

# WOMAN OF WELCOMING HEART

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*The Nano Nagle Story*



**NANO NAGLE STORY**

*This show has been designed to educate, inspire, and entertain. Fictional characters have been introduced in some places. It is hoped that the overall story will help share the remarkable courage and compassion of Nano Nagle as she followed her calling in life and that it might inspire a new generation to delve deeper into her life and mission, and perhaps take up her lantern and follow in her footsteps.*

Tom Conroy.

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# **WOMAN OF WELCOMING HEART**

(The Nano Nagle story)

By

Dan E Hyland and Tom Conroy  
(Song Lyrics from Poems by Raphael Consedine PBVM)

Script Adviser  
Sister Roisin Gannon PBVM



# ACT ONE

## Scene 1

*Music "She's A Woman Of Welcoming Heart" starts.*

**USL**

**Elevated platform - An Older Nano, in dim spot light, is kneeling and praying with her head bowed. The rest of the stage is in blackout. The Older Nano finishes praying and slowly looks around the auditorium; she smiles, and then raises her head to God.**

**Cross fade**

**DSL**

**The classroom. Modern day Ireland.**

**The room is decked out as a classroom with the children in their school uniforms, ages range from twelve to fourteen. They are sitting at their desks listening to the teacher, Miss Mere a teacher in her late thirties whose favorite catchphrase is "My desire is to inspire". She is teaching the class to sing the chorus to the song "She's A Woman Of Welcoming Heart" before describing, with great enthusiasm, the upcoming school trip to the National Museum.**

*Chorus x2 (All sing)*

*She's a "Woman Of Welcoming Heart,"*

*Hands open, doors wide-flung.*

*She's a "Woman Of Welcoming Heart,"*

*Hear her voice grown dear from listening for years,*

*Her choice is giving knowledge as her art,*

*She's a "Woman Of Welcoming Heart."*

**Miss Mere:** Beautiful everyone, just beautiful!! Now we have a long day ahead of us tomorrow and we will be setting off at 9am in the morning. So, 5C, make sure that you are up, washed and fed before you get to school. No shirts hanging out David Callaghan, no runny noses, Margaret Hines and no chewing gum Emily Harding. And please make sure that you have all been to the bathroom before we leave. We don't want a repeat of last year do we, Connor Dundun?

**All class:** No Miss Mere.

**Miss Mere:** What is your desire?

**All class:** My desire is to inspire.

**Miss Mere:** Excellent, 5C

**Nell is a twelve year old girl with all the energy, guts, and guile all twelve year olds should have. She is a well liked Girl who sees the world as an adventure playground full of pirates and princesses, dragons and monsters, and hates being cooped up in classrooms, or Museums for that matter.**

**Nell:** Ah Miss why do we have to go to a silly museum..can't we just go to the forest and make rope swings into the river like what we did in the summer?

**Miss Mere:** We can if you like, Nell, but then how will you see the dinosaurs and cavemen in the

museum? Maybe they will come to life and chase us all around the place **(She runs at the children who whoop with enjoyment)** and try and eat us for their dinner.

**Nell:** They won't do that Miss; sure they're all dead and stuffed with wax.

**Miss Mere:** How do you know Nell Gerard, have you been there before? Have you seen the astronauts flying all around the place? Have you seen the majestic animals of the wild creeping around every corner trying to eat you alive? **(She runs at the children again who, again squeal in response)**

**Nell:** Astronauts Miss, real live ones, really? I love spaceships and astronauts, me Miss.

**Miss Mere:** Real enough, Nell, real enough. You don't want to go swinging on a swing when you can enrich your mind with the full splendor of a museum do you?

**Nell:** No Miss. But what if Miss...

**Miss Mere:** What if what, Nell?

**Jason:** What if she can't afford it Miss, is what she was gonna say.

**Nell:** No I wasn't, you!

**Jason:** She can't afford nothing, Miss. The state of her.

**Miss Mere:** That's enough from you Jason.

**Nell:** You should take a look at yourself once in a while.

**Miss Mere:** What were you going to say, Nell, before you were so rudely interrupted?

**Nell:** Well it's true though, Miss: What if I can't go? What if me Daddy won't sign the forms? He says that he can't afford to send me off to see astronauts and cavemen. Can I go on the swing by meself then?

**Miss Mere:** By meself...what kind of language is by me self?

**Nell:** On me own like, Miss, it means on me own.

**Miss Mere:** I know what it means, Nell, it's your pronunciation that is hindering.

**Nell:** Me pronunci what?

**Miss Mere:** Pronunciation child, the way you speak.

**Nell:** What's wrong with it? Will I talk slower like Miss? Can you not be understanding me Miss? Me Daddy says that I do be talking funny at times.

**Miss Mere:** You speak and talk just fine Nell.

**Nell:** Will I use me pron-umpi-tation will I Miss?

**All the children laugh**

**Miss Mere:** That's enough 5C **(The Bell rings and all the children start to leave the classroom all except Nell)** Ok leave quietly and remember 9 O'clock sharp in the morning and go to the bathroom before you leave home, we don't want a repeat of the last one now do we? **(She pats the heads of all the departing pupils with a loving smile)** I will not retire until I see one of you as president of Ireland. Tomorrow is a day of learning and fulfillment and brain nourishment; speaking of which, packed lunches. Pack an extra sandwich for the journey home. Always be ready for the unexpected. I will make doctors and brain surgeons out of you all yet, that I promise. **(She turns to**

**notice Nell)** Nell Gerard, the school bell has rung and you are still here, well now that's a first. **(She is visibly upset)** Nell? Nell what's wrong with you?

**Nell:** You heard them, Miss, they all laugh at me, they do Miss, all the time because I don't have what they have. I don't be getting away, Miss, like they all do. I don't know what Spain looks like or Disney world looks like. I know Suzie Hennessy does. Sure she tells us every day, sure. And I know they all do be laughing at me because, because me Daddy doesn't have a well paid job but he does his best all the same: and because we don't have fancy clothes and money, Miss. And because...

**Miss Mere:** ...because you are funny, Nell and intelligent and bright and kind hearted that is why they laugh, Nell. Not at you, but with you. Yes some children get away but the majorities don't. You are certainly not alone there, I can tell you. You are a lovely child and with brains to burn, and if I ever had a child, and don't tell anyone else this, but I would love one just like you.

**Nell:** Me Miss?

**Miss Mere:** Yes, you Nell.

**Nell:** You think that of me, Miss.

**Miss Mere:** Yes Nell.

**Nell:** I'm not clever though, Miss. I'm thick as a brush, Jason Sprag tells me all the time. **(Mimicking in a deep voice)** "What's the point of learning anyways?" he says "You're as thick as a stick and ya gonna be cleaning the streets or working behind a bar. It's all's you'll be good for".

**Miss Mere:** Take no notice of Jason Sprag...And I have already spoken to your father on the phone and I had a bit of a chat with him. He is coming up to sign the forms after school.

**Nell:** Is he?

**Miss Mere:** He is and to answer Jason Sprag's question of learning: Learning is, learning is, **(searching for the right words)** look just because someone says "it's not great" doesn't mean to say that it won't be. Learning is everything Nell. Learning is power. And one day you will see that. The pen is mightier than the sword.

**Nell:** Seriously Miss, you wouldn't fight someone with a pen and them with a sword, now would ya?

**Miss Mere:** Do you know what learning is, Nell? Have you ever sat and thought for just one second why you can read and write? Or would you rather not be able to read and write?

**Nell:** No. Of course not, Miss. Sure everyone loves to be able to read. I love me snapchats.

**Miss Mere:** Snapchats indeed. Imagine looking for work around the streets of Dublin, Cork, Longford or anywhere else for that matter bare foot, hungry, in rags and with no education, money or work?

**Nell:** Er, Ok.

**Miss Mere:** Then imagine being that person when out of the blue a chance comes up in a shop window with a sign outside saying "Hiring today" what would you do?

**Nell:** I'd go in and say "Take that sign down Missus, your troubles are over because I'm the girl to solve your hiring problems, when can I start?"

**Miss Mere:** How can you do that though Nell?

**Nell:** Sure, I'm hard working Miss, who wouldn't want to hire a hard worker?

**Miss Mere:** I agree but how did you know they were hiring?

**Nell:** Sure, I read the sign.

**Miss Mere:** But what if you couldn't read?

**Nell: (thinks for a second)** Oh yea. I wouldn't be able to go in because I wouldn't know what the sign meant. Now I get it, education is a good thing.

**Miss Mere:** Good, Nell. Now let me tell you this, just so that you can read, do you know what one very courageous lady did so all children of Ireland could have an education, so this whole Island could just simply be able to read and write?

**Nell:** What did she do Miss? Was she a brain-iac, Miss? Was she clever, Miss?

**Miss Mere:** She was more than clever, Nell, much more than that.

**Nell:** Was she clever enough to be able to write with a sword Miss?

**Miss Mere:** Maybe not that clever, but she did defy the might of the British rule with only a...

**Nell:** A Pen Miss?

**Miss Mere:** Not quite a pen, Nell, but a bit of faith. You see, she had God on her side.

**Nell:** God, Miss? The real God? Did He have a sword? This lady sounds like a real rebel.

**Miss Mere:** Now jump up onto my desk, stay quiet and listen while I tell you the story of a girl from Ballygriffin in the rebel county of Cork. A girl who changed everything and her name was Nano Nagle.

**Nell Jumps up onto the table**

*Song – “Come Listen” Performed by Miss Mere*

**Scene change during song behind curtain into 1735 Paris.**

*Intro*  
*“Come listen, led by your spirit,*  
*Little by little, lift up your faith.*  
*Come listen, led from within,*  
*All is quiet, come listen.*

*Verse*  
*Deep like a valley she planted her seed,*  
*Till it became vibrant and strong.*  
*It rose like the Sunrise for hundreds of years,*  
*Till it became our voices in song.*  
*The branches hang further and further,*  
*In darkness, in winter, or summer.*  
*Many now follow her journey,*  
*Her seed has become a great tree.*

*Outro*  
*Come listen, led by your Spirit,*  
*Little by little, lift up your faith.*  
*Come listen, follow her journey,*  
*Her seed has become a great tree.*  
*Her seed has become a great tree”.*

**Dim light on Older Nano kneeling. She stands up and exits the stage Left**

**Song fades**

## Scene 2

### Paris France 1735.

*Dramatic Song and Dance - "A Woman Becoming" (Performed by all)*

*Verse 1*

*Running in fields and orchards, free as the wind in the grass,  
What are you absorbing from the daily rhythms of life going past?  
Brothers and sisters around you, parents - trustworthy and strong,  
What do you dream by the river as it tells of a world beyond?*

*Chorus*

*Where will your heart find its pathway, will it be in this country?  
Why do you sit on the stones away from your loving family?  
Does wonder wake in you at the coming of the spring?  
Who are you little girl? You are a woman becoming.*

*Verse 2*

*Colours of rip'ning apples, beautiful smells in the woods,  
What do you sense within you taking root, urgencies deep in your blood?  
By the quiet fireside with grown-ups worshipping,  
What do you make of your inheritance, what are you learning?*

*Repeat Chorus*

*Bridge*

*Knowledge is precious,  
Worthy of effort and risk.  
Lift up your eyes, take your place,  
There are lessons to face*

*Repeat Chorus*

*Last Line*

*A woman becoming.*

**After song finishes, "d'Anglebert Menuet" starts playing.**

**Ann and Fleur are dancing with two gentlemen. Young Nano and a young man, Sebastian, both seventeen, are dancing together in a great ball room surrounded by dignitaries of France. They are all the toast of the ball and everyone politely applaud them when the music ends. The girls leave the dancing and stand at the side having drinks. Everyone is dressed with the finest clothes Paris has to offer. Music and dancing start up again quietly in the background. (For this background music, use any of the Menuets from "Notebook of Anna Magdalena Bach", published in 1722 and available online. Play on Piano or Harpsichord.) The three huddle gathered together.**

**Fleur:** Oh girls this is such a wonderful evening...I must have danced with all the gentlemen here tonight.

**Ann:** Me too, my feet are on fire, but I don't want this evening to end.

**Nano:** I have been waiting for Jean Claude to ask me to dance and he keeps getting distracted by

that man over there.

**Ann:** That's Maurice de Saxe, Nano...he is very high in the French army, a marshal I suspect.

**Fleur:** I see that Sebastian has taken your eye Nano, that is twice you and he have danced this evening.

**Nano:** I know, he is sweet, but if Jean Claude asks me then I will dance with no other.

**Ann:** Every time we come here you seem to only want to dance with Jean Claude. There are so many to dance with. I think you love him.

**Nano:** Stop it Ann, you'll have tongues wagging.

**The three girls start to giggle**

**Ann:** It is true though. What about Emmanuelle Pertit, he is really handsome? Fleur likes to dance in his strong arms. Don't you Fleur?

**Fleur:** I do and I'm not ashamed to say so. His arms are like an ox.

**Nano:** I love the way he says Ballygriffin.

**Ann:** Who do you mean, Emmanuelle?

**Nano:** No, Jean Claude. When we talk about home. He pronounces it as Bollygrowfin.

**The three girls start to giggle.**

**Fleur:** Well I have been asked three times this evening for my hand in marriage and it is not even midnight.

**Nano:** Me too.

**Ann:** Be very careful what you respond with girls because these are the most powerful men in France and if they want to marry you then you get married. Be stern in your response as they will look for any form of weakness in your answer.

**Nano:** I know what to say, Ann, and who to say it to. I'm far too young to be married, unless Jean Claude...

**Fleur:** Nano, no.

**Ann:** Be careful what you wish for Nano.

**Nano:** Oh Ann you're beginning to sound like Daddy.

**Ann:** Look who's coming over. I hear wedding bells.

**Jean Claude, a young dignitary walks over to the three ladies. They all smile and waft their fans as he approaches.**

**Jean Claude:** Mademoiselles.

**Girls:** Monsieur De'lap.

**Jean Claude:** Nano may I av ziz dance?

**Nano:** You certainly may, Monsieur.

**Ann:** Remember what I said.

**Nano:** Shush.

**Nano and Jean Claude walk to the dance floor as the music continues to play.**

**They dance and Nano looks to be totally smitten.**

**The music ends.**

**Jean Claude:** Nano will we go outside and get some fresh air?

**Nano:** I would love to.

**DSR**

**Two benches with one unoccupied**

**The two go and sit on a bench under the stars.**

**Jean Claude:** I am sorry zat I avent danced with you this evening, I av add some business to take care of. You see my father...

**Nano:** It's ok, you're with me now.

**Jean Claude:** Nano you dance so well, you brighten up ze room. I feel zat you learnt to dance in Bollygroiffin, Cowk, Yes?

**Nano giggles**

**Nano:** Not at all. You are so funny Jean Claude. It's pronounced Ballygriffin in the county of Cork and to answer your question, no, I had two left feet over there.

**Jean Claude:** I saw you dance with Sebastian. And you dance good, yes? So, I guess you must have been taught to dance in Bally griffin in ze county of Cork.

**Nano:** Well I was very good at country dancing.

**Jean Claude:** Country dancing?

**Nano:** Yes Country dancing.

**Jean Claude:** Country is dancing, yes?

**Nano:** Sort of. It's a bit like, like swinging each other around a bit. But I wouldn't let Daddy hear me say that. It's where he and Mammy met. Daddy is a fabulous dancer and the greatest man alive, including you Jean Claude De'lap.

**Jean Claude:** Is zat so?

**Nano:** He is the reason I'm here because he told me to fight for what is right and what I believe in. So I came here to learn.

**Jean Claude:** Fight for what you believe in? Very good I av never erd zat. Nano I zink zat we were meant to meet here in this place tonight and to share each ozzer's company. I want to learn all about you and Cowk and bolly groifon.

**Nano:** Haha Ballygriffin in Cork. Oh Jean Claude I have spent more time with you this past couple of weeks than I have my teachers.

**Jean Claude:** Tell me, what are ze schools like in Cowk? Are zey good the schools and tutors in Ballygrooffin?

**Nano:** Not for the likes of me they're not.

**Jean Claude:** Ze pretty ones, you mean?

**Nano:** No, Jean Claude, stop it. No we don't have schools for the Catholics. The British have reduced us to a miserable existence without hope, property and worst of all education. That is why we were smuggled here, into France. It is forbidden in Ireland to travel abroad to be educated but my father thinks, and rightly so, that every child needs to be able to read and write and be free to choose their own paths in life. Do you not think so Jean Claude, regardless of their religion?

**Jean Claude:** I agree wiz every-zing you say Nano and will do for all eternity.

**Nano:** You're so sweet.

**Jean Claude:** Nano, I must ask, my father is holding a banquet tomorrow night in honor of his friend Marquis de Maillebois. I would be honored if you would join me. I am sure zat my father would delight in your beauty, the same way that I am captivated by you. He does love ze pretty girls.

**Nano:** Stop it I'm not pretty. Ann and Fleur are the pretty ones I'm the, the, **(Looking deep into his eyes)** the lucky one. Jean Claude, I would be delighted to go to your house.

**Jean Claude:** Perfect. Not only are you beautiful, Nano, but your are exquisite, perfect, astonishing, kind hearted, magnificent. Zeez past few weeks have been ze happiest of my life. It is no shame, on my part to say zat I have fallen in love with you.

**Nano:** Oh Jean Claude stop it, please. It is safe to say that here and now, with you, my life is perfect. And I think with Gods will. I think that I...

**Jean Claude and Nano close in to each other about to kiss when, Maurice de Saxe, one of the dignitaries, pulls Jean Claude away.**

**Maurice: (To Nano)** Excusez-moi mademoiselle but I have to have a word with ziz rap scallion. He az been avoiding me all night and I need an answer from him about marring my daughter.

**Jean Claude:** Monsieur de Saxe, I...

**Nano:** Marrying?

**Jean Claude:** No Nano, **(Turning towards de Saxe)** Monsieur de Saxe I av no intentions of marrying your daughter Marie-Aurore. We never talked about it, not even once.

**Maurice:** Well she and your father see it differently.

**Nano:** Jean Claude?

**Jean Claude: (to Nano)** Nano I have never said zat I would marry. **(Towards de Saxe)** When did my father? Monsieur de Saxe, can I speak to you in private please? Nano please stay here I will be back very shortly. Please do not leave. I will return. Where iz my fazzer?

**The two men leave and Nano looks around. Ann, escorted by a young man, Emmanuelle, walks over to her.**

**Ann:** May I introduce...

**Emmanuelle:** Excusez-moi mademoiselle, but can I av ziz dance?

**Nano looks at Ann.**

**Nano:** Yes. Yes you can. You are Emmanuelle Dechamp, is that right?

**Emmanuelle:** It is you are quite correct. You are?

**Nano:** Nano, Nano Nagle.

**Emmanuelle:** Nano? What a perfect name.

**Nano:** Perfect. I heard you have arms like an ox!

**Emmanuelle:** Excusez-moi?

**Nano:** Never mind.

**Nano and Emmanuelle start to dance.**

**Blackout.**

## Scene 3

Nano is traveling through the quiet streets of Paris with Ann and Fleur, when she notices a small group of poor workers waiting outside the church and orders the driver to stop. One small child in particular looks disheveled and undernourished. His clothes are rags and he, like the others, is filthy dirty. He is kneeling and praying. Nano and the girls get out of the carriage. Nano grabs a lantern from the driver and walks over to the small boy. The two girls remain at the carriage.

The workers and children are despondently singing the first four lines to “Take Down Your Lantern and Go Out”

*Take down your lantern and go out,  
Do not dwell on fear or doubt.  
Seek Christ in winding lanes  
And love shall light your lantern-flame.*

**Fluer:** Nano, be careful.

**Ann:** Where are you going Nano, what are you doing?

**Nano continues towards the people.**

**Nano:** Hello there little one. What is your name?

**The boy opens his eyes and smiles from ear to ear.**

**Hugo:** My name is Hugo, mademoiselle angel.

**Nano:** Hugo, well that is a lovely name. Why are you not at home? It is very early in the morning and where are your parents?

**Hugo:** You are an angel sent from God, mademoiselle?

**Nano:** An angel? Dear child no I am not.

**Hugo:** But you arrived just as I was praying for help and God sent you. You look like an angel.

**Nano:** Your parents Hugo, where are they?

**Hugo:** Zey are in Heaven, mademoiselle angel. And zey sent you to elp me, did they not?

**Nano:** Oh child, come here to me.

**Hugo:** I asked for a guiding light to show us the way and you came, mademoiselle angel.

**Nano embraces the young boy and addresses the other people around the church door**

**Nano:** Excuse me, who is responsible for this child?

**No one replies.**

**Nano:** Can someone please tell me why you are here, and why are you all gathering at the door of the church?

**Old woman:** Who are you? Are you ze authority?

**Nano:** No, no, no how rude of me. So sorry, my name is Nano Nagle. I am from Ireland, I am studying here in Paris. I was just passing and I was wondering...Erm what is your name?

**Old man:** Ireland is British, no? So, you are British... **(He spits on the ground)**

**Nano: (Angry)** I can assure you I am not British, good sir! **(He spits on the ground, again)** And will you please stop doing that? I am Irish; I come from Cork in Ireland.

**Hugo:** Is Ireland God's house in Heaven?

**Nano:** Not quite. But it is beautiful though...and definitely not British.

**Old man:** We come every morning to pray and to get warm. Sometimes the Priest brings food, sometimes not, but we come here every day regardless to pray that God will save us from this misery. As for my name, does it matter what my name is?

**Hugo:** This is Mademoiselle Angel from Heaven. I prayed as she arrived. My parents sent her here to elp us. Isn't that right Mademoiselle Angel? You are here to elp, yes? To save us, yes? **(Hugo starts to cough.)**

**Nano kisses the child on the head and she sits him down at the lamppost and smiles then closes his eyes, exhausted.**

**Hugo:** Zank you, Mademoiselle Angel.

**Nano looks around at all the people then she notices her own lavish existence. In a hurry she goes back to her carriage, puts down her lantern and takes all the money she has in her bag.**

**Nano:** Girls do you have any money at all?

**Fleur:** Money, Nano?

**Ann:** Yes we do, Nano **(She nudges Fleur)**

**The girls give Nano the money**

**Nano: (To the driver of the carriage)** Do you have any money?

**Driver:** What? Mademoiselle, you are supposed to pay me.

**Nano:** Do you have any money, I said?

**Driver:** Is zis a stick up?

**Nano:** No it is not. Look I will give you double for the ride when we get to my residence. Do you have any money, food anything?

**Driver:** Yes but...

**Nano:** Then please give it to me.

**Driver:** Ziz is most unheard of Mademoiselle. And you will pay me double, yes?

**Nano:** Yes double, hurry.

**Driver:** I av a family to feed too, Mademoiselle.

**Nano:** I will pay you, good sir. On my word and as God is my witness.

**The driver mutters to himself then reluctantly hands over his money and a small rolled up piece**

of cheese and bread. Nano, picks up the lantern and starts to share the food and money out to all the people who in turn swamp her to kiss her hand and thank her over and over as they start to savagely eat the food.

The workers, no longer despondent, start singing the first four lines to “Take Down Your Lantern and Go Out” while eating the food...

*Take down your lantern and go out,  
Do not dwell on fear or doubt.  
Seek Christ in winding lanes  
And love shall light your lantern-flame.*

**Nano comes centre stage and sings the remainder of the song**

*Do not build yourself confining walls,  
For it is certain need loudly calls.  
And do not say: “Thus far shall I walk, and nothing more.”  
And do not say: “These things shall I do, and nothing more.”  
Your pilgrim heart shall urge you one pace beyond.  
Take down your lantern and go out.*

The priest enters and opens the church doors. The crowd filters through after him and leave Nano. In all the fuss, no-one realizes that the small boy, Hugo, is lying on the ground dead. Nano rushes over to him.

**Nano:** Hugo (**She nudges him**) Hugo, here is some food. Hugo. Wake up!

**Nano realizes that he is dead. Nano looks up at the church door.**

**Nano:** God help them.

**Blackout.**

## Scene 4

**Nano's sister, Anne, is sitting at her writing desk, she is looking upset.**

**DSL**

**Miss Mere continuing the story to Nell.**

**Miss Mere:** Nano never forgot that encounter with those people and would often talk about it throughout her life. But, saying that, Nano loved her time in Paris. She would go to parties and galas and thoroughly embraced the freedom and the high life France had to offer.

**Nell:** She sounds like a right one, Miss.

**Miss Mere:** Well, now she was young, free, single and had money. I dare say she had a ball. What girl wouldn't in that situation?

**Nell:** I know what I would do, Miss Mere.

**Miss Mere:** There you go. What would you do, Nell?

**Nell:** I'd buy pizza all day long, Miss.

**Miss Mere:** Ha ha. Nell.

**Crossfade CS**

**Enter Nano. She is very excited and walks around the room with a spring in her step. Then slops onto the sofa with an air of romance in her voice.**

**Anne:** Nano where have you been: I have almost the whole of Paris looking for you?

**Nano:** I have been down at the harbor Gala with Baptiste and Emmanuelle. Do you know Emmanuelle Anne?

**Anne:** Of course I do Nano, sure didn't I introduce you to him? Anyway, but listen...

**Nano:** Well he can dance Anne. And he's so strong he could lift a horse and cart.

**Anne:** Nano.

**Nano:** His arms are like two tree trunks Ann, massive!

**Anne:** I know Nano I've danced with him many times...but listen.

**Nano:** Well I bet he danced with me better, I'm sure of it. He told me that I was the best girl he had ever danced with.

**Anne:** He says that to all the girls.

**Nano:** You're just jealous.

**Anne:** I'm not jealous, but there is something that I have to tell you...

**Nano:** He held me so tight I thought I would pass out.

**Anne:** Nano will you be quiet and listen for one second?

**Nano:** Who are you talking to, you're not my father?

**Anne:** Well maybe if I was you would listen...Nano I have something to tell you...

**Nano:** If this is about Jean Claude I really don't care about him getting married.

**Anne:** No it's not about Jean Claude it's about... look read this

**(Anne takes out a letter)**

**Nano:** What is it? Is it an invite to the wedding?

**Anne:** You are making me crazy Nano Nagle, shut up and read, read!

**Nano:** Is it, is it news from Ballygriffin? **(Nano stands and looks at the pale face of Anne)** Is, is it Daddy?

**Anne:** Here read this. **(She passes Nano the letter. Nano reads the letter then looks up)**

**Anne walks over and embraces Nano. Nano cries out)**

**Nano:** Oh Daddy, no!

**Anne:** There is a boat leaving Monday and Mammy bought tickets already. If there are any goodbyes to be said, to any of your dance partners then they have to be said soon. Mammy has sent a letter to say we will meet her in Dublin to arrange the formalities.

**Nano:** I'm so sorry Ann. I never meant to...

**Ann:** He taught us the meaning of love Nano, and forgiveness which is something that I myself have to thank him for. We must go, Mammy, will surely need us.

**Nano:** Oh Anne. **(Nano breaks down)**

**Ann:** It's all about family now, my dear sister, and they need us; now more than ever.

**Nano:** Oh Anne I'm so sorry for what I said. Daddy was...I thought he would live forever. He was as strong as a...Oh Anne what will we do without him?

**Ann:** We'll go home, Nano, home to Ireland. I am sure our answers lie there.

**Blackout**

## Scene 5

**A graveyard with many mourners standing around the grave as the priest conducts the ceremony and the people gather there in an overwhelming sadness. All the family gathers around Nano.**

*Song "We Grieve" – Performed by all*

**Chorus (All sing)**

*We grieve with empty hands,  
We grieve, alone we stand.  
He touched our lives,  
He knew a new day would dawn.  
Now he's buried,  
We read the words on his stone.  
We grieve, we grieve.*

**Verse 1 (Nano sings)**

*To You, O God the living yearn,  
In you we seek resurrection.  
Lift the silent darkness,  
Until your will fills us with hope.  
Bid us mortals, help us cope.*

**Repeat Chorus (All sing)**

**Verse 2 (Ann sings)**

*For You, O God we all gather,  
In you we place our ev'ry prayer.  
Your radiance awaits us,  
So roll this grief away from us.  
Bid us mortals, help us cope.*

**Repeat Chorus (All sing)**

**Blackout**

## Scene 6

**The kitchens.**

**DSL**

**Miss Mere passes Nell a lantern which Nell holds up and studies with great interest.**

**Miss Mere:** After a few years back home, Nano's sister Ann and her mother both passed away. Nano so desperately wanted to teach the children all she had been taught, but because of the penal laws she was unable to do so. So Nano returned to Paris to join a convent to pray for the people of Ireland. This was her reason to return to France. There her life started to change from the party girl to the convent girl.

**Nell:** So no more partying then? Sure nuns don't party do they Miss?

**Miss Mere:** Well she wasn't a nun just yet Nell, but yes the parties all but stopped.

**Nell:** Shame.

**Miss Mere:** She would help in the convent and would be often seen praying or cleaning, but in general helping out. Her hard work and dedication inspired everyone that met her. She would light up the room like a lantern.

**Nell:** Like this one Miss. **(Nell picks up a lantern)**

**Miss Mere:** Possibly Nell, quite possibly.

**Nell:** Lanterns are cool.

**Cross fade CS**

**Father Augusto is helping Nano. They are washing and drying up pots and pans.**

**Fr. Augusto:** Nano, may I ask why did you return to Paris? It has been a while since you left Ireland. I heard about your sister Ann and your mother's passing, I am so sorry. Maybe, you like to talk about zem? Talk to me now. Is there something on your mind? You don't have to be afraid.

**Nano:** Thank you father. Yes you are right, I am afraid father, I'm afraid of what the future holds for me...you see lately, I cannot stop thinking about the time when we were living in Dublin. My sister Ann sold a fine roll of silk to provide money for the poor. That act of kindness touched me deeply and made me think of my life and how I could help the poor of Ireland. But it was not the silk or the fact she gave away the money. It was who she gave it to made me think of here.

**Fr. Augusto:** You did not approve of zeez persons?

**Nano:** Oh yes, Father, I did approve. I deeply approved, shocked at first yes, but Ann was completely right to do it. It was the first time in my life that my eyes were opened and with that I mean truly opened in the eyes of God.

**Fr. Augusto:** In zee eyes of God? How?

**Nano:** The people who received the help were extremely poor and destitute and the money would have gone a long way to help feed and clothe their family. My eyes were closed until that moment. Then I heard God say that this is what I have to do. That is why I wanted to come back.

**Fr. Augusto:** You heard God?

**Nano:** I would like to say yes Father.

**Fr. Augusto:** Nano it has been quite some time since you returned to Paris. Do you not think of home at all?

**Nano:** Always Father Augusto. It was so hard to leave my family but I have to help here. God keeps on telling me to help, I am sure of it.

**Fr. Augusto:** Is he telling you or are you avoiding Him?

**Nano:** Avoiding, Father? No, why would I avoid God?

**Fr. Augusto:** Nano it is simple to do the easy things but hard to do the right things...

**Nano:** I don't understand.

**Fr. Augusto:** Your work here is complete, Nano, and as you say, you think you can hear God, then listen to Him. He would want you to help the helpless not be helped. He wants you to go back to help the children of Ireland the way that you have helped the people of Paris. Jesus said that he is looking for the lost flock, not the found.

**Nano:** That is why I am afraid Father. I so desperately want to teach, but the laws in Ireland forbid me to. What will happen if I go back and get arrested? Then all will be for nothing. Nano stops what she is doing and looks at the priest.

**Fr. Augusto:** Listen to the words of the Father.

*Song – “Word Of The Father” Performed by Fr. Augusto*

*Word of the Father,  
Lord Jesus Christ,  
By Whom all things were made,  
In Whom all creation is growing into unity,  
I pray You possess me utterly,  
So that ev'ry word of mine  
May be in truth Your Word,  
Bread for daily living,  
Received by the Spirit's grace,  
Broken for sharing  
Here in Your presence,  
O Living Word,  
Flesh among us still.*

**Nano:** What would I do there, Father?

**Fr. Augusto:** Teach, learn, and embrace education and direct the children into God's love the way that you have directed me.

**Nano:** You Father?

**Fr. Augusto:** Me and anyone who has ever met you. You have the Holy Spirit upon you, Nano, and always have since the moment I met you. You have a wonderful kind soul, and in my opinion, were quite rightly chosen by God to do His work. Go home. Return to your flock and help them to learn God's word. To keep people uneducated in God's word is wrong and those who preach God's words, but do not perform them, are themselves hypocrites. You are by no means a hypocrite, Nano, so let me ask you this, what does education mean to you?

**Nano:** I know that to keep people ignorant and uneducated condemns them to a life of misery and to not know God's love is to be in a cold and lonely place.

**Fr. Augusto:** Zen go home and teach that. Risk all and give all Nano. I have a contact, a safe contact zat, let's just say, haz ad hiz differences wiz ze British also. He tends the animals of ze Captain of the guards in ze British army. He has elped many of our friends over ze years. He is also a landlord and can meet up with you to elp you start off. The children of Ireland need you more than the people of Paris. Go. Tell Mr Copelan I said ello. He is a bit odd and ard to understand sometimes but he will like you because you are a woman of welcoming heart.

### **Crossfade**

*Music "Woman of Welcoming Heart".*

## Scene 7

**Cove lane, Cork 1754**

**Nano is looking at a run down disheveled shack in the City. She is with the potential Landlord, Mr. Copelan. He has a thick Cork accent.**

**Mr. Copelan:** It will only cost you one half crown a week for this lovely, cozy, snug and well vented, spacious modern living area with fitted...door, boy.

**Nano:** I will give you three pennies a week, with the will of God, and not a penny more.

**Mr. Copelan:** Done. We'll shake on it, girl. Father Augusto said you were a determined woman, boy and I love a woman with determination. So I do.

**Mr. Copelan spits on his hand and opens his hand to shake Nano's. Nano looks at the hand then looks at the landlord and smiles. She looks all around the room.**

**Nano:** This will be the first "Petites Ecoles", Mr Copelan.

**Mr. Copelan:** Pet what? Are you having animals in here? Father Augusto said nothing about pets. It will be more if you're keepin pets, boy. He holds out his hand.

**Nano beaming with excitement.**

**Nano:** It means small school. Petites ecoles. It's French.

**Mr. Copelan:** Children? You know they're worse; I have eight of them... Children!? Pet, petty, ecol... Small school, boy? You're opening a school? You do know that's illegal? You'll attract all the Red Coats in the county. You can be put into prison for giving education to. . . If the Brits find out **(Pause)**...When are you opening it?..Can my tribe come, including the wife?

**Nano:** Haha of course. **(Pause)** Cove lane, this is where the first school will be. That feels so good to say doesn't it?

**Mr. Copelan:** You'll have to keep your wits about ye, girlie, and keep this place a secret. If the Red Coats find ye they'll have ya up in front of Harris in no time at all, boy.

**Nano:** Harris?

**Mr. Copelan:** Lieutenant Harris. He's as bad as they come, boy. Men, women, children, priests and I suspect nuns when he gets the chance, he'll have you swinging from a rope soon as look at ye, boy. He's bad to the core that fella.

**Nano:** Then we will have to keep it secret won't we?

**Mr. Copelan:** You can count on me to keep your secret but be careful of who you trust, boy. I thought you were mad to look at this place but even madder to open up a school here. Are you going to do this on your own, like?

**Nano:** Yes, but with the will of God and if the Bishop allows, I will recruit local teachers or anyone who will help. And together we will run the school for all children that are unable to be educated. And in God's name we will teach them. But like I said, I have to convince the Bishop to help me.

**Mr. Copelan:** Well fair play to ya, girl. The Bishop will be a hard nut to crack, boi, I heard he's as tough as they come, too. But havin just met ye I think you'll pull it off coz, sure, I still think you're as

mad as a bag of goat skins, boy. And if you do get caught, well I was only renting it to you because you said you were going to put goats in here, right? Why do goats always remind me of the mother in law? Can you answer me that?

**Nano:** Er, no.

**Mr. Copelan:** Anyway, but as long as my clan can go then I say, as me ould Mammy used to say to us lot,

*“May you always have walls for the winds,  
a roof for the rain, tea beside the fire,  
laughter to cheer you, those you love near you,  
and all your heart might desire.”*

**Nano:** God bless you for that, Mr Copelan.

**Mr. Copelan:** My pleasure. What’s your name again, boy?

**Nano:** My name is...

**Enter Lieutenant Harris escorted by a Red Coat.**

**Lieutenant:** Well, well, well who do we have here then? Two vagrant looking tramps in what can only be described as a derelict pig sty.

**Mr. Copelan:** Harris!

**Lieutenant:** What did you say?

**Mr. Coplelan:** Sorry. Sir my name is...

**Lieutenant:** I know who you are Copelan, I recognize your smell anywhere. Your odour is identical to the captain’s pregnant goats that you are so keen on tending. Well aren’t you going to introduce me to your...friend?

**Mr. Copelan:** Yes sir, this is...sorry...

**Lieutenant:** Well spit it out man.

**Mr. Copelans:** This is... her name is...

**Nano: (walking towards Lieutenant Harris with her hand outstretched as to shake hands)**  
My name is Nano Nagle and I am here in order to rent this building to secure my lodgings for the foreseeable future. Mr Copelan has very kindly made me a rent agreement that I quite simply could not turn down. I shall excuse your comment on vagrant tramp sir, as we were not properly introduced. And you are?

**Lieutenant:** I’m...er...

**Nano:** Spit it out man I haven’t got all day.

**Lieutenant:** I am Lieutenant Harris and I...

**Nano:** How very pleased to be of acquaintance, Lieutenant, excellent: now perhaps you can provide me with some extra hands and help me move in and clean up the place? I have bits and bobs of furniture that are far too big for me to carry and Mr. Copelan has told me it hasn’t been lived in for a while so I could do with all the help I can get.

**(Copelan stands there with his mouth wide open)**

**Lieutenant:** I, I am...I cannot...

**Nano:** Yes, yes. You cannot what?

**Lieutenant:** We, I...who are you again madam?

**Nano:** It's Miss.

**Lieutenant:** I beg your pardon, Miss.

**Nano:** Nano Nagle is my name. Do you need any more information Captain?

**Red Coat:** Lieutenant! Its Lieutenant maam.

**Nano: (to soldier)** Thank you soldier, sorry Lieutenant.

**Lieutenant: (looking at the soldier)** No I have to leave because we are...attending a gala...

**Nano:** Then please do not let me keep you any longer Lieutenant. (Nano escorts the men to the door) We are all very busy people are we not? It has been a pleasure meeting you, call in any time. Goodbye.

**The men exit.**

**Nano walks over and closes Mr. Copelan's mouth.**

**Nano:** I met his sort in France many times.

**Mr. Copelan looks around the room completely perplexed as to what has just happened.**

**Mr. Copelan:** Well Missus...did that just happen? If I didn't know better I'd say I was full of the porter... I'd besht get crackin. I have the Captain's beasht in the field and it's about to burst all over the county.

**Nano:** Thank you once again, Mr Copelan. And for the record you don't smell.

**Mr. Copelan:** I have never in all my days witnessed something like that, Missus.

**Nano:** You just have to trust in God and he will guide you the right way.

**Mr. Copelan:** I will trust in Him if that's what He can do. Good luck to ya.

**Nano:** Thank you for all you have done Mr Copelan, but for now I think I will need more than luck. **(Mr. Copelan exits and Nano looks around the room then sits on a chair. She takes a great breath out and looks up.)** My dear sweet Lord that was a bit too close.

**Blackout.**

## Scene 8

### Classroom Cove Lane

#### DSL

**Miss Mere is again chatting to Nell.**

**Nell:** That Harris fella didn't sound like a nice person at all Miss, did he?

**Miss Mere:** No not at all but, you see Nell, once you see the spirit of a person and their determination to do the right thing, it's virtually impossible to ignore it no matter who you are. And more than that Nell, Nano had God to guide her. She would pray for hours upon hours every evening for guidance, strength, and the courage to do what was right for the children. This was Nano's secret weapon that no one could beat, a mightier weapon than any sword. In prayer, she listened for the truth and spoke with God.

**Elevated platform at the side of stage – Nano kneels and prays. There is silence for around 10 to 15 seconds while she prays. Enter children Centre Stage while Nano continues to pray.**

*Song & Dance - "May We Burn, May We Yearn" Performed by the Children*

*Chorus*

*May we burn, may we yearn,  
May we each day embrace the world.  
May we seek in narrow streets,  
May we find the way within.  
May we climb the walls that hold us,  
Do all that you ask us.  
May we burn, may we yearn  
May we share God's Word.*

**Verse 1 (Soloist)**

*Small sparks of hope against the dark,  
To kindle fire in other hearts.  
To kindle desire in homely hearths,  
Beacons throughout the Earth.*

*Repeat Chorus*

**Verse 2 (Soloist)**

*Flames blazing far beyond the seas,  
To kindle fire in other dreams.  
To kindle desire in each corner,  
God is alive, He's always there.*

*Repeat Chorus*

**Miss Mere:** Whenever you are in doubt Nell, or not sure what to do or if anyone cares or is listening, pray to God in silence, like Nano did. God will always listen to you if you open yourself to him. God answered Nano's prayers by helping her to procure schools in which to teach her beloved children. Who knows, He may even answer yours about pizza.

**Nell:** Wow Miss Mere. That's amazing!! What happened after that?

**Miss Mere:** Well, later on that year...

**Cross fade into the classroom**

**Thirty little girls in the class room and two teachers, Miss Tinsley and Miss Fairclough. Miss Fairclough is to the right and Miss Tinsley is conducting the girls in a rendition of “She’s A Woman Of Welcoming Heart”**

**Miss Tinsley:** From the beginning girls.

*Chorus x1  
She’s a “Woman Of Welcoming Heart  
Hands open, doors wide-flung.  
She’s a “Woman Of Welcoming Heart,”  
Hear her voice grown dear from listening for years,  
Her choice is giving knowledge as her art,  
She’s a “Woman Of Welcoming Heart.”*

**Miss Fairclough:** Excellent girls just beautiful as always.

**Miss Tinsley:** Now girls sit down and start to read, in silence, your poems for Miss Nano when she arrives.

**All the girls sit and start to read. The two teachers turn toward each other.**

**Miss Tinsley:** She had better come here soon because she has not stopped this month trying to raise money.

**Miss Fairclough:** She is helping the sick too as if she doesn’t do enough.

**Miss Tinsley:** When was the last time you saw her eat anything?

**Miss Fairclough:** I saw her take a bite of an apple then she gave the rest to one of the girls.

**Miss Tinsley:** I saw one of the Red Coats with Lieutenant Harris outside here yesterday. I’m sure they know why we are here.

**Miss Fairclough:** I know, but Nano insists that they will leave us alone if we don’t cause any fuss. So I trust in her.

**Miss Tinsley:** I don’t know how much longer I can go on like this...I mean I live in fear every day.

**Enter Nano and the Landlord Mr. Copelan carrying some blankets and clothes.**

**They place them on the floor. He pulls out his rent book and hands it to Nano**

**Mr Copelan:** Just sign me rent book, der now missus.

**Nano signs the book and hands it back to him.**

**Mr.Copelan:** Well ladies? How’s me two favorite women of words an numbers, boy?

**Teachers:** Mr. Copelan, just fine thank you.

**Mr. Copelan:** Well girls how’s me flock?

**Six little girls come running towards Mr Copelan shouting Daddy, Daddy.**

**Miss Tinsley:** Girls, go back and sit down, you will see your father after school. The girls reluctantly go back and sit down.

**Mr Copelan:** Well I’ll tell ya this, and I’ll tell you no more. You’ve done a great job with my tribe; I

can tell you that, boy.

**Miss Fairclough:** That's very kind of you to say, Mr Copelan.

**Mr. Copelan:** Credit where it's due is what I say. Young Sally over there read to me the other evening and brought a tear to me eye I can tell you that.

**Miss Tinsley:** That is very good, well done Sally.

**Sally:** Thank you Miss Tinsley.

**Nano:** What did she read to you Mr Copelan?

**Mr. Copelan:** She read me rent books and told me how much money I'm owed. I was almost in floods of tears.

**Nano:** It is a special moment when they read for the first time isn't it?

**Mr Copelan:** Not the readin', I'm owed twelve shillings, boy. I can't understand how I didn't see it meself.

**Miss Tinsley:** Well like we said, well done Sally.

**Mr Copelan:** Right you lot I'll see yuz all later on, good luck to you all. I'll have to go and collect me money, boy.

**Mr. Copelan exits.**

**Nano:** Look at these ladies, all donated from Father Augusto from Paris. What a splendid man.

**Miss Tinsley:** My goodness.

**Miss Fairclough:** How? Why?

**Nano:** It is amazing what a gentle prayer and a constant letter for help can get you, isn't it? Next stop the Bishop. **(The three ladies start to giggle quietly so the children can't hear)** I'm sorry I was away I was at the other schools. They are coming along just fine. With just a little more help we can do great things.

**Enter Nano's brother, Joseph. He only notices the teachers and doesn't even see the children at all. In a big loud angry voice he bellows.**

**Joseph:** Nano, have you completely lost your mind? Do you have any sort of idea as to what you are doing trying to set up schools here? When you get caught and I am saying when because you will be caught. You will then be put into jail, prosecuted and maybe even... I can't even say it. Has Harris been in to you yet because he will and what are you going to say then? When I read your letter I thought, the old gal's gone mad and lost herself completely. She'll end up on the streets begging like a pauper. I mean, look at the state of you. When did you eat last? I know that you are my sister and I love you but I am sorry, I have to take control of you and your finances. So get your coat because I am going to take you back home with me right this minute. I have booked you in to see the doctor so he can examine...

**Nano:** Ah Joseph how lovely to see you.

**Joseph:** Don't you lovely me Nano Nagle this is serious. I had to stop and ask people in the street where you were. Under the cover of darkness like a common thief...

**Nano:** I am being serious; it is lovely to see you.

**Joseph:** ...Like a common thief I felt like. I have travelled far and wide to try and talk some sense into you. You cannot get away with this sort of thing, wait until the Bishop finds out, he'll have a calf

I can tell you that. Plus you haven't the room to teach and nowhere to put the children if they turn up, I'll be surprised if they do.

**Nano:** Say hello to my brother girls.

**All the class shouts out**

**All girls:** Hello Mr Nagle.

**Joseph almost jumps out of his skin.**

**Joseph:** Dear lord God almighty, where did you lot spring from?

**Sally:** Don't take the Lords name in vein.

Joseph: What?

**Clare:** Don't take the lords name in vain. I said Jaysus once and Miss Nano said I was takin' the Lord's name in vain. So don't do it, boy.

**Joseph:** Yes, yes, quite right, sorry, sorry girls. (Whispering) My God Nano how many are here?

**Hannah:** Thirty of us mister. And countin'.

**Joseph:** Thirty? Well that is nice...Well you are a bright one aren't you?

**Zoe:** "As bright as the Lantern" Miss Nano says.

**Joseph:** And she's right too. I have never heard a little girl talk so, so...

**Hannah:** Intelligently, mister?

**Joseph:** Yes, little one intelligently is the word I was looking for.

**Joseph is amazed at the outcome of the children and speaks to them all.**

**Joseph:** Are you all learning to count to ten?

**Zoe:** To ten I can count to a hundred.

**Clare:** I can count to a thousand.

**Ivy:** I can do my times tables up to 5.

**Sally:** I showed me Daddy he was owed rent.

**Clare:** Miss Nano tells us stories of Jesus when he fed five thousand people with only a few fishes and some bread.

**Zoe:** And when Jesus woke Lazarus from his sleep.

**Joseph:** Wow, now that is good. What great stories. How clever you all are. And what are you going to do when you leave school?

**Clare:** I am going to be a doctor.

**Ivy:** I am going to be a teacher.

**Zoe:** I am going to be the first girl ever to be a captain on a ship. And I'm going to sail around the world.

**Joseph:** Now that is something. **(Smiling. Pause)** Nano can I have a word in private, please?

**Nano:** Of course. Girls continue to read and I'll be back in a moment.

**All Girls:** Yes Miss Nano.

**Nano:** Ladies will you carry on?

**Teachers:** Yes Nano.

**Joseph:** Nano what I have just witnessed is truly remarkable, they are amazing, you are amazing. How did you? I thought that you would be in trouble. I thought Harris would have had you up swinging by a... I was coming here to talk some sense into you and take you away to Ballygriffin but you are in total control of the situation. You're teaching, I mean really teaching. I want to help in any way I can. Financially, emotionally and physically.

**Nano:** Be by my side, Joseph, always. I trust you with my heart.

**Joseph:** Of course. What about the Bishop?

**Nano:** I have sent him letters and I'm meeting up with him shortly. I will need all the help I can get after that, I'm sure. Please, Joseph, just be by my side is all I ask.

**Joseph:** For you Nano and for what I have just witnessed I will do anything on one condition.  
Nano: What is it?

**Joseph:** You will come to live out your final days with me at home, in comfort. No more living like a pauper.

**Nano:** How could I turn an invitation like that down?

**Joseph:** Then I'll do the best I can.

**All the girls are standing as a chorus.**

**Miss Tinsley:** Ok girls, from the start.

*Song "Jesus Summons Us Today" Performed by the children*

**Chorus (All sing)**

*Jesus summons us today  
To marvel at the whole of God's creation.  
Jesus calls us that we may  
See and share the news of God's vision.  
The darkness just might  
With gladness become light,  
If our hearts on this earth all say;  
"Jesus summons us today."*

**Verse 1 (Joseph)**

*Lord Jesus Christ works in our lives.  
Lord Jesus walks with us.  
Lord Jesus walks with us.*

**Repeat Chorus (All sing)**

**Verse 2 (Joseph)**

*Lord Jesus Christ tends to all men  
And women and children.  
Men, women, and children.*

**Repeat Chorus (All sing)**

During final chorus, the spotlight is back on the Older Nano who is Kneeling and Praying on the elevated platform at the side of the stage. The lights fade from the stage and a spotlight is left on Nano praying as the songs comes to an end.

Blackout.

End of Act One.

(Intermission)

# ACT TWO

## Scene 1

**A very well represented room of finery and distinguished reputation. The Bishop of Cork is talking to Lieutenant Harris of the British army at the Bishop's desk. He is dressed in full military uniform and pomp. A young boy, Tim, is sitting in the corner of the room beaten and bruised.**

*(Optional Opening Music - "She's A Woman Of Welcoming Heart"...Same music as Crossfade music at the end of Act 1, Scene 6)*

**Lieutenant:** Look, Bishop we all want to live side by side in a safe and happy county without any fuss or misdemeanors occurring, you understand?

**Bishop:** Of course Lieutenant.

**Lieutenant:** You do realize that it is a hanging offense to attack my men?

**Bishop:** I do Lieutenant, but he is only twelve years...

**Lieutenant:** I have had scoundrels hanging every day for the past three weeks now for less than this.

**Bishop:** Yes but if you would just let me...

**Lieutenant:** Then don't make me have to come here again because I can assure you the next time I will not be as tolerant.

**Bishop:** I will have the situation looked into right away, Lieutenant.

**Lieutenant:** You'd better. This, this scum tried to steal eggs from my men.

**Tim:** They where my eggs Me lord and they took them from me.

**Lieutenant:** See, Bishop this is the kind of belligerent back chat I'm talking about. **(To boy)** Silence boy or you'll be swinging from the end of a rope, this day. I guarantee that.

**Bishop:** Like I said, Lieutenant, I shall look into it.

**Lieutenant:** He attacked two of my men while they were on duty...

**Tim:** I was walking home, from Donelly's farm, Me lord, and they attacked me. Kicking me and tripping me up. Why would I attack two armed Red Coats?

**Lieutenant:** If you interrupt me one more time...I could very easily make an example of him, but I'm too tired plus I have a party to attend...

**Bishop stands quickly to quell the situation.**

**Bishop:** Lieutenant, leave him here with me and I will see to it personally that he gets what he deserves. We all want to live, as you say, happily side by side.

**The Lieutenant stands.**

**Lieutenant:** You'd better. Twenty lashes across his back should do the trick. (To Bishop) I allow you people to bend the rules and I do look away occasionally, but I am not a fool so don't try and make me look like one. Is that understood?

**The Bishop nods. The Lieutenant fixes his hat.**

**Lieutenant:** I'll see myself out.

**He leaves. The Bishop makes sure he is gone.**

**Bishop:** Are you ok Tim? Can you walk?

**Tim:** It'll take more than two of em, Me lord. And that stuck up pimple nosed...They attacked me, Me lord. And took all me eggs.

**Bishop:** Can you walk I said?

**Tim:** Sorry...yes I can walk just fine.

**Bishop:** Then go, and for God's sake stay away from the Red Coats.

**Tim:** I always try and stay away...it's them that finds us. They hanged me uncle Micheal three days ago for dancing in the street, said he was drunk.

**Bishop:** I know Tim, I heard.

**Tim:** He wasn't drunk, he was just told he was expecting his first child and started to dance as the Red Coats walked by. They beat him and he was only defending himself. I know because I saw.

**Bishop:** I know Tim, Mary will be looked after I'm sure.

**Tim:** It's not right Me lord. Not right at all. He was going to be a Daddy.

**Bishop:** Listen to me, go into the kitchen and see Mrs Morley and give her this note. **(He writes on a piece of paper.)** A dozen eggs should replace the ones you lost.

**Tim:** I never lost...

**Bishop:** The ones YOU lost! Do you understand?

**Tim:** Yes Me lord. The ones I lost.

**The Bishop hands Tim the note.**

**Bishop:** Then go. I don't want to see you here again, or at the end of a rope.

**Tim takes the note then leaves. The bishop walks back to his desk and sits down and breathes a big sigh of relief. He pours himself a glass of sherry, takes a sip then starts to write a note. There is a knock at the door.**

**Bishop:** Come!

**Nano enters the room looking every bit of a beggar woman. The bishop looks her up and down with disgust. He carries on writing using utter contempt towards Nano.**

**Bishop:** Well don't just stand there sit, woman, sit.

**Nano:** Thank you My lord.

**The Bishop holds out his left hand for her to kiss without looking up from the page. Nano kisses**

the ring on his finger, then genuflects to him, then sits.

**Bishop:** Well what is it? **(He takes out a handkerchief and wipes his hand)**

**Nano:** My lord, I have come here to ask for your help. I would like your permission to send over the Ursuline sisters to help me run...

**Bishop:** Yes Miss Nagle I have read your letter. You do know that it is against the law to set up any form of Catholic school in this country? I don't particularly want the Red Coats coming here again, I can tell you. Particularly Lieutenant Harris.

**Nano:** Yes I do know that My lord...

**Bishop:** Then why is it, Miss Nagle that you request me to break the law, me the Bishop of Cork?

**Nano:** My Lord, I know what I ask is a lot, but I have already been breaking the law, myself, running Catholic schools here and nobody has stopped me so far.

**Bishop:** I have heard of your pathetic little scheme to run a school. What do you have? Three, maybe four students?

**Nano:** We have seven...

**Bishop:** Ha, seven students, how very quaint.

**Nano:** ...If you would allow me to finish, my lord, we have seven schools, five for girls and two for boys.

**Bishop:** What?! Seven schools!? Are you mad, woman? **(The bishop stands and runs to the door to see that all is clear)**

**Nano:** I have some teachers, but they are still too afraid to commit to the schools for fear of arrest. Plus I am not getting any younger and I need the Ursuline sisters to continue to educate the children.

**Bishop:** Miss Nagle, you have astounded me. But the reality of the matter is; although laws against Catholics can be, let's say, got around; they are still laws none the less. We cannot afford to advertise our wares, but as I am sure you are of the understanding that I am connected to the most powerful families in the country. As I am, after all, the brother of Lord Dunboyne, a very powerful and influential man, so therefore I am related to the, shall we say, best families? Where as you...?

**Nano:** I am the daughter of Garret Nagle from Ballygriffin, my lord.

**Bishop:** Garret Nagle? So that makes you Sir Richard Nagle's niece?

**Nano:** It does my lord.

**Bishop:** Then you must be very wealthy and educated? So why are you dressed like you are a beggar woman?

**Nano:** I am a beggar, my lord, for I have given all of my money towards the running of my schools.

**Bishop:** Then you are a fool. **(He paces the room)** These nuns, where are they exactly?

**Nano:** There are some Irish nuns with the Ursuline sisters in Paris my lord and they are just waiting for your approval.

**Bishop:** If I approve of this will you house and feed them accordingly? For I tell you I will not.

**Nano:** I will My lord. I can assure you my schools are beginning to be of service to a great many parts of the world. We are growing from acorns into oaks my lord.

**Bishop:** Is that so? **(Still skeptical. He sits.)** Then against my better judgment your request is granted, Miss Nagle, but I hope you have plenty of money?

**Nano:** I have not one penny, my lord. But as my sister, Ann, once said...“The poor are Christ”...I am sure He will not let us down.

**Bishop:** Miss Nagle, you are without doubt the bravest and most courageous woman I have ever met, let alone the most stubborn, your letters are testament to that. But I have to say God bless you for what you are doing because I think it is criminal to not be able to educate our own children. So go. Go and educate with my blessings.

**Nano:** Bless you my lord.

**Bishop:** You will find, in my kitchen, as we speak a young boy, Tim, who would benefit greatly from a teacher like yourself. **(He drinks his drink)** This indeed has been a strange day.

**Nano:** You won't regret this My Lord.

**Bishop:** I'd better not.

**Blackout**

## Scene 2

**Elevated platform at the side of stage – Nano kneels and prays. There is silence for around 10 to 15 seconds while she prays. Enter children Centre Stage while Nano continues to pray.**

*Song & Dance - "Lead Me Mary" Performed by the Children*

**Chorus (Children)**

*Lead me Mary, guide my feet,  
Let your beauty help me seek.  
Lift me in your arms with the Lord,  
Gift me strength to ponder His word.  
Give me new love, love, love, love,  
Love in my heart.*

**Verse 1 (Nano Sings)**

*Waiting for silence,  
Asking for stillness.  
Knowing, sowing light for God.  
Giving, believing in the Lord.  
The mystery prepares me, helps me see.*

**Repeat Chorus (Children)**

**Verse 2 (Nano Sings)**

*Precious moments,  
Spent in the present.  
Eyes fixed on the grace of God.  
Living life through the Lord  
A renewal eternal, God gives all.*

**Bridge (Nano Sings)**

*As I gaze and wonder  
At your pure face.  
As I breath I reach new heights  
With you in the quiet.*

**Repeat Chorus x2 (Children)**

**Enter Father Augusto Centre Stage while Nano continues to pray**

**Father Augusto sings to the children while they sit and listen**

*Song - "Only She Could See" Performed by Father Augusto*

**Chorus (Fr. Augusto)**

*She had no wish to take the lead,  
But she took one look and understood.  
She had dang'rous rivers under her feet,  
But she believed with safety, not uncertainty,  
That history would guarantee,  
The promise of security  
That only she could see.*

**Verse 1 (Fr. Augusto)**

*Longing for the familiar,*

*Where nothing feels rough on the road.  
Following behind,  
Where nothing feels new or rocks the boat.  
But then the call came.*

*Repeat Chorus (Children and Fr. Augusto sing)*

**Verse 2 (Fr. Augusto)**  
*Sweeping up all the tendrils,  
Hearing murmurs beyond the sea.  
Pausing to be still,  
And never once asking: "Lord, why me?"  
And when the call came.*

**Bridge (Fr. Augusto)**  
*She lifted her head,  
Ahead she tread.*

*Repeat Chorus (Children and Fr. Augusto sing)*

**Presentation sisters of the blessed virgin Mary school.**

**A lantern light procession enters the stage and the Nuns walk in singing.**

**Fr. Augusto and the children join in the procession.**

*Song – "Jesus Summons Us Today" Performed by all*

*Chorus (All sing – slower than the children's previous version in Scene 8)*  
*Jesus summons us today  
To marvel at the whole of God's creation.  
Jesus calls us that we may  
See and share the news of God's vision.  
The darkness just might  
With gladness become light,  
If our hearts on this earth all say;  
"Jesus summons us today."*

**Nano is now sitting at her desk bare footed. She is searching for something in her desk. There is a lantern on the table dimly lit.**

**Miss Mere and Nell are at the side of the stage.**

**Miss Mere:** So the momentous decision was taken to introduce a religious order of Nuns to Cork in order to give permanence to Nano's schools. They arrived in May 1771 and lived in the convent Nano had built for them. What excitement Nano must have felt. Her work would continue.

But Nano was not happy. The Ursulines were enclosed and could only teach in the school within their enclosure. They were precluded from going forth to the other schools and also from sharing in Nano's apostolate in the garrets and hovels of the poor. Nano realized that this was not the answer she wanted or needed. Her dream appeared to be lost. **(Pause)**

Nano continued to work tirelessly every day for years trying to find money or sponsorship for the schools and sometimes she got it and sometimes not.

**Nell:** What happened when she didn't have the money for food or the rent?

**Miss Mere:** Nano, I am sure, always had a plan B. I'm sure God would not let her down.

**Cross fade to Nano.**

**Nano:** I know it is here somewhere. Please dear God help me find it. One month's rent is bad but three.

**A man enters from the cold with his hood over his head. Nano looks up from her desk.**

**Nano:** Can I help you, sir?

**The man removes his hood to reveal his identity.**

**Nano:** Jean Claude?

**Jean Claude:** How are you Nano?

**Nano:** What are you doing here? How did you know I was here? Oh it's so good to see you.

**Nano rushes to him and embraces him.**

**Jean Claude:** Zis is a far cry from Paris, no?

**Nano:** Jean Claude you look...so well.

**Jean Claude:** So do you, Nano.

**Nano:** Me? I look like a...How are you? Are you still married to Marie-Aurore? Did you have children?

**Jean Claude:** I am not married, no. Marie-Aurore passed away twelve years ago wiz ze fever.

**Nano:** I am so sorry.

**Jean Claude:** It is ok. She gave me six children Nano, five girls and one boy.

**Nano:** Six children that is magnificent Jean Claude.

**Jean Claude:** Yes ze keep me on my toes I can tell you zat.

**Nano:** Wow, but what are you doing here in Ireland?

**Jean Claude:** I av erd about your plight and what you are doing here wiz ze children and I zink zat you are wonderful and I want to elp, if I may. You are indeed an incredible woman. Just so they can be educated in peace and with faith. How noble, how brave, how Nano.

**Nano:** Not at all...!...

**Jean Claude:** I have a lot of explaining to do as to what appened to us in France all those years ago, and I ad ze conversation with myself over and over but that is for another time, for now, I want to give you zis.

**Jean Claude hands Nano a satchel full of money. There is plenty of it in there.**

**Nano:** Why are you doing this for us? You have no reason to come here.

**Jean Claude:** I was a coward and I never fought for you. I spoke of you often to my wife and family and why I am stronger because of you. You taught me to fight on for what I believed in. It took a long time for me to do zat, but I never forgot. I erd of what you were doing here back in Paris and I wanted to contribute. I was talking to your brother, Joseph, and he told me where to find you.

**Nano:** Good old Joseph.

**Jean Claude:** I have been practicing something zat I zink you might like.

**Nano:** Practicing?

**Jean Claude:** Wee, practicing. I av learnt to pronounce zings correctly, for a change.

**Nano:** Things correctly? Like what?

**Jean Claude:** Zings like ze county of Cork and the beautiful Ballygriffin.

**Nano:** Oh Jean Claude.

**Jean Claude:** It is good, yes?

**Nano:** Perfect.

**Jean Claude:** Do you remember how we danced in Paris Nano? You were such a wonderful dancer.

**Nano:** I think of it often Jean Claude. I think of it when I am feeling down. It picks me up and I float on the clouds when I think of how we danced.

**Jean Claude: (Acting as if he is at the ball again...bows to Nano)** May I have zis dance, mademoiselle?

**Nano: (Curtsys to Jean Claude)** Why certainly good sir. **(They dance slowly with the same “d’Anglebert Menuet” music from Scene 2 playing in the background)**

**Jean Claude:** I would ask you to come back with me to Paris if I thought you would say yes.

**Nano:** Jean Claude...I...

**Jean Claude: (Looking in her eyes he sees the response)** No, Nano, forgive me. You don’t need to answer. I don’t zink my heart would take ze rejection so I am not going to ask. Can I give you this money with all of my heart and all my good will? I want nothing in return. Let us say zat it is a zank you Nano, for all zat you av done for me. I am giving you this money and I am walking away. **(As he slowly walks away, Jean Claude turns back to Nano. Jean Claude hugs Nano close)** Merci beaucoup, Nano Nagle. Au Revoir. You will always have my heart.

**He takes her hand and kisses it then turns and exits through the door.**

**Nano waits a second then runs toward the door. As she does she knocks over a lantern from the table. She stops picks it up, looks at the door then calmly places the lantern back on the table. She walks back and sits down.**

*Chorus (All sing – still at a slow tempo)*

*Jesus summons us today  
To marvel at the whole of God’s creation.  
Jesus calls us that we may  
See and share the news of God’s vision.  
The darkness just might  
With gladness become light,  
If our hearts on this earth all say;  
“Jesus summons us today.”*

**Blackout**

## Scene 3

**DSL**

**Miss Mere and Nell are chatting.**

**CS**

**A couple of beggars are leaving and everyone else is tidying up. Miss Bia, a retired, matron-  
esque ex principal from Paris, is helping the children along with everyone else.**

**Miss Mere:** In 1775, the Bishop of Cork professed four ladies - Elizabeth Burke, Mary Collins, Mary Fouhy and Nano. They continued to teach the children along with the Ursuline sisters.

**Nell:** Nano wasn't a nun at all before then?

**Miss Mere:** No Nell, just a good Christian.

**Nell:** Wow that is amazing.

**Miss Mere:** You see, on that very special Christmas Eve, Nano and the nuns invited fifty beggars into the schools and fed them all. It had never been heard of before.

**Nell:** Such kindness.

**Miss Mere:** That says it all Nell.

**Cross fade to CS**

**Beggar man:** Thank you sisters, from the bottom of my heart thank you. And thank you children.

**Sister Mary:** It's our pleasure.

**Beggar man:** I have been living here all my life and never witnessed such kindness. Fifty people you just fed, fifty.

**Sister Elizabeth:** We hope to help you and everybody else.

**Sister Nano:** I hope the Almighty will direct what is most to His honour and glory.

**Beggar man shakes a couple of the nun's hands then leaves**

**Sister Mary:** God bless you sir.

**Beggar man:** You too sisters.

**Sister Nano:** Children, everybody gather round I have some wonderful news.

**They all gather around**

**Nano:** It is on this day, Christmas Eve 1775, the Sisters of Charitable Instruction of the Sacred heart of Jesus is now formed.

**All the children cheer**

**Nano:** And we, as educators, have a God given privilege to teach all the children we encounter. **(A)**

**couple of the nuns look over at Miss Bia)** And we will teach His word and what it means and to be able to simply read and write. By degrees and with the help of God we can do a great deal.

**Sister Elizabeth:** Nano you have created something wonderful, the reading, writing, sewing and even the catechism. Oh Nano you're amazing.

**Nano:** No sister Elizabeth, God is amazing.

*Song – “Christmas Lamps” (Performed by all)*

*Verse*

*Brightly shone the star,*

*Seen by the wise.*

*List'ning for the news,*

*Trav'ling watchful eyes.*

*Following the light*

*Of Glory from above.*

*And now this night all Christians*

*Swing their lamps of love. (Oh!)*

*Chorus x2*

*Swing them out,*

*Joyful, shout*

*For all life and birth!*

*Sing words of peace*

*For all God's Friends*

*In heaven and on earth! (Oh!)*

*Repeat Whole Song With Clapping and Dancing*

**Nano is busying herself collecting blankets and looking for medicines and such. She has a spring in her step.**

**Sister Nano:** Now I am sorry I was away for so long, it is just that I was looking at other properties to rent and also local...

**Sister Mary: (Interrupting Nano)** Eleven more children came here this morning Nano.

**Sister Nano: (looking around the room)** Excellent, sister Mary, just exce...

**Miss Bia:** I was forced to turned zem away, of course.

**Sister Nano:** Miss Bia, why would you turn them away?

**Miss Bia:** Zey had no money and we have no room, Sister.

**Sister Nano:** What? None of the children have any money. That is why we are doing this... Have you been doing this often? **(No one responds.)** I said have you been doing this often?

**Sister Mary:** While you were away, sister Nano, sometimes we get... the classes are so overcrowded and Miss Bia said that...

**Miss Bia:** How it is done in France is zat zey pay a fee, it should be the same here...

**Sister Nano:** No it should not! It will be done for free! What kind of people would we be if we were to charge for education? These children have nothing, nothing. More often than not, when they arrive, they have not had anything to eat so where are they going to get money from?

**Miss Bia:** We need to eat, Sister. We need clothes and shelter too.

**Sister Nano:** That is where I have been, Miss Bia. Do you have no faith at all? I know you were a

well respected teacher in France and I do acknowledge your expertise and I do want to thank you for helping the sisters and I, but this isn't France, this is Ireland. I have been getting all the local business to help us in exchange for their children's education. They all want to help.

**Miss Bia:** My schools in France were run with precision and discipline and it will be run better with regular money coming in to pay for it.

**Sister Nano:** You don't know that.

**Miss Bia:** I know zat money is important and zat without it people cannot eat.

**Sister Nano:** Did Jesus ask for money when he was teaching on the shores of Galilee? Did He turn the poor away because He needed to eat? The man gave His all and we are squabbling over pennies.

**Sister Nano picks up some blankets and starts to leave.**

**Sister Mary:** Nano where are you going?

**Sister Nano:** Mr Bartlett is stricken with the fever and I have to attend his family.

**Miss Bia:** Why always you?

**Sister Nano:** Maybe because I don't charge. If I could be of any service in saving souls in any part of the globe, I would willingly do all in my power. We have no choice. God has chosen us all of us. He has brought us all here and He will guide us, of that I am certain.

**Sister Mary:** Be careful outside Nano, the streets can be so very dangerous at night.

**Sister Nano:** Be careful of what, Sister Mary? I have Him with me, we all do.

**Sister Elizabeth:** You take on too much is all we're saying.

**Sister Nano:** Well if these infections and diseases carry on, the next thing to open will be an infirmary. **(To everyone)** To keep children hidden from an education is ignorance. We are not hypocrites we are teachers. We teach the words that God provided us to teach in His book. Jesus Himself is the greatest teacher of all and we should follow Him in His courage and bravery. We would be wrong if we thought education is for the rich, it is not a privilege, it is a God given right. Nano grabs a lantern and exits. The other nuns start to collect the remains of the meal. Miss Bia looks on.

**Miss Bia:** I saw her begging outside the church last week.

**Sister Mary:** She begs all over the city.

**Miss Bia:** The shame of it all.

**Sister Elizabeth:** How dare you, Miss Bia. That woman begs in hail, rain or shine to look after these children and you call it shameful. How dare you.

**Miss Bia:** Watch who you are talking to, sister.

**Sister Mary:** Do you know that sister Nano has given all her money and time to help the children of Cork? She has never asked for anything in return. And you call that shameful. Well I call it Christian and if more of us had what Nano has the world would be a better place, Miss Bia.

**Crossfade to outside.**

**Nano is walking down the darkened streets carrying her lantern as a man appears and starts to follow her. Nano looks back and starts to pick up the pace as the man closes in on her. She stops and faces him.**

**Nano:** Can I help you sir?

**Tim:** Sister Nano it is me.

**Nano:** You?

**Tim:** Tim, Sister please say you remember? I'm the boy with the eggs many years ago.

**Nano:** Oh dear God in the highest Heavens, Tim, you gave me a fright I thought you were a...it doesn't matter now anyway. Of course I remember you, how could I forget? I'm so sorry to hear about your father, he was a good man.

**Tim:** Thank you. And that is one of the reasons I'm back home. But also I'm here to help Sister, if I may be so bold?

**Nano:** Help?

**Tim:** If it wasn't for you Sister all those years ago, I would never have had an education. You helped me and my family move on. We moved to Dublin away from Lieutenant Harris. You saved our lives.

**Nano:** My pleasure Tim. I am so glad to see you so well.

**Tim:** That's not all. I eventually moved over to Canada and became a teacher just like you. I never forgot you so I would save up some money every month to send to you. But I needed to see you and hand it to you in person. You see I run my own school there.

**Nano:** Congratulations! God has seriously blessed us this day. God bless you Tim. Your father would have been so proud.

**Tim:** Thank you. Please take this. (He hands her a parcel) Sorry for looking a little scary before, it's because, well I had to make sure it was you.

**Nano:** It's alright. Are you married, children?

**Tim:** I have a beautiful wife and a small family of my own now, Sister, yes.

**Nano:** You do, how marvelous?

**Tim:** Three boys.

**Nano:** Three boys, well Tim that is good news.

**Tim:** They do keep me on my toes. It's all because of you though, Nano. I owe my life to you, my children's life to you. I would do anything for you Sister, anything at all.

**Nano:** In that case if you're not too busy **(she hands him the blankets)** I could do with a hand.

**Tim:** For you Nano, anything.

## Scene 4

**Elevated platform at the side of stage – Nano kneels and prays during the scene change. There is silence for the full scene change while Nano prays.**

**Nell and Miss Mere are at the side of the stage.**

**CS**

**There is an oak tree with Nano sitting at it with six little girls around her.**

**Miss Mere:** Nano would get help from all kinds of people, she had what you would call “respect” from everyone she ever met.

**Nell:** Respect is a great word, Miss. It means a lot. My daddy says don’t look for attention, look for respect because it lasts longer.

**Miss Mere:** He’s right too. You see Nell, Nano was loved and respected and don’t forget she was a great teacher who never stopped year in year out teaching the words and stories of the bible. And, like me, sometimes she’d teach in the classroom and sometimes, when the weather was fine, she’d teach out in the fields...even in her last days.

**Crossfade to the oak tree**

**Six little girls are sitting around Nano as she is reading them a story. Nano is very weak and sick. She tries to tell the story as best she can.**

**Nano:** Jesus went up the Tomb that kept Lazarus and asked someone to remove the stone. People were saying “But he has been dead for four days what about the odour”? Jesus said “Did I not tell you that if you believe, you will see the glory of God”? He then turned to the cave and shouted inside. “Lazarus, come out”.

**Sally:** What happened then Mother Nagle?

**Nano:** Lazarus came out alive and well. Jesus said “Take off his bandages”.

**Hannah:** Wow. Jesus brought him back from the dead?

**Nano:** He did and not only that but He showed that if you truly believe in Him, He will resurrect all who believe in Him.

**Sally:** I believe in Him, Mother Nano.

**Nano:** Good girl Sally. So do I.

**Clare:** Jesus is the greatest man ever, Mother Nagle isn’t He?

**Nano:** I believe so, yes. (Nano starts to cough. She closes the Bible) now let’s have a game of hide and seek. I’ll count to ten and you all go and hide.

**The children cheer and run as Nano counts.**

**Nano:** One, two, three, four.....**(coughing)** five...

**Nano falls onto the floor**

## Blackout

Spotlight on Jean Claude as he sings “Children In Ballygriffin” on his own. The rest of the stage is black.

### Verse 1

*A little girl grew here,  
A brownstone house was her home.  
She was like so many Children in Ballygriffin.*

### Verse 2

*She had fireside love and peace,  
And dreams called beyond the mountains.  
Like they did for so many Children in Ballygriffin.*

### Verse 3

*She searched the mountain hills,  
As living water flowed through them.  
Searching like the other Children in Ballygriffin.*

### Verse 4

*The river told stories of  
Places far away and freedom,  
Calling all the growing Children in Ballygriffin.*

### Instrumental

### Verse 5

*A little girl grew here,  
Because of her, far-off lands  
Learn of love and freedom  
Like Children in Ballygriffin.  
Like Children in Ballygriffin.*

## Scene 5

**A bedroom and a bed. Nano is lying on the bed in her final hours. There is Elizabeth, Angela and Mary around her bed praying. She is talking in and out of consciousness. A young nun is sitting by her side.**

**Nano:** The children where are my children?

**Nun:** Yes mother what is it?

**Nano:** I have worked all my life to the best of my ability. All I wanted was for the children to be free from ignorance.

**Nun:** Yes mother and you did that.

**Nano:** Have I done what God wanted me to do?

**Nun:** Yes mother, that and more.

**Nano:** Make our work here count for something; never let the children hunger for the truth.

**Nun:** Yes mother.

**Nano:** Promise me!

**Nun:** I promise, mother.

**Nano:** The children, the poor children.

**Nun:** Mother you are the reason so many of the children survived. They are living all over the world because of you.

**Nano:** Bless the children, wherever they may be. Bless the children of the poor. Never give up and trust in God. Never give up, never.

**Nun:** Mother is there anything I can get you? Water, bread?

**Nano:** Come closer, all of you. There is something I want to say to you all.

**All the Nuns gather all around Nano's bedside and slowly all start to lean into her.**

**Slow fade into Blackout.**

*Song "Do Not Be Grieving"*

**Chorus (All)**

*We journey, we journey past our last breath,  
Do not be grieving, do not be grieving.  
We journey, we journey beyond the gate of death,  
Do not be grieving, do not be grieving.*

**Verse 1 (Soloist – Fr. Augusto)**

*God has promised He will give,  
We share His dying, we too shall live.  
God offers love to all who believe,  
Life in its fullness we shall receive.*

*Repeat Chorus (All)*

*Verse 2 (Soloist – Fr. Augusto)*

*Christ gives comfort and gladness  
Love Him forever, for He loves us.  
Always remember those gone before,  
Christ shows the way, our first-born brother.*

*Repeat Chorus*

## Scene 6

**The classroom, Modern day.**

**Nell is sitting on the table as before.**

**Elevated platform – The older Nano is kneeling and praying.**

**Miss Mere:** Nano and her sisters were familiar faces around Cork, but in 1784 because of her health and age Nano died. She died going from school to school as she had done every day since they opened. “Love one another as you have hitherto done. Spend yourselves for the poor.” were her last words. Her poor old knees were bloody and cut because she had spent so much time praying on them.

**Nell:** Do you think she would have been happy when she died, Miss?

**Miss Mere:** Well she died knowing that all her work was in safe hands Nell, with the Presentation sisters and it is still working today all over the world from Cork to Dublin to Waterford to Kilkenny and all over the continents. Look. **(Miss Mere holds up a map of the world with all circles on it.)**

**These are the places one woman’s inspiration reached with her desire to educate children.**

**Nell:** And do these places help the way Nano and her sisters did?

**Miss Mere:** They do, Nell.

**Nell:** So let me get this straight, because of Nano Nagle I can read and write?

**Miss Mere:** Yep.

**Nell:** It’s yes Miss. Use the correct pro-nump-itation.

**Miss Mere:** Haha sorry Nell.

**Enter Mr. Gerard, who is Nell’s Father.**

**Mr. Gerard:** Nell sweetheart, it’s time to go home. Hello Miss Mere, how are you today, boy?

**Miss Mere:** I am very well thank you Mr. Gerard. Did you get my message about Nano Nagle?

**Mr. Gerard:** I did, Miss. **(Tapping his jacket pocket)**

**Nell:** Daddy, guess what? Miss Mere has told me all about Nano Nagle and thanks to Nano, all of us can read and write. She had faith in God, which is better than having a sword.

**Mr. Gerard:** A sword?

**Miss Mere:** Don’t ask.

**Nell:** Oh Daddy, I want to be just like Nano. Do you know she could talk to God in prayer?

**Miss Mere:** Nell, we can all do that.

**Mr. Gerard:** Nano Nagle, sure she was a great woman. Didn’t my own great-great-great-great Grandfather rent her out the very first school in Cove lane? She changed us all, Nell. Sure we

still have his rent-book in the family, it's a family heirloom...look **(he takes out the rent book from his jacket pocket, all go to look at it)** ...Nano even signed it for him all those years ago.

**Nell:** Seriously?

**Mr. Gerard:** And if you look close enough, he even let her off with a few months rent, boy!

**Nell:** Good man great, great, great, great, great, great granddaddy. Thanks Daddy! **(She hugs him)**  
Thanks Miss Mere! **(She hugs her)**

**Nell walks over to the teachers desk and picks up a lantern and holds it aloft**

Nell: **(Shouting out)** Thank you Nano Nagle!

**All cast come out to the stage except Nano, who is kneeling on the elevated stage**

*Song "Take Down Your Lantern And Go Out" - Performed by all*

*Everyone (except Nano)*

*Take down your lantern and go out,  
Do not dwell on fear or doubt.  
Seek Christ in winding lanes  
And love shall light your lantern-flame.*

**Nano now comes centre stage and joins in**

*Nano on her own  
Do not build yourself confining walls,  
For it is certain need loudly calls.*

*Everyone (Including Nano)*

*And do not say: "Thus far shall I walk, and nothing more."  
And do not say: "These things shall I do, and nothing more."  
Your pilgrim heart shall urge you one pace beyond.  
Take down your lantern and go out.*

*Song – She's A Woman of Welcoming Heart*

*Verse 1 (Miss Mere sings)*

*In the face of fear, she chose to be daring,  
In the face of anxiety, she chose to trust,  
In the face of impossibility, she chose to begin.*

*Chorus (Everyone Sings to Nano who Listens)*

*She's a "Woman Of Welcoming Heart,"  
Hands open, doors wide-flung.  
She's a "Woman Of Welcoming Heart,"  
Hear her voice grown dear from listening for years,  
Her choice is giving knowledge as her art,  
She's a "Woman Of Welcoming Heart."*

*Verse 2 (Miss Mere sings)*

*Faced with failure, she held on to her hope,  
Faced with death, she believed in living  
Faced with the future, she gave one word and it was "Love."*

Repeat Chorus **(Everyone Sings to Nano who Listens...during this chorus, Nano slowly walks back up to the elevated platform and kneels to pray.....Also during this chorus, other children enter in procession from the back of the auditorium and bring to the stage the flag of each country where Presentations are ministering.)**

*Repeat Chorus* **(Everyone Sings to Nano with their arms outstretched towards her while she listens and prays)**

Lights slowly fade on stage and the spotlight is left on Nano for 10 to 15 seconds in silence while she prays. She then looks at the audience and winks.

**Blackout.**

**(The End)**