

Dancing at the Revolution

by

Michael Bettencourt

67 Highwood Terrace #2, Weehawken NJ 07086
201-770-0550; 347-564-9998 [cell]; m.bett@verizon.net;

<http://www.m-bettencourt.com>

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Dancing at the Revolution

Dancing at the Revolution is based on the two years Emma Goldman spent in the federal prison at Jefferson City, MO, after her conviction, along with her life-long companion Alexander Berkman, for conspiracy to advise people to resist the draft during the First World War (then known as the Great War). Soon after her release in 1919, she and Berkman, along with 247 people, were deported to Russia. They stayed there for two years until, disenchanted, they decided to leave.

The play begins with Goldman in the midst of writing her autobiography, Living My Life, which Berkman helped edit (often with pointed ruthlessness). Goldman is being assisted by Hannah Chartier, a 20-year old woman from St. Tropez, where Goldman is living while composing. (the character of Hannah is fictional, though Goldman did have a series of young women acting as her secretary)

Goldman is stuck: after the sharp disappointment of her sojourn in the Soviet Union and a decade of rootless wandering, she no longer has the strong confidence in her abilities and ideals that she once had. This has brought writing the autobiography to a halt. However, by telling Hannah the story of her time in prison, which was a test of her ideals and compassion, she finds a chance to re-capture her sense of purpose and, in the process, help Hannah make some important changes in her life concerning her own future freedom and happiness.

Act I deals primarily with Goldman's attempt to recapture her sense of purpose in writing the work. Interspersed with her scene with Hannah are scenes that depict the events leading up to Goldman and Berkman's arrest. These scenes are done in stylized fashions, using music, dance, rhymed language, and pseudo-naturalistic dialogue. They are meant to contrast with the narrative scenes where Goldman speaks with Hannah.

Act II focuses entirely on Goldman's time in prison, ending in a scene with Goldman and Hannah where both women understand the importance of following one's ideals regardless of the pain and suffering acquired by doing so.

Until her death in 1940, when she was buried in Chicago's Waldheim Cemetery, Goldman was only allowed to come to the United States once, for a lecture tour.

SCHARACTERS (9 women, 1 man -- not including STAGEHANDS)

- Emma Goldman, sixty years old at the start of the play but must be able to play 10 years younger
- Hannah Chartier, *her secretary, 20 years of age* (she needs to only speak with a *slight* French accent). She will also play Mollie Steimer, *prison mate with GOLDMAN*

- Kate Richards O'Hare, prison mate with GOLDMAN
- Indian Alice, Minnie Eddy, Evelyn L'Ariat, Aggie Myers, Addie, Dope Fiend, *prison mates with GOLDMAN -- ADDIE and DOPE FIEND must be African American*
- Alexander Berkman, Emma's friend of 40 years
- Stagehands 1, 2, 3, and 4, dressed completely in uniform black shirts and pants. They will also play various characters. At least one of the STAGEHANDS should be a woman to play the MATRON in Act II.

SETTINGS

- St. Tropez, France
- Various locations in New York City
- The federal prison, Jefferson City, MO

TIME

- St. Tropez: circa 1930
- Jefferson City: some time between 1918 and 1919

MISCELLANEOUS

- Direction: The director is free to choreograph the scenes (such as the trial) in any appropriate way other than what is laid out in the script.
- Music for various underscorings. The music should be mood appropriate and atmospheric and not necessarily based on any recognizable songs or tunes, unless called for.
- Sounds: indicated in the script. The director is free to add any soundscapes that enhance the workings of the script.

Dancing At The Revolution

Act I, Scene 1

Pre-show music: various revolutionary songs, such as the Internationale. If possible, slides of EMMA GOLDMAN shown as the audience comes in. The stage is set for GOLDMAN's office: a large table serves as GOLDMAN's desk. The table should be large but easily movable. Off to stage right is a similar table with piles of paper on it as well, about three-quarters of which are in manila folders. The rest are in neat piles. Three other chairs are nearby as well. Under the tables are two or three wastepaper baskets. On GOLDMAN's table are piles of paper, writing implements, books, a clock, etc.

Lights will **not** go to black and then come up. Music fades out as GOLDMAN enters with a folder in her hand, reading the contents.

GOLDMAN

Damn! Damn!

(puts the folder down, looks at another one)

I thought the friggin' paper was in here.

(in exasperation)

This damn book is going to kill me.

GOLDMAN picks up a paper-clipped bunch of papers off her desk.

GOLDMAN

All right, Hannah, let's test your index. May it bring me peace.

She traces down the page, finds what she wants, goes to a folder, pulls out the document, and expresses satisfaction -- all done very quickly.

GOLDMAN

Well, my faithful Sancho Panza Hannah, it works. Your index works. One windmill down.

(looks at the profusion of papers around her)

A thousand to go.

Looks at the paper she found with the index. At this moment HANNAH enters, a small leather satchel in her hands. She sees GOLDMAN but doesn't say anything. GOLDMAN does not see her and reads out loud. HANNAH watches for a moment, shakes her head, puts the satchel down, and leaves: she's seen this performance already.

GOLDMAN

Living My Life by Emma Goldman.

(in a carney barker's voice)

Yowser, yowser, yowser, the auto-biographee of
the centuree, come one, come all, come see this
over-60 fat Jew-in-exile try to finish the book
before it finishes her! Yowser, yowser, yowser.

HANNAH re-enters with a precarious bundle of papers in her arms.
GOLDMAN notices her this time.

GOLDMAN

Hannah, Hannah -- that time already?

HANNAH

Where would you --

GOLDMAN

(indicating the papers)

What --

HANNAH

-- like these?

GOLDMAN

-- are those?

HANNAH

More letters.

GOLDMAN

(gestures vaguely)

Anywhere.

HANNAH tries to place them, but the table is so full that GOLDMAN has
to come over to help her put them down. HANNAH busies herself re-
arranging things.

HANNAH

A lot of letters, Miss Goldman.

GOLDMAN

Piles of nonsense.

(starts looking through them)

Any editorial droppings from Mr. Berkman?

HANNAH

Nothing today.

GOLDMAN
(annoyed)

Nothing.

HANNAH

Yet.

GOLDMAN
(exasperated)

Great. Now he's given up on me.

HANNAH

Sometimes the post from Nice is late.

GOLDMAN waves off the statement. HANNAH straightens the new papers, sorts through them, etc. GOLDMAN goes back to her desk and tries to write.

HANNAH

May I ask you a question?

GOLDMAN

Shoot.

HANNAH

About Mr. Berkman.

GOLDMAN

Shoot him.

HANNAH

Do you like Mr. Berkman?

GOLDMAN

Do I like Mr. Berkman? Sasha and I have been dirt and roots for 40 years, Hannah -- dirt and roots --

(makes a linking gesture with her hands)
-- though he's more in the dirt category at the moment.

HANNAH

So you like him?

GOLDMAN

On average. Do you? Young women have fallen in love with Sasha -- Is that a blush?

HANNAH
(ignoring the tease)
If you like him so much, then why do you two
always argue when he's here?

GOLDMAN
We don't argue -- we expostulate.

HANNAH
You sound like two geese with stomach pains.

GOLDMAN
Two geese with gas --

HANNAH
And why do you get like that when the mail comes?

GOLDMAN
Like what?

HANNAH
(makes like a cat pouncing)
Like a cat and its mouse.

GOLDMAN
(mimicking her)
Like that?

HANNAH
Yes.

GOLDMAN
Snarly, you're saying.

HANNAH
Snarly.

GOLDMAN
Because he's always sending me things I don't
want to read.

HANNAH
Because he cuts whole pages away from what you
send him.

GOLDMAN
He's making this book harder for me to write.

HANNAH
He says he's trying to make it better.

GOLDMAN
(kiddingly)

Who ya gonna listen to -- him or the one who pays
you?

HANNAH
And so you both get so snarly.

GOLDMAN
Which is why we shout like two people trying to
give birth to one child at the same time --

GOLDMAN leans back in her chair and breathes heavily and comically as
if she were in labor. HANNAH laughs.

GOLDMAN
So, you're sure -- no "mice" from Mr. Sasha
Slash-and-Burn?

HANNAH
No "mice." But there is another post this
afternoon.

HANNAH rearranges papers. GOLDMAN tries to write, then gives it up.
She joins HANNAH.

GOLDMAN
I've been so busy using up all the oxygen that I
didn't ask how you were.

HANNAH
I am fine.

GOLDMAN
Your standard answer.

HANNAH
It's true.

GOLDMAN
Always fine.

HANNAH
Is there something wrong with that?

GOLDMAN
Hannah, how can two people orbit together -- like
us -- like ballroom waltzers --

GOLDMAN takes HANNAH and dances a few steps with her.

GOLDMAN
-- for how many months, now? -- and still be
strangers? You've indexed my life, and I hardly
know ya. You're always fine.

They finish with a mild flourish. GOLDMAN grabs two pads of paper off
the desk and two pencils. GOLDMAN hands one pad and pencil to HANNAH.

GOLDMAN
Grab a chair.

HANNAH
Why?

GOLDMAN
Do as your slave boss tells you.

HANNAH grabs a chair; GOLDMAN indicates where she should put it down;
she does, and sits. In the meantime, GOLDMAN grabs her own chair and
sits opposite HANNAH.

GOLDMAN
I'm going to interview you. You're going to
interview me.

HANNAH
I don't know how --

GOLDMAN
I've been interviewed a thousand times. It's
easy. Follow me.

GOLDMAN takes up a position to write.

HANNAH
I really don't want --

GOLDMAN
How old are you?

HANNAH
Twenty.

GOLDMAN writes it down.

GOLDMAN
Now ask me.

HANNAH
This isn't going to turn into a lec[ture] --

GOLDMAN
No more lectures on birth control using a banana.
I swear. Now your turn.

HANNAH
I don't want --

GOLDMAN
Go ahead.

HANNAH
How old are you?

GOLDMAN
Sixty. What do you do for a living?

HANNAH
Do? I live.

GOLDMAN
Go on.

HANNAH
On my father's farm.
(exasperated)
I really don't want --

GOLDMAN
Your turn.

HANNAH
I really don't want to do [this] --

GOLDMAN
Go ahead.

HANNAH rises and puts the pad and pencil on the desk.

HANNAH
This isn't how people get to know each other.

GOLDMAN
You're angry.

HANNAH takes no notice of GOLDMAN's interjections; she just speaks.

HANNAH
I'm not like a bunch of letters.

GOLDMAN
You're not fine.

HANNAH
It's like the priest --

GOLDMAN
The priest?

HANNAH
-- poking -- wanting to know your dirty clothes -
-

GOLDMAN
I didn't mean to --

HANNAH
-- or the old men in the café -- their eyes
licking you --

GOLDMAN
I'm sorry --

HANNAH
Or the nuns. Or the postmaster. Everyone wants
to look under my bed -- It makes me feel like
I'm nothing -- to anyone --

GOLDMAN
I was just thinking we might have some fun.

HANNAH
For a living, you asked. All right. I am not
fine today, and you might as well get that
straight from my teeth. My father, this morning,
crumbs falling on his shirt as he ate and spoke
at the same time -- I hate that! Sorry. He
told me he spoke to Monsieur Levesque --

HANNAH tries to go on but can't.

GOLDMAN
As in Monsieur Raymond Levesque, the butcher,
with a son, the assistant butcher?

HANNAH nods.

GOLDMAN
Marriage.

HANNAH nods.

GOLDMAN
And this is not good news to you.

HANNAH hesitates, shakes her head no.

GOLDMAN

The young man --

HANNAH holds up her hand, indicating for GOLDMAN to stop. She is near tears.

GOLDMAN

The interview is over.

GOLDMAN gets up, puts the pad and pencil on the desk, and gently steers HANNAH back to her chair.

GOLDMAN

At your age, Hannah, I arrived in New York to start my real life. And I had to divorce a husband to do it.

HANNAH

You -- married?

GOLDMAN

Even younger than you -- at eighteen. And, no, the earth didn't crack! To a Mr. Jacob "Dull, Jealous, Hair in His Ears, Crumbs on His Vest, a Shine on His Pants" Kersner. Mr. Kersner wanted me to "serve" him after we were married -- I don't do "serve" very well. So --

GOLDMAN makes a flicking motion with her fingers.

GOLDMAN

-- and on to New York. And my real life. That's when I met Sasha -- I don't like marriage. I'd rather eat snails alive with the shells. Do you want to get married?

HANNAH

My father is pushing me.

GOLDMAN

Do you?

HANNAH does not answer, but her silence is her answer.

GOLDMAN

Then don't.

HANNAH

But he's pushing so hard!

GOLDMAN

Then push back. Push on.
(cups her hands under her own breasts)
Push up.

HANNAH laughs briefly.

GOLDMAN

But don't let them push down.

There is a moment of awkward silence between them.

GOLDMAN

But maybe you're thinking you shouldn't be taking
advice from some fat old lonely Jewish lady
buried in a French bungalow.

HANNAH

He's a stubborn man.

GOLDMAN

I'll bet it runs in the family.

HANNAH looks worried.

GOLDMAN

All right, let's get some work done. Shall we?
Where did we stop yesterday?

HANNAH, looking relieved, rifles through her bag, takes out a sheaf of
notes.

HANNAH

You wanted to start with your years in prison.

GOLDMAN

Yes.

HANNAH looks at her notes.

HANNAH

(unsure of the word)
Fay-der-al --

GOLDMAN

Fe-der-al.

HANNAH

Fe-der-al prison, two years. In a place called -
-

(mispronounces it)
-- Missouri.

GOLDMAN
(correcting her)
Missouri.

HANNAH
Missouri.

GOLDMAN
All right.

HANNAH
Shall I start? Miss Goldman?

GOLDMAN
Not yet.

GOLDMAN gets one of the chairs.

GOLDMAN
Sit here.
(HANNAH hesitates)
No more interviews, I promise. Sit here, please.

HANNAH sits. GOLDMAN takes a second chair and sits facing her.

GOLDMAN
Hannah, at this moment, both of us are pinned
wriggling to the wall. Me by this book and Mr.
Berkman; you, by your father and, potentially, by
the offspring of Mr. Levesque's bourgeois loins.
We need a kick in the ass.

HANNAH
Kick in the -- ?

GOLDMAN
I don't want you to keep making nice, neat
indexes -- not yet. Hannah, I want you to listen
to the story.

(stops herself)
No, Emma: wait.
(to HANNAH)
I can be such a demanding bitch, eh?
(HANNAH smiles)
Don't agree so quickly!

GOLDMAN prepares herself, as if making a formal request.

GOLDMAN

Let me try this again. Hannah, would you do me the favor, the kindness, the good turn to listen to me? I need you to listen hard --

HANNAH

-- hard --

GOLDMAN

-- and bounce things back, hard.

HANNAH

You need me.

GOLDMAN

I need you.

HANNAH

Like a tennis racket. Why?

GOLDMAN

I need you to help me understand what I'm doing here.

HANNAH

And you don't know that yet.

GOLDMAN

I know, but I don't -- don't you see? The road through the woods is dark.

HANNAH

And you think I can do this?

GOLDMAN

I don't know if you can --

HANNAH

-- I can --

GOLDMAN

-- but I need to try it out on you. And I think the story will make you see things with different eyes. Something in it for you.

HANNAH

I don't know if I'll understand you. I can barely follow you sometimes, the way you jump around and try to make everyone feel sorry for you.

(touches her ears)

But you have both of my ears.

(cups her own breasts)
Push on, is it?

GOLDMAN laughs.

GOLDMAN
(cups her own breasts)
Push on!

Lights change but do not go to black.

Music: low, ominous, with added sounds of artillery, gunfire, screams of pain, etc.: the sounds of war.

Two chairs are placed center, under a harsh downlight; they should be lit so that the St. Tropez office goes into shadow. GOLDMAN sits and is joined by BERKMAN, who walks with a cane.

* * * * *

Act I, Scene 2

The STAGEHANDS enter and go to set positions; if the space permits, they should also be placed in the audience. The rest of the cast, including HANNAH, also enters -- HANNAH should wear something different for this scene.

STAGEHANDS
A time not long ago, and not that far away.

As each STAGEHAND speaks, the rest of the cast will make stage pictures of "soldiers at war" -- in essence, tableau. The director is free to choreograph these as desired.

NUMBER 1
(wearing pince-nez as Woodrow Wilson)
The world must be made safe for democracy....The day has come when America is privileged to spend her blood and might. -- Woodrow Wilson, April 2, 1917, seeking a declaration of war against Germany.

NUMBER 2
God should have mercy on the opponents of this war for they need expect none from an outraged people and an avenging government. -- Attorney-General Thomas Gregory.

NUMBER 3
One allegiance, one flag, one language. I urge vigorous police action against...veiled treason

on street corners and elsewhere. -- Theodore Roosevelt.

War sounds change to crowd sounds, a crowd in protest, a crowd being attacked by police. Music continues underneath.

NUMBER 4

All Bolsheviks should be deported in ships of stone with sails of lead, with the wrath of God for a breeze, and with hell for their first port.
-- General Leonard Wood.

The rest of the cast now become the audience that will hear GOLDMAN and BERKMAN speak. Crowd sounds louder, almost drowning out the STAGEHANDS, who shout to get above it.

NUMBER 1

Congress shall make no law --

NUMBER 3

-- abridging the freedom of speech --

NUMBER 4

-- or of the press --

NUMBER 2

-- or of the right peaceably to assemble --

ALL THE CAST

-- and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.

By this time the four STAGEHANDS stand in a semicircle behind GOLDMAN and BERKMAN, just outside their light. The crowd sounds and music continue for two or three beats after the word "grievances," then abruptly stop. The rest of the cast simply stands. Two or three beats of silence. GOLDMAN speaks.

GOLDMAN

The prisons filled.

BERKMAN

Twenty years for a lecture.

NUMBER 3

Forty-five years for handing out a pamphlet.

GOLDMAN

Union leaders were lynched.

NUMBER 1

Lawful assemblies attacked.

BERKMAN

"Undesirables" deported.

NUMBER 4

Congress shall make no law --

NUMBER 3

-- abridging the freedom of speech --

GOLDMAN

Hannah, our turn --

BERKMAN

Our test --

GOLDMAN

-- came soon enough.

* * * * *

Act I, Scene 3

The time becomes May 18, 1917, at the Harlem River Casino, an enormous mass meeting to protest the proposed conscription bill. SOUND: In the background are the sounds of a great mass of people, muffled as if behind doors or a wall.

GOLDMAN and BERKMAN stand. The STAGEHANDS and the rest of the cast move upstage and face the theatre audience; they are now the "audience" to whom GOLDMAN and BERKMAN will speak. It is suggested that the director choreograph this "audience" to make tableau, move and speak, etc. in response to BERKMAN and GOLDMAN. One STAGEHAND wears a military cap. Another STAGEHAND speaks to the theatre audience.

STAGEHAND

May 18, 1917: the Harlem River Casino

GOLDMAN

Well, Sasha --

BERKMAN

Yes --

GOLDMAN

Here we are again in the wolf's mouth.

BERKMAN

It has been a long time --

(indicates the crowd)

Supposedly eight thousand out there waiting for us.

GOLDMAN

A third probably police.

BERKMAN

A third drunken soldiers.

GOLDMAN

And the third third?

BERKMAN

Everyone who hates this bloody, stupid war.

GOLDMAN

Adjectives unnecessary.

BERKMAN

(laughs)

That's only fair. I've cut your writing down often enough --

GOLDMAN

Shall we save this democracy from itself?

BERKMAN

If not us, then no one. Lead on, Mrs. Alving.

GOLDMAN

Only if you follow, Dr. Stockmann.

BERKMAN

Behind, yet equal.

A bright light comes up on the "podium," and as they step forward, all the cast now comes in to "real time" and hoots and hollers and cheers and sings the Internationale, etc. BERKMAN and GOLDMAN will face the theatre audience, the convention being that the cast, even though behind them on the stage, is actually in front of them as the audience. BERKMAN steps up to the "podium." GOLDMAN sits. The crowd sounds dim to underscoring, audible but not intrusive. Neither BERKMAN nor GOLDMAN have to be anchored to the "podium"; they are free to move about the stage.

BERKMAN

Friends, compatriots -- you know why we have to be here today. Even the police and the rowdy soldiers -- great protectors of democracy -- know why we have to be here today. Mr. Wilson has taken us to war -- which would be fine if the greedy bankers and industrialists and arms merchants were the ones going off for slaughter. But no! Old men declare the war, but young men will be forced to declare their deaths. No! No!

No! People who want to destroy injustice must tell Mr. Wilson and all his capitalist trough-feeders that we will resist his call for universal conscription -- universal slavery! universal death! -- and support anyone who refuses to be conscripted. Let the old men fight -- let the young men live!

Crescendo of applause and some boos as BERKMAN pauses.

BERKMAN

I now give you over to the capable hands of my friend and comrade Emma Goldman -- my tongue is brass, hers is silver.

There is a small affectionate exchange as BERKMAN and GOLDMAN change places. Chorus of cheers and some boos.

GOLDMAN

Imagine for a moment --

The STAGEHAND wearing the military cap stands up and shouts.

STAGEHAND

You're nothing' but a bunch of stinkin' Bolshies!

GOLDMAN

(undaunted)

See this war --

STAGEHAND

Bunch of Jews! Garlic eaters! You're not even American!

A chorus of boos from the audience.

GOLDMAN

(trying to ignore him)

This rank and overgrown garden of Mr. Wilson's mind --

STAGEHAND

They should send you off to die! Get rid of you! Let me have the floor! Let an American talk!

The boos grow louder, with voices shouting "Shut him up!" and "Throw him out!" GOLDMAN quiets down the audience.

GOLDMAN

If he wants to speak, let's let him speak. He obviously believes in the justice of his cause, just as we do. And he's probably going to die

for it. Give him the silence and respect he deserves.

The crowd sounds die out, just a shuffling in the audience. The STAGEHAND, suddenly confronted with this enormous silence, is frightened.

STAGEHAND

You're all trai -- traitors, paid for by Ger-- German money. You love the Kai-- Kaiser.

GOLDMAN

Go on.

STAGEHAND

Ah, hell, let's get outta here!

STAGEHAND sits, to a chorus of boos and derisive cheers. Crowd sounds continue.

GOLDMAN

One of our country's finest. The fate of democracy lies in his hands -- someone save us all! But let's not make too much fun of him.

The tone of the following speech should be intimate rather than declamatory until GOLDMAN gets to the end.

GOLDMAN

Because I want you all to answer a question, I want all of you out there who are mothers and fathers of sons -- and even he is someone's son, don't forget that -- I want you all to answer one question. Your son has just been snatched by the government to fight a war. Your flesh, your blood, your hopes -- soon to be ground up like bone and thrown away. And the question: For what? The question echoes in your mind: For what? You struggle to find an answer. Not that plenty aren't given to you: patriotism, the flag, making the world safe for democracy. But these are bloodless, abstract -- not like the fresh face of your boy, his smile and his laughter. For what, for what? And as much as you agonize, no answer comes that justifies destroying his young and fruitful spirit. And for good reason: there is none. Your boy's blood allows old men to wallow like hogs in their profits -- but for you his death will just be death, bitter and dirty. It will not bring about equality, or justice, or democracy, to you or anyone else -- it will only bring pain and despair and

confusion. This is what conscription ultimately means -- the government sacrificing your boy so that the world is made safe for wealth and profit. If you love your boy, if you value true freedom and not the pap fed to you by Mr. Wilson, then you will join with us to slay this savage beast called conscription.

* * * * *

Act I, Scene 4

Cheers and thunderous applause; cast exits. The lights come up on the St. Tropez office, which is now the office of the No-Conscription League.

Lights change as BERKMAN and GOLDMAN move into the office area. The phone rings loudly. BERKMAN answers.

BERKMAN

Yes, yes, this is the No-Conscription League. No, we can't tell you to not register -- but we have materials if you want to read -- What was that again? A little subtlety and skill, at least, officer, please -- you offend my aesthetics.

BERKMAN slams the phone down, sits.

GOLDMAN

Police -- again?

BERKMAN

That I'd actually advise someone over the phone to dynamite a registration office? In person, now --

GOLDMAN

Sasha!

BERKMAN

I haven't lost a certain -- affection for it.

GOLDMAN

That's because your own fuse is so short.

The phone rings again, but before BERKMAN can pick it up, the four STAGEHANDS burst into the office, wearing suit jackets and hats of the period. One of them, STAGEHAND 1, wears a badge. He goes over to the phone, picks it up and puts it down immediately. The other three fan out into the room.

STAGEHAND 1

Emma Goldman?

GOLDMAN

Fatty Arbuckle.

STAGEHAND 1

Don't get smart.

GOLDMAN

"Smart" would be if I knew who you were.

STAGEHAND 1

Emma Goldman, you are under arrest. And so is Berkman. Where is he?

BERKMAN

(waving from his seat)

Who said justice wasn't blind?

GOLDMAN

(to BERKMAN)

I knew I was smart -- I recognize you --

BERKMAN

A moon cow?

STAGEHAND 1

(moves toward BERKMAN)

Now look here --

BERKMAN

At what?

STAGEHAND 1 grabs BERKMAN by the throat.

STAGEHAND 1

(Quietly)

Shut up.

GOLDMAN moves toward STAGEHAND 1 to distract his attention and protect BERKMAN.

GOLDMAN

Sasha, this is United States Marshal Thomas D. McCarthy, quoted for saying the government should move more quickly to arrest us.

BERKMAN

(holding up his cane)

It's not like I'm a sprinter. What were you waiting for?

GOLDMAN

Sasha!

(to STAGEHAND 1)

You wouldn't happen to have an arrest warrant?

STAGEHAND 1

Don't need one for traitors.

GOLDMAN

Does "Fourth Amendment" sound familiar?

BERKMAN

(pointing to the other STAGEHANDS)

He can't count past three.

STAGEHAND 1

I can count you two out.

(signals to the other STAGE-HANDS)

Look for it.

GOLDMAN

What are you looking for?

The STAGEHANDS rifle through the papers and paraphernalia.

STAGEHAND 1

Move your haunches out of the way.

BERKMAN

Not a moon cow any more -- a cattle drover.

GOLDMAN

Gelded bull.

BERKMAN

Gilded calf.

STAGEHAND 1

Enough!

(to the STAGEHANDS)

Did you find it?

GOLDMAN

What?

STAGEHAND 1

I want the membership list of the No-Conscription League.

GOLDMAN

We never mind the hospitality of the police.

BERKMAN

But not everyone we know can afford the honor of an arrest.

GOLDMAN

We don't keep the list here.

BERKMAN

And you can't find out where it is.

STAGEHAND 1
(angered)

Move!

BERKMAN
(sound of a cow)

Mooooooove.

GOLDMAN

Sasha --

BERKMAN

You're right, liebchen -- beware a sharp tongue -
-

TOGETHER

-- does not cut itself off.

BERKMAN
(to STAGEHAND 1)

Take us to your leader.

Lights down on the office, up down center. STAGEHAND 1 carries two chairs; BERKMAN and GOLDMAN carry the other two. The chairs are placed in two rows, two chairs each. One STAGEHAND stays with STAGEHAND 1. BERKMAN and GOLDMAN sit in the back row, STAGEHAND 1 as a passenger, the other STAGEHAND as the driver.

STAGEHAND 1

I want you to get in the car.

(mockingly)

I want you to shut up -- no little coded hand gestures, no passing notes, no wise-ass remarks, none of your Bolshie tricks.

Car sounds.

STAGEHAND 1

Let's go.

Everyone pitches as the car starts with a jerk and squeal.

BERKMAN

He knows how to drive this?

GOLDMAN

Watch out!

The car swerves, and everyone pitches with it -- all very vaudeville.

GOLDMAN

Do the police in New York City always aim for the pedestrians?

BERKMAN and GOLDMAN wince as the driver narrowly misses something.

GOLDMAN

You're breaking the rules --

STAGEHAND 1

I represent the United States government.

BERKMAN

The government can overrule physics?

STAGEHAND 1

(looking at them both)

We can do anything we want.

The car comes to a screeching halt. BERKMAN makes as if to look out the window.

BERKMAN

Ah, my dear, the Tombs.

GOLDMAN

And after 6 o'clock.

BERKMAN

No arraignments today.

(to STAGEHAND 1)

Do we get our choice of cages?

STAGEHAND 1

Out.

BERKMAN and GOLDMAN "get out" of the car; sound of doors slamming. The STAGEHANDS take two chairs and put them behind the two desks.

They escort BERKMAN off, somewhat roughly. STAGEHAND 1 takes the two remaining chairs and places them as in Act 1, Scene 1, with HANNAH and GOLDMAN. He forces GOLDMAN to sit. HANNAH enters and sits as before. Lights change: it is St. Tropez.

* * * * *

Act I, Scene 5

HANNAH

So you had to stay in prison all night?

GOLDMAN gets up, goes to the desk, and picks up a small tin of sweets.

GOLDMAN

It wasn't hard. A rest, really.

She takes a sweet, offers one to HANNAH.

GOLDMAN

Pastille?

HANNAH refuses. GOLDMAN puts the tin in her dress pocket but does not sit.

HANNAH

I'm not sure I could do that.

GOLDMAN

Well, I was pissed off -- ils sont chiants? is that right? -- so that made it a little easier. I always feel right at home when I'm pissed off.

HANNAH

What happened next?

GOLDMAN

What happened next? We went to trial, on June 27, 1917 --

(sarcastically)

-- my forty-eighth birthday, wouldn't you know?

Pause, as if waiting for a certain response to this fact and not getting it.

GOLDMAN

Doesn't that strike you as funny?

HANNAH

(vaguely)

Yes.

GOLDMAN
Weren't you inspired by what we were doing?

HANNAH
It was brave, I guess.

GOLDMAN
It was dangerous, yes.
(sensing something)
What?

HANNAH
Nothing. Go on.

GOLDMAN
Not yet. Something's plucking your knickers.
Out with it.

HANNAH gets up and paces for a moment, straightens papers, etc.:
nervous.

HANNAH
I -- I don't want to be rude.

GOLDMAN
(lightly)
Be rude.

HANNAH
Well --

GOLDMAN
Take your swing.

HANNAH
I know you don't think so -- brave, you said --
but -- it sounds to me like you might have done
something wrong --

GOLDMAN
We didn't.

HANNAH
But they arrested you.

GOLDMAN
Maybe they were wrong?

Overlap the lines.

HANNAH
Why would they make trouble for themselves --

GOLDMAN

They were the enem --

HANNAH

-- if they didn't have a good reason?

GOLDMAN

They were blind --

HANNAH

Not your reason, but they thought --

GOLDMAN

They had a reason, all right.

HANNAH

-- you were --

GOLDMAN

Small-minded bast --

HANNAH

-- the enemy, too.

GOLDMAN cuts herself off.

HANNAH

You were the enemy, too. You had your reasons. They had theirs. You both thought you were right. Why did you think you were more right?

GOLDMAN snaps her head around, as is something speeds by.

GOLDMAN

Peeeyowww!

HANNAH bridles at this but says nothing. GOLDMAN picks up a loop of string off the desk.

GOLDMAN

You are a cool one.

She strings the first set of a cat's cradle. Throughout the next lines, she coaxes HANNAH to participate.

GOLDMAN

Talk some more, please.

HANNAH

There is a lot of hatred in your voice as you tell the story.

GOLDMAN

They would have broken my bones as soon as breathe.

HANNAH

It would be hard for me to feel that kind of hatred.

GOLDMAN

Every soul being equal --

HANNAH

-- equal in the sight of God, yes.

GOLDMAN

You've told me about your catechism.

HANNAH

It's what you believe, too. What you say you believe.

GOLDMAN

But no godhead for me.

HANNAH

(shrugs)

It comes out to the same thing -- respect for people.

GOLDMAN

So there can be no bad people, everyone being equal?

HANNAH

Of course not! Don't try to make me sound like a fool.

The cat's cradle should be on HANNAH's hands by this line. She gives the string back to GOLDMAN.

HANNAH

What you tried to do -- good. Fighting wars is stupid -- like most things men do. But also true: You hated the men who hated you -- hate for hate. And what did it change? They just hated you back. They just wanted to shut you up -- which you liked because you like being the enemy. You like it! Ils sont chiants? Right! Just big boys acting like little boys to see who can shoot their water the farthest.

GOLDMAN

Love your enemy, then?

HANNAH

At least don't hate them so much. It turns us into knives. It makes us blind.

GOLDMAN

And the more you think you're absolutely right -- absolutely right -- the more blind you are?

HANNAH

I've never known enough of anything to think I was completely right, so I don't know. But you have thought --

GOLDMAN

What?

HANNAH

Being absolutely right --

GOLDMAN looks at HANNAH quizzically. During GOLDMAN's lines, HANNAH gets up, agitated, and walks toward one of the desks. She grabs a small pile of paper and throws it into one of the wastepaper baskets just as GOLDMAN finishes.

GOLDMAN

Did you just call me blind? Was I just scolded by someone a third my age?

(laughs, takes out the tin of sweets)

Nice forehand -- again. Your whole argument -- it's merde, of course, cow shit, les tourtes de fumier de vache -- but nice shot, there --

HANNAH

As if everything out of your mouth --

GOLDMAN turns to her, intrigued. She snaps the tin shut with a loud snap without taking a sweet.

GOLDMAN

Is what?

(indicates the wastebasket)

Is that a clue for me?

HANNAH says nothing but starts to kneel to get the papers out of the basket. GOLDMAN raises a hand to stop her.

GOLDMAN

Stop that. I said stop! You had better follow through on the smash.

HANNAH

I can't.

GOLDMAN

Not allowed!

(moves close to her)

Follow through!

HANNAH hesitates, then launches.

HANNAH

Days, months -- so much talk talk talk I don't understand --

GOLDMAN

So I talk too much.

HANNAH

Let me finish! Don't chop me off. You pile up stones -- like one of those walls in my father's fields that wanders nowhere -- and sometimes I just want you to stop before I get crushed.

GOLDMAN

So I blab.

HANNAH

Let me finish! And that! You use words -- to me, nonsense! American -- nonsense!

GOLDMAN goes to say something, but HANNAH simply continues through.

HANNAH

(gives it two syllables: Bah-lab)

Bah-lab. What is bah-lab? Why don't you just say what you mean and not act so much? You expect me to --

During the next lines HANNAH takes out what she threw in the basket, replaces it on the table, straightens things. GOLDMAN doesn't try to stop her this time.

GOLDMAN

What?

HANNAH

I think you expect me to clap my hands just because you're Emma Goldman.

GOLDMAN

Go on. Go on.

HANNAH

When I was fourteen I worked for a lady who talked to her plants -- sing, tell her dreams, do little dances -- all for her plants. I would stand in the same room with her, and -- right to the plants -- and never to me.

GOLDMAN

I see --

HANNAH

I don't really know you, so I have to watch you. What to trust, what to move out of the way of. I think you like me -- at least you act like you do. But --

GOLDMAN

You feel -- not seen. Like a plant.

HANNAH

Yes --

GOLDMAN

And not paid attention to.

HANNAH

Yes. I don't know what to trust. And I hate it.

GOLDMAN

Just like your father --

HANNAH

And Mr. Levesque --

GOLDMAN

The priest --

HANNAH

All of them!

GOLDMAN

And me, too.

HANNAH
Though not like them. They really don't see me.
You just always have your eyes somewhere else --

GOLDMAN
On other plants.

HANNAH
Piling up stones!

GOLDMAN
(making a theatrical flourish)
Ah-ha!

HANNAH laughs.

GOLDMAN
What?

HANNAH
I shouldn't.

GOLDMAN
You stop now, I'll fire you!

HANNAH
When I was sixteen, actors came here, set up a
stage --
(points at GOLDMAN)
Pantelone!

GOLDMAN
Gesundheit.

HANNAH
Il Capitano. Il Dottore.

GOLDMAN
You're saying I'm like those --
(overlapping)
-- old men -- ?

HANNAH
(overlapping)
Those old men -- they all wore masks, and they
talked so much! But I noticed this: they never
talked to each other -- the masks -- like horse
blindlers.

GOLDMAN

So now I'm some old fart swoonmeister on an Italian stage "bah-labbing" my life away --

(in a high, sing-song)

-- in affected, empty language.

HANNAH

No, no!

GOLDMAN

(lightly)

Yes, yes, liebchen! Yes, yes. You are not that far off. Game to Hannah.

HANNAH

That's not the p --

GOLDMAN

I know, I know -- but it is the point. Hannah's point.

HANNAH

Sometimes -- not all the time -- I want you to just look at me. No mask. No blab. And sometimes -- sometimes I think Mr. Berkman feels the same way.

HANNAH feels she has crossed a line.

GOLDMAN

Has he talked to you about this?

HANNAH

No. It's just in his face. If you look. We should get back to your story.

GOLDMAN

You do?

HANNAH

Yes.

GOLDMAN

We haven't finished --

HANNAH

You were in prison.

GOLDMAN

Hannah --

HANNAH

You were in prison.

GOLDMAN, seeing that HANNAH's reserve won't be broken, offers a sweet to HANNAH.

GOLDMAN

Sweets for the sweet.

HANNAH hesitates, then takes one. GOLDMAN puts the tin away.

GOLDMAN

So you want to still hear the story.

HANNAH

It's a good story.

GOLDMAN

Not too many stones?

HANNAH

So far.

GOLDMAN

Not too much "bah-lab"?

HANNAH

Chapter two should be interesting.

GOLDMAN

Okay. Wait.

GOLDMAN takes up a foolish actor's pose.

GOLDMAN

Is this how they did it?

HANNAH

Pantelone!

GOLDMAN

They did whatever black magic they had to do, and the day came when Sasha and I had to go to trial.

* * * * *

Act I, Scene 6

Lights change. HANNAH helps with the set change. To the sound of carousel or march music, the set changes with a stylized choreography. Two chairs are set stage right; GOLDMAN and BERKMAN sit there. A chair stage left for STAGEHAND 1/United States Attorney HAROLD

CONTENT. STAGEHAND 2 enters wearing judge's robes and brings out a white box, about 2' square and tall, on which is written "JUDGE" in bold red letters. STAGEHAND 2/JUDGE stands on the box. Two revolving bar-stool type chairs are set stage left of the JUDGE: these will be the witness chairs. Papers, books, and other items will be mimed. The convention here will be to speak to the audience as if to the JUDGE. Witnesses and CONTENT should have small prop and/or costume things to distinguish themselves.

STAGEHANDS 3 and 4 enter bearing placards or wearing sandwich boards.

STAGEHAND 3 (side one): "Eine Kleine Geschichte Musik, or How History Bit Us In The Ass."

STAGEHAND 4: "The Grand And Gritty Tragical-Comical-Historical Pageant Of Emma And Sasha"

STAGEHAND 3 (side two, in a list): "Dramatis Personae: Judge Julius Mayer, Attorney Harold Content, Emma and Sasha"

STAGEHAND 4: (side two, in a list): "The Jury, Various Witnesses, The World."

STAGEHANDS exit. Music out. Sound comes up: the murmur and buzz of a crowded courtroom.

NOTE: The style here is always "mock court" and mock courtly. During the dance sequences, BERKMAN dances as if he is not injured. He only uses the cane when the action comes back to "reality." People, when speaking to the JUDGE, actually speak to the theatre audience.

JUDGE

Bring this courtroom to order. Now, I will not put up with any enthusiasms.

BERKMAN

We object --

JUDGE

Too enthusiastic. What did I just say?

BERKMAN

We want a dismissal.

JUDGE

Suggestion dismissed.

BERKMAN

We've had no time to prepare our cases. We haven't been allowed to read the charges or even wash our faces!

JUDGE
(to CONTENT)
Sir, enlarge us. The charges?

CONTENT
Very simple.

JUDGE
See.

CONTENT
On May 18, 1917, at the Harlem River Casino, they told people to commit violence and resist the draft. Emma Goldman said, "We believe in violence and we will use violence."

GOLDMAN
I did not say "violence."

JUDGE
Silence!

CONTENT
She and Alexander Berkman conspired to do this.

BERKMAN
Inspired, I'd say.

CONTENT
They know their crime -- they don't need any time.

JUDGE
Approve.

(to BERKMAN)
Next move.

BERKMAN, GOLDMAN, and CONTENT place their palms together and dance.
Music: a simple dance tune. ALL speak in rhythm.

BERKMAN
So then -- we won't -- participate.

JUDGE
You're not allowed to abdicate.

CONTENT
You have to play the game we play.

GOLDMAN
We don't have to listen to a thing you say.

BERKMAN
(gesturing to GOLDMAN to sit)
To illustrate: we sit and quit.

GOLDMAN
Our rumps play trumps.

Music out.

JUDGE
You can't just perch and leave us in the lurch --
I'll appoint a lawyer for you.

CONTENT
(to JUDGE)
A Mr. Weinberger is their attorney of record.

BERKMAN
Until today. We want a dismissal.

JUDGE
Denied.

CONTENT
You will be tried.

JUDGE
And you will have a lawyer by your side.

The next lines are choreographed.

GOLDMAN
Your honor. We've only had two days --

BERKMAN
-- to gather our defenses.

CONTENT
You brought yourself here --

JUDGE
-- to be punished for your offenses.

BERKMAN
Then we won't be part of this charade.

JUDGE
I won't allow this tirade!

CONTENT
Lie in it -- your bed is made.

GOLDMAN
Sasha, wait --
(BERKMAN looks at GOLDMAN)
Grand Guignol.

BERKMAN
Commedia dell'arte.

GOLDMAN
(indicating the courtroom)
We've got the theatre.

BERKMAN
We know our parts.

GOLDMAN
The world will hear --

BERKMAN
-- our ideals reported.

GOLDMAN
They won't let us win.

BERKMAN
Probably deported.

GOLDMAN
But at least we might plant a seed. Agreed?

BERKMAN
Agreed.

TOGETHER
Let's do the deed.

End of choreography.

BERKMAN
(to JUDGE and CONTENT)
We'll defend ourselves.

CONTENT
A fool for a client.
(to JUDGE)
Dismissal should not be granted.

JUDGE
Approve.
(to BERKMAN)
Next move. Let's bring in the jury.

BERKMAN

They're in a hurry.

The JURY consists of the six WOMEN (excluding KATE) plus six objects to make up a total of 12 people. The JURY should wear some kind of mask -- blank white mask, happy face, etc. -- or have a set of expressions that are choreographed all the way through. In any case, the JURY's faces should have an artificial quality to them.

The six objects can be done in a number of ways -- e.g., faces on a stick, sock puppets, ventriloquist dummies -- it is up to the director. The JURY sits in front of the JUDGE and can be arranged in any way the director wants. The sense to get across is that the JURY is a puppet of the court.

JUDGE

You may examine the jury.

BERKMAN

What do you mean?

CONTENT

You can ask them what you want, and if you don't like what they say, you can dismiss them.

JUDGE

Not all of them, of course. We need twelve. We are civilized around here.

GOLDMAN

Matter of opinion.

Everyone talks to the JURY but directs comments to the theatre audience. The questions have choreography to them, and the theatre audience can be considered the "jury pool." The JURY's responses to the arguments should be choreographed and coördinated.

GOLDMAN

Do you believe in freedom of speech?

BERKMAN

Has the government here exceeded its reach?

CONTENT

The state must protect the majority's rule.

BERKMAN

That's when an ass is led by the fool.

GOLDMAN

Are laws always sacred? Can you question the laws?

BERKMAN

Can you think for yourself and pick out the flaws?

CONTENT

As a citizen you're bound to uphold what is right.

GOLDMAN

Even if they steal people in the middle of the night?

GOLDMAN

Is the United States the land of the free?

BERKMAN

Then why is there so much inequality?

CONTENT

Economics has nothing to do with this case.

JUDGE

You reds always dish out that "class warfare" ace.

BERKMAN

Do you think anarchists are Satan's lieutenants?

GOLDMAN

That they only love bombs and smelly old peasants?

BERKMAN

Do you believe in God? Is Christianity supreme?

GOLDMAN

Can the Muslims and Buddhists fit into this scheme?

CONTENT

Don't be misled by their misleading questions --

JUDGE

They're just the result of bad indigestion.

CONTENT

Don't be confused by their "commie" appeal.

GOLDMAN

We're trying to show you a higher ideal.

BERKMAN
You can think for yourselves --

GOLDMAN
To your own self be true.

JUDGE
Have you made your selections?

CONTENT
Twelve red, white, and blue.

BERKMAN
Twelve not our peers --

GOLDMAN
-- that's the best we could do.

End of choreography.

CONTENT
Are you quite finished?

BERKMAN
Revived.

GOLDMAN
Replenished.

CONTENT
Will these twelve do?

GOLDMAN
They'll do what you want.

BERKMAN
We just hope that one of them will show some spine.

CONTENT
For dodgers like you? See how they sit quiet, in a line, like light bulbs in their sockets.

GOLDMAN
They fit nicely in your pockets.

JUDGE
Continue the case.

EMMA / BERKMAN
(saluting each other)
About face.

They sit. STAGEHANDS 3 & 4 will be witnesses. As the identities of the witnesses change, they simply turn on their stools either to face in or face away. The STAGEHANDS should also use props to distinguish the witnesses -- cigar, lady's hat, bow tie, etc. At this point, the JURY should not take focus from the action.

SOUND: Each time the witness changes, there will a single loud clap, either some person clapping or the sound of the "clapper" used on movie sets.

CONTENT

I would like to call to the stand Mary Eleanor Fitzgerald.

During the interrogations, EMMA, BERKMAN, and CONTENT speak directly to the witness but into the theatre audience when speaking to the JUDGE. Any references to documents, etc. should be mimed.

CONTENT

State who you are.

FITZGERALD

Mary Eleanor Fitzgerald.

CONTENT

Your relation to the defendants?

FITZGERALD

I was financial secretary for the No-Conscription League.

CONTENT

By the time of this trial, how much money did they have in their accounts?

FITZGERALD

\$746.96.

CONTENT

That was all?

BERKMAN

(to GOLDMAN)

Not a bad return on thirty years work, hey?

JUDGE

Silence!

CONTENT

Then what about this deposit of \$3067 three days before the trial? Did it, by chance, come from the Kaiser --

(to the JURY)

-- who is killing our boys as we speak!

GOLDMAN

Objectionable! What has Mr. Content eaten that he would make such an undigested accusation? That money came from James Hallbeck.

Witnesses change -- HALLBECK is in his 80s.

GOLDMAN

Mr. Hallbeck, explain why you gave us \$3000.

HALLBECK

I have been an anarchist ever since they hung the innocent men at Haymarket. I own vineyards in California; I gave money to the one person I knew who would use it well.

CONTENT

Miss Fitzgerald, is this true?

Witnesses change.

FITZGERALD

Yes.

CONTENT

And the other \$67?

FITZGERALD

Small donations from friends -- none from the Kaiser.

BERKMAN

I guess it's proved we were not wealthy.

JUDGE

Proved.

BERKMAN

(loud whisper)

I hope they don't find the gold bars we removed.

JUDGE

Move on.

CONTENT

But we have more serious charges

GOLDMAN

More serious than our poverty?

CONTENT

Resisting the government! The incitement of violence! Conspiracy! Yes, yes, yes! I call William Randolph to the stand. State who you are and what you do.

RANDOLPH

(if possible, in an Irish accent)

I'm a shorthand reporter for the New York City Police Department.

CONTENT

Did you attend the meeting at the Harlem River Casino on May 18?

RANDOLPH

I did.

CONTENT

And you took stenographic notes?

RANDOLPH

I did.

CONTENT

What's your rate?

RANDOLPH

About 125 words a minute.

CONTENT

And what did you hear Miss Goldman say?

RANDOLPH

She said, "We believe in violence and we will use violence."

CONTENT

Absolutely sure?

RANDOLPH

Yes.

CONTENT and GOLDMAN exchange places.

GOLDMAN

Mr. Randolph, did you take down even the Russian names that night?

RANDOLPH

It was noisy.

GOLDMAN

That means "no." Could you list the words of mine you missed?

CONTENT

Objection.

JUDGE

Sustained.

GOLDMAN

Because I certainly don't remember the words you said I said.

(to JUDGE)

I'd like to "sustain" a little experiment to test Mr. Randolph's speed, and I'll make it easy. I'll read from Mr. Randolph's transcript, and I won't use any Russian names. Instead of debating about angels on pinheads, let's count them.

JUDGE

Mr. Content?

CONTENT

(hesitating)

No objection -- provided she reads fairly.

RANDOLPH mimes handling a pad of paper.

RANDOLPH

Ready.

GOLDMAN

"We don't believe in conscription, this meeting to-night being a living proof. This meeting was arranged with limited means. So, friends, we who have arranged the meeting are well satisfied if we can only urge the people of entire New York City and America" -- am I really that graceless? -- "there would be no war in the United States, there would be no conscription in the United States, if the people are not given an opportunity to have their say." There, that should do it. Mr. Randolph -- please.

CONTENT

That was too fast!

GOLDMAN

(coily)

Have you been to some of my lectures?

RANDOLPH

I have not gotten it all down, Miss Goldman.

CONTENT

See, it was not a fair test.

GOLDMAN

Because he didn't get his own words down?

BERKMAN

A touch, a touch, I do confess.

GOLDMAN

Mr. Randolph -- we wait with bated breath.

CONTENT

Objection!

GOLDMAN

I apologize. Mr. Randolph -- our breath is no longer bated.

RANDOLPH

(clearly nervous)

"We don't believe in conscription. This meeting tonight being a living proof. This meeting was arranged with limited means, so friends, we can only urge the people that there will be no conscription in the United States" -- that is as far as I got.

GOLDMAN cups her ear and waits.

GOLDMAN

Well, Mr. Randolph --

RANDOLPH

What?

GOLDMAN

I am waiting for the words "urge the people of entire New York City and America -- " Mr. Content, aren't you waiting for those words?

CONTENT

We get the point. We get the point!

GOLDMAN

I am also waiting for the words "We believe in violence and we will use violence." Should I wait very much longer?

BERKMAN

I think the experiment is done -- well-done!

CONTENT

Not quite. Your honor, we want to call another witness.

JUDGE

Who?

CONTENT

Charles Pickler.

BERKMAN

(smiling)

Pickler! For people in a pickle!

STAGEHANDS switch: CHARLES PICKLER is on the stand.

CONTENT

Mr. Pickler, were you at the Harlem Casino on May 18?

PICKLER

I was.

CONTENT

Why?

PICKLER

I was taking notes for the Stenographic Service Company -- they've done Miss Goldman in the past.

CONTENT

How fast does she talk?

PICKLER

At a full boil, up to 200 words a minute. She "simmers" at 125, I would guess -- but she doesn't simmer often. And from what I just saw -
- well --

CONTENT

Your honor, instruct the witness to stop offering opinions.

BERKMAN

You asked for a professional opinion.

JUDGE

You will have a chance to cross-examine.

CONTENT

I no longer wish to question this witness.

BERKMAN

He's ours? Yes!

(BERKMAN comes forward with relish)

Mr. Pickler, do you know Miss Goldman or myself?

PICKLER

Not personally.

BERKMAN

Do you believe in anarchism? The No-Conscription League?

PICKLER

Makes no sense to me.

BERKMAN

So no feelings one way or the other at the lecture?

PICKLER

I was working -- I wasn't at the vaudeville.

BERKMAN

What's your rate?

PICKLER

Around 225 if the subject is easy.

BERKMAN

Is Miss Goldman easy?

PICKLER

Not at full steam.

BERKMAN

As she was that night.

PICKLER

Yes.

CONTENT

Conjecture.

PICKLER

Fact. By the end I was racing -- she easily perked along at 200.

BERKMAN

So if Mr. Randolph was only "perking along" at --

CONTENT

Objection.

BERKMAN

-- was transcribing at 100 to 125, he'd be "perked out," so to speak?

PICKLER

My professional opinion -- Absurd.

BERKMAN

Let the court note that this testimony comes from a government witness Mr. Content quickly abandoned when his testimony became inconvenient.

(to PICKLER)

I hope your feelings weren't hurt.

PICKLER

Naw.

BERKMAN

Thank you.

JUDGE

You may step down.

BERKMAN

(sotto voce, to CONTENT)

And you stepped in it.

GOLDMAN

Your honor, since the government's transcript is only good for the outhouse and accuses me of saying what I wouldn't say, it's time to slay this insult about my violence.

The next set of witnesses come in rapid alternate succession; at each witness change, the sound of a clap. The STAGEHANDS can choose whatever characterizations and props they want.

STEFFENS

Lincoln Steffens here. I have known Emma Goldman for 24 years. You have always opposed any violence.

Clap.

REED

John Reed, newspaperman. Emma Goldman a bomb thrower? The average cop on the beat has stirred up more violence than Emma Goldman.

Clap.

SLOAN

Anna Sloan, wife of the painter John Sloan. I was there on May 18. If Emma had promoted violence, it would have chilled my spine because she has never, ever urged anyone to harm another human being.

Clap.

ABBOTT

Leonard Abbott here. Emma and I have been friends for a quarter century, and I was there that night. Violence -- it don't hitch up to her argument.

Clap.

HALL

Bolton Hall, lawyer, if you please. Miss Goldman and I have talked many nights away -- she has always believed in educating people. Dynamite's a rotten textbook for getting people their liberty.

Clap.

GOLDMAN

I have more.

CONTENT

We've danced this dance enough. We get the point.

BERKMAN

A touch, a touch --

The JUDGE claps three times rapidly.

JUDGE

Summations to the jury.

As a choral arrangement, in the order given. The STAGEHANDS exit.
The JUDGE does not have to stay on his box for this.

JUDGE

This is a country based on the rule of law.

GOLDMAN

This three-act comedy has come to an end.

CONTENT

What is on trial here is not their beliefs --

JUDGE

Free speech means orderly expression --

CONTENT

But they can't ask people to disobey the law.

BERKMAN

We've been saying these things openly for 30
years.

GOLDMAN

Violence from the top begets violence at the
bottom.

BERKMAN

Can such an open book be a conspiracy?!

JUDGE

There is no place here for disobedience.

BERKMAN

Definition -- Un-American mean independent
opinion.

GOLDMAN

Militarism: Young men turned to slaves who kill
on command.

CONTENT

Obedience to the law -- or anarchy.

GOLDMAN

How can the world be made safe for democracy --

BERKMAN

-- if democracy is not safe here?

JUDGE

Progress must be accomplished by lawful means.

GOLDMAN

Progress is never within the law.

JUDGE

(to the JURY)

On your mark. Get set. Go.

Immediately, STAGEHAND enters rings a bell, as if a timer has gone off, or says "Ding!" The JURY should strike some kind of tableau.

CONTENT

Thirty-nine minutes. Longer than I thought. You must have impressed them.

JUDGE

Your verdict?

JURY

Guilty -- as if you had to ask.

CONTENT

Sentence?

GOLDMAN

Wait!

JUDGE

No. Two years each in federal penitentiary.
\$10,000 fine.

GOLDMAN

We want to appeal.

JUDGE

No.

GOLDMAN

We need to consult.

JUDGE

No. And once that's over, you're both booted back to your Bolshevik comrades. Dismissed.

BERKMAN

Give us two days.

CONTENT

It's up to the federal marshals to decide that. Perhaps you two should learn telepathy.

BERKMAN

Come on, Emma. Time to shift the battle field.

GOLDMAN

I wish to thank the court for this marvelously fair trial. Thank you so very much.

JUDGE

You both fought well here -- too bad you couldn't use your skills in more patriotic ways.

GOLDMAN

What do you think we've been doing? Hannah, what did they think we were doing?

* * * * *

Act I, Scene 7

Music for scene change: carousel music. Lights change: St. Tropez. The chairs are set as in Act 1, Scene 5. BERKMAN, JUDGE, and JURY exit. HANNAH re-enters.

GOLDMAN

So, after that, off to prison -- like beef to the wolves. Me in Missouri --

(mispronouncing it like HANNAH)

-- Sasha to Atlanta, Georgia -- each buried for two years. Then -- pfft! Deported. And now buried here --

(slangy voice)

-- and I'm usin' ya like a shovel.

GOLDMAN

Has any more sunk in?

HANNAH

Of what?

GOLDMAN

Of -- me --

HANNAH

I'm -- yes -- a little more.

GOLDMAN

But does anything --

(searches for the word)

-- anything bubble up --

GOLDMAN strikes her breast bone with the tips of her fingers.

GOLDMAN
-- in here? Pop? Fizz? Fly off?

GOLDMAN sees HANNAH's face.

GOLDMAN
Don't even try to answer -- it's not fair. If I
don't feel it, why should you?
(laughs to herself)
Did you know I was considered the most dangerous
woman in America? I used to be able to crack a
crowd open with just the right word.

GOLDMAN covers her teeth with her lips, as if toothless.

GOLDMAN
Not dangerous now. Toothless old hag.

Staggers, as if aged, still "toothless," trying to be funny.

GOLDMAN
Old anarchist crone, can't gnaw on a bone, hasn't
got a Kropotkin to piss in.

Sees that HANNAH doesn't react, gives up the attempt at the humor.

GOLDMAN
It's all -- gone. I should go join the old men
in the café -- "Move over, mon-sewer, let me
tell you about my dozens of lovers." See if I
can rattle their loins if not their minds.

GOLDMAN makes a dismissive gesture. HANNAH makes a forehand motion
with her hand.

HANNAH
I can hit harder.

GOLDMAN smiles. HANNAH strokes a backhand.

HANNAH
I can hit faster.

GOLDMAN makes a half-hearted attempt to return the "volley," mimes
watching the ball bounce past her.

GOLDMAN
Oops. Damn. Match over.

HANNAH

Not over. You're not in prison yet -- so to say. The story keeps moving. Aren't you going to tell me about it? You said that's what you wanted to do.

GOLDMAN

Not at the moment. No more talk. For the moment.

HANNAH makes the forehand gesture again; GOLDMAN half-heartedly returns it, then looks away and sits and stares, unsure what to do. HANNAH moves to the tables and starts reading and filing papers.

A tall, forceful woman enters: KATE RICHARDS O'HARE. She walks to face GOLDMAN. GOLDMAN starts, looks at HANNAH, who does not see the woman.

GOLDMAN

Hannah?

HANNAH

(looks at GOLDMAN, does not see O'HARE)
Yes ma'am?

GOLDMAN

(looks from HANNAH to O'HARE and back)
Just focus on the prison documents. Put everything else to one side.

HANNAH

(using an American accent)
Will do.

HANNAH does not hear any of the following dialogue. She continues doing her work.

GOLDMAN

Kate Richards O'Hare.

O'HARE

Emma Goldman.

GOLDMAN

What are you doing here?

O'HARE

Playing Hamlet's father.

GOLDMAN

Reminding me of my blunted purpose?

O'HARE
Giving you that kick in the ass.

GOLDMAN jumps, as if kicked.

GOLDMAN
Nope -- didn't work.

O'HARE
Emma --

GOLDMAN
What purpose, Kate?

O'HARE
To tell the truth.

GOLDMAN
More of a dying than a living in that.

O'HARE
Stir things up.

GOLDMAN
I'm not a cook.

O'HARE
Write.

GOLDMAN
You do the writing -- you write well. I read
your prison book -- nice cheekiness subtitling it
"Sometime Federal prisoner number 21669." I
don't even remember what my number was -- thank
you for saying what you said about me --

O'HARE
(indicating HANNAH)
You're having a hard time with her.

GOLDMAN
She's easy to work with.

O'HARE
She doesn't understand, does she?

GOLDMAN
It's my tongue -- all knotted. Not her fault.

These lines overlap, as if GOLDMAN is not listening to O'HARE at all.

O'HARE
You tongue-tied?!

GOLDMAN
She's young --

O'HARE
It would be easier to hog-tie a speeding train --

GOLDMAN
-- she lacks context.

O'HARE
-- than to peg your tongue down.

GOLDMAN
No common ground.

O'HARE
It ain't a lack of words on your part, my dear.
You always liked the young.

GOLDMAN
"Like" -- I'm not past tense yet.

O'HARE
I smell it on you.

GOLDMAN
It used to be I could thrill a mind with my
ideas. Now -- Now I'm borrowing courtesies -
-

O'HARE
Emma Goldman, shut your goddamned mouth.

GOLDMAN looks both startled and, oddly, pleased.

GOLDMAN
Could you say that again?

O'HARE
(slowly)
Shut your goddamned mouth. Is it working?

GOLDMAN reacts as if shivered by something pleasant.

O'HARE
You don't do self-pity well at all.

(indicating HANNAH)
Here is a good mind, and you're telling me you
can't move it. Emma, when we were prisoned
together, we bent minds a lot less supple than
this one.

No response.

O'HARE
(trying to coax a response)
And we did that by -- ?

No response.

O'HARE
(slightly sarcastic)
We did that by -- c'mon, recite after me -- by
putting everything into play -- I know you know
this. Every day became a classroom, hands-on,
down-and-dirty.
(GOLDMAN smiles slightly)
Ah, I see you remember! Nothing abstract --
everything noun/verb.

O'HARE uses the same gesture that GOLDMAN used earlier talking about
her and BERKMAN: fingers linked.

GOLDMAN
(links her fingers)
Noun/verb.

O'HARE
Do the same. Take her through our prison time,
make her guts know, the way we had to learn, and
teach. You believe in the beauty of Anarchism --
show her how it's supposed to work, in real time,
against real cruelty. She'll rise.

(moving to HANNAH)
Look at how diligently she works.

HANNAH looks for a paper; O'HARE hands it to her and HANNAH takes it
without missing a beat, as if she had picked it up herself.

GOLDMAN moves to where O'HARE and HANNAH are, and she, too, begins to
help HANNAH, handing papers, moving things, etc. The "help" becomes
choreographed over the next set of lines, all three of them moving,
where appropriate, in mesh.

O'HARE
Look at the attention she gives you.

GOLDMAN
Like Sasha -- concentrated.

O'HARE
Organizing, sifting, turning things into her
words so she can understand.

GOLDMAN
That's what --
(overlaps with "you did")
-- I did.

O'HARE
(overlaps with "I did.")
-- you did at her age. Sasha cuts your words
because they are self-indulgent --

GOLDMAN
I spill all over the place --

O'HARE
-- cheap melodrama --

GOLDMAN
-- but that's how I make up who I am --

O'HARE
-- you'd never tolerate it from your beloved
Ibsen.

GOLDMAN
Last act, Kate.

O'HARE
Emma, you know this drill: we all chalk up more
wasted life than accomplished living. The trick
is to make what we little we actually do is the
best we can do.

Choreography ends.

O'HARE
Talk to her.

GOLDMAN
Kate --

O'HARE
Nothing is over for you, Emma. You can't believe
that. Talk to her.

GOLDMAN

I feel -- passed by. This book feels like a millstone against me.

O'HARE

Milestone.

GOLDMAN smiles.

O'HARE

Talk to her. You've already set some stones down; use them.

As O'HARE and GOLDMAN recite the following names, the women enter and stand in a semi-circle upstage.

O'HARE

Remember Indian Alice, Minnie Eddy, Evelyn L'Ariat --

GOLDMAN

Aggie Myers -- Mollie Steimer --

O'HARE

Addie and Dope Fiend. You didn't change the world with them. But you did change them, some of them, at least moved them -- stunted people who still found hope to hope after tasting your words. How much stronger your words will be with this free soul poised on some hard choices. Look at her work. On your book. The one the three of you are going to finish.

GOLDMAN

If Sasha lets me!

O'HARE

He's a sculptor, not a butcher. And he believes.

O'HARE turns to leave.

O'HARE

Grace to you, Emma.

O'HARE joins the women upstage. GOLDMAN finds herself near HANNAH, holding a paper.

HANNAH

Do you want me to do something with that letter?

GOLDMAN

Oh, ah --

(puts the letter down)
Probably. Eventually. Hannah, what was I doing
while you --

HANNAH
Sitting there. Just staring.

GOLDMAN
Do you have any questions?

HANNAH
Not yet. Well, yes. In this letter you
mentioned two names: Indian Alice and Minnie
Eddy. Who were they? Ma'am, are you all right?

GOLDMAN
Right as rain. Can you say the names again?

HANNAH
Indian Alice and Minnie Eddy.

At the mention of the names, all the WOMEN move forward to HANNAH and
GOLDMAN.

GOLDMAN
Sad story, those two. They died, one from
venereal disease -- you know about that?

HANNAH
Yes.

GOLDMAN
The other from -- well, she was murdered. By the
prison. Starved her to death.

HANNAH
That's true?

GOLDMAN
Right in the land of the free and the home of the
grave -- Kate, you're right -- this is the way
--

HANNAH
Kate?

GOLDMAN
You'll meet her soon enough. Sit down. I
haven't finished the story yet.

HANNAH
We have all this work.

GOLDMAN

Yes, we do. We have Indian Alice and Minnie Eddy and Evelyn L'Ariat -- All right. The judge has sent Sasha and I to prison --

(claps her hands)

zoom! We appeal to judges called the Supreme Court to change the decision, but nope, nope, nope. So it's off -- me to Missouri, Sasha to Atlanta, Georgia. I said that already. They opened the doors of the prison -- banged them open -- Hannah, stay with me now -- go with me --

HANNAH

I am here.

GOLDMAN

(linking her arm with HANNAH's)

And then I stepped -- then we will step -- into hell.

Lights bump out. Music.

END OF ACT 1 -- INTERMISSION

During the intermission, all set pieces are removed. If the director desires, he or she can set the stage in the following manner for Act II. However, if this is not possible or desired, it can be dispensed with. (NOTE: The script has been written without using this floor pattern)

Using white gaffe tape, a grid is laid down on the floor. (Masking tape or chalk can be used in a pinch, but it is not preferred.) The grid contains nine "cells." The actual measurements of the cells in Jefferson City were 8' x 7' x 8' high, but it is not necessary to make the cells actual size; smaller is better, to show the cramped lives of the prisoners. Each cell will have its own light focused on it.

Where each woman is:

Back Row: Dope Fiend (colored woman) / Addie (colored woman) / Indian Alice

Middle Row: Minnie Eddy / Evelyn L'Ariat / Aggie Myers

Front Row: Mollie Steimer / Emma Goldman / Kate O'Hare

Other props will be brought on as needed during Act II.

Another suggestion: In one production, the director lowered wires with clips on the end that clipped into holders on the floor that formed a

large square, the "bars" (or wires) being about 2.5' apart. It was an effective way to define the prison space.

* * * * *

Act II, Scene 1

The WOMEN enter in a line upstage and face upstage to a low, ominous music. Lights up to ghost. SOUND: the clang of eight closing steel doors in quick succession. At each "clang," each woman will turn and face the audience. Music, sound, and lights bump out. The WOMEN remain on stage.

NOTE: The first four WOMEN will be numbers 1 through 4. GOLDMAN will always be WOMAN 5. The second four WOMEN will be numbers 6 through 9.

Lights up. GOLDMAN is escorted onstage by the MATRON. The MATRON is carrying a folded dress, made of coarse brown muslin, and a pair of shoes. GOLDMAN carries nothing and wears no shoes. This should be played down center.

FOUR WOMEN

"Emma Goldman Arrives At Jefferson City,
Missouri."

FOUR WOMEN

"A Guest Of The Federal Government."

MATRON

Stop right there.

GOLDMAN

Here? Or here?

MATRON

No lip, or I'll skin 'em both right off you.
Right there. Any diseases?

GOLDMAN

Nothing to complain of -- thank you for asking.
I'd like a bath and a cold drink.

MATRON

Don't fake me. Most women here delivered have
it. Pigs.

GOLDMAN

And you a pearl before them.

MATRON

No lip, I'm warning you.

GOLDMAN

I don't have the clap, the critters, the pox, if that's what you mean. Heard, though, that respectable people -- even prison matrons -- can pick it up.

MATRON

Hand me your insults, but I go to my home at night.

(indicating GOLDMAN's dress)

Off with it! Now!

GOLDMAN takes off her dress and hands it to the MATRON, who throws it on the floor. The MATRON begins frisking her, doing it in the most degrading way possible: reaching into GOLDMAN's drawers, pawing her, etc.

MATRON

Stand still.

GOLDMAN

What are you looking for?

MATRON

Dope. Cigarettes. Anything.

GOLDMAN

I have an entire set of files up my cunt --

The MATRON grabs her hair.

GOLDMAN

You should see what I have up my asshole.

The MATRON jerks her around by the hair.

MATRON

Shut -- your -- gob.

The MATRON finishes her inspection.

MATRON

All right, into the tub.

GOLDMAN

That?

MATRON

Required.

GOLDMAN

But you haven't cleaned the tub.

MATRON
Don't waste water here.

GOLDMAN
How many people before me?

MATRON
Ten, maybe.

GOLDMAN
I want to clean the tub.

MATRON
La-di-da.

GOLDMAN
With disinfectants.

MATRON
This ain't a hotel.

GOLDMAN
I refuse, then. I'm a nurse -- I know the
"disease." I am not going to use that tub.

The MATRON is right into her face.

MATRON
Take your goddam bath!

GOLDMAN
I won't.

MATRON
I'll break you.

The next four lines overlap.

GOLDMAN
"Abandon hope --

MATRON
I'll send you to the black hole.

GOLDMAN
-- all ye who you talk with her."

MATRON
I'll send you to the black hole. You know I can
--

GOLDMAN
There's a black hole --

MATRON
You know I will.

GOLDMAN
-- in your eyes.

MATRON
Do it.

GOLDMAN takes a step away from the MATRON and mimes turning on the taps. She mimes scooping one handful of water and letting it run over one of her feet. She scoops a second one and lets it run over her other foot. Turns off the water.

GOLDMAN
Clean enough.

MATRON
(throws the prison dress at her)
Put this on.

GOLDMAN
A circus tent!

MATRON
For the clown.

GOLDMAN
(puts the dress on)
My -- not nearly coarse and scratchy enough!

MATRON
This ain't --

TOGETHER
-- a hotel.

GOLDMAN
The shoes.

MATRON
Feet clean enough, I guess.

GOLDMAN puts the shoes on.

MATRON
You'll get your work dress tomorrow, when you show up to the shop. Welcome to Jefferson City.

The MATRON takes away GOLDMAN's dress as she exits. GOLDMAN faces the women. There is the sound of a very loud clanging door. The same ominous music as at the beginning of the scene. Lights to black except for a light on GOLDMAN.

GOLDMAN

Hannah -- my introduction to the dog guarding the gate to all the hells I had always said I wanted to destroy: cruelty, the waste of beauty, the acid of power, the fuck of injustice. I was dragged into my element -- and "my element" frightened me to my roots. Pissed off? There we were all -- guards and guarded alike -- pissed on. Everything that I believed I believed in was on the killing floor in that slaughterhouse. I stepped past the dog -- and I plunged into the abyss of the workshop.

* * * * *

Act II, Scene 2

SOUND: The loud clang of machinery.

FOUR WOMEN

"The Workshop and The Foreman."

FOUR WOMEN & GOLDMAN

"Hell and Its Lieutenant."

The nine WOMEN kneel, equally spaced, GOLDMAN in the middle, WOMAN 1 stage right. The FOREMAN enters. The clang mutes underneath his speech, audible but not disturbing. The FOREMAN carries a riding crop. He walks down the line as he talks; as he passes each woman, he touches her with the crop: a hit, a caress, a mock "knight dubbing," and so on. That woman begins a rhythmic motion of some sort to indicate sewing on a machine: it can either refer to the actual articles being sewn or mimic the motion of the machine itself. Each motion should tie in to the motion before it so that by the time the FOREMAN reaches the end of the line, the women look like one large machine. As he talks the machine runs faster and faster, but always in synch. Their faces are impassive.

FOREMAN

Work is a great liberator. It turns the brute earth into wealth. It gives us purpose and direction. It ennobles the soul. All of which does not apply to scum like you.

(hits WOMAN 1, begins his walk)

Your purpose is to make the "task" -- your sole purpose is "to make the task."

(hits WOMAN 2)

Sewing the collars on eighty-eight unionall jackets today, and tomorrow, and the day after that.

(hits WOMAN 3)

Doing the hems of fifty-five blue denim jumpers today, and tomorrow, and the day after that.

(hits WOMAN 4)

Eighteen dozen suspenders today, and tomorrow, and the day after that.

(hits WOMAN 5)

It's very simple: make the task or suffer. And I will make you suffer.

(hits WOMAN 6)

You know I will. I have the power. I count the jackets and decide if they're done right.

(hits WOMAN 7)

I keep the books that tell the only truth. Do you want to write that extra letter a week?

(hits WOMAN 8)

Be perfect in all regards. Do you want to make a dollar a month?

(hits WOMAN 9)

Have no imperfections in my eyes. One slip, and I will throw you down the hill like the rock of Sisyphus.

He has reached the end of the nine women, who are now moving quite quickly in their motions.

FOREMAN

You -- will -- not -- fail!

(softer)

We understand each other.

FOREMAN exits. Sound up to full. The women continue to work faster and faster, their faces still impassive. After 10 or 15 seconds, GOLDMAN screams in pain and collapses. All the others collapse as well but without screaming. Sound cuts out; lights to black.

* * * * *

Act II, Scene 3

Light up immediately only on GOLDMAN. As GOLDMAN speaks, the WOMEN rise and begin circulating behind her: they are taking recreation in the prison yard. During GOLDMAN's lines, they should "wander" in a very patterned way that still appears aimless.

NOTE: Each "prisoner" can fashion the character in any way that seems logical: speech patterns, gestures, movements, etc. The text is merely the starting point for the creation of the character. The

characters will also talk about various physical conditions, none of which will be made actual through make-up or costume.

GOLDMAN

I crumpled like paper, Hannah, all sick and knotted -- a kind doctor made me healthy enough to suffer the workshop again. And "the change" -
- "the change" was ripping through me, too!
Pinched and buried with hot flashes in hell!
Now, there's a résumé for you!

ALL WOMEN (EXCEPT GOLDMAN)

"The Prisoners in the Yard."

GOLDMAN

But I was hardly at my worst -- at least my friends remembered me. Almost everyone else there -- for all anyone cared -- and they didn't -- these women were dead and forgotten. They just hadn't been shoveled into their coffins yet.

The lights come up full, harsh. GOLDMAN joins them. MINNIE EDDY, AGGIE MYERS, and INDIAN ALICE all stay on the margins. During the scene, the WOMEN are all separated, in their own worlds. By the end of the scene, they have started to come together as a group.

ADDIE

(going up to GOLDMAN)

Who you be?

GOLDMAN

No one at the moment.

O'HARE

(Kiddingly)

I know what she is.

GOLDMAN

Kate!

ADDIE

Yeah?

O'HARE

She's a red!

GOLDMAN

Kate Richards O'Hare -- I had heard about this --

They greet.

DOPE FIEND

She's like you, then.

O'HARE

Only the best!

DOPE FIEND

(she pronounces "ci" as "see")

A so-ci-a-list!

O'HARE

(pronouncing it correctly)

Socialist.

DOPE FIEND

I like being social -- but myself, I am for the blues. I don't understand this "reds" bidness at all.

GOLDMAN

A lot of people don't.

STEIMER

I know you, too.

GOLDMAN

I know you, too -- Mollie Steimer.

STEIMER

Yes.

GOLDMAN

You worked on Mother --

STEIMER

On your magazine.

GOLDMAN

The grand and glorious Mother Earth! Fierce, you were, yes --

(to O'HARE)

-- she copy-edited like a surgeon. Like a dragon! Like a fencer! Writers trembled when she grabbed the blue pencil!

ADDIE

So you all knew each other out in the world?

O'HARE

Of each other. By reputation.

DOPE FIEND

Oooh, sounds like a cat fight to me! Come gather 'round!

GOLDMAN

(to STEIMER)

But you're here?

NOTE: STEIMER always speaks with strong physical gestures.

STEIMER

Mollie Steimer, political prisoner --
(holds up two fists)

Zero, zero.

DOPE FIEND

(imitating)

Zero, zero! What's that supposed to mean?

STEIMER

It means this, my friend: I didn't get here by way of dope or baby-killing or husband-slashing or selling off my vertical smile --

L'ARIAT

That's my game.

STEIMER

None of that!

L'ARIAT

Trying some "smile" might cool you down.

STEIMER

The dishonorable Henry D. Clayton gutted me with 15 years and deportation --

STEIMER sees that DOPE FIEND does not understand the term.

STEIMER

Deportation: kicking my filthy ass back across the ocean.

DOPE FIEND

Then that's what happened to me -- my mama "deportationed" me when I was eighteen -- except it was across the river out of town.

ADDIE

We all got that boot in the butt. But you --
(mimics STEIMER's gesture)
-- for what?

STEIMER

You ready?

ADDIE

You're ready.

STEIMER

For handing out a leaflet --

ADDIE

That man hated you 15 years into here for a leaf?

STEIMER

For a leaflet, for paper, a piece of paper that carried ideas.

ADDIE

C'mon -- paper?

STEIMER

No dynamite, no gunpowder, only ideas -- ideas he didn't like. An idea like a bullet through his brain. Your brain. So he took me in and zeroed me out.

(makes like she's boxing)

Zero, zero.

DOPE FIEND

Didn't know they could do that for things like that.

GOLDMAN

I am sorry about Jacob [pronounced "Jah-cub"]

DOPE FIEND

What's a "jah-cub"?

O'HARE

As am I.

STEIMER

Jacob Schwarz -- my friend.

L'ARIAT

I got friends.

STEIMER

The police shortened his sentence by beating him to death --

DOPE FIEND

Man --

STEIMER

Saved themselves some money.

ADDIE

That's harsh -- thought only black men got lynched like that.

STEIMER

We were so fucking dangerous, Emma, we were, so fucking dangerous.

GOLDMAN

It's all right, it's all right -- stay close to me, Mollie -- stay close. Kate --

ADDIE

Didn't know they could do that for something in your mind.

GOLDMAN

Oh, yes.

DOPE FIEND

I wouldn't been able to read it anyway, so my mind would've been safe.

ADDIE

I wonder if I got anything that dangerous in me?

O'HARE

We all do.

L'ARIAT

Maybe -- but the men do whatever damn well pleases them.

DOPE FIEND

Even if it don't please them, they do it.

ADDIE

And then do it again.

L'ARIAT

And again.

O'HARE

Mollie --

STEIMER

I'm fine -- I've decided to do this like a cobra.
You need to spend pity, spend it on these alley
cats -- something useless for the useless.

GOLDMAN

Don't let your anger --

L'ARIAT

(to GOLDMAN)

She should give that lip a rest.

GOLDMAN

Stay by me.

L'ARIAT

(indicating STEIMER)

We got her sad-ass story.

(to O'HARE)

So what made you one of us useless?

O'HARE

(pointing to STEIMER)

Same thing -- words. Five years for a speech I
gave.

L'ARIAT

Zero, zero, too -- come up snake-eyes and welcome
to the useless!

(to STEIMER)

Cobra --

(dismissive)

-- yeah.

(to GOLDMAN)

And you?

GOLDMAN

Make it three -- too much talk, too big a mouth.

L'ARIAT

Big mouth, big words --

(to the others)

-- so what good has all their talking done?

GOLDMAN

I have been wondering that myself.

ADDIE

(to GOLDMAN)

Out there, can't think -- out there, can't talk -
- kinda like in here.

DOPE FIEND
You fixing to join the "politicals"?

GOLDMAN
Politicals?

ADDIE
Quit cher bitching.

STEIMER
Even prison ranks the rank.

ADDIE
They smarter than us -- they should hang
together.

GOLDMAN
Kate?

O'HARE
They think because we know long words we're
better.

ADDIE
You are.

GOLDMAN
Do you know me?

DOPE FIEND
Not five minutes ago, and not now.

GOLDMAN
Emma Goldman.

Holds out her hand. DOPE FIEND shakes it, looking dubious.

ADDIE
You that kind of man woman?

GOLDMAN
Because I shake her hand?

DOPE FIEND
Ain't our custom.

GOLDMAN
Don't worry -- it won't hurt.
(holds up her hands)
My hands are empty, I come in peace.

(shakes ADDIE's hand)
Emma Goldman -- people called me the most
dangerous woman in America.

L'ARIAT

You?

DOPE FIEND

Out there, maybe --
(indicating the three of them)
-- all your "talk" -- but now you about as
dangerous as a pair of cut-off bull balls because
you are with the biggest collection of trash I
ever seen -- and you ain't even talked to them
three yet, the loonies -- and I set myself right
in the middle.

ADDIE

Me along with you.

DOPE FIEND

We thought we couldn't get any lower than what we
had for our lives.

ADDIE

But we was wrong. Addie.

DOPE FIEND

Dope Fiend.

TOGETHER

Colored women on the wrong side of Jesus and the
law.

ADDIE

My man played me false. I falsified his life.

DOPE FIEND

I ate the black power of dope, and now it eats
me.

ADDIE

He went to one hell. I came here.

DOPE FIEND

And when I got here, they took the dope away.

ADDIE

Her body screamed.

DOPE FIEND

Not sex, not food -- only "I want dope" kept
ringing in my ears. Still.

ADDIE

And another sin -- I killed my unborn baby.

DOPE FIEND

Me, too.

ADDIE

Unwanted.

DOPE FIEND

Wanted, but not to a crazy mother.

ADDIE

Ended the life before --

DOPE FIEND

-- my life ended it.

ADDIE

They found out --

DOPE FIEND

-- and added the sin to my sentence.

ADDIE

Ten years.

DOPE FIEND

A dozen.

TOGETHER

Two colored women on the wrong side of Jesus and
the law.

ADDIE

Jesus supposedly loved such as us out there.

DOPE FIEND

But in here he just ain't got the time.

TOGETHER

Amen.

ADDIE

We're all payin' for men in here, one way or
another.

DOPE FIEND

Amen to that, and give me some slide.

They exchange "skin."

GOLDMAN

I want to talk with you more later. I know so little about your people.

ADDIE

Do you mean "people," like my folks, people, or a race thing?

DOPE FIEND

Give Ethiopia a rest! She big on Marcus Garvey.

GOLDMAN

Everything. I know so little -- I don't even know who Garvey is.

DOPE FIEND

Don't get her started!

ADDIE

Yeah?

GOLDMAN

Yes.

ADDIE

I'd be honored to talk.

DOPE FIEND

Well. Count me in, too.

(to EMMA)

You the first white person I seen her speak civil to without threat of a lynch behind it. Can you bottle what you got?

GOLDMAN

I didn't know I was white.

DOPE FIEND

Course you are.

ADDIE

I think maybe she ain't.

DOPE FIEND

And I think maybe you cracked.

GOLDMAN

It's all right -- we're all a little cracked.

DOPE FIEND

Some more than others.

ADDIE and DOPE FIEND move away, arguing -- they don't hear GOLDMAN speak to them. L'ARIAT hovers on the edge.

GOLDMAN

That's why we have to "stick" together -- They missed my glue pun. Mollie, Mollie, where are you -- oh, good. Mollie -- it's all here, isn't it? No different here than out there. We "politicals" have work to do.

O'HARE

Emma --

GOLDMAN

It's the only way we'll all stay intact.

O'HARE

Yes, yes -- but pay attention and listen to me. They don't care a lick about "speeches" --

L'ARIAT

Personally, I hate being speeched to.

O'HARE

Unless we have some new way to pick the mealy bugs out of the breakfast porridge.

L'ARIAT

That would be helpful.

O'HARE

Noun/verb, Emma -- that's the only grammar. No "falutin'," high or otherwise.

GOLDMAN

Are you trying to tell me something?

STEIMER

Personally --

GOLDMAN

What? Out with it.

STEIMER

Out there -- I thought you were getting too much gas under your skirts.

GOLDMAN
You thought I was passing wind, eh?

STEIMER
Belching.

GOLDMAN
Mind-farts.

STEIMER
All those no-testicle radicals out there you hung
around with --

GOLDMAN
Even Berkman?

STEIMER
He's all wool and a yard wide -- but the rest of
those nannies! They should spend some time in
here flicking the cockroaches off the lunch table
--

L'ARIAT
(makes a flicking motion)
Ping!

STEIMER
It would purge a lot of their thought-crap and
straighten their spines.

GOLDMAN
My next book gets dedicated to the mealy-bugs.

O'HARE
There have been worse teachers.

STEIMER
Emma -- a lot of shit here to get to the gold.

GOLDMAN
The shit is the gold, Mollie. Let's dig.

O'HARE
Lead on, McDuff.

L'ARIAT
Come here.

L'ARIAT takes GOLDMAN to MINNIE EDDY. The others trail behind.

L'ARIAT
Try to dig through this shit.

GOLDMAN

I'm Emma Goldman.

EDDY cowers at first from the outstretched hand, then, in a very tentative but decided manner, she reaches out and touches GOLDMAN on the arm. She lets her hand linger, and GOLDMAN takes her hand in both her hands and simply holds it.

EDDY

Feels good.

GOLDMAN

What's your name?

EDDY

Minnie Eddy.

GOLDMAN

Emma Goldman.

EDDY

Short for Miniver. Ugly.

GOLDMAN

It's a very nice name. Better than "Em-ma" -- like two letters of the alphabet and a grunt.

O'HARE

Or "Kate" -- like a sneeze.

STEIMER

Or --

(overemphasizing the "ee" sound)

-- "Mollie" --

GOLDMAN

(to STEIMER)

Good!

STEIMER

I always wanted --

(in a Slavic accent)

-- a big Russian name -- like, Sophia Perovskaya.

GOLDMAN

Ah -- good choice.

STEIMER

Miniver is nice -- easy on the tongue.

STEIMER puts her hand on the coupled hands of GOLDMAN and EDDY; so does O'HARE. Momentary sharing, then GOLDMAN tries to let go of EDDY's hand.

EDDY

Don't.

EDDY looks embarrassed at her insistence and pulls her hand away. ADDIE and DOPE FIEND join the group, their argument finished. AGGIE also joins but hangs, like a frightened little dog, on the fringe; she mimes carrying a dog in her arms, petting it, but pays close attention. INDIAN ALICE stays by herself.

EDDY

Sorry. Got no right to impose. Go back to your friends.

L'ARIAT

She's cracked from floor to ceiling.

DOPE FIEND
(to L'ARIAT)

Just the size of your own crack.

L'ARIAT

Jealous!

DOPE FIEND

Of a dry well? Ha!

GOLDMAN

(looking at everyone)

We're all friends here, Miss Miniver.

(takes her hand back)

Tell me more.

EDDY

(touched)

Miss Miniver.

EDDY Brings GOLDMAN slightly away from the group.

EDDY

I can never make the task.

L'ARIAT
(loudly)

She can't make the task.

EDDY

Never.

L'ARIAT

She can't.

EDDY

My fingers get nervous, my mind rattles, my eyes wing off somewhere --

L'ARIAT

No focus!

EDDY

I already got sent to the hole once.

L'ARIAT

She makes it hard for all of us. She almost got us all sent to the hole.

ADDIE

That's true.

L'ARIAT

Think you can dig through her shit a little to make it easier for all of us? Now, that would be helpful.

DOPE FIEND

Why you fussing with this loser?

GOLDMAN

I fussed with you.

ADDIE

(snaps her fingers)

Quick!

(to DOPE FIEND)

Gotcha!

GOLDMAN

(to EDDY)

Go on.

EDDY

If I rush -- blam! all over the place. If I go slow -- behind from jump. Then the numbers start nibbling at me again. The foreman hates me --

L'ARIAT

He hates everyone.

DOPE FIEND

(deep voice)

"Be perfect in all regards."

ADDIE

(deep voice)

"Have no imperfections in my eyes."

DOPE FIEND

"One slip, and I will throw you down the hill
like the rock of Sisyphus" -- whoever that be.

EDDY

Stop it!

L'ARIAT

Look who's piping up!

(to GOLDMAN)

That's new for her.

EDDY

(looks embarrassed at her outburst)

He wants me to lick up shame, so he erases my
numbers from the book.

(to the others)

Just like he does to all of you!

(again, embarrassed)

The book says everything, Miss Emma. The book
has my number in it.

GOLDMAN

Is this true?

O'HARE

He does it to all of us.

STEIMER

He's all the gods boiled down to a whip.

GOLDMAN

(to ALL)

Is it? True?

(no one assents or dissents)

We've got to stop that.

DOPE FIEND

Well --

GOLDMAN

I do have lungs and a tongue -- they used to be
worth shooting off.

DOPE FIEND

It don't do to push.

ADDIE
And you calling her a loser?
(to GOLDMAN)
I don't know how, but I agree with the trying.

DOPE FIEND
(muttering)
Political.

GOLDMAN
(to EDDY)
We'll do something.

EDDY
You can't. But thanks. I'll let go now.

GOLDMAN
But don't go far.

GOLDMAN sees AGGIE MYERS.

GOLDMAN
Is that a dog?

MYERS
Yes. Can't have.

GOLDMAN
I'm just surprised to see something other than
bugs and rats.

MYERS
Riggles is my baby doll. Won't beg anything for
myself, but I will for him. He needs the best.
The dog is good.

GOLDMAN
I'm sure it is. And who are you?

MYERS
The dog is good. Aggie Myers. It was over a
card game.

GOLDMAN
(to STEIMER)
Card game?

MYERS
Where's Riggles? Oh, good, good.

GOLDMAN
She's not here for a card game?

STEIMER

Murder.

GOLDMAN indicates MYERS, as if to say, "Her?"

DOPE FIEND

She started petting that -- thing the day she got here.

ADDIE

Like some hug their money.

DOPE FIEND

Like some have to breathe.

MYERS

The boarder. Yes, yes!

L'ARIAT

Now you got her ticking!

MYERS

My husband and I ran the boarding house.

L'ARIAT

"It was a card game."

MYERS

It was a card game. The boarder shouted at my husband, "You had that ace shoved up your arse!"

L'ARIAT

(echoing)

"--shoved up your arse" -- yeah, yeah --

MYERS

I was eighteen -- what did I know about arse?

L'ARIAT

I knew all about "arse" at --

GOLDMAN gestures for her to stop.

MYERS

They fought -- cards went everywhere. They said I did it. Not me, Riggles, not me. The poker. He said I used the poker -- on my husband. Playing poker! They believed him. I was eighteen. Rope -- that's what they wanted. But I was eighteen, so they changed it to life. Life and rope. Riggles? Ah, good.

MYERS starts to wander away.

GOLDMAN

Wait!

GOLDMAN "pets" the dog.

GOLDMAN

You take good care of him.

MYERS

(indicating the dog)

Life -- not rope. Yes.

MYERS goes back to the fringe.

GOLDMAN

Life or rope.

DOPE FIEND

Got no hope.

ADDIE

Tell it to the Pope!

They give each other some "slide."

STEIMER

(to GOLDMAN, indicating MYERS)

How do you fix that without some dynamite?

L'ARIAT

My turn.

O'HARE

(to STEIMER)

And how would dynamite mend her?

L'ARIAT

My turn.

STEIMER

The Apocalypse would do us all some good -- blow away all the slime!

L'ARIAT

My turn, Red Emma.

GOLDMAN

Mollie -- "Red Emma" -- how'd you get that name?

L'ARIAT

I have heard about you. My mother went to one of your birth control lectures once.

(indicating herself)

Obviously, it didn't work.

GOLDMAN

Maybe she wanted you.

DOPE FIEND

Who'd want her?

L'ARIAT

Hard to tell who wanted what in my family. Dad kept slinging it in, and Mom just kept slinging 'em out. I acquired a taste for the "slinging in." Hey, do you like my name?

GOLDMAN

What is your name?

L'ARIAT

Evelyn L'Ariat. L-A-R-I-A-T. The streetwalker "lariat" -- wrap that noose around 'em and pull 'em in! I just Frenchified it a little with that --

(makes an "apostrophe" with her finger)

-- to make it stand out. But not much trade in here, at least in what I like.

DOPE FIEND

A streetwalker with no street.

L'ARIAT

But I should be out soon -- I ain't worried.

ADDIE

You know they're worried when they say they ain't worried.

L'ARIAT

All right, then -- maybe a little.

DOPE FIEND

Maybe a lot.

L'ARIAT

See, my "sin" -- my "crime" -- was that I decided I could keep a little more of the money if I slipped around on my own.

DOPE FIEND

Uh-huh.

L'ARIAT

But the big hairy power boys said no, no, no. You have to split it with protector, police, and plug-ugly politicians (all of 'em got limp firehoses). So they faked me up on a charge of rolling a customer to teach me a lesson.

(snaps her fingers)

Small lesson, small potatoes -- I'm as taught as I'm going to get. A week more, tops.

EDDY

She's been saying that for a month now.

L'ARIAT

The ghost speaks!

(to GOLDMAN)

You gave her a tongue back. Yeah, so it's been a month -- time moves different in here.

GOLDMAN

I was a streetwalker once.

STEIMER

You?

GOLDMAN

For a night.

L'ARIAT

Pick up my jaw!

O'HARE

Really?

GOLDMAN

For Sasha --

(to the others)

-- for my companion Sasha. Alexander Berkman.

O'HARE

The Frick assassination!

GOLDMAN

Attempted.

L'ARIAT

You're hooked up with an assassinator?

GOLDMAN
He needed money for a -- project.

O'HARE
(to L'ARIAT)
Mr. Berkman tried to kill a very rich and
powerful man.

L'ARIAT
That's a good project.

STEIMER
Very good.

GOLDMAN
He needed money. So I was going to earn it on my
back -- just for a night. To get money for a gun
and a train ticket.

STEIMER
So what happened?

GOLDMAN
The first man -- the only man -- I picked up --

L'ARIAT
Too much talking with the wrong lips!

GOLDMAN
He took me to a saloon, bought me a beer, gave me
\$10, and told me to give it up because I
obviously didn't have the stomach -- or the
skill. (I thought I had a little!) I never
learned his name. I got \$10 more from my sister,
and Sasha was on his way.

L'ARIAT
So you never actually did it?

GOLDMAN
Not in trade. But plenty of other times.

L'ARIAT
No wonder you were big on birth control.

GOLDMAN
I hope you do get out soon.

L'ARIAT
Matter of minutes. Days at the most. A week,
tops.

MYERS

Riggles thinks it's going to be longer.

GOLDMAN

I don't doubt it for a moment.

L'ARIAT

What does a dog know?

Beat. Everyone looks at ALICE COX.

GOLDMAN

What?

O'HARE

(indicating ALICE COX)

Be careful of her. Syphilitic.

L'ARIAT

She's got a lock on the pox.

GOLDMAN

I thought so -- The modern leprosy. She
doesn't have much time left, does she?

STEIMER

Dying seems to be the only thing she's good at.

GOLDMAN

We'd all live better if we were better at dying.

(to COX)

You. Yes, you. Hello. Hello.

COX

(tries to avoid her)

Unclean.

GOLDMAN

No, no -- just sick. Don't go away --

COX

Stay away. The worm is in me.

GOLDMAN

I am a nurse -- I trained in Europe. You know
what it is you have?

COX

Punishment.

GOLDMAN

No, you're just sick, not evil.

COX
Evil is as evil's been done to me.

GOLDMAN
Do you have a name?

L'ARIAT
Go on, tell her -- we've all told her ours.

COX
Alice Cox. Stay away.

EDDY
Indian Alice.

GOLDMAN
What -- The word, Miss Miniver? Her people?

EDDY
Tribe.

GOLDMAN
What tribe?

COX
Forgotten. I am only this.

GOLDMAN
No.

COX
That is all I am.

GOLDMAN
No.

COX
But not always.

GOLDMAN
No.

COX
Not until they found the gold. It turned their
blood black, their eyes black, their hearts --
He wanted me to take him to his claim, up the
river, in the canoe. I did. But he hit me,
hard, hit me again and again --

L'ARIAT
(quietly)
I know about that.

COX

And he dug into me like digging into the ground.
So I killed him. I remember that. But his gold
fever got all up inside me. They chained me and
let it eat me inside.

STEIMER

It's been eleven years, Emma.

ADDIE

Sometimes her clothes get so stiff from the open
sores --

DOPE FIEND

They rattle when she walks.

EDDY

I can hear her coming down the hall.

MYERS

Riggles cries for her.

COX

(with sudden clarity)

There was a time when life was not like this.

GOLDMAN

It can come again.

COX

When I die, life will not be like this. I will
remember all the shining faces.

(she loses the clarity)

I am what greed does.

GOLDMAN

No. No. I'll try to help. I'm a nurse --

(to the others)

I cannot believe that they --

O'HARE

There's nothing you can do.

COX

(again, with clarity)

Nothing's left, Emma.

The WOMEN should be in close proximity to each other, a tableau of
less separation than at the beginning of the scene if not yet real
connection. GOLDMAN looks at each of them as the sound of the
workshop machines comes up. As the sound gets **very** loud, they all

break from the group and go to their workshop positions, doing their machine motions.

* * * * *

Act II, Scene 4

The FOREMAN enters with a STAGEHAND dressed in vest, suit, watch chain, etc.: the garb of a businessman. As they walk down the line, they argue.

WOMEN
(shouting over the noise)
"The Workshop."

The machine sounds dim to underscoring.

FOREMAN
I've got them working as fast as they can work.

MAN
Production is not enough.

FOREMAN
Things aren't entirely in my hands.

MAN
Your balls are in my hand. I don't want excuses.

FOREMAN
I don't work for you -- I work for the state of Missouri.

MAN
You don't work for me? All you slaves work for me.

During the next lines, the women bark out the name of the company for whom they're making the garment. As they do so, they mime holding up an article of clothing. MAN pushes WOMAN 9 over so she is on all fours, and he sits on her as if on a chair. The machine continues. MAN takes out a cigar and lights it -- it should actually be lit.

WOMAN 1
Defiance brand, Omaha, Nebraska.

FOREMAN pushes WOMAN 8 over and sits as well.

MAN
Boy, you're just a gear in the machine of profit.

WOMAN 2
Great Western, Minneapolis, Minnesota.

FOREMAN
I ain't a boy.

MAN
Let me sketch out the machine to you.

MAN rises. WOMAN 9 pops back to upright, continuing her machine motion.

WOMAN 9
S.J. Kacere, Cedar Rapids, Iowa.

MAN
Twenty-six hundred inmates --

WOMEN 7, 6, 5, and 4 bend over at the waist. He walks on their backs as he talks. As he passes over each one, she pops back up and continues the machine. If the spacing is such that he can't walk from one to the next easily, the FOREMAN will scuttle between each woman to provide the bridge. In any case, the FOREMAN rises and walks along with him. WOMAN 8 pops back up and continues with the motion.

NOTE: If there is a concern about this action, then substitute any stage picture which gets across the notion of "making a profit off their backs."

WOMAN 8
Lincoln Jobbing House, Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

MAN
And what do they do all day?

WOMAN 7
The Iron Brand, Des Moines, Iowa.

MAN
Nothing! Because they're discarded and useless
and we can't hang everyone.

WOMAN 6
Sampson Brand, San Francisco, CA.

MAN
A mighty burden on the sovereign taxpayer. So in
steps me -- the businessman savior!

FOREMAN
The bloodsucker.

MAN hits FOREMAN. MAN should be on WOMAN 4 by now.

MAN
Know your betters, asshole.

WOMAN 5
Magnet Brand, Los Angeles, CA.

MAN
If it weren't for me, you'd be on some shithole
farm cracking corn and eating locusts.

He steps off her.

WOMAN 4
Smith, Follett, and Crowl, Fargo, North Dakota.

MAN pushes WOMEN 1 and 2 over; MAN and FOREMAN sit.

MAN
The state, in its infinite wisdom, sells these
degenerates to me. The profit is all "velvet"
because I don't have to wipe their asses -- you
all do that work for me. But we have a problem.

FOREMAN
Not enough production.

MAN
You are learning quickly.

FOREMAN
Not enough "velvet.'

MAN
Kerrect!

They rise. WOMEN 1 and 2 pop up and continue the machine. The two men in a weaving pattern among the women. The two strands of dialogue overlap.

WOMEN

- WOMAN 9: These men make money
- WOMAN 1: off our hands
- WOMAN 8: or off our backs.

FOREMAN / MAN

- FOREMAN: But the machines are old --
- MAN: So fix 'em quicker.
- FOREMAN: They're lazy.

- WOMAN 2: Fucked either way.
- WOMAN 7: We're nothing but a sponge
- WOMAN 3: for them to squeeze dry.
- WOMAN 6: Same old story.
- WOMAN 4: Slavery never ended.
- WOMAN 5: This must end now.
- MAN: Punish 'em more.
- FOREMAN: It'll kill 'em.
- MAN: We'll get fresh meat.
- FOREMAN: There's a limit.

FOREMAN

There's a limit!

MAN

(grinding cigar in FOREMAN's palm)

That's where you're wrong. The only limit is in your imagination. Be imaginative. I have faith in you.

The FOREMAN grips his hand in agony as the MAN exits. There is a beat as the women work with the machine sound underscoring and the FOREMAN watches them in his pain. The sound of the machine rapidly gets louder as the FOREMAN becomes more and more enraged looking at the women until his rage and the sound peaks. He screams at them, a loud inarticulate howl, and the sound bumps out abruptly. The FOREMAN exits. The machine continues "working" in silence.

* * * * *

Act II, Scene 5

GOLDMAN

"On The Nature of Proportionate Punishment"

ALL

"A Treatise."

MINNIE EDDY collapses from exhaustion. The machine stops. The FOREMAN enters, hand bandaged. GOLDMAN goes to EDDY.

GOLDMAN

She needs help.

FOREMAN

She's a sneak.

GOLDMAN
She's sick. Any idiot can see that.

FOREMAN
I'm not an idiot, so I don't see it. She's
already cost me plenty. She's gonna pay back.

EDDY stirs.

FOREMAN
Back to your machine!

EDDY sees GOLDMAN.

EDDY
Like a knife behind my ears.

FOREMAN
Get up, you bitch!

GOLDMAN
Watch your tongue!

FOREMAN
Do you want the hole, too?

GOLDMAN
I want you to act like a decent human being!

FOREMAN
In this place?

GOLDMAN
Anywhere.

FOREMAN
A luxury. This worthless scrap has never made
the task. Guard!

STAGEHAND enters, a prison GUARD.

FOREMAN
Chuck her in the hole. Might as well finish it
off.

GOLDMAN
You can't do that!

FOREMAN
Can -- and will. With pleasure.

ADDIE stands.

ADDIE

We need her to help us all make the task.

DOPE FIEND stands.

DOPE FIEND

We'll give her a hand. Two hands.

MYERS

Don't take her to the hole.

FOREMAN

(to GOLDMAN)

What've you been doing?

STEIMER

I will help her make the task.

L'ARIAT

Well, hell -- I got two hands that can work with all of yours.

O'HARE

We know how important it is to you for us all to make the task.

COX stands, remaining silent, but fixes her look on the FOREMAN.

O'HARE

(with gentle emphasis)

The task -- the task is what's important.

FOREMAN

(to GOLDMAN)

You've been making them think too hard -- all of you thinking too hard! -- and you've bitched it for them making them think they got hope. Them? Stopping me? That'll be the day.

The GUARD takes EDDY roughly from GOLDMAN and starts to walk. The WOMEN all take one step closer to each other, as if to block the GUARD's way.

FOREMAN

The hole has a never-ending appetite, my sweeties. Dope Fiend, Addie -- all of you. I know your privileges. I know your hungers. Red Emma here -- she's just piss on a hot stove. Ssssst! I'm here for a long, long time.

(to the GUARD)

Go.

Once again the GUARD moves to go. The WOMEN don't break immediately, but they have heard the FOREMAN, and after a moment's hesitation, they step back.

EDDY

(as she's led off, to them all)

Thank you. Bless you.

The GUARD brings EDDY center stage. The WOMEN except GOLDMAN become the "hole," kneeling on the floor on three sides with their backs to EDDY. The GUARD roughly puts EDDY in the cell; GUARD and FOREMAN exit.

GOLDMAN

The hole, Hannah. The last circle of the last circle of hell. A coffin without last rites. The poor frightened broken child. A thin mattress, damp floor, moldy bread, rancid water - - all for her crime of not making enough "velvet."

GOLDMAN joins them. The following lines should be underscored by discordant music or sound.

EDDY

So cold. My bones -- melt. Can't eat the bread. The rats get it. The numbers. Like the rats -- nibble, nibble, nibble. Ahhhh! I am a good girl, I am. No harm to anyone. Always quiet. Quiet, quiet. Shhh! I can hear their claws. Let me out of here! I'll work hard, I will. I promise. I'll make the numbers. Quiet, quiet. Shhh! They're singing -- I can hear their squeals. Little pips, little squeaks. So tiny. Let me go! Let me -- ahhh! I am a good girl! I'll work hard! I'll do the task!

EDDY stops.

EDDY

Become one of them, I will -- hard little paws, brown fur. They can move anywhere they want. Up. Down. Out. Out. Out. I have always been a good girl. I have always been a good girl.

Music/sound out. There is a moment of complete rest and silence as EDDY slumps inside the cell. The WOMEN pivot to face her, still kneeling on the floor. As they speak, EDDY comes to consciousness and stands with an air of calm, and for the first time she looks like a full human being. Then, in a coördinated move, the WOMEN rise at the same time and speak.

COX
Two to 15 days was usually the limit.

ADDIE
(echoing)
The limit.

L'ARIAT
They kept her twenty-one.

MYERS
Not always bread every day.

ALL
The rats were angry then.

O'HARE
I wrote to the warden, but he wouldn't interfere.

ADDIE
One of the earth's wasted.

DOPE FIEND
(echoing)
Wasted.

STEIMER
The man always disposes.

GOLDMAN
They let her out for Thanksgiving.

ALL
Giving thanks.

DOPE FIEND
They shoulda just cut her throat.

COX & L'ARIAT
She hadn't eaten for so long --

ADDIE & STEIMER
-- she filled her gut with that questionable food
--

O'HARE & DOPE FIEND
-- it was like she'd taken the hole inside her --

GOLDMAN & MYERS
-- and it cut through her like glass.

GOLDMAN
That night.

DOPE FIEND
(echo)
That night.

O'HARE
In her cell.

ADDIE
(echo)
Her cell.

L'ARIAT
Her insides --

L'ARIAT & COX
Rotted with --

COX
The food that couldn't nourish --

MYERS
Her stomach burst --

STEIMER
And her heart gave up --

ALL
Her heart gave out.

As GOLDMAN steps forward to speak, EDDY suddenly crumples and falls into their arms. They bear her offstage repeating the following chant.

*Minnie -- Eddy -- will work -- no more
Minnie -- Eddy -- stands on -- the shore
Death -- takes -- her by -- the arm
And Death -- will shield -- her from -- all harm.*

GOLDMAN
The matron threw cold water on her, slapped her several times, and told her to get off the floor. She never summoned the doctor. She died the next day, rotted from the inside out, poisoned without remorse.

GOLDMAN finishes; the chant finishes. Lights go to a single downlight on GOLDMAN, who curls into a fetal position in the "hole." Lights out.

* * * * *

Act II, Scene 6

The sound of the workshop machine. The women come in and take their places and start the machine motion. The MATRON stands at attention, watching everyone. EDDY will join the work line, but she is clearly a spirit -- this should be indicated by some simple change, such as a wearing a white dress. She moves at her own pace in the machine -- she is no longer part of that rhythm. EDDY will float through the remaining prison scenes, reacting as she chooses to the events. Lights up.

WOMEN (ODD NUMBERS)

"A Bit of Defiance"

WOMEN (EVEN NUMBERS)

"In the Alliance."

MATRON

Si-lence! You know the rules. No talking while you work.

The women speak in loud whispers.

O'HARE

(to GOLDMAN)

I got the chewing gum.

GOLDMAN

So did I.

L'ARIAT

(to everyone)

Did you hear that? Gum!

MATRON

I said si-lence! I mean si-lence!

ADDIE

She's such a cow.

STEIMER

At least a real cow gives milk.

DOPE FIEND

Her titties is pretty useless.

MATRON

I see you moving your lips. If you're moving your lips, you're talking, and I don't want anyone talking!

MYERS

I'm not talking! They'll take Riggles!

COX

I can't feel my teeth.

The MATRON walks among them, and as she walks she does a little something to each one, except EDDY, just to annoy the person and assert her power: a flick of the ear, etc.

MATRON

I told you I didn't want to see any talking. You know the rules: complete silence.

L'ARIAT

Lick me.

MATRON

What? Who said that?

L'ARIAT smiles, shrugs. The next comments are done so that they are said when the MATRON has her back turned. The MATRON can never catch the culprit, but she increases her petty punishments, hitting people at random. She can intersperse such lines as "I'm warning you" or "You'll get yours."

ADDIE

Dried-up left tit.

DOPE FIEND

Dried-up right tit.

MYERS

Dog -- shit.

COX

Pus.

STEIMER

Thug.

ADDIE

(pronounced "hor-nee" with a pig squeal)
Horn-y!

COX

Seal fat.

DOPE FIEND

Queer.

MYERS

Woof!

L'ARIAT

Lick me.

MATRON

Enough! One more, and you're all in the hole. I will bury you, just like that sniveling little bitch Minnie Eddy!

They fall silent, knowing she can and will make good on her threat. They continue working.

MATRON

Better. Much better. Break!

The women stand wearily. The machine sounds stop. GOLDMAN and O'HARE consult.

O'HARE

Should we?

GOLDMAN

We should.

They walk down the line handing out chewing gum (mimed). At first they give a piece or two to each person, but something happens: they all look at each other chewing and enjoying it, and they start to smile. O'HARE indicates, "Would you like some more?", and they all nod yes. So, with a wink at each other, GOLDMAN and O'HARE start handing out more until people are chewing gum like cud and laughing -- all silently. The MATRON bellows.

MATRON

Break over!

The women go back to work, chewing madly, with a smile. Machine sounds begin.

MATRON

I can see your lips moving. What did I tell you?

She gets off her box and walks down to the line and leans over each of them as if to catch them saying something. But they don't say a word, just chew, exaggeratedly, and smile. The MATRON is exasperated.

* * * * *

Act II, Scene 7

FOREMAN enters. He is still wearing his bandage. Machine sound stops; the women stop. He reads a letter, evidently with some distaste. He finishes, looks at the MATRON, then crumples it and puts it in his pocket.

ALL WOMEN

"The Taming of the Shrew."

The FOREMAN goes to L'ARIAT and pulls her from the line. The other women stand. MATRON motions: machine sounds out.

FOREMAN

Pretty lady.

He traces the outline of her body with his crop as he talks and circles her.

FOREMAN

Do you believe in the Lord?

L'ARIAT

(nervous laugh)

Depends on what he's willing to pay.

FOREMAN

Do you believe in the Lord?

L'ARIAT

It's not necessary in my line of work.

GOLDMAN

The young prostitutes, Hannah, were sent there by their masters.

FOREMAN

Do you believe in sin?

GOLDMAN

If they became too independent.

L'ARIAT

I believe in sin if people'll pay for it.

FOREMAN

Do you believe in an immortal soul?

GOLDMAN

A whore can't be allowed to think for herself.

L'ARIAT

I only have a soul in the dark late at night.

FOREMAN

Do you believe in forgiveness?

L'ARIAT

Live and let live.

FOREMAN

Such innocence.

GOLDMAN

So they break them.

FOREMAN

Unfortunately, your protector can't afford to be so generous. Or patient.

L'ARIAT

So I guess not my "protector" anymore.

FOREMAN

Never was to begin with.

GOLDMAN rushes into the scene.

GOLDMAN

(to FOREMAN)

Sorry. Sorry. Evelyn, we need you in the shop. The break's over.

FOREMAN

Get out of here again.

GOLDMAN

I will, sir, yes, in a moment, as soon as I get Evelyn back to work.

(looks at the MATRON)

The matron is getting angry. C'mon, Evelyn.

GOLDMAN takes her by the arm. The FOREMAN shoves GOLDMAN away.

FOREMAN

(to the MATRON)

Take your break. Go on!

GOLDMAN looks at the MATRON, who hesitates, then exits.

FOREMAN

(to GOLDMAN)

I told you to get away.

The other WOMEN move in.

FOREMAN

Oh, Christ, not again!

L'ARIAT

Emma's right -- I should go back to work.

FOREMAN

You are not going anywhere anymore. You, you sow
--

(pushes GOLDMAN again)

You have business of your own to mind.
(to the others)

So do all of you.

DOPE FIEND

We know what you're gonna to do her.

ADDIE

(to L'ARIAT)

You know, don't you?

L'ARIAT

Occupational hazard.

GOLDMAN

What?

FOREMAN

All of you shut up.

DOPE FIEND

They brand her.

GOLDMAN

Brand her?

ADDIE

Hot coals.

MYERS

Everywhere.

GOLDMAN

Is that true?

FOREMAN

A useless whore needs to be made useless.

GOLDMAN

You'd do that?

FOREMAN

I don't have a choice.

GOLDMAN

Who told you to do that?

STEIMER

There's always a choice about being a bastard.

GOLDMAN

Who told you to do that?

ADDIE

Maybe he was just born a bastard.

MYERS

Born a bastard.

FOREMAN

Shut up.

MYERS

Sorry.

DOPE FIEND

Under a dark star.

ADDIE

From a black hole.

FOREMAN

(to GOLDMAN)

I don't answer to you.

(to L'ARIAT)

And no more shit from your "comrades." Let's go.

GOLDMAN

You can't do this.

FOREMAN

You have no idea what you're talking about.

GOLDMAN

I know exactly what I'm talking about.

L'ARIAT

(to GOLDMAN)

It's going to be all right.

FOREMAN

Not unless you got the second coming of Christ coming right now.

GOLDMAN

I know exactly what I'm talking about, and I'm not moving. Goons like you are like farts at a bean dinner: no big deal.

STEIMER

Damn ripe.

ADDIE

Damn straight.

MYERS

Damn him to hell -- oh --

GOLDMAN

I don't care who told you to do what you're going to do. No real man -- no real man -- bends over like that for anyone anytime. No real man shits his pants and calls it gold.

The FOREMAN, with L'ARIAT in tow, goes to move out. GOLDMAN stands in his way. He goes to move around her, and again is blocked when STEIMER links her arm through GOLDMAN's. Each time the FOREMAN moves, two WOMEN link arms (this includes EDDY). Even COX is part of this action, though she stands apart, afraid of infecting someone. Their "resistance" is completely without confrontation or violence, even when he threatens to strike them. It extends what they did when he came for EDDY. Finally he comes back to GOLDMAN.

FOREMAN

You. Will. Not.

The FOREMAN forces GOLDMAN to the ground and takes L'ARIAT. STEIMER kneels to help GOLDMAN.

L'ARIAT

Emma, it's all right. Looks like I'm going to be here longer than a week, tops.

As they exit, the WOMEN follow until they cannot go any farther.

DOPE FIEND
(to GOLDMAN)

They have a special room.

ADDIE

Handcuffs hanging from the ceiling.

STEIMER

No!

ADDIE

Hang 'em high!

MYERS

Burn them.

STEIMER

No!

COX

Blister them to death -- I know --

STEIMER

Get this out of my head!

O'HARE

It will never leave.

STEIMER

Get it out! Get it out!

GOLDMAN goes to comfort STEIMER. Suddenly, MYERS grabs the palm of her right hand, holding it up as if it has been burned. DOPE FIEND grabs her left breast in pain. ADDIE grabs her left palm in pain. COX grabs her right breast in pain. STEIMER puts her hands over her face in pain. O'HARE grabs her stomach in pain. All of them, including GOLDMAN, then put their hands over their crotches in pain and collapse to the floor. They look at one another in astonishment; EDDY watches in great sorrow. The branding is done. The MATRON enters and sees them. Lights to black.

NOTE: Do not use screams to show the pain but other vocalizations: grunts, a word, etc.

* * * * *

Act II, Scene 8

In the darkness, a hymn or some kind of religious music is played. The WOMEN stand, including EDDY and L'ARIAT. While L'ARIAT shows no physical injury, she should now act as if she is injured and disfigured. The GUARD, now dressed as the PREACHER, stands on the "cell" and preaches. The FOREMAN stands next to him with a variety of accouterments that the PREACHER will use. Comments from the WOMEN will intersperse the sermons. Music dims to underscoring.

WOMEN 1-4

"The Snows Of Mercy"

WOMEN 5-9

"Fall On All Mankind."

Lights up.

PREACHER 9

In this season of Our Lord's birth, we should give thanks for the lives his love has given us.

GOLDMAN

The preachers, Hannah. What a rack of rancid
Lamb of God. They wafted through like skunk
cabbage.

PREACHER 9

You are fallen women, deep in sin, but God loves
you still.

ADDIE

Back-handed way of showing it.

PREACHER 9

(now wearing the miter of a bishop)
Through confession and honest sorrow for your
sins, Jesus, who died on the cross for you, will
bring you eternal life.

STEIMER

J.P. Morgan dumped them into the gutter, you
crack-faced eunuch.

PREACHER 9

(now wearing the hat of the Salvation Army)
Join the army of God and fight as a soldier for
Christ.

L'ARIAT

(holds up the palms of her hands)
Where was the Celestial General when they branded
me?

PREACHER 9

(wearing the hat of a country preacher)
Scarlet whores of Babylon! He will burn your
flesh in his righteousness!

COX

(L'ARIAT holds up her hands again)
My flesh already burns. Why does he blame me?

PREACHER 9

(wearing a heavy gold cross)
The Light of God is Love. We must rise to the
apotheosis of his expectations for our goodness.

ALL

What?

PREACHER 9

I mean, God guides us through the hurly-burly of
the warp and woof of our tangled lives.

EDDY

He needs to be shot in the head twice a day to
before he can know anything.

PREACHER 9

(now wearing a flowered hat)

And we at the Ethical Society --

O'HARE

She's never slept with vermin.

PREACHER 9

-- want you to know --

ADDIE

Never had to make task.

PREACHER 9

-- that the uplift of your souls --

MYERS

I only love Riggles!

PREACHER 9

-- is what prompts us to dispel your ignorance.

DOPE FIEND

She clearly ain't got nothing goin' on underneath
her hat or her skirts.

The FOREMAN helps the PREACHER down and they exit.

WOMEN 1-3

The prison punishes the sinner --

WOMEN 4-6

The Church punishes the sin --

WOMEN 7-9

They both do it forever.

GOLDMAN

What a --

On GOLDMAN's next line, the four pairs of WOMEN do a choreographed
dance step together, like a minuet.

GOLDMAN

Perfect pas de deux.

Lights change. They are in the yard.

ADDIE

Man, I hate those frog-faced mumbler. Father
Dill-Pickle.

O'HARE

Reverend Apple Dumpling.

MYERS

Preacher Blinky Milk.

STEIMER

Elder Cream Puff.

COX

Deacon Pie-Face.

DOPE FIEND

Lady Bite-Me.

GOLDMAN

All your names have to do with eating!

L'ARIAT

I bet you even Jesus wouldn't come here.

GOLDMAN

He's already here.

O'HARE

Why, Emma -- I never heard you say a good thing
about religion!

ADDIE

You made a buck talkin' down religious? Sign me
up! I always hated the feelin' of rope around my
neck.

GOLDMAN

(to O'HARE)

Don't get your hopes up. Christ was a
bootlicker.

(to ADDIE)

"Talkin' down religious" is easy -- the Bibble --

DOPE FIEND

The Bibble!

GOLDMAN

-- is the stupidest book ever written.

O'HARE

A bootlicker.

GOLDMAN

Without a doubt.

O'HARE

I have felt Christ more here in this cesspit than I have anywhere.

ADDIE

Hissy fight on the rise.

GOLDMAN

I'm not surprised -- he likes the low places.

MYERS

God exists -- look at Riggles!

COX

He walks around at night and heals us. Some of us. I don't deserve it.

GOLDMAN

Stop that!

(to O'HARE)

What have you been feeding them?

O'HARE

(shrugs her shoulders good-naturedly)
Comes right out of their own needs.

GOLDMAN

(indicating COX)

Do any more of you believe what she said?

L'ARIAT

I've been crucified -- why not?

STEIMER

Emma, this might not be a good idea.

ADDIE

I don't believe the crud-ups that come and talk to us, but I always been taught that Jesus loved the trash. That's surely, surely us, ain't it?

MYERS

Jesus the bringer of light!

O'HARE

I couldn't agree more. Jesus the Man, that is. He'd never like Deacon Pie-Face. All his friends came from the "trash" --

(to ADDIE)
-- you're right -- and he grabbed his Apostles
from the low places.

GOLDMAN
Kate, stop, stop it, please!

ADDIE
The politicals got a contention goin'!

GOLDMAN
Jesus was a slavemaster! All right there in his
own words!

STEIMER
Emma --

L'ARIAT
Let 'em go. It passes the time.

O'HARE
He spoke truth to power.

GOLDMAN
He spoke --
(hesitating)
-- shit.

ADDIE
Yee-haw!

GOLDMAN
I can see it now. Everybody, just look at it
with me. This scraggly bearded tumbleweed blown
in from the desert tells anybody he can round up
they have to wait until the kingdom is at hand --
but in the meantime they're going to have to
suffer -- and old Pilate giving him the thumbs-up
-- go Jesus! -- because that's exactly the plan
the Romans have in mind: make 'em wait and make
'em suffer.

COX & MYERS
What?

ADDIE
I get it!

GOLDMAN
Simple, simple point. Follow me on this, Kate.
The Sermon on the Mount?

ADDIE

All them "Blesseds."

GOLDMAN

Remember any?

L'ARIAT

Blessed are the meek --

GOLDMAN

-- for they shall inherit the earth.

(indicates all of them)

Well, my fellow meek, any of you have a deed in your hands?

DOPE FIEND

I got cockroaches and rat bites.

O'HARE

(to GOLDMAN)

You know that wasn't the spirit of --

GOLDMAN

Why tell people they'll get a cut of the action -
-

(to DOPE FIEND)

-- see, I got your lingo! -- a cut if they turn both cheeks? The last thing the meek need is to be more meek! It's all been stolen from them because they've been busy --

(turning her head back and forth)

-- turning their cheeks.

MYERS

Blessed are they that hunger -- that hunger --

GOLDMAN

Kate?

O'HARE

(with a slight exasperation)

And thirst for righteousness, for they shall be filled.

GOLDMAN

(overlapping)

-- for they shall be filled, thank you. Okay, how?

COX

How what?

GOLDMAN

How? How are all these righteously hungry people going to get filled while the meek are busy turning their cheeks --

(turns her head back and forth again)

-- and the Romans sitting there with all the guns, so to speak? Our Christ-boy was long on advice, short on follow-through.

MYERS

What do you think, Riggles?

GOLDMAN

And you don't get to enjoy anything here! "For great is your reward in heaven." Couldn't he advance you a loan, just a little --

DOPE FIEND

A loan!

GOLDMAN

-- so that none of you would have to break your back for a wage or a trick?

ADDIE

Go down, Moses!

STEIMER

Emma -- your audience.

GOLDMAN pauses for a moment, caught up in her own rhythm, and slowly looks at all of them.

GOLDMAN

You're right.

(to O'HARE)

She's right. Well, enough. You get my point: I don't like what he teaches. Just look at us -- we've done what we've done -- do you see evil sinners, eternal damnation? I don't. The only good thing he ever said -- love each other. We could all do more of that.

O'HARE

I'll agree there.

COX comes up to GOLDMAN and holds out a hand.

COX

Love me?

Without a hesitation, GOLDMAN places her left palm against COX's right palm.

GOLDMAN
Especially you, Indian Alice

L'ARIAT puts her right palm against COX's left palm.

L'ARIAT
We're both branded.

MYERS puts one hand against L'ARIAT's hand, one hand clutching the dog.

MYERS
I got no one left.

O'HARE puts a hand on MYERS' shoulder, and holds out her other hand.

O'HARE
Links have all sorts of metal in them.

ADDIE joins.

ADDIE
I have to believe somethin'. Might as well be you.

STEIMER joins.

STEIMER
I believe in circles -- and enough goddam ammunition for everyone.

DOPE FIEND joins.

DOPE FIEND
First time in a long while I ain't got the hungers.

As DOPE FIEND's hand goes to join GOLDMAN's, EDDY steps in between them so their hands join across her back. There are several beats of silence, then the heavy sound of bells signaling the end of recreation. The women file off.

O'HARE
(to EMMA)
Just be sure to disinfect that hand. And Evelyn's.

GOLDMAN

I believe in science as well as solidarity! Come help me.

They link arms and leave. Lights out.

* * * * *

Act II, Scene 9

Music: something Celtic/Christmas. GOLDMAN enters; lights up on GOLDMAN as she moves around the stage. She should move into and out of nine pools of light, her gestures implying that she is leaving and paying a kind of last tribute in the individual cells of her cellmates. The cell lights cross fade as she leaves one and enters another.

GOLDMAN

We had a rollicking Christmas, Hannah. I had my friends send me bracelets, ear-rings, necklaces, brooches -- we doubled the value of Woolworth's stock! While they were at the movies on Christmas eve, Mollie, Kate, and I divvied up and with the help of a floor matron we played Santa, slipping into the cells, aprons stuffed with goods. And when they returned -- the place echoed like a nursery. On a day celebrating a birth in a place of death, they received a momentary pardon. The true solstice had arrived.

Music out.

GOLDMAN

Troubling news about Sasha: solitary confinement, stripped of all privileges, starved. I was afraid they would disassemble him. He had already suffered fourteen years of the prison grind for Frick; even Christ only had to last three days.

The WOMEN enter; lights come up to full. STEIMER and O'HARE carry on the clothes that GOLDMAN had worn at the top of the act, with the addition of an overcoat. The rest of the WOMEN set up GOLDMAN's office at St. Tropez while GOLDMAN changes her clothes and puts on the overcoat. The director should find a simple, stylized way for the WOMEN to have a final tableau of farewell and a graceful exit where indicated.

GOLDMAN

Odd to leave -- friendships and more forged there. People had died, dissolved -- and we had defied it as best we could -- all of them now my

comrades -- hopefully each other's comrades --
some "noun/verbs" left behind for possible bloom.
Reds, blues -- it was all colors. The one
commandment from the bearded man seemed to work -
- for a little while, at least.

(dressing should be finished)

And as much as I could I even spared some grief -
- not much, mind you -- for the bullies and
brown-noses. Love thy enemy, Hannah, as you
said. We said goodbye --

(tableau finished)

-- and the river of the world broke us apart and
took us all away.

(WOMEN exit)

I have missed them always. But nothing could
make me breathe that air a breath longer than
demanded. Besides, the government had plans.
They had buried us; now, they dug us up and got
ready to throw us away.

Lights change.

GOLDMAN

A small, bare room on Ellis Island. After the
deportation hearing.

A STAGEHAND enters as HARRY WEINBERGER, their attorney; coat and
bowler and carrying a leather satchel, from which he takes papers and
pencils. BERKMAN enters in an overcoat. GOLDMAN joins him. They
each pull knit caps out of the pockets and put them on. WEINBERGER
and BERKMAN stand. GOLDMAN sits and reads one of the papers.
WEINBERGER has just finished saying something.

GOLDMAN

Harry, don't.

WEINBERGER

We could always --

GOLDMAN

Mr. Weinberger, Mr. Weinberger, as our "attorney
of record," we know exactly your arguments.

(indicating the three of them)

Our hips have been glued too long for a surprise.

(turns to BERKMAN)

Sasha, you've read this?

BERKMAN

English is one of several languages I can read.

GOLDMAN

You know what it means?

BERKMAN
(in a low hiss)
Of course I know what it means!

WEINBERGER
The Supreme Court was unusually blunt.
(to BERKMAN)
You. You never applied for citizenship.

BERKMAN
I'm citizen of the world.

GOLDMAN
Sasha -- don't.

WEINBERGER
I'm used to it -- a porcupine is softer.

BERKMAN
So I'm not a citizen.

WEINBERGER
Which means I can't shield you. You're an
anarchist pest --

BERKMAN
I've been called worse --

WEINBERGER
-- and like a pest --

WEINBERGER squishes his thumb and index finger together, rubs them,
and flicks away the crushed "pest."

BERKMAN
No more than a bed bug. Well, that says a lot.

WEINBERGER
You've got nothing left to stand on.

BERKMAN
Nobody does. It'll be good to go.

WEINBERGER
Sasha, it's not like a holiday -- I can't
guarantee the booking.

BERKMAN
Russia.

WEINBERGER
It's nothing but dice for you now.

BERKMAN

But the dice for Emma.

WEINBERGER

Not quite as loaded, yes.

GOLDMAN

(not looking at either of them)
What is with the gambling?

WEINBERGER

Emma, you know what this says?

GOLDMAN

English is one of several languages I can read.

WEINBERGER

They gave you another chance to fight for your citizenship. Justice Brandeis issued the writ of error -- the prosecutor made a big mistake -- we can --

GOLDMAN

I know what it means.

WEINBERGER

Do you? It's a real chance.

BERKMAN

(indicates for WEINBERGER to step away, sits)
Listen to me.

GOLDMAN

(in a light tone)

Why start now?

WEINBERGER

We have about a minute.

BERKMAN

You should fight this. If you win, think of what you can continue to do. Fight it!

GOLDMAN

Always thinking "the fight." For thirty years we have always made "the fight."

BERKMAN

What else?

GOLDMAN

You. You. For 30 years, thick and thin, shit and glory. You -- the only country I care to be a citizen of.

OFFICIAL

Time's up. Bell tolls.

GOLDMAN takes up a piece of blank paper and a pencil. As she draws, she places BERKMAN's hand on her wrist so that he, in effect, draws what she is drawing. He watches steadily.

GOLDMAN

Harry, the tide is out. I know I could fight this -- but a good fighter also knows when to get out of the clinch. It is time to let go of America. It is also time not to let go of Sasha. I am more sure of his borders than any other. If they fling him, I'm flung, too.

She holds up to WEINBERGER what she has been drawing: it is the word "NO" in large block letters lightly shaded in. WEINBERGER takes the paper and displays it.

WEINBERGER

Final word?

GOLDMAN

Final word.

WEINBERGER puts on his hat and tucks the paper under the rim so that it covers his face.

WEINBERGER

Final word.

They all laugh lightly. WEINBERGER gathers up the papers and waits.

GOLDMAN

(to BERKMAN)

You will have to try harder to get rid of me.

BERKMAN holds her hand, says nothing.

* * * * *

Act II, Scene 10

GOLDMAN hands BERKMAN her coat; BERKMAN and WEINBERGER exit. HANNAH enters and sits, and we are St. Tropez again.

GOLDMAN

They reported us, exhorted us, aborted us -- and then deported us. To Russia. Cattle were treated better than we were -- you couldn't eat us, and we had no milk to give, no matter how much you squeezed our body parts. We got lice and endured Lenin. Enough?

HANNAH

It's a lot.

GOLDMAN

Perhaps too much?

HANNAH

It's a lot. But not too much for me. Oh no.

GOLDMAN

It wasn't boring?

HANNAH

Oh no.

GOLDMAN

It was all so long ago.

HANNAH

I could -- smell it, the way you told it. What touched me hardest --

GOLDMAN

Was what?

HANNAH

The death of Minnie Eddy --

GOLDMAN

In the prison people said Minnie Eddy was "marked" --

HANNAH

Marked?

GOLDMAN

Like in the middle ages, when people believed others were born with their deaths engraved on them --

HANNAH

That's ridiculous --

GOLDMAN

-- a birthmark shaped like a noose, for instance
--

HANNAH

She wasn't "marked"!

GOLDMAN

Not with a birthmark, no --

HANNAH

Not "marked" with anything! The foreman "marked" her! I do not believe you don't say that right out. It was the men who marked her. Just like my father wants to "mark" me --

GOLDMAN

Something just slip out?

HANNAH

Jules!

GOLDMAN

The intended's name sounds like a branding iron.

HANNAH

It is! Just like Evelyn L'Ariat!
(with a long hiss in the "s.")
Julessss.

GOLDMAN

So -- what to do, now that you let it out? Like I said, I was divorced and in New York --

HANNAH

I cannot have that life!

GOLDMAN

What is my life that it cannot mark you? Think for a moment.

HANNAH

Having a "think for a moment" is not the problem! I can't stop thinking. I haven't stopped thinking since you started that story -- those women -- Sometimes I do not want to think!

GOLDMAN sits HANNAH down facing the audience.

GOLDMAN

Just breathe for a moment.

GOLDMAN begins massaging HANNAH's shoulders. She will also move to HANNAH's hands, sitting to do it.

HANNAH

I'm not sure I like you doing this.

GOLDMAN

I'm not trying to feel you up, so relax! It's medicine. I'm a nurse -- remember? Viennese trained. Even met Freud -- who is now an adjective. Relax, Hannah -- you're carrying so much of your life right here and here. Let it go for a moment -- it's in good hands.

Several beats as GOLDMAN massages.

GOLDMAN

Now tell me.

HANNAH

What?

GOLDMAN

Why -- why you don't want to think.

HANNAH

I didn't say that. I said sometimes I don't want to think.

GOLDMAN

The why still stands.

HANNAH

Because it hurts me.

GOLDMAN

Not called a "sharp mind" for nothing. Your arms -- loose. So why?

HANNAH

Nothing I think -- matches anything. Like Jules --

GOLDMAN

Tell me about him.

HANNAH

No -- that would give him a -- thickness. A heat. No.

GOLDMAN

Lean your head.

HANNAH

I feel like a stranger, in my own house. I feel like a prisoner, yes! I want books, and I can't have them! I have to sneak them in. And my father -- God bless his heart, he works hard, he really does -- but -- the foreman!

GOLDMAN

Loose.

HANNAH

And all his work has made him like field stones. God, forgive me my mouth! But my mind is not a field stone!

GOLDMAN

No, it's not.

HANNAH

I don't want to be the wife of the butcher! That's why it hurts -- these stones all around me. And sometimes --

GOLDMAN

Yes?

HANNAH is silent. GOLDMAN kneels or sits on the floor in front of her and unlaces one of her shoes.

GOLDMAN

Yes?

HANNAH

At night, staring out the window, parts of me feel already -- owned. Marked. I almost think I should throw out a yes!

GOLDMAN

That's not thinking -- that's just fearing.

HANNAH

So easy for you to say!

GOLDMAN begins massaging HANNAH's foot. HANNAH doesn't know what to make of this but does not resist.

GOLDMAN

Hannah, this about fear: once it's out of your mouth, you can't put it back -- that's why your brain hurts, because you can't hide anymore.

HANNAH watches GOLDMAN's hands.

GOLDMAN

In my training I read where Asians believe the foot maps the body. Yes. If you find the connections, you can get deep inside. I don't remember the map exactly --

(squeezes her little toe)

-- that make your brain feel better? just kidding --

HANNAH

You are very strange, Miss Goldman.

GOLDMAN

But not boring.

HANNAH

Not boring, no.

GOLDMAN

Hitting anything in there? Any changes?

HANNAH

I can't live how you did --

GOLDMAN

No one is --

HANNAH

-- how you do.

GOLDMAN

-- asking you to.

HANNAH

I can't.

GOLDMAN

You could -- but won't.

HANNAH

I can't! It costs too much!

GOLDMAN

That's what the prisoner mind always says. You should value your mind more.

HANNAH

I can't do it!

GOLDMAN
Can't, can't. "Can't" is a stone-making word.
(gives the foot a hard rub)
How about can? What can you do?

HANNAH
(a visible, physical shock)
Ow!

GOLDMAN stops.

GOLDMAN
Did I just hurt you?

GOLDMAN gently massages the foot.

HANNAH
No, no -- right there. No, over.
(GOLDMAN presses)
Ow!

GOLDMAN
What?

HANNAH
Something --

GOLDMAN
Where? Where?

HANNAH taps on her breastbone with the tips of her fingers.

HANNAH
Right here.

GOLDMAN presses again.

HANNAH
Yes!

GOLDMAN
What does it feel like? Tell me.

HANNAH
Like something -- clicked open.

GOLDMAN
Unpleasant?

HANNAH
Press again.

GOLDMAN
Well?

HANNAH
More air.

GOLDMAN
More air?

HANNAH
As if my ribs got loose.

GOLDMAN
We should mark that spot.

HANNAH
Don't make fun of me!

GOLDMAN
If you only knew --

HANNAH
More air. More air. Stop it, please! Just --
stop.

GOLDMAN
Of course.

GOLDMAN releases her foot and begins to put HANNAH's shoe back on.

HANNAH
No, don't -- I will do that.

GOLDMAN gets up. HANNAH goes to put her shoe, but before she does, she presses the same spot for a second or two. She puts on her shoe and then just sits still: she is very alert. GOLDMAN watches her. Then, as if suddenly possessed, she makes a boxing gesture, just as STEIMER did.

HANNAH
Zero, zero.

HANNAH looks at her hands in astonishment, then at GOLDMAN.

HANNAH
What is happening?

GOLDMAN
It's been around for 5000 years -- bound to get
something right.

HANNAH
What is happening?

GOLDMAN
(sitting)
You tell me.

HANNAH
You touched me --

GOLDMAN
-- and something opened.

HANNAH
I took a deep breath --

GOLDMAN
And "zero, zero"!

HANNAH
Something opened. I can't --

GOLDMAN
If you could see your own face --

HANNAH
At this moment I can't -- I can't see Jules'
face. Julessss. Ha! Julesssssss! Ha! You
know whose face? You know whose face?

GOLDMAN
Whose?

HANNAH
Minnie Eddy's. And I don't even know her face!

GOLDMAN
It was a beautiful face.

HANNAH
And all of them, all of them -- like pictures
glued into the front pages of the Bible under the
sideboard.

(closes her eyes)
I turn the pages -- there they are, I turn them
back -- there they are, as close to me as my
blood is to daylight!

GOLDMAN
Good image.

HANNAH

Nope -- is it "nope"? -- nope, can't see his face. Someone I've known almost every minute of my life. Should that scare me?

GOLDMAN

You don't sound it.

HANNAH

But should I be?

GOLDMAN

Should, should. Never been big on the word. "Thou shalt not 'should' on thyself."

HANNAH

Should on?

GOLDMAN

Should on -- don't let the cow "should on" your foot -- fumier de vache --

HANNAH

Should on?

GOLDMAN

Don't step in the should!

HANNAH

Sh -- Oh, oh -- I get it! I get it!

GOLDMAN

You don't sound scared.

HANNAH

I'm not!

GOLDMAN

If you're not scared -- are you scared? just checking -- well, then, if you're not scared, don't "should on" yourself to feel something you don't.

HANNAH

Don't "should" on myself.

GOLDMAN

Maybe Jules never had a real face to you.

HANNAH

And if you think about it -- if I think about it -- I'm really just a face to him. He

doesn't know a thing else about me but my face.
And all those years -- my years -- promised to
Jules No-Face based on this
(indicating her own face)
-- which is going to get sour anyway -- What
about this face?

GOLDMAN pulls a compact out of her pocket, opens it, and shows HANNAH
her face in the mirror.

GOLDMAN
It is a perfectly lovely face.

HANNAH
Can you see it?

GOLDMAN
Can you see it? Look.

HANNAH
Do you see Jules in it?

GOLDMAN
Do you?

HANNAH
(laughing)
Nope!

GOLDMAN puts away the compact.

HANNAH
My picture -- right there, the first one glued in
the Bible, right in front of Addie with an "A"!

GOLDMAN
Uh-oh -- the rogues' gallery!

HANNAH
And you can see my face?

GOLDMAN
A face meant to be seen.

HANNAH
Marked?

GOLDMAN
But not marred. Opened.

HANNAH
And not out of stone.

GOLDMAN

Out of light.

HANNAH

Did you ever want a daughter?

HANNAH

Did you?

GOLDMAN

Yes.

HANNAH

Why didn't you?

GOLDMAN

I couldn't. The equipment didn't work.

HANNAH

Is it too late?

GOLDMAN

Everything is still possible.

HANNAH

My mother died after the fifth child -- the sister after me. I never knew her.

GOLDMAN

My mother -- My mother used to meet with some fellow busybodies for a weekly coffee, and once they wanted to cut her off when she went on a little too long about some topic, and she said, "The whole of the United States couldn't shut my daughter up, and you think you're going to get me to keep quiet?!" I never would have expected that -- honor -- from her. It would be nice to honor someone.

HANNAH touches her breastbone with her fingertips.

HANNAH

I am breathing much better now.

Takes HANNAH's fingertips and touches them to her own breastbone.

GOLDMAN

So am I. Which is good, because we have acres of this book left to plow.

HANNAH

Including --

GOLDMAN

Oh, he who must be obeyed is never out of the picture.

HANNAH

He's clearing out the stones!

GOLDMAN

Cutting out the hedges!

HANNAH

Two people giving birth to one child!

GOLDMAN

Three.

HANNAH

Oh, no -- no, no. Let me just midwife, please. I can't yell like the two of you do. You two yell so much better than I do!

GOLDMAN

Done! Thank you.

HANNAH

I'm going to work on the letters.

GOLDMAN

You've had a long day put into you already.

HANNAH

I like it here.

GOLDMAN

Then you should stay where you like.

HANNAH rises, pauses for a moment to look at GOLDMAN.

HANNAH

You're welcome. It's an honor. I'll go check the post, see if we have any "mice."

HANNAH exits.

GOLDMAN

Kate, Kate, what do you think? Did it go all right? This book is finished. I just need to write it down.

(puts the palms of her hands together)
Like an apple between Sasha and Hannah --
They'll squeeze the truth out of me.

GOLDMAN rises. She goes to exit, then turns back into the light.

GOLDMAN

Kate, Mollie -- for a time there, even if it was hell, we showed them all their better angels. That's what all this has been about, hasn't it? This whole mess we've called our lives? Just trying to massage that foot, trigger some breathing, coax the angels into the light. So, a small step -- with her, a small step. For me -- a fat step!

In her carney barker's voice.

GOLDMAN

"And now, ladies and gennelmen, come one, come all, and see a most amazing thing: this book -- this earth time -- can now be finished."

GOLDMAN picks up HANNAH's index, flips through it.

GOLDMAN

Hah, I knew it -- no "death of Emma Goldman" listed here yet! It's good to be reminded of that every now and then.

GOLDMAN takes a deep breath and makes a stabbing motion.

GOLDMAN

On to the windmills!

Lights out. Music.

BLACKOUT