

DELICATE CHAMPIONS

by Stephen Warble

THE
LGBTQ
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Rehearsals

n: Dec. 6 - 1:00 - 5:00
6:00 - 10:00

Ruby

DELICATE CHAMPIONS

by

Stephen Varble

Performance

9th - Jan. 8th

Rehearsal at:
549 W. 52nd St

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to Ruby
with Love,
Stephen

(26)

SALLY Kirkland
799-7403

Theatre
EN2-7600

982-4049
John Beary

EN2-7603
STAGE MANAGER

Repertory Theater of Lincoln Center, Inc.
150 West 65th Street
New York, N. Y. 10023

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by Stephen Varble

CHARACTERS

AVIS HONOR - SALLY KIRKLAND

NATURAL CLEMENS - JUDE JADE

STEPHANIE - PATTI GAUL

PRINCESS FREFREARA - RUBY

ROGER REYNOLDS - TOM

TUNGSTEN DEED - CHUCK BERANT

EUGENIA MORSE REYNOLDS - SHARON GANS

RAYE TIM TIP ~~TRON~~
~~GENERAL VONAVON~~ - MARTIN COVE

THE KING - KEVIN QUINN

A BURGLAR - STEPHEN

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Play is - a huge wound with an ivory bandage

INTRODUCTION

DELICATE CHAMPIONS presents a world and atmosphere apart from our own. This introduction serves as a guide into this ethereal realm, a bridge over a lotus-laden pond into a kingdom of tender soil. Though the technical and artistic means used to carry the audience into this other world may seem at times incongruous, if not vandalistic, to a world of pure felicity, it must be remembered that the sublime can only be the aspiring vision of, alas, a mutable imagination. Only death can prove whether the golden air of dreams can hold our weightless spirits and only faith in beauty and the gift of love can make the inevitability of death and mutable existence bearable. The gift of love and faith in the power of beauty allow the characters of DELICATE CHAMPIONS to escape becoming victims of gross circumstance and transform them into exquisite creatures before death imposes its arbitrary nightfall. They become one and the same with their visions of the sublime and create for the audience through their sounds and movements, through their artful revaluations of the things of this world and their jangled, bizarre juxtapositions of these things, a world in which the moon might well keep the clay chilly and the lambent womb of an alligator's throat might easily cough and thus give birth to phantasmagorical organisms.

The dialogue of the characters functions primarily as sound. Though the thoughts expressed by words are discernible and delineate the plot and the relationships of the characters coherently, the chief purpose of the words is, nevertheless, to facilitate the flight of the imagination. Thus, when one hears a metaphor, one might experience a sensation so strange as inhaling the vapors from a boiling pot of gravel and rice. The play wafts to and fro, its susurrant dialogue, stops to e, and then moves on as a

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sound track integrated into the play in such a way that all action is synchronized with this sound track. The flexibility and exactitude to meta-physical boundaries of time, and implement emotional momentum. The music within the play and even some of the dialogue will also be on this sound track. In short, the sound track should be considered as the extra sensory mechanism of the play.

In order to synchronize the action and dialogue with the sound track, the action and delivery of dialogue must be carefully planned. There will be some elasticity in timing

INTRODUCTION (Continued)

of action and dialogue delivery since the sound track will be manually operated; still, there must be a pattern of action and dialogue delivery followed in each performance if grace is to be maintained. Even the movements of the mouth as the words of the dialogue are spoken will be planned! Therefore, the inflections and nuances of speech will be drastically affected. This is not to say that the meaning and sound of the dialogue are to be subordinated to the movements of the mouth in speech. No, not at all. But, the conscious effort to coordinate the movements of the mouth in speech will constitute an extraordinary dramatic effect, enabling one to see that the imagination which is capable of maintaining a world of pure fantasy is strong willed, indeed. However, the strength of will illustrated by the characters' commitment to beauty and to love must appear as an artesian force. The physical and vocal dexterity which arise from the characters' strength of will must facilitate an incredible ease at performing miracles.

The settings and lighting also convey the characters' rather alchemic abilities for the characters construct a radiant world out of newspaper. Figures similar to those found on Greek vases and in the drawings of Matisse are painted on newspaper which covers everything within the settings. Every space and plane of the stage is activated and converted into a shimmering equilibrium by these drawings. The very walls of the theatre must seem to stutter in ecstasy. The lighting will usually suggest dawn or dusk and make the dust of the air seem to vibrate with energy. The costumes will seem a synthesis of the light and the lines of the drawings. In tableaux when all the characters in the play are present on the stage, there will seem to be a merging of their forms with the forms painted on the backdrops. An intoxicating visual illusion will follow for the audience. The audience will also see at least a part of the set already appropriately lit effect will be at once both

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ACT IScene 1

Pink lights illuminate the backdrop of nude figures painted on newspaper. Everything shimmers. One also hears traffic noise and sees a very beautiful girl, AVIS HONOR, standing at center stage reading a newspaper. SHE is dressed in a garden dress and has red hair, as do all the characters in the play. The newspaper which SHE reads is opened full and arched above her head. One has time to study her in this position.

Suddenly the theater completely darkens. When the lights return seconds later, one sees a piece of newspaper floating to the floor and AVIS in a completely different position and attitude. Now SHE seems intensely interested in something. Still SHE holds a part of the newspaper but does not look at it.

The lights go off again. One hears AVIS crumple a piece of paper in her hands and stomp the floor with her foot quite like a Flamenco dancer. When the lights come up again, SHE freezes into another position, one which makes her look as if SHE were about to begin a race. All one sees the wad of newspaper which SHE ew into the air fall to the or. SHE holds the remaining spapers at her side and they gle to the floor.

in the lights go down and these aining newspapers are hurled into the air. Also, two other beautiful young ladies, NATURAL CLEMENS and STEPHANIE, enter and position themselves beside AVIS and begin to run with her with great force but without advancing. NATURAL carries a silver tray, and balances it perfectly, regardless of the movement.

When the lights come up again, one sees this congested activity. THEY seem to run in unison. There are periodic variations and then a complete staggering of movement altogether as AVIS backs away from her friends. But SHE nonetheless remains terribly animated and even when SHE stands still, SHE vibrates. The THREE of them seem quite akin to hummingbirds.

AVIS

We must go slower, I cannot breathe the wind. I must sip my breaths slowly as cool astringent tea.

NATURAL

The king must be notified of his daughter's perilous condition. Princess Frefreara is in love with Roger Reynolds.

AVIS

In love? How do you know if she's in love? I'm not even sure they've ever spoken.

STEPHANIE

She's in love! In love!

NATURAL

Her heart has suffered the shock of a gong.

AVIS

Umh ... And ...

STEPHANIE

She's in love! In love! She's in love! In love!

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word has yet been born between
ger Reynolds.

RAL AND STEPHANIE

as yet been born between them?

AVIS

No word, no word, no word, no word. Not even an ornamental syllable has yet dared to take shape in their respective larynxes. Not even the lovely L.Y.

NATURAL AND STEPHANIE

Ly, ly, ly.

(THEY pronounce the syllable
phonetically)

AVIS

the more exacting N.E.S.S.

NATURAL AND STEPHANIE

ess, ness, ness.

(Pause)

ut perhaps a word will soon be born between them.

AVIS

erhaps, perhaps, perhaps, perhaps. Perhaps is the saddest
rd I know ... a little whiff of hope about a slow pigeon.

STEPHANIE

ut how can they speak to each other when their mouths seem
nly capable of forming kisses?

NATURAL

Yes, is not a kiss an indication of love?

AVIS

Are you not kissed by the air when you walk about? And when
you take a bath, have you ever noticed that the water is not
exactly discreet as to where it puts its lips. Should I meet
a man, we might very well kiss before speaking, but surely
we would speak before we fell in love. Anyway I don't see
why we should exhaust ourselves by running to warn her father
about something so marvelously inevitable.

NATURAL

She cannot fall in love. Don't you know that if the princess
falls in love, the magic spell which the king had cast on her
when his wife died so abruptly would surely be broken?

AVIS

What magic spell? I wasn't aware there was one. You'll have
to forgive me my ignorance. I've only lived in these parts
since my father was transferred from his Detroit office.

RAL

sed to have condemned Princess
omplete that it eradicated her
effectiveness of this magic
his subjects must protect the
LOVE'S PERNICIOUS TITILLATION!"

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AVIS

But if he wants his daughter to be happy, then how can he
expect her not to fall in love. There is no happiness without
love.

STEPHANIE

Treasonous concepts! The princess is doomed to imbecilic
bliss.

NATURAL
She must never be allowed to vie for the skinny attenuated happiness love has to offer.

STEPHANIE
She must live out her life in a heaven of iron mirth.

AVIS
Horrors! Horrors!

NATURAL
So you see ... in order to protect ourselves, we must report to the king that his daughter is in love with Roger Reynolds; however ...

(Long pause)
should we expire on our way to the palace, say, suffer an ambush from love's desperados, then we might be able to claim that we died for our country, yet inadvertently succumbed to the joys of love. Won't you ... won't you kill us? Here, a pistol.

(At this point the hovering, vibrating movements of the CHARACTERS ceases or rather elongates and becomes sensual. The ruffling of feathers moves into an exploration of the flesh)

AVIS
I can't do it, but perhaps I could gain your favor by detaining you with a fight. Is that not a satisfying alternative? I've strong arms. My arms, my arms are strong.

NATURAL
Why don't we fight until it's time to go to Eugenia Morse soon. Then we can pause and ask as negatively about her son's does about his daughter.

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is
NATURAL's tray remains perfectly balanced. As THEY are about to exit, the traffic noise grows maddening in an attempt to announce the arrival of ROGER REYNOLDS and PRINCESS FREFREARA. The TRIO freezes.

A spotlight illuminates a pathway at center stage. ROGER

REYNOLDS emerges pushing a large white cube. When the traffic noise dies down, the cube begins to disintegrate into a mass of chiffon in the midst of which lies the PRINCESS. SHE rises. ROGER responds to her transformation as might a magician captivated by the opening of a flower. HE pushes the platform on which SHE stands around and around the stage. Finally HE stops and brings his mouth close to hers. There follows what can be referred to only as "The Waltz of the Mouths" which cadences with an alarmingly long kiss. THEY exit. The THREE GIRLS come back to life and continue to fight)

STEPHANIE

Love, love make of conversation a waltz of the mouths, a waltz of the mouths.

NATURAL

You see, they were kissing! You can't deny it!

AVIS

No, no, you are right. They were kissing.

STEPHANIE

But I was the first to see it. I was the first. In fact I was present at their first kiss, hidden behind the shrubbery beside the water fountain on the school playground. We were far away from the teacher, far away from our fellow school-mates who would have snickered or scorned. I cried full

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et feet of paradise move so
of being discovered that I cried

RAL

wrap about my neck are as
strangely chilling as the taste of alum. What a nuisance you
are in the cafeteria, always whispering in my ear, whispering!

AVIS

Whispers, whispers, don't we love them.

STEPHANIE

You do love me, don't you, Natural? Natural, you do!

1. come in with diary - to rest
2. carrying pillow + blanket
3. spread blanket - 5 gestures - 1 min
4. ~~open book~~ teeline on blanket
5. open book - bounce up & exit
6. come in - (other entrance) reading, with glasses, putting on glasses
7. ~~put on~~ begin speech until now comes one
8. run back out
9. enter with pencil - slide down to bed
10. repeat last line - answer immediately, saying lines
11. begin to write immediately, saying lines, reading until after breakfast in struggling for lights

NATURAL
Oh yes, and I've decided I'm going to give you a cliff for your birthday. Out west, you know? And then either a fast car or a horse ... you can take your pick ... either one ... and then you might also be able to gauge the height and depth of love quite easily, my dear. My dear, dear, darling,
(Loving pause)
darling Stephanie.

(STEPHANIE and AVIS respond by looking perplexed at each other. One senses pain. THEY exit fighting. NATURAL's tray, of course, remains balanced.

PRINCESS FREFREARA comes out alone. SHE has with her a pair of glasses, an opened book, and a fountain pen. SHE moves, then SHE stops to think. Her short monologue should take about five minutes to deliver)

← get glasses FREFREARA → get pencil
How to make things come to life is so interesting. So interesting. It is profound. Yes, definitely. How to make things come to life. How does one do it? With a touch, a summoning look, or by what combinations or alterations of these attitudes can one achieve organic alchemy? It is not that I wish to give legs to stones, or breasts to the future, only that I wish to make myself come more and more to life while living, like the turning on of lights in a room already full of lights. How to write, too, is also very interesting. So very interesting. But I must stop daydreaming and write Roger a very serious letter. Yes, decision making is also very interesting and very important. Very important.

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OLDS and ROGER
very old and
very distant.
tle cart onto
lds folded
ssware)

EUGENIA
My dear, my dear, my dear, my dear.

ROGER
Look! Look! See? I can wring the humidity from paper! Outstare crystal! Walk with as eloquent a dispassion as seaweed.

Burke
Katherine
Murray

ec-?
ext
day)

get
up

My dear.

EUGENIA

I can bring the tenacity of granite to wood. Rub the palms of my hands over atmospheres.

ROGER

My dear.

EUGENIA

See what strength she's brought me?

ROGER

My dear.

EUGENIA

So how could I forget you? I'll always remember you. Loving Princess Frefreara has actually helped strengthen my memory. When I'm with her, I can recall the first few days of my life ... the smell of fresh blue and pink paint, cold window panes, an old and inexplicable pair of ice skates. Mother, if I can remember these things when I am with her, then how could I ever forget "about" you?

ROGER

Come here, my dear, and let me look at you.
(SHE looks at him for a short time)

EUGENIA

The vase has no claim upon her flowers. She simply holds them for awhile. But mothers, mothers become more like lobsters ... 100% vilified architecture.

ROGER

No, no, you are beautiful. Have you forgotten?

NIA

my dear. But my memories, the sneezes, full blown events in my beauty, I remember well. I trust your alliance of skin with bone. Expectancy.

R

... I can see it. It's still there, but mother, mother, please give me some money so I can marry Princess Frefreara in a proper fashion. I don't want to have to run away from home and elope and have to depend upon her for support. I don't want to have to live in the palace, and skip around all the time, acquiescent, grateful. The consequences of an elopement are frightening, surely you know that?

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EUGENIA

I eloped, my dear, I did. My father hated your father, Kent, so it had to be. But once we made our fortune, once Oklahoma's nasturtiums and oil proved a sufficient rebuttal to Wisconsin's butter, I found myself my father's floating dividend ... his "flag" for matrimony. But he demanded compensation for his loss ... and so do I.

ROGER

What can I do? Tell me! Tell me, so I can start to work at once!

EUGENIA

You love her?

ROGER

So much, so much! I've already told you. So much I could disappear!

EUGENIA

Aren't you aware of the king's decree that no one is to tamper with his daughter's affections? You may be executed.

ROGER

But I'm sure Princess Frefreara can talk to her father as sensibly as I talk to you.

EUGENIA

But it's dangerous, very, very dangerous.

ROGER

Mother, what can I do to convince you it's o-k?

EUGENIA

First go back to law school. This silly ahoi of sense will not last long and if it does, then law school will provide you with the necessary training for life with a princess. the practice of power as I growing old. Roger, Roger ... ke the proof of your will a Encourage me to die with your my fingers loosen as do the n the white wicker furniture.

ROGER

But, mother, I couldn't do that. I couldn't do it. I'm too contemporary.

EUGENIA

Well, well, for the moment, my dear, I cannot bestow my blessing on this marriage.

(SHE turns to leave)

Here, read a newspaper. Now I must go.

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(EUGENIA exits with the cart.

ROGER goes into a rage, tears the newspaper which SHE has given him into shreds, throws the remnants to the floor.

Suddenly a bed appears on the stage. On it sits TUNGSTEN DEED, one of ROGER's oldest friends. TUNGSTEN wears sunglasses because HE is almost blind. ROGER does not know this and when HE speaks to him, TUNGSTEN quickly removes the sunglasses and tries to appear very happy, but it is obvious, however, that HE is thoroughly miserable)

ROGER
Tungsten Deed! You're here so early. I didn't think you were coming until late this afternoon.

TUNGSTEN
I started out a little early, I know, but I couldn't resist. It's been so long and I wanted so badly to see you. I've just been skimming through your scrapbook trying to find the words to our old school anthem. You know the, "Through the Urals we did go and up the Mount of Olives" song? But I couldn't find them.

ROGER
But it should be in there on a mimeographed sheet of paper in purple ink. Here, give me the book.

(TUNGSTEN fumbles for the book since HE is extremely self-conscious. He is in a state of quietude, flustered, flustered to book, looks unsuccessful as to the

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Well, it looks as if they might have gotten lost in the shuffle over the years. Um! That's terrible. I liked that song, too.

TUNGSTEN
I miss those days, Roger, when we were students traveling together, packing sawdust in our suitcases so we might feel indefinitely in summer session.

ROGER
And how was the train this time from Lintz to Madrid?

TUNGSTEN
Lonely. Only the food was terribly good, as usual.
(There ensues an awkward pause)
Did you like the green terry-cloth robe I sent you from Egypt
and the sandals?

ROGER
Oh yes, very much.

TUNGSTEN
And I have an enormous bale of cotton to give you, but it
hasn't arrived yet.

ROGER
That's strange. Only people have given me peculiar things in
peculiar ways before. But that's wonderful, wonderful, won-
derful, Tungsten! And now, my dear friend, let me ask you a
question. What new things have you learned?

TUNGSTEN
I don't know.

ROGER
God, it's good to have you back. Do you have any new plans
for travel and study?

TUNGSTEN
No, not really. Maybe I'll write.

ROGER
I do hope so. Your letters were fascinating.

TUNGSTEN
I'd like to see them again. But then if I see them, I might

--

ER
very interesting.

GSTEN
ng.

ROGER
So soon?

TUNGSTEN
Yes.

ROGER
Well, I hope to see you again.

Sure.

TUNGSTEN

(HE rises to leave, wraps a tiger costume around himself, and puts back on his sunglasses)

Hey, do you want to take your letters with you now? I've kept them all together.

ROGER

All right.

TUNGSTEN

(ROGER gets the letters, puts them in a large envelope, and gives them to TUNGSTEN.

Thank you. TUNGSTEN turns to leave)

ROGER

Come on, I'll show you out.

TUNGSTEN

No, please don't bother. Stay and straighten up your room. (HE turns to leave but misses an easy exit. HE falls to the floor and begins to cry)

ROGER

What's wrong?

TUNGSTEN

I don't know. There's a heavy sunset outside now, isn't there. I have to walk through it going home. I can feel the orange surrounding me already. The only horrible thing is ... I can't see it so well. Roger, the last time I crossed a street, I was run over by a truck and it's affected my eye- may go blind.

ROGER

Come on, please. Everything will work out. I'll help you. Doctors can work with you. Come on, cheer up. I have some food here, eat one. I know it sounds silly, but sometimes clears the mind of fear.

Come on, you can't go home yet. I want you to stay. You can have supper here and there'll be plenty to eat because Mother's having a party downstairs. Come on, let me help you up.

(TUNGSTEN cries even more loudly than before. ROGER carries him

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to the bed, places him on it, then tries to humor him. HE takes one of the paws of the tiger costume and scratches TUNGSTEN lightly on the neck, making a great roar as HE does. TUNGSTEN finally calms down and begins to laugh slightly. HE reaches up to hug ROGER. ROGER suggests that THEY go elsewhere for awhile and after TUNGSTEN is sufficiently comforted, HE complies. THEY exit.

The THREE GIRLS appear again. THEY are walking in slow motion and appear to be yelling at each other although one hears nothing but the perpetual traffic noise. EUGENIA MORSE REYNOLDS enters with a handsome escort, GENERAL VONAVON. SHE can hardly walk)

EUGENIA

My head ... my head. Might I lean against you, General Vonavon, my dear? Girls, girls, good afternoon ... only today, today ... I'm ...

(SHE begins to speak incoherently.

The GIRLS begin to respond)

NATURAL

Is it true that Roger and the princess are in love?

STEPHANIE

Don't be evasive. Tell us.

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NATURAL

the king finds out?

EUGENIA

determined to marry and if the king proves ineluctable in his decree, then we may have to assist them in some, hopefully bloodless, hybrid of revolution. But, my dear, I'm only toying with this idea ... as if I were forming a little finger out of modeling clay or playing with a piece of lint. But who knows, my dear, who knows? What would you do? Please tell me if you know of any particularly engrossing distractions. I need intervals of hazy respite, either that, or total black-outs.

AVIS

Natural was thinking of revealing their affair to the king.

EUGENIA

Don't, please, please don't. I'll give you money, hamstrung furbelows, or better still, take the general.

NATURAL

Perhaps you might introduce us. Introductions to nice people are a kind of blackmail one rarely receives.

EUGENIA

General Vonavon, Miss Natural Clemens.

NATURAL

Hi.

(Long pause in which THEY study each other)

Girls, I may have to leave you. I'm afraid he may be the man I've been searching for my entire life.

EUGENIA

I think I'll go prepare some wholly improbably refreshment.

or

(The blank spaces indicate that words are formed by the mouth but there is no sound)

AVIS

Here, let me help you.
(THEY exit)

NATURAL

Stephanie, you know ... something tells me that the only reason I've been so keenly interested in Princess Frefreara and Roger Reynolds is that I've never been in love myself. I want to be in love, Stephanie. Stephanie, push me away.

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HANIE

don't want you to run away with
m, I'll become a martinet of

NATURAL

But my dear, you mustn't. You must be happy and if you can't, you must bathe your feet in warm water each evening in an apartment in the poorer part of the city ... that will keep your heart resilient.

STEPHANIE

You can't leave like this. Avis! Avis! Come! Help me!

Yes, fetch Avis. I want her to know that I'm investing my love in this man without there having been one word between us.

NATURAL

But what she said is true. One shouldn't be hasty about such things. Avis, Avis, come quick!

STEPHANIE

(AVIS and EUGENIA enter. EUGENIA carries a tray of refreshments)

We're coming, my dear. Yes, we have exactly five bowls here and I want each of us to have five healthy portions.

EUGENIA

I don't think that we'll have time, Mrs. Reynolds. Farewell. Farewell.

NATURAL

Avis, she's running away with him.

STEPHANIE

Are you really going? Won't you have some refreshment, first. I'll miss you, of course, but I wish you all the happiness in the world even though I think you should reconsider.

AVIS

No, no I've made up my mind mindlessly. Stephanie, pull yourself together.

NATURAL

(GENERAL VONAVON and NATURAL exit.
NATURAL still carries her tray)

STEPHANIE

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e can be certain in an instant
man she has ever met, then
farfetched gamble.

NIA

My dear, please don't cry. I should never have introduced them. She should have gone to the king and exposed my son. He should be punished. My son must be made to realize what a bad influence he and Princess Frefreara are having upon the people. And now, in order to protect him, I have contributed to this confectionary chaos. Someone must take command. Someone must do it.

(The doorbell rings)

ld you please get that. EUGENIA (Continued)

(STEPHANIE turns to go, but meets NATURAL who has returned with a letter on her tray. As soon as STEPHANIE sees her friend, SHE falls to the floor)

STEPHANIE
I'm sorry I got so angry. Forgive me. I want you to have a good time. Do you think you'll come back and settle down here?

NATURAL
I'm sure we'll return, darling. Now I must give Eugenia a letter which a messenger just gave to me as we were leaving. It's from Princess Frefreara to Roger Reynolds.

EUGENIA
So it is? Give it to me, my dear, and thank you, thank you very much. And goodbye, again.

(NATURAL exits)

I'm surprised Princess Frefreara learned to write, laughing as she does all the time. Her father should be horsewhipped for casting that evil spell on her. Why should anyone, especially an heir to the throne, be made incapable of feeling any other emotion than happiness? Let it be known here and now that Eugenia Morse Reynolds no longer has any confidence in the rulers of this country. Now let me see what she has to say to my son.

(SHE tears open the letter and reads it aloud)

"My dear, unlike you, I have no mother to go to for advice ... " That's me she's talking about. It astounds me that she realizes the importance of parents. "Since I

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my father in whom I can confide alone. I have decided to end this solitary confinement, renew and announce our forthcoming marriage ... " signed Princess Frefreara. "I must hasten to the king's council, reactionaries, and squint at the king. I must make my son the President of a New Republic. Good night, my dears. Feel free to linger if you like, but I ... I must hasten to the palace.

(EUGENIA exits)

AVIS

Well, I don't see why we don't go to the palace, too. In fact if we hurry we might be able to get there before either

AVIS (Continued)
the princess or Eugenia arrive. That will give us sufficient time to decide what part we must play in this imbroglio of hearts. You want to go?

STEPHANIE
Yes, yes take me. I need a spectacle; Spartacus hanged or flaming mistletoe, to nourish my grieving spirit back to health.

(THEY do not move, since the setting of the next act does not change. The house lights come up. Perhaps intermission)

ACT II

AVIS

I wonder where the king keeps himself locked up?

STEPHANIE

Probably upstairs.

AVIS

You know it's very curious ... this magic spell ... this franchise on happiness which the princess possesses. For if the magic spell has taken effect, surely it would have altered her very physiognomy. She must have become wantonly plastic, and though I want to protect the princess, I feel positively vandalistic towards him.

STEPHANIE

You want to taunt her durability.

AVIS

It's an irresistible temptation. It's not that I doubt the extent of her happiness. Oh no, I'd feed my brain sand before I'd become a cynic. Perhaps it's just that I'm overly playful. She does fascinate me, however, and there are these sensations of awe within me when I think of her.

STEPHANIE

She fascinates me, too. I suppose I feel a loyalty towards her as a subject and a human interest in her now that I'm totally friendless.

AVIS

Perhaps I could eliminate any chance of vindictiveness towards her if I assayed simply to understand her particular "commitment to" or "victimization by" happiness. Or if the nature of my awe could ascend descendingly as the falling of

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ANIE
coming.

enters with

Look at her legs, her thighs. How strong!

AVIS

And yet how vulnerable! I'm so afraid her legs may be nothing more than miraculous limbs to unwitting catspaws, golden muscles to befuddled rabbits' feet. Perhaps I love her ... this stark manifestation of a human improbability. If ... if by chance she is really happy and really in love, I shouldn't want anything to disquiet her. She must revolve in an air of lullabies.

Would you happen to know the whereabouts of my father, the king?

FREFREARA

We were just asking about that ourselves and decided he must be on the second floor.

STEPHANIE

Are you here to see him, too?

FREFREARA

No. No, we're, we're ...

STEPHANIE

We're friends of Mrs. Reynolds. We've just come from her house.

AVIS

How is she?

FREFREARA

She's on her way to the palace.

AVIS

Oh, how wonderful! I'm just about to tell my father that I would like to marry her son, Roger. It will be very nice for them to meet and talk afterwards. Do you know if Roger got my letter?

FREFREARA

We were there when the letter arrived and Mrs. Reynolds intercepted it.

AVIS

It was then that she decided to come to the palace.

STEPHANIE

**THE
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HISTORY | PROJECT**

FREARA
letter?

heads negatively)

FREARA

I don't think so.

AVIS

Then I will write another one or perhaps I will go and see him this evening. You know I've never been to his house. We usually meet somewhere along the banks of the Ohio. "The otiose Ohio" Roger calls it, this river, which prompts me to

FREFREARA

recline and then he whispers in my ear such things as, "The lambent womb of the alligator's throat, fecund, coughs and thus gives birth to dissolute organisms ..." and I become so agitated that my body forms a sort of inverted relief in the soft earth of the river bank. Roger calls this indentation made by my body, "The dinosaur's milk bowl." Roger, Roger ... is the sole contingency to my destiny. He makes my happiness plausible. I love him. I've plans for pyramids.

FREFREARA (Continued)

Princess, how can one offer congratulations?

AVIS

It is done. It is done.

FREFREARA

Oh Princess, might I come and serve you. Nothing would please me more. I've nothing to do now ... now that I've graduated from high school. Here let me take those flowers from your arms. Roses are anchored to mortality with thorns. You, lovely Princess, are more fortunate ...

STEPHANIE

(In unison)
And more fragrant.

STEPHANIE AND AVIS

What are your names?

FREFREARA

My name is Stephanie.

STEPHANIE

I am Avis Honor.

AVIS

1. distant, from afar
2. exhaust myself
3. be understood *
4. recalling fond memories
5. voice is the inner (unhappy) self coming out

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FEARA

to me, but we must converse
my father. I must speak to him
anie, you may accompany me only
I must proceed alone. I haven't
last time I saw him he was wrap-
round my mother. He said she
gh, and that she would blend
with the snow, and never return. He said that the two white
horses which would draw the sleigh were very swift, very
swift, yet silent as loaves of bread. He was right ... she
never returned. I see her sometimes -- I'm certain of it ...
in various moments of mists, measures of sound, and, of
course, always in the snow. But I wish I could talk to her.
I'd like to tell her about ... about ... about Roger.

Sheeze

repeat

Princess, you, you are a miracle ...

AVIS

My dear Avis ... I sense that you and I must have a talk
when I return ... there's a drizzling heat in your eyes.
You want to be in love?

FREFREARA

Yes, I, too, want to be happy and in love.

AVIS

Your neck, your neck, and your arms, your arms are glorious.

FREFREARA

(AVIS falls to the floor)

Oh Princess -- I am not worthy --

AVIS

You mustn't nibble at my feet. I'm terribly ticklish. Come
on, get up. It's a very peculiar expression you use to tell
me that you love me. What is this lovely moisture about your
face?

FREFREARA

They're tears. Tears. Do you know what tears are? Oh, I
should not have asked. I do not want to confuse your ears
with unfamiliar syllables. Oh Princess, go! Go! You must
hurry to your father. My happiness should not obstruct your
responsibility.

AVIS

Remember, remember we shall talk later concerning the idio-
syncrasies of our boyfriends.

FREFREARA

AVIS

... never ... had ... a ...

REARA

their freckles!

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(STEPHANIE laughs at AVIS as SHE
and the PRINCESS exit)

Oh dear! I've never had a boyfriend. What will I say? I
don't know anything about boys. Let me see. I'll draw a
picture of a boy. Yes! With arms and legs and hair ...

(SHE begins to draw)

And when she returns, I'll ask her to have the picture posted
with a reward offered for his capture. I like the idea

immensely. Why shouldn't I have a boy made exactly to order except that ... oh dear ... I draw so terribly. I'm afraid his physique will provide for a new concept in distortion. But, but, but ... yes! ... I like that line there! Yes! Yes! Very much! I love you! I love you!

(AVIS falls upon the drawing and makes violent love to it. In the midst of her speech, EUGENIA MORSE REYNOLDS enters)

EUGENIA

I see that you, too, are under the delusion that our nation was conceived in excitement and dedicated to the proposition that all life is combustible. Straighten up, my dear, and give me some information. Has the princess yet received an audience with the king?

AVIS

She and Stephanie went to find him a few minutes ago.

EUGENIA

Her present dialogue may prove disastrous.

AVIS

But the princess seemed totally intrepid as she set out on her expedition.

EUGENIA

But how could she possibly predict the consequences of revealing her love for Roger to the king. She's had no communication with her father in years and knows nothing of his decree.

(STEPHANIE enters completely distraught)

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HISTORY | PROJECT**

HANIE

S. Reynolds, The King, The King.

reaming. HE
d in circles,
ver his long

KING

My anguish is complete! The barineter sleeps past its highest mark the came as it does at zero. Nothing could gauge this anguish. Nothing gauges those last few human excesses before death. Arithmetic is music to death. Music! Music! Music! There is no word, no number, only a kind of music which distinguishes the movement of going towards death.

FREFREARA

(Following her FATHER into the room)

My friends, my father, the king. We have become like crates agog in a juggled freight train. Move with us. This celebration will render us a new geological outlook.

(SHE sees EUGENIA)

Oh ... would you, perhaps, be Roger's mother? Oh Father, Father, you must meet Mrs. Reynolds.

KING

So you are the mother to her husband-to-be!

EUGENIA

My dear, watch your words. My dear! My dear, this country would be better off without you. You are as archaic as the transportational use of the verb "to pull".

KING

My sword!

(THEY fight. HE knocks EUGENIA out, then resumes running in circles. Soon, however, HE falls clutching his heart)

Frefreara, I see her, your mother. No, no it's only an hallucination.

STEPHANIE

He's dying. Oh Princess, let me nurse him back to health. Anyone capable of such subtlety while invoking the invectives appropriate to ire deserves undying admiration. He is an opal on fire. A bloodstone in the making. Such sensitivity should be nurtured, blessed. Let me help him through his convalescence. Come Avis, help me take him to his room.

FREFREARA

not understand.

back to life. SHE
(ing the KING's body)

EUGENIA

step aside. It's prostate. But now, at least, you're free to marry. Welcome into my home.

FREFREARA

I'm very happy to meet you at last. I wanted you to talk to my father. Perhaps as soon as he's rested and adopted a conversational tone ...

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shake hand

Eugenia (cont.) -

But where is love
Love love love love

I have always thought
that someone would teach
me about love. --

but love can dwell in an all
with trash cans

and with such a structure,
trashcans ~~the difficulties~~;
~~difficulties~~, difficulties;

Oh Princess, you who are most
happy, are women ever loved?

en rotate, ~~are celebrated~~
~~twenty~~. A ringing sound

thier ears as they go about
thier chore. You want to hear the
tinging sound? ---

Silence

EUGENIA

Of course, of course, my dear. But now you and I must begin our plans for the wedding. Really, my dear, it's very simple very simple. I think we ought to keep simplicity in mind in everything we do. ~~You know a democratic form of government is very simple, also, and if you marry my son, I'm sure that he'll want his leadership of your household to be reflected throughout the country.~~ I don't see why you shouldn't let Roger be president and you be vice-president of the country after your marriage, especially now that your father's indisposed. It's all so simple and natural. Oh well, my dear, you think about it. You think about it. Well, I guess I'll be seeing you. Goodbye for now. You know... I like you. You... uh... seem to make me forget all my... uh... premeditations. It's quite shattering, my dear. Well, uh... I'm going home. That's right. I've got a lot to do with this wedding coming up. But I wonder... What is a home? A home is modern woman's boon, a storing place for carbohydrates, a shelter for sacrifice, a comfortable spot where an intelligent wife can write novels from one thirty to four each afternoon. Oh Princess, I'm scared! I'm old and worried about my son's future. You must be good to him.

FREFREARA

Yes, yes.

(THEY embrace. EUGENIA exits. The PRINCESS begins an incredible scream. AVIS and STEPHANIE rush into the room, but the scream subsides into a coloratura trill, whereupon STEPHANIE bows and exits, leaving AVIS alone with the PRINCESS)

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ally strung along a line of breath

an invisible

(S)

times, though rarely, there are
tely I have swallowed outbursts
of the sun are a modesty I can-
ll me that there can be no mis-

interpretation in the meaning of the sentence, "I am in love with Roger Reynolds and very happy."

(SHE stops. AVIS shuffles)

It must be difficult to listen, isn't it? It's difficult even for me. At every announcement, there are always bothersome, stray thoughts. Let's see, what were we going to talk about when I returned? Our boyfriends! Yes, we were going to tell each other about our boyfriends.

AVIS

Oh Princess, I forgot to tell you. I've never had a boyfriend. But I would like to have one, if you want me to have one. Anyway, I've drawn up a picture of what I'd like him to look like. We could have this picture posted and offer a reward for the capture of the boy who most closely resembles the picture. That seems to me the only sensible way for me to obtain a boyfriend. We can entitle him "Dream of Love".

FREFREARA

Let me see what he looks like. Why don't you also indicate the color of his hair and eyes, and then give the picture and this information to Stephanie. She seems eager to work for me, and this might prove exciting for her. Tell her to start on the search at once. At once! What further humoring my father needs ... I should give it to him, myself. But, if you like, we could have a double wedding! Yes! We will have a double wedding. Oh God! God! God! God! God! God! God! God! God! God! God! God! God!

(Her voice fades and THEY begin to dance in a simple manner. Eventually THEY disappear under sheets of newspaper)

ACT IIIScene 1

k
lowly in-knock on
ound (delicately)

~~There are loops of rope hanging from the ceiling on the half of the stage which would correspond to the audience's right. On the audience's left there is a kind of "out-house" in which ROGER sits. One can see that HE is sitting "on-the-john" in a position similar to Rodin's "The Thinker". The light inside this small bathroom is relatively dim. The rest of the stage is lit with very sparse mercury vapor light, and the stage seems to be totally dark except for this slight purple glow. One hears FREFREARA knock at a door.~~

ROGER

Yes, who is it?

FREFREARA

It's Frefreara.

ROGER

What's that? You'll have to speak up, I'm in the bathroom.

FREFREARA

It's Frefreara. Can I come in?

ROGER

you get into the courtyard.
another.

FREFREARA

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~~room by mani-
 pulating herself through the
 loops of rope hanging from the
 ceiling. SHE continues to do
 this until SHE leaves. As SHE
 moves from rope to rope, SHE
 picks up some of ROGER's things
 and puts them in a large bag.
 There is a chest of drawers in
 the room at the center of the
 stage, the entire contents of~~

Stops
e to

him be-

to each

✓

up - feel way over to bed - touch bed,
lie down beside bed humming 3-2
get lie down on bed

~~which SHE will stuff into her bag.~~

~~SHE will also steal ROGER's scrap-~~

~~book)~~

er sits up - I put arm & leg on bed

ROGER

and

Oh, I was sorry to hear about your father. His illness has ~~certainly upset~~ my mother. In fact I think ~~she's~~ may be losing her mind. ~~Only one thing remains constant in her mind and that's her desire to see me become The President of the New Republic regardless of whether we marry.~~ If you want to have ~~my mother~~ her arrested or something, it's o-k with me, although I wouldn't want anything really bad to happen to her. You should give her some colossally intricate task to perform, ~~perhaps~~ Commission her to establish some vast decorative border for our countryside. That way she can combine needlework and imperialism for the rest of her days.

FREFREARA

Roger, Roger, I think, I think, Roger, Roger, that we're going to have to wait.

ROGER

What's that, honey? Speak up! It's hard to hear in here.

FREFREARA

We're going to have to wait, wait awhile.

ROGER

~~Wait for what?~~

FREFREARA

Wait awhile before we get married.

ROGER

(There is a long pause)

lets cape down

FREFREARA

ay from here?

enter backwards, exit backwards

ROGER

FREFREARA

Maybe exploring in the swamps.

ROGER

Sure, I guess we could go away, but I want to come back in time to return to ~~law~~ school. I sort of think I should go back to school if we get married.

to front left entrance

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enter forwards, slowly - slow motion - Roger - he takes
me to the bed ^{meet}

3-3

FREFREARA

Roger, Roger do you want to be President if there's a New Republic?

ROGER

For Christ's sake! I don't give a damn. That's some foolish notion my mother has.

FREFREARA

I think it would be better for you to be President because I don't think I'll be able to have children and we'd need children for the continuation of a monarchy, wouldn't we?

ROGER

Why don't you worry about that when the time comes?

Why don't you worry about that when the time comes

FREFREARA

Oh! Oh, Roger! Roger!

e, still asleep
ng popping
e - wake up
(SHE laughs. SHE has just picked up the scrapbook and with the glow from the mercury vapor light has attempted to look at the pictures)

ROGER

Now what?

FREFREARA

It's nothing, just some of your old pictures.

yes, yes, yes,

ROGER

What are you doing, Frefreara?

ding)

FREFREARA

Nothing at all.

ROGER

ers? Leave things alone in

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thing over and
d crash)

ke so much noise, Frefreara, Frefreara
h a racket. I don't want dear
ere tonight. Frefreara? Do

I have to come out of here?

(There is complete silence.
SHE exits. One hears the flushing of a toilet on the sound track.
HE comes out, buckling his belt.
HE sees that it's dark and that FREFREARA has vanished)

open bottom drawer
second drawer,
top drawer —
Take underwear from
top, bottom second, bottom drawer

Touch + love underwear + revolves
- You have taken all my underwear? Fref? Fref? Fref.

and your scrapbook, the book with pictures & mementoes - where is it? where is it?
under my bed, my bed, Under my bed, my bed.

What the ... Frefreara? ROGER (Continued) 374
playing games. Where are you. Come on, stop

(HE turns on the lights. HE sees
his chest of drawers open and empty)
What's she done? Why the hell has she taken all my under-
wear? Frefreara?

(HE goes to the door and looks
out, then looks into a closet or
under his bed.

Suddenly one sees TUNGSTEN climbing
madly through a window)

TUNGSTEN
The police! The police are after me! Help me! Help me,
Roger!

ROGER
What's going on around here? Did you come in here with
Frefreara?

TUNGSTEN
If I came in here with Frefreara, then why does she have
the police after me.

(One hears an incredibly forceful
knock at the door)

Oh God! They've come!

ROGER
Tungsten, what with your poor eyesight, you might be
imagining things! If I'm not correct, they've come to
take my mother away. What in heaven's name would they
want with you?

STEPHANIE

up in the name of the law!

NIE's voice in
growing louder

EUGENIE

Roger, Roger, my dear?

(EUGENIE pushes the door open
and runs to ROGER and TUNGSTEN)

Roger, Roger are you unharmed, my dear? Has Frefreara's
love abruptly turned to hatred? It's true, we have
committed treason, but the revolution will live on in
the hearts of the people. Roger, Roger, my dear, are we

EUGENIA (Continued)

to be taken into custody immediately? For if we are, my dear, I am ready. Earlier this evening, I had wavering premonitions that something like this would occur. My bags are packed. Surrender, Roger, gives the noose a certain elegance.

ROGER

Well, if you're ready to go, then why don't you leave with these nice young lady. Please take her with you. Now! And remember, she's to be treated with the utmost respect in prison. Princess Frefreara assured me only a few minutes ago that her prison term would be quite interesting and not at all uncomfortable.

STEPHANIE

If what you say is true, then we will, of course, take your mother into custody.

(SHE handcuffs EUGENIA roughly)

But we have come primarily for this gentleman.

ROGER

You've come for Tungsten Deed?

STEPHANIE

(SHE unrolls AVIS's drawing and passes it around)

Does he not resemble in every detail the image of this criminal? Answer me?

ROGER

Why it's uncanny! Tungsten, look! It's you! What does this mean?

STEPHANIE

This criminal has been aptly named, "Dream of Love" for is to be punished by coercive helpless girl who has been t after night after night.

GER

ing about this. Are you aware girl's dream?

TUNGSTEN

Can I help it if someone dreams about me? It's all so totally foreign to me that I wish I'd never been born. Roger, Roger, you have to save me from this epidemic of love and happiness. I won't have any part of it. I'm blind. Natural got what was coming to her when she eloped with General Vonaven. But none of you have heard about that, have you? She stopped sending postcards when the light-headedness started ...

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ave Tim Tip Tron

STEPHANIE

Tell me! Tell me! What's happened to her.

TUNGSTEN

Natural is pregnant!

(STEPHANIE gasps, "So soon?")

And Eugenia Morse Reynolds, I've detested you since the first time you interrupted our first meditations in the sand pile. And I've always hated my own family, too. And I've hated this land of orange and purple and blue and pink and green and yellow and black. And sometimes more than anyone else, I've hated you, Roger, you, my only friend.

ROGER

Come on, Tungsten. This isn't such a preposterous end for you. Everybody has to get married some time or another. Don't worry about it. You and Mother go on to the palace together and I'll come along shortly.

(STEPHANIE handcuffs TUNGSTEN)

Stephanie, take them away!

STEPHANIE

To the left, march! *sung*

(ROGER is left alone on the stage.
The lights dim)

ROGER

What to do? What to do? What to do? First I must find my shoes.

(The lights come up again.)

...shoes and puts
...as before)

...love for my mother, my love
...frefreara, fills the cosmos and
...able from the others. For
...feara, "I love you," the words
resound, rebound, echo, fill the air to the hilt, in fact
grow tantamount to the specific density of the atmosphere
in about three minutes. But this happens also when I say
"I love you" to either Tungsten or Mother. So how can I
divide my love into respective loves since each of my
loves is intertwined into a composite gas? Perhaps there
is a way to make everyone happy. However, something tells
me that it is Frefreara whom I love the most, because I
have said to her, "I love you," many more times than to
anyone else.



ROGER (Continued)

(Pause)

How deeply do I love her? I love her like I love dry ice, like Hot Springs in the Autumn, like sulphur water and salt licks in the winter. I have admired her, venerated her as the heir to the throne. I have loved her as a woman. Yes, I have loved her as a woman. Yet I say I love her as I love such peculiar phenomena because there is something about her which tells me she could survive an attack of albino foliage. Yes, survive something absurd. There is something about her which tells me she could live without me. She is a glimmer with an elastic band, graceful above extremities. She has that undaunted equilibrium found in the composition of gold and the bloom of a rose. Yes, she could live without me, I'm afraid. I'm certain of it. Sure, she has made me wild with joy, but ... but ... but ... Remember Roger, you have your shortcomings. I could easily dare to be ungrateful for her having loved me. I could dare not to understand her caprices such as the stealing of my underwear and her authorization of the arrest of Tungsten Deed for being someone's unrequited "Dream of Love". I could turn away my face in a kiss, turn away abruptly as a mere experiment in betrayal. Which would make me happier: to take shots in the dark with my emotions, gamble alone for the phantasmagoria, or believe in the eternal delight of her love and grow happily old with her. How deeply do I love her? How deeply?

(HE puts on a hat and exits grandly from the stage.)

The lights fade quickly.

Scene 2: FREFREARA and AVIS are playing with the things which FREFREARA stole from (ment)

FREFREARA

- We will flee, into the swamps discernible trail. For if they after us, we do not want to make it it. But search they must!

AVIS

But what if Roger gets tired of searching?

FREFREARA

When a man gets tired, he usually begins to reminisce. Taking this in mind, I will string up pages of his scrapbook along the trail. If he wants to reminisce accurately and for any length of time, he'll be compelled to follow begin applying rope + scrapbook to me.

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FREEAREA (Continued)

me further into the swamps in order to round up his memories. So, you see, even if he stops to reminisce he'll eventually be drawn closer and closer to me.

In order to round up his memories

AVIS

But what about "Dream of Love"? Why should a captured man, knowing himself to be innocent, come searching for his prosecutor? Why shouldn't he run back to freedom?

FREFREARA

Nonsense! If he is an authentic "Dream of Love," he will come equipped with an inordinant sense of curiosity. He will surely want to discover who it is who has dreamed him so loveable. Come, let's don our wedding gowns. exit

AVIS

But I'm worried. What will I do if he isn't captured? And even if he is captured, what will I do if he doesn't search for me. I'll look pathetic running around in the swamps in a wedding gown. I'm afraid. I'm not very good at hiking aimlessly. What'll I do when futility strikes?

FREFREARA

Mike with hope. Remember you are the lost happiness of an
imaginary love. ~~A rare sort of happiness, indeed.~~
~~Who knows what you may find in the swamp? Remember, please~~
~~if pretty girls are, well, not long wanted.~~ ~~Now, u~~
come dress! I want to be ~~deep in the swamp~~ by dawn.

(THEY put on their bridal gowns and some accessories but not their veils)

AVI8

But Princess, listen to me! What if they simply don't follow? What if they don't bother to search for us at all?

FREFREKA

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FREFREKA
take. More than anything in the
ther or not I am doomed to an
s or whether my gift for love is
me in a realm apart from him,
l, he finds me, sustain me even if
he doesn't bother to search. If he doesn't follow me and
search me out and I nonetheless prove myself to be mentally
sound in the interim, I will return home, marry someone
else, and settle down and rule.

AVIS

Frefreara, forgive me. I'm not as complicated as you are. I could be satisfied very easily. Since I'm afraid my "Dream of Love" will never come true, I suppose my only

STEPHEN - And for tomorrow, a medicine I will
prepare for the King - a medicine I will
and put in a bowl, to set -
so simply - piquant take of life, ~~life!~~ ~~life!~~ ~~life!~~ ah,
maining in the small of your father's
carry intricate utensils to nurse, to build
et fence or the most effective to
around a homeless oyster - to
with blood, terrace its flux, and
anonymous bloom - and - and -
what it means to help wound -
Ah, Ah, Ah.

Frefreara Ah?

Eugenia - Wound? What does she know about
Frefreara - Oh Mrs Reynolds you've come to
the palace?

Eugenia - Maybe, my dear, maybe -
I do have a certain penchant
for antiques.

AVIS (Continued)

hope is, as you say, to find someone else exciting in the swamp.

FREFREARA

~~I love the sound of relinquishment in your voice. As you exhale, you give a mystery to the air. Should you assemble pearls, walk for a day, quantify the shades of blue at dusk, you would be the one to contribute that ponderous good which prevails over the eternal still life of reality. Avis, Avis you must come with me. You must not question it.~~

~~both to dance in ballet & both fall to ground~~

AVIS

At least there will be an element of humor in the memory of it. Are you going to tell your father?

FREFREARA

I have already. He said nothing, only smiled. Stephanie has had such a quietening effect on him.

AVIS

She's become so industrious in the last few hours. Ah, here she is.

(STEPHANIE enters with her two prisoners. SHE forces them to the floor)

STEPHANIE

Princess Frefreara, your prisoners. I suggest that before you leave you find suitable restrictive lodgings for them since we have no proper prison facilities in the palace at the present time. ~~Now I will leave them with you for further interrogation and return to my patient, the king.~~ Goodbye.

FREFREARA

ts)

~~let me help you up ...~~

EUGENIA

~~you had ordered me to be taken prisoner.~~

FREFREARA

~~There must be some misunderstanding, but now that you're here, why don't you make the palace your home? Do you think you might like to live here, Mrs. Reynolds?~~

EUGENIA

~~Well ... I do have a certain penchant for antiques. Maybe, my dear, maybe.~~

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3-10

Frefreara! Frefreara! Frefreara! AVIS
see? It's him. The Dream! Do you see what I
Help! Help! Help! Dream of Love! Help me!

EUGENIA
He's one of Roger's oldest friends, but he's terribly shy.
His name is Tungsten Deed. Come on Tungsten, say hello
to Princess Frefreara and Miss Avis Honor.

TUNGSTEN
No! No! I've done nothing. I'm almost blind!

AVIS
Princess, tell me, what am I to do?

FREFREARA
Strike a hard blow. Love is a concussion dealt on the
installment plan.

AVIS
You could never know how much I love you. But I must warn
you ... this love of ours may prove ill-fated for I must
leave you shortly. The Princess and I are going into a
self-enforced exile and by daylight will be lost ~~in the~~
~~depths of the swamps.~~ Only you and Roger can save us.
You must come and search for us and if you find us, bring
us back to safety.

TUNGSTEN
Would you please speak a little slower, and ... uh ...
come a little closer. I'd like to get a better look at
you.

(SHE moves very close to him)

AVIS
his.

TUNGSTEN
. Yes, yes, I'm sure I'll be
in.

AVIS
My darling, darling. Dream of Love.

TUNGSTEN
My real name is Tungsten Deed.

AVIS
They call me the Thrilling Insurrection of Spice. Oregano,
taragon, paprika, cloves dwell within my very bones.
Remember that! I am the spirit of the new world, the
phantom of the West Indies, the Gulf of New Mexico!

TUNGSTEN
Well, if you must go, I'll follow shortly with Roger and we will search for you. In fact if you want us to follow, you'd better get going because Roger is due here any minute.

Quick! Get in place! FREFREARA Goodbye everyone. Goodbye! Good-
bye!

(SHE and AVIS pick up their things
and exit)

EUGENIA
Quick! Some drums! We must begin to prepare for the wedding ... The Marriage in the Swamp. It will be so beautiful.

(ROGER enters but is not given a chance to speak)

Roger! Roger! After her! The Princess has disappeared into the swamp and you must follow her!

ROGER
She's what?

EUGENIA
Tungsten, explain it to him as best you can. But, my dear, believe me, even though she's disappeared into the swamp, all is well, only I don't have time to give you all the details, only an imperative; pursue that sublime creature. Pursue her! Pursue her to the ends of the earth! Now I must begin the preparations for the wedding.
~~Tungsten, take him! Go!~~

(There is happy confusion as everyone exits.)

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ast scene has no
e is only continual,
FREFREARA and
opposite sides
Throughout the scene,
actly the same move-
ments. AS THEY enter, THEY string
up a clothes line and attach pieces
of underwear and pages from ROGER's
scrapbook to it with clothespins.
THEY meet at the center, split apart,
twirl around in their bridal gowns,
collide, and fall joyously to the
ground. THEY laugh silently. As

their laughter subsides, THEY take positions conducive to waiting.

To the front of the stage another scene occurs simultaneously with the brides' entrance into the swamp. GENERAL VOVAVON is dressing for the wedding as his pregnant wife, NATURAL, serves breakfast to customers in the cheap coffee shop which THEY have opened. The counter is made from an ironing board and there are stools in front of it. NATURAL pantomimes both the conversation with the nonexistent customers and the preparation of the food which THEY have ordered. SHE turns on a radio. A song by Ray Price is heard "I Won't Mention It Again". SHE is very unhappy that SHE must keep the restaurant open while her husband goes to the wedding. HE finishes dressing, then kisses NATURAL goodbye. SHE is hostile to him. GENERAL VONAVON makes the transition into the other scene very slowly. HE sprays himself with mosquito repellant, etc., as HE inches himself into the swamp.

ROGER and TUNGSTEN have now discovered the whereabouts of the GIRLS and chase after them.

TUNGSTEN, of course, is in need of perpetual assistance since HE has such poor eyesight. EUGENIA also appears. SHE is dressed as a worker with thigh. SHE carries an axe nonexistent underbrush.

ROGER and TUNGSTEN see the GIRLS.

STEPHANIE and the KING (on crutches) appear. SHE carries a white satin runner which SHE spreads with mellifluous ease. This runner serves as the ceremonial carpet for the procession of the bride and groom. The KING tries to help her. EUGENIA sees how easily STEPHANIE and the KING have entered the swamp and is

a bit angered. SHE hurries to finish the construction, a little pathway. These various activities must seem terribly preoccupied, intense, complicated, perhaps absurd, but always amusing. STEPHANIE also pushes out a cart onto the stage which is covered with a wedding cake, boxes of rice, and champagne, then attempts to find a place for the KING to sit.

By this time EUGENIA finishes her task and drives a stake into the stage and attaches a plaque to it which reads, "Eugenia Morse Reynolds Pathway, 982 A.D." SHE then takes a bottle of champagne and smashes it against the stake after which SHE nearly collapses. Her fall, however, is intercepted by ROGER and TUNGSTEN who have tired of chasing the inexhaustible BRIDES. THEY carry EUGENIA to the center of the stage and bow to her.

FREFREARA and AVIS notice that THEY are no longer being pursued and are puzzled. THEY are, at this point, at separate sides of the stage. With great determination THEY walk towards ROGER and TUNGSTEN. The GIRLS grab hold their future husbands, pull them away from EUGENIA, and exit.

EUGENIA implements the dramatic force of this action by spreading her arms ominously, dropping her making a Slowly SHE o the audience, blows her nose ally, then k dejectedly towards GENERAL VONAVON who has completed the transition into the scene. HE finds a place for her to sit beside the KING. There are peculiar interactions between her and the KING. The KING, GENERAL VONAVON and STEPHANIE help her to remove her boots. SHE undresses

further and one eventually sees that under her construction worker's uniform, there is an evening gown.

Meanwhile NATURAL has determined not to be left out of the festivities. SHE puts an "Out To Lunch" sign on the counter and prepares herself for the wedding. SHE exits from the restaurant still carrying her tray and races in slow motion for the swamp. As soon as SHE leaves, however, a BURGLAR appears. HE is a despairing figure, more a bum than a burglar, even though HE carries a gun. HE drags himself to break into the restaurant and once HE has done so HE stuffs himself with bread, then wearily turns on the radio. A hymn is being played, "Just As I Am". After this hymn is played once, EVERYONE at the wedding begins to sing the words.

ROGER and TUNGSTEN appear in tuxedos and move very slowly down the satin runner. EUGENIA hides her eyes. Then the BRIDES appear. The KING and FREFREARA move down the runner, then AVIS and MRS. REYNOLDS make the procession. The KING and MRS. REYNOLDS deliver FREFREARA and AVIS to their respective husbands, whereupon EVERYONE turns towards GENERAL VONAVON. When the hymn is finished, the BUM turns off the radio and shuffles very slowly away. ~~GENERAL VONAVON~~ makes a few strange gestures with his hands. EVERYONE nods his head affirmatively for an inordinant length of time. The wedding seems to end. GROOMS kiss the

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an outburst of NATURAL's entrance. ~~GENERAL VONAVON~~ instigates the final stages of the marriage ceremony -- the throwing of rice, the wedding reception, the newlyweds' preparation for the honeymoon, etc. SHE and STEPHANIE also have a momentary reunion. ~~GENERAL VONAVON~~,
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however, is outraged that his wife has disobeyed him and sends her home. The celebration continues for a short while without her, but as SHE nears home, EVERYONE exits from the stage except the BURGLAR who is still in the process of shuffling away. THEY look at each other for a moment. Then SHE goes into the restaurant, sits at the counter, and cries)

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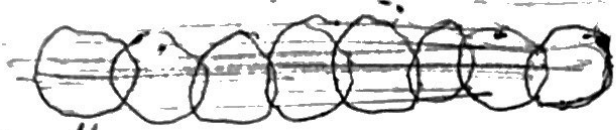
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A D M I S S I O N F R E E

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Act one

- 1/ cut tongue motion in walk of mouth
- 2/ make "how to make things come to life"
speech more clearly understood

Act Two

less stiff

grotesque - no squinting

2) opera - more understood

3) tears - taste feel

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