

**MINE**

An Inner-Chamber Play

m kennedy v o l c o f s k y

Reel 3 of *The Sunapes*

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.— Characters —.

. Dog's Head .

. Raincommander Burnbraid \$ .

. Slave .

. Dancers .

. Double-Cunted Aporia .

- ▲ A MINE. Black earth floor. Three-sided, no corners, with walls softly curved, slightly glossed, dully reflective. Rubble at sides.
- ▲ 5 SPIKELIGHTS — ‘Oil’ Lamps on spikes pounded into the backwall, at heights above the head of the tallest DANCER.
- ▲ DownStage Left & Right wings are TUNNEL-entrances.
- ▲ A half-buried TRAINTRACK at the front of the Minespace runs from Tunnel to Tunnel of the Mine.
- ▲ CANDLE-FOOTLIGHTS set along the audience side of the Tracks.
- ▲ TOOLS&MINESWORDS BOX — A human-size slat-wood tool Box, old and worn, TOOLS & MINESWORDS handwritten on its front in Fuckred lipstick. This is ‘assembled’ by opening its front-side out of the ground, and unfolding the other three sides from this front-side, the three sides all being hinged together. Like a magician’s box.
- ▲ Four large HOOK-EYE TENT SPIKES staked to the four ‘corners’ of the Mine.
  - ▲ A thick HEMPROPE tied to each.The Ropes go up and disappear from view converging in a pyramids apex high in the ‘rafters’ just above Right of Center. As if suspending something heavy.
- ▲ Various buried objects and trapdoors in this Mine.

*Tfillin: Plural of Hebrew tfila, 'prayer': two small leather (or sometimes metal) cases each attached to a leather strap; one is fastened onto the forehead, one to the left bicep, its strap spiraling down the forearm and around the index finger. They are worn by Orthodox or Conservative Jewish men during morning prayer. The tfillin boxes contain passages from Deuteronomy and Numbers, including the Sh'ma, the prayer asserting the Oneness of YHVH — "G•d" — as well as the mandate to use tfillin. The forehead-box has four chambers, the arm-box has two.*

*Mezuzah: Hebrew mezuzah, 'doorpost': the small amulet attached to the right side (entering) of all thresholds in a Jewish home, all those leading into rooms — all except the bathroom. Inside this amulet is a scroll of the same excerpts from Deuteronomy and Numbers — the Sh'ma, and the mandate to use mezuzim. Its prototype can be sensed in the blood smeared on the doors of Hebrews the night of the Exodus from Egypt. Exile begins at home. The mezuzah is to be touched with kissed fingers when passing through the threshold. The word Shaddai, 'Almighty', written on the underside of the scroll, is often made visible. The root of Shaddai is the same for the Hebrew word meaning 'breasts'.*

*Yod: Tenth letter of the Hebrew alphabet, the word means 'hand'. A Yod is a rod with a small pointing hand on the end, used to keep one's place while chanting from the Torah in synagogue; to keep a distance between the hand and the text; to create a bond between reader and the text; and both to simultaneously prevent one from and enable one to point directly at 'G•d' — the Torah. They are made either elaborately or simply, out of wood or silver.*



*The audience is held outside the performance area proper.  
From inside the sound — the feeling — of a huge collapse, a crashing is heard.  
Then they enter the*

*Mine. Dark. Dust is settling. Rubble. A filthy nude man wearing arm Tfillin stands DownStageCenter — small box tied around the left bicep, strap spiraling down the forearm, around the hand, around the forefinger. He is sooted unevenly from head to foot, watching the procession file in. When it has settled —the audience that is— two flames fall from the rafters, one right after the other. One flame falls on and lights the Tfillin box — inside the box is a Candle — and then falls to the Mineearth; the nude man crushes it out with a foot. The other falls into the rubble, UpStageLeft. It too ignites a Candle. It burns. He gazes at his feet, looks straight ahead again. He moves backwards to the burning Candle without looking. He picks it up, without looking. It is in a Tfillin box tied around the head of a dog. The flame that ignited this Candle flies back up, disappearing. The man returns DownStageCenter, holding the DOG'S HEAD by one of its ears, its forehead Tfillin-Candle burning.  
He says in a quiet voice to House*

I love you.

*OffStage, in each Tunnel, the lights of a changing traffic signal begin to pulse, at the pace of a slow heartbeat. Beginning at green. Pulse green. Mechanical click. Pulse yellow. Mechanical click. Pulse red. Stay, pulsing, at red.*

*The man places the DOG'S HEAD —its forehead Tfillin-Candle burning— over his own.  
The DOG'S HEAD makes its hands into the shape of an open book, tilts its head forward and begins to Daven —pray— rocking slightly forward and back at the hips, counting rapidly in a barely audible whisper, starting at 1.  
The counting is interrupted by occasional smacking of the lips.  
A brief prayer, perhaps 15 seconds. Stops. Closes book.*

*Two flames — one from each of the Tfillin-Candles— detach and break away, sail in opposite directions and disappear into the OffStage Tunnels. In each Tunnel the sound of a shortcircuit, the flicker of blue shortcircuit light, and darkness, the pulsing red stopped. Pause. In each Tunnel the flicker of flames begins. In each Tunnel a low, steady, quiet male sobbing begins.*

*The DOG'S HEAD whispers to House*

I love you.

*Beat  
Beat*

*The DOG'S HEAD takes a long, deep inhale, and holds it at its apex.*

*Beat*

*Beat*

*The DOG'S HEAD lets loose a howl to stand your hair on end.*

*Beat*

*The DOG'S HEAD stands, looks both ways down Tracks. The male sobbing OffStage continues.*

*Beat*

*Beat*

*The DOG'S HEAD plucks a hair from its head and touches an end of it to the forehead Tfillin-Candle, igniting it.*

*The DOG'S HEAD lights the Candle-Footlights with this lit-hair.*

*Moves to the backwall, and lights the Spikelights with it, proceeding from StageRight to StageLeft.*

*The DOG'S HEAD moves to the rubble UpStageLeft, crushes out the lit-hair with a foot, and crawls into the rubble, burying itself, the flames of the Tfillin-Candles disappearing under the rocks.*

*The sobbing stops.*

*Pause.*

*A man appears in each Tunnel. Each carries a pick-ax and a shovel over a shoulder, and a tin bucket by its handle in one hand. They wear sleeveless t-shirts, khakis, and workboots. They are bareheaded. On their foreheads they have a Candle set in a reflector, a miner's head-light. They are filthy with Mineearth. They walk slowly, getting their bearings in a new workspace. They come in, set down their buckets, and begin to dig. They dig in silence, without looking at one another. They unbury the matted carcass of a dog, stiff with rigor. They stand it up, continue digging. The one from StageRight unburies another Bucket, a large pair of rusty Shears, and a flowerprint summer Dress. The one from StageLeft unburies a full unlabeled liquor Bottle, a mass of human Hair, and a flowerprint summer Dress. Pause. Each throws the pick-ax, shovel, and bucket they entered with down into the hole they have dug. They pull wallets out of their pants pockets and empty money — bills and coins— down into the hole they have dug. They toss the wallets in. They pull small books out of their pockets, kiss them, and throw them down into the hole they have dug. They pull sets of keys out of their pockets, and throw them down into the hole they have dug. They each remove their headlights and boots and clothes, and, naked now, throw them down into the hole they have dug. They bathe themselves with Mineearth, even rolling in it on their backs gleeful like dogs, with low moaning growls, making themselves as filthy as possible. With ecstatic sound effects they mime-piss & -shit in the hole they have dug. They fill the hole in, with their hands and feet, also dog-like. The dog-carcass they let remain stand. They throw the Dresses over their shoulders, pick up the objects they unburied — the one from StageRight the Bucket and Shears, the one from StageLeft the Bottle and Hair — and, cocking their heads as*

*if hearing something from inside their Tunnels, stand and listen. They move, searchingly, hesitantly, each back to his Tunnel, and exit.*

*Pause.*

*The sobbing begins again in the Tunnels. Low, steady, male.*

*The two men emerge from the Tunnels, each wearing the flowerprint summer Dress, holding the objects they unburied from their holes.*

*RAINCOMMANDER BURNBRAID \$ from StageRight, with Bucket and large Shears.*

*SLAVE from StageLeft, with Bottle and mass of Hair.*

*They are sobbing, steadily, quietly. They gaze out at House.*

*With their eyes on the House they walk slowly down Tracks to CenterStage, where they meet, eyes still out to House. They dip at the knees and place their objects on the ground. Each grabs a handful of Mineearth with his right hand, and stands up again. While looking out at House, the sobbing stops and their eyes shut.*

*They inhale loudly through their noses, face each other, and kiss, long, open-mouthed, embracing. They let go, mouths still open, and exhale. Each cradles the back of the other's head with the empty hand, eyes shut. Each takes his right hand, full of Mineearth, and presses the earth into the other's mouth, shoving and screwing it in. They inhale loudly through their noses. Their eyes open. They gaze at one another. The hand covering the mouth is formed into a tube, through which they sing, moving in rhythm.*

SLAVE & RAINCOMMANDER BURNBRAID \$

Or salt Or coal Or diamonds Or gold

Or food Or heat Or love Or gold

Or ocean Above Or starlight Below

Or moon In the roof Or sun Under toe

*The hand-tubes are pulled off and they each mime-smoke a cigar, eyes to the sky, still cradling the backs of each other's heads, puffing.*

SLAVE

'Tsa girl.

RAINCOMMANDER BURNBRAID \$

Few shay sho.

*They puff, eyes to the sky. They look each other in the eye.  
They re-cover each other's mouths with the hand-tube. Sing again, moving with  
rhythm. Descending tones every two lines.*

SLAVE & RAINCOMMANDER BURNBRAID \$

Eh, O eh ah

Eh, O eh ah

Mo-Eh, O eh ah

Eh, O eh ah

Eh, O eh ah

Mo-Eh, O eh ah

Ah ah ah ah ah ah ah ah

*They stop. The hand-tubes are collapsed back down to re-cover their mouths;  
they make the dirt-shoving-in movement, as before. They stare into each other's  
eyes. Blink once. Their eyes shut. Dropping arms to side, turn to face House,  
mouths closed. Break into a huge species of smile, head cocked, eyes shut,  
showing mouths—teeth and gums and tongues—blackened with Mineearth.*

*Eyes open and roll up to the ceiling. Right heads. Empty hands forming open  
books at their chests, they pronounce the Unpronounceable Name, a gesture that  
strongly resembles dry-heaving. They close the books.*

*They sniff the air.*

*They turn and after a brief visual examination of the ground, while sniffing, they  
hone in and, high-stepping over the UpStage Rail into the Minespace, with their  
bare hands unbury 2 filthy plates of food, a filthy old wine bottle, 2 filthy glasses.*

*They pull two wooden chairs up out of the ground. The chairs were buried in  
sitting positions.*

*They sit, arranged around the dog carcass, and begin to have this filthy lunch,  
eating off their laps with their hands, enjoying, talking while eating, filling each other's  
glass.*

RBS

They took a helmet, which was just like a fishbowl, and they filled it with bees, and they  
put it on my head.

SLAVE

You mean they put it over your head.

RBS

The sound was worse than the stinging.

SLAVE

This was for a long time?

RBS

Yes.

SLAVE

Ah.

RBS

Then, much much later, with a beam of sunlight they cut the top open, right around, like just like like ... All the bees by now had died of course, from the stinging. They all were piled up, now, right, dead, right up to the bottoms of my eyes. Which now were absolutely shut up, completely closed with the swelling. There were even some under my eyelids. For a long time I couldn't even tell what was moving under there, bees or my eyes. But eventually logic prevailed, and I knew. I was certain. Although they barely had any weight, any weight at all. Dead they even felt edible. There were some in my mouth, but I didn't chew. That was hard, too, having grown ravenous. Even with my tongue so swole. I remember imagining that they were a delicacy, somewhere. Which I later discovered to be true. Certain situations annihilate the boundaries of one's own cultural habitat, revealing the arbitrariness of the structure one is born into, and lives within, like this ground bound to this air. In moments like those one thinks with the living and dead minds of a million men. And *everything* is real, and *true*, not the opposite, as some would have. But, because it was much, much later, and everything else was shut up swollen, I had had to learn to breathe through my ears. So I was.

SLAVE

What sort of logic are you referring to?

RB\$

Well. A base sort, no doubt. Considering the context. Constructed — improvised, actually, out of the materials at hand and the necessities of the situation. An algorithmic dirge really. A kind of metonymic cocoon formed and out burst the certainty.

SLAVE

Really? So the sound was worse?

RB\$

O yes. Much worse. Much much more worse. Especially after they died. And even more worse because I had had to learn to breathe through my ears, you understand. So I had to inhale the sound. There was just no other way. Except to stop inhaling. Which was harder than you would expect. Considering. Considering the sound would stop *only* when the breathing did. You'd think then at least then stopping would be an option, at least. Especially with that sound. Those bees. Because the sound was. They died but it got trapped. It was a voice. A bellowing voice. Bellowing, echoing in your head. Shouting, wailing your name. But only inside. Only *inside*. Thundering your name. Over and over and overandoverandover. Forever.

SLAVE

Not mine, yours.

RB\$

Thats what I said. When they — when that beam of sunlight opened that helmet up there was such suction, the sound sucking out of my head, being sucked out my ears. The bees went up right between my eyes in a tiny tornado of yellow dust with the light just shooting in. But because I had had to learn to breathe through my ears, you see ... You understand now?

SLAVE

I'm listening.

*RB\$ smiles and then backhands him. Glasses and plates fly. SLAVE is knocked off chair onto hands & knees, looking at the ground, where he remains.*

RB\$

*Stands*

RB\$ (cont)

Don't you ever say that to me. Ever.

*He empties the winebottle onto the ground.*

Lights.

*From right beneath himself SLAVE opens a trapdoor and removes 3 Oil-lamps, already lit. Like Hurricane lamps. He closes the door. He arranges the lights around RB\$'s feet, then returns to looking at the ground, on his hands & knees, where he remains.*

RB\$

I said you think I betrayed who?

I said Who?

I said you need a name to make a complaining.

I said you need a name.

I said so I betrayed Who?

There wasn't any answer.

There couldn't be.

How could there be?

There wasn't any.

Before I even set foot there.

Before I even set FOOT there.

I remembered even before.

*Turns and faces House.*

*Quiet*

Slave

SLAVE

Yes, 'Mander.

RB\$

We got work.

SLAVE

Nnknow.

Slave. RB\$

Yes, 'Mander. SLAVE

And how many day it was getting to up here? RB\$

Bleeve it was one eighteen, 'Mander. SLAVE

It *was* one eighteen, Slave. RB\$  
And Slave.

Yes, 'Mander. SLAVE

Doesn't give a dogs eye what you bleeves. RB\$  
Bleeves has nothing to do with it.  
And anyway, Slave.

Yes, 'Mander. SLAVE

You don't believes. RB\$

No. SLAVE

And Slave. RB\$

Yes, 'Mander. SLAVE

RB\$

Look up now. We up here now and the least you could do is start raising your eyes, man.

SLAVE

*He doesn't*  
Yes, 'Mander.

RB\$

Slave.

SLAVE

Yes, 'Mander.

RB\$

Have you ever seen me before?

SLAVE

What should I say?

RB\$

I love you.

SLAVE

I love you.

RB\$

We say that up here, Slave.

SLAVE

Yes, 'Mander.  
*Pause*  
'Mander.

RB\$

I'm listening.

SLAVE

*Still looking at ground*

SLAVE (*cont*)

Where is of everything this time? Nothings here. Toolbox. Dancers. The coins I so much love to place upon your eyes. Nothings of it here. 'Mander. Nothings like it is so when we come. Do you know? Alls I can think is this we've come to the wrong one. Nothings of it. Nothing of its here.

RB\$

It has been robbed of us Slave. Stole. Sunk beneath a rain of dirt upon dirt. We have nothing. Nothing. You feel that? You FEEL that? *Nothing*. We arrive up here one hundred eighteen day getting up here and theres we have NOTHING. Them never return.

SLAVE

*Raises head, looks at RB\$*

'Mander. 'Mander I loves you. 'Mander.

RB\$

I'm listening.

SLAVE

'Mander. Now we can begin. Good? You listen. Whiles I rise and begin you just of stand there and listen so to the wind. 'Mander you will?

RB\$

*Turns head towards SLAVE*

I'll take everyone.

I'll take everyone and shove them back inside themselves.

I'll shove them back inside themselves til nobody is gone.

I'll make them.

I'LL MAKE THEM.

*Faces House again*

SLAVE

You remember, Commander, then, when, we used t' make coal-rubbings of headstones up on Sleepers Hill? 'Mander you collect that? Good? Well, sir. Commander. I want you to do that with the air now, of with the wind. Right here in the air before you a story is chiseled into the wind. Commander, I want you to make a coal-rubbing of it. I want



DANCERS wear filthy & torn coalgrey-striped loose fitting baseball-like uniforms, crumpled newspaper tutus around their waists. The stripes are almost two-inches wide.

They wear filthy & torn once-white socks, no shoes.

On the front left breast a team-size number 1 in red; on the back a larger team-size red 0.

They wear short blonde wigs over identically grey-striped caps. A red Greek 'Phi' on caps.

They have red lips.

They themselves are clean.

They each have a closed jar of coins tied to the outside of their left shins.

They each hold, horizontally, a man's wingtip, which they spin on the palm of one hand.

They hum musically.

They cross the stage facing the House, moving sidewise along the Tracks, rotating the shoes, curtsying, and then stamping the jars of change to make them ring.

Punctuating the speech with deliberate familiar percusses.

They cross in front of RB\$.

They exit out the StageRight Tunnel before the speech ends.

Neither DANCERS nor SLAVE make any effort to not interfere with RB\$'s speech. At the end he is left speaking alone.

RB\$

*Balancing on UpStage Rail*

SSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSsst. SSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSsst. SSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSsst.

Even the stamps are still wet, see.

I —.

He.

Can smell the coffee in the mouth that licked this envelope clean.

I —.

It. Is. Morning, you understand. Morning up on Sleepers Hill. A very green and sunwarm morning, thick ripe summer. The air like some bastards breath in your face. Clouds of gnats humming like brains. Coiling and uncoiling. The whole world trying to think this thing through with me see.

*I am a purse. Theres money in me shaw.*

I dreamed one of the girl Sleepers said that to me and Im up there supposing I can figure out which girl Sleeper it is.

RB\$ (cont)

*We finally made it up here*

*Look Look*

*The air is clear and bright and wide*

*Look*

*And there is light*

*Light light light light light light light light*

*Sleepers Hill is never so bright and wide as this*

*Never*

*I am a purse. Theres money in me shaw.*

*Come, Cash. Come you Buck. I let you find it just you try some.*

So Im up on Sleepers Hill with the world trying to think through this thing. Nancy Chubb had came with me. Nancy Chubb is a close friend, and she tells me You cant think through a dream. Nancy Chubb tells me not one of them girls up on Sleepers Hill is ever a purse no more. But, what you might say is she came along for the ride. And I had already decided to start digging. The Scoop and the Halfsweep are already in my hands and its getting too hot too quick to not start if Im ever going to. So I do. I get down on my hands and knees and start. I dont make no decision about which. I let my legs stop walking and my arms start digging right where they want. Those gnats in the air like brains makes me think the less I use mine the better. Wasnt mine that whispered in the first place sos I dont think mine 'll be much help hereafter.

So Nancy Chubb sits down watching me start to dig up one of the girls up on Sleepers Hill. She sits down with her long red hair back against this girls headstone her skirt up showing me herself whiles I dig. Nancy Chubb is a close friend. Theres nothing. *Nothing*. Nothing like digging for a Sleeper watching female flesh being made wet with its own female hands. Being pressed and opened and ripened with its own wet unringed fingers. Being rubbed and slit and moved in and out of its own red painted nails.

Theres nothing like watching.

Im digging and Im watching and the sun is like an empty pool on my back. Im pouring sweat. Im hurrying. Im digging. And Nancy Chubb is taking her time. My heads eye-level with the ground when Nancy Chubb starts to make her sound — the sound she does



RB\$ (cont)

an instant. The unstopped hole is restopped. Im hoisted the hundred miles up and over the top. I become an assassin to him I know as me.

*I am a purse.*

Nancy Chubb ties the Scoop and the Halfsweep together and I swing them cross my shoulder and we make our way down from Sleepers Hill. She goes back to twisting bottles. And I dont even fill in that rotten stinking sewer-hole of meat. Leave it for the sky to eye like one of its own plucked sockets.

*Pause*

Or another version of the same.

*Falls flat on back into Minespace*

SLAVE

*From inside Box, soft taunting singing*

Rain ... Com ... Man ... Der

RB\$

*Flips onto abdomen*

You stop that

SLAVE

Rain ... Com ... Man ... Der

RB\$

*Flips onto back*

Stop that that

SLAVE

Rain ... Com ... Man ... Der

RB\$

Stop stop.

*SLAVE's singing has stopped. RB\$ gets up on knees, cupping hand to left ear.*

That.

Slave. Slave wait wait slave. Slave. I. Kay. Nigh. Bred. I. I. I cannin. Breathing. Slay. Os. Slay.

SLAVE

*Getting out of Box*

O shhhhh, 'Mander. Shhhhh, sir. You know of I don't bleeve. You know of.

*Leaning over him from behind*

Ling

*Blows in RB\$'s left ear*

Ling

*Blows in right ear*

Ling

*Blows in left ear*

There, 'Mander. Shhhhh, sir. Wasn't such a tehble story you jus rubbed on, sir. Yes, dear, I was. Learning to count, 'Mander, never easy for no one.

*Pulls him up by his hair*

*Violently*

You. Forgot. The fire.

SLAVE

Don't. Forget. Your feet.

*Less violent*

This is always the point of where you falter, 'Mander. This is always the point of where you fail. Why are you so failing, 'Mander? Why are you so throwing away your feet?

*Lets him go*

'Mander.

RB\$

You started this.

SLAVE

We got work.

RB\$

What happened?

SLAVE

'Mander —

RB\$

NO. What happened? What happened what happened what happened what happened  
what happened?!?

*Pause*

SLAVE

Lowly lowly lowly tale of the Hyena. Do you remember this so on the way up?

RB\$

Passing the —

SLAVE

Just by the, under it —

RB\$

I hear it — still — the

SLAVE

Thats a given

RB\$

I hear I hear the sound of the sea —

SLAVE

Thats a given its a given —

RB\$

I hear the sea. Yes. I have much often remarked on the sonorous similitude of very large  
fires and the explosion of waves.

SLAVE

Yes.

RB\$

I'm listening.

SLAVE

That Hyena what served us lunch. And right during you of 'scuse yrself go out the back and clip Ehad's lefthanded spikelight. Just like that so. An that moroccoworker was never the same since.

RB\$

He died. He was a man. Nothing he ever did never lasted.

SLAVE

Of he's dead 'Mander.

RB\$

Thats right he was a man. He's dead Ehad. He died Ehad. Nothing he ever did never lasted and he was a man Ehad ohright? And I clipt that spikelight during that lunch what served up to us by that lowly lowly Hyena.

SLAVE

A lefthanded spikelight is hard to come by.

RB\$

And I stole it.

That Hyena. I swallowed her teeth once.

SLAVE

I remember that.

RB\$

Still on the jaw, you'll recall. Yes.

SLAVE

*In violent, exaggerated female-Hyena voice, with violent gestures as well*  
What you would like me ti do crawl und the sheets of the erth lay down and and ded man  
that what who wants  
Me lay down and die, now, eat thisa up alive, well  
For I sit down und ground I first me I ssy what needs  
What union not here, thast  
What forgiving, thanks before as all that never had

SLAVE (cont)

Beyond between inside crushed way down under we had, we got here and now

What you want me do lay down and ded

Just ngo, slip through like these

Looking, plush, pleased, righteous, bargaining, meticulous handjobbed seraphim down  
wwith all the others

Lay down and ded is what you'd like, I remember

Baaaaaah Baaaaaaah Baaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaah

PRobably

You want crawl und this mud sheet, curl up and breath ded for good and ever?

We can do that too, sir. There's all piece of the story muscled under this mudpied sheet,  
even und our dresses, m

*Both hysterical laughter. Continue. Sudden stop. Both run and fighting each other get in to the Box and pull the lid shut.*

*Pause, actorless stage.*

*Laughter, a quiet laughter heard now from the Box. They re-emerge, with their arms full. They are carrying flowerprint summer dresses, hair, eyeglasses, silverware, women's shoes, hardbound black books, and under both their bundles, each has an Ax.*

*They dump all of it in the Center, keeping hold of their Axes. They laugh, quietly, throughout. SLAVE re-lids the Box.*

*Axes in hand they "Model" for each other, trying on the hair and glasses, holding the dresses up in front themselves, showing each other a hand holding a shoe, a fork, a knife, a book, whatever the combinations; they laugh steadily throughout, not loudly, not forcefully, a falling subdued warbling laughter.*

*They stop.*

*They drop everything onto the pile.*

*They face each other with the Axes. Look at each other, the pile between them.*

*Pause.*

*With no warning and with great speed each turns and gives the Hemprope knot behind him— tied to the Hook-Eye Tent-Spikes in each corner of the Mine —a single blow with the Axe.*

*Then —one crossing from UpStage to Down, the other the reverse— they give a single blow to the other two.*

*They toss their Axes on the pile.*

*They stand under the Ropes point of convergence, and looking up, watch.*

*The Hemropes unravel and are pulled, by whatever they were securing, out of the Hook-Eyes and into the rafters.*

*The Ropes fly up fast, loud, out of sight.  
RB\$ stands, mouth open head back welcoming whatever it is about to fall on top of him. He sees it.  
SLAVE kneels and rapidly, with a few hand-strokes unburies 2 large silver Coins.  
He moves behind RB\$ and mimes the Coins plunge from above, lands them on RB\$'s open eyes, resting them there.  
SLAVE then kneels in front of RB\$, at his feet, arms covering head in a gesture of defenseless protection.*

*Stay. Loud labored panting breaths.  
Pause.*

*RB\$ tilts his head forward and the Coins drop into his open palms.  
SLAVE stands up and brushes off his knees & palms.  
RB\$ closes a hand over each Coin, turning them face-down, and makes the gesture to SLAVE to "Guess".  
SLAVE chooses, tapping the hand three times.  
RB\$ turns over the fist, opens it, shows the Coin, and SLAVE plucks it from his palm.  
They gaze at one another.  
They each close a fist over the Coin, raise this fist to their lips and kiss the first finger-knuckle, keeping it near their mouths.  
They pivot, turning their backs to one another.*

RB\$

I'd give you six dollars for that but not a penny more.

SLAVE

Me I'dn't take ner less thn a dime ever, and expecially ner from of likes as you.

RB\$

You understand, don't you, the convergence of time into cash.

SLAVE

Yes, somewhat like the convergence of starlight into the past.

RB\$

That, sir, is precisely accurate and even somewhat insightful I'd say.

SLAVE

Clear.

SLAVE (*cont*)

Auction. It is not barter it is an outright sale.

RBS

All goods in persnals, the way we always liked it.

*They kiss the knuckle again.  
Turn to face one another.*

SLAVE

*Lifts up his Dress, exposes himself, and holds the Coin at a spot on his upper right thigh.*

I want to put it there.

RBS

*Lifts up his Dress, exposes himself, and holds the Coin at a spot above his right hip bone.*

No, I want it here.

*Drop their Dresses.*

SLAVE

I want it to the right and down.

RBS

*Gestures for the Coin. SLAVE tosses it to him.*  
Well, we'll just have to give her two then.

SLAVE

Well, you draw the picture and I'll write it out.

*SLAVE picks the Axes up off the pile and goes and steps inside the TOOLS&MINEWORDS BOX, closing the lid behind him.*

RBS

*Watching SLAVE descend and disappear into the Box.*  
Silence pours in the mine

Extinguishes the ember left, and I saw night.

*The lid shuts.  
Drops the Coins, one at a time.*  
And then from the trees a swarm of embers fell

RB\$ (cont)

Igniting the attic floor.

*Covers them over with a foot.*

I betrayed you before you me

But saved my confession until after yours

Because I knew you loved me more

And so will always be more wrong

See

*Covers ears with hands. Uncovers.*

What you have done has been absolutely forgot

And so forgiving can no longer reach you

In just this same way

Your voice came gliding to me long after I saw your mouth move

I did not know

*The Box lid opens*

Hadint

You were so far

*SLAVE emerges from the TOOLS&MINES WORDS BOX triumphantly holding a pair of men's wingtips. He closes the lid and sits on it, admiring, then putting on and tying, the Shoes.*

SLAVE

*While putting on and tying them*

*The message of the Shoes*

Raincommander, all your pictures have been destroyed

And your name too is a mockery, without bearing, without wheels.

When I believed coming here together would suture our estrangement I could not see how you would change along the way, before we arrived.

And now that we have entered

RB\$

We blasted our way in here Slave

SLAVE

Now that we have entered I think it best we retain our separate ways

RB\$

Go them

SLAVE

*Up from the Box, walking tentatively towards him in the new Shoes*  
It is as if the root

The root we have both grown from was ruined by a spring rain that never stopped.  
Raincommander.

*At him, close, face to face*  
When I put my ear to your chest I hear my own heart beat

RB\$

When I put my ear to your chest I hear the ocean

SLAVE

That is proof

RB\$

This is proof

SLAVE

We were once in love

RB\$

We were one in love

SLAVE

Come here, 'Mander, listen to the waves

RB\$

*Head on SLAVE's chest. Listening.*  
I could hear them Slave, up on Sleepers Hill  
With my eyes closed like this  
A matchhead the size of the sky, struck, flaring  
Kshhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhh, Kshhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhh, Kshhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhh



*In the dark a single male sob.*

SLAVE

*In woman's voice, whispering.*  
You set me on fire

*A male sob*

You set me on fire, you tried to turn me into smoke

*A male sob, and 'SSSSSssssssssss'*

The woman you loved, me

Me

*Pause*

*RB\$ lights a match, and what is visible is SLAVE with his head on RB\$'s chest*

RB\$

*Lighting new match when necessary*  
Firecup. Heartsaddle. Soundscuttle. Chute. Footdrill. Threader. Winder. Scoop.  
Astronomer. Strummer. Halfsweep. Rake. Houselight. Spikelight. Conductor. Ax.  
Stringer. Water. Sugar. Vodka. Bread. Lamb. Chocolate.  
Whiteheartwhitelungwhitebonewhitebloodwhitetonguewhitesea.  
Blackheartblacklungblackboneblackbloodblacktongueblacksea. Wind. Ice. Rain. Fire.  
The Daily Press.

*Dark again.*

*Pause.*

RB\$

*In dark*  
I. Was in war. I. Was in work. I. Was made to watch. I returned I heard all your  
voices coming from above ground. I. Wanted to write your name on the empty page of  
the sky like my ancestors did. Write your name in smoke with the fat of your body like a  
pen dipped in fire. I. Loved you. I could not find you I returned to our home. I could  
not find you. Even you held me. Later. And much later, after we both are long dead, my  
name is erased, paved over by the cement loom of the city. Is I loved you.

SLAVE

*In original voice*  
What name.

RB\$

My name. Mine. My name.

SLAVE

*Violently*  
What. Name.

*The TOOLS&MINES WORDS BOX opens, and 5 DANCERS, wearing Leg-Candles, emerge; one remains standing in the Box. They wear their caps over their wigs now. They form a conveyor belt, along which they pass armfuls of Greenery, of foliage, which is dumped at the shod and unshod feet of the two men, until much of their lower-legs are hidden.*

DANCERS

*While conveying the green*  
Raincommander Burnbraid Dollarsign  
Who had a son  
Who had a son  
Who had a son  
Raincommander Burnbraid Dollarsign  
Cast the story  
He refused to tell  
  
Raincommander Burnbraid Dollarsign  
Is instantly forgot  
Instantly forgot  
Is instantly forgot  
Raincommander Burnbraid Dollarsign  
Whose name has been erased  
Whose name has been extinguished  
Raincommander Burnbraid Dollarsign

DANCERS (*cont*)

You never lived

Inside the story

No one lives

DANCERS *all move to back Minewall, standing beneath the extinguished Spikelights, backs to house.*

The story outside

I live

DANCERS *turn, face forward.*

*In the light of the Leg-Candles RB\$ & SLAVE dance out the following, empty handed.*

*The “Or” phrases are syncopated with and overlapped by the longer phrases, sung by 2 DANCERS as a rhythmic chorus beneath. j = Handclaps & Leg-Candle lifting.*

DANCERS

Raincommander Burnbraid Dollarsign and Slave

j Or salt

Dig and dig for hours and days

j Or coal

Dig and dig for days for months

j Or diamonds

Dig and dig for months for years

j Or gold

Dig and dig for years

No sun no sun no moon no moon

In this Dogmine

Drink from an empty bowl of hands

In this Dogmine

j Or food

They undig the tops of

j Or heat

They undig the names of

DANCERS (*cont*)

*j* Or love

They undig the rings of

*j* Or gold

They undig the cups of

Houses Streets Silver Gold

*j* Or ocean

This far then the end of

*j* Or starlight

Make this far the sight of

*j* Or moon

This far then the end of

*j* Or sun

Make this far the sight of

Drink from an empty bowl of hands

In this Dogmine

DANCERS *fall silent.*

RB\$ & SLAVE *stop 'digging' and rest on their 'shovels', wiping sweat, breathing heavily.*

SLAVE

I'm listening.

RB\$ *backhands him. He's knocked to the ground onto hands and knees, where he remains, looking at the ground.*

RB\$

Ever.

*Plucks a hair from off the dog-carcass as each DANCER pulls a hair from their wigs.*

Lights.

*A flame falls from the rafters and hovers.*

*He touches the dog-hair to it, lighting it. The DANCERS light their wig-hairs from their Leg-Candles.*

*The flame drops to the ground, and he steps on it, crushing it out.*

RB\$ offers SLAVE the lit dog-hair who takes it and then gets up.  
With lit wig-hairs DANCERS light the Spikelights above their heads.  
With the lit dog-hair SLAVE high-steps over the Rail, and re-lights the 2 Chair-Lamps on either end of the Tracks, and all the Footlights, moving StageLeft to StageRight.

High-stepping back over Rail into Minespace SLAVE re-lights the Lamp on the carcass last.

RB\$ follows at a distance behind him, also high-stepping over Rail. Picking up each lit Chair-Lamp he signals into a Tunnel with it; then puts it down, lit, on the Tracks.

Upon finishing the lighting, RB\$ remains on the Tracks, Center, turning his head, looking into both Tunnels with grim expectation.

Upon finishing the lighting, DANCERS stand at the wall, alternating, 2 facing forward & 3 facing back.

Upon finishing the lighting, SLAVE stands at the Greenery.

*While lighting:*

DANCERS join in with repetitive “Bring”, low underlining whisper which begins to sound like a phone

RB\$

Bring thigh, bring palm of hand, bring back of knee and smooth skin behind ankle

SLAVE

Bring ankle and back of hand

RB\$

Bring earlobe and hip

SLAVE

Bring gums and scalp and wrist

RB\$

Bring nails and skin around nose

*Stop lighting; no DANCERS*

SLAVE

Bring the name and the housepaint

RB\$

Overhead nothing but the one electric light

*Resume lighting; DANCERS resume “Bring”*

RB\$

Bring cranium and lower head bowl

SLAVE  
Bring arms and rest of props

RB\$  
Bring tongue and all stories

SLAVE  
Bring ears and hinges

RB\$  
Bring ears and all fingers

SLAVE  
Bring ears and jambs

RB\$  
And bring Mezuzahs Slave

SLAVE  
And bring Mezuzahs Slave

*Lighting finished*

SLAVE  
*Stands at the pile of Green watching RB\$.*  
Raincommander.

*RB\$ high-steps over Rail, moves UpStage and meets him there.  
They reach down and begin to stuff handfuls of the foliage into themselves — their dresses have ‘breast’, ‘belly’ and ‘butt’ pouches sewn into them — Stuffing themselves so that they take on exaggerated women’s shapes.  
They ‘model’ before one another again, this time sullenly, mirroring each other exactly.  
They stand and reflect on one another.*

*RB\$ moves back, high-stepping over Rail onto Tracks, Right of Center, looking into both Tunnels, grimly.*

RB\$  
*All out to House*  
Whitelung.

*SLAVE picks up the large pair of Shears RB\$ first entered with.*

SLAVE  
*As he picks it up, the way a nurse echoes a call for a surgical instrument*  
Whitelung whitelung whitelung whitelung  
*Leaning over Rail hands it to RB\$*

RBS

Blacklung.

*SLAVE picks up the tin Bucket RBS first entered with*

SLAVE

*As he picks it up and carries it*  
Blacklung blacklung blacklung blacklung

*Leaning over Rail places it at RBS's feet*

RBS

Lamb.

*SLAVE moves to the Pile — of clothes and shoes and eyeglasses and silverware  
and hair — and picks up a mass of Hair*

SLAVE

*As he picks it up and carries it*  
Lamb lamb lamb lamb

*Stands behind RBS, dangles it in front of him.*  
*RBS cuts the Hair into pieces, which fall into the Bucket at his feet.*

RBS

Vodka.

*Using his Shoes SLAVE unburies a Daily Press from right underneath him. He  
picks it up. Peruses it.*

*Violently*

Vodka.

*SLAVE pulls a page out, drops the Paper.*  
*He rolls the page into a tube, and ignites it from the Lamp on the dog-carcass.*  
*He points the lit Paper into the Bucket of Hair, squatting behind and reaching  
around RBS.*

*They both inhale the smoke, loudly.*  
*SLAVE stands up, gazes down at his Shoes.*

*Pause*

*SLAVE looks at RBS's back.*

*Pause*

SLAVE *squats, retrieves the burnt Paper, stands, unrolls it, flattens it. Peruses it.*

SLAVE

*To RB\$'s back*  
It tells about us but I'd rather not read it.

RB\$

*Looking into Tunnels*  
You always rather not do what you can't. Me, I'm just the reverse. Me — I've drank deep drafts from the firecup — I've ridden bareback in the heartsaddle — I've donned the mantle of the dreamstorm and had my eyes taken from me —

SLAVE

*The message of The Daily Press*  
*All to RB\$'s back*  
I was *on* that ship with you.

RB\$

*All to House*  
Shut up.

SLAVE

I was *on* that train with you. I was *on* that trolley with you. I was *on* that elevator with —

RB\$

I said Shut Up I said Shut Up.  
I said VODKA.

SLAVE

You made the pictures but I wrote the words.

*Invective*  
It's all half mine. It's all.

RB\$

*Still out to House*  
Then why are you asking me for it again?  
You're asking for something you have?

RB\$ (cont)

Mine's like yours. Half. Half of all of half of all.

You. Are an imbecile.

*Quiet*

And I said vodka.

SLAVE

I'll dig you a ditch you'll never crawl out up.

RB\$

Nothing can be further from the truth.

SLAVE

*Throws down Paper*

Than what?

RB\$

*Still out to House*

I. Said. Vodka.

SLAVE *high-steps over Rail grabs him by the shoulders and turns RB\$ to face him, as RB\$ opens Shears and puts them around SLAVE's throat.*

SLAVE

Nothing can be further than what? Hmm? Further than what? Of what? What? What!  
Further than who?!

RB\$

You. Are thoughtless. Shall I make you headless too?

SLAVE

You. Are gutless. Make us equal!

DANCERS *all face forward. They sing in a resonant, ringing acappella with uneven handclaps this song from Jean Toomer's Cane. • = Nods; j = handclaps. The handjclaps all come at the end of deep, full bowing N•ds, so that the DANCERS drop into N•d, jclap as they reach the bottom, 'wake' into song, sing, & N•d again.*

DANCERS

•...j Hot blooded moon. •...j Sinner! •...j

DANCERS (*cont*)

Red nigger moon. •...j Sinner! •...j

Come out that •...j fact'ry door. •...j

DANCERS *resume their positions at the Minewall, alternating, 2 facing forward and 3 back.*

RB\$

*Still with Shears around SLAVE's throat*

We arrived together yes

Shared the same pocket yes

Hounded and humped that selfsame hole yes

But if I remember

If I do not forget

You yrself made yr way a visa without mine.

You left, right?

Haven't you remember?

*They stare at one another*

DANCERS

*Fast whisper-chant*

Rmembah Rmembah Rmembah Rmembah Rmembah Rmembah Rmembah Rmembah

Rmembah ...

*During whisper-chant:*

RB\$ *cuts a lock from SLAVE's head and drops it in the Bucket.*

SLAVE *grabs his own guts, and holding his guts high-steps over the Rail and wanders around the Minespace in an agony of the bowels, finally goes hikes his Dress and squats where the DOG'S HEAD buried himself, hands covering ears, facing StageLeft wall.*

RB\$ *drops the Shears, puts his fingers in his ears and makes excrement sounds.*

*Finishes.*

DANCERS *fall silent.*

RB\$ *high-steps over Rail, picks up burned page of 'The Daily Press' and hands it to SLAVE, who is still squatting, reaching his hand out with his face turned away from RB\$ in an exaggerated "shame".*

RB\$ *folds the Paper into a neat deliberate square.*

SLAVE *takes it and wipes himself with it.*

RB\$

It tells about us but I'd rather not read it.

SLAVE

*Wiping himself*

You always can't do what you might of.

*Continues a prolonged wiping*

RB\$

*Having waited enough*

Are you deaf?

No really are you deaf?

SLAVE *Stands.*

SLAVE

*Yells in RB\$'s face*

TIME TO ENTER THE WORLD

*Drops shitted Paper.*

*They rub their hands against one another's.*

DANCERS *begin to make bird songs, each a different bird.*

RB\$ & SLAVE *walk DownStage, high-step Rail and cross onto Tracks.*

*Each picks up a Chair-Lamp and carries it to Center.*

*They stand next to one another, between the Chairs.*

*Each leans on their Chair, legs crossed at ankles, facing House.*

*Pause.*

RB\$

*Lets go of Chair.*

*Mock 'plea' to House*

I crosst an ocean to set my feet on the ground that would gulp me down

I kept saying

This is not Amehlica

This is not Amehlica

This is HERE

RB\$ & SLAVE

*With Nods & Handclaps*

•...j Welcome! •...j Welcome! •...j Welcome! •...j

SLAVE

*Pointing with thumb at RB\$, with heavy Yiddish accent*  
Vun vit lid

RB\$

*Pointing with thumb at SLAVE, heavy Yiddish accent*  
Vun vitowt lid

*Exhausted they cease, slumping in place.*  
*Both breathe heavily, leaning on Chair-Lamps.*

RB\$

This is a job which rejects all muscle.

SLAVE

No muscle here. No muscle get this job done 'Mander.

RB\$

No. Bring. No. Muscle.

SLAVE

Music though.

*DANCERS birdsongs stop.*

*Pause.*

*DANCERS start hissing sound as from punctured tire.*

*RB\$ & SLAVE 'hear' something. Each looks into the Tunnel he came from.*  
*SLAVE high-steps over Rail, and remains just outside UpStage Rail for the following.*

*RB\$ remains on the Tracks.*

*SLAVE picks up the unlabeled liquor Bottle he came in with.*

*Opens cork, throws it on Pile of clothes etc.*

*Goes and pours some on the spot he shat.*

*Moves to RB\$'s side, high-stepping over Rail.*

*During this RB\$ cups hands around ears. With his eyes only, he looks up.*

RB\$

There is only one place on earth.

SLAVE

*At RB\$'s Left*  
*Extends the Bottle to RB\$.*  
Here.

RB\$

*Still with eyes only looking up*  
My sight fails.  
My heart fails,  
Without answer.

SLAVE

Vodka.  
*Whispers into RB\$'s ear*  
Vodka vodka vodka vodka

*Still looking up, with right hand RB\$ takes Bottle — left hand remains cupped  
around ear — and pours it all into Bucket of Hair.*  
DANCERS *hissing stops.*  
RB\$ *looks out to House.*  
*Pause.*

DANCERS

Slave and Raincommander Burnbraid Dollarsign

RB\$

*Lowers his cupped hand*  
*Tosses Bottle onto Pile in Centermine*  
Axe

SLAVE

*High-steps over Rail onto Tracks*  
Axe

*Both squat, plunge their hands into Bucket, and mix it, kissing.*  
*They stand, clutching handfuls of wet Hair.*

RB\$

Right up.



SLAVE (*cont*)

Well jus what the hell you think we're here for you illiterate cocksucker you ugly stupid rancid puddle of ox shit you abomination you you know what I think? You know what I think I'm going to do?

*Inhales*

*Bends and unburies a Yod. Wields it, pointing, raging.*

I'm going to take a Yod. You know what a Yod is? You know that tool? 'A Yod is the finger that points at G•d.' Yes? You moron. YOU KIKE! I'm going to take a Yod and I'm going to shove it so far in to that crisp little vagina of yours that every word thats written in there will be popped like an egg under a hammer DO YOU HEAR ME? I am going to shove that Yod so far inside you you wont have a letter, a SOUND left to read. LOOK AT ME! I'll tear that vagina open like ripping your face in half! I'll bury you in your vagina! BURY YOU! BURY YOU! I'LL RIP ALL THE WORDS OUT OF IT! ALL OF THEM! ALL OF THEM! MY MASTER WILL ANNIHILATE YOU!

*Inhales*

Stare. Go on stare. Why don't you say something. Hmmm? Say something. Go on. I know that look. I know that look. I've had that look FOREVER! FOREVER! You fuck. YOU FUCK! You little pathetic fuck. You think you can stare me quiet? Hmmm? You think NOW you can stare me quiet don't you. DON'T YOU! You think I wouldn't have found out? How? That thing stinks! IT STINKS TO HIGH HEAVEN! It's all over you! I'll tell you what I'll do. I'll take that crisp little vagina of yours and I'll turn it into a tent and you can go live in it. How's that? Hmmm? How's THAT? I'll shove a Yod so far up in it you'll have plenty of head room. And then you can take yourself, and your vagina, and your vagina's words, and your SMELL and you can go be happy and live in the dirt where you have always belonged. ALWAYS! Not here! Not with me. Not. No. NOT WITH ME!

*Inhales*

*RB\$ continues to stare.*

WHAT ARE YOU? SOME KIND OF ANIMAL?

*DANCERS stop counting and RB\$ starts: barely audible rapid whisper, beginning at 1, interrupted by smacking of lips. He continues to stare at SLAVE.*

SLAVE

*Inhales. New voice; no longer raging, gesturing with Yod.*

I come home one night my hands bloody from other people's hats what sick the heat the pregnancy and I find him home too, when he's s'posed t' be working the nighthole. He's inside standing in the doorway between the kitchen and the bedroom, leaning, his hand like this over the mezuzah. And he's not washed. No. What, I can see. The lamps is lit and I can see his handprints all over the walls and he's been in a bottle. His beard is soaked. This I can smell, this I don't need to see. He's looking right at me. He shakes his head, like this. He says "Dis is nicht Amehlica. Dis is heah." He's got the Firecup, holding behind his back. Full. He sticks it out holding it like he wants me to drink, like it was full of ice not coals. I'dint say nothing. I was never afraid of him. Never gave me what to be, so why I should start. But I have to urinate. And I need to get by, to the nightpot. So I go to pass by. What did I smell him. Then? He's standing over me. Somehow now I'm on my back, I'm on the floor. He's standing over me, with his boots in-between me. Holding the cup up, like this, holding the hem of my dress up in a fist. And he says in this Amerrrican voice, "My son drinks fire like I-zay-yah." He tries to pour the cup in me. *In me.*

*RB\$ continues counting.*

*SLAVE lifts and extends left leg to RB\$, points Yod at him.*  
Unshoe me.

*RB\$, standing, N•ds Out: counting fades away, sporadic lip-smacking continues, eyes fluttering closed, mouth open and turned down, head slowly falling to and lifting off chest, knees buckling and straightening, body spasmodically slumping.*

*SLAVE remains, left leg out.*

Yr precious ocean.

*Drops foot heavily.*

*Places Yod in •RB\$'s right hand*

*SLAVE stands, looking both ways down Tracks, head turning on neck.*

*2 DANCERS begin to count as before.*

*3 DANCERS begin to breathe in unison steadily, audibly.*

*Counting, lip-smacking & breathing.*

SLAVE (*cont*)

*Facing House, but speaking to •RB\$, behind him.*

I think you were deformed at birth. Your womb should have been cut out and thrown down a poison well. You should of had been sealed off. Anybody that — All in the ocean, tossed from the rocks.

*Counting and lip-smacking fade away. Breathing continues.*

SLAVE *picks up his Chair-Lamp and walks around •RB\$.*

*Keeps threatening to hit •RB\$ with it as he walks circles around him during the following.*

See there. All you never was sank down and collected in that sac of a big fat ass. I can see all you never was right there. All you ever wanted and lost. All. Every moment of it.

That person you never became. I can see. You're buried in it. I can see you trapped in there like you were yelling from a cage. I can see the shape of your mouth in the contours of that big fat rump you have. Your big fat ass. Just by looking at your mouth I can see your ass. I can see your fat ass in the way you steal looks out of the corners of your eyes. Top and bottom you're bottomed. You're bottom from bottom to top. I can see all you never were hanging right there. Right there. The biggest part of you is everything you've lost.

DANCERS *breathing fades away.*

DANCERS *reach up and douse Spikelights.*

*They do a slow one-footed softshoe, swinging the Leg-Candles like pendulums.*

*No longer circling, SLAVE uses Chair-Lamp as light now, like reading cave paintings.*

From here. I can see the stretchmarks on your breasts. Like on dunes after a rain. Your nipples like blood on sand. There. Ever-so-faint burnt-wood smell of your skin. And from here. I can see the stretchmarks on your belly. The longitude marks of the world. And your bellybutton. Deep. I know it was made by my tongue. And from even here I can see the salt of your armpits. I kneeled to them like a deer. I would watch your heart beating there, while you slept at dusk. Smelling them. And from even here I can see the faintly, faintly shining lips of your cunt. A drop of piss like a jewel in the amber street

SLAVE (*cont*)

light. How you would sleep with one knee up by your chest. I can see you, from here. I remember you.

*SLAVE, on Tracks, sits on Chair-Lamp, next to Lamp, watching flame, warming his hands over it.*

*DANCERS Leg-Candles come to rest.*

DANCERS

*A good long resonant harmony.*

*Sinner! ... j*

*j Clap wakes •RB\$.*

*He transfers the Yod into his left hand.*

*He wipes the back of his right arm—from elbow to fingers— across his mouth.*

*Smacks his lips.*

*SLAVE remains seated next to Lamp, looking into it, warming his hands.*

RB\$

*Throughout the following, with the Yod in his left hand he strokes, prods smacks and pokes his own Dress-form, its butt, belly and breasts; going under the Dress-hem, he finally sends the Yod up under his Dress: feeling this woman up.*

I walk behind women that look like you. And all women do. And I think, am I going to hurt her? I do not want to. But I feel as if I am obligated to. As if what I am meant to do is drag you, the woman that looks like you—and all women do— catch you by the hair and off into a bush, and demolish your head with a shoe. And I wonder “Is she afraid of me?” as I walk behind her. That’s what starts it. Thinking *she* is afraid of *me*. That is when the feeling of obligation always comes. The obligation to do hurting.

*He makes the Yod into a mock-erection, tenting-out the front of his Dress.*

*He grins at House.*

*SLAVE raises his head, offers RB\$ his wingtip-shod left foot.*

*DANCERS pull electric cicada key-rings out of their uniform-backpockets, and start them singing.*

*RB\$ notices Shoe. He reaches out the Yod and runs it sensually along the bottom of the Shoe, its side, its top, gradually running the Yod all the way up the inside of SLAVE’s leg and under his Dress, arriving where SLAVE’s new pubic-patch is.*

*While caressing SLAVE’s shoe & leg, amidst cicada sound:*

He fed me his cock. The sweet-cock of a young boy, its first coat of fur coming in. Fed it to my full-grown cunt. Sometimes he would stand in the doorway, both arms high up



*He hands the Shoes, one at a time, to the nearest DANCER, who passes it on to the next.*

*The DANCER behind •SLAVE's Chair jams each empty unlaced Shoe onto the Chair's 'shoulder' posts.*

*RB\$ gets on hands and knees, crawls, and collects all the debris-objects on the Minefloor, hugging and pushing them into a pile in front of the TOOLS&MINESWORDS BOX.*

*Remaining on his knees he opens the Box, dropping first its lid and then everything else down into it.*

*He disassembles the Box, stands, and slams it—a trapdoor again—closed.*

*During RB\$'s 'cleanup':*

*DANCERS hoist •SLAVE in Chair onto their shoulders and into the air, howling and turning circles.*

*Howling they move to the StageLeft Tunnel and hang the Chair-Lamp, with •SLAVE on it, from the spike above the Tunnel.*

*They howl up at •SLAVE in the Chair, celebratory.*

*Howling is stopped by the closing slam of the Box.*

*DANCERS—grouped beneath hanging Chair—& RB\$ look at each other.*

*From inside the Tunnel the rhythmic sound of shaking coins is heard.*

*RB\$ walks to them, and gets down on his knees before them.*

*One by one, as if to kiss their feet, he blows each Leg-Candle out.*

*The coin-sound grows thinner as each Leg-Candle is extinguished, stopping when the last is out. On hands and knees RB\$ backs a few feet away, and puts his face to the ground.*

*A small Hand-Car—a "railroad dolly" with lever which is pumped to make it move along tracks—rolls out of the Tunnel, stops behind DANCERS, under Chair.*

DANCERS

*Whisper*

Light light light Light light light Light light light

Sleepers Hill is never so wide so bright

*From the legs of the Chair above them 4 DANCERS remove 4 Douser-Yods.*

*They form a tight line facing RB\$.*

*The DANCER in the middle, without Yod, takes a step back, turns and mounts the Hand-Car, grips lever, faces into Tunnel, waiting.*

*The space in the line is closed.*

*The 4 others, with Yods,—2 holding Yod in Left hand, 2 in Right—Reach out and douse RB\$, touching his head with the Yods.*

*Upon their touch he begins sobbing, low, steadily.*

*The 4 step backwards and mount the Hand-Car.*

*They form a tight unit, shoulder to shoulder, each facing one direction — UpStage, DownStage, Left, Right, the Douser-Yods grasped in both hands, and pointing down between their feet.*

*First DANCER pumps lever, and the Hand-Car slides into Tunnel, disappears.*

*Candle-Footlights, RB\$’s Chair-Lamp and dog-carcass Lamp are the only lights now.*

*RB\$’s sobbing stops. He raises face, lifts his head, kneels, stands up, steps over Rail and goes and plucks a hair from off the carcass.*

*He touches it to the carcass-Lamp, igniting it.*

*He steps back over Rail, and touches the lit-hair to each of the Candle-Footlights, blowing each one out after touching it with dog-hair fire.*

*He walks down Tracks to the hanging Chair, reaches up with the lit-hair and lights the Lamp with it.*

*He backs away, looking up at •SLAVE.*

*He holds the dog-hair. It continues to burn.*

*From inside the StageLeft Tunnel a loud group-handclapping is heard, one strong jclap.*

*•SLAVE jwakes.*

*RB\$ drops the burning dog-hair, steps on it, crushing it out.*

*SLAVE & RB\$ look at one another, blinking.*

*They both run the backs of their right arms —from elbows to tips of fingers— across their mouths, smacking their lips.*

*The two Chair-Lamps —one hanging from Tunnel StageRight, one on the Tracks StageLeft— and the dog-carcass Lamp are the only Lights now.*

*From here until the End their eyes remain locked upon each other’s.*

*RB\$ walks down Tracks to SLAVE in the hanging Chair and, using both hands, gently kisses each of his feet, which are at eye-level.*

*SLAVE lifts the Yod from off his lap to his mouth and using both hands, kisses it, twice, gently. He reaches it down to RB\$.*

*Using both hands RB\$ pulls a white String out of his mouth. The String is looped at the end.*

*He puts the loop around the Yod, and backs up towards his Tunnel, StageRight.*

*Using both hands he unreels the String from his mouth as he backs up.*

*He arrives beside his Chair-lamp, String running the length of the Tracks from his mouth up to SLAVE.*

*Using both hands SLAVE raises the Yod and —with no hands— gets the String-loop into his mouth.*

*RB\$ sits down on his Chair-Lamp, beside the Lamp.*

*They sit, SLAVE suspended above the Tracks, RB\$ on them, the String strung between their mouths, hanging across the Mine.*

*A flame rises out of the dog-carcass Lamp. It floats up, hovers, and then moves to the middle of the String.*

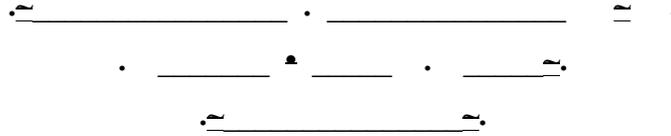
*They inhale, drawing it taut.  
The flame touches the string, which ignites and runs like a fast fuse in both  
directions, to both their mouths.  
The fuse reaches their mouths.  
Their Chair-Lamps go out.  
Their eyes close.  
The flame returns to the carcass-Lamp, which is now the only Light.  
The carcass-Lamp goes out.  
Dark Mine*

RB\$ & SLAVE

*Whisper*  
I love you.

*OffStage, in each Tunnel, the lights of a changing traffic signal begin to pulse, at  
the pace of a slowheartbeat. Beginning at green. Pulse green. Mechanical click.  
Pulse yellow. Mechanical click. Pulse red. Stay, pulsing, at red. Mechanical  
click. Out.*

END



### Note

*Tfillin and Mezuzim both contain small parchment-scrolls inscribed with the passages from which they are derived: the record of the mandate of their existence is sealed inside them. It is the text within which completes their circuit of 'Holiness'. Empty, they are unusable.*

*Here is one passage (The Shema):*

Hear Israel The Lord is God The Lord is One

You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. Take to heart these instructions with which I charge you this day. Impress them upon your children. Recite them when you stay at home and when you are away, when you lie down and when you get up. Bind them as a sign on your hand and let them serve as a symbol between your eyes; inscribe them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.

*Devarim (Deuteronomy) 6:4-9*

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~ Staging ~.

The possibilities of ~~MINE~~, as concerns staging, are many:

From the manifestation of the Play ‘as written’ — someplace underground — to the formal, austere suggested-world of Noh.

- Imagine the Play in the dirt, with all the digging being dug — occurring in a hooded outdoor site, with firm control over Fire&Wind.
- Imagine a Noh-stage, with a raised Minefloor eye-level with Audience, whose under-life can be seen; what is unburied is handed up, what is buried is placed down into these same hands.
- Imagine the DOG’S HEAD being seen doing much of this Under-Floor work.

All Fire-Masters are hereupon called:

- Imagine long, stage-blackened tapering bamboo rods, with small torches attached to their ends, pointed into the Minespace from the rafters and wings like fishing-poles, as the living flames.
- Imagine Bunraku-blackened FireHands, running the living flames along their courses.

The spirit of Fire & Smoke magic-shows —without electricity— is called.

This Play is dedicated to *living*.