

R. W. Schneider
106 Roydon RD
New Haven, CT 06511
rschneider29@yahoo.com
Voice and fax: (203) 624 0712

17 Tolbiac, a short play on long paper

Setting

The play is situated in six contiguous apartments at the rear of a century-old building in the 13th arrondissement of Paris. While the front of the building (on the Rue de Tolbiac) sports the sweeping curves of carved limestone that befit its location on a major artery of a capitol city, the rear (the side we see) is finished in plain, brown brick. The six apartments that concern us, two each on the sixth, seventh and eighth floors, all have windows framed in this material, save the two uppermost which are tucked under the zinc Mansard. Windows are important in the play because all the action is glimpsed through them. The play exists only because French windows in midsummer are so often left open, especially in older buildings where none of the tenants owns an air conditioner.

The entry doors of the six apartments face each other across narrow landings. A column of windows glazed with textured glass allows us to see blurry figures walking up and down the stairs between them, although a production that can afford it could add a glassed-in lift whose lit compartment rises like a bubble even as the dark shadow of its counterweight falls at the same speed and for the same duration. Either way, the textured windows are ajar on the middle floor -- the seventh -- allowing us a glimpse of what happens on that landing.

These rear apartments are tiny, so tiny that all six of them can be built against the back wall of a good-sized theatre and still have their windows visible through the proscenium. The apartments on the left are studios. They have three windows: a main room, a small kitchen and a still-smaller bath. The apartments on the right are bigger, but show only two windows: living room and kitchen. If traps can be removed at the downstage edge of the set to suggest the lower five floors of the building, so much the better. As an alternative, the set can be built downstage from the proscenium and flush with the apron. None of the apartments require more than eight feet of depth behind the windows. If sight lines are a problem, the building itself can be made of scrim.

The upper left apartment belongs to a retiree, who can be of either gender. The window treatments are almost formal compared to the others. Once the steel shutters are folded back, we see sparkling glass with lace curtains tied back on either side. Even now, with the shutters closed, we see a tiny balcony with narrow window boxes in which grow healthy-looking geraniums of several colors. A small ficus tree on the right is not doing nearly as well.

The other apartment on the top floor is occupied by the Woman in Red and Her Lover, both in their early 20s. Their bathroom window, made of textured glass and hinged at the top, is propped open to reveal a rectangle of shower stall. At rise, the window of the bed-sitting room next to it is closed by a roll-down bamboo shade that glows orange when lit from within. In contrast, the kitchen window is wide open and we see a bit of a stove, a kettle, and breakfast cereal boxes on shelves.

The middle-left apartment, below the Retiree, is occupied by Sandrine and another woman, both in their mid-twenties. Their bedroom is a stark, white cube with a thin foam mattress on the floor. I know Sandrine's name because I heard her voice messages. The other I call "The Cuter of Two Roommates" because that's all I know about her.

Across the landing from the two roommates (and directly below the Lovers) is an apartment that's being redone. No window treatment. When the steel shutters are open, we see unfinished shelving leaning against fresh drywall.

The lower left apartment (under Sandrine and her Cuter Roommate) is a flat with American-style roller shades. The lights go on and off and we hear sounds, but see no one. While all the windows are mysterious, these are particularly so.

The lower right apartment is the domain of an intense woman in her early thirties who spends a lot of time cleaning, hence the name I've given her: Spic and Span. Instead of a window box, she has a row of dirt-filled flowerpots in which nothing grows. Behind them, a living room with books and posters. The smaller window reveals a tidy kitchen whose far wall has large windows glazed with textured glass in an attempt to bring natural light to the bedroom behind it. When the lights are on in the bedroom, the rear wall of the kitchen glows brightly.

Events in each apartment are related in the corresponding column of the performance text. A blank cell indicates that the previously-described action continues. Actors can and should supply additional bits of behavior -- like grace notes -- within the framework provided. To take just one example, there's scarcely any limit to the number of times that someone who's getting ready to go out will cross in front of a window.

The audience should feel it's watching these windows from sixty or more feet away, perhaps with the aid of binoculars. Accordingly, everything sounds distant and muffled. Sounds from the stairwell carry better than sounds from the apartments. The dialog is unintelligible, though much can be gleaned from the intonation and relative volume of the voices that speak it. Vowels carry better than the consonants. French vowels would go nicely with the French windows, but perfect pronunciation is neither necessary nor desirable. All that's needed is a consistent system of sounds that can be spoken with conviction, a cheerful imitation of French speech in the same spirit in which the set is a cheerful imitation of French architecture. I've supplied English dialog in quotes for the convenience of the actors. Super titles shouldn't be necessary.

Music

The play has five movements of which the fourth is hypothetical. All parts of the play are meant to be performed to music. A production that can afford it might employ a pianist as in the days of silent films. Recorded music would do very well, but songs with intelligible lyrics would intrude on the dialog and should be avoided. Simply by way of suggesting something to the reader's ear, here are some possibilities:

Morning: Rhapsody in Blue; Miles Davis; Francisco Rota; Duke Ellington

Evening: Mozart, Chopin; Rachmaninoff, Ravel

Night: Eric Satie; Scott Joplin; The Modern Jazz Quartet; Django Reinhardt; Mahler, maybe.

Characters (in order of appearance)

Sandrine (middle left apartment) mid-twenties. Generally quick. Driven. Sometimes moody.

The Woman in Red (upper right apartment) early twenties. Attractive, sassy, willful.

The Retiree (upper left) Has the studied quality of movement that comes with age and long routine. Placid exterior conceals a passionate student of classical Japanese theatre.

The Woman in Red's Lover (upper right) early twenties. Easy, graceful, everything he does is sexy.

Spic and Span (lower right) Early to mid thirties. Energetic but disoriented. Capable of feverish activity. Very anxious to entertain her younger, prettier neighbor.

A Cheerful Worker (middle right) Twenty something, single, a bit shy.

The Cuter of Two Roommates (middle left) Indolent. Hedonistic. Selfish. Reckless. Irresistible.

A Woman's Voice

A Man's Voice

A Dog Walker. Probably quite young.

MORNING

Over the course of the scene, we go from a dull, gray half-light of early morning to full sun. Spic and Span's shutters are open, but the rooms inside are dark. Her entry door into the stairwell is open a crack. The mysterious, lower left apartment has American-style, roll-up window shades. They're pulled all the way down.

	Retiree (UL)	Lovers (UR)	Roommates (ML)	Stairwell	Getting Redone (MR)	Mystery (LL)	Spic and Span (LR)
1							
2							
3							
4							
5			Loud alarm.				
6							
7			Bedroom light on.				
8							
9			Bath light on.				
10							
11							
12			Toilet flushes.				
13			Bath light off			Dog barks.	
14		Bedroom light on.				Bedroom light on.	
15				Sound of street door closing.			
16						Dog barks again.	
17							
18						Dog barks.	
19						Living room light on. WOMAN'S VOICE: May Teh twah! "Shut up!"	
20							
21							

	Retiree (UL)	Lovers (UR)	Roommates (ML)	Stairwell	Getting Redone (MR)	Mystery (LL)	Spic and Span (LR)
22						Dog barks.	
23						WOMAN'S VOICE: The twah!	
24						Dog whines.	
25		A shadow moves across the drawn bamboo roller-blind from within.					
26						Bedroom light out.	
27			Sandrine crosses bedroom in pajamas.				
28			Kitchen light on. Sandrine starts to make coffee.				
29		Bath light on.	Sandrine finds half a baguette loaf from yesterday. She gets the butter out of the fridge. Returns to bedroom.	Sound of street door closing.			
30			Sandrine rummages quietly for her clothes in the bedroom. A lump stirs under the covers.				
31		A hand places shampoo bottle on window ledge.	Sandrine goes into the bath to dress.				
32		Sound of shower running.				Bedroom light off.	
33							
34	Bamboo shade goes up. Retiree appears, ties back curtains inside						
35							
36	Steps onto balcony						
37	Surveys the world.						
38							

	Retiree (UL)	Lovers (UR)	Roommates (ML)	Stairwell	Getting Redone (MR)	Mystery (LL)	Spic and Span (LR)
39			Sandrine crosses bedroom pulling on her top.				
40		Hand takes shampoo bottle	Sandrine eats her breakfast in the kitchen, mostly standing.				
41		Steam from shower					
42	Is he curious about who's taking a shower next door?						
43		More steam from shower					
44							
45			Sandrine puts her coffee cup in the sink. Goes to bedroom to use the mirror.	Florescent lights blink on. Sound of the street door latching.			
46		Hand replaces shampoo bottle					
47							
48			Lump stirs under the covers more pointedly. Sandrine turns off bedroom light.	Workman enters stairs below. He's carrying three, five-foot planks.			
49		Soapy hair visible	She takes her bag and goes out. ►				
50		More steam.		Sandrine backs into the workman as she closes her door. SANDRINE: Oh, Pardon! "s'cuse me!" WORKMAN: Bohn shoor! SANDRINE: Bohn shoor, mezs-yuh.			
51		Hair rinsed clean.					Spic & Span, already dressed, crosses her unlit living room to stand by her door. It's only open a crack.

	Retiree (UL)	Lovers (UR)	Roommates (ML)	Stairwell	Getting Redone (MR)	Mystery (LL)	Spic and Span (LR)
52		Shower stops.		The workman leans the planks against the wall. They promptly fall over, but Sandrine catches them.			
53				WORKMAN: Mair-see. "Thanks" SANDRINE: Eel knee ah pah de quwa. "Don't mention it." She goes down the stairs.			
54		Shampoo bottle removed.		Workman watches her go, then opens the door to the middle right apartment and goes in. ►			She's clearly waiting for someone to go by.
55				Spic and Span's entry door is ajar. Sandrine ignores it as she goes past the sixth floor landing.			
56	Reappears with watering can. Waters window boxes.	A wet towel takes its place.		She disappears, but we still hear her footsteps going down the stairs.			Spic and Span closes her door. We glimpse her crossing the living room, still unlit.
57		Bath light goes off.			Steel shutters open. Workman appears at window. Inspects condition of guard rail, shutters and hinges. Looks down into the small park behind the building. ◀		We see her a bit more clearly as she crosses the kitchen. A generally pleasant face with a hint of severity and anxiousness in her brow and eyes.
58				Goes back to landing and brings the planks inside. ►			
59				Florescent lights go off.	Leans them against upstage wall.		She disappears into the bedroom and turns on the light. The rear wall of the kitchen glows brightly.

	Retiree (UL)	Lovers (UR)	Roommates (ML)	Stairwell	Getting Redone (MR)	Mystery (LL)	Spic and Span (LR)
60					Sound of planks falling.		
61		Bamboo shade on bedroom window goes up. A young woman is controlling it. She's wrapped in a red towel. Her hair is wet. Surveys world.			Appears briefly with power cord. Looks down into small park again. Is he looking for Sandrine?		
62	Goes back inside.	Disappears.		A faint sound of the street door closing as Sandrine leaves the building.			Comes into kitchen to make coffee. She's silhouetted against the windows behind her.
63		Woman reappears in kitchen window wearing a red nylon tee shirt and red briefs. Begins to prepare breakfast.			Disappears.		
64					Reappears with masonry drill.		
65					Disappears.		
66							
67							
68							
69					Masonry drill starts.		
70	Reappears, looks for source of drilling sound.	Scowls and disappears.				Dog barks Bedroom light on.	Closes kitchen windows with a scowl.
71	Notices the fichus tree is shedding leaves and shakes it in irritation.						
72	A shower of dry leaves falls out of it and drift diagonally across the façade onto Spic and Span's flowerpots.						Returns. Opens window and looks up accusingly at source of sound.
73	Registers that the fichus tree is suffering.						She's just in time to receive the fichus leaves from above.

	Retiree (UL)	Lovers (UR)	Roommates (ML)	Stairwell	Getting Redone (MR)	Mystery (LL)	Spic and Span (LR)
74	It's probably getting too much light.						A bigger scowl.
75	Goes back inside.						Goes back inside.
76					Masonry drill stops.		
77						Dog stops barking.	
78							
79							
80							
81	Re-emerges with a cheap, Japanese parasol. Opens it and verifies that it's the right size to shade the fichus.						Re-emerges with a plastic grocery bag. Angrily begins plucking the fichus leaves from her flower pots and putting them in the bag.
82	Looks for a way to attach it to the balcony.						
83	As it happens, there's a metal tube welded to the balcony in just the right spot, perhaps for an awning.						
84	The handle on the parasol, however, is too big to fit in the tube...						
85	...although the shaft of the parasol is just the right diameter.				Sound of sawing.		
86	Retiree makes the connection.						
87	Goes inside.						
88							A leaf has lodged between the flower pots in a place where she can't reach it with her fingers.
89							Considers what to do. Disappears.

	Retiree (UL)	Lovers (UR)	Roommates (ML)	Stairwell	Getting Redone (MR)	Mystery (LL)	Spic and Span (LR)
90							
91							
92	Re-appears, dressed. Parasol in hand.						Re-emerges with a pair of chopsticks.
93	Checks appearance.						Extracts the last leaf.
94	Leaves the apartment.						
95	▶ ▶ ▶			Retiree starts down the stairs.			Takes the bag inside.
96							
97				Knocks at the door of Getting Redone.			
98					Workman answers door. Somewhat afraid that his sawing has disturbed the neighbors. WORKMAN: Bohn shoor, Mezs-yuh.		Checks to see if she looks all right.
99				RETIREE: Excuz-ay Mwa. Poor ee-ay voo coup-ay set showz? "Sorry to bother you. Could you cut this for me?"			Leaves the apartment. ◀ ▶ ▶
100				Spic and Span starts upstairs with the incriminating bag of leaves.	WORKMAN: Ah! Entry, mezs-yuh.. "Come in."		
101				Retiree: Mairsee. "Thank you." Steps into the apartment ▶ just in time to avoid Spic and Span.			
102				Spic and Span continues up the stairs to the Retiree's door. Rings the bell.	Workman closes the door.		
103				She holds the bag of leaves like an exhibit to be presented in court.	WORKMAN: At-tandeh. "Wait."		
104					Workman rummages in his tools.		

	Retiree (UL)	Lovers (UR)	Roommates (ML)	Stairwell	Getting Redone (MR)	Mystery (LL)	Spic and Span (LR)
105				She waits.			
106					Workman emerges with a Sawz-all.		
107							
108				Rings the bell again.	Plugs it in.		
109					Tests it.		
110					Puts a block of scrap wood on the floor. WORKMAN: Poor ee-ay voo leh ten-ear? "Can you hold it."		
111		Lover appears. He's wearing boxers. Good-looking, athletic, but not muscular.	During this moment, the characters freeze momentarily. We hear a cosmic sound, a kabuki samisen? The pipes of Pan?	She holds the bag at arms length. A momentary freeze.	Retiree kneels in front of the block and holds the parasol. Workman positions the Sawz-all. For an instant they resemble figures in a Japanese print.		
112		Closes the bamboo shade.		Hangs the bag of leaves on the door knob. Considers leaving a note.	Workman saws off the handle.		
113		Disappears.		Rummages in purse. She has nothing to write with.	RETIREE: Mairsee. Mairsee. Voos et jahnn-tee. "Thank you. You're kind."	Dog barks.	
114					WORKMAN: Eel knee ah pah de quwa. "Don't mention it." Retiree backs out of the apartment with a bow. ◀		
115				Retiree starts up the stairs. Once again just missing Spic and Span.		Dog stops barking.	

	Retiree (UL)	Lovers (UR)	Roommates (ML)	Stairwell	Getting Redone (MR)	Mystery (LL)	Spic and Span (LR)
116				Retiree discovers bag hanging on the door. Removes it. Looks inside. Closes it. Enters apartment. ◀◀◀ Retiree Spic and Span ▶▶▶		Lights out.	
117	Retiree sets down umbrella, opens the bag again. Removes a leaf. Examines it. Replaces it in the bag. Closes bag.						Spic and Span re-enters her apartment.
118					Passes in front of window.		
119	Appears on balcony.						Appears at window.
120	Opens bag again. Looks inside. Looks front. Looks back in bag. Looks front again. Closes bag.						Resumes breakfast.
121	Takes bag inside.						
122					Passes in front of window again.		Toast and coffee!
123	Re-emerges with parasol.						
124	Opens parasol.						
125					And again.		
126	Tries parasol in the metal tube. It fits perfectly.					Bedroom light off.	Looks through window. Looks at condition of window. It's not right.
127	Disappears.				Workman puts away the Sawzall.		Sets down toast. Disappears.
128	Comes back with bag of dead leaves.						
129	Pulls remaining dead leaves from fichus and puts them in the bag.						
130		Woman reappears. Opens windows. Goes to kitchen.					

	Retiree (UL)	Lovers (UR)	Roommates (ML)	Stairwell	Getting Redone (MR)	Mystery (LL)	Spic and Span (LR)
131			Covers stir. COTR's head emerges.				
132	Disappears.		She's half asleep.				Reappears with paper towel. Begins to wipe window in desultory fashion.
133		Lover reappears, closes window. Muffled sounds of complaint.	More than half asleep, actually.		Reappears with screw anchors and a hammer.		
134		Woman in kitchen calls from her cornflakes and milk: WIR: Less-la oouvairt "Leave it open."	Staggers out to bathroom. Bath light stays off.		Begins to tap screw anchors into the wall.		
135		LOVER: Jueh la veuh fairmeh! "I want it closed."	Sound of water running.		Pauses. Examines result.		Pauses. Examines result.
136		WIR: Non -- oouvairt "No. Open."					Disappears.
137	Reappears. Curious about argument next door.	Lover appears in kitchen with WIR. LOVER: Mawh, Jueh la veuh fairmeh. "I want it closed."			Taps more anchors into the wall.		
138	Disappears.	WIR: Jueh mangz, alor less-la OOUVAIRT "I'm eating, so leave it open."	Appears briefly in bedroom. Pauses. Flops back down on bed.				Reappears with spray cleaner. Begins to clean energetically.
139		LOVER: Too mangz! Too mah tawn pah? "You're eating, you don't even wait for me."					
140	Reappears with empty watering can.	WIR throws a piece of baguette at him. Tyenh – mangz sah! "Here, eat that."			Stops tapping. Looks out window.		Continues cleaning
141	Pretends to water window boxes.	LOVER: Feh pah sah! "Don't do that."	Sits up in bed. Looks out window.		Resumes work.		
142	Pauses. Pretends to examine result.	WIR: Less-la oouvairt ahlor. "Then leave it open."					

	Retiree (UL)	Lovers (UR)	Roommates (ML)	Stairwell	Getting Redone (MR)	Mystery (LL)	Spic and Span (LR)
143		Lover throws bread back at her.					
144	Puts down watering can.	WIR: Mal-o-tru! "Oaf." LOVER: Kooshun! "Pig!"	Lies back down.				
145		WIR: Fascho! "Faschist!" She throws empty milk carton at him.			Looks out window. Shrugs. Resumes work.		
146	Checks battery on hearing aid. Disappears.	LOVER: Tyenh, too mangz? Too mangz? "So you're eating? You're eating?" He rips open the bag of cornflakes and throws them around the kitchen. WIR: Nohn! Ahret!					
147	Re-emerges, adjusting hearing aid with new battery.	LOVER: Too mangz?. Ahlor, mangz sah! "Then eat that!" WIR: Feh pah sah! "Don't do that!"					
148	Still adjusting. Looks out front.	LOVER: Say tray bohn, mangz too sah! "It's really good. Eat all of that!" He throws cornflakes out the window.			Looks out window.		Looks out window.
149		He hastily pulls on trousers. WIR: Too meuh daygoot! "You make me sick!"			Dead-pans the cornflakes drifting by.		Reacts to cornflakes falling into her flowerpots.
150		LOVER: Vah teh fair footrah! "Go fuck yourself!" He looks desperately around the room for his wallet and subway pass. WIR: Kesk too feh? "What are you doing?"			Resumes work.		Tries to find source of cornflakes.

	Retiree (UL)	Lovers (UR)	Roommates (ML)	Stairwell	Getting Redone (MR)	Mystery (LL)	Spic and Span (LR)
151	Picks up watering can.	LOVER: Jueh par. "I'm leaving." (But he's still getting things together.) Jueh PAR!					Begins to pull cornflakes out of the flowerpots. Stops. Recognizes the absurdity. Looks out front. A decision.
152		WIR: Ptee quon! "Asshole!"					Sprinkles cornflakes back onto the pots.
153		LOVER: Espez de quonne! Vah teh fair footrah! "Asshole yourself! Go fuck yourself!"					Disappears.
154	Bamboo shade rolls down.	He leaves. She throws his shoes after him. ▶▶					
155		She begins to pick up things in the kitchen. Then disappears.		Florescent lights blink on in the stairwell We see the Lover's muddled form bounding down the stairs.			Reappears in living room with telephone.
156							A moment of concentration.
157		Reappears in the bedroom. Opens bedroom window.					
158		Throws herself on the bed.					
159							Dials.
160		Picks up magazine. Tries to read.			Looks guiltily out of window, bothered by what he's about to do.		
161			Phone rings.				It's ringing!
162			Sits up in bed.		Disappears.		
163			Reaches for phone. COTR: "Aloe?"				
164		Throws down magazine.					S & S: Aloe? Ee-cee tah voahzeen... "Hello, it's your neighbor..."
165	"				Disk sander. Very loud.		

	Retiree (UL)	Lovers (UR)	Roommates (ML)	Stairwell	Getting Redone (MR)	Mystery (LL)	Spic and Span (LR)
166						Dog barks.	Closes living room windows, still on the phone.
167				Florescent lights off.		Bedroom light on.	Paces in living room, still on the phone.
168							
169			Twists herself into a kneeling position on the bed. Still on the phone.				Disappears.
170					Sander noise stops.		
171		Gets up. Looks out bedroom window	One foot on the floor, the other leg still bent under her.			Dog stops barking.	Reappears in kitchen, still on the phone.
172		Closes window.					
173			Looks toward kitchen.			Bath light on.	
174							
175		Throws herself back down on the bed.	Phone call continues.		.		Phone call continues.
176						Sound of toilet flushing.	

Lights fade, music concludes. End of first scene.

EVENING

Slanting rays of early-evening sunlight shine directly into the windows. Glass slides under a microscope couldn't be more penetratingly illuminated.

	Retiree (UL)	Lovers (UR)	Roommates (ML)	Stairwell	Getting Redone (MR)	Mystery (LL)	Spic and Span (LR)
1							
2							
3				Retiree enters.			
4							
5							
6				Lover charges up the stairs, two at a time. Passes the retiree on the middle landing. LOVER: Pardon!			
7							
8							
9				Unlocks apartment door. ◀◀			
10		LOVER: Too eh la? Too eh la? Too eh la? "Are you there?"					
11		Searches the apartment. Oou eh too? "Where are you?"		Retiree enters his apartment. ◀◀◀			
12	Disappears.	Maird! "Shit!"					
13	Opens bamboo blind.	Looks out kitchen window.					
14	Disappears.		COTR appears in bedroom. She's finally ready to go out.				
15			Checks herself in the mirror.				

	Retiree (UL)	Lovers (UR)	Roommates (ML)	Stairwell	Getting Redone (MR)	Mystery (LL)	Spic and Span (LR)
16		He looks down to street level for WIR.		Workman slowly climbs stairs. This time he's carrying three eight-foot planks which have to be maneuvered around each landing.			
17		Disappears.	Impulsively takes a daisy from a small vase of flowers and puts it behind her ear.				
18			Checks herself in the mirror again.				
19		Reappears in bedroom. Throws himself on bed.	Exits apartment. ►				
20				Emerges just in time to collide with workman again. Workman drops planks. WORKMAN: Maird!			
21				COTR: Oh. Par-don. "Cuse me" WORKMAN: Yah pah de mal. "It's all right." She goes down a flight of stairs.			
22	Reappears on balcony.			Knocks on Spic and Span's door.			
23				Workman leans planks against wall. Fumbles for keys.			S & S appears in living room window. Checks mirror.
24				Enters apartment with planks. ►			Opens door. COTR: Bohn swahr. "Good evening."
25	Leans over balcony. Checks window boxes.			Goes back to recover keys and close door. Pauses to register conversation on the landing below.			S & S: Bohn swahr. Entry. "Good evening. Come in."

	Retiree (UL)	Lovers (UR)	Roommates (ML)	Stairwell	Getting Redone (MR)	Mystery (LL)	Spic and Span (LR)
26	Disappears.			Workman reenters his apartment. ► COTR enters Spic and Span's apartment. ►►►			
27	Reappears in kitchen. Takes down a glass.			Sandrine exits.	Workman closes door.		S&S Closes door.
28	Removes ice trays from freezer. Bangs out some ice cubes.				A mental survey of the work to be done.		S & S Asay twah. "Have a seat."
29	Ice in glass.				Picks up a plank. Looks at it oddly. Sights an edge to check straightness.		COTR ignores the invitation, slowly tours apartment. S & S watches. Small talk.
30	Adds gin.				Puts plank down. Disappears.		COTR crosses window several times at odd intervals. S & S remains standing; she doesn't know what to do with herself.
31	Adds more gin.				Reappears.		
32	Removes lime from fridge. Cuts a slice.	Gets up. Goes through the kitchen to bathroom. Bathroom light on.					Without quite realizing it, the two women are circling each other.
33					Measures something.		S & S Goes to kitchen. COTR watches her go.
34	Replaces gin in freezer. Removes tonic water from fridge.						Comes back with a bottle of Port, a jar of peanuts and a vacuum-sealed package of Japanese aperitif crackers.
35	Final assembly. Stirs drink.				Checks measurement.		Goes back for glasses. COTR watches her go.
36	First sip.				Transfers measurement to something else.		Goes back for dish. COTR watches her go.
37	Disappears from kitchen.			WIR climbs staircase slowly.	Disappears.		Pours peanuts into dish.
38							Pours port into glasses.

	Retiree (UL)	Lovers (UR)	Roommates (ML)	Stairwell	Getting Redone (MR)	Mystery (LL)	Spic and Span (LR)
39							S & S picks up the packet of aperitif crackers. As she pulls the cellophane off, the crackers go flying.
40	Reappears on balcony with gin and tonic. A moment of small but significant triumph. Armed with gin-tonic, retiree might be the bronze statue of the Zouave on the Pont d'Alma. Retiree's authority over window boxes is complete.						Both laugh.
41							S & S heads back to kitchen for broom, but COTR stops her, her hand on her arm. COTR: Yah pah de mal. "Don't bother."
42	Life is good.			WIR puts key in lock. Enters her apartment. ◀◀			
43		Appears in the window.					S & S: Alor...chin-chin... "Here's lookin' at you..."
44	Leaves balcony.	WIR: Too eh la? "Are you there?" Scans bedroom. Disappears.					They toast each other: nervous laugh from S & S. Sardonic smile from COTR.
45		WIR enters kitchen just as Lover emerges from bathroom..					
46		They embrace.					They sit down. Two talking profiles.
47							
48		They kiss.		Sandrine visible in staircase, coming back from work.			
49							

	Retiree (UL)	Lovers (UR)	Roommates (ML)	Stairwell	Getting Redone (MR)	Mystery (LL)	Spic and Span (LR)
50							
51				Key in lock. Enters her apartment. ◀			
52		They continue kissing.	Appears in the window.		Reappears, looking for something.		
53			SANDRINE: Too eh la? "Are you there?"				
54		She leads him to the bedroom. Another kiss.	Enters kitchen. SANDRINE: Too eh la?		Can't find it.		
55			SANDRINE: (<i>less conviction</i>) Oo eh too? "Where are you?"		Rummages.		
56					WORKMAN: Oo eh teal? "Where is it?"		COTR's profile draws back.
57			Reappears in bedroom. Looks out window.				
58			Her face is empty.		WORKMAN: Maird!		
59			It's the emptiness that comes when one becomes aware that one doesn't give a shit about anything..				Laughter.
60		They lie on bed, still kissing.	How can one live when one is indifferent to everything?		WORKMAN: Maird, maird eh MAIRD!		
61			Turns back inside.		Looks out. Perhaps a shrug.		More laughter.
62			Pushes button on answering machine for messages.		Turns back inside.		
63		They begin to pull off each other's clothes.	Skips through old messages.				

	Retiree (UL)	Lovers (UR)	Roommates (ML)	Stairwell	Getting Redone (MR)	Mystery (LL)	Spic and Span (LR)
64	Disappears.		Beep! WOMAN'S VOICE: Sandrine, too nah pah bizwahn duh venn ear deh mahn... "Sandrine, you don't need to come tomorrow..."				
65			Beep! MAN'S VOICE: Aloe Sandrine. Say MeeChell... "Hello, Sandrine? It's Michael.				More laughter.
66		A moan.	Beep! WOMAN'S VOICE: Aloe Sandrine, Say tah mair. Jueh neh say pah see... "Hello Sandrine, it's your mother. I don't know if..."				S & S's profile moves toward COTR. COTR, calculatingly, doesn't withdraw.
67			Beeeeeeep! There are no new messages.				
68		WIR, holding her clothes on with one hand, gets up and lowers bamboo curtain with the other.					More laughter.
69			Sandrine picks up foam mattress from the floor and leans it against the wall (the normal place for it during the day.)				
70			Picks up magazine, used Kleenex, and some of COTR's underwear		Reappears with masonry drill.		
71			Begins to tidy up dresser.		Locates six holes, darkens marks with pencil.		
72		A louder moan.					
73			Comes to a dead stop.				

	Retiree (UL)	Lovers (UR)	Roommates (ML)	Stairwell	Getting Redone (MR)	Mystery (LL)	Spic and Span (LR)
74					Tests drill.		COTR crosses briefly in front of the window and back again.
75			Plops mattress back down. Throws herself down on it.				
76					Looks out window. Dare he use the tool?		
77					Drills first hole.		
78		A still louder moan.			Looks out window, embarrassed by the noise he's making.	Dog barks.	
79	Reappears with a small mirror and a box of tissues.						
80	Opens boutique bag. Sets out theatrical make up on kitchen counter.				Drills second hole.		
81						Dog barks	
82							COTR is looking for an ashtray beautifully.
83	Pulls hair back and puts it under a net or shower cap.	Rhythmic thumping sound, barely audible. The bed is banging against wall.					S & S watches.
84							
85							S & S rises, gets ashtray from entry table.
86	Registers thumping.		Registers thumping.		Registers thumping above.		S & S Opens door. Goes out on landing. ◀◀◀
87	Begins to apply whiteface.			S&S registers thumping. Returns to apartment. ▶▶▶			
88			Annoyed by thumping on ceiling. Goes to kitchen.		Drills, third, fourth and fifth screws quickly.		She hands the ashtray to COTR. Their hands touch.

	Retiree (UL)	Lovers (UR)	Roommates (ML)	Stairwell	Getting Redone (MR)	Mystery (LL)	Spic and Span (LR)
89		Thumping stops.	Tries to tidy up the kitchen which COTR has left in a mess.			Dog barks.	Eye contact.
90			The thumping continues in her head.			Barking continues.	
91			More tidying. Brushes eyes as she tidies.		Checks position of holes.		.
92	Registers thumping. Another sip of gin and tonic.	Thumping starts again	Gives up tidying. Goes to bedroom. Throws herself on bed.				When they sit again, S & S sits beside COTR
93							
94			Goes to window. Tears?		Drills sixth hole.		Laughter.
95					Disappears.		.
96							
97			Disappears.				COTR is doing all the talking now.
98						WOMAN'S VOICE: Teh twah! TEH TWAH! "Shut up!"	
99							
100		Thumping stops.					
101						WOMAN'S VOICE: TOO AH REHT? "WILL YOU STOP?"	
102		Light goes on in the bath, then off right away. Laughter from bath.				.	
103		Shower starts.				Barking stops.	
104					Reappears with plank which he trial-fits as an upper shelf.		

	Retiree (UL)	Lovers (UR)	Roommates (ML)	Stairwell	Getting Redone (MR)	Mystery (LL)	Spic and Span (LR)
105		Steam from shower.			Places vertical partition under plank.		
106	Another sip.	Lover and WIR heard laughing in shower.					S & S listens gravely. Nodding occasionally.
107					Gingerly removes two temporary clamps.		
108					As he turns his back to the shelving and reaches for a tool, his heel knocks the vertical partition out of place and the upper shelf falls on his upstage ear. WORKMAN: EYEE! MAIRD!		
109					Feels his ear. Looks at his hand. There's blood on it.		
110					Goes to kitchen. Opens tap. There's no water pressure because the water is turned off. WORKMAN: Mair-DUH!		
111					Checks ear again. Bleeding profusely.		
112					Looks for mirror. There isn't any.		
113					Adjusts windowpane to try and see his ear. Unsatisfactory. WORKMAN: Eyee.		
114		More steam.			No paper towel. Uses a bit of newspaper.		
115					It doesn't hurt, but it just keeps bleeding...		
116					Goes out on landing. ◀		

	Retiree (UL)	Lovers (UR)	Roommates (ML)	Stairwell	Getting Redone (MR)	Mystery (LL)	Spic and Span (LR)
117				Rings at Sandrine's door.			
118			Hears her doorbell.				
119			Checks her face in the mirror.	He rings again.			
120	Finishes drink..	More laughter.	Answers door.				
121				WORKMAN: Excuz-ay Mwa. Jueh meh swee bless-ay. "Sorry to bother you; I've hurt myself."			
122			SANDRINE: Ah! Entray. "Come in."	He enter's Sandrine's apartment. ◀			
123			SANDRINE: Venay. "Come" She leads him to kitchen.				
124			Workman goes to kitchen and carefully pulls away newspaper. Sandrine looks at wound. SANDRINE: Ah-tandeh. "Wait." Goes to bedroom to get cotton balls.				Loud, Rabelaisian laughter.
125			Workman puts his whole ear under kitchen tap.				
126			SANDRINE: Feh pah sah! "Don't do that!" Sandrine pulls him out from under the tap and mops his ear with cotton balls.				
127	His face is entirely white. When he looks out the window, his face is a second moon.		WORKMAN: Mairsee. Voos et jahnn-tee. "Thank you. You're kind."				A kiss?

	Retiree (UL)	Lovers (UR)	Roommates (ML)	Stairwell	Getting Redone (MR)	Mystery (LL)	Spic and Span (LR)
128						Roller shade snaps up, but we see only the hand that does it.	

Lights fade, music concludes end of second scene.

NIGHT

Two hours have passed. During this scene, the deep rose tints of a smoggy sunset slowly give way to dramatic purple shadows. The windows glow like aquariums in the darkness. When shades are drawn, colored shadows play against them from inside. The bamboo shade in Spic and Span's apartment is down at rise. The roller shade at the mysterious lower left apartment is still up. The apartment is lit by the bluish tint of a television, but we see no one. There's also a television on in the lovers' apartment. We hear indistinct commentary a crowd noise from both televisions and several unseen ones besides. France is playing Brazil in the World Cup.

	Retiree (UL)	Lovers (UR)	Roommates (ML)	Stairwell	Getting Redone (MR)	Mystery (LL)	Spic and Span (LR)
1							
2							
3							
4		Immense crowd noise from TV – France has scored a goal.				Immense crowd noise.	
5							
6							
7							
8							
9						Dog barks.	
10						WOMAN'S VOICE: Pah meant-nanh! "Not now."	
11						Dog continues barking. WOMAN'S VOICE: Pah meant-NAH!	
12						Dog continues barking.	
13						WOMAN'S VOICE: MAY TU AH RHET? "WILL YOU STOP?"	

	Retiree (UL)	Lovers (UR)	Roommates (ML)	Stairwell	Getting Redone (MR)	Mystery (LL)	Spic and Span (LR)
14						Sound of dog hit with rolled-up newspaper.	
15						Dog whines.	
16	Bamboo shade slowly rolls up.					A hand appears and pulls the roller shade back down.	
17							
18							
19		Crowd noise from TV.				Crowd noise from TV.	
20							
21							
22							
23							
24	We hear clapping of wooden blocks at a steadily increasing tempo.						
25	Retiree springs onto balcony in full kabuki makeup and costume. Strikes a "mie" pose.						
26	Reverses pose. We hear a fragment of text in Japanese.						
27	A few steps. Gesture.						
28	Another pose.						
29							
30	Recitation.						

	Retiree (UL)	Lovers (UR)	Roommates (ML)	Stairwell	Getting Redone (MR)	Mystery (LL)	Spic and Span (LR)
31	Works the gesture separately.			Florescent light in stairwell blinks on. Workman and Sandrine come up the stairs with take-out containers from the local traiteur. There's an easiness between them.			
32		Disappointed crowd – missed goal.		Hesitation on landing between the two apartments.		Disappointed crowd.	
33	Recitation with the gesture.			◀ Sandrine Workman ▶			
34			Sandrine snaps on lights. Appears in kitchen. Gathers up two glasses and a bottle of wine. As she twists the corkscrew into the cork, the handle breaks off. SANDRINE: Tynhs! ▶		Workman sets down carry-out. Workman adjusts painter's lamp to cast indirect light on the table. Quickly arranges planks to make a low table. He places his rolled-up drop cloth upstage of table for use as a cushion.		
35	Pose.				Sandrine brings in the wine bottle with the broken screw sticking out of the cork. SANDRINE: (smile) Tynhs "Here." WORKMAN: Mairsee. Sandrine leaves. ◀◀		Shadows behind the blind.
36		Crowd noise from TV.	Sandrine returns to her kitchen for paper napkins, two plates, two forks, two knives, a bottle of mineral water.		Workman picks up cordless screw driver and tightens the chuck around broken-off corkscrew. Finishes driving in the screw, pulls out the cork.	Crowd noise from TV.	

	Retiree (UL)	Lovers (UR)	Roommates (ML)	Stairwell	Getting Redone (MR)	Mystery (LL)	Spic and Span (LR)
37	Breaks character.		She pulls the door open with her foot to go out. ►	They almost collide, a happy surprise. She reacts to the improvised corkscrew. SANDRINE: Bravo! WORKMAN: Eil knee ah pas de kwoi. Sandrine ► ◄ Workman	Workman heads toward Sandrine's apartment with the cork still spinning on the screwdriver. ◄		
38	Short beat.		Workman sets down corkscrew in Sandrine's kitchen and washes his hands.		Sandrine enters and sets down the dinner things		
39	Disappears.		Which towel to use?				COTR appears in kitchen window, smoking.
40		Crowd noise from TV.	He looks around her kitchen. What sort of person is she? He leaves screwdriver-cum-corkscrew and returns to "his" apartment. ►►		She sets the table.	Crowd noise from TV.	
41					Workman re-enters. His hands are clean.		
42	Kabuki vocalization offstage.				Sandrine pours the wine and sets out the various dishes.		
43							Finishes cigarette. Disappears.
44					A moment of self-consciousness as they sit down to share the meal.		

	Retiree (UL)	Lovers (UR)	Roommates (ML)	Stairwell	Getting Redone (MR)	Mystery (LL)	Spic and Span (LR)
45	Reappears, practices "mie" several times silently in slow motion.						
46					They serve each other the food.	Sound of something breaking.	
47						Dog barks.	
48	Disappears.					MAN'S VOICE: Maird, maird eh MAIRD!	
49					They toast each other.	WOMAN'S VOICE: Poor quoh too lesse sah lah? "Why did you leave it there?"	
50						MAN'S VOICE: Teh twah! "Shut up."	Shadows behind the blind.
51						WOMAN'S VOICE: May say tah fhote. "It's your fault!"	
52						MAN'S VOICE: Teh twah. Pah meant-nanh! "Shut up, not now!"	
53						Dog whines.	
54							
55		Very loud crowd noise from TV. Goal!			WORKMAN: Alley! Alley! "Go France!" SANDRINE: Alley!	Very loud crowd noise from TV. Goal!	
56							
57							

	Retiree (UL)	Lovers (UR)	Roommates (ML)	Stairwell	Getting Redone (MR)	Mystery (LL)	Spic and Span (LR)
58							COTR raises roller blind in living room. We see S & S lying immobile on the couch with a damp cloth over her face.
59							
60							She might be dead.
61							
62							
63							
64							COTR: Sah vah? "Are you okay?"
65							S & S removes the cloth from her face.
66	Reappears with a fan. Kabuki fan dance. Very, very slow.				.		S & S gestures as if to say "Don't bother me, I've got a migraine."
67					She passes him the baguette.		COTR goes out onto the landing and closes the door softly behind her. ◀◀◀
68		Crowd noise from TV. The match is over.		COTR pushes the button for stairwell lights. As the florescent tubes blink on, she goes up four steps and stops.		Crowd noise from TV. The match is over.	
69		Lover opens roller shade. He's wearing a baseball cap backwards.		She comes back down to the landing. Looks at S & S's door.	She raises her glass. He fills it.		
70	Makes mistake. Stops.	Looks out window.		Walks up to door, raises her hand to knock.	Eye contact.		With difficulty, S & S sits up.

	Retiree (UL)	Lovers (UR)	Roommates (ML)	Stairwell	Getting Redone (MR)	Mystery (LL)	Spic and Span (LR)
71	A moment of concentration	A moment of concentration	During this moment of concentration, the characters freeze momentarily. We hear a cosmic sound, a kabuki samisen? The pipes of Pan?	A moment of concentration.	A moment of concentration	Light on.	A moment of concentration
72				She lowers her hand without knocking, then goes down the stairs, her footsteps echoing in the stairwell...			
73	Starts over.						Lies back down.
74		WIR appears behind lover and wraps her arms around him.					
75		They kiss.					Pulls cloth over face again.
76		She removes his baseball cap and puts it back on him with the bill in front.					
77		He turns the bill in back.					
78		WIR: Non, seh meuh devanh. "It's better in front."					
79		LOVER: Less-uh "Leave it."					
80		WIR kisses him.					
81		WIR: Seh meuh devanh!					
82		LOVER: May non! "No, it isn't!"					
83		Another kiss.					
84		WIR: Si! Si! "But it is!"					
85		LOVER: Jueh nem pah devanh. "I don't like it in front."		Fluorescents blink on in stairwell. We see COTR climbing the stairs.			
86		WIR: Too lem dare-yair. "You like it behind."					

	Retiree (UL)	Lovers (UR)	Roommates (ML)	Stairwell	Getting Redone (MR)	Mystery (LL)	Spic and Span (LR)
87		LOVER: Wee. Jueh lem dare-yair. "Yes, I like it in back."			Eating and talking.		
88		WIR: Dare-yair komma plook. "Like a hick."					
89		He turns to face her.		Takes a deep breath in front of her own door.			Loud sob.
90		Touches her face.		Tries to open it. Locked.			
91		LOVER: Devanh, Jueh peh pah tom-brass-ay. "I can't kiss you when it's in front."		Checks pockets for key. Doesn't have them.	A small laugh.		
92		WIR: Avec sah devanh, sah feh bazeballeur! "With the visor in front, you look like a ball player."		Rings.			
93		LOVER: Jueh veh pah etra bazeballeur! "I don't want to be a ball player."		Waits.			
94		WIR: Plook! "Hick!"		Leans on bell.	Eye contact again.		
95		LOVER: Too mahn maird! "You're a pain in the butt!"			She smiles. He doesn't.		
96		She reverses the cap again. LOVER: Eye! "Ow!"		Goes back down to Spic & Span's apartment.	Sandrine gets up. Walks slowly around the room, examining tools.		
97		WIR: Plook!		Deep breath. Rings bell.	Picks up a pipe-bending tool.		
98		LOVER: Ah-reht! "Stop it."			SANDRINE: Seh kwa Sah? "What's this?"		S & S sits up.
99		WIR: Plook!			WORKMAN: Seh poor day twee-oo. "It's for pipe."		Gets up.
100		LOVER: : Pah meant-nanh! "Not now."					Goes to door.
101	Reacts negatively to the lover's insipid conversation.	She reverses the cap again.			Sandrine picks up a Sawzall. SANDRINE: Ey sah? "And this?"		Opens it. S & S: Oh. Seh twah. "Oh, it's you."

	Retiree (UL)	Lovers (UR)	Roommates (ML)	Stairwell	Getting Redone (MR)	Mystery (LL)	Spic and Span (LR)
102	Disappears.	LOVER: Jueh teh dee dar-reht-ay! "I said stop it."		COTR: Esk kuh jaeh less-eh mah cleh ee-see? "Did I leave my key here?" ▶▶▶	WORKMAN: Feh gaff; seh braun – shay. "Be careful; it's plugged in."		S & S: Jueh crwah pah "I don't think so."
103		WIR: Okay, Jhar-reht. "Alright, I'll stop."					COTR hastily ransacks the room looking for the key. S & S watches.
104		They kiss.			SANDRINE: Sah serh ah kwa? "What's it for?"		
105					WORKMAN: Sah koup too. "It'll cut anything."		COTR checks the kitchen. S & S stands by the door.
106		WIR: Plook!			SANDRINE: Bwah? Meh taale? "Wood? Metal?"		S & S: Non?
107		LOVER: Konass! "You bitch!"		COTR bounds up the stairs.	WORKMAN: Bwah, meh taale. Too. "Wood... metal, anything."		COTR: MAIRD! She offers S&S a gesture: touches her cheek. At least as patronizing as it is affectionate.. Leaves the apartment. ◀◀◀
108		WIR grabs the cap and runs out the door, followed by her lover.		She pounds on her door and shouts. Ou-vraa! Ou-vraa la porh-te! "Open up. Open the door."	At the same moment, Sandrine switches on the Sawz-all. The noise of the tool fills the room. Neither hears COTR pounding on the door across the landing.		S & S watches her go.
109				A silent snort of rage.	Both laugh. A moment of complicity.	Bath light goes on.	Reacts to sawing noise.
110		A stand off on the landing.		COTR slowly circles the landing.	Sandrine slowly moves back to the rolled-up drop cloth.		Turns back to apartment, kicks the door shut behind her.
111				She sits on the stairs	She sits beside him.		She sits on couch. A sigh.

	Retiree (UL)	Lovers (UR)	Roommates (ML)	Stairwell	Getting Redone (MR)	Mystery (LL)	Spic and Span (LR)
112		WIR charges down stairs with lover in pursuit. WIR (to COTR): Par-don! LOVER (to COTR): Par-don!			The Sawzall lies between them as Mark's sword lay between Tristan and Isolde.		Looks at living room as if she'd never seen it before.
113		They reach the fifth floor and disappear from sight, but we still hear their racing footsteps echoing in the stairwell.		COTR suddenly gets up and runs up the stairs.			A dry gasp of a sob.
114				Deep breath.		Light goes off.	
115				Knocks on retiree's door.			
116	Reappears wearing ornate kimono, demon wig and demon makeup (or full kabuki drag for an <i>onnagata</i> role, whichever is more outlandish.)						Gets up.
117				Knocks again.			
118	RETIREE (opening door): Bohn swah mahd muh zel. Kes kil yah? "Good evening, young lady. What's the problem?"						Advances slowly on window as if mesmerized.

	Retiree (UL)	Lovers (UR)	Roommates (ML)	Stairwell	Getting Redone (MR)	Mystery (LL)	Spic and Span (LR)
119				COTR: Bohn swah mesz-yuh. Jueh swee dez-o-leh de voos day-ran-zjeh, meh jueh swee votrah vwah-zeen dahm bah... jueh swee sortee sahn mah cleh eh jueh neh peh pah entray sheh mwa. "Good evening. I'm sorry to bother you, but I'm your downstairs neighbor. I locked my key inside and I can't get into my apartment."			Unlatches window and pulls it open.
120				COTR: Seh treh jolee, sah. "That's very pretty [what you're wearing]." She touches the embroidered fabric.			Deep breath.
121	RETIREE: Entray, mad muh zel, entray.. "Come in, Miss. Come in."			COTR: Mair-see. Mez-yuh "Thank you." She enters retiree's apartment. ◀◀◀			Leans over window railing and looks down at the ground below.
122	COTR gestures to the window below. COTR: Voos vwwhy-eh? "You see?"						Climbs onto window ledge. She wants to feel at least the possibility of death.
123	Retiree sets kabuki prop in corner. Leans over balcony railing to look at window below.						Looks up at top of window frame. There's a spot of dirt there.
124	RETIREE: Wee, jueh vowh. "I see."						
125	COTR: Say pah luwan. It's not far."						Climbs back down.

	Retiree (UL)	Lovers (UR)	Roommates (ML)	Stairwell	Getting Redone (MR)	Mystery (LL)	Spic and Span (LR)
126	RETIREE: Non; say pah luwan. Venn-ay. "Follow me." Both disappear.						
127							Disappears.
128							
129							
130							
131							Reappears with cleaning supplies and gloves.
132							Begins cleaning the window frame.
133					The workman sparks his blowtorch into life.		
134					SANDRINE: Kesk too feh? "What are you doing?"		Stops cleaning.
135					WORKMAN: Attens. "Wait [you'll see]." He uses the blowtorch to light a candle.		A snort.
136					He softens the wax on the base of the candle. He hands the blowtorch to Sandrine, then presses the candle onto the plank.		Picks up cell phone.
137					He takes back the torch and turns it off.		Puts down cell phone.
138					Sandrine turns off the electric light.		Removes gloves.
139					SANDRINE: Suepear! "Neat!"		
140					WORKMAN: Seh meuh, non? "It's better, isn't it?"		
141							
142							Picks up cell phone.
143							
144							

	Retiree (UL)	Lovers (UR)	Roommates (ML)	Stairwell	Getting Redone (MR)	Mystery (LL)	Spic and Span (LR)
145							
146	Retiree and COTR reappear carrying mountaineering rope and carabineers between them. RETIREE: Ah ten day. "Wait."						
147	COTR: Okay. Retiree helps COTR don harness.				Workman smiles.		
148					He sits back down.		Walks around living room with cell phone, rehearsing.
149					They look at each other in the candlelight.		
150	Retiree secures rope to balcony.						
151							
152	Checks harness.				Sandrine removes the Sawz-all.		Dials, then immediately hangs up.
153	Final instructions.						
154					Workman moves closer.		
155	Retiree helps COTR over the railing.						
156	COTR rappels cautiously down building. ▼			We hear racing feet coming up the stairs.	He touches her hair.		
157							
158				LOVER: Meh non! "No way."	He touches her face.		
159	▶▶		COTR puts a leg over her own window railing.	WIR: Spece deh kon! "Asshole!"			Dials again.
160			Now the other leg.	Lover appears charging up the stairwell with the cap: LOVER: Too neh laura pah! "You won't get it!"	He touches her lips.		
161			Adjusting the rope, she accidentally lets the carabineer slip a yard. ▼ COTR: MAIRD!	WIR pursues him shouting: Rhond la Mwa! "Give it back!"			Waits.

	Retiree (UL)	Lovers (UR)	Roommates (ML)	Stairwell	Getting Redone (MR)	Mystery (LL)	Spic and Span (LR)
162	RETIREE (to COTR): Neh booz-ay pah! "Don't move!"		Now she's hanging upside down, her legs hooked over the window railing above her. Her cell phone rings.	A momentary stand off on the seventh floor landing. They're both panting.	He touches her hair again.	.	
163	RETIREE: Sah vah? "Are you alright?"		Reacts to her cell phone ringing.	She feints downstage with her eyes. When his eyes follow hers, she grabs the cap with her upstage hand and makes a break for the eighth floor.		Dog barks	It's ringing!
164			COTR (to Retiree): Sah vah. "I'm okay."			Dog barks some more.	
165				She rushes through door ahead of her Lover. ◀◀	They lean towards each other.		
166	Disappears.	WIR barricades the door with her body. The lover pushes and pulls on the knob.	Cell phone keeps ringing. She blocks the carabineer, then pulls herself a bit higher on the rope to free her legs. She's still upside down.	LOVER: Oo-vraa. Oo-vraa la porh-te! "Open up! Open the door."	They kiss.		Paces, the phone to her ear.
167		WIR retreats from door. Moves to window.	Very slowly, as the cell phone keeps ringing, she does a backwards somersault in the air. Her feet go past her head and continue below her, pushing open the windows of the bottom left apartment. She follows them and disappears inside, pulling the roller shade in with her. ▶▶▶	Lover opens the eighth floor stairwell window and looks out.			Looking out the window, the phone pressed to her ear, her face pressed to the window. She mouths a silent "MAIRD!"

	Retiree (UL)	Lovers (UR)	Roommates (ML)	Stairwell	Getting Redone (MR)	Mystery (LL)	Spic and Span (LR)
168	Reappears with a samurai sword to cut the rope if necessary. Freezes in another <i>mie</i> pose, the sword held high.	She flings the cap out the window. It sails into the audience.		LOVER: (RE: the cap) MAIR-DUH!	Still kissing.	All the apartment lights come on, one after another. Sound of dog barking.	Still waiting for an answer.
169						MAN'S VOICE: Maird! Meh kesk voo fet? "Shit! What exactly are you doing?"	

Blackout, music concludes. End of scene.

INTERLUDE OF INCREASED INTEGRATION AND COOPERATION (FUGUE)

As rose-colored shafts of early-morning light illuminate the building, the façade is removed – either by being lifted into the flies, lowered like a drawbridge, crumbling into pieces or by whatever other method the designer chooses. If need be, the effect can be achieved with lights alone. The effect should be to expose the apartments like the rooms of a dollhouse. In them, we see the characters, frozen in postures of every-day life as if left that way by the doll house’s owner. The lighting progresses to mid-morning with unnatural speed. At some point, the characters come to life and proceed to action with unprecedented purpose and resolve. The music, too, is brisker. *Honky-Tonk Women* by The Rolling Stones?

	Retiree (UL)	Lovers (UR)	Roommates (ML)	Stairwell	Getting Redone (MR)	Mystery (LL)	Spic and Span (LR)
1							
2				Dog walker comes to life on sixth floor landing. He carries a box of bar supplies.			
3				Dog walker balances box on a raised knee and rings bell of LR apartment.			
4							S&S comes to life when she hears bell. Crosses to open the door. "S&S: Ah, bohn jour!"
5				DOG WALKER: Bohn jour. Too-teh la. "Good morning. Everything's inside." Hands S&S the box.			
6							S&S; Mairsee! Bonne journaih! "Thanks! Have a good day."
7			Lights on. Sandrine comes to life, picks up trowel and heads out the door. ►	Dog Walker: "Bonne journaih ah voos."			
8				Sandrine" (calling down the stairs to Dog Waker) Saloo! "Hi!"			
9				Dog walker: Saloo, Sandrine! Dog walker exits to street.			

	Retiree (UL)	Lovers (UR)	Roommates (ML)	Stairwell	Getting Redone (MR)	Mystery (LL)	Spic and Span (LR)
10		WIR and her Lover unfreeze: they're dragging a large cardboard box. WIR: Day-pesh twah! "Hurry up."		Sandrine goes up the stairs to the Retiree's apartment. She rings.			
11		LOVER (off): May atahn-mwah! "Wait for me, at least."					
12	Lights on, Retiree unfreezes. Admits Sandrine:	Lover enters and helps WIR with the box.					
13	RETIREE: Bhon joor, Sandrine!			SANDRINE: Bohn joor, mezs-yuh [mah-dahm] ◀◀◀			
14	RETIREE: Tyenh-eh. Leh vwaw-see "Here it is..." Sandrine hoists a large bag of potting soil over her shoulder. Sah vah? "Okay?"						
15	SANDRINE: Mair-see! RETIREE: Eil knee ah pah de kwoi. Sandrine exits. ▶▶▶	They exit. ▶▶		SANDRINE: Saloo! WIR: Saloo, Sandrine. Excusay new. "Excuse us." SANDRINE: Ouu, say grow sah! Sah vah? "Oh, that's big. Are you okay?"			

	Retiree (UL)	Lovers (UR)	Roommates (ML)	Stairwell	Getting Redone (MR)	Mystery (LL)	Spic and Span (LR)
16	Retiree exits to change out of kimono.			WIR: Wee, sah vah. LOVER: Bon joor, Sandrine. After a few "after-you"s, Sandrine heads down ahead of the lovers, who jostle the box down between them. LOVER: Ah-tahn. Ah-tahn!			S&S appears. Checks her appearance in the mirror.
17							
18				Sandrine rings at S&S's door with her free hand.			
19							S&S: Entray, Sandrine!
20				Sandrine enters S&S's apartment. ►►►			SANDRINE: Leh voici! "Here it is!" S&S motions her into the kitchen and follows with a tray of bedding flowers.
21	Retiree reappears dressed in work clothes. Checks appearance. Picks up painting supplies. Exits. ►►►			WIR and Lover produce the keys to Lower Left apartment and enter, dragging the box in between them. ►►			A mental survey of the work to be done.
22			Lump stirs under the covers.	Retiree descends stairs. Workman appears at the bottom of the stairs. Instead of a toolbox, he carries three bulging laundry bags.		From the box they extract multiple pieces of molded plaster.	SPIC & SPAN: Jeu h rehyhns. "I'll be back." She leaves. ◀◀◀
23				S&S greets the Workman on the landing. S&S: Bohn joor. Sah vah? WORKMAN: Sah vah tray bien, eh voos? "It's going very well, how about you?" They ascend stairs together.		The pieces have to be identified and checked off against a list.	Sandrine begins energetically cultivating the flower pots.

	Retiree (UL)	Lovers (UR)	Roommates (ML)	Stairwell	Getting Redone (MR)	Mystery (LL)	Spic and Span (LR)
24				S&S: (to retiree) Bohn joor mezs-yuh [mah-dahm] RETIREE: Bohn joor mad muh zel! (to Workman) Bohn joor mezs-yuh. WORKMAN: Bohn joor, sah vah? RETIREE: Tray bien, mairsee.		It appears to be a reproduction of a classic statue.	
25				Retiree enters Getting Redone. ► Workman enters Roommate's apartment. ◀		LOVER: Too-teh la? "Everything there?" WIR: Too-teh la.	
26			Workman rouses COTR from under the covers. WORKMAN: Eh! Eil foh se leveh! "Hey, you've got to get up!" COTR: Sah vah. Sah vah! "Okay, okay!" Pouting, COTR goes into the bathroom.	S&S enters Retiree's apartment. ◀◀◀	Retiree begins by clearing away planks and tools.	A mental survey of the work to be done.	
27	S&S proceeds to kitchen and begins setting out glasses and bottles.		The Workman disposes his three sacks.		A mental survey of the work to be done.	They begin by positioning the pediment.	
28	Ice, rum, coconut cream, pineapple juice and pineapple slices. Swizzle sticks.		After a mental survey of the work to be done, he begins sorting, folding and stacking COTR's laundry. There's an amazing amount and variety of it. Whites. Colors. Delicates.		Retiree will proceed to paint a stylized pine tree, the traditional ornament that decorates a nõh stage, on the back wall.		

	Retiree (UL)	Lovers (UR)	Roommates (ML)	Stairwell	Getting Redone (MR)	Mystery (LL)	Spic and Span (LR)
29	A mental survey of the work to be done.		COTR emerges from the bathroom, still in her pajamas. She's brushing her teeth. Traverses the bedroom without acknowledging the Workman.		Using a long, partially-wetted, calligraphy brush, he sketches out the first branches.		Now she's ready to begin planting flowers.
30	With the efficiency of gesture of a professional bar keeper, she starts making Piña Coladas for the entire cast.		COTR leaves. ►		Long, swift strokes.		
31	Napkin under each glass.			COTR traverses the landing still brushing. Enters Getting Redone. ►		Several sections are now in place.	
32	Ice in each glass.				COTR: (removing toothbrush temporarily) Sa-loo "Hi" RETIREE: Bohn joor mahd muh zel!		
33	Rum in each glass.				COTR picks up the Sawz-all and leaves. ◀	With the torso in place, we recognize the Venus de Milo.	
34	A momentary freeze! We hear a cosmic sound.		A momentary freeze! We hear a cosmic sound.	A momentary freeze! We hear a cosmic sound.	A momentary freeze! We hear a cosmic sound.	A momentary freeze! We hear a cosmic sound.	A momentary freeze! We hear a cosmic sound.
35	Coconut cream in each glass.			COTR climbs the stairs to the lovers' apartment. There's no hostility in this; she has to start somewhere.			

	Retiree (UL)	Lovers (UR)	Roommates (ML)	Stairwell	Getting Redone (MR)	Mystery (LL)	Spic and Span (LR)
36	Swizzle stick in each glass.			Enters lovers' apartment. ◀◀	The small but ancient pine tree seems to bend in an invisible wind.	LOVER: Eel knee ah pah de brah? "It doesn't have arms?"	Turns the pots to orient each plant to the sun.
37	Pineapple juice in each glass.	With the briefest mental survey of the work to be done, COTR takes the toothbrush out of her mouth and dons eye protection. She'll now proceed to saw apart the rest of the set.				WIR: Non, eel knee ah pah de brah.	
38	Stir.	She might be a practiced demolition worker.			He paints the dark and gnarled trunk beneath.		
39	Pineapple slice on each glass.						
40		She knows what she's doing.					

Their efforts continue as the lights fade.

EPILOG: UN AHN PLU TARR “A YEAR LATER”

The façade is restored to its previous appearance. All traces of the previous scene have vanished, save the flowers at lower right. The lighting progresses to mid-morning with unnatural speed and continues to accelerate until multiple day have whizzed by like so many strands of fading and counter-fading lights on a Christmas tree. A year passes. The fichus tree now looks better; the cheap Japanese parasol looks considerably worse. The steel shutters of Getting Redone are closed, but the window at Lower Left is wide open. The light advances quickly rosy morning through noontime. A clutch of colorful balloons -- released from a child’s birthday party in the square below -- drifts past the windows. The harshness of the midday light fades and the characters begin to come home from their daily occupations. The music is slower and fuller, almost elegiac.

	Retiree (UL)	Lovers (UR)	Roommates (ML)	Stairwell	Getting Redone (MR)	Mystery (LL)	Spic and Span (LR)
1				Sound of street door latching.			
2							
3							
4							
5				COTR appears on the stairwell. She dawdles up to the 6 th floor landing, clearly reluctant to go where she’s going.			
6							
7				A glance at Spic and Span’s door? Hard to decipher.			
8				Big sigh. Rings door at lower left.			
9				Door opens. She goes in. ▶▶			

	Retiree (UL)	Lovers (UR)	Roommates (ML)	Stairwell	Getting Redone (MR)	Mystery (LL)	Spic and Span (LR)
10						MAN'S VOICE: Oo eh-teh two? Sah feh deuh euhres kuh jeuh tah atahn! Two kwoi kuh say ree-nhh, deh meh fair atahndreh komm sah? Two teh prendreh poor key? "Where were you? I've been waiting two hours for you! You think it's not important that you make me wait? Who do you think you are?"	
11						COTR moves by window, glances out furtively.	
12						MAN'S VOICE: May reh-pond mwah, oh mewhs! Jeuh temh! Jeuh temh komm ehn foo! Jaeh leh dewot de sah vwarh oo two ehteh! May di mwah! "Well at least say something! I love you. I love you madly. I have a right to know where you were. So tell me!"	
13						COTR: Jeuh swee sortee. "I went out."	
14						MAN'S VOICE: Kommenh? "What?"	
15				Sound of street door latching.		COTR: Jeuh swee sortee!	
16						MAN'S VOICE: Oo? Two eh sortee Oo? "Where? Where did you go out to?"	
17						COTR: Sortee. Say too. "I went out, that's all."	

	Retiree (UL)	Lovers (UR)	Roommates (ML)	Stairwell	Getting Redone (MR)	Mystery (LL)	Spic and Span (LR)
18				Retiree appears at bottom of steps. Registers the argument as he passes the landing, but pays no heed.			
19						MAN'S VOICE: Two neh memh pah. Mwah, jeuh temh, may twah, two ne memh pah! "You don't love me. I love you but you don't love me." COTR closes the window, effectively muffling the argument, which continues behind the glass.	
20				Sound of street door latching.			
21				LOVER: May atahn-mwah! Oo two vah? "Wait for me. Where are you going?"			
22				WIR appears; she's very pregnant. Lover is several steps behind, lugging a newly-purchased stroller which is probably bigger and heavier than the one they should have gotten..			
23				The Retiree stands to one side to let them go up. They ignore him. WIR: Two vehn? "Are you coming?" LOVER: Jahreeve. "I'll be right there."			

	Retiree (UL)	Lovers (UR)	Roommates (ML)	Stairwell	Getting Redone (MR)	Mystery (LL)	Spic and Span (LR)
24				WIR: Two ah la kle? "Have you got the key?" LOVER: Two nah pah la kle? Jeuh nah pah deh kle, mwah! "You don't have the key? I don't have the key!"			
25				WIR: Kommenh, two nah pah la kle? "What do you mean, you don't have the key?" LOVER: Oh, si; jhai la kle. "Oh, yes, I have it after all." He opens the door and lets them in. ◀◀			
26		She unpacks their baby purchases. He goes to the bathroom.		The Retiree has loitered on the 7 th floor landing to leave the 8 th floor landing to the lovers.			Spic and Span, looking far more relaxed than we've seen her, crosses her kitchen and living room. She goes out on the 6 th floor landing and calls up to the Retiree. ◀◀◀
27		Bathroom light on.		S&S: Oh, voos et lah. Sah vah? "Oh, you're back. How are you?"			
28		From time to time she says something to him through the door. He doesn't respond.		RETIREE: Sah vah tray bieh. Voos venah toot ah leure? "I'm very well. Are you coming up?"			
29				S&S: Wee, jeuh vienn toot suite. "Yes, I'm coming right away." ▶▶▶			
30				The Retiree climbs the stairs and enters apartment. ◀◀◀			S&S goes back to her bedroom to get ready.

	Retiree (UL)	Lovers (UR)	Roommates (ML)	Stairwell	Getting Redone (MR)	Mystery (LL)	Spic and Span (LR)
31	Turns on light, puts on a kettle, then goes to change.			Sound of street door latching.			
32		She goes to the kitchen. He emerges from the bathroom.				COTR passes in front of the window in silent tears. It's not guilt; she just doesn't like scenes.	
33				Sandrine appears, climbing slowly. She's got a small plastic bag of groceries, but carries it without the sense of triumph that even modest acquisitions usually inspire.			
34							S&S appears in a simple-but-attractive kimono and clogs. She turns out the light, leaves and locks the door behind her. ◀◀◀
35	Retiree emerges, also in Japanese dishabille. He lights a stick of incense.			Sandrine is digging out her keys as S&S goes by. S&S: Bohn swahr, Sandrine. SANDRINE: Bohn swahr!			
36				Sandrine enters her apartment. ◀ S&S knocks at Retiree's door.			
37	Answers door. RETIREE: Ah, voos et la. S&S: Bohn swahr!		Sandrine puts down her bag and kicks off her shoes. Her feet ache.				
38	RETIREE: Bohn swahr, mahd muh zel. Entry!		Bathroom light on.	S&S: Bohn swahr! ◀◀◀			

	Retiree (UL)	Lovers (UR)	Roommates (ML)	Stairwell	Getting Redone (MR)	Mystery (LL)	Spic and Span (LR)
39	They greet each other with short, conventionalized bows and fall to a rather formal Japanese tea.						
40	It's clear that the Retiree has instructed S&S in the correct rituals. She performs them with pride and gusto.						
41	They converse in low voices as she prepares the tea.						
42							
43			Sandrine emerges in a tee-shirt and jeans.				
44			Moves around living room. Almost pushes the button on the answering machine, but thinks better of it.			COTR opens the windows to stub her cigarette out on the steel railing outside the window. COTR: Too mahn maird! Too mahn taund? Too mahn maird! Vah teh fair foo-tra! "You're a pain in the butt. You hear me? A pain in the butt! Go fuck yourself!"	
45			Her face is empty.			COTR closes the window but continues her tirade.	
46			She goes into the kitchen.	Sound of street door latching.			
47	Retiree gently corrects one of her gestures. She smiles.		A mental survey of what needs to be done.				
48		She goes to the bathroom. He gets his keys and metro pass and sneaks quietly out the door. He needs a break. ▶▶	Begins doing the dishes.				
49							

	Retiree (UL)	Lovers (UR)	Roommates (ML)	Stairwell	Getting Redone (MR)	Mystery (LL)	Spic and Span (LR)
50				The Lover heads down the stairs just as the Workman appears at the bottom. The Workman carries a heavy tool case slung over his shoulder.			
51		Bathroom light out.		Workman climbs the stairs and sets the toolbox down in front of Sandrine's door. WORKMAN: Bohn swahr! LOVER: Bohn swahr A bit of masculine solidarity in this. "Women: can't live with 'em and can't live without 'em."			
52		WIR emerges from the bathroom drying her hair.		Workman removes a small bouquet of roses from the toolbox, and then searches in his pocket for the key. Lover continues down the stairs.			
53	Retiree lights one or several Japanese lanterns.		Sandrine emerges from the kitchen drying a plate.				
54	S&S dims the electric light. They enjoy the soft glow of the lanterns.			Having found the key, the workman lets himself in to "getting redone," the apartment he has carefully redecorated for his girlfriend and himself. He holds the bouquet behind his back. WORKMAN: Sheeree? Oo eyh too? "Where are you, dear?" ▶			

	Retiree (UL)	Lovers (UR)	Roommates (ML)	Stairwell	Getting Redone (MR)	Mystery (LL)	Spic and Span (LR)
55		WIR: Sheeree? Oo eyh too?				There's a crash as the living room light goes out.	
56			Sandrine carries the plate back to the kitchen.		Living room light on. A YOUNG WOMAN'S VOICE: voice: Jeah sweize eecee. "I'm here."		
57		WIR: Sheeree? "Dear?"	She sets the plate on a pile of clean plates as if it were one more piece of a fatal jig saw puzzle.		Laughter.		
58					A YOUNG WOMAN'S VOICE: Oh mairsee! Deh fluhr! "Oh, thank you! Flowers!"		
59		WIR- Too mahn maird! "You're a pain in the butt."	Mechanically, she starts to dry another.				
60		She exits to the bedroom.			More laughter.		
61				A dog walker comes up the stairs with three dogs of differing sizes and temperaments.			
62				He rings at Sandrine's door.			
63			She sets down the dish and hangs up the dishcloth.				

	Retiree (UL)	Lovers (UR)	Roommates (ML)	Stairwell	Getting Redone (MR)	Mystery (LL)	Spic and Span (LR)
64			She crosses the room with an air of expectation and opens the door.				
65				DOG WALKER: Bohn swahr! (to one of the dogs) Eh vvahla tah maytress! "There's your mistress!"			
66			SANDRINE: Eh vvahla ma poopsi! (to dog walker) Mairsee ! She pays Dog Walker..				
67				DOG WALKER: Mairsee, mad muh zel. (To dogs.) Allons-y, voos deuh. "Let's go, you two."			
68			SANDRINE: : Sah vah, ma pehteet? Sah vah, Poopsi ? "Are you okay, little one? Are you okay, Poopsi?"	Dog Walker descends stairs with the other two dogs.			
69			She plays happily with the dog.				
70							
71			The dog barks.				
72			SANDRINE: Wee. Sah vah. Sah vah, ma pehteet.				
73			SANDRINE: Sah vah.				
74				Sound of street door latching.			
75							
76							
77	We hear a cosmic sound.	We hear a cosmic sound.	We hear a cosmic sound.	We hear a cosmic sound.	We hear a cosmic sound.	We hear a cosmic sound.	We hear a cosmic sound.
78							

The music concludes as the lights fade. End of play.