

From the desk of...

TOMMY NELSON

ONE Brief Night

Perhaps my most favorite scene in all movies is from "The Shawshank Redemption". In the bleak horror of the oppression of Shawshank the haunting beauty of the twining of soprano voices floats throughout and above all the grey activity of the guilty. What they are singing and who they are and how they arrived is a mystery to all the condemned but still... all activity stops - of guards and prisoners - in this brief respite of beauty. And of hope. The hope that prison is not the end and not the final reality. The hope that there is beauty and salvation from outside the unescapable walls. A beauty that the lone innocent man, Andy Dufresne, has brought to the guilty.

Redemption indeed

That scene epitomizes Christmas.

From Thanksgiving on, a melody begins, inexplicable to the hearers. A beauty from the outside that "its beginning to look a lot like Christmas everywhere you go." A mysterious beauty, a haunting beauty. A beauty that speaks from

"Angels we have heard on high
Sweetly singing o'er the plains.
And the mountains in reply, echo back
their joyful strains!"

a melody of the incarnation of a God as man among
His creation. Immanuel. "God with us"

"Do you hear what I hear?"

"Do you see what I see?"

of trembling shepherds "sore afraid" told to "fear not"
of "good news of great joy" for "all the people:"

of "silent night holy night
all is calm, all is bright"

And just the rumor of that day,
just the rumor that God has made contact
and the prophecies are true as is the Bible
and there is a God who loves us and loves us all
and gave His Son to die for us

Just the rumor causes all of our nation to give gifts,
to love one another and sing joyfully

And for just a brief moment our nation appears sane
as the spell is broken

like Shawshank Prison

like "Close Encounters" and contact is made from outside
and the world becomes ecstatic.

So for a brief evening the greatest possibility
is afoot

God Rest ye merry gentlemen
Tommy