

Carrie Coon:

Hello, and welcome to Steppenwolf Theater Company's presentation of *The American Clock*, a play by Arthur Miller. This piece is in radio play format, so the image you see won't change. We hope this gives you the opportunity to sit back, divest of screens for a moment, and experience the story in a more intimate way, putting the focus squarely on Miller's writing and the actors' voices. Or, if you prefer, imagine 15 ensemble members on a Zoom call.

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There will be a brief intermission, but if you need to step away for a moment, feel free to pause the recording and begin again at your leisure. Also, please know that any recording or distribution of this presentation is strictly prohibited. Thank you for choosing to be a part of our Steppenwolf community, particularly in this most challenging time. We're so glad you're here, and we hope you enjoy our production of *The American Clock*, by Arthur Miller.

Rose Baum:  
(singing)

Rose Baum:  
By the summer of 1929-

Lee Baum:  
I think it's fair to say that nearly every American-

Moe Baum:  
Firmly believed that he was going to get-

Arthur A. Robertson:  
Richer and richer.

Moe Baum:  
Every year-

Arthur A. Robertson:  
The country knelt to a golden calf in a blanket of  
red, white, and blue.

Clarence:  
Shoe shine, shoe shine, get your shoes shined.

Arthur A. Robertson:  
How you making out, Clarence?

Clarence:

Mr. Robertson, I'd like you to lay another \$10 on that General Electric. You do that for me?

Arthur A. Robertson:

How much stock you own, Clarence?

Clarence:

Well, this 10 ought to buy me \$1,000 worth, so altogether, I guess I got me about \$100,000 in stock.

Arthur A. Robertson:

And how much cash you got home?

Clarence:

Oh, I guess about \$40-\$45.

Arthur A. Robertson:

All right, Clarence. Let me tell you something, but I want you to promise me not to repeat it to anyone.

Clarence:

I never repeat a tip you give me, Mr. Robertson.

Arthur A. Robertson:

This isn't quite a tip, this is what you might call an untip. Take all your stock and sell it.

Clarence:

Sell? Why just this morning in the paper, Mr. Andrew Mellon says the market's going to keep going up. Got to.

Arthur A. Robertson:

I have great respect for Andrew Mellon, Clarence, know him well, but he's up to his eyebrows in this game. He's got to say that. You sell, Clarence, believe me.

Clarence:

I never criticize a customer, Mr. Robertson, but I don't think a man in your position ought to be carrying on that kind of talk. Now you take this 10, sir. Put it on General Electric for Clarence.

Arthur A. Robertson:

I'll tell you something funny, Clarence.

Clarence:

What's that, sir?

Arthur A. Robertson:

You sound like every banker in the United States.

Clarence:

Well, I should hope so.

Arthur A. Robertson:

Yeah (laughs). Well, bye bye.

Rose Baum:

Now, sing, darling, but don't forget to breathe,  
and then, you'll do your homework.

Lee Baum:

(singing) I can't give you anything but love, baby.

Lee Baum:

Up to '29, it was the Age of Belief. How could  
Lindberg fly the Atlantic in that tiny, little plane?  
He believed. How could Babe Ruth keep smashing  
those homers? He believed. Charlie Paddock, the  
world's fastest human, raced a racehorse and  
won because he believed. What I believed at 14  
was that my mother's hair was supposed to flow

down over her shoulders, and one afternoon, she came in into the apartment.

Rose Baum:

(singing) Diamond bracelets Woolworths doesn't sell, baby. Til that lucky day you know darn well, baby. I can't give you anything but love

Lee Baum:

And it was short.

Rose Baum:

I personally think with all the problems, there was never such a glorious time for anybody who loved to play or sing or listen or dance to music. It seems to me every week there was another marvelous song. What's the matter with you? (laughs) Oh, for God's sake. Nobody's gonna bother with long hair anymore. All I was doing was winding it up and winding it down.

Lee Baum:

It's okay. I just didn't think it would ever happen.

Rose Baum:

But why can't there be something new?

Lee Baum:

But why didn't you tell me?

Rose Baum:

Because you would do exactly what you're doing now: carrying on like I was some, kind of, a, I don't know what. Now, stop being an idiot and sing.

Lee Baum:

(singing) Grab your coat and snatch your hat.

Rose Baum:

No, you're not breathing, dear.

Rose Baum:

(singing) Leave your worries on the doorstep.

Lee Baum:

(singing) Just direct your feet to the sunny side of the street.

Rose Baum:

(laughs). Rudy Vallee's turning green.

Moe Baum:

Trafalgar 5-7-7-1-1. Herb, I'm just thinking; maybe, I outta pick up another 500 shares of General Electric. Good.

Frank:

Car's ready, Mr. Baum.

Rose Baum:

You'll drop us at the theater and then take my father and sister to Brooklyn and come back for us after the show. And don't get lost, please.

Frank:

No, I know Brooklyn.

Fanny Margolies:

Rose, Listen, Papa really doesn't want to move in with us.

Rose Baum:

Don't be silly, he's been with us six months.

Fanny Margolies:

I'm telling you, he's not happy about it.

Lee Baum:

He's not happy.

Fanny Margolies:

Well, you know how he loves space, and this apartment is so roomy.

Moe Baum:

He bought himself a grave, you know, it's gonna be in the cemetery on the aisle so he'll have a little more room to move around.

Rose Baum:

Oh, stop it.

Moe Baum:

Get in and out quicker.

Fanny Margolies:

Out of a grave?

Rose Baum:

He's kidding you, for God's sake!

Fanny Margolies:

Oh! I think he's afraid my house'll be too small; you know, with Sidney and us and the one

bathroom. And what's he gonna do with himself in Brooklyn? He never liked the country.

Rose Baum:

Fanny, dear, make up your mind - he's going to love it with you.

Moe Baum:

Tell you, Fanny - maybe we should all move over to your house, and he could live here with an 11 room apartment for himself, and we'll send a maid every day to do his laundry.

Fanny Margolies:

He's brushing his hair, Rose, but I know he's not happy. I think what it is, he still misses mama, you see.

Moe Baum:

Now that's serious - a man his age still misses his mother.

Fanny Margolies:

No, our mother - mama. (laughs) He thought papa misses his own mother!

Rose Baum:

No, he didn't, he's kidding you!

Fanny Margolies:

Oh, you!

Rose Baum:

Go. Hurry him up. I don't want to miss the first scene of this show; it's Gershwin, it's supposed to be wonderful.

Fanny Margolies:

See, what it is, something is always happening here.

Moe Baum:

Trafalgar 5-7-7-1-1.

Fanny Margolies:

I mean, with the stock market and the business. Papa just loves all this.

Moe Baum:

See you again soon, Charley!

Fanny Margolies:

You ready, papa?

Moe Baum:

Herb, maybe I ought to get rid of my Worthington Pump. Thousand shares? And remind me to talk to you about gold, will you? Good.

Fanny Margolies:

Rose will come every few days, papa.

Rose Baum:

Sunday we'll all come out and spend the day.

Grandpa:

Brooklyn is full of tomatoes.

Fanny Margolies:

No, they're starting to put up big apartment houses now/ it's practically not the country anymore. On some streets, there's hardly a tree! I'm looking at that bracelet - is it new?

Rose Baum:

For my birthday.

Fanny Margolies:

It's gorgeous.

Rose Baum:

He gave exactly the same one to his mother.

Fanny Margolies:

She must be overjoyed.

Rose Baum:

She's overjoyed. Why not?

Grandpa:

Well? So I'm going!

Lee Baum:

Bye bye, grandpa!

Grandpa:

You be a good boy.

Lee Baum:

There goes the boarder. I lived to see it!

Rose Baum:

Want to come and ride with us, Lee?

Lee Baum:

I think I'll stay home and work on my radio.

Rose Baum:

Good, and go to bed early. I'll bring home all the music from the show, and we'll sing it tomorrow. Good night, darling.

Moe Baum:

When'd you get a haircut?

Lee Baum:

I did, but it grew back, I think.

Moe Baum:

Should you talk to your mother about college or something?

Lee Baum:

Oh, no, not for a couple of years.

Moe Baum:

Oh. Okay, good. (laughs)

Arthur A. Robertson:

So Doctor, where did I leave off yesterday?

Dr. Rosman:

Your mother had scalded the cat.

Arthur A. Robertson:

There's something else, Doctor. I feel a conflict about saying it.

Dr. Rosman:

That's what we're here for.

Arthur A. Robertson:

I don't mean in the usual sense. It has to do with money.

Dr. Rosman:

Yes?

Arthur A. Robertson:

Your money.

Dr. Rosman:

What about it?

Arthur A. Robertson:

I think you ought to get out of the market.

Dr. Rosman:

Out of the market?

Arthur A. Robertson:

Sell everything.

Dr. Rosman:

Could you talk about the basis for this idea? When was the first time you had this thought?

Arthur A. Robertson:

About four months ago. Around the middle of May.

Dr. Rosman:

Can you recall what suggested it?

Arthur A. Robertson:

One of my companies manufactures kitchen utensils.

Dr. Rosman:

The one in Indiana?

Arthur A. Robertson:

Yes. In the middle of May all our orders stopped.

Dr. Rosman:

Completely?

Arthur A. Robertson:

Dead stop. It's now the end of August, and they haven't resumed.

Dr. Rosman:

How is that possible? The stock keeps going up.

Arthur A. Robertson:

30 points in less than two months. This is what I've been trying to tell you for a long time now, Doctor. The market represents nothing but a state of mind. On the other hand, I must face the possibility that this is merely my personal fantasy.

Dr. Rosman:

Yes, your fear of approaching disaster.

Arthur A. Robertson:

But I've had meetings at Morgan Bank all week, and it's the same in almost every industry. It's not just my companies. The warehouses are overflowing. We can't move the goods! That's an objective fact.

Dr. Rosman:

Have you told your thoughts to your colleagues?

Arthur A. Robertson:

They won't listen. Maybe they can't afford to. We've been tossing the whole country onto a crap table in a game where nobody is ever supposed to lose. I sold off a lot two years ago, but when the market opens tomorrow I'm cashing in the rest. I feel guilty for it, but I can't see any other way.

Dr. Rosman:

Why does selling make you feel guilty?

Arthur A. Robertson:

Dumping 12 million dollars in securities could start a slide; could wipe out thousands of widows and old people. I've even played with the idea of making a public announcement.

Dr. Rosman:

That you're dumping 12 million dollars? That could start a slide all by itself, couldn't it?

Arthur A. Robertson:

But it would warn the little people.

Dr. Rosman:

Yes, but selling out quietly might not disturb the market quite so much. You could be wrong, too.

Arthur A. Robertson:

I suppose so. Yes. Maybe I'll just sell and shut up. You're right. I could be mistaken.

Dr. Rosman:

You probably are. But I think I'll sell out anyway.

Arthur A. Robertson:

Fine, Doctor. And one more thing. This is going to sound absolutely nuts, but when you get your cash, don't keep it. Buy gold.

Dr. Rosman:

You can't be serious.

Arthur A. Robertson:

Gold bars, Doctor. The dollar may disappear with the rest of it. Well, good luck.

Dr. Rosman:

Your hand is shaking.

Arthur A. Robertson:

Why not? Ask any two great bankers in the United States and they'd say that Arthur A. Robertson had lost his mind. Gold bars, Doctor. And don't put them in the bank. In the basement. Take care, now.

Jesse Livermore:

About Randolph Morgan. Could you actually see him falling?

Tony:

Oh, yeah. It was still that blue light, just before it gets dark. And I don't know why. Something made me look up, and there's a man flyin' spread eagle, falling through the air. He was right on top

of me, like a gian! And I look. I couldn't believe it.  
It's Randolph!

Jesse Livermore:

Poor, poor man.

William Durant:

Damned fool.

Jesse Livermore:

I don't know. I think there is a certain gallantry,  
when you lose other people's money as well as  
your own, there can be no other way out.

William Durant:

There's always a way out. The door.

Tony:

Little more brandy, Mr. Durant?

Jesse Livermore:

To Randolph Morgan.

Tony:

Amen here. And I want to say something else -  
everybody should get down on their knees and  
thank John Democrat. Rockefeller.

Jesse Livermore:  
Now you're talking.

Tony:  
Honest to God, Mr. Livermore. Didn't that shoot a thrill through ya? I mean, there's a man. To come out like that with the whole market falling to pieces and say, 'I and my sons are buying six million dollars in common stocks.' I mean, that's a bullfighter.

Jesse Livermore:  
He'll turn it around, too.

Tony:  
Oh, sure, he'll turn it around, because the man's a capitalist. He knows how to put up a battle. You wait, tomorrow morning it'll all be shootin' up again like Roman candles!

Jesse Livermore:  
(laughs)

Tony:

Uh, yeah, sure, sure, bring her in. My God, it's Randolph's sister. She don't know yet.

Tony:

How do you do, Miss Morgan? Come in, come in. Here, I got a nice table for you.

Diana Morgan:

Thank you!

Tony:

Can I bring you a nice steak? Little drink?

Diana Morgan:

I-I believe I'll wait for Mr. Robertson.

Tony:

Sure. Make yourself at home.

Diana Morgan:

Are you, are you the famous Tony?

Tony:

That's right, miss.

Diana Morgan:

I certainly am thrilled to meet you. I've read all about this marvelous place. Are these people literary?

Tony:

Uh, well, not all, Miss Morgan.

Diana Morgan:

But this is the speakeasy F. Scott Fitzgerald frequents, isn't it?

Tony:

Oh, yeah, but tonight is very quiet with the stock market and all, people stayin' home a lot the last couple days.

Diana Morgan:

Is that gentleman a writer?

Tony:

No, miss, that's Jake the Barber, he's in the liquor business.

Diana Morgan:

And these?

Tony:

Uh, Mr. Durant, Miss Morgan. Mr. Livermore, Miss Morgan.

Diana Morgan:

The name of Jesse Livermore was uttered in my family like the name of a genius! (laughs) A Shakespeare, a Dante of corporate finance.

Lee Baum:

And William Durant, he had a car named after him, the Durant Six.

Moe Baum:

A car?

Diana Morgan:

Oh.

Moe Baum:

Durant had control of General Motors, for God's sakes.

Diana Morgan:

Not the Jesse Livermore?

Jesse Livermore:

Afraid so, yes.

Diana Morgan:

Well, I declare!

Jesse Livermore:

(laughs)

Diana Morgan:

And sitting here just like two ordinary millionaires.

Lee Baum:

Ah, yes, the great men. The fabled high priests of the neverending boom.

Diana Morgan:

This certainly is a banner evening for me. I suppose you know Durham quite well.

Jesse Livermore:

Durham? I don't believe I've ever been there.

Diana Morgan:

But your big Philip Morris plant is there. You do still own Philip Morris, don't you?

Jesse Livermore:

Oh, yes, but to bet on a horse there's no need to ride him. (laughs) I never mix in business. I'm only interested in stocks.

Diana Morgan:

Well, that's sort of miraculous, isn't it? To own a place like that and never have seen it! My brother's in brokerage - Randolph Morgan?

Jesse Livermore:

I dealt with Randolph when I bought the controlling shares in IBM. Fine fellow.

Diana Morgan:

But I don't understand why he'd be spending the night in his office. The market's closed at night, isn't it?

William Durant:

Yes, but there's an avalanche of selling orders from all over the country, and they're working around the clock to tally them up. The truth is, there's not a price on anything at the moment. In fact, Mr. Clayton was over there at the end of the bar waiting for the latest estimates.

Diana Morgan:

I'm sure something will be done, won't there?  
They've cut off our telephone!

Jesse Livermore:

How's that?

Diana Morgan:

It seems, it seems that daddy's lived on loans the last few months, and his credit stopped. I had no idea! Why, I feel like a figure in a dream. I sat down in the dining car the other day, absolutely famished, and realized I only had 40 cents! I'm surviving on chocolate bars!

Jesse Livermore:

(laughs) Whatever has become of all the money? You mustn't worry, Ms. Morgan, there'll soon be plenty of money. Money is like a shy bird: the slightest rustle in the trees and it flies for cover. But money cannot bear solitude for long. It must come out and feed, and that is why we must all speak positively and show our confidence.

Rose Baum:

And they were nothing but pickpockets in a crowd of innocent pilgrims.

Jesse Livermore:

With Rockefeller's announcement this morning the climb has probably begun already.

Arthur A. Robertson:

Yes, but they also believed.

Henry Taylor:

What did they believe?

Irene:

Yeah, what did they believe?

Arthur A. Robertson:

Why, the most important thing of all - that talk makes facts!

William Durant:

If I were you, Miss Morgan, I would prepare myself for the worst.

Jesse Livermore:

Now, Bill. There is no good in that kind of talk.

Arthur A. Robertson:

And they ended up believing it themselves!

William Durant:

It's far more dreamlike than you imagine, Miss Morgan.

Moe Baum:

There they are, chatting away, while the gentleman at the end of the bar...

William Durant:

That gentleman, who has just put down the telephone, is undoubtedly steeling himself to tell me that I have lost control of General Motors.

Diana Morgan:

What!

William Durant:

If I were you, I'd muster all the strength I have, Miss Morgan. Yes, Clayton?

Arthur Clayton:

If we could talk privately, sir.

William Durant:

Am I through?

Arthur Clayton:

If you could borrow for two or three weeks...

William Durant:

From whom?

Arthur Clayton:

I don't know, sir.

William Durant:

Good night, Miss Morgan. How old are you?

Diana Morgan:

19.

William Durant:

I hope you will look things in the face, young lady.  
Shun paper. Paper I something plague. Good luck  
to you.

Jesse Livermore:

We have to talk, Bill.

William Durant:

Nothing to say, Jesse. Go to bed, old boy. It's long past midnight.

Lee Baum:

Say, didn't Durant end up managing a bowling alley in Toledo, Ohio?

Arthur Clayton:

Dead broke.

Jesse Livermore:

Clayton, what's Philip Morris going to open at, can they tell?

Arthur Clayton:

Below 20. No higher. If we can find buyers at all.

Jesse Livermore:

But Rockefeller. Rockefeller-

Arthur Clayton:

Doesn't seem to have had any effect, sir.

Arthur Clayton:

I should go back to the office ,sir, if I may. I'm very sorry, Mr. Livermore.

Jesse Livermore:

(laughs)

Diana Morgan:

Mr. Livermore?

Arthur A. Robertson:

Sorry i'm late, Diana. How was the trip?

Arthur A. Robertson:

Bad, Jesse?

Jesse Livermore:

I am wiped out, Arthur.

Arthur A. Robertson:

Come on now, Jesse, a man like you ha always got 10 million put away somewhere.

Jesse Livermore:

( laughs) No, no. I always felt that if you couldn't have real money, might as well not have any. Is it true what I've heard, that you sold out in time?

Arthur A. Robertson:

Yes, Jesse. I told you I would.

Jesse Livermore:

Arthur, can you lend me \$5,000?

Arthur A. Robertson:

Certainly.

Arthur A. Robertson:

Five weeks ago, on his yacht in Oyster Bay, Mr. Livermore told me he had \$480 million in common stocks.

Jesse Livermore:

What the hell are you doing? You're keeping your money in your shoe? By God. Don't you believe in anything?

Arthur A. Robertson:

Not much.

Jesse Livermore:

Well, I suppose I understand that. But I can't say that I admire it. Well, I guess it's your country now.

Arthur A. Robertson:

Not long after, Jessie Livermore sat down to a good breakfast in the Sherry-Netherland Hotel, and, calling for an envelope, addressed it to Arthur Robinson, inserted a note for \$5,000, went into the washroom and shot himself.

Diana Morgan:

Is Randolph ruined too?

Arthur A. Robertson:

Diana, Randolph is dead. He, he fell from his window.

Rose Baum:

Lee? Darling?

Lee Baum:

How do you like it, ma?

Rose Baum:

Wow! What a beautiful bike!

Lee Baum:

It's a Columbia Racer. I just bought it from Georgie Rosen for \$12.

Rose Baum:

Where'd you get \$12?

Lee Baum:

I emptied my savings account. But it's worth way more.

Rose Baum:

Well, I should say! Listen, darling, uh, you know how to get to Third Avenue and 19th Street, don't you?

Lee Baum:

Sure, in 10 minutes.

Rose Baum:

Well, this is my diamond bracelet, and this is Mr. Sanders' card and the address. He's expecting you; just give it to him, and he'll give you a receipt.

Lee Baum:

Is he going to fix it?

Rose Baum:

No, dear. It's a pawnshop. Go. I'll explain sometimes.

Lee Baum:

Can't I have an idea? What's a pawnshop?

Rose Baum:

Where you leave something temporarily and they lend you money on it, with interest. I'm gonna leave it the rest of the month, till the market goes up again. I showed it to him on Friday, and we're getting a nice loan on it.

Lee Baum:

But how do you get it back?

Rose Baum:

You just pay back the loan plus interest. But things'll pick up in a month or two. Go on, darling, and be careful! I'm so glad you bought that bike. It's gorgeous!

Lee Baum:

Does papa know?

Rose Baum:

Yes, dear, papa knows.

Joey:

Oh, hiya, Mrs. Baum.

Rose Baum:

Hello, Joey. Did you get thin?

Joey:

Me? No, I'm okay. See what I just got?

Rose Baum:

Where did you get that?

Lee Baum:

How'd you get it autographed?

Joey:

I just wrote to the White House.

Lee Baum:

Boy, look at that, huh? Herbert Hoover.

Rose Baum:

What a human thing for him to do. What did you write him?

Joey:

Just wished him success. You know, against the Depression.

Rose Baum:

Look at that! You're going to end up a politician, Joey.

Joey:

I might. I like it a lot.

Lee Baum:

But what about dentistry?

Joey:

Well, either one.

Rose Baum:

Get going, darling.

Lee Baum:

You want to shoot some baskets later?

Joey:

What about now?

Lee Baum:

No. I've got something to do for my mother. Meet you on the court in an hour.

Joey:

Wait, I'll go with you! Let me on!

Lee Baum:

I can't, Joey.

Joey:

Oh.

Lee Baum:

See you on the court.

Arthur A. Robertson:

To me, it's beginning to look a lot like Germany in 1922, and I'm having real worries about the banks. There are times when I walk around with as much as \$25, 30,000 dollars in my shoes

Frank:

Morning, Mr. Baum. Got the car nice and warmed up for you this morning, sir. And I had the lap robe dry cleaned.

Moe Baum:

What is that, Frank?

Frank:

Oh, looks like the garage bill.

Moe Baum:

What's that about tires on there?

Frank:

Oh, yes, sir, this is the bill for the new tires last week.

Moe Baum:

And what happened to those tires we bought six weeks ago?

Frank:

Those weren't very good, sir. They wore out quick, and I want to be the first to admit that.

Moe Baum:

But \$20 apiece and they last six weeks?

Frank:

That's just what I'm telling you, sir. They were just no good. But these ones are going to be a whole lot better, though.

Moe Baum:

Tell you what, Frank.

Frank:

Yes, sir. What I mean, I'm giving you my personal guarantee on this set, Mr. Baum.

Moe Baum:

I never paid no attention to these things, but maybe you heard of the market crash? The whole thing practically floated into the ocean, you know.

Frank:

Oh, yes, sir, I certainly heard about it.

Moe Baum:

I'm glad you heard about it, because I heard a lot about it. In fact, what you cleared from selling my tires over the last 10 years. (laughs)

Frank:

Oh, no. Sir, Mr. Baum.

Moe Baum:

Frank, looking back over the last 10 years, I never heard of that amount of tires in my whole life, since I first come over from Europe, a baby at the age of six. That is a lot of tires, Frank. So I tell ya, what we're gonna do now, you're going to drive her over to the Pierce Arrow showroom and leave her there, and then come to my office and we'll settle up.

Frank:

But how are you gonna get around?

Moe Baum:

I'm a happy man in a taxi, Frank.

Frank:

Well, I'm sure gonna be sorry to leave you people.

Moe Baum:

Everything comes to an end, Frank. It was great while it lasted. No hard feelings. Bye bye.

Frank:

But what, what, what am I supposed to do now?

Moe Baum:

You got in laws?

Frank:

But I never got along with them.

Moe Baum:

You should have. Taxi!

Frank:

Damn!

Irene:

You got fired, you walked away to nothing. No unemployment insurance, no Social Security. Just the in laws and fresh air.

Rose Baum:

Still, it was very nice in a certain way. On our block, when we moved to Brooklyn, a lot of married children had to move back with the parents, and you heard babies crying in houses that didn't have a baby in 20 years. But of course the doubling up could also drive you crazy.

Rose Baum:

What are you doing?

Grandpa:

There's no room for these in my closet.

Rose Baum:

For a few canes?

Grandpa:

And what about my hats? You shouldn't have bought such a small house, Rose.

Rose Baum:

I'll put them in the front hall closet.

Grandpa:

No, people step on them. And where will I put my hats?

Rose Baum:

Papa, what do you want from me? We are doing what we can do.

Grandpa:

One bathroom for so many people is not right. You had three bathrooms in the apartment, and you used to look out the window, there was the whole New York. Here, listen to that street out there. It's a Brooklyn cemetery. And this barber here. He's very bad. Look what he did to me.

Rose Baum:

Why? It's beautiful. It's just a little uneven.

Grandpa:

I don't understand, Rose. Why does he declare bankruptcy if he's going to turn around and pay his debts?

Rose Baum:  
For his reputation.

Grandpa:  
His reputation. He'll have the reputation of a fool!  
The reason to go bankrupt is not to pay your  
debts!

Rose Baum:  
He wanted to be honorable.

Grandpa:  
But that's the whole beauty of it! He shoulda  
asked me. When I went bankrupt I didn't pay  
nobody!

Rose Baum:  
I've got to tell you something, papa. From now on,  
I wish you-

Grandpa:  
And you'll have to talk to Lee. He throws himself  
around in his bed all night. Wakes me up 10  
times, and he leaves his socks on the floor! Two  
people in that bedroom is too much, Rose.

Rose Baum:

I don't want Moe to get aggravated, papa. He might try to start a new business, so he's nervous, so please, don't complain, papa. Please?

Grandpa:

What did I say?

Rose Baum:

Nothing. Maybe I can find an umbrella stand someplace.

Grandpa:

I was reading about this Hitler.

Rose Baum:

Who?

Grandpa:

He's chasing all the radicals out of Germany. He wouldn't be so bad if he wasn't against the Jews. But he won't last six months. The Germans are not fools. When I used to take mama to Baden-Baden this time of year.

Rose Baum:

How beautiful she was.

Grandpa:

One time we were sitting on the train ready to leave for Berlin. And suddenly a man gallops up calling out my name. So I says, "Yes, that's me!" And through the window he hands me my gold watch and chain. "You left it in your room, mein Herr." Such a thing could only happen in Germany. This Hitler is finished.

Rose Baum:

Please, put them back in your closet, huh? I don't want Moe to get mad, Papa!

Grandpa:

Man don't even know how to go bankrupt.

Lee Baum:

Ma, guess what?

Rose Baum:

What?

Lee Baum:

Remember I emptied my bank account for the bike?

Rose Baum:

So?

Lee Baum:

The bank has just been closed by the government. It's broke! There's a whole mob of people in the street yelling where's their money! They've got cops and everything. There is no more money in the bank.

Rose Baum:

You're a genius.

Lee Baum:

Imagine. I could have lost my \$12. Wow!

Rose Baum:

That's wonderful.

Lee Baum:

Oh, ma, your pearl choker. Wasn't that papa's wedding present?

Rose Baum:

I hate to, but-

Lee Baum:

What about papa's business? Can't he-

Rose Baum:

He put too much capital in the stock market, dear. It made more there than in his business. So now, it's not there anymore. But we'll be all right. Go. You can have a jelly sandwich when you come back. Where's your bike? They stole your bike? May he choke on his next meal! Oh, my darling, my darling. My darling, what an awful thing. So now you're going to have to walk to the hockshop like everybody else. Come, have your jelly sandwich.

Lee Baum:

No, I'd like to see if I can trot there. It'd be good for my track. By the way, I've almost decided to go to Cornell, I think. Cornell or Brown.

Rose Baum:

Oh. Well, there's still months to decide.

Lee Baum:

(singing)

Arthur A. Robertson:

Till then, probably most people didn't think of it as a system.

Henry Taylor:

It was more like nature.

Mrs. Taylor:

Like weather. Had to expect bad weather, but it always got good again if you waited. So we waited, and it didn't change. And we waited some more and it never changed. You couldn't hardly believe that the day would come when the land wouldn't give. Land always gives. But there it lay, miles and miles of it, and there was us wanting to work it, and couldn't. It was like a spell on Iowa.

We was all there, and the land was there waitin',  
and we wasn't able to move. Amen.

Brewster:

Just sit tight folks, be startin' in a few minutes.

Farmer 1:

Looks like snow up there.

Farmer 2:

Even the weather ain't working.' (laughs)

Brewster:

You be catchin' cold sitting on the ground like  
that, won't you, Henry?

Henry Taylor:

Tired out. Never slept a wink all night. Not a wink.

Mrs. Taylor:

You'll have to share the cups, but it's something  
hot, anyway.

Brewster:

Oh, that smells good. Lemme take that, ma'am.

Mrs. Taylor:

You can't be sitting on the ground like that, Henry, now come on. It's an auction. Anybody's got a right to come to an auction.

Henry Taylor:

There must be a 1000 men along road. They never told me they'd bring a thousand men.

Mrs. Taylor:

Well, I-I suppose that's the way they do it.

Henry Taylor:

They got guns in those trucks.

Mrs. Taylor:

Well, it's too late to stop them now, so you might as well go round and talk to people that come to help you.

Charley:

Brewster? Where's Brewster?

Brewster:

What's up, Charley?

Charley:

Judge Bradley. He's getting out of the car with the auctioneer.

Farmers:

What's Judge Bradley doing here? How come the judge has come?

Brewster:

Well, I don't see what that changes. Guess we're gonna here what we came here to do. Is that right?

Charley:

Right.

Farmers:

Right.

Charley:

No use quitting now.

Judge Bradley:

Good morning, Gentleman. I want to say a few words to you before Mr. Howard starts the auction. Now, I have decided to come here personally this morning in order to emphasize the gravity of the situation that has developed in the state. We are on the verge of anarchy in Iowa, and that is not gonna help anybody. Now, you are all property owners-

Brewster:

Used to be, Judge, used to be.

Judge Bradley:

Brewster, I will not waste words. There are 40 armed deputies out there. I would like to make only one point clear. I have levied a deficiency judgment on this farm. Mr. Taylor has failed to pay what he owes on his equipment and some of his cattle. A contract is sacred. The National Bank has the right to collect on its loans. Now then, Mr. Howard will begin the auction. But he has discretion-

Judge Bradley:

Now then, Mr. Howard will begin the auction. But he has discretionary power to decline any unreasonable bid. I ask you again, obey the law. Once law and order go down, no man is safe. Mr. Howard.

Mr. Howard:

Well now, let's see. We have here one John Deere tractor and combine, three years old. Beautiful condition. I ask for bids on the tractor and combine.

Brewster:

10 cents.

Mr. Howard:

I have 10 cents. I have 10 cents, I have 10 cents.

Bidders:

500.

Judge Bradley:

Sheriff, get over here. Protect these men!

Mr. Howard:

Do I hear \$500, do I hear 5?

Bidders:

500.

Mr. Howard:

Do I hear 600?

Bidders:

600.

Mr. Howard:

Do I hear 700?

Bidders:

700.

Judge Bradley:

Grab him.

Brewster:

You come any closer, we're going to string him up. Y'all get back on that road and we string up the judge. So help me Christ, he goes up. Any one

of you deputies interferes with this auction. Now, let me just clear up one thing for you, Judge Bradley.

Henry Taylor:

Let him go, Brewster. I don't care anymore. Let him take him.

Brewster:

No, you just sit tight, Henry. Nobody's taking anything. That is all over, Judge. Now, Mr. Howard, just to save time, why don't you take a bid on this whole place. Will you do that please?

Mr. Howard:

I'll- I'll hear bids on everything. Tractor and combine, pair of mules and wagon, 26 cows, eight heifers, farm and outbuildings, assorted tools and so forth. Do I hear-

Brewster:

One dollar.

Mr. Howard:

I hear one dollar. One dollar. Sold for one dollar.

Brewster:

Now, will you just sign that receipt, please?

Henry, why don't you go along now and get to milkin'. Let's go, boys.

Judge Bradley:

Henry Taylor, you are nothing but a thief. And that is a crime against every law of God and man. And this isn't the end of it either.

Harriet Taylor:

Should we milk him, Papa?

Mrs. Taylor:

'Course we milk 'em. They're ours. Henry?

Henry Taylor:

It's like I stole my own place.

Arthur A. Robertson:

Nobody knows how many people are leaving their hometowns, their farms and cities and hitting the road. Hundred of thousands. Maybe millions of internal refugee. Americans transformed into strangers.

Banks:

I still hear that train. Still hear that long, low whistle. Still hear that train, yeah. Whoo whoo. How long, baby how long has that evening train been gone? How long, how long, baby how long? 1929 was pretty hard. My family had a little old cotton farm in McGehee, Arkansas where a man had to be on the road and leave his wife, his mother just to try to get a little money to live on. But God help him, I couldn't get anything. I was too ashamed to send them a picture. All dirty and ragged, hadn't shaved. Write a postcard. Dear Mother, doing wonderful and hope you all are fine. Be sleeping on a Los Angeles sidewalk under a newspaper. My Ma says, "Oh, my son's in Los Angeles and he's doing pretty fair. All the way to Santa Fe." So hungry and weak, I begin to see snakes through the smoke. An old white hobo named Callahan got a scissors on me, wrapped me between his legs. Otherwise I'd have fell off into a cornfield there. Except for Callahan, there's no friendships in the hobo jungle. Everybody else

was worried and sad-looking and it was evil to each other.

Banks:

I still hear that long, low whistle. Whoo whoo. Went up to the station, watched my baby leaving town. You went disgusted, nowhere could peace be found. Oh how long, how long, baby how long?

Moe Baum:

Lee, when you say \$300 tuition-

Lee Baum:

That's for Columbia. Some of the others are cheaper.

Moe Baum:

That's for the four years.

Lee Baum:

Well, no, that's one year.

Moe Baum:

(laughs)

Lee Baum:

Minnesota here is, uh, 150 for instance and Ohio State is about the same, I think. Pa, he always got drowsy when the news got bad. And now the mystery of the marked house began. Practically every day you'd see the stranger coming down the street, poor and ragged, and he'd go past house after house. But at our driveway he'd make a turn right up to the back porch and ask for something to eat. Why us? Yes?

Henry Taylor:

Uh, sorry to be bothering you on a Sunday and all.

Rose Baum:

Who was that, dear?

Lee Baum:

This is my mother.

Henry Taylor:

Howdy do, ma'am. My name is Taylor a- and I'm just passing by, wondering if you folks have any work around the place.

Moe Baum:

Hey, the bell rang. Oh.

Rose Baum:

Another one looking for work.

Henry Taylor:

I could paint the place or fix the roof. Electrical, plumbing or masonry, gardening. I always had my own farm and we do all that, don't you know. I'd work cheap.

Rose Baum:

Well we don't need any kind of-

Moe Baum:

Where are you from?

Henry Taylor:

State of Iowa.

Lee Baum:

Iowa?

Henry Taylor:

I wouldn't hardly charge if I could have my meals, don't you know.

Moe Baum:

W- whereabouts in Iowa?

Rose Baum:

My sister's husband comes from Cleveland.

Moe Baum:

No, no, Cleveland, nowhere near. Whereabouts?

Henry Taylor:

You know Stiles?

Moe Baum:

I only know the stores in the big towns.

Henry Taylor:

(laughs) Well, I never expected to meet a...

Moe Baum:

Mister?

Rose Baum:

What's the matter?

Lee Baum:

I'll get water.

Rose Baum:

Is it your heart?

Henry Taylor:

Excuse me. I'm awful sorry. Thank you, sonny.

Rose Baum:

He better sit down.

Moe Baum:

Yeah, you want to sit down? Come, sit down.

Rose Baum:

You got some kind of heart?

Henry Taylor:

Would you be able to get me something to eat?

Rose Baum:

You're hungry?

Henry Taylor:

Yes, ma'am.

Moe Baum:

Better get him something.

Rose Baum:

Oh my God in heaven!

Moe Baum:

What are you doing? Just going around?

Henry Taylor:

Well no, I- I come east when I lost the farm. They was supposed to be hiring in New Jersey pickers for the celery but I only got two days. I been in the Salvation Army four or five times but they only give me a bun and a cup of coffee yesterday.

Lee Baum:

You haven't eaten since yesterday?

Henry Taylor:

Well, I generally don't need too much.

Rose Baum:

I was just makin' it so I didn't put in the potatoes yet.

Henry Taylor:

All beets?

Rose Baum:

That's what you call borscht.

Henry Taylor:

Yes, ma'am.

Moe Baum:

How do you come to lose a farm?

Henry Taylor:

I suppose you read about the farmers' uprising in the state a couple months ago?

Lee Baum:

I did.

Moe Baum:

What uprising?

Lee Baum:

They nearly lynched the judge for auctioning off their farms. Were you in that?

Henry Taylor:

Well it's all over now. But I don't believe they'll be auctioning any more farms for a while, though. Been just terrible out there.

Rose Baum:

And I thought they were all Republicans in Iowa.

Henry Taylor:

Well I guess they all are.

Lee Baum:

Is that what they mean by radical, though?

Henry Taylor:

Well, it's like they say, people in Iowa are practical. They'll even go radical if it seems like it's practical. But as soon as it stops being practical, they stop being radical.

Moe Baum:

And you've probably all learned your lesson now.

Lee Baum:

Why? He was takin' away their homes, that judge.

Moe Baum:

So you go into court and lynch him?

Lee Baum:

But- but it's all wrong, Pa.

Rose Baum:

Shh, don't argue.

Lee Baum:

But- but you think it's wrong, don't you? Suppose they came and threw us out of this house.

Rose Baum:

I refuse to think about it. So where do you sleep?

Moe Baum:

Excuse me, we are not interested in where you sleep, Mister.

Lee Baum:

What's your name?

Henry Taylor:

Taylor. I'd be satisfied with just my meals if- if I could live in the basement.

Moe Baum:

There is no room for another human being in this house. You understand? Including the basement.

Henry Taylor:

I wasn't asking for charity.

Moe Baum:

I'm going to loan you a dollar. And I hope you're going to start a whole new life. Here. And pay me back but don't rush. Glad to have met you and good luck.

Henry Taylor:

Thanks for the soup, Mrs...

Rose Baum:

Our name is Baum. You have children?

Henry Taylor:

One's 15, one's 9.

Rose Baum:

Take care of yourself. And write a letter to your wife.

Henry Taylor:

Yes, I will. Goodbye, sir.

Moe Baum:

Stay away from rope.

Henry Taylor:

Oh, yeah, I will.

Lee Baum:

Goodbye, Mr. Taylor.

Henry Taylor:

Bye, sonny.

Grandpa:

Who was that?

Moe Baum:

He's a farmer from Iowa. Tried to lynch a judge so she wanted him to live in the cellar.

Grandpa:

What's a farmer doing here?

Rose Baum:

He went broke, he lost everything.

Grandpa:

Oh. Well he should borrow.

Moe Baum:

I'll run down the street and tell him. You got me hungry. I'm going down to the corner, get a chocolate soda. What do you say, Lee?

Lee Baum:

I don't feel like it.

Moe Baum:

Don't be sad. Life is tough. What are you going to do? Sometimes it's not as tough as other times, that's all, but it's always tough. Come, have a soda.

Lee Baum:

Not now, Pa, thanks.

Moe Baum:

Be back right away.

Rose Baum:

Oh, Papa, give me the plum pit.

Lee Baum:

That man was starving, Grandpa.

Grandpa:

No, no. He was hungry but not starving.

Lee Baum:

He was. He almost fainted.

Grandpa:

No, that's no starving. In Europe, they starve. But here, not. Anyway a couple of weeks, they're going to figure it out, what to do, and you can forget the whole thing. God makes one person at the time, boy. Worry about yourself.

Arthur A. Robertson:

His name is Theodore K. Quinn.

Ted Quinn:

My baby don't care for shows. My baby don't care for clothes. My baby just cares for me.

Arthur A. Robertson:

The greatest Irish soft shoe dancer ever to serve on a board of directors. They'd know him at Lindy's, they love him at 21. High up on top of the American heaps, it's Ted Quinn, hardly 40 years of age in 1932.

Ted Quinn:

Ted Quinn. Come over, Arthur, I've got to see you, but come to the 29th floor. I've got a new office.

Arthur A. Robertson:

All this yours?

Ted Quinn:

Yep. You are standing on the apex, the pinnacle of human evolution. From that window you can reach out and touch the mustache of the almighty God.

Arthur A. Robertson:

Ted. Ted.

Ted Quinn:

Jesus, don't say it that way, will you?

Arthur A. Robertson:

President of General Electric.

Ted Quinn:

I'm not sure I want it, Arthur.

Arthur A. Robertson:

(laughs)

Ted Quinn:

I'm not that... damn it! I never expected Swope to pick me. Never.

Arthur A. Robertson:

Oh, go on. You've been angling for the presidency for the last five years.

Ted Quinn:

No, I swear not. I just didn't want anybody else to get it.

Arthur A. Robertson:

(laughs)

Ted Quinn:

No! That's not the same thing. Seriously, Arthur, I'm scared. I don't know what to do. Now that I'm standing here, now that they're about to paint my name on the door. The Times sending a reporter.

Arthur A. Robertson:

What the hell's got into you?

Ted Quinn:

I don't know. Almost like shame.

Arthur A. Robertson:

F- for what? It's that damn upbringing or yours. That anarchist father.

Ted Quinn:

The truth is I've never been comfortable with some of the things we've done.

Arthur A. Robertson:

But why suddenly after all these years?

Ted Quinn:

It's different taking orders and being the man who gives them.

Arthur A. Robertson:

I don't know what the hell you're talking about.

Ted Quinn:

My baby don't care for shows. My baby don't care for clothes. My baby just cares for me. I had a very unsettling experience about 18 months ago, Arthur. Got a call from my Philadelphia district manager that Frigidaire was dropping the price on their boxes. So I told him to cut hours and in a matter of weeks they cut. We cut. They cut. We cut 'til I finally went down there myself because I was damned if I was going to get beat in Philadelphia. And I finally cut our price right down to our cost of production.

Ted Quinn:

Well ting-a-ling-a-ling-a-ling, phone call from New York. What the hell's going on down there? Gotta get down to Wall Street and have a meeting with the money boys. So there we are, about 10 of us. I look across the blinding glare of that teak wood table and low and behold, who was facing me but Georgie Fairchild, head of sales of Frigidaire. Old friends, Georgie and I. Go way back. But he is Frigidaire, you know. What the hell is he doing in a GE meeting?

Ted Quinn:

Well it turns out that both companies are owned by the same money and the word is that Georgie and Quinn are going to cut out this nonsense and get those price up to where they belong. (laughs) I tell ya, I was absolutely flabbergasted. Here I've been fightin' Georgie from Bangkok to the Bronx, layin' awake at night thinking how to outfox him. Hell, here we were like Grant and Lee, thousands of soldiers out to destroy each other, and it's suddenly like all these years I've been shoving my old man. It's farcical.

Arthur A. Robertson:

It's amazing, you're probably the world's greatest salesman and you haven't an ounce of objectivity.

Ted Quinn:

Objectivity? Arthur, if I'm the greatest salesman, which I'm far from denying, it's because I believe. I believe deeply in the creative force of competition.

Arthur A. Robertson:

Exactly. And GE is the fastest-growing company in the world be-

Ted Quinn:

Because we've had the capital to buy up one independent business after another. It's haunting me, Arthur. Thousands of small businesses are going under every week now and we're getting bigger and bigger every day. What's going to become of the independent person in this country once everybody's sucking off the same tit? How can there be an America without Americans? People not beholden to some enormous enterprise that will run their souls?

Arthur A. Robertson:

Am I hearing what I think? Ted, you'd actually resign?

Ted Quinn:

If I did? Would it make any point to you at all? If I made a statement that-

Arthur A. Robertson:

What statement can you possibly make that won't call for a return to the horse and buggy? The America you love is cold stone dead in the parlor, Ted. This is a corporate country. You can't go back to small personal enterprise again.

Ted Quinn:

A corporate country! Jesus, Arthur, what a prospect!

Miss Fowler:

The gentleman from the Times is waiting, Mr. Quinn. Unless you'd like to make it tomorrow or...

Ted Quinn:

No, no, no, no. It has to be now or never. Ask him in. Tell me the truth, Arthur. Did I move your mind at all?

Arthur A. Robertson:

Of course I see your point but you can't buck the inevitable.

Miss Fowler:

Mr. Graham.

Ted Quinn:

Glad to meet you. My friend, Mr. Robertson.

Graham:

Oh, yes. How do you do?

Arthur A. Robertson:

Nice to meet you. I'll see you later.

Ted Quinn:

No, stay. I'll only be five minutes.

Arthur A. Robertson:

But I ought to get back to my office.

Ted Quinn:

(laughs) I'm still the president, Arthur, stay. I want to feel the support of your opposition.

Arthur A. Robertson:

(laughs)

Ted Quinn:

I'll have to be quick, Mr. Graham. Will you sit down.

Graham:

Well I have a few questions about your earlier life and background. I understand your father was one of the early labor organizers in Chicago?

Ted Quinn:

Mr. Graham, I'm resigning.

Graham:

Beg your pardon?

Ted Quinn:

Resigning, I said.

Graham:

From the presidency? I don't understand.

Ted Quinn:

I don't believe in giant business, or giant government, or giant anything. And the laugh is, no man has done more to make GE the giant it is today.

Graham:

(laughs) Well now. I think this takes us off the financial section and onto the front page. But-but- but tell me, tell me, how does a man with your ideas rise so high in a great corporation like this? How did you get into GE?

Ted Quinn:

Well it's a long story, but I'd love to tell it. Started out studying law at night and working as a clerk in a factory that manufactured bulbs for auto headlights. See, in those days they had 40 or 50 makes of car and all different specifications for the light bulbs. Now say you get an order for 5,000 lamps. The manufacturing process was not too accurate so you had to make 8 or 9,000 to come out with 5,000 perfect ones. The result, though, was that we had hundred of thousands of

perfectly good lamps left over at the end of the year.

Ted Quinn:

So one night on my own time I went through the records and did some simple calculations and came up with a new average. My figures showed that to get 5,000 bulbs, we only had to make 6,200 instead of 8,000. The result was that company saved \$130,000 in one year. So the boss and I became very friendly and one day he says, "I'm selling out to General Electric." But he couldn't tell whether they'd keep me on. So he says to me, "Ted, tell you what we do. They're coming up from Wall Street, these bankers, you see, and I'm going to let you pick them up at the depot." Figuring I'd be the first to meet them and might draw their attention and they'd rehire me, you see.

Ted Quinn:

Well I was just this hick town kid, you know, about to meet these great, big, juicy Wall Street bankers. I tell you I hardly slept all night trying to figure out how to make an impression. And just

toward dawn, it was during breakfast, and I suddenly thought of that wall.

Ted Quinn:

The factory had this brick wall a block long. No windows, two stories high, just a tremendous wall of bricks. And it went through my mind that one of them might ask me how many bricks were in that wall. 'Cause I could answer any question about the company except that. So I got over to the plant as quick as I could, multiplied the vertical and horizontal bricks and got the number.

Ted Quinn:

Well, these three bankers arrive and I get them into the boss's limousine and we ride. Nobody asks me anything. Three of them in those big fur-lined coats and not one goddamn syllable.

Anyway, we round the corner and that's when one of them turned to me and say, "Mr. Quinn, how many bricks do you suppose is that wall?" And by God, I told him. Well he wouldn't believe it. Got out and counted himself. And it broke the ice, you see. And one thing led to another, they

made me manager of the plant. And that's how I got into GE.

Graham:

But what are your plans? Will you join another company or...

Ted Quinn:

No. I've been tickling the idea I might set up an advisory service for small business. Say a fella has a concept. I could teach him how to develop and market it because I know all that. And maybe I could help to keep those individuals coming because with this terrible depression, you hear it everywhere now. An individual man is not worth a bag of peanuts.

Ted Quinn:

I don't know the answers, Mr. Graham, but I sure as hell know the question. How do you keep everything that's big from swallowing everything that's small? 'Cause when that happens, God Almighty, it's not going to be much fun.

Graham:

Well thanks very much. Good d- good day, Mr. Robinson. (laughs) I must say...

Ted Quinn:

He was not massively overwhelmed, was he?

Arthur A. Robertson:

He heard the gentle clip-clop of the horse and buggy coming down the road.

Ted Quinn:

All right, then, damn it! Maybe what you ought to be looking into, Arthur is horseshoes.

Arthur A. Robertson:

Well you never did do things in a small way. This is unquestionably the world record for the shortest presidency in corporate history.

Ted Quinn:

She ain't scared to show it. She don't care who knows it. My baby just cares for me.

Rose Baum:

Who would believe it? You look out the window in the middle of a fine October day and there's a dozen college graduates with advanced degrees playing ball in the street like children. And it gets harder and harder to remember when life seemed to have so much purpose. When you couldn't wait for the morning.

Lee Baum:

At Cornell, there's no tuition fee at all if you enroll in bacteriology.

Rose Baum:

Free tuition?

Lee Baum:

Maybe they're short of bacteriologists.

Rose Baum:

Would you like that?

Lee Baum:

Bacteriology.

Rose Baum:

Hm. (laughs) Must be awful. Anything else free?

Lee Baum:

It's the only one I've seen.

Rose Baum:

I've got to finish this book before tomorrow. I'm overdue 14 cents on it.

Lee Baum:

What is it?

Rose Baum:

Coronet by Manuel Komroff. It's about this royal crown that gets stolen and lost and found again and lost again for generations. It's supposed to be literature but I don't know. It's very enjoyable.

Lee Baum:

Ma?

Rose Baum:

Hm?

Lee Baum:

I- I guess it's too late to apply for this year, anyway. Do you think so?

Rose Baum:

I imagine so, dear. For this year.

Lee Baum:

Okay, Ma.

Rose Baum:

I feel so terrible. All those years we were throwing money around and now when you need it...

Lee Baum:

That's okay. I think maybe I'll try looking for a job but I'm not sure whether to look under help wanted male, or boy wanted.

Rose Baum:

Boy. Don't be frightened, darling. You're going to be wonderful.

Sidney Margolies:

( singing)

Fanny Margolies:

Sidney. Sidney. Sidney, I have to talk to you.  
Sidney, stop that for a minute.

Sidney Margolies:

Ma, look, it's only July. If I was still in high school it would still be my summer vacation.

Fanny Margolies:

And if I was queen of Romania I would have free rent. You graduated, Sidney, this is not summer vacation.

Sidney Margolies:

Mama, it's useless to go to employment agencies. There's grown men there, engineers, college graduates. They're willing to take anything. If I could write one hit song like this, just one, we wouldn't have to worry again. Let me have July, just July. See if I can do it. Because that man was serious, he's a good friend of the waiter who works where Bing Crosby's manager eats. He could give him any song I write and if Crosby just sang it one time.

Fanny Margolies:

I want to talk to you about Doris.

Sidney Margolies:

What Doris?

Fanny Margolies:

Doris. Doris from downstairs. I've been talking to her mother. She likes you, Sidney.

Sidney Margolies:

Who?

Fanny Margolies:

Her mother, Mrs. Gross. She's crazy about you.

Sidney Margolies:

Oh.

Fanny Margolies:

She says all Doris does is talk about you.

Sidney Margolies:

What is she talking about me for?

Fanny Margolies:

(laughs) No, nice things. She likes you.

Sidney Margolies:

(laughs) Doris? She's 13.

Fanny Margolies:

She'll be 14 in December. Now, listen to me.

Sidney Margolies:

What, Ma?

Fanny Margolies:

It's all up to you, Sidney, I want you to make up your own mind, but Papa's never going to get off his back again and after Lucille's wedding we can forget about her salary. Mrs. Gross says being she's a widow, you know, and with her goiter and everything...

Sidney Margolies:

What?

Fanny Margolies:

If you like Doris, only if you like her, and you would agree to get married when she's 18 about

or 17 even. If you would agree to it now, we could have this apartment rent-free starting next month.

Sidney Margolies:  
Forever?

Fanny Margolies:  
Of course. You would be the husband. It would be your house. You'd move downstairs with that grand piano and the tile shower. I even think if you'd agree, she's throw in the three months back rent that we owe. I- I wouldn't even be surprised you could take over the bakery.

Sidney Margolies:  
The bakery? For God's sake, Mama, I'm a composer.

Fanny Margolies:  
Now listen to me.

Sidney Margolies:  
But how can I be a baker?

Fanny Margolies:

Sidney, dear, did you ever once look at that girl?

Sidney Margolies:

Why should I look at her?

Fanny Margolies:

Because she's a beauty. I wouldn't have mentioned it otherwise. Look, look out the window down on the street there. Look, look at that nose. Look at her hands. You see those beautiful little white hands? You don't find hands like that everywhere.

Sidney Margolies:

But Ma, listen, if you just leave me alone for July and if I write one hit song I know I can do it, Mama.

Fanny Margolies:

Okay, Sidney, we're behind \$180. August 1st, we're out on the streets. So write a hit, dear. I only hope that four or five years from now you don't accidentally run into Doris Gross somewhere and fall in love with her. After we all died from exposure.

Sidney Margolies:

But Ma, even if I agree, supposing next year or the year after I- I meet some other girl and I really like her.

Fanny Margolies:

All right, and supposing you marry that girl. And the year after you meet another girl you like better. What are you going to do, get married every year? But I only wanted you to know the situation. I'll close the door, everything will be quiet. Write a big hit, Sidney.

Sidney Margolies:

(singing)

Doris Gross:

(singing)

Sidney Margolies:

Gee, you're really terrific at that, Doris.

Arthur A. Robertson:

I guess the most shocking thing is what I see from the window of my Riverside Drive apartment. It's Calcutta on the Hudson. Thousands of people

living in cardboard boxes right next to that beautiful drive. It is like an army encampment down the length of Manhattan Island. At night, you see their campfires flickering and some nights I go down and walk among them. Remarkable the humor they still have. But of course people still blame themselves rather than the government. But there's never been a society that hasn't had a clock running on it, and you can't help wondering how long. How long will they stand this?

Arthur A. Robertson:

So now Roosevelt's got in and I'm thinking, "Boy, he'd better move. He'd better move fast." And you can't help it, the first thing every night when I get home I go to the window and look down at those fires. The flames reflecting off the river through the night.

Rose Baum:

Goodbye, darling. This is going to be a good day, I know it.

Moe Baum:

I think you're right. Goodbye.

Rose Baum:

Don't squeeze your lunch, Lee. I put in some cookies. And listen, it doesn't mean you can never go to college.

Lee Baum:

Oh, I don't mind, Ma. Anyway, I like it around machines. I'm lucky I got the job.

Rose Baum:

All the years we had so much and now when you need it.

Lee Baum:

See ya. I thought you left a long time ago.

Moe Baum:

Eh, I'll walk your way. Good job?

Lee Baum:

It's okay. (laughs) I can't believe they picked me.

Moe Baum:

Good. How much money you got, Lee?

Lee Baum:

Money have I got?

Moe Baum:

I mean, right now.

Lee Baum:

Oh, well about 35 cents. I'm okay.

Moe Baum:

Could I have a quarter? So I can get downtown?

Lee Baum:

Oh, sure, Pa.

Moe Baum:

You got your lunch. I'll need a hot dog later.

Lee Baum:

It's okay. I have a dollar in my drawer. Should I?

Moe Baum:

No, don't go back. Don't, uh, mention it. Huh?

Lee Baum:

Oh, no.

Moe Baum:

She worries.

Lee Baum:

I know. We went down to the subway together and it was hard to look at one another. So we pretended that nothing had happened. But something had. It was like I started to support my father. And why that should've made me feel so happy I don't know, but it did. And to cheer him up I began to talk and before I knew it I was inventing a fantastic future. I said I'd be going to college in no more than a year. At most two. And then I'd straighten out my mind and become a student. And then I'd not only get a job at a newspaper, but I'd have my own column nonetheless. By the time we got to 42nd Street, the Depression was practically over. And in a funny way, it was. In here. Even though I knew we had a long, bad time ahead of us. And so, like most people, I waited with that crazy kind of expectation that comes when there is no hope. Waited for the dream to come back from wherever it had gone to hide.

Speaker:

Intermission.

Rose Baum:

(music) (singing) He loves and she loves and they love so. But this piano is not leaving this house. Jewelry, yes. But nobody hauks this dear, darling piano.

Rose Baum:

(singing) So why can't you love and I love, too?

Rose Baum:

The crazy ideas people get. Mr. Warsaw, on our block, to make a little money, he started a racetrack in his kitchen with cockroaches. Keeps them in matchboxes with their names written on them. Alvin, Murray, Irving. They bet nickels, dimes. Oh, What a show, that Funny Face.

Rose Baum:

(singing) It's wonderful, it's marvelous, that you should care for me.

Rose Baum:

The years go by and I don't get to see a show. And Brooklyn drifts further and further into the Atlantic. Manhattan becomes a foreign country and a year can go by without ever going there.

Rose Baum:

( singing) It's awful nice, it's paradise, it's what I love to see.

Rose Baum:

Wherever you look, there's a contest. Kelloggs, Post Toasties, win 5000, win 10,000. I guess I ought to try, but the winners are always in Indiana somehow. I only pray to God, our health holds up because one filling and you gotta lower the thermostat for a month.

Rose Baum:

Sing. (singing) Do, do, do what you done, done, done before, baby.

Rose Baum:

I must go to the library. I must start taking out some good books again. I must stop getting so stupid. I don't see anything, I don't hear anything except money, money, money.

Arthur A. Robertson:

Looking back, of course you can see there were two sides to it with the banks foreclosing right and left, I picked up some first class properties for a song. I made more money in the 30's than ever before. Or since. But I knew a generation was coming of age who would never feel this sense of opportunity.

Lee Baum:

After a lot of jobs and saving, I did get to the university and it was a quiet island in the stream. Two pairs of socks and a shirt, plus a good shirt and a mackinaw and maybe a part-time job in the library, and you could live like a king and never see cash. So, there was a distinct reluctance to graduate into that world out there where you knew nobody wanted you.

Lee Baum:

Joey, is it possible?

Joe:

What?

Lee Baum:

You're a dentist.

Ralph:

Well, I hope things are better when you get out, Lee.

Lee Baum:

You decide what to do?

Ralph:

There's supposed to be a small aircraft plant still working in Louisville.

Lee Baum:

Too bad you picked propellers for a specialty.

Ralph:

Aww. They'll make airplanes again, as soon as there's a war.

Lee Baum:

How could there be another war?

Joe:

As long as there's capitalism, baby.

Ralph:

They'll always be war. You know, according to the bible and if not I'll probably go into the ministry.

Lee Baum:

I never knew you were religious.

Ralph:

I'm sort of religious. They pay pretty good, you know. You get your house and clothing allowance.

Joe:

Don't forget to read Karl Marx, Lee and if you're ever in the neighborhood with a toothache look me up. I'll keep an eye out for your bi-line.

Lee Baum:

Oh, I don't expect the newspaper job. Papers are closing all over the place. Drop me a card if you open an office.

Joe:

I am probably going to be in my girls, father's basement. He promised to dig the floor out deeper so I can stand up.

Lee Baum:

(laughs) What about equipment?

Joe:

I figure 2, 3 years I'll be able to open. I can make a down payment on a used drill. Come by, I'll put back those teeth Ohio State knocked out.

Lee Baum:

I sure will. So long Rudy.

Rudy:

You might still be seeing me around next semester.

Joe:

You staying on campus?

Rudy:

I might for the sake of my root canals. If I just take one university course I am still entitled to the health service. Could get my canals finished.

Lee Baum:

You mean there is a course in the Lit school you haven't taken?

Rudy:

Yeah, I just found out about it. Roman band instruments.

Joe:

( laughing). You're kidding.

Rudy:

No, in the classics department. Roman band instruments. See I've still got three big ones to go on this side.

Group:

(laughing).

Rudy:

Well, if you really face it, where am I running? Chicago is loaded with anthropologist. Here the university is like my mother. I've got free rent, wash dishes for my meals, get my teeth fixed. And God knows I might pick up the paper one morning and there is an ad. Help Wanted, handsome young college graduate, good teeth, must be thoroughly acquainted with Roman band instruments.

Group:  
(laughing).

Ralph:  
Well, I'll keep looking for your bi-line anyway,  
Lee.

Lee Baum:  
No, I doubt it. But I might angle the job on a  
Mississippi Paddle boat when I get out.

Rudy:  
They still run those?

Lee Baum:  
Yeah. There's a few. I'd like to retrace Mark  
Twain's voyages.

Rudy:  
Well, if you run into Huckleberry Finn -

Lee Baum:  
I'll give him your regards.

Ralph:  
Hey, beat Ohio State kid.

Joe:

So long Lee.

Lee Baum:

So long Joe.

Lee Baum:

How scary and beautiful the Mississippi is. How do they manage to live? Every town has a bank boarded up and all those skinny men sitting on the sidewalks with their backs against the storefront. It's all stopped, like a magic spell. And the anger, the anger when they were handing out the meat and beans to the hungry and the maggots wriggling out of the beef and that man pointing his rifle at the butcher. The man and the fresh meat the government had paid him to hand out. How could this have happened? Is Marx right? Paper says 12 executives in tobacco made more than 30,000 farmers who raised it. How long can they accept this? The anger has a smell. It hangs in the air wherever people gather. Fights suddenly break out and simmer down. Is this when revolution comes? And why not? How would Mark Twain write what I have seen?

Armed deputies guarding corn fields and whole families sitting beside the road staring at that food, which nobody can buy and is rotting on the stalk. It's insane.

Rose Baum:

But how can he become a sports writer if he is a communist?

Joe:

Florist, florist. Buy a flower, buy a flower miss? (singing) There's one thing roadside asking you to do, catch a bus ride up fifth avenue in New York City. In New York City really got to know your line.

Isabel:

Hello honey.

Joe:

Can you start calling me Joe? It's less anonymous.

Isabel:

Whatever you say. You couldn't come later. Hey could you? I was just ready to go to sleep. I had a long night.

Joe:

I can't. I got to catch the girls before they get to the office. They buy a flower from me every morning for their desks and later I'm too tired.

Isabel:

Hey, ain't that uncomfortable. Two pairs of pants.

Joe:

It's freezing cold on that subway platform. The winds like the Gobi Desert. The only problem is when you go out to pee it takes twice as long.

Isabel:

Selling books too, heh.

Joe:

No, I'm reading that. Trying not to forget the English language. All I hear all day is Shit, Fuck and Piss.

Isabel:

(laughing).

Joe:

I keep meaning to tell you Isabelle, it is so relaxing to talk to you, especially when you don't understand about 70% of what I'm saying.

Isabel:

Hey (laughing).

Joe:

In here I feel my sanity coming back to a certain extent. Down in the subway all day I really wonder, maybe some kind of lunacy has taken over. People stand there waiting for the train, talking to themselves and loud with gestures. And the number of men who come up behind and feel my ass. What scares me, see, is that I'm getting too nervous to pick up a drill. If I ever get to practice dentistry at all. I mean. The city is crazy. A hunchback yesterday suddenly comes up to me. Apropos of nothing and he starts yelling, You will not find one word about democracy in the constitution. This is a Christian republic. Nobody laughed. The Nazi swastika is blossoming out all over the toothpaste ads and it seems to be getting worse.

Joe:

There's a guy on 48th street and 8th avenue selling two hotdogs for seven cents. What can he make?

Isabel:

Two for seven, Jesus.

Joe:

I tell you I get the feeling every once in a while that some bright morning millions of people are going to come pouring out of the buildings and just...I don't know what, Kill each other? Or only the Jews? Or just maybe sit down on the sidewalk and cry.

Isabel:

What is that book, It's about family?

Joe:

No, it's just called the Origin of the Family and Private Property in the State by Friederic Engles. Marxism.

Isabel:

What's that?

Joe:

Well, it's the idea that all of our relationships are basically ruled by money.

Isabel:

Oh, right. Yeah.

Joe:

No, it's not what you think.

Isabel:

It's a whole book about that?

Joe:

It's about socialism where the girls would all have jobs so they wouldn't have to do this. See.

Isabel:

Oh, but what would the guys do though?

Joe:

Well, like for instance if I had money to open an office I would probably get married very soon.

Isabel:

Yeah, but I get married guys and I even get two dentist that you brought me. Burney and Allen and they've got offices too.

Joe:

You don't understand. He shows that underneath our ideals it's all economics between people and it shouldn't be.

Isabel:

What should it be?

Joe:

Well, you know, like love.

Isabel:

Oh. That's nice. Hey, you think I could read it?

Joe:

Sure. Try. I'd like your reaction. I like you early Isabelle, you look so fresh. Gives me an illusion.

Isabel:

I'm sorry if I'm tired.

Joe:

Say. Did Burney finish the filling?

Isabel:

Yeah, he polished yesterday.

Joe:

Open. Burney's good. I told you we were in the same class. Say hello when you see him again.

Isabel:

He said he might come after 5:00. He always says to give you his best.

Joe:

Give him my best too.

Isabel:

Till you I never had so many dentist.

Banks:

(singing) I can't get a job. Can't get no grub.  
Backbone and navel doing the belly rub. Waiting  
on Roosevelt. Roosevelt.

Banks:

Sometime you get the rumor they be hiring in New York City. So, we all went to New York City, but there wasn't nothing in New York City. So, we head for Lima, Ohio. Detroit, Michigan. Duluth, Minnesota. Go down Baltimore. Alabama or Decatur, Illinois. But anywhere you go there's always a jail. I was in a chain gang in Georgia picking cotton for four months just for hoboeing on a train. That was 1935. Summertime. When they set me free they gave me 35 cents.

(laughing) Yes sir, 35 cents is what they gave me. Picking cotton four months against my will.

Banks:

I still hear that train, that long low whistle.  
whooo-hooo.

Rose Baum:

(music) Who told you, you could take this piano?  
No, No, No. Stop it. Please. How stupid it all is.  
How stupid. Oh my dear Lee wherever you are  
believe in something, anything. But believe.

Isaac:

You been working the river long? I ain't seen you before, have I?

Lee Baum:

No. This is my first trip down river. I am from New York City. I'm just kind of looking around the country talking to people.

Isaac:

What you looking around for?

Lee Baum:

Nothing. Just trying to figure out what's happening. You ever hear of Mark Twain?

Isaac:

He from around here?

Lee Baum:

Well, long time ago yeah. He was a story writer.

Isaac:

I ain't seen him around here. You ask at the Post Office.

Lee Baum:

No, but I might. I'm kinda surprised you can get 15 cents a slice down here these days.

Isaac:

Oh, white folks loves watermelon. Think its as bad as this up north.

Lee Baum:

Probably not quite. I sure wouldn't want to be one of our people down here, especially with this depression.

Isaac:

Mister. If I was to tell you the Gods honest truth, the main thing about the depression is that it finally hit the white people because those folks ain't never had nothing else. Well now, here come the big main.

Lee Baum:

He trouble?

Isaac:

He anything he wants to be mister, he's the sheriff.

Sheriff:

Issac.

Isaac:

Yes sir?

Sheriff:

Sit down.

Isaac:

Yes sir.

Lee Baum:

I'm off the boat.

Sheriff:

You don't bother me boy, relax.

Isaac:

Looks like rain.

Sheriff:

Hard to know.

Isaac:

Always is in Louisiana. Anything I can do for you sheriff.

Sheriff:

Read the papers today?

Isaac:

Aww. I couldn't read my name if an airplane wrote it in the sky. Sheriff, you know that.

Sheriff:

Well, my second cousin, Allen, the State Senator. The governor just appointed him. He's gonna help run the state police. He's coming down to dinner Friday night over to my house, bringing his wife and two daughters. I'm gonna try to talk to Allen about a job on the state police. They still paying the state police see.

Isaac:

Hmm-mm-hmm (affirmative). Well, that'd be nice, won't it.

Sheriff:

Isaac, I'd like you to cook me up some of that magical fried chicken, around 6:00 Friday night okay? I'll pick it up.

Isaac:

Hmm-mm-hmm (affirmative).

Sheriff:

That'd be for eight people. Let's see, my brother and his wife are coming over too. Cause I am to give Allan a little spread there, get him talking real good, you know.

Isaac:

Hmm-mm-hmm (affirmative).

Sheriff:

What's that gonna cost me for eight people?

Isaac:

\$10.

Sheriff:

\$10.

Isaac:

Yeah, that's right sheriff.

Sheriff:

I want to show you something here, Issac. My radio, you see.

Isaac:

Does it play?

Sheriff:

Sure. Plays real good. Now, I give \$29.95 for that two years ago.

Isaac:

Aww, plug it in.

Sheriff:

Go ahead, sure. You sure painted this place up real nice. Like a real restaurant. You oughta thank the lord Isaac.

Isaac:

I sure do. The lord and fried chicken.

Sheriff:

You know. The county ain't paid nobody at all in three months.

Isaac:

Yeah, I know. Where yeah switch it on.

Lee Baum:

Just turn the knob. There you go. There all paying the state and I figure if I can get Allen to put me on -

Isaac:

I can't hardly hear it.

Sheriff:

Well, Isaac. Gotta get the aerial out. You give me eight fried chicken dinners and I'll let ya hold this for collateral. Okay? Now here we go now.

Roosevelt:

Suspicion tied to ill will and intolerance gathered darkly in many places in our own land we enjoy indeed a fullness of life.

Sheriff:

Nice fat chickens here, don't give me any little.

Isaac:

Whose that talking?

Roosevelt:

Greater than that of most nations, but the rush of modern civilization itself has raised for us new difficulty.

Sheriff:

Sounds like somebody I know.

Isaac:

Hush. That's Roosevelt ain't it. Sure. That's the president.

Sheriff:

How bout it? We got a deal or not?

Roosevelt:

New problems which must be solved if we are to preserve in the United States the political and economic freedom for which Washington and Jefferson planned and fought. We seek not merely

to make government a mechanical implement, but to give it the vibrant personal character that is the embodiment of human charity. We are poor indeed if this nation cannot afford to lift from every recess of American life the dark fear of the unemployed, that they are not needed in the world. We cannot afford to accumulate a deficit in the books of human fortitude.

Sidney Margolies:

Music. What's the matter? Boy, you can change quicker than -

Doris Gross:

I can't help it. It keeps coming back to me.

Sidney Margolies:

How can you let a dope like Francey bother you like this?

Doris Gross:

Because she is spreading it all over the class and I still don't understand how you could have said a thing like that?

Sidney Margolies:

Hun, all I said is that if we ever got married that we would probably live downstairs. Does that mean that that is the reason we would get married? Francey is just jealous.

Doris Gross:

I just wish you hadn't said that.

Sidney Margolies:

You mean, you think I'd do a thing like that for an apartment. What must you think of me?

Doris Gross:

It's just that I love you so much.

Sidney Margolies:

If I could only sell a song or even pass the Post Office exam then I'd have my own money and all this garbage would stop.

Doris Gross:

I said I love you. Why don't you say something?

Sidney Margolies:

I love you. I love you, but I tell... you know what I think?

Doris Gross:

What?

Sidney Margolies:

Honestly, I think we ought to talk about seeing other people for a while.

Doris Gross:

What other people?

Sidney Margolies:

Going out. You're still a little young honey and even at my age it's probably not a good idea for us if we never even went out with somebody else.

Doris Gross:

Well, Who do you want to take out?

Sidney Margolies:

Nobody.

Doris Gross:

Then what do you mean?

Sidney Margolies:

Well, it's not that I want to.

Doris Gross:

Yeah, but who?

Sidney Margolies:

I don't know like maybe, what's her name?

Margie Gance's sister.

Doris Gross:

You mean Esther Gance with the -

Sidney Margolies:

Then not her.

Isaac:

You want to take out, Esther Gance?

Sidney Margolies:

I'm not saying necessarily. But for instance, you could go out with George.

Doris Gross:

Which Georgy?

Sidney Margolies:

Georgy Creager.

Doris Gross:

Huh. You're putting me with Georgy Creager and you go out with Esther Gance.

Sidney Margolies:

It was only an example.

Doris Gross:

But Georgy Creager.

Sidney Margolies:

Forget Georgy Creager. Make it..alright, you pick somebody then.

Doris Gross:

Well, how about Morris?

Sidney Margolies:

What Morris? You mean Morris from -

Doris Gross:

Yeah, Morris from the shoe store.

Sidney Margolies:

Really.

Doris Gross:

Well, didn't he go a year to city college.

Sidney Margolies:

No, he did not. He went one semester and he still walks around with a comb in his pocket. I think maybe we just better wait.

Doris Gross:

I don't know. Maybe it would be a good idea. At least til I'm a little older.

Sidney Margolies:

No, we'll wait. We'll think it over.

Doris Gross:

But, you know.

Sidney Margolies:

We'll think it over hun.

Doris Gross:

Play sitting around.

Sidney Margolies:

It's not any good.

Doris Gross:

What do you mean? It's your greatest. Please.

Sidney Margolies:

(singing) You've got me sitting around, just watching shadows on the wall. You've got me sitting around and all my hopes beyond recall.

Doris Gross:

(singing) I want to hear the words of love. I want to feel your lips on mine. Days and nights there in your arms.

Sidney Margolies:

(singing) Instead I'm sitting around and all the world is passing by. You've got me sitting around like I was only born to cry.

Doris Gross:

(singing) When will I know the words of love.  
Will I feel your lips on mine.

Sidney Margolies:

(Instead) Instead of sitting around.

Doris Gross:

(Instead) Sitting around.

Sidney Margolies:

(sitting around) Sitting around.

Ryan:

All right everybody I'm doing the best I can. One  
at a time. Arthur Clayton?

Moe Baum:

I don't understand this. I distinctly read in the  
paper that anyone that wants to work can go  
direct to WPA and they fix you up with a job.

Lee Baum:

They changed it. You can only get a WPA job  
know if you get on relief first.

Moe Baum:

So, this is not the WPA.

Lee Baum:

I told you pop, this is the relief office.

Moe Baum:

Like, welfare.

Lee Baum:

Look if it embarrasses you.

Moe Baum:

Look if it has to be done, it has to be done. Now, let me go over it again. What do I say?

Lee Baum:

You refuse to let me live in the house. We don't get along.

Moe Baum:

Why can't you live at home?

Lee Baum:

If I could live at home I don't need relief, that's the rule.

Moe Baum:

So, I can't stand the sight of you.

Lee Baum:

Right.

Moe Baum:

So, you live with your friend in a rooming house.

Lee Baum:

Correct.

Moe Baum:

There gonna believe that.

Lee Baum:

Why not? I left a few clothes over there.

Moe Baum:

All this for \$22 a week.

Lee Baum:

What I'm gonna do? Even old time newspaper men are out of work. See if I can get on with the WPA Writer's Project at least I get experience if a

real job comes along. I've explained this a dozen times Pop. There's nothing complicated.

Moe Baum:

I'm just trying to get used to it. All right. We shouldn't look too friendly, huh?

Lee Baum:

That's the idea.

Moe Baum:

I don't like you and you can't stand the sight of me.

Lee Baum:

That's it.

Moe Baum:

So, he laughs.

Ryan:

Matthew R. Bush!

Moe Baum:

Looks like a butler.

Lee Baum:

Probably was.

Moe Baum:

Ugh.

Arthur A. Robertson:

I did a lot of walking back in those days and the contrast were startling. Along the west side of Manhattan you had eight or 10 of the worlds greatest ocean liners tied up. I recall the SS Manhattan, the Berengaria, the United States. Most of them would never sail again, but at the same time they were putting up the Empire State Building. Highest in the world. But with whole streets and avenues of empty stores who would ever rent space in it?

Moe Baum:

Lee, what will you do if they give you a pick and shovel job?

Lee Baum:

I'll take it.

Moe Baum:

You'll dig holes in the streets?

Lee Baum:

It's no disgrace dad.

Arthur A. Robertson:

It was incredible to me how long it was lasting. I would never, never have believed that we could not recover before this. The years were passing. A whole generation was withering in the best years of its life.

Kapush:

What can you expect from a country that puts a Frankfurter on the Supreme Court? Felix, the Frankfurter, look it up.

Dugan:

Get back in the clock you cuckoo.

Kapush:

Whose talking to me?

Irene:

Hey now, don't mess with me mister.

Dugan:

You tell em lady, you tell em.

Ryan:

We gonna have another riot folks. Is that what we're gonna have? Mr Capush, I told you three days running now, if you live in the Bronx you gotta apply in Bronx.

Kapush:

It's all right. I can wait.

Ryan:

Leave him alone will ya. He's a little upset in his mind.

Dugan:

He's a fascist. I seen him down Union Square plenty of times.

Ryan:

Oh Jesus, here we go again.

Irene:

Getting on to 10:00 Mr. Ryan.

Ryan:

I've done the best I can Irene.

Irene:

That's what the good Lord said when he made that jackass, but he decided to knuckle down and try harder. People been thrown out on the sidewalk. Mattresses. Pots and pans. And everything else they own. Right on 138th street and they going back in their apartments today or we gonna raise us some real hell.

Ryan:

I've got no more appropriations to you until the first of the month and that's it Irene.

Irene:

Mr. Ryan you ain't talking to me. You talking to Local 45 of the workers Alliance and you know what that means.

Dugan:

Yeah. Communist party.

Irene:

That's right mister. And they don't mess. So, Mr Ryan why don't you get on your phone and call Washington. And while you're at it you can remind Mr. Roosevelt that I done swang 139th street for him in the last election and if he want it swung again he better get cracking.

Dugan:

See, communist party.

Ryan:

Holy Jesus.

Lee Baum:

I was told to bring my father.

Ryan:

What?

Lee Baum:

Yesterday, you told me -

Ryan:

Get off my back all of you.

Dugan:

This country is gonna end up on top of the trees  
throwing coconuts at each other.

Moe Baum:

I hope I can get out by 11:00. I got an  
appointment with a buyer.

Toland:

Boy, oh boy. Look at this, Helen Hayes gonna put  
on 40 pounds to play the Victoria Regina.

Moe Baum:

Whose that?

Toland:

Queen of England.

Moe Baum:

She was so fat?

Toland:

Victoria.

Toland:

I picked up Helen Hayes when I had my cab. Very  
small girl and that Adolphe Menjou once, he was

small too. I even had Al Smith once, way back before he was governor. He was real small.

Moe Baum:

Maybe your cab was extra large.

Toland:

What do you mean? I had a regular Ford.

Moe Baum:

You lost it?

Toland:

What are you gonna do? The town is walking. I paid \$500 for a new Ford, including bumpers and a spare. Thank God. At least I got into the housing project. It's nice and reasonable.

Moe Baum:

What do you pay?

Toland:

\$19.50 a month. Yeah, it sounds like a lot, but we got three nice rooms. Providing I get a little help here. What's your line?

Moe Baum:

I sell on commission right now. I used to have my own business.

Toland:

Used to. Whoever you talk to, I used to. If they don't do something I tell ya one of these days this used to be a country.

Kapush:

Ignorance, Ignorance. People don't know facts. Greatest public library system in the entire world and nobody goes in, but Jews.

Irene:

Solidarity folks. Black and white together. That's what we got to have. Join the Workers Alliance, 10 cents a month and you get yourself some solidarity.

Kapush:

I challenge anybody to find the word Democracy in the Constitution? This is the republic. 'Demos' is the Greek word for mob.

Dugan:

Cuckoo, cuckoo.

Kapush:

Come to get my money and the bank is closed up,  
\$4000 up the flue. Thirteen years in hardware,  
saving by the week.

Dugan:

Mental diarrhea.

Kapush:

Mob-ocracy. Give me. Give me. Give me. All they  
know.

Dugan:

So, what are you doing here then?

Kapush:

Roosevelt was sworn in on a dutch bible.  
Anybody know that. Betcha didn't know that, did  
ya?

Irene:

You giving me a headache mister.

Kapush:

I got nothing against coloreds. Colored never took my store away. Here's by bank book. See that. Bank of the United States. See that, \$4610.31 cents right? Whose got that month? Saving 13 years by the week, whose got my money?

Arthur Clayton:

I think there's something the matter here.

Irene:

Hey, hey Mr. Bush.

Ryan:

Myrna call the ambulance.

Lee Baum:

You all right.

Irene:

Grace, you got anything in that baby bottle?

Grace:

Ain't much left there.

Irene:

Okay, now open your mouth mister. There look at that, see. Man is starving.

Lee Baum:

Look, take this dime for God's sake. Why don't you send out get him a bottle of milk.

Irene:

Lucy?

Lucy:

Here I am Irene.

Irene:

Go down the corner, bring a bottle of milk and a couple of straws honey. You in bad shape mister. Why'd you wait so long to get on relief?

Bush:

Well, I just don't like the idea ya know.

Irene:

Yeah, you're a real bourgeoisie. Let me tell you something.

Bush:

I'm a chemist.

Irene:

I believe it too. You're so educated and you'd sooner die than save brother. This man is starving Mr. Ryan.

Ryan:

What are you, a medical doctor now Irene? I called the ambulance. Now, don't start making an issue will ya. Arthur Clayton.

Arthur Clayton:

I'm Clayton.

Ryan:

You're not eligible for relief. You've got furniture and valuables don't you?

Arthur Clayton:

But nothing I could realize anything on.

Ryan:

Is this your address, Gramercy Park South.

Arthur Clayton:

That doesn't mean a thing. I haven't really eat---

Ryan:

Gramercy Park South?

Arthur Clayton:

That doesn't mean a thing. I haven't really eaten in a few days, actually.

Ryan:

Where do you get that kind of rent?

Arthur Clayton:

I haven't paid my rent in over eight months.

Ryan:

Forget it, mister. You've got valuables and furniture. I can't-

Arthur Clayton:

I'm very good at figures. I was in brokerage. I thought if I could get anything that required, say, statistics.

Irene:

Now, let me tell you people. Time has come to say brother. My husband pass away and leave me with three small children. No money. No work. I was about ready to stick my head in the cooking stove. Then, the city marshal come and take my chest of drawers, bed, and table, and leave me sitting on a old orange crate in the middle of the room.

Irene:

And it come over me, mister, come over me to get mean. And I got real mean. Go down in the street and start yelling and howling like a real mean woman. And the people crowd around the marshal truck, and 'fore you know it, that marshal turned himself around and go on back downtown empty handed.

Irene:

And that's when I see it. I see the solidarity, and I start to preach it up and down, because I got me a stick. And when I start pounding time with this stick, a whole lot of people starts to march,

keeping time. We shall not be moved. Ye. We shall in no wise be disturbed.

Irene:

Some days, I goes to court with my briefcase, raise hair with the judges. Every time I goes into court, the cops commence to holler, "Here comes that old lawyer woman." But all I got in here is some old newspaper and a bag of cayenne pepper, in case any cops start muscling me around. That hot pepper, that's hot cayenne pepper.

Irene:

And if the judge happen to be Catholic, I've got my rosary laying in there, and I kind of let that crucifix hang out so as they think I'm Catholic, too.

Lucy:

Irene, here's the milk.

Irene:

Give it here, Lucy. Now, drink it slow, mister. Slow. Slow.

Ryan:

Lee Baum?

Lee Baum:

Here. Okay, Dad. Let's go.

Ryan:

This your father?

Lee Baum:

Yes.

Ryan:

Where is he living now?

Lee Baum:

I don't live at home because-

Ryan:

Let him answer. Where is he living, Mr. Baum?

Moe Baum:

Well, he, he rents a room some place.

Ryan:

You're going to sit there and tell me you won't let him in the house?

Moe Baum:

I won't l- let him in. No.

Ryan:

You mean you're the kind of man, if he rang the bell, and you opened the door and saw him, you wouldn't let him inside?

Moe Baum:

Well, naturally, if he just wants to come in the house.

Lee Baum:

I don't want to live there.

Ryan:

I don't care what you want, fellow. You would let him in the house, right?

Moe Baum:

I can't stand this side of him.

Ryan:

Why? I saw you both sitting, talking together for the last two hours.

Moe Baum:

We weren't talking. We were arguing, fighting.

Ryan:

Fighting about what?

Moe Baum:

Who can remember? We were fighting. We're always fighting.

Ryan:

Look, Mr. Baum. You're employed, aren't you?

Moe Baum:

I'm employed. Sure, I'm employed. Here. See? Read it yourself. RH Macy. Right? Ladies' full length slip. Genuine Japanese silk. Hand embroidered with lace top and trimmings. 2.98. My boss makes four cents on these. I make a tenth of a cent. That's how I'm employed.

Ryan:

Mm. You'll let him in the house.

Moe Baum:

I will not let him in the house. He don't believe in anything.

Arthur A. Robertson:

Then and now, you have to wonder what really held it all together, and maybe it was simply the future. The people were still not ready to give it up. Like a god, it was always worshiped among us, and they could not yet turn their backs on it. Maybe it's that simple, because from any objective viewpoint, I don't understand why it held.

Group:

Flowers for sale. Flowers for sale. Flowers for sale.

Lee Baum:

Any girl with an apartment of her own was beautiful. She was one of the dialogue writers for the superman comic strip. Edie, can I sleep here tonight?

Edie:

Oh. Hi, Lee. Yeah. Sure. Let me finish, and I'll put a sheet on the couch. If you have any laundry, throw it in the sink. I'm going to wash later. Ugh. This is going to be a terrific sequence.

Lee Baum:

It's amazing to me how you can keep your mind on it.

Edie:

He's also a great teacher of class consciousness.

Lee Baum:

Superman?

Edie:

He stands for justice.

Lee Baum:

Oh. You mean under capitalism, you can't-

Edie:

Sure. The implications are terrific.

Lee Baum:

... You know, you're beautiful when you talk about politics. Your, your face lights up.

Edie:

Don't be such a bourgeoisie horse's ass. (laughs)  
I'll get your sheet.

Lee Baum:

Could I sleep in your bed tonight? I don't know what it is lately. I'm always lonely. Are you?

Edie:

Sometimes. But a person doesn't have to go to bed with people to be connected to mankind.

Lee Baum:

(laughs) You're right. I'm ashamed of myself.

Edie:

Why don't you join the party?

Lee Baum:

I guess I don't want to ruin my chances. I want to be a sports writer.

Edie:

You could write for the workers' sports page.

Lee Baum:

The Daily Workers' sports page?

Edie:

Then help improve it. Why are you so defeatist? Hundreds of people are joining the party every week.

Lee Baum:

I don't know why. Maybe I'm too skeptical or cynical. Like, when I was in Flint, Michigan, during the sit down strike, thought I'd write a feature story, all those thousands of men barricaded in the jam plant, the wives hoisting food up to the windows in baskets. It was like the French Revolution.

Lee Baum:

But when I got to talk to them as individuals, the prejudice, the ignorance. In the Ford plant, there was damn near a race war because some of the Negro workers didn't want to join the strike. It was murderous.

Edie:

Well, they're still backward. I know that.

Lee Baum:

No. They're normal. I really wonder if there's going to be time to save this country from itself. You ever wonder that? You do, don't you?

Edie:

You really want my answer?

Lee Baum:

(laughs) Yes.

Edie:

We're picketing the Italian consulate tomorrow to protest Mussolini sending Italian troops to the Spanish Civil War. Come. Do something. You love Hemingway so much. Read what he just said. One man alone is no fucking good. As decadent as he is, even he's learning.

Lee Baum:

Really, your face gets so beautiful

Edie:

Anyone can be beautiful if what they believe in is beautiful. I believe in my comrades. I believe in the Soviet Union. I believe in the working class and the peace of the whole world when socialism comes.

Lee Baum:

Boy. You really are wonderful. Look, now that I'm on relief, can I take you out to dinner? I'll pay. I mean-

Edie:

Why must you pay for me? Just because I'm a woman?

Lee Baum:

... Right. Forgot about that.

Edie:

I've got to finish this panel. I'll make up the couch in a minute. What about the writers project? You get in on that?

Lee Baum:

I think so. They're putting people on to write a WPA guide. It's going to be a detailed history of every section of the country. I might get sent up to the Lake Champlain district. Imagine. They're interviewing direct descendants of the soldiers who fought for the Battle of Fort Ticonderoga. Ethan Allen and the Green Mountain Boys?

Edie:

Oh. Yes. They beat the British up there.

Lee Baum:

It's a wonderful project, because people really don't know their own history.

Edie:

When there's socialism, everyone will.

Lee Baum:

Why don't you have Superman get laid? Or married even?

Edie:

He's much too busy. (laughs) Mm. Oh. What are you doing?

Lee Baum:

When you say the word socialism, your face gets so beautiful-

Eddie:

You're totally cynical, aren't you?

Lee Baum:

... Why?

Eddie:

You pretend to have a serious conversation when all you want is to jump in my bed. It's the same attitude you have to the auto workers.

Lee Baum:

I can't see the connection between the auto workers and-

Eddie:

Everything is connected. I have to ask you to leave.

Lee Baum:

... Eddie.

Edie:

You are not a good person.

Lee Baum:

She's right, too.

Rose Baum:

That endless Brooklyn July. That little wooden house baking in the heat. I never smelled an owl, but in July, the smell of that attic crept down the stairs, and to me, it smelled as dry and dusty as an owl. From Coney Island to Brooklyn Bridge, how many thousands of women waited out the afternoons dreaming at their cards and praying for luck? (laughs) Luck. Luck.

Doris Gross:

Sidney's finishing a beautiful new song, Aunt Rose.

Rose Baum:

Maybe this one'll be lucky for you, Doris. Why are you always in a bathrobe?

Doris Gross:

I'm only half a block away.

Rose Baum:

But you're so young. Why don't you get dressed and leave the block once in a while?

Fanny Margolies:

All my girls love it home, too.

Rose Baum:

Mm. Fanny, it's your turn, isn't it?

Fanny Margolies:

Mm. I'm trying to make up my mind.

Rose Baum:

Concentrate. Forget your dandruff for a minute.

Fanny Margolies:

It wasn't dandruff. It was a thread.

Rose Baum:

(laughs) Her dandruff is threads. It's an obsession.

Lucille:

I didn't tell you. This spring, she actually called me and my sisters to come and spend the day cleaning her house.

Fanny Margolies:

What's so terrible? We used to have the most marvelous times, the four of us, cleaning the house. It's turning into an oven in here.

Lucille:

I'm going to faint.

Rose Baum:

Don't faint. All the windows are open in the back of the house. We're supposed to be away.

Fanny Margolies:

But there's no draft, for Papa's sake.

Lucille:

Why couldn't you be away and you left a window open? Just don't answer the door.

Rose Baum:

I don't want to take the chance. This one is a professional collector. I've seen him do it. If a window's open, he tries to listen. They're merciless. I sent Stanislaus for lemons. We'll have cold lemonade. Play.

Fanny Margolies:

I can't believe they'd actually evict you, Rose.

Rose Baum:

You can't? Wake up, Fanny. It's a bank. May they choke after the fortune of money we kept in there all those years. Ask them for \$200 now, and they p-

Fanny Margolies:

Rose, dear. Come on. Something'll happen. You'll see. Moe's got to find something soon, a man so well known.

Lucille:

Couldn't he ask his mother for a little?

Rose Baum:

Oh. His mother says, "There's a depression going on." Meantime, you can go blind from the diamonds on her fingers, which he gave her. The rottenness of people. I tell you, the next time I start believing in anybody or anything, I hope my tongue is cut out.

Doris Gross:

Maybe Lee should come back and help out.

Rose Baum:

Never. Lee is going to think his own thoughts and face the facts. He's got nothing to learn from us. Let him help himself.

Lucille:

But to take up communism.

Rose Baum:

Lucille, what do you know about it? What does anybody know about it? The newspapers? The newspapers said the stock market will never come down again.

Lucille:

But they're against God, Aunt Rose.

Rose Baum:

Ugh. I'm overjoyed you got so religious, Lucille, but please, for God's sake, don't tell me about it again.

Fanny Margolies:  
I'll be right down.

Rose Baum:  
Oh. Now she's gone to pee on her finger for luck.

Fanny Margolies:  
All right. So I won't go. And I wasn't going to pee  
on my finger.

Rose Baum:  
So what are we playing? Cards, or statues?

Grandpa:  
Why do they need this election?

Rose Baum:  
What do you mean, why do they need this  
election?

Grandpa:  
But everybody knows Roosevelt is going to win  
again. I still think he's too radical. But to go  
through another election is a terrible waste of  
money.

Rose Baum:

What are you talking about, Papa? It's four years.  
They have to have an election.

Grandpa:

What if they decided to make him king?

Rose Baum:

King?

Fanny Margolies:

(laughs) Oh, believe me.

Grandpa:

If he was king, he wouldn't have to waste all this  
time making these ridiculous election speeches,  
and maybe he could start to improve things.

Rose Baum:

If I had a stamp, I'd write him a letter.

Grandpa:

He could be another j- Kaiser Franz Joseph. And  
after he dies, you could have all the elections you  
want.

Rose Baum:

Doris, are you playing cards or hatching an egg?

Doris Gross:

Oh. It's my turn? Ugh. All right. Here.

Rose Baum:

Hallelujah. Lucille, did you lose weight?

Lucille:

I've been trying. And thinking of going back to the carnival.

Fanny Margolies:

Oh. You better not mention it in front of Grandpa.

Lucille:

He doesn't have to know. And anyway, I would never dance anymore. I'd only assist the magician and tell a few jokes. They're talking about starting up again in Jersey.

Rose Baum:

Herbie can't find anything?

Lucille:

He's going out of his mind, Aunt Rose.

Rose Baum:

God almighty. So what's it going to be, Fanny?

Fanny Margolies:

One second. Just let me figure it out.

Rose Baum:

When they passed around the brains in this family, was out to lunch.

Fanny Margolies:

Oh. It's so hot in here. I can't think.

Rose Baum:

Play. I can't open the window. I'm not going to face that man again. He has merciless eyes. Stanislaus, you come in the front door? The mortgage man could come today.

Stanislaus:

I forgot. I didn't see anybody on the street, though. Fresh lemonade, coming up on deck. I starched all the napkins.

Rose Baum:

Starched all the napkins. They're cracking like matzos. I feel like doing a fortune. Where are those cards?

Lucille:

I, I don't know, Aunt Rose. Is it so smart to let this man live with you?

Doris Gross:

Oh. I would never dare. How can you sleep at night with a strange man in the cellar?

Fanny Margolies:

No. Stanislaus is a gentleman. I think he's a little bit of a fairy, isn't he? (laughs)

Rose Baum:

(laughs) I hope. For God's sake, Fanny, play the queen of clubs.

Fanny Margolies:

How did you know I had the queen of clubs?

Rose Baum:

Because I'm smart. I voted for Herbert Hoover. I see what's been played, dear, so I figure what's left.

Fanny Margolies:

Oh. She's a marvel. She's got Grandma's head.

Rose Baum:

Look at this fortune.

Fanny Margolies:

Here. I'm playing.

Rose Baum:

I always feed the vagrants on the porch, but Stanislaus, when I hand him a plate of soup, he says he wants to wash the windows before he eats. Before. That, I never heard. I nearly fell over. Go ahead, Doris. It's you.

Doris Gross:

Oh. I know just what I want to do. Wait a minute.

Rose Baum:

When I went to school, we had to sit like soldiers with backs straight and our hands clasped on the desk. Things were supposed to be upright. When the navy came up the Hudson River, you cried, it was so beautiful. You even cried when they shot the tsar of Russia. He was also beautiful.

Rose Baum:

President Warren Gamaliel Harding, another beauty. Mayor James J. Walker smiled like an angel. What a nose. And those tiny feet. Richard Whitney, president of the Stock Exchange, a handsome, upright man. I could name 100 from the rotogravure. Who could know that these upright, handsome men would either turn out to be crooks who would land in jail, or ignoramuses? What is left to believe?

Rose Baum:

The bathroom. I lock myself in and hold onto the faucet so I shouldn't scream at my husband, my mother-in-law, at God knows what, until they take me away. What the hell kind of fortune did I lay out here? What is this?

Doris Gross:

Gray's Elegy in a Country Churchyard.

Rose Baum:

What?

Fanny Margolies:

Why don't you lie down, Rose?

Rose Baum:

Lie down? Why? What Gray's Elegy? What are you-

Stanislaus:

It's a braw bricht moonlicht nicht tonicht. That's Scotch.

Fanny Margolies:

How does he get those napkins to stand up?

Rose Baum:

What's the jacket suddenly?

Stanislaus:

SS Manhattan. Captain steward at your service.

Rose Baum:

Will you stop this nightmare? Take the jacket off.  
What are you talking about, Captain Stewart. Who  
are you?

Stanislaus:

I was a captain's personal steward, but they're  
not sailing the Manhattan anymore. Served J.  
Pierpont Morgan, John D. Rockefeller, Enrico  
Caruso. Lousy tipper. Lionel-

Rose Baum:

Bring in the cookies, please. Hm. Thank you. I'll  
pour the lemonade. Go. Please.

Fanny Margolies:

Rose, dear. Come upstairs.

Rose Baum:

How does he look to you?

Fanny Margolies:

Why? He looks very nice.

Lucille:

He certainly keeps the house beautiful, Aunt Rose. It's like a ship.

Rose Baum:

He's a liar, though. Anything comes into his head, he says. What am I believing him for? What the hell got into me? You can tell he's full of shit, and he comes to the door, a perfect stranger, and I let him sleep in the cellar?

Lucille:

Sh. Sh.

Rose Baum:

Listen, Stanislaus.

Stanislaus:

I go down to the ship general store tomorrow, get some special white paint, paint the whole outside the house. I got plenty of credit. Don't cost you.

Rose Baum:

I, I thought it over. You understand?

Stanislaus:

I bought a big ladder from the hardware store, and I going to make nice curtains for the cellar windows. Taste the lemonade. I learned that in Spanish submarine. Excuse me. Got to clean out the ice box.

Fanny Margolies:

I think he's very sweet, Rose. Here. Have some lemonade.

Lucille:

Don't worry about that mortgage man, Aunt Rose. It's after 5:00. They don't come after 5:00.

Rose Baum:

He seems sweet to you?

Grandpa:

What Lee ought to do Rosie?

Rose Baum:

Huh?

Grandpa:

Lee should go to Russia.

Rose Baum:  
To Russia?

Grandpa:  
In Russia, they need everything, whereas here, you see, they don't need anything, so therefore, there's no work.

Rose Baum:  
Five minutes ago, Roosevelt is too radical, and now you're sending Lee to Russia?

Grandpa:  
That's different. Look what it says here. 100,000 American people applying for jobs in Russia. Look. It says it. So if Lee would go over there and open a nice chain of, of clothing stores-

Rose Baum:  
Papa, you're such a big anti-communist and, and you don't know the government owns everything in Russia?

Grandpa:  
Yeah. But not the stores.

Rose Baum:  
Of course the stores.

Grandpa:  
The stores, they own?

Rose Baum:  
Yes.

Grandpa:  
Them bastards.

Rose Baum:  
I'll go out of my mind here.

Doris Gross:  
So who wrote it?

Rose Baum:  
Wrote what?

Doris Gross:  
Gray's Elegy in a Country Churchyard? It was a \$15 question on the radio yesterday, but you were out. I ran to call you.

Rose Baum:

Who wrote Gray's Elegy in a Country Churchyard?

Doris Gross:

By the time I got to the radio, it was another question.

Rose Baum:

Doris, darling, Gray's Elegy in a Country ch-

Fanny Margolies:

(laughs)

Rose Baum:

... What are you laughing at? Do you know?

Fanny Margolies:

Oh. How would I know?

Lucille:

Is it g- Gray? W- Well, it says Gray's Elegy, right?

Doris Gross:

Well, how could it be Gray? That's the title.

Fanny Margolies:

Oh. (laughs) What's the matter, Rose.

Doris Gross:

Oh. What'd I say?

Fanny Margolies:

Rose? What's the matter?

Lucille:

Are you all right?

Fanny Margolies:

What's the matter? Oh, Rosie. Please don't. Oh. It'll get better. Som- Something's got to happen.

Moe Baum:

Hello?

Doris Gross:

There's someone-

Rose Baum:

Sh. I'll go upstairs. I'm not home.

Doris Gross:

... Uh (laughs) it's Uncle Moe.

Rose Baum:

Oh.

Moe Baum:

What's the excitement?

Rose Baum:

Thank God. I thought it was the mortgage man.

You're home early.

Fanny Margolies:

Let's go. Come on.

Moe Baum:

You're crying.

Lucille:

How is it in the city?

Rose Baum:

Go out the back, huh?

Moe Baum:

The city is murder.

Fanny Margolies:

Well, get your bills together. I'm going downtown tomorrow. I'll save you the postage.

Rose Baum:

Moe, why don't you take a shower? Why are you so pale?

Lucille:

Bye-bye, Uncle Moe.

Moe Baum:

Bye, girls.

Doris Gross:

I must ask him how he made that lemonade.

Rose Baum:

You sell anything? No, huh? Here. Come drink. It's cold.

Moe Baum:

You're hysterical every night.

Rose Baum:

No. I'm all right. It's just all so stupid, and every once in a while, I can't, I can't...

Moe Baum:

The thing is, you're listening to me.

Rose Baum:

What? Oh. Uh, Papa. Go on the back porch, huh? It's shady there now.

Grandpa:

But there's, there's a man who'll see me.

Rose Baum:

It's all right. He won't come so late. And Moe is here. Go. And why don't you put on your other glasses? They're much cooler. Yes, dear. What? What's going to be?

Moe Baum:

We are going to be all right.

Rose Baum:

Why?

Moe Baum:

Because we are, so this nervousness every night is unnecessary. And I wish to God-

Rose Baum:

It's just the fortune. I, I started to do a fortune,  
and I saw a young man, the death of a young man.

Moe Baum:

... You, you don't say?

Rose Baum:

Why? Why'd you say that?

Moe Baum:

Nothing.

Rose Baum:

It's Lee?

Moe Baum:

Will you cut that out?

Rose Baum:

Tell me.

Moe Baum:

I saw a terrible thing on the subway. Somebody  
jumped in front of a train.

Rose Baum:

Oh. Again? My God. You saw him?

Moe Baum:

No. A few minutes before I got there. Seems he was a very young man. One of the policemen was holding a great big basket of flowers. Seems he was trying to sell flowers.

Rose Baum:

I saw it. Look. It's there. That's death. I'm going to write Lee to come home immediately. I want you to put in that you want him home.

Moe Baum:

I have nothing for him, Rose. How can I make him come home?

Rose Baum:

Then go to your mother and stand up like a man to her, instead of this God damn fool.

Moe Baum:

This can't, it can't go on forever, Rose. A country can't just die. Will you stop? I'm trying. God help me, I'm trying.

Grandpa:

Rose. The doorbell.

Rose Baum:

God in heaven. Make him go away. Oh, dear God. Give our president the strength and the wisdom. Give Mr. Roosevelt the way to help us. Oh, my God. Help our dear country, and the people.

Sidney Margolies:

Good fight tonight, Mr. Baum.

Lee Baum:

Huh? Yeah. Pretty good.

Sidney Margolies:

Hey.

Lee Baum:

Huh? Huh. Sidney.

Sidney Margolies:

Boy, you're some cousin. I'm looking straight at you, and no recognito. I'm chief of security here.

Lee Baum:

You still on the block?

Sidney Margolies:

Sure. Say, you know who would have loved to have seen you again? Lou Charney.

Lee Baum:

Charney?

Sidney Margolies:

Hundred yard dash. You and him used to trot to school together.

Lee Baum:

Oh. Lou. Sure. How is he?

Sidney Margolies:

He's dead. Got it in Italy. And you knew Georgie Rosen got killed, didn't you?

Lee Baum:

Georgie Rosen?

Sidney Margolies:

Little Georgie. Sold you his racing bike, that got stolen.

Lee Baum:

Yes. Yes. God. Georgie, too.

Sidney Margolies:

Korea. A lot of wars on that block. Oh, yeah. Lou Charney's kid was in Vietnam. Still and all, it's a great country, huh?

Lee Baum:

(laughs) Why do you say that?

Sidney Margolies:

Well, all the crime and divorce and whatnot.  
(laughs) But one thing about people like us, you live through the worst, you know the difference between bad and bad.

Lee Baum:

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Sidney Margolies:

But I look back at it all now, and I don't know about you, but it seems it was friendlier. A- Am I right?

Lee Baum:

I'm not sure it was friendlier. Maybe people just cared more.

Sidney Margolies:  
Like the songs, I mean.

Singer:  
(singing)

Sidney Margolies:  
Yeah. You listen to a '30s song, and most of 'em  
are so happy, and still, you could cry.

Lee Baum:  
You still writing songs?

Sidney Margolies:  
Sure. I had a couple published. I got a new one  
now, though. Love you to hear it. It's called A  
Moon of My Own. I don't know what happened.  
I'm sitting on the back porch, and suddenly, it  
came to me. A Moon of My Own. I ran in and told  
Doris. She could hardly sleep all night. (laughs)

Irene:  
(singing)

Lee Baum:  
How's Doris? Are you still...

Sidney Margolies:

Oh. Very much so. In fact, we were just saying, we're practically the only ones we know who didn't get divorced.

Banks:

When the war came, I was so glad when I got in the army. A man could be killed any time at all on those trains, but with that uniform on, I said, "Now, I am safe." I felt proud to salute and look around and see all the good soldiers of the United States. I was a good soldier, too. I got five battle stars. Yeah. I've seen all kinds of war, including the kind they call peace.

Banks:

One time, I was hoboing through that high country, the Dakotas, Montana. I come to the monument for General Custer's last stand, Little Bighorn. And I wrote my name on it. (laughs) Yes, sir. For the memories. Just for the note so my name will be up there forever. Yes, sir.

Banks:

But I still hear that train sometimes. Still hear that long, low whistle. Yes, sir. I still hear that train. Whoo, whoo.

Lee Baum:

Did I hear your mother died?

Sidney Margolies:

Yeah. Fanny's gone. I was sorry to hear about Aunt Rose and Moe.

Lee Baum:

After all these years, I still can't settle with myself about my mother. In her own crazy way, she was so much like the country. There was nothing she believed that she didn't also believe the opposite. She'd sit down on the subway next to a black man, and in a couple of minutes, she had him asking her advice about the most intimate things in his life. Then maybe a day later...

Rose Baum:

Did you hear? They say the colored are moving in.

Lee Baum:

Or she'd lament her fate as a woman.

Rose Baum:

I was born 20 years too soon. They treat a woman like a cow. Fill her up with a baby and lock her in for the rest of her life.

Lee Baum:

But then, she'd warn me, "Watch out for women. When they're not stupid, they're full of deceit." (laughs) I'd come home and give her a real bath of radical idealism, and she was ready to storm the barricades. By evening, she'd fallen in love again with the Prince of Wales.

Lee Baum:

She was so like the country. Money obsessed her. But what she really longed for was some kind of height where she could stand and see out and around and breathe in the air of her own free life.

Lee Baum:

With all her defeats, she believed to the end that the world was meant to be better. I don't know. All I know for sure is that (laughs) whenever I

think of her, I always end up with this head full of life.

Rose Baum:

Sing. (singing)

Arthur A. Robertson:

There were moments when the word revolution was not rhetorical.

Ted Quinn:

Roosevelt saved them. Came up at the right minute and pulled the miracle.

Arthur A. Robertson:

Up to a point, but what really got us out of it was the war.

Ted Quinn:

Roosevelt gave them back their belief in the country. The government belonged to them again.

Arthur A. Robertson:

Well, I'll give you that.

Ted Quinn:

Of course you will. You're not a damn fool. The return of that belief is what saved the United States. No more, no less.

Arthur A. Robertson:

I think that's putting it a little too-

Ted Quinn:

That's it.

Rose Baum:

(singing)

Ted Quinn:

God, how I love that music.

Rose Baum:

(singing) Life is just a bowl of cherries, so live and laugh at it all.

Carrie Coon:

Thank you for listening to *The American Clock* by Arthur Miller, directed by Austin Pendleton, featuring the voice talent of Steppenwolf

Ensemble members Joan Allen, Kate Arrington, Ian Barford, Robert Breuler, Cliff Chamberlain, Gary Cole, Celeste M. Cooper, Glenn Davis, Kathryn Erbe, Audrey Francis, K. Todd Freeman, Francis Guinan, Jon Michael Hill, Tim Hopper, Ora Jones, Terry Kinney, Tina Landau, John Malkovich, Sandra Marquez, James Vincent Meredith, Laurie Metcalf, Amy Morton, Caroline Neff, Austin Pendleton, Jeff Perry, William Petersen, Yasen Peyankov, Molly Regan, Karen Rodriguez, Anna D. Shapiro, Namir Smallwood, and Lois Smith.

Carrie Coon:

Our production stage manager was Laura D. Glenn. Sound design by Rob Milburn and Michael Bodeen, with sound engineering by Martha Wegener and Gregor Mortis. Our production manager was Elise Hausken.

Carrie Coon:

*The American Clock* was produced by Jonathan Berry. This production was generously sponsored by Anne and Don Phillips. For a detailed program and cast list, please visit [steppenwolf.org](http://steppenwolf.org). Special

thanks to Erin Cook, Karena Fiorenza, Suzanne Petri, Gina Cirone, and Patrick Zakem. This has been a production by Steppenwolf Theatre Company.