

THE OVENS OF ANITA ORANGEJUICE

A History of Modern Florida

A play by Ronald Tavel

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Scene:

Dade County, Florida; Washington, D.C.; Los Angeles
and San Francisco, California. 1977.

Characters:

This play is intended for approximately 12 actors.
Except for the title role, the rest should double
or triple, etc.

ANITA ORANGEJUICE
MACK HACK
TRUTH HACK
ANGEL
JOE NELLI
HAIRY REAMS (First Aid)
ERIKA (Second Aid)
Chorus of ORANGES
TOUGHTY
ROBERT CUNTZ
LOS OLVIDADOS (later, THE FOUND ONE)
SHOILEY SPELLINGBEE
ALVIN DARKPERSON
FATHER JOHN THE BAPTIST
TV MODERATOR
TELEPHONE VOICES
TV (NEWS) ANCHORWOMAN
MAMASITA
WARREN
JOHN PRIG
CHILD (A Girl)
MARIA
CHICO
CHICANOS (three)
ROBERT HILLSBORO
CAROL LINE
ARNOLD EDITOR
SAM LIPSHITZ
SELMA LIPSHITZ
SEMINOLE INDIAN
LINDA
CITIZEN (Mr. Weissmuller)
Flock of SHEEP
Mob of LATINOS
H. TOMSON COKE
An ORANGE

SCENE I. A street in Miami Beach. A crummy palm tree and a public telephone booth. The phone rings 6 or 7 times, then finally stops. Beat; and enter ANITA ORANGEJUICE, a full-figured woman with bouffant auburn hair, a knee-length mouton-lamb fur coat to match and peddle pushers, not matching; and her booking agent, handsome MACK HACK.

ANITA: Every day is actually so undisappointing. As expected, it disappoints thoroughly. Not a single booking since the bicentennial ended, 16 days ago!

MACK: Now what's depressing you?

ANITA: What do I pay you 20% for? To spend half my life doing commercials? That's wasting my calling!

MACK: Things could be worst. You're situated smack in the sun and Bible belt. After all, you could be playing Nome or the North Pole, Alaska.

ANITA: I was born smack in the sun and Bible belt, gnome. 'N I ain't moved north since. Call that a crusade?

MACK: Don't call me a gnome, Anita. The name's Mack. Mack Hack. Booking Agent Extraordinaire.

ANITA: (producing a quart of Tropicana from under her coat) Wanna hit o' Orangejuice Extraordinaire?

MACK: Vitamin C gives me diarrhea.

ANITA: But a day without a orange-straight is like --- (swilling)

MACK: A day without sunshine. What're you wearing a fucecoat for?

ANITA: I'm cold.

MACK: It's 97 degrees.

ANITA: I'm into this ~~mouton-lamb~~. It matches my hair and everyone around hair has one. They've had one since 1942. Why should I be different?

MACK: So's I could hook you some heavy gigs. Folks don't pay six-fifty to see a crusader looks just like them.

ANITA: They did last year. I raked in half a million durin' the bicentennial singin' "God Distress America," plus a lotta hit-parade hymns. But there's no real lasting love for God or country in this country. Soon as the celebrating stopped the whole peninsula slipped back into guzzling, gambling, and girlie shows. These conducts pave

the conduits to Hell! I told you I didn't want to make Miami my base of operations. Can't see a saved soul anywhere for the haggle of sinners hawkin' their ware. I wear this mouton to remind us of Our Lord, the Lamb.

MACK: Anita, you could carry holy fervor too far. Most souls save religion for Sunday.

ANITA: Cause they're looking for a leader, that's all. Some prophet to keep them from making the wrong choice. Like your wife just did. That's why I wanna pow-wow with Truth. Did you reach her yet?

MACK: Yup. And she's gonna call in on this here public pay phone right about now. As per instructed.

ANITA: Good.

MACK: But what's all this cloak 'n dagger for? Why a public telephone booth?

ANITA: Because I'm too scared to take this call at home. It's like lettin' the Devil inta yer livin' room. Can't have my kids, either, hearin' the disgustin' thing I gotta disgust with yer ol' lady. --Why, there's the phone now!
(there is no sound of ringing; speaking louder)
Why, there's the phone now!
It's ringing now!!

MACK: (out; shrugging his shoulders) I don' hear nut'in.

(ANITA steps into the booth and picks up the receiver. In an elevated area lights come up creating a pink aura around TRUTH HACK seated at her home phone and tape recorder. She switches on the tape. A dwarfish winged ANGEL beside her, all silly smiles, presently rises and dances about, distracting and finally annoying her to death. But her saintly tone and formal gown are not easily ruffled. Neither is ANITA's soft-sell.)

ANITA: Truth, is that you, dear?.... This is Anita Orangejuice.

TRUTH: Anita, darling! How's the How-to-make-money-outta-Jesus song business doing these days?

ANITA: Not as well as last year, honey, but thanks for asking.

TRUTH: Don't mention it. It's my business to be concerned with every citizen's welfare.

ANITA: Well, I'm not on welfare, sweets, doesn't your husband keep you posted on my affaires?

TRUTH: I work for the County Commission, not the FBI.

ANITA: He don't talk business?

TRUTH: Not in bed.

ANITA: Watch yer language, Truth, yer husband's right here beside me.

TRUTH: Well, when you've got a small hand to play with, you oughta make sure it's not a big deal.

ANITA: (pause) Truth, I axed you to call cause I been talkin' to Shoiley Spellingberg - you know her?

TRUTH: Yes, Shoiley Spellingberg, the Miami talk-show hostess and longtime Equal Rights Amendment foe.

ANITA: The very same. And she said you intend to introduce a Queer Rights Ordinance to free the fairies in our county of discrimination in housing, public accommodation, and employment.

TRUTH: So?

ANITA: Is that true, Truth?

TRUTH: Is an orange orange?

ANITA: Well, I think you oughta know I intend to oppose you.

TRUTH: Please don't oppose me. Oppose the bill, if you have to oppose something.

ANITA: Truth, do you remember this?:-
(singing)
"Oh, come along with me
To my little corner of the world..."

TRUTH: I can not tell a lie. That's one of your million sellers.

ANITA: And do you remember this?:-
(singing)
"I want Truth Hack in my corner of the world."

TRUTH: I can not tell a lie. That's my campaign for election as County Commissioner theme song which you sang and which endorsement helped me in some small ways to win said election and enjoy the fruits thereof.

ANITA: (to MACK) Did you hear that? You getting this all down? She said she's enjoying the fruits of her campaign.

MACK: (ingenuous) Is that incriminating?

ANITA: Have you a big deal?

MACK: (feeling his crotch) It's incriminating!!

ANITA: It's adultery!

TRUTH: Anita, love, somehow I feel I don't have your undivided attention. Some sinner annoying you?

ANITA: Yes:- you! You're making the wrong choice! As homos do, ~~who~~ should choose to be straight!

TRUTH: (mystified) How's that??

ANITA: (trembling) Did you ever see them? - putting on skull's mask make-up and dressing up in dresses and dancing in cemeteries - on top of graves! - did you? --Look, Truth, what I'm trying to say is that I think you owe me something for winning your election for you.

TRUTH: Like what?

ANITA: Like dropping introducing this legislation for fruits.

TRUTH: Oh, come off it, Anita, where would you be without fruits? And the Gay Coalition had more to do with winning my election than you. So go buy fuccoats, swimming pools, Miami Beach mansions, diamonds, pearls and peddle pushers, cause you can't buy outta a Baptist mentality and you can't buy me!

ANITA: Too booked with coalitions of fruits?

TRUTH: Is this conversation over? My tape's running out. (to the dancing ANGEL) Buzz off!

ANITA: I will in a moment, hon. Just tell me when you propose proposing the legislation.

TRUTH: The hearing is in two days, on January 18th ---

ANITA: Then you'll hear from me at the hearing. And you won't need to make a tape - I'll be loud 'n clear, dear! --What a set-up, Mack, we're all set up! (hanging up)

MACK: (ingenuous) You got a notion?

ANITA: (staring at his crotch) Certainly not! I don't even think about my husband's! Come on, we better breeze: I've got mounds of cow-pie to prepare and I have to squeeze a orange commercial in as well, before that hearin' in just two days. (grabbing MACK by the sleeve)

MACK: The pace of life is so slow in the South.

(ANITA yanks MACK offstage. TRUTH takes her tape off the recorder and gives it to ANGEL who wraps it in pink ribbons. She is quite leizurely the Southern-Belle when she moves.)

TRUTH: Keep that in a safe hidin' place like a safe and leak it to the press should the vote on my proposal go agin us, will ya, John Baby-Face Dean?

ANGEL: (the voice surprisingly deep) For you, baby, anything.

TRUTH: (relaxing) Isn't this wonderful, havin' a Guardian Angel? But then, again, you really need one in the South.

(The lights go out on TRUTH. We see the telephone booth in a lone spot. It rings 6 or 7 times, then stops. Spot out.

SCENE II. A TVfilming studio. JOE NELLI, a director, and HAIRY REAMS, his aid, bring on a TV camera and take-board.

JOE: O.K., Anita, we're ready for you!

ANITA: (O.S.) One moment, sweets!

JOE: Hairy, I think you better write out the idiot sheet.

HAIRY: You know how I hate to write, Mr. Nelli.

JOE: O.K., hang in and we'll see how this take takes.

ANITA: (O.S.) I'm all ready, Joe.

JOE: (flat; cross-eyed) She's ready.

(ANITA clacks in on high heels, in a halter and peddle pushers. She is beaming. She confronts the camera.)

HAIRY: (clapping the clap-board) Take 34!

ANITA: "A man came up to me on the street and axed if I wanted some orange juice. So, of course, I said I'd be tickled."

JOE: (pause) Well?

ANITA: Isn't that the line?

JOE: Half of it.

ANITA: I'm sorry, Joe. It's so long between takes, my brain's ossified. And I got a million things on my mind. Can we start again?

JOE: (flat) Hairy.

HAIRY: Take 35!

ANITA: "A man came up to me on the street and axed if I wanted some orange juice. So, of course, I said I'd be tickled.
(pause)
Pink."

JOE: Cut! Look, Anita, baby, we been here since 7 this morning. Did you or didn't you learn the copy?

ANITA: Oh, just once more, Joe, I know the thing front 'n backwards, but having to repeat it so many ---

JOE: (doubly flat) Hairy.

HAIRY: Take 36!

ANITA: "A man came up to me on the street and axed if I wanted some orange juice. So, of course, I said I'd be tickled.
(long pause)
Orange."

JOE: Cut! I told you 10,000 times if I told you once, no pause after "tickled." It sperls the whole Beethoven Last Quartets feeling of the shtick! It's shrewdness, it's sorrow, it's ingenuity!

ANITA: (baffled) Again?

JOE: Again. Hairy.

HAIRY: Take thirty Goddamn seven!

ANITA: "A man came up to me on the street and axed if I wanted some orange juice. So, of course, I said I'd be tickled -- orange.
(pause)
So he tickled me with a orange."

(JOE is about to interrupt and/or pull his hair out, but big ORANGES with green-stem legs come rushing in as a chorus and begin to sing, this apparently being their cue, before he can.)

ORANGES: (singing)
 "A day without a orange is so sad, is so blue,
 A day without a orange is so bad, that is
 true,
 That you better drink your orange or eat it
 if you can,
 Eat it like a woman or eat it like a man!"

JOE: (raging) Stop! Stop! This is horrendous! I ---

ANITA: (pointing very pointedly to HAIRY) I think Hairy Reams is upsetting them.

JOE: Who axed you?

HAIRY: Yeah.

ANITA: Well, how can you expect them to sing on key when they know a fifty bucks-a-film porno star is tryin' to make enough to eat by takin' a gig as their clap-board man? 'N cussin' every time he claps that board!

JOE: (shrieking) It's not their singing that's off -- they sound as good as the Met Opera Chorus nine weeks into the season -- it's you, Anita -- you don't have your lines! What's with, "So he tickled me with a orange?" What's that, huh?!!

ANITA: Well, why should he tickle me at all? He shouldn't even be in the same city as I.

JOE: Mr. Reams, write it out for her on the idiot sheet before they put me away for good! I should be directing "Jaws 3" or "Godfather 18" and look what they have me doing for a living! Couldja die!

(ERIKA, a somewhat stocky, business-like second aid, enters.)

ERIKA: Someone to see Miss Anita O.J.

JOE: (despairing) Take five, will you, Anita, see who wants you. Hairy, write it up like I said. And somebody gimme a swig.

ANITA: (producing her quart of juice) Here. Joe.

(MACK HACK enters, alternately trying on for size a baseball cap, a skull cap, and several KKK hoods. ANITA goes to him, leaving the studio lights which darken for the moment.)

JOE: "Here. Joe." Even that she can't say without a pause. Those deadly pauses! Be the death a me.

ANITA: Hi, Mack, how'd it go?

MACK: Jist great. I got Shoiley Spellingberg, a Bible-

thumpin' Baptist preacher, Catholic Archbishop Carroll, New York's Cardinal Cook, a Orthodox Jew, a half dozen loco Republicans, an' good ol' Alvin Darkperson. They all swore to show at the hearin' and sent along their secret insignia as sacred covenants. And a lotta fundin' comes with 'em, cause each is champin' at the bit fer a bit in yer crusade.

- ANITA: Good, cause these fruit commercials are bustin' my bal--- Ya see, another week of this and I'll be jist as perverted as that Joseph Nelli. -Look at him --- over there:- think he's queer?
- MACK: (dubious) He hides it pretty good.
- ANITA: (staring at JOE) Sure... that's why he's giving me such a hard time. Well, he'll be the first one to get his, when we're at the finishin' line!
- JOE: (to HAIRY) Did you finish her line? Let me look at it.
(HAIRY holds up a placard which reads:
"A MAN CAME ON ME IN THE STREET WHEN HE ASKED
IF I WANTED SOME ORANGE JUICE")
Oh, no! I heard how you hung-like-a-horse porno stars was ill-bred, but this don't even make horse-sense!
(out; anguished)
Horse-sense? I got zwei dummer Esels on my hands! What can I tell you? It's a living. But I can't wait to get out of it.
- ANITA: (out) Maybe he won't have to wait.
- JOE: Listen, Anita, I got a idea. This set-up ain't working and we have only today to get it in the can. So I wanna try something different. -Clap-board girl, come here! A staged scene, Anita, a dramatic presentation. Wanna give it a go?
- ANITA: (sing-songy) My time is yours.
- MACK: (sing-songy) And her overtime is mine.
- JOE: No overtime, no matter how it comes out. We have to bring this one in on budget. So Hairy is gonna play the guy that comes up to you on the street, O.K.? -Hairy, let's ---
- ANITA: Oh, Joe, can't someone else do it?
- JOE: There's no other union actor in the studio. And that there girl get clap - I mean, gotta clap.
- ANITA: But ---

JOE: What're you worried about, he's very experienced.

ANITA: Acting?

MACK: Miss O.J.'s contract stipulates ~~unconditional~~ approval of those portraying scenes with her.

JOE: What objections could she have to Hairy Reams?

MACK: His morals.

JOE: Oh, come off it, how can anyone in Show Biz object to somebody else's morals? --Take 1 on the dramatic recreation, people!

(Everyone assembles for the shot. The ORANGES expose the Scene I set and leave. JOE throws ANITA a mouton-lamb; she paces back and forth on the street getting into character.)

ERIKA: (clapping the clap-board) Take 1!

(HAIRY meanders onto the shooting set with a fedora pulled low over his brow and a long raincoat. ANITA is startled.)

HAIRY: Hello, baby, wanna hit a orange juice?

ANITA: (fumbling) Um, er - you have some on you?

HAIRY: Right under dhis raincoat. Wanna see it?
(making as if, starting to open his coat)

ANITA: (fleeing the set) No! ~~Back!~~ Someone stop him!

JOE: (to ANITA) What the hell is the matter with you?

MACK: (to JOE) Ask yerself that, you monster!

JOE: What are yis two crazy?! I've swallowed enough crap for one day! Get back on that set!

(ANITA grips MACK's hand, bites her tongue, and returns to the set: the set itself is freaking her as she paces back and forth on it. MACK, also, is a bit taken aback by it.)

ERIKA: Take 2!

(The phone rings. ANITA is non-plused. She rushes into the booth. It stops ringing. She picks up the receiver.)

ANITA: (scared) Hello, Truth? Truth, darli---

(A spot hits the elevated area where it frames HAIRY who muffles his voice and says ominously into a wall-phone:)

HAIRY: Hello, chippy, wanna hit a orange juice?

ANITA: (very nervous) Oh, a, sure, a day without a

orange-straight is like a day without sunsh---

(The ORANGES rush on in front of the phone booth, singing wildly. ANITA is trapped and frantic in the booth since she can not break through the chorus line to get out.)

- ORANGES: (singing)
 "Orange juice can cool ya out if you're
 feeling trapped and dry,
 If you're over-dressed, depressed, and
 think you're gonna die!"
- ANITA: (trying to push through the ORANGES) Help! Oh!
 Help, let me through! Save me, let me out of ---
- JOE: (shouting over the din) Cut! Cut! I said Cut!
- ANITA: (crashing through the line and into MACK's arms)
 Oh, thank God -- thank you, Joe!
- MACK: There, there, dearest, you're O.K. now.
- JOE: (fuming) May I ask what in ---
- ANITA: Believe me, Joe, I was getting claustrophobic in
 that miniature gas chamber!
- JOE: What miniature gas chamber? That's a telephone
 booth! You O.D.-ing on orange juice or something?
 Now it's a gas chamber! She must spike that
 juice with acid. Ascorbic acid.
- MACK: Miss O.J.'s contract stipulates that there is to
 be no claustrophobic gas chamber in her scenes.
 Not if she has to be in it, that is.
- JOE: O.K., I'll go in it -- and turn on the gas, fair
 enough? I'm ready for it.
- MACK: Guess you don't read the small print in contracts?
- JOE: No, I don't go in for pornography.
- MACK: Anita, there's no hard 'n fast reason to work for
 this guy. I can bring charges of sadism and get
 him fired with a formal apology to boot.
- JOE: (pacing) Wait a minute, wait a minute, I got
 another idea. We'll do it all out of doors. In
 the open air - yeah, that suits the theme of
 fresh air, health, and clean living that we're
 pushing. What a business! - pushing O.J. Hairy,
 come here, let me tell ya what I got in mind.
 (taking HAIRY aside and conferring with him)
- ANITA: (to MACK) How's my make-up? Mascara running?

MACK: What's this thing with you and gas chambers, doll? You never mentioned that before.

ANITA: A dream I have, that's all, a recurrent dream. I wake up screaming like Betty Grable, I wake up in a cold sweat, it's terrible. I keep seeing myself in a locked telephone booth like Bonita Granville who got gassed to death in a telephone booth in "Hitler's Children." You could see her inside sliding down the glass, one hand on her choking throat.

MACK: Oh. Yeah. "Hitler's Children," 1942. TV Guide lists that as a nifty little anti-fascist package.

ANITA: (sour) Does it.

JOE: O.K., Bonita, we're ready for you. Go up and start walking around the street again.
(to the ORANGES)
Clear the set, boys, we'll take it from the top.

(The chorus leaves once more. ANITA returns to the set.)

ANITA: (sardonic, under her breath) Boys.

JOE: This time, give us the healthy living shpeel, will you, Anita, as you stroll about.

ANITA: Will do.

ERIKA: Take 2!

ANITA: Down here in sunny Florida we believe in healthy living:- fresh air and exercise, a sun bleached beach, pollution free ocean waters, sterilized high-rise condominiums and orange juice! Come down and see us any time of the year, summer is cheapest but we're always here, brown as a berry and anonymous behind our Southern-cop reflector motorcycle glasses, Janzen swim suits, and slim, trim figures no matter our age from tiny tots to senior citizens. But if you can't make it soon, don't neglect your daily dose of Florida orange juice -- Florida:- land of St. Augustine's Church, the Ft. Lauderdale drag races, the alligator wraslars, the last of the Seminoles, and the Fountainbleau of Youth -- Florida! the Minute Maid peninsula - cause it was nothin' till it was made in a minute by shootin' down our pink flamingos to pin up whole on a lady's chapeau. And remember:- a day without orange juice is like an LP of hymns without Anita singing them. This is my little corner of the world and in my house are many mansions: so there's room for everyone in Florida, for I have gone before you to prepare a place for you in

Florida and if I have gone before you surely I will return to get you and bring you down to Florida that wheresoever I am in Florida drinking orange juice, there you shall be too, drinking orange juice!

(ANITA, in her ecstasy, floats by the palm tree. HAIRY pops his head out from behind it and intones lasciviously:)

HAIRY: Hello, baby, wanna hit a orange juice?

ANITA: (bravely) Ya got some in -- I mean, at hand?

HAIRY: I'd say "in hand," right off da top of my head!

(HAIRY leaps out by the tree, his hand bobbing away under his raincoat, a sight largely blocked from the audience by ANITA's back. She shrieks. Then HAIRY reaches down and comes up with a Coca-Cola tumbler which he thrusts at ANITA. She seizes it compulsively. The ORANGES rush onto the set, kicking in unison and vocalizing, not in unison.)

ANITA: (outraged) This is not orange juice - it's ---

ORANGES: (singing)
"A staid Minute Maid who began a crusade
Discovered that Coke was who really paid ---"

ANITA: (totally freaked: tearing into the ORANGES) And chorus boys! These ain't chorus boys! They're fags! All fags! I won't work with fags! I'll see them dead before I work with them!
(to JOE)
You, you too, you screaming nelly!! You're done for! This sick joke is your last in Dade County!
(now downstage center, the tumbler held aloft)
Orange juice! -- This is semen! You hear me:-
fresh, shot semen!!! Drink it, you fags!!!

(ANITA throws the Coca-Cola tumbler at the shrinking ORANGES who disperse and flee before her wrath.)

SCENE III. The Hearing. The characters enter severally, each carrying his or her chair and props. They form two opposing groups, like armed camps, on either side of the stage. At stage right sit TRUTH HACK and her GUARDIAN ANGEL, ensconced by TOUGHTY, a Women's Equal Rights Activist, ROB CUNTZ, a Gay Activist Advocate, and LOS OLVIDADOS, the

President of Latins for Human Rights. At stage left sits MACK HACK wearing a "President of Save Our Children, Ink" badge, surrounded by SHOILEY SPELLINGBERG, a TV Talk Show Hostess, ALVIN DARKPERSON, baseball star, FATHER JOHN THE BAPTIST, a preacher drinking from a Coke bottle, and ANITA ORANGEJUICE in a cutie-poo paisley blue dress, carrying a brown paperbag and an American flag. Much noisy fussing and commotion, fanning against the heat, shifting of and struggle over the best seats, requests for ladies to remove their chapeaus, etc. TRUTH opens the proceedings in her inimitable, relentlessly sugary monotone - belied by her playing nervously with a palm frond as if it were a feather boa or worry beads. ANGEL is doing a ballet routine.)

TRUTH: I call this boisterous hearin' to order and order you unruly, motley crew of people to shut your faces and take your seats or I shall have yis one and all expelled from this courtroom and put under White House arrest.

SHOILEY: Can you see from where you are, Father John?

JOHN: That dark person is in my way.

SHOILEY: Well, I'm afraid I can't help you there: this is a deseggeragated hearin'.

JOHN: Don't matter: my hearin' ain't so good anyway: wouldn't matter how close I was to that saint.

SHOILEY: (squinting across the room at TRUTH) A saint? Yer seein' ain't so good needa. A harlot in a Easter parade, I'd call her.

TRUTH: Ballet Boy, I'd appreciate it if you'd pass up yer practicin' durin' this here hearin'. Jist sit still, if yer capable of that, that is.

MACK: (to ANITA) He must think practice fakes perfect, but I think he jist plain ol' stinks.

ANITA: And how! That dancin' dwarf makes my skin crawl. Boy, ya sure can spot 'em a mile away, can't ya? That's a Japanese dwarf fruit.

ALVIN: Ah feel privileged to be in the same room with you, Miss Anita.

ANITA: Good. Cause you are.

ROB: Here's an English dictionary, Señor Los Olvidados, you can follow it along with the proceedings.

OLVIDADOS: Grathiath.

MACK: Pleased to meet ya, Father John, pretty pleased.

JOHN: What?

MACK: I said: You and your funds are pretty pleasing!

JOHN: What?

ROB: Pleased to meet you, Miss Toughty. Your fight is my fight.

TOUGHTY: Whad you say about a fight, faggy?

ROB: Oh, I was just wondering if your seat was comfy.

TOUGHTY: Oh, I thought ya wanted to fight.

TRUTH: Can I now have you all's undivided attention:- we shall dispense with the salute to the flag, but I shall send out of the room anyone who's attitude I don't like. I have on me and intend to propose the Dade County, State of Florida, ordinance granting equal rights to homosexualists. The ordinance having been previously published and publicly posted in jails, old-age homes, movie houses, railroad johns, hospitals, motels, post offices, beach cabanas, straight bars, and all other places that my Angel here could think of, you all gotta be blind or familiar with its stipulations.

MACK: Madame Chairwoman, would the court be so good as to refresh those in attendance with its particulars so that they may hear just how dumb they are, them stipulations in the ordinance?

TRUTH: Very well, husband.

MACK: Madame Chairneuter, I am not here in my capacity as your husband. I am here in my capacity as the President of "Save Our Children, Ink."

TRUTH: That's good, cause you haven't all that much capacity as my husband.
(the COURT laughs; she raps her palm frond)
I see we Southerners still retain our honored in false myths appreciation for a neat turn of phrase. But I will have order in this hearin' even at the expense of my not hearin' your ability to savor my wit. The ordinance stipulates the followin' writ: that all of age homosexualists bein' of sound mind and firm body, shall enjoy unqualified equality with their straight brothers and ignored sisters in the areas of apartments, public accommodation, Southern hospitality and hospitals, X-rated filums, and menial, demeaning, and blue and white color jobs, wash, rinse, and blow jobs, and jobs in parochial and public shoo-uls.

MACK: Now, the fine folk of Dade County can see just how unjust by its very wording that there law is. It makes homosexualists de facto more equal than straight folks which are heterosexualists, because if one of each camp gits fired off a job then the homo can sue on the ground of prejewdix on his affectational preference whereas the good guy can not beef but has to go on unemployment.

TRUTH: Sit down, Mack: I did not call on you to testify.

MACK: Hey, wait a minute, I ---

TRUTH: I said, Sit down.

ANGEL: (very tough) Da lady said to sit down!

TRUTH: I do not like what you're doing, Mack. You're not testifying.

MACK: I'm not testifying? -- then what am I ---

TRUTH: You're performing!

MACK: What else are you supposed to do in a play?

ANITA: Now, see, the inequality is illustrated right there:- homosexualists are always performing, from crack of dawn into the crack in their ---

TRUTH: What the hell would you know about performing!

ANITA: Honey, all my money comes from ---

TRUTH: Then shut your moneyed trap!

ANITA: Well, I may be moneyed, but my religious life more than repents for that.

TRUTH: Feel guilty, huh? An' repentin' by becoming fanatically religious? --I call upon sweet Shoiley Spellingberg, first, to give her 2¢ plain.

SHOILEY: (standing) Present, Madame Chairgirl. Hi, Mack.

TRUTH: I-dentify yo'self!

SHOILEY: My identity is Shoiley Spellingberg. I'm a famed tube talk show hostess. On my show the guests do the talking, so I welcome this opportunity to air my own very felt opinions, something which my show's sponers would never allow.

TRUTH: Let us see just how justified they are taking that position. What are your opinions?

SHOILEY: So in my opinions, The American Way Of Life is

bein' threatened by the Women's Equal Rights Amendment. The family unit is busted up by lettin' women get the same pay as men for the same work. This forces them to leave home and flirt in the office or in their orifice which is worst, to neglect their children and so beat them up and be guilty of child beating while the fathers become child molesters of their own children otherwise known as incest.

- TRUTH: I fail to see what the Women's Equal Rights Amendment has to do with this here hearin'.
- SHOILEY: Then what a fool you are. And I feel sorry for you.
(sitting in a huff)
- ANITA: Sure, she's a fool: cause as I observed in the Observer the two Amazons spearheadin' the ERA are lesbian lovers.
- TRUTH: Not that it matters one way or t'other, but the way I heard it there's but one woman spearheadin' the fight, she bein' a bonafidy housewife and mother. A breeder to you. I call Al Darkperson.
- ALVIN: (standing) Present, Madame Charwoman.
- TRUTH: I-dentify yo'self!
- ALVIN: Ah'm Alvin Darkperson, baseball star, familiar to millions of fans on TV 'n in the flesh 'n may Ah say Madame Charwoman what a pleasure it is for me to be here today in this here courtroom.
- TRUTH: It is also a voted-in Civil Right.
- ALVIN: It is also a voted-in Civil Right.
- TRUTH: For persons of yo color. Yo opinions, please.
- ALVIN: Well, Ah don't want no fags to play baseball which this law would allow them to do cause fags can't play ball good which everybody knows since they was kids when they was outsiders 'n nobody let them let play ball with them so they sat on the side 'n got made fun of 'n never learned to play so if they was to play on my team they's always lose the game for us cause them fags can't not play ball.
- MACK: Aptly put, very aptly put.
- TRUTH: (fanning herself with a frond) Anythin' else?
- ALVIN: Yeah: Ah don't want no fags in the shower room with me after the game watchin' me take a shower

cause as everybody knows for a fag to take a shower wid another man is like for a regular man to be takin' a shower wid Marilyn Monroe.

TRUTH: You feel you look like Marilyn Monroe?

ALVIN: That ain't what Ah'm sayin'.

TRUTH: So, then, enlarge.

ALVIN: O.K.:-It's like this: as everybody knows dark persons are extremely well-hung much more than light persons is 'n so when a fag sees a dark dingle in the shower especially wid all that water runnin' down over it 'n makin' it look much more irresistable like in "From Here To Eternity" or a Lifebouy TV ad they can't not resist it so they jumps you 'n starts suckin---

TRUTH: Could you watch your language: there are men in the room.

ALVIN: Sorry. So when a fag jumps you and fellatiofies you, it feels very good cause they's all experts at this 'n then after you don' want yo wife to do it no more or even a pick-up since they ain't not so good at it 'n then you be sperled fo' the natural thing 'n turn into a fag yo'self goin' round alleys at night lookin' in them hallways where queers hangs out, like gay bars 'n all, to get yo'self a queer to get fellatiofied.

MACK: Graphicly put, very graphicly put!

TRUTH: Are you makin' claim to be experienced in this? I mean, so graphic a description must come from experience, or else be disqualified testimony since it is too pictorial, Mr. Darkperson!

ALVIN: Look, all I know is that Christ didn't go to no gay bars. 'N you should stop tryin' to confuse me wid sophistry which is what the grist of yo questions is widout question. 'N for whether dark persons has bigger dingles than light mens, if you ever seen one of them Jim Brown or Jimmy Hendricks calendars which white gals all buys ---

MACK: (jumping up, a bundle of nerves) Why, that was fine testimony, Alvin, fine testimony. Why don't let's hear what the other fine persons here say?

ALVIN: Oh, um, sure. That swing wid you, Madam Charwoman?

TRUTH: Oh: jist when yer elucidation was becomin' its cancellation? --Oh, all right, then, I call on ---

MACK: (jumping up again) Yo lovin' husband!

TRUTH: I call on Father John the Baptist Preacher whom I did not know was my husband.

MACK: So that's the way it is?! -O.K.: - Father John!

JOHN: What?

MACK: (shouting in his ear) Kick off the crusade!

JOHN: (standing) You call on me, Madam Easter Bunny?

TRUTH: (shouting) IIIIIII-dentify yo'self!

JOHN: I am John the Baptist, preacher, Father John for short, I bred 12 issue. I preach hell fire and brimstone 'n got Revelation by rot, a, rote.

TRUTH: The assembly is familiar with yer Big Bank -- I mean, Big Church, Father, and its pulpit from which you preach yo rousin' sermons. Makes a body feel real good bein' scared that way first thing on a Sunday mornin'. Yo opinion on the ordinance. -Please!

JOHN: What?

ANITA: (taking his Coke bottle) She wants to hear your sermon on Lot's wife, or whatever it is.

JOHN: No kiddin'? Why didn't she say so, then?
 (revving up to full blast, immediately)
 "And it was when the Lord saw the people of Lot, that they was fornicatin' an' screwin' in inconvenient positions with lambs 'n lions 'n neighborin' tribes, that He gave them a triple-X ratin' an' raided their jernts like a entire precinct a Irish cops, closin' down their act with sulphur 'n smoke 'n makin' earthquakes to quake 'n volcanoes to vomit at their slurpin' heinousness 'n chewin' 'n lickin' 'n givin' toe jobs 'n the like -- for they was the children of Sodom and Gum-morrah: so-called counta they did pull out their dentures 'n give gum jobs 'n hummed on testees 'n thrust wet tongues into in-zy belly buttons 'n swallowed up whole out-zy ones: and the Wife of Lot turned stiff with her multiple orgasms 'n the multitude licked at her like deer at a salt-lick and hence she was so-called a pillar of salt counta the many tongues that licked away at her when she was stiff with screamin' mountain-movin' orgasms so insatiable was she: and the twin cities of the plain was so-called twins counta people was seein' double from their relentless humpin' 'n bangin' each other 'n they was cross-eyed from exhaustion 'n depletion a their seed yet they stayed not off but continued of the like lecherous epic till

their heat combusted them 'n they was incinerated with their lustihood havin' only their wettish snatches 'n pearl drops a sperm hangin' off the slits atop their tools to quench that holocaust which wast not enough to put out such a awesome conflagragation, their drippin' snatches 'n down to the last drop deflated flappin' sausages! -- Sausages filled with pig flesh! I might add ---"

- TRUTH: Please don't add. Husband, I mean, President of "Save Our Children Ink," I assume that exhaustive inventory leaves you with little to add.
- MACK: (standing; ANITA stealthily slips the bottle back to JOHN) Not in the least. Now, we five form a impromptu make-shift group called, "Save Our Children Ink," to do just that:- save our innocent issue from bein' taught by Sodomites the lifestyle of the people of Sodom and Gum-morrah.
- TRUTH: It would appear they's no time for a lifestyle, bein' so busy abed as 'twere.
- MACK: Oh, no, they do find time to swish into classrooms.
- TRUTH: I don't see how. ...Please add. ...When?
(pause; MACK, baffled, turns to ANITA for help)
When, Mack? -Just when do they find the time?
- ANITA: (leaping up) All the time - like after each orgasm!
- TRUTH: Don't pull on my chain, Anita: or out you'll go! Forewarned is foreskinned, I mean, forearmed.
- JOHN: Four arms, four arms they got to feel folks up with!
- TRUTH: Now that we've silence from the prosecution, we'll turn our attention to the defense: Señor Los ---
- ANITA: Wait! -- I didn't get my chance to ---
- TRUTH: Well, I warned you. Angel, eject her at once!
- TOUGHTY: I'll help.
- (ANGEL and TOUGHTY rush at ANITA who jumps up and thrusts forth her package and the flag as if to hold them both at bay.)
- ANITA: Stop jist there, yis two peculiar preverts, or I'll bring down the wrath a Our Lord 'n country on both!
- TOUGHTY: Is that all ya got to stop us? Some joke! Come on, let's us K.O. the kid 'n git on with th---

(They both spring at ANITA. ANITA whacks ANGEL offstage with the flag; he immediately reappears dressed as a POSTMAN and delivers a letter to TRUTH. Meantime, the women battle on:)

ANITA: Stop, lezzy, look at this:- I always carry a plain brown paperbag wrapped package! And it contains - (having difficulty; finally tearing open the bag) see - a gilt-edged Holy Bible! And I am goin' to read to you from Leviticus, the 4th book of Mo---

TOUGHTY: Not so long as folks drink Coke, you ain't!

(TOUGHTY and ANITA grab Coke bottles out of a case of them standing on TRUTH's desk, smash their bottoms, and circle each other around the court, teenage-gangstyle. The COURT is enthralled, except for TRUTH and ANGEL who pay no mind.)

TRUTH: Hmmmmm, a letter from a suburb of Miami:- New York, the dogshit city. It's signed, Thomas Cute, my equivalent up there, May LeMay, the president of their Fire Fighters Union, and Matty Troy, their criminally-convicted City Council Leader. It's addressed to you, Mack, and yo embattled buddy.

MACK: (his wrapt attention on the fight) What's it say?

(TRUTH trips ANITA as she circles by, and ANITA falls face-flat into TOUGHTY who, taking her by the arms, deftly drags her offstage; battle-sounds O.S. ANGEL sweeps the glass.)

TRUTH: It says..... Hmmmmm..... "Do what we done here -- 6 times -- voted the filth to filth." -I see now the depth of your exploitation, Angel. You are crushed day by day into bein' the actual go-between and water-boy for your very foremost foes.

ANGEL: (picking up and humbly pocketting the broken Coke glass) What can I say: it's a living.

TRUTH: (crumpling the letter and sticking it in her bra) It's gay knocks. Well, I can't introduce out of state influence. And what could be more out of the states than Nueva York? Speakin' in and of foreign tongues, it's time to hear from you, Señor Los Olvidados.

OLVIDADOS: (standing with fear and timidity as TOUGHTY re-enters and takes her seat) Presidenté, Señora.

TRUTH: You president of somethin', too?

OLVIDADOS: Si, Señora, of Latinos for Human Rights.

TRUTH: I-dentity yo'self, dear.

OLVIDADOS: I haf no identity for I am Los Olvidado, "The Forgotten One." I am witout a name, I commit the sin witout a name, I do not exist, I am no here. An I will no stand it no more, ees crackin' me up.

SHOILEY: That accent is crackin' me up.

TRUTH: Shut yo cracks, Shoiley, both of 'em!

OLVIDADOS: I esuffer greatly because of my secret an I must become in public or I die inside an from like esuffocation in a closet when you can no breathe or budgit one bit. My family is against me, all Cubanos is against me, these people tell me God is against me, an my boss gettin' very upset, I belief he gonna fire me off my job while my landlord say he think it time I move.

TRUTH: That's exactly why we've convened, Sr. Olvidados: to legislate against these miseries for you in the land of the free and the home of the brave.

OLVIDADOS: (sadly) I am no very brave.

TRUTH: I think you are, comin' here openly like this and comin' out. But you needn't bend over backwards -- or forwards, as 'twere -- we can go on to the next confessor, if you like.

OLVIDADOS: (taking his seat) Grathiath, Señora.

TRUTH: Next, I call upon Rob Cuntz.

MACK: Hey, wait a minute, what the heck is this? Yer speedin' through the defense when we ain't even heard out the opposition! Call that justice?

TRUTH: Why? you want to hear from Miss Orangejuice? I'd love to myself and, forward-lookin' enough, she prepared her testimony in advance, like a box lunch, anticipatin' that she might have to leave unexpectedly. Show you what I mean. -Angel, the tape, please. This postman here is Angel Dean, Angel John Dean.

ANGEL: Here ya go, sister. Pink ribbons 'n all.

TRUTH: Ain't these pink ribbons jist darlin'?
(undoing the ribbons and fixing them in TOUGHTY's hair)
There, Ms., that's so you! Play the tape, dear. Where's my nail file? Might as well do my nails, I heard this before.

(ANGEL puts the tape on a play-back and ANITA is heard singing "My Little Corner of the World." The COURT is startled.)

ALVIN: God that's awful!

JOHN: I don't hear a thing.

TRUTH: That's the wrong side, Queen, a, Dean. Flip it.

(TOUGHTY muscles ANGEL aside and, business-like, flips the tape.)

THE TAPE: "Truth, is that you? This is Anita Orangejuice. Shoiley Spellingberg said you intend to introduce a Queer Rights Ordinance. I think you oughta know I intend to oppose you. -You getting this all down? She said she's enjoying the fruits of her campaign. It's adultery! -I think you owe me something for winning your election for you. Like dropping introducing this legislation for fruits. Too booked with coalitions of fruits? -What a set-up, Mack, we're all set up!"

TRUTH: (snapping off the tape) There. I think that speaks for itself.

MACK: I think 18 minutes is missin' off that tape!

TRUTH: 18 minutes is always missin' off a tape. That's how tapes is made these days. It never mattered before, did it?

SHOILEY: Seems to sound like blackmail is involved here.

ALVIN: Yup: seems Miss Anita was goin' to take a leak to the effect that Miss Truth is a adulterous lessen she dropped her proposals to fruits.

JOHN: Yup, yup, it's getting a little ripe in here.

MACK: (flabbergasted) What're yis all nuts? Wha--- Can't you hear how that tape's been doctored?

JOHN: No, I can't hear.

TOUGHTY: He can't hear. Save ya breath!

MACK: (despairing) Is there no honesty in Dade County?

SHOILEY: I shoiley don't like my name bein' spelt out so Brooklyn in this. Blackmail is at best ambiguous.

JOHN: I can't hear the blackmail no more'n I can hear the missin' 18 minutes. The Church jist can't hear of blackmail. Therefore, I'm morally bound not to vote with the votin' block of that orange juice promoter.

TRUTH: (smiling broadly; turning to ROB) You Rob Cuntz?

ROB: Well, I wouldn't but I am.

TRUTH: Then I call on you to testify. I-identify yo'self!

ROB: (standing) My name is Robert Cuntz. I am the Gay Activist Advocate advocating this anti-discrimination ordinance. First off, I should like to note that History has two hands: one meaningless and the other deadly.

- TRUTH: Please note the issue instead.
- ROB: I'm doing just that, Madame Chairperson. History is a seesaw of sickening statistics and trivia and, from time to time -- when we're lucky -- they're clear enough to balance each other.
- TRUTH: Please address yo'self to the issue. We're not in school.
- ROB: We should be, since school is the issue. The main thrust of the ordinance is the protection of homosexual teachers in parochial schools. The orange juice block urges the firing of all such teachers in order to open up their jobs during this depression. In fascist history, one creates a depression to punish and control a rebellious populace -- such as we were in the '60s -- then seeks recovery in scapegoats. The 1933 Jewish pogroms in financially chaotic Germany were initially an economic move:- fire Jews so that there is employment for Aryans. Extermination was an afterthought, not thought about till 1942.
- SHOILEY: Now on that pernt, ---
- ROB: And may I note that the first inmates of the concentration camps in 1935 were not Jews, but 250,000 German homosexuals -- the men who wore the pink triangles -- all of whom eventually were slaved or shot to death.
- SHOILEY: This is argument by emotional analogy and it is confusin' the orange juice stand that a good teacher who's homosexual necessarily holds up an attractive role model to his students, which same bein' that gayness is a positive alternative for them.
- ROB: And so it is: for what better models to emulate than teachers like Socrates, Plato, Leonardo, Michelangelo and Voltaire?
- TRUTH: So you concede that teachers influence the sexual proclivities of their pupils?
- ROB: No, I say homosexuality is a viable, equally-good choice. But a teacher can not affect a student in that choice and the evidence is myself: for I had heterosexual teachers all my life, yet I am homosexual.
- TRUTH: Then you hold kids swing one way or t'other by the time they're four?
- ROB: Correct. Four months.

SHOILEY: With all due respect, we can't have men dressed as Theda Bara teachin' our kids.

TOUGHTY: Then how come Anita wears men's slacks in that new o.j. ad with the helicopter in back of her?

ANGEL: If only they'd back her into that helicopter so's she'd git a little behind in her work.

ROB: With all due respect, Shoil, you're confusing transvestites with homosexuals. They are a breed apart: more heterosexual men and women are transvestites than ---

SHOILEY: Conceded. Now, what about child molesters?

ROB: 96.4 % of child molesters are straight men. The incidence of child molesting by gays is minuscule and almost never school-oriented.

TRUTH: Are you satisfied, Miss Spellingbee, or is this contest between you two gonna take us into cocktail time?

SHOILEY: I don't contest Mr. Cuntz on these pernts. But we must preserve the child-bearin' 'n rearin' foundation of our God-fearin' 'n scarin' Judeo-Christian country. Ya know, this ain't some newfangled notion that we jist invented. All history has been against homos; why, in the Middle Ages they burnt them as witches.

ROB: Do you want me burnt?

SHOILEY: Be polite now. Present company is always exempt.

ROB: Polite? Have you any idea what life-lasting torment is being initiated in thousands of gay students in this community right now because of what we are doing here?

SHOILEY: What are we doin'? We're discussin' laws.

ROB: Let's discuss them: as far as this being a Judeo-Christian country goes, a separation of church and state was demanded by our constitution. Tell me, Shoil, would you allow an atheist to teach?

SHOILEY: I would not allow an atheist to teach.

ROB: But that is guaranteed by ---

SHOILEY: It is only guaranteed by the 14th Amendment for whose repeal I have proselytized since the '60s!

TRUTH: Folks sure has been busy in Dade County.

ROB: (pause) And now I think that the folks of Dade County can see the full extension of an anti-gay rights stand.

ALVIN: Ah don' clearly see it.

ROB: It requires nothing less than a National Constitutional Convention to re-draft the Constitution of the United States of America, foremost in which redrafting would be repeal of the 14th Amendment, that amendment whose due process clause guarantees the enforcing of the entire Bill of Rights, guarantees the equal protection under the law of all citizens in their pursuit of life, liberty, and property -- that very amendment known to every schoolboy as "The Civil Rights Amendment!"

SHOILEY: Agreed. A Christian country must not and can not guarantee civil rights to all citizens. Christianity can't survive that.

ROB: And that Second National Constitutional Convention has been voted for by 9 states and is pending in 13 others!

SHOILEY: And I canvassed votes and tirelessly electioneered in those successful referendums and will continue to do so until I git the number of states up to the necessary two-thirds majority. Then, with repeal and a few other petty patches here and there in the Constitution, we can preserve our homeland, establish it as a Christian haven, and finally save our children.

ROB: We are your children! We are your children!!

TRUTH: Enough picayune academia. -Mr., a, Ms.?

TOUGHTY: -Ms. Thoughty.

TRUTH: Is that all?

TOUGHTY: Yes, Truth, dhat's all. The name is tersely descriptive. It describes my tuft.

TRUTH: I see, I dentify!

TOUGHTY: (standing) Dese here fists is my identity. Any dumb body so fulla myths, ms-conceptions, and prejewdix as to not comprehend da psychic damage dhey awready done to gays and so be not votin' pro da legislation know what dhey gonna git! -How's about you, Alvin? You'll be kickin' yaself.

ALVIN: (startled) Y'all mean you'll be kickin' mahself! ...Somehow Ah feels the force a them feet, I mean,

the force a the times. 'N as everybody knows Ah never went in fo wraslin', baseball's mah game. 'N course, we widout our mascot, ain't we, Mack? - that's bad luck. So Ah think Ah bess change Mah ---

MACK: Oh, Anita: where are you now that we need you!

TRUTH: I call for the vote! All in favor of our Dade County, State of Florida, ordinance grantin' Human Rights to homosexualists stand right up!

(TRUTH, ANGEL, ROB, TOUGHTY, OLVIDADOS, JOHN and ALVIN leap up, their chairs crashing behind them. TRUTH snaps on the tape:- we hear ANITA saying: "introduce a Queer Rights Ordinance, introduce a Queer Rights Ordinance," over and over again.)

ANGEL: The oranges seems to be repeating on her; heh-heh.

TRUTH: I count one, two, three, four, five, six, seven votes present and one from Miss Anita in absentia.

THE SEVEN: Hurrah! Hurrah! Hurrah! Three leers, a, cheers for Miss Anita in absentia!!!!

TRUTH: All opposed please stand while them pro sit!

(The SEVEN sit; MACK and SHOILEY stare fearfully at TOUGHTY.)

TRUTH: Am I to count yis two sittin' as sittin' it out abstentions? Or y'all gonna stick to yer gums?

(MACK and SHOILEY slowly rise. SHOILEY takes MACK's hand.)

SHOILEY: We'll stick to our gums. Like orange rinds.

MACK: Yeah, I'll stick it out. Same as fruits do.

TRUTH: I count one, two opposed. So the vote, then, tallies up as: ---

MACK: Oh, Anita: where are you now when we need you?

(Suddenly, palm fronds shoot up and bloom all around TRUTH, while a huge Pink Triangle descends from above to halo her.)

TRUTH: So the vote comes in as:- "YES!" The ordinance favorin' Human Rights is passed by a landslide 8 to 2!! --Boy, never thought I'd make it!

THE SEVEN: Hurrah for Saint Truth! Hurrah for Human Rights!

OLVIDADOS: We won! We won! -Rob, do this mean I am no a criminal anymore?

ROB: Not exactly.

- OLVIDADOS: (not hearing him) That my need to espress my heart, my take an give of loves will no again haf me hunted down like a pink flamingo by the policia? an be locked up like a mad dog for 15 years?
- ROB: Not exactly. Sodomy is still a crime.
- OLVIDADOS: But we won!
- ROB: You only won the right to be named -- in public, that is -- for you did indeed always have a name, hows ever secret society kept it. So I call for your Before-the-Law baptism:- Father John!
- JOHN: One baptism comin' up!
(rushing in a flutter down center to OLVIDADOS)
Kneel, my son!
(punching the unprepared, bewildered OLVIDADOS in the stomach so that he falls to his knees)
O thou who wast hitherto called Los Olvidados -- "The Forgotten Ones" -- thou one standing for the multitude who art thus, I hereby baptize you:- "The Found One" -- He Who Returns from Oblivion.
(producing his Coke bottle)
And with this fine phial of baptismal tears, I name thee into a worldly existence as Adam named the animals of Eden in nomini Patris, Filitis, eh Spiritus Sanctus, Amen!
(pouring a guey, reddish substance from the Coke bottle onto THE FOUND ONE's head)
Heavens! This ain't holy water! It's ---.....
- THE COURT: (crying out) ORANGE JUICE CONCENTRATE!!!
- JOHN: Pure concentrate of orange juice! Thick, guey, and as slow to plop as Herr Heinz ketchup!
- ROB: My God! Who could've calculated her canniness?
- JOHN: The Almighty Orange! A Miracle hath been accomplished this day! Upon thy knees before It! And hereinafter all must believe in The Orange!
- THE COURT: (falling in confusion to their knees) O Orange, we put our trust and faith in country, flag, and Thee!
- ROB: (dire, the only one who does not kneel) What ugly chicanery. And it will be praised from the pulpit and plopped on the front page of every local religious newsletter. So that many no better or worse than these will believe hereafter in that Coke-owned Minute Maid and her Juice from the Orange.
- ANITA: (appearing on the elevated area with band-aids on

her nose, a steak over one eye, and a sash across her orange one-piece swimsuit reading: "WOMAN OF THE YEAR") And so I am here, now when you need me!

(Sacred music with ANITA singing. The stage slowly darkens and the COURT carries off their props, filing away one by one in silhouette: like a long-shot from a Cecil B. DeMille Biblical epic.

SCENE IV. Miami's Northwest Baptist Church. A bare stage. ANITA, in flowing evangelical robes, appears in a single blinding spot. Protected by three tall MEN, also gowned in white, who form a close semicircle behind her, she carries a gigantic Bible and addresses the audience as though we were her Baptist congregation.

ANITA: I have invited myself to speak in this Baptist House of Worship on a matter of urgency to all. I am a devout Baptist as you here know, but for those among you suffering a memory lapse, I should furnish my qualifications both to speak frankly and as frankly quote frank scripture:- for I was a runner-up in a Me-iz America Pageant. I was born about 37 years ago in Mandingo, Oklahoma, but Florida is my adopted state and we've benefited mutually from that. Since I first sang with the choir boys in my granddaddy's church and even then I knew the score on choir boys, I yearned to invest in sacred music:- for I was a runner-up in a talent show at age 3 and a born-again Baptist at 8 when I got my biggest boost by meeting the creator of stars, Jesus Christ Our Lord. My canary career got a third shove up there through the Youth For Christ and appearances with Billy Graham, a man who if any man comes straight comes straight. In fact, he played straight-man to my singing:- for I was a runner-up in a Me-iz America Pageant. My career torpedoed in the '60s with such million peter sellers as "Paper Roses Picked From Our Noses" and "Till There Was You There Was Me, Me, Me." My religious albums wassn't bummers neither. In short, I became the remains of the All-American girl: I stand for Motherhood, banana cream pie, Sunday school which I teach downstairs here, diet or sugared Coke drinks and hamburgs and won't

drink, toke, chew gum or ever not be proud to be an Americanness, a country where there is freedom and people's rights are respectored. As for Vietnam, I feel very keenly that was a war between atheism and God and God wouldn't want us to rebuild there though some very evil capitalists probably helped flatten them back then in order to do just that right now. I know, because I played Nam 7 times in Rob Hope's Christmas Show singing to real boys robbed of all hopes which I restored to them through my own religious recording company and publishing outfit. Furthermore, I've sung our National Anthenium at political conventions, stag parties, church rallies, linching rallies, and bingo games; and wherever I have an engagement I exchange recipies for Jim Crow pies and make contacts for future appearances. The focus I brought to Miami and you could say I put Florida on the map cause them Seminoles certainly didn't, earned me a co-hostessship at the Florida Orange Bowl, spokesladyship for The First Federal Savings and Loan in Miami, and a \$100,000-a-year contract as the sele ad-woman for the Florida Citrus Commission. Add these all up and you have a sincere and deeply religious personality whose whole life resolves around her 4 some odd children telling you that homosexuality is against God's wishes. Homos say their name is legion, quoting the demons of gospel who said to Christ, "Our name is legion," thus identifying theirselves as demons. Miami's newly passed ordinance for demons' rights infringes upon my rights as a citizen and discriminates against me as a mother to get an example in edgewise of God's moral code. And I am here in this house to garner not up the rewards of this earth, but rather to gather up signatures against that law and so cause a referendum to be held to repeal it which shall shard up credits for me in Heaven! 10,000 signatures are needed off you people and I needn't imply that whomsoever doesn't sign up is by implication a queer hissself and a self-confessed one before this assembly and you will all git your names in the papers with your pitchers to boot in yer boots, leathers, 10 gallon hats and rhinestone jockies! And I am ready to sacrifice my career as Abraham was the sole son of ol' age and my 4 some odd children and go to whatever other lunatic fringe is warranted to save our children! For the mass recruitment of our offspring is absolutely necessary to the growth and survival of queerdom: since because sissies can not reproduce, they must recruit - and from where? why, from amongst our children needs must they recruit to freshen their rank, rank, rank ranks!!

ACT II

SCENE V. THE FOUND ONE's shabby parlor. An overstuffed and a TV with a life-size screen: the TV program we see is the actual actors within the box: THE FOUND ONE and a wry MODERATOR, in a middle-shot framed from a panel desk to the tops of their heads. For the moment, we do not see and are unaware of the rest of the parlor. Loud salsa trails off.

MODERATOR: Welcome to "Views and News of Miami's Spanish Community," a public, severely needed service program. Here we are on a pleasant but hot March night in Metropolitan Miami, all set for what we hope will be a not unpleasant but hot topic in town these days. For tonight we air something seldom if ever discussed publicly in the Spanish community: Civil Rights. Last week we delved into the plight of sharecroppers and our migrant orange pickers in particular, whose jobs currently are jeopardized due to the boycott on that crop burgeoning in response to singer Anita Orangejuice, Queen of the Florida Citrus Industry. Migrant pickers, as usual, are the first victims of a vegetable and fruit dispute, but violence is mushrooming throughout the county amongst those taking either side of this issue. Our speaker is The Found One, here in behalf of "Latins for Human Rights." -Sir.

FOUND ONE: (with innocent enthusiasm) Effirst, I want to make a plea for peace in the community.

MODERATOR: Effirst, you should thank me for introducing you.

FOUND ONE: I would effirst thank you to stop pickin' you nose.

MODERATOR: (winking smugly to the viewers) At least, something's getting picked in Dade County.

FOUND ONE: I would want to esay fore anthin' else, that no matter how this esituation work out an wherever you estand on it, for or against a referendum, there is no call for callin' peoples up on the phone an threaten them an then burnin' crosses

in their lawn an blowin' up their garages an flingin' bombs in through their parlor windas when they is watchin' TV an beatin' them up in parkin' lots while they goin' to get out their autos which is already on fire.

MODERATOR: I think that's a sentiment luckily shared by a minority of Floridians. Speaking of minorites, Señor Found One, which are you representing?

FOUND ONE: Gay Latinos -- in behaf of all American gays: this country's third biggest minority, comin' right after da Catlicks an blacks.

MODERATOR: (pause; melodramatically looking about) There. He said it. And the ceiling didn't collapse! Let us hope that no viewers rush over to this station and help it to during the course of our program. Señors and Señoras, Channel 47 has dared to name the love that dare not name itself! -Remember, you heard it here first. -Your complaint, please.

FOUND ONE: Da way you espeak to me -- like a second-class citizen.

MODERATOR: I was only being thoughtful: I figured you had some kinda fantasy about being on the Gong Show.

FOUND ONE: I think maybe this is da Gong Show. Since da clowns you feature there gays is all past masters at: havin' da guilt an self-hatred which drives them to act edder da macho clown or da butterfly clown, their inferioty feelin's acceptin' da only two you straights know how to be. But I wan' to do somethin' in the stead of all who become so crooked cause they confront such straits.

MODERATOR: Phrases neatly turned! In an age of the purely visual, we can still find -- you see -- turns of phrase, neat turns of phrase, you see? -And?

FOUND ONE: An I was particular fraid to come on here cause of gettin' in another family quarrel wid my family who is always comparin' me wid my older brudder which got 18 kids. Never married, but got 18.

MODERATOR: Bet you got 18 kids somewhere along the line, too. Like in public parks and toilets and rumper seats?

FOUND ONE: (disgusted) Is it time for da phone calls?

MODERATOR: The board is lit up like a Broadway marquesa. Pick up on the first one in that row of them there.

THE PHONES: (as THE FOUND ONE picks up the first receiver from a row of phones encircling him:) "Hallo, fairy,

wanna date? Ya could blow me."
 (as THE FOUND ONE hangs up and picks up the 2nd:)
 "Wanna suck my 18 inch chocolate joy stick?"
 (again, he hangs up; and picks up the next phone;
 the following responses from each receiver in
 turn:) "Bend over, sweetie, I'll plug up the
 diarrhea yer ploppin' out on dhis show."
 "You disgrace your people. We don't want Mary
 Coneys in Miami."
 "Take it, all of it, you love it! Aaaaaaaaagh!"
 "Eat out my asshole, baby. I bathed last week."
 "Christ didn't go to no gay bars."

FOUND ONE: Needa do most gays. Kinsey says only 1 in 10
 ever been inside one or even knows what they is.

MODERATOR: (beside himself with glee) Oh, dear, the best
 one was: "Eat me out, baby, eat me out. I bathed
 last week!" Well, I see that our linguistically
 imaginative callers have passed on this issue ---

FOUND ONE: (distracted) Passed what? It is incredible how
 peoples who call theirself Christians can hold
 such unjustified hatred towards us.

MODERATOR: And now that we've heard the views of Miami's
 Spanish community, we must break for the news of
 same and go on to our next guest: Sr. Muy Lascivo,
 a Fidelista speaking on pedophilia. So stay tune.
 Señor Found One, thank you for finding yourself
 tonight on "Views and News of Miami's Spanish
 Community." And safe, I mean good cruising to you!

(The MODERATOR extends his hand, but THE FOUND ONE ignores
 it and leaps through the TV screen into his parlor. There
 he paces madly and tears at his tongue. Behind him a young
 strawberry blonde, superchic NEWSWOMAN comes on the screen.)

NEWSWOMAN: Channel 47's Eye on Anita finds this local item
 back in the papers of every state of the disunion:
 Singer Sewing Machine Corporation's main office
 in Louisville tonight dropped Anita as proposed
 hostess for their talent variety show, a decision
 apparently related to her anti-gay rights crusade.
 Reached tonight, a spokesperson for Singer of
 unidentifiable gender said, we're quoting: "We
 want this to be a pleasant show. We'd like to
 have as little controversy as possible." Said
 Anita, we're quoting: "This destroys a dream I've
 had since I was a child. I'm a victim of" -- get
 this! -- "blackmailing." Said the National Gay
 Task Force, this is a quote: "We are not happy to
 see that kind of discrimination, even when the
 victims themselves are discriminators." And Anne
 Frank said: "But deep down I still believe that
 all people are basically good."
 (smiling editorially)

Not sharing the sentiment apparently is Flack Campbellsoup, president of the Miami Chapter of ACLU and owner of The Club Clubbed Bath Houses: he withdrew \$84,000 from First Federal Savings and Loan whose ads Miss O.J. does. In what is apparently an unrelated incident, a director of TV commercials, one Joseph Nelli, was discovered hanged by the neck in his Orange Walk flat this morning by an overnight "guest."
(heavy editorial on "guest")

The "guest" said he found an apparent suicide note stating that Mr. Nelli, whose contract with F.L.A. Citrus had been mysteriously dropped, had felt his career to be irrevocably demolished.... And now, turning to Sports for some real action:

FOUND ONE: (rushing to the TV) God, that woman an da filth she is creatin'! What else is on? --Oh, no!

(He switches the channel: we see SHOILEY, MACK, and ANITA in a splendid gossamer gown, gabbing on "The Shoiley Talk Show.")

ANITA: So that's why I say, Shoil, gay acts are not only immortal, they are illegal, since gays are generally either Brooklyn bank robbers, jumbojet highjackers, or sadistic murderers who kill 27 runaway teenagers at a time and stuff their bodies into green plastic garbagebags. Through the power of the box, a referendum box, that is, the normal majority must soundly deflect Truth's attempt to legitimize homowreckuality. Miami's blunderin' gay ordinance is no more a civil rights issue than is a drunk's arrest for disturbin' the peace.

SHOILEY: Yet some has it you yo'self has been disruptin' the peace, as well as gay persons' gittin' a piece.

ANITA: I never mind that: it is better to burnst. Look, homos are a abomination to the Lord because they are eatin' male sperm.

SHOILEY: (smiling) Accordin' to Kinsey so's a lotta wives.

ANITA: And that makes them worst than homos cause they got other things to do -- like lay back and take it. You see, God is quite displeased with that tremendous gay inundation in San Francisco and that's why He brought that drought on Northern California. And as size-mologists size it up, God's definitely plannin' a earthquake along California's Andreas Fault which is very much the fault of all them homosexys.

SHOILEY: How's yer campaign comin'? Any polls out yet?

MACK: Well, the Poles will come out counter the gays. After all: let's remember World War II!

SHOILEY: Yis jist got a boost from Minnesota, ain'tchis?

ANITA: Right on! "Save Our Children Ink" reached that state's senate at the 11th hour 'n successfully mashed the gay rights bill there.

MACK: And Arny Peter, a city councilor who's gittin' every fag teacher he can find fired in Dover, New Hamshire, sent Anita a personally embossed on govament stationery thank you note fer raisin' his consciousness.

FOUND ONE: Cinch she couldn't raise anytin' else for him.

SHOILEY: But what about our own Dade County? A U. of Miami poll says the Coalition for Human Rights is influencin' a margin in favor of no referendum.

MACK: Universities always got radicals takin' polls. Besides, ya kin never tell how Dade will go: it's a very mixed county: from high yella to black-ash.

SHOILEY: A-hem! -I see our next guest has made it in time to jern us:- lessen it's gittin' late fer you two.

ANITA: (sing-songy) I'm first wakin' up! Who is it?

SHOILEY: Dashin' underground film star, Hairy Reams!

ANITA: Shoil! You didn't tell me Hairy was schedul---

(SHOILEY, MACK and ANITA roll back on their chairs giving the impression of the camera zooming out to take in a 4th figure. HAIRY REAMS enters the frame, kisses SHOILEY, reaches over, kisses ANITA, then sits. He looks great; and has a great tie.)

HAIRY: Hi, baby, hi, Mack. Hallo, Shoil. Like my tie?

ANITA: Your tie, indeed!

SHOILEY: (purring) It is very loooong and wide, isn't it?

HAIRY: Isn't it.

SHOILEY: I thought you two would enjoy bein' on the same show together.

ANITA: Why?

HAIRY: Cause I owe my neat new career to you, Nita.

ANITA: How's that?

HAIRY: Well, after you got me up on charges for that popular double-bill, "The Frenched Foreign Legion" and "The Skinning of the Moil," and made sure I was put away for a while, I got a lotta legit

offas offa all the publicity. So I've gone legit. We'll be starring together in "Little Mary Sunshine," due to come out in the Sunshine State in just two mont---

ANITA: I don't believe it!

HAIRY: And as for da rest of my act, we can intend fer that after the screening, any night.

ANITA: (shaking) What?

HAIRY: For you, baby, any night.

SHOILEY: Love your tie!

HAIRY: Knew you would!

ANITA: I doubt yo'll make the transition to legit films. What's to replace the gold carnation of yo armpits?

HAIRY: You, on the other hand, should make the reverse transition rather comfortably. Why not try a snuff flick: I can see enjoying it's every last minute!

ANITA: I can't conceive how a whole middleclass generation suddenly spawned a lowclass one: druggers, hippies, gypsies, drifters, an' flashers the likes of you. Never in history did offspring ever come out so in reverse: God's certainly cussed us counta our toleratin' all you hobosexes.

HAIRY: Awful lotta folks feel likewise 'bout you. Yer erstwhile pals, Male, a, Dale Evans 'n Bing Crosby -- who, after all, once owned Minute Maid -- said today they don't exactly feature you the Southern Saint Joan.

ANITA: (surprised; then saddened) Really?How treacherous... Then, I shall be prayin' fo' them.

SHOILEY: Good.

(ANGEL enters the frame in the awkward, ill-fitting POSTMAN's outfit, slinging a bulky leather mailbag.)

ANGEL: (business-like) Delivery for Miss Anita O.J.

ANITA: (giggling uncontrollably at the sight) Really, Shoil, that one of yer selected short subjects?

(ANGEL takes a cream pie from the mailbag and slams ANITA directly in the face; he cries out like John Wilkes Booth:)

ANGEL: Another piggy bigot gits it in the face!

ANITA: (as everyone gasps; shocked into silence; then,

with her face completely plastered:) Banana Cream? Well, at least it's fruit.

(HAIRY leaps up and violently apprehends ANGEL who raises his hands, offering no resistance; MACK and ANITA both cry out:)

MACK:ANITA:(together) No, no, let him be! Don't hurt him!

MACK: Let's pray, Anita -- quickly, let's pray!

ANITA: (clasping her hands with MACK's help) Father, I want to thank you for lettin' me appear on "The Shoiley Talk Show." And I want to pray for.... for.... this sinner....

MACK: --And I don't hate him!!

ANITA: And I don't hate him. Please protect him and lead him from his deviant lifestyle. And.... Oh!....

(ANITA breaks down and weeps bitterly, MACK holding her hands, the cream masking her face; blobs fall on him and her gown.)

FOUND ONE: An so estupidity an violence will answer estupidity an violence, day after day as long as men live an nothin' will ever change. This craziness gonna drives me to somethin' desperate.
(switching off the TV and its somber image)
I gotta get help....
(dialing his telephone; lights up in the elevated area; we see home phones ringing in an eery vacuum)
No frien, no doctor ever home when you needs them.
Where is all da peoples who you know all da time?

(Finally, after many dialings, his old MAMASITA appears.)

MAMASITA: (picking up in the elevated area) Bueno!

FOUND ONE: Mamasita mia! Soy muy contento now.

MAMASITA: Oh, it's jou, Los. Look, Los, I got somethin' in da oven an it's gonna burn.

FOUND ONE: Por favor, Mamasita, don go aways: I gotta talk ---

MAMASITA: But da stove is goin' wid all da burners an it's so hot tonight, I can no estand here on da phone. Da entire family is havin' dinner.

FOUND ONE: Mama!

MAMASITA: I told jou, Los, not to go in dhat pogroma. All da neighbors is eshame for jou an nobody espeak to us now. I like for jou to be estraight like jou brudders, no for eshame but for jou happiness. Jou are bery sensitif an dhis what jou doin' is a tret to jou emotional well-bein'. I can no

esalvage jou if jou don listen to jou parents.

FOUND ONE: Today I felt good! I fin' Los cause I come out honest: it help me inside: afore I was a dead one!

MAMASITA: Jou got to tink of udder people an stay hid away. Jou are no free an da reputation of all jou frien an relative depen on jou not bein' in public.

FOUND ONE: No, Mama, no, please hear me. Don' ---

MAMASITA: Jou are bery artistic an illogic an nervous. Jou can no lead a fight for liberty.

FOUND ONE: But I feel much better for what I do an less ner---

MAMASITA: Do jou feel better for what jou did? Do jou, Los? I no hear dhat by da tone of jou voice. I think jou make one big mistake tonight.

FOUND ONE: No, wait, don say that!

MAMASITA: Jou brudders is hungry. I hav'ta feed dhem now. Dhey are my good sons who listen to me.

FOUND ONE: Don leave da phone, please, please don leave me!

MAMASITA: I gotta leave: an maybe jou better leave Miami for da good of da familia. An for jou own good. Jou are guilty now an jou are no safe here.

FOUND ONE: All are guilty! None is safe!

MAMASITA: (as the lights dim on her) May our beloved Virgin Mother protect jou wherever jou go. Adios, my son.

FOUND ONE: Maybe I'm wrong, maybe I'm just wrong. An Anita tells it like it is: cause I am alone -- cause a man have nothin' between hissself an da world outside except a phone -- an no one at all is on da udder end of mines....

(THE FOUND ONE cries. Simultaneously, we hear ANITA weeping with him in her humiliation. Then, suddenly, an object is thrown through the parlor window. It explodes with a cloud of stage-filling smoke while voices shout: "Die, Fairy!"; "This is for you, you Spanish Nancy!"; "Mary Coney!"; "Burn, Pig!"; "Die, Faggot!"; etc. Nothing is visible on the smoke-bound stage. A pistol goes off. Then, as the smoke clears, we see the body of THE FOUND ONE slumped in the overstuffed; a gun falls from his hand and blood pours from his temple.

SCENE VI. The Miami street with the palm tree and phone booth. The phone rings 6 or 7 times while ANITA, smartly outfitted in a brown jacket, open-collar checkered blouse, velvet slacks, and shoulder bag (the spitting image of a bourgeois Patty Hearst), stands by and waits patiently for the ringing to stop. Finally it does: she enters the booth and seizes the receiver - voraciously.

ANITA: Hello, Shoil? What's the good word?

(A green spot hits SHOILEY, far right on the elevated area.)

SHOILEY: The word is good, Anita dear. How ya doin'?

ANITA: Great, but skip the tube talk.

SHOILEY: Then pernt one: I've defeated the Women's Equal Rights Amendment! The vote was close, somethin' to somethin', math was never my strong pernt, but Florida followed Nevada 'n Carolina 'n nothin' could be finah -- ceptin' Mack Hack's strong pernt!

ANITA: How'dja pull it off?

SHOILEY: You mean, his strong pernt? -Oh, you mean - well, Operation Wakeup, The John Berchers, Young Americans for Freedom 'n the Conservative Party coughed up a cool 37 thou -- 'nough fer me to git off 145,000 letters to the locals spellin' out clear how ERA would rob Florida of its law-makin' rights on marriage, divorce, property settlements 'n, most especially, the bringin' up of our kids.

ANITA: Then, you suggest ---

SHOILEY: Right: that's pernt two: launch yerself a letter campaign if ya wanna come out on top a them fags -- and, honey, make them first class letters so's no one kin check on how many ya send 'n axe fo' a financial breakdown as stipulated by fed'ral campy paign finance laws. Listen to Shoil 'n yo campaign will be champagne!

ANITA: Shoil, yer a doll! How kin I ever repay you?

SHOILEY: Well, Mack Hottest-Rod-in-the-South Hack says he's losin' sleep over this publishin' contract you signed fer a opus entitled, "Militant Queerdom and The Militant Kingdom." Claims his new client, gay and pro-gay, Rod McSuem, might sue 'im.

ANITA: Goes to show Mack oughtn't have two rods workin' for him.

SHOILEY: Specially when his God-given one already works like two.

ANITA: So you'd like for me to let lapse that contract? Mean a loss of more'n a \$100,000, hon....

SHOILEY: Well, I won't twist yer arm, but if you play ball with me like Alvin Darkperson do with you 'n I with Mack, I'll put you through right now to that certain party you axed me about?

ANITA: (ecstatic) Wouldja, Shoil! Oh, God, don't drag yer legs!

SHOILEY: I gotja on hold: 'n don't drag yers, yer in the big time now 'n the guy's busy. --Go ahead, Warren, she's on the line.

(Spot out on SHOILEY and up at a desk immediately left of her: on THE RIGHT HON. WARREN in judicial robes; he has a red neck.)

WARREN: (heavy Western drawl) Howdy:- Anita Orangejuice?

ANITA: (cooing) Why, if it isn't that grand old bald eagle of the Supreme Court of The United States, Chief Justice Warren Bugger hisself!

WARREN: What kin I do for you?

ANITA: Justice Bugger, I have an informational update: that as of today I've defeated the Women's Equal Rights Amendment, all by my orangejuice self, in a total of 11 states! 'N I had nothin' more to do than enlighten the public as to how all the leaders of ERA are Jew lesbians -- I mean, jist plain lesbians. I hope yer pleased.

WARREN: You've been a busy girl.

ANITA: That's right: altogether too busy to take the Carters up on that invitation to sing "The Battle Hymn of The Republic" at the White House, even though I know it's your favoritest hymn 'n my rendition yer most favoritest of anybody's.

WARREN: Yes: I'm disappointed.

ANITA: Well, I've considered all the extenuations 'n if you want me to take off time from my pressin' crusade to canary to you, you'll have to make up for that lost time.

WARREN: Shoot.

ANITA: Save me a heapa trouble if, when the Supreme Court reconvenes in October, among yer first day decisions you'd let stand the Washington State lower court rulin' that every homosexed teacher is to be charged with immorality and dismissed and the Paramus, New Jersey rulin' that gay teachers must undergo psychiatric examinations and no longer have access to their kids. You see, if they're among the decisions announced at the first sittin' of the 77-78 season, they'd have a terrific impact, Chief Justice Bugger.

WARREN: I sure hanker to hear that hymn.

ANITA: Take yer time decidin', Chief Justice, it's not a easy decision to make. I expect you'll be subject to the same ridicule I am now should ya take the side of God.

WARREN: Hmmmmmm, I sure do hanker after hearin' that there hymn exactly the way you delivers it.

ANITA: (coy) Oh, Justice, you make me feel like Salome!

WARREN: Let's hope you don't end up like her. Good bye. (pressing his phone buttons; spot up on SHOILEY)

ANITA: (out) Wonder what he meant by that?

WARREN: Miss Spellingbee, you still there?

SHOILEY: Yes, your majesty, I mean, your honor.

WARREN: Well, that orangejuice gal sure drives a hard bargain. But I guess I'll go the distance.

SHOILEY: Oh, you've made two happy women!

WARREN: (mumbling) Didn't exactly make them... yet.... --See yis at that White House concert. So long. (hanging up; the spot on him goes out)

SHOILEY: Well, kid, ya done it!

ANITA: You knew I would, you knew I would! All I needed was a direct line to the man.

SHOILEY: Ya know, sometimes you amaze even me. You naughty, naughty girl: yer one of history's dangerous women -- our very own fire-haired Maureen O'Hara!

ANITA: Listen, I've no time fer analogies. Gotta get crackin'. You'll hear from me.

SHOILEY: Everybody always does.

(The WOMEN hang up. Spot out on SHOILEY. Then the booth phone

rings 6 or 7 times while an ORANGE walks across the stage with an idiot sheet in each hand: the first one seen reads: "RIDDLE:/ WHO JAWS FOR A DIME/ IN APRIL TIME?"; and the second reads: "THE MIAMI SHARK,/ ANITA OF ARC." Exit ORANGE and when the ringing stops, ANITA picks up; a pink spot hits ALVIN DARKPERSON at a wall-phone inside a pin-up plastered lockerroom immediately left of WARREN's desk.)

- ANITA: This Alvin Darkperson, baseball star 'n manager?
- ALVIN: Y'all oughta know, y'all axed me to call in.... S'matter, sugar, need consoulin' cause some soul brother mugged ya -- right in the mug?
- ANITA: Why, Alvin, have you been drinkin'?
- ALVIN: Why, Nita, y'all knows Ah couldn't drink 'n play.
- ANITA: Alvin, I want to speak to you bout yer deflection over to the queer camp. Yer givin' baseball a bad name jist at the touchy time in our national sport's history when more'n one retired player has writ a opportunistic autobiography claimin' that major league teamwork's so tight cause 5 to 10% of each league is infiltrated with lovers.
- ALVIN: (hiccupping) Couldn't be: baseball ain't co-ed.
- ANITA: But yer traitorous deflection is lendin' credence to that hate-litracher.
- ALVIN: Ain't nobody ground mah ass over the ground counta it.
- ANITA: Well, baseball aside, the worster problem is that homos is comparin' theirselves to blacks which you is abettin': they're lobbyin' hows they're suffrin' the identical minority suffrin'. Now this couldn't be since the most worst thing about homos is that they think they're brighter than the rest of us so there is a logical confradiction in terms between their comparin' theirselves to blacks as bein' equal with them in the face of all I.Q. tests to the contrary, anthropological lineages on heredity 'n out 'n out bare facts fag-lips lyin' in their teeth, you understand?
- ALVIN: (downing a beer) Ah thinks Ah do....
- ANITA: And, Alvin, do you remember this?:-
(singing the teary Irish tune, "Little Town in the Auld County Down" - and laying it on thick:)
"And I care not for fame or renown:
Like the black sheep of old,
I'll come back to the fold... "
- ALVIN: (crying in his cups) That's awful, awful....

ANITA: What?

ALVIN: Ah says it's awful how Ah deflected over to the commy pixy pinkos. Could y'all belt that one out agin so's Ah kin come back to the billfold, Ah mean, to the team, rah-rah-rah. By the way, you Irish?

AL & ANITA: (together, singing in full teary-Irish tenor:)
 "Like the black sheep of old,
 I'll come back to the fold:
 Little team where they all loves to ream!"

ANITA: (as both hang up to the tune) God, it's so easy.

(Spot out on ALVIN. Then the phone resumes ringing while an ORANGE crosses the stage with an idiot sheet reading: "AND SO A MONTH LATER, IN MAY, GAY MAY." The ORANGE wilts as it walks and it is beginning to shrivel. ANITA reads the sheet and removes her jacket, presumably for the May weather, and drapes it over a frond of the palm tree. Exit ORANGE.)

ANITA: This here phone puzzles me: but it don't worry me no more. There's somethin' wrong with it -- as there is with all modern things 'n the so-called modern way of livin'. But so long as I've got it figured out -- and I do -- everythin' is A-1 O.K. All ya gotta do is wait fer it to stop ringin', and then you answer it.
 (the ringing gets louder and ever more urgent)
 But it has such a hollow sound to it, don't it though? Somethin' eery about it, somethin' so unearthly. Like a child cryin' in the night. Takes a lotta stamina not to run in 'n grab that receiver: 'ceptin' I know it won't do no good.
 (the ringing finally stops)
 There, that awful clarion call is o'er -- or
 I've got a block against hearin' it any more.

(ANITA tears into the booth and all but tumbles over the instrument. An orange spot hits TRUTH's Cinderella phone immediately left of the lockerroom. ANGEL is perched on a ladder above it, his wings drooping, his chin in his hands. As TRUTH sweeps forward majestically trailing her gown, he dredges up the receiver and listlessly hands it to her.)

ANITA: It's that Southern scenic turn-off, Ms. Saint Slattern! -Who's the joker picks up fer you?

TRUTH: That's for me to know and you to find out.

ANITA: Fair enough. I will. Got negative news for me?

TRUTH: We sure has. E.N. Vandenheuvel -- that Dutch govament official? -- threw a ball 'n raised 40 thou to take out a full page ad in Time Magazine sayin', "Shame, shame on you!" 'N he sent me a

transAtlantic cable praisin' how Christian I am.

- ANITA: That there's debatable. 'N the Dutch oughta keep their dubious treats to theirselves. We Yankees hold the man should pay when a couple steps out.
- TRUTH: 'N he prayed we're havin' an AmsterDAM good time.
- ANITA: Take the Dutch gayway 'n yer sure a bein' damned.
- TRUTH: Don't know about that: Church of Christ Scientist 'n Church of Christ Period both came out today -- I mean for, not as, deviants. -Don'choo love it?
- ANITA: I could live without them -- a lot longer, in fact.
- TRUTH: And The National Ecumenical Coalition as well?
- ANITA: There's no need to look so pleased with yerself!
- TRUTH: How do you know what I look like?
- ANITA: Yer right up there -- on that there dais -- with that henchman of yers with the dual identity near squattin' on yer head!
- TRUTH: Well, cream goes to the top, don't it, doll? And speakin' of whom, I'll turn the mouthpiece over to him. I've a bisque on the burner 'n the roaches will git at it if I don't afore them. Besides, the oven's goin' full blast 'n it's gittin' so warm my formal feels uncomfortable. Angel-Lou? (handing ANGEL the phone and sweeping offstage)
- ANGEL: This the Madwoman of Miami?
- ANITA: (her mind elsewhere) Ya oven's on full blast, eh?
- ANGEL: So?
- ANITA: 'N it's gittin' hot up there where yis guys is?
- ANGEL: So?
- ANITA: Nothing.... I was jist thinkin'. Listen, Angel, or Postman, or whatever yer name is, you some kind of Buggane, banshee, or brownie or somethin'? Speak up, after all, you are committed to Truth.
- ANGEL: So?
- ANITA: So where do you come from?
- ANGEL: The Island.
- ANITA: (pleasantly surprised) Oh? -- what part?

ANGEL: Coney.

(ANITA slams the phone down in a fury as the spot on ANGEL goes out and the ORANGE reappears with a new idiot sheet.)

ANITA: Fiendish elf! He'll get his gay knocks worster than any. Be the size of an ant when I finish with him! --O.K., you: do yer shtick.

(The ORANGE starts his walk; he is a bit more shrivelled.)

ORANGE: (as the phone resumes ringing) This street is called Orange Walk, Miami Beach, Florida.
(pause; out:)
All right, so that line is not so great. But remember when the Marx Brothers had a elephant walk across the stage jist so that Chico could say: "That's irrelephant"? Was almost as bad 'n it cost a helluva lot more money.
(mumbling to himself as he nears the wings)
This costume's killin' me. It's so hot inside it. Like a oven in here....

ANITA: Hey, you, didja forget the idiot sheet?

ORANGE: Oh, yes: got so involved with my one bad line.
(holding up the sheet which reads: "ORANGES GROW IN MORE THAN ONE STATE"; then exiting)

ANITA: How right you are! And this here's the big one from that other state. A virtual coast to coast hotline spannin' the country quicker than a midnight ride with the KKK!

(The ringing stops and ANITA hops to the booth and picks up. Immediately left of the Cinderella phone a multi-gel, gaudy spot hits SENATOR JOHN PRIG with an image of Grauman's Chinese Theatre projected on the drop behind him.)

PRIG: The land of Valencia oranges calling the land of Indian River oranges set on the Bermuda seashelf.

ANITA: -Oh, that's so cute! Is this California State Senator and gubernatorial hopeful, John Prig?

PRIG: Is this our delightful competition, Miss Tropicana-Minute-Maid-Snow-Crap?

ANITA: Yup. How's yer Priggish self 'n all the little Prigs?

PRIG: Busier than ever counta my candidacy.

ANITA: Kin I tell ya somethin' in strict confidence, Prig -- jist from one orange pusher to another? You stand about as much chance of becomin' gov'na in California as a kike in Cairo. Lessen

you expand.

- PRIG: (indicating huge breasts) What have you in mind? a big squeeze? I don't have your endowments.
- ANITA: Well, Senator, Jerry Brown is jist about the best loved gov'na California ever had. To defeat him you need starspangled press, somethin' as flashy as the commy-scare campaign that limelit Nixon in the late '40s. Ever consider a anti-fag platform?
- PRIG: But the ACLU?
- ANITA: Don't worry about them: they're too busy defendin' The American Nazi Party.
- PRIG: Look, Miss Sun-Kissed, I've heard of your stupi--courageous work in retirement haven, but I think you're beating a dead horse. If you'd bone up on Wall Street, you'd see how Dow Jones figures the gay-rights thrust as integral to the whole thrust of where we're headed businesswise. Gays clock in as two-fifths the mobile work force, those singles who get up at a moment's notice and go where we need them; as well as labor longer and for far less since they seldom breed. And a shortage of on-the-go cheap labor is one of our biggest headaches out here.
- ANITA: That's the most anti-American sentiment I've ever heard. I think you symbolize the disintegration of the American family unit!
- PRIG: Now hold your horses. This American family unit to which you so uninformedly refer is 7% of America! Whereas upwards of 50% domiciles in single or double unit. That is, either alone or with a playmate. So what the devil are you blathering about?
- ANITA: Aside from your blatant unAmericanism, I'm "blathering" like you about horses, jackass: cause you could be a dark horse winner if 'steada bein' forward-lockin', you'd stump on a non-futuristic platform suited to currently livin' concerned citizens. I never said you could stem the tide of history, but you can divert it fer a while 'n that's what I'm fightin' for: to slow down the disintegration of the Yankee Christian family jist long enough fer our children 'n their children to enjoy it. After that, what matter? -- probably won't even be a world existing by then considerin' how even every nigger nation in Africa already got atomic bombs stockpiled in their jungles.
- PRIG: A hopeless view of history to be sure.

ANITA: But a hard-nosed one, 'n one you could win that gov'naship by a nose ridin' on.

PRIG: Convince me.

ANITA: O.K., attack teachers first: propose a bill to fire any suspected of bein' gay. Hearsay will do -- cause how many are gonna fess up? And make sure yer bill stipulates goin' right into the classrooms to smoke out the fairies -- cause you'll accumulate no credits or kudos if ya seem fuzzy on enforcement. Ya see, Senator, California so overpays teachers, jist imagine the number lined up now waitin' for you to ferret out the fags.

PRIG: You do have a smattering of economics....

ANITA: Next, get on Hollywood's case. The public's plain stupefied with the proportion of performin' perverts -- from Navarro 'n Valentino to Brando 'n Pacino. Promise to blacklist the blackguards, every sick one of 'em.

PRIG: Then what?

ANITA: Then, mandate banning from schools 'n libraries all the books of Walt Whitman, Marcel Proust, Hans Christian Andersen, and Horatio Alger, Jr.

PRIG: Didn't know you knew the names of so many writers.

ANITA: Why, Prig, how can you say that: I'm a writer myself. "Militant Queers" will be my 7th oeuvre.

PRIG: You know, you're onto something could be big: I'm thinking practically any dark horse running on a gay-scare's already three/fourths in.

ANITA: That's right: gays are the only contemporary scapegoat: they're rushin' America's decline as they did Greece 'n Rome's. Cause who else could you point to? Say a word in public office anti blacks or spicks 'n you've committed political suicide. If only more candidates would see that.

PRIG: Miss Now-Minded, you may be giving me a million dollars worth of advice.

ANITA: Send your check to "Save Our Children" cause that's just what you'll be doin'.

PRIG: I can almost see the backdoor to Ronnie Reagan's bedroom and feel his bumpy-with-companion bed quilts. Still, I'm thinking I'll need 312,404 signatures by mid-fall to put that kind of anti-gay initiative on a '78 state-wide ballot. Off-

hand I'd say I've a 50-50 chance: but time is on my side.

ANITA: And so is God.

PRIG: She is that. O.K., idea-girl, I'll get my aids on it before they split this afternoon, but right now I must clear the line. I'm expecting a call from Fanny Fox.

ANITA: Oh.

PRIG: God bless you.

(PRIG and ANITA hang up, the spot on PRIG goes out, and the phone resumes ringing. The ORANGE, carrying an envelope, reappears wearing a wild wig, eyeglasses and a long beard.)

ANITA: Where you goin' in such a rush?

ORANGE: Over to the pig you jist won-over. I've a letter bomb to plant in his office. I may be no more'n a orange way past pickin' to you, but to my constituents I constitute what's left of the Weathermen's leanin' left of left Pasadena branch.

(The ORANGE exits. The ringing stops and ANITA picks up. A spot hits MACK singing operatically into the Cinderella phone.)

MACK: (singing to the tune of "Love Is Where You Find It")
"Gay is where you find it,
Don't be blinded:
It's everywhere!"

ANITA: (appalled) What?!

MACK: It's me, baby. Can'tja take a joke?

ANITA: Not that kind. I figgered ya fer a change of gender. Got a decision on my referendum?

MACK: Yup -- and as Billy Graham would put it -- you remember him? -- the judges have made the decision for Christ! Your referendum is all set for June 7th. On that sunny Tuesday the confused folk of Dade County will vote whether or not they want their Fey Rights Ordinance repealed.

ANITA: (ecstatic) Then they accepted the legitimacy of the 66,000 signatures I slaved to collect?

MACK: Not exactly. But only 10,000 were needed. And 10,000 checked out as legitimate. The rest were aliases, pen names, and persons in cemeteries. Who apparently stood up to be counted.

ANITA: Great, then we'll go for broke! Listen, I'm

getting off a first class letter campaign: I want the names of county parents with school-age kids -- and I want a pile as high as I'm into this -- which is up to my head.

MACK: You may be in this over yer head cause that's how high the pile of letters is I got right here threatening to kill you.

ANITA: (pause) So they kill me. So what?

MACK: Figure to die in office, eh? You really got yer hackles up, don't you?

ANITA: I've got my faith up, and I am not afraid. You think I'm the center of this whole homodrecktual mess on my own? Where would be the sense in that? But God drew a circle around me and put a fire in my heart.

TRUTH: (O.S.) It's called heartburn.
(reappearing and offering MACK a highball)
Here, dear, have some more Dutch courage.

ANITA: Is that yer better half I overhear overthere?

MACK: (downing his third highball) Yup.

ANITA: See some shrimp hangin' off her apron strings?

TRUTH: Why, Nita, you disturb me: you know I always go formal: where would I come by apron strings?

ANITA: Come buy some at my place:- I am a bonafide lady, housekeeper, and mother.

TRUTH: Then ladybug, ladybug, fly away home, yo house is on fire and yo children are burnin' up.....

ANITA: You listened to us on an extension, fruit fly?

TRUTH: (quietly, evenly) No, Anita. It is useless for me to do anythin' like that any more.

ANITA: Why? Where's your Guardian Angel? a, Angel?

TRUTH: He said he'd call you. Left me a letter earlier warnin' me that folks really would buy your baloney about God and His obligatory fire. But he said he'd call you.
(shouting up to the theatre's lighting booth)
Would you bring up the spots 'n collect the images of the various parties that phoned in at Miss Orangejuice' behest?

(Their spots tick on one by one, re-lighting SHOILEY, WARREN, ALVIN, PRIG and MACK, all in their individual sets that form

a line across the elevated area. TRUTH moves to the center of them and as she speaks the phone resumes ringing. But each ring is louder, eerier and more echoed than the last.)

TRUTH: So many have come to me askin' about the importance of gay rights legislature. They say they simply don't see the need for it. Its importance may be gauged by the great importance that all of you on this stage here attach to stoppin' it. And your urgency militates for nothin' less than the prevention of understandin'. For as each repressed group comes to understand others and their repression, so will they understand their own repression: and from that day the days of the exploiters and the enslavers will be numbered.
(the ringing begins to drown out her words)
You in the audience may never see this freedom that you fight for in your lifetime -- but as you fight for it, to that measure you are free and to that degree you understand, and the very struggle itself gives life time to you....

(The ringing covers over TRUTH's voice and all the upstage spots snap out at once, leaving ANITA alone. She wears a dark, complex expression. Her brow is furrowed, her eyes turned downward. She bites her nails worriedly and pulls her fingers through her hair. The phone's insistence is greater than ever, its rings very close together: but ANITA seems unperturbed by them now, as if they were exactly what she was expecting. She waits several moments and then lifts the ringing receiver gently and as gently clears her throat. She closes the neck of her blouse. We see a small blonde GIRL, about 13, by a bedphone at the center of the dais.)

CHILD: Mommy?

ANITA: (softly) Yes, dear?

CHILD: Mommy, I'm scared.

ANITA: There's nothin' to be afraid of, dear. Daddy's in the house and so are your brothers and sister.

CHILD: No, Mommy, nobody's here except me.And you.

ANITA: (pause) Where are we, dear?

CHILD: In our automobile. We're driving through Miami. But we stopped.

ANITA: Why, baby, what happened? What do you see?

CHILD: An accident. A bad accident. People are dead.

ANITA: You're havin' a nightmare, sweetheart, that's all. Darling musn't be afraid of nightmares.

Everyone has them. The world is a very big, scary place in which to live. Even Mommy sometimes is uncertain and frightened.

- CHILD: No, Mommy, I'm awake. Please, Mommy! I'm awake!
- ANITA: Ssssh. Then tell me, darling, what do you see?
- CHILD: Three cars. All smashed up together. Everybody is dead. Some people are lying out on the road with.... they have blood..... a little girl, her neck is broken, the bones ---
- ANITA: Honey, honey!
- CHILD: The bones from her neck are sticking up in blood and.... pieces of her skin are.... near us.
- ANITA: Cover your eyes, darling!
- CHILD: I'm doing that, Mommy, and I still see them!
- ANITA: (completely transported; to herself) So -- at last: the Words I've been listenin' for, for so long! The telephone call, THE Great Call! that I have waited for all these long, long months! (into the receiver)
I know, dearest. We can't stop ourselves from seein' God's handiwork no more than Cain could stop God from seein' his handiwork. For God is talkin' to us, terrible though the way He has chosen to do so is.
- CHILD: But how can these broken bodies be God talking?
- ANITA: Because He is showin' you and me this awesome accident in order to announce that He has spared us from it so that we can wage His war. If He did not wish us to, He would have sent us to this place a few seconds earlier and we would be these poor dead souls. Give me your hand, dear, your little hand, and let me hold it.
- CHILD: Yes, Mommy.
- ANITA: And let us thank Jesus right now for exemptin' us from being among these spread out here whom He has taken up to be with Him.
- CHILD: (pause) Mommy, if God can take care of us like this in the road, won't He also take care of us at the poles where the people are going to vote?
- ANITA: I know now, darling, that He will. God will win for us. And I know that He is here with us now answerin' all my nights of prayin' and that He is tellin' me directly how deeply and seriously He

did mean me to fight this great battle for Him. For I am His vessel. --And He will also vindicate the pain of your vision, my poor baby: because no suffering offered to Jesus is in vain.

CHILD: Yes, Mommy, I believe you.

ANITA: Now I want you to say our very own special prayer that stands in the courtyard of the wonderful house that God gave us to live in: for Jesus Christ Our Lord gave to us our mansion surrounded with palm trees that grow the fronds we spread before His entrance into our hearts; and I have met Him. And then I want you to go to bed.

CHILD: (praying) "Christ is the Head of This House.
The Unseen Host at Every Meal.
The Silent Listener to Every
Conversation."

ANITA: Good night, sweetheart. Sleep well.

CHILD: Good night, Mommy.

(ANITA pauses, staring ahead of her, and then gently replaces the receiver. She stands in perfect stillness for some time while the lights dim about her. Then she slowly moves toward the wings. Just as she is about to disappear, the phone resumes ringing. Louder and louder; desperately; humanly; terrifyingly. She stops dead in her tracks, an expression of implacable torture coming over her face. Fade out.

SCENE VII. Downstage right a stove and a telephone next to a long leather cartridge belt crammed with machine gun bullets: the Miami domicile of long haired, fiery sex-pot, MARIA FELIX, wearing an apron and juggling a frying pan and a heavy Dutch oven. Enter ANGEL as the POSTMAN slinging his bulky mailbag. He sniffs her cooking, dubiously.

ANGEL: What're you fryin' tacos like nothin' was the matter?

MARIA: Listen, midget, I haf 13 kids to feed. Dhey'll all be home from escuela any minute now, screamin' to eat. Jou got a delivery for me?

ANGEL: A very special delivery, Señora Felix: a first

class letter!

(MARIA shoves the kettle into her oven, wipes her hands on her apron, and takes the letter. ANGEL exits. MARIA opens the letter, skims it quickly, and begins shrieking with admirable volume. She dashes over to the cartridge belt and buckles it on, criss-crossing it over her luscious tropical development; uncontrollably shrieking all the while. Her phone rings. She answers it. Spot up at the far left edge of the elevated area: on a public phone booth with the Golden Gate Bridge projected on a backdrop behind it. Three mean-looking CHICANOS are standing about it; a fourth, CHICO, is inside the booth, carving on it with a switchblade.)

CHICO: Tía Maria?

MARIA: (screaming) Aaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaagh!

CHICO: That is not very coherent, Tía.

MARIA: Aaaaaaaagh! Aië, Chico, my beloved nephew, you will not belief dhis: I just got a letter right here sayin' -- O Dió! Dió! -- dhat fag teachers is all over da school, unzipperin' dheir flies in front of my niños and dhen draggin' dhem in da clothesclosets and screwin' dhem! An' it say here dhat in Cuba dhey already put all the patos in work camps a long time ago an worked dhem to dheir deaths, but here in Miami we let dhem teach our Cuban childrens and screw dhem in da toilets an gym lockerrooms an clothesclosets! Aaaaaaagh!

CHICO: Aië, Tía, we got the same trouble here. Senator Prig paid a call at Our Lady of Most Precious Blood Dripping Off The Crown Of Thorns Church last Sunday and talked to us about all the pato teachers in San Francisco.....

(Downstage left a spot comes up on ROB CUNTZ sitting at his home phone. Simultaneously, another spot hits the far right edge of the elevated area, illuminating a second public phone booth: in it is ROBERT HILLSBORO, a handsome young gardener. The light on MARIA goes out. As CHICO speaks, he and his COMPANIONS move slowly from their booth toward centerstage, switchblades in hand.)

CHICO: Hey, mirar, hijos, is that or isn't that a Pink Triangle I see over there..... A pato, pig-Pink Triangle.....

HILLSBORO: (into the phone; playing nervously with a large point-down pink triangle sewn on the left arm of his workjacket) Cuntz, you wouldn't believe it, a grown man and he still sleeps with women.

ROB: I'm telling you, Robert Hillsboro, these closet cases are dangerous.

HILLSBORO: So I told him doin' gashes no more equipped him to slap leather or lay down rubber than it equipped Dave Kopay to run touchdowns before he gave up girls. So then he said but what would his priest think if he found out ---

ROB: Oh, who the hell cares what priests think! Why are we always a problem for other people?

HILLSBORO: But you have to consider other people.

ROB: My life has been nothing but. Considering my mother, my father, my employers, the public -- it's been a life full of consideration: and it has done me in. Look, ultimately homosexuality is its own defense because there is nothing duller than a heterosexual -- believe me, Hillsboro -- nothing!

HILLSBORO: At any rate, Rob, we've been working up a San Francisco fiscal statement disclosing the amount of tax money wasted every year persecuting victimless criminals -- like guys out cruisin' Grand Street and the Park.

ROB: Good. And are you wearing your pink triangle?

HILLSBORO: Yup.

ROB: And did you tell everyone else to?

HILLSBORO: Yes: but they don't see why it's all that necessary. They said just because the Nazis forced the concentration camp Jews to wear the yellow Star of David and the gays to wear inverted pink triangles, doesn't mean they must wear th---

ROB: I told you why they must, Hillsboro: because the most dangerous gay is one who thinks he's out of the closet and isn't. Invisibility is our endorsement of our own oppression. Listen, this long distance call is costing a fortune, I gotta run: I'll get back to you with specifics on forming alliances with Reform Groups and going about working more closely with trade unions. It's in that direction that the next five years of progress lie. Call ya tomorrow.

HILLSBORO: Bye, Rob. Take care of yourself.

(ROB and HILLSBORO hang up. Light out on ROB. HILLSBORO leaves the phone booth, and then first sees the FOUR CHICANOS. He leaps from the elevated area and runs toward centerstage, but they catch up to him and, falling upon him with cries of "Here's one for Anita!" and "This one is for Anita!", stab him fifteen times. HILLSBORO sinks with his hands reaching out and his blood carpeting over the apron into the audience.

SCENE VIII. A bare stage. Enter an ORANGE with a big box.

ORANGE: Oh, as you must know, today is June 7th. Also, a lot of days thereafter. Like _____.
(citing the exact date of the performance)

(A SECOND ORANGE joins him with a similar burden in tow: a long oblong box somewhat larger than a coffin, perhaps the exact size of the familiar telephone booth. They arrange these boxes (or booths) upstage with their heads facing directly out. The heads have handles enabling them to be easily opened. Large lettering on them reads: "POLLING BOOTHS." The ORANGES exit and, as the scene progresses, reappear with more and more boxes until there is a long row of them away upstage. Then they pile a second row on top of the first. The second row is shorter than the first, i.e., it has fewer boxes, and the third is shorter still: thus, the ORANGES actually build up a pyramid-shaped tower. MACK, in his Sunday best, appears downstage holding a mike. ERIKA, wearing a matron's outfit, is with him.)

MACK: IBU-TV News in MetroMiam: June 7, 7 a.m., a warm, cloudless Tuesday here with the poles just opening. The citizens of our lush, tropical paradise should be piling in any moment now to vote, "Yes," I want the Gay Rights Ordinance repealed, or "No," I don't want it repealed. And here, arriving with the sun, is Dade County's very own Roman Catlick Archbishop, Dr. Carol Line. And, a, I guess, his flock....

(ARCHBISHOP CAROL LINE, in rich Papal robes, enters leading a FLOCK of bleating sheep. One of them is black. Wearing sheep-heads as costumes, the FLOCK articulates: "Baaaaaa.")

CAROL: Bless the morn, the sun, and thee, my son.

MACK: Same to you. Care to tell IBU-TV which way the Catlicks will swing?

CAROL: The Catlicks will "swing" the way I told them to last Sunday. From the pulpit. And I was very emphatic.

MACK: (ingenuous) And that was?

CAROL: Whad you just come outta the woods or somethin'? If they heard it once, they heard it six million times: Catlicks are excommunicated and damned to Hell if they ever do or say anything in favor of our sexual nature, pre-marital sex, sex at all, abortion, education, pleasure, joy, movies, listener-sponsored radio, dissent, individuality or creativity.

MACK: (to ERIKA) A, aid, would you lead the flock to slaughter, a, like you oughta?

(ERIKA, business-like and indifferent, takes ARCHBISHOP CAROL by the ring and leads him up to the polling booths; the SHEEP follow the leader. ERIKA pulls the handle of the first box and opens its little door. The inside of the box appears corridor-like, just large enough for a man to crawl inside on all fours. There is a faint red glow within.)

ERIKA: This way, Catlicks, watch your heads. And try not to dirty your new red gown, Carol.

(CAROL and the SHEEP, bleating all the while, each crawl inside a box and ERIKA closes them and locks their handles in place. We hear those locks very distinctly. ROB CUNTZ and TOUGHTY, both conservatively dressed, enter arm in arm.)

MACK: And here comes our first couple of the morning. Sir, your name? -Into the mike, if you will.

ROB: Rob Cuntz, on behalf of the National Gay Task Force and Miami Coalition for Human Rights.

MACK: Oh, boy, Mr. Cuntz, you must be out for blood this morning!

ROB: Au contraire. None of us is. We love Anita as much as she does us. After all, she is a great glamour queen; but for a queen a bit misguided.

MACK: Have you any last minute insights in---

ERIKA: (flat) "Last minute," I like that.

ROB: Not really. We still can't fathom, and perhaps never shall, Anita's fascination with, and fixation on, homosexuality. Unless -- and it is probable -- that she will emerge as the closet classic fag-hag of all time. When she says she loves gays, believe me, she really means it. And as no other woman before her or on so grand a scale. She intends nothing short of converting every single gay in America to straightness -- as if that and that alone was the only thing that mattered under the sun. Pretty exotic mentality, wouldn't you say?

TOUGHTY: And erotic.

MACK: Your name, honey?

TOUGHTY: Toughty Temple, Women's Equal Rights Activist and Dade County Government Executive Secretary.

MACK: Ah, yes, Ms. Toughty, I remember you now. Just didn't recall your family name -- or political position.

TOUGHTY: Well, for future reference, you needn't tax yer noodle with the latter. Besides, I wasn't free before to announce either. But I am now, seeing as how I was fired yesterday.

MACK: Oh? What for?

TOUGHTY: For lesbianism. Thanks to Miss Orangejuice..... and you. Yes, now I seem to recall you.

MACK: (nervous) -How you kids voting?

TOUGHTY: (as she and ROB display huge "NO" badges) "No," of course: we don't want Gay Rights repealed. But it saddens me to even have to vote.

MACK: How's that?

TOUGHTY: I just think this country's reached a pretty sorry pass when it's saddled with the need to define folks according to their Saturday-night inclinations. Why not categorize them by the color of their eyes as well?

MACK: Why ask me, I ain't Mendel. Please, step right this way to cast your votes.
(as ERIKA leads ROB and TOUGHTY to the boxes)
Well, there goes a distinct loss to our women's team in the next international Olympics. Too bad. Too bad. But America can't have it both ways. Pun unintentional.

(ERIKA shows ROB and TOUGHTY each into a box and locks their doors. Enter ARNOLD EDITOR with a pencil behind his ear.)

MACK: Your name, position, and vote if you will. All information to be honored with strictest confidence, heh-heh.

ARNOLD: Arnold Editor here, opinion-maker and editorial page editor of The Miami Herald, voting "Yes," repeal the G.R. Ordinance: on the grounds that it simply is not needed as I stated succinctly on the editorial page of today's edition, if you can read. -Hi, babe, busy tonight?

MACK: Assuming that such could be, as a "journalistic" observer of the American scene, care to venture an opinion that accounts for all the hysteria surrounding this ---

ARNOLD: You gotta understand that anything that has to do with sex drives people bananas and nuts in this country. "Bananas and nuts," get it?

ERIKA: (flat) It's good he'll get it.

ARNOLD: It has to do with our Puritanical root. "Root," get it? Besides, I don't want to drive gays from the benefits of all the creativity derived from the loneliness they're driven to by illegality and prejudice.

MACK: Aid, would you "drive" Arnold to a polling box. (under his breath as ERIKA leads ARNOLD away) Smart aleck.

ARNOLD: I axed you if you was busy tonight, babe.

ERIKA: (flat) I expect to be busy till the vote is tallied, Arnold Schwatzenigger. Which should be till pretty late. Press the lever in there, "press" man, and register yer vote like a good boy. Get it?

(ARNOLD crawls into a box and ERIKA locks it. Enter SAM and SELMA LIPSHITZ, a typical Miami couple. SAM wears a Harry Truman sports shirt and slacks; SELMA has sprayed hair, huge tinted sunglasses and much jewelry; New York accents:)

MACK: Ah, two long-term residents of the area. Ought to be enlightening. Your nomenclatures?

SAM: Mr. and Mrs. Lipshitz.

SELMA: Yeah, and we don't see what all this fuss is about. Why don't they jist give them people their rights? This referendum's so dumb, ain't it? They're human beings like everybody else.

MACK: But some authorities claim they're not. They say they're sick and unsuited to serve the young.

SELMA: Are these "authorities" A-ri-ans?

MACK: At least one is a brunette.

SAM: Me and my wife see the handwriting on the wall.

MACK: Um, to what are you referring?

SAM: The Bible. Nebuchadnebbish and the handwriting on the wall?

MACK: Well, we've all heard a lot of Bible talk in and around Miami these last few months: to which exact verses are you now referring?

SAM: Don't gimme voices. When you start with the homos, after that it's the Negroes, and then next it's the Jews. You follow my drift?

MACK: -Oh, I think it's time for you to vote. Thanks so much for your opinions. Poll attendant!

ERIKA: Right this way, folks, for a hot time in the old town tonight! Europe never had it so simple.

SELMA: What the heck is she talkin' about, Sam?

SAM: I'm not sure, Selma, but I think some of them Orthodox Jews should maybe oughta try to figure it out. I really think they should.

(ERIKA places the couple into a single box and locks it. She seems very pleased with herself, rubbing her hands.)

ERIKA: There, together for eternity, the two of them. Quel sentiment!

(A SEMINOLE INDIAN crosses the stage as if late for work.)

MACK: Going in to cast your die?

SEMINOLE: Wha?

MACK: I say, are you voting on the gay issue?

SEMINOLE: Don' bodder me. My people already die. Now it da gay peoples' time.

MACK: May I ask what you do for a living, that you're so unconcerned, sir?

SEMINOLE: I wrasle aligators.

MACK: And so look death in the jaws every day.

SEMINOLE: Dhas right. An today ees no diffint. 'Cept today it's dhem guys wraslin' gators. Goodbye, Merican.

MACK: (watching the SEMINOLE exit) Wrasles aligators? What kin I tell you? It's a living.

ERIKA: Hate to lose one. Even if it ain't but a peau-rouge.

MACK: Don't be a jenny ass, there's plenty more where he came from. And speakin' of which, the very next looks familiar, like a movie star or somethin'! Hi, good-lookin'! Gonna vote?

(HAIRY REAMS enters, very properly attired, accompanied by LINDA L., a luscious starlet, hanging on his arm.)

- HAIRY: Don't the lady merit a hello?
- MACK: (pointedly ignoring LINDA) Well, if it isn't Hairy Reams, star of "Grease" and "Little Mary Sunshine!" Guess you'll be voting American, fella!
- HAIRY: What does that mean?
- MACK: Well, what with yer new life and legit career, you've turned over a new leaf, haven't you, Hairy?
- HAIRY: I've turned over a new piece, I do it and get it both ways, you closet case.
- MACK: I beg your pardon?
- HAIRY: You could beg from here to eternity, baby, I wouldn't give you a turn no-how.
- MACK: I'm afraid I don't know to what you are referring. Nevertheless, Mr. Reams, care to tell our viewers how you and the "lady" are voting?
- HAIRY: I'm voting "No" on repeal. And the lady can speak for herself. She has a brain of her own, whether or not the state of Florida concedes that to women.
- MACK: Yes, but in the time-honored manner of the American way of life a wife votes same as her husband does.
- LINDA: "Wife?" Is he making a proposal for you, Hairy?
- HAIRY: I wouldn't know, but I don't accept unless you can think and talk for yourself, Linda L.
- LINDA: -I'm voting "No" on repeal and not because Hairy is. My reason is:- that what do I need to worry about competition from gays for? I never had no competition from women -- see what I mean, Mister?
- MACK: I know to what humungousness you are referring.
- LINDA: So let the gay guys get their chance. I get mine and, boy! is it fun!
- HAIRY: I accept his proposal. I'll marry you, Linda.
- ERIKA: Then right this way to the showers -- I mean, the wedding shower.
- LINDA: (to ERIKA) We gonna take a shower?
- ERIKA: Well, um, that's what we usually tell everyone. And it works, they go along quiet that way. Take

off their clothes, pile them neatly up, so it's more convenient for us afterward, and etc., etc. (mumbling the above while she shows the couple into a single box and locks it firmly) There. A real hot honeymoon as befits a ex-porno star and his maybe not so ex new wife and not so "new" wife what with the morals of people like them two.

MACK: Boy, this referendum is sure bringing the queers and bisexys outta the woodwork: actually, between both dispositions you could say they're really coming in numbers! (seeming pleased with his "neat turn of phrase") Ah, here comes someone certainly not going to vote for deviance: famed baseball star, team-owner, and manager, shrewd dealing Alvin Darkperson. If sober.

(Enter ALVIN DARKPERSON in a new-fashion baseball outfit.)

ALVIN: Some half 'n half musta designed these newstyle uniforms. Notice how tight under ya torso they is?

MACK: That shouldn't oughta worry you.

ALVIN: Why not? Think I like to feel pinched? Feel so pinched, I dunno if'n it's gonna work the next time I whip it out.

MACK: Yer whippin' out a "Yes" on repeal, ain'tcha, Al?

ALVIN: I'd like to whip it out 'n wipe them out -- the whole fashion industry. Fagstyles! Eech!

MACK: And is y'all predictin' for IBU-TV viewers?

ALVIN: Ah am predictin' a overwhelmin' victory! The normal, moral, kind-hearted jist down-home folk of the South will bring in a "Yes! repeal dhat damn ordinance!" Ah am predictin' a win!

ERIKA: (rubbing her hands) Ah, a nigger!

MACK: And the South has always made room for dark persons, hasn't it, Alvin, unlike these here uniforms?

ERIKA: Yes, we have plenty of room for them. These booths'll hold more darkies than McDonald's!

ALVIN: Well, Ah wouldn't say that the South has alwa---

MACK: But that's another subject, isn't it, Alvin?

ALVIN: Them pollin' booths sure looks strange.... Like they was King Tut's tomb or somethin'....

ERIKA: Yeah, some half 'n half musta designed them.

ALVIN: (very hesitant; staring) ...Some half 'n half musta designed them.

ERIKA: But you'll fit into them real well, just like you do that new-fangled baseball uniform which, not to press a point, some half 'n half also designed.

ALVIN: Guess you got a point there, rookie. Damned if Ah kin see where it is.

ERIKA: Right this way. Granted it's a bit tight in certain places same as your outfit, but you can hold yourself in, can't you?

ALVIN: Long as there ain't no Marilyn Monroe around Ah guess Ah kin.

ERIKA: Then rest assured.And rest in peace, or with your piece.... or whatever.....

(ALVIN is placed into a red-glowing box. Enter a very ordinary CITIZEN in bathing attire, carrying water wings.)

MACK: Mornin', Mr. Weissmuller. Have you the time f---

CITIZEN: Look, if it's about this gay rights business, I don't have the time. It's all I been hearin' about for the last half year.

MACK: And you're not caught up in the excitement of it all? After all, this is the dull '70s:- what else is goin' on?

CITIZEN: What excitement? I don't see why it's important. Jist cause a couple of homos wanna work, rent pre-fabs or nock off some nookie in motels, who cares?

MACK: Then you don't see this as a larger issue?

CITIZEN: (putting on the wings) You kiddin'? They're talkin' about it like it was Nazi Germany or somethin'. People must be bored. Don't they got better things to do than make such irresponsible comparisons in order to read the papers?

MACK: Then you won't be voting today?

CITIZEN: I'm goin' swimmin'. It's too hot to stand inside a pollin' booth.

MACK: (watching the CITIZEN exit) Hate to see anything with wings slip the snare, I mean, not participate in democracy. Looks like a grown-old version of my wife's whipping boy. Same insouciance.

(Enter FATHER JOHN THE BAPTIST, taken aback by the pyramid.)

JOHN: -Looks like the Tower of Betty Grable! Oughta christen it, decadent structure like that.

MACK: Father John the Baptist Preacher! How ya votin'?

JOHN: That's my business.

MACK: How do you mean? I thought the church was of a single mind on this issue.

JOHN: The church ain't got a mind ---

ERIKA: Very aptly put.

JOHN: --- that's singular on any issue be it whatsoever. This here sodomites issue, and it is the only issue sodomites ever had, has split the church in two same as twins.

MACK: So you feel that sodomites can not only have issue, but that they would be twins? Identical twins?

JOHN: Naturally. Because they is persons of the same identical sex that is havin' them.

MACK: I see.

ERIKA: I don't.

MACK: And you don't feel disposed to disclose to the public therefore which way you're voting?

JOHN: Correct. I am indisposed to go public either way.

ERIKA: How very like the church.

JOHN: (hard) Whad jou say?

ERIKA: How very much I like the church.

JOHN: Who is this harridan?

MACK: Erika von Strongheinie.

JOHN: Got a strong heinie, huh? Kin take 12 inches?

ERIKA: (annoyed) I thought you was half deaf?

JOHN: That's right, I am: the other half hears real well.

MACK: I hear some enthusiastic raucousness backstage: like a Central American revolution or anniversary.

MARIA: (O.S.) Storm dee pollin' place! Aaagh! Cunyo tu madre, la mas grande poota del Habana, Cubaaaaagh!

- JOHN: That is a raw cuss, if ever one was in Esperanto!
- (Led by MARIA FELIX with her cartridge belt criss-crossed over her bosom, a MOB of LATINOS, their clothes half ripped off, bombards the stage, clawing to get at the polling boxes.)
- MARIA: Keel all da soldatos blockin' off da pollin' booths! Shoot dhem down! Machine-gun everyone!
- MACK: (nearly torn apart) Wait a minute, wait a -- God! What is all this unbridled emotion?
- MARIA: We haf beeg hearts, we are eemotional peoples, jou pale-faced-laid-back-tight-ass-type WASP!! (to FATHER JOHN, respectfully:) Buenos, padre, com'está?
- JOHN: (trampled under foot) I'll be still functional, if you pick what's left of me up off the floor.
- MARIA: Jou dhere, peek up da padre! Estop estandin' on hees frock, will jou? Jou gettin' footprints all over eet! --Kiss hees cross for penitence!
- MACK: But what's all the hysteria for? If you form a line you'll each get a chance to cast your ---
- MARIA: (producing the letter) We is hysteria for berry bueno reason!:- deed jou see dhis letter sen' out first class to every Spany in da city? Deed jou, my frien'?
- MACK: (perusing the letter) Well, um, I think, well, yes, señorita, it's not totally unfamiliar to ---
- MARIA: Look what eet say:- dhat fags is allowed for teachin' in da schools an formin' sex-rings to suck off an fook off my childrens an lendin' dhem out for prostitute aroun' da whole estate when dhey says dhere only on school-outin's! Leetle six, seven year olds! O Dió!! Dió! Dió! Dió!
- JOHN: Strongly worded, very strongly worded.
- ERIKA: And very aptly put.
- MARIA: Storm da polls! Keel da soldatos! Vote, "Si! Si! Si! Die! Die! Die!" an get da maricones da hell out of Miami an Cuba an Mehjeeco an Merica!!
- ERIKA: (as the MOB tears toward the boxes) Take the padre with you, please.
- MARIA: Take da padre! Vamanos, niños! Vamanos, hechos del Diablo, hechos da la revolucionária!!!!
- (The MOB barrages the boxes and pulls them open; then each

scrambles into a box of his own accord and pulls its door closed from inside; MARIA shoves FATHER JOHN in one and locks it before jumping in herself. MACK and ERIKA are left a bit disconcerted by the action. They adjust their clothes.)

ERIKA: Tough crowd, huh?

MACK: I call it real up-front participation in the democratic process. -And now comes she whom you've all been waiting for:- the girl with the Good Housekeeping Seal of Approval, that fabulous born-again Baptist, America's Singing Beauty, Miss Anita Orangejuice! And her escort for the evening, Mr. H. Tomson Coke, capitalist.

(Conversing confidently, ANITA strolls on on the arm of H. TOMSON COKE, a human-size Coca Cola Bottle puffing a smelly cigar and occasionally burping up its bottle-cap. ANITA is dazzling: with her full figure, statuesque as a Juno, in a form-fitting gown whose sequins, catching the light, blink thousands of times at the audience, her breasts large and lifted, her hips ample and tight, and her auburn hair in a cast of apple-orange and royal-purple rays. In fact, she resembles nothing so much as a rejuvenated Jane Russell, shortly to display all the considered theatricality and poise that go with being an accepted love-symbol and star.)

ANITA: So you can be quite sure, Mr. Coke, that boycotting the products I advertise and blacklisting me via Actors Equity and the Screen Actors Guild legally establishes religious persecution.

COKE: I'm not quite sure: isn't our Constitution very plain about the separation of church and state?

ANITA: It never sanctioned a separation of God and country.

COKE: But wasn't it a deistic God the constitution had in mind?

ANITA: (puzzled) What?

COKE: How edifying. And speaking of edifying, this edifice here is an erection that needs no apology. It is the Eye-full Tower of our times!

ANITA: So pleased you approve of how I invest your funds, Mr. H. Tomson Coke.

MACK: -Mr. H. Tomson Coke himself! Tell me, Mr. Coke, how you rate a date with Miss Orangejuice, America's most admired female public figure?

COKE: Well, son, money talks. And Miss Orangejuice is an employee of mine.

MACK: How's that?

COKE: Minute Maid is owned by Coke.

MACK: So, too, I understand, is Carter.

COKE: We hope so. Coke was the chief contributor to his campaigns -- both for governor and president.

MACK: Hence, Chip, Sister Lillian, and wife Rosalyn could all come out against Anita, but the Big Man himself, no way.

COKE: Yer real quick, ain'tcha, sonny?

ANITA: Lemme have the mike, Mack.

(ANITA takes the mike and moves toward centerstage center, making those little adjustments that entertainers often do as they prepare for a number: she wets her lips, rolls her bare shoulders and snuggles securely into her spike-heel cutaways. Meantime, COKE draws MACK aside, out of earshot of ANITA:)

COKE: You the President of "Save Our Children Ink," Mack?

MACK: Yer real quick yerself.

COKE: Well, you was president: it don't exist.

MACK: Howda ya mean?

COKE: "Save The Children Charity Fund" took a 14 thou drop in contributions last month due to the similarity in names, slapped "Save Our Children Ink" with a lawsuit and won their case dick down at the first hearin'. Yer outta business, Mack.

MACK: Astounding! Well, that was merely a sideline. Most of my income's outta Anita. I'm her agent.

COKE: And that's exactly what I'd like a word with you about. You aware the lady's being blacklisted by all 3 of her unions -- Music Composers of America, Stage Actors Equity and Screen Actors Guild?

MACK: Is she? Astounding!

COKE: Won't be seein' her puss again on TV or the stage fer a long time, if ever. Won't be seein' her at the Orange Bowl this year either. NBC's jist dumped her from their New Years Day jubilee -- first time in 9 New Years she won't be hostin' the big event. Lotta money for a lady to lose. Anita's a loser, Mack.

MACK: But you don't expect her to lose this referendum, do ya?

- COKE: Hell, no! Not by a long shot a jism. Jist wait till the balance of voters show up here and there won't be a beach or bar it's safe for gays to show off their summerwear in this season.
- MACK: So what do you mean Anita's a loser?
- COKE: But that's jist what I'm gettin' at. Lotta fast cash in gay summerwear, gay winterwear, gay bars and bathhouses, moviehouses, motels, hotels, boat cruises, and discos. Charge the highest prices anywhere in the country where they hangout.
- MACK: But I thought you was backin' Anita?
- COKE: Sure: backin' her to lose. There's wherein lies the big payoff. We figgered her fer rallyin' the homoinffectuals to finally win their capitalistic right to spend money. They constitute 10% of the home market -- a 10% with a staggeringly high discretionary buying power.
- MACK: Yer tryin' to say yid kinda prefer fer me to drop Anita as a client?
- COKE: And take up witcher alienated wife again. Yer better off that way any way cause it ain't fascism put Coke at the controls. And since homophobes are the Nazis of our time and MetroMiam the Berlin of the '70s, when you recall how Hitler's pushin' up daisies now, you'll realize that we don't intend to be his Himmler, pushin' up pansies in the plot that's closest to him. So Anita's nights are numbered.
- MACK: What a swishedstika! Damn!! -By the way, H. Tomson Coke, what's the "H" stand for?
- COKE: Haldeman. His contacts put us in contact with Senator Prig and all them California churches that pitched so much cash into Anita's campaign.
- MACK: Oh. --Why, here comes Truth!

(TRUTH appears in agitated disarray, her long hair undone.)

- TRUTH: Oh Mack! the whole town's a battle zone! They've firebombed a gay assembly hall and Latinos are beatin' up gays on the back streets 'n shavin' their heads bald -- a custom that sociologists hitherto held the Spanish to've outgrown. And a release to my office from Frisco discloses that counta the murder of Robert Hillsboro, a 5 million dollar law suit's out on Anita and "Save Our Children Ink" for crossin' state lines with the intention of causin' a riot 'n reckless endangerment to life and property!

MACK: I find Anita's goals inconsistent with those of the performin' arts. I'm severin' all ties with her. Truth, why don't you 'n I split town fer our second honeymoon?

TRUTH: (nearly bolted over) How sudden of you!

MACK: Well, H., we two are off. But listen, jist one favor, will ya? Let's not tell Anita tonight 'n sperl her fun? Be a good egg fer once, will ya, H.? Let this be her moment in the moonlight?

COKE: Sure: after all, I'm a gentleman, ain't I? 'N a real gentleman would never sperl a lady's fun.

(The play now shifts to ANITA. Every spot narrows in. MACK, TRUTH, ERIKA and COKE turn to face her, furnishing stage lines shot in her direction. Then real lines suddenly appear on the floor and all converge at a single novasight:- ANITA.)

ANITA: I am claiming victory tonight in The Name of God! We have won by an unbelievable 69 to 31% margin! 69! 69! 69! God is vindicated! Vindicated by the Catlicks, Baptists, Jews, Blacks and Spaniards of blessed Dade County! -As I speak, sing my very most favorite hymn, "Victory in Jesus!" for I have made heard the warnings I so foolishly feared decadence had deafened you to. Yet it did not, for you are the Army of Saints amassing for battle against the homosexuals! And maybe some among you won't ever receive personal glory here on earth as I have, but I know that God has prepared a very tremendous glory for you in Heaven -- for if God had God-forbid condoned homosexuality, He should surely have placed Adam and Bruce in the Garden of Eden! And did He do that? Did He? No! He put Adam and Eva Brawn there who was not brawny as implies her name but retiring and feminine as I! So that, retiring, I received seed properly and in 1969 -- 69! 69! -- gave birth to twins as she, as Cain and Able, who arrived prematurely, two whole months prematurely, and nearly died. Yet, by a miracle of Christ, they survived. So how then could I allow those little ones, twins delivered by the Awful Almighty, to be helplessly exposed to homosexuals?! Were they through the Grace of the All-pervading Goodness twice-delivered in order for me to then deliver them into the outstretched, lasciviously-eager arms of the gays? Oh, no! And I repeat, OH, NO! -So lift up your voices in verses! -But remember what I say: I do not hate homosexuals: I love them. I hate the sin of homosexuality!!

(pausing to sing along and receive her applause)
And now, here, today, out of my love for you, I am launching a national "Revive America Movement" to redeem our nation from the moral decay and plagues

it has fallen to -- for I am going national! I am going national! there shall be no stopping me! Sing! Sing! --Oh, yes, to be sure, some liberal outlets, radical vomitoriums, have claimed my campaign was waged in a climate of hysteria that more befits the 17th than the 20th Century:-- yet 'twas commanded of us by Leviticus that we rid our country once and forever of that HUMAN GARBAGE that calls itself "Gay" -- yes, it was thus once, twice, and thrice demanded of us! --- Aid! Aid! --- turn on the ovens!!

(ERIKA throws a switch and a red glow grows over the theatre. Gradually, it becomes a flickering of strobes that transforms the house into an inferno, reddest around the boxes.)

ANITA: The hair-raising horror of child seductions is cindering before you! It smells up sweet to the altar of God Who is well pleased with His Right Hand Woman! I am preparing a "how to" pamphlet to be sent to every city in our union. It tells how to tell a gay and get him fired and driven out from the Holy Walls and then put to the fire if he will not repent and alter his ways for I am the Way, I shall show the homosexual the Way, I shall change him into heterosexuality and the father he should be, all this I swear I will do! Our Archbishop drafted a statement of this I promise you for me to sign before you and to have you hereinafter hold me accountable for lest I die the death! On my Bible I swear it!
(producing a parchment and quill and dancing a jig as she signs and then throws both parchment and quill out into the audience)
And I dance a jig before you -- see me, see me! as I sign this covenant with you and the Lord! And I need not ask if you want me to sign it -- for I know how you crusaders will answer, with what word you normal, moral majority will reply: and that single word is:--- Enough!.... Enough!
.... ENOUGH!!
(pausing to accept the thunderous applause; but it continues long beyond all expectation, the very length finally moving her to tears)
Dear Children of God, I can not go on in the face of such overwhelming love and goodness. Tears rob me of this chance to express my profound gratitude. And, so, instead, I shall close my victory speech by reading to you from the Living Bible the passages from 1 Corinthians 6 that so aptly anagram the banner of our Holy Crusade:

(ANITA holds out a Bible and reads from It with her hot tears streaming over her cheeks. The last of the ORANGES are herded on stage and thrust into the boxes. ANGEL becomes visible, squatting atop the pyramid of boxes with his broken wings drooping behind him and his face hidden in his fingers. Then he stands and removes his wings and garments, revealing himself

to be -- and to have always been -- a 13 year old GIRL:-
ANITA's CHILD.)

ANITA: "Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the Kingdom of God? Do not be deceived; neither the immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor robbers will inherit the Kingdom of God. And such were some of you. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God!"

(the crackling of the ovens, competing with her rising voice, make it difficult to hear her)
Did you all hear that? -He extends salvation to to the homosexuals through the sacrifice of His crucifixion which washes them and leads them penitnant through His blood into His Kingdom!

Listen to the damnation of His doing otherwise:-

"Do you not know that he who joins himself to a prostitute becomes one body with her? But he who is united to the Lord becomes one spirit with Him. Shun immorality. Every other sin which a man commits is outside the body; but the immoral man sins against his own body. Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, which you have from God? You are not your own; you were bought with a price!"

O! hot is the fire in the ovens of Hell, which ovens cinder the sins of the gays forever!....
Burn! Babylon! Burn! I give you to God!!!

(The inferno peaks at a flickering and crackling crescendo and then goes suddenly out. The CHILD and the pyramid of boxes have disappeared, been consumed in the conflagration. In their place, high atop the backdrop, standing solitary and still, is the telephone booth. It begins to ring: its plaintive, urgent, unending cry. Far downstage, ANITA is left shivering and alone. She turns and stares upward at the telephone booth. And the booth and ANITA, at greatest distance from each other, is the final image.)

ANITA: Who is calling?

" VINYL VISITS AN FM STATION "

a play in one act by Ronald Tavel

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characters:

HANOI HANNA
G.I. JOSEPH
VICTOR
SCUME
MR. PUBLIC
CUTTER
SLICER
SAINT BARBARA
MEMBER

" VINYL VISITS AN FM STATION "

(Dark stage; silence. Then a harsh overhead illuminates two figures placed downstage center: HANNA, a very tall, long legged and beautiful girl dressed in an all black-leather "Hong Kong traffic-stopper," is standing perfectly still, her face expressionless, holding a radio mike. A foot or two behind and to the right of her, seated in a plain chair, is G.I. JOSEPH, dressed in jungle fatigues. His head is thrown back and, as HANNA speaks, he moves it slowly forward, showing a face lined with the death-limit of exhaustion, empty, gray, emotionless, drained of all ability to feel, see, or react. Simultaneous with the end of HANNA's speech, G.I.'s head falls powerless on his heaving chest.)

HANNA: Harbor in my heart, exhausted soldier boy, you wretched refuse on our over-populated shore, Hanna has sympathetic charms, she is a licensed masseuse let to a parlor-house by her parents at age eight, and knows how to stretch the knuckles in your gun guarding hand, let down your guard, she knows how to touch your sole so your toes uncurl and run her tapering middle nail from your knotted groin to your five o'clock neck. Bend, bend with the Orient, the river of Lao Tzu bending east northeast in its untroubled run up the range of the Way, bend, boy, with the oriental wisteria shrub, whispering in your weekend ear the weekends of your youth will run out here. The weekends of your middle mind, the weekends of your age age in the wood of the rice wines of the East: you'll never go home, home now is here, you complex economic extension of what's the matter in the America of your mother's moneyed marriage, your sister's honeyless proposal, your mother's milkless dugs. There are many ways, but the Way is unwayed, there are many names but the name is not named. The core attends in the culture for as long as it takes to tend the culture of the pearl of the seeker of the core. For this seeker is unclouded by longing and the man without mist in his mind takes a long life to move, for he sees all the ways and every different route is open to him; but the man who is mastered by his desire is accessible to the surface and the surface touches his skin in each turn that handles his heart. Harbor in my heart, exhausted soldier boy, you have no home that you remember now and your heart is in the dark chamber of the imaginary daemons.

There are many ways, but the Way is AWOL, A.W.O.L., A Way Of Love, A Will Of Life, A Walk Of Leaving, there are many names but the name is Hanoi Hanna. Hanna you have, who else have you who's sympathetic, too? Slip, slip away, mere slip on the hybrid wisteria shrub, dark property of the oriental ever, come, come, I have hair down to here, dark hair have I to here and nowhere else. Soft my little hands, as momentary as the rice field's puddle's patter after it's sown in the spring. I know you'll come away, away from the base debases you. Hanna waits. Your black Saint Barbara, slashed and bleeding, bless you in the desertion to life that you will endeavor. Renunciate. No river within you can run up the mountain of the Way and its Power, must race self-righteously downward grabbing at coin and matter, mere mother matter, unless you renunciate. Renunciate. You must renunciate!

(There is a long moment of silence. The two figures curiously resemble Egyptian statuary: HANNA seems like a stone Isis, G.I. like the familiar seated Pharaoh. Then the harsh overhead dims out. The stage remains entirely black and silent for a full minute and a half.

Suddenly, cruel, third-degree spots come up on the set: Stage right holds an elaborate steel structure, approximately 6 foot square. Its top is an uncovered mattress and, 3 feet under that, is a horizontal platform. The sides of the structure are variously equipped to restrained torture victims. A fireman's axe is bound by a leather cord to one of the front beams. A ladder runs up to the mattress. There is a parrot stand with circle upstage center and upstage left is a 4 foot square estrade concealed now by the presence before it of a standing torture rack: SCUM, a heavy fellow, is chained to this rack with arms and legs outstretched, clothes torn, etc. MR. PUBLIC, a long hair shadow, is reclining beneath the parrot stand, reading a large book, eating an apple, and sniffing a bar of naphtha soap. CUTTER and SLICER, twin grotesques in S-M regalia, motorcycle helmets, etc., are seated silently by or on the estrade. VICTOR, a handsome, soft-eyed stud in peacock-elaborate Hell's Angels finery, is lying on the mattress, his allotted roost. G.I.'s chair is now at the right side of the steel structure. He sits in it, immobile, blankly staring at the audience. Downstage off-center is a table with two chairs. On the table is a microphone, a carton of cigarettes, a package of tacks, a red bulb. A piano is situated at extreme stage left. Chains, whips, candles, etc., decorate everything. The whole impression is one of extreme congestion as in an S-M clubhouse built into a small garage. As the lights go up, HANNA, astride the reclining MR. PUBLIC, is whipping SCUM who groans with delight:)

SCUM: Aaaaaah! Give her room! give her room to work!

PUBLIC: Whadda ya mean give her room? You're the one that takes up half the space in this club.

VICTOR: She needs a whip twice that length just to circle yer girth.

PUBLIC: Put a girdle on him, Hanna, 'n ya might not have to get a longer whip.

SCUM: Owwww! You slim jims are jist jealous a all the area I got to enjoy myself with.

VICTOR: (now midway on the ladder, reclining against it, filing his nails) I'm jist jealous that ya kin still enjoy yerself.

HANNA: (turning on VICTOR and whipping him) Why be jealous -- try some yourself!

SCUM: He's too callous to cut through to, Hanna.

PUBLIC: It's hard to find the artery into a guy who got calluses on his heart.

VICTOR: (taking the blows) Have a heart, Hanna, I don't go in for scourging!

SCUM: Go down for it, Victor, on your knees. The mental set's better that way.

PUBLIC: (as VICTOR is beaten to the floor) 'N ya kin look for yer lost way on the floor that way, too.

VICTOR: (on eye-level with PUBLIC) Like you, for instance?

PUBLIC: I try; I read.

SCUM: While I go to seed.

PUBLIC: I'm searching for the true creed.

SCUM: All I want is to bleed. Yet every woman bestows

PUBLIC: her blows

SCUM: on just the Jim who can't appreciate it.

VICTOR: I hope you're getting something outta this, Hanna.

HANNA: It's to get something outta you, Victor -- and get this play started.

VICTOR: Well, stop whipping me for a minute, will ya, and I'll get it started.

SCUM: How stout hearted of you, Victor. Them guys half asleep in the first two rows'll be forever in your debt.

VICTOR: (as HANNA drops the whip) I'll collect that debt

'n pay up my Blue Cross first thing after the show.

- HANNA: (going to the table, wiping blood spots from her outfit with a roll of Scott's tissue) Well, we're waiting.
- VICTOR: Don'tcha wanna wash up first?
- PUBLIC: (sniffing the naphtha) Soap's busy. She'll have to get in line.
- SCUM: That's just fine. While you peacocks prime I'm left hung like a horse with his mare jutting out from under during rutting time.
- HANNA: I like that image.
- SCUM: Too bad: it's never used again.
- PUBLIC: Yeah, there's no running imagery in this one-acter.
- SCUM: There's just running off at the mouth.
- PUBLIC: Or running off with oneself.
- SCUM: (examining his chains) No, I don't think there's that either.
- VICTOR: (standing, approaching HANNA) Well, to start things off, I'd venture to say you're an ideal, Hanna, you're some facet of man's ideal.
- SCUM: Very venturesome of you.
- PUBLIC: But boring.
- VICTOR: And you are different.
- HANNA: I don't claim or want to be. I'm just a simple girl much like any other. Got simple tastes, simpler needs. I'm wise ya might say, very wise, but never different.
- VICTOR: But you're still an American ideal.
- HANNA: I don't claim to be that either -- more exactly, that's exactly what I don't need to be. I need ---
- VICTOR: But the way you keep up the appearance. How fresh and summer-stocky you look after a day's work. Whatever you do somehow agrees with you. The club all looks bushed after they finish work.
- PUBLIC: Or looks for bush after they finish work.
- VICTOR: But you look more beautiful then than ever.
- HANNA: There's a profundity somewhere in there. Guess I'll

have to wait till the denouement to find out what it is. However, I haven't finished up completely.

- SCUM: That's what I've been tryin' to tell you. There's still another nail needs to be driven.
- HANNA: So make like you're Luther, will ya, Victor?
- VICTOR: (sizing up SCUM) Man, such a mess!
- SCUM: And you're gorgeous?
- HANNA: Soon as you post him, wanna blast off with me, Victor?
- VICTOR: I aim at the moon, every day.
- SCUM: And stars fall over Alabama that night.
- HANNA: Come, quick, see if you can't place one peg right.
- PUBLIC: Peg leg.
- HANNA: Here's the hammer. Hanna's hammer.
- VICTOR: This is gonna hurt me more than you you insatiable low class maso.
(driving a nail into SCUM's right foot)
Got a real ghetto mentality, Scum. No sense of sublimation, everything's gotta be black and white. Poor Scum.
- SCUM: I like to have things spelled out for me, too. Can you spell, Victor?
- VICTOR: S.C.U.M. - Sado Come Uppity Maso. And there ya go. -How's that, mentors?
- SCUM: (bored) Resplendent. Like the first kiss of love.
- HANNA: Perfect analogy.
- SCUM: Meaning a painful try.
- HANNA: Yes, that's what strikes me about you, Victim I mean Victor, everything you aim at, each nail you're driven to, is such a painful try.
- VICTOR: That's cause you're my muse.
- HANNA: Really!
- VICTOR: My mentor and muse. Two ideals in one body - that can still keep its shape.
- SCUM: Sounds like a bargain.
- VICTOR: I believe so. Where do you want him?

HANNA: Oh, put him under the bed for the weekend. Mr. Public will be glad to assist, be of public assistance or something.

PUBLIC: Medicare would be more to the point.

VICTOR: (to PUBLIC) Careful of the points.

(HANNA snaps her fingers, cracks her whip, and PUBLIC rises reluctantly and he and VICTOR lift up SCUM's torture rack and carry it over to the steel structure.)

SCUM: You drop your load and there's a buck in it for both of you. Ya can spend it on bandaides.

HANNA: Mr. Public can spend in yer mouth.

VICTOR: And I in I mean on you.

SCUM: Such repartee.

(VICTOR and PUBLIC place SCUM's torture rack on the shelf under the mattress. PUBLIC sits on the immobile G.I.'s lap, opens his hardback book and continues reading it. G.I. reads over his shoulder. HANNA mounts the ladder during this.)

VICTOR: (to SCUM) Lemme know if ya want a glass of vinegar or anything. Long as I don't have to rise to the occasion in the middle of the night.

HANNA: Oh, I don't know; sometimes I like it when I'm half asleep.

PUBLIC: (to G.I.) You read over it and I'll give you the cold shoulder.

SCUM: Well, he can always read between yer wrinkles, ya don't wanna open up yer as---

HANNA: (on the mattress) I'll open up, you studs too limited in your Kama Sutra to open up new areas. At least you, Victor, try, so Hanna's stuck-on her simple tastes.

SCUM: Impaling by prick is so passé: who really still feels it? -Hey, where's he going?

HANNA: (calling) It's five o'clock, Victor, I'm off work.

PUBLIC: Or off to work. She plays "switch."

SCUM: How vulvar.

PUBLIC: (amused) Revolver. You can revolve her

SCUM: on yer index toe.

PUBLIC: Towing the asiline it's called.

SCUM: No, no, I can't think quick enough to top that.

PUBLIC: So you'll shut up for second?

SCUM: Yeah.

HANNA: (calling to VICTOR who is standing indecisively by the table, eyeing a record player) Help me off ---

PUBLIC: Help her to get off.

HANNA: with my boots, will ya, baby?

VICTOR: Baby like to listen while she loves?...
(turning quickly to the audience)
Listen, I may not be the educated type, I'm only half informed and this script only half informs on me, I only half understand half the things that happen around here, but I have heard the music, an echo on a plain in a closed place, and I am willing to close my eyes if it's sweet. Close them the same as everyone else.

HANNA: (referring to the wailing of the low background music) If you put on a record that oriental shit'll stop. Who could keep rhythm to that?

PUBLIC: I feel some kinda rhythm myself, wonder what it is....

VICTOR: (uncertain, but obeying HANNA) Yeah, that background tape sorta gives ya a headache, don't it? I don't mean listening to it, I mean trying to figure it out. Music shouldn't make matters more troublesome. Specially gook stuff.

HANNA: It's chinxs, not gook.

PUBLIC: Like the food?

SCUM: Right, but without the M.S.G.

HANNA: (to SCUM) You broke your fast, not with food but with fool falderal.

SCUM: (shrugging) I jist faldered ya all.

PUBLIC: (to the audience) Don't sweat it, folks, that'll probably be the worst.

SCUM: Till your next line.

(VICTOR puts Turn, Turn, Turn on the record player and the Chinese wail immediately aborts. He rushes up the ladder, flounces on top of HANNA, and both go at furious fakery like tomorrow was moritorium on it. PUBLIC gets kicked in the head.)

VICTOR: (singing along, but with blatant vindictiveness)

To every fling, twin, twin, twin,
There is a treason, twin, twin, twin,

- HANNA: (singing) And a crime to every purpose under Heaven.
- PUBLIC: (singing) A crime to be true, a crime to lie,
(referring graphically to his long hair)
A crime to grow, a crime to keep,
- SCUM: (singing) A crime to will, a crime to feel,
(peeking up) A crime to look, a crime to peek.
- VICTOR: (singing) To every king, twin, twin, twin,
There comes a treason, twin, twin, twin,
- HANNA: (singing) And a slime in every purpose under Heaven.
- VICTOR: (singing) A crime to crack up, a crime in sanity!
- SCUM: (singing graphically) A crime to plough, a crime
to weed!
- HANNA: (singing) A crime to blast away stoned!
- PUBLIC: (singing) A crime to get together sober!
- ALL FOUR: (singing) For every wing, twin, twin, twin,
There is a reason, twin, twin, twin,
And an "I'm" to every purpose under Heaven!
- VICTOR: And you thought the Penta costal Church was the
only religion with a beat!
- PUBLIC: (still heaved on the earlier rhythm) No... but I
wouldn't say every beat had to do with a church....
- SCUM: I always lived on the top floor. I never liked
people living over me.
- HANNA: An exemplary masochist.
- PUBLIC: Just a fatted calf.
- SCUM: Your better half, Mr. Public, your better half.
What time is it?
- VICTOR: Where you going?
- SCUM: I like to know the time - you mind?
- PUBLIC: (getting kicked in the head on his upbeat) I'd
appreciate knowing the time, too, when you quit that
is. It's like burning your candle at both ends.
- HANNA: (edifying VICTOR) It's like some kinda marathon for
stop-watch Scum. He's going to try to outdo his record.
Pity you ain't going for trying to outdo this record.
- VICTOR: (picking up pace) A connosewer can arrive in low.

HANNA: I know: but I ain't seen no speed limits posted.

SCUM: Hey, how's about hitting the keys a little lighter? You're gonna knock out my eye with one of them springs! My good eye, too!

VICTOR: And make the bad one jealous.

HANNA: (singing to Love Me Or Leave Me) America!:-
Love it or leave it,
But don't try to deceive it...

SCUM: I don't feel a thing.

HANNA: Neither do I.

SCUM: What's that supposed to make you?

HANNA: It doesn't make me. But at least I'm not complaining.

VICTOR: (insightfully, to HANNA) That's your tragic flaw.

PUBLIC: This page is a bore.

(VICTOR's attention turns to PUBLIC, coming to focus with incredulity on his non-voyeurism. He stops screwing.)

VICTOR: Hey, whatcher doing, Mr. Public?

PUBLIC: Reading. What does it look like?

VICTOR: That's what it looks like.

(Long pause. PUBLIC continues reading; G.I. continues as well.)

VICTOR: I don't like it.

PUBLIC: What?

VICTOR: You reading.

PUBLIC: Well, that's how the cookie grumbles.

SCUM: And stumbles.

VICTOR: Or tumbles, baby!! I said I don't like it.

PUBLIC: Why? - because you can't read?

VICTOR: That's right, dummy.

PUBLIC: If that's right, I ain't no dummy. Besides, if I can read I'm no dummy and if you can't read, you're the dummy.

VICTOR: (long pause) I can read.

PUBLIC: (long pause) Then why don't ya?

VICTOR: (long pause) Cause I don't wanna.

PUBLIC: What do you wanna do?

HANNA: Yeah, what do you want to do?

SCUM: What, pray tell! what?

VICTOR: This!

(VICTOR scrambles down the ladder. PUBLIC gets up and darts across the stage toward wing left, but VICTOR reaches him, grabs the book out of his hands, and tosses it backwards with a vicious thrust: it lands in G.I.'s lap: G.I. opens it and continues reading. Everyone else watches VICTOR and PUBLIC stand at bay. The tension mounts; VICTOR is a shade defensive.)

VICTOR: What was it you were reading, Mr. Public?

PUBLIC: The Wisdom of China; and, of India.

VICTOR: All in one volume?

PUBLIC: For a buck ninety-eight.

VICTOR: Sounds like a bargain.

HANNA: (the oriental music resuming) Sounds like that shit again.

(Everyone listens thoughtfully until the tape ends on its own.)

PUBLIC: I don't like it.

VICTOR: You a music critic now?

PUBLIC: I don't like what you done.

VICTOR: When?

SCUM: Which?

HANNA: What?

VICTOR: Why?

SCUM: I don't like it either.

PUBLIC: What?

SCUM: What all three of ya done.

HANNA: Why not?

SCUM: It's Broadway-slick connoisseurish, that's why not. Studious effort is the mark of men without Grace. Yin-Yang spins subconsciously, or not at all.

HANNA: If we Yin-Yanged the Catholic Indo-Chinese circle you thought subconscious, none of us would be genuine sadists.

SCUM: Aye!- there's the rub, you Catholic Indo-Chinxs: none of you is, because I ain't satisfied.

VICTOR: Who says you're supposed to be?

SCUM: I can't get no satisfaction....

PUBLIC: Some of the public might get the idea that this whole set-up is just to satisfy you.

SCUM: Well, ain't it? - I'm the masochist.

VICTOR: (confused) You meaning to imply that we all don't get no kicks outta this?

SCUM: You all get your kicks outta seeing me get my kicks. That's academic. It's the Confusion-ancient slave-Queen myth:- imagine what power the treasoned King must renunciate just to keep her in the chains to which he's grown accustomed.

HANNA: (blase) That is academic. -And we are sub-conscious.

SCUM: Youses sub human. I'm submattress.

PUBLIC: I don't like it.

HANNA: (really fed up) Public don't like it!!

VICTOR: What?

SCUM: Which?

HANNA: (bored to limpness) And why....

PUBLIC: What you done with my book.

VICTOR: You mean what I done with the wisdom of China -- and of India?

PUBLIC: Exactly. And you don't stand a Chinaman's chance of getting away with it, either. There just ain't enough room in this clubhouse for both of us, Victor. Like there ain't enough room in China for seven hundred million Chinxs. Some soon mourning they's gonna be bustin' outta their unarable earth 'n spreadin' inta Sidney Australia 'n Red Square Moscow never mind Vietnam 'n northern India. Figured I oughta know somethin' about the Yella Peril if it's gonna stop me from cashin' Traveler's Checks in as many places as that, that's why I was readin' that book. Figure you oughta know somethin' about me,

too, seein' as I'm gonna be findin' yer comfy roost up on that there mattress a mite softer than the concrete floor or that there chair with the rhinoceros horn.

SCUM: Hornbill I believe it is, actually a bird not a ---

VICTOR: (wavering a bit before PUBLIC) You got a one-track mind, man. There's still a north and south to every country. Once ya find it you latch onto the Libran balance of power 'n come up with a lotta state's rights, too.

PUBLIC: Speaking of my rights, I think ---

VICTOR: What?- that you and me should oughta have this out?

SCUM: I knew it was coming to that - oh, joy in the some soon mourning that has arrived!

PUBLIC: Exactly, Victor.

(VICTOR and PUBLIC go at each other's throats. HANNA pops chocolates in her mouth, relaxes on the mattress, and doesn't pay particular attention to the fight. SCUM squirms with frustration. G.I. reads. At first the struggle is even and more resembles a ballet than a realistic match.)

HANNA: Hmnnnnnn, - Barracuda Chocolates, my favorite.

SCUM: I can't see a thing! I can't see a thing!

HANNA: People in the cheaper seats never do.
(leaning over the edge of the mattress, stuffing some chocolates into SCUM's mouth and mushing others all over his face)
Nash instead.

VICTOR: Who's my little boy, the Public who just listens or the Public who just sings?

PUBLIC: Pubby who takes it or Pubby who swings?

VICTOR: When the war's silent as silent our springs,

PUBLIC: And the salt water rising eyewhite red stings.

VICTOR: I could be treasoned if there were kings!

HANNA: Deal death to the loser, loosen his strings.

SCUM: Others want bootblacks, but I wanted wings.

(Suddenly the tape of oriental music blasts out a singularly grating disharmonic riff. VICTOR, caught off guard, shocked and shaken, bears down with his foot in antagonized fury. Unfortunately, his boot comes down squarely on PUBLIC's toes.)

VICTOR: God damn that Yella Peril yellin' bitch! I'll ---

PUBLIC: OOOOWWWWW!!! You oughta be shoved back up a Tampax you're ~~re the string cut a string along some~~ ~~computer's~~ nervous breakdown!!

(PUBLIC throws himself at VICTOR and their fight is now quite real, vicious, dead-serious, bloody. HANNA and SCUM become genuinely excited, they hang on the outcome despite their talk:)

SCUM: Samson and Goliath! their battle rattles the brainy saviors of civilization.

HANNA: This beats the Pope's hot war on abortion,

SCUM: his rousing the rutters to overpopulation

HANNA: and inviting the unborn foetus to the feast of life;

SCUM: which, with the starving billions on a square inch each

HANNA: and a half bowl of rice seaweed flavored

SCUM: is, all in all, an unfortunate metaphor.

HANNA: They're even matched! there's no way one can win.

SCUM: Only some holy intervention can determine an outcome.

VICTOR: I believe so. Where do you want him?

HANNA: (seeing VICTOR reaching for a pair of shears on the table) Look! he's gonna cut that hippy down to lies.

SCUM: The hippy's only way to Heaven is through his hair: the Chinese thought of that first, the pigtail, you know, that they get pulled up to Chinese Heaven by?

HANNA: (indifferent) I flunked outta my Eastern Culture course. Couldn't stand the gook that taught it.

SCUM: Mr. P.'s gonna flunk outta Heaven, sure as the shears of the Philistine. -P.'s probably the Philistir

VICTOR: (snipping a lock of PUBLIC's hair) And a crime to every purpose under Heaven. A crime to plough, a crime to weed... Weeded, ya could be rammed aft right easy.

PUBLIC: (stopping short; melting to the floor) As you'll be rammed right aft-er me.... Hypocrite lecteur.....

HANNA: (blankly) Samson did lose. These Biblical mysteries sure are inscrutable. Wonder what secret P. revealed?

SCUM: Goliath's still champion in the flicks of his dreams.

HANNA: (looking at VICTOR downstage left, priming himself)
Wonder why they're only dreams....

VICTOR: (to audience) I must be doing something right....

(CUTTER and SLICER rise in accord, fiercely, purposefully. They yank PUBLIC up from the floor and immediately begin to chain him to the parrot stand, forcing his arms through the circle and pressing his chest against the vertical. PUBLIC, rallying slightly, merely mouths his words: SCUM speaks them.)

HANNA: Why, there's Cutter and Slicer!

SCUM: It's like Dancer and Prancer.

HANNA: (sexy-blase) And Vixen...

VICTOR: I'm fixin' myself up.

SCUM: No, no, not the parrot stand... that jungle parrot....

CUTTER: Ssssssssssssssh.

SCUM: Anything but the Asian jungle parrot's stand!

SLICER: Don't be crass.

CUTTER: Or over-obvious. Alas! tryin' to spoon-feed the audience. Where's the S-M game in that?

SCUM: Mercy, mercy!

HANNA: Il n'y a pas de quoi.

SCUM: O Christian God! -- the Asian parrot's last stand!!

CUTTER: Now, now, you're a big boy now. Old enough.

SLICER: (fatherly) Act your age, everyone's watching.

SCUM: What does age have to do with it? - the older you get, the more it hurts.

SLICER: Splendid.

VICTOR: (nursing a cut) I was beginning to suspect as much....

HANNA: (to VICTOR) I suspect this is some kinda adult education course for you. High School extension division.

VICTOR: High School derision more exactly:- upstagin' me.

SCUM: But you guys really hurt! you two ain't actin' at all!!

CUTTER: Now, now, if you had any stage deportment at all to speak of, you'd know how to fake and fall and

completely avoid getting actually harmed.

- SLICER: Of course, given the kind of Method training you've had, I suppose we have no choice but to really and truly torture you. Pity, some people know (moving down left of center, almost into the audience, strutting) how to pretend. Take the war, for instance, that's a play I could really get my incisors into while this Actors Studio freak would be still mulling it over on his worried-down molars looking for the motivation. Motivation! Just play yourself, that's all there is to it, and you'll find picking off yellow pigmies as native to your territorial needs as picking the hair out of your teeth before going straight.
- CUTTER: (moving down right of center, almost into the audience) Going straight to the Actors' Unemployment Fund, that is: there are certain straight roles take a bit more honing and polish than just coming off as one's own simple, elegant, and audacious self.
- SLICER: Can't imagine which those might be.
- CUTTER: Hamlet's a case in point. When I play Ham---
- SLICER: You ham it up: Hamlet's not a case in point; despite the complexity and quantity of his thought, more thoughts go through an average actor's head in the course of a single day than they do through Hamlet's in the run of that whole play.
- CUTTER: A good actor's day, that is.
- SLICER: Every day's a good day for me.
- VICTOR: (gazing at himself in a mirror) This just ain't my day. No sooner do I down one distraction when two more rise to take his place. (strutting across and then upstage as he speaks, forcing CUTTER, SLICER, and PUBLIC on the parrot stand back upstage by the strength of gait and will) Creeps who, if they was in flicks, would be found on the bottom of that diagonal list ya see in the credits. On TV reruns their names would be so low down they'd be outta frame. I got the plumage and some mix up in the Xerox room, some illiterate typist's typo gives them the speeches. But I can talk if it comes to that, I ain't no deaf 'n dummy, I hear the music and I can talk back to it - talk and walk - walk up in a Way these leather lovers will never learn to crawl. Now stay there! (mounting the ladder to the mattress) And I can ascend, heights don't scare me. I'm Libra, an air sign. Animals earn their concrete floor. They need the concrete....

(VICTOR sits beside HANNA on the mattress, examining himself in the mirror. His legs dangle over the downstage edge. As she speaks he slowly releases the mirror and stares haughtily, pridefully confident at the audience. Then he grows morose, his eyes turn downward. CUTTER and SLICER proceed to torture PUBLIC systematically but silently until her speech ends. When the dialogue begins the torture sounds are heard and they continue throughout except as indicated.)

- HANNA: When I was thirteen I needed my first abortion. The go-between took two hundred I had to earn by whoring and started to drive me to the quack's. Half-way there he parked the car and asked me to run into a drug store and buy the douge bag, he'd forgotten to pick one up he said. While I was in the pharmacy, fumbling with the bills, trembling, weak from worry, timid, a child, the go-between stepped on the gas and drove off....
- VICTOR: He seen ya coming, honey.
- HANNA: When I needed my second abortion I went directly to the quack's myself. He put me under with ether. When I came to, as someone struggling upward for breath, three old men were holding me down, each in turn assaulted me. The second one a second time after the third.... there had been no abortion.... At the time of my third pregnancy I was addicted to opium. Those days I felt nothing. I had the baby in a room by myself. I felt no pain. I bore the baby alone without feeling, without pain, without feeling. It inherited my opium habit, went into withdrawal, and was dead four days later. I shut it up inside the incinerator.
- VICTOR: Animals do need the concrete, a man is different....
- HANNA: (touching VICTOR's crotch) I don't think you're paying attention - to anything!
- VICTOR: Then why are you so acutely?
- HANNA: I'm not! Nothing much to look forward to.
- VICTOR: How do you mean?
- HANNA: Those so lengthily impressive in a state of inattention are the kind that wouldn't venture much farther in a state of attentiveness.
- VICTOR: But that isn't so with me.
- HANNA: I know, but I'm saying that's the kind that wouldn't.
- VICTOR: But it does.
- HANNA: But it's the type that wouldn't.

VICTOR: It's the type that wouldn't, but in actuality it's the exception to that rule.

HANNA: But it is the type that wouldn't.

VICTOR: Yes, it is the type that wouldn't.

HANNA: Well, then, you don't interest me.

VICTOR: Why not?

HANNA: Because I'm not interested in types.

CUTTER: (to SLICER, choosing a long pin) This type of needle pierces most profoundly....

VICTOR: But you can't type me, I'm the exception to ---

HANNA: I know all that. Shut up. That's why you're the hero. Audiences can't figure you out an---

SCUM: (himself now) Hero of what?

HANNA: Shut up, Scume, or we'll pull out your nails and set you free.

SCUM: They promise me anything, but the monitor's merry, Mac. I ain't got a thing to worry about.

VICTOR: (suddenly enlightened) Escape from freedom! -Scume, you're an accomplished escapist from freedom. An escapist artist! That's why you're a minor character.

SCUM: A minor character in what?

HANNA: In what! In what! --- you sound like a broken wrecked chord. A minor character in the Theatre of War -- does that satisfy you?

SLICER: This shorter needle gives more satisfaction....

SCUM: (singing) "I can't get no satisfaction..."

VICTOR: And you probably never will. That's why and what makes you a maso, baby; you got it worked out to stay one your whole one-track insensitively defined life. Insensitives can't sense the right and left of things. There just ain't never gonna be a north or south for you. Or there'll be just that: a north and a south, always that. You're a whole: a defined whole - defined as a whole indiscriminate mass.... Which mass outsiders can't discriminate. It's a waste of good stage time to torture you.

SCUM: Didactic pig. Wait'll next play for my answer.

PUBLIC: Please, guys, please, gimme a break!

CUTTER: Here in your thigh bone, how's about the elbow jernt?

SLICER: Yeah, that gives more easily, sounds the sweeter too.

SCUM: Sounds which distract from the downstage action.

HANNA: (despondent) Lengthiness in a state of both attention and inattention is pure redundancy.

VICTOR: (cutting) Same thought just occurred to me, Hanna.

G.I.: (amused, unconscious of his surroundings, reading aloud) "The greatest cleverness has a surface re-assembling asininity; the greatest eloquence sounds like stuttering."

VICTOR: Shut up down there!

G.I.: (not hearing, continuing) "The farther one pursues knowledge, the less one knows."

VICTOR: I'll come down there in one minute and it will mean the less you knows. Stop reading!

G.I.: (deaf, continuing) "When two armies equally matched meet, the yielding one has the right of way; when two men matched equally meet, the man of sorrow wins.

VICTOR: (jumping up in a fury, tumbling HANNA aside, and leaping off the steel structure) Stop reading that book! you water dieted, brain washed weasel. I'll ---

G.I.: Library closing?

VICTOR: (making to grab the book) Gimme that!

HANNA: (hanging over the edge of the mattress, insouciant) Let him keep the literature, Victor. You take it out of his hands and it'll just fall into some others. Like it did into his.

VICTOR: What others'? Everbody else is tied up.

SCUM: (sighing with sadness) La chair est triste, hélas, et j'ai lu tous les livres...

PUBLIC: (now bleeding) I haven't.

HANNA: (calmly descending the ladder) Cutter isn't tied up. His hands are free, albeit busy. And you know how much he loves to read.

CUTTER: After I deliver the mail, I read it.

SLICER: (reading a letter he has taken out of PUBLIC pocket) His wife says she hopes he won't be changed when he comes back. She says she hasn't changed at all.

CUTTER: That's such an obvious American point to make.

PUBLIC: Such a good, long suffering woman...

VICTOR: I want that book!

HANNA: (crossing to the table; once there, she stuffs a cigarette into a long, carved holder; MEMBER, a near mute and ominous looking member of the club seated at the left side of the table, lights the cigarette for HANNA) Very explicit of you. But grabbing is not the way to get it. No man inherits what another has not renunciated. Bring him over here, we'll put him on the air, and I'll get more renunciations outta him in a fifteen minute stint than you can shake your rock-filled boxing glove at in twice that time. --And then the Wisdom of China, and of India will be all yours, Victor.

VICTOR: (dubious) You mean it?

HANNA: (straight to the audience; very strong) I mean something. Why would I have so many lines? -Come over here, soldier boy.

VICTOR: (throwing G.I. out of his chair) Get up, get moving.

SCUM: (to the bewildered G.I.) You stand you lose yer squatter's rights, you know.

PUBLIC: And God knows we been in Indo-China long enough to have earned them... Hey, easy on that scalpel.

CUTTER: Just trimming yer left nipple. It's bigger than the one with rights. Some nights I do a little more than just trimming the rights. -The pastey.- (SLICER hands CUTTER a pink pastey)

HANNA: (scattering tacks on the chair at the right edge of the table) Sit down before you drop, soldier boy.

VICTOR: (as G.I. stares down at the tacks) Shall I hel---

HANNA: No! you just stay where you are. You've done enough. Of nothing. It's time for you to listen now. (smacking G.I.'s face, once, twice, thrice) I said, sit down!

G.I.: (swaying, bleary eyed) You want the book?...

HANNA: (furious) I read that book!! -sit down.

(HANNA kicks G.I.'s shins with a vicious karati blow and he buckles into the tack-strewn chair. VICTOR sits simultaneously in the chair G.I. vacated. G.I. starts up for a moment when he feels the thumb tacks, then resettles quietly. He puts his hand under his seat, lifting his thigh slightly, subtly, and

searches about for a moment. He comes up with a single thumb tack which he slowly places in his mouth and sucks as if it were a toothpick. The torture trio steps up in ghouliness.)

HANNA: Chinese Heaven protect the working girl! What unpromising material.

G.I.: I dunno know. My brain washer thought I had a real future in Oriental Lit.

SCUM: (bored into somnolence) Glit did he say....

HANNA: Silence: I will do the talking until we go on the air. You will answer all questions to the letter of the re-instructions you have received; failure to respond responsibly will result in immediate infliction of sensory stimuli insuring you do so, after which cooperation you will be removed from the premises and dragged across burning bomb-sites to a premises whereat you will be treated to more unusual re-instructions until such temporality in the muddlemind of Western man as when you have been enlightened enough to respond without paradox as reconstructed. You have no choice! You will come to the sum same sooner or later. For you, G.I., better sooner than later. -Now, act natural, just relax and be yourself.

G.I.: That's dumb. Who else could I be?

HANNA: Silence, you insignificant slipper on the slither of a Christian God over the shods of His holocausted domain! -We're on the air! Hit it, you canaries!

(HANNA switches on a red bulb on the table and there are other red light effects to indicate the radio show has begun. VICTOR draws his chair up to the table, SCUM slips off his torture rack and rushes to the table, CUTTER and SLICER roll PUBLIC down to just behind HANNA, and VICTOR, HANNA, SCUM, CUTTER, SLICER, PUBLIC, and MEMBER burst into the program's theme song, a conglomerate of unmatched voices and music adding up to a torture G.I. never dreamt he'd be subjected to:)

G.I.: Hammammm, if Mohammed won't go to the red light district, the red light district'll come to him...

THE SONG: Broadcast from our bamboo shack,
We gonna slice it up, we gonna stomp 'n hack:
The best ends up on the cutting room floor
But shows where it's at crying "More! more! more!"
It's the FM S-M Sextet time:
Got a chain, got a whip, got a missing rhyme....

HANNA: (purring into the mike on the tail of the fading music as VICTOR tosses SCUM back onto his torture rack) Good evening Mr. and Mrs. America and all the ships at the China Sea. This is your blockaded informer, Hanoi Hanna, bringing you a program of

whimsey and fact for men, including the latest news developments followed five seconds later by a comprehensive commentary from the magazine of the identical nomenclature, boxing the compass liberally north northeast a liberal analysis meant to rest light and comforting on the rednecks of Red Square.

G.I.: (mumbling, puzzled) Square rednecks?...

HANNA: Red runs the river of Yankee blood and on it are set little toy sails bearing the message of a reviolated Barbara who bleeds for you a purer strain into the stream you have polluted with the ignorance of your deaths. The East has sooooooooooooo much time. Time, as in Lady Murasaki Shikabu's mentality,

G.I.: (Kabuki growl) Murasaki Shikabu???

HANNA: you will recall, moves so slow it doesn't move at all. Yet move your lives on and out of existence, the existence you dreamt was yours by birth, farmers in a Iowa cornfield, ranchers on an olive oil grease splattered pan handle, counter boys serving straw, soap, soap scrubbed necks on a Saturday night and strawberry sodas to Lana Turner who sits forever at your soda counter waiting to be discovered.

SCUM: Think if I sat forever at a soda counter I'd be discovered?

PUBLIC: If ya blew some grass while you were sitting there I imagine you'd be.

HANNA: Have you never dreamt of going back home, lonely and lost, private, how private is it in a fox hole, dreamt I say because that is as close to home, dreaming, dreaming, that you will ever come. Unless, of course, you run off now.

G.I.: (mumbling) Run off at the mouth...

HANNA: Run off now, run off now, or forever shoulder the onus of leaving it to your black Saint Barbara, saint of artillery and soldiers, gunsmiths and napalm-sprayers, firemen and General Electric Motors - the patron saint of all of these and even that, to repent for the murders that you have made. And hasn't she enough to repent for will take up her time for the better half of eternity ---

PUBLIC: Which better half is about how long yer speech'll run.

HANNA: without the addition of the damage that you, private, killing, personally do?

VICTOR: Black, was she? Good old Saint Barbara?

- HANNA: For those who find beauty in a brow of Egypt.
- G.I.: I know her: she was the daughter of a pagan merchant who cut off her head when she declared the Faith.
- HANNA: Which merchant was immediately struck down and killed by the lightning and thunder of the Lord.
- G.I.: (squashed between HANNA and VICTOR) And for which miracle of the Lord's vengeance Barbara was canonized.
- SCUM: (Yiddish accent) Could ya drop dead? Under a bed I have to lay to hear a Sunday sermon.
- PUBLIC: Under that bed you're laying for some reason.
- VICTOR: Didn't they de-saint her last year along with George and Christopher and all them?
- HANNA: (genuinely interested, as at a cocktail party) Did they?
- G.I.: Why so nuff, I remember the whole mess: they claimed she was a saint of a God of Vengeance and that don't sit easy with the Church right now. I don't sit easy either with all these tacks up my ass.
- HANNA: (to VICTOR across the squash of G.I., very strong) If the Church can de-saint a saint, thereby admitting that it was once in error, on what grounds does your Church claim to be ever correct? Must not the Ultimate Dictum be above suspicion infallible?
- G.I.: (struggling to get his face between the two conversers) Don't sweat it, honey, they is. They took her back, didn't they? they re-sainted her.
- VICTOR: (dead serious) Along with George and Christopher and all them?
- G.I.: Why sho nuff. The Church pasted Barbara's beheaded head back on her shoulders where it belongs. -Wha'd you say about making Barbara shoulder the onus of my murders in Indo-China? If she can shoulder her own head after all that taking it off and putting it back on, that black bitch kin shoulder anything.
- HANNA: Enough of these sophistic circumventions! You Yankee oversexeds have learned a White House lingo allows you to say black when you mean white, peace when you mean war, and God when you mean genocide. ...And Hanna's nightmare consists in knowing that you mean what you say It is time for ---
- VICTOR: (enthusiastic) Our song?
- HANNA: The song later. I misplaced my earplugs. Right now

it is time for a word from the Silent Majority. Roll him over to the mike, guys. He looks ready to burst his last opened vein with the venom of all the evil of his investor's ways within him we haven't found an outlet for as yet. -Ya could gag on those prepositional clauses...

SLICER: (rolling the parrot stand toward the table with CUTTER's help) If he actually confesses is the exquisiteness of his tortures lessened?

HANNA: Presumably.

CUTTER: If not altogether dispensed with. Depends on the explicitness of his confessions. Drat.

SLICER: (holding the mike up to PUBLIC who squirms slightly within his chains) Speak directly into the honeycomb mouth; use the same even tone. Don't cough, swallow, or spit: it picks up everything.

PUBLIC: I wish to confess: I ain't no Cardinal Spellman, but I can flex my muscles and feel my Spiro as well as any mother morth of the Mason-Dixon. I ain't no cardinal, but I know something about parrots and I can spell, man, as well as I can read any rot the random house or groove press prints on the eternal mystery, wit, wisdom, and erotica of the East. The parrot's beak looks something like a disappointed pecker, fizzling out, it quartermoons down to within thirty-two miles of our beer juggling boys in the sanctuary of Saigon, we are in Cambodia because of the sanctuaries of the diminutive ones in the disappointed pecker. Peck, peck, pecking order of the military established orgy, defoliation vernal equal knox gelatin celebration, and all other generally good times are had over the upside-down corpses of the water buffaloes with cardinals and parrots pecking on their Heaven-pointing non-kosher hooves, hooves that only yesternight were ploughing through the rice wine paddies' puddles' piss. I love orgies and other competitive sports! America is founded on the principle of competition and if Laos can out-compete Cambodia for our intervention so much the more hair on their depilatoried crotches for them! I mean a weeded garden is groovable kicks for a single night in the brothel of Bangkok but, man! two years a bangin' that hairless bottom 'n ya start feelin' like yer movin' in on some pederast's territory, the forbidden right or left to the Plain of Jars. Them bushless chicks looks like they're eight years old! We might've carried this defoliation bit a bit too far.

HANNA: Please to find other metaphors for the renunciation of your capitalist mistakes: we have the FCC

regulations to contend with.

PUBLIC: Pardon the color I give to my points, M'am, but we folk on the bottom of the Dixie cup are plain spoke and without prejudice, we color the shots like we sees them. And we are ready to shoot it out in Thailand, Facist Burma, frozen Tibet, and in our marriage of convenience Sikkim if we has to and kill that cook, Hope Cook, if Uncle Sam eats supper that far up by Everest. Shoot it out! and make a loud noise unto the Lord for we be tired of being silent and the majority rules don't it? I been thinkin' about Manchuria, now there's a candidate for McCarthy's investigation, and Mongolia, what about Mongolia, if Russia don't want it and they's had long enough to make up their head, shouldn't we be movin' on in? He who hesitates is opting for some more guerrilla war, we forge in now and we've got an open field, can fight right out in the open same as the redcoat British used to and be old fashioned respectable same as them British still is beyond every blitz and recalcitrant letting go of colony after commonwealth after puppetship after possession after --- O Lord! that's all I ask for - a little respectability, a little open plain dealing so's I can hold my head up high in the cup of Your paternal condoning con-job!!

HANNA: Con-job! - that's it, he's confessed. His Christian God and all Its saintly flunkies are perpetrating a vicious con-job on his head, leading him and his fellow minutemen by a Holy Hand into the demolition of Its pagan competitors. Con-job: that's exact! He's confessed. Take him away!

PUBLIC: But wait a minuteman, I ain't finished my confession!

HANNA: Ah so - then continue his torture the better to bouse the color and clarity of the which he'll spit out that's yet still lodged to prick and sting him. Take him away I say! Refine your techniques upstage.

CUTTER: (rolling the parrot stand back upstage left with SLICER's help) Good; I was just getting into something that'll really make him come into the cup and wafer of his Martian God.

SLICER: He'll see that God plain as the nose on his face, assuming, that is, we don't decide to wittle a bit off that excessive beak.

PUBLIC: Hey, ya don't hear me layin' into the way you two lovelies look.

SCUM: With a mug like yours, hippy re-public, I doubt you could afford it.

VICTOR: Ya took them words right outta my mouth, Scume.

SCUM: No plume in my hat for that:- takin' words outta your mouth, Victor, comes almost second-nature to a guy what's flat on his back.

HANNA: (quickly, as VICTOR rises belligerently, cutting him off with all the hyped-up enthusiasm of a late night disc-jockey: directly into the mike) Mr. and Mrs. America, the FM S-M Sextet!!

(SCUM hurriedly scrambles off his torture rack and rushes to join the group: HANNA, VICTOR, SCUM, PUBLIC, CUTTER, SLICER, and MEMBER, all squashed together around the mike, immediately burst into raucous caterwauling; HANNA puts plugs in her ears:)

THE SONG: Saint of Thunder and of Clap,
Saint of Lightning and Mishap:
Saint of Sado-Masochists art Thou!
On broken knee to Thee we bow.

Bar-bar-a! Bar-bar-a!
From barbaric origin
To the Christian ph'lasophy
Vi-o-lence did violent win!

Saint of the Sacramental cup,
Saint of the Flesh at which we sup:
Saint of Sado-Masochists art Thou!
Our minds to stretch we Thee endow.

Bar-bar-a! Bar-bar-a!
From barbaric origin
To the Christian ph'lasophy
Vi-o-lence did violent win!

Saint of the Peacock's rainbow dye,
Saint of the Phoenix resurrect high:
Saint of Sado-Masochists art Thou!
Thou sanction us to bomb Kwangchow.

Bomb Kwangchow! Bomb Kwangchow!
That's Canton in China's south:
But an hour by air we vow
From the bomb-sites Thou allow'th!

Bomb Kwangchow! Bomb Kwangchow!
That's Canton in China's south:
But an hour by air we vow
From the bomb-sites Thou allow'th!

HANNA: (into the mike) Ah-ah, don't touch that dial out there in radioland,

SCUM: I should think they're all too paralyzed out there to do that.

HANNA: cause we'll be back in just a moment with our special guest of the evening, G.I. Joseph: to us, as I'm sure

he will be to you, just a guy called Joe.

G.I.: (ashamed) Call me Ishmael. I got a mopey dick.

(The group is taken aback. MEMBER rises from his chair at the left edge of the table and seeks refuge by the cluster at the parrot stand. SCUM squats in MEMBER's chair with relief. HANNA pulls the plugs from her ears in a fury:)

HANNA: Did you dare say something?!

G.I.: It ain't what I said, it's what I done. Sorry.

HANNA: What do you mean, you spineless spastic ---

G.I.: Guy gotta keep busy at solitaire in solitaire: go outta yer mind if ya don't. I was willin' to jist sit here 'n read, but that wasn't good enough for you members.

HANNA: So you --- this ruins everything!

VICTOR: (taking his chair from the table in disgust and bringing it back to its original position by the steel structure; sitting in it there) You's a two-time loser, Hanna, lost two birds in one evening. It must be the Orient's night off.

HANNA: The night's not over yet. The God he has in mind resurrected, didn't He?

G.I.: Like Barbara's phoenix from the burning bomb-sites ---

HANNA: Fools! Hanna has time, like the Orient so much time ---

G.I.: Pardon, Madame, but it is protocol to inform your listening audience of the time intervals at which you broadcast the news - so's they knows when next to tune in, Madame, thank you.

HANNA: (upset, annoyed) The news is broadcast every hour on the hour. Bulletins are broadcast at one - in the morning.

SCUM: I'll set my alarm.

HANNA: And now, Joe, I'm sure our audience is all on pins and needles to hear what you have to say.

G.I.: (smiling broadly) If they was on tacks we could use ESP, wouldn't have to say nothin' at all....

HANNA: First of all, how do you find the weather here?

G.I.: (examining his trousers' thigh) Sticky?

HANNA: Sticky? What is this Americanism?

G.I.: Gosh, you know, creamin' in my pants:- it ain't the heat, it's the Hanna.

HANNA: (pleased) Then I have made points! even if once removed. Twice, proved. -Hear that, Victor?

VICTOR: (unconvinced) A Hanoi Hanna of the mind?

SCUM: The mind's eye.

HANNA: Exactly! Now you boys are getting the idea. Hanna's hope as well as her strength is to be found in her woodpecking away at the vivid fantasy life these unfortunate American provincials have been forced to cinematize into in escaping from their wouldn't-satisfy-a-dodo reality.

PUBLIC: I think that wouldn't-satisfy-a-dodo is another dig at you, Scum.

SCUM: It's a dig, but it ain't a cue. Dig?

HANNA: (laughing) You mean you couldn't dignify that triple gerund with a witless come-back.

SCUM: Lemme sleep, will you? Gerunds(!), the dummy -- what does she know about gerunds? A gerund is a verbal noun having all the ---

MEMBER: (worried about his chair) You stayin' here permanent?

SCUM: Temporary. I'm a transient, cheaper by the week.

MEMBER: Where ya transientin' to?

SCUM: To my torture rack, soon as Public and Victor set it back up in the back where it belongs.

VICTOR: I ain't settin' nothin' back. I'm on my way forward.

SCUM: Fool to think there is a forward. Thought is a circle been spinning for five thousand years, it repeats itself with all the dependability of a Tibetan prayer wheel.

CUTTER: (to SLICER, indicating a huge funnel to be employed in the Drink Water-Drink Urine torture on PUBLIC) The "Funnel of Love," please.

SLICER: (handing CUTTER the funnel) If we could just once fit Scum through the funnel, he'd come out a shape not nearly so rotund and subconsciously disposed to wheeling around repeating himself.

SCUM: Pure sophistic hoping aghast hope.

HANNA: And so now, Joseph, why don't you tell our all-ears

audience what you think continuously about while frigging, a, frittering away your middle of the road existence here in par conséquent sticky country?

G.I.: Home -- right?

HANNA: Right round robin. What is your home like?

G.I.: Well, did ya ever hear of Truth Or Conséquent, Aridzona?

HANNA: Yes.

G.I.: Well, that ain't it. That's this. I hail from Twin Peaks, Iowa.

HANNA: Is that near Paris, Illinois?

G.I.: No, it's closer to Sodom, Mass.

HANNA: Solemn mass?

G.I.: Skip it.

HANNA: We skip nothing! I asked you what Twin Peaks is like, and why you yearn so for it!

G.I.: Well, it's like this: at Twin Peaks there is, as you come in off the open freedom of the road, a peak directly to your left and if ya turn about face real sharp, you'll sight a peak directly to your right ---

HANNA: Which looks identical to the one on your left, is veritably its twin, n'est-ce pas?

G.I.: How'd ya guess, Hanna?

HANNA: No guessing in it: Americans think they always have to make a choice between two twins. They think there is a choice.

VICTOR: (assured) There's only consolidation.

G.I.: (suddenly asserting his rights) And I yearn so for it because of the peacefulness of making a choice between the two twins:- it's sick of one and half dozing of the other.

HANNA: Silence, bird brain!

G.I.: Whadda ya mean, bird brain! And whadda ya mean, silence?? -Ain't this a radio program?

HANNA: You will tell what you were told to ---

G.I.: Jesus! it's like somebody tellin' ya ya talk too

much over the telephone. What the hell else can ya do?

SCUM: Ever hear of Pinter? Or not-hear Pinter?

PUBLIC: The matinees.

HANNA: (resuming, pursing with stepped-up direction) Your beautiful house under the shaded elms ---

G.I.: My house, if anything, is under the wistaria shrub.

HANNA: (a sentimental routine, the entire club humming behind her, sentimentally) Under the shaded Oriental wistaria shrub, with Mother there in the door, Father also there - all the friends that I knew, named saints engowned in blue!

VICTOR: (insightfully) I'm beginning to get the picture.

HANNA: Well, I'm waiting, what about these things?

G.I.: I dunno. You're the one who's good at telling stories. And they is stories.

HANNA: It's your home town story. It's your life story. The girl you left behind - what about her?

G.I.: Well, to begin with, right now I'm glad I left her behind.

PUBLIC: Pussy is preferable.

G.I.: I'll tell ya, Hanna, Alice was a matter of opinion. See, she weren't nothin' like you. Fat 'n dull, fulla corn 'n apple pie 'n the wide blue sky I seen every day of my life. I used to lay in the hay stack a lot, with a straw in my mouth, and dream. (eyeing HANNA and resuming his compulsive habit) Uncle Sam is smart. Now I jist have to look across the table.

VICTOR: G.I. Joseph swings across the crescent moon from the horn of terror to the horn of total indifference. He never finds the middle mark, he opts for the boring but more dealable indifference. I take the crescent moon by the horns, halve it with a clean crack, and create a cusp.

HANNA: I hate to be brusque, but that is quite enough!

G.I.: (first working up, innocently) That's enough?

HANNA: (her anger mounting) You lie!

G.I.: Do I?

HANNA: Your Alice is beautiful! your home is beautiful!
your home town of Twin Precipices is beautif---

SCUM: (as Charlie Chan) So now they're precipices....

HANNA: your mother is beautiful! your father is beautiful!
your friends crowded into the door are beautiful!
beautiful! beautiful! beautiful! waiting there! ---
and you are beau--- you are lonely! lonely! lonely!
to see them all as they really are, you are sick
and sticky of your mind's eye and want nothing more
than to leave this sticky jungle forever!!!

G.I.: If you say so.

HANNA: It is not I, but you who say so!

G.I.: Yeah, but you put it so much more usefully than I
could. You put purpose and inclination in it. I
put the tacks a bit to one side.... on some days....

HANNA: Enough!!

G.I.: Enough? I can go ---

HANNA: (as G.I. rushes from his chair) Stop! Stop! -Victor!

(VICTOR leaps from his chair and catches G.I. downstage center
where he deals him a cruel blow in the stomach. G.I. doubles
up and crumbles to the floor. VICTOR rabbit-punches him on
the back of the neck. HANNA puffs furiously, shaking.)

VICTOR: The program ain't terminated, Joe!

G.I.: It will be: your ratings are probably lower than ever.

VICTOR: Like it in the neck again?

G.I.: No - please! - my neck is stiff.

VICTOR: Then put it back in your pants.

HANNA: (lowering the mike to G.I.'s level on the floor)
And so, now, quickly, to resume:-

G.I.: Can't you do the news first - m' zipper's stuck.

HANNA: We will tell you the news if you tell us first about
your anxieties, elaborating at length on the quaint
suspicions you have about just who is seeing your
Alice home: who is warming her over... You can't
kid yourself that much:- yet you still hold onto her
still waiting for you, do you, Joseph?

G.I.: She don't have much choice. Anyhow, I couldn't
care less if she's waitin' or not. My kinda luck
'n she jist would be waitin'... Mmmmmmmmm... maybe

if I stayed here longer.... maybe another four or five years....

- HANNA: (totally out of control) NO!!! NO! NO! That is exactly what you musn't say ---
- VICTOR: Shut up, Hanna! I think Joe is going to stay here another four or five years. He's in bad need of re-instructing on how to conduct himself on FM.
- G.I.: We can't all be stars.
- HANNA: (recouping her glam) Tant pis pour toi!
- PUBLIC: (his parrot stand rolling uncontrollably downstage left; HANNA swinging the mike quickly over to him) We interrupt this program to bring you a special news bulletin --
- ALL: Sssssssssshhhhhh.....
- PUBLIC: Word just in from Wall Street:- before closing the Dow Jones Averages voted that as part of their plan to back the book industry by issuing paperbacks, The Wisdom of China, And of India, will shortly be re-issued in paperback form!!
- G.I.: Gee! I coulda saved six cents.
- PUBLIC: (being viciously rolled back upstage by a CUTTER and SLICER with murder on their minds) And now, our regular programming will be resumed as we return you to your local station....
- G.I.: (grabbing the mike, standing alone centerstage) Listen, I have actually found a part I really like: (reading from the book as the entire cast stares at him incredulously:)
 "Palaces have beauty against a set of hovels.
 Goodness is apparent only when the backdrop is black.
 Being requires non-being to germinate.
 Difficult and easy are phases of achievement.
 Long needs short just to be measured.
 High must relate to low.
 Sound tones next to the voice give rise to the
 recognition of harmony.
 Therefore, the Wise Man works by being still.
 He teaches the Doctrine without using words.
 Everything comes up before him; he never turns away
 from it.
 He animates all things; he appropriates no thing.
 He earns, he does not own.
 He never lays claim to credit; therefore credit
 can never be taken from him."
- HANNA: (solemnly, evenly) Take him away, Victor, and torture him until you yourself drop from exhaustion

or are sucked into succor from some other source.
Hanna has had enough.

- VICTOR: (laying rough hands on G.I.) Let's go, smartypants.
- G.I.: (being dragged to the steel structure) Hey, hold on!
I have a vote same as the rest of the clubmembers!
- HANNA: You cast it, Joseph. You're off the air now.
- SCUM: (now standing upstage center; deeply moved) How
marvelous: he must be a maso after me own heart:
opted for the ultimate, for feeling....

(VICTOR chains G.I. to the left side of the structure; he slashes him with a barbed wire and rubs alcohol into the cuts. Then he begins to bury long needles in G.I.'s arms, legs, and ribs. PUBLIC, still being tortured, is now nearly dead.)

- G.I.: (weeping) Lord God, I have given all, that I might
feel one single sensation, however small its flame,
burning into me the knowledge that I am alive....
Lord God, Thy servant calls.

(HANNA, sitting on the table and caressing the mike, begins her speech with exacting sensuality, perfect control; as she speaks a great light grows upstage left: in its heart is SAINT BARBARA, dressed in flowing blue veils, holding a peacock feather in one hand and a tiny three-windowed tower in the other. She appears suspended, is actually standing on an invisible staired estrade some 4 feet high. Her black skin seems almost purple under the blue gown and her calm, smiling face beams dazzlingly: the enlargening light gives the strange impression of emanating from her eyes. Everyone except HANNA, becomes imminently aware of BARBARA's epiphany; some kneel.)

- HANNA: The sado-masochistic game of war, poor soldier boy,
your sit-at-home Hannibals and Alexanders desensitized
you into; sailing you uniformly and in uniforms into;
flying you to, in great birds of fray, the eagle of
prey, the Yankee Eagle.... Uniforms:- the most
necessary, the most associated-with badge of the
sado-masochist, his need of the uniform just to sight,
to recognize, so insensitive to detail is he, detail
by which the remaining sane build to generalities,
the generality here being the almost universal
condemnation in our contemporary decomposition of
what you do.... Some say the desensitized have
chosen, some year lost in their infancy's own memory,
never to feel again. But the sage knows that no
such choice is parceled the animal of man. -And
Hanna holds even her Haven-Heaven apart from the
piteousness of such a self-deception.... The
whole play's a power-play.....

(The light surrounding SAINT BARBARA intensifies spectacularly,

reaching all the corners of the stage. Holy music begins to play and BARBARA sings, a clear, compelling soprano:)

BARBARA: Christian soldiers waging war
On Lord Christ's competitor!
Warrior Popes embattled for
Oneness -- One excelsior!

Peace shall follow on your fray
Staged to give to Christ His day,
Deadly weapons hid away,
Painless pastimes to portray.

King of Peace! for us portray
Pastimes perfect, pause, and play.

Peace! peace! peace! pea---

(As BARBARA reaches for a sopranic crescendo, her voice alters into the terrifying sound of artillery fire; machine-gun staccato sputters out of her mouth and, finally, as she ovals her bewildered, trembling lips, the deafening explosion of bomb after bomb pours uncontrollably from her. She contorts, flexes, and wages an awesome struggle within her own body to suppress the holocaust that has bloomed from her throat, and finally triumphs, the battlesounds subsiding and petering out, allowing her to reach for and attain three pure, perfect notes. As she returns to her original, immobile smiling stance, VICTOR reaches for the huge fireman's axe that is bound to the front of the steel structure. He intones staring into the audience.)

VICTOR: I need... I need....

BARBARA: (softly, kindly, a saint's voice) Have you a need, Victor?

VICTOR: Oh, yes, Saint Barbara. The need at least to be Victor.

BARBARA: (pause; then, kindly) O my son, you would not ---

VICTOR: (rushing up the steps of the estrade with the axe in his hand) So it's peacock, then, neither cardinal nor parrot, but peacock's pride for which they died....

(VICTOR twists the peacock feather out of BARBARA's hand and lets it fall to the floor. She smiles at him and, of her own accord, drops the miniature three-windowed tower. It clanks on the estrade. VICTOR pulls her slightly forward, revealing a large wicker basket till now concealed by BARBARA's gown, and forces her to kneel beside it with her head over its open top. He raises the axe high into the air, and then brings it down cleanly beheading her. Her head drops into the basket, her body slumps over on the estrade. The holy light dwindles back into itself slowly dimming most of the stage. Only HANNA is visible now under a harsh overhead striking the table.

She holds the mike close to her mouth as she speaks; her lines lead her into the gentleness of absolute confidence; her tone as well as her feeling continually elevates until it freezes, as it were, in a kind of forever. The overhead softens imperceptibly before beginning its slow fade.)

HANNA: How well your pentagon has always geographed the theatres of your wars:- in a Havanna of Cecelia Valdez where you might pick the poinsettia from the auburn circles a senorita's ear, in a Paris of Mademoiselle Fifidon a Berlin of Mai Britt where you might reamaze with all the wonder of a babe the miracle of chocolate, soap bars, and a single carton of cigarettes. Reamaze after the pall of their always appearing. And now are you fixed after a kiosk under the scrim of Madama Butterfly, geography's farthest, an extreme as fine as any, no, the finest of all I fancy, if one had as one has to find a fancy in the young soldier's sleep where he must imagine for as long as his pentagon imagines that he probably must. Hanoi Hanna. In Terry and the Pirates, the Dragon Lady, Madame Chiang Ky Chek, Ngo Ding Nhu, Tokyo Rose, Saigon Sally, even the Tiger Woman.... Like every woman, mother, sister, wife, Hanna has lost; like every woman Hanna is loss lost in her use.... Your love looks to love the world in the ways its progenitor can not:- and a Hanoi Hanna is born, is cultured, is set in a sundial brooch with needles circumferencing out until they indifferent away like the sign of the rising sun. I am always, inutility in myself, inutilly frozen for me, imaged, exploited, waxed.... I am the Always to eternal, the eternal woman made by men.... imaginary; immortal.....

5/6/70.
5/31/70.

THE NUTCRACKER
IN THE LAND OF NUTS
IN THE LAND OF NUTS

THE NUTCRACKER
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THE NUTCRACKER
IN THE LAND OF NUTS
a play by Ronald Tavel

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Characters:

| | |
|---------------------|--------------------------------------|
| NUTCRACKER | CADILLAC |
| MACK DONALDS | ERIKA MOUSE |
| HACK DONALDS | GRAVEL GERTIE DOLL |
| SEVEN-HEADED MOUSE: | BLUE GRETA GARBO SLIPPER |
| GLUTTONY | GHOUL |
| GREED | BANDAGE |
| SLOTH | HARD HEART of the Seven-Headed Mouse |
| ENVY | WALL OF CHINA |
| FIB | ARNOLD BLACK-EGG |
| PRIDE | BEETLE |
| DESPAIR | JAGUAR |
| FRED | VALERIE |
| MOTHER | (CHRISTMAS TREE) |
| FATHER | |
| JANE | |
| DROSSELMEIER | |
| ANGEL | |
| NATHAN | |

Suggested doublings:

NUTCRACKER
JANE
DROSSELMEIER
MOTHER, ERIKA MOUSE, BLUE GRETA GARBO SLIPPER
MACK DONALDS, THE BANDAGE, ARNOLD BLACK-EGG
HACK DONALDS, THE HARD HEART
FATHER, GHOUL, THE BEETLE
FRED, THE JAGUAR
THE ANGEL, VALERIE, THE GRAVEL GERTIE DOLL
NATHAN
THE CADILLAC, THE WALL OF CHINA
 THE SEVEN HEADS as voices suit the music
 (THE CHRISTMAS TREE)

A music score has been written for this play by
 Simeon Westbrooke.

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Christmas Eve. The stage is dimly lit. Around a gigantic and strangely decorated Christmas tree is assembled a heap of packaged gifts, among them The Summer Dull Drums, MACK and HACK DONALDS, two toys wearing chefs hats whose rotound stomachs (or spare tires) are formed into drums; and a tall NUTCRACKER, an American soldier.

A scratching noise, the NUTCRACKER sits up.

NUTCRACKER: Listen, listen, did you hear it?
A scratching sound, a little twit:
Pawing, I think, and squeaking,
Clawing and tweaking:-
Where there's such a scratching sound
Mice abound!

MACK & HACK: We heard it, we heard it,
It's all around -
It's a kind of scraping sound,
It's under the floor,
It's in the ground:-
Where there's such a scratching sound
Mice abound!

NUTCRACKER: A Nutcracker am I,
I only personify
A living and loved G.I.:
You see, I'm just a toy
And though I try and try -
On that you can rely -
I'm not a much-loved boy:
A Nutcracker am I.

MACK: Get the fast food!
Bring the junk!
The mice will plunk
Right down upon it!
And bit by bit,
While eating it,
They'll thrash and gasp,

Gargle and rasp -
 And by this device
 We'll do in the mice!

HACK: Bring the sugar and salt,
 Franks, buns, and malt,
 Chewing gum and soda pop:
 Hurry up, skip to it, hop!
 Bacon and lox,
 French fries in the box,
 Pudding and jelly
 To swell up their belly -
 And by this device
 We'll do in the mice!

MACK & HACK: We're Mack and Hack Donalds,
 The Summer Dull Drums --

MACK: I'm Mack, he's Hack --

HACK: I'm Hack, he's Mack --

MACK & HACK: We're Mack and Hack Donalds,
 The Summer Dull Drums,
 And on our big tums
 We mix and prepare
 An edible snare
 For boys or girls,
 Mice, men, or churls
 To eat -
 But it's a cheat!
 So beware! beware!
 We're Mack and Hack Donalds,
 The Summer Dull Drums,
 You'll see how the junk food will swell up their tums!
 And bums!

(A huge and hideous SEVEN-HEADED MOUSE digs its way up through
 the roots of the Christmas tree, causing it to tilt and sway.)

SEVEN-HEADED
 MOUSE: Squeek, squawk, squiggle,
 Look at all those delicious toys,
 Granola girls and whole-wheat boys:
 Let's eat 'em up!
 Squeek, squawk, squiggle,
 Make 'em squirm, make 'em jiggle!
 And eat 'em up!

FIRST HEAD: But they call me Gluttony
 And don't I see
 The kinda food looks good to me:
 Hot dogs, candy, and white whipped creams,
 And ketchup and ices that fill my dreams!
 And there's French fries - they make me drool!

MACK: That's Gluttony - what a fool!

- SECOND HEAD: My name's indiscriminate Greed,
On almost any scrap I'll feed,
Doesn't matter if I've need
Or not, I'll eat, eat, eat:
And greasy food to me's a treat!
- HACK: That bore's insatiable Greed:
To the table he'll stampede:
He never has enough -
And that's too bad, that's tough
On him!
- THIRD HEAD: Me, people call cool-headed Sloth -
Meaning "laziness," by my troth!
I'm too lazy to eat good food
And I'm seldom in a thinking mood.
Besides, although I'm sluggish Sloth,
I don't think junk food'll stunt my growth.
- NUTCRACKER: (feeding the fast food to FIRST HEAD)
Then eat, eat, ess, fress,
Sugar, salt, the whole mess;
Baloney, salami - it's on the house!
Eat, you Seven-Headed Mouse!
Eat, Gluttony - to stay alive!
Seven heads ---
(the FIRST HEAD dies)
only six survive!
- (feeding the SECOND HEAD)
So eat, ess, fress, eat:
Breakfast cereal - it's sweet!
Eat, you Greedy-Head ---
There:-
(the SECOND HEAD dies)
dead, quite dead!
- And drink, drink, drink,
You sleepy Head o' name o' Sloth,
This gets you and your nerves up both:-
It's coffe, tea, and ovaltine,
And cocoa squeezed in-between:-
Drink, drink - it'll give you drive!
Seven heads ---
(the THIRD HEAD dies)
only four are alive!
- FOURTH HEAD: They call me Envy, green-eyed Envy,
Cause I am jealous of every one I see:-
And even though this did them in,
Why should I alone be thin
And not partake of all this food?
That would just make me brood.
I'll eat it.
- NUTCRACKER: Do.
(the FOURTH HEAD dies)

FIFTH HEAD: I am called the Head of Fib,
I lie all life to grave from crib.
And I'd have better lyrics if they'd let me ad lib.

NUTCRACKER: You lie!
You die!
(striking off the FIFTH HEAD with a bayonet)

SIXTH HEAD: (fixing the ribbon on her elaborate neck)
Me, men call the sin of Pride.
These five dead heads I take in stride:
I'm too proud to learn from them,
My lovely neck's a fine strong stem.
I let my beauty be my guide.
What have I to cloak or hide?

NUTCRACKER: Your neck!
She's a dame, but -
Oh - what the heck!
(lopping off the SIXTH HEAD)
See what comes from being proud?
Naught that's fit, save for a shroud!

SEVENTH HEAD: And I, the last, am called Despair.
With six parts dead, how can I care?
Nothing excites or inspires me,
The last live branch on a withered tree...
(looks downcast and dreary and dies)

NUTCRACKER: What a dope -
He gave up hope:
And hence his living head
Just like that fell dead.
As simple as that.
-What an unusual hat!
(tying the SEVENTH HEAD's bonnet over his helmet)

NUTCRACKER &
MACK & HACK: Victory! Victory!
The Seven-Headed Mouse of Sin
Has been done-in
By its own faults:
Ice cream and chocolate malts,
Sweets and franks,
Treats and pranks,
Pride, envy and gluttony
And, most of all, giving up, you see!
Victory! Victory!

NUTCRACKER: Sssssh! Listen, the humans are coming. Back to
our boxes and packages.

HACK: But shouldn't we sweep up the remains of the
mouse-monster first?

NUTCRACKER: Too late!

MACK: But they'll smell a mouse!

HACK: Shut up! Get in!

MACK: (looking worriedly at the Christmas tree) That tree's precariously balanced...

(The TOYS hasten into their respective packages, helping each other to re-fix their ribbons. Enter MOTHER, FATHER, JANE, FRED, and DOCTOR DROSSELMEIER.)

FRED: The presents - at last we can open our Christmas presents! I can't wait!

MOTHER: But you'll have to wait. You know we never open our gifts until after the party.

FRED: But I've waited so long, mother!

FATHER: Fred, you're not even being polite. You stampeded right in here and nearly knocked over your sister.

JANE: And cousin Nat, shouldn't we wait till cousin Nat arrives, first?

FATHER: That's right, Fred, you're in such a hurry that you neglected to wait for Nat. And godfather Drosselmeier's feelings will be hurt for Nat is his nephew.

FRED: (looking at the MOUSE's corpse) What happened to that mouse?

DROSSELMEIER: He ate at a deli and died.

MOTHER: Musicians, let us have music! Come, let us dance.

JANE: Oh, mother, you know I can't dance!

MOTHER: Don't be silly, child, of course you can. Play!

(The BAND plays and MOTHER and FATHER dance. The children sit at the side. DROSSELMEIER amuses himself at the punch bowl.)

JANE: I wonder what Godfather Drosselmeier created for us this Christmas. Fred... don't you wonder what Godfather made for us?

FRED: I know what he made for you.

JANE: What?

FRED: A Gravel Gertie doll.

JANE: Oh, Godfather is going to perform!

DROSSELMEIER: (singing and dancing, tipsy)
 I'm Drossel... -Drosselmeier,
 I'm a magician, not a liar,
 And I'm getting higher and higher
 On this punch --
 Should have had lunch
 Before I started to drink.
 Never think, never think, I never think.

I make unusual puppets and dolls,
 Gangster types and molls,
 Private eyes,
 Russian spies,
 And Geishas with parasols.

ALL: And Geisha girls with parasols!

DROSSELMEIER: Spinning and spinning and spinning about
 Out of control one night,
 I set down to work
 Drunk as a jerk
 And couldn't get one foot right.

ALL: He couldn't get one foot right!

DROSSELMEIER: The Nutcracker's foot,
 Despite what I put
 In the design,
 Seems too benign --
 That thin wooden stick
 Just doesn't have kick
 And may fail when it's put to the test.
 Oops, I'm spinning, I've got to rest.

ALL: Oops, he's spinning, he's got to rest.

MOTHER: Poor Jane, I'm afraid for her. She's so slow,
 so backward, she can hardly walk without
 tripping and she has no confidence at all.

FATHER: She is simple. Don't fret, dear. The Good
 Lord watches over her.

DROSSELMEIER: She is blessed, mother, Jane is blessed in a
 special way. All simple folk are.

MOTHER: Oh, look, here comes Nat at last!

(NAT enters, gallantly removing his cloak. He bears an
 identical resemblance to the NUTCRACKER. A special aura
 surrounds him. JANE, across the stage, looks at NAT, and
 in that moment she, too, is enveloped in an aura.)

JANE: Hello, Nat. Merry Christmas.

NAT: Merry Christmas, Jane. You look beautiful
 tonight.

(NAT crosses to centerstage and JANE goes to meet him. An ANGEL in the tree sings and they both dance together while everyone watches in astonishment.)

ANGEL: Beautiful night, magical night,
Our suffering's light and all seems right
On a magical night.
Broken dolls walk and wood puppets talk,
The wounded are well,
Dull books sell
And the plain smile as lovely as stars.
Angels sing and nothing mars
A beautiful, magical night.

FRED: Well, now that Nat's finally here, we can open our gifts.

NAT: Hello, Fred.

FRED: Can't stand on ceremony, Nat. Hmm, let's see, here's my present from Godfather Drosselmeier. My name's on it. It's nice and big.

MOTHER: Why, Fred, aren't you going to give Nathan his present first? Where are your manners?

FRED: We got you a white Cadillac, Nat. It's behind the tree. Now can I open my present?

JANE: We got you a white Cadillac, Nat.

NAT: Thank you Fred and Jane.

DROSSELMEIER: Fun with Fred and Jane.

(The white Cadillac is propelled out from behind the tree. FRED opens his package. It is MACK & HACK.)

FRED: What's this? - two fat chefs!

MACK & HACK: Well, we never!

MOTHER: They're counter boys, Fred. They work in a fast food chain.

FRED: What's that supposed to mean?

DROSSELMEIER: Well, you're always hungry, aren't you?

FRED: And what if I am? Just look at their stomachs, looks like they ate up all the food themselves!

MACK & HACK: Well, we never!

JANE: Did somebody say something?

FATHER: Those aren't their stomachs, Fred. They're

drums. You wind them up and they play on those.
You call them skins.

DROSSELMEIER: Here, let me wind them up for you, Fred.
(doing so)

MACK & HACK: (singing and drumming on their stomach-drums)
Hittin' some skin!
Hittin' skin! sockin' skin!
Bangin' on skin!
We ain't fat, we're thin as thin,
These ain't stomachs, these are skin!
Hittin' some skin!

FRED: Ugh!

MOTHER: Oh, Godfather Drosselmeier, they're charming!

FRED: I think they're raucous.

FATHER: They're "with it," Fred, very "with it."

JANE: Mother, ~~my~~ my gift to you's a Sacred Heart;
(See Insert for Page 8.)

DROSSELMEIER: Don't you want to open your gift, Jane?

JANE: May I?

FRED: Oh, boy.

DROSSELMEIER: (undoing the wrapping) Had a little trouble with
the left leg, didn't seem re-inforced enough, but
birch is hard to come by these days, good birch,
and I didn't have quite enough....

FRED: Don't worry, Jane's not likely to notice the
difference.

FATHER: Why, Fred!

FRED: Why? Cause she's simple-minded.

FATHER: That'll be enough. Oh, look, oh my!

MOTHER: Extraordinary!

(The NUTCRACKER is revealed. Everyone is astonished.)

JANE: How handsome he is!

FRED: Bears a striking resemblance to someone we might
know, don't he?

Insert for Page 8.

JANE: Mother, my gift to you's a Sacred Heart;
 And Frieda, here's a Belgian petticoat;
 Godfather, I found in the bargain mart
 This fifties' bug-detector; and I wrote
 Out a Christmas gift-certificate
 For 14 dollars' worth of tropical fish
 For Dad, complete with tank. I think that's it.
 Oh, no! I forgot: if it's not too babyish,
 Here is a big, stuffed orange tabby cat
 For my one and only favorite cousin, Nat!

(MOTHER, FATHER, DROSSELMEIER, and NATHAN receive their gifts
from JANE with surprise and appreciation, (DROSSELMEIER with
surprise) and FRIEDA with something less than appreciation.
Except for the latter, they thank her warmly. The latter
thanks her coldly.)

DROSSELMEIER: Well, Nathan is my favorite nephew. And sometimes I can't think up original ideas. Not after so many years of original ideas, must have suffered a brain-drain....

MOTHER: But he's beautiful!

FRED: Sure is! And all I got is the Summer Dull Drums.

MOTHER: Hush, don't be ungrateful.

NATHAN: I'm embarrassed.

FRED: I'll bet. I'm furious!

JANE: But if those counter boys are drums, what is this lovely soldier?

DROSSELMEIER: Come, I will show you. Anybody have a nut?

FRED: Well, my sister; will she do?

FATHER: I may have to send you upstairs.

NATHAN: Here is a walnut, uncle.

DROSSELMEIER: Good, thank you.

MOTHER: And here's an almond and a hazelnut. And a betelnut.

DROSSELMEIER: These are fine. Now watch:

(DROSSELMEIER manipulates the NUTCRACKER's legs. The NUTCRACKER sings, dances, and cracks the nuts one by one.)

NUTCRACKER: Quickly, let me have a nut:
 Around its husk both legs I shut --
 And crack, crack,
 I give you back
 Its kernel good to eat!
 Now, isn't that a feat?

ALL: Now, isn't that a feat?

FRED: I hope he didn't cheat!

JANE: Oh, I love my Nutcracker! He is so wonderful!
 Oh, thank you, Godfather Drosselmeier, what a wonderful gift! What a beautiful present!

MOTHER: It is a unique creation, perhaps uniquely inspired.

NATHAN: No, I am altogether unworthy to have been its inspiration.

FATHER: Fred might make your modesty his model. That would be the finest present he could give his parents this Christmas.

- FRED: (coming downstage with a demonaic expression, a Devilish aura envelopping him, changing before us and reciting (not singing) evilly:)
Modesty, my foot! That Nutcracker's a freak:
Didn't Drosselmeier say one of his legs is weak?
Well, the heart of a Seven-Headed rat
Is harder than a baseball bat!
- (FRED extracts the heart from the mouse's corpse and brings it to DROSSELMEIER who is drinking again and not looking at things too carefully.)
- FRED: Here, Godfather: I have another nut for the Nutcracker to crack.
- DROSSELMEIER: Well, well, well, we are consumming all the little nasties, aren't we? I'll have to switch to the pickled onions.
(manipulating the NUTCRACKER again)
- NUTCRACKER: Quickly, let me have a nut:
Around its husk both legs I shut --
-Oh, that fiendish little Fred
Gave me something hard and red:
The mouse's heart -- some joke!
Now I fear my leg is broke!!
- ALL: Oh, look, his leg is broke!
Fred played a nasty joke!
- FATHER: Up to bed with you, bad boy, this instant. No more party for you. You have spoiled this night for everyone!
- JANE: No, he hasn't, father. I can mend the Nutcracker's leg. I'll bandage it up.
- MOTHER: I'm afraid that may not be enough, Jane, dear. All of Godfather's creations are very intricate and delicate. A bandage may not do at all.
- DROSSELMEIER: Oh, but do let her try, mother. Her sentiments are correct as they are pure. So who knows what she may do?
- MOTHER: No, Godfather, it is wrong to lead her on and deceive her. The truth is the kindest thing in the end. She, too, must learn to live with what is so, as must we all.
- DROSSELMEIER: But just this night, make an exception. There's time enough for truth tomorrow.
- MOTHER: Only regretful persons think such things. But there's no arguing on Christmas Eve. Then remain a while here, Jane, and administer to your

Nutcracker. But don't be long. We shall ajern to the sitting room to continue the festivities. Be sure to join us there.

JANE: Oh, I shall, mother.

NATHAN: I'll be waiting for you, Jane.

DROSSELMEIER: May I bring along the punch bowl?

(Exit MOTHER, FATHER, FRED, NATHAN and DROSSELMEIER with the bowl of punch. FATHER can be heard reprehending FRED in the hallway. Their shadows play against the walls and ceiling of the hall, somewhat altering the atmosphere, somewhat other-worldly in effect, a bit eery; they are watched by JANE.)

FATHER: You are not to continue onto the sitting room with the others, Fred; you are to go directly to your room.

FRED: Why? Why? Why?

FATHER: Because you don't know how to behave like a human being. Because you don't behave like a human being.

FRED: Why? Why? Why? Why?

FATHER: Because you don't behave like a human being. Because you are not a human being.

JANE: Oh!

FATHER: You are not a human being.

JANE: Oh, dear me. Dear me. Isn't it strange being left all alone with the toys so suddenly..... But I have work to do. Like Clara Barton I must attend to the disabled veterans. Poor, dear Nutcracker: you fought so bravely for your country and now everyone is neglecting you.... pretending you don't exist.
(ripping a ribbon of material from her petticoat)
This bandage will take care of your broken leg, however. And now you must rest so that you will recover quickly.

(JANE places the NUTCRACKER in a swing for two (or a hammock) and swings him to sleep. The voices of the toys all about them join in a gentle lullaby and JANE, herself, falls asleep. DROSSELMEIER is seen in another part of the theatre, fancifully garbed - more like an owl than a magician.)

DROSSELMEIER: O my toys, children of mine:-
Sing! though you be but tin and pine!
Tin and pine! Tin and pine! and in the end

Cast in the trash as dividend!

- TOYS: Soldier, soldier, put away
The busy, exploding glare
Of war. And take your rest.
On your moist, unquiet breast
Two hundred trembling ginkgo leaves,
White with smoke and seared with shot,
That listened to the march all day,
Have coiled them inward and shied away
And folded themselves up to sleep
Under your holster.
- HACK: Look, Mack, she done gone out.
- MACK: Him, too. Ain't they sweet? sleepin' together
like that.
- CADILLAC: (who is very snooty, an upper-class type toy)
Well, I don't want to say anything, but that
girl is just kidding herself. She's walking down
Dream Street, if you ask me.
- HACK: Why?
- CADILLAC: Well, she's so poor, what else can she do but
dream?
- MACK: What do you mean?
- CADILLAC: What do you mean what do I mean? Where'd you
boys get your smarts? Why, that gal's so poor
that if she liquidated her assets she'd have a
trickle.
- MACK: But why do you say she's dreaming?
- CADILLAC: Cause she imagines that a mere bandage can heal
a wooden nutcracker's leg. Now, a bandage can
heal a mere human's leg, but a mere bandage
cannot heal a wooden toy's leg. You see, toys
are infinitely more complicated ~~than~~ than
humans and it takes a great deal more to cure
us of our ills than it takes to cure a person.
If this were not so, a mere bandage would do us,
but it is not so and so ~~obviously~~, it does not.
- HACK: But what, then, would heal the Nutcracker's
broken leg?
- MACK: Assuming a bandage is of no use?
- CADILLAC: I'm afraid, my dears, that only the true love of
a true queen can do that. Remember, I said a
true queen. By the way - I'm Alexandra:- ride
me!

MACK: Well, a true queen is more easily read than rid.

HACK: Wha?

CADILLAC: Listen, did you two spare-tires hear something peculiar?

MACK: You don't mean that scratching sound?

HACK: You don't mean that pawing and squeaking, do you?

CADILLAC: Think we better take it on the lamb?

MACK: You ain't goin' to Witchita Falls by any chance?

MOTHER MOUSE:(from under the roots of the tree) My poor dead Seven-Headed son! I shall be revenged!

CADILLAC: I think you boys better hop in!

(The very, very gigantic MOTHER MOUSE emerges from the floor-boards under the roots of the Christmas tree. She is very much more terrible to behold than her late offspring; bits of flesh hang from her fingernails and blood is caked at the edges of her mouth and in her whiskers: the remnants of her last repast. She sings as the cowardly toys desert the Nutcracker:)

MOTHER MOUSE: Jump in that Cadillac and flee,
You tubby toys - cowardly!
Ride to Dry Gulch and Calamazoo -
I'd do that if I were you!

(The MOTHER MOUSE comes downstage and takes the corpse of the 7 Headed mouse in her arms.)

MOTHER MOUSE: What? - is no single head left alive? I cradle your corpse as once I did your mewling bald and blind pink infancy. Who did this? Who slew my son?
(addressing the audience and the children in it who, presumably, would say nothing fearing for the Nutcracker's safety)
What is this silence that deafens my ears? Did none of you here see who took the life of my son? Were you then all asleep or in the john? Does not a one of you know the truth:- tell me the truth that I may be avenged. Tell me, tell me, tell me who killed my son that I may kill him! So.... not a sound. To know the truth and not tell it, is not altogether unlike a lie.

DROSSELMEIER: Yet if they tell, they betray him: what a predicament these poor children are in! Life is soooooo ambiguous, isn't it? Ah, come here, Mack, Hack, and you, you silly pretentious Cadillac, and hide behind my shirt sleeves.

NUTCRACKER: I slew thy son and did not say so because I slept, you evil-smelling mouse! But you, you have awakened me from my pleasant rest with all your sobbing and babbling and I would know why you make such a fuss and disturb my well-earned sleep!

MOTHER MOUSE: So, you laughable cripple! you poisoned and beheaded my offspring and now add impudence to your crime!

DROSSELMEIER: Oh, who can save the Nutcracker now?!

NUTCRACKER: I am not afraid of you, wicked mouse of the underworld! Come, Erika Mouse, and do your worst!

(The NUTCRACKER, wielding his bayonet, appears rather small and ridiculous next to the huge MOTHER MOUSE. But he courageously enters into battle with her, limping on a crutch but very nearly immobile. HACK, MACK and CADILLAC, peering out from behind DROSSELMEIER form a kind of commenting CHORUS on the engagement:)

CHORUS: See them fight! see them duel!
Oh, it's awful! oh, it's cruel!
This commentary comes, alack!
From Mack, Hack, and Cadillac!

He is wounded, he can't move!
This is futile, what's it prove?
And the newscasting clique
Is Mack, Hack, and Cadillac!

HACK: She looks a lot like Godzilla
Or some grilla in a thrilla
That I seen one afternoon
On the airplane to Rangoon.

CADILLAC: And he looks like a puny shrimp
With that broken leg and limp!
There jist ain't no contest here --
Pass the vin-ordinaire?

DROSSELMEIER: (doing so) Drown your sorrows, drown your dread:
My Nutcracker's as good as dead!

MACK: Poor G.I. -- he done no wrong.
His name we celebrate in song.

CHORUS: These gifted observations smack
Of Mack, Hack, and Cadillac!

(The MOTHER MOUSE lifts the NUTCRACKER in her paws, looking indeed like a movie prehistoric monster about to munch off her victim's head. But just then DROSSELMEIER gets an idea - the only one that could possibly save the NUTCRACKER.)

DROSSELMEIER: Jane! Jane! Wake up! Your Nutcracker is in terrible trouble!

CADILLAC: Oh, that dreary plain-Jane, what can she do to help? Of what possible good to awaken her?

DROSSELMEIER: Foolish Cadillac, she is a human and therefore somewhat the equivalent of a god among you toys.

CADILLAC: There is nothing foolish about a Cadillac. Only poor people say such things.

MACK & HACK: Jane, Jane, get up, your beloved Nutcracker is in dire need of help!

(DROSSELMEIER, MACK, HACK and CADILLAC sing from their distant safety in the theatre to JANE: Her eyes slowly open.)

D, M, H, & C: Arise, Fair Maiden, heroine:
 The squealing Beast of Berlin
 Is going to bite your boy-friend's head off
 Unless you open your eyes and get off
 Your behind.
 Then look about and find
 Some weapon to whip the mouse with
 Or your dress his blood will be doused with!

NUTCRACKER: (striking at ERIKA MOUSE with his bayonet)
 There - that's for trifling with a marine:-
 Nicks on your knees, toes, and in-between!

MOTHER MOUSE: Idle chatter from a midget -
 I'll chop yer head off and watch you fidget!

JANE: Oh, my wonderful Nutcracker! His broken leg has rendered him helpless against his enemies. I must do something to help him! But what?!

DROSSELMEIER: What every woman does when confronted with a rodent!

JANE: (simple: pained to think) Set down poison or a trap? Oh, please!

DROSSELMEIER: No, to dispatch with the rodent immediately!
 Those measures are taken afterward, poor child!
 Child, dear Jane, look down - at thy feet:....

(JANE casts her gaze downward and a spot follows her eyes: traveling down her dress to her feet: there we notice for the first time (as if appearing quite conveniently now just when it is needed) that she has on one enormous blue slipper -- about two and a half times the size of her other one. It sparkles! A light bulb goes on over her head.)

JANE: If the shoe don't fit, don't wear it!

(JANE removes the great blueslipper and holds it high over her head, aiming it at the MOUSE. But she steps back as she gets ready to throw it and, in doing so, catches the slipper in a crucial, central piece of wiring on the Christmas tree. As she thrusts her arm forward flinging the slipper at the MOUSE, JANE pulls the entire Christmas tree and all its decorations, including the ANGEL, down upon herself. The ANGEL tumbles with an agonizing cry:)

ANGEL: O, all is lost through this, her blu^slipper:
I tumble to earth as at dawn the Big^ADipper!

(The toys all scatter in chaos and most of the lights go off as if broken by the tree's fall. But the MOTHER MOUSE sees her opportunity - and seizes it.)

MOTHER MOUSE: So - you are pinned under the tree, you dreadful offspring of human kind! You who would have bashed out my brains with your Garbo slipper! But the awesome, abstract perfect Idea of Mousehood hath punished thee for thy insolence - and hath given me the only arrangement possible for me to take my revenge upon thee - the true cause of all my sorrow!

JANE: Oh, no, Erika Mouse, don't bite me - don't! How could I be the cause of your sorrow: I never ever saw you before!

MOTHER MOUSE: Indeed, O Feeble-Minded One: for whom then did that dottering Doctor Drosselmeier create the Nutcracker, if not for you? -- that Nutcracker who slew my Seven-Headed son?! Nay, nay, do not try to deny it!

JANE: You can't possibly hold me responsible for what my toys do! I mean, am I my Nutcracker's keeper?

MOTHER MOUSE: An end to chatter and in your side
My razor-sharp teeth I'll slide!!

TOYS: Flee all, flee! All, all flee!
No time to stay and disagree
With what she's done! For she is done
With what she's done and so avenged her son!

MOTHER MOUSE: Eeeeeeeeeekkkkkk! Heh-heh-heh! Eeeeeeeeeekkkk!
I just had to get a bite to eat!

(The gigantic MOUSE scrambles off down under the uprooted roots, her whiskers dripping with fresh blood. And all the toys drop down into the hole as well with a great fuss and clatter. Only the NUTCRACKER is left limp and supine on the floor, his broken leg twisted up half into the air. DROSSELMEIER hurries over to JANE and, quite breathlessly, begins to pull the Christmas tree and roll it off her. She appears very still now.)

DROSSELMEIER: My child! my Jane! Oh, dear - how awful, how perfectly awful for something like this to happen on Christmas Eve. But then again, it would be perfectly awful any night of the year, wouldn't it? Except that it couldn't happen just any night of the year - could it? Know why? - there ain't no Christmas tree around just any night to fall down on poor Jane. And I ain't so tipsy, making it ever so difficult to extricate the child from ---
Oh, gracious! Why, I -- oh, dear....

(DROSSELMEIER finally frees JANE from under the tree - or what he thought was JANE: for she is so swollen up from the MOUSE's bite that she is virtually unrecognizable. In short, she has been transformed - rather unpleasantly.)

JANE: Godfather Drosselmeier, what is the matter? Why are you staring at me?

DROSSELMEIER: Um, nothing, my child, nothing is wrong.

JANE: Then why are you staring at me?

DROSSELMEIER: Am I?

JANE: Oh, I know I ^{am} slow and simple, but even I can tell that something is wrong! Aren't you going to administer to my bite?

DROSSELMEIER: Your bite?

JANE: Yes, Godfather, my bite! I was bitten. You know that, you saw it happen, you told me to throw my slipper at the big mouse and I tried and got bitten for my pains. A mouse that was angry with me for a doll that you, as well, created.

DROSSELMEIER: This doll has brought you some small measure of joy, has it not?

JANE: Why, yes, I think so. He is very lovely.

DROSSELMEIER: Then stop trying to make ^{out} that I am the cause of all the problems in the world.

JANE: But it would appear that you are.

DROSSELMEIER: Yes, it appears that I am. But am not I also the author of whatever brings you joy as well?

JANE: Well, the world is very complicated.

DROSSELMEIER: Just so long as you recognize that, little girl.

JANE: I do. But now what?

DROSSELMEIER: Well, now we have to set about finding a way to restore your former beauty. No question but that we can't leave you looking like this.

JANE: (fighting back tears) Oh, I knew it, I knew it, I've changed, haven't I? I'm hideous, hideous! That bite has run a poison through my veins!

DROSSELMEIER: Now, now, nothing that can't be reversed. This isn't irrevocable like Greek tragedy or something, you know. I've just got to think.

JANE: What have you got to think about? Aren't you a doctor - don't you know what will cure me?

DROSSELMEIER: Now don't suffer a personality change as well. You were always a passive and compliant sweet little thing - and I prefer you stay that way while work things out.

JANE: Grrrrrrrrrrrrr..... Grrrrrrrrrrrrr..... Oh, dear, I'm afraid I've taken on the mouse's temperament through its saliva. I'm rabid.

DROSSELMEIER: (looking at her ears) No, you're still a girl. A girl with a swollen head, that's all.

JANE: Very funny.

DROSSELMEIER: And I do know what will cure you.

JANE: What?

DROSSELMEIER: Well, it's nothing I could lay my mits on right away, understand. In fact, it's something rather hard to come by. In fact, I have no idea where in creation to start looking for it.

JANE: What is it?

DROSSELMEIER: Valerian root.

JANE: What?

DROSSELMEIER: I mean, Valerian, the kernel of the Valerian nut, a single bite of it would restore thy natural good looks in a second. Oh, I'm certain, it does so many things, cures so many ills, it's a kind of panacea, Valerian, it is. But I haven't the foggiest about where to find it.

JANE: (on the verge of tears again) Oh, then what good is it to know what will cure me - when no one knows how to come by it. Why, it could be anywhere, this Valerian nut - in the Matto Grasso or Bhutan!

NUTCRACKER: I know where the Valerian nut is to be found!

DROSSELMEIER: Do you?

NUTCRACKER: Surely!

JANE: Then will you take me to it?

NUTCRACKER: That would be my greatest pride and pleasure!
For you saved me, dear Jane, from certain death
at the teeth of the dreadful mouse and suffered,
in place of me, the brunt of her ill will. But
this land where the sacred Valerian is, is not
easy to get to: it will take a bit of traveling
and some perseverance, I warrant you that much.

JANE: Oh, I'll go anywhere, anywhere,
And I'll also persevere!

DROSSELMEIER: And I had better go along as chaperon.

NUTCRACKER: Then look up there: see that steam pipe and all
the steam that's coming out of it now? and see
that hole in the floorboards around the pipe? -
well, we've got to scamper down it! Let's go!

J, D, & N: Don't mean to leave you in the lurch,
But down we go to search and search
For the yellow and blue Valerian nut
Whose use the Senate would like to rebut
Because it's better than Mother Church
For curing ills. And that's clear-cut!
So -- strut! strut! strut! strut!
Then down to find the Valerian nut!

(They scramble into the hole and shimmy down the pipe. Steam
pours out from it as from Hell. Finally they come to the
bottom, tumbling over each other, and sit up dazed somewhere
in the Underworld. They rub their sore limbs. Presently,
MACK and HACK drive by in the CADILLAC as if on a Sunday drive.)

CADILLAC: (sexy) Hi, G.I.!

NUTCRACKER: Where are we?

M, H, & C: You're in the hole! You're in the hole!
When you lack the self-control
To drive straight or take a stroll,
But trip instead and tumble down
A piping hot pipe or pole
Heated by some kind of troll,
You're in for lots of rigmarole:-
Perhaps a Mouse of bad renown,
Some shmahta-rag or hand-me-down,
A mink stoll, a curtainpole,
A chicken down or prince's crown
Or bag of kittens marked, "Please drown."
But on the whole,
You're in the hole!

NUTCRACKER: Very edifying.

CADILLAC: Don't get smart. I norm'ly don't stop for hitchhikers.

HACK: Just what is it that you three want?

JANE: Please, good sirs and madame, don't get angry with us: but we are looking for the Valerian nut.

MACK: What for?

DROSSELMEIER: So we may cure what ails poor Jane.

CADILLAC: Nothing, I fear, can cure what ails plain-Jane. She's just plain plain, you see. It's a matter of genes, you got it or you don't, and she, I fear, don't got it.
(just then, seeing JANE in a clear light; startled)
She jist got it. Bad.

NUTCRACKER: Would either of you two short-order cooks know where the Valerian nut is?

CADILLAC: Why, G.I., don't you?

NUTCRACKER: Well, yes, I thought I did. I mean, of course, I do - know where the Valerian nut is. It's in the Land of Nuts.

MACK & HACK: But of course, where else would it be?!

NUTCRACKER: Where else, indeed. But that's just the problem! You see, I thought I knew where the Land of the Nuts was - I mean, it was right under the hole in the floorboards around the pipe. I saw it here yesterday!

CADILLAC: Well, it was here right up until yesterday - but then Erika Mouse and her Seven-Headed Son took over and since that moment nothing's been the same in the Underworld.

HACK: Tell you what: why don't you ask the Gravel Gertie doll where the Land of the Nuts is now? She's a kind of matriarchal type - they knows just about everything, she'd know where.

NUTCRACKER: But where is she?

CADILLAC: She's where she always is, hard by her hovel. I just passed her on my way down to The Roots. Hop in, I'll take you there.
(to MACK & HACK)
O.K., boys, this is where you two get off.

MACK & HACK: Well, we never! Where does she get off to tel---

CADILLAC: Get off! Get off!
 (MACK & HACK do so)
 And you three get in.
 (JANE, NUTCRACKER & DROSSELMEIER do so)
 And off we go! So long, suckers!
 (she drives off, heavy on the accelerator)

MACK & HACK: (stranded, looking kind of dopey together)
 What a crusty, thankless dame
 To dump us here and feel no shame!
 People say: "Put out or get out,"
 But never just scoff:
 "Get off! Get off!"

(The lights go out on MACK & HACK and come up on the GRAVEL GERTIE DOLL who is dancing with her broom in front of her abode. She has huge protuberant eyes and floor-length, soft grey hair. An ugly duplicate of the well-known original.)

GERTIE DOLL: I need a man so bad I'm mad:
 Boy, am I homely, boy, am I sad;
 Only a mother could look around and see
 Something to love here passionately:
 Remember me?
 I hid in a cave cause I wasn't too brave,
 But mostly I grovel
 By my old hovel:
 Remember me?
 I ain't from a movie, I ain't from a novel:
 Remember me?
 My hair is floor-length and grey,
 My voice is like Dennis O'Day,
 I go back quite a way:
 Remember me?
 I ain't from folklore, I ain't from TV:
 Remember me?
 I'm a friend of Dick Tracy's:
 You buy me in Macy's:
 Remember me?

(The CADILLAC rounds a bend and pulls up screeching in front of GERTIE. JANE claps her hands with glee.)

JANE: Half an angel and half a loon,
 You first appeared in a famed cartoon;
 A mixture of honey and vitriol ---
 You're the Gravel Gertie Doll!

GERTIE DOLL: Right you are, sweetie, on the first try! Eeeeeee!
 (spotting DROSSELMEIER)
 Eeeeeee! Howdy, handsome; trick or treat?

DROSSELMEIER: A trick is a treat. At my age.

GERTIE DOLL: Not always. What can I do for you three travelers?

CADILLAC: Love your broom. Does it go non-stop to Tampa and St. Pete?

GERTIE DOLL: Aaaaah, why don't you go sit it out in the lobby!

JANE: Oh, Gertie, we're looking for the Land of Nuts.

GERTIE DOLL: (quickly) Yeah, but that means edible nuts, you wretch!

DROSSELMEIER: Now, Gertie, don't be so self-conscious and insecure. You seem to suffer from a very weak self-image. I'm sure none of us here thinks so little of you as you do of yourself.

CADILLAC: Yeah, listen to Dr. Esselen, he does more than just blow weed up at Big Sur.

NUTCRACKER: Indeed, the good doctor here is the leading spokesman for ~~our stoned but unhigh~~ generation.

JANE: So can you tell us, Gravel Gertie dear, where the Land of Nuts is ~~presently~~ located?

GERTIE: The Land of Nuts has been re-located. Erika Mouse and her Seven-Headed son absconded with it.

CADILLAC: We know all that - we want to know where.

GERTIE: Do ya? Well, why ~~come~~ to me?

DROSSELMEIER: Cause you're a kind of matriarchal type, Gertie, and so is Erika Mouse. Matriarchal types tend to understand each other and hang out together.

NUTCRACKER: Therefore, it was natural for us to assume that you must know her and that she might very well have confided to you the new location of the Land of Nuts.

GERTIE: Yeah, well, naah. Yis assumed all wrong. I'm too ugly to have friends. So nobody confides in me. I don't know nothin'.

DROSSELMEIER: And from this instance here at hand ought we all extract a pertinent lesson:- that abismal ignorance is often a by-product of one's lack of self-respect!

NUTCRACKER: For when you think little of yourself, how can others think more of you and be your friend and tell you things?

GERTIE: But I'll tell ya what, gorgeous:- why dontcha ask the ^{Blue} Greta Garbo Slipper where old Erika Mouse is now?

NUTCRACKER: Why her?

Big
AD

GERTIE: Cause the Slipper had the last contact with Erika Mouse - heh! heh! - hit her right in the head, if I ain't mistaken!

NUTCRACKER: And just where might we locate the Big Blue Greta Garbo Slipper?

GERTIE: Oh, ya might "locate" her at The Roots Cafe - She's there most any time o' night and day: Since she give up fun 'n flicks She hides out there 'n stares at tricks.

JANE: Oh, thank you, Gravel Gertie!

GERTIE: Forget it, honey. Ya need all the help ya kin git. So I guess I'll see yis three later. (indicating the CADILLAC) And as fer you, partner, I'll take you in right now! Eeeeeeeee.

CADILLAC: I beg your pardon, you most certainly will not. I find you very ugly.

GERTIE: You may find me ugly, but ya'll be stayin' here to keep me company, sweetie, nevertheless. Ya see, you got four flats.

CADILLAC: What?!

GERTIE: Ya blew 'em on my front yard - didn't think they call me Gravel Gertie fer nothin', did ya? Heh! he! heh! Eeeeeeeee.

(GERTIE grabs the CADILLAC and starts voraciously hugging and kissing it. Lights out on the GRAVEL GERTIE compound and up on The Roots Cafe. This a cafe whose decor consists of the roots of the Christmas tree, reaching, twining, and twisting down under the floorboards. The BLUE GRETA GARBO SLIPPER is seated at a cafe table, smoking a holder-held cigarette, sipping a "viskey", her aged legs crossed. She has huge droopy lids. Her voice is husky and accented. She is a shoe.)

BLUE SLIPPER: The days creep, the years fly -
 Oh me! oh my!
 And I am bored, I am blue:
 Aren't you?
 But I want to be alone,
 Everything I need I own:
 Cable TV, a telephone,
 HiKarate and Brut cologne.
 I want to be alone.

I'm the Big Blue Greta Garbo Slipper
 Cause I'm blue, very blue, not chipper.
 And they said I had big feet -
 The biggest on the shooting lot or street,
 But vhat matter? - every man I want to, I meet.
 And I want to be alone.

DROSSELMEIER: Well, I don't know, but obviously some actor who wants to branch out.
(they both scream at DROSSEY's vitticism)

BLUE SLIPPER: So sit down, Drossey, and haf a viskey on me and tell old Greta vhat brings you to this secretive cafe in the back streets of the Newyoricans' New Yorico barrio? -Vaiteer, two viskies!

(The waiter, an absolute GHOUL, appears as out of thin air and peers down at the senior citizens. It intones:-)

GHOUL: Vill dhey be straight up, Madam?

BLUE SLIPPER: No! dhey'll be straight down!
(screaming, etc.)

GHOUL: (bending over, as if to confide in Madam's ear)
But, Madam, dhis article can down a qvart of Old Granddad in a qvart of an hour.

BLUE SLIPPER: Ghoul! Dhis article is Old Granddad! Now, do as I tell you and russle up dhem viskies! You vas sayin', Drossey - oh, Drossey, vhat times ve used to have!

DROSSELMEIER: Well, Greta, I've actually come on a mission t---

BLUE SLIPPER: Oh, look, Drossey, it's a full moon tonight, a full moon!
(moaning and swooning as in her most cliched flicks)

DROSSELMEIER: Greta, I've come to ask if you know the whereabouts of ---

BLUE SLIPPER: How can I know anybody's vhereabouts when nobody knows my vhereabouts? People bore me, you know I'm too good for them!

DROSSELMEIER: But this is urgent - you must think! I'll show you why, you'll see what I mean - it's an emergency. Jane - Jane, will you come in?

(JANE enters accompanied by the NUTCRACKER whose leg is still bandaged. JANE's condition is somewhat more advanced now.)

BLUE SLIPPER: Oh! Dear! Didn't I see you in a Maria Ouspenskaya movie?

JANE: Oh, I don't think so. I don't even know who she is. In fact, it couldn't be: I'm not an actress.

BLUE SLIPPER: You don't have to tell me! Ghoul! bring a small candle here.

GHOUL: (re-entering with a candle and 2 whiskies) Vill Madam have her viskies au fondue?

BLUE SLIPPER: (lighting the small candle) No, Madam will not.
It's just that it's better to light one small
candle than curse the --- EEEEEEEEEEEEEKKKK!!!!
The curse of the Weremouse!

(The BIG BLUE GRETA GARBO SLIPPER flees the cafe, screaming.
JANE is horrified, DROSSELMEIER and the NUTCRACKER more nervous
than ever. The GHOUL takes on a new interest in life.)

JANE: OH! I knew it! Weremouse! I'm a weremouse!

GHOUL: And the moon will be full tonight, Missy. What a
fun you can have if you play your bite right.

NUTCRACKER: Oh, the Garbo Slipper fled - now we'll never find
out where Erika Mouse and the Valerian nut are!

DROSSELMEIER: (heating the two whiskies with the fondue candle)
Doesn't matter:- her vanity prevents her from
knowing or seeing anyone outside of herself any-
way.

JANE: You mean, unlike Gravel Gertie, Greta thinks too
highly of herself?

DROSSELMEIER: (downing both whiskies) That's right. So she
wouldn't know who Erika is even if she barked
into her -- which she did, barked right into her
head, right, Jane? -What aim!

JANE: Grrrrrrrrrrrrrrr.... Grrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrr.....

NUTCRACKER: Oh, I'm discouraged. Truly discouraged.

GHOUL: Why don't you just lay down and die?

DROSSELMEIER: (hiccup) And I, too, am discouraged. If I had
only created your leg properly, reinforced it the
way I know it should be reinforced, none of this
would have happened - for then, with your true
strength, you should have done in Erika long ago.
But, instead, because of my unprofessional
attitude, we are all at that monster mouse's
mercy.

GHOUL: Would you like me to lay you out alongside the
wooden one?

DROSSELMEIER: Oh, once I thought I knew how to make puppets,
everyone said I could make them well and I believed
it. Now, I don't think I can do anything, any-
thing at all, and don't want to.

GHOUL: I play a pretty spooky organ: let me gif you a
key, Drossey, and you can sing.
(sitting at the cafe's organ and striking a
dreary note; then, accompanying DROSSELMEIER)

DROSSELMEIER: Ah! there's the dreary note!
 It makes the Ghoul grin and gloat.
 Ain't it awesome and remote?
 Oh, I know that note by rote!

GHOUL: It makes me grin and gloat,
 Grin and gloat!

DROSSELMEIER: That note's the clarion called despair
 And sob of hearts beyond repair:
 It's when your coat is worn threadbare
 And the party's out of wine and Gruyère.

GHOUL: The note makes me grin and gloat,
 Grin and gloat.

DROSSELMEIER: When I hear that tragic key
 Everything melts down in me
 And I drip away to be
 With the souls lost at sea.
 And the bums on the bow-er-ee.

GHOUL: It makes me grin and gloat.

NUTCRACKER: Oh, I can't go on a moment longer! What's the
 use of even trying. We're a total loss. And
 what's the use of wearing this bandage all around
 the Underworld? That's the biggest joke of all!
 What do I need this big, silly thing for? It
 won't do a bit of good - it can't help heal me!
 It's a bloody piece of uselessness! It mocks my
 misery!

(The NUTCRACKER unwinds the bandage from his leg and throws
 it away in anger and despair. (Buoyed by invisible wires) the
 bandage twists and floats across the stage; then, after traveling
 about, it picks up speed, twirls about with blinding velocity
 and (with a grand gesture of stage sleight o' hand) turns into
 a large BANDAGE DOLL which can sing and dance. So it does so.)

BANDAGE: Bandage up, come on, get smart:
 Give yourself a second start!
 Just because you hurt a little,
 Doesn't mean your brain is brittle!
 So take your aching, broken heart
 And bandage it - for that's true art!

And never give up!
 Never say die!
 Don't be fed-up
 Cause you always can try
 Again once you apprehend
 That you can bandage up and mend.

(All the rest jumping up and forming a wild chorus line,
 kicking and dancing as in a punk-disco)
 GHOUL: (speaking) Just listen to that petticoat.

ALL: A Night at The Roots!
Get tight at The Roots!
Put on your jeans and high-heel boots:
Stomp out a rhythm, stomp out a beat,
Get off your fanny and use your feet!

BANDAGE: Now I'll tell you an anecdote:
They tore me off a petticoat,
Cause I was useless under skirts,
So, now I'm good for where it hurts.

ALL: A Night at The Roots!
Its management's in cahoots
With nurse's aids who seek recruits
To start a dance craze and a fad
So they can bandage blistered feet like mad!

BANDAGE: Try again, try again
Like Balboa at Darien:
If he could find the Pacific Ocean,
Then what the heck's all the commotion
About your rather simple task?
Looking for Erika? Well, then, just ask!

(The BANDAGE suddenly moves aside and, in doing so, reveals the Seven-Headed Mouse's HARD HEART seated at a cafe table; it looks very impatient and annoyed and growls at the waiter:)

HARD HEART: Ghoul! Let's have some service around here!

GHOUL: Yavol, certainly, Herr Hard Heart. What vill it be?

NUTCRACKER: Why, look, look there, that's the Seven-Headed Mouse's Hard Heart!

HARD HEART: The usual!

GHOUL: One hard cider coming up!

HARD HEART: On the rocks!

GHOUL: But of course rocks, hard rocks.

JANE: Isn't that Hard Heart the remnants of the son of Erika Mouse?

DROSSELMEIER: Precisely. And are you thinking what I'm thinking?

NUTCRACKER: That if anyone would know where Erika Mouse is, the remnants of her son would!

DROSSELMEIER: Precisely.

NUTCRACKER: Oh, but of what possible use to ask it? A Hard Heart would never tell us anything we want to know. That's why it's a hard heart.

- BANDAGE: Well, you never do learn anything, my boy, do you? For what reason could a Hard Heart possibly exist except to be finally softened?
- NUTCRACKER: Softened? But how would one go about softening a Hard Heart?
- BANDAGE: Well, now, that is for you to go about discovering, is it not? How else will you ever learn what living with others is all about unless you go about it? And unless you discover what living with others entails, you can never become a real person: but will remain, instead, a wooden nutcracker forever. Now I suggest you start by asking it what ails it.
- NUTCRACKER: That's not easy for me, seeing as how I'm what really ails it more or less. I mean, it's a mere remnant of its former whole on account of me, wouldn't you say, Mr. Bandage?
- JANE: I'll help you, poor Nutcracker, you needn't get embarrassed so long as I can spare you that. Mr. Hard Heart, tell me, pray, what ails thee?
- HARD HEART: Get lost, hussy.
- JANE: I'll bet you have a lovely deep bass or baritone voice! I know it just by your manly demeanor. Perhaps it can give wings to your troubles.
- GHOUL: (reentering with the order) There's some hard stuff on the house for the entertainment. And an even harder bed of concrete for those who kill the business around here -- with their sour pussies, for instance... Could be a Mickey Finn in that cider right now, you never know....
- HARD HEART: (running^a finger around inside its collar, feeling the pressure; giving in:)
 A Hard Heart never dies,
 It just fades away
 To some secretive old cafe
 In the skid row streets of town
 Where every one is feeling down
 And there it feels at home,
 A heart of steel and chrome:
 A heart of iron, rock, steel and chrome.
- JANE: And why do you feel so down, Mr. Hard Hat, I mean, Mr. Hard Heart?
- HARD HEART: Cause there is little left of me,
 Of what I used to be.
- JANE: There is very little left of what I used to be.
 I was once a meek and mild-mannered little girl,

now I'm a weed of evil in the guise of a weremouse and your dam did that I fear. And there is very little left of Doctor Drosselmeier and what he used to be: a creator, a man of ingeniousness and medicine, a specialist, oh, yes, not a family doctor, a specialist. Now he's a rummy. And a hack. And there is very little left of what the Nutcracker used to be: for not being able to crack nuts any more, he is slated for the woodpile, I fear, and from there a quick toss into the fireplace, a thing that warms our chilled extremities for but a moment, no more, and then 'tis but a cinder, an ash or two.

HARD HEART: (beginning to soften) It's a hard world. But I don't see what I can do about it.

JANE: Ah! but there is everything that you can do about it. For your mother, the great big monster mouse, who is the perfect reflection of the pure, Abstract Idea of Mousehood, has absconded with the Land of Nuts and along with it, all the nuts that lived there.

HARD HEART: So? I should think the Underworld is better off with a few less nuts.

JANE: Not so, Mr. Hard Heart. For among those nuts was the Valerian nut - a mere taste of which would restore me to my former self. And if he should see this happen, my Godfather, Doctor Drosselmeier, would doubtless be restored to his own former self: a man with confidence in his talents and creations. And this once so, he could then easily fix up the Nutcracker, reshaping his ill-formed leg so that it is well again and can crack nuts. Would not you like to see all these things come about? -See the world set at rights again?

HARD HEART: What would you have me do?

JANE: Bring us to your mother and the Land of Nuts, for she is your mother and you must know where she is. And we will do the rest.

HARD HEART: What's in it for me?

DROSSELMEIER: The pure, unmitigated pleasure of doing good and bringing pleasure to others. I guarantee you, there's nothing like it in all the world!

(The HARD HEART ^{stands} and leads everyone at The Roots Cafe in a circular dance which gets faster and faster until, like a spinning propeller, they seem to blur and become invisible, dragging the Cafe and its whole world into invisibility with them. Strob lights and strange music dizzy the theatre.)

HARD HEART: I'm a Hard-hearted Son of a Breck,
But I'm through now with all that dreck:
For I give up my commy bent,
Yes, I really do relent -
For I've seen the end and I repent
Of ever wanting a leftist totalitarian state
Where your brains, soul, art and talent you must
abnegate --
And from the rapidly encroaching New Dark Ages
I'll turn back a couple of history's pages
And restore you three
To a land that's free!

So spin and like a propeller turn!
And melt, Dark Ages, down and burn!
Twirl and whirl
With this little girl,
All of you -- the whole cafe!
And we'll redeem those led astray
For the young, the strong, the brave and the free,
The artists and lovers of Democracy!

(When they stop spinning, the Cafe and its crowd have disappeared, and JANE, NUTCRACKER, DROSSELMEIER and HARD HEART find themselves in a new place:- The Land of Nuts. Seated on a throne, laughing demonically and cracking her whip, is a sanguinary ERIKA MOUSE. She presides over a huddled mass of NUTS, all of whom are chained together and are of an identical innocuous color and shape. There are nearly a dozen of them and they cringe together in front of a flat on which is painted hundreds of these same shaped and colored NUTS going back to infinity - so that the realized NUTS appear to be continuous with the painted ones. They whimper pathetically.)

MOTHER MOUSE: Eeeeeeeee! Heh! Heh! Heh! Heh! Fools! Scoundrels!
-Wastrels! I know why ye have come! Ye seek
the sacred Valerian Nut! - well, ye seek in vain,
in vain! - for look, here chained together are
all the nuts in Nutland and I have put a curse
on them, on every one of them so that they all
look alike! They are identical! And you, O
Nutcracker, cripple that you are, and so not
able to crack them open and get at their kernels,
cannot now or ever tell which is the Valerian!
But now, since you have come into my land and
under my power, I shall turn the three of you as
well into nuts - nuts looking and being no
different from these identically looking commy-
enslaved nuts!
(suddenly noticing DROSSELMEIER for the first time)
Hmmmmmm, who's the senior citizen?

JANE: He is my godfather, Doctor Drosselmeier.

MOTHER MOUSE: Oh, yeah? Well, then, in that case, I think you
useless fools may have an alternative at that.
Tell you what:- I will point out which nut is

the Valerian and let you two take it with you with all safe conduct that I shall provide back to the realm of humans, if he remains in Nutland.

NUTCRACKER: Oh, no, never! We are not going to leave without him.

MOTHER MOUSE: You are not going to leave at all! For exactly at the stroke of Midnight, when I come into possession of and may articulate my full demonic powers, I shall bite you three in the head and turn you all into the nameless nuts you so obviously already are! And now, get out of my way, you're blocking my view of the full moon!

NUTCRACKER: Oh, but had I the use of my poor lame left leg, and were it as difficult as locating a needle in a haystack or a Snowman in the Himal'yas, yet I would to it and crack open each and every nut, though there be a thousand of them and a thousand times a thousand of them, until I found that Valerian and gave thee, my beloved mistress, to eat of it and be cured! But, alas, I have not the use of my leg and so cannot save thee, Jane!

JANE: Dear Nutcracker, wonderful Nutcracker, how I know now that you would if you could....
(smiling and kissing the NUTCRACKER)
Some people get to a subway station
Just as the train is pulling in,
And some just as it's pulling out.
To some all life is a long vacation
For they enter the world a mandarin;
To others it's an endless drought.
Do I ever ask myself why?
No, not I.

Some shoppers fancy whatever is new,
Their eyes only brighten at a thing's debut;
But others look for beaded clutches,
And lizard purses and old things such as
Deco compacts and cigarette cases,
Cloth gimcracks with harlequin faces,
Genuine blueblack fountain pens
And porcelain hounds tacked to Parisiennes.
Did you ever ask yourself why?
Not I.

Some only seek a lover dight
In present force and future might;
But I love thee for what thou art
And love thee now as at the start
When thou hadst all thy powers great,
Which now are chipped away by fate,
For then I saw the Good in thee --
And wounds of war and changing wind
Can never lessen that for me:

For that alone is disciplined
 Against the tax of destiny.
 Do I ever ask myself why?
 No, not I.

NUTCRACKER: Look, look! My leg!

DROSSELMEIER:What is it?

NUTCRACKER: It moves, it flexes! It juts out at will, it
 pulls back at will! It kicks up! it stomps down!
 It's fixed -- fixed!

JANE: Oh, Godfather, it's a miracle!

DROSSELMEIER:No, no miracle -- unless love be a miracle. Why,
 yes, yes, love is a miracle: for it is your love
 for the Nutcracker that has set right again his
 splintered limb!

NUTCRACKER: Do you indeed love me, Jane?

JANE: Yes, dear Nutcracker, I do.

NUTCRACKER: And then is it indeed her love for me, Doctor
 Drosselmeier, that has fixed my leg? For if 'tis
 that, why then, but Jane must be true royalty!

DROSSELMEIER:Why do you say that?

NUTCRACKER: Why? Everyone in Toyland says it:- that only the
 true love of a true queen could heal my damaged
 leg because it was damaged by hate. A true hate.
 A hate such as only can exist between siblings.

MOTHER MOUSE:And a hate that was fostered by another true
 queen, a great queen, namely myself - the Queen
 of Nutland, the Queen of the Night! But enough
 of this palaver, you bleeding-hearts, prepare to
 make your peace with whatever it is you worship,
 for it is nearly Midnight! Eeeeeeeeeeeeeee!!!!

NUTCRACKER: No, Fiend! Monster! Maniac! This ain't your
 night! For I am healed, and now that I am healed
 I shall crack open the nuts and find the Valerian
 and cure Jane of her weremousehood.

MOTHER MOUSE:Her who-what-where? -her where-who-what?

DROSSELMEIER:Rules are rules, old woman, and you know as well
 as we that so long as we are able to crack the
 nuts, and able because we have strength by dint of
 love, then for so long we are not under your
 power to be changed by you into nuts! For hate
 knows when it has no force in the face of love!

MOTHER MOUSE:Oh yeah? Well, rules may be rules, but I haven't

told you all of them:- which are, to wit, that you have only three tries at cracking open nuts and finding the Valerian - and if you fail in three, then it's my turn, and you'll be three nuts!

HARD HEART: Now wait a minute, Mother: that's not fair!

MOTHER MOUSE: Neither is life! -Kennedy said that, remember?

HARD HEART: But you didn't say that before.

MOTHER MOUSE: (hard) Well, I'm sayin' it now!

HARD HEART: But why, then, just three tries?

MOTHER MOUSE: Because there are three of them.

HARD HEART: Oh, yeah? Well, how about seven tries - because I had seven heads.

MOTHER MOUSE: Four!

HARD HEART: Six!

MOTHER MOUSE: Five! - And that's as high as I go -- five's a compromise, a good enough compromise. -You traitor! My own son. I'd say you were off your head for taking their side, but you're off all seven of your heads, so forget it. And now, no more palaver: start your five tries at once, Nutcracker, and pick shrewdly - for you bargain for the freedom, health, and eternal identity of yourself and your friends in these tries. Now, crack away like Krakatao!

NUTCRACKER: How can I pick shrewdly when every nut in Nutland looks alike? -Oh, well, there's no where to start except at the beginning: so, let's see, I'll just select the very ~~first~~ nut here. It'd be like her to place the one we want right in front of our nose: --because most people don't see what's right in front of their noses.

(he selects the foremost NUT, which is about 2 x 2 ft, rolls it centerstage and straddles it)

I straddle you, Nut,
And I'll paddle you, Nut,
If you don't split
As soon as I hit
My thigh with my fist.

-Get the gist?

(he strains and socks his thigh, once, twice)
Now don't be a bad jack,
Crack, Nut, crack, crack!

-There we go!

(The shell of the NUT splits in two and falls away. The kernel,

which is a beautifully mounted small piece of the GREAT WALL OF CHINA (very recognizably so, but with two dancing shoes visible underneath it), sings and dances, encouraging the audience to guess who it is:)

WALL OF CHINA: Lots of culture, Confucius and Lao-Tzu,
 Laundry tickets, "Yellow Menace," and Mao, too:
 Chop-chop! -say, can you guess
 What kind of nut I am? -No? -Yes?
 I'm very long and I surround
 One-eighth the earth around and round:
 Six hundred million folks are in a rut
 Because I walled them in. What kind of nut
 Am I? Can you guess?
 No? Yes?

Well, everybody used to call
 Me the very high "Great Wall
 Of China."

In ancient times no wall was fine-a --
 In height higher nor in length more supreme --
 Since I was built with an ingenious scheme,
 Cause I'm still standing and still in the pink:-
 Oh, yes, I'm still a perfect rink
 Around the present Red regime
 Which I sort of ream.
 Yet some say I'm no wall
 At all,
 But just a bummer,
 And the Chink
 You see in Shakespeare's "Mid-Summer
 Night's Dream!"

HARD HEART: Oh, I know what kind of nut that is, don't you?

JANE: No, what?

HARD HEART: A Walnut!

JANE: A Walnut! Oh, dear, that will never do!

WALL OF CHINA: Nevertheless, my child, that's exactly what I am!

MOTHER MOUSE: Eeeeeeeee! Fabulous! Joy in the morning! That's one strike out, Nutcracker! one out for you! I'm so happy I could bust a bloodvessel anticipatin' your failure!

NUTCRACKER: You mean, you'd crack your own nuts to spite your face.

MOTHER MOUSE: You know, I find you as cheeky as a comic strip and twice as dumb. Now get on with the nutcracking - you have four chances left.

NUTCRACKER: (selecting a second NUT from the center of the mass of them) Let me see:- here's one that

looks ~~as~~ as good as any other. I'll try it.
(rolling the second NUT out and proceeding as
he explains:)

I place you, Nut, beside one leg --
And lift my other one this high --
Then snap it -- for my second try --
Down to crack you like an egg!

(The SECOND NUT's shell cracks open and out pops its kernel,
ARNOLD BLACK-EGG, a professional weight-lifter with a really
unbelievable chest expansion and an inferiority complex --
and a cute face and an Austrian accent. Everyone stares in
dismay. ARNOLD gets into some classic poses.)

JANE: What is that?

ARNOLD: Arnold Black-Egg is my name,
I can get 'most any dame
I want to date me
If I've a mind to it.
Unt don't debate me
Unless you're blind to it --
Mine built, I mean - mine fabulous frame --
Cause it's mine fortune unt mine fame!

Now I ain't vhat you call defensive --
"Just let live unt let the mens live,"
I always say -- unt since I always say;
"Veight-lifting is yavel here to stay"
-Zo alzo, big muscles, zere here to stay."

Mit barbells unt veights
I get gorgeous dates,
Cause zey make tip-top shape
In mine calve unt huge nape --
See dhese pecs --
I vill break your necks
If you laugh at me --
Let me alone -- just let me be! --
Zo now -- if you vant da best,
Just ogle dhis chest ---

DROSSELMEIER: A Chestnut -- that's a Chestnut!

HARD HEART: Well, I didn't think it was a Bicepsnut or an
abdominal one.

JANE: A Chestnut? I thought it was a Hazelnut. Aren't
its eyes hazel?

NUTCRACKER: Oh, dear.

JANE: Can you believe how many kernels, clothes, and
folks around here have a Northern European accent?

DROSSELMEIER: Cause this is based on a Northern European classic:
nicht war, dumpkoff?!

look

MOTHER MOUSE: Yeah, but how they take liberties with them classics around here. I hardly recognize myself.

JANE: Me neither. I can hardly recognize myself. And I'm getting very worried - cause don't I get worse when the full moon is out - I mean, being a weremouse?

DROSSELMEIER: Uh-huh.

JANE: Then it won't be long now, Godfather. The moon is half risen and I'm wizened with long nails and down!

DROSSELMEIER: Maybe you should wait in the lobby.

JANE: Grrrrrrrrr.....

MOTHER MOUSE: All right, Crackerjack, make your third move. And you there, the Chestnut kernel, thank you. Thank you very much indeed...

CHESTNUT: You velcome. I zee you after, ja?

JANE: Please, Mr. Nutcracker, choose the Valerian this time. I'm getting desperate. Grrrrrrr....

NUTCRACKER: I'm doing my very best, Jane, but all this pressure isn't helping me one bit you know. How can one make wise choices with a double deadline?

JANE: Grrrrrrrrrr.....

NUTCRACKER: O.K., O.K. Hmmmm, this nut seems to be bouncing around a bit here - like it's trying to say something - if to me, what then but that it is the Valerian?!

(getting a hold on the "bouncing" NUT and steadying it so that he can work on it)

Now just hold still, you bouncy Nut

--Still, I say, until I split you:

Then whate'er's inside you shut

Will be free -- so let me hit you!

(The NUTCRACKER smacks the NUT about with his legs and it cracks in two. Out comes a huge auburn BEETLE with a Ringo Starr hair-do. It carries a guitar and is singing, "I Want to Hold Your Hand." Most jump with the joy of recognition, as if this were all just a guessing game: but JANE is beside herself.)

JANE: Oh, no, that's not the Valerian! No way, bluejay.

MOTHER MOUSE: Oh, shoot! that one is easy. It's a Betel Nut.

HARD HEART: Almost too easy -- I should have thought it was a Cashew -- since it made so much cash!!

(screaming at its own vitticism)

BEEBLE: Yeah! Yeah! Yeah! that Betel Nut is good to chew -
Now maybe not for me and not for you:
But folks down Southeast Asia way,
Them Thais and Campucheans say
The Betel Nut is good to chew!
Chew! Chew! you won't be blue!

Just wrap a climbing pepper leaf
Around the nut in a Betel Palm
That's growing right out on the reef,
Then add some burnt-up choral lime,
Give the thing a little time
And poof! you've got the Asian chew:
The Betel cures the Asian flu -
The Betel Nut! - you won't be blue
No more -- you won't be blue
No more -- you won't be blue
No more --

MOTHER MOUSE: Shut that damn Beetle up! - I can't stand concert
music - give me disco or give me death!

JANE: Asian flu? I don't have the Asian flu - that's
not what ails me! Oh, Nutcracker, what are you doing?

MOTHER MOUSE: He's doing everything to play right into my hands!
Three strikes against you, wise-guy! I said, get
rid of that Beetle - Arnold, box its ears - if
you can find them under all that hair!

JANE: All that hair! Gulp! You see, Godfather,
everyone is noticing! Oh, hurry, hurry!

DROSSELMEIER: Patience, my child, patience. The Nutcracker
still has two tries.

MOTHER MOUSE: And then he dies! - Or becomes the very nuts he
cracks, which is much the same thing.
(to HARD HEART)
I don't know why they complain about the Aryan
influence around here. Seems to me there's more
talk about matters Asiatic than anything else.

HARD HEART: Too true, too blue, and too bad.

JANE: Grrrrrrrrr.....

HARD HEART: Ooops - did I say something wrong?

MOTHER MOUSE: Try number four, Nutcracker! The moon's three-
fourths into the sky - hop to it!

JANE: She's just so sure of herself.

NUTCRACKER: Tell me.

JANE: O.K., I will. How about that one?
(pointing to a NUT which is set aside from the others as if to escape notice)

NUTCRACKER: Oh, yes, hiding out, are you? I'll bet dollars to donuts this is the one.
(getting the NUT in scissor-hold)
I'll be gentle, I'll be true:
One good clamp should open you!

(The NUT cracks, and out steps an amorous JAGUAR: it moves immediately into a frantic routine:)

JAGUAR: Nyoka the Carioca girl
Ain't no Latin con:
She's the luscious, milky pearl
Of the Amazon!

Nyoka does the frantic dance
Of Bahia fame:
If the studs who see her, prance -
They are not to blame.

Nyoka the Carioca girl
Men love from afar:
Cause she loves to pet and curl
With a jaguar!

Nyoka in the noisy night
Hears a tropic beat:
When the bucks begin to fight
She is on her feet:

Nyoka leaves them all behind
Who'd her suitors be --
So her suitors I remind
She belongs to me!

(Everyone on stage grabs a piranha fan-mask and, holding them before their faces, join in with the JAGUAR as a busy CHORUS:)

CHORUS: Piranha! Piranha!
Just put
A bleeding foot
In the Amazon and a hundred of 'em are on ya!

Piranha! Piranha!
Will eat
A scrap of meat
Whether it's on a long horn cattle's hide or your
feet!

Piranha! Piranha!
Clean out
A big hog stout
In a couple seconds and they can do the same to
you in there about!

ALL: Nyoka! Nyoka!
 It sure ain't the polka!
 It's not a fox-trot or a waltz:
 Nothin' Yankee, nothin' false!
 A Carioca! It's the Carioca!

JANE: Oh, that love-sick jaguar is a Brazil Nut!

DROSSELMEIER: Yes, it's a Brazil Nut: I didn't think so frenetic-
ally self-confident a routine would betoken the
 Valerian.

JANE: But, Godfather, don't you see:- that leaves us
 with but a single try left. And look: the moon
 has nearly ascended to her throne in the sky!

DROSSELMEIER: Then let me pick the last nut to be cracked. We
 can't take any further chances with my inventions.
 (he pushes aside the crowd of identical NUTS until
 he reveals a very tiny ONE hidden in the dead
 center of them. He starts back with delight:)
 Ah! I believe I've struck gold!

NUTCRACKER: What? That measly shrimp?!

DROSSELMEIER: Big things come in small packages, my boy. No,
 no, step back, let me do it - stuff like this has
 got to be handled with kid gloves, not hard pantaloons.

NUTCRACKER: They're just standard army fatigues, a little loud
 on the camouflage, maybe, but ---

DROSSELMEIER: (prying apart the tiny shell) There - it's easier
 than opening a beached muscle. Ah-ha! Success!

JANE: What? - that?

DROSSELMEIER: Yes, my dear. That.

JANE: But that looks like a pea-nut to me: why, it's
 no bigger'n a pea in a pod!

DROSSELMEIER: Just so. And I've lost my specs, so tell me,
 Jane, what color is it? Yellow or blue?

JANE: (approaching dubiously, peering down, bending over)
 Blue.

DROSSELMEIER: Just so. Good. Maximum strength.

MOTHER MOUSE: Foiled, foiled! You fiends!

HARD HEART: Oh, mother, take off your glasses and join the fun.

JANE: Eeeek! The moon! Let me to it!

(The stage is suddenly hit with the full blast of white moonlight.)

JANE becomes quite animalistic as she reaches voraciously for the VALERIAN NUT.)

VALERIE: Hello, Jane. How are you?

JANE: Skip the small talk, sister - will I need ketchup?

VALERIE: Junk food is never necessary. My name is Valerie.

JANE: Big deal.

VALERIE: Valerie the Valerian.

JANE: That's quite a mouthful for such a small mouthful. Well, down the hatch!

VALERIE: Aren't you going to take me with water? I go down better that way.

JANE: There's enough rabid saliva in my mouth to make up ten glasses of water!

DROSSELMEIER: Wait, Jane, do you think you should?

JANE: Wait for what? -- the full moon's out, you old bag!

MOTHER MOUSE: Eeeeeeeee! My evil proceeds without my participation. Such is the role of momism in history.

DROSSELMEIER: But, Jane, I mean, at your age - why, you're so young, do you think it's wise to start in with things like this at your age?

JANE: Now, don't you start in! Let me have it!

DROSSELMEIER: No, no, I can't. In all good conscience, I can't!

MOTHER MOUSE: He talks of conscience now!

JANE: I'm warning you, Godfather, I'm rabid, I'm a weremouse - I won't take no for an answer!

DROSSELMEIER: Then let me pay the full price for my sins, for my creations, my unpredictable offspring!

JANE: You WILL, Drossey, YOU WILL!!!
(she bites deeply into DROSSELMEIER's back)

MOTHER MOUSE: Eeeeeeeee! Savage jungle fury! All new thrills!

HARD HEART: Chaos, sheer chaos.

NUTCRACKER: What in the wonderworld of toys is going on?

JANE: The Valerian Nut, where is it? Lost, lost like a contact lens in a bearskin rug!

(DROSSELMEIER has fallen face down on the floor under the blow of JANE's weremouse bite. JANE is scrambling around (with her back to the audience) looking for the Valerian nut. When old DROSSELMEIER rises, helped to his feet by MOTHER MOUSE, he has been transformed into a weremouse himself (of course), a big one, about the size of MOTHER MOUSE.)

MOTHER MOUSE: Eeeeekkk! A weremouse! A hideous weremouse! Drossey's a were--- well, not so bad at that, are you, big boy? Not so bad at all....

DROSSELMEIER: And you, neither, - if you'd just remove your glasses.
(taking off MOTHER MOUSE's specs)
There, now, isn't that better?

MOTHER MOUSE: Much. And you look much better yourself. More like your real self, I should think....

DROSSELMEIER: Then shall we make sweet music together - I mean, you sweet old senior citizen, you think that's still possible?

MOTHER MOUSE: Quite possible. And I've got a pocketfull of half fares and drastic discount tickets - up at my place, that is.

DROSSELMEIER: My thoughts, exactly.

HARD HEART: Oh, look, look at Jane!

(Everyone turns to look at JANE who has risen to her feet.)

WALL OF CHINA: Why, she's completely changed!

ARNOLD: Hey, zey, she's not bad.

JAGUAR: Beautiful woman, very beautiful wooman!

BEEBLE: Cool, man, dig it!

NUTCRACKER: Jane, you are lovely. A true queen of beauty.

DROSSELMEIER: And a true queen. For I have given my all to manage that - my very humanity. But that's what you wanted, Jane, isn't it?

JANE: Oh, yes, to be a true queen! And so I am. In all the splendor and beauty which such entails. But, dear, good Godfather, was it necessary for you to be transformed into a... a.... just for me to become what in my heart I know I always was?

DROSSELMEIER: I'm afraid so, my child. I'm afraid so. For are you so very sure that this is what you truly were all along, completely were, even just in your heart?

JANE: I believe so.

DROSSELMEIER: Well, well, who can say?

NUTCRACKER: Not I, I'm sure. I'm quite beyond figuring these things out.

DROSSELMEIER: And so, too, am I, Mr. Nutcracker. Quite old and beyond knowing more than you'll ever know. -Come, Mother Mouse, we have our nest to build.

MOTHER MOUSE: But what of the remnants of my son, the Hard Heart of the Seven-Headed Mouse?

DROSSELMEIER: That Hard Heart can go and rest quietly in Heaven now for it has become quite soft, you see. So stop worrying about your son.

HARD HEART: That'll be the day.

MOTHER MOUSE: Thank you, John Wayne.

JANE: So ^{that} leaves just you and I, Mr. Nutcracker - to get married at last and live happily ever after!

NUTCRACKER: But I'm afraid that can never be, Jane - never, despite your true self, your beauty and queenhood: for I am a wooden toy, not a human - not a boy!

JANE: Oh, no, no, not after all I went through -- Godfather, where are you? Where are you going? Didn't you say that the love of a true queen could turn ---

DROSSELMEIER: (disappearing into the dark) No, Jane, true love can heal, it cannot bring the dead to life or the inanimate to humanity....

JANE: But, Godfather.....

MOTHER MOUSE: (softly, disappearing into the dark) Foolish child, girl-children are no less foolish than sons, are they?.... bye, Ja.....

(JANE falls in a swoon as the entire crowd of MICE and NUTS along with their fantasy-land fade away in a whirl. When a spot finds her on the floor of the bare stage, she is there alone beside the immobile, inanimate body of her wooden NUTCRACKER.)

JANE: Oh, lovely Nutcracker, brave G.I.,
What have you and what have I?
You no life and I no friend,
You no breath at all in the end
And I no love though we did try
So hard - didn't we? I cry. I cry.

So this is how things end at last,

Nothing wet is water-fast.
 Colors fade
 Though dried in the shade
 And the present is much like the past.
 Why should I lie?
 I cry. I cry.

Dear Nutcracker, sweet Nutcracker, toy,
 I had wished you were a boy.
 Foolish, so foolish, wasn't I?
 Why should I lie?
 I cry. I cry.

(NATHAN rises up from beside the immobile body of the NUTCRACKER, BEING HIS IDENTICAL IMAGE, except alive, and dressed in G.I. fatgues, camouflage, etc. He takes JANE's hand and lifts her.)

JANE: Why, it's Nut, I mean, Nat.

NATHAN: Yes, Jane. You look beautiful.

JANE: You look....

NATHAN: A little like some gift someone gave you? My uncle has seen me wear these Vietnam fatigues many times. And long before he fashioned that Nutcracker for you. You must have as well. These are hardly new, you know.

JANE: It's so hard to remember sometimes, isn't it? I mean where and when you saw things.

NATHAN: But you do remember and that's what counts. Things want to be remembered. And so do people. That's why they make things, to tell you never to forget. This Nutcracker says for my uncle never to forget....

JANE: I shan't, I promise, Nat.

NATHAN: Will you dance with me?

(They dance.)

JANE: A morning must come when people are gone,
 But all my toys stay forever on
 By that same need that made them live:
 To teach their mistress what it meant to give.
 To your maker, Goodbye,
 For you, my toys, never lie,
 Oh, my toys, how you never can die.

END.

11/28/79