



SHOW WAY
A NEW MUSICAL

By Jacqueline Woodson

Music and Lyrics by Tyrone L. Robinson

Based on the Newbery Honor Book SHOW WAY by Jacqueline Woodson
Illustrations by Hudson Talbott

Commissioned by The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts
Washington, DC

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Cast of Characters

The Griot

Elder Mother

Mama

Auntie

Lil' Bit

Brother

PERUSAL

PERUSAL

Show Way Musical Numbers

1	Prologue	The Griot	5	
2	Ev'ry Stitch Has a Story/Show Way	The Griot, Ensemble	5	
3	Seven: Part 1/"Best Friends"	Soonie's Great Grandma, Soonie's Great Grandma's Friend, The Griot, Ensemble	8	
4	In South Carolina	The Griot	9	
5	Pass On	Big Mama, Soonie's G-G, Other Children	10	
6	And In the Daytime	The Griot	11	
7	Free	Big Mama, Soonie's Great Grandma	11	
8	The Next Place	Big Mama, Ensemble	13	
9	Raise Her Up/Big Mama Becomes an Ancestor	Ensemble	15	
10	Soonie's Great Grandma Grew Up	The Griot, Soonie's Great Grandma	16	
11	Seven: Part 2/"Juba"	Soonie's G-G, Mathis May, Brother	16	
12	Little Speck of Me	Mathis May, The Ancestors	17	
13	Mathis May Knows How to Make	The Griot, Ensemble	19	
14	Jump	Elder Mother, Mathis May, Edwin, Ensemble	20	
15	Mathis May's Husband	The Griot, Women	22	
16A	Edwin's Song/March	Edwin, Mathis May		22
16	March/"Battlefield Dance"	Edwin, Ensemble	23	
17	Little Speck of Me (Reprise)	Edwin, Ensemble, The Griot	23	
18	1863: Freedom	The Griot, All	24	
19	Years Later Soonie Came	The Griot, Soonie's Mama	25	
20	Every Stitch Has a Story (Reprise)	The Griot, Ensemble	25	
21	Hard Work Makin' a Life	The Griot, Ensemble, Soonie	26	
22	Soonie's Song	Soonie	27	
23	Some Mornings Soonie Looked Out	The Griot, Ensemble, Soonie	28	
24	High Times (1890's – 1950's)	Brother	29	
25A	Out of the Ashes	All Women		29
25	Brighter Days to Come	Caroline, Ann, Ensemble	32	
26	Ann and Caroline	The Griot	34	
27	Dream Variations	The Griot, All Women	34	
28	Seven: Part 3/"And When I Was Seven"	The Griot	35	
29	Finale: Ev'ry Stitch/Show Way (Reprise)	All	36	
30	Bows/Exit Music	Instrumental	37	

Pre-Show fades and is replaced by...

1 Prologue

The Griot

The sound of a KORA playing the “Stars”/Ancestors music theme.

Lights up on THE GRIOT holding her baby.

The baby fusses. THE GRIOT “hums” to soothe the child.

THE GRIOT

Oo

Oo

Oo

2 Ev’ry Stitch Has a Story/Show Way

The Griot, Ensemble

ANCESTRAL VOICES *fill the space.*

VOICES

Oo

Oo

Oo

THE GRIOT

EV’RY STITCH HAS A STORY TO TELL AND
THIS ONE IS OURS.

SO MUCH JOY AND SO MUCH GLORY!
JUST WAIT AND SEE!

WE COME FROM A LONG, LONG LINE
OF STRONG WOMEN.

OUR FAM’LY TREE.

WE PASSED DOWN

THE GRIOT and WOMEN

HOPE

THE GRIOT
 PASSED DOWN
 FAITH THE GRIOT and WOMEN

THE GRIOT
 PASSED DOWN
 STRENGTH THE GRIOT and WOMEN

THE GRIOT
 AND
 PRIDE THE GRIOT and WOMEN

VOICES
 AND LOVE AND
 SO MUCH JOY! (JOY...) THE GRIOT and VOICES

Music shifts.

THE GRIOT
 THE STORY STARTS A LONG TIME AGO,
 THE GRIOT and ELDER MOTHER
 OUR PEOPLE WERE NOT FREE.

THE GRIOT
 THEY LONGED TO LIVE AS WE HAD BEFORE,

THE GRIOT and MAMA

AS FAMILIES IN AFRICA.

THE GRIOT *gently hands her baby to Auntie.*

THE GRIOT

SO THEY'D...

ELDER MOTHER

TAKE PATCH PIECES,
SEW 'EM TOGETHER

LIL' BIT

IN PLAIN SIGHT?

MAMA

WITH NEEDLE AND THREAD
AND A WHOLE LOT OF LOVE!

LIL' BIT

IN PLAIN SIGHT.

AUNTIE

SEW THE JOURNEY
BUT HIDE IT IN PICTURES

LIL' BIT

IN PLAIN SITE!

BROTHER and ELDER MOTHER

NO ONE WILL KNOW
BUT THOSE WHO ARE RUNNIN'

(To Lil' Bit.)

IN THE DARK OF NIGHT!

THE GRIOT

THEY PASSED IT ON AND THEY MADE A

ALL SHO-
 WAY!
 SHO-WAY!
 SHO-WAY!

THE GRIOT
 THEY MADE A...

ALL SHO-
 WAY!
 SHO-WAY!
 SHO-WAY!
 SHO-WAY!

The voices weave in rhythmic counterpoint.

SOPRANOS
 TAKE PATCH PIECES
 SEW 'EM TO-GETHER
 WITH NEEDLE AND THREAD
 AND A WHOLE LOT OF LOVE

(IN PLAIN SIGHT!)

(IN PLAIN SIGHT!)

FOLLOW THE *MAP*
 AND IT WILL GUIDE YOUR WAY!

GROUP 1/MAMA
 TAKE PATCH PIECES
 (IN PLAIN SIGHT!)

(IN PLAIN SIGHT!)

SEW THE MAP
 INSIDE OF THE QUILT
 AND PASS IT ON!

BROTHER

ALL

ELDER MOTHER/
 BROTHER
 (IN PLAIN SIGHT!)
 STARS AND MOONS
 AND ROADS
 TO SHOW THE WAY...

(IN PLAIN SIGHT!)

PUT 'EM TO-GETHER
AND THAT MAKES A
SHO-WAY!
SHO-WAY!
SHO-WAY!

SOPRANOS

THAT MAKES A...

ALL SHO-

WAY!
SHO-WAY!
SHO-WAY!

3 Seven: Part 1/"Best Friends" Soonie's GG, Soonie's GG's Friend, The Griot, Ensemble

Virginia 1830's. Music shifts to a playful VAMP.

Two young girls, SOONIE'S GREAT GRANDMA and HER FRIEND play.

THE GIRLS YOU

AND ME, BEST OF FRIENDS.
BE TO-GETHER 'TIL THE END.

They repeat the phrase in harmony and play a hand slapping game until-

SOONIE'S GREAT GRANDMA is sold away.

Mournful music.

THE GRIOT

AND WHEN SHE WAS *SEVEN*,
SOONIE'S GREAT GRANDMA
WAS SOLD AWAY...

ENSEMBLE *hums under the following.*

ENSEMBLE

Oo

THE GRIOT

She was sold from the Virginia land to a plantation in South Carolina without her ma or pa.

BUT SHE HAD MUSLIN HER MA GAVE HER
AND TWO NEE-DLES FOR STITCHIN’.

ALL

AND THREAD DYED RED
WITH BERRIES FROM THE CHOKE-
CHERRY TREE.

Music shifts.

4 In South Carolina**The Griot**

THE GRIOT

IN SOUTH CAROLINA,
BIG MAMA RAISED MOST OF THE CHILDREN.

SHE RAISED SOONIE’S GREAT GRANDMA
ON THAT LARGE PATCH OF LAND.

AT NIGHT SHE TOLD STORIES IN A WHISPER,
‘BOUT CHILDREN GROWIN’ UP
AND GETTIN’ THEMSELVES FREE.
SOONIE’S GREAT GRANDMA *is afraid.*

5 Pass On**Big Mama, Soonie’s Great Grandma, Other Children**

BIG MAMA

IT’S ALL RIGHT TO FEEL AFRAID.
BIG MAMA GETS SCARED TOO. BUT
YOU DON’T HAVE TO BE AFRAID I’LL
ALWAYS BE HERE WITH YOU.

YOU’RE SAFE NOW, I’LL PROTECT YOU
KEEP YOU IN MY LOVING ARMS. DON’T
FRET CHILD, I WILL TEACH YOU LIKE
THE OTHERS.

AND WHEN IT'S SAID AND DONE,
WHAT WE PASS ON BEFORE WE PASS ON
IS WHAT MATTERS.

SOONIE'S GREAT GRANDMA *sits with the other children.*

BIG MAMA

THERE'S POWER IN YOUR HANDS!
THERE'S POWER IN YOUR MIND!
LOOK DEEP WITHIN YOURSELF, GIRL.
THERE'S STRENGTH THAT YOU WILL FIND!

IF YOU LOOK UP TO THE STARS,
IN THAT GREAT BIG SKY.
YOUR ANCESTORS ARE THERE.

A LITTLE SPECK OF THEM
IS ALWAYS WITH YOU!

SO, YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE A-FRAID.

OTHER CHILDREN

YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE A-FRAID.

BIG MAMA

I'M ALWAYS HERE WITH YOU.

AND WITH THIS NEEDLE
AND THIS THREAD...

SOONIE'S GREAT GRANDMA YOU

WILL TEACH ME!

BIG MAMA
THERE'S POWER IN YOU!

YOU'RE SAFE NOW

SOONIE'S GREAT GRANDMA
I'M SAFE WITH YOU NOW

I'LL PROTECT YOU
KEEP YOU IN MY LOVING ARMS.

YOU'LL TEACH ME LIKE YOU
TAUGHT ALL THE OTHERS.

OTHER CHILDREN
AND WHEN IT'S SAID AND DONE,

BIG MAMA, SOONIE'S G-G, OTHER CHILDREN
WHAT WE PASS ON
BEFORE WE PASS ON
IS WHAT MATTERS.

6 And In the Daytime

The Griot

THE GRIOT

And in the daytime when there was some few minutes for an enslaved person to rest a bit, Big Mama taught Soonie's Great Grandma to sew...colored thread into *STARS* and *MOONS* and *ROADS* that enslaved children grew up and followed late into the night... A piece of quilt and the TRUE MOON leading them...

7 Free

Big Mama, Soonie's Great Grandma

BIG MAMA

KEEP YOUR STITCHIN' STRAIGHT. NOW
YOU'RE DOIN' FINE. HEED MY WORDS,
CHILD AND MIND!

LEARN THIS LESSON WELL.
WHEN NIGHT FALLS,
FOLKS WHO'S MOVIN' ON
COME A-CALLIN'.

THEY SOON WILL BE...

The music picks up tempo.

BIG MAMA

Shhhh!

BIG MAMA
 SEE, THIS HERE'S THE WILD GEESE FLYIN' TO
 BE FREE!
 FREEDOM'S YONDER.

SOONIE'S GREAT GRANDMA
 THAT'S WHERE I WANNA BE!

BIG MAMA
 SEE HOW THAT NORTH STAR SHININ'?
 CUZ GOD PUT OUT HIS HAND.
 KEPT IT SHININ' YONDER TO
 THE PROMISED LAND!

THE STARS SAY, "FOLLOW ME!"

Interlude

THIS QUILT'S A ROAD TO FREEDOM!
 THE JOURNEY'S HERE INSIDE.
 THEY'LL FIND THEIR WAY
 WITH THIS HERE *MAP* WE
 PROVIDE!

SOONIE'S GREAT GRANDMA
 I WANNA BE A NORTH STAR.
 SHOW MYSELF THE WAY.
 BE LIKE THE GEESE
 AND FLY FAR AWAY!
 WON'T YOU FOLLOW ME?

BIG MAMA
 I'M TOO OLD TO RUN.
 JUST LEAVE ME BE!
 KEEP UP YOUR STITCHIN'.
 GET YOUR OWN SELF FREE!

SOONIE'S GREAT GRANDMA
 I CAN'T LEAVE WITHOUT YOU!
 SHOWIN' ME THE WAY!

BIG MAMA YOU'LL
NEVER BE WITHOUT ME.
OKAY?

SOONIE'S GREAT GRANDMA
OKAY!

BIG MAMA
THERE'S POWER IN YOUR HANDS
TO SEW STARS AND MOONS AND ROADS!
YOU'LL CARRY ME WITH YOU, WHEREVER
YOU MAY GO!

SOONIE'S GREAT GRANDMA
THERE'S POWER IN MY HANDS TO SEW
STARS AND MOONS AND ROADS, BUT
I'LL MISS YOU IN MY HEART.
I LOVE YOU SO!

BIG MAMA
CARRY ME IN YOUR HEART

BOTH
WHEN YOU/I ARE/AM
...FREE!

8 The Next Place

Big Mama, Ensemble

African Drumming followed by rhythmic foot stomps and claps.

BIG MAMA is being called to The Next Place.

BIG MAMA
PUT ON MY WHITE ROBE!
NO PAIN AND STRIFE!
FIN'LLY AT PEACE
AFTER THIS WOEFUL LIFE.
BASKIN' IN GLORY!
PARADISE IS THE WAY.
IN THE NEXT PLACE I'LL BE FREE ALL DAY!

SOPRANOS

SUNBEAMS SHINE BRIGHT, TOO BRIGHT TO
 BEHOLD! GO WHERE I PLEASE,
 WALK THE STREETS PAVED WITH GOLD!

SEE ALL MY KIN FOLK
 WE LOST IN THE PAST.
 IN THE NEXT PLACE I'LL BE FREE AT LAST!

FULLNESS OF JOY,
 AND GLORY AWAITS!

CLOTHED IN YOUR LOVE,
 THROUGH THE GREAT PEARLY GATES!
 FEAST AT THE TABLE
 PREPARED JUST FOR ME.
 IN THE NEXT PLACE I KNOW I'LL BE FREE!

Celebration.

ALL FREE-

DOM!
 JOY DIVINE!
 PARADISE!
 PEACE IS MINE!

HAPPY IS THE WAY!
 FREE AT LAST!
 REST ALL DAY!

FREE-DOM! (FREE-DOM!)
 JOY DIVINE! (A JOY DIVINE!)
 PARADISE!
 PEACE IS MINE! (YOUR PEACE IS MINE!)

HAPPY (HAPPY!) IS THE WAY! (IT IS THE WAY!).
 FREE AT LAST!
 REST ALL DAY! (I'LL REST ALL DAY!)

BIG MAMA
ON THAT GREAT ROLL I CAN SEE MY NAME!

ENSEMBLE
SEE MY NAME!

BIG MAMA
RAISE ME UP

ENSEMBLE
RAISE ME UP!

BIG MAMA
TO THE GARDEN ON HIGH!

ENSEMBLE
Oo

BIG MAMA
I'M READ' TO GO
TO MY REWARD IN THE SKY!

Tambourines, foot stomping, and claps take over. All dance!

BIG MAMA
(Facing "The Light")
I'M READ' TO GO
TO MY REWARD IN THE SKY!

9 Raise Her Up/Big Mama Becomes an Ancestor

Ensemble

A joyful funeral procession.

ENSEMBLE
RAISE HER UP!
LIFT HER UP ON HIGH!
NOW AT PEACE.
ETERNAL PARADISE.

OH!

LIFT HER UP TO THAT GREAT HOME.

OH!

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PERUSAL