CHARACTERS:
-Meriwether Lewis
-William Clark
-Rogers
-Sam (a negro)
-Two Soldiers
-Other Explorers
-Parker
-Miller
-Chaboneau
-An Interpreter
-Bird Woman (Interpreter's wife)
-Indian Chief
-Two Braves
-Squaw
-Other Indians
-Indian Chief
-Governor of the state
-Other Citizens

SCENE I
A Room in a House in St. Louis

(Lewis and Clark are seated at opposite sides of a table. Same is mending a hole in a coat. The others are smoking or sitting idle. Time - May.)

LEWIS: Tomorrow, if all is well, we shall continue our journey.

CLARK: I am glad we are going so soon. It is time to explore the land between the Mississippi and the Pacific and to put it to use.

LEWIS: (Spreading out a map on the table.) If we follow the Missouri to its source, I think we can find the Columbia, and that flows into the Pacific.

CLARK: No one knows where the sources of those rivers are. It will be interesting to search for them.

LEWIS: I have no doubt that we shall discover more than one important fact. I wonder how the Indians will like to see a new flag waving over them.

CLARK: Probably we shall find out when we call at the different settlements and tell the Indians that they must obey the Great Father at Washington now, instead of the French king.
(Enter Rogers, dragging a box.)

LEWIS: Well, Rogers, what have you there? That box seems heavy. Do you need help?

ROGERS: (Smiling.) No, thank you. I can manage it. These are presents for the Indians.

CLARK: Let us see them before you nail on the cover.

(Rogers takes out beads, knives, mirrors, brightly colored coats, and other garments.)

FIRST SOLDIER: (Laughing.) Those ought to buy the friendship of a good many Indians.

ROGERS: Yes, all there are between the Mississippi and the Pacific.

CLARK: Such trifles are but a small price to pay.

LEWIS: The long journey will be price enough. No doubt, we shall all agree to that before we get back.

SECOND SOLDIER: No matter what is ahead of us, I shall be glad to get out of this place. I have had an interesting time trading furs for horses with the Frenchmen.

FIRST SOLDIER: The horses are all on the big boat. It was almost impossible to get that big roan over the gangplank.

LEWIS: (Anxiously.) I wish those boats were not so heavily loaded. We cannot tell how many rapids and falls we may find.

CLARK: There is nothing that we can leave behind. We must run the risk, and discard, later, what may be in the way.

FIRST SOLDIER: Perhaps we might leave Sam here with the Frenchman. (He points to the negro.)

SAM: No, sah. I'se gwine to see de start of de Mississippi. I ain't gwine leave you to fight dem Injuns alone.

(All laugh.)

LEWIS: Well, I hope there will not be much fighting. Remember, men, we are not out for war, but for the exploration of a new country. With forty-two men in our party, however, we ought to be able to explore and fight, too, if necessary.

CLARK: If we expect to start with the sun in the morning, we must all turn in for a good night's sleep.

(All rise, say good night, and leave the room.)

SCENE II

Camp Fire in the Woods near the Mouth of the Platte River

LEWIS: (Poking the fire.) Well, friends, we have made some progress, though perhaps we have not gone ahead as quickly as we had hoped.

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PARKER: *(Tracing a map in the firelight.)* I am glad of the delay, for I have succeeded in making some very good maps of the places we have found. There seems to be no end to the wonders of this country. I should not be surprised at anything now.

MILLER: *(Picking up a sketch.)* What is this picture?

PARKER: A sketch I made of a waterfall I found a while ago. It is so high that the water falls halfway, breaks into mist, and gathers again into a second fall that seems to come from a cloud.

ROGERS: I hope we shall not have to tow the boat against any more rapids, or drag it around any more waterfalls.

PARKER: If I had my choice, I would rather fight Indians than meet wild animals.

LEWIS: Today when I was by myself, I met a grizzly bear, a wolverine, and three buffaloes.

CLARK: Yesterday I drove away two buffaloes that were as tame as cows. Then I spied a big wood rat, unlike anything I have ever seen before.

ROGERS: When I woke up that night I slept under the old oak tree. I found a long rattlesnake for a neighbor.

PARKER: I killed him, *wrote a letter warning those who were to come after me, and nailed the letter to the tree.*

MILLER: Yes, and when we got there, some beavers had gnawed the tree down and used it for a dam.

LEWIS: They must have been very hungry beavers to eat the post-office for breakfast.

*(All laugh.)*

CLARK: Well, I am glad we are all together again.

LEWIS: Yes, and this seems to be a safe place to spend the night.

PARKER: *(Yawning.)* I am tired enough to go to sleep.

ROGERS: So am I.

*(All roll up in their blankets and lie down around the fire.)*

MILLER: I wish those wild ducks and geese would stop their quacking and hissing.

LEWIS: *(Killing mosquitoes.)* These mosquitoes are a dreadful nuisance. I have never seen such enormous creatures anywhere else.

PARKER: What is that strange noise? It sounds like waves against the sand.

*(All listen.)*

CLARK: Oh, that's nothing but a prairie dog scratching and prowling round.

MILLER: I heard a rustling over there, unlike any sound I have ever heard before.
LEWIS: It is only an antelope. Go to sleep, and you will not be disturbed by noises.

ROGERS: *(Rising and looking round.)* I declare, this sand bank is sinking. The water is creeping in upon us. That is the course of those queer sounds.

*(All get up.)*

LEWIS: The stream must be changing its course. That has happened before in this region.

CLARK: We must find some other place to spend the night. The place where we were lying is disappearing rapidly. Even the wild geese have left it.
*(They pick up their belongings and depart.)*

PARKER: *(Following in the rear.)* I wonder what will happen next.

**SCENE III**

*Winter Quarters near Bismarck on the Missouri River*

*(Lewis is cleaning a gun, Rogers and Parker are mending a boat. Clark is writing. Chaboneau and his wife are taking turns at stirring meal in a bowl.)*

LEWIS: It is almost a year since we left St. Louis, and we have not reached the Rockies yet.

PARKER: Well, I think sixteen hundred miles is a long distance to have covered. Chaboneau says that we shall surely find the Great Falls in three moons.

ROGERS: That would be about June, wouldn't it? I wonder where we shall be next April.

CLARK: *(Laughing.)* Anybody who is likely to grow impatient should have gone with the party that returned.

ROGERS: I am anxious to go ahead as fast as possible. I want to see that eagle's nest over the Falls. I do not believe those Mandan Indians ever saw half the wonderful things they told us about.

LEWIS: *(To the Bird Woman.)* Do you think we can reach the eagle's nest and the Falls in three moons?

BIRD WOMAN: In two moons we should see the High Mountains, and in three moons we are sure to hear the Big Falls.

CLARK: *(To the Bird Woman.)* Do you still intend to go with us? Such a journey may not be very safe for you and your child.

BIRD WOMAN: *(Smiling cheerfully.)* Indeed, I am going with you. I want my little son to be the youngest explorer known.

CLARK: *(To the others.)* She has the necessary courage, but I am afraid that peril is too great.

CHABONEAU: I have told her so, but nothing will change her decision.

BIRD WOMAN: I shall try to be a help rather than a hindrance. I fear no danger with so many strong men.

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LEWIS: That is a real compliment.

CLARK: I hope we shall prove worthy of her good opinion.

(Enter Indians.)

LEWIS: (In Indian language.) Good day, friends, I wonder whether you will sell us some food today.

CHIEF: (Shaking his head.) We have none to sell. We need it all ourselves.

LEWIS: But we have presents for you. Come let us show them to you.

(Indians crowd around.)

CHIEF: Maybe we can let you have some venison if you pay us enough.

CLARK: (Offering a present.) Will you take this in exchange for some beans?

FIRST BRAVE: Yes, I will get some now. Do not give that present to anybody else while I am gone. (He goes out.)

ROGERS: (Offering another gift.) I will give this for some buffalo meat.

SQUAW: I will look for some. Just wait a moment. (She goes out.)

PARKER: I should like a piece of suet to make a pudding.

SECOND BRAVE: I have very little, but you may have it all, if you will give me this. (He picks up a string of beads.)

LEWIS: All right. Go and get it. (Brave goes out.)

CLARK: What a fine Fourth of July dinner we shall have!

LEWIS: We shall have venison, beans, and buffalo meat.

PARKER: (Laughing.) Don't forget the suet pudding I intend to make.

LEWIS: That will be a real feast, after living on stale meat, fish, and roots for so long. Maybe the Bird Woman will rob some mice nests for us, and get their winter store of Jerusalem artichokes.

PARKER: The last she found were delicious. I am glad she came along. She not only helps to provide us with food, but she is an interpreter even better than her husband.

(Indians return with food.)

CLARK: (To the Indians.) The Great Father in Washington will always be kind to his children, as long as they are so generous.

CHIEF: We are all pleased with our bargains. Now would you like to see some of our braves dance, before you go?

LEWIS and CLARK: Yes, indeed.
(Braves dance. White men applaud.)

CLARK: That was very well done; but we must hasten on, my men. We have yet a long way to travel, and the day is far advanced.

LEWIS: Goodbye, red men.

CHIEF: Goodbye, palefaces. Come again and bring us some more presents.

(Indians go out, followed by white men.)

SCENE IV

Near the Missouri River, in what is now Montana

(Lewis, Clark, Parker, Miller, Rogers, Chaboneau, Bird Woman, and other Indians are all sitting down under a tree. Time - August.)

PARKER: If we do not get food soon, we shall starve. We have eaten our last piece of pork.

ROGERS: We have a little flour and some parched meal left.

MILLER: That will make a very poor meal.

LEWIS: Look! There are some people in the distance.

(All jump up.)

PARKER: Where? I do not see anybody.

LEWIS: (Pointing.) At the foot of that hill.

(They all look.)

CHABONEAU: I see them. There are some men and several squaws.

LEWIS: Let us be ready to meet them. (Picking up a blanket.) We will throw this blanket over our heads and spread it on the ground as a sign of friendship. Let us leave our guns standing against this tree so that they will know we do not mean to harm them. When they get here, we will give them these beads and looking-glasses. (He takes presents from a bag. They lay down guns, wave and spread out the blanket, and start to meet the Indians, who are entering in fear and bowing their heads to be struck. Lewis and his men smile and shake the Indians’ hands, give them presents, and by pantomime show that they are friendly. Then the Indians embrace the white men and daub vermilion on the cheeks of their newly-found friends.)

INDIANS: (In chorus.) Ah, hie! Ah, hie!

ROGERS: What does that mean?

CHABONEAU: Probably it means that they are much pleased.
(Indians begin to take off moccasins.)

MILLER: Must we do that too?

CHABONEAU: Yes. It means they will go barefoot among rocks and thorns if they ever break friendship with us.

(Indian Chief passes round pipe of peace. They all smoke. White men remove moccasins.)

CHABONEAU: (In Indian language.) We should like some food. We have eaten nothing since last night.

CHIEF: (To Squaw.) Bring that cake made of chokecherries.

(She brings it, and the Chief gives it to Lewis.)

CHIEF: This is all we have.

CHABONEAU: To meet some traders with a white chief who cannot be far distant. If you are not afraid, we should like to have you come with us.

CHIEF: No one shall ever say that we are afraid (the braves nod assent.), but I suspect that you may be deceiving us.

CHABONEAU: (In English, to the white men.) They are suspicious of us.

LEWIS: Tell them we will remain here with them, and send one man ahead to find the other party.

(The interpreter is supposed to tell the Chief.)

CHIEF: That will satisfy us, if you will let us hold your guns.

CHABONEAU: (To white men.) He wants our guns.

LEWIS: Very well. Tell him to take them. We have the powder and shot.

CHABONEAU: (To Chief.) The white chief says you may hold them.

(Indians crowd around, pick up guns, and examine them. Enter Clark and other traders.)

LEWIS: Here they are now. (He advances to Clark and shakes hands with him.) We have been looking for you a long time. It is certainly good to see you again.

CLARK: We have had a hard trip with our heavily-loaded boats up the rapid stream; but, thank Heaven, we are all together once more.

(All shake hands.)

LEWIS: (Pointing to the Indians.) These red men that we have just met do not trust us. We must gain their confidence.

CLARK: Then let us have a council with them, and see whether we can get them to give us some of their horses
to use for the rest of the journey.

LEWIS: That is a wise idea. (To the interpreter) Chaboneau, you tell them.
CHABONEAU: (Speaking Indian dialect.) Come, friends, let us smoke the pipe of peace with the white men who have just come, and talk over our affairs.

(All form a circle, and smoke.)

CLARK: I will give them these presents. (He pins medals on some, and gives knives, beads, looking-glasses, etc., to others. All seem delighted.)

CHABONEAU: We will give you more presents in exchange for some horses.

CHIEF: What will you give us?

CHABONEAU: This coat, these leggings, handkerchiefs, and knives. (He holds up the articles mentioned.)

CHIEF: We will give you some good horses for those.

CHABONEAU: Then the bargain is closed.

CLARK: Tell them to come over yonder and have something to eat. We brought along part of a deer, an antelope, and some Indian corn.

LEWIS: That is welcome news, for we are all hungry.

CHABONEAU: Come, friends, the white chief invites you to a feast.

(Everybody rises and follows Clark. All go out.)

SCENE V
Banks of Columbia River

(White men are sitting before a camp fire. Indians enter in single file, humming and beating rude drums. They form a semicircle in front of the white men, smile, and nod their heads.)

LEWIS: What are those savages going to do?

BIRD WOMAN: Cook us a meal to show their friendship.

(The Indians heat stones in the fire, drop them into pails of water, and put fish in to boil.)

ROGERS: They are boiling salmon.

CHABONEAU: They have plenty of that kind of fish now. They have been drying a supply for winter.

MILLER: What are those rush mats for?
BIRD WOMAN: Those are dishes to hold the food.

PARKER: They have brought some filberts and berries, too, for us to eat.
CLARK: Thank them, Chaboneau. None of us know their language.

CHABONEAU: Neither do I. My wife will have to talk for us. She came from this part of the country.

LEWIS: You speak to them, Bird Woman.

BIRD WOMAN: (In Indian language.) The white men are pleased with your kindness.

CHIEF: We are glad to do all that we can for strangers.

(Indians grunt, smile, and nod in a friendly manner. All eat the feast together and smoke the calumet. Then the white men distribute presents among the Indians.)

LEWIS: (To the white men.) Now that we have followed the river for such a long distance, we cannot be far from the ocean.

CLARK: If we continue our voyage, we are sure to find the Pacific. Let us go forward.

PARKER: How can we go any farther? Our blankets are soaking wet from the rains, and we have nothing to eat but dried fish.

ROGERS: Yes, and we are all tired. I have rowed until I am stiff.

BIRD WOMAN: Why should we stop because of mere discomfort? It will be only a short time before we reach the end of our journey.

LEWIS: Well said, brave woman. You always give us new courage.

CLARK: Come, men. I think we can stand the hardship if she can. It would be cowardly to stop now.

ROGERS: (To Bird Woman.) You are the stoutest-hearted explorer in the party.

BIRD WOMAN: Oh, no, I am not brave. I am only anxious to find the end of our journey.

LEWIS: Let us all show our enthusiasm by continuing on our way.

(All go out, after bidding the Indians a friendly goodbye.)

SCENE VI
St. Louis--A room in a House

LEWIS: It is good to be home again after our long journey, and an absence of over two years.

GOVERNOR: You can never be fully repaid for all that you have done for the United States in exploring so thoroughly the far West.
FIRST CITIZEN: We are delighted to welcome you back. Every day we have anxiously watched for your return.

SECOND CITIZEN: More than once we feared you were lost; but every one has prayed for your safety.

THIRD CITIZEN: (To interpreter's wife.) We are glad that you brought the youngest explorer home safe and sound. Apparently the trip has done the child no harm.

FOURTH CITIZEN: How can we reward this gallant company? They have done what no money can repay.

GOVERNOR: President Jefferson is anxious to see you at Washington to express his gratitude in the name of the nation.

CLARK: We have found the way to the Pacific Ocean, and opened up that rich country. What we have accomplished is a sufficient reward for our labors.

(All go out.)

CURTAIN