SCENE 4

#6B: Echoes

The projections show the woods again, now at nighttime. Behind the screens on either side are PAUL and JOHN, their silhouettes cast by the backlight of the projectors. The silhouettes are unnoticed by JOJO. JOJO’s voice begins to be echoed back to her by a mysterious pair of echoing male voices.

    JOHN & PAUL
    Timber! Timber!

JOJO notices and stops to listen.

    JOJO
    Hello?

    JOHN HENRY
    (From offstage; echoing JOJO) Hello!

    PAUL BUNYAN
    (Also from offstage) Down go the trees!

    JOJO
    Echo?

    PAUL BUNYAN
    (Echoing JOJO) Echo!

    JOHN HENRY
    And the family!

    PAUL BUNYAN
    And the family!

    JOJO
    Where are you? Who are you? This is company property you know!

#7A: Incidental Music 2

JOHN steps out from behind the screen.

    JOHN HENRY
No, Jojo...this is the workers’ wood!

*PAUL steps out from behind the opposite screen.*

    PAUL BUNYAN
He’s right, you know. Stands to reason. The company hardly ever spends any time here.

    JOHN HENRY
You never see a board of directors holding a meeting in hard hats on the work site.

    JOJO
What? What are you talking about? Who are you two?

    JOHN HENRY
I guess you could say we come with the territory

    PAUL BUNYAN
We’re what you might call tall tales

    JOHN HENRY
*(Gesturing to Paul)* Especially this one!

    PAUL BUNYAN
Folk heroes!

    JOHN HENRY
Like from the old songs:
“JOHN HENRY, WHEN HE WAS A BABY
SITTIN' ON HIS MAMMY'S KNEE”
Heard of that? That’s me!

    PAUL BUNYAN
And I’m Paul Bunyan! You know, the fella with the ox!

    JOJO
*(Unconvinced)* I mean… you look about the right size, I suppose. But what I’m wondering is...

    JOHN HENRY
Yes?

#7B: “That Villain, Mr. Seeds”

    JOJO
What I’m wondering is, what use is a legend? My team look to me for support, and I’m at a loss!

THAT VILLIAN MR SEEDS
HE BOUGHT THE COMPANY
AND PLANTED IN OUR MIDST
HIS ILL WILL AND GREED

JOHN HENRY
Well, that’s our point exactly.

JOJO
What?

PAUL BUNYAN
That little ditty you just sang

JOJO
What ditty? What?

JOHN HENRY
I guess you might not be as in on the narrative musical conceit as we are.

PAUL BUNYAN
Let’s put it to you in a different way. *(Turns to John)* Ready, John.

JOHN HENRY
Ready, Paul!

#8: Folk Heroes

JOHN & PAUL
FOLK HEROES

PAUL BUNYAN
IF THEY NEED AN AXE TO GRIND, FOLK HEROES

JOHN HENRY
OR A BACKBONE FOR TO FIND, FOLK HEROES

PAUL BUNYAN
THE STRENGTH TO STAND THE PICKET LINE, FOLK HEROES

JOHN HENRY
OR SCRATCH A SCAB, BOYCOTT A MINE

JOHN & PAUL
FOLK HEROES! FOLK HEROES!

PAUL BUNYAN
I JOURNEYED ‘CROSS THE AMBER WAVES
UPON AN OX NAMED BABE
THROUGH PURPLE MOUNTAINS MAJESTY
A LUMBERJACK BY TRADE
MY HANDS CUT DOWN THE NATION’S TREES
MY FOOTPRINTS MADE HER LAKES
I DID THE WORK OF A HUNDRED MEN AND NEVER ASKED FOR THANKS!

I MADE A LAKE OF PEA SOUP
JUST TO FEED ME AND MY MEN

JOHN HENRY
OOH, FEED HIM AND HIS MEN

PAUL BUNYAN
WE BRAVED A WINTER SO DAMN COLD
THE SNOW TURNED BLUE, AND THEN...

JOHN HENRY
OOH, SNOW TURNED BLUE, AND THEN...

PAUL BUNYAN
I MADE THE GRAND CANYON
WITH THE HEAD OF MY AXE
BUT WHEN MY CREW WOULD SWEAT AND TOIL, I ALWAYS HAD THEIR BACKS!

JOHN & PAUL
WHEN THE LAND WAS WIDE
AND FOLKS WERE HUNGRY
IT TOOK A FOLK HERO TO CUT IT DOWN...

PAUL BUNYAN
...AND GIVE THEM PLENTY

JOHN HENRY
I WAS BORN IN EAST VIRGINIA
WITH A HAMMER IN MY HAND
AND WITH IT, MADE THE RAILROADS
THAT TRAVERSE THIS MIGHTY LAND
UNTIL ONE DAY, THE RAILROAD BOSS
A MAN SO SHREWD AND MEAN
GOT A BRAND NEW DRILL WITH A HEART OF STEEL AND BLOOD MADE OUT OF
STEAM!

I LOOKED HIM IN THE EYE, SAID “SIR,
IT MAY NOT RUN ON STEAM,

    PAUL BUNYAN
OOH, MAY NOT RUN ON STEAM

    JOHN HENRY
BUT I RECKON THAT MY HAMMER
CAN BEAT YOUR DAMN MACHINE”

    PAUL BUNYAN
OOH, BEAT HIS DAMN MACHINE

    JOHN HENRY
AND THOUGH THE BOSS-MAN LAUGHED
AND SAID IT SIMPLY COULDN’T BE DONE
AND THOUGH IT MEANT MY LIFE, I HAMMERED ’TILL THE DAY WAS WON!

    JOHN & PAUL
WHEN THE BOSS HAD COME
TO LAY US OFF
IT TOOK A FOLK HERO TO WORK AND WORK…

    JOHN HENRY
...UNTIL HE DROPPED

    PAUL BUNYAN
FOLK HEROES!

    JOHN HENRY
FOLK HEROES!

    JOJO
What are you saying!
JOHN HENRY
I’M SAYING YOU’RE NOT POWERLESS, JOJO

PAUL BUNYAN
I’M SAYING WE STOOD UP TO THE BOSSES
AND SO CAN YOU

JOHN HENRY
JUST BECAUSE IT’S NOT IN VOGUE DOESN’T MEAN IT CAN’T BE DONE

JOJO
But my team’s divided!

PAUL BUNYAN
YOU COULD TRY A SONG?

JOHN HENRY
HEY THAT’S THE TICKET, YOU SHOULD WRITE THEM ONE!

JOHN & PAUL
FOLK HEROES!
WE’RE HERE FOR EVERY LOGGER
AND WE’RE HERE FOR EVERY MINER
WE’RE HERE FOR EVERY FISHERMAN
AND EVERY PICKET LINER

JOHN HENRY
AND THOUGH YOU JUST MIGHT LAUGH AND SAY IT SIMPLY CAN’T BE DONE…

PAUL BUNYAN
WE’LL CHOP THE TREES…

JOHN HENRY
AND DRIVE THE STEEL…

PAUL BUNYAN
AND BUILD THE CARS…

JOHN HENRY
AND PLANT THE FIELDS…

PAUL BUNYAN
AND MINE THE HILLS…
JOHN HENRY
AND FISH THE DEEP...

PAUL BUNYAN
And earn our wage!

JOHN HENRY
And earn our keep!

JOHN & PAUL
UNTIL THE DAY IS WON!

PAUL BUNYAN
Here, wait one second.

*Paul fetches the acoustic guitar from the back of the stage.*

Here, this is mine from my days in the logging camps. Just me and the boys and a few open
chords. Ah, makes a fella feel nose-tal-gic!* (*nostalgic)

JOJO
Thank you I guess… you want me to write a song?

JOHN HENRY
That’s the idea, people need something to bring them together. Give them a new hero. What’s
that woman who got injured’s name? Carmella?

JOJO
Carmen.

PAUL BUNYAN
Carmen? What about “Carmen the One-Armed Lumberjack”?

JOHN HENRY
Maybe a bit to comic, Paul, it’s not that sort of folk song. How about “Carmen and the
Machine”?

PAUL BUNYAN
Sounds like a soppy indie band, John.

JOHN HENRY
What? What’s an indie band? Anyway, I’m sure you’ll think of something suitable, Jojo. Your kind always does.

#9: Timber! (Reprise)

There is a flash of light on the screens, and JOHN and PAUL step behind them and are gone. JOJO looks around in confusion and then down at the guitar in her hands. Blackout.