

# UC Santa Cruz

## UC Santa Cruz Electronic Theses and Dissertations

### Title

('Pata)physicist

### Permalink

<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/7j557268>

### Author

Blakely, Austin

### Publication Date

2016

### Copyright Information

This work is made available under the terms of a Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike License, available at <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/>

Peer reviewed|Thesis/dissertation

UNIVERSITY of CALIFORNIA  
SANTA CRUZ

**('PATA)PHYSICIST**

A thesis submitted in partial satisfaction of the  
requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

in

THEATER ARTS

by

**Austin M. Blakely**

JUNE 2016

The thesis of Austin M. Blakely is approved:

---

Danny Scheie, PhD.

---

Patty Gallagher, PhD.

---

Professor Brandin Baron

---

Tyrus Miller  
Vice Provost and Dean of Graduate Studies

Copyright © by  
Austin M. Blakely  
2016

# Contents

<b>Dedication</b>	<b>v</b>
<b>Acknowledgements</b>	<b>vi</b>
<b>1 Introduction</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>2 Ivona</b>	<b>3</b>
2.1 Summary . . . . .	4
2.2 Historical Context . . . . .	5
2.3 Acting Method . . . . .	8
2.4 Given Circumstances . . . . .	12
2.5 Intentionality . . . . .	14
2.6 Superobjective . . . . .	17
2.7 Physicality . . . . .	18
2.8 Voice . . . . .	20
<b>3 'Pataphysics</b>	<b>22</b>
3.0.1 More on Dimensional Analysis . . . . .	30
<b>4 Actor Training as a Non-Actor</b>	<b>32</b>
<b>5 Performance Critique</b>	<b>35</b>
5.1 Revision, Reimagining, and Reinvention: 'Pataphysical Interpretations on <i>Ivona</i> . . . . .	37
<b>6 Conclusion</b>	<b>39</b>
<b>A Evergreen Notebooks</b>	<b>41</b>
A.1 Psychedelic Nature . . . . .	47
A.1.1 Even More on Dimensional Analysis . . . . .	49
<b>B <i>Princess Ivona</i> Script</b>	<b>50</b>
<b>Bibliography</b>	<b>85</b>



## Abstract

('Pata)physicist

by

Austin M. Blakely

In search of an acting method, an actor recounts past experiences. Konstantin Stanislavski's work in *An Actor Prepares*, is applied to my role of Simon in UCSC's production of Witold Gombrowicz's *Princess Ivona* in Fall of 2015. My work on the role is discussed, along with beat breakdowns, informed intentions, historical context, and given circumstances. In the interest of improvement, Alfred Jarry's 'Pataphysics as laid out in *Exploits and Opinions of Doctor Faustroll*, *Pataphysician* is explored in an attempt to revise my approach to acting. An openness to possibilities is discovered and further synthesized while working under Art Manke in the Jewel Theater's production of Noël Coward's *Fallen Angels*. Upon discovering the possibilities that had been missed in the production of *Ivona*, I surmised that my goals for the show had been unrealized. I reimagine other potential possibilities for my role as well as the show from a directorial standpoint. In conclusion, the notion of an acting method is refuted in the argument that a preconceived system of acting closes the actor from experiencing all possibilities.

To my Mentor,

Danny Scheie,

for showing Cruising on my first day of grad school.

And to Jim Bierman,

My friend, in Faustroll.

## Acknowledgements

I want to thank Patty Gallagher, Jim Bierman, Amy Ginther, and Brandin Baron.

# Chapter 1

## Introduction

The actor is constantly confronted by the notion of a method. They have a process by which to systematically approach each new role; a surefire way to understand the mindset of the varying characters they are presenting. I began this year of grad school in search of my own method. Studying physics in my undergraduate years, I was able to act in shows but never felt as though I was creating the groundwork for a process, or method, of my own. I wanted to feel as though acting was less of an unknown, mysterious entity that decided of its own accord whether success would be granted, or demise. I wanted to be on top of my acting. Instead, I discovered that the process of assuming a character could not be so easily described.

In studying physics I was confronted with rules: how the universe worked and the formulae by which to predict and manipulate it. When then going into theater, I tried to apply this one-equation-fits-all theory to acting. It didn't work. Acting, and when I say acting I really mean living life under one's given circumstances, is a dynamic element that requires an openness and ability to change to function. You cannot act with reliance on a

fixed set of rules, instead one must be open to all of the possibilities that the universe has to offer. William Ball, a theater practitioner who, in 1965, founded the American Conservatory Theater in San Francisco, said, “the actor must be demonstrator of the universe.” I believe that this can be interpreted to mean that the actor must portray a character that is the result of a series of trialling all options and allowing the one which the universe chose to be the one that is expressed. Through the teachings of 'Pataphysics, a scientific method devised by French-African playwright Alfred Jarry in his 1911 guide, *Exploits and Opinions of Doctor Faustroll*, I will explain the ways in which this method of giving oneself to the whims of the universe can be explored practically, using my role of Simon in Polish playwright Witold Gombrowicz's *Princess Ivona* as an example.

## Chapter 2

# Ivona

In the Fall quarter of 2015 at UCSC, I acted in a production of *Princess Ivona* directed by Luke Medina, a fellow graduate student. It was the first opportunity I had to create a completely immersive character with a full length script since being admitted as a dedicated theater student. I say this because I have had several other opportunities as an actor to create a character, but these all occurred while I was a physics student and could not devote my full attention to the theater. I was humbled by my own discoveries of my shortcomings as an actor, thinking previously that all my flaws in character were due to a lack of time. However, I still made use of all the things that I had picked up along the way while dabbling in theater as a physicist. In order to best capture the character that lived inside the script, I made use of movement exercises like Anne Bogart's Viewpoints<sup>1</sup> that were used in class as well as the Stanislavski<sup>2</sup> method on my script study at home.

---

<sup>1</sup>A methodology created for actors to describe the exploration of their spatial and temporal inhabitation of the actor on stage.

<sup>2</sup>Theater director who devised a method by which an actor could create a living character and assume their life in a realistic manner.

## 2.1 Summary

Princess Ivona is a story about a Prince, Phillip, who falls in love with “Ivona,” an unattractive, “unglamorous, unsexuctive” girl with an “organic deficiency, from sluggishness of the blood” (Gombrowicz, 18-20). This deficiency causes her to be mute and physically impaired. Phillip meets the disapproval of everyone in the community, who jointly hate “Ivona” for being different. Phillip, in the face of these complaints, vows to marry the girl.

Later in his chambers, Phillip and Simon, Phillip’s best friend and advisor, evaluate this girl and decide what to do with her. Phillip is quick to suggest forms of torture that Simon, being a pacifist, rejects. Some guests enter the fold, interrupting Simon and Phillip. Among these guests is a man who seems to have had a history with “Ivona.” Phillip hears of this and is quick to relinquish his hold on “Ivona” to this man who wishes to take her. When he tries to leave with “Ivona,” she refuses, her first decisive action in the play. Phillip sees this and resolves that he will continue his courtship and departs with “Ivona,” leaving Simon behind.

Act III opens with a small quarrel between Simon and Phillip as the audience sees the bond between them waver. They leave and the reactions of the King and Queen to “Ivona” are shown. The Queen defends “Ivona” to the King, who detests her. They both have interactions with “Ivona” and it can be seen with what little regard they treat her. The King compares the Queen to “Ivona,” who then breaks down and vows to kill the girl, to prevent herself from becoming “floppy and undone” (Gombrowicz, 51). The King and Queen leave and Phillip has a moment of flirtation with Isobel, the Queens chambermaid and resident pretty girl. Phillip requests that Simon bring “Ivona” in, much to Simon’s dismay. Simon and Phillip quarrel some more over Phillip’s wavering resolve. Phillip decides that

they must kill “Ivona” so that the status quo can be restored and Simon, despite being opposed to violence, agrees.

In Act IV, all hell breaks loose. Assassination attempts on Ivona’s life are made by the King, the Queen, and Phillip and Simon. All of these outright attacks fail in favor of an edible one. The entire court feeds “Ivona” a bony pike hoping that she will choke on one of the bones. She chokes and dies to a chorus of superficial cries. The court, resuming their grand facade of civility say some words and plan for the funeral. The curtain closes on Phillip, the last one of them to kneel in sorrow.

## 2.2 Historical Context

*Princess Ivona* was written at a time of great discourse in the theater and in the world by Witold Gombrowicz, a playwright alive 1904-1969. Written from 1933 to 1935 and published in 1938, *Princess Ivona* can be seen as a direct reaction to the rise of the Nazi Party from 1919 to 1934.[3] The uniformity and conformity of the world in *Ivona* parallels that of the strict Nazi regime. The characters all accept mindlessly that they must follow in the wake of the ruling party to be regarded highly in society. They chastise “Ivona” immediately for not meeting the perceived ideal image of the society. Although the performance that my cast put up focused on the patriarchal aspects of our current society, *Ivona* during the time can be seen as a perfect allusion to antisemitism. She is characterized as looking different but not of note. “Her nose is well proportioned, and she is not brainless. In fact, she is not a bit worse than many of the girls [Phillip and Simon] know” (Gombrowicz, 30). She is in every way an other. She is taken from her family without her consent and torture is immediately discussed. Phillip talks about “ty[ing] her



to the table leg,” “cutting her throat with pleasure,” and then quickly afterwards marrying her off as an unwilling bride (Gombrowicz, 28, 34).

The status quo of the play shares the casual violence that we see prevalent in the Nazi culture of the time. During the Nazi rise to power, violence was a common power play in the political field. The repression of violence to a calm and ignorant social surface is a major theme in the play. We are faced with Phillip’s raving violence in Act I and later learn that the King has his own violent past. The characters retain a good face on the surface so that they may function like a proper hierarchy, much like the Nazis were able to retain power as a legitimate political party despite the multiple violent acts, the SS and the Munich Putsch, they committed to skew the political field in their favor. An acknowledgement of the allusions to the Nazi party raise the stakes immensely for our characters. Although Simon does not follow this aspect of the culture, his opposition to violence can be seen as an opposition to escalation. As a member of the organization where violence is hidden under a shallow surface, perhaps Simon does not recognize how ingrained this violence is in the culture. Either way, this violence is shown as an innate characteristic of the society, and that by conforming to the society, violence becomes a part of that conformity. This historical context creates a uniformity of every character apart from “Ivona.” Phillip becomes less a violent person of his own volition, and more a result of the society that surrounds him. Just as thousands of good German people were convinced to participate in the Holocaust, so too are the characters of “Ivona” convinced to perpetuate the systems of violence, oppression, and conformity that they are supplied.

The theater of the time was in its own state of revolution. With the performance

of *Thérèse Raquin*<sup>3</sup> by Émile Zola rousing the critical theatrical eye in 1873, theatergoers had now accepted the new role of theater as to what is expected onstage. Going in a further direction to the absurdist elements we see in the play, Jarry produces *Ubu Roi*<sup>4</sup> at the turn of the century in 1896. Although the show was only allowed a one night engagement due to its riotous first performance at Paris' Nouveau Théâtre, *Ubu Roi*, with its fragmented and nonsensical plot, showed that a theatrical piece did not have to tell a story in the traditional sense. This opened the door for *Ivona*, which was more a depiction of a society and the playing out of the circumstances of the oppression by that society. *Ivona*'s storyline is not resolved. The actions of the characters are not consistent, and the show ends turbulently during the crux of the plot arc. No longer having to adhere to telling the stories of wealthy aristocrats and valiant noblemen or to the standard plot line employed by the many plays before it, a story like *Princess Ivona* had a place in mainstream theater. At its first performance in 1957 at Warsaw's Teatr Dramatyczny,[3] *Ivona* was critiqued among plays like *Endgame* by Samuel Beckett and *The Dumb Waiter* by Harold Pinter. Its non-consequential plotline faces none of the characters with the wrongs that they have committed and life seemingly proceeds as if none of the action of the play had happened at its completion. This precursor to absurdism was shown alongside actual Theater of the Absurd. Its conception was ahead of its time and came at a time in history when the repression of expression outside of the societal norm was at its greatest. Much like in the text, the ideas of the play could not be portrayed on the stage until after the fall of Nazi

---

<sup>3</sup>The story of a young woman of a family of average means. She unwillingly marries her cousin at the will of her aunt. The young woman, Thérèse, has an affair with her husband's friend. The play is the first example of Naturalism, a literary theory that sought to show the believable reality of everyday life.

<sup>4</sup>*Ubu Roi* tells the story of a fat, greedy politician who gains the throne through regicide. The show had many iterations, as a puppet show, with alternate versions in Jarry's other work *Ceasar Antichrist*, and as a straight play.

Germany in 1945.

## 2.3 Acting Method

In preparing for this role, I took a lot of influence from Stanislavski's system of acting, as laid out in his book *An Actor Prepares*. Stanislavski was a theater practitioner alive from 1863-1938 who directed and ran an acting school. In an attempt to put down his ideas for future generations of actors, he developed a method by which an actor can assume the role of their character. He describes a process of analyzing character very similar to a scientific method, in which the actor goes through a step-by-step program in order to embody the character mentally and physically. The process appealed to me as a science major accustomed to following steps. This logical method first asked me to read the script and gain any details about my character that I could from direct and contextual clues. Where does my character live? What does my character do for a living? With whom does my character associate themselves? How does my character speak? Other characteristics can be gleaned from analysis of behaviors my character exhibits in the presence of others, or from other characters mentioning details of a shared backstory. If my character never speaks in the presence of another, perhaps they either dislike or fear them. If my character is spoken about in a negative light from one character to another, I might have something that character wants or have done something to win that character's bad favor. Taking these concrete clues from the text, I can then begin to fill in the holes to create an entire backstory for my character.

For my character, Simon, I will walk through his entire life from the day he was born leading up to the action of the play. What class was he born into? What were his

early developmental years like? Did he have a pet? Were both his parents in the picture? Siblings? What was school like? Did he succeed or struggle? Did he have a lot of friends? What were his friends like? When did he meet Phillip? Was he involved in Phillip's life at an early age or not? What was his relationship to the royal court? Were his parents royalty? How does he feel about all the other characters in the play? What are his opinions on important topics of the play? Formulating these questions that aren't explicitly addressed in the text creates a character that is complex and deep.

Once the character is established, the play is reread and divided into beats or, as Stanislavski would refer to them, "bits."<sup>5</sup> Beats are defined as the smallest discernible action in the play. Each beat is divided and given an "objective, [which] must always be a verb" (Stanislavski, 123). Stanislavski believes that emotions cannot be acted to portray emotion. In order to put one in a genuine emotional state, one must put themselves into actions that they believe the character would employ to achieve their objectives. He prefers active verbs, or verbs that inspire one to action, over emotionally sympathetic words because "verbs [provoke] thoughts and feelings which [are], in turn, inner challenges to action" (Stanislavski, 126). A sensual approach, with no guidance as to the journey to emotion, often results in over-dramatized, fake acting. Active verbs instead supply an action that a character can do, a goal to accomplish the things that they want. Evaluating what the character wants during each act, scene, and beat, the active verbs assigned to each beat will be the methods the character uses to accomplish these desires. These intentions give direction to a character's lines and actions. In this way, the actor can "live the part" by "actually experiencing feelings that are analogous to it, each and every time [one] repeats the process of creating

---

<sup>5</sup>Stanislavski's reference to units as the smallest bits of the play was skewed in translation. His heavy Russian accent lead American theater theorists practicing his method to understand them as beats, like in music. The term was adopted and is now widely used in the modern American theater.

it” (Stanislavski, 14-15). Instead of attempting to conjure up the emotions that one would desire the character to achieve, the actor simply follows the intentions assigned to each beat, allowing the subconscious to create its own emotion. Emotions are subconscious, and Stanislavski states that “our subconscious is inaccessible to our conscious. We cannot enter into that realm. If for any reason we do penetrate into it, then the subconscious becomes conscious and dies” (Stanislavski, 13). Therefore, intentions allow the actor’s emotions to flow freely and organically by following the intentions with their conscious minds, keeping their subconscious only reactionary and, therefore, intact.

The actor is then ready to bring the performance to its feet. The actor goes through the lines, imbuing each with their assigned objectives, also known as intentions or active verbs. As they go through the lines, they attempt to reach a state in which they are allowing themselves to feel openly. They repeat the intentions in the lines until they become natural. They memorize the intentions with the lines and begin to be able to unconsciously follow their scheme of objectives. The active verbs begin to be expressed without mental effort, and the actors can yield themselves entirely to their own emotions. Stanislavski talks about the “mechanical actor” who goes on stage with conscious control over all of their actions. He says that the actor must “never allow themselves externally to portray anything that you have not inwardly experienced and which is not even interesting to them” (Stanislavski, 29). By rehearsing the intentions repetitiously, the actor hopes to achieve the inward experience to which Stanislavski refers.

Much like in 'Pataphysics, a pseudoscientific practice discussed in great length in Chapter 2, the actor must never treat any decision as concrete or definite. The actor must be willing to put their ego aside and not become so attached to any idea that they allow the

performance to suffer for their own, albeit great, idea to shine on stage. They must accept that any small revelation could undermine all of their current decisions while elevating other options. The world of the play is one that is constantly changing, and to be a character that is alive in such an environment, the actor must be privy to these changes. All choices made must only be hypotheses, or theories at most, and only the rules that the director inflicts upon the action can be tentatively accepted as law.

The actor must view each feeling as a path. “On the stage there cannot be action which is directed immediately at the arousing of a feeling for its own sake... All such feelings are the result of something that has gone before. Of the thing that goes before you should think as hard as you can. As for the result, it will produce itself” (Stanislavski, 40-41). When utilizing this path, the actor is forced to refrain from making any one choice definite. All of the action of a play must be based off of what came before, so while the show may be repeatable to a degree, this constant reaction to the events before keep the action fluid and dynamic. The through-line<sup>6</sup> of the play is based on the initial conditions of each moment, which then create the new initial conditions of the next. The smallest change in the action of another actor has the potential to create a butterfly effect,<sup>7</sup> altering the entire through line of the character, and the actor must be open to these changes.

---

<sup>6</sup>Stanislavski’s idea of the through-line involves the train of thought of the character throughout the play. This includes the character’s thoughts coming onto stage, as well as between scenes. In this way the line becomes consistent through the play, with characters entering with the mindset they would logically have with the action that occurs to them offstage.

<sup>7</sup>Based off of Edward Lorenz’s 1972 talk at the American Association for the Advancement of Science *Predictability: Does the Flap of a Butterfly’s Wings in Brazil set off a Tornado in Texas?*, the butterfly effect is a hypothetical example of chaos theory, in which a small change in the initial conditions of a chaotic system can lead to an extremely unpredictable result as the change permeates through time, i.e. the change in air density of a butterfly flapping its wings becoming a major atmospheric disturbance such as a Tornado in Texas.

## 2.4 Given Circumstances

The character of Simon is an advisor to Prince Phillip, as well as his best friend. He goes everywhere with the Prince and wholeheartedly participates in acts of drinking and chasing women as the Prince sees fit. He is a loyal follower and aims to please Phillip by being a source of approval and encouragement. The script begins with Phillip in a rather unnatural slump of sorts. He is refusing to go about the clique's daily agenda of drinking and flirting with the frequent female passersby and instead is insistent on pondering some greater life questions which the society seems to ignore. He then goes on to meet a girl named "Ivona," with whom he immediately falls in love, despite her muteness, lack of attractiveness, and sluggishness that put her in a marionette-like state. From this moment on, there is a schism between Simon and Phillip. The story of Simon is really one of his quarrel with his master and friend. The context suggests that this is the first time this has happened. Simon struggles to maintain a sense of normalcy and to keep the status quo where he thinks it is. He is not only a pacifier to violence but to change. Therefore, when Phillip starts to become more serious with "Ivona," Simon sees his old life slipping away and fights to prevent those changes. Although the etymology of Simon means "he is heard,"[11] Simon fails to sway Phillip's decision and is instead continually following Phillip's command. In a way, nothing changes in the relationship of Simon and Phillip and, though Simon was not able to fight the change he meant to, the change he did fight in the hierarchy of their relationship remained unchanged.

Simon is a sort of yes man and, even though he openly opposes Phillip's decisions throughout the course of the play, he is always the one being swayed, regardless of Phillip's lack of effort to do so. The years of precedence have prevented Simon from being able to

actually change Phillip's mind and his advice falls on empty ears for most of the action. He is willing to do anything to get his friendship back with Phillip which causes him to desert his own ideals. He seeks to pacify the violence of the play as well as extinguish any fires of change from the other characters. He ultimately fails in this objective, proving through the play that the individual is subject to the will of the communal structures of power around them. In fighting change, he realizes he is unable to create it. He cannot change the will of those around him and the action of the play proves to be predestined. He is oppressed by those around him, but realizes that he always was; only now is he fighting against the will of oppression and finding that he is failing.

My goal for this character is to show not just an individual's trappings for a failure to rise above the will of the society around them but a universal hopelessness at fighting this kind of structure. To do this I will enact Simon as a smile. He is a source of encouragement and validation for Phillip, and his face encompasses this role, despite his emotion. He finds that through his trained action, he cannot stop smiling, and holds an eternal grin until the end of the action where "Ivona" dies and his objective has failed. This characterizes his inability to influence as well as show the extent of this societal oppression. The audience sees his actions unable to change the will of others, his own trajectory completely unhinged by the will of others to the point where he is willing to murder, despite his objections to violence, and finally his inability to express the despair for having failed. He is forced to live on without individual will of any kind. He realizes his slavery in the final moments of the play and is faced with an existence that he started out fighting for. He knows that the next day, life will resume as always, only now his actions will be empty, his companions enemies. His world is changed only by the lack of ability to do otherwise. He continues smiling and



acting as if nothing had gone wrong because he has no way of doing anything otherwise.

## 2.5 Intentionality

The methodical aspect of Stanislavski's method consists of going through the script and dividing it into beats. This section will describe choices for some of my scene objectives for each scene and how they contribute to the accomplishment of the superobjective, discussed in the next section. The choices of intentions for each beat characterize Simon and his given circumstances inform the choice of objectives. For reference, these beat divisions and assigned active verbs are available in my script in Appendix B.

For many of my Act I intentions, I chose my active verbs based on adhering to the group mentality. I chose verbs like to encourage, to back, to inflate, and to inquire while talking to other members of the group, primarily Phillip. I chose verbs like mock, woo, call, and jest when referring to the women, affectionate verbs being used for attractive girls and offensive ones used for "Ivona." These choices were informed by Simon's nature to please Phillip in Act I. His main goal is to keep Phillip happy and entertained because the group cannot function without him. He struggles to deal with Phillip's odd treatment of "Ivona" in Act I, not knowing whether he is joking or serious, and that unease certainly informed the choices for his actions. At certain times, he lashes out with mockery and offense and other times he lets this insecurity creep into his action like to plea, to cower, to stress, and to bargain.

In Act II, Simon gets to let his own opinions be shown. Now being separated from the public, Simon can express his concerns to Phillip. He must do this somewhat inadvertently, for he cannot offend Phillip outright. I chose to scoff, to command, to gain,

to challenge, and to advise for the first portion. However, when Phillip seems to ignore his objections, the verbs intensify to attack, deny, and dismiss. All the while this argument is happening, the two men are also examining “Ivona.” To further the idea that “Ivona” is just an object to Simon at this point, I chose verbs that related to a medical examination. I chose the verbs to poke, to prod, to diagnose, to confirm, to speculate, and to prescribe, along with more harmful verbs like abuse, coax, humiliate, and fetishize. I wanted my actions toward “Ivona” to feel like a mixture between a medical examination and a torture session. Simon doesn’t want to harm “Ivona” but his follower mentality causes him to imitate Phillip in his actions. At the same time, his curiosity causes him to take a more scientific approach on probing “Ivona” for answers.

Act III starts the feud between Simon and Phillip, and Simon’s intentions can be seen to move away from pacifying. In using verbs like slash, counter, riposte, and attack, Simon accomplishes his superobjective in the sense that, by fighting Phillip’s radical change, he pacifies the catalyst that will change the entire society. Simon fails in this goal, as his duel falls on empty ears. As mentioned in the previous section, the etymology of the name Simon means he is heard. However, Simon cannot accomplish his goals because he is incessantly ignored by Phillip. The next scene shows Simon entering into a giant power play by Phillip, who is unaware of Simon’s anger towards him. This angers Simon further, yet he still must display his subservience to Phillip. When his initial objective to protest is denied, he must submit, obey, and serve the whims of Phillip. Simon is sent off to obtain another member of the court, where he has a chance to let off some of his anger. He dominates this lesser man, using the momentum of this to contest Phillip. Phillip, still ignorant to his friend’s turmoil claims that they must kill the princess. When Simon hears this, he realizes that

the fighting is no longer productive to stopping the change that is about to happen. In a last ditch effort, he begs for Phillip to finally listen to him, with the verbs to calm and plea but realizes that Phillip's mind is steadfast in its insanity and he accepts that he must help him kill "Ivona." Killing "Ivona" is the only way that Simon feels he can prevent a change in his friendship with Phillip and he sacrifices his ideals to cowardly cling to this last semblance of his old life.

At Simon and Phillip's Act IV entrance, they are seen in the middle of their assassination attempt carrying a knife in Phillip's hands and a basket in Simon's. Simon exercises a frantic attempt to hold onto his sanity by observing, reasoning, clocking, watching, and rationalizing. However, he is infected by Phillip's madness and becomes indecisive, alternately defecting and fulfilling Phillip's wishes. He is clouded with despair, trying to justify his actions, but eventually as his mind slips into the circumstances, he begins to exhibit less inhibition. He thirsts, spooks, witnesses, doubts, reverses, and mutinies. His more primal instincts come out and his active verbs reflect this madness. In the last second, he is given a glimpse of Phillip's madness and, becoming an outside viewer, makes one last effort to distract Phillip before "Ivona" and the King simultaneously enter. He recognizes that he has failed and that all is lost. The rest of the events of the play unfold as Simon solemnly watches from the corner in horror. At the murder of "Ivona," Simon has failed his superobjective and abandons it. Despite the rest of the court attempting to resume normalcy, Simon cannot omit the actions that played out before him and must continue his day to day actions with an inner turmoil and an outer complacent obedience. He becomes a face, now stripped of the blissful ignorance to which he once clung.

## 2.6 Superobjective

Superobjective is the driving motivation for a character throughout the play. The superobjective relays all of the characters wants into one intention, expressed as an active verb, so that the actor may interpret all individual beats as contributing factors to this overarching superobjective. Stanislavski states that “In a play the whole stream of individual, minor objectives, all the imaginary thoughts, feelings and actions of an actor, should converge to carry out the super-objective of the plot. The common bond must be so strong that even the most insignificant detail, if it is not related to the super-objective, will stand out as superfluous or wrong” (Stanislavski, 271).

Simon’s superobjective for the play is to keep Phillip safe. He wants to preserve the status quo of the world, ensuring that Phillip continues his day to day carefree lifestyle unimpeded by more serious matters. In doing so Simon must act as a mediator for all interactions that occur between Phillip and others. Therefore, I have chosen Simon’s superobjective as to pacify. He attempts to pacify Phillip’s violence, as well as his violent emotions. Simon doesn’t want the violence that is hidden beneath the surface interactions to boil up and destroy everything. Simon has a complacency towards the way things are. They shine on the surface like a utopia but with a subtext that is dark and violent. He preserves this state of unsteady peace in order to prevent the unraveling of violence and chaos boiling just beneath the surface.

Through his actions, he is unable to accomplish this goal. Violence reigns and “Ivona” is murdered before him. In the process he forfeits his ideals and briefly agrees to kill “Ivona,” only to be stopped by Phillip. In the final moments of the play, the court tries to resume their previous status and forget the violence that occurred. For Simon, however,

this is not enough and his history of violence has plagued him, leaving him unable to return to the status quo.

## 2.7 Physicality

In the physicalization of Simon, I took a lot of guidance in my exploration from clowning. I used Anne Bogart's *Viewpoints*[2] to synthesize this into a physical character. Anne Bogart is a theater director currently working out of Colombia University who, collaborating with Broadway director Tina Landau, is responsible for developing an improvisational method of experimenting with physicality. Viewpoints is a guided, traditionally by the director, exploration of movement in space and time. Heralding from a Clowning studio with Patty Gallagher,<sup>8</sup> I resonated with the aspects of the clown that is flexible and larger than life. The clown is an outsider and resonates as a foil to the accepted societal structures in order to reveal their faults. Simon exemplifies this in the end of the play, as he sheds his conformed body in favor of shapes not fitting the culture's accepted molds. I also knew that to create a sense of normalcy at the front of the play, this clownish aspect should have to transform and evolve through the later action.

I started by creating a character that was stiff and rigid. He was upright, proper, he walked with his head held high, he looked down upon those of lower class, and held his resolve against those that intimidated him. He was the perfect servant mixed with the perfect wingman. His movements were soft and swift, smooth and svelte. He carried the shoulders of a man that was told his whole life that he was better than the rest. He led with a high chin, eyes down on the world before him, unless that world was Prince Phillip

---

<sup>8</sup>Professional actor and a professor of acting, dance, and clowning at the University of California at Santa Cruz

who, despite being of higher class, was the only person with whom Simon could really level.

During the rehearsal process, the cast spent a lot of time working with viewpoints that helped us refine these characteristics. We evaluated our character's physicality both alone and around others. We got a sense of our characters' social standings in relation to one another and how that played into our physicality at any moment. While participating in these activities, the sense came to me that Simon would not really be as proper as I was making him out to be in all situations. He would not feel the need to stand with shoulders held straight and firm in the face of his subservients. He would be a snobby rich kid when in the presence of inferiors and the perfect little subservient in the presence of the royal court. Through these viewpoint sessions, I developed this relaxed rigidity, using my previous iteration as a base. My character had a slight stiffness to him always, with it becoming more or less pronounced based on the company. He led chin up around the king and queen, tail hidden between his legs, and chest out when around the other men or women. He evolved based on the needs of the moment. He was malleable, to be there for Phillip in any way necessary.

Letting go of the rigidity allowed the physicality of the character to be more real, however, the development of it created a background in the physicality of the character.

Towards the end of the play, the world starts crumbling around Simon. His hopes to preserve the status quo and previous way of life was crushed in the unfolding of Phillip's and Ivona's relationship and eventual marriage. This breakdown is reflected in the physicality of Simon. He releases the stiffness that he was taught his entire life. The habitual tension that he held became more loose. He relinquishes himself when he agrees to play a part in the murder of "Ivona" and his character must reflect both his failure to achieve his

superobjective as well as his betrayal of his own pacifism. Although he does not kill “Ivona,” the act of taking up a blade with intent to murder incites an insanity within him that I felt would be the perfect opportunity to expand the clowning influence of the physicality. Simon begins jumping up and down, nervously ticking, and playing with his hands. His previous schooling and sense of propriety is thrown out the window and he is left with only his most primal self. His eyes dart around, his hands make large, flailing gestures. He is struck in the heat of the moment and all of the societal structure that he fought to protect is stripped off of him, leaving nothing but a quivering child, unbound by expectation. He becomes like a child and, therefore, like a clown.

## **2.8 Voice**

With a heavy concentration on voice during the quarter in which the production was put up, I focused a lot on what I was doing with my breath and voice on stage. I was trained in speech for the stage as well as operatic singing, so there was a lot of work on projection and how to project. I found that during the production, I was able to mobilize the tactics I learned in my training and utilize them on stage.

During this training, there was a lot of focus on effort. Finding a way to project with strength and clarity while retaining a sense of ease was the constant goal of both trainings. The methods introduced to me a new trial of focus and form. I was constantly at odds with my own training.

With a newfound awareness of breath, I came upon a realization during one of the shows. Near the end of the play, when my character was faced with the reality that all of the awful things that had been done would be swept under the rug and that life would be

expected to continue as normal, I was crying onstage. I felt as though in the circumstances, I would be crying, and upon thinking of my circumstances in the moment, the tears coming out of my eyes were my character's, so I thought I was doing a good job of it. I felt as though it was a portrayal of a real character with real emotions, until I realized that every time I cried on stage, I was holding my breath. Everything that I was learning in class, that breath should be always open and released, was telling me that this was not efficient and possibly fabricated emotion, rather than emotion that I was feeling. As Stanislavski would lead me to believe, there cannot be action solely for the purpose of creating emotion, I realized that the action of flooding my thoughts with the consequences of my character was not organic, and that the resulting action in my body was a tension in my diaphragm that was causing me to hold my breath. The tension in my body was not productive to creating a response that was mine.



## Chapter 3

# 'Pataphysics

In the early 20th century, a crazy, bicycle-riding, absinthe-fueled man had an epiphany. In writing a book describing his theories of science, he devised a way to become smarter, better, faster, stronger, and smaller than himself. He studied hard but ultimately was too intelligent to function in the normal scientific world, so he devised his own. He called it 'Pataphysics “preceded by an apostrophe so as to avoid a simple pun” (Jarry, 21) and defined it as the science of imaginary solutions. This man was named Alfred Jarry, and he took the ideal of infinite possibilities to every facet of his life. He let the lack of a sense of what is right or wrong permeate into his language, coining the phrases “that which blows” to describe the wind and “that which rolls” to describe his bicycle which carried him in his daily life across France. He preferred the hallucinogenic state of his mind under the influence of absinthe to reality. And most importantly, he wrote *Ubu Roi*, which, through its riotous reception and eventual critical reconciliation, would redefine what does and does not belong on stage.

Derived in his 'patamemoir, *The Exploits & Opinions of Doctor Faustroll*, Pata-

physician, are solutions to problems spawned from the mind of a madman, along with some well-taught lessons and cheeky humor. Among these things are the dimensionality of God, the concepts of uncertainty and accepting the unreal, and a cocky self-referential man, not to be confused with Jarry, Doctor Faustroll. Remember, this is a 'patamemoir. Within the book, tangled within the wonderment of science and the description of Alfred Jarry's intended aesthetic and height, are the tenets of 'Pataphysics, a branch of science construed as much to contradict as to prove.

'Pataphysics is to metaphysics as metaphysics is to physics, meaning it feels even less of an obligation to follow the scientific method. Jarry writes that 'pataphysics "is the science of that which is superinduced upon metaphysics, whether within or beyond the latter's limitations, extending as far beyond metaphysics as the latter extends beyond physics" (Jarry, 21). Physics seeks to find the general solution to the universe through tested and methodically proved theorems. Metaphysics seeks to discover more general truths about the origin and nature of our world and beyond; *why* is a thing the way it is? rather than a thing *is* the way it is. Originally conceived by Aristotle in his work *Metaphysica*, Metaphysics was defined simply as the book published after, *meta*, physics, *Physica*, and later became the science beyond physics in translation. Aristotle's *Metaphysics* is the first publication in the field of Philosophy, and covers questions of existence, substance, God, and essence: what it is to be a thing. 'Pataphysics takes this a step further, more general, more existential, less requiring of proof, albeit no requirement of proof.

'Pataphysics covers the laws governing the specific case and of the exceptions to the laws of physics. "Pataphysics will be the science of the particular" (Jarry, 21). Its concerns are phenomena that do not abide by the laws of physics. 'Pataphysics does not concern

itself with the creation of rules governing generalizations, “despite the common opinion that the only science is that of the general” (Jarry, 21). Whereas deductive science seeks to find the most general solutions for the universe, ones that will hold on both big and small scales, for matter and antimatter, in all eleven dimensions and beyond.<sup>1</sup> 'Pataphysics seeks to find a solution to a particular drop of water<sup>2</sup> landing on the head of Mrs. Worthington-Stock on the 31st of June 1878 as she strolls across Clerkenwell Rd. on her way to the new deli. It traces the drop's behavior as it bursts and briefly forms an octopus with eight clearly defined appendages flailing and tangling in her hair before returning to its flattened droplet shape.

'Pataphysics is the solution of the ridiculous circumstances. It takes the theories described by Aristotle, Cicero, Pascal, and Swift: that all things are possible on an infinite time scale given enough attempts. What is now referred to as the Infinite Monkey Theorem,<sup>3</sup> the theory that a monkey striking keys randomly for an infinite amount of time would eventually produce the complete works of William Shakespeare, explains that no matter how infinitesimally small of a chance something has of happening, with enough time that thing will happen. Explained mathematically, we can view the possibility of a monkey hitting any of the forty-six characters common on the first few generations of Qwerty typewriters as

$$\frac{1}{46}$$

then we can view the next character as equally probable for  $n$  characters such that the

---

<sup>1</sup>Physics is currently at odds, with different rules holding in different conditions. Hence physics seeks to unite the equations to hold for all of these conditions.

<sup>2</sup>Fluid dynamics involves use of the Navier-Stokes equation, which is non-linear, meaning that a particular solution cannot be solved exactly. Solving the equation for any water droplet landing in a tangled maze of hair needs to use imaginary explanations.

<sup>3</sup>The theory that anything is possible, even if it has an infinitesimally small chance of happening.

probability of typing a string of characters  $n$  long would be

$$\left(\frac{1}{46}\right)^n.$$

This probability approaches zero as  $n$  gets larger. So the probability of typing the approximately 3,800,000 characters in order to recreate perfectly the complete works of William Shakespeare are astronomically small. The probability of it happening becomes zero. However, if we look at the probability that any given string of characters is NOT typed, we get the relationship

$$1 - \frac{1}{46^n}.$$

Therefore the probability that any specific sequence of words containing  $n$  characters will occur in the string of  $p$  characters is

$$\left(1 - \frac{1}{46^n}\right)^p.$$

This relationship, since  $n$ , although large, is finite, the relationship will approach zero as  $p$  goes to infinity. Therefore as the monkey gains an infinite number of inputs for the infinite time that she has, the probability that the complete works of Shakespeare will not be produced goes to zero. 'Pataphysics takes these extremely small possibilities and imagines them as truths. The pataphysician accepts that not only could a monkey produce the works of Shakespeare but that she may have already, and that a claim that all of Shakespeare originated from a monkey on a typewriter must be as thoroughly considered as if it had all been written by one man.

Part of the reason that Jarry/Faustroll experience so many of these one in  $10^{189465}$  coincidences is because, in 'Pataphysics, all things are equal. It takes the tentative nature of theory and, with the possibility that all of scientific theory is actually wrong, starts from the

ground up to reinvent the way the world is explained. It views its own theories as equally valid to those that have been tested and proven through experiment. Equality among all things fights our intuition's nature of deciding things without considering all possibilities equally. This is discussed in method acting, Stanislavski warning of an overindulgence of the intuition. When we allow our instinct to decide for us without allowing for change to this formula, we close ourselves to other options. Similarly, 'Pataphysics believes that all things are pataphysical, regardless of their recognition of the status. Roger Shattuck, an American writer of the 21st century most famous for his focus on French literature and art, wrote "No difference in value, only in state, exist between ordinary men and those who are consciously aware of the pataphysical nature of the world, including themselves" (Shattuck, 29). This equality between "men," which can be extended to all people if we excuse the patriarchy of the 1960s, can alleviate the snobby British professor aspect of physics.

Paradoxically, 'Pataphysics is inclusive of all things, including science. It hopes to reveal some truth that exists beyond the realm of the explained and beyond the realm of consciousness. It describes all things beyond the one thing that cannot be described. It exists beyond the realm of time and space. It exists beyond the realm of the eleventh dimension. By its "imperturbability," coined by Roger Shattuck in his Evergreen Notebooks volume 4, number 13, it rests beyond the realm of even trying. The imperturbability allows one to relinquish a sense of responsibility to interact with the world as others see fit. The pataphysician is not concerned with the politic, nation, or affiliation. There is no difference in value, only in state between these things, and the pataphysician thusly feels no need to be concerned with them. The pataphysician sees the absurdity of life and understands the ridiculousness of taking it seriously. Shattuck writes

Life is, of course, absurd, and it is ludicrous to take it seriously. Only the comic is serious. The pataphysician, therefore, remains entirely serious, attentive, imperturbable. He does not burst out laughing or curse when asked to fill out in quadruplicate a questionnaire on his political affiliations or sexual habits: on the contrary, he details a different and equally valid activity on each of the four sheets. His imperturbability gives him anonymity and the possibility of savoring the full pataphysical richness of life.\*

\* Imperturbability is not just a dignified version of 'cool kicks.' 'Playing it cool' means indifference and in, at best, an indifferent game. The pataphysician is concerned; not through engagement in an attempt to create human values, but in the manner of the child looking through a kaleidoscope or the astronomer studying the galaxy.

The pataphysician does not try to create meaning by giving unnecessary significance to human constructs. Instead, they appreciate the things in the universe that already have intrinsic value. The pataphysician is critical to the importance given to an institution and whether its origin lies in humanity or not. Gender, race, religion, social class: none of these things concern the pataphysician. Instead a pataphysician is just as likely to identify as a queer female and a heterosexual non-binary from moment to moment. Not that the pataphysician wishes to devalue the choices of others, as all are equal, whether they practice 'Pataphysics or not, but the pataphysician therefore observes the differences in these variables as purely nominal. Existing as a being unbound by title or class, the pataphysician can then concentrate on what really matters; that is, everything and nothing.

'Pataphysics has jurisdiction over metaphysics and physics. While metaphysics covers all things beyond physics and is inclusive of all the things that physics governs, 'Pataphysics covers all things metaphysical and beyond. If we think of physics as a base, metaphysics would be the square and 'Pataphysics the cube. If physics is a line in one dimension, metaphysics is a plane in two and 'Pataphysics is three dimensional space. It is inclusive of the line that encompasses physics, along with all lines that run parallel to

physics, all other alternate existences of physics. A physics in which gravity causes all objects to repulse each other, where the speed of light is not a constant but is dependent on the distance the observer is from the Pillars of Creation in the Eagle Nebula, and that has a constantly decreasing entropy instead of one that can never decrease exists within the scope of 'Pataphysics. Likewise, different iterations of metaphysical theory also exist in parallel within 'Pataphysics. Parallel planes stacked upon each other infinitely are still contained by the three-dimensionality of 'Pataphysics. Infinite systems of logic and understanding, differing in every way imaginable. 'Pataphysics, displaying infinite potentials, can then be seen to represent the fifth dimension and beyond, as can be seen in Section 3.0.1.

'Pataphysics, however, also exists within physics, becoming a loop in the hierarchy. 'Pataphysics is beyond metaphysics is beyond physics is beyond 'Pataphysics. In our dimensional envisioning of the three, 'Pataphysics would then also exist as a single point, a zero dimension. A place with no dimension in which each of these concepts exist without distance between them. We see the physics which dictates that entropy is constantly decreasing intermingled with the one where it can never decrease with no markers as to which is which. All things become equally valid and rational in the increasingly irrational and ridiculous point that is 'Pataphysics.

How can 'Pataphysics exist as both zero dimension and infinite dimension? Jarry explains in *Doctor Faustroll* the surface of God. He says that "God is, by definition, without dimension; it is permissible, however, for the clarity of our exposition, and though he possesses no dimensions, to endow him with any number of them greater than zero, if these dimensions vanish on both sides of our identities" (Jarry, 111). In order to calculate the surface of God, Jarry imagines her to possess two dimensions for ease of writing the

mathematical symbols on a sheet of two dimensional paper. Jarry states “Symbolically God is signified by a triangle, but the three Persons should not be regarded as being either its angles or its sides. They are the three apexes of another equilateral triangle circumscribed around the traditional one” (Jarry, 111). Imagining God as an equilateral triangle with sides of length  $a$  and angles of 120 degrees between them. “From the space enclosed between these lines, or from the triangle obtained by joining the three farthest points of these straight lines, we propose to calculate the surface” (Jarry, 112).

Let  $x$  be the median extension of one of the Persons  $a$ ,  $2y$  the side of the triangle to which it is perpendicular,  $N$  and  $P$  the extensions of the straight line  $(a + x)$  in both directions *ad infinitum*.

Thus we have:

$$x = \infty - N - a - P.$$

But

$$N = \infty - 0$$

and

$$P = 0.$$

Therefore,

$$x = \infty - (\infty - 0) - a - 0 = \infty - \infty + 0 - a - 0$$

$$x = -a.$$

In another respect, the right angle whose sides are  $a$ ,  $x$ , and  $y$  give us

$$a^2 = x^2 + y^2$$

By substituting for  $x$  its value of  $(-a)$  one arrives at

$$a^2 = (-a)^2 + y^2 = a^2 + y^2.$$

Whence

$$y^2 = a^2 - a^2 = 0$$

and

$$y = \sqrt{0}.$$

Therefore the surface of the equilateral triangle having for bisectors of its angles the three straight lines  $a$  will be

$$S = y(x + a) = \sqrt{0}(-a + a)$$

$$S = 0\sqrt{0}$$



COROLLARY: At first consideration of the radical  $\sqrt{0}$ , we can affirm that the surface calculated is one line at the most; in the second place, if we construct the figure according to the values obtained for  $x$  and  $y$ , we can determine: That the straight line  $2y$ , which we now know to be  $2 > \sqrt{0}$ , has its point or intersection on one of the straight lines  $a$  in the opposite direction to that of our first hypothesis, since  $x = -a$ ; also, that the base of our triangle coincides with its apex; That the two straight lines  $a$  make, together with the first one, angles at least smaller than  $60^\circ$ , and what is more can only attain  $2\sqrt{0}$  by coinciding with the first straight line  $a$ . Which conforms to the dogma of the equivalence of the three Persons between themselves and in their totality. We can say that  $a$  is a straight line connecting 0 and  $\infty$ , and can define God thus: DEFINITION: God is the shortest distance between zero and infinity. In which direction? one may ask. We shall reply that His first name is not Jack, but Plus-and-Minus. And one should say:  $\pm$  God is the shortest distance between 0 and  $\infty$ , in either direction. Which conforms to the belief in the two principles; but it is more correct to attribute the sign  $+$  to that of the subject's faith. But God being without dimension is not a line. - Let us note, in fact, that, according to the formula

$$\infty - 0 - a + a + 0 = \infty$$

the length  $a$  is nil, so that  $a$  is not a line but a point.

Therefore, definitively:

GOD IS THE TANGENTIAL POINT BETWEEN ZERO AND INFINITY.

(Jarry, 112-114)

'Pataphysics then exists, not in the bifurcated state of both zero and infinity dimension, but, like God, in the dimension that is the tangential point between zero and infinity.

'Pataphysics is the science...

### 3.0.1 More on Dimensional Analysis

When we consider the first three dimensions, they seem comprehensive. Being purely spatial, we can view them as dimensions lower than the one we reside in. Dimension zero: a point. Dimension one: A line. Simple back and forth direction. One path of movement, one degree of freedom. The second dimension: A plane. The Flatlandian realm of early Mario iterations, of high school geometry, and now modern interfaces. We, as humans, are extremely accustomed to the second dimension as we interact with it daily

in terms of writing, computers, phones, etc. The third dimension: space. Now comes the realm that we are commonly regarded as being a part of. Not only are length and breadth represented but also depth. However, this third dimension does not include the possibility of change. To say that we are three dimensional creatures would be to assume that the world we live in is a snapshot. A model of a three dimensional shape. To change, we require another dimension. We need to include a passage that moves forward and backwards: time. To view time as a dimension, it is useful to compact the third dimension to a point: a Planck time<sup>4</sup> interval snapshot of the world, that when introducing time, becomes the living, dynamic universe in which we reside. The fourth dimension, time, creates a line which has a forward and, though we don't experience it, backwards direction; a line, so to speak. The fifth dimension should then in turn relate to the fourth in the same way that the second relates to the first, in that it is a plane, a plane of time. Time now not only has a forward and backwards direction, but a left and right. In the fifth dimension, the timeline can be changed, new possibilities are included. The fifth dimension represents all possible timelines, all possibilities for a thing. As a fifth dimensional creature, you would not only exist as yourself, but also all possible selves for all differing decisions you could have made throughout your life. You are the culmination of all the infinite concurrent timelines of yourself. A fifth dimensional being would simultaneously experience every potential universe. The actor should strive to this fifth dimensional existence so that they too may experience every possible universe.

---

<sup>4</sup>Planck time is the shortest meaningful amount of time derived from the time it takes for light to travel a Planck length, the shortest discernible distance of our universe. A Planck time is equal to  $5.39 \times 10^{-44}$ s.

## Chapter 4

# Actor Training as a Non-Actor

During my internship at the Jewel Theater, I was given some insight on how a show should be ideally run. Working on Noël Coward's *Fallen Angels*, directed by Art Manke, was a process far smoother than any previous production I had worked on and took place in half the time. I was working as an assistant director because I could not find an acting internship that would work into my school schedule. However, the experience that I gained learning acting as a non-actor was perhaps the most valuable of the year.

I was assigned some work before the show, reading William Ball's *A Sense of Direction* and Phillip Hoare's biography on Noël Coward. I did not make it through the tome that told Noel Coward's life story, but William Ball's book gave me a nice perspective on the actor/director relationship and what each's roles are. I did watch a three-part documentary on Noel Coward and felt this sufficient to make up for my lack of completion of the Hoare.

The rehearsal process took place over the course of three weeks. This accelerated pace was eased by the Art's knowledge of the show, having directed it twice previously

with the same team of designers. Art also had a strong relationship with the two principle actors, having attended ACT in San Francisco with them years ago. This all made stepping into the show feel like there was a sense of preparedness that I had not experienced before. The big ideas of the show were formed and solidified, the design team was done and just manipulating their old designs to fit into the new space, and the bond between the cast and director was already established.

I was unfamiliar with the language of directing, despite having read Ball's book, and was not nearly as well versed in the show as anyone else in the room. I spent the first week just trying to keep up and become accustomed to the space, the show, the people, and so many other things. I was recording blocking notes, blessed by the fact that Art was so prepared that he needed little. By the second week, I was on book<sup>1</sup> for the show while the actors were already off book,<sup>2</sup> still trying to record blocking as I was now standing in for one of the actors who had a previous commitment during the day. I ended up standing in for another of the actors who was not in the space until three days before opening, so I did get some stage time.

I think the most valuable lesson for me came while watching the actors work on such a tight deadline. Their commitment to finding a through-line every chance they got was amazing. Every run, even the smallest scenes, they would try to assume the mind of their characters. I took this as sign that I had not been giving my full efforts in my acting engagements. The actor, especially on a deadline, must utilize all of her time to most fully accomplish the mindset of her character. There are no excuses for a lack of effort in this department, for every bit of wasted time through the script with no effort to create

---

<sup>1</sup>keeping track of lines in the script

<sup>2</sup>having all of one's lines memorized, so that they no longer need to carry a script, or book, onstage

a character instills the idea that the words have less meaning. Working alongside such talented actors, in what would be a hectic environment, if not handled by professionals, was an aspirational and humbling experience. I feel as though I gained a sense of standards for what my role as an actor involved. I also picked up a few things about direction, despite not being needed at all since Art was so on top of his craft.

## Chapter 5

# Performance Critique

Ultimately, I didn't accomplish what I wanted due to a lack of overarching vision for *Princess Ivona*. The cast was disjointed in what we wanted for the production, allowing my choices to be vague under the guise that they would realize themselves when we decided the direction for the play, but when it never happened my vagueness stagnated and led to a bad performance on my part.

In the revival of this cast, I would do many things differently. Now knowing more about absurdism and 'Pataphysics, I think that my effort to create a world that is as absurd as it is real would be more directed. In a way, this was due to a lack of preparation on my part. I lacked the background of theatrical knowledge required to perform an absurdist piece. Without this groundwork of theater history, I had no platform on which to stand and create. I found myself lost in trying to "figure out" the script, and left important developmental aspects by the wayside. Our cast being somewhat misguided, we found that many of the important decisions for the play were being made faux-democratically during the rehearsals by the process of somewhat heated discussion.

Through my time working on the show, I was given the opportunity to present my acting skill in a practical manor. It was an opportunity to showcase my talents while serving a director's vision. I was presented with new concepts, both historical and theatrical, and was expected to integrate these concepts into the piece. Because I had not had a background in theater education, I was floundering to properly execute absurdism, physicality, script analysis, and the like. The experience I had was insufficient to fulfill the role in a seminal performance. I had not yet acquired a graduate level education for theater, so my performance was not indicative of a graduate level actor. However, upon learning about these concepts through the graduate level courses, I now feel as though, if I could rewind the process, reevaluate my choices and work, hopefully creating something worth everyone's time.

From the beginning of the rehearsal process, I was unprepared. I had not yet read the script, I was not schooled on dramatic theory, I had no knowledge of the playwright or the historical context of the play, and I was not coming forth in a mental state to succeed. This lack of preparation stagnated as my other work grew thicker, through the rehearsals and into the show. Whatever process I have gleaned from my education here, I have learned that an actor cannot succeed if they are not ready to begin from the drop of the starting block. The five week rehearsal period is extremely cramped, so going forward I will prepare myself in any way I can before that first rehearsal. I will research the play and playwright to have some idea of what the importance of the piece is. I will be more involved in the director's focus for implementing the piece on the stage of today. By way of my graduate education, I now have some knowledge on dramatic theories and how they play together to shape today's theater. I will know how to analyze a script and apply subtleties from

the text into my character instead of taking things at face value. I will come to rehearsal in a mental state that is conducive to success, rather than being clouded by vanity and self-doubt.

## 5.1 Revision, Reimagining, and Reinvention: 'Pataphysical Interpretations on *Ivona*

My approach to this show consisted of me attempting to utilize all of the ideas that I thought were correct in the theater. However, a script does not always need to be handled in this way.

My approach to voice was to keep a sense of relaxation in order to achieve maximum resonance and be heard in the theater. From watching Shakespeare, I thought that a better voice was a louder and more clear voice. However, I thought about a version of *Ivona* that put less emphasis on the text. The production lends over ninety percent of the text to the patriarchal characters. What if the production let these men's words be more of a device? What if the concentration was drawn more to the fact that they were talking rather than the words that they spoke? I imagined a show that let these ramblings be expressed through slurred, unclear speech, so that the audience could only understand some key points of what was being said. Having the male characters speak in gibberish for some of their lines would certainly give more importance to the few words that the female characters had, which would be unaltered.

In the physicalization of our *Ivona*, our cast focused on the textual description of sluggishness. The result was an *Ivona* that slumped around, physicalizing a doll-like lack



of motivation. This was okay for the production that my cast put on as it characterized the objectification of women. However, it came off to audiences that Ivona was mentally handicapped, which was not the intent of the director. I imagined an iteration of *Ivona* that took a more temporal understanding of sluggishness. What if Ivona were to physicalize herself normally but in slow motion? She would be the victim of a world moving too fast around her, not able to converse as the speech of the other characters whirled by her. The rest of the characters would treat her as deficient because they only saw that she moved slowly but in actuality the change would be a rift in time. This would allow “Ivona” to be depicted as more of a normal character to the audience while retaining her status as an other to the rest of the ensemble.

In using Stanislavski’s methodical approach to acting the role, I was confronted by the fragmented nature of my character’s lines. I focused on the lines that he had, imbuing each with an active intention, but the sheer volume of lines that my counterpart had seemed to drown out everything that I was doing. I imagined instead a piece that did away with the excessive language and had the characters convey intention through movement. An *Ivona* ballet would showcase the plotline and character developments in far fewer words than the script and the grace and poise created by Ivona’s sluggishness would lead to more of an emotional reaction from the audience at her death.

## Chapter 6

# Conclusion

The culmination of these experiences has led me to these simple guidelines for an approach to an acting profession:

- The actor is expected to know their lines on, or preferably before, the deadline assigned by the director
- The historical context of the show will not be ignored by the actor
- The actor will be knowledgeable to the theory pertinent to the show
- The actor will analyze in detail the entire script for clues as to who their character is
- The preparation of the director, designers, and management will be met by the actor
- The actor will neither counteract nor be a disciple of the director but will do their best to follow the director's vision within their own creativity and comfort level

More of a job description than a method, these loose tenets to follow will not provide me with a plan of attack for the next role but perhaps keep me well equipped. The

pataphysical actor, one who is open to all of the universe, can have no method. The notion that there is a one-size-fits-all approach to acting devalues the actor's nature as "potential universe" (Ball, 6). I may fail to understand the acting method but, much like Andrew Hugil's description of pataphysics in his *'Pataphysics: A Useless Guide*, "To understand pataphysics is to fail to understand pataphysics. To define it is merely to indicate a possible meaning, which will always be the opposite of another equally possible meaning," my failure to grasp one acting method could just as well be the start of an acting school.

## Appendix A

# Evergreen Notebooks

These are the ramblings of a pataphysicist.

Like a dice, Luke rolls a losing 6. Then I roll a 2 and beat him I did. 'Pataphysics rests beyond Metaphysics rests beyond Physics. 'Pataphysics takes the previous dimension and adds another aspect of length to it. If we imagine physics as a linearly contained science, with a progression forward and backward in understanding of the universe or however it wants to be defined. When you give a universe the potential to become something more than itself, by taking away the rules that dictate it, which can be done through 'Pataphysics. 'Pataphysical physics have been explored in Faustroll, for instance the dimensions of god and the surface tension of water. However what about 'Pataphysical metaphysics? Then what about 'Pataphysical 'Pataphysics? 'Pataphysical 'Pata'pataphysics? 'Pataphysical meta'pataphysical 'patametaphysical physics? These are all very real questions that will be delved into in great length on the next page.

This page is intentionally left blank.

The real dilemma of 'Pataphysics is where does it all go? In physics, all of our thoughts and ideas get stored on cells in our brains and dissolve into more basic particles that have those ideas imprinted onto them when we die. In metaphysics, thoughts and ideas are processed by our souls into the spiritual realm, where they can be consumed in the afterlife or mess with the wireless internet connections. In 'Pataphysics, however, the thoughts and ideas do not have a logical place to go once they have been conceived. Why should we assume that pataphysical ponderings could fit inside of the spiritual or physical spectrum? This theorist has said that pataphysical ideas, once they have been thunk, are stored in the strings of the universe. However, these scientists are idiots, as the strings are already full to the brim of normal ideas, having been filled at approximately 7 : 77 : 72 GMT, Mardi 10 Sable 24, when the fifth letter of the first word was heard by an audience, generating a thoughtgasm at the Nouveau Théâtre. Since then, the pataphysical mind has been somewhere unknown, with thoughts and ideas being stored who knows where. It would be so easy to theorize them gone forever, however this does not follow the conservation of thought, which states that all things that have once been thunk, must again come into some form of existence in the mind every ten years, eleven days, thirteen hours, twenty six minutes, and two seconds. Because of the vast quantity of ideas, because of their progression into mainstream media, bacteria have been the bearers of most of this burden of thought. Bacteria's streams of consciousness are flooded with the whining of pataphysicians everywhere. All those who every have thought, "well what if the sun was actually a giant custard filled doughnut, and we just don't know of it's creamy filling because it's heated crust just hasn't cooled off yet. And other star systems are full of doughnut stars as well, but all of the doughnut's holes are tangential to the star's orbits around the earth, so that

we cannot see them and only observe their rounded sides” are flooding bacteria with their thoughts. Now it must be common knowledge that the bacteria that grow under the kitchen sink are much beyond silly quivering of thought such as this, and would much rather spend their hours of life contemplating the proper amount of atoms a screwdriver should consist of as to not be too cumbersome to rotate but still be able to apply a significant torsional force. However, this question may take longer than we should wish because of the questionings of these young pataphysical minds. That is why we, as humans, and apologies to any primates concerned enough to read my humble writings or primordial sentience perusing these thoughts as they rush from my consciousness, should boycott thought. At least for a couple of Millenia, while the bacterial cultures have the opportunity to create a vessel life form that can contain all of these thoughts. There is also the possibility that these thoughts are contained within black holes. It would certainly make sense as to why these holes are so massive, because they are filled up with so many of our thought-beams. These thought beams can ricochet infinitely on the walls of the tear on time space that black holes occupy. The bouncing off the walls intensifies in energy to great enough levels such that they can escape the continuum and be emitted as Hawking radiation. While black holes can be seen going down in the plane of spacetime, a pataphysical white hole, which can be seen going up in time space, is even more rare. This white hole is a phenomena that has been previously unobserved by the scientific body, which relies on the emittance of light to make its observations. White holes, however, emit light radiation at a speed too fast for scientists to pick it up on modern instrumentation. The speed of the light released,  $77,772c$ , where  $c$  is the current scientific definition for the speed of normal light, is caused by the dominant structure of the white hole, consisting of seven two sided triangles propped

against one another. The light bounces off the two sides of the prism, but uninhibited by the third side, accelerates ad infinitum.

List of Binaries made equal by pataphysics:

Hot	and	Cold
Black	and	White
Near	and	Far
On	and	Off
Man	and	Women
Fast	and	Slow
Reality	and	Imagination
True	and	False
Homosexual	and	Heterosexual
Day	and	Night
Fear	and	Courage
Acknowledgement	and	Denial
Right	and	Wrong
Good	and	Bad

Of course these binaries seem to be drastically different by nature, however it is only the perception of them that makes it seem so. The human mind is fond of these binaries, as we like to believe ourselves akin to the particle. However, humanity actually exists as a wave. Consider the fact that humans observe each other with greatest reliance



to sight, a wave of light, and sound, a kinetic wave. Consider that the phenomena of touch is reliant on the vibrations of our nerve endings sending wave pulses through our neurons to our brains. The human is a wave.

We then must interpret the qualities we construct for ourselves and our environment as a spectrum, for a spectral representation of a wavelike quantity is the way. When we see these values as spectral, it becomes more apparent that they are indeed equal. For example, take black and white, white being the presence of all colors and black being the absence. To the human, whose photoreceptors are typically stimulated around lows of  $10^{-6}$  candelas to damaging intensities of 100s of lumens, we typically see black at the low end of intensity and white at the high end. For the colossal squid, able to see in low light conditions thousands of meters beneath the sea, our starlit night would be a bright shade of grey. What to us is absolute black is to them a color further to the white side of the spectrum. There is no existence of a binary between the two. It goes without saying that this same principle of perception can be applied to many of these binaries. What makes something objectively slow, or courageous, or bad cannot be quantified definitively. All is relative.

“Pronounced slowly, it is the idea of duality, of echo, of distance, of symmetry, of greatness and duration, of the two principles of good and evil” (Jarry, 75). The pataphysician realizes that there will always be simplistic people who prefer to compartmentalize humanity into these binaries, assigning them values of better or worse, and so there will always be discourse about something. The pataphysician recognizes the advancements towards complete equalities of all things, as is the way of 'Pataphysics, but acknowledges that with the infinite qualities that a human can possess, there will always be a view that

some quality is better than another. In an infinite amount of time, there will be complete equality of all things as the universe nears its heat death. 'Pataphysics recognizes then that according to the infinite monkey theorem that humans will be equal on this time scale.

## A.1 Psychedelic Nature

When one goes down the rabbit hole, all rules are off. The laws of the world have changed drastically and the possibilities of any improbable occurrence increase to the realm of plausibility. The laws governing the world become solely controlled by the mind of the beholder and the whole of existence is open to the unlimited possibilities of an infinite mind. The user must accept all stimuli as part of the real world, bringing into question what is real. The concrete aspects of the world melt away and all that is left is the abstract, the ethereal, and the beyond.

Interestingly enough, the human mind has a mechanism that, when dying, releases a psychoactive stimulant into the brain. When we move to the stage beyond our perceivable universe, we are faced with this uncertainty, no matter what lies beyond. If we must, as humans, deal with the world we came to know in great detail, the world that we accepted as “real,” the world that we relied upon as the steady ground beneath our feet, crumble beneath us to the limitless and unbounded world of our minds, there must be some value to an open mind. Psychedelic drugs have this property, to unleash the mind's fury on one's experience. Because we use so little of our minds at a time, LSD allows us to unlock these regions of previously unexplored space. What we define as hallucinations have just as much grounds for existence as the piece of toast you ate for breakfast this morning. Webster's dictionary defines hallucination as “an experience involving the apparent perception of something not

present.” The key words of this definition being perception and presence.

How does our perception of the world become more or less valid? Our perceptions of any event can be misconstrued, we could not have all the evidence, we miss things, our minds are clouded by fatigue, hunger, lust. Humans seem to perceive the world on an individual basis and define other’s visions as incorrect if they differ from their own. ‘Pataphysics includes the desire for these differing perceptions to all be viewed and considered equally. There is no perception that is “wrong,” only nominally differing in state alone. The mind of the user of a hallucinogenic drug is only viewing an alternate reality, one that is different from the one that is claimed valid by general consensus.

The presence of a thing is also disputable. Most humans, with the ability of sight, rely almost solely on it to determine a thing’s existence. That which cannot be seen does not exist. Even deductive science relies on light, the fastest method of information transfer, to determine a thing’s existence. Of course, particle physics has determined some problems with the reliance of light [10]. Still, much of our interactions with the world around us rely on stimuli from one of our five senses. On psychedelic drugs, this reliance on the senses becomes menial, and things can exist outside of what others interpret to be reality.

Humans have an over reliance on the things that they believe to be concretely, irrefutably true. They believe that gravity will always pull masses together, that sound will travel radially away from its source, that two plus two will always be four. They convince themselves that they have blue or green or brown eyes, and that they will never be able to be a professional cheerleader because of their bad knee. They create a world around them and harden to the possibility of change. On psychedelic drugs however, these concrete things seem less so. Ego death occurs, and one is faced with the possibility that all of their

memories and truths that they hold so dear are mere fabrications. They are faced with change, in its entirety, and they become different people because of it. The pataphysician must be able to cope with this state, and in it, find that they exist only in their current and fleeting state of consciousness, with all other qualities of reality merely an illusion.

### **A.1.1 Even More on Dimensional Analysis**

When trying to create a hierarchal understanding of all things in order to organize his thoughts, Doctor Faustroll came upon the nature of humanity. He asked, “what class is more encompassing, human or people?” The human is a person, but all people are human. Trying to express the qualities of a human person, he ran into even more problems. Human people were too diverse to fit into slots. His chart fell apart, the hierarchy toppling over into his desk-side bin. He then realized that this two dimensional analysis of people was insufficient. People could not be defined by one thing or another. Humans need spectrum to be defined. People cannot be confined to the two dimensions that lie on paper. Instead, the human being can be expressed as a sphere of infinite radius. The human’s qualities are expressed in the rays emanating from the center of the sphere. There can be an infinite amount of these rays, as the surface area of the sphere can be infinitely divided into infinitesimally small segments. Therefore, all of the qualities of the person human can be expressed in the whole of the infinite sphere. Whether they are good or bad, how many parking tickets they have received, the amount of previous incarnations lived as a lobster or a can of corned beef, can all be expressed in the all encompassing infinite sphere. ‘Pataphysics is the science...

## Appendix B

### *Princess Ivona* Script

argued with his critics in the *Diaries*, denigrated the denigrators and hailed those who hailed him. But my impression is that in the final analysis Gombrowicz's *Diaries* work against him. All artists are vulnerable. But Gombrowicz was so much preparing himself for the hostile world that he tended to over-explain himself. Twice I implored him to remove the personal prefaces he had written to guide his English critics. He persisted in building up a protective watch-tower. This he had done from the very beginning. In the name of sincerity, I suppose. He believed in the importance and survival of the printed word. Sometimes he seemed to forget that words too have their built-in obsolescence. They corrupt the sincerity that pushed them out. Pop art thrives on this transience.

I am glad I met him in my green youth. His integrity, his charm, his stylised manners were of the kind that elevate memories. He observed and described the regressive appetites of man at a time when fear pushed societies towards catastrophe. He was not, however, a prophet of doom; such prophets are many and are replaceable. Instead he played with a dainty fork, picking his teeth to shock the easily-shockable. How convincing is the violence of manners? The brutal forces today are horribly simple. They would knock the teeth out for a start. And then what would be the use of the fork, symbolic or otherwise? Our existence, like our literature, is becoming shock-proof.

## First Run Notes

Encounter, March 1971

- entrance/exits foster
- cheat out more
- do rather than act
- hit laughs stronger
- tighter: more decisive
- separate for questioning Ivona
- pace up
- look at chamberlain laughs
- throw innocent more SR
- whom? → Ivona dub
- bitch is important
- be seen under mask

## PRINCESS IVONA

5 facts from text - Doesn't speak in presence of king

- Doesn't speak in long, drawn out monologues
- Has a moral compass
- Loves his friend Phillip
- Has a secret love for Isobel
- Has had advanced schooling
- Born of a rich family
- Intelligent
- Sarcastic
- Easily Bored
- Analyzing Everything

Stopping Cyprian from violence Act 1

"For God's Sake"

Public Disgrace

Isobel

Causing Everything

likes

pretty girls  
eggling  
alcohol  
nice clothes

dislikes

embarrassment  
feeling lesser  
king

Simon

24

The principle town ruled by King Ignatius

Gentleman

## CHARACTERS

IVONA  
KING IGNATIUS  
QUEEN MARGARET  
PRINCE PHILIP heir to the throne  
LORD CHAMBERLAIN  
ISOBEL lady in waiting to the Queen  
SIMON friend of the Prince  
CYPRIAN  
IVONA'S AUNTS  
INNOCENT a courtier  
CHECKERS a servant  
STATE DIGNITARIES  
COURTIERS  
BEGGAR  
LADIES OF THE COURT

## ACT ONE

*The promenade — usual seats, trees, etc. The public in their Sunday best. Enter KING IGNATIUS, QUEEN MARGARET, PRINCE PHILIP, LORD CHAMBERLAIN, SIMON and CYPRIAN followed by ladies and gentlemen of the court.*

QUEEN: What a wonderful sunset!

CHAMBERLAIN: Wonderful indeed, Your Majesty.

QUEEN: Truly inspiring, is it not?

CHAMBERLAIN: Exactly so, Madam, exactly.

KING: A wonderful sunset now, and a jolly hand of bridge later... What?

CHAMBERLAIN: Indeed. How perfectly Your Majesty combines an innate sense of beauty with a natural desire for the game. (A BEGGAR approaches) What do you want?

BEGGAR: Help, My Lord!

KING: My Lord Chamberlain, give him a crown. Let the people know that we have their welfare at heart.

QUEEN: Give him two. For that wonderful sunset.

LADIES: Aah! Aah!

KING: Give him three. Let's do it in style.

COURTIERS: Aah. Aah.

BEGGAR: God bless your Majesty. May the Almighty bless your gracious Majesty, and your gracious Majesty bless the Almighty. (*Exits, singing a beggar's song*)

KING: Right now! Let's go. It won't do to be late for dinner. We've

still got to make a tour of the Gardens to mingle freely with our loyal subjects. It isn't a National Day for nothing, what? *(All get ready to go except PRINCE PHILIP)* You not coming, Philip?

PHILIP: *(picking a newspaper up off the ground)* Just a moment...

KING: Aha, I see. A rendez-vous, what? I was just the same at your age! Let's leave him to it. *(Exit chucking)*

QUEEN: *(reproachfully)* Ignatius!

*The trumpets sound, the court leave except PRINCE PHILIP, SIMON and CYPRIAN.*

CYPRIAN & SIMON: This do, what a crushing bore!

PHILIP: Wait, let me read today's horoscope. *(Reading)* 'From twelve till two'... this isn't it... Here it is: 'between seven and nine in the evening great expansion of vitality, growth of personality, excellent if hazardous ideas. This is the time for bold plans and daring enterprise'.

CYPRIAN: What use is that to us?

PHILIP: *(continues reading)* 'also for the affairs of the heart'.

*back*  
SIMON: Ah, that is different. *(Pointing to some passing girls)* attend And there they are.

CYPRIAN: Avanti, avanti! Duty calls.

PHILIP: What do you mean — duty?

CYPRIAN: Action, action! Gloriously, deliciously. We are young, we are men. We are young men. Let us be young men and give work to the clergy so that they can be clergy. That's what I call a proper division of labour.

SIMON: Look at that elegant and seductive siren. Look at those legs!

PHILIP: Oh no. Not again? Not the same old thing?

CYPRIAN: No? But why not? Of course, again and again. What would she think if we just let her pass?

PHILIP: No.

SIMON: What? What do you mean: 'no'?

CYPRIAN: *(with astonishment)* Doesn't it give Your Highness a glorious sense of achievement to hear sweet lips say 'yes', even if it means hearing the same old thing over and over again?

PHILIP: Of course it does, of course... *(Continues reading)*

'These hours favour the success of great undertakings, they bring refinement of feelings, they can be dangerous for those of exalted ambition and acute sense of dignity. Affairs started at this time may turn out to be successful or otherwise'. At least that's true... *(Enter ISOBEL)* Welcome, Madam.

CYPRIAN: This is an unexpected pleasure....

SIMON: A delight...

ISOBEL: Good evening, Your Highness. What are you doing here, away from the Court?

PHILIP: Exactly what I should be doing: while the presence of my Father inspires the hearts of our loyal men I am here to inspire delicious dreams in the hearts of our ladies... but you, shouldn't you be attending the Queen?

ISOBEL: I am late. I am rushing there now. I have been for a walk...

PHILIP: You are in a rush? Where to?

ISOBEL: Your Highness seems a little distraught? Your voice sounds melancholy. Aren't you enjoying life any more, Your Highness? I am, to the full.

PHILIP: So am I... That's why...

CYPRIAN, SIMON, ISOBEL: What?

PHILIP: Humph...

CYPRIAN, SIMON, ISOBEL: That's why what?

PHILIP: Oh, nothing.

ISOBEL: Nothing? Are you not well, Your Highness?

SIMON: A cold?



CYPRIAN: Migraine?

PHILIP: Wrong, wrong again! I am seething, I tell you, throbbing and bubbling inside.

CYPRIAN: (*staring at a girl*) Not bad, that blonde. Not at all bad.

PHILIP: Blonde? If you said brunette it would be exactly the same... (*Looking round, depressed*) trees and more trees, they are all exactly the same. I want something to happen.

SIMON: Look, another one. *Call*

CYPRIAN: Chaperoned!

SIMON: Two aunts! *Mock*

ISOBEL: What is this game?

CYPRIAN: Look, Your Highness, look. One could die of laughter.

SIMON: Be quiet. Let's listen. *Silence*

1st AUNT: Let's sit down. Can you see those young men, my child?

IVONA: (*silent*)

1st AUNT: Do smile, my child, always smile.

IVONA: (*silent*)

2nd AUNT: Why so clumsy, child? Why can't you smile properly?

IVONA: (*silent*)

2nd AUNT: Yesterday again you had no success whatsoever. No success today, no success tomorrow. Why are you so unattractive, my child? Unglamorous, unseductive. Nobody ever looks at you. You are a trial, that's what you are.

1st AUNT: We have spent all our savings to buy this dress for you. You can't blame us for not trying....

CYPRIAN: The monstrous scarecrow!

ISOBEL: 'Monstrous' is going a little far.

SIMON: Look at her! She dares to look.... *imprudent*

CYPRIAN: The miserable wretch, the cry baby. Come, let's show her how despicable she is. We'll snub her, put her in her place.

SIMON: Yes, let's deflate this puffed up misery. This is our appointed duty. You first, I'll follow. *inflate / cover*

*They march in front of IVONA, bursting into laughter under her nose.*

CYPRIAN: Ha, ha, ha, right under her nose.

ISOBEL: Oh leave her alone. It's just silly.

1st AUNT: (*to IVONA*) You see what you have let us in for?

2nd AUNT: To be a public laughing stock. Oh, you are a trial. I thought that in my old age, when I ceased to be a woman, I would cease to be a butt of ridicule. Now I am old and as ridiculous as ever. Why? Just because of you.

CYPRIAN: Do you hear? The aunts are at it too. Go on! Give it to her!

2nd AUNT: They are laughing at us again. If we leave now, they will laugh behind our backs. But if we stay, they will laugh in our faces.

1st AUNT: My child, last night, at the dance, why didn't you even lift a finger?

2nd AUNT: Why will nobody take any interest in you? Do you think we like it? Such sexual ambition as we ever had we have invested in you and you do nothing; you don't even ski.

1st AUNT: Why don't you try pole vaulting? Other girls do....

CYPRIAN: Oh, look at the jellyfish. She makes me squirm, sets me on edge. She annoys me more than I can say. I can't bear it. I'm going to throw them off their seat, shall I?

SIMON: No — it isn't really worth the trouble. It would do just as well to shake your finger or to wave your hand or do anything else for that matter. Whatever you do to her turns into a snub. (*Sniffs*) *deflate*

2nd AUNT: Look, now they're sniffing at us. *hargain*

ISOBEL: Do leave her alone.

CYPRIAN: No, don't. Let's play a real joke on her. I'll pretend I'm maimed, I have a club foot, and it will make her think that not even the laziest dog would deign to lick the crumbs thrown from her table. (*Moves towards IVONA*)

PHILIP: Stop. I have a much better idea.

CYPRIAN: I withdraw and leave the field to you.

SIMON: What's the idea? You look as if you were on to something this time.

*encourage*

PHILIP: More than you think. (*Approaches the AUNTS*) Will you allow me to introduce myself? I am His Highness, Prince Philip, the heir to the throne.

AUNTS: Aah!

PHILIP: Ladies, you seem to be having trouble with this young person. Why is she so apathetic?

1st AUNT: It is our misfortune. She is suffering from an organic deficiency, from sluggishness of the blood.

2nd AUNT: It makes her swell in winter and sink in summer. She has catarrh in the autumn and headaches in the spring.

PHILIP: It must make it difficult to choose the right season for anything. Is there no cure for her?

1st AUNT: The doctors say that if she were to become livelier, her blood would flow faster and then she might be cured.

PHILIP: But why doesn't she get livelier?

1st AUNT: Because her blood is too sluggish.

PHILIP: You mean if she became livelier her blood would flow faster and if her blood would flow faster she would become livelier. Most peculiar, a real vicious circle. Do you know what I think....

2nd AUNT: Your Highness is laughing at us of course. You are welcome to, I am sure.

PHILIP: Laughing at you? No, I am not laughing at all. (*The clock strikes seven*) The hour is too serious. Don't you feel a certain expansion of vitality, a growth of personality, a kind of ecstasy even?

1st AUNT: I'm afraid not. A little chilly, perhaps?

PHILIP: Odd. (*To IVONA*) Don't you feel anything?

IVONA: (*silent*)

2nd AUNT: What could she possibly feel?

PHILIP: Do you know that the moment one looks at you, one is tempted to harm you in some way? To tie you up with a rope for instance and then to run at full speed or to drive you as a sort of milk cart. I would like to prick you with a pin and to make silly faces at you. You get on everybody's nerves. Don't you see you are like a red rag to a bull. You are provoking, you insult everyone, you drive people to distraction. Everyone has his personal irritant, but you are the universal irritant. The way you sit, the way you fiddle with your fingers and wiggle your toes. It's quite incredible. It's splendid in a way, a revelation of sorts. How do you manage to do it?

IVONA: (*silent*)

PHILIP: It is your silence, the way you look offended. The sublime air of a proud queen. You are disdainful, you are soured, arrogance and vinegar. I recognize that for everyone there is, somewhere, somebody capable of firing them to a white heat; you do that to me, you must be mine, you shall be mine. (*SIMON and CYPRIAN draw nearer*) Simon and Cyprian, let me introduce you to this offended queen, this proud Anemia.... Look, her lips are moving. She would say something spiteful, if only she could think of something to say.

ISOBEL: How ridiculous. (*Draws nearer*) Do leave her alone. It isn't funny and it's becoming most distasteful.

PHILIP: (*sharply*) Did you ever think it wouldn't be?

CYPRIAN: Allow me to introduce myself. I am Count Acidity.

SIMON: Ha, ha, ha. I am Baron Leukemia. The joke is perhaps not subtle but certainly appropriate. *mock / comment*

ISOBEL: Haven't you had enough? Leave the wretched creature alone.

PHILIP: Wretched? Not so fast, dear lady. What would you say I told you that I were going to marry this wretched creature?

SIMON & CYPRIAN: Ha, ha, ha.

PHILIP: This is not a laughing matter. I will marry her (SIMON and CYPRIAN *laugh*)... I will marry her. I simply have to. She is my own turmoil. I will marry her. (*To the AUNTS*) I may have your permission, mayn't I? *Just -> jest*

SIMON: It is you who are going too fast and too far with this joke. It won't be funny if they sue you for breach of promise.

PHILIP: A joke? And isn't she herself a colossal joke? Can't I be a joke as well? The balance is perfect. I am a prince, she is a proud and affronted queen. Just look at her. (*To IVONA*) Madam, may I be allowed to request your hand in marriage?

1st AUNT: Good gracious.

2nd AUNT: Good gracious. Your Highness has a generous heart.

1st AUNT: Your Highness is a true philanthropist.

CYPRIAN: Incredible. *plea*

SIMON: Mad. I beg you in the name of your ancestors.

CYPRIAN: I beg you in the name of your descendants.

PHILIP: Stop, both of you. (*Takes IVONA's hand*)

ISOBEL: The King.

CYPRIAN: The King.

SIMON: The King. *stross*

*Trumpets, trumpets etc. Enter the KING, the QUEEN, the LORD CHAMBERLAIN, followed by ladies and gentlemen of the court.*

AUNTS: We better make ourselves scarce before the storm breaks.

*The AUNTS flee.*

KING: Still here, what, Philip? I see you are having fun. (*To his entourage*) Didn't I tell you? My own flesh and blood.

QUEEN: Ignatius.

KING: I told you, what! What did I say? Blood runs thicker than water, like father like son, what! (*Aside*) Good Lord, this nymph seems a little...? What is this frump, my son?

PHILIP: Allow me, Sir, to present my future wife.

KING: Your what?

ISOBEL: His Highness is joking, of course.

KING: Joking, now I see. Just like his father. Practical jokes are about the only thing I still enjoy these days. The funny thing is, the simpler the joke, the more it pleases me. I really don't know why. There are no jokes like the old jokes, what! The simpler they are, the younger they make me feel.

CHAMBERLAIN: Exactly so, Your Majesty. May I concur with your judgement. Nothing is more rejuvenating than a really senseless joke.

QUEEN: (*embarrassed*) Philippe....

PHILIP: This is not a joke.

QUEEN: What is it then, Philippe, if it's not a joke....

PHILIP: It is my betrothal.

KING: What!!!

*The court flee in panic.*

QUEEN: We must keep our temper at all costs. We must proceed with tact. (*To IVONA*) Would you mind looking at that tree over there. (*To PRINCE PHILIP*) Philippe you are putting her in an impossible position. You are putting us in an impossible position, you are putting yourself in an impossible position. (*To the KING*) Calmly Ignatius, calmly.

PHILIP: Your Majesties, I see that in your eyes I have done something outrageous. That I, the Prince of the blood, should be linked to a person like this....



KING: Now you are talking sense.

PHILIP: I don't see it like that at all. I am not talking her because have too little, but because I have too much. Surely this is not wrong, and I am not lowering myself.

KING: Too little? Too much? What do you mean 'too much'?

PHILIP: Am I not rich enough to take on this misery? Why, pray should only prettiness attract me. Who says so? What is wrong with being ugly? Is there a law against it? Even if it were the law, I would not follow it blindly. I am free.

KING: You can't be serious, Philip. Pride has gone to your head. Why must you muddle quite simple things? You meet a pretty girl, you like her, you naturally . . . what? If she isn't pretty, on the other hand, you equally naturally run as fast as you can. There is nothing complicated about it, it is the law of nature. A for myself (*A cautious glance at the QUEEN*) I follow it willingly, to be sure.

PHILIP: This law of nature seems to me stupid, vulgar, ridiculous and unjust.

CHAMBERLAIN: It must be so, if you say so, Sir, but all the same the most stupid laws of nature are the most delectable, Your Highness.

KING: Are you bored, Philip? Are you weary of your studies at the faculty of advanced furnace construction? What about your splendid welfare work among our poorer subjects?

QUEEN: And all your childhood games — tennis, bridge, polo? And football and dominoes?

CHAMBERLAIN: Is it possible, if I may be allowed to put it somewhat plainly, that it is that very freedom of sexual behaviour among your contemporaries which is the cause of your ennui, Your Highness? It is a little hard to believe, I must admit. I don't think it would have bored me.

PHILIP: To hell with sexual freedom. I am going to marry, that's all.

KING: To marry. To marry, indeed. You damnable insolent puppy!

I'll teach you to laugh at us, I'll curse you . . . cast you out.

QUEEN: Ignatius, you couldn't do that.

KING: I will do it. I will lay a curse on him. I will put him in irons. I will throw him out into the street.

QUEEN: Ignatius, oh Ignatius. It would cause such a scandal.

Ignatius, he is only doing it out of the goodness of his heart.

KING: Out of the goodness of his heart, indeed! He's breaking his old father's heart.

QUEEN: He is doing it out of pity. He has always been so tender and the misfortunes of this miserable girl must have moved him deeply. Oh, Ignatius, it would cause such a scandal if you did anything rash.

KING: (*suspiciously*) Her misfortune has moved him? Is that what you think?

CHAMBERLAIN: Your Majesty, the Queen is so right. His Highness is doing it entirely out of his natural generosity. It is a generous deed, a noble deed. (*Aside to the KING*) Don't you see, Sire, unless we call it a generous deed, it is a scandalous one as surely as two and two makes four. You know, Sire, how obstinate Prince Philip is. We must avoid scandal at all costs.

KING: Yes! Well, well . . . on second thoughts we have to admit that your action was well intentioned. Although very, very rash, of course, what? Generosity, that's it. Generosity, what!

PHILIP: It isn't generosity at all.

QUEEN: (*talking very fast*) But it is, it is, Philippe, dear, do not interrupt. We know best. In recognition of your goodness we will allow you to present your fiancée to us. The way she bears misfortune has appealed to our best, most refined feelings. It has indeed affected us deeply. We will receive her at the palace as one equal to the highest in the land. This, we are sure, will not bring discredit on our house, but indeed exalt it.

PHILIP: (*interrupts*) Simon, send her here — Their Majesties have consented.

QUEEN: Ignatius, calm, remember!

PHILIP: (*approaches, leading IVONA on his arm. The courtiers emerge from under the trees. Trumpets, trumpets, etc*) Your Majesties, may I be allowed to present my fiancée?

CHAMBERLAIN: (*in a whisper*) Curtsey. Curtsey.

IVONA: (*nothing*)

CHAMBERLAIN: Curtsey, curtsey.

PHILIP: Curtsey.

QUEEN: Here, here... (*She bows slightly to give IVONA a hint*)  
Now... now....

KING: (*bows slightly as the QUEEN has just done*)

IVONA: (*nothing*)

PHILIP: (*a little perplexed*) This is the King, my father, His Majesty and this is the Queen, my mother, Her Majesty. Curtsey. Curtsey.

IVONA: (*nothing*)

QUEEN: (*hurriedly*) Philippe, my dear, we are touched... the sweet creature... (*Kissing IVONA*) my child, we will be mother and father to you, we are delighted with the truly evangelical spirit of our son, we respect his choice. Philippe, retreat! Upwards and onwards for ever.

CHAMBERLAIN: Aah!

COURTIERS: (*on a signal from CHAMBERLAIN*) Aah!

KING: (*absolutely blank*)... upwards... onwards... I suppose you could put it like that.

QUEEN: (*continues hurriedly*) Now take her in and order her apartments to be made ready, see that she lacks nothing.

CHAMBERLAIN: Aaa....

COURTIERS: Aaa....

*Exit PRINCE PHILIP, IVONA, SIMON and the courtiers.*

KING: Oh, oh, she... we... damn... my goodness me, do you see what happened? In the end we had to bow to her... she wouldn't... and she didn't... ugh. Isn't she a horror!

QUEEN: Isn't she? That is the beauty of his deed!

CHAMBERLAIN: Quite so, Your Majesty, quite so. If I may coin a phrase: the uglier the betrothed, the more beautiful the betrothal. Sure, the Prince will get over it in a few days if we don't force the issue. I will see him today to find out what his intentions are. It's just an extravaganza and we must not cross him in any way if we don't want to make things worse. We must keep our peace, watch our step and proceed with caution.

QUEEN: And tact, Ignatius, and tact.

## ACT TWO

Enter SR

*The Prince's apartments. Enter PRINCE PHILIP, SIMON, IVONA. CHECKERS, duster in hand, comes in through opposite door.*

PHILIP: Get out, Checkers. (CHECKERS leaves) Make her sit down. I am still afraid she may run away. Should we tie her to the table leg?

SIMON: She's half dead, she won't run, Philip. *Wave hand*

PHILIP: Well? *Diagnose*

SIMON: (disapproving) Why are you doing this, Philip? *challenge face*

PHILIP: Why? Why? Don't you see that she's my own dragon to be slain, my Gordian knot to be cut. I am a hunter in the night, going single-handed after a lion. I am Theseus taking the bull by the horns. Simon. . . . *scold*

SIMON: One can't get any sense out of you today.

PHILIP: Or it may just be irresistible curiosity. Rather as if one were prodding a worm with a stick to see if it will turn.

SIMON: Will you let me tell you what I think? *gain*

PHILIP: Do. . . . *Downstage left*

SIMON: Let us leave her alone. In half an hour's time we won't know what to do with her. It will be very inconvenient apart from anything else. You were far too rash. *advise*

PHILIP: I thought both you and Cyprian were rash enough with her.

SIMON: Quite true, we were. But it is one thing to have a little joke in the open air and a different thing to drag her indoors. *defend*  
My advice is to let her go at once. *Command*

PHILIP: Look at the way she sits. Incredible! All the same, what impertinence. Just because this girl is as she is, must one assume that she can't attract anyone at all? Infernal cheek on the part of nature. (Looks at IVONA) Do you know, it is only since I first set eyes on her that I have really felt . . . no, that I have become fully a prince. Before that I felt no more than a baron and one of the lesser ones at that.

SIMON: How very odd. I would have said the opposite is the case. Since you saw her you have behaved more like a baron than a prince. *attack*

PHILIP: It is odd but I must tell you that I have never felt so self assured, so splendid, so brilliant. Tra, la, la. . . . (Places a pen upside down on the end of his finger) Look, I could never do this before. Apparently it is necessary to find someone truly inferior to appreciate one's own excellence. To be a prince in name is nothing — to be a prince in essence, it's heaven, it's pure joy. I am floating on air. (He dances round the room) Now let us have a look at our splendid folly, our magnificent distraction. Madam, could you be prevailed upon to speak?

IVONA: (silent)

PHILIP: You know, it's not that she's wholly ugly; it is that element of misery within her composition.

SIMON: That is the worst of it. *kneel confirm*

PHILIP: Madam, why are you like this?

IVONA: (silent)

PHILIP: Silence, silence. Why are you like this? *NOPE*

IVONA: (silent)

SIMON: No answer. Offended. *diagnose*

PHILIP: Offended.

SIMON: Perhaps not offended. Just scared.

PHILIP: A little overwhelmed?



IVONA: (*quietly and uneasily*) Please, leave me alone. I am not offended.

PHILIP: Not offended, then why don't you answer? *step back SR*

IVONA: (*silent*)

PHILIP: Well?

IVONA: (*silent*)

PHILIP: Can't you? Why?

IVONA: (*silent*) *abuse*

SIMON: Ha. Ha. She can't. She is feeling offended after all.

PHILIP: Madam, please, be kind enough to explain to us your mechanism. You are not all that stupid. Why then do people treat you as if you could not tell black from white. Are they just teasing you? *realize*

SIMON: She isn't stupid, she's in a stupid situation.

PHILIP: You are right. I beg your forgiveness. Look, Simon, isn't it amazing? Her nose is well proportioned, and she is not brainless. In fact, she is not a bit worse than many of the girls we know. But nobody would dream of teasing others as they tease you, would they? Why are you the scapegoat? Has it become a habit?

IVONA: (*quietly*) It is a wheel, it goes round and round in circles.

SIMON: What wheel? *wonder*

PHILIP: Don't interrupt. What wheel?

IVONA: It is going round and round, always, everybody, everything, all the time.

PHILIP: Round and round? Why round? There is something mystical about it: a wheel? All circles are mystical. For example, she is lethargic. Why? Because she is out of sorts. And why is she out of sorts? Because she is lethargic, of course. Don't you see it is a circle? A vicious circle.

SIMON: (*to IVONA*) It's your own fault, cheer up a little, you bumpkin.

IVONA: (*silent*) *poke*

PHILIP: She dismissed you like a school boy, don't you see?

SIMON: Come now, pluck up courage. A little humour. A little life. Look, you are just sulking. Smile a little and all will be well. *prod*

PHILIP: Smile just a little. It won't hurt.

IVONA: (*silent*)

PHILIP: She won't. She is quite right not to. . . . It would be so out of keeping. It would only make things worse. She would be even more annoying, more irritating, more provoking, wouldn't she? Simon, I have never seen anything like it. Isn't it magnificent? What do you think would happen if we smiled at her first?

SIMON: It wouldn't work, it would be a pitying smile. A smile of pity wouldn't really do, would it? *deny*

PHILIP: Isn't it an absolutely hellish combination, an infernal dialectic. You can see, can't you, for all that she keeps silent as the grave, she herself has thought it all out. There is a method in it, it's a system, a perpetuum mobile. Inside everything is spinning, as if a dog and a cat were tied to the same pole, the dog chasing the cat and frightening it, the cat chasing and frightening the dog, a mad chase without end. But what does one see? Nothing. *diagnose*

SIMON: A hermetic, self contained system.

PHILIP: It couldn't have been like this always, though, could it? Not at the beginning? Why are you afraid? Because you are shy. But why are you shy? Because you are afraid, a little. Which came first? There must have been a beginning.

IVONA: (*silent*)

PHILIP: Let me see. There must be something in you — some-

thing positive as it were, a spark? You can't consist only of deficiencies. There must be something, some reason, some quality, a mainstay of sorts. Something you like in yourself, that you believe in. I promise you, we will fan that spark into a blaze. It will make your cheeks rosy.

IVONA: (*silent*)

PHILIP: Wait. This is important. Suppose someone comes up to you and tells you that you are a horror, an abomination and a curse. Striking, wounding, killing words. What would you reply? Would you say: 'Yes, I am all this, it's true, but ...' But what? What would you say?

IVONA: (*silent*)

SIMON: Come, tell us.

PHILIP: But... for instance, 'But I am kindhearted' or 'But I am nice'. Don't you see? One positive quality, one virtue, is all we need.

SIMON: (*violently*) Do say something. Speak, madam, speak.

PHILIP: Perhaps you write poetry: elegies, epitaphs? However bad they are I would recite them with enthusiasm, I swear. Oh couldn't you give me just something to build on? Do you, in fact, write poetry?

IVONA: (*silent*)

SIMON: She despises it.

PHILIP: Do you believe in God? Do you pray? Do you kneel? Do you believe that Christ Our Lord died on the Cross for you?

IVONA: (*contemptuously*) Yes.

PHILIP: A miracle. At last Glory be to God. But why with such contempt? You can't speak with contempt about the God you believe in.

SIMON: It is beyond me.

PHILIP: I will tell you something, Simon. She only believes in God because of her deficiencies. She knows that if she were

like other people, she would not believe. She believes in God but she knows all the time that God is only a sort of dressing to cover up her psychosomatic sores. (*To IVONA*) Isn't it so?

IVONA: (*silent*)

PHILIP: But... even so, there is some appalling lethargic wisdom in it.

SIMON: Medicine. Medicine. Pills and a suitable treatment would cure that wisdom of hers. General hygiene — a morning walk — sports and games — rolls and butter.

PHILIP: You forget her body does not assimilate medicine. It does not do so because it is too sluggish. We know that sequence. It doesn't assimilate remedies for sluggishness because it is too sluggish. You are forgetting the mystic cycle. The morning walks and games would of course cure her weakness but she can't go for walks because she is too weak. Simon, have you ever heard anything like it? It calls for pity, but what a curious kind of pity...

SIMON: (*to IVONA*) It must be a punishment for your sins. You must have misbehaved prodigiously in your childhood. Philip, there must be sin at the bottom of this. It could not have happened without a monumental lapse. You have sinned.

IVONA: (*silent*)

PHILIP: Oh, at last, I have grasped it, at last. Listen, if you are so weak, then you must feel everything less strongly, suffer less, less and less. Do you hear? The circle closes to your advantage, it all evens out. You know less of the fascination of the world, but it must also hurt you less.

IVONA: (*silent*)

PHILIP: Well?

IVONA: (*silent, gives a furtive glance at PRINCE PHILIP*)

SIMON: (*noticing*) What is she doing?

PHILIP: What?

SIMON: Nothing, really. Philip...



PHILIP: (*getting anxious*) What is she doing?

SIMON: Philip. She is making eyes at you.

PHILIP: She couldn't....

SIMON: Look. She is... positively... she is eating you up with her eyes. Passionately, damn it. She is squirming her way towards you. Take care. This weakness is lusty, seeking with desire.

PHILIP: She's shameless, it is a scandal and a disgrace. How dare you fasten upon me? You worm, you maggot. Shall we roast her a little? Make a poker red-hot and make her dance?

SIMON: Philip, stop it. *retreat*

PHILIP: There is something unbearable about her. I can't stand it. It's offensive. You are offending me. I do not wish to know about your troubles. You... pessimist, you... realist.

SIMON: Philip. *stop*

PHILIP: Look how she is sitting....

SIMON: Make her get up.

PHILIP: Then she will be standing, and that will be even worse. Look at her — begging, begging for something... asking me... Simon, we must get rid of this creature. Give me a knife. I will cut her throat with pleasure.

SIMON: For God's sake!

PHILIP: I'm joking, of course. But she is scared. She is really scared — it's foul. Why are you frightened, Madam, when it was only a joke? It was a joke — why are you taking it seriously?

SIMON: Now you are overdoing it.

PHILIP: What? I suppose so. How funny, you really think I'm overacting. Very likely. But it's her fault, not mine. It is she and not I....

*A bell. Enter CHECKERS.*

SIMON: Who is that? (*Looks through the window*) Visitors, I think. The Lord Chamberlain and some ladies.

CHECKERS: Should I open the door? *distra*

PHILIP: They've come to pry. Let us go and tidy ourselves.

PRINCE PHILIP, SIMON and IVONA leave the room. CHECKERS opens the door. Enter the LORD CHAMBERLAIN, TWO GENTLEMEN, FOUR LADIES and INNOCENT

1st LADY: Nobody in? (*Looks around*)

2nd LADY: Oh, really, I can't. (*Giggles*)

1st GENTLEMAN: And what if it is serious?

CHAMBERLAIN: Quiet, please, ladies. I beg you, no giggling. (*Ladies giggle*) No giggling, I said. We must behave as if nothing has happened, if we are to find out how the wind is blowing.

1st LADY: And what if it is serious? Oh, what an idea. Look, her hat! What a hat! I can't! I have got a stitch.

2nd LADY: I am bursting!

CHAMBERLAIN: A little self control, I beg of you.

ALL GUESTS: But we can't. Stop or I will burst. Stop it. We are bursting. We are dying.

*They are all laughing except INNOCENT. Enter PRINCE PHILIP, SIMON and IVONA.*

ALL GUESTS: Your Highness. (*Bows and curtsies*)

CHAMBERLAIN: We were just passing. We couldn't refrain from calling... (*Rubs his hands*) all of us....

PHILIP: Ivona, darling — I am delighted to be able to present you to my future wife.

GUESTS: Aah (*Bowing*)... Congratulations, congratulations.

PHILIP: My dear, overcome your shyness and say something. These ladies and gentlemen belong to the best society. Don't be afraid of them as if they were cannibals or chimpanzees from

Borneo. I apologize for my fiancée. She is exceptionally sensitive, proud and shy — somewhat difficult to get on with. (To IVONA) Do sit down, we can't be kept standing for ever.

IVONA: (as if to sit on the floor)

SIMON: Oh, no, not there.

*Murmurs*

GUESTS: Ha, ha, ha, ha.

1st GENTLEMAN: Could have sworn there was a chair there.

1st LADY: There was, but it must have run away.

GUESTS: Ha, ha, ha. Magic. A bad omen.

CHAMBERLAIN: Please, sit down. (Moves a chair nearer) Be careful, though.

SIMON: Hold it, so it doesn't run away again. *JSK*

CHAMBERLAIN: Be kind enough to aim with care.

PHILIP: Aim well, my dear. (IVONA sits down) Well done.

All take seats except PRINCE PHILIP

1st LADY: (in an aside to PRINCE PHILIP, with a certain degree of familiarity) Really, Your Highness. It's too much. I will die of laughter.

2nd LADY: (in an aside to PRINCE PHILIP) I will burst. I will die. It is of course the most fashionable kind of practical joke. I didn't know Your Highness had such a flair for it. Only look at her!

PHILIP: (encouraging his guests) Ha, ha, ha.

GUESTS: Ha, ha, ha.

PHILIP: (louder) Ha, ha, ha.

GUESTS: (louder) Ha, ha, ha.

PHILIP: (louder) Ha, ha, ha.

GUESTS: (not quite sure) Ha, ha, ha, ha. (Laughter dies out. Silence)

CHAMBERLAIN: (coughs)

1st LADY: I must leave, I'm afraid. I have just remembered an appointment. Your Highness will excuse me. . . .

2nd LADY: I have to go as well. Your Highness will forgive me, I have got an appointment too. (In a low voice to PRINCE PHILIP) I understand now. You have arranged it all to show us up. What a joke! Your Highness gets engaged to this simpleton to make fools of us. Your Highness must have found out about Lady Joanna's face lifts and wigs. That's why you got engaged to this peasant . . . to show her up. I can assure you that the irony of your stratagem has not at least escaped me. I take my leave.

PHILIP: The irony?

1st LADY: (who heard most of it — to 2nd LADY) If it were intended to show up anybody it would be more likely you with your false teeth we all know of. (To PRINCE PHILIP) Your Highness, do not be too cruel, I beg you! And now I really must be going.

2nd LADY: My teeth. More likely your false bust.

1st LADY: What about your crooked shoulder?

2nd LADY: Remember your toes.

GUESTS: We really must be going.

PHILIP: Don't go yet.

GUESTS: It is time, Your Highness. It's time for us to go.

The GUESTS leave except the LORD CHAMBERLAIN and INNOCENT. One can hear from the stairs outside: 'toes', 'teeth', 'wig', etc.

CHAMBERLAIN: Forgive me, Your Highness, but I am forced to request an immediate interview with you, Sir. Your Highness has frightened our fair ladies away.

PHILIP: I did not, their own secrets have driven them away. It appears that there is nothing more frightening. Famine and war are nothing compared to one little well hidden false tooth.

INNOCENT: Excuse me.

PHILIP: What is this? You are still here?

INNOCENT: I am. I am sorry. I only wanted to say that this is vile.

PHILIP: What is vile?

INNOCENT: Vile and mean. I am sorry. I must sit down. Excitement always upsets my breathing.

PHILIP: You said something was vile?

INNOCENT: I am sorry... I got carried away. Forgive me, Your Highness. Forget about it, please. I am sorry. *(Wants to leave)*

PHILIP: Wait. You said something was mean and vile. Wait a moment.

INNOCENT: *(his speech alternates between deadly quiet and high irritation)* But I see now that I can't keep it up.

CHAMBERLAIN: What a silly expression. Keep up — what?

INNOCENT: Keep up what I have started. *(Wanting to leave)* I apologize.

PHILIP: Wait a moment, don't be so mysterious, Mister... Mr... Mr...

INNOCENT: I love her and that is why I got carried away and started protesting. But I withdraw my protest and I beg you to forget the whole incident.

PHILIP: You? You love her?

SIMON: Well, I'll be damned! *Exc | a | m*

CHAMBERLAIN: How comic.

PHILIP: You pierce my heart. This is serious. Do you know the sudden transition from frivolity to seriousness. There is holiness in it. It's a revelation.

INNOCENT: Your Highness, I am a humble man.

PHILIP: Forgive me, Ivona. Thank God, somebody can love even you. So it is possible. You have got somebody who... What a relief. I have done what I have because I couldn't bear you. I couldn't bear the thought of you. Forgive me, I give you my blessing. Go now. Leave me alone.

SIMON: *(looking at IVONA, who is bowing her head)* Crying!

PHILIP: Crying? It's happiness. *W | a | n | t | i | n | g*

SIMON: I wouldn't trust the cry baby. Her sort only cry from unhappiness. Do you love him?

IVONA: *(silent)*

PHILIP: It doesn't matter. *(To IVONA)* Things are not so bad, now that there is somebody who loves you. *(To INNOCENT)* You are a brave person, a real man. Go on loving her. It's splendid. You have redeemed us all, we are all indebted to you.

INNOCENT: Vanity prompts me to explain that she loves me too. She doesn't like to admit it in front of the Prince, naturally, as I don't gratify her pride. *(To IVONA)* It isn't worth pretending, you have after all told me many times that you loved me.

IVONA: *(silent)*

INNOCENT: *(irritated)* Oh, don't be so upish. If you wish to know, you attract me as little as I do you, or even less....

PHILIP: What?

INNOCENT: *(calmly)* Allow me to explain, Your Highness. When I said I loved her, I meant that I loved her for want of something better, because of the absence, let us say, of....

CHAMBERLAIN: Fi donc. You mustn't speak like this.

INNOCENT: The point is that desirable women or even average women are so difficult and unbending. With her one can relax. There is no competition and no showing off. I relax with her and she with me. We love one another because she is as unattractive to me as I am to her, we are equal.

PHILIP: I admire your frankness.

INNOCENT: I would lie willingly but it would be useless. Everybody sees through everything these days. The fig leaves have withered. There is nothing left but to be honest. I am not denying that our love is a consolation prize. I have as much success with women as she with men. All the same I am



jealous, I have a right to show it. *(To IVONA with surprising passion)* You have fallen in love, haven't you? With him? Him?

IVONA: *(cries out)* Get out, go!

INNOCENT: She is in love.

IVONA: *(collapsing after her great effort)* Go....

PHILIP: She spoke. But in that case... she spoke. You heard. That means she really loves me.

INNOCENT: It's obvious. I have lost as usual. I shall go. I am going. *(Exits)*

PHILIP: She loves me. Instead of hating me. I am cruel to her. I humiliate her. She falls in love with me and now she loves me. Because I can't stand her, she loves me. This is serious. *(Enter CHECKERS)* Go away, Checkers. What should I do?

CHAMBERLAIN: If Your Highness could be a little more lighthearted about it.

PHILIP: It can't be.... Tell me you don't... You don't love me?

IVONA: *(silent)*

PHILIP: She loves me. I am loved by her. I am loved by her. I am her beloved... I am involved in her... She has enmeshed me. I can't look down on her if she loves me. I cannot scorn from outside because I am part of her. All this time I thought that I existed on my own, by myself — and *(Snaps his fingers)* she has caught me. She is the trap and I am captured. You love me. I must love you, I will love you...

SIMON: What are you going to do? *Swends*

PHILIP: To start loving her!

SIMON: You can't do the impossible.

PHILIP: *(to IVONA)* Ivona, put your hat on.

SIMON & CHAMBERLAIN: Where are you going? *Stop*

PHILIP: For a walk. Just the two of us. To learn to love.

PRINCE PHILIP and IVONA leave.

XDSL

SIMON: What now? *despair*

CHAMBERLAIN: She has turned his head.

SIMON: How could she? This monstrosity.

CHAMBERLAIN: Sometimes, you know, ugly women turn heads more effectively than pretty ones.

SIMON: The mind boggles.

CHAMBERLAIN: I can tell you, there is nothing more dangerous than an ugly woman. It is generally assumed that agreeable women are dangerous, but a really unpleasant woman — or, for a woman, a really unpleasant man... Ho, ho, ho. Truly unappetizing women, specially when young and when the disagreeableness is of proper — ah — intensity... Ho, ho, ho... the inexperienced young man who approaches that sort of woman with undue confidence, ho, ho, ho, may get involved in really monstrous capers.

SIMON: Monstrous capers? *question*

CHAMBERLAIN: Young man, you don't know anything about it and even I with all my experience of life don't. There are things a gentleman must know nothing about, because he would cease to be a gentleman if he did. *(Bell)* What is this?

*Enter CHECKERS.*

CHECKERS: Shall I admit 'em?

*Enter the KING and the QUEEN.*

QUEEN: Where is Philippe? Are they out?

CHAMBERLAIN: They have just left.

KING: We have both come to see what hot water he has got into this time. The Queen's ladies came to her shouting and screaming, complaining that our son had got himself engaged to that frump for a joke, just to spite them, to show up some beauty secrets, umm... slight imperfections of theirs, what? If that's all he's after there's not much harm in it.

QUEEN: All the same, we can't allow it. My ladies are all terribly agitated. . . . This joke has really gone too far.

CHAMBERLAIN: If it were only a joke! We must take all possible precautions Your Majesty.

KING: Why?

CHAMBERLAIN: He is in love with her. He loves her. I can't explain it. I can't put it into words. I can't say it. It is something . . . explosive, we must all take cover or it will blow up in our faces.

KING & QUEEN: Oh, what shall we do?

### ACT THREE

*A room in the castle. SIMON seated, two ladies of the Court walk through giggling, followed by PRINCE PHILIP.*

PHILIP: What are you doing?

*Enter SL*

SIMON: Sitting. *CONFESSING*

PHILIP: And what else?

SIMON: Nothing. *SLASH*

PHILIP: What were they talking and laughing about, the two bubbling blunderers? What were they saying?

SIMON: They were giggling. Women often do. It's their nature and it suits them best.

PHILIP: Were they laughing at me?

SIMON: Why should they? They were just laughing at each other.

PHILIP: If not at me, then at her . . . my fiancée. But surely their laughter has changed? I may be wrong but it seems to me that they in fact no longer laugh at her but at me. Everyone is whispering and giggling. Is it a delusion? Do something for me. Try to find out what they are saying about us, what kind of ridicule they are building up? I would like to know. It does not matter, of course, but I would like to know. You also might tell them that if they continue to take liberties behind my back. . . .

SIMON: What is happening to you, Philip? You are as touchy and as easily hurt as if you were your fiancée.

*Attack*

PHILIP: Don't go too far. I have had enough. I am not used to being a laughing stock or to having my actions and my feelings ridiculed. Tell that mob that if anyone permits himself the least impropriety, the shadow of a slight. . . .

*Sit in front of tree*

*Counter*

*Wpofte*

*at Court entering*  
*The doors open, trumpets etc. Enter the KING, the QUEEN, IVONA and the LORD CHAMBERLAIN, ISOBEL and the COURTIER.*

QUEEN: (to IVONA) You liked it? You liked it, didn't you? Have you had enough? Sufficient? *(Smiles and kisses IVONA ingratiatingly)* Perhaps another pear in syrup? A nice sweet one?

IVONA: *(silent)*

QUEEN: It would do you good. So much good.

KING: Good, good!

QUEEN: Perhaps a little cream? Cream does you good. It's so nutritious. What about some cream? Or milk? Milk with sugar? Lait sucre? *(Silence)* What is it? No appetite? Naughty, naughty. What are we going to do about it?

IVONA: *(silent)*

CHAMBERLAIN: Nothing? *(Laughs benevolently)* Nothing?

KING: Nothing? *(Laughs at first benevolently, then nervously)* Nothing? *(To LORD CHAMBERLAIN)* Nothing?

QUEEN: Nothing?

CHAMBERLAIN: Nothing at all, Your Majesty. In fact, if the truth be told, nothing. *(Silence)*

QUEEN: Such a shy creature. So nice, so quiet. If only she would say something occasionally. *(To IVONA)* If you would say something sometimes, my pet. It is not difficult, really. One has to say something sometimes — for decency's sake. It's elementary decency. You don't want to be indecent? What are we going to do now? How will we occupy ourselves?

KING: Well?

CHAMBERLAIN: Well?

IVONA: *(silent)*

KING: What? Nothing. Surely it is impossible never to know the answer? You can't mope around the house all day, what? — and

nothing, nothing, nil. It's such a bore, don't you see? What? *(He stares at them all in stupefaction)* Say something, for goodness' sake.

CHAMBERLAIN: Heaven help us.

QUEEN: May the Lord have mercy upon us.

*Enter CHECKERS.*

CHECKERS: Your Highness, the doctor has arrived and is waiting in the gallery.

PHILIP: *(to IVONA)* It is for you. Come. You will excuse us.

PHILIP and IVONA leave.

QUEEN: Philippe, just a moment . . . Philippe.

PHILIP returns.

QUEEN: *(to the COURTIER)* Will you leave us, please, we have to speak to our son. *(The COURTIER leaves)* Philippe, you can't complain that we do not respect your feelings. We are like a mother and father to this poor child. But couldn't you use your influence to make her slightly more communicative? She hasn't said a word during tea, she hasn't said a word during lunch or breakfast for that matter. In fact she has not said a word all day long. Just think what they all think of her, and of us. The decencies should be preserved, Philippe.

PHILIP: *(sarcastically)* Decencies?

QUEEN: My dear son, aren't we offering her a mother's heart? We love her, with all her faults, because she loves you.

PHILIP: *(threateningly)* You love her? Love. See to it that you do. *(He leaves)*

QUEEN: Oh Lord, give us wisdom. Oh Lord, guide us. Ignatius, you are not showing her enough warmth, she is frightened of you.

KING: Frightened be damned. Then how does she manage to get into every corner and to look through every window? She will use up all our windows in no time at all. And still not a word, nothing



at all. Frightened, my foot. *(To LORD CHAMBERLAIN)* Give me the reports. Ah, France is rising again. *(To herself)* Frightened, but of what? Of me? *(To the QUEEN)* And you are fussing around her too much. *(Imitates the QUEEN)* 'Another pear?' 'Or another little cake?' As if you were a boarding house landlady.

QUEEN: You are not fussing, you are quite natural with her aren't you? You only have to swallow every time you are about to speak to her, and you look scared whenever you are near her. Do you think that nobody has noticed?

KING: Scared? It's she who is scared. *(Murmurs)* The viper.

CHAMBERLAIN: The majesty of Your Majesty seems to intimidate her. I am not the least surprised — I too have been intimidated myself on occasions. In fact, I have trembled in the sight of Your Majesty, but may I be allowed to suggest that Your Majesty might encourage her a little: take her aside and have a little chat.

KING: With her? Me? With our Grumpy Dumpy? What...

QUEEN: A splendid idea. She needs encouragement. We must arrange little talks in private, a *deux* or a *trois*. When she gets used to us we will attempt it with the others. It will stop her being so terrified. Ignatius, don't be churlish. We will start at once. I am going to send her to you under some pretext. Philip is with the doctor. I know, I will send her back for some wool. But I beg you, promise to behave like a true father to her. *(Leaves)*

KING: Lord Chamberlain, look what you've got me into. What can I talk about?

CHAMBERLAIN: Your Majesty, it is the simplest thing. You approach her, you smile to her, you say something, you tell a joke — then she, of course, will have to smile, perhaps even to laugh — then you will smile back, and so on and so forth: you will start what it might be permissible to call happy social intercourse.

KING: Smile, smile. Why should I put myself out? Because she is too shy? What? Lord Chamberlain, you do it. *(Wants to leave)*

CHAMBERLAIN: But, Sire, surely it isn't the first time you will have to put a girl at ease?

KING: It's all very well but this wretch is so scared.

CHAMBERLAIN: Everybody is afraid a little.

KING: But she is so lackadaisical about it — no guts even about being afraid, what? So dull. Oh, here she is. Wait, now, I am not going to make a fool of myself all by myself. Don't go, stay. *(The KING assumes a pleasant face. Enter IVONA)* Nice to see you here... what? *(IVONA approaches, looks round. The KING, good-naturedly)* Looking for something, eh?

IVONA: Wool...

KING: Wool?

IVONA: Wool...

KING: Oh, here it is. *(Laughs)*

IVONA takes the wool.

KING: Ha, ha, ha.

IVONA: *(silent)*

KING: Was it lost?

IVONA: *(silent)*

KING: Hm, hm. *(Walks up to IVONA)* What is it? What? *(Laughs)* Well, we are a little scared? There is nothing to be scared of. Nothing at all. What? *(Impatiently)* I said there's nothing to be afraid of.

IVONA: *(withdraws a little)*

KING: I am father. I am Philip's father, daddy... Ugh. Not daddy, father. Anyway, I am not a stranger. *(He comes nearer. IVONA withdraws further)* You mustn't... I am a plain, ordinary man. Well, not ordinary — but I am not an ogre. I am not a bogey man. I have not eaten any little children. There is nothing to be afraid of. I am not a beast. I am saying I am not a beast. I am not a beast. *(Nervously)* There is nothing to be

afraid of. I am not a beast. (*Comes nearer still. IVONA backs violently, drops her wool. The KING shouts*) I say there is nothing to be afraid of, I am not a beast!!!

CHAMBERLAIN: No, no, tess . . . no.

KING: You snake! (*IVONA backs out of the room*)

CHAMBERLAIN: Hush. Somebody may hear you.

KING: She is scared. Scared. Scared, my foot . . . not properly scared, just indulging herself. Mammn, boo, boo, gugga.

CHAMBERLAIN: I would venture to suggest that she is not even capable of being properly afraid. Some of our ladies can be afraid beautifully, with such chafin, such piquancy. This one only just manages to be scared. There is nothing to it. (*With distaste*) No frills, the plainest possible thing.

KING: I've just remembered something . . .

CHAMBERLAIN: Remembered? What?

KING: Afraid, afraid. Lord Chamberlain, do you remember that one . . . the one we . . . a long time ago. How one forgets, what?

CHAMBERLAIN: Whom, Your Majesty?

KING: It's a long time, I have forgotten all about it till now. I was only a prince and you were only an embryo of a chamberlain. That little one we . . . You know . . . I think on this sofa. I think she was a seamstress.

CHAMBERLAIN: The little seamstress. The sofa. Youth, oh blissful days of youth. (*Enter CHECKERS*) What is it, Checkers? Do not interrupt. (*CHECKERS leaves*)

KING: She died soon after that, I think . . . drowned herself.

CHAMBERLAIN: She did. I remember as if it were yesterday, she walked on to a bridge and then from the bridge . . . splash . . . oh, youth, youth. There is nothing to equal it.

KING: Wouldn't you think she was rather like this Grumpy Dummy?

CHAMBERLAIN: But, Your Majesty, this one is a bloated blonde and the other was a thin brunette.

KING: But she was scared in the same way. Bungle, botch — mamma, gugga . . . just the same. She was scared stiff, the trollop.

CHAMBERLAIN: If these memories displease Your Majesty, it is better to forget. It's better not to remember dead women. A dead woman isn't a woman at all.

KING: She was scared and she looked ill-used — just as this one. On this sofa. Ugh, why should something always remind one of something else? I can now remember the whole damn thing.

*Enter the QUEEN.*

QUEEN: Congratulations. Wonderful. You have put her at her ease, you have reassured her! Paralysed with fear, poor thing. What has got into you, Ignatius? You have spoilt everything.

KING: Hell and damnation, don't you come near me, Madam.

QUEEN: What's all this? Why shouldn't I come nearer?

KING: Why? Why? Always why. Can't I have any wishes of my own? Am I not my own master, what? Must I explain everything? Why are you looking at me? Why are you staring? Well? Why? Why did I rage at her? Because she reminded me of something.

CHAMBERLAIN: Not worth mentioning. Your Majesty. It isn't worth telling. . . .

KING: She reminded me about something . . . but, about you if you want to know, yes, about you, my darling.

QUEEN: About me?

KING: Ha, ha, ha. There is no need to stare. Hang it all, I am sorry. Margaret, I admit that I got carried away, but can you imagine, I can't even look at this poor child without thinking of you. What? I didn't want to speak about it, it is embarrassing, but if you want me to be frank, I will. You know how sometimes one person reminds us of another . . . not altogether, in



sort of a different condition as it were, you understand? When I see Grumpy Dummy . . . the way she moves . . . sloppy, groping, fumbling . . . it makes me think of you (*Whispers*) all floppy . . . and undone . . .

QUEEN: She reminds you of me . . . undone?

KING: Exactly. Exactly what you are thinking. Say it. Say it yourself and you will see that it is the same. Whisper it to me.

QUEEN: Ignatius, my God.

KING: I see, Madam, you would rather keep your little secrets.

QUEEN: You are forgetting yourself.

KING: On the contrary, I am remembering. I am remembering all sorts of things. In a moment I shall remember all. (*Muttering*) Mamma, gugga. (*Leaves hurriedly*)

QUEEN: What does it all mean?

LORD CHAMBERLAIN *runs after the KING. The QUEEN remains thoughtful. Enter ISOBEL, titters herself in front of a looking glass.*

QUEEN: Stop tittering yourself.

ISOBEL: (*ashamed*) Your Majesty . . .

QUEEN: You are doing it all the time. Since this . . . this . . . unfortunate creature appeared at court, you are all fidgeting, and preening yourselves. Come here now, girl, I must ask you something.

ISOBEL: Your Majesty.

QUEEN: Look at me. Look straight into my eyes. Admit it. You have told somebody. You have been prattling about my poems. Admit it. You couldn't keep the secret any longer and you told them.

ISOBEL: Your Majesty.

QUEEN: You haven't? If you have told nobody, how could he have found out? He must have found my notebook under the mattress.

ISOBEL: Who, Your Majesty?

QUEEN: That is it. That is what he meant. Look, tell me frankly as if I weren't the Queen. I am releasing you temporarily, of course, from all the deference due to me. Tell me the truth. When you look at Ivona, does anyone else come to mind? No association? The way she walks, for instance. Her nose? The way she looks, her general behaviour? Do they remind you of somebody? Some affinity? Do you think that a malicious person could see some link between her and . . . and . . . and my own . . . my poetry? My own intimate feelings I put in it.

ISOBEL: Your poetry? Your Majesty, how . . . What is this?

QUEEN: The disastrous, the cursed poetry. The world is far too vulgar. Disastrous ecstasies, fatal reveries, pernicious confidences. You are not telling the truth. Why did he say 'Floppy'? If he had not read it, he would not use the word. Are my rhymes so naked, so undone? 'Undone' — oh, horrible word. But you are not telling the truth. Swear, swear by the light of these candles. This is of the utmost gravity. Swear properly, kneel down and take an oath. Repeat after me: I swear . . .

*Enter PRINCE PHILIP, followed by the KING and the LORD CHAMBERLAIN.*

PHILIP: Mother, I would like to talk to you. But I am sorry . . . What am I interrupting? A sorcery session?

QUEEN: No, no, she is just doing up my shoes. These shoes are too large.

PHILIP: Why, pray, did the King frighten my fiancée?

QUEEN: Not this tone, Philippe.

PHILIP: What tone would you find suitable? What tone should I adopt when my father bullies my fiancée for no reason and treats her brutally? She is now half paralysed with fear. I can't leave you with her for one moment without you maltreating her in any way you think fit. In the circumstances I think I am fantastically calm. (*Enter CHECKERS*) Go out, Checkers. Mother, I would like to talk to you alone.

QUEEN: I will agree to talk to you alone if you tell me first what you are going to say. (ISOBEL retires)

PHILIP: I see you are being cautious, Mother. Forgive me if I say something which sounds odd. I don't know how to put it. Is it true that she reminds the King of some past sin of yours?

QUEEN: Who told you that?

PHILIP: Father. He told me that he had given her a scolding because she reminded him of your secret vice.

*Enter the KING and the LORD CHAMBERLAIN.*

QUEEN: Ignatius, what have you been telling Philippe?

KING: Nothing, except the truth, of course. He pestered me, so I told him. Why? When? What? I told him the truth. I would much rather he had pestered you than me.

QUEEN: Ignatius.

PHILIP: If only you would pay some regard to my situation: out of the blue my father assaults my fiancée. When I ask him, as I surely have a right to, why he has done it, you both start talking in riddles. How is it? Because of my mother's past sins, should my father let fly at my fiancée?

KING: Yes, I assaulted, I attacked, I let fly. And why, do you think, I did it? Is it because of my own little sins? Why are you staring, Margaret? If you stare at me, I will stare at you.

PHILIP: My parents stare at one another because of my fiancée? My mother stares at my father, my father stares at my mother all because of my fiancée?

KING: Don't laugh at your father, Philip. And pipe down.

QUEEN: Your father was vexed and annoyed and told you the first thing that came into his mind. To stop you pestering him. It is absurd, not worth talking about. Let us change the subject.

PHILIP: Madam, I know it is absurd.

QUEEN: Let us not talk about it any more. Absolute nonsense.

PHILIP: Nonsense indeed, quite absurd, idiotic. (Bows)

QUEEN: Why are you bowing?

PHILIP: (confidentially) Because where she is concerned I am a little absurd too.

QUEEN: You, absurd?

PHILIP: It is difficult to call it anything else. I do not love her, and this makes me behave like a fool. I can see why you behave stupidly towards her, because I do the same myself.

KING: Philip, you're taking liberties. Hold your tongue. (PHILIP bows) Why are you bowing again, you fool? This is going too far.

PHILIP: (confidentially) But with her one can go as far as one likes.

KING: What? What is this? As far as one likes? I wouldn't like to go anywhere with her. What is it all about? Lord Chamberlain...

QUEEN: Philippe, stop this bowing! Why are you doing it?

KING: Oh! That filthy nuisance. (Aside)

CHAMBERLAIN: One may be able to do anything one likes to her but that does not mean that the Prince can do anything he likes to us, does it? (The PRINCE bows now to the LORD CHAMBERLAIN who backs in a panic) Not to me. I had nothing to do with it. Don't come near me.

PHILIP: (Confidentially) Anyone can come near her, of course. One can pull her hair, one can tweak her ear.

KING: Ha, ha, ha. (Embarrassed, stops abruptly) I mean... you know... what?

CHAMBERLAIN: Your Highness, if you touch me, I...

PHILIP: Anyone can touch her. Believe me, you can do absolutely anything you like with her. She is made for it — for anything. She is too shy to protest, too disagreeable. One can do any-

thing. One can be stupid, idiotic, cynical, horrid. (*Bows to LORD CHAMBERLAIN*) Anything you fancy, Your Excellence.

CHAMBERLAIN: (*recoils*) I am not interested. It is a matter of complete indifference to me. (*Bows to PRINCE PHILIP*) I take my leave. (*Exit*)

KING: Rot and rubbish. Why are you staring, Philip? Good day. (*Bows*) Good day. Get out. (*Exit*)

QUEEN: What do you mean? Explain, explain. Goodbye. (*Exits*)

PHILIP: (*shouts after LORD CHAMBERLAIN, KING and QUEEN*) You can do anything. Everything. Whatever you like. (*To himself*) She is still sitting somewhere, by the fire, and she loves me. Loves me... Whatever you like, whatever you can think of. Everything. (*Notices ISOBEL who has got up from a chair she has been sitting on during the preceding scene. PRINCE PHILIP comes up to her and kisses her neck*) You can let yourself go with her, anything goes!

ISOBEL: Let me go.

PHILIP: Oh, with her one can do just as one pleases. (*Kisses her on the lips*) Ah, delightful.

ISOBEL: (*struggling*) I will scream.

PHILIP: But I am telling you, you can do as you like with her. I am sorry, I did not mean you, didn't want to, really. It just happened... I am sorry. What have I done? I have behaved like a fool again.

ISOBEL: The impertinence.

PHILIP: I beg you not to tell anyone. If my fiancée were to hear of it she would be hurt. Hurt, hurt, hurt, hurt.

ISOBEL: But let me go, Your Highness.

PHILIP: (*still holding her*) In a moment... hurt. (*Kisses her*) What a nose, what a lovely mouth you have. Don't go. I believe I am being unfaithful. It's terrible... It's glorious. It's so easy! Checkers! Checkers!

ISOBEL: (*struggling*) At least don't call anyone.

PHILIP: On the contrary my love. (*Enter CHECKERS*) Checkers, ask Master Simon to come with Miss Ivona at once. (*CHECKERS leaves*) There is no question of my letting you go. I feel at ease at last. The delight of embracing a girl who is not repulsive. I shall send you flowers. Oh, how easy it all is. I have my touch again. I must turn it to good account. I love you. (*Enter SIMON and IVONA*) Simon, this is my present fiancée.

SIMON: What? *to protest*

*enter USL*

PHILIP: Ivona, I must confess something to you. Just a moment ago I was unfaithful to you with Isobel. You are no longer my fiancée. I am sorry but there is nothing I can do about it. You are not desirable and Isobel is, extremely. Do not be offended that I announce it so lightly, everything will be easy from now on. (*To ISOBEL*) thanks to you, my treasure, my darling, and I intend to make use of that. (*Kisses ISOBEL's hand. To IVONA*) Why are you standing like this? Actually you can stand as you like, it doesn't matter any more. Farewell. I am going, moving away, further and further away from you. I am breaking it off. I warn you, you won't gain anything by standing there.

SIMON: She won't gain anything. Not if she stood for ten years. What fun it all is. This is marvellous. *SIMON*

PHILIP: (*to ISOBEL*) I am sorry, my heart, I haven't even asked if you consent? Don't refuse me. (*Kisses her hand*) Each gesture makes me happier and healthier. I will give the necessary orders immediately. There is no need to keep our engagement secret. My parents will be pleased... the Lord Chamberlain... the kind Lord Chamberlain will be delighted. The court... it will be a load off everyone's mind. Really the atmosphere was becoming impossible, I know. (*To IVONA*) Still standing? Surely everything is straight between us. What are you waiting for, my dear?

SIMON: She won't move, not by herself. *obey*

PHILIP: Call that lover of hers, let him cart her away, remove her from here to wherever it is she lives.

*drop Ivona's hand*



*serve*  
SIMON: I will get him at once and we will pack her off. Immediately, Philip, so she doesn't have a chance by just staying on.

PHILIP: Don't worry. (SIMON leaves) You can stand as long as you like, you won't get me again into another absurd mess. I have changed and everything has changed with me. There you stand — a living reproach — but it means nothing to me. Stand as much as you like. Ha, ha, ha. Anyway, you like to be hurt because you're sexless, you dislike yourself, you are your own enemy. You subconsciously provoke people. You make everyone turn against you, so that everyone feels a knave and a thief. But if you stand there for a year, difficult and gloomy, you can do nothing against this ease. (Smiles lightly at IVONA, then turns ISOBEL round)

ISOBEL: Wouldn't it be better not to tell her all this? Have some pity, Philip.

PHILIP: No, no pity now. Only pleasure. I know her from experience. Above all, one must keep talking as long as she is here, one must keep telling her the worst things in the lightest possible tone. This is the point — the more unpleasant, or indecent the matter, the more innocent the manner, making light of the whole thing. In this way her very existence is discouraged, her silence not allowed to speak. She cannot put anyone under an obligation. It places her in a world where she can do nothing. Don't worry about me, I am safe now. It really is very easy to break things off, it is only a question of changing the key. Let her stand, by all means let her stand and stare. Let us go. It has not struck me before that one can simply leave her behind. If she is staying, we will go. (IVONA stoops) Don't curtsy to me.

IVONA: I am not curtseying.

PHILIP: Let it go. What did you pick up? A hair? What do you want it for? It's Isobel's. Drop it.

IVONA: (silently)

*Enter SIMON and INNOCENT.*

INNOCENT: I am sorry but you can't do this. First Your Highness

made the girl fall in love with you and now you are sending her away. Royal fancy. You broke her heart, I protest.

PHILIP: Oh, you protest?

INNOCENT: Or rather, I am trying to protest. (Sits down abruptly under PRINCE'S threatening stare)

PHILIP: Look how this man sat on his protest.

SIMON: He sat on it as a dog on his tail. Off with you now — take your ladylove and off with you both. Go. *dominate*

PHILIP: Wait — she must give up that hair.

SIMON: Hair, Sir? *obscene*

PHILIP: Give me that hair, Ivona, do you hear?

ISOBEL: Philip, I have enough hair. ...

PHILIP: No, she must give it back. I can't stand her taking it with her. (Recovers the hair from IVONA) I've got it. But that's not enough. It is not the hair — it is us, she has still got us. (To ISOBEL) We are still in her, the trap. Go on, I will come in a moment. Simon. (All leave except SIMON) Stop her from leaving the castle. Don't let her go. For the moment my breaking it off must not be made public. Let everything appear to be just as before.

SIMON: I knew it. I knew that she would get you again if we let her stand. *contest*

PHILIP: I want it to end for good. Don't get alarmed. I will have to... (Makes a gesture of cutting somebody's throat)

SIMON: What? Whom? — *discovery*

PHILIP: Ivona.

SIMON: You are only working yourself up. It's all over. You have broken it off. We will send her home and forget about her very existence. *calm*

PHILIP: She won't be here, but she will be somewhere else.

Wherever she is she exists. I will be here, she will still be

somewhere... Ugh... no, I can't stand it. I would much rather kill her once and for all.

SIMON: But you are cured. *plea*

PHILIP: I am, really, I give you my word. I have fallen in love with Isobel. I have shaken off the sufferings of that wretch. But she still has us involved, Isobel and me, and she will go on, in that way of hers — you know what I mean — involving us. I can't stand it. I must kill. What if she goes away? She will carry us with her. I know that it isn't normal practice to kill people. But I assure you that I am absolutely sober. I know what I am saying, I am not exaggerating one way or another. (*Slightly anxious*) You must admit, I do not even look excited do I?

SIMON: Do you really want to kill her? You mean — kill, just like that? It is a crime, you know?

PHILIP: It will be my last extravaganza, last escapade, the last fling to finish it all. I will play it light, cool and easy — you will see. It seems terrible, but in fact it is like an operation, no more. It must be the easiest thing possible, to kill such a weakling and she is asking for it. Will you promise to help me?

SIMON: What it is she is making you do, the bitch. *accept*

PHILIP: We have got into this mess and we have to get out of it. We will keep my engagement to Isobel secret for the moment. Don't tell anybody about it. Let everything appear as before till tomorrow. Tomorrow I shall devise the most convenient method of extermination. But you must help me. I can't do it alone. I must do it with somebody. I won't do it by myself.

## ACT FOUR

*A room in the castle. Trumpets etc. Enter the KING, followed by three DIGENTARIES.*

KING: (*absentmindedly*) All right, all right. Stop pestering me. I have got important matters to attend to. Anything else?

CHANCELLOR: Your Majesty has still to decide what clothes would be appropriate for the ambassador extraordinary and minister plenipotentiary we are sending to France. Should he wear court dress or uniform?

KING: (*gloriously*) Let him go stark naked. (DIGENTARIES shocked) I am sorry, I am a little absentminded today. Let him go just as he likes. So long as he is paying for it himself, of course.

DIGENTARIES: This is the decision we had expected Your Majesty would take in your superior wisdom.

MARSHAL: Your Majesty, we are having tonight a great banquet to celebrate the occasion of the inspiring and democratic betrothal of Prince Philip to the flower of the lowest social strata of our society, Miss Ivona Hopit. Has Your Majesty any special directives regarding the Menu?

KING: Give 'em pigswill. (DIGENTARIES shocked) I meant to say, of course, serve game. That's it, game will do very well. What are you staring at me for?

DIGENTARIES: This is just the decision we had expected Your Majesty would take in your superior wisdom.

SUPREME JUDGE: Your Majesty, may I humbly submit this petition, begging your clemency on behalf of old Plimsoil. It is signed by all the twelve courts from the lowest to the highest.

KING: Clemency be damned! Let him hang.

DIGNITARIES: Your Majesty!

KING: Hang him, I said. Why are you staring at me again? The prerogative of mercy is mine to use just as I like; I make use of it by not using it. I want that scoundrel to hang not because he is a scoundrel but because I... *Hm...* What I want to say is that we are all scoundrels. You, I, everybody. And now stop staring at me. I have had enough of it. As from today nobody is going to be allowed to stare at me. There is far too much staring going on altogether.

DIGNITARIES: This is precisely the decision we had expected Your Majesty to make in your superior wisdom.

KING: And now — out with you. Enough of all this twaddle. And don't try to wonder about it. As from today nobody is going to wonder at anything. I have been too gentle with you up to now. From today I shall show you who is master round here! I am going to muzzle the whole lot of you. (DIGNITARIES bow) Don't bow. I forbid you. Don't you know any better than to bow? Out!

*DIGNITARIES leave in a panic. The KING looks round with suspicion and hides behind a sofa. Enter LORD CHAMBERLAIN looks round equally suspiciously, and starts to move furniture around in a furtive and sly manner. He pushes an armchair, turns up a corner of a carpet, disarranges books on the shelves, drops a plum stone on the floor. He notices the KING.*

CHAMBERLAIN: Oh!

KING: Hump... hump.

CHAMBERLAIN: Your Majesty?

KING: It is me all right. What the hell are you doing here?

CHAMBERLAIN: I? Nothing.

KING: (*gloomily*) You're wondering why I am in this room, aren't you? Seems the fashion these days to wonder. I am hiding, you see. I am hiding. I am laying an ambush.

CHAMBERLAIN: Ambush, Sire, for whom?

KING: Nobody in particular. Ambush for fun. (*Laughing*) This room is next to the apartments of our Grumpy Dummy. Margaret often comes here as well. (*Lameley*) Some of their goings on may be worth seeing, so I would see them for myself.

CHAMBERLAIN: See what?

KING: Margaret.

CHAMBERLAIN: Her Majesty?

KING: Her Majesty. I would like to see what she is like when she is alone. When nobody can see her. I have been living with her for so long and I really don't know anything about her. I believe she has something on her conscience, hump? Perhaps... perhaps she too? There is nothing she couldn't do. My head whirls when I think of it. Perhaps she is deceiving me. That's most likely — or something else; everything is possible. Everything, anything.

CHAMBERLAIN: Your Majesty... that sofa...

KING: Keep quiet, you fool. One sofa is as good as another when one wants to hide. You, Lord Chamberlain... what were you doing — what are you doing here... moving the furniture and fiddling with bits and pieces?

CHAMBERLAIN: Just to...

KING: Just to what, tell me. I am also here just to....

CHAMBERLAIN: I am doing a tour of the castle and I am trying to make things a little difficult.

KING: Difficult?

CHAMBERLAIN: For instance (*Sitting down*) it is a little difficult to sit down when the chair is put this way. (*Demonstrates*) One may sit beside it instead.

KING: Why are you dropping plum stones on the floor, Lord Chamberlain?



CHAMBERLAIN: To make it a little difficult to walk, Your Majesty.

KING: Difficult to walk? (*Gloomily*) Aah, so she has managed to get your back up too? Dummy Grumpy. (*Retreating*) It's nothing, what?

CHAMBERLAIN: Your Majesty, I am a man of the world and of certain standing. I abhor all this impudence, this insolence, this dissipation sprouting up everywhere. It goes on and on, I don't know where it will end.

KING: Yes, yes, insolence . . . getting worse. Dissipation. What? Do you remember, old friend? (*Nudges* LORD CHAMBERLAIN)

CHAMBERLAIN: I don't want to remember anything, Sire.

KING: He bowed to you as well as to me, you know. It's nothing. Dissipation increasing . . . insolence . . . well, well. And what? I jump from behind the sofa, as she passes and spring at her and frighten her, frighten her . . . one can do it to her, one can do anything to her, frighten her and strangle her — yes — kill her. We have killed one before, after all.

CHAMBERLAIN: Fi donc, Your Majesty.

KING: I am only telling you one can do anything with her . . . it does not matter with her. You can do just as you like.

CHAMBERLAIN: Your Majesty, this is out of the question. Hearing help us; as it is this court is already seething with gossip and intrigue. And now, to cap it all, Your Royal Majesty popping out from behind a sofa. The need for tact and savoir faire has never been greater than in present circumstances. On the other hand (*Laughs*) a certain solution has just occurred to me.

KING: Why are you laughing like an idiot?

CHAMBERLAIN: This is the solution. Your Majesties are giving banquet today to celebrate this deplorable betrothal: now, if we served fish, fish full of bones, pike for instance? It is in season now, one could serve it in a cream sauce. (*Enter CHECKERS*) Leave.

KING: (*Gloomily*) Out. Pike. . . .

CHAMBERLAIN: Pike. (*Laughs*)

KING: What do you mean — pike?

CHAMBERLAIN: Your Majesty — pike served at an official banquet! I don't know whether you have noticed that she is even more lost when there are many people around? And it is so easy — yesterday I only gave her one look, a little up and down look and she almost choked herself with a potato. If one were to serve pike, it is such a difficult fish to eat, so full of bones. . . . And if one were to serve it at an official banquet, with so many people there — wouldn't it be an easy thing to choke on?

KING: My Lord Chamberlain (*Looks at* CHAMBERLAIN) it sounds silly. Pike?

CHAMBERLAIN: (*a little hurt*) I know it sounds silly. I wouldn't be telling you about it, Sire, if it weren't.

KING: (*scared*) My Lord Chamberlain, but what? If she really. . . ? . . . could she really choke?

CHAMBERLAIN: (*haughtily*) Then Your Majesty believes that she could really. . . . But that would be so silly, didn't you say? And if by mere chance such a silly accident did occur, what could we possibly have to do with . . . such silliness?

KING: But didn't we? Didn't we talk about it?

CHAMBERLAIN: Oh, that was just talk. . . . (*Looks attentively at his nails*)

KING: Just talk? Ha, it can be done. I know how to do it. If we storm her from above, we attack her sharply enough, we can get away with anything, even so silly that nobody would suspect us. Why not carp? What? It shall be carp, Lord Chamberlain.

CHAMBERLAIN: Pike, pike.

KING: But why not carp? Or eel? I suppose pike will do from above. . . . Hm. . . . (*Scared again*) Storm her from above.

CHAMBERLAIN: Yes indeed, Your Majesty. Charging at her in full regalia.

KING: Yes, yes, full regalia, of course, plenty of light, lots of people and magnificent clothes . . . splendour, grandeur and glory, then one battle cry from above and she's had it. She will choke to death for sure. And nobody will be any the wiser because it is too silly. We will do it in the grand manner, bear down on her from on high, not from below. Royally we'll kill her. What! I can see the Queen, let's hide.

CHAMBERLAIN: But . . .

KING: Let's hide, I want to have a look at her. *(They hide behind the sofa. The QUEEN comes in holding a little bottle. KING, aside) What's that? (Sticks his head out)*

CHAMBERLAIN: Tss . . .

QUEEN walks a few steps towards IVONA's room, stops, takes out a little book, groans quietly and covers her face with her hand.

KING: *(aside)* What is this? A book of grief?

CHAMBERLAIN: *(aside)* Tss . . .

QUEEN: *(reads out)* I am alone *(repeats)* yes, I am alone, alone. Nobody knows the secrets of my bosom, nobody. Nobody knows my bosom at all. *(Reads)* To you, my little notebook's reams I trust my reveries and dreams. My chaste thoughts are here for you, Nobody guesses this is true. *(Speaks)* Nobody guesses indeed. How terrible it is. How terrible. Oh death. *(Lifts up the little bottle)* Oh, poison.

KING: *(aside)* Poison?

QUEEN: *(her face contorted with grief)* Let nobody guess. Let it read on. Let these words strengthen our determination to do it terrible deed. *(Reads)* My people, you see me on the throne. You see me when my crown is on.

You do not know what fumbles inside, Perhaps you think it's only pride.

In fact in that too rich a frame I grope towards another name. Undone within, royal outside, I would rather be a floppy bride I want to be free as a bird on the wing So that my verses may better sing.

Oh, suppleness, O pliability. Oh, I must burn this. Destroy it. It's terrifying. And I wrote it. It's mine and whatever happens it still is mine. Oh, I see now the whole horror of it. Ignatius, Ignatius has read it. I see the likeness . . . I do. As she slobbers, gropes and stumbles . . . she is herself a terrifying allusion to my poetry. She is the informer, the betrayer. It's me, it's me, it's mine. There is a likeness between us. Oh, how she has dragged it all out into the open. How she has exposed it. Anyone who has seen her will discover that likeness to Margaret. Anyone who looks at her will know me as I really am just as if he read my most intimate lines. Enough. She must perish. Margaret, Margaret, you have to put her to death. Forward, murderous bottle. She must not continue on this earth, there is no time left — otherwise everyone will know about that poisonous link between us. I don't wish to become the butt of ridicule, gossip and derision, the scapegoat of suggestion. To death with her. Let us go quietly to her room and put a few drops from this bottle into her medicine. Nobody will know. She is such a weakling, they will think she has just died. Who could guess it was me? I am the Queen. *(Moves on)* No, I can't go like this. I can't look my ordinary self when I am about to do murder. I must change, get my hair dishevelled at least, not too much, nothing ostentatious, just enough to effect a change. Like this.

KING: *(aside)* Tss . . .

QUEEN: Shall I go so dishevelled? But that may betray you. If anybody should catch you with your hair all over the place. Stop talking to yourself. I am sure she also talks to herself. Margaret, stop talking to yourself. It may give you away. *(Looks into a mirror)* This glass is showing me up. I can't go on like this. I must bring all my ugliness into the open before I am ready to go. Stop



talking to yourself. Somebody will hear you. I can't stop talking to myself. Do all murderers talk to themselves before the act? There is something odd, abnormal about this room — a sort of venomous disorder? A twisted mouth, Margaret, that's what is needed. That's better, let's go now. You and I together. But am I not going alone? Twist your mouth more. Let us go. Remember all your lines and go. Remember all your pliable reveries and go. Remember the suppleness, the secret striving suppleness and go. I am going. I can't... it is too insane. A moment longer, let us put on a little smear... the ink here... *(Smears some ink on her face)* Now it's going to be much easier... I am different. Stop, this may betray you. Let us go, to kill the informer. Let us read the poem again, just a moment longer *(Takes out her book of poems)* to inflame the desire to murder.

KING: *(jumps up)* Margaret!

QUEEN: Ignatius....

KING: I have caught you redhanded. Show it to me. *(Wants to take her book)*

QUEEN: Let me go.

KING: Let me see it. Now. Oh, murderess. I want all your secret sins. Let me see and we shall start another honeymoon. Let me see, you secret poisoner.

QUEEN: Ah. *(Faints)*

CHAMBERLAIN: Water, water. She has fainted.

KING: Ha. Now we know. She dreams of suppleness and wants to poison Grumpy Dummy. It doesn't matter anyhow, I have killed her already.

QUEEN: *(faintly)* You killed her? Whom?

KING: I have drowned her. I and our Chamberlain. We have drowned her together.

CHAMBERLAIN: Water. Here is some water.

QUEEN: You have drowned? Ivona?

KING: Silly. Not Ivona but it makes no difference. Not Ivona, another one. Long time ago. Now you know about me. You know? Compared to my crimes, all your silly little verses are just nothing. I have killed her and now I will kill Grumpy Dummy. I will kill her too.

QUEEN: You will kill....

KING: Yes, now I will kill her. If it comes off. Someone is doing it to someone else, somewhere, every minute of the day. All the time, if not this one then another. And if not that one, somebody else. You know? Charging from above with full regalia, intimidate, and then... *(To CHAMBERLAIN)* Give me some water *(Drinks)* I am old... I am getting older.

QUEEN: I won't let you, Ignatius. I forbid it.

KING: You will let me, old girl, you will, as you let yourself have a go, as everyone lets everyone else.

*Enter IVONA, wants to withdraw when she has seen the others but is unable to do it and proceeds to her room. From this moment everyone talks in whispers.*

KING: Hal

QUEEN: Ignatius, I don't agree, I don't want you to....

CHAMBERLAIN: Quiet, for goodness sake.

KING: Be quiet, you fool. *(To CHAMBERLAIN)* It will be all right *(To QUEEN)* Do you think I would do it the way you planned, humbly, from below? Not on your life. I will kill her in style, in majesty, with a battle cry and yet so stupidly that nobody will be any the wiser. Margaret, a murder has to be high handed and not done meekly, cap in hand. Go and wash yourself, you are looking a sight. And get that banquet going. It is getting late. We will have pike for the hors d'oeuvres by the way. I would like pike myself, in a cream sauce. Jolly good fish, pike, special. What?

QUEEN: Pike...? Pike? *(To CHAMBERLAIN)* He has gone mad. Thank God.

KING: Hold your tongue. I haven't gone mad. Give us pike as I tell you.

CHAMBERLAIN: Madam, pike makes an excellent hors d'oeuvre. I can't see any reason why one shouldn't serve pike.

QUEEN: I am not going to serve pike. Don't drive me out of my mind, I am not going to serve anything of the sort. Why pike? It's unheard of, the whole thing. Why should I serve pike?

KING: What! Temper! (To CHAMBERLAIN) Give me the crown. (Puts it on)

QUEEN: (terrified) Ignatius, Ignatius, why? Take it off.

KING: Margaret, if I tell you to serve pike you will serve pike. Don't bicker or I will crown you. I can crown you. I can crown you for I am a sinner. I can do anything and you tremble before me for I am a sinner. I am the king of sin, get that, I am the king of rot and sin, of rape and groan.

QUEEN: (terrified) Ignatius.

KING: Oh well... Now, now... serve pike. Invite all the elderly statesmen, all those old experienced intimidators, you know, the old boys who would paralyse the devil himself with fright. (In a lower voice) Margaret, enough of all this shyness, fear, shame, do you understand? Enough poetry, flexibility, pliability. You are not a chicken, you are a lady, the Queen. You should not flop. The others have to bend, not you, remember. Now go and wash yourself, you are looking like nothing on earth, you slattern. Put on your damask dress — show what you can do, old girl. Get a move on. Pull yourself together — a gracious bearing and tact and a royal manner — a general refinement is what you are for, after all. Tell your wenches to put on their best front too. Now, get along — you understand? You have to put up a first class performance, you and your women — they are to be ladies and not sluts. Get the guests and the food and don't bother about the rest, I will deal with that. And remember — grandly, grandly, royally. One, two, three — majesty. Now go, you slaver. (Exit the QUEEN, covering her face) Lord Chamberlain... (Nudges him)

CHAMBERLAIN: Sire?

KING: (in a whisper, gloomily) Bow to me. I need you to bow.

CHAMBERLAIN: (listening) Somebody is coming.

KING: We'd better hide.

*They hide behind the sofa. Enter, creeping, PHILIP carrying a knife, followed by SIMON carrying a basket.*

PHILIP: Where has she gone?

SIMON: Tss, here. *Slush*

PHILIP: What is she doing?

SIMON: (looking into IVONA's room) Swotting flies. *clock*

PHILIP: Swotting?

SIMON: Yawning. *watch*

PHILIP: (getting his knife ready) Let us try... One, two, three. See that nobody is coming. Get your basket ready.

SIMON opens the basket, PHILIP creeps towards IVONA's door

KING: (aside to CHAMBERLAIN) Our Phil is at it as well.

CHAMBERLAIN: Tss...

SIMON: (who has been observing PHILIP) Philip, stop. Or I will give the alarm. *defect*

PHILIP: Nervous? *excuse*

SIMON: It's impossible! Going for that wretch with a knife! It's too silly — one can't do it! You can't knife somebody like that! And this basket. *disappear*

PHILIP: Stop. (Puts the knife down) Technically, the basket is indispensable.

SIMON: If only you could see yourself. *reason*

PHILIP: Enough.

SIMON: (looking into IVONA's room) Going to sleep. May be asleep now... *deserve*

PHILIP: Asleep?

SIMON: Looks like it. She is lolling in her chair.

PHILIP: (*Looking in*) Now or never. If now it would be painless. You try.

SIMON: Me?

PHILIP: It's easier for you — you are a stranger and you are an equal. You are not her target... she does not love you. Simon, do it for me. It won't take more than a second. It's an operation — she won't feel anything. She won't even know that in the same second that you do it, she won't exist any more. It will happen outside her, it is easy, it is our act and it does not concern her really.

SIMON: That's what makes it difficult: it is too easy. (*Takes the knife*)

PHILIP: No, no, no.

SIMON: No? *reverse*

PHILIP: It is as if you were about to slaughter a hen.

SIMON: Can't we? I had thought we could but we can't. Oh, damn it all, she is too weak, too sickly... if only she were a stout, red-cheeked wench but she is so pale. One can't do it to one so pale, can one?

PHILIP: Somebody is watching us.

SIMON: I am watching. *spook*

PHILIP: No, it's somebody else — who sees everything.

SIMON: I see it, of course. *assure*

PHILIP: Yes, you see me and I see you. You better go now, I prefer to be on my own. I will deal with it. An operation, rather horrid perhaps but still an operation. I would rather be a monster for a moment than for a lifetime. Go behind the door, I will do it... (*Exit SIMON*) On my own. It really is salvation for her isn't it? The end of suffering. And for me as well. The whole thing is perfectly rational... (*Looks round, takes up the knife, puts it down again*) Simon!

KING: (*aside, very excited*) You are a bungler.

SIMON: Yes? (*Returns*) *witless*

PHILIP: It is even worse on one's own. The thing looms so large... swelling and growing horribly. What's that?

SIMON: She is breathing... (*They both listen*) *relieve*

PHILIP: Breathing... (*Looks into IVONA's room*) breathing, alive, all of her together, in herself, up to her eyes, immersed, contained in herself. (*Takes the knife*) Easy enough to push this into the flesh... the problem will still be there... unresolved. It's horribly easy and that makes it so horribly difficult.

*Enter ISOBEL.*

ISOBEL: What is this? (*At the sight of the knife*) Murder!

PHILIP & SIMON: Tss... *silence*

ISOBEL: Murder... would'st thou be a murderer?

PHILIP: Keep quiet and don't interfere. I am settling a few personal matters and I will come to you when I am ready. Go now.

ISOBEL: (*to SIMON*) You too? Are you the accomplice?

SIMON: It's mad, Philip. Let us leave it. *change*

KING: (*aside*) Mad indeed.

ISOBEL: Come away, I beseech you.

PHILIP: (*Looking into IVONA's room*) Asleep...

ISOBEL: Let her sleep. What is that to you that she is asleep? I too will sleep... tonight, Philip.

PHILIP: Shh. A sigh.

ISOBEL: I too will sigh... tonight. Don't think of her. I am here. Don't think of her, don't murder her. Come away, Philip.

PHILIP: Dreaming, what dreams?

ISOBEL: Let her be. I will tell you of my dream last night. I dreamed of you. Come, please.



PHILIP: About me, about us. She must be dreaming about us. About you and me. You and I are in there.

ISOBEL: In there? In what?

PHILIP: In her inside, within. Don't you hear she is in pain, painfully asleep! Her breathing sounds cruel. It is hard labour with the two of us inside. She can get up to all sorts of things. Goodness knows what she will do with us.

ISOBEL: You are not yourself, Philip. You have lost touch again.

PHILIP: (*still whispering*) I am myself but I can't be myself altogether, how can I get back to norm if she stays outside it? And from outside she plays the tune and we dance to it. Trala... la, tralala.

ISOBEL: How can you, Philip, after what happened between us?

PHILIP: (*listening*) Snoring....

ISOBEL: What?

PHILIP: Snoring.

ISOBEL: This is really too much.

KING: (*aside*) Too much. Too much, damn it. Get on! Over and done with!

PHILIP: (*answering without realising it*) I can't. What is this? Who said that? Have you noticed, there is something odd about this room? Look at the furniture. (*Knocks over a chair*)

KING: Odd, huh, odd.

CHAMBERLAIN: Tss....

SIMON: Let us kill her now or let us go. I really can't stand here for ever with this basket. I will go, I will run away from here. I won't be an accessory, no longer.

PHILIP: I must, I must.

KING: On with it, man.

ISOBEL: Kiss me. (*To SIMON*) Make him kiss me.

PHILIP: (*listening*) She's gurgling.

ISOBEL: I have had enough. I am going.

SIMON: Your Highness, do kiss her. For heavens sake do something to make him kiss you.

KING: Go on, kiss her.

CHAMBERLAIN: Tss....

ISOBEL: I am not going to beg for a kiss. I am not going to stand for hours outside the door of that wretch with a basket and a knife. It is too much. I leave you for ever.

PHILIP: (*desperately*) Don't leave me, Isobel. I will kiss you. Wait.

ISOBEL: (*pushing him away*) I won't. Let me go. I won't kiss to order. It doesn't make sense, outside this door, with this basket, with this knife. I won't. I am going and going for good.

KING: (*still behind the sofa*) Go on. Get on with it.

PHILIP: Keep cool or we will all go demented. Be quiet and don't wake her up. Little patience, Isobel, you are too impetuous. I mustn't lose you. Don't bother about me not being myself, I agree that one should not really kiss in these circumstances, outside this door, but let us, let us kiss one another as if it were the most natural thing to do. If we can't be ourselves let us at least pretend we are, otherwise we shall never escape. A kiss now will be our salvation, it will bring us back to norm, it will get us out of this predicament, I am sure. (*Embraces ISOBEL*) I love you. Say that you love me.

ISOBEL: I won't. I won't say it for anything. Let me go.

PHILIP: She loves me. I love her.

INONA appears at the door rubbing her eyes. The KING excited, leans out from behind the sofa and is held down by the CHAMBERLAIN.

KING: Go on, Philip.

ISOBEL: Philip....

I'm bored

PHILIP: (*passionately, directing her*) Philip, Philip, I love you.  
SIMON: Philip, she is awake. *for 1st recognition*

KING: (*loudly*) Now, Philip, now. Go ahead. Give it to her. Down with Grumpy Dumpy.

CHAMBERLAIN: Hold the King.

ISOBEL: Let us run.

KING: Don't scream. Get me out of here. (*Scrambles out*) Ugh, I am stiff, I have got pins and needles. (*To PHILIP*) Go on. Quick. Don't botch it in the end. We will bump her off, it's now or never. This way, Chamberlain. We are off.

*Enter the QUEEN dressed for the banquet. The footmen bring in the lights and the tables are laid for the feast. They are followed by the GUESTS.*

KING: Wait. This is no good. We forgot the pike. Of course, from above, not from below. From on high, not cap in hand. Grandly in majesty; intimidate and overwhelm. Margaret, it's your turn bear down on her. (*To the GUESTS*) Delighted . . . delighted . . . how kind . . . get your collar straight, Philip and tidy your hair. Royally, imperially, my son. (*To CHAMBERLAIN*) Give me the crown.

PHILIP: What is all this?

CHAMBERLAIN: Nothing, it is only the banquet.

KING: (*to the GUESTS*) Let me greet you all. Come in. Come in.

GUESTS: Your Majesty.

QUEEN: Come in. We are delighted.

GUESTS: Your Majesty. (*Bows and curtseys*)

KING: (*to the GUESTS*) And now, down to it. Let the superior gnaw at the inferior and the inferior at the superior — or rather let the superior draw out of the inferior the rightful pride and the inferior from the superior — the stimulus and the incentive to more fruitful efforts and noble rivalry and finally in conclusion I would just like to ask you to place my future

daughter-in-law opposite us, as it is indeed in her honour that we are giving this . . . fête champêtre.

GUESTS: (*bows and curtseys*)

QUEEN: Whether you will sit high or low, let everybody flourish and shine in the sunlight of our graciousness. Let the ladies show themselves at their best, let the men surpass themselves. Let us all be brilliant, elegant, distinguished and altogether remarkable.

KING: Indeed. In full cry. Tally ho. What . . . let us sit down, of course.

GUESTS: Your Majesty. (*Bows and curtseys. KING and QUEEN sit down*)

CHAMBERLAIN: (*to IVONA*) Be gracious enough to take your seat, Madam. (*IVONA does not budge*) Will you be so kind as to sit down. (*Puts IVONA on the chair*) Your Highness, will you come here? And Your Eminence? And Your Excellency? And you, Countess Dowager . . . and you, maître? (*All sit down*)

KING: As we have said, we are giving this modest but elegant entertainment to celebrate the violent end . . . I mean, the happy betrothal of our future daughter in law. We have decided that it would be fitting to grace the occasion by bestowing upon her the title of the Princess of Burgundia, in partibus infidelium, of course. She is the centre of tonight's festivities. Look, how nicely she acknowledges it all.

GUESTS: Your Majesty. (*Discreet clapping*)

KING: (*serving himself*) A little bony perhaps, but tasty I think.

QUEEN: (*serving herself*) Getting on a little but very, very distinguished, I think, especially in this sauce. I find distinction much more important than what is normally described as poetry, don't you? Perhaps I am not sentimental enough but I really can't stand (*Very grandly*) all that poetic diction — birds, songs and the rest of it. It is all too, too childish and I much prefer truly mature pursuits becoming to a lady of my position, a lady pur sang.

GUESTS: Aha!

CHAMBERLAIN: (*serving himself*) This fish looks fairly ordinary at the first glance, but how truly aristocratic it is in its very essence. What a splendid sauce. It's like cream and yet different and so superior. The taste is piquant, sharp, brilliant, paradoxical and paradisaal. I don't doubt that this distinguished gathering will do it justice.

GUESTS: Aha!

KING: (*to IVONA*) Don't you like it? (*Threatening*) Don't you?

CHAMBERLAIN: (*icity*) You must be suffering from a singular lack of appetite, Madam?

GUESTS: (*shocked*) Oh.

IVONA: (*starts eating*)

KING: (*gloomily to IVONA*) If you are not careful with this fish you might choke. Those things happen, you know. A pike like this seems innocent enough but sometimes....

CHAMBERLAIN: (*to IVONA*) As His Majesty has just been kind enough to observe, one should be careful when eating pike or one may choke. (*Sharply*) It's dangerous. It's a difficult fish.

KING: (*menacingly*) Dangerous, I say.

GUESTS: (*amazed*) Oh. (*Stop eating, silence*)

QUEEN: (*elegantly*) Eh bien, Ivonne, vous ne mangez pas, ma chère?

CHAMBERLAIN: (*fixing his eye glass*) You despise it? The pike of His Majesty is not good enough for you?

KING: (*more menacing still*) What does this behaviour mean?

IVONA: (*starts eating 'solo'*)

KING: (*gets up, points menacingly to IVONA*) She has choked. A bone in her throat.... a bone, I say. No....

IVONA: (*chokes*)

GUESTS: (*terrified, stand up*) Help. Water. Thump her on the back.

QUEEN: Help.

GUESTS: Oh, the unfortunate maid. What a thing. Catastrophe. Caput. Dead. Let us not disturb their Majesties.... the family.... (*They leave, exposing the body in full view*)

PHILIP: Dead?

CHAMBERLAIN: Choked on a bone.

PHILIP: Bone? Ah yes, a bone. I see.... She looks dead enough. (*Silence*)

QUEEN: (*nervous, perhaps slightly embarrassed*) Ignatius, we must start thinking about the court mourning. You haven't got a suitable suit. You have put on weight and they are all too small.

KING: I haven't, have I? Well, I will order one.

QUEEN: Yes, but you must send for the tailor straight away.

KING: (*surprised*) Tailor? Yes, of course.... (*Rubs his eyes*) Yes, Solomon, the Tailor, men's outfitters. (*Looks at IVONA*) What? Dead? I mean — really dead.

QUEEN: (*after a moment*) We shall all die....

KING: (*after another moment*) Do something. One must do something. One must say something, surely. To deal with the silence. So, Philip, you must be brave. She is dead. You can't help it.

QUEEN: (*patting PHILIP on the head*) Your Mother is with you, son.

PHILIP: What are you saying?

CHAMBERLAIN: (*to the servants, pointing to the body*) Take her and put her on the bed. Run, one of you, and get the bed ready. Get Cadaver at once, the funeral director. We can't do without him. He is our key man in this. Go and get him. (*The servants draw nearer to the body*) Wait, I will kneel. (*Kneels down*)

KING: Yes, of course. (*Kneels down*) This is the right thing. One should kneel. (*They all kneel down except PHILIP*) We should have done it straight away.

PHILIP: Sorry? What are you doing?

CHAMBERLAIN: What are we doing? (*PHILIP is silenced*) Will you, please, kneel?

QUEEN: Kneel, Philippe. All should be on their knees. And we all are.

KING: Get down. You can't stand up when we are all on our knees. (*PHILIP kneels down*)

## THE MARRIAGE

Act 2 tactics for interrogating Ivona  
changing them up

# Bibliography

- [1] Ball, William. *A Sense of Direction: Some Observations on the Art of Directing*. New York: Drama Book, 1984. Print.
- [2] Bogart, Anne, and Tina Landau. *The Viewpoints Book: A Practical Guide to Viewpoints and Composition*. New York: Theatre Communications Group, 2005. Print.
- [3] Gombrowicz, Rita. "Ivona, Princess of Burgundia." Witold Gombrowicz. Trans. Lauren Dubowski. N.p., 2008-2011. Web. 20 Apr. 2016. <http://www.gombrowicz.net/Ivona-Princess-of-Burgundia,1234.html>.
- [4] Gombrowicz, Witold. Trans. Krystyna Griffith-Jones and Catherine Robins. N.p.: Marion Boyars, 1969. Print.
- [5] Hugill, Andrew. *'Pataphysics: A Useless Guide*. Cambridge, MA: MIT, 2012. Print.
- [6] Jarry, Alfred. *Exploits & Opinions of Doctor Faustroll, Pataphysician: A Neo-scientific Novel*. Trans. Simon Watson. Taylor. Boston, MA: Exact Change, 1996. Print.
- [7] Lorenz, Edward. "Predictability: Does the Flap of a Butterfly's Wings in Brazil Set off a Tornado in Texas?" American Association for the Advancement of Science, 139th Meeting. Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge. 29 Dec. 1972. Speech.



- [8] Shattuck, Roger, and Simon Watson Taylor. "What is 'Pataphysics?" *Evergreen Review* May-June 4.13 (1960): 21-145. Web. 9 May 2016.
- [9] Stanislavsky, Konstantin. *An Actor Prepares*. Trans. Elizabeth Reynolds Hapgood. New York: Theatre Arts, 1964. Print.
- [10] Young, T. "The Bakerian Lecture. On the Theory of Light and Colours." *Proceedings of the Royal Society of London* 1.0 (1800): 63-67. Web. 9 May 2016.
- [11] Zimmerman, Shadow. "Names of Ivona." *UCSC Ivona*. Wordpress, 29 Sept. 2015. Web. 10 Oct. 2015. <https://ucscivona.wordpress.com/>.