ENSEMBLE OPTION — BIRD SELLER

(BEGGAR WOMAN)

WANT IT SNUGLY HARBORED?
OPEN ME GATE, BUT DOCK IT STRAIGHT,
I SEE IT LISTS TO STARBOARD.

(SHE grabs at his crotch and starts to dance around him grotesquely, lifting her skirts. ANTHONY is appalled. HE pulls coins out of his pocket and tosses them to her)

ANTHONY

Here and here and here. Take it and off with you. Off!

(The BEGGAR WOMAN, cackling, collects the coins and scampers off. ANTHONY turns back to the house, gazes up at the window. The noise has frightened the birds, who start screeching. ANTHONY becomes aware of them and moves over to the now sleeping BIRD SELLER, shakes him awake, and inspects the cages)

START Which one sings the sweetest?

BIRD SELLER

All's the same, sir. Six pence and cheap at the price.

(ANTHONY selects one, gives the man a coin, holds up the cage)

ANTHONY

He sings bravely.

(Watches the cage)

But why does he batter his wings so wildly against the bars?

BIRD SELLER

We blind 'em, sir. That's what we always does. Blind 'em and, not knowing night from day, they sing and sing without stopping, pretty creatures.

(HE gets up, slinging the cages on his back and starts off)

Have pleasure of the bird, sir. FINISH

(HE exits. JOHANNA reappears at the window. ANTHONY holds up the cage, indicating it is a present and SHE should come down to get it. SHE hesitates, smiles, nods, disappears from the window. HE waits. Shyly, almost furtively, JOHANNA slips out of the door and stands there. HE moves toward her, holding out the cage. Slowly her hand goes out toward him. Their fingers touch)

#8 – Johanna (Part I)

ANTHONY

(Softly)

I FEEL YOU,
JOHANNA,
I FEEL YOU.