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Full Circle

by CHARLES L. MEE

Based on the Chinese legend

Full Circle has also been produced under the title Berlin Circle.

This piece is inspired by The Chalk Circle (Huilan ji) a Chinese zaju play by Li Qianfu, written in the Yuan Dynasty (1271-1368), which inspired *The Chalk Circle* by the German poet Klabund, which inspired Bertolt Brecht's *Caucasian Chalk Circle*, which inspired the Beijing opera production of Huilan ji by Hu Zhifeng.

Full Circle is written to be performed by 10 or 11 speakers and a host of non-speaking actors.



Scene 1

East Berlin, 1989

At the Berliner Ensemble

[The Sign Man, our guide, introduces each scene, holding up placards a la vaudeville.]

SIGN MAN

Scene One. East Berlin. 1989. At the Berliner Ensemble.

[Two American investment bankers in pin-striped suits sit with one or two Chinese investment bankers in pin-striped suits, and Zhu in a Mao jacket.]

[silence as the Chinese all look at each other in embarrassment; at last Zhu nods to the translator to go ahead and render the translation]

TRANSLATOR

He said: thank God. We used to think that communism would solve all of our problems. Now we see that capitalism will solve all our problems.

[silence for a moment, then:

the Chinese all look at Mr. Market and smile;

Mr. Market smiles, too.

A "flash camera" goes off to capture the historic moment.

Again: music from the Chinese opera of Caucasian Chalk Circle.

The audience on the stage applauds and begins to get up from their seats.

The play that follows is set in East Germany.

The Revolution we are in the midst of is the breakdown of the wall,
the end of Communism in the East—
indeed, the end of Communism.

Among the audience members:

Erich Honecker, the Secretary General of the Communist Party of East Germany
who, at age 77, is rail thin, white as parchment,
having just come through three cancer surgeries,
with steel-rimmed glasses, wide, frightened eyes, a cadaver.

Honecker is accompanied by two cronies:
Modrow and Krenz.

We have here a meeting between Georg Grosz (men with beards, cigars,
eyeglasses, lumpy heads, misshapen faces, and badly designed but expensive
clothes of the political class), the Marx Brothers, Robert Rauschenberg, Commedia,
vaudeville, revolution, guilt, Town and Country magazine, money, and the
exhilaration of making things up as you go along.

Honecker explodes immediately after the Chinese play, before the applause has stopped]:

HONECKER (coughing sepulchrally)

What is this? Is this some sort of political play?

[silence—to his cronies]

Who brought me here to see this, was it you, Krenz?

STUPID KRENZ

Uhhhhhh, no, not me, not me. I think it must have been Hans, Herr Honecker.

HONECKER

Was it you, Hans?

SLY MODROW

No, not I. I certainly don't remember bringing you here. But, in any case, if by any chance it turns out that I did, this was certainly not the play I thought we were going to see. I thought we were supposed to see a play by Brecht, and I don't think this is it at all. I, uh, I think the artistic director has made possibly some changes to the text.

HONECKER

Who is that?

SLY MODROW

Who?

HONECKER

The artistic director.

SLY MODROW

Ah. That would be Heiner Muller.

HONECKER

Heiner Muller. Where is this Heiner Muller? Is he here?

[silence;
the actors playing the translator and Ching have left at the end of the prologue, but
the actor playing Zhu has come out from backstage;
he now looks to his left at the man who stands next to him;
this man has vomit on his t-shirt, his hair is a matted mass,
he is badly shaved, is blotchy red-faced, with brown-shaded sun glasses;
this is Heiner Muller,
the slimeball artistic director of the Berliner Ensemble.

Everyone else edges toward the margins,
tense, fearful, hoping they won't be noticed—
leaving the Artistic Director and the Secretary General
isolated at center
to have their little summit meeting
to see whether Honecker squashes Muller like a bug.]

HONECKER

So.

You are Heiner Muller?

MULLER

I, uh, yes, yes, your honor, I am.

HONECKER

And you're responsible for this play?

MULLER

Well, yes, in a sense, of course, one is never entirely responsible, in the sense that,
uh, theatre is a collaborative art, so that really, it is the uh general group or the uh
collective that is responsible for a theatrical work—the society as a whole really that
is responsible.

HONECKER

Ah-ha. But would you say, in your own opinion, that this was a political play we
have just seen?

MULLER

Oh.

Political.

No.

No, not at all.

HONECKER

It seems to me like a political play.

MULLER

Yes, of course, it would appear to be so, but in actuality, it is not political at all; it is, rather, a human play, a play about how human beings feel, no doubt because of the way they were brought up, you know, their childhoods, their mothers and fathers, you know the reference to having lived there for generations.

HONECKER

A bourgeois play.

MULLER

Yes, well, no. I mean, of course, you are quite right, very perceptive, to see that it might appear to be so, whereas in reality, it undermines the very premises of the bourgeois play, in that you can see that this fellow from the West is greedy because he has been raised in a capitalist home, where he's had to learn to compensate for the deprivation of love by becoming a consumer.

HONECKER

Ah-ha. I see.

MULLER

Otherwise, if not, of course, we would be asking your office of censorship to correct us, as we have been corrected in the past when we have gone off track, not seeing for the moment the error of our ways and, frankly, grateful to you—because there are things that should not be seen on the stage! Things that should not be seen in art at all, art of any kind!

I mean, would one want to see a bottle of piss on the stage? No! Does one want to see pornography on stage? No! Sexuality. Sexuality of all kinds. What one might see from these sexual relationships, what they might show of some deeper relationships, for example, of the way in which the public world invades our private lives, invades the very depths of our souls so that this invasion, this twisted or perverted political structure in which we live might in some way be seen to have

shaped, or misshaped our innermost souls? No. No! No! What we like in our work is a celebration of the human spirit, of possibility. Optimism! Optimism!

[he is mopping his brow of perspiration]

And I must say, speaking not for myself alone, but for our entire company here, we are grateful for a government that ensures the public order and nurtures the public good, sometimes even by giving grants to cultural institutions, god knows!, even though to be sure it is easier to give grants to ballet companies or to art museums rather than to theatres where words are used and because words have meaning, this or that word might offend someone even without meaning to although we make every effort to delete every offensive word we are able to locate so that the government will be able to give us a grant—although your excellency, in all honesty, I must say that you have cut our grants in recent years. I mean not you, not you yourself, of course, but your granting agency.

[he is on his knees now, clutching at Honecker's knees;
he is weeping now]

I beg your pardon. This wasn't my intention. I just, whenever I start talking on any topic at all, I can't help myself soon I find my mouth talking about money, when I'm thinking of nothing at all, my mind turns to money, because I've become a shameless person, shameless and pathetic, even though still, of course, I am a citizen and proud to be one really, overcome really with the good luck of living in our country, god bless it. Let me kiss the hem of your garment.

[he grabs the pant leg of Honecker]

HONECKER

Stop that! Stop it!

[Modrow and Krenz pull him off.

Muller, looking around desperately, sees the baby held in the arms of Honecker's young mistress Christa]

MULLER

And whose baby is this?

My God what a beautiful child! My God what a beautiful child! Excuse me for saying my God, I mean excuse me for saying my God, but what else can one say in the presence of such a beautiful baby? What is this child's name? Wait, wait, don't tell me. Is this the baby I've heard so much about?

[to Honecker]

This is your child, isn't it? I don't mean to embarrass you but let's admit it at your age quite the cocksman I beg your pardon I beg your pardon I only mean to say that I hope I myself at your age, you know what I mean, but this is, correct me if I'm wrong, is this not Karl Marx Honecker?

HONECKER

It is.

MULLER

What a glorious name. I mean, this is a name that bears some history!

HONECKER

Yes, well....

MULLER

Will he succeed you?

SLY MODROW

This is not the way we do things,
passing down titles like aristocracy.

MULLER

Of course, of course, it slipped my mind,
you know, one does historical plays, one forgets how things are.

May I hold the baby?

CHRISTA

Erich!

MULLER

Let me just kiss his sweet brow.

[he wipes his mouth with the back of his hand and goes for the baby]

CHRISTA

Erich!

HONECKER

Don't touch that baby!

MULLER

Let me kiss the foot of the mother of our hope of the future.

CHRISTA

Would you get this piece of crap off my shoe?

[Modrow and Krenz stop Muller]

HONECKER [to Muller]

Could you learn to show a little respect?

CHRISTA

Right. Exactly.

Could you show a little respect?

And come to think of it, Daddy-

[to Honecker]

how about you?

Maybe you could show a little respect, too.

[to the others]

You know, he doesn't mind hearing about his little baby

being the hope of the future

but do you think he has made a nice home for me and the baby?

No.

You know: when

you have plenty of money, no sweat,

now you can turn around and say to everyone else:

Hey! Money isn't everything

Don't be, you know: grasping.

But I had to make my own way.
How I grew up: we had nothing.
So, of course, it turns out, I am a desperate woman.
There are things I want.
I keep saying to Erich:
can't we at least send away to Paris for wallpaper?

PAMELA

I agree with you completely. Completely!
Children: they need a nice home.
To say nothing of the wife.

[silence; throat clearing]

Or mistress. Whoever. You know:
mate, partner, significant other.
I mean, we are people, too.

HONECKER

Who is this?

PAMELA

Pamela Dalrymple. From New York. And you must be?

HONECKER

Erich Honecker.

STUPID KRENZ

From East Berlin.

PAMELA

Yes! Yes! Of course. I sort of put that together. Imagine that. Such a fascinating city!
I came to Berlin, you know, to do a little sightseeing, and I just couldn't resist
coming over here to East Berlin to see the Berliner Ensemble I'd heard so much
about them all these years, and aren't they just—different! I've never seen anything
so different. Of course I don't pretend to understand anything I see in the theatre.
Especially when it's in Chinese!

[she laughs happily at her own joke; no one else does]

Ah, well, but aren't all the arts Chinese these days, if you know what I mean.

And, yet, Mr. Secretary, if I may call you that, I think this young lady is right: you can't very well live without a nice home. You know this is one of the wonderful things about democracy, I've always said: the single family home, and the goal of each individual to fulfill the unique potential within, and to do it to the utmost and, then even more than that it leads one to decency and gaiety and enjoyment and warmth. You know, warmth will take you a long way if you are a human being. And, frankly, I think that's what this play is missing.

[to Muller]

You could do with a little warmth. You know: human beings are not just all what's in their heads, or this sort of experimental Chinesey kind of thing. I mean, nobody understands that. Nobody identifies with that. This is not how human beings are. We are warm people. You need to try to deal a little bit more with our feelings. And, frankly, if you were to change your shirt, people might think you were a little more approachable. What is this on your shirt?

MULLER

This?

PAMELA

Yes.

MULLER

Vomit. I think it's vomit.

PAMELA [to Honecker]

You see what I mean?

MULLER

Well, I can't always be changing my shirt, you know: we don't have any heat in the theatre—which I also meant to mention to your excellency....

HONECKER

Heat? Heat? What does the state give a damn for your theatre with its little coterie

of elitists coming here to enjoy some art that no one else understands or gives a damn about? The state may want to support art that all the people can enjoy, don't you know, volk festivals, volk dancing, volk music, patriotic pageants for the children in the schools, but for this stuff you people do here, I say freeze your butts off for all I care.

ACTOR ZHU

You know what people say about you?

MULLER

Shhh!

HONECKER

No. Of course I don't. How would I know?

MULLER

Shhh!

ACTOR ZHU

They tell the joke: "why doesn't Honecker ever play hide and seek?"

HONECKER

So, well. Why not?

ACTOR ZHU

Because: "Who would come to look for you?"

[Everyone laughs—except for Modrow and Krenz and Honecker, who are stony-faced—which everyone finally notices, and stops laughing.]

HONECKER

You think this is funny? I'll tell you what's funny. You want to know what I think about your theatre? I piss on your theatre! That's what I think, in case you want to know. I piss on it! I fart on it and shit on it. I piss on you, too, you little scumball....

SLY MODROW

I think your car is waiting for you just out front here.

HONECKER

And if I ever come back here again it will be to see you pissing yourself because you have come to the end of the line with this bullshit theatre and all your bullshit little sensitive bullshit.

[he is physically assisted toward the door by Modrow and Krenz]

SLY MODROW

Come this way, Mr. Secretary.

HONECKER

You have not heard the last from me. You will see me again, I assure you!

HEINER MULLER

Still, you may change your mind!

[the front double doors to the theatre are opened and a deafening, theatre-shaking roar of a crowd is heard from outside]

STUDENTS

Stasi Raus! Stasi Raus!

HONECKER

What the hell is this?

STUPID KRENZ

There's a crowd out there!

SLY MODROW

Students. They're nothing but students.

STUPID KRENZ

They have rocks. They've all got rocks.

[The theatre staff all rush to the doors to look out and a deafening wall of sound crashes through the theatre.]

SIGN-MAN

Scene 2. The end of communism.

Scene 2

The End of Communism

[A revolution is occurring in the streets. People are yelling and chanting—and Honecker and Modrow and Krenz are blown back into the theatre lobby, and Modrow and Krenz strain to close the doors on the crowd outside.]

[DULLE GRIET is blown into the theatre—
shoved by the crowd outside—
past Modrow and Krenz,
and Modrow and Krenz slam the doors shut behind her.]

DULLE GRIET

Oh!

Oh!

Excuse me!

HONECKER

So! What's this? Eh? What do you think you're doing?

DULLE GRIET

Look!

I've got a piece of the wall!

Look!

HONECKER

A piece of the wall?

What wall?

DULLE GRIET

The wall that separates us from the West!

We are all tearing down the wall.

HONECKER

Tearing down the wall?

DULLE GRIET

Yes. And we are tearing down the government, too.

From now on,

everything is going to be brand new.

From now on,

everyone is going to have hope.

MULLER

Ah. You want to be careful what you say.

DULLE GRIET

Right. People always tell you:

be careful what you wish for, too,

but they just say that

to make you feel afraid

to wish for anything at all.

The truth is:

the way things are is not the way they always have been

or the way they have to be.

You can change the world.

HONECKER

Get her name, Modrow.

SLY MODROW

What is your name, miss?

DULLE GRIET

Dulle Griet.

MODROW

Dulle Griet?

DULLE GRIET [speaking slowly and distinctly so Modrow can write it down]

Dulle Griet.

HONECKER

Let me tell you something, young lady:
I never forget a name.

DULLE GRIET

Oh, Jeez, how do you do it?
I always have trouble remembering names.

PAMELA

Well, you should always try to focus on the other person.
Forget the impression you are making on him.
Otherwise, afterwards, you remember your own name
but you can't remember his.

KRENZ

That's good advice.

DULLE GRIET

I think that's what I always do wrong.

PAMELA

You can fix it with a little practice every day.

DULLE GRIET

Right. Right.
Thanks for the advice.
I'm glad I ran into you.

PAMELA

It was lovely to meet you, too, dear.

STUDENTS

Die mauer muss weg!

DULLE GRIET

And, I'm sorry to just run off, you know,
but my friends are waiting for me.
You know, we're making history.
Nice meeting you all.

[She opens the door.
The roar of revolution.
She leaves.]

SLY MODROW

Quick. Is this your back door?

HEINER MULLER

The stage entrance?

[to one of his company]

Will you let His Excellency out the back way?

ACTOR ZHU

Help him get away?

HEINER MULLER

You want people to think he's a friend of ours?

Let him out the back way.

[the Secretary General and his men are rushed off toward the back door]

PAMELA [pacing back and forth excitedly]

Oh. I've never been in a revolution. I've thought I might be, of course, but I've never had the luck even to see one.

HEINER

Out the side. The side.

PAMELA

I suppose the closest I came was when I went to the Madeira school, we all wore the same uniform, so that induced a sort of egalitarian spirit—and we were taught about poverty; I mean we had a Poverty Party once and donated the proceeds to the Social Welfare Fund, but I can't say that poverty ever touched us very directly, so, to me, this is quite an unusual opportunity.

[the Secretary General and his men come rushing back in, led by one of the Ensemble company members]

TRANSLATOR

There is a crowd out there, too.

SLY MODROW

We seem to be surrounded.

STUPID KRENZ

There's no way out

COSTUME DESIGNER

Don't say that.

[to an assistant]

Bring me that rack of things, darling, and let's disguise these fellows.

[Modrow starts feverishly stripping.]

SLY MODROW

Take me first.

CHRISTA

Here. Hold this.

[Krenz takes the baby awkwardly, looks helplessly around.]

Do we have something in a sort of lime green?

[Suddenly, while Christa goes on talking, all the Secretary General's party is frantically putting on costumes with the help of the designer and his assistant—Christa going through multiple costumes, finding nothing she likes.]

CHRISTA

No. No. You don't.

My God, you've got nothing here.

[ripping something off the hanger and holding it up]

Nothing.

This is pathetic.

I went to Saks and I said to the saleslady
do you have thongs?
You know, this is in America.

[she is pacing frantically back and forth]

She pushes her eyeglasses up her nose and says
for underwear?

Right, I say, for underwear.

No, she says, we don't have thongs,
we have bikinis.

They come in a package of three, she says.

Three?

Three?

I don't want a package of three, I yell at her.

And pretty soon, they're calling over the store detective
telling me to pipe down

Pipe down, I say,

I'm a fucking shopper!

The reason you have a job is because I am here
demanding things!

And so the next thing I know

I'm being manhandled,

I find myself back out on Fifth Avenue

and I'm supposed to count myself lucky that I'm not in jail—
that's what happened to me

the last time I tried to shop at Saks!

And they call that a free country?

[While Christa tries on various outfits,
the baby is passed back and forth among Krenz and Modrow
and the other bystanders,
each looking around nervously
asking "who is going to take the baby?"
until the Secretary General's party is all costumed.]

SLY MODROW

OK. Ready? Are you ready?

STUPID KRENZ

Ready.

SLY MODROW

Mr. Secretary?

HONECKER

Ready.

ZHU ACTOR

Here, hold this [gives baby to Pamela]. Follow me.

[The parade of absurdly costumed cronies
sets out for the back door in an unseemly rush.

Pamela has ended up holding the baby,
rocking it back and forth as she talks to Christa.
She watches the Secretary General's party run out.]

PAMELA

I feel so lucky. In Paris one time, traveling with my friend Connie, we saw a demonstration of some sort, and so of course we joined it. We walked through the streets with the bakers for a couple of hours, and it reminded me of Bastille Day, but then, after a little while, we broke off from the demonstration to have lunch with my Aunt Elise, who had left San Francisco after her husband died and taken up residence in a beautifully decorated home in Paris, where she....

[Roaring and shouts from the back door.
Everyone turns to listen.

The Secretary General's party are all brought back in, manacled.
Two students have them in tow,
and the students are accompanied by Dulle Griet
who still holds a piece of the Berlin wall in her hand.]

STUDENT LEADER

These people here say they are actors
they say they were just in a play

here in your theatre.
Is that true?

HEINER MULLER
We don't know these people.
This one looks like Honecker to me.

DULLE GRIET
Erich Honecker?

HEINER MULLER
Right.

COSTUME DESIGNER
And that one, he looks like Hans Modrow.

DULLE GRIET
Hans Modrow?
Gee, I can't believe I just met these people,
and I didn't even ask their names!
[to Pamela]
God, it's just like you were saying!
I was so worried about the impression I was making!

STUDENT LEADER
We should put them on trial.

HEINER MULLER
Right. Or just take him out and shoot him.

HONECKER
This man
[pointing at Muller]
has just signed his own death warrant.

STUDENT LEADER
Okay. Let's take them away.

[The students of out door with the Secretary General's party and are met by the roar of crowd.

Actor Zhu follows them out.

Other members of the Berliner Ensemble are gazing out the door]

[Pamela is holding the baby]

PAMELA

Wait! Christa!

Hey! Wait!

You've forgotten your baby! Mr. Muller, she doesn't have her baby.

ACTOR ZHU

The cabinet of Willi Stoph has resigned!

They say they are going to make Egon Krenz

Secretary General of the Party.

PAMELA

Egon Krenz?

Who is Krenz?

STUPID KRENZ

What's that?

PAMELA

They are making Egon Krenz Secretary General.

STUPID KRENZ

I am Egon Krenz.

I am Egon Krenz.

I am Egon Krenz!

[Cheers from the crowd outside:

Egon Krenz.

Egon Krenz.

Egon Krenz.

Egon Krenz.]

PAMELA

Hey! Wait! Wait!

What am I supposed to do with this baby?

Young man

There's no need to feel down, I said

Young man

Pick yourself up off the ground, I said

Young man

Because you're in a new town

There's no need to be unhappy

Young man

There's a place you can go, I said

Young man

When you're short on your dough you can

Stay there

And I'm sure you will find

Many ways to have a good time

SIGN MAN

Scene three. Checkpoint Charlie

Scene 3

Checkpoint Charlie

The stage revolves on a turntable.

We are out on the streets.

Everybody has suitcases and bundles and is pushing baby prams filled with enormous bunches of bananas.

They sing the American pop song: YMCA

They are joined by the company from the theatre, including Pamela

It's fun to stay at the Y * M * C * A

It's fun to stay at the Y * M * C * A

They have everything for young men to enjoy

You can hang out with all the boys

It's fun to stay at the Y * M * C * A
It's fun to stay at the Y * M * C * A
You can get yourself clean
You can have a good meal
You can do whatever you feel

Young man
Are you listening to me, I said
Young man
What do you wanna be, I said
Young man
You can make real your dreams
But you've got to know this one thing:

No man
Does it all by himself, I said
Young man
Put your pride on the shelf and just
Go there
To the YMCA
I'm sure they can help you today.

It's fun to stay at the Y * M * C * A
It's fun to stay at the Y * M * C * A
They have everything for young men to enjoy
You can hang out with all the boys
It's fun to stay at the Y * M * C * A
It's fun to stay at the Y * M * C * A
You can get yourself clean
You can have a good meal
You can do whatever you feel

[Everyone has arms full of toys, flowers, and cosmetics.
Everyone chews gum and smokes American cigarettes.
And some people have chunks of the wall.
They are all taking photographs of each other.
The soldiers have put down their arms.
They have guns, helmets, gas masks, clubs, shields, riot gear—
but just carry it around in their hands

because the police have been called off
and they are no longer trying to impose order.
The moment after the revolution — the moment the song ends —
the American investment banker Warren arrives.
He is eating a hamburger and drinking a Coke.
He speaks to the soldiers.]

WARREN

Excuse me, I don't mean to intrude
but I was told I might find the new director of the Central Bank here.

STUDENT 2

Do we have a central bank?

WARREN [with a smile]

Everyone has a central bank.

PAMELA

Warren!

WARREN

Pamela!

PAMELA

What are you doing here?

WARREN

Well, it's obvious what I'm doing here.

What are you doing here?

PAMELA

All I meant to do was to come and see a play!

WARREN

And you have a baby?

PAMELA

This is not my baby.
I can't take care of a baby.
I'm looking for his mother.

STUDENT LEADER

Are you from America?

WARREN

Yes. Yes.

STUDENT 2

A businessman?

WARREN

Yes. An investor.
I'm here looking for investments.

STUDENT LEADER [sidling up to him]

I've got some investments I could show you myself
if you're interested in that sort of thing.

STUDENT 2

If you want my advice, you'll jump in right away.
Get in on the ground floor.

WARREN

Well, if there's anything I've learned
I've learned you never ask the barber if you need a haircut.

[The students and others in the crowd are all taken aback,
impressed by the wisdom of his aphorism.]

STUDENT 2

Still, you don't want to be afraid of taking a risk.

WARREN

If there's anything I've learned
I've learned to be patient.
You can't swing at the ball while it's still in the pitcher's glove.

[All laugh, appreciating his wise investor's humor—
"getting" his jokes.]

STUDENT LEADER

Stick around.
I think there are some people here you could really work with.

WARREN

Maybe. Maybe not.
You know:
My idea of a group decision is to look in the mirror.
[All laugh.]

STUDENT 2

Nonetheless, you play too hard to get, you'll miss the big opportunities.

WARREN

In my experience,
you don't want to get too seduced by big opportunities.
If there had been a really smart capitalist on the ground at Kitty Hawk,
the best thing the guy could have done
was to have shot Wilbur down.

STUDENT LEADER [beginning to show some respect]

So what you're saying is work on your analytical skills.

WARREN

Right. And look at your fundamental values.
Think of this:
There are 21 billion razor blades used in the world every year.
Of all of those, Gillette has 30% of the market.
And with the price they charge: 60% of the value of the market.
In some countries they have 90%.

Here's something you do every day
and you get a terrific shaving experience.
Now men are not inclined to shift around
when they get that kind of situation.
And if you own a little of Gillette
you go to bed feeling very comfortable
just thinking about two and a half billion men
with hair growing while you sleep.

STUDENT LEADER

What you want to be is sharp.

WARREN

Sharp, yes, but honest.

I always say,
when I'm looking for people to work with,
I want them to have integrity, brains, and stamina.
If they don't have integrity,
they'll kill you with their brains and stamina.
Think about it:
if you hire someone who's not honest
you really want them to be dumb and lazy.

STUDENTS

Right...right.

STUDENT 2

I notice you drink a lot of Coke.

WARREN

I drink five cherry cokes a day.
That's 750 calories.
I would have lost 70 pounds a year if I didn't drink them.
Really, it's been a lifesaver.

CROWD MEMBER 1

[taking out a little leather pouch]
I have a few diamonds.
I could take them liquid
and have some cash to put in the market

STUDENT LEADER

Yeah, well, I have some jewelry
if you're talking about raising cash
I could just give it to you to decide

STUDENT 2

If it comes to that, I have a little cash already,
I have some Deutschemarks.

CROWD MEMBER 2 [taking off his coat]

I have a coat, you could take my fur coat.

CROWD MEMBER 3 [pulling Warren offstage]

Come with me. I want to show you something.
I promise you:
this is worth your while.

WARREN

No, no, wait!
Pamela!

PAMELA

Warren!

WARREN

Pamela, I love you,
I've always loved you,
I meant to tell you when we were in Palm Springs

PAMELA

I love you, too!
I love you, too!

[He is gone.]

Goddammit!

Do you know who he is?

Goddammit!

There goes the best chance I ever had!

And I'm stuck here all because I've got this goddam baby.
Will someone take this goddam baby?

SOMEONE WITH A BULLHORN

The news is:
Egon Krenz is out.
Egon Krenz is out.

PAMELA

Who's Egon Krenz?

SOMEONE WITH A BULLHORN

Hans Modrow is Secretary General.
Hans Modrow is Secretary General.
[A cheer goes up from the crowd.]

[Muller slinks across the stage, keeping to the margins,
as though he were getting out of town,
a pile of folders in his arms.]

PAMELA:

[holding out child]
Oh, Mr. Muller....

HEINER MULLER

[says nothing— keeps going]

[Christa comes running in.]

CHRISTA

I've left some things behind.

PAMELA

I've been looking for you,
I have your baby.

CHRISTA
Stay right here.
I'll be right back.

[She runs into the theatre.]

PAMELA
Thank God,
I thought I was stuck forever with this child.

STUDENT LEADER
Who's child is this?

PAMELA
It belongs to Christa.

STUDENT LEADER
You mean to Honecker?

PAMELA
Yes, it's his little boy.

STUDENT LEADER
This is Honecker's child?
Wait, don't go away.
We're going to take this child
and put him with the Secretary General.

PAMELA
In jail?

STUDENT LEADER
Right.
We don't want any heir apparent on the loose.
Wait right here.
Don't go away.

[Christa comes running back out, with an arm full of costumes from the theatre.]

CHRISTA
Where did he go?

PAMELA
Who?

CHRISTA
Did you see my driver?

PAMELA
I didn't see anyone with you.

CHRISTA
Damn him.
How am I going to carry all this stuff?

PAMELA
What stuff?

CHRISTA
These clothes.
Did you see the things they had in there?

PAMELA
I thought you didn't like anything they had.

CHRISTA
That's what I said.
You didn't think I was going to say I liked the stuff!
[yelling to her driver offstage]
Dieter! Don't you do that! Don't move that car! I'm coming!

PAMELA
Wait wait wait!
Christa.
You've forgotten your baby.

CHRISTA (stops dead)
Oh right.

The baby.
Look, right now, the way things are
Erich gone, the revolution,
the baby's going to be a whole lot better off with you.
OK?
You take care of him.

PAMELA
But...

CHRISTA
For his sake.
I'll be back.
[she runs out yelling.]
Dieter, I'm coming. Wait for me. Dieter!

PAMELA
Wait!
Wait.
Damn!

I can't take care of a baby.
Damn.
[she looks at the baby]
And I can't just leave you here.

[she looks around
sees Dulle Griet;
to Dulle Griet]

Have you ever been a mother?

DULLE GRIET
No.

PAMELA
Ever taken care of children?

DULLE GRIET

No.

PAMELA

Never mind.

[handing the baby to Dulle Griet]

You can be my au pair.

I'm giving you \$150 a week plus room and board.

DULLE GRIET

Well, I don't know.

PAMELA

\$250.

DULLE GRIET [pulling back the baby blanket to look at the baby]

It's a sweet baby.

Do you think it will like me?

PAMELA

He's going to love you.

DULLE GRIET [speaking to the baby] Of all living creatures,
the elephant is the most noble.

It will bury its own dead

with dust and earth

and green boughs.

It will not pass by the body of one of its own
without stopping to grieve at their common misery
and perform the rites of burial.

They are chaste creatures,
and monogamous,
and modest about procreation.

They will seek woods and secret places
and sometimes water—
lakes or ponds or streams—

and while they copulate
they turn their heads toward the East.

There was an elephant in Egypt once
who was in love with a woman who sold corals.
This same woman was loved by Aristophanes of Byzantium—
and Aristophanes rightly complained
that never before
had a man had to compete with an elephant
for the love of a woman.
One day, at the market,
the elephant brought the woman certain apples
and put them into her bosom,
holding his trunk there a great while,
handling and playing with her breasts.

They like flowers and ointments.
They love a meadow filled with flowers.
They will bathe often,
and are wellknown for their gentleness.

They can be killed with ditches.
If fruit and flowers are placed in a ditch
and then the ditch is covered over with boughs and leaves,
the elephant will fall in
and impale itself on sharpened stakes.

You could say: I am not an elephant.

What do elephants have to do with me?

You could say: I am not a root. I am not a berry.

What do roots and berries have to do with me?

And yet
this is how the trouble
so often begins.

PAMELA

That's lovely.

Just lovely.

Okay, let's get on with it.

[The stage begins to revolve on the turntable.
And Pamela—with Dulle Griet—begins her flight.

Taxi!

Taxi!

How do you get a taxi around here?

DULLE GRIET

A taxi?

PAMELA

What?

You have to phone for a cab in Germany?

I just hate it when they do that.

Well, never mind.

We can walk.

Come along.

[She leads the way with Dulle Griet following,
carrying the baby.

Dulle Griet sings a lullaby to the baby: a reprieve of YMCA,
or "Baby Face, you've got the cutest little Baby Face...." etc.]

Scene 4

Berlin Alexanderplatz

[The stage revolves;
they arrive in another square of Berlin.
It is deserted

except for an old broken down truck
with an open cab.
They are in front of an imposing classical building.]

DULLE GRIET
Where are we going?

PAMELA
To the Staatliche Museum.

DULLE GRIET
That's the Staatliche Museum right there.

PAMELA
Good. I found it.

SIGN MAN
Scene 4. Berlin Alexanderplatz.

DULLE GRIET
You wanted to go to a museum?

PAMELA
I've come to get the Pergamon Altar Piece.
Have you seen it?

DULLE GRIET
I don't think so.

PAMELA
A big group of marble sculptures, from Pergamon.
The Germans stole it from the Greeks.

DULLE GRIET
I didn't know.

PAMELA
I'm going to get it back.
This is the chance of a lifetime, you know.

These revolutions don't come along so often.
And I'm certainly not going to leave the Altar Piece here
to get smashed up by a bunch of German rioters.

I mean:
a bunch of rioters.

DULLE GRIET
I don't think you can steal something so easily from a museum.

PAMELA
I'll pay the guards for it.
You wait here.
I won't be gone long.

DULLE GRIET
What if you don't come back?
Oh, no.

[Pamela steps inside the door
and steps right back out again
followed by two soldiers
in ratty old uniforms
who are serving as museum guards
carrying immense pieces of marble sculpture.]

PAMELA
Okay. Put it in the truck.

SOLDIER ONE, WERNER
Yes, maam.

SOLDIER TWO, HERMANN
I don't know.

WERNER
You don't know what?

HERMANN

I don't know about putting it in the truck.
That's the museum truck, you know.

WERNER

You didn't get paid for putting it in the truck?

HERMANN

I'm saying: I don't know about the truck.

PAMELA

It's a package deal, take it or leave it.

WERNER

We're taking it.
We're taking it.

PAMELA

Then let's get it going.

[as they put the sculptures in the back of the truck]

HERMANN

There's no ignition in this truck, you know.

WERNER

What do you mean by that?

HERMANN

Just what I said: there's no ignition in this truck.
Why do you think it's sitting here?

WERNER

O, yeah.

HERMANN

Plus, there's no clutch either.

WERNER

Oh.

HERMANN

That's why I said: I don't know about the truck.
I don't think it has an engine yet either.

WERNER

Oh.

No engine.
Unh-hunh.

HERMANN

You sold this truck to her
and you didn't know about the engine?

WERNER

Of course I knew about the engine!
This is one of the new models, you know.
Usually you buy your basic truck
and then the mechanics put in all the extras.
But with parts in short supply,
you know how it is.
Probably it's the same in America just like here.

PAMELA

You mean to say this truck doesn't go?

WERNER [shouting angrily, self-righteously]

Well, it goes if you push it.
Did you think of that?
Women! You leave all the thinking to a man!

PAMELA

I'm not pushing any goddam truck.

WERNER

I'll tell you what we'll do
We'll throw in some books and manuscripts, too.

Take the whole lot for the same price.

[to Hermann]

Go get some nice illustrated books.

You'll see.

It's going to be okay.

This truck has good brakes.

Standard equipment.

PAMELA

Do you know how things are in other places in the world?

Do you know, when we had guests on the Riviera at La Garoupe,
there were fresh flowers in every room.

No one who ever asked for Campari the first time they visited

Ever had to request his favorite drink again.

The butlers wrote down everything.

There was never a mistake.

This is how things are done in other places.

WERNER

Well, I'm pleased to hear it.

More or less, it's the same thing here.

HERMANN

The books are in the truck.

WERNER

Right.

Good luck to you ladies.

[They go back inside the museum.

Pamela and Dulle Griet stand with the truck.]

PAMELA

No problem.

I'll hold the baby while you push.

[She gets in the driver's seat.]

Okay, let's go. Ready in the front.

[The soldiers appear again.]

WERNER

Hey!

Wait a minute!

Oh. So.

What have we here?

PAMELA

What have we where?

WERNER

What are you two ladies doing here with a truck load of stuff?

PAMELA

What's the matter with you?

You're the one who just sold it to me!

WERNER

Me?

No, no, no.

Not me, lady.

PAMELA

This is the same fellow who just sold this truck to me, isn't he?

HERMANN

I'm sure I wouldn't know, lady.

I don't remember seeing you before.

WERNER

I'll have to ask you for your passport.

PAMELA

This is completely outrageous,
you do business with someone
and then you pretend you've never seen them before?

WERNER

Excuse me.
I'm not a businessman, madam.
I am a state employee, and I'll be needing to see your passport.

PAMELA

I'm certainly not going to give you my passport.

WERNER

What's the trouble?
The way you talk, a person would think you had something to hide.
I think you'd better give your passport to me,
or we are going to have to search your truck.

[Pamela gives the passport to him.]

PAMELA

You people have a lot to learn about how things are done.

WERNER

You'll have to leave your passport with me for a few days
until we've had a chance to run it through the computer.

PAMELA

A few days.
I can't leave my passport with you.
I'm going home today.

WERNER

Oh, I don't think so.
You know: these things happen.
You take one step outside the law
and the next thing you know
it's a jungle.

Corruption runs amok.
Might makes right.
There's hell to pay.
You should have thought a little bit ahead.

PAMELA

What do you think you're going to do—
sell my passport?

WERNER

I could do that,
but that would be wrong.

Good luck to you, ladies.

[The Soldiers go back inside.]

DULLE GRIET

Where are we going now?
You won't get far without a passport.

PAMELA

We'll hang out somewhere.
The way things are going,
this fucking country is going to collapse,
and then we'll be out of here.
The thing now is to find a place to lie low for a few days.

DULLE GRIET

Right.

PAMELA

A spa or some kind of resort
you know
like your famous places where they have the mineral baths.

DULLE GRIET

Oh.

PAMELA

You know.

Baden Baden. Marienbad.

DULLE GRIET

I don't know.

But I have a brother who lives near Dresden.

We could stay with him

or maybe he knows where there's a spa.

PAMELA

Good.

Let's go, then.

Ready in the front.

[Dulle Griet begins to push the truck around the periphery of the circle.]

Do you know any lullabies?

DULLE GRIET

I think so.

DULLE GRIET SINGS

The Beatles' All You Need is Love

All you need is love.

All you need is love.

All you need is love, love.

Love is all you need.

All you need is love.

All you need is love.

All you need is love, love.

Love is all you need.

Nothing you can know that isn't known.

Nothing you can see that isn't shown.

Nowhere you can be that isn't where you're meant to be.

It's easy.

All you need is love.

All you need is love.
All you need is love, love.
Love is all you need.

[They travel a la Brecht,
around the periphery of the revolving stage in one huge circle as the stage turns;
the stage can be littered here and there with broken bicycles, broken automobile
engines, broken factory equipment, broken dolls, broken toys, old government file
cabinets, old Soviet tanks, old helmets, old machine guns, jeeps, helicopters.]

PAMELA

Wait, wait! Stop!
Where are we going?
Have we been here before?
What's going on?

DULLE GRIET

I think we're going in circles.

PAMELA

Well, we can't go on like this.
I'm exhausted.

[Dulle Griet sits down, completely worn out.]

PAMELA

You know,
I was in Turin one time
and I just couldn't get back to Paris to pick up my son
who was coming in to the Gare du Nord,
some friends were dropping him off
he'd been, you know, visiting with them in the country,
so I called Susan Mary Alsop,
Susan Mary Patten at the time,
she married Joe sometime later, I forget when it was,

[somewhere in the midst of this
she switches from talking to Dulle Griet to talking to the baby]

and I asked her if she couldn't please make the rendezvous
at the Gare du Nord
well, it was a nightmare for her, I know,
it was rush hour
and she didn't know the people
who were bringing my son in from the country
so there she was
at the Gare du Nord
asking these people to turn over a little boy
to a perfect stranger
but I'm thinking: this time
this time, with this little child
I'm going to do the right thing
I know I can't make it up to my son
but I do think this time
I really can do the right thing.

DULLE GRIET

I'd like to do the right thing myself.
Sometimes I feel such badness welling up in me
I can hardly bear it
it makes me so afraid.
what things I could do
if something turned me loose
there's such anger deep inside
I could go deep into that and never come back again.
And still, I think:
there is some goodness too.
I have in me such an intensity of life.
I sometimes think: oh
how many beautiful songs there are in the world
choirs of all kinds
children in their schoolrooms
farmers in their fields
such a beautiful thing to sing a song.

I think, one day, when my happiness is given to me
When my happiness is given me,
life will be

a nameless thing.
It will seethe and roar;
it will plunge and whirl;
it will leap and shriek in convulsions;
it will quiver in delicate fantasy;
writhe and twist;
glitter and flash and shine;
sing gently;
it will shout in exquisite excitement;
vibrate to the roots
like a great oak in a storm;
it will dance;
it will glide;
it will gallop;
it will fly;
it will soar high—high;
it will go down into depths unexplored;
rage and rave;
sound out like a terrific blare of trumpets;
chime faintly;
sob and grieve and weep;
revel and carouse;
it will go in pride;
lie prone like the dead;
it will float buoyantly on the air.
And when it comes my turn to meet face to face
with the miraculous vision of the Happy Life
I know I will be rendered dumb.
But my feeling will open up like the torrent of a summer rain
like a rain of summer flowers.

PAMELA

Well, you're an odd girl.
I must say, this is what I love so much about travel.
One meets such interesting people.
People you would never get to know otherwise
or even think you'd want to know.

DULLE GRIET

Is that how you met this man Warren?

PAMELA

Yes, I suppose I did,
but Warren, he's altogether different.
He's very rich
but even more than that: he's such a human being.
I've had lots of guys
but Warren: he's the one
if only Warren comes back when this is all over
I'll end up having a happy life after all.

DULLE GRIET

How do you get so many guys?

PAMELA

Well, what do you do?

DULLE GRIET

I don't do anything.

PAMELA

Oh, you have to do something,
they won't find their way to you all by themselves.
I think it helps,
the moment a guy comes into the room
if you just focus on him
just don't see anyone or anything else in the room
go to him
take him by the hand
lead him to a couch
sit down with him there
and never take your eyes off him
just suck him in
touch him a lot
in little ways, everywhere
and then if you have to
once you've got him into bed

bring along a glass of ice cubes
in case his attention wanders
keep an ice cube in your mouth
and run that all over him
you won't have trouble after that
keeping his attention focused on you.

DULLE GRIET

It's not so easy for me, sometimes, even to think of what to wear.
Like, take shoes, for instance.
I sometimes worry whether I have enough pairs,
or too many—though, you know, I don't think two pairs is really too many,
or else maybe I have the wrong sort,
whether they go with things,
or no one wears them anymore—
you know, the heels are too high, or they don't wear red, or alligator—
whether things are, you know,
too short or too long
or you know they shouldn't be embroidered,
you know too baggy or it shouldn't have a fur collar—
this is wrong, or in what way it's wrong,
it's more than I can worry about all the time,
so now I just get what I want and sometimes I don't wear it.
I think
if men and women could just love one another
then there wouldn't be any war.

PAMELA

Right.

[Two soldiers enter.]

WERNER

A couple of women all alone.

[to the women]

What are you two women doing here?

PAMELA

We're taking a little rest.

WERNER

Where is it that you're going?

DULLE GRIET

We're going to my brother's house near Dresden.

WERNER

I see.

[silence]

Have we met before?

PAMELA

What?

WERNER

You look awfully familiar to me.

PAMELA

Is this the line you always use to pick up girls?

WERNER

Sorry. Sorry.

HERMANN

You have nothing to fear from us.

We might look a little scary in our uniforms, but really there's no army any more.

We're not doing anything.

WERNER

There's not much for us to do the way things are.

We've been reduced to odd jobs here and there night guards, railroad guards.

Right now we're looking for a kidnapped baby can you imagine that?

DULLE GRIET

No.

WERNER

Soldiers reduced to baby sitters.

HERMANN

We're looking for the baby that belongs to Erich Honecker
they think this baby should be put on trial
imagine that

I have his picture here

[he shows the picture to Dulle Griet]

A sweet little thing, eh?

WERNER

I see you have a baby here.

DULLE GRIET

Yes.

WERNER

I guess we should take a look
just to do our job, you know.

DULLE GRIET

He's sleeping now.

WERNER

Unh-hunh.

Well, we can wait for him to wake up.

DULLE GRIET

Oh. Okay.

PAMELA

So, it's the life of leisure for you soldiers now.

HERMANN

Yes, maam.

PAMELA

The good life.

HERMANN

Yes, maam.

WERNER

The life of the idle rich.

PAMELA

And yet, there must be times you miss the olden days.

HERMANN

I suppose there are.

WERNER

Yes, I have to say, there are times I miss the way it was.

PAMELA

Some people, you know, have never seen what it is to fight.
They don't know how it is to be a soldier.

WERNER

Right.
I think that's true.

PAMELA

They don't know what a man can do
when the rules of restraint are taken off.

WERNER

It may be that they don't know, in fact,
a man is always on battle alert,

HERMANN

always lying in ambush,

WERNER

always straining all his senses,

HERMANN

rigid with attention,

WERNER

ready to pounce like bats from dark dungeons
when they are aroused.

HERMANN

the trumpet signal
two notes only

WERNER

dancing in the morning air
and then we're on top of them

HERMANN

our cries meeting the cries of the enemy

WERNER

merging into theirs
like hearts trembling on the brink of eternity
a cry long forgotten
our skin all armor
all steel enclosure
living guns
tanked up motors turned loose with no brakes to hold us
guns wriggling and jerking in our hands like fish

HERMANN

I have to admit:
that feels good to me.

PAMELA

This is how it is for men sometimes.
Why they find it hard to give it up.
I can understand.

WERNER

Well, it's all a question where we are touched most deeply.

HERMANN

Right.

WERNER

And you might say, certainly, the anus is a private place.

HERMANN

Right.

WERNER

The phallus is essentially social.

HERMANN

Right.

WERNER

But the anus—that's mostly private.

HERMANN

Right.

WERNER

When you talk of the constitution of a private person, that's the anus.

And the public person, that's the phallus.

So you could say that exposing one's phallus is a shameful act—but a glorious one, too,

and every man has a phallus

that guarantees him a social place.

And every man has an anus, too,

which is truly his own,

in the most secret depths of his own person.

HERMANN

This is the sort of thing that makes you think:

you wouldn't mind getting back to work.

PAMELA

Well!

I think this conversation has taken a turn
not quite suited to mixed company.

WERNER

Oh, I beg your pardon!

PAMELA

Yes, well, I should think so.

And now, if you gentleman will excuse us

I think my friend and I should be on our way.

I'm sure the two of you need to be getting back to work yourselves.

WERNER

Oh, back to work!

Yes.

HERMANN

Right.

PAMELA

Come along, Dulle Griet.

I think we can leave these gentleman to their duties.

Good day to you gentleman. And good luck.

WERNER

Right. Thank you, maam.

Let's go, Hermann. This way. This way.

HERMANN Coming, Werner.

[The soldiers go out. Pamela and Dulle Griet move on.]

DULLE GRIET

I think this baby needs a little milk.

PAMELA

That shouldn't be too difficult.

Why don't we just check in to this lovely hotel for the night.

SIGN MAN

Scene 5. This lovely hotel.

Scene 5

This Lovely Hotel

[She starts to the front door.]

CONCIERGE

Wait, wait, stop right there.

PAMELA

What seems to be the trouble?

CONCIERGE

We don't take children in this hotel.

PAMELA

We don't have children, we have a baby.

CONCIERGE

As if I didn't know a baby is a child.

PAMELA

I have American dollars.

CONCIERGE

The baby will have to stay with your servant
in the servant's quarters.

PAMELA

Is there milk in the servants' quarters?

CONCIERGE

Of course there is.

PAMELA

Then that will do.

CONCIERGE

Welcome!

[They enter the hotel door.

The stage revolves.

Dulle Griet and the baby go to the kitchen, where there is an immense chef with big white chef's hat, vast white apron.

Pamela is led to the spa area for a massage.]

PAMELA [as she is being led to the spa area]

Now, I must admit,

I simply love a good massage,

especially after traveling,

I find it just puts my body back together.

And as long as we're going to do a massage,

I don't mind a little brushing and a little scraping,

a little bit of having my pores cleansed,

my torso packed in astringent gels,

a pedicure,

but I must tell you right away,

I don't care for all that deep breathing

and all that calisthenics.

And I really can't stand all those sessions of lymph drainage.

And, while we're on the subject of preferences,

let me say:

I can only take so much of buttermilk and cottage cheese

and those wretched unsalted bits of waferbread

before I want to shoot something.

So I'll be anticipating a little bit of food

after we are finished with the seaweed wrap.

[As she is finishing this, she lies down on a massage table and a masseur goes to work on her.]

MASSEUR

Yes, maam.

[Meanwhile, in the kitchen.]

COOK

Would you like a cup of tea, love?

DULLE GRIET

Oh, yes, I would, thank you.

COOK

Not at all.

DULLE GRIET [sitting in a corner of the kitchen]

It's a little bit like heaven here

so it seems to me,

so clean and fresh.

COOK

I wouldn't disagree.

DULLE GRIET

I always thought,

probably, heaven is in the Himalayas

COOK [not getting it]

Unh-hunh.

[The cook goes back to cooking,

maybe making bread,

kneading the dough and slamming it down on the breadboard

with immense force and aggression

and a sort of lusty enjoyment of the slamming and banging.]

DULLE GRIET

and the Chinese, you know,

have walled it off from everyone

except the Chinese themselves.
They are saving it for themselves.

But now I see, really,
heaven is right here
where everything is clean.

COOK
This is what you really think?

DULLE GRIET
Well, sure.

COOK
What? Did you read it somewhere?

DULLE GRIET
I don't remember.

COOK'S ASSISTANT
So why do you say that kind of thing?

DULLE GRIET
Because you can say anything you want nowadays.

COOK ASSISTANT
You can?

DULLE GRIET
Yes.

COOK
But you need a little practice at saying anything
because, so far,
what you have to say is gobbledygook.

DULLE GRIET
What kind of things do you say?

COOK

First of all,
the Chinese don't know heaven from their elbow.
You want to know where heaven is:
it's in America.
You want to know what you do when you get to heaven:
you eat like a king, fuck like a mink
and wear whatever you want.
The Americans have more shoes than Imelda Marcos.
America is where Imelda Marcos got her shoes.
And if you want to get to heaven
you're going to have to toughen up.
No more of this hopeful sentimental stuff.

You're going to want to be clear, focused,
on the move,
you know, going forward
like a sailboat
not just sitting here
with your sails luffing in the breeze.
That's the trouble with people in this part of the world
they are all masters of luffing.
Well, you'll be left behind
if you don't get on with your life.
Now, already you've got a baby
you don't even have a husband, am I right?
No job. No money.
But you didn't think twice about taking on a baby.

DULLE GRIET

Oh, I meant to ask:
do you have a little milk?

COOK

This is all you think to do:
ask for a handout.
Don't lift a goddam finger on your own
but show no shame in asking for a handout.
[yelling]

The welfare state is dead!
Get on board!
Look around you!
Get with the program!
It's every man for himself from here on in!

DULLE GRIET

I just thought perhaps a little bit of milk for the baby's bottle.

COOK

What do you think this is, the Marshall Plan?

DULLE GRIET

My employer will pay you for it.

COOK'S ASSISTANT

Ah!

Put it on the tab, eh?

COOK

Now you're thinking like an American.

Righty-oh.

COOK'S ASSISTANT

We'll put it on the tab.

No problem.

COOK

Why didn't you say so in the first place?

DULLE GRIET

I didn't think about it.

COOK'S ASSISTANT

You'll have to get in a little practice:

[singing it out]

put it on the tab!

DULLE GRIET [timidly imitating]
Put it on the tab.

COOK'S ASSISTANT [again, singing it out at full volume]
Put it on the tab.

DULLE GRIET [a little less timidly]
Put it on the tab.

COOK'S ASSISTANT [with COOK, again singing it out at full volume]
Put it on the tab.

DULLE GRIET [very boldly]
Put it on the tab.

[Dulle Griet is now joined by the others in the hotel—
the masseur and concierge and Pamela,
as though, with the sounds of singing coming through the walls,
they don't quite know what is possessing them to sing]

COOK'S ASSISTANT
[with COOK, PAMELA, MASSEUR, CONCIERGE]
Put it on the tab.

DULLE GRIET
Put it on the tab.

[Pounding on the door.
Silence.
Cook and Dulle Griet look toward the door.
Pamela sits bolt upright on her massage table.
She and the masseur look at the door.]

COOK
Who could that be?
It sounds a little like the good old days.

[Concierge suddenly appears.]

CONCIERGE

There are soldiers at the door.
Who's done something wrong?

PAMELA

Dulle Griet!
Get the baby!
Goddammit,
these fellows have probably come back to check for babies in the hotel.

[She rushes into her clothes.]

CONCIERGE

Does this mean you're checking out?
I don't think you've paid your bill.

PAMELA

Just put in on my Amex.

CONCIERGE

We don't take American Express.

PAMELA

Well, you'll have to send the bill to my secretary, then.

CONCIERGE

You said you'd pay in dollars.

PAMELA

Of course I will
but I don't go around carrying cash, do I?
I'll be happy to have my secretary send you a personal check.

CONCIERGE

We don't take checks!

PAMELA

You people have a lot to learn about how business is conducted.
You know, just because I'm rich doesn't mean I'm stupid. What's that? [takes the candelabra]
Come along, Dulle Griet.

[Pamela gathers up the fluffy white towels,
the fluffy white robe, and some bottles of massage oil
to steal.
At the end, she turns back and takes a candelabra, too.
She leaves, covered with a green face mask,
seaweed wrap, clothes pins stuck all over her, etc.]

DULLE GRIET [to the cook]
Thanks for the hospitality.

PAMELA
Come along, Dulle Griet!

[The two of them stand on either side of the double doors
leading outside.
They each open one of the doors,
so that each one of them is hidden when simultaneously
they open the two doors.
The two soldiers rush in.]

WERNER
We've come to search the hotel for a small baby.

[Pamela and Dulle Griet
slip out through the doors,
and close the doors behind themselves.]

Do you have any babies here?

CONCIERGE
Those two women have a baby.

[The soldiers turn around.]

HERMANN

What women?

[Of course, the doors are closed.]

CONCIERGE

The women who just went out.

WERNER [suspiciously]

I didn't see any women.

HERMANN

And we just came in.

CONCIERGE

Two women with a baby

just came and went.

If you hurry, you can catch them.

WERNER

Thank you.

I'll see that you get a commendation for this

if we catch them.

[The two soldiers go to the doors.

Werner opens the door on his side for Hermann.

Hermann opens his door.

Werner closes his door to use Hermann's door.

Hermann closes his door.

Werner opens his door.

Werner closes it.

Etc.

Until they shoulder each other out of the way going through one door.

The stage rotates.

Dulle Griet is pushing the truck again.

Pamela is in the truck with the baby.
They are moving through the woods.]

PAMELA

Speaking of chases.

I remember one night

when I came home to find Gianni in bed with a seventeen year old

Anne Marie d'Estainville

such a lovely girl

well I just hit the ceiling

I chased them all the way right out of the house

and they got into his Lancia and just roared away

then the phone rang in the middle of the night

they had been driving along the Lower Corniche

and, you know, Gianni had been doing cocaine and lots of drinking

and just smashed into a delivery truck

and everyone crawled away except for Gianni

and finally the police came along and took him to the hospital

and his jaw was broken and his right leg was crushed

it took him months to recover

months.

What's this?

DULLE GRIET

This is the bridge I was told about.

PAMELA

This is a rope bridge!

DULLE GRIET

I wasn't told it was a rope bridge.

SIGN MAN

Scene six. The rope bridge.

Scene 6

The Rope Bridge

DULLE GRIET

I was told: this is the short cut to Dresden
so the soldiers couldn't catch us.

PAMELA

But this is a rope bridge!

DULLE GRIET

I guess that's why the soldiers wouldn't think
we would come this way.

PAMELA

We can't push a truck across this bridge.

DULLE GRIET

No.

PAMELA

I can't carry the Pergamon Altar piece across a rope bridge!!!
This is what they call German technology???

[Silence.]

DULLE GRIET

We don't have maybe all the latest things.
But we're not bad people, all of us.

PAMELA [apologetically]

Of course not.

Of course not.

[silence;

Dulle Griet gives the baby to Pamela
and goes to get a ladder from the truck,
which she then positions so they can go up to the bridge]

Of course, once I had Gianni in traction
I thought I'd never lose him.
I did things to him while he was hanging suspended in the air
that I don't suppose he was ever able to forget.
Some of them he deserved.
Some of them he enjoyed.
Then, too, I sang for him.
I danced for him.
I gave him everything I had.
But do you think he married me when he got out of traction?
He did not.
And do you know why?
Because I wasn't Catholic!
My God,
I'd have become a Catholic
if that's all he wanted.

[silence]

Nonetheless,
if the soldiers are coming
we need to make the best of it.

[giving the baby back to Dulle Griet]

Can you manage with the baby?
Dulle Griet?

DULLE GRIET

I feel his heart beating!

[silence]

Like a song.

[silence]

Oh, don't you think it's wonderful
how many beautiful songs you've heard

that come from all over the world
choirs of all kinds
the worker in the field
piano virtuosos,
orchestras,
the voice of God, they say, is a hummingbird,
or an orange blossom,
or the pearl-rose of India,
the beautiful blue Danube,
the white flowers this baby planted without thinking in my heart.

[silence]

PAMELA

I guess you've come to love this baby,
haven't you, Dulle Griet?

DULLE GRIET

Yes.

PAMELA

I see the way he listens to you so sweetly
to the stories that you tell him
I've come to love him, too.

[silence]

Well, we'd better keep on moving
so those soldiers don't catch up with us.
Come along,
I'll lead the way
and test the bridge to make sure it's safe for you and the baby.

[Pamela starts out across the rope bridge, followed by Dulle Griet with the baby.]

Oh.

This is a little scary.
A little scary.

But I think you can do it.
Come along.

[As they cross the bridge, Pamela talks.]

The truth is, Dulle Griet,
in a way I think
thank god for this abyss
and this little bridge
because you know
as I think back on it now
I don't think I've ever risked my life for another human being
I've never known if I would or if I could
put my life on the line
for someone I love or care about
and I've always thought: what kind of a wet fish are you
that you don't just jump in the water
and, you know, without thinking about it,
just give yourself to another person
or find that you already have given yourself
before you even thought about it
because you can't help yourself
because you have a heart
and it just went out to someone all by itself
the way it did to Warren, really,
but I never put my life on the line for him
I never even just said, well, you know,
I go for you, I'm yours, with no conditions
and now
I'm putting my life on the line for this baby
and
I feel good about it
my heart's gone out
and I see, this is how it is to love another person
and the truth is,
I would throw myself off this rope bridge
if I had to
if it came to that
to save this child

because I think
goddammit
I'm never going to do again
what I did
when I left my little boy in that train station
because I loved him, too,
and this time goddammit I am going to take care of another human being

[Fireworks go off in the sky.]

Oh, look. Fireworks.
It must be a holiday.

[Dulle Griet thinks.]

DULLE GRIET
Or else someone is blowing up an ammunition dump.

PAMELA
Whoever in the world would want to do that?
I think it must be a garden party.
Come along, Dulle Griet.
We don't want to miss the fun.

[As they exit, the fireworks continue.]

The soldiers enter.]

HERMANN
Hey! Hey!
I found a truck!

WERNER
A truck. Right.
These women were traveling in a truck.

HERMANN
So, they got here, and then
they had to abandon the truck

to get across the rope bridge.

WERNER

Right.

Across the rope bridge.

They climbed up this ladder then across the rope bridge
because they thought we would be too afraid to follow.

[silence]

HERMANN

Right.

WERNER

These devious women
thought we men
would be too afraid to follow them
all the way up there.

[they both peer down into the abyss under the rope bridge
silence]

to risk our souls

[letting their gaze drift out into the audience that occupies the abyss]

by falling into the yawning abyss below
that pit of darkness
that place of eternal fitful sleep
from which no traveler returns altogether intact

that shadowy void just beyond the edge of the stage of human comedy

that chasm of idle dreams
where so often the soul is afflicted
in turn by
the sense of the unending drift of time
of minutes that pass like hours
hours like days

creeps on this petty pace
until the mind can encompass nothing more
save the constant thought
of the aching back
and the numbed butt

while the faltering attention
drifts to the bitter memory of having had to leave the dinner table
without time to finish a cup of coffee
coffee one had hoped might at the very least have cleared away
the lingering effects of the cocktail
(or the cocktails)
before dinner—
or of the after-dinner
belt
of whisky

and finally
the mind can focus on nothing more
than the urgent desire
to get to some place to urinate!

and so at last
in this frame of mind comes
the frantic, unbalanced exercise of
grim Judgment
the merciless spirit of censure
the proclivity toward righteous outrage
and the unreasoning urge to dash into the streets
yelling flop! flop!
nothing but endless stocks of horse
flop!

No.

[regaining his superior composure]

We will have to stay on our guard, Hermann,
remember our training,
to cross over this bridge

and not fall into this abyss
with these poor lost souls.

HERMANN
Right.

WERNER
Come on.
[silence]

HERMANN
We're going to cross the bridge?

WERNER
Yes, Hermann, we are going to cross this bridge
and catch these women!

HERMANN
I don't think I can cross that bridge.

WERNER
Of course you can, Hermann.
So come along.
I'll let you go first so I'm not out there jiggling it
while you're trying to get across.
Here we go.

HERMANN
I'm not sure about this, Werner.

WERNER
Those women might have been afraid to cross, Hermann,
but you
[spoken as an order]

are not afraid!
Let's go.

HERMANN
I'm going, Werner, I'm going.
WERNER
Well, don't stop.

HERMANN
It's a little jiggly, Werner.

WERNER
Steady on, Hermann. Steady on.

[halfway across the bridge]

Steady on. Steady on.

HERMANN
Werner! Werner! Could we just take a little intermission here?

WERNER
As soon as you get to the other side, Hermann!

HERMANN
Werner. Confidentially,
suddenly I have an urgent need for an intermission.

WERNER
In just a minute, Hermann, just a minute.

HERMANN
Werner, I've gotten a little frightened,
and now I think I myself have to go to the men's room.

[he starts to let his pants fall down around his ankles]

WERNER
Not yet, Hermann!

HERMANN

I can't wait, Werner.

WERNER

Not yet!

Hermann!!

HERMANN

There's nothing I can do!

WERNER

Not yet! Not yet, Hermann!!!

Hold on,

we're going to make it, we're going to make it,

I'll tell you what:

we'll sing a song to calm your nerves.

Do you want to sing a song?

HERMANN

Yes.

WERNER

Do you know the song YMCA?

HERMANN

Yes. I know that.

WERNER

Okay. Sing it with me now, Hermann.

Are you ready?

[singing]

Y-M-C-A!

Don't, Hermann, don't!

Don't make the letters with your hands.

Just hold onto the bridge!

HERMANN

Right. Right. Okay.

Werner and Hermann sing YMCA
as they cross to the other side;
music comes up to continue playing YMCA
and the house lights come on
and the audience dances up the aisles singing YMCA.

Intermission

Scene 7

In the Suburbs Of Dresden

SIGN MAN

Scene 7. In the Suburbs of Dresden.

[The interior of a house in East Germany, near Dresden. The room is dark. We see the backs of two easy chairs. The TV faces us. It is a home improvement show. This house is leaking, peeling the plaster is falling off the walls. The man and woman in the easy chairs are drinking beers. He is in his undershirt, unpressed trousers with suspenders, old slippers, unshaven, hair uncombed, bleary eyed. She is in a negligee, her hair in curlers, a green mud pack on her face, slippers with fluffy bunnies on the toes. This is more or less a one-room house, so there is also an unmade bed, a dresser with lots and lots and lots of cosmetics (in poverty, the wife is a fashion plate). There is a kitchen table with unwashed plates, remains of former meals. Buckets catch the dripping water from the ceiling.

A video is playing in the background.]

Good evening and welcome to "This Perfect House." The beauty of any wall begins with its smooth and silky flatness and perfect walls, like any work of art, require a suitable frame. Moldings will articulate their size and shape.

Moldings do more than add period character. They can also hide flaws and balance misproportions—tricking the eye into reading space differently. Moldings add depth and elegance to a room. They also accent its best features.

There are scores of ways to use molding to enhance a room. Mount crown or cove moldings at ceiling lines, put chair rails and picture moldings or other trims at soffit height or midwall. Dress up cabinets—as in this picture by adding fluted edge molding to the shelves.

What you'll need to add the beauty of molding to your home:

Moldings, of course

(remember to measure each piece and buy a variety of lengths)

3d or 4d finishing nails

construction adhesive

and silicone caulk

As for tools:

tape measure

pencil

chalk line

power mitar box

sanding block

studfinder (whoa, I've got one right now)

hammer and nail set or electric nailer

[There is a pounding on the door.]

DULLE GRIET'S VOICE [FROM OFF]

Hello.

Helmut!

Ursula!

Hello.

It's Dulle Griet!

Hello!

[Helmut turns off the television with the remote.

They sit and listen.]

Helmut!

Ursula!

Hey!

It's your sister Dulle Griet,
let me in, Helmut,
come on!
I let you in when you came to Berlin!
Helmut!

HELMUT
Okay!
Okay!
Quiet down!
I'm coming!

[He doesn't move.
After a few moments, she calls out again.]

DULLE GRIET
Helmut!

URSULA
Would you get the fucking door?

HELMUT [yelling at Dulle Griet]
Okay, I said I'm coming!

[He takes a last swig of beer,
gets to his feet.
He shuffles slowly toward the door.]

DULLE GRIET
Helmut!

HELMUT [yelling]
I'm coming, goddammit!
I said I was goddam coming,

and I'm goddam coming!

[He opens the door.]

DULLE GRIET

Hi, Helmut.

HELMUT

Jesus God Almighty, you are impatient!

DULLE GRIET

May we come in?

HELMUT

Who is this?

DULLE GRIET

This is my friend Pamela.

Pamela, this is my brother Helmut.

PAMELA

How do you do?

DULLE GRIET

We need a place to stay, Helmut.

HELMUT

Are the police after you?

DULLE GRIET

Yes, but it's not what you think.

HELMUT

We don't want any trouble here, Dulle Griet.

We have a certain, you know,
life that we live here.

DULLE GRIET

I know, Helmut, I know.

HELMUT [to Pamela]

She always was a trouble-maker.

DULLE GRIET

I haven't done anything, Helmut.
I am getting to be a practical person.
I am getting with the program, Helmut.

HELMUT

Isn't that just what you'd say?
I don't guess the police are after you for doing nothing.
What is this, a baby?

DULLE GRIET

Yes.

HELMUT

You have a baby?

DULLE GRIET

It's not mine, really,
I'm just taking care of it.

HELMUT

You want me to let you in
and you start out by lying to me right away about the baby?

DULLE GRIET

Yes, it's my baby.

HELMUT

Where is the father?

DULLE GRIET

Well, the father has gone away
for a little while.

PAMELA

Do you think we might come in?

[Ursula, having heard Pamela's voice,
puts on her own best company manners.]

URSULA

Who is that, darling?

HELMUT

It's my sister and a friend.

URSULA

Let me see, Helmut!

Hello, Dulle Griet.

DULLE GRIET

Hello, Ursula.

URSULA

Who is this person you've brought with you?

DULLE GRIET

This is my friend Pamela.

PAMELA

How do you do?

Pamela Dalrymple.

From New York.

URSULA

Oh, from New York.

How do you do?

I'm Ursula Grohmann from Leipzig.

Please, won't you come in?

[She elbows Helmut out of the way.]

How delightful to have a visitor from America.

It's not something that happens every day for us!

[She laughs the hostess laugh.]

You'll have to excuse us.

We've been entertaining all day

and haven't had the opportunity to tidy up.
Sometimes I think, we never stop!

HELMUT
We should.

URSULA
And yet we don't.
I love people
there it is
there's nothing one can do about it!
But here, please,
put down your things. Have a seat.
May I give you a cup of tea
or some schnapps?

PAMELA
No, thank you,
we're quite all right.

URSULA
A little beer for the baby to quiet it down?

HELMUT
Is the baby fussing?

DULLE GRIET
No.

HELMUT
Then I don't think it needs a beer.

PAMELA
This is such a lovely home.

[As she launches into this,
we see no one believes her,
and the others are frankly dumbfounded
by her ability to lie.]

You know, I've had the good fortune
to stay in many lovely homes.
I remember when I stayed with the Duke and Duchess of Windsor
what a perfectly delightful home they had
the quartet of 18th century George II saltcellars
that had once belonged
the Duke of Cumberland
the one the Scots called the Butcher of Culloden
and there was just a classic simplicity about everything.
And yet
I've never been in a home lovelier than this
because of course what really matters finally
is the warmth and hominess of a home.

[Silence.

Ursula moves one of the buckets to catch the leaks from the ceiling.]

URSULA

We're very pleased
to have the opportunity of having you with us in our home.

HELMUT

Whose baby is it?

PAMELA AND DULLE GRIET SIMULTANEOUSLY

It's my baby.

[Pamela laughs.]

PAMELA

We both think of it as our own.
Dulle Griet takes care of it
but actually it's mine
I mean I was the one left holding him,
and since I've come to know the baby
I'm actually getting to like him,
well really even love him quite a lot.

HELMUT

Where is the father?

PAMELA

Oh. The father is dead—
or maybe just in jail.

HELMUT

The father is in jail!!!
And you bring this child into my house?

PAMELA

The father is Erich Honecker,
I think by now he may be dead.

HELMUT

Erich Honecker,
the Secretary General of the Party?

PAMELA

Yes, that's the one.

HELMUT

You had sex with Erich Honecker?

PAMELA

Oh, dear, no,
we saved the child
the mother left it behind
it was going to be arrested
and taken away with the Secretary General
and we thought it was much too young to go to jail
so we brought it with us
but now of course
everyone is making such a fuss
soldiers are chasing after us
they say they want the child back
now they want the child
whereas just a day ago

or was it the day before yesterday?
no one even wanted to hold it
while his mother changed her clothes.

HELMUT

Well, if you want to stay here,
you'll need to have a father for the child.

[smacks himself in the head with his hand]

I have a father just next door
you could marry him
and then there would be no questions asked.

PAMELA

I don't think I'm going to be getting married
to the father next door.

HELMUT

Frankly,
if you want this child to be safe
you don't want a lot of questions asked.
You don't want to have to say:
"well, it's really not my child
it's Erich Honecker's
and I took it when his mother was changing her clothes."
What you want to say is:
my husband is the father.
And that will shut up the idle curious on the spot.

URSULA

Helmut is right.
You'll be wanting a husband if you have a baby.

PAMELA

Who is this next door neighbor?

HELMUT

He's an automotive mechanic.
Well, not a mechanic really.

URSULA

No.

HELMUT

They let him change the tires.

URSULA

change the tires.

HELMUT

He's not—
well: able—

URSULA

No.

HELMUT

to learn to do much else.

URSULA

much else.

HELMUT

But he's a sweet fellow.

URSULA

sweet fellow

HELMUT

Doesn't talk too much.

URSULA

talk too much

HELMUT

Won't give you any trouble.

URSULA

give you any trouble

HELMUT

You won't need to share a bed with him
because I don't think he knows how to—
well....

URSULA

We needn't get too personal.
You'll be quite safe.

HELMUT

It's a good match.
Any woman would be lucky to have him.

URSULA

lucky to have him

HELMUT

And he's handy, too, around the house.

URSULA

around the house.

PAMELA

What do you think, Dulle Griet?

DULLE GRIET

Well, if it's absolutely necessary....

PAMELA

I can see the reason in it.
And, since you can be the mother as well as I,
there seems to be no impediment your marrying him.

DULLE GRIET

I should marry the mechanic?

PAMELA

I see no other way.

It certainly does seem best for the baby.

DULLE GRIET

I thought you were going to put your life on the line, Pamela!

PAMELA

Yes! And I think I am,
in my own way.

I mean I don't think it's going to do anyone any good
for me to marry a perfect stranger.

HELMUT

I'll get the groom.

[He leaves.]

URSULA

I'll prepare the wedding feast.

[she leaves]

PAMELA

I think I'll just freshen up.

[she leaves]

URSULA [to Pamela as they are going out]

I just love the way you've done your hair

It's so
radiant.

DULLE GRIET [to the baby]

Sometimes in life we think
we don't have a choice
or if we do

we just go along
passively
victims
subject to the plans of others
not living our own lives
doing as we're told
living out the lives others have planned for us
I think:
this is how it seems to me now
you can see how I am pushed around
bullied
by my brother and by Pamela
I wonder
is this the sort of person I am?
is this how I have been all my life?
I could say:
fuck you!
You marry the fucking mechanic if you want to,
I'm out of here!
But, the truth is,
this is what I want to do.
I choose you.
I choose you.
You are going to be my baby.
I am going to care for you
like no one ever has been cared for before.
I am going to love you.
I am going to give you everything I have.
You may say:
oh, I see,
you are just going to make up for your own lost life
when no one cared for you,
but no, this is not true.
I had a mother once
and she loved me so much

I remember how it's done.
I'm going to pass it on.
This is what I choose

in all the world.
No one can take me away from you.
You can count on me
forever.

[Helmut returns with the groom in tow.
The groom is big and stupid.
He is in his wedding outfit,
with trousers way too short in the legs,
a carnation in his lapel.]

HELMUT
Dulle Griet, this is your fianc e, Gunter.

DULLE GRIET
How do you do, Gunter?

GUNTER
Good.

DULLE GRIET
I understand you are a mechanic.

GUNTER
Yes.

DULLE GRIET
And that you live next door.

HELMUT
With his mother.

DULLE GRIET
With your mother.

GUNTER
Okay.

DULLE GRIET
Will your mother be coming to the wedding?

[Gunter looks uncertain.]

HELMUT

Yes. She is getting ready now.

DULLE GRIET

It is odd to meet like this,
but I suppose that arranged marriages
have just as good a chance of happiness as any kind.

GUNTER

Okay.

HELMUT

We can have the wedding now,
and afterwards,
the wedding party in the basement.

DULLE GRIET

Shall we go?

GUNTER [smiling]

Okay.

[She puts her hand on his arm,
they turn upstage and go through the door.]

The stage revolves—

as we hear either

Clarke's Trumpet Voluntary

or Marc-Antoine Charpentier's Prelude to Te Deum

or Wagner's Wedding March from Lohengrin

—and we are at the wedding feast.

It looks like Breugel's painting of the wedding feast:

everyone at one long table, like the Last Supper;

Dulle Griet and Gunter are at the center on the long side of the table,
facing forward;

Gunter, drunk, sits smiling stupidly.

Dulle Griet wears a white bridal veil.

Already someone has passed out and slumps forward over the table.
No one's fancy clothes fit; they are all borrowed.
Pamela is holding the baby.
Pamela, who pours something from a flask into her teacup at some point
is a little tipsy herself.]

PAMELA [talking to Gunter's drunk mother]
Our house had forty rooms;
and yet, even so, the only cozy room was the library,
so we spent all our time there.
When my friend Mary came home

[Gunter's drunk mother falls forward,
her face hitting the table with a thunk,
stopping Pamela's story dead.]

PAMELA
Oh, dear.

URSULA
I never thought I'd see the day
I'd be a wife and mother
some people plan ahead
but what's the point?
Life is going to happen
whether you plan it or not.

DRUNK HELMUT
[rising to offer toasts]
I would like to drink a toast.
To the bride and groom,
to their health,
to their baby,
and more babies to come

OTHER GUESTS
More babies!

URSULA [weeping]

May all their babies be as sweet as their first
and may they take many pictures,

many many pictures as their baby grows up

[sobbing]

My God, you can never have too many pictures.

OTHER GUESTS

And movies.

That's true.

Videos.

Home videos.

[one of the guests passes out]

URSULA

On a serious note....

OTHERS

No, no, no....

URSULA

Yes. Yes. On a serious note

I say, let us pray that we find a third way

neither communism nor capitalism

but a third way

[another guest passes out]

some middle ground

to get rich, like in the West

and to share like in the East

Because the choice that we are being given

this should not be our only choice.

[another guest passes out]

HELMUT

Bullshit

This is bullshit bullshit

in life you have to choose

one thing or another

do you think you can become partly pregnant?

Life is not like this.

URSULA

What do you know what life is like

you've never been out of the village you were born in

"we must choose"

"we must choose"

the truth is:

the world will choose for you

[another guest passes out]

HELMUT

Okay. You want a different world?

Go to Mars! Go to Mars!

URSULA

You mean you think it's OK

to go through all this

living like this for forty years

and settle for no better place than this?

DULLE GRIET

What do you know, you two

you've sat here talking behind closed doors all these years

talk and talk

and not even where anyone could hear you

but I

I went to Berlin

and do you know what this is?

[bang—she puts it down on the table—

the drunks all raising their heads for a moment
before they sink back down]

This is a piece of the Berlin Wall.

Look at that.
I helped to tear it down
and now the wall is gone
completely gone
and the whole world is different.
Don't let anyone tell you
you can't change the way things are.
It happens all the time.

PAMELA

I myself think anything is possible
You know
they always used to say of John Hay Whitney
Jock they called him:
for a fellow with only one yacht
he sure has had a lot of girls in a lot of ports.

[other guests have passed out]

For me, it's the same as decorating a room.
Flowers or pillows or photographs
can simply make a room spring to life.
And I've always felt,
you can transform a room so that when you walk into it
you feel at home
you feel you are in New York
but you can't help yourself exclaim:
oh, isn't this just like Paris?

[Ursula,
trying now to make up to Helmut
with a little seduction,
starts singing to him]

Ich mochte liebe von dir
Von dir und niemand doch ausser dir
Ich mochte liebe von dir allein pooh pooh be doo
Ich soll nichts mehr wollen
als dein Herz zu halten
Ich darf nicht mehr traumen
Ich Kuss nur mein lieb
Ich mochte liebe von dir
Von dir und niemand doch ausser dir
Ich mochte liebe von dir allein

As they continue to dance,
we see the two soldiers rush frantically across the stage and exit;
then after a moment, they return,
look at the members of the wedding party.
Soldier 1 takes out a notebook and consults it.
All the wedding guests are passed out
except for Pamela, Dulle Griet, Ursula, and Helmut.]

WERNER
So, a wedding party, I see.

HERMANN
Someone must have gotten married.

WERNER
Right.
And I am thinking:
this bride looks familiar to me.

HERMANN
She does?

WERNER
And this must be the baby.

DULLE GRIET
This is not the baby.

WERNER

This is not what baby?

DULLE GRIET

This is not the baby you're looking for.

WERNER

How do you know what baby we are looking for?

PAMELA

This baby belongs to this young woman
and this father here.

(she gestures to Gunter, passed out under the table)

WERNER

Ah-ha! You again!

Would I happen to have the pleasure of addressing...

(consulting his notebook)

Pamela Dalrymple?

(consulting notebook again)

From Park Avenue, Los Angeles, New York?

PAMELA

In a way, yes.

And you are...?

WERNER

Leftenant Werner Heine.

PAMELA

I think, Leftenant Heine, that you are making a mistake.

You know,

Mr. Modrow is a personal friend of mine.

WERNER
Hans Modrow?

PAMELA
Hans Modrow.
Yes. The Prime Minister of the, you know, whatever it is.
Hans Modrow is a personal friend of mine.

WERNER
Well, Modrow is out.
It's Gregor Gysi who's in charge of things now.

PAMELA
Gregor Gysi?
Who is Gregor Gysi?
We never get the news.
Doesn't anyone ever just send a card any more?

WERNER
Now, I think you'll both have to come with us.

DULLE GRIET
I can't leave my husband and my baby.

WERNER
Your baby needs to come with us, too.
As for your husband,
I guess he's not going anywhere.

[Warren enters, drinking a Coke and eating a hamburger.]

WARREN
Excuse me?

WERNER
Hello?

WARREN

I beg your pardon.
I was looking for your local investment club.
I was told they might be meeting here.

PAMELA

Warren!

WARREN

Pamela!
So this is your baby.

PAMELA

No, I'm only...
[she looks at the soldiers]
Or, what I mean is: yes!
This is my baby.
And I am an American
with, you know, certain rights
and also an American Embassy!

WARREN

I knew that, Pamela.

PAMELA

Oh, Warren,
how can I ever explain?

WARREN

You don't need to explain anything to me, Pamela.
After all,
you needn't feel you have any obligation towards me.

PAMELA

I want to feel an obligation towards you, Warren.

WARREN

Oh...

Well...

In that case,
perhaps you will.

PAMELA

To tell the truth, I do already.

WARREN

I do, too, towards you.

Even though, to be perfectly frank,
I don't even know quite how we met,
or how we came to know one another,
or just what our relationship is now.

PAMELA

Oh, neither do I, Warren!

Isn't that just the way with love?

You don't know how it all began

or where it will take you—

you just take the risk

jump off the high dive

and scream!

WARREN

I'll tell you the truth, Pamela.

I've never known anyone like you.

I thought so the first moment I saw you
on the golf course at Chevy Chase
when you had lost your ball
and we looked for it together in the ravine
do you remember?

PAMELA

Of course I do.

WARREN

I thought then: the way you just
plunge into life
not knowing what might happen
right away I thought:
what a brave person
and I thought:
I could go anywhere in the world with you and I have to say,
being a sort of straight person myself
I love the way nothing embarrasses you
even maybe when it should
the way you go off half-cocked
when I'm still standing there
waiting to get fully cocked
you make things happen
I had this fantasy:
we were lying together on the beach
and I looked down at our feet
my feet had on a pair of brown loafers
perfectly polished
not a grain of sand on them;
your feet were covered with sand and seaweed and seashells
and what looked like a sandwich left over from lunch
I thought:
I'd follow wherever those feet would go
I thought: you'd take me into life
places I've never been before
I'd like to go with you.
I look at you, I think:
you're hot.

PAMELA

Oh, Warren, you're such a good person.
I'm afraid I have to confess:
I lost my ball on purpose.

WARREN

Well, I figured that.
I loved that about you.

You know what, Pamela:
you just make me want to tap dance.

WERNER

OK OK

[with immense perverse pleasure]

I'm sorry to spoil the party

but we need to take these ladies back to Berlin for trial.

WARREN

Trial?

What have you witnessed, Pamela?

PAMELA

Oh, Warren,

it turns out I'm a suspected perpetrator.

WARREN

Really?

Whatever for?

PAMELA

Kidnapping.

[everyone looks at the baby]

WARREN [looking at the baby]

Well, I'm sure you're innocent, Pamela.

[to the soldiers]

You can be sure she'll have a very good explanation.

But, by all means, let's get this cleared up.

We can all take my car back to Berlin.

WERNER (stalwartly)

I have to admit

we already took possession of your car.

PAMELA

Excuse me, but
how are you going to have a trial?
You don't have a government.
You don't have a court.
You don't have a judge.

WERNER

Oh, yes, we have a government, a provisional government,
and we do have a judge.
And just as soon as we get back to Berlin
Hermann and I are going to pick up the judge.

PAMELA

Pick up the judge?
And where are you going to find a judge?

WERNER

Well, right now he's in jail.
Our job is to deliver you to Berlin
and bring the judge to the trial.
So come along, folks.
Let's be on our way.

DULLE GRIET

Come, sweet,
we'll go for a ride in a big shiny car.

HERMANN

Do you have the keys, Werner?

WERNER

You took the keys, Hermann.

PAMELA

Come on, then, Dulle Griet.

WERNER

Did you leave the keys in the car, Hermann?

HERMANN

I think I did, Werner.

I think they're in the car.

WARREN

Excuse me!

Do you think you might let my driver out of the trunk?

WERNER

Yes, sir! Right away.

Come on, Hermann,
before some idiot steals the car.

PAMELA

I'll just take a little something for the road.

[as she takes some things from the wedding table for car snacks]

URSULA

Wait. Wait.

Hey, wait! No, wait!

[They are gone.

The wedding guests remain.

Gunter rises from under the table.]

GUNTER

Where....

Where is everyone?

HELMUT

They're gone for a ride

in a car,

Gunter.

GUNTER

A car.

Good.

[he sinks back down to the ground]

HELMUT

I am going to propose a toast to you, Gunter.

To Gunter.

To the man himself.

Because

fundamentally

Mann ist mann.

Humanity!

It's all we've got to work with.

And this is no time to quit!

URSULA [begins, with rest of wedding guests waking up and joining in]

Aus dem tiefen raume

Aus der erdegrund

Hebt sich wie im traume

Dein verliebte mund

Wenn sich die spaten nebel drehen

Wir wird bei der laterne stehen

Mit der Lilli Marlene

Mit der Lilli Marlene

Scene 8

Ich Bin Ein Berliner

(Muller sits alone on a wooden chair at a wooden table,
a single naked bulb over his head.

He is still sweating, covered with vomit.)

SIGN MAN

Scene eight. Ich Bin Ein Berliner.

MULLER

SO?

What am I doing here?

What did I do wrong?

What did I do,

that I should be singled out,
that I should be the one in jail?

You could say,
where were you
you know
all those years.
While you know things were not so good.
Objected
in a way
putting on the odd play or two
whatever the point of that was
the voice of conscience
that knows just how far to go
but not too far

No. True enough.
No one had to shut me down!
They could count on me
to be brave seeming
right thinking

timid.
In short:
a pillar of the state.

I mean one could say
what is an artist anyhow
in essence
if not a supporter of the status quo
since it would be hard to argue that a work of art can change history
and therefore, ipso facto
a work of art is an exercise in accepting things as they are
which is, in and of itself
a way of supporting the status quo.

You have all these artists who like to say of themselves
well, I am changing the world
and if they like to say it

there is no harm in it
except that it's not true
and it gets an artist in the habit of lying
and expecting his lies to be accepted
so that, when his lies are not accepted
he is in a snit

Or not, or not
it may be that a work of art contributes
to the common discourse of the culture
and so, in some modest way,
supports or undermines the status quo
but really so what?
I mean if you really care
whether this fellow on the street has no food or clothes
the most useful thing to do is not to put on a play
but give him food.

I know the arguments for art
I've made them all myself.

A work of art
unlike any other work of human beings
because it is created in the complete freedom
of the imagination
is the purest expression we have of human freedom
and as such it shows us how to be free
indeed how to be human.

Well, OK.
There's not much demand for that sort of thing nowadays
you couldn't get someone to pay for it
cash on the barrelhead.

And anyway,
this is not what I was saying all these years
I myself
speaking freely
given the license to speak freely in my theatre

what I would say all those years was
well,
there's nothing to be done
there's nothing to be done
so let's have a good time
that was what I had to say.
Or, in my optimistic moments I would say:
you can fix this a little bit
not revolution but evolution
you can try to mollify the excesses
you can keep certain bad people
or certain tendencies of the society
or the social structure
from going to that extra degree of cruelty.
It may be that things must be hard
but maybe not exactly cruel.
And this—to soften the blow
this is all a prudent man can do
if he understands the world the way it is.

And then you find, well:
all that smart temporizing stuff you said
that was not true
there was something to be done after all.
You were wrong.
You are a dumbkompf.

Who was to know?
How should I have known?
And then you say: yes.
You could not have known.
And even if you had, what could you have done?
When, as we all know,
these things are not up to any individual.
It takes a whole class of people
the proper mentalities
the objective historical forces
the right timing
and so forth.

And yet, nonetheless, you can't help but feel:
even if it is true that you are a useless little speck of dirt
who couldn't have done a thing all by yourself
nonetheless if you didn't even try,
well then,
too bad:
guilty
guilty
you are guilty!
That's all.
Next!
I mean, why wriggle out of it?

And yet,
no matter what they say,
I was not what you call a member of the secret police.
That is a specific lie!
I did not work for the Stasi!
(qualifying this)
I did not work directly for the Stasi.
That is to say I was not a direct paid employee of the Stasi.
To be sure, occasionally
when I thought it would do more good than harm
I gave information
nothing more.
Because even in a police state
there are criminals
people who maybe should be inhibited from certain kinds of behavior
I mean, you know, not all the citizens are innocent
just because their leaders are guilty.
Of course I'll be accused of being a member of the Stasi
by some opportunistic liars who come along
now that it's safe to change your socks
change your political opinions
you know, fuck them, fuck them,
suddenly I'll be the villain
okay
I'm a grown man
I know how the world works

this is how they're going to be, fair or unfair,
I have no regrets
well, possibly I have some regrets
but I understood what the deal was
this was the deal
now everything is changed
now forget about it
you chose wrong
you lose
you are a loser
history says: your side was wrong
what you did was bad
what your side did we call a war crime
never mind what we did on our side
because we are the winners
and you are a loser
so fuck you.
And OK
OK
I am admitting that what I did was wrong
I am fully embracing my culpability!
The truth is: I would like to have my face pushed down into the mud
have a boot up my backside
this is what I deserve.

In any case,
this is how it is to be a German
in this century.
Let's face it.
One generation after another:
to be the ones who say:
I am sorry.
I was wrong.
I was wrong.
This is how it is
to be a human being
Now you see
you look at me
and you see what it is

to be a human being
what it is we are capable of.
You could look at us and see what it is deep down inside you, too,
but lucky you,
you get a free look
because you don't have to say you were wrong
even if in fact you did do something wrong
you'll never admit it
I admit it!
I admit it.
Where did I go wrong.
I wonder this myself.

Of course when I was a child starting out
I had a normal childhood
like any other person.
I wouldn't mind finding a little Kruse doll in my Christmas stocking,
a little Elke or Heidi or Britta or Geraldine
or an Otto Bear
Or the little Nutcrackers
from Group A in the Steinbach Christmas catalogue,
Herr Drosselmeyer himself,
or Mad King Ludwig
and you think:
where did it go wrong?
On Christmas morning
my father wore his red vest
and all the little children sat in his lap
and he told them stories of Herr Drosselmeyer
and old Kris Kringle
so you could say certainly
this father was a good father
when your father goes out to work in the morning
you don't know where he is going
in fact, he could be going anywhere, doing anything
what you know is that
when he comes home in the evening
takes a glass of schnapps by the fireside
reads the bedtime stories to the children

this is a good man, a loving father
compassionate and generous,

Of course
the history I lived through
should have informed my judgment
I should have learned a thing or two
for the rest of my life
how to behave and so forth
as for instance when I was a child
you had sometimes
experimental subjects placed in the water,
dressed in complete flying uniform,
winter or summer combination,
and with an aviator's helmet.
This was wrong.
People knew it at the time.
Water temperatures from 2.5 to 12 degrees Centigrade
the occiput and back of the head were submerged in water
so that when the brain stem and the back of the head were chilled
you would sometimes have fatalities
with large amounts of free blood in the cranial cavity.
And you say, after this,
did you learn nothing,
how could you once again
once again
do something wrong?
Well, maybe it's not my history after all
maybe it is in my nature as a human being
if a human being has a nature.
And after all, the Americans did this too
with their CIA in Latin America.
I'm not saying this to excuse anything.
I am not using the old tu quoque defense
of what I have done or what my father did.
Of course, if we are going to drag him into it
my own father never spoke of it.
But we don't deny it.
And I myself thought

what have you learned from this?
What can make it good
if anything can
not that anything can make it good
but at the very least what have you learned from this?
You have to speak up
speak up
speak up
this is what there was to learn
speak up
but then I didn't.
When it came my turn,
you know, you think,
well, this is nothing in comparison with these other things
This is just the way the world works
you don't want to be naive
the world is not run by Buddhist monks!
This is how it is and was and ever shall be
save yourself for the really big ones
when you really need to make a stand
hold to it
risking death
and so forth.

Do you have some other answer?
Then shut up!
I myself was allowed to keep my theatre running
give employment to many actors
and so forth and so on.
It's an art
but also it's a business.
You don't want to throw people out of work
for the sake of a little useless posturing
for no point at all
and then they are unemployed and suffering too!
And these are artists I'm speaking of
these are precious people
not just some roadside scum

(quietly)

And, of course, I don't mean to say...

that is, obviously,

even roadside scum deserve to have some employment
dignity

What do you think?

Is this not a characteristic of a country

where they never shovel their sidewalks in the winter

right in front of the most expensive hotels in all of Germany
snow and ice

so that old people might fall and break their legs and hips
only the most fit

can walk from a limousine into a hotel dining room

this is not given from God

this is how men have designed the world in which they live!

And in fact:

You can't escape history.

You can't simply fly up from the planet into the sky

and all of a sudden you are not caught in the web

in which we all live

dependent upon one another

enmeshed in one another's lives

You could make your way along the margins all through your life

staying in the shadows of the tall buildings

with no one noticing just how nasty a piece of work you are

but when you live a nasty life out in the world as well

and all those lies come back in to invade your private life

twisting around the sort of person you are

even in the privacy of your living room

even you take it to bed with you

how it is you make love

or can't make love

and it makes you angry

to be so cheated of the life you might have had on earth

you become a brutal piece of shit.

So forget about it.
Let's all try now to start all over
Let bygones be bygones.
We start with a clean slate.
This is a beautiful earth
a beautiful planet
we are human beings
capable of great good
let's start here from zero
everybody has an equal chance for a wonderful life
I don't talk about where you've been
You don't talk about where I've been
Now we are all Americans
We start without a history
Today is a new day

What we want to know now is:
what are the new business hours?
6 am to 8 pm Monday through Friday
Saturdays from 6 am until 4 pm or 6 pm?
This is hardly enough.
This is not yet serious.
What about Sunday?
What about Saturday night?
Let's get on with it
do the best we can.

And as for me
all right
I accept it
In fact, I would welcome being punished
this, too, you say,
well, this is very German of him
nonetheless I don't care
I myself would feel better if I were punished

I wouldn't mind to have my teeth pulled out
my tongue cut off
for the things I have done

a hot poker put up my butt
pulling out the fingernails
hanging by the wrists,
burning with cigarettes
burning with an iron
hosing with water
hitting with whips
hitting with truncheons
kicking with boots
exposing to cold showers
depriving of sleep
depriving of toilets
depriving of food
subjecting to abuse
hitting the head against the wall
electric shocks used on the head
on the genitals
on the feet
on the lips
on the eyes
on the genitals
hitting with fists
whipping with cables
strapping to crosses
caning on the backside
caning on the limbs
inserting sticks
inserting heated skewers
inserting bottle necks
pouring on boiling water
injecting with haloperidol
chlorpromazine
trifluoperazine
beating on the skull
cutting off the fingers
submerging in water
breaking of limbs
smashing of jaws
crushing of feet

breaking of teeth
cutting the face
removing the fingernails
wrapping in plastic
closing in a box
castrating
multiple cutting

others may not feel the same way
that's their business
all the best to them
I wish them well
but I, myself,
I would like to be punished.

Whatever it is said
I may have contributed to
whether true or not
whatever it is I may have condoned
or consented to with my silence
or neglected to challenge as an artist or a human being
a citizen, a worker in the society,
OK
OK
let it be done to me
let justice take its course
I, for one, am ready.
You want to know
how should a man behave?
I say:
do as I do.
Do as I do.

So!

[Two soldiers step out of the shadows.]

You can take me away now
I am ready to be put on trial
I am expecting no pity.

[the two soldiers look at one another in confusion]

WERNER

Well,
assuming this is not some sarcastic charade
you are putting on
assuming you are speaking from the heart
and that you mean just what you say
nonetheless, I am afraid:
I don't think so Mr. Muller.
This punishment is not in the cards for you.
The people in the streets,
the students and all the others
knowing about you and your theatre all these years
the stands you've taken
what it is you represent
it turns out
they are asking for you
as the man of conscience during the old regime.
Not for them to judge you
but for you to be the judge.

MULLER

Me to be the judge?

WERNER

Be fair in resolving their disputes.
They have a good many disputes
as you might well imagine
in a time of turmoil.

MULLER

What kind of shit is this?
For me to be the judge.
I am the criminal in this proceeding.

[as though trying to drum it into their thick skulls]

I am the guilty one
the one who
at the end
is punished.

WERNER

In this case,

I don't think so.

The people, the students and so forth
they say they want someone whose hands were in the muck
someone who knows how it is to sin.
Who's better to judge, they say,
than one who is himself guilty?

MULLER

This is a crazy idea.

These people who say this:

these are crazy people.

You think to be a criminal
qualifies you to be a judge?

WERNER

Unless you think,

having shirked your duties as a citizen all these years past
the thing to do now
is shirk your duty once again.

[silence]

MULLER

OK.

We'll get this over with
and then I'm retiring
and you can bring in another judge from another jail to put me on trial
what do you say to that?

WERNER

We'll just have to take it as it comes.

HERMANN

We've brought your robes.

MULLER

What robes?

HERMANN

Your judge's robes.

MULLER

I'm to wear robes?

No, no, no. No robes.

HERMANN

Yes, you need to wear the robes.

MULLER

No, no. I draw the line at robes.

[the soldiers advance on him with robes and wig]

WERNER

No. *We* draw the line at robes.

MULLER

No, no, you don't.

[he tries to run; they grab him,
wrestle him to the ground and wrestle him into robes and wig
as they all shout:

"No robes, goddammit—get these on—get his arms—I've got him—you bastard—
you can't do this to me—I am a citizen, I'm a citizen"— etc. At last he is in robe and
wig, sitting on the ground.

MULLER

My God, how bad can it get?

Oye! Oye!

Let the court come to order.
God help us, the creatures of the earth!

[The soldiers, now deferential,
open the doors for him,
and the three of them go out through the doors.]

[Crowds, now hungry and poor, are wandering around the stage.
It is chaotic, confused, missing something.
Music, jumbled, blares and the masses mill around.]

SIGN MAN
Scene nine. The chalk circle.

Scene 9

The Chalk Circle

WERNER
Ladies and gentlemen,
let the court come to order.
And let the court please rise to welcome
His Excellency, our judge Heiner Muller.

[Those who are sitting, rise.
This is a whole crowd of East Berliners,
unemployed and dressed in rags,
all with tin begging cups.]

MULLER
Please be seated.
Or go on standing.
Whatever you like. We live in a new age.
Okay. Okay. Let's get on with it.
What's on the docket here?

WERNER

The case of Christa, the mother of Karl Marx Honecker
vs.

HERMANN

Pamela, the American woman who kidnapped Karl Marx Honecker

WERNER and HERMANN

during the recent troubles.

PAMELA

The fact is, your honor,
I never did kidnap this child
[gesturing to the baby in Dulle Griet's arms]
Quite the opposite is the case,
it was abandoned by Christa
when she ran away during the revolution.
The baby was thrust into my arms,
and I have done my best to care for it
with my au pair here, Dulle Griet
nurture it
in short
mother it.
So I think I can daresay
that I am the true mother
and this woman now wants to kidnap the child from me.

MULLER

Oh, that's very nicely put.
[to Christa]
What do you think of that?

CHRISTA

Words, you know, can prove anything.
But if you test the blood,
you'll find the baby belongs to me.
I am its mother
as they say, its biological mother
its birth mother.

DULLE GRIET

No true mother would drop her child and run away.

CHRISTA

Here is a girl telling me what a true mother is,
I who carried this child in my belly for nine long months
suffered through a labor of 36 hours
gave painful bloody birth to this baby
and now I am to be lectured about what true motherhood is
by a girl who's never done anything in her life
but throw rocks at soldiers?

What are you saying?

I shouldn't have my baby because you don't like my style of mothering?

Anyway I said I was coming back, didn't I?

PAMELA

Well....

CHRISTA

Of course I was coming back!
Did you think I was just going to abandon my baby?

[silence]

DULLE GRIET

In fact, I am the one who cared for your baby all this time
I am the one who carried him through the countryside
to take him to safety
fed him, changed him,
talked and sang to him.
This baby is mine now, if you want to know the truth.

PAMELA

And, well, frankly, mine.
I mean, Dulle Griet has been wonderful,
and I wouldn't want to minimize that in any way
but, to be perfectly candid,

I think I have the wherewithal
to give this child every opportunity in life.

MULLER

Right.

Now we have three mothers
where once there were none.
Suddenly this is a precious child.
What is it?

Could it be that our former Secretary General Honecker
left some bank account in Switzerland
that this child is heir to?

DULLE GRIET

I wouldn't know, don't look at me.

PAMELA

I'm sure I don't need another Swiss bank account.
[Muller looks at Christa.]

MULLER

What do you think?

CHRISTA

What?

I shouldn't want money?

Because I never had money
it would be wrong to have it now?

Or, it's altogether wrong to have money?

Is that what you're saying?

Or it's wrong the way the money would come to me,
because it doesn't come from a tax shelter
or from speculation in the currencies of Southeast Asia?

What are you saying exactly?

Maybe if I had a little money
I could take care of the baby,
did you ever think of that?

MULLER

Yes, well,

good point, good point.

Never mind what I said about, you know, Swiss bank accounts.

So,

here is one birth mother
and two nurturing mothers.

Who should the baby belong to?

Which is the true mother, would you say?

Which of these women ought to be the mother?

Not an easy question if you ask me

In fact, I don't think I can answer it at all.

Frankly, in my opinion.

Not a one of you quite comes up to snuff.

One of you brings money to the job.

One brings love.

One brings the bloodlines.

But I don't think any one of you
has it all.

So I think we ought to leave it up to the child.

It's his life after all.

PAMELA

Are you kidding? He's a baby.

MULLER

What you're saying is, he's too little to talk

but maybe he's not too little to express himself

PAMELA

He's too little to make a judgment about a thing like this.

MULLER

I don't think you're showing much confidence in the system here.

PAMELA

Yes, well, no, I'm not.

MULLER

You know there is a precedent for this in the history of jurisprudence
for settling just such a dispute as this
as it was done by King Solomon
noted for his wisdom
and by the Chinese in the 10th century or the 9th century whatever
you can never tell these centuries apart in China
but the point is everyone was happy with the outcome
and I think it's going to work for us here.

I'll show you how it works.

This is what we can do.

[to Werner]

Come, take a stick or piece of chalk
and draw a circle for us here
right in front of me.

Good.

[the soldier takes his time with this]

Ladies, step aside. Step aside.

Good.

A nice big circle.

Make it even.

Good.

And now

bring the little fellow,
and sit him inside the circle,
right here in the center.

And now, mother Christa,
you come here to this edge of the circle,
stop right there,
don't cross the line.

And you, mother Pamela,
come to the opposite edge,
just up to the chalk line,
and you stay there.

[Dulle Griet steps up to the edge of the circle.]

HEINER

OK, Dulle Griet, you there
now remember
no stepping over the line, OK?

DULLE GRIET

OK.

HEINER

Now then we will see just who this baby goes to
of his own free will
His choice!
Free Choice!
You know what I'm saying?
No touching!
No reaching in and grabbing.
Let him decide
who is the true mother here!
OK?
Ready?
Set!
Begin!

DULLE GRIET

It's OK, Karl,
I'm here for you.

CHRISTA

Come my little nubchick, come to mama.
Come my little mullywuggins
my little bubala
come to mama

PAMELA

Oh, here, baby, come
how does one speak to a little child?
Me, too,

you know,
everything they're saying
I feel very much the same
even though it may be
because of my upbringing
I don't express myself so well
you know this sort of old reserve
a kind of stiffness

DULLE GRIET

Oh, love,
come to me
I'll care for you as no one ever has.

PAMELA

but in my heart
I feel the same love and tenderness as anyone else
and I have the wherewithal to take care of you
I don't like to say it
but let's face the facts
I can give you certain advantages in life
that even Dulle Griet cannot
as good a person as she is.

CHRISTA

See here I have some candy for you
and milk!
milk!
[she takes out a breast]

PAMELA

This is not fair!
Put that back.
[uproar from the crowd]

DULLE GRIET

Oh, OK, Karl
here is my breast, too.

[Dulle Griet takes out her breast.]

PAMELA

[after a moment, takes out her breast]

Here, baby,
come to me,
come on.

I say, really,
just come over here right this minute

CHRISTA

Come along lovikins
you little mollybubalawokkins
you sweet little plum sucker
come to mama

[Pamela reaches into the ring and grabs hold of the baby
to pull him out]

[Christa grabs hold of the baby
Dulle Griet, too, runs into the ring]

DULLE GRIET

Oh god don't hurt him
let go, let go,
Pamela, let go!

[meanwhile Christa and Pamela are shouting "let go you bitch," "I've got him," "he's
mine'" "you let go," "I had him first," "don't hurt him," "then you let go," etc.

while Dulle Griet is also trying to get hold of Christa and Pamela
to pull them off the baby and save the baby]

Oh, let him go, Christa,
let him go,
don't hurt him
oh please god don't hurt him
don't hurt my baby!

Oh, please, let him go.
Don't hurt him.

[Pamela, with a big, wrenching pull, drags the baby out.]

PAMELA

I've got him.

I've got him.

He's mine.

I've got him.

[she hands the baby immediately to Dulle Griet]

DULLE GRIET

Oh god, oh god

my little baby

oh god, are you OK?

Come, dear,

come, sweet, sweet baby

let me hold you

let me hold you forever

CHRISTA

You call that fair?

You pulled the baby right out of my hands.

PAMELA

You pulled him, too.

CHRISTA

You pulled him first.

PAMELA

Well, yes, you took out your tit

what do you think I'm going to do

sit by and watch you make a cheap whore spectacle of yourself?

CHRISTA

Take, take, take is all you think.

You think you can grab anything you want.

You want it, you see it, you grab it, you own it,
you bitch, you people,
who do you think you are?

MULLER

Excuse me.

CHRISTA

Well, let's have a re-match
and this time let's make it fair.

MULLER

Excuse me.

CHRISTA

No grabbing, no pulling,
you said yourself, no grabbing, no reaching in.

PAMELA

Well, no taking your clothes off either.

MULLER

Excuse me.

May I remind you —

CHRISTA

I'm demanding another trial!

MULLER

Okay that's it:

Quiet in the courtroom.

CHRISTA

No!

MULLER

I'm warning you Christa.

CHRISTA

No!

MULLER

Okay.

Officers, remove this woman from the courtroom.

CHRISTA

Hey, what do you mean remove me?

You can't do this to me

That's my baby.

MULLER

Remove her.

CHRISTA

Who do you think you are?!

I know you, Heiner, you pip-squeak.

Your days are numbered

your days are briefly numbered

I'm not a person who forgets

I'm the kind of person who sends letter bombs you creep.

(She is gone.)

MULLER

Well then.

(Silence.)

And now.

As to the judgment of the court:

MULLER

In this ancient test of true motherhood,

the court is aware of that fact that

in the olden days the law was that

whoever lets go

not wanting to hurt the child

proves her love of her child

and shows she is the true mother.

But what we've come to see in our day
is, to be frank, this is a little bit naïve

a little bit too much wishful thinking
because what we have come to understand
is that people who let go
just get things taken away from them

We live in a new age now.
And the new rule is
the real mother is the one
who grabs the child and holds on for dear life
who holds on and keeps holding on
who never lets go
until she and she alone has the child in her grip
that is the true mother.

DULLE GRIET

But I was the one who fed him
and sang lullabies to him
I am the one who knows every little sound he makes
and what it means
what he needs and wants!

(She is on her knees.)

Please don't take him away from me.

Pamela?

(Pamela looks at Heiner.)

PAMELA

It's true, what you say.
Dulle Griet.
I know you love this baby
This time we've had together, you and I,
watching you with the baby,
seeing how you are with one another,
I thought:
well, let's think of what's best for the baby.
And you, Dulle Griet,

you're just a natural loving person.
So what I'd like to say is
even though the baby is mine
because, well, I was the one who got him from the chalk circle
and I can give him all the things he needs
still:
you have a job as the baby's au pair
for just as long as you like.
Because: I think the baby needs you.
I think I need you.
And it's true that whenever I need to be away
in Paris or on the Riviera
I can always rest assured
that the baby is in good hands with you.

DULLE GRIET

Oh, thank you, Pamela.

WARREN

There you are,
I think it's safe to say
these days you can count on it
everyone will have a job
from Milwaukee to Calcutta
there's work for everyone.
[he looks around at all the Berliners in rags
holding tin cups]
Not right away, but soon.
Soon.
A lot of very smart people are working this out.
All we need to do is pass a little legislation
to encourage investors to put their money in for the long term
place the tax on profits from speculative investments at 100%
100% from currency speculation,
arbitrage, all that sort of thing
[silence]

PAMELA

Yes, well, let's hope so!
For the baby's sake!

You know, what Warren always says is:
he's a Republican when it comes to production
and a Democrat if you're talking distribution.

In any case, in the meantime,
thank goodness, life goes on!
And Warren and I have decided
to be married right away
everyone's invited to our wedding in Biarritz

[Pamela turns to Warren.]

So come, darling,
let's be on our way.
And here,
Dulle Griet,
this is Warren's card
it has the number of his office here in Berlin
just call his secretary Helga
and she'll take care of everything

[Dulle Griet weeps quietly with relief, happiness, grief, love, and confusion.]

You know, a home
a bank account

[She is touching the baby.]

May I hold the baby?

[Dulle Griet gives the baby to Pamela.
A tender moment.]

There. There.
Now, Karl Marx, you sweet sweet baby,
Dulle Griet and I,
we don't quite have this figured out,
but we're going to find a way to share you
we're going to work it out
because this time
I'm really going to do the right thing.

[silence

she kisses the baby, and hands him back to Dulle Griet]

Good bye, dear,

[she and Dulle Griet embrace]

take good care of yourself
I wish the whole world could be just like you.
Thank you all, so much.
We've had a lovely time.
For me, this has been the most memorable visit
I have ever had to Berlin.
And to think:
none of it would have happened at all
if I hadn't gone to the theatre!

[she continues talking as they leave]

Goodbye, you lovely people.
I wish you all the best
God knows you deserve it.
We'll drop you a card
and don't forget to save
June the first
the invitations will be coming along
from Warren's secretary.

[they are gone]

MULLER

Well, Dulle Griet,
I hope you feel things have worked out
as well as you might hope
speaking realistically.

For myself
I've decided to step down from the bench,
so that it could no longer be said that this is
in some way
an improper act
to propose marriage to you.

[Dulle Griet's head spins around.]

DULLE GRIET [speaking to the baby]
Sometimes you look at the branches of a cherry tree,
and you see how complicated and beautiful they are.
They seem so complicated,
it can be a little frightening.
And yet it's because the tree is divided
into so many branches
that poets sometimes will use the image of the cherry tree
to describe the relationships among human beings.

MULLER

You may think this is sudden
and I suppose I am a sudden sort of person
as well as a sort of slob
for sure I know I'm not a perfect person
but I see the way you hold that child, I see in you such goodness
and
and I know I love you

DULLE GRIET

You know:
I see the way you make judgments
and I know I love you, too.

MULLER

Then you'll marry me?

DULLE GRIET

Yes, I will.

Oh, but, I'm already married. I forgot.

I wish I weren't, but I am.

MULLER

You wish you weren't?

DULLE GRIET

Yes.

MULLER

No problem.

As my last judicial act,

I hereby annul your previous marriage.

There.

Now there's nothing in our way.

[Muller takes Dulle Griet and the baby in his arms.

In their embrace, they look like The Holy Family.]

DULLE GRIET

Oh, Heiner!

[The whole cast sings

"All You Need is Love" in German]

Lieb Lieb Lieb

Lieb Lieb Lieb

Lieb Lieb Lieb

WARREN [re-entering, playing a guitar]

There's nothing you can do that can't be done.

Nothing you can sing that can't be sung.

Nothing you can say but you can learn how to play the game.

ALL

It's easy.

Alle brauchen lieb

Alle brauchen lieb

Alle brauchen lieb

Lieb.

Lieb ist iberall

Alle brauchen lieb

Alle brauchen lieb

Alle brauchen lieb

Lieb.

Lieb ist iberall Alle brauchen lieb

Alle brauchen lieb

Alle brauchen lieb

Lieb.

Lieb ist iberall

[with Muller and Dulle Griet joining in
while daisies rain down from the sky.

The cast are still unemployed and dressed in rags,
and holding out tin begging cups.]

THE END.

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A NOTE ON THE TEXT:

Full Circle was composed the way the German artist Max Ernst made his Fatagaga series of pictures after World War I, creating a collage of historical material by sampling or "quoting" documents of his time. In the same way, passages of this play were inspired by or taken from such texts of our time as Klaus Theweleit's *Male Fantasies*, Robert Darnton's *Berlin Journal*, *Personal History* by Katherine Graham, *Life of the Party: The Biography of Pamela Digby Churchill Hayward Harriman* by Christopher Ogden, *Warren Buffett Speaks* by Janet Lowe and other writings and remarks of Warren Buffett, *The Philosophy of Andy Warhol*, *The Pillow Book of Sei Shonagon*, and the writings of George Bataille, Mary Maclane, and Heiner Muller, among others.

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