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Theatre for Social Change Terms 1&2

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Concubine
A Play by Jasmine Roth and Robyn Belt

Submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for
Honors in the Department of Theatre and Dance

UNION COLLEGE

Dramatis Personae:

LIZETTE - An adult prostitute who later becomes a pimp

ANGIE - A girl who is trafficked, she ages from six to twenties

CURTIS - A pimp with his own history of sexual abuse

The chorus will be fellow members of the brothel, deliver most of the poetry in unison and play the remainder of the speaking roles. There should be one man and three women, and they should be divided as follows:

Chorus 1: FEMALE: Baby, Bed 3, Delilah, ACTOR 3 in “Dinah”

Chorus 2: MALE: Male Prostitute, Beds 1 and 4, ACTOR 2 in “Dinah”

Chorus 3: FEMALE: Jaded Woman, Leah, Bed 3, ACTOR 1 in “Dinah”

Chorus 4: FEMALE: The Other Woman, Ballet Dancer, Policewoman, Bed 2, Dinah

Setting:

A messy stage, with all costumes and props flung about. The floor should be littered with magazine clippings from things like “Cosmo” and “Playboy”.

Once an actor enters, they will never fully leave the stage, but may be in tableau on the side. When the dialogue becomes poetry the “chorus” should always be present, even if only one speaker delivers the text. Poetry moments should be staged more abstractly incorporating more movement.

Set Pieces:

a bunk bed

two regular beds

4 mattresses with sheets

a chalkboard

2 chairs (not matching)

a ballet barre

2 blocks

four mirrors

Props:

a hair brush

make-up

dollar bills

an Angelina Ballerina book

a cell phone

Concubine

By Jasmine Roth and Robyn Belt

All actors stand onstage in child costumes; one wears overalls, one wears a dress. They have their hair in pigtails and braids. They are cute, sweet, kids. The sound of music playfully reverberates around them. Something like M.I.A's Mathangi.

In a staggered fashion, the kids begin to move from one side of the stage to the other. Each one (at their own pace) takes off a layer of clothes at a time, becoming sex workers in dress and mannerism as they move around the stage. The first to enter into the sex trade should in some way force or seduce someone else to do so, creating a ripple effect.

Actors can start at different ends of the stage, so that there is a moment when all actors are at different parts of the stage and different stages of life.

This movement sequence can be staged in many ways, but must show the children being forced into prostitution. In the original production, this was done through a game of freeze tag. All actors are onstage as children. One actor quits the game of tag to become a prostitute. They find another actor and force them to quit the game as well. This continues until no one is left playing tag and everyone has become a sex worker.

When the music ends, the actors should break the tableau to fill the stage with activity as if it were the dressing room of a brothel/strip club. The actors are getting ready for nightly activities.

There is idle chit chat amongst actors, hoots, calls, whistles. The environment is lively, sexual, and charged with aggression. People are throwing clothing objects left and right. It is messy and loud.

ANGIE, a bit more aloof than the others, stands at a mirror applying her make up. A JADED WOMAN, and a younger girl, called BABY, begin to talk.

JADED WOMAN: You look ripe.

(No response)

JADED WOMAN: We not good enough to talk to?

BABY: He told me not to talk to the older girls.

JADED WOMAN: So you let him drag you down here, let him put you on your knees, and then let him tell you who to talk to? Fuck me if I was such an easy ho. *(She laughs.)*

BABY: *(Angry)* I don't let my Daddy tell me nothing!

JADED WOMAN: You're Daddy? Oh, poor BABY. We've all been fucked by our daddies. Who are you to walk around like you're not some twenty dollar ho'? Pull that tampon outcho ass and look at me when I talk to you!

BABY: *(fumbling with her clothing to distract)* Listen. I'm just here to do what I gotta do. I don't want no trouble.

JADED WOMAN: *(scoffing)* You and everyone else, bitch.

(A moment passes between the two women. They stare each other down, and discover that both souls are hardened.)

BABY: How long you been here?

JADED WOMAN: 10 years, I gave birth to my second son on that spot you're standing on. I got knocked up with my first on that couch upstairs. The same chair Lionel used to fuck me in. Another thing? He used to love to ji-- *(She cackles)*

ANGIE: *(Cutting her off)* Leave her alone, Carmel. Don't you remember your first day? Or are you too fucked to remember?

JADED WOMAN: Who the fuck asked you Snow Bunny?

ANGIE: Your two sagging tits.

(JADED WOMAN retreats and goes to get sheets to make up a blank mattress, handing a sheet to another woman. The JADED WOMAN and one other girl begin to make the beds onstage.)

ANGIE (to girl): You nervous?

BABY: No.

ANGIE: I was. (*ANGIE begins to rub coke on her gums*)

BABY: What?

ANGIE: To get through it. It helps. (*ANGIE hands her a little bit of her coke*) You'll never want to sleep once you start, and just gumming a little of Lionel's shit will keep you at it.

(*BABY takes the bag and "gums" cocaine delicately, a bit uncertain and afraid.*)

ANGIE: You can use more. So, I'm guessing your parents didn't name you BABY?

BABY: I'm Laura. You?

ANGIE: Out there Tatiana, here I'm Angie.

Music begins softly. Something like Tabla Beat Science's "Magnetic" The Jaded Woman now was Leah, comes forward and snaps at Baby, who gets up and writes "LEAH" in large letters on the chalkboard. All other women continue to get ready, they change, they dress, they put on makeup, some may do coke, they may also help make beds if needed. The JADED WOMAN delivers this poem as the Biblical Leah but also as herself. The recitation begins after the JADED WOMAN, "Carmel" has "whooshed out" the sheet three times.

LEAH/CHORUS THREE:

She must have looked so earthy standing there,
So god damn earthy in her folds and draping,
Sweet, juicy Rachel with all the right shaping.
Oh! It must have been a sight to see the pretty one first,
She-Who-Walks with light, shiatsu tread marks in the sand,
With those soft hands
Kept soft for the right man.

He-Who-Keeps -The-Herd,
Increases flock, sows seeds like desert's maize,
and keeps the girl who won't put out,
for the boy who loved her nose ring.

(*The chorus becomes the "12 Tribes" and incorporates aggressive movement towards Leah,*

grabbing her limbs or face)

But do you remember,
He-Who-Takes me by the twelve tribes,
with my dull, flat, face pressed against the mooned tent.

(Beat. Reflective, religiously soaking in the memory of violence)

God, was I something when my belly swelled
with an early grave and a whisper

Chorus (*in Unison*):
that he never loved me.

CHORUS moves to the outside of stage, facing away from the audience. In tableau they wait for their customers. Actors shout, things like “you wanna ride around the world” “I go down for 20” to get attention from their potential customers.

A “new” actress, distinctively costumed as a new character steps forward. LIZETTE moves to center stage as she delivers a limerick about her life, it starts playful and ironic. LIZETTE has a “working class” dialect. Touch of Brooklyn, maybe twangy. She is not a high school graduate. Nor is she unintelligent.

LIZETTE:

There once was a girl named Lizette
Whose mother had named her Varnette
A kid thrown away
Now forced to obey
Entwined in a deadly duet

There once was a girl named Varnette
And later they called her Annette
When she ran away
It wasn't just play.
She was raped by a man she'd just met.

There once was a girl named Annette
And later they called her Lizette
When someone said one day
if you don't have sex for pay
I'll burn your vag with my cigarette

CHORUS:

There once was a girl named LIZETTE
 Whose mother had named her Varnette
 A kid thrown away
 Now forced to obey
 Entwined in a deadly duet

The chorus members turn the bed into a car. LIZETTE steps into the car. CURTIS gets in on the other side. Lizette is dressed up to work. Curtis can change his demeanor with the flip of a coin.

CURTIS: *(on cell)* Between the fucking hydrants, man! On Park, yea...Fucking Christ! No. I don't know what the fuck you're saying.

LIZETTE: *(whispering)* I see a car.

CURTIS: *(motioning to silence her, physically and brusquely)*. What? No, man. You're too fucked for this. I'm giving your 30 bags to Angelo and you don't fucking push me again.

LIZETTE: Curtis?

CURTIS: *(to Lizette)* Bitch, I asked you to be silent. *(on phone)* You fucking hear that? That's me dropping your spick ass, you fucking prick! *(Curtis hangs up)*

(A moment passes in silence as Curtis collects his breath)

CURTIS: I can't keep cutting myself in half and not have enough shit for us, y'know? Frankie is such a prick. I didn't think he would drop 30 bags of prime shit! I...*(He reaches out and touches Lizette)*

LIZETTE: *(Shoving him away)* So Frankie's a prick? So what? Weren't we lazy pricks when we were tweaked too? *(beat)* I know that you're trying to cover rent on top of everything. Plus keep Pamela's fat ass happy along with her fat fuckin' kid. But I'm the one with the dick in my mouth, Curtis.

CURTIS: That's a fucking car.

(Lizette nods and begins to fix herself)

LIZETTE: Yea, but the plates are out of state, think it's okay?

CURTIS: I don't know. Look where they're parked. Can't be a cop. *(bitterly)* Just ask for directions from them with your mouth open and your tits hanging out. Git on Baby.

LIZETTE: Yea, but you said this beat was tipped off two weeks ago, one of Lionel's white girls was taken in, remember?

CURTIS: (*violently*) Then you find out if they're cops the fucking hard way, Jesus! If you're too scared to even try and trick, let out alone get out of the fucking car, then you're really not working! Are you?

LIZETTE: (*Rising up in her alignment to get in CURTIS' face*) All I was going to SAY, if you let me fucking talk for one minute, is that if I get arrested it's your ass too. And I won't be the one selling crack and pussy, CURTIS. That'll be you.

CURTIS: (*fuming*) I really don't need you to push me right now. I know what's at stake. Everything's at fucking stake. We could fucking die at any moment, isn't that right? If we haven't died already, right? If we haven't fucking killed ourselves yet? Don't fucking push me!

(*Curtis "fumes" temporarily. A moment passes. Lizette stares at him, a bit numb, too tired to fight back.*)

LIZETTE: (flatly.) They've been parked for ten minutes.

"LIZETTE" gets out of the car after adjusting herself. Music plays. World music like Rufus Cappadocia's "Prayer." She takes a moment, and begins to recite this piece while working her beat, seducing the audience as the man in the car. She is seeking to turn tricks. She is meditative, glorious, still and present.

LIZETTE/EVE:

The still still earth in those early hours.

The creeping of rocks along a creek, and scattered light refracted in those rocks, and air, and hazy leaves and boughs of trees.

Adam and Eve held hands beside a river-creek, God touched those hands, no supposition, and everything was good.

In the beginning there were two

(*Curtis joins her in saying the words "two of us"*)

Of Us, and that naked, senseless, mewling sound, reverberations against canals, and destitute darkness, and robbed light.

(*The male chorus member write "EVE" in large letters on a chalkboard*)

But soon, we were three.

(The male chorus member joins in to say the word "three")

Eve walked with He, and He with She, and there were Holy Ghosts between, them,
Spirits, transformation goddesses, Kama Sutra, Allah,
Oh my God!

*(The woman pauses and collects herself. The male actor who is a John appears stage right.
Lizette delivers this last stanza to the John.)*

I think about running a hand against your stubble,
And of horizon lines in paintings,
And of the good in you,
And what my last words might sound like.
Punctured and half-formed, taken from your ribs,
And played like a guitar, with an honest dusty tune against this street.

A police siren, makes the John, LIZETTE and CURTIS all run off stage.

The scene shifts into ANGIE bedroom, BABY is watching Angie's story intently, as if part of their previous conversation. The intention is that Baby is the audience into Angie's past.

All other actors move around Angie, and the energy of the room turns into a teenagers bedroom.

ANGIE has changed age, maybe a subtle costume shift. 16 year old ANGIE sits on her bed making phone calls to her best friend. Time passes between each phone call, this should be simulated in some way.

All other actors recite in "Greek Chorus" fashion

CHORUS *(a different chorus member per line):*

There is a girl
Quiet and young
Blue eyes shine
hope and promise

ANGIE: "Hi Amber! I just have to tell you! I lost my virginity! It was wonderful, magical, beautiful. I really like sex! He kept telling me how wonderful I was and how beautiful and good....OH it was amazing...I know...well my parents weren't home, its fine, they'd like him...I know he's older but...I mean not like my dad older, just like you know, older. He's so sweet....He cares about me. Did I show you the Tiffany earrings he bought me my mom doesn't even have anything that nice... I know its against the law TECHNICALLY, but Amber I LOVE him..."

CHORUS *(a different chorus member per line):*

There is a girl
 Quiet and young
 Blue eyes shine
 hope and promise

ANGIE: You just can't control who you fall in love with... no you can't tell anyone, I'm trusting you, I don't want him to get in trouble... I don't know, this just feels like the best thing in the world...Hold on...he's calling me. I'll talk to you later, I love you, bye!"

Time passes as the chorus speaks. ANGIE moves around her "room" maybe brushes her hair, puts on makeup etc. to show her aging.

Chorus:

There is a girl
 Her lips taste
 like mint Chapstick
 with glitter
 because she likes
 to feel pretty

There is a boy who
 meets her and knows her
 Likes her blue eyes and glitter.
 Listens and whispers
 sweet sweet girl
 in her ear.

The chorus moves to surround her, threatening. ANGIE calls from her Cell phone.

ANGIE: (Disheveled, out of breath, beyond flustered) "Hi Amber- I-uh can you come pick me up?...I'm at a motel...on the corner of 6th and 50th. No,...I can't call my parents...Amber, I need you...He brought friends....I know. I know...Can you please just come....And I need...I need clothes. ...Thanks. I love you."

Time passes as the chorus speaks. ANGIE puts on heels, and walks to a stationary phone onstage to make the last call. The chorus forces her into prostitution shown through movement and physical violence.

Chorus: He replaces her Chapstick
 for ruby red lipstick
 her blue eyes with bruises
 Soft skin sliced

ANGIE calls from a pay phone

ANGIE: "Amber-how many times do I have to tell you. I like what I do. I'm good at it. I like being good at something...No, I can't tell you where I am, but I'm not in New York, He took me to Cincinnati first, but we're moving...all over...We- me, him and the three other girls...He's not bad for me, Amber, he supports me...well...its not his fault...sometimes I deserve it...he takes care of us, and sometimes that includes....does my mom still ask about me?...I can't Amber, you know I can't come home—"

Music begins

The chorus takes her away from the phone.

CHORUS (*In unison*)

There is a girl
tear stained cheeks
taste salty and bitter
as men fuck her
for pleasure with fear

THE CHORUS hoists ANGIE onto a block and begin to mold her. Chorus pins/tapes images of overtly sexualized body parts that they find on the floor onto ANGIE's corresponding body parts. The stanzas are to be repeated, with some said in unison creating a "row" effect with the language. The delivery of these lines is robotic and artificial.

Chorus:

Human dissection for your canon proportions,
You must tear me flesh from bone to find me perfection,
Smooth-featured and closed-mouthed.

Give me a blanket stare, stretched on cheekbones,
Softened by the chisel, and your still, cool,
Hand that polishes my hips and carves my breasts that stand alert
To suckle you and all my kids.

Lapis Lazuli for inlaid eyes

Lashes from copper,

(UNISON)

And I am hollowed stone.

The CHORUS moves off to the side of stage and stands in poses as if they are working the street.

CURTIS and LIZETTE come back, LIZETTE sits on another bed. The chorus stays, watching.

CURTIS: You little shit. I know exactly what you is. *(Running up and screaming in her face.)* A thieving cunt who steals 30 bucks from me to get her nails done!

LIZETTE: CURTIS, please...It wasn't for no nails...I...

CURTIS: *(Interrupts)* As if those nice nails could make me pedal your ass further! You a bottom bitch not some white-collar hooker. You're a twenty-for-head ho with the beat you're working and those track marks all over you.

LIZETTE buries her face, but does not cry. She is breathing heavily. She is playing a tactic of her own.

CURTIS: Stop stealing my shit, man. Please, stop stealing my shit. *(Stares at LIZETTE, still uncertain on how to respond.)* What? You think I want to be pimping your sorry ass, and Pamela's, and Tawny's all up and over the Heights? I love you girls like family. *(Insisting tones)* Don't I give you the roof over your head? Didn't I drag you out of some crack den in winter?

LIZETTE: Sure, CURTIS, I know.

CURTIS: *(connected to her by his own past.)* Just like my fucking mother. A crack BABY, a mean hooker, a fucking angry piece of shit woman who would steal shit from her own kids when she could get away with it.

LIZETTE: Well, holy shit CURTIS, you got a lot of problems with pussy.

CURTIS: What can I say man, pussies always trail me. Uncle Richie-my momma's pimp- he called that my gift-gettin pussy and keepin in. That, Uncle Richie he always say them hoes yo' cheese grinders, so I'm making my cheese.

LIZETTE: Well you won't be making "yo' cheese" unless you get more of that thorozone for

Tawny.

CURTIS: You a backhanded ho LIZETTE, you don't like the way Daddy treats you, you go back to Momma. What, you didn't like your foster Daddy rubbin his cock on you? Fuck you LIZETTE, you a pretty little white girl, and your Momma didn't even know what smack was.

LIZETTE: No, but she always knew where she hid the scotch no matter how fucked she got.

CURTIS: Bitch you don't know what hard is. Try havin your mom come in loaded and start yanking on your dick. I'm fucking 8 years old. She told me every day the only reason she didn't abort me was 'cause her pimp thought it ruined the girl's pussy.

LIZETTE: Fuck CURTIS, I'm supposed to be crying some shit?

CURTIS: You's always a sweetheart LIZETTE.

LIZETTE: At least your Momma's dead. Last time I talked to mine, she was in some home, I told her I was dancing.

CURTIS: Yea you dancing, BABY.

They laugh, but CURTIS quickly grabs LIZETTE by the wrist and twists it behind her.

CURTIS: Seriously stop stealing my shit. Get on your knees and give it a kiss. (*Shaking his head*) Ratchel nail job.

World music begins again. Dinah writes Dinah on the chalkboard. BABY joins THE CHORUS who surround the young woman, who is Dinah, and step forward to tell each part of her story.

ACTOR 1: Now Dinah, the daughter Leah had borne to Jacob, went out to visit the women of the land. When Shechem son of Hamor the Hivite, the ruler of that area, saw her, he took her and raped her.

ACTOR 2: His heart was drawn to Dinah daughter of Jacob. He loved the young woman and said to his father Hamor, "Get me this girl as my wife."

ACTOR 3: "These men are friendly toward us," Shechem said. "Let the Hebrews live in our land and trade in it; the land has plenty of room for them. We can take their daughters and they can take ours."

ACTOR 2: Three days later, Dinah's brothers, took their swords and attacked the unsuspecting city, killing every male.

ACTOR 3: They put Hamor and his son Shechem to the sword and took Dinah from Shechem's house and left.

ACTOR 1: The sons of Jacob came upon the dead bodies and looted the city where their sister had been defiled.

CHORUS (*In unison*): Should we let our sister be treated like a whore?

(Dinah steps forward to tell her story while the chorus supports her.)

DINAH: (*To Chorus, ironically, a bit embittered with the knowledge that she didn't get to tell her own story.*) Almost left me to die where I stand? As a bloody once-proud column without a speaking part? Violent in your veins, so red begets red? Should I cheer when the streets run red? Red badge of courage in your honor? Its funny that once you're damaged goods, your family finds it hard to look you in the eye.

The CHORUS flails away and becomes attached to ANGIE's story. The actors transition back into their brothel chorus counterparts. The brothel energy resumes, as if the women have returned from the night. They may change and slowly go to sleep. We have walked in on a moment. ANGIE speaks.

ANGIE: Where you gonna sleep tonight?

BABY: He told me I don't get a bed, 'til I make two hundred

ANGIE shakes her head, and motions to her own bed.

ANGIE: You know, you don't look like a BABY when you're all dressed up like that.

BABY: I wish people would stop saying shit like that, I'm fourteen!

ANGIE: Shit, I remember when I was fourteen. My face was covered in pimples but I had some boobs growin' in, not like yours though. (*Beat*) I think that was the first time I got wasted, fourteen. My half-brother-Billy-he had an apartment in Philadelphia, invited my sister Lydia and I over for a weekend. You ever been to Philly? (*Baby shakes her head*) Billy's friends kept making me drink this shitty stuff, and the next thing I know I'm on a couch with these two guys finger fucking me. That was freshman year, when I was still a good student. So how about you, hows fourteen going?

Club music begins. A ballet barre is carried out from one side by the remainder of the CHORUS. Two BALLET DANCERS take their place at the barre and begins to warm up for ballet class.

ANGIE takes her place on a “small stage” and begins to dance as a stripper. The other chorus members, joined by LIZETTE and CURTIS and stare up at ANGIE, they form the chorus for the dialogue. The “she” the chorus speaks of represents ANGIE. The crowd watching ANGIE is rowdy, reminiscent of drunk men at a bachelor party. ANGIE should loose touch more and more throughout the piece.

BALLET DANCERS:
I who dance at the barre
Pointed toes, fifth position,

CHORUS:
But She who dances not by choice
At the bar, on the street

BALLET DANCERS:
I who dance in mirrors,
In photographs, in dresses.

CHORUS:
She who dances while
Pimps spread fingers around me.

BALLET DANCERS:
I who dance while
Spotlights spread their glow around me,
Stripping fear, stripping silence.

CHORUS:
Stripping freedom, stripping spirit.
She who dances broken promises
From employment agencies

BALLET DANCERS:
And when I’m dancing lifted high

CHORUS:
From the man who barks orders.

BALLET DANCERS:
In spirit on a stage,
CHORUS:
She who dances with their money

BALLET DANCERS:

I who dance feeling

CHORUS:

In photographs, in costumes
keeping business up.

BALLET DANCERS:

I who dance everywhere.

CHORUS:

And when She dances lifted high

BALLET DANCERS:

sand crinkling in my toes

CHORUS:

for those

BALLET DANCERS:

tapping toes under tables

CHORUS:

Who strip her body down to numbness.

BALLET DANCERS:

I who dance down winding roads

CHORUS:

She who dances slowly dying.

BALLET DANCERS:

I who dance through life.

EVERYONE:

She who dances.

ANGIE stumbles out of the poem. This particular night, she has had enough. The ballet dancer who is the same actor as BABY looks at her. ANGIE is drunk, her dress has been torn. LIZETTE, who has been watching ANGIE notices her. The rest of the actors should be in the back of the tableau. The LIZETTE we see here is not the LIZETTE who was being pimped by CURTIS. She is

more collected, worldly, and less likely to boil over. Her voice has changed in addition to her demeanor.

LIZETTE: I know you, you're one of Lionel's girls. You look absolutely fucked, sweetheart. Why don't you let me help you out there? *(Reaches out to help ANGIE stand)*

ANGIE: No, I-can't-my boss. I need to go back in there.

LIZETTE: LaMonte's doesn't need you, they're a shit place, and besides, they have six other dancers tonight. *(ANGIE stares at LIZETTE as though she has multiple heads.)* I used to dance too, but not around here. I was in town tonight, and I see you, looking sweet and tired as hell.

ANGIE: I think I need to puke.

LIZETTE: Listen, if you want, you're going to go back in and grab your things, I'll wait here for five minutes. That's it, if you're out here in five minutes, I'll be here. This is your chance to live with another girl. You wanna stay cooped up with Lionel and his ratchet hoes?

ANGIE: *(Belligerent)* Don't touch me!

LIZETTE: I'm Lizette. And you're fucked if you don't come back to my place.

ANGIE: Why the fuck should I go with you?

LIZETTE: Because I need to help someone. Because I need another woman's voice. Because Lionel is shit for you.

ANGIE: And what beat did you say you worked?

LIZETTE: Did I say I worked on a fucking beat? You think that's all us hoes are good for? I can hook you up better. With a better place to sleep and hot water.

ANGIE sways as LIZETTE talks to her. She is unstable and reliant on the other woman's physical support. LIZETTE reaches out and holds ANGIE by the arm.

ANGIE: *(Mumbles something inaudible)*

Time passes- music plays, a movement moment between them that establishes the bed that is LIZETTE's home. ANGIE and LIZETTE sit on a bed. The women have been living for weeks together now. During the next segment, we see LIZETTE bring ANGIE home and tuck her into bed. There are still tableaux where ANGIE and LIZETTE are sleeping in bed together, drinking together, and speaking.

At the same time, the chorus stands in a straight line, the first straight line in the stage picture. They face the audience. These lines are repeated on top of each other almost synonymously. The male voice should be actor 2.

Actor 1: "You smell so sweet, like strawberries."

Actor 2: "You're a pile of crap," Dad said to me when he was finished. Then Mom cleaned up.

Actor 3: "You don't need to run with Latin Kings and nigger pimps."

Actor 4: "If you love me, you'll sleep with them tonight"

Actor 1: "I'll kill your whole fucking family."

Actor 2: "You're my special boy"

Actor 3: "You're not like those other girls..."

Actor 4: "You reckless eyeballing, bitch? I can beat you to this ground."

Actor 1: "You like it when you don't want it, don't you?"

Actor 2: "I know you're angry now, but the truth is you'll never stop loving me"

(There is a collective breath taken by the Chorus. They resume.)

Actor 3: "Fucking grab that bitch!"

Actor 4: "You can call the police but no one's gonna un-rape you"

Actor 1: "You're already impure, so why does it matter?"

Actor 2: "If you tell anyone, I'll make sure they know it was your fault"

Actor 3: "I can give you a job in a massage parlor, for \$20 an hour"

Actor 4: "Tonight we are doing what Mommy and daddy are doing."

Actor 1: what they told me

Actor 2: "Don't worry boys are supposed to like this"

Actor 3: My father said, “You need to stop crying, you’ll wake the others”

Actor 4: What she told me

Actor 1: “Get in that corner and keep your head down.”

Actor 2: What he told me

Actor 3: “You just love my cock inside you.”

Immediately after the delivery of the last line LIZETTE should begin her line, as if a continuation of the previous section.

LIZETTE: *(While putting on make-up or getting dressed)* Listen honey, you know I can't let you stay here for free forever, especially with my landlord who's such a prick.

ANGIE:--but I thought--At least 'til next month right? I'm still pissing blood.

LIZETTE puts a finger on ANGIE's lip to 'sh' her gently, the touch is familiar and comes easily for both of them. They have a moment.

LIZETTE: Don't worry. I'm not asking you to work in cars and alleys and streets. That I can promise you. You know I got love for you.

ANGIE: You hardly fucking know me.

LIZETTE: Doesn't matter when I feel like I've known you all my life. Listen, we do this together for three more months and we can haul ass out of here. With better money, we get a better place. Maybe move somewhere so there's no records on our ass and we can work. Like work, “work”. You would be such a cute waitress.

ANGIE: Yea, yea, I can do three months.

(LIZETTE smiles and embraces ANGIE. Perhaps she kisses her.)

LIZETTE: You're such a sexy, little fuck, y'know that, Ange?

Chorus of women writes Delilah's name on chalkboard and then integrate into the next piece, one of them becomes Delilah and ANGIE and LIZETTE join the chorus, the brothel energy has resumed.

An actress appears on-stage to a percussive rhythm. She may be playing with fabric, and should giggle and “make eyes” at specific audience members before beginning the piece. She and the CHORUS repeat the name Delilah several times.

DELILAH:

That just sounds so yummy, don't it?
Pop that in your mouth and taste up on it.

CHORUS:

Oh, she's a she all right,

DELILAH:

was one ever so,
Immortalized by sex,
Yet can we know,
Her heart didn't break for him,
his locks on the floor,
Or the fact that her hand wasn't weighted in gold.
Or that Delilah didn't live outside her concubine role,

CHORUS and DELILAH:

Walled in the harem, until she was sold,
Enslaved to a court in which she was low,
Asked to learn a language she wasn't born to know.

(The tone of delivery shifts entirely)

Or that the gold in her palm was like his earnest eyes,
which invite the promises of morning,

throwing your arms around your mother,
that fine pursuit of happiness, in the field.

(Chorus joins in on italicized words)

Of having *sex*, and *cake*, to *eat it too*,
Because she is delicious, and knows just what to do,
when asked to place her head against his chest,
to *bite*, to *bleed*, to *swallow*, and chew.

All for the gold in her palm.
Which reminds her of palms, and the shade of the palms,
and the unmolested field.

*The chorus members make a circle of beds and each take position amongst them.
There are three beds and one bunk bed.*

*ANGIE and LIZETTE stand in the middle of a circle of beds, they are in their own world, the
beds are dark-and their occupants are barely noticed. They talk as ANGIE gets ready.*

LIZETTE: God, your hair looks so shiny. I wish mine got that shiny.

ANGIE: Thanks.

LIZETTE: Hey, you're not still pissed that I woke you up early are you?

ANGIE: No.

LIZETTE: Y'want some of my lotion?

ANGIE: Nah, I didn't even shave.

LIZETTE: All the more reason.

(Lizette begins to rub lotion on Angie's legs.)

LIZETTE: These are mostly working guys y'know? I worked with a girl who got me into the hotel avenue. Less street shit ya'know.

ANGIE: I know.

LIZETTE: You always do. Let me fix your eyes? You look so tired, Ange.

ANGIE: I can do it

(ANGIE fixes her makeup. LIZETTE waits for ANGIE to finish, watching her quietly. LIZETTE hands ANGIE four room keys.)

LIZETTE: Four fucking Johns and stop being a whiny bitch about it. Good luck.

(She kisses her forehead. ANGIE walks to the first bed, and then to the others, in between each one she rubs coke on her gums. LIZETTE stands in the middle of the circle, she watches ANGIE.)

LIZETTE: I really do love her.

(Bed #1, ANGIE moves to bed, a man stands)

Man: I've been waiting awhile

ANGIE: Sorry to keep you unsatisfied for so long

Man: We have to make this quick, I have to get home

ANGIE: Anything you want.

(They move to the bed, freeze)

LIZETTE: My name is Lizette. My name was once Varnette. Before that, they called me Annette. That's what my mom named me, that lazy piece of shit. She popped vicadin's like candy after Dad left and collected disability like they paid her. You know what the social worker told me,

after my mom tried to take out my fuckin eye with a piece of glass. “Anything can be better than this.” Well, except for that second foster daddy. That second foster daddy...

(ANGIE moves to the second bed, the man moves to the fourth bed. Bed #2: a woman in a business suit sits anxiously)

2: Hi

ANGIE: Hello

2: So how do we start?

ANGIE: Depends on what you're in the mood for-

2: This is my first time.

ANGIE: Buying a hooker or being with a woman?

2: Both.

LIZETTE: I think CURTIS loved me. We had shared seven years together, and a few homes- most of them were shit. He got booked on some shit like loitering. And I finally had the sense to leave him. He cried like a BABY on the street outside the station. On all fours. He grabbed my knees outside, and tugged at my dress, and screamed the word “FUCK” while looking up at the sky. In all my years, I’ve never heard a man cry like that.

(ANGIE moves to the third bed, Bed #3, two people sit on the bed)

3: Hi

4: Welcome

(Before she says anything they grab her, punch her crotch and throw her on the bed.)

LIZETTE: Ange always acts like the sky is gonna to eat her whole. But she has a very soft body. Out of all the girls at Lamonte’s she kept her head down the most and didn’t watch herself in the mirror. *I* thought, I can work with this. I can take care of her and she’ll take care of me, and we can share an apartment and get dressed together. Girls like us have been doing that for years. It’s how we remind each other that we’re only human.

(ANGIE moves to the fourth bed: a bunk bed. She climbs to the top bunk. Bed #4, The man is sitting on the bed, legs dangling off the edge)

Man: What’s your story?

ANGIE: Which one do you want?

Man: I want to know who you are.

*(ANGIE begins to dance seductively for that person, maybe she strips a little.
She is reciting mechanically, like a memorized speech)*

ANGIE: I was raped when I was five, I am a very broken girl, I need you to save me. I love you.
Or do you want the other story: I am a strong woman, here by choice. I love sex.

(She stands on the top bunk continues to dance, the other beds move.)

ANGIE:

Tell them what they want to hear
I could be anything you want
I am your fantasy come
to fulfill you.

They ask and question
But no one will ever know
What's behind this flesh
Because when they see
flesh they want to fuck

Chorus:
and to fuck
is the opposite
of listen.

ANGIE:

At least it always has been for me.
(she is no longer dancing at this point)

I need
to disappear
to crawl inside someone else's skin
to pretend that it isn't me between those sheets

Chorus and ANGIE:

Wounds open

ANGIE:
I who lie sleepless
on bed sheets
in backseats
on street corners
at midnight.

I whose high heels dance
and trick
and walk.

I who slides down sweaty poles
with
dirty dollars
thrust at my crotch.

Chorus and ANGIE:
Wounds open

ANGIE:
on a bed of semen and yeast infections

Chorus and ANGIE:
Wounds open

ANGIE:
on that bed that felt my first rape
and my third.

Chorus and ANGIE:
Wounds open
dripping blood.

(Sound cue of droplets. Angie leaves the top bunk and begins to get dressed. She talks directly to the audience)

ANGIE: I was finished with him, and he was finished with me. He was an odd one, just asked me if I would stay for a while, while he slept. A hotel room in a strange city. There was a bible on the night table and I flipped it open randomly and read.

(Angie walks the street, like she's working her beat. Other women also walk the street in the back ground.) Judges though, a story in a book called judges. Its what my finger fell on, so I read. Levite and his concubine-an unfaithful concubine-are traveling and they stay at an inn. But that night a group of men show up and want to have sex with the man-not the woman, the man. The owner thinks thats fucked up, so he offers up his virgin daughter and the concubine to satisfy them instead. However, they're only somewhat appeased, so they go a head and gang bang the concubine all through the night. And when she stumbles back and collapses on the threshold of the inn and bleeds to death right there on the doorstep-no one hears her cry. So naturally, the man chops up her body and sends it to the 12 tribes of Israel. What could be worse? (she laughs) Maybe NOT dying, but reliving it.

(The police officer approaches)

POLICE OFFICER: Ma'am, you can put your hands behind your back, you're under arrest for prostitution.

ANGIE: But I wasn't doing anything! We were just talking, I wasn't doing anything.

POLICE OFFICER: You have the right to remain silent. Anything you say can and will be used against you in a court of law. You have the right to an attorney...

ANGIE: I got it. I know.

The chorus becomes other women and men who have been arrested. Policewoman becomes a prostitute again. Transition into "Human Dissection"

A series of lights and poses as if each actor is getting her mug shots taken. They each have a mug shot sign detailing the date and their offense-prostitution. The women speak robotically as their photos are taken. This text should be divided and layered, so it is not said in unision.

Chorus

Human dissection for your canon proportions,

You must tear me flesh from bone to find me perfection,

Smooth-featured and closed-mouthed.

Give me a blanket stare, stretched on cheekbones,

Softened by the chisel, and your still, cool,

Hand that polishes my hips and carves my breasts that stand alert

To suckle you and all my kids.

Lapis Lazuli for inlaid eyes

Lashes from copper,

And We are hollowed stone. *(UNISON)*

ANGIE should be the last woman to move forward for her photo.

ANGIE: Angelina Michaels

A bright light flashes as if a photo was just taken, ANGIE turns to face the side

ANGIE: Arrested January 18, 2014, prostitution

Another bright light flashes, finishing the mug shot

20 year old ANGIE sits at a desk being interrogated by the police

POLICE OFFICER: You're a lucky young woman you know. To be pulled off the streets. Second time in six months too.

ANGIE: You call that lucky?

POLICE OFFICER: Where were you?

ANGIE: Outside the Hilton Times Square. I wasn't even dressed up.

POLICE OFFICER: Your face was re-conned. That's all it takes. *(A moment)* Say his name and I'll book your pimp. We can get you both off the beat.

ANGIE: You could put us both in a fucking cell.

The two women stare at each other in direct conflict.

POLICE OFFICER: There's another girl here to pick you up. I want you to go home with her tonight, and leave us your information for a Public Defender I also want to look into re-location services for you. Rehabilitation.

ANGIE: *(Scoffing)* Rehab, you ever been?

ANGIE stands up to leave and is greeted by Lizzette, the evidence of the police station fades away. The policewoman once again becomes a member of the Chorus.

LIZETTE: The fucking Hilton? What are you some kind of retard who doesn't know what a lobby is?

ANGIE: Don't give me shit right now, Lizette. I'm tired. I spent a night in there with some ghetto hooker who kept grabbing my tits.

LIZETTE: You got caught.

ANGIE: So? You don't give a shit about me.

LIZETTE: What the fuck Ange? You know that's not true!

ANGIE: Maybe I don't wanna be your bottom bitch.

LIZETTE: You're fucking asking for it, outside a fucking hotel!

ANGIE: Maybe I am. *(These last two lines are delivered almost on top of each other)*

(There is a moment of conflict and deep, penetrating stares.)

LIZETTE: Damn it, ANGIE! *(LIZETTE shoves ANGIE out of a place of deep hurt. ANGIE shoves back and the two women engage in a physical altercation.)*

LIZETTE: *(continued)* We were supposed to do this together, and now you act like you fucking hate me and I'm hurting you? I give you food, and laundry, and whatever shit you need, and let you sleep in bed right next to me. You would be givin' head for ten bucks in a car if it weren't for me!

ANGIE: You're such a cunt LIZETTE.

(In response LIZETTE grabs ANGIE by the hair and yanks her to the floor)

LIZETTE: No, you're the cunt, ANGIE, Tatiana, little whore-bride. You're the dick sucking cunt and the only thing you're good at is dick sucking. You want out? Then be out. But don't you ever be an ungrateful whore to me again. You're shit without me.

(LIZETTE turns to leave, starts walking away, ANGIE is still on the floor. LIZETTE looks back. When she speaks she is near tears.)

LIZETTE: You're my fucking sister Ange.

(The women look at each other. Lizette finally leaves.)

ANGIE (screaming): LIZETTE!

There is a moment when everything is still. The chorus comes forward led by CURTIS speaking

*about Adam and Eve. ANGIE changes to prepare for her last monologue. He begins to speak.
Music plays, the same as EVE's monologue, something like Rufus Cappadocia, Prayer.
Throughout the poem each chorus member comes forward to stand with CURTIS.*

CURTIS:

In the beginning there were two
Of Us,

THE MALE PROSTITUTE:

Adam and Eve held hands beside a river-creek,
and everything was good,
And easy-naming animals and watching gardens grow

CHORUS (in Unison):

But oh
That heavy fall.

THE OTHER WOMAN (male voices should join on the italicized words):

Leaving us bruised as we hit *the*
hard cold street,
this garden of concrete,
that now our high heels echo on

BABY:

dancing, turning tricks.
to mate like beasts.

The JADED WOMAN:

Are there still holy ghosts between Us,
spirits, transformation goddesses, Allah
God?

THE MALE PROSTITUTE:

I think about running my hands under cold water,
and of the gnarled and ironed bars inside my window,
and of

THE OTHER WOMAN:

the good in you,

CURTIS:

and what corner I will die on,
and what newspaper will dare to say I lived?

The chorus fades to the outside and prepares themselves for the final movement sequence.

5 year old ANGIE lies with her body half under her bed, reading 'Angelina Ballerina' as she speaks half to herself, half to the audience. The actress is the same ANGIE but we see that she is now a small child.

ANGIE: My name is Angelina Eve Michaels and I am in kindergarten. My baby sister Lydia was born today, 8 pounds and 12 ounces. I didn't know what an ounce was, but Daddy helped me look it up on the computer. I'm really good with computers. Daddy said Mommy's not going to come home from the hospital for a while. But I miss Mommy, she wasn't here last night either, so she didn't get to tuck me in. When I grow up I'm going to be a doctor and I'll make it so that mommies always get babies during the day so that they can tuck their other kids in, I'll also let the other kids come to the hospital. Daddy said I couldn't go cause I wasn't old enough, but my sister's there and she was just born! I also have a half-brother Billy, its just a half because my

mommy isn't his mommy. I wonder what the other half is, he has to have two halves. Maybe he's half my friend. Half brother-half friend. That sounds pretty great to me! Kinda like Amber, she's my best friend at school, but she's kinda like a sister. I wonder if she could be half my friend and half a sister. Maybe I'll ask her tomorrow at recess. Do you think Lydia will mind if I have a half sister too?

Music begins to play, something like "More than Life" by Whitley.

All actors come onstage, they help ANGIE up. They resume their positions of the opening. Slowly they change back into their "child" costumes, resuming their original innocence. ANGIE, since she is already a child should help other actors make this transition. As actors become children they should help each other. The play should end exactly as it started.

End of Play