

Psychopomp

a musical drama
by Peter White

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This musical drama is dedicated to my wife Kim

Psychopomp

Guide of Souls

Synopsis and Comment

The drama begins with a protagonist who appears in bodily form only at the very beginning and the very end of the story. He/She looks like a person but is, in fact, the personification of the world civilization known as “The West.” The West is troubled. There are great days in its past but its present seems to consist only of the overwhelming task of creating the illusion of its former glory for descendants who “just want more.” The answer to this problem for The West is decidedly psychological and Jungian, lying in a series of mysterious dreams that emerge when The West lies down to sleep at the end of the prologue. This dreaming takes place in Sault Ste. Marie, Northern Ontario and draws us into both a love story and a quest.

In the Sault we meet a brash local girl by the name of Blue who is a natural leader among her group of friends, a group about to be initiated into adulthood. A few hours before the initiation ceremony, Blue meets a curious stranger named Companion when he steps out of a Greyhound bus at the town depot. He presents himself as the sum total of all of the West’s historical accomplishments but he is, in fact, quite lost and powerless in the here and now.¹ Blue is all confidence, believing that she is the maker of her own destiny. Eventually, however, she finds out that, through her connection to Companion, that she is at the mercy of the under-rehearsed and poorly disguised archetypal twins Fric and Frac.² The cast is rounded out by an undefined rabble of hangers-on and wannabes known simply as the Mob. After Blue and Companion fail the initiation rite in front of the court house on Queen Street, they are beaten and deposited with prejudice by the Mob in the wilderness. On waking up they struggle to find their way back to the Sault as their feelings for each other intensify. Their efforts and feelings are guided, and even moreso misguided, by the twin brothers Fric and Frac who have a much different agenda, the creation of new levels of consciousness. This quest has taken Fric and Frac from the birth of human consciousness in some long forgotten African moment all the way to this eminently forgettable couple and place in the present. As Blue and Companion contend with their human-all-too-human concerns, Fric and Frac ruthlessly test their mettle for being carriers of the next level of consciousness into the future. The drama closes with the reappearance of The West as he/she awakes and ruminates about the strangeness of dreams.

As the reader might suspect, taking in the plot of this drama that presents itself in the traditional way as if it really *is* a drama in the traditional sense would be problematic. One might be tempted, for instance, to take the images in what follows literally and be offended and repulsed or else delighted and spellbound as they wait for each black comic barb to appear. While either one of these options is possible, neither one is quite right. They are part and parcel of the package but what this story really wants (and yes, this assumes that stories in and of themselves want something) is to be understood as *the soul of the age displaying itself* while using the images of what is familiar to do so. It would be nice to just let the piece speak for itself but there is no getting away from the fact that for 21st century man it is no longer *what* one sees but *how* one sees that truly matters. This “how” of which I speak is impossible to go into here but, should the reader’s interest be piqued, the way of seeing that informs all that follows can be found in the 1998 book *The Soul’s Logical Life*, by the German Jungian writer and analyst Wolfgang Giegerich, the 1918 book *The Decline of the West* by the German philosopher and historian Oswald Spengler and *The Collected Works* of C.G. Jung, the Swiss founder of the psychology that bears his name.

Psychopomp - Scenes and Songs

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Psychopomp - Guide of Souls³

Prologue

The West, a character of indeterminate gender, costumed as a walking mosaic of Western Culture (900 - 1800 CE), sleepily approaches the edge of centre stage and speaks wearily.

The West: My God I'm tired. You would be too after 900 years.⁴ Well, give or take a hundred. No one agrees exactly on when I was born. Some say right after the reforms of Charlemagne, others say you can't speak of me until Bernard of Clairvaux. How do I know?

Born just here or just there, just this time or that time, wherever or whenever, I am the West. And in my day I was something else! Crusades, Gothic Cathedrals, charting the heavens and the earth, painting with oils and composing symphonies . . . from 900 to 1800⁵ I was infinite energy. Now? I just get more and more tired. Then I was a Culture. Now I am a Civilization. Then I was Greece. Now? Rome.

I've told them in a thousand different ways but my children's grandchildren's grandchildren just want more. Take me to the moon! Take me to Mars! To the Big Bang! To the Final Whimper. I'm like a movie star who can't get a moment's peace . . . nothing is enough . . . infinite want. Enough talk. It is time for rest.

The West approaches a bed on stage left, lays down and goes to sleep. One by one the characters of the play appear as if out of the West's head and furtively make their way across the stage and between the crack in the curtain.

Scene 1 - The Marriage of Sexuality

On the apron a set of stairs with 4 - 6 steps appears at centre stage at the break in the curtain. Red carpet

proceeds down the stairs and extends a few feet beyond them while gold coloured ropes with tassels run down each side of the steps. Blue, Companion and the members of the Mob⁶ each wear or carry their Initiation crown. Blue and Companion remain hidden behind the curtain. The Mob appears; agitated and excited around the stairs. When Blue and Companion fail to appear on cue, two Mob members scurry behind the curtain and prod/shove Blue and Companion to the top of the stairs. The Mob members then run back to the apron and hoot/scream as Blue and Companion descend the stairs looking embarrassed, awkward and self-conscious. At this point Fric, sitting at a radio news desk at stage right, ("visible" to the audience but not to the group on stage), begins to sing. The Mob cajoles Blue and Companion to walk around the apron a la "Royal walkabout" as Fric sings.

Hello, my name is First Last
and I am the Present of Future's Past *Pause*

All of Hollywood gathers tonight
for what is sure to be pure delight
as Sexuality takes the hand
of Sexuality. Understand
that Sexuality fills the air
just as Sexuality fills this pair
who wave with sweet, exquisite smiles,
thrilling the crowd with their Sexual styles.

The ushers and bridesmaids are all Sexualized
each one of them Sexually accessorized.
There's feasting on Sexual caviar
and Sexual drinks at the Sexual bar.
A wedding cake climbs seven layers high,
oozing and dripping; a Sexual sigh.
And then up at the top the lovers entwine
in a Super-Sized Sexual bump and grind. *Pause*

The curtain opens to the full stage revealing the backdrop of the courthouse. At centre stage there is a tree with the "balance of justice" scales incorporated on the branches

that extend to stage left and right. (The tree will stay in place for the duration of the play.) Wearing their Initiation crowns the Mob, Blue and Companion frolic around the tree. Again, Blue and Companion participate less than enthusiastically. Fric sings the following throughout.

Meanwhile, on the local scene
another wedding; king and queen.
This marriage is to a community
known as the secret society.
Now this is strange, for I am told
that everyone about it knows.
But it must be a secret clique
for no one does about it speak.

Initiation is the name
of this delirious, serious game.
Late at night the fun will start
and naming itself is at the heart
of what our initiates must do,
one by one and two by two,
in front of the courthouse that sits on Queen.
Eternal ritual, local scene.

Goodbye for now. I am First Last.
I am the Present of Future's Past.

Scene 2 -Sex and Money and Stuff⁷

In view of the audience, the Mob receives glittery/garish costumes from the backstage crew as stage hands drag a "Hollywood Musical" backdrop in front of the courthouse backdrop. The stage hands, still visible to the audience, begin blowing bubbles from the sides of the stage as the music begins. During the song the Mob members on each side of the tree compete to add "sex, money and stuff" props to their side of the scale. Visually presented in the style of a Hollywood musical with big smiles and choreography. Blue and Companion, still embarrassed and self-conscious, make half-hearted attempts to do the

dance moves. Mob members shouting in blind enthusiasm.

Mob 1: I hereby call this meeting to order!

Mob 3: Find someone who cares and I'll give you a quarter!⁸

Mob 2: Call who you want, just don't take too long!

Mob 4: 'Cause it's time to sing the Secret Song!

All sing:

Sex and money and stuff⁹

I can't get enough

I'm roped, I'm tied, I'm satisfied

with sex and money and stuff

Sex and money and stuff

I'll take it straight up

Cold or hot I like it a lot,

Sex and money and stuff

Verse one

Mob 2 sings:

I've walked a thousand miles

I've stood upon the shore

I've sailed across the ocean

I'm answering the call

Chorus

Bridge

Mob 1: Power¹⁰

Mob 3: What about the power?

Mob 1: Don't forget the power,

Mob 3: Don't forget the power

Mob 1: It makes the world go round,

Mob1 & 3: makes the world go round . . .

Chorus

Verse two

Mob 3:

I'm marching with the millions
I'm standing straight and tall
I'm keeping step with everyone
and I salute you all

Chorus

All recite while the "Ah Poor Bird" round is played.¹¹

Ah poor bird, this our lament
for a civilization and its discontent
Awash in an ocean of sensual sloth
without any wisdom to season the broth.
Come what may, we make this vow,
we'll see it through, at least for now.

Scene 3 - The Invocation

The Mob decreases the dynamic level and continues "Ah Poor Bird" as a round while the backstage crew noisily appears, returning the backdrop to the courthouse. Lights dim. Torches appear. The Mob/Initiates gather expectedly around Frac and sit at the foot of the Tree.

Frac as Initiator:

Oh yes, there's nothing like a song and dance
to cast the spell, to trick the trance.
Ladies and gentlemen please be aware
that what you see here is both common and rare.
This is the 21st century youth
about to embrace his absolute Truth.
The truth that there is not one truth at all
unless it be found on the web, in the mall,
or in the pop charts, exquisitely styled,
"To be adult is to stay a child."

Now it is time for the invocation.

I'm talking about a declaration.

A mission statement that opens the doors.

A speech . . .

Mob 1: I've got it!

Frac: . . . the stage is yours.

As the music begins the Mob snaps their fingers on beats two and four, singing doo-wop background vocals throughout the invocation.

Mob1:

Our cola soft drink who is on tv
precious your carbonation be
Give us this day our daily drink
and if we slip up just give us a wink
and we'll let it go if some little cuss
does a non-cola drink in front of us.
Lead us not into restaurants
that don't have proper advertisements¹²
but fill us with Nachos and all things nice
for you have the billboards, the stock and the price,
forever and ever until you are disgraced,
and are unceremoniously replaced,
by something that is what we all are within,
by something more beautiful, young and thin.

Evian¹³

As new music begins the Mob begins a gyrating, grotesque dance.

Frac:

Sacrilege! Heresy! Blasphemy!
These are the words that you say to me?
Don't you know what could happen to you
if it weren't for the fact that these words are . . . true?

The Mob holds hands with crossed arms and sways back

and forth while “ooing.”

Nevertheless, it is time to sing.

It is time to choose a name my things.

But do bear in mind, it's a one shot deal
so be careful as you beg, borrow and steal.

Scene 4 - The Initiation (That's My Name)

As the lights go up the the Mob shouts and squeals in delight.¹⁴

Mob4:

Well I was born naked and that's the way I like to stay
People say, “how could you be so sexual?”, well, well...
I tell them it's quite natural
then I tell myself the same
and that is why Sizzlin Sex is my name . . .

Chorus

All sing:

That's my name, that's my name
don't wear it out
That's my name, that's my name
I was born to shout all night long,
I am sexual, perpetually young and thin and beautiful

Companion sings:

Well I was born happy but that didn't last for long
for I was disconnected from that Newton gravity, that's me
The more I stand up alone, the more I fall down again
and that is why Companion is my name.

The song stops dead and the Mob mutters agitated:

Mob 1: What's his problem.

Mob 2: What's his problem.

Mob 3: He's got problems.

Mob 4: This is a problem.

Frac as Initiator:

Ah yes, well, keep moving along

More name! More names! More songs! More songs!

Mob 1: SUV! *Everyone cheers*

Mob 2: DVD! *Everyone cheers*

Mob 3: SOB! *Louder cheers*

Mob 4: STD! *Horrificed silence*

Song continues . . .

Mob 1:

Well I was born online, megahertz in my brain
high speed connections, and a mouse in my hand, oh yeah
I am a living website, I eat gigabytes to stay sane
and that is why .com is my name

Chorus

Blue sings.

Well I was born near water, under a cloudless sky
I never was and I have always been, so it seems
I was born guilty, I am pure and without shame
and I will tell you, Blue is my name

The Mob begins pushing Blue and Companion while shouting:

Mob 4: Anyone with a name that wrong

Mob 1: ought to be shot and pissed on!

Mob 2: And not necessarily in that order!

Mob 3: Find someone who cares and I'll give you a quarter!

Mob 4: What's your problem?

Mob 1: You want a problem?

Mob 2: What's your problem?

Mob 3: We'll give you a problem.

Mob 4: Blue?

Mob 1: Companion?

Mob 2: Are you stupid or what?

Mob 3: Or maybe you think you're better than us?

Mob 4: Get your name from the list like everyone does.

Blue: There's a list?

Blue was teaching from the cradle.
Words and speeches, myths and fables.
She could coo and she could curse
the very best, the very worst.
The sweet blue spruce that near her grew.
The stench of blast furnace number two.

Soon enough she could moan and roar
like a country-blues matador.
She played violin in the Sault Symphony.
Unspeakably weird cacophony . . .

That was Blue.

Once, she got busted for jaywalking
and claimed she was a victim of stalking.
They hauled in the old man she pointed to.
He died from the shock as she tapped her shoe.
Another time she saved the lives
of toddlers lost on the 75.
She led them to safety one by one
then gave them each a stick of gum.

Typical Northern gal I'm told.
Deep-fried food and beer that's cold
then out to Arturos in heels to swing it
playing the goddess to the limit.
Who is who? You know the deal.
Pick a number and spin the wheel
'cause tonight the carnival's in town
with casinos and blackjacks and money down
Take your chances, there is no shame.
Fate is a colour and Blue is her name.

Scene 7 - Companion Introduction

*Frac prods Companion's unconscious body with his foot
as he takes out his own script with a side-long glance to
Fric as he raises his arms and nods his head to
communicate, "So what!"*

Frac speaks:

Companion. What a ridiculous name.
A strange one for a hero to claim.
A wretched excuse he is to be sure
but when fate is the sickness, fate is the cure.

I was looking out a few days ago
as I soared above Timmins and then Chapleau.
Looking at Fric

I was thinking about how long it's been for us
when I spotted him there in a Greyhound bus
It was winding its way down 17.

It was almost unreal – like suspense in a dream. *Beat.*

He was here and then there and then concealed
playing hugs and kisses with the Canadian Shield.
Like one of those games with a problem to solve,
you turn away but you're still involved.
He is a problem and a thanklessly hard one.
A problem that goes by the name Companion.

Frac puts script in his pocket.

Now Fric, look around us. Isn't this grand?
Sault Ste. Marie. *Ambiguously nonplused* Hot damn.
The village that thinks that it's a metropolis
up in the middle of nowhere. All of us
know that Toronto, on the other hand . . .
that's a metropolis. That's grand. *Pause*
And you can have it. Look at how
they stroll about all hipper than thou
saying, "We're the city, we're the city!
We're bigger and better. More sexy, more pretty!"
No, keep your commuting, keep your congestion
and we'll take this cornerstone of rejection.
After all it's where we are!
We traveling twins who follow no star.
Always afoot one place or another.
Eternally joined, the hostile brothers.
Now here we arrive, *pointing to audience*,
with this rabble so handsome

to follow the fate of this Blue, this Companion.

Fric: What was the name of the place again?

Frac: Sault Ste. Marie you ignorant stain!
Why won't you give one ounce of the pound
that I give to your dry monologues. You sound
as if you still hold a grudge my friend
from days long gone. You remember when
you were Remus and I was Romulus?
Patronizing Sometimes there just isn't
room for both of us.¹⁸

Fric:
Haughtily indignant So it would seem.

Frac:
 Oh don't be that way.
As for Companion, what's to say?
Frac, followed by Fric, gradually walks forward to the apron.
As they complete the scene the curtain gradually closes
He's endless intentions and not one direction.
All potentials and no selection.
Marble awaiting Michelangelo.

Fric: Or a goddess named Blue . . .

Frac: *Disdainfully* What do you know?

Fric: *With a flourish*
We ourselves should be introduced.

Frac:
Well, I should.

Fric: You should find a noose.

Curtain now closed.

Scene 8 - Fric and Frac Introduction

Apron

Fric: I'm Fric.

Frac: I'm Frac.

Fric: I'm here.

Frac: He's gone.

Fric: I'm left.

Frac: He's right.

Fric: I'm up.

Frac: He's down.

Fric: I'm sweet.

Frac: He's sour.

Fric: I'm tight.

Frac: He's slack.

Fric: I'm pure.

Frac: He stinks.

Fric: I'm Fric.

Frac: I'm Frac.

Fric:
Why don't you stop being a nuisance
and tell them who you are!

Frac:
 For once an agreement!
I am the opposite of anything you are.

Fric:
I certainly hope so.

Frac:
Dismissively Hope is a star.
Hope is a star that is evil Fric.

Fric:
Now what's your problem? Are you sick?
Hope is all that keeps this place going.
They've had the winds of recession blowing
since fifteen thousand years ago
when the Wisconsin glacier laid them low.

Frac:
Yes, yes, it's true. I agree.
Facts are facts and have no falsity.
Meanwhile, this problem, how does one answer?
How does one heal a permanent cancer?
Will you make your cardboard sign called hope?
Ask mummy nature to toss you a rope?
She'll be as happy to hang you as feed you
so get up off your knees and choose. That's what I'd do.

Fric:
Choose?

Frac:
Choose.

Fric:
Choose what?

Frac:
Just choose!

Look around, you'll find some clues.
Start choosing the world, turn black into blue,
or the world will just keep choosing you.¹⁹

Fric:
Father sent us, how long ago?

Frac:

Don't remind me.

Fric:
I have to.
I remember to remember.

Frac:
I recall.

Fric:
With unexpected fury You're a pretender.

Frac:
Alright, alright. I'll bite your bait.
Let us sing of our timeless fate.

Scene 9 - Freedom

With the curtain still closed the Mob enters as music begins. They sing and dance during the song.

Fric: Here's a story you know well
Frac: Two little children and a bell
Fric: One ring for hate, one ring for love
Frac: One from below, one from above

Chorus
Both sing:
This is the song we sing
of love and everything
I'm talking about freedom - oh
I'm talking about freedom - oh

Fric: Here is a picture you can see
Frac: Inside of you, inside of me
Fric: One colour,
Frac: one black and white
One for death,
Fric: one for life

Chorus

Frac: It's so simple that it's hard
Fric: To hear the song with open hearts
Frac: You are the only one to know
Fric: The joy within your sorrow

Chorus

Exit Mob.

Scene 10 - Tropical Village.²⁰

Lights dim. Music begins.

Frac: A tropical village.
Fric: The father takes his twin sons into the hut.
Frac: He presents them with a bowl full of a rich stew,
loaded with vegetables and nourishment.
Fric: The father explains that the twins must make a
great journey; that the village can no longer be
home;
Frac: that a new land must be sought out and that the
brothers must undertake the adventure.
Fric: As the father explains all of this, he gives out
spoonfuls of the stew in a most mysterious
manner.
Frac: He only allows the boys to eat one out of every
three spoonfuls.
Fric: The father then explains that on their long and
difficult journey, two out of every three mouthfuls
Both: must be experienced as hunger.

*Lights return to normal. Frac has collapsed. Fric
tenderly supports him.*

Fric:
Now, now brother. You must hold on.
You musn't forget that your weakness is strong.
"Stronger than greatest strength is weakness."
That's what you said to Jung when you spoke Swiss

Frac:
If I die I will be reborn.

Fric:
But Frac, must this go on and on?
Can we never reach that place
where we join the human race?²¹
Curse me for hoping but what else can I do?
We've got Companion and Blue.

Frac: *Weakly*
What a long, long journey it's been.

Fric:
Five thousand years is a long time to dream.²²

Frac:
Mesopotamia, Egypt, India, Greece.

Fric:
Rome, China, and the Middle East.

Frac:
The Aztecs too, so the history book says.

Fric:
At least 'till they met up with bloody Cortez.
And now the West rests in the hands
of these beautiful fools with no clue and no plan.
We can wish all we want for a white knight and stallion,
we've got Blue and Companion.
Meanwhile let us go back to when
these two first laid eyes on each other then
after that we'll turn the screw
and feed them each some of that missing stew.

They begin exiting with Fric supporting Frac.

Fric: It could be worse you know . . .

Frac: It could be worse? Tell me how it could be worse.

Fric: Remember when Sargon was cleaning his blade in the sea? That was bad.

Frac: Oh yes, that was awful.

Fric: And Genghis Kahn.

Frac: Is his mother still alive?

Fric: Frac you've got to lay down.

Frac: But she was so very nice to us . . .

Scene 11 - First Meeting

This scene is a flashback to the moment when Blue and Companion first met, some hours before the events of the first four scenes. The curtain opens. The backdrop is the town bus station. Blue comes walking by with the Mob and conspicuously puts away her cell phone in her purse just as Companion exits the door of the bus station wearing earbud headphones. As he steps off the bus he pulls out his mp3 player to select a song which cues the beginning of the scene's music.

Blue: Look you guys, it's a long-toothed jackass
I thought they were extinct.

Comp: Oh that's class.
Look who's talkin' and who is this greeter
that speaks to this world-wide adventurer?

Blue: Adventurer? *Laughs* Are you kidding me?
Mr. Greyhound bus in Sault Ste. Marie?
To Comp. What have you done
that would be called impressive,

get lost in the bush when the flies were oppressive?

Comp: In 1610 I saw Jupiter's moons.
In 1720 I wrote well-tempered fugues.
I am larger than life. I am infinitesimal.
I am your companion, your heaven, your hell.
Meanwhile I must ask who are you?
So cocky and yet somewhat cute.

Blue: Well my name can't be said, *Pointing to Mob*, but
to each of these hearts
I am known as the Queen of these parts
the eternal goddess on eternal display.

Comp: Modest too.

Blue: What did you say?

Comp: How can a Queen be lacking a name?
This really is a place that is strange.

Blue: *Pulling Companion aside, speaking in hushed tones*
And now you've hit upon the rub
for tonight I must appear to love
a sham that all these fools believe.
My only hope is that I can deceive
them into thinking that I'm one too
but my name . . . it's a problem . . .
*pushing Companion away and pointing at him while
speaking out loud*

but how about you?

You look alright, you talk a good game,
speaking to Mob
Don't you think it's time we heard his name?

Comp: I'd be quick to oblige but these days I am cursed.
Just saying my name turns bad into worse.
The best I can do I'm afraid to say
is a riddle that makes most slither away.

I am . . .
A friend to all and a lover of none.

A buggerish boy with a bulletless gun.

Blue: *Eyeing Companion up and down*
A problem child or a mystery man, *to Mob*
which one do you think we have on our hands?

Mob1: I think she likes him!

Mob2: I think he likes her!

Mob3: Let's bring him along!

Mob4: Oh for sure!

Mob1: We'll put them together!

Mob2: Top of the stairs!

Mob3: Our king and queen!

Mob4: The royal pair!

Exit the Mob with Blue and Companion. Curtain closes.

Scene 12 - America

Fric and Frac and the Mob are on the apron. Half of the Mob portrays European figures such as Columbus, Vespucci, Napoleon and Louis XVI; the other half of the Mob portrays figures such as Washington, Lincoln, Roosevelt and Reagan throughout scene.

Fric: Christopher Columbus

Frac: Amerigo Vespucci

Fric: European fathers from across the sea.

Frac: Washington to Lincoln

Fric: Roosevelt to Reagan

Frac: *Sarcastically, rolling his eyes and sweeping his arm in direction of audience*

Now look at all these children of liberty.

Fric: *In the style of a grand introduction*

Ladies and gentlemen if you please,
the ones who brought the word "can't" to its knees,
the world's newest Civilization home
. . . America!

Frac: *Sarcastically* the world's newest Rome.

Fric: *Musing* If America and Rome are of a piece.

Frac: *Matter-of-factly* Then Europe is America's
Greece.

Rome was practical.

Fric: Greece was cultural.

Frac: Rome was cynical.

Fric: Greece philosophical.
Greece had Pythagoras and his theorem.

Frac: Rome had lions and the Coliseum.

Fric: Greece had the mystery of Culture's creation.

Frac: Rome had the problems of Civilization.²³

Fric: You can say that it's wrong.

Frac: Call it a plague.

Fric: The fates guide he who will,

Frac: he who won't, they drag.²⁴

Each "America" Mob member drags "Europe" Mob member offstage.

Fric and Frac sing.

Chorus

America, America, oh what is your song?
America, America, you the West's youngest son

Frac sings.
From the Mexican jungle
to Canadian snow
America,
where did you go?

From North to South,
through the great divide
with a big blue ocean
right by each side.

Chorus - both sing.

Fric sings.
Will you hear what you need,
words that rise from the land
from the ones that you conquered
with a musket in your hand?

Will you hear what they whisper?
They cannot speak loud;
high in the air
and deep in the ground.

Chorus - both sing.

Frac: Civilization. It's not so bad.

Fric: There's no going back.
The two split into separate topics as they continue.

Frac: *Pedantically* Remember Baghdad?
They took the turn . . . mmm . . . 1000 AD
and that's just the Magian Middle East.

Fric: I long for our little village home . . .

Frac: *Counting fingers*
India, China . . . we mentioned Rome.

Fric: Life was beautiful way back when.

Frac: First the royal bloodlines end.
Then personality rules the day.

Fric: Why did father send us away?

Frac: Yes Fric, it's all as it was in the dream
of Spengler's decline into fellaheen.

Fric: Oh Frac, we've worn so many faces.

Frac and Frac together: Many times. Many places.

Frac: Cain.

Fric: Abel.

Frac: *Smiling* Romulus.

Fric: *Glaring* Remus.

Frac: Enkidu.

Fric: Gilgamesh.

Frac: Judas.

Fric: Jesus.

Frac: Castor.

Fric: Pollux.

Frac: Moses.

Fric: Aaron.

Frac: Osiris.

Fric: Set.

Frac: Christ.

Fric: Satan. *Turning to Frac*
Are we going too far?

Frac: Not far enough.

Fric: The Gothic Cathedral.

Frac: Sex, money and stuff.

Fric: Two halves of one whole.

Frac: It can't be denied.

Fric: Even though it is.

Frac: God knows we've tried.

Exit Fric and Frac.

Scene 13 - Threshold to Adventure

The continuation of the flashback of scene 11. It is now just before the initiation ritual which started the drama (scenes 1 - 4). The curtain opens. We see the courthouse backdrop with the tree is at centrestage. Blue and Companion are by themselves in front of the tree.

Blue: You sure you have the stomach for this?

Comp: I'll tell you if you give me a kiss.

Blue: Only you know what you're made of.

Comp: Sounds like you are out of love.

Blue: Listen to me. Don't you understand?
If this thing goes wrong we'll be damned.
Have you been to hell when the devil's away
and tried to find the strength to pray?
Where a spade is a black heart steeped in flame,
where love and terror share a name?

Comp: Well that's quite a song but I'm quite a dancer,
give me your problem and I'll get you an answer.
Just tell me the name of the game.

Blue: Mysteries can't be explained.

Comp: But you can describe it and then I'll see
what cards have been dealt to you and me.

Blue: You might be the first intelligent life
I've seen since I went to bed last night.
One day you might even speak in symbols
then again you might be all show.
You see, competence isn't in style anymore
people prefer exotic allure.

It doesn't matter how thin the ice,
underneath it's twice as nice.

All the same I'll be disappointed
if you turn out not to be anointed.

You know I might even cry
if you turn out to be a lie.

*Turning away from Companion,
troubled by indecision*

The road here divides I must choose a way,
the fates guide she who will, she who won't they drag.

*Looking at Companion, still musing to herself but
now settled in her mind*

He looks like sweet Actaeon hunting a stag,
the fates guide she who will, she who won't they drag.

The curtain closes. While the scenery is changed to the wilderness backdrop, the Mob re-enacts the Initiation scene, ("That's My Name"), in pantomime as music plays.

Scene 14 - The Murder of Innocence

The action returns to the present. We find Blue and Companion unconscious in the wilderness where they were abandoned by the Mob. Curtain opens. The backdrop is now Northern Ontario wilderness. The bodies of Blue and Companion are slumped up against opposite sides of the tree at centrestage. Their faces are not visible to the audience. The bodies are, in fact, stand-ins (or mannequins) dressed as Blue and Companion who will feign unconsciousness throughout the following scenes. Fric sits at a radio news desk at stage right. The Mob sits on the floor beside the news desk gazing in wonderment at Fric.

Fric:
Hello, my name is First Last
I am the Present of Future's Past.

A man and a woman are in custody.
They're being held for questioning.
Making a sweeping gesture toward Blue and Companion
They've been brought here at great expense
for murdering their innocence.

Be forewarned what I'm about to say
will make even tough-minded bodies sway.
So take a deep breath and sit up straight
and be a good initiate.²⁵

These two who whose crimes we must convey
kidnaped Innocence yesterday.
They drove three long rusty nails
in the victim's skull as it twisted and wailed.

Some say that Innocence Itself is to blame
that a lack of knowledge gives no claim
to privilege or protection.
Others say there's no connection.

Everything is only illusion.

Thinking it's real leads to confusion.
Nevertheless, let it be said,
right here and now, Innocence is dead.

Goodbye for now, I am First Last
I am the Present of Future's Past.

Blackout. Exit Mob.

Scene 15 - Decision

Lights up. Fric and Frac enter and observe the unconscious bodies of Blue and Companion.

Fric: *With characteristic melodrama as he inspects Blue and Companion.*
Oh my what an awful tragedy

Frac: I've seen worse.

Fric: Feeling better I see.

Frac: You know as well as I do brother
that love that is not fierce is none other
than hate that wears a poor disguise.
Have you learned nothing from all of these lives?

Fric: You think you know what these two need?

Frac: Who cares! Why bother watering weeds?

Fric: Oh you really are feeling better.

Frac: Well Fric! Have you ever seen two wetter
behind the ears little pups as these?
You'd have to go back to Adam and Eve.

Fric: I say we stay and help them out.

Frac: Don't start.

Fric: Don't stop.

Frac: Don't push.

Fric: Don't pout.
Frac, we see what they cannot.

Frac: What difference does that make to our lot?
What would father say if he heard you?

Fric: That our destiny is linked to these two.

Frac: You're starting to sound like a fire thief, *Menacingly*
shall I pluck out your liver with my own teeth?
Disparagingly We can see what they cannot.
How much freedom has that bought?
It is for freedom that we sing
but all we seem to do is cling
to phantom intuitions sung
into heads that have no tongue.²⁶
What makes you think these two are different?

Fric: Forgive me brother, I repent.
Let's just go on philosophizing.

Frac: Don't you start with patronizing.

Fric: Well what else are we going to do?
Frankly Frac, I'd like a clue.

Frac: Alright, alright I'll sing your song
but let me tell you if you're wrong
I'll kick you all the way to hell.

Fric: Well if I'm wrong it's just as well.

Fric and Frac exit.

Scene 16 - Beautiful Mystery

As each character dreams they appear on stage and sing

to the "sleeping" other slumped against the tree.

Blue sings.
One time - I look,
deep into your eyes
Two times - each night
I dream of what I realize
Three times - I swear
I never will be alone
Four ways to look
and I see you everywhere

All of this searching and there you were
waiting for me, waiting for me
You never left and you return
Now I see - now
And once more, I know
the beautiful mystery.

Companion sings.
One world - in space
spinning around and around
Two ways, to go
so which one is up and which down?
Three days, three nights,
you give me death and then life
Four points, one circle,
and I see you everywhere

Close your eyes and hold my hand
What do you see? What do you see?
We never were and here we are
You and me - oh
And once more, I know
the beautiful mystery.

While facing away from each other both sing.

All of this searching and there you were
waiting for me, waiting for me

You never left and you return
Now I see - now
And once more, I know
the beautiful mystery.

*While the lights remain up, the real Blue and Companion
replace the stand-ins who are carried off by stage hands.
Blue stands on one side of the tree while Companion
stands on the other side.*

Scene 17 - Duality

*The Mob enters. The female members collect near Blue
while the male members collect near Companion. The
Mob sings each chorus.*

Chorus: Just you and me, oh-oh, duality.
One, two, no three, oh-oh, duality.

Blue and Companion awake and call to each other.

Comp: Blue!

Blue: Companion!

Comp: What's going on?
What happened?

Blue: What happened? We screwed up the song.
This is what you could call Northern justice
but you don't have to go North for this.
The punishment changes, the crime is the same.
The what of your fate in the what of your name.

Comp: *Looking around dazed*
I don't think we're on Queen St. Blue.

Blue: We're somewhere.

Comp: Yeah.

Blue: We're not in the Sault.

Chorus: Just you and me, oh-oh, duality.
One, two, no three, oh-oh, duality.

Frac: *Frac appears dressed like a Carnival Barker*
Hello and welcome to Malenfemale!

Comp: *To Blue*
It's the Initiator.

Frac: You've successfully failed.
This means you'll have to pick a side.

Blue: What do you mean?

Frac: If you don't you'll collide.
This is a place under control.
Near kept from far. High kept from low.

*While talking, Frac stands in front of the tree and
nervously holds out one arm toward each side.
The Mob members, females on Blue's side and
male members on Companion's side, gradually
strain more and more toward each other.*

Mob 2: *Calling to males*
Come on over here we've got something to show ya!

Mob 1: What's your point?

Mob 4: Nice to know ya!

Frac: I don't mind telling you it's a mess.

Blue: So you're in charge here?

Frac: More or less.

Mob 4: *Calling to males*
Well can you talk or do you just stare?

Mob 3: Here's a quarter call someone . . .

Mob 1: *Threatening male Mob member*

I swear
if you say those words one more time . . .
*Regaining his composure to flirtatiously address
the females.*
Ah ladies, allow me to speak in rhyme . . .

Chorus: Just you and me, oh-oh, duality.
One, two, no three, oh-oh, duality.

Comp: Is it always like this?

Frac: Pretty much.
They hate each other and then they clutch
each other again for one moment's peace
then soon enough it's back to the beasts.
Something is said or something is not.
One stir is enough to boil the pot.
Then in come bandits from Rightenwrong
and Goodenevil; you know the song.

Blue: I know some tunes but not this one.

Frac: Look around, you're in Duality chum.

Chorus: Just you and me, oh-oh, duality.
One, two, no three, oh-oh, duality.

Frac: You see that tree? There's one in each town.
Every soul that can laugh or frown
has plucked that fruit and had a bite.

Comp: The tree of kn . . .

Frac: *Holding a clipboard so as to mark down their
choice*
So it's black or white?
Getting more exasperated
You gonna pick a side or what?

Blue: What about "if", "and" or "but"?

Frac: Oh, so you're the exception to the rule.
So wise for such a young, old fool.
Well this is quite a cursed blessing.

Blue: Well surely there must be a third thing?

Frac: Up or down, right or left.
What makes you think there's something else?

Comp: He's like a door that won't unlock.
Chokes Frac
Maybe this will make him talk.

Frac: Now, now let's not get so extreme
you're straying from the golden mean.

Comp: We want to know what is this place?
Where is the courthouse? Why no trace
of anything we've ever known?

Frac: I told you before, you've been blown
into this local freedom jail
for initiates who successfully fail.

Chorus: Just you and me, oh-oh, duality.
One, two, no three, oh-oh, duality.

Blue: He talks in riddles.

Comp: Plays with words.

Blue: *Holding the pointy end of her Initiation crown
against Frac's throat*
Let's kill him.

Comp: *Looking at Blue in shock*
Let's not be absurd.

Blue: *To Companion*

Don't be so quick to die of fright.
I know his kind, they never fight.

Frac: Okay, okay, you've humbled my pride. *Pause*
You've got to find something
that can't be described.
The closest you'll get is a picture or sound
and then you'll think you've earned that crown.
You'll stand apart, upon your throne
eager to share the secret stone.
But if you're smart you'll make two into one
by plunging in water to get to the sun.

*A great puff of smoke appears and Frac,
alternately stumbling, falling and cursing makes
his escape*

Chorus: Just you and me, oh-oh, duality.
One, two, no three, oh-oh, duality.

Comp: You know, I've had dreams
that made more sense.
Give me some empirical evidence.
I mean, I was afraid those
thugs you called friends
had dropped us off at the end of the end
of the world but this place is such a freak show
I'm beginning to think we're in . . .

Together: Toronto!

Scene 18 - Blue

Comp: *Holding his back*
Ah! One of those roots has driven a hole
into my back where the heart meets the soul
I don't think I can even walk!

Blue: Well it doesn't take much to make you squawk.
When you're in nature you change to suit it.
She does as she pleases -- you commit
You're obviously not from around here.

Comp: Ohhhh, you're not so nice as you appear.

Blue: I'm climbing that hill to get some bearings
You just sit there and keep on staring.
Blue marches off in disgust

*Companion walks, gradually straightening up. While
looking in the direction of Blue he sings.*

Some angels say that you're good
some angels say that you're bad
Some people say you're a user
I don't know about that

Some say you swallowed the world
and it murdered your heart
the more you try to stay whole
the more you fall apart

Chorus

Blue, Blue oh I love you
You are the sorrow where joy is too
I live for nothing, I live for you
oh Blue, I want you

I sit alone in the night
I remember the day
I am watching you move
I can hear what you say

I see you swallow the world
I see you searching for love
When you close your eyes
I see what you're dreaming of

Chorus

*At the song's last note Blue returns and Companion tries
to disguise any evidence of his growing passion for her.*

Blue: Trees and rocks, trees and rocks
nothing to see but trees and rocks.

Comp: Your so-called friends are real jerks.

Blue: *Ignoring him, Blue puts one headphone of Companion's mp3 player in her ear and rotates the thumb wheel in search of a radio station. Companion joins her, putting the other earphone in his ear.*
Let's see if your radio works.

Scene 19- Snake Woman

Fric sits at the radio desk, invisible to Blue and Companion, and makes his report as they listen to the radio. The fisherman in the report travels along the shoreline of the St. Mary's river in the Sault from city hall to Whitefish Island at the Sault locks which was a place of aboriginal habitation for hundreds of years. There he encounters a native medicine woman.

Hello my name is First Last
and I am the Present of Future's Past

Breaking news. A local fisherman
now lies in unstable condition
after a strange and unreal vision
that nevertheless made a real incision
through his heart, into his brain,
down his back and around again.

Behind City Hall he started out
casting his line along with his doubts
that any fish waited in that water
named for God's grandmother's daughter.
He wandered up along the boardwalk
until he reached the Canadian locks.

He thought of crossing to the rapids
and having thought it, he had decided.
When his foot came down on the other side
he found himself with those who had died

and lived there for so many lifetimes
and that is where this trail unwinds.

Before his unbelieving eyes
there stood a woman small in size.
Her presence could be physically felt;
frail and strong as life itself.
Markings covered her brown frame
and words spilled from her mouth like flame.

But what took this man from his mind
was how a snake did slowly wind
around her face until her head
had disappeared completely. Instead
of terror she just reached with calm
and held it, making silent sounds.

She withdrew the poison venom.
This caused her to swell up and then
the snake dropped harmless at her feet
as she spat poison through her teeth.
She held forth the open jaws
and so revealed her timeless laws.

They found him later near the locks
and even now he sits in shock.
Lost to time, lost in thought
about the fish he never caught.
Goodbye for now, I am First Last
I am the Present of Future's Past.

Comp: That's the damndest thing I ever heard
Outrageous. Perfectly absurd.
If where we are is what we see
then this is an unreal reality.
This is no longer some prank or a game.
We're lost Blue.

Blue: Say my name again. *Beat.*

Blue and Companion freeze in place.

Scene 20 - Birds

Fric and Frac enter and sing, referring to Blue and Companion as the birds, streams and fish of the song. The Mob sings/dances.

Fric sings.

Brother, how do you teach a bird to fly?

Brother, how do you teach a bird to fly?

Brother, do they come that way?

Or tell me, do they have to change?

Brother, how do you teach a bird to fly?

Frac sings.

Hey now, how do you teach a stream to flow?

Hey now, how do you teach a stream to flow?

Brother, is it hard to say?

Should they hurry or just learn to wait?

Hey now, how do you teach a stream to flow?

Both sing bridge.

Forget what you heard before

'cause there's nothing compares

with the eyes you adore

C'mon, c'mon if you can

Be as loose as a goose, like a Zeus, like a bluesman.

Fric: Brother, how do you teach a fish to swim?

Frac: Brother, how do you teach a fish to swim?

Fric: Tell me, do you know these things?

Frac: Look, there's another one drowning.

Both: Brother, how do you teach a fish to swim.

Bridge.

Exit Fric and Frac. Blue and Companion unfreeze.

Scene 21 - Chez L'Amour Deteste

Comp: "Lovers don't finally meet somewhere.
They're in each other all along."²⁷

Blue: It's true you have a way with words
but can you turn them into songs?

Comp: I can sing and I can dance.

Blue: Just like most anyone can do.

Comp: I can turn them into romance.

Blue: But can you see it through?

As they talk, Blue and Companion continue to each share an earphone of the mp3 player as Companion tries to dial in a radio station. A station first crackles and then becomes clear. Blue and Companion freeze in place as the music begins. Stage hands bring in chairs and small tables and set them in front of Blue and Companion. The Mob appears and sits in chairs. A sign for "Chez L'Amour Deteste" restaurant appears near Fric's news desk. Fric appears and begins to sing. As song the continues Blue and Companion serve as the snake and crocodile respectively.

Fric:

Hello my name is First Last

and I am the Present of Future's Past.

I am standing here on the Great Northern Road
where rumours start and lies are told.

Now I have come to place my guess

here at Chez L'Amour Deteste.

This unassuming restaurant

has become home to those who want

something that tastes better than youth.

Well here I am to get to the truth.

The people sit on the edge of their seats.

They look as one to where the floor meets
the wall at the Northern end of the room.

A stage rises there out of the gloom.

On one side sits a live crocodile, *Comp. moves*
on the other a snake begins to stir while *Blue moves*
the patrons offer up applause *Mob applauds*
and the croc opens its great jaws. *Companion rises and*
opens/raises his arms with fists clenched conveying power
and danger.

The snake now slowly raises its head *Blue rises and moves*
as a magnet drawn into Companion's embrace
and into the mouth of the croc it is led.

Or does it lead? I cannot tell.

Oh this is a vision of heavenly hell.

Slowly the teeth come down and then *Comp. embraces*
Blue with fists clenched, then releases tension and opens
hands/arms gently outward again
just as soon the jaws open again.

Now the snake unlocks its maw
Blue opens her jaws and bares her teeth
and swallows the head of the croc.

The law *Companion is drawn toward Blue. She takes Comp. in*
violent kiss, relaxes and then gently releases him of nature has
here been broken in two.

What price will this offence cost you
is something we can't begin to say
until your world has washed away
and you are tossed into wilderness
and left to certain aimlessness

Goodbye for now, I am First Last
I am the Present of Future's Past.

Scene 22 - Dance

Stage hands appear and remove chairs. The Mob
members pair off to dance.

Companion sings.

Darling, may I have this dance?

Soft string, let me hear you play.

Dark wood, deep in your arms
there are sounds I must hear.

May I have this dance?

Chorus

There is no need to be lost in tomorrow

There is only today

I will dance, dance all your sorrow

I will sing all your troubles away

Blue sings.

Soft wind, tease me with your silent song.

Dark eyes, take me away.

Sweet mouth, deep in your heart

there are stories to know.

May I have this dance?

Both sing Chorus

Scene 23 - Secrets of the Universe

Blue: I thought that you were just a talker,
now you could tell me the earth was flat
I'd believe.

Comp: "They looked upon each other
and nourished themselves with that."²⁸

Blue: Since we met it's as if we are normal
and the world has lost its mind.
Soon we'll feel the cold of nightfall.
Somehow we have got to find . . .

Comp: I know! When we first met
you put a cell phone in your purse.

Blue: If it got the beating we did I'll bet
there's no chance that it still works.

Blue dials and both lean in to listen. At the same time
Frac pokes his head out from backstage while making a
devilish grin to the audience. His head slips back and

after a couple of rings we hear his voice begin to sing.

Scene 24 - The Philosophy

Frac: Hello and welcome to “Secrets of the Universe”
To find out what happens when you die or worse
please press down the number one.
To find out why bad things still come
to people who are as pure as gold
please press two . . . and then hold.
If you sometimes wonder why
good things still come to those who lie
please press number three. If the knife
that cuts you concerns the meaning of life
then you must press down number four
and be prepared to wait some more.
To exit the point at which you arrived,
please press down the number five.

Blue and Companion: Five. *Blue presses five*

Frac: Hello and welcome to “Secrets of the Universe”
To find out what happens when you die or worse
please press down the number one.
To find out why bad things still come
to people who are as pure as gold
please press two . . . and then hold.
If you sometimes wonder why
good things still come to those who lie
please press number three. If the knife
that cuts you concerns the meaning of life
then you must press down number four
and be prepared to wait some more.
To exit the point at which you arrived,
please press down the number five.

Blue, clearly annoyed, presses five again.

Frac: Hello and welcome to “Secrets of the Universe”

*Companion grabs the cell phone, jumps up and down on it
and throws the remains into the forest.*

*Enter Frac rubbing his head and holding the remains of
the cell phone.*

Blue: You again!

Comp: Well, who are you this time?

Frac: Ridiculous. Sacred. Profane. Sublime.
Virgil. Mary. Mercury. Hermes.
Here to guide you wherever you please
as long as it is within your fate . . .
I’m good with wings but I don’t create

Comp: Hermes?

Blue: Mercury?

Frac: *Growing impatient* I am here to inform
you . . . better still, I am here to warn
you that you are up the Goulais river
without a paddle. Not a twig! Not a sliver!
Into the tailrace²⁹ without a barrel!
I could go on and on. I swear all
chances you have had to hear
the words said plain into your ears
have been a fog of worthless breath.
If I were alive you would be my death!
Regaining composure
I know a secret and you must learn it.
That is: the philosophy of shit.

Blue: Oh yes, of course, I mean why not?
We’ve stood and heard
everything else you’ve got.

Frac: *Sidelong to audience*
This human race would be a comedy
if it weren’t for all the tragedy.

To Blue and Companion

Allow me to teach you your future memory,
the real perennial philosophy.

*As the music begins, the Mob, with their initiation crowns
perched upside down on their heads, join Frac to
sing/dance.*

Frac:
The philosophy of shit
You can depend on it
You can make a fist but you can't resist
The philosophy of shit

Mob1:
The philosophy of shit
There's no escaping it
You can slip and slide but you cannot hide
from the philosophy of shit

Mob2:
The philosophy of shit
There's no denying it
You can make it rain but you can't explain
The philosophy of shit

Chorus

Oh - Oh - don't you know your philosophy of shit?
Oh - Oh - don't you love the philosophy of shit?

Frac:
The philosophy of shit
It's got you in its grit
You can squirm and squeal but you're gonna feel
The philosophy of shit

Mob3:
The philosophy of shit
It's a habit you can't kick

You can change your locks but you can't detox
The philosophy of shit

Chorus

Frac:
The philosophy of shit
It's an ice cream you must lick
You can change the cone but you're still on loan
to the philosophy of shit

Mob4:
The philosophy of shit
You can beat it with a stick
Drop your atom bomb but you can't run from
The philosophy of shit

Chorus

*At the last note of the song Frac and the Mob disappear.
A cacophony of atonal-like music and storm noise breaks
out. The lights blackout except for an intermittent spot
on Blue and Companion who cling to each other in terror
at the foot of the tree.*

Scene 25 - Let Wisdom Speak

*The noise ends abruptly. The Mob members reappear
with grotesque/terrifying oversized masks. The voice of
an old woman recites the verses. The Mob members each
take turns lip-synching a verse along with the old
woman's voice while circling and threatening Blue and
Companion in their dance. In the final verse The Mob
members take turns lip-synching the individual lines as
indicated below. The refrains are spoken by the Mob
beginning with triple forte and ending triple pianissimo
dynamics.*

Chorus: Let Wisdom speak! (*fff*)

I will tell you a secret. Listen!
There are no secrets, not one.
There are blind eyes, many, but not one secret.

Chorus: Let Wisdom speak!

Bring me not into your world of "this" and "that".
Mundane realities are not the concern of Wisdom.
She is above, She is below.
She surrounds you with invisible arms
of terror and beauty combined to form . . .
Wisdom.

Chorus: Let Wisdom speak.

Form.
How you have formed me again and again.
In every age you have sculpted my figure
and once asked, I gave you every truth you requested.
Did you not know you requested the terrible
when you requested the beautiful?

Chorus: Let Wisdom speak.

Wisdom speaks and more
often than not no one hears.
This is of no consequence to Wisdom.
"The human psyche loves to make deals"
(I gave that to Robert Bly.)
Wisdom, however, like Nature,
does not negotiate.
Wisdom, like Nature, is.

Chorus: Let Wisdom speak!

Wisdom speaks of the waves that now crest
and crash into the seas of humanity.
What was truth is now a lie.
Wisdom knows this is true.

Chorus: Let Wisdom speak.

Wisdom speaks but She will not be forced.
Will you bend Nature to your will?
Or will Nature abide your foolishness
for a time and then hit you with the
terrible truth you requested from the first?

Chorus: Let Wisdom speak.

Wisdom speaks to children in order
to teach the older ones but they do not hear.
They are caught in sticky webs
of daily importance that fill their
ears and eyes with foolishness disguised
as Wisdom.

Chorus: Let Wisdom speak.

My brother Pleasure has the world in his web.
I care less than nothing for
all his spellbinding creations.
I am in them. I am not.
Who has eyes or ears?
Who knows that Pleasure is my Brother?
That without the sacred marriage, Pleasure
is "a banging gong, a clashing cymbal"?
(I gave that to St. Paul.)

Chorus: Let Wisdom speak

Pleasure does not care.
He will dance in every form you give Him.
He loves to dance
and His forms are endless.
He knows that if the sacred marriage to his
Sister is not consummated that He will die.

Chorus: Let Wisdom speak

He is not afraid to die.
It is all the same to Him.
Still, Wisdom speaks through the din
of devotion to Pleasure, not so much
from hope as from necessity.
"The infinite is in love with the forms of time"
(I gave that to William Blake.)

Chorus: Let Wisdom speak.

Mob 1 lip synches: Wisdom speaks until weariness
energizes Her old haggard frame
with zest for life.

Mob 2 lip synches: Destruction or transformation.

Mob 3 lip synches: It is all the same to Wisdom.

Mob 4 lip synches: The life of Wisdom,
like the life of Nature,
will have its way.

Mob 1 lip synches: Wisdom has spoken.

Mob 2 lip synches: Who has heard?

Chorus: Let Wisdom speak. (*ppp*)

Exit Mob. Fric appears at his news desk and stands beside it.

Scene 26 - Split

Blue and Companion huddle together terrified. Fric sits at stage left calmly peeling and eating an apple. Fric stands beside his news desk watching. Blue interprets the terror of the previous scene as a sign that it was a mistake to join up with Companion.

Blue: Go away from me.

Comp: What did you say?

Blue: I was a fool to believe you could come here.
to this place where terror and beauty play
together and mortals must love what they fear.

Comp: I love you Blue, that is enough.

Blue: And what am I? Do you think that you know?
What do you see? What do you love?
Am I the flame or am I the glow?

Comp: I don't have to understand.

Blue: What makes you think the price is so cheap?

Comp: The price of what? Give me your hand.
Let me turn your bitter sweet.

Blue: The price of life is death Companion.
How can you pretend that it's not?
You are the reason that we have fallen
into this wasteland of tree and rock.
You are the one with suspicious friends
Gesturing toward Fric and Frac
appearing every time we move.
And still you call the beginning the end,
do you even know what you're trying to prove?

Comp: I only know the way I feel
when I look at you.

Blue: Go away.

Comp: What has turned your heart to steel.
Talk to me Blue.

Blue: *Rising* Go away.

Comp: *Rising with her, standing with his back to the tree*
Only a moment ago we drowned
and danced within each other.

Blue: Go away.

Comp: What must I do, *Holding Blue's crown*, to earn
this crown?
To be your lover . . .

With a mischievous grin Frac nonchalantly rolls the apple toward Blue. Blue picks up the apple and when she does it magically transforms into a knife. As she screams, "Go away!" Blue plunges the knife through Companion's chest and into the tree.

Blue: Go away!

Companion gasps, then dies, remaining impaled to the trunk of the tree. At the moment that Companion is stabbed, Fric grasps his chest and drops to one knee. Blue collapses, wailing in grief at the base of the tree below Companion.

Scene 27 - What's Your Name?

Blue and Companion remain motionless. Fric and the Mob join Frac. Mob sings/dances.

Fric: Now we're finally getting somewhere.

Frac: Sometimes you have to accept their prayer
to boil away inside their own juices
until they finally go to pieces.

Fric: The apple was really a beautiful touch.

Frac: Why thank you brother, they really are such
a peculiar species, *gesturing to Blue and Companion*, and these no exception,
so stubbornly blind to the plain connection
between the disaster of annihilation
and the renewal of transformation.

Chorus

Frac: *Addressing dead Companion*
What's your name, can you figure it out?

Fric: *Addressing Blue who is frozen in place*
What's your name, can you do without

a name?

Frac: I'm talkin' about your name, ah.

Fric: It hasn't always been this way

Frac: *Scratching head*
Was it science?

Fric: Money?

Frac: *Making face* Sexualité?

Fric: Maybe its just the trick of time
that waters down that wedding wine.
The price of being civilized
requires the loss of the greatest prize.

Frac: Meaning itself is laid to rest
even as modern man is blessed
with a life that is better ten times over
than his most recent dead ancestor.

Chorus

Fric: Meanwhile these two, what's to be done?
Can they really sing the ancient songs?

Frac: People still howl when the moon is full
but would they really sacrifice a bull?³⁰

Fric: Each time must themselves re-make,
re-form, re-lease, re-generate.

Frac: Take the disaster of annihilation
and turn it into transformation.

Fric: If God is dead today. We both know
that He'll be back again tomorrow.³¹

Fric: Yet only these two have the choice
to give us death and so give us voice.

Frac: Only them. Right now, right here.
Otherwise we disappear.

Fric: Into timeless older younger.

Frac: Eating spoonfuls filled with hunger.

Double Chorus

Exit Fric and Frac and the Mob. While Blue remains motionless and oblivious, a stand-in with a knife sticking out of his chest appears. Stagehands help the stand-in to remove Companion and take his place.

Scene 28 - One Dream at a Time

The ghost of Companion, with a bloody wound in his chest, appears and sings to Blue who remains motionless at the foot of the tree.

Companion: Oh Blue. You are my soul, my heaven, my hell, my love, my hate, my beauty and my terror.

And if you lose your way
to wander the wasteland
let your feet go astray
one step at a time,
one step at a time.

And if you start to fade,
and thoughts are no longer
let your heart have its say
one beat at a time,
one beat at a time.
one step at a time,
one step at a time.

Bridge

Each time you call my name I will appear
I'll make your sorrow disappear

And if you lose the day
to find your eyes closing
let your soul find the way
one dream at a time,
one dream at a time.
one step at a time,
one step at a time.

While Blue remains motionless and oblivious, Companion trades places with the stand-in who exits.

Scene 29 - Here's to the Infinite

Blue slowly rises and sings to Companion's body.

Blue: Oh Companion. You are my soul, my heaven, my hell, my love, my hate, my beauty and my terror.

Chorus

Here's to the infinite space between us.
Here's to the infinite joy that we'll never know.
Here's to the infinite time which cannot hold us . . .
here's to the infinite depths of the Faustian soul.³²

I was born 900 years after God³³
I have grown into this *gesturing to herself*, woman and
gesturing to Companion, man
and I know my destiny is to roam alone, alone . . .

I did ride, ride to Jerusalem³⁴
I did fly, all the way to the moon
still I know my destiny is to roam alone, alone . . .

Chorus

Bridge

From Mephistopheles to John F. Kennedy
the trail leads ever deeper, everywhere.
Still no matter where I go, or how much I come to know

I never reach the end, never . . .

I am lost, lost in the wilderness

I have killed the only hope I had found
and I know my destiny is to roam alone, alone . . .

Chorus

Lights fade. Curtain closes.

Scene 30 - Schopenhauer

Frac and Companion approach each other from opposite sides of the apron. Frac is dressed as an 18th century gentleman (Schopenhauer) taking a walk. Companion still has the bloody wound on his chest.

Comp: Not you again.

Frac: Who again?

Comp: You.
Who are you this time?

Frac: Who?

Comp: Who?

Frac: Think for once you thoughtless dummkopf
oh pardon me, your head is too soft
to hold a single drop of logic.
You'd better run along and quick.

Comp: I'm guessing you're German.

Frac: So you can guess?
Allow me one moment to be impressed.

Comp: Eighteenth century . . .

Frac: What year? What hour?

Comp: A cynical pessimist . . . Schopenhauer!

Frac: Oh my God! If I weren't an atheist
I would give a prayer of thanks for this.
The blessing of another fool
blind to the accidental cruel
joke of nature to give us a brain
to learn that life is meaningless pain.

Comp: *Addressing the audience with his thumb pointed toward Frac*

If I weren't dead I'd be depressed
at such a beautiful, terrible mess.

Frac: So what! Move aside, I've walking to do.

Comp: With nowhere to go?

Frac: Away from you.

Comp: Not one pearl of truth? Not a single gem?

Frac: Truth is a lie. That is your problem.

Exit Frac.

Scene 31 - Ode to the Problem

Companion moves to the centre of the apron.

Companion: *Dejected, beaten* Ever since I knew that I was, as far back as memory goes I have wrestled with this problem. *Companion slumps with head in hands for a long pause, at the end of which he exclaims with burning frustration* My whole life has been one endless attempt to negotiate some kind of settlement with this problem, run away from this problem . . . find comfort in this problem. *Pause* Right now is the burning point of this problem where the seeds of its future are being carefully and invisibly sown. *Long pause and then with resignation* I must love this problem. *Short pause* I must kiss it full

on the lips. *With growing intensity* I must place this problem in my chest where it has always been waiting for me to choose to join in this dance of living death and dying life.

Fric appears slightly behind Companion and to one side to become the "voice" of his thoughts. Companion stares silently straight ahead as Fric speaks. As he speaks the Mob, now dressed completely in black and standing behind Companion, sing a choral background.

Fric speaks:

This problem is the only possible purpose of life. Loving it equally well in the harvest moment and the hail of bullets can be the only worthy goal. Words, music, images - none of them can explain this problem, they can only describe it. This problem can only be experienced to ever greater depths - for he who has feet to walk - but can never be fulfilled; it has to be a problem in order to be.

Companion speaks:

I find this problem in another and I want to kill, or possess. I find this problem in myself and I want to die, or be reborn. I find the problem everywhere and I am enslaved, or free. *Pause*

Frac now appears slightly behind Companion and to the other side to become the "voice" of his thoughts. Companion stares silently straight ahead as Frac speaks. As he speaks the Mob once again sings a choral background.

This problem is a gift that is rejected. She is a bride left at the altar, he is a child forgotten and alone. *Pause* This problem is a celebration that lasts forever but is attended only by a few. The simplicity of this problem is inscrutable. The beauty of this problem is terrifying. The timing of this problem is now, and right now is forever.

Companion speaks:

This problem humiliates me and so pride is impossible. This problem loves me and so self-hatred is impossible too, for I am what this problem is.

The voices of Fric and Frac with the Mob singing a choral background.

Tossing this problem from hand to hand in gratitude and playful joy - that is the action of a master dancer. Look at him smile! Listen to her laugh! They greet this problem with the sword of experience and the love of fate and hold nothing back.

Companion joins Fric and Frac:

They have learned the secret that there is nothing to be held onto. *Pause, music ends*

Companion alone again:

There is only this problem. Everything else fades away until the tiny burning point in the center of all that ever was dances alone, crackling into the future.

Exit all.

Scene 32 - Black Elk³⁵

Fric appears on the apron, staring with interest at the horizon, (facing the audience). Blue approaches him.

Blue: Who are you?

Fric: You don't know yet?

Blue: What are you looking at?

Fric: The sunset.

Blue: Where is that sun?

Fric: South Dakota.

Blue: Who is that climbing?

Fric: A true Lakota.
A man who is both fierce and meek.
That is Black Elk climbing Harney Peak

Blue: *Looking away*
There's nothing left for me to see.

Fric: Now you are open to mystery.

Blue: I've lost it all for the sake of a name.

Fric: And what have you lost?

Blue: All but the blame.

Fric: You follow Black Elk a way up there
and he will teach you that anywhere
is the centre of all that exists.
A moment as rare as the total eclipse
of the moon and the sun.
The truth is Blue, the two are one.

Scene 32 - We Are One

Blue sits down on the stage. Companion enters and sits down with his back to her. As Blue and Companion sit, each is unaware that the other is so close.

Fric sings:
We seem to be so many,
we are really one
From Harney Peak in South Dakota
to Jerusalem
We seem to be so many,
we are really one
From the dying of each moon to
the birth of each new sun.

Fric gestures toward Companion.

He chases her through every lonely night
Each time he sheds a little bit of pride
He disappears then comes around again
Maybe this time . . . maybe this time . . .

Fric gestures toward Blue.

She rises up each day to search again
From the east down to the west she looks for him
The night comes down to take her dream away
Maybe next time . . . maybe next time . . .

We seem to be so many,
we are really one
From the currents of the Ganges
to the Parthenon
We seem to be so many,
we are really one
From the dying of each moon to
the birth of each new sun.

Fric, Blue and Companion all sing in three-part harmony until the end of the song. Blue and Companion remain unaware of anyone else being present.

Welcome to the centre of the world
Anywhere the smoke of love curls
Every sun and moon and boy and girl
There is no space . . . there is no time . . .

We seem to be so many,
we are really one
From the newborn baby's cry
through to Avalon
We seem to be so many,
we are really one
From the dying of each moon to
the birth of each new sun.

Blackout.

Scene 34 - Waking Up

The curtain opens as stagehands bring in the courthouse backdrop. Blue and Companion are in the same position that they were at the beginning of scene five, "The Proclamation." It is the morning after the failed initiation rite. All of the experiences since the Mob attacked them were their various dreams. They rise slowly, favouring injured parts.

Blue: If that was a hint of our future together
then problems are in our destiny.

Comp: I am your problem, now and forever
and you are my infinite mystery.

Fric and Frac appear on the apron where Fric has made his "First Last" reports and they observe Blue and Companion.

Fric: Do you suppose they'll make it?

Frac: Of course Fric.
Everyone makes it. That's no trick.
It's what you make of it, that's the prize.
Everything else is just truth and lies.

Fric: Timeless.

Frac: History.

Fric: Black.

Frac: White.

Fric: Problem.

Frac: Mystery.

Fric: Dark.

Frac: Light.

Fric: All dark is no good, nothing to see.

Frac: All light is useless, blind as can be.

Fric: Blind as a kitten.

Frac: Blind as a bat.

Fric: Blind as a Fric.

Frac: Blind as a Frac.

Fric: Are we closer now? What do you say?

Frac: Well I'm not as hungry as yesterday.

In the following section Fric and Frac only appear to speak to each other as they separately ruminate about where things are going in the history of consciousness. Fric, in his "visionary" style, imagines a "heaven" where he and Frac will be reunited with their ancient father's remains. Frac intellectualizes pedantically about the ideas suggested by Spengler in "The Decline of the West." Frac turns away from Fric

Meanwhile, what about the fate of the West?

Fric: *Turning away from Frac*
One day we shall complete our quest.

Frac: It all depends upon the high priest.

Fric: I can see it now, a celebration feast . . .

Frac: For the West the high priest is the engineer!

Fric: evergreen trees among rocks appear . . .

Frac: In the age of the machine he holds the key.

Fric: surrounded by cool freshwater . . . I see!

Frac: What would happen if he walked away?

Fric: a return to our village for the mortal decayed

Frac: How long until it all goes up in smoke?

Fric: remains of our father to be worn as a cloak
Turning toward Frac
in a sacred dance for a new world my brother.

Frac: *Turning toward Fric*
The end of this one.

Fric: The birth of another.
Where shall we hear the next world song?

Frac: Spengler said Russia is coming along.

Fric: Your friend Spengler is a crackpot.

Frac: He's an easy target for the cheap shot.

Fric: That settles it then, we'll take our show
to Moscow!

Frac: Well, let's intend to go.

Fric: And make something of wherever we land.
Cheerfully Agreed?

Frac: *Resigned* Agreed. *Disgusted* Ridiculous.

Fric: *Joyful* Grand.

Scene 35 - All of This Coming and Going

One by one each of the four characters sing during the final song.

Comp: All of this coming and going,
careful not to hurt yourself
'cause you are a part of me

Blue: All of this coming and going,
say did we get there yet?
And how many miles to go?

Companion and Blue sing.

Chorus

Well I don't know but I've been told
that you and I are one
A shining band of gold and lead and love . . .

Fric: All of this coming and going,
careful not to run me down
'cause I am a part of you

Frac: All of this coming and going,
say did you hear that sound?
It's terrible, beautiful, terrible, beautiful.

Fric, Frac, Blue and Companion sing.

Chorus

The Mob joins in for a lively repeat of the song. Fric, Frac, Blue and Companion continue to sing the choruses.

Mob 1: All of this coming and going
Careful not to hurt yourself
'cause you are a part of me

Mob 2: All of this coming and going
say did we get there yet?
And how many miles to go?

Mob 1 and 2 sing.

Chorus

Well I don't know but I've been told
that you and I are one
A shining band of gold and lead and love . . .

Mob 3: All of this coming and going
Careful not to run me down
'cause I am a part of you

Mob 4: All of this coming and going
say did you hear that sound?
It's terrible, beautiful, terrible, beautiful.

The Mob, Fric, Frac, Blue and Companion sing.

Chorus

Epilogue

The West arises from his bed where he has lain since the end of the prologue.

The West: My God what dreams! What do you suppose would happen if you took such nonsense seriously? Ah well, enough of that. Mouths to feed, millions to entertain, billions more to serve. Good morning, welcome to Western Civilization, may I take your order?

The End.

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1. Psychologically, Blue and Companion symbolize the masculine and feminine halves of the Western soul.

2. Fric and Frac are the play's representation of the archetypal twin motif. In the story they reside "outside" the psyche of the West in what C.G. Jung called the collective unconscious. (According to Jung, the collective unconscious contains the whole spiritual heritage of mankind's evolution, born anew in the brain structure of every individual. C.G. Jung *The Structure of the Psyche*, CW 8, par. 342) They are imaginal figures who appear everywhere where human myth and legend has existed; a pair of warring, conspiring opposites whose image is one way of

comprehending the soul.

3. A psychopomp is, in the broadest sense, anyone or anything that functions as a link between the physical and the spiritual. A short list of examples might include the aboriginal shaman, gods such as the Egyptian Anubis and the Greek Hermes, the work of art or the sleeping dream. Mircea Eliade has shown that in ancient times it was the task of the shaman to retrieve the soul of a sick person from the land of the dead, it having been stolen there by one of the deceased who still longs for life. In this musical drama we have a work of art, appearing in the form of a dream collage, presenting *itself* as psychopomp to a civilization sick with loss of soul: the West.

4. Oswald Spengler's dating for the West is roughly 900 - 1800 CE.

5. The recorded audio should say "1800" instead of "1900."

6. The Mob consists of four characters, two male, (1 & 3) and two female, (2 & 4). The size of the mob may be increased as resources permit but they should always be increased by increments of four and should always have an equal number of male and female characters.

7. Scenery changes are done in full view of the audience, reinforcing the theme that we are contemporary moderns of a world Civilization that have long seen through all the illusions that were the comforting realities of our ancestors. We cannot, therefore accept the beloved convention of theatrical illusion. That would tempt us to take the story and its action literally instead of giving its symbolic import centre stage in our experience of the drama.

8. This is an incorrect variation of the well known cliché response to uninteresting information, "Here's a quarter, call someone who cares." Mob3

spontaneously shouts out a variation, (invariably wrong) of the cliché most anytime he speaks. The whole Mob tends to speak in unoriginal cliché.

9. Sex, money, stuff. These are the hallmarks of contemporary Western Civilization just as clearly as religion, rank and taste would have been the hallmarks of the West two hundred years ago. The psychological rule is, however, the louder one talks about something, the more they doubt their possession of it. The contemporary West obsesses about sex because it is impotent, rages about money because currency is valueless in the face of the spiritual bankruptcy that is the nature of Civilization life and clamors for more and more stuff in order to disguise its poverty of soul.

10. The other Mob members dramatically repeat each word/phrase of this section in a state of wonderment; the word "power" itself entrances them. Therefore they sing with the expected reverence and zeal even though they have no idea what they are singing about.

11. The melody of the chorus of "Sex and Money and Stuff" is based on the traditional English round "Ah Poor Bird". (Ah poor bird, take your flight, far above the sorrows of this sad night.)

12. Pronounce, ad-ver-tis-ments.

13. The invocation ends with Evian for Amen. It is also the backwards spelling of the word "naive," the nature of the Mob.

14. Naming can be used to reinforce a neurotic defense (as the Mob members do) or to reveal the repressed (as Companion and Blue do.)

15. Webster's Dictionary.

16. Webster's Dictionary.

17. This is an allusion to the old Christian schism about whether Jesus was born a human or divinely created.

18. In the legendary founding of Rome the two twins Romulus and Remus argued over the city's layout. In the ensuing fight Romulus killed Remus and so the civilization was named "Rome."

19. Frac is happy to choose. He is a problem-solver by nature. His is an excellent organizer of facts and chooses decisively. His choices, meanwhile, lack impact because he lacks the intuitive gifts of Fric. Fric, on the other hand, is dreamy by nature and sees everything as a mystery. He has a great sense about where things are going but has little ability to make choices.

20. In this passage, the tropical village personifies that first departure from animal consciousness to human consciousness that is currently guessed to have occurred about two million years ago in Africa. The departure is ordered by the father, (the masculine or the "animus" in Jungian parlance), requiring a journey into consciousness, a journey full of difficulty where every goal is seen long before it is attained, ("two out of every three mouthfuls must be experienced as hunger.")

21. This passage alludes to Giegerich's interpretation of what the project of psychology is about. That is, the soul which has always been experienced as something external to man's consciousness, first through the innumerable gods of polytheism and then through the invisible God of monotheism, wants to come home to consciousness; wants to be part and parcel of the internal logic of what consciousness is.

22. What follows is a listing of what Spengler describes as the unique World Cultures that have so far existed.

23. In Spengler's theory of history, each World Culture period is followed by a World Civilization period which may last for any length of time but which lacks the creative "life-pulse" that characterizes the World Culture. By his dating, the West entered the Civilization stage around 1800 CE.

24. An Ancient Greek saying "Ducunt Fata volentem, nolentem trahunt", with which Oswald Spengler gives in Latin at the close of his book, *The Decline of the West*.

25. This verse is not heard in the audio.

26. Here we return to the theme that Fric and Frac are the primordial urge of consciousness to reach itself at ever higher levels. They are wrestling with the question of whether Blue and Companion are suitable candidates for the furthering of this project. Blue and Companion have become potential candidates for the making of new consciousness, first by seeing through and then by failing their initiation rite. Fric, ever the optimist, is in favour of the move while Frac, ever the pessimist, finds the prospect dubious at best.

27. From *Essential Rumi*, translated by Coleman Barks.

28. From *Tristan und Isolde* Gottfried von Strassburg.

29. The tailrace is the watercourse that carries the flow of lake Superior away from the hydroelectric turbines and into the St. Mary's river. The current is turbulent and dangerous.

30. This lyric alludes to Giegerich's critique of those who wish to revive the ancient religions but who ignore the essential aspect of their rituals: live sacrifice.

31. Jung claimed, somewhere in his written work, that if all the religions of the world were to disappear today, they

would begin anew tomorrow, by which he meant, I believe, that the notion of soul or spirit cannot be severed from being human.

32. Spengler referred to the Western soul as "Faustian." By this he meant the story of *Faust* where the play's namesake strikes a deal with the devil in order to achieve ultimate power, satisfaction and happiness in this earthly life. Spengler believed that this character perfectly captured the essence of the Western soul: an unquenchable drive to the infinite.

33. 900 CE is Oswald Spengler's dating for the birth of the West.

34. The Crusades.

35. Black Elk (1863 - 1950) was a Lakota medicine man who, in the narration of his life story to the American poet John G. Neihardt, explained that Harney Peak, in what is now South Dakota, is the centre of the world. He followed this information with the insight that anywhere is the centre of the world i.e. the issue lies in one's way of seeing.