



Shakespeare's Sister

Created by Théâtre de l'Aquarium

Translated by Gillian Hanna

This is a scanned copy of the script for Monstrous Regiment's 1980 and 1982 productions of *Shakespeare's Sister* (not to be confused with Emma Whipdale's 2016 play of the same title), now held in the company's archive at the V&A's Theatre and Performance Archives.

The text for Théâtre de l'Aquarium's production of *La soeur de Shakespeare* at the Cartoucherie de Vincennes in 1978 was created from improvisations by the company based on interviews with women. It was obtained by Monstrous Regiment following a visit to Vincennes by Gillian Hanna and Mary McCusker, and translated by Gillian.

This scanned document contains two versions of the script. The first includes the stage directions for the 1980 production at the ICA in London, directed by Hilary Westlake, and the names of the 'characters' are the first names of the performers in that production. The second is Gillian's initial translation, without the later stage directions; the names are probably those of the Théâtre de l'Aquarium performers. The 1980 production was revived and re-directed in 1982 with various cast changes; full details and other information about the show are provided in its Production page on this website.

All requests for permission to perform or translate the play should be addressed to: Alan Brodie Representation, Paddock Suite, The Courtyard, 55 Charterhouse Street, London EC1M 6HA (www.alanbrodie.com)

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Shakespeare's 3 Sister.

The stage: at the back, a brand new, just-married kitchen, the cooker, and fridge gift-wrapped, a sparkling kitchen table, a vegetable rack. There are two large picture-windows against which images will be thrown from time to time.

At the front of the stage, a small table on which there is a tape recorder.

A stained glass window is projected on to the back wall of the kitchen and The Wedding March is played as the lights come up slowly on one bride, dressed in white standing like a dummy in front of the image. The music turns to a loud storm, and then into a baby crying noisily.

① The tape recorder begins to turn, the bride moves slowly towards it, to listen to what the voice on the tape recorder is saying:

"I haven't got a timetable. Because in the first place I Haven't got a natural sense of organisation. Then my husband hasn't either. I tried to conform for a while. I suppose I do what any housewife does: I cook. I haven't got much to tell you. At the moment my life is terribly ordinary. There isn't much..(LAUGHTER)...although..I don't really like to say this but...well actually I think bringing up children is something rather fine,..let's just say it's not much in terms of economics...I'd say that in economic terms...well in terms of profit...."

The bride stops the tape recorder. She pulls the end of a piece of tape out of the machine.

② Gillian: Interview with a woman of today who would like to remain anonymous.

She pulls a bit more. A whole mass of tape comes out.

③ Three kilometers of taped words.....

She acts the voice

④ Gillian: I haven't got a timetable. Because in the first place I haven't got a natural sense of organisation. Then my husband hasn't either. I tried to conform for a while...I suppose I do what any housewife does: I cook. What do I do? Well, first of all I look after my two children..that's quite a plateful to start off with. Two and a half and six months. (LAUGHTER) She laughs...What do I do? Well, that's

really an awkward question. I do a bit of housework. The washing. Well, when I say washing that's really just a figure of speech because I've got a washing machine. So that leaves the ironing which is really the only work I do. But..but I think that as far as..well I think that women nowadays really have very little to do in the way of housework. Really..I mean...I mean...take me..Well I have help. A woman who comes in ..well actually she first came last year so that I could go and give some English classes at the Institute. That's where I was working. Well that's when we got this cleaning woman. At first I was hoping to get more work at the Institute ..but then.. well it all fell apart a bit...so as it turns out I don't go very often. But, well, speaking purely personally, I would like to have some sort of occupation, whatever it was. I'd like to go back to the Institute: for my own sake and therefore for the children's. As far as...I get the feeling that by staying here...I'm going round and round in circles in this flat..round and round myself and my problems...

I'm not at all organised. Nobody I know is organised. Particularly my husband. His hours change all the time. He's got a lot of commitments, meetings at all hours of the day and night. That means that...that I have to be fairly available when he comes in, whatever time it is. He told me he's be coming in this evening some time between eight o'clock and half past ten...you see..
① that's useful...

She begins to laugh. Other laughs echo from the back of the stage. Three more brides in white, covered in tape, glide on in a line.

Josefina: I haven't got much to tell you....
Christine: At the moment my life is terribly ordinary. There' isn't much....
Mary: I haven't got much to tell you..at the moment my life is terribly ordinary...nothing much...I don't really like saying this but....
Gillian: But I really did want to bring up children...
Josefina: Absolutely....
Mary: Bringing up children is something very fine...
Christine: very fine.

Josefina: Absolutely. Bringing up children is something very fine...
 ① Let's just say..that it's not much...in economic terms...
 Mary: ② I would say that in terms of economics..
 Christine: ③ In terms of profit..

They all notice a speck of dirt on the floor. They reach towards it to clean it up. They notice each other - as if for the first time. They are shocked. They run off at four separate doors. They run back on, notice each other again and run off at four different doors. This happens twice more...

② Arrival of the two ~~grrr~~ grandmothers. They are madly cleaning.

David: Have you done the corners?
 John: That's what I'm doing now.
 David: What about the other corners?
 John: Don't go mad...
 David: I'm warning you. All this has to be finished before he comes home.
 John: You're so sloppy. Didn't anyone ever teach you how to clean a room properly?
 David: We haven't done the corner. We haven't done the oven..we haven't done the insides of the cupboards..we haven't done the windows..oh yes...I've got a memory like a sieve..I'll cross off the windows. I did them yesterday.
 John: You call that doing the windows? When I do the windows I do them with vinegar, I do..and I don't leave smudges behind me.
 David: It rained in the night.
 John: Well you'll have to do them again.
 David: But we'll never get everything done this evening.
 John: Well, tomorrow then...
 David: Tomorrow's ironing day. Today is washday and mending day.
 John: Hold your horses. We're not on piece work. Am I supposed to go back over everything after you?
 David: That's right. That's right...take your time..and when he gets back the whole house'll be upside down. Marvellous!
 John: That's hardly our fault. What can he say?
 David: Nothing. He never does say anything. ③ He only unbuttoned his lips this lunch time so he could get the soup down his throat. ④ And when I think...those vegetables were hand picked one by one...I'd peeled them with my own daunt fingers..

I'd put them through the seive when they were jsut nicely cooked, and I'd added a bi: of fennel and simmered it..and he didn't say a dicky bird.

John: (CHOPPING VEGET BLES AND PUTTING THEM IN A SAUCEPAN)

And my soup does him so ~~xxxxx~~ much good..even if he works ~~xxxxx~~ his fingers to the bone...my soup will put the flesh back on him.

David: It's not like wh-t you get out of a tin, or the rubbish they give you in restaurants!

John: He could always try getting a maid..she'd be hard put to it to take over from us..

David: No, but he'd soon see the difference.. she'd bleed him white..

John: The money we save him..well, that's normal...it's only natural...

David: Now be careful.. not too much raw pepper in the soup this evening. None of your fancy fol-de-rols..

John: Oh no. Very light. Light as a feather..so he can get a good night's sleep...so he can regain his strength....

SHE PUTS THE SAUCEPAN ON THE COOKER...AFTER SHE HAS TURNED HER BACK ON IT, IT STARTS TO SLOWLY POUR SMOKE...

David: After his hard day's work, the poor old soul²..Well after all, that's what we're here for!

(SINGING)

Some day my prince will come....

Both: Some day I'll find my love
And how thrilling that moment will be
When the prince of my dreams comes to me....

ohn: My husband is very very sweet..

avid: He comes home at all hours of the day and night..

ohn: That's useful...

avid: But when he does come home I have to be - well it's only natural - available...

ohn: Well, otherwise that'd be the end of family life as we know it.

avid: That would be the end of civilisation....

THE SAUCEPAN EXPLODES WITHA FLASH

Oh! You! Dozy Dora!

ohn: A disaster! My God! My God!

avid: Anyone would think you ruined everything just for the fun

of it...It's not as if you're a beginner!

John: What's he going to say?

David: And what would have happened if you'd set the house on fire
We could be sitting in the gutter with nowhere to go...
condemned to roam the streets without hearth or home..like
savages..You want to keep an eye on yourself..you shouldn't
get careless over the little things. Mankind could easily
plunge back into barbarism!

In the dark night of history, man was only an animal like
any other..but one day he stole fire from heaven so he
could cook his meagre fare..and the name of that monkey
was: Prometheus. the discovery of cooking was the signal
for the beginning of the great human adventure...man
distinguishes himself from the beasts by his wife's
cooking.

The grandmothers go off. Josefina and Gillian come on..they put on
their little aprons and look around the kitchen.

Gillian: My kingdom!

Josefina: My little kitchen!

Gillian: It's a bit funny the first time...doing the cooking after
the honeymoon...

Josefina: It's a good job he's not here to see this!

Gillian: He'll be hungry poor thing. It's only natural for me to..

Josefina: What about you? Are you hungry?

Gillian: I suppose if we'll just have to do what any housewife would
do on the first day.

Josefina: That's normal.. it's only natural...

Gillian: The very first meal can have repercussions for the rest
of your life! My God! What am I going to give him to eat
this evening?

Josefina: Didn't you ever learn to cook?

Gillian: (SHAKING HER HEAD)

What about you? I WASN'T

~~Josefina:~~ GILLIAN: How could I? We weren't married.

Gillian: What on earth am I going to make for his dinner?

TO THE AUDIENCE

Have you got any ideas?

Josefina: Something delicious...

Gillian: Cheap...

Josefina: Easy to make..

Gillian: Very easy to make...What on earth am I going to get for
his dinner?

Josefina holds her hand out and 'plucks' an egg out of thin air, like a conjurer.... (A)

Gillian: Oh! Oh! What a wonderful idea
 Josefina: Nothing up my sleeve..
 Gillian: Go on. Crack it, and do a fried egg.
 Josefina: No! You do it. (Throws her the egg)
 Gillian: No! You! (Throwing it back)
 Josefina: (Getting ready to throw it at the unseen husband who's 'Not here to see this')
 Why doesn't he do it?
 Gillian: He can't, he's been working, poor thing. Look, it's normal, it's natural for us to....
 Josefina: (B) It's only normal...

She goes off, casually throwing the egg on the ground. Gillian is shocked, but there's nothing she can do. She stands, looking at the egg on the floor..from their three doors the other three brides take their aprons off and begin to tempt her to leave the mess. She tiptoes towards her own door, taking her apron off as she goes. She is stopped in the nick of time by one of the grandmas.

John: What's going on my little angel? You love your husband, don't you, my little angel? Well, then. what's the matter? Dear, oh dear, we'll have to hide all this, won't we? What's the matter? Nothing? What could possibly be the matter? You've been given the whole world on a plate! What's the matter? My little angel?...Has the cat got your tongue?
 Gillian: But it's all dirty grandma!
 John: Well of course it is! But with a little bit of love, why, a home sparkles! Come along then, let's get our skates on...A miracle! That's right.....

Gillian begins to wipe up the egg with her veil. The grandmas watch approvingly.

(S) (L)
 Grandmas: | Plaisir d'amour ne dure qu'un moment
 | Chagrin d'amour dure toute la vie....

The two grandmas go on singing as Gillian goes to the front of

① the stage. She tries to remember...as she does so, she stands on her head.

Gillian: Fried egg, that was Wednesday, Thursday, Sunday..lentil soup, stewed apples, liver sausage, peel, pip,stuff, bd boil...it could all turn inot a little game...Friday, three hundred and fifty kilos of chips..Sunday..however in love a young husband might be, the way to his heart is still through his stomach...cooking time, fifteen minutes...Friday, Sunday...noodles with ham...jugged here.. Monday, Tuesday..Wednesday.....

④ Meanwhile, Christine has been coming on, suitcase in hand. She watches Gillian for a while. Gillian rolls off the stage. Christine suddenly begins to talk to the audience.

Christine: I'd just come back from the market. My husband and my children didn't notice anything. My knife in the cold water. ^{THEY DIDN'T SEE ME - THE SAME OLD VEGETABLES} They simply didn't see me...There's noone there... Come and get it ..I'm waiting for them...Here they come: We eat. Then, a preoccupied peck...and this is the way out! I don't even know whether it was any good. I'm just another object around the house. I'd like to have lived near a railway station! There's always a station near a kitchen....

③ So I left...

A pencilled note: 'Manage on your own lads!'

I took the housekeeping money..towards the wide streets and the shop windows...At last I was a passer-by. And noone saw me..at long last I was really..and in the crowd...at last I was really useless. And I inhaled my town, my station, my canals, my streets...at last I was really at home...

⑤ She opens the suitcase. All the market vegetables fall out onto the floor.

⑥ They say that I'm a runaway.....

She goes to the back of the kitchen and sits on her suitcase by the vegetable rack with her head in her hands.

Josefina: ⑦ M. Did you come back?

Mary: C. Yes. Did you come back?

~~Josefina:~~ M After three days.
~~Mary:~~ C I ran out of money.
~~Josefina:~~ M The return of the prodigal mother!
~~Mary:~~ C Tears and forgiveness...
~~Josefina:~~ M A slap up dinner! And not a waord about my little escapade!
~~Mary:~~ C They even did the washing up!
~~Josefina:~~ M For how long?
~~Mary:~~ C A fortnight!
~~Josefina:~~ M A fortnight!
~~Mary:~~ M I haven't unpacked my case yet....

① Christine takes a large red cabbage out of the vegetable rack and places it tenderly on the kitchen table. She lifts up a butcher's cleaver and chops the cabbage in two.

③ Josefina has gone over to the tape recorder and has gone back to the confession of the woman that began the play.

⑤ Josefian: I think you have to..well to tell you the truth I think that there's no rule, there's no general agreement. I mean, every woman visualises her own home as an expression of...as an expression of her own home..as an expression of her husband's salary..as an expression of her children. as an expression of herself (laughter) . She laughs. That's really an awkward question, to ask me what I do. I sometimes go th the institute to give English lessons.. not nearly enough for me..I'd like to go more, but you have to understand it's not very easy when you have children. And then..and then..I try to read. I say 'I try' because..I really love books..I even went to some lectures on The Uses of Literacy...on...and besides I'm aware, well particularly now that I've got two children...that I don't read any more because..every time I pick up a book I say to myself, there's something else I ought to be doing.. I ought to be doing the wakhing...I've got this to do.. I've got that to do...this and that....every time I pick up a book I say to myself...

Mary, Christine and Gillian come on with large waterproof aprons on. They are carrying washing bowls of water and large books.

All four brides move together in a mime of reading, being caught at

it by the grandmas, who have hung up a three stranded washing line behind the brides. They tear the pages out of the books, wash the pages and hang them up on the lines with pegs. The grandmas are patrolling behind the lines to make sure that this washing is being done properly.

Mary: Every time I pick up a book, I say to myself there's something else I ought to be doing...I ought to be doing the washing ..

~~Gillian:~~ *W TULLER* The washing? Well, that's a figure of speech really, because I've got a washing machine ..so..

Mary picks up her book, moves to the front and reads from it

Mary: Virginia Woolf: A Room of One's Own:
 (2) 'Let me imagine...'

She hands the book to Gillian, and they both stretch themselves out on the floor to read it comfortably....

~~Gillian:~~ *Eviva* Let me imagine, since facts are so hard to come by, what would have happened had Shakespeare had a wonderfully gifted sister, called Judith, let us say. He was, it is well known, a wild boy, who had, rather sooner than he should have done, to marry a woman in the neighbourhood, who bore him a child rather quicker than was right. That escapade sent him to seek his fortune in London. He had, it seemed, a taste for the theatre; he began by holding horses at the stage door. Very soon he got work in the theatre, became a successful actor, and lived at the hub of the universe, meeting everybody, knowing everybody, practising his art on the boards, exercising his wit in the streets, and even getting access to the palace of the queen. Meanwhile his extraordinarily gifted sister remained....

INSERT SCRIPT

(5)

She stops, because one of the grandmothers has begun to whip her lightly with a piece of string.... She goes back to her place in washing line.

David: You've got this to do, you've got that to do...without this there's no that...and that...and this...and that...you've got this to do...and that to do...and this...and that....

① He grabs the book, then, as if it were red-hot, he flings it on the ground and blesses it with the sign of the cross as if to exorcise it .

② Mary comes forward and performs the Virginia Woolf text.

Mary:

5a

Meanwhile his extraordinarily gifted sister remained at home. She was as adventurous, as imaginative, as agog to see the world as he was. But she was not sent to school. She picked up a book now and then, one of her brother's perhaps, and read a few pages. But then her parents came in and told her to mend the stockings or mind the stew and not moon about with books and papers. They would have spoken sharply but kindly for they were substantial people who knew the conditions of life for a woman and loved their daughter - indeed, more likely than not she was the apple of her father's eye. Perhaps she scribbled some pages up in the apple loft on the sly, but was careful to hide them or set fire to them. Soon, however, before she was out of her teens, she was to be betrothed to the son of a neighbouring wool-stapler. She cried out that marriage was hateful to her and for that she was severely beaten by her father. Then he ceased to scold her. He would give her a chain of beads or a fine petticoat, he said; and there were tears in his eyes. How could she disobey him? How could she break her father's heart? She made up a small parcel of her belongings, let herself down by a rope one summer's night and took the road for London.

She was not seventeen. She had the quickest fancy, a gift like her brother's for the tune of words. Like him she had a taste for the theatre. She stood at the stage door. She wanted to act, she said. Men laughed in her face. The manager guffawed. He bellowed something about poodles dancing and women acting. He hinted - you can imagine what. She could get no training in her craft. Yet her genius was for fiction. At last, Nick Greene the actor-manager took pity on her; she found herself with child by that gentleman and so killed herself one winter's night and lies buried as some cross-roads where the omnibuses now stop outside the Elephant and Castle.

Halfway through this performance the brides have stopped washing

and have been listening intently to Mary. Now Gillain gets up goes and picks up the book that Grandma threw down, hugs it

Gillain: ¹ To be, or not to be....?

The brides go off. Grandmas fling themselves on the vegetables that Christine emptied out of her suitcase and which are still lying on the ground.

John: ³ ⁴ He's still not home!

David: I'm absolutely livid!

She is putting them in the other grandmas apron.

John: He's got a little too used to treating us as if we didn't exist.

David: You see, that's what you get for being available all the time. For being all sweetness and light.

John: Next time he can have soup out of a pcket!

David: Listen, I think we should leave this lot on the table as they are. Raw! Let him get on with it! Raw!

John: Raw! And if he's so damn fussy, let him peel them himself!

David: Ohno, no no....I'm not having him in my kitchen.

John: Oh God, yes, I'd have to go round after him, clearing all the mess up...chips in my best china! No thanks!

David: His Lordship'd turn the simplest suace into World War Th Three!

John: That one couldn't boil water without burning it.

⁵ The saucepan's 'd be frazzled.

David: We can't let him mess everything up!

John: Not the way prices are these days.

David: I'm telling you, he's going to eat it all up and it'll be to his own advantage not to complain....

John: ⁶ Listen, you won't forget the bay leaf will you...like you did last Sunday ...

David: And you watch out with the butter...just the tiniest knob, because of the arteries....

They put the vegetables in the rack and go off singing...

⁷ 'In our mountain greenery

Where God paints the scenery

Just two crazy people together..

While you love your lover, let
Blue skies be your coverlet,
When it rains we'll laugh at the weather....'

① Christine appears holding the tapes. She goes back to the interview.

Christine:

⑦ This is the question that really foxes me: what do I do?
Well, every day is different. Because. (.she laughs) (~~she~~
~~finds a baby's rattle on the tapes~~) Because actually
I don't think I do very much if you see what I mean.. (~~she~~
~~shakes the rattle~~)..I mean from the point of view of immed-
iate profit I don't think I do very much.. Well, actually,
I hope I do do a lot in that I ...

She begins to run to and fro behind the rattle which is pulling her
in all directions, from door to door and across the stage.

bring up my children. And that's my long-term profit. I
hope that the time I spend with them, playing with them,
listening to them, talking to them, telling them stories..
I hope that's all worth something. But you can't work that
out in black and white..there's no...well there's no immediate
profit...It's not an occupation. I don't have a real occupa-
tion if you see what I mean...I'd rather you asked me
questions...Besides (sigh) that's really my problem at
the moment...I very much wanted to bring up children, which
means that you have to devote the greatest possible amount
of time to them. Because I believe....

the mom

④ Mary, Josefina and Gillian waltz on, spinning slowly round and round
like automatic dolls..then Josefina and Gillian pull thier skirts
round their faces - like the drapery on a cot. They start to howl.
Their mothers (Mary and Christine) try to put them to sleep. The
grandmothers are knitting peacefully in a corner.

Mary: What a little sweetie-pie...

Mary & Christine:

Hush a bye baby
On the tree top
When the wind blows,
The cradle will rock....

Mary and Christine rock the babies. They gradually fall asleep and their mothers tiptoe away.

Josefina: Gimme my talcum powder!

Gillian: Gimme my nappies!

① The two mothers rush back to attend to the babies.

Mary & Christine:

Hush abye baby
On the tree top
When the wind blows
The cradle will rock....

② The babies go to sleep again...

Josefina: Gimme my drops!

Gillian: Gimmemy gripe water!

③ The babies are screaming. The mothers are aghast. They do not know what to do. They appeal to the grandmothers, who put their knitting down...they come over to the babies and massage their necks (strangle them?!). They babies are dead quiet.

Grandmas: Hush a bye baby
On the tree top
When the wind blows
The cradle will rock....

It's alright. Mummy's here. Mummy's still here.

Mary & Christine:

I beleive th t children need their mothers. I really do believe that...well..I think... ahem... I believe that children need theri mothers....

John& David: But of course, my precious, Mummy's here. I'm still here.

④ Josefina comes on with a ~~suscepna~~ round her neck. She is drumming on it with drum sticks. A flourish.

Josefina: Listen! I always wanted to be a boy...A boy! I wanted it so badly that I dreamed I had a boy... A boy who was brave, strong, desperately attractive, intelligent, a pilot or a boxer, a hunter, and outlaw - setting out on a whole series of adventures that were utterly

forbidden to me because I was a girl.

The saucepan turns back into a saucepan and the drumsticks are used to stir whatever is being cooked in it.

This dream of being a boy vanished when I felt something moving inside me, as if from the depths of sleep - something that urgently desired to be given life.....

Mary, Christine and Gillian have glided on behind Josefina. Now they all four make up a line and mime the effort, struggle, pain and exhaustion of giving birth...meanwhile...

John:

A/ Does it hurt? I thought I heard someone screaming. I'm a bit deaf... Everything alright? They say it's a pleasure..
J/ It's hard work..hard work..Joy..tears...well, that's normal..How's it going? They say it's wonderful..they say..
J/ I forget what they say..Girl..boy..they're only words. What does it all mean? Oh, it doesn't matter..It's pushing..They say we give the light of day to..It's a pleasure which brings pain..How should I know..They say it doesn't go on for ever... Boy or girl, children leave home all too soon..grow up too quickly and leave home too soon..

SLAP BABY, CRY - RUN ROUND THE FRONT, PUT IT IN THE CORANDGR

The four brides have collapsed with exhaustion. They go off as

John recovers from the emotions of the experience.. *GO OFF COME ON AGAIN IMMEDIATELY WUBUNG TROUOL WITH BABY ON*

David:

How well I remember it! It's engraved here (points to her heart) My little boy - he gave me such a lot of trouble. Oh it wasn't his fault: he was such a sickly little thing! So I used to give him spinach - for the iron you know..well my little boy never caused me the slightest upset..what about Mother's Day..he always had just the right little present: a bottle of scent, a scarf, and every year some sweet little message - all the bad times made up for in a second! He never forgot a single Mothers' Day. Not one! It's all engraved here in a mother's heart

GIVE BABY TO ANNE.

Rewrite?

5

ROUND THE BACK OF THEM, (FAKE OFF WIG, PUT ON SCHOOL CAP) CONCENT MOTHER -
The four brides glide on..another gentle tarantella. They are draped
in pastel draperies. They are brides, virgins, mothers, earth mothers
all the sweet and loving protective figures of the rare fantasy.
David rushes back onto the stage. He is a little boy. He has a schoolboy cap on, and a bunch of flowers in his hand. He is looking

for his mother.

David: Mum...Mum...Where's my Mum? Mum...mum...Where's my Mum?

The brides form a tableau of loving motherhood. He chooses one of them..

David: It's my Mum!
Mummy! Today is Mothers' Day, and I would like to recite for you a little something ^{I WROTE AT SCHOOL} written by our schoolmaster:

O no, you cannot call it back, The arrow, once it's left the quiver. And when you've drained life's golden cup It's empty then for ever.	<i>ALL THINGS MUST FADE & PASS AWAY IN THIS VALE OF YEARS EVERYTHING WITHERS & SLOWLY DIES WITH THE PASSING YEARS</i>
But when a mother's weary cheek Is kissed by her little boy Her tired heart replenished, Is filled again with joy.	<i>BUT THERE'S ONE THING ONE JOY I'M CERTAIN OF THE GUY IN A MOTHER'S HON WHOM HER WING INFANT ONCE HER KISSES</i>

He has lost her again. The brides regroup into another tableau.
He chooses another madonna for his mother.

David: Mummy! Today is Mothers' Day and I would like to recite for you a little something by Erasmus Darwin:

Warm from its cell the tender infant born
Feels the cold chill of Life's aerial morn;
Seeks with spread hands the bosom's velvet orbs
With closing lips the milky fount absorbs;
And, as compress'd the dulcet streams distill,
Drinks warmth and fragrance from the living rill;
Eyes with mute rapture every waving line,
Prints with adoring kiss the Paphian shrine,
And learns ere long, the perfect form confess'd,
IDEAL BEAUTY from its Mother's breast.

He moves again. The brides regroup. He chooses another Mother.

David: Mummy! Today is Mothers' Day, and I would like to recite for you a little something by Marshall Petain:
~~"Supreme destiny of the bearded lady! Holy duty, dedicatio
Oh, chain of undying love, eternal history..fleash of your~~

flesh...goodness, a piece of black pudding..repository, sacred vase, holy urn, sainted womb! ...the belly is a barracks...Oh, beat out your drums, the burdens of the Motherland, pregnant with your deenest hopes, oh sky sparkling with epaulettes and medals...Fire!!!

As David launches into the next speech, the brides gradually reveal their horror at what is being done to them, and they silently collapse and stagger offstage.

It is a long tirade in pseudo German-Italian..which extolls the virtues of motherhood and enlists the aid of the Madonna in the movement of Fascism...It becomes more and more hysterical and probably ends with a Nazi salute....

THERE ARE TWO WORLDS IN THE LIFE OF THE NATION. NATURE WAS DONE WITH TO ENTRUST THE MAN WITH THE CARE OF HIS FAMILY AND THE NATION, THE WOMAN'S WORLD IS HER FAMILY, HER HUSBAND, HER CHILDREN AND HER HOME. I AM CERTAIN I VOICE THE OPINION OF THOUSANDS OF YOUNG MEN WHEN I SAID THAT IF MEN WERE DOING THE WORK THAT THOUSANDS OF YOUNG WOMEN ARE NOW DOING, THE MEN WOULD BE ABLE TO KEEP THOSE SAME WOMEN IN DECENT HOMES. HOMES ARE THE REAL PLACES OF THE WOMEN WHO ARE NOW COMPELLING MEN TO BE IDLE. IT IS TIME THE GOVERNMENT INSISTED UPON EMPLOYERS GIVING WORK TO MORE MEN, TELLING UNWILLING THEM TO MARRY THE WOMEN THEY CANNOT NOW APPROACH. UND UNSERE MUTTERPOLITIK IS DIE REINSTE IM GANZEN EUROPA, SCHLAGT ES NICHT IN IHREM PAK, DAS VATERLAND NIEDER ZU TRAMPEN. SPONTANAMENTE SENDO UN PO' RECALCITRANTE MADRE MIA! DEPOSITO CONSACRATO, UTERO SANTO, THE BELLY IS A BARRACKS - FLESH OF OUR FLESH, GOODNESS, A PIECE OF BLOODSAUSAGE - SCHLAGT ES NICHT IN IHREM PAK -

John:

David:

There, there dear...It's all over now..It's just history!
My God. Everything in ruins..We're going to have to roll our sleeves up..we'll have to make twelve million bonny babies to get this country back on its feet again..twelve million bonny babies....

John leads the distraught widow away..

WÄRSSEN SIE EINZELMANN IN EUREN NATIONALSOZIALISTISCHEN BÄCKE ON HOLY VESSOL - ON SKY SPARKLING WITH EPAULETTES AND MEDALS UND - DUE, DON'T CARE WHAT MAMA DON'T KNOW, COUNTA PLAY ALL CULPARK ANYHOW. FIRE!

6

ALL Mary runs on from her door ...

~~Mary~~: Mummy....Mummy...Where's my Mummy...

Josefina runs on from her door - directly opposite Mary. They meet and cross to each others doors.

ALL

~~Mary & Josefina~~:

2

Mummy..Mummy...Where's my Mummy...Mummy Mummy...I want my Mummy....

Christine runs on from her door...

The three Brides:

Mummy..Mummy...Where's my Mummy...Mummy...Mummy..I want my Mummy...

0

Gillian runs on from the fourth door..The four brides run towards each other crying...they run to the middle, holding out thier arms to each other and for their mothers. They meet and then part, running backwards to their own doors...

The four Brides:

3

Mummy..Mummy...here's my Mummy...Mummy..Mummy..I want my Mummy...

They are all in great distress now, and run around the stage here and there and everywhere...their cries grow louder and louder...they are in a line now, their backs to the audience, screaming for their mothers.. When the music begins, they fall silent and turn round to face the audience. They are very pregnant. They have beatific smiles on their faces.

John skips on.

John: 4

5

Ah! Here they are, my bonny little bulge babies!
My mothers-to-be!

And aren't you like your Mummies, hmm? I taught her how to be self-effacing and she's fulfilled her role to the letter! And now it's your turn...

6

Bottles, nappies, potions prams, naughty naughty, smack smack, fairy stories, poos and wees, hurties, cuddles, sew on buttons, kiss kiss....

Your mummy would hang herself for your sake! And now it's your turn!

.. 7

You'll have the most beautiful babies in the world - even if we won't be there to see them! 8

1/2
The four brides step forward. They are puzzled.

Brides:

To be or not to be....

8
The stage is plunged in darkness. When the lights come back, there is a large basket in the middle of the stage. A resplendant cock is sitting in it.

Christine: Eggs..eggs...eggs.

Josefina: E Is he sitting?

Mary: M He's sitting.

Josefina: He's pulling our leg. Look, it's no joking matter.

Christine: Just looking at it makes me feel sick.

Mary: Maybe he's a bit sozzled.

Christine: A Where's the mother? Come on.. chuck, ch-uck...

Josefina: E Yes, there's got to be a hen somewhere. A hen...

Christine: You haven't seen a hen anywhere have you? A real hen these poor orphans' mother?

All: Chuck, chuck... here chicky... chuck... chuck...

Mary: M Maybe the mother's found something better to do..

Christine: A Like what might I ask? A mother is bor to sit..

Josefina: Chuck, chuck, here chucky, here chucky...

Mary: M Maybe things are ~~gettingxbetter~~ changing.

Josefina: A Come off it! It's impossible.

Mary: M Why?

Christine: A Because.

Josefina: E That's the way things are.

Christine: A It's normal. It's a question of nature.

Mary: M Nature? But some hens abandon their brood.

Christine: A Well those hens aren't hens. They're just sluts. They're aberrations of nature.

Josefina: E And who better to do the sitting than the hen do you imagine? Once she's layed the egg, her backside's there, right over it, so that's where she stays. And everyone's happy.

Mary: M Well it seems to me that this backside..go on, have a good look at it..I'm not dreaming. It seems to me that this backside is sitting after its own fashion.

Christine: A Sitting! But sitting comes from here. (Points to her heart)
He doesn't feel anything
~~That thing doesn't feel anything here. He's got no feelings, no deep n-tural feelings, do you understand me. He hasn't got an instinct, that swells up from his very depths.~~

Mary: M But thishen, this cock, oh-Lord, this beast here, sitting

on these eggs; it's warming them with its feathers. It's got as much warmth as any other beast. ~~That's true isn't it?~~ (To cock)

Josefina: E. It's all a charade. Come on, get out of there you imposter. Cocks don't know when they're well off. They let their seed go, a little squirt and then they're off again.

~~Christine: O.K. Come on then, squirt, clear off out of it. Don't you hear that you're no use for anything?~~

Josefian: E. You can see he hasn't the foggiest what he's supposed to do.

Christine: A He couldn't possibly know.

Josefina: E Do you know how to lift your wings up?

Christine: A Do you know how to place the eggs under your stomach?

Josefina: E Do you know how to settle down without crushing them?

Christine: A Do you know how to cluck without moving?

Josefina: E You can see perfectly well that it's not a hen.

Mary: M The end product is the same.

Chris & Jos: E NO!

Mary: M Well anyway, it won't be any worse.

Chris & Jos: E Yes it will.

Josefina: A Nothing repl. ces the love of a mother hen.

Mary: M Why?

Josefina: Because.

Christine: A That's the way things are.

Josefina: E It's a question of nature.

Mary: M Why?

Add what have you got to say for yourself? (to cock) He says you've seen nothing yet. It's the duck's turn next.

Josefina: E Oh that's lovely! Get rid of mothers..and fathers .. anyone can look after the kids...

Christine: A You'll end up with a generation of delinquents.

Josefina: E A fine nest of degenerates

Mary: M Shh! He's trying to concentrate.

Christine: E Don't you think there's something funny about that cock of yours? Bit of a limp crest wouldn't you say?

Josefina: A You do come across these things in nature.

Mary: M What if Nature was nothing but a set of bad habits? If the hen had just got into the bad habit of sitting all on her own?

Christine: A. But Nature's got nothing to do with habits. You can't change Nature; it's unchangeable..as unchangeable as the

sun going round the earth; like that basket, once it's out there, it stays there..

The basket begins to move backwards of its own accord.

And even if it moves a little bit, it still doesn't prove anything...

The basket goes on moving...

E Because there are millions and millions of cocks who won't change their habits at all...

A And what about the poor hen in this story? What's left for her? What does she get out of it?

Mary:

M The hen? Maybe she gets the sun up...

Blackout. In the darkness a cock crows....

Gillian appears creeping out of her door. She has a candle in a candle holder in her hand.

Gillian:

Is it also something to do with the life we lead at home? Maybe that's possible..maybe that's why there's a growing rift between us that wasn't there when we were first married. My husband had many fewer commitments, and as for me, well I was still working so..when we were first married this...problem..didn't exist at all.. not at all..it just happens ..well, it's here and more...well it's certainly true that there's a wider and wider gulf growing between us.. so then sometimes I say to my self.. well it's up to me to make the first move..it's up to me to try and do something, to try and share his interests, but..well it's very difficult because my husband brings a lot of work home with him at night..so he doesn't want to..to go over it all again.. and I can't ..it isn't possible because.. sigh...

She produces a boxing glove from behind her back. During the following speech, she uses it to hit herself..

It was me who pushed my husband! ..to take on these responsibilities, these commitments. He does union work, he runs magazines, he's busy with masses of things..I pushed him into them in the beginning because I thought it was natural that he should be somebody..yes, that's

yes that's it, that he should be somebody, get involved, take his responsibilities seriously..but...but it's true that..th t there's a ~~xxxxxxxxxxxx~~ gulf between us, and it's growing wider and wider...

Now she begins to punch the air , not herself, as if she's hitting her husband..

My husband, very sweet...when he comes home..at all hours.. available..that's normal..everything has to be in its p proper place..but..what about me..yes..push myself to take my responsibilities seriously ..my commitments..push myself why can't I be somebody..pusj myself...

Suddenly she stops punching the air..

On the contrary there are women who work.No that's not on the contrary that's on the other hand. (she hits herself there are women who work and who have children as well and who are very unhappy because they have twice the work, what with the husband the job and the children...

She flings the boxing glove away.

That's enough... speaking for myself I realise..Look to tell you the honest truth..I'm fed up with being here.. I'm fed up...I've had enough...

She runs up to the kitchen. She opens the fridge and gets a packet of letters out of it. She throws them down on the floor as she reads out the name of the person to whom each of them is addressed.

Mister..mister..mister..mister...

One last envelope is apparently addressed to her. She hugs it to herself. She runs back to 'her' spot and settles down to read it. It is an advertising leaflet. She screws it up into a ball and throws it into her own face. She falls backwards, unconscious.

The two grandmothers appear, stealthily.

David: (peering up her nightdress)

J.S. She's asleep!
J. DONT WORRY SIR - WE'LL TAKE CARE OF HER.

John: S:But don't be too long sir, she is available..

J.S: Oh! Love letters! Oh!

She has begun picking up the envelopes that Gillian threw down and

is opening them. The two grandmas go into ecstasies over the bank notes which are in the envelopes - the husbands' wages.

David: Oh, you're too kind sir! Thank you!
John: How would we ever get along...
David: What a career! Right to the very top!
John: Clock in. Clock out..Overtime!
David: Now do take care of yourself sir!
John: A coronary! Then we'd be in trouble!
David: (to the sleeping woman)
You see how right you were to push him, to push him, to pushhim, to push him....

Meanwhile, the other grandmother is frantically collecting the notes and secreting them about her person.

Grandmothers: We've been together now for forty years
And it don't seem a day too much...
There ain't a feller living in this world
As I'd swoon for my dear old Dutch...

John: (pricking himself on one of the pins with which he's been pinning the notes on to himself)
Oh! I pricked myself.

David: Butterfingers! (She tries to grab the notes and pricks herself as well) Ow! A drop of crimson blood!

John: (Yawning) Now, at the self-same moment she felt the prick, the horses fell asleep in their stables...the flies on the wall...the fire itself...

David: (Going to sleep, singing)
Some day my prince will come...

Far off in the distance somewhere another voice is singing

Mary: (O) Some day, my prince will come...
Some day my prince will come...

Christine and Josefina come on to see where this plaintive voice comes from. They gently open the fridge door. Mary is curled up inside the fridge, clutching her doll. She is frozen in cold cold light.

She leans out and runs to the front of the stage.

Mary: When we were first married, my husband had many fewer

commitments, and as for me, well I was still working...
so...when we were first married this problem didn't
exist at all, not at all...when we were first married..
(she sings) Here Comes the Bride....(she throws
confetti over the sleeping Gillian) I had no qualms
about reading, even if one of the children was
crying, even if my child was crying, even if I hadn't
done the cooking...I had no qualms because I said to
myself I've got to do it...In those days I had much
less of a sense of....

The sleeper suddenly wakes and sits bolt upright

Gillian: That's the word....

She leaps to her feet. All the brides are frozen

Gillian: Guilt.

All the brides turn to run

Gillian: I've got to get out

They begin to move.

Gillian: It's the only way to get these family problems
& brides into perspective...

They run again

GILLIAN,

~~All Brides:~~ I've got to get out..Otherwise...

David: (waking up and singing)
Spring starts to spring....

The brides are terrified they will be caught. They all rush to
the fridge and throw themselves into it one after the other.
They disappear, closing the door behind them.

David: The cuckoos start to sing
And Mother Nature wears her newest gown..
Troubles there are
So much rarer
Out of town.
Out there the sun is a big yellow duster
Polishing the blue blue sky
With white fluffy clouds in a cluster

Hanging on the breeze to dry...

She has been sweeping up the while, trying to tidy up all the mess..She sweeps up the tape, becomes curious and picks it up to try and decipher it..It is the original interview...

David: "Speaking for myself, I understand..well ^{that} to tell you the truth there are times when I'm sick to death of being here..so I say to myself: Is it my temperament? In the old days I used to think of myself as a bit of a dreamer, a home-body...I used to tell myself that a stay-at-home life would suit me very nicely...

The grandmother becomes more and more upset..as she realises what she has said..she dashes to get the pot from the stove, crams the tapes into it, smashes the lid down on them and sits of the pot.

David: Then I realise that it's not...so I ask myself questions: Is it my temperament? No it's not my temperament.

She gets out a kitchen knife and plunges it into the other granny's back. The other gran is still asleep.

David: Yet I used to think of myself....
"Spring starts to spring..."
I used to think I was more inclined....towards an introspective....

John: (reviving)
Are you sure?

David: I don't know any more.

John: Now then. Let's be brave. Let's face the future with courage...

David: Tell me something : what is my future?

She holds out her hand for her palm to be read. She's got a pink washing-up glove on. John gazes at the palm.

John: Very little inner life....

David: Is that all? Is that my temperament?

John: It's blurred..

David: My temperament is blurred?

John: So's mine.

David: Yours! Are you trying to tell me you've got the same temperament as me?

John: He. He. He. ...It's always you...what about me then? Don't I count?

A torrent of pink washing up gloves fall onto the the stage and pile up around the grandmothers. They seem infinite in number.

John: (gazing at the heap)
Empty handed...empty handed...how many times have we ended up empty handed...the things these hands have done...grabbed...(singing) "Ah ca ira, ca ira, ca ira...."

During Grandma's speech, the four brides unseen, softly sing the Ca Ira...over and over...

"Ah, ca ira, ca ira, ca ira.
Le peuple en ce jour sans cesse repete
Ah ca ira ca ira, ca ira.
Malgre les mutins tout reussira.
Nos ennemis confus en reste la
Et nous allons chanter Ah ca ira!
Ah, ca ira, ca ira, ca ira!
Quand Boileau jadis du clerge parla
avec ila fait cela
En chantant sa chansonnette.
Avec plaisir on dira
Ah, ca ira, ca ira,
ca ira, ca ira,
Malgre les mutins tout reussira..."

John: Grabbed (Little by little she begins to remember)
There was no more bread...and the streets were crowded with empty handed women...
"Ah, ca ira, ca ira, ca ira..."
.. Ah. Now I remember, as if it xxxrxyrxyrxyrxyrxyrxyr was yesterday. We grabbed the bread and we hung

hung onto it....

"Ah ca ira ca ira..."

King Louis and Marie-Antoinette and their snotty nosed brat...we grabbed them from Versailles.. and we didn't let go till we'd got them to Paris,, and there were thousands of hands stretched out to cheer us on, and there we were, shaking our pikes...

"Ah, ca ir, ca ira, ca ira..."

David:

That's all over now.....

John:

And afterwards...(a lapse of memory..a pause..she begins to sing...) "If I was the only girl in the world...." And then I had to go home...my husband wanted to take part in things ...he wanted to sit in the cafe..well that's normal..it's only natural....

"And you were the only boy..."

But then the real women - not women like me - the..

"Ah, ca ira, ca ira, ca ira..."..the Furies...

David:

(sobbing)

Why can't you forget all that?

John:

That's a laugh! Calling them Furies..we were the sould of gentleness..the Furies..and they wouldn't stop shaking their fists...."Ah,ca ira, ca ira, ca ira..."And in their club...in the women's revolution ary club.....

David:

Be careful, you'll hurt yourself!

John:

"Nothing else would matter in the world today..."

"Ah, ca ira..ca ira, ca ira..." And all these women who had never even opened their mouths , suddenly revealed the other half of the sky for all women to see. And all the distinguished persons spat on them and ended up packing them off back to their homes...and..and...(she can't remember any more)..."We would go on living in the same old way..."

And they all lived happily ever after..and they had lots of lovely children....

David:

Draw a veil over your memories.

The grandmothers go off in their sorrow. Mary - dressed in black and carrying a huge globe which she puts down on the stage - cries and kneels down.

Mary:

(12)

"These irate women protested: they formed clubs where at one and the same time they attended to their own rights as women, as well as to the common rights of all. The Convention, the great Convention, closed their clubs and forbade these women to meet to discuss public affairs; and at the same time that these autocratic revolutionaries were enacting the inequality of women, they were making the furthest ends of the earth reverberate with the sonorous words: Liberty and Equality. "

She starts to take her black clothes off..

"Women cannot be satisfied with vain promises which have too often been gone back on by those who seek power, and who, in moments of candour, forget themselves so far as to say: 'When we gain power we will see what can be given to women - as long as it doesn't inconvenience men.'

So let us count only on ourselves in the struggle to gain our freedom. Let us not abandon our demands. We have been the victims of bad faith for too many centuries to forget ourselves now."

Hubertine Auclair: Workers' Congress, Marseilles.
October 15th 1879..

She goes off. Gillian breezes on. Christine is on the floor picking up the rubber gloves and tidying them into neat pairs.

Gillian:

Well, there we are..sigh..but ..sigh..I don't know what else I can tell you..I don't know what you'll be able to make of it..can you see any solution? Well, I suppose part time work could be some kind of solution.

But, I mean a job..well not necessarily a job.. Because..well, here I am, talking like one of those middle class..oh it doesn't matter..not necessarily a job, because in a job one immediately becomes

part of an economic context...It could be some kind of voluntary work..maybe I could get involved in some movement or other..it could be..well not necessarily a job that's financially rewarding.. In the long run, I think that maybe a part time job is the best solution.

(She gets out a bank note and gives it to Christine

That was my solution all last year, thanks to this woman who came to help me, and so enabled me to go out to work.

During that period I was very happy..truly..at last..I still am..Oh I have to admit there are times when I feel a bit uneasy..I'm speaking purely personally now, I really wouldn't want to speak for other women.

Gillian and Christine go off.

The two grandmothers come on carrying a portable record player which they put on the kitchen table. They put on a record. Edith Piaf singing 'Non, rien de rien. Non, je ne regrette rien'....All the brides come on and begin to pick up and sort out the gloves. They put them into neat piles of pairs. The record goes on until the phrase 'Je repars a zero'. The record sticks:

Zero.Zero.Zero Zero.Zero.....

The brides repeat the movement they were making when the record stuck, in time....

A little girl comes on. She looks round. She goes to the record player and takes the record off. The brides are frozen in the moment the 'Zero's stop.

The little girl looks round the stage. She wanders about a bit, looking at these strange creatures. She goes to the cooking pot and opens the lid. She takes out slips of paper on which snippets from the interview are written. She reads them out loud. For example:

Nicole: Yes Mum...when they asked me they said, well at least it's only pin money for you...

Martine: In the long run, I think that maybe a part-time job is.. the best solution..

Nicole: Yes Mum...there aren't any jobs...

Martine: That was my solution all last year, thanks to this woman who came to help me, and so enabled me to go out to work. During that period I was very happy..truly..at last..I s still am...I have to admit that there are times when I fell a bit uneasy..I'm speaking personally now, I wouldn't really want to speak for other women.....

Record Player Plays

Edith Piaf: "Non, rien de rien,
Non, je ne regrette rien...."

18

Little Girl: "I suppose I do what any housewife does, I cook for my husband.."
"Everytime I pick up a book I say to myself, there's something else I ought to be doing. I've got this to do. I've got that to do....
I have to be fairly available, whatever time he comes home...
I don't think I do very much, if you see what I mean..I hope that I do do a lot in that I bring up my children and that's my long-term profit...
I have the feeling that by staying here I'm going round and round in circles..in all senses of the word..I literally wander round and round this flat, and then I go round and round in my head, going over my problems...
So then I say to myself, is it my temperament?
The best way of resolving all this would be..would be.. That's the word...guilty...
I don't know what else I can tell you....."

Sound Q.

Re-show music

) " " stop

) Albinoni → (15½)

④ Wedding bells → (19)

LET TAPES RUN.

⑤ Jan - (19)

⑥ Cock crow (10)

⑦ Ne rein - (10)

Box A

Bloody baby
Black veils
Blue garter + fl
Blue knitting
Blue apron
Confetti
Corks
Chopping board
Cups x 2
Decanter
Glasses x 2
Gem (+ ammo)
Griller pans x 3
Halo
J. cloths
Knife
Lollipop
Lighter
Left hand glove
Letters
Pam
~~Pam~~ Potato knife
Rue
Spries

Sparklers.

Sauces x 2
Towel
Veils x 3

Box B

Boxing glove

Beithung silk

Blue bow

Book

Bubbles

Candle o' hickles

DA

Filly aprons x 2

gong + hammer

Green aprons x 4

J. Cloths

Knife (nubles)

Lollipop

Pink knitting

Red apron

Red bow

Record

Scissors rubber glove R.

Spao combata -

Spaule

Talc

Towel (Blue)

Wig brush

Lizma Jackson

①

A Voice on tape:

I haven't got a timetable. Because in the first place I haven't got a natural sense of organisation. Then my husband hasn't either. I tried to conform for a while. I suppose I do what any housewife does: I cook. I haven't got much to tell you. At the moment my life is terribly ordinary. There isn't much () ...although...I don't really like to say this but...well actually I think bringing up children is something rather fine...Let's just say it's not much in terms of economics...I'd say that in economic terms...well in terms of profit....

Big box of tapes

INTRO OF WIFE & MOTHER

Karen:
Cathy

Interview with a woman of today who would like to remain anonymous.

Three kilometres of taped words.....

I haven't got a timetable. Because in the first place I haven't got a natural sense of organisation. Then my husband hasn't either. I tried to conform for a while.. I suppose I do what any housewife does: I cook. What do I do? Well, first of all I look after my two children.. that's quite a plateful to start off with. Two and a half and six months. She laughs...What do I do? Well, that's really an awkward question. I do a bit of housework. The washing. Well, when I say washing that's really just a figure of speech because I've got a washing machine. So that leaves the ironing which is really the only work I do. But..but I think that as far as..well..I think that women nowadays really have very little to do in the way of housework..really....I mean I mean .. take me ..well I have help. A woman who comes in..well actually she first came last year so that I could go and give some English classes at the Institute. That's where I was working. Well that's when we got this cleaning woman. At first I was hoping to get more work at the Institute...but then..well it all fell apart a bit...so as it turns out I don't go very often. But..well speaking purely personally, I would like to have some sort of occupation, whatever it was. I'd like to go back to the Institute: for my own sake, and therefore for the

children's. As far as..I get th. feeling that by staying here..I'm going round and round in circlces inthis flat.. that's for sure..round and round my self and my problems...

I'm not at all organised. Nobody I know is organised. Particularly my husband. His hours change all the time. He's got a lot of commitments, meetings at all hours of the day and night. That means that...that I have to be fairly available when he comes in, whatever time it is. He told me he'd be coming in this evening some time between eight o'clock and half past ten...you see..that's useful....

Martine: I haven't got much to tell you
Nicole: At the moment my life is terribly ordinary. There's not much
Francoise: I haven't got much to tell you..at the moment my life's terribly ordinary..nothing much..I don't really like saying this but...
Karen: But I really did want to bring up children..
Martine: Absolutely..
Francoise: Bringin up children is something very fine..
Nicole: Very fine.
Martine: Absolutely. Bringing up children is something very fine..
let's just say..that it's not much...in economic terms...
Francoise: I would say that in terms of economics.
Nicole: In terms of profit

②

PROLOGUE FOR THE RETURN OF THE PRINCE.

Enter grandmothers

Jean-Louis: Have you done the corners?
Thierry: That's what I'm doing now
Jean*Louis: What about the other corners?
Thierry: Don't go mad...
Jean-Louis: I'm warning you. All this has to be finished before he comes home.
Thierry: You're so sloppy. Didn't anyone ever teach you how to clean a room properly?
J-L: We haven't done the copper. We haven't done the oven..we haven't done the insides of the cupboards ...we haven't done the windows..oh yes..I've got a memory like a sieve.. I'll cross off the windows. I did them yesterday.
Thierry: You call that doing the windows? When I do the windows I

do them with vinegar, I do...and I don't leave smudges behind me.

J-L: It rained in the night.

Thierry: Well you'll have to do them again.

J-L: But we'll never get everything done this evening..

Thierry: Well, tomorrow then..

J-L: Tomorrow's ironing day. Today is washday and mending day.

Thierry: Hold your horses. We're not on piece work. Am I supposed to go back over everything after you?

J-L: That's right, that's right..take your time. And when he gets back the whole house'll be upside down. Terrific!

Thierry: That's hardly our fault. What could he say?

J-L: Nothing. He never does say anything. He only unbuttoned his lips this lunchtime so he could get the soup down his throat. And when I think: those vegetables were handpicked, one by one...I'd peeled them with my own dainty fingers..I'd put them through the seive when they were just nicely cooked.. and I'd added a bit of fennel and simmered it..and he didn't say a dickie bird. *Get saucepan / abandon broom.*

Thierry: And my soup does him so much good..even if he works his fingers to the bone..my soup will put the flesh back on him.

J-L: It's not like what you get out of a tin or the rubbish they give you in a restaurant!

Thierry: He could always try getting a maid..she'd be hard put to it to take over from us..

J-L: No but he'd soon see the difference..she'd bleed him white..

Thierry: The money we save him..well, that's normal..it's only natural.. *at the "coted"*

J-L: Now be careful...not too much green pepper in the soup this evening. None of your fancy fol-de-rols ...

Thierry: Oh no.. verylight, light as a feather so he can get a good night's sleep...so he can regain his strength...

J-L: After his hard day's work, the poor old soul. Well after all that's what we're here for!

"Some day my prince will come..."

Thierry & J-L: "Some day my prince will come
some day..etc etc

*nb. I'm looking for
the words. (trns

Thierry: My husband is very very sweet..

J-L: He comes home at all hours of the day and night...

Thierry: That's useful...

J-L: But when he does come home I have to be - well it's natural - available...

Thierry: Well otherwise that'd be the end of family life as we know it.

J-L: That'd be the end of everything...Oh! You! Dozy Dora!

Thierry: A disaster! Oh my god! Oh my God!

J-L: Anyone would think you ruined everything just for the fun of it...It's not as if you're a beginner..

Thierry: What's he going to say?

J-L: And what would have happened if you'd set the house on fire? We could be sitting in the gutter with nowhere to go, condemned to roam the streets without hearth or home..like savages..You keep an eye on yourself..you shouldn't get careless over the little things. Mankind could easily plunge back into barbarism!

In the dark night of history man was only an animal like any other..but one day he stole fire from heaven so that he could cook his meagre fare..and the name of that monkey was: Prometheus..the discovery of cooking was the signal for the beginning of the great human adventure..man distinguishes himself from beasts by his wife's cooking.

③

EGG.

Karen: My kingdom!

Martine: My little kitchen!

Karen: It's a bit funny the first time...Doing the cooking after the honeymoon...

Martine: It's a good job he's not here to see this!

Karen: But he'll be hungry the poor thing. It's only natural for me to...

Martine: What about you? Are you hungry?

Karen: I suppose we'll just have to do what any housewife would do on the first day.

Martine: That's normal..it's only natural..

Karen: The very first meal can have repercussions for the rest of your life! My God! What am I going to give him to eat this evening?

Martine: Didn't you ever learn to cook?

Karen: What about you?

Martine: How could I? We weren't married.

Karen: What on earth am I going to make for his dinner? Have you

got any ideas?

Martine: Something delicious..

Karen: Cheap...

Martine: Easy to make..

Karen: Very easy to make..what on earth am I going to get for his dinner?

Oh! Oh! What a wonderful idea.

Produce egg.

Martine: Nothing up my sleeve...

Karen: Go on, crack it and do a fried egg.

Martine: No. You do it.

Karen: No. You.

Martine: Why doesn't he do it?

Karen: He can't, he's been working poor thing. Look, it's normal it's only natural for us to...

Martine: It's only natural...

(A)

1ST LESSON. (PLAISIR d'AMOUR)

Thierry: What's going on my little angel? You love your husband don't you? My little angel? Well then what's the matter? Nothing! What could be the matter? You've been given the whole world on a plate! What's the matter? My little angel..has the cat got your tongue?

Both Granmas on stage.

Karen: But it's all dirty Grandma!

Thierry: Well of course it is! But with a little bit of love, you a home sparkles! Come along then, let's get our skates on.. A miracle! That's right..

Clean up the egg.

" Plaisir d'amour ne dure qu'un moment
Chagrin d'amour dure toute la vie..
Plaisir d'amour ne dure qu'un moment
Chagrin d'amour dure toute la vie.."

Karen: Fried egg, that was Wednesday, Thursday, Sunday..lentil soup, stewed apples, liver suasage, peel, rip, stuff, boil. it could all turn into a little game...Friday three hundred and fifty kilos of ships...Sunday..however in love a young husband might be, the way to his heart is still through his stomach..cooking time, fifteen minutes..Friday, Sunday, noodles with ham, jugged here..Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday...

RUNAWAY (4A) (8)

Nicole: I'd just come back from the market. My husband and my children didn't notice anything. My knife in the cold water...they didn't see me. The same old vegetables the same old peelings...they simply didn't see me..There's no-one there...come and get it..I'm waiting for them..Here

they come: we eat. A preoccupied peck..and this is the way out! I don't even know if it was any good. I'm just another object around the house.I'd like to have lived near a railway station! There's always a station near a kitchen...

So I left.

A pencilled note: 'Manage on your own lads!'

I took the housekeeping money... towards the wide street and the shop windows..at last I was a passer-by.And no-one saw me..at long last I was really ..and in the crowd..at last I was really useless..and I inhaled my town, my station, my canals, my streets..at last I was really at home.....

They say that I'm a runaway...

5

BACK TO THE FOLD

Martine: Oh mum!
Francoise: Hey Mum!
Martine: Eh, mum!
Francoise: Oh come on mum...

} as kids

Martine: Did you come back?
Francoise: Yes. Did you come back?
Martine: After three days.
Francoise: I ran out of money.
Martine: The return of the prodigal mother!
Francoise: Tears and foregiveness...
Martine: A slap up dinner! And not a word about my little escapade!
Francoise: They even did the washing up!
Martine: For how long?
Francoise: A fortnight!
Martine: A fortnight!
Francoise: I haven't unpacked my case yet...

Martine: I think..I think you have to ..well to tell you the truth I think that there's no rule, there's no general agreement. I mean every woman visualises her own home as an expression of..as an expression of her own home..as an expression of her husband's salary..as an expression of her children..as an expression of herself. She laughs. That's really an awkward question, asking me what I do. I sometimes go to the Institute to give English lessons...

not nearly often enough for me..I'd like to go more, but you have to understand it's not very easy when you have children..and then..and then...I try to read.I say 'I try' because...I really love books..I even went to some lectures on the Uses of Literacy..on.. and besides I'm aware, well particularly now that I've got two children...that I don't read any more because..every time I pick up a book I say to myself there's something else I ought to be doing...I ought to be doing the washing ..I've got this to do..I've got that to do..this and that..every time I pick up a book I say to myself.../

SHAKESPEARE'S SISTER (1)

Francoise: Sits down

Every time I pick up a book, I say to myself there's something else I ought to be doing..I ought to be doing the washing...

Karen:

The washing? Well that's a figure of speech really because I've got a washing machine..so..

Francoise:

Virginia Woolf: A Room of One's Own: 'Let me imagine...'

They have the book.

Karen: also sits down

Let me imagine, since facts are so hard to come by, what would have happened had Shakespeare had a wonderfully gifted sister, called Judith, let us say. He was, it is well known, a wild boy, who had, rather sooner than he should have done, to marry a woman in the neighbourhood, who bore him a child rather quicker than was right. That escapade sent him to seek his fortune in London. He had, it seemed, a taste for the theatre; he began by holding horses at the stage door.*Very soon he got work in the theatre, became a successful actor, and lived at the hub of the universe, meeting everybody, knowing everybody, practising his art on the boards, exercising his wit in the streets, and even getting access to the palace of the queen. Meanwhile his extraordinarily gifted sister remained....

*David on Whipping Gilly.

J-L:

You've got this to do.. you've got that to do..without this there's no that..and that..and this.. and that.. you've got this to do..and that to do.. and this ... and that...

Francoise:

Meanwhile his extraordinarily gifted sister remained at home. She was as adventurous, as imaginative, as eager to see the world as he was. But she was not sent to school. She picked up a book now and then, one of her brother's perhaps, and read a few pages. But then her parents came

in and told her to mend the stockings or mend the stew and not moon about with books and papers. They would have spoken sharply but kindly for they were substantial people who knew the conditions of life for a woman and loved their daughter - indeed, more likely than not she was the apple of her father's eye. Perhaps she scribbled some pages up in the apple loft on the sly, but was careful to hide them or set fire to them. Soon, however, before she was out of her teens, she was to be betrothed to the son of a neighbouring wool-stapler. She tried out that marriage was hateful to her and for that she was severely beaten by her father. Then he ceased to scold her. He would give her a chain of beads or a fine petticoat, he said; and there were tears in his eyes. How could she disobey him? How could she break her father's heart? She made up a small parcel of her belongings, let herself down by a rope one summer's night and took the road to London.

She was not seventeen. She had the quickest fancy, a gift like her brother's for the tune of words. Like him she had a taste for the theatre. She stood at the stage door. She wanted to act she said. Men laughed in her face. The manager guffawed. He bellowed something about poodles dancing and women acting. He hinted - you can imagine what. She could get no training in her craft. Yet her genius was for fiction. At last, Nick Greene the actor manager took pity on her; she found herself with child by that gentleman and killed herself one winter's night and lies buried at some cross-roads where the omnibuses now stop outside the Elephant and Castle.


J-L:

"Brylcreme, a little dab'll do ya
Brylcreme ya look so debonaire.

*Livid Green
Fanny Liquid*

Brylcreme, the girls'll all persue ya

They love to run theri fingers through your hair."

Karen:

To be or not to be...?

Thierry:

He's still not home!

J-L:

I'm absolutely livid!

Thierry:

He's got a little too used to treating us as if we didn't exist.

REVOLT IN THE KITCHEN

J-L: You see, that's what you get for being available all the time. For being all sweetness and light.

Thierry: Next time he can have soup out of a pocket!

J-L: Listen, I think we should just leave this lot on the table as they are. Raw! Let him get on with it! Raw!

Thierry: Raw! And if he's so damned fussy, let him come and peel them himself!

J-L: Oh no, no no...I'm not having him in my kitchen.

Thierry: Oh, God, yes..I'd have to go round after him, doing it all again...chips in my best china! No thanks!

J-L: His Lordship'd turn the simplest sauce into World War Three!

Thierry: That one couldn't boil water without burning it. The saucepans'd be frazzled!

J-L: We can't let him mess everything up!

Thierry: Not the way prices are these days.

J-L: I'm telling you, he's going to eat it all up, and it'll be to his own advantage not to complain...

Thierry: Listen, you won't forget the bay leaf will you.. like you did last Sunday...

J-L: And you watch out with the butter.. just the tiniest knob because of the arteries....

Both: "In our mountain greenery
 Where God paints the scenery
 Just two crazy people together.
 Whilst you love your lover, let
 blue skies be your coverlet,
 When it rains we'll laugh at the weather..."

*pick up
 vegetables &
 put in them into
 apron.*

Nicole: ~~80000~~ CHILDREN.
 This is the question that really foxes me: what do I do? Well, every day is different. Because...she laughs..because actually I don't think I do very much, if you see what I mean...I mean...from the point of view of immediate profit I don't think I do very much. Well, actually I hope that I do do a lot in that I...bring up my children. and that's my long-term profit. I hope that the time I spend with them, playing with them, listening to them, talking to them, telling them stories... I hope that's all worth something. But you can't work that out in black and white. There's no..well there's no...there's no immediate profit..

It's not an occupation . I haven't got a real occupation if you see what I mean..I'd rather you ask d me questi ns.. besides th t's really my problem at the moment..I very much wanted to bring up children, which means you have to devote the greatest possible amount of time to them.. Because I beleive...

9;
Francois :

~~FRANCOIS~~ ~~NOT HERE~~

That a little sweetie pie! Look at the little botty!
Look at the little handies!

"Hush a bye baby
On the tree top
When the wind blows
The cradle will rock..."

Martine: Gimme my talcum powder!

Karen: Gimme my nappies!

Francoise: "Hush a bye baby
On the tree top
When the wind blows..."

Martine: Gimme my drops!

Karen: Gimme my gripe water!

Thierry & J-L:

"Hush a bye baby on the tree top...."

Francoise & Nicole:

I believe that children need their mothers. I really do beleive that..well I think...ahem..I believe that children need theri mothers...

Thierry & J-L:

But of course, my precious, Mumy's here. I'm still here...

9A TO BOY. OR NOT TO BOY.

Martine:

Listen! I always wanted to be a boy.. A boy! I wanted it so badly I dreamed I had a boy...A boy who was strong, brave, desperately attractive, intelligent, a pilot or a boxer, a trapper an outlaw - setting out on a whole series of adventures that were utterly forbidden to me because I was a girl.

This dream of being a boy vanished when I felt something moving inside me, as if from the depths of sleep - something that urgently desired to be given life...

10

MOTHERS DAY.

Thierry:

Does it hurt? I thought I heard someone screaming..I'm a bit deaf..everything alright? They say it 's a pleasure. It's hard work..hard work...Joy..tears..well that's normal..How's it going? They say it's wonderful..they say..I forget what they say..Girl, boy: they're only words. What does it all mean? Oh it doesn't matter..It's pushing..they say that we give the light of day to..it's a pleasure which brings pain..How should I know...they say it doesn't go on for ever...

Boy or girl, children leave home all too soon..grow up too quickly and leave home too soon...

J-L:

How well I remember it! It's engraved here. My little boy - he gave me such a lot of trouble. Oh, it wasn't his fault: he was such a sickly little thing! So I used to give him spinach - for the iron you know..well my little boy never caused me the slightest upset ...what about Mother Day..he always had just the right little present: a bottle of scent, a scarf, and every year some sweet little message...

All the bad times made up for in an instant! He never forgot a single Mother's Day. Not one! He remembered every single one. It's all engraved here in a mother's heart.....

Mum..mum...were's my mum? mum...mum...where's my mum?

It's my Mum!

Mummy! Today is Mother's Day and I would like to recite for you a little something written by our schoolmaster:

All things must fade and pass away
In this vale of tears;
Everything withers and slowly dies
With the passing years.

But there's one thing I'm certain of,
One joy that never misses;
The glory in a mother's heart
When her loving infant gives her kisses!

Mummy! Today is Mother's Day, and I would like to recite

*Ends
bring on
components of
a mother*

for you a little sonet ing by Henry Bordeaux:

"In the vaporific kitchen, the full and sweet breast's milk, like unto the distaff in the meadow of duty, winding slowly through the daily tasks, the massy cow with gentle eyes, submits herself to the ecstasies of the shining hearth, thus flows the tranquil sould of days as oleaginous as the warm and creamy milk."

Mummy! Today is Mother's Day, and I would like to recite for you a little sonet ing by Marshal Petain:

"Supreme destiny of the bearded lady! Holy duty, dedicatin oh chain of undying love, eternal history..flesh of your flesh..goodnes, a piece of black pudding...repository, sacred vase, holy urn, sainted womb!..the belly is a barracks..oh beat out you drums, the burden of the mother land, pregnant with your dcepest hopes, oh sky sparkling with epaulettes and medals...fire!!! "

(German Italian gobbledegook)

Thieery: There, there dear..It's all over now..It's just history.

J-L: My God. Everything in ruins..Ye're going to have to roll our sleeves up..we'll have to make twelve million bonny babies to get this country back on its feet again...twelve million bonny babies....

II

MOTHERS TO BE.

Nicole: Mummy..

Francoise: Mummy...

Nicole: Where's she gone?

Martine: Mummy?

Francoise: Where's she got to now?

Martine: Are you hiding Mummy?

Nicole: Mummy I wanted to tell you that you're wrong to...

Francoise: Mummy, don't you think this is going a bit too far?

Nicole: Mummy, you musn't take too much notice..

Martine: Oh come on Mummy...

Francoise: Look what we get up to when you're not around...

Thierry: Ah! Here they are, my bonny little bulge babies! My mothers-to-be!

And aren't you like your mummies, hmm? I taught her how to

be self-effacing and she's fulfilled her role to the letter! And now it's your turn....

*Maintain
line up.*

Bottles, nappies, potions, prams, naughty naughty smack smack, fairy stories, poos and hurties, cuddles, sew on buttons, kiss kiss..

Your mummy would hang herself for your sake! And now it's your turn!

Love and marriage

Love and marriage

Go together like a horse and carriage

Dad was told by mother

You can't have one without the other....

You'll have the most beautiful babies in the world - even if we won't be there to see them....

Martine, Francoise & Nicole:

To be or not to be....

FATHER NATURE.

12
Francoise:

Look out!

Nicole:

Eggs...egs..eggs..

Martine:

Is he sitting?

Francoise:

He's sitting.

Martine:

He 's pulling our leg. Look it's not joking matter.

Nicole:

Just looking at it makes me feel sick.

Francoise:

Maybe he's a bit sozzled.

Nicole:

Where's the mother? come on..chuck chuck..

Martine:

Yes. Where's got to be a hen somewhere. A hen...

Nicole:

You haven't seen a hen anywhere about have you? A real hen. These poor orphans' mother?

All;

Chuck, chuck..here chicky..chuck chuck..

Francoise:

Maybe the mother's found something better to do.

Nicole:

Like what might I ask? A mother is born to sit..

Martine:

Chick, chuck, here chicky...

Francoise:

Maybe things are changing

Martine:

Come off it! It's impossible.

Francoise:

Why?

Nicole:

Because.

Martine:

That's the way things are.

Nicole: It's normal. It's a question of nature.

Francoise: Nature? But some hens abandon their brood.

Nicole: Well those hens aren't hens. They're just sluts. They're aberrations of nature.

Martine: And who better to do the sitting than a hen do you imagine? Once she's layed the egg, her backside's there, right over it, so that's where she stays. And everyone's happy.

Francoise: Well it seems to me that this backside..go on, have a good look at it, I'm not dreaming it..It seems to me that this backside is sitting after its own fashion.

Nicole: Sitting! But sitting comes from here. That thing doesn't feel anything here. He's got no natural feelings. No deep natural feelings, do you understand me. He hasn't got an instinct that swells up from his very depths.

Francoise: But this hen this cock..Oh Lord, this beast here, sitting on these eggs; it's warming them with its feathers. It's got as much warmth as any other beast. That's true isn't it?

Martine: It's all a charade. Come on, get out of there you imposter. Cocks don't know when they're well off. They let their seed go, a little squirt and then they're off again.

Nicole: O.K. Come on then, squirt, clear off out of it. Don't you hear that you're no use for anything?

Martine: You can see he hasn't the foggiest what he's supposed to do.

Nicole: He couldn't possibly know.

Martine: Do you you know how to move your wings to one side?

Nicole: Do you know how to place the eggs under your stomach?

Martine: Do you know how to settle down without crushing them?

Nicole: Do you know how to cluck without moving?

Martine: You can see perfectly well that it's not a hen.

Francoise: The endproduct is the same.

Mart & Nic: NO!

Francoise: Anyway it won't be any worse.

Mart & Nic: Yes it will

Martine: Nothing replaces the love of a mother hen.

Francoise: Why?

Martine: Because.

Nicole: That 's the way things are.

Martine: It's a question of nature.

Francoise: Why? Well, what have you got to say for yourself? He says you've seen nothing yet, it's the duck's turn next.

Martine: Oh that's lovely! Get rid of mothers...and fathers...anyone can look after the kids...

Nicole: You'll end up with a generation of delinquents.

Martine: A fine nest of degenerates.

Francoise: Shh! He's trying to concentrate.

Nicole: Don't you think there's something a bit funny about that cock of yours? Bit of a limp crest wouldn't you say?

Martine: You do come across these things in nature.

Francoise: What if nature was nothing but a set of bad habits? If the hen had just got into the bad habit of sitting all on her own?

Nicole: But nature's got nothing to do with habits. You can't change nature. It's as unchangeable as the sun going round the earth. Like that basket. Once it's put there it stays there.

And even if it moves a little bit, it still doesn't prove anything...

Because there are millions and millions of cocks who won't change their habits one jot.

And what about the poor hen in this story? What's left for her? What does she get out of it?

Francoise: The hen? Maybe she gets the sun up...

(13) FRANKENSTEIN'S MONSTER

Karen: Is it also something to do with the life we lead at home? Maybe that's possible...maybe that's why there's a growing rift between us that wasn't there when we ^{were} first married. My husband had many fewer commitments, and as for me, well I was still working so...when we were first married this.. problem didn't exist at all... not at all..it just happens. well it's more and more..well it's certainly true that there's a wider and wider gulf growing between us.. so then sometimes I say to myself..well it's up to me to make the first move..it's up to me to try and do something, to try and share his interests but...well it's very difficult because my husband brings a lot of work home with him at night..so he doesn't want to..to go over it all again.. and I can't..it isn't possible because..sigh..

It was me who pushed my husband!..to take on these responsibilities, these commitments. He does union work, he runs magazines, he's busy with masses of things..I pushed him into them at the beginning because I thought

Thierry: Now, at the self same moment e e felt the prick, the horse fell asleep in their stables..the flies on the wall..the fire itself...

J-L: Some day my prince will come...

A Voice: (Francoise) Some day my prince will come.. Soome day my prince will come..

Francoise is inside a judge.

Nicole: Well of course your prince will come! Of course he will!
Martine: Do you really think so? I can't see anyone coming...
Nicole: It's too soon to get desperate!
Martine: Doesn't time pass quickly..she's too grown up for her destiny.
Nicole: Oh she'll manage somehow. She's a good girl..responsible bright as a button..
Martine: But time's going by!
Nicole: Be patient. and while you're waitingyou can help your Mummy to wash up...and make the beds..
Martine: You can look after your little brother
Nicole: You see, she's dedicated already.
Martine: And she never plays with the rough boys in the playground!
Nicole: She's a little angel..she'll manage yet...
Martine: Listen you wouldn't say there'd been a mistake and she was a bit psst it, would you?
Nicole: Her mother would have told us.
Martine: What about school?
Nicole: That's fine.
Martine: She's really got everything going for her. She's a little angel..She's honest, good tempered, a hard worker..she's already learned how to draw up a housekeeping budget. So?
Nicole: So, patience. It can take twenty or twenty five years to find a husband - thirty in the worst cases. All you need is an opportunity..the right opportunity..
Martine: A good husband to protect thi s sweet child..
Nicole: She's a real little wifey...

15

15

16

GUILT

Francoise: Then we were first married, my husband had many fewer commitments, and as for me, well I was still working, so.. when we were first married this problem didn't exist at all. Not at all...when we were first married...'Here Comes the Bride'...I had no qualms about reading, even

if my child was crying, even if I hadn't done the cooking.
I had no qualms because I said to myself I've got to do
it..In those days I had much less of a sense of...

Karen: That's the word....
Guilt.

I've got to get out. It's the only way to get these family
problems into perspective..I've got to get out other-
wise...

J-L: 16A. ~~UNCONSCIOUSLY THE WILL~~ TEMPERAMENT.
Spring starts to spring
The cuckoos start to sing
And Mother Nature wears her new est gown.
Troubles there are
So much rarer
Out of town.
Out there the sun is a big yellow duster
Polishing the blue blue sky
With white fluffy clouds in a cluster
Hanging on the breeze to dry....

Speaking for myself, I understand..well to tell you the
honest truth there are times when I'm sick to death
of being here...so then I say to myself: is it my
temperament? In the old days I used to think of myself
as a bit of a dreamer, a home-body..I used to tell
myself th t a stay-at-home life would suit me nicely...
Then I realise that it's not...so I ask myself questions:
Is it my temperament? No, it's not my temperament.
Yet I used to think of myself...
'Spring starts to spring..'
I used to think I was..more inclined towards an
introspective...

Thierry: are you sure?

J-L: I don't know any more.

Thierry: Now then..Let's be brave. Let's face the fu ure with
courage...

J-L: Tell me something: What is my future?

Thierry: Very little inner life...

J-L: Is that all? Is that my temperament?

Thierry: It's blurred..

J-L: My tempoerament is blurred?

introspective

Thierry: So's mine.
 J-L: Yours! Are you telling me you've got the same temperament as me?
 Thierry: Me, me, me, me...it's always you..what about me then, don't I count?

'bB

UNCOVERING THE PAST

Empty handed...empty handed...how many tires have we ended up empty handed...the things those hands have done..snatched away..."Ah, ca ira, ca ira, ca ira.." snatched away...there was no more bread...and the streets were thronged with empty handed women..."Ah, ca ira, ca ira, ca ira..."

Ah, now I remember, as if it was yesterday...we snatched that bread and we hung onto it...

"Ah, ca ira, ca ira, ca ira..."

King Louis and Marie Antionette and their snotty-nosed brat..we snatched them from Versailles..and we didn't let go till we'd got them to Paris, and there were thousands of hands stretched out to cheer us on, and there we were shaking our pikes...

"Ah, ca ira, ca ira, ca ira..."

J-L: That's all over now....

Thierry: And afterwards...'If I was the only girl in the world'.. And then I had to go home...my husband wanted to take part in the goings on from the cafe..well that's normal.. it's only natural...

'And you were the only boy...'

But then the real women - not women like me - the

"Ah, ca ira, ca ira, ca ira..."...the furies...

J-L: Why can't you forget all that?

Thierry: That's a laugh, calling them 'furies'...we were the scold of gentleness...the furies... and they wouldn't stop shaking their fists..."Ah, ca ira, ca ira, ca ira.." And in their club..in the women's revolutionary club...

J-L: Be careful, you'll hurt yourself!

Thierry: "Nothing else would matter in the world today..." "Ah, ca ira, ca ira, ca ira.." And all these women who had never even opened their mouths, suddenly reeled the other half of the sky for all women to see. and all the distinguished persons spat on them and ended up pelting them off back to their homes...and...and...

"We would go on living in the same old way..."
And they all lived happily ever after..and they had lots
of lovely children...

J-L: Draw a veil over your memories.

16 **C** 1876 DEMANDS
Francoise: "These irate women protested: they formed clubs where at
one and the same time they attended to their own rights
as women, as well as to the common rights of all.
The Convention, the great Convention, closed their clubs
and forbade these women to meet to discuss public affairs;
and at the same time that these autocratic revolutionaries
were enacting the inequality of women, they were making
the furthest ends of the earth reverberate with the
sonorous words: liberty and equality.

"Women cannot be satisfied with vain promises which have
too often been gone back on by those who seek no end, and
who, in moments of candour forget themselves so far as
to say 'When we gain power we will see what can be given
to women - as long as it doesn't inconvenience men'. So
let us count only on ourselves in the struggle to win
our freedom. Let us not abandon our demands. We have been
the victims of bad faith for too many centuries to forget
ourselves now."

Hubertine Auclair: Workers' Congress. Marseilles. October
15th 1879.

17
Martine: NO^o to women.
Well, there we are..sigh..but..sigh..I don't know what
else I can tell you...I don't know what you'll be able to
make of it .. can you see any solution? Well I suppose
part time work could be some kind of solution.

Nicole: Yes Mum.

Martine: But..I mean a job..not necessarily a job..

Nicole: Yes Mum. Aren't any jobs...

Martine: Because..well indeed..here I am talking like one of the
middle classes, but it doesn't matter...not necessarily
a job, because in a job one immediately becomes part of
an economic context...

Nicole: Yes Mum...I spent two years looking for a job...

Martine: It could be some kind of voluntary work..maybe I could
get involved in some movement or other..it could be..
not..necessarily a job that's financially rewarding...

****Translator's note:**

As I've already pointed out with the songs, I feel that much of the play will have to be fixed during rehearsals. It will be up to the company to decide exactly which bits to leave 'French' and which to change in some way to accommodate an English audience. Just so you won't think I've been slacking, here are two possible alternatives for the first two Mother's Day Recitations:

Mother's Day Poem:

O no, you cannot call it back,
The arrow, once it's left the quiver.
And when you've drunk life's cup of tea
It's empty then for ever.

But when a mother's weary cheek
Is kissed by her little boy
Her tired heart, replenished,
Is filled again with joy.

From: Temple of Nature Canto Three by Erasmus Darwin (Really!)

Warm from its cell the tender infant born
Feels the cold chill of Life's aerial morn;
Seeks with spread hands the bosoms velvet orbs
With closing lips the milky fount absorbs;
And, as compress'd the dulcet streams distill,
Drinks warmth and fragrance from the living rill;
Eyes with mute rapture every waving line,
Prints with adoring kiss the Paphian shrine,
And learns ere long, the perfect form confess'd,
IDEAL BEAUTY from its Mother's breast.

Nicole: Yes Mum...when they socked me they said: well at least it's only pin money for you...

Martine: In the long run, I think that maybe a part-time job is.. the best solution..

Nicole: Yes Mum...there aren't any jobs...

Martine: That was my solution all last year, thanks to this woman who came to help me, and so enabled me to go out to work. During that period I was very happy..truly..at last..I s still am...I have to admit that there are times when I fell a bit uneasy..I'm speaking personally now, I wouldn't really want to speak for other women.....

Edith Paif: "Non, rien de rien,
Non, je ne regrette rien...."

18
Little Girl: "I suppose I do what any housewife does, I cook for my husband.."
"Everytime I pick up a book I say to myself, there's something else I ought to be doing. I've got this to do. I've got that to do....
I have to be fairly available, whatever time he comes home...
I don't think I do very much, if you see what I mean..I hope that I do do a lot inthat I bring up my childrenand that's my long-term profit...
I have the feeling that by staying here I'm going round and round in circles..in all senses of the word..I literally wander round and round this flat, and then I go round and round in my head, going over my problems...
So then I say to myself, is it my temperament?
The best way of resolving all this would be..would be..
That's the word...guilty...
I don't know what else I can tell you....."

As any housewife - cooking, bringing up children
housework, washing, ironing

Classes of tape - (the voices just go on & on?).

4 Brides all echoing the tape.

2 Old women. (played by men). Far more
conscientious & positive about their work.
Proud of their soups & clean undies.
Comment that a maid doing same work would cost a fortune.

Saucepan put onto camping stove - dense smoke
Saucepan covered with a doormat

A Bride puts frying pan onto camper - cooking's just
at first after the honeymoon.
Bought aprons or over bride dresses.
Apparently couldn't learn to cook before as they were endive

A bride produces egg as if by magic - for the dinner
End up smashing egg.

Old women step in - hold on to remaining bride -
encourage her to love new role in life. She's
wrapping up egg with veil.

Using saucepan as pendulum recites housewife's
creed in menus for the week. (way to man's heart
etc).

Nicola enters with suitcase. She's off - family
Ashtrays of her emochais or tashis
Suitcase full of vegetables ...

Frances & Maureen arrive holding up dresses to reveal
short trousers - little children - ...

Consultation of 2 brides - Frances & Maureen who'd
both tried to leave

Maureen back to tape -
men

Francis reading lefty volume. Martine over bowl of water
Martine keeps washing pages of the book & finally
washes book

James is reading "A Room of One's Own".
1. reads Fantasy of Shakespeare's sister.

Old woman starts "whipping" Martine with length of string - getting to the business of being a wife - no time to yourself for reading or creative thinking.

Brides retreat, old woman grabs both & ties it up with string - furrows - sprinkles water over it as an exorcism almost.

James grabs knife & book, goes behind camping stove & acts Virginia Woolf's words. At the end of speech cuts open book - Martine impressed -

Old woman strips & hair shampoo ad. Martine returns to tearing pages, washing them & hanging them on the line.

Blows out all camper stoves. darkness.

Old women wish to vegetables. muttering impotently about ungrateful husbands. Pick up all veg. and potter off supper.

Nicola arrives taking up tape subject. Finds rattle and seems mesmerized by it - chasing it round the stage i.e. rattle/baby calls the name. Her children her raison d'être.

Margreen & Martine become babies
Frances & Nicola the adoring mothers

Margreen has always dreamed of being a big burly masculine born to rule man. She waves a flap/table cloth. Hangs table cloth over line - then a baby starts to be born behind it -

Tenny as a father - clueless as to what girl birth means.

But it's all over so fast - & the children are grown and gone - and the Tenny's have nothing left - see emotion of 2 old women

One of old women becomes her own ^{son} husband
with various paraphernalia the "boy" turns one
of the brides into acceptable image of his
"mother" - other brides hold saucepans
which reflect lights onto main action
Amazing fantastic speeches follow &
heralds images of motherhood - the theme
- at the end of which the "mother" ends up
with face in saucepan of milk.

Old woman / little boy becomes mourning
they have another table with ^{widow} - as they go

The other brides now search for their Pummie
Old woman Terry re-enters extending wishes
of young brides as potential mothers.

A basket with a cock sitting on eggs is
pushed into view. All rather appalled that the
"mother" hen is not sitting on eggs. Don't
approve of men being involved with raising of the
basket goes.
All go.

Margaret appears with pie. Back to original tape.
She is in white - Boxing glove. - She pushed
hubby on to where he is today (Behind every man is
a woman)

curtains open to reveal a fridge
more dialogue. Then beating air from top of
fridge. Collapses exhausted.
opens fridge - lots of mail for Mr, Mr, Mr etc. One
for her - a publicity brochure - too much brochures
out.