

WEST STREET STORY

Performed as part of the Reality Variety Show  
May 9, 1981

Produced by Matt Hartzell  
Directed by Jim Brunner  
Choreographed by Joe Houseal  
Written by Matt Hartzell  
William Ney  
Jim Brunner  
Tim Ficco  
James Preston  
David Nau

CAST

Tony...Evan Canter	Students:
Maria...Buffy Bowser	Liz Stuck
Anita...Anne O'Malley	Matt Hartzell
Ice....Tim Ficco	Joe Houseal
Arab...Noah Blyler	Anne Haskins
Action...William Ney	Laura Trent
Mr. Potatohead...Khy Daniel	Melinda Rooney
Mr. Donnybrook...Andy White	Mary Putnick
Mr. Gorgias...Peter Gilbert	James Preston
Dean Goldfinch...Dan Van Doren	
Baby John...Peter Green	Tutors:
Fifi...Lisa Cobb	Peter Norton
Tutor #1...David Wolf	Kate O'Malley
Tutor #2...Martin Miller	
Tutor#3...Kathy Heed	Punk Dancers:
Mr. Milner...Kurt Schuler	Karen Tourian
Jack...Phil Maddocks	<b>John Costa</b>
Pat...Dave Neumann	Mike Kessler
Kevin Kraus...Kevin Kraus	Gillian Nassau
Bernie Eisenblotz... George Eckerle	Sue Price
Marine Recruiter...Rick Campbell	Camilla Kenyon
Moonie Recruiter...Paul Cree	Shirin Moayyad
	Bert Hutto

Pianists: David Nau John Shock

ACT I Scene 1 -- In the Coffee Shop

(General group of students milling about. On either side of the room can be seen a Marine and a Moonie recruiter vying for the attention of the students.)

Action:

Is Tony gonna make it to the dance?

Arab: Naw, Tony never comes around anymore.

Ice: He's lost the feeling of how it is when you're a Johnny.

Baby John: When you're a Johnny?

Action: When you're a Johnny!

SONG: Title should be obvious.

(Tony enters as song ends.)

Arab: Hey Tony! What's up? etc. etc.

Fifi: Hiya kiddo, what are you going to write about? Gonna get something in this year?

Tony: Aww, heck. I don't know. (can't be bothered) What are you doing?

Fifi: I think that Hiedigger's relation to Kant in connection with some of Hegel's ideas about history--which Marx criticized-- in an essay on Hume, which was inspired by Nietzsche's meditations on the Dedekind Schnitt.... would be interesting.

Tony: Yea, I'm going to mention something like that in mine. I want to do something with Achille's Shield...(shield rolls across stage)...Well... and mostly I just want to get it in on time.

Fifi: Yea, when did you get your Junior essay in?

Tony: I don't know... a couple of weeks ago. Had car trouble.

Fifi: Were you happy with it?

Tony: Aww, it was better than all the years' before. (gets his coffee) Let's see what these guys are up to.(heads over)

Baby

John: Gee, Tony, you going to come to the party Friday?

Tony: I don't know... When is it?

Action: C'mon, we never see you. That off campus life must be getting to you.

Tony: I'm sick of those things. They're always fighting over what kind of music to play, how to dance, all that.


## When You're a Johnnie

When you're a Johnnie you roll into town  
 With your head in the clouds and your feet off the ground .  
 When you're a Johnnie you read the Great Books,  
 You learn how to talk, (to) give and take dirty looks.

It's so civilized- they all use your last name  
 But then you realize the whole thing's just a game-  
 They're all insane!

Soon you can't wait for that last final day  
 But then when it comes you find you'd rather stay  
 When you're a Johnnie you stay a Johnnie!

## DIALOGUE INTERLUDE

When you're a Johnnie your the oddball in town  
 The Middies and Boat People think you're a clown.  
 When you're a Johnnie you're the silliest thing  
 You go around  raving 'bout Philosopher Kings.

You're lost in a world of ~~XXXXXX~~ princes, poets, and popes  
 You also get lost when you go out for soap.  
 You feel like a dope!

Here come the Johnnies, its late afternoon  
 Happy Hour <sup>an hour</sup> , flies by <sub>A</sub> too soon.  
 There go the Johnnies, tripping on home  
 To set up the kegs for a bash in Chase-Stone.

(It's the) Academic Life - hard work and hard play  
~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~ Not like those bums in hazy Santa Fe.  
 We're here to stay! (Yeah!)

Here comes a Johnnie and its a sure bet  
 That he's gonna ask <sup>you</sup> <sub>A</sub> for your last cigarette,  
 For your last- friggin'- camel- ciga- ratte!

I-1

Ice: Nah, listen man-- I've got this one all worked out-- we'll have a good time. It's all taken care of, you know? We'll play some, the tutors will play some, No battles.

Tony: Well, sounds good enough; maybe I'll be there. (puts coffee down) Well, I got to get going; Perry Mason's on at twelve.

John: Yeah, we'll see you, Tony. (Others, etc. etc.)

Act I, scene 2 -- Dance in the Coffee Shop

(Tutors and students, and there is, as indicated, some friction about the music. Tutors want waltzes, the kids want rock, punk, disco. Scene opens with a minute or so of waltz, then, zap, it's disco. Back to waltz, back to punk, etc. etc. A floor full of dancers should dance accordingly)

Maria and Tony enter from opposite sides, catch each other's eye, and walk inexorably towards each other. It is their first meeting. When they finally get together, everything freezes ...

Maria: Are you a tutor?

Tony: No... Are you a student?

Maria: No, I'm a Febbie tutor.

Tony: Oh, I'm a senior. (a pause) I'm going to write my essay about Achilles Shield...

Maria: Oh really! It's such an elegant metaphor, and ties right into Plato's cosmology.

Tony: Yeah, well I kind of liked the Greek plays.

Maria: (becoming excited) Oh, the Tragedies! "The Purgation of Pity and Fear" about which Aristotle so eloquently wrote.

Tony: You know, last year Mortimer Adler said...(a chorus of partyers in back strike up a line or two of "He's a real Adler man.")

Maria: Oh, Mortimer! (reflecting) He saw the connection, and understood how Aristotle built the foundations we've been building on ever since.

Tony: Yeah, like Aquinas.

Maria: God, yes! Aquinas, given Augustine, is exactly what I mean. And Dante brought art to this culmination of reasoned faith.

Tony: And then you get Shakespeare....

Maria: Exactly. Shakespeare portrays art and nature so well in Macbeth, Lear, and... Cymbeline...and Sonnet 247, and then...

Tony: Right! Since we have reason in art with Aquinas, and then art and nature with Shakespeare, it's easy to see how Bacon had to come along and unite Reason and Nature, and make Her his slave!

Maria: (momentarily silenced, perhaps tingling) ...But what is nature? That's the next question. And then we've got to look at Descartes.

Tony: I think...(not necessarily intending to say therefor I am)

Maria: Therefore..(nodding and smiling) Right, right, exactly!

Maria: Without a thorough examination of the self and sensation, how are you going to found Science? Locke understood that, Hobbes understood that, and when...

Tony: Well, Kant of course...

Maria: Yes, yes, Kant formed the bond between the ... the... well, the "fell- incensed points of mighty opposites" (Hamlet) by bringing together the epistemological ideas of Newton and Leibniz, finally we had the union of logos and empiricism that gives us Science.

Tony: Yeah, so man can become a rational observer like "The Incredible Huck".

Maria: Who?

Tony: You know, (stutters) Fa, Fa, Fa, Huck Finn.

Maria: Oh, I never thought about him like that. Very Apt! I guess this whole thing represents the kind of development Hegel was talking about..

Tony: Does that contradict me?

Maria: No, not really, because modern philosophy begins to reject the absolution of non-contradiction. Like Nietzsche, who can love and hate in the same breath. (sigh)

Tony: It's strange, but Jesus loved and hated. But what about your neighbor? I mean...Marx. All he said was "Why should you make money off of my labor." How can you argue with that?

Maria: "But consider my Soren Kierkegaard." He gives us many more inspiring arguments that each man's only real responsibility is to his own spiritual freedom.

Tony: Yeah, that's kind of spooky...(fearing and trembling) when you realize that... that... (eye contact; romance).. you need somebody to talk to.

Maria: (After prolonged eye contact, she breaks off a bit nervously) Well, you know, Freud pointed out that what you think you need may not be what you really need. It's all rooted deep in your hidden past.

Tony: Yeah, deep.

Maria: But I know what you mean. Close friends are the natural release for those kind of thoughts. (pause) Like Zarathustra, "O you great star, what would you be if not for those for whom you shine?" I guess that's what...

Tony: (Finally reading her thoughts, interrupting her) ... What the Phaedrus is all about.

Maria: I think you're right.

Tony: Wow. (big pause) What's your name?

Maria: Maria.

Tony: Tony.

Maria: Listen, I've got to get going. It's been really great talking with you. Bye! (exits)

Tony: .....see you. (Wanders upstage to sing )

SONG: I've just met a mind with Pure Reason

Tony: The spark of my mind was dead for years  
(Pure Reason, My Reason, Pure Reason, My Reason)

Tony: It's my reason not a job that will stop my fears  
(Pure Reason, My reason, Pure Reason, My Reason)

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Tony: Pure Reason, I just met a mind with Pure Reason,  
And suddenly my brain, will never be the same to me!  
Pure Reason, my nous is alight with Pure Reason,  
And suddenly its clear, my apperception's dear to me!

Pure reason, use it well and the ancients are passing  
Use it wrong and Nietzsche is laughing.

Pure reason, let it go and the judgements are flowing  
It will grow--my oral will be glowing

(after each couplet repeat) Pure Reason, I'll never stop using My reason.

(back to line 5) Pure reason, I just met a mind with pure reason  
m And suddenly it seems, my will is willing dreams of her!

Pure reason, categorically she's what I sought  
t's imperative now that I ought  
To love her,  
I'll never stop loving her Reason!

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on more line

(Gang of seniors sitting out on the steps of McDowell when Baby John enters, books in hand.)

John: Hiya guys.. Whatcha all doin sittin out here? (No reply save a few random grunts of recognition, till he brightens up) Oh, I get it! You're planning the Senior Prank!

Action: I like it. I'm going to <sup>call my essay</sup> ~~write mine~~ <sup>Understanding Shakespearean Fool- My</sup> "Senior Prank". (general laughter)

John: Huh? (hurt by the laughter, till he figures it out again) Oh, I know, you guys are all in trouble, aren't you!

Arab: Well, whatcha think the dean called us all to see him for?

Fifi: Look, we're Seniors, right? We can't get outta here until we do this essay thing, okay? It's nothing like a freshman essay; I mean, I'm writing mine on Hegel.

John: Oh. I've been thinking a lot about Achilles' Shield. (he flinches as a clattering is heard backstage) Hegel can't be so hard, though, cause it's all written in dialectic anyhow, isn't it?

Action: (Laughing) Yeah, what's that you're reading there now, philosopher, "The Dialogues of Spiderman"?

John: Naw, it's this really neat brochure I got from the admissions office. It's got this really neat walking tour of the campus. (reads the cover) "St. John's College...A place to learn to walk. (Milner cycles in)

Arab: Yeah, and to ride, too! (Benjy parks bike to assorted- Hi Mr. Milner, Hi Mr. Milner..(from the back) Hiya, Benjy!

Ben: Well, well, well, and what are all you, ahem, gentlemen doing out here? Aren't you all scheduled to be meeting with the Dean right now?

Action: Well, you're right, Mr. Milner, but the bell hasn't rung yet, has it? And you know we never go ~~to class~~ <sup>anywhere</sup> until the bell rings.

Ben: Yes, but in your case, Mr. Cass, you rarely go to class even after the bell rings. (starts to walk upstairs, pauses, and turns to Action) and by the way, why don't you make an appointment to see me at your earliest convenience?

SONG: Dear Kindly Benjy Milner

student: Dear, kindly Uncle Benjy, you tell me, "Go to class!"  
Sometimes I just don't want to delve into that morass  
Where instinct's fairly mangled, it really burns my spleen  
When every phrase starts with, "Just what do you mean..."

chorus: Yes, Benjamin Milner, we're really upset  
By Socrates' daimon, you see we're not ready yet  
For balding old fat men who question all day,  
When we know philosophy don't pay. (It don't pay!)  
It don't pay, it don't pay, there's no earthly way.  
I can't eat by knowing the eidé!

student: Dear, kindly Freshman tutor, we started with Plato.  
But I was just a sophist, I wanted to make dough.  
Soon found I had to study, was forced to seek the Truth.  
Yet wound up, drinking, up on Paca's roof!

tutor: Yes, Benjamin Milner, he shouldn't be there.  
Please make him go to class, yes would you teach him to care.  
He's not really trying as hard as he could.  
Deep down inside he's lost The Good. (Lost the Good!)

chorus: What is good? What is good? Can you teach me good?  
Don't you know, I wish you really could!

student: Dear, kindly Sophomore tutor, you tell me there's a god.  
Who's merciful and loving, yet isn't it so odd  
That treachery and warfare were justified through him?  
Geez Louise, all my guiding lights are dim!

tutor: Yes, Benjamin Milner, this child is not whole.  
For matters eternal I've found he hasn't a soul.  
Morality's lacking, he's devoid of grace.  
He's headed for that nihilistic race. (Let's save face!)

chorus of  
tutors: Let's save face! Let's save face!  
He should be disgraced.  
We have ways to make him leave this place.

student: Dear, kindly Junior tutor, I can't translate "esprit".  
And Descartes had no pensee with which he could doubt me.  
And yet with all them numbers, I couldn't get to "one".  
Infinity stopped me, who said this would be fun?

tutor: Yes, Benjamin Milner, he's had a bad year.  
He never opened Kant without first downing a beer.  
His dogmatic slumbers were noticed by all,  
And nine p.m., not Newton, timed his fall. (Timed his fall!)

chorus: We're so small! We're so small! But there's one more Fall,  
Till we're seniors, yeah, we'll tell them all!

student: Dear, kindly Senior tutor, you got to understand  
It's just my reading Hegel that gets me out of hand.  
Our wills thought they were conscious, we want to make money.  
Look what happened, Marx said we weren't free!

chorus: Gee, Benjamin Milner, we're really annoyed.  
You've quoted every book to us from Homer to Freud.  
You say all the answers are found there indeed  
When will you wake up? We can't read!!



ACT 1 Scene 4 The Meeting in the King William Room

(A group of six or so tutors in robes sitting around a table, the gang of students file in and sit or stand around. Until the song, the tutors in this scene are stiff and formal.)

Dean: Good afternoon, seniors, I'd like to welcome you all to this essay rules meeting. We shan't be too long...

Potatohead: Mr. Dean, Mr. Dean, excuse me. I don't want to belabor the point, but I will. While we're all here together this afternoon, I'd just like to remind you seniors, as you are composing your essays, to be cautious about making historical references, because you don't know anything about history. This is an important concern of mine, and I really feel that it should be one of yours. After all, after two years in the French Tutorials --and I've been teaching the french tutorial for 26 years -- how many of you can honestly say whether Pascal was a contemporary or a predecessor of Voltaire?

Fifi: Oh, I know!! (Someone nudges her for silence) But I do! I do!

Potato: (not perturbed) ... or for that matter, how many can tell me whether Balzac and Baudelaire were representative of one or two cultures, OR whether or not they shared the same middle name! Who can distinguish Andre Hercule de Fleury from Claude Fleury? (he looks towards Fifi with a sneering smile) Yes?? Well, the only point I'm trying to make is that precious few of us have any awareness of the glorious richness, the verderous fecundity of the lives behind the words we read. (Looking into space, tapping his pipe) Gustave le Bon and the peace at Pasay, Armand Hippolyte Louis de Fizeau, Ennui and Henri duc de Montmorensi, (breaking rythmn) Auguste Charles Joseph de Flahaut de la Billarderie...

Dean: (at the third line, begins coughing increasingly to cut him off, interjecting) Yes, well taken...of course...Yes, but..

Potato: (gets serious, points pipe) And I haven't even touched upon the prominent German or Romanian or Yugoslavian figures who...

Dean: Yes, yes, thank you Mr. Potatohead. A good point, and well taken ~~that~~ is. Take that down, will you Terry? (looks around) Terry. Terry? (feeling lost) Terry?? Oh, well, I'll have to make a note of it. (To the class) I know you all peobably don't think of me as your dean, but I've always thought of you as my senior class. I want to help you, and I'm very concerned that your essay be a fulfilling culmination of your time here. So I'm well aware of the agonies of perplexity and the choice of final decision...(looks up quizzically) Was that right? And anyhow, well done, well done.

As you all know, there are certain guidelines which we strongly suggest you adhere to in the course of your composition. Mr. Potatohead here has already given us an adequate demonstration of the skills and devices of rhetorical persuasion, and so now I'd like to turn this over to Mr. Donnybrook who will have a few words to tell us about the second of the three expository techniques which we value so highly here at St. Johns College, of which I am the dean.....

Donnybrook: Thank you Mr. Goldfinch, charmingly put. Utterly rapturous...almost purple, for lord's sake. (changing glasses)  
 Flattery, you know, is a funny thing. I suppose one sees it most clearly in.. amorous discourse, you know, love talk. Yes, flattery, that's what I'm going to talk about, and, of course, I shall do it well, if I may so flatter myself.

~~Flattery, you know, is a funny thing. I suppose one sees it most clearly in.. amorous discourse, you know, love talk.~~

Flattery, you know, is like a woman, a beautiful woman, a heaving, voluptuous virgin whose soul desire is to bring pleasure to all that she lights upon. Her tongue is a thousand fluttering doves, which capture and allure a man and arouse his throbbing ambition, which...eh.., well, certainly not unlike the lust of Zeus for the swan, Leda.(picks out a girl, smiles, all 36 teeth) Yes, a beautiful woman, flattery, and one no man-or student-can afford to ignore.

The flatterer himself must be a master chef, serving up the one perfect dish for every occasion. The succulent breasts of a sumptuous duck a l'orange,...

Potatohead: God, that's good (nodding all directions, smiling)

Donnybrook: ..Yes, yes,..tasty but not filling (smiles at another girl, changing glasses) ..yes. And then for desert, the richest chocolate mousse ever conceived, or, perhaps, a babas au rhum flambeau. It depends, you see, on the singular humor of one's guest. For either one, offered to the right man or woman, can convey her into the most blissful somnolence. (another smile, another pair of glasses)

Goldfinch: Yes...yes, well, ..uh; Well done, thank you Mr. Donnybrook. My wife Lydia...

Gorgias: Well, seniors, you've witnessed rhetoric, you've heard about flattery, but when it comes time to flesh out that essay, when you're at page 18 and have nothing to say, I hope you'll keep in mind what I have to say about Sophistry. Therefore, listen up.

Sophistry is the world's oldest profession. Let's take a hypothetical case: a hypothetical student, a hypothetical committee, a hypothetical essay, and a hypothetical four copies to go. Follow? Okay. When the student has raked his field with rhetoric, and has spread the fertilizer of flattery, now it is time for him to sow the seeds of sophistical argumentation. There he is-follow? He's got two choices- he can cultivate the field or let it grow wild. But if those seeds are to sprout and mature, then there is in fact no choice. The weeds must be culled. Sowhat am I talking about? If it's not obvious to you by now, I'm talking about the conquest of the opponent by means of undeniable, irrefutable logic.

And yet, sophistry is more than mere logic. For when cut off at one juncture, the student armed with sophistry can become the many-headed hydra, seeking out at every moment any number of perfectly legitimate means to the desired end. Remember at all costs! The end justifies the means. There is no absolutely true or false argument. Successful argument does not depend on any intimate relationship with The Good. You too can make the weaker appear the stronger simply by employing these useful tips:

- 1) Don't strain for intimate knowledge of the subject. Who needs it? I mean, what is this, a yacht club?

2) Keep talking. Silence shall be construed as ignorance, and allows the crafty opponent a chance to pick up the ball and run with it, using his own sophisticated skills against you.

3) Never admit to error. When backed into a corner, be prepared with the formulations designed to transfer or communally distribute the error to the other members of the discussion.

In conclusion, let me be brief. (Polonius from Hamlet)

Give thy thoughts much tongue  
and any unproportioned thought its act.  
Be thou familiar, at sometimes vulgar.  
Those devices thou hast and their adoption tried  
Grapple them to thy soul with hoops of steel.  
But do not dull thy mind with contemplation  
Of each new-hatched, unfledged idea. Step in  
To the entrance of a quarrel, and being in,  
Bear it that the opposed be aware of thee.  
Give every man thy voice, but few thy ear.  
More lavish a vocabulary than thy mind can hold  
But not expressed in detail- gaudy, not deep.  
For the syllables oft proclaim the man  
And they in the oral are of the best rank and station  
And of a most select and generous chief in that.  
Neither a dogmatist nor a skeptic be  
For doubt oft loses both itself and them  
And adherence dulls the edge of an elusive tongue.  
This above all; to thine own self be true,  
And it must follow as the night the day  
Thou canst not lose to any man.

Dean: (after a grand pause) Well done! Well done, I dare say.  
Well, students, are there any questions?

Arab: Well, what about Plato's cautions regarding sophistry?  
I mean, can you really get anywhere without dialectic?

Action: And I don't want to be a sycophant-- I mean, hey, I'm  
no brown nose. I mean, I like to call a spade a spade--  
speak ~~the~~ truth, ya know.

Ice: Yeah, and Mortimer says The Philosopher says its not  
rhetoric, but logic that convinces people. Makes sense to me.

Tutors: Kids, the fact of the matter is; you'll never get any--  
where that way. Trust us!!

Dean: Well, that seems to take care of everything. Good luck,  
and please feel free to come to me or any of us here with  
any problems you might encounter in the next month. Good day.

Potato: (after students file out) God, I love my work.

Donny: I know what you mean. There's a certain...ah..fulfillment  
to be had here.

Gorgias: Well, it follows, ya know...

SONG: I LIKE TO TEACH IN ANNAPOLIS

I LIKE TO TEACH IN ANNAPOLIS

At St. John's College, they learn to think.  
Here one also learns to drink.  
Always the happy hour's flowing  
Later the seminar's blowing  
With the red rose glowing  
Soon the conflicts growing  
The job requires 'snowing'  
I like to think and be thought of  
Here one can live with the 'ought haves'

I like to teach in Annapolis  
Life is a peach in Annapolis  
Red brick for each in Annapolis  
You can catch feash in Annapolis

*All*

Here you are as free as you choose  
Free to read, talk, and drink much booze  
Sometimes the class is a good snooze  
But better know Kant or you will lose.

*O'Malley  
Bert  
Bowser  
White  
Daniels*

Many well speak in Annapolis  
Life is real Greek in Annapolis  
Topsiders squeek in Annapolis  
Cheek to cheek in Annapolis

*All*

We all stay out of the Crime zone  
Faculty parking in Chase-Stone  
Ben wouldn't want them to steal parts  
Out of our Pintos and Dodge Darts

*Norton  
Van Don  
Schuller  
Wise  
Heed*

2 Citizens frown in Annapolis  
1 Government town is Annapolis  
4 A tutor's a clown in Annapolis  
3 Tourism's down in Annapolis

*All*

I've got an office in Mac- D-  
All the way up in the Bel- fry  
What do I care if the bells ring  
I can not he-ar a damn thing!

I like to teach in Annapolis  
Life is a peach in Annapolis  
Red brick for each in Annapolis  
You can catch feash in Annapolis

*All*

2 Just a quick hop to the L.C.  
Come 4 o'clock you will find me  
We can discuss the Republic  
One ~~more~~ word of Greek and I'll get sick

ACT II SCENE I + MODMO

Coffee shop; Marine recruiter at his place. Tony towards front. Anita enters, spies him, and immediately zips right over to him.

Anita: Hi Tony, mind if I join you?

Tony: Sure, I'm supposed to be having a paper conference with Maria - uh, Miss Suné.

Anita: Oh, I'm surprised. I would have thought you'd choose a more experienced tutor. What are you writing on?

Tony: Kant and his Copernican revolution. I mean, trying to see how much of his work is really just putting the self, or the understanding, in a new position with regard to the...uh... phenomenon. It's coming along okay- Maria- Miss Sune has really been a help.

Anita: How interesting. I'm glad to see you so excited about your work. You sure have progressed wince our time together back in Freshman lab. But even then, when you were having a hard time, I always thought you had... something special. You know, I've taught many a freshman lab in my day, but that year, when we met, it was like learning it all over again. It was a very good year, wasn't it?

Tony: Yeah, yeah it was. You know, everytime I smell formaldyhyde I think of lab, and you, and those pithed frogs.

(Maria enters)

Oh, excuse me

(He walks over to Maria, leads her over to the table. Anita is aghast.)

Anita: Well, let me get out of your way. Bye-bye.

(Maria and Tony sit down)

Maria: We... how's it going? Did you get anything done after last night?

Tony: Yeah, a little, but my legs were kind of fired. I wrote a few pages, but... it doesn't look like what they want. How can you make Kant look like Rhetoric, Sophistry, or Flattery?

Maria: (<sup>OU</sup>prse) Darling, don't worry. The two of us working together can write a paper that they will love. I know it's hard (they both smile, pause), but with your youthful enthusiasm and my experience we can get something together.

Tony: (unconvinced) uh-huh.

Maria: Look Tony, idea of ours, I know it can work, I know it. We can write a paper that demonstrates your abilities to use Sophistry, Rhetoric, and Flattery, as the instruction committee wants, and, that satisfies you and what's going on in your head. We can clothe truth in beauty.

Tony: Yeah, I guess,... but it doesn't feel right. It's kinda funny.

Maria: Yeah it is,... but you've got to write that kind of essay, if our plans are going to work. You're going to write a great essay, you're going to graduate with honors, and in five years, you're going to come back to St. John's and teach, and we'll be together forever.

Tony: Yeah, I can, and we will. This is almost too much. For 3½ years I've been just itching to get out of here, and now, since you, everything I want is here and depends on an essay.

Maria: Its as it it was meant to be. Stranger things have happened, you know.

(Bell rings)

Tony: You're so smart. I've gotta go.

(all the while Anita has been listening and reacting- envy, anger,

## I FEEL WITTY

Maria:

I feel witty  
 I feel witty  
 Discerning the false and the true  
 And I pity those who fail to see  
                   things as I do

I feel charming  
 Oh so charming  
 Its alarming how charming I feel  
 And so witty, I can hardly believe  
                   I'm real

Note the sharp observation there!  
 Who can that brilliant girl be?  
 So well-versed in Greek,  
 Comfort'ble with Kant,  
 Well-informed in Lab,  
 What else can there be?

I feel clever  
 Oh so clever  
 So brainy its surely a crime  
 I'm possessed of a pretty remarkable  
                   mind!

Anita:

Have you seen the new girl Maria  
 I dare say she's cute as can be  
 A Harvard grad- Phi Beta Kappa  
 I am sure she'll do well and drive  
                   me out of my ~~wild~~ *tree*.

She thinks she's in love  
 I think its absurd

One would think that a tutor  
 Would be more reserved  
 She's risking her job  
 One hopes she's aware  
 She's breaking the rules  
 And seems not to care.

Other Tutors

You know you're right-we  
 Hadn't noticed  
 We thought she was just doing her job!

Anita and Others:

So calm and assured  
 So bright and relaxed  
 Well she'd better wise up  
 Or we'll screw her ass.

Maria:

I feel witty  
 Oh so witty  
 The students will all flock to me  
 I May even take the limelight  
                   off dear Howard Z.

I feel brilliant  
 I feel vibrant  
 I feel crackers and cheese and  
                   wine  
 And so cogent- I can hardly  
                   believe my mind

Did you catch the word play there?  
 How do these sparkling gems appear?  
 Such a witty mind  
 Such a witty tongue  
 Such a witty eye  
 Such a witty ear!

I feel clever,  
 Oh so clever  
 So brainy its surely a crime  
 I'm possessed of a pretty remarkable  
                   mind!

ACT II, Scene 2

KING WILLIAM

tutors: So, Mr. Kraus, could we conclude from this discussion <sup>that</sup> the truth can be clothed in beauty?

Kraus: You know, the truth is so simple that it just often looks like pretentious banality. But when I'm working on a problem, I never think about beauty, I think of only how to solve the problem. But when I've finished, if the solution is not beautiful, I know it's not true. The truth's more important than the facts, and though we travel the world over to find the beautiful, we must carry it with us or we find it not.

tutors: Thank you, thank you very much for this most enjoyable conversation and congratulations on this MORE than satisfactory oral.

raus: (Shouts for joy, jumps up and sheds gown to show boxing attire while Rocky theme blasts. He dances out. A timid looking George Eckerle type timidly approaches, while music fades.

olf announcer: And now, approaching this final challenge of the St. John's College open, the leader after 3½ rounds, Berny Eizenbyotz, candidate for the degree of bachelor of arts, hoping for a birdie on the examination of his paper entitled, "Freud and the Eternal Longing for Maternal Love". And now, down to Jack in the King William Room. Jack?

ack: Right, Pat. He's approaching the chair now, he's about to sit down. He's <sup>already</sup> looked over the committee, <sup>Pat</sup> and he seems to feel pretty assured about the outcome. <sup>BUT AS HE'S ONLY UP BY A STROKE, PAT</sup> He's only up by a stroke, and must feel that he needs the bird to walk out of here a winner. Of course he has a difficult lie-- he's chosen a tough topic. Not many seniors would even attempt to bring home a Freud essay from this distance. Here comes the precis.

ernie: Freud conceives the mother to have a crucial role in the development of the child. This is altogether fitting. But wither does he go? Who would deny that he's only truly perfected when he can achieve to his needs, his desires, with the aid of reasoned speech: logos. And so, in light of these appreciations it is my thesis that man is fully understood only in a system that considers both this primal source and ultimate perfection. Such a consideration produces this proportionality which constitutes my conclusion: Mother is to man as man is to logos. Here we see man as the mean which can only be qualitatively and qunatitavely determined when the first antecedent -- MOTHER, and the final consequent -- LOGOS have been synthisized into one concept.

Pat: Quite a precis! What's the reaction down there, Jack?

Jack: Pat, it's quiet down here, a hush of acknowledgement and anti-cipation has fallen over this crowd -- I think they loved it. It was quite a precis. But no one here is quite sure what's going to happen. Let's listen now, the chairman looks like he's ready to tee off.



Chairman: Mr. Eisenblotz, perhaps it would be helpful if we started off by examining more closely this relationship between the logos and...your mother. If the antecedent and the consequent do surround middle terms -- which in this case, are in identity with themselves, men to men, just why is it then that your mother is like logos?

Bernie: Well, I thought I had shown on page 13...

Chairman: See, I was thinking that they're both common to all...

Tutor #3: Men -- yes -- very good, very good, Mr. Chairman.  
(giggles)

Bernie: Why common to all? Could you clarify that a bit for me?

~~Chairman:~~ Let's look at Euclid. (as if it's obvious)

Tutor #1: Could you tell me what your mother has in common with proposition I-47?  
(tutor #1 is the bully type)

Bernie: Well, I could try. I really hadn't considered it from that angle.

~~Chairman:~~ Well, let me tell <sup>you</sup> what I'm thinking.

Tutor #1: I'm thinking that your mother and I-47 both require erections on all sides.

Bernie: Mom?

~~Chairman:~~ Logic's the light of nature.

~~Tutor #2:~~ How's your mama like a light bulb?

Bernie: Well, she's always bright and warm, and...well...

#3: No, what I think Mr. Miserable (#1) is driving at is that anyone can turn her on.

Bernie: and...and... She always thought I was so bright that she called me son.

Tutor #2: Mr. Eisenblotz -- I don't think this is the place for that kind of levity. (Tutor #2 is the type)

Bernie: Ooh, oh, sorry. (pause)

Tutor #2: (seriously) Well, Mr. Eisenblotz do you have thoughts, or would you hazard a guess, as to...(smiling) why your mother is like a cigarette butt??

Bernie: N...n...no.

#3: 'Cause any old bum can pick her up off the street.

Bernie: I don't see how this, even if it is true, has any bearing on my thesis...

#1: Well, it may be that cigarettes are too trivial a consideration. Consider...uh...volcanoes. How might they resemble your mother?

Bernie: Wait a....

#2: Well, once they start smoking, there's no stopping them!

#3: Yes, yes, and it does seem clear that Mr. Eisenblotz' mother is like Iwo Jima, in that the marines take both of them from behind.

(Seitzer)

(Bernie, sobbing, staggers out of his chair, and makes it as best he can for the door. He exits. Room begins to settle back down, tutors straighten their caps, stop laughing, and as audience quiets...)

Jack: Tough, tough break for the kid. He could'a been a contender. A Bogie on the 18th. Back to you, Pat.

Pat: The thrill of victory, the agony of defeat.

(Tutors do chinese fire drill again, switching seats, getting ready. They've jsut had a good meal; and are in no mood for anything heavy.)

Tutor #2: I feel like I've just had a good meal. His mama was alright.

(Tony and his Introducer enter room in the usual fashion.)

Introducer: Mr. Chairman, I present Anthony Sophra, candidate for the degree of bachelor of arts, for examination on his essay: "Saving the old-finch) the Appearances in the Critique of Pure Reason."

Tutor #2: (now the chairman) Thank you. Please be seated. Mr. Sophra, could you read us a summary of your paper? (the old chairman still has a slight giggle)

Tony: A comparison of the two prefaces written for the Critique of Pure Reason, at least seven years apart, provides a number of clearly different perspectives on the task Kant has undertaken. In the Preface to the 2nd Edition, he suggests an analogy to the work of Copernicus. Through this analogy we see that Kant's work can be considered a success only if it accomplishes two distinct tasks -- it must first dissect the faculty of reason -- this is analogous to Copernicus mathematically 'saving the appearances': But the Critique must also make way for the higher science to follow, that is, the Queen of all Sciences, Metaphysics. The Copernican analog Kant forwards here as a necessary accomplishment is the contribution of Copernicus' new universal picture to the foundation of Mathematical Physics. My essay attempts to evaluate Kant's work on his own terms, in light of what we have since learned in the various physical sciences, and with an examination of our progress in metaphysics, the great mother... (Here Tony pauses, scans committee, and entire audience turns their heads to the tutors, in fear of another "mother" onslaught. The tutors are impassive.), since the publication of the Critique of Pure Reason. This examination seems to vindicate Kant's ~~grant~~ hypothesis, and proclaims his success.

(Tutor #2 Belches loudly)

Tutor #2: (current chairman) What do you think Kant uses as a basis for knowledge? What's his criterion for truth?

Tony: Well, that's a very general question. It's fairly obvious that for Kant we can't know the things themselves, and that all our knowledge of objects is founded on a synthetic conditioning process that is determined by our own understanding.

Tutor #3: Yes, quite, well...What part do you think Hume's work played in all of this?

Tony: Well, Kant himself acknowledges Hume, as well as Berkeley, Descartes, and Locke, as stimulants, or perhaps even antagonists, to his work. Hume's eminently reasonable Idealism seems clearly to be in Kant's mind as he writes.

(Tutors not too interested, rather unresponsive. Their questions continue to be general fluff questions, and not directed to Tony's own thoughts.)

Tutor #1: Was the categorical imperative a necessary consequence?

- Tony: (pause) 'Necessary' for what? Could you say more? I was speaking very generally about Kant's relation to the Idealists and the would-be natural philosophers. I don't see what 'necessity' you're referring to. Could you... (motions with hands)
- Tutor #1: (caught sleeping, bumbling) Well, perhaps then you could tell me what you think 'necessity' refers to.
- Tony: Well, in Kant's world, necessity is of course one of the 12 categories. The third Postulate of Empirical Thought explains what it means for a proposition to be necessary. I think the quote is: "Necessity is just the existence which is given through possibility itself." Uh, something is necessary which can be determined to be an effect of a cause given in experience.
- Tutor #2: Which of Aristotle's four causes would that be?
- Tony: (shakes his head) Well, it seems to me that if we accept Kant's hypothesis we are talking with words that allow of no application to Aristotle's scheme, and that we have nothing to do with what Aristotle is thinking.
- Tutor #2: Nothing to do with Aristotle? Aristotle, my God, you guys...
- Tutor #1: Mr. Sophra, just what is your point? (pointed irritation)
- Tony: Well, I've tried to say... Would you like me to re-read my precis?
- Tutor #2: Hey, Hey, I think that's uncalled for here...
- Tutor #1: Mr. Sophra, I don't want to hear your precis again, but I must ask you to present your thoughts clearly.
- (from here on in things are tense, and tutor #1 especially spits out all his lines. Nasty.)
- Tony: All I'm asking for is a relevant question.
- (shocked silence)
- Tutor #3: (giggle) This guy's serious! (sotto voce, aside to a kid in one of the nearby chairs)
- (silence continues)
- Tutor #2: (picks up book and, in a fluster, flips through the pages) Alright, alright, let's see what we can find. Tell me what this means: "The unity of apperception in relation to the synthesis of imagination is the understanding: and this same unity, with reference to the transcendental synthesis of the imagination, the pure understanding." Uh, O.K., let me get you a question outta there, you want a question? Uh... perhaps that's unfair. Let's see... what is pure about that understanding?

Tony: It derives its purity from the purity of <sup>its</sup> ~~that~~ synthesis ~~by~~ by definition.

Tutor #2: (left hanging) Uh, well...alright then, well, I don't want to read to you all afternoon, but it says right here...

Tutor #1: Mr. Sophra, have you considered Hegel's view? He refers to Kant as a 'half-philosopher' you may remember: "The saying has become famous that a half-philosophy leads away from God and it is the same half-philosophy that locates knowledge in an approximation to truth." My question is: What's the value of half-philosophy, pure or not? (nasty, nasty)

(pause)

Tony: Mr. Chairman, I still don't see how this line of questioning can be brought to bear on my essay...and I don't see any reason to continue wasting my time or yours. (Rising from his chair suddenly, knocking ice water glass into tutor #3's direction. Tutor #3 jumps) You're making a mockery of my efforts and the efforts of this young woman (pointing at Maria). We were together day and night on this essay...

(Goldfinch grabs Tony's arm and settles him back down. Tutor #3 hems and haws, looks at his watch -- all else is quiet still.)

Tutor #2: Well, yes, oh! (looking at watch), look at that, time really flies...Uh thank you, Mr. Sophra, I guess it's time for a smoke, a coke, and a joke.

(All stand, and surprised, stunned silence continues. As Tony and Goldfinch move out, Tony moves over to and grabs Maria's hand. They take two steps towards door. Anita however quickly moves in, hooks Maria's other arm, and irresistibly pulls her from Tony, and back to the table. Tony, Goldfinch go out, students follow.)

Tutor #1: Mr. Chairman, let me say right away that I think this entire affair was most unsatisfactory.

Tutor #2: Well, I don't know if I'd put it that strongly. He let me read.

(Switch of attention to Maria, surrounded by 6 or so other tutors)  
(3 Male and 3 female singers, Anita chief)

Anita: So, my little pretty (Wiz. of Oz) working night and day, were we? Well, we'll see how long you're working.

SONG A Boy Like That.

A BOY LIKE THAT

Song # 6

tutors:

A boy like that he'll kill your tenure  
He'll make you wish you've never been here  
Remember Phaedrus he was a big mess,

A boy like that he only drinks beer  
His essay's lost he'll never leave here  
He is not moral he'll fail his oral.

Has no esprit de finesse  
Has no esprit geometrie  
Go read Descartes, you'll see I'm right and you'll be free  
Read Descartes, Maria, you'll be free!

Anita: A boy like that he'll soon forget you  
He'll join the corps on that I'll bet you  
He's lost pure reason you can't help him  
His mind is shot, just wait, Maria, just wait and see!

Maria: Oh no Anita, no! Anita no!  
That isn't true, not for me Maybe for you, not for me  
This cannot be both true and false I know the truth  
Kant gives me proof, Anita, and the  
truth knows you're wrong For my

Anita: A boy like that could kill your tenure

Maria: proof is too strong, For

A: He'll make you wish you've never been here

M: I belong

A: Remember Phaedrus, he was a big mess

M: To truth alone, to truth alone! In him I  
see no also-ran He can

A: Has no esprit de finesse

M: be an overman You are

A: Has no esprit geometrie

M: wrong why it's Don't you

A: Read Descartes, you'll see I'm right, and you'll be free

M: Think I know?

A: Read Descartes, Maria, you'll be free!

Maria: Anita, no! You should know better! You read  
Nietzsche, or so you said. You should know better.  
I have a mind, and it sees all that's true. Help him  
rise, what else can I do? As a guide; I'm his. And  
Everything he is, I am too. I love the truth  
And it's all that I need. Right or wrong, he needs  
Me too. He loves truth; we're one. There's nothing to be done.  
Not a thing we can do; But love truth, love it forever,  
Love the truth now, tomorrow, and all of our lives...!

Duet: When truth comes so strong, there is no right or wrong  
The truth is your life...!

(Action, Ice, Arab, and Tony are stomping down to the LC immediately after Tony's oral)

Tony: God I blew it... everything we'd planned for... everything we'd worked for is all at once down the drain.... If I'd just listened to Maria! If I'd just submitted to their sophistry, their rhetoric (He's repulsed by these words)

Action: Ahh, who knows? Don't worry about it!

Tony: ....their flatterry. What will I do? What will we do? If I flund this oral, I've blown it, no matter what I do next time; they'll never take me back. And even if I pass, the things I said will be on record, man.. they'll never take me anyway; I'll never get to be a tutor.

Arab: So who wants to be one?

Tony: Don't you see? There's no easier job this side of Des Moines!

Ice: De what?

Tony: Des Moines!! Don't you see, it's Maria's life, she loves it-- That's all you have to do is love it-- you read a certain number of books, and you talk about ---you better love them because that's all you're going to do for the rest of your life is read and talk about those books---And she loves it. She could never leave this place. But there's no way I could stay in this cobblestone tourist trap with her there and me at Murphy's Mart or ... tending bar at the LC... But what can I do..... She belongs here.

Action: Ahh, you'll get over her! She's only a broad, for chrissakes.

Tony: Only a broad?? She's...(Pure reason hums over the PA. He is frozen, and the boys walk on a few feet before realizing that something is wrong. They approach him, fingers snapping, for)

SONG: COOL (during song, Baby John has emerged from the Christian Science Reading Room. As song ends, )

Action: (to Tony) Come on, you need a drink.

Arab: I'll buy. (they enter the LC, while Fifi enters from other side)

Fifi: (to Baby John) What are you doing out in front of a bar??

John: Well.. Uh.. Tony just... they were all... and .. I think he just had his oral.

Fifi: Oral?? I just had my oral yesterday afternoon and all the tutors assured me it was just the most... I'm sure it got honors, but of course, its not in the Registrar's office yet.

John: Wow... really?

Fifi: Yeah.... come on, I'll tell you all about it (takes his arm to lead into LC) ..You are 18, aren't you??

John: Sure-- sure!! (Fifi smiles as they enter. They sit down inside, and a bit later Anita comes in and sits very near where Tony and co. are, and listens on.)

Action: Look, it ain't the end of the world.

Ice: Yeah, come on, it wasn't that bad.

Arab: (chuckling a bit) I think you kind of told them.

Tony: (hands running through hair) You guys don't understand.

Ice: Look, after 15 years here, Maria'll be...

Arab: Heh-heh, like our old buddy over here... (points to Anita)

Action: The Lab Goon!! (laughing) (Anita is shocked)

Tony: (laughing half-heartedly) You guys,....

Arab: Yeah, Ice, remember that stupid rabbit, heh-heh....

Ice: Nah, you idiot, that was a dogfish!

Tony: (nudged into conversation) I had a sea cucumber. (they all laugh)

Ice: Ah yes, back to the days of Freshman Lab and Miss Spencer. It's gotten so bad you can't tell her perfume from the formaldehyde. That's Maria in 15 years buddy, that's your girl.

Tony: Maria! Never, no way! She's just so witty, and so clever, and so charming! That'll never happen to her! She's... (Anita has heard enough. She rises and approaches)

Anita: Well, as long as we're being so jolly, Tony, I thought that you would like to know that your witty little advisor friend will not have the opportunity to become familiar with our laboratory program. We, the tenured members of the faculty, have decided we cannot condone the sort of behavior Miss Sune has exhibited these past three months, and have been unable to renew her contract for next year. (She spins-- about to storm out-- turns around and..) Oh, and needless to say, your committee was in unanimous agreement concerning the oral: it was an abysmal failure. (She storms out and offstage)

(Tony is thunderstruck. The boys are silent, staring at him)

Ice: Hey, Tony. (reaching for his shoulder)

Arab: It's okay, Tones, it's okay.

(Tony shrieks, bolts out the door, down street, and falls on mailbox, making strange whimpering sounds. The Marine recruiter rises, and slides like a snake out the door after him; a small, evil smile on his face.)

Marine: Son, grab a hold of yourself. You always have a choice. (Sticks the paper in front of Tony's face. Nudges him. Tony looks up. Stares at it. Resolutely nods his head.) We've got a special ten year plan. Plenty of bonuses, fringe benefits, something you can count on. (Tony nods again, and with a dazed look signs. Marine whisks the paper away, a big evil smile on his face. Pats Tony on the shoulder. Walks a few steps off, busy with paperwork.)



COOL

Song # 7

Action: You wann get outta this lousy school. You gotta stay cool.

Tony: I wanna teach!

Ice: Be cool.

Tony: I wanna marry her!!

Ice: Stay cool.

Tony: I wanna have babies!!!

Action: You're a fool! (finger snapping)

All: Boy, boy, crazy boy-- stay loose boy.  
Gotta rocket, in your pocket-- turn off the juice, boy.  
Don't get hot, cause man you've got  
Some high times ahead.  
Take it slow, then Daddy, you can live it up and die in bed.

Boy, boy, silly boy--- be cool, boy.  
Breeze it, buzz it, easy does it, -- keep cooly cool boy!  
Go man go, but don't be a yo-yo school boy,  
Just play it cool, boy, real cool.

II-3

(Maria enters at head of group of tutors. They are obviously reconciled. She sees Tony, runs over to him.)

Maria: Tony, Tony, whats the matter? Hey?

Tony: Oh, I've blown it all.... I'm sorry, I'm so sorry...

Maria: What do you mean? What's wrong? The oral was okay, and it was a great paper.

Tony: But you!!!??

Maria: Oh, they had a few things to say to me, but I guess its kinda of understandable. We were a bit reckless...(a bit embarrassed)

Tony: But your work....??

Maria: Tony, it's fine--- we both made it!!

Tony: Made it, we both made it????

Maria: (nodding, beautiful smile) Sure, I'm going to keep teaching in Annapolis, and in five years or so you'll be here working too!

(Tony snaps out of daze, smiles unbelievably, grabs her to hug her, and clanck, the recruiter drops the letter into the mailbox. Tony spins in the direction of the noise and dies again)

Tony: (in a stupor) No, I won't.

(Maria puts 2+2 together as the Marine smartly salutes them.. With expressionless, dazed looks, they wander, arm in arm, upstage into spotlight to sing)

SONG: SOMEWHERE

(an song ends, the bells of McDowell begin to toll. All the tutors and students instinctively look towards it as if to go, the Marine nonchalantly strides off opposite, and Tony and Maria drop their heads.)

FINI

SOMEWHERE

He: There's a space for us  
Somewhere a space for us  
Subjective form of all outer sense  
All knowledge comes thence

She: There's a time for us  
**Someday** a time for us  
That apodeictic necessity  
Ordering all sensibility...somehow

He: Somehow empiric'ly real

She: Yet transcendently ideal!  
Somehow...

Both: There's a space for us  
A time and space for us  
Gath'ring manifolds here and there  
A priori- you know they're there  
Somehow. Someway. Somewhere.