

Angels in America Audition Scenes and Monologues.

Everyone should pick three pieces to present at auditions. One must be from a scene and one must be a monologue. The third choice may be a scene or a monologue. Everyone must pick at least two different characters, preferably three. Woman must choose either the monologue of the Rabbi or Henry. Three additional rolls will be cast, along with the Angel, to represent the four emanations.

Scenes:

Joe and Roy – page 15

Prior and Louis – page 22

Joe and Harper – page 26 (Joe-You aren't even making sense) to end of page 27

Joe and Louis – page 29

Prior and Belize – page 59 Prior and Voice (woman) – page 62

Joe and Hannah – page 75

Sister Ella Chapter and Hannah – page 82

Prior and Prior 1 – page 86

Monologues:

Rabbi (woman) – page 10

Harper – page 16-17

Prior – page 41

Henry (woman) – page 42

Joe – page 53

Roy – page 58

Louis – page 92

Belize – page 96

Hannah – page 103

Character Arc, Actions and Descriptions

Roy M. Cohn (Fire) – He represents the cold, compassionless force of nature, the survival of the fittest. There is no moral code – actions are not judged and/or emotionalized. Actions, choices just are. Power is life, life is power and any other philosophy threatens existence of the self. The acceptance of anything else betrays man a weak and subservient.

Joseph Porter Pitt (Air) – He is average, not consumed by being elevated or living prominently in society. He strives to live morally pure through his spiritual beliefs but is failed by his struggles with his true sexual identity. He has a learned belief that life is morally prescribed by the divine and that the self/inner identity must adjust, mature, adapt or evolve to reach that purity. While he knows his homosexuality is his true inner identity he cannot accept that inner nature as real as it destroys his moral/ethical beliefs.

Harper Amaty Pitt (Water) – She is fragile, broken and scared. She has followed faithfully the moral construct she was raised under but has received nothing in return. She accepts this as a failure of her own and as a punishment she deserves. She yearns to be free of this fate but has no idea of who she is or who she will become if she ever manages to do so.

Louis Ironson (Earth) – Average guy with little ambition, easily satisfied with the base fulfillment of life's basic needs. He doesn't desire much more than a good meal, a good day and a good sex life. He accepts his homosexuality but freely hides it from society when it helps him, avoiding all hassle. He fails and fears accepting that life is complex and demands devotion and commitment. He sees the world in shades of black and white and is repelled by shades of grays. He is plagued by the guilt of his inactions and inability to sacrifice for others, namely, Prior.

Prior Walter (Phosphor) – He is a representative Everyman, or at least every good man. He is pure in his love but does understand love's fallacies. He is pure of heart but is affected by betrayal, as the rest of us are. Hardship does not affect his natural ability to see clearly and use his insight into others even when his is challenged by both a physical disease and a symbolically diseased society. He is the ideal choice to be a savior/prophet because he will ultimately refuse the choice and power. He believes he is not divine and man can never be divine.

Hannah Porter Pitt (Lumen) – She is a hardened, yet fragile woman, chiseled in stone from the moral construct of her upbringing. She is also a potential vessel of evolution and change. In Millennium, she is given the action of coming to the rescue of her son Joe, even though she is at this time in life, incapable of understanding his problems and how her beliefs have crippled her son. She must first wander through a lost and diseased wilderness, learn from the experience, and then renew her life with a new system of belief. This is only realized in Perestroika – in this play she is wandering.

Belize (Fluor) – He is as close to an angel a person can be on earth. He is nurturing, forgiving and has the innate ability to care. He is non-judgmental and yet believes life is to be lived morally just. He acts as a confidant for others and assists them as morally and ethically as is humanely possible. He accepts life is to be revealed in even in the midst of its cruel destruction and devastation.

The Angel (Candle) – The voice of our inner identities and personal truths, capable of accepting all realities and choices of man – yet incapable of acting upon those realities or acting for them. The Angel is there to give insight and vision but cannot act for itself. That is the separation of the Divine and the Human – The divine can only be and eternal but cannot produce an action or a choice – only man is capable of choice and action.

Rabbi Isidor Chemelwitz (played by Angel, a change from play) – He represents the patriarchal Moral/Ethics of the ancient past. His beliefs, at one time vital and capable of offering insight and purpose, have now weathered through time and are now dying, losing their purpose and giving way to a new philosophy or absence of one.

Mr. Lies (played by Belize) – He is Harper's desire to escape and represent the results of denial and avoidance. His purpose is to flee reality without consequence. He is an agent of numbness.

The Man in the Park (played by Prior) – He is impulsive passion, wandering lust. Sex without purpose, consequence or commitment and yet is affected by Louis's guilt and shame.

The Voice of the Angel -- The voice of our inner identities and personal truths, capable of accepting all realities and choices of man – yet incapable of acting upon those realities or acting for them. The Angel is there to give insight and vision but cannot act for itself. That is the separation of the Divine and the Human – The divine can only be and eternal but cannot produce an action or a choice – only man is capable of choice and action.

Henry (played by Hannah) – The agent of scientific truths. Facts are facts and reality is reality. He bears no responsibility for being the messenger.

Emily (played by Angel) – The hand of nature and caring as well as a voice of concern and compassion. Like the angels – she is not allowed to get involved or act for the other characters.

Martin (played by Harper) – A scavenger of the privileged.

Sister Ella Chapter (played by Angel) – She is a keeper of order and the preventer of change. She clings to the community she knows and understands and fears a community of the unknown.

Prior 1 (played by Joe) – The bearer of the old orders – the conservative truths of the spiritual past.

Prior 2 (played by Roy) – The bearer of the new orders – the prophetic progressive insights of what's to come.

Homeless Woman (played by Angel) – the chaos and psychosis of a detached society. Life with no purpose or direction.

Ethel Rosenberg (played by Hannah) – She is the spirit of Karma and reaping what you sew. Humans are the ones who freely choose actions and they cannot escape the consequence.

ANGELS IN AMERICA

ROY: What? *(To Harry)* Hold a minute. *(Button)* Mrs. Soffer, Mrs. . . . *(Button)* God-fucking-dammit to hell, where is . . .

JOE: *(Overlapping)*: Roy, I'd really appreciate it if . . .

ROY: *(Overlapping)*: Well she was here a minute ago, baby doll, see if . . .

(The phone starts making three different beeping sounds, all at once.)

ROY: *(Smashing buttons)*: Jesus fuck this goddam thing . . .

JOE: *(Overlapping)*: I really wish you wouldn't . . .

ROY: *(Overlapping)*: Baby doll? Ring the Post get me Suzy see if . . .

(The phone starts whistling loudly.)

ROY: CHRIST!

JOE: Roy.

ROY: *(Into receiver)*: Hold. *(Buttons to Joe)* What?

JOE: Could you please not take the Lord's name in vain?

(Pause)

I'm sorry. But please. At least while I'm . . .

ROY: *(Laughs, then)*: Right. Sorry. Fuck.

Only in America. *(Punches a button)* Baby doll, tell 'em all to fuck off. Tell 'em I died. You handle Mrs. Soffer. Tell her it's on the way. Tell her I'm schtupping the judge. I'll call her back. I will call her. I knew how much I borrowed. She's got four hundred times that stuffed up her . . . Yeah, tell her I said that. *(Button. The phone is silent)*

So, Joe.

Joe & Roy

MILLENNIUM APPROACHES

JOE: I'm sorry Roy, I just . . .

ROY: No no no no, principles count, I respect principles, I'm not religious but I like God and God likes me. Baptist, Catholic?

JOE: Mormon.

ROY: Mormon. Delectable. Absolutely. Only in America. So, Joe. Whatya think?

JOE: It's . . . well . . .

ROY: Crazy life.

JOE: Chaotic.

ROY: Well but God bless chaos. Right?

JOE: Ummm . . .

ROY: Huh. Mormons. I knew Mormons, in, um, Nevada.

JOE: Utah, mostly.

ROY: No, these Mormons were in Vegas.

So. So, how'd you like to go to Washington and work for the Justice Department?

JOE: Sorry?

ROY: How'd you like to go to Washington and work for the Justice Department? All I gotta do is pick up the phone, talk to Ed, and you're in.

JOE: In . . . what, exactly?

ROY: Associate Assistant Something Big. Internal Affairs, heart of the woods, something nice with clout.

JOE: Ed . . . ?

ROY: Meese. The Attorney General.

JOE: Oh.

ROY: I just have to pick up the phone . . .

JOE: I have to think.

ROY: Of course.

(Pause)

It's a great time to be in Washington, Joe.

Prior & Louis

not Louis, because if you say Louis they'll hear the
sibilant S.

LOUIS: I don't have a . . .

PRIOR: I don't blame you, hiding. Bloodlines. Jewish curses are
the worst. I personally would dissolve if anyone ever
looked me in the eye and said "Feh." Fortunately WASPs
don't say "Feh." Oh and by the way, darling, cousin Doris
is a dyke. ¹⁷

LOUIS: No.

¹⁸ Really?

PRIOR: You don't notice anything. If I hadn't spent the last four
years fellingating you I'd swear you were straight.

LOUIS: You're in a pissy mood. Cat still missing?

(Little pause.)

PRIOR: Not a furball in sight. It's your fault.

LOUIS: It is?

PRIOR: I warned you, Louis. Names are important. Call an
animal "Little Sheba" and you can't expect it to stick
around. Besides, it's a dog's name.

LOUIS: I wanted a dog in the first place, not a cat. He sprayed
my books.

PRIOR: He was a female cat.

LOUIS: Cats are stupid, high-strung predators. Babylonians
scaled them up in bricks. Dogs have brains.

PRIOR: Cats have intuition.

LOUIS: A sharp dog is as smart as a really dull two-year-old
child.

PRIOR: Cats know when something's wrong.

LOUIS: Only if you stop feeding them. ¹⁹

PRIOR: They know. That's why Sheba left, because she knew.

LOUIS: Knew what?

(Pause.)

PRIOR: I did my best Shirley Booth this morning, floppy slip-
pers, housecoat, curlers, can of Little Friskies; "Come
back, Little Sheba, come back . . ." To no avail. Le chat,
elle ne revicendra jamais, jamais . . .

(He removes his jacket, rolls up his sleeve, shows Louis
a dark-purple spot on the underside of his arm near the
shoulder)

See.

LOUIS: That's just a burst blood vessel.

PRIOR: Not according to the best medical authorities.

LOUIS: What?

(Pause)

Tell me.

PRIOR: K.S., baby. Lesion number one. Lookit. The wine-dark
kiss of the angel of death.

LOUIS (Very softly, holding Prior's arm): Oh please . . .

PRIOR: I'm a lesionnaire. The Foreign Lesion. The American
Lesion. Lesionnaire's disease.

LOUIS: Stop.

PRIOR: My troubles are lesion.

LOUIS: Will you stop.

PRIOR: Don't you think I'm handling this well?
I'm going to die.

LOUIS: Bullshit.

PRIOR: Let go of my arm.

LOUIS: No.

PRIOR: Let go.

LOUIS (Grabbing Prior, embracing him ferociously): No.

Joe & Harper

JOE: Look, I know this is scary for you. But try to understand what it means to me. Will you try?

HARPER: Yes.

JOE: Good. Really try.

I think things are starting to change in the world.

HARPER: But I don't want . . .

JOE: Wait. For the good. Change for the good. America has rediscovered itself. Its sacred position among nations. And people aren't ashamed of that like they used to be. This is a great thing. The truth restored. Law restored. That's what President Reagan's done, Harper. He says "Truth exists and can be spoken proudly." And the country responds to him. We become better. More good. I need to be a part of that. I need something big to lift me up. I mean, six years ago the world seemed in decline, horrible, hopeless, full of unsolvable problems and crime and confusion and hunger and . . .

HARPER: But it still seems that way. More now than before. They say the ozone layer is . . .

JOE: Harper . . .

HARPER: And today out the window on Atlantic Avenue there was a schizophrenic traffic cop who was making these . . .

JOE: Stop it! I'm trying to make a point.

HARPER: So am I.

JOE: You aren't even making sense, you . . .

HARPER: My point is the world seems just as . . .

JOE: It only seems that way to you because you never go out in the world, Harper, and you have emotional problems.

HARPER: I do so get out in the world.

JOE: You don't. You stay in all day, fidgeting about imaginary . . .

HARPER: I get out. I do. You don't know what I do.

JOE: You don't stay in all day.

HARPER: No.

JOE: Well . . . Yes you do.

HARPER: That's what you think.

JOE: Where do you go?

HARPER: Where do *you* go? When you walk.

(Pause, then angrily) And I DO NOT have emotional problems.

JOE: I'm sorry.

HARPER: And if I do have emotional problems it's from living with you. Or . . .

JOE: I'm sorry buddy, I didn't mean to . . .

HARPER: Or if you do think I do then you should never have married me. You have all these secrets and lies.

JOE: I want to be married to you, Harper.

HARPER: You shouldn't. You never should.

(Pause)

Hey buddy. Hey buddy.

JOE: Buddy kiss . . .

(They kiss.)

HARPER: I heard on the radio how to give a blowjob.

JOE: What?

HARPER: You want to try?

JOE: You really shouldn't listen to stuff like that.

HARPER: Mormons can give blowjobs.

JOE: Harper.

HARPER (Imitating his tone): Joe.

It was a little Jewish lady with a German accent.

This is a good time. For me to make a baby.

(Little pause. Joe turns away.)

have there. Then they went on to a program about holes in the ozone layer. Over Antarctica. Skin burns, birds go blind, icebergs melt. The world's coming to an end.

Scene 6

First week of November. In the men's room of the offices of the Brooklyn Federal Court of Appeals, Louis is crying over the sink. Joe enters.

JOE: Oh, um. . . Morning.
LOUIS: Good morning, counselor.
JOE *(He watches Louis cry)*: Sorry, I . . . I don't know your name.
LOUIS: Don't bother. Word processor. The lowest of the low.
JOE *(Holding out hand)*: Joe Pitt. I'm with Justice Wilson . . .
LOUIS: Oh, I know that. Counselor Pitt. Chief Clerk.
JOE: Were you . . . are you OK?
LOUIS: Oh, yeah. Thanks. What a nice man.
JOE: Not so nice.
LOUIS: What?
JOE: Not so nice. Nothing. You sure you're . . .
LOUIS: Life sucks shit. Life . . . just sucks shit.
JOE: What's wrong?
LOUIS: Run in my nylons.
JOE: Sorry . . . ?
LOUIS: Forget it. Look, thanks for asking.
JOE: Well . . .
LOUIS: I mean it really is nice of you.
(He starts crying again)
JOE: Sorry, sorry, sick friend . . .
JOE: Oh, I'm sorry.

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Joe & Louis

LOUIS: Yeah, yeah, well, that's sweet.

Three of your colleagues have preceded you to this baleful sight and you're the first one to ask. The others just opened the door, saw me, and fled. I hope they had to pee real bad.

JOE *(Handing him a wad of toilet paper)*: They just didn't want to intrude.

LOUIS: Hah. Reaganite heartless macho asshole lawyers.

JOE: Oh, that's unfair.

LOUIS: What is? Heartless? Macho? Reaganite? Lawyer?

JOE: I voted for Reagan.

LOUIS: You did?

JOE: Twice.

LOUIS: Twice? Well, oh boy. A Gay Republican.

JOE: Excuse me?

LOUIS: Nothing.

JOE: I'm not . . .

Forget it.

LOUIS: Republican? Not Republican? Or . . .

JOE: What?

LOUIS: What?

JOE: Not gay. I'm not gay.

LOUIS: Oh. Sorry.

(Blows his nose loudly) It's just . . .

JOE: Yes?

LOUIS: Well, sometimes you can tell from the way a person sounds that . . . I mean you *sound* like a . . .

JOE: No I don't. Like what?

LOUIS: Like a Republican.

(Little pause. Joe knows he's being teased; Louis knows he knows. Joe decides to be a little brave.)

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(The Man leaves.)

ROY: How long have we known each other?

JOE: Since 1980.

ROY: Right. A long time. I feel close to you, Joe. Do I advise you well?

JOE: You've been an incredible friend, Roy, I . . .

ROY: I want to be family. Familia, as my Italian friends call it. La Familia. A lovely word. It's important for me to help you, like I was helped.

JOE: I owe practically everything to you, Roy.

ROY: I'm dying, Joe. Cancer.

JOE: Oh my God.

ROY: Please. Let me finish.

Few people know this and I'm telling you this only because . . . I'm not afraid of death. What can death bring that I haven't faced? I've lived; life is the worst. (Gently mocking himself) Listen to me, I'm a philosopher.

JOE: You must do this. You must must must. Love; that's a trap. Responsibility; that's a trap too. Like a father to a son I tell you this: Life is full of horror; nobody escapes, nobody; save yourself. Whatever pulls on you, whatever needs from you, threatens you. Don't be afraid; people are so afraid; don't be afraid to live in the raw wind, naked, alone . . . Learn at least this: What you are capable of. Let nothing stand in your way.

Prior & Belize

Scene 5

Three days later. Prior and Belize in Prior's hospital room. Prior is very sick but improving. Belize has just arrived.

PRIOR: Miss Thing.

BELIZE: Ma chérie bichette.

PRIOR: Stella.

BELIZE: Stella for star. Let me see. (Scrutinizing Prior) You look like shit, why yes indeed you do, comme la merde!

PRIOR: Merci.

BELIZE (Taking little plastic bottles from his bag, banding them to Prior): Not to despair, Belle Reeve. Lookie! Magic goop! PRIOR (Opening a bottle, sniffing): Poo! What kinda crap is that?

BELIZE: Beats me. Let's rub it on your poor blistered body and see what it does.

PRIOR: This is not Western medicine, these bottles . . .

BELIZE: Voodoo cream. From the botanica 'round the block.

PRIOR: And you a registered nurse.

BELIZE (Sniffing it): Beeswax and cheap perfume. Cut with Jergen's Lotion. Full of good vibes and love from some little black Cubana witch in Miami.

PRIOR: Get that trash away from me, I am immune-suppressed.

BELIZE: I am a health professional. I know what I'm doing.

PRIOR: It stinks. Any word from Louis?

(Pause. Belize starts giving Prior a gentle massage.)

PRIOR: Gone.

BELIZE: He'll be back. I know the type. Likes to keep a girl on edge.

Prior & Voice (Woman)

PRIOR: I promise.

HELIZE: *(Touching him, softly)*: Ouch.

PRIOR: Ouch. Indeed.

HELIZE: Why'd they have to pick on you?

And eat more, girlfriend, you really do look like you.

(Belize leaves.)

PRIOR *(After waiting a beat)*: He's gone.

Are you still . . .

VOICE: I can't stay. I will return.

PRIOR: Are you one of those "Follow me to the other side" voices?

VOICE: No. I am no nightbird. I am a messenger . . .

PRIOR: You have a beautiful voice, it sounds . . . like a viola, like a perfectly tuned, tight string, balanced, the truth. . . .

Stay with me.

VOICE: Not now. Soon I will return, I will reveal myself to you;

I am glorious, glorious; my heart, my countenance and my message. You must prepare.

PRIOR: For what? I don't want to . . .

VOICE: No death, no:

A marvelous work and a wonder we undertake, an edifice awry we sink plumb and straighten, a great Lie we abolish, a great error correct, with the rule, sword and broom of Truth!

PRIOR: What are you talking about, I . . .

VOICE:

I am on my way, when I am manifest, our Work begins:
Prepare for the parting of the air,
The breath, the ascent,
Glory to . . .

Scene 6

The second week of January. Martin, Roy and Joe in a fancy Manhattan restaurant.

MARTIN: It's a revolution in Washington, Joe. We have a new agenda and finally a real leader. They got back the Senate but we have the courts. By the nineties the Supreme Court will be block-solid Republican appointees, and the Federal bench—Republican judges like Land mines, everywhere, everywhere they turn. Affirmative action? Take it to court. Boom! Land mine. And we'll get our way on just about everything: abortion, defense, Central America, family values, a live investment climate. We have the White House locked till the year 2000. And beyond. A permanent fix on the Oval Office? It's possible. By '92 we'll get the Senate back, and in ten years the South is going to give us the House. It's really the end of Liberalism. The end of New Deal Socialism. The end of ipso facto secular humanism. The dawning of a genuinely American political personality. Modeled on Ronald Wilson Reagan.

JOE: It sounds great, Mr. Heller.

MARTIN: Martin. And Justice is the hub. Especially since Ed Meese took over. He doesn't specialize in Five Points of the Law. He's a flatfoot, a cop. He reminds me of Teddy Roosevelt.

JOE: I can't wait to meet him.

MARTIN: Too bad, Joe, he's been dead for sixty years!

(There is a little awkwardness. Joe doesn't respond.)

MARTIN: Teddy Roosevelt? You said you wanted to . . . Little joke. It reminds me of the story about the . . .

ANGELS IN AMERICA

Joe & Hannah

MILLENNIUM APPROACHES

(Points to the building) Maybe the court won't come here. Ever again. Maybe we are free. To do whatever. Children of the new morning, criminal minds. Selfish and greedy and loveless and blind. Reagan's children. You're scared. So am I. Everybody is in the hand of the free. God help us all.

Scene 8

Late that night. Joe at a payphone phoning Hannah at home in Salt Lake City.

Joe: Mom?

Hannah: Joe?

Joe: Hi.

Hannah: You're calling from the street. It's . . . it must be four in the morning. What's happened?

Joe: Nothing, nothing, I . . .

Hannah: It's Harper. Is Harper . . . Joe? Joe?

Joe: Yeah, hi. No, Harper's fine. Well, no, she's . . . not fine.

How are you, Mom?

Hannah: What's happened?

Joe: I just wanted to talk to you. I, uh, wanted to try something out on you.

Hannah: Joe, you haven't . . . have you been drinking, Joe?

Joe: Yes ma'am. I'm drunk.

Hannah: That isn't like you.

Joe: No, I mean, who's to say?

Hannah: Why are you out on the street at four AM? In that crazy city. It's dangerous.

Joe: Actually, Mom, I'm not on the street. I'm near the boat house in the park.

Hannah: What park?

Joe: Central Park.

Hannah: CENTRAL PARK! Oh my Lord. What on earth are you doing in Central Park at this time of night? Are you . . .

Joe: I think you ought to go home right now. Call me from home.

(Little pause)

Joe?

Joe: I come here to watch, Mom. Sometimes. Just to watch. Hannah: Watch what? What's there to watch at four in the . . .

Joe: Mom, did Dad love me?

Hannah: What?

Joe: Did he?

Hannah: You ought to go home and call from there.

Joe: Answer.

Hannah: Oh now really. This is maudlin. I don't like this conversation.

Joe: Yeah, well, it gets worse from here on.

(Pause.)

Hannah: Joe?

Joe: Mom. Momma. I'm a homosexual, Momma.

Boy, did that come out awkward.

(Pause)

Hello? Hello?

I'm a homosexual.

(Pause)

Please, Momma. Say something.

ANGELS IN AMERICA

Sister Ella Chapter 4 Hannah

MILLENNIUM APPROACHES

SISTER ELLA CHAPTER: Know why I decided to like you? I decided to like you 'cause you're the only unfriendly Mormon I ever met.

HANNAH: Your wig is crooked.

SISTER ELLA CHAPTER: Fix it.

(Hannah straightens Sister Ella's wig.)

SISTER ELLA CHAPTER: New York City. All they got there is tiny rooms.

I always thought: People ought to stay put. That's why I got my license to sell real estate. It's a way of saying: Have a house! Stay put! It's a way of saying traveling's no good. Plus I needed the cash. *(She takes a pack of cigarettes out of her purse, holds one, offers pack to Hannah)*

HANNAH: Not out here, anyone could come by.

There's been days I've stood at this ledge and thought about stepping over.

It's a hard place, Salt Lake: baked dry. Abundant energy; not much intelligence. That's a combination that can wear a body out. No harm looking someplace else. I don't need much room.

My sister-in-law Libby thinks there's radon gas in the basement.

SISTER ELLA CHAPTER: Is there gas in the . . .

HANNAH: Of course not. Libby's a fool.

SISTER ELLA CHAPTER: 'Cause I'd have to include that in the description.

HANNAH: There's no gas, Ella. *(Little pause)* Give a puff. *(She takes a furtive drag of Ella's cigarette)* Put it away now.

SISTER ELLA CHAPTER: So I guess it's goodbye.

HANNAH: You'll be all right, Ella, I wasn't ever much of a friend.

SISTER ELLA CHAPTER: I'll say something but don't laugh. OK. This is the home of saints, the godliest place on earth they say, and I think they're right. That mean there's no evil here? No. Evil's everywhere. Sins everywhere. But this . . . is the spring of sweet water in the desert, the desert flower. Every step a Believer takes away from here is a step fraught with peril. I fear for you, Hannah Pitt, because you are my friend. Stay put. This is the right home of saints.

HANNAH: Latter-day saints.

SISTER ELLA CHAPTER: Only kind left.

HANNAH: But still, late in the day . . . for saints and everyone. That's all. That's all.

Fifty thousand dollars for the house. Sister Ella Chapter, don't undersell. It's an impressive view.

ANGELS IN AMERICA

Prior & Prior 1

PRIOR 1: You're alive. I'm not. We have the same name. What do you want me to explain?

PRIOR: A ghost?

PRIOR 1: An ancestor.

PRIOR: Not *the* Prior Walter? The Bayeux tapestry Prior Walter?

PRIOR 1: His great-great grandson. The fifth of the name.

PRIOR: I'm the thirty-fourth, I think.

PRIOR 1: Actually the thirty-second.

PRIOR: Not according to Mother.

PRIOR 1: She's including the two bastards, then; I say leave them out. I say no room for bastards. The little things you swallow . . .

PRIOR: Pills.

PRIOR 1: Pills. For the pestilence. I too . . .

PRIOR: Pestilence. . . . You too what?

PRIOR 1: The pestilence in my time was much worse than now. Whole villages of empty houses. You could look outdoors and see Death walking in the morning, dew dampening the ragged hem of his black robe. Plain as I see you now.

PRIOR: You died of the plague.

PRIOR 1: The spotty monster. Like you, alone.

PRIOR: I'm not alone.

PRIOR 1: You have no wife, no children.

PRIOR: I'm gay.

PRIOR 1: So? Be gay, dance in your altogether for all I care, what's that to do with not having children?

PRIOR: Gay homosexual, not bonny, blithe and . . . never mind.

PRIOR 1: I had twelve. When I died.

(The second ghost appears, this one dressed in the clothing of an elegant 17th-century Londoner.)

MILLENNIUM APPROACHES

PRIOR 1: (Pointing to Prior 2.) And I was three years younger than him.

(Prior sees the new ghost, screams.)

PRIOR: Oh God another one.

PRIOR 2: Prior Walter. Prior to you by some seventeen others.

PRIOR 1: He's counting the bastards.

PRIOR: Are we having a convention?

PRIOR 2: We've been sent to declare her fabulous incipience. They love a well-paved entrance with lots of heralds, and . . .

PRIOR 1: The messenger come. Prepare the way. The infinite descent, a breath in air . . .

PRIOR 2: They chose us, I suspect, because of the mortal affinities. In a family as long-descended as the Walters there are bound to be a few carried off by plague.

PRIOR 1: The spotty monster.

PRIOR 2: Black Jack. Came from a water pump, half the city of London, can you imagine? His came from fleas. Yours, I understand, is the lamentable consequence of venery . . .

PRIOR 1: Fleas on rats, but who knew that?

PRIOR: Am I going to die?

PRIOR 2: We aren't allowed to discuss . . .

PRIOR 1: When you do, you don't get ancestors to help you through it. You may be surrounded by children but you die alone.

PRIOR: I'm afraid.

PRIOR 1: You should be. There aren't even torches, and the path's rocky, dark and steep.

PRIOR 2: Don't alarm him. There's good news before there's bad.

Rabbi

Like and Eric. (Looks more closely at paper) Eric? This is a Jewish name? (Shrugs) Eric. A large and loving family. We assemble that we may mourn collectively this good and righteous woman.

(He looks at the coffin)

This woman. I did not know this woman. I cannot accurately describe her attributes, nor do justice to her dimensions. She was... Well, in the Bronx Home of Aged Hebrews are many like this, the old, and to many I speak but not to be frank with this one. She preferred silence. So I do not know her and yet I know her. She was...

(He touches the coffin)

...not a person but a whole kind of person, the ones who crossed the ocean, who brought with us to America the villages of Russia and Lithuania—and how we struggled, and how we fought, for the family, for the Jewish home, so that you would not grow up here, in this strange place, in the melting pot where nothing melted. Descendants of this immigrant woman, you do not grow up in America, you and your children and their children will the goyische names. You do not live in America. No such place exists. Your clay is the clay of some Litvak shield, your air the air of the steppes—because she carried the old world on her back across the ocean, in a boat, and she put it down on Grand Concourse Avenue, or in Flatbush, and she worked that earth into your bones, and you pass it to your children, this ancient, ancient culture and home.

(Little pause)

You can never make that crossing that she made, for such Great Voyages in this world do not any more exist. But every day of your lives the miles that voyage between

that place and this one you cross. Every day. You understand me? In you that journey.

So.

She was the last of the Mohicans, this one was. Pretty soon... all the old will be dead.

—MILLENNIUM APPROACHES

Scene 2

Some day. Roy and Joe in Roy's office. Roy at an impressive desk, here except for a very elaborate phone system, rows and rows of flashing buttons which beep and beep and whistle incessantly, making chaotic music underneath Roy's conversations. Joe is sitting waiting. Roy conducts business with great energy, impatience and sensual abandon: gesticulating, shouting, cooing, crooning, playing the phone, receiver and hold button with virtuosity and love.

ROY (Hitting a button): Hold. (To Joe) I wish I was an octopus, a fucking octopus. Eight loving arms and all those suckers. Know what I mean?

JOE: No, I...

ROY (Gesturing to a deli platter of little sandwiches on his desk): You want lunch?

JOE: No, that's OK really I just...

ROY (Hitting a button): Aliene? Roy Cohn. Now what kind of a greeting is... I thought we were friends, Aliene. Look Mrs. Soffer you don't have to get... You're upset. You're yelling. You'll aggravate your condition, you shouldn't yell, you'll pop little blood vessels in your face if you yell... No that was a joke, Mrs. Soffer, I was

ANGELS IN AMERICA

Harper

JOE: Roy, it's incredibly exciting.
ROY: And it would mean something to me. You understand?

(Little pause)

JOE: I . . . can't say how much I appreciate this Roy, I'm sort of . . . well, stunned, I mean. . . . Thanks, Roy. But I have to give it some thought. I have to ask my wife.

ROY: Your wife. Of course.

JOE: But I really appreciate . . .

ROY: Of course. Talk to your wife.

Scene 3

Later that day. Harper at home, alone. She is listening to the radio and talking to herself as she often does. She speaks to the audience.

HARPER: People who are lonely, people left alone, sit talking nonsense to the air, imagining . . . beautiful systems flying, old fixed orders spiraling apart.

When you look at the ozone layer, from outside, from a spaceship, it looks like a pale blue halo, a gentle, shimmering aureole encircling the atmosphere encircling the earth. Thirty miles above our heads, a thin layer of three-atom oxygen molecules, product of photosynthesis, which explains the fussy vegetable preference for visible light, its rejection of darker rays and emanations. Danger from without. It's a kind of gift, from God, the crowning touch to the creation of the world: guardian angels, hands linked, make a spherical net, a blue-green nesting orb, a shell of

MILLENNIUM APPROACHES

safety for life itself. But everywhere, things are collapsing, lies surfacing, systems of defense giving way. . . . This is why, Joe, this is why I shouldn't be left alone.

(Little pause)

I'd like to go traveling. Leave you behind to worry. I'll send postcards with strange stamps and tantalizing messages on the back. "Later maybe." "Nevermore. . . ."

(Mr. Lies, a travel agent, appears.)

HARPER: Oh! You startled me!

MR. LIES: Cash, check or credit card?

HARPER: I remember you. You're from Salt Lake. You sold us the plane tickets when we flew here. What are you doing in Brooklyn?

MR. LIES: You said you wanted to travel. . . .

HARPER: And here you are. How thoughtful.

MR. LIES: Mr. Lies. Of the International Order of Travel Agents. We mobilize the globe, we set people adrift, we stir the populace and send nomads eddying across the planet. We are adepts of motion, acolytes of the flux. Cash, check or credit card. Name your destination.

HARPER: Antarctica, maybe. I want to see the hole in the ozone. I heard on the radio. . . .

MR. LIES (He has a computer terminal in his briefcase): I can arrange a guided tour. Now?

HARPER: Soon. Maybe soon. I'm not safe here, you see. Things aren't right with me. Weird stuff happens. . . .

MR. LIES: Like?

HARPER: Well, like you, for instance. Just appearing. Or last week. . . . well never mind.

People are like planets, you need a thick skin. I think

ANGELS IN AMERICA

Prior: Humming

LOUIS: You love me.

Prior: Yes.

LOUIS: What if I walked out on this?

Would you hate me forever?

(Prior kisses Louis on the forehead.)

Prior: Yes.

JOE: I think we ought to pray. Ask God for help. Ask him together.

HARPER: God won't talk to me. I have to make up people to talk to me.

JOE: You have to keep asking.

HARPER: I forgot the question.

Oh yeah. God is my husband a . . .

JOE (Scary): Stop it. Stop it. I'm warning you.

Does it make any difference? That I might be one thing deep within, no matter how wrong or ugly that thing is, so long as I have fought, with everything I have, to kill it? What do you want from me? What do you want from me, Harper? More than that? For God's sake, there's nothing left, I'm a shell. There's nothing left to kill.

As long as my behavior is what I know it has to be. Decent. Correct. That alone in the eyes of God.

HARPER: No, no, not that, that's Utah talk, Mormon talk, I hate it, Joe, tell me, say it . . .

JOE: All I will say is that I am a very good man who has worked very hard to become good and you want to destroy that. You want to destroy me, but I am not going to let you do that.

MILLENNIUM APPROACHES

(Pause)

HARPER: I'm going to have a baby.

JOE: Lie.

HARPER: You liar.

A baby born addicted to pills. A baby who does not dream but who hallucinates, who stares up at us with big mirror eyes and who does not know who we are.

(Pause.)

JOE: Are you really . . .

HARPER: No. Yes. No. Yes. Get away from me.

Now we both have a secret.

Prior: One of my ancestors was a ship's captain who made money bringing whale oil to Europe and returning with immigrants—Irish mostly, packed in tight, so many dollars per head. The last ship he captained foundered off the coast of Nova Scotia in a winter tempest and sank to the bottom. He went down with the ship—la Grande Geste—but his crew took seventy women and kids in the ship's only longboat, this big, open rowboat, and when the weather got too rough, and they thought the boat was overcrowded, the crew started lifting people up and hurling them into the sea. Until they got the ballast right. They walked up and down the longboat, eyes to the waterline, and when the boat rode low in the water they'd grab the nearest passenger and throw them into the sea. The boat was leaky, see, seventy people; they arrived in Halifax with nine people on board.

LOUIS: Jesus.
Prior: I think about that story a lot now. People in a boat waiting, terrified, while implacable, unsympathetic men, in

Henry (Woman)

possibly strong, seize . . . maybe the person next to you, maybe you, and with no warning at all, with time only for a quick intake of air you are pitched into freezing, turbulent water and salt and darkness to drown.

I like your cosmology, baby. While time is running out I find myself drawn to anything that's suspended, that lacks an ending—but it seems to me that it lets you off scot-free.

LOUIS: What do you mean?

PRIOR: No judgment, no guilt or responsibility.

LOUIS: For me.

PRIOR: For anyone. It was an editorial "you."

LOUIS: Please get better. Please.

Please don't get any sicker.

Scene 9

Third week in November. Roy and Henry, his doctor, in Henry's office.

HENRY: Nobody knows what causes it. And nobody knows how to cure it. The best theory is that we blame a retrovirus, the Human Immunodeficiency Virus. Its presence is made known to us by the useless antibodies which appear in reaction to its entrance into the bloodstream through a cut, or an orifice. The antibodies are powerless to protect the body against it. Why, we don't know. The body's immune system ceases to function. Sometimes the body even attacks itself. At any rate it's left open to a whole horror house of infections from microbes which it usually defends against.

I like Kaposi's sarcomas. These lesions. Or your throat problem. Or the glands.

We think it may also be able to slip past the blood-brain barrier into the brain. Which is of course very bad news.

And it's fatal in we don't know what percent of people with suppressed immune responses.

(Pause.)

ROY: This is very interesting, Mr. Wizard, but why the fuck are you telling me this?

(Pause.)

HENRY: Well, I have just removed one of three lesions which biopsy results will probably tell us is a Kaposi's sarcoma lesion. And you have a pronounced swelling of glands in your neck, groin, and armpit—lymphadenopathy is another sign. And you have oral candidiasis and maybe a little more fungus under the fingernails of two digits on your right hand. So that's why . . .

ROY: This disease . . .

HENRY: Syndrome.

ROY: Whatever. It affects mostly homosexuals and drug addicts.

HENRY: Mostly. Hemophiliacs are also at risk.

ROY: Homosexuals and drug addicts. So why are you implying that I . . .

(Pause)

What are you implying, Henry?

HENRY: I don't . . .

ROY: I'm not a drug addict.

ANGELS IN AMERICA

have loved him even more. And if he had returned mutilated, ugly, full of infection and horror, she would still have loved him; fed by pity, by a sharing of pain, she would love him even more, and even more, and she would never, never have prayed to God, please let him die if he can't return to me whole and healthy and able to live a normal life. . . . If he had died, she would have buried her heart with him.

So what the fuck is the matter with me?

(Little pause)

Will he sleep through the night?

EMILY: At least.

LOUIS: I'm going.

EMILY: It's one AM. Where do you have to go at . . .

LOUIS: I know what time it is. A walk, night air, good for the . . . The park.

EMILY: Be careful.

LOUIS: Yeah. Danger.

Tell him, if he wakes up and you're still on, tell him goodby, tell him I had to go.

Scene 4

An hour later. Split scene: Joe and Roy in a fancy (straight) bar; Louis and a Man in the Rambles in Central Park. Joe and Roy are sitting at the bar; the place is brightly lit. Joe has a plate of food in front of him but he isn't eating. Roy occasionally reaches over the table and forts small bites off Joe's plate. Roy is drinking heavily, Joe not at all. Louis and the Man are eyeing each other, each alternating interest and indifference.

MILLENNIUM APPROACHES

JOE: The pills were something she started when she miscarried or . . . no, she took some before that. She had a really bad time at home, when she was a kid, her home was really bad. I think a lot of drinking and physical stuff. She doesn't talk about that, instead she talks about . . . the sky falling down, people with knives hiding under sofas. Monsters. Mormons. Everyone thinks Mormons don't come from homes like that, we aren't supposed to behave that way, but we do. It's not lying, or being two-faced. Everyone tries very hard to live up to God's strictures, which are very . . . um . . .

JOE: I shouldn't be bothering you with this.

ROY: No, please. Heart to heart. Want another. . . . What is that, seltzer?

JOE: The failure to measure up his people very hard. From such a strong desire to be good they feel very far from goodness when they fail.

What scares me is that maybe what I really love in her is the part of her that's farthest from the light, from God's love; maybe I was drawn to that in the first place. And I'm keeping it alive because I need it.

ROY: Why would you need it?

JOE: There are things . . . I don't know how well we know ourselves. I mean, what if? I know I married her because she . . . because I loved it that she was always wrong, always doing something wrong, like one step out of step. In Salt Lake City that stands out. I never stood out, on the outside, but inside, it was hard for me. To pass.

ROY: Pass?

JOE: Yeah.

ROY: Pass as what?

ANGELS IN AMERICA

(The Man leaves.)

Roy

ROY: How long have we known each other?
JOE: Since 1980.

ROY: Right. A long time. I feel close to you, Joe. Do I advise you well?

JOE: You've been an incredible friend, Roy, I . . .

ROY: I want to be family. Family, as my Italian friends call it. La Familia. A lovely word. It's important for me to help you, like I was helped.

JOE: I owe practically everything to you, Roy.

ROY: I'm dying, Joe. Cancer.

JOE: Oh my God.

ROY: Please. Let me finish.

Few people know this and I'm telling you this only because . . . I'm not afraid of death. What can death bring that I haven't faced? I've lived; life is the worst. (Gently mocking himself) Listen to me, I'm a philosopher.

JOE: You must do this. You must must must. Love; that's a trap. Responsibility; that's a trap too. Like a father to a son I tell you this: Life is full of horror; nobody escapes, nobody; save yourself. Whatever pulls on you, whatever needs from you, threatens you. Don't be afraid; people are so afraid; don't be afraid to live in the raw wind, naked, alone. . . . Learn at least this: What you are capable of. Let nothing stand in your way.

MILLENNIUM APPROACHES

Scene 5

Three days later. Prior and Belize in Prior's hospital room. Prior is very sick but improving. Belize has just arrived.

PRIOR: Miss Thing.

BELIZE: Ma chérie bichette.

PRIOR: Stella.

BELIZE: Stella for sure. Let me see. (Squirting Prior) You look like shit, why? Yes indeed you do, comme la merde!

PRIOR: Merci.

BELIZE: (Taking little plastic bottles from his bag, handing them to Prior) Not to despair, Belle Reve. Lookiel Magic goopi! PRIOR: (Opening a bottle, sniffing) Booh! What kinda crap is that?

BELIZE: Beats me. Let's rub it on your poor blistered body and see what it does.

PRIOR: This is not Western medicine, these bottles . . .

BELIZE: Voodoo cream. From the botanica round the block.

PRIOR: And you a registered nurse.

BELIZE: (Sniffing it) Beeswax and cheap perfume. Cut with Jergens Lotion. Full of good vibes and love from some little black Cubana witch in Miami.

PRIOR: Get that trash away from me, I am immune-suppressed.

BELIZE: I am a health professional. I know what I'm doing.

PRIOR: It stinks. Any word from Louis?

(Pause. Belize starts giving Prior a gentle massage.)

PRIOR: Gone.

BELIZE: He'll be back. I know the type. Likes to keep a girl on edge.

Louis

LOUIS: I

LOUIS: It's—look, race, yes, but ultimately race here is a political question, right? Racists just try to use race here as a tool in a political struggle. It's not really about race. Like the spiritualists try to use that stuff, are you enlightened, are you centered, channeled, whatever, this reaching out for a spiritual past in a country where no indigenous spirits exist—only the Indians, I mean Native American spirits and we killed them off so now there are no gods here, no ghosts and spirits in America, there are no angels in America, no spiritual past, no racial past, there's only the political, and the decoys and the ploys to maneuver around the inescapable battle of politics, the shifting downwards and outwards of political power to the people...

LOUIS: POWER to the People! AMEN! (Looking at his watch) OH MY GOODNESS! Will you look at the time, I gotta...

LOUIS: Do you... You think this is, what, racist or naive or something?

BELIZE: Well it's certainly *something*. Look, I just remembered I have an appointment...

LOUIS: What? I mean I really don't want to, like, speak from some position of privilege and...

BELIZE: I'm sitting here, thinking, eventually he's got to run out of steam, so I let you rattle on and on saying about maybe seven or eight things I find really offensive.

LOUIS: What?

BELIZE: But I know you, Louis, and I know the guilt fueling this peculiar tirade is obviously already swollen bigger than your hemorrhoids.

LOUIS: I don't have hemorrhoids.

BELIZE: I hear different. May I finish?

LOUIS: Yes, but I don't have hemorrhoids.

BELIZE: So finally, when I...

LOUIS: Prior told you, he's an asshole, he shouldn't have...

BELIZE: You promised, Louis. Prior is not a subject.

LOUIS: You brought him up.

BELIZE: I brought up hemorrhoids.

LOUIS: So it's indirect. Passive-aggressive.

BELIZE: Unlike, I suppose, banging me over the head with your theory that America doesn't have a race problem.

LOUIS: Oh be fair I never said that.

BELIZE: Not exactly, but...

LOUIS: I said...

BELIZE:... but it was close enough, because if it'd been that blunt I'd've just walked out and...

LOUIS: You deliberately misinterpreted! I...

BELIZE: Stop interrupting! I haven't been able to...

LOUIS: Just let me...

BELIZE: NO! What, *talk*? You've been running your mouth non-stop since I got here, yaddadada yaddadada blah blah, up the hill, down the hill, playing with your MONOLITH...

LOUIS: (Overlapping) Well, you could have joined in at any time instead of...

BELIZE: (Continuing over Louis):... and girlfriend it is truly an *awesome* spectacle but I got better things to do with my time than sit here listening to this racist bullshit just because I feel sorry for you that...

LOUIS: I am not a racist!

BELIZE: Oh come on...

LOUIS: So maybe I am a racist but...

BELIZE: Oh I really hate that! It's no fun picking on you Louis, you're so guilty, it's like throwing darts at a glob of jelly, there's no satisfying hits, just quivering, the darts just drop in and vanish.

LOUIS: I

BELIZE: I

LOUIS: I

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BELIZE: I

LOUIS: I

Belize

LOUIS: I was never ambivalent about Prior. I love him. I do. I really do.

BELIZE: Nobody said different.

LOUIS: Love and ambivalence are . . . Real love isn't ambivalent.

BELIZE: "Real love isn't ambivalent." I'd swear that's a line from my favorite bestselling paperback novel, *In Love with the Night Mysteries*, except I don't think you ever read it.

(Pause.)

LOUIS: I never read it, no.

BELIZE: You ought to. Instead of spending the rest of your life trying to get through *Democracy in America*. It's about this white woman whose Daddy owns a plantation in the Deep South in the years before the Civil War—the American one—and her name is Margaret, and she's in love with her Daddy's number-one slave, and his name is Thaddeus, and she's married but her white slave-owner husband has AIDS. Antebellum. Insufficiently Developed Sexorgans. And there's a lot of hot stuff going down when Margaret and Thaddeus can catch a spare torrid ten under the cotton-picking moon, and then of course the Yankees come, and they set the slaves free, and the slaves string up old Daddy, and so on. Historical fiction. Somewhere in there I recall Margaret and Thaddeus find the time to discuss the nature of love; her face is reflecting the flames of the burning plantation—you know, the way white people do—and his black face is dark in the night and she says to him, "Thaddeus, real love isn't ever ambivalent."

(Little pause. Emily enters and turns off TV drip.)

BELIZE: Thaddeus looks at her; he's contemplating her thighs and he isn't sure he agrees.

EMILY (Removing IV drip from Prior's arm): Treatment number . . . (Consulting chart) four.

PRIOR: Pharmaceutical miracle. Lazarus breathes again.

LOUIS: Is he . . . How bad is he?

BELIZE: You want the laundry list?

EMILY: Shirt off, let's check the . . .

(Prior takes his shirt off. She examines his lesions.)

BELIZE: There's the weight problem and the shit problem and the morale problem.

EMILY: Only six. That's good. Pants.

(He drops his pants. He's naked. She examines.)

BELIZE: And. He thinks he's going crazy.

EMILY: Looking good. What else?

PRIOR: Ankles sore and swollen, but the leg's better. The nausea's mostly gone with the little orange pills. BM's pure liquid but not bloody anymore, for now my eye doctor says everything's OK, for now, my dentist says "Yuck!" when he sees my fuzzy tongue, and now he wears little condoms on his thumb and forefinger. And a mask. So what? My dermatologist is in Hawaii and my mother . . . well leave my mother out of it. Which is usually where my mother is, out of it. My glands are like walnuts, my weight's holding steady for week two, and a friend died two days ago of bird tuberculosis; bird tuberculosis that scared me and I didn't go to the funeral today because he was an Irish Catholic and it's probably open casket and I'm afraid of . . . something, the bird TB or seeing him

ANGELS IN AMERICA

It'll be great. I want to make a new world here. So that I never have to go home again.

MR. LIES: As long as it lasts. Ice has a way of melting . . .

HARPER: No. Forever. I can have anything I want here—maybe even companionship, someone who has . . . desire for me. You, maybe.

MR. LIES: It's against the by-laws of the International Order of Travel Agents to get involved with clients. Rules are rules. Anyway, I'm not the one you really want.

HARPER: There isn't anyone . . . maybe an Eskimo. Who could ice-fish for food. And help me build a nest for when the baby comes.

MR. LIES: There are no Eskimo in Antarctica. And you're not really pregnant. You made that up.

HARPER: Well all of this is made up. So if the snow feels cold I'm pregnant. Right? Here, I can be pregnant. And I can have any kind of a baby I want.

MR. LIES: This is a retreat, a vacuum, its virtue is that it lacks everything; deep-freeze for feelings. You can be numb and safe here, that's what you came for. Respect the delicate ecology of your delusions.

HARPER: You mean like no Eskimo in Antarctica.

MR. LIES: Correcto. Ice and snow, no Eskimo. Even hallucinations have laws.

HARPER: Well then who's that?

(The Eskimo appears.)

MR. LIES: An Eskimo.

HARPER: An antarctic Eskimo. A fisher of the polar deep.

MR. LIES: There's something wrong with this picture.

(The Eskimo returns.)

Hannah

MILLENNIUM APPROACHES

HARPER: I'm going to like this place. It's my own National Geographic Special! Oh! Oh! *(She holds her stomach.)* I think . . . I think I felt her kicking. Maybe I'll give birth to a baby covered with thick white fur, and that way she won't be cold. My breasts will be full of hot cocoa so she doesn't get chilly. And if it gets really cold, she'll have a pouch I can crawl into. Like a marsupial. We'll mend together. That's what we'll do, we'll mend . . .

Scene 4

Same day. An abandoned lot in the South Bronx. A homeless woman is standing near an oil drum in which a fire is burning. Snowfall. Trash around. Hannah enters dragging two heavy suitcases.

HANNAH: Excuse me? I said excuse me? Can you tell me where I am? Is this Brooklyn? Do you know a Pineapple Street? Is there some sort of bus or train or . . . ?

I'm lost, I just arrived from Salt Lake. City. Utah? I took the bus that I was told to take and I got off—well it was the very last stop, so I had to get off, and I asked the driver was this Brooklyn, and he nodded yes but he was from one of those foreign countries where they think it's good manners to nod at everything even if you have no idea what it is you're nodding at, and in truth I think he spoke no English at all, which I think would make him ineligible for employment on public transportation. The public being English-speaking, mostly. Do you speak English?