To Engage, or Not to Engage the Audience

A Stage Management Senior Project: *The Terrifying*, and politically charged theater

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Abstract: This senior project in Theatre and Performance consisted of stage managing a experimental political production of *The Terrifying* written by Julia Jarcho. Work on the production was supported by knowledge obtained in academic courses based in collaboration and design techniques.

Table of Contents

ESSAYS REGARDING SENIOR PROJECT REQUIREMENTS:

Artistic Aims........................................................................................................2
Research Paper.................................................................................................9
Technical Essay..............................................................................................22

STAGE MANAGEMENT PORTFOLIO MATERIALS:

Calling Script.................................................................................................29
Welcome Packet Letter.................................................................................65
Calendars: Preliminary....................................................................................66
Calendars: Version 11 and 12; Final Two Editions.......................................72
Class Schedule Conflicts sheet.................................................................74
Playbill covers.............................................................................................75
Production Team and Cast.....................................................................79
Additional Production Crew.................................................................80
Rehearsal/filming images.........................................................................81
Artistic Aims

For *The Terrifying*, our team had a global goal that was politically based. We wanted our production to comment on current societal issues, recognizing the parallels between the play’s fictitious horror world and our current cultural-political system. We hoped the audience would also question what we see as an all too regular complacent attitude towards social change. Finally, we also wanted to produce an ambitious theatrical work without downsizing our designs, despite having constraints due to our departments lack of production concentrations. In this major, the unbalanced production needs a show demands from its production crew (stage managers, designers) is met with little to no supervision or assistance from faculty in the Theatre and Performance department. Production crews suffer due to understaffing, situational issues with staff and materials gathered for projects by students, and lack of training accessibility in our program, yet the demand from directors and creatives has rarely altered. Students wish to create great theatre, and to create great theatre you need the design elements to match the acting abilities; in a department where most students are acting/directing concentrations, how can it be reasonable to ration the few production concentrations off? Why isn’t there an amount of show restrictions for them as well? My suggestion would be to either hire production oriented staff, or to accept fewer actors who are unwilling to work as crew (as Theatre and Performance unfortunately has many of these people).

Political theater demands its audience members to think about their position within society. With the current presidency reversing so many liberal policies (such as social reform on the LGBTQ+ community, support for Planned Parenthood, healthcare programs for the poor, environmental concerns), politically aware theater is key for our country right now. It is the responsibility of the individual, especially theater artists, to not allow the ignorant belief of a few to become our permanent past. We have been aware that history repeats itself for millennia, and that action is the key element to changing the present societal norms and cultural practices. Theater artists should not be exempted from this call to action, especially when we have a captive audience ready to listen. My team aimed for *The Terrifying* to start a conversation, to encourage the audience to think deeply about their civic responsibilities.
First and foremost, Julia Jarcho included political commentary in her script and we wanted to highlight this in a subliminal way. I don’t think each scene specifically spoke on the presidency alone; other topics such as grief, sexuality (and freedom to act on your sexual identity), domestic violence, incarceration, and the challenges we face based on cultural differences were also addressed throughout the play. Of course, Donald Trump was our main focal point; how could he not be when we live in an America ruled by his arguably oppressive policies, the world only seeing us through his eyes? Is a leader not the reflection of the people? In a dictatorship, the leader is not. We chose to add sound clips of Donald Trump’s voice into certain cues, but to not make his voice louder than the story’s. At the end, a stage direction directly notes playing sounds from the 2016 election after Nickel, the journalist, monologues about moving to the city and not feeling safe in society. To further expand the team’s interpretation of the playwright’s hidden message in that stage direction, we chose a specific phrase Trump said regarding sexual assault allegations against him (“the events never happened. Never”) to end the show. The stage a moment prior was lit up overwhelmingly in strobe lights accompanied by yelling and screaming, which abruptly ended in a fade to darkness. The phrase in darkness was meant to invoke a meta reflection for the audience; we hoped they would ask, “what have we witnessed, what was the point?” in the beat of silence before the bows. This is a question I find myself asking nearly constantly when I turn on the news. Why had we, the creative team, chosen to add Donald Trump sound files to end the show? Or, more importantly, why had we, the citizens, allowed this man to become president? I believe it is fueled by fear that we will lose everything we have worked hard for (our homes, money, families, social status) if we advocate for cultural changes and accept the responsibility that the future is in our hands, not the politicians we elect, and not in the wealthy corporate businessmen’s arms.

Americans cannot disregard the need for political advocacy at all ages in this country; no matter how safe we feel, whether it be financially and economically stable, or by the sheer color of our skin, we are not in a safe society when we chose to hold our tongues and take a step back regarding injustices to our neighbors. The Terrifying is a storybook monster we will never face, but the message was still clear; nothing we love is truly safe when monsters have the power. The Terrifying leaves you to explore concepts however you wished and to interpret to your own ability as vaguely or detailed as you could;
our mission was to get those questions circulating. I only have the answers that are my own
interpretation, and that was exactly the artistic aim of the show; to push the audience to think and come
to conclusions on their own. To move forward as a society, we must come to these questions and
solutions not independently, but together if we ever hope to move forward from presidents like Trump.

Recognizing the faults in the current presidency and his rise to power was an initial goal in the
process. My aim was for our production to educate subliminally about the parallels between the play and
the current political world. I wanted to shine a light on these violent every day happenings, and recognize
why and how we as citizens are not acting to alter our own cultural norms that are rooted in violence,
racism, and economic imbalance. We have been desensitized to violence with the thought that violent
acts could never happen to our inner circle of loved ones until something does happen. The town in The
Terrifying is like those we exist in; in any community, people talk about each other; neighbors whisper
about other neighbors, as is the culture of communal living. However, why do we spread rumors like
those that are spread about Annalise going around with her friends and soldiers, instead of hoping to find
the truth? Why do we focus on what we have heard to be true from sources we trust instead of on finding
the real story? I’m aware even the left-leaning news sources that I follow blow things out of proportion.
I take it upon myself to investigate the other side, yet many Americans turn on Fox News and do not
question their biased coverage. On another note, there are soldiers within this town, yet there is no
mention of them trying to hunt down the monster, only that they have been in a war. Could this war be
the war against everyday life within society? Perhaps a direct war they fought in? Could these soldiers
somehow be the homeless veterans of America? The Solider named Anry enters and has only one arm
and embodies The Terrifying in a human form, and he is broken in his physique and speech, the
memories of the childhood innocence Annalise recounts to him seemingly quite distant from this person.
How does war, and every day existence impact the psyche of our citizens, and do we forget ourselves in
the process? I hoped to explore these questions in our table work.

An additional political artistic aim was to discuss the jail system and the injustice towards falsely
incarcerated people, specifically men of color. Within the play, Nickel is locked up without a trial or any
concrete evidence of a crime because he is the outsider, and is later released when they realize he was innocent after all. Why do we lock up those who may have caused a crime without questioning why they were forced to be in the position to commit the crime in the first place? While our legal system claims to ensure fair representation, most of the black men or poor people arrested in America cannot afford a good lawyer, and stand no chance against the word of the prosecutors. How has this society failed its’ own citizens, especially people of color? Sociologists tend to argue that the jail system is a new legal mode of slavery; prisoners commonly return to the jail system, and within it they are forced to work for the state being paid practically nothing in return for hard labor. There is no escaping the system once you are in it; it is not to reform but to contain “dangerous people”. That’s not to say that there aren’t people put in prison that aren’t very violent and deserve to be locked away for a long time; my argument here is that we wrongfully imprison people of color over drug charges and don’t offer them a way of reform, but instead stamp them as a potential threat in society.

Finally, I aimed to understand why many production concentrations within Theatre and Performance struggled to balance their time on multiple shows in one semester, and struggled to put up their senior projects in general. When discussing a show that is so politically charged, and demands you assess everyone and the cultural norms around you, how could I not aim to understand the inner workings of this theatre department as well? I came to this school as an actor, and had no idea the hard work that went into building a set and designing a production for the stage. When a show I was originally cast in needed a stage manager, I gave it a try, and fell in love. I have become an artist who thrives off pouring my heart into my work to show my collaborators that I care; to engage with everyone present in rehearsals and meetings, big or small, show to show, is how I stage manage. There are not many like me in this department (that I know of, that is). Most of the accepted students are actors, who have little to no interest in the backstage realm, and an issue I faced personally was not having stage hands (even though there is a required credit course, these students do not show up for call). When it comes to stage managers and designers, it seems there are a handful of people who know what they are doing and do what they do well. Because of this imbalance, and because these people love what they do and care, this
department devours them, and most, like me, finish a semester of two to four shows without a single day off, battered and exhausted. How I have managed to retain my GPA and sanity astounds me.

What I found to be a common struggle amongst creative teams that they did not have proper resources, administrative help, or knowledge to solve issues regarding organizing rehearsals and orchestrating a tech process in the condensed short period of time we are given. What I have always loved about Theatre and Performance is the independence to explore whatever element of creation within theater you desire, but it is at a cost. Unless you already have knowledge of lights and sound design, you will struggle on your own, referring to references at the library but having few mentors whom you can turn to. I am a lucky individual; I reached out to different departments and wedged my foot in the door when I could. Most are not so lucky. Even with this extra knowledge, without anyone to confide in or ask for their opinion, I had to make all executive decisions on my own. To work with a team is a beautiful thing; I did not get that opportunity as there were no stage managers available when my assistant left the show to take over another senior project.

We do not possess a large enough staff to meet the needs of the amounts of shows and students in this major. Without staff supervision, materials that are needed for builds are often guessed (i.e. buying nails instead of screws for materials going into the deck, making removal difficult, or mistreatment of legs and soft goods that effect the entire department). I won’t even get into the safety liabilities of undertrained students using circular saws; my hope is that with the new building and shop that a carpentry course will be required for B.A. students, though the shop will most likely fall to the B.F.A. Design/Technology students who have an interest in building. As I stated previously, this is a department of mostly actors who want to act and only act. These actors then point the finger at those of us who are production concentrations; they call us disorganized, say we don’t know what we are doing, because in a sense they are correct; we are entirely figuring out how and what to do situationally as it comes at us. There are no rules except that the show must happen, and it must happen in the week you have a slot in one of the two theaters provided.
Peter Sprague enjoys his job, and does it to his best ability; he has stated he is an actor at heart, and we have used and abused the poor man. Because most Theatre and Performance majors are actors, when they are forced to take Production Practicum as a core curriculum, they are disengaged. Most students leave early, skip class, and don’t want to learn. The one credit production class you must take and pass twice people commonly don’t recognize as important. I know when I was still an underclassman, I did not take either courses seriously, though I did add a helping hand since it was better than sitting on the floor with the rest of the class. Just like the political themes I discussed, we do not act and expect change to happen. I think if perhaps some of the shows were run by some of the Design Technology majors, our department could flourish, but because we do not have school funding for our productions, and we are not a BFA, I don’t believe we will get their hands to help.

In conclusion, what I believe The Terrifying did achieve was engagement and constant questioning, and opened my eyes to departmental issues I can only hope will improve in the future. My friends and family who came to see the show needed to understand the elements they did not grasp to fortify the aspects they concretely saw on stage. For example, people did not understand why Annalise walks away with the Solider and returns with blood running down her leg, and why Nickel hands her a sock to wipe it up. When she exits with the solider, he rapes her (which is The Terrifying’s first attempt at killing her and stripping her of her innocence), and the sock was comedic relief. We couldn’t stage a rape on stage; it didn’t fit the show and didn’t need to be so outwardly stated, but it did add layers to Annalise’s position and relationship to Nickel. To me, that moment was always subliminally discussing how women are hurt by men, and jump to their next relationship before improving themselves because we, from a very young age (i.e. a boy hitting books out of your hand when you are little and being told he likes you) are taught that men can and should save us from other men and ourselves. When it came to stage management, in the rehearsals I attended, I gave my full attention to discussions which, I found, added to the engagement of the cast and crew. To be engaged and to be enraptured in these discussions created a collective want to dive deeper.
Fundamentally, our goals were to engage, question, and push awareness. Our goals were to encourage action, or at least start conversations on why we should be more politically involved. The only way to change the world is to confront the issues and fight them until they have changed. Nothing improves without being forward and educated. Within our department, we need to act towards helping each other and understanding we must be realistic with what we have, and our expectations should reflect what we have. We can no longer sit back or be quiet on topics that are not comfortable to discuss, and theater people must be the ones to stand up first.
“However stupid a fool’s words may be, they are sometimes enough to confound an intelligent man.”

-Nikolai Gogol, Dead Souls

In periods of extreme political change such as the advent of communism and governmental control over freedom of speech, novelists have strived to record the human experience of living under political strife. None have done this better than Nikolai Gogol, the “father of Russian surrealism and the grotesque (Delgato),” and George Orwell, one of the most influential English political writers of the twentieth century. Their novels led the path to articulating political viewpoints through their characters and plots. These novelist’s works enhance and expand our understanding of what is happening in our political sphere today. Their commentary on human existence through mental and physical suffering has new relevance in Trump’s America. Throughout this paper, I will discuss Orwell’s novel 1984, and how the story helped shape our view on totalitarianism and inequality today, especially in relation to the American Dream and Donald Trump’s rise to power. I will discuss one of Nikolai Gogol’s surrealist and grotesque stories, The Overcoat, and how the story inspired Julia Jarcho’s play The Terrifying. Within this realm, I will discuss the characters in The Terrifying and the stories in relation to the education system, police violence, grief on an individual basis, and incarceration in America.

To start, I’d like discuss Donald Trump as a president, and then move into a discussion on George Orwell’s novel 1984. In the current American presidency (current to this paper, at least), we are being ruled by an authoritarian leader who advocates for media bias in his support by invalidating all sources who oppose him as “fake news.” This same president announced he would shut the government down entirely if he did not get proper funding for a border wall.
between Mexico and the United States, saying on live television “if we don’t get what we want, one way or the other, whether it’s through you, through military, through anything you want to call, I will shut down the government, and I am proud…the people of this country don’t want criminals and peoples that have lots of problems and drugs pouring into the country” (CNN). Unfortunately, statements such as the above, as absurd as they feel, are what we expect from Donald Trump. This is a man who has never held public office, has made a career as a reality TV star, and exists in the top 1% of wealth in our country. He is not fit to be in such a powerful position when most citizens could never be economically represented or understood by such a person. How did we, a nation founded on the ideals of free speech, escaping dictatorships and religious prosecution, become so consumed with our desire to be wealthy and overvalue someone of wealth like Trump? Why must we equate happiness to pocket size? Americans saw his “small loan of a million dollars” as a stepping stone achievable for any person living in this country, because a white picket fence and the nuclear family structure is no longer enough; to be happy you need fame and money. How have we forgotten our society was created by immigrants, and why does Donald Trump sound like Big Brother from 1984?

If you are unfamiliar with Orwell’s classic novel, Big Brother is the totalitarian leader ruling in the fantastical communist London. Orwell lived during and before World War II as a socialist, and wrote two books famously based in fictitious worlds, one based off Stalin’s rise to power and betrayal of the Russian Revolution, Animal Farm, and the second, 1984, in a “totalitarian future” (“History – Historic…”). The main character of 1984 is named Winston, and the novel follows him as he attempts to be an individual, a rebel, secretly. The novel starts off with him beginning to write in a journal, something illegal to do. In this version of London, the government is constantly watching you via the “thought police” who have secret cameras and microphones hidden everywhere you are. You are not allowed to have rebellious thoughts,
you are not allowed to fall in love, which Winston and Julia, a mechanic, do. The two are in love regardless, and are torn apart by a man named O’Brien, who they wrongfully trusted as a fellow rebel. The two are tortured into compliance, and are broken people continuing to live the way they had hated in the beginning of the book without complaint (Orwell). The goal of this government, which is fighting a war that is not properly described in the book, wants complete control over its citizens to an extreme. The people are constantly fed propaganda in their news from the telescreens they are not allowed to turn off, and participate in the “two minutes hate” where they slander any rebels known and yell and spit about it. What these propagandas enforce is the government’s emotional control for means of complete power.

In America today, we have some of these elements of control, which we may not know the extent of. Numerous times it has been proven that the NSA or National Security Agency taps into our phones, yet it is justified as being for safety precautions instead of what it truly is: an invasion of privacy. Donald Trump has famously vilified immigrants within his presidency, especially those crossing the border of Mexico, and dehumanized them with his verbal propaganda that they are coming with drugs, to rape, and to steal jobs in rallies. ICE, or Immigration and Customs Enforcement, has detained an unknown number of “immigrants”, some of which are U.S. citizens, and when you go on their website, you cannot search any persons under the age of 18. This is concerning; parents have been separated from their children and cannot reunite with them. There is barely any news on what is happening inside these detainment centers, but reports are starting to come back of children being abused, beaten, and sexually assaulted. The American Dream has become success by monetary wealth instead of freedom, and people believe that the life Trump lives can be achieved if you worked hard enough. At the slightest indication that immigrants may be the cause of economic failure, citizens voted for Trump and his anti-immigration policies. There appears to be a certain type of
shame associated with being poor in this country; citizens have too much pride to accept they cannot climb out of their economic stratospheres. Instead of noticing that most money rests with a minority of citizens, Americans focus on work ethic, and believe if you work hard enough you can be anyone. Donald Trump’s success at blaming immigrants was reason enough to many American to believe he was deserving of power. Like Stalin, Trump failed his people. Trump has not yet fulfilled and more than likely won’t fulfill the promise to build his wall. It can be assumed his followers believe the wall will fix their economic burdens; that deporting immigrants and their undocumented cheap labor will force employers to hire citizens instead. Not only has he not completed the wall, he has run out of money in the process, and has failed the people.

Artists are vital voices in political climates like this. Artists do not create for the intention of money but rather for expression. Because they have little to risk, they vocalize during times of injustice most; Orwell certainly did his best to record political injustice through creative fictional worlds of what could be. Nikolai Gogol, a beloved Russian writer, was less politically inclined, and more religiously influenced, especially closer to his death. His works inspired Julia Jarcho when she wrote *The Terrifying* (the character of Nickel has the same personality to Akaky in *The Overcoat*) and many other writers, as his stories explored surrealism and the grotesque that related to the common Russian.

Nikolai Gogol wrote up until his death in 1852, but in the end of his life, he’d lost his artistic fire. He was working on his second half of his novel *Dead Souls*, but decided to burn it instead before taking to bed to die a painful death after nine days of agony (“Nikolai Gogol”). He wrote tales that inspired many Russian writers. His work still resonates with people today, and you can see his influence written into Jarcho’s characters; Nickel from *The Terrifying* is most likely based off a character in Gogol’s story, *The Overcoat*. 


The Overcoat is a short fictional story of about forty pages and centers on the life of Akaky Akakyevich Bashmachkins. He is a Civil Servant clerk born of Civil Servants, who copies documents for a living. Everyone in his department makes fun of him for his simple hard work and old worn uniform; regardless, he is persistent in replicating quality copies, is fearful of promotions (he breaks a sweat the one time he was given such a chance), and is relentlessly bullied. His uniform coat is falling apart, so he decides to get it repaired by a tailor named Petrovich, who insists he buys a new coat. Akaky is convinced to spend a large amount on one, despite worries he cannot truly spare the money to do so.

The day he receives the coat and wears it to work, the fellow clerks can’t help but insist they celebrate his coat at a party. Akaky’s new overcoat surprisingly gives him the respect of those around him who had previously mocked him, and he is not certain how to respond to praises. One clerk offers to throw a gathering at his home during that clerk’s birthday, since this coat, different from Akaky’s usual uniform, was such an achievement. A dinner party is thrown, and the celebration continues with champagne and food. On his return home, he is robbed by men with mustaches while on a darker street. He runs to a police officer to report this crime, who brushes him off to report it the next morning. When he finally speaks to the police commissioner after several failed attempts, the officer belittles the report, blaming this robbery on Akaky for being out late. His coworkers suggest he go directly to “a certain Very Important Person” who was “not important until recently”; his exact job or position is never known, but it is mentioned he has the rank of a general (Gogol, 259-262).

The Very Important Person gets upset by Akaky asking for his help directly instead of going the correct protocol way, which would be through his secretary. He refuses to help, scares Akaky, and Akaky dies a few days later, falling ill with a fever. The story states through hallucinations, he was cursing profusely about the important person. Once he has passed, Akaky
returns as a spirit, stealing men’s overcoats regardless of their ranking, especially police officials. He eventually catches up to the Very Important Person, who was feeling guilty about the way he had treated Akaky, and Akaky steals his overcoat after scaring him, never to be seen again. What the interaction left behind was exactly in Akaky’s spirit; a humbling that persuaded the person to never act so coldly again. Akaky was ignored while alive, and was too easily pushed around; as a spirit, he got his revenge, especially against the police who did nothing to help him in his final days.

*The Overcoat* is a reminder that we are all universally the same, we just wear different coats. We have different amounts of wealth, but our worth should not be measured by status, rather your dedication and spirit. We should not judge someone for their appearance; it was clear Akaky’s coworkers did not know who he was and had no interest in learning who he was until he had a nicer coat. This story also ties into the American Dream; Akaky was happy where he was, didn’t strive for promotions or anything more than what he needed; upon receiving an item that made him feel like he had worth to those around him, and then tragically losing that power, he fell ill and died. As Americans, we are constantly fighting to be good enough and to be on an equal playing field to our peers, and we mock those who are less fortunate than us to feel better about our own financial struggles. We have an expectation enforced by ourselves to constantly climb up social ladders, obtaining more wealth and possessions, until we have found happiness in abundance. The introduction of social media only made this pressure worse; not only do we face discrimination and social isolation in person based off financial circumstances and appearances the way Akaky did; we also get to watch everyone who is fortunate enough to get lucky with their jobs and partners online. Akaky was dehumanized by his peers because he did not desire more than what he needed to survive.
Additionally, this story is a reminder of how government officials treat citizens based off opinion as opposed to by their humanity, and the detrimental effects of being ignored or pushed to the side cost people their lives. When comparing The Very Important Person to our own president, it became clear there are parallels over time of abuse of power. The Very Important Person chose to sit and catch up with his old friend who he had recently seen according to the story instead of hearing the concerns of someone in need. In fact, he nearly forgot about Akaky entirely, bringing him forward to yell at him instead of trying to help him. The book mentions The Very Important Person checked in to find out if Akaky had found his coat after a period passed, but by then Akaky was already dead, the coat never found. If our politicians could hear us on our concerns when we addressed them, we would be able to report crimes and have justice regardless of status; we would then be properly represented and protected by leaders. Instead, our president wishes to place blame inwards on immigrants and the vulnerable; like Akaky, they are easy targets, because they cannot properly defend themselves on their own.

Civilizations formed for protection from the dangers of the uninhabited world, yet we have forgotten our humanity for each other in this country, and institutionalized racism is at the core. We have police and militaries, yet citizens do not feel protected, and we have a high rate of imprisonment. Those in power are commonly wealthy white males; the poor and people of color tend to live in difficult economic stratosphere’s, with little to no upward mobility. These people cannot be properly represented by someone who does not understand the struggle they face every day. Many politicians have rarely struggled in life, if at all. Police officers have been documented in video recordings attacking innocent black Americans with gun shots over small petty crimes that sometimes were never committed in the first place. Our president does not address these murders, and has done nothing to attempt to bring their families justice.
With colonialization, many nations with people of color were governed unjustly for profit, being paid little to nothing. In neocolonialism, we force our prison population to create goods at cheap rates, with pay that parallels what slaves were paid. Forty percent of prisoners in the U.S.A. are black; in fact, America possesses nearly a quarter of the world’s incarcerated, while we only have five percent of the population (“Incarceration nation”). Also, we do not address mental health properly; because of this those who could easily receive treatment instead fall to crime, and wind up in prison. If we can effectively communicate how these corrupt systems are failing our people, we can begin to take steps towards representation for all, not just the wealthy and powerful. Thankfully, there are playwrights who are working to address those injustices through political theater, and Julia Jarcho is one of them.

_The Terrifying_ was first produced in March and April in 2017 in Abrons Arts Center in New York City. Pewter, Nickel, and Cloris were all played by the same middle-aged actor, Annalise was played by a woman of color and was the only person of color on stage, and Vosha was played by an androgynous person who is now out as transgender. For my senior project, our casting included eight actors, and was intentionally meant to represent a wider demographic of American citizens. Pewter was played by a white-passing actor, Nickel by a person of color, Vosha as a white-passing male (whose height overpowers the “teenagers” in the show comedically), Raymour as a female identifying bi-racial actor (this role was gender bent), Annalise as a white woman, Cloris as a white male, Raluka as a white woman, and The Soldier as a person of color.

_The Terrifying_ discusses mundane moments in life that do not coherently work well for individuals, yet are never overturned or altered by the individuals impacted. This play is not meant to be traditional; it is meant to make the audience feel uprooted and uncomfortable. In the Prologue, Jarcho starts the play with a graphic and bloody death after an otherwise tender and
loving moment. Cloris, the jailer, then meets The Terrifying (which is the monster terrorizing the townsfolk) for the first time, and joins in on consuming Raluka, the victim. This starting point sets the scene, while the voice of Annalise describes how The Terrifying consumes your thoughts along with your flesh, and hunts who you care for the most. This creature is a personification of how our emotions and thoughts consume us; to the characters in the show, it is a monster that punishes its victims violently in a vulnerable moment for being another character’s favorite person. This creates tension, and Annalise seems to be entirely focused on the death of her friends throughout the entire show.

The Terrifying monster is like Big Brother in 1984. It either kills those who encounter it or breaks their spirits, as presented in Anry or “The Solider”. This character is described in stage directions as being a soldier missing an arm, who speaks only in voice overs. In the only scene he is present for (though they reference him multiple times in the play) Annalise, who is a teenager, recounts their childhood innocence and scary stories they used to be told at the fair, and his responses are brief. His voice isn’t even his own, it’s entirely a voice over. The reader cannot be certain that these thoughts are Anry’s; rather, this is The Terrifying speaking through him as a vessel.

Vosha, who is described by Jarcho as a young boy, carries a knife with him everywhere at his mother’s instructions. Pewter, the teacher, takes away his “tickler”, which Pewter leaves in the school. He tells Vosha to have his son, Raymour, go with him to get it (Jarcho, 4). This choice seals Raymour’s fate; he was Raluka’s favorite, as it is discussed with Raymour and Annalise prior to Vosha finding him, and The Terrifying is hunting him already. The sun sets, and Raymour successfully gets the young boy his knife and walks him home. This is the moment the religious superstition sets in; Vosha gives Raymour his knife to walk home with, since he had been swearing and using the Lord’s name in vain (one of the ten commandments;
punishment would follow this for very religious people). Raymour, who disagrees with the town’s counsel saying everyone should carry knives to protect themselves, takes the “tickler” only to make Vosha happy, and on his way home is brutally killed by the monster.

Pewter is the teacher to whom the entire first half of the play is titled. He waits for his son’s return all night, and is greeted with his dead body without being able to remember his own son’s eyes. He begins to grieve, does not return to teaching his students, and ultimately blames Vosha for his son’s death, strangling him in front of his classmates.

Pewter, fundamentally, is not happy to be in this town. He finds most students simply are not smart enough to comprehend the subjects he is discussing with them. His ramblings are filled with unfinished sentences and thoughts; there is an implied ending, but his thoughts are non-linear and are hard to follow, especially in scene eleven when he loses himself in his grief, returning to work far too early. In the eleventh scene, he is trying to teach Romanticism a few days after the death of his son. He has chiggers all over his body, which are a small type of mite that in larval state liquify human flesh to consume it, and his sentences flow from the bugs to his lesson plan. To be covered in bugs, you wonder where he has been in the past few days. Has he been at home, not showering, or perhaps laying on Raymour’s grave? Maybe he ran through the woods in search of The Terrifying. His character is wracked with guilt, remorse, denial and even hallucinates his son’s ghost in this same classroom as he rapidly cycles through stages of grief. As Raymour’s father, it is distinctly clear he was not the father Raymour needed, and he is aware. It almost tragically feels as though, with the backstory we gave him, he felt powerless in helping Raymour through life without his wife.

Julia Jarcho has written a story that parallels a struggle American citizens face; we are not given the proper time to grieve within our own work system. You are expected to pick yourself up and continue with life after the loss of a relative, but the reality is not everyone heals.
at the same pace, and grief needs to be experienced and deeply felt to be able to healthily move forward with yourself. Only when Pewter is in the jail cell can he finally vocalize it was not yet Raymour’s time to go. Because he was not given time or treatment for his mental health to return to a normal state after the loss of a family member, he commits a crime, and is put in prison. He is a tortured man, living in an unsatisfactory world of children and townspeople who cannot understand him, spending many days talking to himself, until the day he is murdered in Vosha’s honor by the people of the town. He talks about how Romanticism focuses on how there is only one correct way to go about doing anything, and any wrong way must be punished; this to me reverberates as his belief that he incorrectly was a father to Raymour.

Additionally, the play comments on the false safety we reassure ourselves with weapons; Raluka and Raymour both had knives on their person when they were attacked, and neither fought back in the face of the monster. As Americans with a second amendment right to own guns, we put a lot of trust in our ability to protect ourselves, yet we commonly have the barrel pointed at the people in our own neighborhoods. We would like to believe guns do not need to be controlled, but in 2018 alone, there were more mass shootings than days in the year. A vast majority of these shootings had been in high schools or on college campuses. Despite these facts, we still believe guns are there to protect us. Time after time again, they come back to haunt us. Vosha’s comment on how the counsel advices everyone to keep a knife, and how he isn’t a child, highlights how we are forcing those in high school to adapt to be ready for a shooting at any moment. Instead of going to the root of the real problem, which is the need for gun regulations, we design mats for gyms that can be used as bulletproof shields, and we do active shooter drills at least once a semester. To prepare children for a possible impending doom constantly is stripping them of their childhoods and ability to grow up as a child. All the characters in Jarcho’s story shine a light on this stripping of innocence; they are fighting an
undefeatable monster that will kill them no matter what they do, and have become desensitized to brutality, like Americans have.

Overall, our nation is struggling, but there is hope. Voices never heard before are beginning to gain platforms; Jarcho’s play records how we as Americans in the twenty-first century live under political leaders who do not accurately represent us. We do not have thought police, and are having open conversations about what is hurting our wellbeing, but we are clearly far from being finished with corrupt political rule. As theater artists, we must continue to give voice to those asking for help, and Jarcho is one of the many writers creating challenging work that strives to do so.
Work Cited


Technical Essay

Of all the projects I had pitched to me during the Valentine’s Day “speed dating” senior project two-minute proposal swap, *The Terrifying* was the one that rang out to me the most. I was drawn to how the production would comment on our political system being so closely related to a monster that preys on what you love. Still, I did not join the team during the proposal phase. I had just finished a similar type of politically conscious theatrical work, *The Skriker*, which was focused, in a subliminal way, on climate change and how we have destroyed our planet. I wanted to work on a lighter comedy, though my heart was not in my proposed project, *The Understudy*. I knew my alternative would be on the production of *The Terrifying*; I had joined as stage manager regardless of senior project status, as I felt I could get deeply rooted into it as a production. I had joined because the scenic designer I worked with, Alex Theisen, was signed on, and if she was on board a project, I knew it had to be good. After projects were approved and mine was denied, I signed on to *The Terrifying* fully as my own senior project, and started working on the preliminary paperwork.

Janos Boon was the director with a detailed vision who inspired the entire process. Over the nearly year-long process, the two of us would work well together, but also would struggle to collaborate. Our process, like any theatrical process, was not a smooth road, but I never lost my respect for their direction along the way. Despite any hardships we faced, the way they dictated the world to the actors consistently altered the way I viewed the script; they pushed their actors gently to the correct direction, but also left room for them to grow and manifest their own characters. Janos has been one of my favorite directors to work with, and I walked away from *The Terrifying* with a broader world view thanks to their perspective.

Janos and I had rarely spoken before this show, and I did not know their direction style, their expectations, or their work ethic going into the creative team. When you work on any piece of theater, part of the process is learning what will work for that show and that specific team; as a Production Stage Manager, part of your process must be to learn how your director creates, what their vision entails, and
how to properly understand it so that if any designer or creative member cannot understand the
directorial view, you can aid in the communication so the process works cohesively for each party.

I wholeheartedly believe, had I not signed on to too many productions in the Fall semester, not
knowing Janos going in would not have become an issue. Skipping the aforementioned learning process
due to my absence from rehearsal in the initial staging process left us both with a disadvantage; they did
not fully know my style of stage management, which is and always has been quite hands on and
interactive with the correct allotted time. I did not see their depth of development with the characters and
the world. Because we didn’t know each other and I was so distant in the beginning process, we would
butt heads and misinterpret each other quite often, which was frustrating for both parties. Before all of
that, however, was the summer between Spring 2018 and Fall 2018.

Janos and I had a FaceTime call July 7th, 2018, to discuss our concerns that would in time
unfortunately come true. I was in California at the time, at an internship at PCPA, and I recall it being a
bright sunny day when we addressed potential issues with some of the actors and creative team, we had
asked to join the production. Most of our worries stemmed in losing members of the team and having to
struggle to fill their shoes once the process had begun. When I reviewed my notebook to write this paper,
I realized everything we had talked about being possible problems became realities once the school year
began; there was an actor who we decided to not move forward with, an actor who dropped acting in the
show to focus only on designing, a producer we tried to work with but who unfortunately never helped
out, and my assistant stage manager who dropped the production after the Fall semester was over. With
each issue raised, we worked to resolve and move forward as effectively as possible. We recast our
missing roles, and the seniors took over producing. However, I never found an additional assistant.
Everyone I attempted to interview either couldn’t commit to the show, or cancelled their interview the
day/week prior. I became a team of one and I struggled to meet my own expectations, let alone the
show’s demands.

Auditions began in September, with each one of the six seniors pitching in with our opinions on
those trying out for the four non-senior roles. We had callbacks, and held off on announcing our cast list
until we had our meeting with the rest of the department. Looking back, auditions were a breeze. I was not prepared for what would unfold. Fall semester kicked off, and I was sinking rapidly in outside work for other productions and school work.

By the time Fall was nearly over and two of the four productions I was working on were both put up and striked, I realized I had rarely attended the rehearsals I had roombooked (a process of requesting a room on campus for a certain time frame digitally) for The Terrifying. In fact, I rarely checked in to see how the rehearsals had gone, what had been accomplished, and how my assistant was doing. This was her second show stage managing, and I had entirely thrown her to the wolves to do my job with the expectation that she could figure out managing the way I had; independently. I trusted her to be me after blindfolding her and giving her no instructions on where to go; I left her empty handed with a bare minimum of resources. It felt that since I was doing what I found to be the most stressful aspect, getting a room, this was semi-fair to do. My expectations were for her to be present in rehearsals, to take notes, and to send me a rehearsal report of which I provided a template. This to me was not unreasonable; I did not have the time to be in these rehearsals each week, and was doing all the paperwork in the few moments I had to myself. Communication was the issue; she never reached out and told me I had given her too much responsibility or was confused about anything; she never had questions for me, and her notes weren’t as detailed as I expected them to be. Due to conflicting schedules and the fact that I was extremely overworked, we rarely ever met or spoke, and prior to this process, we had been close friends. For reasons I later found out to be more complicated than simply having too much responsibility, she left the production.

As previously mentioned, I completed calendars and templates to help the show in the future, and did my best to keep the lines of communication open amongst any designer and cast member to the directorial team. The emails I sent were countless; they regarded time conflicts and organization, specifically orchestrating rehearsals (time frames, locations, and who was called), meetings (times, locations), and mediation for any information that had to be transferred from party to party (this could be designer to director, actor to director, designer to designer, etc.). I created paperwork like I would for any
Purchase College production to facilitate collaboration and to give our team tools to succeed. When it came to organization and communication digitally, I excelled. My assistant’s job outlines were, as stated, to be present in the rehearsal room, take notes, and to send out a rehearsal report at the end of the rehearsal, but she had signed on to several other shows, and they were rapidly becoming her priority (which was not told to me at all). Additionally, she was secretly dating my abusive ex-boyfriend, and I suppose the weight of that secret made it difficult for her to reach out to me.

If I were to suggest one thing to future generations of THP students, it would be to set boundaries within your work, and get to know anyone you are about to work with so intensely and intimately prior to signing on. Above all, be adaptable and expect everything to potentially go wrong; have a backup plan if you can. I thought my assistant was one of my best friends, and at the time I believe we were friends; but I clearly did not know her, and did not know her limitations or what was going on in her life; school was challenging, she was not balancing her other shows with this one. She had been with my ex for a month and I hadn’t noticed! How dramatic! Take the time to get to know your creative team; take the time to focus on your senior project. Once I became a team of one, I was forced to be present and engaged with the script, actors, and creatives alike apart from a screen. Thankfully, she stayed on the show until I had time to be in nearly every rehearsal, and for that I am grateful.

For context, during the Fall semester, I was Production Stage Manager of the first Fall Purchase Performance Lab (the third semester Theatre and Performance conducted festival pieces for shorter senior projects, but Fall 2018 was the first time Jack Tamburri was the producer. Bless that man and his bluntness with argumentative students! I was a Deck Stage Manager/ Props Stage Manager for the mainstage production of *Revolt. She Said. Revolt Again.*, and I was solo Stage Managing as well as assistant directing my friend Lex Alston’s senior project *Falling on Purpose*, a one-man devised clowning show. I did not have free time; I did not sleep; I barely ate, and my health did take a toll by the end of the show. For PPL, I was the meeting scheduler (no, there was NOT one time every week or every other week that worked for the majority), orchestrator of scene transitions during tech, and was required
to be present at every show. I worked the front of house with one of the stage managers and the ushers, and created a system for guests entering that worked relatively well by the end of the weekend. I was always standing in the back of the house during the shows to fix any bump that occurred in house or backstage. For *Revolt*, I had to communicate to the props department when the list changed; by the end of the show, I had thirteen versions of the props list. I also was added into moments on stage for that production, and ran stage right during the shows. *Falling on Purpose* did not go up until the following semester, two weeks after *The Terrifying*, and for that show I called certain cues (all sound cues), oversaw props, and was the foley artist for Lex. Most of that show was me running around. Moreover, I also was balancing a part time job at a high-end restaurant and classes.

The lesson I learned after all the hard work I dedicated to all those other projects was that signing onto too many projects is rewarding, but absolutely exhausting. I tend to overbook myself, and this time I understood the impact it had on me, and those around me. My roommates never saw me and had all gotten close while I was running from show to show. My friends felt distant because they had become distant; I didn’t have time for them. Most importantly, my senior project had suffered. As a Production Stage Manager, I needed to be present in most rehearsals to keep morals high and the creative energy healthy, but I was stretched too thin to address issues that were clearly present in detail until after winter break.

Once we reached tech, we ran into crew problems. Since I had no assistant, Alex Theisen stepped in as my Deck Captain to run the crew during transitions mid show. I cannot properly articulate how deeply her helping me altered everything; she did not have to step in, but she did, and it made an enormous difference. I am terrible at asking for help, she didn’t want to watch a crew destroy her set, the rest was history. The issues arose when we found we did not have a consistent crew despite sending an email to Peter Sprague a month prior with specifications of how many people we would need. What would have been perfect was six to ten deck crew members, three or four ushers, and my board ops. I must have cycled through twenty or thirty people who would not respond to emails, or who would state their interest in being a part of the production, and then change their minds once hearing it would be for
the full weekend. In the end, the deck crew ended up being composed of a few of Alex’s friends, and we rotated two deck positions for students who had night classes or work issues.

Another issue became time management; I did not wish to hold actors past a certain time, but our lighting designer worked at a slower pace than I had been expecting building cues. This caused tension amongst the actors who began to feel I had lied to them about the time they were needed in the space since the first tech rehearsal had to be extended without an email at the beginning of the day. On top of this, I was trying to accurately record the sound, light, and projection cues in my calling book, while also live updating the deck run sheet (an item used by run crew backstage for tracking where they need to be and what set item they move during transitions, a document I should have handed off to Alex Theisen, but never did since I already felt she was doing too much). The designers constantly were changing the cues and the placements; I would dismiss actors and stay in the booth until two in the morning trying to accurately record the cues which were usually wrong the next time we reviewed the scene since the placements weren’t solid until Tuesday night; even then, cues were different the next day!

By the time we reached faculty show, I was beaten down. Since the 8th of February, I had been preparing everything, helping with builds and load ins, spending most days in the theater or going to class to immediately return to the theater from 10:00am to 2:00am, my only breaks to sleep when I had to. I did my very best calling that performance, and even then, the number of mistakes were astronomical. I walked out of the booth for the faculty’s notes on the brink of tears; I heard the notes coming back on the improper calling of the show, mistakes I knew I had made that didn’t make sense to an audience out of proper context. I had heard actors talking about me behind my back, crew members talking about me behind my back, and my spirit was broken. I did not quit. I could not continue to fail. The next show, I called it mostly right, missing a few projection timings, and two trees fell onstage (which Alex and the crew quickly jumped to fix). The Friday show I called perfectly; the matinee and the night show on Saturday were even better. Once the faculty show ended, a weight lifted.

When it comes to the technical implementation of a theatrical piece, I act quickly on my feet (especially situationally), but I need to time manage myself far more effectively. I do not have the perfect
formula to manage school, work, personal life, and my art. Throughout this process, my inability to limit my own work load to a reasonable sustainable level came at a cost. My coping mechanism for stress had developed into adding more work to my life, yet I was rarely content with the work I was producing. I disappointed my team and cast time after time, failing to follow through on promises repeatedly. I wasn’t reasonable with myself; I had become a team of one, and I did not know how to ask for help from my team when I needed it because I felt like I had let them down so much already. However, people want to help; there is no shame in being realistic. You cannot run a large technical show alone; don’t try to.

I still have so much to learn; I have so many things to develop and improve. What I know to be true is that I love what I do; I love being involved from creation to finalized product, and I care so immensely for what I work on and who I work with, but I do not allot myself enough time and space to recuperate from school work and personal issues. I had put this pressure on myself to be perfect, to produce quality theater, and I had done an injustice to myself. I had forgotten to enjoy the bumpy road. I had forgotten that people sometimes disagree with your choices and want more from you. I want to openly admit, there are so many aspects of this production and my job that could have been better. I was, in many moments, not reaching the standard to which I hold my peers. Within this production, I learned sometimes it’s okay to disappoint yourself. Sometimes things don’t go how you wished they would; you make the wrong choice, you overwork yourself, but the show goes on. Check pride at the door and skip perfection. Life is far too short to constantly be trying to be perfect in an imperfect world.
Calling Script

The Terrifying
a tale for the stage

by Julia Jarcho
The Terrifying was first produced by Minor Theater at Abrons Arts Center in New York City in March-April 2017. It was directed by the author, with live sound design by Ben Williams. Ásta Bennie Hostetter was the design dramaturg and costume designer, Jason Simms was the set designer; Barbara Samuels was the lighting designer. The cast was as follows:

RALUKA, a teenager
ANNALISE, a teenager
The MEN (played by one actor):
PEWTER, the teacher
NICKEL, a stranger
CLORIS, the jailer; Annalise’s father (?)
VOSHA, a little kid
RAYMOUR, a teenager, Pewter’s son
Heard but not seen: THE TERRIFYING,
also known as SOMETHING; and a SOLDIER

Hanna Novak
Kim Gainer
Pete Simpson
Kristine Haruna Lee
Jess Barbaraglio
Ben Williams

Producer John Del Gaudio; associate producer Gillian Fallon; production manager Ann Marie Dorr; production stage manager Liz Nielsen; production assistant Stephen Smith; assistant director Kelly Lamanna; fight director Alex Gould; assistant sound engineer Eric Bayless-Hall; master electrician Megan Lang.

The titles (of the play and its two Parts) come from an unfinished story by Nikolai Gogol.

Houses closed, give Dante go to cue
Soren on Hanamichi! House lights out, Leandra

Prologue.

The woods around the poor village of V———, sometime in the nineteenth century. Night.

Sounds of the forest. Bats and squirrels. A clearing.
RALUKA appears. Her face is covered. She walks quietly. She has come here, secretly, to meet someone. She looks around. She waits.
She hears someone approaching in the dark. Then stopping.
She tries to see who it is.

RALUKA
Raymou?

Silence.
RALUKA takes a knife out of her pocket.
In the darkness, the figure of a large middle-aged MAN (CLORIS) appears.
RALUKA doesn't recognize him; it's not who she expected. She shrinks back. She looks around. She is about to flee the way she came when—

CLORIS.

Raluka.

The voice is familiar. She pauses. She turns back around.

RALUKA

Where's Raymoun?

CLORIS

Raluka, I...

He holds something out to her. Flowers.

She looks at him.

She puts the knife away.

She comes closer.

The air begins to glow a little. Gently, a warm, kind breeze. The soft sound of a well-shaped mouth about to tell a bedtime story. Both RALUKA and CLORIS are suddenly suffused with peace. A moon-white moth floats out of the flowers in CLORIS's hand and alights on her arm. She smiles.

But SOMETHING is nearby. "Help me! Help me!"

But it breathes. It sniffs.

RALUKA and CLORIS both turn to stare up at it. It is very big.

ROAR. RALUKA SCREAMS. Blackout.

Sound of something being dragged across the ground and into the brush. Sound of eating.

A little while later, the moon comes out. CLORIS is still standing, frozen, where he stood. He is watching the eating. And something is happening in his soul.

The sound of eating pauses. We hear the animal's breath. CLORIS and the beast lock eyes. He trembles in fear.

It seems to ask him...

THE TERRIFYING

Khrrrr?

Almost unbelieving, terrified, CLORIS walks towards it, to the body.

He stops before the body and kneels. He sees carnage.

He realizes he's still holding the flowers. He sets them down. RALUKA's body is in tatters. He lays a hand on her, brings it back up, covered with blood.

He sniffs the blood on his hand. He tastes it.

He bends down. He begins to eat. THE TERRIFYING eats too.
We hear ANNALISE:

ANNALISE
The logic of the monster was well known. When it devoured you, not only your flesh but your desire would get into its bloodstream; and its next victim would be the one you loved. Or so they used to say.

Part One: The Teacher.

Music.

Scene 1. PEWTER, the teacher.

PEWTER
I've asked a question.

PAUSE.
It hangs in the air. I look out at them.
I look at each one of them.
One by one they look away.
They don't know the answer. And it's my fault. I've failed to show them.
But why should I show them? What's the matter with them? Nobody showed me, I didn't need to be shown, I knew it.

BEAT.
 Didn't I? Know it?

BEAT.

What is it?

BEAT. Sound of whispering.

Someone.
You in the
in the
Hello?

The whispering stops. In his home. It's late afternoon. PEWTER is sitting at the table, perhaps with a cup of tea.

Sounds like I'm telling a dream. Not at all. Every day. Every minute when I am on the job; every second of that time; unrelenting absolute

Little VOSHA has come in.

PEWTER
Vosha.

VOSHA
Were you doing something?
And I'll have to go to work on my uncle's farm so we can buy more chickens and I won't have time to do my homework and then you'll be mad...

PEWTER
You can assure her that your tickler's double-triple-locked-up in our special unbreachable supply cabinet, and that you'll get it back tomorrow.

VOSHA
But she won't let me walk to school without it! She says it's the only way I'm safe!

PEWTER
Then don't tell her you've lost it.

VOSHA
I didn't lose it! You took it! Sir.

PEWTER
I didn't take it. I—

*He stops himself.*
Why don't you go and find Raymour and tell him I said to take you over and get it. He has the key to the school.

VOSHA turns to go. Stops.

VOSHA
Does he have the key to the supply cabinet?

PEWTER
There is no supply cabinet.

VOSHA
?!

PEWTER
Your mother doesn't know that, does she?

VOSHA (thinking about this. Exits running):

Thank you sir!

PEWTER looks out the window. It is beginning to get dark.

PEWTER (calls)

Vosha!
Too late. To himself:
Try to walk in the center of the road. Away from the bushes.

Scene 2. RAYMOUR and ANNALISE by the river.

RAYMOUR
And then what happened.

ANNALISE
Could I be anyone?

RAYMOUR
Sure. *Wrong answer.*
Or wait. For me?

ANNALISE
For you?

RAYMOUR
I don’t understand.

ANNALISE
Could we be anyone. Does it not matter.

RAYMOUR
I don’t think there’s anyone else around here we could be.
*BEAT.*
There’s no one else I’d come to the river with.

ANNALISE
Anymore.

RAYMOUR
No! *BEAT.*
Could I be anyone for you?

ANNALISE
I thought you didn’t believe them.

RAYMOUR
I don’t.

ANNALISE
Then don’t ask me that.
VOSHA
Shows what you know. We're all supposed to have them.

RAYMOUR
Ridiculous. Says who?

VOSHA
The council for one.

RAYMOUR
Says little kids should carry knives?

VOSHA
I wouldn't know about little kids. Are you coming to the school or not? It's a long way back to our place and my mom's gonna raise a smell if I'm out in the dark.

RAYMOUR
You promise not to stab me?

VOSHA
Long as you don't try anything funny.

RAYMOUR laughs. BEAT. VOSHA giggles. They exit.

By the river, the sun is setting.
SOMETHING stalks by.

Scene 3. The highest point of the road, beside a cliff. It's a winding road and from here you can see most of the village. NICKEL, a stranger, stands in the twilight, gazing at the view below.

NICKEL
The logic of the monster is well known.

ANNALISE walks by.

Good evening.

ANNALISE
Good evening.

She exits.

NICKEL looks after her, then back out over the town.

After a moment, ANNALISE returns.

NICKEL
Good evening.
The Terrifying:

Dante — you have two cues coming up, be ready after 9.57.

ANNALISE looks at NICKEL.

ANNALISE
Good night.

NICKEL
Good night, beautiful girl.

ANNALISE exits.
The moon shines.
NICKEL looks up at it, then out. He takes out his notebook and makes some notes.

Scene 4. RAYMOUR and VOSHA are talking to Vosha’s mother (unseen), who is standing in the doorway of her house.

RAYMOUR
It was my fault, Ma’am. See I asked Vosha to stay late and help with preparations for the fair.

VOSHA
He bullied me.

RAYMOUR
That’s not true. You know Vosha has a natural inclination to want to help out. It’s really

The door slams.

VOSHA
Sorry. She’s mad ’cause it’s late.

RAYMOUR
Well go on in before she gets madder.

He starts to exit.

VOSHA
You want some mash? She probly kept it warm for me.
RAYMOUR
Shush.

VOSHA
But you know how it works! When it gets you, it comes after the one you l—

RAYMOUR
We were just friends. 
*RAYMOUR takes the knife.*
Make sure and find me tomorrow. Before school ends.

VOSHA
I will.

RAYMOUR
Good night.

VOSHA
Sorry I said you bullied me.

RAYMOUR
Good night, Vosha.

VOSHA
Good night.

VOSHA exits into the house.
*RAYMOUR looks at the knife. He pockets it. He goes on his way.*
*The moon shines.*

Scene 6. *The house where ANNALISE lives with her father, the jailer CLORIS. The kitchen table right after dinner: their empty plates and cups, a large half-empty bowl of mash, a candle to light the room. CLORIS is sitting, his chair pushed back from the table, digesting. He strokes the sides of his face, where his beard would be. ANNALISE is working on her story while clearing the table.*

ANNALISE
She could find no hint as to whether he had come this way.
The mud was full of footprints, but. When she bent down to look, it was clear that they had all been made by children and goats.

CLORIS
What’s that?

ANNALISE
Nothing.
She starts to exit with the dish of mash.

CLORIS
Wait.

ANALISE
What?

CLORIS
Lemme look at you.
He does. For a while.

Ok.

ANALISE
Dad, if I was Rahuka, would you...

CLORIS startled.

CLORIS
What?

ANALISE
Rahuka. If...

CLORIS
Oh yeah poor girl just awful just horrid.

He stands up.

ANALISE
But would you rather see what had happened or not see, and have to imagine, and never know.

CLORIS
Not think about it, that's what.
Be back late.

CLORIS leaves.
ANALISE thinks for a minute. She eats some of the mash.

ANALISE
The sun was setting behind a cloud. But in the last of its light, she spied, far off, the smoke rising from the houses of the City. She felt a chill.

A knock on the door. - SQ 116
ANNALISE
Want more?

NICKEL
Thank you.
She wonders if that's a yes.
Thank you. That—
(not sure of the expression)
hit the spot?

ANNALISE
What are you going to do?

NICKEL
I'm a journalist out on assignment. Rumors of terror out here in the countryside, old lady tales of
a ravakening beast called the Terr—
the Terr—
Well and I have ideas of my own. Nickel.
He puts out his hand; she gives him back the cup. He puts it down again.
Could I—
(not sure of the expression)
sack out on your floor?

ANNALISE
Oh. Uh. It's a good idea but, it's just me here now. My father's at the tavern. I don't think he
would...

NICKEL
Yes yes right. Of course. Provinces. Purity, ok.

ANNALISE
But you shouldn't go back out there, even armed. Maybe in the root cellar.

NICKEL
What?

ANNALISE
With the bees? I'll give you an extra blanket. I'll have to shut you in so he doesn't think you had
sex with me. Is that all right?

BEAT.

NICKEL
Yes of course.

They go off to the cellar.
Scene 6. RAYMOUR is walking home. The moon is covered by clouds. He hums a little song to himself.

RAYMOUR
My only one
it is
in your eyes
you are
in my life
no business
of them

A noise. RAYMOUR freezes. He takes out Vosha's knife. He starts another verse:

When I come
it is
in your eyes...

Another noise. A girl's voice takes up the song:

GIRL'S VOICE (vo)
you are
in my eyekkkkkh [the last syllable is distorted into something like a growl]

RAYMOUR
Annalise?

GIRL'S VOICE (vo)
"Annalise?" "Annalise?"

Sound of someone gagging in contempt.

RAYMOUR
Rahuka...?

RALUKA'S VOICE (vo)  
say that again
you make it sound like it's not just my name by accident
like it's my name because of me

RALUKA appears behind him.

RAYMOUR
Who is it?

RALUKA'S VOICE (vo)
or like it's your name
I was waiting for you

RAYMOUR
Sissy? Vinca?

GIRL’S VOICE (vo)
Don’t tease. Tell me my name again.

RALUKA disappears. RAYMOUR looks down. There is a pool of blood at his feet. THE TERRIFICING attacks. It drags him into the bushes. All the light is gone and RAYMOUR is gone too.

Scene 7. PEWTER’s house. Daybreak. PEWTER has not slept much. He talks to himself while he gets ready to go to work.

PEWTER
Where is that boy.
Tries it again.
Where is that boy?
And again.
Where is that boy gotten off to now?
(Gotten off to? Nmm.)

Threatening:
Young man. I understand you have your… but is it really wise to stay out all night, when…?
Young man. Son.
My son. Son.

A telephone rings.

Scene 8. The same. a couple of hours later. PEWTER and ANNALISE with Raymour’s remains.

PEWTER
Why don’t you sit.

She sits. Silence.

ANNALISE
Maybe… you should sit, sir.

PEWTER
Why? Is there something rigged up overhead? A bucket of creepy-crawlies?

ANNALISE looks up at the ceiling.

ANNALISE
No, it’s safe.
PEWTER
SAFE?
Stop that.

ANNALISE
I'm sorry.

PEWTER
What color were his eyes. When they were intact. Green? Could they have been green, or was that the... cat?
I know who can tell me, his beloved the Tramp. "The Tramp," as I call her. Don't tell her.

ANNALISE clears her throat.
It's her. The Tramp.
What? Speak up.

ANNALISE
There's no one here.

PEWTER
No one here. No one here in these wastes. Only pigs and whores and—look.
Look!

ANNALISE
We wanted to go to the City—

PEWTER
A Honey Moon?
A Honey Moon?
You may, you may honey-moon with my son if you can answer the following question.
What color...

BEAT. He loses track.

ANNALISE
Gray.

PEWTER

Scene 9. VOSHA by the river, trying to sharpen a stick with a rock. ANNALISE enters.

ANNALISE
PEWTER
SAFE?
Stop that.

ANNALISE
I'm sorry.

PEWTER
What color were his eyes. When they were intact. Green? Could they have been green, or was that the... cat?
I know who can tell me, his beloved the Tramp. "The Tramp," as I call her. Don't tell her.

ANNALISE clears her throat.
It's her. The Tramp.
What? Speak up.

ANNALISE
There's no one here.

PEWTER
No one here. No one here in these wastes. Only pigs and whores and—look.
Look!

ANNALISE
We wanted to go to the City—

PEWTER
A Honey Moon?
A Honey Moon?
You may, you may honey-moon with my son if you can answer the following question.
What color... 

BEAT. He loses track.

ANNALISE
Gray.

PEWTER
A-a-ah. Green, I knew it. 

They stand there quietly.

Scene 9. VOSHA by the river, trying to sharpen a stick with a rock. ANNALISE enters.
ANNALISE
Go ahead on, Vosha. I don’t want anyone looking for you here.

VOSHA
They won’t look for me.

ANNALISE
I don’t want you here.

VOSHA
Did Raymouir like you the best?  
_Significantly:_
’Cause Raluka liked him a lot. That’s why it happened, y’know. After it gets someone it comes after whoever they—

ANNALISE
Raluka was a fat-faced cunt.  
_This startles both of them._
We were like sisters.

VOSHA
Yeah but. Were you Raymouir’s favorite?

ANNALISE
Of course.

VOSHA
Tiny Molovski said Raymour only went around with you because of what you like to do with the soldiers.

ANNALISE
Soldiers?

VOSHA
I said I hope that’s true because if he really did like you like Raluka liked him, then now… you know… you better watch out—

ANNALISE
Vosha get the god damn christ hell out of here!

_VOSHA gasps. Then:_

VOSHA
Fat-faced cunt!

_VOSHA races away._

_w sq 132,5 = 136_
ANNALISE sits down.

ANNALISE

It was dark when she finally reached the gates of the City.

"I know what they'll be like here," she said to herself as she walked past the first of the houses.

"They won't notice me at all, because I'll seem no different from them. That will make it easier."

She called out, but there was no answer, so she just slipped through.

As if summoned by her story, the soft, glowing note that we heard in the Prologue returns.

ANNALISE is tired.

She falls asleep.

A silver-white moth flutters by.

The sun rises to its highest height; no more shadows.

Something is lurking very near. Where? Not in the shadows; there aren't any.

And SOMETHING approaches the sleeping ANNALISE.

A rustle.

ANNALISE sits bolt upright.

The root cellar!

Scene 10. NICKEL has been locked up in the root cellar this whole time.

NICKEL

The candle had gone out hours ago. When Nickel began to feel the stirrings of hysteria, he drew on past experiences for support. He reminded himself he was no stranger to tight places, literally or and he determined to ignore the pressure in his bladder and those other ticklish feelings brought on by sitting alone in the dark as a boy

concentrate instead on the job he had been sent to do: It Prowls the Provinces. You may have heard that the simple folk of our southeastern region live in fear of a (etc.) but when I, but when this author had the fortune to sojourn among the village folk, he found that there was more, much more... His mind had turned to its favorite occupation which was pondering how he might finally transcend the drivel they assigned him and produce a True Work of Thought worthy of the Revolutionary Spirit which was now growing amongst the disenfranchised peoples throughout the world and possibly even here

even here

BEAT.

A Month Among the Beetles.

Big Trees and Round Faces: A Journey Into the

BEAT.

Simple But warm... thighs

The cellar door opens. ANNALISE is there.

ANNALISE
I'm so sorry
Something happened.

He looks up at her. She looks angelic in the light of the doorway. Auratic moment.
He whispers:

NICKEL
Deliver me.

She runs down to him. He grasps her by the arms.

I—

Have to relieve myself.
I want to talk to you. About everything. I'll see you again.

He exits.

PAUSE.

She looks down at her arm and gasps. It's covered with... blood?
ANNALISE sees a half-eaten beet on the floor.
She picks it up and considers eating the rest of it.

Scene 11. Afternoon, a few days later. The classroom. VOSHA is one of the students. The teacher is late. VOSHA whispers to a classmate:

VOSHA

But Sissy said her aunt can't get out of bed today because of...

inaudible. The classmate says something outrageous and VOSHA SHRIEKS with delight. Then:

No, no way. Think about it if that happened to you my ma says he's gonna be too sad for the rest of the year and he should just go back to the City

PEWTER enters. The students hush.

PEWTER

Nice to see you all again. Nice to be back at work hard at work Romanticism. Let's all get used to the word. / Romanticism.

VOSHA

Romanticism.

PEWTER

Good. It's—

PEWTER stops himself in the face.
Chiggers. Awful this season. Romanticism, in the larval state, attaches to the skin. Chews on you a little and falls away. Normally. Once grown up, well: no longer a threat. No longer an... irritation.

**PEWTER scratches his neck vigorously.**

Why is everyone afraid.

**VOSHA raises hand**

Of Romanticism.

**VOSHA lowers hand.**

Let's have a brief history, just very brief, since I know how you like to complain. In essence, we are talking about a phenomenon that reacts. Reacts. To, to, to what came before. Yes, Vosha.

**VOSHA**

Me?

**PEWTER**

What was your question or your... your request.

**VOSHA**

I didn't, raise my hand.

**PEWTER**

Ah, pardon me I thought. Thought you were flagging me down.

**VOSHA**

No Sir.

**PEWTER**

Going on. Reacts. Now this sounds very obvious, doesn't it, obvious, reacts, what doesn't, who doesn't, who wouldn't, what wouldn't, nothing, no doubt. But that is, let me stress this, write this down please, that is a very recent way of thinking. Whereas previously there was a, a. What seems now.

What seems from our vantage point now to be

You all look confused. It makes me

*He sighs.*

Let me go back. Yesterday, no, whenever, whenever it was, we were speaking of the so-called classical era in which, if I do say so myself, what I said was, write this down, the artists of the day like the scholars possessed a certain confidence that all of this would cohere. And that we would manage to account for everything ad infinitum. So that for example if one wanted to... if one wanted...

**BEAT.** *He claws at the back of his head, seems to catch something, examines it.* Leptotrombidium or I mistake me. From the far east.

*He releases it.*

Everything. If one wanted to make a piece of, let's say, let's say, anything

poetry

(of which I know you're all terribly fond, joke)
Chiggers. Awful this season. Romanticism, in the larval state, attaches to the skin. Chews on you a little and falls away. Normally. Once grown up, well: no longer a threat. No longer an... irritation.

PEWTER scratches his neck vigorously.

Why is everyone afraid.

VOSHA raises hand.

Of Romanticism.

VOSHA lowers hand.

Let's have a brief history, just very brief, since I know how you like to complain. In essence, we are talking about a phenomenon that reacts. Reacts. To, to, to what came before. Yes, Vosha.

VOSHA
Me?

PEWTER
What was your question or your... your request.

VOSHA
I didn't raise my hand.

PEWTER
Ah pardon me I thought. Thought you were flagging me down.

VOSHA
No Sir.

PEWTER
Going on. Reacts. Now this sounds very obvious, doesn't it, obvious, reacts, what doesn't, who doesn't, who wouldn't, what wouldn't, nothing, no doubt. But that is, let me stress this, write this down please, that is a very recent way of thinking. Whereas previously there was a, a. What seems now

What seems from our vantage now to be

You all look confused. It makes me

He sighs.

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wanted?

BEAT. He claws at the back of his head, seems to catch something, examines it. Leptotrombidium or I mistake me. From the far east.

He releases it.

Everything. If one wanted to make a piece of, let's say, let's say, anything poetry.

(of which I know you're all terribly fond, joke)
well there would be a right way to do it. And very many, very many ways of of. Of doing it wrong. And these were and these ought to be punishable. Because, if you are going to do something—GOD—

EGASP goes up.

No no I was going to say god demands that you do it as well as god would want you to do it. And since god himself is perfection itself, it follows it follows

PAUSE. He turns to face the board and hides his face in his hands.

Something changes in the air.

After a moment, PEWTER turns back around, in order to pick up where he left off.

Because you see the assurance that things are not that way, that there is no correct procedure; that in fact we—

RAYMOUR is there.

PEWTER sees him and goes pale. He wobbles. In a hoarse whisper:

Raymour?

VOSHA raises hand again.

SIR?

PEWTER

to RAYMOUR

My boy, my boy, I can’t make out what you’re saying—

VOSHA

Sir, there’s no one there.

PEWTER

Quiet, Vosha. Raymour, Raymour, please speak up, I don’t understand you...

VOSHA

There’s other kids who look like Raymour because we share the same Ethnic Characteristics—

RAYMOUR begins to fade away.

PEWTER

Vosha, shh—

VOSHA

Like there’s mute Keoff, or Anry who’s away at the wars now, lots of people look like people, but Raymour’s—

PEWTER

VOSHA be QUIET

Turning to VOSHA.
You and your tickler (\(\frac{\text{\textcopyright}{14}}{\text{\textcopyright}{14}}\))

Advancing on VOSHA.

You and you really needed your tickler, did you, or your pig of a mother was going to beat you, well did she beat you? Did she?

VOSHA
Sir I/ gave it to him so he could—

PEWTER
Did you feel SAFE once you had it you WORTHLESS little SHIT

PEWTER grabs VOSHA by the throat and chokes. VOSHA struggles.
PEWTER chokes VOSHA to death as the other children watch in horror.
There is a commotion. We hear Vosha’s mother wailing. The villagers begin to form a mob.
The clank of a jail cell door.

Scene 12. Dusk. PEWTER is in jail. A rusty bucket: a piece of scrap paper with a hard lump of bread.

PEWTER
I’m a terrible teacher.

He sits and does nothing.
Shadows grow.

A single rotation of the sun.

Tragedy: from the ancient tragos, goat. The sacrifice.

Lights up on the hall outside. CLORIS, the jailer, leans against the door to Pewter’s cell. He is unkempt; almost a little unmade; but full of energy and cheerful malevolence.

CLORIS
Shame you’ll miss the fair. We do have a rich feel for merrymaking here, you can’t deny that.
Course you have your own idea of fun, don’tcha teacher.

No answer from PEWTER.

Like to read, no harm in that. My daughter, she likes that kind of thing. Of course she kept company with your own boy. Nice enough kid. Not much of a danger, if you know what I mean.
Not like me at that age. Now no tellin’ who she’ll go around with. Yeah it’s a shame.
Still, we’ve all lost someone, teacher. Most of us more than one. Plenty of us seen everyone we love eaten up by the war, by the fever, the draught, the molds. It’s no excuse, teacher, for what you did. No excuse for that. Little throttle \(\frac{\text{\textcopyright}{137}}{\text{\textcopyright}{137}}\)

throbbin in your hands
Snap

CLORIS is overtaken by a wave of excitement which turns into pain in his jowls. It passes.

Tell you a secret: She’s not my daughter. And uh \(\frac{\text{\textcopyright}{130}}{\text{\textcopyright}{130}}\)

CLORIS unlocks the cell door. It swings ajar.
I wouldn't count on making it to the scaffold.

**CLORIS exits.**

**PEWTER back in his cell:**

**PEWTER**

Hey!
You left it open, hogbrain!
I might I might abscond and then where
where would

*No answer.*

The shadows grow.

**PEWTER closes his eyes.**

Time passes.
He falls asleep.

Slowly, the music from the “festival” evolves into something else.
The air begins to glow a little. Faintly, a note of warmth, of... forgiveness? And
then, unlikely as it is, a breeze.

**RAYMOUR appears.** In his sleep, **PEWTER**’s face relaxes. He almost smiles. He
calls out softly:

Raymou... 

But SOMETHING is approaching. In his dream, **PEWTER**’s pleasure turns to
horror.

No it’s not time yet. Not time yet!

**PEWTER has woken himself up. RAYMOUR is gone.**

The **TOWNSFOLK** burst in with their weapons and farm implements. The other
thing has fled.

Oh thank God you’re all here! It’s here, it’s in here, you’ve got to—You must—What are you
doing? No!

Shouts and cruel laughter. **PEWTER** screams as the **TOWNSFOLK** put him to
death.

**Interlude.**

**Part Two: The Success of a Mission.**

Scene 13. Ten days have passed. In the distance, wan music from the last day of the fair. It’s
afternoon, but we’re in a dark place. Perhaps a tavern? **CLORIS** is telling a story to unseen
companions.

**SCENE BEGINS:**

**CLORIS**

Truth is I don’t really know. I mean: I was off in the war. At the war. That was before Old
Mankoff died and they sent word would I come back and mind the jail. It’d been a couple years.
Mails couldn’t be trusted. You’d get a letter, two thirds of it been torn away en route, used as
you-know-what, all it’d say was My Dear, My Handsome Dear, I have some Handsome News,
whatever, end of page, can’t read, can’t read in that fog we get anyway out there.
But I did return. And when I arrive there's my best girl and there's, classic, a little one. This is
your Daughter, she says, your Daughter, looks just like you, look, that same emptiness, I don't
know, I said. I don't think so; I don't know. I don't

By this point, we should understand that this is not a tavern; that we are
someplace stranger; and that CLORIS is not addressing any old drinking
buddies.

Fuck it, right?

THE TERRIFYING

FUCK IT

CLORIS

Best girl dies of the fever, well. There's her girl. Mine too. My kitten.
She can run around with her schoolfellows, I don't mind. Always comes back. Needs the urhrh
structure. And
I can tell she doesn't let them. HaHAKH too bad for you you're one of your kind, 'cause you're. Missing out on life's greatest
unhh. What you do for fun, hey? What you do for
Heah only kidding, I know. What you do, I know.

He sneers a look at its face.

So who's next? Don't mean to pry. But I've got some ideas if you. Don't mean to presume. Just I
appreciate your letting me pass the time with you

It kind of GROWLS—wetly.

Oh look. I. Hoo.
Wanna hear my ideas? Annhh
His ideas dissolve into something warmer.

Yeah fuck it. Get drunk
in the middle of the day
middle of the fucking afternoon
eat fucking
shit
snails, don't even
roast'em

It RUMBLES

Bellies
nice soft bellies
the white
ribs, warm and almost like
flex, flexible

THE TERRIFYING

WHAT ARE YOU

CLORIS

Nothing
THE TERRIFYING
WHAT ARE YOU

CLORIS
YRRRRS

CLORIS clutches the side of his face. A tusk is growing there.

Scene 14. The town square. ANNALISE and one of the soldiers have wandered away from the crowd.

ANNALISE
People are always dying anyway. You can't start canceling everything.

SOLDIER
Yeah. SQ 15 0

ANNALISE
And the little ones, it's their favorite time of year. They shouldn't be punished. Remember they used to tell us the gypsy women can tell if you're a motherless child? They'll put poppies in your tea and stuff you in a sack and sell you to the soldiers. That was the most exciting thing about the fair.

SOLDIER
SQ 15 0, 0

'Ves a load.

ANNALISE
(Remembering he's a soldier)
Of course, I know, you would never

SOLDIER
SQ 15 0, 0

'Ves orphans all over, get twenty miles out. Take your pick. Who'd pay for 'em.

ANNALISE
Well
maybe for a really good one.

SOLDIER
SQ, 15 0, 0
(not really convinced)

Yeah.

ANNALISE
It's just something they told us to scare us.

They look at something in the distance.
That's Vosha's mother with the chickens. Poor thing. I guess there's as many leftover mothers as orphans almost. You'd think they could all just rearrange themselves to match up. People are much too particular.

Yeah.

Well I'm not.

I forget.

Sure.

You don't believe me? Why would I lie?

I believe you. What I care.

Everyone in this town is a liar. And they're liars with no imagination. Anry, I've known you since we were little and you'd come by the jail Sunday mornings to fetch your dad.

I have to be back twenty minutes.

It won't take that long. Will it?

I want to get some tobacco too.

Ten minutes later, Bernard motions to leave.
Suddenly there is a sound from behind a tree. ANNALISE freezes. NICKEL emerges. He is very embarrassed.

NICKEL
I was just. Nap. Didn’t see a word, or. Out like a, what is it, fire?

Silence.

ANNALISE
Did you enjoy the fair?

NICKEL
I yes. Is it gone?—over?

ANNALISE
It’s the last day. The gypsies are leaving.

NICKEL
Soot. I meant to buy some tobacco.

ANNALISE
You can still get it, if you hurry.

NICKEL
Oh, it’s all right.

PAUSE. NICKEL notices a little bit of blood running down ANNALISE’s leg. He wishes he had not noticed, but his wish comes too late to prevent her seeing his noticing.

You have a little—

ANNALISE
Oh.

NICKEL hands her an improbable (gayly colored) handkerchief, which is actually a sock.

No...

NICKEL
Please, I have squads. My great indulgence.

She takes the sock and dabs at the blood. For a second she wonders if she should hand it back, but she puts it away in her pocket.

ANNALISE
Thank you.
Yes, I want to go where it's nothing.

NICKEL
Everyone's walking around with—hobbling, careening with—indigestion! Constipation! Wandering womb! Not like here where you're born sickly you either get well quick or you kiss the hill. You'd be—

She kisses him.
She kisses her back.
I'm afraid you're gonna be so disappointed.

She looks off across the square:

ANNALISE
That's Sissy and Vinke staring. I ought to go home and feed the pigs before we go.

NICKEL
I'll walk with you.

ANNALISE
No, better not. Meet me by the river in an hour.

NICKEL
All right.

ANNALISE
wipes a little more blood from her leg, and exits.
NICKEL nods to the girls across the square. We hear their giggles in the wind.

Scene 15. Deadscape: The Audience. YOSHA is watching a movie: "The Terrifying." YOSHA is enjoying himself very much.

PEWTER stumbles into the theater, tired and unkempt after his stygian journey. He sees the movie and gives a little scream.

YOSHA
Shhh!

PEWTER sees YOSHA and gives another little scream. He tries to exit the way he came in, but finds he cannot. YOSHA watches him, finding it hilarious. Then PEWTER hears his own voice in the movie. He starts watching the screen. He lets himself fall into one of the seats. YOSHA climbs over the seats to get to him. Sits down next to him. Reaches under the seat and finds a bag of popcorn. The bag of popcorn begins to wiggle and squeak.
A bat flies out. VOSHA grabs it and wrings its neck. Rips off a wing and begins to suck on it. Then offers the bat to PEWTER.

PEWTER tears off the other wing and begins to suck on it.

They watch the movie.

A chorus of bats sounds softly throughout the theater.

**Scene 16. CLORIS's house. ANNALISE is packing a few things into a bundle.**

**ANNALISE**

And as the days went by, the old sense of being strange began to fade. It was as if she were only now getting to know the person she had always been. And she began to see how much of what she had taken for herself was really just a kind of residue of the filth of that place—

She finishes assembling her bundle.

It was like her kettle, the old kettle that had been gray as long as she could remember until the morning when, on a whim, she had taken the scrub brush to it, and underneath its color was something entirely different, deep and rich and gleaming.

She spies a beet. Using the liquid in the bottom of the tin cup, she uses beet juice to paint her eyes and lips:

In the City there were people who understood that kind of thing, not like the ones she'd known in her childhood, who never understood anything at all...

RAYMOUR appears behind her. She doesn't see him (does she?)

but something shifts inside her—very creepy sound starts now—and she unbuttons her blouse and uses the beet to draw an X on her chest.

The front door BANGS open. RAYMOUR vanishes and CLORIS appears. He is wearing a bandage on the side of his face. ANNALISE hides her bundle.

What happened to you?

CLORIS

Oh. Stepped on a rape. Rake.

ANNALISE

Jeez, Dad.

CLORIS

You can't go out like that. Put on something over it, some kind of blanket, or horse...

ANNALISE

Have you been at the inn? Have you been carousing? You look just awful. You ought to lie down. I'll get you a drink.

She exits. He sits at the table and puts his head in his hands. Strange things happen in his body. He looks up and sees the bloody SOCK which has fallen out of her pocket. He picks it up and is overcome with an impossible mix of emotions: confusion, disgust, lust, tenderness, sadness... then rage.

ANNALISE returns with a cup, sees him with the sock, and drops the cup.
CLORIS
Who is it
One of the soldiers?
ALL of the soldiers?

_He has found the bundle she packed._

Know what they do out there in the fog with ungrateful little pieces of meat?
I'll find out who it is. The young girls, they'll tell me. They're no fools.

_She tries to get away. He grabs her._

CLORIS
Keep you fresh. — Safe. SAFE

Scene 17. Deadscape: The Audience. The movie is playing, apparently to an empty house:

SCENE 3 from this play (Nickel and Annalise), with underscoring.

VOSHA appears from under a pile of coats. He is turning into a bat.

A MOTH flutters through the theater. VOSHA catches it and eats it.

Then PEWTER appears, elsewhere in the theater. His transformation is less advanced. He has been watching the movie and is bored—but then, when

the scene switches to Scene 6 (Raymon walking home alone), he becomes
greatly alarmed. He SQUEAKS, trying to warn Raymon on the screen.

VOSHA SQUEAKS at him, and explains what a movie is.

PEWTER is impressed and settles down. They watch some more.

CLORIS

Scene 18. Sound of a small, violent crowd gathering. NICKEL is apprehended and muscled
towards the jail. ~

But listen I say I'm here as a, as, sometimes it's called the epic I

you know the outland—outbuilding—brigand—vagabond! no, ~

I can't help it if an oversexed schoolgirl develops a—no, I said—no no no no, you fellows are all

one big misunderstanding

no not at all— ~

CLANK of a jail cell door.

"corrupting," heck. For all the corrupting I was doing I might as well have been the blushing

maiden. Still, he thought to himself, if I do convince them not to broil me in the equinoctial

bonfire I really ought to see what I can do for that girl. The things she's been through...

_He shakes his head._

He shook his head. Trust me to end up in a sticky scene with the jailer's daughter.

CLORIS outside the cell, in the shadows.
CLORIS

Snot
my
daughter

He laughs a terrible porcine laugh, drops onto all fours, and trots away.
We see ANNALISE locked in the root cellar. She pounds on the door.
Then CLORIS bursts in. He has grown tusks. His hands are turning into cloven
hooves. He gallops up to her, leering. She shrinks back in horror. He is
about to devour her when:

ANNALISE

Dad.

She goes up to him and hugs him.
He stops in his tracks.
His body begins to relax in her embrace.
Then there is a terrible CRASH at the top of the steps and THE TERRIFYING is
there. It ROARS.

CLORIS

No. Not her
My kitten.

THE TERRIFYING
WHAT ARE YOU

CLORIS can't answer. The TERRIFYING rips him apart.
ANNALISE, who has been watching in horror, flees.

Scene 19.

ANNALISE emerges from the root cellar. Only she's someplace else entirely.
DEADSCAPE.
ANNALISE looks around this weird place, an abandoned theater.
There are faint squeaks of bats in the rafters.
Then there is a kind of HUM and a light comes up, Yosha's KNIFE is there.
ANNALISE picks up the knife. There is a massive flutter of wings and
shadows as bats fly up all over the theater.
RAYMOUR appears in the distance. He is in the City.

RAYMOUR?

RAYMOUR doesn't seem to hear this, but there's the sound of a smartphone
ringing. ANNALISE wonders what it is.
RAYMOUR answers it.
RAYMOUR
Yeah?
Hello, you there?

ANNALISE
I'm here!

RAYMOUR
Hey, what's up? Annalise?

ANNALISE
Yes! I don't—

RAYMOUR
I can't really hear you. Just TEXT ME ok?

He hangs up. Happily.

So weird.

RAYMOUR disappears again, but we hear his voice somewhere else.

RAYMOUR (v.o.)
Would you do something for me?

ANNALISE
What?

RAYMOUR (v.o.)
Would you finish the story?

ANNALISE
Thought you already know what happens.

RAYMOUR (v.o.)
I was being dumb. You're the only one who knows.

BEAT. ANNALISE tries:

ANNALISE
It was
dark when she
finally
She called out, but
there was no answer, so
so she
PAUSE

I'm sorry, quickly!

A soft, kind glow.

Return of the voice, but different: softer, sweeter.

RAYMOUR (v.o.)

Don't worry, beautiful.

More voices begin to combine with RAYMOUR's voice. It is very pretty.

Beautiful girl
Beautiful only girl
at the end of the world. We know it.
We'll tell it.

Less pretty now...

its tusks
are so rough
as they catch on your guts
and it stamps on the bones in your legs
and its breath is shit
as its teeth sink into your face
and your thoughts
are just wet little brains in its mouth
in its hair
and it tramples the pieces
into the ground
tears up the sheets and
fills the bed with blood.

* * *

But ANNALISE has her knife.
She yells:

ANNALISE

AAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAH

The woods take up her yell. All the ghosts everywhere.
In the cell, NICKEL raises his head and listens.
ANNALISE is pissed off. She storms around, raising hell.
THE TERRIFYING is there.

AAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAH

THE TERRIFYING
WHAT ARE YOU

ANNALISE raises her knife.
THE TERRIFYING

WHAT ARE YOU

ANNALISE

something else

\[ LQ \ 29.6 \]

\[ W LQ \ 29.7 \]

ANNALISE fights the Terrifying in the dark. We see her fighting in flashes.
The last flash is ANNALISE on her back, dead in a pool of blood.

Scene 20. NICKEL is still in his cell. \[ LQ \ 29.7 \]

NICKEL

What is the nature of human goodness? Nickel pondered this and other riddles while once again awaiting his deliverance from under ground. And as he languished in the drafty cell, his thoughts turned to Annalise, the way she'd looked at him when she offered to—what was it—to enails...? She was a wild, sun-colored blossom of the meadow; thinking of her, he remembered the stories his nanny had told him, or someone had, stories of life in the provinces, its robust simplicity, men and women working hard with their own hands, coming home tired to plates of nourishing mash.

But as the hours went by, he began to feel with growing certainty that once the townsfolk came to their senses and released him, he would beat a hasty retreat from this hamlet and find his way back to the City as soon as possible. \[ BAT\]

The light on ANNALISE's body begins to fade.

And the City, he said to himself in the tones of one confronting childish resistance, the City is no place for a girl like her. Oh, she might pine for him a little, but. She'd get over it by and by. Who knows what anyone wants? he thought. Least of all do we know the hearts of girls. Their hearts lie deep inside their bodies. But...

Sound of the cell door opening; sound of some masculine commotion;

NICKEL is relieved of his chains and stands.

Just then a sloppy little man appeared outside his cell and began yelling. The jailer's friends had found his body, mangled and mauled, just outside his cell door; he daughter was nowhere to be seen. The stranger could obviously not be held responsible for either of these facts, since he had spent the night in chains. Soon enough he was set at liberty, and the townsfolk saw no trace of him again.

But Nickel's account of his sojourn in the provinces, published in one of the more reputable weekly magazines, drew enough attention to launch him, slowly but effectively, on the kind of literary career he had always longed for.

A stagehand enters and begins resetting for top of show.
He was invited to dine among the men he most admired; he came to be known among them as a dry wit, an unpredictable but passionate thinker, a deep soul. He gave improving lectures to sophisticated audiences; he was asked for his opinions on art, on music, on current affairs. And though he sometimes woke in the night seized with a terror he couldn't explain; and sometimes, turning down an empty street in the afternoon he suddenly felt a heavy breath behind him, spun around to look, and saw no one was there.

"The logic of the monster was well known. When it devoured you, not only your flesh but your desire would get into its bloodstream; and its next victim would be the one you..."

It never occurred to him in this connection what he otherwise knew full well: that sometimes what we love with the most consuming passion isn't another person at all, but... a place. Even a place we've never been.

Sounds of THE CITY are rising under this.

And as the little village melted away into the rust-colored runoff of crimes and wars, more crimes and wars, the monster slowly turned its immortal eyes to that place. And laid its plans for devouring the City whole.

And if you thought you would be safe here that monsters only live in the middle of nowhere in the fat, stupid heart of this land surely you don't think so anymore.

PAUSE. Dana: it's over.

But we can pretend. Dana: [be quiet, hang up]

The lights fade to black.
The TERRIFYING ROARS.
End of play.
Welcome Packet Letter

Welcome to *The Terrifying Cast*!

I’ve handed you some important documents. Please review the rehearsal calendar for this semester (including our tech week dates and estimated rehearsals for Spring 2019), the Emergency Contact form, and your script (unless you are a senior and already had a script prior).

Please fill out the Emergency Contact Information form; this includes the Allergy and Emergency medication information (this means if you have a food allergy and have an EpiPen in your backpack front pocket, please note so accordingly). Your health is very important to the team!

You do not need to list any medication that is not for emergency purposes (i.e., birth control, etc.).

Please note that mental and physical health is taken seriously on this team; if you feel distressed during rehearsal, receive distressing news before or during a rehearsal, or have a mental health issue, do not be afraid to approach the team. I am always available to talk after rehearsals, and sometimes before. If you are in physical pain or feel ill during a rehearsal, inform me or my assistant Em before leaving the space. Know we are here for you if you need us.

We have a harassment policy; don’t harass anyone. We are all professionals on this Senior Project. I like to run a show as if we were getting payed to do it; practicing this way prepares you for the professional world. I do not have a contract for you to sign on harassment, but please be respectful of each other and the spaces we work in. Many of us are friends outside of this show; during rehearsals, we are a team of actors and production members creating a layered piece of theater. If you feel you are being harassed by a member of the team or by the actors, please contact me privately through text or email.

We can have fun while being productive! If no one gets off track or talks over our directors, our show will have moments of play. Bring your scripts and a pencil to rehearsals; water is also nice to bring!

You may not bring guests to rehearsals. Our rehearsals will be closed to the public unless previously agreed amongst the Creative Team.

Food and drink will be allowed in some spaces, but not others. Read your emails carefully for this information! In the Dance Studios, we will not have any food or drink, or shoes.

Please inform me if you have not already of any other shows you’ve signed on to since we’ve last spoken!

I look forward to working with you all in the future. Contact me through email, or through text (you can find my contact information in the contact sheet) if you have any questions, or would like to talk about anything.

Welcome to the show,

Kat Taylor

Production Stage Manager
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**August/September**

The Terrifying Calendar

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**November**

**Preliminary Calendar**
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**SCHEDULE**

- **FALL 2018 FINAL WEEK**
  - Saturday, Dec 16: Final Exam
    - 8:30pm-11:00pm
    - Location: TBA
    - Full Exam
    - Run through
  - Final Exam

**CLASS TIMES**

- **SATURDAY**
  - 8:30pm-11:00pm
- **FRIDAY**
  - 8:30pm-11:00pm
- **THURSDAY**
  - 8:30pm-11:00pm
- **WEDNESDAY**
  - 8:30pm-11:00pm
- **TUESDAY**
  - 8:30pm-11:00pm
- **MONDAY**
  - 8:30pm-11:00pm
- **SUNDAY**
  - 8:30pm-11:00pm
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**February/March**

The Terrifying Calendar

Version 1 of 1
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**THE RENUMI CALENDAR**

**February/March 2019**

**Version 11**
# THE TERIFFING CALENDAR

**FEBRUARY/MARCH**

**VERSION 12**

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*Note: All dates are subject to change.*

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### Class Schedule Conflicts Sheet

#### Spring 2019 Conflict Calendar

**Color Key:**
- **Red:** Faculty, Staff, and Student Events
- **Green:** Class Times
- **Blue:** Library and Campus Events
- **Purple:** Athletics and Other Campus Events

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#### Additional Scheduling Conflicts

**Faculty:**
- 08:00-09:00
- 14:00-15:00

**Staff:**
- 09:00-10:00
- 13:00-14:00

**Students:**
- 07:00-08:00
- 15:00-16:00

#### Conflict Resolution

- **Faculty:** Contact the Dean or Department Head
- **Staff:** Contact the Human Resources Department
- **Students:** Contact the Registrar Office
Playbill covers
The Terrifying

Humanities Theater
2/28: 7:30PM
3/1: 7:30PM
3/2: 2:30 & 7:30PM

#KEEP FAMILIES TOGETHER

written by Julia Barroso

theterrifying2019.ticketleap.com
Humanities Theater
2/28: 7:30PM
3/1: 7:30PM
3/3: 2:30 & 7:30PM

TERRIFYING
Written by
Julia Barroso

theterrifying2014.ticketsense.com
Production Team and Cast

THE TERRIFYING
written by Julia Jarcho

PRODUCTION TEAM
Director
Stage manager/ATD
Scenic Designer/TD/Deck Cap.
Lighting Designer/ASD/ATD
Sound Designer
Sound Designer/Composition
Costume Design
Makeup/SFX
ALD
Master Electrician
Dramaturgy
Film Crew

Amy Janos-Boon (Shorts AD)
Kat Taylor
Alex Theisen
Adam Hamdy
Logan Bruner
Samuel Long
Jaysen Engel
Nico Santamorena
Addison Jenkins
Caroline Jannace
Ash Visker
Jake Nocerino, Cindy Chen, Brandon Pettus

CAST
Nickel
Pewter
Vosha
Annalise
Raymou
Raluka/Voice Actor
Soldier/Voice Actor

Dalton Grant
Sean Church (ATD/Shorts Director)
Michael Jorge
Mika Steele
Anaela Hurt
Andrada Angileri
Bernard Scutter (AD)

Not listed: Cloris/Fight Choreography Captain, Soren Correia
Additional Production Crew

RUN CREW

BUILD/ LOAD IN/ PAINT/ STRIKE CREW

TREE BUILDERS
Kyle “The Lorax” McManus - Sean McManus - Sean Church - Andrade Angileri - Alexander Osani - Michael Jorge

USHERS
Sara Atlashi - Jose Velasquez - Amya Stewart

BOARD OPS
Dana Massa - Dante Nastasi

RESIDENT ARTISTS
Tyler McCray - Muse McCormack - Alex Alejandrino - Kyle McManus - Bernard Scudder - Yoshi Carillo
Rehearsal/filming images