Mock me, if you must, when I am gone, not to my face!
O Thebes my city, O you lordly men of Thebes!
O water of Dirke's stream!* Holy soil where our chariots run!
You, you do I call upon; you, you shall testify
How all unwed of friends, by what harsh decree,
They send me to the cavern that shall be my everlasting grave.
Ah, cruel doom! to be banished from earth, nor welcomed
Among the dead, set apart, for ever!

CHORUS. Too bold, too reckless, you affronted
Justice. Now that awful power
Takes terrible vengeance, O my child.
For some old sin you make atonement.

Antistrophe 2

ANTIGONE. My father's sin! There is the source of all my anguish.
Harsh fate that befell my father! Harsh fate that has held
Fast in its grip the whole renowned race of Labdacus!*
O the blind madness of my father's and my mother's marriage!
O cursed union of a son with his own mother!
From such as those I draw my own unhappy life;
And now I go to dwell with them, unwedded and accursed.
O brother,* through an evil marriage you were slain;
and I
Live—but your dead hand destroys me.

CHORUS. Such loyalty is a holy thing.
Yet none that holds authority
Can brook disobedience, O my child.
Your self-willed pride has been your ruin.

ANTIGONE. Unwept, unwedded and unbefriended,
Alone, pitilessly used,
Now they drag me to death.
Never again, O thou Sun in the heavens,
May I look on thy holy radiance!
Such is my fate, and no one laments it;
No friend is here to mourn me.

CREON [speaks]. Enough of this! If tears and lamentations
Could stave off death they would go on for ever.
Take her away at once, and wall her up
Inside a cavern, as I have commanded,
And leave her there, alone, in solitude.
Her home shall be her tomb; there she may live
Or die, as she may choose: my hands are clean;
But she shall live no more among the living.

ANTIGONE [speaks]. O grave, my bridal-chamber,
everlasting
Prison within a rock: now I must go
To join my own, those many who have died
And whom Persephone* has welcomed home;
And now to me, the last of all, so young,
Death comes, so cruelly. And yet I go
In the sure hope that you will welcome me,
Father, and you, my mother; you, my brother.*
For when you died* it was my hands that washed
And dressed you, laid you in your graves, and poured
The last libations. Now, because to you,
Polyneices, I have given burial,
To me they give a recompense like this!
Yet what I did,* the wise will all approve.
For had I lost a son, or lost a husband,
Never would I have ventured such an act
Against the city's will. And wherefore so?
My husband dead, I might have found another;
ANTIGONE

Another son from him, if I had lost
A son. But since my mother and my father
Have both gone to the grave, there can be none
Henceforth that I can ever call my brother.
It was for this I paid you such an honour,
Dear Polynices, and in Creon's eyes
Thus wantonly and gravely have offended.
So with rude hands he drags me to my death.
No chanted wedding-hymn, no bridal-joy,
No tender care of children can be mine;
But like an outcast, and without a friend,
They take me to the cavernous home of death.
What ordinance of the gods have I transgressed?
Why should I look to Heaven any more
For help, or seek an ally among men?
If this is what the gods approve, why then,
When I am dead I shall discern my fault;
If theirs the sin, may they endure a doom
No worse than mine, so wantonly inflicted!

CHORUS. Still from the same quarter the same wild winds
Blow fiercely, and shake her stubborn soul.

CREON. And therefore, for this, these men shall have cause,
Bitter cause, to lament their tardiness.

CHORUS. I fear these words bring us closer yet
To the verge of death.*

CREON. I have nothing to say, no comfort to give:
The sentence is passed, and the end is here.

ANTIGONE. O city of Thebes where my fathers dwelt,
O gods of our race,
Now at last their hands are upon me!
You princes of Thebes, O look upon me,
The last that remain of a line of kings!
How savagely impious men use me,
For keeping a law that is holy.

[Exit ANTIGONE, under guard. CREON remains]
MORELL [firmly] Quite. You must choose definitely.
MARCHBANKS [anxiously] Morell: you don't understand. She means that she belongs to herself.
CANDIDA [turning to him] I mean that, and a good deal more, Master Eugene, as you will both find out presently. And pray, my lords and masters, what have you to offer for my choice? I am up for auction, it seems. What do you bid, James?
MORELL [reproachfully] Cand—[He breaks down: his eyes and throat fill with tears: the orator becomes a wounded animal]. I can't speak—
CANDIDA [impulsively going to him] Ah, dearest—
MARCHBANKS [in wild alarm] Stop: it's not fair. You mustn't shew her that you suffer, Morell. I am on the rack too; but I am not crying.
MORELL [rallying all his forces] Yes: you are right. It is not for pity that I am bidding. [He disengages himself from CANDIDA].
CANDIDA [retreating, chilled] I beg your pardon, James: I did not mean to touch you. I am waiting to hear your bid.
MORELL [with proud humility] I have nothing to offer you but my strength for your defence, my honesty for your surety, my ability and industry for your livelihood, and my authority and position for your dignity. That is all it becomes a man to offer to a woman.
CANDIDA [quite quietly] And you, Eugene? What do you offer?
She pauses and looks curiously from one to the other, as if weighing them. Morell, whose lofty confidence has changed into heart-breaking dread at Eugene's bid, loses all power for concealing his anxiety. Eugene, strung to the highest tension, does not move a muscle.
should come with us, Eugene, to see the pictures of the hero of that household. James as a baby! the most wonderful of all babies. James holding his first school prize, won at the ripe age of eight! James as the captain of his eleven! James in his first frock coat! James under all sorts of glorious circumstances! You know how strong he is! I hope he didn’t hurt you! how clever he is! how happy. [With deepening gravity] Ask James’s mother and his three sisters what it cost to save James the trouble of doing anything but be strong and clever and happy. Ask me what it costs to be James’s mother and three sisters and wife and mother to his children all in one. Ask Prossy and Maria how troublesome the house is even when we have no visitors to help us to slice the onions. Ask the tradesmen who want to worry James and spoil his beautiful sermons who it is that puts them off. When there is money to give, he gives it: when there is money to refuse, I refuse it. I build a castle of comfort and indulgence and love for him, and stand sentinel always to keep little vulgar cares out. I make him master here, though he does not know it, and could not tell you a moment ago how it came to be so. [With sweet irony] And when he thought I might go away with you, his only anxiety was—what should become of me! And to tempt me to stay he offered me [leaning forward to stroke his hair caressing at each phrase] his strength for my defense! his industry for my livelihood! his dignity for my position! his—[relenting] ah, I am mixing up your beautiful cadences and spoiling them, am I not, darling? [She lays her cheek fondly against his].

Morell [quite overcome, kneeling beside her chair and embracing her with boyish ingenuousness] It’s all true, every word. What I am you have made me with the labor of your hands and the love of your heart. You are my wife, my mother, my sisters: you are the sum of all loving care to me.

Candida [in his arms, smiling, to Eugene] Am I your mother and sisters to you, Eugene?

Marchbanks [rising with a fierce gesture of disgust] Ah, never. Out, then, into the night with me!

Candida [rising quickly] You are not going like that, Eugene?

Marchbanks [with the ring of a man’s voice—no longer a boy’s—in the words] I know the hour when it strikes. I am impatient to do what must be done.

Morell [who has also risen] Candida: don’t let him do anything rash.

Candida [confident, smiling at Eugene] Oh, there is no fear. He has learnt to live without happiness.

Marchbanks. I no longer desire happiness: life is nobler than that. Parson James: I give you my happiness with both hands: I love you because you have filled the heart of the woman I loved. Goodbye. [He goes towards the door].

Candida. One last word. [He stops, but without turning to her. She goes to him]. How old are you, Eugene?

Marchbanks. As old as the world now. This morning I was eighteen.

Candida. Eighteen! Will you, for my sake, make a little poem out of the two sentences I am going to say to you? And will you promise to repeat it to yourself whenever you think of me?

Marchbanks [without moving] Say the sentences.

Candida. When I am thirty, she will be forty-five. When I am sixty, she will be seventy-five.

Marchbanks [turning to her] In a hundred years, we shall be the same age. But I have a better secret than that in my heart. Let me go now. The night outside grows impatient.

Candida. Goodbye. [She takes his face in her hands; and as he divines her intention and falls on his knees, she kisses his forehead. Then he flies out into the night. She turns to Morell, holding out her arms to him]. Ah, James!

They embrace. But they do not know the secret in the poet’s heart.
Cecily. Well, ever since dear Uncle Jack first confessed to us that he had a younger brother who was very wicked and bad, you of course have formed the chief topic of conversation between myself and Miss Prism. And of course a man who is much talked about is always very attractive. One feels there must be something in him after all. I daresay it was foolish of me, but I fell in love with you, Ernest.

Algeron. Darling! And when was the engagement actually settled?

Cecily. On the 14th of February last. Worn out by your entire ignorance of my existence, I determined to end the matter one way or the other, and after a long struggle with myself I accepted you under this dear old tree here. The next day I bought this little ring in your name, and this is the little bangle with the true lovers' knot I promised you always to wear.

Algeron. Did I give you this? It's very pretty, isn't it?

Cecily. Yes, you've wonderfully good taste, Ernest. It's the excuse I've always given for your leading such a bad life. And this is the box in which I keep all your dear letters. (Kneels at table, opens box, and produces letters tied up with blue ribbon.)

Algeron. My letters! But my own sweet Cecily, I have never written you any letters.

Cecily. You need hardly remind me of that, Ernest. I remember only too well that I was forced to write your letters for you. I wrote always three times a week, and sometimes oftener.

Algeron. Oh, do let me read them, Cecily?
MERRIMAN. Miss Fairfax.

(Enter GWENDOLEN. Exit MERRIMAN.)

CECILY. (advancing to meet her) Pray let me introduce myself to you. My name is Cecily Cardew.

GWENDOLEN. Cecily Cardew? (moving to her and shaking hands) What a very sweet name! Something tells me that we are going to be great friends. I like you already more than I can say. My first impressions of people are never wrong.

CECILY. How nice of you to like me so much after we have known each other such a comparatively short time. Pray sit down.

GWENDOLEN. (still standing up) I may call you Cecily, may I not?

CECILY. With pleasure!

GWENDOLEN. And you will always call me Gwendolen, won't you?

CECILY. If you wish.

GWENDOLEN. Then that is all quite settled, is it not?

CECILY. I hope so. (A pause. They both sit down together.)

GWENDOLEN. Perhaps this might be a favorable opportunity for my mentioning who I am. My father is Lord Bracknell. You have heard of Papa, I suppose?

CECILY. I don't think so.

GWENDOLEN. Outside the family circle, Papa, I am glad to say, is entirely unknown. I think that is quite as it should be. The home seems to me to be the proper sphere for the man. And certainly once a man begins to neglect his domestic duties he becomes painfully effeminate, does he not? And I don't like that. It makes men so very attractive. Cecily, Mamma, whose views on education are remarkably strict, has brought me up to be extremely short-sighted; it is part of her system; so do you mind my looking at you through my glasses?

CECILY. Oh! Not at all, Gwendolen. I am very fond of being looked at.

GWENDOLEN. (after examining CECILY carefully through a lorgnette) You are here on a short visit, I suppose.

CECILY. Oh, no! I live here.

GWENDOLEN. (severely) Really? Your mother, no doubt, or some female relative of advanced years, resides here also?

CECILY. Oh, no! I have no mother, nor, in fact, any relations.

GWENDOLEN. Indeed?

CECILY. My dear guardian, with the assistance of Miss Prism, has the arduous task of looking after me.

GWENDOLEN. Your guardian?

CECILY. Yes, I am Mr. Worthing's ward.

GWENDOLEN. Oh! It is strange he never mentioned to me that he had a ward. How secretive of him! He grows more interesting hourly. I am not sure, however, that the news inspires me with feelings of unmixed delight. (rising and going to CECILY) I am very fond of you, Cecily; I have liked you ever since I met you! But I am bound to state that now that I know that you are Mr. Worthing's ward, I cannot help expressing a wish you were — well just a little older than you seem to be — and not quite so very alluring in appearance. In fact, if I may speak candidly—
never will – (A thought strikes him, strikes him as funny.) Blair's been running her for years!

HAPGOOD. What do you mean, Ernest?

RIDLEY. She got pregnant screwing the Russians, Auntie. Then it was a choice between losing a daddy and losing a prize double, a turned mole who would have been blown overnight if he was known to be the father, and we aren't in the daddy business, we're in the mole business.

HAPGOOD. I don't know what your talking about – talk English!

RIDLEY. Your sister carries a torch and she can't tell front from arseholes. We're in a racket which identifies the national interest with the interests of the officer class. Betty bought the whole lie and put it first, she is the lie. I'll get her kid back for her but it's only personal. If she's set me up I'll kill her.

HAPGOOD. You're potty about her, Ernest. I'm disappointed in you. Why should she set you up? What for? Somebody isn't lying to somebody, everybody's lying to everybody. You're all at it. Liars. Nutters' corner. You deserve each other – she shouldn't be out without a guide dog, and you don't know if you're carrying a torch for her or a gun. Secret bloody service! If you're it I'm learning Russian. And you sound as if you're half-way through the course, no wonder you're confused. You're out on a limb for a boy she put there, while she was making the world safe for him to talk properly and play the game – what a pal, I should have a friend like you.

RIDLEY. It's not her fault. Do you think you cracked it taking snaps of fancy junk? She's all right. Anyway, I like kids, and you never know, now and again someone is telling the truth.

HAPGOOD. You're all right, Ernest. You're just not her type.

RIDLEY. Yeh, she says I'm not safe. Too damned right I'm not. If I was safe I wouldn't be in a whore's hotel with somebody's auntie waiting for a meet that smells like a dead mackerel.

HAPGOOD. Where would you be?

RIDLEY. Anywhere I like, with a solid gold box for a ticket.

HAPGOOD. You can walk away, Ernie, it's only skirt.

RIDLEY. Shut up.

HAPGOOD. (Cranking up.) You'd better be sure, she plays without a board. You haven't got a prayer.

RIDLEY. Shut up!

HAPGOOD. If you think she's lying, walk away. If you think bringing back her son will make you her type, walk away. You won't get in the money, women like her don't pay out – take my advice and open the box.

RIDLEY. (Grabbing her.) Who the hell are you?

HAPGOOD. I'm your dreamgirl, Ernie – Hapgood without the brains or the taste.
BERNICE: You ain’t taking that piano out of my house.
(She crosses to the piano.)
Look at this piano. Look at it. Mama Ola polished this piano with her tears for seventeen years. For seventeen years she rubbed on it till her hands bled. Then she rubbed the blood in . . . mixed it up with the rest of the blood on it. Every day that God breathed life into her body she rubbed and cleaned and polished and prayed over it. “Play something for me, Berniece. Play something for me, Berniece.” Every day. “I cleaned it up for you, play something for me, Berniece.” You always talking about your daddy but you ain’t never stopped to look at what his foolishness cost your mama. Seventeen years’ worth of cold nights and an empty bed. For what? For a piano? For a piece of wood? To get even with somebody? I look at you and you’re all the same. You, Papa Boy Charles, Wining Boy, Doaker, Crawley . . . you’re all alike. All this thieving and killing and thieving and killing. And what it ever lead to? More killing and more thieving. I ain’t never seen it come to nothing. People getting burned up. People getting shot. People falling down their wells. It don’t never stop.

DOAKER: Come on now, Berniece, ain’t no need in getting upset.

BOY WILLIE: I done a little bit of stealing here and there, but I ain’t never killed nobody. I can’t be speaking for nobody else. You all got to speak for yourself, but I ain’t never killed nobody.

BERNICE: You killed Crawley just as sure as if you pulled the trigger.

BOY WILLIE: See, that’s ignorant. That’s downright foolish for you to say something like that. You ain’t doing nothing but showing your ignorance. If the nigger was here I’d whup his ass for getting me and Lymon shot at.
Female monologue

Trina Washington
Drama 10
Lura Dolas
11-19-96

FENCES

By August Wilson

Rose:
I've been standing with you. I been right here with you, Troy.
I got a life to. I gave eighteen years of my life to stand in the
same spot with you. Don't you think I wanted other things?
Don't you think I had hopes and dreams? What about my life?
What about me?

Don't you think it ever crossed my mind to want to know other
men? That I wanted to lay up somewhere and forget about my
responsibilities. That I wanted someone to make me laugh so
that I could feel good. You ain't the only one with needs and
wants. But I held on to you, Troy. I took my feelings, my needs,
my wants, ...... my dreams, and I buried them inside of you. I
planted a seed and I watched and prayed over it. I planted
myself inside of you and waited to bloom. And I didn't take no
eighteen years to find out that the soil was hard and rocky and
was never going to bloom. But I held on to you, Troy. 'Cause you
was my husband. I owed you, everything I had. Every part of
me I could find to give.

...............And upstairs in that room, with darkness falling in on
me....... I gave everything I had to try and erase the doubt that
you wasn't the finest man in the world. And everywhere you
went I wanted to be there with you. 'Cause you was my
husband. 'Cause that was the only way I was gonna survive
being your wife. You always talking 'bout what you have to
give, and what you don't have to give.........But you take too,
Troy. You take.................and don't even know nobody's given.
trust me, not least, I will help you to believe that your wife loves you and is happy in her home. We need such help. Marchbanks: we need it greatly and always. There are so many things to make us doubt, if once we let our understanding be troubled. Even at home, we sit as if in camp, encompassed by a hostile army of doubts. Will you play the traitor and let them in on me?

Marchbanks [looking round wildly] Is it like this always? A woman, with a great soul, craving reality, truth, freedom; and being fed on metaphors, sermons, stale perorations, mere rhetoric. Do you think a woman’s soul can live on your talent for preaching?

Morell [stung] Marchbanks: you make it hard for me to control myself. My talent is like yours insofar as it has any real worth at all. It is the gift of finding words for divine truth.

Marchbanks [impetuously] It’s the gift of the gab, nothing more and nothing less. What has your knack of fine talking to do with the truth, any more than playing the organ has? I’ve never been in your church; but I’ve been to your political meetings; and I’ve seen you do what’s called rousing the meeting to enthusiasm: that is, you excited them until they behaved exactly as if they were drunk. And their wives looked on and saw what fools they were. Oh, it’s an old story: you’ll find it in the Bible. I imagine King David, in his fits of enthusiasm, was very like you. [Stabbing him with the words] “But his wife despised him in her heart.”

Morell [wrathfully] Leave my house. Do you hear? [He advances on him threateningly].

Marchbanks [shrinking back against the couch] Let me alone. Don’t touch me. [Morell grasps him powerfully by the lapel of his coat: he cowers down on the sofa and screams passionately] Stop, Morell: if you strike me, I’ll kill myself: I won’t bear it. [Almost in hysterics] Let me go. Take your hand away.

Morell [with slow emphatic scorn] You little snivelling cowardly whelp. [He releases him]. Go, before you frighten yourself into a fit.

Marchbanks [on the sofa, gasping, but relieved by the withdrawal of Morell’s hand] I’m not afraid of you: it’s you who are afraid of me.

Morell [quietly, as he stands over him] It looks like it isn’t it?

Marchbanks [with petulant vehemence] Yes, it does. [Morell turns away contemptuously. Eugene scrambles to his feet and follows him]. You think because I shrink from being brutally handled—because [with tears in his voice] I can do nothing but cry with rage when I am met with violence—because I can’t lift a heavy trunk down from the top of a cab like you—because I can’t fight you for your wife as a drunken navvy would: all that makes you think I’m afraid of you. But you’re wrong. If I haven’t got what you call British pluck, I haven’t British cowardice either: I’m not afraid of a clergyman’s ideas. I’ll fight your ideas. I’ll rescue her from her slavery to them. I’ll pit my own ideas against them. You are driving me out of the house because you daren’t let her choose between your ideas and mine. You are afraid to let me see her again. [Morell, angered, turns suddenly on him. He flies to the door in involuntary dread]. Let me alone, I say. I’m going.

Morell [with cold scorn] Wait a moment: I am not going to touch you: don’t be afraid. When my wife comes back she will want to know why you have gone. And when she finds that you are never going to cross our threshold again, she will want to have that explained too. Now I don’t wish to distress her by telling her that you have behaved like a blackguard.

Marchbanks [coming back with renewed vehemence] You shall. You must. If you give any explanation but the true one, you are a liar and a coward. Tell her what I said; and how you were strong and manly, and shook me as a terrier
brother called Ernest, in order that you may be able to come up to town as often as you like. I have invented an invaluable permanent invalid called Bunbury, in order that I may be able to go down into the country whenever I choose. Bunbury is perfectly invaluable. If it wasn't for Bunbury's extraordinary bad health, for instance, I wouldn't be able to dine with you at Willis's tonight, for I have been really engaged to Aunt Augusta for more than a week.

JACK. I haven't asked you to dine with me anywhere tonight.

ALGERNON. I know. You are absurdly careless about sending out invitations. It is very foolish of you. Nothing annoys people so much as not receiving invitations.

JACK. You had much better dine with your Aunt Augusta.

ALGERNON. I haven't the smallest intention of doing anything of the kind. To begin with, I dined there on Monday, and once a week is quite enough to dine with one's own relations. In the second place, whenever I dine there I am always treated as a member of the family, and sent down with either no woman at all, or two. In the third place, I know perfectly well whom she will place me next to tonight. She will place me next to Mary Farquhar, who always flirts with her own husband across the dinner-table. That is not very pleasant. Indeed, it is not even decent... and that sort of thing is enormously on the increase. The amount of women in London who flirt with their own husbands is perfectly scandalous. It looks so bad. It is simply washing one's clean linen in public. Besides, now that I know you to be a confirmed Bun-

buryist I naturally want to talk to you about Bunburying. I want to tell you the rules.

JACK. I'm not a Bunburyist at all. If Gwendolen accepts me, I am going to kill my brother, indeed I think I'll kill him in any case. Cecily is a little too much interested in him. It is rather a bore. So I am going to get rid of Ernest. And I strongly advise you to do the same with Mr. ... with your invalid friend who has the absurd name.

ALGERNON. Nothing will induce me to part with Bunbury, and if you ever get married, which seems to me extremely problematic, you will be very glad to know Bunbury. A man who marries without knowing Bunbury has a very tedious time of it.

JACK. That is nonsense. If I marry a charming girl like Gwendolen, and she is the only girl I ever saw in my life that I would marry, I certainly won't want to know Bunbury.

ALGERNON. Then your wife will. You don't seem to realize that in married life three is company and two is none.

JACK. (sententiously) That, my dear young friend, is the theory that the corrupt French Drama has been pro- pounded for the last fifty years.

ALGERNON. Yes; and that the happy English home has proved in half the time.

JACK. For heaven's sake, don't try to be cynical. It's perfectly easy to be cynical.

ALGERNON. My dear fellow, it isn't easy to be anything nowadays. There's such a lot of beastily competition about.
ANTIGONE

Can cut so deep as treachery at home?
So, think this girl your enemy; spit on her,
And let her find her husband down in Hell!
She is the only one that I have found
In all the city disobedient.
I will not make myself a liar. I
Have caught her; I will kill her. Let her sing
Her hymns to Sacred Kinship!* If I breed
Rebellion in the house, then it is certain
There'll be no lack of rebels out of doors.
No man can rule a city uprightly
Who is not just in ruling his own household.
Never will I approve of one who breaks
And violates the law, or would dictate
To those who rule. Lawful authority
Must be obeyed in all things, great or small,
Just and unjust alike; and such a man
Would win my confidence both in command
And as a subject; standing at my side
In the storm of battle he would hold his ground,
Not leave me unprotected. But there is
No greater curse than disobedience.
This brings destruction on a city, this
Drives men from hearth and home, this brings about
A sudden panic in the battle-front.
Where all goes well, obedience is the cause.
So we must vindicate the law; we must not be
Defeated by a woman. Better far
Be overthrown, if need be, by a man
Than to be called the victim of a woman.

CHORUS. Unless the years have stolen away our wits,
All you say is said most prudently.

HARMON. Father, it is the gods who give us wisdom;
No gift of theirs more precious. I cannot say
That you are wrong, nor would I ever learn
That impudence, although perhaps another
Might fairly say it. But it falls to me,
Being your son, to note what others say,

ANTIGONE

Or do, or censure in you, for your glance
Intimidates the common citizen;
He will not say, before your face, what might
Displease you; I can listen freely, how
The city mourns this girl. ‘No other woman’,
So they are saying, ‘so undeservedly
Has been condemned for such a glorious deed.
When her own brother had been slain in battle
She would not let his body lie unburied
To be devoured by dogs or birds of prey.
Is not this worthy of a crown of gold?’—
Such is the muttering that spreads everywhere.

Father, no greater treasure can I have
Than your prosperity; no son can find
A greater prize than his own father’s fame,
No father than his son’s. Therefore let not
This single thought possess you: only what
You say is right, and nothing else. The man
Who thinks that he alone is wise, that he
Is best in speech or counsel, such a man
Brought to the proof is found but emptiness.
There’s no disgrace, even if one is wise,
In learning more, and knowing when to yield.
See how the trees that grow beside a torrent
Preserve their branches, if they bend; the others,
Those that resist, are torn out, root and branch.
So too the captain of a ship; let him
Refuse to shorten sail, despite the storm—
He’ll end his voyage bottom uppermost.
No, let your anger cool, and be persuaded.
If one who is still young can speak with sense,
Then I would say that he does best who has
Most understanding; second best, the man
Who profits from the wisdom of another.

CHORUS. My lord, he has not spoken foolishly;
You each can learn some wisdom from the other.

CREON. What? men of our age go to school again
And take a lesson from a very boy?
**Male Monologue**

**Angels in America** by Tony Kushner

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

BelIze: Nobody said different.

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

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

(Pause.)

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

(Little pause. Emily enters and turns off IV drip.)
particles can't do that — your bullet of light has already hit the screen before the next bullet is even fired. So there is only one solution.

BLAIR. What's that?

KERNER. Each bullet goes through both slits.

BLAIR. That's silly.

KERNER. Now we come to the exciting part. We will watch the bullets of light to see which way they go. This is not difficult, the apparatus is simple. So we look carefully and we see the bullets one at a time, and some hit the armour plate and bounce back, and some go through one slit, and some go through the other slit, and, of course, none go through both slits.

BLAIR. I knew that.

KERNER. You knew that. Now we come to my favorite bit. The wave pattern has disappeared! It has become particle pattern, just like with real machine-gun bullets.

BLAIR. Why?

KERNER. Because we looked. So, we do it again, exactly the same except now without looking to see which way the bullets go; and the wave pattern comes back. So we try again while looking, and we get particle pattern. Every time we don't look we get wave pattern. Every time we look to see how we get wave pattern, we get particle pattern. The act of observing determines the reality.

BLAIR. How?
THE REAL INSPECTOR HOUND

MAGNUS. You mean—?
HOUND. Yes! One of us ordinary mortals thrown together by fate and cut off by the elements, is the murderer! He must be found—search the house! (All depart speedily in different directions leaving a momentarily empty stage. SIMON strolls on.)

SIMON. (Entering, calling.) Anyone about?—funny . . . (He notices the corpse and is surprised. He approaches it and turns it over. He stands up and looks about in alarm.)

BIRDBOOT. This is where Simon gets it. (There is a shot. SIMON falls dead. INSPECTOR HOUND runs on and crouches down by SIMON's body. CYNTHIA appears at the French windows. She stops there and stares.)

CYNTHIA. What happened, Inspector? (HOUND turns to face her.)

HOUND. He's dead . . . Simon Gascoyne, I presume. Rough justice even for a killer—unless—unless— (He looks thoughtfully at the sofa and the corpse.) We assumed that the body could not have been lying there before Simon Gascoyne entered the house . . . but . . . (He slides the sofa over the body) there's your answer. And now—who killed Simon Gascoyne? And why? ("Curtain," Freeze, Applause, Exeunt.)

MOON. Why not?

BIRDBOOT. Exactly. Good riddance.

MOON. Yes, getting away with murder must be quite easy provided that one's motive is sufficiently inscrutable.

BIRDBOOT. Fickle young pup! He was deceiving her right, left and centre.

MOON. (Thoughtfully.) Of course, I'd still have Puckeridge behind me . . .

BIRDBOOT. She needs someone steadier, more mature . . .

MOON. And if I could, so could he . . .

BIRDBOOT. Yes, I know of this rather nice hotel, very discreet, run by a man of the world . . .

MOON. Uneasy lies the head that wears the crown.

BIRDBOOT. Breakfast served in one's room and no questions asked.

MOON. Does Puckeridge dream of me?

BIRDBOOT. (Pause.) Hello—what's happened?

MOON. What? Oh yes—what do you make of it, so far?

BIRDBOOT. (Clears throat.) It is at this point that the play, for me, comes alive. The groundwork has been well and truly laid, and the author has taken the trouble to learn from the masters of the genre. He has created a real situation, and few will doubt his ability to resolve it with a startling dénouement. Certainly that is what it so far lacks, but it has a beginning, a middle and I have no doubt it will prove to have an end. For this let us give thanks, and double thanks for a good clean show without a trace of smut. But perhaps even all this would be for nothing were it not for a performance which I consider to be one of the summits in the range of contemporary theatre. In what is possibly the finest Cynthia since the war—

MOON. If we examine this more closely, and I think close examination is the least tribute that this play deserves, I think we will find that within the austere framework of what is seen to be on one level a country-house week-end, and what a useful symbol that is, the author has given us—yes, I will go so far—he has given us the human condition—

BIRDBOOT. More talent in her little finger—

MOON. An uncanny ear that might have belonged to a Van Gogh—

BIRDBOOT. —a public scandal that the Queen has thus far neglected—

MOON. Faced as we are with such ubiquitous obliquity, it is hard, it is hard indeed, and therefore I will not attempt, to refrain from invoking the names of Kafka, Sartre, Shakespeare, St. Paul, Beckett, Birkett, Pinero, Pirandello, Dante and Dorothy L. Sayers.

BIRDBOOT. A rattling good evening out. I was held.
THE REAL INSPECTOR HOUND

Moon. I’m standing in.
Moon and Birdboot. Where’s Higgs?
Moon. Every time.
Birdboot. What?
Moon. It is as if we only existed one at a time, combining to achieve continuity. I keep space warm for Higgs. My presence defines his absence, his absence confirms my presence, his presence precludes mine. . . . When Higgs and I walk down this aisle together to claim our common seat, the oceans will fall into the sky and the trees will hang with fishes.

Birdboot. (He has not been paying attention, looking around vaguely, now catches up.) Where’s Higgs?

Moon. The very sight of me with a complimentary ticket is enough. The streets are impassable tonight, the country is rising and the cry goes up from hill to hill—Where—is—Higgs? (Small pause.) Perhaps he’s dead at last, or trapped in a lift somewhere, or succumbed to amnesia, wandering the land with his trouser cuffs stuffed with ticket-stubs. (Birdboot regards him doubtfully for a moment.)

Birdboot. Yes . . . Yes, well I didn’t bring Myrtle tonight—not exactly her cup of tea, I thought, tonight.
Moon. Over her head, you mean?
Birdboot. Well, no—I mean it’s a sort of a thriller, isn’t it?
Moon. Is it?
Birdboot. That’s what I heard. Who-killed-thing?—no-one-will-leave-the-room?
Moon. I suppose so. Underneath.
Birdboot. Underneath?? It’s a whodunnit, man!—Look at it! (They look at it. The room. The body. Silence.) Has it started yet?
Moon. Yes. (Pause. They look at it.)
Birdboot. Are you sure?
Moon. It’s a pause.
Birdboot. You can’t start with a pause! If you want

my opinion there’s total panic back there. (Laughs and subsides.) Where’s Higgs tonight, then?
Moon. It will follow me to the grave and become my epitaph—Here lies Moon the second string: where’s Higgs? . . . Sometimes I dream of revolution, a bloody coup d’état by the second rank—troupes of actors slaughtered by their underestudies, magicians sawn in half by indefatigably smiling glamour girls, cricket teams wiped out by marauding bands of twelfth men—I dream of champions chopped down by rabbit-punching sparring partners while eternal bridesmaids turn and rape the bridegrooms over the sausage rolls and parliamentary private secretaries plant bombs in the Minister’s Humber—comedians die on provincial stages, robbed of their feeds by mutely triumphant stooges—And march—an army of assistants and deputies, the seconds-in-command, the runners-up, the right-hand men—storming the palace gates wherein the second son has already mounted the throne having committed regicide with a croquet mallet—stand-ins of the world stand up!—(Beat.) Sometimes I dream of Higgs. (Pause. Birdboot regards him doubtfully. He is at a loss, and grasps reality in the form of his box of chocolates.)

Birdboot. (Chewing.) Have a chocolate!
Moon. What kind?
Birdboot. (Chewing.) Black Magic.
Moon. No thanks. (Chewing stops dead. Of such tiny victories and defeats . . . )
Birdboot. I’ll give you a tip, then. Watch the girl.
Moon. You think she did it?
Birdboot. No, no—the girl, watch her.
Moon. What girl?
Birdboot. You won’t know her. I’ll give you a nudge.
Moon. You know her, do you?
Birdboot. (Suspiciously, bridling.) What’s that supposed to mean?
Moon. I beg your pardon?
Birdboot. —for God’s sake, Moon, what’s the matter
ANTIGONE

ANTIGONE. When I can do no more, then I will stop.

ISMENE. But why attempt a hopeless task at all?

ANTIGONE. O stop, or I shall hate you! He will hate
You too, for ever, justly. Let me be,
Me and my folly! I will face the danger
That so dismays you, for it cannot be
So dreadful as to die a coward's death.

ISMENE. Then go and do it, if you must. It is
Blind folly—but those who love you love you dearly.
[Exeunt severally]

Strophe 1

CHORUS [sings]. Welcome, light of the Sun, the fairest
Sun that ever has dawned upon
Thebes, the city of seven gates!*
At last thou art arisen, great
Orb of shining day, pouring
Light across the gleaming water of Dirke.*
Thou hast turned into headlong flight,
Galloping faster and faster, the foe who
Bearing a snow-white shield* in full
Panoply came from Argos.

He* had come to destroy us, in Polyneices’
Fierce quarrel.* He brought them against our land;
And like some eagle* screaming his rage
From the sky he descended upon us,
With his armour about him, shining like snow,
With spear upon spear,
And with plumes that swayed on their helmets.

Antistrope 1

Close he hovered above our houses,
Circling around our seven gates, with
Spears that thirsted to drink our blood.
He's gone! gone before ever his jaws

ANTIGONE

Snapped on our flesh, before he sated
Himself with our blood, before his blazing fire-brand
Seized with its fire our city's towers.
Terrible clangour of arms repelled him,
Driving him back, for hard it is to
Strive with the sons of a Dragon.*

For the arrogant boast of an impious man
Zeus hateth exceedingly. So, when he saw
This army advancing in swollen flood
In the pride of its gilded equipment,
He struck them down from the rampart's edge
With a fiery bolt*.
In the midst of their shout of 'Triumph!'

Strophe 2

Heavily down to the earth did he fall, and lie there,
He who with torch in his hand and possessed with
frenzy*
Breathed forth bitterest hate
Like some fierce tempestuous wind.
   So it fared then with him;
And of the rest, each met his own terrible doom,
Given by the great War-god,* our deliverer.

Seven foemen* appointed to our seven gates
Each fell to a Theban, and Argive arms
Shall grace our Theban temple of Zeus:*
Save two, those two of unnatural hate,
Two sons of one mother, two sons of one King;
They strove for the crown, and shared with the
sword
Their estate, each slain by his brother.

Antistrope 2

Yet do we see in our midst, and acclaim with
gladness,
Victory, glorious Victory,* smiling, welcome.
Now, since danger is past,