

GENERAL AUDITION - SCENE #1

Moritz and Melchior

MORITZ

Melchi, thank you.

MELCHIOR

It's nothing.

MORITZ

But I should have known it. "Multum ille." It's just... I didn't sleep all night. In fact, I, uh, suffered a visit from the most horrific, dark phantasm...

MELCHIOR

You mean, a dream...?

MORITZ

A nightmare, really. Legs in sky blue stockings, climbing over the lecture podium.

MELCHIOR

Oh. *That* kind of dream.

MORITZ

(*"Indeed"*)

Have you ever suffered such... morifying visions?

MELCHIOR

Moritz, of course. We all have. Otto Lammermeier dreamt about his mother.

MORITZ

Really?!!

MELCHIOR

Georg Zirschnitz? Dreamt he was seduced by his piano teacher.

MORITZ

Fraulein Grossebustenhalter?

(*"The horror!"*)

Melchi, why – why – am I haunted by the legs of a woman? By the deepening conviction: some dark part of my destiny may lie there between them...?

MELCHIOR

All right then. I'll tell you. I got it out of books. But prepare yourself: it made an atheist out of me. (*Beat*) So –

MORITZ

No no – not here! I can't talk it! No – do me a favor: write it down. *All* of it. Conceal it in my stachel – after Gymnastics – tomorrow. (*Beat*) If you like, you could add some illustrations in the margins.

MELCHIOR

Top to bottom?

MORITZ

Everything.

Note: these scenes/monologues may also be used in callbacks

GENERAL AUDITION - SCENE #2

Wendla and Melchior

WENDLA

So...

MELCHIOR

So... the stream. Dreaming again?

WENDLA

I was, I guess.

MELCHIOR

And what were you dreaming of?

WENDLA

It's silly.

MELCHIOR

Tell me.

WENDLA

I dreamed I was a clumsy little girl, who spilt my father's coffee. And when he saw what I had done, he yanked out his belt and whipped me.

MELCHIOR

Wendla, that kind of thing doesn't happen anymore. Only in stories.

WENDLA

Martha Bessell is beaten almost every evening – the next day, you can see the welts. It's terrible. Really, it makes you boiling hot to hear her tell it. Lately, I can't think about anything else.

MELCHIOR

Someone should file a complaint.

WENDLA

You know... I've never been beaten. Not once. I can't even imagine it. It must be just awful.

MELCHIOR

I don't believe anyone is ever better for it.

WENDLA

I've tried hitting myself – to find out how it feels, really, *inside*.

(WENDLA sees a switch on the ground and picks it up)

With this switch, for example? It's tough. And thin.

MELCHIOR

It'd draw blood.

Note: these scenes/monologues may also be used in callbacks

	WENDLA
You mean, if <i>you</i> beat me with it?...	
	MELCHIOR
Beat you?	
	WENDLA
Me.	
	MELCHIOR
Wendla, what are you thinking?!	
	WENDLA
Nothing.	
	MELCHIOR
I could never beat you.	
	WENDLA
But if I let you?	
	MELCHIOR
Never.	
	WENDLA
But if I asked you to?	
	MELCHIOR
Have you lost your mind?	
	WENDLA
Martha Bessell, she told me –	
	MELCHIOR
Wendla! You can't envy someone being beaten.	
	WENDLA
But I've never been beaten – my entire life. I've never... felt...	
	MELCHIOR
What?	
	WENDLA
<i>Anything.</i>	

Note: these scenes/monologues may also be used in callbacks

GENERAL AUDITION - SCENE #3

Herr Knochenbruch and Fraulein Knuppeldick/Ensemble

HERR KNOCHENBRUCH

Well, well. Fraulein Knuppeldick.

FRAULEIN KNUPPELDICK

Herr Knochenbruch?

HERR KNOCHENBRUCH

Now that... that skittish, near-aphasic moron...

FRAULEIN KNUPPELDICK

Moritz Stiefel.

HERR KNOCHENBRUCH

("Indeed")

Has somehow passed our middle-term exams, it would appear we face a certain dilemma.

FRAULEIN KNUPPELDICK

Ah.

HERR KNOCHENBRUCH

The upper grade, as you know, will hold only sixty. I hardly think we can promote sixty-one.

FRAULEIN KNUPPELDICK

Hardly, Herr Knochenbruch. But, let us look to the finals ahead.

HERR KNOCHENBRUCH

Yes?

FRAULEIN KNUPPELDICK

Remember, it is I who shall be marking *them*.

HERR KNOCHENBRUCH

Then *I* am assured the good name of our school is secure.

Melchior, Moritz, Frau Gabor

MORITZ

START Look at me — I'm trembling. Last night I prayed like Christ in Gethsemane: "Please, God, give me Consumption and take these sticky dreams away from me."

MELCHIOR

With any luck, he'll ignore *that* prayer.

MORITZ

Melchi, I can't focus — on *anything*. Even now, it seems like... Well, I see, and hear, and feel, quite clearly. And yet, everything seems so strange...

MELCHIOR

But all those illustrations I gave you — didn't they help illuminate your dreams?

MORITZ

They only multiplied everything ten times! Instead of merely seeing Stockings, now I'm plagued by Labia Majora and —

(*FRAU GABOR enters with tea*)

FRAU GABOR

Well, here we are, with tea. Herr Stiefel, how are you?

MORITZ

Very well, thank you, Frau Gabor.

FRAU GABOR

(*Skeptical*)

Yes?

MELCHIOR

(*Busting him*)

Just think, Mama. Moritz was up, reading all through the night.

MORITZ

Uh, conjugating Greek.

FRAU GABOR

You must take care of yourself, Moritz. Surely, your health is more important than Ancient Greek.

(*Indicating his books*)

Now, what have *you* been reading, Melchior?

MELCHIOR

Goethe's FAUST, actually.

FRAU GABOR

Really? At your age?...

MELCHIOR

It's so beautiful, Mama.

MORITZ

("Indeed")

So haunting.

FRAU GABOR

Still, I should have thought...

But surely, you boys are now of an age to decide for yourselves what is good for you and what is not.

(Sighs)

If you need anything else, children, call me.

(FRAU GABOR goes out)

MORITZ

Well, your mother certainly is remarkable.

MELCHIOR

("Yes, but")

Until she catches her son reading Goethe.

MORITZ

I think she meant the story of Gretchen and her illegitimate child.

MELCHIOR

Yes. You see how obsessively everyone fixes on that story. It's as if the entire world were mesmerized by penis and vagina.

MORITZ

Well, I am. All the more so, I'm afraid, since reading your essay. What you wrote about the... *female*... I can't stop thinking about it.

(Pulls out the essay)

This part here — is it true?

MELCHIOR

Absolutely.

MORITZ

But, how can *you* understand that, Melchi? What the *woman* must feel.

MELCHIOR

("Why not?")

Giving yourself over to someone else?... Defending yourself until, finally, you surrender and feel Heaven break over you?...

(MORITZ nods)

Act I, Scene 5

Afternoon. MELCHIOR and WENDLA discover each other in the woods.

WENDLA

Melchior Gabor?

MELCHIOR

(In disbelief)

Wendla Bergman?! Like a tree-nymph fallen from the branches. What are you doing — alone up here?

WENDLA

Mama's making May wine. I thought I'd surprise her with some woodruff. And you?

MELCHIOR

This is my favorite spot. My private place — for thinking.

WENDLA

(Starts away)

Oh. I'm sorry —

MELCHIOR

No — no. Please.

(She pauses)

START

MELCHIOR

So... how have you been doing?

WENDLA

Well, this morning was wonderful. Our youth group brought baskets of food and clothing to the day-laborers' children.

MELCHIOR

I remember when we used to do that. Together.

WENDLA

You should have seen their faces, Melchior. How much we brightened their day.

MELCHIOR

Actually, it's something I've been thinking a lot about.

WENDLA

The day-laborers?

MELCHIOR

("No")

Our little acts of charity. What do you think, Wendla, can our Sunday School deeds really make a difference?

WENDLA

They have to. Of course. What other hope do those people have?

MELCHIOR

I don't know, exactly. But I fear that Industry is fast determining itself firmly against them.

WENDLA

Against us all, then.

MELCHIOR

Thank you, yes!

WENDLA

It seems to me: what serves *each* of us best is what serves *all* of us best.

MELCHIOR

Indeed.

(A beat)

Wendla Bergman, I have known you all these years, and we've never truly talked.

WENDLA

We have so few opportunities. Now that we're older.

MELCHIOR

True. In a more progressive world, of course, we could all attend the same school. Boys and girls together. Wouldn't that be remarkable?

(In the moment of intellectual engagement, MELCHIOR has drawn so close to WENDLA that she grows self-conscious and has to pull back)

WENDLA

What time is it?

MELCHIOR

Must be close to four.

WENDLA

Oh? I thought it was later. I paused and lay so long in the moss by the stream, and just let myself dream... I thought it must be... later.

MELCHIOR

Then, can't you sit for a moment? When you lean back against this oak, and stare up at the clouds, you start to think hypnotic things...

WENDLA

I have to be back before five.

MELCHIOR

But, when you lie here, such a strange, wonderful peace settles over you...

WENDLA

Well, for a moment maybe.

END

(WENDLA and MELCHIOR settle beneath the oak. The lights shift, isolating them in a world of vibrant shadow. A classic arpeggio begins)

#7 - The Word of Your Body

(WENDLA)

JUST TOO UNREAL, ALL THIS.

WATCHING THE WORDS FALL FROM MY LIPS...

MELCHIOR

BAITING SOME GIRL - WITH HYPOTHESES!

WENDLA & MELCHIOR

HAVEN'T YOU HEARD THE WORD OF YOUR BODY?

(MELCHIOR reaches, tentatively, takes WENDLA's hand. They begin a private pas de deux)

MELCHIOR

DON'T FEEL A THING - YOU WISH.

WENDLA

GRASPING AT PEARLS WITH MY FINGERTIPS...

MELCHIOR

HOLDING HER HAND LIKE SOME LITTLE TEASE.

WENDLA & MELCHIOR

HAVEN'T YOU HEARD THE WORD OF MY WANTING?

O, I'M GONNA BE WOUNDED.

O, I'M GONNA BE YOUR WOUND.

O, I'M GONNA BRUISE YOU.

O, YOU'RE GONNA BE MY BRUISE.

JUST TOO UNREAL, ALL THIS.

#13 – Don't Do Sadness

MORITZ

AWFUL SWEET TO BE A LITTLE BUTTERFLY.
JUST WINGIN' OVER THINGS, AND NOTHIN' DEEP INSIDE.
NOTHIN' GOIN', GOIN' WILD IN YOU – YOU KNOW –
YOU'RE SLOWIN' BY THE RIVERSIDE OR FLOATIN' HIGH AND BLUE...

OR, MAYBE, COOL TO BE A LITTLE SUMMER WIND.
LIKE, ONCE THROUGH EVERYTHING, AND THEN AWAY AGAIN.
WITH A TASTE OF DUST IN YOUR MOUTH ALL DAY,
BUT NO NEED TO KNOW, LIKE, SADNESS – YOU JUST SAIL AWAY.
'CAUSE, YOU KNOW, I DON'T DO SADNESS – NOT EVEN A LITTLE BIT.
JUST DON'T NEED IT IN MY LIFE – DON'T WANT ANY PART OF IT.
I DON'T DO SADNESS. HEY, I'VE DONE MY TIME.
LOOKIN' BACK ON IT ALL – MAN, IT BLOWS MY MIND.

I DON'T DO SADNESS. SO BEEN THERE.
DON'T DO SADNESS. JUST DON'T CARE.

(The song ends, and the lights shift. Twilight. A river. MORITZ stands alone. He withdraws a gun from his pocket. ILSE suddenly enters. Sees him)

START

ILSE

Moritz Stiefel!

MORITZ

(Frantically hiding the gun)

Ilse?! You frightened me!

ILSE

Did you lose something?

MORITZ

Why did you frighten me?

(A beat)

Damn it!

ILSE

What're you looking for?

MORITZ

If only I knew.

ILSE

Then what's the use of looking?

(A beat)

MORITZ

So, where have you been keeping yourself?

ILSE

Priapia — the Artists' Colony?

MORITZ

Yes.

ILSE

All those old buggers, Moritz. All so wild. So... Bohemian. All they want to do is dress me up and paint me!

That Johan Fehrendorf, he's a wicked one, actually. Always knocking easels down and chasing me. Dabbing me with his paintbrush. But then, that's men — if they can't stick you with one thing, they'll try another.

Oh God, Moritz, the other day we all got so drunk, I passed out in the snow — just lay there, unconscious, all night.

Then, I spent an entire week with Gustav Baum.

(Off his look)

Truly. Inhaling that ether of his! Until this morning, when he woke me with a gun, set against my breast. He said: "One twitch and it's the end." Really gave me the goosebumps.

But, how about you, Moritz — still in school?

MORITZ

Well, this semester I'm through.

(A beat)

ILSE

God, you remember how we used to run back to my house and play pirates?
Wendla Bergman, Melchior Gabor, you, and I...

—————→
Skip song

#T3a — Blue Wind

(A plaintive guitar sounds. A spotlight finds ILSE)

MORITZ

Good night, Ilse.

ILSE

Good night?

MORITZ

Virgil, the equations — remember?

ILSE

Just for an hour.

MORITZ

I can't.

ILSE

Well, walk me at least.

MORITZ

Honestly, I wish I could.

ILSE

You know, by the time you finally wake up, I'll be lying on some trash heap.

(ILSE goes. MORITZ winces)

MORITZ

For the love of God, all I had to do was say yes.

(Calls after)

Ilse? Ilse...?

(He waits. If only he could run after her... But now, she's gone)

So, what will I say? I'll tell them all, the angels, I got drunk in the snow, and sang, and played pirates... Yes, I'll tell them, I'm ready now. I'll be an angel.

(MORITZ sighs, looks out on the night. He withdraws the gun from his pocket)

Ten minutes ago, you could see the entire horizon. Now, only the dusk — the first few stars...

So dark. So dark. So dark...

*(MORITZ cocks the hammer of the gun. Sets the gun in his mouth. BLACKOUT.
End of Act II, Scene 2)*

END

Act II, Scene 5

A vineyard at sunset. Church bells sounding in the distance. HANSCHEN and ERNST loll in the grass.

START

HANSCHEN

Those bells... So peaceful.

ERNST

I know. Sometimes, when it's quiet, in the evening like this, I imagine myself as a country pastor. With my red-cheeked wife, my library, my degrees... Boys and girls, who live nearby, give me their hands when I go walking...

HANSCHEN

You can't be serious.

(A beat)

Really, Ernst, you're such a sentimentalist! The pious, serene faces you see on the clergy, it's all an act — to hide their envy.

(HANSCHEN deftly scoots closer to ERNST)

Trust me, there are only three ways a man can go. He can let the status quo defeat him — like Moritz. He can rock the boat — like Melchior — and be expelled. Or he can bide his time, and let the System work for *him* — like me.

(HANSCHEN scoots even closer to ERNST)

Think of the future as a pail of whole milk. One man sweats and stirs — churning it into butter — like Otto, for example. Another man frets, and spills his milk, and cries all night. Like Georg. But, me, well, I'm like a pussycat, I just skim off the cream...

ERNST

Just skim off the cream?...

HANSCHEN

Right.

ERNST

But, what about the...?

(Off HANSCHEN's look)

You're laughing.

What — ?

Hanschen?

END