

Lincoln Pullman

by

Mickey Bolmer

(3 acts, 13 + dancers, history)

Robert Lincoln conceives  
the American Century  
institutes wage slavery  
by destroying  
the American Railway Union  
and Eugene Debs, oh so like Robert's father  
the town of Pullman  
and George Pullman, oh Robert and George great friends  
in return George gives Robert  
the Pullman Palace Car Company  
great wealth  
even more power to use from the shadows  
and all it takes  
is  
marketing magic  
(how we love kings and queens, princes and princess, and fairy tales)  
and  
bound silence

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Characters

Di (also plays Flo Pullman)	Dis (also plays George Pullman)
Mary Lincoln (also plays Kate Debs)	Abraham Lincoln (also plays Eugene Debs)
Robert Lincoln	Harriet Pullman
J.D. Banker	Jay Railway
Roomer Reed	Half Teel
William Teel	Louis Sullivan
Francis E. W. Harper	dancers

Sets

Act 1: Chicago Columbian Exposition 1893  
Act 2: various around Chicago and Pullman, Illinois  
Act 3: upstage center, a white gazebo/temple/porch, Greek/Roman columns in some way and stairs.

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Act 1

(park bench)

DI

Hi, I come a prologue arm'd, but not in confidence Of author's pen or actor's voice, but suited In like conditions as our argument, To tell you, fair beholders how comfortable is a park bench, a world apart. You're right, not American, often wished I was. Richard Leakey, he was on his way to a conference in the States, topic: evolution of violence, sat with me one day to say, it's compassion, fossil after human fossil shows bones, leg bones, broken and mended, a person sheltered, fed, guarded long enough for a bone to mend, compassion. Love? I asked. "When you wish upon a star."

(Dis enters)

Do you know that Dr. Leakey's parents were told that only a crazy man would think of going to Africa to find our ancestors? Once, a big affair at Versailles, I got away into a garden; a stone bench, cool to the touch, slipped off my shoes, eased my gown, ah, "makes no difference who you are, anything your heart desires can come to you." Hello. Rest a bit; it's a lovely bench.

(Dis doesn't quite exit)

Don't stay away too long. A stone bench, the world's press to my back, legs crossed, the Taj Mahal before me, alone, I felt a queen. Ah, Marie,

(Mary enters. Di drifts.)

two lovely children...

(Mary sits)

MARY

Four, the first cursed. What a lovely gown.

DI

Thank you. One of my favorites.

MARY

It needs flowers.

(Mary removes a flower from her gown and pins it onto Di's. Di kisses Mary.)

Thank you, my dear. We are born queens.

(exits)

DIS

Who are you? I don't like you!

DI

Come sit with me here on this lovely park bench.

DIS

Why must I speak to you? I don't know you.

DI  
You do.

(becomes Snow White fleeing through the forest)

DIS  
I made you.

DI  
I made you.

DIS  
No! Look at you...

DI  
Mary...Bessie...  
(sheds her gown to spirit)

DIS  
Shrew!

DI  
Mae...Judy...Marilyn...

DIS  
Slut!

DI  
Jackie...Madonna...

DIS  
Wanton!

DI  
That will be quite enough of that thank you. Kiss me.

DIS  
What?

DI  
You know this! Kissing the sleeping princess quickens the blood, rushing it into limp tissue, waking pleasure.

DIS  
Whore!

DI

(driving him)

Besides, I know exactly how you feel about these children and if you think I am going to keep my mouth shut any longer. Well, I tell you one thing.... You don't fool me a bit. Practically perfect

(Dis exits)

princesses never permit sentiment to muddle their thinking. Which leaves us now beginning in the middle; starting thence away to what may be digested in a play.

(pulls the curtain revealing the set for Act I, the Golden Doorway of the Transportation Building at the World's Columbian Exposition, two more park benches, wooden slats, one left, one right)

You are seated in gondolas which float before a great building, three American football fields long and one wide. The building's walls, which rise ten stories, are painted in thirty shades starting with red at the ground through orange to yellow at the top. This the only color in the Great White City of the Chicago World's Columbian Exposition of 1893, the building's architect, Louis Sullivan, and set, between each pair of window arches, a flying angel. At the back of the building, through matching arches, trains,

(the word brings Dis back)

yes, full sized steam locomotives and their cars, run in and out on paired railway tracks. Here, at the center, Louis built a large square pavilion, a king's tent, a queen's jewel box, and set within it five great, telescoping arches, golden red, yellow, platinum, green gild the twenty-seven and a half million

DIS

(drawn back)

Twenty-seven and a half million! Does that include the give-aways? The curse of a theme park, killed poor Moses

DI

Paid or free, they remembered and spoke with awe of Louis Sullivan's Golden Doorway, the Gate of the Sun. Dis I think we have a chance here.

DIS

At the 1964 New York World's Fair, when the Dis..., well my Audio-Animatronics Abraham Lincoln would rise and deliver the Gettysburg Address, people wept. After the fair, he appeared at Disneyland with equal success.

DI

Did he like California? Take a chance, kiss me!

(Dis exits but not before he hears Di's next line.)

DI

That's gratitude for you. Didn't even say good-bye.

(Mary enters and sits on the bench)

MARY

Never do.

DI

Madam!

MARY

Is Banquo gone from court?

DI

Ay, madam, but returns again to-night.

MARY

Say to the king, I would attend his leisure  
For a few words.

DI

Madam, I will.

(Exit Di)

MARY

Nought's had, all's spent,  
Where our desire is got without content:  
'Tis safer to be that which we destroy  
Than by destruction dwell in doubtful joy.

(Enter Abraham)

How now, my lord! why do you keep alone,  
Of sorriest fancies your companions making;  
Using those thoughts which should indeed have died  
With them they think on? Things without all remedy  
Should be without regard: what's done is done.

ABRAHAM

We have scotch'd the snake, not kill'd it:  
She'll close and be herself, whilst our poor malice  
Remains in danger of her former tooth.

(Di costumed as Flo but not Flo enters and sits on the bench. Dancers enter. They will be the fair's crowds and spirits; their work may be choreographed, improvised, quite danced, or quite acted. Now, some will treat Mary and Abraham as if they are street actors doing an impromptu scene.)

But let the frame of things disjoint, both the worlds suffer,  
Ere we will eat our meal in fear, and sleep  
In the affliction of these terrible dreams  
That shake us nightly: better be with the dead,