

Scene 11

Setting: Storage room at a mill. Charlotte is about to give birth. Chair and a stool. Katy and Charlotte on stage, Charlotte sitting in the chair.

Cast: Charlotte, Katy Pruett, and Noah, their driver

(Lights up)

(Noah enters from stage right, Katy goes to him.)

Katy Pruett

Did you find someone?

Noah

No ma'am. Didn't have no luck. They say Granny Mimms do the birthin' round here, but she laid up wit' the sciat'ca. Besides, done startin' snowin'. Good thing we stopped here.

Katy Pruett

Yes, Charlotte couldn't have gone much further. But we've been friends with Trace and Amy for years. They're good people.

(Going to Charlotte)

Charlotte looks like you're ready to unload. Noah couldn't find anyone to assist, so I may as well tell you I'm not much help at all when it comes to this stuff. I can crank a churn and knit a two-colored shawl with the best of 'em; but I don't mind sayin, birthin' babies is not my strong suit.

Charlotte

No matter Miss Kate, we be jus' fine.

You he'p me n' I' he'p you. Might be a spell though fo' this chile make up his mind, so I reckon you jus' bide yo' time wit' Miss Amy fo' now. Noah can fetch you when I'm ready.

(Katy Pruett puts on her coat and exits stage right)

(Lights down and then back up) (Noah needs to change position while they are down. He is dozing when they come up)(It is early morning about 5 am)

Charlotte

Noah, bes' go get Miss Kate, I reckon it's time.

(Noah exits stage right. He and Kate Pruett enter stage right after a short beat. Katy removes coat.)

Charlotte

Noah, get them rags yonder and set 'em 'side that stool. An' han' me that leather strap, 'case I need sumpn' to clamp down on. You can wait outside 'til we call.

(Noah does those things and exits stage right)(Charlotte kneels holding the stool)

Miss Kate, look like you 'n me gon' have to get dis done. I sho' 'preciates yo' he'p. This is what I need you to do. When you see that youngin' squeeze out, catch 'em in that thar wrap yonder. Think you can do that Miss Kate?

(Katy Pruett nods assent, gets wrap, and gets in position)

(Charlotte panting, gives yell and pushes)(Rooster crows)

(Charlotte heaves a sigh)

Ol' rooster crow right on time.

(Light strikes crystal medallion worn by Katy and a prism effect floods the room)

Lord be praised, this chile sho' nuff gon' see a bran' new day.

(Lizzie is born)(Baby cry)

Katy Pruett

Charlotte, you have a daughter! What are you going to name her?

(Hands baby to Charlotte.)

Charlotte

Her name Elizabeth.

(Lights down)