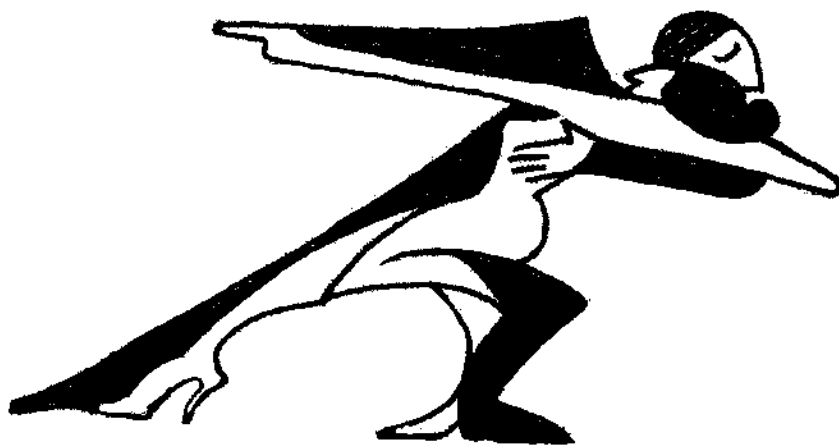


TANGO TRABAJO

by
Michael Harvey



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Tango Working is a performance as much as a play, the music, and the choreography, are essential to its realization. It is theatrical not realistic.

CAST

Although there are eleven characters at most four are on stage at any given time, six actors can handle it comfortably. All players should be able to move and dance well.

ANNA...Middle management executive

BEE...Young clerk running the shipping dept.

ZEEK...middle-aged shipping clerk

NEWMAN...Young new employee

Although played in a somewhat stylized way the above characters should appear more three-dimensional than these:

FATHER...Middle-aged gigolo

MA & PA...Military couple

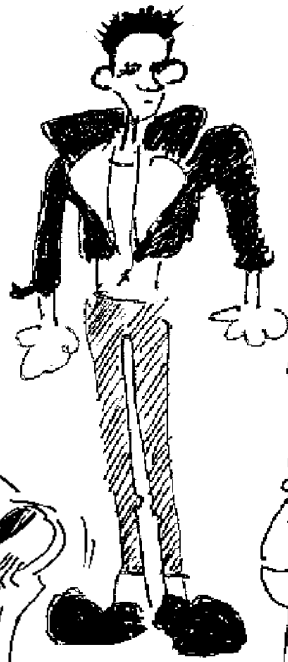
GANGSTER & MOLL...Crime couple

DANCING COUPLE

These are dream/fantasy characters and should be played in a stylized manner by the best dancers.



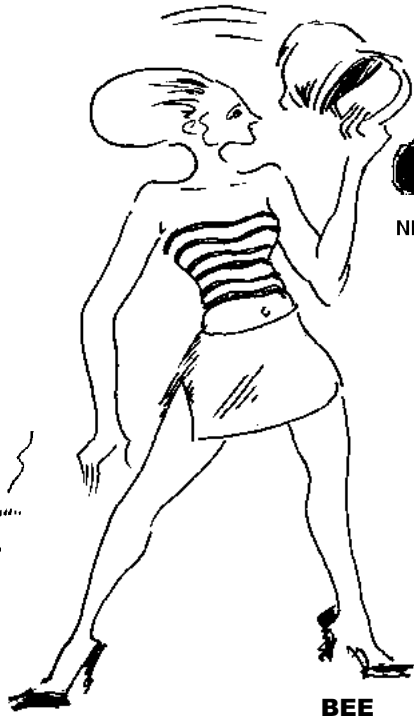
ANNA



NEWMAN



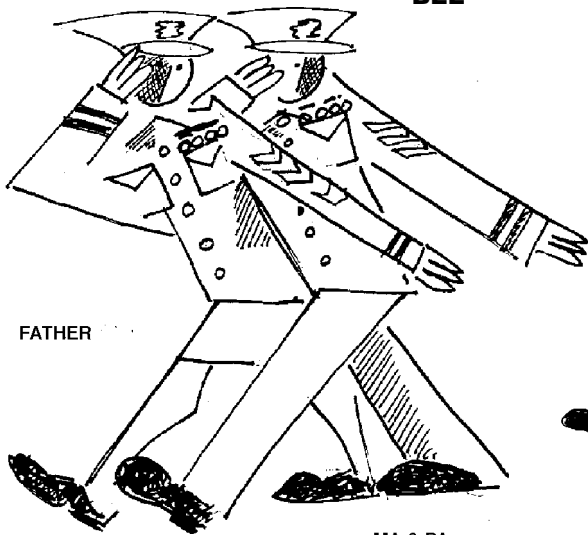
ZEEK



BEE



FATHER



MA & PA



GANGSTER & MOLL

TANGO TRABAJO



Dark stage - slow rising music. A couple dance a sensual Argentine tango across the stage in a spotlight and exit. Music dies.

A light comes on, switched on by a woman in the doorway - **ANNA**. The light reveals an office desk to one side of the stage with a computer, phone and a chair. The other side of the stage is filled with colorful cardboard boxes and cartons of various sizes - a shipping department. **ANNA**, mid-thirties, is dressed in the uniform of the junior executive. She is an intense, ambitious woman, proud of her success in the corporate world. Her steely aggression and superficial charm have served her well so far. Now something is threatening her career and revealing insecurities she doesn't handle well. She looks about furtively then crosses to the desk and begins to search it. As she goes through the drawers a voice alerts her to some one's approach.



BEE

(off) Morning.

*(ANNA quickly hides behind the boxes as another woman comes through the door - **BEE**.)*

BEE is a feisty young working girl in her mid-twenties. Under the hair gel, cheap perfume and elaborate fashion is a quick witted, quick tempered woman constantly rocked between her pragmatic self and her romantic desires.

BEE

BEE does not see ANNA she strides directly up stage to confront the audience.

Work! *(beat)* Men! *(beat)* Work! Get up in the morning fight the day ... the weather, the traffic every step of the way.

Work! *(beat)* Who pays for that bed? The roof overhead? For the food that you're fed? YOU that's who. You gotta get outta bed. Money for rent on somewhere to live, so you can get up and go to work to earn the money to pay for the food to feed your body to have the strength to get up and go to work to pay the rent on somewhere to sleep. ...Yadda ... yadda ... yadda. Wake up! *(beat)* Slap on a face, a mask against all the nastiness said ... all the piss and vinegar coming down on your head ... you just wish you'da stood in bed. *(she slams her bag down on the desk)*

And men! *(pause)* They're worse than work!

(ANNA pops up behind a group of boxes formed into a hiding place - Zeek's lair.)

ANNA

You don't have to tell me about men, I know all about men! Have you seen what he's got back here?

BEE

(startled) How long you been back there?

ANNA

(looking at her side of the boxes - the audience can't see.)

What's he do back here? Where is he anyway?

BEE

(Not too friendly) He's not here yet.

ANNA

Men! Who do they think they are? He's late.

BEE

It's not time yet.

(a buzzer sounds. ZEEK appears in the doorway carrying a package.)



ANNA It's time now.

BEE He's here now.

ZEEK *(Pleasant)* G'morning. Guess what ...

ANNA *(to ZEEK, as she leaves)* You're late. Degenerate.

ZEEK It's just time ...*(watches her go)* ... g'morning
to you too. *(to BEE)* What she want?

BEE You.

ZEEK Me? I'm right here.
(Bee looking at her desk)

BEE Hey! Who's been messin' with my stuff?

ZEEK Standing right here. *(he uses animated gestures but BEE pays
no attention)* Walks right past me. Am I here or am I here? ...
What she want?

BEE Who knows.
*(Throughout the performance BEE is always checking forms,
answering the phone, filing papers. Work for ZEEK is a matter
of putting in the time. He is a Nihilist with little belief in any-
thing beyond a sense of comfort. An auto-didact with quiz-show
knowledge and crossword vocabulary, Zeek's whole life has
been about getting by - avoiding notice, avoiding blame.)*

ZEEK Standing right here ... unbelievable. Day's hardly started
and already I'm not here ... You listening?

BEE I'm listening

ZEEK Not here. You know what ... I'm on the way in this morning
an' I catch sight of this guy, out the tail of my eye, you know
how you do, down by the Super-Market, and I had this
uncanny feeling ... You listening?

BEE *(straightening her desk)* I'm listening.



ZEEK The guy looks like me. You in a mood?

BEE *(Edgy)* No. *(beat)* So ... he looked like you...

ZEEK You're in a mood.

BEE I'm listenin, alright.

ZEEK So then...

BEE *(stepping on line)* It was you.

ZEEK Hey! How'd you ... ?

BEE In the window. Everyone's done that.

ZEEK Everyone? ... Everyone?

BEE Most everyone.

ZEEK So there I am looking at myself ...apprising appraising
when a guy walks up and gives me this parcel.
(holds it up)

BEE *(showing interest)* What guy?

ZEEK Just shoves it at me. Never saw him before. He says, "Okay,
Jake. It's up to you now."

BEE He goes - okay, Jake?

ZEEK Yeah. Sort of 'Psst, okay Jake.'

BEE Jake? So whaddyou say?

ZEEK I says, Jake? I'm not Jake. He winks and he says, "and I'm
not Tony." Then he takes off leaving me with this.

BEE What is it?

ZEEK It's this. *(judges the weight)* It's got a bit of weight.

BEE What's written on it?

ZEEK Jake. That's all. *(shows her the parcel)*

BEE He thought you were Jake.

ZEEK Disturbing.

BEE You was mistook. *(She goes back to her work)*

ZEEK Mystery ... Whaddaya think?

BEE Nothing ... I'm pissed.

ZEEK See ... I could tell, right off.

BEE I gotta cause.

ZEEK *(Setting down the parcel, and taking off his jacket)* See myself
in the window. It's me, I can see that. Guy comes up thinks
I'm Jake. Get here, she walks past me like I don't exist. Not
only am I somebody else, I'm somebody else who's not here.
(he studies BEE for a moment) The boyfriend, eh? Always the
boyfriend.

BEE Don't mention his name!

ZEEK I don't know his name.

BEE Bastard! He's gone. Gone! Took off. Took my toaster too.

ZEEK Took your toaster? *(putting on a work coat)*

BEE Hateful shit. I fed that man. I clothed that man. The more
you care...

ZEEK I like a bit of toast.

BEE Men! I could kill him. *(building up steam)* I was a damn fool
for his every whim, every foible.

ZEEK Foibles? *(distracted, looking about for something)* ... never
cared for foibles.

BEE I cared. *(off on her own)* Oh, how I cared.

ZEEK You seen my coat?

BEE Jackass, laying around watching TV ... I'm out working. The

things I did for that man. Troubles I took. The love, the thought.

ZEEK You move it?

BEE Ah, Johnny how could you! *(pause - shakes her head thoughtfully)* Great ass though.

ZEEK You do something with my coat? *(takes a pencil from her desk.)*

BEE I haven't touched your damn.. *(looks at him losing patience)..* you've got it on. And put that back. Get your own pencils.

ZEEK *(looking at his coat)* How the hell?

BEE *(pause)* So whaddaya think?

ZEEK The boyfriend?

BEE No, the package! What's in the package.

ZEEK Something.

BEE Open it ... go on.

ZEEK Can't do that. That's Jakes'. Unsettling being mistook. Know what I mean? Like some one stealing my life.

BEE Who'd want it? *(The phone on Bee's desk rings. She answers)*
Shipping.....Ah ha...Stottle to Coburg?....uh hu

(As she talks ZEEK goes around the boxes to where he is hidden from BEE but in full view of the audience. His lair, where ANNA had discovered his 'art' gallery at the opening. He folds his newspaper then as BEE hangs up:)

ZEEK Her?

BEE Her. *(she gathers up some papers ready to leave.)*

ZEEK I'm gonna ask for a raise today.

BEE A raise? Ha! A raise? It never ceases to astonish me that you

get paid at all. It takes you all day to do what anyone else would do in five minutes.

ZEEK See what I mean? The struggle involved, the stress. I deserve a raise.

BEE There's a word for people like you. *(she goes out with the papers in hand.)*

ZEEK *(calls after her)* And you don't know what it is.

(ZEEK takes a lottery ticket from his jacket to transfer it to his workcoat pocket. He reads out the numbers from the ticket.)

Seven...twenty-two...thirty...sev.....

(ANNA enters)

ANNA Zeek!

ZEEK Eh! *(without missing a beat)* So that's four cartons to Rexler and Reepman *(turning to Anna)* Ah, yes. Ma'am. Another fine day in Patagonia.

ANNA Huh? Zeek, *(her tone much friendlier than before)* what did you find on that stuff from Coburg to Stottle?

ZEEK *(Mystified)* Stottle to Coburg?

ANNA Coburg to Stottle. Bee didn't tell you? We're being accused - a misplaced shipment. It's a big deal. A lost order.

ZEEK Important? *(cagey)* Always important. Yes, yes. She was writing a memo on that ... Needed some names, some dates.

ANNA *(Annoyed)* She didn't tell you, did she. Zeek, *(conspiratorial)* Can I have a word?

ZEEK *(prefers not to know)* You know, Mondays ... very busy

ANNA This is important, Zeek.

ZEEK I'm all ears.

ANNA Confidential. Between us, no further. Not a word.

ZEEK Didn't hear a thing.

(She looks about to make sure they are alone. Tango music begins quietly in the background.)

ANNA There's a problem... A subversive in the company.

ZEEK *(Surprised)* Subversive? ... Get outta here.

ANNA In the company. Sabotage!

ZEEK Sabotage? ... Ha! ... Now you mention it.

ANNA You know about it?

ZEEK To be expected. Big company, there's always intrigue. Some one needling, some one filching, backstabbing, gold-brickers. I'd look in sales, I were you. Shifty lot in sales.

ANNA No, no. It's here. In shipping.

ZEEK Here?

ANNA In shipping. Orders gone astray. Files lost ... misdirected.

ZEEK Don't look at me I just work here.

ANNA You? No, not you.

ZEEK *(Amazed)* You don't mean Bee?

ANNA Who else?

ZEEK Nah! Not Bee. Not credible. Don't be fooled by the outfits, she's as straight as they come. What reason would she have? You gotta have a reason. She has no reason.

ANNA To make me look bad. You think she likes me?

ZEEK She's never said. Why'd she wanna do that?

ANNA To get me fired.

ZEEK What for?

ANNA So she'd get my job.

ZEEK *(realizing)* Ah ... She'd like that.

ANNA Wouldn't she just.

ZEEK Hard to believe. You work with some one... think you know them.

ANNA Ambition's a cutting edge.

ZEEK It's what they say.

ANNA She's a clever girl, Zeek, doesn't let on. A Schemer. You've seen the signs.

ZEEK There were signs?

ANNA Symptoms. Ambition's a sickness, Zeek. Ambition'll blind you to cruelty, breed a cunning you never dreamed of. I've seen it a thousand times, Zeek. I want you to do something for me.

(They move warily into dancing positions and as the music rises. They dance without touching. Wary, conspiratorial but testing)

ZEEK You have a plan?

ANNA I do ... watch her.

ZEEK You're gonna watch her?

ANNA You're going to watch her.

ZEEK Me?

ANNA Her every move.

ZEEK You want me to spy?

ANNA Yes.

ZEEK On a workmate?



ANNA Yes.

ZEEK I can't do that.

ANNA For the good of the company?

ZEEK What'd the company ever do for me?

ANNA Watch out for yourself, Zeek.

ZEEK My self?

ANNA Your job. You want to keep it, don't you?

ZEEK I'm there. She won't take a breath I don't see.

ANNA There's my man. You and me...*(she moves in closer - sensual)*

I want to reach that other man in you, Zeek.

ZEEK *(startled)* Who? Jake? You know about Jake?

ANNA The inner man ... where she goes, who she sees ...

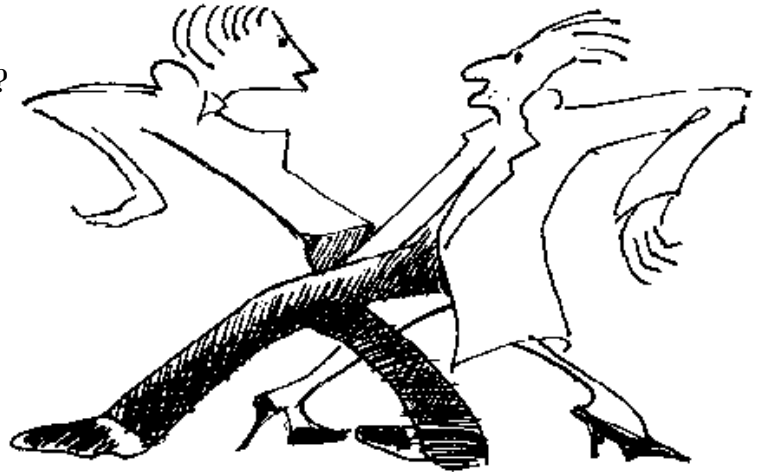
ZEEK Jake, the inner man. The deeper self?

ANNA I want to know.

ZEEK What's in it for me?

ANNA Satisfaction.

ZEEK Promotion?



(carried away he reaches for her. She pulls back)

ANNA Don't touch! *(music stops abruptly)* Management.

(straightening) So we understand each other. You tell me everything, or else. Up or down ... *(motions with her thumb)* .. or out!

(ANNA leaves. Silence. ZEEK , obviously uncomfortable, gravitates to BEE's desk and starts to peruse the papers on it. BEE enters)

BEE Get away from there!

ZEEK Just lookin'. Keep your hair on.

BEE You keep your hands off.

ZEEK Whaddya got to hide?

BEE Hide? I got nothing to hide, I just know you. You'd make a mess out of chaos.

ZEEK My neurosis. *(He stands watching as she files the papers)*

BEE All I need is your greasy prints on everything. Don't you have anything to do? ... I know you wouldn't do it anyway, but...

ZEEK but you had to ask ... your neurosis.

(BEE is moving back and forth from boxes to desk checking numbers etc. ZEEK follows her, appearing from behind boxes, watching her every move. Their talk is easy and familiar, having worked together for a number of years)

 You see the game last night?

BEE *(sarcastic)* Oh, sure I was glued.

ZEEK Serious.

BEE I was at the clubs.

ZEEK Dancing?

BEE I like to dance - least till Bigfoot broke the heel offa my best pair of pumps.

ZEEK I'm gonna organize this lot. *(the cartons)* I got plans. Totally restructure. Alphabetize ... size ... color, destination, frequency...

BEE You organize this lot we'd be lost.

ZEEK So he was gone when you got home?

BEE It was him and his big feet broke the heel off.

ZEEK So he took a moonlight flight ...

BEE Into the night. *(beat)* Can I pick 'em or I can pick 'em.

ZEEK What else did he...

BEE *(stepping)* I don't wanna talk about it. *(Irritated)* Why you following me about?

ZEEK Who me? I'm talking to you.

BEE You're following me. You're giving me the creeps. Hanging over my shoulder like you're checking up on me.

ZEEK Me? Checking on you?

BEE Ridiculous, right. *(picking up the phone)*

ZEEK Who ya calling?

BEE Who'm I calling? What's it to you who I'm calling? I'm doing what I do every day. I'm doing my job. What's got into you?

ZEEK Just interested. Trying to improve myself.

BEE Ha! There's a laugh. When were *you* ever interested in what I do?

(goes ahead and dials)

ZEEK *(mock offense)* I'm interested ... deeply interested ... all manner of human endeavor ... Religious leanings, evolution of the species, Gothic architecture, alchemy the bicycle.

BEE *(to phone)* Hi, it's Bee. Yeah. That'll be three cases of 409. Thanks. *(hangs up)*

ZEEK It's the focus, the achievement.

BEE Well, this is it, bub. What you see is what you get.
(Silence - he watches)

ZEEK This is what you do all day?

BEE Can you bare the excitement? *(pause)* ... How long you worked here?

ZEEK Count the years!

BEE This is the first time you noticed what I do all day?

ZEEK Do you know what I do all day?

BEE I know exactly what you do all day. You do as little as possible.

ZEEK *(To the side)* Been me I woulda jumped out the window.

BEE Been you I woulda pushed ya.

ZEEK Bada boom! *(It's part of their love/hate work routine ... he continues to watch what she's doing)* Nothing but bits of paper. All these forms. You know what they're for?

BEE Of course I know. It's my job.

ZEEK You never lose 'em? Send 'em to the wrong place?

BEE Why would I lose 'em? I'm good. I keep track.

ZEEK I'd lose 'em.

BEE 'Course you would. That's why I don't want you near my desk.

ZEEK You'd like another job, though. A woman with your talent, this can't be fulfilling. You need more scope, room for advancement, you got capabilities.

BEE Who wouldn't?

ZEEK Shorter hours, more pay.

BEE Be a fool not to.

ZEEK So you're thinking of it? Improving yourself, moving on. Getting ahead.

BEE What's with the inquisition? Following me around, giving me the third degree. Any other day you're hiding out with your newspaper. You suddenly after my job or something?

ZEEK Me? Doing this all day? You kidding, catch me.

(ZEEK sees the futility of it and sidles off to his lair to read the paper BEE busies herself filing and typing - Silence -)

*(Enter **NEWMAN** an exuberant puppy, in his early twenties. Physically alive and at ease with his body he lives totally in the moment, a conformist without ambition or curiosity. He stands about until BEE spots him..)*

BEE Hello, handsome. What can I do for you?

NEWMAN This shipping? They said shipping....

BEE You found it, Tiger. You got something for us?

NEWMAN Me ... I'm the new man.

(he hands BEE a piece of paper. ZEEK is up watching from his lair. BEE reads. NEWMAN looks round)

Great here ... Big company...

BEE *(Squeals)* Ha! I don't believe it. Zeek, they've sent you an assistant. Who'da thunk it.

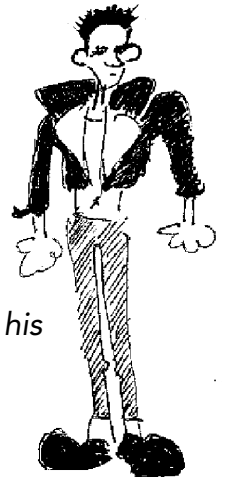
(ZEEK comes out of his lair, very suspicious. He reads the note BEE hands him. Bee's quite pleased with the sight of Newman)

Just what you need. Some one to help you.

ZEEK *(still suspicious)* Who sent you?

NEWMAN They did....Personnel.

ZEEK Personnel? eh? Personnel. That's not right. Something



wrong here. Wasn't the head of this department, was it?
Woman, short hair, business suit...

BEE Anna? It's not her job, Zeek.

NEWMAN I don't know. Personnel's all I know.

ZEEK Personnel my eye.

(He walks away to where he set Jake's parcel, looks at it without touching, then returns to Newman pointing an accusing finger)

JAKE!

NEWMAN Eh?

ZEEK You're Jake, right.

NEWMAN *(confused)* Who? ... Me?

BEE Don't be a jerk, Zeek! Of course he's not Jake. No one in their right mind would take him for you.

ZEEK Why not?

BEE Just look at him.

ZEEK *(Agitated)* Well, who is he?

BEE He's him. Newman the new man.

ZEEK This is making me nervous. What's he doing here?

BEE Don't be so paranoid. You asked for help.

ZEEK *(Getting worked up)* Ask for help? What's that got to do with it? I've been asking for help for years.

BEE Well, here he is.

ZEEK Oh, yeah. Yeah? Help is it? Help me, eh? We'll see about that.*(to Newman)* Don't you move. Stand right there. I'll be back. *(throws a glance at the parcel)* And don't touch anything.

(agitated ZEEK leaves. BEE takes her time sizing up NEWMAN. She likes what she sees)

NEWMAN He's not too happy to see me.

BEE He'll get over it. So...new man, eh? I'm Bee.

NEWMAN Hi. Bee. How's it going?

BEE Lookin' up. So what do we call you?

NEWMAN Newman. Like...

BEE New man, yeah. From around here? Live nearby?

NEWMAN Chestnut Street. Know it?

BEE Chestnut. Chestnut ... over by the refinery?

NEWMAN That's it. Down by the river...

BEE The river still ...

NEWMAN It's almost out ... keeps flaring up.

BEE Must be pretty though, all those trees.

NEWMAN The chestnuts?

BEE Yeah, the chestnuts

NEWMAN All gone now. Some kinda bug, something.

BEE Yeah? So, what were you doing before this?

NEWMAN Carpets.

BEE Oh, yeah ... Like rugs...

NEWMAN Carpets. Fitted carpets. You know, measure it up,
(with hand gestures and accompanying noises, he pantomimes measuring, cutting and laying out a carpet. Throughout Newman reverts to noises and gestures whenever words fail him.)Pptt!!!

BEE *(surprised and amused)* Done. Fitted?

NEWMAN Snug as a bug.

BEE You seem to like it, why'd you quit?

NEWMAN Static.

BEE Static?

NEWMAN All day, every day. Pow! *(his hand flies off as if shocked)* Every time you touch something. Pisssh! *(gestures again)*

BEE Yeah, that could get old.

NEWMAN You got that right. And the knees ... really gets ya...
(ZEEK strides in still agitated.)

ZEEK Not there. Authority - never there when you need 'em. That techi down the hall was lookin' for you.

BEE Techi? Oh, right! *(grabs a paper and leaves)* If I see her I'll tell her you want her. She'll like that.

ZEEK Not me. I don't give a damn.

(As BEE exits. ZEEK turns to NEWMAN his poise recovered but still suspicious.)

ZEEK Soooo...new man, eh?

NEWMAN There you go. This is a big place you got ...

ZEEK *(stepping on line)* New man, new blood...can't beat it. Young, strong ...you're a bit of sportsman, I can see that.

NEWMAN Who me? *(flexes his muscles)* Grr - pow! No, not me.

ZEEK Fresh face, eh? Tonic... you follow it though - sport.

NEWMAN You know ... TV sorta thing. The big games noth....

ZEEK *(stepping on line)* That's it. You got it, new face. Wakes us up. Gets stale. Same old routine...work work work. Stuck in a rut. Who's your pick for Saturday?

NEWMAN Saturday?

ZEEK The big game. Eh? Eh?

NEWMAN Sssish. Got me. Who's playin'?

ZEEK Pity, pity.... So...So, it's the women, eh?

NEWMAN The women?

ZEEK How you spend your time. Women. Out all night. Plenty of.
(makes sexual gestures with his hands) Eh? Can't beat it. Yeah.
I was young once. Big ones, skinny ones, short, tall. All the
time *(repeats gesture)* There's a man's world

NEWMAN *(not so enthusiastic)* Well ... I don't know.. sshhpheh...
*(repeats Zeek's gesture in reverse, as if undoing what Zeek had
done.)*

ZEEK You alright? Nothing wrong, eh?

NEWMAN I'm good ... regular...just...regular.

ZEEK Regular, eh? So what's a regular guy doing here? A little
sabotage, maybe? A little subversion? Regular undercover
work, eh?

NEWMAN I don't follow ya.

ZEEK You better not. *(leaning close)* Who really sent you?

NEWMAN Personnel.

ZEEK *(disgusted)* Personnel? Personnel doesn't send people any-
where. Personnel takes in applications, files resumes.
Personnel says "We'll let you know." And they never do,
they sit and snicker, that's what they do in personnel. A
snickerish lot. The only jobs Personnel ever finds are jobs
for their brother-in-laws, or their nephews. You're not relat-
ed are you?

NEWMAN I got a sister.

(BEE walks in and goes straight to her desk to get something, The men immediately stop and watch her in silence. She gets what she needs and suddenly becomes aware of what they are doing)

BEE What?

ZEEK What?

NEWMAN Nothing.

(NEWMAN watches BEE exit. ZEEK pulls out his Lotto ticket)

ZEEK Seven, twenty-two, thirty-nine, seventeen, forty-four, twelve....Whaddy say to that?

NEWMAN I used to work with a guy who'd always bet on his wife's....

ZEEK *(stepping on line)* That's the winner. There's poetry in them numbers ...fable, legend, mystery. They sing to me. *(stares into the distance)*

NEWMAN I like the instant ones you rub off. You get...

ZEEK *(stepping on line)* Dreams, my boy ... Glennrock Bay. *(At the mention of Glennrock Bay the sound of waves and gulls fills the air. They stand and listen)* Retirement.

NEWMAN I'm to take your job?

ZEEK *(snapping back)* Who told you that? She tell you that?

NEWMAN Who? She? No, you. You just said you were retiring.

ZEEK Me? I'm staying right here, don't you forget it. You're not getting me outta this.

NEWMAN *(flustered)* No, no. Course not. This is you. I'm here to help .. lift ..move ..whatever. Phew... *(pause)* So what do I do?

ZEEK Ah...ah, well. You'll get us out of a rut. That's what you'll do. Invigorate - a splash of cold water in the phisog.

NEWMAN *Awright! (enthusiastically strides among the boxes, rubbing his hands together)* Let's do it to it.

ZEEK What are you doing?

NEWMAN Let's do it. Whatever we do. *(pause. still rubbing his hands looking around)* What do we do?

ZEEK Do? We show up is what we do.

NEWMAN Then what?

ZEEK *(Sharp)* It's a start.

NEWMAN You're right. You dead right, it's a start. *(nodding, gesturing to the boxes)* We make these?

ZEEK Make 'em? Hah. Nah, we don't make 'em. There was a time, before your time, when the word manufacture had some meaning. Those days are gone.

NEWMAN Someone's gotta make 'em.

ZEEK Not here they don't. Over there. Things are made over there.

NEWMAN Oh, yeah. Where's that?

ZEEK Over there, over here, over there. It doesn't matter where. It's somewhere else. They ship 'em here. We ship 'em there.

NEWMAN Coming and going. *(gestures)* Zzipp - zzip.

ZEEK In and out

NEWMAN *(gestures)* Zzzip - zzip. *(pause)* What are they?

ZEEK Bang, bang, bang. automatic-pistol, ain'tcha. One question after another. They are things. Things that are made over there and shipped over here.

(They stand and study the boxes. Newman tries but after a moment can't restrain himself)

NEWMAN We busy?

ZEEK Some days. Some days there's not much to do. Others days... Others, it's overwhelming how much there is that can't be done. Disasters, calamities, cave-ins measureless to man.

NEWMAN What happens?

ZEEK Nothing.

NEWMAN Nothing?

ZEEK Nothing. What happens to revolution in the Baltics, Earthquakes in the East, Coups d'etats in the South? Media's full of it, right? TV. every night.

NEWMAN I never watch the news.

ZEEK Sure it is. Beat you over the head with it. Confound the mind, sap your senses ... then...?

NEWMAN Then?

ZEEK Nothing. Gone...never another word.

(Zeek sits on a box as if to emphasize the futility. Newman looks about, and after a silence:)

NEWMAN So what's your job?

ZEEK My job?... *(he gets up and walks across stage gathering his thoughts, Newman follows, Zeek turns and drives Newman back with his lecture)* My job is to instill into you a respect for hierarchy. A thorough bestial obedience to the chain of command. Know the hand that feeds and the teeth that bite. Through systematic acts of physical and psychological abuse I shall bring you groveling to the corporate alter, begging

forgiveness for the sins they have committed against you, and ready to commit your soul to pointless and irrational acts of loyalty to a faceless management who don't know, and don't care, if you are dead or alive.

NEWMAN Oooph.

ZEEK It's something. You may come in here asking why, but you will go out saying because. *(friendly)* Come here, sit down ...have a box *(They sit)* ... Now tell me, who sent you?
(The phone rings. Neither of them move. BEE runs in but is too late)

BEE Dah! *(NEWMAN wanders over to BEE at her desk. Zeek slips off to his lair.)* Hey, Newman. How're you getting on? Zeek showing you the ropes?

NEWMAN The ropes? Oh, yeah. Showing me the ropes ...

BEE Giving you a hard time?

NEWMAN No, no ... tell me ... is..... Is he always with the ten dollar words, and the? *(makes noise and gesture indicating nuttiness.)*

BEE He's harmless. *(looks over at ZEEK who is reading his paper and nods)* You get used to him.

NEWMAN Like the static. .. *pssh (hand flies off)* So. What should I do?

BEE Do? He didn't tell you?

NEWMAN Nah ... I can't wait he seems.. ph...

BEE Didn't get you a workcoat either?

NEWMAN Hey, shpffewww.

BEE You don't want to ruin that jacket. It's nice.

NEWMAN Just an old thing.

BEE Looks good on you. Shows off your figure very well.
Handsome... eh?

ZEEK (sings) You don't need to say you love me just to hold my
hand.

BEE Stop it!

ZEEK Get your hand out of his pants.

BEE You shut up!

NEWMAN They have a soda machine, anything here?.

(Bee regains her composure)

BEE Well, you could move these boxes.

NEWMAN These? Sure thing. Where to?

BEE Over there.

(BEE points to the other side of the stage. NEWMAN whips off his jacket and grabs a large carton with enthusiasm. He staggers across stage, around several cartons, passed Zeek, who is watching him intently, and arrives back where he started. He keeps going, showing signs of flagging, and as he passes Zeek for the second time:)

ZEEK You doing laps?

NEWMAN Huh? ...

(staggers and puts the carton down where it was originally.)

ZEEK Very nice.

BEE Whaddaya doing?

NEWMAN No place to put it.

BEE (a little edgy) Make a place. They belong over there.

NEWMAN What's wrong with here?

BEE (sharp) They don't belong there.

NEWMAN What's the difference?

BEE *(Temper flaring)* What's the difference? They're in the wrong place is the difference!

ZEEK *(joining them)* Everything in it's place.

BEE Shuddup you! *(blasting NEWMAN)* You making fun of me? What I ever do to you? I ask you one simple thing and you try to make a fool out of me. You got a problem with authority something, or is it just something against me? Gaw - damn it!

ZEEK Whoa! Easy. He didn't steel your toaster. *(Grabbing NEWMAN by the arm ZEEK guides him out.)* He needs a workcoat.

(As BEE stands alone quiet tango music starts in background. Stage lights dim.)

BEE What a fool. Why'd I do that? Was my childhood? As a child ... was I ever a child?... sloth was my mother, fidget my father. Care free, and free of care for me ... mother died of indolence on a rococo couch of plush velvet. Father tangoed the night away. For them an indulgence of chaos, for me insecurity and doubt. They laughed at life and left me anxious and perplexed. *(calling off)* Father? Daddy?.. Oh, daddy you never do anything on time. You never do anything in time. You never do anything with time.

(romantic tango music grows with DAD's entrance)

DAD But I keep time.

(FANTASY DAD a Latin lover in evening dress saunters down stage to the music)



FATHER

And I do have a good time. Shall we dance?

(they dance a sensual tango their conversation interwoven with their movement)

BEE Daddy
DAD Daughter?
BEE You never loved me.
DAD I always loved you
BEE You always left me.
DAD You never left my thoughts.
BEE Out all night in your dancing shoes.
DAD With you in my heart.
BEE A blonde on your arm.
DAD Such a beautiful child.
BEE You were never there to see me.
DAD Such happy eyes.
BEE You made me laugh.
DAD You became so serious.
BEE When you went away.
DAD Grew up too soon.
BEE What choice did I have?
DAD So responsible. All your ducks in a row.
BEE The night you won the dance contest.
DAD Another trophy.
BEE I waited up all night to see you.
DAD The day you wouldn't go out.
BEE You never came home.



DAD Because your mother wore no underwear.

BEE Remember?

DAD You were so ashamed.

BEE So shame making

DAD You were so controlled.

BEE Some one had to be.

DAD So organized.

BEE I wanted ease, I wanted casual. You turned casual into chaos. Who could doubt my need for order.

DAD You even ordered your doubts.

BEE Oooh! Irritation conflagration!

DAD *(spinning her off)* You dance a divine tango, my dear.

(They dance off as the lights go down. Music fades, lights come up ANNA comes in.)

ANNA Bee! ... Zeek! Zeek! What the hell's going on here? People!

(ANNA throws up her hands and leaves. ZEEK and NEWMAN return. NEWMAN is wearing a tent sized smock)

ZEEK Almost new. People wait years for a coat like that.

NEWMAN Room to grow.

ZEEK Clothes maketh man ... it's what they say. Clothes maketh man ... We're a shallow middling lot when you get down to it. The outer husk is all we see, the paint, the trim, the Flowers on the hat.

NEWMAN *(reading the label)* size forty-four

ZEEK The paint on the face. *(surprise)* You say Forty-four? Wait a minute. *(He digs out his lottery ticket and scours it)* Forty-

four. Yes! Seven, twenty-two, thirty-nine, seventeen, forty-four. ...

(gestures to a landscape, same wave and gull sounds rise)... On hillside, overlooking a calm and tranquil sea. Maybe a gull, distant, circling. Lush green fields sloping away to a tiny village in the valley. Sun's up ... breaking through the morning mist, warming the earth.

NEWMAN Glennrock Bay?

ZEEK Ain't that something?

NEWMAN Never seen the like.

ZEEK Takes your breath.

NEWMAN You going there?

ZEEK Soon.

(ZEEK stares off entranced by his vision. NEWMAN picks up a broom and begins to sweep. Sound effect dies. ZEEK suddenly snaps out of it.)

ZEEK What *are* you doing?

NEWMAN Sweeping.

ZEEK Sweeping ... And who asked you to sweep?

NEWMAN No one ... I just thought.

ZEEK You just thought?

NEWMAN I'd sweep.

ZEEK Initiative is it? Showing initiative.

NEWMAN I just thought.

ZEEK You'd sweep. Not a thought for anyone else. Do you have any idea the kind of trouble, misery and mayhem initiative has wreaked on the working man? Time and motion,

automation, electrification, digitalization, globalization...
Initiative has almost destroyed work altogether.

NEWMAN I was just sweeping the floor.

ZEEK You're after my job!

NEWMAN *(offering the broom)* You wanna sweep?

ZEEK Of course I don't want to sweep. What did that woman say to you?

NEWMAN What woman?

ZEEK That back-stabbing cow that's got you spying on me, trying to get my job.

NEWMAN I was just sweeping the floor.

ZEEK I'm the one who says when to sweep.

NEWMAN Oh ... You the man ... should I sweep? Not sweep, sweep?

ZEEK Subversive little Noman aren't you. Of course not! Sweeping exists so there's something to do when the boss comes in.

NEWMAN Like now? *(starts to sweep as BEE comes through the door and goes to her desk.)*

ZEEK No, no, no...relax.

ANNA *(off, but approaching)* Bee! Bee ...

(They both take brooms and sweep industriously. ANNA enters and has to get around them to get to BEE)

ANNA Out of the way ... move it!

(They continue a slow synchronized sweep-dance as ANNA confronts BEE)

ANNA What's going with Coberg to Stottle?

BEE What d'you mean?

ANNA What do I mean?

BEE Whaddaya mean?

ANNA This department is annexed to a subdivision of a major division of a multi-national corporation and I am in charge. Do you understand what that means?



BEE I shoulda known this was coming.

ANNA It means that people listen to me! They pay attention because I am a person of accomplishment. Someone no little importance. It means that I am responsible for every little thing that happens here. I am responsible for every foul-up by every know-nothing fly-speck in this department. Do I make myself clear?

BEE Coberg to Stottle?

ANNA *(music quietly begins as Anna starts ranting to no one in particular)* Superiors. My superiors, are picking and pointing. Something is wrong, they tell me. Holding my feet to the fire. Bitch they called me ... bitch.

BEE I shoulda stood in bed.

ANNA Oh, not in so many words. They're too clever for that -

Sexual harassment, lawsuits ... uh hu. But in other words, words not similar in outward appearance but exactly the same in meaning. Explain yourself bitch, they said. *(To BEE)*
So, as your superior, I demand to know what is going on?

BEE I really don't know.

ANNA You don't know? You don't know. Of course you don't know. You don't know anything. But let tell you I smell treachery.
(looking over at ZEEK)

I am suspicious. Deeply suspicious.

(The music rises as she goes over to ZEEK and NEWMAN they DANCE through the following lines up to ANNA's exit)

Zeek! Zeek! What do I know?

ZEEK You know what's going on.

ANNA Tell me.

ZEEK I don't have my glasses on.

ANNA Coburg to Stottle? What happened?

ZEEK Something happened?

ANNA This morning. I asked you to *(realizing NEWMAN is with them)* Who's he?

ZEEK He's the new man.

ANNA Who sent him?

ZEEK You sent him.

ANNA Not me. I asked you to keep an eye out, keep an eye on.

ZEEK She didn't do anything. You didn't send him?

ANNA Nothing at all? 'Course I didn't send him. What's going on?

ZEEK Nothing. She's good ... works hard.

ANNA Solidarity, eh. Undermining my authority?



ZEEK Nah ... is the truth.

ANNA I can see what's going on.

ZEEK What's going on?

ANNA They're try'n to get me. It's not my fault..

ZEEK Who's is it?

ANNA What's his name?

ZEEK The new man? Newman.

ANNA Who sent him?

ZEEK Personnel.

ANNA Personnel? Whadda they know. I'm not a bitch. I'm disappointed in you, Zeek. You were supposed to help me on this one. Disappointed ... disappointed ... disappointed

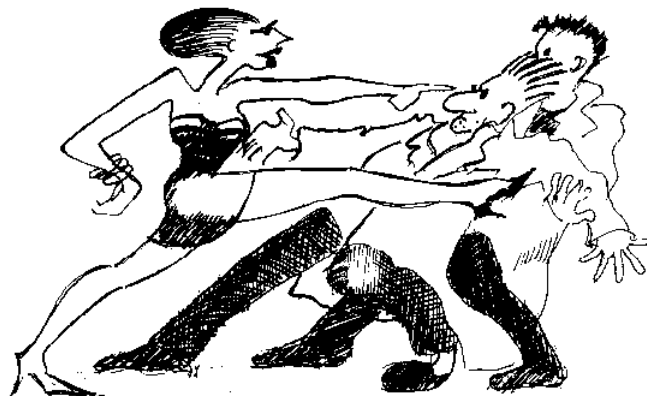
(ANNA circles the room like an agitated hound, exhibiting for the first time that maybe there is something canine about her. NEWMAN, BEE & ZEEK watch spellbound until she reaches Newman. To NEWMAN)

... and you helped him!

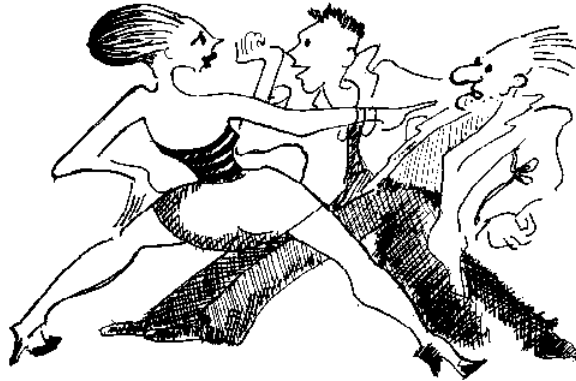
NEWMAN Is my job.

(ANNA exits with a defiant laugh/bark. They look after her without comment for a beat. Then BEE focuses on ZEEK)

BEE So! You were spying on me you ruptured spleen!



ZEEK I was not spying on you.
BEE I should kick your ass!
ZEEK I was protecting you.
BEE You were following me, Bladder face! Checking, spying, taking note.
ZEEK I spoke up for you...
NEWMAN He did, he did ... spoke up for you, I heard.
ZEEK See? Good man, Newman.



BEE Protecting me, protect y'self you mean.
NEWMAN He did, he really did.
BEE Honest? Hard to believe. I'm so tense ... hard to calm down. That man. Johnny what have you done to me? How could he do that to me? I was so open. He shouldna done it.
ZEEK Dah! The boyfriend.
BEE I was an open book.
ZEEK Good riddance.
BEE He just ripped out the pages.
ZEEK (to NEWMAN) He took her toaster.
NEWMAN Toaster?
ZEEK Toaster.

BEE *(sits on a box, dabs her eyes)* Ready to believe anything. Feel like some one ripped off my tattoo.

NEWMAN You gotta a tattoo?

ZEEK *(gesturing him away)* SSssh!

NEWMAN turns away and picks up Jake's parcel. ZEEK watches BEE for a moment, then turns to NEWMAN)

ZEEK Hey! Put that down.

NEWMAN Just lookin' for Stottle to Coburg?

ZEEK Does that say Stottle? Does that say Coburg?

NEWMAN Says Jake.

ZEEK That's what it says.

NEWMAN What is it?

ZEEK What is it? It's Jake's that's what it is.

BEE *(recovering)* He won't open it.

NEWMAN Who's Jake?

ZEEK No one.

BEE A phantom.

(NEWMAN puts down the parcel and wanders among the boxes)

ZEEK *(To BEE)* You didn't see this guy ... he was evil...

BEE Open the damn thing.

NEWMAN Very sinister ... a gangster

BEE *(mocking)* A gangster, hah!

NEWMAN Whoa! *(He has found ZEEK's lair.)* What is this?

BEE *(glancing at at Newman)* He's found you out, Zeek.

(music grows in background - the following lines are to a slow sensual DANCE)

ZEEK Get outta there!

NEWMAN *(fascinated)* Certainly peculiar.

ZEEK I can aspire, can't I.

BEE Hope against hope.

NEWMAN *(looking round the lair)* I don't get it.

BEE Enjoy the mystery.

ZEEK She's just afraid ... afraid of the edge ... it's thrilling

BEE Thrilling? What a love-life.

ZEEK It does for me.

BEE Ha! No Passion. No sensuality, no skin to skin

ZEEK If it's all you can get.

BEE No desire, no tingling, no lust.

NEWMAN *(confused)* Where's the sex?

BEE There is no sex.

ZEEK Sex is all in the mind.

NEWMAN *(shocked)* Nah! Whaddaya mean?

BEE *(taunting Zeek)* No smell, no touch, no sweetness

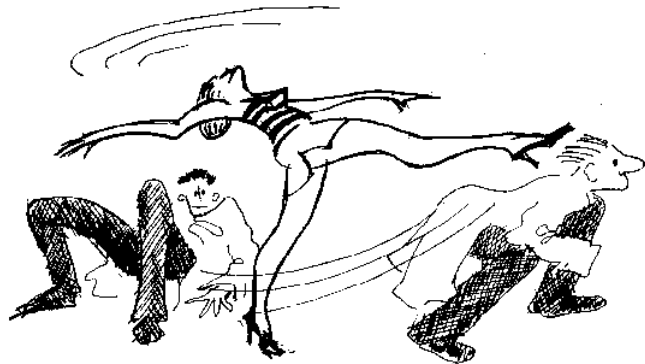
NEWMAN In the head? *(to BEE)* You should look.

BEE I don't wanna see

ZEEK You'd think less of me?

BEE Right now that's not possible!

(BEE swirls away dismissing them, snatches a piece of paper and leaves. Music dies)



NEWMAN *(still bothered by it)* In the mind?

ZEEK *(emphatic)* In the head.

NEWMAN Pht pht pht *(digesting it - pause)* You're pretty hard on her.

ZEEK I'm not hard.

NEWMAN That stuff about her boyfriend.

ZEEK He was the one who was hard. She's better off.

NEWMAN You don't like her?

ZEEK We just work together.

NEWMAN Maybe she still loves the guy.

ZEEK She deserves better than a clown like that. She always goes for the losers. The foul balls.

NEWMAN No telling with love.

ZEEK No self respect ... She's needs to believe in herself ... needs some one better.

NEWMAN Don't we all.

ZEEK Yeah. We all need. *(pause)* You like her?

NEWMAN She's attractive. *(pause - tentative)* You like her?

ZEEK I'm married.

NEWMAN *(neutral)* Ah.

ZEEK What's that mean?

NEWMAN Nothing.

ZEEK *(unsure of the ground)* Not that it means...

NEWMAN *(also unsure)* No ...no.

ZEEK Look at the cover, don't have to read the book.

NEWMAN Right...absolutely.

ZEEK She's attractive.

NEWMAN Good cover? You're not ...?

ZEEK What? No, no...not at all. *(pause)* you got a girlfriend?

NEWMAN Me? No. Looking. Always looking.

ZEEK Yeah, well, no rush. Play the field ... play the field

NEWMAN Chance'd be a fine thing.

ZEEK You're better off...

NEWMAN Why?

ZEEK *(Change the subject)* ... Seven, Twenty-two, thirty-nine, seventeen, forty-four..

NEWMAN Glennrock Bay?

ZEEK The smell of brine and wildflowers on the air. Feel the damp in your clothes? The sun'll dry it off. Can't hardly see the headland out there...hear the boats? *(he mimics a fog horn)* ...been many a wreck out there on the point. *(fog horn)* Pirate ships at one time.*(NEWMAN joins him in the fog horn sounds)* Fishermen bringing in the catch. *(ZEEK slowly takes off his smock - BUZZER).*

NEWMAN What's that?

ZEEK *(heading for the door)* Lunch!

(ZEEK exits and NEWMAN quickly follows him out.)

Lunch
tango music

AFTERNOON

NEWMAN enters carrying a paper bag, glancing from side to side he crosses to place it on BEE's chair. Then he puts on his workcoat while looking at Jake's parcel where it sits on top of a large carton. The Buzzer sounds, **ZEEK** enters and puts on his workcoat. They examine the parcel, passing it back and forth.)

ZEEK Good lunch?

NEWMAN Yeah.

ZEEK Whaddya have?

NEWMAN Sandwich. (*checks the parcel's weight*)

ZEEK What kind of sandwich?

NEWMAN Err...

ZEEK Salami? Chicken salad.. (*also checks the weight*)

NEWMAN ...er. (*whistles*) Gimme a sec....

ZEEK You can't remember what kinda sandwich you had?

NEWMAN It was just a sandwich. Not important.

ZEEK Not important? Lunch? It's the most important part of the day. (*puts parcel to ear and shakes gently*) You had roast beef, right?

NEWMAN No...no

ZEEK Smoked turkey?

NEWMAN (*shaking, listening*) No.

ZEEK Pastrami? Liverwurst? Tuna ? Cheese?

NEWMAN Yes...yes. Cheese sandwich. You happy?

ZEEK (*sniffs the parcel*) American? Swiss? Provolone? Cheddar?

NEWMAN Duh...Cheddar, yeah, yeah, cheddar.

ZEEK Rye or white?

NEWMAN Ah, come on. Who cares?

ZEEK I care. It matters. How can I work with a man who takes no delight in the particulars of life. A man lost to the delicacies of taste. A man bereft of sensual appetite. Eh? What's the point of all the work if you can't enjoy it, eh?

NEWMAN *(sniffs the parcel)* Ooooph. Smells like a dog.
(BEE enters smiling. She carries a package.)

ZEEK Hey.

BEE *(lively)* Tossed salad, French dressing, toasted baguette. And guess who took my bench in the park?

ZEEK We give up.

BEE The man himself. *(ZEEK & NEWMAN look blankly at each other)* The top dog. The big boss.

ZEEK *(amazed)* In the park?

BEE Yes.

NEWMAN By himself?

BEE By himself.

ZEEK *(impressed)* The cappo de tutti cappos. In the park. All alone.

NEWMAN By himself

BEE Eating a sandwich.*(anticipating ZEEK)* Whole wheat was all I could tell.

ZEEK *(disappointed)* Dah! Knew it.

BEE He said hello.

NEWMAN You know him?

BEE No ... he just said hello.

NEWMAN Try'na pick you up.

BEE No ... he just hello.

ZEEK And did you take the opportunity to kiss his major capitalist ass?

BEE *(lively)* Just your style ... grovel, grovel, grovel.

ZEEK Oh, very comical. Bubble, bubble, bubble - That's our busy Bee always perky, very perky.

BEE I am not perky, I hate perky. I'm lively.

NEWMAN She's viderant.

BEE Vivacious, you heard him.

ZEEK Same thing.

BEE *(snapping - in good humor)* Is not! I should call you cute?

ZEEK Cute is for children and dogs.

BEE And perky's for parrots, and I ain't a parrot.

NEWMAN You're in a good mood

BEE I did something for myself
(she opens her bag and takes out soap, smells it then offers it to the others)
Smell

ZEEK *(smells)* Ugh! Middle-class.

NEWMAN *(smells)* Better than Jake.

BEE What? Jake? *(turning to her desk)* Was Jake here? I missed him? What's this?
(She opens the bag on her chair and takes out an old toaster. Newman turns away, waiting to be discovered.)
Oh. That's so sweet. *(she turns to ZEEK)* I don't know what to say.

ZEEK Hey?

BEE So thoughtful. Zeek. That's really nice.

ZEEK *(He hasn't a clue how it got there)* You're welcome.

NEWMAN Hey, I ...

BEE *(stepping on line)* God, it's filthy. You might've cleaned it.
Gaawwd!
(she holds it like a rotten fish by the cord. Newman backs off, not so keen to claim responsibility now.)

ZEEK Well ... yes ... yes ... sorry .. it was the thought...

BEE Of course it was. It was so sweet of you to think of me.
Gonna make me cry. Do you have something we can clean it with?

ZEEK Ah, yes.... Newman ...

BEE Gawd it's caked on. What were you cookin' in it?

ZEEK Newman ... *(he has ducked behind the boxes)* ... Newman.

BEE It's alright. *(lowering it back into the bag.)* It's the thought that counts. *(wiping off her hands)* .. I'm very touched, I really am.

ZEEK Yeah ... well ... it's nothing.

BEE *(Squeals, plants a kiss on Zeek's forehead)* A burst of happiness!
(BEE puts the bag on the floor, grabs a paper and walks out. NEWMAN slowly appears from behind the boxes watching her go , he turns and glares at ZEEK .)

NEWMAN I'm the one who brought the...
(ANNA enters stepping on line)

ANNA Bee! Bee! Where's Bee? Damn employees, never where they're supposed to be.

ZEEK Not here.

ANNA Subterfuge, mutiny. I won't hear of it. Understand. Where's that shipment?

NEWMAN Throttle to Soberg?

ZEEK Not to be found.

ANNA Coberg to Stottle, fool.

ZEEK Couldn't find that either.

ANNA Be serious!

ZEEK We're serious.

NEWMAN We're serious.

(They quickly move among the boxes, one to each side of the stage, but it is obvious they are not taking her seriously.)

ANNA This is not just a box were looking for .. not just a shipment.

NEWMAN *(Pulling at boxes)* Not a box?

ZEEK *(looking)* You heard the boss.

ANNA *(Moving back and forth between them)* This a failure of intent.

NEWMAN *(holding up a box)* You mean like this?

ANNA *(scooting over)* Yes ... No ... no ... This a crisis of management.

ZEEK *(holding another box)* Something like this?

ANNA *(scooting back)* Yes ... yes.. no, no. A violation of trust...

NEWMAN *(shaking a box)* Here you go...

ANNA *(racing back)* There 'tis, there 'tis no, no
The stock holder meeting ...

ZEEK *(Shaking a box)* Here it is, now. Come on.

ANNA *(racing back, a nervous quivering and giggling growing)*
No..no...Shivers through the market, panic selling



NEWMAN *(tempting with another box)* Here you go, here you go ...
ANNA *(jumping at the box)* I'm not a bitch, I'm not a bitch.
ZEEK *(shaking a box - as to a dog)* No ... no. You're a beauty. Yes
you are. You're a beauty.

(ANNA, quite giddy now trots between the two men)

NEWMAN *(dog talk)* What a lovely girl ... yes you are.

ZEEK You're best ... good girl, good girl.

(ANNA letting out yaps of excited pleasure rolls back over a carton. They descend on her, tickling her stomach)

NEWMAN There's a gujji gujji

ZEEK Pretty girl, pretty girl.

(ANNA's leg's are up and peddling with the excitement.)

NEWMAN tch tch tch tch tch.....

ZEEK SShhsshshshshshsh

(BEE enters)

BEE What the hell?

(The men stop, ANNA jumps up flustered, takes off, half speaking half yapping)

ANNA Arf .. Coberg arf, Stottle, arf arf Stottle arf..

(They watch ANNA leave, a beat, BEE heads to her desk)

BEE I don't wanna know.

NEWMAN It's not what looks like.

BEE What is?

(she's busy looking through files.)

NEWMAN Well ... so, what was it Cottle to Stoberg?



ZEEK Wottle and Throttle.

BEE Coberg to Stottle. (*finds the files and leaves*)

NEWMAN (*surveying the boxes*) You know what it looks like?

ZEEK (*surveying the boxes*) A box.

NEWMAN You remember the size?

ZEEK No.

NEWMAN You remember the color?

ZEEK No.

NEWMAN You remember the label?

ZEEK No.

NEWMAN Okay. (*he moves among the boxes searching*)

ZEEK (*leaning on the carton looking at Jake's parcel*) Do you know
what it is I'm going to tell you?

NEWMAN No ... (*pause. Looks over at ZEEK*) ... what?

ZEEK This has happened to me before. A year or more or so ago ...
I was walking along Church Street, minding my own
business, when I ran into Charlie Ribbons. Charlie, I says,
how are you? Fine, fine, he says. And how are you, Peter
Girdle? I'm not Peter Girdle, I said. That's not my name. And
I'm not Charlie Ribbons, he says. So there we stood, looking
at each other, and sure enough ... It wasn't either of us.

NEWMAN (*searching again*) Is Coberg in Brazil?

ZEEK I dunno.

NEWMAN (*Twisting his head, reading labels*) How 'bout France, Spain?

ZEEK Could've been either one.

NEWMAN I've got Florida here ... Japan..

ZEEK But it wasn't either of us. Think of the odds of that happening, eh? Peas in a pod is what we are, can't see your own hand in front of your face.

NEWMAN *(pause - Newman looks at ZEEK)* Don't you ever do any work?

ZEEK I pretend to work, they pretend to pay me.

NEWMAN You put a lot of effort into avoiding work.

ZEEK Keeping my side of the bargain.

NEWMAN Be easier to work.

ZEEK I thought you worked for the boss, but you don't do you? You're one of them agitators!.

NEWMAN No I'm not. *(perplexed)* What's an agitator?

ZEEK A provocateur!

NEWMAN *(even more perplexed)* Ah

(Zeek lectures Newman as they move about the stage in a synchronized dance. No music but it is a tango none the less)

ZEEK It's a system, boy. We're a small part of it. We're a tiny cog in a bigger machine. We're expected to turn with certain inexorable rhythm that won't throw off all the other little cogs that are working at their own steady motion. It's like a band. Think of rhythm, think of melody. All the instruments playing together, keeping time. You wouldn't want to go introducing chaos and disorder now would you? Throwing the timing off. You wouldn't want to wreck the whole damn tune.

NEWMAN No, never ... like a song. A tune ... *(whistles)* ... But what about what's her name ... the boss?

ZEEK The Boss? Never worry about the boss.

NEWMAN She's very angry. She's freakin' over this Coberg to Stottle thing.

ZEEK She's always angry. It's the Problemo du jour, forget about it.

NEWMAN She's losing it.

ZEEK She's being tested.

NEWMAN Tested?

ZEEK If your system's got a weak spot it's gonna blow - ppisshhh...

NEWMAN Kaboom!

ZEEK The chain of command. Listen, you want to understand business you gotta understand the military. You take shit from above and give it to the one below. No one at the top is responsible, everyone at the bottom is expendable. That's our real job - taking the shit.

NEWMAN She seemed serious about it.

ZEEK She is. Of course she is. What else would she be? They're giving it to her on a shovel, she's passing it on. She's playing her part like fine tuned fiddle.

NEWMAN What about Bee?

ZEEK She's playing her hand.

NEWMAN The boss'll smother her.

ZEEK It's a struggle to the death.

NEWMAN The boss is coming apart.

ZEEK She's losing her nerve.

NEWMAN So what do you do?

ZEEK Me? - nothing.

NEWMAN So what do I do?

ZEEK You help me.

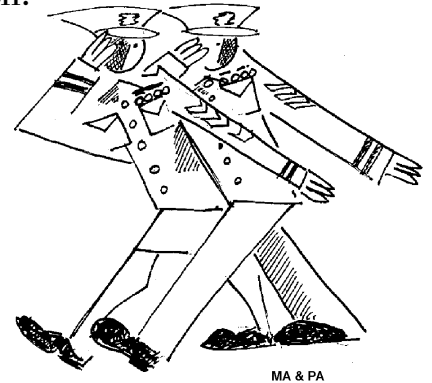
(NEWMAN walks off in frustration.)

(calls after him) It's war. *(a brittle tango begins to build)*

Indeed it is. From Achilles to Rommel, Hannibal to Nevsky, Washington to Wellington, Alexander to Bonaparte .. my family was the very model of a modern major general.

PA (off) Hat-ten-shun! By the left...Q-wick Harch!

(ZEEK leaps to attention. Enter FANTASY MA & PA in military uniform marching in exaggerated style to the tune of the tango.)



PA Company halt. You ugly little man

MA A very vulgar, ugly little man. You bathe and strive today, soldier?

ZEEK Yes ma'am.

PA Wash behind your pretense?

ZEEK Yes, sir.

MA Scour your delusions?

ZEEK Yes, ma'am.

PA The battle of Granicus?

ZEEK Alexander's battle against Darius, sir.

MA Over here, over there, when and where?

ZEEK Over the river Granicus, 334 B.C., ma'am.

PA In 216 the Romans attacked?

ZEEK The Carthaginians at Cannae, sir.
MA And ... and, you excuse for a blemish.
ZEEK Hannibal, with brilliant use of his cavalry, encircled the
Romans and ...
MA }
PA }
ZEEK }

MA Who led the Salamis against Troy?
ZEEK Odysseus, ma'am.

PA Wrong. wrong, wrong. Ajax!

MA The lightning cleanser.

ZEEK Ba bobba, bom, bom, bom.

PA Napoleon Bonaparte had one tactic.

MA Strike with force

ZEEK Where the enemy lacked it.

(They wind up their dance with MA & PA going off - end music.)

ZEEK The folks, ladies and gentlemen. The folks.

(chuckles....pause) Wasn't really my childhood ... something I made up. Can't recall the real thing anymore. Blocked it out. Now I struggle with my own invention... fight it daily ... with indolence.

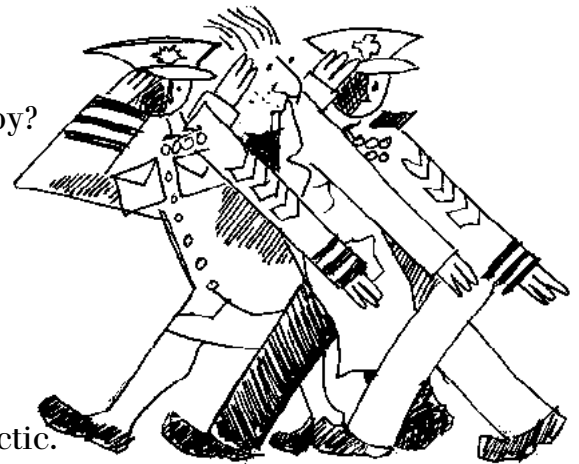
*(enter **NEWMAN**)*

ZEEK Found it alright?

NEWMAN Yeah, right down the hall there ...

(The phone rings, ZEEK is standing next to it, he reluctantly answers his free hand in his pocket.)

ZEEK Yeah... Uhhu ...not right now. Lemme get a pen. *(he doesn't move or take his hand from his pocket)* Okay, go ahead ...



yeah...yeah...That with a K ... Yeah. Got it. Bye.
(*he puts the phone down. BEE enters triumphant.*)

BEE Got it. I found it. I knew it all along.

NEWMAN Stottle to Coberg? You found it?

BEE The damn thing was already sent, 'cepted and signed for.

ZEEK You're kidding?

NEWMAN How'd you find out?

BEE It was erased from the computer, the Techies retrieved it.
Went out thirty-seven days ago.

NEWMAN Eh, that's clever. You're good.

ZEEK Ech ... good enough.

NEWMAN Now we don't have to look for it.

ZEEK No ... no. Now's the best time to look.

NEWMAN But it's not here.

ZEEK Perfect. Now we have predictability. (*rubbing his hands in glee*) Now we can look without the slightest fear of finding it. No surprises. Smooth sailing.

NEWMAN (*Resigned*) Into the sunset.

BEE (*Up beat*) Me? I like to work ... it's something done.
Something outside yourself. It exists ... I exist

ZEEK You just identify with your job. Being hired only means you can be fired.

BEE (*emphatic*) Doing is being.

ZEEK That road leads nowhere ... and it's the same coming back.

NEWMAN (*pause - taking that in*) You could always ... yeah ...

BEE Yeah, something real. Teach a class ... milk a cow ... dig a

hole. Leave some trace that you've lived.

ZEEK A hole? A hole? You want me to leave a hole in ground?

BEE For every enthusiast there's a cynic.

ZEEK And for every workaholic ..

NEWMAN *(Stepping on line)* There's you!

ZEEK *(without irony)* ... It's fate .

NEWMAN *(BEE heads for the exit again)* Going?

BEE Taking a different road.

ZEEK *(pause)* Whaddya think Newman?

NEWMAN Nothing.

ZEEK Good boy. *(pause)*

NEWMAN Yeah, wait a minute, that toaster ...

ZEEK *(stepping)* This work thing reminds me ...

NEWMAN No, no ... the toaster...

ZEEK It's what I'm talking about ... Watch this...*(takes a piece of paper from BEE's desk and walks studying it.)* What am I doing?

NEWMAN The toaster ...

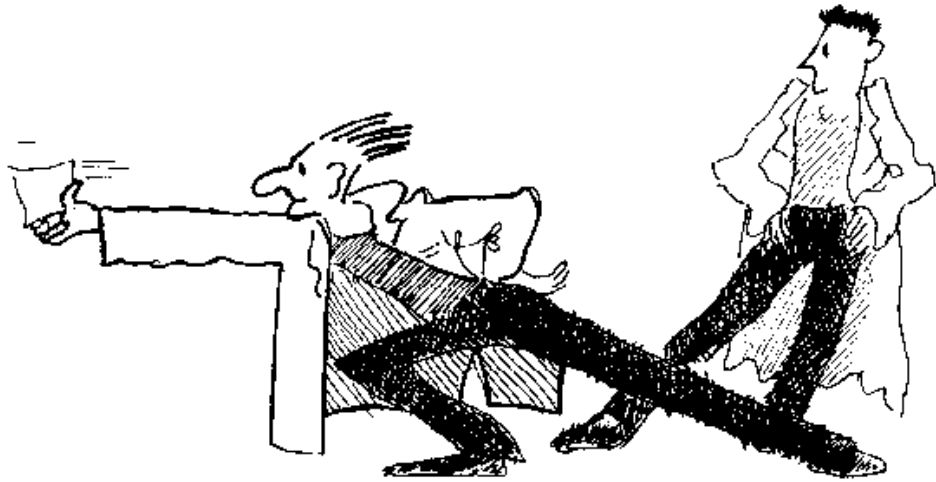
ZEEK That's right. Look at me. Look at me. You've never seen me before. What am I doing?

NEWMAN How should I ... You're ... runnin' around ... you're looking for something? You have to pee ...

ZEEK Come on ... come on

NEWMAN You're checking the paper.

ZEEK Warmer, warmer, come on...



NEWMAN You're busy.

ZEEK Correct! Smart boy, head of the class. - Busy! It is a practice among certain untrustworthy people in this business, not me, of course, to walk about with a piece of paper so as to disguise their real purpose, to wit, the expenditure of time doing nothing.

NEWMAN You serious?

ZEEK Never more so. (*holds out paper*) This is their passport. This is their shibboleth. Say it!

NEWMAN Slivowitz. shlivobeth...

ZEEK Shibboleth...shibboleth. Idiot! The password. The shield against the question stupid, the interrogator venal and the busybody nauseating. It has an impenetrable aura of intention and purpose. Royal messengers may have had their wax seals, but the shibboleth of bureaucracy is paper. It is a profound mystery of the working world but pieces of paper are thought to contain secrets of unmeasured consequence. So don't hide it, hold it out, look at it.



(**ZEEK** holds out his piece of paper and marches off - **NEWMAN** looks after him expecting him to return. pause. Instead **BEE** enters)

BEE Hey, Tiger. Waiting for bus?

NEWMAN Nah ... no. He just went ... pppssh ... and, I thought ...
(whistles) ... Er .. Bee ... listen

BEE (working) I'm listening.

NEWMAN About that toaster ...

BEE Oh, gawd. D'ya see it? It's so filthy.

NEWMAN I know but the point ...

BEE And the cord's all frayed ...

NEWMAN Is it?

BEE But he meant well. It was the thought that ...
(**ANNA** enters brusquely squashing the mood.)

ANNA Where's Zeek?

NEWMAN Who me?

ANNA What's going on?

BEE Work, work, work.

ANNA Call this work? You don't know what work is. I work, you should see how I work. And what's my reward? All I get is jealousy. Zeek! Envious nobodies. Zeek! Where's Zeek?

BEE On a pick - up.

ANNA On a pick-up ... People not coming through. People trying to

spite me. I give instructions ... might as well talk to the wall, clear instructions, I direct, I re - direct. Talk to that box might just as well.

BEE Stranded on ugly.

ANNA I'm out there twenty-four / seven ... I've taken it for the team, bled on the corporate floor. Moving up. A comer, a player. I was even going to have lunch with the big boss himself today, *(suddenly wistful)* Important meetings changed his schedule. *(BEE and NEWMAN glance at each other. ANNA becomes angry again)* And now they're accusing me ... how dare they!... with lies and condemnations. It's gone far enough.

BEE So you're accusing us.

(BEE moves forward on ANNA in the manner of an aggressive dog. BEE and ANNA circle one another. Sharp tango music)



ANNA You? No, not you, no. It's that idle wretch, Zeek.

BEE Zeek? what did Zeek do?

ANNA Coburg to grrr (growls). It's those bean counters ... cooking the books. Calling after me ... Here girl, here girl.

BEE What's wrong with Zeek?

ANNA Those sleazeballs in Marketing (growls) whistling at me ... whistling. Here girl, here girl *(whistles and begins dog responses)*. Zeek? Zeek? That brainless fool? Arf arf...

BEE That's what you think. I know your snide accusations and mean opinions. You always want to believe the worst.

ANNA Lunch with the boss at a fine restaurant. Woof.

BEE Trying to set us against each other with your nasty insinuations.

ANNA I'm good ... a resume like gold. (*yaps, growls*) fetch, fetch!

BEE Innuendoes. Spying and back-stabbing.

ANNA I was on the V.P. track ...

BEE Picking , accusing ...

ANNA (*arf, arf, she is really losing it.*)
....deceit ...betrayal. Woof!

BEE Coberg to Stottle.

ANNA Woof! Woof! (*growling, snarling - crazy*)

BEE (*seeing it's gone too far*) Hey. Calm down.
Take it easy.

NEWMAN (*hoping about*) Down girl, down!

ANNA Woof ! Woof!
(ANNA runs amok among the boxes completely transformed into an over excited dog - exits barking)

NEWMAN (*pause - with new admiration for BEE*) That told her.

BEE She's gone mad!

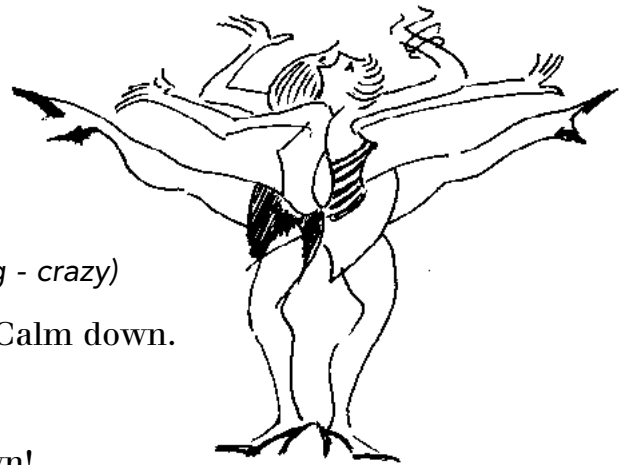
NEWMAN Went off with her tail between her legs.

BEE I'm on fire. .. burning ...

NEWMAN You really set her straight.

BEE (*wriggling her shoulders, her fingers*) Tingling all over.

NEWMAN You're very good, you are ... really. You should run this



place. You could do her job.

BEE You think so? Phew ...

NEWMAN Sure you could. What she got that you don't? You're bright, you're organized, you're hot ...

BEE She's not.

NEWMAN She's angry, she's paranoid, she's ranting and raving, she's out of control.

BEE She's a bitch.

NEWMAN D'yer hear her growl?

BEE She did, yeah, she growled.

NEWMAN Bad dog.

BEE You think I could? You think I could do it?

NEWMAN Oh, you're hot. You'd be fabulous.

BEE Yeah ... I'd be in charge.

NEWMAN *(goads her on)* Hot dog!

BEE The corporate ladder. Suits, options, meetings ... meetings

NEWMAN All the way ... top dog.

BEE Not like her.

NEWMAN You don't have to be a bitch. Remember the big boss? He was, hello... everything.

BEE Eating his sandwich.

NEWMAN *(rooting for her)* In the park.

BEE By himself.

NEWMAN Whole wheat.
(silence, BEE stares off at the future)

BEE Nah...It's not me.

NEWMAN *(let down)* Why not?

BEE It's not what I want. I don't want to tell people what to. I don't want to be in charge.

NEWMAN You could do it.

BEE *(shaking it off)* It's not me.

NEWMAN Yeah. Only people who want to be in charge get to be in charge and they're just the people you don't in charge.
(pause) What do you want?

BEE *(facing the futility of it all)* I don't know.

NEWMAN *(looking around)* We just go on?

BEE That's it - more of the same.

NEWMAN Nothing changes?

BEE Always the same. The afternoons drag a bit.

NEWMAN Yeah. *(looks at boxes)* I s'pose I could ... er ...do something .

BEE No rush.

NEWMAN No? No ... Needs thought.

BEE Yeah. He keeps a newspaper over there.

NEWMAN Oh, yeah?

BEE Sit down. Take the weight off your feet. There's no point in doing Zeek's work for him. Not like you're saving him.

NEWMAN Thanks *(pause)* He told me about the boyfriend. Sorry to hear that.

BEE Yeah...thanks.

NEWMAN You need to get out. *(sitting, taking up the newspaper)* Movies and things.

BEE I'd like that.

NEWMAN Stop thinking about him.

BEE That'd be nice.
(picking up the paper) Been a lot of trouble in the world.
(He reads, she watches fondly.)
(Enter ZEEK, he looks about and feels excluded. To get their attention:)

ZEEK Who could go for some pie, about now?

NEWMAN Whoa. *(he's up, excited)* Some pie?

BEE Ooh. With a good crust and a fluted rim.

ZEEK And a juicy, fruity filling

NEWMAN I like it. Fruity, juicy. I like it.

ZEEK You can't beat a good thick crust with a scalloped edge.

BEE Or nice latticed top.

NEWMAN Hot ... ooh

ZEEK and glazed.

NEWMAN *(emerging from Zeek's lair, smells)* Rhubarb pie. Ah!

ZEEK *(disgusted)* Agh! You eat rhubarb pie?

BEE What's wrong with rhubarb pie?

NEWMAN I just love rhubarb pie.
(pause as Newman enjoys his pie)

ZEEK Certainly made an impression on you.

NEWMAN Oh, yeah. Oh yeah. *(He's still acting out)* Vivid.

ZEEK Ah. Do stop hopping about you're making me dizzy.

NEWMAN Hey, it's youth. Vigor.

BEE Hot to trot.

ZEEK What a waste.

BEE You feel so vigorish you could straighten these boxes.

ZEEK Here we go, line it up, square it off. I just don't feel like pie anymore.

NEWMAN It's my body talking.

ZEEK Well, this is herbody talking - right angles and left angles square on the hypotenuse.

BEE Oh, Get out! Better than your Sodom and Gomorrah back there.

ZEEK Oh, ho. *(to Newman)* Welcome to the cities of the planes - Sodom and Geometry where they do things,

NEWMAN rectangular, triangular and equilateral!

BEE This a test?

ZEEK Show him what a real man can do.

BEE *(to BEE)* You're so neurotic.

NEWMAN *(seductively to Newman)* Satisfy my neurosis.

ZEEK *(he tests the box).* Heavy, I'll need help.
A bitter/sweet, heartbreaking slice of pie.
(ZEEK takes a piece of paper and leaves. BEE & NEWMAN slide down on either side of the box. They are close.)

NEWMAN Your whim turned to obsession.

BEE Be gentle.

NEWMAN Easy now...it's heavy.

BEE Like all my obsessions.

NEWMAN Ease it to me.

BEE Can you bear the load?

NEWMAN I'll take the weight.

BEE Such a man.

(Tango music comes up as they begin to rock the box back and forth. They slide into a sensual dance. By the time the music stops they are smitten.)



Music stops - pause - enter ZEEK

ZEEK *(Ignoring them)* Punishment enough, punishment enough.

BEE *(Straightening up, moving apart)* What now?

ZEEK Loss ... Loss. *(pulling out lottery ticket and staring at it.)* Not a single number. Not a one! That's it... Glennrock Bay... Retirement.

BEE Oh, shut up!

ZEEK That's nice. Not a drop of sympathy from you. What did you ever lose?

NEWMAN She lost love.

ZEEK Lose? She didn't even like him. I just lost my dream. My reason for being.

BEE You lose every day. Every morning you buy a ticket, every afternoon you lose.

ZEEK Somebody wins. *(To NEWMAN)* And what're you doing ?

NEWMAN Regretting I had nothing to lose.

ZEEK I regret. I live my regrets. I had hopes - Moving up. Something big. That's what life is - hope, escalating with age as the possibilities diminish.

NEWMAN Why didn't you do something?

ZEEK Fear of success.

BEE Other people's.

ZEEK Where's it writ that you have to succeed?

NEWMAN What's the other - fear of failure?

ZEEK Not at all. Failure is my success. It's what I'm good at. Did I ask to get born? Did anyone ask me if I wanted to be part of

ZEEK cont. this day by day humiliation? Life! Life has failed me. It has. I tried, I've done my best. I never challenged it with aspirations or ambition. I've never asserted myself or interfered. I've always kept my nose clean and steered out of trouble. All I ever asked was to complete the course. I never wanted to win, take on that weight, never, no, not me. I just wanted to cross the finish line ... So what every one'd be gone home by then, I don't care. I just want to cross the line with some dignity left. Maybe pick up a little reward at the end.

NEWMAN Glennrock Bay?

ZEEK Why not?

NEWMAN *(Getting it)* Yeah....Why not. Life's hard enough. I don't get most of it ... alphabet soup, DNA and MSG. All that stuff you never asked for pushing and pulling you. Jeessh ... baah ... Hours of television numbing your woof . It's hard. Static, it's all static. Psssh. A fresh start is what we need ... Glennrock why not Glennrock...
*(disappointed by the epiphany **NEWMAN** Turns to leave)*

BEE You're leaving?

NEWMAN Just going.
*(exit **NEWMAN**, BEE watches him go.)*

BEE *(pause)* Man of few words.

ZEEK Most of them noises.
(BEE sits to work at the computer ZEEK stares off. She glances over.)

BEE Don't dwell.

ZEEK It's quiet. *(pause)* Remember when you're a kid and it's raining outside ... maybe the TV's broke. *(pause)*

BEE You should be used to it by now. *(pause)*

ZEEK The smell of the house ... sound of a car passing by ...
(pause - barking. off) What's that?

BEE Her.

(Silence - ZEEK goes over to JAKE's parcel and stands looking at it. After a moment BEE looks up and sees him. She knows what he's up to and tries to stop him.)

BEE Oh, no, Zeek! *(sinister tango music rises)*

What's it this time?

*(Two figures appear - **FANTASY GANGSTERS**, the man dressed in a trench coat and fedora, wielding a gun. The woman, with big hair, dressed as a gangster's moll.)*

BEE Ah. Fer chrissakes!

(The gangsters dance a menacing tango. When they stop, to BEE:)



GANGSTER Awright, lady. Keep it shut. This the place, Babe?

(Both gangsters wield guns. They look about.)

MOLL Gotta be the place, Mugs.

BEE What do you want?

GANGSTER I essplaned already, shuddup!

MOLL Here he is, Mugs. Here's our boy.

GANGSTER That our boy?

ZEEK Me? Who are you?

GANGSTER Hey, babe. Our boy don't know us. Who do you think we are,
Wiseboy?

ZEEK You look like gangsters,

GANGSTER We are gangsters. See ... knew us all along.

MOLL Yeah, Know'd us right off.

GANGSTER That's our boy, Wiseboy.

BEE What the hell you doing here?

MOLL Whaddaya think we're doing here, honey? We're part of the
plot.

GANGSTER All part of life's rich pattern.

ZEEK When things get slow bring on the guy with the gun....

GANGSTER That's right, Wiseboy. End of the afternoon, things start to
sag, gotta bring on some mean guys and tough broads.

BEE Every afternoon, Zeek. It's always something.

MOLL What'sa matter, girlie, can't stand a little excitement?

GANGSTER Watch her, Babe. If she gets outta line.

BEE Oh, yeah. What she gonna do, her nails?

ZEEK Easy, babe. They got the drop on us.

BEE I am not your babe!

GANGSTER *(to his moll)* You sure 'bout this guy?

MOLL He's the one I saw.

ZEEK I'm not who you think.

GANGSTER Think you know what I think, Wiseboy. We know what we want. What happened to the shipment?

ZEEK *(surprised)* Coburg to Stottle? That's all taken care of. You didn't need the guns.

BEE Coburg? Yeah, that went off weeks ago.

MOLL Butt out, sister.

GANGSTER Whaddaya mean, weeks ago.

BEE That shipment. We tracked it.

GANGSTER You couldn't. He didn't have it til yesterday. He only came in from BA last night.

ZEEK I was here yesterday. All day.

BEE He was.
(barking - off)

GANGSTER What's that?

BEE The boss

GANGSTER Make it quick, Wiseboy.
Where's the shipment?

BEE You got the wrong department.

MOLL Shaddup.

GANGSTER *(to Moll)* You sure this is Jake?

ZEEK I'm not Jake.

MOLL He's the guy I saw.

GANGSTER I'm looking for Jake. Jake's got something belongs to me.

ZEEK Here ... *(pointing to parcel)* Here!

BEE Now get rid of them, for chrissakes!

ZEEK I can't, I can't get 'em out of my mind.

BEE Just shut 'em out, Zeek. Think of something else.

GANGSTER You tryin' to rub us out, lady? You got some moxy, you know that.

MOLL *(looking at parcel)* This is the package, all right

BEE Tell them, Zeek. *(to gangster)* Some one just gave him that this morning.

GANGSTER Oh, yeah? Why'd they give it to you, Wiseboy?

BEE They thought he was Jake.

GANGSTER I ain't askin' you, lady.

ZEEK They thought I was Jake.

GANGSTER One more time... *(barking - off growing nearer)*
Okay, Babe. Quick.



MOLL He's the one. I saw Tony give him the package this morning.

ZEEK That's right. When I said I'm not Jake, he said, yeah, and I'm not Tony.

MOLL But it was Tony.

GANGSTER And you ain't Jake? What happened to Jake?

ZEEK How should I know?

BEE For god's sake, Zeek. Can't you keep your own characters straight? Can't you deal with these people.

MOLL Shaddup.

BEE Shaddup yourself.

MOLL No, you shaddup. I essplained at you awready.

GANGSTER Hey, hey! Ladies. A little civility here, we're in shipping ... thank you. So whaddaya think, Babe? He the real thing?

MOLL I dunno. Whaddayou think?

GANGSTER I'm thinking. I'm thinking.

(pause)

BEE Oh, get 'em out, Zeek. You're driving me nuts.

ZEEK Can I help it? My head's full of this stuff. Heros and villains, gangsters and molls. It's all right for you, - line it up, square it off, organize - your neurosis is socially acceptable. Mine's not!

(Barking approaches)



GANGSTER (to Moll) Check that.

MOLL (goes to door looks out, returns)

GANGSTER There's people out there. And a big dog.

GANGSTER Awright. Grab the package.

(She does, and they back off in tango motion holding up their guns.)

Anything wrong. We'll be back.

(**GANGSTER & MOLL** Exit with caution. **BEE & ZEEK** have resumed their former positions - Music fades - pause)

BEE I wish you'd stop doing that.

ZEEK It passes the time. (sits - pause - looks around.) Like old times.

BEE The two of us.

ZEEK You an' me.

BEE Where'd he go?

ZEEK I dunno ... Like him, don't ya?

BEE I do, yeah.

ZEEK Foul ball. You know it was him who gave you the toaster.

BEE I thought it mighta been.

ZEEK I would have ...

BEE If you'd a thought.

ZEEK Yeah he's a good kid.

BEE Yeah ... good kid.

(off stage there is a loud eruption of barking and shouting as people try to break up a dog fight. The noise is intrusive, BEE and ZEEK glance off but pay it no mind.)

(noise dies. NEWMAN enters casually as if nothing is amiss but his workcoat is torn to shreds. There's no reaction from BEE or ZEEK)

BEE There you are.
NEWMAN Yeah.
BEE What's happening?
NEWMAN Static.



(he crosses and shoves a couple of boxes together and sits. ZEEK gets up looking at him.)

ZEEK Is that what you're gonna do?
NEWMAN Huh?
ZEEK You're gonna sit and lounge all afternoon?
NEWMAN You have something better in mind?
ZEEK We could use our intelligence for a start.
NEWMAN I'm using it. I'm sitting. I listened. Learned from the master.
ZEEK What happened to the initiative?
NEWMAN Got my own box - see?
ZEEK Youth you don't deserve it!
NEWMAN What's got into you?
ZEEK A day like today makes you see things. Makes you think.
Day after day it's just another day, then bang you don't know
who you are. You're mistook ... you're some one else. And

you think ... I coulda been different ... if it wasn't for me I coulda been some one else.

NEWMAN Sit down, take rest.

ZEEK That's right, sit down, block it out. The unexamined life is the life for you.

NEWMAN Take the weight off ... relax.

ZEEK Did it ever occur to you to ask yourself who's the you in you?

NEWMAN I'm me.

ZEEK Me? *(turning away)* No more sense of yourself than a chicken.

NEWMAN I'm always me.

ZEEK *(turning back)* And who's me? We change. Once you were charming now you're annoying. Who's the real you?

NEWMAN Why torture yourself? *(pause)* You know who you are! You're your own worst enemy.

BEE Not while I'm alive.

ZEEK *(sarcastic)* Ha ha.

(pause. ZEEK sits. pause. In sync. all three check their watches - the following section plays like the steady ticking of a metronome - each line coming on the beat.)

BEE How's it going?

NEWMAN Passing nicely.

ZEEK Cruising speed

NEWMAN I'm bored!

ZEEK Bored?

BEE That's what he said.

NEWMAN Bored!
 ZEEK An ordinary kind of...
 BEE day in, day out -
 NEWMAN Boredom.
 BEE He's looking for a more...
 ZEEK exotic kind of...
 NEWMAN boredom.
 BEE Tropical boredom.
 ZEEK Philosophical boredom.
 NEWMAN Ennui
 ZEEK Weltschmerz.
 BEE Airport lounge.
 NEWMAN Boredom
 BEE Political pundits.
 NEWMAN Boredom
 BEE Annual report
 NEWMAN Boredom
 ZEEK Accredited critics.
 NEWMAN Boredom
 BEE Rarified boredom
 ZEEK Photogenic boredom
 BEE Disneyfied boredom
 ZEEK Mind numbing, bone aching, hair crawling...
 BEE Flesh deadening, life yawning, grave calling
 BEE&ZEEK Boredom.
 NEWMAN A real man's boredom.

(Music rises and the couple from the opening sequence tango on to the stage. ZEEK and NEWMAN take off their workcoats, BEE gathers up her bags as they watch the couple dance,)

ZEEK Time rushes on.
BEE Time soon.
NEWMAN To go?
ZEEK That's why we came
BEE So we can leave.
ZEEK Another day done.
BEE A good days work.
ZEEK Takes it out of you.
NEWMAN Just showing up.
ZEEK Doing the time.
BEE Always something to do.
ZEEK You can't do it all.
NEWMAN We'll try tomorrow?
ZEEK Today wasn't the day.
BEE Tomorrow.
ZEEK Tomorrow's the day.
NEWMAN Always tomorrow.
BEE Always another day



(The music and dancers come to a sweeping finish)

NEWMAN G'night.
ZEEK G'night.
BEE Goodnight

Players exit stage while dancers continue to dance as lights dim.



THE END

