

SAILOR OF THE SOUTH WIND

by

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#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Two people from my alma mater, Duquesne University, are no longer alive to hear me thank them for bringing some of the magic into my life, so I place my words for my appreciation to outlast any spoken tribute. James Beymer was my chairman. More importantly, he taught me Shakespeare. All the references to Shakespeare in my Critical Apparatus come out of what I learned from him. I never took a class from Helen Kleyle, but she was my teacher. In our meetings over administrative matters, she proved to me the importance of education and the joy of contributing to the lives of our students. I still feel her spirit as I work.

# **ILLEGIBLE DOCUMENT**

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DOCUMENT(S) IS OF  
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**THIS IS THE BEST  
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SETTING: The bar, late mid afternoon. The actual bar is wooden, with a brass railing along the base, a couple of stools, and a mirror, bottles and clocks from distilleries against the wall. The bar stretches from just past the stage right door to around center, upstage. There are matching wood, dark tables and chairs throughout the rest of the setting. There are pictures on the walls and doors at center, upstage, and far upstage left. When the play opens, JESSIE, the thirtish, attractive, manager of the bar is waiting on two construction workers, VINCE and SAM, both of whom are at least in their mid 30's, unrefined, and still in their working clothes.

VINCE

(To JESSIE as she pours a drink.) Thank ya. I need something for my nerves. I'm a shakin' when they send me up to the high scaffolds and where the boys just started with the steel. I ain't never been a scared before. Tell h'r, Sam.

SAM

This boy ain't never been a frightened of a thing in his life, 'cept to what his Mrs. look like in the mornin'. (VINCE swats at SAM.) Nah, Jessie, I ain't never seen my man so worried about a construction site. He were born to build big buildin's. We been walkin' the steel together, the way up high stuff that look like some skeleton since when, (To VINCE) twelve years?

VINCE

At least. And me a year or so before you joined your first crew, and I ain't never seen such a sham in all my life. We're buildin' that new hospital, across the street and down the whole block. This is the biggest thing this part a town seen in a long time, and I should be proud of it workin' on this in my neighborhood.

JESSIE

You should, and you were when you first came by and told me, "We've been holding on down here so long, this could save this old place." But what has got you feeling so wrong?

VINCE

This hospital is my first time to be more than just another guy working the steel into place, walkin' it, to put the rivets in, then come down and have a few. (Raises glass.) I ain't seen how it works in the office much before, but what I'm seeing in there doesn't make sense. It doesn't fit what I know of construction, and I'm just afraid something's going to happen to me, or one of my crew. Hell, (Trying to smile.) even Sam, this old son of a B. Maybe, I should have this drink while it's cold. (Sips.)

SAM

This man ain't no fool, but he's getting on in years. No more out to stud, (Nudging VINCE.) yeah? His Mrs. don't just headache. She so bad, Vince here been out buying open things or Tylenol.

VINCE

Pay him no never mind. He's trying to cheer me up. This is his level best.



JESSIE

Below sea level.

VINCE

You can't be too serious when you walk steel. Up there in the sky. Hell, this bastard (Puts arm around SAM.) is tryin' to save my life.

SAM

Oh, he's such an old man now. He worries too much. And senility's supposed to make ya forget, not think too much. You don't think, you get constipated. Personally, I can't give a shit about bein' constipated.

JESSIE

Ya know, my mom still remembers when you were a kid goin' to school. This is a big neighborhood, in a big town, but, then, there was only one school. She asks about you.

SAM

She does? Oh, she was a saint, my mom say that all the time. (Sort of proud of himself.) What she ask? Ask about me?

JESSIE

(Leans gently towards SAM.)

How is the old fuckhead?

VINCE

(Finally smiling.) I remember your mom, too. You're a lot like her Jessie. Same kind a fire. I haven't seen her for a while. How is she? Is she good?

JESSIE

(Shaking her head no.)

She isn't goin' to make it much longer. Since she busted her hip, I can't tend her right. The home out in the country we put her in is fine, but I swear her heart breaks whenever she remembers that she's not in the neighborhood. Mom wants to be in the Old Folks Home on 14th street. But the mayor says he's closing it. I wish someone would help to keep that home open. Somebody has to change the mayor's mind. This is the only area Mom knows as her home, that she belongs here. This is where she, and daddy, were born. Then all of us are like that. Since daddy died, all she has are these old walls. But, the ones she sees aren't the same old walls. I wish someone would help keep the home open.

VINCE

(To JESSIE.)

Can't you bring her home?

SAM

Weren't you listening? What did the lady just say? Or is your hearing goin', old man?

VINCE

(To SAM.)

Oh you treat me like my daughter, Lisa. She's goin' to go to college and not know this life. I pray I keep workin'. If I ever lost this job, I'd

die before I'd watch my family suffer.

JESSIE

Vince. Vince come on. Not so serious. Don't cry in your beer, I've put in enough water. Times have been too hard down here. This part of the city has almost been forgotten. God knows the mayor doesn't give a damn about the people down here. I was sure all of this was going to fall away, everything I'd know was going to be left for ghosts and gangs. This old place was rotting. But then the county comes in with that new hospital. And it's goin' up right across the street (Points to stage right.). Now we've got a chance. Now we've got a reason to use any money we have.

SAM

What kind a silly thing would you be spending for? A new hat?

JESSIE

Just remember who now owns the stool you're brains are restin' on. Me.

VINCE

Oh. Wonderful. How did you ever get that fat Frank Terrbovich to sell his place? Frank has always loved to sit (Points to table in far corner.) right there, watching you do all the work. Oh, you own the bar. But where'd the money come from? (To SAM.) Isn't that some news?

JESSIE

Vince. Please don't make a fuss. I don't own the whole bar. I've only a part. A part of a part. See, the people who work here, Burt, Carla, everyone in the kitchen, we were all afraid of losing our jobs. Terrbovich told some of us not to get comfortable working here.

SAM

So Frank's going to sell the place?

JESSIE

It sounded like he was. So all of us got together and they sent me to talk with Frank. I asked if our jobs were safe and he started to talk abou' a deal.

VINCE

I don't know if I'd want to make deals with a slob like Frank.

JESSIE

I wouldn't want to either. But he made us an offer. He said he was trying to sell at least part of the bar. Frank asked if we would want to spend some money to have a say about our jobs. So we all put our savings together and signed a contract. Now everyone who works here is their own little company and we own half of the business and old Terrbovich signed a guarantee that he'll never fire us.

VINCE

God. None of us have been sure of work for the last few years. I guess this makes you some kind a upper class career woman. Huh, Jessie?

JESSIE

I got just one part of our part. It isn't that much. See, it isn't even a full half of the bar. Frank still owns like fifty-one percent, he's still the owner, but he signed the guarantee.

VINCE

But he still could make trouble.

JESSIE

We're not made a money. This is the best bar in the neighborhood, and we're lucky when we break even. But, with what you guys are doing, that new hospital could save it all. Hell, look at the people you know who can afford a beer to relax instead of going into debt because they were broke. You sell more beer like that. With the jobs you guys have been able to get, the bar should have more customers through the next year, at least. By then, either things will have to built for all the people work will work at the hospital. If last that long, I bet a lot of these hospital people will come over here of lunch, or a drink. Without that building, the place we call home would have gone to hell. The neighborhood might have looked so bombed out, we wouldn't be good enough for a ghetto.

VINCE

I know this is important. So important, my Lisa is proud of me, 'cause I'm in charge of so much. Even is that includes him. (Points to ) I want nothin' to stop my Lisa from school or what's good for everybody. Something must be done.

SAM

They should know, your're right. (VINCE stares at him.) Yes you are. That Old Folks Home over on 14th street oughta be kept open, for people like your mama, Jessie.

JESSIE

(To VINCE.)

He's finally caught up to that point. He's in a different time zone?

SAM

What, now you don't care about your mother?

JESSIE

No. Hell, no it's....Well, I do have to feel good about something. (Shy smile.) I'm now manager of this place.

SAM

So you'll have the money to take care of your mom, proper, eh? Especially now that you used all your cash buying the stools in here.

JESSIE

You're the biggest stool I've ever seen, stupid. Hell, I told you already. We got the money, but the place she wants to go to is closing in a couple a weeks. The home on 14th. It's close to our house. But the place is going to shut down and the mayor won't do anything to get money for it anymore. The mayor won't even talk in public about it. That slimy smiler, (Angry) Grr. He put in new garbage cans with his name on 'em, but he won't even talk about our elderly. He should be inside those things too.

There has to be someone who'll listen. There's that lawyer Livingston and his Neighborhood Coalition, but they haven't gotten anywhere.

SAM

Hell, somebody oughta listen to you. Shit, if they'd listen to you they put up for you some hysterical monument.

JESSIE

We don't need that. We've got you.

ENTER ANY KEHOE FROM STAGE RIGHT DOORWAY. HE'S IN A SUIT WITH A COUPLE OF NEWSPAPERS UNDER HIS ARM. HE LOOKS AROUND. THE CROWD STARES BACK. HE WALKS TO CENTER STAGE.

ANDY

Hi, there.

JESSIE

Afternoon. What'll you have? (He doesn't answer quickly.) Before six, there's no cover charge for standing in the middle of the room.

ANDY

Yeah. Sure. I'll, have a beer.

JESSIE

Any particular kind? If you want, we've a special on some day old draft.

ANDY

(Slightly taken back.)

You, now you don't have to be flippant.

JESSIE

Is that going around? Can I get shots?

VINCE

(Quietly to JESSIE)

You know this suit? Why do you treat him so?

JESSIE

He looks like he could be one of those guys from the mayor's office. We had one last week.

ANDY

I decided....

JESSIE

I'll call the papers.

ANDY

No need. I am the papers. I'm a reporter, well, I work for the Mirror, (In a clipped, memorized tone.) the new, weekly newspaper that's printed on this side of town for this of town. Could I speak to your boss?

JESSIE

Hey, I ain't been that rude. I can handle whatever you need.

ANDY

I'm sure of that for most things, but I want to see if I can do some business while I wait. For friends. I'll have a Mic, draft, fresh stuff if you have it.

JESSIE

We tapped a new clydesdale this morning. (Fills him a glass.) What kinda business?

ANDY

As I said, I'm from The Mirror. (Pulls a paper out and opens it for them to read.) I'm sure you've read it.

JESSIE

(Pulls wet copy from deep under the bar.)

Haven't read it much, but it sure the hell makes a good mat for under the taps.

ANDY

(Noticeably angry.)

That's a poor waste of a good newspaper. I didn't start it up to be a bar rag.

SAM

Thought you said worked for it, not started it?

ANDY

Well, both. I'm the publisher. Well, both. See, the money that I used to start the paper came from my father. It's my responsibility to make it go. He gave me the sword, but it's my crusade.

SAM

Who's your old man that he could set up a business?

ANDY

He used to be a judge around here. He was on the state supreme court. Do you remember a Judge Kehee?

VINCE

(With a sense of awe and surprise.) Oh, geez. He's a powerful guy. (To SAM and JESSIE.) Remember how that Judge was always on the news. Nobody messed with him. (To ANDY.) But you're his boy?

ANDY

Yeah, and the Judge decided to let me stay in charge. It was my idea in the first place. I'm called the News Editor, but I work for Dick Ambrose. I'm sure you've seen Dick's by-line; his is in thick ink on a lot of stories in the Post-Times for the last few years.

JESSIE and VINCE

No.

ANDY

Well, he's the best. And we got a fine paper here and I think your manager would be interested in having a box, you know the kind of contraption with the window in front, and a coin slot, and have it right out front, or especially inside the door so your customers will stop by to buy a paper and stay to read it, so they'll buy something more. Don't you see? Especially when we start coming out more often during the week.

JESSIE

A box for your stuff, and I though you wanted to stand in the middle of the floor and sell'em to passersby, on their way to the john.

SAM

Publisher, reporter, and paperboy. If you do windows, you might get some money out of it.

ANDY

Hey. Hey. who the hell are you to be saying this? Who are you to judge my business? (Shakes papers at them.) Now I really want to talk to the person in charge. We do this to help out this crapped out neighborhood, and this is the treatment. Where's the manager?

SAM

Behind the bar. (ANDY fumbles with the papers.) Ain't that a shitter?

JESSIE

You think a woman is only able to be thankful for the tips you leave on the table? I'll let you know I'm not some silly waiters. I run this bar, and I own part of it, so what does that do for your proposition?

ANDY

If I wasn't meeting some people here, I'd take myself home. I can take hints, but I want to know why you hate me so much.

JESSIE

It's not you. Who knows you? It's the paper.

ANDY

We're the same thing.

JESSIE

Well, that's too bad, cause it doesn't say much for you. While it looks nice enough, it's just a lot of pictures. Pictures are good if you want readers like Sam, (SAM looks at her puzzled.) but if you want what you say you do, you got to do something for these people. You say it's for this part of town, but look at it, look into the thing and show me how much of that is really about the people, the conditions, the frustrations of this place.

ANDY

You want some kind of small town rag, with who had who to a pot luck dinner, and Mary Sue Beth Belle Somebody did nothing much? Big crime like

stolen lawn chairs? I'd never want that. Not for me.

JESSIE

No. I didn't say that. Hell, I hate those things, too. But when have you ever come down here and asked about what we felt was important? How 'bout those burnt out places a few blocks over, where little kids keep climbing through the old bricks and burnt timbers? They should tear them down. No one will, but have you tried to help? Your big stories always come from downtown. Smigelski, the mayor, don't listen to us, why should we read about him?

ANDY

But he's still your mayor and what happens there will get down to you.

JESSIE

Same with Congress. So should you spend your time there? With that logic, you should spend your time talking to God.

ANDY

But Dick knows this town so well. I listen to what he thinks. But you think what you need is to have things torn down?

JESSIE

What we really need is for something to stay up. Do you.... I bet you don't.

ANDY

Don't what?

JESSIE

Know about the home for the elderly down on 14th street? The big old mansion back off the street?

ANDY

I know where it is. I've seen it. What about it?

JESSIE

Did you know it's going to be closed in a couple a weeks because the city has cut funding. It says that the place isn't a "true need", but it's as nice a place as I could find. Without it, there isn't a decent place in miles. We've gotta ship our parents like cattle to stock yards. It ain't that bad, but it feels like that, I can tell you, and what can you do about it?

ANDY

What has the mayor said about it? I've never had a long talk with the guy, but I've seen him a lot and he's always open to ideas.

SAM

Yeah, open at both ends. In one (Points to his mouth.) and out the other.

JESSIE

He won't talk about it. Anywhere.



ANDY

An old friend, friends since we were kids and then all the way through school, Parker Livingston, is the head of the coalition in the neighborhood. Now, are they okay with you?

JESSIE

They're great.

ANDY

I'm meeting Parker here. And Dick, my editor, I told you about. We'll get something going. I promise you, absolutely promise that we'll get something. We'll try. I mean it.

JESSIE

It's only a challenge when you have something to lose. It's that way for us.

ENTER DICK AND PARKER FROM  
STAGE RIGHT.

DICK

Andy. You diggin' up another crackling story?

ANDY

Gentlemen. Hello. (They shake hands.)

PARKER

Baily Hopkins says hello. I saw him down at the courthouse. He wondered if any of the rest of us were going back to the university for homecoming.

ANDY

(Fondly.)

God damn, Baily. He still selling insurance? (PARKER nods, yes.) He still getting sued? (They laughed.)

DICK

Sorry to break up the old tie reunion. We've got important business, and it's good news.

ANDY

I've got a piece of business for us too. (He glances at JESSIE.) It involves you, Parker.

PARKER

Haven't I had enough tickets fixed? Maybe we should have you fixed?

ANDY

Not now. It's something important. I've made commitments.

DICK

I'm the one with commitments, one that should concern our collective, journalistic ass. I invited your friend to make sure it's done right. I've found a new place for us to use as our office. It's a place where we can print the paper more often because it has more space, and, (Grinning.) it costs less than those hellish damp basement rooms we've



been stuck in. But, first things first. (Turns to JESSIE, snaps his fingers.) A Bud, bottle. And, what'llya have Parker?

PARKER  
(To JESSIE)

Water, with a little lemon please.

DICK  
Looks like Andy's waiting for his brew to come to a boil. (ANDY grabs the sweaty glass.) Whatcha been doing, trying to convert these people?

ANDY  
Oh, they've been working on me. I'd like to talk with your about....

DICK  
We've got a lot to talk about. (JESSIE sets their drinks on top of the bar.) Let's take a good seat because I'll need the space to spread out our new deal.

THEY SIT AT A TABLE JUST LEFT  
OF CENTER STAGE. JESSIE CARRIES  
THE DRINKS OVER.

DICK  
(To ANDY)  
Why I asked you here was, well, don't you like it? It's a nice place.

ANDY  
It has its moments.

DICK  
You know, Mr. Hunter's print shop is right through that back door, (He points to stage left.) across the street. We've been coming out to Hunter's for six months to have the paper printed and we never even looked over here. This place has been waiting for us.

ANDY  
Usually, when we're there, we need coffee and some late dinner, cheap.

DICK  
But it's a good part of the neighborhood. Just a couple blocks from the Expressway ramp. And the county hospital is going up across the street. Hell, it is the whole street. This is where all the rebuilding will be, where everything will be centered. I think it's a hell of a location. We'll be able to see everything that happens in this neighborhood.

ANDY  
You wanta buy season tickets?

DICK  
No, I just really want to know, do you think this is a great location?

ANDY  
Yes. Hell, yes. But why have we come here? Three-fers? Happy Hour?

DICK GRINS BROADLY AT PARKER.

PARKER

This is where I come in, to make Dick's happy hour. It seems your boss needs your approval on what can easily be called an investment. He's made agreements that need your signature and I've been at the courthouse checking papers and having contracts drawn up.

ANDY

And I thought you were down there to do some public good.

DICK

I've talked with the owner of a place that'll save us and make us stronger with one move. And I'm glad you like this place because we're buying it. (Indicates the room.)

JESSIE DROPS A MUG. VINCE  
AND SAM TURN TOWARD THE TABLE.

ANDY

(Gesturing toward the fallen glass.)

There goes your investment. But you can't be serious. We going to do what, rent it out to AA as a target range?

DICK

You're not looking at the beauty of this.

JESSIE

(Comes out from behind the bar.)

The beauty of this place, mister, is that we own it. We bought it, half of it. Just yesterday, and we got a guarantee on our jobs.

DICK

(Standing to meet her.)

I don't know who you are. The only jobs safe with this are ours.

JESSIE

We're the people who work here, who own half. I have the papers.

DICK

(Displaying anger.)

I don't know who you've been dealing with. I have news. I jewed the owner of this grave down something fierce.

PARKER

I think we should sit down.

DICK

(To JESSIE.) I don't know what your game is, though I've seen some pretty weird shit come outa this set of roach farms. Since I was growing up, this has been the off side of town. Tell her. Tell her, Parker. Show her the papers.

PARKER

You really should sit down. Dick, I saw the papers at the court house,

and your deal isn't all you thought it was. (DICK turns to PARKER, stunned.) I didn't know if I should tell you when we met on the sidewalk out there, or when, because you still have a deal to work with someone around here, you're right (To JESSIE.) ma'am, I don't know who you are, but I do know that a gentleman named J.T. McGriff does own 49 percent of the business. And there is an employment guarantee.

DICK

I heard about this McGriff bastard. So what? We'll own more of the business and the building than they do. The Mirror will have the power to decide what has happen here. Forget the bastard.

SAM AND VINCE STEP TOWARD  
DICK.

JESSIE

I'm McGriff. Jessie. J.T.

PAUSE. OBVIOUS ANGER BETWEEN  
DICK AND JESSIE.

ANDY

(To PARKER, lightly.)

So, much happen at work today?

PARKER

Please, people. Dick. Ms. McGriff. I'm sorry. Please forgive my short-sightedness. I'm Parker Livingston, and I hope you'll all allow me the chance to prove myself. Ther person who owned this neglected both of you, both sets of rights. (To JESSIE.) He made you a promise he had no intention of worrying about. (To DICK.) And he could give you what he said over the phone, control of the place, because the title on the building will be the paper's. Still Turrbovich was not very truthful with the works. He won't fire them because it isn't his bar anymore.

ANDY

You have to measure honesty? Do you taste-test?

DICK

Shit. Andy. It wasn't to be this way. It was all agreed to. And you have to sit there with that dim prep smile and laugh. It may not be my money, or even my family's, but I'm sure the hell not laughing.

ANDY

Neither am I. If you'd watch, I haven't laughed for weeks. If we don't cut the kind of deal you thought you had, we'll be under in three weeks. Even with it, we may go in five. Hell, I'm trying to sell copies to anyone I meet on the street. The money my father gave to start this is almost gone. When it goes, it's my responsibility. Ask me to laugh with failure emptying everything beautiful I see.

JESSIE

Lawyer. Yeah, lawyer. You saw the deal, the paper I signed. I signed that for every person who works here. We all own a piece and will take (Points to ANDY and DICK.) them, the old man, you, hell, we'll take your

dentist to court if it helps. We'll sue you all.

PARKER

You may not have to. Andy, you know, since this is your baby, Dick could negotiate, but it won't go through until you sign. You can keep it from ever happening.

ANDY

I didn't get into this to make big decisions. But if I do nothing, I'll be letting the paper die.

DICK

But, Parker, that guarantee - does that bind us? We weren't told.

PARKER

No. All it really says is that the man who made the promise would never fire them. You could, easily. (To JESSIE.) The guarantee really isn't worth much.

JESSIE

But our savings were. You know this town, this side of it. Nothing's out there. Maybe in a year there will be. We've been living on hope for three years. Hell. Bought out by a paper dish rag a month before it goes belly up.

ANDY

I sign this, and I'll own fifty-one percent of all this.

PARKER

Yes, you the corporation. This is actually good investment property. This block is going up in value. Your dad would be left with a nice property, if nothing else.

DICK

Shit. Take it. We'll pay'em rent. Hell, we don't have to do that.

PARKER

No, you don't. You have the building, they have most of the equipment and furniture, plus their share of the bar's profits. But, if there's no bar....

DICK

SAM AND VINCE SLAM THEIR  
GLASSES TO THE BAR COUNTER  
TO SHOW THEIR ANGER.

They can have the junk.

ANDY

Mighty christian of you.

JESSIE

(Her eyes fixed forward, hurt.)

You'll have a hell of a headline now, "Chumps hit pavement." Buy half of nothing, lose that. I can still call my lawyer.

ANDY  
(To DICK.)

How much time during the day will we need this room?

DICK  
Hell, we'll go to printing twice a week right away. Everyone working full time, and Mr. Hunter's next door, we'll need no more than a few hours a day. It'll be so much simpler here.

ANDY  
We won't fill this place up, totally, for awhile.

DICK  
Don't worry about needing new furniture. My plans are for needing more staff by next year. We'll grow into the place. It's worth investing.

ANDY  
I'm sure. (To JESSIE.) I'm sure you felt that way. By the way, is the business good during the day? Is it worthwhile?

JESSIE  
Not really, not until the whistle across the street blows. Then they (Gestures toward VINCE and SAM.) come in. In a little while, their friends, then their wives to take them home, then someone to bring home the wives. You know.

ANDY  
Sort of. Can I see those contracts, Park? (Looks at the papers.) This is an incredible lease.

PARKER  
Because you're not really paying for everything.

ANDY  
I know. (He takes out a pen. VINCE puts his arm around JESSIE. She is angry and crushed.) (To PARKER.) Can you add one more thing, or maybe it should be separate afterwards? That the people in Ms. McGriff's group will be allowed to run the bar from, say four in the afternoon to their normal closing, on weekdays, and we'll take it Sundays if we're coming in on Mondays, but that we'll decide later. Let's say for the period of one year, then we'll look at it again. How's that for decisive, Dick?

DICK  
Well. Fuck. Andy what the god damn are you doin'? What kinds fuckin' arrangement is that?

ANDY  
My kind. It's all mine. It'll be up to Ms. McGriff and her people if we'll do it, Parker.

PARKER  
You can make a separate contract. You and Ms. McGriff have to agree on a lot of little things and what amounts of money will be involved.

JESSIE

Like the catches.

VINCE

You must want something else outta her, and she should give it.

SAM

Yeah, you don't come treatin' us like a pup you throw dry bones to. What else?

ANDY

Nothing. None that I can think of. I'll want it run well. And I'll expect it ready for our use every morning, and emergencies, nights. You decide what to do with what was the early shift. This will all become real if there is a room or big closet around this room where we can move our equipment to every night, where it will be safe.

DICK

Move a newsroom, composing room, every day? Fuck.

ANDY

Dick. Portable typewriters. Phones that plug in. Putting wheels on the new paste-up board we have to build anyway.

PARKER

It can be done, but it's the long, hard way.

ANDY

When was I ever different? And, once we've done that, I want us to plan how we're going to get the mayor to do something to help this neighborhood. I've had a good tip, from someone I'd respect, that The Mirror should help your campaign to save the Old Folks Home on 14th street. It'll be like the old days, Parker.

DICK

No. Oh no, not that. We've got to save ourselves. That's nothing, and we're not going after the mayor on that. I'm setting him up for more important things, unless you expect my reporters to wait tables.

ANDY

But I promised, myself.

DICK

But I'm in charge. Or do you want handle all that, now that you're the wizard. Do you want to play with my contract?

ANDY

You don't have one. We never needed more than a handshake. But I'm the one responsible.

DICK

But it's my reputation.

ANDY

But it's my failure. I still want to look into that.

DICK

Look if you want, but don't bother me with it. And don't bother the mayor. I've got enough now to try to live with.

PARKER

Ms. McGriff, can we get down to this? I'm sure you want the facts for your people.

JESSIE

This time, I'll want everything written out, and I'll get a lawyer of my own. I'll demand the truth.

ANDY

So will we.

FADE

END OF SCENE

SETTING: The bar, in late afternoon. JESSIE is working behind the bar. ANDY, wearing a windbreaker and a cap, is sitting at the bar. VINCE is sitting a few stools away. STAN and CINDY, who are reporters, sit at a table near center stage nervously sipping drinks.

JESSIE

(To ANDY.)

There's such a commotion out there. Aren't you going to see? (He waves her away.) Would you want anything else? (He waves more briskly.)

ENTER PARKER AND MAYOR FROM  
STAGE RIGHT.

MAYOR

(Patting PARKER on the shoulder.)

Maybe it would be a good idea to get away from that, Mr. Livingston. They do hang around, like there's not a thought in their collective heads.

PARKER

It's a big day, with the second wing on the hospital being started. And, mayor, it's Parker, if you wish, your honor.

MAYOR

(Sitting at the bar.)

Oh, it's my honor entirely. (Faint laugh.) No one's going to notice that we're gone. Especially with those elderly protesters of yours. You're sure to beat me out for the top of the six o'clock news.

PARKER

Let me get you that drink I promised, mayor. (STAN and CINDY react as if they've recognized the mayor.) I should be quiet. This was to get you away for a second.

MAYOR

No problem. I always feel more comfortable with the public. And let's make that drink a cup of coffee. It's going to be a long day, another long day. And your people will make sure of that.

PARKER

I know the people I represent in this neighborhood, the Coalition, have been hammering away at you a lot. But there's nothing to say we can't be civil about this.

JESSIE

(Perks up on PARKER'S  
last line.)

Civil! (They turn toward her. She blushes.) Cough, clearing, cough, my, er throat. What, ah, is it that you want?

PARKER

We'll have two coffees, miss. (To the MAYOR.) Cream? (He nods no.) Just that. Thank you. (To the MAYOR.) I'm sure there are ways we can discuss this properly and clear the air for both of our points of view.

MAYOR

We could talk today worth a month of polite chit chat and correspondence,



and do that much every day this week, but I've looked over the balance sheets, and we can't afford to keep that nursing home going. There was a time we guaranteed every good idea because it felt good to feel the clean air of ideals fill our lungs. Oh, that was all well and good, but the money, oh. The economy has asthma. We aren't destined for those long, hard races, not when we run every race. We'll do what we can to close it down, and help in dispersing the resident's properly to other, equal facilities. But, hell, man. There's no way I can bring that back. I'll say that in public. I'll say that in the privacy of this bar. Let's enjoy the quiet and the coffee before we have to go back to those damn headlights they put on the TV cameras. Like each one doesn't trust in the sun.

PARKER

But if you'd come right now, or at your convenience, I'll show you the fragile lives that will be, well ruptured. It's more than a balance sheet.

MAYOR

I know. I know how precious the old ones are. But we have to live with a wide range of priorities and a thinning set of resources. You shouldn't try me on those things. It's like talking about baseball to me. I know who I should cheer for, and you won't get me to change. But, you do put up a good fight, son.

PARKER

Thank you, sir. From you that means a lot.

MAYOR

I bet you like basketball. Up and down the floor? Huh? I'm right?

PARKER

Well....

STAN STANDS AND WALKS TO  
THE MAYOR.

STAN

(To PARKER.) Pardon. (To MAYOR.) Excuse me. Mayor Smigelski?

MAYOR

(Extends hand.)

Yes. Glad to meet you, sir. What's your name?

STAN

Stan, Mr. Mayor. We thought it was you. Sort of surprised to see a man like you here, just like anybody else.

MAYOR

Well, Stan, my dad spent his whole life working in the mills on the east side of the river. I grew up, like any other kid in this town, and it feels good to come back and feel the city this way, open, warm, quiet, but something's humming through the whole place. Could always feel this town as alive, Stan. I guess that's why I believe in it so much. You from around here, Stan?

STAN

I live close by. And you picked a nice place to come to, your honor.  
(To JESSIE.) You see who you got here?

JESSIE

I (Sniffs.) knew early on.

ANDY

(Still in disguise.)

You really are the mayor. (They shake hands.) You're the guy I see all the time on the six o'clock news.

MAYOR REACHES HIS HAND OUT  
TO VINCE, WHO SHAKES IT,  
BUT DOESN'T SEEM TO UNDER-  
STAND WHY IT'S HAPPENING.

STAN

You down here to have a drink with us people? You need a drink?

JESSIE SNARLS UNDER HERE  
BREATH.

MAYOR

(He notices JESSIE.) Thank you, sir, but Mr. Livingston and I will have to be getting to the ceremonies across the street after this good cup of coffee. (To PARKER.) Then Parker, I want you to come to the reception with me. There are a lot of important people there.

PARKER

Thank you. I appreciate that.

STAN

Could I, sir?

MAYOR

Sure, Stan. What's on your mind?

STAN

I know some people (Looks at JESSIE.), don't think you do everything, as well, as they would expect out of you, but I wanta say what I say to them, that you just do a great job keeping all the things going as well as you do for this city. I really appreciate what you've done for the schools, the grade schools. I've got a little girl who's so happy with the nice, bright rooms you had redone down at her school. I think it helps her learn.

MAYOR

We have to insure our future. We have to keep our education strong and enjoyable. The children will learn to better listen to authority.

STAN

I was so glad you spent the money there.

MAYOR

(Gloating at PARKER.)

We can't price the value of the mind.

STAN

And, if I can, the added cops, police, I mean. Having those extra cars going by the house. My wife and I live easier.

MAYOR

What good is a municipal if it doesn't provide protection and security for its members? It's a sacred commitment.

CINDY STANDS, WALKS TO STAN.

CINDY

(To the MAYOR.)

And, sir, (MAYOR extends hand. They shake.) Hello. I'm Cindy.

MAYOR

I wondered when you'd throw in, Cindy. (Faint laugh.)

CINDY

Oh, sir, I wanted to thank you for the hot meals program down at the Methodist church on Marpole. My mom lives down there.

MAYOR

Well, though I appreciate your gratitude and your feelings, I have to admit that that's a state funded group. They are good people. They really contribute to the community.

STAN

And it's a blessing.

CINDY

You can't pay that back.

MAYOR

Never.

STAN

Some of her friends need help. And they're good people.

MAYOR

And we have to push ourselves for their behalf.

ANDY

Like they pushed to make this town great?

MAYOR

Exactly.

CINDY

Gotta protect the good people.

MAYOR

Of course. No where, no time should they suffer in any way.

STAN

Even in a run down part of town like this?

MAYOR

Oh yes. Especially. Just as this new hospital project and all the other projects in the works are about to return the vitality to this grand old place.

ANDY

So we'll need the 14th street home.

MAYOR

Of course. We can find the money for the 14th street home somewhere in the budget. Su....re, well. Hey, wait. Let me....

ANDY

Sorry, your honor. (Pulls out a reporter's notebook.) I'm getting it down, every word.

MAYOR

But.... (Grabs at notebook.) But this wasn't a conference. It's a trap. (To PARKER.) No witnesses but you.

PARKER

(Points to STAN and CINDY.)

This is in public. They aren't my demonstrators....

MAYOR

(Sarcastically.)

Hell, yeah.

PARKER

They aren't. But I hope they (STAN and CINDY.) understand how important their honesty will be.

MAYOR

(Pointing to ANDY.) And what about this one? He's not one of yours'?

ANDY

I've been hanging around, hoping for something and it was just too tempting. (Extends his hand but it's not taken.) Andy Kehoe, from The Mirror.

MAYOR

(Stunned.)

It can't be. You can't be from The Mirror.

ANDY

Didn't think we were that good?

MAYOR

(Recovering.)

No. It's, it's your word against mine. It's known, quotes are never right.

ANDY

(Pulling out cassette recorder.)

But no one doubts your word, Mr. Mayor.

MAYOR  
(To PARKER.)

You won't get me. I'll make a statement right now, I've found the funds for the old place, and I'll look like a saint. Hell, it's the best thing I could do, anyway. But I remember well who ever has hurt me.

MAYOR STORMS OUT, STAGE RIGHT.

ANDY  
(Holds up recorder.) But I'm not sure I turned the damn thing on. (He falls onto PARKER, laughing. STAN and CINDY pull out their recorders, laughing.)

CINDY  
Andy, I think he was too far away from our's to pick him up.

PARKER  
If he hadn't been such a total ass, he'd report me to the bar. And about what you did in this bar. Friend, you aren't a totally honorable person.

ANDY  
Only for my frineds. Go. Listen to him. Smile, before he takes too much credit.

PARKER  
(Slowly shakes ANDY'S hand.)  
Thank you. No matter how, the people thank you.

PARKER EXITS STAGE RIGHT.

STAN  
Boss, you want us to write this up, just the way it happened?

ANDY  
(Joking around, referring to their disception of the mayor.) Stan, you don't want your wife to read about (Points to CINDY.) your other Mrs. Your poor little girl'll drop outta school. Cindy, I want you two to make it sound like Parker talked him into it, (Points to VINCE.) in front of stunned witnesses. What say, Ms. McGriff?

JESSIE  
I hope this is all going to be real.

ANDY  
It will. I'll take care of it. (To STAN and CINDY.) Get going. Write it at Mr. Hunter's. As honestly as possible. I'll come over and fit it in tomorrow's edition. No time to call Dick. I'll have to override the boss. Go. Go.

CINDY AND STAN EXIT, STAGE  
LEFT DOOR.

JESSIE  
(To ANDY.)  
Would, would you like a drink?

ANDY

What I need is something for my stomach. I was scared as shit. Do you have anything?

JESSIE

With the food here? Sure, I'll be back in a minute.

JESSIE EXITS CENTER STAGE  
DOOR THEN A LONG PAUSE.

VINCE

So you're big time?

ANDY

Thank you.

VINCE

(Obviously a bit drunk,  
but alert.)

That wasn't a compliment. Head games 'gainst chickenshit ain't nothing. You don't know what ain't nothing.

ANDY

I'm sorry, but I thought I just did something worthwhile.

VINCE

You don't know nothing. You get some gimme boneyard to stay open. Big deal. You just don't know.

ANDY

(Starting toward stage left,  
tired of VINCE.)

Tell Ms. McGriff, I had to go to the printers. Tell her I'm sorry.

VINCE

You wanta story? I'll give you one, a big one. How'd you like to to hang that mayor out where everyone could see?

ANDY

I think I've done enough for today.

VINCE

When that hospital falls over in a strong wind, you don't come askin' me then.

ANDY

Something wrong with the design?

VINCE

Hell, what do I know about that. But I know steel, and I know they aren't putting the right steel in that building. I see all the papers, bills, invoices, everything, and I got to tell somebody before one of my friends get hurt.

ANDY

Are you saying that someone is using cheap materials to save money?

VINCE

Hell, no. The city is paying for the good, strong steel, but they aren't getting what is paid for.

ANDY

How could a builder get away with that? It's a government contract. There have to be inspectors.

VINCE

Sure. I see them come in the office, but they never want to see anything. They just sign the reports the company has waiting for them. They never read the reports. It seems like everyone in city hall must be in on it.

ANDY

Dear God. But if this is real, why are you talking.

VINCE

Cause my friends are the guys who walk the steel, who have to put it up in place. I worry it won't be strong enough, that something is going to break when weight is put on one of those cheap beams. I'm afraid of the company. They don't care what might happen to a person. They find out I'm saying these things, and the company will make me pay.

ANDY

If this is true....

VINCE

(Angry.) Whatta mean if?

ANDY

BECAUSE of what's happening, you have to tell the truth. People have to warned. You've got to protect your friends.

VINCE

But who protects my family if the company makes me pay? Who'll take care of my Lisa? You promise they won't hurt us, that my daughter will be all right. My Lisa.

ANDY

No one will know about you until no one can harm you.

VINCE

No. Never. Nobody is ever to know. I don't do this except it got to be done. But you've been good to Jessie. You take care of her mom. I may have to trust you. I have the papers that prove what I say. If I decide to bring you anything, you'll see how this world really is.

END OF SCENE  
FADE OUT

SETTING: - bar - around noon. ANDY is off to one side at a table with papers spread all over it, STAN is at a table, left of center, typing. CINDY is at a table beside his, talking on a phone.

ANDY

(Mainly talking to himself.)

I've got to get this right. I've got to, I've got to get credit for this. I keep thinking that bent old man, after risking everything to get these records and invoices to me, will rush'em off to Channel Six. Once he's used to spilling his guts, he may blow it all over town. This story won't mean a damn thing. The paper will die anyway. Shit.

STAN

(Staying business-like.)

I'm almost done with the sidebar on how the city inspection department is supposed to work.

ANDY

(A little more frantic.)

Now you aren't listening to me. No one will care about that because we aren't getting to print. I can't decipher all these damn numbers and abbreviations, you should see this handwriting, and I can't get this all together. I think it proves that the steel they have been using isn't as strong as the design call for. And the bastards have charged the city for the stronger, more expensive steel. I think that's what it says. I need to be an engineer. We'll fold because I'm not an engineer.

STAN

Of course you're not. If you were, we'd be a mess. You'd lay out the stories and the pictures with a "T" square. You said yourself that it would all be in the numbers. (Counting out his points on his fingers.) The prices. The cost. The number of them. The size. He showed you where all the columns are on each. If you really want to, I've a friend who has a small architectural firm. I could call. Maybe....

ANDY

(An order.) No. (Softer.) No, he may not know that much anyway. Well, more than me. No, it's putting them together. Stan, I'm all right. I'm just afraid of finishing this. (CINDY hangs up phone.) When the old man, told me about this, I was leaping all over the place. Even standing still, I was leaping inside. Now, now I'm afraid of what it'll be when this is done. It can't be the same again. Not that I'm all that happy with the way it is, it's just that people, they'll be judging me on something bigger than I've been before. This'll be me. You've never met my father, and I even still call him "Judge", even though that job was years ago. His friends even though that job was years ago. His friends call my paper his. They'll even give him credit for this story. I don't know how I could win at this.

CINDY

(She stands.)

You'll do find, Andy. You always do.

STAN

(Trying to answer the  
the question better.)

You earn your praise and live with hesitation. I never saw anything a



man made that he pulled from inside himself.

CINDY WALKS CLOSER TO ANDY.

ANDY

(A quiet voice.)

What if I do it wrong? The bastards will swallow everything like a cheap egg role at a slow dinner. Hell, they wouldn't remember they did it. Forgetting we were even here. I don't want to be just the wind. Who remembers the wind? Like what Jessie said when we met, who knows you? I lose this, and all I'll have is the wind.

CINDY

Andy, you won't lose us. You're on a streak, and the mayor just hasn't learned all of his lesson yet. You're out to get him.

ANDY

(Earnestly.) Watch that kind of talk. I'm not after anybody. We're pursuing the facts and the people have the right to know what we find. (Slowing, starting to smile.) But, Smigelski is a slimy S.O.B. Don't you hate the way he finds the longest way not to say anything. He's the most boarishly humble man I've ever suffered through in my life.

STAN

Even Dick when he drinks?

ANDY

(Appreciating the joke.)

Oh, oh, now that slander. But even Dick. And I did love watching him bleed on this floor. Oh, I love killing the slimy snakes in the world.

CINDY

(Starting back for her table.)

Then do we wait any longer?

ANDY

(Saluting CINDY.)

No ma'am. Permission to make a legend?

STAN

(To ANDY.)

Before you ship out, tell me how long you want the sidebar to run. The one on how it's supposed to be.

ANDY

Okay. (Draws in the air with his hands.) I want it to run all the way down the right side of the page, from underneath the headline to the bottom, with enough for a jump to page three. I told Dick to leave a couple of inches there. It'll be beside an organizational chart of the inspector's office. I pulled that out of something Smigelski sent out last election.

CINDY

What about Dick? What's he writing.

ANDY

Nothing. He's given all to me. Said I deserved it all. He's at Hunter's getting the pictures ready and waiting on a bunch of reporters who gab like a bunch of old maids.

STAN

I need another page or so. (Puts a sign on table saying: "Writer on Deadline. Do Not Disturb.")

CINDY

(To ANDY.)

I still have to finish the follow up story on the 14th street home. My part of the glory's at the printers, but the other news goes on.

ANDY

(Trying to sound serious.) I won't allow it. (They faintly laugh.) I have to decide, (Nodding at his typewriter.) the Pulitzer or ordering lunch.

CINDY

(Putting hand on stomach.)

Don't remind me.

ANDY PUTS SIGN ON HIS TABLE,  
BUT OVER 'DISTURB' IS A PIECE  
OF TAPE, THE WORD 'FEED'  
PRINTED ON IT. THE TYPEWRITERS  
ALL WORK TO A FAST RHYTHM.  
DICK ENTERS FROM STAGE LEFT.

DICK

Stop. Andy, stop. (They all stop typing.) Stop. Andy. It's over. You've got to quit this. You could lose it all.

ANDY

(Cautiously.)

All right. You can have a by-line too.

DICK

God damn it, Andy. There aren't jokes. Parker called me at Mr. Hunter's. He thought both of us would be there. He's on his way from his office. He's trying to make a deal with the D.A. and we might escape the law.

ANDY

Don't give me (Deeper voice.) The Law. I don't need bullshit.

DICK

You're getting more than you'll want. The cops came to Parker's office, they went in his safe, pulled an envelope. There was a letter, from you. It was an offer to that guy, Vince DeLucci. That's your source? The guy named Vince?

ANDY

Yeah. I hadn't told anyone his last name, and I never wrote anything.

DICK

But Parker saw the paper it was on. He said he recognized the letterhead. Did you get some kind of distinctive stationary? For your birthday?

ANDY

Christmas. From my parents.

DICK

Parker recognized it. It says you'll pay this guy to change the figures at his job. The cops said you paid to have it all made up.

ENTER PARKER FROM STAGE RIGHT.

ANDY

(To PARKER.)

What? What did I do?

PARKER

I'm sorry. I'm very sorry but they found the most damaging evidence at my office. An envelope, sealed and notarized. They're ready to arrest you. Andy, with what the district attorney has, he has a good case.

ANDY

Good? Nothing was ever written to be found. The man came to me. Right here, in this room. It's them who've built a conspiracy. Suppliers, contractors, the city. Hell, the city. The D.A. has to be in on this. See how it's all squeezing me while they save their butts.

PARKER

It's not the D.A. You know my sister is one of his prosecutors. Kathleen asked to see it all. She has an idea of what the case will be against you. Do you think she would stand for any hint of a frame up? Are you going to stop believing in us? We grew up together.

ANDY

Then who's doing it?

PARKER

I don't know. But I do know the D.A. has been one of the few friends your paper ever had.

DICK

(Accustively.)

That you've had. Are they your friends now?

CINDY

Now what's that remark suppose to mean?

DICK

Parker's the one with the stuff in his safe. I'm wondering what loyalty a rich bastard like this could ever feel for this place. I think we need a lawyer, not a clumsy traitor.

PARKER SLAMS HIS BRIEF CASE ON A  
TABLE, IS ON THE BRINK OF CHARGING  
DICK.

ANDY

(Stepping between them.)

Dick. Don't let our friendship cloud who the real enemy really is. It's me.

CINDY

(Comes to his side, sympathetically.)

Of for God's sake.

DICK

Don't say anything in front of him (Points to PARKER.) he musta made a deal.

ANDY

(To DICK.)

Please. (To all of them.) Please, I'm the one who decided to be the crusader. I'm the one who took this story. If there's blame, it's mine, for not seeing something that was there. Maybe I should have never trusted the guy.

PARKER

Andy, I saw the ledgers too. I told you what I still believe, these are the facts and it must be a massive conspiracy. This proves it most of all.

STAN

(To ANDY.)

You'd never short cut, 'cause that would be worse than anything they would have ever done. We know you couldn't do it.

DICK

We'll have to find a way to get them.

PARKER

That'll be harder than you may know. I've been on the phone with Kathleen and her boss. He knows your father, and he's heard of you, but the letter was just the last piece for them. The foreman at the construction site called the police this morning. He told the cops that a filing drawer in his desk that he keeps locked was open and there were marks on it like someone had pried it open. It had been broken into. When the police checked, DeLucci confessed. He said you had approached him, offering five thousand dollars.

ANDY

That's nothing of what happened. Are you sure we're talking about the same man?

PARKER

It must be, because they know what documents you have. They read a list of things I remember. If you print what you have, which don't have the same figures as these in police possession, they'll charge the paper with fraud, libel, and falsification of public documents. They'll send The Mirror down with you.

DICK

(To PARKER.)

But it was your office they found the letter in. I still haven't heard

any kind of explanation for that, though I don't know if there's any one that will do.

PARKER

It was a safe at the Coalition's office. You know that's a storefront operation open for any member of the community. You've never been restricted for our facilities. I didn't deal with DeLucci, but he said he asked someone for a safe place to keep important papers for a few days and he was given a receipt. (To ANDY.) He says he did it to protect himself from you.

ANDY

Then somebody thinks I can turn into a monster. This guy sounded so frightened of the people he works for, but he was so angry at the risks they were taking that he went back in there at night. I can't believe he was a set-up, for that somebody would work that hard to get me.

CINDY

They know how good we are. They know, once we get big enough, we'll be dangerous.

ANDY

(To the staff.)

Now, if you publish; no jobs. Maybe no future in the profession for any of you. My dad, I think, has already written off all the money. He'll take on another client or two. (Sigh.) Funny. Dad, (Nodding towards PARKER.) his best friends are lawyers. I don't know if either one would touch me now.

DICK

Best friends? He's touched you up as some scapegoat, I bet. No one outside this staff, except Parker, knew. Hell, he's probably traded you for some new playground, or a grant from the state. (To PARKER.) What was it? What's he worth?

ANDY

(To DICK, angrily.)

He wouldn't trade me. There's nothing they could offer this man for what of himself he'd have to give up, his honor. This is a man of honor. A man my father, (A bitter grin.) the Judge, respects. He's more of what I should have been.

PARKER

The Judge has always been proud of you.

ANDY

But not today. We can't print, not now. But the story will come out when I go to court. At least they'll have to suffer the questions.

PARKER

Maybe not. You'll have to choose. The city won't come after the paper if it isn't printed and the company won't press charges, for a price.

DICK

The can pay for their subscriptions.

PARKER

(Ignoring DICK'S comment.)

They would rather not go through the "suffering" in public so that no one, as they said, misunderstands what is happening. The D.A. only asks for your silence because he respects the Judge so much. I've talked to the construction company and they also asked the D.A. to let this go if you just keep quiet. Andy, but, if you don't resign, today, from the paper, the company will push for an indictment, file a civil suit, and ask for a restraining order to keep the paper from printing anything, so long as you have any influence over its contents. The price is you. You forget, and you leave, and you and The Mirror are guaranteed survival. You'll have a chance.

ANDY

They can't keep me from paying for my own business, and they can't muzzle the press. That's guaranteed.

PARKER

But they will hound you so viciously that what circulation and advertising you have will probably disappear because of people's doubts. If they don't get what they want, they'll try to snap your back across their knees like dry kindling.

STAN

(To PARKER, with some anger.)

But can't do anything to save your friend?

ANDY

(To PARKER.)

Can't you for me? I heard you. I know, without you, they wouldn't want to do us any favors. The Mirror does have a chance to survive. And you and Kathleen have tried your best. You know I've always loved you two.

PARKER

So, you know, when she said what she's had to, she's crying. I don't want to see you crushed. I don't see anything else, expect fighting until the truth comes. I'll help, but (Gestures to indicate DICK.) look what they've done to me. They'll trade you your freedom for the truth.

ANDY

It won't be freedom. The truth is like (Holds his hands out, palms facing each other.) on those cat's cradles. (To PARKER.) I'd only make knots. Remember?

CINDY

(Touching ANDY'S shoulder.)

But if you leave....

ANDY

Dick is already editor. (To PARKER.) I can still own it, at a distance? (PARKER nods yes.) We're actually lucky, in the situation. Maybe, in a while, I'll be able to come back bit by bit.

DICK

Once you break, they'll blackmail you forever. Maybe you should sell.

ANDY

I'd rather you pulled my heart out. Leave me some control, even my frustration. I should take it all as a compliment. Somebody went to a hell of a lot a work to knock me from my horse. (To all of them.) You know? I never saw myself as the hero. (Pauses. Points to PARKER.) You know, or my old man. But I always wanted to be. I always wanted the hero. But.... (Starting to choke up.) Know...?

PARKER

I said I would call as soon as you decided. They want the resignation in writing before everything is filed.

ANDY

Bastards. I submit it to myself?

PARKER

Dick's the boss now. Any sign of you running or influencing the staff or their editorial judgements will be seen as the dissolution of the, "gentleman's agreement". He's right, once this settles, you could sell.

ANDY

Or I could sell my memoirs. They should get about the same price today, I couldn't give them away. (To PARKER.) Heah, did they also say to break my legs so I don't chase after our delivery trucks? Will I be arrested if I paper train my dog? (Pause.) Oh, I think it's a fair trade. Better than fair. The Judge would tell you that. You won't have to make up for my mistakes. Hell of a day. I can see the headline, "Owner forced to resign". It's better I go. The Mirror is the best idea I ever had. It's a much better idea than I am. I think I'll find some place to go. Please make the idea work. (To DICK.) I'll get you my resignation by tonight. I can't think of the right words right now. (Starts to exit stage right.)

STAN TRIES TO BLOCK ANDY'S WAY.

STAN

(To ANDY.)

Can we tell another paper? Let them prove our point, but save our, your ass. Once the truth is out, you're safe. The Post-Times?

ANDY

(Putting his hand on STAN'S shoulder.)

Believe a man, a paper on the shiny edge of an indictment? No. Let me keep my shame here. But we must have really scared the livin' shit out of them. For all this. But Stan, who'd believe a propted up boy wonder. I sure wouldn't.

ANDY SLOWLY EXITS TO STAGE RIGHT.

FADE.

END SCENE



SETTING: The first hours of the next morning. The room is dimly lit. There is a glow from behind the center stage door. The noise of clanging pans and running water make it obvious that someone is in the kitchen. There is the sound of a stumble from off stage left before ANDY enters through that door. He's drunk. His hair and windbreaker are a mess. He stumbles to the bar.

ANDY

(Almost shouting.)

Can't a man get any service around here. I've got an I.D. I can prove my age.

JESSIE

(Enters through center door,  
carrying baseball bat.)

Oh. You.

ANDY

(Pointing to the bat.)

Get in line.

JESSIE

(Putting the bat down.)

Don't you get here more like nine or ten o'clock? (She sees he's drunk.) Have you guys been partying? Are you still celebrating what you did to the mayor? It was something though. I don't think I've really thanked you.

ANDY

Don't worry. Don't waste the time. I'm not a man to thank, but I'm great to accuse. That's what I am, you know, but not good enough to arrest.

JESSIE

(Cautiously playing like  
it's a game.)

Smigelski put a price on your head? Won't they pick up the garbage on your block now?

ANDY

No, it's me they don't have the decency to trash. See, if you don't know, I'm no longer trying to be a journalist. I quit my job today. I trusted the wrong man.

JESSIE

You sold the paper?

ANDY

You aren't listening. I had to resign today. The god damn builders of your new hospital had a sword over my head and your friend Vince put it there.

JESSIE

(Shocked, then defending.)

My Vince? DeLucci? Big Vince DeLucci? How could you ever know him and



what would he ever do to you?

ANDY

He told me the greatest story I was ever told at least. Big scandle. They're putting the wrong materials into that new place and your Vince couldn't stand the thought of his friends working on it. So, he told me.

JESSIE

He'd mumbled about something.

ANDY

But the god damn D.A. gets me, through my best friend. That Vince of yours came out on the side of those bastards. I'd like to know where he is right now. But, see, this guy I hired, who I had to fight with my dad to hire, today I told him he was taking over everything. I still pay the bills, but they find me one step into my own business and they'll haul my ass to jail and shut the dream down so fast, (He stops to think.) Your head'd spin, (Thinks.) like those Looney Tune cartoons, with the pigs.

ANDY SETTLES INTO SILENCE.  
JESSIE CLEANS AROUND HIM.

JESSIE

(Trying to be calm to break the ice.)

Bad day?

ANDY

Shit life.

JESSIE

You know, part of my job has always been listening. I was surprised when I first waited tables. People thought only the bartenders heard anything. It's everyone in this business.

ANDY

I'd have something to tell. An amazing story. But no one could hear it all. You know, I had a very good education. Tremendous school this city has. I had teachers I couldn't appreciate then.

JESSIE

I never got to go to the university. I went to community college for the last few years, when I could afford it. But I haven't been able to take that much.

ANDY

I went to college. Never was a good student, though. Oh, I was good enough, but I wasn't like Parker. You've met him. He went through the whole school, came out with a law degree when he was twenty three. Me. I was working on a small paper in Addison, the town my father's from. I'm proud he's my friend. I wish we could talk.

JESSIE

Call him. You can use our phone, behind the bar. He is a nice guy. Give him a call.

ANDY

(Starting to cry.)

I can't. He, he cleaned up after me again. Do you think he liked going, cap in hand, to the city's attorney to beg for his friend? How could he feel good, giving away his dignity for my hide.

JESSIE

Did he complain?

ANDY

He's too good for that. Too proud.

JESSIE

If he's too proud to help, I wouldn't care much about him.

ANDY

(Shouting.)

It had to be humiliating. I sure am.

JESSIE

But he's your friend.

ANDY

I'm too stupid to be his friend. I'm not worth it.

JESSIE

(Getting mad.)

You can be a damn nice guy yourself. But you are hard to be friend to. God knows I'm trying.

ANDY

(Quieter.)

Why do that? Who am I to you.

JESSIE

The day we met, you didn't act like you'd know how to get in out of the rain. You try to do good things. Maybe you try too hard, like you aren't sure who you are to yourself. I do respect you for trying so hard, for helping my mom.

ANDY

When I did it, I wasn't thinking about your mom. Don't make me out to be something.

JESSIE

You not knowing means more. What you probably need more than anything else is sleep. Where can I drop you, 'cause I'm driving.

ANDY

Yeah, sleeping. When I'm like this, I really don't dream. They'd have to fight upstream against the scotch. But I don't want to sleep. No. I want to wait. I want to see if tonight's the first snow and I want to wait.

JESSIE

But you aren't dressed for it, and it won't be that cold for another couple weeks.

ANDY

You want cold. You should see my dad's eyes, right about now, about whenever he got the call and I know someone had to call. I'll think I'll wait here.

JESSIE

You've done a lot of good. I'm sure your daddy loves you whatever the problem. Please let me take you to your place, you need the rest.

ANDY

(A wail more than a scream.)

No. It's going to snow. I could feel it. Winter's coming and I want to wait here.

JESSIE

It's not that cold.

ANDY

(Screams.)

I know it's winter. I felt it all night. I won't go out into the night. The dark is all cold. Leave. Leave me here, like they threw me out. Now let me here. But don't make me go into the dark winter.

JESSIE

You shouldn't stay along tonight. I've seen what too much of the stuff can do. Some people I won't serve. I'll make coffee.

ANDY

This is as much my place as yours. More. Yeah. More. So get outta here. I can still evict you if I wanted to. That's my power. So get out of here, and be glad for my mercy. Please I shouldn't be this way. Leave me.

JESSIE

Andy.

ANDY

I'll kick your god damn bar all over the street and all your jobs with it. Get out of here, you bitch.

JESSIE

(Angry, hurt.)

If that's who you really want to be, Mister Kehee. (Grabs coat from rack, goes for stage right door.) Remember, we still own a lot of this. You'll pay for whatever's broken.

ANDY

Call my lawyer. (JESSIE exits.) Good. Better. She should go. I'm like disease. I feel the cold coming. I can feel the air on my face. The air feels like there'll be snow, wide wet snow. I don't stay for the

winter. I used to like it, but I don't wanta haveta face this one. Sky's grey, snow collecting soot once it falls. It'll be an ugly season.

I think I'm safe here, but I can't say. (Shouting to no one.) I can take a hint. Hell. (Calm.) I need another place, but nothing around here. My family won't want to see me. There's no asking that. I'll need to find my course, like I'm any good at that.

(Imitating a stereotype of old sailor.) Ah, me harty, we'll use the North Star. (Normal voice.) Sailor's friend, but not mine. North Star's for course, for finding a destination not for flotsom. No North. Not that way. Anyway, that's probably where winter's coming from.

I could go back East. (Playing with the sound of the phrases.) Back East. Back Home. Back to the coast. Oh, back to the cape. But nothing past would have me. There's nothing east of here.

Right off, forget West. That's always been for the future here. Go West young boy. Follow the sun to where it goes after each long day, where it still shines while night is full around us here, where it'll shine at least a little while longer. There's hope. It's all future, but I haven't any claim to it. I can't wait for that. (Pulls out bottle of pills. Shakes them. The audience should hear them.) Almost full. Now I need the chaser.

(Goes behind the bar, searching.) Finally. (Bends down, opening a small refrigerator.) I wish the fridge had something else. (Puts bottle of beer on to the counter.) I don't need to be choosy. I won't be dwelling on it.

There was a time when summer didn't mean much to me, but spring, and the promise of clean, warm air. It's the best to move through, like open, friendly fingers. It's strong hands, the way the frozen part of the world is gone. You don't think about the snow a few weeks after. Something after death.

I need the sun. I need morning like springtime, when all the colors stand on top of each other, reaching, more intense than before. Driving by a tree along the road, it's so real, you could touch it through the glass. I have the south open to me, and south is where I should hope to go. From here, the sun spins over the line I'd find if a wind would take me south. If it could find me the light.

I could write something. It's been my job. Could I practice on them before I'd have to explain it to God?

Look at my hands. The color of my skin. It's always that, but look at the color. I am so alive and alone now. I have to be my own witness. I'd burn up if I'd always do this, feel my thinking, but there's nothing to save it for.

I had a chance. After being nothing, the Judge gave me a chance. He bought one for me, and I don't know how but I'm nothing again. This could be no greater shame for him.

I've got to forget what I had to do. Just think about the sun. Finding a high southern wind. (Opens the bottle. Toasts the sky.) Past these difficult days, to my own stars. (Cynically.) The stars?

FADE

END SCENE

SETTING: The bar a few months later. Late evening. The temperatures have turned mild and people are wearing sort of springtime clothes. There are a couple typewriters under covers on the back tables. JESSIE is behind the bar. DICK, STAN, and CINDY are at a table, nearly empty drinks in front of them.

DICK  
(Confidently.)

I can feel that spring is here. That damned winter is over and business is picking up. We will become a daily paper. And less than a year from now. I'll be needing your help hiring the new staff people we're able to afford. Now that Spring's here, maybe we could even go to the colleges and interview. Hell, that'll be funny, going back to hire some of those bastards.

STAN  
I think it sounds great. I always wanted to be on a daily in a city. I hoped it would be a metro.

DICK  
Glad to hear that. You'll need that kind of enthusiasm when I move you two up to management.

STAN  
But, we aren't selling that many more papers.

DICK  
But we can fill all the advertising space we'd have if we were twice as big. The people with the money recognize how valuable we are to them. I've had to run offers down. That's all I need to know. The salesmen believe in us.

CINDY  
But when I try for an interview, some people don't know who we are. A guy the other day thought it was prank by friends of his. He kept asking who put me up to it.

DICK  
Those types still think we wait for them. They make the news and just swallow what they put out. Hell, we are the news. Who else in this town is going to a banquet, and the mayor's giving him a lift? He knows not to dare getting us mad. He wants to make sure his speech gets back to everyone and that our fangs aren't sticking out when we write the story. People will have to eat out of our hands.

STAN  
But I don't know why the mayor would worry. We haven't done anything to him since that set up here for the old folks home. That was months ago.

CINDY  
Does he ever talk about that?

DICK  
(Saying it to cut off discussion.)

No.

Mayor enters from stage right.

MAYOR  
(Sort of jovial.)  
Oh, back at the scene of the crime. (Pointing to STAN and CINDY.) I know those faces. Feel me twice? Shame on me.

DICK  
Hello, sir. Don't worry. I've told them to give you a break, tonight.

STAN  
Evening, Mayor.

MAYOR  
(Shaking STAN'S hand.)  
Hello, Stan. I saw what you wrote about our plans for redevelopment down here. Very good. Very good work.

STAN  
Thank you. But I didn't have the time to do much more than repeat what your people had said.

MAYOR  
Fine. Fine. Call me if you need anything else. Good evening, Cindy. How are you?

CINDY  
All right, Mr. Mayor. (Picking up her glass.) Sipping a small drink after work.

MAYOR  
Then I hope I'm not interrupting something. But, I have to get your boss to the Hilton so he can hear all my bright ideas. I don't want him missing the open bar and my favorite snacks.

DICK  
And make sure I have to eat my share of the rubber chicken he has served at these things.

MAYOR  
The car's double parked and I don't want to fix a traffic ticket in front of you. I'll bring him back in one, objective piece.

STAN  
You make sure of that.

DICK  
Good night. I'll be in tomorrow around ten. We'll be on deadline.

MAYOR  
(To anyone who'll listen.)

Good night, everyone.

DICK AND MAYOR EXIT STAGE RIGHT.

CINDY  
Andy would be beside himself if he's watched that.

STAN  
He would. I think of Andy a lot these days. I know it's been about four month since the last time we were all together, but I keep thinking about that last terrible day. I keep thinking that I should start making phone calls again to see if anyone, anywhere knows what happened to Andy.

CINDY  
I want to know. I think we should go back to his home and see if his family will answer our questions now.

STAN  
All we got out of Andy's parents is the month check to pay off the mortgage on this building. But I think it's just an investment to them. They said they would never talk about him. They didn't answer our questions months ago. I don't think they'll change. For all we know, he's planted under one of the rock gardens at their place.

CINDY  
Please don't say that.

JESSIE  
Yeah. (Realizing she's interrupted.) I mean, he was your friend.

CINDY  
What do you care? You still have the deal to run the place, even without him.

JESSIE  
I saw how the pressure had gotten to him that night. I was the one who was here with Andy and he wouldn't let me help. I couldn't find the right thing to say. But do you think I just accept that and forget about him?

CINDY  
I'm sorry. I remember how you helped us look for Andy, how you talked to everyone around here who might have seen him. You got to like Andy?

JESSIE  
Yeah. I first I thought I just felt sorry for him how scared he was of his father, (Sarcastically.) "The Judge". Andy seemed to living under his father's shadow.

STAN  
But we didn't do that much to help him. We coulda bought the poor guy a sunlamp. I don't think we looked hard enough for Andy, and (Holding up his drink.) this isn't strong enough to take away that doubt.

JESSIE

I don't like to, but I can make one strong enough to take the paint off your car.

STAN

Rust does that for free. It's all right. (Again picking up his glass.) This doesn't solve anything. Cindy and I have been trying to prove that Andy's story was true, but the facts are still confusing. And Dick doesn't want to even talk about it. He says it could be dangerous.

CINDY

So we aren't getting too far. (To STAN.) And you aren't getting home to your family.

STAN

(Patting CINDY on the arm.) I can take a hint. (Starts to pull out wallet to pay for their drinks.)

JESSIE

No. On me. A little of the stuff, maybe it would help.

STAN and CINDY stand.

STAN

He did like you.

CINDY

Even when he called you bitch.

JESSIE

It's one of those things.

CINDY

I'm sorry. Good night.

STAN AND CINDY EXIT STAGE RIGHT  
JESSIE BUSES THE TABLE, PUTTING  
THINGS OUT OF THE WAY. ANDY  
ENTERS FROM STAGE RIGHT.

ANDY

Is the kitchen closed?

JESSIE

No, we.....(Looks up.) Jesus.

ANDY

(Looking over his shoulders.)

Where, where. You working with him now?

JESSIE

Why, aren't you dead?

ANDY

(Softly cynical.)

Hi, yourself. And how are you?



JESSIE

We thought you were dead. That night. The empty pill bottle, and the warm beer.

ANDY

Could you put that on my tab?

JESSIE

(Angry.)

God damn it, Andy.

ANDY

How else am I to say hello? I'm all right. I ran away from here, but I wasn't done with the place. I hoped you'd be the one I'd see. To apologize. I wasn't doing much of anything right.

JESSIE

(Touches his face.)

It's all right. I've heard a lot since then. Sit down. Let me get you a drink.

JESSIE HURRIES AROUND THE BAR.

ANDY

That's okay. I don't think I should be here long if anyone I know comes back. (In self-depreciation.) They shouldn't be made to ignore me.

JESSIE

Who? Who'd do that? These two of yours. Cindy, and that guy who bites his lip, they were just here talking about you. They missed you, too.

ANDY

Can't imagine that. I've done a lot of things wrong. I was outside, and saw them leave.

JESSIE

Did you see that Dick from your paper leave here with the mayor, the other dick?

ANDY

My editor? And the mayor? What kind of story was he on?

JESSIE

The kind where your friend is taken to some big dinner downtown, with curb to curb service.

ANDY

I'm glad I missed that. They would have had a good laugh seeing me. He'd kill the paper if I'd walked in then.

JESSIE

Andy, where have you been? What happened? You had me so angry and scared.

ANDY

When I scared you, I was doing it to myself. I hated myself. I didn't

understand why, so I hated even more. I didn't want anything around me. It wasn't you. I'm sorry.

JESSIE

(Angry.)

But why wouldn't you talk to me? (Steps. Considers.) I sound like a self-centered bitch.

ANDY

No you don't. It's not easy to understand why someone displays that kind of anger. Looking back, I realized how I had treated you, Parker, and the staff. Like I was drowning, flailing at a life jacket.

JESSIE

But you didn't have to stay away for all these months.

ANDY

I've been working on a paper down in Phoenix. I'd gotten that far on the cash I had with me. While I was sitting in a place, (Waves his hands to indicate the bar.) some place like this, I saw an ad in the paper for a reporter. So, I applied. I told them about everything I've done, except for The Mirror. I couldn't tell them about this, I wasn't sure if I'd have a chance for the job if they knew. But, on the other hand, when I got the job, it was the first time I knew something was mine because of my own worth and not being my father's son.

They had me doing stories on almost anything that happened in Phoenix. Obituaries, school board meetings, there was even a birthday party for an elephant at the city zoo. There was a lot of that irr-elephant stuff.

It was still a way of hiding out, but I finally started to get over my problems. I didn't worry so much about what other people thought. I'm happy just doing my job. I know where my efforts are going.

JESSIE

Then this is just a hello? You aren't staying? You here to see your folks?

ANDY

They don't know I'm in town. I had to come here before I could say I was home. This is my responsibility, to find out how I'll feel.

JESSIE

Well?

ANDY

I'm glad we can still talk. This place, well, it's just here. I don't remember all the seams in the paneling. And all the chairs are smaller. It's okay. I'm not afraid.

JESSIE

Did you see that one of the towers of the hospital's almost done?

ANDY

I could see its shadows. I mustn't have been right about the poor construction. They played me for a jerk 'cause it would have come out by now.

JESSIE

Whatever they did to you, at least you're still alive. But I still can't think about Vince.

ANDY

Hell. Him. I figured he got a better job, some sort of reward for his part.

JESSIE

I don't know what happened. Christ, neither of you would talk. But, you mustn't have heard. Vince wanted your forgiveness.

ANDY

He did betray me.

JESSIE

Then they reward weird, because the company fired him. Said he'd be blackballed for ever working again. Vince walked out, that night you left, on the steel of the 12th floor across the street. Laid his hat on the beam and jumped.

ANDY

(Much affected by this.) Oh, God. That night.

JESSIE

He said he had hurt too many people. He wanted you to forgive his family. His daughter still cries when she talks about him.

ANDY

(In a flat voice.)

Lisa. I promised Vince I would take care of his daughter, if anything happened. Dear God, he knew what he was up against. Do you know Lisa?

JESSIE

(Surprised.) Yeah. I've known her since she was a kid.

ANDY

Lisa. Then it was true.

FADE  
END SCENE

SETTING: The bar, early the next morning. JESSIE is in street clothes instead of her uniform. ANDY is dressed as he was in 2-1. There are a few lights on, but sun light is evidently coming through the stage right windows. One of the plug-in phones is on a table. ANDY comes out of the kitchen door carrying two plates of breakfast. JESSIE is pouring coffee at the bar.

ANDY

They're scrambled. A couple of eggs a piece.

JESSIE

(Rubbing her face.)

In my work, you hate the morning.

ANDY

You don't like looking at the dawn?

JESSIE

No. These early hours usually mean you've spent the night cleaning up some mess. This time, it doesn't mean that. It's dawn again.

ANDY CROSSES TO HER AND QUICKLY  
--KISSES JESSIE. SHE STARES AT  
HIM.

ANDY

To thank you. For caring.

JESSIE

It's not like I've been waiting every day at the train station for you.

ANDY

Then you minded?

JESSIE

I've been kissed before.

ANDY

Before breakfast? (Steps back, embarrassed.) I'm sorry. I still have a lot to learn. I've always thought things came quickly.

JESSIE

Look. You finish your job first. Then, when you've settled, I hope you'll want to talk about this again. (She turns her head toward the door.)  
I hear steps coming.

KNOCK AT DOOR STAGE RIGHT.  
JESSIE CROSSES TO IT, OPENS  
DOOR. STAN AND CINDY ENTER,  
CINDY RUNNING INTO ANDY'S ARMS.

CINDY

(Near tears.)

I didn't believe him when he called. I said, Stan, what are you getting me outta bed for?

ANDY

(Still holding her, shaking STAN'S hand.)  
To say hello. So I wouldn't miss either of you any longer. For me to know what you'd say, if you'd talk to me at all.

STAN

You'd trust us that little?

ANDY

As little as I believed in myself. (Pointed to JESSIE.) She's spent the best part of the last few hours talking me into it. She even dialed the phone.

STAN

If you'd asked me before all this bull, I'd said you're a sight for sore eyes.

CINDY

And that I was worried about you too, Chief.

ANDY

(Laughing.) Don't call me Chief. (They grin.) I'm fine. I'm living in Phoenix. I've been working on a paper there. I'm just a reporter, but I'm able to spend a lot more money on myself than when I was called an editor on our paper. More than that, the job's fun. Still, I had to come back, I had to know what had happened to me. You're eyes have told me a lot this morning that I'm grateful for.

STAN

They're telling me that I got to bed late and they'll cry if I don't get some of that coffee.

JESSIE

Please. Please, have a cup. (She begins to serve.) Would you like something to eat? Andy should still have the grill hot.

STAN AND CINDY LOOK AT EACH  
OTHER, THEN SIZE UP ANDY AND  
JESSIE.

STAN

No thanks. I grabbed something as I dressed.

CINDY

Me, too. (To ANDY.) More granola bars.

ANDY

Are you sure? (They nod "no", smiling.) (To CINDY.) Oh, always eating that stuff. It's damn good to see you. I'm sorry I got you out of bed, but I wanted to see you here, before work started.

STAN

You made sure of that.

ANDY

I wanted you here, now, to know if I should keep facing people. I'm not proud of how I acted.

CINDY

(A bit sharp.)

No one was sainted for falling on a pogo stick sword. (Pumps hands up and down.)

STAN

None of us felt we did right by you. Geez, we reared a bit for our consciences, then sent you out like spoiled meat. Damn, I was afraid you'd never talk to us.

ANDY

(Pointing to JESSIE.)

Jess said there was talk of me dead.

CINDY

What could we know?

ANDY

I asked my folks to be silent. I'm still surprised at how well they've taken everything. Finally, I've had the guts to come back. I want to find out what parts were true.

STAN

What we know is confusing, but, Cindy and I, we've been checking. We wanted to know how guilty we were that day. We've found we were wrong not to fight for you.

CINDY

We've talked to some of the suppliers involved. You were right. We can only prove parts of it, but what you were writing was the truth, somebody, somewhere, was covering their ass.

JESSIE

Vince. (She grabs ANDY'S shoulder.) Vince didn't lie. He didn't hurt you.

ANDY

(To JESSIE.) I dishonored your friend. I'm sorry. (To STAN and CINDY). It's easier to blame someone else. I'd wanted to believe someone had to go to a lot of effort to trap me, not that I'd just stumbled into it. It was a bloody consolation.

STAN

But you were at the top of something. We also found that a lot of dealing had been going on with the property around here. Both where they're building the hospital and these blocks around it. The prices around here shot up like roman candles, and that was months before we found any public talk about the hospital taking place.

ANDY

Smigleski again. The son of a bitch. Do you know who's with him on this?

CINDY

We've traced some of it, when Dick didn't have us working. This has been our own project.

STAN

It's hard. There are a couple of dummy companies. They have a post office box, and nothing more. Then they're owned by something else. Some of these are bigger, and they have a phone number and an answering machine. We even found (Now also to JESSIE.) this place was owned by a couple of those companies before it was sold back to the guy who'd owned it first. It was sold back to the guy who turned around and sold it to both of you.

JESSIE

He'd never said anything. He was always the boss, and used to brag about the security he had in the place.

STAN

He musta been secure because it was sold back for about \$20,000 less than he'd been paid for the bar two years before.

CINDY

And that was totally opposite of the rest of the deals. With every other deal, the price went up, thousands of dollars each time, and the sales were only weeks apart. I've seen this scam when they buy big tenements, and burn them down for the insurance settlement.

ANDY

Only they're burning the city. If I could get Parker to listen to me, to help, he might be able to get you through this stuff faster.

STAN

Who'd you think gotta us this far? I don't know my way around all that shit. He started to help as soon as he heard. The man's been crushed since that day. Your family won't talk to him.

ANDY

Oh, God, I never ment to hurt you. I thought you'd want no part of me. I wanted the escape to be a clean one, so I asked them to stonewall anyone. I've never understood the price. (To JESSIE.) I'll have to call.

CINDY

(Shy, shrugging shoulders.)

He'll be here soon. I called between bites of granola.

ANDY

God. Oh, God. Now if we'd get Dick's part in all of this.

STAN

He doesn't know. We don't want to tell him. There's a lot for you to know.

JESSIE

(Interrupting.)

For you guys to do what you need to, tell me if I'm wrong, but wouldn't new copies of what Vince brought you, and maybe new stuff, if you found something to show it all was true, wouldn't that be what you need?

ANDY

Yes. Or Singelski's confession.

JESSIE

What if someone would do what Vince did, did it now?

ANDY

None of us are going to get into the hospital. I destroyed the copies I had. I didn't want them being used as evidence.

JESSIE

The shift's about to come on across the street. There's someone who would want to do it. Give me a minute.

JESSIE EXITS STAGE RIGHT DOOR.

STAN

(To ANDY.)

Do you know what Jessie, is talking about?

ANDY

I'd trust her.

CINDY

You're happy with her? (Pause.) You look better, older, in a good way, better than I ever saw you before.

ANDY

Thanks, I think. I've been trying to keep busy. But I asked my folks to keep tabs on here. I've an idea of what you've written. I'm satisfied.

STAN

But I wished you'd be back.

JESSIE ENTERS STAGE RIGHT.

JESSIE

(Facing door, talking to off stage.)

Come in. Now. No one would want to be watching.

SAM ENTERS, CARRYING A LUNCH  
BUCKET.

ANDY

(To SAM.)

Hello. I think we met a while back.

SAM

Fuckin' A we met. And you got Vince dead. (To JESSIE.) Why you bring me in here with these types?

JESSIE

Because they want to save Vince's good name. It wasn't them. Somebody big is shafting everybody. We wanta find what really happened to your friend. He's my friend, too. I need your help. Lisa does.



SAM

Tell me what you're asking. You wantin' me to go off the roof?

JESSIE

No. I want you to go to the office. Vince found stuff there, and you could do it too. We need to find who did it to Vince. He said he was trying to protect the guys like you.

SAM

But you've seen what they do to people. You want me to lose more. I, I can't take these days without him. He taught me, but couldn't do himself no good.

ANDY

We want you to do this so you'll survive. We want you to help show your friend was telling the truth. He told me he was afraid of what could happen to the workers. That the steel wasn't good enough and some day it was going to fall. Innocent people would pay for what's happening. The innocent have already paid too much. Your friend is dead.

SAM

And what should I care.

JESSIE

Sam!

SAM

I didn't push him off that beam. Nobody did. The dump wop. What was he doing up there anyway? Make me understand why I should save the memory of a coward.

JESSIE

Oh, Sam.

ANDY

(To JESSIE.)

Jess. (To SAM.) What's a coward?

SAM

He's a got a problem? We all got problems. He solving anything?

ANDY

Maybe. Maybe, Sam, he was trying to solve a problem, and he thought he was the problem. He had decided to do something he'd always thought should be done, but it wasn't the way it should have been.

SAM

(Angry.)

You saying he wanted to die?

ANDY

He wanted to be the hero. But they weren't going to let him. See, instead of the daydreams we may have sometimes, he was going to be a real hero. It wasn't for a thrill, so people walking by that building would say, "Vince DeLucci saved that". He had real courage, Sam. He was just doing what had to be done, even though he knew it was risky. He

was scared and he did it. He was very brave.

SAM

That's some kinda brave I ain't never heard of. Don't bullshit me. (He starts to stand.)

ANDY

Maybe. Maybe he thought about what he did that night the same way. (SAM settles down.) It seemed it had to be done. He'd been trapped. He made things worse. His family wasn't going to have any money, and the bad steel was still there. He knew I'd been hurt, but think of what he saw in his mind when he thought of his family's dreams.

SAM

Those kids a his. They always talking about going on to school. But did he make it better?

ANDY

It must have seen the easier way. No one would have had to look at him again. To have every morning bring a reminder to him, and everyone he loved, of his shame. It would be over. It would all go cold and people forget. People would forget.

SAM

(Chocking on tears.)

But I can't forget. I found him. They called. We looked all over. His car's at the corner. You know, the hospital gate swingin' open. It was windy. I find him, and ask him "why?". Why?

ANDY

It was all he could see. It was all he could feel. It's not hard to think about.

SAM

How you think you know what Vince was thinking?

ANDY

'Cause I thought all those things that night. I didn't have the guts to climb, though. I had a bottle of pills and and open beer, and I was swimming in self-pity and it seemed all so calm if I killed myself.

CINDY

(Quickly.)

Oh.

ANDY

(To everyone.)

It would have closed a lot of things.

SAM

(Angry.)

Then why aren't you dead? Why aren't you the one?

ANDY

It's a dumb answer. It is the truth. I couldn't stand thinking what the sun could look like, and I wouldn't know. That's all. Dead, maybe I'd

be up in the sky forever, and always see it all. But, I, me as I am, would never have a day again. I'd never be. That made me scared. I had the fear to stay alive.

CINDY

Then where did you go?

ANDY

I sat in my car, and stayed still. I tried to sleep. I worried that I shouldn't be driving, and I laughed, you know, that I was suddenly worried about being in a wreck. I couldn't sleep, so I did see the dawn and it was nothing special and I was glad of that. It didn't have grand colors or thundering clouds, and it made me feel secure. I could see that any day, and it was beautiful. I'd been right. There's no relief in suicide. I'm sorry Vince is gone. There are no more choices. You lose more in that than anyone could take from you.

SAM

(Crying.)

So, you're alive. But the guy who taught me everything I'm good at, look at what he done. Where's that leave me?

ANDY

To follow what your friend taught you, things he wanted you to know. You have to find his courage to help people, the way he wanted to. And then you'll have to find more courage because you've seen what they'll do to someone who stand in their way. You finish his job. You make this worthwhile. Then he wouldn't be responsible for letting them get away with it, he'll have started the end. The job still has to be done.

STAN

(To ANDY.)

But if you're involved, they'll go to court.

ANDY

They never intended to. This would have all flown apart in a court room. They must have shit in their pants when we didn't call their bluff. But I can't get inside that office. Again, it'll take a better man than me.

SAM

Don't spread it too thick. I still don't see why I should go.

ANDY

For the truth. Because a person loses his life if he doesn't find the truth about others, and, more importantly, himself. The truth of what he's capable of. If he doesn't try, he might as well forget he's alive.

JESSIE

(To SAM.)

If you say no, it won't go outside this room. I called to you 'cause I thought you'd be interested. (Points to the reporters.) They're nobody to you. Me? I don't think I could do it myself.

SAM

Now you're lyin' to me and, if you never know, you ain't good at it.  
When do you need the stuff?

JESSIE

(To ANDY.)

When?

ANDY

Soon is best. The bastards may hear I'm back.

SAM

(Standing up.)

I'll do what I can.

ANDY

(Extending his hand.)

Thank You.

SAM

Let's wait to see on both of us.

SAM EXITS STAGE RIGHT.

FADE

END SCENE

SETTING: Mid afternoon, the same day. DICK is frantically typing at one of the tables. He looks a bit tired, but confident. There's a phone on his table. There are papers, more phones, typewriters, and a camera on the other tables. A sign is propped up on the bar counter, "Be out by 3:30 and don't touch our business."

PHONE RINGS. DICK PICKS IT UP.

DICK

(A bit out of breathe.)

Yeah. The Mirror. (Pause.) This is Dick Ambrose. How are you? Neither of them are here now. (Pause.) We'll hire a few more full time people soon. Those two have been running in and out all day, since before I got here this morning.

CINDY ENTERS, STAGE LEFT. SHE SITS FAR AWAY FROM DICK, READING NOTES.

DICK

(Still on the phone.)

Wait a minute. (To CINDY.) Cindy. It's for you. (She nods and starts for a phone.) Here's one of them. (She picks up receiver.) Talk to you soon. (Hangs up.)

CINDY

(On the phone.)

Hello. Cindy Ross. Oh, hi. Yes, I know.

STAN ENTERS FROM STAGE RIGHT. DICK AND CONVERSATION WILL COVER OVER CINDY'S TALKING.

DICK

(To STAN.)

(Sarcastic.) I hope you'll stay around at least a few minutes. I've been by myself most of the day. I don't know where you two have been.

STAN

It's trying to make deadline. Not to have another of those afternoons, and evenings. I promised my wife she'd see me at the dinner table tonight. She thought it might be a nice touch.

DICK

(Displays anger.)

Those are the sacrifices of the job. Glad I'm not married, (Looks over shoulder to CINDY.) No bitch is worth the bitchin'.

CINDY HANGS UP, WRITES SOMETHING DOWN. SHE MAKES ANOTHER CALL. STAN NOTICES, BUT DICK DOESN'T.

STAN

Well, if we're going to make it, we'll have to move quick. There's only thirty minutes before her (Points to the sign.) deadline.

DICK

(Displays anger.)

Like what I just said. (CINDY hangs up. DICK turns to her.) What was that? The guy who called, I know him. He's from the county. But he was real anxious to talk to you.

CINDY

Just a favor. He was letting me know that there may be a meeting for rezoning this area.

DICK

(Say it sharply.) I coulda told you that.

ENTER JESSIE FROM STAGE RIGHT.

JESSIE

(Loud to DICK.)

Come on, you lazy slob, get your butt out of here. I've got to start up my work, I've got a lot of people depending on me.

DICK

(Anger flashing.)

Heay. You. Don't come bitchin' in here. We still have a good half hour, (Points to her sign.) by your own mark. I don't know where you get off, always harrassing us until we're out the door.

JESSIE

I have a contract with the owner of the other half of this place.

DICK

Owner of more than your half. And he isn't here. If there's a complaint, take it up with his damn high-on-the-hill family. But you don't have a deal with me.

JESSIE

You have to honor commitments.

DICK

I will when I want to and when I have to. Until then, get out of here before I call the real owners and have you tossed out for good.

ENTER ANDY FROM STAGE LEFT.

ANDY

(To DICK.)

By the real owners, do you mean me?

DICK TURNS. IS STUNNED, THEN STARTS TOWARD ANDY.

DICK

Oh my God.

ANDY

Or do you mean the Kilbright Development Company?

DICK STOPS IN HIS TRACKS.

DICK

Huh? (Collects himself.) Oh, where've you been? It's so damn good to see you. Cindy, Stan, do you believe it?

CINDY

We have all morning, especially since we started making phone calls.

STAN

It's amazing what we've been finding out today.

ANDY

You see, Dick, I've been around since late last night. All of us got together for a bit of a breakfast meeting. Sorry you weren't there, but we found out you've been too busy to make it.

DICK

No problem. I did have a late night myself. I'm so glad you're here, and that you're all right. But, you know, we are close to deadline, and (Gestures to JESSIE.) this, person, is trying to throw us out early.

ANDY

I know. I told her she could. She's got to get ready for a private party, to celebrate this day.

DICK

Andy, I know you weren't always a stickler for all the demands of the job, and this is a great day. But we'll have all night, and I promise you we'll get crazy on into the morning.

ANDY

You can't promise someone else their morning.

DICK

(Not understanding ANDY.)

Sure. But we have to get the paper out. And (Coming closer to ANDY to advise him.) if anyone sees you here. Oh, God. It's been a long time, but if somebody from across the street sees you with us, the court mess could come crashing down around us. No party, not even this one, would be worth that. We can have it later at my place. I've a nice new place you should see.

ANDY

Maybe, some day. I'm sure.

DICK

We're really starting to be successful now. The money's beginning to come in. Mainly advertising, but that's because we're ready to fly, right through the roof. You were right, about this neighborhood, about the paper. We're going to spread out across this city soon. But you can't want to risk it by being seen. I'm glad you came in the back way.

ANDY

I've found that I do most things that way.

DICK  
(Still a bit confused by ANDY.)

Well, you know.

ANDY  
It's amazing what a person can learn about themselves, about what they're capable of doing and what they allow others to do to them. Wouldn't you say, Dick?

ENTER PARKER FROM STAGE RIGHT.

DICK  
(To ANDY.)  
Sure. Well, (To PARKER.) you know, Parker, long time since we've been together, but I'm glad you're here. (Crosses to PARKER.) I think you should tell our friend that's it's best if he gets out of here, now, quietly.

ANDY  
(Sharply.)  
You always have someone else use the knife for you, Dick? Can't you do your own cutting?

DICK  
(Politely.)  
I'm sorry, I....

ANDY  
(Flush.)  
You know what we used to call this, at school, when we stayed up, studying politics?

DICK  
You know I didn't learn that way.

ANDY  
We used the politicians word. We called it ratfucking.

DICK  
(Trying to be off handed.)  
Colorful.

PARKER  
(To DICK, dryly.)  
You're better at comebacks than that.

ANDY  
Know what you need? You need to air a few things out. They say confession, of whatever kind, is good for the soul.

DICK  
(Trying to laugh.)  
What? You become a priest when you left?

ANDY  
You did it to me. The ratfuck included me. You know what the word means?



More than a traitor. More than a double cross. You're the gutless kind that can't look the person in the eye.

DICK

I, I'm worried that you may have pushed yourself too far today. We all know how emotional the last few months must have been.

ANDY

(Carefully, each name stings DICK.)

Kilbright Development. The Crawford Construction Company. And Interstate Real Estate. And Home-Rite, Inc., and Don Smigleski.

DICK

What about the mayor? You look pale.

STAN

You're lookin' like shit.

PARKER

It's an old idea. But history has proven its worth. Using information no one else has, a group of people start buying what seems like useless property, paying a proper price. In a little while, some of the buildings are sold, at a profit. Each week or so brings new rounds of buyers, always making money, until they're bought by companies that appeared about the time of the first sales. In the end, though, the same people who had the information are the ones who make the last sale to, let's say, the government, specifically, this city.

STAN

The places that have gone up the most in value are the ones that are sold for the construction of a new hospital.

CINDY

And the best spots around the construction are either sold for parks or garages, or businesses open up with their old friends to run the places, to keep a proper distance.

DICK

You could sell that idea.

ANDY

We don't have to, it's happening on these streets.

DICK

No. Not that same old story. Andy, don't keep trying to prove that you were right. We saw what it did to you before.

JESSIE

(To DICK.)

God. You're a shithead.

ANDY

(To JESSIE.) Thank's. I've got to keep this in sight. (To DICK.) This is it. A clash of shitheads. The one who said he had a dream of good deeds, but couldn't control his idea, and the one he hired to run it all,

but who sold out to the type of people he was supposed to protect the people against. We've pulled apart the whole maze. And for good measure, one of the people we're paid to tell the news to went into the offices across the street and found the originals from a few months ago. You guys are sloppy. That's not like you, Dick.

DICK

What, or who, has anything to say against me?

PARKER

Of course, someone had to have warned them about the documents Andy had. I was the only person who was, more or less, an outsider to the paper. You know Andy had a copy of the combination to my safe and a key to the door. (Ironie.) I left them here as protection, if I ever forgot the combination. But you made a good move. If I had been trying to hurt Andy, having the evidence in my safe would look clumsy. But confused people tend to think too hard; to push too far. So a hurried attempt to stop Andy would look that way, like I hadn't had much time to act. At that point, sloppy was the correct thing to do.

STAN

So you have Andy's best friend as the obvious heavy, confusing us all. Not only that, you create at least doubt about Andy's best source for advice.

ANDY

First you defend me, then blow up at Parker. You must have known me well because the threat of failure was enough to make me snap. I folded so fast, I probably surprised you, but you'd won on a bluff. But, someone got cocky, and a man died.

DICK

You can't be blaming me for that worker who jumped. He was the guy who gave you the papers.

JESSIE

And for that, you cut him off? You let him die?

ANDY

That was your mistake. I must have made you confident, because you got rid of the person you needed to keep for the charade to work. You should have given him a new job. The game would have seemed complete and no one would have been sure of anything. A lack of honor is shame. Betrayal is disgusting. But, some eyes can see you as a murderer.

DICK

Nothing you've said, nothing is evidence against me. It's all hearsay. (To ANDY.) You're the one who never wanted to make decisions. You finally did. You're trying to hang this on me.

JESSIE

Don't keep trying to play every side against the other. It won't work. I got a call into my old boss, fat, old Turrbovich. You weren't good at picking friends either.

PARKER

She found him running a disco a few hundred miles from here. I'm sure he was to have been safely tucked away. He had to have a liquor license.

STAN

(To DICK.)

The only department without the right bribe.

JESSIE

I tell him I know what's happening, that all these companies (ANDY.) he's talked about were offering me a deal, but I want to know who I asked the money from. Suddenly, 'cause I'm part of it all, I'm his old pal, and he tells me that you (DICK.) 're the contact, you'd ask the mayor. He throws in that the bar went so cheap to make sure your friend would put you in the middle of all this. He asked if you'd found your break to take the paper from the snot nose. I laughed and so did he.

DICK

Only your story....

PARKER

That's on tape. The district attorney has it now. The sky should start to crack over your head any minute now.

DICK

(To ANDY.)

You can't let me take this. Remember how you said you couldn't start this paper without me? Remember the fights you had? You can't. I've made this something. Do you know almost every dollar of advertising we have comes as part of my deal?

ANDY

We can do without that treatment.

DICK

(To ANDY, while gesturing  
towards STAN and CINDY.)

Ask'em. Ask'em, you can't survive with the ads. Nobody buys the damn thing.

JESSIE

People don't pay for what they know is bull.

CINDY

We know about the ads your friends were paying for. What do you think we used finally to trace who was involved?

ENTER MAYOR FROM STAGE RIGHT.

MAYOR

(Seeing who's there.)

Err. I just stopped by....

ANDY

Don't waste time. You must know what we're doing here.

MAYOR  
(To DICK.)

I got a call, from the bozo, Frank Turrbovich, we had running this place.

PARKER  
(To the MAYOR.)

And you'll soon get one from the Prosecutor. You better call your lawyer, that is, if he isn't in jail already.

ANDY  
(To MAYOR.)

Think of this as urban renewal. We're tearing you down and putting up a human being in your place.

DICK  
(To ANDY.)

This is still fragile. You mustn't have the money to keep this going. You let this go on and there won't be a penny coming in by tomorrow.

ANDY  
Fine. That gives us enough time for one last issue. Be serious. You think we're sitting on the biggest story of our lives?

DICK  
You're god damn money. You worthless little momma's boy. A hack who's rich daddy bought a paper so you'd have a by line. Of course I wanted this job, 'cause I told him (The MAYOR.) that you'd get bored in a week and leave it to me. Wait. If you tell the whole truth, everything will come out, and you know what you'll look like?

ANDY  
Asshole of the month. Okay. You'll be the biggest load of shit I ever flushed. (Smiles.) Just think. Immortality. (Serious.) Don't try. My opinion is the one I live with. If all this collapses because I tell the truth, the world's got problems, but I'd pay you to do it over again. (Looks at the MAYOR.) God knows what he's paid to do to you over and over again.

MAYOR  
I'll sue you for slander. And libel. (Points to JESSIE.) She lied to Turrbovich. That's in trappment. I'll sue.

ANDY  
(Pushing DICK at MAYOR.)  
But you can have custody.

DICK SQUARES TO HIT ANDY.  
ANDY RAISES HIS HAND.

ANDY  
You'll do nothing to me now you didn't let me do to myself already. I saw myself in a bright morning's light. It's sickening, the twilight of lies I see you are.

DICK

We won't let this go easy. We'll still try to strangle this, never let it grow. We'll even get your pompous old man.

ANDY

I'd have never hired a quitter. You'll, though, have no choice. You'll only twist in the wind. (Looking at MAYOR.) And next time, have better taste in losers.

DICK AND MAYOR EXIT STAGE RIGHT.

PARKER

(To ANDY.)

They will fight. It may be years. Have you talked to your dad about the money for staying open?

ANDY

I don't intend to.

CINDY

Then you're going back to Phoenix? You seem content about down there.

ANDY

I'll go back, pack up, and find some place here in town. Look, I've got to know if this will ever work. The truth isn't to be on handouts. I need to know if I can make it the way I want. That'll be worth it. It might be best for you two to start looking for something else to do, before it crashes.

STAN

So my kids go back to playing baseball instead of getting a video game. My wife would rather them playing baseball.

CINDY

Then can we get to work?

ANDY

Please. (Excitedly, to STAN.) Get to Mr. Hunter. Tell him to stop the press.... (Quietly.) I wasn't really going to say that?

STAN

I'll have them ready for a couple new pages. I'll say it's old times.

STAN EXITS STAGE LEFT.

CINDY

(To PARKER.)

I'll need to ask a few questions.

PARKER

The answers are yours, and only yours until you print.

ANDY

(To PARKER.)

Thanks, friend.

ANDY HUGS PARKER, SQUEEZES  
CINDY.

ANDY  
(To JESSIE.)

I'm sorry you had to lie to get the last piece of their puzzle. There must be better ways.

JESSIE  
You aren't a hypocrite if you don't hide there anymore. You know your heart. If this doesn't work, you know we two could have one incredible business here. Again, thank you.

ANDY  
For Vince?

JESSIE  
Me. Proving my instincts aren't all wrong.

ANDY  
Thank you.

CAUTIOUSLY, THEY EMBRACE, THEN  
HOLD EACH OTHER. BOTH ARE  
CALM, BUT OBVIOUSLY AFFECTIONATE.

ANDY  
Nothing against the service here, but, tonight, when this is done, can I take you some place nice for dinner? I've never seen you away from this room.

JESSIE  
Sure. If we can talk our bosses into giving us the night off.

FADE

END OF PLAY

## AN AFTERWORD

### Critical Apparatus for Sailor of the South Wind

As with Andy Kohee, the Sailor of the South Wind, my play had to grow and mature. What had seemed to be a wonderful set of ideas had to reflect a deeper discipline and be more direct in presenting its story. Besides an affection for the works of Shakespeare, I have not been directly influenced by another writer's or a genre's style or technique. But I have not written something revolutionary. It is related to accepted dramatic works, not by blood, but by a thematic and stylistic kinship. I wanted to write a realistic drama that contained the humor and poetic imagery that is part of normal life and thought. Andy is a character who must defend the truth while he fights to find the meaning of his own life. He is a representative modern person, and that, to me, is the importance of his struggle.

I first read Henrik Ibsen's An Enemy of the People, as Arthur Miller adapted it, after South Wind has been rewritten. Initially, I was stunned at the number of points of similarity. Each has, as here, a man fighting for the truth and his life against a powerful conspiracy led by the town's mayor. Also, the press, in each case a paper that was proudly founded to supply the facts, has been used as a weapon to propagate dishonesty.

More importantly, though, the plays differ in focus. In South Wind, the central conflict is that of one man finding the strength to discover the truth. It is a story of an individual who creates his problems. Through Miller, presents an almost totally corrupt community

that tries to destroy a man of truth. It is the story of a corrupt society, more than of personal weakness.

Dr. Stockmann helped to found a health spring that should revitalize his poor town. It is interesting that both plays are concerned with dangers to facilities that were to improve the public health. But, the "enemy of the people" is not the victim of a veiled conspiracy. The play starts with Dr. Stockmann's discovery of poison in the spring. Dr. Stockmann's adversary is not a secret traitor, but his brother Peter, the mayor. Peter is not much like Mayor Smigelski of South Wind. Ibsen's mayor is the leader, not another follower. Peter Stockmann turns the town newspaper, the health institute, and the community against his brother. He had promised he would. He twists his brother's words and bullies the paper into censoring the news that the poison was found in what was to be the curative spring waters. Peter says he does it for the financial good of the town.

Dr. Stockmann and his family are attacked by all the sides of his home town. Ibsen, in turn, is attacking the "establishment". The people are their own enemies. The only "good" people end the play besieged with Stockmann by a mob. South Wind does not share the view of a societal breakdown. The villains are individuals. They try to corrupt the system without any regard to public safety, but the proper agencies of society quickly move to punish the offenders once the crime has been uncovered. The city's District Attorney was willing to give Andy a way to save himself, but was moving quickly to arrest the mayor and his co-conspirators. The citizens of the city, specifically Jessie, Vince, and Sam, help discover the truth. They do not riot against the truth's defender. South Wind is not meant to be an indictment of government, but an argument for strong, responsible media and



fair, honest legal representatives. My work does not have the sense of despair and frustration with the common citizens as does Ibsen/Miller's.

The view that government corruption is a flaw rather than the norm is part of the message of Arthur Miller's The Crucible. His here, John Proctor, like Dr. Stockmann, tries to stand for truth and justice in the path of dangerous hysteria. Miller used the historic context of the Salem Witch Hunt to show how a community based on ignorance and fear could be led into a blood bath of innocents in the name of spiritual justice. But John Proctor shares more than his defense of truth with Andy Kehee, he also carries his personal guilt into the conflict.

Proctor wanted to be independent of the Puritan settlement, and the minister had already marked him as a questionable member of the community. In the town, a comprehensive, but narrow-minded set of rules and attitudes were dispensed by the insecure Reverend Parris. This rule by religious superstition was a stack of dry kindling for the mischievous games of some of the town's young girls. Led by the cunning and devious Abigail Williams, the children frighten their elders by telling of dealings with the devil. Abigail's method of misdirecting fear away from her is a lot like Dick's methods in my play. Abigail accuses others of being evil in the way that Dick argues that Parker must be the traitor. In Salem, the children's subterfuge started a blaze that became the means by which people were able to act out their repressed greed and jealousy.

While Proctor wants to be left alone by the community's actions, he can not escape his indirect responsibility for causing the hunt. He has committed adultery with Abigail resulting in her passion for him. She builds up the hysteria so that it will be large enough to swallow Proctor's wife, Elizabeth. The Salem tribunal of frightened, short-sighted men will listen to any charge of witchcraft without questioning its validity.

This gives Abigail the opportunity both to have deadly power and to eliminate Elizabeth.

When Proctor rejects her and tries to demonstrate her prejury to the tribunal, he is accused of witchery himself and condemned to death. In the final scene of the play, Proctor is given a chance to sign a false confession in exchange for his life. The truly innocent have not signed. Those who have been spared have accused others, but Proctor will not sacrifice anyone else. Because of his guilt as an adulter, Proctor sees himself as an evil person. In South Wind, Andy Kehee's shaky self-image is seemingly confirmed by the threats made against him through Parker. Proctor and Andy Kehee felt that, even though they had not consciously done anything wrong, they were still flawed enough to be punished. Proctor can sign a confession that says he is a sinner. Andy contemplates suicide and does leave the city because he can not believe in himself and does not think he is worth saving.

Andy does pull back from suicide because it would only serve the things that are wrong and, in time, finds the strength to return to pursue the truth and face the rejection he thinks does await him. Conversely, John Proctor, after signing the confession, will not have his good name used to further the hunt. He would not legitimize the killing, even to save his life. It seems that as a defender of the truth, Dr. Stockmann, John Proctor, or even Andy Kehee, must be willing to make a sacrifice to support what he believes in.

It is hard to believe in a painless, bloodless victory, even if out of the victory, the hero gains the total truth. While it is not fully comparable to the danger of Stockmann's isolation or Proctor's execution, Andy does have to accept the risk of the financial collapse of his dream if he does hold to his high principles. It is more courageous for someone

to face a costly loss that they can clearly see than to gallop headlong while trusting in some divine justice.

George Bernard Shaw in Saint Joan is both more "talky" and more funny than the other plays. There is less drama shown on stage and more discussion among the characters about each other and the battles and politics. Joan appears as a naive, almost precocious imp who happens to have been told by God to defeat the British. The incongruence of that is it runs throughout the play. Even in her moments of courage, she is still an immature girl leading an army of men. The warriors and the religious spin circles around her. But her uneducated eyes can see through their pretentiousness.

Saint Jean is not a comedy, but it does have a comic texture. Wars and even her death are things that occur off stage. On stage, Shaw's words rule. He often uses a gently cutting wit to explain his ideas. No scene seems to show this more than the epilogue. The setting is the bedroom of Charles, the king Joan helped bring to the throne. It is twenty-five years after her death and an inquisition has determined that Joan was not a witch. When Charles falls asleep, Joan comes to him in a dream. She is joined on stage by other ghosts to debate the stupidity of her death and the war. None of the spirits are angry spectes of fate. They are the thoughts and feelings of people forever trapped in an event they would rather forget.

The comic texture is woven in with the tragic irony that a servant of God was consumed by war and burned at the stake. Use of humor and comic action does not mean a play is not a serious drama. Like Saint Joan, South Wind is comic to some extent. But the use of humor thins out as the crisis builds. When Dick announces the threat of legal action, he tells Andy that there are no more jokes. The dialogue remains serious until the truth of the conspiracy is being revealed in the last scenes.

I am of the generation addicted to M\*A\*S\*H on television. That show proved that the horror of war and death can be coped with through humor. My natural tendency is to look for the irony in any situation. Maybe that is the logical outcome of a cynical generation. I want my characters to be able to joke about their dreams, doubts, fears, ideas, loves, etc.. capable individuals in the complexity of life. Few people, if any, can survive at a single, tense pitch.

Each main character in the four plays is in a life-threatening situation. In the first three, characters face death or injury at the hands of a group. My here is ready to kill himself. It is true that Andy is the victim of a conspiracy, but he is really to blame himself for his predicament. I do not support Andy's fanciful rationalization for suicide. There is only meaning in striving for quality and progress in life. Dr. Stockmann and Proctor stand up for what they think is a proper quality of life. In the second scene of the second act, he gets to return to his debate over life or death. He answers the question with an increasingly positive vote for life. He votes for living and creating a worthy life. This probably comes from the pieces of existentialism that filtered through my undergraduate education. I came to believe that the individual is primarily responsible for his world and the effect he has on others. That is a fundamental thematic thread of South Wind.

South Wind began in January of 1981 as a voyage of a romantic moving through three different relationships. He would move from a self-deluding, long distance fixation, to the acceptance of a physical relationship, to an honest and deep love of a character who has always been Jessie McGriff. The main male character has always been what is now visible as Andy Kehee, but he and the plot and style of the play have evolved as much as he does in the play.

The initial idea was for the main character to emotionally mature in the course of the play. He was to start as a blind romantic, not able to tell the difference between what he imagine and what was really happening because of his emotional need to feel he was in love. He was insecure and could not see that the feeling he thought was the most important thing in his life was exaggerated in his mind. He would be much like the heroes of many of Shakespeare's comedies and romances. I took a class on those works during my senior year at Duquesne University which ingrained in me a deep love and awareness of such characters as Orlando of As You Like It as an example. The ultimate pastoral here, living in the forest to serve his true king, Orlando writes horrible love sonnets to a woman he briefly met, Rosalind, and nails the poems to the trees. His beloved, who has also escaped to the woods, finds them. In the disguise of a boy, Rosalind insults Orlando's poor romantic abilities. She, as the boy, has to teach Orlando how to love. Then there is the spectacle of the King of Navarero and his three attending lords in Love's Labor's Lost. They have pledged to study monastically for a year. They have barely begun before they spot a princess and her ladies. The men spend the rest of the play trying to romance the ladies, while trying to keep their scholarly image alive. They fail at both. My favorite example, though, is of a woman, actually, the Queen of the Fairies, Titania in A Midsummer Night's Dream. Her lover, King Oberon, has his trusted Puck put a potion in her eyes that will make her fall in love with the first creature she sees. Oberon arranges that the creature be a mortal named Bottom. He has also changed Bottom so that his head now looks like that of an ass. Despite that, Titania showers him with affection and praise for his looks. She is blindly in love. This inability to distinguish between what the lover wanted to see and what they actually had was already on my mind when I received an opportune invitation for lunch.

I was at my home in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania for Christmas vacation. A few days before I had to start back for Kansas State, my father and I were invited by an associate of his at ALCOA for lunch at the Pittsburgh Press Club. I had never been there before. While waiting for our table, we stood in the bar. The walls and ceiling are covered with actual front pages of newspapers. In the center of the room is a news wire service teleprinter. I kept my eye on the wire machine as we talked. Having once been an undergraduate journalism major, an old fascination captured me. That evening, while looking over the first notes on the "romantic" love project, I came up with the idea of combining a newspaper office and a working bar. It appealed to my love of Shakespeare's use of his play's setting as a metaphor for the world.

In the case of The Taming of the Shrew, the play opens with a drunken tinker named Christopher Sly who is fooled into believing he is a noble who has been brought to the play. He appears in the early acts in a nobleman's box, probably through a door at the top of the stage at the Globe, watching the Shrew. The question was raised in class, where does the audience really start and where, if ever, does the stage end? I used this as a starting point for exploration of possible extra meanings for my stage setting.

The dual use of the barroom is to be seen as the mixing point for both the news reporters and the people who the news is about and/or affects. The difference between the professionals' newsroom and the homes and streets of the "civilians" can be as far as the distance between theory and reality. The members of this staff want to feel that they are special, in a world of rarefied air. But here, these who report on the world and the world itself can not be separated.

Because the people who are to report the facts are involved in making the news, they can lose their abilities to make objective judgments. To me, a natural parallel to the emotional romantic problems of someone in love would be the education of a journalistic romantic. Both with the truth. I quickly decided to write a play about a young reporter who learned about the responsibilities, limitations, and dangers of love in somewhat paralleling action to his education of the truth. The use of the hospital as the centerpiece of the corruption was an easy symbol for Andy's peer emotional health.

The women in the life of the main character, included a girl who was never seen on stage, but whom he talked about at length, a young reporter who cared for him, whom he could care for finally, knowing that she did not intend to settle down with him, and Jessie. From the childish infatuation with the girl who liked but did not love him, Andy's acceptance of the reporter's considerable, but untethered affection was to be a demonstration of an increase in his emotional strength. He would learn not to make more out of it than there was. In the play as printed here, all the steps have been replaced by a silence about any past affairs and his awkwardness around Jessie in Act II. The closest thing to a reference to his past is when Andy's friends see him with Jessie in the second scene of act two and Stan and Cindy are surprised and happy. Jessie was always to be his final goal, one that is equal to the redemption of the paper's mission or his maturity or even the continuation of his life.

In the original work, the two founders of the paper, now named Andy and Dick, were both editors and equal financial partners, though Dick was still the boss because of his greater experience. Here has never been a question in my mind that Dick has the more aggressive ambition



and Andy the stronger philosophical commitment. They were to have been old college friends who had been reporters on rival papers and had recently found a mutual interest in becoming a greater part of the action, immediately. They would worry about money because it was their savings that were being depleted. The deal with the bar is basically unchanged, except that the ownership of the bar was to be equal. The deed was in Andy's name because Dick's credit rating was poor after he had defaulted on his college loans. This was the catch to allow Andy's eventual recovery of the business.

There was always a character who soon became known as Parker, who was a childhood friend of the main character. They both came from successful families. As in the new version, this is one of Dick's reasons for his betrayal. At first, though, Parker was only a helper, a sort of personification of the ideals that Andy always expounded. Parker grew out of a need I saw for a counterpoint to Andy's hesitant rhetoric. He performed most of the plot function that he does now. The damning material was found in his safe and he helped prove where the guilt actually laid.

Another source of my play derives from the second semester of my sophomore year. I left the university paper, where I was a marginal reporter, to join a friend in creating a campus news publication. It was in a magazine format and we said our goal was service to the university community and we dreamt of adventure and power. But the adventure lasted only a few months and produce five issues. I had resigned my editorial position and was changing majors by the time the fourth issue went to print. The main reason, I believe, the magazine, failed was that we lost sight of our responsibilities and principles. The last issue was a boring and blatant piece of propaganda supporting those student



government leaders the staff was personally close to. In the end, the virtue we had been so loud about had been corrupted by us all. We tried to gain advantages by our position as suppliers of the truth. I am proud of some of my actions. Ironically, we received a special community service award from the Pennsylvania Collegiate Press Association. The depth of our lies was not immediately preceptible and I thought this experience was kindred to the theme I had in mind. We were romantics who each had to face our individual realities and in doing so we learned a great deal about what we and other people are capable of doing.

There are specific differences between my life and this play. The money, Andy's grave concern, was not a problem at the university. We had a budget supplied by the student government. In fact, as far as we could tell, we were the only student-run and student-financed news-magazine on any college campus. We never came close to going broke. Also, Andy, who is a reflection of my early ideals and some of the lessons I learned, does not leave the profession as I did. He finds peace in the work. I found boredom. None of the "staff" characters are close to the collection of go-getting sophomores we had on the magazine. Stan is a sort of tough guy, who is married, and does not dream about becoming more than a reporter. Cindy also is not a very ambitious person. She wants to do her job right, but her passions are gentle and simple. In the original draft, Cindy had a few lines in the first act and was going to marry and leave the profession in Act II. My undergraduate group was for the most part hungry and ambitious. A bit of each of us went into Andy.

The character of Dick is one of ruthless, but charming ambition. He is not really sophisticated, but uses his appearance as a straightforward

professional with great cunning. When he joined Andy, it was with the full intent of taking total control as soon as possible. He is the kind of evil that Andy, in his "innocence", cannot see. When he tears apart Dick's web of deception, Andy is able to see his own self-deception. Dick, while initially based on people whom I have seen try to disrupt the truth, has become a personal devil for Andy. As far as I know, the sum of lies and deceit I know from personal experience does not equal the cold-hearted gladhandedness of Dick's that results in a man's death. He enjoys what he is doing. That is a quality for a villain I picked up from an interview I saw of film director Frank Capra. He said that he thought his villains worked best for the audience when they did their worst with a calm enjoyment, not a tortured soul or sick mind.

As for the basis of the other of the characters of South Wind, I have no stories of working in a battered inner city bar. I have tried to create these people out of my observation of working people. The model for Jessie, though, is traceable. She, in the way I picture her and her combination of femininity and toughness, is based on a female police officer from my township in Pittsburgh during the summer of 1981. I talked with her once. One day, I started talking with the officer while she ran a speeding check. After the hour or so we talked, I quickly realized that she had the proper blend of softness and honesty I needed for the here's final relationship. I never saw the officer again, I cannot remember her name, but the necessary impression had been made.

As for Sam and Vince, they are the creation of someone who grew up as the son of a plant administrator in towns built around factories. These two were chosen from a gang of about six workers who were going to populate my first draft. Sam has always been the clown who, like Andy, is not able to handle all the duties of his life. The pitiful

thing about Sam is that he is older than Andy, but only in age, and that he has not tried to learn anything in a long time. Vince was the wise old man who had a few lines to balance with Sam. His daughter Lisa was only two quick lines to show that the next generation of educated people often come from families like Vince's. She has become a pivotal point for characters' motivations. Many of my peers at Duquesne were the first from their families to attend college. Their brothers and sisters sometimes for no better reason than luck, stayed close to home, working at or around the mill. Jessie is one of those who, for no particular reason, remained in that kind of neighborhood.

The Mayor and those involved in the conspiracy are simply variations of the typical corrupt politicians. I decided that the Mayor should not have a strong will or personality so that he would seem subordinate to Dick in the last scene. Dick may be his devil as well. In fact, during the writing of the new version, I tried to use the word "hell" exclusively in relation to Dick and the Mayor, or to other characters when they are talking about them or the conspiracy.

The play's original make-up of romantic and social conflict seemed to be a perfect and sensible combination. I saw the two tracks of Andy's education as inseparable. The preliminary draft of the play was unwieldy, an attempt to fuse enough abstract ideas for two plays. To me, the most important idea was no longer my original thought. I wanted a story of the fight for truth. Within a week, I had eliminated the girlfriend who was never seen, the reporter who became Andy's lover, Dick's lover/co-conspirator, most of the construction workers, a bartender, and a drunk who frequented the bar. Someday, I will dig some of them up again. I added a visible government official, a new version of Cindy to better

the number of characters of each sex in this mainly male play, and Andy's worries over exhausting his father's seed money as his early trauma. I started calling his father the "judge" to give a cold distance to their relationship. He is also someone who can do what Andy is not mature enough to do, make correct judgments. He is not evil, just misunderstood by his son and becomes a role model. Jessie and Andy originally had a brief meeting in the first scene, but, now that she would become the direct force that pulled him toward his victories, she opened the show and was never far from him.

The gang of workers was reduced to make the workers' relation to the paper simpler and more direct. The source of the documents was to be a city clerk. Also, the confrontation with the mayor was to be at a press conference. Before neither were shown on stage, only reported in conversations. Dr. Fedder stressed the need to show as much action as possible, which renewed an old echo from other teachers. As I said before, this reflects things I am passionate about and I could not tell where objectivity stopped and subjectivity began. Much of what the play was to say had to be said to me again. Dr. Fedder's constant insistence on clear development in each scene has been the greatest assistance I have received on or with this project.

One problem I had, and which Dr. Fedder ordered me to correct, was in naming all the characters. Andy had not been called that for a long period of time. I had just about given up and settled on calling him simply "A" and Dick was "B". Maybe the initial led to his name. I cannot remember. Dick's name is for the crude pun Jessie makes in the second act. Once there were two characters called Pete. One became Stan and the other did not survive the editing. Parker's name comes from the first name of a Kansas State basketball player because it has a proper

rich person sound. His last name, and the name of the politician were problems. In the Spring semester of 1982, I ran a "Name-the-Character-in-the-Play Contest", in both of my English Composition II classes. The prize would be something small that had nothing to do with class. There were entries, but no winners. I finally called him Livingston for the rewrite as another counterpoint to Andy's self destructive urge.

Smigelski is the name of a punter for the Atlanta Falcons football team. It sounded evil.

The name of the play, though, has been the same for almost two years. After coming to Kansas, my cousin, Jim, pointed out that the title of a favorite song, "People of the South Wind", by the group Kansas, was based on the name of the state. Kansas, or Kaw, was the name of the tribe that had lived around North Eastern Kansas and their name meant "people of the south wind." The addition of the final "s" makes the word stand for the land of the Kansas. I was fascinated by the name of my adoptive state and felt that translation could be used in my writing somewhere. I finally found a metaphor, which is basically what Andy says in the last scene of Act I. The north wind, in my original plan of the metaphor, was for "those with direction." Eastern and Western winds took on the implications those direction have in American history. Since I had come to Kansas for graduate school, the south wind was for "those seeking knowledge." I should say that the undisclosed setting that I have used in my mind for the play is my home of Pittsburgh. I have left that vague because I want a greater universality to the work. But Kansas has a warm meaning to me. Since I have been teaching at Kansas State, most of my students have been Kansans. Now this quality for the wind is more than my own self praise, it is a reflection of the love and respect I have for the students I have worked with here.

In the rewrite, the same number of scenes, four in Act I and three in Act II, were kept. The plot line has not been drastically altered. The major part of the rewrite has been a streamlining of the plot and greater use of the stage for action. It is less talk, with more of the story shown and not told. It is less philosophic, but it is not less philosophic. It is still my play, but it is now higher into the light.

SAILOR OF THE SOUTH WIND

by

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Abstract. Sailor of the South Wind is a two act drama dealing with the here's, Andy Kehee, drive to establish a newspaper to serve a large, but crumbling city neighborhood. Using his rich father's money, Andy founded the paper and hired an experienced reporter, Dick Ambrose, to be the editor, while Andy remains a reporter because he is not strong enough to assume total responsibility for his project. The newspaper shares a room that is, for half a day, their office and, in the evening, a bar. The deal was struck to save money. The other owner, a young woman named Jessie McGriff, pushes Andy to more directly help the neighborhood. He has some success, but before he can print the facts concerning a fraud in the construction of a hospital, he is threatened with arrest on the charge that he falsified the documents. Not being emotionally strong, Andy falls in to a depression and contemplates suicide. In the second act, which takes a few months later, Dick is running a financially successful. Andy returns to the bar and is told by Jessie that the paper has gone away from his ideals. Joining two loyal reporters and, with Jessie's help, a construction worker who gets copies of the original documents, Andy further discovers a conspiracy involving the mayor and Dick to profit from the building of the hospital. The true story goes to print even with the fear of losing the money the paper received for advertisements from the co-conspirators that support the paper. Included as an afterword is a critical apparatus which explains the play's origins, development, its use of comic patterns and compares and contrasts its relationship to works by Shakespeare, Ibsen, Shaw, and Miller.