

ACT I

Character Sides for "Underground"

Emala (sidev2)

(EMALA [7] Black, Bali's smart and inquisitive daughter. DEMBI [28], a female house slave who was reluctantly brought on their journey. BALI [30], Black, a skilled enslaved blacksmith with piercing eyes and a sturdy physique. They have been walking for days trying to find the path for freedom. He is keeping her spirits high during their journey. Then she asks...)

EMALA

Daddy, how much longer do we have to walk? My feet hurt and belly is grumbling!

BALI

It ummm... It should be soon!

(Bali looks around for a sign of where he is going.)

Hopefully...

DEMBI

do you know what to look for emala?

(She nods her head "no".)

well, sometimes we talk in special ways in order to keep it a secret. do you know how to keep a secret?

EMALA

i do! this one time daddy went and took three plates of master's good food.
he ate so much his stomach started to swell and i hadn't even gone to tell!

BALI

emala, you keep a secret about as well,
as a lion can hug a gazelle.

(He grabs her and roars like a lion. They share a laugh.)

DEMBI

ok then, i'll tell you...
we give signals to each other.
communicate in ways that master won't think we can.
we create. sometimes we do it through song and other times
through clothing. things we make by hand.

EMALA

Well, when we get there I wanna play. I want to be with other kids and get on a swing and everything!

BALI

You wanna get on a swing?

EMALA

Yes daddy and I wanna ride a chariot all around the town!

BALI

A chariot and a swing, huh? How high do you want to go?

EMALA

Real high daddy!

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(This is the singing portion of the audition, you can sing this song, an upbeat spiritual - Swing Down Chariot - or a spiritual of your own choosing.)

EMALA

GET ON A SWING, STOP AND LET ME RIDE,
GET ON A SWING, STOP AND LET ME RIDE,

OH, ROCK ME LORD, ROCK ME LORD
CALM AND EASY, I'VE GOT A HOME ON THE OTHER SIDE.

SIX WHITE HORSES PASSING SIDE BY SIDE,
SIX WHITE HORSES PASS ME SIDE BY SIDE,
OH, ROCK ME LORD, ROCK ME LORD
CALM AND EASY, I'VE GOT A HOME ON THE OTHER SIDE.

SWING LOW, SWING LOW, SWING LOW, SWING LOW
AND LET ME RIDE.