

ACT ONE

MADELINE is in her bedroom, sprawled on her bed, which is covered in love letters and velvets. The lights are low so we can barely see anything else. Next to her bed, on a night stand, there is a bust of Napoleon but it is distorted with severely sunken eyes and an exceptionally elongated nose with a perfume bottle laying in one socket. There is one window, through which Madeline stares now, that leads to the fire escape, which emits a light made murky with the mist of San Francisco. Madeline begins to speak to the window, directly, to her angel there as if it were a neighbor across the way.

MADELINE

Sex, love, alms, I cannot take it anymore.
 The dirty floor that pins me against the morals of a man's world.
 Do I have to sniff the dirt or act menacing,
 Like him, and them, to scroll by with a scowl,
 A ramming dialogue that cuts the nut out of the cunt!
 I want...a baby.
 So I will sprinkle,
 My naked eggs on time's thistle,
 A spell, a sensitive whistle,
 A punishing howl,
 To eschew the elite harbors of the soul
 With a blow of the sail,
 Sending ourselves back to paradise,
 Where we belong,
 And severed by song of acolytes and bar-whistlers.
 I am tired, worn-down, depleted and mustering for love,
 Pussy combed and trail whipped,
 Wasting fires on filaments of men,
 Major and blown,
 Advocates of war,
 Seeming pilots of peace,
 I want a coalescent craw daddy
 who will fill my barren womb.
 So tonight, my angel, send me a man, a south paw who screams
 indulgence at my indolence,
 Inching towards the islands of crestfallen cadence;
 I am a howl backdrafting!
 And this is the last night I pray for my conception
 Before I lay my womb next to the rest of my dead dreams,
 So when that last man opens the door
 He will get simmered and swallowed
 By the garnishes of air and fire!

Lights dim on Madeline's room as they rise on the main area of Pussyhat's Headwear and Turn of the Night Cabaret. It's essentially a musty little basement trying to be a living room, a Church, a museum, a womb. There are more busts of Napoleon and more French strategic maps dotting the walls, which are adorned in fabrics jutting outward. The whole place is like the entrance before, except this more like the womb: a sense of pregnancy, things unborn and overdue, as evidenced by the antiques and fluffy, almost fleshy fabric laden walls. There's one couch in the middle for guests to sit. Somewhere on the ground we see an old blues guitar with an old phonograph earpiece attached to it. There are dents from customers throwing money in it. There are more pieces of spray painted machine parts glued to the walls. Starting DSR is Ramie's room with a door covered with a curtain. The room is at an angle of about twenty degrees to the front of the stage. Slowly moving USL a few inches away is Chamille/Zoe's door. Following the wall past their door at the USL corner and at an angle of about forty degrees from the front of the stage is the main entrance. The back wall is straight to the audience and is USL until it begins to curve towards DSL to mirror the wall of Ramie and Chamille's room entrances. A little over half way between DSL and USL is Madeline's doorway. Madeline's room is SL and separated from the main area by the wall. Her room is slender and deep as there is another wall SL of her room and then the fire escape. A window DSL leads from her room to the fire escape. There is another wall with a window and then Dr. Supine's office, also small and austere. CHARLEY WHO-HORSE, the musician, enters extreme stage right through the vagina entrance, playing his trumpet.

CHARLEY

Life is jazz or jazz is life,
 Don't ask the devil less' his tail beat in three-quarter
 time! (blares the trumpet)

I left Harlem in '25, came here to San Fran,
 The last unknown home of a black man!
 Here at Pussyhat's, a speakeasy with a slip!
 Where we can gather up Harlem's last sticks
 And whip the drums with envy of ourselves!
 They say the world at war, and I'll play!
 When I get paid? When I get laid? With my wife, my friend, my
 lover, and su' hope they all is one!

*He plays and wanders to the side,
 muttering. ZOE rushes in followed by
 Chamille. Zoe is almost in tears.*

ZOE

He says he loves me! He cries about me! I cry about him!

CHAMILLE

He cries, 'cause he don't know how to love you!
 That's why he wants to marry you.

ZOE

Oh, Cammy! Oh...I gotta tell you something!

CHAMILLE

Tell me what?

ZOE

You promise not to tell no one else?

CHAMILLE

If nobody asks.

ZOE

I mean it! You gotta double up swears on it! YOU GOT TO!

CHAMILLE

Okay. Okay. I won't say a word. What is it?

ZOE

...I'm pregnant!

CHAMILLE

(Pause) Damn. Who's the father?

ZOE

Who's the mother?!?? Oh, I wish it was the priest! Then I'd
 sure have a scandal, make it worth the scandal!

CHAMILLE

Does Mamma know?

ZOE

I ain't told her! You know how bad she wants her own! I'm afraid of her! It's all...spangled up! Oh, Cammy, how'd it happen to me?

CHAMILLE

Well, honey...

ZOE

....I been seein' a doctor!

CHAMILLE

What sort of doctor?

Lights drop on Zoe and Chamille and rise on Dr. Carl Supine and his assistant Peter Simpson. Carl is in his later 30's-early 40's with studious, pensive gaze but with a hint of a swimming piranha underneath his seemingly erudite facade. He is dressed in a three piece brown suit, dapper, with his jacket off and sporting a bow tie. Peter Simpson, early 20's, boyish, wears a conservative baggy button down shirt and basic dress pants.

The office is cramped but austere, perfectly opened and shelved books above a small desk which has a notepad with scribbles. There is a therapist's couch. There is a small plant by the window. There are no corners; everything is rounded superbly, discrete and revealing to the refined eye. There is a suit hanging on the doorway/wall with two or three bow-ties and suspenders dangling. Two peculiarities: there's a box, unpacked, beside the desk and a clock on the wall with the glass smashed and an extra hand and the numbers out of order and another clock just like it on the opposite wall. Peter is taking dictation from Carl.

CARL

Note Peter, third session, Patient, Zoe. Her dreams are intense. I have to admit I'm jealous of her clarity in recall. Don't write that part down Peter. Her intensity of dreams is more so in a pregnant woman than I have ever seen prior. It is as if the baby wants her as much, or more, than she wants the child. And I am concerned they are only going to get worse, perhaps while she's conscious.