

A PRODUCTION BOOK FOR THE WALTZ OF THE TOREADORS

by

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PART I

THE WALTZ OF THE TOREADORS, A STUDY IN ROSE AND NOIR

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## INTRODUCTION

A Playwright and a Play are Chosen

Jean Anouilh, "perhaps the most produced of all living playwrights"<sup>1</sup> and one of the most prolific, having written twenty-two full-length plays over a span of thirty years, captured my interest in graduate school two years ago. Before that time I had known him for only two of his works, Antigone and The Waltz of the Toreadors. Early in 1963, however, I studied Anouilh's development as a dramatist and read more of his plays with growing interest. His ability to draw characters, his great facility as a theatrical craftsman, and his themes all attracted me.

When it came time to select a play for this Master's Thesis production my mind went immediately to Anouilh's works. I knew from the outset that few had been successful in America from a commercial standpoint. I felt, however, that some of the very factors which kept them from being widely embraced by the general public might well make them very "right" for showing on a university campus. Pronko notes:

The Broadway theaters usually present plays cast more or less in the realistic forms and cater to an audience that prefers to have its thinking done for it. Anouilh's plays...require a certain amount of thought on the part of the beholder. Moreover, that thought may lead us to discover things about ourselves that we would prefer not to know.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>"Cynicism Uncongealed," Time, Vol. 82, No. 24, December 13, 1963, p. 66.

<sup>2</sup>Leonard Cabell Pronko, The World of Jean Anouilh (Berkeley, California, 1961), p. xix of the Introduction.

The situation on a college campus is far different from that on Broadway. In a university setting commercial considerations can be largely ignored; a student director planning a Master's Thesis production can be more idealistic. He does not need to select a play which is realistic or to cater to an audience that prefers to have its thinking done for it. An audience in an educational milieu, drawn largely from students and faculty, can legitimately be exposed and invited to rise to an appreciation of a play which requires thought. In fact, thinking is supposed to be stimulated in a university setting. Furthermore, if the thought leads anyone ultimately to discover things about himself that he would "prefer not to know" this is not a valid reason to avoid a play which might lead to such discovery. Psychologists link preferring not to know with the fear of knowing. Furthermore, the fear of knowing blocks the need to know in order to grow. Long ago Freud, as quoted by Abraham Maslow, pointed out that one basic fear shared by all humans is the "fear of knowledge of oneself--of one's emotions, impulses, memories, capacities, potentialities, of one's destiny." Maslow, an avant-garde psychologist adds:

We tend to evade personal growth because this can bring...fear... awe...feelings of weakness and inadequacy. And so we find...a kind of resistance, a denying of our best side, of our talents, of our finest impulses, of our highest potentialities, of our creativeness.<sup>1</sup>

Fear, then, binds all humans and prevents emotional and intellectual development. And fear is thus one of the formidable opponents of the university. It can be met head on, however, and eventually resolved if individuals are exposed to experiences which potentially lead to awareness.

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<sup>1</sup>Abraham H. Maslow, Toward a Psychology of Being (New York, 1962), pp. 57-58.



The learning experience offered by Anouilh's plays seemed truly challenging. All that needed to be done was to select the one that would be produced. Anouilh's reputation in America, I knew, rested largely on plays such as Antigone, The Lark and Becket. Yet, other of the playwright's works such as Ardele, The Waltz of the Toreadors, Pauvre Bitos, and Ornifle, published in France in 1956 by La Table Ronde in a collection called the Pieces grincantes (Grating plays) intrigued me. Each of these plays had a unique "flavor" so difficult to ignore that I felt all were worthy of attention. The Waltz of the Toreadors was finally selected as this Master's Thesis play for the following reasons. It best fitted the physical requirements of the Purple Masque Theatre. There were twelve in the cast and, from the actors regularly trying out it was likely the roles could be filled and played somewhat as the author envisioned them.

This last point, that the author's vision might be fulfilled, was of extreme importance. The main aim of any director with integrity is to form a cohesive whole of the many parts of the dramatic production and bring the play to life as nearly as possible as the author envisioned it. This means the director must attempt to gain insight into the work--rediscover "the author's state of mind," as Louis Jouvet expresses it.<sup>1</sup> Such insight can be gained only through a thorough research process. Any source of information that seems likely to shed light on the play or its creator--biographers, the author himself, drama authorities, historians, perhaps--must be examined. Interest in the endeavor will be sustained and, possibly, heightened only if a work is chosen which the director deems truly challenging and exciting.

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<sup>1</sup>Quoted in Wallace Fowlie, Dionysus in Paris: A Guide to Contemporary French Theatre (New York, 1960), p. 47.

To me The Waltz of the Toreadors is such a play, and for a personal reason. The play's totality not only aroused an intuitive initial response, when it was first read some three years ago, but for months afterward haunting lines, as well as keen remembrance of the total cumulative effect, persisted and perturbed. The work had aroused strange feelings--non-plussing but fascinating. The enigmatic nature of the feelings begged explanation even though I suspected, in the light of Pronko's statement, quoted earlier, that an objective appraisal of the play might well prove disturbing as well as illuminating. Why had I responded to the play as I did? This was the question I hoped to answer.

#### The Scope of the Appraisal

The remainder of this essay will be devoted to information which was found helpful in gaining insight into The Waltz of the Toreadors. A biographical sketch of the playwright, comments on Anouilh's appearance and personality, and the way Anouilh the man and his experiences are reflected in The Waltz are included, as is background material pertinent to an understanding of the play--the original French version and the English translation, possible cultural barriers and the historical era. The play itself, its author's purpose and outlook, the overall concepts developed, the themes and the style are then discussed. Finally, performance strategy is reviewed and conclusions are drawn.

## THE PLAYWRIGHT

### Biographical Sketch

Rediscovering Anouilh's state of mind started with an investigation of biographical details. Within the environment which shaped him clues would be found, perhaps, to account for his adoption of playwriting as a career and for the origins of some of his viewpoints and skills. It was immediately evident that one of the most striking things about Anouilh's "biography" is the lack of details.

The playwright was born in Bordeaux June 23, 1910. He came from a poor family. His father was a tailor who made little money. His mother was a competent violinist who took positions as a musician from time to time to supplement the family income. Shortly before the boy was ready to enter primary school (1915) the family moved to Paris. Four years later, however, Anouilh's mother secured a job with the orchestra at the Casino at Arachon near Bordeaux. The boy accompanied her back to the city in which he had been born. The Casino produced operettas. It is known that young Jean watched the lavish productions regularly for a period of three months and soon began to try his hand at writing one-act verse plays. It was not until he was sixteen, though, that he finished a full-length work in the style of Rostand. This play has never been published.<sup>1</sup>

Anouilh himself has mentioned his schooling. He attended Colbert Primary School in Paris and, later, Chaptal College. He emphasizes the fact

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<sup>1</sup>Pronko, pp. xiv-xvi of the Introduction.

that he did not study literature. He must have left Chaptal rather soon for he also reports attending the Law Faculty in Paris where he remained for a year-and-a-half.<sup>1</sup> Fowlie notes that the playwright finally had to drop out of Law school because of financial difficulties.<sup>2</sup>

Anouilh next went to work for an advertising firm as a copywriter. Here, he says, "I learned to be ingenious and exact." During this time he supplemented his income by writing publicity scripts and jokes for the movies.<sup>3</sup> The playwright left the advertising firm to take a position as secretary to Louis Jouvet. Here he became, for the first time, associated directly with the world of the theatre and members of Louis Jouvet's Theatrical Company. It is not certain whether he met Monelle Valentin, a talented young actress, when he was with the advertising agency or when he went with Jouvet. At any rate, it was while he was working for the latter in 1931 that he married the girl. His famous actor-director employer did nothing to aid the young author's ambitions as a playwright; he did, however, lend the newly wedded couple stage furniture when they began housekeeping.<sup>4</sup>

A call into military service terminated Anouilh's stint with Jouvet. The army did not suit the playwright, however, and he served only the required time. "If I hadn't left they'd have thrown me out, because I made one mess after another," the playwright recalled years later when speaking of the experience.<sup>5</sup> The enforced removal from civilian life neither halted

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>Fowlie, p. 114.

<sup>3</sup>As quoted in Pronko, loc. cit.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

<sup>5</sup>Isolde Farrell, "Anouilh Returns," New York Times, Sunday, January 3, 1954, "Drama," p. X3.

the young man's interest in the theatre nor his efforts in connection with it. L'Hermine (The Ermine), which he had completed in 1931, was produced by Paulette Pax at the Theatre de l'Oeuvre in 1932. And although the run of this serious play lasted only thirty-seven performances, the critics greeted the effort favorably. It was at this point Anouilh decided to make his living "only by writing for the theatre and a little for films...It was folly but I did right to make that decision," he states.

Three years were to pass before another of Anouilh's works was staged. But he wrote continually. Jezabel and Le bal des voleurs (Thieves Carnival) were finished in 1932; La sauvage (Restless Heart) and Y avait un prisonnier (Once was a Prisoner) were both completed in 1934. They were not produced in the order they were written. It was the last work which finally caught a producer's eye and, in March 1935, it opened for a successful run at the Theatre des Ambassadeurs. Two and one-half months later the film rights of the play were sold for a sizeable sum. These funds put a firm financial footing under the young playwright; his period of poverty was over. From this time onward he wrote solely, as he vowed he would, for the theatre and for films.<sup>1</sup>

Biographical details pertaining to the interim between 1935 and today are even more sketchy than those just given. Anouilh and Monelle Valentin had one daughter, Catherine, who is now grown and has made her debut as an actress.<sup>2</sup> The playwright has evidently divorced his first wife and subsequently re-married. Time reported in 1963 that he had married "two of his young heroines." Evidently the second wife is an actress as was Monelle.

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<sup>1</sup>Pronko, loc. cit.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

The same Time article termed the playwright "rich, famous and a recluse." His fame was attributed to his heavy output of plays which were well-known on the continent and are seen more and more frequently in London and New York. Cited as evidence of his wealth and desire for seclusion were the facts that Anouilh has four homes in Paris and its environs; when he is writing he flees to a small chalet in the Swiss Alps; photographers are discouraged from taking his picture.<sup>1</sup>

#### Appearance and Personality

It appears that Anouilh has never been fond of photographers; only two pictures of him were seen during the preparation of this study. The more animated of the two is obviously a candid shot taken backstage in a theatre, for scenery appears in the background; he is sitting on the end of an ornate old couch, relaxed and laughing heartily. The playwright seems to be of medium build and his expression is highly animated. His face, however, is not distinctive. He strongly resembles, in fact, the prototype of a small-town storekeeper. His face is long and slender; he sports an unassertive little mustache and wears silver rimmed glasses.

Anouilh shows great interest in the treatment of his plays and attends rehearsals regularly. Skilled performers who have heard him read his plays, say he is a fine actor. He is reported by them variously as "charmingly shy," "bitterly sarcastic," "skillful" and "agreeable." In fairness it should be noted, however, that the second evaluation came from players in Colombe, four of whom were fired during rehearsal, while the more flattering comments were made by members of the cast of Becket which the author co-directed with Ronald Pietri.

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<sup>1</sup>"Cynicism Uncongealed," Time, loc. cit.

The playwright avoids the public. While he regularly drops by the theatre to see performances of his plays he always sits in the prompter's box where he can both view the production and hear audience response without being seen. He grants few interviews, neither has he given would-be biographers any encouragement. An oft-quoted letter by Anouilh written in reply to someone who requested information begins with the sentence, "I have no biography and I am very glad of it." Only a skeletal number of facts follow and the tone of the last sentence, "The rest is my life, and for as long as it pleases heaven for it to be my private business I shall keep the details to myself," is unmistakably final. It discourages further inquiry.<sup>1</sup>

A pattern begins to emerge from these scarce biographical details and few personality notes. Anouilh seems to have great faith in himself. He exhibited such faith when he decided to write only for the theatre before he had conclusively achieved recognition as a playwright. Unquestionably, the theatre is his great love. His life has centered about it and he married two actresses. While he is closed to the majority of society he remains open to his chosen profession and those actively involved in it.

Although the playwright is one of the few in the world who earns his living solely from writing plays and he has been highly respected in France for many years, he does not capitalize on his output by thrusting himself forward. He appears to be a genuine recluse who sincerely wishes to remain apart from the social whirl and from publicity hawks who would pander to him, no doubt, if he so desired. He does not seek adulation; nor does he, apparently, wish a clear public image of himself developed. He remains in

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<sup>1</sup>Pronko, loc. cit.

the shadows forcing his plays to speak for him. But does he not, possibly, do this also when he says, "I have no biography?" Might this statement not indicate that Anouilh considers his life history to be "in the making" as he writes his plays? Therefore, it cannot properly be said to already exist. Pronko notes that the playwright is so thoroughly committed and "engaged" as he creates, that scarcity of biographical details is little handicap, in the final analysis, in understanding the man the plays reflect.<sup>1</sup>

### Anouilh in the Play

The influence of Anouilh's environment and some of his personality traits are reflected in The Waltz of the Toreadors. The year in which the play is set, 1910, is the year in which the playwright was born. The General has a provincial background as does his creator. The Waltz also mirrors Anouilh's keen memory of the operettas he saw so early in life. The playwright seems to have thought of music, dialogue, characters and action simultaneously as he wrote. Fowlie goes so far as to say that the very construction of the play and its dialogue is "musical," noting that many of Emily's speeches in Act II, Scene 2, especially, are like arias.<sup>2</sup> The romantic elements in The Waltz are also strongly reminiscent of those in operettas.

The skills Anouilh developed while writing copy in the advertising agency are evident in The Waltz, too. His ability to be ingenious is demonstrated in the clever way he twists and turns relationships between characters and his approach is very inventive. Exactness is shown in the lack of super-

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<sup>1</sup>Pronko, loc. cit.

<sup>2</sup>Fowlie, p. 117.



fluous dialogue. Each sentence is hard hitting, either advancing the plot or revealing characters graphically. Anouilh knows exactly what he wishes his characters to show and to do and what points he wishes to make. They are made, and then he goes on. An advertising copywriter must work rapidly as well as concisely. The Waltz has an air of being improvised, quickly and cleanly. Another attribute of good copy is its ability to catch and hold attention. The play has the capacity to catch and hold the attention of the audience. As for the vividness of effects in The Waltz, they are very similar to those found in a well laid-out, cleverly written advertisement.

The time Anouilh spent in the military was not wasted; he consciously or unconsciously grasped the military career-officer's mind. The General's whole outlook--his inability to act unless he is given orders; his helplessness to choose and take responsibility for his choices; his brusque and awkward treatment of his wife and children, as though they were men in the ranks; his resorts to attempts at violence rather than to reason--shows the playwright's keen powers of observation. Yet, the character is not drawn without compassion. The General's personality has been tempered with his creator's sensitivity and understanding. Anouilh has entered into the character with feeling and perception.

Aspects of the playwright's personality are also reflected in characters other than the General. The Doctor's secure manner may be the security Anouilh feels as a craftsman, and the agreeableness of the physician that exhibited by the playwright while co-directing Becket. The playwright's ability to take a risk and his faith in himself are aspects of Gaston, who flings caution to the winds and goes after Ghislaine, believing he can win her.

The central character in The Waltz and Anouilh may have borne a similar cross. "A performance at his own expense for twenty years tends to wear out the spectator," the General sighs as he speaks of his ex-opera singer wife's emotionalism. It is noteworthy that when The Waltz was written, in 1951, Anouilh had been married to actress Monelle Valentin for exactly twenty years. It is quite possible that the playwright is voicing in the play his own rising dissatisfaction with the "performances" of his own wife, for Anouilh eventually divorced Monelle. If he shares the General's horror of hurting anyone (which he well may for his marriage lasted some thirty years before he was divorced) validity is added to the parallel between the attitudes of the playwright and the character.

The experience Anouilh had in writing comic gags for films was valuable to him. Evidence can be seen in his ability to write the witty dialogue and bald humor that makes The Waltz especially alive. As for the playwright's conflicting moods, commented upon by the actors who have been in his plays, they are incorporated into The Waltz in its chameleon moods.

## BACKGROUND MATERIAL PERTINENT TO AN UNDERSTANDING OF THE PLAY

### The Original French Version and the English Translation

Several doubts about the degree of faithfulness of the English translation to the original French version arose while research was underway. In his introduction Pronko charges: "Translators (or rather adapters) of Anouilh's plays have seldom done them justice and have frequently wrought fundamental changes in the works."<sup>1</sup> Although Pronko credits the translator of The Waltz of the Toreadors, Lucienne Hill, with doing a satisfactory job on Ardele, Marsh says: "Critics in London criticized Ardele when, in fact, much of Anouilh's theatricality had been ironed out of it. Life had been removed."<sup>2</sup> While neither authority makes a comment on Hill's English translation of The Waltz, the question can be asked if English and American audiences saw a distortion of Anouilh's original.

A search failed to turn up any information about the translator. Her address, however, was obtained from Samuel French and a letter dispatched to her in England seeking biographical details as well as comments on any cuts made in the English translation. Meanwhile, the original French version was secured and compared with the English version.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Pronko, p. xx of the Introduction.

<sup>2</sup>Edward Owen Marsh, Jean Anouilh: Poet of Pierrot and Pantaloon (London, 1953), p. 17.

<sup>3</sup>All page references to the French original are taken from Anouilh's La Valse des Toreadors (Paris, 1952).

The first obvious difference noted between the two was in the designation of acts. The French version has five. The translation has a total of five divisions also, but they are separated into Act I, Scenes 1 and 2; Act II, Scenes 1 and 2; and Act III. In each case, the dramatic divisions reflected French and American preferences. French drama has traditionally had five acts; American drama, on the other hand, has had three. This was not regarded as a fundamental change.

Cast lists were checked and showed agreement on the number of characters. The overall size of the scripts, however, were slightly different. The original version of the play appeared longer, indicating that there were, in all probability, omissions of French lines.

A line-by-line comparison<sup>1</sup> revealed that cuts had indeed been made. The first lengthy one appeared in the French script (pp. 67-69) at the end of Act II (Act I, Scene 2, English translation). A two page speech of the maid, Eugenie, had been left out of the English version. In the French version the servant reads Ghislaine's entire suicide note aloud, then makes a single comment of her own. In the note the girl who has waited for the General seventeen years contrasts her secluded and lonely life with the General's exciting existence. "It is very sad; but just the same, it is very well written," the scene concludes, as the maid reacts to the epistle. This letter and its contents further delineates Mademoiselle De Saint-Euverte's character. It is also noteworthy that Ghislaine voices much the same attitude of longing for an active life as does the wife in Act II, Scene 2 when Emily reminds the General he is running about on his "great fat legs" while she is immobilized in a wheel chair. A facet of the maid's

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<sup>1</sup>With the aid of Betty McGraw of the Department of Modern languages.

outlook is omitted, too, from the English translation when her tart commentary with its sharp twist of mood is cut.

A second sizeable cut of two-and-a-half pages had been made near the beginning of Act III (Act II, Scene 1, English translation), during the discussion between the doctor and the General. In the French version (pp. 71-74) there is an exchange contrasting the attitudes of men and women toward life and love:<sup>1</sup>

General: Dear Lord, how simple it could all be! Why do we complicate life so?

Doctor: Because we have a soul, General. Take an old free-thinker's word for it. It's that which makes life hell for us. The maid's petticoat's are pleasant at times, but afterwards--without love, without any real desire--what emptiness. Then the soul fluctuates in this emptiness--your mouth is full of it--it comes out through your nose. It's nauseating.

General: I know that. But it is not disgusting. After, one becomes an idealist, that's all. A vague disgust, the heart on the sleeve, the most noble thoughts. You would be incapable of doing anything ugly. When you think you've become incapable of--Ugh. It is a sensual delight to feel your soul, Doctor. Materialists do not understand pleasure. Don't think I'm a pig. The afternoon goes by, very delicately--you read a book, you take a little walk and smell the flowers. You feel light and artistically inclined. You have an excellent dinner, and then toward evening, without thinking any more about it, between two doors! One ignominious moment is not bad for one. One shouldn't think anything of it, with all the scruples one has. It's better then you immediately resume your idealism and go to bed full of good resolutions, of course. And who wins after all? Virtue wins. It's a pity that women never understood this ingenious principle of equilibrium. Women dramatize everything.

Doctor: They do not have the same conception of selfishness, that is all. We have decided that frivolity would be

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<sup>1</sup>The lines of the original French version omitted from the English translation have been underlined. This practice will apply uniformly to the passages quoted throughout.

our only nourishment and we are the center of it. But they, they project themselves on the world which takes their shape and becomes them--and, most particularly, on the man who is to become their means of expression. The unfortunate man keeps his great mustache, his glands, his social rank, his career. So he doesn't even notice it. But it is in the bag. All that happens in no more than a wink of an eye. In fact, he has become a dough to be kneaded by a woman...for love, for money, for control, for vengeance, for all. And he is happy besides, the imbecile! At least, at the very beginning he is loved.

General: God keep us from being loved, Doctor. And if at least they did their duty with a smile...but not at all. They suffer enormously and want to consume us. Always crying, complaining, feeling ill. Do you actually believe there are so many reasons for suffering in this world?

Doctor: No.

General: Nor do I. And when they cease feeling ill then we're really in for it.

Doctor: I'm going to tell you a secret, General. We have all stayed little boys. Only the little girls grow up.

While the omission of these lines from the English script does not tamper with the personalities of either of the characters speaking, it does cut comments which delineate some of the universal points Anouilh is trying to make. In the translation which omits the sequence, implicit action has to carry almost the entire burden of transmitting these thoughts which in the French version are made more explicit in dialogue.

Later in this same Act, one-half page of dialogue was cut in the English translation. In a speech in which the General dictates to Gaston (p. 78), the precise date the Dubreuil Expedition left Rabat (May 25, 1898) is given, and the line "grave responsibilities rested on my shoulders" is taken away from the military leader. The omission of these points does not harm the English script or distort it, but the date of the Expedition aids in placing the event precisely in the historical period, and the General

voices a feeling of awe at his responsibility, a dimension of his attitude not noted in the English version.

During Act IV, in the French script (pp. 135-137), an exchange takes place between the General and his wife delineating the male versus the female attitude toward marriage. This has been left out in Act II, Scene 2 of the English translation of the scene. In the latter the wife accuses the General of not being a man in her bed. In the French version, she then enlarges on this thought:

Wife: Soon weary, my friend, soon asleep, and when for a wonder you had a little energy, soon replete. You claim everywhere that you are deceived, you men, that the women are unfaithful; therefore, always be good for something and you will always be loved.

General: Always be beautiful and desirable and we shall see. Learn to serve us something other than left-overs during the thousand and one days of married life and then we shall prove to you, perhaps, that we have kept our appetite. The question has not been asked but if you want the truth I haven't desired you for seventeen years, and if I have been unfaithful at times it was, damn it, just to prove to myself that I was still a man.

Wife: We too, we too want to prove we're still women.

General: That has nothing to do with it, Madame. You have the integrity of the family to defend, the honor of your name and that of the children. And besides desire doesn't stir you as it does we men. You poor blind ones!

Wife: What do you know about it?

General: We have seen you at play. Even in your good days... And now your first curiosity is gone--oh, don't make me say all these silly things, but an anatomy is soon explored and politeness followed. Politeness is monotonous, Madame. It took a lot of imagination to keep going.

This is generalized information; it has, however, universal appeal. For a second time, some universality was sacrificed in the English translation. Implicit action had to carry the full burden to get these ideas across, while

the French version has both implicit action and explicit remarks to clarify and support each other.

In addition to the longer sections noted, there were short exchanges of a few sentences, lines and phrases in the French script that did not appear in the English translation. One sequence (pp. 10-11) is highly revealing. Early in Act I, Scene 1 when the wife's door is open, the General writing his letter, and she talking to him, her accusations draw a different picture of her husband's behavior than does the English version.

Wife: I fell ill with thinking of all the things you are busy doing in your head while you pretended to comfort me. Admit it, hypocrite! Where were you just now in your head? With what woman? On what couch, in what bedroom which I shall never see--never, do you hear? You will never be honest enough to describe it to me. In what kitchen, tumbling Heaven knows what drab that scrubs there on all fours. And you creep up on her like a great tomat. You're seizing her from the rear; you're biting her neck; her hair is in your mouth and that doesn't disgust you--you who always make a scene when you find a hair in your soup! She hasn't even dropped her mop that pig! With the odor of chlorine water--on the floor like beasts. Leon, you make me sick!

A bit later (p. 12) the wife also observes further:

Wife: A girl who doesn't even wash! Doesn't that matter to you, that she stinks?

General: Madame that would be unimportant. You know nothing about women. But--I'm writing to M. Poincare. Will you let me finish my letter in peace?

In the foregoing passage, it is obvious that an aspect of the General's character revealed to the French audience is not divulged to either Americans or Englishmen. Why?

The British critic Hobson, speaking in general about Gallic drama, notes: "There is a violent contrast between the coarseness and daring of the things the French actors say and the restraint and Puritanism of the things they do." He explains that in the French Theatre "vivid verbal



license" is taken for granted and that audiences are not shocked. He further states that many French characters are transformed on the English stage because "the English public would misunderstand the frank and physical language of the French original."<sup>1</sup>

In the case of the above passage there is the definite possibility that such misunderstanding would occur, and its inclusion in the translation would damage the play. The picture the wife draws and the General's response, which indicts him of that which she accuses him, represent attitudes which Americans cannot examine, in mixed company at least, with any feeling of comfort. In a production on the K-State campus the character of the General as drawn in this scene would so repel spectators early in the drama that the General would not be able to command any sympathy for the remainder of the play.

The main point gleaned from the comparison of the two scripts was that, while some cuts made from the original were wise and others did not seriously affect either character delineations or the main stream of dramatic action implicit in the play, other passages having universal import and appeal were sacrificed. Because it was realized that the deletion of the latter would make transmission of the playwright's precise attitudes toward males, females, and the marriage relationship difficult, some consideration was given to adding the exchange between the Doctor and the General (pp. 71-74) and the sequence between the General and his wife in Act II, Scene 2 (pp. 135-137). This was rejected for two primary reasons: the entire play would have been unnecessarily lengthened by their insertion; student actors

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<sup>1</sup>Harold Hobson, The French Theatre of Today: An English View (London, 1953) p. 21-22, 26.

might have a difficult time holding the audience in already rather "talky" sections of the play. French spectators, Hobson points out, consider closely the speaking of lines, concentrate heartily on what they hear, and revel in long philosophical passages about love and life. American audiences, in contrast, have a tendency to focus primarily on what they see, having a tendency to become restless in scenes which discuss any point at length.<sup>1</sup>

A letter from Lucienne Hill dated February 23, 1966, arrived several months after the production had been presented. In the inquiry addressed to her a deduction had been made that she must have been an actress or, certainly, had prior experience in the theatre other than as a translator. The reply from Miss Hill proved the deduction to be true:

Yes, I have indeed had prior experience of the theatre. I was an actress for the first ten years of my career--at Barry Jackson's Repertory Theatre in Birmingham, among other places. I began translating when I was understudying Siobhan McKenna in an Anouilh play called Romeo and Jeannette which Laurence Olivier put on. He asked me to do a reading version of Ardele and that's how I started translating. I've done fourteen of Anouilh's plays.

Biographical comments followed:

I attended Somerville College, Oxford, reading French and German. I am bilingual in French having a French mother, and having been reared in a French atmosphere. No English spoken until I was six.

Miss Hill had also been asked if she felt Anouilh was ever clever for the sake of being clever. She replied:

No, I don't think Anouilh is ever tricky for the sake of it. To me the dramatic effect is always married to the content of his work and it leaves me openmouthed with admiration, always. What I have sometimes noticed is the sense of deja vu in the dialogue--not the dramatic element, which, as I say, always surprises me. But as someone once said of Edith Sitwell--the inventiveness is so great that inevitably there must be some repetition.

Miss Hill then declared her affection for The Waltz and commented on the translation she had done:

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 29.

Oddly enough it went very easily into English. I didn't myself delete anything at all, as far as I remember. The Lord Chamberlain demanded two little snippets out, and Peter Hale and I together cut the play a bit for length. It was hard because it was all such good stuff, but it did need a bit out, as all French plays do, simply because they play longer in English, since we speak more slowly than the French. Also we go in for "production" more, if you see what I mean: "Pauses and gestures" as we used to say.

As had been suspected, the cuts were essentially a matter of length; producer Peter Hale and Miss Hill evidently did not feel it was wise to risk the audience becoming restless with the play demanding much more than two hours of its attention. Thus the letter cleared up any remaining questions as to why the cuts had been made.

#### Possible Cultural Barriers

Anouilh realizes that some situations he employs, timeworn traditions in the French theatre, "remain as enigma to the American audience and therefore cannot reach or touch them."<sup>1</sup> In order to appreciate The Waltz of the Toreadors as the playwright envisioned it, then, an understanding of several conventions, thoroughly familiar to Gallic audiences but relatively unfamiliar to American spectators is needed. These conventions, rooted in French culture and theatrical history, form certain barriers which are difficult for the American viewer to scale causing certain incomprehension in regard to the play.

Pronko notes, for example, Anouilh's frequent use of the "typically French" cuckold theme<sup>2</sup> in which the "weaker" sex triumphs over the "stronger." Quite simply, a clever wife is revealed as being unfaithful to her more slow-

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<sup>1</sup>Pronko, p. xix of the Introduction.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

witted husband who remains blissfully unaware, at least for a time, of her infidelity. A gallic audience has seen this theme used by so many French playwrights that it has become a convention which theatregoers look forward to with delight. The Frenchman enjoys spotting the devious wife and watching the "blind," pompous, self-assured male being hoodwinked. And finally, if and when the husband discovers the wife's infidelity, the French viewer finds his chagrin thoroughly comic. This theme, of course, figures prominently in the situation between Leon and Emily.

A second theme employed in The Waltz, so familiar to Gallic audiences that it, too, is regarded as a convention, is the comic shrew concept. The shrew is a nagging, highly emotional wife who browbeats and rails at her meek and easily cowed husband. As in the case of the cuckold theme, the shrew and her "victim" are both regarded as comic.

Two other peculiarly French views reflected in The Waltz are the attitudes taken by Gallic society toward marriage and infidelity. In France marriage is primarily a social convention and achieves most of its value on this basis. Once either a man or woman is married he or she is automatically accepted as respectable. Love is not an important consideration in the selection of a mate, either. The man regarded as the best "catch" is one who has a fine career and can offer the woman financial security; if a male with these attributes is not available the woman strives for a man bearing a fine old family name. Further, the prevalent idea held in Catholic France is "once married, always married." Matrimony is seen as a valuable social asset and when this attitude is coupled with a religious law banning divorce, it is easy to see why a majority of people regard marriage as indissoluble. The outgrowth of the above held attitudes, however, is infidelity. To seek love outside the marriage relationship is so common that it is accepted by

the French as a "fact of life," and not necessarily as a matter of morals. A man is quite likely to have a mistress. It is not so usual, however, for a woman to take a lover, or at least the French male doesn't like to think it is. He ultimately feels a husband with a real sexual prowess ought to be able to hold his wife and "play around." This is why to be cuckolded, to be hoodwinked by one's wife who finds love away from home, makes a husband a laughing stock. "Look," others jeer derisively, "he can't even hold his own wife."

Three main ideas seem obvious as the foregoing French conventions are reviewed: that they primarily involve the characters Emily and Leon and their relationship as revealed especially in Act II, Scene 2 of The Waltz; that French viewers will likely read many subtle comic nuances into the play to which American spectators may remain quite oblivious; that our own cultural attitudes, in fact, may tend to cause us to frown even as the French spectator smiles. The question arises: might Act II, Scene 2, in which the conventions operate more powerfully, prove a complete enigma to an American audience? Perhaps a contrasting of the responses of French and American spectators to certain points in the play involving the conventions being discussed might lead to an answer to the question.

From the outset, in Act I, Scene 1, it is likely that the French viewer will quickly cast Emily into his mold of comic shrew and Leon as her hapless "victim." That spectator will, in consequence, see the opening exchange between man and wife as predominantly comic. The American, on the other hand, will laugh at first but as Emily's accusations of the General mount higher he is likely to think of her as neurotic, possibly threatening even. He will tend, therefore, to be quite sympathetic with Leon. In the same scene the letters the wife writes to Doctor Bonfant are, to the French

spectator, a highly suspicious piece of evidence in the possible unfolding of the cuckold situation. The American, less keenly suspicious of a woman being involved in intrigue, tends to dismiss the incident, once it is divulged that the letters have not been received. The Frenchman, in contrast, sees great significance in the capacity of the wife for unfaithfulness, whether or not the letters reached their destination, and he continues to anticipate further exploration of her love life outside the marriage relationship later in the play.

In Act II, Scene 2 the wife shows a fine ability to throw dust in the General's eyes and to manipulate the conversation away from her own actions. Thus, early in the scene, the Frenchman's original suspicions of Emily are intensified. As she begins to whine and accuse Leon of preferring other women the Gallic spectator enjoys her shrewishness, also. Americans, on the other hand, tend to see the wife as increasingly devious and see aspects in her, too, which are likely to reinforce his first impression, that she is neurotic. Her manipulation of the General will probably make the American shrink away from and censure her. The early part of Act II, Scene 2, then, is likely to be less funny to the American than to the Frenchman even though it has many witty lines.

Another sequence in the same scene which may call forth a different response in people of the two nationalities, is the one where the wife attacks the General's ability as a lover. The Frenchman sees this as a fulfillment of his expectations that the comic shrew will use every weapon at hand; to him the sequence is predominantly funny. The American, in contrast, is likely to take the wife's attack on the General's manhood quite seriously and sympathize with him. Subsequently, when the wife rises up in bed and glories in the indissolubility of the marriage--even into the grave where she

and Leon will lie side by side--American and Frenchmen will, in all probability, accept this picture differently, also. The Frenchman hearing her tirade within the shrew context and agreeing with her views on the indissolubility of marriage will probably revel in her volubility and descriptive powers. Most couples in predominately Protestant America regard marriage as dissoluble; divorce is common and extra-marital relations are socially unacceptable. There is, therefore, a block to the American's gaining insight into the Wife's and General's viewpoint toward marriage, and it is hard for us to understand why Emily should wish to remain married when she knows her husband has been unfaithful for years. Marriage to the grave under these circumstances is shocking to us, especially when the wife, knowing her husband hates her and is bored by her, says, "What difference does that make?"; then, a moment later she is reiterating her intention to remain his wife.

A bit later in Act II, Scene 2, the attitudes of both French and American spectators somewhat converge. But a discussion of how Anouilh uses conventions, French and otherwise, to help achieve his unique effects appears in the section of this essay on his style.<sup>1</sup> Ample illustration has already been given to make the point that Gallic audiences will see the General and Emily somewhat differently than will American audiences and that viewpoints of people of each nationality are conditioned by the respective cultures. Only the question of whether or not Act II, Scene 2, especially, will prove a complete enigma to an American audience because of cultural barriers remains to be answered.

While Pronko is probably right in his analysis of the cuckold theme as typically French, as are the comic shrew concept and the Gallic attitudes

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<sup>1</sup>Starting on page 65.

toward marriage and infidelity, it does not follow necessarily that the scene which most involves these concepts would remain an enigma to an American audience and could not reach or touch the members of that audience. It is fully realized that the American response would be less complex than the French and that the scene would be likely to be taken more seriously throughout by the former than the latter. There is no doubt, however, that the impact of the scene would be felt and a responsive chord struck in the American spectator.

How, then, should Act II, Scene 2 be played before an American audience? It must be played in the "French sense" if the play is to come alive as Anouilh intended. When the play is viewed in its entirety the conventions just discussed prove to be relatively minor considerations. The major themes of The Waltz of the Toreadors are universal and not likely to be misunderstood, nor are their full connotations likely to be missed by American spectators. It was hoped, therefore, in the production under discussion here, that by emphasizing the universal themes the minor themes just discussed would fall into their proper frame.

Anouilh hits upon another possible cultural barrier in The Waltz when he notes his plays have not been fully comprehended in the States because "They have been weighed in the balance of realism, and found wanting, whereas they are not realistic but a poetic and imaginative interpretation of reality."<sup>1</sup> With this statement the playwright places himself squarely in the ranks of a theatrical movement which has exerted considerable influence on the French theatre since 1890, that of the anti-realists. Instead of feeling that the theatre should imitate the real (as does a realistic

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<sup>1</sup>Pronko, Ibid.



playwright), the anti-realist strives for a "poetic interpretation of that same reality, as the creation of an independent universe." A playwright working in this tradition situates the truth as "above, below or beside the daily perceptible phenomena" and "interprets, reveals or invents." Pure estheticism is not the goal. Rather, the anti-realists and the directors who bring their plays to life "try to synthesize a concrete equivalence of their creation and the world in which we live and the constant reminder of the theatre's unreality."<sup>1</sup> Giraudoux, the French playwright having the most powerful influence on the French theatre between 1928 and 1944, is of this mind and many other playwrights, Anouilh among them, join in the pursuit of anti-realistic ends. Today, the movement dominates French drama and Gallic spectators enthusiastically receive plays written in the anti-realistic tradition. In fact, French critics actively attack American plays cast in a realistic mold and they are not popular with Gallic spectators, either.

In view of the considerable difference between the predominant theatrical tradition in France and here in America, it is indeed likely that Americans may be somewhat bewildered by a "poetic and imaginative interpretation of reality." While there are some anti-realistic plays in our theatre, such as those of the expressionists, the trend has not been powerful enough to make an impact on the majority of our theatregoers. Neither have the aims of our anti-realists been precisely those of the French playwrights. We have a predisposition to take characters and situations quite literally. The Waltz, therefore, will not be an extremely popular play.

Will American spectators be able to appreciate the play as the playwright intended? Anouilh's vision is powerful; he uses consummate skill in

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<sup>1</sup>Jacques Guicharnaud in collaboration with June Beckelman, Modern French Theatre (New Haven, 1961), pp. 6-7, 15.

the weaving of his dramatic spells; his themes are universal. Though the average spectator will tend to focus on the surface anecdote rather than the deeper drama underlying it, the "tone" of the latter will make an impact. And the spectator with a child's eye, with mind and heart open to the possibility of new wonders, will suspend disbelief. This is the playgoer who will most nearly "live with" General Saint-Pe and experience the playwright's interpretation of reality.

### The Historical Era

The Waltz of the Toreadors is a period play set against a French background. Mention is made of historical figures, events and national institutions. As the General dictates his memoirs the Treaty of Frankfurt, African campaigns, Morocco and its Sultan being wooed by Germany, Saumur, the French cavalry and its dragoons figure prominently in his vivid account of his past. The French script even includes a precise date, May 25, 1898, as the day the Dubreuil Expedition, in which General Saint-Pe figured prominently, left Rabat. It seemed to be, therefore, a familiar historical date to a French audience.

Questions, naturally, followed these observations. Were Anouilh's allusions cast in a true turn-of-the-century perspective? What significance might there be in the playwright's use of this particular era? An investigation of the historical period was clearly mandatory.

Drama authorities were first consulted. Few have either paid much attention to the period in which The Waltz is set or conjectured, except in passing, on its possible significance. Marsh simply says, "The era gives the play the charm of a past epoch, with the added piquancy of being recent enough to be remembered and yet as unrecoverable as the innocence of child-

hood."<sup>1</sup> Styran notes Anouilh's "frequent choice of the twilight 1910's for his style and setting," and suggests Anouilh's reason for its selection "may lie in his wish to play with his characters with their passions and their actions."<sup>2</sup> Grossvogel advances the notion that the presence of the characters out-of-time emphasizes their non-reality; they "reside in a vague half-way house between the solid bourgeois confidence of the pre-Drayfus decade and the uneasily self-righteous idiocy that followed."<sup>3</sup>

While it is likely that Anouilh may have indeed used a past era so he could play with his characters and emphasize their non-reality, it was still puzzling why this particular time has been chosen. There was, it seemed, a good possibility that there might be additional reasons for its selection. Meanwhile, two more items--bourgeois confidence and the name Dreyfus--were added to the details to be checked.

It was deemed advisable to begin historical exploration in 1870 and continue it through 1910. In the former year a French empire ended as the nation was defeated at the hands of Germany in the Franco-Prussian war. This conflict was climaxed by the Treaty of Frankfurt, the earliest historical date mentioned by the General in the play. In 1870, the war began over what seems a rather minor event. The Prussian king wished to put Prince Leopold on the throne of Spain. France protested, however, and the request was withdrawn. Napoleon III, then heading the French government, felt so strongly about any possibility of a German being on the Spanish throne that he insisted

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<sup>1</sup>Marsh, p. 181.

<sup>2</sup>J. L. Styran, The Dark Comedy (Cambridge, England, 1962), p. 196.

<sup>3</sup>David I. Grossvogel, The Self-Conscious Stage in Modern French Drama (New York, 1958), p. 192.

on a guarantee that the candidacy would not be renewed. The King of Prussia who had already given his word, was insulted. Bismark, desirous of unifying Germany, saw in the incident a chance to attain his ends; he did not, therefore, intervene in an attempt to "clear the air." France subsequently declared war; French troops, ill-prepared to wage any conflict, marched into the field, meeting highly-trained German soldiers. The fighting lasted only from July 19th to September 2nd. On the latter date the French army was surrounded and had to capitulate. Napoleon III was toppled from power, and the Second Empire in France was over.<sup>1</sup>

The Treaty of Frankfurt was signed on March 1, 1871. Under its terms the new Third Republic French government was obliged to pay a huge indemnity to Germany, meet the cost of German occupation forces until the indemnity was paid, and give up Alsace and Lorraine; it was also agreed that German troops would make a formal, triumphant march through Paris. The effects of the Treaty were far-reaching. The nation lost the mineral resources and population of Alsace and Lorraine and suffered 500,000 military casualties as well. The financial position of the country was rendered precarious. The French military system was thoroughly dislocated and discredited after the ignominious defeat. In short, French national esteem was at a low ebb.<sup>2</sup>

The Third Republic had a great deal to do. Its leaders determined to rebuild France, re-establish respect for the army, and somehow recapture the nation's position of power in Europe. Colonization was seen as a means of accomplishing these objectives.<sup>3</sup> Commercial power might be gained and,

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<sup>1</sup>Encyclopedia Britannica, Vol. 9 (Chicago, 1964), p. 800.

<sup>2</sup>France: The Nations of Today, Ed. by John Buchan and Edward Gleichen, (Boston, 1923), pp. 105-107, hereafter referred to as France.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

at the same time, the project might prove worthwhile for the army and its personnel.<sup>1</sup> Coubertin observes, "Unless the trade of war is exercised it becomes relaxed. French armies would have relaxed had it not been for the colonial expeditions."<sup>2</sup> And, to young soldiers, expeditions in the colonies offered an opportunity to rise "from the ranks and enter world history."<sup>3</sup>

At first the advantages of colonization were not obvious to either French civilians or military men. The government, therefore, countered the apathy with rationalizations. The French civilization, it was pointed out, was the "highest and most universal expression of humanity."<sup>4</sup> It was only fair to share this superior Christian culture with less enlightened areas where the evil slave trade flourished and the Moslem religion held sway. Why, if France failed to colonize, the nation was "neglecting an imperative call of Divine Providence."<sup>5</sup> Little wonder, with these powerful arguments being used, that a patriotic wave soon inundated the country. God and France became synonymous; the military carried the holy banner, and both the nation and her standard-bearer were idolized. Adventurous young men soon joined the Army in great numbers and went abroad proudly.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Norman Dwight Harris, Intervention and Colonization in Africa, (Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1914), p. 2.

<sup>2</sup>Baron Pierre de Coubertin, The Evolution of France Under the Third Republic, Trans. Isabel F. Hapgood (New York, 1897), p. 363.

<sup>3</sup>Dennis William Brogan, France Under the Third Republic (New York, 1940) p. 217.

<sup>4</sup>Edward R. Tannenbaum, The New France (Chicago, 1961), p. 206.

<sup>5</sup>Harris, pp. 9-15.

<sup>6</sup>Raymond Recouly, The Third Republic, The National History of France Series, Trans. by E. F. Buckley (London, 1928), p. 134.

The French, in the 40 years before 1870, had explored a good deal of Africa, and Algeria was already a French possession. Much of the colonization effort after 1881, when the real push got underway, was directed, therefore, toward the Dark Continent. French military expeditions marched into Tunisia in 1881; Senegal was the scene of campaigns for 20 years, between 1878 and 1898, as Moslem chiefs of military tribes offered stiff resistance. During the same period the Congo Basin was overrun. Madagascar was taken over by the French under a treaty in 1885. Samory was the scene of conflict between 1880 and 1886; Timbuctu and Dahomey were the focus of attention, especially between 1893 and 1894. There were major efforts; there were many minor ones. By 1900, France controlled the largest Empire in Africa--stretching east from the Atlantic to West Sudan and south to the Congo; in addition to this vast territory Madagascar had been annexed.<sup>1</sup> When the General in The Waltz speaks of African Campaigns, he is speaking in true historic context.

The Moroccan effort is also factual. The first sign of France having an interest in Morocco is a treaty made in 1891 by France and her ally Russia. They decided to share the country in a joint exploration and civilizing mission. At the time Morocco was plagued by internal wars started by pretenders to the throne, bankruptcy, tribal revolt and rival concession hunters. The country was "ripe" for taking over.<sup>2</sup> None of the histories talked of very many specific Moroccan campaigns; those that were touched upon were led by especially outstanding figures in French history. The great activity mentioned would indicate, however, that there were many expeditions launched

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<sup>1</sup>Thomas Walter Wallbank and Alastair MacDonald Taylor, Civilization--Past and Present, Vol. II (New York, 1942), pp. 262-263.

<sup>2</sup>Brogan, pp. 392-394.

between 1897 and 1906 against Moroccan groups who hated the presence of infidel outsiders.<sup>1</sup> The General's condescending attitudes toward the natives and his frequent mention of France and its missionaries are authentic.

In 1905, Harris reports, Germany stepped in to play the other European powers against each other in Morocco. The Kaiser landed in Tangier and insisted both on the valid interest of Germany in Morocco and on the full independence of the Sultan. The Algeciras Conference of 1906 prevented Germany from achieving its ends. Spain, Britain, Russia and France banded together with the result that Morocco was formally awarded to France; but the old enemy of France had given the French government a scare.<sup>2</sup> This is the plot between the Sultan and the Germans to which the General alludes in his dictation of his memoirs.

The part played by Saumur Military Academy graduates and the dragoons in the African campaigns also need explaining. The latter was cavalry soldiers specializing in guerilla warfare; they rode to the field and dismounted to fight.<sup>3</sup> As for Saumur, its cavalry school was founded in 1768. The 8th Dragoons trained their officers, and enlisted men as well, there. Brogan, however, singles the school out as one that, above all, made fine horsemen, but not necessarily efficient cavalry officers. "The cavalry officers duty," he explains, "was to lead his troupers in elaborate but highly unrealistic drill formations in peace and in heroic and useless charges in battle."<sup>4</sup> Few officers read or thought for themselves. "All their family and social connections keep them

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<sup>1</sup>France, pp. 152-154.

<sup>2</sup>Harris, pp. 252-260.

<sup>3</sup>A New English Dictionary on Historical Principles, Ed. Dr. James A. H. Murray, Vol. III (Oxford, 1897), p. 215.

<sup>4</sup>Brogan, p. 18.

from it," Taine notes.<sup>1</sup> Another passage from the same source which illuminates the General's background:

The officers who distinguished themselves in Africa...were commanders of small columns, and they rose to the top without ever learning to handle big units or developing a higher sense of military duty than was involved in recklessly risking themselves in the front line and inspiring courage in all the troops within ear shot...there was still plenty of courage but there was an unbridled appetite for promotion and reward and a consequent unwillingness to collaborate which was very dangerous.<sup>2</sup>

A way to advance, Brogan points out, was to cultivate people socially. Anouilh must have been familiar with this historical data and have chosen Saumur deliberately to help delineate the General's character.

As early as 1887, prior to the Dreyfus affair to which Grossvogel alludes, a number of scandals began to come to light. The class in power, the bourgeoisie, and the Third Republic government which represented it requested a high official to resign. He had hired so many of his relatives for key positions that trouble inevitably ensued; graft was proven. The French people began to be embarrassed about their politicians and their practices. Then, in 1890, the first of what were to become annual labor demonstrations was held. The three-fourths of the population who made up the bourgeoisie sensed their power was being challenged so they tightened their ranks. It was well they did because soon after the labor demonstration in 1890, the Panama Canal scandals broke. Small investors found they had been duped through lack of wisdom on the part of the Canal Company and government officials as well. Directors of the Company were subsequently tried for fraud; politicians were tried for corruption. It was

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<sup>1</sup>Quoted by Brogan, p. 20.

<sup>2</sup>Brogan, p. 21. Italics mine.



impossible to sweep these highly publicized events "under the rug."<sup>1</sup>

An upsurge of anti-Semitic feeling was also noted in 1890. Four years later, however, its degree of intensity was brought sharply into focus by an incident involving Alfred Dreyfus, a Jewish captain of artillery in the French army. He was accused by his predominantly Catholic-Conservative superiors of selling military secrets to Germany. Papers, which later were proved to be forgeries, led to his trial, conviction and life sentence to Devil's Island. The case appeared closed; but it was far from over.<sup>2</sup> In 1897, a newly elected head of French intelligence, Colonel Picquart, began to suspect the evidence on which Dreyfus had been convicted and began an investigation. French army officers were uncooperative, to say the least. Picquart finally succeeded without the army's help in having a commandant named Esterhazy brought to trial; a military court predictably acquitted him in three minutes. Picquart was disgraced for a time. The Dreyfus family, however, carried on its own investigation. Esterhazy finally admitted his guilt. Public confidence in the army was thoroughly shaken. When the Dreyfus case was about to be opened a second time in an effort to free him, rumors were circulated that there was a conspiracy afoot to make the French soldier distrust his officers. But, in spite of anything the army could do, Dreyfus was brought back from Devil's Island in 1899 for a second trial. His penalty at this time was merely reduced from life to ten years. The men who had high rank in the military could not fully admit the miscarriage of justice. It was not until 1906, therefore, when the case had lost most of its unsavory connotation, that Dreyfus was finally completely cleared. He was at that time

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., pp. 266-275.

<sup>2</sup>Recouly, pp. 196-205.

restored to the army with pomp and ceremony and even given the Legion of Honor.<sup>1</sup>

These pages in French history are ignoble ones even in the present day. Park sums up the attitude of certain French critics toward the Third Republic:

...no great actions, few great thoughts; a hollow and purely verbal philosophy, predominance of a partisan, narrow metaphysic over national realism; parliamentary disorder, impotence of the executive, governmental instability, electoral demagoguery; bureaucracy, routine; budgetary deficits, financial frauds, social indifference, and bourgeois egotism at their height; misdeeds and troubles due to alcoholism and depopulation favored by the general unrestraint and the absence of religious and moral authority.<sup>2</sup>

Park's mention of bourgeoisie egotism suggested the importance of knowing its attitudes and basic approach to living. A search for further information was thus undertaken.

Historians emphasize that no one social class monopolized what came to be called the bourgeois spirit. Earle points out that "both men of property and would-be men of property"<sup>3</sup>--professional men, civil servants, land-owning peasants, even some higher wage earning workers--took the outlook. Tannenbaum adds, "Above all else it is a state of mind expressed in a style of life by various economic groups."<sup>4</sup> These people's views developed during the early years when the Third Republic was rebuilding France and

<sup>1</sup>Brogan, pp. 343-345.

<sup>2</sup>Julian Park, ed., The Culture of France in Our Time (New York, 1954) p. vii of the Preface.

<sup>3</sup>Edward Meade Earle, ed., Modern France: Problems of the Third and Fourth Republics (Princeton, New Jersey, 1951) p. 45.

<sup>4</sup>Tannenbaum, p. 60.

proponents were so numerous that bourgeois ideas swept the whole of French society.

What were some of the bourgeois ideas that might relate to the play? The era was steeped in the ideal of the age of chivalry, with the defense of one's honor emphasized as all important. Dueling was the means of defending it. Financial and personal security were highly prized; a favorite dream which epitomized both was to live a leisurely life as a semi-retired pensioner cultivating a garden. Status was very important. It was imperative that one preserve one's self-image and one way to do this was to be cautious. Good sense--the recognition that "things are as they are because they are that way and God helps those who help themselves"--was idolized.<sup>1</sup> There was also an emphasis on adaptation to circumstances in which the individual found himself. Sure paths of success were to move from the provinces to Paris, or marry well, or use guile, or get an education.<sup>2</sup> Prudence, compromise and mediocrity were all attributes of the bourgeois. One's social role determined one's style of life. There was a conflict in the individual between a longing for glamour and a desire for respectability. The radical was unequivocally a social outcast, so few bourgeois dared to indulge and pay the price.

Atheism, while no longer fashionable in 1910 as it was at the turn of the century, had implanted attitudes against organized religion which resulted in "a suspicion of motives of the clergy; a mixture of mild contempt and ridicule toward priests...because of their chastity and pious manner..."

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid, p. 68.

<sup>2</sup>Emily, the General's wife, used a combination of the first three approaches.

Every intervention of a Bishop or cure in public life exasperated.<sup>1</sup> The nineteenth century bourgeois generally professed the belief that religious practice demonstrated and supported the morality of women and that the main virtue of a man was independence. Further, the sentimentalization of many forms of devotion seemed weak and feminine to the men. The devout male was ridiculed. "If only to be baptized, married and buried in, however, a church was a necessity of French life."<sup>2</sup>

As for marriage, while formal respect for it abounded, its sanction was external, ecclesiastical and legal. Above all, it was a social institution--a convention like any other--and it was thoroughly "materialized." The bourgeois viewed marriage as neither a sacrament nor a matter of love. It was a contract signed in front of the town notary.<sup>3</sup> The contract, however, was regarded as being binding for life. Brownell notes, "It is indissoluble, but a social convention which renders its indissolubility attractive."<sup>4</sup> Bourgeois women felt there were just two types of women: "the young and the old who attempted to remain young."<sup>5</sup> The great goal of a woman's existence was marriage and failure to attain this state was the greatest failure a woman could suffer. Once married, the bourgeois woman, Coubertain points out, "accounts no sacrifice too dear for the sake of attaining her end--the absolute and complete possession of her husband."<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Tannenbaum, p. 36.

<sup>2</sup>Brogan, p. 316.

<sup>3</sup>Tannenbaum, p. 60.

<sup>4</sup>William Crary Brownell, French Traits: An Essay in Comparative Criticism (New York, 1888) p. 55.

<sup>5</sup>Balzac quoted by Brownell, p. 157.

<sup>6</sup>Coubertain, p. 382.

She didn't, however, expect to find the passionate and intense love she sought in the marriage relationship.

The average number of children in a French family was two. Youngsters were treated with politeness by parents but they were kept in the background.<sup>1</sup> Their wants, in fact, were regularly repressed with adult satisfactions having priority. Children were not encouraged to explore or experiment. On the contrary, they were expected to memorize irrevocable rules of behavior at home, and then obliged to memorize more irrevocable rules of thinking at school which would govern every compartment of behavior. Thus, the French child was given little freedom to express personality until it had been formed for him. It was an everpresent challenge to the child, however, to see how far he could go in "breaking the rules without getting caught."<sup>2</sup> Personal responsibility was continually discouraged by the culture. Adherence to the views of public opinion was emphasized instead.

After these data had been collected and compared with the play, it was obvious that the familial milieu in The Waltz of the Toreadors is authentically "in period," that the characters represent types prevalent at the turn of the century, and the viewpoints they hold are a cross-section of bourgeoisie outlooks of the time. Historian Tannenbaum reinforced and supplemented this conclusion. He notes The Waltz of the Toreadors as a play exhibiting the demoralized attitudes of the bourgeois spirit, a combination of complacency and hypocrisy; he illustrates the charge by summarizing the content of the General's advice to Gaston, pointing to the retired military man as epitomizing the greatest weakness of the typical bourgeois at the turn of the century. He goes further by saying the play "reveals much about upper middle-class

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<sup>1</sup>Brownell, p. 143.

<sup>2</sup>Tannenbaum, p. 29.

values in twentieth century France."<sup>1</sup> The General and his milieu are not really dated as it would first seem. They are current today.

Further investigation disclosed there was not only a definite parallel between the attitudes mirrored in The Waltz and those evident now, but, when Anouilh wrote the play in 1951, political events in the later era recalled those of the turn of the century..France was politically immobile in the early 1950's. There had been several rapid changes in government leadership which were as embarrassing to the average Frenchman as had been the scandals around 1900. Those in power did not build for the future, they defended the past. The importance of the individual in French politics was all but gone; pressure groups were formed--the army's among them--to defend special vested interests against those of their rivals.

Organization was poor. The bourgeoisie was in power and it was highly complacent. Little attention was being paid, for example, to ominous signs that prizes won during the early period of the Third Republic might soon be lost. The colonial empire was tottering. Between 1947 and 1953 there were regular flare-ups in Algeria and in the far eastern French colony of Indo-China as well. Germany, the old enemy, looked as though it might regain its position of power in Europe. The United States was pushing for German re-armament.<sup>2</sup> These events are directly related to those highlighted by the General who dwells in The Waltz on earlier achievements and the grandeur of France.

While the bourgeoisie who dominated the power structure in the French government seemed blind to these ominous developments, French intellectuals,

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 62-63.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., pp. 6-118.

Tannenbaum reports, were alarmed. They feared a technocratic bureaucracy would take over; deplored French performances in the two world wars and doubted her ability to perform in the future.<sup>1</sup> They suffered "contradictory longings for individual freedom and comforting submission to authority as well as conflicting impulses toward self-protection and self-dissolution."<sup>2</sup> These are the very poles between which the General is torn.

With such relationships between political conditions and so many evident parallels between social attitudes in the play and our present day, it is plain that Anouilh is talking obliquely to mid-twentieth century audiences in terms of an earlier era with similar characteristics. The playwright is warning against a possible loss of hard-won colonial gains of the Third Republic and against a threat of Germany regaining her power in Europe. More important, the playwright is criticizing a self-satisfied smugness which atrophies into a maintenance of a decadent status quo and bourgeois standards which set public opinion up as a God and final judge and regard a person's social role as the chief determinant of an individual's personality. Anouilh is worried about widespread present day conformity which is rooted in the bourgeois insistence on strict adherence to set patterns.

A critical comment mentioned earlier, J. L. Styan's note that Anouilh often chooses his style as well as his setting from the "twilight 1910's," should be clarified before we depart from considerations of the historical period as it relates to The Waltz. The style to which the critic refers is that used by the most popular playwrights of the "boulevard-type" theatre established and frequented by the Third Republic bourgeoisie. Until the advent of World War I, class complacency was reinforced and reflected by a

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., pp. 10-17.

<sup>2</sup>An idea from Gide quoted by Tannenbaum, p. 97.

theatre of pure entertainment--a "theatre of reassurance."<sup>1</sup> The prime consideration was to please. As Guicharnaud expresses it:

Vaudeville, comedy, and bourgeois drama seemed to join forces in order to give the maximum of good conscience to the ruling bourgeoisie, both in their virtues and their vices. Each performance persuaded the audience that man, life and the real were no more than what they believed them to be. The public and its art closed in upon each other. Their agreement was so perfect that the theatre did not present the audience with an image of what it was, but of what it wished to be--hence the innumerable basic conventions which had almost become an institution. Everything took place as if the self-satisfied performance of mediocrity enobled that mediocrity, and as if the closed doors of the bourgeois drawing room, on which the curtain usually went up, symbolized the sanctification by art of the limitations of the bourgeois' intellectual, spiritual and moral horizons.

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An image of what the public believed itself to be was presented in forms that were thought to be the only forms possible. Derived from the "well-made" play, late nineteenth century theatre reduced the Aristotelian notion of action to its most superficial level. Made up of proven stage tricks and conventions of dialogue and staging, the plays never questioned the idea of theatre itself, nor did they ever suggest a universal drama. They always recalled something which already existed, both in the technique of detail and in their basic conception.<sup>2</sup>

From an artistic standpoint, such plays have little survival power. Most are sadly dated and thus not relevant today.<sup>3</sup>

While there are obvious style resemblances--the use of vaudeville, comedy and drama--between The Waltz of the Toreadors and the boulevard type plays just described, there are indications also that the resemblance is, possibly, superficial. The total impact of The Waltz perturbs. Surely this is a sign the play does not belong to a theatre of reassurance. Then,

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<sup>1</sup>Guicharnaud, p. 4.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., pp. 4-5.

<sup>3</sup>Oreste F. Pucciani, Ed., The French Theatre Since 1930: Six Contemporary Full-Length Plays (New York, 1954), p. 3 of the Preface.



too, it is the opinion of the historian Tannenbaum that while the setting and outlook of characters "reveals much about middle-class values in twentieth century France" Anouilh is primarily interested in expressing views on love and life.<sup>1</sup> This statement suggests that The Waltz is universal drama. A further analysis of the playwright's purpose, outlook, themes and style is clearly necessary to clear up the mystery.

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<sup>1</sup>Tannenbaum, pp. 62-63.

## THE PLAY

### The Author's Purpose

Anouilh has declared he is satisfied with his decision to write only for the theatre; he has devoted himself assiduously to his craft over the years. The task of stating his purpose in writing The Waltz of the Toreadors, therefore, is simple. Anouilh is a dramatist. As such, he has assumed the responsibility of "story enactment."<sup>1</sup> His efforts are concentrated, then, upon offering the spectator a "dramatic experience before the parts of that experience are drawn together again."<sup>2</sup>

Further definitions may also be helpful. In order to transmit a dramatic experience effectively, a play must have a "vital feeling" culminating in a powerful "commanding form"<sup>3</sup> which will guide director, actors and stage artists and technicians in reproducing the tone dominating the form. The style the playwright employs and the themes he weaves into the fabric of his play are means of achieving "vital feeling." His personal outlook, on the other hand, determines the predominant tone.

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<sup>1</sup>A term used in similar context by Susanne K. Langer, Feeling and Form, a Theory of Art (New York, 1953) p. 321.

<sup>2</sup>J. L. Styan, The Dark Comedy (New York, 1962) p. 278.

<sup>3</sup>Terms used by Langer in similar context, pp. 314-323.

The Author's Outlook

Drama critics unanimously agree with historian Tannenbaum that Anouilh has a broad outlook. Pronko notes, for example, that the playwright is "interested primarily in revealing to us his view of man and man's place in the universe. His principal theme is man himself as he faces his destiny."<sup>1</sup> Anouilh is interested, along with other French playwrights of today, in "modern man in the modern world,"<sup>2</sup> Pucianni observes. And Guicharnaud marks Anouilh's interest in the "human drama."<sup>3</sup> It can, therefore, be concluded that when the experience of General Saint-Pe unfolds before the spectator the character epitomizes modern man caught in a not-uncommon situation.

Anouilh was troubled when he wrote The Waltz of the Toreadors for a feeling of unrest permeates the work. He is disturbed at men compromising with life and compromising themselves. In The Waltz man meets neither life, his fears nor other humans directly unless forced to do so. He "is so human as to remember and hope rather than heed and act."<sup>4</sup> Man to Anouilh is a toreador riding society's horse into the arena of life. The values of society teach him how to circle the bull--his fears--and he rides about the animal at waltz tempo. The lavish costume of the toreador gleams in the sun; it is a mask which gives a fine appearance and lends the rider distinction. But the mask only enables the toreador to endure the contest. The rider inside is fearful and very conscious he is alone.

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<sup>1</sup>Pronko, p. 211.

<sup>2</sup>Pucciani, p. 12.

<sup>3</sup>Guicharnaud, p. 113.

<sup>4</sup>Styan, p. 260.

The playwright does not judge man's behavior. As he observes the main toreador--General Saint-Pe--he merely sets down, in turn, the "amused, detached or aggrieved" attitudes he feels; he does not "censure, approve or condemn."<sup>1</sup> Rather, he seems to say "People are like this but they have reasons for being as they are. Be gentle with them." Anouilh does not make any cut and dried recommendations to the spectator, either. He merely sets forth the situation and suggests "likelihoods, depicts chanciness and stresses on both sides." He is content to stimulate "by implications."<sup>2</sup> His obligation as playwright is to offer the dramatic experience in which the spectator is invited to participate. Then, it is up to the spectator to attempt to analyze his feelings after he leaves the theatre if he so desires.

#### Overall Concepts

The Waltz of the Toredors is an enactment of an episode in the life of a weak, frightened, self-centered retired man who is unable, try as he might, to come to any conclusion as to the meaning of his life or to develop a satisfactory concept of himself. At the opening of the play, the General is still basking in a self-concept developed in the Army, an institution which conferred importance and significance upon him and gave him an active life. The dictation of memoirs, however, only makes him sense the great disparity between the past life and the one he now lives. That past life, really, has no relevance now. Nor does Ghislaine have relevance either, he

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<sup>1</sup>Joseph Chiari, The Contemporary French Theatre: The Flight from Naturalism, (London, 1958) p. 174.

<sup>2</sup>Styan, p. 278.

finds. Her presence once gave him peace and freedom from fear but she turns to Gaston who has a present rather than a past to offer her. The General looks to his wife and children to confer identity upon him. He sees them both as ugly, and they epitomize the weight of responsibility rather than contributions to happiness. Furthermore, when he faces his wife he finds she does not see him as he tries to imagine himself, a handsome and fearless man. She sees him simply as her "thing," her "garbage bin."

Leon also seeks meaning and identity under the maid's petticoats, in his garden, in the museum, where--contemplating art--he says he has felt peace. These distractions he realizes, however, are but transitory respites from an all-pervasive loneliness and sadness within. "Beauty's a thing man should be able to create for himself," the General says wistfully. But what has he managed to create? His sole creation is an exterior personality, a pseudo-identity with sufficient charm to inveigle the maid into the garden, a grotesquely decorated shell which merely enables him to endure, through pursuing still another meaningless relationship, the darkness of a life in which he cannot find meaning or an identity which he can respect.

The General is not, in the final analysis, a disreputable man or simply a grotesque one. He achieves a grandeur by virtue of the fact that he knows something is wrong. He cannot define what that something is, nor can he, in consequence, correct his plight. He is free from the illusions he has at the beginning of the play, however, and he is consciously playing his role at the end. He has not been and is not a completely unaware vegetable. He knows humans have capacities he has not been able to actualize. That he can sense these potentials is all to his credit.

Anouilh does not see life simply in terms of black and white. He expresses it in many tones of grey as well. This idea is set forth by drama

critic Nelson who utilizes two terms Anouilh has used from time to time in relation to his earlier plays in which a predominating tone of either rose (pink-optimism) or noir (black-pessimism) emerged. In The Waltz of the Toreadors, Nelson feels, Anouilh sees both life and the play which reflects it as a mixture of rose and noir. The playwright realizes that it is a temptation to look at life or the play one way or the other. Nelson states that Anouilh recognizes the comic and tragic viewpoints of life as having equal validity and sees both as states of being;<sup>1</sup> therefore, the playwright depicts man (in the persons of his characters) as forever oscillating between the two.

Another critical theory most helpful in shedding light on The Waltz of the Toreadors involves a dual notion:

Lost in a world where there is no answer, men somehow struggle, each on his own level, in the anguish of knowing they are caught in an absurd mechanism or in a masquerade.<sup>2</sup>

Here is how it may be applied. The absurd mechanism in which the General is caught is society and its customs, false values and hypocrisy, and its institutions--the family and the professions. All exert a corruptive influence on the man weighing him down with "obligatory degradations" which conflict with his will to escape. The masquerade, on the other hand, is "a theatrical vision of life"<sup>3</sup> which the General adopts. When he decides to play a role he makes an objective assertion that life is really one vast masked ball and he is a participant.

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<sup>1</sup>Robert J. Nelson, Play Within a Play, The Dramatists' Conception of His Art: Shakespeare to Anouilh (New Haven, 1958) p. 134.

<sup>2</sup>Guicharnaud, p. 130.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., pp. 123, 125.

To explain further, Anouilh sees the theatre itself as a metaphor of life, as it depicts man caught in society's mechanism, and a solution to life, as man slips on a mask and plays a role. When seen in this dual light The Waltz of the Toreadors is revealed as "a protest. It is both a rebellion and a game, hence the symbol of an ambiguous victory."<sup>1</sup>

In the final scene of the play the idea is demonstrated clearly. The General is left alone by the Doctor. Emily calls to her husband, her voice reminding him of his obligation to her which will always have him trapped. He assures her he won't go anywhere. It is once again quiet. The General walks upstage, calls out to "Lieutenant Saint-Pe! Graduated Second from Saumur. Steady! Aim! Fire!" thus symbolically killing an aspect of himself, his youthful idealism which had led him to believe he could escape. This is a disengagement from a subjective involvement in life. Then, the new maid, Pamela, comes in. The older man advances toward the girl, almost by habit, falling into the role he has played so often in the past, that of an old roue. A conversation full of innuendoes ensues until they reach an understanding. "You and I know it doesn't mean anything," sets the bounds of the relationship and its expectations; at this masquerade there will be no hanging together after the ball. One dance is enough. There is, however, a tiny trace of regret in the line as though the General's idealism is not quite dead. This is followed at once by "But still--one feels less lonely in the dark." Here is the excuse for the continuation of the performance. Anything is better than being left alone, after all. And the "absurd couple" exits into the garden.

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 130.

### Themes

There are many themes interwoven into the fabric of The Waltz of the Toreadors. When they are noted in a specific order, however, the foregoing suggested meanings are revealed in addition to the way Anouilh sees the world. The chief theme is how man faces his life and deals with it. All of the other threads of thought and the action of the play further delineate and make specific man's plight.

The first of Anouilh's premises is that the universe has no answers which will reveal man's place in it or his purpose. Secondly, man is alone. The General searches for meaning everywhere, it will be remembered. He makes beauty and perfection, synonymous with meaning, but no matter where he searches for it he only has fleeting glimpses of something which gives him a feeling of peace and stills his fears. He is able to participate only vicariously and after the momentary satisfaction, he feels more alone than ever. Anouilh, in shaping the play, also chose to deal with a retired man, cut off from his profession which would make him feel as though he fit somewhere. The General does not participate in activities outside the home, either; he does not even participate at the health club in which the Doctor regularly works out. He is but an honorary member. His isolation is further emphasized by his inability to communicate with anyone. He talks with his friend, the Doctor, more than anyone else but when communication is seen as a two-way process it is evident that the General does not communicate. He gives the Doctor little chance to reveal himself as a person; neither is he able to hear or heed the Doctor's advice.

The societal pattern draws a veil over the basic disorder in the universe and conceals man's aloneness from himself in order to give him some sense of security and identity. As it does so, however, it corrupts



the individual. The General has adopted society's code. We know nothing of his early background except that his mother was a provincial housewife. We can assume, however, that when he was young he was adventurous and ambitious and he saw the army as a way of achieving stature and respect, as well as offering him an exciting life. He did not realize when he entered the service, however, that power in the hands of a nation corrupts and that he was volunteering as a tool in the hands of France. As a member of the military the General adopted the rules and became cast in a mold for the glory of his country. Thus, the individual is sacrificed to a nation's desire for aggrandizement. The rules of honor, the uniform and the medals to which General Saint-Pe clings are but rewards for upholding the power of the rulers and vested interests not, as Leon would believe, because they accrue to him as an individual. They honor the national might which he symbolized and not himself as a person. The class system has also distorted the General. It is only because he regards himself the member of a high class that he assumes the right to pay a young maid's wages and take more than her work in exchange; he claims her body without a qualm. She is an object to be manipulated, nothing more.

His views about marriage, absorbed from the societal code, have also corrupted any chance for a solid relationship between him and Emily. He sought a glamorous wife who participated in public entertainment. She was a member of an opera company and, as such, would be somewhat known. It was a jewel in his crown to be able to claim and gain such a woman for a life-long companion. They had a few years of love. But, soon he began to cast his eye elsewhere. She noticed, but he felt it was his right. She was in love with him and capable of feeling humiliated and hurt. Having regarded her primarily as a "thing," and having had little contact with her as another

human, he didn't even stop to think of her as having feelings. He did as he pleased, for society has a double standard and it is much more widely accepted that the man will "play." Society is less likely to condone, even in France, the wife taking lovers. She was much more secretive than he with her affairs. But, when she is unfaithful to him, it is largely because in his fear of hurting others, he never considered her as an Other. She is simply his possession and as such, her duty and sole desire should be to rear the children, and guard the honor of the family. Beyond this he does not, because of the "set" society has given him, think or even imagine she will go. She must adore him. Wives always adore their husbands; think of them as supremely masculine; bolster their egos. Emily is a fiend in his eyes because her behavior has not lived up to what society has told him women should do. So, power corrupts, social classes corrupt, and the family corrupts.<sup>1</sup> None are honest about their function. None explain their limitations to the individual. None, the way they are structured, lead the individual to more honestly face himself. All give stature, of a type; none give a man, unless he is the victim of great illusions, a feeling of true personal worth.

The General longs to be what he once was--young, adventurous, attractive, vigorous and capable of chastity as well as licentiousness with a woman. But Anouilh points out, time is irreversible.<sup>2</sup> In Act I, Scene 1 the General tries to revive the past by dictating his memoirs. He never gets far, however; first his demanding daughters come in, then the Doctor, then Ghislaine. His present life in the person of these people keeps interrupt-

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<sup>1</sup>Pronko, p. 76-110.

<sup>2</sup>Noted by Alba Della Fazio, "Pirandello and His French Echo Anouilh," Modern Drama, vi, p. 358.

ing so he cannot complete the illusion of having turned back the clock. In Act III the bugle, reminiscent of the past life, mocks his present. His experiences with Ghislaine, enjoyed in the past, are not recoverable, either. Though he tries to recreate how he felt when he danced with her for the first time, he knows it is not the young Lieutenant who dances with a young Ghislaine. The experiment reversing time fails completely when the two grown daughters enter and wonder who the "lady" is and the General has to admit it is a lady who knew them when they were tiny. Finally, any hope that might survive in the General of even partially bringing the past back to life is doomed when the living symbol of the old man's youth, his Ghislaine, goes away with a young man in whom she sees the young Lieutenant with whom she was once in love. And, as time is proven irreversible, the tremendous abyss between the past and the present is continually emphasized. The contrast in age between the participants in the drama, as well as the contrast between the active life the General lived during the African campaigns and his present life are the chief means of doing this.

The foregoing themes are Anouilh's way of demonstrating still another of his main concepts--an individual cannot know himself in a state of purity.<sup>1</sup> He cannot recover his youth; he cannot shake off the corruption he has suffered in time. In fact, this brings forth still another idea which Anouilh underlines--the impossibility of shedding one's past.<sup>2</sup> The prior deeds of the General accompany him in the present. They are embodied in the person of his wife whom he has chosen to marry and the two daughters they spawned. The habitual resort to threatening a duel is a hold-over, too, from his

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<sup>1</sup>Marsh, p. 27.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

military life, as well as from the society in which he lives that regards dueling as a "proper" way of settling a quarrel. The social codes to which he adheres in playing out life "as a long family lunch," a ritual, and the hypocrisy which accompanies the employment of such codes, is evidenced in his behavior with Pamela and Madame Dupont Fredaine, as well as in Act II, Scene 1, when he attempts to pass them on verbally to Gaston. These things are inextricable parts of the General's personality which have, by casting him into a mold, superimposed "deforming traits"<sup>1</sup> on his original being. He is as a conditioned dog who salivates when the appropriate bell is rung.

But the ritualistic activities in which the General engages perform several functions. They have substituted habit for original thinking. They have made him feel "a part of something." And they have given him a pride in being a symbol rather than in being a person. Every now and then, when he catches a glimpse of what Anouilh feels is the ultimate reality, the fact that man is alone and there are no ready-made answers, really, to life or man's role in it, the General feels keenly his aloneness. Then, he becomes frightened. He resorts, at these times, to other methods, ones he has devised himself, to cover his forlornness. He senses that the societal mechanism is absurd; he feels anguish. In order to avoid some of the pain, the General attempts to look at life objectively. He tries to regard life as a masquerade. He puts on a mask, consciously, and attends the "ball," thus identifying with participation in a gala event rather than actually living his life which wounds and hurts. He turns on his "charm," a routine that others who are also acting accept. In this objective mood no one takes anyone else very seriously; everyone acts very gay, and for a while, with much noise and excitement and

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

playfulness, the terror of being alone is once again veiled in illusion.

A belief in love is another concept Anouilh sees man resorting to in an effort to overcome his aloneness.<sup>1</sup> This theme in almost every aspect is pursued in The Waltz of the Toreadors. Familial love and ties are revealed to be sordid and ugly, however. What began as love between the General and his wife, developed into years of suffering, and finally ends in the recriminations of the two in Act II, Scene 2. The Doctor's relationship between himself and his own wife he reports as no better than between Leon and Emily. Gaston and Ghislaine's love seems, at first glance, ideal. But when the play is examined closely there are ominous signs that their happiness will be short-lived. Ghislaine is thirty-five and Gaston twenty. Immediately following their sexual encounter, in Act III, Gaston has a proprietary air when they enter; Ghislaine enthuses to the General that she has a little cord around her neck with her owner's name on it. Already she feels she is a "possession" and expects her owner to identify her, much as the wife has expected the General to live a life in which she can proudly bask. Later in Act III, Ghislaine shows jealousy of Gaston's feelings toward the two daughters. She admits to the General that though Gaston says she can come to visit him from time to time she rather doubts Gaston will allow it, for her lover is "horribly jealous." Finally she leaves without touching or comforting the General because Gaston gives her a warning look. Gaston, when challenged by the General in the same act knows he is expected to stand up and defend his "woman." Though he only manages to be awkward, he attempts to oblige. Already Ghislaine is a passive "thing" to be defended rather than a person in her own right who is demonstrated in the play as being able to

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<sup>1</sup>Pronko, p. 76.

stand up and forthrightly tell the General about her affair with Gaston.

Lust is another aspect of love which is examined. The General admits this is but a temporary measure taken to fill his essential feeling of emptiness. And, afterwards, he admits his loneliness is intensified for there is only politeness left and the politeness becomes monotonous. No lasting relationship results.

Friendship, as has already been pointed out, is not even successful in filling the lonely void. The General cannot learn anything about himself or his role in life through another--not even a friend as good as the Doctor. But, was not the General's love for Ghislaine pure? Does its existence not prove that love can exist and serve the purpose of reducing loneliness? Anouilh's answer seems to be a resounding "no." The love the General had for Ghislaine was a feeling that was precious, and he did not violate that love. But the General says himself, with rare insight, immediately after saying Ghislaine never hurt him, "Of course, I never lived with her." Anouilh therein suggests it is because the General hasn't lived with Ghislaine that their love is still surrounded with beauty. The playwright says, then, that love in none of its aspects can long survive. It is but another illusion, ineffectual in giving any solution to man's inevitable solitariness.

Evasion is another human practice investigated in The Waltz of the Toreadors. It is a means of underlining the impossibility of being truly one's self in one's original state of purity. The General has created for himself an identity which he hopes will make him accepted and loved by everyone.<sup>1</sup> He has developed an impressive manner and projects as a gusty, hearty

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<sup>1</sup>Della Fazio, p. 356.

person. By his own admission, however, this charming exterior is his mask. When he is talking to the Doctor he wonders who can recognize him underneath the front. The answer is, Emily can! His wife does not see him as he appears in the mask; his evasion fails. He is her husband, an object. So regarding life as a masquerade, or employing evasion in the attempt to make it other than it is, are both failures.

This does not keep Anouilh from expending a good deal of pains in the justification of the mask.<sup>1</sup> The General's mask is justified quite simply as a trade-mark of his profession. He had to develop a certain amount of bearing, authoritative manner, charm and ability to get away with saying outlandish things when he chose, in order to gain popularity with his men and advance in the service. It was especially mandatory in his case that the mask be flawless because it covered a great fear and a great sensitivity at "hurting people," the very thing his profession demanded he do. The Wife's mask of invalidism is just as carefully justified. Invalidism was her way of holding her husband. To pretend to be ill was to play upon his very weakest trait and, after all, she has no way of earning a living; she cannot face being deserted in the eyes of society. She must employ the mask. The false face is close to her own, also. It mirrors her great emotionalism, neuroticism even, and symbolizes her very real sickness of spirit. She performs, after all, because her audience responds. If it did not respond she is the type who would immediately resort to another mask to get the attention she so desperately craves.

Note should be made at this point of multiple personality. The General not only is aware that several personalities lie within him; but he expresses

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<sup>1</sup>Guicharnaud, p. 126.

shame and sorrow at the realization. His behavior with the different people to whom he adjusts and the circumstances of the particular situation all demonstrate his many aspects of personality. Compare his "We are male comrades, you and I" attitude with Gaston as he dictates to the young man, his abruptness with Estelle and Sidonia when they interrupt to beg for their dresses, and his sentimental gallantry with Ghislaine when he and his love are alone. His is a chameleon personality which rapidly adjusts.<sup>1</sup>

Marsh sees in The Waltz of the Toreadors the demonstration of still another of Anouilh's themes: "denial of one's self--the bloodless murder."<sup>2</sup> The General has continually denied himself the growth of developing as the unique person he might have been. Idealism, hope, faith in himself, these the young Lieutenant had. Any semblance of these aspects of personality begin to collapse, however, in Act II, Scene 2, and when Ghislaine finally leaves, the General kills that younger self symbolically. It is indeed a bloodless murder in the play.

A struggle between illusion and reality also goes on in The Waltz. The General has many illusions, an illusion of a finer side in him, for example. He has kept this illusion intact by not violating Ghislaine. He also has the illusion that Ghislaine and his Wife love him. The love of the former has helped him endure his life for seventeen years. The illusion of the finer side, ironically, is one of the most appealing things about the General. Yet, his illusions are destroyed and the playwright thus demonstrates the futility of longing for an uncorrupt self and the necessity for facing the realities of what one is in the eyes of others.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Della Fazio, p. 361.

<sup>2</sup>Marsh, p. 70.

<sup>3</sup>Della Fazio, p. 363.



The relativity of truth is reiterated over and over again. It arises out of the basic conflict between the impulses that lie deep within the General and the societal mechanism that lies without. The General's feelings are all held in relation to society. He draws back partly, becomes anti-social, and tries during the play to come to some resolution of the opposing forces in his personality. He cannot resolve his inner conflicts, nor can he integrate himself within the society. He is adrift in a world of relativity where there are no absolute values to which he can cling. The playwright thus makes the point that "man cannot be reduced to a unity which will give him inner peace and happiness."<sup>1</sup>

The General's inability to act largely arises out of a basic insecurity in his personality. Every time he fails to carry through an intention, this insecurity is revealed. In addition, there is an insecurity revealed within the situation also, underlining uncertainty and insecurity as a fact of existence within and without. This uncertainty has a way of destroying any certainties. The General's "certainty" that his wife loves him is destroyed as is his "certainty" of Chislaine's loyalty. Furthermore, the tensions created in the spectator by the irony which pervades the entire play, produce a feeling of overwhelming insecurity. Marsh notes that Anouilh "represents the signpost of uncertainty and insecurity--a symptom of post-war society's insecurity."<sup>2</sup>

Life as a play, or a masquerade is also definitely depicted in The Waltz. The General, as has been noted earlier, admits he is wearing a mask. He senses the theatricality of his position as he objectively observes, when

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 367.

<sup>2</sup>Marsh, p. 34.

talking about Emily, that she has performed for him for twenty years. Fowlie notes, too, that Act II, Scene 2 may be regarded as a rehearsal of the entire marriage relationship.<sup>1</sup> Gaston, as Ghislaine reveals, sees "life is but a holiday--a ball" and the General, not being able to see the situation objectively at the moment groans..."a ball--." Then there is the speech in Act III when the Doctor replies to the General's question "How will it all end?"

Doctor: As in real life--or in the theatre, in the days when plays were plays--a contrived denouement, not too gloomy on the face of it, and which doesn't really fool a soul, and then, a little later, curtain.

In these instances, Anouilh is not only demonstrating how the characters look at life, as a masquerade, a game, a play--which in this construct are seen as synonymous--but he is also pointing up the play's theatricality. He is saying that for these characters there must be a contrived denouement. They cannot change. They cannot extricate themselves from their two viewpoints toward life, the subjectively felt, awful reality of the societal mechanism and the objective view which is a masquerade. Death--the curtain--hovers ominously. When it falls, they will still be coping in the same ways. Anouilh also admits the denouement is "not too gloomy on the face of it" and speaks directly to the spectator to say, "Don't let it fool you." Then, the message buried inside the play and evidenced only for a moment to spectator and to General Saint-Pe as well, the playwright proceeds to close the drama just as he says he will.

One theme remains to be commented upon now and it will also be touched upon later. "The persistence of the child in the adult leads to catastrophe,"<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Fowlie, p. 118.

<sup>2</sup>Guicharnaud, p. 118.

Guicharnaud notes as he speaks of the General. A dictionary definition of a child is "a person like a child in interests, judgment, etc." How does this definition apply to the General? It was finally concluded, after analysis, that it is not only the young Lieutenant that is meant when the critic terms the General a child. The General does not want any responsibility; he hesitates to make even the most rudimentary personal decisions throughout the play. He shows definite signs of adolescence, also, in that he does not seek any further solutions for his situation. In his final acceptance of the theatrical role he adopts at the end of the play, he plays the role, it seems, because he does not have knowledge of another course to follow. He is dependent upon the Doctor and his social "sets"; he finds it difficult to reason cogently or to act. He is a puppet who lets the world and its ready-made recipes, which do not cover all exigencies, rule his life, even as he admits during the play that life is different and needs different rules from those he has learned in the military. He clings to safety, to the known course, rather than take any risks which are an inevitable part of the true adult's life. In short, his approach to life is conventional rather than innovational, adolescent rather than mature.

A rapid summary will help to organize these themes into a cohesive whole--man's plight. The universe has no ready-made answers for man as to his meaning or purpose. Man is alone. He cannot make full or adequate contact with others through love or friendship. Attempts at evasion or taking an objective viewpoint toward life do no lasting good; they are merely attempts to pretend the loneliness isn't real. Man has been contaminated by the social order which blinds, distorts his nature, and cripples him. Society does not realistically take man's individual potentialities or basic impulses into account; it merely uses the individual toward its own ends. Man is forced, in many cases, to express himself underground, thus living a hypocritical, and even base, real existence. Man has developed a multiple

personality of which he is ashamed for it is a sign he cannot know himself in a state of purity or anyone else in a state of purity, either. Man cannot ever be reduced to a unity which will give him inner peace and happiness. Insecurity and relative truth are his lot. Anyone who closes his eyes to these facts ends up as an adolescent. Realization of them and acceptance of them, on the other hand, are a sign of an adult. The play, thus ends in denouncing illusion which would encompass the failure to face any of the foregoing ideas.

A summarizing statement by Chiari unifies a theme already stated--denial of the self, the bloodless murder--with the basic construct above:

Loneliness is the human lot, and is beyond remedy. Our personalities, our past, our families or society imprison us, and the only hope of achieving some form of liberation midst suffering and tears is being what one is meant to be...not by trying to stifle one's own nature and thus causing more harm by irresolution than by one single cruel deed.<sup>1</sup>

By attacking the General's chief weakness (usually regarded in life, ironically, as an admirable trait), revealed in Leon's admission "I can't bear to hurt anyone" and the denial of one's self contingent on this attitude, the playwright, then, not only denounces illusion in the play but obliquely points toward a way of partial liberation from the General's slavery--the honest and straightforward expression of one's self, one's own deepest feelings and ideas. An individual who chooses this path, however, must have greater faith in himself and a greater conviction of his own worth than does General Saint-Pe.

The deep core of The Waltz of the Toreadors just described is unsettling. It well might be extremely difficult for an audience to take.

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<sup>1</sup>Chiari, p. 203-204. Italics mine.

Society and man's own inner tendencies conspire against the confrontation of such ideas. As dramatist Anouilh concocts this medicine for his patients, however, he adds such pronounced stylistic spice to the basic mixture that the final prescription is not only palative but tantalizing.

### Style

Before beginning a discussion of the specific stylistic means employed in The Waltz of the Toreadors, a comment should be made about the playwright's sensitivity to drama as a "structure of shifting relationships between characters and spectators during the course of a performance."<sup>1</sup> Anouilh instinctively adapts his style to the spectator's mind, a mind that is usually highly resistant to new views or suggestions, especially when a playwright's vision of man and life are unsettling and ambivalent. In order to put his concepts and the emotions attendant on them across, Anouilh strives to divide the individual watcher against himself while the dramatic experience is underway. Instead of trying to get the spectator to either identify with or to withdraw from the character of the General and his situation Anouilh leads the viewer, through various stylistic devices, to alternately fight for a subjective and then an objective view; reason is rapidly played off against emotion and vice versa. The spectator's loyalty is divided and in the resulting ambivalent atmosphere his ordinarily rigid thoughts and attitudes become elastic so the playwright's outlook, that is, his unrest, penetrates. In addition, the ambivalence adds a true-to-life complexity to the dramatic experience.

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<sup>1</sup>Styan, p. 239.

The playwright's approach is predominantly indirect. The Waltz takes place in a bygone era and the realistic set depicts a not-unfamiliar room, a man's study. The spectator is quite likely to be reassured by both. He is, however, to be comfortable but momentarily. Anouilh seeks "to make his audience suffer without the relief of tears and to make it mock without a true relief of laughter."<sup>1</sup> The individual spectator is to have his attitudes built and broken many times during the enacted experience so that tension will suspend judgment by stylistic means concentrated toward this end. The playwright juxtaposes uncommon impressions and employs all types of irony--verbal irony, irony of manners and comic irony--to gain the desired effect. In addition, Anouilh exploits convention. Because this last practice is perhaps the playwright's greatest forte, it will be discussed first.

Earlier, the typically French cuckold and shrew conventions, both having strong comic connotations for a Gallic spectator, were discussed. It was established that the viewpoint the Frenchman has toward Emily, Leon and their situation, during most of Act II, Scene 2, is largely conditioned by expectations held in connection with these conventions. The scene just mentioned was reviewed up to and through the point where suspicions of Emily are verified and the cuckold situation seems to be well on its way to being fulfilled according to the expectations of the delighted Gallic beholder.<sup>2</sup> The analysis of the scene was broken off abruptly because, during the last few minutes of the action, Anouilh stylistically thwarts the expectations his countrymen hold. He breaks the attitude they have adopted. The initial shock comes when Emily tries to define her love for Leon. She explores

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<sup>1</sup>Styan, p. 249.

<sup>2</sup>pp. 22-26 of this study.

several possible explanations for her feelings for him, rejecting each. Finally, she decides why she loves him: "You're my thing! My garbage bin." The Frenchman is hit as Leon is hit. Emily's statement goes too far; it breaks the comic shrew vision the spectator has. Subsequently, the pace of the scene picks up; everything seems out of joint, whirling round and round; the French spectator is drawn into the vortex. He watches the General. Leon is not simply chagrined as the cuckolded husband usually is. Leon's very world is crashing about him and an aspect of his identity is being buried in the ruins. He is not a fit figure for laughter. The French spectator is at sea. His conventions have boomeranged on him. He begins to wonder how he could have so mistakenly predicted the course of events. Finally, as the Wife invites the General to dance and he responds by choking her, the viewer is left feeling quite disoriented. Why? Because Anouilh plans it that way. The playwright uses familiar conventions in an unorthodox manner, smacking the spectator for jumping to orthodox conclusions, forcing him out of his rut.

But, in the example just cited, only French concepts are exploited, the American will say. If these were the only conventions employed in The Waltz, it is true that neither English or American audiences would be much affected. When the play is examined carefully, however, it is obvious that the playwright habitually thwarts expectations held in connection with conventions every bit as familiar to Anglo-Saxons as to Frenchmen--farce, melodrama, sentimentality, and vaudeville antics, slapstick, and elements of realism. Anouilh uses them all in a revolutionary manner, in a thoroughly ironic spirit.

Melodrama, for example, usually used with only a pretense at seriousness, exploiting action for the sake of action, and emphasizing accident, is most often resolved into a happy ending. The boulevard type playwrights used

it, but only to mildly excite the spectator and help him escape his life. In the hands of Anouilh, however, melodrama takes on a different face entirely. In Act II, Scene 2, in which it is used most lavishly it engenders no superficial excitement. It strikes with a shattering impact for it is used to thrust the General into his horrifying reality. As the character is impelled finally to face his wife's concept of him, the spectator is subjectively involved in Leon's shock, pain and retaliation. There is no mere pretense at seriousness in this scene. It is serious; it is monstrous reality at its most absurd. Furthermore, the denouement does nothing to contradict or resolve the situation as given.

As for sentimentality, it is usually employed superficially, presenting suffering simply for the sake of suffering. It was employed by the boulevard playwrights to give a semblance of feeling to their frothy romantic plays. When sentimentality is used in The Waltz, however, while it is pushed to the point of ridiculous, it invariably reveals character traits. Ghislaine's over-sentimental outlook points up her essential tendency to over-dramatize. The girls' suffering about Gaston, too, accents their inexperience and over-romanticization of love. They finally give up sentimentality for suffering for the sake of suffering is not sensible even to them. Realizing this in the middle of the lake they swim back on their own and somehow seem to be more mature for their decision. Their "maturity" proves to be false, but because they make the decision to live on this count, it adds a bit of complexity to their very simple personalities. In the case of the General, sentimentality undergirds an aspect of his personality, his inability to hurt others. The spectator withdraws from the characters and laughs at the sentimentality even as character delineation is skillfully being done.



"The usual purpose of farce is to entertain: the appropriate response to it is continuous and unrestrained laughter. Farce has little intellectual content or symbolic significance, is not concerned with presenting a message, makes no pretense of demanding serious consideration, has slight residue of meaning,"<sup>1</sup> Hatlen observes. Anouilh, however, refuses to allow farce to entertain. For example, the scene at the end of Act I, Scene 2 is widely farcical. Ghislaine jumps out of the window, lands on Gaston's head, is brought back into the room and poor Gaston doesn't know how to handle the situation. The clumsiness of the secretary and the development of the scene between the two virgins is uproarious. The General enters with his wife in his arms. The farcical situation continues to unroll rapidly to the end of the scene and laughter is sustained throughout. Later in the play, however, the playwright indicts the spectator for his laughter. This chance meeting, hilarious though it is at the time, marks the beginning of the end of the relationship between Ghislaine and the General. The latter is to experience deep pain because the meeting occurred. In retrospect, the scene is not so funny after all.

Elements of French vaudeville and slapstick as well are also interspersed in the play. The routine the General and Ghislaine go through when she interrupts him as he is trying to get up courage and tell his wife he wants a divorce in Act I, Scene 2, is a good example of the former. She first discovers the Doctor and the General, in a scene of pure slapstick, comparing punches. She mistakes the purpose of the comparison and screams, "Oh, you're wounded." The General gets rid of her only to have her reappear.

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<sup>1</sup>Theodore W. Hatlen, Orientation to the Theatre (New York, 1962) p. 128.

This time she is advised to wait and read a magazine as she does so. "A magazine! Like at the dentists" is a music hall type joke as are her repeated interruptions which occur also in vaudeville sketches. Another slapstick bit involves the General's attempts to unhook his swords from the wall in Act III. The slapstick adds to the hilarity for a few moments but when the Doctor reminds the General Gaston is but a child and the General replies "There are no children anymore," the grin at the slapstick is likely to freeze; the spectator should hear disillusioned hurt behind the statement more keenly, because only a few seconds before the man who now seems pitiful was the object of ridicule.

One of the most interesting things about Anouilh is how near and yet how far he is from a realistic portrayal of life. In The Waltz realistic and fantastic aspects are so combined that anyone familiar with the realistic dramatic tradition is likely to find it difficult to decide how to "take" the drama. Anouilh doesn't mind this; it aids and abets his attempt to keep the viewer off-guard so he can present his heightened view, his poetic and imaginative interpretation, of life. Anouilh's "new world of conventions" is made up of ones which have already been rubricized and pigeonholed (realism among them) but he employs the conventions in unconventional ways and touches the whole with fantasy. Before exploring the anti-realistic elements of The Waltz, a review of similarities between Anouilh and the realists is of value.

The realist uses a number of traditional means to make his commentary. There is usually an adherence, for example, to the classical unities of time, place and action. Anouilh follows this pattern. Anouilh has selected as the point of attack an incident near the climax of the play, very much as does the realist. Ghislaine arrives with the love letters in Act I, Scene 1. The major climax is reached as the General's illusions concerning his wife

are stripped away in Act II, Scene 2.

Anouilh concentrates upon a small group of characters and only for a short period of time. His plot is also exceedingly simple. Fowlie notes "Two major occurrences sustain the play's action. He [the General] discovers that his wife has always been unfaithful, and that the young girl with whom he danced la valse des toreadors seventeen years ago has fallen in love with his secretary, a young man named Gaston, who turns out, at the end of the play, to be the General's own illegitimate son."<sup>1</sup> The playwright also goes to great pains to contrive a plot with inexorable illogical-logicality. It is implausible in a way, and yet, because the General believes so intensely in the reality of what is happening, a spectator will find it difficult to remain completely unimplicated. Anouilh undergirds each characterization with environmental influences as do the realists. He motivates the characters to behave as they do. Gaston, reared in the convent away from the main stream of life, is gauche and gullible. Ghislaine, an old maid, responds to Gaston with a fervor that follows long years of restraint. Emily, a former opera singer, carries on her performance after marriage, and when she is removed from an active milieu she logically becomes bored and restless, finally taking to her bed in protest. The dialogue Anouilh writes also has realistic elements; he employs metaphors from actual experience: "Life is like a long family lunch," and the "ideal is the lifebouy."<sup>2</sup>

There are, as noted, many similarities, then, between Anouilh and the realist. But while the latter "in an attempt to condense the action and frame it in a solid mold amid a welter of concrete details...sacrificed his

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<sup>1</sup>Fowlie, p. 117-118.

<sup>2</sup>Pronko, p. 134.

chance to stimulate the imagination and to give free play to his fancy,"<sup>1</sup> Anouilh has not let realistic elements hamper his inventiveness.

While the realist is likely to begin with a situation, the French playwright begins with characters.<sup>2</sup> "A theatrical fantasy is gradually generated by them and organized around them. After only a few speeches, a plot begins to form. The characters themselves create their own setting and their own drama,"<sup>3</sup> Fowlie notes as he points to this method having been used by Anouilh in imitation of the way Pirandello's Six Characters in Search of an Author is constructed.

Characters are conceived with varying degrees of the exaggerated and the realistic. The grown daughters of General Saint-Pe, probably the most fancifully conceived of the characters in The Waltz, are straight out of a vivid imagination. Yet, they graphically demonstrate their father's advancing age and his illusions of being young as few other things could. In Chislaine's person in Act I, Scenes 1 and 2, as well as in Act II, Scene 1, she is an imaginative embodiment of female virginity. The man with the newspaper in the train who she imagines is going to attack her and the revolver she carries emphasize her orientation around the central fact of her purity. And while Gaston's nurturing in the monastery accounts for the general characteristics he has, the playwright accentuates his traits making him extra naive, extra proper, extra bashful--Anouilh's way of touching the young man with his playwright's magic. The minor characters, Eugenie, Pamela, Madame Dupont Fredaine,

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<sup>1</sup>Hatlen, p. 148.

<sup>2</sup>The General and Emily appear as characters in Ardele written and produced three years before The Waltz was written or staged.

<sup>3</sup>Fowlie, p. 117.

and Father Ambrose, are stock characters artificial, yet lifelike. Emily is more touched with the playwright's imaginative flights than either the General or Doctor Bonfant, but her emotional outlook demands it for the effects Anouilh seeks. Doctor Bonfant is used as a base of normality for measuring the others so he is drawn most realistically of all. But it is the General who, though grounded firmly in realism, has aspects of his character touched with imagination and who speaks in the language most touched with imagery; this blend lifts him into a realm where he is larger than life and "truer than true."

The fact that The Waltz is one giant "play-within-a-play" removes it from realism. This enables Anouilh to have his characters recognize the essential theatricality of the experience they undergo and the spectator, in consequence, is occasionally reminded by the lines in the dialogue that he is in the theatre watching a play. The spectator disbelieves for a moment and achieves respite from being implicated. Invariably, very shortly after one of the speeches alluding to the play as a play the mood becomes intense and belief is re-engendered rapidly.

As an adjunct to Anouilh's imaginative interpretation, mention should be made of his poetic treatment of life. The playwright does not use lyrical, rhetorical or grandiloquent speech. It is Pronko's opinion that "the poetry of Anouilh's language lies...in a use of imagery which is integrated so closely with the thought of the characters that it is an essential part of it."<sup>1</sup> While the metaphor of life being like a long family lunch is taken from everyday experience and is in that sense not fanciful or exotic, it is

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<sup>1</sup>Pronko, pp. 133-134.

imagery nevertheless. So is the Doctor's line in which he speaks of the General's heart advising him to "let it unswell quietly that old over-tender sponge." Chiari recognizes, while Anouilh is not strictly speaking a poet, "there are in his plays beautiful moments expressed in true poetic language which rises beyond character into a world of his own." Chiari also notes Anouilh's language is a subtle and pointed instrument in satire and biting comments against vulgarity or social weakness.<sup>1</sup> The entire scene between Gaston and the General in Act II, Scene 1 could well be lifted from the play and would almost stand on its own as a vivid and cogent description of the predominant way men look at life and its ideals. As for the final scene between the Doctor and the General late in Act III, which follows the exit of the rest of the group who are on their way to church, it has poignancy without descending into sentimentality, and successfully underlines the intensity of the emotion both men feel without becoming banal. The economy of the language and the skill of the playwright at breaking the overall mood by having each man in his own way try to inject humor is responsible. A quotation from Marsh may further illustrate Anouilh's particular brand of "poetic truth:"

Anouilh writes in the poetic tradition of this century's best French drama. He shares with many other playwrights the conception of drama as in essence poetic--stirring and reflective, arresting and impressive in language, dotted with longer speeches of beautifully chiselled prose that are poems in themselves, taking its inspiration in its characters but transcending them into a world of universal sympathy, not delving into them with clinical inquisitiveness. Anouilh's lyricism, his satire of the human...his plea for purity and sincerity with no tinge of moralizing, his indifference to allegations of contradictions in his works, are in this tradition of poetic truth.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Chiari, p. 203.

<sup>2</sup>Marsh, p. 191.

The playwright is not content to let poetry and fantasy triumph over realism, to use melodrama, farce and sentimentalism in unorthodox fashions, and to sprinkle the whole with vaudeville and slapstick touches. To make sure the spectator is kept charged with tension and to further compel his attention Anouilh juxtaposes contrasting ages and traits of characters and then adjusts and readjusts first impressions. Characters are, for example, delineated rapidly and economically and the plot is advanced as well by playing off Gaston's youth and the General's age against each other; simultaneously, the virginity and timidity of the former is contrasted with the sophistication and expansiveness of the latter. Ghislaine's beauty and sweet pliability of manner early in the play are an obvious contrast to Emily's reported ugliness and demanding stridency. Anouilh also takes a pattern of feeling of one character and counters it by a contrary pattern from the same character as he is seen in another light. In Act I, Scenes 1 and 2, for instance, the Doctor's calm reasonableness and gentle sense of humor are played off against the General's illogicality and seriousness. The latter is shown, however, to be able to be logical and have a sense of humor, too, in Act II, Scene 1, when he takes Gaston in hand and recites a successful man's code of living. Change follows change, modulation follows modulation throughout the play. Finally, when the lights go out upon the dramatic experience the realization of how masterfully Anouilh reconciles the seemingly opposite characteristics of the two main couples concerned--Gaston and Ghislaine, the General and Emily--dawns. The no-longer chaste Gaston of Act III, who chooses the path of action which the General is unable to take at this time in his retired life, is firming up characteristics very like those of the older man. As for the apparent dissimilarity between Ghislaine and Emily, it is revealed as largely illusory. The two women, in the final analysis, are temperamentally alike--high pitched

emotionally--and with the passage of time the former has the demonstrated potentiality to become the exact type of the latter; the spectator suspects, further, that the relationship cycle of the younger couple will be the same as their elderly counterpart, for the two women are one, capable of having the same effect on their prototype men. "Make way for the young", the Doctor says. "May they commit the self-same follies and die of the same diseases." The way Anouilh delineates the characters, they will.

For reasons of clarity the element of irony of manner was not mentioned during the foregoing discussion. This type of irony is in operation in the process of character delineation as described. It is demonstrated when "a person's true character is shown to be in painfully comic contrast to his appearance or manner."<sup>1</sup> The supposedly invalid wife, for example, is revealed as having the strongest will in the play. The General declares he is implacable as he relentlessly closes the door on his wife's cries; later, however, he goes down time after time to defeat because he is not able to be implacable at all. The girls get their dresses; his wife defeats him; he has to give in to Gaston and Ghislaine and to yield to their marriage. It is Gaston, the timid convent-trained secretary, who has sufficient ruthlessness to go after what he wants and get it. Ghislaine, who seems gentle in the early part of the play, hurts quickly but cleanly in Act III. But these examples are over-simplified. Actually, the irony of manners operates so gradually throughout the play, in many cases, that one facet of a character is presented only to be contradicted by another and then another. This is especially true in the case of the General. The viewer is led early in the play, to sympathize with the character. Thereafter, any of his comic characteristics are painful, especially when, a moment after laughter arises, Anouilh invariably indicts the spectator for mocking by again inspiring sympathy for the man. Through a skillful use of irony of manners it

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<sup>1</sup> Ian Reynolds Thompson, The Dry Mock, A Study of Irony in Drama (Berkeley, 1948) p. 7.



is not until the play is finally over that a synthesis of impressions can be made.

Verbal irony is employed, also, to arrest the spectator's attention. It is being used when "the implication of what is said is in painfully comic contrast to what is meant."<sup>1</sup> A clear-cut example may be seen in Act I, Scene 1, when the wife asks what the General is thinking about as he is writing his letter and he replies "you." Later in the scene when the memoirs are being written another example occurs. The General dwells on the little twelve year-old native girls standing naked, alone, and defenseless in the dark tent; he sensuously relishes recalling the occurrence. But when Gaston, who becomes as "worked up" as the General, interrupts and says anxiously "and then---," the General's reply is painfully comic. "Well, we're not savages. We turned them over to the sisters at Rabat." The spectator wonders if the soldiers were such heroes. The playwright, however, does not give the viewer any time to reach a conclusion for the play's action rolls relentlessly on. The Doctor enters, Gaston exits, and the ensuing scene between the General and the physician, who the spectator is seeing for the first time in the play, compels attention. The soldiers, the native girls and the nuns are forgotten.

The way Anouilh encompasses the entire structure of the play within a comic irony framework is especially interesting when one is considering the spectator. Using the knowledge of how the viewer's mind works and wishing to disturb its equilibrium the playwright fully considers that the spectator knows all. He then mixes two forces, positive and negative, in the viewer's mind. The positive force in The Waltz of the Toreadors is the General's "wish to be and assert himself." The negative force is comprised of the multiple factors working against the realization of the General's desires. Comic dramatic irony

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 5.

emerges when the spectator sees trivial and commonplace events undermine and belittle the General into his final near-helplessness.<sup>1</sup>

The negative forces in *The Waltz of the Toreadors* are especially complex because Anouilh plants many within the personality of General Saint-Pe himself. Leon's own impulses come in conflict with his reluctance to hurt others. His complacency opposes his urge to assert himself. His desire to "keep up appearances" wars with his timid consideration of shocking public opinion. In short, General Saint-Pe's personality is divided against itself. And much of his final defeat lies in his inability to have faith that he can accomplish. Commonplace values have rendered him so powerless that he is commonplace.

Combined trivia which come from without and act as additional negative forces are the girls prattling for their dresses, Ghislaine's emotional outbursts which interrupt the Doctor when he is trying to get the General to act, the entrance of the maid as she heralds the coming of a new maid into the household, and the arrival of Madame DuPont Fredaine. All interrupt and undermine any resolution the General might accumulate otherwise. All are inconsequential, yet they act cumulatively to corrode his too-weak desire for self-assertion.

The chain of coincidences that help to destroy the General's hopes are also part of the negative force working to belittle and undermine him. Ghislaine enters with the love letters. This tempts the General to consider reviving their old love, assert himself with his wife and perhaps escape in order that he may finally Be.<sup>2</sup> When he hesitates, however, and becomes

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<sup>1</sup>Styan, p. 41.

<sup>2</sup>Be alludes to the state of Being-Becoming, i.e. having identity.

angry at the Doctor, Ghislaine is bewildered. She waits. Meanwhile the General finds the suicide note of his wife. Ghislaine overhears his concern for Emily and decides to commit suicide herself. It is then she jumps from the window and the accidental meeting between her and Gaston takes place. One of the most ironic coincidences, however, is one the spectator can realize only in Act III when Gaston's real father is revealed. The General is finally disarmed by a young man conceived twenty years before while he was not considering the possible consequences of his actions. It is this lack of consideration of consequences which Anouilh focuses upon rather than upon the boy's legitimacy or illegitimacy.

A recitation of the plot raises questions. Doesn't the play appear very slickly "well-made?" Fowlie does not believe so. He feels the term "well-made" is better applied to the realistic theatre "than to the plays of Moliere, Marivaux, or Anouilh, where the construction is more musical and choreographic."<sup>1</sup> How about the use of coincidence? It is not stretched too far? It is Marsh's opinion that Anouilh "knows the value of improbability and is never frightened of the critic's shortsighted complaints that his plays are contrived, for he writes in a tone where contrivance makes for strength rather than weakness." The critic goes on to note that the dramatist is not attempting to be realistic in details; he is playing with his characters. And, Marsh adds "this very playing shows up the helplessness not only of his characters, but of the human race itself."<sup>2</sup>

Styan notes "a reorientation of attention in the audience may be decided by a subtle turn of mood or tone, even at a verbal level simply, as

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<sup>1</sup>Fowlie, p. 112-113.

<sup>2</sup>Marsh, p. 189.

in conversation when a stray remark from a stranger arrests us, or when a new note in a familiar voice makes us start and look."<sup>1</sup> Anouilh subtly turns mood and tone, especially when revealing the character of the General. Within a short time the playwright can show the man as both a clown and a hero capable of inspiring laughter and pity. A single speech can, for example, arouse ambivalent feelings:

General: The shell is handsome. They have painted the oak leaves onto it, and Lord knows how many decorations. I have a lovely house, splendid whiskers, the easy wench in these parts refuse me nothing. When I go by on my black mare of a morning, in my corsets, I'll even wager I make the little virgins at the High School that peep behind their curtains dream of me. I utter enormities when the fancy takes me, and everyone turns a deaf ear, even the priest, because I have a way with me.

Thus far, this speech from Act II, Scene 1, has a self-congratulatory tone and a bright mood. The man making it seems to be a singularly proud and self-confident man. But, the General has not finished speaking:

Well, my friend, the shell is empty. There's nobody inside. I am alone, and I'm afraid.

Suddenly, the proud man is humble; his earlier self-confidence is shown to be partially assumed. The contrast between the two sections of the speech is so sharp, the emotional tone so different, that though the former is longer, its lighter tone is shattered and undercut by a depth of misery so strong that the overall dual impression is balanced; ambiguous feelings in the viewer result.

In any discussion of Anouilh's style comment should be made on his ability to build suspense in The Waltz of the Toreadors. His handling of the Wife is a classic example. Her voice is heard at the opening of the play.

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<sup>1</sup>Styan, p. 251

It rises from an invalid whine to an insidious attack. Her presence is felt from the beginning, then, and from that point on, though she is not seen fully until Act II, Scene 2, she is carried onstage by the General and dumped into Gaston's arms in Act I, Scene 2. Her face is not seen; neither does this short confrontation add delineation to her character. It piques the curiosity, however, and the spectator is reminded of her presence. In Act II, Scene 1, Emily calls to Leon at a crucial moment. She pitifully asks him to come and sit with her just as he is about to go in and resolutely ask for a divorce. The Spectator is quite likely to sympathize momentarily with her at this point. After all, by this time in the play it has been divulged that her accusations in the opening scene concerning the General's unfaithfulness are true so loyalty may be divided. Anouilh finally brings Emily on the stage in Act II, Scene 2; she plays her big scene and is shown for what she is. The audience no longer wonders about Leon's opponent; it has met her and she is formidable. Though she does not reappear physically onstage her voice cuts into the silence as the General is alone in his defeat following the final exit of the Doctor. She says she is going to sleep but the spectator knows her eyes will not remain closed for long. She will watch the General for the rest of his life.

While exploring the style of Anouilh it was evident that though the playwright juggles seemingly incompatible elements and creates many contradictory impressions in the play, The Waltz of the Toreadors taken in its entirety is unified. At first it is not evident how this "wholeness" has been attained. Finally, J. L. Styan sheds light on the matter. In The Waltz of the Toreadors he notes, "the farcical and the pathetic are counterpointed in perfect balance."<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Styan, p. 198.

He explains further, speaking generally: "...the unity of a play is not to be conceived narrowly as a matter of forms, as unity of 'action,' but a final tone and climate, a 'fourth' unity in which opposites may flourish together in the audience's mind...the unity lies in a higher sphere in the feeling or in the reference to ideas. The fourth unity is possible even where ingredients are mixed, provided that the author burns with his thesis, has made an accurate assessment of his audience, and can keep it strictly enslaved."<sup>1</sup>

But to what rules does Anouilh adhere to achieve the "fourth unity?" Styan says: "The effect cannot be gotten by following a set of rules, but can be forged from the materials of the specific subject chosen and from the rhythm the subject imposes. The element of life the author has selected for treatment must determine the form the play must take."<sup>2</sup> Let us correlate these remarks with what has been determined about The Waltz. The specific subject is the life of General Saint-Pe who, after forty-seven years of "keeping up appearances," finding his expectations crushed and his illusions destroyed, realizes how useless and absurd the pattern he has so slavishly followed really is in either establishing his identity or giving meaning to his life. This subject imposes disturbing, even unsettling, rhythms on the play. The rhythms mirror not only the inner turmoil the General feels as the props under his life and self-identity begin to sway and finally give way, but reflect also the dizzying void of nothingness which opens before him when he can no longer believe either he or his life is significant. As for the element of life which determines the form of the play, it is the

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 295.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 124.

realm in which illusion vies with reality.

There is no doubt that Anouilh "burns" with his thesis: the structure of society leads man into adopting illusions and once man compromises with society he compromises himself and his concept of reality. The various stylistic devices enable Anouilh to lead the viewer to experience the element of life dealt with--illusion vying with reality--on two levels. The first level lies within the play's context as the spectator shares the General's vacillation between illusion and reality. The second level is experienced by the viewer in his own world. He is both disappointed when his own expectations held in connection with familiar theatrical conventions prove illusory and disturbed as the types of irony employed render predicting what will come next almost impossible. As the viewer loses familiar points of reference he finds himself adrift in an absurd, unpredictable and ambiguous reality very similar to that the General faces within the play. Thus, in the final analysis, the viewer is forced to place his trust in the playwright's ability to extricate him from a dual predicament--that of the General and his own. Fortunately, Anouilh's hand is so firm and his techniques so skillfully executed throughout The Waltz that the spectator is always aware of a powerful, albeit unpredictable, commanding form being fulfilled. This secures participation of the viewer until the "fourth unity" is achieved at the final curtain.

### PERFORMANCE STRATEGY

It was discovered during research that there were many pitfalls in presenting The Waltz of the Toreadors. Styan warns that any of the pieces grincantes (grating plays) "invite anguished experience; their ironies can sicken; their flavor can be acrid and nauseous." He notes also: "even if the producer and his actors do hit upon the precise level of playing, there can be no guarantee that they can hold all the audience all the time. Audiences pricked too hard will kick."<sup>1</sup> It was clear that while there was no assurance that audience reaction could be fully controlled or predicted, a level of playing within the intentions of the author would have to be achieved.

The level of playing was based upon the following reasoning: The Waltz of the Toreadors is not meant to "entertain" in the usual sense; it is permeated with ambiguity reflected in a mood of unrest and the spectator can perceive this mood only if tension is sustained by the clear demarcation of the many nuances in the play that lead, in turn, to amused, detached, or aggrieved attitudes. The themes are universal and are expressed both implicitly and explicitly in action and dialogue. Clarity is mandatory; dialogue must not be glossed over any more than the many moods, and action must be clear-cut; action cannot proceed at such a breakneck pace, even in the potentially uproarious scenes, that characterizations are "fuzzy". Only sensitive acting can reflect the acrobatic leaps of the author's mind and feelings, and finally reveal the many dimensions of the play.

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<sup>1</sup>Styan, p. 292, 273.



The following strategy was developed to achieve the desired effect. It was decided that during the earliest rehearsals the actors should be encouraged to leave themselves open to the text, carefully observing and seeking to establish each individual character's feelings and thoughts. Search for motivations or reasoned "understanding" of these characters, spangled as they are with poetry and imagination, was not held to be as important as the transposing of the individual actor's self into the situation, experiencing the excitement and responding to other characters sharing the experience. The actor must simply believe. The comedy and pathos, after all, originate in the individual orientation of each character-person. If each could "be," the jointly created situation would, hopefully, be animated and momentum would be generated.

The playwright had taken great risks in the writing of the play as he attempted to balance his many opposites. Any such balance is precarious. The actors might feel the precariousness of the balance and sense the risks involved as they attempted the many emotional and intellectual leaps reflected in the script. Ghislaine, the General, and Emily have wide emotional ranges in their individual personalities, demanding flexibility and great commitment from the actors playing the roles. Most performers have not taken risks of the type inherent in The Waltz. The temptation for the actors, playing these three roles especially, might be to either work for laughs or play for sympathy. In order to waylay this tendency as much as possible, the performers were encouraged to play the roles "straight" for at least the first five weeks of the rehearsal period. This would give them a chance to probe all nuances and to experience the whole as sincerely and earnestly as possible and to relax while doing so. Then, during the two final weeks of rehearsal, characterizations and action could be slightly heightened and exaggerated so the

"mountain tops" and "valleys" of emotion would be revealed in the perspective the playwright intended. During this time the solidly grounded players could stand back just far enough to thoroughly delight in the risks they must inevitably take, and the inherent zest of the play would be revealed through their enjoyment. If this occurred, it was hoped that the audience would not "kick" too hard even though it was being hit.

## CONCLUSION

Risks, mountain tops, valleys, zest--these are words that would always be associated with The Waltz of the Toreadors. The picture, however, was still far from complete. Then (if I may be personal for a moment), I remembered an experience I had had one evening when I returned home from rehearsal during the fourth week of preparation. The house was quiet and the play kept going round and round in my mind. Finally, in an attempt to still the unrest, I sat down and tried to articulate what was felt about the characters and their situation. The following impressions were the result.

A chill wind blows in the dusky corridor and there are echoes of cries to be heard in the half-light. Vari-colored tinsel streamers hang from the ceiling and there are garish posters on the walls, but the floor of the corridor is dank and damp. There are people trying to walk steadily in some kind of straight line, but they don't succeed. Far more often they fall and bruise themselves on the rough cobblestones. Every now and then the dim light is broken by harsh floods falling from an unknown source; the streamers glow and sparkle and the posters glare and suddenly the stumbling people are no more; they are animated phantoms going through elaborate motions, speaking in a stream, yet one doesn't hear the other though the voices are harsh and shrill. Every now and then, in darkness or light, an icy air current catches the people, tosses them into the air, whirls them about and sets them down again in the same place, nearly, as they started. They look so funny as they tumble and twist--until they start to whimper with fear. And why shouldn't they be fearful and whimper? It's frightening to be turned, twisted and slammed about at the mercy of a capricious blast of chill air.

These are shadow-people without any real content. They feel a great deal; in fact, feelings--laughter, tears, giggles, shouts, hysteria and sobs--seem to be running rampant; it's almost as though they must feel to feel alive. For because of the winking, blinking lights their eyes are weak--so weak they don't discern much of anything or anyone about them. Each sobs alone, wishing that something would rescue him. But there is no great voice telling them what to do, which way to go or how to protect themselves. None can look at himself nor can anyone look at any other; it's frightening to look at one's self or one's self reflected in another.

Fear is everywhere; even when they're masked and playing the game in the light of the floods, they're frightened--frightened of being unmasked--for someone might see there are no eyes in the faces under the masks and tears stream from the open holes where eyes ought to be. Not one would like anyone to see his tears; tears are not allowed in the game.

And yet, the game is a help. Pretending helps one to be powerful and see some structured game in which one is competing. When one plays with maids, or takes a lover, one's eyes can be turned away from the mystifying feelings one has inside. Pretending is like wrapping one's self in cottonwool. Pretending protects one from the chill wind that blows, keeps one's feet on the ground--almost--but the strong gusts come from time to time, then the game's held up, the mask of pretense falls and they're helpless.

"Be yourself," I feel like shouting. But, it's too late for that. These people are themselves, the only selves they'll ever have. They've acted parts for so long, parts that their profession prescribed, or that society says one must play if one is a "madame" or a "mademoiselle" that they can no longer differentiate any other self from the selves they irrevocably are.

There's no way out for any one of them, I think, unless they thicken their skins and get so they don't shiver in the wind; unless they fill up the void inside by facing it and saying, "So there's a wind. So I'm alone. So I'm going to be twisted and whipped by the gusts every now and then. This is the way it is. There's no getting around that. Rules won't help me. Romance won't solve the problem. Playing a role won't either. In fact, the longer I imagine either a role or rules are going to help the more I'll be frozen into the mask and fettered by the rules. Pretty soon, I'll not be able to escape at all. Life will be over and it'll be too late; all I'll have to take into the grave is a mask and afterwards--well, rules and a mask won't help there--if there is anything there."

Live, don't play at living. It's easier to play and it seems safer to play and most people are playing at living, but someone outside them is calling the shots. They aren't free. And there is always danger one will be found out. Someone may discover there are just tears and no eyes where the eyes ought to be under the mask.

But they can't hear me; they can't hear any better than they can see. Poor lost children; poor little boy lost; he's a little boy still and he's lost and life is very nearly over. What a waste! The roles they played and the performances they gave and those tears--they were all wasted. "It's a farce; but it's so sad."

At moments they are almost beautiful, at moments outlandish, at moments grotesque, and at moments sad; they could have been humans but instead they were actors--hollow humans--and most of them didn't even know it. They could have been whole, but instead they were divided into two compartments that had mixed until the two compartments

were no longer demarcated clearly. The two faces have now melded into one huge frozen grin. But inside there is a whisper--a mystifying whimper of longing for something.

These people may be good but for a night as they walk through their given paces; they may not even be remembered because they're so much like you and me and everyone we know and we don't like to see ourselves. No, they may not be remembered, except by those who know them, who saw their helplessness, who felt their fears, who heard their cries under the frozen grimace, who held out a hand night after night, a hand they couldn't take because the light in their corridor was so dim and the wind so strong and cold and the hand they saw as danger, as one of the gusts was danger. It just might tip--tip them over.

It was clear that "wasted people" and "lost people" must be added to "mountain tops" and "valleys" and "risk" and "zest" as terms that would be recollected in connection with The Waltz of the Toreadors. But, as the director looked at this list, she realized that something was still being overlooked. Some reason needed to be found to explain why, in the final analysis, The Waltz does not sink into deep dark despair as it is being viewed, how--even as it deals with people who have compromised with life and compromised themselves--it manages to exhilarate.

And suddenly, out of the welter of research information and the intricacy of the play itself, a pattern emerged. A statement by Marsh concerning a conviction Anouilh holds in common with the existentialists that had not first seemed to apply to The Waltz was recalled. "The existentialist believes that he is free to create his own values and need not accept anyone else's. These are his ultimately true gestures."<sup>1</sup> Subsequently, a concept of Carl Hausman of the KSU Department of Philosophy came to mind:

It seems to me that the difference between plants, animals and humans is the latter's ability to create. Plants and animals follow routine laws of development. But human beings can, at

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<sup>1</sup>Marsh, p. 193.

any moment, rise above the routine. To be creative is to be supremely human.<sup>1</sup>

Once these two statements were synthesized it was clear what the Doctor and General mean as they talk of the soul in Act II, Scene 1. The Doctor terms it a "sickness" and says, "It's war if you don't make your peace with it." The playwright is, above all, demonstrating the war in The Waltz. The soul--man's desire to be free, to uniquely express himself creatively as a demonstration of his freedom--struggles within the General. He is so bogged down in routine and so inundated by values others have created, however, that he cannot heed his own desire to express himself as a unique human being. The General cannot risk; does not have true zest; fails to do what he feels a man should be able to do--create beauty for himself.

But, even as the war is lost by the General in The Waltz, it is won by the playwright who triumphantly creates his concept of beauty and shares it. Anouilh suffers from none of the restrictive afflictions of his characters, and the risks the playwright takes, out of which much of the zest of the play arises, is his assertion of freedom in the creative act. Years ago he withdrew from society. As he views life from a distance he has a perspective on man's plight that one deeply involved in the dilemma is unlikely to have. The General is dominated by frivolities--"his great mustache, his glands, his social rank, his career" and the image attendant on them--so he has stayed a little boy and catastrophe follows. Anouilh, in contrast, dominates his creative vision; refuses the image of "the playwright" that he might create if he so desired, and he exhibits maturity as a successful dramatist.

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<sup>1</sup>Quotation transcribed from the final program in a radio series "The Creative Process" produced in October, 1965, and filed at KSAC Radio, Nichols Gymnasium, Kansas State University, Manhattan, Kansas.

While the General's interests are childish, dominated by trivia, the playwright's interests are adult. Anouilh is concerned with man's plight and trivialities are introduced into The Waltz only to drive home the playwright's point--most men are circumvented from self-expression because they allow themselves to be inundated by the unimportant. While the General does not feel capable of assuming responsibility, hesitates from making decisions, and depends on his adolescent social "sets" for guidance--while he is, in short, a puppet, with others (society, his profession, his wife) pulling the strings--his playwright creator is free and exhibits a sure hand, taking full responsibility for the dramatic experience he creates. Anouilh lampoons the social "sets" of the 1910 era and ours, takes the dramatic conventions of the time into which he came into the world and by which he was molded, and joyfully uses them toward his own unique ends, thus demonstrating his freedom from them. Yet, even as he acts as puppeteer, he does not violate the characters. Even as he speaks within each and every one, he imposes his own viewpoint on none for no one can demonstrate it. He expressed his freedom, instead, in the dramatic form. While the General clings to safety and the known course, refusing risks, preferring the conventional, the playwright, on the other hand, chooses a dangerous, uncharted course without hesitation and, in so doing, develops an unconventional, unique and exciting method of his own.

Anouilh does not even share the General's conventional differentiation ugliness and beauty or the feeling of the character that the contemplation of art should render one peaceful. Anouilh prefers to challenge and disturb and he blends beauty and ugliness to achieve his final effect. As Marsh notes, the playwright gives the General a grotesquely decorated envelope and slips a letter of lonely and poetic grief inside. In so doing Anouilh impresses, even delights, with the truth of man's image.

Perhaps the playwright's devotion to the idea of the individual's freedom to create his own values is reflected most markedly in what he attempts to accomplish for actors, directors and spectators who confront The Waltz. Though Anouilh sees man caught in a routine and largely uncreative cycle within the play's action, representative of life as we the majority live it, actors, directors and spectators are invited, by the play's very structure, to rise to a new level--a creative level--in order to participate. Each must attempt to depart from the known, relinquish familiar values, suspend judgement and take risks in the effort to metaphorically rise to grasp and understand. Thus the playwright opens up the possibility of the individual realizing as he is freed that, as Professor Hausman states:

Human beings can, at any moment, rise above the routine. Every moment opens the possibility of a creative act. The more we are open to our own potential, to the way that each moment provides a stimulus, the more we are liable to bring forth something new and valuable.

The playwright knows that:

Each one has a capability for creativity; it is imperative that each has a realization of his capability of providing something new, violating routine in doing it, bringing forth something that is valuable by breaking convention.<sup>1</sup>

The spectator, actors and director are urged to open their minds and feelings and experience their capability for creativity in appreciating the play.

Thus, the playwright, in the final analysis, presents an opportunity for every person confronting The Waltz to reject life as being either an absurd mechanism with man as its victim or a game one plays in order to endure. A sensitive individual can, while participating in the dramatic experience, feel something else, something beyond the usual. Once this is felt, perhaps

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<sup>1</sup>Both quotes are from Carl Hausman, Ibid.



he can go on to create a self, to establish a unique identity, to chart a "supreme" destiny.

Anouilh's "creative courage" is great. He has faith in the knowledge that he must violate, but at the same time he is steadfast for he knows he is not simply seeking to destroy. He is seeking something that is positive and valuable that will come after he has broken with what is familiar. And, in The Waltz of the Toreadors he succeeds. Gustave Flaubert in his Letters says, "The artist in his work of art has to be like God in the creation, invisible but all mighty. You should feel him everywhere but see him nowhere."<sup>1</sup> This is Anouilh's achievement in the play.

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<sup>1</sup>From the notebook of a friend who saves memorable quotations.

**PART II PRODUCTION DETAILS**

## THE ACTORS

### Appearance, Personality and Growth of Characters

Amouilh places few stringent limits on the physiques of most of the characters in the play. The director concentrated, therefore, on selecting people who could, first of all, best fulfill the acting demands. Other considerations were also kept in mind; whether or not the individual actor had a physical presence in keeping with the personality traits of the character he would play; how his or her build would physically complement the other cast members. It was felt there should not be a wide disparity in either the talents or physiques of the individuals; this might tend to attract undue attention to one or another and visually distract from the text.

GENERAL SAINT-PE. The build of the actor selected to play the General was the one around which the other characters would revolve. The young man finally selected was five feet seven inches tall and had a substantial, bloomy build. He was padded so he would have a hint of a paunch. He stood tall and had an authoritative presence. He attempted to develop a military bearing with the assurance this connotes. His stride was firm and a bit measured, befitting a man who had frequently reviewed troops. Since a retired man of forty-seven was regarded as old in 1910, the lethargy of body and heavy footedness associated with an older person was attempted. This also emphasized the disparity between the youthful Lieutenant the General insists he is and the actual person he has become during the intervening years.

The General has many facets to his personality and many lie at oppo-

site ends of the pole. This is Anouilh's way of dramatizing the essential lack of unity within the central character. The elderly man is a victim of inner conflicts, trapped in his own temperament and whipped by passions he can never explain. These conflicts are brought sharply into focus by the situation within which the General finds himself. He is retired. He has long hours in which to think, to review his life, to wonder just who and what he is. He averts his eyes from what he has become, however, for in contrasting his present life with his past the latter seems preferable.

Little of the General's background before he entered the military is divulged in the play. He must have been an exuberant youth, however, who sought glamor and adventure in the military. It is known that he associated chastity with his love for Ghislaine; this reveals him as a person with principles and a capability for not violating someone whom he regards as a special person.

Life in the army was structured. Leon felt busy and useful. What he was working toward seemed worthwhile--the Glory of France. He felt needed and important to the colonization push.

All of the young Lieutenant's energies, however, were directed toward becoming successful in the eyes of others and winning the approval of others. In consequence, he did everything society expected of him. He kept up appearances by marrying, having children, obtaining a fine house, growing fine whiskers, developing a gallant manner and acting impressive. In his spare time he was frankly and unashamedly frivolous, as were the other men he knew. He dabbled in culture--opera and art--for it was the fashion to do so. And he finally won a singer as his wife. This did not prevent him from having affairs with many other women as well, for it was an accepted way for men to exhibit their prowess. As time passed he came to appreciate pure beauty and

to loathe personal ugliness. The combination of meeting society's demands and developing dilettante tastes worked like a charm. He advanced in the military rapidly.

In the service Leon performed well. He became used to taking orders and adopted the military code of honor, the highest expression of the military mind. It impressed upon him that his honor and nobility depended, not on his personal virtues and quality but upon his belonging to a certain class or caste. His attention was focused upon the honor of the family, the honor of the class, the honor of the regiment, and the honor of the army. Within this thought framework he was obliged to forget himself and be willing to sacrifice his life for the sake of the groups with which he had learned to identify himself. These moral valuations had an impersonal, generic, regimental, class character, and their worth depended on their being impersonal. Thus, Leon came to believe that his individual honor depended not on what proceeded from him but on what proceeded from another, not on his own but another's feelings.

The young Leon had uneasy feelings about himself sometimes, but he learned to cope with them. When he married he put one prop under his pride. After all, one's wife loves a man; it is her duty. Besides, why shouldn't she? The successful military man is a loveable, handsome man. What more could a woman want? A second prop was added when he fell in love with Ghislaine and found peace whenever he was with her. The furtive meetings between the two, however, were infrequent. Much of the rest of the time the young lieutenant was highly conscious of being alone and afraid. This thought was especially terrorizing for someone might find out how shaky he felt. In battle the very excitement seemed to dull his feeling of isolation. But when time hung heavy on his hands he avidly sought for distraction and company. Then he went to a brothel to cheer his soul up a bit. In the

brothel he could demonstrate his power over an Other; he could compensate for an empty void inside, which he could not justify or even describe.

Now, let us contrast the General's present with his past, avoiding as much as possible the play's action as it develops. No order is imposed on his life in retirement; he is free from outside restraint and rules, other than those he wishes to make for himself. He is master in a fine house, or almost master. His wife interrupts with many demands. Dictating his memoirs helps take up time, though, and so do walks in the garden and furtive pinchings of the maids, which sometimes progresses further. He almost manages to feel safe and secure, until, that is, he looks in the mirror. Then he is forced to admit that age is creeping up on him. It shows in his receding hairline. It is evidenced as his paunch advances. Even the accumulation of braid on his sleeves, when he dresses occasionally in his full regalia, reminds him he is old.

Keeping up appearances is not so necessary in one's home. The General is out of the spotlight and appears only at an occasional fete. He has even stopped participating at the health club. Complacency has set in. He doesn't seem to be able to involve himself with anyone or in anything. Sensuousness is the only frivolity he has left, but this is a diet that does not satisfy him in the long run. It uses up his excess energy, yes, gives him the old feeling of power for a moment, but when the incident is over, he is tired, disheartened, and more conscious than ever that he is alone.

Little progress is made on the memoirs. It is difficult to get much done when there is no schedule that has to be kept. Trivial things keep interrupting him, too. His wife calls to him; his daughters make demands; he is the one who hires the new maids for the household. The General feels he should be satisfied; but he isn't and he doesn't know why. He is highly subjective and becomes increasingly vulnerable. It's easier to feel secure

when he has on his uniform, but there's no need to wear the impressive one, complete with medals. The General also feels himself a "virgin"; this, to him, is very peculiar. Obviously something has gone wrong. He's done everything he can think of, yet he's missed something. But what? This is the main question raised by the character in the play.

The conflicting influences of both the distant and recent past are mirrored during the play in the General's behavior. His early purity and romantic outlook are evident when he is with Ghislaine. Some of his youthful drive and enthusiasm come to the fore as he dictates his memoirs. His forcefulness as a commander of troops is exhibited when he stops the quarrel between the girls and, afterwards, confronts Gaston. Of course, the incident doesn't call for such response; the subjects, after all, are not in uniform. It is the successful man of high rank, also, who gives advice about love and life to Gaston. The General's sensuousness bridges both past and present. It comes to him as naturally as breathing, continually helps to bolster his ego and demonstrates his power. When the General is with the Doctor, however, a different personality is exhibited. Then, he is insecure, frightened, and weak. He finds it difficult to think logically. Without the ability to reason well, action does not often result. Besides, he has so little conviction of his own worth that any personal aims take a back seat. Then too, Leon feels that life is like a "game of dice." He is convinced of an individual's helplessness in the face of fortune's unpredictable twists and turns.

As the plot in the play develops the traits come in real conflict with one another. When Ghislaine exhibits the love letters Emily has written to the Doctor the General begins to experience difficulty. During the ensuing action, he becomes more and more confused. Nothing he tries to do seems to be effectual. He attempts to defend the honor of his home by challenging

the Doctor to a duel. The latter, however, rather easily diverts the General's attention, but frustration at being blocked builds in the military man. He is shown having difficulty in reaching the decision as to whether or not he even has a right to act. Finally, when Leon does get up enough courage to talk with his wife, her brutal revelation of her own infidelity and her picture of him, her husband, is crushing. Her certainty that he is but a thing shakes his very being. She can regard the whole confrontation as a play, a scene from the opera. He knows better. It is the real thing, his all too horrible reality, and he will have to live with this hideous woman forever. There is only one chance for escape and he tries it. He tries to choke the life out of her. But he can't even consummate this action. If, however, he can keep Ghislaine, then life with her in the background will still be bearable. He needs her to preserve some of his pride. She will, he thinks, always see him as her ideal. Of course, Ghislaine is finally lost to the General, also. Gaston takes her. And the General is forced to re-evaluate himself once again. He concludes, "If I've lost her, I'm nothing but an old Pantaloon who never carried a single one of his acts through to a conclusion." He questions Ghislaine closely to see if she can reveal something in Gaston which is attractive; if he could understand what she sees in his secretary he would feel better. But he can't; a bumpkin has won her from him. Thus, in Act II, Scene II, and Act III, the two main props under the General's pride are destroyed. No one loves him. He has only a manner which may or may not be effective. It is to reassure himself that his charm will still work that he tries it on the new maid. Then too, he may, in this relationship manage, even if only for a moment, to feel powerful and influential once again. And if he can't quite achieve that, he will be less lonely in the dark.



The actor playing the General has a difficult task. He must feel rather than think; react rather than initiate action. The best preparatory foundation for the role is to absorb the main principles by which the General has lived, believe fully and wholeheartedly in them and in the fact that two women love him. He should focus upon the security and safety his home represents and see this as desirable; but he must also prefer the past activity and honor to the present passivity and anonymity. He should glory as he dictates the memoirs, for life had meaning then; he was a leader of men. Once these mental "sets" are firmly implanted the actor can let the stimuli of the developing situation, the progression of events and the people involved, all of which undermine these concepts, gradually take their toll on his feelings. Bewilderment, disillusionment, even real hurt will be felt, but this is the risk and the reward. Only if the part is played from moment to moment with deep earnestness, realizing that when the General feels the most powerful, he is living in the past and pretending, will it be exciting both to the actor and the spectator. The focus should not be on winning love or laughs but being experienced, being lived with. The spectator will be fascinated with the complexity of emotions that arise in the character. Only if the actor commits himself fully to each and every nuance can he fascinate properly.

It is not necessary to resolve the conflict in the mind of the actor playing the General. The General cannot resolve it; he merely experiences it. He does not need the actor's judgment of him from any standards of right and wrong, weakness or strength. Only the spectator who dares can render judgment. The way Anouilh has drawn the character, it will not be easy for the spectator to judge, either; the General is the spectator, the spectator's friends, and the spectator's enemies. He is man himself. If

the actor does the job well, the character will emerge as an ambiguous and very human being who will elicit, as real people do, complex responses which will haunt and tease the viewer as he seeks to solve the riddle that lies in the middle of the character and also in the middle of the viewer's deepest self. This is to fulfill the dramatists' intention.

**EMILY, THE WIFE.** The size of the actress playing Emily is somewhat dictated by the script and depends on the physical capacities of the two actors playing Gaston and the General. She has to be lifted and carried about by both. The Emily of this production had a medium-small build and her face was slender. Her features were rather sharp and her eyes were huge.

Emily came from a poor background and had little formal schooling. But, she had drive, for she successfully reached Paris from the provinces with an opera company. The most non-biased account of Emily in her youth comes from Doctor Bonfant. She was not beautiful; she was, however, attractive and vivacious. Several men, even after her marriage, fancied themselves in love with her.

At the time of her marriage to the General, Emily, no doubt, felt she had achieved the pinnacle. She had, after all, married a "comer." Leon was bound to advance in his position and, as his wife, she would advance along with him. She found caring for the children and staying at home an unexciting contrast to her earlier glamorous life on the stage, however. The General's career took him away from home and the full responsibility of the house and the family fell on her shoulders. Boredom resulted. Then, too, after the "first fine careless rapture" the General began to take her for granted. His eyes turned elsewhere. Emily's pride was crushed. Her misery at recalling the Saumur Ball when she finally revolted is not faked. She did not take her husband's neglect passively. She retaliated with a long

sequence of lovers. To insure against the General's leaving her, for she wished to hold the social position she had achieved, she took to her bed; perhaps she even imagined she was truly ill.

By the time the play occurs, the 20 years of marriage have taken their toll. Emily's skin is sallow; her eyes are staring from years of relative isolation, and her self-pity and subjectivism have her enslaved. Any intellectual capacity and drive she has had has been transformed into a restless, neurotic energy. She is entirely self-centered, ruthless and vengeful. She knows how to probe every one of the General's weak spots and she does without a qualm. She does not even have to think or analyze any longer; she instinctively strikes, as would a snake, at the person she holds responsible in her late years for her decay. In her final moment of triumph no veneer of civilization controls the impetuosity of her attack. There is a demonic glee as she watches the General cringe as she disillusion him.

Emily's range may be said to cover four octaves. She is a contralto, a mezzo, a lyric and a dramatic soprano all rolled into one. She can hit every tone with a different shading; her thin lyric soprano wail is every bit as marked as the full contralto blasts. She acts the helpless child with the same ease she appears to be drawing her last breath. Always, Emily feels rather than thinks. Furthermore she tends to cast everything in an operatic mold. In Act III, after the choking, she refuses to relate the attack as being inspired by her own behavior; instead, she sees passion as a regular concomitant of the opera. Why not? After all, she has won and her return to her helpless invalid pattern is a sign of her confidence in her triumph. The General, she is finally certain, will not try to escape again.

If Emily could see herself objectively she would withdraw from herself in horror, but she cannot see herself objectively. Instead she feels

thoroughly justified and is convinced she is in the "right." When all is said and done, she is a formidable opponent--powerful, energetic, without conscience--and she has the strongest will in the play.

GASTON. Because of the eventual revelation that Gaston is the General's son, the height of the slender actor chosen to play the youth was only slightly greater than that of the performer playing his father. The actor had a finely chiseled face and a naturally erect posture. As he created the character of the secretary his movement became quite formal. Thus, the discipline exercised upon Gaston by the priests as he grew up was subtly suggested.

Gaston is a neat, organized, and highly efficient secretary. His honesty and simplicity in Act I and Act II are unmistakable. In the very first scene with the General the young man is a bit shocked by the older man's sophistication, but he is noticeably fascinated by the General's exciting past life, and it is obvious that he admires his elder's poise and zest. It is so different from the behavior of those with whom he grew up.

Gaston's emotional reactions throughout the play are apparently serious, though he is an essentially comic type. When he has his first encounter with Ghislaine his lack of experience with women shows in his clumsy manner; but we see him compromise his principles, kiss her as she asks him to and somehow he has more poise after that. Gaston is sensitive; he is hurt when the General shouts at him for not being able to "manage" Estelle and Sidonia. The young man does not attempt to strike back, however, and he holds his temper. There is no viciousness or flavor of evil in either his words or his actions and malice is not his motive for seducing Ghislaine. Gaston's greatest flaw is his tendency to act without thinking of the possible consequences of his action. He runs in and plays the game with Ghis-

laine when she is pretending to think he is Leon. Thus he falls in love as the answer to his loneliness.

In Act III, Gaston's sexuality is demonstrated. He was shown to have a curiosity about sex and a capacity to become sexually aroused in Act I when the General speaks of the naked native girls; it is not until Act III, however, that he has coitus. The change in Gaston's personality after his encounter with Ghislaine should not be blatantly different; but that he has gained in sophistication, that his manner has become more firm and more authoritative should be unmistakable. For him to act too aggressive would indicate a too-facile putting on of a coat which he is not accustomed to wear. Gaston wishes to impress Ghislaine so badly that he arrives at a stage where he is definitely trying to be masterful. He accepts the General's proposition of fighting the duel. Gaston is freed, too, in the third act to demonstrate affection toward his "Father. My dear old father." This gives another facet to his personality. The role in the Purple Masque production was played with utter subtlety, yet not a nuance was lost. Humor was heightened because of the actor's seriousness, commitment and dedication.

DOCTOR BONFANT. The General's companion and neighbor is also a professional man, but the Doctor is still involved with his practice. While the General's figure is inclined toward paunchiness, as the script indicates, the Doctor's figure is trim; he exercises at the health club. There should not be striking height differences between the two men; in this production the Doctor was only slightly taller than his friend. The former was blonde, however, while the General was dark.

Doctor Bonfant confesses his marriage is no happier than the General's. He seems, however, to accept this as a fact of life. He gives evidence of

understanding his patient, Emily, as he does the General. Toward the latter he exhibits patience, gentle amusement, and compassion. The Doctor is calm and reasonable and has a sly wit, even toward his own profession. He fills the prototype of a Doctor, yet he sees physicians objectively as people who only manage to find better words to describe the old complaints and who take blood pressure largely because it's part of the expected routine. Though he attempts to clarify the General's position for him and confront his friend with his own ambiguity so he can make up his mind and act, the Doctor is not successful. In analyzing the situation of the other, however, he displays his own wisdom and keen knowledge of human nature. While the Doctor is compassionate he does not insult his friend by pitying him. He draws the line at sentimentality and reassures the General as to his ability to adjust. It is as though the Doctor knows his friend will finally resort to his old promiscuous pattern for comfort and the physician accepts the inevitable. The medical man, in short, is resigned to the human comedy and the behavior of man. He is realistic in his statement "Make way for the young. May they commit the self-same follies and die of the same diseases." He lacks, however, a knowledge of the potential of humans to achieve any liberation from the two attitudes reflected in the play.

ESTELLE. The plumper of the two daughters of General St. Pe, Estelle, cannot be beautiful. The actress who created the role in the Purple Masque production was quite well rounded and about five feet nine inches in height, just a bit taller than the actor who played her father. Estelle shares with her sister two obsessions--new dresses and Gaston. She is a different type from Sidonia, however. Estelle is the more sensitive character, the more naive; she is less courageous than Sidonia and almost cries as she pleads with her father. When the fight occurs, though, Estelle rises to the oc-

casian and shows considerable spunk. The actress playing Estelle revealed within the character, especially as she paraded in her new dress, a tiny self struggling to be beautiful and poised but not quite knowing how.

SIDONIA. The actress playing Sidonia, the thinner of the two sisters, was about five foot ten inches in height and, when standing near her father, was obviously taller than he. She stood with her legs wide apart, hips thrust forward, shoulders slouched in a rather indolent and stubborn manner. Sidonia is more determined and courageous than her sister and is the one who insisiently holds her ground when her father tries to dismiss them. She is quite assertive, in fact, and she is aggressive with Gaston. When parading, her stride was more assured and her air more poised than her sister's.

Neither of the girls is drawn as a three-dimensional character nor does either progress or grow. Their personalities were stunted by a father who would not let them grow emotionally. Both were played, however, with verve and originality and were highly appealing. The two were fine contrasts because of the development of a unique character on the part of each; yet, with identical desires, they made a unified assault on their father to achieve their ends.

GHISLAINE. Ghislaine, like Emily, has to be picked up and carried by the General and Gaston. Again, this restricts the size of the actress playing the role. Even were this not the case, however, it would be difficult to envision Ghislaine as a large person. The General's vision of her is of a beautiful woman and a petite one. To select a bizarre type would not help to justify this illusion. The actress playing Ghislaine in this production had a slender, medium-frame body; her facial features were finely chiseled and delicate; her neck was quite long and very graceful. Her head

was set high and she had an air of desperate daring in Act I, Scenes 1 and 2. Yet, she was the epitome of femininity in the dependent clinging sense.

Ghislaine's emotional range is wide, but she has had so little experience transmitting it that she has developed but three octaves in comparison to the wife's four. Ghislaine is highly fearful in Act I. She is a bit faded, too. There is an element of tiredness which reflects the seventeen years of waiting. A streak of practicality is also revealed. She remembers the precise date of a meeting with the General while he remembers the romantic aura which surrounded it. She also has a woman's loathing for dust and is willing to hire the maids for the household. Resolution is also a strong trait of Ghislaine's. She comes to get the General and readily imagines herself married to him and no longer a pitied and pitiful Mademoiselle. She is very optimistic and hopeful, too, until he dashes her hopes first by inaction and then by showing agitation at his wife's suicide attempt. Then, she dramatically gives up, decides life is no longer worth living, and seeks to end it all.

Once Ghislaine meets Gaston, she clings to him as though he is the last spar in the ocean. She does this indirectly, however, pretending to him and to herself that he is the General. It is hard for Ghislaine to be honest with herself. In Act III, after Gaston has "taken" her, it is a quite different woman who returns to the stage. She has a radiance, a sense of security, a sense of belonging that she lacked in Act I. She is sure of herself and highly possessive of Gaston. She admits the indiscretion to the General in an organized, matter-of-fact, yet romantic way. And when she vows she will be as true to Gaston as she was to the General, there is no reason to doubt her; she tries to get permission from her lover to see her old flame from time to time, but Gaston does not like the idea. Ghislaine



is energetic and passionate and feels no embarrassment at either feeling. She is going to regard Gaston as an object, however; she shows she is already doing so in the play and will intensify the tendency. She compares choosing between the two men to choosing between a pink dress and a green one; this does not seem to be an accidental metaphor. It is an indication of the similarity of her outlook and Emily's. These lines were fully stressed so the parallel would be obvious. If and when Gaston casts an eye on another woman, Ghislaine will do all she can to hold him. Even when he barely looks at the two girls, his sisters, she is jealous. These traits indicate she will successfully develop the fourth octave.

MADAME DUPONT FREDAINE. The dressmaker's physical size is not indicated in the script. Descriptions of her lie at opposite extremes. The girls see her as an "old reprobate." The General tells the woman she is as "handsome as ever." An effort was made to encompass both concepts. Madame Dupont Fredaine is a trade-type which Anouilh has introduced primarily to allow the General's charming manner with women and his habitual inconsequence to be demonstrated. Though Ghislaine is in the house, and he is trying to decide whether or not he will ask his wife for a divorce, he is easily diverted by this other woman who appears on the scene.

In the Purple Masque production a girl from Austria of about five feet nine inches in height with a large body build and distinctive face played the role. Her lightly accented voice was warm; her manner was provocative and cloying. She was handsome; the extra make-up on her face, beyond what any of the other women wore, made her look painted, however, and her middle-age and quite girlish manner was that of a "reprobate." Madame Dupont Fredaine's two chief personality traits are a pride in her professional ability, and a keen knowledge of how to bargain to exact the highest

price possible for her dressmaking services. She does not draw the line at compromising herself physically. Her husband is not so important to her as her own satisfaction and the profits she can reap. Madame Dupont Fredaine can easily evaluate the General, be aware when he is being inconsistent, and does not hesitate to point his inconsistency out to him. Her wit is discerning, but she softens it by being kittenish.

FATHER AMBROSE. An actor of about the same height, but of a far lighter body build than the actor playing the General was chosen for the role of Father Ambrose. His voice quality was quite sharp, but it was juxtaposed with an oily manner. The personality of Father Ambrose is not complex; he is a prototype priest. He is a bit of a bore with his long-winded account. His manner is pontifical; his insistence on holding the center of the stage and having his dramatics appreciated tends toward the ridiculous. He is highly persistent and demands to tell the story his own way. He is secure in the knowledge that God is speaking through him. The way he reveals his secret is precious. He is condescending in his patience of the General's manner. It is as though he regards the man a member of the flock who has gone astray but he is bound to understand and forgive him. He patronizes the retired military man and attempts to get him to pray although he promises him "once won't make a habit of it" knowing that the General would need this assurance, at least, before he would go to the chapel at all.

EUGENIE. Although Eugenie is a stock servant type, she has her own little personality. The actress playing the role in the Purple Masque production was a girl of medium height with a slender body build and blonde coloring. The character came to life as spirited, witty, and with a keen knowledge of both her employer and Father Ambrose. She sees through the

exterior manner of both. In Act I, Scene 1, she interrupts Ghislaine and the General to tell the latter about the new girl who is replacing the last maid. She knows he will be interested. Even though he attempts to dismiss her without details, she is wise enough to linger until he finally realizes what she has been saying. The physical attributes of the new maid are the ones she describes for they are the ones he always wants to hear about. In Act III, Eugenie is self assured as she goes about her business of lighting the lamps. She ignores the General's dark mood, relishing instead Father Ambrose's tippling in the kitchen and his highly secretive manner. Eugenie is high pitched emotionally, however; when Ghislaine is brought in by Gaston, unconscious, the maid is very excited and proves of little help in the emergency.

PAMELA. "A fine looking girl, dark and a little on the plump side," Eugenie describes Pamela in Act I, Scene 1. The actress playing the role in the production fitted this general description although she was not very plump in physique. She was a very pretty girl with a round little face and firm cheeks. Her manner was naive; her voice soft and sweet. Pamela has evidently been warned that the General will make advances; she goes along with him with a minimum of scruples although she does have herself and her own self-protection in mind when she asks what will happen if Madame finds out.

#### Costumes

While there are but eleven characters in this show a total of seventeen outfits are needed. They were obtained in various ways. Two of the males were dressed in rented garments, and some miscellaneous accessories were also ordered from a costume house. Some ensembles were borrowed, others

were adapted from items on hand in the costume room, and still others were constructed from new fabrics by the costume crew.

The era of the play, 1910, influenced the design of each garment. Styles of the period were adopted. Choice of color was determined by a balancing of four factors: (1) the hues that were popular during the historical period; (2) the personality of the character being dressed; (3) the body build of the actor; (4) the effect the gelatins to be used on the spotlights would have on the individual ensemble.

Bradley makes concise statements about early 20th century male apparel. She mentions trimly-tailored dark serge suits with four button coats having high lapels and tapered trousers that might or might not be cuffed. There were tweed suits, too, and popular colors, whether solid or tweed mixtures, were black, brown, grey and green. High, uncomfortable collars and stiff cuffs were also much in vogue. Monocles or spectacles frequently hung around the neck on a heavy cord. Cuff-links and either light or dark colored spats were worn. Pipes and cigars were both smoked.<sup>1</sup>

Women's costumes and accessories between 1908 and 1911 are also described in considerable detail by the same authority. Dress silhouettes were moving from a comparatively full cycle into a more slender one. In consequence, gored skirts were favored, sleeves were narrow and of either fitted or kimono type. Varying necklines from deep V's to bateau were seen. Busts were flattened with special brassiers and waistlines were frequently bloused. Crochet and embroidery were featured trims. Natural linen dusters or capes began to come into their own around 1910 and long loose silk or chiffon scarfs draped over hats with the scarfs completely encasing the head were

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<sup>1</sup>Carolyn G. Bradley, Western World Costume: An Outline History (New York, 1954), p. 343-344.

worn. Pumps were the favorite shoe. Ribbon bows perched in the hair, hat-pins bristled on hats, and watches attached to fobs were much in evidence. Women favored, Bradley generalizes, "subdued colors."<sup>1</sup>

Lester and Kerr are more specific as to the precise hues in vogue. They allude to the French finesse with shadings of taupes, smoky tones, and peacock blues. Hand embroidery, fringe and beadwork are highlighted as high-style. Skirts slashed at either center front or at the side seams with the openings filled with narrow panels of thin fabric or ruffles were also evident, as were bordered skirts.<sup>2</sup>

The influence of the foregoing research comments upon the finished costumes is evident in the following description of individual outfits.

GENERAL SAINT-PE. The central character wore a two-piece light grey-blue wool uniform with a single inch-and-a-half black stripe down each trouser leg. Fine black braid edged each side of the high, mandarintype collar and was wound eight times around each lower sleeve. Two tiny antiqued bronze stars were attached to each upstanding collar point. When the outfit was ordered from Eaves Costume Company a size larger coat than usually worn by the actor was requested to allow room for tapered padding, extending from the chest area down over the waistline and onto the abdomen, to be worn underneath. The padding was suspended from the shoulders, tied around the waist and anchored to the actor's upper thighs. A portion of a white shirt front was stretched tightly over this form and then sewn fast on either side. When the General opened his coat the shirt buttons appeared stretched apart

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 345.

<sup>2</sup>Katherine Morris Lester and Rose Metzorg Kerr, Historic Costume, Fifth Ed. (Peoria, Illinois, 1961), p. 23.

to the popping point from a roll of excess fat around his middle. The waistband of the General's trousers secured the lower portion of the padding so it did not "ride up". The General wore a monocle around his neck suspended from a narrow black grosgrain ribbon. Black hose and shoes completed his outfit.

**HIS WIFE.** Emily wore an ankle length nightgown of white broadcloth. The sleeves and yoke of handmade lace formed the upper portion of the bodice which was secured at the neckline with a drawstring. The gown was donated to the theatre by an aged woman. It was part of her trousseau when she was married early in the century. When carried in by the General in Act I, Scene 2, Madame Saint-Pe was barefoot, and a filmy white wool knitted shawl completely covered her head, shoulders and face. In the confrontation scene (ACT II, Scene 2) her head was covered with a white cotton nightcap and its lace ruffle framed her face. Only a few wisps of hair escaped in back and over the forehead. She was barefoot in this scene as she had been in the earlier one.

**ESTELLE.** Estelle is the plumper of the two grown daughters who are dressed as children in the first act. The outfits of the two girls were very similar, being made by the costume crew from new fabrics and cut from exactly the same patterns. Color in most cases, however, was slightly varied. The body builds of the girls were so different, too, that Estelle inevitably emerged looking heavy and her sister looking gaunt. When Estelle entered in Act I, Scene 1 for the first time she wore a gold background tiny flower percale print dress. The figures were white and black and there was a fleck of red to be seen in the fabric. Her four-inch ribbon sash and hairbow, worn in back, were of gold polished cotton. The dress had a round neck; the

sleeves and front were gathered, so there was considerable fullness to blouse over the belt tied low over the hips. The skirt of this dress touched just below her knees. White tights and black "Mary Jane" shoes completed the picture. For her second entrance in Act I, Scene 1, when she displayed her too-short last year's Corpus Christie dress, Estelle wore a white broadcloth dress with a flat, circular yoke trimmed around the neck in eyelet lace. The sleeves were kimono type and the bodice bloused, front back and sides over a wide, pale blue satin sash tied at the hipline. Her skirt, overlaid with edging hand-made early in the century, rose well above her chubby white-tights-clad knees. A blue satin ribbon perched in her hair at the crown and the "Mary Jane" shoes from the first entrance were again worn. In Act II, Scene 1, Estelle was attired in a full-length three-piece white broadcloth dress. There was an overskirt, an underskirt and a top because this type of combination was easier to put on than a two-piece outfit. The round necked top was worn inside the overskirt which stopped just above the knees. A white satin sash was secured around the waist where the two met. One-inch ruffles on the short sleeves of the top were repeated around the bottom and up the front of the ankle length white underskirt which was slit twelve inches up the front. Estelle's sash was secured only with snaps so when Sidonia pulled on it, it came loose readily. White hair bow, tights, and the same black shoes were accessories. In Act III, after the attempted suicide, a patchwork quilt was thrown around Estelle; she was barefoot, and her curly hair was wet for this appearance.

SIDONIA. Lanky Sidonia wore, on her first entrance in Act I, Scene 1, a companion percale tiny-flower print dress whose design matched her sister's. The background of hers, however, was red and its figure was white, black and

gold. Sidonia's sash and hairbow were of red polished cotton. Tights and shoes of the two girls were identical. The second entrance outfit was different in two ways from her sister's. Sidonia's sash and ribbon were yellow and the hand-made overlay on her short skirt was a slightly more intricate design than Estelle's. For Act II, Scene 1, the long dresses of the two girls had but two construction differences. The ruffle on Sidonia's left sleeve was only basted in place so Estelle could easily rip it loose, and hooks and eyes were fixed on Sidonia's belt which was not removed. In Act III a patchwork quilt very similar to that worn by Estelle was thrown around Sidonia. Her feet and legs were bare and her long hair was well-soaked before she came onstage. Each of the girl's three dresses were washed, starched and pressed by the costume crew each day before the evening performance.

GASTON. The Eaves Costume Company provided a black serge four-button suit and vest of the period and a white shirt with wide starched collar and cuffs for Gaston. Grey wool spats were secured for him from the Kansas City Costume Company. His tie of accordion-pleated grey, white and maroon striped silk was worn cravat-fashion under the chin. This outfit, with black shoes and hose, was worn throughout.

GHISLAINE. Chiffon and lace immediately came to mind when Ghislaine's costume was considered and, since both fabrics were very much in period, they were used generously. When she first appeared in Act I, Scene 1, her face, head and shoulders were completely swathed in a huge, soft-beige rayon chiffon scarf which was held four inches higher than her crown by a hat worn underneath. Hatpins kept the veil and hat in position. When she lifted the scarf back and exposed her face, the front of a pastel pink, tucked nylon chiffon hat came into view. She wore a three-quarter length



natural color linen cape borrowed from a local source. The skirt of her muted pink satin ankle-length dress hemmed in pink lace fell below. Her hose, shoes and gloves were pastel pink and her reticule was a draw-string-type small bag of irridescent gold and bronze bugle beads. A gold watch on a fob was pinned to her left shoulder. Before returning to the stage in Act II, Scene 2 she removed her hat and chiffon scarf. She continued to wear her cape, however, throughout this scene. It was not until Act III, then, that Ghislaine shed her cape and her dress, made by the costume crew, came into full view. It was cut with a form-fitting bodice, graceful low boat neck, three-quarter length sleeves and the graceful ankle-length skirt gently flared into a short train in back. The satin reflected so much light that it was decided to overlay the entire top with lace; and a lace belt cinched in the waist. A pale pink rectangle of nylon chiffon was tucked into the neckline framing her neck and face. On the right shoulder and under her left breast nestled a single white rose with pink inner petals, pink bud and green leaves.

MADAME DUPONT-FREDAINE. A rich royal blue taffeta fabric, contributed by one of the sororities, was chosen for the dressmaker's dress. The finished product was ankle length. The bodice was form fitting, the sleeves wrist length, and the neckline plunged into a deep V. In front, the waistline was curved down slightly over the abdomen and accented with a narrow black velvet ribbon cording. The full skirt was gathered into place at this point. Most of the fullness was concentrated in the back and over the hips with the front falling quite straight into a gentle drape. Two-inch black lace was gathered and inserted into the neck opening and was sewn around the sleeves at the wrist. A triangular black velvet pincushion studded with

straight pins was secured to her left shoulder. Black hose and flat leather slippers were worn.

**DOCTOR BONFANT.** The Doctor's suit came from the costume room. It was a blend of grey, black, brown and white wool threads which carried as a brownish-grey tweed. While the suit coat was not strictly of the 1910 period it was a four button style and belted in back. This tended to reduce any "modern" look it might have had. With the suit the Doctor wore a white shirt, stiff white collar, black, grey and white silk foulard ascot and black shoes. His grey spats came from the Kansas City Costume Company.

**FATHER AMBROSE.** The black faille cassock worn by the priest was borrowed from a local Episcopalian minister. It buttoned down the front from neck to ankles. With it he wore a black rope belt and underneath black trousers, shoes and hose. A white collar with front worn in back was pinned to the inside of the cassock neckline and a silver cross on a chain hung around his neck.

**EUGENIE and PAMELA.** The two maids were dressed identically. The Junction City Little Theatre lent two ancient black blouses with long sleeves and two ankle-length skirts (one faille, one broadcloth), two circular ruffled white organdy maid's caps and two white organdy aprons with bibs. The latter were especially effective for they had wide full straps which flared "wing-like" over the shoulders. Black hose and plain black pumps completed the ensembles.

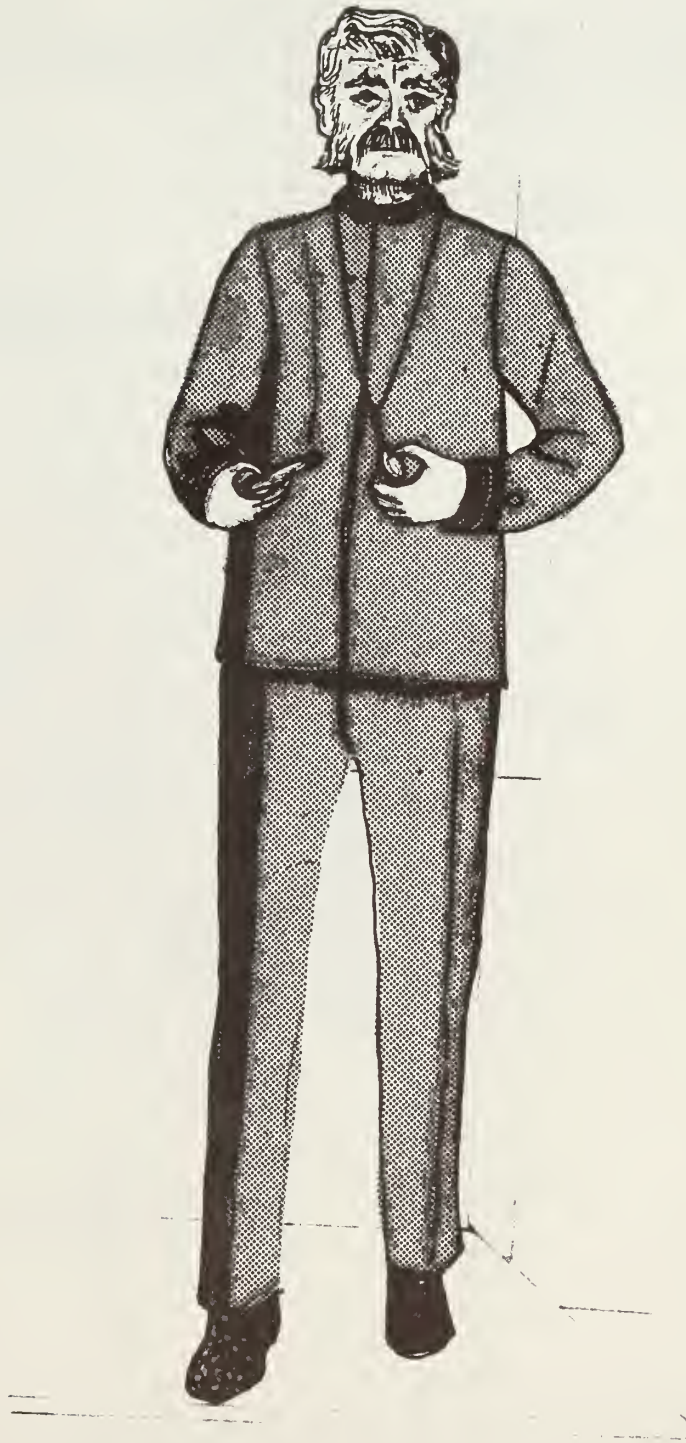
Characters Appearing on Stage by Scenes

Characters	Act I		Act II		Act III
	Scene 1	Scene 2	Scene 1	Scene 2	
General St. Pe	■	■	■	■	■
Mme. St. Pe	■	■	■	■	■
Gaston	■	■	■	■	■
Estelle	■	■	■	■	■
Sidonia	■	■	■	■	■
Dr. Bonfant	■	■	■	■	■
Ghislaine	■	■	■	■	■
Eugenie	■	■	■	■	■
Mme. Dupont-Fredaine	■	■	■	■	■
Father Ambrose	■	■	■	■	■
Pamela	■	■	■	■	■

**EXPLANATION OF PLATE I**

**Costume Sketch for General Saint-Pe**

PLATE I



**EXPLANATION FOR PLATE II**

**Costume Sketch for Gaston**

PLATE II



EXPLANATION FOR PLATE III

Costume Sketch for Estelle and Sidonia, First Entrance, Act I, Scene 1



PLATE III



EXPLANATION FOR PLATE IV

Costume Sketch for Estelle and Sidonia, Second Entrance, Act I, Scene 1

PLATE IV



**EXPLANATION FOR PLATE V**

**Costume Sketch for Estelle and Sidonia, Act II, Scene 1**

PLATE V



**EXPLANATION FOR PLATE VI**

**Costume Sketch for Estelle and Sidonia, Act III**

PLATE VI



EXPLANATION FOR PLATE VII

Costume Sketch for Doctor Bonfant



PLATE VII



**EXPLANATION FOR PLATE VIII**

**Costume Sketch for the Maids--Eugenie and Pamela**

## PLATE VIII



EXPLANATION FOR PLATE IX

Costume Sketch for Ghislaine  
Act I, Scenes 1 and 2, Act II, Scene 1

PLATE IX



EXPLANATION FOR PLATE X

Costume Sketch for Ghislaine, Act III

PLATE X



EXPLANATION FOR PLATE XI

Costume Sketch for Madame Dupont-Fredaine



## PLATE XI



**EXPLANATION FOR PLATE XII**

**Costume Sketch for Madame Saint-Pe**

PLATE XII



**EXPLANATION FOR PLATE XIII**

**Costume Sketch for Father Ambrose**

PLATE XIII



Make-Up

The creation of make-ups for The Waltz of the Toreadors presents a considerable challenge. Six out of the eleven characters are between thirty-five and forty-seven years of age; yet the make-up artist is forced to rely chiefly on subtle, well blended modeling--shadowing and highlighting--to give sufficient maturity and to point up those facial characteristics of each actor that will contribute to revealing character, for actors in the Purple Masque must work in such close proximity to the audience.

Research yielded several facts incorporated into the final results. Bradley points out that in 1910 men frequently parted their hair in the middle. She mentions beards as being in vogue for the professional man, citing, among others, doctors. Middle-aged men, she also observes, frequently wore tea-strainer or walrus mustaches, and mutton-chop whiskers as well as beards were common. Respectable women, she notes, did not wear obvious make-up, relying mostly on a light dusting of face powder to reduce excess shine. False hair--switches and rats--was frequently used to achieve a puffed effect, and if these were not used females snarled their own locks and then piled them high. Psyche knots often graced the back.<sup>1</sup>

GENERAL SAINT-PE and DOCTOR BONFANT. Perhaps the most difficult make-up problems were presented by the actors cast in these two roles. Both young men were in their twenties, yet they had to appear convincingly middle-aged. With the clue from Bradley about the prevalence of whiskers among professional men and the General's comment about his "splendid whiskers" it was decided to build the make-up of both around facial hair. This would

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<sup>1</sup>Bradley, pp. 343, 345.

help immeasurably to add maturity. In advance of the first dress rehearsal, therefore, experimentation was done and beards and mustaches were created. Crepe hair and spirit gum were built up in layers on the face of each of the actors, and constructions were achieved firm enough to last throughout the three preliminary showings and the four final performances.

The General's facial hair, made of a blend of grey, brown and white crepe hair, was constructed in three sections. Two were triangular extensions of his own sideburns, trimmed close near the ears and more luxuriant as they reached the outside angles of his lower jaws, at which point the hair was approximately an inch and a half in length. These sections fitted into the mutton-chop whisker category. A bare space of approximately one inch was left between the inner side of each mutton-chop and the corners of the actor's mouth so the cheek and inner jowls could be highlighted to enhance the suggestion of looseness of flesh associated with advancing age. Then a one-piece adaptation of a walrus-type mustache was affixed under the nose, its fullness extending a good half-inch out past and drooping below the corners of the mouth and covering the top lip line. The chin was left bare.

Doctor Bonfant's beard was a full one, made of a blend of blonde, brown and grey crepe hair extending from ear to ear and covering his entire lower face. His mustache was much closer trimmed than the General's, and there was a one-half inch space left bare beneath his nose. The mustache joined the beard on either side of the mouth and the whole was trimmed in a neat curve following the jaw and chin line and left quite curly.

With this work done in advance, basic old-age make-up pattern was followed each evening by both boys, with differences as noted. The General first applied a half-and-half mixture of Max Factor's number 5½ (ruddy-male) and 7 (sallow-olive) tube grease paint. The Doctor, who is designated in

the script as in better physical shape and as having keener muscle tone, used only number 5½. Each then shadowed cheek, temple, eyesocket, and around-the-chin hollows. For this the General used a blend of brown, grey and red liner colors while the Doctor relied on brown. Highlighting of cheekbones, upper brows, inner fatty areas of the cheeks next to the nose, and chin prominence was then done by both with clown white. Accenting of crows feet, lines between the brows and on the forehead, under the eyes and on either side of the nose between it and the mouth was done with a brush dipped in the shadowing mixtures used earlier by each. High-lights of clown white were applied just above these shadowed lines. Eyes were lined close above the upper lashes. In addition, the Doctor also applied a touch of dark red cream rouge just below his cheekbones to accentuate this shadow and add a bit of additional color to his face. Translucent powder set this basic old-age make-up.

After the excess powder had been brushed away spirit gum was applied to the respective areas on each to be covered by their pre-formed facial hair. When the spirit gum became "tacky" the pre-formed pieces were pressed into place and held firmly until they adhered. The eyebrows of both men were ruffled up by brushing them in the opposite direction from which they grew and white shoepolish was stroked on the out-of-line hairs. The General's dark hair was combed back without a part and generally saturated with white hair spray. Doctor Bonfant's blonde hair was merely greyed at the temples with white shoe polish.

Both actors applied the base color of their make-up on their hands.

The resulting appearance of each man was strikingly different from that of the other. The General's facial shape was predominantly square. His countenance was distinguished. He was a handsome man for all his forty-



seven years. At first glance, he looked virile, resolute and strong. His color, however, was quite sallow and the highlight across his cheek bones and down either side of his nose on the inner folds of his cheeks made his flesh appear flabby and tired. In short, his facial mask supported the dashing, strong and decisive impression he wished to convey to society and yet it bore the mark of that which he desperately wished to hide from himself, his advancing age. The Doctor's was a more finely chiseled, slender and aesthetic face. His color was healthy and though his face showed the signs of advancing years his flesh looked firm. The makeup was very helpful to the actors in establishing the middle-age required, and it also reinforced the character contrast between the two men revealed by the script.

FATHER AMBROSE and MADAME SAINT-PE. The basic old-age make-up procedure mentioned above covers the principles followed by the actors playing both Father Ambrose and Madame Saint-Pe. Colors used by each, however, varied. The priest is in his early forties, the wife forty-five. The former used number 5½ Max Factor tube grease paint as a base; the latter mixed equal portions of 4½ (pale-pink) and 6A (yellow-sallow). Facial shadows of the male were deepened with a blend of brown and red, while a mixture of grey, red, brown and blue was used by the female. Clown white accented prominent bones of both. The respective shadow colors were used by each for aging lines with clown white highlights above them. The eyes of both were lined with brown just above the upper lashes. Madame's eyes were lined beneath as well with dark red rouge. Both set their entire make-up with translucent powder. No lip color was used by Father Ambrose, but dark red male rouge was rubbed thoroughly into the lips of the wife and then blotted and powdered. Hair at the temples and the eyebrows of the male were brushed with shoepolish. The female's hair was not touched since so much of it was

hidden by her nightcap. Father Ambrose's face emerged with the actor's own slender and somewhat bony facial modeling sharply accentuated. His huge, prominent eyes were the most outstanding single feature. The make-up used on the actress playing the wife threw the angularity of her bone structure into relief. The red line under her rather staring eyes deadened them a good deal. She looked tired, weak and strained rather than attractive; but then, even in her prime, the Doctor says, "She was never what you would call a beauty."

GHISLAINE and MADAME DUPONT-FREDAINE. The make-up of these two women proceeded upon a modification of the basic old-age pattern. The former is but thirty-five years of age so the task was to achieve a slightly faded look. Madame Dupont-Fredaine, on the other hand, is in her mid-forties and quite daring. She should appear well preserved for her age and quite colorful in comparison to Ghislaine. The same Max Factor tube grease paint numbers were used by both but in different proportions. The actress playing Ghislaine used about seven-eighths parts of number 2A (pastel pink) and one-eighth part of 7A (dark ruddy female). The girl creating Madame Dupont-Fredaine, in contrast, used about three-quarters 7A to one-quarter 2A. Her complexion emerged looking hale, hearty and glowing while the platonic love's looked fragile and very protected. Facial shadowing of hollows on both girls was done by using a combination of brown, red, blue and grey though that of the older character used a higher proportion of brown and the younger leaned more heavily on grey and blue. Blue eye-shadow was generously used on the dressmaker, soft lavender on the virgin. Facial lines were intensified with shadow of the colors already noted and all modeling and lines were highlighted with clown white. Only a slight touch of light red was used on Ghislaine's cheeks while those of Madame Dupont-Fredaine were noticeably touched with

dark red. The older woman used dark red lipstick and, from the audience, it was obvious she was wearing make-up on her mouth. In contrast, a pale pink which carried only as a faint blush was used on Ghislaine. Both women used brown eyeliner and brown pencil on their brows. Dupont-Fredaine's long blonde hair was teased, piled high on her head, swirled into a plump roll, and greyed with silver spray. The actress playing Ghislaine had short, very light brown hair cut in layers which presented a problem. Finally a bit darker brown hair-piece was affixed into a psyche knot in back and then beige and blonde hair-spray was applied to both the switch and her own locks to even the color between the two shades. In front, a single piece of hair over Ghislaine's left eye was streaked with silver spray. It should also be mentioned that prior to her entrance in the third act dry medium-pink rouge was brushed onto her cheeks, above her eyes just below the brow, and on the point of her chin to add more bloom to her complexion.

GASTON. Gaston's make-up was that usually called a "straight-juvenile." Tube grease paint number 5½ was blended on his face, neck and hands. Pancro, a dark toned Indian-red greasepaint, was used in the hollows of his cheeks and above his eyes to simultaneously deepen the shadows and add a glow of youthful color. A line was drawn with brown pencil above the upper lashes and from the outer corners to the middle of the eyes below the lower lashes. His blonde brows were gently darkened with brown pencil, also. Light rouge was blended carefully onto his cheekbones, ear lobes, and point of his chin. The whole was set with translucent powder. As a final touch, the actor parted his thick, wavy, very light brown hair in the center and coaxed two curves into place on either side of the midpoint. This combing was kept in the unfamiliar line with clear hair spray.

ESTELLE, SIDONIA, EUGENIE and PAMELA. The four remaining actors in the cast, the two maids and the daughters, all did straight ingenue makeups using exactly the same shades of base and following identical procedures. Equal proportions of 7A and 2A tube greasepaints were blended onto faces and necks. Cheekbones and chins were then highlighted with clown white. Each applied a thin film of light blue eye shadow, blending it carefully so no clear line of demarcation was evident. This cut down on the possibility they would look "made-up." Brown pencil outlined the eyes above the lashes. Light red rouge was gently stroked in a triangular area high on the cheekbones toward the nose. A very light coating of pale pink lip color was applied by all and blotted thoroughly. Finally, translucent powder was puffed on and excess brushed away. The hair-styles of the girls varied considerably. The actress playing Eugenie wore her blonde hair piled high with her cap perched on top. The girl who created Pamela had mid-length, curly hair and her cap also rested on top. The styling for the two daughters was not intricate. It was assumed that if their father insisted on their appearing young he would refuse to let them tease it as older women did. Estelle's dark hair was, therefore, worn simply. It was parted on one side and fell in curly ringlets. Her various hair bows were attached with bobby pins to the back mid-crown. Her sister's long, perfectly straight hair fell in back to a point just below the shoulders. The front section was first parted below each ear then drawn smoothly up and back and was secured with a bobby pin just below the top of the crown. This made a fine anchoring point for her hair bows.

## SETTING

Script Demands

Production is thought of very little and there are few stage directions," notes theatrical critic Harold Hobson as he speaks of the writing and presentation of modern dramas in France.<sup>1</sup> It is not surprising therefore, that a detailed description of the setting is lacking in Anouilh's script of The Waltz of the Toreadors. It is merely stated that the play takes place in 1910 in the home of General St. Pe in Paris and that the action transpires in the "General's room." The decor is economically suggested by the notation "exotic trophies, weapons and hangings." Other staging requirements are four doors--a "communicating door" between the General's room and Madame St. Pe's bedroom directly adjoining, another portal leading to the main part of the house, one opening into the morning room, and one into the garden--and a window out of which Ghislaine can jump in her suicide attempt.

The "General's room" of Act I, Scene 1 discussed above, is also indicated as the setting for Act I, Scene 2; Act II, Scene 1; and Act III. As for Act II, Scene 2, between the General and his wife, Anouilh envisioned it as occurring in Madame St. Pe's bedroom with her propped against the pillows of her bed.

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<sup>1</sup>Harold Hobson, The French Theatre of Today, An English View (London, 1953), p. 29.

### The Physical Limitations of the Theatre

How the demands of the script were met was largely determined by the physical limitations of the theatre. The Purple Masque has a main acting platform 32' x 12' x 1' made up of a 24' x 12' central core, two 4' x 4' platforms butted against this core, one to the upstage Left, and two 6' x 4' platforms, each with a ninety degree radius arc cut from it, joining these auxiliaries downstage Right and Left. The resulting platform is thirty-two feet along the back, twenty-four feet across the front, and is centered in front of a solid wall with two open doorways cut into it six feet from the edges of the platform. Back of the solid wall is a backstage area. The audience is seated on the other three sides of the raised performance stage. Therefore, the first question that arose in the early days, when fitting the play into the theatre was being considered, was how could four entrances and a window be accommodated?

It was finally decided that part of the lobby area, a space 10' x 15' far upstage Left of the acting platform, usually curtained off for use by the audience, might possibly be utilized in some way. The lobby rectangle is just four feet from the upstage Left edge of the platform; it has a door opening into the backstage area; and a visual relationship might be formed between it and the raised stage without too much technical difficulty. It was quite possible that at least two exits might be accommodated here. If this worked out, one of the open doorways back of the acting platform could be used as the window and the other doorway, if a flat having two doors set into it could be used in conjunction with it, could serve as an exit for the actors to the main backstage area. It was evident that the four doorway and a single window demands could be met.

This settled, the problem of the suggested second set remained. How

could the wife's bedroom be shown? The wall back of the acting platform is solid. There is, therefore, no possibility of creating a second set in depth in the backstage area. Then, the scene change is indicated for the second scene of Act II. The action of the entire second act would be seriously delayed and its impact jeopardized unless a rapid change could be accomplished. There is no curtain in the theatre, either. In consequence, any contemplated change would have to be made in full view of the audience. Considering these physical, time and visual limitations it was felt that a change of set was neither practical nor desirable. This meant that the encounter between Madame Saint-Pe and the General would have to occur against the main set used for the rest of the play.

This concluded, it was decided that a new opening must be written for the scene. It would be the only way of attempting to justify the action which must now take place in "soil" alien to the wife. The new opening must, without violating the identity of either of the characters involved or without seriously slowing the action, bring Emily onstage somehow. In addition, it was felt that if the new lines given the actors could justify the rearrangement of the furniture in the General's room, the wife might be able to physically "take possession" of the man's room and dominate it. After all, she would have done this if he had confronted her in her own bedroom. If this could be done it was hoped that the addition of lines might not damage the overall effect, that it might dispense with the need for the second set, and that the playwright's original situational intention might be fulfilled as well.

### The Set Design

Before a design of the set was made, the type of treatment it should be given remained to be decided. Anouilh's mention of the display of mementoes of the General's exploits will be remembered. This indicated a predominantly realistic environment and nothing in the lines of the script contradicted this impression. Two sources which had been consulted corroborated the idea also. First, Pronko points out that at the heart of Anouilh's theatre is a "realistic core" and one evidence of this core can be a setting which "...looks as we would expect such places to look in real life." The critic further comments upon the desirability of such settings as transmitting "...a feeling of stability which is comforting to audiences living within their confines." This feeling of initial comfort, he goes on to explain, is especially valuable in plays whose content is, in the final analysis, unsettling.<sup>1</sup> The Waltz of the Toreadors is, of course, such a play. Secondly, pictures indicate that realistic sets were used for the Paris, London and New York productions of the show.<sup>2</sup> It is not surprising, then, that the final set design for the study was realistic and that the impressive forty-four feet of wall space utilized for it and its adjoining environs aimed to reflect the considerable military reputation and high rank of its occupant.

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<sup>1</sup>Leonard Cabell Pronko, The World of Jean Anouilh, Perspectives in Criticism, No. 7 (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1961), pp 131-133.

<sup>2</sup>Theatre Arts (September, 1957), p. 33.



### Description of Flats, Platforms, Steps and Masking

In describing the execution of the setting it may be most clear to move from far upstage Right to far upstage Left. It will also be helpful if the reader will refer occasionally to the floor plan on page . An 8' x 10' flat with two standard two-and-one-half foot wide doors set into it was first constructed. The farthest Right door was designated as the one opening into Madame Saint-Pe's room; the other door led to the rest of the house. This large flat was projected three feet onto the acting platform far upstage Right by supporting it on either side with two 3½' x 10' flats, the edges of which joined the back wall of the set. There was sufficient space in the resulting "box", created by the three flats, for the General and Gaston to carry the Wife through either of the doors. The single up Right opening in the back wall of the stage proper which lay back of the box provided an exit into the backstage area.

Between the projecting unit just discussed and the French window (planned for the second opening in the back wall upstage Left), were eleven feet of back wall space. This main expanse was covered with a series of ten foot high flats. As for the window and four feet of wall space to its Left, a 7' x 10' flat was built with a door opening two and a half feet wide and seven and a half feet high cut into it and aligned with the opening in the back wall. Then shutters were hinged on either side of the resulting full length "window," and a 2' x 6' x 18" balcony platform with opaque railing was erected backstage of the opening. A 3' x 7' x 6" platform was centered on the acting area directly downstage of the window helping further to create the illusion of a French window. This raised area served another practical purpose as well. It raised the actors standing on the platform six inches so they could be better seen over furniture placed downstage. A

leafed lemon tree limb was mounted above the window opening, just backstage, screening lights mounted in the ceiling and giving an outdoor "feel." Finally, a white muslin cyc was stretched in a half circle behind the window opening to screen off the backstage area. Enough space was left between this cyc and the backstage railing platform to give an illusion of depth and allow room for Ghislaine's jump to the mattress-covered floor eighteen inches below.

There were four feet between the Left edge of the six inch platform in front of the window and the far upstage Left edge of the acting platform. The actors, therefore, dropped six inches to the acting platform proper, walked four feet at this level and then descended to floor level via a single 3' x 1' x 6" step.

To utilize the lobby space and also tie it in with the main acting platform, it was felt wise to develop what could be regarded as a relating passageway between the two. This passageway was created on the floor between the raised acting area, the audience seated stage Left and the lobby opening. From above, a 12' x 4' roof further established the passageway effect. The roof was made of a flat covered with plyboard on top, with muslin on the bottom. Then, curved cardboard rectangles resembling Spanish tiles were stapled to the plyboard side. The entire unit was suspended from the ceiling by four thin wires; and it was hung at an angle from the wall so it projected three feet out over the passageway.

A facing flat was next constructed to mask the lobby area. This evolved into a large 12' x 11' flat with a 3' x 8' archway cut into it 4' from the stage Right side. It was butted against the edge of the flats covering the back wall. The arch formed an entrance into another passageway three and one-half feet wide. Through this arch lay the morning room. To

reach it the actors descended the six inch step leading off the acting platform, walked three and one-half feet straight ahead and then made a sharp left. A curtain was suspended from the ceiling on their right cutting this exit off from the remaining lobby. The arch was not the only feature of the 12' x 11' flat mentioned above. One foot from the edge of the arch a one foot deep, three foot wide and five foot high niche was cut thirty-six inches off the floor. This afforded a space for a sizeable piece of statuary.

Beyond this large flat lay an opening four feet wide which let into the lobby proper. Here was the "garden" exit, the fourth demanded by the script.

Finally a four inch wide molding was tacked across the top of those portions of the set back of the acting platform to give finish to the main room. This stopped the eye from going up further than the ten foot flats, as did the black painted wall of the theatre that rose above them.

### Set Furnishings

Few good reproductions of the furniture of the turn of the century (or earlier) that would properly fit the setting were available in local stores; therefore, it was decided to attempt to secure most pieces from private individuals who would lend them for the performances. All pieces except for two--a low, marble-top table and a world globe mounted on a reproduction of an early American stand--were borrowed from homes in Manhattan. Most were well worn. This contributed a "lived-in" look to the resulting stage room. Arrangement of furniture was planned so the General's study would have three centers of interest focused on three separate conversational groupings. Furniture was placed well in from the edges of the acting platform

so actors could walk completely around groupings as well as work stage Center. This provided considerable opportunity for varying the blocking. The overall effect was balanced and pleasing.

A large 10' x 11' rug with a gold background, earth-brown border design, and large plum and maroon flowers surrounded by green leaves in the corners occupied the center of the acting platform. It neatly extended from the back wall almost to the front and covered the area from the projecting flat upstage Right to the raised platform downstage of the upstage Left window. In addition two 5' x 7' auxiliary rugs were used on either side of the just described larger floor covering. These did not match each other exactly but they blended, for each had predominantly beige tones with maroon and blue used in each of the oriental-type patterns. The majority of the stage, then, was well-covered, deadening sound and adding warm color as well.

Furniture was arranged in the following positions. In the area downstage Right of the projecting double-door flat, a black leather and oak couch (with hinged ends that could be raised or lowered flat) was set on a diagonal. The upstage end was from two to two and one-half feet downstage of the doors. The downstage end was three feet in from the stage Right edge of the acting platform and from two to two and one-half feet from the front edge. The open back of the couch faced the post which is located between the audience seated Right and the audience seated directly in front of the stage. Whether actors sitting on the couch faced the Center of the stage or the post, they could be clearly seen in profile by those watching. A round bolster covered in an aged piece of heavy corded grey-green drapery material rested on the downstage end of the couch which, during all scenes with the exception of Act II, Scene 2, was kept erect. The upstage Right end was raised or lowered as the action dictated.

Sitting against the 3' x 10' flat placed diagonally between the projecting flat up Right and the back wall were two pieces. Farthest downstage was a straight Victorian chair with curved back and legs, its seat covered in grey-blue needlepoint; and upstage of the chair, in the corner was an unusual plant from the campus greenhouse. The tree-like plant, sitting in a one and one-half foot in diameter wood pot, was four and one-half feet high. Its leaves were green on the top side and maroon underneath. The color it added picked up and balanced the shades of pieces of furniture found on stage Left. The Victorian chair was near the desk, placed up Center six inches out from the broadest expanse of back wall, and the couch stage Right. Gaston moved it near the former to take dictation. The Doctor and the General also utilized it, moving it a bit downstage of its usual position against the wall. It could, therefore, be moved into a conversational grouping stage Center or become part of one stage Right.

The desk, 40" x 24" x 30" was originally a non-descript scarred mahogany piece. To give it "character," bring it somewhat into period, and blend it with the desk chair, it was painted with flat black enamel and antiqued with gold paint. It was placed six inches from the back wall stage Center, and its length projected out onto the acting platform. The desk chair sat two and one-half feet out from the back wall and just to stage Left of the desk. It was oak, straight in style, and had a worn black leather seat.

In the corner where the platform in front of the window met the back wall the colorful world globe was set. It rested in an early American maple stand, but the "out-of-period" reproduction receptacle did not attract much attention because the soft orange, aqua, blue, green and gold tones of the globe itself demanded the most interest.

Downstage Left of the window platform was the third conversational grouping made up of three pieces of furniture. The General's chair with its back set parallel to the back wall, an imposing Louis XIV piece with mahogany frame, arms and legs with central stringer joining them, sat two feet downstage of the platform. Its high rising rectangular back and the padded seat were both covered in a maroon pile fabric. Downstage Left of this chair and placed so it faced the General's chair was a Victorian man's chair. Its rounded back, placed one and one-quarter to two feet from the front edge of the acting platform and three feet in from the stage Left edge, faced the post which rises between the audience seating area Center front and stage Left. The Doctor occupied this piece of furniture more than any other character. The covering on the round seated piece with low arms was a frieze with beige background, printed with raised design in tones of green, gold, orange and maroon. Directly Left of these two chairs and just touching the Doctor's chair was a low, marble-top mahogany frame table--a Victorian reproduction--obtained from a local furniture store. It's dimensions were approximately 18" x 32" and it was placed with its greater length running up and downstage.

### Color

Any reference to color has been omitted from the description of construction of flats, platforms and steps but has been included in the description of stage furnishing. This is because the former was dictated, to a great extent, by the upholstery of furniture that was borrowed. The largest expanse of color on the stage, it will be remembered was the predominantly gold rug. The platform canvas was painted with latex in a yellow-tan shade, therefore, to blend with this covering and the 5' x 7' companion

floor coverings. The flats, covering the entire back wall of the main room set, were brushed with a pastel grey-green scene paint. This threw the plant's exotic foliage into relief and picked up the grey-green of the couch bolster, the green touches in the rug border, and the green in the upholstery on the Victorian man's chair down Left. Woodwork on the doors, around the window, and on shutters, and the molding topping the ten foot high flats were given a bit darker shade of grey-green latex paint.

It was decided to differentiate the far upstage Left flat with arch and niche fronting the lobby and under the roof from the green back wall of the main room set by making it a light beige suggesting stucco. The roof over this flat and establishing the passageway underneath was painted with dark tile-red scene paint. This shade tied in amazingly well with the red of the leaves of the plant, the flowers in the corners of the large rug, and the General's chair on the main acting platform.

#### Set Accessories

The accessories gave a final touch to the setting. Upon what was chosen rested the responsibility of fulfilling the script demands--"exotic hangings, weapons and trophies"--those things which would reflect the interests and personality of the room's main occupant.

It was decided to keep the accessories rather widely spaced so a crowded background would not upstage the action. In the Purple Masque the back wall of the set is so close to the audience that anything hung on it demands a good deal of attention.

On the diagonal flat connecting the projecting unit with its two doors to the back wall of the main room set an oval shield was hung eighteen inches above the top of the back of the Victorian straight chair. The

shield, made of cardboard curved into shape, was covered with thick display zebra-printed paper and spattered with several shades of scene paint and latex--tile red, dark blue, black, green and grey--to tone down its stark black and white design so it wouldn't command too much interest.

Next, on the back wall, two rectangular areas were marked with molding to suggest paneling. The bottom piece of the molding forming the rectangles was thirty inches from the floor (coinciding with the height of the desk). The 4' x 5' molding rectangles were placed to stage Right and Left of the desk with an unenclosed space of three feet left between them in the Center of the back wall. In the stage Right rectangle was arranged an 18" x 29" display board, painted the grey-green of the woodwork, on which five plastic reproductions of old guns were mounted. The barrels of a pair of flint-lock French dueling pistols (circa 1776) diagonally approached each other at the top; a ten inch long antique Privateer of the 1787 era, a six inch barrel 45 Pepperbox, and a derringer, manufactured between 1861-1865, were arrayed in that order beneath. Balancing this gun arrangement in the stage Left rectangle were two other weapons--a pair of dueling swords crossed on a "family crest" done in shades of blue with white, with black and red fleur de lis details. The swords were mounted with the handles down and were securely wired to the nails holding the crest in place. Directly over the desk, placed up on the wall about thirty inches from its upstage end, was the spiraled-horned head of a Thompson's gazelle. Around its neck were hung two powder horns suspended from leather thongs. And across the top of the back wall, nailed a foot under the top set molding, was a ten-and-a-half foot mounted, black Anaconda snake whose faint gold markings gleamed intermittently as light struck them.

Directly to stage Left of the window and hanging four feet above the



acting platform, was an aged, expandable oak hat rack with enamel pegs making a diamond pattern on the wall. On one of its pegs was hung a red Moroccan fez with black tassel; on another was a riding crop; and on a third, a pair of binoculars in a well-worn black leather case hung from a black shoulder strap.

Nearly filling the niche upstage left, a white plaster statue of Aphrodite rested. The maroon curtain suspended from the ceiling in the lobby added color to this portion of the set as one looked up the garden room passageway, and gracing the left wall of the exit was an old print in an ornate, heavy gilt frame.

Small personal touches "dressed up" the desk and marble-top table. Old books were lined up on the upstage end of the desk, held by antique, bronze bookends. A brass cannon on mahogany frame sat in front of the books. A lamp with dark emerald shade hoisted on a twelve inch slender arm shed light on the desk blotter covering the center and downstage end of the desk. An engraved brass writing set--tray, inkwell, and bristly pen holder--faced the General as he sat in his desk chair; and on his left was a bronze colored circus-glass candy dish with mints in it. The low marble-top table stage left had but five objects on it--an aged wooden cigar box with hinged lid, a bronze ash tray, two match boxes, and an ornate green glass umbrella shaded Victorian lamp with eighteen inch high bronze center post.

The complete set picture was delicately colored. It looked massive without being overpowering. It was a "lived-in" room with a side passageway that seemed a fitting environment for the central character of the play.

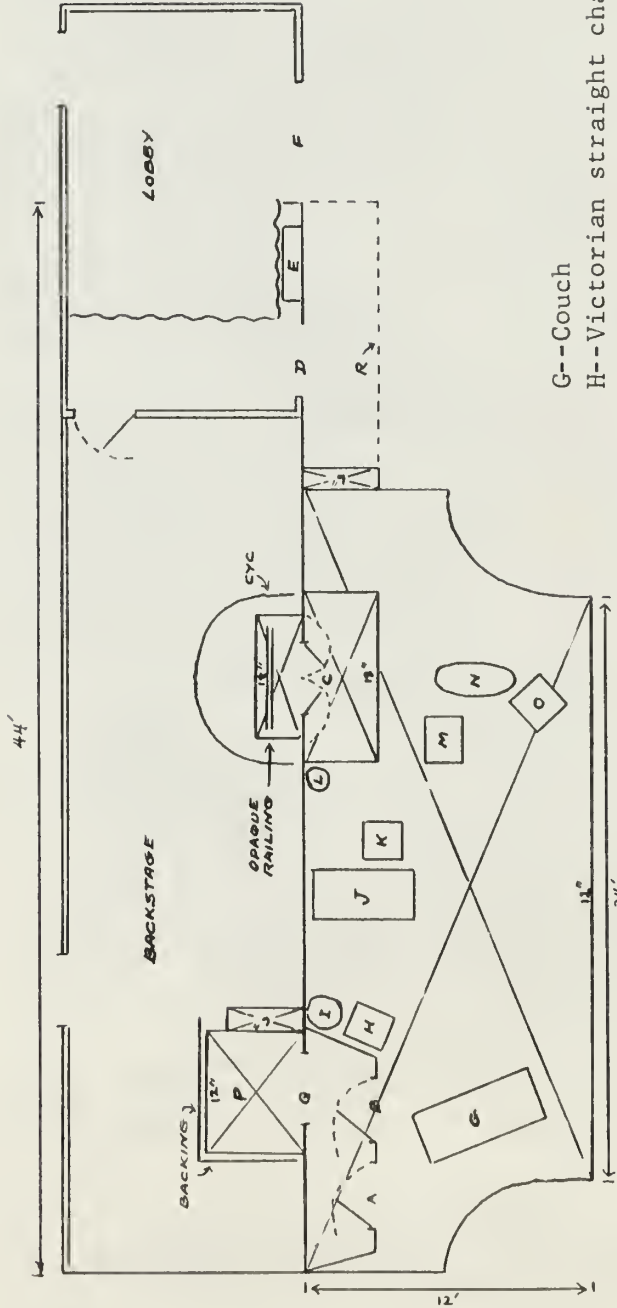
Furniture Re-arrangement for Act II, Scene 2

Since the whole emphasis in Act II, Scene 2 was directed to stage Center, mention should be made of furniture re-arrangement in the study in the second scene of Act II. A new opening was written for the scene which enabled the following adjustments to be made during the course of the action. The maid, Eugenie, and the General lifted the couch from its usual position stage Right, swung it around and set it eighteen inches below the desk and slightly on the diagonal with the head swung a bit to stage Right, the foot a bit stage Left of Center. The downstage adjustable end of the couch was lowered flat; the head, upstage, was left erect. The wife was then placed on it. A foot-and-a-half of floor space was left downstage of the couch so the General could walk completely around his wife as she lay with her head propped up against the erect upstage end of the couch against a pink and a lavender pillow each edged with three-inch ruffles. Over her the maid spread a pastel green ruffled, fluffy comforter. A bit later the General moved his chair upstage and set it in front of the closed shutters to wedge them firmly together. This opened the center stage Left area so the audience had a clear, unobstructed view of the upper portion of the wife's body and her head. Still later the General moved Gaston's straight Victorian chair downstage from its usual position against the diagonal wall to a point just upstage Right of the head of the couch. As a result of this repositioning the wife dominated the room. The addition of her feminine quilt and pillows made the masculine setting take on a softer "feel" during the scene and achieved the effect that had been sought.

EXPLANATION OF PLATE XIV

Floor plan for Act I, Scenes 1 and 2  
Act II, Scene 1 and Act III

PLATE XIV



Scale: 1/8" = 1'

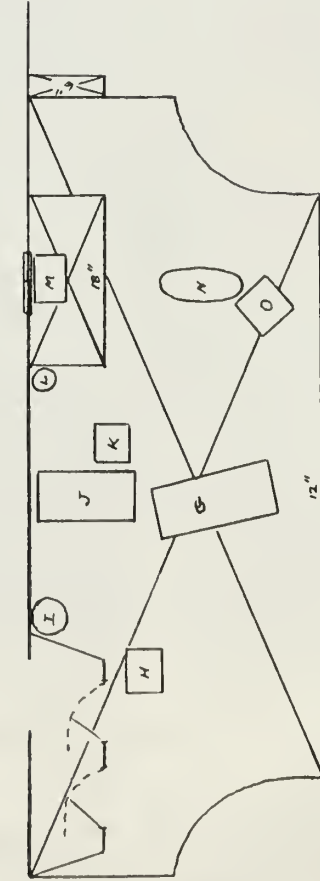
- A--Upstage far Right door to Wife's bedroom
- B--Upstage Right door to main part of house
- C--Upstage Left French window
- D--Upstage far Left arch to morning room
- E-- Niche
- F--Upstage far Left exit to the garden

- G--Couch
- H--Victorian straight chair (Gaston's)
- I--Plant
- J--Desk
- K--Desk chair
- L--World globe
- M--Louis XIV chair (General's)
- N--Low marble-top table
- O--Victorian man's chair (Doctor's)
- P--Exit landing
- Q--Upstage Right exit to backstage
- R--Edge of roof over up Left exit passageway

**EXPLANATION OF PLATE XV**

**Main stage floor plan during most of Act II, Scene 2  
indicating re-adjustment of furniture**

PLATE XV



- G--Couch
- H--Victorian straight chair
- I--Plant
- J--Desk
- K--Desk chair
- L--World globe
- M--Louis XIV chair
- N--Low marble-top table
- O--Victorian man's chair

Scale: 1/8" = 1'

**EXPLANATION OF PLATE XVI**

**Gaston, the General, Emily and Ghislaine  
near the end of Act I, Scene 2**





**EXPLANATION OF PLATE XVII**

**Gaston, Estelle, Sidonia, Madame Dupont-Fredaine and the General  
Act II, Scene 1**

PLATE XVII



**EXPLANATION OF PLATE XVIII**

**The General chokes Emily  
Act II, Scene 2**

PLATE XVIII



EXPLANATION OF PLATE XIX

The Doctor, Sidonia, Estelle, Father Ambrose, the General, Chislaine and Gaston  
Act III

PLATE XIX



List of Set Properties

## Hanging--On Stage Throughout

- 1 zebra shield--on diagonal wall up Right
- 5 guns mounted on display board--Right back wall
- 1 anaconda snake mounted--hanging across top of back wall
- 1 Thompson's gazelle head--mounted back wall Center
- 2 powder horns--hanging from neck of gazelle
- 2 dueling swords, crossed on "family crest"--Left back wall
- 1 lemon tree limb--outside and above window up Left
- 1 white muslin cyc--outside up Left window
- 1 mattress--outside up Left window
- 1 hat rack--up Left between window and passageway on back wall
- 1 Moroccan fez--on hat rack
- 1 riding crop--on hat rack
- 1 binoculars and case with strap--on hat rack
- 1 rectangular picture in gold frame--hung to left in morning room passageway
- 1 dark maroon curtain--separating up Left morning room passageway from lobby
- 1 statue of Aphrodite--sitting in niche in passageway up far Left
- 1 roof--over passageway up far Left

## Furniture--On Stage Throughout

- 1 large rug--stage Center
- 2 auxiliary rugs--one to Right, one to Left of main rug
- 1 couch--stage Right Center
- 1 bolster--downstage end of couch
- 1 straight chair--against diagonal wall up Right
- 1 tree-like plant in wooden pot--in corner where diagonal wall up Right meets back wall

- 1 desk--up Center
- 1 desk chair--Left of desk
- 1 world globe on stand--left of chair up Center
- 1 large man's chair--stage Left of Center
- 1 low marble-top table--Left of man's chair
- 1 smaller man's chair--down Left of marble-top table

Small Props--On Stage Throughout

- 6 large old books--on desk
- 1 desk lamp--on desk
- 1 brass cannon--on desk
- 1 rectangular "tidy" -- on desk
- 1 candy dish with candy--on desk
- 1 paperweight--on desk
- 1 brass inkwell--on desk
- 1 pen--in holder on desk
- 1 brass pen holder--on desk
- 1 manuscript--center desk drawer
- 12 envelopes--center desk drawer
- 12 pieces of stationery--center desk drawer
- Cigars in wooden cigar box--on marble-top table
- 1 lamp--on marble-top table
- 1 ashtray with water--on marble-top table
- 2 matchboxes with matches--on marble-top table



## Off-Stage Properties

### Act I, Scene 1

1 partially handwritten letter

1 envelope

1 Doctor's bag

1 reticule

1 pearl handled pistol

1 note pad

1 pencil

1 man's silk handkerchief

### Act I, Scene 2

1 Doctor's Bag

1 reticule

1 pearl handled pistol

1 note pad

1 pencil

Farewell note handwritten by wife on colored stationery

Coffee cup and saucer with coffee

### Act II, Scene 1

None used

### Act II, Scene 2

1 tray

Assorted pill bottles with pills--on tray

Assorted liquid medicines --on tray

1 empty water glass--on tray

1 man's handkerchief--on tray

1 bottle of colonge--on tray

1 green ruffled coverlet

1 pink ruffled pillow

1 lavender ruffled pillow

Act III

1 piece of notepaper with handwriting--girl's suicide note

1 feather duster

1 Doctor's bag

## LIGHTING

### Description

The entire action of The Waltz of the Toreadors takes place in a single day. At the opening of Act I, Scene 1 it is 9:00 in the morning. Scene 2 takes place immediately after. Act II, Scene 1 occurs early that afternoon. Scene 2 happens immediately thereafter. It is dusk at the beginning of Act II and at the close of the play it is dark outside, but there is a moon. Through the window of the General's study one can see the visible signs of the passage of time outdoors and the interior adjusts accordingly. Interior lights are used in Act III when it is dark outside. As for the passageway leading to the morning room and garden far upstage Left, its light is similar to that outside. Three sizeable and definite areas--the main acting platform (the interior of the room), the outdoors (seen through the French window), and the passageway--had light sources focused upon them and they were played one against the other. The term "general illumination" applies to the simultaneous adjustment of all three areas.

The overall lighting effect sought for the main part of the interior of the study (the acting platform) was predominantly a realistic one, warm in tone. To achieve it a total of sixteen lamps were used--four 6" Lekos with 500 watt T-12 medium pre-focus base bulbs, ten 6" Fresnels with 500 watt T-20 medium pre-focus base bulbs, and two 8" Fresnels with 750 watt T-20 medium pre-focus base bulbs. Three of the spotlights were focused on the two doors upstage Right. Stage Right Center, stage Center and stage Left

Center were each flooded with four spotlights, and one spot illuminated the step upstage Left used by the actors to descend from the platform and go into the passageway. Two light sources on the stage set were manually operated by the actors. One was the desk lamp, up Center, the other the table lamp on the low marble-top table stage Left. The former had a single seven-and-a-half watt bulb and the latter had two seven-and-a-half watt bulbs which were switched on or off separately. No glare resulted from these weak light sources. The warm toning was done by using no-color pink (number 60), special lavender (number 17), no color blue (number 140) and light straw (number 2) in combination on the spotlights coming from overhead.

As actors moved into the passageway up Left they came into the range, in Acts I and II, of a 6' Leko with 500 watt T-12 medium pre-focus base bulb tinted with a bastard amber (number 71) gelatin simulating sunlight. Mounted next to this lamp was a second spot of the same size and with the same type power bulb, but its gelatin was steel blue (number 29). This one was used in Act III to suggest moonlight flooding the passageway area.

The outdoor effects were created by four instruments located backstage of the window. Two 6" Fresnels with 500 watt T-20 medium pre-focus base lamps without lenses were recessed in the ceiling just above and behind the window opening. A couple of ceiling tiles were removed to accomplish this positioning. Each spot had a different shade gelatin on it. One was tinted with bastard amber (number 71) and the other with steel blue (number 29). The former was lit during Acts I and II, the latter in Act III. The other two lamps were Olivettes with 1,000 watt screw-type mogul base bulbs gelled throughout with steel blue (number 29). Each was positioned four and three-quarters feet up on the wall immediately on either side of the balcony platform backstage and both were focused on the white muslin cyc. These were lit at all times.

The electrical load of these lamps and the houselights was distributed among sixteen out of a possible eighteen available dimmers each having a capacity of 2,000 watts. Spotlights focused on the main interior were patched into dimmers number one through ten with one, two, eight and ten carrying one lamp apiece. All other dimmers in this sequence controlled two spots each. The passageway and outdoor daytime spotlights were on dimmers fourteen and eleven respectively; those suggesting moonlight were on dimmers fifteen and twelve. As for the Olivettes, they were both on the number thirteen dimmer. Houselights were controlled on number eighteen.

Lighting in Act I, Scenes 1 and 2 in Act II, Scene 1 was comparatively simple. Sunshine from outdoors appeared to be flooding the main interior and the passageway. To gain this effect the general illumination was brought up from medium intensity at the very opening to full intensity. In Act II, Scene 2, after the shutters were closed, all interior lamps and the passageway light were reduced to a medium-low intensity to suggest the cutting off of sunlight. The exterior lamps, however, were left up full so the "sunlight" outside the window would sift slightly through the slats of the shutters. When the General manually turned on the desk lamp the Center stage interior lights were brought up simultaneously by the light crew to medium. Two things were accomplished by this. Attention was focused upon the wife and her feminine accouterments stage Center. The stage Right and Left portions of the study, left at medium-low lighting intensity, tended to recede in importance.

When the lights came up at the beginning of Act III the general illumination was set at medium-low intensity. The lamps with moonlight gels focused on the passageway and outside were lit. This resulted in a dim

overall effect which suggested dusk and effectively silhouetted the restless General in the open window. Later in the act as he manually turned on the two lights in the lamp on the low marble-top table stage Left the crew in the light booth brought up the four spots focused on that area. A bit later when the maid turned on the desk lamp up stage Center, the eight spotlights trained on stage Right and center Stage came up to medium. (The three spots on the doors upstage Right were not touched). The effect was that of a room as it would appear in the evening with the lamps lit. The procedure was reversed in the closing minutes of Act III. The General first turned the lamp on the desk up Center off. There was a corresponding drop in spotlight illumination on stage Right and Center to medium-low. Next, after the Doctor's exit, he turned off the table lamp on stage Left. As each of the two bulbs were put out the stage lights stage Left dropped gradually to medium-low. They stayed at this setting throughout the final scene with Pamela. Only when the two began moving across the acting platform did the interior and exterior lights go down to low and the passageway moonlight spot was cross-faded with them and brought up to medium to light their way out the garden exit far upstage Left.

Though there was no great complication in the lighting used or in the intensity of the settings, it served beautifully to model the faces of the actors, and in Act's II and II especially, it most tellingly reinforced the mood of the play.

Lighting Cue Sheet

(Cross referenced in Red numbers in the script)

1. The house lights fade out on a two minute, 40 second count. There is a thirty second blackout.
2. The main interior, passageway sunlight and exterior sunlights come up instantly to medium intensity.
3. The main interior illumination comes up full.
4. There is an instant blackout lasting nine seconds to cover the break between scenes 1 and 2 of Act I.
5. The general illumination comes up full.
6. There is an instant blackout.
7. The house lights come up full for a ten minute intermission.
8. The house lights fade down on a two minute and thirty second count. There is a twenty second blackout.
9. The general illumination comes up full.
10. There is an instant balckout lasting thirty-two seconds to cover the break between Act II, Scene 1 and Scene 2.
11. The general illumination comes up full.
12. The interior and passageway lights are reduced to medium-low intensity. (The exterior daylight is left up full.)
13. The Center stage interior lights come up to medium.
14. The Center stage interior lights are raised on a sixteen count to medium high.
15. There is an instant blackout.
16. The house lights come up full for a ten minute intermission.
17. The houselights fade out on a two minute and thirty second count. There is a twenty second blackout.
18. The general illumination comes up to medium low. Moonlights are now in use on the exterior and passageway areas.

19. The interior spotlights on stage Left are raised to medium.
20. The Center stage and stage Right center interior area lights are brought up to medium.
21. The Center stage and Right stage interior area spotlights are taken down to medium low.
22. The stage Left interior lights are taken down to medium-low.
23. The spotlights illuminating the interior and the exterior moonlight spots are taken down to low.
24. Cross-fade the passageway moonlight spot up to medium.
25. There is an instant blackout.
26. All interior stage lights come up full for curtain call.
27. Stage lights out. Hold for ten count.
28. House lights come up instantly.



## SOUND EFFECTS

### Their Functions Within the Play

With the sole exception of Gaston's gulp-hiccough as Ghislaine lands on his head following her leap from the window, all sound effects in The Waltz of the Toreadors are musical. There is the Waltz itself heard in Act I, Scene 1; the Italian song Gaston sings off-stage in Act I, Scene 1 and again in Act I, Scene 2; and the cavalry lights-out bugle call heard near the beginning and at the end of Act III

It is not unusual for Anouilh to utilize music. Grossvogel notes it as a property that "mocks the action" and "marks moods." "The laughter of, and at, the characters can freely echo in the music, the dance, and all the attributes of the spectacle," he observes.<sup>1</sup> Alba Della Fazio pays particular attention to the fact that music is basic to the construction of many of Anouilh's plays and points out (much as does Grossvogel) that it "adds to the jocosity of events, or intensifies the seriousness or mock-seriousness of a scene."<sup>2</sup> When these observations, which apply to a number of the playwright's works, are related specifically to the incidental music called for in the script of The Waltz of the Toreadors it becomes obvious that each selection is highly integrated into the dramatic action and performs specific functions.

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<sup>1</sup>Grossvogel, pp. 192-193, 198.

<sup>2</sup>Della Fazio, p. 346.

"The Waltz of the Toreadors" itself, for example, is a powerful idiom of the past, part and parcel of the crucial first meeting of the General and Ghislaine which occurred at the Saumur Ball seventeen years prior to the time that the action of the play begins. To weld this event, its emotional overtones and The Waltz together, and to emphasize their immediacy and relationship to the present action, Anouilh inserts a play-within-a-play into Act I, Scene 1 in which Ghislaine and the General re-enact their initial encounter. The illusion of the past occurring in the present is established when the General murmurs the name of The Waltz for the first time in the play. At once its melody fades up and under the dialogue, building a bridge of sound into yesterday. As the lovers dance in the ensuing sequence the background music aids greatly in sustaining and intensifying the prevailing romantic mood. That spell is broken and the music ceases when the General's grown daughters, who were "but babies" when their father met Ghislaine, interrupt.

Gaston's Italian song, in contrast to The Waltz, is an outpouring of the present and it also connotes what the future may hold in store. When Ghislaine first enters with the maid in Act I, Scene 1 Gaston is singing outside the window. The voice attracts her at once. She asks the maid, Is that He [the General] singing?" This is the first of a series of Ghislaine's mistaking Gaston's identity for that of her older lover. These errors, each time they are made, prepare the audience for ensuing action in the play. They reiterate Gaston's resemblance to the General, when the latter met Ghislaine as a young Lieutenant, hint at the real relationship of the two men finally revealed in the third act, and foreshadow Ghislaine's eventual involvement with the young man as well. Though Eugenie corrects Ghislaine, pointing out that it is the Secretary rather than his employer who is singing,

Mademoiselle de St. Euverte remains unconvinced. After the maid leaves, she carefully listens to Gaston's voice once again and says, "It sounds so like his voice." Taking this line as his cue the General enters and the singing fades out just before he speaks. Thus, through the utilization of a song sung off-stage, Anouilh makes several plot points and reinforces them.

Gaston sings for the second time in Act I, Scene 2. The situation is this. The General and the Doctor have just rushed out to prevent Madame St. Pe from carrying out her suicide threat. Ghislaine has seen her lover's agitation and decides it is a sign he still loves his wife. There is no hope for her love being consummated, she concludes; therefore, there is no reason to go on living. She sits at the desk and begins her farewell note-- "Leon, this is my last letter to you..." As her voice trails away and she continues to write Gaston begins to sing outside. This time, Ghislaine pays his voice no heed. Her attention is too completely focused upon the desperate measure she has decided to take. She finishes the note, rises to her feet, holds the revolver to her heart and pulls the trigger twice; the gun does not go off. The music, meanwhile, has accompanied her every move, its warm joyous tone sharply contrasting with Ghislaine's desperation. It intensifies the mock-seriousness of the maiden's actions and keeps the overall tone of the scene light so the audience feels perfectly free to laugh at Ghislaine's incongruous attempts at suicide. As she fails to get the revolver to fire, starts for the pond and then decides to jump from the window, the song continues relentlessly. But, just after she disappears over the railing, the melody rudely breaks off and the gulp-hiccup follows at once. What, the spectator wonders, has happened? Why did the singing stop and what is the significance of the strange strangled cry? Suspense builds.

Only when Gaston finally enters bearing the Mademoiselle's limp body and explains she fell on his head are the questions answered and the audience is free to dissolve into laughter. The great delight felt is largely a result of the way the playwright linked on-stage and off-stage happenings with sound effects.

The first time the cavalry lights-out bugle call is heard, near the beginning of the third act, it has significance largely because of its military connotation. It effectively links the central character with his old profession. As the lights come up in Act III the General is alone, prowling about in his study, exhibiting the extreme nervousness of a thoroughly frustrated and confused man. At one point, as he halts for a moment, the bugle is heard in the distance. The General's body straightens perceptibly. For a split second, as he hears the bugle, he is transported back in time into the safe structure of his old military outfit. When the call ceases and the General is jolted back into the present, however, his original agitation is intensified. He realizes he is not safely in the military. He is old, retired from the cavalry and adrift in an absurd world with which he is having difficulty coping. That he has felt secure for a moment only makes him feel his isolation more keenly. The bugle is thus a mocking reminder of a structured life now over. Its regimented logic sharply contrasts with the chaos being experienced in the present, and it intensifies that chaos.

The final time the lights-out bugle echoes in the act is at the end when Pamela and her General stroll off the stage and into the garden. The mournful call reflects the hopelessness and loneliness felt by the retired soldier even as he, robot-like, follows his shop-worn seduction pattern, not because a conquest is going to quiet his restlessness and sense of iso-

sation but because, with Ghislaine gone from his life, it is all that is left. The bugle is a fitting epitaph for this tired old man whose "lights have gone out" during the course of the play and also a fitting climax in sound for his dramatized story upon which the stage lights dim out as he exits into the garden.

### Solving Sound Effects Problems

The title melody for the Purple Masque production was an original composition by Professor Thomas Steunenberg of the department of music at Kansas State University. In early July the composer took the script to study it. On July 30, 1965 he talked with the director. "The music must be in keeping with the moods of the script and must underline those moods," he first observed. Then he went on to give his impression of the play. It was, he felt, basically serious. The playwright, in his opinion, had merely employed humor as the "cutting edge." The music, therefore, "should be dark with a certain restlessness in it; yet it should have humorous and romantic elements as well." The director agreed. Professor Steunenberg also sensed that The Waltz functioned as an idiom of the past. To achieve that idiom he suggested that he harken back in his composing patterns to the era in which the General and Ghislaine first met. "In 1893," he mused, "the Viennese light opera composers were enamored of the rhythm of the hesitation waltz which had a sexy connotation. Franz Lehar, for one, employed the form and it was generally popular throughout Europe. I could use the works of this composer, and others who utilized the hesitation rhythm, as a base for my composition," he suggested. The director felt this was a valid approach so, following this meeting, Professor Steunenberg began his task.

The composer first approached the dialogue and action sequence in

Act I, Scene 1 of the play-within-a-play for which the music would provide accompaniment. He wrote the dialogue under his score approximating, as best he could, the speed at which the words would be spoken and the action performed. Two themes emerged. "Both were purposefully written in a minor mode to somewhat depress the usual color of the musical form," Professor Steunenberg explained during an interview with the director on February 17, 1966. "In this way I felt I could best remain true to the dark tone I sensed in the play when I first read it."

While the resulting music faithfully adhered to the rhythm of the hesitation waltz, it did not sound familiar, nor could anyone in the cast, even after repeated listening, hum the tune. When asked how he had managed to create this effect Professor Steunenberg replied, "When the idiom in which one is working is so familiar, the composer has to guard against becoming banal. I used two techniques to avoid becoming trite. Firstly, I deliberately inserted an unexpected interval here and there into the melodic line, intervals which would be exceedingly difficult (if not impossible) to predict. As a result, neither theme was singable. Secondly, the Viennese light opera waltz composers used a regular bass pattern and made no attempt to create tension with it. In contrast, I deliberately introduced mounting tension throughout in the bass. This is the 'long line of thought' technique used by Schubert, among other composers. The resulting composition, therefore, did not sound familiar nor could it be sung unless the unexpected intervals were omitted." Thus, with the help of a talented and sensitive musician, the first and perhaps most crucial sound effect problem was solved.

Gaston's Italian song was sung by a beginning voice student--a tenor. He talked with the director and decided to prepare "O Sol O Mio."<sup>1</sup> The

---

<sup>1</sup>"Oh, My Sun" is the English translation of the song title.

student's singing voice in quality was similar to the speaking voice quality of the actor who played Gaston. In the director's opinion, his rendition was entirely satisfactory.

The cavalry lights-out bugle call was improvised in the minor by Paul Shull, Associate Professor in the-K-State music department. When heard early in the act, only the last four measures of the total call were used. At the end of the act, however, the full call--eight measures in length--was needed to accompany the long exit-cross of Pamela and the General.

Before discussing the final production tape it should be mentioned that after Professor Steunenberg had composed the two themes of The Waltz for Act I, Scene 1, he suggested arranging variations of those themes into overture form. He first turned out a composition two minutes and fifty seconds in length. Later, he inserted twenty additional seconds into the original. It was decided to use the latter longer overture as the curtain raiser. The shorter version was not wasted, however; it was employed following the two ten minute intermissions as introductory music to Acts II and III. After consultation with the composer the director also decided to use interim music to heighten anticipation and to bridge blackout pauses between scenes. The Professor composed one interim nine seconds long for insertion between Scene 1 and Scene 2 of Act I and another quite different in tone and thirty-two seconds in length to bridge the pause between Scenes 1 and 2 of Act II.

Margaret Walker, Assistant Professor in the department of music and a fine pianist, recorded the overtures and interim selections just described, together with the incidental music accompanying the play-within-a-play, in the Chapel Auditorium. Both the music student who sang "O Sol O Mio" and Paul Shull who played the bugle call on a muted trumpet taped in the KSAC

Studios. Next, all musical selections were spliced onto a single tape in the order they would be used in the production. Finally, leader tape was inserted between each cut and each was clearly identified with a crayon marker. No matter how volume controls were manipulated, when the tape was played in the theatre, the bugle call did not sound far enough in the distance. This fault was corrected by electronically creating an echo effect on the original recording.

Gaston's gulp-hiccough was the only sound effect done live. As for the spliced-in-sequence selections, they were played on a tape recorder placed backstage. The speaker on this machine was used for those cuts heard within the action of the play. The act overtures and interim music, on the other hand, were played over a speaker hung high on a post above the heads of the audience seated directly in front of the stage.



Sound Cue Sheet

(Cross-referenced by Green numbers in the script)

1. The Waltz of the Toreadors full length overture, three minutes and ten seconds in length, is played on the front speaker at medium volume.
2. On the backstage speaker at medium-low volume, "O Sol O Mio" begins.
3. "O Sol O Mio" ends.
4. The Waltz of the Toreadors main melodic theme begins on the backstage speaker at medium volume.
5. The Waltz of the Toreadors main melodic theme ends.
6. The interim music between Act I, Scene 1 and Act I, Scene 2, nine seconds in length, is played on the front speaker at medium-high volume.
7. On the backstage speaker at medium-low volume, "O Sol O Mio" begins.
8. "O Sol O Mio" ends.
9. The shortened version of The Waltz of the Toreadors overture, two minutes and fifty seconds in length, is played at medium volume on the front speaker.
10. The interim music between Act II, Scene 1 and Act II, Scene 2, thirty two seconds in length, is played on the front speaker at medium-high volume.
11. The shortened version of The Waltz of the Toreadors overture, two minutes and fifty seconds in length, is played at medium volume on the front speaker.
12. The bugle call, four measures in length, is played at low volume on the backstage speaker.
13. The bugle call, eight measures in length, is played at medium-low volume on the backstage speaker.

The Waltz of the Toreadors

by

Jean Anouilh

Translated

by

Lucienne Hill

**ACT I**

**Scene 1**

**The Year: 1910**

**9:00 A.M. of a Spring Day**

**The Study of General Saint-Pe**

(The overture begins. The houselights fade out slowly. During the thirty second blackout the General takes his place in the desk chair upstage center. As the lights come up he is writing a letter. The communicating door to the Wife's bedroom far upstage Right is open. After a nine count her shrill voice cuts the silence.)

Voice

(off)

Leon!

General

(automatically)

Yes!

Voice

What are you doing?

General

Working.

Voice

Liar. You are thinking. I can hear you. What are you thinking about?

General

You.

Voice

Liar. You are thinking about women being beautiful and warm and good to touch and not feeling all alone in the world for a while, you told me so once.

General

(patiently)

I haven't the faintest recollection of it. Go to sleep, my love. You will be tired later.

Voice

I am only tired, only ill, because of you! Ill with thinking, always thinking of all the things I know you're doing!

General

Come now, my love, you exaggerate, as usual.

(He leaves off writing and leans back in his chair.)

The whole time you have been ill, and that makes years now, I haven't left this room, sitting here glued to this chair dictating my memoirs, or pacing about like a bear in a cage, and well you know it.

(The General returns to his letter writing task.)

Voice

(whining)

I fell ill with thinking of all the things you are busy doing in your head while you pretended to comfort me. Admit it, hypocrite! Where were you just now in your head? With what woman? In which kitchen, tumbling Heaven knows what drab that scrubs away there on all fours? And you creep up on her, like a great tomcat. Leon, you make me sick!

General

(continuing to write)

By Hades, Madam, you are dreaming. I am sitting at my desk, writing to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, M. Poincare.

Voice

He's a good excuse, Poincare! You are holding your pen, oh, yes--but in your head, your hands are still mauling that girl. Stop it, Leon!-- if you don't want my death on your conscience. Have you no shame, man, no refinement?

General

(stops writing)

Will you let me finish my letter in peace.

Voice

(whimpering)

But inside! Inside your head! Why won't you let me inside your head--just once--just for a minute?

General

(putting his pen down)

Confound it, madam, my head is out of bounds! It's the one spot where I can have a bit of peace, I want it to myself.

Voice

(rising agitatedly)

I shall get into it one day. I shall come upon you there when you least expect it and I shall kill you!

General

(rising)

All Right....

(He crosses upstage Right to the Wife's door as he speaks.)

you have brought it on yourself--I shall take Dr. Bonfant's advice and shut the door.

Voice

Leon, I forbid you! You are a coward and the Doctor is a murderer. Leon, I shall have an attack!

(In spite of her shrieks the General closes the door. The Secretary enters through the door up Right of center as the General, at first unaware of the newcomer, continues to speak.)

General

Implacable! I have shut her door!

(He turns toward stage center and sees the Secretary.)

Oh--Good morning, my boy.

Secretary

Good morning, General

(The General crosses downstage of the Secretary and returns to the desk chair. At first, he merely pulls the chair out from the desk. The Secretary, meanwhile, steps upstage Right, picks up the straight chair and sets it to the Right of the desk.)

General

My word, she needn't think I'm going to put up with her whims forever. Haven't you a wife, young man? A little girl friend? It's the old, old story--you meet her by chance, you take her under the apple trees and ten minutes later you are married and living with her poor old mother.

Secretary

I am too young.

(The Secretary holds out his hand for the manuscript which the General has taken from the center desk drawer.)

General

Yes, and in a flash you'll be too old.

(The General sits after handing the Secretary the manuscript.)

You'll be sitting at your desk dictating your memoirs. And between the two, pouff--a game of dice!

(The General begins to fold the letter he has written to M. Poincare.)

You must feel the urge sometimes though, I hope?

Secretary

No sir. I have not long left the seminary. I am still chaste.

General

Good. Sad, though. Life without women, my boy, what hell! There's another problem M. Poincare will never solve.

(The General seals the envelope and puts it on the far corner of the desk where the Secretary will see it.)

General (continued)

Now then, to work. Where were we?

Secretary

We have finished Chapter 30. Do you want me to read it back to you, sir?

General

Not now. I'm feeling in form.

(He rises and strolls up to the window upstage Left as he speaks.)

I managed to slip out for ten minutes, earlier, for a turn around the garden. The air was heavy with the scent of rhododendrons--I wandered down a path, it was cool, my joints were as sprightly as a two-year-old's nobody called me--it was extraordinary. I fancied I was a widower.

(He turns briskly and focuses on the Secretary.)

Chapter 31. My African Campaigns. Paragraph One. Morocco. Until 1898, the policy of the French Government in Morocco was a policy of presence. Since the ill-starred treaty of Frankfurt, however, another factor was coming to have a dangerous bearing on Moroccan policy;

(He steps downstage off the platform and moves behind the easy chair upstage Left. Subsequently, at the end of the speech he sits in the chair.)

The creation of the German Empire whose intrigues and promises were to induce the Sultan to stiffen his attitude towards ourselves. An incident, to all appearances insignificant, was to set a light to the powder.

(Estelle and Sidonia, lanky wenches of rising twenty, enter.)

Sidonia

Papa!

General

Yes.

(The two girls advance from the upstage Right door to stage center. Sidonia leads Estelle who meekly follows her sister.)

Sidonia

(firmly)

What are we going to do about Corpus Christi?

General

Nothing! We'll say we forgot.

Estelle

But, Papa, Father Ambrose wants Sidonia and me in white, he said so again yesterday. And we have nothing to wear.

General

Then wear nothing. It will be fifty times more jolly. Now then, my boy, where were we?

Secretary

Relations between the Sultan and the government.

(Estelle and Sidonia advance toward their father.)

Estelle

Papa! We are carrying the first banner in the procession directly behind the altarboys. We are your daughters and if we don't look as nice as all the other girls people will talk.

General

People will talk anyway. Wear your last year's dresses!

(Sidonia breaks away from Estelle and crosses down Left to the side of the occasional chair.)

Sidonia

They're too short. We've grown.

General

Again? Hell's bells and little fishes, when are you going to stop?

(He rises.)

Look at me--have I grown?

Estelle

People go on growing until the age of twenty-five.

General

They do in theory.

(He begins shooing them out. He crosses only to stage center while they hurry toward the door upstage Right through which they entered.)

But if they have a scrap of tact, they leave off sooner. Go and put on your last year's dresses and come and show them to me.

Girls

Yes, Papa!

(They poke at the Secretary as they pass him, giggle, and then go out.)

General

(looking at the Girl's retreating figures)

My God, aren't they ugly? To think that I, with such a soft spot for a pretty face, could have brought those into the world.



Secretary

The Mademoiselles Saint-Pe are full of all sorts of moral qualities.

General

All sorts. But not the right sort.

(He crosses up Right to the Secretary and looks down at the boys notes.)

Heigh-ho--where were we?

Secretary

Relations between the Sultan and the government.

General

Well now, they weren't going so well either.

(He moves downstage Right to the end of the chaise.)

One fine day the black bastard makes off with a couple of our missionaries. He has a bit of fun with them first and then sends them back, dead as pork, trussed up like sausages, minus one or two spare parts.

(He turns and looks upstage at the Secretary.)

I won't dwell on the ironic element. It was an insult to the flag! The Dubreuil expedition is decided on. Ah, my boy, what a campaign.

(He rubs his hands together and sits on the downstage end of the chaise.)

We got our money's worth for our two priests! By jingo, we ran through some Arabs! With good clean steel too and no nonsense. And then, my boy, the little girls of twelve, the way they grow 'em in those parts--wonderful.

(He focuses on the plant upstage Right as though the girl in his narrative was coming to life.)

There she is, terror-stricken, crouching naked in a corner, a little creature that knows it will be forced, and that almost desires it. Two young breasts, tender as fawns, and cruppers, me lad! And eyes!--and you the soldier, the conqueror, the master. Your sword still steaming in your hand--you have killed--you are all powerful--she knows it and you know it too--it is hot and dark inside the tent, and there you stand, face to face, in silence--

Secretary

(leaning forward, flushed and panting)

And then--

General

(simply)

Well, dammit all--at that age! We're not savages. We turned them over to the Sisters of Mercy at Rabat.

(Doctor Bonfant enters from the garden far upstage Left.)

General (continued)

Ah! here's Dr. Bonfant come to see his patient.

(The General rises. So does the Secretary who, as he hears the General's order, lifts his chair and returns it to its position against the diagonal wall upstage Right.)

Leave us for a while, my boy. I shall ring for you. Good morning, doctor.

(The Secretary picks up his notebook from the desk.)

Secretary

(to the Doctor)

Good morning.

Doctor

Good morning.

(The Secretary exits through the main door upstage Right.)

General

(watching the boy go)

Fine-looking young chap, isn't he?

(He crosses to the end of the desk upstage center. The Doctor comes to meet him and they shake hands.)

Would have cut quite a dash as a dragoon but for his vocation as a virgin. Superb handwriting, though, and no fool The Cure found him for me. He's a parish child one of his colleagues brought up. I see you came up the back way through the garden.

Doctor

Yes, it's easier, somehow, to get down to work after a pleasant interlude. And how is our invalid this morning?

General

The same as yesterday, the same as tomorrow no doubt. And how is medical science progressing?

Doctor

(crossing to occasional chair down Left)

No further. We have found other terms far less vague than the old ones to designate the same complaints.

(He sits.)

It's a great advance linguistically. No scenes today?

General

A small one on the usual theme. However, I took your advice and shut the door.

(The General crosses Left of center near the arm of the easy chair.)

Doctor

Excellent. And did that silence her?

General

She must have gone on on the other side but at least I couldn't hear her.

Doctor

As I say, this paralysis of the lower limbs is of a purely nervous origin, like all the rest. The mental process is quite simple--we won't walk any more so as to rouse his pity and make it impossible for him to leave us. You must have led her a dance to have brought her to that, General.

General

(Moving to the front of the easy chair as he speaks.)

Not to that extent, Doctor, not to that extent. I loved my wife very much at first.

(He sits in the easy chair.)

Yes, it seems as odd to me now as my craze over a stamp collection at fifteen. But it's a fact, we had a few happy years--well, when I say happy----Before lapsing into bigotry and fruitbottling, Emily had quite an amorous disposition. My wife was an opera singer, you know. She bellowed her way through Wagner as a Valkyrie. I married her and made her give up the theatre, to my eternal cost. She was to go on acting for myself alone. A performance at his own expense, lasting for more than twenty years, tends to wear out your spectator.

(He picks up the cigar box from the marble top table to his left.)

So I set about finding my fun elsewhere, naturally.

(He offers a cigar to the Doctor who refuses. The General removes a cigar for himself and then closes the lid of the box.)

Chambermaids, waitresses, whatever hole-and-corner capers a man dares to indulge in, who is very closely watched. And I grew old, little by little. First a shade too much stomach, then the paunch advancing as the hair recedes, and the sleeve wound round with more and more gold string.

(He returns the cigar box to the table top.)

And beneath this fancy dress the heart of an aged youngster still waiting to give his all. But who's to recognize me underneath the mask?

Doctor

What would you say if I told you more or less the same tale, General?

General

It wouldn't be the slightest consolation. At least your wife didn't decide at the eleventh hour to fall madly in love with you and die of unrequited passion.

(The General lights his cigar. The Doctor picks up his bag which is on the floor by his chair and gets ready to rise.)

Doctor

She makes up for it in other ways.

(He rises.)

Well now, I shall go and take her blood pressure. That won't do her any harm.

(The General rises as the Doctor crosses toward the Wife's bedroom far upstage Right.)

It is always normal anyway. Does she eat at all?

(The General begins crossing down Left, below the occasional chair, and around the marble top table. He continues during the next speech to move upstage, and focus on the Doctor the while.)

General

Like you or me. I shall make the most of your visit and take a little turn around the garden, like any carefree bachelor. Don't tell her, she would accuse me of deceiving her with a geranium.

(The Doctor goes in to his patient, the General into the garden far upstage Left. The stage is empty for a moment. The Secretary is heard outside singing an Italian song. The door to the main part of the house upstage Right of center opens and the Maid Eugenie shows in a visitor, a woman decked out in a cape, hat and veils. Her face is completely covered.)

Maid

(Leading the woman to stage center as she speaks.)

It's very early, Madame. I think the master is taking his morning stroll around the garden.

Mlle. de Ste-Euverte

Is that he singing? It sounds like his voice.

Maid

Oh no, Madame. That's the Secretary.

(She crosses upstage Left as she speaks.)

I'll go and ask the master if he will receive you, Madame.

Mlle. de Ste-Euverte

Mademoiselle.

Maid

(turning)

I beg your pardon, Mademoiselle. What name shall I say?

Mlle. de Ste-Euverte

Mademoiselle de Ste-Euverte.

Maid

Very good, Mademoiselle.

(The Maid exits into the garden far up Left. Mlle. de Ste-Euverte makes a tour of the room, looking carefully about her.)

Mlle. de Ste-Euverte

Nothing has changed in this house.

She runs her finger along the downstage end of the desk top up center.)

Still as much dust as ever. The poor darling needs someone badly.

(She listens to the song and as she moves toward the plant upstage Right, she murmurs--)

Strange--it sounds so like his voice.

(The song stops. The General appears on the walkway from the garden up Left and stops as he reaches the top of the platform, dumfounded.)

General

Ghislaine!

Ghislaine

Leon!

General

(crossing to her)  
You here?

Ghislaine

Yes. And with head held high.

General

There'll be the devil of a row.

Ghislaine

I came so that it might take place.

General

(crossing behind Ghislaine and looking anxiously at his Wife's bedroom)  
Careful. She's in that room.

Ghislaine

Alone?

General

(leading her to the center stage side of the chaise)  
 Doctor Bonfant is with her.

Ghislaine

I thought as much.

(She turns away from him, walks stage center then turns, flips her veil back from her face and looks at him.)

I'll explain in a minute. First, let me look at you. Leon!

General

Ghislaine! You!

Ghislaine

Myself.

General

As intrepid as an Amazon!

Ghislaine

(walking upstage a couple of steps)

I took the night express. I found myself alone in the compartment with a fellow of sinister aspect who was pretending to read a newspaper.

General

(takes a step toward her)

Ghislaine...

Ghislaine

(whirling on him)

At one point he asked me the time.

General

(falling back a step toward the chaise)

The swine!

Ghislaine

(moving upstage Right of center)

But I gave him such a look that he took the hint immediately. He even said thank you as if I really had told him the time. He folded his newspaper and fell asleep.

(The General sits on the chaise. Ghislaine opens her bag as she speaks.)

Or perhaps he was only pretending. But I was perfectly calm--I was armed. See, this little pistol with the mother-of-pearl handle which you may remember, Leon.

(Ghislaine advances toward the General with the pistol displayed in her open hand.)

General

Ghislaine, you have it still?

Ghislaine

Had he made one false move, had he so much as touched the hem of my dress I would have slain him and then myself. I had to get to you intact.

(She returns the pistol to her bag. The General holds up his arms and draws her down beside him on the downstage end of the chaise.)

General

Thank you, Ghislaine. But you know it's impossible, Ghislaine.

Ghislaine

Everything is possible, now. I have the proof of it here in my reticule. Our long years of waiting will not have been in vain, Leon.

General

Seventeen years.

Ghislaine

Seventeen years since the Garrison Ball at Saumur.

General

The Chinese lanterns, Ghislaine,

(The faint sound of music begins to be audible.)

the gypsy orchestra--and later, just the pianist. The music seemed to be just for us that night.

Ghislaine

Oh, the strange enchantment of that waltz, Leon!

General

The Waltz of the Toreadors.

Ghislaine

Tra la la, la la la.

General

(rising, clicking his heels, his hand out)  
Mademoiselle, may I have the pleasure?

Ghislaine

(looking at an imaginary dance card)  
But, sir, you are not on my card.

General

(simulates writing)  
I will inscribe myself on it officially. Major Saint-Pe. We have not been introduced but I feel that I have known you all my life.

Why, Major, how bold you are!--Then you took me by the waist.

(The General puts his arm around Ghislaine and they begin to sway to the music.)

Ghislaine (continued)

and all at once your hand burned me right through your gloves and my dress. From the moment your hand touched my back I no longer heard the music. Everything whirled.. . .

(The couple begin to waltz around stage center moving toward Stage Right for the next dialogue sequence.)

General

The waltz!

Ghislaine

It was love!

(The General and Ghislaine waltz upstage of the chairs stage Left and move far Left of them. As they dance downstage Sidonia and Estelle enter through the main door to Right of stage center.)

Sidonia

Pappa, we've come about the dresses.

(The music abruptly stops as her voice cuts in.)

General

(releasing his partner)

Ten thousand demons, can't you see I'm busy?

(He crosses up Left of center.)

This lady is my teacher. I'm having a dancing lesson.

(The Girls move Right of center; Estelle is upstage of Sidonia.)

Estelle

Is there to be a ball then, Papa?

General

(improvising wildly)

Yes, I'm arranging one, for Corpus Christi funnily enough.

(He introduces the girls to Ghislaine.)

My daughters.

Ghislaine

Is it possible? Those darling little babies?



General

There we are!

Ghislaine

But it was only yesterday.

General

(crossing to Estelle and Sidonia upstage Right of desk)  
They shot up very fast. You see, they've already grown out of their new dresses. This lady is an old friend who saw you when you were tiny. As for the dresses, it's clear you both want new ones. Granted. Run along to Madam Dupont-Fredaine, choose the stuff...

Both Girls

Thank you, Pappa.

Sidonia

Darling Papa.

General

(shooing them toward the door)  
And tell her to come and see me about terms no later than this afternoon.

Estelle

Oh, thank you, Papa!

Sidonia

We'll look lovely after all!

General

Well, we'll have a shot at it anyhow.

(The Girls skip out the main door to Right of center hand in hand.)

What a pair of silly geese! Heaven knows what tales they're going to spread.

Ghislaine

But why are they so big? Leon, can I have aged as well?

(Ghislaine wanders to stage center and the General comes up behind her.)

General

You are still the same Ghislaine, the same sweet tuber rose wafting her night-time fragrance over the gardens of Saumur!

(Ghislaine crosses in front of the General and sits in the center of the chaise, stage Right.)

Ghislaine

(wailing)

But I was eighteen years old at that ball!

General

(crossing swiftly to her)  
It never does to start adding up.

(The General sits downstage of Ghislaine on the chaise.)

Your hand! Your little hand imprisoned in its glove. Do you remember that meringue at Rumpelmeyer's seven years ago?

Ghislaine

No. You're wrong. The whole of 1904 we couldn't meet at all. It was the beginning of her attacks. The meringue was 1903.

General

I ate the little bits from off your fingers.

Ghislaine

You were as bold as brass even then. Yet we had only known each other a few years.

General

Why count the years? It was a week ago. Your fingers still smell of meringue.

(The Maid enters from the main part of the house. She closes the door gently behind her.)

Maid

Excuse me, sir.

General

(starting)  
Yes--what?

Maid

The new one's come, sir.

General

The New what?

Maid

(advancing toward the chaise)  
The new girl to replace Justine.

General

Suffering catfish, can't you see I'm busy? I haven't time to go on choosing chambermaids. Engage her....

(He has second thoughts.)

What does she look like?

(The General rises. The Maid who has started to leave turns and looks at him slyly over her shoulder.)

Maid

A fine-looking girl, sir, dark and a little on the plump side.

General

(dreamily)

A little on the plump side....Engage her.

(The Maid exits through the main door up Right.)

Ghislaine

Leon, I wish you would let me help you. You don't know what you may be getting.

General

(turning toward her)

Thank you, Ghislaine, but there's no need. From what I hear she's sure to be very nice.

(He sits again on the chaise beside Ghislaine, this time on the upstage end.)

Besides, we have decisions to make. Your presence here is unthinkable, my love, you know that.

Ghislaine

This time, though, I am quite determined to stay.

General

What did you say?

Ghislaine

(rising and crossing to center)

Leon, I have waited for so long in silence, keeping myself for you.

(She stops center stage, her back to him.)

If I were to bring you positive proof of the unworthiness of her for whom we sacrificed ourselves, what would you do?

General

Unworthiness? Emily unworthy? Alas, Ghislaine, you must be dreaming.

(Ghislaine crosses diagonally up Left toward the window.)

Ghislaine

Yes, Leon, I am dreaming, dreaming that I am about to live at last! In this reticule I hold clasped to my heart I have two letters.

(She turns to him.)

Two letters signed by her hand. Two love letters to a man.

General

Thundering cannonballs,

(He rises.)

it can't be true!

Ghislaine

(her arms open wide)

We are free, Leon!

General

(ignoring her arms and crossing to stage center)

Who is it? I demand to know his name.

Ghislaine

Doctor Bonfant.

General

Doctor Bonfant!

(The Doctor enters from the Wife's bedroom, closing the door behind him and advancing to the upstage end of the chaise.)

Doctor

Ah, General, I am happy to be able to tell you that she is much better today.

(He sets his bag at the upstage end of the chaise, takes his handkerchief out of his pocket and mops his brow as he speaks.)

We chatted for awhile and that appeared to soothe her. You see how wrong you are to poke fun at doctoring. It all depends on the doctor, and the way one goes about it.

General

(icily)

No need to labor the point, sir. There is a young lady present.

(The Doctor turns to Mlle. de Ste-Euverte in mild surprise.)

Doctor

I do beg your pardon.

(He bows.)

Madame.

Ghislaine

(with infinite nobility)

Mademoiselle.

## Chislaine, (continued)

(She looks toward the General and goes to him with her arms open wide.)

But not for very long now!

(The Doctor straightens, astonished. There is an immediate blackout. A musical interlude lasting nine seconds begins at once. 4

ACT I

Scene 2

Immediately Thereafter

Same Place

(In the nine second blackout the Doctor takes his place on the chaise, sitting so he faces stage center; the Doctor moves to the platform before the window upstage Left. When the lights come up, the latter crosses to Right of center and then turns on his heels and paces to down center. He whirls on the Doctor.) 5

General

Swords, sir---. What do you say to swords?

Doctor

General, I say you are quite wrong.

General

(pacing up to the Left corner of the desk)

Blood must be shed, sir! I shall listen to your explanations afterwards.

Doctor

It may be a trifle late by then.

(The General crosses to Left of center and turns on the Doctor.)

General

I can't help that. Blood to begin with, sir!

Doctor

You're quite right. With the present state of your arteries---How about a little cut with the lancet first? I have my bag here.

General

Your sawbones humor is uncalled for, sir.

Doctor

(lifting his bag up on the chaise beside him)

I am quite serious. Blood pressure is our triumph. It is one of the few chances we have of being accurate, thanks to our little gadget here. That is why we take it on every conceivable occasion. The last time you were up to two hundred and fifty. That's very high, you know.

General

(crossing left to marble table)

I don't care, sir. I shall consult one of your colleagues. It is a question of honor at the moment.

(He pauses and considers the Doctor's last statement.)

Two hundred and fifty, is that high?

Doctor

Very.

(The General moves forward a step toward the Doctor.)

General

Did you or did you not receive those letters?

Doctor

I tell you I never did. If I had, how could they come to be in your possession?

General

True enough...

(He crosses to Left of center a bit upstage.)

You've seen them, though. They aren't forgeries.

Doctor

Apparently not.

General

Therefore, sir, the fact is this: my wife is in love with you.

Doctor

So she writes.

(The Doctor replaces his bag on the floor by the chaise.)

General

And you consider that perfectly normal, do you?

Doctor

What can I do about it?

General

(crossing to the Right downstage end of the desk)

By Jove, sir, has the Medical Corps no honor! Any cadet--what am I saying--any regular N.C. O. would already have replied--at your service!

(He paces back to Left of center.)

Explanations would have followed later.

(The General whirls and faces the Doctor.)

How would you like it if I slapped your face?

Doctor

I should promptly slap yours back, sir. And there I should have the advantage of you. I am Acting President of the sports club of which you are merely the Honorary Secretary.

(The Doctor rises from the chaise.)

I do an hour's training every morning. You spoke about your paunch, remember?



(The Doctor crosses to center stage a bit upstage of the General and begins to open his coat.)

Doctor (continued)  
We are the same age. Just look at mine.

General  
(grudgingly)  
You're pulling it in.

Doctor  
No. Feel it, it's quite natural. Now look at yours.

General  
(unbuttoning his coat and looking down)  
Good Lord!

(Ghislaine appears in the doorway Left of the platform and catches sight of the two men.)

Ghislaine  
Oh, my God, you're wounded!

(The Doctor and the General hastily pull up their trousers turning their backs to Ghislaine as they do so. She comes timidly forward.)

General  
No, no, of course not. Go back into the morning room,

(He crosses up Left and shoos Ghislaine back toward the morning room.)

and don't come out whatever you do. We will call you when it's all over.

(Ghislaine exits. The General crosses back toward the downstage end of the desk completing the adjustments to his dress as he moves.)

What a business!

Doctor  
I am all at sea, I must confess. Who is this young woman?

General  
(crossing up Left of center)  
Young girl, sir, a friend of mine. I forbid you to jump to any conclusions.

Doctor  
If I cannot even form a supposition I shall be more at sea than ever.

(The General begins to move toward the easy chair up Left.)

General

Mademoiselle de Ste-Euverte--a lady descended from one of the noblest houses of Lorraine--is the love of my life, Doctor, and I am hers. I met her at the annual Ball of the Eighth Dragoons at Saumur in 1893,

(He sits in the easy chair.)

seventeen years ago. She was a girl of the best society, I was a married man. Anything between us was quite out of the question. At the time, owing to my career and the children, I dared not contemplate divorce. And yet, we could not give up our love.

Doctor

(crossing a couple of steps downstage)

So she became your mistress!

General

No sir! I respected her maidenhood. Seventeen years that's been going on! Mademoiselle de Ste-Euverte is still a maiden and I am still a prisoner.

(The Doctor crosses downstage Left and sits in the occasional chair.)

Doctor

But dammit, General, your career is established, your daughters are grown up, what in Heaven's name are you waiting for?

General

I'll tell you a secret. I am a coward.

Doctor

Stuff and nonsense, General. You wanted to run me through a minute ago. And what about your oak leaves and your eighteen wounds?

General

Those were done to me. It's not the same. Besides, in battle it's comparatively simple. Life is a different thing.

(There is a pause. The General then rises, crosses downstage center and says dully.)

I can't make people suffer.

Doctor

Then you will make them suffer a great deal, my friend, and you will suffer a great deal yourself.

General

I fear so.

Doctor

(rising)

Let us sum up the situation shall we? I want to help you out of this dilemma. You are in love with this young woman.

General

Young girl, sir.

Doctor

Young girl, if you prefer it. She loves you. She has spent years waiting for you.

(The General turns and faces upstage.)

She sacrificed her youth in vain anticipation of a happiness which you once promised her. You owe her that happiness now.

General

I know.

(He moves directly upstage to the end of the desk center.)

Not a minute has gone by during those seventeen years that has not been poisoned by the thought of it. What is she doing? She is alone, playing the piano in the deserted drawing room of her big house, doing her embroidery, eating alone at her vast table in the chilly dining room where my place is always laid and always vacant. I know it, sir, I know it all.

(He looks upstage Right on the wall where his guns are mounted.)

Time and again I have seized my service revolver--I'm not afraid of death--he's an old comrade--bang-bang, all over. For me, not for her.

(He crosses down to stage center.)

I had no right to do it!

Doctor

Leave your revolver, like your sword, up on the wall, General.

(He crosses to the General stage center.)

Among all your military equipment did you never think of your kitbag?

General

My kitbag?

Doctor

Two shirts, three pairs of pants, six handkerchiefs, hey presto! Mademoiselle de Ste-Euverte is no longer--a young girl!

General

(crossing a couple of steps Right)

And my wife, sir?

Doctor

Do you love her?

(The General crosses Right to the chaise and sits on the downstage end looking up at his Wife's door which is closed.)

General

Lord, no. But she loves me. She'll die of it.

Doctor

Hum, I wonder.

(He crosses up to the end of the desk stage center and leans his back against it as he speaks.)

Women have unexpected reserves. I understand she wrote to say she was in love with me.

General

(leaping up)

Upon my soul, sir, how dare you! You have offended me! To the sword, sir! To the sword!

Doctor

Now, General, we must try to understand each other. If you kill a man for her sake, I can't see you anywhere near to leaving her. You must be logical, General.

General

Can you swear that you are not her lover?

Doctor

On the head of my wife.

General

(settling back on the chaise once again)

Anyway she's ugly--nothing but a bag of bones.

Doctor

Oh no. General.

(He crosses Right of center.)

Your wife was never what one would call a beauty, but when you came to live here fifteen years ago, I don't mind telling you, my dear fellow, that she created quite a stir. Not in me, sir, not in me, particularly! But her personality, her clothes, her talent....Very attractive woman, sir, was your wife, and then, coming from Paris as she did....

General

She came from Carpentras.

Doctor

(crossing to stage center)

She had just come from Paris nonetheless, and from the Opera. You know what they are in the provinces. I am personally acquainted with two who at all events nursed secret hopes.

General

(awful in his anger)

Their names!

Doctor

(crossing down Right of center)

What is the use General, now? One of them is in a wheel chair through sacrificing overmuch to Venus. The other is dead.

General

Always too late.

Doctor

Exactly. The more I think of it, General, the more I am disturbed by your case. This constant living in the past.

General

I know. I forget my paunch and the gold strings on my sleeve. I am old.

Doctor

Your jealousy of Madame Saint-Pe was fine in the old tooth-and-nail days. What can it possibly matter to you now?

(He walks upstage of the chaise and around to the far Right of it.)

Your love for Mademoiselle de Ste-Euverte was for Mademoiselle de Ste-Euverte as a young girl the night of the Garrison Ball. That one has been dead these many years. Neither you nor she herself can so much as recall what she once was.

(The Doctor sits on the upstage end of the chaise facing the General.)

General

Oh yes, Doctor, dear me, yes!

Doctor

A tender memory. The memory of a dead girl. And Major Saint-Pe is dead too. Turn your attention to your rose trees. You haven't so much longer, you know. Why not forget him?

General

(rising)

Never!

(He crosses to stage center.)

The heart has stayed the same, sir, under the ironmongery!

(He springs to attention.)

Lieutenant Saint-Pe! Graduated second from Saumur! No money, but plenty of courage and well thought of! Ready to give his all for France, for honor, for a woman! A real woman, sweet and loving and faithful and pure; not that

General (continued)

third-rate prima donna! I am thirty years old! I swear I am! And I did find that woman. I found her last night, at the Annual Ball at Saumur. I am ready.

Doctor

(rising)

Then you must make haste, General.

(He crosses around the downstage end of the chaise.)

One good honest explanation. Cut to the quick before gangrene sets in. Hurt if you must but do it without flinching. And then start again afresh.

(He goes to the General stopping Right of center.)

Crossing the threshold of that door

(He indicates the Wife's bedroom door far up Right.)

seems like flying to the moon, but in fact all it requires is this one step.

(Ghislaine appears at the door.)

Ghislaine

(advancing into the study up Left)

I can't stand it! I must know!

General

(slightly on edge)

Dammit all, Ghislaine, you've waited seventeen years, surely you can contain yourself for an extra ten minutes.

Ghislaine

(crossing to the Right edge of the platform before the window)

No I can't--not even for ten minutes.

General

(crossing up Left of center)

I must have time enough to make her confess, and inform her of my irrevocable decision. She is an invalid, dammit. I owe her consideration. Don't you be cruel, too.

Ghislaine

I bore her cruelty and respected her love so long as I believed her faithful to you. Now I know that she dared to betray you I shall know no pity, Leon, and no patience. Either way, should you be capable of hesitating still, I have a little pistol with a mother-of-pearl handle which you may remember, here in my reticule. I shall end this life within the hour, without ever having known more of love than your vain promises, Leon.

General (continued)

(moving to Ghislaine and propelling her toward the morning room)  
Give me strength! All I ask is a moment to set my life in order. Go back into the morning room and be patient. There are some magazines on the table.

Ghislaine

(stopping stock still facing up Left)  
Magazines! --Like at the dentist's! You have wounded me for the first time, my dear.

General

(crossing to her and taking hold of her shoulders)  
My beloved! Who said anything about a dentist? Anyhow, you aren't the one who is going to have the tooth out. Just one moment.

(He pushes her gently but firmly toward the morning room.)

I adore you!

(She turns at the door of the morning room and he blows her a kiss. She exits.)

Doctor

(moving to stage center and pointing his finger at the Wife's door)  
General!

General

Yes! Time is getting on.

(He pulls the back of his uniform coat down and briskly walks across the stage toward his Wife's bedroom door. He stops as he reaches the door to the main part of the house and turns to the Doctor.)

Suppose you spoke to her first, Doctor?

Doctor

(moving to the General)  
That might prove a little awkward considering those letters. Suppose she falls into my arms? There'll be no end of explaining to do then.

General

That's true. Stay here, though, will you, and if I shout "Help," come in.

(The General strides to his Wife's bedroom door, resolutely opens it and goes in. The Doctor, meanwhile, moves upstage to the desk and looks at the book titles as though he is going to read in the interim. The General rushes out waving a letter.)

Doctor, she's not in her room!

Doctor

(rushing over to the General up Right)  
What! Is there another way out?

General

Through the window, by hanging on to the wisteria.

Doctor

In her condition--

General

(moving a couple of steps downstage to the Right of the chaise)  
She left this letter on the table. "I heard everything. Men are all cowards. Whatever they may have said to you, Leon, I have never loved anyone but you. I lied to you. I can walk when I want to. I am going. You will never hear of me again." Does she mean she wants to kill herself?

(During the reading of the letter Ghislaine has crept into the study and stands upstage near the window attracting no attention.)

Doctor

(looking at his watch)  
The railroad crossing! She spoke of it! The train goes through at five past! It's two minutes to!

General

The pond! You go to the pond--I'll go to the tracks.

(The two men rush out the main door up Right; the Doctor snatches his bag as he goes.)

Ghislaine

(advancing Right toward the desk)  
I, too, heard everything. You love her still, Leon! Only one way out.

(She sits down at the desk, searches in the drawer for stationery, pulls out a piece and begins writing. She is calm, but is obviously almost to cry. She daubs at her eyes and sniffs as she reads snatches of what she is writing.)

Leon, here is my last letter to you to whom I have written so often....

(Her voice trails away; she continues to write. Gaston, the secretary, is heard outside the window singing his Italian song. 7  
His voice is heard throughout the writing of the letter. When she is finished, Ghislaine leaves the folded note on the General's desk propped up against his books in a prominent position.)

There. On his books. That's all. It's the simplest thing in the world.

(She rises, unhurriedly, picks the pistol with the mother-of-pearl handle out of her reticule and advances downstage center. She lifts up the left side of her cape, puts the pistol to her heart, closes her eyes and pulls the trigger. Nothing happens. She looks at the gun in surprise, pulls out a catch, pushes another, blows into the barrel, and fires again. Still nothing. She stamps her foot in chagrin.)



Ghislaine (continued)

You too have been waiting seventeen years!

(Ghislaine walks upstage returning the gun to the reticule as she does so. She tosses the reticule on the desk and then looks at her fobwatch and mutters.)

Too late for the train. The pond!

(She runs toward the main door, but changes her mind before opening it.)

No. Not in the same place as her, for Heaven's sake!

(She darts a quick look around the room.)

The window! With a little luck....

(She runs to stage Left, approaches the window, swings her legs over the balcony and drops. The singing ends abruptly in a loud hiccup. The stage is empty for a moment. The maid screams and then ad libs off stage.)

Maid

For goodness sakes--what was that? What's the matter--what happened--someone go and fetch the master quickly.

(Gaston enters carrying a senseless Ghislaine, closely followed by the Maid who closes the door to the rest of the house as they get into the study.)

Good gracious, sir, whatever's the matter? You yelled fit to raise the dead!

Gaston

I was rocking quietly in the hammock when this lady comes tumbling down on my head.

(He strides to the chaise and lowers the unconscious Ghislaine on it with her head downstage.)

Maid

Well, fancy that! Maybe she wanted to kill you.

Gaston

Herself more likely. Besides I don't know her from Adam. She's fainted.

Maid

And the doctor just this minute left.

(She crosses to stage center. Gaston looks down at Ghislaine.)

The man as good as lives here half the time, and the one day we have a suicide he's out.

Gaston

For God's sake go and fetch something.

Maid

What?

Gaston

(dropping to one knee and gently slapping Ghislaine's face)  
Well, I don't know--ointment, smelling salts--iodine.....Anything!

Maid

I'll make her a good strong cup of coffee.

(She exits up Right through the main door, closing it behind her.)

Gaston

No blood anyway.

(He gingerly feels Ghislaine all over.)

No bones broken apparently. No bumps. Madame! Madame!

Ghislaine

(weakly)  
Mademoiselle.

Gaston

Mademoiselle--I beg your pardon. Are you feeling better?

Ghislaine

Leave your hands where they are, Leon.

Gaston

(turning away, embarrassed)  
Excuse me, but you are making a mistake.

Ghislaine

(eyes tightly shut she cries out)  
Leave your hands, Leon--caressing me--or I feel I shall swoon again--your hands quickly--I'm going--

Gaston

(looking down at his hands)  
My hands? Oh, dear, I can't very well let her faint away again. Not that it's at all unpleasant, and I am such a lonely young man. Besides, I'll mention it when I go to confession.

(He looks at Ghislaine's body not knowing quite where to take hold. Finally he siezes her around the waist.)

Ghislaine

Oh, how good it feels! You are touching me at last, Leon! You thought me strong--and I was strong, I had to be, but oh, how long they were, all those nights on my own! Before I met you I was alone too, but I never knew it. It was on the morrow of the Saumur Ball that my bed suddenly seemed wide. That next night and all the nights for seventeen years.

(Ghislaine suddenly reaches up her arms and gets hold of Gaston's neck pulling him down on her shoulder.)

And all the wicked thoughts--you don't know! I shall never tell you. I struggled alone.

(Gaston pulls himself erect, flushed and slightly disheveled, but with a growing look of wonderment on his face. He cannot take his eyes from Ghislaine who continues to murmur. Her eyes are closed for the entire time.)

No one was to touch me until you finally came. Your arms are strong and gentle your hands, gentler than at the Saumur Ball. Kiss me, now that you know I am going to die. What are you waiting for, Leon, my death!

Gaston

(looking out front)

The lady is obviously making a mistake, but seeing that she may be going to die--

(He rises formally to his feet, and bending stiffly from the waist he bends down and kisses Ghislaine.)

Ghislaine

(just has time to sigh)

At last!

(There is a long kiss. The door to the main part of the house opens and the General carrying his unconscious Wife in his arms enters. He gets only a couple of steps into the room when he sees Gaston kissing Ghislaine on the chaise.)

General

What the devil do you think you're doing?

Gaston

(standing stiffly erect)

But sir, the lady is delirious.

General

(moving to Right of center)

Fifty thousand devils, I can well believe it!

Gaston

She fell on top of me, sir, and ordered me to kiss her.

General

(moving to stage center)

Hell's bells, has everyone round here gone mad this morning?

(He is still encumbered with his unconscious Wife and shouts in his exasperation.)

What's wrong with you? What happened?

Gaston

She threw herself out of the window, sir.

(He crosses up Right of center.)

Thank goodness I was underneath in the hammock. She landed right on my head.

General

Out of the window! Holy Moses, they're insane, the lot of them! My beloved!

(He begins to go to Ghislaine on the chaise but suddenly realizes he is still holding his wife. He stops short and turns to Gaston.)

Here, my boy, take my wife will you?

(He puts his Wife into Gaston's arms and throws himself down by the chaise on one knee. Gaston staggers back upstage Right with the Wife.)

Ghislaine! My dearest! Why did you want to die?

Ghislaine

(coming to)

Who is that touching me? I do not know those hands!

General

It's I, Ghislaine--Leon. Your Leon.

(The General begins to slip his arms around Ghislaine. She pushes him away.)

Ghislaine

Let me go. You aren't Leon. I don't recognize your hands.

(The General leans down and kisses her.)

Nor your mouth. Leon kissed me just now, at long last. He is twenty years old. I forbid you to touch me. No one may touch me but him. I am keeping myself.

Wife

(coming to in Gaston's arms)

Leon!

General

(picking up Ghislaine)

That's done it. The other one will come to in a minute.

(He strides up Left toward the morning room. He stops and turns to Gaston.)

She mustn't see her here. She'd kill herself a second time.

Wife

(clinging to Gaston's neck and screeching)

Leon, hold me! Kiss me, Leon! You can see I'm dying. Kiss me quickly before I am quite dead.

Gaston

(yelling to the General who is going out with Ghislaine)

This one wants to be kissed before she dies as well!!! What am I to do?

General

(turning to Gaston)

You must be out of your mind, my boy! Can't you see they're both delirious? Put Madame down in her room.

(He turns and goes into the morning room.)

I am taking this young lady in here.

(Both men exit with their unconscious burdens. Gaston takes the Wife, as instructed, into her room. The study is empty for a two count when the maid comes in with the coffee. She looks about and is astonished to see no one there. There is an instant blackout. After a five count the house lights come up full.)

10 MINUTE INTERMISSION

ACT II

Scene 1

Early that Afternoon

Same Place

(The overture begins. The lights in the house dim slowly. There is a blackout. The General takes his place on the chaise. When the stage lights come up he is discovered reading a book. It is hard for him to focus his attention on it, however; he looks toward the morning room. Then he attempts to return to the book. He flips through several pages, adjusts his monacle and tries to read. Finally he gives up and puts the book aside on the chaise. He crosses stage Left to the marble top table, opens the cigar box and chooses a cigar. He looks toward the morning room up Left. There is no sound. Finally, he sighs, turns his back on the morning room and strides back to the chaise. As he moves he bites off the end of his cigar and feels for matches in his pockets. He finds a box of matches and sits on the chaise. He lights his cigar and blows out the smoke. The Doctor comes out of the morning room up Left and comes up into the study.)

General

Well?

Doctor

(setting his bag down by the desk)

She is resting and so is your wife. I gave them both a good sedative.

(He crosses down to stage center and faces the General.)

The snag is that they will eventually wake up.

General

We are so peaceful as we are! It's most odd, for an hour now there hasn't been a sound. I was even on the point of gathering a few ideas. You know science ought to find a way of putting women permanently to sleep. We could wake them for a while at night and then they would go back to sleep again.

(The Doctor strolls up to Gaston's chair on the diagonal wall up Right, lifts it and brings it to Right of center facing the General.)

Doctor

But what about the housework? You should see the performance I have to fry myself an egg--and that's nothing, there's the washing up afterwards!

General

If the worst came to the worst we wouldn't put the maids to sleep. Have you seen the latest little one? With all these upsets I haven't even had a chance to say hello to her. A boson, my dear chap!

(He sighs deeply.)

Dear Lord, how simple it could all be! Why do we complicate life so?

Doctor

(leaning back in his chair and unbuttoning his coat)  
 Because we have a soul, General. Take an old freethinker's word for it. It's that which makes life hell for us. The maid's petticoats are pleasant at times, but afterwards--without love, without any real desire--what emptiness! I'll tell you a secret, General.

(He sees mints in a dish on the desk reaches over and pops one into his mouth.)

We have all stayed little boys. Only the little girls grow up.

General

(suddenly)

There is one, though, who never hurt me, who never once complained.

(He rises and looks off Left toward the morning room.)

True, I never lived with her.

(He crosses toward the marble top table stage Left.)

Oh, if you could have seen her at the Saumur Ball! I bet you don't believe that I really love her, having waited all this time?

Doctor

My dear man, one must never judge the courage or the love of others. No one can say who loves or is afraid.

General

(turning to the Doctor)

There's my life story, Doctor, in a nutshell.

(He moves up Left of center.)

The shell is handsome. They have painted the oak leaves onto it, and Lord knows how many decorations. I have a lovely house, splendid whiskers, the easy benches in these parts refuse me nothing. When I go by on my black mare of a morning, in my corsets, I'll even wager I make the little virgins at the High School that peep behind their curtains dream of me. I utter enormities when the fancy takes me, and everyone turns a deaf ear, even the priest, because I have a way with me.

(He looks out front.)

Well, my friend, the shell is empty.

(He turns stage Left with his back partially to the Doctor.)

There's nobody inside. I am alone, and I'm afraid.

Doctor

Afraid of what?



General

I dunno. Of my loneliness, I suppose.

Doctor

(rising and crossing to the General)

My poor old friend.

General

My bits of fun, do you think they amuse me? They bore me to death.

(He crosses diagonally far down Left below the occasional chair.)

It's my terror of living which sends me scampering after them. When you see them swinging by with their buttocks and their breasts under their dresses you feel I don't know what wild hope surge up inside you! But once the dress is off and you have to get down to it---. Well, an anatomy, whether it's of a wench or your wife for that matter, is soon explored. Then there's only politeness left. Politeness becomes monotonous. Doctor, with all these philanderings you get to my age realizing that you have never in your life made love.

(He moves downstage of the occasional chair and around far Left of the marble top table.)

It's wrong of me to make fun of my secretary. I am an old virgin, Doctor.

Doctor

No. You have the sickness, General, that's all.

General

(looking up)

Which one? I've had them all.

Doctor

(crossing to the side of the easy chair)

Those sicknesses are nothing. They can be treated. We have a soul, General. I long denied the phenomenon. I was one of the old school. We did not bother with that subject in my day. I wanted to stick to abscesses and cancers. But now I know. It's in the soul the trouble lies, in nine out of ten cases.

General

(crossing upstage to the window)

But damnit all, everybody has a soul!

(He turns to confront the Doctor who is looking upstage at him.)

That's no reason for being scared out of one's wits a whole life long.

Doctor

It is, General. Souls are rare. And when by ill luck you happen to possess one, It's war if you don't make your peace with it.

General

(crossing down Left of the easy chair)

Peace, peace? But what brand of peace does it want, damn its eyes? It surely doesn't expect me to take Holy Orders, does it?

Doctor

(sitting in the easy chair)

No. If it were as simple as that you would have done it long ago.

General

(crossing back of the easy chair to stage center)

Then what does the jade want?

(He turns to the Doctor.)

The only time I feel slightly at peace is when I look at something beautiful. Damn it, I can't turn myself into a painter or sculptor, can I?

(He crosses up Right of center.)

What then? Scuttling from art gallery to museum like a half-wit, brandishing a Kodak? No, by heaven! Beauty's a thing one should be able to fashion for oneself.

Doctor

What about Mademoiselle de Ste-Euverte, General?

General

(after a pause)

Well, yes, there it is.

(He looks toward the chaise where Ghislaine was lying earlier.)

You know, it's an extraordinary thing what happened to me at Saumur. There was a girl--like any other--the color of her dress and hair had caught my eye--I introduce myself,

(He advances toward the chaise as he did in Act I, Scene 1 when he asked Ghislaine to dance.)

ask her for the dance. The Waltz of the Toreadors. Take her by the waist and I say to myself--how good I feel! What's happening to me? I have suddenly ceased to be afraid. My soul was leaving me at peace at last. It was an enchanted moment, Doctor.

Doctor

And did it happen again?

General

Every time. At all our pathetic little meetings. Each time came the miracle.

(He turns and looks at the Doctor.)

I suddenly stopped being afraid.

Doctor

Why in heaven's name did you wait so long?

General

It's easy to talk.

(He goes to the chaise and sits.)

You don't know the old bitch--I mean my soul. When she is face to face with my wife, she bawls with disgust and fright; but when I make Emily cry, when she starts to whimper in her wheelchair, where I know she only sits in order to annoy me--when I am at last about to throttle her--don't laugh, it has crossed my mind--and take my cap off the hall stand to decamp once and for all, do you know what she does then, the great goop?--my soul, that is--? She cuts off my legs; she floods me with pity, mean ignoble pity, and old memories of love from the days when everything was not dried up and stale between us. She roots me to the spot.

(He rises and crosses upstage to the end of the desk.)

So then I hang my hat back on the peg again. And I take my soul on a little jaunt to the brothel, to see if it won't cheer her up a bit. Have you got a soul, Doctor?

Doctor

Yes, but she's extremely shy and fairly modest in her demands.

General

Well, don't let her get out of hand. Rule her with a rod of iron, for if you don't she'll have your skin!

(He crosses up Left and looks toward the morning room.)

Dear Ghislaine! Dear, sweet, patient Ghislaine! Dear little soldier on half pay! Dear widow!

(He comes down behind the Doctor who is still sitting in the easy chair.)

Give her a little less gardenal than the other, will you? I should so like to console her.

Doctor

(smiling)

Very well. I am very fond of you, General. And to think we were within an ace of murdering each other over that letter business!

General

(crossing center and thumping his breast with clenched fist)

God in heaven, what a fool I am! Suppose I thought of myself a little for a change! Me! Me! I exist too, don't I? Suppose I gave up trying to understand others for a minute? How good it would be! What do you say, Doctor?

Doctor

The best thing you could do, General, if you can bring yourself to do it.

General

Then it's all settled. Inspection over.

(The Doctor rises.)

Dis-miss! Carry on!

(The Secretary enters.)

Ah, there you are, my boy. You're in luck. I'm in a rollicking mood.

(He crosses up to the desk chair, pulls it out.)

We are going to mop up the chapter on Morocco in two shakes of a lamb's tail, and we'll postpone the next one until ten years from now.

(He sits.)

I'll show them what stuff I'm made of!

Doctor

(crossing up Left of the desk chair)

I'll leave you, General. My wife is going to think I'm here a bit too often. I don't have to tell you what reproaches are, eh?

(He reaches his hand around to the still seated General.)

I shall look in to see them both this evening. You should take advantage of the sedative to rehearse your lines for the big scene.

General

I'm bearing them in mind. But it's so good to talk of something else for a minute. I shall take a little stroll around Morocco and come straight home again.

(The Doctor picks up his bag and exits far up Left into the garden.)

Now, let's get back to our two sky pilots.

(Gaston hurriedly gets his chair and sits.)

As I was saying, there they were, with some parts missing. Write down: A fearful mutilation, the details of which one hesitates to enlarge upon, perpetrated on the persons of two saintly churchmen, placed us under the sorry obligation of shedding blood ourselves.

(Estelle and Sidonia enter in their new long dresses followed by Madame Dupont-Fredaine who lingers near the door to the main part of the house while the girls advance to the upstage end of the couch.)

Sidonia

Papa, we've come about the dresses.

General

Will you leave me in peace? I've other fish to fry just now. We go into the attack first thing in the morning.

(Madame Dupont-Fredaine advances to Right center not looking at the General. She depends on her melodious tone to attract his attention.)

Madame Dupont-Fredaine

General!

General

(seeing her)

Why, Madame Dupont-Fredaine.

(He crosses to her and kisses her hand.)

I am delighted to see you. Lovely and tempting and swish-swishing as ever!

(He swings her around until she ends up on his right just Left of center.)

By Jove, what a figure! What allure! Madame Dupont-Fredaine, you are the loveliest woman in the neighborhood.

Madame Dupont-Fredaine

Now, General, that's all over and done with. We must think of the young ones now. You gave us very little notice, you know--we had to perform miracles to make beauties out of these two girlies.

(She beckons to the two girls to advance. Estelle leads the way coming to Right of center.)

General

(out of the side of his mouth)

Miracles, how right you are.

Madame Dupont-Fredaine

(advancing toward Estelle and dropping to one knee before her.)

What do you say to this little frill at the bottom, hinted at again in the sleeves? I think it's a dream!

General

(looking at the dressmaker's behind)

Enchanting! Enchanting!

(He comes close up behind her and strokes her backside.)

Your own dress is delightful, too. What is this splendid material?

Madame Dupont-Fredaine

(reaching back and thrusting his hand away)

General! Look at your daughters.

(She rises.)

Their material is very much more beautiful.

General

(disinterestedly moving Left center)

Lovely, lovely! Is it going to cost a lot?

Madame Dupont-Fredaine

(moving to the General's shoulder)

Now, General, you know I'm very reasonable--

General

(close to her and nudging her bosom)

Oh, Emma, how I wish you were!

Madame Dupont-Fredaine

(moving up Left center)

Now, now. Let's not talk about the price. The young ladies wanted to make sure of pleasing you, and Monsieur Gaston, too, I fancy!

Secretary

(rising and moving to the end of the desk)

But Madame, I am not qualified to judge. I have had so little experience with young ladies.

Madame Dupont-Fredaine

(moving near him her hand out)

When one is twenty years of age and handsome one is always qualified, young man.

(She strokes his chin with her fingers.)

Why, he's blushing! He's adorable, this secretary of yours, General!

General

(thundering)

Ten thousand demons, Madame, I forbid you to adore him!

Madame Dupont-Fredaine

(smiling at the General)

Walk about the room, will you, young ladies? The gentlemen will give us their verdict.

(Madame Dupont-Fredaine and the General move down Left. The girls promenade. Sidonia makes a circle in front of the chaise and then moves up Left in front of the window. Estelle circles to the far Right of the chaise and stops near Gaston at the end of the desk.)

General

(while the girls parade)

These repeated refusals are absurd, you know, Emma.

Madame Dupont-Fredaine

Stop it now. You are a wicked old wolf. My husband is a friend of yours.

General

Of course, and that's perfect. Nobody would suspect a thing between us.

(The General looks toward the girls who are parading.)

Charming! The dresses are charming!

(He turns back to Madame Dupont-Fredaine.)

I really must have a serious talk with you about the cost of these fal-lals, dear lady!

(He takes her hand and they move directly upstage Left.)

Do come for a little stroll around the garden, won't you? I shall present you with a rose.

(He urges her on ahead of him directing her up Left toward the garden. She moves toward the morning room.)

Go along, my dear---. We won't be a moment, girls. Gaston, I leave them in your care, my boy.

(He turns to follow Madame Dupont-Fredaine who is about to disappear into the morning room. He speaks to her hastily.)

No, no, Madame--not in there. We've a guest in the morning room and she's ill. We musn't disturb her. The garden's out here.

(The General rapidly catches up with the dressmaker and redirects her into the garden.)

Sidonia

(marching across the stage to Gaston)

Aren't you ashamed, letting her say you're adorable?

Estelle

An old fly-by-night like her! Doesn't it matter to you that we are pining away?

Secretary

But, my dear young ladies, how could I help it?

Estelle

And the other one this morning, I suppose you couldn't help her either? Why did you kiss her?

Sidonia

(inching between Gaston and the desk)  
It's shameful. Everybody saw you.

Secretary

(escaping to stage center)  
I was alone.

Estelle

(crossing down Right of the secretary)  
You don't think we ever leave you alone, do you? We never let you out of our sight. We were outside on the stairs.

Secretary

She had fallen on top of me. She was dying. What else could I do?

Estelle

(closing in on his Right)  
You swore, Gaston.

(Sidonia has, meanwhile, crept in to the Left of the secretary.)

Sidonia

You swore, one or the other.

Secretary

(backing upstage to the downstage end of the desk)  
I love you both, young ladies.

Estelle

(looking up at him)  
Yet it's a third you kiss. A nice thing!

Sidonia

(crossing down Left near the occasional chair)  
Ah, my dear--men! Does it surprise you? What a little child you are!

Estelle

You never ever kiss us!

Secretary

(moving Left)  
But you are young ladies. Besides, there are always two of you.

(The two girls look at each other in fury.)

Sidonia

Ooh!

Estelle

You see!



Sidonia

(advancing a step)

You see!

Estelle

(advancing toward Sidonia a step)

You never ever let me see him alone!

Sidonia

No, it's you!

Estelle

(moving Left and speaking in Sidonia's face)

'Tisn't! It's you.

Sidonia

(stamps her foot)

'Tisn't! It's you! You pudding!

Estelle

You skinny lizard!

(Estelle pushes her sister's shoulders.)

Sidonia

(pushing her back)

You old bag of lard! You sappy sausage you!

Estelle

You string bean!

(Sidonia reaches out and grabs Estelle's belt and starts snapping her with it. Estelle rushes downstage Left, up around the table and to the window, back across the stage to far Right of the chaise and up Right around the upper end of the chaise. Then, she stops stage center, stomps her foot and pulls the ruffle off Sidonia's sleeve. Sidonia screams as she sees the damage that has been done. The secretary, meanwhile, has been following the two girls. He is ineffectual in stopping them for he doesn't know how to handle the situation. A "Ladies, Ladies," is about all he can muster. Sidonia runs with Estelle's belt up to the window and holds it far out over the balcony. Estelle reaches for it but Sidonia deliberately drops it outside. Estelle screams. Subsequently, she begins to slap at Sidonia.)

Secretary

(from stage center looking up at them)

Ladies! Ladies! Help! Help! Oh, my goodness, they'll murder each other.

(Madame Dupont-Fredaine and the General, the latter very red in the face, come running in. The former pulls the girls apart and the latter strides down left below the occasional chair and adopts a stiff military stance.)

Madame Dupont-Fredaine

Young ladies! Your dresses!

General

(shouting)

Holy suffering catfish. Have you finished? Where did I get such a pair of misbegotten frumps? What is going on? Explain yourselves!

Sidonia

(moving to the Right of the desk)

She started it!

Estelle

(crossing beyond her sister with her back to Sidonia)

I didn't! She did!

General

(looking across at the Secretary)

Devil take it, man, I leave them in your charge and you can't even stop them fighting!

(He advances toward Gaston who moves to the downstage end of the chaise.)

Madame Dupont-Fredaine

(dropping to her knees by Sidonia)

Oh your dresses! Your dresses! Little vandals!

General

Answer me! What were they fighting about?

Secretary

(turning front)

I can't tell you, sir.

General

(crossing to the center of the chaise behind the Secretary)

Can't tell me, eh? Ye gods and little fishes, who is making a monkey out of who? You two

(He turns toward Estelle and Sidonia.)

come here! What were you fighting about?

(The two girls advance slowly. Sidonia comes down to stage center. Estelle sidles toward Right center.)

Estelle

(blurting it out)

Papa! We love him to distraction!

Sidonia

Both of us!

General

Whom?

Both Girls

(sobbing and pointing at the Secretary)

Him!

General

That is the rampaging limit!

Estelle

(crossing to the upstage end of the chaise, kneels and buries face in lap)

But, Papa, you don't know what it's like to be in love!

Madame Dupont-Fredaine

(crossing swiftly below chaise and up far Right to Estelle)

Ladies! Ladies! You're weeping onto your dresses!

General

Blood and giblets, that's a good one! That emasculated virgin?

Madame Dupont-Fredaine

(looking across at him)

General!

General

Sorry, it slipped out. That zany? That trashy little penpusher?

Estelle

(lifting her head)

Papa, what's emasculated?

General

Jumping Jehosophat, leave the room this instant! Be so good as to take them away, Madame Dupont-Fredaine,

(Madame beckons to Sidonia, stage center, and puts her arm around Estelle and steers them both toward the main door up Right.)

and leave me with this young pumpkin here. I don't know what's going on in this house, but things are beginning to get out of hand.

Madame Dupont-Fredaine

(pausing at the door)

It's love, General!

General

Love! That's rich! Love isn't an excuse for everything.

Madame Dupont-Fredaine

(moving Right center to the General and slapping him)

Naughty fibber! You just told me the very opposite! Goodbye for the moment.

General

(winking)

See you later, Emma.

(The women exit closing the door behind them.)

Well, what have you got to say for yourself, sir?

Secretary

(moving to Right of chaise)

I don't know, sir. I am quite overcome.

General

(down center a couple of steps)

Exactly! You were recommended to me by a venerable ecclesiastic who vouched for your morals and your handwriting. I had up till now testified to the excellence of both.

Secretary

(moving to center of chaise)

I swear to you that nothing in my behavior could have incited the young ladies to--

General

(turning his back)

Don't drown the salmon, sir! Nothing in your behavior could have incited you to kiss Mademoiselle de Ste-Euverte on the mouth this morning either, I suppose?

Secretary

She mistook me for someone else, sir.

General

(whirling on him)

That makes it even worse! You are an imposter, sir!

Secretary

No, General. But the terrifying thing is that while I held her in my arms I quite thought that it was me she loved.

General

She wasn't properly conscious, my boy.

Secretary

(bitterly)

She kept calling me Leon.

General

(crossing up to the Left downstage end of the desk)

Leon? What a coincidence! The name of her intended, no doubt!

Secretary

But all the same it was to me she said it.

General

(bursting out laughing)

Ha, that's a good one! That's very good!

(He turns and faces the Secretary.)

So you think one falls in love like that, do you? At first sight and for always? Fiddlesticks! You must gorge yourself on cheap novels!

(He relaxes back and leans on the end of the desk.)

Secretary

No, sir, on the classics, exclusively. But the course of events is frequently quite similar. In any case I intend to confess to this lady when she is once more herself, and offer to make amends.

General

(standing erect)

Confess? Confess what? You will do no such thing. I will not have you confuse the wits of this unfortunate girl.

(He crosses up Right of center near the Secretary's chair.)

Am I going to have to teach you, by roundly boxing your ears, just what a young girl's honor means? I've seen you already, my lad, with that last little maid we had here. Don't deny it! I tell you I saw you!

Secretary

It was she who pursued me, sir. I avoided her.

(He looks toward the main door up Right.)

She was always coming up behind me in the passages--

General

(sitting in the Secretary's chair)

Oh, the little bitch!

Secretary

She said she was fed to the teeth with this dump--I quote, of course--and that she absolutely had to have a young one.

General

(interrupting in a thundering voice)

Young man! You are on the threshold of life, but you appear to be totally devoid of principles.

(He rises.)

You were put into my care--I could be your father--

(He paces restlessly up center.)

General (continued)

and it is my duty to instill those principles into you.

(He turns on the Secretary who is about to speak.)

Hold your tongue! You will speak when your turn comes and not before.

(The General picks up the Secretary's chair and moves it down between center and Right of center.)

Sit down!

(The Secretary moves up Right and around the end of the chaise, then he goes to the chair and sits as instructed.)

Firstly, one point about which it is forbidden to make light. Honor. Do you know what I mean by honor?

Secretary

Yes, General.

General

(crossing in front of the Secretary diagonally down Right to the inside end of the chaise)

I should hope so.

(He paces back in front of the Secretary between center and down center.)

You have been bred on the classics, you say?

(He turns and looks at the Secretary.)

I do not therefore have to teach you the fable of that Spartan youth who, having stolen a fox and hidden it beneath his tunic, preferred to have his stomach gnawed away sooner than confess his theft? This admirable fable contains a moral. Will you kindly tell me what that moral is?

Secretary

(after hesitating a moment)

Never confess.

General

(crossing up by the Left corner of the desk)

No, sir, wrong answer.

Secretary

Never steal a fox.

General

Wrong again. He did steal. But having stolen, what remained for our young Spartan to do then?

Secretary

Give back the fox and take his punishment.

General

No, sir.

(He crosses Left a couple of steps.)

In allowing his stomach to be gnawed away without a murmur he did better. He showed that he had honor. Draw the moral, now that I have put you on the right track.

Secretary

When one does something contrary to honor, honor consists in never owning up to it.

General

No, sir!

(He goes to stage center.)

That is pride which is an insufferable fault.

Secretary

I give up, sir.

General

Ha! You give up do you? Do you indeed? I can see your sense of honor is choking you! A nice bunch I must say, the younger generation! If the War Office is counting on your sort to hoist the flag....

(He crosses up Left of center, stands with his back to the front of the stage, and then wheels and returns to the left of center.)

However, the meaning of this fable, sir, is very simple. Honor bids me not to steal. Right, I do steal--unless one is an idiot one sidesteps the rules and regulations now and then. But, one thing is certain, I am not capable of forfeiting my honor. Therein lies the principle. I have been caught. Therein lies the accident. Never let yourself be caught. Am I, a young Spartan, going to be found wanting in honor? No. I cannot be found wanting in honor. Hence there is no fox under my tunic. You get it?

Secretary

No, sir.

General

(crossing to the easy chair up Left)

Never mind. You'll understand when you grow up. Simply retain from all this that is essential to keep up appearances.

(He lifts the easy chair and moves it two feet to the Right. He sits.)

Let us take a more familiar instance. You are sleeping with the maid.

Secretary

(shocked)

General!

General

Don't have a fit. You were on the verge of doing so, you young Pecksniff. And if you weren't a born ass you would have. To resume, honor is strong, but the flesh is weak. You are hot blooded. You've got the wench under your skin--when she brushes past you in the passage, something goes Bmp in your stomach. Do you for all that pinch her bottom at table in the middle of luncheon?

Secretary

Oh no, sir.

General

No, you simply say, "Leontine, please bring us some bread." And yet you know perfectly well it isn't a bread roll you're after. Luncheon runs its course, impeccably, does it not?

Secretary

Yes, sir.

General

Life, Gaston, is one long family lunch, tiresome because it has to be performed according to a long-established ritual, with initialed napkin rings, embroidered table mats, forks of different shapes and sizes and a bell push under the table. It is a game we have agreed to play. So we have to play according to the rules; answer the children's questions, divide the plum tart into equal slices, scold the youngest when he dribbles, fold one's napkin nicely and put it back into its ring--until the coffee. But the coffee once drunk, down the back stairs into the pantry and the best of luck. The law of the jungle comes into its own.

Secretary

But--

General

Dammit there's no need to be a complete fool.

Secretary

There's just one thing--

General

Quiet! I haven't finished. I can see the way your mind's working. You are young, you want the moon--you are going to say, "That's middle-class hypocrisy. What about ideals? Where does the ideal come in?"

Secretary

Yes, General.



General

Well, my boy, the ideal is doing very nicely, thank you. The ideal, my friend, is the lifebuoy. You're in the ocean, splashing about, doing your damndest not to drown, in spite of whirlpools and cross current. The main thing is to do the regulation breast stroke and, if you're not a clod, never to let the lifebuoy out of your sight. No one expects any more than that of you. If you relieve yourself in the water now and then, that's your affair. The sea is big, and if the top half of your body still looks as though it's doing the regulation breast stroke, nobody will say a word.

Secretary

But does one never reach the lifebuoy, General?

General

Never. But if your heart's in the right place, you never lose sight of it either. Fanatics who try a faster stroke to reach it at all costs, deluge everybody else and always finish up by drowning, generally dragging God knows how many poor devils under with them, who could otherwise have gone on quietly floundering about and minding their own business. Do you see what I mean?

Secretary

No, General. Might I say something, though?

General

Go ahead, my boy. Your turn to speak now.

Secretary

(turning to look straight at the older man)

I am twenty years old, General. I would rather try to go fast and drown.

General

(gently, after a pause)

You are right, my boy. It's a sorry business growing old, and understanding.

(He rises and cries out.)

Lieutenant Saint-Pe! Graduated second from Saumur! Volunteer! Wait for me! I'm done for anyway--here goes, I'd rather drown.

(He turns toward the Secretary.)

I only said all that because one has to. Try all the same not to drown others, even in a good cause.

(He crosses behind the Secretary and puts his hand on his shoulder.)

That's what weighs heavy on a man, hurting other people. I have got used to everything, but not to that.

Wife

(off)

Leon!

Yes!

General

Leon, where are you?

Wife

(wearily)

I'm here! I'm here, for Heaven's sake! I'm always here.

General

(off)

Come and sit with me, Leon. Goodness only knows what you're playing at while you think I'm asleep.

Wife

General

(smiling at the Secretary)

Playing the fool, my dear, with a young spark who wasn't even listening and quite right he was too, damn him.

(He crosses back to the easy chair and returns it to its up Left position.)

Wait a bit, my boy. There's no almighty hurry after all, even if they do make fun of you. Wait until the right girl comes along and with her you will miraculously cease to be afraid. But when you find her, by Hades don't wait seventeen years!

Secretary

(rising)

No, General. I won't, General.

General

At once! Remember my advice! Immediately! And make for the lifebuoy,

(He crosses back to the Secretary stage Right center and claps him on the shoulder.)

side by side--the only proper way to swim is two-by-two. Wish me luck. I'm going in myself. But it's in the cards that one of us may drown en route.

Wife

(off)

Leon!

(The General strides toward the bedroom door far up Right.)

General

(stopping before the door)

Here I am, Madame. At your service--for the last time.

(He opens the door and goes in, closing the door behind him.)

Secretary

(returning his chair to its position up Right)

At once! That's all I'll keep of his advice!

(He runs toward the morning room. Mademoiselle de Ste-Euverte is heard murmuring through the morning room arch.)

Mademoiselle de Ste-Euverte

Leon! Leon, you've come back! Can it be true then? Will I really never be alone again? Oh! Leon!

(There is a short pause. The Secretary re-enters on the run. He mounts the platform of the study on the far Left edge)

Secretary

The lady is still making a mistake. And yet, despite the action of the sedative, something tells me she isn't altogether taken in.

(He swings around facing front and then turns to the audience stage Left on the final line.)

How interesting it is, living! The Reverend Fathers never told me.

(He screws up his courage and runs back into the morning room up Left. There is a blackout. Interim music, lasting 32 seconds, comes up. 10

**ACT II**

**Scene 2**

**Immediately Thereafter**

**Same Place**

(As the stage lights come up the door to the Wife's bedroom opens and the Maid emerges carrying a tray laden with medicines. She barely gets through the door when a voice cuts the silence.)

Wife

Eugenie, what did you take out of here? I have only to turn my back and--

(She screams as the General lifts her.)

Leon! Leon, what are you doing?

General

(calmly and with great control)

I believe it is obvious, Madame. I am lifting you. We're going to my study and we're going to talk finally

(He enters from the Wife's bedroom carrying her in his arms.)

you and I.

Wife

But why here? Why not talk in my room?

(The General carries his Wife to the chaise stage Right and deposits her on it with her head downstage.)

General

You have closed your eyes and turned your back on me, Madame, for the last time. In here you won't be able to insult me with inattention.

Wife

I see you're bound to torture me--to force one of my attacks!

General

(looking at the desk where the Maid has deposited the tray)

Eugenie has brought your medicines on ahead, Madame. Surely one of them will revive you.

Wife

So that's what she--

(Her teeth start chattering dramatically. She is barefoot and is dressed only in her nightgown.)

Wife (continued)

Leon, you're a sadist. You dump me here on this chaise because you know it's the draftiest place in this ugly room. Move me at once!

(She looks up Left to the open window.)

And oh, my eyes...the light...my eyes aren't used to--

General

(exchanging glances with the Maid)

Quiet yourself, Madame. I am quite prepared to meet your terms for comfort, whatever they may be. Then, your complaints silenced, we will thrash this matter out once and for all.

(He beckons to the Maid.)

Eugenie, help me move the chaise.

Maid

(crossing down Right to the head of the chaise)

Yes, sir.

General

Where do you wish it moved, Madame?

Wife

Put the head up there, near the desk. It's not nearly so drafty there.

(The General and the Maid start to lift the chaise.)

Not with me on it, you fool. Oh, I have a chill--a chill!

General

(forcing himself to be calm)

Eugenie, run get my wife's coverlet and her pillows.

(The Maid exits into the Wife's bedroom while the General picks up Madame Saint-Pe and places her in the easy chair up Left.)

Meanwhile, I'll put you down here, and then I'll.....What else did you wish done?

Wife

Shut out the light! Close the shutters!

General

(speaking as he moves toward the window)

Close the shutters.

(The General closes the shutters as the Maid reenters with the quilt and cushions and puts them in the Secretary's chair up Right.)

Wife

(fidgeting)

This chair is scratchy--and I'm cold, so cold. You'd like nothing better than to see me freeze to death, you villain. You'd like nothing better than to--

(As his wife is speaking the General crosses to the desk up center and lights the lamp to counteract the gloom in the room.) 13

General

(calmly and quietly)

Be silent, Madame.

(He crosses down Right to the head of the chaise.)

I am endeavoring to please you, futile though the attempt may be. Come Eugenie, take hold of the foot.

(The Maid crosses to the upstage end of the chaise and prepares to lift it.)

Follow me.

(The two swing the chaise so the head is centered below the end of the desk.)

Is this agreeable, Emily?

Wife

(peering at the chaise)

Turn the head a little to the right, Leon--further away from the window.

General

(under his breath)

You never could resist stage center!

Wife

What?

General

(speaking as the Maid adjusts the pillows on the chaise)

Your wish is our command. That's right, Eugenie, plump the pillows and I'll--

(He crosses to the easy chair and lifts his wife. The Maid places the pillows at the head of the chaise and the General puts his wife down with her head upstage. The Maid subsequently spreads the coverlet over Emily who peers over the top edge, dramatically shivering. The General crosses to Right center and stands with his back to his wife.)

Madame, the time has come. For more years now than I care to remember--

Wife

(cutting in sharply)

Are you mad, sir? Not in front of the servants!

(The Maid is lowering the foot on the chaise. She looks first at the Wife, then at the General and steps back Left center.)

General

(turning)

Oh--. Eugenie, that will be all.

(The Maid starts moving toward the door to the main part of the house up Right.)

Close the door as you leave, please.

(The Maid exits closing the door behind her. As the latch clicks, the General, who has been waiting dramatically, clears his throat, turns his back once again on his wife and resumes his formal attack.)

As I was saying....the time has come.

Wife

(interrupting sweetly)

I thought you closed the shutters.

(The General looks upstage. The shutters are standing slightly ajar. He says nothing. Instead he resolutely controls himself, crosses to the easy chair up Left, lifts it and goes up to the shutters. He wedges the chair back against them so they cannot reopen. He then crosses back downstage below the chaise and resumes his position Right center with his back to his wife.)

General

(with clenched teeth)

As I was saying.....the time has come. For 20 long years of our marriage you have thought only of yourself.

Wife

(shrilly)

That's not true! Why, I tried to kill myself because of you, you monster! Isn't that enough for you?

General

(over his shoulder)

You were stretched out on the tracks--an awkward position but quite safe. You knew the train had already passed.

Wife

I didn't know! I was waiting for it.



General

(turns and crosses to the downstage end of the chaise)

On that branch line you could reckon on a good twenty-four hours of it.

Wife

Is nothing sacred to you? You brute! I might have died of cold during the night.

General

(fixing his eyes on his wife's face and moving Left)

That's enough. I have humored you as long as I'm going to, Madame. We are well into April, and spring is early this year. We are dying of heat.

Wife

(leaning forward in bed)

Of sunstroke then--starvation...I don't know....Of sorrow--yes, that's it--quite simply of sorrow, in my state of health.

General

(moving a couple of steps up Left)

Sorrow you can die of in your bed, Madam, at leisure. It was absurd, like everything else you do.

Wife

I am seriously ill. How often has the doctor told you that my condition gives cause for the gravest alarm?

(She falls back weakly against the pillows.)

I did truly mean to kill myself and that alone should make you fall sobbing at my feet, if your heart were not made of granite!

General

(moving to the head of the chaise)

My heart is not made of granite, Madam, but I am thrifty with my tears.

Wife

(leaning forward)

I sacrificed my life for you!

(She screams.)

Murderer!

General

(shouting in turn)

Be quiet, confound you. Be quiet or I'll leave the room!

(After a pause he goes up Right, picks up the Secretary's chair and places it downstage Right about two feet and sits.)

Let us talk things over calmly.

Wife

I'm too unhappy. You aren't unhappy, not you! You have your health and strength, you have. You're up and dressed each morning, you ride your horse, you walk around the garden, you go drinking with your friends! You live! You jeer at me, on your two legs, while I sit glued to my wheelchair. Aren't you ashamed of being well?

General

You are glued to your wheelchair for no other reason than because you want to be. We know that now.

Wife

Do you dare to say that I'm not ill?

General

One has to be an idiot like myself, Madam, to go on believing in your aches and pains by this time. As for your poor ailing legs, thank God we'll hear no more about those for a bit. I strongly suspect you of stretching them in your room every night. They helped you keep your balance mighty well down the wisteria and over to the railway line this morning.

Wife

It was the last spasm of the stricken beast who longs for death. Call your accomplice Doctor Bonfant, with his rubber mallet; let him test my reflexes!

General

Death and damnation, Madam, that's too easy!

Wife

Too easy for you, I daresay. What have you got to complain about? While I lie here, racked with pain, you who can wander fancy free on your great fat legs, where do you go, eh?

General

From here to the garden, at your beck and call every ten minutes.

Wife

And what is there in the garden? Answer me that, you pig, you satyr, you lascivious goat!

General

Well, I dunno....roses....

Wife

(cackling)

Roses! There's Madame Tardieu on the other side of the privet hedge, that frightful woman who exhibits her bodice as she leans over her flowerbeds. They're a household word hereabouts, Madame Tardieu's breasts! Whalebone, rubber, steel probably--she's propped up like a tumble-down barn.

General

All right, all right, all right! After all, I haven't been to look.

Wife

You dream of nothing else. You'll be mighty disillusioned when the great day comes! But on the other side of the fence, at the bottom of the garden, walking along the school path at midday and at four, there are younger ones, aren't there? The little convent girls! You centaur! One of these days the parents will complain.

General

You're wandering, Madam. They say good morning to me, and I say good morning back.

Wife

And what about prize-giving day, at which you always manage to officiate, you old faun! When you kiss them, red as a lobster in your uniform?

General

It's the custom.

Wife

What you're thinking isn't the custom and you know it! You tickle their bosoms with your decorations as you lean over them. Don't say you don't. I've seen you.

General

If nothing worse happens to them, as they're growing up we'll make May Queens out of them.

Wife

Queens of the May, indeed! You're always ready to officiate on May Day, too. Last year's one, that hussy, as you kissed her, you whispered something in her ear. It was reported to me.

General

(chaffingly)

I whispered something? You don't say so!

Wife

You arranged to meet her, I know. Besides I've seen her since. She's pregnant.

General

Nonsense, she's put on weight, that's all.

Wife

My maids are putting on weight, too, one after the other.

General

(rising and putting the chair back up Right)

Let's change the subject, Madam. I have something very serious to say to you.

(He crosses to the upstage end of the chaise and stands over his wife as he accuses her.)

## General (continued)

You are untrue to me, Madam, that's the long and short of it. You wrote to Doctor Bonfant that you were in love with him. I have proof of it here in my wallet, down in black and white with two spelling mistakes which identify your hand. Yes. For you, who have always accused me of being a clodhopper, too lumpish to appreciate Baudelaire or Wagner, can't tell a conjunction from a carrot. You never had a day's schooling in your life.

## Wife

How shabby you are! To come on my deathbed and throw my unhappy childhood in my face! For over a year I was a boarder with the daughters of consuls and ambassadors in the most select ladies' college in Paris.

## General

Where your mother went to do the household mending and where they took you in and fed you out of charity.

## Wife

My poor mother and I suffered a great deal, no doubt. But please to remember that my mother was a woman of infinite distinction, not a little provincial housewife like yours.

## General

One trade is as good as another, but your mother, Madam, was a dresser at the Opera.

## Wife

She accepted the post at the earnest request of the Director, solely for love of music. A woman whose hand Monsieur Gounod kissed at a gala matinee for charity.

## General

(crossing around the head of the chaise upstage from Right to Left)

Have it your own way. Let us get back to those letters. Did you or did you not write them? Do you or do you not address him as "Armand"? Do you tell him, yes or no, that his hair smells of vanilla when he sounds your chest, and that you pretend to have a belly ache so he can come and feel it for you? It's down in black and white with two spelling mistakes in your own handwriting.

## Wife

(turning upstage toward him)

How could you stoop so low as to come poking about in my correspondence?

## General

I did not poke about in your correspondence, Madam. I obtained possession of those letters. How?

(He moves down Left of center.)

That's none of your business.

Wife

Oh, isn't it? None of my business? Those letters were in the drawer of my bedside table where I keep my curlers and other objects of an intimate nature. You tell me they are in your wallet. And you dare to cross-question me? It's past belief! I did think you were still a gentleman.

General

Dammit, Madam, will you stick to the point?

Wife

So you ransack a lady's drawers, do you, my lad? You try to dishonor her, you a senior officer?

(The General turns away from her.)

All right, then, I shall tell. I shall tell everybody. I shall get up, I'll recover the use of my poor aching legs, for a day, and the night of the reception at the annual Tattoo, in front of all the high ranking military personnel, I shall make a sensational entrance and I shall tell all!

General

(turning to her once again)

I repeat I have not ransacked your drawers.

Wife

(leaning forward)

Have you those letters?

General

(crossing down Left toward the occasional chair)

I have.

Wife

(wheedling)

Show them to me.

General

(sitting in the occasional chair)

Ha ha! Not on your life.

Wife

Very well. If you really have those letters in your wallet, there can be nothing more between us but an ocean of contempt. You may go.

(She snuggles down on the chaise and pulls the coverlet under her chin.)

I am sleepy. I'm asleep.

(She lies with her eyes closed. The General waits a moment and then straightens up in his chair.)

General

No, Madam, you are not asleep. That would be too easy. Open your eyes.

(He rises.)

Open your eyes, this instant, do you hear--

(He advances on the Left side of the chaise.)

or I'll open them for you.

(He goes around the upstage end of the chaise and around on the Right side. He shakes her.)

Emily! Do as I say. Emily open your eyes!

(He shakes her, slaps her cheeks, forces her eyelids up from their white eyeballs, and begins to lose his head.)

Come to your senses, damn you! What new game are you playing now?

Wife

(weakly)

My heart!

General

What about your heart!

(His wife rises up weakly and grips his arm.)

Wife

It's shrinking.

(She gasps and settles back against the cushions, closing her eyes.)

Leon! Goodbye, Leon! I never loved anyone else but you.

General

(falling back a step)

Oh no, not your heart attack. We haven't even raised our voices. Your heart attack is for after the big scenes, Madam.

(He advances and feels her pulse.)

You are warm, your pulse is good. I'm not falling for that!

(He shakes her and lifts her by the shoulders to an erect position.)

Wake up, Emily!

(He lets go and she falls back against the cushions.)

You can't be as rigid as that. You're doing it on purpose.

## General (continued)

(He goes upstage to the tray on the desk.)

I'll give you your drops.

(He rummages about among the bottles.)

Holy Moses, what a collection! It would take a qualified druggist to make head or tail of this lot! There's enough here to upset the constitution of a cart horse. Needless to say, no dropper. Where the devil did Eugenie put the thing?

(He holds up a bottle and a water glass and crosses to the left side of the chaise.)

Oh well, here goes--one drop more, one drop less--the way things are now...

(He drops several drops of the medicine in the water and stirs the mixture with his finger.)

Emily, drink this,

(He advances on her, leans down and attempts to force the glass between her lips.)

and if that doesn't do the trick I'll call the doctor. Unclench your teeth, my love--unclench your teeth, damn you, it's dripping all over you!

(He rises and crosses up to the desk, setting the glass on the tray.)

Give me strength--

(He looks down on her, then rummages again in the tray.)

what's the matter with you? Your pulse is all right. There's no getting away from that. I'll give you your injection.

Wife

(feebly)

You're still rummaging, Leon. You're suspicious of me even on my deathbed.

General

(half turning toward her)

I'm not rummaging. I'm looking for your capsules.

Wife

(flopping over on her left side and almost falling off the chaise)  
Too late. Call the children.

General

(swiftly moving around the chaise on the Right and pulling her back on it)

What are you raving about, my dear, you aren't going to die. You're weak, that's all. I'll get the doctor.

(He begins to move away from the chaise. Emily reaches out and holds him by the arm.)

Wife

Too late. I implore you, don't move, Leon. Stay with me.

(She draws him down on one knee to the Right of the chaise.)

Hold my hand as you did in the old days long ago, when I was ill. You took care of me, then, you were patient with me. You used to bathe my temples with eau de colonge and murmer sweet nothings in my ears.....

(He rises and goes up to the tray on the desk, looking for the bottle of colonge and mumbling.)

General

I saw it a minute ago--I can still dab you with a bit of colonge....

(He pours some on a large handkerchief.)

Wife

But without the sweet nothings! It's that that's killing me--you murderer!

General

(reaching over the top of the upstage end of the chaise)

There. That will revive you.

(The handkerchief covers the Wife's nose and she coughs and chokes. He looks down and sees what has happened and lifts it to her forehead.)

Wife

It frightens you, eh, to hear me say it? I'm dying for want of your love, Leon.

General

(crossing down to the Right of the chaise and falling on one knee)  
No, no, no, don't be silly now. To begin with you are not dying at all, and you know perfectly well, my love, that I am always full of attention for you.

(He solicitously tucks the coverlet around his Wife.)

Wife

(dropping the handkerchief onto the floor to the Left of the chaise and siezing his hand)



Wife (continued)

Attentions! What do I want with attentions? I want you to love me as you used to long ago, Leon, when you took me in your arms and called me your little girl, when you bit me all over.

(She reaches out and, with her hands on both sides of his face, brings his face close to hers.)

Aren't I your little girl any more, to be carried naked to my bath?

General

(struggling to draw away)

Emily, we all have to grow up sometime.

Wife

(plaintively)

Why don't you bite me all over like a young terrier any more?

General

(breaking away and rising)

Dammit, Madam, young terriers grow into old ones, after twenty years.

(He goes to the Secretary's chair up Right, moves it away from the bed a bit further, and sits.)

Besides, I've lost my teeth.

Wife

(sitting up with astonishing vigor)

You've teeth enough for others, you mealy-mouthed old fraud! You can talk about those letters which were never even sent. I have evidence of another sort, in a trinket box underneath my mattress, letters both sent and received, where there's no question of your having lost your teeth. Letters in which you play the young man for another's benefit--and there you flatter yourself incidentally, my poor Leon--for apart from your summary prowess with the maids, you needn't think you're capable of much in that line either--

General

(rising and crossing above the chaise to the Left of it)

Be quiet, Madam! What do you know about it?

Wife

I know as much as all women left unsatisfied. Learn first to satisfy one woman, to be a man in her bed, before you go scampering into the beds of others.

General

(turning and facing her)

So I have never been a man in your bed, Madam. Is that it?

Wife

Soon weary, my friend, soon asleep, and when for a wonder you had a little energy, soon replete. We would both close our eyes in the bed, but while

Wife (continued)

you performed your little task, picturing the Lord knows whom, you don't imagine, do you, that it was you I thought about?

General

(Stung, he turns Left.)

How vulgar you are, Madam--vulgar and shameless. However, if that was so, why the reproaches and the scenes, why so many tears for so long?

Wife

Because you belong to me, Leon! You are mine like my house, mine like my jewels, mine like my furniture, mine like your name.

(She rises to her knees on the chaise.)

General

And is that what you understand by love?

(He staggers a couple of steps down Left.)

Wife

(standing on her chaise)

Yes!

General

(crossing to the Left end of the foot of the chaise)

Death and damnation, Madam! I do not belong to you!

Wife

To whom then?

General

(crossing to the Right end of the chaise)

To no one. To myself perhaps.

Wife

No! Not any longer. I am your wife. Your wife before God and before the law.

General

Hell's bells, Madam, I'll escape you!

Wife

Never!

General

I'll pretend not to know you.

Wife

I'll scream, I'll cause a riot! I'll break things. I'll run up debts to ruin you--

General

(crossing to below center Right of chaise)

I tell you I'll take a train and disappear into thin air. You won't know where I am.

Wife

You'd never dare, and if you did, I'd follow you to the far ends of the earth!

General

And when I die, hell's teeth!

(He turns and looks at her.)

Will you make that journey too?

Wife

When you die I shall cry out loud--I was his wife! I shall put on widow's weeds, I, and I alone, will have the right and I shall visit your grave on All Soul's Day. I'll have my name engraved on the tombstone and when my turn comes to die I shall come and lie beside you for eternity. Unknown people, as they pass, will still read that I was your wife, on the stone!

General

By God I hate you, Madam.

(He crosses to the down Left corner of the chaise.)

Wife

(sitting on the bed)

What difference does that make? I am your wife.

General

(crossing to Left center and turning toward her)

I hate the sight and sound of you! And I'll tell you something else that's stronger even than my hatred and disgust. I'm dying of boredom, Madam, by your side.

Wife

You bore me too, but I am your wife just the same and about that you can do nothing.

General

(crossing straight down Left below the chaise)

But devil take you, you hate me just as much!

Wife

(rising up on her knees)

Yes, I hate you. You ruined my career. I had a superb voice, a dazzling future--you insisted that I give up the stage. All that was brilliant in me you crushed underfoot. Other men worshipped me, you frightened them away with your great sword. You created a desert around me with your stupid

Wife (continued)

jealousy, you made me unlearn how to be beautiful--unlearn how to love and be loved. Expected me to keep house for you like a servant, feed your sickly children, I, whose breasts were famous throughout Paris!

General

(turning to her)

Your breasts famous? Don't make me laugh. Where did you exhibit them anyway, in Lohengrin?

Wife

At festivals of Art. Before people whose refinement and luxurious living your petty tradesman's world can't even guess at. Have you ever thought, you desperado, of all I sacrificed for you?

General

(Pacing Right and then back Left below the foot of the chaise)  
Death and damnation, that is ancient history, Madam!

(He stops Left, turns to her and states his purpose.)

I am resolved to sue for a divorce.

Wife

A divorce! You could never live alone, you're far too frightened. Who do you think would have you, you poor devil?

General

I have found someone who will have me.

Wife

(forcing herself to appear relaxed and leaning back)  
She must be very old and pretty ugly--or pretty poor to be reduced to that.

General

It's a lie. She is young and beautiful. She's true to me. She is waiting for me.

Wife

Since when?

General

Since--since seventeen years

Wife

You ~~must~~ be joking, my dear! Seventeen years!

(She laughs.)

And you think she loves you? And you, do you think you love her? And they've been waiting seventeen years, poor lambs!

General

(sitting in the occasional chair down Left)  
Yes, Madam, and because of you.

Wife

Oh, Leon, if I weren't so ill, I'd laugh; I'd laugh like a mad one! It's too silly--really too silly! Seventeen years! But if you really loved her, you poor imbecile, you would have left me long ago!

General

I stayed out of respect for your grief and pity for your illness, which I long took to be genuine, Madam.

Wife

What a fool you are! Do you think I couldn't dance if I wanted to?

(She gets off the chaise on the Right side.)

Look! You see how well I can stand!

(She goes to him with her hands out.)

Come and dance with me. Come.

(He doesn't move. She backs up stage Left moving with grace and ease.)

General

You're mad. Go back to bed.

Wife

(moving upstage of the chaise)

No. You are my true love and I want to dance with you. Like at the Ball at the Military college in Saumur, the one of '93, seventeen years ago, funnily enough. Do you remember?

General

Confound you, why?

Wife

(standing at the upstage Right end of the chaise)

Because you were so handsome and scintillating and sure of yourself with the women at that Ball. "Major Saint-Pe!" How smartly you clicked your heels, German fashion, when you introduced yourself!

(She moves into the Right center area and sways as she talks.)

How fetchingly you smoothed your whiskers, how prettily you kissed their hands. I shall never forget that ball.

(She moves toward the foot of the chaise and sits.)

I was still in love with you then, and I had stayed faithful, idiot that I was, in spite of your lady friends whom you forced me to invite to dinner. But at that ball I suddenly had enough, all at once, in a space of a second. You were dancing a waltz with a ninny of a girl--I saw you whisper in her

Wife (continued)

ear and she made eyes at you and simpered. The Waltz of the Toreadors..... I even remember the tune.

(She gets up and moves Right.)

I was too wretched. I had to get away, out of that ballroom. I went out into the hall to order my carriage. There was a man there,

(She turns from Right center and looks at the General.)

younger and handsomer than you, and he helped me. And when he found our carriage he said I couldn't possibly go home alone and he climbed in to escort me.

General

Well?

Wife

(moving toward the chaise eyes fixed on the General)

Well, you were still waltzing, my poor dear, with your superb half turns and your airs and your graces. What do you suppose women are made of? He became my lover!

General

(stiffening his body and leaning forward in spite of himself)

What? You have had a lover, Madam, and it was at that Saumur Ball that you made his acquaintance? A man who had merely helped you find our carriage, a complete stranger?--

(He rises and turns toward the marble top table.)

I won't even ask you his rank. How horrible!

(He turns to her.)

But I'd like to believe that you had a few doubts, dear God!--a few misgivings before taking such a step. I fondly hope you did at least wait a little.

Wife

Of course, my dear. I was a respectable woman. I waited.

General

How long?

Wife

(lying on her stomach on the chaise and smiling at him)

Three days.

General

(exploding)

Holy suffering rattlesnakes. I waited seventeen years, Madam, and I'm waiting still.

Wife

(leaning back up against the head of the chaise)

And when that one was posted, I forget where, to the devil--to the Far East, I took another just as handsome, and another, and again another, and so on before I grew too old and there would only be you left who would have me.

General

(moving to Left center toward her)

But damnit, if you were untrue to me why the tears and the reproaches--why the immense heartaches and the torment--why this illness?

Wife

(leaning forward)

To keep you, Leon. To keep you for always because I am your wife. For I do love you, Leon, on top of everything. I hate you for all the harm you did to me, but I love you--not tenderly, you fool, not with seventeen years of waiting and letter-writing--not for the bliss of being in your arms at night --we have never made love together, you poor wretch and you know it--not for your conversation--you bore me--not for your rank either, nor your money-- I've been offered more--I love you because you are mine, my object, my thing, my hold-all, my garbage bin--

General

(turning away from her and looking down Left)

No!

Wife

Yes, and you know it! And whatever you may promise others you know you will never be anything but that,

General

(wildly)

No!

Wife

Yes! You will never be able to bring yourself to hurt me, you're too cowardly. You know it, and you know I know it, too.

General

(crossing Right half-way to the down Right corner of the stage)

No!

Wife

(getting off the Right side of the chaise)

Yes! Come now darling, dance with me. The Waltz of the Toreadors, the last waltz, with me this time.

(She holds out her arms.)

General

(with his back to her)

No.

## Wife

(coming up behind him and pulling on his downstage shoulder)  
 Yes. I want you to.

(He shakes off her hands. She backs up to the foot of the chaise.)

And you want whatever I want. Come, dance with your chronic invalid, your old bag of bones.

(Her voice grows sweet. She holds out her arms once again.)

Come dance with your remorse!

(He doesn't move. She starts slowly and seductively toward him.)

Come dance with your love!

## General

(backing Right)

Don't touch me, for pity's sake, don't touch me!

(She continues to go toward him. When he can back up no further and she touches him, he suddenly siezes her by the neck and starts forcing her backward toward the chaise. As her body drops on the mid-section of the chaise he bends her trunk toward the foot until her head drops over the end. He chokes her the while.)

Phantasmagoria!!

(The Wife struggles in her voluminous nightgown, trying to tear his hands away from her throat. There is a blackout. The black- 15  
out is held for a ten count; then, the house lights come up.) 16

10 MINUTE INTERMISSION



ACT III

Early That Evening

Same Place

17

(The house lights dim as the overture plays.. In the blackout  
 The General takes his place on the platform in front of the  
 window upstage Left. When the stage lights come up he crushes  
 a piece of stationery in his hands and begins to stride dia-  
 gonally downstage Right to the foot of the chaise which is now  
 in its original position. He looks out front for a moment then  
 turns and looks up at his Wife's bedroom door. He starts down-  
 stage of the chaise as though to go up to her door, but stops  
 just as he starts up Right. He turns toward the front again.  
 Then he nervously strides up Left to the easy chair, only to  
 stop and fidget. He turns front again and crosses downstage  
 Left to the occasional chair. He lifts his hand to his head  
 and cries out. At this moment the bugle is heard. He straight-  
 ens to attention almost automatically. As the tones of the  
 bugle end, he strides around the occasional chair and goes up-  
 stage Left to the hatrack. He takes the binoculars that are  
 hanging on it, removes them from their case and trains them out  
 the window as though he is trying to pierce the gloom. The  
 Doctor opens the door of the Wife's bedroom and comes into the  
 study. The General lowers the binoculars and looks at him in  
 silence.)

Doctor

I have just taken her blood pressure. She's as right as rain.

(He advances to the upstage end of the chaise.)

She's had a bad fright, that's all.

General

So did I.

Doctor

So did I, my friend. The moment your maid appeared and said to "Come at once, Madame is choking," I guessed.

General

(crossing to the desk and setting the binoculars and case down)  
 What did she say?

Doctor

Who? Your Maid?

General

(dropping down to stage center)  
 My wife.

Doctor

(crossing to the chaise and sitting)

My poor friend, she seems to think it quite in order that you should want to do away with her. Murder is the regular concomitant of passion at the opera. She submits gracefully, biding her time, no doubt, and feeling vaguely flattered; she is more than ever convinced that you are a pair of star-crossed lovers.

General

(crossing to the marble-top table stage Left and switching  
on the light) 19

Oh, the idiocy of it! Will she never understand that she quite simply bores me?

Doctor

I'm afraid you will have to face up to it, General. Never.

General

(sinking into the easy chair)

But, dear God, that can't be all there is to life! Why did no one ever warn me? Everybody around me looks happy and content. How do they do it, damn them--how do they manage not to suffer? What is their password? Let them tell me, at once. I've no more time to wait.

Doctor

My dear old friend, I think that is a question one must ask oneself when one is very much younger.

General

(rising and snapping to attention)

I am young! Lieutenant Saint Pe!

(He strides to stage center and faces the Doctor.)

It's nothing but a booby trap! I see it now. Doctor, has medicine not discovered anything to put the clock back seventeen years?

Doctor

Nothing so far.

General

Are you sure?

Doctor

It would surely have been mentioned in certain....specialist publication.

General

(crossing up toward the window and looking out)

I'm in no mood for levity. Are you aware of what's going on? Mademoiselle de St-Euverte and my secretary have gone out for a walk. They've been away nearly two hours.

Doctor

Nothing very odd about that. You were closeted with your wife. Your explanations bode fair to going on forever. I expect they simply decided to go for a short stroll while they were waiting.

General

(turns back toward the Doctor)

A curious misunderstanding arose between the two of them this morning. They they left, with their little fingers linked, so the maid tells me. Does that strike you as normal too?

(He goes to the upstage end of the marble-top table.)

As for my daughters, who were enamoured of our hero--they have gone as well, leaving this letter on the table,

(He takes the crumpled letter, smoothes it out, and holds it near the light.)

together with their fake jewelry wrapped in tissue paper. "We are too unhappy. He is in love with another. We prefer to die"--(two more of them, it's all the rage in this house)--"Tell Madame Dupont-Fredaine not to go on with our dresses." Among other primordial virtues their mother has imbued them with a solid notion of economy.

Doctor

Good Heavens, and haven't they come home yet?

General

(crosses behind the easy chair up Left)

I sent the gardener in search of them. They must be down by the pond, dabbling their feet in the water.

(He goes up to the desk.)

They're far too plain to kill themselves.

(He sits in the desk chair and leans his elbows on the desk, dropping his head into his hands.)

Everything is tumbling about my ears! Tell me how will it all end?

Doctor

(crossing up to the Right downstage end of the desk)

As in real life--or in the theatre, in the days when plays were plays--a contrived denouement, not too gloomy on the face of it, and which doesn't really fool a soul, and then a little later--curtain. I speak for myself as well as you. Your blood pressure's up to two hundred and fifty and my gall bladder is a bag of stones. Make way for the young! May they commit the self-same follies and die of the same diseases.

General

But I love her, Doctor, and I am young.

(The Maid enters. She goes to the desk and turns on the desk lamp. 20)

Maid

Will you please say if I am to serve dinner, sir?

(The Doctor crosses up to the window and looks out.)

If we wait much longer, the deviled mushrooms won't be deviled mushrooms any more.

General

Oh shut up about your mushrooms! We'll call them something else, then.

Maid

And there's Father Ambrose drinking white wine in the pantry. He says he'll wait as long as you please, sir, but what he has to tell you is too important to put off till tomorrow.

General

Feed him the deviled mushrooms. What does he want, today of all days?

Maid

(moving downstage into the center Right area)

I already suggested he should eat something. He won't He says the excitement of what he has to tell you has quite spoilt his appetite.

(The Doctor upstage Left turns to listen.)

But, my word, he's catching up on the white wine! I don't know if he helps himself like that at Mass but if you don't see him soon, whatever it is he has to tell you is going to be pretty muddled. I think he's going off his head. He says it's Providence and we'll have to say some masses in Thanksgiving.

General

Why, what's Providence been up to this time?

Maid

He says he can tell no one but yourself, sir. It's a secret between Providence and him.

General

Well, tell them both to wait.

(The Maid exits through the door to the rest of the house up Right.)

My reason is tottering, I can feel it. I can't have lost her so stupidly after seventeen years the way one loses a dog in the street. With her lost

General (continued  
to me there's nothing left but a ludicrous old pantaloon, who never saw a single one of his gestures through to its conclusion.

(He rises and crosses to Right center.)

I have the impression that Lieutenant Saint-Pe is lying bloodless on the field of battle, not even wounded in the fight--some idiot's rifle blew up in his back a few minutes before zero hour--but that all the same he is going to die.

Doctor, if I've lost her--

Doctor

(who has been looking out the window again and now looks up Left)  
No, General, you have not lost her. Here she is, with her ravisher--all rosy from the evening air.

(The Secretary and Ghislaine enter from the garden far up Left.)

General

(rising and moving forward)

Ghislaine....this unaccountable stroll--I nearly died of fright.

(He stops, noticing that as the couple advance toward him their hands are clasped.)

Now will you kindly tell me....

Ghislaine

(stopping up Left center)

My dear, will you ask the doctor to leave us for a moment?

(The Doctor leaves his position in front of the window and crosses upstage toward the main door up Right.)

Gaston, leave us too, please.

Secretary

(self-assured though a little somber)

Very well. But only for a moment.

(He crosses up Left and out the morning room exit.)

General

Only for a moment? What's got into the young puppy? He never dared speak in that tone to anyone in his life before!

Doctor

(to the General on his way out)

Courage, Lieutenant! Something tells me this is going to be your last campaign.

General

(sitting on the chaise)

Are you going to explain, Ghislaine?

Ghislaine

Yes, my dear, I'll tell you. It's quite simple. I love that young man.

General

You're joking. And it isn't funny Ghislaine. Why, thundering Hades, two two hours ago you'd never even seen the fellow!

Ghislaine

(crossing down Right to the end of the chaise)

Had I seen you before the Saumur Ball? And yet the very second when you took me by the waist I fell in love with you. Those seventeen years took nothing away, but added nothing, either, to my love.

General

That wonderful mad gift of yourself in one moment is something I have always understood and loved you for. But this isn't the same thing at all.

Ghislaine

(turning upstage and looking at him)

Why isn't it, Leon?

General

Well, because...at the Saumur Ball--it was me.

Ghislaine

(gently)

Well?

General

Well, damnit all, it's not for me to say so, but I was brilliant, I was witty, I was young! And I desired you madly--that counts for something too. But him!

Ghislaine

(crossing down Left of center)

He is retiring--or he was--a little naive, perhaps, but you see, my dear--now how can I put it? For a woman those are opposing qualities, but equally appealing--we love everything. It's like having to choose at a fitting, between a green silk and a pink one.

(She turns to him.)

I might add that he is young, younger even than you were at Saumur, and that he desires me too.

General

Him? That nonentity? That mooncalf?

Ghislaine

Leon, I forbid you to insult him!

General

(rising and moving Left toward the morning room but stopping  
upstage center)

Try and stop me! So he desires you, does he? Do you expect me to believe that when he saw you his anaemic blood gave a great leap? Don't make me laugh. Say he was speechless--say he knelt at your feet, recited poetry perhaps--but don't tell me the boy desires you--it's grotesque!

Ghislaine

(looking calmly up at him)

But he proved it, my dear.

General

How? How could he have proved it to you?

(He moves downstage Left to her and grasps her shoulder with  
his hands.)

Let a real man, worthy of that title, take you in his arms tonight--and it will be tonight, my dearest, I swear it--let a real man once make love to you dammit, and all the rest will disappear like so much smoke.

Ghislaine

I know. It is all so much smoke, my dear.

(She removes his hands from her shoulders and crosses up Right  
of center.)

Because at long last, someone has made love to me.

(She turns and faces him.)

I'll shout it to the world, I'm not ashamed. What words do you need then to make you understand? I belong to him.

General

(moving a step toward her)

He dared? That two-faced, vice-ridden little villain?! That brute? Took you by force did he? I'll kill him!

Ghislaine

No, no, my dear, not by force. He took me, and I gave myself, and I am his now, for always.

General

(crossing to her)

Ghislaine, it's all a nightmare. I'll help you to forget it....



Ghislaine

(drawing away from him and moving above the chaise)

No, Leon, you must not touch me any more. Only he may touch me now. And you should know how faithful I can be.

General

(crosses to the chaise, sits and looks up at her)

But when he touched you, you had fallen on your head, you were pumped full of sedative, you didn't even know who was touching you. You thought it was me!

Ghislaine

(crossing Left to just below the desk)

The first few times, yes. But afterwards I knew quite well. He touched me, really touched me! And all of a sudden I was no longer sad and lonely and drifting with the tide, I found my footing on the shore at last and I shall never be alone again--at tables, at Mass, in my wide, wide bed. Don't you see what a wonderful adventure it is? You would be a tiny bit glad, too, if you really loved me, Leon.

General

I do love you, Ghislaine, but--

Ghislaine

(turning to him)

Then why not share my joy and let everyone be happy? I'm not alone any more! You so often wished it for me. You used to say I should have a companion--

General

Yes, but a female--

Ghislaine

I have a male companion now,

(She moves downstage center.)

it's so much better! We'll meet from time to time just as we used to do. He said he would permit it. Although, between ourselves, my dear, I rather doubt it.

(She looks up Left toward the morning room.)

He's insanely jealous, do you know that? He says he won't let me out of his sight.

(She faces front her face wreathed in smiles.)

Oh, my dear, I am so happy. I am no longer a dog without a collar. I have a little cord around my neck with my owner's name on it. How good it feels!

General

(his head in his hands)

Lieutenant Saint-Pe! Don't leave me! What is happening?

Ghislaine

(heedless of the interruption)

You say he has no wit.

(She moves Left to the marble-top table and looks again toward the morning room.)

Not with men, perhaps, not with you, but what does that matter to me? To me he says the prettiest things. He told me that we must swim abreast towards the ideal as if towards a lifebuoy, and that the only proper way to swim is two by two.

General

(rising)

I might have known it! Did he also tell you that life was one long family lunch, with napkin rings, forks of different shapes and sizes and a bell push under the table?

Ghislaine

(turning to him)

What are you suggesting, spiteful? He says poetic things. He says life is but a holiday, a ball....

General

(sinking back on the chaise)

A ball...

Ghislaine

Yes, isn't that a sweet idea?

(She moves Right back to stage center.)

A ball of night, and we must make haste he says, before the lamps go out. I loved him from the very first, I told you so, but I had got so into the way of thinking love was nothing but one endless vigil, that when he asked me to be his I wanted to cry--Later! Tomorrow! But do you know what he said?

General

(in a strangled voice)

No!

Ghislaine

(crossing upstage above the chaise)

He said, "At once! At once, my darling! Now who but he would say a thing like that? At once! It's wonderful. I never guessed that one could have something at once!

(The Secretary enters. His step is resolute. He strides to the end of the desk upstage center.)

Secretary

The moment is up, Ghislaine.

Ghislaine

(flustered)  
I'm sorry, Gaston.

General

(rising and crossing toward the Secretary)  
I'm sorry, Gaston! So there you are, Don Juan! The pretty turtle doves.

(Ghislaine crosses down in front of the chaise where she can see the faces of both men.)

Just look at them, will you. It's enough to make a cat laugh. What the devil do you take me for, the pair of you? Death and damnation, I'll soon show you what I'm made of!

(The Doctor appears in the door to the main part of the house up Right.)

Come in, Doctor, come in. You're just in time. Do you know what they've just told me,

(Ghislaine crosses in front of the General who moves Right as he speaks. She goes to Gaston and they stand up Right of the easy chair.)

These two-starry-eyed cherubs here? They're in love with each other, if you please. Yes, sir, since two hours ago! And what's more, they haven't wasted any time. Some folks have a scruple or two, some folks wait a little while--not they!

(The General is focusing his attention on the couple. The Doctor drifts down Right of the chaise.)

In the woods, anyhow, like animals.

(The Secretary steps back and allows Ghislaine to move behind him to the Left of the marble-top table. He stands near the easy chair up Left facing the furious General.)

And they expect my blessing into the bargain! God almighty, have they completely lost every scrap of moral sense?

Doctor

(gently)  
Lieutenant Saint-Pe!

General

(crossing Right of center toward the Doctor)  
General! Please to address me by my proper rank!

(He marches resolutely up Right toward the main door.)

General (continued)

I'll show them who I am! I am going to put on my uniform and all my decorations.

(He stops at the door.)

No, it'll take too long.

(The Secretary moves down Left of center between the easy chair and the occasional chair. The General advances toward stage center his eye on his rival.)

Aha, so you seduce young girls, do you, eh? Steal another man's wife, would you? Play cock of the roost, sir, would you? Well, me young jocko, when you've got guts you must show 'em, and otherwise than with the ladies-- and that may not prove quite so funny.

(He stands facing front.)

Fetch me two swords someone! Those two up there, on the wall.

(Everyone stands still. The General wheels upstage, gets the desk chair and climbs up on it to disengage the swords from the wall.)

And no need for seconds, either. The Doctor can stand by.

Ghislaine

Oh, my God, he wants blood! He's a cannibal!

Doctor

(crossing downstage of the chaise)

General, you aren't going to start all that again?

General

(turning briefly to him)

And you down there, you hold your tongue, too, sir! I haven't forgotten that business of the letters.

Ghislaine

(rushing to the General, falling on her knees and clasping his legs in her arms)

Leon! I love him! And if you love me, as you say, you won't hurt him.

(The General merely pulls at the swords which will not come down, and Ghislaine retreats as he shouts at her. She falls back on Gaston.)

General

The hell I won't! I'll cut off---his ears. I'll kill him!

Doctor

(from the downstage end of the chaise)

General, get down from that chair!

Secretary

(stepping forward)

Though I have never held a sword, if the General insists, I am prepared to fight.

Ghislaine

(rushing to him)

Gaston, not you! Not you! Let him fight by himself!

Doctor

(moves two steps upstage toward Right center)

General, it would be murder! He's a child!

General

(still struggling with the swords)

There are no children any more. If he's a child let him go and play with his hoop. Holy suffering blood-stained billicans, who's the double-dyed blockhead who put up these swords!

(He calls unthinkingly.)

Gaston!

Secretary

Yes, Sir?

General

Give me a hand, my boy.

Secretary

(moving to the desk and putting one knee up on it)

Yes, sir.

(The General turns and suddenly realizes what he's done.)

General

What the devil are you doing there, sir? Get down!

(The Secretary follows instructions. He falls back upstage Right near the plant.)

Doctor, come and help me will you?

Doctor

I refuse to be a party any longer to this tragic tomfoolery.

(He sits on the chaise.)

You have no right to provoke this lad.

General

Did he or did he not consider himself old enough to take the woman I love?

Ghislaine

(moving swiftly across to the upstage end of the chaise)  
But you never would take her at all.

General

I know my manners. Besides, I was going to.

(He pauses, turns to them, dismounts from the chair and walks downstage Left.)

Why, what a fool I am! It's so much simpler than that! Come to think of it, he is a child. How old are you exactly, my boy?

Secretary

Twenty in strawberry-time, sir. The twenty-third of May.

General

Twenty in strawberry-time, splendid. In order to marry then, unless I'm much mistaken, you need your parents' consent, do you not?

Secretary

Why recall in her presence the painful circumstances attendant on my birth?

(He crosses up Left and starts to return the desk chair to its proper position.)

I have no parents, sir, as you well know. I am a foundling.

General

(moving to stage center)

True. But you have a guardian, have you not, a venerable churchman, Father Lambert I think I'm right in saying? We'll see if Father Lambert will consent to the marriage when I've told him a thing or two!

(The General crosses up Right and opens the door to the rest of the house and shouts.)

Eugenie! Eugenie! The Cure! The Cure, quickly! Send Father Ambrose up at once.

(He closes the door and crosses back to stage center)

She's quite right, it is providence that brings the fellow here, for once. I'll bet my braces Father Lambert will never let you marry an adventuress!

(Ghislaine sinks on the upstage end of the chaise.)

Ghislaine

Oh, Leon! How could you?

(Father Ambrose enters through the door to the main part of the house up Right.)

General

(catching sight of him)  
Ah, there you are, Father.

Father Ambrose

(crossing to the General stage center and shaking hands)  
General, at last!

General

You take the words out of my mouth.

(The next four speeches of the two men are spoken simultaneously with each man becoming aware that someone is talking with him, followed by a breakoff, with both starting again and the same impasse being reached.)

General

A matter of the utmost importance...

Father Ambrose

A revelation of the utmost interest...

General

The peace and honor of the family. A watchful firmness...

Father Ambrose

The joy and sanctification of the home. A sacred duty...

(The two finally give up and look at each other.)

General

(after a slight pause)  
After you.

Father Ambrose

After you.

(The General begins to open his mouth.)

No, on second thoughts, me first. General, may I speak freely before everyone?

(Father Ambrose looks dramatically around the room.)

General

(sitting in the easy chair up Left)  
If you like. But hurry up. I haven't much time.

Father Ambrose

(crossing to Right center)  
But we are all friends here, I see--friends who will soon be as deeply moved as I.

Secretary

(starting to cross downstage of the desk toward stage Right)  
If I am in the way, General, I can withdraw.

Father Ambrose

(looking upstage at him)  
No, my son, you are not in the way. Far from it.

(Gaston stops near the plant up Right. Father Ambrose turns to the General.)

General, it is with deep emotion that I recognize in this the hand of Providence..

General

No preambles! Come to the point, Father, come to the point. I have to talk to you about this young rascal here.

Father Ambrose

(taking a step toward stage center)  
So have I. When I brought Gaston to you for the post of secretary, I had indeed no inkling....

General

(impatiently)  
Come to the point, I say. I'm an old soldier. In a couple of words.

Father Ambrose

(from stage center)  
Heaven has nevertheless willed it, in its infinite mansuetude and the exquisite delicacy of its Grace....

General

In a couple of words! Not a syllable more or else I'll speak myself.

Father Ambrose

Very well. You have asked for it, General,

(He crosses down Right of center)  
but it may sound a little crude. Montauban. Lea.

General

What do you mean, Montauban Lea. What's that, an address?

Father Ambrose

(chuckling indulgently)  
You see how difficult it is in a couple of words.

(He moves upstage just below the desk stage center.)

Allow me to amplify a little. There lived in 1890 at Montauban, where the 8th Dragoons were on maneuvers, a young dressmaker by the name of Lea.



General

(racking his brains)

Lea? Lea? Holy codfish, Lea! Well, what about her? You don't know what army life can be, your reverence. I could cite you a whole almanac on those lines.

Father Ambrose

There was also a dashing captain, dashing, but alas, very fickle, very careless of a young girl's honor.

(He moves to the arm of the easy chair near the General.)

This captain, the whole while the maneuvers lasted, gave young Lea to believe he loved her. Perhaps indeed he did.

General

My dear fellow, why of course! Lea! A ravishing girl, Doctor. A dark haired filly with eyes a man could drown in--reserved, prudish almost, but in bed of an evening--oh, my dear fellow.....!

(In his enthusiasm the General has reached out and inadvertently taken Father Ambrose's arm. Father Ambrose pulls it decisively from his grasp and the General becomes aware of what he has done.)

I beg your pardon, Father. Have you had news of this young girl, Father?

Father Ambrose

To begin with she was not exactly a young girl, General, by this time; and she has just yielded up the ghost after a very honorable marriage, releasing by her death Father Lambert of a secret.

General

(looking across at the Doctor who is on the chaise)

Fancy. Twenty years ago already.

Father Ambrose

Twenty years.

(He looks upstage toward Gaston.)

The exact age of this young man here, less nine months.

General

What? ! !

Father Ambrose

A child was born, unbeknownst to you, of this guilty and transient union. A child entrusted to Father Lambert who, in turn, entrusted him to me.

(The General has risen slowly. He faces front.)

Gaston, kiss your father!

General

Well, I'll be....

Secretary

(crossing the room to the General)

Father! My dear old Father!

(Father Ambrose moves up Right of the desk.)

General

Don't choke me, you great oaf!

(He pushes Gaston back and advances toward stage center.)

Just because he tells you I am your father there's no call to....

(He takes a quick look at the young man over his shoulder.)

And look at the size of him!

Doctor

General, one thinks to sow a wild oat, and see, what should spring up but a young oak tree.

Ghislaine

(rising from the upstage end of the chaise)

Why then everything is quite simple, now!

(She crosses left and stands between the two men, finally grasping one hand of each in her own.)

You are the man I have loved all along! It's you, Leon, you! Young and free, and even handsomer than your own self! I knew those hands reminded me of something--

General

(extricating his hand and stiffly facing front)

Don't overdo it, it's becoming indecent.

Ghislaine

(flying into Gaston's arms Left of center)

Gaston, we are free to love each other.

Secretary

(beaming over the top of her head at the General)

Thank you, father!

General

That's right! Everything is settled.

(He crosses up center to the end of the desk and looks over at the lovers whose arms are clasped around each other.)

General (continued)

Simple as pie, isn't it? Thank you, father! Ha, so I'm your father, am I? Right. I refuse to give my consent.

Ghislaine

What?

General

(crossing decisively to the upstage end of the chaise Right)  
Do not protest, Madam. I don't wish my son to form an alliance with just anybody. I shall make the necessary enquiries.

Ghislaine

(very reproachfully)

Leon! After all this time that you've known--

Secretary

(moves down Left away from Ghislaine looking at the General)

Father! Dearest father! It's so good to have a father!

Father Ambrose

General! When Providence itself went to such trouble.

Doctor

(gently)

Lieutenant Saint-Pe.

General

(sinking down on the upstage end of the chaise)

All right. My part in this is growing more and more ridiculous. I give up. Death and damnation, let them marry, then, and never let me hear any more about anything.

(Estelle and Sidonia, wrapped in blankets, enter up Right through the main door. Their father looks up at them.)

Oh, Lord, what is it now?

(Ghislaine sits in the occasional chair down Left. Gaston stands near her holding her hand and looking down at her. Father Ambrose sits in the Secretary's chair up Right. The girls advance together to the Right of the desk center.)

Estelle

We really did jump in the lake, Papa, and we swam right out to the middle--

Sidonia

Until we could swim no longer---

General

Then what?

Estelle

(turning to her father)  
Then we came back.

General

Quite right. You can always die some other time. He's your brother, little sillies.

(He indicates Gaston stage Left.)

So you see there wasn't any need to go and drown yourselves.

Both Girls

Our brother?

General

Yes, I have just heard the news.

Secretary

(embarrassed and moving up Left to the Right of the easy chair)  
That simplifies everything, young ladies. Now I can love you both.

Ghislaine

(bounding up from the occasional chair and going to stand by him)  
Gaston, I forbid you!

(She looks at the rest, catching herself and changing her tone.)

What a man! Isn't he dreadful?

Sidonia

(moving a couple of steps down center)  
Our brother? But Papa, how can that be?

Estelle

Why didn't Mother know?

General

I haven't time to explain. Ask Father Ambrose. He did the trick with the help of Providence. They're going to be married. He'll explain it all to you one day in Sunday School.

Estelle

Papa, if this lady is to be married, won't we need new dresses for the wedding?

General

(acidly)  
Naturally.

Estelle

(delightedly)  
I want to be in duck egg blue.

Sidonia

(arraying herself close by Estelle)

And I want to be in yellow.

General

As you please, you look ravishing in anything.

(Father Ambrose drifts to center below the desk.)

Run along now--we'll discuss the dresses later.

(The girls begin to move toward the main door up Right. The sound of Father Ambrose's voice stops them just before they open the door.)

Father Ambrose

One moment, my children. I feel that Providence has more than shown today that its bounty extends over us all. The chapel is close by. What do you say to a little prayer, all together, by way of thanksgiving?

(He moves Right upstage near the General.)

Won't you join us, General? Once won't make a habit of it. Besides, I'm sure that deep down you believe in Providence.

(Ghislaine and Gaston move up Left of center as he is speaking.)

General

I shall have to now that it's beginning to take notice of me. But as to saying thank you, really...

(He looks over at the happy couple.)

my heart wouldn't be in it today. Tomorrow, Father, tomorrow.

(The Cure shakes his head and shoos the girls out the main door up Right. He follows them. Gaston and Ghislaine move upstage Right until they come near the General who has risen following his last line and moved far Right. Ghislaine goes to the General and reaches out to gently touch his shoulder. Gaston gives her a warning look and reaches out his hand. Instead of touching the General she puts her hand in that of her lover and they exit, closing the door behind them. The General sighs deeply and moves toward the desk stage center.)

What a farce!

(He switches out the desk lamp.)

It's so sad.

Doctor

(rising from the downstage end of the chaise and moving a couple of steps up toward his friend)

Yes, General. Darkness is falling. We must sound the curfew.

Doctor (continued)

(He sings a little flat.)

Da da! Da da! Da di di da di di da.....

General

(gruffly)

Stop that! What do you take me for? That's the Infantry Lights Out!

Doctor

(turning away from him and facing front)

I beg your pardon.

(He speaks over his shoulder and very gently.)

Eh--how does it go exactly--in the cavalry?

General

(in a cracked voice)

Da di! Da di! Da.....

(He moves down center noticeably disheartened.)

I haven't the heart for it. It's too silly. Lieutenant Saint-Pe. I want to live; I want to love. I want to give my heart as well, dear God!

Doctor

(moving toward him)

General, nobody wants it any more. Let it unswell quietly, that old over-tender sponge. You should have sown fewer wild oats and had the courage to hurt while there was still time. Life should be led like a cavalry charge, General. They ought to have told you that at Saumur.

(He moves away a couple of steps to the Right.)

My poor old friend, shall I tell you the moral of this story?

(He turns back to the General.)

One must never understand one's enemy or one's wife. One must never understand anyone for that matter, or one will die of it.

(He goes to the downstage end of the chaise and picks up his bag. He shakes himself out of a down mood and begins to cross up Left.)

Heigh-ho, I must go home to Madame Bonfant and her scenes.

(The General does not move or reply. The Doctor stops up Left before leaving the room and tries to lift his friend's spirits.)

I think you will do very nicely on your own.

Doctor (continued)

(There is no reply. He says one more thing and then exits through the garden.)

See you very soon.

General

(motionless and in a soft voice)

Yes, Yes.

(After the Doctor can no longer be seen there is a silence.)

Wife

(off)

Leon!

General

(walking toward the marble top table Left he turns out one light) 22

Yes.

Voice

Are you there?

General

(yanking on the chain of the second light) 23

Yes.

Voice

Good. I'm going to have a little nap. Don't do anything in the meantime.

General

(dully)

No.

24

(He shudders and crosses up Right to the end of the desk and looks up at the guns. His back is to the audience. He snaps to attention and cries out suddenly.)

Lieutenant Saint-Pe. Graduated second from Saumur! Take aim! Steady! Fire!

(He stands quite still for a five count. Then he turns and moves several steps toward the Left. The door to the main part of the house up Right opens and a lithe figure in a Maid's outfit slips into the room. The girl has a feather duster in her hand and she moves toward the chaise. When she senses the General is in the room she stops and speaks.)

Maid

Did you call, sir?

General

(starting)

Eh? What? No, I didn't call.

(He suddenly realizes the newcomer is feminine. He turns around slowly and looks at the girl as she begins straightening the chaise, smoothing its cover and dusting the woodwork on it.)

Who are you?

Maid

(brightly)

I'm the new girl, sir.

(She moves to the downstage end of the chaise and starts up the inside.)

The new chambermaid you engaged this morning.

(The General strolls Right center.)

General

Ah yes, of course, by Jove, yes, yes. What was I thinking of? And what is your name, my dear?

Maid

Pamela, sir.

(She leans over as she works on the chaise.)

General

Pamela. Fancy that now, Pamela. And the prettiest bosom in the world too. What is all this nonsense about our having a soul? Do you believe in it? He's a fool, that doctor.

(His voice settles into a sensuous purr.)

Put your duster down, my child. It's a bit late to be tidying up now. And there is never enough dust on things. We must let it settle.

(The Maid finally puts the duster on the chaise.)

You know, you'll find this an easy sort of place.

(The General moves downstage Right center a couple of steps.)

I'm an old youngster, and I don't ask for very much--

(He turns upstage and looks at her.)

provided folks are nice to me.



## General (continued)

(He moves upstage and reaches out toward her. She moves in response to his bidding with him to stage center.)

You haven't seen my roses, have you? Come, I'll show you round the garden, and if you're a good girl I'll give you one.

(He slips his arm around her waist and she looks down at it.)

It doesn't bother you, does it, Pamela, if I put my arm round your waist?

Maid

No, sir, but what will Madam say?

General

Madam will say nothing so long as you don't tell her.

(He tightens his arm around her and they stand close.)

That's a good girl. It's nicer like this, don't you think?

(There is a slight pause.)

Not that it means anything, but still, one feels less lonely in the dark.

(The two begin to cross up Left. As they reach the window a distant bugle is heard playing the Cavalry lights out. It is a plaintive and wraithlike sound which follows the absurd couple far up Left until they disappear into the garden. The blackout follows the exit of the two and the last tone of the bugle.)

25

All lights come up for a curtain call. |  
There is a blackout which is held for ten seconds. |  
The house lights come up full instantly.

26

27

28

## REHERSAL DATA

Cast Members

Name	Address	Telephone Number
John Dillon	817 Colorado Street	6-4318
Rodney Wilson	1635 Laramie Street	9-2518
Dallas Snyder	801 Moro Street	8-2412
Elizabeth Teare	823 Bluemont Street	8-5101
Carolyn Wilson	1403 Jarvis Drive	9-2197
Mary Berg	1026 Sunset Street, Apt. 5	9-4584
Karen Comerford	601 Fairchild Terrace	9-4693
Leanna Lenhart	1814 Hunting	9-5423
Helga Lisec	1118 Claflin Road, Apt. 106	6-9309
Bill Kammer	914 Garden Way	9-6279
Sherry Almquist	63 Blue Valley Court	8-2905

Rehersal Record

Date	Place	Time
September 28	Denison Hall, Room 217	7:00-9:00 p.m.
September 29	Denison Hall, Room 217	7:00-9:15
September 30	Denison Hall, Room 217	7:00-9:30
October 1	Denison Hall, Room 217	7:00-9:30
October 4	Denison Hall, Room 217	7:15-9:30
October 5	Denison Hall, Room 217	7:15-9:30
October 6	Denison Hall, Room 217	7:15-9:30
October 7	Denison Hall, Room 217	7:15-9:30
October 8	Denison Hall, Room 217	7:15-9:30
October 11	Denison Hall, Room 217	7:15-9:30
October 12	Denison Hall, Room 217	5:00-7:00
October 13	Denison Hall, Room 217	7:15-9:30
October 14	Denison Hall, Room 217	7:15-9:30
October 15	Denison Hall, Room 217	7:15-9:30
October 18	Purple Masque	7:15-9:30
October 19	Purple Masque	8:30-10:00
October 20	Purple Masque	7:15-9:30
October 21	Purple Masque	8:00-10:00
October 22	Purple Masque	5:15-7:15
October 25	Purple Masque	5:15-7:15
October 26	Purple Masque	7:15-10:30
October 27	Purple Masque	7:15-9:30
October 28	Purple Masque	7:15-9:30
October 29	Purple Masque	7:15-9:30
October 30	Denison Hall, Room 115	1:30-3:30
November 1	Purple Masque	7:15-9:30
November 2	Purple Masque	7:00-9:15
November 3	Purple Masque	7:00-9:30
November 4	Purple Masque	7:15-9:30
November 5	Purple Masque	7:15-9:30
November 6 (Crew only)	Purple Masque	2:00-3:30
November 7	Purple Masque	1:00-5:30
November 8	Purple Masque	6:15-11:00
November 9	Purple Masque	6:15-11:00
November 10 (Performance)	Purple Masque	6:30-11:00
November 11 (Performance)	Purple Masque	6:30-11:00
November 12 (Performance)	Purple Masque	6:30-11:00
November 13 (Performance)	Purple Masque	6:30-11:00

## PERFORMANCE DATA

The Waltz of the Toreadors was given on November 10, 11, 12, and 13 in the first semester of the 1965-66 school year. All performances were given in the Purple Masque Experimental Theatre, Gate 2, East Stadium.

	Call	Performance
First Dress Rehearsal November 7, 1965	6:15 p.m.	8:15 p.m.
Second Dress Rehearsal (open) November 8, 1965	6:15 p.m.	8:15 p.m.
Third Dress Rehearsal (open) November 9, 1965	6:15 p.m.	8:15 p.m.
First Performance November 10, 1965	6:15 p.m.	8:15 p.m.
Second Performance November 11, 1965	6:30 p.m.	8:15 p.m.
Third Performance November 12, 1965	6:30 p.m.	8:15 p.m.
Fourth Performance November 13, 1965	6:30 p.m.	8:15 p.m.

Performance Time Records

November 10, 1965

Overture	3:09
Act I, Scene 1	18:17
Interim Music	:09
Scene 2	16:55
Intermission	10:00
Act II, Scene 1	24:50
Interim Music	:32
Scene 2	24:49
Intermission	10:00
Act III	27:45

TOTAL TIME: 2 Hours 16:16

November 11, 1965

Overture	3:09
Act I, Scene 1	18:05
Interim Music	:09
Scene 2	18:15
Intermission	10:00
Act II, Scene 1	24:52
Interim Music	:32
Scene 2	25:10
Intermission	10:00
Act III	25:32

TOTAL TIME: 2 Hours 15:44

November 12, 1965

Overture	3:09
Act I, Scene 1	17:55
Interim Music	:09
Scene 2	18:10
Intermission	10:00
Act II, Scene 1	25:20
Interim Music	:32
Scene 2	24:23
Intermission	10:00
Act III	27:20

TOTAL TIME: 2 Hours 16:58

November 13, 1965

Overture	3:09
Act I, Scene 1	17:35
Interim Music	:09
Scene 2	17:55
Intermission	10:00
Act II, Scene 1	23:55
Interim Music	:32
Scene 2	24:04
Intermission	10:00
Act III	27:20

TOTAL TIME: 2 Hours 14:39

EXPLANATION FOR PLATE XX

The Program

THE DEPARTMENT OF SPEECH AND THE K-STATE PLAYERS present:

A Master's Thesis Production

*The Waltz of the Toreadors*

by

*Jean Anouilh*

Translated by

*Lucienne Hill*

Directed by Betty Norris

Original Music by Professor Thomas Steunenberg

PURPLE MASQUE EXPERIMENTAL THEATRE

8:15 p.m.

November 10, 11, 12 & 13, 1965

Next Production:

"RUMPELSTILTSKIN"

5th Annual Tour of Manhattan Schools - Dec. 8

Family Night, Lee School - Dec. 10

2 Afternoon Performances, Manhattan High - Dec. 11

# THE WALTZ OF THE TOREADORS

Time: 1910

Place: The Study of General St. Pe' in his Paris town house.

Act I Scene 1 9:00 a.m.  
Scene 2 Immediately thereafter

## INTERMISSION

Act II Scene 1 Early that afternoon  
Scene 2 Immediately thereafter

## INTERMISSION

Act III That evening

## CAST

Mme. St. Pe'..... Elizabeth Teare  
General St. Pe'..... John Dillon  
Gaston..... Dallas Snyder  
Sidonia..... Karen Comerford  
Estelle..... Mary Berg  
Doctor Bonfant..... Rodney Wilson  
Eugenie..... Leanna Lenhart  
Mlle. De St. - Euverte..... Carolyn Wilson  
Mme. Dupont-Fredaine..... Helga Lisee  
Father Ambrose..... Bill Kammer  
Pamela..... Sherry Almquist

## PRODUCTION STAFF

Stage Manager..... Boyd Masten  
Assistant Stage Manager..... Kent Nordvig  
Lighting..... Mary Berg, Harvey Goldberg,  
Michele Clark, Lyle Heldenbrand  
Properties..... Elizabeth Teare, Elaine Whitman  
Sound..... Bill Kammer, Doug Van Wickler  
Make-up..... Glenda Apt, Linda Baldrige,  
Yolanda Dosier, Sharon Valenti  
Costumes..... Jean Shackelford, Dee Haun,  
William Blackwell, Jr., Pat Seitz,  
Karen West, Ginger Green, Helga  
Lisee, Dee Dee Miller, Linda  
Pelkey, Karen Gorman, Susan Moore  
Posters..... Doug Van Wickler, Jamie Aiken,  
Boyd Masten  
Scenery..... Dennis Jury, Sharon Valenti,  
John Dillon, Dallas Snyder, Leanna  
Lenhart, Frank Atkinson, Carolyn  
Wilson  
Furniture..... Dallas Snyder  
Publicity..... Betty Cary  
Business Manager..... Pamela Malik  
House Manager..... Ardis Horsch  
Pianist..... Margaret Walker  
Bugle Calls..... Paul Shull  
Singing..... Steve Guthrie

## THEATRE STAFF FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF SPEECH

Director	Dennis Denning
Associate Director	Wallace Dace
Technical Director	Carl Hinrichs
Costumes	Betty Cleary
Wardrobe Mistress	Margaret Peabody
Shop Foreman	Chuck Boles
Head, Department of Speech	Norma Bunton

Next Production: 5th Annual Tour of Manhattan Schools - Dec. 8  
"RUMPELSTILTSKIN" Family Night, Lee School - Dec. 10  
2 Afternoon Performances, Manhattan High - Dec. 11



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thesis Adviser: Wallace Dace, Associate Professor of  
Speech

Literary Adviser: Mrs. Eugene McGraw, Instructor in  
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K. F. Baseomb, M.D.

Mrs. Orville Burtis

Betty Cleary

Mr. and Mrs. Robert Conover

Bernard Holbert

Kansas State University Museum

Kansas State University Conservatory

The Manhattan Mercury

R & G Market

Radio Station KSDB

Dunne Pharmacy

The Collegian

Radio Station  
KSAC

Mrs. Philip Lakin

Mr. & Mrs. Dougal Russell, Jr.

Jim Temaatt

Dennis Underbjerg

Kaup Furniture Company

College of Veterinary Medicine

College of Architecture & Design

The University News  
Bureau

Radio Station KMAN

Palace Drug Company

Produced by special arrangement with Samuel French, Inc.

### THE PROGRAM PRINTING PROCESS

The programs were prepared by using a comparatively new process available on the campus. The layout was designed and then typed with an IEM machine. A Xerox copy was made of this original on a multilith plate. The multilith plate was run on an off-set press. The result is a program of a much more professional appearance than can be achieved on a stencil. Furthermore, processing can be completed in a single day. As for cost, it is approximately one-half that for regular printed programs.

## BUDGET

Income

Basic Amount Allowed for Thesis Production by the Department of Speech . . . . .	\$150.00
Box Office Ticket Receipts . . . . .	<u>354.00</u>
TOTAL INCOME . . . . .	504.00

Expenses

Royalty . . . . .	85.00
Scenery . . . . .	83.77
Costume . . . . .	
Rental . . . . .	43.30
Fabrics, Trim and Patterns . . . . .	17.38
Freight . . . . .	11.55
Cleaning . . . . .	5.30
Props . . . . .	3.98
Advertising . . . . .	
Manhattan Mercury . . . . .	11.20
Poster Board . . . . .	.60
Box Office . . . . .	
Tickets . . . . .	8.00
Programs . . . . .	<u>17.17</u>
TOTAL EXPENSES . . . . .	288.25

Balance

Total Income . . . . .	\$504.00
Total Expenses . . . . .	<u>288.25</u>
FINAL BALANCE . . . . .	\$215.75

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A PRODUCTION BOOK FOR THE WALTZ OF THE TOREADORS

by

BETTY L. MORRIS

B. A., University of Washington, 1948

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AN ABSTRACT OF A  
MASTER'S THESIS

submitted in partial fulfillment of the

requirements for the degree

MASTER OF ARTS

Department of Speech

KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY  
Manhattan, Kansas

1966

This production book is a compilation of research information which contributed to the director's conception of Jean Anouilh's The Waltz of the Toreadors presented as a Master's Thesis production on November 10, 11, 12, and 13, 1965, in the Purple Masque Experimental Theatre, Gate 2, East Stadium. Performances were sponsored by the Department of Speech and the K-State Players. The aims of the director and the reasoning on which they were formulated are recorded in the hope that anyone reading this book will be able to understand how the play was approached and brought to life.

An explorative essay divulges, first, the reasons why this particular work by Anouilh was chosen. Following this, information helpful in gaining insight into The Waltz of the Toreadors is reviewed. A biographical sketch of the playwright, comments on Anouilh's appearance and personality, and the way Anouilh the man and his experiences are reflected in The Waltz are included, as is background material pertinent to an understanding of the play--the original French version and the English translation, possible cultural barriers and the historical era. The play itself, its author's purpose and outlook, the overall concepts developed, the themes and the style are then discussed. Finally, performance strategy is reviewed and conclusions are drawn.

Production details follow the essay. The section on the actors sets forth the director's concept of each character's personality and the make up and costuming that was done to round out the individual portrayals. Costume sketches are provided as pictorial records of each. The setting is described in full with explanations given for the particular approach. Color is discussed, also, as are furniture and properties. Floor plan sketches show how the set appeared for the major portion of the play and how furniture was rearranged by the actors in order to change the focus for one scene. Photographs



show the set and the actors, in costume and action, before it. The lighting for The Waltz of the Toreadors is described with cue sheets for all modulations of effect. Sound effects are also noted in a descriptive section with cue sheets furnished.

The script with all movement, sound effect and lighting cues is included. The translation is that of Lucienne Hill with one exception. A new beginning for Act II, Scene 2 was written by the director to meet the physical requirements of the theatre.

The closing pages of the production book indicate rehearsal and performance data as well as the budget. The sum allocated by the Department of Speech was \$150. Box office receipts have been added to this figure. Expenditures in various areas are recorded and a final balance is shown.

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