**A WHALE OF A TALE**

**An East London Musical**

**2011**

**A Young Adult Production**

**Written by Jennifer Bryson**

SCENE OUTLINE WITH SONGS

1. Creation - 1 Adiemus – Karl Jenkins

chorus sings

creation mime / sing

with Angelo speaking

2. Jonah and King O - 2 Shades of Grey – Billy Joel

small group/ individuals singing

prophets try to convince Jonah what to do

colour symbolism / grey cloth

Place: King O's palace

3. Niniville - 3 Ka – Ching – Shania Twain

Small group sing

ninnies act

sung in-between the speaking parts of the scene

Place: Niniville - Western suburbia

4 Fire Burning- Sean Kingston

Hip hop evil/demons dance

Ninnies ‘burn and die’

4. So you want to be a pirate -

5 A Pirate I was meant to be- Monkey Island

Pirates sing / act with pirate props

Place: Docks

5. Stormtroopers - 6 Headphones- Jars of Clay

small group sing

Jonah with headphones frontstage

Pirates and Stormtroopers fight to this song.

Place: Docks

7 Praise you in this storm – Casting Crowns

\*Chorus sing

The pirates throw away all their illegal equipment they destroy the whole stall and they change their pirate clothes for new clothes.

---------------INTERVAL ---------------

6. In the whale - 8 In the Belly of the Whale - Newsboys

individual/small group sing

in-between conversation with Jonah/ Rasta

weird sea creatures on stage

Place: Whale Game

- 9 Kayama/Adiemus reprise – Karl Jenkins

\*chorus sing in background

Crucifixion story symbolism in front

Jonah caught in seaweed.

10 Seasons of Love – From "Rent"

\*chorus sings with sea creatures, broadway-style

Place: Whale Game

7. Nini-revival -

11 Redemption song – Bob Marley

small group / individual on guitar competing with Jonah's sermon.

12Fire burning reprise – Sean Kingston

Hip hop dance – good/holy spirit

Ninnies acting / Spitwad and Slimeball burn

Place: Niniville suburbia

8. The Tree - 13 Dynamite – Taio Cruz

Celebratory dance and verbal percussion

Ninnies join in.

Place: Niniville suburbia

14 Poor Me in Sea Major - Elizna story told by Jonah/ singer

dramatized

15 Who I am – Casting Crowns

Jonah frontstage

\*chorus sing - finale

all cast on stage

*All cast on stage and bow*

CHARACTERS

*Principal characters*

Jonah

We meet Jonah as a self-assured prophet who carelessly agrees to King O's instructions without thinking about the consequences of it. Throughout the play he is the 'everyman' character who the audience can relate to. He runs away, doubts, rationalizes his decisions, gets angry with God, repents, sulks, is bitter and asks lots of questions of himself, the audience, and King O. When Jonah comes across as unreasonable or in two minds, it is for the purposes of satire that points back to our own hearts – he is all of us, at some point. His questions and fears are not so far removed from our own.

King O

King O, Alpha and Omega, Beginning and End combines massive gravitas with approachability. He is expressive, extravagant, and cool (with a bit of a jazz musician feel). The verse that comes to mind for this interpretation is **Zephaniah 3:17**.***He will take great delight in you; in his love he will no longer rebuke you, but will rejoice over you with singing*. King O is fun – he doesn't want to intimidate us with his grandeur but welcomes us with his warmth.**

Slimeball

Slimeball is the pompous and over-the-top demon-in-charge of Niniville. He considers himself very important and a great expert in human nature. He is always ready with advice or insults for his inept nephew, Spitwad. He is verbose and pedantic but with an evil edge for anyone who crosses him. However, he is to be played more comic than terrifying - after all, he serves a defeated master and knows it.

Spitwad

Spitwad is a new graduate from demon academy and he hasn't got being a demon exactly down pat yet. He is candid, dim-witted and enthusiastic - also a bit of a bumbling coward. He is very fond of Slimeball, despite all evidence that this feeling is not mutual.

Angelo

Angelo is the foil for Slimeball and Spitwad's schemes. She has more class than either of them and displays confidence and lightness. She is sophisticated and intelligent with a quirky, musicality to how she delivers her lines.

Other smaller characters (use doubling up for small cast)

Attendant – loyal servant of King O

Old Salt – crusty sailor at the harbor

Four Prophets – Jemima, Phil, Alex, and Kim - the prophets of King O vacillate between being self-important, wimpy and equivocating.

Eleven Ninnies – Inhabitants of the great and feared city of 'Ninniville' with various humorous sins.

Four Pirates – Davey, Billy, Lola, Scum. The pirates are conniving and lovable.

Three Stormtroopers – Fierce, staunch, mean and from Star Wars fame.

Rasta – a Christian Rasta, of course! Very wise, with Jamaican accent.

Adam – repentant and wearing very little clothes, as per Garden of Eden.

**Scene 1: Creation**

*(Front stage left contains Spitwad and Slimeball, talking maliciously. Front stage right contains Angelo in calm reflective pose, perhaps painting or reading a book. It should be clear that Spitwad and Slimeball are demons and Angelo is an angel, but not one out of any Sunday school nativity. Spitwad and Slimeball notice the audience, stop talking to each other, and address them. There are flowers and plants on stage.)*

**Slimeball:***(Points at the audience)* Look, Spitwad, humans!

**Spitwad:** Ooh, big ones, little ones. Ugly ones*. (Steps closer to the audience, scrutinizing them).*

**Slimeball:** Let's talk nicely to our meat…I mean, guests, shall we?

**Spitwad:** Are we gonna have lunch then?

**Slimeball:** *(Slaps him)* No doubt you being here must be depriving some poor village of its idiot.

*(Goes on to audience, ignoring his apprentice)*

Welcome to the realm of the spirit. I am the majestically malignant Ignatius Cobavelew Slimeball, 5th level demon, cunning conjurer and delightful deceiver of great renown, arch-overseer here in the town of Niniville. And this is my (*cough cough*) nephew, Spitwad. Fresh from demon academy and as raw as sushi.

**Spitwad:** With a mind as quick as lighting!

**Slimeball:** Just a pity that lightning doesn’t strike the same place twice.

**Spitwad:** Cut it out! Anyway, *(excitedly)*tell them about my project!

**Slimeball:** Our most dreaded master has decided to put Spitwad on the case of a rather delicious little human called Jonah. Spitwad is quite proud of this project – although you shouldn't count your fangs before they've grown. In addition to my many important and illustrious responsibilities here on earth, the powers that be have given me this tedious demon-babysitting job! *(Spitwad is distracted by a flower).* Focus Spitwad – your mind's too small to let it wander alone.

*(Spitwad holds a flower up to Slimeball)*

**Slimeball:** A-choo!

**Spitwad:** Bless you! I mean…curse you!

**Slimeball:** You embarrassment to the Slimeball line! Get a grip.

**Spitwad:** Sorry, Slimer old Pal. The things on earth are still kinda weird to me. Demon academy was much less flowery and colourful. The sunsets give me the creeps.

**Slimeball:** Nature stinks like a smelly rose. Our perverse enemy has put his mark on it. Many a defiant mortal have found our feared enemy in a rose-tinted sunset.

**Spitwad:** Amen to that! I mean… Zounds! Scullian! Curses?!

**Slimeball:** What mark did you get in cursology anyway, Spitwad? I bet you couldn't make a baby cry.

**Spitwad:** My cursology is fantastic! I even did the course twice! Watch this, watch this. *(He finds someone in the audience to insult)*

Hey, four eyes! *(…and other bad insults)* Bet you are scared now, face to face with one of the meanest monstrosities of the underworld. Yeah, don't try and outstare me – my eyes blaze with fire. *(Spitwad loses nerve and jumps away).* Help! He's mocking me, Slimeball.

**Slimeball:**Oh Spitwad, you're about as subtle as a flying brick.

Like I was saying…It takes a demon of great fortitude (in other words – someone unlike you) to walk head on into creation. As you have noticed, it tends to shout the praises of our most feared adversary.

**Spitwad:** Thank goodness…I mean, thank badness for dark high rise office buildings.

**Slimeball:** Yes. Darkness is our forte. Our most cunning master would probably have made everything in shades of black, with a dash of extra black.

**Spitwad**: If he could make anything. Which he can't. Hee hee hee!

**Slimeball**: You want to go reminding him of that?

**Spitwad:** No, he remembers the story. The grand beginning… I wish we could forget.

*(From the other side of the stage, Angelo comes closer, addressing the audience).*

**Angelo:** Heavens be praised. I have found you. You can't believe everything you hear around here. I've heard some nasty rumors and spotted some suspicious characters in the neighbourhood… *(Looks around critically, indicating Spitwad and Slimeball).*

**Slimeball:** Buzz off lightball. We found them first.

**Spitwad**: They are ours…

I mean, they are our…friends.

**Angelo**: (*does not bother with them but talks to the audience).* My name is Angelo. And I am here to shed a little light on the scene. For a little light makes mincemeat of darkness. I believe this dubious duo was about to tell you all about the beginning…

**Spitwad:** You can't make us!

**Slimeball:** Not a chance *(and general moaning, groaning, wretching sounds).*

**Angelo:** Then allow me to set the scene for the grand beginning of it all – as I recall, it goes something a little like this:

**Angelo *(while Adiemus song starts to play):***

*You are the ultimate answer to God's loneliness.*

**ADIEMUS**

***Whole chorus sings/mime - creation story***

***Angelo speaks above and through the music:***

*(Verse sung) And the earth was empty*

*There was nothing on the face of the earth*

*And the spirit of the Lord hovered over the land*

*Looking – for you.*

*God made all you can see and all you can't see*

*He pulled it out of inky blackness, out of bottomless emptiness*

*It was a great magic trick.*

*Light, he poured into darkness – for His people would be called a people of the light*

*Sky – he invites the waters to separate above and below it – He rolls out the ocean – He puts the heavens above*

*and the earth below – and He promises His people that what is done in heaven, will also happen on earth.*

*(Adiemus chorus - no speaking. Angelo is watchful.)*

*(Flute solo) God said: Green up, earth! Out of every crevice and nook and cranny leap the seed-bearing plants – and fruit that is good to eat.*

*Lights come out! – radiant sun – moon – stars – outdazzling each other - waiting for man to point his grubby*

*fingers up at them.*

*Swarm ocean, fly birds. Earth generate life! Wild animals of every kind - Fill up; fill up the earth with furs and fins and feathers. Make every empty space abound with boundless life.*

*And then Man! The feather in His cap. Each one of you – plucked out of the no of all nothing and stuffed with dust and then He breathed – and when He breathed it all happened at once – He wrote eternity in Your heart. And He wrote you in eternity.*

*(Adiemus chorus - no speaking)*

*(verse and Adiemus chorus) And so you were thought up. He stored the thought of you in His head until it was time for you to arrive on earth.*

*It was good – it was celebration – it was you.Feast your eyes. Feast your ears. Do not doubt that you are meant to be here. There is always a place for you at His table. All of creation shouts out and celebrates Him. And you too are called to celebrate with Him.It is done. And then He rested. Nothing more needed to be done. It was too good for words. Too good for man to grasp in his hands. But creation knows. It was the witness from the beginning of time. And still it shouts out and refuses to be silenced. And when it said all that it was called to say and did all it was sent to do… then the curtain fell.*

*(Adiemus chorus ends - Final drumroll of song and blackout).*

*------------------------------------------------------------*Blackout-------------------------------------------

**Scene 2: Jonah and King O**

*(King O's palace room. Spitwad and Slimeball talking together, scheming, with Angelo watching them. Front of stage is King O, behind laptop, possibly with musical instrument. Prophet-types scattered across the stage, consulting scrolls, talking and looking important.)*

**Slimeball** *(listening on earpiece):*Stop the presses! This just in by d-mail. Speak slowly, Wormwood. You know how you slobber into the microphone when you get excited. Yes, I hear you. Stop King O from finding a prophet…stop him launching a new hit on Niniville. We're on it!

**Spitwad:** King O – is he some kinda rapper? Get down with King O!*(He raps, badly.)*

**Slimeball:** No, you dimwit. King O is what these people call our most feared enemy: Alpha and Omega, Beginning and End. Creation? It was His party. Now, to foil His plan. I'll get the rest of the prophets out of the way – you focus on your charge – Jonah.

**Spitwad:** We're gonna corrupt the prophets. It is so diabolical! Wait…what's a prophet again?

**Slimeball:***(slaps him)* Demon academy standards certainly have dropped if a graduate can't even identifyone of our horrible enemy's special messengers.

**Spitwad:** *(cowardly)*Isn't a prophet rather lethal? I mean, I could get seriously hurt!

**Slimeball:** My ignorant little friend -even men of iron can have feet of clay. He is going to be putty in our hands. What would you rather hear: the winning lottery numbers or fire and brimstone?

**Spitwad:** Erm, fire and brimstone?

**Slimeball:** No! You know how these humans are – they want to hear health, wealth and prosperity.

**Spitwad**: But what if Jonah really gets a message about fire and brimstone and all that?

**Slimeball**: Then we cover fire and brimstone with chocolate – make it look good, taste good, and they will swallow it whole – and come back for more!*(Demons laugh manically).*

**Angelo:** Twisting the tale again, are we?

**Slimeball:** Telling it like it is, not sugar-coating like you do, withered wings!

**Angelo:** Well perhaps if you could keep your large green mouth closed, we could actually hear what King O has to say? Or are you still fishing for flies? *(He holds Spitwad's mouth closed. Slimeball is free to wander and chat to prophets. An attendant enters and goes towards King O.)*

**Attendant:** Excuse me, sir, there was the small matter of that moon of Jupiter. The one that is going to crash later on today.

**King O:** Oh, yes. There is no need for that collision. Just give me a moment *(He stretches out his hand and performs a circle-turning motion on the laptop.)*

Ah, yes. A stubborn little moon, that one. But happy to go again on the course that I chose for her.

**Attendant:** Very good, King O.

**King O:** Oh, yes. It is very good. But greater things are yet to come. Summon my prophets! Now for something with a little more glamour and pizzazz. Friends, prophets, gentlemen, lend me your ears!

*(The prophets all come close together to King O. He shouts boomingly as soon as they are close to him)*

**King O:** I have a dream…

**Jemima:***(aside)* And I am having a nightmare.

**King O:** It is a dream, for the city of Niniville.

*(General gasping of "oh, no, not Niniville, anywhere but that!")*

I hear they are marching to the beat of their own drum. But it's time that they face the music and change their tune.

So who is going to be my chosen messenger for this high honour? Don't push – don't all volunteer at once.

*(Prophets jump back)* Yes, Jemima? I see you just tingling with anti...cipation.(*Prophets look uncomfortable, gulping, shivering, looking at the floor)*

**Jemima:** Well of course, I would love to go…it is just…well…

*(Scene freezes, music starts to play "March of Siamese Children")*

**Slimeball:** Can you hear it, Spitwad – music to my ears. The prophets parade of well-prepared but pathetic excuses...

*(Music in background continues)*

**King Omega:** My prophets. Who of you will go to Niniville, on this important mission?

**Jemima:** I can't go myself, but I can updatemy Facebook status, maybe tweet Niniville, put the warning on MySpace. I don't actually have to go there, do I?

**Phil:** *(holding up tickets*) I would love to go, but there is this rugby test, and I've got tickets. I have to pray for the team. They can't do it without me!

**Alex:***(with diary out*) I'll check my diary and get back to you – actually I think I have an opening on the afternoon of the 2nd of February 2013.

**Kim:** I've already got a mission trip planned for Hawaii, LA, Paris and Rio. I really feel called to those places, the beaches…I mean, the people there? Don't you agree?

*(They all escape huddling):*

**Alex**: Did you hear where he wanted us to go – to Niniville?

**Jemima:** The most shocking … evil … terrifying place…

**Phil:** Niniville is huge and fierce and we are supposed to walk up there and say 'Er repent!' And they will say:

'You and what army?' or perhaps they will say nothing, because we will already be decapitated!

**King Omega**: Call Jo.*(Prophets look intensely relieved)*

**Alex:** Now there is the man for the job! What a spiritual guy…

**Kim:** Jo is a man who can't say no.

*(He ushers Jo in.)*

**Jonah:***(dramatically)*Ladies and gentlemen, the prophet has entered the building!

**Kim:** Hey Jo, remember that R20 from the other day? Can I keep it?

**Jo:** Er, sure! By the way, why am I here?

**Alex:** King O has big things in store for you.

**Jo** (*oozing machismo):*I'm a 'big things' kinda guy. Look out world – Jonah goes where angels fear to tread!

*(He walks up to and faces in King O.)*

**King O:** Jo, my favourite prophet!

**Jo**: You say that to everyone.

**King O**: And yet, it is still, the truth.

**Jo**: But…why do I see the rest of the prophet pack look like their legs have turned to jello?

**King O**: They are…otherwise occupied. But Jo, you have won the prophetic sweepstakes. It's time for you to go solo! Like cream – or scum – you are going to rise all the way to the top. So tell me, what is it that prophets want to do most of all?

**Jo**: Sleep?

**King O:** What a guy, what a joker! (*Nudges him affectionately)* A prophet wants to prophesy of course! And I'm giving you this once-in-a-lifetime chance to do just that. Here is a message from me to the great city of Niniville. As my special messenger I want you to take this message and deliver it as soon as prophetically possible. What do you say?

**Jo:***(Insincerely)* Sure!

**King O**: I am glad to see you are o- so – obedient.

**Jo:***(woodenly)* Can I at least see the message?

**King O:** Here it is. It's an easy one to remember. I wouldn't want you to come back because you forgot. Ha ha ha!

**Jo:** It says: Repent. You have 40 days. This message will self-destruct in 40 days. And if you do not repent, so will you.

*(Gulp)* lovely.

**King O:** No point beating around the bush! Have a great trip and remember that the gut-wrenching horror of Niniville is vastly exaggerated. *(Jonah walks like a zombie in the wrong direction)*

Oh, and in case you forget. Niniville is in that *(points)* direction.

*(Prophets come around Jonah, cheering, following him to ticket vendor. Ticket vendor is Spitwad).*

**Jemima**: Yo Jo, He is our man, if he can't do it, no one can.

**Phil**: What a legend. You do the prophet-profession proud.

**Jonah** *(to ticket seller):* Can I have a ticket please.

**Spitwad:**Tarsus, was it? *(Jonah nods)* It's a great destination. You made a wise decision.

**Prophets:**Tarsus!

**Jonah:** Maybe I'm just taking the scenic route?

**Phil:** Ooh! You're trying to run away.

**Jonah:** No, I'm not trying to run away, I'm just, I'm just…

**Spitwad***(whispers)* …trying to carve out your own destiny…

**Jonah:** I'm just trying to carve out my own destiny! That's right!

**Alex**: Has that ever worked?

**Jonah:** It worked for you!

**Kim**: I have a legitimate excuse!

**Jonah:** Yeah, right!You guys set me up!

**Jemima:** Ooh...Rebellion against King O…someone always tries and it always ends in tears.

**Jonah:** But what else can I do?

**SHADES OF GRAY**

**Prophets and Jonah singing (packing, getting ready, dressed, with the demons coaxing him on and Angelo trying to stop him).Grey and colour symbolism (Angelo: Jo - Don't Go! Spitwad: Jonah, Just go!)**

-----------------------------------------------------blackout---------------------------------------------------------