

1973

A Production Study of Thornton Wilder's *The Skin of Our Teeth*

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A PRODUCTION STUDY OF THORNTON WILDER'S

THE SKIN OF OUR TEETH

(TITLE)

BY

LE HOOK

THESIS

SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE DEGREE OF

Master of Science in Education

IN THE GRADUATE SCHOOL, EASTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY
CHARLESTON, ILLINOIS

1973

YEAR

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PREFACE

This thesis is a production study of Thornton Wilder's play The Skin of Our Teeth, which was produced at Cerro Gordo High School, May 19 and 20, 1973. This study will include a critical analysis of the play itself as well as the production book including all of the elements of the production.

In order to analyze The Skin of Our Teeth, it is necessary to understand Thornton Wilder's philosophy and what he was after in all of his playwriting and this play in particular. Writing in the preface to Three Plays by Thornton Wilder, he said,

Every action which has ever taken place--every thought, every emotion--has taken place only once, at one moment in time and place. 'I love you,' 'I rejoice,' 'I suffer,' have been said and felt many billions of times, and never twice. Every person who has ever lived has lived on unbroken succession of unique experience . . . the more one becomes attentive to what these disparate moments have in common, to repetitive patterns. As an art (or listener or beholder) which 'truth' do you prefer--that of the isolated occasion, or that which includes and resumes the innumerable? The theatre is admirably fitted to tell both truths. It has one foot planted firmly in the particular, since each actor before us . . . is indubitably a living, breathing 'one'; yet it tends and strains to exhibit a general truth It is through the theatre's power to raise the exhibited individual action into the realm of idea and type and universal that it is able to evoke our belief When emphasize place in the theatre, you drag down and limit and harness time to it. You thrust the action back into past time, whereas it is precisely the glory of the stage that it is always 'now' there You don't have to pay deeply from your hearts participation.¹

It is evident from these general comments that the basic idea of Wilder's work is to assist the audience in applying their own experience in understanding the specific themes which he develops in his plays. This

allows them to take their own unique, one time experiences and apply them to the experiences being portrayed on the stage.

The play, John Gassner said

is perhaps the best out-and-out theatricalist work of the American theatricalist work of the American theatre.² Wilder wrote The Skin of Our Teeth begins, also, by making fun of old fashioned playwriting; but the audience soon perceives that he is seeing 'two times at once.' The Antrobus family is living both in prehistoric times and in a New Jersey commuters' suburb today. Again, the events of our homely daily-life . . . are depicted against the vast dimensions of time and place.³

He wrote in comparison of his two Pulitzer Prize winning plays that

Our Town is the life of the family seen from a telescope five miles away. The Skin of Our Teeth is the destiny of the whole human group seen from a telescope 1,000 miles away. He definitely felt that all important truths are inside everyone waiting a novel or play to awaken them.

One of the first elements to consider in the analysis of any play is the theme and the theme in The Skin of Our Teeth is expressed in the title of the play. The human race has the ability to survive, although the world will often seem to conspire against the race and the survival will be by the slimmest of margins. Because man has this ability he must not be discouraged from continuing to survive or from pursuing intellectual development.

In The Skin of Our Teeth Wilder has used a presentational technique which allows the audience to become involved with the specific characters and their personal problems while realizing that they also serve as representatives of the whole human race. This dual aspect of the characters is emphasized by the way they drop their stage roles and become the actors who are appearing in a play.

The main characters are George and Maggie Antrobus; their maid, Sabina; and their children, Henry and Gladys. George Antrobus is Adam, the father of the race, and the typical American businessman, who rejoices in the invention of the alphabet and the wheel. He has the virtues and the weaknesses of the entire human race. His basic drive is to preserve and increase human knowledge and he does not seem to change throughout history. He is man as an intellectual, always on the verge of a disaster, always surviving by the "skin of his teeth."

Maggie Antrobus represents Eve, the eternal mother and homemaker. There are two things which serve as her driving force. The first of these is her love for her children and the other is her desire to keep the family and the home intact. She represents the instinctual and anti-intellectual forces in the human race.

Sabina represents the sensual quality taking care the desires of man. She is Lilith, the eternal wicked woman, but she also represents the comic aspect of humanity. In this way she helps to underscore Wilder's comic viewpoint in this play. Both as actress, Miss Somerset, who plays Sabina, she represents an anti-intellectual force. Her main drive appears to be self-gratification.

Of the two children, Henry (or Cain) is the most important, although Gladys does represent youthful innocence, which reaches maturity by the end of the play. Henry represents the conflict within man, and proof that he will never be able to reach perfection.

Thus the major conflicts of the play are set in motion. George conflicts with Maggie over the preservation of knowledge versus the preservation of the family. They also conflict over Sabina which sets up another conflict between Sabina and Maggie. Henry is in conflict with

everyone and Gladys conflicts with her mother on typical adolescent problems but she comes back to her mother's side versus Sabina. All of these conflicts are secondary to the conflict between the entire family and the outside forces which threaten to engulf them.

The first act represents the forces of nature in the form of the ice age. These forces are overcome by using common sense and courage. This act shows immediately that the past and present are being shown simultaneously. Sabina begins the act which is interrupted by Mrs. Antrobus failing to answer her first cue. This allows Sabina to drop her character and speak directly to the audience, establishing the theatricalness of the play. Although the room is definitely that of a middle-class American family, a dinosaur and woolly mammoth appear and references to the approaching glacier are made throughout the act. At the end of the act George goes through a great struggle within himself in trying to decide whether the race is worth saving when it contains the evil which he sees in Henry and the anti-intellectualism he sees in Maggie and Sabina. The act ends when he decides that there is much to be taught and the human race should go on.

The flood or storm of the second act could be viewed as not just a natural phenomenon. "Apparently it is also a form of retributive justice handed down by an unnamed power."⁵ "The central symbols of the act are the bingo parlor and the fortune teller which signify, respectively, chance and destiny."⁶ These two forces are in conflict throughout the act. The scene is a convention at Atlantic City. This convention of the mammals has two delegates from other orders.

After each has sinned in various ways: George through lust, Maggie through pride, Henry through hatred. Redemption is provided by a boat for those who forsake the pleasures of the moment. An interesting aspect of this act is the fortune teller who can tell the future but not the past because no one tells you your past. The character can be considered the voice of the playwright because she is saying that the past is impossible to hold on to and constantly changing in our mind.

The third act is more serious in nature representing the coming of peace after the last war. Although the family was scattered during the war, they are united during the act. This is a rather unusual reunion because it appears Henry was the enemy, representing the self-destructive instinct within the human spirit. It is during this act that Wilder has what I believe to be the one flaw in the play. The conflict between Henry and Mr. Antrobus is not solved between them but by the actors playing the parts. Since the other conflicts were resolved by the characters, I feel this is a failing of the play but only a minor one. The act ends with Mr. Antrobus weary but accepting his responsibility to continue to rebuild civilization. Then Sabina reappears as at the beginning of the first act reinforcing the theme that the race will go on surviving its problems forever.

The one remaining aspect of The Skin of Our Teeth that needs to be considered is the source. Malcolm Goldstein wrote

The strongest complaints against The Skin of Our Teeth have risen, not in discussions of its theatrical viability, but in remarks on its sources. Two scholars, Joseph Campbell and Henry Morton Robinson, who had been studying James Joyce's novel Finnegans Wake, noticed many similarities in the play. 7

"They published a series of articles in the Saturday Review titled The Skin of Whose Teeth? in which they showed that the play drew heavily upon "Wake" in themes, plot, characters, dialogue, and devices of presentation.⁸ They charged in this article that The Skin of Our Teeth was not an entirely original creation, but an Americanized re-creation, thinly disguised of James Joyce's Finnegans Wake.⁹ This did start a literary debate in the literature of the time, but I feel the comment that best sums up the situation was in Time, when it pointed out that Campbell and Robinson were "trying to make headlines out of footnotes, were confusing influences with imitations."¹⁰ Of course, Wilder was influenced by Joyce's work since he had been lecturing and writing about Joyce throughout the thirties.¹¹ Surely any ideas which he borrowed from Finnegans Wake have reached many more people than they would have in the original. The major consequence of this controversy was that, although the play won the Pulitzer Prize, it failed to win the New York Drama Critics Award "despite the obvious superiority of this play to all others of the season."¹²

The original Broadway production of The Skin of Our Teeth opened November 18, 1942 at the Plymouth Theatre in New York. This production was done by Michael Myerberg and played 359 performances before closing September 25, 1943. The critical reaction was mixed but mostly favorable. The original reviews are collected in the 1942 volume of the New York Theatre Critics Reviews.¹³

The favorable reviews included that of Burns Mantle of the New York Daily News who said "I don't promise that you will enjoy The Skin of Our Teeth . . . but I think you will be sorry if you do not see it."¹⁴

Howard Barnes of the New York Herald Tribune was quoted as saying

Theatre-going became a rare and electrifying experience at the Plymouth last evening . . . on the whole it is a tremendously exciting and profound stage fable . . . It was the language of the theater triumphantly to make its points.¹⁵

Lewis Nichols of the New York Times wrote "Thornton Wilder . . . has written a comedy about man which is the best play the Forties have seen in many months, the best pure theatre."¹⁶ One of the most lucid comments was made by Burton Roscoe of the New York World-Telegram when he wrote "Mr. Wilder has learned enough about the theatre to know that it is a medium of entertainment first and of instruction and edification afterwards."¹⁷

There were less favorable reviews including that of Louis Kronenberger of the New York Newspaper PM who said that "The brightest moments of the play are the best proof that, as a whole, The Skin of Our Teeth is much less than it might have been."¹⁸ John Anderson of the New York Post dismissed the production with "'The Skin of Our Teeth' actually is neither a profound nor particularly impressive drama."²⁰

The originators of the main roles received almost as much variation in evaluation from the critics. Burns Mantle's comment of Tallulah Bankhead's performance as Sabina was that "Miss Bankhead has the flashiest part and plays it past the hilt . . . I trust she will speak then (her lines) a little less nervously and a little more clearly tonight."²¹ While Wilella Waldorf said "It is Miss Bankheads Lily Sabina who does the most to keep 'The Skin of Our Teeth' from disintegrating into a waggish and rather heavy footed bore."²² Mr. Antrobus in the original production was played by Fredric

March, of whom John Anderson said "Mr. March plays Mr. Antrobus with deep sincerity and simplicity, so that he becomes a sort of everlasting Mr. Average Citizen."²³ Florence Eldridge was Mrs. Antrobus and Howard Barnes said that she gave "a parable human sympathy and warmth."²⁴ Florence Reed, in the words of John Anderson, "provides a vivid and fascinating sketch of a boardwalk fortune teller."²⁵ The production was directed by Elia Kazan, of whom Burns Mantle wrote "Elia Kazan has directed well but permitted her troupe to frequently run away with the text."²⁶

What I feel to be the most important comment on the original production was made by Brooks Atkinson of the New York Times when he wrote

Mr. Wilder, who hates the penny-plain naturalistic theatre, is speaking a compassionate word in praise of the fortitude of the human race; and rather than be solemn about it he is also whooping it up with some burlesque antics on the periphery of the drama. He has looked on life with his welkin eye like a prophet; he has winked his other eye in sociable good humor.

The first act of 'The Skin of Our Teeth' seems to me a masterpiece of imaginative theatre on a theme that would be profound if Mr. Wilder were writing didoctically Although the third act is no match for the stunning act that opens the play, it recovers its dynamic faith in the capacity of the human race to go on saving itself by the skin of its teeth, and it offers--in offhand fashion--two or three sublime reasons for retaining hope in the future.²⁷

The Skin of Our Teeth received a major revival on August 17, 1955 at the theatre of the American National Theatre and Academy. The critical comment on this production, which had been a part of the "Salute to France" program at the Paris Festival, was virtually unanimous in its praise.²⁸ John McClain writing for the New York

Journal-American said "I found it to be a delightful evening in anybody's theatre."²⁹ Brookes Atkinson of the New York Times wrote "What's good enough for the French is good enough for us It is perfect."³⁰ This is high praise indeed coming from one of the leading critics of the New York stage.

Mary Martin played the part of Sabina and Richard Watts, Jr. of the New York Post wrote "Miss Martin, who has the mocking gusto necessary to bring it (the part of Sabina) within the scope of her own highly personal style, provides the enlivening quality that is necessary to both the character and the play."³¹ Brooks Atkinson said:

"As Mr. Antrobus, George Abbott, the song-and-dance maestro, gives a pleasant and knowing performance--a little small vocally, but big enough in understanding."³² Walter Kerr of the New York Herald

Tribune wrote of Mary Martin and Helen Hayes who played Mrs. Antrobus, that "Miss Hayes and Miss Martin are perfect loud speakers for this sort of thing, as well as perfect foils for each other

Beoth are delightbul all evening, Miss Hayes perhaps most so when she turns . . . and delivers the little 'promise' speech that wraps up the second act."³³ The only person who played the same part as in the

original production was Florence Reed. William Pepper of the New York World Telegram wrote "Florence Reed, in her original role of the

Fortune Teller, is a marvelously theatrical figure as she pubbs on her pipe and makes sonorous and cynical comments on the idiotic humans around her."³⁴ Pepper goes on to say "Director Alan Schneider has managed

to make wonderful sense out of Mr. Wilder's chaotic play while Lester Polakoo's scenery makes no sense at all, which is as it should be."³⁵

The general reaction to this production is best expressed in the comments of two critics. John McClain wrote "It isn't really necessary to be too analytical about 'Skin'--you may not understand, or necessarily agree with everything that goes on--but my guess is you'll like it."³⁶ Robert Coleman of the Daily Mirror said " 'The Skin of Our Teeth is a provocative novelty. It shoots off sparks of eternal verity. What you make of them is up to you You will get much from it as you bring to it."³⁷

When reading this play one of the first things I noticed was the inherent technical problems which it presents. These alone make it an interesting play. I felt that, if I could solve these problems, I could do almost any play. Our Theatre has many of the shortcomings of most high school stages. It was built as part of a gymnasium and although the stage has a forty-five foot proscenium opening, it is only twenty-one feet deep and has virtually no space for storage in the wings. There is absolutely no fly space since there is a false ceiling that is hung immediately above the pipes. Our lighting system is also very limited since it has eight fresnels, each on a separate dimmer; two ellipsoidal spot lights, which are on the same dimmer; and one follow spot.

The major technical problem with The Sin of Our Teeth is the setting for Act II is completely different from the Act I setting and in Act III the setting reverts to the same as in Act I. Another problem is the three separate flats which are supposed to fly up out of sight in Act I.

Having no space offstage to keep a separate act, the problem of changing the set had to be approached from the standpoint of using some of the same units in all of the acts. This problem was solved by the use

three periaktoi with two wings. For Acts I and III one side of each perioktos and the inside of one wing were painted flat black so that the wing could be opened up and there would be an eight by ten foot black surface. This surface was used to mark entrances and exists in the first and third acts. For Act II one surface of the unit and one side of each wing were painted with the booths of the Atlantic City Boardwalk. This provide a surface ten feet high by fourteen feet wide simply by turning the periaktoi one third turn and opening both winds. The set change could be made with the use of these units in less than ten minutes.

The other main problem, the flats that were supposed to disappear into the flies, was solved by attaching a pulley from the pipe above each section and running a cord to the top of each one. This procedure allowed the sections to stand upright when the cord was pulled tight or fall flat on the stage floor when the tension was released. These cords also allowed the sections to be suspended at a forty-five degree angle at the beginning of Act III and to be pulled upright later in the act.

There were several other problems which had to be solved as we worked with the play in rehearsal. Among these were developing a cabana that could be set up by two girls, constructing a weather light with four separate circuits, and making a dinosaur head and a mammoth head. However each problem was solved as it came up, or at least before performance.

FOOTNOTES

¹Thornton Wilder, Three Plays, (New York: Bantam Books, Inc., 1972), pp. IX-X.

²John Gossner, Directions in Modern Theatre and Drama, (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1965), p. 143.

³Wilder, p. XII.

⁴"Thornton Wilder," Time, January 12, 1953, p. 48.

⁵Malcolm Goldstein, The Art of Thornton Wilder, (Lincoln, Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press, 1965), p. 125.

⁶Rex Burbank, Thornton Wilder, (New York: Twayne Publishers, Inc., 1961), p. 107.

⁷Goldstein, p. 128.

⁸Burbank, p. 101.

⁹Joseph Campbell and Henry M. Robinson, "The Skin of Whose Teeth," Saturday Review of Literature, December 19, 1942, p. 3.

¹⁰"New Play in Manhattan," Time, November 30, 1942, p. 57.

¹¹Burbank, p. 101.

¹²Goldstein, p. 128.

¹³New York Theatre Critica Reviews, Vol. III, No. 33 (1942), pp. 173-176.

¹⁴Ibid., p. 173.

¹⁵Ibid., p. 176.

¹⁶Ibid., p. 175.

¹⁷Ibid., p. 174.

¹⁸Ibid., p. 176.

¹⁹Ibid., p. 175.

²⁰Ibid., p. 174.

²¹Ibid., p. 173.

²²Ibid., p. 174.

²³Ibid., p. 175.

FOOTNOTES (Continued)

²⁴ Ibid., p. 176.

²⁵ Ibid., p. 175.

²⁶ Ibid., p. 173.

²⁷ Lewis Nicols, "Thornton Wilder," New York Times, November 12, 1942, VIII, p. 1.

²⁸ New York Theatre Critics Reviews, ed., Rachel Coffin, Vol. IVI, No. 25 (19522) pp. 293-296.

²⁹ Ibid., p. 294.

³⁰ Ibid., p. 295

³¹ Ibid., p. 293

³² Ibid., p. 295.

³³ Ibid., p. 296.

³⁴ Ibid., p. 296.

³⁵ Ibid., p. 296.

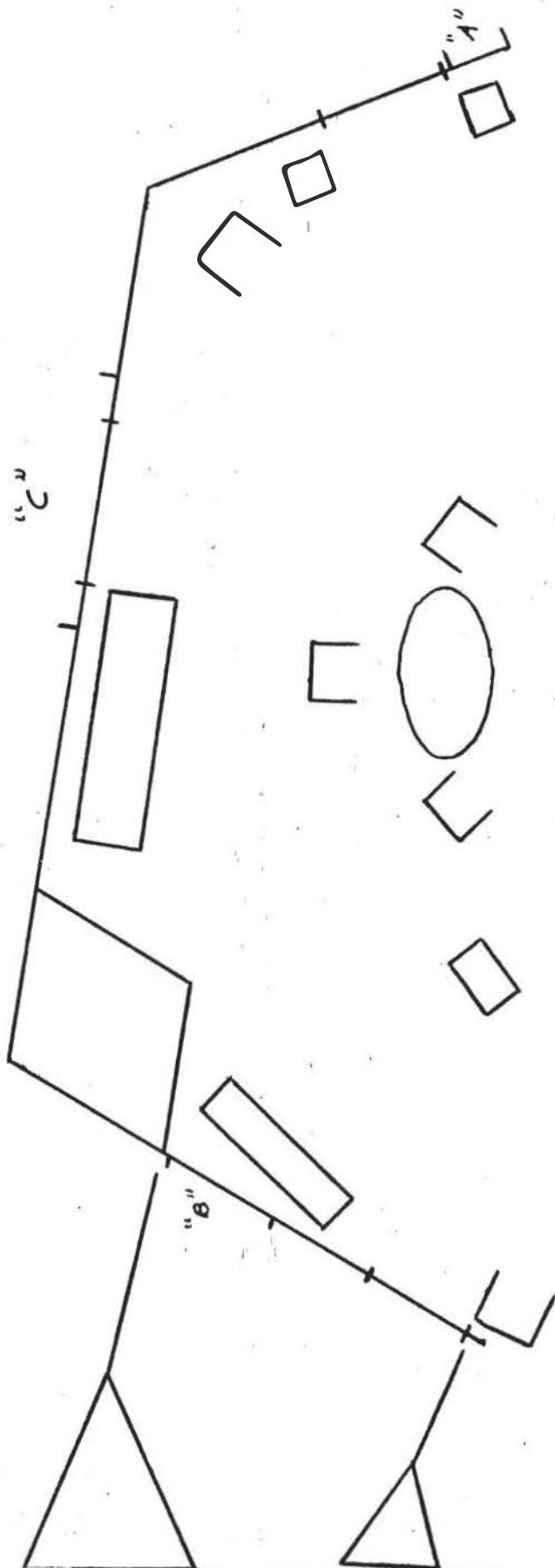
³⁶ Ibid., p. 294.

³⁷ Ibid., p. 295.

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Act I



SCALE: 1/4" = 1'



THE SKIN OF OUR TEETH

ACT ONE

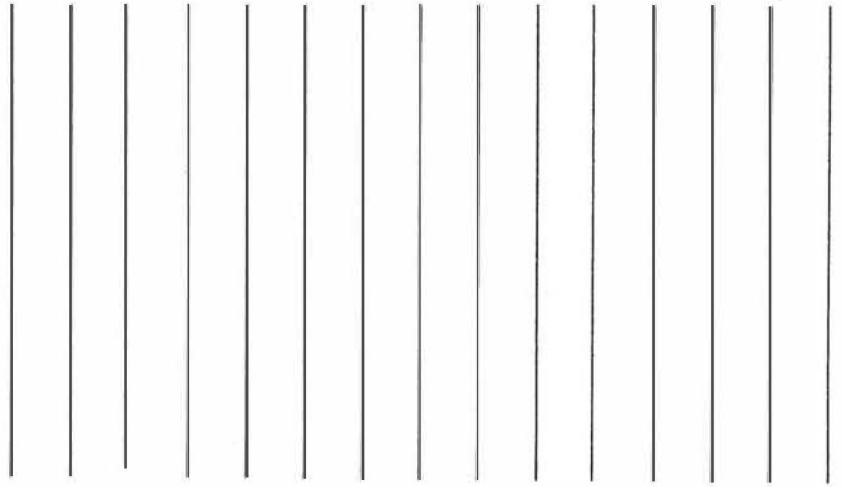
Act I begins with a series of slides shown on two strips of white muslin attached to the edges of the act curtain making a projection screen fifteen feet high by twelve feet wide. The slide projector is located in the balcony.

When the curtain opens, the living room of the Antrobus home is disclosed. The walls of the set are simply an open framework made with an upright every two feet connected top and bottom with the entire frame painted white. The back wall is set at an angle with the Left end closer to the front of the stage. The side walls are eight feet high at their downstage end and slope to meet the six feet high back wall. There is a window in the center of the back wall. Down Right is a door that leads to upstairs, and down Left is the front door. The frame of the doors and window is made from plywood cut in a scalloped pattern and painted brown.

Masking around the doors is achieved by the use of periaktoi with the exposed surfaces painted flat black. There is a gold cyclorama curtain which conceals the back wall and the wings. There are two platforms, four feet by eight feet, the same height as the stage, which are next to the front of the stage at the extreme Right and Left. There is a step unit leading up to the Left platform. There are three sections of wall which are rigged to fall during this act. One of these is down Left, one is up Right, and the third is in the center of the back wall.

There is a table center with three straight chairs, a couch between the alcove and the window and a bench between the kitchen door and the alcove. There is an armchair up Left with a bird cage on the floor upstage of it and a straight chair downstage of the kitchen door. There is a small table upstage of the front door with a fishbowl on it and another downstage with a pot of flowers on it. There is a hassock to the Right of the table and an imaginary fireplace down Center on the front edge of the stage which consists of two fire dogs and a small pile of sticks.

1. During the announcer's speech, slides illustrate the things he is telling about. The announcer speaks from backstage into a microphone connected to two speakers in front of the stage.
2. As the curtain opens Sabina enters through the kitchen door St. Rt. She is carrying a feather duster and she crosses to the window UC.
3. Sabina turns to audience.
4. Sabina X to door St. Lt.
5. After speaking this line to audience Sabina X to table below door.



THE SKIN OF OUR TEETH

ACT ONE

ANNOUNCER:

The management takes pleasure in bringing to you--the news of the world:¹ Freeport, Long Island. The sun rose this morning at 6:32 a.m. This gratifying event was first reported by Mrs. Dorothy Stetson of Freeport, Long Island, who promptly telephones the Mayor. The Society for Affirming the End of the World at once went into a special session and postponed the arrival of that event for twenty-four hours. All honor to Mrs. Stetson for her public spirit. New York City: The Plymouth Theatre. During the daily cleaning of this theatre a number of lost objects were collected, as usual by Mesdames Simpson, Pateslevski, and Moriarity. Among these objects found today was a wedding ring, inscribed: To Eva from Adam. Genesis 2-18. The ring will be restored to the owner or owners, if their credentials are satisfactory. Tippehatchee, Vermont: The unprecedented cold weather of this summer has produced a condition that has not yet been satisfactorily explained. There is a report that a wall of ice is moving southward across these counties. The disruption of communications by the cold wave now crossing the country has rendered exact information difficult. Little credence is given to the rumor that the ice had pushed the cathedral of Montreal as far as St. Albans, Vermont. For further information see your daily papers. Excelsion, New Jersey: The home of Mr. George Antrobus, the inventor of the wheel. The discovery of the lever, has centered the attention of the country on Mr. Antrobus of this attractive suburban residence district. This is his home, a commodious seven-room house, conveniently situated near a public school, a Methodist church, and a fire-house; and it is right handy to an A. and P. Mr. Antrobus, himself. He comes of very old stock and has made his way up from next to nothing. It is reported that he was once a gardener, but left that situation under circumstances that have been seriously reported. Mr. Antrobus is a veteran of foreign wars, and bears a number of scars, front and back. This is Mrs. Antrobus, the charming and gracious president of the Excelsior Mothers' Club. Mrs. Antrobus is an excellent needlewoman; it is she who invented the apron on which so many interesting changes have been wrong since that time. Here we see the Antrobuses with their two children, Henry and Gladys, and friend. The frient, in the rear, is Lily Sabina, the maid. I know we all want to congratulate this typical American family on its enterprise. We all wish Mr. Antrobus a successful future. And now the management takes you to the interior of this home for a brief visit.

SABINA:²

Oh, oh, oh! Six o'clock and the master not home yet. Pray God nothing serious has happened to him crossing the Hudson River.³ If anything happened to him, we would certainly be inconsolable and have to move in- to a less desirable residence district.⁴ The fact is I don't know what'll become of us. Here it is the middle of August and the coldest day of the year. Its simply freezing; the dogs are sticking to the sidewalks; can anybody explain that? No.⁵

1. Section A of wall leans over Sabina and she backs away from it and it straightens up.
2. Sabina X back to table below door St. Lt.
3. Section A of wall falls flat on floor, Sabina shrugs and X to chair St. Lt. of table in Center and starts dusting it including the under side.
4. Sabina X to chair Rt. of table and starts to dust it.
5. Sabina X to above table and picks up slingshot from table.
6. Sabina puts slingshot back on table and X to hassock DRC and dusts it.
7. Sabina X to fireplace DC and dusts Right fire dog.
8. Sabina knocks on a piece of wood in fireplace. Then she X to Left fire dog and dusts it.
9. Sabina cross to section B of wall and begins to dust it. After she starts the next line section B falls to a forty-five degree angle.
10. Sabina X to chair below kitchen door Stage Right.
11. Sabina X to window.
12. When nobody enters on this line, Sabina glares to door St. Rt. and repeats it. When there is still no entrance made, Sabina X to window and starts the act over.
13. Sabina X DLC polishing her nails with the feather duster.
14. Sabina suddenly drops the play and says in her own person with indignation.

But I'm not surprised. The whole world's at sixes and sevens, and why the house hasn't fallen down about our ears long ago is a miracle to me.¹ Every night this same anxiety as to whether the master will get home safely; whether he'll bring home anything to eat.² In the midst of life we are in the midst of death, a truer word was never said.³ Of course, Mr. Antrobus is a very fine man, an excellent husband and father, a pillar of the church, and has all the best interests of the community at heart. Of course, every muscle goes tight every time he passes a policeman; but what I think is that there are certain charges that ought not to be made, and I think⁴ I may add, ought not to be allowed to be made; we're all human; who isn't? Mrs. Antrobus is as fine woman as you could hope to see. She lives only for her children; and if it would be any benefit to her children she'd see the rest of us stretched out dead at her feet without turning a hair--that's the truth. If you want to know anything more about Mrs. Antrobus, just go and look at a tigress, and look hard. As to the children--⁵ Well, Henry Antrobus is a real, clean-cut American boy. He'll graduate from High School one of these days, if they make the alphabet any easier--Henry, when he has a stone in his hand, has a perfect aim; he can hit anything from a bird to an older brother--Oh! I didn't mean to say that--but it certainly was an unfortunate accident, and it was very hard getting the Police out of the house.⁶ Mr. and Mrs. Antrobus' daughter is named Gladys. She'll make some good man a good wife some day, if he'll just come down off the movie screen and ask her. So here we are'.⁷ We've managed to survive for some time now, catch as catch can, the fat and the lean, and if the dinosaurs don't trample us to death, and if the grasshoppers don't eat up our garden, we'll all live to see better days, knock on wood.⁸ Each new child that's born to the Antrobuses seems to them to be sufficient reason for the whole universe's being set in motion; and each new child that dies seems to them to have been spared a whole world of sorrow,⁹ and what the end of it will be is still very much an open question.⁹ We've rattled along, hot and cold, for some time now, and my advice to you is not to inquire into why or whither, but just enjoy your ice cream while it's on your plate; that's my philosophy.¹⁰ Don't forget that a few years ago we came through the depression by the skin of our teeth!¹¹ One more tight squeeze like that and where will we be?¹² Oh, oh, oh" Six o'clock and the master not home yet. Pray God nothing has happened to him crossing the Hudson. Here it is the middle of August and the coldest day of the year. It's simply freezing; the dogs are sticking--One more tight squeeze like that and where will we be?

FITZPATRICK:

Make up something! Invent something!¹³

SABINA:

Well--uh--this certainly is a fine American home--and--uh--everybody's very happy--and--uh--¹⁴ I can't invent any words for this play, and I'm glad I can't. I hate this play and every word in it. As for me, I don't understand a single word of it, anyway--all about the troubles the human race has gone through, there's a subject for you. Besides the author hasn't made up his silly mind as to whether we're all living back in caves or in New Jersey, and that's the way it is all the way through. Oh--why can't we have like we used to have--Peg O' My Heart, and Smilin' Thru, and The Bat, good entertainment with a message you can take home with you?

1. Sabina X to chair Lt. of table.
2. Stage Manager steps out from behind act curtain St. Lt. and points to kitchen door St. Rt.
3. Sabina sit in chair Lt. of table. Mrs. Antrobus enters St. Rt. with a watering can and X St. Lt. to water flowers on table below door.
4. Sabina stands up and puts duster on table.
5. Sabina X to Rt. of Mrs. Antrobus.
6. Mrs. Antrobus puts watering can under table.
7. Mrs. Antrobus X to center table.
8. Sabina turns and speaks to audience.
9. Sabina X to Mrs. Antrobus.
10. Sabina X Dn. St. and drops to her knees.

I took this hateful job because I had to. For two years I've sat up in my room living on a sandwich and a cup of tea a day, waiting for better times in the theatre.¹ And look at me now: I--I who've played Rain and The Barretts of Wimpole Street and First Lady--God!²

FITZPATRICK:
Miss Somerset!²

SABINA:
Oh! Anyway--nothing matters! It'll all be the same in a hundred years. Oh, oh, oh. We came through the depression by the skin of our teeth-- that's true!--one more tight squeeze like that and where will be?³

MRS. ANTROBUS:
Sabina, you've let the fire go out.⁴

SABINA:
One-thing-and-another; don't-know-whether-my-wits-are-upside-or-down; might-as-well-be-dead-as-alive-in-a-house-all-sixes-and-sevens--

MRS. ANTROBUS:
You've let the fire go out. Here it is the coldest day of the year right in the middle of August, and you've let the fire go out.

SABINA:
Mrs. Antrobus, I'd like to give my two weeks' notice, Mrs. Antrobus. A girl like I can get a situation in a home where they're rich enough to have a fire in every room, Mrs. Antrobus, and a girl don't have to carry the responsibility of the whole house on her two shoulders.⁵ And a home without children, Mrs. Antrobus, because children are a thing only a parent can stand, and a truer word was never said; and a home.⁶ Mrs. Antrobus, where the master of the house doesn't pinch decent, self-respecting girls when he meets them in a dark corridor. I mention no names and make no charges. So you have my notice, Mrs. Antrobus. I hope that's perfectly clear.⁷

MRS. ANTROBUS:
You've let the fire go out!--Have you milked the mammoth?⁸

SABINA:
I don't understand a word of this play.--Yes, I've milked the mammoth.

MRS. ANTROBUS:
Until Mr. Antrobus comes home we have no food and we have no fire. You'd better go over to the neighbors and borrow some fire.⁹

SABINA:
Mrs. Antrobus! I can't! I'd die on the way, you know I would. It's worse than January. The dogs are sticking on the sidewalks. I'd die.

MRS. ANTROBUS:
Very well, I'll go.¹⁰

1. Sabina gets off her knees and sits in chair Lt. of table.
2. Sabina starts crying and Mrs. Antrobus X to above chair Rt. of table.
3. Mrs. Antrobus exits through kitchen door with feather duster.
4. Sabina stands up.
5. Mrs. Antrobus enters from kitchen with bedspread and X to DC.
6. Mrs. Antrobus hands Sabina one end of bedspread.

SABINA:

You'd never come back alive; we'd all perish; if you weren't here, we'd just perish. How do we know Mr. Antrobus'll be back? We don't know. If you go out, I'll just kill myself.

MRS. ANTROBUS:

Get up, Sabina.

SABINA:

Every night it's the same thing. Will he come back safe, or won't he? Will we starve to death, or freeze to death, or boil to death or will we be killed by burglars?¹ I don't know why we go on living. I don't know why we go on living at all. It's easier being dead.²

MRS. ANTROBUS:

The same thing'. Always throwing up the sponge, Sabina. Always announcing your own death. But give you a new hat--or a plate of ice cream--or a ticket to the movies, and you want to live forever.

SABINA:

You don't care whether we live or die; all you care is about those children. If it would be any benefit to them you'd be glad to see us all stretched out dead.³

MRS. ANTROBUS:

Well, maybe I would.⁴

SABINA:

And what do they care about? Themselves--that's all they care about. They make fun of you behind your back. Don't tell me: they're ashamed of you. Half the time, they pretend they're someone else's children. Little thanks you get from them.⁵

MRS. ANTROBUS:

I'm not asking for any thanks.

SABINA:

And Mr. Antrobus--you don't understand him. All that work he does--trying to discover the alphabet and the multiplication table--whenever he tries to learn anything you fight against it.

MRS. ANTROBUS:

Oh, Sabina, I know you. When Mr. Antrobus raped you home from your Sabine hills, he did it to insult me. He did it for your pretty face and to insult me. You were the new wife, weren't you? For a year or two you lay on your bed all day and polished the nails on your hands and feet: You made puff-balls of the combs of your hair and you blew them up to the ceiling. And I washed your underclothes and I made you chicken broths. I bore children and between my very groans I stirred the cream that you'd put on your face. But I knew you wouldn't last. You didn't last.⁶

1. Mrs. Antrobus and Sabina start folding the spread and meet face to face.
2. They meet again as they continue to fold the spread.
3. Mrs. Antrobus takes cover, pushes Sabina into chair Lt. of table, cross to sofa UC.
4. Mrs. Antrobus puts spread on sofa then looks out window. Dinosaur and Mammoth enter Up Lt. behind set. Dinosaur puts head in window.
5. Mrs. Antrobus X St. Rt., turns to watch Dinosaur and Mammoth X off St. Rt. above set, then turns and exits kitchen door as Section C of wall falls to stage floor.
6. Telegraph Boy enters St. Lt. Sabina sees him and rises.
7. Mrs. Antrobus enters from kitchen X to door Lt.
8. Telegraph Boy knocks on door Lt. as Mrs. Antrobus and Sabina bring chair from up Lt. to barricade door and lean against it.
9. Dinosaur and Mammoth enter St. Rt. above set and X to door St. Lt.
10. Sabina pushes chair up Lt. and hides behind it. Mrs. Antrobus opens door in pantomime. Dinosaur and Mammoth charge through door and go to fireplace DC. Telegraph Boy enters and stops by door.
11. Mrs. Antrobus X to between animals. Dinosaur is Rt. and Mammoth Lt. of fireplace.
12. As Mrs. Antrobus speaks to animals they nod in answer to her questions.
13. Telegraph Boy X to fireplace, kneels and strikes match.
14. Sabina X to Center. Telegraph Boy shrugs in answer to Mrs. Antrobus.
15. Mrs. Antrobus hands Sabina stick which has one end painted red.
16. Sabina exits Rt. into kitchen. Mrs. Antrobus sits in chair Rt. of table.
17. Telegraph Boy crosses to Lt. of table.

SABINA:

But it was I who encouraged Mr. Antrobus to make the alphabet. I'm sorry to say it, Mrs. Antrobus, but you're not a beautiful woman, and you can never know what man could do if he tried.¹ It's girls like I who inspire the multiplication table. I'm sorry to say it, but you're not a beautiful woman, Mrs. Antrobus, and that's the Bod's truth.²

MRS. ANTROBUS:

And you didn't last--you sank to the kitchen. And what do you do there?³ No wonder to you it seems easire being dead. Reading and writing and counting on your fingers is all very well in their way--but I keep the home going.⁴ --Ther's that dinosaur on the front lawn again.--Shoo! Go away. Go away.

DINOSAUR:

It's cold.

MRS. ANTROBUS:

You go around to the back of the house where you belong.⁵

SABINA:

Now that you audience are listening to this, too, I understand it a little better. I wish eleven o'clock were here; I don't want to be dragged through this whole play again.⁶ Mrs. Antrobus! Mrs. Antrobus! Help! There's a strange man coming to the house. He's coming up the walk, help!⁷

MRS. ANTROBUS:

Help me quick! Who is it? What do you want?⁸

TELEGRAPH BOY:

A telegram for Mrs. Antrobus from Mr. Antrobus in the city.

SABINA:

Are you sure, are you sure? Maybe it's just a trap!

MRS. ANTROBUS:

I know his voice, Sabina. We can open the door.⁹ I'm sorry we kept you waiting. We have to be careful, you know.¹⁰ Hm!--Will you be quiet?¹¹ Have you had your supper? Are you ready to come in? Young man, have you any fire with you?¹² Then light the grate, will you?¹³ What are people saying about this cold weather?¹⁴ Sabina, take this stick and go and light the stove.¹⁵

SABINA:

Like I told you, Mrs. Antrobus; two weeks. That's the law. I hope that's perfectly clear.¹⁶

MRS. ANTROBUS:

What about this cold weather?¹⁷

1. Mrs. Antrobus pulls hassock to her, takes sewing basket from it and begins to darn red sock.
2. Telegraph Boy steps DLC takes the pose of a herald. Animals pose on each side of him as if they held trumpets.
3. Sabina enters from kitchen and X to Rt. Center.
4. Telegraph Boy sings to tune of "Yankee Doodle".
5. Animals howl, Sabina screams.
6. Dinosaur X up Lt. behind chair and lies down as Mammoth X down Lt. and lies down.

TELEGRAPH BOY:

Of course, I don't know anything--but they say there's a wall of ice moving down from the North, that's what they say. We can't get Boston by telegraph, and they're burning pianos in Hartford. It moves everything in front of it, churches and post offices and city halls. I live in Brooklyn myself.

MRS. ANTROBUS:

What are people doing about it?

TELEGRAPH BOY:

Well--uh--Talking, mostly. Or just what you'd do a day in February. There are some that are trying to go South and the roads are crowded; but you can't take old people and children very far in a cold like this.

MRS. ANTROBUS:

What's this telegram you have for me?¹

TELEGRAPH BOY:

If you wait just a minute; I've got to remember it.² This telegram was flashed from Murray Hill to University Heights! And then by pubbs of smoke from University Heights to Staten Island. And then by lantern from Staten Island to Plainfield, New Jersey. What hath God wrought! "To Mrs. Antrobus, Excelsior, New Jersey: My dear wife, will be an hour late. Busy day at the office. Don't worry the children about the cold just keep them warm. Burn everything except Shakespeare."

MRS. ANTROBUS:

He knows I'd burn ten Shakespeares to prevent a child of mine from having one cold in the head. What does it say next?³

TELEGRAPH BOY:

"Have made great discoveries today--have separated em from en."

SABINA:

I know what that is, that's the alphabet, yest it is. Mr. Antrobus is just the cleverest man. Why, when the alphabet's finished, we'll be able to tell the future and everything.

TELEGRAPH BOY:

Then listen to this: "Ten tens make a hundred semicolon consequences far-reaching."

MRS. ANTROBUS:

What does he say next?

TELEGRAPH BOY:

I-I can't do this last part very well.⁴ "Happy w'dding ann'vers'ry to you, Happy ann'vers'ry to you."⁵

MRS. ANTROBUS:

Dolly! Frederick! Be quiet.⁶

1. Mrs. Antrobus rises and crosses to Telegraph Boy
2. Mrs. Antrobus takes needle from her collar and hands it to him.
3. Telegraph Boy starts Lt. and stops.
4. Mrs. Antrobus X to St. Lt. door.
5. Telegraph Boy takes pose again.

TELEGRAPH BOY:

'Happy w'dding an'vers'ry, dear Eva; happy w'dding ann'vers'ry to you.

MRS. ANTROBUS:

Is that in the telegram? Are they singing telegrams now? The earth's getting so silly no wonder the sun turns cold.

SABINA:

Mrs. Antrobus, I want to take back the notice I gave you. Mrs. Antrobus, I don't want to leave a house that gets such interesting telegrams and I'm sorry for anything I said. I really am.¹

MRS. ANTROBUS:

Young man, I'd like to give you something for all this trouble; Mr. Antrobus isn't home yet and I have no money and no food in the house--

TELEGRAPH BOY:

Mrs. Antrobus--I don't like to--appear to--ask for anything but--

MRS. ANTROBUS:

What is it you'd like?

TELEGRAPH BOY:

Do you happen to have an old needle you could spare? My wife just sits home all day thinking about needles.

SABINA:

We only got two in the house. Mrs. Antrobus, you know we only got two in the house.²

MRS. ANTROBUS: Why, yes, I can spare this.

TELEGRAPH BOY:

Thank you, Mrs. Antrobus. Mrs. Antrobus, can I ask you something else? I have two sons of my own; if the cold gets worse, what should I do?

SABINA:

I think we'll all perish, that's what I think. Cold like this in August is just the end of the whole world.

MRS. ANTROBUS:

I don't know. After all, what does one do about anything? Just keep as warm as you can. And don't let your wife and children see that you're worried.³

TELEGRAPH BOY:

Yes, Thank you, Mrs. Antrobus. Well, I'd better be going.⁴ Oh, I forgot there's one more sentence in the telegram--⁵ "Three cheers have invented the wheel."

1. Telegraph Boy makes gesture of large circle.
2. Telegraph Boy gives Sabina a look and exits St. Lt.
3. Sabina X Rt.
4. Sabina exits Rt. into kitchen.
5. Mrs. Antrobus speaks to animals.
6. Animals shake their heads.
7. Again they shake thier heads. Animals shrug, Mrs. Antrobus X to St. Lt. door, and animals X to window.
8. Mrs. Antrobus calls out door. Gladys and Henry enter Up Lt. above set.
9. Henry pantomimes throwing rock Gladys X to door St. Lt.
10. Gladys enter and runs across to chair down Rt.
11. Henry throws again then enters X to sofa, Mrs. Antrobus X to center below table.
12. Children take off coats and mittens and speak at the same time.
13. Mrs. Antrobus draws up hassock down center, children set on floor beside her - Henry Lt., Gladys Rt., Animals complete group, Mammoth beside Gladys, the Dinosaur beside Henry. Both animals let feet hang over stage edge.
14. Mrs. Antrobus grabs Henry by hair.
15. Henry puts hand over forehead, Mrs. Antrobus lets him go, and he pulls his hair over forehead.
16. Mrs. Antrobus uses corner of apron to polish Henry's forehead, holding him by hair.
17. Mrs. Antrobus puts her hand over Henry's mouth.
18. Gladys gestures "Shame on You", Henry gestures "Keep Quiet".

TELEGRAPH BOY:

I don't know. That's what it said. The sign for it is like this.¹ Well, goodbye.²

SABINA:

Mrs. Antrobus, it looks to me like all the nice men in the world are already married;³ I don't know why that is.⁴

MRS. ANTROBUS:

Do you ever remember hearing of any cold like this in August?⁵ From your grandmothers or anyone?⁶ Have you any suggestions?⁷ Henry. Gladys. Children. Come right in and get warm. No, no, when Mama saus a thing she means it.⁸ Henry! Henry. Put down that stone. You know what happened last time.⁹ Henry!¹⁰ Put down that stone. You know what happened last time. Henry! Put down that stone!¹¹ Gladys! Put down your dress! ! Try and be a lady.¹²

GLADYS:

Mama, I'm hungry. Mama, why is it so cold?

HENRY:

Mama, why doesn't it snow? Mama, when's supper ready? Maybe it'll snow and we can make snowballs.

GLADYS:

Mama, it's so cold that in one more minute I couldn't of stood it!

MRS. ANTROBUS:

Settle down, both of you, I want to talk to you.¹³ It's just a cold spell of some kind. Now listen to what I'm saying: When your father comes home I want you to be extra quiet. He's had a hard day at the office and I don't know but what he may have one of his moods. I just got a telegram from him very happy and excited, and you know what that means. Your father's temper's uneven; I guess you know that. Henry! Henry!¹⁴ Why-- why can't you remember to keep your hair down over your forehead?¹⁵ You must keep that scar covered up. Don't you know that when your father sees it he loses all control over himself. He goes crazy. He wants to die?¹⁶ Lift your head up. Stop squirming. Blessed me, sometimes I think that it's going away--and then there it is: just as red as ever.

HENRY:

Mama, today at school two teachers forgot and called me by my old name. They forgot, Mama. You'd better write another letter to the principal, so that he'll tell them I've changed my name. Right out in class they call me: Cain.¹⁷

MRS. ANTROBUS:

Don't say it. If you're good they'll forget it. Henry, you didn't--hurt anyone today, did you?

HENRY:

Oh--no-o-o!¹⁸

1. Mrs. Antrobus pulls down Gladys' dress.
2. Gladys puts hands on face.
3. Mrs. Antrobus slaps Gladys' hand as she pulls it away.
4. Mrs. Antrobus rises X Lt. to door. Mammoth back behind table.
5. Mrs. Antrobus turns away from children. Gladys gets up and X above table.
6. Gladys X to Mrs. Antrobus. Henry X to Rt. of table.
7. Sabina enters from kitchen St. Rt.
8. Gladys starts Rt. stops as Mr. Antrobus is heard entering from back of auditorium.
9. Mr. Antrobus comes down center aisle through audience towards front of stage. Animals try to hide, Dinosaur under table, Mammoth behind chair Rt. of table. Sabina kneels beside Mammoth.
10. Mr. Antrobus comes up steps to stage. Sabina X above table.
11. Mr. Antrobus X to door St. Lt. Sabina, Mrs. Antrobus and Gladys barricade door with chair.
12. Henry picks up slingshot and takes aim.
13. Mrs. Antrobus takes Gladys Up Center.
14. Sabina puts chair Up Lt.

MRS. ANTROBUS:

And, Gladys, I want you to be especially nice to your father tonight. You know what he calls you when you're good--his little angel, his little star.¹ Keep your dress down like a little lady. And keep your voice nice and low. Gladys Antrobus!!! What's that red stuff?² You have on your face?³ You're a filthy detestable child! Get away from me, both of you! I wish I'd never seen sight or sound of you. Let the cold come! I can't stand it. I don't want to go on.⁴

GLADYS:

All the girls at school do, Mama.

MRS. ANTROBUS:

I'm through with you, that's all!⁵ --Sabina!--Don't you know your father'd go crazy if he saw that paint on your face? Don't you know your father thinks you're perfect? Don't you know he couldn't live if he didn't think you were perfect?--Sabina!⁶

SABINA:

Yes, Mrs. Antrobus!

MRS. ANTROBUS:

Take this girl out into the kitchen and wash her face with the scrubbing brush.

ANTROBUS:

Look out below!! "I've been working on the railroad, all the livelong day--" etc.⁸

MRS. ANTROBUS:

Sabina what's that noise outside?⁹

SABINA:

Oh, it's a drunken tramp. It's a giant, Mrs. Antrobus. We'll all be killed in our beds, I know it!¹⁰

MRS. ANTROBUS:

Help me quick. Quick.¹¹ Who is it? What do you want?--Sabina, have you sny boiling water ready?--who is it?¹²

ANTROBUS:

Broken-down camel of a pig's snout, open this door.

MRS. ANTROBUS:

God be praised! It's you tather!--Just a minute! George, Sabina, clear the door, quick.¹³ Gladys, come here while I clean your nasty face!¹⁴

ANTROBUS:

She-bitch of a goat's gizzard, I'll break every bone in your body. Let me in or I'll tear the whole house down.

1. Sabina stands at door with her fingers in her ears.
2. Sabina opens door Mr. Antrobus enters dressed in winter clothes carrying wheel and lantern and sack with bone on top.
3. Everybody except Henry rushes to hug Mr. Antrobus who drops sack. Gladys takes his scarf, Sabina takes his hat and coat.
4. Henry X and takes wheel up Rt.
5. Mr. Antrobus points to parcel on floor.
6. Sabina bends over to pick up parcel.
7. Henry sits bench Up Rt., looking at wheel.
8. Mr. Antrobus swats Sabina's backside, she straightens up quickly.
9. Sabina X to kitchen door St. Rt.
10. Gladys takes lantern and puts it under table below door St. Lt.
11. Sabina rubs backside and exits by kitchen door. Dinosaur takes bone to Mr. Antrobus who throws it across stage. Dinosaur chases it and takes it up center to sofa. Mrs. Antrobus X to fireplace.

MRS. ANTROBUS:

Just a minute, George, something's the matter with the lock.¹

ANTROBUS:

Open the door or I'll turn your livers out. I'll smash your brains on the ceiling, and the devil take the hindmost

MRS. ANTROBUS:

Now I'm ready, Sabina. You can open the door.²

ANTROBUS:

Well, how's the whole crooked family?³ I'll be scalded and tarred if a man can't get a little welcome when he comes home. Well, Maggie, you old gunny-sack, how's the broken down old weather hen--Sabina, old fishbait, old skunk-pot--And the children,--how've the little smellers been?

GLADYS:

Papa, Papa, Papa, Papa, Papa

ANTROBUS:

How've they been, Maggie? How've they been?

MRS. ANTROBUS:

Well, I must say, they've been as good as gold.⁴ I haven't had to raise my voice once.

ANTROBUS:

Papa's little weasel, eh? Sabina, there's some food for you.⁵ Papa's little gopher?⁶

GLADYS:

Papa, you're always teasing me.

ANTROBUS:

And Henry? Nothing rash today, I hope. Nothing rash?

HENRY:

No, Papa⁷

ANTROBUS:

Well, that's good, that's good--I'll be Sabina let the fire go out.⁸

SABINA:

Mr. Antrobus, I've given my notice. I'm leaving two weeks from today. I'm sorry, but I'm leaving.⁹

ANTROBUS:

Well, if you have now you'll freeze to death, so go and cook the dinner.¹⁰

SABINA:

Two weeks, that's the law.¹¹

1. Mr. Antrobus X to Mrs. Antrobus and gives her a kiss on cheek.
2. Mr. Antrobus points at wheel, Mrs. Antrobus grabs his arm.
3. Mr. Antrobus X to Henry and slaps him. Gladys X to Mrs. Antrobus.
4. Mr. Antrobus takes wheel, X to Mrs. Antrobus, Henry follows him.
5. Mr. Antrobus rolls wheel across front of stage, Gladys stops it.
Mr. Antrobus goes after it.
6. Mr. Antrobus rools wheel back across stage to Henry.
7. Mrs. Antrobus takes Gladys and Henry to kitchen door. Mr. Antrobus
X to chair up Lt. and sits.

ANTROBUS:
Did you get my telegram?¹

MRS. ANTROBUS:
Yes.--What's a whell?

ANTROBUS:
Why, there it is--²

MRS. ANTROBUS:
What does this cold weather mean? It's below freezing.

ANTROBUS:
Not before the children!

MRS. ANTROBUS:
Shouldn't we do something about it?--start off, move?

ANTROBUS:
Not before the children!!!³

HENRY:
Papa, you hit me!

ANTROBUS:
Well, remember it. That's to make you remember today. Today. The day the alphabet's finished; and the day that we saw the hundred--hundred, the hundred, the hundred, the hundred--there's no end to 'em. I've had a day at the office! By the way, Maggie.⁴ Take a look at that wheel, Maggie--when I've got that to rights; you'll see a sight.⁵ There's a reward there for all the walking you've done.

MRS. ANTROBUS:
How do you mean?

ANTROBUS:
Maggie--we've reached the top of the wave. There's not much left to be done. We're there!

MRS. ANTROBUS:

And the ice???

ANTROBUS:
The ice!⁶

MRS. ANTROBUS:
Children, go out in the kitchen. I want to talk to your father alone.⁷

HENRY:
Papa, you could put a chair on this.

1. Dinosaur X to Rt. of Mr. Antrobus, Mammoth X to his Lt. Gladys and Henry exit St. Rt. Mr. Antrobus takes goldfish bowl off table to his Lt. Mrs. Antrobus turns to face him.
2. Mr. Antrobus speaks to fish.
3. Mr. Antrobus picks up birdcage and speaks to bird.
4. Mrs. Antrobus X to Mr. Antrobus slowly.
5. Mrs. Antrobus faces him directly.
6. Mammoth X down Lt. Dinosaur moves Rt.
7. Mr. Antrobus whistles to bird.
8. Mr. Antrobus puts fishbowl back on table and birdcage back on floor above chair.
9. Mr. Antrobus rises and crosses a step Dn. Lt.
10. Refugees begin to enter from both sides above set, Mrs. Antrobus starts towards kitchen but stops as they call.

ANTROBUS:

Yes, any booby can fool with it now; but I thought of 't first.¹

MRS. ANTROBUS:

Well?

ANTROBUS:

It's cold--² How things been, eh? Keck, keck, keck--³ And you, Millicent?

MRS. ANTROBUS:

I know it's cold.⁴

ANTROBUS:

No spilling of sunflower seed, eh? No singing after lights-out, y'know what I mena?

MRS. ANTROBUS:

You can try and prevent us freezing to death, can't you? You can do something? We've can start moving. Or we can go on the animals' backs?⁵

ANTROBUS:

The best thing about animals is that they don't talk much.

DINOSAUR:

It's cold.

MAMMOTH:

It's cold

ANTROBUS:

Eh, eh, eh! Watch that!--⁶--By midnight we'd turn to ice. The roads are full of people now who can scarcely lift a foot from the ground. The grass out in front is like iron,--which reminds me, I have another needle for you.--The people up north--where are they? Frozen--crushed--

MRS. ANTROBUS:

Is that what's going to happen to us?⁷ Will you answer me?

ANTROBUS:

I don't know, Maggie. I don't know anything. Some say that the ice is going slower.⁸ Some say that it's stopped. The sun's growing cold. What can I do about that? Nothing we can do but burn everything in the house, and the fenceposts and the barn. Keep the fire going.⁹ When we have no more fire, we die.¹⁰

MRS. ANTROBUS:

Well, why didn't you say so in the first place?

MISS T. MUSE:

Mr. Antrobus.

JUDGE:

Mr. Antrobus.

1. Mr. Antrobus turns to door St. Lt. Refugees stand at window.
2. Sabina enters from kitchen.
3. Mrs. Antrobus exits by kitchen door.
4. Mr. Antrobus opens door St. Lt. Sabina X to behind him.
5. Sabina points out door. Mr. Antrobus pushes Sabina to center.

HOMER:
Mr. Antrobus.

MRS. ANTROBUS:
Who's that? Who's that calling you?

ANTROBUS:
Hm--let me see.¹

JUDGE:
Could we warm our hands for a moment, Mr. Antrobus?

MITT T. MUSE:
It's very cold, Mr. Antrobus.

HOMER:
Mr. Antrobus, I wonder if you have a piece of bread or something you could spare?

MRS. ANTROBUS:
Who are these people? Why, they are all over the front yard. What did they come here for?²

SABINA:
Mrs. Antrobus, there are thousands of tramps knocking at the back door.

MRS. ANTROBUS:
George, tell these people to go away. Tell them to move right along. I'll go and send them away from the back door. Sabina, come with me.³

ANTROBUS:
Sabina, stay here. I have something to say to you.⁴ Ladies and Gentlemen--I'll have to ask you to wait a few minutes longer. It'll be all right. While you're waiting, you might each pull up a stake of the fence. We'll need them all for the fireplace. There'll be coffee and sandwiches in a moment.

SABINA:
Mr. Antrobus, what's that? What's that big white thing moving this way? Mr. Antrobus, it's ice--it's ice.⁵

ANTROBUS:
Sabina, I want you to go into the kitchen and make a lot of coffee. Make a whole pailful.

SABINA:
Pailfull?

ANTROBUS:
And sandwiches, piles of them, like this.

1. Sabina drops out of character and speaks as Miss Somerset.
2. Miss Somerset X to front of stage and speaks to audience.
3. Antrobus and Fitzpatrick speak at the same time.
4. Sabina exits St. Rt. below set. Mrs. Antrobus enters from kitchen X to door St. Lt. and stands guard. Refugees edge closer to window, Doctor and Judge in Front.
5. Mr. Antrobus X to Mrs. Antrobus at door.
6. Doctor puts his head in window.
7. Doctor withdraws head, Mr. Antrobus imitates diphtheria.
8. Mrs. Antrobus takes chair from Up Lt. to table.

SABINA:

Mr. An-Oh, I see what this part of the play means now. This means refugees.¹ Oh, I don't like it--I don't like it.² Ladies and Gentlemen, don't take this play serious. The world's not coming to an end--you know it's not. People exaggerate. Most people really have enough to eat and a roof over their heads. Nobody actually starves--you can always eat grass or something--that ice business--why, it was a long, long time ago.

ANTROBUS AND FITZPATRICK:

Miss Somerset! Miss Somerset!³

SABINS:

All right, I'll say the lines, but I won't think about the play. And I advise you not to think about the play either.⁴

MISS M. MUSE:

Mr. Antrobus-Mrs. Antrobus.

MRS. ANTROBUS:

George, these tramps say that you asked them to come in the house. What does this mean?

ANTROBUS:

Just--they're a few friends I met on the road.

MRS. ANTROBUS:

Now you're not to let these people in.

ANTROBUS:

They're real nice--real useful people--

MRS. ANTROBUS:

George Antrobus, not another soul comes in here over my dead body.⁵

ANTROBUS:

Maggie, there's a doctor there.⁶ Never hurts to house a good doctor in the house. We've lost a peck of children, one way and another. You can never tell when a child's throat will get stopped up. What you and I have seen--!!⁷

MRS. ANTROBUS:

Well, ust one person, then, the doctor.⁸ The others can go right along the road.

ANTROBUS:

Maggie, there's an old man, particular friend of mine--

MRS. ANTROBUS:

I won't listen to you--

ANTROBUS:

It was he that really started off the A.B.C.'s.

1. Mr. Antrobus X to hassock and sits.
2. Judge puts head in window, Mrs. Antrobus X to window, and Judge withdraws.
3. Mrs. Antrobus X down Lt.
4. Mr. Antrobus rises and X to her. Mrs. Antrobus turns away.
5. Mrs. Antrobus X to RC. Mr. Antrobus X to door St. Lt.
6. Animals rise.
7. Animals X to door St. Lt. slowly, Mammoth exits first, Dinosaur pauses and gives Mr. Antrobus bone then exits.
8. Refugees start in.

MRS. ANTROBUS:

I don't care if he perishes. We can do without reading or writing. We can't do without food.

ANTROBUS:

Then let the ice come!!!¹ Drink your coffee!! I don't want any coffee if I can't drink it with some good people.

MRS. ANTROBUS:

Stop shouting. Who else is there trying to push us off the cliff?

ANTROBUS:

Well, there's the man--who makes all the laws. Judge Moses.²

MRS. ANTROBUS:

Judges can't help us now.

ANTROBUS:

And if the ice melts?--and if we pull through? Have you and I been able to bring up Henry? What have we done?

MRS. ANTROBUS:

Who are those old women?

ANTROBUS:

Up in town there are nine sisters. There are three or four of them here. They're sort of music teachers--and one of them recites and one of them--

MRS. ANTROBUS:

That's the end. A singing troupe!³ Well, take your choice, live or die. Starve your own children before your face.

ANTROBUS:

These people don't take much. They're used to starving. They'll sleep on the floor. Besides, Maggie, listen!⁴ No listen: Who've we got in the house but Sabina? Sabina's always afraid the worst will happen. Whoe spirits can she keep up? Maggie, these people never give up. They think they'll live and work forever.⁵

MRS. ANTROBUS:

All right, let them in. You're master here.--But these animals must go. Enough's enough. They'll soon be big enough to push the walls down, anyway. Take them away.⁶

ANTROBUS:

All right. The dinosaur and mammoth--! Come on baby, come on, Frederick. Come for a walk. That's a good little fellow.⁷

DINOSAUR:

It's cold

ANTROBUS:

Yes, nice cold fresh air. Bracing.⁸

1. Doctor enters and X Up. Lt.
2. Judge enters and X to Center. Mrs. Antrobus X down Rt. and picks up Gladys' coat.
3. Mr. Antrobus takes Homer to Judge. The Muses enter and huddle ULC.
4. Mrs. Antrobus exits into kitchen, Mr. Antrobus starts to follow but stops up Center.
5. Refugees move about room, the Muses to Rt. of table. Doctor and other refugees DL, the Judge and Homer to Lt. of table. Sabina and Mrs. Antrobus enter from kitchen pantomiming carrying trays. Sabina stops at door, Mrs. Antrobus X to table.
6. Sabina X to table.
7. Sabina speaks to audience. Sabian exits St. Rt. below set.
8. Refugees pantomime passing trays around room.
9. Mrs. Antrobus X to Rt. of table.

ANTROBUS:

Make yourself at home. Maggie, this the doctor--m--¹ And--Judge--Maggie, you know the Judge. Come right in, Judge.² Coffee'll be here in a minute. Maggie, you know--you know Homer?³ Miss Muse--are some of your sisters here? Come right in--Miss E. Muse; Miss T. Muse; Miss M. Muse.

MRS. ANTROBUS:

How do you do? Please to meet you. Just--make yourself comfortable. Supper'll be ready in a minute.⁴

ANTROBUS:

Maggie--! Make yourself at home, friends.⁵ Sanbina, pass the sandwiches.

SABINA:

I thought I was working in a respectable house--that had respectable guests. I'm giving my notice, Mr. Antrobus, two weeks, that's the law.

ANTROBUS:

Booby, pass the sandwiches.

SABINA:

Two weeks, that's the law.⁶

ANTROBUS:

There's the law. That's Moses.

SABINA:

The Ten Commandments--Faught!!--That's the worst line I've ever had to say on any stage.⁷

ANTROBUS:

I think the best thing to do is just not to stand on ceremony, but pass the sandwiches around from right to left. Judge, help yourself to one of these.⁸

MRS. ANTROBUS:

The roads are crowded, I hear?

MISS E. MUSE:

People are trampling one another.

DOCTOR:

Ma'am, you can't imagine

MISS M. MUSE:

You can hardly put one foot before you.

MRS. ANTROBUS:

Well, you know what I think it is,--I think it's sunspots.⁹

HOMER:

Oh, you're right, Mrs. Antrobus--

THE MUSES:

That's what it is--

1. There is a sudden silence. Mr. Antrobus X to Judge. Mrs. Antrobus sits in chair Rt. of table.
2. All Refugees look at Judge, Mrs. Antrobus rises in suffering and whispers.
3. Sabina screams from kitchen, Homer rises and is helped up Center by Judge. Mr. Antrobus X to below table St. Lt.
4. Sabina enters X to Mrs. Antrobus. Gladys enters from kitchen and steps to above door.
5. Mrs. Antrobus exits into kitchen.
6. Mrs. Antrobus enters with Henry behind her, with a red "C" on his forehead. Mr. Antrobus starts for him and Mrs. Antrobus shields him.

JUDGE:

That's what I was saying the other day.

ANTROBUS:

Well, I don't believe the whole world's going to turn to ice. I can't believe it. Judge! Have we worked for nothing? Professor! Have we just failed in the whole thing?¹

MRS. ANTROBUS:

It is certainly very strange--well on both sides of the family we come of very hearty stock.--Doctor, I want you to meet my children. They're eating their supper now. And of course I want them to meet you.

DOCTOR:

Of course!

MISS M. MUSE:

How many children have you, Mrs. Antrobus?

MRS. ANTROBUS:

I have two,--a boy and a girl.

JUDGE:

I understood you had two sons, Mrs. Antrobus.²

MRS. ANTROBUS:

Abel, Abel, my son, my son, Abel, my son. Abel, my son.³

ANTROBUS:

What's that?⁴

SABINA:

Mr. Antrobus--that son of yours, that boy Henry Antrobus--I don't stay in this house another moment!--He's not fit to live among respectable folks and that's a fact.

MRS. ANTROBUS:

Don't say another word, Sabina. I'll be right back.⁵

SABINA:

Mr. Antrobus, Henry has thrown a stone again and if he hasn't killed the boy that lives next door, I'm very much mistaken. He finished his supper and went out to play; and I heard such a fight; and then I saw it. I saw it with my own eyes. And it looked to me like stark murder.⁶

HENRY:

He was going to take the wheel away from me. He started to throw a stone at me first.

MRS. ANTROBUS:

George, it was just a boyish impulse. Remember how young he is. George, he's only four thousand year old.

1. Mr. Antrobus X to fireplace and begins to stamp out fire.
2. Doctor and Judge X towards him.
3. Mrs. Antrobus X to Mr. Antrobus, Sabina X to her side.
4. Mr. Antrobus X UR. Mr. Antrobus X U.
5. Mr. Antrobus sits in chair UL, Sabina X to UR.
6. Gladys steps to above table.
7. Gladys X to alcove UR. Mr. Antrobus covers face with hands.
8. Gladys exits UR. Mrs. Antrobus turns to Refugees. Sabina starts refugee singing "Jingle Bells". Mrs. Antrobus X to Mr. Antrobus and takes his shoes off.
9. Henry X UC above table.
10. Mrs. Antrobus stands. Henry X to Lt. of Mr. Antrobus.
11. Gladys enters from alcove with slippers X to Rt. of Mrs. Antrobus. Henry kneels beside his father and starts multiplication table.
12. Gladys X to Rt. of Mr. Antrobus and kneels putting his slippers on him.

SABINA:

And everything was going alongso nicely!

ANTROBUS:

Put out the fire!¹ Put out all the fires. No wonder the sun grows cold.

MRS. ANTROBUS:

Doctor! Judge! Help me!² --George, have you lost your mind!³

ANTROBUS:

There is no mind. We'll not try to live. Give it up. Give up trying.⁴

SABINA:

Mr. Antrobus! I'm downright ashamed of you.

MRS. ANTROBUS:

George, have some more coffee. Gladys! Where's Gladys gone!⁵

GLADYS:

Here I am, Mama.

MRS. ANTROBUS:

Go upstairs and bring your father's slippers.⁶ How could you forget a thing like that, when you know how tired he is!⁷ George, remember all the other times. When the volcanoes came right up in the front yard.⁸ And the time the grasshoppers ate every single leaf and blade of grass, all the grain and spinach you'd grown with your own hands. And the summer there were earthquakes every night.

ANTROBUS:

Henry! Henry!⁹ Myself, All of us, we're covered with blood.

MRS. ANTROBUS:

Then remember all the times you were pleased with him and when you were proud of yourself.--Henry!¹⁰

HENRY:

Yes, Mama.

MRS. ANTROBUS:

Henry! Come here and recite to your father the multiplication table that you do so nicely.

HENRY:

Two times six is twelve; three times six is eighteen--I don't think I know the sixes. ¹¹

GLADYS:

Papa--Papa--I was very good in school today. Miss Conover said right out in class that it all the girls had as good manners as Gladys Antrobus, that the world would be a very different place to live in.¹²

MRS. ANTROBUS:

You recited a piece at assembly, didn't you? Recite it to your father.

GLADYS:

Papa, do you want to hear what I recited in class?¹ "The Star," by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow.

MRS. ANTROBUS:

Wait!!!² The fire's going out.³ There isn't enough wood! Henry, go upstairs and bring down the chairs⁴ and start breaking up the beds.

GLADYS:

Look, Papa, her's my report card. Lookit. Conduct A! Look, Papa. Papa, do you want to hear "The Star," by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow? Papa, you're not made at me, are you?--I know it'll get warmer. Soon it'll be just like Spring, and we can go to a picnic at the Hibernian Picnic Grounds like you always like to do, don't you remember? Papa, just look at me once.⁵

ANTROBUS:

You recided in assemby, did you?⁶ You didn't forget it?

GLADYS:

No!!! I was perfect.⁷

ANTROBUS:

Build up the fire. It's cold. Build up the fire. We'll do what we can. Sabina, get more wood.⁸ Come around the fire, everybody. Bring up your benches.⁹ At least the young ones may pull through. Henry, have you eaten something?

HENRY:

Yes, Papa.

ANTROBUS:

Gladys, have you had some supper?

GLADYS:

I ate in the kitchen, Papa.¹⁰

ANTROBUS:

If you do come through this--what'll you be able to do? What do you know? Henry, did you take a good look at that wheel?

HENRY:

Yes, Papa.

ANTROBUS:

Six times two are--

HENRY:

--twelve; six times three are eighteen; six times four are--Papa, it's hot and cold. It makes my head all funny. It makes me sleepy.

1. Mrs. Antrobus pulls Gladys to her right. Mr. Antrobus slaps Henry.
2. Gladys repeats each phrase after her mother. Henry continues multiplication table. Sabina enters from kitchen with pieces of wood.
3. Singing starts again. Sabina X to fireplace and speaks to audience.
4. An usher runs down center aisle with pieces of wood and hands them to Sabina who puts them on fire.
5. Curtain.

ANTROBUS:

Wake up. I don't care if your head is sleepy. Six times four are twenty-four. Six times five are--

HENRY:

Thirty. Papa!

ANTROBUS:

Maggie, put something into Gladys' head on the chance she can use it.

MRS. ANTROBUS:

What should it be, George?

ANTROBUS:

Six time six are thirty-six. Teach her the beginning of the Bible.

GLADYS:

But, Mama, it's so cold and close.¹

MRS. ANTROBUS:

"In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth;² and the earth was waste and void; and the darkness was upon the face of the deep--"³

SABINA:

Will you please start handing up your chairs? We'll need everything for this fire. Save the human race.--Ushers, will you pass the chairs up here? Thank you.

HENRY:

Six times nine are fifty-four; six times ten are sixty.⁴

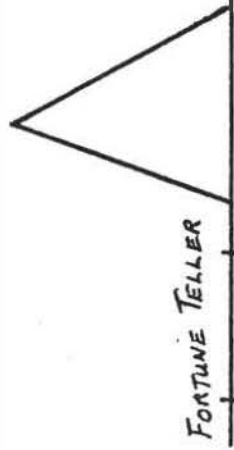
GLADYS:

"And God called the light Day and the darkness he called Night."

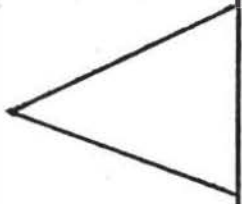
SABINA:

Pass up your chairs, everybody. Save the human race.⁵

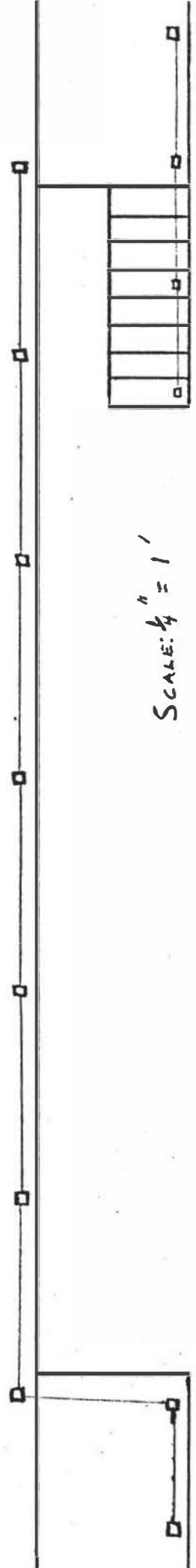
ACT II



BINGO PARLOR



WEATHER SIGNAL



SCALE: 1/4" = 1'

THE SKIN OF OUR TEETH

ACT TWO

During the intermission between Acts One and Two, a beach cabana, made of three flats four feet wide by seven feet high painted with six inch wide red and white vertical stripes, is lashed together in front of the platform stage Right. At the same time the fire dogs and pieces of wood are removed and a railing is set up on the front edge of the stage and both platforms on the downstage edge of the step unit. This railing is made of white standards one foot high and a red rope.

At the beginning of the Act there are slides shown on the screen until Mr. and Mrs. Antrobus are introduced and the curtain opens to the width of the bench on which they are seated.

When the curtain opens the Atlantic City boardwalk is revealed. The shops on the boardwalk are represented by two of the perisktoi located up Right Center and up Left Center. On the periaktos up Left Center, the Salt Water Taffy booth is painted, as well as the Fortune Teller's booth which is located closer to the Center. The Fortune Teller's booth has an arched doorway covered with a blue curtain. On the other unit at the extreme Right is the Turkish Bath booth and next to it is the Bingo Parlor which are ten feet high and twelve feet wide. There is a third unit upstage Center ten feet high and seven feet wide which is painted black.

In front of the black unit Center is a white park bench. To the Left and above the bench made of a white post six feet high with a three foot high black box on top of it. The black box has three openings in it with a different color medium in each opening. On top of the box is a bulb which has a flasher unit on it and is enclosed in red color medium.

1. Slides are shown during announcers speech.
2. Slide projector out, curtain opens partially to show Mr. and Mrs. Antrobus seated on a bench. Mr. Antrobus rises.
3. Mrs. Antrobus sneezes and murmurs "I beg your pardon".

ACT TWO

ANNOUNCER:

The management now brings you the news events of the world. Atlantic City, New Jersey: This great convention city is playing host this week to the anniversary convocation of that great fraternal order--the Ancient and Honorable Order of Mammals, Subdivision Humans. This great fraternal, militant and burial society is celebrating on the Board, ladies and gentlemen, its six hundred thousandth Annual Convention. It has just elected its president for the ensuing term--¹ Mrs. George Antrobus of Excelsior, New Jersey. We show you President Antrobus and his gracious and charming wife, every inch a mammal. Mr. Antrobus has had a long and checkered career. Credit has been paid to him for many useful enterprises including the introduction of the leve, of the wheel and the brewing of beer. Credit has also been extended to President Antrobus' gracious and charming wife for many practical suggestions, including the hem, the gore, and the gusset; and the novelty of the year,--frying in oil. Before we show you Mr. Antrobus accepting the nomination, we have an important announcement to make. As many of you know, this great celebration of the Order of the Mammals has received delegations from the other rival orders,--or shall we say: esteemed concurrent orders: the Wings, the Fins, the Shells, and so on. These orders are holding their conventions also, in various parts of the world, and have sent representatives to our own, two of a kind. Later in the day we will show you President Antrobus broadcasting his words of greeting and congratulation to the collected assemblies of the whole natural world. Ladies and Gentlemen! We give you President Antrobus!²

ANTROBUS:

Fellow-mammals, fellow-vertebrates, fellow-humans, I thank you. Little did my parents think,--when they told me to stand on my own two feet,--that I'd arrive at this place. My friends, we have come a long way. During this week of happy celebration it is perhaps not fitting that we dwell on some of the difficult times we have been through. The dinosaur is extinct--the ice has retreated³; and the common cold is being pursued by every means within our power. In our memorial service yesterday we did honor to all our friends and relatives who are no longer with us, by reason of cold, earthquakes, plagues and--and--differences of opinion. As our Bishop so ably said--uh--so'ably said--

MRS. ANTROBUS:

Gone, but not forgotten.

ANTROBUS:

"They are gone, but not forgotten." I think I can say, I think I can prophecy with complete--uh--with complete--

MRS. ANTROBUS:

Confidence.

1. Applause and cheers. Mr. Antrobus sits down.
2. Mrs. Antrobus rises.
3. Mrs. Antrobus sits down.
4. Mrs. Antrobus gets up.

ANTROBUS:

Thank you, my dear,--With complete lack of confidence, that a new day of security is about to dawn. The watchword of the closing year was: work, I give you the watchword for the future: Enjoy yourselves.

MRS. ANTROBUS:

George, sit down!

ANTROBUS:

Before I close, however, I wish to answer one of those unjust and malicious accusations that were brought against me during this last electoral campaign. Ladies and gentlemen, the charge was made that at various points in my career I leaned toward joining some of the rival orders,--that's a lie. As I told reporters of the Atlantic City Herald, I do not deny that a few months before my birth I hesitated between--uh--between pinfeathers and gill-breathing,--and so did many of us here,--but for the last million years I have been viviparous, hairy and diaphragmatic.¹

ANNOUNCER:

Thank you. Thank you very much, Mr. Antrobus. Now I know that our visitors will wish to hear a word from that gracious and charming mammal, Mrs. Antrobus, wife and mother,--Mrs. Antrobus.²

MRS. ANTROBUS:

Dear friends, I don' really think I should say anything. After all, it was my husband who was elected and not I. Perhaps, as President of the Women's Auxiliary Bed and Board Society,--I had some notes here, oh, yes, here they are!--I should give short report from some of our committees that have been meeting in this beautiful city. Perhaps it may interest you to know that it has at last been decided that the tomato is edible. Can you all hear me? The tomato is edible. A delegate from across the sea reports that the thread woven by the silkworm gives a cloth--I have a sample of it here--can you see it? Smooth, elastic. I should say that it's rather attractive,--though personally I prefer less shiny surfaces. Should the windows of a sleeping apartment be or shut? I know all mothers will follow our debates on this matter with close interest. I am sorry to say that the most expert authorities have not yet decided. It does seem to me that the night air would be bound to be unhealthy for our children, but there are many distinguished authorities on both sides. Well, I could go on talking forever,--as Shakespeare says: a woman's work is seldom done; but I think I'd better join my husband in saying thank you, and sit down. Thank you.³

ANNOUNCER:

Oh, Mrs. Antrobus!

MRS. ANTROBUS:

Yes?⁴

1. Mrs. Antrobus adjusts girdle.
2. Mrs. Antrobus sits down, nudges Mr. Antrobus who awakens and starts clapping. Curtain closes.
3. Curtain opens. Boices from Cabana.
4. Two conveeners and two girls enter from cabana, X to steps St. Lt., and mount steps.
5. The four X stage and exit UR.
6. Two conveeners enter from DR, X, and exit UL. A sleeping conveener is pushed across stage from Lt. to Rt. in a roller chair. The Fortune Teller and a conveener enter from Fortune Teller's Booth. The conveener hands some money to the Fortune teller then exits UL. Two conveeners enter from Bingo flat with money then exit DR. The Fortune Teller X to bench Center and puts money in her blouse. Two conveeners enter from UR. Voice of Bingo Caller is heard on the speakers.
7. Fortune Teller points with her pipe at the two conveeners who are crossing the stage. They pause momentarily. Then they continue across and off DL. The chair pusher enters UR with an empty chair.

ANNOUNCER:

We understand that you are about to celebrate a wedding anniversary. I know our listeners would like to extend their felicitations and hear a few words from you on that subject.

MRS. ANTROBUS:

I have been asked by this kind gentleman--yes, my friends, this spring Mr. Antrobus and I will be celebrating our five thousandth wedding anniversary. I don't know if I speak for my husband, but I can say that, as for me, I regret every moment of it. I beg your pardon. What I mean to say is that I do not regret one moment of it. I hope none of you catch my cold. We have two children. We've always had two children, though it hasn't always been the same two. But as I say, we have two fine children, and we're very grateful for that. Yes, Mr. Antrobus and I have been married five thousand years. Each wedding anniversary reminds me of the times when there were no weddings. We had to crusade for marriage. Perhaps there are some women within the sound of my voice who remember that crusade and those struggles; we fought for it, didn't we? We chained ourselves to lampposts and we made disturbances in the Senate,--anyway, at last we women got the ring.¹ A few men helped us, but I must say that most men blocked our way at every step: they said we were unfeminine. I only bring up these unpleasant memories, because I see some of backsliding from that great victory. Oh, my fellow mammals, keep hold of that. My husband says that the watchword for the year is Enjoy Yourself. I think that's very open to misunderstanding. My watchword for the year is: Save the Family. It's held together for over five thousand years: Save it! Thank you.²

ANNOUNCER:

Thank you Mrs. Antrobus. We had hoped to show you the Beauty Contest that took place here today. President Antrobus, an experienced judge of pretty girls, gave the title of Miss Atlantic City, 1942, to Miss Lily-Sabina Fairweather, charming hostess of our Boardwalk Bingo Parlot. Unfortunately, however, our time is up, and I must take you to some views of the Convention City and conveners,--enjoying themselves.³

CONVENER:

My watchword for the coming year is save the family.⁴ It's held together for five thousand years. Save it! Thank you!⁵

CONVENERS:

Enjoy yourselves!

GIRLS:

Enjoy yourselves!⁶

BINGO CALLER:

B-Nine; B-Nine. O-Twenty-six; O-Twenty-six. N-Four; N-Four. I-Twelve, etc

CHORUS:

Bingo!!!⁷

1. Fortune Teller points at back of chair pusher, he pauses, then exits UL. Sabina enters from Bingo Parlor wearing a red bathing suit covered by a trench coat. She X to back of bench.
2. Sabina traces her future on the palm of her hand.
3. Two conveeners enter from UL carry bottles.
4. Sabina X to Bingo Parlow as conveeners follow her.
5. One conveener whispers in Sabina's ear.
6. Sabina exits into Bingo Parlor. Conveeners follow. Fortune Teller X to DC swinging her hips.
7. Chair pusher enters UL.

FORTUNE TELLER:

Bright's disease! Your partner's deceiving you in that Kansas City deal. You'll have six grandchildren. Aboid high places.¹ Cirrhosis of the liver!

SABINA:

Ssst! Esmeralda! Ssst!

FORTUNE TELLER:

Keck!

SABINA:

Has President Antrobus come along yet?

FORTUNE TELLER:

No, no, no. Get back there. Hide yourself.

SABINA:

I'm afraid I'll miss him. Oh, Esmeralda, if I fail in this, I'll die; I know I'll die.

FORTUNRE TELLER:

Keck!

SABINA:

All right, I'll tell you my future.² I've wone the Beauty Contest in Atlantic City,--well, I'll win the Beauty Contest of the whole world. I'll take President Antrobus away from that wife of his. Then I'll take every man away from his wife, I'll turn the whole earth upside down. When all those husbands just think about me they'll get dizzy. They'll faint in the streets. They'll have to lean against lampposts.--Esmeralda, who was Helen of Troy?³

FORTUNE TELLER:

Shut your foolish mouth. When Mr. Antrobus comes along you can see what you dan do. Until then,--go away.⁴

SABINA:

Go away, boys, go away.⁵

SABINA:

I'm after bigger fry than you are.--Why, Mr. Simpson! How dare you?! You forget yourself. It does not impress me that you are the commissioner of sanitation from Scranton, Pennsylvania.⁶

FORTUNE TELLER:

I tell the future. Keck. Nothing easier. Everybody's future is in their face. Nothing easier. But who can tell your past,--eh? Nobody! Your youth,--where didit go? It slipper away while you were drunk? Puh! You're like our friends, Mr. and Mrs. Antrobus; you lie awake nights trying to know your past. What did it mean? What was it trying to say to you? Think! Think!⁷

1. Fortune Teller points at chair pusher, he passes a hand across his forehead and exits DR.
2. Conveeners enter from offstage. Four take up positions DR, two UC, three DL, and two by Bingo Parlor.
3. Conveeners jeer at Fortune Teller.
4. Fortune Teller X to Bingo Parlor.
5. Group DR stick tongues out at Fortune Teller, she X to them.
6. Fortune Teller X to group DL.
7. Conveeners all exit quickly. Fortune Teller X DL. Mr. and Mrs. Antrobus and Gladys enter UR. They X to DL, Mrs. Antrobus stopping at bench.

FORTUNE TELLER:

Split you heads. I can't tell the past, and neither can you. If anybody tries to tell you the past, take my word for it, they're charlatans. But I can tell the future.¹ Apoplexy! Nobody listens.--Keck! I see a face among you now--I won't embarrass him by pointing him out, but, listen, it may be you: Next year the watchspring inside you will crumple up. Death by regret,--Type Y. It's in the corners of your mouth. You'll decide that you should have lived for pleasure, but that you missed it. Death by regret,--Type Y-- Avoid mirrors. You'll try to be angry,--but no!--no anger. And now what's the immediate future of our friends, the Antrobuses" Oh, you've seen it as well as I have keck,--that dizziness of the head; that Great Man dizziness? The inventor of beer and gunpowder. The sudden fits of temper and then the long stretches of inertia? "I'm a sultan; let my slave-girls fan me"? You know as well as I what's coming. Rain. Rain. Rain in floods. The deluge. But first you'll see shameful things--shameful things. Shameful things. Some of you will be saying: "Let him drown. He's not worth saving. Give the whole thing up," I can see it in your faces. But you're wrong. Keep your doubts and despairs to yourselves. Again there'll be the narrow escape. The survival of a handful. From destruction,--total destruction.² Even of the animals, a few will be saved: two of a kind, male and female, two of a kind.³

FIRST CONVENER:

Charlatan!

SECOND CONVENER:

Madam Kill-Joy!

THIRD CONVENER:

Mrs. Jeremiah!

FOURTH CONVENER:

Charlatan!⁴

FORTUNE TELLER:

And you! Mark my words before it's too late. Where'll you be?⁵

FIRST CONVENER:

The crooking raven.

SECOND CONVENER:

Old dust and ashes.

THIRD CONVENER:

Rags, bottles, sacks.

FORTUNE TELLER:

Yes, stick out your tongues. You can't stick your tongues out far enough to lick the death-sweat from your foreheads. It's too late⁶ to work now--boil out the flood with your soup spoons. You've had your chance and you've lost. Enjoy yourselves!!!!⁷

1. Henry and chair pusher enter UR fighting over roller chair, two conveyers follow.
2. Both speak at same time.
3. Mr. and Mrs. Antrobus X to Henry.
4. Fortune Teller X to her tent.
5. Fortune Teller exits.
6. Chair pusher exits UL with chair, two conveyers follow.
7. Henry X DR.
8. Mr. Antrobus X to bench.
9. Gladys X to bench and sits.
10. Henry X to platform DR.

MRS. ANTROBUS:

Gladys, Gladys Antrobus, stick your stummick in.

GLADYS:

But it's easire this way.

MRS. ANTROBUS:

Well, it's too bad the new president has such a clumsy daughter, that's all I can say. Try and be a lady.

FORTUNE TELLER:

Aijah! That's been said a hundred billion times.

MRS. ANTROBUS:

Goodness! Where's Henry? He was here a minute ago, Hentry!¹

HENRY:

I'll put your eye out. I'll make you yell, like you never yelled before.²

NEGRO:

Now, I warns you. I warns you. If you make me mad, you'll get hurt.

ANTROBUS:

Henry! What is this? Put down that slingshot.³

MRS. ANTROBUS:

Henry! Henry! Behave yourself.⁴

FORTUNE TELLER:

That's right, young man. There are too many people in the world as it is. Everybody's in the way, except one's self.⁵

HENRY:

All I wanted to do was--have some fun.

NEGRO:

Fun? You get clean away from me and you get away fast. Nobody can't touch my chair, nobody, without I allow 'em to.⁶

ANTROBUS:

What were you doing, Henry?⁷

HENRY:

Everybody's always getting mad. Everybody's always trying to push you around. I'll make him sorry for this; I'll make him sorry.⁸

ANTROBUS:

Give me that slingshot.⁹

HENRY:

I won't. I'm sorry I came to this place. I wish I weren't here.¹⁰

1. Henry turns offstage.
2. Mrs. Antrobus X to Mr. Antrobus.
3. Both X DL. One Conveener enters DL.
4. Conveener bows to Mr. Antrobus who nods as they pass.
5. Conveener makes face at them. Mrs. Antrobus turns and chases him off UR.
6. Mr. Antrobus X to bench and sits.

HENRY:

I wish I weren't anywhere.

MRS. ANTROBUS:

Now, Henry, don't get so excited about nothing. I declare I don't know what we're going to do with you. Put your slingshot in your pocket and don't try to take hold of things that don't belong to you.¹

ANTROBUS:

After this you can stay home. I wash my hands of you.²

MRS. ANTROBUS:

Come now, let's forget all about it.³ Everybody take a good breath of that sea air and calm down.⁴ Who was that you spoke to, George?

ANTROBUS:

Nobody, Maggie. Just the candidate who ran against me in the election.⁵

MRS. ANTROBUS:

The man who ran against you in the election!! My husband didn't speak to you and he never will speak to you.

ANTROBUS:

Now, Maggie.

MRS. ANTROBUS:

After those lies you told about him in your speeches! Lies, that's what they were.⁶

GLADYS:

Mama, everybody's looking at you.

HENRY:

Everybody's laughing at you.

MRS. ANTROBUS:

If you must know, my husband's a saint, a downright saint, and you're not fit to speak to him on the street.

ANTROBUS:

Now, Maggie, now Maggie, that's enough of that.

MRS. ANTROBUS:

George Antrobus, you're a perfect worm. If you won't stand up for yourself, I will.

GLADYS:

Mama, you just act awful in public.

1. Mrs. Antrobus X to bench and sits. Chair pusher brings two conveyers across Lt. to Rt.
2. Henry X to bench.
3. Mr. Antrobus takes out coin purse.
4. Henry X to Turkish Bath flat.
5. Mr. Antrobus hands a bill to Gladys.
6. Mr. Antrobus hands Mrs. Antrobus a bill.
7. Mr. Antrobus X to Rt. of Bingo Parlor.
8. Sabina enters from Bingo Parlor, X DL, down stairs. Mr. Antrobus follows to KL. Henry starts to follow then X to platform DR.
9. Sabina X to cabana and exits.

MRS. ANTROBUS:

Well, I must say I enjoyed it. I feel better. Wish his wife had been there to hear it.¹ Children, what do you want to do?

GLADYS:

Mama, can we ride in one of those chairs? Mama, Papa, I want to ride in one of those chairs.²

MRS. ANTROBUS:

No, sir, If you're tired you just sit where you are. We have no money to spend on foolishness.³

ANTROBUS:

I guess we have money enough for a thing like that. It's one of the things you do at Atlantic City.⁴

MRS. ANTROBUS:

Oh, we have? I tell you it's a miracle my children have shoes to stand up in. I didn't think I'd ever live to see them pushed around in chairs.

ANTROBUS:

We're on a vacation aren't we? We have a right to some treats, I guess. Maggie, some day you're going to drive me crazy.⁵

MRS. ANTROBUS:

All right, go. I'll just sit here and laugh at you. And you can give me my dollar right in my hand. Mark my words, a rainy day is coming. There's a rainy day ahead of us. I feel it in my bones.⁶ Go on throw you money around. I can starve. I've starved before. I know how.

CONVEENER:

Hello, George. How are ya? I see where you brought the whole family along.

MRS. ANTROBUS:

Anyway, it's going to rain very soon and you have your broadcast to make.

ASTROBUS:

Now, Maggie, I warn you.⁷ You're driving me crazy. A man can stand a family only just so long. I'm warning you.⁸

MRS. ANTROBUS:

Why, George Antrobus, how can you say such a thing? You have the best family in the world.

ANTROBUS:

Good morning, Miss Fairweather.⁹

MRS. ANTROBUS:

Who on earth was that you spoke to, George?

1. Mr. Antrobus X to bench
2. Henry starts towards bench then returns to platform.
3. Henry starts towards bench then returns to platform.
4. Henry X to bench facing upstage.

ANTROBUS:

Um-m-just a-solambaka keray.

MRS. ANTROBUS:

What? I can't understand you.

GLADYS:

Mama, wasn't she beautiful?

HENRY:

Papa, introduce her to me.

MRS. ANTROBUS:

Children, will you be quiet while I ask your father a simple question?-- Who did you say it was, George?

ANTROBUS:

Why--uh--a friend of mine. Very nice refined girl.

MRS. ANTROBUS:

I'm waiting.¹

ANTROBUS:

Maggie, that's the girl I gave the prize to in the beauty contest,--that Miss Atlantic City 1942.

MRS. ANTROBUS:

Um! She looked like Sabina to me.

HENRY:

Mama, the lifeguard knows her, too. Mama, he knows her well.

ANTROBUS:

Henry, come here.² She's a very nice girl in every way and the sole support of her aged mother.

MRS. ANTROBUS:

So was Sabina, so was Sabina; and it took a wall of ice to open your eyes about Sabina.--Henry, come over and sit down on this bench.³

ANTROBUS:

She's a very different matter from Sabina. Miss Fairweather is a college graduate, Phi Beta Kappa.

MRS. ANTROBUS:

Henry, you sit here by Mama. Gladys--⁴

ANTROBUS:

Reduced circumstances have required her taking a position as hostess in a Bingo Parlor; but there isn't a girl with higher principles in the country.

1. Mr. Antrobus X DL. Henry takes aim at weather signal with slingshot.
2. Mrs. Antrobus turns around and points at weather signal. Henry X UL.
3. Mr. Antrobus sits on bench. Gladys puts her check on his shoulder.
4. Henry X DL to platform.
5. Mrs. Antrobus gets up.

MRS. ANTROBUS:

Well, let's not talk about it.--Henry, I haven't seen a whale yet.

ANTROBUS:

She speaks seven languages and has more culture in her little finger than you've acquired in a lifetime.¹

MRS. ANTROBUS:

All right, all right, George. I'm glad to know there are such superior girls in the Bingo Parlors.² --Henry, what's that?

HENRY:

What is it, Papa?

ANTROBUS:

What? Oh, that's the storm signal. One of those lights means bad weather; two means storm; three means hurricane; and four means the end of the world.

MRS. ANTROBUS:

Goodness! I'm going this very minute to buy you all some raincoats.³

GLADYS:

Mama, don't go yet. I like sitting this way. And the ocean coming in and coming in. Papa, don't you like it?

ANTROBUS:

H-m-m-m!

MRS. ANTROBUS:

Well, there's only one thing I lack to make me a perfectly happy woman: I'd like to see a whale.⁴

HENRY:

Mama, we saw two. Right out there. They're delegates to the convention.

GLADYS:

Papa, ask me something. Ask me a question.

ANTROBUS:

Well--how big's the ocean?

GLADYS:

Papa, you're teasing me. It's--three hundred and sixty million square miles--and--it--covers--three-fourths--of--the--earth's--surface--and--its--deepest place--is--five--and--a--half--miles--deep--and--its--average--depth--is--twelve--thousand--feet. No, Papa, ask me something hard, real hard.⁵

1. Henry makes an airplane gesture.
2. Henry makes machine gun sound.
3. Henry aims at his mother with louder sounds, then X UL.
4. Mrs. Antrobus X to Mr. Antrobus.
5. Henry starts to run Mrs. Antrobus stops him.
6. Henry exits UR.
7. Gladys kisses her father and exits UR. Two conveeners enter U. L.
8. Conveeners X Lt to Rt.
9. Conveeners exit UR.
10. Fortune Teller exters from her booth.
11. Sabina leaves cabana.
12. Mrs. Antrobus X and exits UR.

MRS. ANTROBUS:

Now I'm going off to buy those raincoats. I think that bad weather's going to get worse and worse. I hope it doesn't come before your broadcast. I should think we have about an hour or so.¹

HENRY:

I hope it comes and² everything before it. I hope it--³

MRS. ANTROBUS:

Henry!⁴ Henry!--George, I think⁵--maybe, it's one of those storms that are just as bad on land as on the sea. When you're just as safe and safer in a good stout boat.

HENRY:

There's a boat out at the end of the pier.

MRS. ANTROBUS:

Well, keep your eye on it. George, you shut your eyes and get a good rest before the broadcast.

ANTROBUS:

Thundering Judas, do I have to be told when to open and shut my eyes? Go and buy your raincoats.

MRS. ANTROBUS:

Now, children, you have ten minutes to walk around. Ten minutes.⁶ And Henry: control yourself.⁷ Gladys, stick by your brother and don't get lost.⁸ Will you be all right, George?⁹

FIRST CONVEENER:

George.

SECOND CONVEENER:

Geo-r-rge!

FIRST CONVEENER:

Georgiee!

SECOND CONVEENER:

Leave the old hencoop at home.

FIRST CONVEENER:

George. Do-mes-ticated Georgie!¹⁰

MRS. ANTROBUS:

Low common oafs!¹¹ That's what they are. Guess a man has a right to bring his wife to a convention, if he wants to. What's the matter with a family, I'd like to know.¹² Hm'p--what else have they got to offer?

1. Sabina X to and climbs steps to platform DL.
2. Sabina X RT., stops, and turns back to Fortune Teller.
3. Fortune Teller laughs, X UL faces offstage. Sabina X to Lt. end of bench.
4. Mrs. Antrobus is startled, gets up quickly, and X DR two steps.
5. Sabina sits on bench. Mr. Antrobus X to RT. end. Fortune Teller gradually turns using a coaching manner.

FORTUNE TELLER:
Heh! Here she comes!¹

SABINA:
What's he doing?

FORTUNE TELLER:
Oh, he's ready for you. Bite your lips, dear, take a long breath and come on up.

SABINA:
I'm nervous. My whole future depends on this. I'm nervous.

FORTUNE TELLER:
Don't be a fool. What more could you want? He's forty-five. His head's a little dizzy. He's just been elected president. He's never known any other woman than his wife. Whenever he looks at her he realizes that she knows every foolish thing he's ever done.²

SABINA:
I don't know why it is, but every time I start one of these I'm nervous.³
Oh, Mr. Antrobus,--dare I speak to you for a moment?⁴

ANTROBUS:
What?--Oh, certainly, certainly, Miss Fairweather.

SABINA:
Mr. Antrobus--I've been so unhappy. I've wanted--I've wanted to make sure that you don't think that I'm the kind of girl who goes out for beauty contests.

FORTUNE TELLER:
That's the way!

ANTROBUS:
Oh, I understand. I understand perfectly.

FORTUNE TELLER:
Give it a little more. Lean on it.

SABINA:
I knew you would. My mother said to me this morning: Lily, she said, that fine Mr. Antrobus gave you the prize because he saw at once that you weren't the kind of girl who'd go in for a thing like that.⁴ But honestly,⁵ Mr. Antrobus, in this world, honestly, a good girl doesn't know where to turn.

FORTUNE TELLER:
Now you've gone too far.

ANTROBUS:
My dear Miss Fairweather!

1. Mr. Antrobus sits beside Sabina
2. Mr. Antrobus glances Rt.
3. Fortune Teller exits into her booth. Mr. Antrobus and Sabina rise, Sabina takes his hand and leads him to platform KL. They start down steps.
4. Sabina stops in front of the middle of the stage.
5. Mr. Antrobus starts to embrace her.
6. Sabina stops him and drops out of character to speak to audience.
7. Mr. Antrobus X to steps, mounts them, and X UL looking offstage.

SABINA:

You wouldn't know how hard it is. With that lovely wife and daughter you have. Oh, I think Mrs. Antrobus is the finest woman I ever saw. I wish I were like her.

ANTROBUS:

There, there.¹ There's--room for all kinds of people in the world, Miss Fairweather.

SABINA:

How wonderful of you to say that. How generous!--Mr. Antrobus, have you a moment free?--I'm afraid I may be a little conspicuous here--could you come down, for just a moment, to my beach cabana--²

ANTROBUS:

Why--oh--yes, certainly--for a moment--just for a moment.

SABINA:

There's a nice, comfortable deck chair there. Because: you know you do look tired. Just this morning my mother said to me: Lily, she said, I hope Mr. Antrobus is getting a good rest. His fine strong face has deep lines in it. Now isn't it true, Mr. Antrobus: you work too hard?³

FORTUNE TELLER:

Bingo!

SABINA:

Now you come along and just stretch out in my cabana. No, I shan't say a word, not a word. I shall just sit there,--privileged.⁴ That's what I am.⁵

ANTROBUS:

Miss Fairweather--you'll--spoil me.⁶

SABINA:

Just a moment. I have something I wish to say to the audience.--Ladies and gentlemen. I'm not going to play this particular scene tonight. It's just a short scene and we're going to skip it. But I'll tell you what takes place and then we can continue the play from there on. Now in this scene--

ANTROBUS:

But, Miss Somerset!

SABINA:

I'm sorry. I'm sorry. But I have to skip it.⁷ In this scene, I talk to Mr. Antrobus, and at the end of it he decides to leave his wife, get a divorce at Reno and marry me. That's all.

1. Mr. Antrobus X to RC. above bench. Sabina turns to find him gone.
2. Mr. Fitzpatrick enters UR. and X DC.
3. Conveeners and others including Fortune Teller enter from offstage.
4. Mr. Antrobus X DC to Lt. of Fitzpatrick.
5. Mr. Antrobus X to and sits on bench.

ANTROBUS:
Fitz!

SABINA:
So that now I've told you we can jump to the end of it. Where you say:¹
Where is he?-

FITZPATRICK:
Miss Somerset, we insis on your playing this scene.³

SABINA:
I'm sorry, Mr. Fitzpatrick, but I can't and I won't. I've told the audience all they need know and now we can go on.

FITZPATRICK:
And why can't you play it?

SABINA:
Because there are some lines in that scene that would hurt some people's feelings and I don't think the theatre is a place where people's feelings ought to be hurt.

FITZPATRICK:
Miss Somerset, you can pack up your things and go home. I shall call the understudy and I shall report you to Equity.

SABINA:
I sent the understudy up to the corner for a cup of coffee and if Equity tries to penalize me I'drag the case right up to the Supreme Court.

FITZPATRICK:
Why can't you play it--⁴

ANTROBUS:
What's the matter with the scene?

SABINA:
Well, if you must know, I have a personal guest in the audience tonight. Her life hasn't been exactly a happy one. I wouldn't have my friend hear some of these lines for the whole world.⁵ I don't suppose it occurred to the author that some other women might have gone through the experience of losing their husbands like this. Wild horses wouldn't drag from me the details of my friend's life, but--well, they'd been married twenty years, and before he got rich, why, she'd done the washing and everything. As for the other harrowing details, well--

FITZPATRICK:
Miss Somerset, your friend will forgive you. We must play this scene.

1. Fitzpatrick steps back from edge of stage.
2. Fortune Teller exits into her booth.
3. Mr. Antrobus X to platform DL.
4. Fitzpatrick exits UR. All others exit while saying "Skip it."
5. Mr. Antrobus X down steps to Sabina's Lt.
6. Mr. Antrobus and Sabina embrace and kiss at some length. Then they X Rt. in front of Stage to cabana.
7. They exit into cabana. Roller chair is pushed across Rt. to Lt. Mrs. Antrobus enters UR, X to bench & sits.
8. Gladys sits on bench. Two conveyers X UL whistling then they exit.

SABINA:

Nothing, nothing will make me say some of those lines--about "a man outgrows a wife every seven years" and--and that one about "the Mohammedans being the only people who looked the subject square in the face."¹

FITZPATRICK:

Miss Somerset! Go to your dressing room. I'll read your lines myself!²

SABINA:

Now everybody's nerves are on edge.

ANTROBUS:

Skip the scene!³

SABINA:

Thank you. I knew you'd understand.⁴ We'll do just what I said. So Mr. Antrobus is going to divorce his wife and marry me. Mr. Antrobus, you say: "It won't be easy to lay all this before my wife."⁵

ANTROBUS:

Wait a minute. I can't get back into it as easily as all that. "My wife is a very obstinate woman." Hm--then you say--hm-- Miss Fairweather, I mean Lily, it won't be easy to lay all this before my wife. It'll hurt her feelings a little.

SABINA:

Listen, George: other people haven't got feelings. Not in the same way that we have,--we who are presidents like you and prize-winners like me. Listen, other people haven't got feelings; they just imagine they have. Within two weeks they go back to playing bridge and going to the movies. Listen, dear: everybody in the world except a few people like you and me are just people of straw. Most people have no insides at all. Now that you're president you'll see that. Listen, darling, there's a kind of secret society at the top of the world,--like you and me,--that know this. The world was made for us. What's life anyway? Except for two things, pleasure and power, what is life? Boredom! Foolishness! You know it is. Except for those two things, life's nau-se-ating. So,--come here!⁶ Now when you wife comes, it's really very simple. Just tell her.

ANTROBUS:

Lily, Lily: you're a wonderful woman.

SABINA:

Of course I am.⁷

GLADYS:

Mama, here I am.⁸

MRS. ANTROBUS:

Gladys Antrobus!!! Where did you get those dreadful things?

1. Gladys X to platform DR as laughter comes from it.
2. Gladys X to bench and sits. Broadcast official and assistant enter DR with microphone. Assistant places mike URC. Broadcast official X to bench.
3. Mrs. Antrobus covers Gladys' legs with coat. Assistant X to UL.
4. Sabian enters from cabana and X to steps.
5. Assistant X DL.

GLADYS:

Wha-a-t? Papa liked the color.

MRS. ANTROBUS:

You go back to the hotel this minute!

GLADYS:

I won't. I won't. Papa liked the color.

MRS. ANTROBUS:

All right. All right. You stay here. I've a good mind to let your father see you that way. You stay right here.

GLADYS:

I--I don't want to stay if--if you don't think he'd like it.

MRS. ANTROBUS:

Oh--it's all one to me. I don't care what happens. I don't care if the biggest storm in the whole world comes. Let it come. Where's your brother?

GLADYS:

He'll be here.

MRS. ANTROBUS:

Will he? Well, let him get into trouble. I don't care. I don't know where your father is, I'm sure.¹

GLADYS:

I think he's--Mama, he's talking to the lady in the red dress.

MRS. ANTROBUS:

Is that so? We'll wait till he's through. Sit down here beside me--and stop fidgeting. What are you crying about?²

GLADYS:

You don't like my stockings.

BROADCAST OFFICIAL:

Mrs. Antrobus. Thank God we've found you at last. Where's Mr. Antrobus? We've been hunting everywhere for him. It's about time for the broadcast to the conventions of the world.

MRS. ANTROBUS:

I expect he'll be here in a minute.³

BROADCAST OFFICIAL:

Mrs. Antrobus, if he doesn't show up in time, I hope you will consent to broadcast in his place. It's the most important broadcast of the year.⁴

MRS. ANTROBUS:

No, I shan't. I haven't one single thing to say.⁵

1. Mr. Antrobus enters from cabana. Assistant exits UL.
2. Broadcast official X DL, Mr. Antrobus climbs steps, and Sabina follows him.
3. Mr. Antrobus faces Broadcast Official on platform.
4. Broadcast official steps Lt. Mr. Antrobus X to Lt. of bench. Sabina follows. Bingo announcer is heard during next speeches.
5. Broadcast Official X UC.
6. Broadcast Official X to Rt. of Mr. Antrobus. Chorus cries "Bingo".
7. Broadcast official backs away UC.

BROADCAST OFFICIAL:

Then won't you help us find him, Mrs. Antrobus, a storm's coming up. A hurricane. A deluge!

ASSISTANT:

Miss Fairweather, have you seen--¹ Joe! Joe! Here he is.

BROADCAST OFFICIAL:

In the name of God. Mr. Antrobus, you're on the air in five minutes. Will you kindly please come and test the instrument? That's all we ask. If you just please begin the alphabet slowly.²

ANTROBUS:

I'll be ready when the time comes. Until then, move away. Go away!³ I have something I wish to say to my wife.

BROADCAST OFFICIAL:

Mr. Antrobus! This is the most important broadcast of the year.⁴

SABINA:

Don't let her argue. Remember arguments have nothing to do with it.

ANTROBUS:

Maggie, I'm moving out of the hotel. In fact, I'm moving out of everything. For good. I'm going to marry Miss Fairweather. I shall provide generously for you and the children. In a few years you'll be able to see that it's all for the best. That's all I have to say.⁵

BROADCAST OFFICIAL:

Mr. Antrobus! I hope you'll be ready. This is the most important broadcast of the year.

GLADYS:

What did Papa say, Mama? I didn't hear what he said.⁶

BROADCAST OFFICIAL:

Mr. Antrobus. All we want to do is test your voice with the alphabet.

ANTROBUS:

Go away. Clear out.⁶

MRS. ANTROBUS:

George, I can't talk to you until you wipe those silly red marks off your face.

ANTROBUS:

I think there's nothing to talk about. I've said what I have to say.

SABINA:

Splendid!!

1. Broadcast Official X to mike and points at weather signal.
2. Mrs. Antrobus removes coat from Gladys' legs. Then Mrs. Antrobus rises.
3. Mr. Antrobus turns on Sabina.

ANTROBUS:

You're a fine woman, Maggie, but--bus a man has his own life to lead in the world.

MRS. ANTROBUS:

Well, after living with you for five thousand years I guess I have a right to a word or two, haven't I?

ANTROBUS:

What can I answer to that?

SABINA:

Tell her that conversation would only hurt her feelings. It's-kinder-in-the long-run to-do-it-short-and-quick.

ANTROBUS:

I want to spare your feelings in every way I can, Maggie.¹

BROADCAST OFFICIAL:

Mr. Antrobus, the hurricane signal's gone up. We could begin right now.

MRS. ANTROBUS:

I didn't marry you because you were perfect, George. I didn't even marry you because I loved you. I married you because you gave me a promise. That promise made up for your faults. And the promise I gave you made up for mine. Two imperfect people got married and it was the promise that made the marriage.

ANTROBUS:

Maggie, I was only nineteen.

MRS. ANTROBUS:

And when our children were growing up, it wasn't a house that protected them; and it wasn't our love that protected them--it was that promise. And when that promise is broken--this can happen.²

ANTROBUS:

Gladys!! Have you gone crazy? Has everyone gone crazy?³ You did this. You gave them to her.

SABINA:

I never said a word to her.

ANTROBUS:

You go back to the hotel and take those horrible things off.

GLADYS:

Before I go, I've got something to tell you,--it's about Henry.

1. Mrs. Antrobus X DC.
2. Mrs. Antrobus pantomimes pulling bottle from purse and throws it over heads of audience.
3. Mrs. Antrobus drags Gladys off Lt.
4. Gladys enters UL X to them.
5. Gladys runs off Lt. Mr. Antrobus starts to follow.
6. Sabina stops him.
7. Sabina takes Mr. Antrobus to mike RC.
8. Mr. Antrobus points at audience.

MRS. ANTROBUS:

Stop your noise,--I'm taking her back to the hotel, George.¹ Before I go I have a letter--I have a message to throw into the ocean. Where is the plagued thing? There it is.² It's a bottle. An in the bottle's a letter. And in the letter is written all the things that a woman knows. It's never been told to any man and it's never been told to any woman, and if it finds its destination, a new time will come. We're not what books and plays say we are. We're not what advertisements say we are. We're not in the movies and we're not on the radio. We're not what your're all told and what you think we are: We're ourselves. And if any man can find one of us he'll learn why the whole universe was set in motion. And if any man harm any of us, his soul--hte only soul he's got--had better be at the bottom of that ocean,--and that's the only way to put it. Gladys, come here. We're going back to the hotel.³

SABINA:

Such goings-one. Don't give it a minute's thought.⁴

GLADYS:

Anyway, I think you ought to know that Henry hit a man with a stone. He hit one of those colored men that push the chairs and the man's very sick. Henry ran away and hid and some policemen are looking for him very hard. And I don't care a bit if you don't want to have anything to do with Mama and me, because I'll never like you again and I hope nobody ever likes you again,--so there!⁵

ANTROBUS:

I-I have to go and see what I can do about this.⁶

SABINA:

You stay right here. Don't you go now while you're excited. Gracious sakes, all these things will be forgiven in a hundred year.⁷ Come now, you're on the air.

BROADCAST OFFICIAL:

Thank you, Miss Fairweather. Thank you very much. Ready, Mr. Antrobus.

ANTROBUS:

What is it? What is it? Who am I talking to?

BROADCAST OFFICIAL:

Why, Mr. Antrobus! To our order and to all the other orders.

ANTROBUS:

What are all those birds doing?

BROADCAST OFFICIAL:

These are just a few of the birds. Those are the delegates to our convention,--two of a kind.⁸

1. Mr. Antrobus turns to Sabina.
2. Thunder drowns him out then the lights black out momentarily. As the lights come back up, the Broadcast Official has exited Rt. Sabina has X ULC and the Fortune Teller is to Mr. Antrobus' Lt. after Fortune Teller speech. Mr. Antrobus X UC.
3. Sabina X to Mr. Antrobus
4. Mr. Antrobus X UL.
5. Sabina X to Fortune Teller.
6. Mrs. Antrobus and Gladys enters UL.
7. Sabina X DR.

ANTROBUS:

Look at the water. Look at them all. Those fishes jumping. The children should see this!--There's Maggie's whales!!¹ Here are your whales, Maggie.

BROADCAST OFFICIAL:

I hope you're ready, Mr. Antrobus.

ANTROBUS:

And look on the bench! You didn't tell me these would be here!

SABINA:

Yes, George. Those are the animals.

BROADCAST OFFICIAL:

Yes, Mr. Antrobus, those are the vertebrates. We hope the lion will have a word to say when you're through. Step right up, Mr. Antrobus, we're ready. We'll just have time before the storm. They're waiting.

ANTROBUS:

Friends. Cousins. Fourscore and ten million years ago our forefather brought forth upon this planet the spark of life.²

FORTUNE TELLER:

Antrobus, there's not a minute to be lost. Don't you see the four lights on the weather signal? Take your family into the boat at the end of the pier.

ANTROBUS:

My family? I have no family. Maggie! Maggie! They won't come.

FORTUNE TELLER:

They'll come.--Antrobus! Take these animals into that boat with you. All of them,--two of each kind.³

SABINA:

George, what's the matter with you? This is just a storm like any other storm.⁴

ANTROBUS:

Maggie!

SABINA:

Stay with me, we'll go--This is just another thunderstorm,--isn't it? Isn't it?⁵

ANTROBUS:⁶

Maggie!!!

MRS. ANTROBUS:

Here I am and here's Gladys.⁷

1. Mrs. Antrobus X and exits UR calling "Henry". Fortune Teller X to Mr. Antrobus and Gladys.
2. Fortune Teller pushes Mr. Antrobus and Gladys DL to platform. Sabina sits on bench.
3. Gladys starts down steps. Mr. Antrobus pantomimes hurrying animals along down steps.
4. Fortune Teller X to DRC. Gladys starts up center aisle.
5. Mrs. Antrobus enters UR and starts across Lt. Mrs. Antrobus exits UL. Mr. Antrobus starts up aisle.
6. Sabina rises and X DL to platform. Two conveyers enter UL X Rt.

ANTROBUS:

Where've you been? Where have you been? Quick, we're going into that boat out there.

MRS. ANTROBUS:

I know we are. But I haven't found Henry.¹

SABINA:

I don't believe it. I don't believe it's anything at all. I've seen hundreds of storms like this.²

FORTUNE TELLER:

There's not a moment to be lost. Go push the animals along before you. Start a new world. Begin again.

SABINA:

Esmeralda! George! Tell me,--is it really serious?³

ANTROBUS:

Elephants first. Gently, gently,--Look where you're going.⁴

GLADYS:

Stop it or you'll be left behind!

ANTROBUS:

Is the kangaroo there? There you are! Take those turtles in your pouch, will you? Here! You jumb up here. You'll be trampled on.

GLADYS:

Papa, look--the snakes!⁵

MRS. ANTROBUS:

I can't find Henry. Hen-ry.

ANTROBUS:

Go along. Go along. Climb on their backs.--Wolves! Jackals,--whatever you are,--tend to your own business!

GLADYS:

Papa,--look.

SABINA:

Mr. Antrobus--take me with you. Don't leave me here. I'll work. I'll help. I'll do anything.⁶

SECOND CONVEENER:

--George! What are you scared of--George! Maggie, Maggie, where's my umbrella?

1. Two conveyers exit UR. Gladys and Mr. Antrobus are at end of aisle.
2. Mrs. Antrobus enters UL X to above bench.
3. Henry enters UR X to his mother.
4. Mrs. Antrobus pushes Henry DL to platform and down steps past Sabina. Then they go up aisle.
5. Sabina runs down steps and up aisle. Fortune Teller X to bench and climbs up on it. All conveyers enter DR in a congo line X in front of bench.
6. The Antrobus family and Sabina exit by door in back of auditorium. Conveyers freeze.
7. Curtain.

FIRST CONVEENER:

Fellas, it looks like rain. George, setting up for Barnum and Bailey.¹

GLADYS:

Mama! Papa! Henry. The pier's cracking!

ANTROBUS:

Come on now, Maggie,--the pier's going to break any minute.²

MRS. ANTROBUS:

I'm not going a step without Henry. Henry! Cain! Cain!³

HENRY:

Here I am, Mama.

MRS. ANTROBUS:

Thank God!

HENRY:

I idn't think you wanted me.⁴

MRS. ANTROBUS:

Now, come quick!

SABINA:

Mrs. Antrobus, take me. Don't you remember me? I'll work. I'll help. Don't leave me here!

MRS. ANTROBUS:

All right. There's a lot of work to be done. Only hurry.

FORTUNE TELLER:

Back to the kitchen with you.

SABINA:

I don't know⁵ why my life's always being interrupted--just when everything's going fine!!

CONVEENERS:

Get a canoe--there's not a minute to be lost! Tell me my future, Mrs. Croaker.

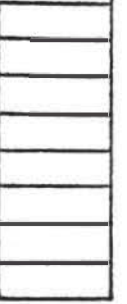
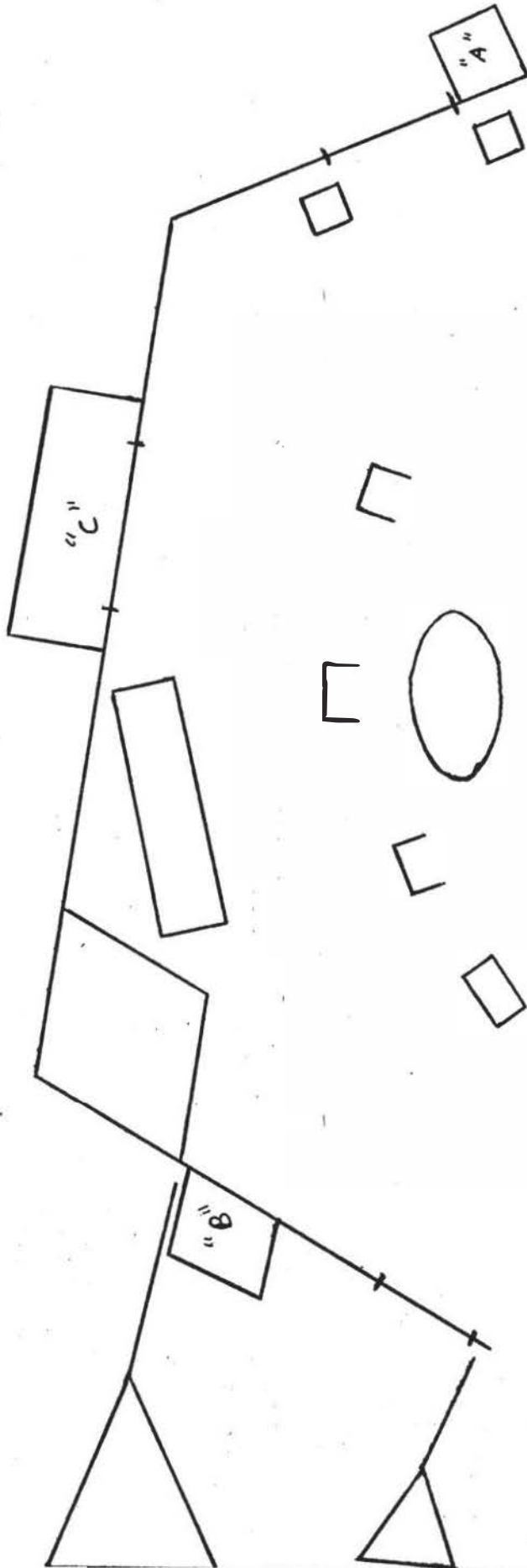
FORTUNE TELLER:

A-nine; A-nine. C-twenty-four. C-twenty-four.

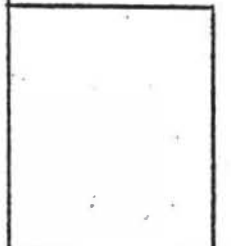
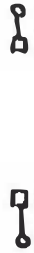
FORTUNE TELLER:

Go back and climb on your roofs. Put rags in the cracks under your doors--nothing will keep out the flood. You've had your chance. You've had your day. You've failed. You've lost.⁶ They're safe. George Antrobus! Thin it over! A new world to make. Think it over!

ACT III



SCALE: 1/4" = 1'



During the intermission between Acts Two and Three, the cabana is taken down, the railing is removed, and the fire dogs are replaced but they are set on their sides.

As the curtain opens the Act One set is revealed with a few changes. The three sections of wall are all leaning at about a forty-five degree angle. There is a rope hanging to the Right of the center table. The flowers on the table downstage of the front door are missing. The fish is gone from the fishbowl and it is lying on its side on the table upstage of front door. The sofa is further Right than before. There is a four feet by eight feet platform, one foot high located upstage of the window in the Center wall.

1. Sabina enters UL above set and X to door DL. Sabina X to C.
2. Sabina X UR to alcove.
3. Fitzpatrick enters DL.
4. Sabina X DR.
5. Mr. Antrobus enter DL X C. Fitzpatrick turns to Mr. Antrobus.
6. Assistant Stage Manager enters DL with numerals. Mr. Tremayne enters DL X LC. Sabina sit hassock DRC. House lights come on.
7. Hester and Ivy enter UL X to LC.
8. Extras enter UR and sit on sofa. Fred Bailey starts down aisle.
9. All actors start to talk at once.
10. Sabina stands up.

SABINA: ¹

Mrs. Antrobus! Gladys! Where are you? The war's over. The war's over. You can come out. The peace treaty's been signed. Where are they? Henry! Are they dead, too? Mrs. Annnntrobus! Glaadus! Mr. Antrobus'll be here this afternoon. I just saw him downtown. Huuury and put things in order. He says that now that the war's over we'll all have to settle down and be perfect.²

FITZPATRICK:
Miss Somerset.³

SABINA:
They may be hiding out in the back--

FITZPATRICK:
Miss Somerset! We have to stop a moment.

SABINA:
What's the matter?⁴

FITZPATRICK:
There's an explanation we have to make to the audience.--Lights, please.⁵
Will you explain the matter to the audience?⁶

ANTROBUS:
Ladies and gentlemen, an unfortunate accident has taken place back stage.⁷
Perhaps I should say another unfortunate accident.

SABINA:
I'm sorry. I'm sorry.⁸

ANTROBUS:
The management feels, in fact we all feel that you are due an apology. And now we have to ask your indulgence for the most serious mishap of all. Seven of our actors have--have been taken ill. Apparently, it was something they ate. I'm not exactly clear what happened.⁹ Now, now--not all at once. Fitz, do you know what it was?

FITZPATRICK:
Why, it's perfectly clear. These seven actors had dinner together, and they ate something that disagreed with them.¹⁰

SABINA:
Disagreed with them!!! They have ptomaine poisoning. They're in Bellevue Hospital this very minute in agony. They're having their stomachs pumped out this very minute, in perfect agony.

ANTROBUS:
Fortunately, we've just heard they'll all recover.

1. Fitzpatrick X ULC.
2. Bailey X up steps to DLC. Sabina sits on hassock.
Tremayne bows deeply.
3. Hester and Ivy curtsy.
4. Mr. Antrobus X UC to sofa.
5. Fitzpatrick X DC.
6. Ivy steps DC.

SABINA:

It'll be a miracle if they do, a downright miracle. It was the lemon meringue pie.

TREMAYNE AND WOMAN (together):

It was fish-- It was the canned tomatoes--

TREMAYNE:

It was the fish.

SABINA:

It was the lemon meringue pie. I saw it with my own eyes; it had blue mould all over the bottom of it.¹

ANTROBUS:

Whatever it was, they're in no condition to take part in this performance. Naturally, we haven't enough understudies to fill all those roles; but we do have a number of splendid volunteers who have kindly consented to help us out.² These friends have watched our rehearsals, and they assure me that they know the lines and the business very well. Let me introduce them to you--my dresser, Mr. Tremayne,--himself a distinguished Shakespearean actor for many years;² Miss Somerset's maid, Ivy; our wardrobe mistress, Hester; and Fred Bailey, captain of the ushers in this theatre.³ Now this scene takes place near the end of the act. And I'm sorry to say we'll have to keep the curtain up. Those of you who wish can go out in the lobby and smoke some more. The rest of you can listen to us, or--or just talk quietly among yourselves, as you choose. Thank you.⁴ Now will you take it over, Mr. Fitzpatrick?⁵

FITZPATRICK:

Thank you.--Now for those of you who are listening perhaps I should explain that at the end of this act, the men have come back from the war and the family's settled down in the house. And the author wants to show the hours of the night is a philosopher, or a great thinker. Eleven o'clock, for instance, is Aristotle. And nine o'clock is Spinoza. Like that. I don't suppose it means anything. It's just a kind of poetic effect.

SABINA:

Not mean anything? Why, it certainly does. Twelve o'clock goes by saying those wonderful things. I think it means that when people are asleep they have all these lovely thoughts, much better than when they're awake.⁶

IVY:

Excuse me, I think it means, excuse me, Mr. Fitzpatrick--

SABINA:

What were you going to say, Ivy?

IVY:

Mr. Fitzpatrick, you let my father come to a rehearsal; and my father's a Baptist minister, and he said that the author meant that--just like the hours

1. Assistant Stage Manager X DL hands out numerals.
2. Extras exit UR
3. Actors nod in answer.
4. Fitzpatrick X Lt. to Bailey. Bailey slowly X Lt to Rt, speaking softly.
5. Mr. Antrobus X DR shows Bailey to go below set.
6. Bailey exits DR below set.
7. Hester X Lt. to Rt.

and stars go by over our heads at night, in the same way and stars and though of the great men are in the air around us all the time and they're working on us. even when we don't know it.

FITZPATRICK:

Well, well, maybe that's it. Thank you, Ivy. Anyway--the hours of the night are philosophers. My friends, are you ready?¹ Ivy can you be eleven o'clock? "This good estate of the mind possessing its object in energy we call divine--"Aristotle.

IVY:

Yes, sir. I know that and I know twelve o'clock and I know nine o'clock.

FITZPATRICK:

Twelve o'clock? Mr. Tremayne, the Bible.

TREMAYNE:

Yes.

FITZPATRICK:

Ten o'clock? Hester,--Plato?² Nine o'clock, Spinoza,--Fred?

BAILEY:

Yes, sir.

FITZPATRICK:

The planets! We forgot all about the planets.

SABINA:

O my God! The planets! And they sick too?³

FITZPATRICK:

Ladies and gentlemen, the planets are singers. Of course, we can't replace them, as you'll have to imagine them singing in this scene. Saturn sings from the orchestra pit down here. The Moon is way up there. And Mars, with a red lantern in his hand, stands in the aisle over there--Tz-tz-tz. It's too bad; it all makes a very fine effect. However! Ready-- --nine o'clock: Spinoza.⁴

BAILEY:

"After experience had taught me that the common occurrences of daily life are vain and futile--"

FITZPATRICK:

Louder, Fred. "And I saw that all the objects of my desire and fear--"⁵

BAILEY:

"And I saw that all the objects of my desire and fear were in themselves nothing good nor bad save insofar as the mind was affected by them--"⁶

FITZPATRICK:

Do you know the rest? All right. Ten o'clock. Hester. Plato.⁷

1. Hester exits DR below set.
2. Dog X Lt. to Rt.
3. Tremayne starts X to Rt. slowly.
4. Ivy exits DR below set. Mr. Antrobus follows her off.
5. Fitzpatrick X DL.
6. Tremayne exits DR below set. Sabina rises, X UL and exits. Assistant Stage Manager exits DL.
7. Curtain closes. House lights out.
8. Act starts over. Curtain opens. Sabina enters UL, X to door DL.
9. Sabina Speaks to audience.
10. Sabina X UR to alcove.
11. Sabian X DR exits kitchen door DR. Mrs. Antrobus enters from alcove UR.
12. Mrs. Antrobus X Rt. Gladys appears UR in alcove.
13. Mrs. Antrobus X UC to window.
14. Gladys enters and takes blanket off baby's face.

HESTER:

"--can be multiplied a thousand fold in its effects among the citizen."¹

FITZPATRICK:

Thank you--Aristotle, Ivy?²

IVY:

"This good estate of the mind possessing its object in energy we call divine. This we mortals have occasionally and it is this energy which is pleasantest and best.³ But God has it always. It is wonderful in us; but in Him how much more wonderful."⁴

FITZPATRICK:

Midnight, Mr. Tremayne.⁵

TREMAYNE:

Yes!

FITZPATRICK:

That's right,--you've done it before.--All right, everybody.⁶ You know what you have to do--

Lower the curtain. House lights. Act Three of The Skin of Our Teeth. You volunteers,⁷ just wear what you have on. Don't try to put on the costumes today.

SABINA:

Mrs. Antrobus! Gladys! Where are you?⁸ The war's over--⁹ You've heard all this--¹⁰ Where--are--they? Are--they--dead, too, etcetera. I--just--saw Mr.--Antrobus--downtown, etcetera. He says that now that the war's over we'll all have to settle down and be perfect. They may be hiding out in the back somewhere. Mrs. An-tro-bus.¹¹

MRS. ANTROBUS:

It's getting light. There's still something burning over there--Neward, or Jersey City. What? Yes, I could swear I heard someone moving about up here. But I can't see anybody. I say: I can't see anybody.¹²

GLADYS:

Oh, Mama. Be careful.

MRS. ANTROBUS:

Now, Gladys, you stay out of sight.¹³

GLADYS:

Well, let me stay here just a minute. I want the baby to get some of this fresh air.¹⁴

1. Mrs. Antrobus X DC.
2. Mrs. Antrobus X to door DL and looks out.
3. Mrs. Antrobus X UL.
4. Mrs. Antrobus X to window.
5. Sabina X UR to UL above set.
6. Sabina X to door DL and enters.
7. Sabina X to UC.
8. Mrs. Antrobus X to Sabina.
9. Sabina X to Gladys UR.
10. Mrs. Antrobus X to chair LC.

MRS. ANTROBUS:

All right, but keep your eyes open.¹ I'll see what I can find. I'll have a good hot plate of soup for you before you can say Jack Robinson.²

Gladys Antrobus! Do you know what I think I see? There's old Mr. Hawkins sweeping the sidewalk in front of his A. and P. store. Sweeping it with a broom. Why, he must have gone crazy, like the others.³ I see some other people moving about, too.

GLADYS:

Mama, come back, come back.⁴

MRS. ANTROBUS:

Gladys, there's something in the air. Everybody's movement's sort of different. I see some women walking right out in the middle of the street.⁵ Mrs. An-tro-bus!

MRS. ANTROBUS AND GLADYS:

What'a that?!!

SABINA:

Glaaaaadys! Mrs. An-tro-bus!

MRS. ANTROBUS:

Gladys, that's Sabina's voice as sure as I live.--Sabina! Sabina!--Are you alive?!!⁶

SABINA:

Of course I'm alive.⁷ How've you girls been?⁸ Don't try and kiss me. I never want to kiss another human being as long as I live. Sh-sh, there's nothing to get emotional about. Pull yourself together, the war's over. Take a deep breath,--the war's over.

MRS. ANTROBUS:

The war's over!! I don't believe you. I don't believe you. I can't believe you.

GLADYS:

Mama!

SABINA:

What's that?

MRS. ANTROBUS:

That's Gladys's baby. I don't believe you. Gladys, Sabina says the war's over. Oh, Sabina.⁹

SABINA:

Goodness! Are there any babies left in the world! Can it see? And can it cry and everything?¹⁰

1. Sabina X to Mrs. Antrobus.
2. Gladys exits through alcove UR. Sabina turns to Mrs. Antrobus.
3. Mrs. Antrobus X to alcove UR.
4. Mrs. Antrobus exits through alcove. Gladys puts head through alcove.
5. Gladys exits.
6. Sabian sits on sofa URC.

GLADYS:

Yes, he can. He notices everything very well.

SABINA:

Where on earth did you get it? Oh, I won't ask.--Lord, I've lived all these seven years around camp and I've forgotten how to behave.-- Now we've got to think about the men coming home.--¹ Mrs. Antrobus, go and wash your face, I'm ashamed of you. Put your best clothes on. Mr. Antrobus'll be here this afternoon. I just saw him downtown.

MRS. ANTROBUS AND GLADYS:

He's alive!! Sabina, you're not joking?

MRS. ANTROBUS:

He'll be here?! And Henry?

SABINA:

Yes, Henry's alive, too, that's what they say. Now don't stop to balk. Get yourselves fixed up. Gladys, you look terrible.² Have you any decent clothes?³

MRS. ANTROBUS:

Yes, I've been saving something to wear for this very day. But, Sabina-- who won the war?

SABINA:

Don't stop now,--just wash your face. Oh, my God, what's that silly little noise?

MRS. ANTROBUS:

Why, it sounds like--it sounds like what used to be the noon whistle at the shoe-polish factory.⁴

SABINA:

That's what it is. Seems to me like peacetime's coming along pretty fast-- shoe polish!

GLADYS:

Sabina, how soon after peacetime begins does the milkman start coming to the door?

SABINA:

As soon as he catches a cow. Give him time to catch a cow, dear.⁵ Shoe polish! My, I'd forgotten what peacetime was like.⁶ Mrs. Antrobus, guess what I saw Mr. Antrobus doing this morning at dawn. He was tucking up a piece of peper on the door of the Town Hall. You'll die when you hear: it was a recipe for grass soup, for a grass soup that doesn't give the diarrhea. Mr. Antrobus is still thinking up new things.--He told me to give you his love. He's got all sorts of ideas for peacetime, he says. And oh, yes! Where are his books? What? Well, pass them up. The first thing he wants to see are his books. He says if you've burnt those

1. A book is thrown to Sabina from off Rt. which she puts on floor Lt. of sofa.
2. Two more books are thrown to Sabina and she puts them with the first.
3. Sabina lies down on sofa, head at Lt. end.
4. Henry enters UL above set, X DL, enters door, and X to C.
5. Sabina stands up.
6. Sabina backs away to UR.
7. Henry X up to sofa.
8. Henry stomps on books and starts kicking them around.
9. Sabina tries to stop him but he staggers and falls to chair ULC.
10. Henry Stands.

SABINA:

books, or if the rats have eaten the, he says it isn't whorthwhile starting over again. Everybody's going to be beautiful, he says, and diligent, and very intelligent.¹ What language is that? Pugh, German! And he's got such plans for you, Mrs. Antrobus. You're going to study history and algebra--and so are Gladys and I--and philosophy. You should hear him talk: Well, these are in English, anyway.² --To hear him talk, seems like he expects you to be a combination, Mrs. Antrobus, of a saint and a college professor, and a dance hall hostess, if you know what I mean.³ Yes, peace will be here before we know it. In a week or two we'll be asking the Perkinses in for a quiet evening of bridge. We'll turn on the radio and hear how to be big successes with a new tooth paste. We'll trot down to the movies and see how girls with wax faces live--all that will begin again. Oh, Mrs. Antrobus, God forgive me but I enjoyed the war. Everybody's at their best in wartime. I'm sorry it's over. And, oh, I forgot! Mr. Antrobus sent you another message--can you hear me?--⁴ Listen, Henry's never to put foot in this house again, he says, He'll kill Henry on sight, if he sees him. You don't know about Henry??? Well, where have you been? What? Well, Henry rose right to the top. Top of what? Listen, I'm telling you. Henry rose from corporal to captain, to major, to general.--I don't know how to say it, but the enemy is Henry; Henry is the enemy. Everybody knows that.

HENRY:

He'll kill me, will he?

SABINA:

Who are you? I'm not afraid of you. The war's over.⁵

HENRY:

I'll kill him so fast. I've spent seven year trying to find him; the others I killed were just substitutes.⁶

SABINA:

Goodness! It's Henry!-- Oh, I'm not afraid of you. The war's over. Henry Antrobus, and you're not any more important than any other unemployed. You go away and hide yourself, until we calm your father down.⁷

HENRY:

The first thing to do is to burn up those old books; it's the ideas he gets out of those old books that--that makes the whole world so you can't live in it.⁸

SABINA:

You leave those books alone!! Mr. Antrobus i looking forward to them a special.⁹ Gracious sakes, Henry, you're so tired you can't stand up.¹⁰ Your mother and sister'll be here in a minute and we'll think what to do about you.

1. Henry X DL.
2. Henry turns to Sabina in fury.
3. Sabina calls off Rt. through alcove.
4. Mrs. Antrobus and Gladys enter UR through alcove.
5. Mrs. Antrobus and Gladys X to C.
6. Gladys X up to sofa.
7. Mrs. Antrobus X to fireplace DC and picks two potatoes up.
8. Henry runs to Mrs. Antrobus, grabs both potatoes, and sits in chair Lt. of table, eating one of them.
9. Sabina X to behind Henry, snatches one potatoe away, chews on it then hides it in the fishbowl UL.

HENRY:
What did they ever care about me?¹

SABINA:
There's that old whine again. All you people think you're not loved enough, nobody loves you. Well, you start being loveable and we'll love you.²

HENRY:
I don't want anybody to love me.

SABINA:
Then stop talking about it all the time.

HENRY:
I nver talk about it. The last thing I want is anybody to pay any attention to me.

SABINA:
I can hear it behind every word you say.

HENRY:
I want everybody to hate me.

SABINA:
Yes, you've decided that's second best, but it's still the same thing--³
Mrs. Antrobus! Henry's here. He's so tired he can't stand up.⁴

MRS. ANTROBUS AND GLADYS:
Henry! Henry!. Henry!⁵

MRS. ANTROBUS:
Henry!

HENRY:
Have you anything to eat?⁶

MRS. ANTROBUS:
Yes, I have, Henry.⁷ I've been saving it for this very day,--two good baked potatoes. One of them's for your father.⁸ Henry!! Give me that other potatoe back this minute.⁹

SABINA:
He's so dog-tired he doesn't know what he's doing.

MRS. ANTROBUS:
Now you just rest there until I can get your room ready. Eat that potato good and slow, so you can get all the nourishment out of it.

1. Mrs. Antrobus adjusts coat over Henry.
2. Mrs. Antrobus takes gun from Henry's belt.
3. Mrs. Antrobus X to Rt. of table. Gladys X down to hassock and sits. Sabina X to rope and begins to pull on it, as she does the sections of wall that are leaning begin to straighten.
4. Sabina gives rope a tug and stops.
5. Mrs. Antrobus X to Sabina, pushes her upstage, takes rope.
6. Mrs. Antrobus pulls on rope and walls become completely straight.

HENRY:

You all might as well know right now that I haven't come back here to live.¹

MRS. ANTROBUS:

Sh--I'll put this coat over you. Your room's hardly damaged at all Your football trophies are a little tarnished but Sabina and I will polish them up tomorrow.

HENRY:

Did you hear me? I don't live here. I don't belong to anybody.

MRS. ANTROBUS:

Why, how can you say a thing like that? You certainly do belong right here. Where else would you want to go? Your forehead's feverish, Henry, seems to me.² You'd better give me that gun, Henry. You won't need that any more.

GLADYS:

Look, he's fallen asleep already, with his potato half-chewed.

SABINA:

Puh! The terror of the world

MRS. ANTROBUS:

Sabina, you mind your own business, and start putting the room to rights.³

SABINA:

That's all we do--always beginning again! Over and over again. Always beginning again. How do we know that it'll be any better than before? Why do we go on pretending? Some day the whole earth's going to have to turn cold anyway, and until that time all these other things'll be happening again: it will be more wars and more walls of ice and floods and earthquakes.

MRS. ANTROBUS:

Sabina!! Stop arguing and go on with your work.

SABINA:

All right. I'll go on just out of habit, but I won't believe in it.⁵

MRS. ANTROBUS:

Now Sabina. I've let you talk long enough. I don't want to hear any more of it. Do I have to explain to you what everybody knows, $\frac{1}{2}\frac{1}{2}$ everybody who keeps a home going? Do I have to say to you what nobody should ever have to say, because they can read it in each other's eyes? Now listen to me:⁶ I could live for seventy years in a cellar and make soup out of grass and bark, without ever doubting that this world has a work to do and will do it. Do you hear me?

SABINA:

Yes, Mrs. Antrobus.

1. Mrs. Antrobus gathers books from floor and puts them on table. Sabina X DR.
2. Sabina exits into kitchen, rope is pulled up out of sight. Mrs. Antrobus and Gladys move sofa to UC.
3. Mrs. Antrobus X to Henry adjusts his coat around him. Then she sets fire dogs upright.
4. Mrs. Antrobus X above table and puts book on floor above chair Rt. of table. Gladys and Mrs. Antrobus X to kitchen door DR.
5. Mrs. Antrobus and Gladys exit through kitchen door. Mr. Antrobus enters UL above sets, X to door DL, enters and X DR with packages. He turns to face Henry as he talks in his sleep.
6. Mr. Antrobus pulls out his gun, Henry wakes up, rises and backs away DL.
7. Mr. Antrobus X up to window slowly.

MRS. ANTROBUS:

Sabina, do you see this house,--216 Cedar Street,--do you see it?

SABINA:

Yes, Mrs. Antrobus.

MRS. ANTROBUS:

Well, just to have known this house--is to have seen the idea of what this world can do some day--can do some day, if we keep our wite about us. Too many people have suffered and died in order to make any children rich, for us to start renegeing now. So we'll go on putting this house to rights. Now, Sabina, go and see what you can do in the kitchen.¹

SABINA:

Kitchen! Why is it that, however far I go away, I always find myself back in the kitchen.²

MRS. ANTROBUS:

Goodness gracious, wouldn't you know my father was a person? It was just like I heard his own voice speaking, and he's been dead five thousand years. There! I've gond and almost waked Henry up.

HENRY:

Fellows--What have they done for us?--Blocked our way at every step. Kept everything in their own hands. And you've stood it. When are you going to wake up?³

MRS. ANTROBUS:

Sh, Henry. Go to sleep. Go to sleep. God to sleep.--Well, that looks better.⁴ Now let's go and help Sabina.

GLADYS:

Mama, I'm going out into the back yard an hold the baby right up in the air. And show him that we don't have to be afraid any more.

HENRY:

Okay! What have you got to lose? What have they done for us? That's right--nothing. Tear everything down, I don't care what you smash. We'll begin again and we'll show 'em.⁵ All right! Do something. Don't think I'm afraid of you, either. All right, do what you were going to do. Do it. Shoot me, I tell you. You don't have to think I'm any relation of yours. I haven't got any father or any mother, or brothers or sisters. And I don't want any. I'm alone, and that's all I want to be: alone. And what's more I haven't got anybody over me; and I never will have. So you can shoot me.

ANTROBUS:

You're the last person I wanted to see. The sight of you dries up all my plans and hopes. I wish I were back at war still, because it's easier to fight you than to live with you. War's a pleasure--do you hear me?--War's a pleasure compared to what faces us now: trying to build up a peacetime with you in the middle of it.

1. Mr. Antrobus throws gun out window.
2. Mr. Antrobus turns away.
3. Mr. Antrobus turns back to Henry. Henry X to LC.
4. Henry turns away.
5. Henry X DL.
6. Mr. Antrobus X DR. Mr. Antrobus turns to Henry.
7. Henry X to C slowly. Mr. Antrobus starts to X to C slowly.
8. Sabina and Mrs. Antrobus enter from kitchen.
9. Henry grabs Mr. Antrobus around neck. Sabina runs to between them and breaks hold pulling Henry to Lt. Mr. Antrobus withdraws to Rt. beside Mrs. Antrobus.

HENRY:

I'm not going to be a part of any peacetime of yours. I'm going a long way from here and make my own world that's fit for a man to live in. Where a man can be free, and have a chance, and do what he wants to do in his own way.¹

ANTROBUS:

Henry, let's try again.

HENRY:

Try what? Living here?--Speaking polite downtown to all the old men like you?² Standing like a sheep at the street-corner until the red light turns to green? Being a good boy and a good sheep, like all the stinking ideas you get out of your books. Oh, no. I'll make a world, and I'll show you.³

ANTROBUS:

How can you make a world for people to live in, unless you've first put order in yourself? Mark my words: I shall continue fighting you until my last breath as long as you mix up your idea of liberty with your idea of hogging everything for yourself. I shall have no pity on you. I shall pursue you to the far corners of the earth. You and I want the same thing; but until you think of it as something that everyone has a right to, you are my deadly enemy and I will destroy you.--I hear your mother's voice in the kitchen. Have you seen her?⁴

HENRY:

I have no mother. Get it into you head. I don't belong here. I have nothing to do here. I have no home.

ANTROBUS:

Then why did you come here? With the whole world to choose from, why did you come to this one place: 216 Cedar Street, Excelsior, New Jersey--⁵
Well?

HENRY:

What if I did? What if I wanted to look at it once more, to see if--⁶

ANTROBUS:

Oh, you're related, all right--When your mother comes in you must behave yourself. Do you hear me?

HENRY:

What is this?--must behave yourself. Don't you say must to me.

ANTROBUS:

Quiet!

HENRY:

Nobody can say must to me.⁷ All my life everybody's been crossing me,--everybody, everything, all of you. I'm goind to be free, even if I have to kill half the world for it.⁸ Right now, too. Let me get my hands on his throat I'll show him.⁹

1. Henry X DC and speaks as the actor not the character.
2. Henry turns away briefly then turns back to face audience.
3. Mr. Antrobus speaks in his own person.
4. Mr. Antrobus X DR.

SABINA:

Stop! Stop! Don't play this scene. You know what happened last night. Stop the play. Ladies and gentlemen, I forbid these men to play this scene. Last night this boy here almost strangled him. He becomes a regular savage. Stop it!¹

HENRY:

It's true, I'm sorry. I don't know what comes over me. I have nothing against him personally. I respect him very much--I--I admire him. But something comes over me. It's like I become fifteen years old again. I--I--listen: my own father used to whip me and lock me up every Saturday night. I never had enough to eat. He never let me have enough money to buy decent clothes. I was ashamed to go downtown. I never could go to the dances. My father and my uncle put rules in the way of everything I wanted to do. They tried to prevent my living at all.² -- I'm sorry. I'm sorry.

MRS. ANTROBUS:

No, go on. Finish what you were saying. Say it all.

HENRY:

In this scene it's as though I were back in High School again. It's like I had some big emptiness inside me,--the emptiness of being hated and blocked at every turn. And the emptiness fills up with the one thought that you have to strike and fight and kill. Listen, it's as though you have to kill somebody else so as not to end up killing yourself.

SABINA:

That's not true. I knew your father and your uncle and your mother. You imagined all that. Why, they did everything they could for you. How can you say things like that? They didn't lock you up.

HENRY:

They did. They did. They wished I hadn't been born.

SABINA:

That's not ture!

ANTROBUS:³

Wait a minute. I have something to say, too. It's not wholly his fault that he wants to strangle me in this scene. It's my fault, too. He wouldn't feel that way unless there were something in me that reminded him of all that. He talks about emptiness. Well, there's an emptiness in me, too. Yes--work, work, work,--that's all I do. I ceased to live.⁴ No wonder he feels that anger coming over him.

MRS. ANTROBUS:

There! At last you've said it.

SABINA:

We're all just as wicked as we can be, and that's the God's truth.

1. Mrs. Antrobus X DC.
2. Sabina takes Henry to kitchen door where they stop and turn. Mrs. Antrobus X UC.
3. Sabina and Henry exit to kitchen. Mr. Antrobus X to door DL. Mrs. Antrobus X to Lt. of table.
4. Mrs. Antrobus X to window.
5. Mr. Antrobus X to window.
6. Mr. and Mrs. Antrobus embrace.
7. Mrs. Antrobus X to chair Rt. of table. Mr. Antrobus X to Lt. of table.
8. Mrs. Antrobus sits.

MRS. ANTROBUS:

Come,¹ come and put your head under some cold water.

SABINA:

I'll go with him. You have to go on with the play. I've known him a long while. Come with me, Henry.²

HENRY:

Thanks. Thanks for what you said. I'll be all right tomorrow. I won't lose control in that place, I promise.³

MRS. ANTROBUS:

George, you're limping?

ANTROBUS:

Yes, a little. My old wound from the other war started smarting again.⁴ I can manage.

MRS. ANTROBUS:

Some lights are coming on,--the first in seven years. People are walking up and down looking at them. Over In Hawkins' open lot they've built a bonfire to celebrate the peace. They're dancing around it like scarecrows.⁵

ANTROBUS:

A binfire! As though they hadn't seen enough things burning--Maggie,-- the dog died?

MRS. ANTROBUS:

Oh, yes, Long ago. There are no dogs left in Excelsior.⁶ You're back again! All these years. I gave up counting on letters. The few that arrived were anywhere from six months to a year late.

ANTROBUS:

Yes, the ocean's full of letters, along with the other things.

mrs. antrobus:

George, sit down, you're tired.⁷

ANTROBUS:

No, you sit down. I'm tired but I'm restless. Maggie! I've lost it. I've lost it.⁸

MRS. ANTROBUS:

What George? What have you lost?

ANTROBUS:

The most important thing of all: The desire to begin again, to start building.

MRS. ANTROBUS:

Well, it will come back.

1. Mr. Antrobus X UC.
2. Mr. Antrobus X to above table.
3. Mr. Antrobus X DL.
4. Mrs. Antrobus rises.
5. Mrs. Antrobus X to him. Sabina enters from kitchen X RC.
6. Mrs. Antrobus X to chair Rt. of table and sits. Sabina X to above table.
7. Sabina X to LC.

ANTROBUS:

I've lost it.¹ This minute I feel like all those people dancing around the bonfire--just relief. Just the desire to settle down; to slip into the old grooves and keep the neighbors from walking over my law.--Hm.² But during the war,--in the middle of all that blood and dirt and hot and cold--every day and night, I'd have moments, Maggie, when I saw the things that we could do when it was over. When you're at war you think about a better life; when you're at peace you think about a more comfortable one.³ I've lost it. I feel sick and tired.

MRS. ANTROBUS:

Listen! The baby's crying.⁴ I hear Gladys talking. Probably she's quieting Henry again, George, while Gladys and I were living here--like moles, like rats, and when we were at our wits end to save the baby's life--the only thing we clung to was that you were going to bring something good out of this suffering. In the night, in the dark, we'll whisper about it, starving and sick.--Oh, George, you'll have to get it back again. Think! What else kept us alive all these years? Even now, it's not comfort we want. We can suffer whenever's necessary; only give us back that promise.⁵

SABINA:

Mrs. Antrobus--

MRS. ANTROBUS:

Yes, Sabina?

SABINA:

Will you need me?

MRS. ANTROBUS:

No, Sabina, you can go to bed.⁶

SABINA:

Mrs. Antrobus, if it's all right with you. I'd like to go to the bonfire and celebrate seeing the war's over. And Mrs. Antrobus, they're opened the Gem Movie Theatre and they're giving away a hand-painted soup tureen to every lady, and I thought one of us ought to go.

ANTROBUS:

Well, Sabina, I haven't any money. I haven't seen any money for quite a while.

SABINA:

Oh, you don't need money. They're taking anything you can give them. And I have some--some--Mrs. Antrobus, promise you won't tell anyone. It's a little against the law. But I'll give you some, too.

ANTROBUS:

What is it?⁷

1. Mrs. Antrobus X to Sabina.
2. Sabina turns away.
3. Sabina X DL to Mr. Antrobus. Mrs. Antrobus X to chair Rt. of table.
4. Sabina gives cubes to Mr. Antrobus, then X to door DL.
5. Mr. Antrobus X to table puts cubes there.
6. Sabina X to Mr. Antrobus. Mr. Antrobus gives her one cube. Sabina X to door DL.
7. Sabina exits door DL.
8. Mrs. Antrobus hands him books.

SABINA:

I'll give you some, too. Yesterday I picked up a lot of--of beef-cubes!¹

MRS. ANTROBUS:

But, Sabine, you know you ought to give that in to the Center downtown. They know who needs them most.

SABINA:

Mrs. Antrobus, I didn't make this war. I didn't ask for it. And in my opinion, after anybody's gone through what we've gone through, they have a right to brab what they can find. You're a very nice man, Mr. Antrobus, but you'd have got on better in the world if you'd realized that dog-eat-dog was the rule in the beginning and always will be. And most of all now. Oh, the world's an awful place,² and you know it is. I used to think something could be done about it; but I know better now. I hate it. I hate it.³ All right. All right. You can have them.⁴

ANTROBUS:

Thank you, Sabina.⁵

SABINA:

Can I have--can I have one to go to the movies?⁶ Thank you.

ANTROBUS:

Good night, Sabina.

SABINA:

Mr. Antrobus, don't mind what I say. I'm just an ordinary girl, you know what I mean, I'm just an ordinary girl. But you're a bright man, you're a very bright man, and of course you invented the alphabet and the wheel, and, my God, a lot of things--and if you've got any other plans, my God, don't let me upset them. Only every now and then I've got to go to the movies. I mean my nerves can't stand it. But if you have any ideas about improving the crazy old world, I'm really with you. I really am. Because it's--it's--Good night.⁷

ANTROBUS:

Now I remember what three things always went together when I was able to see things most clearly: three things. Three things: The voice of the people in their confusion and their need. And the thought of you and the children and this house--And--Maggie! I didn't dare ask you: my books! They haven't been lost, have they?⁸

MRS. ANTROBUS:

No. There are some of them right here. Kind of tattered.

ANTROBUS:

Yes.--Remember, Maggie, we almost lost them once before? And when we finally did collect a few torn copies of old cellars they ran in everyone's head like a fever. They as good as rebuilt the world.

1. Mr. Antrobus opens book.
2. Mr. Antrobus X to chair Lt. of table. Mr. Antrobus sits.
3. Mr. Antrobus hunts for passage in book. Fred Bailey enters UL above set and X to platform.
4. Bailey X platform and exits UR above set-Hester enters UL and X to platform.
5. Hester X platform and exits UR. Ivy enters UL and X to platform. Gladys enters kitchen door and X to Mrs. Antrobus.
6. Ivy X platform and exits UR. Tremayne enters UL and X to platform.
7. Henry DR below set, stands DR.
8. Tremayne X platform and exits UR.
9. Blackout, everybody exits, as lights come up, Sabina is discovered at window exactly as in ACT I.
10. Sabina X DC and speaks to audience.
11. Curtain

ANTROBUS:

Oh, I've never forgotten for long at a time that living is struggle. I know that every good and excellent thing in the world stands moment by moment on the razor-edge of danger and must be fought for--whether it's a field, or a home, or a country. All I ask is the chance to build new worlds and God has always given us that second chance, and has given us voices to guide us; and the memory of our mistakes to warn us. Maggie, you and I must remember in peace time all those resolves that were so clear to us in the days of war. Maggie, we've come a long ways. We've learned.² We're learning. And the steps of our journey are marked for us here. Sometimes out there in the war,--standing all night on a hill--I'd try and remember some of the words in these books.³ Parts of them and phrases would come back to me. And after a while I used to give names to the hours of the night. Nine o'clock I used to call Spinoza. Where is it: "After experience had taught me.--"⁴

BAILEY:

"That the common occurrences of daily life are vain and futile; and I saw they all the objects of my desire and fear were in themselves nothing good nor had save insofar as the mind was affected by them; I at length determined to search out whether there was something truly good and communicable to man."⁵

HESTER:

"Then tell me, O Critias, how will a man choose the ruler that shall rule over him? Will he not choose a man who has first established order in himself, knowing that any decision that has its spring from anger or pride or vanity can be multiplied a thousand fold in its effects upon the citizens?"⁶

IVY:

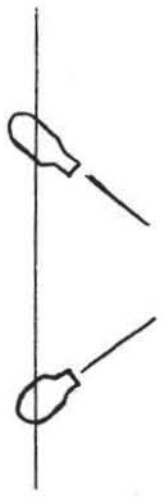
"This good estate of the mind possessing its object in energy we call divine. This we mortals have occasionally and it is this energy which is pleasantest and best. But God has it always. It is wonderful in us; but in Him how much more wonderful."⁸

TREMAYNE:

"In the beginning, God created the Heavens and the Earth; And the Earth was waste and void; And the darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Lord said, let there be light and there was light."⁹

SABINA:

Oh, oh, oh. Six o'clock and the master not home yet. Pray God nothing serious has happened to him crossing the Hudson River. But I wouldn't be surprised. The whole world's at sixes and sevens, and why the house hasn't fallen down about our ears long ago is a miracle to me.¹⁰ This is where you came in. We have to go on for ages and ages yet. You go home. The end of this play isn't written yet. Mr. and Mrs. Antrobus! Their heads are full of plans and they're as confident as the first day they began,--and they told me to tell you: good night.¹¹



LIGHT PROT

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APPENDIX I - Lighting and Sound

The basic lighting plan was a modified version of the McCandless method. Because of a shortage of instruments only two acting areas were set-up downstage. These were illuminated by the eight inch ellipsoidal reflector spotlights which hung from the skylight. The upstage area was divided into three main areas, each of which had illumination from two six inch Fresnel spotlights hung on the first pipe. Additional lighting was provided up Left and up Right by a single Fresnel on each side. The above units were the only ones which were capable of being dimmed. The Fresnels were each controlled by a separate silicon controlled rectifier dimmer which had to be operated manually. The two ellipsoidal reflector spotlights were controlled by a single autotransformer dimmer however they could be unplugged separately to allow just one, downstage area to be lit.

Additional lighting was provided Center stage by a fourteen inch parabolic reflector flood-light which was mounted on the first pipe. There was a small floodlight mount upstage Center to light the platform in Act Three, and the platforms in front were illuminated by a set of PAR spotlights which are permanently mounted on swivel bases in front of the curtain. One special unit was constructed for Act Two. This was the weather light which had four separate circuits, one for each light in it. There were controlled by a portable switchbox which was located behind the Fortune Teller's booth. There was also a follow spot used for specials during the play.

The basic plan consisted of lighting the area in which the action was taking place at the highest level and dimming the other areas. As an aid to this plan the two Fresnels for the up Center area were focused on the chair Right of the table where Mrs. Antrobus was usually sitting and the chair Left of the table where Mr. Antrobus was usually sitting. Sabini's sides to the audience were emphasized by lighting her with the follow spot. At the end of Act Three as the people representing the hours crossed the platform up Center, the flood for the area was turned on and all other lights were dimmed out with the one on Mr. Antrobus being the last one out.

The sound was recorded on tape and played over the speakers used by the Announcer. The main sound effects the thunder which was played at various times in Act Two, and the striking of the clock at the end of Act Three. The Announcer and the Bingo Caller spoke live into a microphone backstage.

APPENDIX II - Costumes and Props

The costumes for The Skin of Our Teeth were, for the most part contributed by various members of the cast since the production had a very limited budget.

In the first act Sabini wore a bright flower dress, mostly blue, with a white apron. Mrs. Antrobus wore a dark wool dress, while Gladys wore a short "little girl" dress with white pantaloons. Henry wore knickers and a turtleneck. Both Gladys and Henry were wearing winter coats, hats, scarfs and mittens for their first entrance in this act. When Mr. Antrobus entered, he is wearing a winter coat, cap, scarf, and blanket over his basic costume which is a suit coat, plaid shirt, baggy pants and work boots. The Telegraph Boy wore a uniform coat and cap and all of the refugees are wearing winter coats.

Perhaps the most difficult costumes to find were those of the Dinosaur and the Mammoth. What was finally arrived at was a costume consisting of blue jeans, dark sweat shirt and black socks. The main part of each costume was the head which was made of hardware cloth shaped into the proper form, covered with papier mache', and painted gray for the Mammoth and green with yellow spots for the Dinosaur. This was fitted to the actors with the use of strips of inner tube looped under their arms.

For the second act the male conveyers wore suits and the female conveyers wore shorts and brightly colored tops. Sabina wore a red bathing suit in the style of the early nineteenth century. For most of the act she wore a coat over it. Mr. Antrobus wore a dark suit and

Mr. Antrobus wore a sport coat and slacks. Mr. Antrobus and all the conveners wore red paper hats. Gladys wore a bright dress and red stockings later in the act. Henry wore knickers and white shirt with a tie. The Fortune Teller's costume was very elaborate involving a long skirt, loose blouse, head scarf, and a large amount of costume jewelry.

In the third act the basic element of costuming was old, torn clothing. Sabina wore an army jacket and blue jeans at the beginning of the act. Later in the act she changed to a bright dress. Mrs. Antrobus and Gladys both wore torn dirty dresses. Henry wore an army coat and blue jeans. Mr. Antrobus wore old slacks and a long overcoat. Mr. Fitzpatrick wore a rumpled suit and loosened tie. Hester and boy wore plain dresses and aprons. Mr. Tremayne and Fred Bailey wore suits and ties.

The prop crew was forced to construct several special items. For the first act these included a goldfish, and a canary, both of which were made from cardboard painted yellow. Other first act props were a large bone and a large stone wheel, made from plywood. For Act Two a chair that could be rolled across stage was needed as well as hats for all the conveners. Act Three props included four large Roman numerals for the hours to carry, two potatoes wrapped in foil, three old books, and six beefcubes, also wrapped in foil.

APPENDIX III - Publicity

For The Skin of Our Teeth publicity was released on a six week schedule. The major sources of publicity were the local weekly paper, the school paper, the Decatur papers and radio stations, and use of local advertising.

The local weekly paper prints almost anything that is sent to him so there is no cost involved in this major source of publicity. The same situation exists with the school paper. The other newspaper tended to shorten the stories that were sent them to one or two paragraphs. For these reasons most of the work on articles went into the ones for the local paper and the school paper.

Approximately six weeks before the production, a short story about which play was going to be produced, and what dates was sent to the local paper and the school paper. These two stories were different as many of the same people would be reading both papers. This practice of individed stories was followed throughout the publicity schedule.

During the next two weeks, the publicity crew worked on stories, decided what rehearsal pictures to take, and designed and worked on posters. About four weeks before performance, a major story, which told the basic information on the play, was released to all newspapers in the area. The next week, the publicity pictures were taken for release the following week.

About two weeks before the play was scheduled to be presented, a major story detailing cast and production information was sent to the newspaper. The posters were put up this same week in the most prominent

places around town.

The week of the production the last story is sent to the papers with copies of the pictures. Announcements are sent to the radio and television stations and a large sign is put up on the outside bulletin board of the school.





