
And Galileo Saw A Pendulum, While Sitting In A Church

A Freedom Play Piece with Classical Newtonian Physics

by Sara Kumar

~Notes to the Readers of Mysterious Love of God~

There was always some light
from stars, lovely ballerinas.

Let the reading unfold
in time,
with God's love.

Let water be heard by the sound of bells.

~Characters, In Order of Appearance~

Dolly, a woman in her forties, who didn't want to lose
her freedom

Andy, a man in his fifties, who loved to think about his
days at Tusculum College

Stagehand Henry, a man in his twenties,
who worked so hard

Stagehand Hamlin, a man in his fifties, who loved his
life, and who loved politics

Eliza, a woman in her fifties, who kept so much hurt
hidden from others

Sam, a man in his thirties, who waited for his sister
to help him move in life

Frederick, a man in his forties, who waited for his sons
to move in life

Thaddeus, a man in his seventies, who loved to think about children in his life

~Characters, In Order of Appearance~

Charles, a man in his fifties who wanted to be thinking
about women's clothing and votes

Mary, a woman in her thirties who wished people could change
for themselves and for more people

Elijah, a man in his twenties who wanted
to care for children eventually,
even at the start

Ketch, a man in his thirties, who isn't afraid to listen
to God, who speaks

Angel of Greeneville, the Angel who loves a town and the people

Thomas, the voice of a former president
named Jefferson, who needs to amend

And Galileo loved to think about the height of rubber soles

Martha, a woman in her thirties, who wanted
things to be done at a local level only, at the
start

Sara, the woman who needs a friend,
and who writes a script

DOLLY

I think I'm not a slave, Mr. Johnson.

I know I'm not a slave, Mr. Johnson.

And I just can't call ya Master know more cause I know it.

I'm Dolly, but I ain't a Johnson.

I don't wants to be a Johnson.

I needs to tell ya, it ain't guud wid it no more.

It ain't guud wid me.

I'll say it, but I don't mean it.

ANDY

You say it, er I ain't gonna feed ya!

DOLLY

I ain't da kind ta die and die.

I ain't dat kind.

We needs to talk some more den.

We needs to talk and talk some more.

*(And dey walk to center and sit down for awhile
before dey go in to da house in Nashville.*

*Stagehand Henry arrives in Greeneville pullin a cart with horses from Nashville,
and Stagehand Hamlin departs the cart
at the Railroad Tracks in Greeneville, near Eliza's home.*

*Eliza stands by her window waiting on Mary to come in, but she doesn't,
so Eliza slowly walks over to her arm chair that is her bed.
Eliza sits down in a normal way and covers herself with a gray blanket
that is not heavy.*

*Stagehand Hamlin begins a walk toward the Local Inn in town and sits at the bench.
It is August, and the year is 1863.)*

DOLLY

Massa Johnson got me, was nineteen year old. Brother Sam jus thirteen years.
Remember da day?

ANDY

I'm rememberin, Dolly. You's said come and buy me. I ain't gonna die here.
Vicksburg's the nail that holds the South together. It'll break in two now,
just wait and see. You got it, Sam?

SAM

I'm a gettin it.

ANDY

You know I never went to school a day in my life.
Learned to read from the town physician while I was plying the needle
and shoving the hot goose.
Broke the chains and ran away to Tennessee like you did.

DOLLY

Oh I wish I was like you, Massa Johnson! My chains been broke already.

ANDY

Proud noble Southern fathers diggin the graves of their own flesh and blood
just so they can cling to their slaves at home.

Justice divine to punish sin moves slow.

The slower is her step, the surer is her blow!

DOLLY

You sure do got da words, Massa Johnson.

ANDY

What's today, Sam?

(Sam had been fixing Andy's desk podium, so it stand steady on da floor.

One 'o da wheels been broke.)

SAM

I think your table is fixed, Massa Johnson.

I done good like I do here for ya.

I don't know da day, but it's Saturday alright.

I need a good break, Massa Johnson.

Tame work for a Saturday. I need a good break.

I need to play awhile. Don't mind it, do ya?

ANDY

I need the date.

*(An Andy checks da podium
and sees it werks betta on da ground naw.)*

DOLLY

It's August. Something August.

ANDY

I know the date. It's August eight, 1863.

Mark it, Sam. I'm granting you your freedom this day.

(And Andy writes on a papa, he pull out from under da podium, in a drawer.)

DOLLY

Oh now, what about me?!

ANDY

I ain't forgettin 'bout ya.

DOLLY

And my Liz, Florence, and Will? You don't forget dem, Massa Johnson.

Not yet. Dey need freedom, like my brotha an I do.

ANDY

I'll make it dat way, Dorry. Cause ya worry, all da time.

DOLLY (*earnestly*)

Oh sweet Jesus, thank you, I never dreamed I'd live to see da day.

ANDY

Go tell it on the mountain top that Andy Johnson freed his slaves today.

Abe Lincoln can't hold that over me now.

SAM

How about da whole 'o Tennessee?

ANDY

What you mean Sam?

SAM

Jus us or all us here, in da state of Tennessee?

I gots to know,

cause our cousin Elijah need freein too.

ANDY

The slower the step, the surer the blow.

SAM

Massa Johnson, what we gonna do now we free?

ANDY

What do you mean, Sam?

DOLLY

Don't go bite yo tongue now, Sam.

SAM

Sister, I mean we don't have no place to go.

ANDY

I'm freein ya. And I can do that.

That's my prerogative as your owner.

Abe freed the slaves in the South, and I can free you.

Leave Tennessee to me. That's my prerogative too as da g'vnor.

DOLLY

We mighty grateful.

SAM

So you keep us on den?

ANDY

Now there's a question for you,
can the negro work on his own account?

SAM

Oh I can work, Massa Johnson, I can work.

ANDY

G'on now. I need ya to get on.

I need to write a speech.

(Andy sets a pen to the air, and the candle on his podium is low.

He was holdin it while Sam was fixin da podium.)

ANDY

Dolly, wait come in here. Dis candle low.

Can't ya hep?

DOLLY

We ain't got no mo candles.

Shipment ain't arrived, from up north here to Nashville.

Ain't no hep here.

ANDY

Den I hep myself.

I got a way wid words. I can write it in ma sleep. G'on now.

(And Dolly open da door fer some sunlight to come awn through.)

SAM

That'd hep ya. Massa Johnson, that'd hep ya.

*(Sam and Dolly leave da home in Nashville,
and move stageleft wid a movement dat dance
wid da wind awl da way to da downstairs kitchen.)*

End of Act 1, Scene 1.