

Side 10
Annalee, Traveler

Scene 16

(*Lights up to discover TRAVELER —played by same actor as UNCLE DEL —an old man seated cross-legged center stage—head down, eyes on the ground in front of him, blind. He holds a cane out, sketching circles. ANNALEE enters at a run with infant wrapped in a yellow blanket. She stops when she sees TRAVELER , bounces baby softly on her hip, hums an unidentifiable tune. Pause.*)

ANNALEE: Sir? Sir, could I speak to you for a second?

TRAVELER: (*Slowly raising his head.*) You are.

ANNALEE: I— I didn't expect to find anyone up here, so far from...I mean, what is it you do way out here? Are you just by yourself?

TRAVELER: I have my—goats and sheep.

ANNALEE: Oh, I see. You *live* out here, then?

TRAVELER: I have my trailer.

ANNALEE: Right. And you—do you go to town much?

TRAVELER: Never.

ANNALEE: Oh. Good. I mean, I was—do you think you could do me a big favor?

TRAVELER: What?

ANNALEE: My child, my son. He's—he's seen something terrible that...I think it's going to take him awhile to get over it. I mean, I'm not sure he'll ever get over this, but I need to leave him for a while. Do you understand?

TRAVELER: No.

ANNALEE: I need to leave him and come back.

TRAVELER: When?

ANNALEE: Well...

TRAVELER: You want to abandon him, is that it?

ANNALEE: No!

TRAVELER: You want to leave him in a dumpster, but there's no dumpster up here, is there? No convenient trash cans.

ANNALEE: No! That's not—I do *not* want to abandon him! That's not what I want to do.

TRAVELER: But that's what you're going to do.

ANNALEE: No! (*Turns away from him.*)

TRAVELER: Can I sell him?

ANNALEE: Absolutely not!

TRAVELER: Give him away?

ANNALEE: Never mind!

TRAVELER: Why do you pretend to care what happens to him?

(*She stops, turns.*)

ANNALEE: There's no pretending. I'm not pretending! I'm his mother.

TRAVELER: Then what is it?

ANNALEE: I'm looking for a home for him!

TRAVELER: *You're* his only home.

ANNALEE: Look, mister, I'm sorry. I thought—

TRAVELER: It's too late to be sorry for anything. It's always too late.

ANNALEE: (*Stares at him.*) Are you blind?

TRAVELER: All I see is wreckage.

ANNALEE: I'm—

TRAVELER: What is it *he* saw? The boy. Something horrible, you say?

ANNALEE: Yes.

TRAVELER: Something so horrible he can't live with it in his mind? He can't go on through life without being tormented by this vision?

ANNALEE: I think—

TRAVELER: What could be so horrible as that?

ANNALEE: His father.

TRAVELER: Ah.

ANNALEE: His father raped someone in front of him. While the baby was crawling around on the floor.

TRAVELER: Ah. And who was that?

ANNALEE: What?

TRAVELER: That his father raped.

ANNALEE: The babysitter.

TRAVELER: Ah. That is horrible.

ANNALEE: I think he might have killed her.

TRAVELER: Really?

ANNALEE: He's going to jail.

TRAVELER: For killing or rape?

ANNALEE: Both, I think.

TRAVELER: And you think the child is going to carry that experience with him for the rest of his life?

ANNALEE: I don't know.