me prove it to you...

This chorus is repeated three times, building. At the end of the third chorus, LEILA yells STOP and the music cuts.

LEILA

Stop! Just stop! Jake! I can't do this anymore...

JACOB

(Awkward, fumbling, desperate) I'm sorry - the door was open, and I saw the light on. I knocked, but...

(Pause) Leila, I've come to apologise. I'm not here to ask for your forgiveness - I don't deserve that. I just need you to know how sorry I am for... I know you could never love me again after everything I've done, but I still need to -

LEILA

(Interrupting) Love you again?? Jacob Carver, don't you know me at all? I didn't stop loving you. I have never stopped loving you. It might have been easier if I had. The last five years wouldn't have been like living a nightmare -

JACOB

(Genuinely confused) The last five years? But I only left one year ago...

LEILA

It was Mali's second birthday. You weren't there. I told my parents you had to work - that you didn't have a

choice, but you did. And when you came home, you wouldn't look me in the eye. I still don't know where you were that night. That's when you started to leave. You were gone a long time before the night you moved out.

Long pause. JACOB is ashamed, distraught.

JACOB

Leila. Just tell me what to do. I'll do anything. If you still love me, then we might...

LEILA

Jake. I still love you, but I don't know if this can ever work again. So much has happened, I... *(trailing off, teary)*

JACOB

Then what can we do, Lei? *(Pause)* Isn't there anything I can do?

Another long pause. LEILA is torn. She remains cold towards him, still hurt. Should look very serious, like there is no chance for JACOB. Then deliver the line flatly.

LEILA

You can help me finish up with these boxes.

*The final verse of **Jericho Road** begins to play.*

JACOB reaches a hand towards LEILA, then places it back down at his side when she ignores it. He starts to pick up the cardboard boxes and carry them off stage. He does the first one or two by himself, while LEILA half watches, half exists in her own world of thoughts. Eventually she helps him fold and pack up the final boxes, until the stage is cleared. When all the boxes are gone, LEILA enters back on stage, looking around at her empty house. She has a hand on the wall, and on the final note of the song flicks her hand down as if flicking off the light switch.

LIGHTS DOWN.

ACT 5

Scene 2

LIGHTS DOWN. Stage is set up for a surprise birthday party. Audience can hear shuffling in the dark and quiet voices - some 'shh-ing' as the whole cast waits for LEILA. The story has skipped forward a few years and it's her 40th birthday.

AMALIA, now 18 years old, is bringing her in blindfolded.

JACOB waits near the back of the group.

AMALIA

We're almost there Mum, then you can take the blindfold off, I promise.

LEILA

(Feeling her way) You know I hate surprises, Mali, can't you just give me a clue about where we're going?

AMALIA

Nearly there, just...up this last step...and...

LIGHTS UP on party scene.

EVERYONE

SURPRISE!

Guests sing 'happy birthday' while LEILA, surprised but happy, hugs friends.

LEILA

(Laughing) Thank you everybody! *(Dryly)* Nice work Mali...

AMALIA

Did we do it?? Were you actually surprised??

LEILA

Well, there were a few clues - I'm turning 40 tomorrow, the blindfold, the secret texting all week...no baby I had no idea... *(laughing and hugging Amalia)*

AMALIA

Mum! You are impossible to surprise! We've been working on this for months, making sure everyone was available this weekend and I was sure...

LEILA

We? *(Looking at Tom and Liz)* This was your little project too, was it??

LIZ

Well actually, we didn't have much to do with it. But Mali did have some help...

JACOB walks into eye line. LEILA is visibly shocked; her hand flies to her mouth, but she tries to cover it with a smile. She greets JACOB warmly but there is a little awkwardness.

JACOB

Hi, Lei. Happy birthday! *(Moves forward to hug LEILA)*

LEILA

Jacob! *(Returns his hug a little awkwardly)*

JACOB

I hope it's okay that I'm here...

LEILA

Of course it is!! Of course! Sorry Jake - I'm just a little surprised - I haven't seen you for over a year...

JACOB

Mmm hmm - since Noah was born.

LEILA

(Remembering) That's right! Is he one already? How is he doing? And Rachael and the girls?

JACOB

They're all doing really well, thanks. We're *all* doing really well.

LEILA

(Genuinely) I'm so pleased to hear that. And - thank you. Thank you for this. I can't believe you all went to so much trouble! It's lovely...

JACOB

It was nothing. My pleasure...really. Mali told me you didn't want a party but we couldn't miss the chance to have the old crew back together. *(Aside)* And Lei - I wanted to take the opportunity to say thank you. I don't think I ever really told you how much it's meant that you always made room for me in Mali's life - even after I...

LEILA

Jake. *(Touching his arm)* You don't have to...

JACOB

No, I mean it Lei. It's like... *(reaching for words)* Like Rach and the kids are the music running through my life, and you're this counter-melody that stands alone, but somehow you're woven through everything. What I'm trying to say is: you have been good to me, and I'm so grateful.

LEILA

(Smiles) You've always been big on metaphor, haven't you?

JACOB

(Laughing at himself) I guess so...

AMALIA approaches cautiously.

AMALIA

Hey Dad? They want to start bringing out the food soon - but can we do the song first?

JACOB

(Looking a little uncomfortable) I don't know Mali...we said we'd talk about it if it felt...

LEILA

'The song'? What song?

AMALIA

(Proudly) Dad and I wrote you a song *(LEILA raises her eyebrows)* and I am not going to let him chicken out. C'mon dad, let's play it now and then you can relax and enjoy the rest of the party. *(Turning to the guests and tapping a glass)* Umm, excuse me everyone, my dad and I have a little surprise for mum, so if you can all gather around...

LEILA and JACOB look at each other; he shrugs and she smiles - LEILA is not quite sure what to think of this but takes a seat while everyone gathers around.

JACOB

(A little nervously) Hi everyone. Just before we eat, well, as some of you know, Mali and I have been writing together for the last few years... *(cheering from the guests)* Thank you! *(laughs)* And when we realised Leila's birthday was coming up, we decided to mark the occasion with a song in her honour, to let her know what she means to us. Leila, this is for you. It's called 'Northern Star'.

JACOB begins to sing. Throughout the song, as AMALIA and then the CHORUS join in, LEILA becomes increasingly uncomfortable. While the song starts off as a beautiful gesture, it becomes apparent to her that the initial problem from hers and JACOB'S relationship still exists: he's still looking to someone else for direction rather than God.

After the second chorus repeats, LEILA cannot listen anymore; she stands and sings the first line of the key change, trying to turn the focus to God. Everyone else joins in with the original words while she is singing the alternate lyrics; no one seems to notice.

NORTHERN STAR

JACOB

*From the day that we met
I knew you were special
You had light in your eyes
And sweet words on your tongue
But we didn't know then*

*How time would bend and shape us
We were so young
Now I'm standing beside you and
I still see my beautiful bride
And I can't find the right words to tell you but
Leila you're my northern star*

AMALIA

*Through the years you have shown
That you are so faithful
Though the journey is hard
And the road is so long
But you walk every day
With beauty and grace
You are so strong*

JACOB/AMALIA/CHORUS

*Your love burning so bright for us
Your joy lighting the way for us
Your peace calming the storm for us
Leila you're our northern star
Your love burning so bright for us
Your joy lighting the way for us
Your peace calming the storm for us
Leila you're our northern -*

LEILA

God's love! Burning so bright for you

ALL/LEILA

Your/His joy lighting the way through/for you

Your/His peace calming the storm through/for you

JACOB

Leila you are -

AMALIA

You are so faithful and -

ALL/LEILA

Leila/Father you're/You're our northern -

LEILA

Star!

In the final lines, the CHORUS moves back, leaving AMALIA and JACOB on either side of LEILA and the front of the stage. They are both turned towards her with arms outstretched. She sings her final line; everyone freezes except LEILA. She walks first to AMALIA and turns her head and hand towards the sky. She then walks to JACOB and turns his head and hand towards the sky. She stands back in the centre of the stage and reaches/looks up on the final note of the song.

LIGHTS DOWN.

THE END.