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A PERFORMANCE STUDY AND ANALYSIS OF THE ROLE OF
PROFESSOR MULLER IN *THE VISIT*.

by

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B.A. University of Alabama, 2002

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Master of Fine Arts
in the Department of Theatre
in the College of Arts and Sciences
at the University of Central Florida
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ABSTRACT

I propose to study the role of Professor Muller in *The Visit* as my thesis role because of the challenge that it presents, not only as a translated work, but also because of the character shift for me - Professor Muller is a 72 year old man and has now been changed to a woman in her thirties. Professor Muller is the only person to stand up to the antagonist, Claire. The confrontation between Claire and Muller takes on a certain tone when it is between a woman and a man, and has a completely different outlook when it becomes woman vs. woman.

The director has taken this play and set it in an abstract time and setting, loosely basing it in a post WW2 era in perhaps Switzerland, or even Germany, although the location will never be actually specified by the director. It is merely a suggestion of where we should begin the process of characterization. The town gives off an appearance of desolation, but we must retain the knowledge of better times. This challenge of not having specifics almost grinds at me to place specifics on the character, but I will attempt to refrain from this. This role will not only challenge my training here in movement, voice and character analysis, but will allow me to pursue a new kind of development in character, one that does not have to be mapped out. This character can be created only through the other characters on the stage. There are no clues in the script, really, because of extensive cuttings and re-workings through this translation. The Professor is defined by relationships, not by words, and this new process excites me.

After the show has closed, I would like to explore the play in its entirety and look to see if I have remained true to the author's work while working in a new concept from the director. I think it is possible to still hold to the origins and maintain the message of the play even through such large changes.

This is going to be one of the most challenging roles that I have faced. I think that at the
same time that I am going to apply my training, I also need to let it go and explore her through my body, my heart. At home, outside the theatre, I can go through the analytical parts - the "who am I" and "where do I come from" questions. My journals will be exceptionally useful for this knowledge. However, in rehearsals, I want to “let it all go” and “fly by the seat of my pants” to uncover answers that might be lost to me if I use only my brain. This is my biggest weakness as an actor - allowing my brain to take over. The problem with over-analyzing is that I look to deeply into the words and the script for the clues that my body may already be telling me, or I miss an impulse to act on a feeling because I am too caught up reading into everything. I need to read, and then play, not read and concentrate. We are doing a “play” after all, not a “work”. It is my hope that I can allow myself to play more, and thereby overcome this weakness.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

It is hard to sit down and describe this project and those who have aided in putting it together. I absolutely think that everyone in my committee must be acknowledged: Be Boyd, my Committee Chair, and Mark Brotherton and Kate Ingram, my Committee Members, and I thank each one for agreeing to be a part of this project.

I owe a special thanks to Mark Brotherton, for being the first director to give me a chance at a thesis role at the University of Central Florida. It means a great deal that he placed that trust in my abilities.

I also owe a great deal of thanks to my family and friends, and especially Kyle, for the moments in which I was ready to throw away the computer, quit grad school and be a waitress for the rest of my life. I would also like to thank my friend Nick Dancaescu for taking away this paper in rough form and helping me to transform it into its final product. Without an editor to catch the things that my eyes had crossed over long ago, this thesis would not be here. These two people always made me see the bright side of completing this thesis, even when I did not believe there was one, and were so supportive of my work. They are honestly the reason my thesis is finished.
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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Statement of Purpose

In this thesis, I hope to illustrate the process in which I used to transform the character of Professor Muller from words on a page into a living person on the stage. In heading down this road, I am not only looking at my script, my director, and the people around me for clues into the psyche of Muller, but I am also relying on my senses, experiences and emotions to help bring forth revelations. Sanford Meisner’s definition of acting is “living truthfully under imaginary circumstances.” The “imaginary” comes from many sources, but it all has to be told truthfully by me.

I am approaching this role from a new perspective. I am choosing not to do any prescriptive research (on the play itself and its history – I will save that for after the performances), but allowing the process of rehearsal to give me ideas to play with, and from there taking those ideas and allowing my head to intervene as I explore them away from the theatre. I am not looking to prepare a historical archive on the play and the author, or delve into how the play had an effect on the social settings around it. However, I am exploring the ways in which my training can be applied to this process. What did I learn from this? Was I successful? These are the questions that are leading me through my process.

General Information

The Visit was the first show in the spring semester of 2005. The performance was slated for the end of February. The auditions for this show were in January, at the beginning of the semester. I was actually called back for two shows other than The Visit, A Chorus Line and

Scapin. I had read all of the shows, and although I was interested in The Visit, I honestly thought Scapin would be much more fun to perform because of the Commedia Dell'arte aspects. I went through all three call backs, and I was truly excited because I felt that I had really prepared well for them. I thought I had a real chance at being in either Scapin or The Visit. Of course, if you read the title of this thesis, then you know my name appeared on the cast list of The Visit, and thus this project began.

When we first came to the reading of The Visit, we learned that we would really be doing highlights from The Visit, with some of the scenes switched around. It did help the play to move along. With all of our cuts, the play still ran 2 hours and 20 minutes or so. Rehearsal process was truncated because of the start of the semester and working around the many conflicts that occur during the spring semester. The spring is conference time, and all in all, there were only 3 rehearsals total in which every single cast member was present.

This play was plagued by scheduling conflicts, sickness, and replacements. We thankfully had an all-purpose understudy to stand in for all of our many conflicts, and due to an onslaught of mononucleosis in the cast, she replaced one of the girls who fell ill. I actually stayed well until the last three performances, and I fell under the influence of a very bad cold. I did make it through all the performances even though I all but lost my voice. I think that the setting of the play had a deep impact on all of us, mentally and physically, living in a world of no hope and extreme malice for weeks on end. I know that it took me a few days after the show ended to really get back on my feet, and I really appreciated smiling, and the feeling of lightness and happiness. This show was quite an experience to go through, and it was not just the script that made it so dark, but all of the factors that seemed to be set on not allowing us to get the play off the ground. When we finally opened, I felt I could relax a little. However, I cannot honestly say
that this show was fun. It was dark. It was jarring. It was bleak and betraying. Quite simply, it was a journey into the heart of German Expressionism.
CHAPTER 2: DURRENMATT – A BRIEF BIOGRAPHY

Friedrich Durrenmatt was born on January 5, 1921 in the small village of Konolfingen, Switzerland to Reinhold and Hulda Durrenmatt. His father was a Protestant minister, and his mother was a devoted Christian, who taught Sunday school at the church. She told all who would listen, as an example of what prayer can do, that the good fortune of her family was in answer to all of her prayers.\(^1\) The couple had been childless for twelve years, during which they adopted a little girl. Soon after the adoption, Friedrich was born, followed by a sister in 1924, Vroni.\(^2\) He lived with his family in Konolfingen in a large three story home. There were extra rooms in the house, and consequently there were different boarders and guests constantly living or visiting there, some of which inspired young Friedrich. His love of astronomy came from a teacher who lived there for a short time, and his interest in painting also came from guests who were visiting his father.\(^3\)

While living in Konolfingen, Durrenmatt attended primary school, and then transferred to secondary school in the next town, Grosshochstetten. His school years were not easy for him, his marks were not high at all, and being the child of a minister seemed to work against him. His parents, both scholars, expected much out of him, and so did his teachers. The children there did not like him very much because he got so much extra attention. Yet, he enjoyed the town in his imagination, where the books he read could come to life in the meadows, farms and forests around him.\(^4\)

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\(^3\) *Understanding Friedrich Durrenmatt*. Page 2.

\(^4\) *Understanding Friedrich Durrenmatt*. Page 2.
When Friedrich was 14, his father was offered a post in Bern, and he accepted it, moving his family there. Friedrich did poorly at the same Christian Preparatory school where his parents had studied. He had to transfer less than a year later to a private school, but school was fast losing its appeal for the young man. Soon thereafter, he left school altogether. He spent his days wandering through the cafes talking to painters and artists of all sorts, reading the works of Lessing, Nietzsche, Wieland, and Hebbel. His uncle had connections with the Stadttheater there, but Friedrich’s niche in theatre was not sparked as of yet. He was miserable in this Bern, not having a place where he fit in and feeling the constant pressure from his family. His father wanted him to follow in his footsteps as a minister. Unlike his father, however, Friedrich was disillusioned by the thoughts of God. He did not carry the same beliefs as his parents, instead thinking of God as a negligent being. This thought would develop and spill over into many of his early works, and continue in one form or another throughout his career. He felt as though he was “delivered to faith” instead of being allowed to experience faith, and was confused by the thoughts of a God that would allow the injustices that WWII brought to Europe to happen.

Durrenmatt decided to study art and become a painter. His family accepted the decision, glad that he found something that he could do well, yet at the same time, disappointed that he was not more successful in school. Upon passing his exams, Durrenmatt enrolled in the art academy in Bern. His paintings did not conform to what the school wanted to produce - they living in the world of impressionism and Friedrich inspired by expressionism. Not surprisingly,

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5 Understanding Friedrich Durrenmatt. Page 2.

6 Tiusanen, Timo. Durrenmatt: A Study in Plays, Prose, Theory. Princeton UP, Princeton. Page 10. “If there is a God, how could He permit World War I? What kind of justice is administered by God? The image of a cruel, torturing God is clearly recognizable in Durrenmatt’s early writings. As a Swiss citizen sensitive to what happened in all of Europe, Durrenmatt also developed a typical guilt complex–for having been saved, for having ‘endured peace.’ ” This is a philosophical conundrum called “the problem of evil.”
he left the art academy, after being told to “go back and learn how to sketch apples.” He went to the University of Bern and studied German literature for a couple of semesters before having a short career in the military in 1942. His eyesight, not up to standards, kept him from going any further than basic training, and instead he made dog tags for Swiss soldiers, in case Hitler decided he wanted to invade the neutral Switzerland. He returned to school, this time at the University of Zurich, not really studying at school, but spending far more time at many of the artist cafes and meeting Walter Jonas, an important expressionist painter. Durrenmatt’s painting improved while he was in this circle, and he tried to write his first comedy, unsuccessfully. It is possible that this period of his life, right before his health forced him to return home, is the spark that ignited the creativity inside of Durrenmatt.

Upon his return to Bern, he went back to school, studying philosophy and writing more and more. He read Hegel, Kant, Kierkegaard, Heidegger, and others over the course of three years, determining that he wanted to be a writer. Instead of finishing school, however, he wrote his first play in 1946, *Es steht geschrieben* (*It is Written*), and never went back to the University of Bern. It launched his tumultuous career in writing. In this same year, he met Lotti Geissler, and married her in October of 1946. She was an actress, performing at the Stadttheater in Basel, and they moved there into a small room. The following year, Friedrich’s first child was born, a son, Peter, and his play *It is Written* was discovered and produced somewhat successfully. It won the Drama Prize of the Welti Foundation, and proved to Durrenmatt that he could succeed in play writing. The next few years would bring along 2 more children, daughters Barbara (1948) and

7 *Understanding Friedrich Durrenmatt.* Page 3.

8 *Durrenmatt: A Study in Plays, Prose, Theory.* “His efforts as a painter were doubtless important to the would-be playwright: he grew used to thinking in pictures, to seeing his scenes on stage.” Page 4.

9 *Understanding Friedrich Durrenmatt.* Page 5.
and Ruth (1951), and a few more successes - first, as a playwright with Der Blinde (The Blind Man) along with his radio plays, and then works of fiction. Such moderate successes were not enough to sustain the family in Basel, however, and they moved to Schernelz on Lake Biel to live with Lotti’s mother. Durrenmatt had his first major hit with Romulus der Grosse (Romulus the Great), premiering in Basel on April 23, 1949. He supplemented his income with a serialized detective novel that appeared in a weekly magazine and was wildly popular. He wrote a sequel to it that was published in the same fashion. The first, Der Richer und sein Henker (The Judge and his Hangman) is still his best selling fiction work today.

In 1951, after the birth of his daughter Ruth, the family moved to Lake Neuchatel. He would live there for the rest of his life. In 1952, Die Ehe des Herrn Mississippi (The Marriage of Mr. Mississippi) became the first play of his to premiere outside of Switzerland. It opened in Munich and launched Durrenmatt to international success. His next play, Ein Engel kommt nach Babylon (An Angel Comes to Babylon) was not successful, sending Durrenmatt back to fiction. His time off of from theatre served him well, for when he returned to the stage in Zurich in 1956, Der Besuch der alten Dame (The Visit, or The Visit of the Old Lady) proved that the playwright had indeed chosen the correct profession. The Visit was the most successful play of Durrenmatt’s career and launched him into international fame. The play was translated into 25 languages, and was directed with smashing success by Peter Brook on Broadway and winning the New York Drama Critic’s Award for 1958.

It is here that Durrenmatt would really enjoy his last true success. He would have other

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mildly successful plays and prose works, but *The Visit* was his only international hit. Timo Tiusanen in *Durrenmatt: A Study in Plays, Prose, Theory* says:

> Both books and writers have their fates. Friedrich Durrenmatt rose like a comet above Swiss, German, European and world-wide theatrical horizons in the late 1950's. After *The Visit* he had to face something we might call “the curse of the second hit.” Expectations are high...This is a curse Tennessee Williams, Arthur Miller and Edward Albee also had to face: what to write after a masterpiece, after *The Glass Menagerie, The Death of A Salesman, or Who’s Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* Durrenmatt and Albee chose to write flops; the other two playwrights mentioned had better luck.\(^\text{13}\)

Durrenmatt continued to have luck with radio plays, prose works, and even some movie scripts, but his next play, an Opera, was a dismal failure. He took some time off from the theatre again, but his other works brought him accolades, winning the Blind War Veterans’ Prize and the Tribune de Lausanne for the radio play *Die Panne (The Breakdown)*, the Prix d’Italia for another radio play - *Abendstunde im Spatherbst (An Evening in Late Autumn)*, the Schiller Prize of the City of Mannheim in 1959 and the Grand Prize of the Swiss Schiller Foundation.\(^\text{14}\)

Durrenmatt’s next strong success was with *Die Physiker (The Physicist)* in 1969. It was his second most successful play of his career. His next play was another failure. During this time, however, with the successes of *The Visit* and *The Physicist*, “Durrenmatt became the first German playwright after Brecht to be staged and discussed both in the Soviet Union and in the

\(^{13}\) Page 255

\(^{14}\) *Understanding Friedrich Durrenmatt*. Page 8.
United States.” In fact, he made two trips to the USSR to tour the country, discuss his plays and attend conferences. He became more politically involved, supporting Israel during the Six Day and Yom Kippur Wars, including in speeches his thoughts about neutral Switzerland (not favorable), and criticizing capitalism and communism. He had one other sort of successful play during this time, Der Meteor (The Meteor) in 1966.

Durrenmatt went on to do adaptations of plays from Shakespeare, Goethe, Buchner and Strindberg. In 1969, he resigned the post of director of the Stadttheater after holding it for less than a year due to personal difficulties with his colleagues and because he suffered a serious heart attack. It left him “disillusioned about the state of theatre in Switzerland.” After recovering, he went to the United States where he was awarded with his first honorary doctorate at Temple University; several more would follow from different Universities - including the University of Nice and Hebrew University in Jerusalem. By the 1980’s, Durrenmatt had pretty much given up writing plays (with the exception of radio plays) and had turned to fiction, until 1982 when he began Achterloo (Waterloo). It was during this project that his wife, Lotti, died. Durrenmatt worked even harder on the play and dedicated it to her memory. It was not terribly successful and Durrenmatt said it was his last bid on theatre - this medium had passed him by. However, during the course of the play, a woman named Charlotte Kerr entered Durrenmatt’s life. Fascinated by him and wanting to do a documentary on him, she attended the premiere and told him her thoughts on the play. He married her some 8 months later on May 8, 1984.

Charlotte Kerr continued to work with Durrenmatt on his writings for the rest of their

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16 *Understanding Friedrich Durrenmatt.* Page 11.

marriage. He had another creative burst with her collaboration and won several literary awards, including the Austrian National Prize for Literature, the Prix Alexi Tolstoi, and the Ernst-Robert Curtius Prize for Essay Writing. He was invited as the guest of honor of a performance of *Achterloo IV* in Prague on January 5, 1991. On December 14, 1990, Friedrich Durrenmatt had another heart attack, and died at his home in Neuchatel. Durrenmatt’s works continue to be read and performed to this day. The strength of his writing is preserved in his best works, which keep him with us every time his plays are performed or his stories or essays read. His immortality resides in that “Durrenmatt [possesses] three outstanding traits, humor, purpose, and the ability to give literary expression to both.”

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CHAPTER 3: PLOT SUMMARY AND ANALYSIS OF THE VISIT

*The Visit*, by Friedrich Durrenmatt delves into the inner sanctums of the world of greed. This play dredges up some of the best and worst examples of human behavior in a story that is as shocking as it is relevant. Durrenmatt wrote the play after World War II as a sort of commentary on the relationship between Switzerland and Germany. The Swiss remained neutral during the war, but in that neutrality did nothing to prevent the horrors that occurred. Perhaps this left a bitter taste in some mouths as Hitler continued his death march across Europe, and contributed to Durrenmatt’s need to write a play such as this. The play is based on a story he wrote, which hardly gained attention, but is so changed in its dramatic version that it bears no matter on the play itself, except as inspiration. This play, and the story that it tells are quite frightening, in their own right. The end should leave the audience questioning their own limits, their own price. In deconstructing the structure and meaning of the play, the imperative questions to ask are what story the play is telling and what style in which it is being told.

**Act One**

In looking at *The Visit*¹, the story begins as one of hope. The opening scene reveals a desolate town that has been working to the bone to make ends meet. The town, Gullen (meaning manure in German), once a thriving village where Goethe once spent the night and Brahms composed a quartet², has lost everything that once contributed to its economic success. All is not lost, however, because Claire Zachanassian is about to make her appearance in Gullen, her birthplace that she left years ago. Claire, formerly Clara Wascher, and is now one of the richest women in the world.

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¹ *The Visit* referred to in this text analysis is the script adapted by Maurice Valency, the translator of the play performed at UCF. Any other translations referred to will be noted.

² Page 7
The efforts of the town of Gullen to get everything perfect for their guest of honor are sad in its limitations, but wonderful in its hope. There is an odd dichotomy watching the town brightly prepare for this visitor while they are at the same time acutely aware of the lack of materials to properly prepare for a visitor of this stature. The Mayor, Teacher and Pastor are tweaking the welcoming speech the Mayor intends to give. Their secret weapon is the town shopkeeper, Anton Schill, who had a passionate affair with the widow Zachanassian when they were young. Anton adds little bits and pieces into the speech to make it personal, to let Claire know that the town welcomes and remembers her as a person rather than for the money she might bestow on them. In the middle of the franticness of the preparation, Anton recalls the love he and Claire shared, and the town breathes with hope - something that has been lost for years. Everyone has a brief moment of happiness and celebration, and they tell Schill that he is going to be the next Mayor.

The sound of a train whistle sends the townspeople into a flurry of activity. One of the men, Hofbauer, reminds everyone that Claire’s train is not due for another few hours. The townsfolk’s brief reprieve turns into frantic horror as they realize the train is grinding to a halt. Out of the steam of the engine appears Claire Zachanassian in all her finery with her entourage. The Station-Master is angry with the unscheduled stop, and begins a tirade which comes to an abrupt end when he realizes that it was in fact Claire who pulled the emergency brake. A large sum of money, some of which Claire gives to the Station-Master for his trouble, and the rest donated to found the Railway Widow’s Relief Fund is handed over to quiet the man. The town watches in awe the money is given away, as if it was nothing, and hope begins to flow anew.

Reality re-emerges when the town realizes that everything is not quite ready. The Teacher

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3 Page 14-15
and Pastor race off to complete preparations. In the meantime, Claire looks over the villagers and sees Schill for the first time in years. She asks him to call her by her pet names, and reminds him that he was her “black panther. You’re grey now, and soft.” As Claire is introducing her soon-to-be eighth husband to the town, the Teacher arrives, breathless, with the Mixed Choir in tow. They sing a lovely song that is drowned out by the passing of the train. The introductions commence. Claire seems to have a penchant for the morbid side, as she repeatedly offers some comment about death to each new person she meets. A comment about killing someone for their crime prompts the Pastor to inform her that capital punishment is outlawed. She simply suggests this law can change. There is a moment of tension, broken up by stilted laughter. Anton reminds the town of her “lovely” sense of humor. With dollar signs in their eyes, everyone laughs heartily.

As Claire settles into the town, we meet others in her party. The presence of the two strange blind men and the two prisoners that carry her sedan chair give us something to question about this woman. Her luggage is brought up to the Golden Apostle (the best hotel in town) and we see that everyone is a little unsettled by the arrival of Claire Zachanassian. The Teacher in particular remarks that she felt a warning at Claire’s presence, and the Mayor and Policeman agree. However, they all fill their cups and join in the celebration of welcoming Claire, agreeing that in the end, the money is worth laughing at her strange little jokes. As they talk this over, Anton and Claire are having their own little reunion in the forest - one of their favorite places as young lovers. Anton tells Claire he never stopped caring for her and she seems to just pass it off. She allows herself to be buttered up for the money, and lets Anton know that she plans on helping out her poor hometown. We also see that Claire is no longer the little Clara the town

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4 Page 17. This mention of pet names is important for the audience to hear, so that they realize the reference of the black panther that Claire brings with her to the town, and is a foreshadowing of what will happen.
knew long ago. Her first husband rescued her from a whorehouse, made her his wife, taught her to enjoy cigars and died – leaving her all his money. Her leg and hand are not real - they were crushed and broken in a couple of different accidents, and she altogether presents an image of ghastly survival. As the somewhat uncomfortable conversation comes to a close, Claire’s fiancé and the two blind men appear and the scene ends. It is time for the welcoming ceremony. Claire is welcomed by the Mayor, but the speech does not go as planned. The Mayor makes mistakes - calling her a golden-haired child (she is a redhead), reminding the town of her wonderful scholastic accomplishments (there were not any real achievements) and recalled a story of Claire’s generosity towards the poor (a story Anton provided that was not quite factual). Claire takes all this in stride, however, and thanks the Mayor and the town. She then tells her real story, the girl who was in love with Anton, who gave the potatoes to the widow so they could sleep together in a real bed, and who was left alone in the end with a child along the way. Claire describes how the court of Gullen decided to throw out her paternity suit. Schill bribed two men with a bottle of Schnapps to say they too had been with Clara and the paternity could therefore not be determined. Schill left her unmarried and pregnant and as a result, Clara was forced out of town. From there, her life followed a long string of tragedies. She had to give up her child, who later died, she became a whore for survival, and she vowed revenge on the town and man that destroyed her life. Zachanassian, a rich suitor, married Claire and passed his wealth on to her at his death. She remarried several more times, each time amassing more wealth. Now she has brought back the judge, Chief Magistrate Hoffer (now the desexualized Bobby); the two witnesses, Jacob Hueblein and Ludwig Sparr (the two castrated blind men) originally bribed by Schill; the defendant (Anton Schill) and the jury (the town) for a new trial. Justice must be paid,

5 Page 32-33.
and for the sum of one billion dollars, “500 million to the town, 500 million to be divided up per capita among the citizens”\textsuperscript{6}, Claire wants the life of Anton Schill. The offer, of course is rejected. Claire’s ominous, “I can wait.”, sets the stage for the possibility of murder. \textsuperscript{7}

\textbf{Act Two}

The second Act brings the possibility of foul play looming closer, bit by bit. All of a sudden, almost everyone in the town begins buying things from Anton’s store on credit. When Anton asks how they plan on paying off the lines credit, almost everyone seems to have the reply that once Claire realizes how ridiculous her call for Anton’s life is, she will inevitably give the town the money. None of the townspeople actually believe that Claire intends to have Anton murdered. In the meantime, Claire announces she will be marrying her fiancé in the town Cathedral - the dream wedding she always wanted (presumably with Schill). As Schill gets more agitated about the amount of debt the town is amassing, he goes to see the Police Chief. He demands Claire’s arrest on the charge of incitement to murder. The Police Chief laughs at Schill, and tells him that Claire’s offer will never be accepted, and she cannot possibly be serious because she has offered way too much money for his life. He believes it to be a horrible joke. He tells Schill not to worry, if anyone lifts a finger to harm Schill, the Police are there for his protection. Schill notices the new gold tooth in the policeman’s mouth and knows that he has no ally here.

The news comes in to the police station that Claire’s panther has escaped. The decision that it must be hunted down is made. Schill knows that it is he they are hunting - not the panther, but the townsfolk refuse to believe it. As the search for panther goes on, the Mayor informs

\footnote{6 Page 34. The offer.}

\footnote{7 Page 38. The last line of Act 1.}
Schill that Schill will not be elected as the new mayor. His treatment of Claire long ago has called his morals into question. Schill knows this is setting the stage for his murder, yet no one is quite willing to do it just yet. The Pastor recognizes what is happening and all but given Schill his last rights. He urges Schill to leave town immediately to save himself.

The panther’s death at the hands of the townsfolk foretells Schill’s own demise. Schill begins his own hunt - for Claire. He confronts her, and she gently reminds him of the day they met under a balcony, reciting the story of how the roads of destiny have led them to this place. There is no escape from this death. As she talks, Schill lowers the gun and the Pastor emerges to take the gun away from Schill and takes him off stage. The Teacher leads two girls in an eerie song, mourning the death of Claire’s panther.

Schill decides to take the advice of the Pastor and tries to leave town. The town turns up to send him off, giving him handshakes and circling him while saying goodbye, and Schill misses the train. Anton’s fears turn into a reality – his fate is sealed. As he goes home, he knows what is going to happen.

The final act of The Visit leads down an unfamiliar path, though we all seem to know the ultimate and final destination. The Teacher and Doctor go to see Claire in a last ditch effort to entice her to loan the money the town needs. Claire refuses, but triumphantly admits the town has failed because of her. Over the years, she bought up the town piece by piece, and caused it to fail; setting up the town for Claire’s so called justice.

The Teacher takes it upon herself to save Schill, knowing that Claire is so insane with hate that she would go so far as to manipulate an entire town. She wants to go public with the story, and let the reporters know what Claire has asked. Unfortunately, the town prevents her

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8 Page 58. Claire’s line to Anton at the end of her reminiscing their meeting and why they meet again this way.
from saying anything, ignoring the Teacher’s lesson, and they never learn that Claire has set them up. The Teacher stops her tirade at Schill’s request, and buys a bottle of brandy on credit.

Schill tries to say a proper goodbye to his children, but his wife has decided to take them out today so they do not have to witness the upcoming murder. A hug and a see-you-later is all he gets, but the family knows what is looming on the horizon.

Elsewhere, Claire’s wedding is wrapping up, and reporters are clamoring for information on Claire and the Mayor sets up a sort of press conference that will be held in honor of her gift to the town. The vote to decide Schill’s fate has been carefully orchestrated to happen in front of the reporters. As he prepares for his demise, he goes back to the places in the town that he has fond memories of, and sees Claire. They have a touching scene where Claire reveals to Anton that her love for him is ever-present, but has changed to something dark and deadly. She tells him he shall not be alone in death, that she will take his body with her and he will rest facing the sea where she can look upon him every day.

Back at the “trial”, the Teacher tries again to save Anton, and although her words must evoke a measure of guilt from all involved, especially the Pastor, she is forced back into her seat and the town accepts Claire’s offer. Everyone encircles Schill, hands raised (with the exception of the Teacher - she does not raise her hand to Schill) and he is declared dead by the Doctor and the town - “Heart failure...died of joy”. ⁹

Claire has Schill placed in the coffin and then put on the train. She then hands over the check and departs the town, leaving it to stand and watch as her train disappear in the darkness. The viewer hopes in this closing scene that the townsfolk wonder what terrible act to which they have been accomplice.

⁹ Page 87. The Doctor announces the heart failure and the Mayor adds, “Died of joy”, which is then repeated by the town.
This story can be told in a variety of ways, much of which depends on the translation chosen. In the translation reviewed by this author, however, the words used are not heightened, as in others; the descriptions are not as flowery and poetic and at times, the dialogue comes across as natural dialogue - not written dreamy words. In some of the other translations read, the dialogue is not natural, but rather very forced. This causes the images depicted by the story to appear so embellished that the story loses the simplistic meaning. But what is the meaning of this play? What kind of play is this? To answer these questions, we must break down the components of the play.

Determining who the protagonist in this play is not an easy task. It is possible that Claire is, with her arrival to the town, and setting into motion the events that begin the story. However, it is unlikely since, in looking at her and who she is (and also the things she is proposing to the town) she comes across as a sort of foil, or almost antithesis of the morals of Gullen in the beginning. Anton could also be our protagonist, because he is the hero for which we are cheering. We understand that he made some poor choices in his life, but it is doubtful that there is a single audience member cheering his death in the end. Indeed, we are much more likely to view him as the protagonist of the play until we look and see that even though the story revolves around Schill and what is to become of him, he has no say in the decision. If we accept that the definition of a protagonist is an advocate or champion of a cause or idea then Anton Schill does not live up to the definition.

In this internal character conflict, this play strikes a chord in the Greek drama genre. The manner in which the town interacts within the play and with the audience is reminiscent of a Greek Chorus. As such, the town of Gullen, as one character, clearly stands out to be the

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protagonist of this play. They drive the action, they are set up by the antagonist, and the events that follow are totally within their control – only they have the power to change the future. Claire cannot be bothered with the details of what happens - she drives forward in her desire that Anton die. She has controlled the town until now. She has planted the seed, watered it, and now that seed grows into a killer. Claire is victorious in her goal, but it is the town that bears the guilt of what has been done. As other commentators have noted:

This internal evidence identifies the town of Gullen rather than [Schill] as the chief protagonist. If Claire had merely wanted [Schill’s] death for personal revenge, she could have easily found less elaborate means than the complete impoverishment of the town.11

It is an interesting circle, therefore, that happens in this little town. The original injustice caused to Claire by the lies of one man and the bribe of one bottle of Schnapps has turned upon itself. The town that succumbed to the lie is now going to kill the man – per Claire’s bribe of one billion dollars. Claire is not without fault here, but neither is Anton. However, the town carries the burden of the guilt throughout. First, they rejected Clara in the outcome of her case when they all knew of the affair between Anton and Clara, and second, for the death of Anton so many years later.12

The Mayor is like Pontius Pilate trying to wash his – and the town’s – hands of the blame.

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11 Donald G. Daviau and Harvey I. Dunkle. Friedrich Durrenmatt’s Der Besuch Der Alten Dame: A Parable of Western Society in Transition. (Sept. 1974). Page 304. See also, Roger A. Crockett’s Understanding Friedrich Durrenmatt. “Is he [Schill], then, a tragic hero?...the majority of scholars have recognized that Durrenmatt does not grant him the privilege...his sacrifice plays out against a background of baseness and moral depravity that are not ameliorated, only increased, by his sacrifice.” Page 88.

12 Rodger Edward Wilson. The Devouring Mother: An Analysis of Durrenmatt’s Der Besuch Der Alten Dame. “But it is essential to realize that the evil or guilt the Guelleners hope thereby to remove is none other than their own.” Page 285.
and tries to get Anton to take his own life. He claims Anton would be taking the path of honor\textsuperscript{13}, but Anton sees through the lie and puts his own curse on the town by telling the Mayor:

\begin{quote}
You’ve put me through hell, you and your town. You were my friend, you smiled and reassured me. But day by day I watched you change – your shoes, your ties, your suits – your hearts. If you had been honest with me then perhaps I would feel differently towards you now. I might even use that gun you brought me. For the sake of my friends. But now I have conquered my fear. Alone. It was hard but it’s done. And now you will have to judge me. And I will accept your judgment. For me that will be justice. How it will be for you, I don’t know. (He turns away) You may kill me if you like. I won’t complain, I won’t protest, I won’t defend myself. But I won’t do your job for you either.\textsuperscript{14}
\end{quote}

The town is acting as one - and as such, in my mind, the protagonist. The controversial and unusual nature of such a protagonist is perhaps one of the most alluring features of this play.

After deciding who is who in this play, the structure also becomes important. Is it a comedy? Is it a tragedy? A drama? Surprisingly, there are vastly differing opinions on how to categorize the play. Durrenmatt himself calls it “\textit{eine tragische Komodie (a tragic comedy)}”.\textsuperscript{15}

\textsuperscript{13} \textit{The Visit}. “Mayor: Frankly in your place, I myself would prefer to take the path of honor. Get it over with, once and for all. Don’t you agree? For the sake of your friends? For the sake of our children, your children – you have a daughter, a son – Schill you know our need, our misery.” (Page 77)

\textsuperscript{14} Page 77.

\textsuperscript{15} Friedrich Durrenmatt’s \textit{Der Besuch Der Alten Dame: A Parable of Western Society in Transition}. (Sept. 1974). Page 304.
So, therefore in his mind, it must be a tragicomedy. It is tragic, right? And comedic, too (but where?). It must be a tragicomedy, or there would be no argument. In looking further at the definition that Durrenmatt gives his play, we must look at what defines a tragedy, what defines a comedy, and why the play cannot be confined to either of the two labels. It is labeled “a Drama in Three Acts” by Samuel French, Inc., and that may be the easiest way to classify it, but where is the fun and argument in easy?\textsuperscript{16}

A tragedy, in dramatic terms, consist of a character who has a tragic flaw, evokes a catharsis (purging of pity and/or fear) from the audience, and whose fate is really not controlled on his own, but is a result of the chain of events the gods have set into motion. The first problem in classifying this as a tragedy is the use of the town as a Chorus. In a tragedy, the Chorus comments on the tragic flaw of the hero, they are not the hero that is tragically flawed. But, if we set that aside for a moment, and look at the Gulleners then it is possible that their tragic flaw is believing that Claire would have to wait forever. By agreeing with the Mayor that they would never kill Schill, they set themselves up for failure. It is also tragic in looking at the fact that there is a price on Schill. For the amount of one billion dollars, the town is not buying freedom from economic hardship nor is it buying back what it lost because of Claire’s actions. It is selling “its soul for money.”\textsuperscript{17}

There is a plausibility for the tragic flaw, however slight it may be, but there is no question that there is no such presence of a god or goddess controlling this town. However, in looking at the text, it may be possible to view Claire as the “goddess” that controls the town. She is constantly overlooking the town and is the scorned party that seeks revenge (a very Hera-like

\textsuperscript{16} The Visit. Page 1.

\textsuperscript{17} Friedrich Durrenmatt’s Der Besuch Der Alten Dame: A Parable of Western Society in Transition. (Sept. 1974). Page 304.
quality). The Teacher refers to her as “a fury descending upon us, beating its black wings”\textsuperscript{18}, or from another translation, “Like one of the fates; she made me think of an avenging Greek goddess. Her name shouldn’t be Claire; it should be Clotho. I could suspect her of spinning destiny’s webs for herself.”\textsuperscript{19} She is like a goddess – indestructible, as we are told, with her incredible stories of survival. In other texts, she is held together by prosthetic parts, and an ivory hand. The use of these images give the illusion that she is one of the \textit{dues ex machina} from the Greek tragedies, but keep in mind that it is just that - an image. However god-like she may appear, Claire Zachanassian is a mortal. The cause of her fury is man made, not a string pulled by another god. It is a love misplaced, as she tells Anton, and her revenge is self driven.\textsuperscript{20}

We have determined that the tragic flaw and the force of the gods are not supported completely, but there are definite characteristics that place them in both areas. Now, for the question of catharsis. Does this script evoke pity, or fear? Absolutely. When written, the show could not get a footing in the English speaking world because audiences would not stand for what happened to Anton. The critics bashed the show, people walked out and tours were cancelled before they began. Only after a series of re-writes and new translations was it really accepted on Broadway. But in looking at the initial reactions of the script, it must be at least questioned why people were so outraged by the death of Anton. Keeping in mind that this is post-war Europe and America, and most of Europe is embroiled in an economic crisis due to the intense bombings and invasions of WWII, the real reason, I posit, is because they saw something

\textsuperscript{18} \textit{The Visit}. Page 24.


\textsuperscript{20} Kurt J. Fickert. \textit{To Heaven and Back: The New Morality in the Plays of Friedrich Durrenmatt}. (Lexington, 1972). “It is a code of morality invented and perpetuated by man in a world without God; under the exercise of power becomes an end itself and justice becomes retribution.” Page 39.
of the town, Claire or Anton in themselves. The director of this show at UCF asked the audience, in his playbill notes:

What do you, the audience, think of the choices the three characters [Anton, The Town, Claire] make? But before you answer, ask yourself this: In the past, have you ever done something hurtful to someone that you regret? In the past, has someone done something so hurtful to you that it cannot be forgotten? Have you ever done anything detrimental to another person to promote yourself, even if what you gained was achieved by your silence? None of us would like to think we would make the choices that occur in *The Visit*. But in some small scale, haven’t we already?21 So, it is evident that a catharsis does indeed happen in this play, in some way.

We do not have a tragedy completely, but we do have characteristics of one, so the first part of the tragicomedy is holding true. Because this play is not a tragedy through and through, we now must look for the comedic aspects of this show. In a comedy, there are usually things that make the audience laugh or appear ironic, and a comedy also has a light-hearted ending. Does this show qualify for any of these factors? At first glance, you might think that there is not really anything funny in or about this play. However, careful inspection and audience reaction reveal that some humor has found its way into the play. Claire asking her little death questions, and making comments about dying comes across as a strange dark humor, particularly after Anton has told us that she has quite a sense of humor. The actors begin the laughter at these “jokes,” but the audience soon picks it up and goes with it. Also, Claire’s somewhat idiot fiancé

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lends himself to comic relief, in his failing hopes to catch a big fish and his doting qualities. There is also the bit of the switching of the hats between the Mayor and Pastor – there is only one and they have to share – that the audience finds quite humorous. The drowning out of both the Mayor with his speech and the singing of the Mixed Choir by the trains is also comedic in nature. The elements for the light-heartedness, but especially the ironies in the situation of the townsfolk of Gullen are written into this play intentionally, with a particularly dark eye to the absurdly ironic. Even the premise of the play itself is so ridiculous that it comes across as an absurd comedy at first. *The Visit* has been called “the bitterest comedy ever written”, but like we previously discussed with tragedy, comedic elements do not necessarily make up a full comedy.22

Irony is employed through the use of the desexualized figures that Claire brings into the town. These characters are so ridiculous that we have to stop and laugh for a moment, even if the laughter is uncomfortable. The situation of these blind, castrated men playing about the town like boys, along with the stiff butler and two prisoners that are so accommodating to Claire after the horrors that she must have put them through is not right. But the way they follow her like lap dogs, jumping for their bits of chicken and enamored by fishing might make us smile from time to time, enjoying their moments of child-like wonder at the world in which they live. It is an irony that these characters have these moments.23 More ironic is the theme by which Claire,24

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23 Kenneth S. Whitton. *The Theatre of Friedrich Durrenmatt: A Study in the Possibility of Freedom.* (London, 1980). “This is no Komodie. Nevertheless, as these figures lose their humanity and become unthinking stereotypes, they do become clowns whose automatic gestures and responses evoke comic laughter.” Page 110. This quote is applying itself to the townspeople, but I also think it applies to the characters in Claire’s entourage. Also, Bianca Theisen. *Comitragedies: Thomas Bernhard’s Marionette Theatre.* (MLN, April 1996). “Bernhard’s paradox cannot simply be explained with Friedrich Durrenmatt’s insight that comedy is suspiciously paradoxical. Durrenmatt argues that if comedy is to become the world theatre, only the plot has to be comic. Not only are the characters often not comic, but they can even be tragic. The comic plot, argues Durrenmatt, must be understood in terms of paradox. A
having been ruined by a trial, would choose to put the town through its own sort of trial. At the end of Act One, the information, akin to a deposition or grand jury indictment carries the trial feel to the last act where the jury (the town) has decided the fate of the defendant.²⁴

There is not a happy ending for the town of Gullen, but there might be one for Anton Schill. His death, at the hands of his town, has afforded him a measure of respect and peace that he had lost when it was revealed that he lied about the paternity of Claire’s child. So his death, while condemning the members of the town, is not in vain for himself. His death however, cannot be considered a happy ending. Claire’s victory does not make her happy either, but I think it provides closure for her. However, the guilt is not gone, but merely transformed. It opens the door on the town, for one day, their own version of Claire may come calling – demanding the town’s head on a silver platter.

In looking at the elements of tragedy and comedy, there are significant portions of both styles present in this play. Because neither of the styles are completely true for The Visit, and it is a mixture of both, it does make sense that it is best labeled a tragicomedy. I believe it is more correct to label it a tragicomedy, rather than a comitragedy (as one source labels it) because the tragic overtones in this play are more present and pervasive than the comic. It is a play that should strike at the heart of the audience and cause them to think, not smile at each other and laugh about the characters’ situations. As I mentioned before, the script is labeled a drama, and it is because of Schill.

[Schill’s] death has meaning in the sense that it allows him to grow into a plot is paradoxical ‘when it has been thought through to the end’. ” Page 536.

²⁴ Krishna Winston. The Old Lady’s Day of Judgment: Notes on a Mysterious Relationship between Friedrich Durrenmatt and Odon von Horvath. (Germanic Review, Nov 1976). “Claire Zachanassian’s call for justice and the mock trial-cum-town meeting in the last act are themselves such travesties of justice that they point to the need for a higher form of justice and a binding morality.” Page 314. In other words, this is the biggest irony of all.
mature and responsible individual. The inner harmony that he finds after the climactic scene at the train station [end of Act 2] makes him invulnerable to further tribulations. For this reason, he refuses to defend himself and meets his death in the heroic fashion of nineteenth century drama.\textsuperscript{25}

The complexity of the style is intriguing and the story is compelling. The story, beginning as a commentary on the Swiss involvement in the war, has long passed the initial relevancy - and yet, stays relevant for much different reasons today. Many places, events, people and times have their own “Claire,” a vengefully wronged and forgotten truth that we would rather shun than acknowledge. For example, as I write this paper, it has been six months since Hurricane Katrina destroyed the Mississippi and Louisiana coastlines. Wealthy New Orleans has received a lot of attention, but some of the smaller communities - The Ninth Ward, LA; Pass Christian, MS - are still bereft and without a lot of economic help. Will one of these townspeople one day become a Claire? Or if a Claire walked into the town, would they choose the dark road? It is an interesting question.

The reality of the situation of \textit{The Visit} might be questionable. Of course, we would all like to think that we would make the choice not to murder someone, but the possibility that we all have a price is ever present. This possibility is the reason that this play will continue to be produced, and continue to affect audiences for many decades to come.

\textsuperscript{25} Friedrich Durrenmatt’s \textit{Der Besuch Der Alten Dame: A Parable of Western Society in Transition}. (Sept. 1974). Page 304.
CHAPTER 4: DIRECTOR’S CONCEPT

Mark Brotherton had an interesting concept of *The Visit* that he took in with him to the rehearsals. After looking through all of the research, and reading the play (as well as watching rehearsal night after night), I think his simple explanation of his approach is the best way to look at this play.

This play is a love story.¹

I wanted to put the quote on its own line because it is possible that this reasoning might never be reached by most people. Yes, the story is driven by the love-gone-bad between Claire and Anton, but how can the murder of a man be justified in such a manner?

Mr. Brotherton wanted the audience to think about whether the killing was justified or not justified at all. He believed the only way to do this was to approach it from the perspective of love. Had Claire not loved Anton as much as she did, would she have felt the need for such powerful revenge? Had Claire not loved the daughter she birthed, and grieved at her death, would she have felt the need to gobble up the town of Gullen and force it to her will? I do not think so. If we look at one passage spoken by Claire, love is very evident through the decisions made in this play:

Your love for me died years ago, Anton. But my love for you would not die. It turned into something strong like the hidden roots of the forest, something evil like white mushrooms that grow unseen in the darkness. And slowly it reached out for your life. Now I have you. You are mine. Alone. At last, and forever, a peaceful ghost in a silent house...Adieu,

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¹ Mark Brotherton. Interview by Brooke Harrison, Feb. 17, 2006.
Anton.²

Mr. Brotherton also chose to stage this scene in the middle of the final trial of Anton’s life, and it was done in front of all the “jurors” that would soon decide his fate. The lights went down on the townspeople, but Mr. Brotherton chose to highlight Claire’s feelings through intimate lighting around Schill and Claire. During this scene, the audience finds out that she does love Schill, in her own twisted way.

When we talked about the ideas for staging this, Mr. Brotherton said that he and Vandy Wood (the scenic and lighting designer) discussed that this play had to take place in “any time.” There were no props or costumes to define a particular year, date or decade, it was simply a town “where the trains had stopped running”.³ This play could happen anywhere in the world. They wanted to make the stage look old, worn out and cluttered with unused or broken bits of things that could then be turned and moved and used to create other scenes. Mr. Brotherton did not want to have separate scenes for each place; he wanted all of the action to occur in one place - with a few changes to the background to establish a new place. In looking at the stage when it was assembled, grey permeated everything. Its harsh angles and deep shadows gave the set a distinctly German Expressionism feel. However, Mr. Brotherton said that was not in his plans - it just happened to turn out looking that way. It is interesting, because many scholars have commented on the overtones of Expressionism in this play, and Mr. Brotherton was not necessarily going in that direction, but did not mind it when it appeared as such.

The costumes were very important to Mr. Brotherton. The look of the townspeople and Claire’s entourage had to be extremely different. He wanted the townspeople in old, grubby,
drabby clothes that had obviously been mended. The colors needed to be as grey as the set, so that as townspeople started to turn against Anton, the red pieces added would show brightly. He chose the red color to represent the fact that “everyone had put their hand in blood.” He had everybody, except for the Teacher, add some sort of red to their costume. When I asked him why he chose to keep the Teacher innocent of the killing, he told me that the Teacher was the one who planted the seeds of guilt in the mind of the townspeople. She does not make them feel guilty, but she is the medium by which the knowledge of their own guilt arrives. She sees the futility of argument, and she knows that Schill has given up.

The last question I asked him about his choices in directing this play was why he decided to make the role of the teacher a female. Originally written as a 72 year old male, the change to a 30 something female seemed quite drastic. Mr. Brotherton said that being in education, he wanted to give more females time on stage and he looked for characters he could make females because there were several strong male roles. However, in looking at the first scene of Act Three, when the teacher stands up to Claire - briefly though it may be - he said he thought it would be an interesting dynamic to pit woman against woman. I remember during rehearsals Mr. Brotherton asking me to listen to Claire’s tale of leaving town as a pregnant, cold, hungry girl of seventeen. As a woman, could I not relate to that? Is it more interesting for a woman to hear that and fight back anyway, than a man to hear it and cannot sympathize in the same way? I think it raised an important question, and gave me a lot of material with which to work.

Ultimately, Mr. Brotherton wanted the audience to experience the profound decision this

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town had to make. He wanted them to think about how poor they would have to be, and what would have to be at stake for them to make this decision. He did not want this play to be about greed alone, but more of the idea that “the needs of the many outweighed the needs of the few”, or in this case, Anton’s need.\(^7\)

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\(^7\) Mark Brotherton. Interview by Brooke Harrison, Feb. 17, 2006.
Saturday 15 January 2005

We did not actually do anything except go through the script, line by line, and cut it all together so that we would be on the same page. Most of my cuts are gender specific, changing “he” to “she” and so forth, but we are also getting rid of the repetitious nature of her words to make her a stronger character. The semi-confrontation with Clara has become a real head-to-head confrontation. It is the only woman to woman argument that happens in this play. It is interesting to see the shifts that are beginning to emerge within this character. The first act is so frantic, really, for everyone, in getting ready for the visitors to arrive. The air crackles with anticipation and nervousness that everything will not be perfect for the wealthy Claire Zachanassian’s arrival. For my character, this act is the place where the Professor has her act together in some places, especially in front of the Mayor, but there is definitely a layer of anxiety that sits below the surface and it begins to break loose. It’s almost as if her perfect, tightly coiled bun is working itself loose, one hairpin at a time, and there is nothing she can do about it. This character is really wound so tight, I wonder if she has ever had a true moment of fun in her entire life. Everything is so serious about her. Where are the places where she might actually smile because she means it, and not because it is appropriate? What are the things that she thinks about, in her own place that get her through the dark nights? Is there someone in her life that she loves, or has there ever been? Is she lonely, or is she so wrapped up in her job and duty that there is no time for loneliness? Does she actually have any friends, or are they all comrades in a town trying to make it through poverty?
Block Act One. Wow. I really feel like I am the Mayor’s personal assistant or lap dog right now. I seem to be running behind him and the Pastor for a great deal of the time. But it does seem like the Mayor depends on the Professor for some sort of calming or soothing action and strength. He looks to the people around him for all of the answers, or to rein his nonsense in. But the one decision he really makes by himself is at the end of Act One, when he declines Clara’s offer, but what else could he do? The whole town is sitting in front of him and we are all appalled and disgusted by her request of murder for hire.

As we all get through this shocking revelation, and we are not to the “acting” part yet of trying to pretend that we will not kill Anton Schill, I am looking at the relationship that the Professor has with Anton, and she is so tender towards him sometimes. Could this be her spot of
femininity? Where she lets down the hard, get-it-done wall and has allowed some sort of feeling to come into her heart? She wants desperately to save this man. Would she fight this hard if it were someone else in the town? She is absolutely a moral person. Everything in her would fight against wrongful death - she considers herself, and she is, a well-educated woman. Cruelty is not in her nature, but drive and ambition are. Would she compromise for anyone else who was not Anton? I’m not sure. She risks her own life to save this man, although fails, but she may hold her head up high and know she was forced into acquiescence. Yet, she could have fought harder, and died in the process as well, but Anton would not let her go that far. Hmm, this is an interesting relationship these two have. Perhaps she has a crush on him, something innocent, as if she looks up to the kind of person and father he is, and always wanted someone like him to share her life and dreams. I think she very much admires who Anton is, and nothing Claire has to say gets in the way of her thoughts of Anton. She sees Claire as an embittered woman, who granted, was not treated as she should have been in her life, but who could have risen above it instead of sinking down below it. She both pities Claire and is disgusted by her. How is it possible that Claire’s story of Anton would get in the way of how she has seen him live his life in the town? It would not. So, who exactly is Anton to Professor Muller? And Professor Muller to Anton?
Monday, 17 January 2005

The set: Act Two and Three

There is not really much characterization or even relationships going on today. We are speed blocking. For real, speed blocking. Mark is playing all of our parts and telling us where we move to when and then we step in and see if we got it right, or if it looks ok. We really are not even saying all of the lines, we are just jumping from moment to moment. It is actually impressive that we are getting all of it blocked and done in so short a time and it appears as though we are getting it down pretty well. It is rather amusing to see Mark step in and play each of us, and I’m pretty sure that his entire concept is based on “faster, funnier and don’t bump into the furniture.” I hate to tell you, Mark, but there is not really anything funny about this play. It’s rather dark and creepy, especially with those Bobby, Kobby and Lobby characters. And Claire? She is insane, like Charles Manson get-others-to-do-my-killing-for-me insane. We should subtitle this play, *Helter Skelter, The Prequel*. I’m sure he and Claire would find some things in common.
We are working the first bits in the show, the preparation of the arrival of Claire Zachanassian and the arrival itself, which turns out to be strange and disconcerting. In the beginning, we are working on a sense of urgency. The relationship between Mayor, Professor and Pastor is one of necessity, although I think there is some genuine respect for each other, and it seems to me that the Pastor and Professor might actually be friends. They are both little lackeys of the Mayor, almost. He is running around like a chicken with his head cut off and it is up to the Professor and the Pastor to keep him on track. Anton Schill is the one who reins him in, in his nonsense, because he has intimate knowledge of Claire and we all greedily depend on this relationship to give us the money to keep our town alive. My character brings a sense of wisdom to the group. She has thought everything out, and even has a bit of humor when she talks of turning down a “nursery school” for something bigger. I think she is attempting to lighten the situation and take some of the strain off the Mayor. She is concerned that he might just run himself into a heart-attack and she needs him to breathe and think and he’ll be just fine. The thing she fears out of this encounter is not what the others fear (will Anton’s relationship with Clara bring us the result we desire?), but more that the Mayor could be the one that screws the whole thing up for us. Although he is well-liked and a capable leader, the stress of this big a project is nothing like what he has ever seen before, and Professor Muller is scared that he could very well ruin the whole thing.

As the train stops and the town realizes that Claire is indeed here, the Professor loses it. It reminds me very much of the old Bugs Bunny cartoons with Bugs Bunny and the Witch. Every time the witch leaves, she disappears off screen, leaving behind a bunch of hairpins hanging in
the air. That is exactly how the Professor feels, she hears the screeching of the train’s wheels and flips out, running to find the Mixed Choir. Just a few precious minutes before, she felt as though everything that needed to be prepared would be prepared on time, but the early arrival of Claire has thrown a monkey wrench in the whole plan. Upon arrival with the Mixed Choir, she is even more discouraged because at the moment they are singing the train drowns them out. As we work more on this scene, I think it could be quite comical if I can get my body to really show some tension. It’s going to be harder than I thought, because I have chosen a posture to play with for the Professor, ram-rod straight back, severe hair that actually pulls the face and her shoulders are always up around her ears. I talked with Mark about it, and he agrees that it is a good place to start and he said he’d tell me if it worked for him, and he hasn’t said yet that it is not working, so I am continuing to develop what I think is her look. She also walks very hard. Almost as if she is showing her strength in her steps. She is very afraid of appearing weak in front of others, and she is not a weak woman. But she tries to deny a part of her femininity because it might allow someone to take advantage of her. She is the only teacher in the town, so a semblance of formidability must be kept so that she has control of the classroom as well. That is what bothers her about Claire’s sudden arrival - this is something out of the town’s control.
This scene is difficult for me. It is of the Mayor, Policeman and Professor, meeting before Claire comes to the welcome dinner we have prepared for her. The language in this scene is stilted. We are up on top of the platform while there is movement in the darkness below us. For some reason, I cannot seem to find a connection between these characters in this particular scene. Sean and I were talking about it later on a break and he feels the same way. He said that acting wise it is the hardest scene for him. I agree. Robert also feels weird in this scene. I wonder what it is going to take to settle into this particular scene in the play. I mean, it is very early in the rehearsal process, and the first time we have really worked this scene. And we did change the blocking and location quite a few times before getting up to the platform with this scene. It is the first time that the Professor expresses her discomfort with Claire Zachanassian, and the others agree. Sean got to add back in the line, “The Pastor had to go and lie down” and I’m glad that its back. It sums up Claire’s extravagance perfectly. Extravagance for us is only a distant memory. Only the oldest members of the town remember when it was lively, when the Pencil Factory hummed along with the Wagonworks and the Foundry. We scrape by in this town of desolation and dead ends. But we have a light, and his name is Anton Schill.

There is another clue in this scene as to perhaps a wistful longing in the Professor. By now, I have decided that she is alone in her life, that she has never really had a real relationship in her life. She’s always been too focused on work, thinking that part of her life would come later. Well, it is later now and that part is still unfulfilled and we hear it when she says, “The ashes of her youthful love”. She is a bit mad at herself for allowing her thoughts to be spoken aloud. The others do not pick up on it, however, and they descend together, singing down to the
During the next few minutes, the Professor’s premonition of impending doom rears its ugly head. She listens to Claire, and determines that there is something quite wrong with her. Although she is delighted by the prospect of the money coming in, she is horrified by the request for what it is buying. She recognizes the Magistrate, with the help of Mrs. Schill. And as she listens to the tale of Clara’s undoing by Anton Schill, it’s like someone extinguished the flame inside her. As much as she wants to come to his defense, because she does, she cannot because he is wrong. And yet, at the demand of exchange - Anton’s life for the money - something snaps inside. The Professor gets her strength from this moment. There has never been a more unjust request. And she will not stand for it, and she is supported by her fellow townsmen. The Mayor declares Claire’s scheme invalid, and the coldness creeps back into Professor Muller at Claire’s, “I can wait.” line. What is she going to do? It is obvious that Claire is perfectly capable of waiting until the town changes its mind, but will that happen? There is such uncertainty at the end of this act and it undermines the Professor’s strength. I think she realizes this, though and gears up for a fight. She does not for a minute believe that the town will turn against Anton, and she cannot, or the end of the play is ruined. This is the trap of this play that we all have to look out for. I cannot play the end of this play. Instead, I must play moment to moment – each minute builds to the next.
This rehearsal is entitled, “Interrogation by Jennifer Hart.” This rehearsal was a characterization rehearsal. She asked us questions about our relationships, who we are and who we are to each other. We have specifics. Names, lives, siblings, spouses, children or we have none of those. She gave us a lot to think about. I have a whole list of questions to tackle for myself to further build up my character in my journal as rehearsal goes on:

- How have I survived?
- How do I stay here?
- How many teachers and educators have I seen walk out of this town?
- What does it take to make this decision?
- What has happened to this town?
- Do I see a larger picture?
- How many times has my/our great ideas failed? What does that do to me/us?
- How do I feel about my friends/fellow townspeople that have turned?
- What happens to me after Anton is dead?
- How do I feel about what Schill did to Claire? What do I really think happened between the two of them?
- Who is this woman, Claire Zachanassian?
This scene is quite short, and the only time the teacher appears in this act. The second act is the turning act. Anton realizes the reason that he is so popular is because the town hopes he will sacrifice himself for the good of the town. They do not want to kill him but the town would not mind at all if Schill killed himself. The blood would not be on the town’s hands if Schill takes his own life. The Professor wants no part of this decision. I think that is why she does not appear in this act, except in a moment of comfort for Claire. Her panther has been killed because it got loose. It is an allegory for what is to become of Schill, as she called him “my black panther”. Schill is frightened and mad because of the town and Claire, and so goes to confront her with a weapon. When the Professor sees him she ushers the children off, following them off-stage to get the Pastor to help with Schill. I think she knows exactly what is going on, but is refusing to admit it to herself. She is still holding out hope that the town is going to do the right thing, and that by offering her condolences and having the children sing, she can appeal to the humanity in Claire. Because they are both women, she assumes she can draw out the tenderness is Claire. I think this scene is written to describe Claire’s belief in humanity and to show that in spite of everything, she still hopes that Claire will do the right thing. Here is the part in the play where she believes she can win. She is instructing right now, the thing she is best at, and she hopes that her pupil will get the message. She ushers Schill away with the Pastor so that he can do no more harm to himself in Claire’s eyes and she tries to smooth Claire’s sadness (for the loss of her panther) away with song. A really creepy song.
Monday, 24 January 2005

We are going through Act One and finally putting everything together that we have been working on. It has been a little frustrating from time to time, as we do not have everyone here, but I really can’t complain. I’ll be gone in a couple of weeks too. I think that I am pretty much off book for the first act, with the exception of the “Cases, cases and still more cases” scene. The words just keep getting wrapped around my tongue and will not come out right. I still just don’t feel like I have a grip on that scene. That’s not exactly right - it is not the scene that escapes me. I know what the scene is about, I know the motivation of it; it is just that every time we do it, I feel like a robot. The words never sound true to me, it always seems forced. I think that I’ll just have to let it be. Maybe if I stop focusing on how hard it is, if I just do it, it’ll happen. This is the part where my brain starts to get in the way. I wish I could take it out and set it on the table for a little bit and still be able to function.

For the run of this rehearsal, I decided to look at the question “Why do I stay here?” and look for reasons in my fellow townsmen. I think I feel a need to stay in this town, that perhaps it cannot run itself as well without me. The Mayor absolutely needs a voice of reason, and someone to think fully through problems, not just get stuck on one and flounder in all the possibilities. I feel a duty to this town. I would like to see it get back on its feet again, and if I leave, who would educate the people here? There really is no one, and I know that I could get a job in any of the bigger cities, in fact I have had offers, but the people here in Gullen need me to be here. I have my hand in a little bit of everything in this town - the Mayor’s ear, the Pastor’s understanding and friendship, respect in the town, and of course, the education and training of the children in the town. By the time it gets to the end of the Act and the life of Anton is
threatened, and with it, the lingering hope of the town that I have worked so hard to keep alive, my sense of injustice is great, and I am ready to fight at all costs to keep this woman from succeeding.
Work 3.2 before running Act 2. Ok, I have come to a decision about Anton Schill. During the course of 3.2, the store scene, it is apparent to me that Professor Muller is in love with Anton Schill. I considered the possibility of an innocent crush, but she has been developing it for a long time. In talking with Doc about it, he says he also wondered about his feelings towards this Professor who tries desperately to save him, and he thinks that he also has feelings for her and it is the reason that he tries to save her from the town by asking her to let him go. We wondered about the possibility of an affair, because his wife is so very cold most of the time, but decided that it was a love that was not defined by the physical action. We wanted something that we both cannot have, and have left it that way, although the feelings for each other have not changed. In this scene, 3.2, the teacher seems to turn on Schill with the final line “and charge it.” but I do not think that she does.

I talked with Mark about this line and what the implications for it could be and I do not think she is turning on Schill. I think he has forced her to this outcome. When Schill comes into this scene, I am in trouble already - the town is closing in on me to keep me from going to the press about Claire’s real offer. Schill comes in and assesses the situation and makes the decision to resign himself to death. And he won’t let me save him. It is extremely infuriating, because I know I have found a way - once I tell the press how crazy this woman is, Schill will be saved, and perhaps we will get to keep the money promised to us because she will need to save face. I know that there is a danger to me, but I am willing to risk it for the good of the town. I know why the town failed, and I am the only person who is willing to do anything with that knowledge.
The run of the second act is slow for me, I only have the one scene of consolation, and I think I am recognizing that Anton is really in danger and I am keeping up that hope that the town is not turning against him. Even though I am not physically present on the stage, I am aware of all the new things that are coming into the town, and the fascination with buying all these items on credit. I think in this act I am genuinely concerned for the town. All my hard work in education, and instilling principles of truth and justice in the town just might be crumbling around me. I cannot yet oppose the powerful Claire Zachanassian. But I am trying to appeal to her, in small ways, and perhaps learn exactly who she is and why she feels she must have this result. Once I know that, I may be able to get her to see a different point. Act Two is devoted to figuring out who Claire Zachanassian is - another question on the list.
Wednesday 26 January 2005

Ok, I am mad. As the Professor, the most terrifying revelation has occurred during this rehearsal. And I know I have read the play and blah, blah, blah but I think this is the first time any of the feelings have completely come up to the surface. Claire Zachanassian has manipulated this town to set it up for the destruction of Anton Schill for her viewing pleasure. I am answering the question of “Who is Claire Zachanassian?” in this scene. She is not a person, she is not human, she has become a frigid, cold monster, a fragment of something that was once human and is completely driven by the thoughts of revenge. I feel a sense of failure with this woman. Here I was, sent with the doctor as the two most capable and intelligent people in the town (and what happened to the Doctor? What a wimp he turned out to be) to reason with someone who is completely reasonless. And she scares me. I am absolutely not used to that. Everything is always within my control and this woman is absolutely not anywhere near controlling. I do not even think she can control herself. Her desire for what she calls “justice” has destroyed any human part that she had left. After this scene, it is up to me to save this town from becoming something that it will regret becoming. I can see the town turning into a “Zachanassian,” and this scene forces me to want to stop it. It is so sad to me to look at this town. Now I know exactly what happened to it, and I see no solution to help it out. Yes, we may get the money, but at what price? Are we actually willing to sacrifice what is left of our souls for some money? For this town to get back on its feet? Would it not be better to leave this town, together, and whole - and yes, poor - or stay and be manipulated into a twisted form of murder? I am filled with fear, dismay, and a desperation that is driving me to a decision that will threaten my life.
The monologue. This is the most revealing part of my character. A last, desperate plea for
the town to look at what it is about to do. I want so badly to tell the reporters what exactly has
been going on, but instead I have decided to play to the feelings of those who were once my
friends in this town. I must make them face their guilt. They are putting it off in lieu of the
money they are going to receive. The scene has been carefully set, allowing the reporters in to
view the decision of the town and leading them out to the feast while the killing on Anton must
happen. In looking at the construction of the words in this particular monologue, there are a lot
of vocal choices that I can play with. The monologue is filled with clues of where the power
resides. The open vowels in the beginning give me time to think of my next words, and as I go
on a roll, proving my point, it gathers consonance with it - the places where there are hard sounds
that I have to chew to make the point. The constant staccato forces to attention those who are
around me. The pointedness of the sounds can be directed towards the persons I am trying to
persuade. As the monologue gathers in intensity, there are the y-buzz sounds that come out in
“grace”, “feel” and “evil”. There are so many rich sounds to pay attention to in this monologue
that it is going to be difficult to pick which ones I want to use. And I know that different
reactions will lead me to pick out different sounds, and that it probably will not be same every
time I do it, but I want to make sure that I explore all of the possibilities so that I don’t miss
anything. I have actually decided, with Mark and Chris Niess’ permission, to work in movement
class with this monologue as well, so that I am not only working on the vocal clues, but I am
working with Laban/LeCoq processes as well. I want to give it extra attention because I believe
this is the point where everything in the play could change. The Professor cannot, for a second,
think that her words will not affect these people. She has to hope that upon facing their guilt, they could change their minds. She has to hold on to her love for Anton and her sense of Justice.
We are now at the end of the play. In working on these last pages, it is an absolute defeat for the professor. I sit there, and watch as these people that I grew up with, that I taught, raise their hands against another member of the town because of a paycheck. It is an incredibly disappointing moment for me in the play. We have changed the ending somewhat from what the play has actually recorded - the play has the teacher giving in at the end and joining willingly into the covenant of the township. Mark wants to leave me the only person on stage that does not turn against Anton, and gets no red. Everyone who has turned gets a piece of red clothing somewhere, or red accessory. We had some changes in this as we worked today - Claudio is actually forcing me to my place, physically, and is picking up my hand and lifting it in the air during the vote. It is a very intimidating scene. It feels like all of the fight goes out of me after the monologue and I am simply a pawn in a game I can no longer control, that I never really could control. This rehearsal has given me a sense of failure, and that I set myself up for immense failure, but there was no other way. I am not sure that Anton is the only one who dies in this play. I know a piece of the Professor is dead, and I think the town has lost a part of each person that took place in the decision to kill Anton.

Good God, this entire scene is so extremely difficult! It’s trying, and emotionally draining, and leaves me but a shell of the person that I thought I was. If I’d only fought harder, if there was another way - think! But there is nothing that can be done now, and she (Claire) has her victory. So what do I do now? What does the teacher do after this play is over. The righteous indignation in me wants to say that I refuse my share of the money and leave the town to start the post in Kalberstadt that I refused long ago. I don’t really know what becomes of me after this.
Right now, I feel that I am so broken that I have no idea how to put the pieces back together again.

The questions that are coming up in my head that I want to explore are the “whys.” And the question from my interview with Jenn that now comes up for me is who gets to be the judge? The Mayor appoints himself as the leader, but he does not reign in the judgment. The entire town is forced to come to a unanimous vote. I think that Claire is ultimately the judge. And she has passed down a sentence that the town is forced to comply with to continue its existence. The powerless feeling she has tried to invoke has come to fruition and it makes me sad, and mad at the same time that I can do nothing but watch.

This is happening because why? Because a woman wronged has to complete a wrong to make it right? Nothing about this is justice, and at the end, I think Claire must see that. Maybe that is my revenge to her. So, ok, there is a reason to the inciting event, but what about why the town decides to go for it? Something to think about.
We worked Act Three for the first part of rehearsal today. Tonight we are learning the music to all the songs with Ryan - he wrote all the music. Act Three is very hard for me. It’s such a dark place to be most of the time. I’m pretty good at keeping my life separate from the character’s life, but I sense a little bit of sadness seeping over. I guess it’s normal in some cases, I mean, I am living the life of the Professor, but I am looking forward to next weekend when we go to UPTA’s. I think a few days of normal life activities will help me bring a freshness back to the character and keep me from going crazy.

I am really playing with the Laban techniques in this act. Laban uses a description of different actions to produce movement based reactions in the body. The theory is, that when you physically place your body in a certain way - not necessarily visible to an outside observer - that there will be an emotional reaction within the body of the actor. He uses 6 qualifiers, strong vs. light, direct vs. indirect, and slow vs. quick. The following are the 8 techniques, and their descriptions:

- Float: light, indirect, slow
- Glide: light, direct, slow
- Dab: light, direct, quick
- Flick: light indirect, quick
- Punch: strong, direct, quick
- Slash: strong, indirect, quick
- Wring: strong, indirect, slow
- Press: strong, direct, slow
The first scene I am in, with the Doctor and Claire, I am a presser, both physically and vocally. The times at which I get shaken up by something I become more of a slash, and then as I gather my courage for the confrontation before Schill comes in, and the final monologue, I lose a bit of the strength there, and it pushes more to a flick.

The flick works really well for me in the confrontation with Mrs. Schill, Hofbauer, and some of the town members in the store. They, of course, think it is nerves, but I think that I scare them. They know I am the wild card. The drink helps to soothe my nerves, and gather myself to go back into a press, with some punches and dabs layered underneath the press that let loose from time to time. I am happy with the progress on this piece, and I actually feel better after breaking it down into technical terms. Maybe I just need some time to come out of rehearsal and let it go for a bit.

Hmm, well off to eat and then back to the rehearsal of music. I’m nervous about that. I am not so good with singing in front of folks. At least it’s a chorus thing....

*Music Rehearsal, same day*

Well, it was fine. The words are corny, but that’s what Ryan had to work with - he did a lovely job putting together the rest of it. I can’t believe he doesn’t read music. Me, I’m just the opposite. I read it, but I can’t play it, except on one hand. You’d think someone who took piano forever would have a better sense, but I never learned how to sight play. Eh, I can’t type, either, I have to look at the keys, but who cares? So, I know the music now, and I have to come down singing with Sean and Robert Stack from the awful platform scene. Ok, it’s not awful, it’s gotten better, but still, it is about the worst scene in the show. And it has nothing to do with direction, I think the scene is just poorly written.
Monday, 31 January 2005

So we put the entire play together tonight and it was, excuse the pun, a total train wreck. But a good train wreck. Yes, there were mistakes, and yes, it was really confusing from time to time - ok, most of the time - but I feel a lot better after putting the whole thing together. Most of the notes we got were technical things, like move more here, or faster with this, can you move this box on your way out - nothing much in the way of building up the character. But I think that Mark is really leaving that up to us, and we can come ask questions if we are confused on something.

In putting this thing together, I am seeing the challenges that come with having so little time for all of us to be here working on the project together. Everyday we are missing at least one, usually two people, and we are having to play catch up. We just got word that one of our actors, Libby, has mono and we think that someone may have to take her place. I think Stephanie should get to play it, because she has really been our all purpose understudy and I think she should get a reward for it.

I’m tired. I really think that I am putting a lot of myself into this, which I usually do with roles, but I feel a certain pressure to live up to this role because it is my thesis. At least my muscles seem to have gotten used to the Professor’s posture - for a while there, my neck and back and feet were killing me because of the new positions I hold them in when I am her. But it has settled in, now, and I feel that I have made some very good progress today.

The scene between Anton and I, in the store has become something very hard to get through. Mark has asked both of us to pull back from it, to limit the times we touch each other, and it makes it more difficult at the same time as enhances the longing to help and save.
Tuesday, 1 February 2005

Working Act One. There is such a bustle that goes on in this act. Work, work, work. Get it done now, now, now. It really hard, because we are trying to get all of the blocking timing down, with this piece of furniture goes here on this line, and get the play timing down as well. Right now, the first act is really slow. We all need to pick up our cues and get off book. I am off book for everything except the last act, and I think I am going to use the road trip to Memphis to really concentrate on that. I know most of it, its just nit picky words that gets in the way. I need to sit down and just focus on the words. Repetition. That’s all I need.

I got through the scene today - that dreaded platform scene - but I think we made some headway with it. Sean and Robert and I were all laughing about it during one of our breaks and just sort of decided not to take it so seriously. That maybe if we didn’t dread it going into it that it, the laughter would help fix it, as much as it can be fixed. Well, we went out and we sort of did it, and we also played with the little tipsy factor, since both the Professor and the Mayor have drinks in their hands when the lights come up. It may be the only way they can get through the welcoming committee - a little liquid fortitude. It was sort of fun, and I think we went a little too far with it, but at least we recognized something new in the scene. There are some, sort of, inside jokes that go on, sharing the incredible weirdness that come from Claire. It’s a new start for this stagnant scene.
The slow day for me. I only have the one scene, with Claire and the children, and Mark has asked that I really offer formal, very heartfelt and yet community representing, condolences to Claire for the terrible loss of her panther. The children sing a song that is actually, very weird. It adds to this sense of foreboding and allows another sliver of foreshadowing to enter in the play. Mark, however, does not want this to be played up - just played honestly. And that I need to pay attention to the volume and the diction in this piece. This is another passage that I find a little stilted. Maybe it is the translation. I have some time before rehearsal is over, I want to take a look at that passage for some vocal clues to help me with that.

Gracious lady, be so good as to accept our heartfelt condolence. Your beautiful panther is no more. Believe me, we are deeply pained that so tragic an event should mar your visit here. But what could we do? The panther was a savage, a beast. To him, our human laws could not apply. There was no other way–

The consonants underlined are the playable ones, and I have added some of my own that I feel need to be played up as well. There are also open mouthed vowels that are playable, as well as y-buzz. I am coloring the open vowels red and the y-buzz blue. I am not of course, going to do all of these at one time, but I know what I can play with now. I really like the idea of the y-buzz, it is very prevalent in this piece and I think to use it would show a measure of strength. But I can also use the opened vowels to relate to her and maybe open her up to my words to see the ridiculousness of having a panther, and that we, or at least I, understand what the panther represents.
Thursday, 3 February 2005

I think we are getting closer to pulling this act together. I honestly believe that the last act is the one that is in the best shape. It is the easiest. Everyone has definitely turned, I clearly have something to fight for, and Anton has to resign himself to death. There is something that pulls this act on to the end by itself.

I really don’t get notes during rehearsals for this show. I have no idea whether this is a good thing or a bad thing - I will get something if my southern accent steps in for a minute, but I am listening to myself most of the time to try to hear it. I don’t always catch it, and really, my biggest problem is the word “just”. I still have problems with “get” from time to time, but that’s been a problem for a while so I almost always catch it as soon as I say it.

I have been playing with a part of the Anton store scene for a while. There is a part where I tell Anton he is guilty and then call him a bastard. What does this mean to me? During the scene I am trying to get him to tell someone about what Claire is doing. When he refuses, I tell him he is guilty - but what is he guilty of? Am I condemning him for what happened between him and Claire long ago? Or is it something else? I don’t think it is the literal Claire accusation. I think I am telling him he is guilty of not fighting for himself - guilty of giving up. He is allowing the town to do this to him, without a fight, and that is his guilt, and by not letting me help him, I call him a bastard. He sits there, knowing that I can help - he doesn’t know that Claire has ruined the town, but he knows that I know something! And he won’t let me interfere, won’t let me give him the weapon he needs to fight this situation. You know what? I have the question about what I am going to do after Claire leaves this town. I might just let the town get all their money, call a big ol’ meeting and tell them that their savior, darling Clara, set the whole town up to fail to
begin with, and she told me and the doctor. I’m planning on leaving anyways, so happy trails, live with the fact you just murdered someone, and have a miserable life with your blood money. I think I’m rather upset about all these goings on.

I’ve got a good amount of character research in this journal, and I am not one to do a true character analysis. I find that what Jenn did, asking questions, or examining my feelings after a scene, reading it again and making some discoveries both inside and outside the scene help me to create a better character. The paper keeps everything in my brain. And I will do the character analysis, but I am going to wait a bit to do it. I may take a look at it over the road trip and see what I come up with. It’s a lot of hours I am going to spend looking over the script and lines anyway.
Monday, 7 February 2005

I don’t think I have ever been this tired. We had a run-thru tonight of the entire show, and I know I did it off book, but the only scene I can really remember are two scenes - Claire actually scared me to tears tonight, and Anton’s refusal of help just broke me in half. I think I just have no defenses left tonight. This weekend was fun, long and very rough. We went to UPTA’s in Memphis, TN and drove there together. It was all of us from class - Alan, Niki, David, and I and we stayed in a lovely hotel that my mother set up for us, but 18 hours on the road up there, and 18 hours back was God-awful. Of course it was fun at the beginning, but by the end - thank God we stopped Sunday night in Atlanta. If we had driven back the whole way, I might have just killed myself. But, I did get some very valuable work done out of it. I got off book completely and I took a look at the character analysis and thought about all of the questions. I don’t want to write any of it down yet, I don’t have to solidify choices just quite yet - I have a few days. I honestly probably won’t write any of it down until after the play is over. I always get a sense of sadness when a play closes, so maybe that will be my way of sending it off. My handwriting here is awful, thank God for computers. I must be tired.

I had some difficulty staying in posture tonight. My muscles are really sore from being trapped in a car for a couple of days, and my lower back is really being not so much fun. At least I don’t seem to be sick - most of the company is and Ben Hope how now been diagnosed with mono, but he says he’s staying in the show no matter what the doctor says. He says he’s not air-born contagious, but we have all been banned from drinking or eating or smoking after each other. I don’t really have anything else to write about. I’m going to bed.
Tuesday, 8 February 2005

This is the last night that we are going to be in the blue room. In a way, I feel like this space is home for us, and in another way, I am very excited to get on the stage. I desperately need to expanse of space to make sure that the diction and volume I am working on is at a proper level for the theatre. I’m still tired. This whole school/conference/play schedule thing is hard. I can do school or play, or play or conference, or conference and school, but all three at the same time? I sort of just want to collapse and sleep for a weekend and then start over.

I was hoping that my parents would actually be able to come and see the show, I know that they are far away but they were trying. But my dad got called to work at the base in Jacksonville and my mom has to fly somewhere for some conference that just came up. Somehow I am disappointed. I know that they tried, but they have not been able to come see anything that I have been in here. In the two years I have lived here, they haven’t even been able to come visit me. They came all the time in Alabama. Granted, it was closer and my extended family is there, but they know how much I dislike this town. If the professors here were not as great as they are, I would have left already.

Maybe this is something I can use in the play. I’m lonely here. Yes, I have my classmates, who are good friends, and David who is there for me in so many ways, but even he is acting weird sometimes. This show forces me to stand alone at the end. Maybe I am standing alone in my life too. My parents not coming is like Anton not letting me help. This city that I really can’t stand is something like the town at the end of the play. But, when I am finished, where do I go from here? I have the same questions at the end of the play. Sometimes I know, sometimes I don’t. The only thing that is different is in the play, at least I have a choice to have a
good deal of money to live on for the rest of my life. Can that part transfer over into my real life?
I would love that.

Maybe all these thoughts and feelings also come from saying goodbye to this space. There seems to be a lot of goodbyes going around here. And this step brings us that much closer to having the audience that we absolutely need, but that we are not quite ready for, yet.
Wednesday, 9 February 2005

Yikes! What an interesting experience. So, we get on stage with all of our movable parts and sets and stuff and we try to make it work and it just ends up working like some very important link is missing. It was slow, it was not at all about character building, it was very much let’s get through this, and “faster, funnier and don’t bump into the furniture” really needs to apply itself. I think Mark wants to kill us right now. Or himself, really, but I know he had to go through at least an entire pack of cigarettes. It will be better tomorrow, though. We are just now in the space, getting used to the size, the feel, the way things move and interact and it will be fine. I have a really good feeling about it. I think that Sunday is going to be a very good day for us, when we go through and set all of the set changes, make sure that everything is covered and just work those to death, or until they are in our bodies. That is the thing that is killing our progress right now.

And then there is that scene, the one in act one that has been so difficult for me to grasp. Now that Sean and I are actually up on the platform...oh my good acting goddess, send me some faerie dust now. The platform is so up above anything and has such weird lighting that it is really going to take a lot to get used to and make it workable.

Speaking of the lighting, this is the first rehearsal that our lighting designer has been to since we had our presentation meeting at the very beginning. It’s going very slow, much slower than I ever remember it going, and it’s annoying to me. I’m quite sure that she has worked on this, but it just seems like she’s behind, and after all the work we have been doing on it - it makes me irritated. But then, I have hormones, and I am an actor. Who am I to say anything about lighting? Oh, yeah, I’m looking forward to tomorrow. I think it will be better.
Thursday, 10 February 2005

Things are better tonight. We actually got through the show, and we seem to have some solid cues that we are working with. The train sounds are going to be friggin’ fantastic. They are running it through the speakers so that you hear it on one side of the stage and it crosses through the center and goes out the other side of the stage. It is really amazing what they are doing. And there is a spot light that follows the sound, too, that looks the light on the front of the train.

I really put in a lot of effort into the “bane of my existence” scene on the platform. I figured something out with it tonight, that I can use the little bit of beer I am drinking to my advantage. I have asked Mark to look at it and he says there is nothing wrong with the scene, so I am wondering why I just don’t feel it. But, I allowed myself to be a little tipsy, not visible tipsy, just the kind that when you are in an important conversation and the last thing that you want someone to think about you is that your judgment may be impaired, even slightly. And it sort of worked, but I really think that I am going to have to pull out some of the Laban techniques to go with me on this platform journey. My movement teacher at Alabama, who first introduced me to Laban, said that these were good rehearsal tools, and excellent tools for when “your talent didn’t come to work with you”. We all have off days. We all have off scenes. And maybe this technique can help. The teacher is a presser, fundamentally, but I think the alcohol leads a little bit of glide into her. At the thought of Claire’s presence in the town, I think the fear leads a flick to enter into her hands, or maybe in her feet. But the glide takes back over with the thought of the “ashes of her youthful love”, and maybe leads back into some fantasy that she may have had about a young love at some point. Embarrassed by this display, but thankful that no one finds it unseemly, control returns in the form of a press, but the flick of nervousness stays underneath it
at all times.
Friday, 11 February 2005

So I think that I have found the key to that scene. I really don’t think that I will ever find it good, or feel that it has been a true honest moment, but no one else seems to have a problem with it. I asked Mark about it again, and he said it is coming off just fine, and that I am doing some strong work. Remember to think about my diction, and my volume is low in some points. I know that I have some volume problems especially in the last act, with Anton. Although, he has asked me to back off some of the volume in the confrontation with Claire. He doesn’t want her to be as outwardly strong. He wants to contain her strength, but allow Claire to really get to her. As much as I am trying to use a woman to woman connection with her, he wants me to really listen and feel for her during her pregnancy speech. Maybe, in that moment I have a chance to get what I want without Claire knowing it. If I can figure out a way to make Claire think it is her idea to let it go, I win. But as the scene goes on, she just reveals what kind of maniac she is and there is no way that approach is going to work. So I reason. And Mark wants to focus on the reasoning and keep volume levels pretty steady. I can raise my voice at the end, and that is what prompts her to leave the chair and come to me. She admires my strength, but has a real desire to break me, I think.

We had a sort of audience tonight with the crew view, and it was nice to have people out there. There was an energy tonight that we haven’t had before. It is sort of a prelude to what is to come, but in a very small way. It was still fun to hear reactions, know that there were some sincerely funny parts, and know that there are some parts that we definitely need to smooth out some. Tomorrow is dry tech, and we are not called, but I am excited to have everything start to come together. I think, even though it’s heavy, that this show is going to be a good one.
I think this is perhaps the longest day in the history of days. All this technical stuff, while really awesome and totally worth what we are doing, just intensely grates on my nerves. I already knew it was going to be a long day, I was prepared for the restlessness and the waiting, but I still can’t wait for this day to be over. In the morning, we worked furniture stuff. Everyone was assigned their own piece of furniture to move during some point in the show. I got really lucky in that respect. I only move one piece during the entire show and that comes in the last act. Ben and I were supposed to move our seats, but then Mark decided he wanted us to come out a little later, so we got out of that one. But, after the death of Schill, we all move the furniture back and then quickly get back in line for the lights to come up. This is a good day for doing homework, and I just can’t keep my mind how pretty it is outside. We went to lunch over at the student union and ate outside, and it was just a tease. All the grassy areas call to me, saying, “Get a book and a blanket - you know you want to…” Of course I do. But there is work to be done.

We are in the middle of cue-to-cue right now and it is the down act for me, Act Two. I’m ok when I am actually doing something, and yes, the intelligent part of my brain screams at me that this is not a waste of time, but it always seems like things could go more smoothly, or cues could just magically come together.

On the upside, I would like the talk about my costume. I friggin’ love my costume. It is this dress, that is totally a schoolmarm dress, and I get ah-hem...filled out....if you will by the most awesome padding ever. The dress was a little too big in the chest, but instead of messing with the intricate patterning to change it, we just gave me more boobs. I’m all about that. And then there are the shoes. They are this half boot, slightly heeled (about 2.5 inches or so)
wonderful shoes that make me feel like the Professor. They are a little big, but I’ve gotten a couple of pairs of ankle socks and pantyhose and an insert to make them comfortable. I love them. They are my favorite thing about the costume. I can’t wait to put it all together next week.

It seems I get cast in shows that keep me in rehearsals on Valentines Day. I would kind of like to spend it with my boyfriend, but I suppose we need the work, considering we open in 3 days and tech yesterday was sort of a disaster. But at least we got to wear our costumes and go through everything tonight.

The hair and makeup person brought some pictures by of what we needed to look like. They want a limited amount of makeup, enough that the lights don’t wash out our features but not enough to make it look like we have makeup on. Mark wants most of us to look a little dirty, with the exception of the Pastor, Mayor, Schill and myself, since we seem to be the “important” people in town. However, as people start to turn, we can make ourselves look nicer. Guess that means I just stay Plain Jane. I’m okay with that. But my hair is going to be fun. They want it to be in a bun, but they want the braid across the hair, like a head band. Unfortunately, we don’t have a braided headband, but my hair is long enough that I can do something like it. I am taking the front part of my hair and pulling it half way up. The bottom part is secured with a rubber band for now. I part the front loose part down the middle and braid each section, and then hair pin the braid up the side of my head, allowing the ends to cross over in the middle and get tucked under. Then the under part is brushed back and put into a bun. The effect is the braid on the top of my head, behind my ears and still a bun - very German/Heidi/Princess Leia (Empire Strikes Back, not Star Wars).

I am excited about the costume and working in it makes me feel whole. Something really interesting happened tonight, and it was hard to keep from breaking character it was so startling. In the confrontation with Claire in the beginning of the third act, when she pulls me aside and
tells me that the world made her into a whore, she reached out and slid her hand down the entire front of my body, roughly. I had a very visceral reaction of not only jerking away, but actually bringing one hand up to stop her violent caress and the other hand to defend the attack. It was weird, because I automatically went into self defense mode, and I’m glad I caught it before I fully reacted. It was unsettling, and it really helped prepare me through the rest of the act, especially with the decision to tell the reporters what was going on, and then have the town turn on me as well. She actually apologized after rehearsal, saying it was just an impulse she followed and I told her that I’m glad she tried it. It gave me some powerful feelings to work with. I told her she could go farther if she wanted to, that the more off kilter I am, the better the next scene is. She said she had some other things she wanted to play with too, and I told her to go for it, just not to tell me what she was planning so that I can have an honest reaction. She doesn’t want it to be the exact same every night, because no two performances are the same, and I agree. I like being on my toes, to some extent.

I’m ready for an audience. There are still some bugs, but basically, I’m ready for the outside energy. I’m getting tired. And now, I’m going to have a glass of wine and hang out with my boyfriend. I miss hanging out with him.
Tuesday, 15 February 2005.

The show is shaping up rather nicely - there are still some bumps going on in the technical side, but nothing that can’t be fixed. I think we are ready for an audience, that we need that to get to the level that we want to be on. We are still really slow in the first act, and the second act needs a bit more pick up, but we are almost there.

There is that scene in the first act that has never felt right. It still doesn’t. The addition of lights, a chorus, a platform, costumes and glasses have not really made a difference. I think that it is just going to have to feel weird, although I am trying to just let it happen. You can’t force honesty - it just ends up looking fake. So, I’ll enter with my beer and talk to my colleagues and let it be okay that I don’t feel right about it. It is frustrating, though. I want it to be as good as I can make it.

Doc and I got a note tonight that we should not have much eye contact, and no physical contact. That’s really hard for both of us. We have developed such an intimate relationship with tiny touches and it’s really the only way we show our feelings for each other, but in a way that is not really noticeable to others. Certainly not an affair or anything, that would never happen - I respect his wife and family too much, but these little hand touch was a way of reassurance that I was standing there to help. And now that’s gone, and the eye contact can’t be anything too strong as well, so I really feel forced here with this part now. But, I am going to try again tomorrow and see what happens.

I have this theory about Final Dress Rehearsal, and you’ll find many actors out there that share it. If everything in Final Dress goes exactly as it should, then there are bound to be mistakes on opening night. However, if there are mistakes that happen, opening should be just fine. And the more mistakes, the better opening will be. I don’t mean mistakes of catastrophic proportion - like losing cast members or anything, but just stuff like late entrances where you’ve never been late before, flubbing a line you usually get - things like that. If there is anything to that, then opening tomorrow night should be just fine. There were just enough little mistakes to put me at ease.

The scene with the beer was okay tonight. Not great, but not terrible, either - I think I need to stop obsessing about it. The scene with Doc was weird - different with the no touching or looking thing, but it creates a need to make that contact with him. I think it also would be fine. The confrontation with Claire got a bit preachy for me tonight, and the Doctor is a complete wimp. But Claire did almost crush my hand as she drug me over to the side.

I’m ready for an audience. That’s all tonight.

So, its opening night and I got here at the theatre before my call and set up my station over in the corner. There are going to be a lot of people in here and I need my own little space. There was talk of a group warm up, but thank God that fell through. I wouldn’t have gone anyways. I use the time before I put on my costume to clear my head of the day and center my thoughts on what is coming for the evening. So, I had a little time to myself to eat my Subway sandwich before the rest of the cast began to make their way in, and I suddenly very much missed Heather - she was my dressing room buddy during my last show - but Ben came in soon enough.

The first act seemed to fly by. I am on my break during the second act right now, and that seems to be going well too. I remember the stupid scene going ok, and thinking after it was over that it wasn’t too bad, but if I remember it, I wasn’t really all there. I’m nervous - not too much, though. I only get it on opening and then after I get on, I forget about it. This break has kinda brought it back though, I guess because Act Three is all my big stuff. I hope the monologue goes as well as it did last night. I’m focusing on the Pastor tonight. See if I can get his guilt going. Intermission now, between Act 2 and 3. Gotta run.

Act 3 was fine. I was there, I felt sad and empowered and lonely and a complete failure at the end. I’m sitting here in the dressing room for a minute, letting all those people go outside and be greeted by the festivities. I don’t like being in the middle of so many people. I feel claustrophobic and all I really want to do is run outside where I can breathe. But I’m going to go in a minute and then I will go to the opening night party. There at least there is space for everyone to mingle. The lower lobby is just too tiny. Oh well. Deep breath. Here I go.
Night two. There’s a saying about the second night too - the second night slump. And the energy did seem to falter tonight, but it was not as bad as some other shows I have been in. In fact, even though the first act was a little draggy, I think that my character work was stronger than last night. I don’t have any nerves anymore, I only get nervous on opening, so I’m settled into the show and it happened easier tonight. Sometimes, because you need to have an audience for so long, on the first night you really notice them, and I probably did without realizing it. But tonight, I just played within the play. It was fun. Well, not exactly fun, I mean this isn’t a happy ending story, but it was nice to live in it. I don’t really know how the annoying scene went - I’m not sure if I made it through the Anton scene without trying to catch his eye, but I know that I did the scenes. I was there, as the Professor. I do remember one moment in the Anton scene in Act 3 when I said, “And charge it.” that the audience kind of gasped a little. That was fun. I remember that because I was walking off stage at the time.

We get adjudicated tomorrow night. That ought to be interesting. I’ve heard positive things about last night, and tonight, but this place always seems to be positive. I want someone to tell me what they really think, not what they think I want to hear. You can’t learn from constant praise. That’s why I am in school, to make mistakes and learn. What did you get, what didn’t you get? Those sorts of things. Maybe that will happen tomorrow.
Saturday, 19 February 2005.

That adjudication was simply the most incredible waste of time that I have ever been through. I would almost rather have sit through photo call, I think. That’s tomorrow, though. Nice that it’s on Sunday so that we don’t run late into the night. But, that is beside the point. The adjudication. Okay, so it was a lot of smoke blowing and yippies and this was a very well done show. Great. Thanks. How do we make it better? No specifics, no real character comments, no understandings or not understandings - is this a judgment or not? Elizabeth Maupin does a better job of saying what she thinks. At least she’s honest about what she sees.

I’m just so tired of preserving egos. I know this is education - but actors can deal with failing, sort of failing, not really failing, or succeeding. Shouldn’t someone, at some point, let us know if we belong here? Can we compete with the others out there? Yes, I feel that this is a good show and that it is solid, but there are always parts that can be honed, refined, or just made better by someone who has not lived with it for months. They have a fresh eye. That’s what I wanted. That’s what I did not get. Not necessarily about myself; I am not looking for specific praise or criticism (I am also not going to run from it), but I hate it when all you have to say is good things. Maybe it’s my classes that cause me to seek more. I do not honestly remember any time where Kate, Chris, Be, Jim or any other professor has ever said, “Good. Sit down. Next.” We always examine what can be different or improved. I like that.
Sunday, 20 February 2005.

Photo Call is always crazy. But as crazy as it is, I think it ran pretty smoothly. We didn’t have to stay forever. That’s good, because today, this afternoon, yucky. I’m pretty sure half the cast was hung over in some way, and let’s face it - Sunday crowds are really not one for giving you a lot of energy. It’s sort of like an invited dress rehearsal. The older crowd likes to come on Sundays and I think the play was too long for them. It certainly did feel draggy today. The first act took forever. The second act also took forever. The third act finally had some pick up to it, but it wasn’t fabulous. I did not feel like I gave my best performance today. I absolutely used all of my Laban techniques because I felt like my talent did not come to work with me today. And there are days like that. I’ve done shows for three months and there are always up days and down days. In some way, I am really looking forward to the break Monday and Tuesday, but I know when we get back on Wed, most people will be dragging to get back into it. Thursday and Friday should be much better.

I think I am excited for this show to be over for the first week. I need to sleep and catch up on my homework. And housework. And actually spend time with the people, and kitties, who are important to me.
Wednesday, 23 February 2005

It was ok. I was sort of in and out today. I was totally in the first act. Even the crappy scene on the platform seemed to go by rather quickly and painlessly. When I get to the second act, I always work on homework because it’s so late when I get out and I’m usually tired. So I did that tonight, but I think that I stayed focused on what was going on with my scenes in Dinner with Friends. I had the little bit of the gun scene with the children and Anton, but I messed up a line, of the four I have in that scene - how stupid, and I just was sort of on edge. Not in a character way, I was hyper-aware of everything going on around me. So that was weird. But I got to the third act and I settled in again. I am starting to notice what an incredible wimp the Doctor is. Every time that I think that, I forget about it and then he takes something a little farther and it reminds me again that I am really the only person capable of standing up to this woman. If there were no Kobby and Lobby, I think I could take her. But those two, and Mike and Max are rather scary.

I didn’t feel defeated tonight. Yes, I was still upset at what was going on, but I felt out maneuvered tonight. I felt like Claire had out-smarted me. And that made me mad. That was new. I haven’t been mad in a while. Well, I’m mad at Claire every night, but I’m not usually mad at myself. I usually feel like I did everything I could do and still live. Tonight I felt that I could have done more, but that I was led into a trap before I even saw it sitting there. That was kind of fun.
Tonight was a really good audience. I felt like they were with us there tonight, and that we were fast enough, funny enough and not bumping into the furniture enough that Mark would have been proud. The audience was pretty full, and a lot of them were our fellow students, so there was a lot of supportive energy in the show tonight. We wanted to succeed as much as they wanted us to succeed. It’s hard to do, sometimes, with this show. It ends up being so dark that it’s really hard to get motivated on the nights that you are just drained. Just can’t think of the ending before you start. I’m pretty sure that’s an unwritten rule of acting anyway.

I kind of feel more tired than I should, and my throat is a little scratchy. I am going to go home and take lots of herbs and see if I can stop this thing before it starts. It’s about right on time, though. Seems like I always get sick just as a show is wrapping up.
Friday, 25 February 2005.

I don’t really feel any better today, but I don’t feel worse, so I suppose that’s a good thing. I’m popping vitamin c lozenges and taking medicine, and hopefully I’ll be just fine. I know that I plan on going to sleep tonight and not going out anywhere.

I think the show was pretty good. Last night felt better to me, but tonight was okay. The audience was pretty good, and they reacted strongly to my “turning” in the beginning of the third act. I had a rough time with the platform scene today. It felt off.

I don’t really feel like myself right now. I know that the show is going fine, but me, I just don’t feel like myself. I’m sure it’s just the cold, and the medicine I am on, but I am spacey. I am trying not to take medicine during the show unless I absolutely have to, and hopefully I’ll just wake up all better tomorrow.
Saturday, 26 February 2005.

I am sick. I don’t feel better, I feel worse. I can’t breathe, I’m not hungry and I just want to crawl in a bed with my blanket and go to sleep until I wake up well. I hate being sick.

The show is okay, I guess. I can’t really project as well as I usually can and even when I lower my voice to give it better support and carry to it, it sounds scratchy and stuffy. I am dizzy sometimes on stage. I took medicine during the first intermission so that I could make it through the show. Everything feels acutely slow tonight. Like I am watching it underwater. I think that I am still in the show as much as I can be - I don’t feel that I have let the acting part go just because I don’t feel very well, I think I am just playing the teacher as if she isn’t feeling very well either. I mean, she is a part of me as much as I am a part of her so if her host doesn’t feel well, then she doesn’t feel well either. I tried the whole “Professor Muller isn’t sick, so you’re not sick either” and that worked for maybe ten minutes and I’m pretty sure it was because I was looking for my script to do some work on it.

The audience is really important for me in this particular case. The energy that exists in the space we are playing in is giving me something to feed off of, because my body just isn’t giving me everything I need. I haven’t really eaten anything today - just some crackers and little things here and there, drinking juice and stuff, but I just really want to go to bed. It was easy to cry tonight. I’ve wanted to cry all day. Geez, I’m such a baby when I get sick.
The last one. Yay. I’m actually not really sad to see this one go. I think this show has led to a bit of depression on my part, actually. How can you live in a failing atmosphere for over a month and not have it affect your personal life. But I am really sick, too. I went through 2 boxes of Kleenex (anti-viral) between last night and today. When I came off-stage during the second act, my nose was bleeding. Thank God it waited until I had some time to take care of it. Someone sent me some flowers and they had high pollen content. That threw everything into a whack and my eyes swelled, my nose closed up even more and Ben very nicely made them disappear. I am on medicine and I think maybe I gave a brilliant performance today. Yes, my voice was scratchy and not at all there, but I could still be heard. Yes, my nose is stuffy and I can’t breathe, but I can feel. And feel I did. I was in control, out of control, somewhere in between. The Doctor pissed me off, Claire scared the hell out of me and I needed that damn drink that Mrs. Schill gives me. And I was really going to tell those reporters - screw my life! And Anton broke my heart, asking me to give up and let him die.

I’m exhausted. I want to go home. There is no part of strike that I plan on participating in and that does not trigger my guilt complex at all. I’ve done a lot of strikes. It’s time to go home. It’s time to go to bed, and put this play to rest. I can’t believe that it is all over. I’m glad I got to do this. These people are fun to work with, even in a depressing story.
CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION

In looking at the questions I posed for myself in the beginning of this process, I believe that I have been successful. The production of the play was entirely successful, having some of the largest houses for the season, and lots of positive feedback coming in from the audiences.

The process I used to get to the heart of the character was interesting for me. I did most of the character building in rehearsals, feeling reactions from my fellow actors and shape-shifting to find the niche in which the Teacher belonged. I put my trust in the script, and in the director and I feel that my process was something that tool me further into this role and kept it honest for me.

In looking at the journaling process, it is the only writings that I probably will never use again. It was absolutely interesting to type them into this thesis, re-reading where I was and what I was doing, but at the time, it is a hard tool for learning for me. I like taking a look at my work and asking myself questions to dig deeper into the character, but the writing every night is really frustrating for me. However, for this particular show and resulting papers that went with it, the journal was invaluable for getting my thoughts back on track and into the world of the play. My research on the script and author were finished after the performances were over, and when I began to put the thesis together, I began by transcribing my journals. It dropped me right back into the world of the play.

I learned an incredible amount in this process. I grew as an actor, and as a person, and the challenging nature of the role always kept me on my toes. I do not think I ever got “comfortable” with the role or stopped thinking about it. That’s not to say I felt outside of the role, but it never became unimportant to me; I never felt like I was performing with the next day on my mind. This opportunity opened a new way of thinking for me, and I hope that my process is as interesting for you who are reading as it was for me to put it into words.
APPENDIX A: THE SCRIPT
The Visit

ACT ONE

A railway-crossing BELL starts ringing. Then is heard the distant sound of a locomotive WHISTLE. The CURTAIN rises.

The scene represents, in the simplest possible manner, a little town somewhere in Central Europe. (See Scene Design # 1.) The time is the present. The town is shabby and ruined as if the plague had passed there. Its name, Gitten, is inscribed on the shabby signboard which adorns the façade of the railway station unit, Left. This edifice is summarily indicated by a small house and a wooden platform facing the audience, beyond which one imagines the rails to be. THE THIRD MAN leans on a baggage truck standing Down Left. In the station wall is a door with a sign: EINTRITT VERBOTEN. This leads to the station master’s office. Left of the station is a little house in grey stucco, formerly whitewashed. It has a tile roof, badly in need of repair. Some shreds of travel posters still adhere to the windowless walls. A shingle hanging over the entrance Left reads: MANNER. On the other side the shingle reads: DAMEN. And under this a torn timetable marked FAIRPLAN hanging on two nails. The wall of the little house there is a wooden bench, backless, on which two Men are lounging cheerlessly, shabbily dressed, with cracked shoes. The Painter is hunched with paint-pot and brush Down Left. He is kneeling on the ground, painting a strip of cloth with the words, WELCOME, CLARA. THE SECOND MAN is seated on a wooden box near the station master’s office. The warning SIGNAL rings
THE VISIT

ACT 1

THE PAINTER. A cradle of culture.
FIFTH MAN. One of the best little towns in the country.
FIRST MAN. In the world.
SECOND MAN. Here Goethe slept.
FIFTH MAN. Brahms composed a quartet.
THIRD MAN. Here Berthold Schwarz invented gunpowder.

THE PAINTER. (Rises, moves to FIFTH MAN.) And I who once got first prize at the Dresden Exhibition of Contemporary Art—What am I doing now? (Station BELL rings. [SOUND CUE # 2A.] Painting signs!

(STATION MASTER comes out, throws away cigarette. All rush; THIRD MAN gets cigarette and sits Center smoking. FIRST MAN moves back to bench, stands; others remain standing around THIRD MAN.)

FIRST MAN. Well,—anyway, Madame Zachanassian will help us.
FIFTH MAN. (Moves back to bench.) If she comes.
SECOND MAN. (Moving toward trolley.) If she comes.
SECOND MAN. Last week she was in France. She gave them a hospital.
FIRST MAN. (Sits on bench.) In Rome—she—founded a free public nursery.
THIRD MAN. In Leuthenau, a bird sanctuary.
THE PAINTER. (Crosses Center.) They say she got Picasso to design her car.

FIRST MAN. Where does she get all that money?
SECOND MAN. An oil company, a shipping line, three banks and five railways—
FIFTH MAN. And the biggest string of geisha houses in Japan. (Laugh.)

(To the direction of the town come the BURGOMASTER, the MAYOR, the PASTOR, the TEACHER and ANTON SCHILL. They enter Fourth Bay, Left. The BURGOMASTER, the
THE VISIT

ACT I

The Pastor and Schill are men in their fifties. The Pastor is ten years younger. All three are dressed shabbily and are sad-looking. The Burghamster looks official. Schill is tall and handsome, but greying and worn; nevertheless a man of considerable charm and presence. He walks directly to the little house and disappears into it. Burghamster comes Down Center.

PASTER. (Crosses to Burghamster.) Any news, Burghamster? Is she coming?
BURGHAMSTER. She's coming. The telegram has been confirmed. Our distinguished guest will arrive on the 11:40 from Kalberstadt. Everyone must be ready.

(Man gets brooms and starts sweeping toward Upper Right.)

TEACHER. (To Left of Burghamster.) The mixed choir is ready. So is the Children's Chorus. Burghamster. And the church bell, Pastor?
PASTER. The church bell will ring. As soon as the new bell ropes are fitted. The man is working on them now. (Speaks to FIRST MAN.)
BURGHAMSTER. The town band will be drawn up in the market place and the Turnverein will form a human pyramid in her honor—the top man will hold the wreath with her initials. Then lunch at the Golden Apostle. I shall say a few words.

TEACHER. Of course.
BURGHAMSTER. I had thought of illuminating the town hall and the cathedral, but we can't afford the lamps.
PAINTER. Burghamster—what do you think of this?
(Shearer banner)
BURGHAMSTER. (Gala.) Schill! Schill!
TEACHER. Schill.
SCHILL. (Enter, stepping over brooms, to Right of Burghamster.) Yes, right away. Right away.
THE VISIT

ACT 1

PASTOR. You were really quite close to one another in those days?

SCHILL. Close? Yes, we were close, there's no denying it. We were in love. I was young—good looking, so they said, and Clara—I can still see her in the great barn coming towards me—like a light out of the darkness. And in the Konradswell Forest, she'd come running to meet me—barefooted—her beautiful red hair streaming behind her. Like a witch. Oh, I was in love with her all right. But you know how it is when you're twenty—

PASTOR. What happened?

SCHILL. (Shrugs.) Life came between us.

BURGOMASTER. (Gets box and sits Left of bench.)
You must give me some points for my speech. (He takes out his notebook.)

SCHILL. Yes, I think I can help you there.

BURGOMASTER. (Gets box and sits Left of SCHILL.)
Well, I've gone through the school records, and the young lady's marks were, I'm afraid to say, absolutely dreadful. Even in deportment. The only subject in which she was even remotely passable was natural history.

BURGOMASTER. Good in natural history. That's fine.

(He makes a note.)

SCHILL. She was an outdoor girl, Wild. Once, I remember, they arrested a tramp, and she threw stones at the policeman. She hated injustice passionately.

BURGOMASTER. Strong sense of justice. Excellent.

SCHILL. And generous—

ALL. Generous.

SCHILL. Generous to a fault. Whatever little she had, she shared—so goodhearted. She once stole a bag of potatoes to help a poor widow.

BURGOMASTER. (Writing in notebook.) Wonderful generosity—

(First and Third Men move ladder, continue with decorations.)

TEACHER. Generosity.
THE VISIT

ACT I

(ACT I)

(Understand.) Gentlemen, let's get down to business. The first chance I get, of course, I shall discuss our miserable position with Clara.

TEACHER. But tactfully, tactfully.

SCHILL. What do you take me for? We must feel our way. Everything must be correct. Psychologically correct. For example, here at the railway station, a single blunder, one false note, could prove disastrous.

BURGOMASTER. He's absolutely right. The first impression colors all the rest. Madame Zachanassian sets foot on her native soil for the first time in many years. She sees our love and she sees our misery. She remembers her youth, her friends. The tears well up into her eyes. Her childhood companions throng about her. I will naturally not present myself like this, but in my black coat with my cap. Next to me, my wife. Before me, my two grandchildren, all in white, with roses. My God, if it only comes off as I see it! Only it comes off. (The station BELL begins ringing.) Oh, my God, Quick, we must get dressed.

FIRST MAN. (Comes down ladder, crosses down R. M.) It's not her train. It's the "Flying Dutchman."

PASTOR. (Calmly.) We have still two hours before she arrives.

SCHILL. (Takes box and sits near Left station house.) For God's sake, don't let's lose our heads. We still have a full two hours.

BURGOMASTER. Who's losing their heads? (To Fourth and Second Men.) When her train comes, you two, Helmburger and Vogel, will hold up the banner with "Welcome Madame Zachanassian." The rest will applaud. (Fourth and Second Men take position on ladders.)

THIRD MAN. Bravo! (He applauds.)

BURGOMASTER. (Looks at Third Man.) But, please, one thing—no wild cheering like last year with the government relief committee. It made no impression at all and we still haven't received any loan. What we need here is a feeling of genuine sincerity. That's how we greet with full hearts our beloved sister who has been away from us so long. Be sincerely moved, my friends, that's the secret; be sincere. Remember you're not dealing with a child. Next a few brief words from me. Then the church bell will start pealing—

(He is interrupted by the thunder of the approaching TRAIN. [SOUND CUE # 3.] The Men crane their heads to see it pass. The Station Master advances to the platform and salutes.)

PASTOR. If he can fix the ropes in time.

(The station BELL starts to ring.)

BURGOMASTER. Then the Mixed Choir moves in. And then—

TEACHER. We'll form a line down here.

BURGOMASTER. Then the rest of us will form in two or three lines leading from the station—

(There is a screech of brakes. [SOUND CUE # 3 A.] The Four Men jump up in consternation. All move Downstage except SCHILL, who rises from box.)

PAINTER. But the "Flying Dutchman" never stops!

FIRST MAN. It's stopping.

SECOND MAN. In Gilleahl.

THIRD MAN. In the poorest—

FIRST MAN. The dreariest—

SECOND MAN. The loudest—

FOURTH MAN. The most God-forsaken hole between Venice and Stockholm.

STATION MASTER. It cannot stop!

(The train noise stops. There is only the panting of the ENGINE. The STATION MASTER runs off.)

PAINTER. It's stopped!
THE VISIT

ACT 2

OFTSTAGE VOICES. What’s happened? Is there an accident? (A hubbub of oftstage VOICES, as if the passengers on the invisible train were alighting.)

CLAIRE. (Oftstage.) Is this Gillen? (All move Upstage, opposite first Bay Left for CLaire’s entrance.)

CONDUCTOR. (Oftstage.) Here, here, what’s going on?

CLAIRE. (Oftstage.) What the hell are you?

CONDUCTOR. (Oftstage.) Began pulled the emergency cord, Madame!

CLAIRE. (Oftstage.) I always pull the emergency cord.

STATION MASTER. (Oftstage.) Ask you what’s going on here?

CLAIRE. (Oftstage.) And who the hell are you?

STATION MASTER. (Oftstage.) I’m the Station Master, Madame, and I must ask you—

CLAIRE. (Enters.) No!

(From First Bay Left appears CLAIRE ZACHANASSIAN. She is an extraordinary woman. She is in her eighties, red-haired, remarkably dressed, with a face as impassive as that of an ancient idol, beautiful still, and with a singular grace of movement and manner. She is simple and unaffected, yet she has the haughtiness of a world power. Her entire effort is striking to the point of the unbelievable. Behind her comes her PIANIST, tall, young, very handsome, and completely equipped for singing, with crest and net, and with a red-case in his hand. An excited Conductor follows.)

CONDUCTOR. But, Madame, I must insist! You have stopped the “Flying Dutchman.” I must have an explanation.

CLAIRE. Nonno, Pedro—

PEDRO. Yes, no love?

CLAIRE. This is Gillen. Nothing has changed. I recognize it all. There’s the forest of Konradavall. There’s a trout farm full of trout where you can fish. And there’s the roof of the great barn. Hal! God! What a miserable

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ACT 2

blet on the map! (She crosses the stage and goes off First Bay Right with PEDRO. CONDUCTOR and STATION MASTER cross Down Left to first bay.)

SCHILL. (Crosses Down Right.) My God! Clara!

TEACHER. (Moves Upstage.) Clara Zachanassian! X X X

ALL. Clara Zachanassian!

BURGMASTER. And the town band? The town band? Where is it?

TEACHER. The mixed choir! The mixed choir!

PASTOR. The church bell! The church bell!

BURGMASTER. (To the First Man.) Quick! My dress coat! My top hat! My gloves! (FIRST Man runs off Up Right. BURGMASTER shouts after him.) And don’t forget my wine.

(General panic. The Second Man and Fourth Man hold up the banner on which only part of the name has been painted: WELCOME MA— CLAIRE and PEDRO re-enter, Right. CONDUCTOR and STATION MASTER cross to meet them Down Left Center.)

CONDUCTOR. Mastering himself with an effort.)

Madame. The train is waiting. The entire international railway schedule has been disrupted. I await your explanation.

CLAIRE. You’re a very foolish man. I wish to visit this town. Did you expect me to jump off a moving train?

CONDUCTOR. (Stupefied.) You stopped the “Flying Dutchman” because you wished to visit the town?

CLAIRE. Naturally.

CONDUCTOR. (Inarticulate.) Madame!

STATION MASTER. Madame, if you wished to visit the town, the twelve-forty from Kalberstadt was entirely at your service. Arrival in Gillen, one o’clock.

CLAIRE. The local that stops at Lohne, Koenenboch and Lemheusel? Do you expect me to waste three-quarters of an hour changing diagonally through this wilderness?

CONDUCTOR. Madame, you shall pay for this!
THE VISIT

ACT 1

CLAIRES. Bobby, give him a thousand marks!

(BUTLER, a man in his seventies, wearing dark glasses, steps forward from Down Left and opens his wallet. The Townsmen go up.)

CONDUCTOR. (Taking the money in amazement.) But Madame, 1,000 marks for the Railway Widows Relief Fund.

CLAIRES. And these, thousand for the Railway Widows Relief Fund.

CONDUCTOR. (Shouting.) With the money, in his hands.) But we have no such fund, Madame.

CLAIRES. (Moving Up Center with PEDRO.) Now you have.

BURGOMASTER. (Purses his way forward. He whispers to the CONDUCTOR.) The lady is Madame Claire Zachanassian!

CONDUCTOR. Claire Zachanassian? Oh, my God! (To CLAIRES.) That's naturally quite different. Needless to say, we would have stopped the train at once if we'd had the slightest idea. (He hands the money back to BOURY.)

Here, please. I couldn't dream of it. Five thousand, my God!

CLAIRES. Keep it. Don't fuss.

CONDUCTOR. Would you like the train to wait, Madame, while you visit the town? The administration will be delighted. We will be delighted.

CLAIRES. You may take your train away now. I don't need it any more.

STATION MASTER. All aboard! (He puts his whistle to his lips.)

PEDRO. (Steps him.) But the Press, my angel. They don't know anything about this. They're still in the dining car.

CLAIRES. Let them stay there. I don't want the Press in Gülten at the moment. Later they will come by themselves. (To STATION MASTER.) And now what are you waiting for?

ACT 2

STATION MASTER. All aboard! (STATION MASTER blows a long blast on his whistle. The TRAIN leaves.)

[SOUND CUE & 4.] Meanwhile the FIRST MAN has brought the BURGOMASTER's dress coat. He puts it on, then advances slowly and solemnly.

CONDUCTOR. I trust Madame will not speak of this to the Administration. It was a pure misunderstanding. (He salutes and runs for the train as it starts moving.)

BURGOMASTER. (Bows.) Gracious lady, as Burgomaster of the town of Gülten, I have the honor—(The rest of the speech is lost in the roar of the departing TRAIN. He continues speaking and gesturing, and at last bows amidst applause as the TRAIN leaves.)

CLAIRES. Thank you, Mr. Burgomaster. (She glances at the beaming faces of the Men, who bow in turn, and lastly at SCHILL, whom she does not recognize. She turns Unstage.)

SCHILL. Clara!

CLAIRES. (Turns and shouts.) Anton?

SCHILL. (Moves toward her.) Yes. It's good that you've come back, Clara—

CLAIRES. Yes. I've waited for this moment. All my life. Ever since I left Gülten.

SCHILL. (A little embarrassed.) That is very kind of you to say, Clara.

CLAIRES. And have you thought about me?

SCHILL. Naturally. Always, you know that.

CLAIRES. Those were the happiest times we spent together.

SCHILL. Unforgettable. (He smiles reassuringly at the BURGOMASTER.)

CLAIRES. Call me by the name you used to call me.

SCHILL. (Whispers; he is close to her.) My little wild cat.

CLAIRES. (Rocks a step.) What?

SCHILL. (Loudly.) My little wild cat.

CLAIRES. And what else?

SCHILL. Little wild cat.

CLAIRES. I used to call you my black panther. You're grey now, and soft.
THE VISIT

ACT 3

SCHILL. But you are still the same, little witch.
CLARIE. I am the same? (She laughs.) Oh no, my black panther. I am not at all the same.
SCHILL. (Gallantly.) In my eyes you are. I see no difference.
CLARIE. Would you like to meet my friend? Pedro CEBRAL. He owns an enormous plantation in Brazil.
SCHILL. A pleasure.
CLARIE. We're to be married soon.
SCHILL. Congratulations.
CLARIE. He will be my eighth husband. (Pedro stands by himself. Down Right.) Pedro, come here and show your face. Come along, darling—come here! Don't talk. Say hello. (Pedro creases to her.)
PEDRO. Hello.
CLARIE. A man of few words. Isn't he charming? A diplomat. He's interested only in failing. Isn't he handsome in his Latin way? You'd swear he was a Brazilian. But he's not—he's a Greek. His father was a white Russian. We were betrothed by a Bulgarian priest. We plan to be married in a few days here in the cathedral.
BURGOMASTER. Here is the cathedral? What an honor for us!
CLARIE. No, it was my dream, when I was seventeen, to be married in Gullen Cathedral. The dreams of youth are sacred, don't you think so, Anton?
SCHILL. Yes, of course.
CLARIE. And I think so too. Now I would like to look at the town. (The Mixed Choir arrives from Up Left, breathless, in ordinary clothes with green sashes.) What's all this? Go away—what's the matter with them? (She laughs.) Ha! Ha! Ha!
TEACHER. Dear lady.—(He steps forward, having put on a mask also.) Dear lady, as Rector of the High School and a devotee of that noble muse—Music, I take pleasure in presenting the Gullen Mixed Choir.
CLARIE. How do you do?
TEACHER. Who will sing for you an ancient folk song

ACT 1

THE VISIT

of the region with specially amended words—if you would deign to listen.
CLARIE. (Shh.) Very well. Fire away.

(The Teacher blows a "D" on his pipe over. The Mixed Choir begins to sing the ancient folk song with the amended words. [Words to this song will be found in back of book.] Just then the station BELL starts ringing. The song is drowned out by the roar of the passing EXPRESS. [SOUND CUE #5.] The Station Master salutes. When the train has passed, there is applause.)

BURGOMASTER. The church bell! The church bell! Where's the church bell? (The Parson shrugs helplessly.)
CLARIE. Thank you, Professor. They sang beautifully. The little blonde bass—no, not that one—the one with the big Adam's apple—was most impressive. (The Teacher bows. The Policeman Sandy's way professionally through the Mixed Choir and comes to attention in front of CLARIE. Now who are you?)
Policeman. (Clicks heels and salutes.) Police Chief Schultz. At your service.
CLARIE. (She looks him up and down.) I have no need of you at the moment. But I think there may be work for you by and by. Tell me, do you know how to close an eye?
Policeman. How else could I get along in my profession?
CLARIE. You might practise closing both. (Policeman bow and moves Down Left.)
SCHILL. (Lightheartedly.) What a sense of humor, eh?
Policeman. (Puts on the top hat.) Permit me to present my grandchildren, gracious lady. Hermine and Adolphine. There's only my wife still to come. (He wipes the perspiration from his brow, and replaces the hat.)
The VISIT

ACT 1

The LITTLE GIRLS present the roses with elaborate curtsies.

CLAIRE. Thank you, my dears. Congratulations, Burgomaster. Extraordinary children. (She plants the roses in PEDRO's arms. THE BURGOMASTER secretly passes his top hat to the PASTOR, who puts it on.)

BURGOMASTER. Our pastor, Madame. (THE PASTOR takes off the hat and bows. Moves to bench, takes CLAIRE's hands and kisses it.)

CLAIRE. Ah. The Pastor. How do you do? Is it you that gives consolation to the dying? PASTOR. (A bit puzzled.) That is part of my ministry, yes.

CLAIRE. And to those who are condemned to death? PASTOR. Capital punishment has been abolished in this country, Madame.

CLAIRE. I see. Well, it could be restored, I suppose. (THE PASTOR bows back the hat. He shrugs his shoulders in confusion.)

SCHELL. (Laughing.) What an original sense of humor!

(ALL laugh, a little blankly.)

CLAIRE. (Rising.) Well, I can't sit here all day—I would like to see the town.

BURGOMASTER. (Offers his arm.) May I have the honor, gracious lady?

CLAIRE. Thank you, but these legs are not what they were. This one was broken in five places.

SCHELL. (Dramatically.) My kitten is dead.

CLAIRE. When my airplane bumped into a mountain in Afghanistan. All the others were killed. Even the pilot. As you see, I survived. But I don't fly any more.

SCHELL. But you're as strong as ever now.

CLAIRE. Stronger.

BURGOMASTER. Never fear, gracious lady. The town doctor has a car.

CLAIRE. I never ride in motors.

BURGOMASTER. You never ride in motors?
THE VISIT

ACT I

(The Policeman is about to follow the others when the two Blind Men appear from First Bay Left. They carry guitar and mandolin case. They are not young, yet they seem childish, a strange effect. They are dressed exactly alike, though they are of different height and features, and so make the effect of being twins. They walk slowly, feeling their way. Their voices, when they speak, are curiously high and flute-like, and they have a curious trick of repetition.)

FIRST BLIND MAN. We're in—
BOTH. Gullen.
FIRST BLIND MAN. We breathe—
SECOND BLIND MAN. We breathe—
BOTH BLIND M. We breathe the air, the air of Gullen.
POLICEMAN. (Startled.) Who are you?
FIRST BLIND MAN. We belong to the lady.
SECOND BLIND MAN. We belong to the lady. She calls us—
FIRST BLIND MAN. Kobry.
SECOND BLIND MAN. And Lobby.
POLICEMAN. (A step toward them.) Madame Zachanavia is staying at The Golden Apostle.
FIRST BLIND MAN. We're blind.
SECOND BLIND MAN. We're blind.
POLICEMAN. Blind? Come along with me, then. I'll take you there.
FIRST BLIND MAN. Thank you, Mr. Policeman.
SECOND BLIND MAN. Thanks very much. (They cross toward Center.)

(SOUND CUE # 7.)

POLICEMAN. Hey! (The Men stop abruptly and turn.) How do you know I'm a policeman, if you're blind?
BOTH BLIND M. By your voice. By your voice.
FIRST BLIND MAN. All policemen sound the same.
POLICEMAN. (Steps toward them.) You've had a lot to do with police, have you, little men?
THE VISIT
ACT I

represents the cafe of the inn. The Burgomaster and the Teacher enter from Third Left and carry table. Downstage to mark. A procession of townspeople carrying many pieces of luggage passes. Then comes a coffin, lastly a panther cage covered with a canvas. They cross the stage from Left to Right. CUT SOUND.

Burgomaster. (To teacher.) Boys. (He looks up apprehensively at the ceiling.) The floor will never bear the weight. (As the large covered box is carried in, he peers under the canvas, then draws back.) Good God!

Teacher. Why, what's in it?

Burgomaster. A love-potion! (They laugh. He laughs.)

Teacher. What does she need it for?

Burgomaster. Don't ask me. The whole thing is too much for me. The Pastor had to go home and lie down.

Teacher. (Sits down his glass.) If you want to know the truth, she frightens me.

Burgomaster. (Nods gravely.) She's a strange one.

Teacher. You understand, Burgomaster, a man who for twenty-two-years has been correcting the Latin compositions of the students of Gullien is not accustomed to surprises. I have seen things to make one's hair stand on end. But when this woman suddenly appeared on the platform, a shudder tore through me. (Crosses Center, then to table.) It was as though out of the clear sky all at once a fury descended upon us, beating its black wings.

Teacher. (Crosses Center. He points his face.) Ah! Now the old place is livening up a bit! (To Drum Left of table.)

Burgomaster. Ah, Schultz, come and join us.

ACT I

Policeman. Thank you. (He calls.) Beer!

Burgomaster. Well, what's the news from the front?

Policeman. (Crosses Center.) I'm just back from Schiller's barn. My God! What a scene! She had us all tiptoeing around in the straw as if we were in church. Nobody dared to speak above a whisper. And the way she carried on! I was so embarrassed I let them go to the forest by themselves.

Burgomaster. Does the fiancé go with them?

Policeman. (Nods.) With his fishing rod and his landing net. In full marching order. (He calls again.) Beer!

(Third Man enters with beer. First Bay Left, gives beer to Policeman, exits Second Bay Left.)

Burgomaster. But what does she expect to find in the Konradswief forest?

Policeman. The same thing she expected to find in the old barn, I suppose. The— the—

Teacher. (Crosses Center.) The ashes of her youthful love.

Policeman. Exactly.

Teacher. It's poetry.

Policeman. Poetry.

Teacher. Dear poetry! It makes one think of Shakespeare, of Wagner, of Romeo and Juliet.

Burgomaster. Yes, you're right. (Solemnly raises as they lift their glasses.) Gentlemen, I would like to propose a toast. To our great and good friend Anton Schill, who is even now working on our behalf.

Policeman. Yes! He's really working.

Burgomaster. Gentlemen, to the best-loved citizen of this town. My successor, Anton Schill!

(They raise their glasses and All repeat "Anton Schill!"
At this point an unearthly SCREAM is heard.
[SOUND Cue # 9.] It is the black panther howling (Offstage Right.)
THE VISIT  ACT I

(The sign of the Golden Apostle rises out of sight. The LIGHTS go down. The inn vanishes. Only the wooden bench of Scene I is left on the stage, Down Right. [See Scene Design #3.] The procession comes on Upstage through Fifth Bay Left. The two BODYGUARDS carry in CLAIRE's sedan chair. Next to it walks SCHILL. PIERO walks behind with his fishing rod. Last come the TWO BLIND MEN playing mandolin and guitar and, finally, the BUTLER. CLAIRE slights.)

CLAIRE. Stop! Take my chair off somewhere else. I'm tired of looking at you. (The BODYGUARDS and the sedan chair go off Up Right Bay.) Poeso darling, your brook is just a little further along down that path. Listen. You can hear it from here. Bobby, take him and show him where it is.

BLIND MEN. We'll show him the way—we'll show him the way.

(They go off Second Bay Left. PIERO follows. BOBBY goes off Up Right.)

CLAIRE. (Comes Downstage with SCHILL.) Look, Anton. Our tree. There's the heart you carved in the bark long ago.

SCHILL. Yes, it's still there.

CLAIRE. How it has grown! The trunk is black and wrinkled. Why, its limbs are twice what they were! Some of them have died.

SCHILL. It's aged. But it's there.

CLAIRE. Like everything else. (She crosses, examining other trees.) Oh, how tall they are. How long it is since I walked here, barefoot over the pine needles and the damp leaves! Look, Anton. A fawn.

SCHILL. Yes, a fawn. It's the season.

CLAIRE. (They sit together on bench.) I thought everything would be changed. But it's all just as we left it. This is the seat we sat on years ago. Under these

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branches you kissed me. And over there under the hawthorn, where the moss is soft and green, we would lie in each other's arms. It is all as it used to be. Only we have changed.

SCHILL. Not so much, little witch. I remember the first night we spent together, you ran away and I chased you till I was quite breathless—

CLAIRE. Yes.

SCHILL. Then I was angry and started to go home, when suddenly I heard you call and I looked up, and there you were sitting in a tree laughing down at me.

CLAIRE. No. It was in the great barn. I was in the hayloft.

SCHILL. Were you?

CLAIRE. Yes. What else do you remember?

SCHILL. I remember the morning we went swimming by the waterfall, and afterwards we were lying together on the big rock in the sun when suddenly we heard footsteps and we just had time to snatch up our clothes and run behind the bushes when the old pastor appeared and scolded you for not being in school.

CLAIRE. No. It was the schoolmaster who found us. It was Sunday and I was supposed to be in church.

SCHILL. Really?

CLAIRE. Yes. Tell me more.

SCHILL. (Turns and looks away.) I remember the time your father beat you, and you showed me the cuts on your back, and I swore I'd kill him. And the next day I dropped a tile from a rooftop and split his head open.

CLAIRE. You missed him.

SCHILL. No.

CLAIRE. You hit old Mr. Reiner.

SCHILL. Did I?

CLAIRE. Yes. I was seventeen, And you were not yet twenty. You were so handsome. You were the best-looking boy in town.

SCHILL. And you were the prettiest girl.

CLAIRE. We were made for each other.

SCHILL. So we were.
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ACT I

CLAIRE. But you married Mathilde Blumhardt and her store and I married old Zachanausian and he is well. He found me in a whorehouse in Hamburgh. It was my hair that entangled him, the old golden beetle.

SCHILL. Claire!

CLAIRE. (She claps her hands.) Bobby! A cigar.

(Bobby appears Third Bay Right, with a leather case. He selects a cigar, lights it, puts it in a holder, and presents it to Claire.)

SCHILL. My kitten smokes cigarettes!

CLAIRE. Yes, I adore them. Would you care for one?

SCHILL. Yes, please. I've never smoked one of those.

(Bobby gives him a cigar, then exits Third Right.)

CLAIRE. It's a taste I acquired from old Zachanausian. Among other things, He was a real connoisseur.

SCHILL. We used to sit on this bench once, you and I, and smoke cigarettes. Do you remember?

CLAIRE. Yes. I remember.

SCHILL. The cigarettes I bought from Mathilde.

CLAIRE. No. She gave them to you for nothing.

SCHILL. Don't be angry with me for marrying Mathilde.

CLAIRE. She had money.

SCHILL. And what a lucky thing for you that I did!

CLAIRE. Oh?

SCHILL. You were so young, so beautiful. You deserved a better fate than to be stuck in this wretched town without any future.

CLAIRE. Yes?

SCHILL. If you had stayed in Gillen and married me, your life would have been wasted like mine.

CLAIRE. Oh?

SCHILL. My God, Claire, look at me. A broken shopkeeper in a bankrupt town!

CLAIRE. But you have your family.

(A WOODPECKER is heard in the distance.)
THE VISIT

ACT 1

Right and Down Left, the one in Center on a platform. (See Scene Design # 4.) The Pastor emerges Up Center, other Townspeople file in Left and Right. Three Athletes in gymnastic costume form a human pyramid Down Center. The applause continues.

Burgomaster. (Runs in Up Center.) Sing out! She's coming! (Claire enters Up Center, followed by Bobby. The Teacher conducts them in same song sung earlier by Choir. When the song ends, All applaud.) The applause is meant for you, gracious lady-0-0.

Claire. (At table Center.) The band deserves it more than I. They blow from the heart. And the human-pyramid was beautiful. You—show me your muscles. (An Athlete kneels before her.) Superb. Wonderful arms, powerful hands. Have you ever strangled a man with them?

Athlete. Strangled?

Claire. Yes. It's perfectly simple. A little pressure in the proper place, and the rest goes by itself. As in politics.

(The Burgomaster's Wife crosses to her, simpering.)

Burgomaster. Permit me to present my wife, Madame Zachanassian.

Claire. Annette Dunmerruth. The head of our class.

Burgomaster. (He presents another sour-looking Woman.) Paso Schi.

Claire. Mathilde Blumhardt. I remember the way you used to follow Anton with your eyes from behind the shop door. You've grown a little thin and dry, my poor Mathilde.

Schi. (Crosses to her with a Girl and Boy.) My daughter Ottile.

Claire. Your daughter—

Schi. My son, Karl.

Claire. Your son? Two of them!
THE VISIT

ACT I

(The TOWN DOCTOR comes in. Up Left to Center. He is a man of fifty, strong and stocky, with bristly black hair, a mustache and a side cut on his cheek. He is wearing an old cutaway.)

DOCTOR. Well, well, my old Mercedes got me here in time after all!

BURGOMASTER. (Catcher DOCTOR at Center.) Doctor Nüssler, the town physician. Madame Zachanassian.

DOCTOR. Deeply honored, Madame. (He kisses her hand. CLAIRE studies him.)

CLAIRE. Is it you who sign the death certificates?

DOCTOR. Death certificates?

CLAIRE. When someone dies.

DOCTOR. Why certainly. That is one of my duties.

CLAIRE. And when the heart dies, what do you put down—heart failure? Heart attack? Heart wear and tear?

DOCTOR. (Laughing.) What a golden sense of humor! CLAIRE. Bit grim, wouldn’t you say?

BURGOMASTER. (Shrill.) Not at all, not at all. (Behind BURGOMASTER, WHISPERS.) She’s promised us a million.

BURGOMASTER. (Turns his head.) What? (He looks for his notes on the table.)

CLARA. (Whisper.) A million!

BURGOMASTER. (Shrill.) CLAIRE, toward them. BURGOMASTER. Yes?

CLARA. (Sits at table Center.) I’m hungry. (Girls and Waiter fill glasses, bring food. General stir. All take their places at the table. BURGOMASTER, seated next to CLARA, opens champagne. All applaud.) Are you going to make a speech?

BURGOMASTER. (He bows and rises, tapping his knife on his glass. He is radiant with good will. All applaud.) Gracious lady and friends. Gracious lady, it is now many years since you first left your native town of Gillen, which was founded by the Elector Hasso and which never again had to consult the village knight. Much has taken place in this time, much that is evil.

BURGOMASTER. (Shrill.) The world is not what it was; it has become harsh and bitter, and we too have had our share of harshness and bitterness. But in all this time, dear lady, we have never forgotten our little Clara. (Applause.) Many years ago you brightened the town with your pretty face as a child, and now once again you brighten it with your presence. (Prolls on applause.) We haven’t forgotten you, and we haven’t forgotten your family. Your mother, beautiful and robust even in her old age—(He looks for his notes on the table.)—although unfortunately taken from us in the bloom of her youth by an infirmity of the lungs. Your respected father, Siegfried Wüther, the builder, an example of whose work next to our railway station is often visited by our townpeople. (SCHILL covers his face.) That is to say—admired—a living monument to local design and local workmanship. And you, gracious lady, whom we remember as a golden-haired—(He looks at her)—little redheaded sprite romping about our peaceful streets—on your way to school—which of us does not treasure your memory? (He pokes nervously at his notebook.) We well remember your scholarly attainments—

TEACHER. Yes.

BURGOMASTER. Natural history—Extraordinary sense of justice. And, above all, your supreme generosity. (Great applause.) We shall never forget how you once spent the whole of your little savings to buy a sack of potatoes for a poor starving widow who was in need of food. (The CHILDREN serve wine.) Gracious lady, ladies and gentlemen, today our little Clara has become the world-famous Claire Zachanassian who has founded hospitals, soup-kitchens, charitable institutes, art-projects, libraries, nurseries, and schools, and now that she has at last once more returned to the town of her birth, sadly fallen as it is, I say in the name of all her loving friends who have sorely missed her: Long live our Clara! All. Long live our Clara!}
CHEERS and applause [SOUND CUE # 14.]

CLAIRE. (Rises.) Mr. Burgomaster, fellow townspeople. I am greatly moved by the nature of your welcome and the disinterested joy which you have manifested on the occasion of my visit to my native town. I was not quite the lovely child the Burgomaster described in his gracious address.

BURGOMASTER. Too modest, Madame.

CLAIRE. In school I was beaten—

TEACHER. Not by me.

CLAIRE. And the sack of potatoes which I presented to Widow Boll. I stole with the help of Anton Schill, not to save the old trull from starvation but so that for once I might sleep with Anton in a real bed instead of under the trees of the forest. (The townspeople look grave, embarrassed.) Nevertheless I shall try to deserve your good opinion. In memory of the seventeen years I spent among you, I am prepared to hand over as a gift to the town of Gülhen the sum of one billion marks. Five hundred million to the town and five hundred million to be divided per capita among the citizens.

(There is a moment of dead silence.)

BURGOMASTER. A billion marks?

CLAIRE. On one condition. (Sits.)

(Suddenly a movement of uncontrollable joy breaks out. People jump on chairs, dance about, yell excitedly. The athletes turn handspins in front of the speaker's table.)

SCHILL. Oh Clara, you astonishing, incredible, magnificent woman! What a heart! What a gesture! Oh—my little witch! (He kisses her hand.)

BURGOMASTER. (Comes Down Center and holds up his hand for order.) Quiet! Quiet, please! On one condition,
THE VISIT  ACT I

Clara Wiescher, charged you with being the father of her illegitimate child. (Silence.) You denied the charge. And produced two witnesses in your support.

SCHILL. That's ancient history. An absurd business. We were children. Who remembers?

CLAIRE. Where are the blind men?

THE TWO BLIND MEN. (Enter from First Bay Right.)

Here we are. Here we are. (Mike and Max push them forward to below Right table.)

Bobby. You recognize these men, Anton Schill?

SCHILL. (Steps toward them.) I never saw them before in my life. What are they?

THE TWO BLIND MEN. We've changed. We've changed.

Bobby. What were your names in your former life?

FIRST BLIND MAN. I was Jacob Hueslein. Jacob Hueslein.

SECOND BLIND MAN. I was Ludwig Sparr. Ludwig Sparr.

Bobby. (To Schill.) Well?

SCHILL. These names mean nothing to me.

Bobby. Jacob Hueslein and Ludwig Sparr, do you recognize the defendant?

FIRST BLIND MAN. We're blind.

SECOND BLIND MAN. We're blind.

SCHILL. Ha-ha-ha!

Bobby. By his voice?

TWO BLIND MEN. By his voice. By his voice.

Bobby. At that trial, I was the judge. And you?

TWO BLIND MEN. We were the witnesses.

Bobby. And what did you testify on that occasion?

FIRST BLIND MAN. That we had slept with Clara Wiescher.

SECOND BLIND MAN. Both of us. Many times.

Bobby. And was it true?

FIRST BLIND MAN. No.

SECOND BLIND MAN. We swore falsely.

Bobby. And why did you swear falsely?

FIRST BLIND MAN. Anton Schill bribed us.

SECOND BLIND MAN. He bribed us.

Bobby. With what?

Both. With a bottle of schnapps.

Bobby. And now tell the people what happened to you.

SCHILL. (They hesitate and whimper.) Speak!

FIRST BLIND MAN. (In a low voice.) She tracked us down.

Bobby. Madame Zacharias tracked them down.

Jacob Hueslein was found in Canada. Ludwig Sparr in Australia. And when she found you, what did she do to you?

SECOND BLIND MAN. She handed us over to Mike and Max.

Bobby. And what did Mike and Max do to you?

FIRST BLIND MAN. (Covering his face.) They made us what you see. (They cover their faces. Mike and Max pull them off First Bay Right.) I... they... they... (They choke on the...)

Bobby. And there you have it. We are all present in Gullen once again. The plaintiff, the defendant. The two false witnesses. The judge. Many years have passed. Does the plaintiff have anything further to add?

CLAIRE. There is nothing to add.

Bobby. And the defendant?

SCHILL. (Crosses and kneels to Claire.) Why are you doing this? It was all dead and buried.

Bobby. What happened to the child that was born?

CLAIRE. (In low voice.) It lived a year.

Bobby. And what happened to you?

CLAIRE. I became a whore.

Bobby. Why?

CLAIRE. The judgment of the court left me no alternative. No one would trust me—no one would give me work.

Bobby. So. And now, what is the nature of the reparations you demand?

CLAIRE. I want the life of Anton Schill.

(Schill rises. His wife and children rush to him. He
THE VISIT

ACT I

Frau Schill. Anton! Nel Nel! Schill. No—No—She's joking. That happened long ago. That's all forgotten.

Claire. Nothing is forgotten. Neither the mornings in the forest, nor the nights in the great barn, nor the bedroom in the cottage, nor your treachery at the end. You said this morning you wished that time might be rolled back. Very well—I have rolled it back. And now it is I who will buy justice. You bought it with a bottle of schnaps. I am willing to pay our billion marks.

Burgomaster. (Stands up, very solemn and dignified.) Madame Zachansan, we are not in the jungle. We are in Europe. We may be poor but we are not heathens. In the name of the town of Gülken, I decline your offer.

In the name of humanity. We shall never accept.

(All applaud wildly. The applause turns into a sinister rhythmic beat. As Claire rises, it dies away. She looks at the crowd, then at the Burgomaster.)

Claire. Thank you, Burgomaster. (She stares at him a long moment.) I can wait. (Turns and exits Up Center.)

CURTAIN

Freeze

ACT TWO

Scene: Bring front lights Up as curtain reaches head high. The façade of the Golden Aposile with a balcony on which chairs and a table are set out. To the right is a sign which reads ANTON SCHILL HANDLUNG. Under the sign the shop is represented by a broken counter. Behind the counter, some shelves with tobacco, cigarettes and liquor bottles. Two milk cans. The shop door is imaginary, but each entrance is indicated by a door bell with a tinkly sound. [See Scene Design # 5.]

At Rise: It is early morning. Schill is sweeping the shop. The Son has a pan and brush and also sweeps. The Daughter is dusting. All are singing "The Happy Wanderer," as the CURTAIN rises. [Words to this will be found in back of book.]

Schill. Karl—

(Karl crosses with a dustpan, Schill sweeps dust into the pan. The door bell rings. The Third Man enters Third Bay Right, carrying a crate of eggs.)

Third Man. (Closes to Schill, Center.) Morning. Schill. Ah, good morning, Wechler. You're early. Third Man. Twelve dozen eggs, medium brown. Right?

Schill. Take them, Karl. (Karl puts the crate in a corner, Fourth Bay Left.) Did they deliver the milk yet? (Moving to counter.) Son. Before you came down.

Third Man. (Closes to counter.) Eggs are going up again, Herr Schill. First of the month. (He gives Schill a slip to sign.) Schill. What? Again? And who's going to buy them?
THE VISIT

ACT II

SON. Look, Father, we can use the money.
SCHILL. Well, if you feel you have to. (The Son crosses to First Boy Right with duet from and book.)

DAUGHTER. (Crosses to SCHILL.) I'm sorry, Father, I have to go too.
SCHILL. You too? And where is the young lady going, if I may be so bold?
DAUGHTER. There may be something for me at the employment agency.
SCHILL. Employment agency?
DAUGHTER. It's important to get there early.

(SOUND CUE 15)

SCHILL. All right. I'll have something nice for you when you get home.

SON and DAUGHTER. (Salute.) Good day, Burgomaster.

(SON and DAUGHTER go out Fourth Boy Right.)

(The First Man comes into Schill's shop. Mandolin and guitar MUSIC sounds Offstage.)

SCHILL. Good morning. Hofbauer.

FIRST MAN. (Crossing to counter.) Cigarettes. (Schill takes a pack from the shelf.) Not those, I'll have the ones today.

SCHILL. 'They cost more. (He serves him.)

FIRST MAN. Put it in the book.
SCHILL. What?
FIRST MAN. Charge it.

SCHILL. Well, all right. I'll make an exception this time— it's you, Hofbauer. (Writs in his cash ledger, First Boy Left.)

FIRST MAN. (Opening the pack of cigarettes he gives to Schill and sits.) Who's there playing out there?

SCHILL. You've got to get to eat, you know.
SON. I've got to run down to the station. One of the laborers is sick. They said they couldn't use me.
SCHILL. You want to work on the rails in all this heat? That's no work for a son of mine.
THE VISIT  
ACT II

The First Man lights a cigarette. She's getting ready for the wedding. I hear.

Schill. Yes. So they say.

(Enter First and Second Woman from Fourth Bay Right. They cross to the counter.)

First Woman. Good morning, good morning.
Second Woman. Good morning.
First Man. Good morning.
Schill. Good morning. Ladies.
First Woman. Good morning, Herr Schill.
Second Woman. Good morning.
First Woman. Milk please, Herr Schill.
Schill. Milk.
Second Woman. And milk for me too.
Schill. A litre of milk each, right away.
First Woman. Whole milk, please, Herr Schill.
Schill. Whole milk?
Second Woman. Yes. Whole milk, please.
Schill. Whole milk, I can only give you half a litre each of whole milk.
First Woman. All right.
Schill. Half a litre of whole milk here, and half a litre of whole milk there. There you are. (Puts milk cans in Second Bay Left.)
First Woman. And butter please, a quarter kilo.
Schill. Butter, I haven't any butter. (Returning.) I can give you some very nice lard!
Schill. Goose fat? (First Woman shakes her head.)
Chicken fat?
First Woman. Butter.
Schill. Butter. (Comes back behind counter with butter.) Now, wait a minute, though. I have a tin of imported butter here somewhere. Ah, there you are. (Comes back behind counter with butter.) No, sorry she asked first, but I can order some for you from Kallermann tomorrow.
Second Woman. And white bread.

Schill. White bread. (He takes a loaf and a knife.)
Second Woman. The white kind.
Schill. But a whole loaf would cost—
Second Woman. Charge it. (Holds bag open. Schill drops bread into bag.)
Schill. Charge it?
First Woman. And a package of milk chocolate.
Schill. Package of milk chocolate—right away.
Second Woman. One for me too, Herr Schill.
Schill. And a package of milk chocolate for you, too.
First Woman. (Moves toward chairs Up Left.) We'll sit in here if you don't mind.
Schill. Yes, please do.
Second Woman. (Pursuing First Woman Up.) It's so used at the back of the shop.
Schill. Charge it?
Woman. (They sit.) Of course.
Schill. All for one, one for all.

(Enter Second Man, hitting shop bell.)
Second Man. (Crouching at counter.) Good morning.
Two Women. Good morning.
Second Man. Good morning, Henselberger.
Second Man. It's going to be a hot day.
Schill. Phew!
Second Man. How's business?
Schill. Fabulous. For a while no one came and now all of a sudden I'm running a luxury trade. (Moves to Henselberger Center.)
Second Man. Very good.
Schill. Oh, I'll never forget the way you all stood by me at the Golden Apple in spite of your need, in spite of everything. (Comes to Fourth Bay Right. Makes butter and moves Center.) That was the finest boy of my life. Second Man. We're not brothers, you know.
Schill. No, Second Man. We're brothers, you, the whole family's been looking for you.
First Man. As firm as a rock.
THE VISIT

ACT II

FIRST WOMAN. (Munching her chocolate.) As firm as a rock, Herr Schill.

SECOND WOMAN. As firm as a rock.

SECOND MAN. There’s no denying it—you’re the most popular man in town.

FIRST MAN. (Crosses back to Center.) The most important.

(SOUND CUE #16.)

SECOND MAN. And in the spring, God willing, you will be our burgomaster. (Crosses Upstage of First Man.)
FIRST MAN. Size as a gun.

Att. Size as a gun.

(Eats Fish, Right 1/2, with fishing equipment and a fish in his landing net. Women rise.)

PEDRO. Would you please weigh my fish for me?

(While SCHILL weighs fish, PEDRO walks around inspecting shop. He is clasped (fonded by FIRST and SECOND MEN, who inspect him curiously.)

SCHILL. (Weight it.) Two kilos.

PEDRO. Is that all?

SCHILL. Two kilos exactly.

PEDRO. Two kilos! (Giving Schill a tip and exits Right 1/2, hissing shop bell.)

SECOND WOMAN. (As they step down.) The famous FIRST WOMAN. They’re to be married this week. It will be a tremendous wedding.

SECOND WOMAN. I saw his picture in the paper.

FIRST WOMAN. (Sighs.) Ah, what a man!

SECOND MAN. (Moves to counter.) Give me a schnapps.

SCHILL. The usual?

SECOND MAN. No, cognac. 

SCHILL. Right. But cognac costs twenty-five marks here.

SECOND MAN. We all have to splurge a little now and again.

SCHILL. Here you are. Three Star, 9.75.

SECOND MAN. And a package of pipe tobacco.

SCHILL. Black or blond?

SECOND MAN. English.

SCHILL. English. But that makes twenty-three marks eighty.

SECOND MAN. Chalk it up.

SCHILL. Now lock. I’ll make an exception this week. Only you will have to pay me the moment your unemployment check comes in. I don’t want to be kept waiting. (Suddenly.) Eichberger, are those new shoes you’re wearing?

SECOND MAN. (Crosses Left of bench. SCHILL joins.) Yes, what about it? Is that a new hearing?

SCHILL. You too, Hofbauer. Yellow soles! Better new!

SECOND MAN. (Sways legs over bench.) So?

HOFBAUER. (To the Woman, who measles.) And you, too. You all have new shoes! Near-shoed!

SECOND WOMAN. A person can’t walk around forever in the same old shoes.

SCHILL. Shoes wear out.

HOFBAUER. (At Center.) And the money. Where does the money come from?

FIRST WOMAN. We get them on credit, Herr Schill.

HOFBAUER. On credit.

SCHILL. On credit. And where all of a sudden do you get credit?

SECOND MAN. Everybody gives credit now.

FIRST WOMAN. You gave us credit yourself.

HOFBAUER. And what are you going to pay with? Eh?

SECOND MAN. (Shrugs.) Ah, what a man!

SCHILL. (Moves to counter.) Give me a schnapps.

SCHILL. The usual?
THE VISIT

ACT II

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(The stage is set for a scene in an apartment.)

Clare: How are you, Bobby? My third husband?

Bobby: Yes, Madame.

Clare: Horrible man!

Bobby: Yes, Madame.

Clare: Where is Monseur Pedro? Is he up yet?

Bobby: Yes, Madame. He's sleeping.

Clare: Already? What a singular passion!

Pedro: (Comes in with the fish.) Good morning, my love.

Clare: Pedro! There you are.

Pedro: Look, my darling. Four kilos.

Clare: A jewel! I'll have it grilled for your lunch.

Give it to Bobby.

(Pedro gives fish to Bobby, who exits.)

Pedro: (Sits right.) Ah—it is so wonderful here! I like your little town.

Clare: Oh, do you?

Pedro: Yes. These people, they are all—what is the word?

Clare: Simple, honest, hardworking, decent.

Pedro: But, my angel, you are a model reader. That's just what I was going to say—however did you guess?

Clare: I know them.

Pedro: Yet when we arrived it was all so dirty, so—what is the word?

Clare: Shabby.

(The stage is set for another scene.)
SCHILL. (Sits Right end of bench.) Thanks. (He opens notebook.)

POLICEMAN. What can I do for you?

SCHILL. I want you to arrest Madame Zacharias.

POLICEMAN. Fsh?

SCHILL. I said I want you to arrest Madame Zacharias.

SCHILL. And what do you say about that? (He pours beer into his glass.)

SCHILL. Schill's duty. It's your duty.

SCHILL. Extraordinary! Extraordinary idea! (He drinks his beer.)

SCHILL. Why not? (He pours out the rest of his beer.)

SCHILL. Is that Pilsner you're drinking now?

SCHILL. It's the only thing.

SCHILL. You used to drink the local brew.

SCHILL. Hogwash.

SCHILL. Are you happy?

SCHILL. Yes.

SCHILL. Now it's a cuss.
THE VISIT

ACT II

SCHILL. (Rises, taking POLICEMAN'S hands in his hands, and forcing his eyes open.) A brand new, shining, gold tooth.

POLICEMAN. (Breaks away and involuntarily leads the gun at him.) Are you crazy? Look, I've no time to waste. Madam Zacharian's panther's broken loose.

SCHILL. Panther?

POLICEMAN. Yes, it's large. I've got to hunt it down.

SCHILL. You're not hunting a panther and you know it. It's me you're hunting.

(SCHULTZ clicks the lighter and lowers the pan.)

POLICEMAN. Schill, take my advice. Go home. Lock the door. Keep out of everyone's way. That way you'll be safe. Cheer up! Good times are just around the corner.

ROUND CURTAIN. The LIGHTS dim in this area and light up balcony. [See Scene Design # 8.]

PETER is lounging in a chair. (CLARA is smoking.)

PETER. Oh, this little town oppresses me.

CLARA. Oh, does it? So you've changed your mind?

PETER. It is true. I find it charming, delightful—

CLARA. Picturesque.

PETER. Yes. After all, it's the place where you were born and it is too quiet for me. Too provincial. Too much of the small towns everywhere. These people—look at them. They fear nothing, they desire nothing, they strive to be nothing. They have everything they want. They are—

CLARA. Perhaps one day they will come to life again.

PETER. My God—do I have to wait for that?

CLARA. Yes, you do. Why don't you go back to your

PETER. I think I will. (Rises and exits.)

CLARA. Pedro.

PETER. (Re-enters.) Yes, my love?

CLARA. Telephone the President of Hanover's Bank.
THE VISIT

ACT II

Ask him to transfer a billion marks to my current account.

PIER O. A billion? Yes, my love. (Re-geek.)

(LIGHTS fade on the balcony. [SOUND CUE #21:] A sign is seen in. It reads: RATHAUS. The corner of SCHEID's shop is transformed into the BURGOMASTER's office. [See Scene Design #9.] The BURGOMASTER comes in Third Bay Left. He takes a revolver from his pocket, examines it and sets it down on the desk. As he sits down and starts smok-

ING, SCHEID snaps.)

BURGOMASTER. Come in.

SCHEID. (Baker, First Bay Right.) I must have a word with you, Burgomaster.

BURGOMASTER. Ah, SCHEID. Sit down, my friend.

SCHEID. (Leans on counter.) Man to man. As your successor.

BURGOMASTER. But of course. Naturally.

SCHEID. (Looks at the revolver.) Is that a gun?

BURGOMASTER. Madame Zschammer's black pan-
ther's broken loose. It's been seen near the cathedral. It's
as well to be prepared.

SCHEID. Oh, yes. Of course.

BURGOMASTER. I've sent out a call for all able-bodied
men with arms. The streets have been desired. The
children have been kept in school, we don't want any
accidents.

SCHEID. (Suspiciously.) You're making quite a thing
of it.

BURGOMASTER. (Serena.) Naturally. A panther is a

SCHEID. Our old friends.

SCHEID. (Near Uptage of counter.) That's a good
thing you're smoking.

BURGOMASTER. Yes, Havana.

SCHEID. You used to smoke something else.

BURGOMASTER. Formerly.
THE VISIT

ACT II

BURGOMASTER. (Sits on chair.) You know against whom?

SCHILL. You know against whom.

BURGOMASTER. You don’t trust us?

SCHILL. That woman has put a price on my head.

BURGOMASTER. If you don’t tell, why don’t you go to the police?

SCHILL. I’ve just come from the police.

BURGOMASTER. And?

SCHILL. The chief has a new gold tooth in his head.

BURGOMASTER. (Rises and moves closer.) A new—;

Oh, Schill, really! You’re forgetting. This is Gitten, the town of human traditions. Getchle slept here, Braban composed a quartet. You must have that in us. This is a law-abiding community.

SCHILL. (Rises.) Then arrest this woman who wants to have me killed.

BURGOMASTER. Look here, Schill. God knows the lady has every right to be angry with you. What you did there wasn’t very pretty. You killed two decent lads to put yourself out and had a young girl thrown out on the streets.

SCHILL. (Crosses and sits in Burgomaster’s chair.) That young girl owns half the world.

(A moment’s silence.)

BURGOMASTER. (Lauds on back of Schill’s chair.) Very well, then, we’ll speak frankly.

SCHILL. That’s why I’m here.

BURGOMASTER. Man to man, just as you said. (He clears his throat.) Now—after what you did, you have no moral right to say a word against this lady. And I advise you not to try. Also—I regret to have to tell you this—there is no longer any question of your being elected Burgomaster.

SCHILL. Is that official?

BURGOMASTER. Official.
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THE VISIT

ACT II

(The LIGHTS fade on the balcony. [SOUND CUE #12] The SACRISTAN comes in. He arranges the set, and puts the altar cloth on the altar. Then SCHILL comes in. He is looking for the PASTOR. The PASTOR enters, Left. He is wearing his gown and carrying a rifle.)

SCHILL. Sorry to disturb you, Pastor.

PASTOR. God's house is open to all. (He sees SCHILL is staring at the guns. Crosses to bench.) Oh, the guns! That's because of the pastor. I'm here for the people.

SCHILL. Pastor, will you help me?

PASTOR. Of course. Sit down. (He puts the rifle on the bench.) What's the trouble?

SCHILL. (Sits on the bench.) I'm frightened.

PASTOR. (Facing him.) Frightened? Of what?

SCHILL. Of everyone. They're hunting me down like a beast.

PASTOR. Have no fear of man, Schill. Fear God, fear not the death of the body, fear the death of the soul. (Goes to altar.) SACRISTAN. SACRISTAN comes to him, sits him up, then returns. (CONT'D) (CONT'D)

SCHILL. I'm afraid, Pastor.

PASTOR. Put your trust in heaven, my friend.

SCHILL. You see, I'm not well. I shake. I have such pains around the heart. I sweat.

PASTOR. I know. You've passed through a profound psychic experience.

SCHILL. I'm going through hell.

PASTOR. (Steps behind SCHILL.) The hell you are going through exists only within yourself. Many years ago you betrayed a girl shamefully, for money. Now you think that we shall sell you just as you sold her. No, my friend, you are projecting your guilt upon others. It's quite natural. But remember, the root of our torment lies always within ourselves. In our hearts, in our sins. When you have understood this, you can conquer the fears that oppose you; you have weapons with which to destroy them.

SCHILL. (Turning.) No—don't you see? Siemester has bought a new washing machine.

PASTOR. Don't worry about the washing machine. Worry about your immortal soul.

SCHILL. Stockton has a television set.

PASTOR. There is also great comfort in prayer. SACRISTAN, the SACRISTAN comes to the choir. (CONT'D) SACRISTAN comes to SCHILL at altar.) Examine your conscience, Schill. Repent. Otherwise your fears will consume you. Believe me, this is the only way. We have no other. (The church BELL begins to peal. [SOUND CUE #15] SCHILL seems relieved.) Now I must have you. I have a basirian. You may stay as long as you like. (Clases Center) SACRISTAN, the SACRISTAN, the SACRISTAN, and PASTOR. The child is beginning to cry. I can hardly stand it. (CONT'D) SACRISTAN gets books from the bench. Let us make haste to give it the only solace which this world affords.

PASTOR. A new bell?

PASTOR. Yes, but time is marvellous, don't you think?

SCHILL. (Steps back in horror.) A new bell! You are a Pastor? You too?

PASTOR. (He claps his hands in horror. Then he takes his bell and holds his arms.) Oh, God, God, forgive me. We are your weak things, all of us. Do not tempt us further.

PASTOR. (CONT'D) The bell you are holding is in the hand of the SACRISTAN. The SACRISTAN appears in the darkness. The LIGHTS fade. Men appear with bats. The LIGHTS are fixed in the darkness. The LIGHTS come up on the balcony, which moves forward. (CONT'D)
THE VISIT

ACT II

CLAIRE. Bobby! (Bobby enters.) What was that shooting? Have they caught the panther?

Bobby. He is dead, Madame.

CLAIRE. There were two shots.

Bobby. The panther is dead, Madame.

CLAIRE. I loved him. (Wipes Bobby away, and she falls.) I shall miss him.

(The Teacher comes in Fourth Bay Left, with little girls, singing. They stop under the balcony.

[Words for this song will be found in back of book.]

TEACHER. Gracious lady, be so good as to accept our heartfelt condolences. Your beautiful panther is no more. Believe me, we are deeply grieved that such a tragic event should mar your visit here. But what could we do? The panther was savage, a beast. To him our human laws could not apply. There was no other way— (Schill appears Fourth Bay Left with the gun. He looks dangerous. The Girls run off, screaming. Fourth Bay Right. The Teacher follows the girls.) Children—children—children!

CLAIRE. Anton, why are you frightening the children?

SCHILL. (He works the butt, leaning the chamber, and raises the gun slowly.) Go away, Claire— I warn you. Go away.

[SOUND CUE # 24.]

CLAIRE. How strange it is, Anton! How clearly it comes back to me! The day we saw one another for the first time, do you remember?— I was on a balcony then. It was a day like today, a day in autumn without a breath of wind, warm and as it is now— only lately I am always cold. You stood down there, and stared at me without moving. I was embarrassed. I didn't know what to do. I wanted to go back into the darkness of the room where it was dark, but I couldn't. You stared up at me darkly, almost

THE VISIT

angrily, as if you wished to hurt me, but your eyes were full of passion. (Schill begins to lower the gun, insolently.) Then, I don't know why, I left the balcony and I came down and stood in the street beside you. You didn't greet me, you didn't say a word, but you took my hand and we walked together out of the town into the fields, and behind us came Bobby and Lobbi, like two dogs, uninviting and giggling and snuffling. Suddenly you picked up a stone and hurled it at them, and they ran yelping back into the town, and we were alone. (Scene has lowered the rifle completely. He moves forward toward her as close as he can come.) That was the beginning and everything else had to follow. There is no escape. (She goes in and closes the shutters. Schill stands immobile. The Teacher steps in. He starts at Schill, who doesn't see him. Then he beckons to the children.)

TEACHER. Come, children, sing. Sing.

(Tey begin singing. He creeps behind Schill and catches away the rifle. Schill turns sharply. The Pastor comes in, Left.)

PASTOR. Go, Schill—go!

(The Children continue singing, moving across the stage. The Golden Apostle watches. [SOUND CUE # 25.] The scene dissolves into the railway station setting, as in Act I [SOUND CUE # 21A.] But there are certain changes. The time-table marked FAHRPLAN is now new and the scenes brutally painted. There is a new travel poster on the station wall. It has a yellow run and the words, REIST IN DEN SÜDEN. On the other side of the Fahrplan is another poster with the words: DIE PASSIERSPÄDE DERRAMMPAC. [See Scene Design # 52.] The sound of passing TRAINS covers the scene change. [SOUND CUE # 15B.] Schill appears with an old valise in his hand, dressed in a
THE VISIT  

ACT II

Burgomaster. (Rushes Fifth Boy Right with policeman.) Good evening, Schill.
Schill. Good evening.
Policeman. Good evening. (Comes Down Center with Burgomaster.)
Schill. Good evening. (Crosses Left.)
Painter. (Enters First Boy Left.) Good evening.
Schill. (Crosses Right.) Good evening.
Doctor. (Enters First Boy Right.) Good evening.
Schill. (Crosses Up Center.) Good evening.
Burgomaster. So you’re taking a little trip?
Schill. Yes. A little trip.
Policeman. May one ask where to?

(Other Townsmen enter from all directions during this scene, giving the effect of surrounding Schill.)

Schill. I don’t know.
Painter. Don’t know?
Schill. To Kaltenstadt.
Burgomaster. (With disbelief, pointing to the valise.)
Kaltenstadt?
Schill. After that—somewhere else.
Painter. Ah. After that somewhere else.
Schill. I thought maybe Australia.
Burgomaster. Australia?
All. Australia!
Schill. I’ll raise the money somehow.
Burgomaster. But why Australia?
Painter. What would you be doing in Australia?
Schill. One can’t always live in the same town, you know.
Doctor. But Australia—

THE VISIT  

ACT III

Burgomaster. One of the lady’s little men ran off to Australia—

All. Yes. 

Policeman. You’ll be much safer here. 

Painter. Much!

Schill. (He looks about him in anguish like a beast of prey. Low voice.) I wrote a letter to the administration at Kaltenstadt.

Burgomaster. Yes?—And? (They are all intent on the exchange.)

Schill. They didn’t answer. (All laugh.)

Doctor. Do you mean to say you don’t trust your old friends? That’s not very flattering, you know.

Burgomaster. No one’s going to do you any harm here.

Doctor. No harm here.

Schill. They didn’t answer because the postmaster held up my letter.

Painter. Our postmaster? What an idea!

Burgomaster. The postmaster is a member of the town council.

Policeman. A man of the utmost integrity.

Doctor. He doesn’t hold up letters. What an idea!

(Sound bell starts. Ringing. The Local to Kaltenstadt sounds in the distance. [SOUND CUE # 26.]

Station Master. (Enters to right of stage Down Left. 

Burgomaster.) Local to Kaltenstadt!

(The Townsmen all cross down to see the train arrive. Then they turn, with their backs to the audience, in a line across the stage. Schill cannot get through to reach the train.)

Schill. (In a low voice.) What are you all doing there? What do you want of me?

Burgomaster. We don’t like to see you go.
THE VISIT

ACT IV

Doctor. We've come to see you off.

(The sound of the approaching train grows louder.)

Scull. I didn't ask you to come.

Policeman. But we have come.

Doctor. As old friends.

All. As old friends.

(The station master holds up his paddle. The train stops with a screech of brakes. We hear the engine panting offstage.)

Burgomaster. A pleasant journey.

Doctor. And beg for charity.

Policeman. And good luck in Australia! (Cries: to Scull.) Up, dogs, and others follow as if to shake Scull's hand.)

All. Yes, good luck in Australia.

Scull. (Rushing away.) Why are you crowding me?

Policeman. What's the matter now?

(The station master looks at his watch, then blows a long blast on his whistle.)

Scull. Give me room.

Doctor. But you have plenty of room.

(They all move away from him.)

Policeman. Better get aboard, Scull.

Scull. (Facing up and down nervously.) I see, I see. One of you is going to push me under the wheels.

Policeman. Oh, nonsense. Go on, get aboard.

Scull. Get away from me, all of you. (Sways his tail and all back away.)

Burgomaster. I don't know what you want. Just get on the train.

Scull. No. I know what you are going to do—I know what you are going to do.
THE VISIT

ACT II

TRUCK DRIVER. Well, come with me. I'm going that way.

SCHILL. This is my town. This is my home. (With strange new dignity.) No, thank you. I've changed my mind. I'm staying.

TRUCK DRIVER. (He shrugs.) All right. (He goes out.

Fourth Right.)

(SCHILL picks up his bag, looks Right and Left, and slowly walks off. Up Center between lampposts.)

SLOW CURTAIN

ACT THREE

Scene: MUSIC is heard. Then the CURTAIN rises on the interior of the great barn, a dim cavernous structure. (See Scene Design # 11.) Bars of LIGHT fall across the shadowy forms, shafts of sunlight from the holes and cracks in the walls and roof. Overhead hangs an old ladder with rags and great cobwebs covering it. [SOUND CUE # 28.]

Right, smoking a cigar, CLAUDE ZACHARIAHIAN is sitting in her gilded sedan chair, motionless as an idol, in her magnificent bridal gown and veil. Near the chair stands an old cask.

BOSSY. (Comes in, Third Right, treading carefully.)

The Doctor and the teacher from the high school to see you, Madame.

CLAIRE. (Impassive.) Show them in.

(BOSSY wakens them in, Third Right, as if they were entering a hall of state. The Two grope their way through the litter. At last they find the lady and bow. They are both well dressed in new clothes, but very dusty.)

BOSSY. Doctor Nusslin and Professor Müller. (He over Third Right.)

DOCTOR. Madame.

CLAIRE. You look dusty, gentlemen.

BOSSY. (Ducks himself vigorously.) Oh, forgive us. We had to climb over an old carriage.

TEACHER. Our respects.

BOSSY. A fabulous wedding.

TEACHER. Beautiful occasion.

BOSSY. It's still here. But I love this old barn. The smell of hay and old straw and axle-grease—it is the soul of my youth. Sit down. (Doctor sits on straw.)
THE VISIT  ACT III

bucket.) All this rubbish-the haywain, the old carnival, the circus, even the picknick—it was all borne when I was a girl.

TANNER. (Goes down and comes Douglas.)

CLaire. I thought the pastor's text was very appropriate. The lesson a hired man.

TANNER. (Takes a place.)

CLaire. Your characters sang beautifully, Professor.

TANNER. Back. From the Saint Matthew Passion.

DOCTOR. Gillen has never sung such magnificent!

The flowers. The jewels! The people.

TANNER. (He sits on stool.) The theatrical world, the world of talent, the world of art, the world of science—

CLaire. All those worlds are now back in their Sardanapali worlds speed ing toward the capital for the wedding reception. But I'm sure you didn't come here to talk about them.

DOCTOR. Dear lady, we should not intrench on your valuable time. Your husband must be waiting impatiently.

CLaire. No, no, I've packed him off to Brazil.

DOCTOR. To Brazil, Madame?

CLaire. Yes. For his honeymoon.

TANNER AND DOCTOR. Oh, our wedding guests?

CLaire. I've planned a delightful dinner for them.

They'll never miss me. Now what is it you wished to talk about?

TANNER. About—

CLaire. Yes, well, what?

TANNER. Anton Schill, Madame.

CLaire. Is he dead?

TANNER. (Rises.) Madame, we may be poor. But we have our principles.

CLaire. I see. Then what do you want?

TANNER. (He makes his bow again, mounts a step higher.) Claire. The fact is, Madame, in anticipation of your well-known munificence, that is, feeling that you

ACT III  THE VISIT

would give the town some sort of gift, we have all been buying things. Necessities—

DOCTOR. With money we don't have.

(To TANNER. Now his note.)

CLaire. You've run into debt?

DOCTOR. Up to here.

CLaire. In spite of your principles?

TANNER. We're human, Madame.

CLaire. I see.

TANNER. We have been poor a long time. A long, long time.

DOCTOR. (Rises.) The question is, how are we going to pay?

CLaire. You already know.

TANNER. (Courteously.) I beg your forgiveness. Madame, put yourself in our position for a moment. For twenty-two years I've been cultivating my brain to plant a few seeds of knowledge in this wilderness. And all this time, my gallant colleague, Doctor Voldan, has been reaping around in his little field. What does it mean? Trying to keep these wretches alive? Why? Why have we spent our lives in this miserable hole? For money! Hardly. The pay is ridiculous.

DOCTOR. And yet, the President here has declined an offer to head the high school in Kaitersaat.

TANNER. And Doctor Voldan has refused an important post at the University of Kaitersaat. It is the same fact, we love our town. We were born here. It is our life.

DOCTOR. That's true.

TANNER. What has kept us going all these years is the hope that one day the community will prosper again, as it did in the days when we were young.

CLaire. Good.

TANNER. Madame, there is no reason for our poverty.

We refer here from a mysterious slight. We have
THE VISIT  ACT III

factories. They stand idle. There is oil in the valley of
Pescosanti.

DOCTOR. There is copper under the Konradstall forest.

There is power in our streams, in our waterfalls.

TEACHER. We are not poor, Madame. If we had credit,
if we had confidence, the factories would open, orders
and commissions would pour in. And our economy would
boil over together with our cultural life. We would become
rich again like the towns around us, healthy and pros-
t elective.

DOCTOR. If the Wagonworks were put on its feet
again—

TEACHER. The Foundry, the Wagonworks.

DOCTOR. The Golden Eagle Pencil Factory.

TEACHER. Buy these plants, Madame. Put them in
operation once more, and I swear to you, Gallen will
flourish and it will bless you. We don't need a billion
marks. Ten million, properly invested, would give us
back our life, and incidentally return to the investor an
excellent dividend. Save us, Madame. Save us, and we
will not only bless you, we will make money for you.

Claire. I don't need money.

DOCTOR. (Cries to Down Right of his chair.) Madame,
we are not asking for charity. This is business.

Claire. It's a good idea.

DOCTOR. Dear lady, I knew you wouldn't let us down.

Claire. But it's out of the question. I cannot buy the
Wagonworks. I already own them.

DOCTOR. The Wagonworks?

CLaire. And the Foundry?

DOCTOR. And the Golden Eagle pencil factory?

CLaire. Everything. The valley of Pescosanti with its
oil, the forest of Konradstall with its ore, the barn, the
town, the streets, the houses, the shops, everything. I
had my agents buy up this rubbish over the years, bit by
bit, pie by pie, until I had it all. Your losses were an
illusion, your values empty, your self-sacrifice a stupidity,
your whole life completely senseless.

ACT III

TEACHER. Then the mysterious night—

CLaire. The mysterious night was I.

DOCTOR. But this is ridiculous! (Cries Down Left
and sits down. TEACHER turns Upside.)

CLaire. Monstrous. I was invested when I left this
room. It was winter. I was dressed in a cotton sailor suit
and my red head hung down my back. I was in my
seventh month. As I walked down the street to the
station, the boys whistled after me, and threw stones. I
sat freezing in my seat in the Hamburg Express. But
before the roof of the great barn was lost behind the
trees, I had made up my mind that one day I would
come back.

TEACHER. (Turns to face her.) But Madame—

CLaire. (She smiles.) And now I have. (She drops her
hand.) Mike. Max. Take me back to The Golden
Apostle. I've been here long enough.

(MIKE and MAX enter Third Right and start to pick
up the sedan chair. TEACHER pushes MIKE away.)

TEACHER. Madame. One moment. Please. I see it all
now. I hold thought, of you as my avenging fury, a Medea,
a Clytemnestra—a god. I was wrong. You are a warm-
hearted woman who has suffered a terrible injustice and
now you have returned and taught us an unforgettable
lesson. You have stripped us bare. But now that we stand
before you naked, I know you will set aside these
thoughts of vengeance. If we made you suffer, you too
have put us through the fire. Have mercy, Madame,

CLaire. When I have had justice. MIKE. (He signals
to MIKE and MAX to pick up the sedan chair. They cross
the stage and TEACHER baa's.)

TEACHER. Poor Madame, one injustice cannot cure
another. What good will it do to force us into crime?
Murder succeeds horror, shame is piled on shame. It
Ance nothing.

CLaire. It settles everything. (They move Upside
and exit. Right. 1. The TEACHER follows.)
THE VISIT  ACT III

TEACHER. Marlene, this lesson you have taught us will never be forgotten. We will bind it down, bind it fast; to us it will be a moment—more lasting than any other, our—our—our—our—

CLARKE. The highest justice has no play. It is bright and pure and clear. The world made me into a whore, now I make the world into a brothel. Those who wish to go down, may go down. Those who wish to dance with me, may dance with me. (To her Parents.) Go.

(She is carried off. Fifth Right. The LIGHTS black out.)

SOUND CURT #16. Eleventh Right, appears SCHILLER'S shop. It has a new sign, a new counter. (See Scene Design #14.) The door bell, when it rings, has an impressive sound. FRAU SCHILLER stands behind the counter in a new dress. All FLOWERS are on stage at opening to strike and bring on props. Then they cast, hanging to all directions. FRAU SCHILLER remains behind. She is dressed as a prosperous butcher, a few beads in her mouth on a silver chain around her neck.

FRAU SCHILLER. What a wedding! I'll swear the whole town was there. Cigarettes. (To her Parents.)

FRAU SCHILLER. How to get the little happiness after all. I'm happy for her, Georgie-whelke.

FRAU SCHILLER. It's the fashion nowadays. FRAU SCHILLER. That's the fashion nowadays. FRAU SCHILLER. Reporters! Photographers! From all over the world! (In a low voice.) They will be here any minute.

FRAU SCHILLER. (Downstage of counter.) What have reporters to do with us? We are simple people, Herr Professor. There is nothing for them here.

ACT III  THE VISIT

FRAU SCHILLER. (To her Parents.) That's the fashion nowadays. FRAU SCHILLER. How to get the little happiness after all. I'm happy for her, Georgie-whelke.

FRAU SCHILLER. It's the fashion nowadays. FRAU SCHILLER. Reporters! Photographers! From all over the world! (In a low voice.) They will be here any minute.

FRAU SCHILLER. (Downstage of counter.) What have reporters to do with us? We are simple people, Herr Professor. There is nothing for them here.
THE VISIT

ACT III

Teacher. (Crossing to counter.) A very small glass.

Frau Schill. (She serves bottle and glass. The
Teacher takes it.) Your hand is shaking, Herr
Professor.

Teacher. To tell the truth, I have been drinking a
little already.

Frau Schill. Have another glass. It will do you good.

Teacher. (He accepts another glass. Takes bottle
upstairs to bench, sits.) (in that hall—upstairs—walking)

Frau Schill. Up and down. Up and down.

First Man. It's God punishing him.

(The Painter comes in with Karl and Oetting, Fourth
Right.)

Painter. Careful! A reporter just asked me the way to
this shop.

First Man. I hope you didn't tell him.

Painter. I told him we were strangers here.

(They all laugh. The door opens. The Second Man
darts into the shop.)

Second Man. Look out, everybody! The press! They
are across the street in your shop, Hofbauer

First Man. My boy will know how to deal with them.

Second Man. Make sure Schill doesn't come down,
Hofbauer.

First Man. Leave that to me.

(They gape themselves about the shop.)

Teacher. Listen to me, all of you. When the reporters
come I'm going to speak to them. I'm going to make a
statement. A statement to the world in behalf of myself
as Rector of Gilten High School and in behalf of you all,
for all your sake. (He rises and moves Left of bench.)

Painter. What are you going to say?
THE VISIT

ACT III

(The DOORBELL jingles. A REPORTER comes in, Fourth Right.)

REPORTER. (Crossing to Center.) Is Anton Schill here?
(Moves to Schill.) Are you Herr Schill?

SCHILL. What?

REPORTER. Herr Schill.

SCHILL. (Morse hand counter.) Er—no. Herr Schill’s
gone to Kahlberstadt for the day.

REPORTER. Oh, thank you. Good day. (He goes out,
Fourth Right.)

FAINTER. (Mops his brow.) Whee! Close shave. (He
follows the REPORTER out.)

SnooM Man. (Walking up to Schill.) That was
pretty smart of you to keep your mouth shut. You knew
what to expect if you didn’t. (He goes, Fourth Right.)

Poly PHANT. (Crosses to counter.) Give me a Havana.

SCHILL. SURE. (He goes Fourth Right, Schill opens his account book.)

FRAU SCHILL. Come along, children—(FRAU SCHILL,
the SON and the DAUGHTER go of, Fourth Left.)

TEACHER. They’re going to kill you. You’ve known it all
along, and yet too, you must have known it. The seed
is too strong, the temptation too great. And now, perhaps,
you will join against you. (Crosses to him.) I belong to
them, and like them, I can feel myself hardening into
something that is not human—not beautiful.

SCHILL. It can’t be helped.

TEACHER. Pull yourself together, man. Speak to the
reporters. you’ve no time to lose.

SCHILL. (Looks up from his account book.) No. I’m
not going to fight any more.

TEACHER. Are you too frightened that you don’t dare
open your mouth?

SCHILL. I made. Claire what she is. I made myself
what I am. What should I do? Should I pretend that I’m
innocent?

TEACHER. No, you can’t. You are as guilty as hell.

SCHILL. Yes.

The BURGOMASTER comes in Fourth Right. The
TEACHER stands at him, then
goes out without another word, Fourth Right, hiding
battle under his jacket.)

TEACHER. It’s not true.

BURGOMASTER. (Crosses Center.) Good afternoon,

SCHILL. Don’t let me disturb you. I’ve just dropped in for

SCHILL. I’m just finishing my accounts for the week.

(A moment’s pause.)

BURGOMASTER. The town council meets tonight. At
The Golden Apron, in the auditorium.

SCHILL. I’ll be there.

BURGOMASTER. The whole town will be there. Your
case will be discussed and final action taken. You’ve put
me in a pretty tight spot, you know.

SCHILL. Yes. I’m sorry.

BURGOMASTER. The lady’s offer will be rejected.

SCHILL. Possibly.

BURGOMASTER. Of course, I may be wrong.

SCHILL. Of course.
THE VISIT

ACT III

BURGOMASTER. In that case—are you prepared to accept the judgment of the town? The meeting will be covered by the press, you know.

SCHILL. By the press?

BURGOMASTER. Yes, and the radio and the newswrap. It's a very ticklish situation. Not only for you—believe me, it's even worse for us. What with the könnte, and me, I'm the only one. All of a sudden all the publicity, we've become famous. All of a sudden our ancient democratic institutions have become of interest to the world.

SCHILL. Are you going to make the condition public?

BURGOMASTER. No, of course not. Not directly. We will have to put the matter to a vote—that is unavoidable. Not only those involved will understand.

SCHILL. I see.

BURGOMASTER. As far as the press is concerned, you are simply the intermediary between us and Madame Zacharias. I have whitewashed you completely.

SCHILL. That is very generous of you.

BURGOMASTER. (Moves in to counter.) Frankly, it's not for your sake, but for the sake of your family. They have been honest and decent.

SCHILL. Oh—

BURGOMASTER. So far we've all played fair. You've kept your mouth shut and so have we. (Leans on counter.) Now can we continue to depend on you? Because if you have any idea of opening your mouth at tonight's meeting, there won't be any meeting.

SCHILL. I'm glad to hear an open threat at last.

BURGOMASTER. We are not threatening you. You are threatening us. If you speak, you force us to act—in advance.

SCHILL. That won't be necessary.

BURGOMASTER. So if the town decides against you?

SCHILL. I will accept their decision.

BURGOMASTER. Good. (A sequel's pause.) I'm delighted to see there is still a spark of decency left in you. But—wouldn't it be better if we didn't have to call a meeting at all? (He pauses. He takes a gun from his pocket, puts it on the counter.) I've brought you this.

SCHILL. Thank you.

BURGOMASTER. It's loaded.

SCHILL. I don't need a gun.

BURGOMASTER. (He clears his throat.) You see? We could tell the lady that we had condemned you in secret session and you had anticipated our decision. (Moves away to counter.) I've lost a lot of sleep getting to this point, believe me.

SCHILL. I believe you.

BURGOMASTER. (Turns to him.) Frankly, in your place, I myself would prefer to take the path of honor. Get it over with, once and for all. Don't you agree? For the sake of your friends! For the sake of our children... you have a daughter, a son—Schiöld, you know our need, our misery.

SCHILL. You've put me through hell, you and your town. You were my friend, you smiled and reassured me. But day by day I saw you change—your shoes, your tires, your suit—your hearts. If you had been honest with me then, perhaps I would feel differently toward you now. I might even use that gun you brought me for the sake of my friends. But now I have conquered my fear. Above it was bad, but it's done. And now you will have to judge me. I will accept your judgment. For me that will be justice. How it will be for you, I don't know.

SCHILL. (He turns away.) You may kill me if you like. I won't complain, I won't protest, I won't defend myself. But I won't do your job for you either.

BURGOMASTER. (Takes up his gun, puts it into his pocket.) There it is. You've had your chance and you won't take it. Too bad. (He takes out a cigarette.) I suppose it's more than we can expect of a man like you.

SCHILL. (He gives. Frau Schill, son and daughter enter in fourth. Eight. Frau Schill is disinclined to a fine end. The Daughter is in a new role.)
THE VISIT

FAH. SCHILL. Then take us to Kloberstadt, Karl, and we’ll go to a cinema.

SCHILL. A cinema? It’s a good idea.

FAH. SCHILL. (She moves up Left Center with Son and Daughter.) See you soon, Anna.

SCHILL. Good-bye, Otto. Good-bye, Karl. Good-bye, Mathilde.

FAH. SCHILL. Good-bye. (They go out, Fourth Left.)

SCHILL. Good-bye.

(The shop sign is from. [SOUND CUE #13] The LIGHTS black out. They come up at once on the forest scene. [See Scene Design & 15.] SCHILL walks a few steps, looking at the trees.

SCHILL. Even the forest has turned to gold. (He sits on the bench.) CLARA’s voice is heard OFF.

CLARA. (Offstage.) Stop. Wait here. (CLARA comes in.) She sees the tree, glances up the trunk. The trees are by the house. She catches sight of SCHILL.

SCHILL. CLARA. (Be forester.)

CLARA. How pleasant to see you here. I was visiting my forest. May I sit by you?

SCHILL. Oh, yes. Please do. (They sit together.) I’ve been saying good-bye to my family. They’ve gone to the cinema. Karl has bought himself a car.

CLARA. How nice.

SCHILL. Otto is taking French lessons. And a course in English literature.

CLARA. They’re beginning to take an interest in higher things.

SCHILL. Listen. A bird. You hear?

CLARA. Yes. It’s a finch. And a cuckoo in the distance.

SCHILL. Would you like some wood?

CLARA. Oh yes. That would be very nice.

SCHILL. Anything special?

CLARA. “Poe in the Forest.”

FAH. SCHILL. What a beautiful coat, Mathilde!

SCHILL. Real fur. You like it?

SCHILL. Should I? What a lovely dress, Otto?

DAUGHTER. (Spins around.) C’est tres chic, n’est-ce pas?

SCHILL. What?

FAH. SCHILL. Otto is taking a course in French.

SCHILL. Very useful. (Crosses to fourth Left.) Karl—whose automobile is that out there at the curb?

SCHILL. Oh, it’s only an Opel. They’re not expensive.

SCHILL. (Crosses to Center.) You bought yourself a car?

SCHILL. On credit. Easiest thing in the world.

FAH. SCHILL. (After Right of SCHILL.) Everyone’s going on credit now, Anton. These fears of yours are ridiculous. You’ll see. Clara has a good heart. She only means to teach you a lesson. (church bells start ringing.) [SOUND CUE #30.]

DAUGHTER. (Moves to SCHILL.) She means to teach you a lesson, that’s all.

SCHILL. It’s high time you got the point, Father.

SCHILL. I get the point. Listen. The bells of Gillen.

Do you hear?

SCHILL. Yes, we have four bells now. It sounds quite good.

SCHILL. But is that so?

FAH. SCHILL. Otto is taking a course in English literature.

SCHILL. Congratulations. (Crosses to Son.) It’s Sunday. I should very much like to take a ride in your car. One car.

SCHILL. You want to ride in the car?

SCHILL. Why not? I want to ride through the Konradswil Forest. I want to see the town where I’ve lived all my life.

FAH. SCHILL. I don’t think that will look very nice for any of us.

SCHILL. No—perhaps not. Well, I’ll walk.
THE VISIT

ACT III

CLAIRE. Your favorite song. They know it. (She raises her hand. The mandolin and guitar play the tune softly.)

[SOUND CUE #31]

SCHILL. We had a child?

CLAIRE. Yes.

SCHILL. Boy or girl?

CLAIRE. Girl.

SCHILL. What name did you give her?

CLAIRE. I called her Genevieve.

SCHILL. That's a very pretty name.

CLAIRE. Yes.

SCHILL. What was she like?

CLAIRE. She was lovely. When she was born, the only time.

SCHILL. Her eyes?

CLAIRE. They weren't open yet.

SCHILL. Her hair.

CLAIRE. Black, I think. It's usually black at first.

SCHILL. Yes, of course. Where did she die, Clara?

CLAIRE. In some family. I've forgotten their name.

SCHILL. Oh, I'm so sorry, Clara.

CLAIRE. I've told you about our child. Now tell me about myself.

SCHILL. About yourself?

CLAIRE. Yes. How I was when I was seventeen in the days when you loved me.

SCHILL. I remember one day you waited for me in the great hall. I had to look all over the place for you. At last I found you lying in the haycart with nothing on and a long straw between your lips...

CLAIRE. Yes. I was pretty in those days.

SCHILL. You were beautiful.

CLAIRE. You were strong. The time you fought those two railway men who were following me. I wiped the blood from your face with my red petticoat. (The MUSIC ends.) They were stopped.

-verse. (Referred to play: Thoughts of Home.)
THE VISIT

ACT III

Center. Dr. and the Pastor sit at the same table, at his right, and the Teacher in his academic gown, at his left.

BURLINGTON. (At a sign from the Reader, he rises, and heeds the floor with his word of office.) Fellow citizens of Gillen, I call this meeting to order. The subject: there is only one matter before us. I have the honor to announce officially that Madame Claire Zachariusa, daughter of our beloved citizen, the famous architect Siegfried Wachter, has decided to make a gift to the town of one million dollars. Five hundred million to the town, five hundred million to be divided per capita among the citizens. After certain necessary preliminaries, a vote will be taken, and you, as citizens of Gillen, will signify your will by a show of hands. Has anyone any objection to this mode of procedure? The Pastor? (Silence.) The Police? (Silence.) The Rector of Gillen High School? (Silence.) The political opponents? (Silence.) I shall then proceed to the vote—(The Teacher rises. The Burlington turns in surprise and irritation.) You wish to speak?

TEACHER. Very well. (He moves to Left of table, Teacher to Center. The murmur among starts running.)

TEACHER. Fellow townsmen, (The Photographe adjusts a lens in his face.) Fellow townsmen, we all know that by means of this gift, Madame Claire Zachariusa intends to attain a certain object. What is this object? To enrich the town of her youth, yes. (Burlington sits.) But more than that, she desires by means of this gift to re-establish justice among us. This desire expressed by our benefactress raises an all-important question. Is it true that our community labors in its soul with a burden of guilt?

BURLINGTON. Yes! True!

SECOND MAN. Crimes are perpetrated among us.

THIRD MAN. (He jumps up.) True!
THE VISIT

ACT III

BURGOMASTER. (To SCHILL.) I am sure, SCHILL, it is through you that this gift is offered to the town. Are you willing that this offer should be accepted?

(SCHILL remembers something. PHOTOGRAPHER runs to center and takes flash.)

RADIO REPORTER. You'll have to speak up a little, Herr Schill.

SCHILL. Yes.

BURGOMASTER. Will you respect our decision in the matter before us?

SCHILL. I will respect your decision.

BURGOMASTER. (Arrest Center.) Then I proceed to the vote. All those who are in accord with the terms on which this gift is offered will signify the same by raising their right hands. (After a moment, the POLICEMAN raises his hand. Then one by one the various. Last of all, the TRAVELER. SCHILL does not vote.) All against?

The offer is accepted. (SCHILL, etc.) I now solemnly call upon you, fellow citizens, to declare in the face of all the world that you take this action not out of love for worldly gain—

TOWNSMEN. (Raise their hands. In chorus.) Not out of love for worldly gain.

BURGOMASTER. But out of love for the right.

TOWNSMEN. But out of love for the right.

BURGOMASTER. We join together, now, as brothers—

TOWNSMEN. Join together, now, as brothers.

BURGOMASTER. To purify our town of guilt—

TOWNSMEN. To purify our town of guilt—

BURGOMASTER. And to reaffirm our faith—

TOWNSMEN. And to reaffirm our faith—

BURGOMASTER. In the eternal power of justice.

TOWNSMEN. In the eternal power of justice.

(The LIGHTS go off suddenly.)
... THE VISIT 

Act III

THE VOICE. (Off) Locked here! 

Geyer (off): Locked here.

Burgomaster: Form a line. The Men form a line. At the end stands the Athlete in elegant white topi, a red scarf around his neck. Pastor. Will you be so good?

Pastor: (He walks slowly to Schill.) Anton Schill, your heavy love has come.

Schill: May I have a cigarette.

Pastor: Cigarette, Burgomaster.

Burgomaster: (Crosses to Schill.) Of course, With pleasure. And a good one. (He offers his own to Schill)

who takes one. The Policeman lights the cigarette.

Pastor: In the words of the prophet Hosea—

Schill: Peace— (He shaves his head.)

Pastor: You're no longer afraid.

Schill: No. I'm not afraid.

Pastor: I will pray for you.

Schill: Pray for us all. 

(Police officer, smoking; Schill, stand up. (SCHILL kneels.)

Policeman: Stand up, you swirling

Burgomaster: Schills, please.

Policeman: I'm sorry. I was carried away.

(Schill walks slowly to Pastor and turns his back on the audience, then gives cigarette to the Policeman who steps on it.)

Burgomaster: Enter the scene.

(Schill hesitates a moment. He goes slowly into the line of silent Men. The Athlete stands at him from the opposite end. Schill looks in turn at hard faces of those who surround him, and sinks slowly to his knees. The line contracts slowly into a knot as the Men close in and crumple over. The song SCHILL DOWNSING, Complete silence. The beat of

MANN pulls back slowly. Then to open. Only the

ACT III

THE VISIT

Doctor is left, kneeling by the corpse. The Doctor rises and takes off his spectacles.

Pastor: Is it all over?

Doctor: Heart failure.

Burgomaster: Died of joy.

All: Died of joy.

(All make cargo, forming groups of two and three on either side of Stage, and All light cigarettes. A cloud of smoke rises above them. At some time, the Teacher is next to Schill and covers him with his coat; then the Teacher crosses to Policeman, who hands him a lit cigarette. From Fifth Right comes CLAIRZACHENKA, dressed in black, followed by Bava. She walks slowly to Center and looks down as the body of SCHILL.)

CLAIRE: Uncover him. (Bava uncovers SCHILL's face. She stares at it a long moment. She sighs.) Cover his face.

(Bobby covers to CLAIR goes out. Fifth Right, Bobby takes the check from his wallet, holds it out to the Burgomaster, who, after a moment's hesitation, pulls out a piece of money for the SELLER. He holds it in hand (or in the check. The LIGHTS fade.)

[SOUND Cue 83:]

(At once the sound of an approaching train is heard, and the scene devolves into the setting of the Railway Station. The gradual transformation of the shabby town into a line of elegance and beauty is now accomplished. The Railway Station is filled with people LIGHTS and is surrounded with gadgets, lights and fog. What is seen of the town indicates the culmination of the changes from saloon to a station and somewhat technical perfection.

[Scene Design #17] The TOWNSMAN, men and women, now in brand new clothes, form theme-
THE VISIT

ACT III

selves into a group in front of the station. The sound of the approaching TRAIN grows louder. The TRAIN starts and LIGHTS come up full. The CHURCH BELL starts pealing. [SOUND CUE # 31A.] Now come the Two Blind Men, then Bony, Max and Max carrying the coffin shoulder high, KATY CLARE. She is dressed in modest black. Her head is high, her face impassive like that of an ancient idol. The procession crosses the stage and goes off. The PEOPLE bow in silence as the coffin passes. When they have boarded the train, the STATION MASTER blows a long blast.

STATION MASTER. Gillen-Rome Express. All aboard, please!

[He holds up his paddle. [SOUND CUE # 36.] The TRAIN starts, and moves off slowly, picking up speed. The Curtain falls slowly, setting after the departing train in complete silence. The TRAIN sounds fade.]

SLOW CURTAIN

END OF THE PLAY

SONGS FOR "THE VISIT"

ANCIENT FOLK SONG WITH THE AMENDED WORDS

Thank you, dear lady, for visiting our home town, Gillen Town,
Welcome, oh welcome, Claire Zachariasin, we sing out the pan of your renown, great renown—
Ding dong bell, hope you're well,
Bell ding ding, our hearts sing, home is the place
we love best.
Ding dong bell, hope you're well,
Bell ding ding our hearts sing,
Welcome back home to the nest. Pum, Pum,
(This song is sung by the Mixed Choir in the 1st Railroad Station scene and is sung later in the 1st act when Claire Zachariasin is making her entrance for the banquet scene.)

THE HAPPY WANDERER

I love to go a-wandering upon the mountain high
And as I go I love to sing beneath God's dear blue sky
Falalal
Falalal
Falalal
Falalal
Falalal
Falalal
Falalal ah ah ah ah ah ah ah

89
SONG TO BE SUNG BY THE TWO LITTLE GIRLS UNDER THE BALCONY TO CLAIRE SACHANASSIAN.

Like a thought in the night we come
Like a phantom we wait
Like a bell tolling under the sea
Telling you it's too late

But laugh now, you need no tears,
Clara is setting you free...
(Schutz enters at this point. The girls scream and exit followed by the Teacher.)

(The children return and complete the song.)
Round the world she carried your song
And tore the oceans apart
But came now, loveliest flower
So will she tear out your heart.

SOUND PLOT

NOTE: Master gain must be full for all trains.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Cast</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Express passing</td>
<td></td>
<td>Chorus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Express passing</td>
<td></td>
<td>Church Music</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3A</td>
<td>Puffing train passing</td>
<td></td>
<td>New Bell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Express stopping</td>
<td></td>
<td>Feb Background</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3A</td>
<td>Steam</td>
<td></td>
<td>Express Passing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Express starting</td>
<td></td>
<td>Feb Background</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5A</td>
<td>Puffing train passing</td>
<td></td>
<td>Express Passing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Church bell</td>
<td></td>
<td>Express Passing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Feb Background</td>
<td></td>
<td>Local arriving</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>March</td>
<td></td>
<td>End of Act Two</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Panther</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Finn</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Cuckoo</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>March</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Fanfare</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>End of Act One</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Greek Tune</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Greek Tune</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Greek Tune</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Greek Tune</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Merry Widow</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Merry Widow</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Chorus</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: The woodpecker effect in Act 2 was achieved with a wooden toy woodpecker, obtainable in most toy shops. The station bell (with hammer) is placed in the last bay left and hung on the Left portal.

NOTE: For details on rental of sound recording, send as above to text of this book, write to:
ROBERT WHITEHEAD
1501 Broadway
New York, N.Y. 10036

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PRODUCTION NOTE

Regarding the Over-All Approach to Staging “The Visit”

by JOSEPH BROWNSTONE, Stage Manager

As will be noted in reading the stage directions of THE VISIT, as well as in the descriptions of the various settings, and in the scrutiny of the ground plans to be found in the back of this script, the over-all concept in staging THE VISIT requires a fluidity of movement by all the actors, as well as in the lighting and in the transitions from one scene to another. This is essential throughout each and every scene of the play. It is all-important. It is because of this concept that it is vital that each actor be specifically assigned various duties, involving the striking of scenery and properties as well as setting different units.

(As originally presented in New York City, as well as on the national tour of THE VISIT, there were only several places where the actors were not involved in the shifting of scenery (other than the lighting and the fly cues) and that was the scene strike at the conclusion of the Act 3 shop scene and the shift at the end of the play for the curtain calls. The only other scene changes not involving the actors were the onstage and offstage shifts of the Left and Right stage units, and the various shifts of the balcony unit.)

It will therefore be of the utmost importance to consider all the technical aspects of the production most carefully and in great detail in working out the casting, the lighting, the sound, the scene shifts, the costume changes, etc. Since the very nature and concept of THE VISIT necessitates a close and careful working relationship between all departments.

A NOTE REGARDING THE CASTING OF THE PRODUCTION

In the original production of THE VISIT as well as in the National Touring Company, many of the roles were doubled and tripled, allowing the size of the cast to be considerably reduced. The following is suggested as a possible and practical solution for limiting the size of the cast:

MALE—Can also be cast as a townsman in the tribunal scene.
Can also be cast as an athlete for the first half of the banquet scene.
Can also be cast as a townsman in the 2nd Railroad Station scene.

MIST—Same as above.

FIRST BLINDMAN—Can also be cast as a townsman in the 2nd Railroad Scene.
Can also be cast as a radio reporter in the tribunal scene.

SECOND BLINDMAN—Can also be cast as a townsman in the 2nd Railroad Scene.
Can also be cast as a spot lamp operator in the tribunal scene.

THE SONG—Can also be cast as a townsman in the 2nd Railroad Scene.
Can also be cast as a townsman in the Tribunal Scene.

THE THIRD MAN—Can also be cast as The Delivery Man.

THE SECOND WOMAN—Can also be cast as The First Burgemaster.
Can also be cast as a Reporter in the Tribunal Scene.

THE FIRST GROUNDSMAN—Can also be cast as the Photographer in the Tribunal Scene.

THE STATION MASTER—Can appear as a member of the Tribunal.
PRODUCTION NOTES

Regarding Station Units, Restaurant Units, Balcony Unit, and Other Units.

1. The Left and Right Station Units, consist of painted flats, and each is mounted on platform units with casters to enable the units to be moved on and off stage quickly and quietly. The off stage ends of each platform has a long handle hinged to the platform which is used as a handle to help push the units on stage or to pull them off stage and prevents the audience from seeing the operators of these units.

2. The Left and Right Restaurant Units, consist of painted flats, and each is mounted on platform units with casters.

Note: These units are moved on stage and off stage only once during the play. They should be moved onto stage simultaneously with the lowering of the center restaurant unit representing the doorway. (Fly Cue No. 3.) If there are no facilities for flying the center unit, it is suggested that the center unit be mounted on a platform unit with casters and that this unit should work simultaneously with the Left and Right units when being brought on stage. This would necessitate that the center unit be brought on from the 3rd Bay Left. (This, because Claire Zachanassian enters through the center unit doorway, coming from the 3rd Bay Right.)

3. The balcony unit is an easily assembled unit, also constructed on a platform with casters to enable easy operation. This has an additional escape stair unit which can be folded up when balcony unit is not in use.

Note: This unit can remain in one position throughout the entire second act and only at the end of the second act, prior to the railroad station scene can it be moved up stage. When this occurs.
ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGER CUES AND BUSINESS

(Performing at the Conductor)

ACT ONE

1. On Cue: From Stage Manager; Hit Station Bell with hammer until the Station Master salutes.

2. On Cue: "watching trains"—Hit Station Bell with hammer until the Station Master salutes.

3. On Cue: "painting signs"—Hit Station Bell with hammer until the Station Master salutes.

4. On Cue: "on that first impression"—Hit Station Bell with hammer—3 Times

5. On Cue: "if it only comes off"—Hit Station Bell and continue until "That's not her train."

6. On Cue: "the ropes are fixed in time"—Hit Station Bell until the 1st Man starts crossing upstage, saying: "Burgomaster"

7. On Cue: (Mixed Choir Song) "Welcome, O, Wa... Come..." continues hitting Station Bell until "Our hero's a king..."

ACT TWO

1. On Cue: As Policeman starts to pour beer—Hand signal to Schill (who is behind Balcony Unit) to enter.

2. On Cue: As 2nd Man picks up Altar Cloth and starts to roll counter off give cue for the two gun shots. (This action can best be observed from 3rd Bay).

3. Hold flashlight for Claire Zachanassian's exit from balcony, and as the actress clears the escape stair strike the stair until towards stage right, enabling the hangers of the balcony unit to strike that unit upstage.

4. On Cue: Doctor: "... Hold up letter, what an idea..." Hit Station Bell, continuing until two nurses are halfway into line-up, then enter from 1st Bay and join in the line-up.
5. **On Cue:** As Schill takes full standing position, hand signal to Truck Driver to re-enter from Station House 1. Stand in 3rd Bay 1 to signal him.

**ACT THREE**

1. **On Cue:** Teacher sits after "I have nothing more to say," hand signal (from 1st Bay 1) for Reporter to make his entrance.
2. **On Cue:** Schill sits on forest bench. Hand signal (from 1st Bay 1) to Claire Zachanasi to enter from 3rd Bay 9.
3. **On black-out after Burgomaster receives check from Bobby, help Anton Schill exit between 3rd lamppost and station truck to 4th Bay 1.

**Note:** The above-listed duties of the Assistant Stage Manager do not include the other pieces of business which are shown in the script itself, when performing as the Conductor, or as a Townsman and handling furniture, properties, etc.

**PROPERTY PLOT**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage Left</th>
<th>Property</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cameras on tripod</td>
<td>Burgomaster's mace</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spot Lamp</td>
<td>Red and green signal light (practical) for tribune table</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sleds</td>
<td>Beer Mug</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Broom</td>
<td>Mandolin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Can of Butter (on shelf, 1st Bay 1)</td>
<td>Guitar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sedan Chair</td>
<td>2 tablecloths, 1 large, 1 small</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bucket w/water (used for the prop &quot;pike&quot;)</td>
<td>1 wine bottle w/wine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fishing rod</td>
<td>(practical)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fishing net</td>
<td>Wooden tray w/13 champagne glasses, 1 silver plate and wooden gavel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fishing Cred w/trowel</td>
<td>Wooden tray w/9 glasses, 1 plate, assorted silver</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mandolin Case</td>
<td>Corset</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guitar Case</td>
<td>Small cardboard box of flags and flowers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 Straightback chairs</td>
<td>Shop counter on casters w/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large table</td>
<td>Cashbook and pencil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 pieces of luggage, matching</td>
<td>2 milk cans, ladle (under counter)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Panther cage w/cover</td>
<td>Aluminum tray w/weight (scale) (under counter)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collar w/cover</td>
<td>Wagonwheels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bass drum w/stick</td>
<td>Set of shop shelves on casters w/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Snare drum w/sticks</td>
<td>Bottom Shelf:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trumpet</td>
<td>2 large glass jars</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Squash phone</td>
<td>Assorted loaves of bread</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Green flag on pole</td>
<td>12 peep-rides</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Green banner w/initials C2</td>
<td>Camera w/flash gun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Straw basket w/pitchfork</td>
<td>1 dusty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small wood basket</td>
<td>Water dispenser and glass w/water</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Bread knife
Duster
Dustpan and brush
6 bottles (glued)
1 spare pencil
2 glasses
Second Shelf:
Box cigars (practical)
Numerous cigarette
packs including green
1 box
2 packets tobacco
Assorted dressing

Stage Right:
Stepladder
Typewriter in wrapping paper
1 small table
Radio control box w/headphones on chair
Microphone attached above w/20' electric cord
2 lamplighter's poles
1 Champagne bottle (practical) in ice bucket
Towel
10 straight-back chairs
1 Television set tied to a small hand truck
2 shopping bags
2 small milk pails
Numerous music sheets (for distribution to townpeople)
Duster
Streamers, blowers, noisemakers
Small gasoline can
Alcove cloth
Bible, Liturgy and Psalter
1 mop
1 crate eggs
1 camera (for Pedro)
2 wrenches
Tray w/tea set for two (practical)
Policeman's desk on casters w/:
Straight back chair on desk top
100

Third Shelf:
Numerous bottles
including:
2 cognacs, 1 Steinhager
2 Schnapps
2 boxes dummy
2 chocolate bars
Assorted dressing

French telephone on small shelf under desk top
Beer bottle open (practical) on small shelf under desk top
Glass
Notebook and pencil
Wheelbarrow
Burlap
Wooden bucket
2 wine bottles (practical)
2 wine tray w/ 8 glasses, 6 plates, assorted silver, tablecloth
Banner with THANK YOU, FAREWELL
Fairplan

PRESET ON STAGE (ACT 1)

Bench
2 wooden boxes
Luggage truck
2 cases paint w/brushes
1 Banner lettered: one side, WELCOME CLARA, other
side, WELCOME MA
Station paddle hanging on Station Master's shack
2 banner poles, one on each truck, inland
Small table
1 chair
2 beer mugs
1 broom leaning against left station unit

PRESET ON STAGE (ACT 2)

Strike all dishes and restaurant furniture
Counter on marks w/broom, dustpan and brush, cash
book and pencil. Denter flush 2 milk cans and lid on
floor behind counter
2 Straight bottom chairs (shop chairs only)
On Balcony:
2 wrought iron chairs
Small table w/cover
Bench on shop marks (diagonal)
STEPS: Ladder in 1st Bay Left
Strike flags and flowers from station units
Set new sign on Left Station Unit, FAIRPLAN
on Right Station Unit
Policeman’s rifle set in 4th Bay L.

PRESST ON STAGE

(ACT III)

Preset stage left, 4th Bay, counter and shelves
Preset stage Right, 1st Bay, bench
Sofa chair on marks (diagonal)
Wagon wheels (USCG)
Small wicker basket
Wooden bucket
Large straw basket w/pitchfork
Wheelbarrow w/brake
Set banner (THANK YOU, FAREWELL) on poles in 1
and a station units
Set Christmas garlands on station units in wings

At the end of the shop scene, two (2) property men
strike the shelves and counter in the blackout.

After the final curtain, a property man strike the
bench into the 1st Bay w, the other stagehands strike the
t and a station units into the wings, the last props are
town for the curtain calls.

PL Instructions

ACT II, Scene 1

Boxes used and struck by 1st, 3rd and 4th man
Ladders used by 1st and 2nd man—struck by 2nd and 4th
Child

Boxes struck by 3rd man and 2nd child
Paint pots struck by painter
Bouquet struck by painter
Chairs set by stationmaster—struck by 1st child

ACT II, Scene 2

Bench moved to 1st forest marks by 1st child
Luggage carried from Left to Right by:

FRAU SCHILL
PAINTER
2ND MAN
2ND CHILD
1ST CHILD (Enters from R.)
SPORTS
3RD MAN
Karl
Conductor
1ST MAN
REPORTER

ATHLETES: Panther Cage

Table moved down by Burgomeister and Teacher—struck
by Athlete and Third Man
Chairs moved down by Burgomeister and Teacher—struck
by Conductor and Station Master

ACT II, Scene 3

Sofa Chair carried on and off by Mike and Max

ACT II, Scene 4

Chairs set by 1st Woman, 3rd Man and 1st Man
Small Table Left set by 2nd and 4th Man
Small Table Right set by 1st Man and Conductor
Center Table set by Station Master and Conductor
Act II, Scene 2
Shop chair is struck by Conductor
Act II, Scene 2 (Police Station)
Shop shelves struck by conductor and painter
Small Desk with phone, bottle beer, mug, notebook and chair rolled on and set by policeman
Conductor strikes phone into desk drawer
Reporter coins police register and removes it w/bottle and mug and pencil
3rd Man throws TV across from 8 to 12.1
Act II, Scene 3—(Burgomaster’s Office)
Swivel chair—Rolled by Burgomaster
Burgomaster’s swivel chair is struck by 1st Man
Police Station desk is struck by 2nd Man
Shop chair is struck by 3rd Man
Act II, Scene 4—(Church)
Bench is set by Reporter
Altar and altar cloth struck by 3rd Man
Act III, Scene 1—(Great Barn)
Basket is struck by Teacher
Basket is struck by Doctor
Wagon Wheels are struck by Athlete
Basket and Kale are struck by Station Master
Wheelbarrow is struck by 3rd Man
Act III, Scene 2—(Schill’s Shop)
Bench is set by 2nd Man
Counter is set by Conductor
Shelves are set by Karl and Painter
Act III, Scene 3—(Wench)
Shelves are struck by Stagehand
Counter is struck by Stagehand
Act III, Scene 4—(Tribunal-Golden Apollo-Auditorium)
Chairs are set and struck by actors
FLY PLOT

ACT ONE

(Pre-set Lamppost units)
Fly Cue No. 1
The upstage lampposts are flown out
The Golden Apostles sign is flown in
Fly Cue No. 2
The downstage lampposts are flown out
The Golden Apostles sign is flown out
Fly Cue No. 3
The center unit representing the doorway of the restaurant is flown in
(Also the 1st act curtain, the center unit is flown out)

ACT TWO

(Pre-set Shop sign) (The center panel drop is flown out)
Fly Cue No. 4
The shop sign is flown out
Fly Cue No. 5
The Police sign is flown in
Fly Cue No. 6
The Police sign is flown out
Fly Cue No. 7
The Rathaus sign is flown in
Fly Cue No. 8
The Rathaus sign is flown out
Fly Cue No. 9
The upstage and downstage lampposts are flown in and the balcony unit has been moved upstage, the center panel drop is flown in.
(Also the 2nd act curtain, the lampposts are flown out)

ACT THREE

(Pre-set the barn ladder)
Fly Cue No. 10

The barn ladder is flown out
The shop sign is flown in
Fly Cue No. 11
The shop sign is flown out
Fly Cue No. 12
The town hall lamps (3) are flown in
The town hall banner is flown in
Fly Cue No. 13
The town hall lamps are flown out.
The town hall banner is flown out
The upstage and downstage lampposts are flown in
(Also the final curtain, the lampposts are flown out quickly for the curtain calls)

Note: For purposes of simplifying the production, it is suggested that the various signs denoting the different locales be limited. The barn ladder can also be eliminated. The center panel drop is essential for the second act balcony scenes and must be used after the balcony unit has been brought upstage beyond the backdrop. Depending on the facilities in your individual theatre, a means of employing the lamppost units, as well as the town hall lamps and the town hall banner, would have to be worked out accordingly, or perhaps eliminated.

Regarding Fly Cue No. 3, if this were to present a problem, it is suggested that this be utilized in conjunction with the bringing on of the Left and Right Restaurant units.
TRUCK AND BALCONY CUES

ACT ONE
(Pre-set 1 and 1 station units on stage)
Truck Cues No. 1
Station units move offstage into wings simultaneously

ACT TWO
Balcony Cue No. 1
Balcony unit rolled downstage approximately 4 feet
Balcony Cue No. 2
Balcony unit rolled upstage to marks
Balcony Cue No. 3
Balcony unit moved downstage approximately 4 feet
Balcony Cue No. 4
Balcony unit rolled upstage to marks
Balcony Cue No. 5
Balcony unit moved downstage approximately 4 feet
Balcony Cue No. 6
Balcony unit rolled upstage to marks
Truck Cue No. 2
Station units moved onstage simultaneously
Christmas tree lights garlands are placed on both station units for the Act 3 railroad station scene

ACT THREE
Truck Cue No. 3
Station units moved onstage simultaneously
(At end of railroad station scene, strike both station units into wings for curtain calls)
APPENDIX B: CHARACTER ANALYSIS
Physical Qualities

1. Who am I?

   My name is Ilene Muller. I am the Rector of Gullen High School. I have lived in Gullen all my life and I hope to help bring the town back around to its former self - with education, anything is possible.

2. Who am I named after? Do I like my name?

   I am named after my grandmother, one of the founding members of the town of Gullen. When my grandfather died, she helped to complete the building of the Foundry, and when it went under, made me promise to bring it back to life. I love my name, because it was a symbol of strength and courage in our family and town.

3. What is my sex? What do I think of sex?

   I am a female. Sex, as far as what I am, has never really defined me. I never thought what differences I could make as a boy rather than as a girl. I have always been accepted as an equal because of my intelligence. As far as the act of sexual relationships, I have never had one, but always longed for someone I could share that with.

4. How old am I? What do I think of my age?

   I am 34 years old. I am still young enough to hope that my background and education can shape the world in which this town lives. I think that I have an advantage in being younger, because I still have some hope, whereas some of my other townspeople have fallen into the “I can’t get out now, so let’s just make the best of it” mentality. As far as
starting a family, this is where age rushes me a little bit - I feel that I am leaning towards that side where I will never be married and it makes me a little sad. However, I try not to think about it.

5. How does my posture express my age, health, inner feelings?

I am a very stiff person. My shoulders are always up and my back ramrod straight, unless I feel defeated. It makes me appear more mature and very strong person. I am a force to be reckoned with in my own right, especially when it comes to teaching and handling children’s behavioral problems. I think some of the children are a little scared of me sometimes, but I try not to be harsh, merely educationally demanding.

6. How is my complexion? What do I think of it?

I have a clear, fair complexion. I don’t really think about it. My looks are not something upon which I focus my time.

7. What is my height? What do I think of it?

I am slight of build, but it does not bother me. I carry myself as if I am bigger than I am. In my mind, I am around 5'9".

8. What is my weight? What do I think of it?

I am a small woman, but I walk as though I am 130 pounds. I have a strong, heavy walk. I make myself known.
9. What is the pitch, volume, tempo, resonance or quality of my voice? What do I think of it?

   I have a lower tone to my voice. It is steady and strong, well supported and full. As I unravel, my voice tends to go up a little in pitch and is the first thing I try to control when I feel myself losing a grip on my level-headedness.

10. Is my articulation careless or precise? Is my articulation standard or colloquial? Do I have a dialect or accent?

   I am precise in my articulation, and it is pretty much standard. I try very hard to rid myself of any kind of dialect.

11. What is my hair color and style? Do I like it?

   My hair is dark brown, with a few grey streaks in it up near my crown, and long. I like it well enough. Again, vanity is not something I spend time on - I can put it up out of my face and go on with my day.

12. Do I have any deformities? What do I think of them?

   No. I am normal.

13. Do I have any mannerisms? What do I think of them?

   I do. I tend to keep my hands clasped in front of me when I am not using them. It keeps them from wondering around, picking at things. It is a sign of my composure. When I lose that composure, my hands go to my hair.
14. Do I have any handicaps? What do I think of them?

   I think my determination could be a handicap sometimes, because I can overlook others
   and not mean to, but most of the time I think I am pretty fair.

15. How energetic or vital am I? Do I like it?

   I am extremely energetic when I go after something that I want. But, I always have a well
   thought out plan of how to approach and get it. I like it just fine, but there are times I
   wish I could be impulsive.

16. Do I suffer from any diseases past or present?

   No. Just the thirst for knowledge.

17. Are my gestures complete or incomplete, vigorous or weak, compulsive or controlled?

   My gestures are complete, and I suppose they are vigorous, but I would say that they are
   more direct than vigorous. And for the most part, they are controlled.

18. Do I like my walk?

   Yes. I have made it into a walk that shows off strength and intelligence. I am confident.

19. How do I usually sit?

   My back straight in a chair, but not touching the back of the chair, legs together, but not
   crossed, leaning slightly to the right. Hands in my lap.
20. How do I usually stand?

Stiffly, shoulders up, hands in front of me and legs close together when I walk. Not big strides, but ladylike and still strong.

21. Do I have any objects with me, hand props or accessories? Why? How do I handle them?

I have a handkerchief that I carry, and if I am nervous or thinking, it becomes my outlet for that energy. I crumble it in my hands, and play with it in very small motions, usually a wringing motion until I have an answer.

22. Are my basic rhythms smooth or jerky, even-tempered or volatile, impulsive or deliberate, ponderous or light, broken or continuous?

I am a very deliberate person, even-tempered, ponderous and continuous. I have a need to have control over everything so that I can put my intelligence to use. I do not think that I am any better than anyone else, but I do think that I have capabilities from my education that can help out everyone. I don’t use my education to be self centered, but I do use it to empower myself and others around me. I want education for everyone - it’s the only real way to succeed.

23. What do I like to wear? What do I have to wear? How do I wear my clothes? How do I handle them?

I wear clothes that give me a ladylike appearance, but not clothes that would be extremely flattering. I don’t wish to appear mannish, but not extremely feminine as well - I want to be a part of everyone. I handle my clothes very carefully, hand-washing and
special care in mending them. The clothes I have are all I have - it’s too expensive to get more of them. I keep trying to keep them as pristine as I can.

Social Qualities

1. What do I do when I wake up each morning?

I get out of bed, wash my face and unbraid my hair, brush it and put it up in a bun. I get dressed, fix myself breakfast, usually some toast or a muffin if it is a good week, and gather my things to go teach class.

2. What is my relationship to my environment?

I am comfortable in my environment, but it is sparse, and sometimes lonely.

3. What is my educational background? How much discipline was I subjected to? How intelligent am I?

I have been through a rigorous education, I had high marks and advanced classes through high school, and I went away to college, and got a degree. I had an offer to teach in the college, but I wanted to come back and help out my town.

4. What was my childhood like? What are my strongest memories?

My childhood was hard, but good. My parents worked when they could to keep clothes on me, keep me fed, and warm. Since the town’s failure 25 years ago, everyone has worked just to stay alive. My childhood was one of work, and also one of learning what had happened and what it would take to turn the town around again. My talked with my
grandmother on seeing her dreams come true and watching them fall away are my biggest memories - they shaped me into the person I am today.

5. How much money do I have? How much do I want?

Hardly any. I make enough to barely get by. I would like to have enough to be comfortable, but I would also like to see the people in the town make what they deserve.

6. What is my nationality? What do I think of it?

I am who I am. I like the person that I have become. (Mark has specifically asked us not to think of ourselves in a particular nationality - he doesn’t want a German accent, but he doesn’t want it to be distinctly American either, so it would probably be a mix between the two for a more precise nationality.)

7. What is my occupation? Do I like it? What other jobs have I had? When and why did I choose this one?

When I was a little girl, I used to pretend that I was a schoolteacher. I have always wanted to be one, and I have never had any other kind of job. After my success in high school, I was able to go on to university with a scholarship, and excelled there as well, being offered a post within the college. However, I wanted to come home and help the town get back on its feet by helping to educate our people.

8. What are my political attitudes?

I support a strong educational system, and one that will add to the workforce of our poor
little town. I am willing to try almost anything to get the factories in our town rolling again.

9. Am I religious?

Spiritual, not religious. In my education, and studying different types of religions, there is a commonality in them all.

10. Whom would I choose to be if I could be anyone else?

No one. But I would add more quality to my life. I’d like to have what Mrs. Schill has, but I do not want to be her.

11. Did I have childhood heroes? What did I like about them?

My grandmother. Her determination to make her life work after the death of my grandfather was always an inspiration to me. She got her happiness from other places, and living out her husband’s dream. It became her own. And when the town went under, reviving her dream became mine.

12. Do I like members of the opposite sex? What do I like about them?

I like anyone who has intelligence and uses it wisely. It matters not if they are a female or male.

13. Who were my parents? What do I like and/or dislike about them? What can I still hear them saying to me?
My parents were two very good people who worked hard doing whatever they could in the town to support us. Before the failure of the town, my father was a foreman at the factory, and my mother worked as a cook in the town café. When the town folded, my father went to the work office everyday, as did my mother, and I remember them telling me every day to do my best in school. It drove me to want more out of my life, and to maybe one day give back to my family.

14. Do I like my family? What do I like? What do I dislike?

I love my family. There were, of course, the growing pains of life, and my mother constantly encouraging me to “settle down”, but my father understood what I wanted and told me to always go after it.

15. How has my mother influenced me? How has my father influenced me?

My mother gave me the tools to take care of myself, my house and home, and taught me the finer things in life - softness, music; my father gave me the strength to push myself and survive in this world. He taught me about admiration, honesty and justice.

16. Do I have brothers and sisters? What do I think about them?

No, I have never had siblings. But I always wanted a brother.

17. What was my favorite fairy tale? Why?

I don’t really have a favorite fairy tale, but the stories of the Greek gods and goddesses are a usual reference in my daily life. All the stories captivate me in some way.
18. Who are my friends? Who are my enemies? How can I tell if someone is my friend or my enemy?

I don’t really have people who are my friends. I have people in the community that look up to me and respect me, but there is always that reverent wall. The closest friend I have is Schill, because he relates to me as a person and not as a teacher or mentor. The Pastor would be the next person that is close to me, because he understands the barrier we have around us. The Mayor needs me around, but although we respect and like each other, I do not know if you could call us friends. I really don’t have any enemies when the play starts, but at the end, the entire town is ready to kill me if I do not go along with their wishes. Admiration and respect denoted friendship for me, and the threat against my life pretty much told me who my enemies are.

19. What ideas do I like? What ideas do I dislike?

I like the idea of success achieved because of hard work. I like the idea of having a home to come home to, not just a house. I like the idea of the town back in swing. I like the idea of Clara never coming in the first place. I like the idea of justice, but I do not approve of her version. I do not like the town’s dismissal of Schill. I do not like how they band together over money and lose themselves in the process. I do not like the idea of things being out of the realm of logic, because then I have no semblance of control. I do not like disrespect. I absolutely do not like murder.

20. What hobbies or interests do I have?
Reading. I really love any kind of book. There is just as much knowledge to be gained from lore as there is from truth. I also love to play the piano. The one I have is old, and out of tune, but it came to me through my grandmother.


No, I do not have any children.

22. What advice do I have for my children?

If I ever have any, it will be to always follow a path of knowledge and goodness. I never want them to allow greed in their lives.

23. Am I married? Why did I marry the person that I did?

No, I am not married. If I do get married, I will marry someone that I can always talk with, on any subject. I want someone who can make me laugh. I don’t do that enough.

24. What do I like about my spouse? What do I dislike?

If I had one, I’m sure I would like everything. Mostly.

25. How do my physical traits affect each of my social traits?

I am generally a person that is so focused on my objectives that I stay pretty within myself until they are accomplished. I sometimes am unapproachable, or do not allow leisure activities to get in the way of the goals I have set. I have become somewhat unsociable in this aspect, but I am still perfectly capable of being present in a social
event, or helping to lead my community.

26. How do the social traits affect my script objective?

My social traits, being limited, give me to hard of an edge when I push for the truth to come out. Also, because I really cannot relate to people outside an educational setting, I don’t know the subtler tricks to pull people to one side or another. I can only use justice, and I lack the knowledge of these people personally to appeal to their sense of morality. They certainly weren’t present for me to relate to Claire the way I wanted to. Instead of allowing her to see her mistakes, I appeared as another callous person in her life.

27. How do the social traits affect my life needs and wants?

They have allowed me to rise up to the station to which I wanted to be at in the town, but they have also made me unavailable to the home that I have always wanted to make.

28. How does the locale of the play make me feel?

I cannot say that I love the Gullen of now. It makes me sad, and I have a profound sense of loss as I look into the tired faces of those people that I try to help. The ones of us that do succeed end up leaving the town and what we have left are so broken that it is hard to find a margin of comfort. But there is hope for a tomorrow, somewhere. This hope is held deep within the hearts of those here - so deep inside that most of us do not dare to even speak of it, or allow ourselves to think about it often. But I teach it every day. Without the despair in this place, hope would not be so reverently guarded and longed for.
29. How does the time of the play make me feel?

I either wish that we were in a past time, where the town was successful and I could enjoy my life, or I wish we could jump to the future and I could be proud of the new successes the town has found.

30. How does the period of the play affect my action?

I do not think the period affects the action at all. There is not really a particular period - it is sort of post war Germany, but again, we had specific instructions not to make it a period. The only hindrance I think that my action had would be economic.

31. What will be carved on my tombstone?

May her failure on earth not lead to failure in the next world.

32. Where have I been prior to each of my stage entrances?

*Please note that the numbers before each section denote Act and Scene; for example, 1.2 is Act One, Scene Two, and so on.*

1.2 - I have been talking with the Mayor and the Pastor all morning in the Mayor’s office about how to welcome Clara. We are coming to look at how progress on the decorations is going.

1.3 - I rush off to get the Mixed Choir to sing the welcoming song. I am returning with them.

1.6 - I come in with the Mayor, we were putting the finishing touches on the welcoming ceremony and discussing Clara’s strange statements.
2.10 - I have been asked to provide a song of condolence by the Mayor, so I gather the children to go sing to Clara. After making sure the children are safe, and Anton is now without a weapon, I lead the children on to finish the song.

3.1 - After much discussion, the Doctor and I were chosen to go ask Clara for mercy. The Doctor and I have been in his office, discussing our plan of action, and looking at how we can pitch this plan to her. We are now on our way in to see her.

3.2 - I have just come from Clara’s, now knowing that she destroyed the town, and desperately trying to figure out a way to tell everyone and save Schill.

3.5 - I have been led to the trial by the Pastor and Wechsler. Wechsler came to my house to make me leave and the Pastor, on his way, sort of intervened and walked with me there.

**Psychological Qualities**

1. What choices do I face?

   I can either decide to give in to the town and help Schill on to death, or I can stand up to the town and reveal what Claire is doing.

2. What choices do I make?

   I am forced to raise my hand against Schill, but I refuse to enter the circle with the town.

3. What makes me angry? What relaxes me?

   Stupidity. Ignorance is okay - it means not knowing any better, or never having been taught better; Stupidity is knowing better and doing it anyway.
4. What is driving my ambitions, my goals?

   My hope for a renewed town. And my hope that the town will not fall into Claire’s trap.

5. Do I have any instincts?

   Yes, I have an instinct to protect those I care about, and self preservation.

6. Do I do things impulsively?

   No. I think out everything before I do it.

7. What do I worry about?

   I worry that my efforts will be in vain.

8. What do I want? What do others think that I want?

   I want Claire to go away without hurting anyone. I want the town to stand up to her and disregard what she has asked. I want the town to do nothing it will regret. The others think I am out to ruin what hope they have to gain.

9. What do I like about myself? What do I dislike about myself?

   I like my intelligence. I like that I go through a process of logic to figure things out. I do not like that in a stressful situation that I cannot always think clearly. I do not like that I cannot save this town, or Schill.
10. What do I need?

I need everyone to listen to what I am saying. No one hears me - my words are merely a denial of the money they think they so desperately need. But, if someone would just hear what I have to say - really listen, then I could just save the town - the way I have hoped to do for years.

11. What do I fear?

I fear failure.

12. Why can’t I get what I want?

Because I do not know how to get it. There isn’t a book created for this situation and no real way to come up with a training manual. I think I am so afraid of failing that the fear is getting in my way.

13. Do other people like me? Why?

They respect me, because I have answers to problems. I’m not sure they like me, and by the end of the show, I am definitely not liked by anyone but Schill.

14. Are any of my psychological traits manifested physically?

Yes. I hold myself together, physically as well as psychologically. You can see it in my posture and the way I play with my handkerchief when I get nervous or am concentrating hard.
15. Are any of my psychological traits manifested vocally?

Yes, you can hear my last ditch efforts for the town to reconsider as my pitch changes.

It’s the fear creeping in.

**Moral Qualities**

1. Are the choices that I will make based upon expediency or upon some ethical standard?

They are absolutely based on morality. I try to do the right thing.

2. Whom do I admire?

I actually admire Schill, for allowing his murder to happen. At least he doesn’t have to live with the knowledge of what he has done.

3. Will the pursuit of my needs lead to a moral choice?

Yes. I must choose to help kill Schill and save myself, or to sacrifice myself for him. I am forced to go along with it, but I refuse to help kill him.

4. What is my attitude toward the choice that I make?

I hate what I could not do. I hate that I watched Schill die and that I watched the town destroy itself in a bid for money.

5. How do I express this attitude vocally and physically?

In my final speech, I point out everyone’s faults in detail, not only to get them to change their minds, but to remind them at what they will have to live with. I hit the Pastor hard.
In staying out of the circle, I removed myself from the town. When Claire passes each of us on her way out, I’m the only one to meet her eyes and return the stare.

**Play Qualities**

1. Why am I included in the play? How do I contribute to the overall idea the playwright wishes to express?

   I am the only one who retains a moral sense in the play. Without me, the play would lose any hope for Schill’s rescue and give the town a completely bad taste. There has to be some foil in the play and I serve that purpose in many capacities.

2. What metaphors, similes, or personifications are used to describe me?

   There are none, in the entire play. I use them to describe others, but none are used for me.

3. How and why are these figures of speech related to my physical, social, psychological, and moral traits?

   Because there are none, it points to the fact that no one seems to have a real grasp on me enough to say that I am like something. Perhaps they equate me to some stern war general in their homes, but no one has described me that way in my presence, or when I am not around. It shows that no one has insight into who I am
APPENDIX C: CHRONOLOGY
This Chronology is taken from *Understanding Friedrich Durrenmatt*¹

1921 Born in Konolfingen, Canton Bern, son of Pastor Reinhold Durrenmatt and Hula Zimmermann Durrenmatt

1935 Family moves to Bern. Struggled in school and failed in 1939 to be promoted.

1941 Received his High School Certificate in Older Languages. Wanted to become a painter. The Jury at The Art Academy urged his parents to let him study literature instead. Enrolled at the University of Bern.

1942 Brief stint of military service in summer—discharged because of poor eyesight. Transferred to the University of Zurich at the start of Winter Semester. On Christmas Eve he wrote his first short narrative, “Weinacht” (“Christmas”)

1943 Officially registered as a student in Zurich. In the circle of expressionist painter Walter Jonas, Durrenmatt lead a Bohemian lifestyle and continued to write narratives. A long illness forced his return to Bern in late fall.


1946 Instead of a planned dissertation on Kierkegaard, D. wrote play *It is Written*. Radio Play *Der Doppelganger* refused by radio Bern. Married actress Lotti Geissler on October 11, and moved to Basel.

1947 *It is Written* premieres in Zurich, April 19, under direction of Kurt Horowitz. Play created a scandal (which D. welcomed) and won the Prize of the Welti Foundation. Wrote narratives “Pilatus” and “Die Stadt.” Birth of son Peter on Aug 6.


1951
Serialized sequel to *Judge* entitled *The Quarry*. Family moves to a house above Ligerz on Lake Biel. Daughter Ruth born October 6. Radio plays *The Trial of the Donkey’s Shadow* and *Midnight Conversations with a Despised Person*.

1952
D.’s “blasphemous” comedy *The Marriage of Mr. Mississippi* premieres in Munich. Radio play *Stranitzky and the National Hero*. Writes the narrative “The Tunnel” and publishes his early narratives under the title *The City*. Beginning of the relationship with Peter Schifferli’s “Verlag der Arche,” that would publish D.’s works until 1978. Purchases house above Lake Neuchatel.

1953
*An Angel Comes to Babylon* premieres in Munich.

1954
Radio plays *Hercules and the Augean Stable* and *Operation Vega*. Two literature prizes for *Angel*. Essay “Problems of the Theatre.”

1955
Prose comedy *Once a Greek...* Work on both radio play and narrative version of *Die Panne (Traps)*.

1956
Premiere of *The Visit* in Zurich, January 29. Both versions of *Die Panne* published. Radio play *Episode on an Autumn Evening*.

1957
Wrote film script for *It Happened in Broad Daylight*. Prize of the Blind War Veterans for radio play *Die Panne*.

1958
Broadway version of *The Visit* with Alfred Lunt and Lynn Fontanne. Prix d’Italia and Prize of the Tribune de Lausanne for radio plays. Rewrote *It Happened in Broad Daylight* as the novel *The Pledge*.

1959
*Frank the Fifth: Opera of a Private Bank* with music by Paul Burkhard premiered in Zurich, March 19. Mannheim Schiller Award. New York Drama Critics’ Award for *The Visit*.

1960
Trip to London. Grand Prize of the Swiss Schiller Foundation. Writes script for film version *Mississippi*.

1962
*The Physicist* premieres in Zurich, February 21-23.

1963
*Hercules and the Augean Stables*, adapted from the radio play, premieres in Zurich, March 20. Volume of satirical caricatures *Heimat im Plakat* (Homeland in Posters) published.
1964 First Trip to Soviet Union, for ceremony honoring Shevchenko. Filming of *The Visit* (with altered ending) starring Anthony Quinn and Ingrid Bergman.

1966 Premiere of *The Meteor* in Zurich, January 20. *Once a Greek(…)* is filmed. *Writing and Speeches about the Theater* published.


1969 *Play Strindberg* premieres Basel, February 8. Heart attack and subsequent departure from Basel. Receives Literary Prize of the Canton of Bern and divides it up among three Swiss political dissidents. Trip to USA in the fall and Honorary Doctorate form Temple University.


1971 Publishes narrative *Der Sturz* (The Fall). Vienna premiere of Gottfried von Einem’s opera based on *The Visit*.

1972 Stages Buchner’s *Woyzeck* in Zurich.

1973 *Der Mitmacher* (The Collaborator) premieres March 8 (and fails) in Zurich. D.’s son Peter receives jail sentence for refusing military service.


1976 *Der Mitmacher—En Komplex* published. The *Judge and his Hangman* filmed. Welsh Arts Council International Writers Prize.

1978  Publication of a volume of Durrenmatt’s paintings and sketches.

1979  Stage version of *Die Panne* goes on tour with Durrenmatt directing. Literature Prize of the City of Bern. Lecture on Albert Einstein in Zurich.

1980  Publishes thirty-volume *Werkausgabe* (Complete Works Edition) with his new publisher, Diogenes Verlag in Zurich


1983  Death of wife Lotti. Premiere of *Achterloo* in Zurich. Meets Charlotte Kerr. Visits to Greece (with Charlotte and Maximilian Schell) and South America. Honorary Doctorate from the University of Zurich.


1989  Novel *Durcheinandertal* Published. Receives Robert Curtius Prize for Essays.

1990  *Turmbau: Stoffe IV-IX* published. Dies December 14 of a heart attack in his home in Neuchatel, three weeks before he was to have celebrated his 70th birthday at the Czech premiere of *Achterloo* in Prague.
1992  Publication of *Gedankenfuge* (Thought Fugue), a collection of essays.

1993  Publication of *Das Mogliche ist ungeheuer* (The Possible is Monstrous), a collection of poems.
LIST OF REFERENCES


