

## **SHAKESPEARE'S GREATEST HITS BY GEORGE ISHERWOOD**

RIGHTS BY HARTMANN & STAUFFACHER VERLAG  
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INTRO- Music (preferably live). Enter a "cry of players" in long white shirts with Elizabethan lace ruffs. They begin to make up before the audience. When they are finished, some join the musicians, others play in the audience, practice their lines or set their props.

They are strolling players that have travelled far to reach tonight's audience. One actor calls the other actors together. They form a line across the stage with their backs to the public. At a snap of the fingers they all turn to the public and take three steps down stage.

All- Ladies and gentlemen, tonight we present to you

Actor 1- Macbeth!

Actor 2- Hamlet!

Actor 3- Anthony

Actor 4-and Cleopatra!

Actor 5- Richard the Third!

All- SHAKESPEARE'S GREATEST HITS!

(They form a murderous group tableau-stabbing, strangling, poisoning one another gleefully. The the first sweet tones of a song-WHEN LAURA SMILES. They freeze. Under the influence of the song the mood changes from homicidal to lyrical. They sing together sweetly in crisp exaggerated English accents...)

All-WHEN LAURA SMILES, HER SIGHT REVIVES BOTH NIGHT AND DAY

THE EARTH AND HEAVEN VIEW WITH DELIGHT HER WANTON PLAY

AND HER SPEECH WITH EVER FLOWING MUSIC DOTH REPAIR

THE CRUEL WOUNDS OF SORROW AND UNTAMED DESPAIR

( During the singing of this song one actor leaves the group to dress himself for Macbeth. In the second verse the players sing a jolly -Ha, ha, ha! instead of the lyrics. In the process each actor tries to move to the center of the group and take focus. Another actor upstages the first and so it continues madly and frantically until the actor who will play Macbeth upstages them all on the last note of the song )

Macbeth-(quiet grandly) Ladies and Gentlemen, Macbeth, the first act, We are in Scotland...where the wild wind wails

( The other actors prepare themselves for the coming scene behind him)

All-whooh!

Macbeth-Where the rampagous rain rages

All- Splish, splash, splish, splash!

Macbeth- Where the Moorhen doth cry

All- Arr, arr, arrrr!

Macbeth- And where the shivering sheep bleat

All- Baaah!

Macbeth-Ladies and gentlemen, I shall now perform for you, my interpretation of a Scottish hill!

(An actor brings Macbeth a large green mantle. A drum roll. Macbeth begins to turn in the mantle as it flutters around him. He stops draped in the green cloth with his back to the public on his knees. The sound of a flute and a green twig appears on top of the "Scottish hill" Under this mantle Macbeth will begin to put on his red beard, beret, and in his red Highland tartan.

Strange music. In back of Macbeth we see three black forms. They jump around and we see three hideous witches. They look knowingly at each other and then the audience. At a clear signal, they jump down on the audience looking for body parts. They seem to like a particular spectator (a drama critic?). Witch 1 pulls out her knife, while the other two witches hold up the spectator's arm. All three nod gleefully. Witch 1 cuts off the hand of the unlucky audience member. A rubber hand can be used for the squeamish. Laughing malevolently the three return to the stage around the Scottish hill.

Witch 1-( holding up the chopped hand) By the itching of my thumbs...

Witch 2 Something wicked this way comes!

(The evil sisters spit on the hill that now has become their cauldron and make a long spoon with their thumbs. they turn the spoon and dance devilishly around the cauldron in a counter- clock wise direction.)

Witches- Hubble, bubble, toil and trouble  
          Hubble, bubble, toil and trouble  
          Hubble, bubble toil and trouble!

( Now the cauldron begins to turn in a clockwise direction)

Witches- (wilder) Hubble, bubble toil and trouble  
                  Hubble , bubble toil and trouble  
                  Hubble, bubble, toil and trouble!

(Out of the wild turning, Macbeth reveals himself with red beard, beret and tartan. He looks far through the foggy Highland landscape)

Macbeth-So fair and foul a day I have not seen.

( Behind him the witches laugh. Macbeth turns and notices the evil sisters. He crosses him self and tries to run away from them. With invisible bonds, they pull him back toward them as they call," Hail to thee, Macbeth!" He is in their power. After the fourth call, the witches grope him mercilessly. As the other two witches spread their arms like ravens wings, Witch 3 in back of Macbeth holds a crown over his head.)

Witches- Hail, Macbeth, King of Scotland!

( Witch 3 crowns Macbeth. They form a throne under him. A drum beat. Macbeth feels quite well in the role of king. He muses on total power. It might be something he would enjoy.

As he daydreams the witches take his crown and throne and push him forward. An evil laugh from the witches. As he turns around he sees but two black stones. A symbol crash)

Actor- Meanwhile in England. It is after the War of the Roses. The House of York has won this long bloody civil strife. His brother henry sits on the throne. Henry is old, weak and soon will die. The Duke Richard is the most hated and feared man

in England. A man so evil that dogs bark at him as he passes..

All Actors-Woof! woof! woof!

Richard -You dumb mutts!

(He kicks at imaginary dogs)

Actor-A man so deformed, he curses his own shadow.

Richard- Fuck you, shadow!

(Richard sticks out his middle finger at his won shadow)

Actor- Richard the Third, Act One!

( Enter Richard of York smiling. He is an ugly hunchback ( with a ballon for a hump) He limps as he enters)

Richard- I am Richard, Duke of York, friend of the King and Protector of his heirs. Particularly fond of little children.

But today I seek the hand of the fair Lady Ann. Even though I stabbed her father and cut the throat of her pretty husband,  
this is the woman that I must have!

( We hear funeral music)

See where she comes, the noble lady.

(Richard hides in the audience. Enter Lady Ann. She is dressed in black with a high Plantagenet cone hat. She is veiled and crying extravagantly. Behind her come four monks who carry the coffin of her recently deceased husband, Harry.)

Ann- Brothers, set down thy holy load.

( The monks lay the coffin down. They open the coffin lid. the stink is overwhelming. They cross themselves. Ann takes up the bandaged cadaver of her poor husband up into her loving arms. She is overflows with grief and anger)

Ann-Cursed be the hand that made these wounds!

Monks-Ave Maria, gratia plena!

Ann- Cursed be the heart that had the heart to do it!

Monks- Ave Maria, gratia plena!

( Ann lays her dead husband to rest again in his coffin. the monks cover the coffin with the lid)

Ann- Brothers to the cemetery!

( The monks cross themselves, lift Harry's coffin and slowly follow Ann. Richard attacks the funeral party)

Richard-Stop, I say!

Ann- Oh, Mother of God, Richard!

(Ann runs off for shelter in the audience. Richard stabs the coffin with his sword)

Richard- Put down that coffin or, by God, I'll make a corpse of him that disobeys!

Monks- Jesu, Richard!

( After setting down the coffin, the monks run for their life in fear for their lives. Richard laughing swipes after them. he hears Ann weeping in the audience.)

Richard- Ahh, the fair Lady Ann.

( Richard runs for Ann)

Ann- Foul devil hence!  
Help! A damsel in distress!

(He pulls her struggling back on stage. The two spring on top of the coffin.)

Richard- Ann, it was for your beauty's sake that I killed thy husband Henry.

( Ann spits in his face)

Ann- Foul Toad! Would that it were poison!

Richard- Was ever woman in this humour wooed?

Ann-Thou lump of foul deformity!

Richard- Ann, if thou lovest me not, kill me hereth and noweth!

( Richard gives Ann his sword and opens his doublet offering his heart)

Ann- I'll do it!

Richard- (to the public) I'll wager she won't

( Ann raises his sword)

Ann- I'll do it!

Richard- She won't

( Ann raises the sword even higher and tries to summon the energy to stab Richard)

Ann- But I can't!

( Ann lets the sword fall, sighing and Richard laughs)

Richard ( to the public) I told you so!

Ann, if you won't love me i shall kill myself hereth and noweth

( Ann gives Richard his sword)

Ann- Do it, hedgehog!

( Richard removes the coffin lid)

Richard- I need must die! Make some space!

( Richard throws the corpse of Harry out of the coffin)

Ann- Harry!

(Richard steps in with the sword pointed toward his breast. Ann is shocked. )

Ann- Richard! No!

Richard- Thus do I die of love!

( Ann is totally distraught. She looks frantically from the corpse of her husband to the madman trying to commit suicide in another man's coffin)

Ann- Harry! Richard! Harry!

(Ann faints in the coffin with her legs wide apart on sides of the coffin. Richard looks down on her)

Richard- By Jesu, the fair Lady Ann has fainted!

( Richard looks down on the lady again and gets an evil idea. He smiles evilly)

And not a monk in sight...

( Richard springs lustily into the coffin Lady Ann awakes and kicks Richard direct in his codpiece. She stands up and kicks him one last time

Ann- Vile basilisk!

(Ann goes. Richard slowly appears from the coffin, dizzy and battered.)

Richard- Was ever a woman in this humor won?

(Symbol crash)

Actor- Meanwhile ladies and gentlemen, in Egypt, in the royal capitol of Alexandria, Cleopatra, the living Isis, the Queen of Upper and Lower Egypt, Cleopatra, the daughter of Horus, a lady whom even age cannot wither nor can custom stale her infinite variety . Other women cloy the appetite they feed, but she makes hungry where most she satifies. She is also cunning past men's thought.

Here she says farewell to Mark Anthony, her Roman lover. Anthony and Cleopatra, the first Act!

(Egyptian music. Two actors make a camel and carry Cleopatra on stage. The Queen descends onto the knies of two golden masked slaves. She stands in classic form with her arms crossed. cleopatra yawns.)

Cleopatra-To bed!

(Cleopatra falls back into the arms of waiting slaves and the masked slaves kneeling before her stretch out a cloth that becomes her bed. A silver Egyptian moon slowly glides over the dreaming monarch. The chirping of birds. A golden Egyptian sun rises. Under it rises Anthony with a naked chest. The Roman is is

waking up. He is handsome and well built. He looks at Cleopatra lustily and she looks knowingly back at him. They are drawn together by burning passionate love. They are drawn closer to each other. Their hands touch. One can almost feel the sensual electricity running through their bodies. Something's gotta give )

Cleopatra- Anthony.

Anthony-Cleopatra.

Cleopatra- One more time!

(Anthony nods)

Anthony- Oh, sweet Egypt!

(The two descend in delight under the cloth. We notice movement behind the cloth. Anthony pops up in intense pleasure)

Anthony- Oh Egypt, not that!

(Anthony disappears and Cleopatra pops up)

Cleopatra-Anthony, Anthony, you're driving me crazy!

(Cleopatra disappears and Anthony jumps up)

Anthony- Oh Egypt, right there!

(Anthony disappears and Cleopatra pops up ecstatic)

Cleopatra-Oh, you Romans!

( Cleopatra disappears. The cloth is vibrating madly. Anthony appears between the two out stretched legs of Cleopatra. He supports her hand stand with his hands)

Anthony- Now I must leave this fertile delta!

(Anthony disappears. They both appear)

Cleopatra- Stay with me!

(Anthony kisses Cleopatra passionately)

Anthony- I must go to Rome!

Cleopatra- Stay!

(She pulls him to her. He kisses her)

Anthony- I must to Rome!

Cleopatra- Stay with me, if you love me!

( Anthony kisses her again)

Anthony- Ahh, sweet Egypt, I must go to Rome

Cleopatra- Must go... really ... to Rome?

(She can't believe it. He kisses her tenderly one last time, puts on his bright toga and silver headdress. Anthony goes to the other side of the cloth in front of the Queen.)

Anthony- Farewell, Egypt!

Cleopatra- Farewell, sweet Roman!

(Anthony starts to leave sadly through the audience toward Rome. He looks back at the Queen sadly)

Anthony- I'll write you every day.

Cleopatra- Every day?

(Cleopatra is devastated. The light of her life is gone. She cries; then snaps her fingers.)

Cleopatra- The next!

(Up pops a Lust Slave ready for action.)

Lust Slave- Cleopatra!

(Both disappear behind the cloth. Symbol crash. the cloth falls on the kneeling actor who plays)

Actor- Meanwhile we are in Elsinore, in Denmark, where after the death of his

royal father, the melancholy Prince Hamlet walks alone over the battlements of his castle.

(Actor pulls cloth away to reveal hamlet with his skull)

Actor- Hamlet, the first Act!

(Dowland music. Hamlet slowly rises to a classic pose contemplating "the wrecks of time", his skull of his old jester, Yorrick)

Hamlet- To be or not to be?

Yorrick- Yes, that's the question

(Yorrick answers like a puppet)

Hamlet-Pssst. Whether tis noble to suffer the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune or...or...

(Hamlet has forgotten his lines. Yorrick tries to help him.)

Yorrick- or to take arms

Hamlet- or to take arms against a sea of troubles and by opposing end them. to die to seep, no more

Yorrick- To sleep, to die, to sleep, to die, every day the same! Hamlet come closer.

(Hamlet draws closer to the skull)

Yorrick- Closer! Hamlet, closer!

(As the prince comes close to the skull, Yorrick burbs in his face. The putrid stench therefrom is appalling. Yorrick laughs madly. He has gotten the last laugh)

Hamlet- Something is rotten in the State of Denmark!

( A lighting change with ghost music. The ghost of Hamlet's father appears through the public and drifts onto the stage. It is an enormous royal head with armor?on a long pole with white cloth draping down from it. Under the white cloth stands the actor who play the Ghost. Yorrick starts to shake in total fear. Hamlet is thunder struck to his place and can't move.)

Hamlet- Angels and ministers of grace defend us!

Ghost- Hamlet, Hamlet, I am thy father's ghost.

Hamlet,- You, Papa?

Ghost- Uhummmm

(Ghost nods yes)

As I slept in the garden.

Hamlet- In the garden?

Ghost- Poison was poured into the porches of my ear

Hamlet- In your ear? Murder most foul!

Ghost- The serpent who murdered me, now wears my crown.

Hamlet- My Uncle Claudius? Oh my prophetic soul! Oh horrible, horrible most horrible! Oh....

Ghost- Hamlet, if thou didst ever thy dear father love, revenge his foul and most unnatural murder!

( A cock crows. The Ghost starts to go.)

Adieu. The glowworm shows the matin to be near. Remember me, remember me, remember me!

( The Ghost is gone. Hamlet is left alone on stage)

Hamlet- The time is out of joint. O, cursed spite, that ever was born to make it right!

(Hamlet takes up his sword)

Revenge!

(A symbol crash)

Actor- Meanwhile, ladies and gentlemen, we are in Scotland. After meeting the

three witches, Macbeth rushes home to his wife, Lady Macbeth. there in their castle in Inverness they prepare for the coming visit of the King of Scotland, Duncan the Bold. Macbeth, the Second Act!

(Scottish music. We see a stern woman in tartan standing on a ladder. Under her in the same tartan is her husband Macbeth. he hangs like a marionette. Indeed Lady Macbeth controls the strings. To a drum rhythm she brings up her husband's head, wakes him up and moves his dangling arms. She suddenly pulls the right hand of Macbeth to his own chest)

Macbeth- I am Macbeth

LM- That's right, darling.

(LM manipulates Macbeth's arms from above to make a gesture of strength)

Macbeth-And I am the best general in all Scotland

LM- You certainly are, darling.

Macbeth- And the witches said I will become the King of Scotland.

LM- Yes, they did. But first we must kill King Duncan, mustn't we, darling?

(LM manipulates Macbeth's arms wildly)

Macbeth-Kill! Kill! Kill!

(Fanfare. Lady Macbeth hurries down from the ladder and gestures to her husband to get rid of the ladder. Enter King Duncan of Scotland in a white beard stage right. . LM pulls her husband by the ear to stage left, while the King introduces himself. The king has a strong Scottish accent- worse than Mel Gibson's in Braveheart)

Duncan- I am Duncan, king of Scotland and today I visit my bravest general and best friend, Macbeth.

(Duncan turns around and warmly notices the smiling couple stage left)

Macbeth.

Macbeth- Duncan

Duncan-Macbeth!

Macbeth-Duncan!

(the King opens his arms)

Duncan-Macbeth!!

(Macbeth opens his arms)

Macbeth- Duncan, my King!!

( As Macbeth steps to greet the king, Lady Macbeth trips him. He takes a pratfall. She daintily steps over her fallen husband and bows before King Duncan. The old king is much taken by her beauty)

LM- Your Royal Majesty

Duncan- Ahh, Lady Macbeth

(Duncan kisses her hand as she rises. Macbeth pulls himself up off the floor)

And Macbeth, bravest of my generals!

(Duncan and Macbeth fall into each others arms. King Duncan lifts Macbeth into his arms and turns him around.)

Aye, Macbeth!

Lady Macbeth-Duncan, a wee dram?

Duncan- Aye, lassie, aye.

(The whiskey bottle and cup are mimed. She pours the king a drink)

LM- Glug, glug, glug

(She pours her husband a drink)

LM- Glug, glug, glug

(The men toast together)

Duncan/Macbeth-Death to the Sassenacks!

LM (to her husband) Death! death! death!

(to King Duncan) Another wee dram?

Duncan- Aye, another wee dram.

(Lady Macbeth pours the boys another drink and they toast together)

Duncan/Macbeth- Death to the Sassenancks!

(While Duncan is still drinking, Lady Macbeth snaps her finger. A servant brings Macbeth a sword. Macbeth raises the sword dangerously. At the last minute, King Duncan notices the danger and raises his sword. There is an electric tension between the two. Lady Macbeth comes between them and saves the situation with a nervous smile)

Lady Macbeth- A dance, a Scottish sword dance!

(The tension disappears into laughter. Music.)

Duncan/Macbeth- One, two, three , Four, lay the swords down on the floor!

(Duncan and Macbeth lay the swords down in a cross. They raise their and dance over the swords in a silly Highland Fling to Loch Lomand)

All- YOU TAKE THE HIGH ROAD  
AND I'LL TAKE THE LOW ROAD  
AND I'LL BE IN SCOTTLAND BEFORE YEE  
FOR ME AND ME TRUE LOVE WILL NEVER MEET AGAIN  
ON THE BONNIE, BONNIE BANKS OF LOCH LOMAND

(At the end of the song Macbeth swings the now drunken king into the waiting arms of his wife. Duncan begins to flirt and grope her.)

Duncan- Ahh! Lady Macbeth, You take the highroad, and I'll take the low road.

( While Lady Macbeth distracts the king with her copious corporal attractions and charms, Macbeth pulls out a dagger. he raises it over the back of the king, but then loses his will. He tries gain just as the king turns around. The king is shocked.)

Duncan-Macbeth!!!!!!

( Macbeth uses the knife like a toothpick and removes a bit of food from his teeth and the king laughs. Duncan turns again to the charming Lady Macbeth. Lady Macbeth gives her husband a decisive look. As Macbeth raises the knife over the king's back, Lady Macbeth grabs his wrist and pulls it down into the king's back. Duncan is mortally wounded. He falls to his knees. He looks up to Lady Macbeth as she takes his crown and then he looks around to Macbeth who merely shrugs his shoulders and throws the knife away. He looks in horror into the audience and falls dead.

Music-GOD SAVE THE KING.

Lady Macbeth crowns her husband. The two play like Queen Elizabeth II and Philip and wave at their loving subjects, but suddenly something is quite wrong. The melody of the English national anthem goes strangely off. They start to frantically wash their hands.)

Macbeth/Lady Macbeth-Blood!

(Symbol crash)

Actor- Meanwhile in Elsinore, in Denmark the young Prince Hamlet prepares an entertainment for his mother, Queen Gertrude, and his uncle, Claudius, the new King of Denmark. Hamlet Act Two!

( Enter Hamlet)

Hamlet- I'll have these players play something like the murder of my father before mine uncle, if he but blench, I know my course!

(Enter Ophelia with a pink teddy bear. the young girl completely breaks his train of thought.)

Ophelia-Hamlet!

Hamlet-Ophelia!

Ophelia-My lord, I have remembrances of yours  
That I have longed long to re-deliver.  
I pray you now receive them

Hamlet- No, not I.  
I never gave you aught.

Ophelia- Rich gifts wax poor when givers prove unkind.

( Ophelia in tears gives him the teddy bear back)

Hamlet- I did love thee once.

(Hamlet coolly throws the pink teddy bear away)

Ophelia-Indeed, my lord, you made me believe so

Hamlet- You should not have believed me. Get thee to a nunnery!

Ophelia- Oh help him, you sweet heavens!

Hamlet- To a nunnery, go, and quickly too. Why, wouldst thou be a breeder of sinners? We are all arrant knaves. Believe none of us!

Ophelia-O, what a noble mind is here o'erthrown!

( Fanfare. Enter Queen Gertrude. Hamlet bows)

Hamlet- My most royal mother

Gertrude- Hamlet, my most royal son

(Mother and son kiss. Ophelia curtseys deeply and kisses Gertrude's hand

Ophelia- Your Majesty

Gertrude- Ahh, the fair Ophelia.

( Three make a dance tableau, arms stretched elegantly, connected by the little finger with Hamlet between his mother and his girlfriend. They dance a Susato court dance. They step and turn as they talk)

Hamlet- Mother, I've prepared a little surprise for you this evening.

Ophelia- A surprise?

Gertrude- I love surprises!

Hamlet- A piece of theater.

Ophelia-Theater?

Gertrude- I love theater

Hamlet- It's called the Mousetrap

Ophelia-The Mousetrap?

Gertrude-The Mousetrap. I love it. I saw it in London years ago!

( Hamlet directs Gertrude to the audience)

Hamlet- Mother, the royal loge.

Gertrude-The most expensive seats in the house!

(Hamlet points to a place on the side stage for Ophelia)

Hamlet- Ophelia, you, over there(to the public) The play's the thing in which I'll catch the conscience of the king!

(Fanfare. Enter King Claudius. he moves to embrace Hamlet)

Claudius-Tho yet the memory of our dear brother's death the memory be green....

(Hamlet bows at the last second to avoid embracing the King. Claudius is put off and tries to smile it away. The King turns to Gertrude. he goes down to her

Claudius- Gertrude, our sometime sister, now our queen.

Gertrude- Claudius, my royal husband.

(The king kisses her ostentaciously)

Hamlet- (to the public) Friality, thy name is woman!

( Hamlet goes to confer with the players. It will be a masked play and Hamlet will play the evil king)

Claudius- What do they lay this evening?

Gertrude-the Mousetrap, I think it's a musical

Claudius- Anything is fine with me as long as it isn't political

( The actors take their positions)

Claudius- Let the play begin!

( The masked dumbshow begins. Enter the good king and his young wife. They walk down stage together like mechanical dolls hand and hand and then kiss. The good king gestures that he is tired. The young queen goes off. The good king falls asleep on one knee leaning his weary head on his folded hands. sinister music.

Enter the evil brother of the good king. He moves gracefully toward his sleeping brother and reveals a bottle of poison under his black cape. The evil brother pours the poison into the ear of the sleeping good king. The good king awakes and feels the poison burning through his ears. The pain is overwhelming. the good king dies a horrible death. His evil brother takes his crown and puts it on his own head. Enter again the young queen. She sees her husband dead and wails with her hands.

The evil brother looks over to her and expresses to her his desire for her. he takes her hand and together they walk over the dead king who rolls backward. The evil brother and the young queen begin to move their waists toward each other. The movement becomes more and more obscene. )

Claudius-Stop the show!

(A furious Claudius stands up, runs up on stage and divides the evil brother from the young queen with outstretched arms, his back to the public. A flustered Gertrude follows him. She goes to Hamlet, who has been playing the evil brother. Hamlet takes off his evil brother mask)

Gertrude- Hamlet, thou hast thy stepfather much offended!

Hamlet- He has my father much offended!

Gertrude- Apologize to the king at once!

(Slowly the seething king turns to Hamlet. Hamlet walks up to his step father. There is a long sullen silence. Then Hamlet spits in Claudius' face. The king explodes in anger and goes for Hamlet's neck trying to strangle him. Gertrude and Ophelia try to come to the prince's aid. Gertrude takes Claudius and Ophelia takes Hamlet.

Gertrude- Not in public!

( The whole Danish family tries to make a smiling glossy publicity shot of a happy royal family. In the end King Claudius can't contain himself and runs off screaming...)

Claudius- Light! light!

( Gertrude runs after him.)

Hamlet- The trap is sprung!

(A symbol crash)

Actor- Meanwhile in England in the dark Tower of London, The Duke of Clarence, heir to the English throne and brother of Richard takes his morning bath.  
Richard the Third, Second Act!

(Enter the dotty Duke of Clarence. When brains were given out to the Plantagenets, poor Clarence was at the end of the line. He is wearing a striped old fashioned bathing suit and bath cap. He carries before him a small plastic basin filled with soapy water and a brush)

Clarence- I am Clarence, brother of Richard and the next king of England.

( Clarence notices that he smells like an old goat and decides it's time to bathe. He jumps merrily into his basin and splashes around like a happy bird. To the cheerful melody of SINGING IN THE RAIN he scrubs and brushes himself clean. sinister music. Enter Richard. Richard calls out their secret bird call)

Richard-Arr! Arr!

Clarence- Ah, that is my dear brother...Richard

( Richard embraces his brainless brother)

Richard- And that is my dear brother, Clarence ( aside) The total nincompoop!  
Clarence do you know what today is?

Clarence-(straining his tiny pecan brain) Thursday?

Richard- No, today is your birthday!

Clarence- My birthday!

Richard-( aside) Yes, your last birthday! (to Clarence) and I have a little present for you.

Clarence- A present! Gimme! Gimme! Gimme!

( Out of his doublet Richard pulls a little plastic duck. Clarence couldn't be

happier. Richard gives it to Clarence as he sings...)

Richard- HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO YOU  
HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO YOU  
HAPPY BIRTHDAY DEAR CLARENCE  
HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO YOU

Clarence-A duck! a duck! Just what I wanted! Oh thank you, dear brother! A duck! A duck!

Richard- It's the thought that counts.

Clarence- You shouldn't have! It's so yellow and shiney!

Richard- Just a yelow shiney duck and he swims like this.

(Richard and Clarence kneel before the basin as Richard sets the little duck to swim.)

Clarence- Quack! Quack!

Richard- Quack! Quack! Quack!

( Both brothers stand up and make the duck dive bomb into the basin)

Clarence-Whee! Quack! Bonsai!

Richard- Whee! Quack! Bonsai!

( At the high point of the play, Richard grabs Clarence by the back of the neck and pushes him down in the water. Clarence does a handstand and Richard holds his struggling legs. We hear Clarence gurgling. Then Clarence's legs fall. He is drowned and dead. Richard lets Clarence fall, his head still in the basin. A moment silence. Richard tries to listen for sounds of life)

Richard- Quack?( Triumphantly) Quack! Quack! ( with false pity) Alas, poor Clarence, Plantagenet's hope! Alas, poor Clarence, slipped on his soap!.

(Symbol crash)

Actor- Meanwhile in Egypt after her lover Anthony left her, Cleopatra decides to cruise down the Nile to the fabled Valley of Queens.

"The barge she sat in like a burnished throne, burned on the water, the poop was beaten gold, Purple the sails and so perfumed the winds were lovesick with

them."Anthony and Cleopatra, Act two!

( Slaves bring in the coffin that now becomes Cleopatra's royal barge. Cleopatra stands in the bow, two slaves paddle and one slave plays the sail with a purple cloth between his arms. )

Cleopatra-Slaves to Upper Egypt!

Slaves - Bum ba ba bum, ba ba, bum

(Enter an actor)

Actor- Ladies and gentlemen, I shall now present for you my interpretation of an Egyptian crocodile.

( The actor plays a vicious crocodile and attacks Cleopatra's barge)

Slaves- A crocodile!

( The slaves stab the fearsome reptile with their paddles)

Cleopatra- Slaves, back to lower Egypt!

( The slaves paddle in the opposite direction. The queens turns.)

Slaves- Bumm ba ba bumm, bumm ba ba bumm

Cleoptra- Ahh, I see the lighthouse! I see Alexandria! Drop anchor!

( The slaves drop anchor. They help their queen disembark. Fanfare.)

Salves- The daughter of Ra!

( Cleopatra sits on a ladder that is now her throne. On both sides stand two attendants. Charmian and Iras)

Cleopatra- How shall we pass the tedious hours until we hear news of my Anthony? O Charmian, where thinkest thou he is now? Stands he or sits he? Or does he walk? or is he on his horse? O, happy horse, to bear the weight of Anthony.

Charmian- Indeed, you majesty! Happy the horse.

Cleopatra- Give me some music; music, moody food of us that trade in love.

Charmian- Bring in the Babylonian Break dance boys!

( Three Babylonian Break dance boys try to give it their erotic best. The Queen of Egypt is not amused)

Cleopatra- Throw them to the crocodiles!

Babylonians- Mercy!

( The BBDB's are dragged off as a silver bird appears. Flute music. The silver bird flies around the queen.)

Cleopatra- At last, the airmail! Little bird do you come from Rome?

Bird (tweets) Yes ( and nods her head)

Cleopatra-And do you perhaps have a letter for me?

Bird (tweets) Yes ( and nods her head)

Cleopatra- From my dear Mark Anthony?

Bird (tweets) Yes ( and nods her head)

Cleopatra-Oh, give it to me!

( The bird gives Cleopatra a roll of toilet paper)

Cleopatra- Oh, thank you sweet bird!

( The silver bird disappears with flute music. Cleopatra unrolls the toilet paper like an ancient scroll. Charmian takes the end of the paper roll.)

Cleopatra- Let's see what my Anthony writes...Dear Cleopatra I hope you are well. It feels great to be back home . ..my Anthony feels great!... the weather in Rome is fine...not so hot as in Egypt... not so hot as in Egypt, aha...by the way,... for merely political reasons, I have married the sister of Octavian.. every time I sleep with her, I think of you...What?

( Cleopatra rolls the scroll backwards. She can't believe it)

Cleopatra- My Anthony has married another? Bring me something to drink!

( Iras brings her a golden goblet and a torch. The slaves are trembling in fear at the queen's rage. Cleopatra spits fire or throws down the contents of her drink and we see a pyrotechnic effect)

Cleopatra- That's the end of the entertainments!

( Symbol crash)

Actor- Meanwhile we are in foggy London, in the dark and dank Tower of London, where the little princes, Edward and Henry, have been put in protective custody by their Uncle Richard . The boys are the last heirs to the throne of England, two little boys, without their mother, without their father, without their teddy bear. Richard the Third, Third Act!

( Enter Prince Henry with a box. The little prince speaks to the public)

Prince Henry- This is my best friend. he lives inside. you want to see him?

(Prince Henry pulls a big black spider out of the box)

Prince Henry- I call him Uncle Richard.

Prince Edward- Henry!

( Enter Prince Edward skipping a rope. Prince Henry hides his spider and puts him back in the box)

Prince Henry- Back in your box, Unc.

Prince Edward- Henry, what hast thou there?

Prince Henry- Willst thou see it? With thy very own eyes?

Prince Edward- Sure!

(Prince Henry shows him his pet spider and dangles in his brother's face)

Prince Edward- Ahhh! A spider! I hate spiders! When I am king I shall have all his legs pulled off.

Prince Henry-But that's tomorrow

Prince Edward-Look what I found on a hanged man!

Prince Henry- A jump rope!

Prince Edward-And look what I can do!

(He starts to jump rope)

Prince Henry-Wow!

Prince Edward- One, Two, Three, Four, locked behind the Tower door, Five, Six ,  
Seven, Eight soon we'll leave the Tower Gate

Prince Henry- Look what I can do!

( He takes the rope from his brother and skips)

Prince Edward-It's mine!

Prince Henry- Gypsy, Gypsy Rosalie, what kind of husband will it be? Doctor,  
Lawyer, Indian Chief..Doctor, Lawyer..

Richard- (gives his secret call) Arr, arr!

Both Princes-It's Uncle Richard! Our protector!

( Richard enters and sweetly greets his nephews)

Richard- Ahh, my honey sweet nephews. Can your old Uncle play too?

Both Princes- Sure, Uncle Richard!

( The boys turn the rope for their crippled uncle. Richard sings for the public as  
he jumps)

All- One, Two, three, four!

Richard- Little princes never more!

All - Five and six and six and seven

Richard- tonight the boys will sleep in heaven!

( The boys turn the rope too quickly and then tangle up their uncle in rope,  
circling around him. All are laughing. Richard is totally tangled up in the rope)

Prince Edward- You jump pretty good for a hunchback!

Prince Henry-And that with only one good leg!

(Richard is furious at the insults, but tries to repress his anger. He limps over to Prince Edward and bows)

Richard- Edward, the next King of England

Prince Edward-( like a king) Arise, Duke Richard, well hast thou protected us.( Then the little boy breaks out) Tomorrow I'm the king! I'm the king!

Richard- Yes indeed, but now to bed, and you too, Henry. You don't want to fall asleep during your brother's coronation, do you?

Prince Henry- Aww! ( He doesn't want to go to bed just when they were having so much fun)

Prince Edward-When the bishop puts the crown on my head, I'll be king and can do whatever I want forever.

Richard- Tomorrow you can do whatever you want, but tonight you have to go to sleep, but first let's say our prayers.

(All three make a pious tableau. the little princes praying on their knees in front of their devout Uncle Richard.)

Both Princes- Now I lay me down to sleep..

Richard- (Aside) Hopefully forever!

Both Princes- I pray the Lord my soul to keep. If I should die before I wake, I pray the Lord my soul to take.

Richard- Amen!

Both Princes-Amen!

Richard- Now boys slip under the warm blanket.

( Richard snaps his fingers and a blanket is thrown on stage. He kindly arranges the blanket around his still kneeling nephews)

Prince Henry- Uncle Richard, Why is it so wet in here?

Richard-Because your Uncle Clarence was such a messy slob in the bathroom

Prince Henry- Clarence is a messy slob! Clarence is a messy slob!

Prince Edward- Where is Uncle Clarence?

Richard- You'll see him later tonight. But now to bed.

Prince Edward- Ok, but first a lullaby

Prince Henry- A lullaby!

Both Princes-We want a lullaby! We want a lullaby!

Richard- Well then, maestro, a lullaby.

( Richard and his nephews sing "Guten Abend." The boys become sleepy as the song goes on. Edward and Henry sing softly with their eyes closed. Richard lifts the rope gently and places it around their necks. Richard strangles the boys at the end of the song and covers their dead bodies with the blanket)

Richard-Sweet dreams, boys. Now I am the King of England!

( Organ music and Bells. It is the coronation of Richard the Third. Enter the Arch bishop with the crown. Richard bows deeply before the prelate and the rather short- sighted divine puts the crown on Richard's hump instead of his head)

richard- Not there, you idiot, my head!

( Richard is terribly embarrassed. The Archbishop hurriedly puts the crown on Richard's head)

Archbishop- Sorry!

( They smile, shake hands and make a friendly pose.)

Richard-Forgiven.

Archbishop- Forgiven!

( A Symbol crash)

Actor- Meanwhile we are in Mediterranean Sea, north of Egypt. Anthony has left

his wife and broken with Rome. He is again in the arms of his beloved Cleopatra. Octavian is furious about his sister and sends an enormous Roman fleet against Anthony and his Egyptian Queen.

Ladies and Gentlemen, the greatest sea battle of the antique world, the battle of Actium, Anthony and Cleopatra, Act Three!

( During this epic sea battle, the actors will run from side to side and attack each other. They will play both Romans and Egyptians)

Actor- From the west sails the Roman fleet.

(On stage right a line of Romans march in)

Romans- Uno, due, uno, due, uno, due,tre!

(The actors salute their emperor)

Romans- Hail Caesar!

( The Romans begin to row to the Latin relative pronoun order. They learn as the row.)

Romans- Hic, Haec, Hoc- Hic, Haec, Hoc- Hic, Haec, Hoc- Hic, Haec, Hoc!

( The actors playing Romans run over to stage left to play the Egyptians)

Actor -From the south comes the Egyptian fleet.

( A line of Egyptians make a silly Egyptian movement with their hands)

Egyptians- Anubis, Ra! Ra! Ra!

(They pole their barges like Venetian gondolas changing sides as they pole.)

Egyptians- Tutahnkamun, Tutahnkamun, Nefertiti, Nefertiti- Tutahnkamun, Tutahnkamun, Nefertiti, Nefertiti

(The actors run across the stage to play the Romans)

Actor- The Romans spy the Egyptians

(The Romans salute their emperor)

Romans- Hail Caesar!

(The Romans then turn to spy the Egyptians. When they see the Egyptians sailing in their direction, they use all the Italian curse words that were cut out of "the Sopranos." After merrily cursing out their eastern enemies, the actors run across the stage to play the Egyptians

Actor- And the Egyptians spy the Romans.

(The Egyptians make the same sill gesture)

Egyptians- Anubis, Ra!, Ra!, Ra!

(They spy the Romans and make typical Egyptian reactions i. e. Your Mother sleeps with camels!)

Actor- The battle begins as the Egyptians pull back their mighty bows.

( The Egyptians pull back their mighty bows)

Actor- And fire their razor sharp arrows

( The actors let their arrows fly)

Egyptians- Zing!

( The actors scurry to the other side of the stage to receive the arrows as Romans.)

Romans- Hail Caesar!

( The Romans salute and notice a dark cloud of Egyptian arrows flying their way.They fall wounded. The Romans angrily get up pulling arrows out of various places on their bodies.)

Actor- This makes the Romans very angry and they retaliate with their spears and javelins.

(They throw their weapons.)

The Romans- Whooosh!

( The actors high tail it to the other side of the stage to receive the spears...

Egyptians- Anubis, Ra! Ra! Ra!

(Which hit them hard in various places)

Actor- The Egyptians are furious. And bring out their secret weapon of mass destruction, Nut, the terrible, Nut, the Battering Ram.

( The Egyptian with the thinnest body and the hardest head is brought out wearing a bathing cap. Nut breaks a prepared brick on his head and roars. He is indeed a mean Egyptian. His comrades are mightily impressed)

Egyptians- Nut! Nut! Nut!

(Nut springs into the arms of the Egyptians who drive him toward the public. At the last minute, Nut blows on a party hooter. Egyptians cheer. Actors cross the stage to play the Romans. the Romans now play catapult, Catapult is an actor standing stiff )

Roman1-Load the catapult

( Roman 2 puts a ping pong ball into the Catapult's mouth)

Roman 2- Catapult loaded, centurion!

Roman 1- Lower the catapult into position

( Grinding sounds. The actors support the catapult as he stiffly leans backwards)

Roman 2- Catapult in position, centurion!

Roman 1- Fire!

( The Catapult is shot into the audience. He runs furiously until he finds a suitable victim and then fires his ping pong ball at his or her forehead. The Romans cheer, then the actors rush back to play the Nubians. They form a line across the stage with their backs to the public)

Actors- When all else fails, the Egyptians turn to their last hope, the Nubian Suicide Squad.

( The Nubians turn to reveal their frightening selves. The Nubian suicide squad moves with extreme Japanese and Kung Fu precision toward the audience and at the last minute stab themselves)

Actor- The Romans are victorious.

( The Romans make a victory pyramid, the boys supporting the girls who make the "V" sign)

The Romans- Veni, vidi, vici, spaghetti!

( The Romans throw cooked spaghetti noodles at the audience, then become swimming Egyptians. Do be careful here. Spaghetti fights have been know to occur)

Actor- And the defeated Egyptians swim to a watery grave trying to reach their beloved Alexandria.

(We see the sad Egyptians swimming and drowning)

Egyptians- Glug, glug, glug.

(They make a last appeal to the god of death)

Egyptians- Osiris!

( They drown. A symbol crash)

Actor- Meanwhile in Elsinore, in Denmark, the Lady Ophelia has lost her mind and doesn't know where to find it again; perhaps because of the death of her father, perhaps because of the rejection by Prince Hamlet. Who knows?" There is a willow that grows askant the brook. There with fantastic garlands" does she come. Hamlet, Act Three!

( Enter the Lady Ophelia in white. She is mad. She is carrying a strange bouquet. As she goes through the audience, she gives away her flowers. While she is in the audience, we hear Shakespeare's WILLOW SONG)

Ophelia- O, heavens, is't possible a young maid's wits should be as mortal as an old man's life? Where is the beauteous majesty of Denmark? Young men will do it, if they come to it. By cock. they are to blame.

( She gives out some rosemary)

Ophelia-There's rosemary, that's for remembrance. Pray you love, remember

( She gives out pansies)

Ophelia- And there are pansies, they're for thoughts

( She gives some rue)

Ophelia- And rue for you, but you must wear your rue with a difference.

( She looks emptily to another spectator)

Ophelia-I would have given you violets, but they withered all when my father died

( On the stage two actors move a light blue cloth that looks in movement like water. Ophelia dances madly on the cloth and sings. The water slowly rises behind her.)

Ophelia- TAKE THIS FOR MY FAREWELL AND LATEST ADIEU  
SING WILLOW, WILLOW, WILLOW  
MARK IT DOWN ON MY TOMBSTONE" IN LOVE I WAS TRUE"  
SING WILLOW, WILLOW, WILLOW, WILLOW  
SING WILLOW, WILLOW, WILLOW, WILLOW  
SHALL BE MY GARLAND  
SING ALL A GREEN WILLOW  
WILLOW, WILLOW, WILLOW  
AYE ME, THE GREEN WILLOW WILL BE MY GARLAND

(An actor behind the cloth lifts the poor girl up. On the last note of the song, the two actors holding the blue cloth let it fall, to reveal Death himself holding the fair dead maid in his arms. He carries her away.)

(A symbol crash)

Actor- Ladies and gentlemen, the Last Act, where in all tyrants receive there just punishment on the stage of history. The cruel tyrant, Macbeth sits alone in his castle.

He has murdered even sleep. Lady Macbeth has become insane and is constantly washing her hands.

(Enter Lady Macbeth washing her hands madly.)

Lady Macbeth- Who would have thought the old man had so much blood in him?

( She goes off madly)

Actor-The witch's prophesy that until great Birnam Woods come to high Dunsinane Hill, Macbeth shall never be conquered. Macbeth, the Last Act!

( Enter Macbeth drunk and dancing with a ladder)

Macbeth- YOU TAKE THE HIGH ROAD, AND I'LL TAKE THE LOW ROAD..

(Macbeth climbs the ladder with lots of slapstick turns and finally he gets to the top and sits and takes a drink )

Macbeth- Home, at last!

(Music. Dark figures in sunglasses with green leaves before their faces, slink in. They turn their backs to the audience and tweet like forest birds. These are the dreaded

" Birnun Woods"

Macbeth- What a lovely woods! I think I'll piss on it.

(From a plastic flask hidden under his tartan, he relieves himself on "the Birnums" Who turn to the public to show their reaction to the deluge to the public)

Macbeth- Ahh, that feels more like it!

(The Birnums turn to Macbeth and slowly creep up on him, while he happily takes another " wee dram." The whole scene is like the children's game- Red light, green light)

Birnums- Birnum Wood to Dunsinane! Birnum Wood to Dunsinane!

(Macbeth turns and the Birnums stop and turn and tweet)

Macbeth- What a lovely woods and it's all mine!

(The Birnums nod in agreement and turn and move closer to the tyrant.)

Birnums- Birnum Wood to Dunsinane! Birnum wood to Dunsinane!

( Macbeth takes a quick turn to survey perhaps a movement in the approaching forest. The Birnums turn and freeze)

Macbeth- Did I see that tree move?

Birum 1- No!

Birum 2- Shhhh! ( How dumb can a tree be?)

( When Macbeth turns this time the Birnums are close enough to him to stab him violently in the back.)

Birnums- Macbeth!!!!

( The action slows a little. The Birnums get rid of their weapons. Macbeth writhes in pain. the tyrant falls backwards onto the waiting arms of the Birnums. One Birnum takes his crown and lifts it to the public)

Birnums- The king is dead, long live the king!

( A symbol crash)

Actor- Meanwhile we are in England, at Bosworth Field, where an enormous army under the leadership of Henry Tudor, grandfather of our beloved monarch, Queen Elizabeth, plans to attack the crowned hunchback. This Richard is a bloody tyrant, risen in murder and supported by it. Now his well deserved end approaches. Richard the Third, the Last Act!

(Military music. Enter two actors as horses, a white one for Tudor and a black horse for Richard, (mops for manes?) They prance proudly to the rhythm of coconuts. Richard's horse kicks Tudors and neighs evilly. The horses go to their respective sides of the stage. Enter their masters. They walk down center stage. One commander looks very good. He is in white and silver. This is Henry Tudor, grandfather of our most marvelous Monarch, Queen Elizabeth. At his side limps Richard of York, the hated hunchback. Both men despise each other.)

Tudor- Plantagenet Picklepuss!

Richard- Tudor Hardtop!

( They spit at each other. They pull out their lances that are made of rolled up newspaper )

Richard- Tudor, my lance is longer!

(Tudor bends Richard's lance)

Tudor- Not for much longer, thou usurping pig!

( Both men go to their waiting horses. They jump on their horses and ride piggy back on them against their enemy. After three rounds of a joust, Richards horse is mortally wounded by Tudor's lance. Richard drops from his mount and watches

his horse in agony)

Richard- My horse, art thou dead?

Horse- Neeeeee!

(Richard's horse dies legs up stiff, then falling over.)

Richard- A horse!, a horse! my kingdom for a horse!

( A light change and strange music. Two flowing white ghostly cloths approach Richard. From behind one cloth Lady Ann arises)

Richard- Ann, me love!

Lady Ann- Richard, you poisoned me on our very wedding night. Despair and die!

( Ann disappears behind the cloth. The little princes rise with a rope around their little necks.)

Little Princes- Uncle Richard, despair and die!

( The little princes disappear)

Richard- I never touched the little delinquents!

( Clarence rises up with his plastic duck)

Clarence- Richard, quack, quack!

Richard- Sorry, Clarence, but most accidents happen in the bathroom. It was the soap you slipped on, the soap!

( Clarence disappears)

Richard- Mercy Jesu!. Still.

( It is still. Richard can see only the white cloths)

Richard-It was but a dream.

( Lady Ann rises. She pulls a long pin from her high hat and stabs Richard in his hump. The hump balloon pops. All the ghosts of his victims rise up smiling. Richard writes on the floor in pain like a dying beetle. Richard gasps his last evil

breathe and dies. )

All the Ghosts- Quack! Quack!

(A symbol crash)

Actor- Meanwhile we are in Elsinore, in Denmark where the actors are preparing for the last act of Hamlet.

( The actors playing Hamlet, Laertes and Ophelia will come down to the actor announcing the scene in the middle stage)

Actor- See where he comes, the young prince Hamlet

( Enter Hamlet)

Actor- He has become mad over the death of the fair Ophelia

( Hamlet makes a mad gesture)

Actor - And see where he comes, the young lord Laertes.

( Enter Laertes)

Actor- He is furious

( Laertes makes an angry gesture)

Actor- Over the death of his sister, the fair Ophelia

( Enter Ophelia. She sighs)

Actor- She is

(Ophelia sighs and goes toward her brother)

Actor- Quite simply

Ophelia sighs and jumps into the arms of her brother)

Actor-Dead!

(Ophelia drops lifelessly in Laertes arms)

Actor- Hamlet, the Last Act!

Laertes- Look, Prince, to thy dead love.

Hamlet- I, Hamlet, the Dane, loved Ophelia.

(Hamlet and Laertes fight over dead Ophelia's body.)

Hamlet-Forty thousand brothers with their quantity of love make up my sum.

Laertes- You killed her!

( Enter Gertrude and Claudius)

Claudius- O, he is mad, Laertes.

Gertrude- For love of God, forbear him.

(Laertes takes his sisters body and lays it before the king)

Laertes- Revenge! my King Revenge!

Claudius- Laertes, come with me, Gertrude, see to your son.

( Claudius takes Laertes to one side stage right, Gertrude goes to her son stage left. Osric, an insipid courtier, serves the king. He provides him first with a sword, then with a bottle of Poison)

Claudius- Sword!

Laertes- Sword?

Claudius- Poison.

( Claudius covers the sword with poison)

Laertes- Poison!

Claudius- Instant Death!

(Meanwhile Gertrude is embracing her son)

Claudius- Gertrude, leave the boy, he's over twenty five!

(Claudius walks between Hamlet and Laertes. the poison sword in his left hand, the undoctored one in his right.

Claudius- Hamlet good luck, Laertes, good Luck ( King Claudius winks knowingly at Laertes)

(The two young men go to reach for their swords. At the last minute he switches the swords. Laertes gets the" envenomed foil". Claudius returns to Gertrude in middle stage. The young men shake hands.)

Hamlet- May the best man win!

Laertes- And I shall!

Claudius- Let the duel begin!

Osric- Round one!

(The young men parry and fight. Hamlet is hit.)

Gertrude- Hamlet!

Osric- A hit!

Claudius- A palpable hit!

Hamlet- Just a scratch, mother.

Gertrude- But son....

Claudius- Gertrude!

Osric- the Second Round!

(As Hamlet and Laertes fight the second round the swords fall and get switched)

Claudius- (aside) The swords are switched! Time out!

Osrik- Time out!

( Gertrude goes to care for her son, while Claudius brings Laertes to his side to show him Plan-B. Claudius shows Laertes a big golden cup)

Claudius- Wine.

Laertes- Wine?

(Claudius pours poison into the golden cup)

Claudius and Laertes- Instant Death!

(The king pulls out a ping pong ball and drops it into the golden cup)

Claudius- hamlet, this pearl is thine. Your royal father drinks to you health. ( He fakes a drink)

(Claudius reaches to give Hamlet the poisoned wine, but Gertrude come between them and takes up the cup)

Gertrude- No, You royal mother drinks to your health!

Claudius- Gertrude, no!

( Oblivious to the king, Gertrude downs the poisoned wine, tastes something strangely bitter, and starts to feel a slight unpleasantness)

Claudius-(sadly) The last round.

Osric- The last round!

(Laertes and Hamlet fight again. Laertes is hit by the poison sword, without Hamlet meaning to kill him and Laertes falls dying)

Claudius and Osric- A palpable hit!

(Hamlet pulls the sword out of Laertes' side. In back Gertrude is dizzily turning from side to side)

Hamlet- Pardon!

Osric- Look to the Queen there, ho!

Claudius- She swoons to see them bleed.

( The Queen of Denmark staggers forward trying to reach her son.)

Gertrude- Hamlet!... the wine...poison... the king!

(Queen Gertrude falls dead into her son's arms)

Hamlet- Wine?... Poison? (the penny falls) the king!

(Hamlet in rage runs to stab the king. In the last minute Osric comes between then and is run through.)

Osric- A hit, a palpable hit!

(Osric dies as Hamlet finally stabs King Claudius)

Hamlet- Here, thou incestuous, murderous, damned Dane!

(Hamlet forces the wounded king to drink of the poisoned cup)

Hamlet- Drink of this potion and follow my mother!

( King Claudius dies and for a moment it is still in Elsinore. Then Laertes begins to move and lift himself up)

Laertes- Hamlet, Hamlet!

(Hamlet runs to Laertes, kneels and lifts him up in his arms)

Hamlet- Laertes!

Laertes- My sword was poisoned. Exchange forgiveness with me, noble Hamlet.

(Hamlet kisses him gently as Laertes seems to fade away. With his last life energy Laertes stabs Hamlet and dies laughing. The Prince of Denmark is mortally wounded. Melancholy music. He stands one last time. Hamlet surveys the late Royal House of Denmark. Gertrude and Claudius are dead, so are Osric, Ophelia and Laertes. The poison is starting to work on him. He weeps, then begins to laugh.

Hamlet- Not to be, that is the answer!

(Hamlet dies)

( A symbol crash)

Actor- Meanwhile, we are in Alexandria, in Egypt. It is after the Battle of Actium and the Romans have put the Egyptian capitol to the flames. Anthony has lost his last battle. He has lost his mighty fleet, his legions and his Eastern kingdom. He

has lost everything, but his honor. Anthony and Cleopatra, the Last Act!

( We see a sacked city. Egyptian civilians are running for their lives. romans are slaughtering at will. other groups are still fighting and are cut down. Praetorius, one of Anthony's men, has caught an arrow.)

Enobarbus- Praetorius!

Praetorius- I'm a goner, Enobarbus.

Enobarbus- They've got the lighthouse!

Praetorius- And they've got me. Friend, take my farm in Sicily and promise to take care of my wife, my children, and the goats....

Enobarbus- I swear by the gods!

(Praetorius dies smiling. Enobarbus resumes the fight but is wounded by a Roman spear. Enter Mark Anthony with a flag.)

Anthony-Forward men! for Anthony and Egypt!

( He looks into the audience and sees his legions running away)

Anthony-Cowards!

( Anthony lets the flag fall. He notices his old comrade, Enobarbus)

Anthony- Enobarbus, we have lost "Omnia"

Enobarbus- "Omnia" and everything!

Anthony- One last service for your Anthony?

Enobarbus- Anything, my general

Anthony- Here is my sword

( He gives Enobarbus his sword)

Anthony- Here is my heart.

( Anthony sticks his noble chest out. The defeated general shuts his eyes and tries to run against his sword. Enobarbus notices what Anthony is planning and

turns the sword against himself)

Enobarbus- No, I would rather die myself!

(Enobarbus stabs himself.)

Anthony- Amicus meus,

( He kisses Enobarbus)

Anthony- Farewellus. I follow thy brave example and take up my sword as a Roman.

( Anthony stabs himself. Enter Cleopatra with her handmaidens searching the battlefield for her Anthony. She finds him and pulls out his sword. The handmaidens watch weeping.)

Cleopatra-Anthony!

Anthony- Ceopatra! I am dying Egypt, dying.

Cleopatra- By all the gods of Egypt, no!

Anthony- One last kiss, Egypt?

Cleopatra- A last kiss?

Anthony- Of so many thousands of kisses, the poor last, I lay on thy lips

( She takes him up in her arms and they kiss, Anthony bleeds from the mouth, then he pathetically tries to turn away from her)

Anthony- I must to Rome!

( Anthony dies. Behind them the handmaidens place a ladder. They set against it the other side of the coffin lid that has Egyptian mummy case ornamentation on it. This is now the Queen's funeral monument. They bring Cleopatra her finest garments for burial and dress her. She kisses both maidens good-bye. Teary eyed they step forward and look up to the heavens)

Handmaidens- Osiris!

( The handmaidens stab themselves)

Cleopatra- Oh death, come also to me!

( We hears a shaker. The Queen of Egypt looks around her. Out of Cleopatra's golden mantel slithers a highly venomous green snake( a hand puppet) Cleopataara fights with the little reptile that wants to bite her all over. Cleopatra directs his fangs to her regal breasts where he bites her. The poison does its work.)

Cleopatra- Anthony, I come!

(The Queen of Egypt falls dead over her beloved. There are a pile of bodies on the stage; the whole cast is down. The snake dances merrily over the heap of bodies. Strange music. The snake disappears. The bodies start to revive and move slowly like zombies to their respective sides of the stage- men stage right, ladies stage left, their lifeless heads hanging.

Music introduction to WHEN LAURA SMILES. The actors awake from their zombie dreams, raise their heads, and smile. They sing again WHEN LAURA SMILES. As they sing, they dance and elegant court dance and end holding each others little finger in a line before the audience. Then they bow to the audience on one knee together.

**THE END- BY GEORGE ISHERWOOD, AMSTERDAM, NL**

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ACT II  
ACT III  
ACT IV  
FINAL DANCE