

CHARACTERS

(in order of appearance)

Newsies #1, #2, #3 - older children or young teens who “sell” the news

Reverend Fletcher - refined, distinguished pastor

Milton Spurlin - humble middle aged factory worker

Florene Spurlin- his middle aged, somewhat “proud” wife

Estelle Jacobs - Florene’s fiesty mother

Bradley Spurlin - young adult or older teen (solo)

Hattie Davenport - wealthy, arrogant wife of mill owner- middle aged

Randolph Davenport - arrogant mill owner- middle aged

Bonnie Davenport -young adult or older teen- daughter of Hattie and

Randolph(solo)

Jay - young adult or older teen, Bradley’s friend (solo)

Quinton- young adult or older teen, Bradley’s friend (solo)

Shark McShane - young to median adult - gangster-type (solo)

Sister Prudence Jordan - young to median adult - self righteous (solo)

Policeman- watchful, overbearing

Jenny - young adult or older teen- snooty, spoiled - Bonnie’s friend

Amanda- young adult or older teen- snooty, spoiled - Bonnie’s friend

J.D - the town’s kindly barber

Mabel - sweet shop owner

Photographer - seems to be everywhere at just the right time



SAMPLE

SCENE I

Sunday, October 27, 1929.

(Music begins)

(lights up on newsboys at down stage center)

Newsboy #1: Extra! Extra! Read all about it. Thomas Edison honored at the White House on 50th anniversary of the light bulb.

Newsboy #2: Extra! Extra! Read all about it. Philadelphia Athletics win the 1929 World Series.

Newsboy #3: Extra! Extra! Read all about it. Wall Street shaky after Black Thursday. But President Hoover says, "Not to worry."

SONG: High Cotton-Chorus

(Scene opens as congregation is sitting in pews at upstage center; Reverend Fletcher stands in the pulpit) . (Congregation is singing last lines of "There Is A Fountain")

CONGREGATION: *(singing)* And sinners plunged beneath that flood/Lose all their guilty stains/Lose all their guilty stains/lose all their guilty stains/And sinners plunged beneath that flood/Lose all their guilty stains/Amen

REVEREND: And now finally beloved... turn in the back of your hymnals to responsive reading number 84. I, of course, will read the light print and you will read the bold print. Responsive reading number 84. *(reading)* "He that is greatest among you shall be your servant.

CONGREGATION: *(reading)* Be not wise in your own conceits, but to every man that is among you, think not of himself more highly than he ought to think...

REVEREND: For there is no respect of person with God.

CONGREGATION: For every one that is proud in heart is an abomination to the Lord. (For) pride goeth before the fall."

REVEREND: Amen...and amen. May God richly bless the reading of His word. Let us stand and join in singing "Bless Be the Tie That Binds."

(Congregation stands and sings "Blest Be the Tie")

CONGREGATION: *(singing)* Blest be the tie that binds/Our hearts in Christian love/The fellowship of kindred minds/Is like to that above/Amen.

(organ postlude)

(Congregation begins to leave; a few linger to speak with the pastor...Milton, Florene, Estelle, Mr. and Mrs. Davenport are among them. At stage right a few "young" people have gathered. Among them are Bradley, Jay, Quinton, and Bonnie Davenport.) (organ postlude)

MILTON: *(shaking hands with Reverend)* Good service, Preacher.

REVEREND: Thank you, Milton. Hello Mrs. Spurlin...Mrs. Jacobs.

FLORENE: Reverend.

ESTELLE: Yessiree, that was a good service, Preacher. Hope all the sinners were listening.

REVEREND: Pardon me?

ESTELLE: Yeah, I don't think you can preach enough to prideful sinners.

FLORENE: Mama! Those sinners might hear you...

REVEREND: Now, Mrs. Jacobs. My text from the Gospel of Matthew says, "Where your treasure is...there will your heart be also". It means...

ESTELLE: I know, Preacher. You told them rich folks.

REVEREND: But ma'am, remember the responsive reading. It had the warning from Proverbs: "Pride goeth before the fall".

ESTELLE: Yeah, that's one of my favorites. Hope them sinners were listening!! *(exits left)*

REVEREND: But...

MILTON: Maybe you oughta preach that one again next Sunday, Preacher. Some people in this town need to hear that as often as they can. *(to Bradley)*
Hey, Bradley. You coming?

BRADLEY: I'll be home after 'while, Daddy.

FLORENE: *(to Bradley)* Dinner'll be ready soon. Don't be late.

BRADLEY: I won't Mama.

(exit Florene, Milton left)

(The Davenports approach the Reverend)

MRS. DAVENPORT: Lovely service, Reverend.

REVEREND: Delighted you enjoyed it, Mrs. Davenport.

MR. DAVENPORT: Yes, the sermon was very well delivered and...somewhat pertinent.

REVEREND: Thank you, Mr. Davenport...I think.

MR. DAVENPORT: Just hope the message didn't get lost in your eloquence.

REVEREND: Excuse me?

MRS. DAVENPORT: Randolph is paying you a compliment, Reverend.

REVEREND: Oh....

MRS. DAVENPORT: Yes, your topic was of uproots pertinence to this community. But we fear that some in this congregation might not be able to digest such a subject. They simply do not realize that they should heed the warning about pride.

REVEREND: Oh? Some of the congregation? And who might that be?

MRS. DAVENPORT: Oh, you know the kind. Those common laborers who seem to glory in their lowly state in life.

REVEREND: I see.

MRS. DAVENPORT: Oh, I suppose those people are to be pitied. Such behavior is bred, you see.

MR. DAVENPORT: Now Hattie, that Doctor Sigmund Freud says that it's environment.

MRS. DAVENPORT: No matter. The disadvantaged don't seem to notice their...disadvantage....and they even seem to revel in their low lifestyle. I hope they were listening to your sermon and to the scriptures about pride, Reverend.

REVEREND: *(sighs)* Oh, I hope so, too.