



PROLOGUE: ENTHUSIASM AND COERCION

SCENE 1: TWO WOMEN DRESSED IN SUITS SIT ON OPPOSITE ENDS OF A BOARDROOM TABLE; ITS WOODEN SURFACE IS NEARLY THE WIDTH OF THE STAGE. THE SKY OUTSIDE, ORANGE FROM THE SETTING SUN, CASTS A WARM, DUSTY HUE IN THE OLD OFFICE. VARIOUS BOOKS, NOTES, AND PENS ARE STACKED HIGH ON THE TABLE, TAPERING OFF JUST WHERE THE TWO SLOPING PILES MEET IN THE MIDDLE. BARELY LEGIBLE IN THE BACKGROUND IS A SHADOWY FIGURE LOOKING OUT THE WINDOW; HIS BACK IS TO THE AUDIENCE.

WOMAN 1: The war ends with the foundation of a dictatorship. “It is necessary to spread an atmosphere of terror. We have to create an impression of mastery,” said the General Emilio Mola during the Spanish Civil War; but it could have been someone else, after all, he was not the first! And moreover, it will be someone else who says it again, a thousand times over.

An impression, a representation, a media object of agency; like the surface that words create in the newspaper, they fail, intentionally, to give an impression that leads one to someplace else. I fail to understand who leads and why I am lead, through the subtly shaded shards of experience, to the same opaque opinions. How familiar it is to see nothing.

We will find a common ground: the journalists, our storytellers, follow a formula in their exposés: who, what, when, where, why, depending on what hits hardest.

Something I do understand, something I cannot swallow, is that I am not my own master. Someone else will play that role for me. Sometimes I imagine that I am the understudy, and I imagine that there is a law that protects us.

WOMAN 2: The constitution provides for universal suffrage. I want to know too then, why men suffer? They believe they make sacrifices for *freedom*, they may make sacrifices for the *things they love*. They do so, but at the same time, they forget the exact date of when such-and-such a country ceased to exist; at the same time they feel pride for their nation. They forget the exact date of when the I.N.C.'s, with their underhanded grasps, larger than the eye can hold in plain sight, I'm talking *big picture*, when they leveled the globe with impunity, punitively. They do it even while forgetting another exact date; when their own capacity for exuberance became officially neutral, impotent, that is, insignificant, trapped within one realm of possibilities.

PHANTOM: **(TURNING FROM LOOKING OUT THE WINDOW)**
Eye and Hear. I and Here. I do hear. I will see.

WOMAN 1: The General needed a steady supply of trucks, tires, machine tools, fuel, and other things. Their naming brings no greater clarity to the nature or the magnitude of *the con that has convinced you*. Why don't I recognize it? Depressing me further and further into a new state of well-composed coerced.

WOMAN 2: The city feigns excitement with its opening hours, its workdays, its club nights; the museum tours, classical concerts, and Sunday strolls with weekend newspapers under arm and so on, and on, and on, and so on. Its inhabitants like the predictability; it seems like there's a lot going on, the schedules are printed out according to the day of the week.

I....

(THE LIGHTS DIM AND A PROJECTION BECOMES VISIBLE THROUGH THE WINDOW. A FIGURE IS WALKING THROUGH A PARK AT DUSK.)

I watched Catherine Deneuve eating glass in the cinema; now I finally understand. A walk in the city park, with a long wool jacket and a cane, later a conversation at a bar; nothing will persuade you, in fact, it doesn't even try to, it just puts forward its ambivalent excitements and ends, leading to no end, to the end, to nowhere. At the end of the street I turn the corner and another space reveals itself as indifferent.

People will pass here, someone will go in there, another person shouts to another person, and a car goes by.

A car goes by, and night falls.

(BLACK. SPOTLIGHTS DASH BRIEFLY ACROSS THE WALLS OF THE STAGE; BLACK. AFTER A MOMENT THE FLEETING SPOTLIGHTS RETURN. OVER THE NEXT FEW MINUTES THE LIGHTS APPEAR MORE AND MORE FREQUENTLY, BECOMING ELLIPTICAL AND RHYTHMIC.)

SCENE 2: THE BOARD ROOM NOW HAS A BAR SETUP IN IT. THERE IS A MAN SEATED AT THE COUNTER, AND SEVERAL PROSTITUTES LOUNGE AROUND THE TABLE. THE PHANTOM IS TENDING BAR AND IT IS ALMOST NIGHT.

PHANTOM: **(SINGING)**
There are two types of people in this world: winners and losers.
There are two types of trouble in this world: living and dying.

MAN 1: **(READING FROM A NEWSPAPER)**
"Workmen clear the rubble of the stately old Gotham Hotel at John R and Orchestra Place as urban renewal eats away at Black Bottom and Paradise Valley in the 1960's."

Who is hungrier, the bulldozers or time?

The caption told me, only the memory of your feet in this place would persuade you it ever existed.

PHANTOM: **(SINGING)**
Living to die.
Dying to live.
Speaking to say nothing.

MAN 1: My grandmother sent me a newspaper clipping about a house being restored in Detroit. When she was nine years old, after her parents split, her mother was a nurse there. The sturdy brick façade was gutted and its insides were sewn up with cheap drywall and plastic electric sockets.

She wonders why I'm not married, why I don't have kids. I, who even gave up on the idea of having a career, wonder how I was born into and grew so far away from thinking in those terms. The terms of the old regime: reined in with rage until an implosive collapse bears down on the inside, opened finally by force, giving way to the outside— the outside it was too temperamental to acknowledge before its great upset unsettled the collecting and re-distribution of its most personal projections.

PHANTOM: ***(SINGING)***
Change has its chance,
Fails to make an improvement.

Mankind stays blind.
Each nose to the grindstone.

(A WOMAN COMES BEHIND THE MAN AND BEGINS TO CARESS THE BACK OF HIS HEAD WITH HER NOSE. HE MOVES HIS HEAD TO NESSTLE AROUND IT, BUT IGNORES HER.)

MAN 1: Something drastic. Something suffocating. Some sludgy warm hand working its way through the Gulf Stream, digs its way to China and laps at the shores of California. I tore a hole in my clothes and when I looked through my flesh was still the same. But underneath, inside, something was different. I sweat when I walk, I flinch when I talk. I trace the outlines of my fingernails and forget to breathe when I sleep. When I show up at work I'm already exhausted and I wait for the day to be over, but it always begins again.

(THE PROJECTION IN THE WINDOWS THAT HAS BEEN GRADUALLY BECOMING BRIGHTER NOW ALMOST CLEARLY SHOWS A SERIES OF PEOPLE SLOWLY WIPING THEIR FOREHEADS.)

PHANTOM: ***(SINGING)***
At least tonight it should be so
For I swore by and by
Of your justice please

MAN 1: Something drastic. Something suffocating. I sweat when I talk, I walk flinching. The machines are manufactured to have difficulty communicating. They don't even know how to talk to each other! They won't talk to each other.
That's what we are to do ladies!
(HE STANDS, ADDRESSING THE PROSTITUTES)
Ask the machines!

(THE PROJECTION GROWS TO OVERTAKE THE STAGE, WHILE THE IMAGE ZOOMS IN ON THE FINGERS AND FOREHEADS. THE PACE OF THEIR MOVEMENT IS FRANTIC.)

SCENE 3: **THE BOARDROOM TABLE IS CROWDED WITH YOUNG MEN AND WOMEN IN BLUE WORK OVER COATS. THEY ARE IN THE PROCESS OF ASSEMBLING HAND HELD ELECTRONIC DEVICES. THE ROOM IS BLACK EXCEPT FOR THE SMALL TABLE LAMPS ILLUMINATING THE WORKER'S STATIONS. AS THEY WORK, THE PHANTOM PLUCKS THE DEVICES FROM THEIR HANDS, DESTROYS THEM A BIT, AND PASSES THEM ON TO ANOTHER WORKER AT THE TABLE. THE MAN FROM THE PREVIOUS SCENE IS SLUMPED OVER THE BAR SLEEPING.**

WORKER 1: I can clear away the rubble, but the dust is just too small!

WORKER 2: I snort dust when I'm tired.

WORKER 3: I eat dust when I'm hungry.

WORKER 4: I sleep on dust when I'm tired.

WORKER 2: **(EXCITEDLY)**
But there's never time to sleep!

WORKER 1: **(WHISPERING)**
Sometimes I sleep, but I'm always still tired!

WORKER 5: Shhhhh!

(THE SUN IS BEGINNING TO RISE OUTSIDE. THE PHANTOM WALKS AROUND THE TABLE. ONE AT A TIME, HE REACHES OVER THE LEFT SHOULDER OF THE WORKERS AND SWITCHES OFF THEIR LIGHTS. AS THEY GET UP TO LEAVE, HE PUSHES THE DEVICES THEY HAVE BEEN HANDLING TOWARDS THE CENTER OF THE TABLE. THE ELECTRONICS FORM A LINE THE LENGTH OF THE TABLE. AS THE LAST WORKER LEAVES, THE PHANTOM PLACES A GARBAGE CAN AT ONE END OF THE LONG TABLE. FROM THE OPPOSITE SIDE, HE BACKS UP AND TAKES A RUNNING LEAP, SLIDING ACROSS THE TABLE ON HIS BELLY WHILE ENCIRCLING AND PUSHING THE DEVICES INTO THE TRASH CAN WITH HIS ARMS.

THE STAGE HAS BECOME VERY BRIGHT. WHITE LIGHTS SHINE ONTO THE AUDIENCE AS A SCREEN FALLS OVER FRONT STAGE. BEHIND IT, THE PHANTOM GETS UP AND PUSHES THE TRASH CAN OFFSTAGE.

WHITE.)

SCENE 4: **TWO MEN APPROACH CENTER STAGE FRONT, AND WITH EXTREMELY CONTROLLED MOVEMENTS, OPEN THE PROJECTION SCREEN THAT IS SPLIT DOWN THE MIDDLE. WITH STRIPS OF CANVAS, THEY TIE BACK THE TWO SIDES OF THE SCREEN LIKE THE FLAPS OF A TENT, REVEALING A TEMPORARY MILITARY DORM.**

A YOUNG MAN IS SITTING UP, STRETCHED OUT ON A BED READING A MAGAZINE. ACROSS FROM HIM ANOTHER MAN IS LYING ON HIS STOMACH, ROLLING HIS FINGER UP AND DOWN A TOUCH SCREEN TABLET. A THIRD IS SITTING ON THE EDGE OF HIS BED, DOING ALTERNATING BICEP CURLS WITH A 20 LBS. DUMBBELL.

A FOURTH SOLDIER ENTERS FROM UP CENTER, CARRYING SOMETHING IN A WICKER BASKET.

SOLDIER 4: Aw, man. It's a really long story, really long; but fuck, I got something A-may-zing in here! Shit man! Come over here! Johnny, I'm fucking serious, put that down and come over!

(THE SOLDIER WITH THE BASKET SITS WITH ONE KNEE ON THE BED OF THE MAN READING THE MAGAZINE. THE OTHER SOLDIERS APPROACH THE BED, THE SECOND SOLDIER STILL CARRYING HIS ELECTRONIC DEVICE.)

SOLDIER 4: Put that fucking down! Ahhh, whatever, fuck you.

SOLDIER 1: What is it?

SOLDIER 3: Yeah, what the fuck are you so wound up on?

SOLDIER 4: I got my hands on something today... well. Maybe you can figure it out.

(HE PULLS OUT AN OLD MILITARY CAP FROM THE BASKET AND HOLDS IT UP FOR INSPECTION BY THE OTHERS.)

SOLDIER 3: I don't get it.

SOLDIER 2: What, you wanna play dress up?

SOLDIER 4: Johnny, stop and use your brain for a second. Doesn't this look familiar? Remember? Remember that weird kind of trophy room at the second palace? You saw it too, right, Sam?

SOLDIER 1: Ummm. The room yeah, I remember the room...

SOLDIER 2: Oh shit! I remember! Are you serious? Is that it?

SOLDIER 3: What? What is it? What's the "trophy" room?

SOLDIER 4: Use your imagination. Come on! Do you know what this is?

SOLDIER 3: Oh god, just fucking tell me already.

SOLDIER 2: It's a general's hat from the Spanish Civil War.

SOLDIER 4: But not just any hat, and not just any general. Look.

(HE FLIPS OVER THE HAT AND LIGHT STREAMS UPWARDS FROM INSIDE OF IT.)

SOLDIER 1: Damn!

SOLDIER 3: What the fuck!

SOLDIER 2: Is that some serious Raiders of the Lost Ark shit or what?

SOLDIER 4: Well, yeah, kind of. We're not going to combust or anything, but it does do something ver-y special.

SOLDIER 1: What?

SOLDIER 4: Try it out.

SOLDIER 1: What do you mean, try it out?

SOLDIER 4: Put it on!

SOLDIER 1: Put it on and then fucking what?

SOLDIER 4: Well, actually, you have a point. None of these walls are solid. Let's see...

(HE LOOKS AROUND, THINKING SILENTLY FOR A MOMENT.)

Let's go out to tank.

SOLDIER 3: What...

SOLDIER 2: Yeah, let's go!

SOLDIER 1: Go? You guys? What are you talking about?

SOLDIER 2: Come on, you'll see!

(THE SOLDIERS RUSH TOWARDS THE BACK OF THE STAGE AND DISAPPEAR BEHIND THE CURTAIN. THE STAGE HANDS APPEAR AT THE FRONT OF THE STAGE AND UNTIE THE FLAPS OF THE PROJECTION SCREEN.)

SCENE 5: VIDEO: THE SOLDIERS ARE OUTSIDE NOW, AND ARE GATHERING AROUND A TANK PARKED IN THE AFTERNOON SUN OF THE DESERT.

SOLDIER 4: Okay man.
(HE HOLDS THE HAT UP TO SOLDIER 1)
You are going to put this on, and push your thick skull through that tank's side.

SOLDIER 1: **(SHAKING HIS HEAD)**
Man, what are you talking about?

SOLDIER 3: Seriously, are you guys high?

SOLDIER 2: No, he is serious, it's fucking true. Put it on!

SOLDIER 1: **(GRABBING THE HAT FROM SOLDIER 4)**
Aww, what the fuck, you guys are assholes. Seriously, assholes. Why me?

SOLDIER 4: You're the virgin. No, just kidding. Why not you? Don't you believe in the miraculous? I mean you go to church and shit.

SOLDIER 1: That's obviously different asshole. What if I try it with my fist first?

SOLDIER 2: It's a hat! It goes on your head!

SOLDIER 4: And then your head goes through the tank!

SOLDIER 3: Yeah, your head goes through the tank!

SOLDIER 1: I hate you guys.

(HE PUTS THE HAT ON HIS HEAD, PULLS THE BRIM DOWN, AND STANDS UP VERY STRAIGHT.)

SOLDIER 3: Samm-y! Samm-y! Samm-y!

SOLDIER 2: **(JOINING THE CHANT)**
Samm-y! Samm-y! Samm-y!

(SOLDIER 1 BACKS AWAY FROM THE TANK, LEANS FORWARD, AND WITH FULL FORCE RUSHES HEAD FIRST INTO ITS SIDE. THERE IS A LOUD CRASH AND HE WOBBLER BACKWARDS BEFORE SLUMPING DOWN ONTO THE GROUND. THE OTHER SOLDIERS ROAR WITH LAUGHTER. SONG: "ROCK'N ROLL PART TWO" STARTS TO FADE IN.)

SOLDIER 4: **(LAUGHING)**
Oh, Sam, you fucking idiot.

(SONG PLAYS LOUDLY AS SCREEN FADES TO BLACK)

SCENE 6: VIDEO: TITLE SEQUENCE FOR CAMP VICTORY MEGAMIX BEGINS.