

**THE  
PROMENADE**

**Maria Irene Fornes**

Playbill for Premiere Production

**THE PROMENADE**

by Maria Irene Fornes

Music by Al Carmines

Presented at Judson Poets' Theatre  
(Judson Memorial Church, New York City)

Directed by Lawrence Kornfeld

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CAST IN ORDER OF APPEARANCE

105.....David Vaughn  
106 .....George Bartenieff  
JAILER .....Michael Elias  
MISS C.....Gretal Cummings  
MISS F.....Crystal Field  
MISS B.....Joan Fairlee  
MR. T.....John Toland  
MR. J.....Christopher Jones  
MR. R.....Christopher Ross  
SERVANT.....Sheila Roy  
MISS CAKE.....Florence Tarlow  
WAITER .....Howard Roy

CHINAMAN .....Frank Emerson  
WARDEN .....William Pardue  
MOTHER .....Jerri Banks  
PIANIST.....Al Carmines

Sets: Malcolm Spooner

Costumes: Ellen Levene, Maria Irene Fornes

Lighting: Kathy Lewis

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## MARIA IRENE FORNES

Maria Irene Fornes was born in Cuba in 1930, and came to the United States in 1945. She began writing plays in 1961.

She is also a painter, and before becoming a playwright she spent several years in Europe concentrating on painting.

In addition to her other creative talents, Miss Fornes frequently designs and makes the costumes for Judson Poets' Theatre offerings.

She is a member of the writers' unit of the Actors Studio, and of The Open Theatre.

## SCENE I

*(The Cell. 105 and 106 dig and sing.)*

105 and 106

Dig, dig, dig  
A hole to be free.  
Dig a hole. Dig a hole.  
A hole to be free.

*(The JAILER enters. He is out of breath. He sits and dries his forehead.)*

JAILER. It's been a hard day.

105 and 106.

Dig, dig, dig.

JAILER. Screwing all day.

105 and 106.

A hole to be free.

JAILER. Visiting days are hard working days. Screw, screw, nothing but screw.

105 and 106.

Dig a hole. Dig a hole.  
A hole to be free.

JAILER. 34's wife, 48's daughter, and 108's widow.

105 and 106.

Fly the coop.  
Break the wall.  
See the sun.

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JAILER. Well, better get back to the ladies. Just came up for some air . . . What are you two doing there?

105 and 106.

Dig a hole. Dig a hole.  
A hole to be free.

JAILER. Hm. You look like you're digging. Well, I'm going back to the widow. Better get in all the screwing I can before she finds out her old man's dead . . . So long, boys . . . Hm . . . You look like you're digging.

105 and 106.

Unacquainted with evil we are.  
This shelter protects us from wrong.  
To discover the appearance of sin  
We must go where the dog takes a leak.

JAILER. So long boys . . . By the way, if you want to get visitors just let me know. I can arrange it for you.  
(*Laughs loudly and walks away.*)

105 and 106.

The hole is dug.  
Here we go.

(*105 and 106 disappear through the hole.*)

SCENE II

(*The Banquet. There are ladies and gentlemen in evening clothes around the table. The SERVANT sweeps. 105 and 106 enter. They put on top hats and tails. They sit at the table and eat.*)

MR. R. Speech . . . Speech . . .

MR. S. Let's play croquet . . .

MR. R. Speeches and music . . .

MR. T. Let's call Mr. Lipschitz . . .

MR. S. No speeches . . . No speeches . . .

MR. R. Let's have a song . . .

MISS U. Mr. T, was that you I saw in the corner of Fifth and Tenth?

MR. T. Perhaps.

MISS U. With Mrs. Schumann and her newly clipped poodle?

MR. T. It couldn't have been me. Friday night I was out of town.

*(They all laugh.)*

MISS U. And how did you know it was Friday night I saw you in the corner of Fifth?

MR. T. Oh! Well, I must confess. The lady loves me.

MISS O. She shows good taste.

*(They all laugh.)*

MR. S. Then, introduce us. She'll surely fall for me.

*(They all laugh.)*

Let's have a song.

*(105 and 106 stand, and get ready to sing.)*

MISS I. And who are these?

*(105 and 106 realize they have been indiscreet and conceal themselves.)*

MISS O. They must be friends of Mr. S.

*(They all laugh.)*

MISS I. You hit it on the nail.

MR. S. If I am sometimes in the company of this and that, it's only because I like to study life.

*(They all laugh.)*

MR. R. The song. The song. Let's have a song. *(He points to MISS O.)*

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MISS O. The song can wait. (*She smiles coyly and sings.*)

You were there when I was not.  
I was there when you were not.  
Don't love me, sweetheart  
Or I might stop loving you.  
Unrequited love.  
Unrequited love.

MISS I.

Passionate lips are sweet.  
But, oh, how much sweeter  
Are lips that refuse.  
Don't love me, sweetheart  
Or I might stop loving you.

MISS U.

Inviting lips  
Alluring lips  
Which shape the word no  
No no no no no no.  
Don't love me, sweetheart  
Or I might stop loving you.

MR. R.

You know nothing of life.  
You know nothing of love  
Till you have tasted  
Of unrequited love.  
Don't love me, sweetheart  
Or I might stop loving you.

ALL.

Unrequited love.  
Unrequited love.  
There is no love.  
Like unrequited love.

MISS I. Oh! We sung that well.

MR. S. He who scrubs the pot finds it most shiny.

MR. R. And he who soils it turns up his nose.

MISS I. Touché!

MISS U. What a marvellous mind!

MR. R. Just frank.

SERVANT (*mimicking*). Just frank.

*(They all look at her with surprise. A giant card-board cake is brought in.)*

MR. S. Look! It's time for dessert.

LADIES.

Don't eat it.

Don't eat it.

Wait until midnight.

GENTLEMEN.

Put it on the table.

Put it on the table.

MISS U. Phooey . . . It smells of garlic.

MR. T.

It's not to be eaten.

It's not to be eaten.

*(The top of the cake opens and MISS CAKE steps out. The GENTLEMEN carry her to the table.)*

LADIES.

Don't eat her.

Don't eat her.

Wait until midnight.

GENTLEMEN.

Put her on the table.

Put her on the table.

LADIES.

She's not to be eaten.

She's not to be eaten.

MISS I. What is she for?

MR. R. To look at.

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MR. S. And to touch.

MR. R. Only to touch.

MR. S. And to look at.

MISS I. May the ladies touch, too?

MR. R. No, not the ladies, only the gentlemen.

MISS I (*starting to take off her clothes*). I want to be naked too.

MR. R.

Only one.  
Only one  
Naked lady.

MISS I (*undressing*).

Two . . . Two.  
I want to be naked too.

MR. R.

Only one.  
Only one  
Naked lady.  
All right, two  
Two naked ladies.

MISS I.

Thank you.  
Thank you, sir.

GENTLEMEN.

Only two.  
Only two  
Naked ladies.

MISS U (*undressing*).

Three . . . Three.  
I want to be naked too.

GENTLEMEN.

Only two.  
Only two  
Naked ladies.

All right, three  
Three naked ladies.

MISS U.

Thank you.  
Thank you, sir.

GENTLEMEN.

Only three.  
Only three  
Naked ladies.

MISS O (*undressing*).

Four . . . Four.  
I want to be naked too.

GENTLEMEN.

Only three.  
Only three  
Naked ladies.  
All right, four  
Four naked ladies.

MISS O.

Thank you.  
Thank you, sir.

ALL.

Only four.  
Only four  
Naked ladies.  
Four . . . Four  
Four naked ladies.

LADIES.

Thank you.  
Thank you, sir.

*(The LADIES put their dresses back on.)*

MISS I. Mademoiselle, comment vous appelez-vous?

MISS CAKE. Moi, je m'appelle, La Rose de Shanghai.

MISS U. Est-ce que vous êtes français?

MISS CAKE. Pas aujourd'hui.  
Let the fruit ripen on the tree  
For if not the meat will harden.  
I'm the peach of the west.  
Chicken is he who does not love me.

I come from a country named America.

MR. R. You do?

MISS CAKE. I do.  
Chicken is he who does not love me.  
For there's more to the cake than the icing  
A morsel I'm not, I'm a feast.  
And this not every man knows.  
Remember all the times  
You thought you got a bargain?

MISS O. I do.

MISS CAKE.  
And it cost you more than it was worth?

MISS U. Aha!

MISS CAKE.  
That's what we're here for.  
To learn one thing or another.  
For on art alone one cannot live.  
Chicken is he who does not love me.

Tell me you adore me, and I'll let you go.

ALL.  
We adore you.

MISS CAKE.  
I'm the peach of the west, you know.  
And a bit of a rebel, just a bit.  
And chicken is he, chicken are you all.  
I'm not a morsel, I'm a feast.  
I'm not a morsel, I'm a feast.  
I'm not a morsel, I'm a feast.

*(Through the following scene 105 and 106 empty  
the pockets of the guests. They steal silverware.)*

*and candlesticks. They put the loot in sacks they carry with them.)*

MR. R. A toast . . . A toast . . .

MR. S. To the ladies . . . To the ladies . . .

ALL.

Only four.  
Only four  
Naked ladies.  
Four . . . Four . . .  
Four naked ladies.

LADIES.

Thank you.  
Thank you, sir.

*(The JAILER enters.)*

JAILER. Everybody's under arrest.

MR. S. No we're not. We're having a banquet.

JAILER. I want to be naked too. *(He starts taking off his clothes.)*

MR. T. Not the gentlemen . . . The gentlemen in full dress.

JAILER. I'll keep my underwear on.

MR. S. The gentlemen in full dress. Don't take your clothes off.

*(The JAILER takes off his clothes. He wears long underwear.)*

JAILER. In this country we have the best crime.

MR. S. Yes, yes. We have the best of everything.

*(The banquet GUESTS become drowsy. 105 and 106 sing.)*

105 and 106.

Can you bear this bliss?

No . . .  
Can you bear this bliss?  
Yes . . .

Eating is a blessing.  
Money is a joy.  
Drinking is a pleasure  
And riches a delight.

We've come to one conclusion  
That's readily discerned;  
A lot of satisfaction  
Does away with discontent.

Doesn't it?  
A lot of satisfaction  
Produces happiness.  
And the source of satisfaction  
Is wealth.  
Isn't it?  
All that man possesses  
Displaces discontent.

SERVANT. What? What? What? What? What?

105 and 106.

Diamond and cakes  
Macaroons and furs  
Dispel discontent.  
Chandeliers and wine  
Porcelain and lace  
Efface discontent.

Silverware and hats  
Embroideries and salt  
Flowerpots and yachts  
Cinnamon and bells  
And awnings  
And cushions  
And satins  
And rings  
And castles  
And  
And things

Things  
 Things  
 Things  
 Be content!

SERVANT (*as she sweeps*). Riches made them dumb.  
 Yes, riches made them dumb.

(105 and 106 look at the GUESTS. They look at the  
 SERVANT. She nods.)

105 and 106. It's not worth it, then.

SERVANT. It's worth it.

105 and 106. Are you rich?

(*The SERVANT shakes her head.*)

Are you smart?

(*The SERVANT shrugs her shoulders.*)

You might as well be rich, then.

SERVANT. I'm trying.

105 and 106. How?

(*She shows them the broom. They give her a dia-  
 mond ring and a wallet from their sacks.*)

JAILER (*remembering*).

Dig, dig, dig  
 A hole to be free.

MR. S. What kind of stupid song is that?

JAILER. They dug a hole. That's how they got out.  
 They were singing;

Dig, dig, dig  
 A hole to be free.

And they were digging a hole. I have to tell the warden.

(105 and 106 run toward the door. The JAILER runs  
 also. 105, 106 and the JAILER bump against each  
 other. The JAILER doesn't recognize them.)

JAILER. *Après vous.*

105 and 106. *Après vous.*

JAILER. *Pas du tout.*

105 and 106. *Je vous en prie.*

JAILER. *Mon plaisir.*

105 and 106. *Le nôtre.*

JAILER. *Permettez!*

105 and 106. *Notre plaisir.*

JAILER. *Le mien.*

105 and 106. *À votre service.*

JAILER. *L'âge avant la beauté.*

(MR. T *kicks the JAILER out of the door. 105, 106 and the SERVANT follow.*)

MR. T. *Let's play croquet!*

ALL (*as they exit*).

*Can you bear this bliss?*

*No . . .*

*Can you bear this bliss?*

*Yes . . .*

*Eating is a blessing.*

*Money is a joy.*

*Drinking is a pleasure*

*And riches a delight.*

### SCENE III

(*The Park. The MOTHER enters. She looks for her babies.*)

MOTHER.

*Have you seen my babies?  
I've been looking for them*

For years.  
And I can't find them.

Have you seen them?  
Have you seen them?  
Have you seen them?

*(The MOTHER exits. 105's, 106's and the SERVANT's heads appear from behind the bushes. 105 and 106 bury their sacks. They enjoy the fresh air, and sit on the grass.)*

105. Did you really like that party?

106. Yes . . . I liked it . . .

105. I liked it too . . .

106. You did?

105. Yes . . .

*(There is the sound of traffic.)*

You know?

106. What?

105. To discover what everyone has always known is not important.

106. No, it isn't.

105. However . . .

106. What?

SERVANT. *What?*

105. I've just discovered what life is all about.

106. You have?

*(105 nods.)*

SERVANT. What is it about?

105.

To walk down the street

With a mean look in my face.  
A cigarette in my right hand  
A toothpick in the left.  
To alternate between the cigarette  
And the toothpick  
Ah! That's life.

(105, 106 and the SERVANT repeat the first stanza.)

105 and 106.

Yes, I've learned from life.  
Every day I've learned some more.  
Every blow has been of use.  
Every joy has been a lesson.  
What surprises me  
Is that life  
Has not learned from me.

105 (*to the audience*). Why? . . . Well . . . That would be hard to explain . . . If I could give you a kiss you'd understand. (*Blows a kiss to the audience.*) You still don't understand?

106. Wait. (*Blows a kiss to the audience.*)

105 and 106. No? . . .

Well, then,  
Because I'm placid as a cow  
As lucid as glass  
As frank as a bold head  
As faithful as a dog.

(*They exit.*)

#### SCENE IV

(*The Street. There is the sound of a car and a crash. Then the sound of the car again. A MAN lies wounded on the ground. 105, 106 and the SERVANT enter. 105 and 106 look the WOUNDED MAN over, empty his pockets, take his clothes off, and put the loot in their sacks. They start walking away.*)

WOUNDED MAN. Oh. Oh.

*(105 and 106 walk back and watch the WOUNDED MAN. The DRIVER enters.)*

DRIVER. I came back.

WOUNDED MAN. Oh. Oh.

DRIVER. To the scene of the crime.

WOUNDED MAN. Oh. Oh.

DRIVER. I'm a hit and run driver.

WOUNDED MAN. Oh. Oh.

DRIVER. I'll kill myself if you die.

WOUNDED MAN. Oh. Oh. I'm cold.

*(The JAILER enters.)*

JAILER. Have you seen two prisoners escaped from the penitentiary? One tall and the other just a little taller?

*(105 and 106 lie as if wounded.)*

They have black hair and wear prisoners' uniforms with the numbers 105 and 106 on the front and on the back of their jackets.

*(105 and 106 take off their jackets and put them on the WOUNDED MAN. One number is visible on his chest and the other on his back.)*

WOUNDED MAN.

Thank you. Thank you.

You're so nice. You're so nice.

Thank you. Thank you.

You're so nice. You're so nice.

Thank you.

JAILER *(pointing to the WOUNDED MAN)*. That's one of them! Get up 105. *(Kicks the WOUNDED MAN over. The number 106 is visible on his back.)* There's the other. Get up 106. That's them all right. Get up.

DRIVER. Leave him alone. You're kicking the wounded man.

JAILER. What do you mean? That's 105 and 106.

DRIVER. Does that look like two people to you? That's the wounded man.

*(105 and 106 begin to shiver.)*

WOUNDED MAN. My friends are cold, too. Someone must have stolen their clothes.

DRIVER. I'll take the clothes off my back to give to your friends. If you die I'd kill myself.

*(The DRIVER gives his jacket and vest to 105 and 106. He shivers. The WOUNDED MAN gives one of the prisoners' jackets to the DRIVER.)*

WOUNDED MAN. I have enough for two.

JAILER. Which reminds me of this little woman I used to have. She used to change her clothes all the time. That was the only thing I liked about her . . . Hey! There you are, 105 and 106. Don't tell me you're just one. I see you as plain as day. One and two. I can count. Don't tell me I can't count. *(Takes the DRIVER and the WOUNDED MAN by the collar and walks away with them.)*

SERVANT.

Neither probe nor ignore  
That the clothes make the man.  
Isn't it true that costumes  
Change the course of life?

ALL.

Who can marry a gigolo?  
Can you?  
Can you?  
I can't.

Who can love a businessman?  
Can you?

Can you?  
I can't.

Who can pity a cop?  
Who can reason with a clown?  
Who can dance with a priest?  
Can you?  
Can you?  
I can't.

You see, a costume  
Can change your life.  
Be one and all.  
Be each and all.  
Transvest  
Impersonate  
'Cause costumes  
Change the course  
Of life.

*(The JAILER re-enters wearing the prisoners' jackets.)*

JAILER. I'm taking these two prisoners back to jail.  
*(Shrugs his shoulders and exits.)*

ALL.

Who can argue with a jailer?  
Can you?  
Can you?  
I can't.

Be one and all.  
Be each and all.  
Transvest  
Impersonate  
'Cause costumes  
Change the course  
Of life.

*(The JAILER comes running in. 105, 106 and the SERVANT run off stage. The JAILER follows.)*

JAILER. You tricked me, you singing buggers.

SCENE V

*(The Park. 105 and 106 sit on a bench. They knit each end of a single scarf. The MOTHER enters.)*

MOTHER. I've lost my babies. I've been looking for them for years and I can't find them. Have you seen them?

106. No.

MOTHER. You haven't seen my babies, have you? They aren't very pretty but they have dark eyes.

105. No.

MOTHER. I lost my babies right here. Have you seen them?

105 and 106. No.

*(The MOTHER looks closely at 105 and 106.)*

MOTHER. No . . . My babies were pretty. These are not my babies.

*(She looks again. 105 and 106 try to look pretty.)*  
No. These are big, ugly and old. Mine were this big. *(She indicates the size of an infant.)* And pretty. Good bye.

105 and 106. Good bye.

*(The MOTHER walks to the bushes and hides there. She observes 105 and 106.)*

It's to age  
That we owe  
What we are.  
In fact we're grateful  
For the passing of time.  
It's only fitting  
We should be grateful

For the passing of time.  
 'Cause  
 Without growth  
 We'd not be  
 What we are.

MOTHER (*from the bushes*).  
 What are you?

(*They pose for her. They point to themselves from head to toe. They do a turn. They do a tap step.*)

105 and 106.

We are  
 All  
 That we are.  
 From head to toe.

Once it's thoroughly thought through  
 We should realize  
 It's only appropriate  
 We should be attracted  
 To the passing of time.  
 Attracted to the passing of time.  
 'Cause it's to age  
 That we owe what we are.  
 And without it  
 We'd not be  
 What we are.

MOTHER (*from the bushes*). It's distressing to get old.

105 and 106. Woe . . . Woe . . . Woe . . . Woe . . .

MOTHER (*coming out of the bushes*). It's not that bad.

(*The MOTHER, 105 and 106 repeat the last stanza. The JAILER enters.*)

JAILER. I saw you. Running won't do you any good.  
 (*Runs past them and off the stage.*)

(*The SERVANT enters with a roast and champagne. They sit down to eat. The JAILER re-enters.*)

You tricked me. You didn't run.

*(105 and 106 run off stage. The JAILER follows. The banquet GUESTS walk through. 105 and 106 are among them.)*

MR. R. Who's first at croquet?

MISS U. Let's all be first.

MISS O. Phooey. Let's not play croquet.

MR. R. Speech, please, a little speech.

MR. T. I just called Mr. Lipschitz.

MR. S. Let's go to the warden's party. He's a very amusing fellow.

*(105 and 106, the MOTHER and the SERVANT follow the banquet GUESTS arm in arm.)*

106. Shall we have a little speech?

105. Yes. Yes. Let's all speak first.

ALL. To the warden's. To the warden's.

*(105 and 106 take a few steps back. They discuss whether they should go to the warden's. MISS I takes MR. T by the hand, they take a few steps back.)*

MISS I. Let us be irrational.

*(MR. T walks away.)*

*(Opening her arms toward 105 and 106.)* Let's you and me embrace.

*(105 and 106 are confused as to which one she means. They bump against each other, bow to each other, offer the way to the other. They finally get to her with open arms.)*

The moment has passed.

You have, perhaps, made me feel something

But the moment has passed.  
 And what is done cannot be undone.  
 Once a moment passes, it never comes again.

I once had a man who loved me well.  
 His mouth was smaller than his eye.  
 But I loved him just the same.  
 Yes, I loved him just the same.

He said he would kill for me.  
 And I said like for instance whom?  
 And he said like for instance you  
 Like for instance you.

Sometimes it hurts more than others.  
 Sometimes it hurts less.  
 Sometimes it's just the same.  
 Sometimes it's really just the same.

But never mind that.  
 No never mind that.  
 God gave understanding just to confuse us.  
 And it's always the same, anyway.  
 It's always the same, anyway.

If it's in your path to hurt me,  
 By all means do.  
 But, I beg you don't go out of your way.  
 Don't go out of your way to do so.

You don't know what to make of me.  
 But I know what to make of you.  
 I've nothing to lose  
 Or not much, anyway.  
 But never mind that.  
 God gave understanding just to confuse us.  
 And it's always the same, anyway.

You have, perhaps, made me feel something  
 But the moment has passed.  
 And what is done cannot be undone.  
 Once a moment passes, it never comes again.

*(She exits.)*

SCENE VI

*(The Warden's Living Room. The WARDEN sits on a high chair. A stethoscope hangs from his neck. The JAILER and MISS CAKE stand by his side. The rest enter in the order they left the previous scene.)*

WARDEN. Welcome . . . Welcome . . . I am about to entertain. Whoever is not amused will be sent to the common cell.

JAILER. Hear. Hear. The show is about to start.

WARDEN. Has any of you ever heard the story of the rabbit and the turtle?

ALL. Yes.

WARDEN. You see, it goes like this: There was once a rabbit who said to the turtle, "Run fast. Run fast, or I'll win the race." "I'll run slowly," said the turtle, "and win the race." "If that is the case, I'll take a rest," said the rabbit. "Why?" said the turtle. "To give you an advantage," said the rabbit. "Who are you to give me advantages," said the turtle. And so on . . . and so on . . . and so on . . . Whoever doesn't laugh will be sent to the common cell.

*(They all laugh.)*

Good. Now the party's over. Let me see what time it is. *(Looking at his watch.)* Too late! Everybody's under arrest for keeping me up so late. Wait, you've been re-prieved. My watch stopped. It must be earlier than I thought. Or later. Amuse yourselves. I give the best parties in town. I don't? Who said that? I must be hearing things again. No one would dare say I don't give the best parties in town. I must be crazy. Now, who has some mighty good entertainment?

*(MR. R, MR. S, and MR. T walk to the center in a vaudevillian manner.)*

MR. R. This is my son. (*Apologetically.*) He needs a haircut.

MR. S. What he needs is a new face.

(MR. R, MR. S *and* MR. T *laugh heartily.*)

WARDEN. Pretty dull. Pretty dull. I have seen better entertainment than that. Like for instance. (*Sings and bends his fingers.*)

Whenever my fingers went like this.  
I said: Hell, my fingers always go like that.  
Until one day somebody said to me:  
How original it is that your fingers go like that.  
Since then, every time my fingers go like this.  
I say: Look at my fingers go like that.  
How original it is that my fingers go like this.  
One of these days I'll sell them.

That's good entertainment. No one can top that. Who's next?

(MR. T *takes out a song sheet. He gets the key from the piano and sings.*)

MR. T.

It is true I told you I would love you  
And I never did.  
But remember I'm forgetful,  
Little fool.  
Longings are like vapor.  
They come as they go.  
And remember little fool.  
I'm forgetful.

Both, my wife's and my mistress' name is Kate.  
One day, while I made love to Kate, my wife,  
I thought of my sweet mistress Kate.  
In a moment of passion and confusion,  
I said, Kate, dear Kate, oh, Kate.  
My wife, hearing me say my mistress' name.  
Said harsh words to me. And put me on the street.  
Is that fair, I ask you, is that fair.

It is true I told you I would love you,  
And I never did.  
But remember I'm forgetful,  
Little fool.  
Longings are like vapor.  
They come as they go.  
And remember little fool.  
I'm forgetful.

*(The GUESTS applaud.)*

WARDEN. No good. No good. That's common and ordinary. I'm a poet and a scholar. Let's hear some poetry.

105. Miss Cake.

MISS CAKE. Yes, Mr. 105.

106. What do you aim at in your work?

MISS CAKE. Magic.

105. Do you always achieve it?

MISS CAKE. Yes. Once in a while.

106. You don't mean always, then.

MISS CAKE. Yes, I do.

105. Explain.

MISS CAKE. In mathematical terms, if the impossible is ever achieved, it becomes always. That is how eternity is conceived.

*(MISS CAKE takes a bow. The rest applaud.)*

WARDEN. That makes sense. But that's not poetry. That's science. Go back to your cake. Now this is poetry.

A petunia is a flower like a begonia.  
You fry begonia like you fry sausage.  
Sausage and battery is a crime.  
Monkeys crime trees.  
Tree is a crowd.  
The cock crowd and made a noise.

You have a noise on your face, also two eyes.  
 The opposite of eyes is nays.  
 A horse nays and has a colt.  
 You go to bed with a colt.  
 And wake up with double petunia.

Whoever doesn't laugh will be sent to the common cell.

*(The WARDEN uses his stethoscope to make sure that everyone is laughing. They all laugh except 105 and 106. He signals the JAILER to take them away. As the JAILER walks off with 105 and 106 the MOTHER climbs the staircase and sings.)*

MOTHER.

Does anyone understand a mother's love?  
 Except a mother?  
 Does a father understand a mother's love?  
 Except a good father?  
 Does anyone understand a mother's love?  
 Except a son, or a grandfather, or an uncle?

ALL.

Everyone.

MOTHER *(recitative)*.

Then do you know that one autumn afternoon  
 My children disappeared and that that very  
 Autumn afternoon my life ended?

*(The JAILER returns holding two MEN wearing cooks' outfits.)*

WARDEN. I thought I told you to take those two prisoners away.

MOTHER. Don't take my children away.

JAILER. I went the wrong way. That's the kitchen.

WARDEN. March on.

MOTHER. I must kill myself.

*(The MOTHER jumps from the staircase. 105 and 106 enter in time to catch her.)*

WARDEN. Marvellous. Marvellous. That's mighty good entertainment. Do it again.

*(The MOTHER goes up the steps and jumps again. 105 and 106 catch her.)*

Now the party is over. Let me see what time it is. Too late! Everybody's under arrest for keeping me up so late.

*(The JAILER guides everyone out.)*

Good night. Marvellous . . . Marvellous entertainment.

## SCENE VII

*(The Cell is empty. There is the sound of voices. All except the WARDEN enter.)*

JAILER. The ladies are to come with me to the next cell, one at a time. It's too crowded here.

MR. S. I'm tired of this party. I want to go home.

MR. R. Let's go home.

MR. T. Let's go home. Let's not start acting as if we're all criminals.

JAILER. You can't go away. You're under arrest.

MR. S. No, we're not.

JAILER. Have some respect.

*(All except the MOTHER, the JAILER, 105 and 106 exit through the hole. The JAILER exits through the door and locks it.)*

MOTHER. Did you have a good time, my children?

105 and 106. Yes.

MOTHER. Did you find evil?

105 and 106. No.

MOTHER. Good night, then. Sleep well. You'll find it some other time.

105 and 106. Good night.

*(The MOTHER rocks them to sleep.)*

MOTHER.

I saw a man lying on the street.  
Asleep and drunk.  
He had not washed his face.  
He held his coat closed with a safety pin.  
And I thought. And I thought:  
Thank God I'm better than he is.  
Yes, thank God, I'm better than he.

I have to live with my own truth.  
I have to live with it.

You live with your own truth.  
I cannot live with it.

I have to live with my own truth.

Whether you like it or not.

Whether you like it or not.

There are many poor people in the world.  
Whether you like it or not.

There are many poor people in the world.  
But I'm not one of them.

I'm not one of them.

Someone's been stealing my apples.

But I'm not one of them.

I'm not one of them.

I know everything.

Half of it I really know.

The rest I make up.

The rest I make up.

Some things I'm sure of.

Of other things I'm too sure.

And of others I'm not sure at all.

People believe everything they hear

Not what they see. Not what they see.

People believe everything they hear.

But me, I see everything.

Yes I see everything.

The saddest day of my life was the day.

I pitied a despicable man.

And I've been sad ever since.

Yes, I've been sad ever since.

I'd like to go where a human being

Is not a strange thing.

Is not a strange thing.

When I go no one will water my plants.

When I go no one will water my plants.

No one . . . No one . . . No one . . .

Yes, my children, you'll find evil . . . some other time  
. . . Good night. *(She exits.)*

105 and 106. Good night.

All is well in the city.

People do what they want.

They can go to the park.

They can sleep all they want.

And for those who have no cake,

There's plenty of bread.

*(Curtain.)*