

Scene 10

HANNAH. I'm suggesting you leave the community.
 FANNY. I'm a strong worker. You can't make me leave.
 HANNAH. You haven't signed the covenant.
 FANNY. When the time comes I'll be a-signin'.
 HANNAH. You won't need to.
 FANNY. Why wouldn't I? No place better than this. It's heaven on earth here. Learned that from you. Don't you believe that, Sister Hannah?
 HANNAH. We are not here to talk about my beliefs, but yours.
 FANNY. Is that what we are talking about?
 HANNAH. You are insolent.
 FANNY. Not meaning to be. Just tryin' to understand.
 HANNAH. Then understand that it is time for you to depart.
 FANNY. I want to understand the angels. I want to know what they say.
 HANNAH. You are making this up.
 FANNY. The others hear them. They send them songs. And pictures. I see the angels, but I mostly don't know what they're saying. I want to understand them. I want to know what they say.
 HANNAH. Angels speak in heavenly tongues. *(Corrects herself.)* Would speak in heavenly tongues. If they were here.
 FANNY. But what do they say? Please help me.
 HANNAH. They are not here, I'm telling you.
 FANNY. Polly hears them. Izzy hears them. *(She corrects herself.)* Heard them.
 HANNAH. You have created this yourself.
 FANNY. Why do they talk to me?
 HANNAH. Indeed. Why would angels speak to you? *(A pause.)* You must go.
 FANNY. Where do you want me to go? You can't just send me away with a little suitcase. No, you wouldn't do that. You care about people. You do, Sister Hannah. You'd be thinking about me. You'd wonder what happened to me. Did my half-wit brother tear

my clothes off me in the outhouse? Did I give birth to my father's next child on some snowy night all alone with the wind a-howlin' through the cracks in the winders?
 HANNAH. That is enough.
 FANNY. You gonna send me out in the cold and pray that I don't end up like Polly a-layin' on my back in some fancy house in Lexington? Some travelin' men a-pawin' at me? Is that where you are sending me? You gonna pray for me there? You gonna pray me to a safe life, or pray that I go quickly up to heaven?
 HANNAH. You cannot talk to me this way.
 FANNY. Won't you even pray for me then? *(Possibly a pause.)*
 HANNAH. I pray for you every day.
 FANNY. But what do you pray? That I will disappear? Or that I'll show you where the angels are?
 HANNAH. We know where you go. The men are clearing the place right now.
 FANNY. No!
 HANNAH. The land will be plowed and fenced. Perhaps your "angels" won't be there any more. Why don't you simply stop talking about spirits? The others will forget about it and we can all resume our lives here.
 FANNY. You're tellin' me that if the angels go away I can stay.
 HANNAH. I am giving you a chance.
 FANNY. You're tellin' me that if the angels leave I don't have to.
 HANNAH. Girl, think about what you have been doing! Think! Do you honestly believe that celestial manifestations would appear to you, an uneducated young woman who has not even signed the covenant? If Mother Ann were to visit us, don't you think it would be the elders who would see her first? You are not a stupid girl. Don't you think Mother Ann would have something to say to us? To me?
 FANNY. Would you recognize her if you saw her?
 HANNAH. You will leave tonight!
 FANNY. *(With a sudden intake of breath, Fanny looks at something behind Hannah.)* You are not to send me away.
 HANNAH. You have no choice.
 FANNY. *(Fanny stares at something behind Hannah.)* I'll be good. I try to do ... I try ... I try ...

HANNAH. You will not do this.
 FANNY. Don't you see them?
 HANNAH. See what? What do you see?
 FANNY. They are so beautiful. So beautiful.
 HANNAH. *(Hannah looks all around.)* There is nothing there.
 FANNY. You can't see them, can you? You can't see them.
(Hannah holds Fanny by the shoulders and begins to shake her.)
 HANNAH. There is nothing to see.
 FANNY. I hear their voices. *(Hannah shakes Fanny.)*
 HANNAH. Tell me you see nothing. *(Hannah shakes Fanny harder and harder.)* Tell me you see nothing. Tell me you see nothing! *(She lets go of Fanny and kneels.)* Please. Please. Holy Mother Wisdom, hear my prayer.
 FANNY. They speak to me.
 HANNAH. Grant me the vision to see from my eyes as well as my heart.
 FANNY. *(To her spirits.)* What are you saying? *(Fanny shakes harder and harder and finally collapses on the floor, sobbing joyfully.)*
 HANNAH. *(Looking around the room.)* Holy Mother Wisdom, grant me this prayer. Let me see! Let me see! I will see. I will see. You will come to me. *(Betsy, Phebe, Rachel rush in.)*
 BETSY. We heard shouting.
 HANNAH. Sister Fanny is ill.
 RACHEL. I'm scared.
 HANNAH. There is nothing to be frightened of.
 RACHEL. Sister Fanny's an instrument. I've seen her. I see the face of Holy Mother Wisdom. The end of the world is near.
 BETSY. Calm yourself.
 RACHEL. I am a hypocrite. I haven't always believed.
 BETSY. Sister Rachel, you are a good Shaker.
 RACHEL. The sky is darkening. I must confess my sins before it's too late.
 HANNAH. Sister Rachel, you are free from sin. Have no fears. Sister Rachel, would you and Sister Phebe take Sister Fanny to her room? And pray for her salvation. Sister Fanny is ill. *(Rachel and Peggy assist Fanny. Hannah and Betsy move to another part of the stage. Lights change.)*

Scene 11

PHEBE. Are we being visited by angels?
 BETSY. The other villages report visits from spirits. The girls are seeing angels. At the other villages. Mount Lebanon. Hancock. Unfield. Tyngham. They all report visitations from the spirit world. Saint Peter, Saint Michael, Mother Ann. *(A pause.)* Sister Hannah? *(A pause.)* Sister Hannah? What does this mean? *(A pause.)* All of the villages. Spirit manifestations. Songs, drawings. Visions. Gifts. Angels. *(A pause.)*
 HANNAH. There are no angels.
 PHEBE. There are reports from ...
 HANNAH. I know about the reports.
 BETSY. Perhaps we are not acknowledging the gifts we receive.
 HANNAH. The truth of a spiritual gift is tested over time.
 BETSY. Sister Rachel believes the end of the world is coming.
 HANNAH. Sister Rachel is mistaken.
 PHEBE. It's spread throughout the entire community —
 BETSY. The elders at Mt. Lebanon are preparing a Sacred Site. *(A pause.)*
 HANNAH. Are the elders receiving gifts? At Hancock? Mount Lebanon? Are there reports of the elders receiving gifts?
 PHEBE. No. Not the elders.
 BETSY. Earthly vessels are sometimes unworthy of the spirits that fill them. *(A pause.)*
 PHEBE. We must act upon this.
 HANNAH. We must all get back to work. There is much work to do.
 PHEBE. Sister Hannah, we can no longer ignore ...
 HANNAH. Who is ignoring this? I would like to ignore it. How can you ignore giggling girls awake at all hours of the night? Spinning when the mood strikes them. Shaking and trembling and saying that spirits are interrupting their chores.
 BETSY. Sister Hannah ... *(Hannah turns to her.)* Mother Ann had a shaking gift. Mother Ann saw spirits. Mother Ann had gifts. But