



A SONG FOR SAINT MICHAEL'S (Part of the Galveston Cycle)

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2 Act Full-Length (6 Women-3 Men)

A schoolboy's death stirs the people of Galveston Island after the devastation of Hurricane Ike. With the help of a transferred priest, a young witness could tilt the balance from confusion to truth; but drowned secrets have kept Saint Michael's Catholic School afloat all these years.

CHARACTER:

Sister Mary Barbara—Age: Mid-late 60s; an older woman of beauty with a seductive charm.

SISTER MARY BARBARA

Sometimes, Father, the best counsel—the best help we can give is not to fight the lie—but to get someone through the lie. *(Beat)* You see that. Yes. *(Beat)* Did I tell you I was Mardi Gras queen? Lord I was pretty...I mean I was really somethin'! And I wore a white gown with a rhinestone tiara. Yes I did. My hair was red then—just like now. Only maybe a little redder. And I was a sight. I was the envy of the town. Had a boy. He'd take me drivin' in his convertible with the top down and we'd neck at every red light. Right there on the seawall for all to see. I got myself pregnant. That was not done back then—well—not tolerated. Tolerated—never liked that word... But this town let me be—as long as I kept to myself and took care of it in their way. I gave the child away. This town let it all go on. And I became a nun—to save face a bit. Though how that saved face when everyone knew your business already, I'll never know. Perhaps it was just repentance. Paying penance to this town. And my father paid the diocese to keep me close by. And people just accepted it. Never judged me to my face. That's what's nice about social etiquette, you know. Wiping it away leaves you unguarded. It'd be like this island without its wall to protect it. You know, I taught my daughter, even. I did. She came to this school. Never knew who I was. And I taught her. And no one made a fuss. She never knew. They let me keep my secret—and it was good. And it worked. The Church stood by me and provided a home for me through the pain. This whole town did. *(Beat)* Father, we can't always fight so directly. Because when we do...too much of the good secrets are brought out too. Life ain't clean. Pull down too many walls and we are all just left without protection. This frame that God and society gave us is flawed, Father. But it serves. The art is in working with it rather than tearing it all down.

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