

The Expense of Spirit
By Josh Fox

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Josh Fox
International WOW Company
37 Grand Ave
Third Floor
Brooklyn NY 11205
orifox@aol.com
917-913-9610

For Mom, Kathy and Vinnie

Sonnet 129

Th' expense of spirit in a waste of shame
Is lust in action; and till action, lust
Is perjured, murderous, bloody, full of blame,
Savage, extreme, rude, cruel, not to trust;
Enjoy'd no sooner but despised straight;
Past reason hunted; and no sooner had,
Past reason hated, as a swallowed bait,
On purpose laid to make the taker mad:
Mad in pursuit and in possession so;
Had, having, and in quest to have, extreme;
A bliss in proof, and proved, a very woe;
Before, a joy proposed; behind, a dream.

All this the world well knows; yet none knows well
To shun the heaven that leads men to this hell.

-William Shakespeare

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The following text was written in a workshop with members of the International WOW Company. Actors included: Deborah Wallace, Robert Saietta, Ikuko Ikari, Alanna Medlock, Peter Lettre, Jy Murphy, Thomas Westphal, Will O'Hare, Patrick McCaffrey, Peter Rodriguez, Nick Jaeger, Jessica Weinstein, Lee Gundersheimer, Jessica Hedrick, Lily Feinn, Julian Rad, Sauda Jackson, Zina Anaplioti, Ivan Goris, Sarah Nedwek, Vlamyr Vizcaya, Nicolas Rincon, Paul Garcia, and Erin Randolph. The cast is acknowledged here because of their continuing contributions to the life of the text.

Setting: The interior and façade of Heights Video, the best video store on Brooklyn. Home to the most obsessive collection of world cinema available for rent in New York City, perhaps the world. The store has a homey run-down feel, partially because it is, in fact, home to the family who runs it but also because it is a place that instantly makes one feel comfortable. The store is divided into two halves, bisected by a long diagonal counter. Downstage of the counter are rows and rows of video cabinets that seem to go on forever. Video boxes are packed in every possible corner, some of them on the floor, giving the front of the store the feel of an overcrowded library. Upstage of the counter is Marty's apartment and the private realm of the Heights video staff. In the upstage right corner, squeezed in between rows of videos, there is a small kitchen with a stove and sink. There are cutting boards and pots and pans and cooking utensils spread all over the kitchen area, the counter and some on video shelves. Next to the kitchen there is a bathroom door with a sign that says "authorized personnel". A fake Christmas tree stands on a small table near the huge video cabinet that takes up most of the back wall. There is a twelve foot A-frame ladder used to reach videos on the top shelves. Downstage of the counter stage right, a door leads downstairs to the clearance section and the half price bins. . There is a yellow rotary phone on the extreme downstage left counter. The extreme downstage area is the sidewalk in front of the store.

At Rise, Three women, Marty, Jo and Alicia are seen behind the counter. It is Christmas Eve, 2004, at around 4pm.

Marty, a woman in her 40's, the owner and matriarch of Heights Video, is pacing and staring nervously at the phone on the down stage edge of the counter. She is holding a pot and stirring it vigorously. Marty is a square shouldered powerful woman who looks as if she has been through several wars, all in Brooklyn.

She has a film encyclopedia in her head. Her collection is both a point of pride and of obsession. When Marty walks through the store, she leaves a wake.

Jo, Marty's right hand, a woman in her early 30's chops something on a cutting board at the center stage counter. Jo has an steadiness about her, the steadiness of a person who never reaches too far, the calm of a slacker. She is incredibly competent and often reigns in Marty's chaos, she takes care of the books. Alicia, a Japanese woman in her mid twenties, flips a magazine looking bored in the upstage right corner of the long counter. She is a trainee, an independent film buff. She has a high but pleasing voice. It is her first day.

Music accompanies Marty's nervous pacing. She stares at the phone. She looks at Jo. She goes to the kitchen counter, she turns back to the phone. She is obviously worried. After making two rounds from the stove to the phone and back again, she hurriedly picks up the phone. She hears nothing.

Marty

It's not connected. It's not connected. Why is this disconnected? How long has this fucking thing been disconnected?

Jo

Check the cord.

Marty looks down and discovers that the phone cord is on the floor, not attached to the phone. She flips.

Marty

Oh my god. How long has this been on the ground like this?

Jo

It falls out all the time.

Marty plugs in the phone and listens.

Marty

Still not working. You pay the phone bill?

Jo

Yeah we paid it. I mean I paid it. We paid it. Heights Video paid it.

Marty

I told you pay the phone bill no matter what, Jo.

Marty cradles the phone on her shoulder while holding down the hook with her hand.

JO

It takes a minute to reset.

Marty
Which one was the one we had to pay?

Jo
September?

Marty
Ok

JO
Yeah I paid September

Marty
October?

Jo
No.

Marty
November?

Jo
No.

Marty
We get a cut off notice?

Jo
No. Not a new one.

Marty
You sure?

JO
Marty, is it working now?

Marty takes her finger off the hook.

Marty
Yeah.

Jo
So, it's just the cord.

Marty
Ok

Jo
Marty it's just the cord.

Marty

Well watch the cord. Keep your eye on the cord.

To Alicia

You! Get your ass over here and watch the cord. OK?

Alicia runs over to the phone.

Alicia

Ok, Marty.

Marty hears Bernie approaching from down the street. He is shouting "Marty Marty".

Marty

Aw shit.

Marty retreats to the kitchen upstage right. Bernie walks vigorously into the store. Bernie is an unkempt slightly overweight man in his early forties. He wears a down parka that he never takes off. He has glasses that are incredibly scratched up and wears a fur winter hat with ear flaps that he also never takes off. As a result he is a bit blind and deaf. His raspy voice and his thick Brooklyn/Jewish accent are always a bit too loud.

Bernie

Marty Help me out here. Black and white. Police precinct. Brooklyn police precinct under siege. What is it? It's driving me crazy. You know what it is? Black and white cop station siege movie?

Marty

You wanna watch Fort Apache in the Bronx on Christmas?

Bernie

That is it! The Fort Apache in the Bronx! That is it! Hey was that based on a true story?

Marty

What do I know I live in Brooklyn?

Bernie

You never been to the Bronx?

Marty

Course I been to the Bronx.

Bernie

So what are you saying?

Marty

I'm in the middle of making a complex Bouillabaisse right here, Bernie.

Bernie

I'm not asking you about the Bronx. I am asking you about movies.

Marty

Ask Jo, she knows more than I do.

Bernie

Hey, no offense Jo, but nobody knows more about movies than you Marty.

Marty

Yeah but Jo is a terrible cook so ask her.

Bernie

I don't get it.

Jo

Leave her alone she's making dinner.

Marty

Christmas Eve dinner!

Alicia

Can I use the phone?

Marty

No. No personal calls. Chop this.

Jo

You want Fort Apache in the Bronx?

Bernie

Not reallyHey is Paul Newman in that picture?

Jo

You coming tonight?

Bernie

I'm Jewish.

Marty

You're Jewish every year, you come every year.

Jo and Marty

This is a non-denominational Christmas dinner.

Bernie
Is Paul Newman Jewish?

Marty
Boil Goddammit!

Jo
I think he is.

Marty
It's like a plant, if I talk to it, it might do something.

Jo
A holiday dinner.

Alicia
How many people are invited?

Marty
Everyone is invited, baby. Everyone in all of Brooklyn is invited.

Bernie
I'm gonna eat fifty eggs at this party..

Jo
Nobody can eat fifty eggs...

Bernie
What we have here is a failure to communicate!

Jo
Ding- Cool Hand Luke.

Marty
ALRIGHT! I got four things on four burners. Two on oven racks and in the broiler is a very sensitive fish. I need all of yous to shut up for four seconds.

Alicia
How many people is everyone in all of Brooklyn?

Marty
A lot. Twenty, forty. Who knows?

Jo
One year we had fifty two.

Marty
Christ. I need a cigarette.

Jo
Don't do it Marty-

Marty
Christ. You're right. You, get your ass over here, gimme some gum. If I see any gum on anything you're fired. But I like the gum. It's cute. Keep the gum. How's your sister? She's one of my favorite customers, I'm glad she sent you over here. No gum on the counters, though. OK? Everyone in all of Brooklyn is invited.

Phone Rings.

Alicia
answering the phone.
Heights Video.

Marty
Who is it?

Alicia
They want to know if we have video games.

Marty
No calls till Janey calls, just hang up hang up hang up.

Alicia
Bye.

Marty
Tape the cord. Tape it on there. Get the tape its under the counter.

Marty heads upstage to the stove, Alicia disappears under the counter.

Alicia
Where, I don't see it.

Marty
Jo, give her your glasses, she can't see.

Alicia
Wow, there's lots of stuff in here.

Marty
It's under there.

Alicia comes up with a gun

Alicia

WOW. Is this real?

Marty rushes towards Alicia and takes the gun out of her hands.

Marty
Put that away. Of course it's real. This wasn't always such a nice neighborhood.

Marty
Here's the tape.

Marty slams tape down on Counter.

A customer walks in.

Marty
Customer!

Alicia
Hi!

Customer
How you doin? Do you have a *Fistful of Dollars*?

Alicia
I don't know, I just started training.

Bernie
No but I got a pocketful of coins.

Marty
Don't be corny, Jo tell him not to be corny with the new people in the store.

Jo
Bernie, don't be corny with new people in the store.

Customer
How about *The Battle of Algiers*?

Marty
We have that.

Customer
You do? Nobody has that. This place is off the hook.

Marty
What's off the hook?

Jo
Cool your jets, its an expression.

Marty

Off the Hook? Is an expression? What does it mean? Off the hook?

Jo

It's like out of this world, or ...it's good.

Marty

Of course it's good. We're good, we're the best. You hear that pal? We've got everything. We've got practically every movie ever made. We got over 20,000 movies, which is over 200 trillion dollars of production value. Right here at your finger tips, your passport to the history of the world-

Bernie is behind Marty drinking out of the Heavy Cream carton.

Bernie, put down the fuckin heavy cream!!!-

Marty grabs the heavy Cream carton out of Bernie's hands. She scowls at him. Looks back at the Customer and smiles.

You, my friend, have just discovered one of Brooklyn's finest cultural institutions. *Battle of Algiers*? You got it. Got that Alicia, I'm gonna show you the system. Jo, you look for it, I'll teach the little one here how to look up the number.

Jo takes out a membership form and puts it on the counter. Marty Crosses with Alicia to the video stacks.

Jo

Here's a membership form.

Marty (To Alicia)

We're losing our beloved to Jo to Portland in 6 days. So you gotta learn everything that she knows. You better be happy she can't cook.

Jo

I can make toast.

Marty

Yeah. OK. Here's the list with the numbers. They have numbers on the boxes and the tapes. Like this, *The Battle of Algiers*. Number 45692.

Jo

45692 coming up.

Marty

Who the fuck drinks heavy cream? OK. So, you take the display box from the customer here on the counter. THEN you go in back

and find the box that matches this number - See?

Jo

I can make really good cinnamon toast.

Marty

Yeah sure you can. Then when your done take the display box and put under the counter here. When they bring it back, stick the display box back on the wall.

Jo

It's not here.

Marty

Of course its there.

Jo

It's not here.

Bernie sneaks behind the counter while Marty is not looking and goes into the Bathroom.

Marty

It better not be missing. I want nothing missing. Stir this- I'll look for it. Where's Bernie? Did he sneak in the bathroom again?

Jo

Yeah

Customer

I'll wait, its ok.

Marty

BERNIE! Get your ass out of that bathroom! You know you're not allowed back there. You're not allowed on this side of the counter.

Bernie (From inside)

It was an emergency...sort of.

Marty

Emergency my ass... or your ass...somebody's ass.

Jo (Behind counter)

It's \$3.50 a day. Membership is \$27.50 a year. And You get a free one per month so its like you get all your money back.

Customer

And there's no credit cards at all.

Marty

Cash only.

Phone Rings. Marty runs for it.

Marty
Janey? Yeah this is Heights Video. Yeah we have *Husbands*. Yes really. We have all the Cassavetes. Yeah, all of them. Good bye.

Jo
You sure you don't want to get call waiting?

Marty
I don't want to have to change the phone. You keep the tape on there this one works fine.

Fred, a man in his late thirties, early forties walks in. Fred wears a suit and seems at home once he walks in. He has a disarming smile, which hides a barely perceptible but constant sadness. He carries a small duffle bag and wears a scarf.

Fred
So I made it! Came back early!

Jo
Fred!

Fred
You didn't really think I'd miss the all ruckus did you, Marty?

Marty
Hi Fred.

Fred
Something's Cookin! Smells Great! Smells great in here. It does. I smell Paprika and Vinegar and Garlic and all kinds of smells. I've never been so hungry in my entire life. Marty I can smell it all the way down the block, there's gonna be a hundred people in here.

Marty
Thanks Fred.

Marty Retreats to the kitchen

Jo
So? How'd it go.

Fred
She took everything I lost everything. I'm a big loser. Hi!

Jo
Oh Fred-Alicia

Fred
Hi. But I'm done with it finally.

Jo
You got through it?

Fred
I tried to keep my eyes closed the whole time. You know pin the tail on the affidavit.

Fred feigns a blindfold and gropes through the air. He signs his name on the counter and looks up right at Marty. She avoids his eyes.

Marty
Congratulations.

Marty walks away. Fred looks at Jo.

Jo
You okay?

Fred
Prognosis looks good. My pulse is almost back to normal. My cardiologist says I might be able to open a photo album again in a few weeks. I'm controlling the sweating and the palpitations, my glasses are fogging up. I'm alive.

Jo
Fred. You survived!

Fred
Marty, can I roll up these sleeves, mince something?

Marty
Nope.

Fred
Can I put something in the blender? Can I knead some dough? I am pretty handy with the old rolling pin. I can run home and get my oven mitts.

Marty
Thanks, Fred, no.

Bernie emerges from the Bathroom. Sees Fred and rushes over to him.

Bernie

OH MY GOD. What was your sentence reduced?

Fred
In a way.

Jo
Don't give him a hard time, okay

Bernie
You you you... DISAPPEARED for Christ sake!

Fred
It was only a week, Bernie.

Bernie
So you...what is it the South of France? Bermuda?

Fred
Maine-

Bernie
Oh that's interesting. Most people go the other way. Most people go down. You go up. For winter. That's interesting. Does that work?

Fred
It wasn't a vacation.

Bernie
Who's in Maine?

Fred
I'm from Maine.

Bernie
NAAAAA. You can't fool me,

Fred
Where am I supposed to be from?

Marty
I can't do this with a midget oven.

Fred
I'll run up the street to the five and dime. Bigger oven. Anything else?

Marty
The Battle of Algiers.

Fred
How about the battle of Bunker Hill. The battle of evermore. The

Battle of the Network Stars. I'm ready to enlist. I'm gonna run down there and enlist. I'm a free man.

Marty
Yeah, so I heard.

Fred
And I lost the fucking house.

It hits him, Fred sinks to his knees

Bernie
What's the scene?

Fred
Henceforth I shall dwell month to month in an urban parallelogram.

Bernie
What?

Fred
I lost the house, Bernie.

Bernie
OH. O.K. Here you go, something to cheer you up. Name the film- The scene where the nurse comes in and she lifts up his shirt and she starts tracing with a finger, and she's spelling out, H A P.... and she's tracing Merry Christmas on his chest. Because he's blind and he's deaf and he has a cast on his head...

Fred
Not now Bernie--

Jo
Hey Fred, You lookin for a video?

Jo coaxes Fred upstage so that their conversation can be heard by Marty. Fred tries to get her attention.

Fred
Oh yeah. I really wanted to go home alone tonight and watch a video. I was thinking about Bloodsucking Freaks. That's a nice one to warm up the covers by yourself on a frosty Xmas eve. You have that?

Marty
It's out.

Fred
What's that?

Marty

We have it. But it's out. Bloodsucking Freaks. But we have the sequel- *Keep on Freakin.*

Fred

You know without even looking Marty?

Marty

I know what's in my store. I know what goes in and what comes out. It's my job to know.

Fred

Of course it is.

Bernie

Her head is like a steel trap.

Marty shoots a look at Bernie.

Fred

You think a lot of people are coming tonight?

Marty

I have no idea. You bringing anyone?

Fred

Just Rudolph. Is my nose red? My face turning into a beet?

Marty

...

Marty, embarrassed, walks away from Fred, giving a sidelong glance to Jo. Fred crumples a bit.

Fred.

Jo can I talk to you a minute.

Jo

I don't think there's anyone downstairs. I'll be there in a second.

Fred

There's a plan. I'll meet you near the half price bin.

Jo

Ok.

Fred goes downstairs.

Jo

That is the most heart wrenching scene when that nurse comes in and the soldier..

Bernie
Name the film!

Marty
That scene is only in the book-

Bernie
No, that can't be-

Marty
But that scene is not in the film its in the book.

Bernie
I have never read the book so it's in the film.

Marty
Which film?

Bernie
I'm asking you. Your memory is going.

Marty
I'm COOKIN!

Jo
Marty go downstairs and talk to Fred.

Marty
I don't wanna talk to Fred.

Jo
Fred wants to talk to you.

Marty
Suddenly erupting with anger
I don't wanna talk. I don't wanna talk to Fred or anybody else.
I'm cooking. I got 20 or 40 people coming here tonight. And
they gotta eat. They gotta eat until they're sick to their
stomachs!

Bernie
I understand. You're under stress.

Alicia
What's wrong?

Marty
My daughter has to call.
She's probably busy.

Bernie

Out little G.I. Janey's over there, *in the shit*.

Jo

Bernie-

Customer

Like, she's in Iraq?

Marty

She's protecting your sorry ass.

Bernie

Who would play Janey in the movie?

Marty

Stop. Nobody's playing Janey in any movie.

Jo

Marty-

Marty Bumps into Jo

Jo

Would you slow down 5 minutes? You keep bumping my hip.

Marty

You got a big hip. We need a bigger oven. You need a smaller hip.

Jo

You need me to chop something. You need me to go to the store. What do you need?

Marty

What I need is more grated parsley. What I need is for you to keep your fuckin hand on the fuckin phone cord. What I need, is the Battle of Algiers for this fucker- for this guy over here.

Bernie

Renee Zellweger could play Janey! Or maybe the Kirsten Dunst...

Marty

Alright that's it. Get out. Everybody out of my kitchen. You too cutie. Get your ass outta here. Come on. Everybody out.

Customer

I'll come back later.

Customer sneaks a video under his coat and walks out.

Marty

See? He's walking out. We're losing business. Did he get a membership?

Marty

That's \$27.50 walking right out the door... Why can't I get decent help? Why can't I find a one sensitive fuck in this whole place? I gotta do everything myself today, Jo. Jo? Is there anybody here who has any idea of what is goin on here today?

Marty heads upstage. There is an uncomfortable pause. Alicia and Bernie sit at the downstage video cabinet. Jo forcefully walks through the upstage counter, starting up with Marty, choosing to hit this one head on.

Jo

You know Marty, I think fucking *The Battle Of Algiers* is downstairs.

Marty

What you think and what you know are two different things. And I know you was the last one working when *The Battle of Algiers* came in. And so I think that you're the one that lost it.

Jo

It'll turn up. Marty, you've got 17,000 movies.

Marty

People are coming in Jo and asking for Battle of Algiers. There's a *rush* on the Battle of Algiers.

Jo

Why don't they just go see it. It's playing at Film Forum.

Marty

Oh Film Forum! Film Forum. That's a good idea. Why don't they go see it it's playing at Film Forum. Maybe that's because it's a POPULAR fuckin movie. Maybe we should have it on hand. In stock. Because maybe some people don't wanna go to the snooty ass fuckin Film Forum.

Bernie

What's Film Forum?

Marty

See? You think you can find it? You know where it is in this fuckin mess. Battle of Algiers is not the first soldier to go MIA under your watch. Jo's gonna find it everybody. Right before she leaves us forever!

Jo

Stop riding my ass. She'll call.

Marty

I know she'll call. Of course she's gonna call. It's Christmas

Eve. I'm her mother. She'll call.

Jo
She loves you. She'll call.

Marty
Right. I'm not worried. I'm tense.

Jo
Yeah, that's right. You're tense.

Marty
I'm just tense. It's probably nothing.

Jo
She may not be able to get to a phone. What they give them phones
in the field?

Marty
It's not a field. It's a desert.

Bernie
No, that's what they say....*in the field*.

Marty
Am I talking to you? I don't care what they say, Bernie.
Whatever, they've got phones. And if she doesn't call that's
alright. I know she wants to. She's a soldier.

Jo
We're all waiting for her to call.

Marty
Go downstairs and check on Fred.

Jo
Ok. You sure you want *me* to check on Fred?

Marty
Yeah.

Jo heads downstairs. A pause.

Marty
Ok Cutie, let's go.
(to Alicia) So here we have the lists of people who are behind,
you know, who owe us money.

Bernie
Hey Marty. The films of Isabella Rosselini.

Marty
You got a crush?

Bernie
No...no...no.... a little bit. She's a very nice older European woman.

Marty
Here's the book. (slam) Look her up.

Marty
So like I said, here we have the list of the people who are behind. Like McMurrin, John. Says right here- Notorious for keeping Almodovar at home for weeks on end. Now, he always pays but he takes forever.

Bernie
Is it under European?

Marty
So we just keep this list you know like they have at the grocery store with the bad credit cards.

Bernie
How do you spell Rossellini?

Marty
Actors under R.

Alicia
I can't stand owing people money. If I owe someone something I have to give it back right away, you know?

Bernie
I got Kurt Russell here.

Alicia
Like my grandmother, right? Someone stole her money and I was like "Grandma, what happened to your money?" And she's like all sad, you know. And I'm like "why are you sad grandma?" And so she's like "Someone took my money and I can't sleep at night."

Bernie
Tango and Cash.

Alicia
So I'm like "Grandma why can't you sleep?" And she says "Because I owed someone that money."
So you know I'm like, I have to pay it back right away, you know.

Bernie
Isabella my queen.

Marty

Yeah, well we're a little bit more forgiving than you're your grandmother. So this is the list but we don't call them for the money. We do not call people for money, because everybody pays eventually.

Alicia

Well maybe I can help you keep a better record of who is paying and who is not. Maybe I can get this better organized.

Marty

What? No no no. I got a whole system here. I am showing you the system. Let me show you the system. You gonna take apart the system on your first day?

Alicia

No. I am just saying maybe you could make more money.

Marty

You say. Say whatever you want. This is the system.

Bernie

Yeah. I want to rent Immortal Beloved featuring Isabella Rosselini please.

Marty

We have that.

Bernie

Or "Death Becomes Her?" featuring Isabella Rosselini.

Marty

Alicia, now you know the system you can look up "Death Becomes Her"

Bernie

No. "Tough Guys Don't Dance" featuring Isabella Rosselini-

Alicia

She 's married to David Lynch, Isabella Rossellini.

Bernie

David Lynch the pervert?

Marty

No, she shacked up with Gary Oldman and had a kid after that.

Bernie

Oh, Gary Oldman. OK. He's good.

Jo returns from downstairs.

Marty
How's Fred?

Jo
He's okay. He's contemplating purchasing *The Klumps*.

Bernie
That's a classic.

Marty
Why don't you go down and help him with his selection?

Bernie
He knows what he wants.

Jo
No, I think Marty is saying why don't you go down and help him with his selection.

Bernie
Yeah but its really just a matter of personal taste.

Marty
Scram!

Alicia
I'll get some parsley next door.

Marty
You're a sweet heart. And get me a box of Parliaments when you're out, okay?

Jo
Don't do it.

Marty
It's a holiday. I won't start again.
I'll smoke the whole pack tonight, they'll be outta my life forever.

Alicia Leaves, Bernie goes downstairs. Jo and Marty look at each other.

Marty
How about a raise?

Jo
Let's not do this again.

Marty
Jo-

Marty

I have a lease. I have a lease already. I have a flight on New year's Day. All my stuff is in UPS boxes.

Marty

Just a couple more months, Jo. Just until Janey gets back and then she can help me. She was supposed to be back already. You know. They extended the tour of duty. They keep pushing it back and back. It was three months, then six then a year. They can't keep her for more than two fuckin years. Right? I just need a little more time, Jo. Just until Janey gets back.

Jo

Why? I don't do that much around here. Anybody can do this job.

Marty

How long you been here?

Jo

7 years.

Marty

How am I supposed to replace that?

Jo

All I do is talk to the people and charge them three fifty a day.

Marty

You talk to them. You think I wanna just become like every other store. Fred and Bernie just come in because they're in love with you.

Jo

They're in love with you.

Marty

I'm not on the market.

Jo

Marty, I gotta see the world.

Marty

Since when is Portland the world?

Jo

It's a start.

Marty

You got the whole world right here. We got the France section there, we got England over there. Japan over there. We got Spain. You can go anywhere.

Jo

I've lived in this city my whole life. I just want to try it. Maybe I'll like it. My rent in Portland is three hundred dollars a month for a huge place. Three hundred dollars a month. I'll have more time.

Marty

To do what? What are you gonna do with all of your fuckin time?

Jo

I don't know. I don't know what I'm gonna do with it. What am I supposed to do? Join the army just to get out of this fuckin place!

Marty is silent. Crosses to the kitchen. Comes back with a plate.

Marty

She joined up for the money. For school.

Jo

You believe whatever you want to believe.

Marty

It was for the money.

Jo

Well then so is this. I can't afford it here anymore.

Marty

I already told ya I'd raise ya. I will raise you three hundred more a month for three more months. You can just keep the apartment out there then.

Jo

Look. I already made these plans. I'm not changing them. I already met a new guy.

Marty

In Portland?

Jo

No. On the internet. He lives in Portland.

Marty

So what, you type at each other?

Jo

I don't know. It might not work out. But I don't care. I just want to find out. I've never been to the west coast. California is nice I hear..

Marty
Portland's not in California.

Jo
But its near there isn't it?

Marty
Four hundred more a month.

Jo
You can't afford that.

Marty
OK

Jo
What?

Marty
...

Marty
Help me with the salad.

Jo
That's it. Just help me with the Salad?

Marty
How dare you!

Jo
How dare I what?

Marty
How dare you to tell me what I can and can't afford.

Jo
Ok.

Marty
I can afford it.

Jo
You know what you can do.

Marty
I can!

Jo
Then you know what you can do.

Marty
What are you trying to say?

Jo
Well people can buy DVD's on line and that's been hurting
business and... the blockbuster

Marty
Yeah you can get everything on line! You can get a *man* and
foreign films and whatever...

Jo
Marty-

Marty
Why don't we go on line right now and order the Battle of Algiers
while we're at it.

Jo
Marty please.

Marty
Spin this salad. Its wet.

Jo
Marty look at me

Marty
I'm gonna go down and hang out with the Klumps.

Jo
Those guys aren't Klumps. Fred's a good guy. What about him?

Marty
Fred?

Jo
I betcha he can baste a Turkey.

Marty
Aww..... That's nasty. Janey wouldn't like Fred.

Jo
Do you like Fred?

Marty
Never thought about it.

Jo
Marty-

Marty
Spin the salad. Spin the salad. OK.

Jo
Ok.

Marty
Spin the salad. Everything else is spinning. Just spin the fuckin salad. I don't want to talk anymore.

Jo
Ok.

Marty
I need heavy cream. Go out and get some heavy cream. Bernie drank all the heavy cream.

Jo
Marty-

Marty
TAKE A WALK and GET SOME HEAVY CREAM. I don't want to talk to you anymore!

Jo
Ok.

Jo Leaves. Marty fixes what is on the counter. She walks up to the kitchen. She stirs. Marty looks in the oven. She panics for a moment and touches the face of the oven.

Oh shit. Why aren't you HOT. You are supposed to be hot. The Pilot light is out? The fuckin pilot light is out? You have to be cooking from an hour ago. I got people coming in three hours you have to cook for four. What am I gonna do? Oh my god. Oh my god.

I need a match. If I hadn't quit smoking I woulda had a goddamn match, Where's a goddamn match...

Marty rushes towards the downstage counter. And starts looking under it. She pulls stuff out of there, a phonebook, some video cases, two rolls of duct tape, the gun. She continues to throw stuff on the counter, muttering, looking for matches.

Two soldiers in full dress uniforms walk up the street. They stand downstage, the waiting at the glass front door to the video store. Marty doesn't see them, as she is under the counter. She comes up with a book of matches in her hand a triumphant look on her face. Instantly she sees the soldiers standing in front of

the door. She stops still. Her face cracks. She begins hysterically sobbing. She screams. She collapses far upstage, under the ladder near the back wall of video shelves. She gets up, picks up her stirring spoon and her pot and wanders around upstage, her legs still running through the motions of scrambling around the kitchen. Soldier one opens the door.

Sgt. Smith
Ma'am, may we come in?

Marty has begun pacing, looking down. Trying, somehow to avoid this. The soldiers approach the counter and Marty runs at them, spoon in hand, like a sword threatening them feebly.

Captain Sgt. Smith
Ma'am are you Martha Hill, mother of private first class Jane Hill

Marty runs towards the downstage counter, still not looking at them. She begins stirring the pot frantically, trying to find some way out of this, like a mouse trapped in a maze.

Captain Sgt. Smith
Ma'am.

Marty explosively grabs the gun from the counter top and points it at the soldiers.

Marty
GET OUT OF MY HOUSE! GET OUT OF MY FUCKIN HOUSE! LEAVE! LEAVE!

Cadet Sgt. Smith
Put the gun down, Ma'am.

Cadet Johnson
Ma'am please put the gun on the counter.

Marty
Don't say it. Don't say it. Don't you fuckin say it I won't fuckin hear it.

Don't you say a mother fucking word. I don't want to hear it. I am cooking dinner. I'm cooking a big dinner. Don't! Don't you tell me my baby is... You are not gonna tell me my baby... NO. NO. NO.

Not one word you hear me. You are not gonna say it because it's not true. It's not true! Not now. Get down. All the way down. Keep you heads on the floor. Keep em down.

The Marines get down on their knees. Marty hangs over them, screaming

Marty
You're not going to say it. It isn't true. You are not going to say it. We are not going to speak about this. No. No more speaking.

Marty pulls the soldiers up and makes a shhhhhh sound with her hand over her mouth and then theirs sobbing. Marty stands up, and walks around.

Marty
Get up. GET UP!

She points the gun towards them and forces them behind the counter.

Get in there. Go ahead get in there! GET IN THERE. Not a word.

Sgt. Smith
Ma'am--

Marty
Go. That way. WALK WALK WALK. Get in there. OPEN THE DOOR!. OPEN THE DOOR and GET IN THERE!

Marty chases the soldiers into the bathroom. She closes the door behind them. She looks around frantically. She runs to the downstage counter, she grabs the tape and rushes back into the bathroom, closing the door behind her. The sound of duct tape being ripped off the roll is heard. For about 20 seconds the stage is empty and the sounds of tape can be heard coming from the bathroom.

Marty emerges and closes the door behind her and locks it. She puts the gun on the stove. She stands with her back against the bathroom door and breathes, trying to calm down. She walks, slowly towards the counter, and begins to write a sign that says "Out of Order". Fred emerges from downstairs.

Fred
Oh. Where is everybody?

Marty
They went out to the store.

Fred
Last minute shopping spree?

Marty

I needed some things from the store. So I sent them out. I have to make the marinade for the meat and the hollandaise.

Marty tapes the out of order sign on the bathroom door.

Fred

Bernie's asleep in Japanese Noir of the sixties and seventies.

Marty

Yeah. Ok. That's good for business. BERN-- Aw fuck it. Let him sleep.

Fred

Well. I won't distract you. I'll be back at the appointed hour.

Marty

Ok Fred...Yeah... See you at dinner.

Fred

You ok Marty?

Marty

Oh yeah. Just chopping up some onions, you know.

Fred

Oh. Ha ha. Had me fooled for a sec there. Well. See you later then.

Marty

Ok.

Fred heads for the door.

Marty

Fred...?

Fred

Yeah Marty?

Marty

You live far from here?

Fred

Not far, you know Marty, just a couple a blocks.

Marty

Yeah okay.

Fred

Ok.

Fred starts to leave

Marty
Fred?

Fred
Marty?

Marty
Be careful on your walk home.

Fred
It's just a couple of blocks.

Marty
You never know.

Fred
Shoelaces tied. Let's see. Yup. This is left, this is right.
Okay. Got that. I seem to be all straightened out. For the
purposes of walking. That is. Never mind. I'm going. It's
just a couple of blocks.

Marty
So you're here for good? Living in Brooklyn for good?

Fred
Oh. Yeah, for good. For good.
Ok then. I'll leave you to your magnum opus.

Marty
Ok.

Pause

Marty
Fred?

Fred
Yeah Marty?

Marty
I... um... I

Jo walks up and looks through the store front. She stays out on the street looking in, spying, but leaving them alone for another moment.

Fred
Well, you know, it's dumb. But...You see these? I got these
Cranberries. From Maine. Farmer's Market. I thought I would do

em up for tonight. Special homemade Cranberry Sauce a la Fred.
If that would be a welcome addition to the menu?

Marty
You don't have to bring anything. No one has to bring anything
to the dinner. It's all on me.

Fred
I understand. Ok.
I'll be back later then

Marty
Fred?

Fred
Yeah Marty?

Marty Walks up to Fred and kisses him.

Marty
Be careful on your walk home.

Fred
OK!

Marty
Work on that cranberry sauce. That'd be nice.

Fred
I will.

Marty
Ok.

Fred holds the door open, sees Jo.

Fred
I will be back with the best damn cranberry sauce you ever
tasted!

Fred Leaves. Jo walks in sassily with grocery bag.

Jo
Here you go heavy cream. Here's the receipt.

Marty's voice is wavering.

Marty
3.99 for heavy cream? Where did you go?

Jo
I went to the deli.

Marty
Which deli?

Jo
It was closer, the Korean deli...the corner deli.

Marty
The Spanish deli's cheaper than the Korean deli, Jo.

Jo
I don't like going to the Spanish deli-
What's wrong with the bathroom?

Marty
What's wrong with the Spanish deli? Those guys are nice.

Jo
They're not so nice.

Marty
They're friendly.

Jo
Yeah, too friendly.

Marty
You gotta toughen up if you don't like that kind of comment. You should be happy somebody thinks you're pretty.

Jo
I don't wanna go to the Spanish deli, look I'll give you the extra dollar... What's wrong with the bathroom?

Marty
It's not about the dollar dammit, Jo. I betcha there's no fucking Spanish delis in Portland, no, no--fucking vanilla ice cream people, shiny ass fuckers all over the place picking corn out of their asses like they think the fucking world is all right this is New York, this is Brooklyn, maybe they don't even have Spanish delis in Portland maybe they just have white people all over the fuckin place. You get no flavor in anything in the Portland no flavor you get nothing in anything in the Portland. You put that receipt in the book, you gotta frame that, heavy cream.

Alicia returns.

Alicia
Parsley.

Marty

You got a receipt?

Alicia

Yeah.

Jo

Marty. What's wrong with the bathroom?

Marty

Stopped up.

Jo

Are you ok?

Marty

I'm fine.

Jo

You don't look ok.

Marty

I think I'm gonna go upstairs for a minute. I gotta check on some ingredients... watch that pot roast. Teach her how to put things in the book.

Marty goes off upstage left, heading upstairs.

Jo

OK. This is the book. You put the receipts in the book. You write it down in the red column. In the green column, don't write anything in the green column that's for when we pay you back or we put it in your check or give you petty cash at the end of the day but that doesn't happen too often. Where's the fucking plunger?

Jo finds the plunger under the counter and walks towards the bathroom. Jo keeps stopping herself as she is heading towards the bathroom, continuing to explain the books to Alicia.

I'm gonna fix the fucking bathroom. Marty can't stand the sight of shit. That goes on the page with the party not regular expense. This is different cause that's a tax write-off, a business expense, which most of the groceries we buy are. Total it cause actually I think that's the last thing were going to buy for the party.

Alicia

Ok.

Jo heads closer to the bathroom.

Jo

Marty doesn't want to total it cause she doesn't want to know how much its gonna cost but do it because I wanna know. I'm gonna fix the fuckin toilet. Just read out loud to me, what we've got.

Alicia

Ok.

Jo

Total it, but if Marty comes down, just put it away.

Jo goes into the Bathroom.

Alicia

O.K. so...

Parsley ...3.50

Heavy Cream.....3.99

Ice...5.00

JD?....What's JD, Jo? I can't read this handwriting-

Pause, and then, strained, from inside the bathroom-

Jo

Jack Daniels-

Alicia

Jack Daniels, forty five dollar?

Jo comes out of the bathroom. Visibly shaken, stammering through the next speech. She quickly locks the bathroom door behind her.

Jo

Um... you can check it against the receipts in the book. You can cross check it against the actual receipts in the book... But in the end it doesn't matter... we can just put the name of the store that's all the matters for the IRS. We don't know if... the tax guy needs to know the real thing... or just the name of the store so we just put them both down.... if the receipt's from... the liquor store, then its... Jack Daniels.

Marty comes downstairs. Marty looks at Jo holding the plunger. Jo stares at Marty for a long moment. They are deadlocked in a stare, each trying to communicate with the other. Their heads turn to Alicia at the counter with the accounting book.

Marty

Alicia baby, go put those videos away for me ok? Come on chop chop.

Alicia goes downstage, out of earshot.

Jo

Marty who are those soldiers?

Marty
They came to the door.

Jo
You put them in there?

Marty walks away from Jo to Counter.

Jo
And Janey...?

Marty
After dinner. We'll talk about it after dinner.

Music Cue: Heart beat followed by dramatic strings. Scene shifts to downstage as Marty and Jo continue cooking. Bernie re-enters and meets Alicia downstage. Marty shouts cooking instructions to Jo while music plays through. The music is not so much a scene change as a release, something for Marty to shout over.

Marty
Chop up these cucumbers.

Jo
Ok.

Marty
Scale the big ones just wash them, wash and cut the leeks peel and mash the garlic. Wash the parsley. Cut the potatoes into three inch cubes. Put it in the soup bowl. Boil the rest of the soup.

Bernie gets settled on a crate downstage and eyes Alicia who is shelving videos. Marty and Jo, now sequestered upstage, set the table throughout the following scene. The two of them seem suspended in a long painful moment. The setting of the table should take the entire length of the Bernie/Alicia scene, Jo and Marty moving in excruciating slow motion. The long counter transforms into a table which gets filled up with serving dishes.

Bernie
So..uh... this is your first day, huh?

Alicia
Yeah.

Bernie
Who's your sister?

Alicia
You know her...like long hair like this...

Bernie
Oh yeah I remember her yeah yeah.

Bernie
Yeah soon You're gonna take over the entire store, huh? "Alicia's video palace!" right? Ring ring. Hello. Alicia's video. Alicia speaking. This is Alicia, right?

Alicia
So you like this place huh?

Bernie
Yeah yeah this is like a home away from home

Alicia
You coming here everyday?

Bernie
Yeah yeah

Alicia
So you been here for a long time?

Bernie
Nah...Uh nah yes uh yeah pretty long, pretty long...

Marty
Jo, measure that on the other side. That's metric I dunno what that is in American.

Bernie
So uh hey what are you gonna put in the Alicia section?

Alicia
Love Streams.

Bernie
Just that?

Alicia
Yeah.

Bernie
What else?

Alicia
That's it.

Bernie
Only one?

Alicia
I want people to see that movie, you know.

Bernie
Must be a good movie... I ain't seen it by I need to update my video library with with with with *Love Streams*, I guess.

Alicia
You really don't know what movie?

Bernie
No I don't know that one is that a good one?

Alicia
I mean that is like the best move ever made!

Bernie
Yeah, what happens? What's it about?

Alicia
You know, its about family, you know, right?

Bernie
Yeah.

Alicia
I mean they're all separate and everything and they don't like each other actually they hate each other at the beginning I mean John Cassevetes and Gena Rowlands, who are playing brother and sister in the movie. You know, but um.

Bernie
Yeah...

Alicia
So John Cassavetes sort of have mid-life crisis and he can't deal with it by himself and he calls Gena Rowlands for help. Not actually for help but he has no one to talk to.

Bernie
Yeah that's rough.

Alicia
Yeah. So Gena Rowlands come to the apartment and they just stare at each other there is lots of awkwardness and they are all fucked up, you know. But, somehow they just start dancing.

Bernie
Yeah?

Alicia

So... you know, they dance and they are in the middle of the dance they just collapse. They realize that they love each other so much, you know?

Bernie

The brother and sister?

Alicia

Yeah, well they are brother and sister in the movie but in real life they are husband and wife, right? So you watch them there, dancing and it's like the movie--the story -it just breaks apart and it's not a story anymore, it's just these two people on the screen who love each other and hate each other and can only talk to each other in that way.

Bernie

The movie breaks apart?

Alicia

Hey you know what, I don't know you wait until you get Alicia section, I don't know, you should watch that.

Bernie

Yeah I like dancing in he movies.

Alicia

Yeah its beautiful dancing, you know.

Bernie

Yeah? You look like you're a dancer uh...

Alicia

I'm not.

Bernie

You wanna, you could put it, I got a reservation, you could put it in the Bernie reservation, if you want. But maybe we should leave it for the public... But you know, my VCR? I busted it. I was watching this movie and then it started you know doin the skipping thing so I just kicked it.

Alicia

So your VCR is not working?

Bernie

Yeah its a real tragedy.

Alicia

How long has it been broken?

Bernie

Couple months now. But you know I am gonna take it in. There's these Ukrainian guys you know they do a great job.

Marty

You need to put the olive oil in with those slices and cook it for 15 minutes,....

Jo

Ok.

Bernie

I like that movie- *Platoon*. That gets me every time. That's a beautiful thing. It makes me cry. When the guy- Willem Dafoe guy- he's running away from Charlie cause Tom Berenger screwed him over and left him to die? Elias- That's his name- Elias is running from Charlie and you see him from the chopper and that music comes in you know da da da da and he's running in slow motion and his body is riddled with bullets and he throws his arms up in the air like this ...that is so pretty cause he didn't have to die see? And its terrible and beautiful at the same time. That's like poetry, you know?

Alicia

Sounds pretty sick, actually.

Bernie

Yeah. That *Platoon*. I think that's my favorite movie. Some days its *When Harry met Sally* but I love that movie for different reasons, you know.

Bernie

Of course, that's all a thing of the past. Men, with honor dying on the battlefield. How many died in Vietnam?

Alicia

Well, about-

Wait, You're not Vietnamese are you?

Alicia

No.

Bernie

Ok Good. So how many died?

Alicia

About a million.

Bernie

Naw naw Americans. About what...? Fitty thousand. And now- what, a couple eight hundred. Because now the technology is just amazing. I mean, you got planes that you can't see or hear before they are on top of you. I do alot of reading about this stuff. The surgical bombing, the tactical weapons. Microwaves! They can aim these huge microwave cannons that can basically cook a person from long range. Because they target it from outer space. OH! And the MOAB, you know the one they dropped on Florida, to test it. Knocked out about five square miles of the Everglades. The MOAB?, the largest conventional bomb ever made, This thing, it is amazing. Its bright orange which is for danger. And the thing about it is- it is so huge and powerful that it has to go into a plane and they load it onto a palette that has a parachute on it. So they drop it and the parachute is drifting gently downwards and then a guy in Texas somwhere sees that its going on his satellite hook-up and he then targets it via computer--and it rockets off the palate and the thing is, most conventional bombs they they... well, 90 percent of the impact of the bomb goes into the ground. You lose most of your bang into the ground when the thing hits. But the amazing thing about the MOAB is that it has a thirty foot long pole on the end of it and it flies through the sky and when it gets to where it goes it hits the ground with the pole end, like a pitchfork and the pole detonates it and it explodes OUTWARD in every direction and just fries everything in its path. So these guys are incredibly smart. And this thing of the men with honor dying on the battlefield like the Willem Dafoe, that's all history.

pause

I'm hungry. You want a hot pocket. I can nuke em right here. I got two--

Alicia
I think I'll wait for the big dinner.

Bernie
It's a *Lean Pocket*, actually.

Alicia
That's okay.

Alicia
Um... well.. what about the people on the ground, who get killed by these bombs. You ever think about them?

Bernie
Oh yeah they are fucked. They're completely fucked. One minute they are there and the next they're micro waved like Paul Newman's popcorn when you cook it too long and it's all black and gooey and *stuck to the bag!*

Bernie
So, uh, what time is your shift over?

Alicia
Eleven.

Alicia
I am supposed to clean up after the party. Extra money. And I really don't mind.

Bernie
Yeah. I used to have an oriental cleaning lady. They're good. I had a black one too but I think she stole.

Alicia
Ok.

Bernie
So you think I should get the *Love Streams*?

Alicia
Yeah.

Bernie
You're really passionate about that movie.

Alicia
Yeah

Bernie
You probably think we're all pretty strange...

Alicia
No

Bernie
Yeah, you're probably gonna quit tomorrow.

Alicia
No. No. I think you guys are all really cool and nice people and interesting. You guys are just like in a movie. I like it here. I really I love it here.

Bernie
Everybody does everything in this world for just one thing. The love. That's the truth. It's just hiding underneath everything.

Alicia
Yeah.

Bernie

It's not the sex I miss. It's the closeness. I know my Sally is out there. I know that someday my Meg Ryan is gonna walk in that door. I just have to wait.

Jo and Marty have finished preparing the tables. The two of them are frozen in terror, as if holding back a tidal wave with their hands, as if holding up the ceiling.

Marty
Alright Bernie lock her up.

Time seems frozen and accelerated at the same time. Heart beats. Light flashes.

Music grows intense as people are lining up outside the store. Over the course of the next scene a large crowd assembles on the street outside the video store.

Marty
Did you buy napkins?

Jo
Yesterday.

Marty
Did you take the extra chairs out of the cellar and dust em off.

Jo
This morning.

Marty
Did you get plastic cups?

Jo
On special at the 99 cent store.

Marty
Good.

Jo
Yeah. Saved on that.

Marty
Did you take the extra plates out and wash em?

Jo
Yeah.

Marty
Extra toilet paper?

Jo
Its... In the cabinet. Under the sink. In the bathroom.

Marty
Oh. Oh yeah.

Jo
Ok.

Marty
Did you find the tape of the Yule log?

Jo
I found the color version.

Marty
Color version is no good, the black and white is much better.

Jo
We can just turn the color down on the TV.

Marty
You think of everything. It's so much better in black and white.
God.

Jo
Ok.

Marty
We got enough booze? People won't be happy unless we got enough
booze.

Jo
Almost breaking
Marty...

Marty
Don't say nothing.

Jo
I can stay if you want me to. I can...

Marty
No. You go. You go. There's nothing I need.

Jo
Wow it's a good turn out. You're just as popular as ever.
You throw the best Christmas parties in the world.

Marty
Tell the people they can throw their coats in the musical comedy
section. And they can use the bathroom at Lenny's pub across the

street.

JO

Ok Marty.

Marty

It's not for me. It's for the neighborhood. Everyone is looking forward to this. Everyone deserves a nice Xmas dinner. It's important. I'll be fine.

Jo

Ok

Marty

Put on some Christmas music. And fire up that Yule Log. OK Bernie. Open her up!

Joy to the World plays loudly as the doors to the Video Store Open up. All of a sudden the store fills with 20 noisy voices all speaking at once. All clamoring at Marty, asking her questions, saluting her, slapping her on the back. Marty is shouting MERRY CHRISTMAS! MERRY CHRISTMAS! over the din. She talks quickly with many people, smiling, shaking hands, pointing and laughing. The crowd all take off their coats and circle around getting punch as the music plays and Marty continues to smile and laugh. The table fills up with people, greeting and talking to each other. Marty, smiling and greeting the whole way, makes her way toward the door opens it. As the door opens, the music changes ominously and the crowd behind her silences and goes into an eerie slow motion. The table ripples with people stuffing their faces and smiling in grotesque fashion, like an Olive Garden commercial on crack. Marty stands and stares into the distance. We hear a ringing bell from off stage. Santa, a homeless man scamming off the Salvation Army, walks up to her. The crowd continues in slow motion eating until Marty re-enters.

Santa

Hi Marty. Merry Christmas!

Marty

Hey gorgeous how're you doin?

Santa

Pretty good Pretty good.

Marty

You hungry?

Santa

Oh yeah, Marty. You know I am. Best it's the the best dinner of the year. They don't give out this kinda grub at the at the at the Armory

Marty
You still up there?

Santa
Yeah. But they closing it down. They closing alotta the shelters so... Anyways, its not so cold out. Just hope it don't snow.

Marty
Well you go on in there and get some stuffing and gravy.

Santa
Ok Marty

Marty
You eat as much as you want, pal.

Santa
Oh. Uh...Uh. How's Janey?

Marty
She's fine.

Santa
Every time a bell rings, an angel gets it's wings.

Marty grabs the bell and stops it from ringing. Santa heads inside. Music swells again. Slow-motion eating continues inside.

Alicia runs outside.

Alicia
Marty this party is amazing! I can't believe it. All these people. You made so much food!

Marty
You like it?

Alicia
You coming inside?

Marty
In a minute-

Alicia
Don't you want to watch everybody eating? Look inside there. See all of their faces. Let's go. COME ON! COME ON!

Alicia pushes Marty inside. The dinner guests erupt into applause, in real time. The change in time is incredibly jarring. Music changes to a happy Christmas tune. Marty staggers a moment, overwhelmed. The applause goes on for about 20 seconds. Marty arrives upstage, staggering, just in front of the bathroom door.

Sauda
Marty how do you make this chicken?

Marty
It was nothing..

Sauda
Marty come on now, you have to tell us how you made this chicken!

Marty pauses. She looks as if she is about to fall over or burst into tears. There are murmurs at the table for a moment. Suddenly, Marty snaps out of her daze, charges to the head of her table.

Marty
I will never tell you how to make that chicken!

CROWD
OHHHHHH!!!!

Marty
I will take that recipe for that chicken to my fuckin grave!

CROWD
Marty come on, I gotta know. PLEASE MARTY, etc...
Marty we gotta know etc....

Marty charges at the center of the table.

Marty
Should I tell her?

CROWD
YEAH! YEAH!

Ponce
No, don't tell her.

Marty
Shut your face!

Marty
OK, you seen North by Northwest?

Sauda

No.

CROWD

I saw it. I saw it.

Marty

I know you saw it. I know you saw it.
What do you mean you haven't seen it. OK.
Go find it on the shelf. And bring it back to me and I'll tell
you how to make the chicken. GO GO GO!

*The Crowd cheers. Down at the Front of the table, Mitch Stands
up. Mitch is the building owner. He is heavysset, a man in his
thirties or forties with a big energy in his voice.*

Mitch

Marty, Marty!

Marty

Mitch Mitch Mitch. Best Landlord in the world everybody! Those
Bruschetta over there are for you. Extra Garlic to ward off evil
spirits.

Lily

And everybody else...

*Laughs from the table. Every line in this scene is public speech
meant for the whole table. Every bad joke that ensues is met
with laughs and boos at the same time.*

Mitch

Help settle an argument for us!

Marty

Jesus. You been here two minutes and you are already arguing.
What's with this guy?

Crowd reacts

Sherry

MARTY!

Marty

Oh My GOD! Alicia, This is Frank and his girlfriend Sherry...

Frank

Not so fast there Marty!

*Frank holds up Alicia's hand with an engagement ring on it.
There are oohs and ahhs from the crowd.*

Frank

Check it out!

Marty

OH MY GOD! They met in the store. One minute their up here arguing about Bertolucci the next their down stairs makin out like a coupla high school kids.

Sherry

I still think Bertolucci's over rated.

Laughs from the table.

Marty Greets Officer Goris. A woman in her early forties, in uniform, who sits near her teenage daughter. Lily, who has punk rock pink hair.

Marty

Hey Officer Gorgeous. How's the 12 to 8?

Officer Goris

It fuckin sucks. I gotta work tonight.

Marty

Tonight?

Officer Goris

This is my breakfast.

Marty

Alicia make sure she gets some coffee in her, before she get's outta here.

Officer Goris

Indicating Santa

I'm taking this one downtown. For Breaking and ENTERING!

Laughs from the table

Marty greets Professor Vizcaya

Marty

Professor, how ya doing?
Wait a minute. What am I thinking?

Professor Vizcaya

Marty I'm a psycho-analyst, not a mind reader.

Marty

What's the difference? I bet can tell you what everybody in this room is thinking. You want to know who is this beautiful new member of the heights video family is? Alicia, this is Professor Vizcaya, he rents the entire Bergman section every spring.

Professor Vizcaya
Embarrassing but true.

P-Rod
Hey Marty!

Marty
Hey Pedro, how's the elevator business?

P-Rod
Ups and downs. You know. HA HA HA HA!

Groans from the table

P-Rod
These people are driving me crazy. Everyone's always pushing my buttons!!! HA HA HA HA.

More groans.

Sauda
Running back to the table
I got it North by Northwest!

Marty
Running up the ladder and looking down on the table-
Ok you ready! OK, you put the movie in and you wait for the lion to roar. Then you put the chicken in the flour get em all pasty. Heat the oil in big pan, cook the chicken for as long as it takes Cray Grant to escape from the crop dusters. I am not sure how long that is in actual time. But when Cary Grant is in the clear you take that chicken off. Then you add the onions, garlic, green pepper and mushrooms and cook that for as long as the snappy dialogue scene between him and Eva Marie Saint on the train. When it they give each other the look, you take the chicken off. Drain excess fat from the pan. Add in everything else. Cover and simmer over low heat and watch the rest of the movie. By the time they get to Mount Rushmore you're done. Got it?

Ponce
Marty it's too fast.

Marty
Oh well. Ask me again next year!

Crowd
AAAAAWWWWWWW!

Ponce

Do I have to watch North By Northwest while I am cooking it, or can't I just time the sequences?

Marty
What are you crazy? The movie is in the chicken. How you gonna make the chicken and deny the masterpiece of cinema, get the fuck outta here!

Sauda
Hey Marty, where ya from?

Marty
Aw no. No I will never tell you where I'm from.

Sauda
Come on Marty, tell us where you are from!

Crowd pleads

Marty
Nope. I will never ever tell you where I am from

Marty Sings/shouts (see note at end)

B
Postrophe
K
Postrophe
L-Y-N

The Crowd bangs on the table.

You can keep your other places!
Give me that oasis!
Where the girls are all Maternity Cases!

Everyone joins in singing with Marty.

B
Postrophe
K
Postrophe
L-Y-N

Everyone cheers. Marty is still at the top of the ladder.

Marty
I want you all to eat until you can't move and drink until you can't stand up. MERRY FUCKIN CHRISTMAS!

The party shifts, Tables are re-arranged, music changes as we jump forward in time. There are many jumps forward in time

during the party. We travel through four or five hours of the party condensed into about 20 minutes of stage time. After each jump the party goers get more drunk and outspoken. At this first jump, everyone is up out of their chairs and dancing to Frank Sinatra. Marty and Fred dance downstage.

Fred
You're doing a great thing here.

Marty
You think so?

Fred
Yes. You make everybody happy. You forget the outside world the minute you walk in here.

Marty
Really?

Fred
Yes really. There's something in the food. How do you do it?

Marty
Ohh Secret ingredient pal.

Fred
What's that?

Marty
You don't know?

Fred
The Trouble with Harry? The Thirty-Nine steps?

Marty
No. Starts with L, four letters, ends with AHHHHHHHHHH
Marty twirls as Fred dips her.

The party jumps forward again. Marty is on the floor laughing hysterically at Officer Gorgeous' story.

Marty
How's your grandma? She's had Pillow Talk on reserve for a month.

Officer Goris and Lily, her 15 year old daughter trade off on this monologue, filling in each other's pauses and cutting each other off.

Officer Goris and Lily
So Ma's not doing so well. She's really not..

Her brother George, my uncle, died. And at George's house, she couldn't get up the stairs because the banister was broken. She's been bugging him about it for 15 years. To fix it. And she walks in to his house for the wake and as usual it takes her like 20 minutes to get up the stairs. She's clinging to the wall and groaning. And she gets up there and she sees George lying in state. And she starts screaming at him lying in the casket. "GEORGE I told fix that banister. You fucking crumb." She's saying. And its in the middle of this guy who is trying to deliver a eulogy about George. And he's crying and saying how he misses George and there is Ma screaming. How many times I told you to fix that banister! You never listen to me! You fucking crumb"

Marty laughing a bit too loud.

Marty
So what does George do?

Lily
He just lies there.

Marty
He lies there!

Lily
He lies there. Because he's dead.

Marty Laughs. Mitch pinches Lily.

Lily
Don't pinch me you fuckin sicko. I'm not six anymore.

Mitch
Oh I know!

Lily
ASSHOLE!

Officer Goris
Where does she get that fuckin mouth of hers!

Marty
It's a fuckin mystery baby. It's a fuckin mystery.

Officer Goris
They grow up so fast.

Marty
I guess we can't let Mitch baby sit her ass anymore!

Laughter from the crowd.

The party jumps forward again, this time to slow motion. Party goers are putting ornaments on the Christmas tree- moving upstage. Downstage, Bernie has met "Sally" a German woman wearing a turban who looks strikingly like Isabella Rosselini and speaks in a strong German accent.

Bernie
You're not an Arab?

Sally
No I am German...

Bernie
So what's with the turban?

Sally
I am a fortune teller.
Do you want me to tell your fortune?

Bernie
Yeah okay, my hands are a little dirty-

Sally
This is your life line..
Do you teach children?

Bernie
Yes I do, well actually I'm a tutor because
I can't handle more than one at once.

Sally
What do you teach?

Bernie
Oh, you know, the math the history, the history and the math.

Sally
This is your love line here. It's moving off to the side a little..

Bernie
Does that mean I'm gay or something....?

Sally
No, but have you ever had any experiences with the students that you are teaching?

Bernie
Yes, well it's a very interesting story..

It was in a beautiful home so you wouldn't think the kid would be messed, but she was wearin one a those, whaddaycallit?

Sally

A tube top?

Bernie

Yeah. I'll demonstrate, we're workin and she comes up behind me and she's like

Bernie is rubbing himself up against Sally to demonstrate.

Bernie

OH OH! Do I use the quadratic formula for this or can you resolve the function... I was very nervous..

Sally

But you found this erotic, I am sure.

Mitch sees Bernie flirting with Sally and he tosses an aside

Mitch

Hey Bernie, I'd like to put my Weiner in her schnitzel.*

**(For a complete list of Mitch asides, see end of script)*

Party jumps forward again with laughter marking Mitch's joke. This time a line dance is happening upstage as Marty, Mitch, and Fred talk downstage. The party is revving up. Professor Vizcaya chases Sherry around the store, while she moons him. Officer Goris is lying across the main table. Ponce fires off champagne poppers with Alicia, Santa dances drunkenly and incompetently with Sauda. There is a considerable din.

Ponce

Marty, Marty. I gotta use the bathroom. I really gotta go. Can I?

Marty

Oh no no no. You gotta go across the street to Lenny's pub. I can't help you babe.

Mitch walks up to her.

Marty

Mitch Mitch Mitch, how'd you get so rich?

Mitch

I'm gonna get richer, actually.

Marty

Oh yeah?

Mitch

Well, This one Idea I got actually at a movie theater. one of the things I hate is when you gotta go to the bathroom, you know, take a crap... There is the kind where you just have the one toilet and you gotta take a crap and some inconsiderate asshole has just pissed all over the seat you know...

Marty

Oh yeah, I hate that.

Mitch

I understand the problem you go into the bathroom and the seat's down and you don't want to touch it so you know you pee all over it.
So I took a look at the wastebasket in the bathroom the kind with the pedal and when you gotta throw something away, what do you do?

Fred

You step on the pedal.

Mitch

Yes Fred very good, You step on the pedal!

Mitch

So why doesn't someone make a pedal for the toilet!
You walk in there step on the pedal, do your business, step on the pedal again and you're done. That way no one's gotta crap in the wastepaper basket!

Professor Vizcaya and Sherry's chase almost barrels in to Marty, Mitch and Fred downstage.

Professor Vizcaya

Marty. What's that movie? With the guy's who's head explodes in the back of the car. Just explodes all over the windshield... That is incredible!

P-Rod

Like in Scanners!

Professor Vizcaya

Holy shit. THAT is one of the best head explosions ever on film. It's like a big exploding melon. That is disgusting.

Marty

I saw that one.

Sherry

(this monologue is incomprehensible because Sherry has so much food in her mouth. It comes out as sheer babble and disgusting

noises) in *Windtalkers*. There is a guy who is flame throwing,. He has the jet pack strapped to his back and then he gets shot and the flame thrower is gonna explode and he knows it and he just keeps flame throwing because there is this little girl that is trying to get the other side of this ridge and he heroically just keep pouring out the flames and he screams like AHHHHHHHHHh and then he explodes. *Sherry makes exploding sounds.*

Marty
I saw that one too.

P-Rod
But that would never work in real life, the windshield thing. Because most high-powered bullets can shoot through three or four people. Some can even go through bone and hit someone else. The windshield would have been shattered. Trust me I was in the military.

Lily and Zina sit on the downstage counter eating ravenously off a platter. Marty touches Lily's head as she speaks. She looks as if she is about to throw her arms around the girl.

Lily
Oh shit. I'm a vegetarian!

Zina
Me too. I can feel that this is an animal in my mouth!

Lily
Well, if you're gonna do it, this is the best way, right? We should just eat big plates of meat together. This piece has somebody's bite marks in it. That way we have to eat-

Lily and Zina
Everybody's else's juices.

Lily
We shouldn't do this. Jesus was a vegetarian.

Ponce
Wait a minute, Jesus was not a vegetarian.

Lily
Yes he was, Marty was Jesus a vegetarian?

Marty
Na baby, Jesus was not a vegetarian...

Professor Vizcaya
Remember the Sermon on the Mount, the loaves and the *fishes*.

Lily

I'm a vegetarian and I still eat fish.

Professor Vizcaya

That would make you NOT a vegetarian. If you wanna be a vegetarian you cannot eat anything that has blood or a face.

Santa

Broccoli has a face!

Professor Vizcaya

Broccoli has a head you fucking idiot.

Ponce

Jesus was not a vegetarian. He was a suicidal cannibal. He killed himself so that we could eat of the flesh and drink of the blood and all that.

Frank

*Jumping up on the counter and
Cursing wildly in Hungarian.*

You are all blasphemous and drunk!

Professor Vizcaya

Jesus fuckin Christ, who invited him?

P-Rod

Marty you're a catholic right?

Marty

Pope's got nothing to do with it.

P-Rod

Did The Christ kill himself?

Marty

No- Where in the bible does it say that Christ killed himself? And if he did how'd he do it? Did he slit his wrists? Did he nail himself up on the cross. And if he did, how did he get in the third nail. With his teeth?

Party Jumps forward again. Again into slow motion. Bernie and Sally continue their conversation downstage.

Sally

If I were you, I would just get very authoritative with the students I am teaching. I would say, "Kids! I am not kidding with this shit!" I put down the foot unt they are so overwhelmed that it is totally inconceivable that they will do anything wrong.

Bernie

Yeah, kids are scared of Germans.

Sally
Are you scared of Germans?

Bernie
No no no... a little bit. Actually I find you very attractive.

Sally
Oh, ja?

Bernie
You, did anybody ever tell that you look like Isabella Rosselini?

Sally
Mutters something incomprehensible in German that sounds dirty.

Bernie
What does that mean?

Sally
I'll tell you later...

Mitch (another aside to Bernie)
Hey Bernie, I'd like to Munch her Hausen.**

Laughter again as lights go completely dark. A beam finds Marty in the dark.

Marty
Where's Jo?

Another beam finds Jo.

Jo
Right here Marty.

The Party Freezes. Jo is far far upstage. We realize that she hasn't moved since the party began. She has been frozen, stuck upstage. She stands up, takes three steps towards Marty. All of a sudden music whirls in, and the party goes into super fast motion. Like watching a time elapsed video, people stream by Jo in double time, eating voraciously, miming conversations, drinking, talking. All the while Jo moves slowly through the crowd. She looks as if she is about to explode into tears. She navigates through the crowd that is whirling all around her. After about a minute she makes it to the front door. As Jo pushes open the door and heaves herself outside, time shifts again. Normal time resumes, the party goers are mostly on the floor, some are smoking joints, others are collapsed onto tables. Jo stands on the pavement, and breaks down. Bernie comes outside as Jo is crying. He doesn't notice that she is a wreck.

Bernie

How do you like the pipe? Pretty distinguished right? I don't think I am a cigar or a cigarette type. But I think I can get away with the pipe. Like a Ship's Captain. Out on the high seas. Whaddaya think. You go for it? Girls like captains right?

Jo

Oh my god Bernie. Oh..

Jo collapses into Bernie's chest heaving with sobs.

Bernie

What happened?

Jo

Sobbing

Bernie Bernie Bernie.

Bernie

Suddenly trying to comfort Jo

There there. Everybody gets emotional during the holidays. The holidays are terrible. Oh god, terrible. All these people all in there stuffing their faces like pigs. JFK and LaGuardia all backed up. The conversation has no flow. It's difficult to get one's bearings.

Jo

I can't believe it...

Jo sobs even more violently.

Bernie

There there... Listen uh, Jo, can you hold that thought. I kinda gotta pee...

Jo

You do?

Bernie

Yeah.

Jo

You want the key?

Bernie

Oh no. Marty will kill me.

Jo

Yeah. Don't go in there.

Bernie
How bad is it?

Jo
Pretty bad.

Bernie
Yeah, a human mess can be the most disgusting thing on the planet. When the toilet backs up its like you wonder where all that came from. You have to just keep flushing it down. I mean, I know when that happens. I look at it and I see all the lean pockets and the low carb chocolate ice cream and all this stuff that I ate and I go, oh my god, look at this mess. It's this inhuman thing, like alive. And I go. Why the hell did I eat that? You eat it and afterwards you get sick. And the really disgusting part is-

Jo
Stop! Just stop!

Jo shoves Bernie

Jo
God you can be so gross. You disgust me, Bernie. Why don't you shave or something?

Jo Breaks away from Bernie, visibly angry.

Bernie
Jo.

Jo
I mean really. Really. Bernie. What are you doing here? What do you think this is your family? You just come here because you're fucking lonely.

Bernie
Jo Jo Jo. What is going on with you?

Jo
I can't breathe. All of those people in there. I have to leave. I am leaving. You'd think they could figure out how to plant a tree on this street that could grow bigger than a shrub. But look at these, all stuck in these little boxes on the ground. Is there really dirt under there? Do they bring dirt in when they bring the trees in or is there real dirt under this pavement? Can you break through the concrete and find real dirt? How far down does the pavement go before you hit the real earth? Do you know?

Bernie

What?

Jo

I don't know these people. I can't eat this food. I don't want to eat with people who don't look at each other. I was staring at the register for an hour in there. Just looking at the keys. The numbers don't make sense.

Bernie

You're not hungry?

Jo

No.

Bernie

I know. I know. Your last Christmas dinner. Its okay. You don't mean what you are saying. You can be emotional. Just cry. We're all gonna miss you.

Jo

I do mean what I'm saying. This is all pathetic. Really really pathetic. Don't fucking tell me what I do and don't mean.

Bernie

You're just emotional. You're on the verge of Portland.

Jo

This place is underground. This fucking place is already buried. She is three months behind on the phone bill and she's three months behind on the rent and she's throwing a 500 dollar Christmas Party.

Bernie

She's behind on the rent?

Jo

Yeah. Really behind. Mitch has been threatening to kick us out since Halloween.

Bernie

It is?

Jo

You love this place so much why don't you do something. You are incompetent.

Bernie

Jo!

Jo

Bernie you don't know, you don't know.

She collapses back into Bernie's chest.

Bernie

Jo... Jo... You're freaking me out a little bit here. Um. Look you...I think you better take a walk...um...maybe by yourself for a bit...take a walk and think things through. You're going through alot and I um...I really gotta pee. So

Jo

Don't go in the bathroom.

Bernie

How bad is it?

Jo

Pretty bad.

Bernie

I can use it anyway. You think I can use it anyway? It might have cleared itself up by now.

Jo

You want to use the bathroom?

Bernie

Yeah, whatever if the toilet don't work, I can just pee in the sink. I do it all the time at home.

Jo

You pee in the sink at home?

Bernie

Just every once in a while.

Jo

Why?

Bernie

I don't know... It's sometimes *nearer*... I live alone. You know, Jack Kerouac and all that.

Jo

Uh-huh.

Bernie

You should come over once, before you go out West.

Jo

Yeah. Yeah, I should.

Bernie

It's clean. I mean, I clean up. All these years, you should come over one time.

Jo
You're right. I should...

Bernie
Good good. That's good. You'll come over.

Jo
Yeah

Bernie
I can sneak past Marty. She don't have to know I'm using the bathroom.

Jo
Bernie. I'll come over soon. Here's the key. Go pee.

Bernie
Yeah. Can I have the key.

Jo
There it is.

As Bernie walks in, party sounds return. Bernie walks towards the bathroom. He opens the door and walks inside. Marty doesn't see Bernie. Marty sits center stage. Fred approaches her. On Fred's first line a high solo cello plays, mournfully and the party sounds die down again.

Fred
Marty, you got a minute?

Marty
Sure Fred.

Fred
Marty I been comin in here for over a year now.

Marty
Yeah.

Fred
I'm not really a movie buff.

Marty
I know.

Fred

I just want to say that I'm in no rush. I've got plenty of time. Nothing but time, years. So we don't need to rush into anything. I don't. Oh Jesus, I'm giving it all away.

I don't know. Maybe I am still just scraping myself off the pavement and maybe I have no business saying any of this to you. But maybe there is a way for people to heal each other. For things to be okay that way. I mean is it ever okay on your own?

I'm getting ahead of myself. Oh god. I have totally screwed this up. Never mind. I'm impulsive, I guess.

Fred takes Marty's hand. She pulls him in, their faces are almost touching.

But I have time. For this. To take it slow. Slow it all down. Long enough to actually stop and let life go by you. Maybe there is a way to see it just going by you and you could experience it that way. I don't know if it is possible to stop time. Maybe there is a way to let go of the rush, that's all I am saying.

Marty
You got time?

Fred
Yeah, I really do.

Marty
I got a lot of secrets.

Fred
That's okay.

Marty
I don't know anybody.

Fred
What are you talking about? You know all these people. Look around.

Marty
But they don't know me.

Fred
They don't?

Marty
No. Not the real Marty.

Fred
Who's the real Marty?

Marty stops laughing turns and looks at Fred right in the eye, almost interrogating him.

Marty
What if we was being bombed right now, or shot at, what would you do?

Fred
Probably get under the table.

Marty
Would you take care of me?

Fred
Of course.

Marty
Would you keep me safe?

Fred
Yeah of course.

Marty
What if they was crashing planes into Brooklyn?

Fred
I don't think anybody is going to be crashing any planes into Brooklyn. Manhattan maybe, not Brooklyn.

Marty
Oh I never go into Manhattan.

Fred
Then you should be okay.

Marty
What if they was, Fred?

Fred
All I know. It's really far away from us here.

Marty
Not so far. Not so far.

Fred
...

Marty
They're right in there.

Marty points to the bathroom.

Fred
What?

Marty
Right in there. Locked in there.

Fred
In the Bathroom?

Marty
Shhhhhhhhhh!

Fred
Who's in the bathroom?

Marty
Those men. The enemy. They took my Janey and now they want everything else.

Fred
Marty You ok? Who's in the bathroom?

Jo and Bernie, seeing what is going on, walk up to Marty and Fred.

JO
Marty's had a hard day Fred.

Bernie
I'm sure it's okay. It's probably a mistake. Everything's gonna be okay. We're not gonna talk about this now-

Marty
Bernie, Jo, Fred. Listen. It's in us. IT'S IN US! We are doing it. We are doing it. We can't control ourselves. It's too horrible. You can't see it?

Jo
Marty

Marty
My mother used to have a meat grinder to make meatballs. You put the steak in one side and out the other comes this mash. And it bleeds, right there into the bowl. And you hold it in your hand and mush it together with your fingers and it's not a person anymore. There used to be four butcher shops down Henry street. You used to be able to get real cuts of meat. You could get a whole leg of pork. Have them cut it up for you. You could inspect the sides, walk into the freezers. You could smell it and look at the color of the blood to see if it was fresh or not. Brown blood or red. You could touch the flesh with your hand. Brown blood or red to see if it was fresh on your finger tips.

blood caked on the counter tops crusting in the door frame. You had good cuts. Whole tongues and whole livers. You could get a beef heart. Whole. YOU COULD WATCH as they cut it up. You could look at it if you wanted to look at it.

Bernie

Marty. Maybe you want to go lie down.

Marty

They told me not to look but I looked. They advise you not to look not to worry. But I want to know about where she is so I can know about where she is.

Fred

Jo?

Marty

How do I see what she saw? How do I see what she was seeing?

Jo

Marty let's go upstairs for a minute.

Marty

Fred. Listen to me. Get the gun, it's behind the counter. You and me we're gonna go in there and we're gonna kill them. I can't do it alone. We're gonna kill them and we're gonna cut them up. I want to see it. I want to see them cut to pieces. You and me we're gonna go in there and we're gonna kill kill kill kill kill kill kill.

Marty is thrusting her fist into Fred's stomach. Fred is trying to grab her and hold her. Bernie pulls Fred away from Marty, Jo pulls Marty away from Fred.

Bernie

Just leave it alone Fred. Leave it alone.

Fred walks away shocked. For a moment it seems as if time has stopped. The party seems to be almost suspended in amber. Sauda approaches Marty out of the half dark. In her hands is a ball of money and change.

Sauda

Ok Marty, I'm gonna put these returns on the counter back there, I hope that's okay. And here is the late fees. All of it. Thirty-six dollars and seventy five cents. There's three seventy five in quarters there, I hope that's okay.

Marty

Oh Sweetheart. You don't have to do that. Look its Christmas, forget about it.

Sauda

No Marty, I can't keep letting you let me off. I rent a lot of movies. I rent a lot of em. And I want you to take this now. You're too nice. Let me just pay you.

Marty

Sugar, you really don't have to. Let me give a Christmas present. Don't break the bank here.

Sauda

Look Marty, it ain't no big fuckin deal. Just take the damn money, okay.

Marty takes the money and throws it violently on the floor.

Marty

I hate money, you know that. I hate it. I really really hate it.

Sauda is taken aback. Jo bends down and starts picking it up, apologizing.

Marty

And who are you going home with tonight?

Sauda

I was thinking about Buster Keaton.

Marty

You take four or five a those. Hardly anybody rents those.

Sauda

Oh I'd run off with Buster in a Heart beat.

Marty

Well you're getting your chance tonight.

Sauda

I can watch four or five of those in a night

Marty

How many movies you watch a day?

Sauda

Two or Three. More if I'm not going to work.

Marty

Yeah I could watch that... Well you take those and don't bring em back til new years. Take the whole section.

Marty staggers away from Sauda. As Marty passes, Sally walks over

to Bernie. She mutters something incomprehensibly in German. She falls onto him, collapsing drunk onto the floor at his feet. Her blond wig and turban come off in Bernie's hand. He stands there next to Fred holding the blond wig, both of them dejected. Sally is passed out at his feet. Professor Vizcaya and a group of other people smoking a joint are heard in mid conversation:

Professor Vizcaya

It's true what this one is saying. Its true, the Chinese are gonna run Hollywood. They're gonna run everything. You see "The Killer?" Chow Yun Fat. It is beautiful ,there is like a 40 minute shoot out at the end. It's a death ballet, all in slow motion.

What's that movie, Marty?

Marty

The Killer.

Professor Vizcaya

It's incredible. And they have got it, man, the Chinese have taken Hong Kong and they are making hundreds upon hundreds of movies. They are knocking Hollywood out of the theaters all over Asia and all over the place. The competition is coming. Better start learning Chinese.

Ponce

So what she's Chinese, she's just rooting for her team.

Alicia

I'm Japanese.

P-Rod

So what, I'm from Queens that still makes me a New Yorker, right?

Bernie

Really?

Alicia

Yes really.

Bernie (To Alicia, quietly)

So what do you think is gonna happen?

Lee

The Chinese. It's so obvious. There are a billion Chinese.

Bernie

Are we gonna lose? Are we gonna lose this war?

Alicia

Yeah. I think we lose.

Marty

Alicia baby, go down the Spanish Deli and get some ice. We're outta ice.

Alicia

Right now?

Marty

I ain't paying you to talk. That's Jo's job.

Bernie

I am having a conversation here with Alicia.

Marty

I don't remember putting you on the payroll, Bernie.

Bernie

Marty this is important.

Alicia

Its ok, Marty, I am happy to get some ice.

Marty

What happened Bernie, you knocked out the German now you're working on the Japanese? You can hit on the lasagna next we can get the whole Axis back together. You can go home, rent The Pianist and eat Sushi with Isabella Rosselini. After that you can start hitting on the Arabs and the Turks. The Native Americans the Armenians, the Zulu fuckin nation.

Marty walks upstage to the kitchen. Alicia heads out to the store. The party grows darker.

Bernie

Marty, please.

Mitch stands over Bernie and Fred, goading them. Lights are ominous and dark, focusing in on Mitch, like an angry frat boy about the push everyone over the edge.

Mitch

What happened over here guys it looked like it was going so well-

Bernie

It's okay.

Mitch

God, its cruelty. Lead ya on and then...

Bernie

Mitch really its okay.

Mitch
Let's wake her up.

Bernie
Mitch, no

Mitch
I'd like to gas her in the shower.

Bernie
No. listen stop it.

Mitch
BITCHES! I mean what's a man supposed to do? What's left for a good man to do. Throw all honor in the ocean? And sorrow with for good god damn. You just must have wanted to strangle her.

When Mitch screams Bitches, he pounds the table. Lights bump up restoring the reality of the party. We see everyone lying passed out in various stupors of food induced lethargy or drunkenness. Sherry staggers up and knocks over the fake Christmas tree. Mitch sits down next to Fred and Bernie. Marty Stews by the upstage counter.

Bernie
Mitch it's okay.

Mitch
God I'm... such a meanness. You know what it's like. It's like a wolf sitting right beside you. A growling wolf. And you just want to jump right inside of it.

Mitch jumps forward and begins to act like a wolf.

Can you feel it! Like. Cause I can feel it! And it feels like I could eat just eat everything on this table. I could just eat this table.

Mitch jumps onto the table. Gets on all fours, looks at Fred.

Fred. Howl with me. Yeah, come on, let's howl. Come one get up on this table yeah and uh we'll howl. AROOOOOOOOOOOO!!!!!!

HUH? Come on, Fred. Come on Break LOOSE FOR ONCE GODDAMNIT FRED!Come on! I know you're not a fucking pansy so I want you to get up on this table and fucking howl with me. AROOOOOOOOOO!!!!!!

Mitch gets up on the table. Party goers stare at him from the floor.

Mitch
HUH? FINE FUCK YOU MAYBE JEW FAGGOT IN THE GLASSES over here
WILL JOIN WITH ME? AROOOOOOOOOOOOOO!

BERNIE
That's not necessary, Mitch

MITCH
What's a matter I'm half a Jew. NO? Ok. Fuck you. Maybe The
SPICS will howl with me. COME ON RODRIGUEZ HOWL WITH ME!

P-Rod
get the fuck down from there

MITCH
Get up here you fuckin queer. HOWL WITH ME. AROOOOOOOOO
AROooooo!!!

P-Rod
Don't you fuckin call me a queer!

Mitch
YOUR Mom told me you were a queer when I was doing her and your
sister at the same time.

Sauda
Don't pay any attention to that asshole.

Marty
Mitch get the fuck off my counter right now.

MITCH
OH IT'S YOUR COUNTER MARTY? I own this building. I wanna get up
here and howl I will do what the fuck I want. You wanna tell me
what to do, you learn how to pay your fucking rent on time.
AROooooo!

An embarrassed hush falls over the crowd.

BERNIE
Mitch. Mitch. You get offa that counter right now!

MITCH
What you gonna stop me, Bernie. You're gonna come up here and
stop me, you fuckin mook-

*BERNIE rushes MITCH, Knocking him off the table. They fall to
the floor together.
They fight, messily incompetently, rolling around on each other
hitting each other in the sides. After a moment, Fred pulls*

Bernie off Mitch and Mitch rolls to the side. Everyone at the party is crowded around them. There is a commotion. Mitch starts crying.

Mitch

Oh god. Oh god. Oh I'm sorry. I'm sorry. Its just been building up in me for so long. I'm never gonna be a great fuckin movie director.

Mitch keeps muttering incomprehensibly. He begins sobbing.

Fred

I'll take him home.

Mitch

Don't you fuckin touch me! Marty. Look everyone. I'm sorry. You

Marty

Its OK Mitch.

Mitch

You know Marty, listen, I know that you are a few months behind on the rent so you know, in the spirit of Christmas, I just wanna say, that its no hurry, you can pay it off a bit at a time.

Marty

I'm not behind.

Mitch

Oh fuck I'm an asshole. Yeah. I shouldn't bring that up in front of people. I'm such an asshole...

Marty

I'm not behind. I'm not behind at all.

Mitch

Um... Marty, look we're all friends here. We're all friends. We're all friends aren't we....?

Marty

I am not behind

Sauda

We're all behind. Everybody's behind on their goddamn rent, aren't we?

Fred.

How far are you behind Marty, I could help with that.

Sherry

Marty, this party must have cost a fortune, we can all chip in.

Professor Vizcaya.

Yeah. I'll throw in some money. Marty Its no problem. Here's 20 bucks. Everybody, come on, let's get some money together for Marty.

ALL

I'll throw in ten.

I've got some cash. Yeah, here's a five. Etc..

Two bowls start circulating around the crowd. They fill up with Money. The bowls are passed up to Marty a la "It's a Wonderful Life". Marty is standing center stage behind the counter She violently knocks the bowls off the table.

Marty

Get out. All of you. I'm ain't no fuckin charity case! Get the fuck out.

Professor Vizcaya

No one means to offend you Marty.

Marty

Yeah well ya did offend me. So get the fuck out.

Fred (Quietly)

Marty, I have money...I could help out if you need it.

Marty

You too Fred get the fuck out. What do you need an invitation? Get the fuck out.

The party goers, stunned, get their coats and leave. They murmur as they go out the door. Marty, Jo and Bernie are absolutely still. The rest of the guests blow through them and out the door like leaves. Except Mitch, who has passed out near the Christmas tree who is lying on his face. Again the solo cello plays a quiet faraway melody.

Marty

To Jo

You can go email your boyfriend now.

Marty disappears upstage left, going upstairs. Alicia walks in with a bag of ice.

Alicia

Ok I got the ice! I had to go to three different places because nothing is open on Christmas Eve, you know. OH NO! OH NO NO NO!

Is it over? Oh damn! I was only gone for five minutes, you know? I guess I did talk to the guy in the store for a while. OH DAMN. DAMN DAMN DAMN. was a great great party, you know? Damn I always miss the ends of parties. Oh well. There's always tomorrow, right. Are we open on tomorrow, on Christmas?

Bernie
Can I get a little of that ice?

Alicia
Sure.

Alicia walks downstage to Bernie. Jo is listening and quietly picking up plates and bringing them to the kitchen.

Bernie
Thanks. Ow.

Alicia
What happened to you?

Bernie
I got caught under the Mitchelltoe.

Alicia
Oh. What's that?

Bernie
Tell you later. I gotta go home. (starts to get up) But I am feeling like I might lose my mind at home alone.

Alicia
Maybe you should get a movie.

Bernie
Yeah. Yeah. That's good. I'll just watch a movie and wait for Sanity Claus.

Alicia
How about *Love Streams*?

Bernie
You really like that movie, don't you?

Alicia
I don't know if I like the movie or if I just love the title. I don't even know if the title means what I think it means to John Cassavetes, but what it means to me is... it's like... Love streams. There's like this river of love in the world. And places where streams run off the big river and the love collects in pools. You can feel it in some houses, on some corners, or

some places like that. Where the river of love just runs out and gathers and makes a new stream. I think they get made, because, like in a river, a tree will fall down and block the river and then the river will wash up on the shore, or get deeper in a place.

But this is one of those love streams. And we gotta stay here. It's just getting deeper, you know? I can feel it here.

Bernie
You're dripping. Your ice is dripping.

Alicia
Oh. Ha ha ha. Yeah.

Bernie
Do you think that you and I could make a love stream?

Alicia
Yeah, maybe.

Bernie
Except my VCR is busted.

Jo
Slamming a platter on the counter-
Alicia. You're a very nice girl. But there's something you don't understand about people like us. This is home. And right now we're not going to talk. OK? If I were you I would run out that door and keep running. There's no peace in the heart. So you stop the heart. I mean, its a beautiful thing there that you said don't get me wrong, but in the stream of love we drown. Our heads went under a long time ago. And you just stop looking at each other once you go under the water. To look a drowning man in the eye is to realize you're drowned too. So we don't and we can't. So give it a rest and help me clean up this mess.

Jo throws a whole stack of dishes onto the ground. Marty comes downstairs. Marty holds a video in her hands. She looks at Joe. They all face off for a moment, not knowing what marty is going to do. She walks down to the main counter, which is still center stage. She sits.

Marty
You try Fred's cranberry sauce?

Bernie
It was a tad too tart.

Marty
How do you fuck up Cranberry sauce?

Jo
I didn't eat anything.

Marty
Me neither.

Jo
We have lots left over.

Marty
People seemed to like the seafood lasagna.

Jo
I don't think there is a single stuffed mushroom left.

Bernie
Those always go quick.

Marty
I got a fridge full of deserts we didn't get to. You want some Cream Puffs, Bernie?

Bernie
Maybe later.

Jo
We always have lots of desert left over.

Marty runs up to the Bathroom door.

Marty
WE GOT ENOUGH PROBLEMS WIHTOUT YOU! YOU HEARD ME IN THERE. WE GOT ENOUGH PROBLEMS WITHOUT YOU!

She has trapped Alicia up near the bathroom door. Alicia realizes that Marty is not screaming at her. She turns towards the bathroom. Marty is gesturing, waving the video around in the air. Marty turns downstage.

Jo
You want me to put that video away for you Marty?

Marty
Don't touch this.

Jo
Ok.

Marty
Don't you put a finger on this video.

Jo
Ok. What is it?

Marty
The Battle of Algiers.

Jo
You found it?

Marty
It was in Janey's room.

Jo
Oh.

Marty
It's in the middle.

Jo
She must have been watchin it.

Marty
I'm gonna watch it. You want to watch it with me?

Jo
I don't think I can put myself through that right now, Marty.
Alicia, unseen, sneaks into the bathroom.

Marty
Why what's it about?

Jo
You don't know?

Marty
No.

Bernie
Wow. You ain't seen it Marty? Marty, you ain't seen it? It's a classic.

Marty
I said no. What's it about?

Bernie
Um... It's about the French Occupation of Algeria. And how the Algerians fought off the French. Through, well, weird guerilla tactics. They blew up their cafes, jump out from under Burkahs and machine gun the French, little kids find guns in baskets and shoot them. Car bombs. You know, guerillas. So they're blowing up their cafes-, Baguettes are flying everywhere. Splintering

accordions... blood soaked berets... It wasn't pretty. And they, you know, they win eventually. The movie makes you root for the...the.. Algerians. For the Arabs.

Marty
For the Algerians?

Bernie
Yeah. They're the good guys in the movie. Because the French were a colonialist power and yadda yadda yadda. It's very interesting.

Alicia comes out of the bathroom. She closes the door. Marty, Bernie and Jo sink, as if the air has escaped from their lungs momentarily, on seeing Alicia come out. Marty and Bernie walk towards each other on the verge of falling down.

Marty
The French?

Bernie
Yeah. Its an anti-colonialist movie from the 60s. Farkahta College kid revolutionaries love it.

Marty
I guess that's why its at the Film Forum.

Marty falls to her knees holding Bernie and sobbing.

Jo
Marty.

Marty
It's my fault. Its my fault. It's my fault. It's my fault she died.

Jo
No it isn't Marty..

Marty
Yes it is. It's gotta be. It's my fault.

JO
How could it be your fault?

Marty
WHOSE FAULT IS IT?

Marty pulls a letter from her pocket. She holds it up. It has been opened and looks as if it has been read several times.

Marty

Here she is. Here's your Janey. Here she is. Making as much fuckin sense as she always has.

Jo

What's that?

Marty

It's a letter. I got it yesterday. I don't know what it means. Can you tell me what she is saying? You tell me where she is. You tell me where she has gone.

Jo

This is from Janey?

Marty

Will you read it, please?

Jo quickly unfolds the letter and looks at it.

Jo

You want me to read this?

Bernie

What does it say?

Jo

Ma-

I found the way to win. I will try to tell you. You have got to have patience. You have got to think things through. I know that. I have been practicing. And something has opened up in the sky for me. An empty thing. A place to go. I'm surrendering to it.

And Ma I can see it. I am looking straight at it. I'm not scared of any fucking thing. It only hides when you refuse to look at it. But you can't not look. I kicked the shit out of a corpse the other day. And it is impossible to stop. People here shoot at packs of dogs at night, it's not for fun. But it is. It's all over you the next morning and you can't shake it off. But you can't stop yourself today.

I am a thousand years old.

So I am just gonna do it. Because this all around me is impossible to explain and impossible to bear. I found a piece of a skull on the ground just after a bombing run. I picked it up- The head wasn't far off. I just wanted to look at it. The clusters of veins inside of a person's skull look like trees. So there is a god. And god is in there. So there is nothing to fear.

You will need to forgive me. It's just so easy. You shoot. It doesn't matter if you are crying you are still shooting. It's inside us. Pure joy. When you want to kill and when you want to die. The moment grabs you and you drop everything in your field of vision and fire. God it is amazing. You lose the scope of all your actions. It is always today. There are no consequences. But the answer never comes.

It can't be a war all the time. But somehow it always has been, right Ma?

I love you. Janey

Marty

What does that mean? What does that mean? What did she do? What happened to her? What has she done? What has she done?

Jo bends down towards Marty. She looks her in the eye. She is about to speak. She hesitates. She again tries to speak. Suddenly Marty grabs the letter from her hands violently and walks away.

Marty

Don't say it. Don't say it. Get out of my house. Get out. Get out all of you.

Marty pulls the soldiers out of the bathroom. She tears the tape off of their mouths and off of their hands.

Marty

Get out. GET out of my fucking house. Please. Please. Leave. Get out.

Marty rushes to the door. Cadet Sgt. Smith cuts her off and stops her at the door.

Captain Sgt. Smith

MA'AM! Are you Martha Hill mother of Private First Class Jane Hill?

Marty

Yes. I am.

Cadet Johnson

Would you like to receive this news alone or with your family around you?

Marty

Where's Fred?

Jo

You sent him home.

Marty
You got his number?

Jo
Yeah, you want me to call him?

Marty
Yeah. Give Fred a call. Tell him his cranberry sauce stinks and that Marty wants him to come over.

Jo
Ok Marty.
You want me to call Fred Now?

Marty
Yeah. Fred's a nice guy isn't he?

Jo
Yeah, he's a really nice guy.

Marty
Call him.

Jo
Ok.

Looking back at Cadet Sgt. Smith.

Marty
Just tell me.

Sgt. Smith
Ma'am. The Secretary of the Army has asked me to express his deep regret at the death of your daughter, Private First Class Jane Hill, in Iraq on December 21st, 2004. The secretary extends his deepest sympathy to you and your family in your tragic loss.

Pause.

Marty
Is that it?

Sgt. Smith
Yes Ma'am.

Marty
That's all.

Sgt. Smith
Yes, Ma'am

Marty

She...she did it herself didn't she?

Sgt. Smith

A casualty assistance officer will be assigned to handle all of your funeral arrangements and will call within 24 hours. We are not allowed to go into the details. We have been asked to present you with this amount for immediate funeral expenses.

Marty

She did it herself?

Sgt. Smith

Ma'am, a casualty-

Marty

She did it herself?

Sgt. Smith

A casualty assistance officer will-

Marty

You know you tell me.

Sgt. Smith

In 24 hours a casualty assistance officer will.

Marty

She did it herself?

Cadet Johnson

Yes Ma'am. There is an ongoing investigation. But ma'am we are really not supposed to go into the details.

Marty

WHY?

Marty

Oh. Ok.

Ok. You boys can go now.

Soldiers move a step.

Marty

Sit down. Have some food. Where is her body?

Sgt. Smith

The insurance is still valid. A casualty assistance officer will call within twenty four hours and go over everything with you regarding the insurance and the burial. We are authorized to

present you with this amount for immediate funeral expenses.

Marty

Bring it here. Bring her body here. We can put it on the counter and you can rent it.

Sgt. Smith

Excuse me?

Marty

You can rent it, piece by piece!

Deliver her body here. We'll put it right here on the counter. Cut her up and put the pieces on the counter. Chop it up. Rent them one by one for three fifty a pop, take them home with you for a night and put it on top of your TV set. Sit there and stare at it all night as its rots right in front of your eyes.

You want bodies? Dig in the ground. ANYWHERE! Who told you to come here?

We got plenty of food. What more do you want?

If you said you wanted it, would you be refused? To eat? Bread? Or rice? Or falafel whatever they eat over there? We got plenty of food. What more do you want? You want to eat people? You hungry? Are you hungry? ARE YOU HUNGRY? WHY ARE YOU SO GOD DAMN HUNGRY? WHY CAN YOU NOT STOP EATING FOR ONE SECOND? CAN YOU NOT STOP STUFFING YOUR FACE FOR ONE MOMENT? Its revolting the sounds you're making. Standing in a back alley with your pants around your ankles, wondering why you fucked that whore. Running down the street buttoning your pants. What was it worth?

You can kill I can kill. I can...they got men dressed as mermaids on Coney island that can float through the air. And I know! I know how much the insurance is. \$150,000 dollars. \$150,000 dollars.

Eat! Don't deliver their children up to them after you've eaten them.

Sgt. Smith is leaning down looking at the floor. Marty sits, staring. Jo approaches him, puts a hand on his shoulder.

Sgt Smith

Are you a member of the family? (to Jo - she nods)
We are authorized to present you with this amount for the immediate funeral expenses. This is just for the immediate funeral expenses. Tomorrow a casualty assistance officer with call to go over the insurance and the burial options.

Jo

Ok

Marty
How much is it?

Jo
\$12,000

Marty
Give it here.
Marty takes the check and looks at it.

Marty
Twelve thousand dollars. Twelve thousand dollars. Jo. Twelve thousand dollars. Twelve thousand plus a hundred and fifty thousand is how much.

Bernie
162,000. Before taxes.

Marty signs the back of the check.

Marty
There's TAXES? Of course there is. Jo will you do me a favor. Go over and put this check in Mitch's pocket against he rent we owe.

Jo
OK, Marty.

Marty
Thanks.

Marty (To Soldiers)
Where you from?

Sgt. Smith
Upstate.

Cadet Johnson
I'm actually from Idaho.

Marty
Out of towners, huh?

Sgt. Smith
Yes Ma'am

Marty
From up at West Point?

Cadet Johnson

Yes, ma'am.

Marty

Sit down we got plenty of leftovers. You hungry? Alicia, baby, be a good girl and get some plates and silverware for our guests.

Alicia

Ok Marty.

Marty

You're a sweetheart.

Marty

You get down to the city much? You come down here for parties or whatever.

Sgt. Smith

No ma'am not much.

Cadet Johnson

No. But I always want to come down and see what it's like.

The soldiers sit down.

Marty

I'll set you boys up with a plate to take home with you. Nobody goes home on an empty stomach not on Christmas eve. OK? OK? You ever been to Brooklyn? You should stay a while. I got a couple spare rooms upstairs. You been to the promenade? Coney Island? Dumbo? It's beautiful in the sunset. You alright? You alright? You like movies?

Soldiers sit and prepare to eat

Sgt. Smith

Yes Ma'am.

Marty

See? Human beings!

Sgt. Smith

Ma'am we're really very sorry for your loss.

Marty

I'll make coffee. You want coffee don't you?

Cadet Johnson

Sure.

Marty

Can everybody please sit the fuck down at the table. Thanks.
Great. All of you sit. We've got deserts. Sit sit. Jo, sit
down. What a fuckin mess. Gotta clean up after the fuckin party.
The party's over now gotta clean up after it. Me.
Its okay. I'll make coffee. Sit sit down and act nice.
Everybody. I'll clean up.

*Marty erupts in the kitchen, dropping all the plates she has just
collected.*

YOU CAN'T CLEAN IT! YOU CAN'T CLEAN IT. YOU CAN'T CLEAN IT!

Marty picks up the gun from the stove.

LOOK AT ME!

No one can look. Her explosion has rattled them too much.

*Marty stuffs the gun in her mouth and fires, she falls behind the
kitchen counter.*

*Everyone sits in silence. Bernie stands and walks over behind
the counter. He falls down weeping.*

*Mitch, who has been passed out since the last scene, wakes up
screaming, from a dream. He laughs to himself. He does not see
what has happened. He rises slowly and walks to the table.*

Mitch

OH AH! Oh my god, Oh my head is pounding. Holy Toledo. I must
be out of my mind. Oh hey guys. Hey. What happened? Oh.
Desert. Oh great. Hey.

Mitch sits down, picks up a cream puff.

Mitch

Wow, I don't know how she does these cream puffs. Amazing.

*Jo gets up, walks over to Mitch and gives him the check. She
sits back down.*

Jo

This is for the back rent.

Mitch

Oh. Ok. Great. Thanks. Back in business.

Fast Blackout. END.

Note: A bit of International WOW Company fun.

There are four lines in the play which may be improved night to night from the following list of choices;

When Marty says:

"We have it. It's out, but we have the sequel, *Keep on Freakin.*"

The actor playing Marty may want to change the name of the sequel to Bloodsucking Freaks every night, just to keep her fellow actors on their toes. A good thing to do in a long run. Some possible choices include:

Freak like you Mean it
Island of Blood Sucking Freaks
Superfreaks Supersucking
Freaks in Space
Etc. Feel free to add to this list.

Similarly, there are three times when MITCH cracks "German jokes" in the play, to increasing levels of bad taste. In the script these lines read as:

1. *Hey Bernie I'd like to put my wiener in her Schnitzel*
2. *Hey Bernie, I'd like to Munch her Hausen*
3. *I'd like to gas her in the shower.*

These lines can be given out differently everynight, but the severity of the bad taste should still increase from one joke to the next. Here is a list of some options.

1. *Hey Bernie, I'd like to...*
Farfig her Nuugen,
Dussel her Dorff
Leit her suck my hosen
Etc...
2. *Hey Bernie, I'd like to...*
Mein her Kampf
Fire bomb up her Dresden
Mr. Bernie Tear down that wall!
Hitler I hardly even know her
3. *Substitutions for "Gas her in the shower"*
She could be my bar of soap
I'd make her my lampshade
Cook myself in her oven
Kill 6 million of her people

These jokes, while in severely bad taste, should get the audience thinking about the holocaust. It is important, I think to go this far in portraying a party full of people that are in the midst of denying the existence of a senseless and horrifying war.

A note about music:

International WOW Company's production of "The Expense of Spirit" worked with music in two ways. There was an orchestral score that created expressionistic shifts in the emotion of the scenes, scoring the play as if it were a film. The orchestral score served to elevate certain moments from the private to the epic, bringing the audience closer to the inner emotional states of the characters. You may find it necessary to find a musical score for the expressionistic parts of the play that is continuous or repeats the same themes, to build a consciousness of the changes in the audience through repetition. During the prologue and during the slow-motion and fast motion sequences of the party, the score helps also to separate the Marty and Jo from the rest of the party. The second kind of music was Christmas music. Christmas music has this incredibly strange dual effect. It can make you really happy. Or it can make you want to throw up. So of course, I used Christmas Music during the more "realistic" parts of the party, where the party goers are acting in real time. In contrast to the orchestral score which brings the audience in, the Christmas music in the party scenes provided distance, making the ordinary seem disconnected, and disconcerting.

Note About the B'K'LYN song:

To find out how to sing the "Brooklyn" song, rent the directors cut of Husbands by John Cassevetes. The song is in the bar scene. And, by the way, it is a masterpiece, so rent it even if you don't care about the song.

Cast of Characters:

Marty- Matriarch of Heights Video. Early 40s.

Bernie- Film buff with Broken VCR. Late Thirties.

Jo- Staff at Heights Video for 7 years. Late twenties/early thirties.

Alicia- Trainee at Heights Video. First Day. Japanese. Age range can be from teenage to early 30's

Fred- A good guy from Maine. Moved to Brooklyn two years ago. Recently finalized his divorce. Early 40's.

Mitch- Landlord of the building. Early 40s's. Life of the Party

Sgt Smith- An inexperienced soldier who has never had this particular duty. Early 20's

Cadet Johnson- An even more inexperienced soldier who has also never had this particular duty. Early 20's but younger than Smith.

Party Goers:

Sally: Early Thirties. A German schoolteacher who wears a turban, a blond wig and tells fortunes. Looks a bit like Isabella Rosselini in *Wild at Heart*.

P-Rod: Any Age. Short for Pedro Rodriguez. An elevator man who comes straight from work.

Professor Vizcaya: early 40's rents the entire Bergman section every spring.

Officer Goris: Early 40's. Saucy. Mother of Lily.

Lily: Punk kid. 15 or 16. Daughter of Officer Goris.

Zina: A vegetarian. Mid Twenties. Kisses everyone at the party.

Ponce: Graffiti writer, writes "I love you" on counters and videos.

Frank: Husband of Sherry. Hungarian. Early 40's

Sherry: Wife of Frank. Wears party dresses. Like's running around and showing her ass.

Sauda: Mid 30's. Rents 3 movies a day.

Santa: A homeless man dressed as Santa. Any age.