

## PRIEST

### Character & Story Growth Sheet

#### ***WHO IS THIS PERSON***

Character Name: PRIEST

Gender : Male / Man

Family Information (Parent, Child, Siblings):

Only child. No siblings. (No one to ever really say no to him)

Social/Economic Status: Educated – Well Travelled –

Education: Masters in Divinity – Speaks 8 different languages – has resided at over 30 parishes / churches. Upper - Middle Class.

Religious Beliefs: Christianity.

Political Beliefs: Jamaican National Party is his focus.

Date of Birth/Age:

55

Relationship Status:

Single. No children.

#### ***WHAT ARE THEIR CIRCUMSTANCES/MOMENT (What brought them to this point, what is their 'Why here, Why now'. – Clarify this for every scene-***

What time is it? ( Year, month, season, day, time)

Winter. Near Christmas time.

Where are we located? (Country, city, landscape, building house)

Jamaican church residence – A free village in St. Ann Jamaica. PRIEST has been stationed here for almost a decade now. Longest of his career so far.

What has just happened?

PRIEST received word/call from a concerned parents that need their son healed. A soul the PRIEST feels to be lost has come to him. PRIEST

What is expected to happen?

## PRIEST

PRIEST is to use his education, resources and force to convert MANTLE. Priest is to take on a new lost soul. PRIEST is to do whatever means necessary to stop MANTLE from living what he perceives to be a life of immoral sin.

What does each Character need?

PRIEST needs faith, he needs the attention of MANTLE, he needs to speak and announce his views.

He needs to exorcise demon.

What is getting in their separate ways? (Is it ego? Another Character? Life circumstances?)

MANTLE's defiance. MANTLE's rejection. MANTLE's test of theory. PRIEST's ego. PRIESTS moral beliefs being tested. PRIEST being aroused by other worldly thought.

## WENNI

### Character & Story Growth Sheet

#### **WHO IS THIS PERSON**

Character Name: WENNI

Gender : Male / Non-defining

Family Information (Parent, Child, Siblings): WENNI is too an only child (n one to ever say no).

Social/Economic Status: Lower class.

Education: Primary school education / some secondary

Religious Beliefs: Baptist

Political Beliefs: Jamaican Labour Party

Date of Birth/Age: 19

Relationship Status: Partner to MANTLE

#### **WHAT ARE THEIR CIRCUMSTANCES/MOMENT (What brought them to this point, what is their 'Why here, Why now'. – Clarify this for every scene-**

What time is it? ( Year, month, season, day, time)

Winter. Near Christmas time.

Where are we located? (Country, city,landscape, building house)

Beach and Forest Trail – Jamaica – St. Ann

What has just happened?

WENNI's partner and love has just left to potentially end their relationship for good. But WENNI will not let go. He has to wait in emotional agony for three days. WENNI has just been told that their love is not enough.

What is expected to happen?

It is expected that WENNI will go and try to retrieve MANTLE. It is expected that MANTLE will come to his senses and come back to WENNI. It is expected that WENNI won't give up on MANTLE.

What does each Character need?

## WENNI

WENNI needs to leave Jamaica. WENNI needs to be happy in a less constraint world. He needs to leave the island and start a life with MANTLE.

What is getting in their separate ways? (Is it ego? Another Character? Life circumstances?)

If they miss this plane their parents will catch them and there will be more trouble. MANTLE's obsession with proving someone or himself wrong.

MANTLE's insecurity and loyalty to family.

## MANTLE

### Character & Story Growth Sheet

#### **WHO IS THIS PERSON**

Character Name: MANTLE

Gender : Male

Family Information (Parent, Child, Siblings): Oldest of 5

Social/Economic Status: Middle class

Education: Secondary School education

Religious Beliefs: Baptist - Christian

Political Beliefs: Jamaican Labour Party

Date of Birth/Age: 21

Relationship Status: Secret Life Partner of WENNI.

#### **WHAT ARE THEIR CIRCUMSTANCES/MOMENT (What brought them to this point, what is their 'Why here, Why now'. – Clarify this for every scene-**

What time is it? ( Year, month, season, day, time)

Winter. Near Christmas time.

Where are we located? (Country, city, landscape, building house)

Beach and Forest Trail and Church Residences

What has just happened?

MANTLE has decided to participate himself into the spiritual gay conversion therapy process. MANTLE is risking two years of hard work and savings all to please his family.

What is expected to happen?

It is expected that MANTLE will go and stay with a very well-known highly educated PRIEST for 3 days to try and expel his demon. If successful, he will not be with WENNI not go to North America with him.

What does each Character need?

MANTLE needs time to talk to himself. He needs time to find himself. He needs to defy what is not natural to him. MANTLE needs validation.

## MANTLE

What is getting in their separate ways? (Is it ego? Another Character? Life circumstances?)

HIMSELF\*\* HIS DOUBTS \*\* HIS LOVE FOR HIS FAMILY\*\*THE PRIEST'S AMBITION\*\*WILLINGNESS

## PRIEST

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What is expected to happen?

# JAMAICAN LOVE

## Opera Outline

Composer: Marc Migo Cortes | Librettist: Troy Defour

**Setting:** Jamaica; Forest Trail / Residential Church

**Time:** Christmas (Late December)

**Musical Arc:** gradual shifts, a circle: happiness/quarrel (PERIPETEIA), self-doubt/seduction, reaffirmation and happiness.

## CHARACTERS

- Sun (PRIEST): Bass (**supernatural** entity—Sun / something **wicked**)  
55 years old | A black/dark skinned Jamaican | Well-traveled | Tall-Broad-Muscular
- First Woman (MANTLE): Countertenor (youthful, can offer crazy passages in the high register while arguing with WENNI and the PRIEST, and is extremely far from the PRIEST’s “reach”)  
21 years old | stern | passionate | angsty | slender physique | Tall
- First Man (WENNI): Tenor (also youthful, a bit of range contrast with MANTLE).  
19 years old | loyal | polite | romantic | impulsive | slender physique | Short
- Orchestra: Sinfonietta Ensemble (2 percussionists). Possible association of instrument families with characters: PRIEST—pitched, metallic percussion (**magical, evil**); MANTLE—Brass (**determined** to find himself, maybe a **hesitant** march accompanying him throughout the therapy); WENNI—Woodwinds and strings (more **flexible, empathetic**).

## MAIN MUSIC MATERIALS

- “**Seduction**” music, getting more and more **oppressive, perverse**. Enticing percussive colors (pitched percussion)
- **Argument** music, **angular, aggressive, cacophonous**
- **Walking** music, for MANTLE alone. **Decided** but **hesitant**. Ostinato interrotto.
- **Waiting/following** music, for WENNI alone. **Sparse, hollow**. Maybe a distortion of **Walking** music.
- “**Supernatural**” music, for the Priest, may be associated with seduction music. Evocation of chorales, plainchant and other sonorities associated with liturgy.
- **Missing** music (Strings, **longing, tonal, simple**)
- **Happy** music, living in **harmony**, connecting the beginning and end of the piece. A reality, or something to aspire to.



## ACT 1

Instrumental. Happy music (flowing, harmonious, triadic). An “Overture”

MANTLE and WENNI make love engulfed in a makeshift bed of nature.

Duet of “how well we are together.” Intimate, harmonious, connected. **Happy** music. (WENNI+MANTLE).

MANTLE reveals documents buried under two rocks engraved with their initials.

In awe, WENNI raises two plane tickets in a nearby beam of moonlight, reading them.

WENNI declares and manifests delights of the new life waiting for them in North America.

In three days, their plane leaves.

MANTLE ascends, getting dressed. MANTLE straps on a stuffed and puffy satchel.

Recit, still habitating the **Happy** music space. (WENNI+MANTLE).

MANTLE paces and confesses he came out to his parents and younger siblings, about his same-sex relationship and plans to leave Jamaica.

Loyal to the family, MANTLE first agreed to visit a famous priest in St. Ann’s Mountain. He will undergo spiritual healing and leaves tonight.

MANTLE announces his dedication to family.

(Recit continues) replacement of **Happy** music for **Argument** music, culminating in...

MANTLE agrees to leave, only if he returns from the PRIEST with the same feelings.

MANTLE kisses WENNI and departs through a nearby passage in the bushes.

Duet of the **Argument** (WENNI+MANTLE).

WENNI dresses in an irate mood, lamenting of being free from only loving in the shadows.

WENNI dances and talks with the rocks and branches to manifest their American Dream.

WENNI follows MANTLE trekking to the church in the mountains.

Instrumental. WENNI **waits**, then starts **following** MANTLE. **Waiting/Following** music. Possible Aria where WENNI questions his feelings for and fidelity to MANTLE. Echoes of **Happy** music.

*Scene Change:*

MANTLE stumbling, panting and yelling for water arrives at the church doors.

Instrumental. **Walking** music.

PRIEST stands erect in front of the doors balancing a cup of tea. A bible clinging under his armpit. A copper whistle swings around his neck kissing his rosary beads. A broad brown rugged and worn in belt with gold buckle uncomfortably squeezes his torso.

Possible introductory Recit between MANTLE and PRIEST, colored by **supernatural** music (the PRIEST’s theme)

MANTLE kneels dry-heaving from a long walk in the heat. MANTLE begs for water.

PRIEST saunters around MANTLE telling him how sick and worried he’s made his family.

PRIEST reminds MANTLE of his purpose and god-intended nature as a man.

PRIEST, passive aggressively, chastises MANTLE.

PRIEST tells MANTLE he will be 'healed' within three days of sessions.

Aria for the PRIEST (the villain!). Always two-folded. Superficially enchanting but tainted by a wicked subtext. Grotesque. Think of Shostakovich. Harmonic and/or melodic elements may anticipate the exorcism (second temptation).

PRIEST strides into the church residence sipping the tea. PRIEST affirms water is inside.

MANTLE, thirsty, drags self into the church residence following PRIEST's shadow.

(this may be integrated at the end of the previous Aria).

## End of ACT 1

## ACT 2

End of Day 1. PRIEST, drinking tea, drills scripture into MANTLE's psyche through endless reading and reciting.

MANTLE recites, but is constantly bastardizing the beatitudes.

MANTLE, resistant to the lessons, snatches the bible and slaps through pages to land at Genesis 18:20, Sodom & Gomorrah.

MANTLE attempts to educate PRIEST on the true and just nature of this story.

First temptation: (Duet PRIEST+MANTLE) **Seduction** music infiltrates/disrupts **Walking** music. Important idea: Variation. Both MANTLE and the PRIEST read aloud the same story (theme), but each character sings it differently, betraying his inner feelings/intentions. The differences between the two escalate, until...

PRIEST, speechless and uncomfortable, immediately descends his tea cup to the table.

PRIEST grabs MANTLE's arm and escorts MANTLE to the bedroom and locks MANTLE in.  
(end of Duet).

MANTLE, changing for bedtime, is visited by WENNI beneath the window ledge.

WENNI parades a suitcase, wine and rope for climbing to entice MANTLE to leave.

WENNI laments of their times in the forest. WENNI confirms the plane leaves in two days.

MANTLE demands that WENNI leave until the work is done.

Arioso, or Aria. Possible reprise of **Walking** music, **Following** music and **Arguing** music.

Day 2, PRIEST performs an exorcism.

PRIEST straps MANTLE to a table with scripture inscribed all over it.

PRIEST, mildly, thrusts holy water and oils upon MANTLE. PRIEST chugs from his tea cup.

PRIEST's movements crescendo to euphoria and is endowed with a drive for expulsion.

MANTLE's body is still and as it was before.

MANTLE declares feeling no different. MANTLE continues to defy PRIEST's theory.

PRIEST, vigorously, wheels MANTLE to the bedroom, still strapped to the table.

MANTLE is abandoned in the room and fighting the straps.

Second temptation: (Duet PRIEST+MANTLE). Full blown villain in action. **Seduction** music and **Supernatural** music coexist in an open manner. MANTLES' opposition to the

PRIEST's ideas can be perceived in his **Walking** music, sparingly interrupting the PRIEST's singing.

MANTLE laments about any change in himself he may be feeling or fighting.  
MANTLE sleeps.

Aria. MANTLE is **tired** and filled with **self doubt**.

Day 3, visual sessions. MANTLE is rolled into the session room.  
PRIEST, short tempered and spilling tea as he drinks, projects archival film and still imagery. *Imagery; a heterosexual history of love; African kings and queens of early century tribes, arranged marriages, women giving birth, men marrying multiple women at once.*

An image of a family celebrating the 4<sup>th</sup> of July with large American flags attract MANTLE. The projector malfunctions, keeping stuck on the American flag image.

PRIEST, aggressively bangs projector attempting to fix it, with no success.

MANTLE fueled by this image, maneuvers to unlock free from the straps holding him down.

Third temptation: (Duet PRIEST+MANTLE). Introductory Recit, then Instrumental. **Idyllic** music, but imbued with a **darker subtext** (STAGING: projector?). To the Priest's **surprise**, his therapy had the opposite effect to what he expected. Through the images MANTLE realizes the life on film is not what he wants.

MANTLE attempts to leave the church mid-session. PRIEST drops the tea cup on the floor. Cup breaks.

PRIEST physically struggles in forcing him to stay. PRIEST struggles to remove belt.

MANTLE utilizes surrounding elements as intimidation tools.

MANTLE breaks free and escapes.

PRIEST chases MANTLE. PRIEST clenches copper whistles and blows like a blaring siren.

Instrumental. **Action** music (**Argument** music). When MANTLE reaffirms his true nature, evocation of **Happy** music.

## End of Act 2

## ACT 3

WENNI, at their forest trail, nervously but neatly sifts through two small brown suitcases.

MANTLE, limping, races in a panic towards WENNI firmly caressing and kissing.

MANTLE pleads that they must catch the next ferry to the airport immediately.

MANTLE apologizes and affirms that their love is and has always been more than enough.

MANTLE abruptly stuffs all items in the suitcases and zips them up.

**Happy, jubilant** music. **Cathartic** moment, although with certain **urgency**. While MANTLE and WENNI rejoice and make plans, some of the PRIEST's music infiltrates the soundscape, subtly anticipating...

PRIEST, unseen, floundering from behind a dark tree.

PRIEST viciously unfastens his worn-in broad belt and loops it around MANTLE's neck.

PRIEST strangles MANTLE as WENNI attempts to peel PRIEST away. WENNI struggles.

MANTLE's body begins to convulse then weaken from the choking.

WENNI, in adrenaline, grabs their initials engraved rock and bashes PRIEST over the head.

WENNI continues to thrust rock over PRIEST's skull. PRIEST is dead.

More **Action** music (derived from **Argument** music) When PRIEST is killed, echoes of his **Exorcism** music

MANTLE, reaching to stop WENNI, slowly regains normal breathing.

They examine PRIEST lying unresponsive.

MANTLE crawls to PRIEST's body and says a prayer for PRIEST's soul.

MANTLE pulls on long branches nearby, covering PRIEST's body all over.

The vibrating echo of a horn from a ferry boat is heard nearby.

*Sounds of footsteps running through the forest and voices calling for "PRIEST!" are heard.*

Evocation of **Supernatural** music, a small liturgy. Pure sounds, without the PRIEST's ambivalences. Strings, maybe a distant bell.

WENNI clings to their two suitcases and lifts MANTLE to standing.

They agree to never speak of this incident. They embrace, trembling.

MANTLE and WENNI dive through the bushes, leaving for North America. Together.

**Desolate. Waiting/Following** music ensues and dissolves into nothingness as WENNI and MANTLE leave...

*(End of Opera/Outline)*