

hunger

Lyric Sheets

1. The Greatest of My Trials

In an effort to be among the first wagon trains to grab land in California, James Reed decides on behalf of the Donner Party to take an untested shortcut through the mountains.

JAMES REED

And now beginneth
The greatest of my trials, my lord.
For thou hast, like Job before me
Delivered me unto the shadow
Of the mountain of disbelief
And so unto the pathways of a stranger
Now must I follow,
And trust that thou dwelleth
At the end of their journeying
As once thou dwelleth
At the beginning of mine.

Thou hast graced me with wealth
And with wife
And with four blessed children
But then thou hast smote me
With a temper and with a deadly sin
Of avarice.
O greed me not my greed, O Lord!
Let me trust unto thee
For these good people,
And have faith the shortcut
Shall not be made of haste and covetousness
But of patience and humility.
Amen.

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2. A Cup of Tea

James Reed has been banished from the Donner Party, and now his wife, Nellie Reed, battles hallucinations which have haunted her since the week she has been without any food..

NELLIE: Would you have a cup of tea, Mr. Galliard? No? Mind if I pour myself one? I'm trying to remember...it's odd the things you forget. When we were in Boston, James and I had a silver tea cart from Belgium, I think it was, or was it Germany? It was the one...it had...it had -- there was something about the handle. Leaves or branches or something which -- oh! it's a little hot! In Boston, servants would pour tea for me. I don't mind pouring myself. You sure you won't have a cup, Mr. Galliard I'm not sure we have sugar --

(The body rises up. It is JOHN SNYDER. NELLIE scrambles to her feet.)

NELLIE: Oh my God, oh my God, get down. Get you down. You're dead. Protect me, Mr. Galliard, the dead are rising! Protect me, Mr. Galliard, the dead are rising!

WHITNEY GALLIARD: No one there, Nellie. You're seeing things. Just sit you back down and have that cup of tea.

JOHN SNYDER: Dear Amella....

NELLIE: Y'hear! It's talking!

WHITNEY GALLIARD: No one's talking but you.

JOHN SNYDER: We ain't well here. We lost our oxen a few weeks ago. An attack at night by the Cheyenne. Thank God they left the children and women alone, but they ain't none to pull the wagons now and nothing to eat.

NELLIE: Nothing. Nothing! Been twenty days! You -- you have no right to be here anymore, James Snyder, you leave us alone.

JOHN SNYDER: Would you like some sugar in that tea?

NELLIE: This tea's mine. You can't have it.

JOHN SNYDER: All the sugar you c'n stir if'n you come with me, Nellie. Wouldn't you like to come with me, Nellie? It's warm.

NELLIE: No! No!
Not ready!
Not going anywhere,
Not going to with you.

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Don't want your sugar,
Don't want your company.
No! No!
Not ready!
I want to live,
Y'hear me?
Live.
Don't want your sugar,
And I don't want your comfort
And I don't want this tea,
No, I don't want this tea.

You can have it, Mr. Snyder,
You can have it,
You can take it,
But I won't drink the tea,
No I don't want your tea,
No I don't
No I don't,
No tea,
No tea!

(Nellie throws her "teacup" (nothing) onto the ground. James Snyder fades away.)

NELLIE
All I want, Mr. Snyder,
All I want is to survive.
Survive.
Survive....

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3. A Farm in Pennsylvania

Left alone, Whitney Galliard wonders why it was he left the comfort of his family home.

WHITNEY GALLIARD

I had a farm in Pennsylvania.
Fields I would plow with horse and oxen,
A white wooden house my father built himself
With his own bare hands.
It had a larder stocked for winter.
It had a hearth of stone for fire.
I had everything and anything
A man should ever desire.

Why was that not enough?
Why was I so discontent?
Ambition, ambition!
We are hungry more
And more.

I had a farm in Pennsylvania.
It had larder stocked for winter.
A white wooden house my father built.
In Pennsylvania.