

5/11/22

STEAL AWAY

ELIA

(searching his eyes)

Maybe a *promise*. Maybe a boy whose hope kindled my own. What happened to that boy?

WALLACE

Boys grow up!

ELIA

He had dreams!

WALLACE

Boys wake up!

ELIA

What happened to you?? You *got* your new father, your home, your new life - your prayers were answered. Why curse mine??

He clenches his fists. She clasps those fists and kisses him desperately. He resists... then yields... then seizes *her* wrists.

WALLACE

Come on.

CUT TO:

INT. COLT'S WAREHOUSE - JUST AFTER

A massive, bustling workspace. Ella gasps at the workforce of young black men building ENORMOUS STACKS OF COFFINS

WALLACE

Every one built-to-order. Somewhere out there, one of us is being lynched, drowned, burned alive. You see Utopia down South, but coffins don't lie.

START ———▶ **COLT** (O.S.)

This ain't but a trickle; the tide's coming in...

Old Colt has entered; the young men look upon him reverently. Rail thin but tough as steel, his flaring eyes seize Ella's.

COLT

The Southern Cross bears strange fruit; when it resurrects, these stacks'll become mountains.

ELLA

And cowards defect to the countryside. Men of courage *change* the world.

COLT

Men like..?

ELLA

Hiram Jackson, the authors of the
Civil Rights Bill.

COLT

(to his workers, then Ella)
Fourteen-o-seven! I respect your
Mr. Jackson's intent...

The workers bring over an ornate coffin. The engraving reads "HIRAM JACKSON, 1835 - ____", the year of death left blank.

COLT

This'll be my gift to his estate.
Like your Civil Rights Bill, Hiram
Jackson is as dead as they come.

END

SHOCK CUT TO:

**MINES. FURNACES. SCREAMING TORTURED FACES. "IF FISK FALLS
IT ALL FALLS!" HIRAM'S DEAD FACE. MOMMA'S ANGRY FACE. FACES
LYNCHED DROWNED BURNED. THOUSANDS OF FACES. FACES. FACES.**

A loud WHAP! jolts Ella out of the nightmare, choking. We're in:

ELLA'S ROOM - MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT

RAGING WINDS have just blown open a rotted window, filling the room
with a spiritual. Again it's *Steal Away*.

Clutching her ears, she goes to the window then looks out and sees --

A TORMENTED SOUL

-- pacing the grounds, bitterly berating himself.

The sight of White unnerves her. She looks to the clock - it's 4am,
three hours to Fisk's end. Fighting a war of emotions, she wrests
her eyes from White and shuts the window. An instant later --

WHAP! -- she jolts as another window BLOWS OPEN, bringing back
Steal Away. Her heart pounding, she goes over and shuts it.

WHAP! -- another BLOWS OPEN, then -- WHAP! WHAP! -- another and
another. She's clearly at war with the insistent winds.

Harrowed, she charges over and SLAMS the nearest window. It BREAKS
OFF ITS HINGES AND CRASHES TO THE FLOOR. The wind BLASTS IN like a
tornado and BLOWS her belongings onto the floor.