

Writing Sample

THE LOONY BIN

A Play in Two Acts

by

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PREFACE

This play is a collage of the American historical landscape. It offers a wide range of design, acting and directing styles mixed together. The full play offers extensive instructions on my vision for the play as an ensemble piece. You can download it on my website.

I had the good fortune to study with Paul Sills at NYU Tisch School of the Arts. I also toured the USA working with Chamber Theater Productions out of Boston, an off-shoot or type of Story Theater. Improvisation was also a large part of my training and teaching/directing later on. This piece utilizes these forms of expression, as well as (hopefully) my own genre borne from those influences. Most importantly, the collage, merging of various forms of theater we've discovered, are all onstage, when necessary for the greatest effect; from Comedy to Psychological Realism, Theater of Alienation, Visual Art Composition in varying forms (Matisse, Cezanne, and many others) and experimental theater forms.

EXCERPT 1

After walking with his walker, bags tied to it, for about ten seconds THE BEGGAR begins to speak directly to the audience.

BEGGAR

It was tiring. The constant pressure. Led to disgust. It took time. A lot of time. To wear down. The fiber of comfort. My patriotism. Love of delusion. To give up. But I saw his face blown apart. I saw children's arms piled high and set on fire. In wars that should never have been. Money wars. Nightmares. Pain. Now... I walk. I walk. A lot. With this walker. It's my home. The cement knows me. It hears me coming. I think of nothing but my childhood.

Nice Girl enters down stage right. She is dressed in a white dress down to her ankles, with an American Beauty Contest Banner draped over her. She is beautiful and speaks directly to the audience. Throughout her entire speech she wears a large phony smile like the Miss America candidates, people trying to look perfect, say all the right things, and present a fictitious yet expected

example of what beauty should look like.

BACK WALL IMAGE: The Killers and Presidents on the screen move to the side and a photo of Donald Trump smiling boldly with his arm around a young, under-aged, contestant appears center.

NICE GIRL

(to audience, big smile)

Hello. I'm nice. I like to be nice. Look nice. Sound nice. Smell nice. I've always been nice. Ever since I can remember. I love to act polite. Accommodating. Social. Seek approval, and go out of my way to give it. I help other people whenever I can. I exercise, eat right and shave my legs and armpits regularly. And, I use Ivory.

BEGGAR

(still walking very slowly)

Me as a child. Me as a teenager. Me as a college student. Me as a dreamer. A believer. Me as a head perceiving the world through the illusions given to me. Expectations. Beliefs. A proper process with all the right answers. A particular manner. A responsible way. (to an audience member holds out his hand) Hey mister? Got a quarter?

NICE GIRL

(modeling)

Like my hair? I take good care of it. And, I use only natural make up, sparingly. Organic. Of course. I take yoga classes, cooking classes, good-parenting classes, good spousal-preparatory classes, and keep my body in perfect shape for everyone. So they like me. My body is quite... nice... too... See... She begins removing her clothes. Underneath, she reveals a white bikini with the words "Miss America" written across her breasts and groin ("Miss across her breasts, "America" across her groin.) She models herself seductively but not overtly sexual.

EXCERPT 2

The juxtapositions of history, the staging on stage against the projections on the rear wall, create numerous symbolic statements about American history. In this case, the cruelty of our system at its core, selling people's dignity, for profit, a prostituted value system.

This sequence is in the center of the play, the underbelly hidden prior emerging.

The Beggar, from Excerpt 1, has been sitting against a wall throughout the play, seemingly asleep. Mommy is in Tableau in her home eating and talking on the phone.

SISSY has been sitting on her suitcase, putting on makeup, transforming her from a nice Catholic School student who ran away from home, to find a career in Porn.

PIMP is a white man dressed in a gray pin striped suit, who enters and looks at Sissy, and who speaks in a 1970's cliché Black Pimp Accent. He he grabs Sissy from the back of her neck, and walks down stage back and forth selling her to the audience.

DADDY (Sissy's father) sits upstage center, in a porn movie theater, watching a porn film, that is playing on the wall behind him.

The lighting reflects a dark, sleazy underworld, hidden from view now fully exposed like a bare ass on Madison Avenue.

PIMP

(to Sissy)

Baby... What you say? This is my day. OK? This can be your pay.

He pulls out a huge roll of money and puts it up to her face smiling.

Right baby?
PIMP

I guess.
SISSY

PIMP
Sexy Ladyyyy. We'll call you Barby Dollyyyy. You said you
wants to be in my films ain't dat the truth?

SISSY
Yes thank you.

PIMP
OK den... (to audience) ...and man she da best piece of
merchandise a salesman could pray dig wut I say? Jus'
Look at dis fiiiiineeee thaaaaang got a sexy riiiiing
from her long blonde siiiiiilk and her pert wide mouth
for some deep tongue kisssssin' an' the body wooooooovoo
for some nice hard fuckin' - she'll learn to do anything
ya want baby - and man she's new dig? HUNG-RYYYY for
that smear alllll ova her nice young face! New as a
mornin' rosebud outta the farmland mother earth pure
and sweet innocent and ready to be used like cotton -
dig? Or is it - PICK!

Christopher Columbus enters upstage center, and steps up onto a high platform so he's high above the downstage level just over Daddy's head. He is in full Captain garb and begins to sway back and forth slowly as if he were on a ship. He puts his hand over his eyes to block out the sun looking out for land. Several rough seamen, with bandannas, some with eye patches, beards, etc., enter from stage right and left and surround him, looking out as well. Columbus is much higher than the men.

Below Columbus, and above Daddy, a black female slave with her shirt pulled over so her back is exposed, enters, grabbing the edge of a platform far stage right and a white male slave owner enters holding an imaginary whip.

As he motions whipping her, the Foley Artist uses a real whip to make the slashing sounds. With each whip, the Slave screams in agony,

*and writhes in pain, her face out
towards the audience.*

WHIP. SLAVE GIRL SCREAMS.

PIMP

Like dem cotton mills?

WHIP. SLAVE GIRL SCREAMS.

PIMP

Like our past.

WHIP. SLAVE GIRL SCREAMS.

PIMP

Master dude puts it in the rear, father sheds a tear,
begs him not to tear and get's shot in his head on dat
frontier - you dig?

WHIP. SLAVE GIRL SCREAMS.

PIMP

Yeah baby I knows you do. She's fresh right off the
bush but she's shavin' dat bush - jus for your lickin'.
Nice an' smooth on duh tongue. Tight and slippery on
duh dick.

*WHIP. SLAVE GIRL SCREAMS. THE SLAVE
GIRL POSES IN AGONY, THE MASTER
SMILING AT HIS POWER OVER HER.*

CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS

Land mates. I see land!

ROWDY Cheers of men.

WHIP. SLAVE GIRL SCREAMS.

CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS

NEW LAND - NEW RICHES FOR ALL OF US!

Cheers of men.

CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS

This is our mission. To win this land. To take it anyway
we can. Do you hear my words - they are the will of our
Queen!

Cheers of men.

WHIP. SLAVE GIRL SCREAMS.

BACK WALL IMAGE: Center image becomes an image of 5 or more black people, men and women, hanging from a large tree.

NICE GIRL enters downstage of Columbus under his feet near the beggar who is still asleep from Act 1 and across from the Slave Girl and her Master.

NICE GIRL is now A HOOKER and poses in a typical street pose. But she's seriously burnt out, a heroin addict hiding her pain, scotching her arms, a complete change - but we must know it is the Nice Girl from earlier in the play. Around her waist, and clearly readable is the Miss America shawl she wore in Act 1, but now with soot, ripped, and tattered filthy edges.

NICE GIRL

(to the audience, rough,
hard, tired voice)

Hey baby, want a date?

Pose.

PIMP

(regarding Sissy)

She was sittin' there you know jus' sittin' like a baby lamb an' I came along and saved her from the sins of the street took 'er in gave her a place to stay like the bowels of old wooden ships sailin' cross the ocean each wave a little farther from home each movement of the tide jolting the memory of the graceful wild outta ya' pretty little head each twist of your arm squeezed by chains bolted to the vessels walls taking you away far from yourself from your home the scents of the free birds the faces of the tribe all fading and this new thing surrounds you on all sides its new like you couldn't guess at from where you were free - an' so many whips flyin'.

WHIP. SLAVE GIRL SCREAMS.

PIMP

Stingin' orders from angry lips.

WHIP. SLAVE GIRL SCREAMS.

PIMP

Mean white eyes burning like flames massive ignorance
drunk drinking the land and your blood passin' this
innocent thing from natures mommy to civilized towns
lookin' at teeth, bones, muscle, to be sold or not to
be sold.

WHIP. SLAVE GIRL SCREAMS.

PIMP

For da pleasure of the master race and in centuries
past comes down on you through the bigoted eyes of sons
and daughters deadly opinions believed everything built
by it up and high lived by blindin' everything like
pitch forks in a church and so she's here like her?

WHIP. SLAVE GIRL SCREAMS.

*The Slave Girl's Master aggressively
grabs the slave girl and puts his
groin up against her rear, and holds
her head down, so the upper half of
her body is flat on a platform, her
face out towards us. They should be
directly over, or near, Sissy and
Young Man - but in different
centuries.*

*BACK WALL IMAGE: 42nd Street 1970's
of Porn houses, smutty ugly and
blatant bright lights, neon signs,
prostitutes everywhere, and a Screen
Shot of PORN HUB homepage filled
with smutty sex.*

PIMP

Want her? Would you take her? Do things to her? Make
her yours? No one'll know what sinful things you have
on your mind - you can own her? For a little while.
Love her? Use her. Make her your toy. She's cheap.
'cause she' desperate. Can't live alone she'll go with
you 'cause she's scared isn't it beautiful? Isn't it
lovely? Isn't she so, so lovely? Born to be owned.

*On the word "owned" Pimp swings
around fast as Cash and Pan seem to
pop out of nowhere and they meet
eye to eye. Pimp throws his arm out
fast, palm up and Cash slaps a roll
of money into his hand.*

*CASH is fat, wears thick sunglasses
which cover the front and sides of
his eyes. He wears a wrinkled, shabby*

slightly too big black business suit and black thin tie, shiny black shoes and black socks. His hair is black and thickly greased back almost Dracula like. He is mean and harsh and loud. He smokes a thick long fat cigar and wears large gold rings.

PAN (the porn cameraman) follows with an invisible movie camera. This camera is from the early silent film era, and he winds it in large slow even movements - very controlled and precise. Pan is thin and greasy, but has black hair and wears a typical turn of the 20th century costume: overalls, work boots, and a short cap - like workers in America's Industrial Age. He slumps and looks ill.

Pan never stops filming - even if there is nothing to film. He points the camera at the audience and films them moving the camera from stage left to right and back, moving in and back, when not directed to film stage action.

CASH

(to sissy)

Ya Hired. Welcome to the big time bitch.

Cash grabs Sissy violently by the back of her hair and throws her center stage violently - she lands on her back.

CASH

Strip, then dance for me - or get the fuck outta here. You want a career, baby? Do like the man says. STRIP!

Sissy, nervous smiles and starts to dance in place.

CASH

You call that sexy? My grandmother could do better than that. This is the sex industry - we want open wild uninhibited smut - you gotta get inside of your slut for us. Can you do that or not?

SISSY

Yes.

DOWN STAGE LEFT, is THE BOY, who just committed a mass shooting, firing at the Audience with his machine gun, and is now alone, on the run.

Sissy continues dancing and stripping down. She's almost naked. Cash moves to her fast, grabs her by the back of her neck and spins her, then throws her on her back. Sissy falls, in one even dance-like movement, flat on her back, her legs and arms wide open facing upstage, and Pan begins to film her, moving around her like an old silent movie camera winding as he moves. Red and blue lights engulf center stage where Sissy is laying. She does not move and remains in this pornographic position facing upstage.

Pan moves around her now, filming her even when she's in a Tableau.

Christopher Columbus continues swaying from side to side, his hand blocking the sun from his eyes.

*CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS
Land mates! Virgin land. My lord.*

Cheers of men.

Cash swings around to face her and Pan.

PIMP, having been watching this, takes his suitcase and walks downstage and off right smiling and whistling Row Row Row Your Boat.