

Stetson, Kent

QUEEN OF THE CADILLAC

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QUEEN of the CADILLAC@

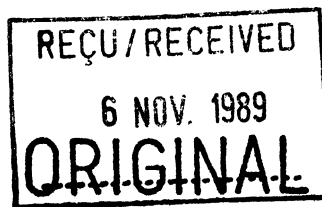
a play in two acts

by

KENT STETSON@

**7069 CHRISTOPHE COLOMB
MONTREAL, QUEBEC
CANADA H2S 2H4**

**Fourth draft:
Nov 5, 1989**



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**QUEEN of the CADILLAC is dedicated, with love, to the memory of
Leigha Lee Browne.**

PLAYWRIGHTS WORKSHOP MONTREAL:

Queen of the Cadillac, first draft, was workshopped and presented to two audiences early in December, 1988. I am grateful to Svetlana Zylina, Artistic Director of PWM who served as dramaturg, and to Eric Steiner who directed the following cast:

HESTOR:	Joan Orenstein
KATHERINE/VIOLET:	Johanna Noyse
TANTO/WINSTON:	Brian Dooley
SONDRA/CLARA:	Jeannie Walker
MACCULLOCH/THE OLD MAN:	Terence LaBrousse
DAVID:	David Gow
ERLICH:	Matt Mabe

Their contributions are gratefully acknowledged.

ACT ONE

OVERTURE.

SCENE 1:

NARRATION: (Amplified, neutral delivery. An actor, out of character)
Montreal. An alley off Rue Mayor. Shipping, receiving - behind The Bay.

HESTOR RUMMAGES THROUGH CARDBOARD BOXES. SHE IS DRESSED IN A MELANGE OF WELL-MAINTAINED, GOOD QUALITY CAST-OFF CLOTHING.

NARRATION: A predatory young man, splendid in full punk regalia, appears on the catwalk above Hestor.

SHE SENSES HIS PRESENCE.

NARRATION: He stalks her.

SHE TURNS SWIFTLY IN HIS DIRECTION. HE DISAPPEARS.

HESTOR: Who's there? Who's there? If I have to come up there to you, you'll be sorry. I'll tan your hide.

SILENCE. SATISFIED, SHE RESUMES HER SCROUNGE. SHE FINDS AN OXYGEN MASK AND HOSE. SHE CHUCKLES, PLACES IT IN ONE OF TWO LARGE EATON'S SHOPPING BAGS. SHE FINDS TWO PAIRS OF BRIGHT RED HIGH TOP CANVAS SNEAKERS. SHE REMOVES, THEN ARRANGES HER OLD SHOES NEATLY IN PLAIN VIEW SHE WEARS ONE PAIR OF SNEAKERS, BAGS THE OTHER.

SOMETHING STIRS NEARBY. THERE IS A RUSTLE, A THUMP THEN SILENCE. HESTOR IS FRIGHTENED.

HESTOR: Bears. I better smoke.

SHE LIGHTS A CIGARET, LISTENS. NOTHING. SHE SEARCHES A SECOND BOX. ERLICH STEALS HER SHOPPING BAG AND SHOES, DISAPPEARS. HESTOR IS ABOUT TO MOVE, MISSES HER 'STUFF'. SHE IS BEWILDERED THEN AFRAID. ERLICH RE-APPEARS ON THE CATWALK. SHE SEARCHES THE EMPTY STAGE.

HESTOR: Who's there?

ERLICH RETREATS INTO SHADOW SILENCE.

HESTOR: Who's there? If I have to come up there...

HE LEAPS FROM THE CATWALK INTO A PILE OF CARDBOARD.

ERLICH: Alley ou-ou-oooup!

HE REMAINS STILL. HESTOR IS DRAWN TO THE SILENCE IN THE CARDBOARD. SHE PRODS ERLICH'S APPARENTLY LIFELESS BODY. NOTHING. SHE BENDS, PEERS AT HIS FACE. ERLICH SCREAMS. HESTOR SCREAMS, RUNS FROM THE STAGE. ERLICH LAUGHS, RUMMAGES THROUGH HER SHOPPING BAG. HE FINDS A CORDLESS RADIO

MICROPHONE, BEGINS A CHANT THAT BECOMES A PUNK ROCK STATEMENT OF ANTI-PURPOSE. HE SLAM SINGS - LIKE JOHNNY ROTTEN OR SID VICIOUS.

ERLICH:

**People make people eat crap.
People make people breathe crap.
People make people think crap.
People make people watch crap
Crap o la on TV, TV color TV.**

They make people buy craaaap.

**Peeople buuuy tee veee crap.
Peeople suuuuck baaack tee vee craaap
Sucki tbacksucki tbacksucki tbacksucki tback
Suuuuck it baaack, suuuck it back, suck it baaack,
murder, rape, atomic bomb
death of the earth's
daughter's and sons
death brought live
to everyone
on tee vee, tee vee, color tee vee**

**Sucki tbacksucki tbacksucki tbacksucki tback
death to you
Sucki tbacksucki tbacksucki tbacksucki tback
on color teevee
Sucki tbacksucki tbacksucki tbacksucki tback
death to you
Sucki tbacksucki tbacksucki tbacksucki tback
and... me... me... MEEEEEEE...**

HIS SCREAM SEGUES TO...

SCENE 2:

THE ISLAND HYMN, FROM THE WINGS, SUNG WITH SWEET, REVERENT SPUNK.

CAST: (SINGS)

**Fair Island of the sea
We raise our song to thee
Thou bright and blessed.
Loyally now we stand
as brothers hand in hand
and sing God save the land
we love the best.**

NARRATION: THE ISLAND HYMN, by Lucy Maude Mntgomery.

KATHERINE ENTERS.

NARRATION: Prince Edward Island. The Culloden lawn. Wings flap as lights fade up. Katherine watches a swiftly falling object.

**THERE IS A MOMENT OF SILENCE, A TERRIBLE SQUAWK AND AN AIRBORNE VICTIM'S
LITTLE CRY.**

NARRATION: An eagle has made a kill.

**FEATHERS DRIFT DOWN. DAVID ENTERS. HE WEARS A CLERICAL COLLAR, BLACK
SHIRT, LIGHT WIND-BREAKER - HIS CONCESSION TO ECUMENISM HE CARRIES A
SMALL SUITCASE.**

KATHERINE: Mother nature's a vicious old bitch.

DAVID: Father nature.

**KATHERINE: Don't give me that feminist hoopla, David. Someone's got to get
Hestor and it might as well be you.**

DAVID: It would make more sense if you went, mom. She's your sister.

**KATHERINE: I'm the last person in the world she wants to see. And this is
the last place.**

DAVID: Then leave her be.

**KATHERINE: Bad blood is no excuse for bad manners. I want this thing done
right.**

DAVID: She seemed to like me.

KATHERINE: She likes everyone. That's her problem.

DAVID: I didn't think she had any friends at all. She seemed so self-contained.

**KATHERINE: The difference between Hestor and I is that I survived our
childhood.**

DAVID: And Hestor didn't.

KATHERINE: Clever Boy.

DAVID: Last time I visited she'd wet the bed.

**KATHERINE: The drugs no doubt. The poor little creature. At least she keeps
herself clean. Doesn't she David.**

DAVID: She had folded a towel under herself.

**KATHERINE: Oh dear god. She won't fly you know. MacCulloch won't wait for
anyone.**

DAVID: Mhm. He's in no position to...

**KATHERINE: I won't rest until that old man is six feet under. We should
cremate him. Just to be sure.**

WINSTON ENTERS, CARRYING A RECTANGULAR PANEL OF POLISHED WALNUT.

DAVID: You mean just for spite.

WINSTON: He must have lost it somewhere along the way.

DAVID: Did he jump, or was he pushed? Or are we talking metaphorically. Do you mean he lost, for instance, his T-square, his ability to right life's more obtuse angles, say? Life's slanted walls, sloping floors...?

WINSTON: David. You are a wuss. You were born a wuss and you got... wussier. I am talking about his mind, boy. His mind. His ability to function in the world we know and love. You're holistic. Ecologically minded. You know. The Earth? (SILENCE) I swear to God you're as light around the edges as the old man.

KATHERINE: He was chipper 'til he tripped.

WINSTON: He was chipper 'till he tripped. He knew that line was there. Ruined our whole vacation.

DAVID: An invisible wire six inches above the ground where there never was an invisible six inch wire before.

WINSTON: Are you accusing me of killing my father?

DAVID: Did you see the wire mom?

KATHERINE: Well no. But you know me. Blind as a...

WINSTON: He asked me to level the porch. It wasn't my idea.

KATHERINE: Old men forget.

WINSTON: He helped me string it.

KATHERINE: Be that as it may. Old men forget.

DAVID: That fall killed him

WINSTON: He was ninety-six years old for Christ's sake.

KATHERINE: And strong.

DAVID: And happy.

KATHERINE: And clear as a bell.

WINSTON: Yeah well he had to go sometime.

KATHERINE: Winston. You are talking about our father. Neither of you will breathe a word of this.

DAVID: People want to know. And this private funeral, Mhm I don't know..

KATHERINE: It is our business, no one else's. Tell them.. tell them..

WINSTON: What? He ascended whole to the waiting arms of his heavenly father?

DAVID: "I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most high. Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit."

WINSTON: Do you believe that shit, David?

DAVID: What?

WINSTON: That heaven and hell bullshit?

DAVID: Would I be a minister if I didn't?

KATHERINE: Tell them he fell down drunk.

DAVID: That's bound to stir sympathy.

KATHERINE: Around Culloden here? They won't bat an eye. McCulloch was just like the rest of them Good to drink.

WINSTON: Yeah well he talked a good game but the truth is McCulloch couldn't handle it.

KATHERINE: Like some others I could name.

WINSTON: What's that supposed to mean?

DAVID: Winston, gimme your keys.

WINSTON: Take your own car.

DAVID: Sondra took it. Use it 'till I get back.

KATHERINE: Wait a minute. You're not leaving the car in Charlottetown.

DAVID: I thought I'd put Hestor on the train in Montreal, fly back, pick up the car and drive...

KATHERINE: You will no such thing. What if she gets confused and hops off in Campbellton or Moncton.

WINSTON: Hestor and New Brunswick. (He shudders)

KATHERINE: Put her on the train and fly back. Honestly David. And you the one in the family with the brains. Oh dear God. The turkey.

SHE EXITS.

DAVID: How am I supposed to get to the airport?

KATHERINE: (off) Sondra'll be back in plenty of time.

WINSTON: There's two thousand dollars worth of prime walnut out there. Every piece cut to perfection. Mortise and tenon, joints that fit like lock and key.

DAVID: That's my Granpa. Was my Granpa.

WINSTON: For some odd reason he wants his coffin glued, no screws or pegs, just this glue that disintegrates in the damp.

DAVID: That's right.

WINSTON: Well I can tell you right now its not properly braced. No. He was definitely beyond the fringe. I'll spring for a ready made.

DAVID: We tried it last month.

WINSTON: Who tried it last month?

DAVID: McCulloch and I. Worked like a charm Best work he ever did, that coffin. Fits together like a Chinese puzzle.

WINSTON: Suckin up' to the old man.

DAVID: You assemble it as described.

WINSTON: David. Gimme a break.

DAVID: You assemble it, Winston. As described. He was very clear on that. No coffin, no house.

WINSTON: Yeah well it just won't stand the pressure.

KATHERINE RETURNS, WITH A PLATE OF SQUARES, WHICH SHE PASSES.

KATHERINE: Now. I made Queen Elizabeth squares and three kinds of pie. I just put in a cake and two hams, and I think I'll make potato salad. How are they?

WINSTON: Gooley.

KATHERINE: (relieved) Good.

DAVID: I loved watching him work. When I was a kid.

WINSTON: Another lamb to the slaughter.

DAVID: He never laid a glove on me. Honest, ref.

KATHERINE: I don't know where you get such foolishness Winston. If you and Sondra'd had children there'd be a little more to you.

WINSTON: We have all we need.

KATHERINE: I mean backbone. Besides. It was only two weeks in the summer. Wasn't it dear.

DAVID: Best times of my life.

KATHERINE: You were fond of each other. Weren't you dear.

DAVID: Yes. He taught me to whistle and sing.

WINSTON: He taught me to bow and scrape. And lie and cheat and...

DAVID: (sings)

There was a soldier, a Scottish soldier
who wandered far away, and soldiered far away
There was none bolder, with good broad shoulder
He fought in many a fray, he fought and won...

He'd seen the glory, he'd told the story
of battles glorious and deeds victorious
But now he's sighing, where he lies dying
upon the green hills of Tyrol

And Oh! these green hills though they're island hills
They're not highland hills, they're not my land's hills.
And fair as these green foreign hills may be,
they are not the hills of home.

KATHERINE: See? That was lovely dear.

DAVID GIVES WINSTON A SMALL BOOK.

DAVID: Maybe this will help.

WINSTON: Its in Gaelic.

DAVID: Pages 56 through 67. Cabinets, cammdes and coffins.

WINSTON: I can't read this.

DAVID: Look at the pictures.

WINSTON: Smart ass.

KATHERINE: His carpentry manuel. (takes it) I haven't seen this in years.
Look. There's our names. Look, David. Soon as we could write he let us
put our names in the book. There's you, Winston. And our poor David. And
me. And Hestor. Hestor wrote the name of the little dead baby. Do you
remember Winston?

WINSTON: Why me?

KATHERINE: What?

WINSTON: Why me? (Takes book) Its just like the old bastard. Trying to get
at me even after he's dead.

KATHERINE: He'll be at us 'til we're all dead.

WINSTON: (to David) Then it will be your turn.

KATHERINE: God knows where he got it, and I'm not saying he did it on purpose or that he was a bad man... well not completely... oh dear... I always get so bogged down... (SNIFFLES) Poor dad.

WINSTON: 'Poor dad' my arse. This time the joke will be on him

KATHERINE: Damnation. I forgot the lemon meringue pie. And the pineapple dream cheese swirls. Winston, go to Montague.

WINSTON: Montague?

KATHERINE: I need marichino cherries. The- green ones. And two packages of Dream Whip.

DAVID: He was afraid of waking up.

WINSTON CHUCKLES.

KATHERINE: What dear?

DAVID: McCulloch. In the coffin.

KATHERINE: Oh god.

DAVID: You know how claustrophobic he was.

KATHERINE: Try not to think about it.

DAVID: He wants it to collapse when the soil piles up.

WINSTON: So if he wakes he'll smother instead of starving to death.

DAVID: Slowly...

KATHERINE: In the dark...

WINSTON: Without a drink.

KATHERINE: (SHUDDERS) Bughhhgh.

DAVID AND WINSTON SHUDDER.

DAVID/WINSTON: Bughhhgh.

THEY SHUDDER ENSEMBLE.

KATHERINE/DAVID/WINSTON: Bughhhgh.

KATHERINE: Old Celtic nonsense. Think of something nice.

DAVID: Not a man to take chances.

WINSTON: I'm telling you it will not hold long enough to get him planted.

DAVID: Yes it will.

WINSTON: Our resident expert in physics. I need two dozen three-inch brass 'L' brackets. For the corners. And brass screws. Lots of long, brass screws.

HE EXITS.

DAVID: Winston! No brackets.

KATHERINE: Here. Finish these off.

DAVID: No thanks.

KATHERINE: Put them in your suitcase for the trip.

AS SHE OPENS HIS CASE AND DUMPS THE LAST TWO QUEEN ELIZABETH SQUARES, A CAR PULLS UP, STOPS.

DAVID: What am I going to do for 18 hours on a train with a woman who speaks in mono-syllables?

KATHERINE: Listen. You might learn something. She wasn't always dim, you know.

SONDRA: (ENTERS) Your father's ready. The funeral home wants to know when to expect the coffin.

KATHERINE: Soon dear, soon.

DAVID: Ask them if they deliver.

SONORA LAUGHS. KATHERINE GLARES.

KATHERINE: We are talking about your grandfather, David. Not a pizza. And you a minister. Honest to goodness. (BEAT) I'll give them a call. (BEGINS EXIT)

DAVID: No brackets, Mom

KATHERINE: What?

DAVID: No 'L' brackets.

KATHERINE: I don't see the harm..

DAVID: What if he does wake up?

KATHERINE: Oh dear god. Winston!!

SHE EXITS

SONDRA: Your mother is amazing.

DAVID: Oh?

KATHERINE: She's handling this very well.

DAVID: She thrives on chaos.

SONDRA: (LAUGHS) This is the least chaotic place on earth. Winston wants to move home. I can see why.

DAVID: I can't quite see you here.

SONDRA: I'm a country girl at heart. The happiest days of my life were spent in the foothills of Alberta. This ain't quite it, but it sure is pretty. The house is exquisite. Perfect for children. Winston and I want a baby, David. A little girl. All our very own.

DAVID: You'll make a great mom

SONDRA: Thank you. I think so too. I love children. And maybe we'll get some animals. Not for food. I've almost got Winston convinced. We're going to become vegetarian. We'll have animals just to watch them grow, and have little ones of their own. Gentle creatures. Geese. Sheep. Maybe some rabbits.

DAVID: The peaceable kingdom

SONDRA: A bit of heaven on earth.

DAVID: (SINGS) You can talk about London
Paris and Spain
You can talk of Kentucky
Vermont and Maine.
But there's a little Island
I'm longing to see
Prince Edward Island is heaven to me.

SONDRA: How charming. You have a lovely voice.

DAVID: Thank you.

SONDRA: Did you write that?

DAVID: That's Hank Snow, the singing ranger. Or was it Wilf Carter.

SONDRA: (SINGS) Prince Edward Island is heaven to me.

DAVID: All those hills, far as you can see. Prime hard wood forest. Most of it McCulloch's. Ash. Beech. Maple. Oak. Tended like a garden. He built every stick of furniture in this house, every dresser, bureau, cupboard, every sash and frame. Bird's-eye maple. Yellow birch. White oak. The best finish work on Prince Edward Island. McCulloch's. The man was amazing.

SONDRA: I love the silence. And at night - the stars. I love the sky. It goes on for days.

DAVID: Hmm

SONDRA: In Toronto Winston talked about Culloden as though it were Shangri-la. I can see why...

MACCULLOCH ENTERS. HE WEARS LONG-SLEEVED WOOLEN UNDERWEAR, WOOL TROUSERS AND SUSPENDERS. HE IS FASCINATED BY SONORA. SHE MOVES ON DAVID.

SONDRA: Did you ever get laid on a train, David?

DAVID: That's a heck of a question...

SHE MOVES VERY CLOSE. DAVID ATTEMPTS ANOTHER EXIT.

SONDRA: Does your mother want this house?

DAVID: You kidding? She hates the place.

SONDRA: Do you?

DAVID: Hate this place?

SONDRA: Want the house.

MACCULLOCH STANDS DIRECTLY OVER SONORA AND DAVID.

DAVID: Are you always this friendly with relatives?

SONDRA: Clergymen make me horny.

DAVID: Sondra. Winston is my uncle. You're his wife.

SONDRA: If you don't tell him I won't.

DAVID DOES NOT RESIST. THEY ARE VERY CLOSE.

DAVID: You are disgusting. What do you see in an old man like that?

SONDRA: Winston is only fifty-five.

DAVID: There must be twenty years between you.

SONDRA: Eighteen. So what was it like.

DAVID: Bumpy.

SONDRA: Did you rock and roll? Or just rock.

DAVID: I just rocked.

SONDRA: No roll? Huh? Not even a little roll?

DAVID: A little. Yeah. A little roll.

SONDRA: Maybe a lot.

DAVID: Maybe. Jesus Sondra, they'll see us.

SONDRA: Was it hot?

DAVID: It was hot.

DAVID BREAKS AWAY,

DAVID: It was before I was ordained.

SONDRA: You'll have a swell trip. If you get lucky.

MACCULLOCH EXITS.

SONDRA: You loved MacCulloch, didn't you?

DAVID: Last man on the Island to speak the old language.

SONDRA: French?

DAVID: No, Sondra. Gaelic. He sang to me when I was a boy. Mournful old dirges three, four hundred years old. "Yeah," He'd say. "I am (find. gaelic for 'he who is the last') It is I. The last man of the old tongue. All the old songs and stories, all the old ways. Gone." Then he'd get all drunk and morbid, and wallow in this vision of the last true Prince Edward Island Scotsman layed out on MacKinnon's marble slab in Montague...

SONDRA: Marbleite.

DAVID: What?

SONDRA: He's laid out on 'Marbelite'. Some kind of New Age plastic.

DAVID: How do you know?

SONDRA: MacKinnon told me. When he showed me MacCulloch.

DAVID: You saw MacCulloch? How did he look?

SONDRA: Dead. A harmless old man. Kind of sweet.

DAVID: He was good to me.

CRASH, OFF. LARGE PIECES OF WOOD RATTLE TO THE FLOOR.

SONDRA: Your mother and Winston are burying the devil incarnate.

DAVID: They are his children. That is different.

KATHERINE: (Enters, laughing) You'd swear MacCulloch was still alive, pulling that coffin apart fast as Winston puts it together. He is feeee- urious.

WINSTON ENTERS WITH A DIFFERENT PIECE OF WALNUT AND A DOUBLE-HEADED AXE.

WINSTON: I swear to God I'll split the thing into kindling and make a fuckin' bonfire.

KATHERINE SEIZES WINSTON'S FOREARMS. THEY ARE EYE TO EYE, THE AXE OVER THEIR HEADS.

KATHERINE: Then he'd be right about you.

WINSTON: He was right about me all along.

KATHERINE: I've decided to cremate him

DAVID: There's no crematorium on the Island.

WINSTON: Besides. He hasn't set foot on the mainland since World War I.

KATHERINE: We'll do him in the back yard. Like Gandhi.

WINSTON: The hell we will.

SONDRA: Winston honey. Put down the ax.

WINSTON STARES AT SONDRA AS IF SHE IS FROM ANOTHER DIMENSION. SHE CROSSES, TAKES THE AXE FROM HIM UNARMED, HE DEFLATES.

KATHERINE: We'll lay him out in the parlor and torch the house.

WINSTON: No.

KATHERINE: Yes.

WINSTON: No. The house stays.

SONDRA: Oh good.

KATHERINE: We'll send him to Saint John.

SONDRA: Saint John?

DAVID: Nearest crematorium

WINSTON: He deserves New Brunswick.

KATHERINE: What have you got against New Brunswick?

WINSTON: You've got to have something to hate.

KATHERINE: Lets forget incinera... I mean cremation. We'll bury him next to mother.

WINSTON: You do and I'll move her.

KATHERINE: We'll create him in the back yard. I mean cremate.

WINSTON: All right.

KATHERINE: Good.

WINSTON: Good.

KATHERINE: Good.

WINSTON: I'll screw him in good and tight.

WINSTON EXITS. KATHERINE IS ABOUT TO FOLLOW

SONDRA: The man's obsessed.

DAVID: Mbn?

KATHERINE: What David.

DAVID: What if he does wake up?

KATHERINE: What of it?

DAVID: You know how he hated the heat.

KATHERINE: Oh dear god. Winston!!

DAVID: I can't wait till we read the will.

SONDRA: Oh?

DAVID: Its in Gaelic.

BLACKOUT.

SCENE 3:

NARRATION: Montreal. Hestor's living space by the furnace in the open basement of a good house in Westmount. Pipes. Wires. Ductwork. Except for a shaft of light from a small ground level window, it is dark and oppressive.

HESTOR ADMRES HER RED SNEAKERS. SHE RETRIEVES THE OTHER PAIR, SLIPS THEM ON HER HANDS AND DANCES, RED SNEAKERS ON HER FEET, RED SNEAKERS IN THE AIR DESCRIBING ODD PATTERNS. SHE SINGS.

**HESTOR: If you go down to the woods today
you'd better not go alone.
Its lovely down in the woods today
but safer to stay at home.
For all the bears...**

NARRATION: The furnace gurgles and belches.

IT DOES. HESTOR BECOMES ALARMED.

HESTOR: Who's there? (TO FURNACE) Who's there? If I have to come up there to you I'll tan your hide.

MORE BELCHES. SHE IS CONFUSED, WARY.

HESTOR: That usually shuts it up.

SHE GOES TO THE FURNACE AND KICKS IT. IT QUIETENS. SHE IS SURPRISED, PLEASED WITH POWER SHE ASCRIBES TO THE SNEAKERS. SHE SITS ON HER BED.

HESTOR: That's good. I better smoke.

NEARBY THERE IS A SMALL HOT PLATE AND A FEW DISHES. A TEA KETTLE. HESTOR LIES ON HER COT WREATHED IN CIGARETTE SMOKE, CONTEMPLATING SNEAKERS, HUMMING TEDDY BEARS PICNIC. SHE IS ROUND AND WARM SERENELY HAPPY. HER MEDITATION IS BROKEN WHEN A SHOE, ONE OF HER ORIGINAL'S FROM THE OPENING, LANDS ON THE STAGE IN FRONT OF HER. SHE SITS UP, STARES AT IT. SHE JUMPS WHEN THE OXYGEN MASK AND HOSE LAND ON THE BED BESIDE HER.

LIGHT BUILDS ON THE CAT WALK ABOVE AND BEHIND HER. ERLICH STARES DOWN AT HER. HESTOR LOOKS AROUND,

HESTOR: You again. I thought you were dead.

ERLICH: We're all dead, man.

HESTOR: Oh. You stole my shoe.

THE OTHER SHOE LANDS WITH A THUMP.

HESTOR: Oops. I read about people like you. You're perverted.

ERLICH: I didn't know bag ladies could read.

HESTOR: I am not a bag lady. Bag ladies have dirty black feet that crack and bleed. Bag ladies have festering sore things on their legs and wear too much clothes all summer and eat garbage which is why if you ever thought of it they smell like piss and vomit. I do not. I smell nice. Bag ladies have no home. Bag ladies talk to themselves and get lost. (PAUSE) Where was I? Bag ladies sleep under bridges in burned out busses by train tracks. I have a bed. Every night I sleep in it. This bed. Right here. My bed. By this furnace. Here.

HE LEAPS OFF THE CATWALK, SQUATS IN FRONT OF HER.

HESTOR: Why you following me around all the time?

ERLICH: The summer of '63 ring a bell?

HESTOR: Whatcha doing with Clara? Eh? Why you lookin' at me like that? Who are you?

ERLICH: That's what I'm here to find out.

HESTOR: Oh.

HE SCALES THE CATWALK AGAIN. HE PACES, AS IN A VERY SMALL CAGE.

ERLICH: I went to art college with this guy who'd been in a wheelchair all his life. Fucked up real bad. Wicked painter. Hated everything he saw. Everything he did. We had a bet. One of us, it didn't matter who, had to produce a painting which '...resulted in the artist's death',

HESTOR: Where's Clara? Eh?

ERLICH: Twisted, eh? He beat me to it. Claims he had a vision whacking off one night. Quite a trick in a wheelchair without brakes.

HESTOR: No brakes?

ERLICH: He had them removed.

HESTOR: I know you.

ERLICH: Kama kazi kinda guy. He dumped handfuls of live snails into buckets of water-based paints. All saturated colours - reds, blues, greens. Some he'd double dip for more subtle shading.

HESTOR: Sounds pretty. Snails swim?

ERLICH: He took them out before they'd drown. Put them here and there on a huge white canvas laid out flat. They slimed around until they died, leaving trails of colored goo.

HESTOR: Sounds pretty.

HE SWINGS OR LEAPS OR SCALES SWIFTLY DOWN FROM THE CATWALK.

ERLICH: It was mudo bizarro. People stood for hours like they were real, watching a long ever-ready battery commercial. Which gadget will puff or hop or vibrate the longest? Eventually the snails suffocate. The end of their trail of sliny glory. He leaves the 'artist's' corpses stuck to the canvas, frames it on the spot and sells it to the highest bidder. He sold one for six thousand bucks. Six Thousand Bucks. Doesn't do a fucking thing but murder innocent snails. Snail agony for fun and profit.

HESTOR: Who won?

ERLICH: What?

HESTOR: Who won?

ERLICH: Hey. Lady. I'm still here.

HESTOR: Hum

ERLICH: (Sudden anger) He stole the idea from a painter in France. Betrayal, man. Betrayal. (HE MOVES CLOSER TO HESTOR) There's an apartment at the back of a house by a lake. There are houses around the lake and huge old pine trees. Full of crows. (HE RECLAIMS THE CATWALK)

HESTOR: That sounds nice.

ERLICH: No. They're ravens. I used to live there. I go back and the land-lady who used to be good to me doesn't give a fuck anymore. I walk in. The lay-out is the same. Even some of my old furniture is there. The floors begin to rot as I walk and I sink to my knees. Then I'm up past my hips, movin' slow. I stop. Trapped. Like an insect in amber.

HESTOR: Stuck.

ERLICH: Yeah. Stuck. The curtains rise and fall. Someone breathing in the night.

HESTOR: Bears.

ERLICH: This raven flaps toward me. He's huge. I try to run, stuck in the floor and I try to run. Fucking stupid. I think he's going to decapitate me... but no. He picks me up by the collar and pulls. I'm in his beak, right, like a rat, get the picture? And he pulls, and he pulls. He's the robin. I'm the worm. My joints start to pop... (he makes popping sounds with his finger and mouth) I feel my guts stretch. I'm bleeding inside... and just as I'm about to rip apart my legs come free and I'm hurled through the roof. I go and I go and I go until there's nothing below me but this beautiful blue ball and I know it's the earth. I think, this is alright. And it's just like the astronauts say. I wanna cry, it's so gentle. This gentle blue ball below me. I want it. I want it in me. (Backs of hands on chest, thumbs hooked, palms out) In here. Blue and white. Blue and white and green, sweet and serene in the big black void. I have x-ray vision. No. A zoom lens. My eyes range over the continents. Asia. Africa. Europe. Here comes Canada. Alright! I'm above the maritimes I see Cape Breton, all of Nova Scotia. I linger over Prince Edward Island. I want to go there - weird, eh? - but I'm pulled out to the gulf and up the St Lawrence. I'm in Montreal. I'm happy. Then I float down south, over America and the earth's skin erupts in a spew of putrid lava and I'm falling toward this stinking pit. There's an old man in it and I hate him I can smell the stink of his petty thoughts. (HE SCRAMBLES BACK UP TO THE CATWALK) I'm standing on this little stairway... way, way in outer space... three steps... one step up, one step down. Me on the middle step. Nothing above but oblivion, this stinking pit below. I can't go up, I can't go down... then this fucking raven comes back. He hovers... this huge vicious black humming bird pecking colored snails outa my friggin' ears. Weird, eh? I look up. He hovers, closer to my eyes... closer... closer. The hum becomes a roar - a thousand jet engines, a million Hiroshimas... He lunges. He plunges at my eyes... Noooo motherfucker. Not my eyes... I leap up toward oblivion. I've escaped. I laugh and I soar and I float. Then I stop. I'm suspended, light, transparent. I'm happy. No. I'm euphoric. I smell popcorn. Which I think is inappropriate, given the situation. Then there's Clara. Then the old man and the stink of the pit and I fall... I fall like this... (HE SCREAMS, FALLS, LEAPS, SCRAMBLES, TUMBLES FROM THE CATWALK). What do you think of that?

HESTOR: You take drugs?

BLACKOUT

SCENE 4:

NARRATION: (Again, a different actor) Montreal. The Golden Cadillac Tavern, Rue Ste. Catherine. Near the forum Two grimy street level windows filter tired remnants of afternoon light.

(NOTE: IN THE CADILLAC, SONDRÁ, WINSTON, KATHERINE AND MACCULLOCH DOUBLE AS CLARA, TANTO, VIOLET, AND THE OLD MAN, RESPECTIVELY)

NARRATION: VIOLET, a living clump of this and that sits at a table surrounded by her 'stuff'. She is involved in the intricate task of attempting to remove the bubbles from a large pitcher of beer with a tea strainer.

VIOLET: Bitch. Bitch. Dirty bitch.

(TOURETT'S SYNDROME CAUSES SUDDEN ERRATIC MOVEMENT AND SHARP VERBAL EXCHANGES BETWEEN VIOLET AND GOD KNOWS WHO)

NARRATION: TANTO is behind the bar. He drinks several glasses of draft in rapid succession.

TANTO: God I'm thirsty, m. J'ai soif, soif, soif.

VIOLET: Grunt.

TANTO: You stupid Bag Person. You're making that biere some flat, hostie...

VIOLET: I hate bubbles.

TANTO: So stir it. Mèlange, 'lo.

VIOLET: (STRIDING TO HIM VICIOUS) They're my bubbles you Nazi bag of shit. My bubbles. My bubbles. My bubbles.

TANTO: Until someone pays for them, Madame, they are my bubbles. So you watch your mouth.

VIOLET: I paid you, bag of shit. I paid you.

TANTO: You did not.

VIOLET: Hestor will. When she comes. She said she would. She likes Violet. Shit!

SHE GOES BACK TO HER TABLE AND RESUMES DE-BUBBLING HER BEER.

TANTO: We'll see about that, Cinderella. That's what I'll call you. Cendrillon. Fucked up. Cendrillon tout fucke, eh? The spell backfired. That's all. Cinderella. That's a good one.

VIOLET: Friggin Greek.

TANTO: I am Canadien. This is my tavern. You are my guest. You fucked up Anglaise. All the same. Look at you. Lower than blackest pit in the darkest hole of hell and still you think the world belongs to you. This is my place, eh? Here you will treat me with respect. I've grabbed you by the scruff of your scruffy neck and the arse of those disgusting culotte and heaved you out of here before and I'll do it again...

VIOLET: No. Please Tanto. Not me. I didn't say anything. It was her. The bitch. Bitch! Dirty bitch! That was her, not me. I'm not that kind... Please Tanto, don't heave me onto the sidewalk where people spit and dogs shit. Just ask me nice and I'll go. Prick! Filthy Latvian prick! I give you everything I got. My tea strainer, my old Newsweeks, my broke respirator. So there's no oxygen anymore. No tube. Cut my throat like them damn kids. Go on. Filthy prick. Filthy Chinese prick.

VIOLET IS STUNNED AND SURPRISED BY THIS PARTICULAR OUTBURST, SOMETIMES SHE DOESN'T NOTICE, SOMETIMES THE LINGERING SENSE THAT SOMETHING AWFUL HAS JUST HIT HER CAUSES HER ANGER, THEN SHAME.

TANTO: Mbn Dieu, j'ai soif, soif, soif.

HE DRINKS. CLARA ENTERS. SHE IS EXTREMELY AGITATED.

CLARA: Have you seen him? Huh? Is he here?

TANTO: Ask Cendrill on.

CLARA: Seen Erlich?

VIOLET PULLS OUT A HUGE BUTCHER KNIFE.

VIOLET: Cut my throat.

CLARA: Back off Baggie.

TANTO: Cinderella.

VIOLET: (DANCING) Cut my throat. Cut my throat. Cut my throat.

CLARA: What about Hestor. Have you seen Hestor?

TANTO: Its welfare day. She's always late on welfare day.

CLARA: Oh God. I'm sick. Tanto. I'm real sick.

TANTO: I can't help that.

CLARA: Erlich said he'd be here by now. Got any stuff Tanto? Have you? I'm sick, Tanto. I'm real sick.

TANTO: Clara. You know I don't deal anymore.

VIOLET: Bitch. Bitch. Dirty bitch.

CLARA: Just enough to make me feel good, Tanto. That's all. I just need to feel good.

TANTO: Non!

CLARA: Please...

VIOLET: Come here dear. I'll make you a nice cup of tea.

SHE HAULS OUT A TIN TEAPOT AND TWO CHINA CUPS, WRAPPED IN TISSUE PAPER.

CLARA: What?

VIOLET: (SWEETLY) Tea dear. Nice cup of three bag tea. Three equals one where I come from Get it? Ask the Italian Woppo Australian prick behind the bar for some hot water. There's a dear...

CLARA MDANS AND RUNS TO THE WASHROOM

VIOLET: Bitch. Whoops. Clara doesn't like tea. How can you be so stupid?

FADE.

SCENE 5:

NARRATION: Montreal. Hestor's living space.

DAVID ENTERS. ERLICH APPEARS ABOVE HIM ON THE CATWALK. HE YELLS DOWN AT HIM

ERLICH: Hey asshole. Wanna score a hit?

DAVID: I don't write music.

ERLICH: (ODDLY APPRECIATIVE) Whooh.

ERLICH DISAPPEARS. HESTOR ANSWERS DAVID'S KNOCK.

DAVID: Hello Hestor.

HESTOR: Did MacCulloch kill Winston?

DAVID: No Hestor. MacCuollich's...

HESTOR: Dead. Winston kill him?

DAVID: Heavens, Hestor. What a question. No. He fell. May I come in?

HESTOR MOVES IN HER SPACE. DAVID FOLLOWS.

DAVID: Some weird person tried to sell me drugs.

HESTOR: My new doctor stopped my medicine. I can smell now. She smells nice.

DAVID: You know me?

HESTOR: I am not dim You're Katherine's youngest boy. Your name is David,
like my brother was.

DAVID: Yes. I've come to take you home.

HESTOR: I am home.

DAVID: To the Island.

HESTOR: (SINGS) 'Prince Edward Island is purgatory'. David's dead.

DAVID: Yes.

HESTOR: In the war. You're my nephew.

DAVID: Yes.

HESTOR :He was nice. Two Davids. One here. One not here. Not anymore.

SHE ROOTS AROUND IN AN OLD TEATIN. IT IS EMPTY.

HESTOR: You got money.

DAVID: Yes.

HESTOR: Oh.

DAVID: Where are we going?

HESTOR: Cadillac.

HESTOR LEAVES, TAKING THE EXTRA RED SNEAKERS, THE OXYGEN MASK AND HOSE.
DAVID HESITATES.

DAVID: Oh.

HE FOLLOWS. ERLICH SWINGS DOWN FROM THE CATWALK SYSTEMATICALLY
DESTROYS HESTOR'S LIVING PLACE (A PUNK BALLET?) AS LIGHTS FADE HE SPRAY
BOMBS DARK VISIONS ON LIGHT SURFACES.

CROSSFADE TO THE CADILLAC.

SCENE 6.

NARRATION: (A different actor) Prince Edward Island. MacCulloch's ash
grove. Dappled light filters through the golden indian summer canopy.
Birds sing. We sense a breeze. We hear the rustle of leaves.

WINSTON AND KATHERINE ENTER.

KATHERINE :Isn't it lovely Winston.

WINSTON: Jesus, Katherine. Look at that. The eagles are back.

KATHERINE: (she inhales her 'yeah') Yeah.

WINSTON: Soon as they can claw and peck, two eaglets in a nest go at it 'til one is tits up on the ground below.

KATHERINE: Honestly Winston.

WINSTON: I didn't invent it. Its just the way it is. Survival of the fittest.

KATHERINE: Survival of the meanest yo mean. You watch too much PBS (she walks center stage) This is it.

WINSTON: I wish you'd make up your mind.

KATHERINE: No no. This is where we'll bury him His favorite spot in the whole world. You would have loved it Winston. One Sunday about twelve years ago - he'd be 84 - he invited us up to this picnic. He was living alone again. That's after Stepmother Grace came and left for the sixth or seventh time.

WINSTON: (HE IMITATES MACCULLOCH'S SOFTSPOKEN SPEECH PATTERN, INHALES HIS 'Yeah.') "Yeah. Good woman to eat after." (DIRTY CHUCKLE)

KATHERINE: It means she was good to cook.

WINSTON: You think so, eh?

KATHERINE: They were married for forty years.

WINSTON: They didn't live together more than three or four all told.

KATHERINE: And then only six months at a time.

WINSTON: She couldn't stand him

KATHERINE: No, no dear. He couldn't stand her.

WINSTON: That's not what she'd told me.

KATHERINE: Anyway she was gone. It was August. Hot. Humid. Yeah. Not a breath of wind. He'd spent the morning preparing the picnic. The kitchen was stifling.

MACCULLOCH ENTERS. HE HAS A 1/2 EMPTY WHISKEY BOTTLE. HE STANDS ON THE CATWALK, UNSEEN BY KATHERINE AND WINSTON.

KATHERINE :MacCulloch was very nervous. Not at all himself. See he'd never been on a picnic so he didn't know what people ate outdoors And rather than ask he just assumed people ate the same out as in. The old fool. God love him he'd cooked pot roast, potatoes, carrots, turnips, parsnips, peas, gravy and kept it all hot on the wood stove, stoked with prime hard wood. It was hotter than hell He'd borrowed a half-ton truck for the event, had us load the kitchen table, pressed-back lion's head chairs, china, linen, silver - the good stuff in the walnut case he

made for Grace - teapot, milk and sugar, fresh cream for the blueberries we'd pick for desert. We drove to this as grove - all green and silver in afternoonsunlight We unloadd the hot 'picnic', put the chairs on boards so they wouldn't sink in the soft earth - on this very spot - spread the linen on the table, set the plates, laid the silver, then served the hot 'picnic' from the back of the blue 1972 Chevy pick-up. McCulloch sat propped under his favorite tree, in his long-sleeve woolen underwear, drinking whiskey, offering gaelic laments to the sprites of the as grove.

WINSTON :Sounds like a Russian movie.

KATHERINE: No no dear. Pure PEI. Celtic master of the day. Yeah This is where we bury McCulloch.

FADE ON THE DOWNSTAGE AS THEY EXIT. MACCULLOCH SETTLES ON THE CATWALK. HE SINGS.

MACCULLOCH:

Fhir á bhát-a na hóró éile
Fhir á bhat-a na hóró éile
Fhir á bhat-a na hóró éile
Mb-shoraidh slán leat`gach áit an teid thir.

MACCULLOCH: (continues)

'S tru ní seautuinn o'n chnór a' s 'airde,
Dh' fhuech am faic ní fear a' Bháta;
An tigthu'm diugh, no'ntigthu' maireach
'Smirtig thu idir, gur trugh a ta' ní.

Fhir á bhat-a na hóró éile
Fhir á bhat-a na hbro éile
Fhir á bhht-a na hóró éile
Mb-shoraidh slán leat's gach áit an teid thir.

SCENE 7:

NARRATION: The Golden Cadillac Tavern.

HESTOR AND DAVID ENTER.

VIOLET : Oh my God. Look at you. Here you are, our dear Hestor. Isn't she lovely? Who are you?

DAVID: My name's..

VIOLET: Prick! We just love her, don't we Bitch! Bitch! Dirty Bitch!

HESTOR GIVES VIOLET THE SNEAKERS.

VIOLET: Oh Hestor. Hestor loves. Violet Bitch!

NARRATION: She puts them on. Violets old shoes, which she immediately abandons, centre, emit a terrifying odor.

HESTOR: This is David. He's from Prince Edward Island.

TANTO: Isle du Prince Edouard? Un insulaire! You're from IPE?

DAVID: Yes. IPE.

TANTO: Soif, soif, soif.

VIOLET: C'est propre, propre, propre...

HESTOR: He's always thirsty.

TANTO: I'm always thirsty, m̄. I drink and drink and drink and never get drunk. My friend. A drink to that lovely little Island. We had just arrived in this great country when I went there as a boy - with ma mere et mon pere who drowned at Brackley Beach after eating plates and plates of mussels... les moules... very good... very bad!

DAVID: I'm sorry to hear that...

TANTO: Ouof! It was nothing. I was raised by a lovely priest in Quebec City. Such a lovely place to die, your little Island. And the mussels were excellent. It was his heart after all. Pahpahpah. Quelle cinema! Is that not humorous? (HE LAUGHS INORDINATELY) But before I give you a drink, I must ask you pay for Madame Cinderella's beer.

HESTOR: Oh. Beer. David' 11 pay.

DAVID: Glad to.

HE DOES.

TANTO: And the one I will give you.

DAVID: Gosh, thanks. But I don't think we have time. Hestor?

HESTOR SITS.

DAVID: A beer would be nice.

TANTO: Of course. And perhaps one for m̄?

DAVID: With pleasure.

VIOLET: Now he is a gentleman, unlike some other Hungarian pricks behind the bar if you know what I mean.

HESTOR GIVES VIOLET THE NEW OXYGEN MASK WITH CLEAR PLASTIC TUBE.

VIOLET: Oh my God. Thank you so much Bitch! Bitch! Filthy bitch! 00ps.

HESTOR: He's my sister Katherine's boy and my father died. Winston killed him

VIOLET: Damn that Winston. Who's Winston?

HESTOR: My brother.

DAVID: Hestor. Winston didn't kill MacCulloch. It was an accident.

VIOLET: Bitch.

HESTOR: He wanted to.

VIOLET: Munts to the same thing. Two equals one where I come from get it?

TANTO: Here you are my friend. Now. Tell me all about IPE.

DAVID: PEI. Well...

TANTO: But first... (HE RUBS HIS FINGERS TOGETHER) .e@ du fric?

DAVID: Sorry. How much?

**TANTO: Seven fifty. No. Eight fifty. No. Make it ten. Ten seventy-five.
Plus tip. Merci. Now. Why did your uncle Winston kill your grand-
father... MacCulloch... Have I got it right?**

HESTOR: Yes.

DAVID: No. Winston didn't kill MacCulloch.

CLARA ENTERS. SHE IS EXHAUSTED, NEAR COLLAPSE.

VIOLET: Here you are my sweet. Three bag tea.

CLARA: Hestor. Have you seen Erlich?

HESTOR: Today.

CLARA: Did he say where he was going?

SHE SPILLS HOT TEA ON HESTOR.

HESTOR: 00ps.

DAVID: Hey. Take it easy.

CLARA: Who are you?

DAVID: Hestor's nephew.

**CLARA: Bullshit, man. You're a cop. He's a cop. Look at his freakin' cop
haircut and his freakin' cop disguise. (YELLS) Pig alert. Pig alert.**

DAVID: I am not a cop.

CLARA: He's gonna bust your fat ass, Tanto.

TANTO: Pardon, Padre. She's fucked up bad...

CLARA: Don't just stand there. Kill him Kill the freaking cop...

TANTO: You a cop?

VIOLET: Bitch. Bitch. Filthy Bitch!

DAVID: I'm a presbyterian minister from Prince Edward Island for goodness sake. No one kills presbyterian ministers anymore.

CLARA: You're a priest?

DAVID: A minister, yes.

CLARA: Help me, Father. Please. It will be the last time. Please? Just a few bucks...

HESTOR: He's good to me. He's my brother. Aren't you, David?

DAVID: No Hestor. I'm your nephew.

VIOLET: I knew that.

CLARA: (SITS) I'm sick, Hestor. You got to help me.

HESTOR: He'll come in a minute, dear. He'll bring help.

DAVID: If she's sick shouldn't she go to the hospital?

CLARA: I'm real sick Hestor.

HESTOR: I know dear.

DAVID: Hestor?

HESTOR: The hospital is bad for Clara.

CLARA EXITS TO BATHROOM

VIOLET: Bad. Bad. Bad. Bitch.

DAVID: Who's the bag lady?

VIOLET: Bag person.

TANTO: She like to stay in touch. Her name is Violet. But ouuf! Pahpah-Pah... she could grow violets anywhere on her person. Perhaps even in the air around her. Hanging violets. (BIG LAUGH) Pahpahpah quelle cinema! She is how you would... comme dit... come dit... comme dit... ah, she is fecund.

VIOLET: Bad. Bad. Bad. More tea? It's three bag tea.

HESTOR: She got the bags from the Hotel Saint Germaine on Atwater. Over there.

DAVID: Oh. They have good tea do they?

VIOLET: La Hote Ste Germaine Tea? The very best. Thanks to your Aunt Hestor.

HESTOR: They put the bags out for her. I asked them and they said yes.

DAVID: Outside.

HESTOR: Oh yeah. Outside.

TANTO: (HE TAKES DAVID ASIDE) They're used.

DAVID: Oh.

HESTOR: I have a new place for you to sleep.

VIOLET: Warm? I like warm

HESTOR: Air shaft. Near old Ogilvies. They're building a big new sky thing.
You can get in the fence hole.

VIOLET: Big hole?

HESTOR: Big enough.

VIOLET: I've got a lot of stuff to get through holes. Once I got caught in a fence hole in winter. I was there long long time. Cold cold cold. I was stuck in that fence hole all night all right with my ass in the air. Some grubby derelict - a swarthy foreigner you may depend - came along and slipped me the old pickle. Imagine. I got out just in time. He was coming back with his buddies.

HESTOR: Boy oh boy oh boy.

VIOLET: Shit!

HESTOR: Big fence hole. I tested it. I went in and out six times. I got bigger and bigger each time and never stuck. Besides. Its not cold yet.

VIOLET: You're good. (Suddenly Vicious) Bitch.

SHE COLLECTS HER 'STUFF'.

VIOLET: Warm I like warm Nice and warm Big and warm Big and warm and wet. Not wet Bitch. Warm place to sleep. Dry. Sleep. Don't wake up.

ERLICH ENTERS. VIOLET CROSSES TO HIM

VIOLET: Cut my throat. Get it?

ERLICH: Yeah, yeah Violet.

VIOLET: Bitch.

ERLICH: Gimme a break. Where's Clara?

DAVID: I think she's in the ladie's.

ERLICH: Clara's into men, man.

DAVID: What?

TANTO: Maudit Anglais. They don't understand each other. We wonder why they can't understand anyone else. Pah-pah-pah. Quelle cinema. J'ai soif, soif, soif. (he drinks)

VIOLET: Warm Warm Stupid. Warm! Bitch.

SHE EXITS TO WASHROOM

DAVID: What's wrong with Violet?

HESTOR: She grew up in Westmount.

DAVID: Oh.

TANTO: Very rich, once, our Violet. Very... how you say... grand. But then she went ding dong and... (dismissive gesture) . . .ouf. pahpahpah...

HESTOR: Family kicked her out. Then the hospital. Couldn't get welfare. Too rich.

TANTO: I have this photo of Hestor. It was taken on Isle du Prince Edward. Before the mussels... Hestor is standing on a pretty wooden bridge. There are hay wagons and unlit lanterns. Sun setting on the horizon.

HESTOR: Rising. It was morning.

TANTO: You are very beautiful, Hestor. Dark and crisp in a beautiful dress.

HESTOR: Mother 's.

TANTO: Hestor is the most beautiful woman in the world.

HESTOR: I was eighteen.

ERLICH: Clara's sick. In the ladies.

HESTOR: Want me to get her?

ERLICH: That's Okay. (He goes to the washroom)

DAVID: Do you remember that photo Hestor?

HESTOR IS SILENT.

DAVID: Well. This has been a slice.

WE HEAR A SCUFFLE FROM THE WASHROOM ERLICH POUNDS ON THE DOOR.

ERLICH: Clara!

VIOLET: (YELLS OFF) You filthy pervert. Get out of here...

ERLICH: Open the door.

SHE DOES.

VIOLET: Cut my throat!

CLARA: (OFF) Go away. No. Get your hands off me.

VIOLET: (OFF) Rape and pillage and violent death. Indiscriminate sex in the streets and hallways and toilets of the nation... bitch!

DAVID: She's in touch all right...

TANTO: Oh. Oho. Ohohoho. That is a good one.

ERLICH: (OFF) Violet, let go. Please.

VIOLET: (OFF) Don't call me Violet.

TANTO: What's all the fuss?

ERLICH EXITS FROM BATHROOM SUPPORTING CLARA.

ERLICH: She was trying to shoot liquid soap. Fuckin' Violet was gonna stand there and watch.

VIOLET: It seemed like the right thing to do. I don't like to interfere.

ERLICH: (Angry at Tanto) Who gave her the needle?

TANTO: She has them stashed all over the place.

ERLICH: Try and stand for me baby. Try and stand.

CLARA: I'm sick, Erlich. Real sick.

ERLICH: I know baby. I know. You said you were going to try...

TANTO: (OFFERS WATER) Drink this.

ERLICH: Drink Clara. We gotta look after each other...

CLARA: No...

SHE GETS UP AND RUNS TOWARD THE TOILET. SHE STOPS, FACE TO FACE WITH THE OLD MAN.

OLD MAN: Looking for me are you my precious?

CLARA: Erlich?

ERLICH: Clara.

CLARA: Have you got it?

OLD MAN: Maybe yes, maybe no...

CLARA: I'm real sick old man. Real sick.

OLD MAN: The world is unkind.

CLARA: (RUMMAGING THROUGH HER BAG) Just gimme the stuff... Augh... Fuck...

SHE PUTS HER FINGER TO HER MOUTH AND SUCKS, REACHES INTO HER PURSE AGAIN, WITHDRAWS THE SYRINGE.

THE OLD MAN CROSSES TO THE BAR.

OLD MAN: Liver and onions Tanto. And don't over-cook the liver - let it bleed. Now my sweeties. We have a little bill to settle.

ERLICH: Yeah well I wanted to talk to you about that. See Clara's been too sick to work so I...

OLD MAN: You are waiting for your show to open at the National Museum of Spray Bomb Weirdness. Yeah, yeah, yeah. I know all about your million dollar future...

ERLICH: Just another week, man. That's all. And it's not for me. I'm off it...

OLD MAN: Uh-huh.

ERLICH: Clara's sick, Man. Look at her. She's gonna die if you don't...

OLD MAN: Lotsa frits Tanto.

ERLICH: Listen to me...

CLARA: I'll do anything you want...

OLD MAN: Good. Wave your hand and produce five one-hundred dollar bills.

HESTOR: I have money.

SHE OFFERS HER ROLL OF BILLS TO THE OLD MAN.

OLD MAN: (FLIPS THROUGH ROLL) One hundred eighty dollars? (HE THROWS IT ON THE FLOOR)

DAVID: Hey.

HESTOR KNEELS TO PICK UP THE CASH. DAVID HELPS HER.

HESTOR: How much money you got?

DAVID: Me?

HESTOR: How much?

DAVID: I'm not buying her drugs...

HESTOR: David woulda'. She's sick. You could make her better.

TANTO: Liver and onions, gravey and lotsa frits.

OLD MAN: You are a saint.

TANTO: Et vous, Mnsieur, vous etes 'scuz'. That will be \$2.75.

OLD MAN: (INDICATING ERLICH) This gentleman will pay.

ERLICH SWEEPS THE PLATE OFF THE BAR. THE OLD MAN AND VIOLET COLLIDE ON THE FLOOR, SNATCHING AT THE MEAT.

OLD MAN: Get your paws off my meat you old witch.

VIOLET: Mne. Mne. All mine.

THEY TEAR AT THE MEAT. SHE WRESTLES IT FROM HIM, BACKS TOWARD THE BATHROOM EATING AND SNARLING, HER FACE AND HANDS BLOODY. ERLICH PINS THE OLD MAN TO THE FLOOR, GOES THROUGH HIS CLOTHES, RIPPING POCKETS AND BUTTONS IN A FRENZY.

OLD MAN: Thief. Help. Thief.

ERLICH: Shut your stinking face Old Man.

OLD MAN: Murder. Murder.

ERLICH RAISES A FIST TO STRIKE THE OLD MAN. DAVID PULLS ERLICH OFF. ERLICH PUSHES HIM ASIDE. DAVID LUNGES BACK AT ERLICH, STOPPING JUST SHORT OF HIS DRAWN AND ACTIVATED SWITCH-BLADE.

ERLICH: Don't even consider it.

HESTOR INTERCEDES. DAVID BACKS OFF. ERLICH SWITCHES HIS ATTENTION TO THE OLD MAN.

ERLICH: Lets have it.

OLD MAN: (Hands Erlich a small tin foil square) Go to hell.

CLARA: Gimme. Gimme.

SHE COOKS THE POWDER AND TEA-WATER IN A SPOON.

DAVID: Come on Hestor. We're getting outa here.

HESTOR: Not till Clara's better.

TANTO: You got your stuff. Get outa here.

ERLICH: This asshole will go straight to the police.

CLARA: Come on, come on...

HESTOR: You'll feel better soon Clara.

CLARA: (Shaking) Please, please... I can't...

HESTOR: I'll do it.

DAVID: Hestor, no...

ERLICH: Back off.

HESTOR: Just about ready. Where's your needle dear?

HESTOR LOADS THE NEEDLE, INJECTS CLARA.

CLARA: Thank you. Oh thank you Hestor.

CLARA BECOMES STILL AND QUIET AND SLIDES TO THE FLOOR. ERLICH GATHERS HER IN HIS ARMS.

ERLICH: Clara.

CLARA TRIES TO SPEAK.

ERLICH: Clara. Clara say something.

CLARA: I found her, Erlich. I found the little bitch and I killed her. It felt good. I found her and I killed her again and again and again. (SHE LOOKS AT HER ARM) See? Just like that. Tell him, Erlich.

ERLICH: Tell who, baby.

CLARA: Tell my old man I did what he wanted.

ERLICH: What old man?

CLARA: Tell him

ERLICH: I don't know who you mean.

CLARA: Tell him I died laughing. Tell him I hope he's happy. Tell him he was wrong. There is a way out. Tell them this one's on the house. Hestor. Help Erlich. Please...

SHE BECOMES VERY SILENT.

ERLICH: (LOOKS AROUND, BEWILDERED) What does she mean?

TANTO: (TAKING CLARA'S PULSE) There is no heart beat. Mbn Dieu. The girl is dead.

HESTOR: MacCulloch.

DAVID: Jesus.

TANTO: That's it. J'ai mon voyage.

ERLICH: Clara. Clara!

HE SINKS TO THE FLOOR, CLARA CRADLED IN HIS ARMS.

DAVID: Hestor, we've got to get out of here.

HESTOR: Not now, David.

DAVID: Hestor. You filled that needle. You injected her...

HESTOR: They're my friends.

DAVID: I know they're your friends, sweetheart. But I've got to get you out of here.

HESTOR: They need me. (Sensing his presence) MacCulloch.

VIOLET JOINS THEM WIPING HER MOUTH SHE PEERS AT CLARA.

VIOLET: Clara don't look so good.

HESTOR: Clara's dead.

VIOLET RUMMAGES THROUGH HER STUFF.

DAVID: (To Tanto) Hestor will be blamed.

VIOLET QUIETLY PLACES HER CLEAR PLASTIC RESPIRATOR OVER CLARA'S FACE. ERLICH DOES NOT OBJECT. HE SIMPLY HOLDS THE END OF THE TUBE CONNECTED TO NOTHING IN HIS HAND AND STARES AT IT. AN ODD PIETA.

HESTOR: All I did was help her feel better.

DAVID: I know. But I've gottotake you home.

HESTOR: He's here.

TANTO: I don't want no dead druggies on my floor. And you. Get Hestor away from here vite, vite, vite;

HESTOR: I can't leave with him here.

VIOLET: You go, he'll follow. He likes Hestor. Go, Hestor. Go.

HESTOR: Erlich. Take Clara to the Arboretum Trees are strong. She likes the junipers best.

ERLICH: (WEEPING, ROCKING HER) Leave us alone.

DAVID: Come on Hestor.

HESTOR: (HESTOR SQUATS, TALKS DIRECTLY, GENTLY TO ERLICH) Me and Clara went to the Arboretum It's on the way west side of town. Maybe east. Gotta take a lot of busses. (SHE PUTS THE ROLL OF BILLS INTO HIS HAND) I gotta go home. Clara knew. (quietly) Clara knew.

DAVID: Hestor...

THEY EXIT, LEAVING ERLICH ROCKING CLARA IN HIS ARMS. LIGHTS FADE ON THE CADILLAC.

SCENE 8: MONTREAL.

HESTOR'S LIVING SPACE.

CROSS FADE FROM THE CADILLAC AS HESTOR AND DAVID WALK THE SPACE.

HESTOR SURVEYS THE CHAOS. DAVID STANDS QUIETLY BY.

HESTOR: My house, my house. My poor little house.

LIGHTS FADE.

SCENE 9:

NARRATION: The Culloden lawn.

LIGHTS UP AS SONDRA WAFTS A WHITE CLOTH OVER A WOODEN PICNIC TABLE ON THE CULLODEN LAWN. SHE IS NOT AWARE OF THE VOICES THAT EMERGE WITH FAMILIAR REVERENT VIGOR FROM THE WINGS.

CAST:

**Upon our Princely Isle
may kindest fortune smile
In coming years.
Peace and prosperity
in all her borders be
from every evil free
and weakling fear.**

SHE SETS THE TABLE FROM A NEARBY TRAY. WINSTON ENTERS. HE IS AMAZED.

WINSTON: Where did you get this idea?

SONDRA: It just occurred to me. Do the cutlery, will you sweetheart?

WINSTON: Its the middle of October, for Christ's sake.

SONDRA: Indian summer. My favorite time of year.

WINSTON: I don't want to spend a lot of time hanging around when they get here, Sondra.

SONDRA: There's lots of time.

WINSTON: I want MacCulloch in the ground by sunset.

SONDRA: This property is beautiful, Winston.

SONDRA: Hello Hestor.

HESTOR: Where's McCulloch?

KATHERINE: McCulloch's in the woods, Hester.

HESTOR: Which woods.

DAVID: He wanted to be buried in his ash grove.

HESTOR: Oh. Yeah.

HESTOR INSPECTS THE TABLE.

KATHERINE: This is all very nice, Sondra.

HESTOR: The table's pointing in the wrong direction.

**KATHERINE: Yes it is dear. Wasn't that clever of Hestor to notice, Winston?
And you used the wrong table cloth, Sondra. Cotton in, linen out.**

DAVID: That's the old silver. McCulloch used the good silver.

**KATHERINE: Why don't you take Hestor's things inside, Winston and we'll
just tidy up here. David?**

KATHERINE AND DAVID STRIP THE TABLE.

DAVID: She doesn't have any things. Just her purse.

KATHERINE: Oh dear God.

HESTOR: Where's McCulloch?

WINSTON: We already told you, Hestor. He's waiting in the woods.

HESTOR: Oh.

HESTOR WALKS OFF, HUMMING TEDDY BEAR'S PICNIC.

KATHERINE: Winston, go after her.

WINSTON DOES.

KATHERINE: David, how is she?

DAVID: Just the way you see her.

SONDRA: Does she know where she is?

KATHERINE: You shut your mouth. David, did she say anything about McCulloch?

DAVID: No. Well yes. She thinks he's still alive.

KATHERINE: The drugs no doubt. Take the other end.

**KATHERINE AND DAVID TURN THE TABLE, NOT THE 90 DEGREES THAT SONDR
EXPECTS, BUT A FULL 180 DEGREES.**

SONDRA: What difference does that make?

KATHERINE: (removing table cloth) David, do you know what you're going to say?

DAVID: Just the standard service with a gaelic prayer. Alright?

KATHERINE: Alright. But no singing.

WINSTON AND HESTOR RE-APPEAR.

WINSTON: She was heading for the woods.

KATHERINE: Hestor dear, we want you to wait for us.

HESTOR: Bears.

DAVID: I think we'd better get going folks...

HESTOR: MacCulloch's spirit is unstable.

WINSTON: Not to mention your...

KATHERINE: Winston! Never mind dear. All the same, the sooner the better.

HESTOR: MacCulloch's spirit is breaking down into miniscule essences that will regroup into some new being.

THEY STARE AT HER, STUPEFIED.

WINSTON: Like a salamander or toad?

HESTOR: Or Atillah the Hum.

KATHERINE: What are they talking about, David?

DAVID: She's into re-incarnation.

SONDRA: You can't be incarnated backwards, Hestor.

HESTOR: Yes you can. Time is nothing in the spirit world. I read that. I'm coming back sixty years ago.

WINSTON: Got your flight booked already have you Hestor?

HESTOR: I'm coming back as Mata Hari.

KATHERINE: Mata Hari?

WINSTON: With her luck she'll get back just in time to be shot.

KATHERINE: Honestly Winston. David, I have to change. Stay with Hestor will you dear? Winston, put on a suit.

WINSTON: Yes 'mother'. Jesus.

**WINSTON AND KATHERINE EXIT. HESTOR SITS ON THE PICNIC TABLE BENCH.
MACCULLOCH APPEARS ON THE CATWALK. HESTOR HUMS TEDDY BEAR'S PICNIC.**

SONDRA: How was your trip, David?

DAVID: The trip was fine, thank you.

SONDRA: Did you get lucky?

DAVID: Keep an eye on Hestor. I've got to change.

SONDRA SITS BY HESTOR.

SONDRA: So. How's life in the fast lane?

HESTOR: Clara's dead.

SONDRA: Who's Clara?

HESTOR: Friend. Cadillac.

SONDRA: Ohm

HESTOR RISES, HEADS OFF AGAIN.

SONDRA: Hestor? (She lights a cigaret) What the hell. She seems to know where she's going.

SONDRA HUMS TEDDY BEAR'S PICNIC. MACCULLOCH EXITS.

SONDRA: What am I doing? (Crushes cigaret) Stupid bitch.

SONDRA FEELS UNEASY, MOVES OFF IN THE DIRECTION OF THE HOUSE.

FADE.

SCENE 10

NARRATION: MacCulloch's ash grove. Late afternoon autumn sunlight filters through the ash grove canopy dappling MacCulloch's highly polished walnut coffin with light. AS before, birds sing and there is the hint of a breeze.

THE COFFIN BEGINS TO RATTLE. MUMBLES ARE HEARD FROM INSIDE. THEN MORE VIGOROUS RATTLING. THEN THUMPS AND CURSES. FINALLY THE LID POPS UP. LINING IS TORN. MACCULLOCH'S ARM APPEARS. IN HIS HAND IS A SCREWDRIVER.

MACCULLOCH: Thank you Davey my boy!

HE DUMPS 3 INCH 'L' BRACKETS ON STAGE. THEN A FIST-FULL OF SCREWS.

MACCULLOCH: Damn that Winston.

HE GETS OUT, LOOKS AROUND PLEASED.

MACCULLOCH: (LYRIC SCOTS PEI ACCENT, SOFT-SPOKEN) Culloden. My ash grove.

HE SYSTEMATICALLY RIPS THE LINING OUT OF THE COFFIN. AS HE WORKS, A BEAUTIFUL YOUNG WOMAN APPEARS. SHE IS COMPLETELY UNCONSCIOUS OF MACCULLOCH, AND HE OF HER. HER REALITY IS 1918, AND SHE PREPARES FOR HER WEDDING. VIRTUALLY NAKED, SHE COMPLETES HER TOILETTE.

HE STOPS SUDDENLY, LOOKS UP, SMILES AT HER. SHE DOES NOT ACKNOWLEDGE HIM

MACCULLOCH: Still mad at me angel ? You would have loved it. God it was funny. They tried to embalm me, eh. I coulda told them they were too late. Already had the guts tore outa me. Twice. World War One, before we met. Then World War two. You gone and me with them four kids.

SHE BEGINS TO DRESS.

HE RE-ENTERS THE COFFIN, KNEELS TO REMOVE A FEW PARTICULARLY DIFFICULT SETS OF SCREWS AND BRACKETS.

MACCULLOCH: I think you died for spite. I never meant nothing by it. Oh no, no, no. Not a thing. I just lost my head. I never could handle it. Nor could I do without it. Not after the gas.

SHE DOES NOT REACT, AND MACCULLOCH IS NOT SURPRISED WHEN THREE YOUNG MEN IN WORLD WAR ONE UNIFORMS APPEAR. PANICKED, THEY ATTEMPT TO SCALE THE CATWALK. A CLOUD OF MUSTARD GASS BRINGS THEM TO THE GROUND.

MACCULLOCH: Last thing I saw was Willy Billy Peggy, eyes bulged, tongue out, ripping off his clothes. We all fell in a heap. Willy Billy's shirt half off, over my face. I was lucky. I came too there was two of them on top of me. Willy Billy Peggy was on me face down. Red Angus was on top of him I got enough to knock me over. But they choked to death. Last thing Red Angus did was piss on Willy Billy's shirt and save my life. They'd let go when they died, see. Yeah.

THE WOMAN'S VOICE, HIGHLY AMPLIFIED, REVERBERATES THROUGH THE THEATRE.

WOMAN: MacCulloch. You bore me to tears.

MACCULLOCH: You knew all that? You know everything now, I suppose?

SHE NODS.

MACCULLOCH: Oh.

SHE IS FULLY DRESSED.

MACCULLOCH: I guess you know what happened to our David.

HER ANGUISHED MDAN, AMPLIFIED, SWELLS, BECOMES THE WORD 'HESTOR', TRAILS TO A DISTANT INFINITY.

MACCULLOCH: Jesus woman. There's no need to bellow. If you see David, tell him he was always my favorite.

THE YOUNG SOLDIER EMERGES FROM THE BOTTOM OF THE HEAP. HE CHANGES HELMETS, REPLACING THE WWI HELMET WITH A WWII MODEL. HE DRAGS THE FIRST CORPSE FROM THE STAGE. THE WOMAN STARES AT MACCULLOCH.

MACCULLOCH: No. Not because he stuttered. Because he did what he was told. Who's side are you on, anyway?

THE SOLDIER ATTEMPTS TO REMOVE THE SECOND CORPSE. HE IS FELLED BY A ROUND OF MACHINE GUN FIRE FROM THE WINGS.

MACCULLOCH: I suppose I'll soon be able to tell him myself.

THE WOMAN BECOMES AGITATED, SEARCHING FOR SOMETHING LOST.

MACCULLOCH: Hestor? She went light in the head when you took off.

HE RAISES THE LID. HE IS ABOUT TO GET IN, LISTENS, CHANGES HIS MIND.

MACCULLOCH: There was no need to shame me.

THE BLOODIED YOUNG SOLDIER GOES TO THE WOMAN AND TAKES HER ARM THEY COME FORWARD, SMILING, RADIANT. THEY DANCE. WHEN THEY PART, THE FRONT OF HER WHITE WEDDING DRESS IS RED WITH HIS BLOOD.

MACCULLOCH: I took you back. And I buried you. He wouldn'ta. Never had the guts. I bent over to say goodbye, you know...kiss you like you're supposed to, and thump - the lid of your coffin comes down and gets me square on the back of the head.

THEY SLAM THE COFFIN LID. MACCULLOCH AT SOME DISTANCE IS FLOORED BY THE BLOW HE RISES SLOWLY, RUBS THE BACK OF HIS HEAD. THEY EXIT, BLISSFUL, UNAWARE. PERHAPS LAUGHING.

MACCULLOCH: Nearly knocked me out. People in the congregation didn't know whether to laugh or cry. Most of them laughed.

HE GETS IN, RECLINES.

MACCULLOCH: For the first time in my life I was afraid. The war to end all wars, wealth and poverty for I've had both you see, disease, fire, starvation. But havin' you torn from me like so much sawdust in the wind. My dear child. I cried like a baby and felt like a fool.

HE ADJUSTS PILLOW READS LABEL.

MACCULLOCH: 'New white material only'. What in the name of Jesus is wrong with feathers. We buried old Alec John Alec with feathers. Damn that Winston. Anyway. That's when it started.

HESTOR APPEARS CENTRE, MOVES BEHIND MACCULLOCH'S UPRaised COFFIN LID.

McCULLOCH: I was asleep one warm spring day, in the new grass behind the barn. I opened my eyes and there she was, standin' wearin' no more than you'd use to dust a fiddle. God what a beauty. That shape of hers, eh?

HESTOR SLAMS THE COFFIN LID SHUT. SHE SITS ON IT.

THERE ARE STRONG PROTESTS FROM WITHIN.

HESTOR: Be good.

MCCULLOCH PUSHES UP WITH ENOUGH FORCE TO RAISE THE LID AND HESTOR SEVERAL INCHES. HE CANNOT ESCAPE, HOWEVER.

HESTOR: (sings)

If you go down to the woods today
you'll never believe your eyes

BLACKOUT. END ACT ONE.

ACT II, SCENE I. MACCULLOCH'S ASH GROVE.

HESTOR IS SEATED ON MACCULLOCH'S COFFIN.

THE CAST: (from the wings)
Prince Edward Isle to thee
Our hearts shall faithful be
Where'er we dwell.
Forever may we stand
As brothers hand in hand
And sing God save the land
We love so well.

A THUMP. SHE HOPS OFF THE COFFIN.

HESTOR: I better smoke. (LIGHTS UP) Smoke keeps the bears away.

MACCULLOCH'S COFFIN LID POPS OPEN. HE SITS UP.

MACCULLOCH: There's no bears on the Island. Be careful with that match.

SHE STUFFS HIM BACK INTO THE COFFIN.

HESTOR: You be quiet in there. You be quiet. If I have to come up there to you, you'll be sorry. I'll tan your hide...

THUMPS FROM WITHIN. SHE SITS ON THE COFFIN AGAIN. THE THUMPING STOPS.

KATHERINE: (ENTERS, CARRYING A LONG-HANDLED ROUND-POINTED SHOVEL) I am not digging in my good dress.

WINSTON: (IN SUIT AND TIE, WITH SIMILAR SHOVEL) I'm not doing this by myself. Jesus, Hestor. What are you trying to pull? Look at this.

HE STOOPS TO COLLECT BRACKETS AND SCREWS.

HESTOR: I never done nothing.

KATHERINE: Then who did, dear.

HESTOR: I don't know. MacCulloch.

WINSTON: Don't give us that 'MacCulloch's still alive' stuff Hestor. Now I'll have to start all over again. DAVID!!! GET OVER HERE AND GIMME A HAND,

KATHERINE: Are you sure that's such a good idea, Winston?

WINSTON: Oh yeah. Right. (yells) NEVER MIND.

HE TRIES TO DRAG MACCULLOCH, STIFF AND APPARENTLY VERY DEAD, OUT.

WINSTON: Come on you old stiff...

KATHERINE HELPS.

KATHERINE: I don't think we should be doing this Winston.

HESTOR: Its nice here.

KATHERINE AND WINSTON LIE MACCULLOCH ON THE GROUND BEHIND THE COFFIN.

WINSTON: Is nice here. It'll be nice here when there's streets, and sewers and split-level houses, and the smell of burning meat on backyard barbecues.

A LOUD MOAN FILLS THE THEATRE.

KATHERINE: What was that?

WINSTON: Nothing. It was nothing.

HESTOR: It was McCulloch.

WINSTON: Hestor. Come here. Look. What you see is nothing but so much dead meat.

KATHERINE: Winston I will not have you talk about Dad like that. Not in front of Hestor. You'll set her off and she'll start to dance.

KATHERINE HANDS HIM SCREWS AND BRACKETS AS REQUIRED. HESTOR GOES BEHIND THE COFFIN AND STARES DOWN AT MACCULLOCH

HESTOR: Poppa bear.

MACCULLOCH RISES, UNSEEN BY WINSTON AND KATHERINE. HE SIGNALS HESTOR BE QUIET. THEY GIGGLE, HE EXITS, QUICKLY.

HESTOR: When we gonna bury Dad?

WINSTON: Soon as I get this thing fixed...

KATHERINE: I should put a few stitches in this lining. Hestor, sweetheart, whatever possessed you to rip it apart like... like... some crazed I don't know.

HESTOR: I don't think he wants to be buried in the suburbs.

KATHERINE: Winston is talking foolish. This is Prince Edward Island. Culloden is forty miles from the nearest town of any size. This will never be suburbia. (ASIDE TO HESTOR) He thinks he's still in Toronto.

HESTOR: Oh. Dad's gone.

WINSTON: Yes Hestor. Dad's gone.

KATHERINE: He had a good long life.

HESTOR: He went away.

KATHERINE: He did, yeah.

WINSTON: Lots of good times. At my expense. Or someone else's.

HESTOR: He left.

KATHERINE: Yes Hestor dear. We know he's gone. You're too hard on him Winston. He had his good points.

WINSTON: True. He suffered more than most people. What with mother, then poor David. (HE LAUGHS)

HESTOR: He's not here.

KATHERINE: Then the house burning down.

WINSTON: God yes. The house...

KATHERINE: Of course he set the house on fire.

HESTOR: It was a very cold night.

KATHERINE: Yes dear. Very cold.

WINSTON: He built that house himself.

KATHERINE: He was upset over mother.

WINSTON: He was drunk.

KATHERINE: He was dead sober, dear. I saw his face. He set that fire, then came upstairs when she was going good and got us children out of bed.

WINSTON: Humph. Mista had a change of heart.

KATHERINE: Oh Winston. Honestly.

HESTOR: He went into the woods.

KATHERINE: That's a lovely way to think of it dear. Dad's not dead. He just went off into the woods. Did you hear that Winston?

WINSTON: The woods he loved. (RISING) There. That's it. Let's re-load the old shuttle craft.

HESTOR: Boom Like on TV.

GOES BEHIND THE COFFIN TO GET MACCULLOCH HE SCREAMS. KATHERINE GOES TO HIM

KATHERINE: Oh God.

DAVID: (OFF) Winston? Mbn? (GIGGLE) Sondra. Jesus.

WINSTON: Sondra and David.

KATHERINE: Oh dear God.

WINSTON SLAMS DOWN THE COFFIN LID, ALL THREE SIT ON IT.

WINSTON: Act normal.

KATHERINE: Winston!

HESTOR: David likes Sondra. He told me on the train.

KATHERINE: Where is McCulloch?

HESTOR: He went that way.

WINSTON: How, Hestor?

KATHERINE: What do you mean how?

WINSTON: I mean did he walk or fly or levitate. He went that way. Gimme a break...

HESTOR: He just sorta got up, told-me to shush, but nicer than he used to, and he scampered away. He's nicer dead.

WINSTON: Christ. I knew something weird would happen. Smile!

DAVID ENTERS FOLLOWED BY SONDR.

WINSTON: Hi kids. Having fun?

SONDRA: These woods are wonderful. David's showing me all kinds of nooks and crannies.

WINSTON: Nooks and crannies? What kind of nooks and crannies?

DAVID: Well, the spring. The birch grove and the beaver pond.

WINSTON: Stay out of the beaver pond...Ha Ha Ha...

DAVID: Ha Ha Ha.

KATHERINE: Winston.

WINSTON: The down side of having a young wife. Listen you two, we're not quite ready for you yet.

DAVID: We heard you yell.

WINSTON: Yeah well it's all right. You two run along. Come back in about half an hour.

SONDRA: Winston, don't keep pushing me aside...

WINSTON: Katherine and Hestor and I need a little time together, darling, that's al 1.

HESTOR: McCulloch left.

SONDRA: Yes, Hestor, McCulloch has left us.

HESTOR: No, I mean he's gone.

SONDRA: Gone? What does she mean gone?

WINSTON: Leave her to us. She's upset and...

KATHERINE: . . .we don't think we should bury him until she calms down.

WINSTON: You understand, don't you sweetheart?

KATHERINE: David, why don't you show your Aunt Sondra the fox dens.
(USHERING THEM OFF) You remember, down by the old clover meadow...

HESTOR INDICATES THE DIRECTION OF MACCULLOCH'S EXIT, WINSTON TAKES IT.

KATHERINE: WINSTON! Damn that Winston.

THERE IS AN AWKWARD PAUSE.

KATHERINE: Do you really believe in re-incarnation dear.

HESTOR: Oh yes.

KATHERINE: Why Mata Hari?

HESTOR: She could dance.

KATHERINE: Oh. I would have chosen Isadora Duncan. Or Toulouse Letrec. How could he just get up and leave like that?

HESTOR: I dunno.

KATHERINE: Dear God. What if Winston can't find him?

HESTOR: Maybe this is a miracle. Like in the bible.

KATHERINE: McCulloch is hardly miracle material.

HESTOR: Or like Poltergiest. Did you see Poltergiest?

KATHERINE: No dear. I don't think so.

HESTOR: A little girl gets sucked into the dark zone by a pissed off Indian and they tie a rope around this lady midget and throw her in the hole...

KATHERINE: That won't work.

HESTOR: Why not?

KATHERINE: There are no midgets on the Island. Where would he go?

HESTOR: I've got to get back to the Cadillac.

KATHERINE: The what?

HESTOR: Back to Montreal.

KATHERINE: You can't go now. Not with McCulloch on the loose.

HESTOR: That's just it. My friends need me.

KATHERINE: We need you.

HESTOR: Ready, aim, fire.

KATHERINE: Stay with us.

HESTOR: No.

KATHERINE: Why dear?

HESTOR: Violet will get in trouble. She got too much stuff and gets caught in fences. Then other ones rob her. And she won't let them and some day she'll be dead, dead, dead. And Tanto will be trying on dresses and buying feathers... which he can't afford, like maribou, ostrich, egret and some other kind.

KATHERINE: Tanto?

HESTOR: Tanto. He's a friend. The Greek Cypriot Montreal Canadian, he calls himself. Violet thinks he's Polish, and Hungarian, and Chinese, and Arabic - Violet hates foreigners.

KATHERINE: People travel too much. Its not fit, I tell you.

HESTOR: He used to try to be a woman in the old days. Used to dress up as Mahallia Jackson and sing Moon River. He was pretty. He doesn't do it any more. Now its all young young 'young and lib 1 ib lib. He looked after me when I woke up.

KATHERINE: That's nice. Come sit with me, Hestor. Are you happy in Montreal dear?

HESTOR: Oh yes.

KATHERINE: Why don't you write me, and tell me little things about your life there. You know I love you.

HESTOR: I don't know.

KATHERINE: Well I do. I'd love to hear from you dear. You know. What you do, where you shop, that sort of thing. I always felt it was my fault, you know... about your, well about your condition.

HESTOR: I smoke too much.

KATHERINE: Yes dear, you do. Its not good for you.

HESTOR: It keeps away the bears.

KATHERINE: There are no bears on the Island.

HESTOR: Mntreal is full of bears.

KATHERINE: Try not to think about it.

HESTOR: (SINGS) If you go down to the woods today, you'll never believe
your eyes...

KATHERINE: Hestor dear. Please. Don't sing that stupid picnic song.

HESTOR: Oh. Okay.

KATHERINE: You nearly drove me nuts, singin half the night. That same damn
song, over and over, over and over, over and over and over...

HESTOR: I shop on the street. Behind hotels. It's nice.

KATHERINE: Hestor, you don't need to eat out of... out of...

HESTOR: Garbage cans?

KATHERINE: Dennis and I are doing very well now.

HESTOR: Dennis didn't come to the funeral.

KATHERINE: Culloden is one of those black holes to him

HESTOR: Like Calcutta?

KATHERINE: No dear. Like in outer space.

HESTOR: Oh.

KATHERINE: Calcutta. Tch, tch, tch. I was lucky. Dennis is a good man. You
know, Hestor we've had our differences, you and I. But all I ever
wanted for you was that very thing. A good man to take care of you.

HESTOR: I can take care of myself.

KATHERINE: Why don't you just let us help you?

HESTOR: I don't eat garbage. I get welfare. I just tell Violet and them
where the good stuff is. Lotsa good stuff gets chucked out and I just
tell them I know lots about around the Cadillac. Ten blocks in every
direction. If you were in Mntreal, say, around the Cadillac and had no
money I'd tell you where to get food and clothes. See Katherine?

KATHERINE: No dear. I do not.

HESTOR: You'd be my friend and I'd help you. Where there's a warm hallway
nobody has yet I'd tell you. If you got stabbed or Dennis beat you, say,
or kids raped you and that I'd take you to the hospital with my welfare

money in a taxi. But you couldn't stay at my place when you got out because I'd get kicked out. Couldn't do nobody no good. See?

KATHERINE RISES.

KATHERINE: You come home and Dennis and I will set you up in nice room in Montague. You'd be near Winston and Sondra. It will be lovely.

HESTOR: If you're in trouble, come to Montreal. I can feed lots more people. Goodbye.

HESTOR RISES.

KATHERINE: We can't have you living like an animal. Not while we have it in our power to get you set up decent. I want you to come home.

HESTOR: This isn't my home.

KATHERINE: The Island is always your home as long as I'm alive.

HESTOR: Then why did you send me away?

KATHERINE: That was different.

HESTOR: It sure was. Was it ever different is all I can say. Boy oh boy oh boy. I was happy here.

KATHERINE: You were turning into a slut.

HESTOR: You lived in Montreal. You turned into a slut.

KATHERINE: I did no such thing.

HESTOR: MacCulloch said you did.

KATHERINE: MacCulloch hates women.

HESTOR: Alec John Alec and them said you were too. I heard them

KATHERINE: That bunch of cronies, hanging around, drunk. Taking advantage of MacCulloch. Taking advantage of you. What was I supposed to do? I can't tell you how much I hate that place. I hate it. I hate it. I hate it I hate it I hate it. I was fourteen years old, poor mother gone, me the oldest female, the slave, on my knees scrubbing the floor with all them no-goods hangin' around waiting for MacCulloch to come back from the woods with the shine. One of them, and to this day I don't know who, booted me face down onto that sloppy wet floor. Filthy from their boots. When they stopped laughing they told me they'd like a nice cup of tea. I told them to go to hell. Well sir. Next thing MacCulloch's back hearing about how 'scaubach' I was. Hadn't the decency to make men a cup of tea. I told him where to stick his tea. I got it good then. And you. You poor little thing. Them at you. Him not lifting a finger. Hestor. Did he ever do anything to you? Anything he shouldn't have?

HESTOR: That's a bad thing to say.

KATHERINE: David said something about your psychiatrist...

HESTOR: He was sex crazy, that psychiatrist. He messed me up good and told me I was crazy because Dad's over-sexed. Said I was the family scrape goat.

KATHERINE: Scape goat, dear.

HESTOR: Yeah. That's it. That I was happy to have everybody say "Its only Hestor ready aim fire ha ha ha". Boy oh boy oh boy.

KATHERINE: That old bastard.

HESTOR: It wasn't dad's fault was it that Mom died.

KATHERINE: Wasn't Dad's fault? He was a booze, hound, Hestor. Of course it was his fault. Wake up and smell the coffee. He broke her heart.

HESTOR: It wasn't dad's fault you had to be our mother when you were just a little girl yourself.

KATHERINE: Everybody loved MacCulloch. He charmed the birds out of the trees. Singing the old songs, telling the old stories. He was amazing, all right. Goddamn alcoholics. You know what they love? They love nothing. Least of all themselves. They are cowards, Hestor. Self destructive cowards.

HESTOR: It wasn't Dad's fault that baby died and he couldn't do nothin.

KATHERINE: And I'll tell you why they're cowards. They could change, but somewhere along the line they make a choice. And the choice is same with every damn one of them Me first, and to hell with the rest of you. They're the worst kind of coward. They need to drag someone down with them Women and children first. They don't booze to forget my dear girl. No siree. They booze to remember.

HESTOR: MacCulloch was good to me.

KATHERINE: They booze to remember how to get at people. MacCulloch was good to you. He wasn't even good to himself. He took all the misery and meanness in his black soul and poured it... no, they don't pour it. They inject it, like vampires, into the weak ones, weak ones foolish enough to show them love. Or goodness. Vampire booze artists. They hate the good in themselves. But not as much as they hate the good in others.

HESTOR: He was never at me.

KATHERINE: They suck you dry, Hestor, then make you drink their poison. They drag you down, ridicule you. They make you feel guilty and sorry for them as they choke the good right out of you. All in the name of love.

HESTOR: He never was.

KATHERINE: Do you hate me, Hestor?

HESTOR: I don't hate nobody. My new doctor she's nice. She's stopping my medicine. Says I never should have been on it in the first place. I used to think it was my fault. I hated myself for being so stupid and ugly and all I wanted was to be kind. Then I was dead. Killed myself. She says I didn't, it wasn't me. She says dad killed me. She says men kill women all the time.

KATHERINE: Clever girl. Must gone to college to figure that out.

HESTOR: She says the patriarchy destroyed me.

KATHERINE: The what?

HESTOR: The male dominated patriarchy.

KATHERINE: Oh. You mean society? Well, dear, we all know how things work.

HESTOR: 'Its only hysterical Hestor nothing really happened'. 'We can't have her raving on. What if someone takes her serious.' 'Stand still woman. And watch your mouth'. 'Quit snivelling or I'll give you something to snivel about, by Christ'. 'Its for your own good'. 'If I have to come up there to you...' 'Come on, boys. Ready aim fire ha ha ha.'

KATHERINE: Praise the Lord, screw the wife and pass the ammunition! Oh dear god.

HESTOR: (VERY ANGRY) Thirty five years on drugs I didn't need, just to shut me up, just to keep me, just to... just... just... Boy oh boy oh boy.

KATHERINE: Hestor.

HESTOR: I gotta go back to Montreal.

KATHERINE: Don't go Hestor.

HESTOR: He's after my friends.

KATHERINE: Please.

HESTOR: And there's this boy. This strange boy... Don't cry, Katherine. You never done nothin wrong. You're a good person.

KATHERINE: I'm not a good person.

HESTOR: Yes you are.

KATHERINE: I figured as long he was at you he'd leave me alone.

HESTOR: You come to Montreal.

KATHERINE: And eat garbage?

HESTOR: I'll take care of you. Let's run away. I liked it when you ran away. Shush. Don't cry. How old were you when you ran away?

KATHERINE: I was fourteen.

HESTOR: Mntreal musta been scary for a little girl from PEI.

KATHERINE: It was pure hell. How could they say those things? I was a waitress...

HESTOR: "Next thing you know you'll be pregnant by God knows who. Well I'll not have anything to do with it. No sir. You and it can rot in hell." I was old when I ran away from home. I didn't know where I was for a long time. Then I came home to Culloden. Still didn't know where I was.

KATHERINE: Konnie's Kountry Kitchen.

HESTOR: What?

KATHERINE: That's where you worked, dear. Konnie's Kountry Kitchen in Mntague.

HESTOR: What did I do?

KATHERINE: You washed dishes.

HESTOR: Boy oh boy oh boy. I remember the train to Mntreal. That's all. Then nothing 'till the Golden Cadillac and Tanto lookin after me. I was thirty two years old. Boy oh boy oh boy. Long time ago under the bridge. Down the tube. Gone.

KATHERINE: Shush, shush, shush. Its all right. Shush. Its a mean old world isn't it? And you were such a sweet little thing.

HESTOR: Boy oh boy oh boy.

KATHERINE: Hestor dear. Don't. I can't bear to see you cry. You know what I'd like to do? I'd like to take this shovel and I'd like to raise it over my head - like this - and bring it down, with all my might - like this.

NARRATION: She does all the above.

HESTOR LAUGHS, LIGHTS A SMOKE.

KATHERINE: I'd like to do it over and over. Again and again and again.

NARRATION: She does.

HESTOR: Bang. Crash. Thump.

KATHERINE: Look. There's the captain of the Nazi U-boat that sunk our poor David's ship off the coast of Newfoundland two days after Armistice was declared.

NARRATION: She scurries after the tiny invisible captain.

KATHERINE SLAMS THE SHOVEL DOWN ON HIM

HESTOR: Squish. Hooray!

KATHERINE: There's the consumption that took our mother...

NARRATION: She chases and destroys it.

KATHERINE: And made me a child slave to four brothers and sisters and that old man.

NARRATION: She strikes four times.

KATHERINE: (THREE STRIKES. LONG PAUSE AND A BIT OF A RUN. FOURTH STRIKE)
Dam. Missed them all. There's the match MacCulloch used to set the house afire.

HESTOR: Whack!

KATHERINE: And there's MacCulloch lighting it. (PAUSE) I won't squash MacCulloch because he changed his mind and woke us up. But there's his teary face in the red glow of the fire.

HESTOR: Splat!

UNSEEN BY HESTOR AND KATHERINE, ERLICH RUNS ONTO THE CATWALK. HE IS TERRIFIED. HE STOPS, TURNS. WINSTON APPROACHES WITH THE DOUBLE HEADED AXE. ERLICH STANDS TRANSFIXED.

KATHERINE: Look! Winston coming out of the lower barn, going full tilt. Look at him clear the machinery. What a jump. Christ, Hestor. Here comes MacCulloch after him Sweet Jesus. He has the axe.

WINSTON IS VERY CLOSE TO ERLICH

NARRATION: She raises the shovel.

HESTOR: No! Don't kill MacCulloch. Not just yet.

KATHERINE: Winston's just a boy.

HESTOR: Let him run.

WINSTON SWINGS, MISSES. ERLICH RUNS. WINSTON FOLLOWS.

KATHERINE: He's coming in the back door crying. Look. That's you hiding behind the stepmother.

HESTOR: Grace.

KATHERINE: Right. Grace.

HESTOR: I'm scared.

NARRATION: Hestor picks up the second shovel.

KATHERINE: You're terrified. No wonder. Here's MacCulloch coming through the back door with the axe. See?

SHE SWINGS AT THEM MISSES.

KATHERINE: They're too fast for me.

HESTOR: There's gouges in the ceiling where the axe gets stuck when he swings.

NARRATION: Katherine swats at the ceiling.

KATHERINE: Oh dear God. Now Grace is fighting with MacCulloch, holding him off while Winston beats it out the front door. You're there Hestor. Look at you crying behind Grace.

HESTOR: That's me. Hiding behind Grace.

NARRATION: Hestor brings the shovel down hard on the image of herself.

KATHERINE: Hestor. You killed yourself.

HESTOR: 00~s. I got Grace too.

THEY LAUGH

KATHERINE: Here's Big Alec John Alec and the cronies who set MacCulloch drunk.

HESTOR: It was Big Alec John Alec that kicked you face first into the filthy floor water.

NARRATION: Hestor brings her shovel down with glee.

KATHERINE: Moush. Good one. Thank you dear, Here's MacCulloch coming upstairs to our room in the middle of the night. He's sitting on our bed. He's...

THEY BRING THEIR SHOVELS DOWN HARD TOGETHER. A MOMENT. THEY HOLD EACH OTHER'S EYES.

HESTOR: Here's one for the old man gave Clara the bad dope.

KATHERINE: Harder, Hestor. Who's Clara?

HESTOR: Here's some for all the things you said.

KATHERINE: That's the spirit.

HESTOR: Here's the people who stole my baby...

KATHERINE: Hestor?

HESTOR: Here's the people who make the drugs...

KATHERINE: Hester.

HESTOR: Here's the people who make the booze...

KATHERINE: Hestor.

HESTOR: Here's all the vampire booze artists...

KATHERINE: What baby?

HESTOR: Here's one for Violet. For what they done to Tanto. For how they burned them poor people in Japan.

KATHERINE: What baby?

HESTOR: For how they'll burn us all.

HESTOR BEATS IN A FRENZY. KATHERINE ATTEMPTS TO STOP HER, BUT CAN'T HOLD HESTOR'S FURY.

KATHERINE: What baby?

HESTOR: There's that psychiatrist at McGill University Hospital. (SHOVEL)
There's that other psychiatrist. (SHOVEL)

NARRATION: She squashes the psychiatrists as though they were vermin - that is with low, fast precise blows around her feet.

HESTOR: And my other psychiatrist. (SHOVEL) There's another one. (SHOVEL)
And another. (SHOVEL) And another. (SHOVEL). There's the welfare woman.
(SHOVEL) There's the kids who hurt Violet. (SHOVEL) And Tanto. (SHOVEL)
And me, (SHOVEL) me, (SHOVEL) me... (SHOVEL). What baby?

KATHERINE: You said they took your baby.

HESTOR: Don't believe a word I say. I'm on drugs.

KATHERINE AND HESTOR FIND THEMSELVES IN AN EMBRACE OF RECOGNITION AND RELEASE.

COMMOTION OFF. WINSTON ENTERS DRAGGING ERLICH

WINSTON: Look what I found.

ERLICH: Hi mom

HESTOR: Why did you break my house?

ERLICH: I couldn't think of any other way to say hello.

KATHERINE: Mom?

HESTOR: You're my baby?

ERLICH: Yes.

HESTOR: Oh.

KATHERINE: How do you know?

ERLICH: Her name is Hestor Ann McCulloch. She gave birth to me at the Montreal General on August 15, 1963. Clara was pregnant. We needed to know who I am For the baby.

HESTOR: Clara was going to have a baby?

HESTOR TURNS AWAY.

ERLICH: The baby woulda been born twisted. Who are these lovely people?

KATHERINE: Well. I'm your mother's sister. I'm Katherine.

SHE STARES IN AMAZEMENT.

ERLICH: Aunt Kathy. Wild. I'm Erlich Van Ecres. Who's the great white hunter?

KATHERINE: That's your uncle, Winston.

ERLICH: Uncle Winston.

WINSTON: Don't call me that.

ERLICH: Simba do? (SILENCE) Bwana?

KATHERINE: And this is your mother, Hestor. But then you already know that.

ERLICH: Who's in the box.

KATHERINE: Your, ah, grandfather.

ERLICH: McCulloch.

HESTOR: Yes. McCulloch.

ERLICH: Can I like see him?

SILENCE.

WINSTON: No.

ERLICH: Why not?

WINSTON: Its too late.

DAVID AND SONDR A ENTER. DAVID IS BARELY MOBILE, A VISION OF SHAME AND GUILT. SONDR A IS FLUSHED AND REFRESHED.

SONDR A: My God. You're splendid.

ERLICH: You're not bad yourself. Who's she?

WINSTON: My wife.

SONDR A: Sondra.

ERLICH: Aunt Sondra. Decent.

KATHERINE: David, this is Hestor's boy. His name is Erwin.

ERLICH: Erlich.

DAVID: We met.

KATHERINE: Ernie wants to see his grandfather, David.

ERLICH: Erlich.

KATHERINE: Winston here was just about to explain why that was out of the question. Weren't you Winston.

WINSTON: Have a nice walk kids?

SONDRA: Wonderful.

WINSTON: Did you stay out of the beaver pond?

DAVID: We, ah, we walked along the dam

SONDRA: I think Erlich should be able to see McCul loch. I mean why not.

WINSTON: The problem is...

DAVID: No hard feelings, about the Cadillac I mean.

ERLICH: Sure man. Relax.

KATHERINE: So. What brought you to the Island, Eric?

ERLICH: Erlich. I, ah, I liberated a Toyota. I had to see my grandfather. And you all. See, when I found out I had real relatives I couldn't wait.

HESTOR: Did they treat you good?

ERLICH: They did they're best. But they're not mine, know what I mean? I'd look in the mirror and like zero. Nothing I recognized. I wanted to say - far out - I got my mother's eyes, my father's nose, my uncles chin, am I ever like my cousin... But their I was. A unimorph. Nothin' else like me in the whole twisted universe. I can't tell you how happy I am to find people who look like me.

THEY LOOK AT HIM THEN THEMSELVES. THEY ARE NOT PLEASED.

WINSTON: If you're after the house, me bucko, you can just forget it. I got big plans for this property....

ERLICH: Fuck the house, man. I just want to find out who I am

KATHERINE: That's understandable. (CLOSE, PRIVATE) There's no call for coarse language, Edwin. (ESCORTS HIM TO DAVID) Come stand by your cousin.

SONDRA: There's a certain resemblance.

WINSTON: Yeah. They're both standing up.

ERLICH: Who's my father?

KATHERINE: Let's go back to the house. There's all kinds of sandwiches and tea...

SONDRA: He's got your build, Winston. And your hands Hestor. I think he's lovely.

ERLICH: So are you.

KATHERINE: He stands just like Jimmy Billy Archie.

HESTOR: And Hector Donald Gordon.

DAVID: And Red Angus the River.

KATHERINE: And Black Angus the Bush. Angus and Angus were twins, Ernie. Never spoke a word for twenty years. (ODD HALF LAUGH) David. What do you think?

DAVID: He's a MacCulloch.

WINSTON: He's a thief and if you think you can waltz in here and grab my property...

KATHERINE: Whose property, Winston?

WINSTON: Well, our property... I mean the family... ah, MacCulloch's. That's what he's after. I mean look at him Some kind of Hell's Angel* The next thing you know this'll be a motorcycle hang out. Then come the drugs, then prostitution. It happened in Mississauga, and the same damn thing can happen here unless we put a stop to it.

ERLICH: Chill out, Bwana. Take a pill.

WINSTON: Don't tell me to take a pill, pal.

KATHERINE: Motorcycle gangs. Drugs. Hookers. I don't think I'd like that.

ERLICH: I just want to see my grandfather.

WINSTON: Well forget it.

SONDRA: I don't see the harm

HESTOR: MacCulloch's gone.

KATHERINE: Yes dear. It's a sad day for the MacCulloch's. (SMALL NERVOUS LAUGH)

HESTOR: He went into the woods.

DAVID: The thing is, Erlich, MacCulloch built this coffin...

ERLICH: He built his own coffin?

DAVID: Yes. I helped him. It's designed to collapse in the grave.

ERLICH: Twisted.

WINSTON: There's not a nail or screw or three inch bracket in the whole thing. Is there Katherine.

KATHERINE: No. No, not a screw or anything.

ERLICH: He built this?

DAVID: I used to help him in the summers when I was a kid.

ERLICH: I envy you man. I dreamed about grandfathers. I bet he was great.

DAVID: He was.

WINSTON: Christ.

KATHERINE: Shush.

ERLICH: I should have started looking for you years ago. But I was afraid of what I'd find. How's it hold together?

DAVID: Joints - you know, dove tails, rabbits, mortice and tenon...

WINSTON: And glue.

ERLICH: Is it glued shut?

WINSTON: Yeah. That's it. It's glued shut. And we're outta glue.

KATHERINE: But we have lots of pictures back at the house. I'll take the kids back Winston and you can bury father. There's lots of food. We'll have a lovely time.

DAVID: I'd like to help.

WINSTON: No, no, no... you go ahead. I can handle it.

ERLICH: So would I.

SONDRA: Me too.

HESTOR: I'd like to sing something. McCulloch loved music.

KATHERINE: Hestor, dear, this is hardly the time for Teddy Bear's Picnic.

WINSTON: Don't let her sing.

HESTOR: He loved 'Fhir 'a Bhàta'

DAVID: I hadn't planned any singing Hestor. Mhm?

KATHERINE: She has her heart set on it.

WINSTON: For Christ's sake, don't let her dance.

KATHERINE: Hestor dear, please don't dance...

DAVID: (STEPS FORWARD, OPENS HIS BIBLE) Let us bow our heads and unite our hearts in prayer. Dearly beloved. Jbch heine na chad to-mis rbi...
HESTOR MOVES BESIDE DAVID, BEGINS THE LAMENT. MUFFED, HE CLOSSES THE BIBLE, RELINQUISHES HIS PLACE. HESTOR STANDS ALONE.

HESTOR: (SINGS)

Fhir á bhát-a na hóra éile
Fhir á bhát-a na hóra éile
Fhir á bhát-a na hóra éile
Mb-shoraidh slhn leat's gach hit an teid thir.

'S tru ní seautuinn o'n chnór a' s 'airde,
Dh' fhuech am faic ní fear a' Bháta;
An tig thu'm diugh, no'n tig thu' maireach
'S nirtigthu idir, gur trugh a ta' ní.

KATHERINE MOVES TO HER, TAKES HER HAND.

DAVID: /KATHERINE: /HESTOR:

Fhir á bhát-a na hbro éile
Fhir á bhát-a na hóra éile
Fhir á bhát-a na hóra éile
Mb-shoraidh slán leat's gach áit an teid thir.

KATHERINE NEVER QUITE GETS THE VERSES. HESTOR HAS THEM COMPLETELY.

HESTOR: /KATHERINE:

Tha mo chridhe briste, brúite;
'S tru na dea a' ruith o'm shuilear
An tig thu'm nochd, no bi mo dhiul riut?
No'm dlín ní'n dorus, le asna thrsaich?

SONDRA, DAVID AND ERLICH JOIN THE CHORUSES. ERLICH DOES HIS BEST TO IMPOSE A PUNK RHYTHM HE IS NOT SUCCESSFUL.

ENSEMBLE:

Fhir á bhát-a na hóra éile
Fhir á bhát-a na hbro éile
Fhir á bhát-a na hóra éile
Mb-shoraidh slán leat's gach áit an teid thir.

WINSTON MUMBLES ALONG, RESENTMENT GIVING WAY TO SOME SLIGHT FELLOW-FEELING.

HESTOR: /KATHERINE:

'S tru ní faighneachd de luchd nam báta
am far iad thu, no'm bhiel thu s'bhailt:
Ach's ann a tha gach aon diubh'g raitinn,
Gur grèrach mise, na thug ní gràdh dhuit.

EMSEMBLE:

**Fhir á bhdt-a na hóro éile
Fhir á bhát-a na hóro éile
Fhir á bhát-a na hbro éile
Mb-shoraidh slán leat's gach áit an teid thir.**

FADE

SCENE 2: MONTREAL.

NARRATION: Hestor's Westmount basement living space. The furnace glows in the calm space. Hestor sits on her bed, smoking. Her attention is fixed on Erlich who spray paints pleasant visions on appropriate surfaces - the early violence replaced by work with a kind of twisted wisdom

HESTOR IS BAREFOOTED, HER RED SNEAKERS BY THE BED.

HESTOR: That's nice dear.

ERLICH: Thanks mom

HESTOR: You like calling me mom, eh?

ERLICH: Yeah. I wish MacCulloch was alive. I'd have someone to call dad.

HESTOR: MacCulloch was your grandfather.

ERLICH: According to the Great White Hunter...

HESTOR: Damn that Winston.

ERLICH: Baby would have been his own grandson, right?

HESTOR: MacCulloch is not your father. He's your dead baby's great grandfather. That's all.

ERLICH: Hey. Mhm Relax. I like the idea of being my own uncle or brother or whatever I am And my baby might have been twisted enough to make it. Some genetic weirdness might give it eye protectors. Or maybe an extra lung that sucked back acid rain instead of oxygen. It could eat chemicals. And have polarized pigment and ultra-violet hair for the ozone holes. And maybe it could reproduce without sex. Or just be smart or stupid enough to stop doing everything wrong.

HESTOR: Like a bag baby.

ERLICH: Hey. Maybe. A twisted little Bag baby.

HESTOR: That'd be nice.

ERLICH: What do you think mom?

HESTOR: It's nice. I like the woods part. Green is restful. Did you take Clara to the Arboretum?

ERLICH: Yeah.

HESTOR: Good boy.

ERLICH: I left her in our favorite spot. Under the junipers. I hope nobody finds her. And our twisted little dead baby. Imagine a baby that's my brother and uncle and my son all at once. That would have been twisted.

HESTOR: That's bad talk.

ERLICH: MacCulloch was twisted.

HESTOR: Damn that Winston.

ERLICH: He's sick.

HESTOR: He always told lies.

ERLICH: I'm just twisted. Tell me a story, mom

ERLICH SITS ON THE BED BY HESTOR.

HESTOR: Did you love Clara?

ERLICH: I didn't hate her.

HESTOR: Did you love her?

ERLICH: I think so.

HESTOR: And did Clara love you?

ERLICH: We never talked about it. We never talk about love.

HESTOR: That's all we ever talked about.

ERLICH: We don't know what to think. About love.

HESTOR: Love is perfect kindness. Where did you meet Clara?

ERLICH: We were at Art College together. But I really met her in the thrash pit at the Dirty Needle. She hocked this huge gob at the band but got me by mistake. She was twisted bad. I liked her. She would have liked dad.

HESTOR: Stop saying that.

ERLICH: What?

HESTOR: About MacCulloch.

ERLICH: There's nothing to be ashamed of.

HESTOR: You should be ashamed of lies.

ERLICH: That covers just about everything. Tell me a story.

HESTOR: I think I'm mad at you. I'm not sure.

ERLICH: I didn't do anything.

HESTOR: You kids. You kids are everywhere. And you're all sick. Sick, sick, sick.

ERLICH: Its a sick world.

HESTOR: Its a good world.

ERLICH: Love is perfect crap. Love rots and dies before your eyes.

HESTOR: No.

ERLICH: Hate is perfect. Hate never dies.

HESTOR: Do you believe that?

ERLICH: Hate beats love.

HESTOR: It's love that wins. Love makes people good.

ERLICH: Crap.

(AS IN THE OPENING, HE SLAM/SINGS THIS)

People make people eat crap.

People make people breathe crap.

People make people think crap.

People make crap
for people to watch
on TV, TV color TV.

People consuuumme TV crap.

TV crap for local, regional, national and international
consumptionnnn-ah-ah-ah-ah...

HESTOR: Your grandmother died of consumption.

ERLICH: They make Cowboys and Indians con sume crap.

Cowboys and Indians are full of crap

They concentrate crap for as tro nauts

As tro nauts are full of crap

They freeze dry crap for soldier boys

Soldier boys and soldier girls

are full of crap

Public officials favor crap

gag on crap in puuublic

cram crap down poor people's throats

Poor people too-o-o sick

too-o-o weak

too-o-o fight back.

HESTOR: That's true. Boyohboyohboy.

ERLICH:

Pumpin' crap
Buying crap
Selling crap
Trading crap for other crap
Crap energieeeeeeah...
They climb on top
the heels
of their boots
smash
the faces of the poor.
They destroy.
They go on holiday.
Holiday, holiday,
Club Mød ho li day...
They drive cars
They ride planes
They live lives
That feed on other people's blood.
Poor people's blood
Poor people's bloood...

HESTOR: McCulloch has a car. Had a car.

ERLICH:

They
have
fat
ugly
grub-like
children
they teach to hate them selves
their own parents
their own selves.
They
do
things
to
each
other
and them selves
in
the
name
of god
and hu man it Y
that make me want to
make me wanna make me wanna
make me wanna p-u-u-u-u-ke...

HE THROWS HIMSELF HARD UNTO THE FLOOR. HE IS BEWILDERED AND DISORIENTED.

HESTOR: That's true. Boy oh boy oh boy. Who are they?

ERLICH: Why did you give me away?

HESTOR: I didn't. They stole you.

ERLICH: Why?

HESTOR: Because I was sick.

ERLICH: I could have helped you.

HESTOR: You want to help me?

ERLICH: Yes. You are my mom Right?

HESTOR: What were you like when you were a boy?

ERLICH: I was a show-off. I liked the attention. Had lots of energy. Then I got lazy. I got lazy when they told me I was adopted - started getting into fights and shit. I ran away a lot. What were you like when you were a girl?

HESTOR: Pretty. And shy.

ERLICH: Yeah. I can see that.

HESTOR: Can you?

ERLICH: Yeah. What else?

HESTOR: They liked me at the communions.

ERLICH: The what?

HESTOR: That's when people came from all over the Island for two days of church.

ERLICH: Two days of church. Wah. That's fucked.

HESTOR: Watch your tongue. They'd come - the old people - and everybody brought lotsa food, and slept wherever they could - like extra beds or on the new hay in barns. They'd come by horse and wagon.

ERLICH: And you were the prettiest one there.

HESTOR: Katherine was prettier than me. Everybody wanted her. She'd come to the communion with the handsomest young man, in a carriage with a black black horse. Shiny. Everybody wanted to be like Katherine. She'd be home from Montreal with all the best clothes. She came to shame McCulloch and the cronies. The service in St Columba's Presbyterian was in english. But they held the Gaelic presbyterian service in the woods. Cause the old language wasn't 'aloud'. Made us wear a shingle in school if we spoke the old language.

ERLICH: I hate them

HESTOR: That's where I went. To the woods. That's where your grandfather sang. But Katherine sang in English, at St Columba's. They hated each

other that much. Then she'd come back to Montreal. She did that for years until she met Dennis and stayed on the Island.

ERLICH: People slept in barns.

HESTOR: Yeah. And danced on bridges, after the communion. We'd put kerosene lanterns along the bridge - it was always in July just after the hay - and we'd dance on the bridge because the floor was good solid wood. I waltzed on the bridge lots of times. It was nice.

ERLICH BECOMES DROWSY, RESTS HIS HEAD ON HESTOR'S LAP.

ERLICH: Sounds nice.

HESTOR: Oh it was. And McCulloch would tell the old stories. Everybody would drink moonshine and dance and talk all night. And from a little way back you see the lantern lights shining on the water and hear the music. I loved to watch people dancing on the bridge. The moon and stars and the crickets and frogs chirping.

ERLICH: (drowsy) The moon chirped?

HESTOR: Oh yeah. We'd sing and dance on the bridge until dawn. The Lanterns would fade on the water as the sun came up. The babies would be asleep in the new hay in wagons. They'd sleep till dawn, their dreams full of music and laughter. And your father... I mean grandfather..., singing. The sun would perk over the edge of the hay fields. The hay there in mounds. Spider webs with little red drops in the sunlight. The fiddler would slow down. And then he'd stop. We'd go home and sleep all day. And that's what we'd do. Did you like that story?

ERLICH: Umm

HESTOR: What's 'the thrashing pit?

ERLICH: Huh?

HESTOR: You said you met Clara at the thrashing pit.

ERLICH: The thrash pit.

HESTOR: Like for grain?

ERLICH: Grain?

HESTOR: Wheat from the chaff. You know. September.

ERLICH: No no. That's where we dance.

HESTOR: Like waltz?

ERLICH: No. We throw ourselves at each other and spit.

HESTOR: Doesn't sound nice.

ERLICH: Its fucking awful. But that's what we do. I'm tired of this image.
I'm getting too old.

HESTOR: You're only a boy.

ERLICH: The next step is oblivion and I don't think I'm up for it. I want a new thing. So I've decided to become a celt. I'm gonna learn the old language. That song you sung for McCulloch... Sing me the old song.

HESTOR: (SINGS) Fhir a' bhat-a na horo eile...

HESTOR SENSES AN UNWELCOME PRESENCE. .

HESTOR: (SINGS) If you go down to the woods today
You'll never believe you eyes.

ERLICH: Not that one, man. Fhir a Bata.

HESTOR: Don't be rude. Go to sleep.

ERLICH SLEEPS. SHE SCANS THE SPACE ABOVE HER.

HESTOR: (CALLS OUT) If I have to come up there to you I'll tan your hide.

SILENCE.

HESTOR: (SINGS)

If you go down to the woods today
you'd better not go alone
Its lovely down in the woods today
but safer to stay at home.
For every bear that ever there was
is there today and that is because
today's the day the teddy bears have their picnic.

THE FURNACE RUMBLES AND BELCHES. HESTOR IS AFRAID. SHE HOLDS SLEEPING ERLICH VERY CLOSE.

HESTOR: (SINGS)

Picnic time for teddy bears
all of the teddy bears
are having a wonderful time today
see them gaily dance about
lah lah lah lab lah lah lah

ANOTHER THUMP FROM THE FURNACE.

HESTOR: Who's there?

SHE THROWS A SNEAKER. THE FURNACE QUIETENS.

HESTOR: Who's there?

SILENCE.

HESTOR: (SINGS) At six o'clock their mommy's and daddy's
will take them home to bed
because they're tired little teddy bears.

THE FURNACE RATTLES AND THUMPS WITH GREAT ANGER.

HESTOR: Go away. Leave us alone. (THROWS OTHER SNEAKER)

THE FURNACE DOOR SWINGS OPEN. SMOKE BILLOWS OUT.

HESTOR: (panic) Don't take my baby-

MACCULLOCH IS SPEWED OUT. HE BEATS HIS SMOLDERING CLOTHES.

MACCULLOCH: That your boy?

HESTOR: This is Erlich.

MACCULLOCH: Weird name for a celt.

HESTOR: Hell freeze over?

MACCULLOCH: I was in the wrong line up. There was a sign saying hell this
way heaven that. I went to hell without thinking. I was meant for
heaven, Hestor. What do you think of that.

HESTOR: Then heaven is hell.

MACCULLOCH: No no. I'm bound for glory. Had a long talk to Mses. He's
spelling off Saint Peter. Mses said "Check with your daughter Hestor.
She says the word, you're in".

HESTOR: You could talk your way into anything.

MACCULLOCH: Blessed with the gift. Ah yes. I'm good to talk. Me and Mses
are just like that.

HESTOR: You're always telling them lies.

MACCULLOCH: Swear to God.

THE FURNACE RUMBLES.

MACCULLOCH: Hell, you see, has this slow moving line-up. Like them banks in
Charlottetown. But hell's line-up is longer. Its been backed up since
the Spanish Inquisition. All these nasty fat-faced RCs in red --
Bishops, Cardinals, Popes.

HESTOR: No Presbyterians?

MACCULLOCH: Of course not. There's fire and brimstone and smoke all right,
oh yes, just like in the bible. Yeah. They change the order in the line
up so you have to stand next to people you hated on earth. And you stand
and you stand and you stand.

HESTOR: Mother there?

MACCULLOCH: And you stand and you stand and you stand. And people are allowed to push in in front of you. People who hated you. You'd be surprised at the number of people that do. They're in one hell of a hurry. (PAUSE) You never did have much of a sense of humor. But you always were good to listen. Is he a good boy?

HESTOR: He'd like to be. He wants to learn the old ways. He thinks your his father.

MACCULLOCH: Damn that Winston. He just told him that to keep him away from the house. I should go back and burn it down. They think I'm some kind of monster.

HESTOR: You are.

MACCULLOCH: Hestor. You were always my favorite. After David.

HESTOR: Damn your lies. You never loved anyone but yourself.

MACCULLOCH: Don't make me do something you'll regret, Hestor..

MACCULLOCH: I never meant no harm.

HESTOR: Yes you did. You did.

MACCULLOCH: I came back to say I love you.

HESTOR: No. Vampire booze artist, Go to hell.

MACCULLOCH: What's that smell?

HESTOR: I don't smell nothin.

MACCULLOCH: What's that on your leg, Hestor?

HESTOR: There's nothin' on my..,

MACCULLOCH: A little higher. There. Hestor. That's disgusting.

HESTOR: Stop.

MACCULLOCH: And your feet. Black and cracked. Bleeding.

HESTOR: Damn you MacCulloch.

HESTOR'S TRANSFORMATION BECOMES PHYSICAL. HER POSTURE GOES, HER HEAD DROPS ON HER SHOULDERS. SHE BECOMES DISHEVELED, WORN, DIRTY, SHE FOLLOWS MACCULLOCH TOWARD THE FURNACE.

HESTOR: What's that smell? Dirty smell. Stink.

MACCULLOCH: Its you Hestor. Its you...

HESTOR: No.

MACCULLOCH: Yes. Come on, sweetheart. You don't want to stay here anymore.
Its a mean old world, isn't it darling?

HESTOR: (SHE LOOKS AT HER LEGS IN HORROR) Its a good world.

THE FURNACE DOOR SWINGS OPEN. HESTOR STARES INTO ITS DEPTHS. MACCULLOCH PUTS AN ARM AROUND HER WAIST.

MACCULLOCH: Come with me, Hestor.

HESTOR: I'm afraid.

MACCULLOCH: Don't be afraid sweetheart. You can help me. Its better if you take someone with you. Someone pretty and good like you. Come on.

HESTOR: Come where, MacCulloch?

MACCULLOCH: Just give me your hand.

HESTOR IS ABOUT TO ENTER THE FURNACE.

HESTOR: No.

MACCULLOCH: Don't make me angry, Hestor.

HESTOR: You won't take me with you.

MACCULLOCH: No? Then maybe I'll take him Shouldn't be hard. He's halfway there already.

MACCULLOCH MOVES TOWARD ERLICH

HESTOR: Don't take my baby.

HESTOR RISES. MACCULLOCH, AT SOME DISTANCE, LEVELS HESTOR WITH HIS VOICE, AMPLIFIED, NOT OF THIS WORLD. SHE FALLS VIOLENTLY TO THE STAGE.

MACCULLOCH DRAGS ERLICH FROM THE BED. HIS VOICE DISTORTION CONTINUES.

MACCULLOCH: Two equals one where I come from Get it?

HE RUNS HIS HANDS OVER ERLICH'S BODY.

MACCULLOCH: So alive, so fresh and warm Vampire booze artist. Vampire booze artist...

HIS AMPLIFIED LAUGH PARALIZES HESTOR. HE MOVES TOWARD THE FURNACE. HE DRAGS ERLICH BY ONE FOOT. THE YOUNG MAN TRAILS BEHIND HIM OPEN, SPLAYED, MACABRE. MACCULLOCH DOESN'T LOOK BACK UNTIL HE FEELS RESISTANCE. HESTOR, STILL ON HER BELLY, HAS TAKEN HOLD OF ERLICH'S TRAILING ARM MACCULLOCH TURNS.

MACCULLOCH: (Amplified) Let go.

HESTOR: No. You let go...

**ANOTHER AMPLIFIED ROAR FROM MACCULLOCH ROLLS HETOR AWAY. MACCULLOCH
TURNS AND RESUMES HIS SLOW AND STEADY MARCH, DRAGGING SLEEPING ERLICH**

HESTOR: MacCulloch.

MACCULLOCH LAUGHS.

HESTOR: MacCulloch! No more.

MACCULLOCH TURNS SLOWLY.

MACCULLOCH (AMPLIFIED) What?

HESTOR: You don't have me anymore. And you will not take my child.

MACCULLOCH LAUGHS.

MACCULLOCH: Try and stop me.

**HE ENTERS THE FURNACE, BEGINS PULLING ERLICH IN WITH HIM HESTOR, PRONE
AT THE MOUTH OF HELL HOLDS ERLICH'S WRISTS WITH ALL HER STRENGTH
MACCULLOCH STOPS, DRINKS DEEPLY FROM A FULL BOTTLE OF WHISKEY.**

HESTOR: Oh dear God help me.

KATHERINE APPEARS ON THE CAT WALK.

KATHERINE: Do what you have to do Hestor.

HESTOR: He's our father.

KATHERINE: It's up to you. (Violet's voice) Prick, prick, filthy prick!

HESTOR: Violet? Violet?

SONDRA APPEARS.

SONDRA: It's starting all over again, Hestor. Help me...

HESTOR: Sondra...

SONDRA: Hell, Hestor. Send him to hell. No. Winston. Please... (Clara's
voice) He's a fucking vampire booze hound, man. Kill the fucking vampire.
Kill him

HESTOR: Clara..

CLARA: Hestor. Please. Help Erlich.

MACCULLOCH ROARS. HESTOR RESISTS, GATHERS HER STRENGTH

HESTOR: Clara?

CLARA: Hell.

HESTOR: Violet?

VIOLET: Hell.

HESTOR: Sondra?

SONDRA: Hell.

HESTOR: Katherine?

KATHERINE: Hell. HESTOR. HELL.

MACCULLOCH ROARS, DRAGS ERLICH AND HESTOR DEEPER INTO THE FURNACE. HESTOR RISES TO HER KNEES.

HESTOR: 'S'ann dha fheih a ni....

MACCULLOCH TURNS. SHE STANDS, GAINES LEVERAGE.

MACCULLOCH: Hestor.

KATHERINE: Hell, Hestor.

HESTOR: 'S'ann dha fheih a ni....

MACCULLOCH: No. Please.

KATHERINE: Yes. Yes. Yes.

HESTOR PULLS WITH ALL HER MIGHT.

HESTOR: 'S'ann dha fheih a ni an cu an conhart.

MACCULLOCH: Nooooo...

ERLICH TUMBLES OUT OF THE FURNACE. MACCULLOCH ATTEMPTS TO FOLLOW

HESTOR: Go to hell where you belong.

HE RETREATS. SHE SLAMS THE DOOR, WHICH REVERBERATES. ERLICH SITS UPRIGHT.

ERLICH: MacCulloch's not my father.

HESTOR: Of course not. It was all them saying it.

VIOLET ENTERS, WUNDED, TOO EXCITED TO SPEAK.

VIOLET: Its amaz... Shit!... You won't belie... Bitch!... Cut my throat... Shit!...

CROSS FADE TO CATWALK.

SCENE 3: MONTREAL.

DAVID: (SINGS)

**Oh my PoPPa
to me he was so wonderful**

**Oh my poppa
to me he was so good.**

**No one could be
so gentle and so loveable**

**Oh my poppa
He always understood**

**Gone are the days
when he would take me on his knee
and with a smile
he'd change my tears to laughter**

**Oh my poppa
so funny, so adorable
always the clown
so funny in his way**

**Oh my poppa
to me he was so wonderful**

**Oh my poppa
I miss him so today**

BRASS, VIOLINS IN FULL. ORCHESTRAL BREAK, KEY CHANGE, THEN FULL CAST CHORUS.

**Gone are the days
when he would take me on his knee
and with a smile
he'd change my tears to laughter**

**Oh my poppa
to me he was so wonderful**

**Oh my poppa
I miss him so today**

CHIMES. HESTOR'S VOICE RISES ABOVE THE REST

**Oh my poppa
Oh my poppa.**

SCENE 4: MONTREAL. THE CADILLAC TAVERN.

VIOLET, ERLICH AND HESTOR ENTER. THE TAVERN IS EMPTY.

VIOLET: Gone... they're all gone.... Shit!

HESTOR: Calm down, dear, before you wet yourself.

ERLICH: Who's gone, Violet?

VIOLET: Cut my throat. Get it?

HESTOR: Stop that, Violet. Just sit down and calm yourself or you'll choke. Where's your respirator?

VIOLET BEGINS TO GASP AND POINT AT A PILE OF HER STUFF. HESTOR FINDS THE MASK, PLACES IT ON VIOLET'S FACE, WHO STRAPS IT ON AND WEARS IT THROUGHOUT THE SCENE.

DAVID ENTERS.

HESTOR: I thought you were going home.

DAVID: I got to the airport, got through security and thought no. I'm staying in Montreal.

HESTOR: Good.

ERLICH: Great, man. What're ya gonna do?

DAVID: First year, McGill Medical school. Then psychiatry.

HESTOR LAUGHS.

DAVID: What's so funny?

HESTOR: Oh never you mind. I better smoke.

DAVID: Do you think Tanto needs help Hestor?

HESTOR: We all need help, dear.

DAVID: I mean at the bar. I have some great ideas. I'm going to become a lounge singer, see. I though we could put a small stage here, right. And a place for the band here. I can sing nights, sling beer and put myself through college.

WE HEAR SINGING FROM THE MEN'S ROOM

TANTO: (SINGS) Mon river, wider than a mile...

HESTOR: Oh no. Tanto's singing.

ERLICH: Nice voice...

DAVID: Tanto sings. Wonderful. We'll do duets.

TANTO: I'm crossing you in style some day

VIOLET: Faggot. Shit.

TANTO: We're after the same rainbow's end
Steaming round the bend
My huckleberry friend
Mbon river...

HESTOR: (Yells) Tanto. Come out here...

TANTO: Hestor? My Hestor?

HE ENTERS, WEARING A FEATHER BOA.

ERLICH: Whoah.

VIOLET: No... wrong one... Bitch!... more....

SHE REPLACES THE MASK.

TANTO: I thought you'd never get back from IPE. Oh my dear Hestor.

HESTOR: (DEADLY SERIOUS) You are dressed funny, Tantalus.

TANTO: I couldn't stop myself...

HESTOR: You promised.

TANTO: A little regression. It is nothing. I was so worried about you.

VIOLET: Faggot.

TANTO: I am a heterosexual cross-dressing gentleman. Aren't I dear?

HESTOR: I am disappointed in you Tanto. Very disappointed.

ERLICH: I think he looks swell. Wanna dance big fella?

TANTO SPITS ON HIM ERLICH IS DELIGHTED, TAKES IT AS A YES.

ERLICH: Whoah... alright!

HE WALTZES TANTO AROUND A FEW TIMES.

TANTO: Let me go you Anglais freak wierdo...

VIOLET: Boys shouldn't dance together. Shit. One of them's a girl. Bitch!

HESTOR: Have you ever lied to me Tanto?

TANTO: Lied to you. No. I have never lied to you.

HESTOR: He's only half English, Tanto.

TANTO: The other half is animal.

HESTOR: He's my son.

THEY STOP DANCING. TANTO HOLDS HIM AT ARMS LENGTH

TANTO: Not true.

HESTOR: This boy is my son.

ERLICH: Twisted.

TANTO: This is the stolen baby?

HESTOR: He is my baby. Yes. And unless you're keeping something from me,
Tanto...?

TANTO: He is how old?

ERLICH: 26.

TANTO: Ah... dix neuf cent soixant trois...mon dieux... Rue Jeanne Manse.
That little ground floor appartement?

HESTOR NODS. THEY SMILE AT EACH OTHER.

TANTO: Mbn fils.

VIOLET: Two equals one where I come from Get it? Bitch.

ERLICH: You look terrific, Dad.

TANTO: My boy. Look at you. You are a true wonder. Pahpahpah quelle cinema!
(EMBRACE). I have a surprise for you. You and your mother will please
sit down. Because if you do not, I think perhaps you will fall.

DAVID: Ah, Tanto.

TANTO: L'insulaire.

DAVID: You've got a great voice, ah, and I, ah, I...

TANTO: Vite, vite, vite. You are ruining mon surprise.

DAVID: I, ah, want to stay in Montreal, see, and I was wondering...

TANTO: If you can have a job. Who do you think I am eh? La Casse Populaire?

HESTOR: Tanto...

TANTO: You start immediately. Now please. You will all sit down. Asseyez-
vous s'il vous plait.

TANTO WALKS TO THE WASHROOM

HESTOR: Oh dear. I bet Katherine's here. Or Winston.

ERLICH: Friggin' Winston.

ERLICH AND HESTOR SIT. DAVID GOES BEHIND THE BAR. VIOLET IS DELIGHTED. SHE BECOMES VERY ANIMATED.

VIOLET: I can't wait. Oh my Dear friends-shit! Bitch! Bitch! Dirty bitch!... it is all Walt Disney. Bitch!

TANTO: Silence!

HE OPENS THE DOOR GRANDELOQUENTLY.

TANTO: Surprise? You will please come out,

CLARA EMERGES. ERLICH STANDS.

ERLICH: Sweet twisted Jesus.

ERLICH GOES TO HER.

CLARA: I'm alive.

ERLICH: Yeah. Yeah you are...

VIOLET DANCES IN GLEE. SHE STOPS VERY SUDDENLY.

VIOLET: HESTOR! HESTOR!! HELP VIOLET!!!

HESTOR RUSHES VIOLET TO THE LADIES ROOM, RETURNS TO THE GROUP.

ERLICH: (FEELS CLARA'S STOMACH) How's our twisted little baby?

CLARA: I woke up in the Arboretum What a wonderful idea. Was it yours?

ERLICH: It was Hestor's.

HESTOR: She had to pee. Boyohboyohboy. What a day.

CLARA: Hestor. I woke under the junipers feeling wonderful, Like I was a child. All the tracks are gone... Look.

THEY STUDY HER ARMS.

CLARA: And the calluses and the bruises. The baby's going to be fine, Erlich. I've stopped bleeding. I feel like I'm eighteen again. (SHE LAUGHS AND CRIES AT THE SAME TIME) I'm going to be one bitch of a mother.

ERLICH: Our twisted little baby.

CLARA: What will we call him?

ERLICH: Tornado.

TANTO: What if its a girl?

CLARA: Tornada.

TANTO: I say tornada, you say tornado.,. (BIG LAUGH)

HESTOR: That's nice. Twist it.

CLARA: You won't leave me, will you Erlich? Promise you won't leave...

ERLICH: I promise I won't ever leave you or Tornado. Clara. I want you to meet my mother.

CLARA: Hestor is your mother.? I love Hestor. I love you Hestor.

HESTOR: This is Erlich's father.

CLARA: Him I can live without. There is something about men in feathers...

TANTO: You will treat your child's grandfather with respect.

HESTOR: McCulloch came out of the furnace while you were asleep Erlich. He tried to talk Mses into letting him into heaven. Imagine. Talking to Mses.

ERLICH: Who's Mses?

TANTO: We have our work cut out for you, my sweet.

HESTOR: Mses was about to sacrifice his son on the alter when God intervened.

DAVID: Ah, Hestor. That was Abraham

HESTOR: God intervened David.

DAVID: It was Abraham, not Mses.

ERLICH: Its the story that counts.

HESTOR: Anyway, God intervenes and saved the young Noah from being Sacrificed.

DAVID: Ah, Isaac.

HESTOR: Don't interrupt. This is my story. Anyway, this calf appears in the bushes...

DAVID: Goat.

HESTOR: Scrape goat. God sent it there. It was one of those times God was nice. One of those times she musta been a woman.

ERLICH: It's a happy story so far.

CLARA: Unless you're the goat.

VIOLET ENTERS, MUCH BECALMED.

VIOLET: Violet is a very happy bag person. Shit!

TANTO: Hestor. I have taken a decision. I want you to be my wife.

HESTOR: Oh okay.

TANTO: Then this boy will be legitimate.

ERLICH: Why didn't you marry her before, dad?

TANTO: She was waiting for a handsome man on a black black black horse.
Not, I fear, a handsome man in a black dress.

HESTOR LAUGHS.

HESTOR: I want to get married. Erlich I want you to marry Carla.

ERLICH: What do you say, baby.

CLARA: -Okay, but lets hurry. I got a doctor's appointment.

DAVID: You can't have a wedding that fast. You've got to have a licence,
there are blood tests.

CLARA: No blood tests.

HESTOR: We want to get married right now.

DAVID: It's highly irregular, but ah, I'll be happy to do the honors.
Dearly beloved, we are...

HESTOR: Violet dear. You are going to perform the ceremony.

VIOLET: Shit. It will be a pleasure.

TANTO: (TO DAVID) You - prepare the wedding feast. Pour beer, Lotsa beer.
And fries. And burgers.

VIOLET.: Bitch. Hestor...?

HESTOR: Take your time dear. Everybody line up. David, dear don't sulk. We
need a witness. Come over here.

TANTO: Let me go get changed.

VIOLET: Faggot.... Bitch!

HESTOR: You're fine the way you are.

TANTO: Of course. And you are beautiful non petite thou, my desert flower,
ma Reine du Cadillac.

HESTOR: Better me than you.

VIOLET: (YELLS) QUIET! (Then gently) Two equals one where I come from Get
it? Bitch! Dearly beloved....

THE WEDDING PARTY LINES UP.

VIOLET: We are gathered here in God's spite... Shit...

NARRATION: They check the catwalk.

LIGHT BUILDS ABOVE THEM

VIOLET: To unite these holy people in lonely ministrone... Hestor! Hestor?

HESTOR: Shush dear. Go ahead.

VIOLET: I don't know the words. Bitch!

HESTOR: That doesn't matter. Just make' them up as you go.

VIOLET: I have often walked down this street before... No... Stupid Bitch... Shit...

DAVID: (Prompting) If anyone here present...

VIOLET: Oh yeah. Thanks. He's a nice boy. You're a nice boy. Prick! If there's anyone here with presents that can...ah, show just cause-. no, that's not it...

NARRATION: They direct their attention to the catwalk. McCulloch does not appear.

VIOLET: If anyone here present can prove beyond the shadow of a doubt...

NARRATION: They check. McCulloch does not appear.

VIOLET: It has something to do with doubt. What about the warranty? Shit. Bitch! Stupid bitch!

HESTOR PUTS HER ARM AROUND VIOLET.

HESTOR: Thank you dear. That was lovely.

ERLICH: Lets sing the old song.

HESTOR: I know an old song. (she whispers to DAVID)

DAVID: John Allen Cameron's tune? Sure.

HESTOR: Start.

DAVID: You go first.

HESTOR HESITATES, STRUGGLING FOR THE FIRST LINE.

DAVID: (SINGS) Will you go to the highlands, Lissie Lindsay
Will you go to the highlands with me
Will you go to the highlands Lissie Lindsay
My darlin and my wife to be.

HESTOR: Will I go to the highlands with you sir
such a thing it never could be
for I know not your name or your station
nor why you roam ragged and free

TANTO WISHES TO WALTZ WITH HESTOR. SHE ACCEPTS.

DAVID/CLARA/ERLICH:

Will you go to the highlands, Lissie Lindsay
Will you go to the highlands with me
Will you go to the highlands Lissie Lindsay
My darlin and my wife to be.

DAVID: Oh my lady, your mind is mistaken
if it sees but a beggar in me
for my name it is Angus MacDonald
A chieftain of highest degree

ERLICH INVITES CLARA TO WALTZ. SHE DOES. VIOLET AND DAVID ARE SHY.

HESTOR/TANTO/ERLICH/CLARA (as they waltz) and DAVID:

Will you go to the highlands, Lissie Lindsay
(Beautiful harmonies emerge)
Will you go to the highlands with me
Will you go to the highlands Lissie Lindsay
My darlin and my wife to be.

DAVID: (underscoring with humming, in harmony, from the ensemble)
She took up her coat of white satin
her clothing of fine quality
and she went with her Angus MacDonald
her darlin and husband to be.

VIOLET APPROACHES DAVID. HE ACCEPTS. THEY ALL WALTZ.

HESTOR/TANTO/ERLICH/CLARA/DAVID/VIOLET:

Will you go to the highlands, Lissie Lindsay
Will you go to the highlands with me

VIOLET: Shit! Oops.

HESTOR/TANTO/ERLICH/CLARA/DAVID/VIOLET:

Will you go to the highlands Lissie Lindsay
My darlin and my wife to be.

NARRATION: They are immensely pleased with themselves. Their attention is
drawn to the furnace, which rumbles and growls with increasing intensity
until...

HELL EXPLODES.

CURTAIN.