

# Humanity's Plea

**CHARACTERS:**

HUMANITY .....Martha Best  
 GREED (Dancer) .....Mildred Lee  
 CHARITY .....Sara Jeffreys  
 IGNORANCE (Dancer) .....Carrie Best  
 WISDOM .....Mary James Best  
 PREJUDICE (Dancer) .....Helen Kannan  
 UNDERSTANDING .....Helen Boyette  
 INJUSTICE (Dancer) .....Ann Daniels  
 JUSTICE .....Ercell Allen

Mankind: Marina Andrews, Katherine Beaman, Aileen Bedford, Sonny Boney, Eliza Cox, Hugh Daughtry, Olivia Ferguson, Rena Graham, Ruth Hinson, Elsie Hooks, Sarah Joyner, Helen McClenny, Bill Nufer, Christine Percise, Herman Perkins, Kala Rosenthal, W. C. Stuckey, and Doris Turner.

**CURTAIN:** Humanity, robed in white, stands on the right at the foot of the Stairway to Happiness. On each side of the stairs are engaged columns, forming pedestals. A spotlight is focused on Humanity.

**HUMANITY:**

I am Humanity.  
 I unfold all people—  
 People of all races,  
 Of all nationalities,  
 Of all beliefs.  
 From me all derive safety and Happiness,  
 For love of mankind is the heart of me.  
 Kindness, tolerance, mercy, sympathy, understanding  
 Constitute my being.  
 These qualities have been mine  
 From the beginning,  
 And always I have held them out to man.  
 To be accepted or rejected.  
 Throughout the ages  
 I have watched their progress,  
 Have seen them slowly grow,  
 Gradually taking a greater place  
 In man's scheme of life.  
 And as they have been accepted,  
 However slightly,  
 I have seen Mankind move nearer  
 To his one great, common goal—Happiness.  
 But through the ages  
 I have seen defeats.  
 I have seen my progress hindered  
 By those forces  
 Which have ever worked against me,  
 Making men unhappy.  
 Yet I have not been destroyed,  
 Always I have been with man—  
 Even as I am with you today—  
 You, who dwell in a world  
 Of confusion and uncertainty—  
 Of unhappiness  
 Born of fear and hate,  
 Of prejudice and ignorance,  
 Of greed and injustice.  
 Still I remain with you,  
 Who know not where to turn,  
 Who search eternally,  
 And work unceasingly,  
 And yet fail to find Happiness.  
 Still I offer my guidance—  
 It is yours,  
 If you will accept it.  
 But I am not always accepted.  
 And those who do not accept me  
 Are the ones who need me most.  
 For they hurt themselves—  
 Even more than you,  
 Their victims,  
 Are hurt  
 By their lack  
 Of love and understanding  
 Of their fellowman.  
 Therefore,  
 I must be worked for,  
 Fought for,  
 Suffered for—  
 Not on the battlefields will  
 You fight for me,  
 For there I am only hurt;  
 I have no place  
 In man's slaughter of man.  
 But from the minds and hearts of men  
 Shall you bring me forth—  
 There do I dwell always.  
 If you would have happiness—  
 If you would rise up,  
 Break, and throw off  
 Your heavy chains of evil,  
 You must believe in me—  
 And teach all men to believe in me.  
 Teach them to overcome  
 Their prejudices and fears and hatreds,  
 For too often  
 These children of ignorance  
 Overshadow and crush me.  
 Teach them to put aside  
 Their greeds, injustices, and lusts for power,  
 For these delusions will never  
 Bring them happiness.  
 Still these evil forces have lived,  
 But in spite of them,  
 I, too, have lived through the years.  
 And now, you must choose  
 To help or to hinder my progress—  
 To have part in making the world  
 Suffer longer and longer  
 In the grasp  
 Of wars and their effects—  
 Effects which breed future wars,  
 Or  
 To follow my slow and constant guidance  
 Out of this chaos.  
 This is my plea to you,  
 For the forces which work against me  
 Are strong and numerous.

(Humanity pauses.)

A pageant dramatizing Humanity's plea that Greed, Ignorance, Prejudice, and Injustice be banished from this world, giving place to Charity, Wisdom, Understanding, and Justice, who can lead Man to his most desired goal—Happiness.

By DORIS DAVIS and MARTHA BEST

As I stand among you  
 Who are lost and afraid in your world,  
 Who are held down by the force of many evils,  
 I can but offer again  
 My compassionate guidance;  
 I can but show you  
 And beckon you  
 To the way of happiness.  
 Such a way I offer  
 To those of you whom  
 The clutching, grasping  
 Chains of Greed  
 Pull down and hold.

(Greed slowly rises from Mankind and dances forward, spotlight playing upon her.)

**Greed:**  
 Are you not tired  
 Of claiming the minds of men—  
 Of tempting them to reach for,  
 And snatch  
 Things which are not rightly theirs?  
 You have long bound them  
 By their unsatisfied wants,  
 For you make them ever hungry  
 For wealth, power, and lands  
 Not virtually theirs.  
 Prompted by you  
 Their powerful arms have clutched and  
 claimed  
 More than they will ever have reason  
 To need—  
 Not only for sustaining life,  
 But for abiding in luxury.  
 Charity for their fellowmen  
 And kindness for them,  
 You have made them overlook  
 And forget.  
 By taking from others,  
 Things not theirs  
 By merit or virtue,  
 Men breed hatred and revenge.  
 Victims of Greed,  
 Look up!  
 The way is clear  
 For you to help me  
 To rise,  
 If you would but cast aside  
 Your unquenchable thirsts  
 For power and material substances.  
 You must understand that every man must  
 Lift up, love, respect, and share  
 With his fellowmen to be happy.  
 And upon understanding these things,

(Greed slowly disappears and Charity comes into view.)

It is imperative  
 That you abide by them,  
 If you desire to reach  
 The goal of complete happiness.  
 Charity will arise  
 Out of this change,  
 And the hatreds you have bred  
 By taking from your fellowmen  
 Will be replaced  
 With the love and happiness  
 Caused by giving unto them.  
 For Charity  
 Brings to life and nourishes  
 The good in man.

(Humanity pauses as Charity takes her place on the pedestal to the right; then Humanity turns and speaks again to Mankind.)

And you are bound by the heavy chains  
 Of Ignorance,  
 As all evil flourishes  
 Under its dark cloak.

**Ignorance:**  
 You bring fear and hatred  
 Into the lives of my people—  
 Fear because men  
 Enveloped by gross stupidity  
 Know little of the things that are,  
 Nothing of what is to be;  
 Hatred  
 Because man is quick to condemn and hate  
 The things which he does not understand.  
 Those whom you claim,  
 Have not the knowledge  
 To cope with life—  
 To understand men and their problems—  
 To find solutions to these problems—  
 To work out their own destinies  
 In a way that makes  
 For Happiness.  
 They are victims  
 Either of unfavorable circumstance  
 Or a lack of ambition  
 To rise  
 From their groping, miserable state.  
 In such a state  
 Hatreds and fears  
 Born of misunderstanding flourish.  
 They are not only dangerous  
 To those in whom they live  
 But to all men—  
 For they ever work  
 Against the good in man.  
 And it has always been so.  
 Since man's creation, Ignorance,  
 You have hindered his progress,

Even as you hinder him today.  
 If men would let me lead them  
 To a greater Happiness,  
 They must realize first  
 That you, Ignorance,  
 Hold them down.  
 Realizing this,  
 They will have taken the first step  
 Toward overcoming the problems  
 Created by their lack of knowledge.  
 Then they must develop  
 A sincere desire  
 To replace ignorance with wisdom—

(Dancer slowly disappears as Wisdom slowly appears.)

To understand all men,  
 Their beliefs and their problems—  
 In order to be free  
 From their hatreds and fears.  
 And when they have done  
 These things,  
 A more liberal outlook,  
 A fuller life will be theirs,  
 For a greater wisdom  
 Will bring to them the opportunity  
 Of freeing themselves  
 From the chains of Ignorance.

(Humanity pauses as Wisdom takes her place on the pedestal to the left; then Humanity turns and speaks again to Mankind.)

And the chains of Prejudice bind you down.

(Prejudice dances out from Mankind, spotlight playing upon her.)

**Prejudice:**  
 You form  
 A film of unfair judgment—  
 Enclosing the minds of many of my people—  
 A warped judgment  
 Of men and their beliefs—  
 Of races and of nations.  
 And, because you have taken possession  
 Of them,  
 They will not let the truth  
 Make them free of that film.  
 They look only on one side  
 Of a problem  
 And though the other pleads for consideration,  
 It is ignored,  
 Or purposely misinterpreted.  
 For you have stealthily crept  
 Into their minds  
 And have grown  
 Until you have overpowered  
 Their natural sense of justice;  
 So they act unjustly  
 As they believe unjustly.  
 Sometimes  
 Men and nations of men  
 Are purposely led to a misunderstanding  
 Of other men and other nations;  
 Many times  
 Men are prejudiced  
 Because of their own ignorance of truth  
 And lack of understanding,  
 And always,  
 These prejudices  
 Hurt those who hold them  
 As well as those  
 Who feel the effects of them;  
 For their victims  
 Are helplessly struggling  
 In a sea of feeling  
 That will not let them rise  
 And give to the world  
 What they might give  
 As free men,  
 And accept  
 What free men might give them.  
 And those who make that sea,  
 Help to make that world—  
 The world which is deprived  
 Of their gifts,  
 And of a greater fellowship.  
 Their prejudices  
 Foster hate and bitterness.  
 These are not good qualities  
 For the minds of men;  
 They do not work for happiness—  
 Only for more bitterness  
 And greater unhappiness.

(Prejudice disappears as Humanity speaks to Mankind.)

You who are bound by Prejudice,  
 Why do you continue  
 To let your unfair judgment  
 Hurt you and your fellowmen?  
 Search your hearts  
 And your minds  
 For any traces  
 Of hatred, contempt,  
 Or any unfriendly feeling for any man  
 Or group of men.  
 Examine these emotional reactions.  
 Look not all on the good side,  
 Nor all on the bad side,  
 For all men are both good  
 And bad—  
 Regardless  
 Of race, beliefs, or nationality.  
 Nationality is determined simply  
 By the place in which  
 One happens to be born.

It is our Creator's plan  
 That the highest of His creatures  
 Be allowed to think  
 And believe  
 For themselves.  
 And of races, there is only one  
 Worth consideration—  
 The human race.  
 Even the distinguishing physical marks  
 Of peoples,  
 Have been almost lost  
 As, through the ages,  
 Races have mingled and mixed;  
 But always  
 The hearts and souls  
 Of all men  
 Have been fundamentally  
 The same—  
 For human nature is unchanging;  
 And human minds  
 Have ever groped,  
 Even as you now grope  
 For Happiness;  
 For that is the common goal  
 Toward which  
 All men unceasingly strive.  
 It will be reached only when you let  
 Understanding destroy your prejudices,  
 And work together  
 Earnestly and sincerely  
 Under its sheltering influence.

(Understanding slowly comes into view.)

Believe this,  
 Conquer your foolish, unfair feelings  
 For men who are all like you.  
 When this is done,  
 Understanding  
 Will help you  
 To realize  
 Your greatest desire—  
 Happiness.

(Humanity pauses and Understanding takes her place to the left of Charity; Humanity turns again to Mankind and begins to speak.)

And you struggle under bonds  
 Forged by Injustice.

(Injustice dances out from Mankind.)

As I see you still  
 Holding men down,  
 Injustice,  
 I think of all  
 The cruel deeds you have wrought.  
 Pampered by pride,  
 Nourished by greed,  
 Strengthened by malice,  
 Urged on by prejudice,  
 You shatter the ideals of  
 Equal rights to "life, liberty,  
 And the pursuit of happiness."  
 You influence men  
 To use their fellowmen  
 Unjustly,  
 So that they may acquire  
 Some rank they cherish,  
 Some possession they desire.  
 You destroy  
 All that is right and good  
 In man,  
 All that our Maker intended  
 For man to have and to be.  
 You frequently cause men  
 To deny other men  
 Their right to believe  
 Whatever creed they choose  
 And express their thoughts accordingly.  
 Sometimes  
 Under false names  
 You are used  
 To gain desired purposes—  
 Sometimes openly  
 Victories won unjustly  
 Are flaunted.  
 And always  
 The scar of injustice  
 That will ever remain  
 Is left  
 In the minds  
 Of those who are hurt  
 By the unjust acts of men.  
 You who use men unjustly  
 Will never reach Happiness  
 That way.

(Justice appears as Injustice slowly vanishes.)

You must respect the rights  
 Of all men,  
 You must refuse to let  
 Malice, greed, and prejudice  
 Dwell longer in your minds;  
 You must use an impartial basis  
 In dealing with your fellowmen,  
 And work unselfishly  
 With all mankind.  
 Then Justice will have dispelled  
 The despair and confusion  
 That Injustice has wrought;  
 She will help  
 To make Happiness  
 A reality for you.

(Humanity pauses as Justice takes her place to the right of Wisdom; then Humanity turns again to Mankind.)

And so, I have made you aware  
 Of these forces  
 By which you are bound,  
 The great evils  
 Of Greed, Ignorance, Prejudice, and Injustice,  
 Which have ever worked against me—  
 And would destroy me—  
 Forces which have grown  
 Into powerful enemies  
 To you in your world—  
 Which you must conquer  
 If you would prevent  
 The destruction of yourself  
 And your chance  
 Of Happiness.  
 And so, I deliver my plea  
 To you—  
 Ask you to accept my guidance  
 In overcoming these forces.  
 The way will not be easy;  
 You will have disappointments  
 And experience defeats.  
 It has always been so.  
 Many times  
 Has man conceived me  
 And considered my way—  
 And many times  
 Has his view  
 Become obstructed—  
 His way obscured,  
 And he has lost sight  
 Of me.  
 But always  
 I have risen,  
 For the Right  
 Will not be destroyed.  
 Always have I sought  
 To lead men  
 Out of the confusion  
 And hatreds  
 That turn his world  
 Into chaos.  
 I offer my compassionate guidance  
 To you today—  
 You, who shudder at the past,  
 Who tremble in the present,  
 And fear for the future—  
 I ask you to accept  
 A way that is hard—  
 But one which is right.  
 I offer hope  
 To you who are in despair.  
 If you will accept my way,  
 It will be yours  
 To bring to birth  
 A new era—  
 An era of greater accomplishments,  
 Of a greater civilization,  
 Of a greater happiness—  
 An era based on  
 Man's respect for man.  
 Then will men work for,  
 And live with men,  
 In true brotherhood;  
 Then will Mankind  
 Work together  
 For the good of Mankind.  
 That is my faith.  
 Will you bring  
 The sympathy born of Understanding,  
 The tolerance born of Justice,  
 The light of Wisdom,  
 And the unselfishness  
 Which lives always with Charity,  
 To destroy those things  
 Which make you despair?  
 Will you follow me  
 To Happiness?  
 This I ask  
 Of you—  
 For you—  
 In the name  
 Of man's brotherhood—  
 In the name of  
 Humanity.

(The curtain closes, leaving Humanity gesturing with hand outstretched toward Happiness.)

**COMMITTEES**

**Commencement Committee:** Kala Rosenthal, chairman; Toni Lupton, Sara Jeffreys, Doris Davis, Martha Best, Carrie Helen Best, Grace Alexander, Mildred Lee, Ike Manly, Sonny Boney, Harold Montague, Johnny Grant, Robert Casson, Shirley Pearsall, Chase Johnson, and Dwanda Lee Bisette.

**Costume Committee:** Ruthe Casson, chairman; Doris Turner, Elsie Hooks, and Shirley Pearsall.

**Scenery Committee:** Harold Montague, chairman; Ellic Person, Robert D. Chandler, Lamuel Summerlin, James Mellhenny, Hugh Payne, Charles Boyette, Johnny Grant, Robert Blalock, Horace Potter, Maylon MacDonald, and Noah Bass. Graves Lewis, a junior, also helped.

**Lights:** Charles Magill, chairman, and Billy Brown, a junior.

**Music:** Accompanist at piano for dancers, Martha Rosenthal, a freshman.

**Faculty Advisers:** Directing: Mrs. W. J. White and Miss Ida Gordner; Script: Miss Ida Gordner; Scenery: Mr. Z. G. Willis and Miss Katherine Kalmar; Costume: Mrs. W. J. White; Dances: Miss Fowler Spencer.