2010

Direction of the Play: Epic Proportions

David Franklin Crutcher
Central Washington University

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Direction of the Play: *Epic Proportions*

A Project Report
Presented to
the Graduate Faculty
Central Washington University

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts
Theatre Production

by
David Franklin Crutcher, Jr.
July, 2010
We hereby approve the project report of

David Franklin Crutcher, Jr.

Candidate for the degree of Master of Arts:

Theatre Production

APPROVED FOR THE GRADUATE FACULTY

Date of Signature

Michael J. Smith
Committee Chair

Date of Signature

Christina Barrigan
Committee Member

Date of Signature

George BeIlah, III
Committee Member

Please note:
The signatures have been redacted due to security reasons.
ABSTRACT

PROJECT REPORT

Epic Proportions
Dobie High School

Directed by
David Franklin Crutcher, Jr.
April and May, 2010

This project entailed the selection, background research and documentation, musical analysis, casting, direction, vocal coaching, and post-production analysis of Dobie High School's production of Epic Proportions. Documentation includes research and analysis of the play and an evaluation of the play as a production vehicle for the Department of Theatre Arts at J. Frank Dobie High School. The analysis also includes a discussion as to the directorial vision of this production.
CENTRAL WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY
Graduate Studies

Final Examination of
David F. Crutcher, Jr.
B.A. University of North Texas, 1997
for the Degree of
Master of Arts
Theatre Production

Committee in Charge
Professor Michael J. Smith
Professor Christina Barrigan
Professor George Bellah, III

McConnell Hall
Room 117
Friday, July 9, 2010
10:00 am
David Franklin Crutcher, Jr.

Courses presented for the Master’s degree

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Total Credit Requirements - 59
BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

David F. Crutcher, Jr.

Undergraduate Study:

University of North Texas, 1993-1997 (BA) & 1998 (Teaching Certificate)

Graduate Study:

Central Washington University, 2007-2010

Professional Experience:

J. Frank Dobie High School  
Theatre Arts Teacher, Technical Director  
8/09-Current  
Houston, Texas

Hebron High School  
Theatre Arts Teacher, Director of Theatre  
5/07-6/09  
Lewisville, Texas

Hebron High School  
Theatre Arts Teacher, Technical Director  
8/06-5/07  
Lewisville, Texas

The Woodlands College Park High School  
Theatre Arts Teacher, Department Co-Head  
8/05-05/06  
The Woodlands, Texas

TWHS McCullough Campus  
Theatre Arts Teacher  
8/02-05/05  
The Woodlands, Texas

Branch Crossing Junior High  
Theatre Arts Teacher  
8/00-08/02  
The Woodlands, Texas

McCullough Junior High  
Theatre Arts Teacher  
8/99-8/00  
The Woodlands, Texas
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Note: This form is to be completed as soon as the student has formed a committee and selected an option from the list below. Submit the original and three copies to the Office of Graduate Studies in Barge 305.

Student Name: David F. Crutcher, Jr.
Mailing Address: 
City, State, Zipcode: 
Birth Date: 07/26/2009

Student ID: 
Date: 07/26/2009

Check option:

- [ ] Written Exam*
- [ ] Non-Thesis Project
- [x] Creative Project
- [ ] Studio Project
- [ ] Portfolio Review
- [ ] Thesis

If the student chooses the Written Exam option, they may omit items 1-5 below.

1. Proposed Title: Direction of the production Epic Proportions by Larry Coen and David Crane.

2. Purpose of Study: The direction of the production Epic Proportions serves as the culminating experience in theatre arts graduate studies.

3. Scope of Study: Documentation based upon the preparation of pre-production research, post-production evaluation, the direction of the production (including casting and rehearsal of actors, preparation of the Director's Production Book, and oral examination) shall benefit both the producing theatre company and its participants.

4. Procedure to be used: Three phases of study shall be included: 1) Pre-production Research and Thesis Documentation in MLA style. 2) Rehearsal and direction of production. 3) Post-Production Evaluation and Documentation.

5. Does the procedure involve collection of data obtained from
   - Human Subjects (including use of surveys)? Yes** [ ] No [x]
   - Use of Animals? Yes** [ ] No [x]

   ** If yes, your procedures must be approved in writing by the Human Subjects Committee or the Animal Care and Use Committee before you initiate your research.

Approved by:

- Michael J. Smith, Committee Chair (typed or printed)
- Christina Barrigan, Committee Member (typed or printed)
- George Bellah, III, Committee Member (typed or printed)
- Scott Robinson, Dept Chair Designee (typed or printed)

Approved by: [signature] Date

Please note:
The signatures have been redacted due to security reasons.
Students will be required to submit two copies of all motion picture film, film strips, sound film strips, slides, tapes, cassettes, pictures, etc. produced as part of the thesis. These are to be submitted at the time the thesis (three copies) is submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies and Research.
MASTER’S THESIS PROJECT
PLAYSCRIPT APPROVAL FORM

(PLEASE MAKE SURE THAT YOU HAVE READ THE PLAY SELECTION CRITERIA SECTION IN YOUR GRADUATE HANDBOOK)

SCRIPT TITLE: Epic Proportions

PLAYWRIGHT(S) [If musical, list lyricist/composer]: Larry Coen and David Crane

NUMBER OF ACTS: 1  APPROXIMATE TOTAL PLAYING TIME: 1 HOUR 15 MIN.

CAST: 
MEN: 9  WOMEN: 5  CHILDREN: 0  OVER 40: 0  GENDER FLEXIBLE: 11

ROLES REQUIRING PEOPLE OF COLOR: 0  ROLES COULD DOUBLE: At least 10

TOTAL NUMBER OF CAST: 8-35

OTHER CASTING CONCERNS: Very flexible casting.

ARTISTIC STAFF: 
MUSICAL DIRECTOR  DANCE CHOREOGRAPHER  FIGHT CHOREOGRAPHER  X  DIALECT COACH  SPECIALTY HIRE (specify what kind)

ORCHESTRA/BAND (specify what size)

Will you be fulfilling any of the above?  If so, which?

Will a guest artist be fulfilling any of the above?  If so, which?

SCENERY/PROPS: 
UNIT SET?: YES  NO  (CIRCLE ONE)  NUMBER OF SETTINGS: 1

HISTORICAL PERIOD: 1930’s  GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION: Arizona Desert

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF SET CONCERNS OR SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS:
A movie set in Arizona.

APPROXIMATE NUMBER OF PROPS: 35  PERIOD

DIFFICULT OR UNUSUAL PROPS?: YES  NO  (CIRCLE ONE)  DESCRIBE: Daggers, swords, a whip, and an axe.

COSTUMES: 
APPROXIMATE NUMBER OF COSTUMES PER CHARACTER: 3 or 4

HISTORICAL PERIOD: 1930’s, Ancient Egypt, Ancient Rome  SEASON: Summer

SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS: Roman and Egyptian costumes from a 1930’s film studio.

JUSTIFICATION FOR CHOICE OF SCRIPT
HAVE YOU SEEN THIS SCRIPT PRODUCED?: YES  NO  (CIRCLE ONE)

saw it cut to 40 minutes for the annual U.I.L. One Act Play Contest in Texas in 2007.

HAVE YOU DONE THIS PLAY BEFORE?: No.
WHY SHOULD YOUR ORGANIZATION PRODUCE THIS SCRIPT?

This play would suit Dobie High School well because it has a theatre department that is just beginning to come into prominence. It is a high-energy comedy, so student interest and involvement will be greater than in past productions. It is also a comedic style that is suited to high school students in general and the director of this project specifically. Finally, the script has great flexibility in casting and technical needs, which is important to a director in a new school community.

WHAT ARE THE DRAWBACKS (IF ANY) TO DOING THIS PRODUCTION AT YOUR SCHOOL?

As I am newly hired at Dobie High School, there are a great many unknown factors. I know my co-worker, but I have never worked with her. I have never worked in the facilities or met the students.

PLEASE GIVE A BRIEF SYNOPSIS OF THE SCRIPT ON A SEPARATE SHEET OF PAPER AND ATTACH.

PLEASE INCLUDE A COPY OF THE SCRIPT FOR THE THESIS COMMITTEE TO REVIEW.

SUBMITTED BY: (Printed Name) ___________ David F. Crutcher, Jr.__________ Date Submitted: __7/26/2009__

(Signature) ______________________________________________________________________________________

Thesis Chair Approval: Michael Smith Date Approved: 1/24/10

Thesis Committee Members Approval: Christina Barrigan Date Approved: ____________

Michael Smith (for George Bellah) 4/5/10

Graduate Coordinator Approval: Scott Robinson Date Approved: ____________

Please note:

The signatures have been redacted due to security reasons.
Project Parameters

Proposed dates for *Epic Proportions* are April 30, May 1, 3, and 4\textsuperscript{th} at 7:00 pm and May 2\textsuperscript{nd} at 2:00 pm. This will be the fourth and final production of the year at Dobie High School, which will give the newly hired director the bulk of the school year to adjust to new coworkers, administration, students, parents, and community. There will be seven weeks of rehearsal beginning on March 22\textsuperscript{nd}. The budget will be approximately $1000. I understand from my new co-worker that I can expect that 30 to 40 students will audition. They will have vastly varied levels of talent and experience. The labor pool for the production’s technical needs will mostly be the students who are cast in the play. *The Constant Wife*, our One Act Play Contest entry, did not advance to the second round of competition, so the advanced students who were working on that production are now available to take leadership roles on the *Epic Proportions* crew.

My coworker, Aimee Small, will serve as Technical Director for the production (as I have for the productions she directed). She and I have been friends for several years and she has proven to be an excellent colleague this year. She is a very talented costumer and is an excellent bargain hunter. She is excellent at finding props in unlikely places. This is fortuitous as *Epic Proportions* will be a very costume and prop heavy show. I am also sure she will provide valuable feedback to me about the acting towards the end of the rehearsal process (we have done this for each other in each of the previous productions this season). Another personnel asset is Rick Burford. He is an equity actor who works as the permanent substitute teacher for Dobie High School. He will also provide valuable feedback throughout the production process.

The venue is well equipped, but rehearsal time there is precious. The facilities (both the auditorium and black box) must be shared with the other fine arts groups in the school, who all make frequent use of it. This production will be in the black box, which is a thirty by thirty foot
square that will seat approximately 90 people. There are curtains that travel 360° around the black box, so the audience and stage arrangements are very flexible. I intend to have the audience on three walls of the black box to form a thrust stage. There is no permanent sound system in the black box, but we do have an excellent travel sound system that is small enough to be out of the way (it is a small four channel board) but powerful enough to run the show. There is an ETC 48/96 Expression light board dedicated to the black box. A challenge will be the lack of ellipsoidal spotlights. There are precious few in the whole school, and the few that do exist are not available to be pulled from the auditorium. Even if they could be moved, they are the wrong throw for the black box. There are a seemingly endless supply of par cans, fresnels, and scoops. While not ideal, a suitable light plot should be feasible.
February 3, 2010

To Whom It May Concern:

David Crutcher has administrative approval to continue with his production of Epic Proportions on April 30, May 1, 2, 3, and 4th. I am aware that this production is part of his Master’s Thesis Project for Central Washington University, and he has permission to use the facilities at J. Frank Dobie High School to complete this endeavor. Furthermore, Mr. Crutcher has permission to include activities for this project in the curriculum of the Theatre Production class at Dobie High School.

Respectfully,

Tanner Ledford
Orchestra Director and Fine Arts Administrator
J. Frank Dobie High School

Please note:
This signature has been redacted due to security reasons.
Evaluation of *Epic Proportions* as a Production Vehicle

I first evaluated *Epic Proportions* as a production vehicle for Hebron High School in the Lewisville Independent School district. The bad news is that I am no longer employed there. The good news is the play is very flexible, and will therefore be an excellent vehicle for J. Frank Dobie High School. The cast can be as few as eight or as many as fifty. This will be beneficial as the number of students who audition for plays at Dobie varies greatly from show to show. The set can be whatever space, labor, and resources allow. There are no elaborate effects called for in the script, though they will fit if the space and students are ready and able to execute them.

The play is a high-energy comedy with no profanity, so it will appeal to the majority of students and audiences. This spoof of the early Hollywood epic movie genre offers entertainment will play well at Dobie High School. Research on Ancient Egypt, The Roman Empire, and Hollywood and Arizona during the 1930’s will lead to a rich production. The script is not very deep, the characters are relatively one dimensional, but a light comedy will be a fitting ending to a season that contained two British comedies (*Hay Fever* and *The Constant Wife*) and Don Nigro’s *Paganini*. Enthusiastic, fearless students will make it fun to direct, crew, or watch.

A challenge for this production will be working with a new group of students. They have only worked on three shows with me before this production (two of which I tech directed and one that I directed). The “feeling out” process between us is far from complete. They are also a group that is green in general. This is Aimee Small’s second year as department head. She and the students have made tremendous strides, but there is much to be done. They are still working to understand some basic theatrical practices. For example, they believe things like birthdays are valid conflicts to put down on the audition sheets. The advanced class is more production work than curricular, which helps solve short-term problems but does nothing to further the student’s
growth as actors and technicians. Aimee and the Dobie students are also not used to having student designers. This year those who were interested have made great strides as student designers without the benefit of curriculum from a dedicated tech class. What the actors and technicians lack in experience and knowledge, they make up for with dedication, enthusiasm, and attitude. They are extremely sweet to each other and they always professional in their demeanor.
Concept Statement for *Epic Proportions*

Larry Coen and David Crane’s comedy is set in the golden age of the film industry, the 1930’s. The play is full of fast moving, witty banter. There will be three major design palettes within *Epic Proportions*: a Hollywood movie set in the Arizona desert during the 1930’s, Ancient Egypt, and the Roman Empire (the latter two through the lens of the first).

With comedy, spoof, satire, the nature of the space chosen for the production, and the title in mind, this production will be decidedly small. There is comedy to be mined from the very idea of stuffing a large history of the world scale story into a black box. There is also humor to be found with a cast of 3,400 being portrayed by fewer than fifteen actors.

The world of the play is a jumbled mess. Comedy can ensue from this mess when the Hollywood, Hollywood Egyptian, and Hollywood Roman designs, which are distinctly different, are allowed to interact more and more as the action of the play progresses until we are left with delicious chaos. This clashing of design palettes will help to foster a genuine sense of danger for the characters under the comedy and keep the audience from assuming from the opening scene that there will be a happy ending.

I imagine *Epic Proportions* as cartoonish in the World War II era Warner Brothers sense of the word. These specific, time period appropriate cartoons are mired in spoof, satire, comedic violence, bad behavior, and fast paced, clever dialogue.

The sound design should include full orchestra numbers that are as loud and violently moving as those found in epic movies of the thirties and forties and the Warner Brothers cartoons from the same time.

The set will be minimal. There is not enough room in the black box for a large set, and sightlines would be problematic with large set pieces since audience will be on three sides. Key
pieces like columns, cots, step units, etc. should help to differentiate the locations of the scenes.

With the set being minimal, the props become more numerous and important. The props must look period and the real props must be distinctly different from the movie props meant to be part of *Exuent Omnes*, the movie the characters are filming. For example the weaponry for the film can be obviously fake even in the intimate setting of the black box.

The costumes must fall into the distinct design categories as well. The audience must be able to immediately identify crew, Egyptians, and Romans from one another. Often in the same scene. With some students playing up to six different roles, quick changes must be made possible by the build of the pieces.

Casting can be very flexible since the script was written for eight actors, but roles can easily be split if the talent in the department warrants doing so. Casting will most likely be blind to ethnicity and possibly gender. This will be necessary since Dobie High School’s student population is very ethnically diverse, and there are a great many more females in the after school theatre program than males. This type of casting can only serve the production well.
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<td>26 Auditions for Epic Proportions (3 leads only) and UIL OAP</td>
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Production Schedule
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<td>Reh 3-5 Working</td>
<td>Reh 12-6 Polishing, Crew</td>
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<td>Reh 3-5 Polishing</td>
<td>Reh 3-5 Polishing</td>
<td>Reh 3-5 Polishing</td>
<td>Reh 3-5 Run 1st half</td>
<td>Reh 3-5 Run 2nd half</td>
<td>Reh 12-6 Run Show</td>
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<td>Reh 3-5 Run Show</td>
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<td>Reh 12-6 Wet Tech, Run Show</td>
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Given Circumstances

Environmental Facts

Geographical Location

_Epic Proportions_ takes place in the Arizona desert at a fictional spot called Molten Rock (Coen and Crane 6). Early in the play Louise Goldman, the Assistant Director of Atmosphere Personnel for the D.W. Dewitt production of _Exeunt Omnes_, describes the location of the film set as being “240 miles . . . across scorching desert” from the nearest town (6). The distance from civilization and the absence of buses isolates the cast and crew until shooting is scheduled to end (10). Being stuck in the middle of the desert gives the cast and crew of thousands (there are over 3,400 extras) plenty of hardships such as a softball league but no softball and only two bathrooms (6). The film crew has given Molten Rock a skyline dotted with sets of Ancient Egypt and the Roman Empire including the Temple of Osiris, the Oracle at Delphi, and pyramids (6, 9).

The Sonoran desert has been traditionally described as “20 miles from wood, 20 miles from water, and 40 feet from Hell” (Ives 147). The 1,000,000 square miles in and around the Sonoran desert only contains two major rivers, the Colorado and the Rio Grande, both of which originate in the mountains (147). Throughout the 1930’s, Southern Arizona’s average annual temperature was 70 degrees Fahrenheit and there was 10 inches of annual rainfall (148). This climate would make the Sonoran desert a logical location for a Hollywood film crew looking to reproduce the ancient Egyptian world on the cheap and near their own base of operations.

Date

The play is set in the 1930’s according to the title page (Coen and Crane 4). The play has an intentional vagueness as to the exact year in which the play is set, giving it a
generic 30's feel. When Phil enters, he is said to be dressed like someone straight out of the *Grapes of Wrath* (7). The play seems to take place over several weeks in the summer heat. Phil says to Benny, “You guys got that orgy last week, didn’t you?” (20). While most scenes take place during daylight hours, scenes seven, ten, eleven, twelve, and fourteen happen at night and will require different lighting looks.

Economic Environment

The action of this play is set during the Golden Age of Hollywood and the Great Depression. Unemployment was rampant; soup kitchens could not keep up with demand. Banks were closed. Homes were foreclosed. The song “Brother, Can You Spare a Dime?” was on everyone’s lips. The Great Depression “happened simultaneously over almost the entire globe . . . [and] was experienced directly, not merely through its repercussions, by the people of nearly every nation and social class” (Garraty 907). Even though the film industry enjoys a greater stability than other industries during times of economic hardship, there was still a great deal of fluctuation in demand for movies and the employment of those who make films (Dawson 345). Under President Franklin Roosevelt, the Works Progress Administration and the Public Works Administration (two newly created agencies) created jobs for workers constructing buildings, dams, bridges, schools, and countless other projects that are still around to this day (Garraty 909). These policies and labor camps were designed to keep American youths busy (910). Eventually, the outbreak of World War II led to full employment and massive economic expansion in all developed nations (944).

The relative immunity to economic hardships enjoyed by Hollywood is evident in *Epic Proportions* from the treatment of the production of the movie within the play, *Exeunt Omnes*. The production is being filmed on location, which is a rarity when
Hollywood executives are pinching pennies (Dawson 342). The scale of the technical aspects of *Exeunt Omnes* is massive as well. Louise Goldman says that it is going to be "the biggest epic ever made" as she addresses the 3,400 extras, and she refers to construction being done on over five hundred sets for the project (Coen and Crane 6).

**Political Environment**

Hollywood during the 1930's was desperate to please its audiences and keep attendance up, even conducting massive Gallup polls and tailoring productions to the information garnered from the public (Ohmer 144). The public was still weary of the war in Europe. According to a Gallup poll in June of 1941, 79% of the American public still favored neutrality (Chambers 44). As with all political debates, Hollywood was mired in it. Harry M. Warner of Warner Bros. said that motion pictures had the ability to "reach directly the heart and mind of the individual" and that they would "contribute to abolishing the war by engendering mutual understanding and empathy among the masses of every race and nation" (45). Peace organizations such as the National Council for the Prevention of War (NCPW) and the Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) realized the power of newsreels and movies to reach large audiences and worked hard to promote anti-war movies such as *All's Quiet on the Western Front*. While *Exeunt Omnes* does not come across as particularly pro or anti-war, it definitely is meant to (comically) "engender mutual understanding and empathy among the masses of every race and nation" (45).

**Social Environment**

Hollywood was under a great deal of pressure to conform to certain social standards in the 1930’s, including the threat of litigation and congressional hearings. As a response, the Production Code of 1930 was adopted in order for the studios to self-
regulate the images, language, and ideas that they would present to the public (Jurca 4). Catherine Jurca cites a wonderful example of how eager Hollywood was to adhere to and, paradoxically, to shape the social environment of the day: A scene in MGM’s *Hollywood Review of 1929* has Lionel Barrymore directing a straight version of the balcony scene from *Romeo and Juliet* when he receives a letter from the New York office telling him that the people do not want anything old-fashioned. Norma Shearer as Juliet chirps, “Now listen, boyfriend, you have a nice line of chatter, but how do I know you care for me in a big way [sic]” (3).

The goofy, stylized, stilted, and overly dramatic *Exeunt Omnes* dialogue is clearly satire aimed at the sanitized, meaningless, pandering dialogue that permeated so many movies of the 30’s in order to be in compliance with the Production Code of 1930.

Religious Environment

The religious environment of the 1930’s in the United States was very similar to the one that exists today. There has always been a very vocal group of people whose moral outrage must be acknowledged in some fashion. An article in the New York Times by J. Hoberman begins:

'I wish to join the Legion of Decency, which condemns vile and unwholesome moving pictures. I unite with all who protest against them as a grave menace to youth, to home life, to country and to religion.' So began a pledge written in the spring of 1934 by the Archbishop of Cincinnati, John T. McNicholas. Distributed in Roman Catholic churches across America, the petition garnered some four million signatures within a month. Racy and insolent, populated by dynamic, street-smart criminals and glamorous ‘fallen women’ in scanty lingerie, set in Art Deco
penthouses and skid row dives, predicated on breezy wisecracks and slangy double-entendres that confounded censors and offended less cosmopolitan audiences, the Hollywood movies of the early 1930's were a different world. Or were they? 'I condemn absolutely those salacious motion pictures which, with other degrading agencies, are corrupting public morals and promoting sex mania in our land,' the Legion of Decency pledge continued. (Hoberman “When the Spice…”)

*Epic Proportions* contains a great number of Biblical references, especially in the form of scenes in *Exeunt Omnes*. Such scenes and references include the parting of the Red Sea, the burning bush, Shel being ordered to “Do Job,” and Mr. Dewitt’s final entrance dressed as Moses.

**Previous Action**

The most vital information we learn about previous action for the characters of *Epic Proportions* is that Benny has always dreamed of being a movie star. Benny’s desire to act is the catalyst for everything that follows in the play.

- In the Narrator’s opening monologue:

  In the beginning, there was wasteland. But this wasn’t very interesting to look at. And so in this barren desert was built the greatest civilization man has ever known . . . This is a story about a lot of things!

  (Coen and Crane 5)

- Louise tells the extras that construction has already begun on over 500 sets recreating the ancient world (6).

- Benny and Phil’s mother found an “extras wanted” flyer in Benny’s room. Phil assumed that was where Benny was when he went missing (7).
• Phil took the last bus out to Molten Rock to find Benny. There will not be another bus until shooting is complete (7, 10).

• Benny read in a magazine that Lydia Saint Claire was discovered while she was an extra in Love's Sweet Surrender. She went on to star in two movies and then die (7).

• Benny says to Phil, “Tell them [mom and dad] to look for me up on the silver screen. Phil, I can’t go back. This is my dream and if I sit around at home it’s never going to happen” (7).

• The day before the action of the play begins, D.W. Dewitt handed his set designer, Shel, a note that said, “Do Job.” He meant the Book of Job from the Bible (8, 9).

• Louise reveals that Mr. Dewitt likes a closed set (10).

• Louise reveals that no one talks to Mr. Dewitt (10).

• Jack says that no one is getting out of Molten Rock until the picture is in the can (11).

• Louise says the mob (minus Benny’s group of fours) is one of the best mobs she has ever worked with (13).

• Phil was drum major of his high school band. He helped figure out the formations. They were all-state (16).

• Louise is from Kipper’s Bay, Alaska (17).

• Admiral Spearing froze to death in Kipper’s Bay, Alaska, on his way to the North Pole (17).

• Louise has no one left in Kipper’s Bay. Her father was killed when the glacier moved (17).

• Six months after her father died, D.W. Dewitt came to Kipper’s Bay to film Vikings Away (17).

• Louise was an extra in D.W. Dewitt’s Vikings Away. She was so well-liked that Dewitt
offered her a permanent job. With nothing keeping her in Alaska, she accepted (17).

- All Phil ever wanted is to lead a marching band of his own (18).
- Benny took acting lessons for six months (20).
- Benny feels like he has been a four all of his life and that is all he will ever be (20).
- Louise reminds the Queen of herself when she was Louise’s age (21).
- Mr. Dewitt has made dozens of pictures (26).
- Marching bands taught Mr. Dewitt how to read when he first immigrated to the United States. For three months he could only spell three words: Go, Team, and Cougars (26).
- An actress playing a Vestal Virgin, Lyla Pinkus, was impregnated nine months before the end of the play (31).
- Louise asks Benny what about her turned Phil into a jerk; Benny assures her that Phil was a jerk before he met her (33).
- Louise’s life was simpler in Alaska. There was just snow, sky, and caribou (33).
- The Queen has kids and divorce papers to sign when she returns from Molten Rock (40).
- *Exeunt Omnes* was to be the Queen’s comeback role (40).
- Louise tells Phil that he is the worst ex-boyfriend that she has ever had (41).
- Referring to growing up in Alaska, Louise says, “The Arctic Circle is no place for sissy girls” (43).
- In what is most likely a lie meant as a distraction during a physical altercation, Phil tells Benny that their mother once confessed to him that Benny was an accident (44).

**Polar Attitudes**

**Benny:**

- Beginning: “I’m not going [sic] Phil. This is my chance” (7). And “Tell them [mom and dad] to look for me up on the silver screen. Phil, I can’t go back. This is my dream and if
I sit around at home it’s never going to happen” (7).

- Ending: “If it takes me forty days and forty nights, I’ll get us to Tucson!” (7). And “Louise . . . when we get across this desert . . . will you marry me?” (45).

Benny is driven by two things at the beginning of the play: he is determined to do what it takes to realize his dream of becoming a movie star and he is determined to stay in the desert and see *Exeunt Omnes* through to the end. By the end of the play, his dream has become to spend his life with Louise and to rescue the entire cast and crew of the film from certain death in the desert.

**Phil:**

- Beginning: “Come on, Benny. Look at those people. There’s no way you’re going to get discovered here” (4).
- Ending: “So Benny, can you really get us out of here?” (45).

At the top of the play, Phil is the dominant of the brothers. He is not above bossing Benny around, stepping in front of him, or even physically attacking him. By the end of the play, Phil realizes that he must let Benny be a leader and have the girl that he neglected. As an apology, he even offers to be Benny’s best man when he and Louise are married (45).

**Louise:**

- Beginning: “What is it about me that turns nice guys into jerks?” (33).
- Ending: “Of course I’ll marry you [Benny]” 45.

Louise falls for Phil at the beginning of the play, but quickly ends up with Benny after Phil proves neglectful and Benny proves himself truly in love with her. She has ended the cycle of falling for the wrong guy who treats her poorly and has begun what has the potential to be a very healthy relationship.
Choice of Words

Coen and Crane have created characters in *Epic Proportions* who use very common, simple, and short words in their speech. There are, however, instances when long, formal, and foreign words are used apologetically or incorrectly for comedic effect; especially during the scenes of *Exeunt Omnes*, the film being made within the story of the play. This has the effect of making the characters seem very stilted and stiff when they are acting in the film.

Louise’s first line in the play contains the words “’bout” and “huh” (Coen and Crane 6). These types of words are peppered throughout the entire play. In Phil and Benny’s opening scene, there is only one word that has more than two syllables in the entire conversation—“discovered”- and they each only say it once (7). Mr. Dewitt’s first two lines are just one word each—“Cut” (6, 10).

The first words spoken in the play are that of the Narrator, who uses numerous multi-syllable words to say very little to great comic effect. In his opening speech he drops the words “civilization”, “majesty”, and “homoerotic” (5). He proceeds to describe the story that is about to unfold as being about “lust and revenge and fate and destiny” only to apologetically conclude that it is about “a lot of things” (5). Louise’s previously mentioned opening monologue also contains the words “Atmosphere Personnel”, “Sphinx”, “Exeunt Omnes”, and “Osiris” (6). It is very common for Coen and Crane to have the characters use words like these in the same monologue, sentence, or even phrases as words such as “’bout” and “huh.” Large, formal, and foreign words are used apologetically and incorrectly in the movie scenes within the play almost as a rule. In the opening scene the Conspirators drop the names “Hecabedes”, “Octavium”, and “Homericus” (5). The Queen of the Nile’s attendant uses the words “jests” and “befall” (22).
The most striking characteristic of the phrases that Coen and Crane give the characters of *Epic Proportions* is the difference between the types of phrases used when they are speaking to one another and those used when they are acting out a scene in *Exeunt Omnes*. The phrases the characters use to speak to one another are very natural, short, flowing, and conversational. The phrases that are meant to be from the script of the film within the play are quasi-King James Bible-speak and are comically pretentious.

Jack and Shel demonstrate the natural, conversational phrases used when the characters are speaking to one another as Jack confronts Shel:

**JACK.** What’s today, Shel?

**SHEL.** Friday.

**JACK.** And what did you promise me for Friday, Shel?

**SHEL.** Pyramids.

**JACK.** How’s that?

**SHEL.** Pyramids. But, there’s no way. (Coen and Crane 8)

The phrases “How’s that?” and “no way” are both very good examples of the types of natural and conversational phrases used by the characters throughout the play when they are speaking to each other.

In a scene from *Exeunt Omnes*, a group of Egyptians have a conversation that perfectly illustrates the faux Bible-speak commonly used in the film the characters are making. Second Egyptian asks his companions, “Was it not amusing today to watch our Pharaoh bandy words with that arrogant Israelite, Moses?” The answer from his companion is, “And oh yes, were we not all helpless with laughter when the bearded one did make his idle threat of Ten Plagues?” (18). It is also worth noting that the Narrator uses phrases in the bad Charlton Heston movie manner as well. When describing Benny and Louise’s first intimate encounter he says, “And yay,
it was a good kiss!” (34).

Coen and Crane use the same juxtaposition gag of small words against longer, more formal, and foreign words in the use of phrases. Louise tells her extras that she wants to see the different groups perform “horror”, “fear”, “anger”, and “sardonic-amusement” in the same sentence (13).

Choice of Images

The imagery in Epic Proportions is all about the desert, sand and rocks. Things are described in the opening as “barren” and taking place in a “wasteland” (5). Benny and Phil “haul granite” (11). The desert and stone imagery is apt given the tremendous struggle all of the characters undergo in order to finish filming Exeunt Omnes. The other main reoccurring imagery is about the large scale of the production within the play. This begins with the title of the play. All manner of objects and actions are continuously described as “epic,” “sweeping,” “majestic,” etc. Epic undertakings are discussed with ease. Louise tells Phil, “Before you came, we were going to part it [the Red Sea] on the side” (17).

Choice of Peculiar Characteristics

The peculiar characteristics of the dialogue in Epic Proportions are in the lines that belong to the script within the play, Exeunt Omnes. They are pseudo-Biblical to the point of being silly. The Queen’s Attendant upon learning that she is afraid that death lingers near says, “Why surely my lady jests. Does not the golden sun still ripen the sweet dates that fall from the majestic palm? No, my beautiful Queen, no harm shall befall you on a day such as this” (23).

Every line of Exeunt Omnes comes across as silly and peculiar.

Sound of the Dialogue

Epic Proportions uses a great deal of hard sounds and repetition for comedic effect. As an example of hard sounds being used in rapid succession: upon being asked to help create a
background life for an incidental slave, Louise answers, “Uh, you’ve always been a slave. The Queen doesn’t know you exist. And you’ve served in her bedchamber ever since you became a eunuch” (22). Almost every scene of *Exeunt Omnes* in the play is repeated. Octavius is stabbed several times, and most of those times he is accompanied by the same lines of the Conspirators. The “Queen of the Nile” scene is repeated ad nauseam before Benny is recast as Phil’s lead, and then it is played once more.

Structure of Lines and Speeches

The lines in *Epic Proportions* are short and natural, allowing for quick, comedic delivery. Consider this exchange between Phil and Louise:

PHIL. You have a boyfriend back there [in Alaska]?

LOUISE. I don’t have anyone back there.

PHIL. No folks?

SHEL. Papa was killed when the glacier moved.

JACK. I’m sorry. (17)

The speeches, on the other hand are scenes within themselves. Louise and Phil each have speeches to the extras that are considerable in length and contain a great deal of information, punch lines, introductions, builds, and resolutions all their own. Louise’s first address to the extras on page six is an excellent example.

Dramatic Action

Detailed Breakdown of the Action
EPIC PROPORTIONS

In the darkness, music begins: the soundtrack music of a great movie epic. As the music continues, we hear the ominous voice of the narrator – very Orson Welles.

NARRATOR. In the beginning there was wasteland. (The curtain rises, revealing an enormous set of ruins. Behind the ruins, there is the suggestion of endless desert.) But this was not very interesting to look at. (The curtain falls.) And so in this barren desert there was built the greatest civilization man has ever known. (The curtain rises, revealing enormous columns.) And here was told the most epic of stories. With the majesty of Cleopatra. The sweep of Intolerance. And the vague, homocentric undertones of Ben-Hur. This is a story about lust and revenge and fate and destiny. This is a story about a lot of things. (Drums. The music shifts in tone as lights come up on two men and a woman dressed in Roman togas. They speak in hushed tones.)

CONSPIRATOR #1. They say that Heebides returns this very evening from his conquests in Sparta.

CONSPIRATOR #2. But does he seek Octavius's throne?

CONSPIRATOR #3. Nay! He is content with the life of a soldier and seeks not that of a ruler.

CONSPIRATOR #2. But if he does not, then who should lead us?

CONSPIRATOR #3. The Emperor would name his idiot bastard nephew, Homericus, as heir to the throne.

CONSPIRATOR #1. Say not so!

CONSPIRATOR #2. But what of the cries of the people?

CONSPIRATOR #1. When has the Emperor ever heard their voice?

CONSPIRATOR #3. But should Homericus ever take the throne it would be the end of us all.

CONSPIRATOR #1. We must not let that come to pass.
CONSPIRATOR #2. We must act this very day. (They draw daggers.)

CONSPIRATOR #3. But hush. Octavius approaches to address the mob. (Octavius enter, and waves toward the audience. There is the sound of a great mob cheering.)

OCTAVIUS. Citizens of Rome —

Unit 2
Louise And Her Extras

DEWITT. (Offstage.) Curt. (The soundtrack music stops. Louise enters. She is an attractive, nearly arrived young woman, carrying a clipboard. As the actors leave the stage, she comes forward and speaks to the audience. She addresses them as if they are a large crowd.)

LOUISE. Okay. How 'bout that, huh? And you guys: not had for a first time, or "first take" as you'll hear it called. For those of you who came in on the buses last night and don't know me, my name is Louise Goldman and I'm the Assistant Director in charge of Atmosphere Personnel, or "Extras." That's you. Now there are more than 3,400 of you out there, so it may take me a little while to get to know all your names. But I want you to know that if you have any problems, you can always come to me. I'm in the little blue tent next to the Sphinx of Antioch, and my flap is always open. So welcome to Moab, Utah, where we will be filming the D.W. Dewitt production of "Except Omnes," which apparently is Latin for "everybody but." Who knew? I think you'll be excited to know that you are going to be part of the biggest epic ever made. If you look around, you can see that construction has already begun on over five hundred sets recreating the Ancient World from the Old Testament to the Land of the Pharaohs. (She consults her clipboard.) Now, even though the nearest town is over 200 miles away across scorching deserts, that doesn't mean we can't have fun right here. So I've got a sign-up sheet for softball that I'll be posting by the Temple of Isis, on the bulletin board next to the Oracle. Oh, and if anyone has a softball bat, that'd be great! Okay, I realize many of you have never acted in a motion picture before. Well, let me just say that if we all work together, then we'll have something we can all really be proud of. And I'm sorry, there are only two bathrooms. All right, we're going to divide you up into a few groups for different scenes. So would you please count off by four, starting here. (From offstage we hear voices beginning to count off.)
Unit 3
Phil Finds Benny

VOICE. One!

VOICE. Two!

VOICE. Three!

VOICE. Four!

LOUISE. Excellent! (Louise exits.)

VOICE. One!

VOICE. Two!

VOICE. Three!

Lights up on Benny. He is in his early twenties and wears a shabby toga. He is standing as if part of the great mob that has been listening to Louise. Phil enters. He is slightly older than Benny, dressed in 1930's farm clothes and wears a hat, like a character out of Grapes of Wrath. (He spots Benny.)

PHIL. Benny!

BENNY. (Surprised.) Phil? What are you doing here?

PHIL. Looking for you.

BENNY. How did you know I was here?

PHIL. Mom found this in your room. (He produces a printed flyer and reads from it.) “Extra Wanted!” I managed to get on the last bus out here. Now come on. Get out of your little dress. You're coming home. (Phil pulls Benny by his toga.)

BENNY. (Pulling away from Phil.) Careful! Careful! (Indicating the toga.) These things come off real easy. And that's not gonna happen to me twice. I'm not going Phil. This is my chance.

PHIL. Come on, Benny. Look at those people. There's no way you're ever gonna get discovered here.

BENNY. Oh yeah? (Pulls a Hollywood fan magazine from his toga.) According to this magazine, Lydia Saint Clair was discovered while she was an extra in Love's Screw Surrender. She went on to star in two movies and now... ok, now she's dead... But this is how she got her big break!

PHIL. All right, fine. What do you want me to tell Mom and Dad?

BENNY. Tell them to look for me up on the silver screen. Phil, I can't go back. This is my dream and if I sit around at home it's never gonna happen.

PHIL. Wow, I've never heard you talk like that. Well... good luck, here... (Puts his hat on Benny.) You know how you burn. (Phil starts to go.)

BENNY. Wait.

B. halts
PHIL. What?
BENNY. Why don't you stay? We can do this together.
PHIL. Are you serious?
BENNY. Why not? They pay us a dollar a day and all we have to do is wave at an emperor now and then. It's like a paid vacation.
PHIL. (Impressed.) Really? A dollar a day?
BENNY. [Lighthearted] Look, Phil, you know what today is?
PHIL. Yeah, it's Mom and Dad's anniversary.
BENNY. They're probably just sitting down to supper now. Mom made her fried chicken. And her whipped potatoes.
PHIL. Yeah, and her creamed corn.
BENNY. And Uncle Frank and Aunt Millie will be there.
PHIL. And he'll tell his dirty jokes and she'll start to cry.
BENNY. And then Mom'll start talking about that girl Dad wanted to marry. And Dad'll start drinking and cleaning his guns.
(Phil thinks and says nothing. The voices counting off grow louder.)
VOICE. Four!
VOICE. One!
VOICE. Two! (There is a pause. Benny watches Phil. After a moment, Phil calls out . . .)
PHIL. Three!
BENNY. (Pleased.) Four! Phil, we're in the movies!
PHIL. Do I have to wear a skirt?
BENNY. Yeah, but when there's a breeze ... just shut up, you'll like it. (Lights fade on them and come up on Jack and Shel. They are on the production staff of the film.)
SHEL. Jack, I've got those drawings of the Palace of Nembia.
JACK. What's today, Shel?
SHEL. Friday.
JACK. And what did you promise me for Friday, Shel?
SHEL. (Under his breath, guiltily) Pyramids.
JACK. How's that?
SHEL. (Loudly) Pyramids. (Defensively) But, there's no way. We haven't finished the Coliseum. We still need a horse for Troy. This picture just keeps getting bigger and bigger —
JACK. Shel, Mister Dewitt wants those pyramids.
SHEL. Mister Dewitt wants! Mister Dewitt always wants. Yesterday he handed me this. (Shel hands a note to Jack.)
Unit 5
Building the Pyramids

JACK. (Reading the note.) "Do job." You're not doing your job?

SHEL. That's what I thought. It took me an hour to realize it's
"Do job." The Book of Job. And now he wants pyramids? (Jack
forbids SHEL by the front of his shirt.)

JACK. I don't care how you do it, but tomorrow there better be
some pyramids.

SHEL. (Almost a squeak.) Hair ... you ... you've got ... hair! (Jack
releases him and exits, leaving SHEL rubbing his chest.) Louise enters.

She is waiting patiently for the counting off to finish. Finally, the
counting off is almost done.

VOICE. Two!

VOICE. Three!

VOICE. Four!

VOICE. One! (There is a pause.)

LOUISE. Okay! Now does everyone have a number?

OFFSTAGE CROWD. Yes!!

LOUISE. Remember them. They'll be very important later on.
Now, the next scene we'll be doing is ... (SHEL frantically whispers
in Louise's ear.) "The Building of the Pyramids." So if you'll all fol-
low Mister Silverman here — (Indicates SHEL) — he'll show you
where to pick up your granite and logs. (Lights fade on Louise and
SHEL. Music: We hear thousands moaning. Lights come up on the
building of the pyramids. Benny and Phil wear harnesses. They are
employed. They struggle as if they are pulling a great weight. The
slavemaster yells at them. He is a large man, wearing an Egyptian
headdress and carrying a whip.)

SLAVEMASTER. Work! (He cracks his whip.)

PHIL. (Struggling with teeth clenched.) All we have to do is wave
our hands ... and then? It's like a paid vacation!

BENNY. (Brightly.) I think we got into that last shot.

PHIL. Yeah, us and a couple thousand other guys.

BENNY. Sshhh!

SLAVEMASTER. Work, you sons of jackals! Work! (He cracks his
whip. The tip of it catches Phil.)

PHIL. Ow! Okay. That's it. I've had it. (Phil pulls the harness
off his shoulders.)

BENNY. Phil, what are you doing?

PHIL. I've had enough, Benny.

S.M. brutalizes

P. complains

B. sugarcoats

P. quites

B. placates
DENNY. (Desperately) Phil, don't.

PHIL. Forget it, Benny. Stay if you want, but I'm going home now.

DEWITT. (Offstage.) Cut! (Phil throws his harness to the ground, forcing Benny to take the full weight of the offstage granite block. Benny is immediately yanked offstage. Louise enters, looking very concerned.)

LOUISE. What seems to be the trouble here? Why have you stopped? (Benny drags himself back on, hauling the enormous weight.)

PHIL. Oh, I don't know. Could be the blinding heat. Could be the back-breaking work. Or it could be the big man with the whip! BENNY. (To Louise, struggling.) For what it's worth, I'm having a great time. (Then, aside.) Uh, Phil, a little help?

PHIL. (Ignoring him.) I'm sorry, Miss Goldman, but this is not for me. If you'll just tell me when the next bus leaves, I'll get out of your way and you can get on with your movie. (Benny hangs onto the slavemaster's arm for support.)

LOUISE. But there are no buses. They've all gone. They won't be back 'til we finish shooting.

PHIL. (Thrown.) Well ... there must be supply trucks or a mail truck I could hitch a ride with.

LOUISE. No. We have everything we need right here.

PHIL. (Desperate.) But that means we're cut off from civilization.

LOUISE. (Sympathetic.) Mister Dewitt likes a closed set.

PHIL. Can I talk to Mister Dewitt?

LOUISE. No one talks to Mister Dewitt.

PHIL. Where is he?

LOUISE. (Pointing up) Up there. (Then, panicked.) Oh God, he's looking at us. (Suddenly we hear D. W. Dewitt's booming voice.)

DEWITT. (Offstage.) Why have you stopped?

LOUISE. (indicating the slavemaster and Phil.) This man hit this man with his whip.

DEWITT. (Offstage.) And?

LOUISE. (At a loss.) And ... he didn't like it. (Jack enters. He's not pleased. But he covers it for Dewitt.)

JACK. There's no problem, Mr. Dewitt. We'll be ready to go in a minute. (To Louise, in a fury) What the hell's going on here? These people are your responsibility!

PHIL. (Stepping in.) Excuse me, there's no need to yell at Miss...
Goldman. It's my fault we stopped. I was just asking her about arrangements for me to go home. (Jack laughs in Phil's face. The laughter builds. The others nervously join in. Suddenly Jack stops laughing and grabs the front of Phil's tunic, just as he grabbed Steve earlier.)

JACK. (In Phil's face.) Nobody's getting outta here till this picture's in the can! (Jack releases Phil, who rubs his chest.) Goldman!

LOUISE. (Instinctively protecting her chest with her clipboard.)

JACK. (Calmer.) Jack ...

JACK. I hope I won't have to come down here again.

LOUISE. Me, too. Not that we don't enjoy it when you do.

(Jack exits.)

BENNY. (To Louise, pulling against the weight.) Uh, Miss Goldman? I'm sorry if we got you into any trouble.

LOUISE. Oh, it's not your fault.

BENNY. I thought your speech this morning was great.

LOUISE. Why, thank you.

BENNY. This whole thing's pretty exciting for me and everybody just seems so nice.

LOUISE. Well, then you'll have to come to one of our little get-togethers in the Forum.

BENNY. Will you be there?

LOUISE. (Smiling.) I think so.

JACK. (Offstage.) GOLDMAN!!

LOUISE. (Starts to exit.) Well, it was nice meeting you.

PHIL. Phil.

LOUISE. Right.

BENNY. Benny!

LOUISE. (On her way out.) Right! (She exits.)

JACK. (Offstage.) Everybody ready? And ...

DEWITT. (Offstage.) Action! (The slavemaster enters and cracks his whip.)

SLAVEMASTER. Work! Work! (Benny and Phil return to pulling their granite block.)

BENNY. Miss Goldman's really pretty. She's so pretty she should be in the movie.

PHIL. I'll tell you something, Benny. I sure don't intend to spend the whole time here hauling granite. And I'll bet she's a good lady to know.
SLAVEMASTER. Work, you sons of jackals! Work! (The slavemaster cracks the whip, while close to Phil.)

PHIL. (To the slavemaster) I know where your tent is.

SLAVEMASTER. (After a beat, brightly) Good work! (Cracks whip.) Good work. (Cries whip.) Good work! (The guys continue pulling their rope. Blackout. In the darkness we hear a fanfare of trumpets. Lights come up on the three conspirators. They are engaged in the scene we saw earlier.)

CONSPIRATOR #5. But should Homerius ever take the throne, it would be the end of us all.

CONSPIRATOR #1. We must not let that come to pass.

CONSPIRATOR #2. We must act this very day. (They draw daggers.)

CONSPIRATOR #3. But hush, Octavius approaches to address the mob. (Octavius enters and waves. The Mob cheers.)

OCTAVIUM. Citizens of Rome, it is said that the War of Peloponnesia is fought not for profit but for the love of blood. (The crowd roars.) It is said that the days of the Etruscan Empire can be numbered by the jewels on the fingers of her citizens. (Crowd roars.) It is said that the — Ack! (The conspirators stab him from three sides. His death is elaborate and well-choreographed and ends with him falling down the stairs. The crowd roars even louder than before.)

DEWITT. (Offstage) Cut! (Rosie enters.)

LOUISE. (To the crowd) Okay mob, we're going to go back. Not bad, but it needs work. (Indicates Octavius.) Really hear what he's saying. Remember: You're an angry mob but you're not an unforgiving mob. Let's rehearse it. (To Octavius.) Wally? Do you mind? (She steps out of the way. Octavius comes forward.)

OCTAVIUM. Citizens of Rome, it is said that the War of Peloponnesia is fought not for profit but for the love of blood. (The crowd roars.) It is said that the days of the Etruscan Empire can be numbered by the jewels on the fingers of her citizens. (Crowd roars.) It is said that the — Ack! (Repeat stabbing and elaborate death. The crowd roars. Rosie comes center.)

LOUISE. No, I just don't feel like we've seen a man die here. Mob, it needs nuance, it needs variety. I know! Let's try breathing it up by groups. Ones, I want to see "Horrific!"; Twos, I want to see
"Fear": Threes, I want to see "Anger"; and Fours, I want to see "Sardonic-Amusement." Let's try it again, Wally?

OCTAVIUM: It is said that she --- Ack! (Repeat stabbing and elaborately death. The crowd roars.)

LOUISE: Okay. Ones: nice. I really got a sense of your "Horror." Twos: very good. The fear was strong but don't be afraid to be more afraid. Threes: special. That was some "Anger." Fours: I really couldn't tell what you were doing. Now remember, Fours, this is a mob that's been hurt before. You're bitter, but you try to hide the pain. Wally.

OCTAVIUM: It is said that she --- Ack! (Repeat stabbing and elaborately death. The Fours laugh.)

LOUISE: No! Come on, Fours. What are you doing?! (Sighs.) Look, we really don't have time to work on this right now. I'm sorry, Fours, that's it for you today. (There is grumbled protest from the Fours.) I'm sorry. You can go back to your tents, Ones, Twos and Threes. Let's take it from the top of Octavius's speech. Wally? Wally? (Octavius does not move. The Mob cheers. Louise and the other actors give the Mob a look. Lights fade on this and come up on Benny crossing the stage, very depressed. Phil answers whispering.)

**Unit 7**

Later That Night in the Brothers' Tent

PHIL: Hey, what happened to you Fours out there? You guys were really a mess.

BENNY: I don't know. We just couldn't seem to get it together. How'd it go after we left?

PHIL: Piece of cake. Wrapped it right up. She said we're one of the few mobs she's ever worked with.

BENNY: (Gloriously) Great.

PHIL: She looked pretty upset about you guys.

BENNY: (Defensively) It was just a bad start. We'll get better.

PHIL: What happened to all those acting lessons you took?

BENNY: (Getting upset) Look, it wasn't just me out there. Can we not talk about this?

PHIL: Fine. (Long pause. He searches for a new topic.) Hey, how about that pudding with dinner?

BENNY: You got pudding with dinner?

PHIL: Sure. Didn't you? (Benny shakes his head. Phil attempts to make Benny feel better as they exit ...) It was bad pudding. Lumpy. It had a skin. (Lights come down on them as lights come up on Louise.)
Unit 8
Louise And Her Extras- Take 2

She speaks to the crowd.)

LOUISE. Okay, quiet down everybody. It has become apparent that some of you are having difficulty understanding the things we are asking you to do. I am speaking of one group in particular. I'm not going to name numbers, you know who you are.] But I thought everyone could benefit from a brief demonstration of the key scenes we'll be shooting today. To do this, I've asked one representative from each of your four groups to help me out. People
... join me. (Four extras enter in plain toga. Benny is one of them.)

The first scene is "The Triumphant Return of Hecbides." You, the mob, will be cheering and waving in the following manner: Ones, broad overhand sweep ... (The first extra demonstrates by waving her arm over her head.) Twos, upper lunge and wrist flick ... (The second extra waves his arm up and down.) Threes, robust vertical fist thrust ... (The third extra raises her fist over her head and moves it up and down.) And Fours, a full dorsal leap and swing. (Benny jumps up and down, waving his hands over his head.) And all together. (They do it together.) There, it looks just like a group of people waving. (To Benny and the extras.) People ... (Benny and extras stop.) Now let's quickly run through a couple of reaction shots: "Moses Bringing Down the Tablets." (Benny and the extras gasp and look up, amazed.) "The Parting of the Red Sea." (Benny and the extras gasp and look out, amazed.) "The Closing of the Red Sea." (Benny and the extras turn around, look over their shoulders and gasp, amazed.) Nice. Okay. I'd like to thank our volunteers. (There is scattered applause.) People. (The extras start to disperse. Benny mumbles his courage and approaches Louise.) Now, let's get going, everyone.

BENNY. Excuse me, Miss Goldman?

LOUISE. (Barely paying attention; reading her clipboard.)

Mmmmm-hmm?

BENNY. Um, I don't know if this is out of line or anything, but I was wondering if sometime maybe you'd like to —

LOUISE. (Suddenly remembering.) Oh! (Turning to crowd.) I almost forgot. In the "Angry Mob" scene, who did we finally decide is He Who is Without Sin?

VOICE. (Offstage.) I'm He Without Sin!

LOUISE. Okay, go to props and pick up your first stone. All
sight, people. (The Mob cheers. Louise heads off, having forgotten)

Benny. Lights fade on his frustrated look. Music returns as the lights come up on a Roman general. He speaks to the crowd. In dim light

we see Benny and Phil and two other extras. They are part of the Mob

listening to the general. Phil is carrying a large sword.)

ROMAN GENERAL. People of Rome, tonight we set sail against

the Persian fleet! (Mob roars. The four extras give the waves they just

learned. They continue "acting" throughout the following.) We shall
give them battle and we shall return victorious! (The Mob roars.

The focus shifts to Benny and Phil.)

BENNY. Hey, where'd you get the sword?

PHIL. Everybody in our group got one.

BENNY. You gonna get to use them?

PHIL. Sure. In the battle with the Persians. You guys are in that.

I'm sure you'll get one.

BENNY. No, we're the dead bodies in that scene. We lie in the
dirt and get picked at by the birds. (Mob roars. Benny looks at Phil's
sword.) Phil, does it seem to you like the Persians never get to do any-
thing fun?

PHIL. How do you mean?

BENNY. It seems like we always get the stuff nobody else wants
to do.

PHIL. You're imagining things. You're just jealous 'cause I got
the sword.

BENNY. I don't know. I guess you're right. (They give a final wave,
the biggest of all. Lights fade on them as lights come up on Louise.)

LOUISE. (To the crowd.) Okay, the breakdown for "The Great
Feast" scene is as follows: Ones, you'll be rejoicing with wines and
sweetmeats; Twos, you'll be gorging on ripened fruits and cheeses;
Threes, you'll be working on the roast suckling pig and wild boar;
and Fours, half of you will be choking on fish bones while the
other half is in the vomitorium. (Beat.) But first we've got to shoot
this parade scene. So, everybody get to your marks. Now does
everyone know what they're supposed to do?

OFFSTAGE. MOH. Yes!

LOUISE. All right. Then ready... and... Go! (Music is heard.}

Parade sounds.) Straight lines! Straight lines! Not! Not only the

even cross! Oh my God... Hold it! HOLD IT! (Music stops.)

B. probes
B. answers
B. complains
P allies
L directs
M retorts
L rescues
Well, that wasn't pretty. Is that ox all right? Oh, well, someone call the kitchen. Look, obviously this isn't working. I don't know why. Give me a few minutes to think. (She studies the plans. Phil enters. He is dressed as a Roman peasant. He crosses to her.)

PHIL. Excuse me, Miss Goldman.
LOUISE. Not now.
PHIL. Miss Goldman, I think I know how you might make it work.
LOUISE. Oh, really?
PHIL. Yeah. See, I think you're bringing the flower girls in too soon. (Shows her the plans.) And you see here where the fire swallows come in? If you brought them in on an eight count, in a zigzag pattern, then the elephants won't keep knocking over the flower girls. Then you can bring in to the cancan in a simple crossover pattern, which'll leave time for the contortionists seeing as they're so slow anyway. (Louise studies the plans.)
LOUISE. I think this may work. Phil, right?
PHIL. (Pleased.) Right.
LOUISE. Phil, how do you know this stuff?
PHIL. Marching band. I was the drum major in high school. I figured out the patterns and formations. We wear all same.
LOUISE. (Impressed, looking back at the plans.) Well, let's give it a shot. (Turns to the mob.) Okay, everybody, we're going to try something new, suggested by ... (Puts her hand on his bicep shoulder, reaches.) ... my assistant here. [Lights fade on them and come up on Benny sitting alone in his tent. He is clearly looking the worse for wear. He sits, writing a letter.)

BENNY, "Dear Mom: Sorry for not writing sooner, but I've been pretty busy. Yesterday was the Last Day of Pompeii, and I for one was not sorry to see it go. I haven't made too many friends here. Phil and I share a tent, but we're in different groups so I don't see him much. Most of the people in my group are pretty strange. A lot of them have been in prison. Miss Goldman said I'm one of the best of the Fours. She's the girl in charge of the extras. She's terrific, ..." (He sighs softly, as lights dim on Benny and fade up on Phil and Louise.)

UNIT 10
Benny Writes His Mother

UNIT 11
Band Geeks Get All the Girls

They are sitting on the steps, outside. It is night. Moonlight, Sound of crickets, etc. They are going over plans for an upcoming scene.

PHIL. (Indicating on the diagram.) See, when the back of the Temple caves in here, the Vestal Virgins come in screaming in a
double "V" pattern here. Then the horsemen come stampeding through from here and here on an eight count —

LOUISE. (Finishing the thought.) So then the High Priest can come tearing down the middle. Phil, you make it sound so simple. This'll be great.

PHIL. (Great.) Gosh, it sure is a nice night.

LOUISE. Sure is. (Looking out.) The ancient world looks so pretty when there's a moon.

PHIL. And look at all those stars.

LOUISE. You think that's a lot of stars? You should see how many there are where I come from.

PHIL. Where are you from?

LOUISE. Kippert's Bay, Alaska. Maybe you've heard of it. It's where Admiral Spearing froze to death on his way to the Pole. You'd love it.

PHIL. (Hesitating slightly.) You have a boyfriend back there?

LOUISE. I don't have anyone back there.

PHIL. No folks?

LOUISE. Papa was killed when the glacier moved.

PHIL. I'm sorry.

LOUISE. Six months later, Mister Dewitt came to town to film "Vikings Away."

PHIL. "Vikings Away?" That was one of my favorite pictures. You worked on that?

LOUISE. I was in it. You know the blubber scene? I was one of those girls. (Phil is impressed.) Anyway, they liked me and offered me a job. I had no reason to stay in Alaska, so I came here. How about you?

PHIL. I'm here 'cause I needed the work.

LOUISE. No. I mean, you got a girl?

PHIL. Oh. (Pursed) No, no one special. (Pause.) It really is a nice night. (Their eyes met. There is a moment. Louise looks down at the diagrams.)

LOUISE. I really appreciate all the help you've been giving me today.

PHIL. Are you kidding? I've had more fun doing this stuff with you than I can remember.

LOUISE. Well, I never could have got them through the Red Sea without you. Before you came, we were going to put it on the side.
LOUISE. You're just so clever with the patterns and formations. Have you ever thought of doing anything with it? Professionally, I mean?

PHIL. Are you kidding? All I've ever wanted is to lead a marching band of my own.

LOUISE. Really?

PHIL. Oh, Louise, you don't know what it's like. To be out on the field, in your uniform, standing tall in scarlet and gold. And the crowd is hushed. All eyes are on you. And then you blow your whistle. And you march. You make a left, the band makes a left. You make a right, the band makes a right. And before you know it, you're spelling words! (Beat.) Anyway, it's just a crazy dream.

LOUISE. (Swept up.) No, you could do it, Phil!

PHIL. You think so?

LOUISE. I can see you in that uniform.

PHIL. Oh, Louise! (Suddenly they are kissing. Lights dim on them and come back up on Benny, finishing his letter.)

BENNY. "Anyway, I miss you all very much. I don't know when this will reach you at there is no mail. But any day now you should be seeing my face up on the silver screen. Your loving son, Benny."

(Beat.) (Benny, Phil and Louise exit. Egyptian music is heard. Three reveling Egyptian noblemen and a dancing girl enter.)

EGYPTIANS. Ten plagues. Ten plagues! (They all laugh. Suddenly there is growing sound of frogs croaking. The Egyptians look in horror at an effigie

P. dreams

L. encourages

B. blusters

Egyp:tans revel
Phil and Benny Compare Days

Unit 14

The dancing girl runs on screaming. There is a frog on her back.
The Egyptians run off screaming. (Lights come up on Phil sitting in his tent. He is reading a script. Benny enters, looking
awful. Phil quickly hides the script.)

PHIL. Boy, do you look awful. How were they?

BENNY. (Still in shock.) After the first three I didn't think they
could get any worse. Then we did "Boils." Then we had lunch.

PHIL. Ugh. How could you eat?

BENNY. Well, we did "Famine" in the morning so we were all
pretty hungry. But before we could eat: "Locusts." Millions of
them, coming out of the sky! My sandwich was gone in seconds!
They were in my hair, my ears ...

PHIL. Oh my God ...

BENNY. (Still in his nightmare.) Then we did "Frogs." Phil, they
shut the doors and dumped buckets of frogs on us. We were up to
ours armpits! Big, slimy, green frogs. The kind with the bubble
under their chin that blows up when they get mad! And Phil, these
frogs were mad! All I want to do right now is lie down for a week.

(Benny moves to the cot. He finds a script.) What's that?

PHIL. (Nervously.) What's what?

BENNY. This is a script. Why is there a script here?

PHIL. (Trying to be casual.) Someone must have left it. (Benny
opens it.)

BENNY. It has your name on it,

PHIL. (Feigning surprise.) Really?

BENNY. (Not moving an inch.) Why do you have a script?

PHIL. It's not important. I'll tell you later.

BENNY. Tell me now.

PHIL. (Giving in.) They're putting me into the Palace scenes. As
a guard. I didn't ask for it, but Louise thought —

BENNY. Louise?

PHIL. Miss Goldman. She thought I'd be right for it.

BENNY. Congratulations.

PHIL. Benny, I'm sorry.

BENNY. Hey, don't be sorry. That's the way this business works.
It's all who you know. You just have to be in the right place at the
right time. Of course it's hard to be in the right place when you're
up to your neck in frogs ... but then's the breaks. (Sincerely trying.)
I'm happy for you.
PHIL. (Relieved.) Wow. Benny, you're terrific. I thought you'd go through the ceiling over this. I mean, it's not much. It's only a couple of lines, but —
BENNY. Lines!??
PHIL. (Desperately.) Short lines. Little lines. Just verbs.
BENNY. (Desperate.) You got lines??
PHIL. Stupid stuff, like "What ho!"
BENNY. (The crucible blow.) You get to say "What ho!"
PHIL. Uh huh.
BENNY. (Taking a deep breath.) Well, good for you. If you want, I'll help you work on it tonight.
PHIL. Oh no, Benny, you've had a hard day. You go out and have some fun.
BENNY. No, Phil. I want to help you. Look, I took those stupid acting lessons for six months. One of us may as well get some use out of them.
PHIL. (Apologetic.) I'm supposed to meet Louise tonight. She wants to coach me herself.
BENNY. Louise.
PHIL. Yeah. (Beat.) I'm sorry. I was going to tell you. (Benny appears a little flustered. He turns away and struggles to remain casual.)
BENNY. About you and Miss Goldman? Oh, everybody knows about that. Even the Twos are talking about it. (Benny calmly removes a small suitcase from under his cot and begins to pack.)
PHIL. What are you doing? (No answer.) What are you doing?
BENNY. Packing.
PHIL. Look, maybe things'll get better.
BENNY. Sure. That's easy for you to say. You'll be up in the Palace munching grapes with the Queen. I've still got four more plagues to go! "Pestilence," Phil! I don't even know what "Pestilence" is! But I'll bet it's not something you want!!
PHIL. Look, it's not always that bad. You got that orgy last week, didn't you?
BENNY. Sure! In Sodom and Gomorrah! Ten minutes of fun and then the wrath of God! (His voice cracks. There are tears in his eyes.) Let's face it. I'm a Four. I've been a Four all my life and that's all I'll ever be! (Defeated, he sets down his bag and crosses to his cot.)
PHIL. That's not true. I'll talk to Louise. Maybe she can do something.

BENNY. Okay, but you better do it soon 'cause next week is the fall of Rome, and I got a pretty good idea who it's gonna be falling on. [Lights fade on them and come up on grips and stagehands preparing for the "Queen of the Nile" scene.]

STAGEHAND #1. Set up for the "Queen of the Nile" scene!

STAGEHAND #2. "Queen of the Nile" scene!

STAGEHAND #3. Where's the Queen? (The Queen enters.)

QUEEN. (Calling off.) I don't have a goddamn cigarette! Louise! (Louise hurries on with a pack.)

LOUISE. Here you go, Estelle.

QUEEN. Thanks, honey. You're a peach. (She holds out her cigarette expectantly. Louise lights it. The Queen inhales and savors her first breath.) So, Louise, word is in the make-up tent is you've got a boyfriend.

LOUISE. Oh, you know how people talk.

QUEEN. So do you?

LOUISE. (Excited.) Mmm hmm. Oh, Estelle, he's so sweet. I've never met a guy like him. He's smart and he listens to me and he helps me with my work.

QUEEN. Fiddling around with him?

LOUISE. A lot.

QUEEN. You remind me of me when I was your age. (Catching herself.) Not that I'm not your age. (Jack enters.)

JACK. Goldman! I've got to cover the "Burning Bush" scene, so you're gonna be shooting this scene yourself.

LOUISE. What? Oh, my God!

QUEEN. I hold it. What about Misser Dewitt?

JACK. He's in the Pyramid.

LOUISE. He's in the Pyramid?

JACK. He says he's not coming out 'til we finish shooting.

LOUISE. (To Jack.) So, who's in charge?

JACK. I'm in charge.

LOUISE. Oh, no. (Catching herself) But a good "oh, no." Like "Oh, no... that's great."

QUEEN. (To Louise.) So you think you can handle this?

LOUISE. Absolutely. (Jack exits.) Let's go people! (The Queen}

B. toughens

Stagehands work

Q showboats

L appeases

L gossip

L dismisses

L revels

J delegates

L perseveres

Q checks

J. reports

L clarifies

L backpedals

L directs
hide her cigarette. She and her attendant take their positions.)
Where's that new slave?

BENNY. (Offstage.) Coming. (Benny enters, excited.)
LOUISE. All right. New slave. Now all you do is stand here, fan the Queen and do whatever she says. Okay?
BENNY. Uh, just a few questions. Has my character always been a slave? How do I feel about the Queen? And is this a room I've been in before? (Louise sighs and quickly inventories.)
LOUISE. Uh, you've always been a slave. The Queen doesn't know you exist. And you've served in her bedchamber ever since you became a eunuch. (Benny doesn't like this last part. Beat.)
BENNY. Or I could just fan her.
LOUISE. There you go. Everyone suits! (Two guards enter and stand off to the side.) And ... Action!! Louise exits. Benny begins to fan.

Unit 16
"Queen of the Nile" Takes 1 through 3

ATTENDANT. Why so sad my Queen?
QUEEN. A dark cloud of death hangs heavily about these chambers.
ATTENDANT. Why surely my lady jests. Does not the golden sun still riup the sweet dates that fall from the majestic palm? No, my beauteous Queen, no harm shall befall you on a day such as this.
QUEEN. (Sigh.) I suppose. (To Benny.) Slave, bring me my sewing basket. (With great solemnity, Benny sets down the fan and crosses to a large basket. He brings it to the Queen. She opens it, looks inside and screams.) ASPS!!! (She throws down the basket and fans, as large rubber snakes come spilling out.)
ATTENDANT. (Pointing at Benny) Guards, seize him! (The guards grab Benny and proceed to beat the life out of him. Suddenly the Queen sits up and calls offstage.)

A. serves
B. performs

Q. assuages
A. confides
Q. confides
Q. commands
B. performs
Q. shrieks
A. punishes
Q. asserts
QUEEN. A dark cloud of death hangs heavily about these chambers.

ATTENDANT. Why surely my lady jests. Does not the golden sun still ripen the sweet dates that fall from the majestic palm? No, my beautiful Queen, no harm shall befall you on a day such as this.

QUEEN. (Sighs.) I suppose. (To Benny) Slave, bring me my sewing basket. (Fair less enthusiastically this time. Benny crosses to the basket. Aware of what’s coming, but unable to do anything about it, he gingerly hands the basket to the Queen. She opens it and screams.)

ASPS!!! (Snakes spill. The Queen faints.)

ATTENDANT. (Pointing at Benny) Guards, seize him! (Once again the guards grab Benny and beat him to a pulp.) Again, the Queen sits up and stops the scene.

QUEEN. No. No no no. Can we stop?

LOUISE. (Entering) Oh! What is it this time?

QUEEN. I don’t know. The faint felt funny.

LOUISE. The faint looked fine. Estelle, please, let’s just get through the whole scene once. Okay?

QUEEN. Okay.

LOUISE. Great. Everyone set? And ... Action! (Music. The scene begins again. As he far, Benny stands at the basket with apprehension.)

ATTENDANT. Why so sad my Queen?

QUEEN. A dark cloud of death hangs heavily about these chambers.

ATTENDANT. Why surely my lady jests. Does not the golden sun still ripen the sweet dates that fall from the majestic palm? No, my beautiful Queen, no harm shall befall you on a day such as this.

QUEEN. (Sighs.) I suppose. (To Benny) Slave, bring me my sewing basket. (Benny walks to the basket like a man going to the electric chair. When he reaches the basket he pauses, unwilling to pick it up. Impulsively, he picks up a nearby bowl of fruit and brings it to the Queen. To his surprise, she looks up and smiles.) Ah, fruit.

(Benny brightens. She takes the bowl from him and carefully selects a piece of fruit. As she removes the piece, she throws the piece into the bowl and screams.) ASPS!!! (She throws the bowl to the ground. Snakes come spilling out. She faints.)

ATTENDANT. Guards, seize him! (Once again the guards beat Benny.) Call for the Executioner! This slave must die at once!

Q. confides
A. assuages

Q. commands

B. persists

Q. shrikes
A. punishes

Q. asserts
L. directs (cont.)

B. survives
A. serves

Q. confides
A. assuages

Q. commands

Q. shrikes
A. punishes
GUARD. (Exits.) Executioner! Executioner! (The executioner enters. He wears a black hood and carries an enormous axe.)
QUEEN. Executioner, this slave has attempted to assassinate your beloved Queen. Cleave him in two and bring forth his traitorous bowels so that all may see.
BENNY. (Having no idea what's going on.) But... But... But...
QUEEN. Silence, villain! Your words are useless here. Prepare your flesh to receive the axe. (The executioner lifts his axe.) Come, Executioner! Execute! (The axe hangs in the air. Benny cries. The executioner hesitates.) As your Queen, I command you to kill him!
EXECUTIONER. (Solemnly.) I cannot kill him. He is my brother. (All gasp. He drops off his hood. It is Phil. Benny is stunned.)
QUEEN. What is this? You would defy your Queen for the love of a brother? Never before have I witnessed such compassion. Such nobility. I am strangely moved. (Taking Phil's hand.) Trouble not, no harm shall befall you. Such virtues shall not go unrewarded. Gifts you shall receive. Treasures beyond your wildest dreams.
PHIL. And what of my brother?
QUEEN. Oh, he shall not be forgotten. (She goes to Benny. He looks up brightly.) Hang him by his ankles and cover him with leeches until the life is drained from his body as the juice from that fig. (She pops a fig into her mouth and turns to Phil. However it is hard for her to speak with her mouth full of fig.) Come and choose your treasures. (Phil and the Queen start to exit as the guards grab Benny and drag him off screaming.)
BENNY. Noooo! Noooo!
LOUISE. (entering.) Can't Print it! Okay! A couple of tough spots, but not bad. (Phil runs to Benny who is lying in a heap on the floor.)
PHIL. Benny! Benny, you were terrific.
BENNY. (Dazed.) Huh?
PHIL. You were great! I gotta tell you, those acting lessons really showed. (Suddenly Sherr runs out. He is sobbing. His clothes are covered with ash and soot.)
LOUISE. My God, what happened?
SHELL. (Fighting for control.) We were... we were shooting the "Burning Bush" scene... You know the part where Moses says, "Oh Lord, what do you want of me? Why have you brought me to this place? Blah blah blah blah..."

Unit 17
Dust in the Wind

G. obeys
Q. extinguishes
B. survives (cont)
E. discloses
Q. empathizes
P. protects
Q. extinguishes
L. directs (cont)
Q. covet
L. comforts
S. laments
LOUISE. Right...

SHEL. So then Moses turns and sees the Burning Bush. And Jack yells "cut," 'cause the fire's not big enough. And I tell him it's really hard. I mean, have you ever tried to make "a bush that burns yet is not consumed"?

LOUISE. No.

SHEL. No, of course not! 'Cause that's a sign from God!

LOUISE. Sure...

SHEL. But does Jack care? Nooo! He just starts yelling at me. "C'mon, you little idiot! I want size! I want spectacle! I want to see the power of God!" So I cranked it all the way up...

LOUISE. (With apprehension.) And...? What happened? Where's Jack? (Off to his hesitation.) Shh, where's Jack? (In answer, he blows a cloud of ash from his hand. Everyone gasps. Blackout. In the darkness we can see a lantern.)

LOUISE. (Off.) Hello? Hello? Mister Dewitt? (Dim lights reveal Phil and Louise. Benny follows behind them, carrying a paper bag.)

PHIL. Are we almost there?

LOUISE. I don't know. I've never been inside the Pyramind before.

BENNY. Have you ever met him?

LOUISE. Not really. Jack was the only one allowed to talk to him.

PHIL. Look, Benny, when we get there just keep your mouth shut.

BENNY. I will, I will. I just want to meet him.

LOUISE. (Calling out into the darkness.) Hello? Mister Dewitt? Are you there? (Silence.) We brought sandwiches.

DEWITT. Over here. (They move toward the voice. A shadowy half-light comes up on Dewitt. He is an older man choked in black robe. We cannot see his face. He is hunched over a manuscript, the flickering light from which throws huge shadows of him across the stage. There are feet of film and piles of loose footage about.)

LOUISE. (To Dewitt.) These tunnels are tricky.

DEWITT. ( Barely looking up from his work.) Who are you?

LOUISE. (Doubtly before the Great Os.) Tim Louise Goldman. I was Jack Kramer's assistant.

DEWITT. Where's Jack?

LOUISE. (With difficulty.) There's been a terrible accident, Mister Dewitt. On Chever, the Mountain of God. Jack was a brave man and he put the picture ahead of everything, even his own safety.
(becoming emotional.) He's gone now, but I know he would have wanted you to know how much you meant to him.

DEWITT. (Beat.) What kind of sandwich?
LOUISE. (Not quite understanding.) What?
DEWITT. In the bag, what kind of sandwich?
LOUISE. Uh, olive leaf and cheese. So anyway, I guess we need you to come out of the pyramid and take over again.
DEWITT. I quit two days ago. Didn't Jack tell you?
LOUISE. No. Why would you quit?
DEWITT. Sweetheart, I'm old. I'm old, and I'm tired, and I'm old.
LOUISE. But you can't give up now.
DEWITT. You know, it's funny you should say that. A few days ago we were shooting the Ten Plagues. And I looked out at all of these people suffering. But in the middle of them, there was this little man, refusing to give up. I couldn't take my eyes off him. And I just thought, I don't need to see this. This is too sad. I've made dozens of pictures. Enough is enough.
LOUISE. But you can't quit in the middle of this one. It's the greatest story ever told.
DEWITT. It's okay.
LOUISE. But we've all worked so hard.
DEWITT. Look, it's like I told Jack: You want to finish it, do it yourself.

LOUISE. Me? Oh, well ... I've directed some background shots, and I did a scene today, which frankly I think came out pretty good. But I don't know if I could take over the whole picture.
DEWITT. It's not that hard. It's all about lining them up and moving them around and getting them to do what you want. It's like a marching band.
PHIL. Like a marching band?
DEWITT. Aw, I love marching bands! They taught me how to read. When I first came to this country, I used to go to the Rose Bowl and watch them spell our words. For the first three months, the only words I could write were "GO!" "TEAM!" and "COUGARS!"
PHIL. I was the drum major in high school.
DEWITT. Awww, I love that story.
PHIL. We went all-state.
DEWITT. Now it's a long story. Enough. Look, why don't you do this?

PHIL. Me? Okay.

DEWITT. Okay.

LOUISE. Okay? Phil, what are you talking about?

PHIL. I'll do it. I'll take over.

LOUISE. Honey, this is bigger than a marching band.

BENNY. Yeah. Phil, this is crazy.

PHIL. Look Benny, if I'm in charge, I can change things. (Meaningfully) I can give people parts. Big parts.

BENNY. (Best.) Have I just been discovered?

PHIL. There you go. And Louise, I really think I can do this. But I need you to believe in me.

LOUISE. Of course I do. (He kisses her. It's a long kiss that grows increasingly passionate. Benny is more and more uncomfortable. Phil and Louise realize Dewitt is there and quickly separate.)

PHIL. Thanks! Thanks, Mr. Dewitt. You won't be sorry. (Benny has wandered over to the piano and glances down at the screen.)

BENNY. Hey. Those people are naked.

DEWITT. Oh, uh, yeah. That's a ... different movie. (Beat, as they all take this in.) Grow. Phil, Louise and Benny turn for the exit. Lights fade on Dewitt.)

PHIL. Oh my God!

BENNY. I can't believe it. I'm really gonna be in the movie.

PHIL. (With a shy glance at Louise.) Maybe not just you.

LOUISE. What do you mean?

PHIL. You'll see. Come on, you guys! This is gonna be great! (Benny and Louise start to exit. Phil stops them.) Uh Uh. Action!

(Benny and Louise start off again, only this time they are rather self-conscious.) Can't? (Benny and Louise are startled and stop in their tracks. Phil is pleased with himself.) Heh?

BENNY and LOUISE. (Overlapping,pering enthusiasm.) Yeah. Sure. That's great. (Benny and Louise exchange a look and exit. Phil turns out to the front.)

PHIL. Action! (Music. Lights shift. Phil exists.)

The Pyramid drop flies out. The stage is transformed back to the "Queen of the Nile" set. During this, the narrator is heard.)

Narrator. And so a boy did rise from the ranks to lead the
people. And the story did resume pretty much where it left off.

(Rehearsal, up on the stage we saw earlier. The Queen and her attendants are facing Benny. The executioner stands nearby, his face obscured by his hood.)

QUEEN. Hang him by his ankles and cover him with leeches until the life is drained from his body as the juice from this fig. (Bess, reconsiders.) Which I will enjoy later. (She hands the fig to her attendant and turns and starts off right.)

BENNY. Wait?

QUEEN. What?

BENNY. Hear me first, for I am not the simple slave boy I appear to be. I am, in truth, Prince Ramadis. (The others react.) Yes, I was stolen as an infant from my natural parents during the Purge of Phylthia and raised by a flock of wild sheep. I return here now to claim the throne that is rightfully mine.

QUEEN. But this cannot be, for Ramadis has been dead for these many years. Slay the imposter! (Suddenly Louise runs on dressed as an Egyptian princess. She wears an elaborate gold costume complete with bracelets and headress.)

LOUISE. Wait!

QUEEN. What?

LOUISE. Mother, spare him please. I beg you!

QUEEN. But what care you, the Pharaoh's daughter, for the fate of this treacherous slave?

LOUISE. As surely as the Nile overflows its banks ere the ibis sings its gentle song and the lotus blossom blooms, I do love Ramadis.

QUEEN. But Prince Isis, you are betrothed to the Philistine king.

LOUISE. (Greeting broadly.) How could I marry a man who slew my father? I hate that Philistine... Stein.

QUEEN. I will hear none of this. Guard her in her chamber until her nuptial day. Now take this man away!

LOUISE. No!

BENNY. Very well, but hear me now, oh Queen of the Nile. You may lock me away, torture me, kill me if you must, for I would sacrifice my life ere I would relinquish my love. (Dramatic pause.)

Then we hear Phil's voice offstage.

PHIL. (Offstage.) Cut! (Music stops. Phil enters. He is dressed for the
first time in contemporary ... 1930's — clothes: smart slacks and an open shirt. He carries a megaphone and a clipboard and wears a shiny silver whistle around his neck. The executioner turns and we see that he has been played by another actor. There is general hustle about the set.)

Ob man! That was great. (Calling off.) Tony, we're going to go with that one! Tell the boys to strike the set! Benny, you were amazing. Louise, fantastic.

LOUISE. (Doubtful) Really? I just felt so ... I mean, I'm not really an actress. (The executioner spots and exits.)

PHIL. Are you kidding? This is the best idea I've had so far. You know what I said the first time I saw you. That girl should be in the movie.

LOUISE. (Touched.) You said that? (Benny raises an eyebrow; knowing full well he was the one who said it.) Louise, unprecedented.)

If you say so ...

PHIL. Trust me. You were terrific! (Brady, the actor's writer, enters with pages.)

BRADY. Here's that new scene for Louise, all typed up. (to Louise.) He's got you laughing, crying, you try to kill yourself, and you do a dance. (to Phil.) Boss, I'm having trouble with the Gladiator scene. Can you come by?

PHIL. (Checking schedule.) No can do. I'm staying first-hour until six o'clock.

LOUISE. I can stay then, honey.

PHIL. Come on, sweetheart, that's not your job anymore.

(Cochette, the costume designer, bustles on. She is very Coco Chanel, in a wide-brimmed hat and sunglasses, with a tape measure around her neck. She carries a bridal gown. She speaks in a broad French accent. An assistant accompanies her.)

COCHETTE. Zo! Philippe, here is the bridal gown. I have worked as fast as I can. (to Louise.) Up, up, up! Zo! (She slides Louise over to a nearby pedestal. The men boost Louise up. Louise holds the gown to herself and stands poised uncomfortably.)

PHIL. Cochette, you're outdone yourself.

COCHETTE. Her neck is too short, I make it long. He hips are wrong, I make them right. Her bosoms ... (With a gesture.) ... rey wander. I tell you! Give me what you give me. I do the best I can.

(Cochette takes the dress. Louise is left stuck up on the pedestal. She...
PHIL. Okay, everyone, meet me in Mesopotamia in fifteen minutes. (Phil and his entourage start to leave. Louise calls after him.)
LOUISE. (Sucking up to the pedestal.) Phil, could I talk to you for a second?
PHIL. Sure. What? (Phil and the group stop. Everyone is listening. Louise tries to speak in confidential tones.)
LOUISE. Uh, what happened to ... (To the onlookers.) Hi. (To Phil.) What happened to you last night? I waited up.
PHIL. I'm sorry. I was with the Sabine Women 'til almost 2:30.
LOUISE. (Hearing this.) Will I see you tonight?
PHIL. Shel, when are we expecting the Angel of Death?
SHEL. 7:15.
PHIL. I can give you about half an hour.
LOUISE. (Quietly.) Why don't we let it go.
PHIL. Honey, I'm working real hard. You have to understand that. You're my girlfriend.
LOUISE. Uh huh.
PHIL. Hey, come here. (She bends down. He gives her a big kiss. Then blows his silver whistle.) All right everyone, let's see some spirit! (Phil and his entourage exit. Benny is left with Louise. She is starting off after Phil. There is a pause.)
BENNY. Hey, I thought you were real good in the scene, Miss Goldman.
LOUISE. Oh, thanks. You too. (Pause. After a polite moment, Louise indicates the pedestal.) Could you ... uh ...
BENNY. Oh yeah. (Cochette's assistant enters to strike the pedestal as Benny lifts Louise off it. The assistant stops and looks at Louise in Benny's arms.)
LOUISE. (To assistant, awkward.) How ya doin'? (Cochette's assistant exits with pedestal. Benny sets Louise down.)

BENNY. So ... have you had a chance to look at the scene we'll be doing tomorrow?
LOUISE. Yes.
BENNY. Well, I know in the script it says I'm supposed to kiss you a lot, but I just want you to know it's only acting, okay? I mean I'm not trying to pull anything.
LOUISE. (Smiling.) Benny ...
BENNY. I mean you're Phil's girl and all ... 
LOUISE. Oh, that's just in real life. In the movie I'm your girl. In the movie I love you. All right, maybe not at first. You're just a simple slave boy and I'm a princess. But we're in a love that was meant to be. And I can only fight it for so long. You're everything I've always wanted. You're brave and you're strong and you're handsome. You've got to forget real life.
BENNY. Right.

LOUISE. If you'd like, we can work on it now. How about the scene in the passageway?
BENNY. Great. (They get out their scripts.)
LOUISE. (Indicating the place on the page.) From here. (They take positions.) She speaks as Princess Iris. What? Who is there? Is someone there? In the passageway? (Screams) Oh, it's you. Come closer, simple slave boy, be not afraid. (She takes his hand. He reacts.) I can hide my love for you no longer. Kiss me. Kiss me thus! (Benny leans forward and passionately kisses Louise. They break away, breathless. Recovering.) That was good acting.
BENNY. Real good acting.
LOUISE. Yeah. You acted real good. (As lights fade on Benny and Louise, the sound of thousands cheering is heard as lights come up on Phil. He quietly steps up.)
PHIL. (To the crowd.) Thank you. Thank you for that warm welcome. I'll try and keep this brief. I just wanted to get you all together to tell you what a terrific job I think you're all doing. (Phil applauds them, indicating they should give themselves a hand. The mob cheers.)

VOICE. When are we going home?
PHIL. (Surprised.) Ah, hard to say really. I've made some changes in the script, and there have been some setbacks. But I'm sure we'll be out of here in no time. Which reminds me... (Consulting clipboard.) I have an announcement: Iyle Finkus, who as you know was one of our Vestal Virgins, has given birth to a lovely baby girl. (Cheers from the crowd.) Mother and daughter are resting comfortably. The time of delivery was 12:41, and the weight at birth was eight pounds, two ounces. So whoever has those numbers in the pool, congratulations. Oh, and speaking of good news, we've been looking into the battle-
room situation. Now that we're finished with the Red Sea, it's all yours. (Wild cheering and applause. Lights fade on this.)

**Unit 24A**

**And Thus the King Ruled...**

NARRATOR. And thus the King ruled with an even hand and a generous heart. Yet he did not know of the surprise to come.

(Lights up as Louise enters. She is wearing a birthday hat and is carrying a birthday cake with lit candles. She spots the mob.)

LOUISE. Hey, you guys. Did everybody get a hat?

MOB. (Huge) Yes! (The candles on the cake blow out.)

LOUISE. Oooh. Hope you all made a wish. Okay, Phil's gonna be here any minute. And hey, thank you for keeping it a secret. I know how rough that is for you Twos. (Murmered acknowledgment from the crowd. Brady, Shep, Cochette and her assistant come running in.)

BRADY. He's coming!

COCHETTE. Everybody hide!

ASSISTANT. Get down! Get down!

SHEP. Kill the lights! (Blackout.)

LOUISE. Does anybody have a match? (Louise is handed a lighter. She brings it to the cake. All of the candles light up all once. Silence as Benny enters. Suddenly lights are thrown on and thousands yell...)

MOB. Surprise! Happy Birthday Phil!!

BENNY. Nope. Just me. (Quietly to Louise and the others.) He's not coming.

LOUISE. What? He promised he'd meet me here.

COCHETTE. And what about the mob? Look, they all signed the card. (She opens up a card which, when unfolded, is so long it spills to the floor.)

BENNY. (To the mob.) Uh, everybody! I'm sorry, but Phil won't be able to make it tonight.

MOB. Aawwww...

BENNY. Yeah. He's got a meeting with Master Dewitt. But we'll make sure he gets the card.

LOUISE. (Blowing out candles. disgusted.) I don't believe it. I can't go through with this. Do me a favor, Benny. Make an excuse.

BENNY. Sure. (To the Mob.) Everybody! Uh... Louise... Louise... has diarrhea. (Louise reacts. mortified.) We've all got a six o'clock call tomorrow, so why don't we make it an early night.

VOICES. Oh. Okay! That's all right!
W.O.M.A.N.'S V.O.I.C.E.  Hope you feel better, Louise! Try bananas!
(Loisie shoots Benny a look. He mouths "Sorry.")
L.O.U.I.S.E. Thanks, Beth!

B.E.N.N.Y. Night, guys.
C.O.C.H.E.T.T.E. Good night, Louise. Men! (Spits) If you are feeling lonely, come by my tent tonight. We will sing some songs.
L.O.U.I.S.E. No. Thank you, Cochetee.
L.O.U.I.S.E. That's okay...
C.O.C.H.E.T.T.E. Good night, Louise. (Cochetee gives her one last lingering look and exits. Louise sits, miserable.)

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L.O.U.I.S.E. Benny, you can take off. I'll clean up.
B.E.N.N.Y. Oh no. I'll keep you company.
L.O.U.I.S.E. Let me ask you something: What is it about me that turns nice guys into jerks?
B.E.N.N.Y. Oh no, no, it's not your fault. He was a jerk way before he met you.
L.O.U.I.S.E. (Smiles) Benny, I don't know what I would have done without you these last few weeks.
B.E.N.N.Y. Yeah?
L.O.U.I.S.E. Oh God, life was so much simpler back in Alaska. All there was was snow, sky, caribou. Big, brown eyes staring in the window. Kind of creepy, but at least they're dependable. You throw some bread crumbs out your window once, and you're on their migratory route forever. I wish I were there right now. (She starts to cry.)
B.E.N.N.Y. Oh come on, don't say that. People need you here.
L.O.U.I.S.E. Who needs me? The mob doesn't need me anymore, they have Phil. Phil doesn't need me, he has Phil.
B.E.N.N.Y. (Hating to see her cry.) Maybe I need you, Louise. Maybe I think Phil's the biggest fool in the whole world. Maybe I think you're just about the best thing that could ever happen to a guy.
L.O.U.I.S.E. You really feel that way?
B.E.N.N.Y. (Bositive.) I said maybe.
L.O.U.I.S.E. Hmmmm (There is a pause. Louise has stopped crying.)
B.E.N.N.Y. But you love Phil.
LOUISE. *More in herself than Benny.* Do I?
BENNY. *(Tense.)* I don’t know. Do you?
LOUISE. *I’m seeing Phil.*
BENNY. *Right.*
LOUISE. *But I certainly don’t see much of Phil.*
BENNY. *Right.*
LOUISE. *And I see you a lot.*
BENNY. *Mmm hmm.*

LOUISE. Hmm. *Long pause. Their eyes meet. The only sound is that of the crickets. After a tortured moment they both tear their gaze away.*
BOTH. *(Shaking their heads.)* Naah. *They smile at each other warmly and more than a little regretfully.*
LOUISE. *Good night, Benny.*
BENNY. *Night, Louise.* (Benny starts to leave. Suddenly he swings around. Louise rushes from her seat, and the two are caught up in a passionate embrace. Music swells. Lights fade.)*

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**Unit 26A**

**ThusBegan the Love Affair**

NARRATOR. Thus began the love affair that would change the shape of history. Never before had one small kiss ruled the future of so many. And yay, it was a good kiss! *(Lights come back up on Benny and Louise in the tent. They are both wracked with guilt.)*

LOUISE. *About last night, was that my fault.*
BENNY. *No, it was my fault.*
LOUISE. *No, Benny, I wanted it to happen. I made it happen. It was my fault.*
BENNY. *All right. (Beau.) But the night before was my fault.*
LOUISE. *And the night before that was mine.*

BENNY. *Oh, God, we’ve got to end this now.*
LOUISE. *I know, I know.*
BENNY. *If Phil ever found out ...*
LOUISE. *I know, I know.*
BENNY. *So that’s it. We’ll break it off clean. Go back to being friends.*

LOUISE. *Right. (Beau.) That means no more little meetings behind the Sphinx.*
BENNY. *That’s right.*
LOUISE. *No more midnight walks through the Gardens of Babylon?*
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BENNY</th>
<th>L. waves</th>
<th>B &amp; L succumb</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LOUISE</td>
<td>B. curtains</td>
<td>P. retrieves</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Unit 27**

**Fetch the Pencil, Big Boy**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scene</th>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Character</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BENNY</td>
<td>Nope.</td>
<td>LOUISE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LOUISE</td>
<td>No more “kiss the camel”?</td>
<td>BENNY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BENNY</td>
<td>(Struggling) We've got to be strong. We've got to stop this.</td>
<td>LOUISE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BENNY</td>
<td>I don't know ... (Benny and Louise suddenly begin to kiss passionately [Phil approaches the tent.])</td>
<td>PHIL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHIL</td>
<td>(Calling off) I'll be right there! I just have to get a couple of things! (Benny and Louise break off mid-kiss.)</td>
<td>BENNY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHIL</td>
<td>Oh no! (There is wild panic as they both rush madly around the tent, looking for a means of escape.)</td>
<td>LOUISE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LOUISE</td>
<td>Hide! (Benny dives under his cot. Phil enters the tent.)</td>
<td>PHIL</td>
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<tr>
<td>PHIL</td>
<td>Louise, what are you doing here? (Louise strikes a seductive pose.)</td>
<td>LOUISE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHIL</td>
<td>Waiting for you, Mister.</td>
<td>BENNY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHIL</td>
<td>Oh honey, that's sweet. But I just stopped by for a second.</td>
<td>LOUISE</td>
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<tr>
<td>PHIL</td>
<td>I've got a meeting with Mister Dewitt. (During the following scene Phil never stops moving, always gathering papers and files, etc.)</td>
<td>LOUISE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHIL</td>
<td>(Fast) Oh shoot. Oh well. Bye bye.</td>
<td>LOUISE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHIL</td>
<td>Maybe we can find some time to talk tonight.</td>
<td>LOUISE</td>
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<tr>
<td>LOUISE</td>
<td>(Too cheerful.) Tonight, tomorrow, whenever. It's fine.</td>
<td>PHIL</td>
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<tr>
<td>PHIL</td>
<td>(Phil drops his pencil near Benny's cot. Louise screams.) Ahhh!</td>
<td>LOUISE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHIL</td>
<td>What?</td>
<td>BENNY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LOUISE</td>
<td>The pencil. It just fell ... so fast. (Phil starts to retrieve the pencil. Louise dives for it.) I've got it! (Phil reaches for the pencil. Louise pulls him hand away as though playing a sexy game.) Nope. Go get it. (She throws the pencil out of the tent. Go! Get it! Go! Go! (Phil is not sure what to make of this.)</td>
<td>BENNY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHIL</td>
<td>Okay. (Phil goes the tent to get the pencil.)</td>
<td>LOUISE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LOUISE</td>
<td>(Fierce whisper.) That's it. I'm gonna tell him the truth. (Benny sticks his head out.)</td>
<td>BENNY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BENNY</td>
<td>(Fierce whisper) No!</td>
<td>LOUISE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LOUISE</td>
<td>I can't take this anymore.</td>
<td>BENNY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BENNY</td>
<td>Sure you can!</td>
<td>LOUISE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LOUISE</td>
<td>I can't take the lying.</td>
<td>BENNY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BENNY</td>
<td>The lying is great!</td>
<td>LOUISE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LOUISE</td>
<td>I'm gonna tell him.</td>
<td>BENNY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BENNY</td>
<td>You can't!</td>
<td>LOUISE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LOUISE</td>
<td>Shh! Shh!</td>
<td></td>
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BENNY. (Overlapping) Shhhhh! Shhhhh! (Phil enters the tent. Benny hides. Louise turns her whispered fight with Benny into a sneeze.)

LOUISE. Shhhhh shhh ... Ha, Choo! (Phil continues to search through his papers.) Phil, there's something I have to tell you. (Benny's hand reaches out and grabs Louise's ankle. She manages to pry herself away from his grip, using her other foot.)

PHIL. (Distracted) Hmmm?

LOUISE. Sometimes something happens between two people. You just have these feelings. And it doesn't matter whether they're right or wrong. You just have them.

PHIL. Awww, I feel the same way, sweetie. Have you seen my blue notebook? (Unbeknownst to Phil it comes flying out from under Benny's cot.)

LOUISE. Here it is!

PHIL. Can we do this later?

LOUISE. (Resigned) Sure.

PHIL. Thanks. Hey, and maybe we can play that pencil game again.

LOUISE. You better. big guy. (She growls at him.)

PHIL. You're great. (Phil gives Louise a quick peck and exits.)

Louise slumps down on Benny's cot. Benny sticks his head out from under the cot.

LOUISE. We've got to end this.

BENNY. I know. (Beat.)

LOUISE. Are you looking up my skirt?

BENNY. Yeah. (Lights fade. When they come up we are in the center of a large arena. Noise of a great crowd. Octavius's trumpeters play. Phil takes a position on the steps to address the mob.)

PHIL. (To the crowd) Now, before we begin, there's something we need to discuss. It seems that someone here thought it would be most amusing to make some small adjustments to the Trojan Horse. (There is snickering from the crowd.) Frankly, I don't find that sort of thing funny. Someone's eye could have been put out. (More snickering.) Now until those responsible come forward, there will be no pudding with dinner. (The crowd boos.) Hey, it's up to you. We have a scene to shoot here. Bring in the Queen of the Nile. (The Queen enters. Phil calls off.) I need Isis and Ramadis. (Phil exits as Benny and Louise enter. They are costumed as Isis and Ramadis. The Queen goes to Louise and Benny.)
The Queen of the Nile

QUEEN. (to Louise and Benny) So, give me the dish on you two.
LOUISE. (Nervous) Dish? There's no dish.
BENNY. (Overlapping) No dish. No dish.
QUEEN. Oh, really? That scene in the passageway was pretty steamy.
LOUISE. We were just acting. (The Queen laughs.)
QUEEN. Oh, honey, you can't act. (Louise doesn't quite know how to take this.)

PHIL. Benny! Louise! Get over here.
LOUISE. (Nervous) Morning!
BENNY. (Overly cheerful) What's up?
PHIL. Everyone knows you two are in love. (A look of horror passes over their faces.)
BENNY and LOUISE. What?
PHIL. But the Queen has vowed to see you die in the arena.
BENNY and LOUISE. (Weak) Oh,

PHIL. Your only hope is to defeat her three best gladiators. (Three gladiators of varying ferocity stand off to the side.) Now you two love each other. It's like nothing you've ever felt before. But it's a forbidden love. And it's tearing you apart. Think you guys can do that? (They glare at him.)
BENNY and LOUISE. Uh huh.
PHIL. All right, let's try it. Good luck, honey. (He kisses Louise and moves away.) Everybody ready? And ... Action! (The Queen enters and waves to the crowd. Sound of cheering. The gladiators begin to chain Louise to two columns.)

QUEEN. (To the crowd) Greetings my people! Treachery can be found in many places. Even in the bosom of your own family. Here chained before you stands my once beloved daughter, Princess Lisa, who has cast her lot with Ramses, usurper of the throne. Since she desires no more than his heart, she shall have it . . . on the end of a spear. He shall forfeit his life for our amusement!

GLADIATOR #1. (Stepping forward) For you my Queen, with sword and shield I shall defeat him! (He brandishes his weapon.)
GLADIATOR #2. With spear and net he will be mine!
GLADIATOR #3. With a metal ball with spikes on it I shall be victorious!
BENNY. And I, with naught but the simple shepherd's crook

Q. gossips
L. refuses
B. refuses
Q. denounces
P. demands
L. appeases
B. deflects
P. proclaims
B. & L. shrink
P. directs
B. & L. breathe
B. & L. assure
P. kisses
P. directs
Q. governs
G1 serves
G2 serves
G3 serves
B. flouts

Unit 29
The Queen of the Nile
and Her Gladiators

LOUISE. (Nervous) Morning!
BENNY. (Overly cheerful) What's up?
PHIL. Everyone knows you two are in love. (A look of horror passes over their faces.)
BENNY and LOUISE. What?
PHIL. But the Queen has vowed to see you die in the arena.
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P. kisses
P. directs
Q. governs
G1 serves
G2 serves
G3 serves
B. flouts
given me by my adoptive father, shall surely best you all. For I have
love beating in my breast, while you mine enemies have naught
but hatred and malice. (Louise beams at him.)

QUEEN. Let the games begin! (Music. She steps back. The three
advance on Benny. They circle him making low guttural noises.
Suddenly they lunges. It is an elaborately choreographed fight. Benny
weirds his crook like a pro. Nets and shields are sailing through the air.

One by one the gladiators are defeated. (Benny runs to Louise's arms
which remain restrained by her chains.)

LOUISE. Ramadidis, dare I believe what I see?

BENNY. I say it now so that all may hear. I do love thee! I do love
thee! (He kisses her passionately. The clinch goes on and on. Her legs
are intertwined with his. Her arms pull at the chains. Finally, Phil
calls from offstage.)

L. swoons
B. loves

Unit 30
A Confession is Made

PHIL. Cut! (Entering.) Cut! Cut! Will someone make them cut?
(The lovers part, breathless. Phil comes to them sneaking, pleased with
the scene. Joking.) Hey you two, how long's this been going on? (In
a guilty rush it all spills out of them, their lines overlapping.)

BENNY. It's only been three days, I swear.

LOUISE. It's just one of those things. It happened.

BENNY. You've got to understand. We were both so lonely.

LOUISE. I never saw you. I was angry with you.

BENNY. And now it's over.

LOUISE. (To Benny.) No it's not.

BENNY. No it's not. Not now that it's out in the open.

LOUISE. You've got to understand.

BENNY. We love each other.

LOUISE. Could someone please unchain me?

BENNY. We wanted to tell you.

LOUISE. We never meant to hurt you.

BENNY. We knew you'd find out. (There is a long silence.)

PHIL. (Quiettly.) I was kidding.

BENNY. (Lamely.) S sku were we?

PHIL. (Glancing around the arena.) I suppose everybody knew
but me. I guess that makes me look pretty stupid.

LOUISE. Phil, we're sorry.

PHIL. How could you? Behind my back. After all I've done for
you. I can't believe it. My girlfriend ... and my brother! It's ... it's
... it's a crime against nature!

**VOICE FROM THE CROWD.** I think it's nice.  
**PHIL.** (Swinging around.) Who said that? This is a private conversation, I believe you all have things you should be doing. [Back to Benny and Louise.] I suppose you're going to tell me that all my fault.

**WOMAN'S VOICE.** Maybe if you spent more time with her, this wouldn't have happened.

**PHIL.** I've been busy!

**MAN'S VOICE.** Too busy to come to the party she threw for you?

**ANOTHER MAN'S VOICE.** Leave him alone! He's under a lot of pressure.

**PHIL.** Thank you!

**ANOTHER WOMAN'S VOICE.** I never thought they were right for each other.

**ANOTHER VOICE.** You could see this coming a mile off!

**ANOTHER VOICE.** Still, she should have broken up with him before she started with the brother!

**ANOTHER VOICE.** They couldn't help it! They're in love!

**PHIL.** That's enough!

**SAME VOICE.** Well, they are. [Phil ignores this and turns back to Louise.]

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**Unit 31**

**How Phil Will Move Forward**

**PHIL.** All right, Louise, I forgive you.

**LOUISE.** You forgive me?

**PHIL.** You were lonely. I was busy. You were confused. We'll pretend this just never happened.

**LOUISE.** It happened, Phl.

**PHIL.** All right. It happened. But the important thing is that it'll never happen again.

**LOUISE.** It'll happen again. I love him, Phil. [Benny groans. Phil looks at him.]  

**BENNY.** (Small.) Sorry.

**PHIL.** Well, then fine. You two are out of the picture.

**GLADIATOR #1.** You can't do that.

**GLADIATOR #2.** They're the main story now.

**QUEEN.** And, honey, the kids are terrific. You can't fake that stuff. [There is cheering from the mob.]

**PHIL.** (Looking up.) I thought I told you to talk amongst your-  

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**VC defends**

**SP disbands**

**P. berates**

**WV attacks**

**P. justifies**

**MV attacks**

**AMV defends**

**P. commiserates**

**All Voices gossip**

**P. disbands**

**SY reiterates**

**P. forgives**

**L. diminishes**

**L. illuminates**

**P. terminates**

**P. attacks**

**B. shrinks**

**P. expels**

**G1 explains**

**G2 reminds**

**Q praises**

**P. discharges**
Now I can do whatever I want. And I say they're out of the picture. I don't care if they are the main story. We'll... we'll rewrite... we'll re-shoot... -

QUEEN. (With mounting hysteria.) Oh no. Oh God no. That'll mean another month, two months. I can't take it here anymore! I have to get home. I have children, divorce papers to sign! This was picture was supposed to be my comeback. But it doesn't look like I'm coming back!

PHIL. I don't care! What I say goes!

BENNY. Phil —

PHIL. (To Benny.) I'm in charge here and I say you're out of the picture! And guess what? You're never going to see your Louise again.

LOUISE. Somebody please unchain me.

PHIL. Everyone, listen to me! From this day forth this man is a FIVE!! (The mob goes in horror.)

LOUISE. Phil, no!

PHIL. Take him away!

LOUISE. (Struggling against the chains.) Benny! (Gladiator #1 takes Ben. Struggle is useless. He pulls himself up and turns to Phil.)

BENNY. All right, Phil, but listen to me. You can make me a five. Take me out of the picture. Kill my dream. I don't care. I'll give up my life before I give up my love. (The mob goes wild. Benny is led off at spear-point.)

PHIL. All right, people. I know we've had a rough morning. And we've all probably said things that we're sorry about now —

VOICE. Aahlo!

PHIL. Or will be sorry about later. But we have a movie to shoot here.

GLADIATOR #2. No.

PHIL. No?

GLADIATOR #2. Forget it. We're done making this stupid movie. We wanna go home.

PHIL. Listen, give me a week. If not for me, then do it for Mister Dewitt!

GLADIATOR #2. No! Not for Mister Dewitt and not for nobody else neither! Who are you to ask us for one more week? One more week of building your cities and fighting your battles! I say who are you to ask us for one more day??!! (The crowd cheers. Phil waits.)
Finally they are silent, waiting to hear his response.)

PHIL. (Starting quietly) Who am I? Who am I? I'll tell you who I am. I'm one of you. I'm a Three. Remember? (Seeing he's got them now) And you're right. This isn't Mister Dewitt's movie. And it's not my movie. It's our movie. This isn't about kings and queens and heroes. It's about us. And I think we owe it to ourselves to see it through. (For the first time the crowd is uncertain. Even GLADIATOR #2 is waver.) He turns to Louise.)

GLADIATOR #2. What do you say, Miss Goldman? We'll listen to you. (There is general murmurs of agreement from the mob. They all look to Louise. She hesitates.)

LOUISE. Will somebody please unchain me?

PHIL. (Quickly under his breath, while unchaining Louise.) Louise, I'm sorry for everything I've done. I'll make it up to you. I promise. I'll see you free. Benny, too. Just tell them to get back to work and the buses and trucks will be here on Saturday to take them home.

LOUISE. They will?

PHIL. No. But they'll believe you.

LOUISE. What'll we tell them on Saturday?

PHIL. I don't know. We'll figure that out on Saturday.

LOUISE. You'll do anything to finish this picture, won't you?

PHIL. I knew you'd understand. (Louise turns to the crowd.)

LOUISE. Everybody! We're going home... today! (A cheer goes up from the crowd.)

PHIL. No! No, you're not! You're staying right here! (The Mob grows louder. The Queen and the two gladiators advance on Phil. Phil's eye fill with fear. He holds Louise out in front of him.) Stay back! (Suddenly he grabs Louise and runs off.)

GLADIATOR #1. (Running after him.) This way!

GLADIATOR #2. (Following.) After him!

QUEEN. (To the audience.) Spread out! (She runs off. We hear the sound of chaos. Phil enters. He is dragging Louise with him. She is bound.)

UNIT 33
Breaking Up Is Hard To Do And Nude Does Not Equal Invisible

LOUISE. You know, I gotta tell you, you are the worst ex-boyfriend I have ever had.

PHIL. Shhhhh!

LOUISE. Oh that's nice. You gonna kick me again. Phil, this is...
crazy. Let me go.

PHIL. As long as I have you they won't hurt me.

LOUISE. It's no use, Phil. They're going to find you.

PHIL. Not if I can get out of these clothes.

LOUISE. (To a crazy man) Phil, we can still see you if you're naked.

PHIL. A disguise!

LOUISE. (Returned.) Oh, Phew....

PHIL. All I need is a little bait. (Phil grabs Louise and places her next to the posternum. Phil hides behind one of the columns. Gladiators enter and go to Louise.)

GLADIATOR #3. Miss Goldman! What happened? (Louise tries to warn him through her gag.) What? (She tries again. Before he can comprehend, Phil emerges and puts his sword to the gladiator.)

PHIL. All right, my friend. You're gonna get back there behind that column and take off all your clothes.

GLADIATOR #3. (With raised hands.) Okay, okay. But I gotta tell you, you don't need the sword.

PHIL. (Indicating off stage.) Faux .... (Phil and the gladiator exit.)

LOUISE is now alone and is still bound. The Queen runs on. She is in a wild panic, though fleeing some offstage terror. Louise gets her attention through her gag. The Queen un-gags Louise and begins wailing her.

QUEEN. Oh, honey, what did he do to you?

LOUISE. Estelle! What's going on out there?

QUEEN. It's chaos. The mob wants out of here any way they can. Some of the Twos are building wings out of feathers and wax!

LOUISE. Have you seen Benny?

QUEEN. They're bringing him this way. But you'll never get him away from that guard. The man's a brute.

LOUISE. Don't count me out yet.

QUEEN. Good luck, honey. (While exiting) I'm gonna kill myself on these goddamn steps. (Benny enters. pushed on by Gladiators.)

BENNY. Come on. You've got to let me go.

GLADIATOR #1. I ain't taking orders from no Five. (Louise enters the gladiator.)

LOUISE. (Beating.) Oh, my God! Oh, my God! Oh, my God!

BENNY. (Surprised.) Louise!
GLADIATOR #1. Miss Goldman, what is it?
LOUISE. I said ... (The rest is just garbled subbing.)

GLADIATOR #1. (Totally confused, moving closer to Louise.) What?
LOUISE. I said ... (More garbled subbing.)

GLADIATOR #1. Excuse me?
LOUISE. I said ... (Suddenly stops crying.) Stay away from my boyfriend! (Louise kneels the gladiator in the stomach, gives him a hard chop and a head butt and throws him offstage.)

BENNY. (Amazed.) Oh my God!

LOUISE. (Triumphant.) Hey, the Arctic Circle is no place for sissy girls!

BENNY. Come on. (They begin to talk.) Where's Phil?
LOUISE. I don't know. The mob may have gotten him by now. (Suddenly Phil appears.)

PHIL. I don't think so! (And with that, Phil grabs Louise and swings her around to his other side. He puts the sword to her neck.)

LOUISE. Oh! That's cold! (The Mob — in the form of the Queen, the Roman General, the Slavemaster and Conspirator #2 — runs in and corners Phil.)

ALL. They're here! They're over here!

BENNY. It's over, Phil. Let her go.

PHIL. Make me. (He draws his sword. Benny has none.)

ROMAN GENERAL. Benny! Here! (He throws Benny a sword. Unfortunately, he throws it point first. Benny scream and jumps out of the way. He glares at the general and picks up the sword.) Benny begins to furiously stab and thrust in Phil's direction. It's all very intimidating until Phil knocks the sword out of Benny's hand. Preparing to toss Benny another sword.) Benny? (Frightened after the last throw, Benny stops him. He picks up his sword.)

PHIL. All right, Benny. Let's settle this once and for all. (Benny and Phil begin to duel. Meanwhile, the others unite Louise. The duel becomes more heated. Benny and Phil lock swords.)

BENNY. Hey, that could have put my eye out. (They continue fighting.) Boy, when we get home you're gonna be in big trouble ...

LOUISE. Stop it! Stop it, both of you! Stop it right now! (They are dueling behind the columns.)

PHIL. Well, he started it!

BENNY. Did not!
Unit 37
The Return of Mr. Dewitt

DEWITT: Stop! Stop! What madness is this? Look at you people. (To Benny.) A boy who would commit fratricide. (To Phil.) A leader who cannot lead. (To Louise.) And a woman who commits adultery with her husband’s brother. Don’t you know it’s a sin?

LOUISE: Uh, he’s not my husband.

DEWITT: Oh, Well, still, it’s not very nice.

LOUISE: You’re right, Mr. Dewitt. We haven’t behaved all that well. Let’s face it, none of us is perfect.

VOICE: I’m He Without Sin.

LOUISE: Give it a rest, Carl! Anyway, we’re done with the movie.

We want to go home. Mr. Dewitt, it’s time to let your people go.

DEWITT: Well, that’s fine with me, sweetheart. But how? Jack was in charge of all that.

LOUISE: Then what are we going to do? (There is a pause. Everyone looks around.)

Unit 38
Benny Finally Takes Over

BENNY: Everyone, listen to me! We can’t stay here and the only way out is across that desert. Sure, some of you are thinking we’ll never make it. Some of you are thinking that we’re gonna die out there in the heat and the sand and the dust. But I say we can do it! Hey, we’re the guys who built the pyramids! (The mob cheers. Benny takes his shepherd’s crook from one of the others.) We’re the...
guys who crossed the Red Sea and pushed that horse into Troy!
(More cheers.) We're the guys who built Rome in one goddamn
day! (The mob goes wild.)

Unit 39
That's a Wrap

LOUISE. Benny, you did it. You're the hero. (He kisses her. The
mob cheers.)

BENNY. Louise ... when we get across this desert ... will you
marry me?

LOUISE. Are you kidding?

BENNY. (Insecure.) Should I be?

LOUISE. No.

BENNY. Then, no.

LOUISE. Of course I'll marry you. (She hugs and kisses him. The
crowd cheers.)

PHIL. Uh, Benny, I know I tried to stab you and everything. But
you need a best man? (Phil and Benny hug.)

LOUISE. (To mob.) Hey, how 'bout that, huh? And look ... (Re-
film cameras.) Mr. Dewitt saved the movie.

DEWITT. Uh, that's the other one again.

LOUISE. (Icked out.) Ah.

PHIL. So Benny, can you really get us out of here?

BENNY. If it takes me forty days and forty nights, I'll get us to
Tucson! (The crowd cheers again. Benny raises his crook high.)

EXEUNT Omens!!! (As they all start up the steps and Benny leads the
others out of the desert, the narrator is heard.)

Unit 39B
And So a Boy Did Lead...

NARRATOR. And so a boy did lead the people through the
desert. And he did deliver them unto the promised land that was
the Greater Tucson Area. And so it was written! And so it was
done! (Music. Curtain.)

End of Play
Titles of the Units and Summary of the Action

• Unit 1A – “In the Beginning”
  The narrator chronicles to the audience.

• Unit 1 – “Octavium’s Murder”
  The Conspirators conspire against Octavium.

• Unit 2 – “Louise and Her Extras”
  Louise welcomes the extras and the extras rally to Louise.

• Unit 3 – “Phil Finds Benny”
  Phil finds Benny and Benny recruits Phil.

• Unit 4 – “Jack and Shel’s Production Meeting”
  Jack attacks Shel and Shel retreats from Jack.

• Unit 5 – “Building the Pyramids”
  Phil quits to Louise and Louise explicates to Phil.

• Unit 6 – “Octavium’s Murder’ Takes 2-5”
  Louise directs to the extras and the extras achieve (ones, twos, and threes) and flounder (fours) to Louise.

• Unit 7 – “Later That Night in the Brothers’ Tent”
  Phil brags to Benny and Benny mopes to Phil.

• Unit 8 – “Louise and Her Extras- Take 2”
  Benny pitches woo to Louise and Louise ignores Benny.

• Unit 9 – “When in Rome . . . ”
  Phil cozies to Louise and Louise responds to Phil.

• Unit 10 – “Benny Writes His Mother”
  Benny vents to his mother.
• Unit 11 – “Band Geeks Get All the Girls”
  Phil succumbs to Louise and Louise succumbs to Phil.

• Unit 12 – “Benny Finishes His Letter to His Mother”
  Benny blusters to his mother.

• Unit 13 – “Plagues”
  Egyptians revel with one another then succumb to the plagues.

• Unit 14 – “Phil and Benny Compare Days”
  Benny complains to Phil and Phil confesses to Benny.

• Unit 15 – “Drama Behind the Scenes”
  Jack controls the cast and crew and the cast and crew rebel to Jack.

• Unit 16 – “’The Queen of the Nile’ Takes 1-3”
  The Queen asserts herself to Louise and Louise directs the Queen.

• Unit 17 – “Dust in the Wind”
  Shel laments to Louise and Louise comforts Shel.

• Unit 18 – “The Heart of Darkness”
  Dewitt resigns to Louise, Phil, and Benny and Phil accepts to Dewitt.

• Unit 19 – “Phil in Charge”
  Phil visualizes to Benny and Louise and Benny and Louise patronize Phil.

• Unit 20A – “And So a Boy Did Rise . . .”
  The Narrator chronicles to the audience.

• Unit 20 – “’The Queen of the Nile’ Take 4”
  The Queen condemns Ramadidis (Benny) and Princess Isis (Louise) and Ramadidis and Princess Isis defy Queen.

• Unit 21 – “Phil’s Directing Style”
Phil praises the company but neglects Louise and the company and Louise responds to Phil's praise and neglect respectively.

- **Unit 22 – “Real Good Acting”**
  Louise succumbs to Benny and Benny succumbs to Phil.

- **Unit 23 – “Don’t Drink Out of the Red Sea”**
  Phil directs the crowd and the crowd cheers Phil.

- **Unit 24A – “And Thus the King Ruled . . .”**
  The Narrator chronicles to the audience.

- **Unit 24 – “Phil’s Surprise Birthday Party”**
  Louise caters to Phil and Phil spurns Louise.

- **Unit 25 – “They Are NOT Real Good Actors”**
  Louise falls for Benny and Benny falls for Louise.

- **Unit 26A – “Thus Began the Love Affair . . .”**
  The Narrator chronicles to the audience.

- **Unit 26 – “We Have to Stop Meeting Like This”**
  Louise succumbs to Benny and Benny succumbs to Louise.

- **Unit 27 – “Fetch the Pencil, Big Boy”**
  Louise lies to Phil and Phil patronizes Louise.

- **Unit 28 – “Everyone Knows But Phil”**
  The Queen confronts Louise and Benny, Louise and Benny deny to the Queen.

- **Unit 29 – “The Queen of the Nile and Her Gladiators”**
  Benny kisses Louise and Louise kisses Benny. Publicly.

- **Unit 30 – “A Confession is Made”**
  Louise and Benny confess to Phil and Phil condemns Louise and Benny.
• Unit 31 – “How Phil Will Move Forward”
Phil dictates to the cast and crew and the cast and crew refute Phil.

• Unit 32 – “Exeunt Omnes”
Phil captures Louise and the cast and crew fight Phil.

• Unit 33 – “Breaking Up is Hard to Do and Nude Does Not Equal Invisible”
Phil dupes a gladiator and a gladiator flirts with Phil.

• Unit 34 – “The Queen Un-Gags Louise”
The Queen rescues Louise and Louise seeks Benny.

• Unit 35 – “Louise Rescues Benny”
Louise rescues Benny and Benny seeks Phil.

• Unit 36 – “Brother Against Brother”
Benny attacks Phil and Phil ambushes Benny.

• Unit 37 – “The Return of Mr. Dewitt”
Dewitt lambastes Louise et al and Louise supplicates Dewitt.

• Unit 38 – “Benny Finally Takes Over”
Benny ignites the cast and crew.

• Unit 39 – “That’s a Wrap”
Benny proposes to Louise and Louise accepts.

• Unit 39B – “And So a Boy Did Lead . . .”
The Narrator chronicles to the audience.

Characters

Benny:

Desire: Benny wants to be a Hollywood star and get the girl.

Benny runs away from the family farm to a movie being filmed in the middle of the
desert to accomplish this. He is willing to endure humiliation, physical abuse, plagues, and the wrath of his family. This has been a dream of his since he was a child and none of the aforementioned tortures dissuade him. Benny falls in love with Louise the first time he lays eyes on her. He has as much difficulty getting her to notice him as he does becoming a star. She has eyes for his brother, ignores him, and makes him a four (the group of extras who get the worst jobs).

Will: Benny has a nearly unbreakable will.

Benny faces all of these hurdles willingly. He seems perfectly happy to pay his dues in a tent in a desert playing an extra to be discovered. He does not give up on trying to impress Louise. Even when she is dating Phil, he makes himself available to her when she needs a friendly ear. The only time he waivers in his determination to be a star and get the girl is when it looks like Phil might beat him to both goals.

Moral Stance: Benny is gentle and giving in spite of being driven.

Benny is morally upright in every regard except when it comes to his desire. He does not lie, cheat, steal, or harm anyone unless it is to achieve his desire. He loves his family and wants to please them, but he abandons them to work on *Exeunt Omnes*. The most immoral thing Benny is guilty of is sleeping with his brother’s girlfriend. Benny knows that this is wrong and regrets it very much, but does feel a certain justification on the grounds that he saw her first and Phil was neglecting her.

Decorum: Benny is a slightly awkward young man.

Benny does not demand a great deal of attention physically. He is invisible to Louise until she has been dating Phil for some time. Many of the other actors on set are intimidating to him. Benny is less attractive and weaker than his brother. He has to work much harder to get Louise’s attention and he is only able to vanquish Phil in a fight with Louise’s assistance.

Summary List of Adjectives:
Benny is driven, unwavering, gentle, and awkward.

Phil:

Desire: Specifically, Phil wants to finish the film. In general, Phil wants whatever is in front of him.

Phil has no direction of his own, but he is driven by a strong desire to possess whatever he is involved with from moment to moment. Upon arriving in the desert to take Benny back to the family farm, Phil is talked into working as an extra. Once Benny convinces Phil to stay, Phil takes over Benny’s dreams of being a big shot in Hollywood and living happily ever after with Louise. When D. W. Dewitt reveals that he has no more interest in directing *Exeunt Omnes*, Phil immediately seizes the reins and quickly drives everyone crazy. His desire to finish the movie becomes all encompassing and completely consumes him.

Will: Phil has a violently strong will.

Phil’s desire to finish *Exeunt Omnes* is so blinding and overwhelming that it costs him his relationship with Louise, his friendship with Benny, and the respect of thousands of cast and crew members. He is more than willing to strand everyone involved in Molten rock indefinitely in order to fulfill his desire. Phil literally turns to violence when his desire to finish the movie spirals out of control. He kidnaps Louise and attacks Benny with a sword.

Moral Stance: Phil is a Machiavellian with a heart.

Phil is willing to try anything to accomplish his goals. He lies to the extras to keep them in check. When Louise asks what he will do when his lie is discovered on Saturday he replies, “I don’t know. We’ll figure that out on Saturday” (Coen and Crane 41). The most morally reprehensible act that Phil commits is kidnapping Louise and attacking his brother with a sword. In the end Phil backs down and does the right thing. He supports Benny’s effort to lead the group to Tucson and Benny’s marriage proposal to Louise.
Decorum: Phil is an intimidating and handsome person.

Phil is a commanding presence physically. He is not intimidated by the other actors. He tells a Slavemaster with a whip, “I know where your tent is” (12). He attacks Benny and would have defeated him handily if not for Louise’s intervention. While he is intimidating, it has more to do with attitude and demeanor than size. Phil is immediately attractive to Louise. She is initially interested in his help on the movie, but she is quite taken with his physical appearance from the moment she notices him.

Summary List of Adjectives:
Phil is possessive, violent, Machiavellian, handsome, and caring.

Louise:

Desire: Louise desires a man who will treat her like a queen.

Will: Louise has a gently resolute will.

Louise is a very sweet woman, but she has an iron will and is ready to fight when necessary. When she thinks that it is Phil who will treat her like a queen, she defends him to her superiors. When it is clear that it is really Benny that she belongs with, her will and determination to defend him knows no limits. She is able to resort to violence when backed into a corner. She even knees an actor in the stomach to prevent him from hurting Benny (43).

Moral Stance: Louise is a good person who is often guilty of giving in to passion.

Louise is someone who wants to do the right thing and be a good person, but she will not apologize for giving in to her passions. When her affair with Benny is discovered, she apologizes to Phil for the deception but not for her love for Benny. She also announces that she will not quit seeing Benny simply because she was committed to Phil first (39).

Decorum: Louise is an attractive girl next-door type.

Louise is mocked by the costume designer for her looks, but the boys are all enamored
with her. Benny even says (and Phil agrees) that she should be in the movies instead of behind the scenes (11).

Summary List of Adjectives: Regal, gentle, tough, passionate, and pretty.

Idea

Meaning of the Title

The title of *Epic Proportions* is a reference to the scope of the motion picture that the characters are filming during the action of the play, *Exeunt Omnes*. The title is quite humorous when compared to how simple the production aspects are and how the cast of thousands can be easily portrayed by a handful of actors.

Philosophical Statements

Coen and Crane make a variety of philosophical statements in Epic Proportions. Many of them deal with the apparent futility of effort against something much larger than yourself, and how in the end, the tremendous endurance required to stay the course are worthwhile.

NARRATOR. This is a story about lust and revenge and fate and destiny. This is a story about a lot of things! (5).

LOUISE. Well, let me just say that if we all work together, then we’ll have something we can all be really proud of (6).

PHIL. There’s no way you’re ever gonna get discovered here (7).

BENNY. This is my dream and if I sit around at home it’s never going happen (7).

BENNY. It was just a bad start. We’ll get better (13).

BENNY. You just have to be in the right place at the right time. Of course it’s hard to be in the right place when you’re up to your neck in frogs . . . but them’s the breaks (19).

DEWITT. Sweetheart, I’m old. I’m old, and I’m tired, and I’m old . . . A few days ago we were shooting the Ten Plagues. And I looked out at all of these people suffering.
But in the middle of them, there was this little man, refusing to give up. I couldn’t take my eyes off him. And I thought, I don’t need to see this. This is too sad . . . Enough is enough. (26)

PHIL. This isn’t Mr. Dewitt’s movie. And it’s not my movie. It’s our movie. This isn’t about kings and queens and heroes. It’s about us. And I think we owe it to ourselves to see it through. (41)

How Does the Action Lead Directly to the Meaning?

• Benny convinces Phil to stay and work on *Exeunt Omnes* (7-8).
• Phil and Benny each speak to Louise and are quite taken with her (9-11).
• Benny’s group of extras is given brutal, menial, and gross tasks (12-13).
• Phil earns Louise’s affection with his help on her scene (16).
• Phil convinces Benny to stay even in spite of his earning everything that Benny wants (19-21).
• Dewitt is in seclusion in the pyramid and Jack is killed in an accident (21-25).
• Dewitt refuses to leave the pyramid and puts Phil in charge. Phil recasts Benny and Louise as leads (25-28).
• Phil ignores Louise and Louise and Benny begin an affair (30-35).
• The affair is revealed (38-39).
• Phil attacks Benny and Louise and is chased by the cast and crew (39-44).
• Dewitt returns and chides all parties for their bad behavior (44).
• In his dream, Miguel finds his voice within and he defeats the soldier (34-35).
• Benny proposes to Louise and accepts the challenge of leading everyone across the desert to safety (44-45).
• Phil offers to be Benny’s best man in a moment of penance (45).
"Epic Proportions" is Benny’s story. All of the action revolves around his desire to be a Hollywood movie star and to get the girl. The desert, a wacky cast and crew, and his own brother Phil stand in his way throughout the play. After the frenzied climax, Benny may or may not be on his way to stardom, but he does get the girl and is a hero in the eyes of the thousands of people marching with him through the desert.

Moods

Mood Adjectives and Images

Unit 1A – “In the Beginning”

Touching: cold, spiky, dusty
Tasting: rich, flavorful
Smelling: leathery
Hearing: booming, bass, rattling
Seeing: red, orange, brown

The mood in this unit is like an extremely exciting movie trailer.

Unit 1 – “Octavium’s Murder”

Touching: smooth, clean, plastic
Tasting: bitter, floral, fruity
Smelling: floral, spring-like
Hearing: whispering, hushed, shadowed
Seeing: amber, sepia-toned, blurry

The mood in this unit is like a horribly foul bottle of wine.

Unit 2 – “Louise and Her Extras”

Touching: soft, spongy, hot
Tasting: cherry, wet, minty
Smelling: perfume, lotion, sweat
Hearing: cheery, bubbly, pleasant
Seeing: pretty, bright, easy

The mood in this unit is like winning money at a casino.

Unit 3 – “Phil Finds Benny”

Touching: rough, strong, abrasive
Tasting: salty, crunchy, medicinal
Smelling: sweaty, familiar, unwashed
Hearing: country, inflection, loud
Seeing: bright, understated

The mood in this unit is like taking bad-tasting medicine and instantly feeling better.

Unit 4 – “Jack and Shel’s Production Meeting”

Touching: jagged, broken, sharp
Tasting: sour, bitter, unpleasant
Smelling: foul, sweaty, angry
Hearing: loud, angry, harsh
Seeing: dull, red, glowing

The mood in this unit is like falling down a hole without end, like Alice.

Unit 5 – “Building the Pyramids”

Touching: gritty, grimy, damp
Tasting: musty, slimy
Smelling: dry, wind-blown, leather
Hearing: piercing, angry, shouting
Seeing: bright, huge, dusty
The mood in this unit is like being outside for two days.

Unit 6 – “Octavium’s Murder’ Takes 2-5”

Touching: crowded, hot, sweaty, dusty
Tasting: spit, dehydration
Smelling: body odor, dirty cables
Hearing: crowd whispers, titters, proclamations
Seeing: bright, blue, light brown

The mood in this unit is like being in a large crowd for hours longer than is comfortable.

Unit 7 – “Later That Night in the Brothers’ Tent”

Touching: cold, dirty, soft
Tasting: tomato, turkey, salty
Smelling: salty, rusty
Hearing: whining, shrill, empty
Seeing: blue, dim, starry

The mood in this unit is like your body at the end of an intense work out.

Unit 8 – “Louise and Her Extras- Take 2”

Touching: prodding, slapping, pounding
Tasting: hot, saliva, crow
Smelling: dust, body odor, fruit
Hearing: lecturing, crowd noise
Seeing: bright, amber, drab

The mood in this unit is like a bad workshop at a conference or convention.

Unit 9 – “When in Rome . . .”

Touching: pounding, stampede, smashing
Tasting: crunchy, sour
Smelling: chaotic, coppery, warm
Hearing: loud, violent, soothing
Seeing: chaos, bright, amber, red
The mood in this unit is like the running of the bulls in Spain.

Unit 10 – “Benny Writes His Mother”
Touching: smooth, firm, cool
Tasting: woody, smokey, potato
Smelling: ink, canvass, leather
Hearing: hollow, silent, quiet
Seeing: dark, blue
The mood in this unit is like a nice warm blanket in the cold.

Unit 11 – “Band Geeks Get All the Girls”
Touching: warm, silky, soft
Tasting: sweet, cherry, ginger
Smelling: floral, copper, powder
Hearing: gentle, delight, flapping
Seeing: blue, dark, starry
The mood in this unit is like a cat alternating between rest and intense activity.

Unit 12 – “Benny Finishes His Letter to His Mother”
Touching: smooth, firm, cool
Tasting: woody, smokey, potato
Smelling: ink, canvass, leather
Hearing: hollow, silent, quiet
Seeing: dark, blue

The mood in this unit is like a nice warm blanket in the cold.

Unit 13 – “Plagues”

Touching: slimy, wet, tingly

Tasting: earthy, soggy, bloody

Smelling: algae, grassy, copper

Hearing: celebratory, panicked

Seeing: bright, amber, green

The mood in this unit is like a 70’s slasher movie.

Unit 14 – “Phil and Benny Compare Days”

Touching: rough, canvass, felt

Tasting: muddy, rubber, metallic

Smelling: canvass, sandy

Hearing: insects, quiet

Seeing: dark, blue, dingy, dirty

The mood in this unit is like relaxing after a dentist appointment.

Unit 15 – “Drama Behind the Scenes”

Touching: vibrations, tension, bumps

Tasting: tar, sand, rubber

Smelling: smoke, makeup, sweat

Hearing: chatter, activity

Seeing: costumes, amber, bright

The mood in this unit is like a beehive.

Unit 16 – “The Queen of the Nile’ Takes 1-3”
Touching: pain, violence, squishy
Tasting: sandy, bloody, hot
Smelling: sweaty, dangerous
Hearing: loud, angry, crazed
Seeing: fast-moving, amber, shiny

The mood in this unit is like schadenfreude.

Unit 17 – “Dust in the Wind”

Touching: ashy, broken
Tasting: tongue, salty, snotty
Smelling: cinders, sand
Hearing: panicked, weepy
Seeing: salty, snotty, broken

The mood in this unit is like dreaming about showing up to work naked.

Unit 18 – “The Heart of Darkness”

Touching: dusty, damp, slimy
Tasting: musty, rancid, warm
Smelling: moldy, thick
Hearing: dripping, hollowed, quiet
Seeing: blue, dark, slimy, dusty

The mood in this unit is like breathing in Jell-O.

Unit 19 – “Phil in Charge”

Touching: rushed, frozen, spongy
Tasting: musty, rancid, cool
Smelling: moldy, thick
Hearing: dripping, hollowed, quiet

Seeing: blue, dark, dusty

The mood in this unit is like a promise from a parent to go to Disney World next year.

Unit 20A – “And So a Boy Did Rise . . .”

Touching: cold, spiky, dusty

Tasting: rich, flavorful

Smelling: leathery

Hearing: booming, bass, rattling

Seeing: red, orange, brown

The mood in this unit is like an extremely exciting movie trailer.

Unit 20 – “The Queen of the Nile’ Take 4”

Touching: pain, violence, squishy, soft

Tasting: sandy, bloody, hot

Smelling: sweaty, dangerous, burned

Hearing: loud, angry, crazed

Seeing: fast moving, amber, shiny, amateurish

The mood in this unit is like watching an awful movie that everyone else loves.

Unit 21 – “Phil’s Directing Style”

Touching: scratchy, pinching, poking

Tasting: crunchy, medicinal, syrupy

Smelling: ripe, fungal

Hearing: cheering, French, condescension

Seeing: struggling, amber, bright

The mood in this unit is like being examined on a Petri dish.
Unit 22 – “Real Good Acting”

- Touching: soft, luscious, tempting
- Tasting: floral, coppery, wet
- Smelling: floral, pheromones, exciting
- Hearing: cooing, grunting
- Seeing: beauty, temptation, forbidden fruit

The mood in this unit is like the dessert you can not have but take anyway.

Unit 23 – “Don’t Drink Out of the Red Sea”

- Touching: firm, dry, even
- Tasting: sugary, rich, overwhelming
- Smelling: dusty, fishy, sweaty
- Hearing: condescension, spin
- Seeing: bright, amber, gold

The mood in this unit is like a political stump speech.

Unit 24A – “And Thus the King Ruled . . . ”

- Touching: cold, spiky, dusty
- Tasting: rich, flavorful
- Smelling: leathery
- Hearing: booming, bass, rattling
- Seeing: red, orange, brown

The mood in this unit is like an extremely exciting movie trailer.

Unit 24 – “Phil’s Surprise Birthday Party”

- Touching: hot, razor sharp, painful
- Tasting: salty, sugary, waxy
Smelling: matches, icing, salty
Hearing: crowds, disappointing, surprising
Seeing: blue, gold, dark, light, white

The mood in this unit is like a new state of the art TV that will not turn on.

Unit 25 – “They Are NOT Real Good Actors”

Touching: silky, warm, smooth
Tasting: honey, wine
Smelling: perfume, sweat, anger, passion
Hearing: rationalization, moaning, slurping
Seeing: beauty, desire, compassion

The mood in this unit is like sinking wonderfully.

Unit 26A – “Thus Began the Love Affair . . .”

Touching: cold, spiky, dusty
Tasting: rich, flavorful
Smelling: leathery
Hearing: booming, bass, rattling
Seeing: red, orange, brown

The mood in this unit is like an extremely exciting movie trailer.

Unit 26 – “We Have to Stop Meeting Like This”

Touching: velvety, silky, smooth
Tasting: honey, coppery, fattening, fruity
Smelling: floral, sweaty, fleshy
Hearing: angelic, cooing, laughter
Seeing: red, skin, sheets
The mood in this unit is like the aftermath of eating the forbidden fruit.

Unit 27 – “Fetch the Pencil, Big Boy”
Touching: tingly, tight, thick
Tasting: tongue, saliva, fear
Smelling: metallic, woody
Hearing: shuffling, spinning, covering
Seeing: panic, oblivious, nothing
The mood in this unit is like getting away with cheating on a test as the teacher watches.

Unit 28 – “Everyone Knows But Phil”
Touching: bristly, tense
Tasting: dry, spoiled, dairy
Smelling: smokey, manure
Hearing: gossip, whispy, clipped
Seeing: orange, upright lines, tension
The mood in this unit is like watching a trapeze artist.

Unit 29 – “The Queen of the Nile and Her Gladiators”
Touching: soft, hot, satin
Tasting: adrenaline, dusty, saliva
Smelling: perspiration, floral, perfume
Hearing: bravado, tenderness
Seeing: intimacy, carnal
The mood in this unit is like watching a late night Cinemax movie.

Unit 30 – “A Confession is Made”
Touching: firm, blunt, bruised
Tasting: bitter, sour, medicinal

Smelling: harsh, citrus

Hearing: nervousness, hurried, shame

Seeing: red, orange, blue

The mood in this unit is like realizing that a nightmare is actually reality.

Unit 31 – “How Phil Will Move Forward”

Touching: sharp, rough, sandy

Tasting: molasses, scones, liver

Smelling: sweaty, anger, tension

Hearing: rigidity, tension, anger

Seeing: red, amber, blue, green, tension

The mood in this unit is like expecting a bomb to go off any second.

Unit 32 – “Exeunt Omnes”

Touching: clamored, crowded, brittle

Tasting: hot, rich, putrid

Smelling: rancid, sweaty, filthy

Hearing: yelling, booing, cheering

Seeing: amber, red, yellow

The mood in this unit is like having 200% too much demand for your supply.

Unit 33 – “Breaking Up is Hard to Do and Nude Does Not Equal Invisible”

Touching: painful, twisted, pulling

Tasting: burning, vomitus, bile

Smelling: bile, vomitus, insecurity

Hearing: threatening, ugly, villainous
Seeing: red, amber, green, sharpness

The mood in this unit is like being prank phone called over and over.

Unit 34 – “The Queen Un-Gags Louise”

Touching: release, stretching

Tasting: orange, banana, water

Smelling: orange, banana, moisture

Hearing: conspiring, humanitarianism, self-preservation

Seeing: aide, friendship, escape

The mood in this unit is like receiving a gift from a loose acquaintance.

Unit 35 – “Louise Rescues Benny”

Touching: rough, sandy, intensely painful

Tasting: dusty, dry, vomitus

Smelling: leather, steel, vomit

Hearing: mumbles, screams

Seeing: violence, trickery, violence

The mood in this unit is like the most common gag in America’s Funniest Home Videos.

Unit 36 – “Brother Against Brother”

Touching: cutting, noogies, slapping

Tasting: spicy, Fruit loops, milk

Smelling: wash cloths, sweat, pheromones

Hearing: taunting, provocation, teasing

Seeing: violence, childish quibbling

The mood in this unit is like watching grown men play in a plastic wading pool.

Unit 37 – “The Return of Mr. Dewitt”
Touching: prickly, hairy, porous
Tasting: manna, dew, remorse
Smelling: clarity, freshness, remorse
Hearing: scolding, apologies
Seeing: power, authority, genuflecting

The mood in this unit is like an effective teacher scolding her entire class.

Unit 38 – “Benny Finally Takes Over”

Touching: electric, energizing
Tasting: water, cool, renewal
Smelling: confidence, cleanliness, excitement
Hearing: motivation, confidence, heroism
Seeing: shiny, blue, gold

The mood in this unit is like winning the Super Bowl.

Unit 39 – “That’s a Wrap”

Touching: welcoming, warm, soft
Tasting: mashed potatoes, cinnamon, cake
Smelling: cinnamon, cake
Hearing: celebration, relief, contrition
Seeing: red, gold, purple

The mood in this unit is like a walk through an amusement park.

Unit 39B – “And So a Boy Did Lead . . .”

Touching: cold, spiky, dusty
Tasting: rich, flavorful
Smelling: leathery
Hearing: booming, bass, rattling

Seeing: red, orange, brown

The mood in this unit is like an extremely exciting movie trailer.

Tempo

The overall tempo for this production will be fast paced with a build toward a frenzied climax, and slowing down through the resolution. Each unit will have moments of a slightly slower pace, a pause, or stillness to hold the interest of the audience and to add variety. The overall tempo will look like this:

\[ \text{Tone} \]

- Heeding the call of destiny.

Previous Reviews

The original Broadway production of Epic Proportions was at the Helen Hayes Theatre on November 30, 1999 and starred Kristin Chenoweth as Louise Goldman (Coen and Crane 3). Terry Byrne of The Boston Herald was quite taken with the production:

Chenoweth is so energetic, and goes so far beyond what could have been a flat character, that when she entreats the crowd to shout with horror, fear, anger or even sardonic amusement, you'll be ready to join right in. Chenoweth is also a master of comic timing, and whether she's taking an extra moment or two to position herself in a revealing gown, or reacting with one of her amazing facial
expressions, she dominates the stage. (Byrne “You’ll Be Entertained . . .”)

He goes on to praise director Jerry Zaks and the designers:

[Director Jerry Zaks] drives the action with the pedal to the metal (a planned intermission has been eliminated and the show runs about 80 minutes), which helps keep the comedy frothy. David Gallo’s orange, cartoon-style sets are bright and breezy, and in spite of the two male actors, Coen and Crane’s jokes deliver some wonderful payoffs. (Byrne “You’ll Be Entertained . . .”)

Byrne was mostly glowing, but there were as many negative reviews (Byrne “A Début . . .”). The following is an excerpt from an extremely unflattering review by Chris Taylor for “Short Takes” in Time:

This epically unfunny Broadway comedy takes place on the desert set of a Hollywood extravaganza, as two brothers fight for the hand of a perky assistant director. Kristin Chenoweth, a Tony winner for last season’s revival of You’re a Good Man, Charlie Brown, is cute, if a bit overcooked, as the Kewpie-doll A.D. But the jokes are bad, the physical comedy repetitious, and the Hollywood satire 40 years outdated. Co-author Crane was one of the creators of Friends. If this is what TV people think Broadway needs, the theater is in more trouble than we imagined. (Poniewozik, et al.)

Equally unimpressed was Ben Brantley of The New York Times:

Ms. Chenoweth, bless her heart, is imprisoned in a relentlessly unfunny cartoon, and all the charm and luminosity in the world aren’t going to raise the dampening clouds that hang over her . . . The eight-member ensemble, which Mr. Zaks appears to have left mostly to its own devices, must deliver lines as old as vaudeville, supplemented with grimaces and stiff, stagy postures that seem less to
have been thought out through rehearsal than improvised in desperation. All the performances need reining in; on the other hand, without the mugging, there would be nothing to command the attention, except for William Ivey Long's costumes and David Gallo's sets. (Brantley "Parting the Sea With Slapstick")

_The New York Times_ was not always sour on *Epic Proportions*, however. A review of a 1986 off-Broadway production at the Judith Anderson Theater received praise:

Under Paul Lazarus's inventive direction, which includes a couple of adroitly arranged fight scenes that mock every technique used by Hollywood heroes to get out of tough spots, the entire no-star cast pitches in with verve and smart timing to draw optimum humor out of the incidents and asides tossed their way. Restraint is not the script's style. You can be sure that one of the vestal virgins will be discovered to be pregnant. On the other hand, it's diverting to hear that the Trojans are refusing to lose. With its big theme, big narration, big music, big screen and its great big offstage crowd of extras, *Epic Proportions* is the biggest little show in town and a rollicking start to the new season of Manhattan Punch Line. (Goodman "Spoof of Movies . . .")

Playwrights Larry Coen and David Crane

Larry Coen works as an arts educator and actor in Boston. He has performed with Commonwealth Shakespeare and the Lyric Stage Company. Coen on acting:

It's all about playing. When you're a kid and you're playing with Matchbox cars or dolls and you create an entire world around them, that's narcotic.

You're . . . listening to the audience, playing a character, reacting to the actors onstage with you. It's about being fully engaged. (Byrne "From KidStage . . .")

Coen is the associate director of the nonprofit City Stage Company and says of his work there:
In the middle schools we're trying to help kids become deeper readers by asking them to think like actors. We ask them to write something that shows what a character in a story is thinking at a particular time. By asking them to participate and be creative, there's no wrong answer and the kids find much more meaning in the literature. (Byrne “From KidStage . . . ”)

Most noted for being the co-creator of NBC's hit television show *Friends*, David Crane has written and produced episodes of numerous sitcoms. He has been nominated for four ACE Cable Awards and won one, and received seven Emmy nominations with one win. He has written episodes of *Everything’s Relative, Sunday Dinner, The Powers That Be, Couples, Crashendo, Dream On, Veronica’s Closet, Friends*, the spin-off *Joey*, and *The Class* (IMBd.com, Inc.).

Learning Goals for the J. Frank Dobie High School Theater Department

- Vocal Clarity: I want the students to project and articulate. I also want them to use appropriate dialect. Many of these native Texan students pronounce, "get" as "git" and "any" as "eeny." This is clearly inappropriate for Midwest farmers, Hollywood film personnel, and an Alaskan in 1930.

- Characterization: Most students in this department have an excellent sense of character. All but three in this play will be playing several different characters, and I hope to see each character played by one actor become distinctly different from one another.

- Comic timing: While this group has an extremely sharp sense of character, they do seem to struggle with timing. The Production Class (the advanced students who are in all of the after school productions) wrote and performed a comedy showcase in the fall. Each and every skit had a superb premise and well-drawn, fully developed characters. Each skit also tended to wander around the punch lines and struggle to achieve an appropriate pace.
I hope to help the students achieve a strong sense of timing for this show.

- Time management: I hope to use this production as a tool to teach the students time management. In the fall productions, we had a great number of rehearsals missed for doctor appointments, out of town trips, and birthday parties. According to my coworker, Aimee Small, this is down significantly from last year, and I hope to keep this trend moving forward. I want the students, and just as importantly their parents, to understand that being involved with the play is a commitment to a great many people and requires planning and sacrifice.

- Discipline: I also hope to use this play to teach the students discipline. By Texas State Law, they may not participate in any extra curricular activity if they are not passing all of their classes. Ironically enough, this law is called “No pass- no play.” The “play” in that phrase refers to sports, but it is a nice pun for our department. All of these students are involved in extra curricular theatre because it is something they want, and many would never put forth the effort to pass classes they have no interest in if it were not required to be part of the play. They are instructed to seek tutorials when necessary and to let me know as soon as they know of a grade problem so they can fix it or be replaced in a timely manner.
Works Cited


<http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0186331/>.

2009.


Rehearsal Journal

Monday, January 25

Auditions for Benny, Phil, and Louise

Today we held cold reading auditions for *The Constant Wife* and for the roles of Benny, Phil, and Louise in *Epic Proportions*. For *Epic Proportions*, the girls read Louise’s first monologue on page six, and the boys read the Benny and Phil scene on page thirteen. With a shorter rehearsal period than usual, the actors will be expected to be off book after the read through in March. This should not be a hardship for anyone since the three leads are being cast so early. *The Constant Wife* is our University Interscholastic League One Act Play Competition piece. As a measuring stick of that production’s importance to the J. Frank Dobie Theatre Department, it should be known that it is the only production of the four in our season that the principal will attend. Having said that, Aimee Small was very generous in sharing key personnel.

Gilbert Martinez, who will play Benny Goldman, must also serve as the light operator for *The Constant Wife*. I do not “pre-cast” shows, but he is not one I had in mind to play Benny. He so clearly ran away with the role in the cold readings that Aimee, Rick, and I joked that he IS Benny. Gilbert is talented and funny, but he is scatterbrained. He is not a very hard worker, but has shown improvement in the last productions. Gilbert is a senior and intends to major in Theatre at Sam Houston State University or the University of Houston.

Ian Lewis will play the role of Phil. Ian is a freshman this year and performed a mid-sized role in my production of *Paganini* in December. He was on time, off book early, and a pleasure to have in the cast. He is getting a larger role than I am normally comfortable giving a freshman, but he has earned it. He and Gilbert have a nice chemistry. He has a good sense of timing and character. He would be excellent at speech tournaments; interpretation is his forte.
Louise Goldman will be played by Swedish foreign exchange student Eleonor Poka. She humbly served as an understudy for our first production and had an excellent role in Paganini. She is an excellent student and talented actress. Her comic timing is outstanding. Going into the auditions I was worried about her ability to be the lead in a comedy in her second language, but she quickly put those fears to rest as the auditions began. Her English has improved markedly over the course of the few months she has lived in the States. As her grasp of English has grown, she has become significantly less gullible and more profane in her peer interactions. Working with Eleonor will be a delight.

Monday, March 1

Auditions

All are cold reading Jack and Shel on pages seven through eight and the Queen and Attendant on page twenty-two.

Auditioners:

Laura Gutierrez- Not at all energetic or grounded.

Marissa Escalona- very natural and excellent. Great attitude. Queen? Very good reading as the queen.

Kirsten Marshall- good energy. No interpretation in either reading.

Bryan Rodriguez- Physically stiff. Good interpretation.

Erik Olmos- Low energy. Ok interpretation. Great Attendant voice out of nowhere!

Liz Sonnier- Great interpretation of dialogue. Ok energy.

Olivia Maslonka- Excellent energy and interpretation of lines. Excellent comic timing.

Paris Nichols- Fantastic Queen!!!

Brittany Stoude- No. Nice physical choices as Jack.
Jose Cantu- Good physicality and timing.


Tuesday, March 2

Call Back Auditions

In addition to the posted call back list, two students who were not able to make Monday’s audition (Elisa Gomez and Brenton Hamilton) joined the group. After cold readings at the original audition, I decided to do ensemble and improv exercises for the call backs.

For the first exercise they were divided into groups of three or four to create an improv scene of a 30’s movie about the history of the world.

Erik, Marissa, and Paris were very creative and abstract. Their scene was musical and nonlinear. Delightful. Brian, Olivia, and Elise began with ape-men creating fire, then Indians, and finally WWI. They utilized a time travel device. Fantastic. Ended with a teenager in the same position in which the ape-man began. Justin, Laura, Brenton, and Jose started with Adam and Eve. Hysterical.

In the second scene they were to improv a scene where they are in a production meeting of the same movie. Olivia, Elisa, and Brian went first. Elisa could not be understood. She was not articulating at all. The scene was very creative and energetic. Justin, Jose, Laura, and Brenton had a slow-moving scene of people arguing. The characters were interesting. Marissa, Erik, and Paris had a similar idea. Interesting characters but the scene and argument were slow.

Next they were each asked to create tableaus for Ancient Egypt, Rome, and Arizona. All groups came up with very creative body pictures.

Finally, they were asked in their best “movie guy” voice to introduce *Exeunt Omnes.*
Justin really shined with this exercise.

Monday, March 29

Read Through

The cast and crew heads introduced themselves and the role they were playing. We went over the policies of the production company and finished the read through at 4:58 p.m. The company seemed very excited about the script. Their only complaint was that “goddamn” and “asshole” must be cut.

Tuesday, March 30

Blocking Rehearsal

The upper classmen lead the cast through warm-ups (as is the custom in all of our productions). The energy is high among all of the cast members. They are excited to do this show, about each other, and even my thesis process. We began blocking at the top of the show. We moved through what I consider to be a large amount of text to block in two hours, but it did not seem rushed. It is, after all, only a skeleton that will be filled out in working rehearsals.

Wednesday, March 31

Blocking Rehearsal

Blocked another large section of text today. I handed the cast characterization sheets to fill out. Those who have multiple characters are to fill it out multiple times; those with one character are to include much more detail.

Thursday, April 1

Blocking Rehearsal

We spent about thirty minutes talking about some of their characterization work sheets. They seem to have a good understanding of where they are going and what they are doing with
their roles. Energy is still high. This is a cast that genuinely enjoys being around each other and revels in each other’s success. That will serve them well.

Monday, April 5

Blocking Rehearsal

The show is now roughly blocked. Everything is in the SM’s promptbook. We are ready to begin working the show off book tomorrow and tackle stage combat.

Tuesday, April 6

Working Rehearsal

We began by working through pages five through twenty. They seem to be struggling a bit with the pacing needed for this production. The other productions this season have done nothing to prepare the students for fast-paced comedy. Aimee made the choice to direct the British comedies *Hay Fever* and *The Constant Wife* at a leisurely pace. The students and I gave *Paganini* wild and nightmarish changes in pace. Nothing this year has approached the speed needed for *Epic Proportions*. For the last thirty minutes, we revisited the Queen of the Nile scene’s fight choreography. They ran it at ten percent speed (which is great for rehearsing combat, but not comedy).

Wednesday, April 7

Working Rehearsal

Today we worked pages twenty through thirty-four. The pacing was a little better. I am trying to get them to a fever-pitched pace now in order to find moments to pull back later. Some students are still struggling a bit with lines. I informed them we really have no time to spend on that anymore. The last half hour was spent on the fight scenes between Benny and the Gladiators and Benny and Phil at ten percent speed.
Thursday, April 8

Working Rehearsal

Today we worked pages thirty-four through forty-two. The boys wore very short rehearsal skirts in order to learn how to move in togas and tunics. They blushed and laughed and had a great time admiring their own legs. And each other’s legs. The girls took pictures. The characters and timing continue to be fantastic. They knew their lines much better today.

Friday, April 9

Working Rehearsal

We began today with an exercise for the benefit of those playing multiple characters. I gave the cast ten minutes to prepare a brief performance in which they were to present a frozen pose, a walk, and a voice (one line) that was radically different for each character that they play. Only one actor struggled with this. Unfortunately, it was José Cantu, who plays more characters than anyone else. I asked him privately after rehearsal to work on this exercise further at home. We worked pages five through twenty-five. They were off book enough for me to let the scenes run and take notes to give at the end of rehearsal. They all diligently wrote down the notes. Most are doing well being off book. Eleonor is the only one who is consistently struggling, and I have a feeling she will be finished struggling tomorrow. It is difficult to be too angry with her for struggling with so many lines in a second language.

Saturday, April 10

Rehearsal was from 12:00-6:00 p.m. We had a bit of a late start due to the fact that an orchestra event was twenty minutes late finishing with the black box. We continued the work through from page twenty-five through forty-five. At that point, I gave notes and we took a fifteen-minute break. After break, I had the actors work on a new character analysis sheet while
the prop, light, and costume crews worked in the black box. After crew/character analysis time, we began another work through and hit pages five through twenty-two. Three company members had approved conflicts to leave at 5:00, so from 5:00 to 6:00 we worked on tech again. The lights are seventy percent focused. Junior Samantha Castillo, the lighting designer, had become accustomed to being at the light board and sending her boyfriend (Gilbert Martinez, who is playing Benny) up on the Genie lift to focus. Gilbert is the most experienced student on the lift, so I trust him to operate it while I am on the ground. He was one of those who left early, so with me at the controls Samantha was forced to make her first trip to the black box grid. She was extremely nervous, but very brave.

Monday, April 12

Worked pages twenty-two to forty-one. The lights are all hung and focused except for the scoops that will be used for red and blue washes. For areas created by par cans, they look pretty tight and stop at the waists of the front row of the audience. There are five areas, each with five lights (two front, two back, and one top). There is a warm and cool light from the front and from the back of each area. I am excited to see them with the gels that Samantha cut today.

Tuesday, April 13

Today we worked page forty-one to the end of the show and then the top of the show to page eighteen. Warm ups started late, and I had a heated reaction. The pacing is coming together. There are now even nice moments where the show slows down appropriately. They are really getting and enjoying the humor. We took time to revisit slowly working the fight choreography at the end of the show. When they are at full speed, I think they will look pretty sharp. They seem to have trouble with body control. Specifically, it seems difficult for them to isolate body parts and areas. I have mixed feelings on the lighting gels I chose. I have a wide variety of skin
tone in the cast, so I selected R01 and R4360 for my warm and cool. The African-Americans and the pale Swede look fantastic. The Hispanics and Caucasians look good until they are in a spot that has a little too much cool R. Samantha and I are going to play with that tomorrow during production class.

Wednesday, April 14

During production class Samantha and I discovered that as long as the lights were not at a higher intensity than eighty percent, Hispanics and Caucasians look fine in our gels. In this intimate space the lights should not be hotter than that anyway, even for the effect of noon in the desert. In rehearsal we worked from page eighteen to the end. Warm ups began and ended five minutes early after being corrected yesterday. However, the cast was a bit sleepy, sick, and spacey today. There was a tremendous amount of breaking character and giggling for the first time in this rehearsal process. Everyone except Eleanor took a step backwards today. Perhaps it's a full moon? After warm ups, Gilbert and Ian worked hard on the fight choreography and it is beginning to come together. Tomorrow we are running the show from top to bottom and without line calls for the first time. I am curious to see how that will go.

Thursday, April 15

Gilbert and Ian have made the fight scene the last part of their daily warm up routine and are having fun with it. It may actually end up being the climax of the show that it is written to be. It does not look sharp, but it at least looks safe now. Today was the first full run of the show. The cast was not allowed to call for lines for the first time; the stage manager handed them paper slips with their line notes on them at the end of the rehearsal. There were some stumbles, but only one dead stop. The dead stop only lasted eleven seconds or so. The timing, energy, and intensity were all much better today. Ian Lewis (Phil) is in very real danger of failing French.
Today I had Drake Williams, a production student who was the male lead in the UIL One Act Play, sit in on the rehearsal and write down all of Phil’s blocking. We will find out on Monday if Ian is eligible to be in the play or not. I am really not sweating. Drake is very talented. He filled in for another failing student in my fall show and was a pleasure to watch work. To Ian’s credit, he took a quantum leap forward in the role once he realized why Drake was sitting next to me in the house with a script. I hope it motivates him academically as well.

Friday, April 16

The cast and crew ran the entire show today. I had to pick up my fiancé from the airport, so I missed the first third of the run. Rick Burford started the run and took notes. There was not a huge step forward today other than some good experimentation with voices by Justin (D.W. DeWitt) and José (Jack). The show ran one hour and fifteen minutes, which is approximately what the final performance should run. I accidentally let Ian leave without interrogating him about his French test. Tomorrow we will rehearse from noon to six. Aimee will have students in the Home Economics room sewing. The light, sound, and prop crews will also be working all day.

Saturday, April 17

There were numerous absences today. All were legit, and ninety percent of them were expected. I should have realized what a skeleton crew I would have today. The day was salvaged by putting all available hands on costume duty. The home economics lab was at our disposal, and Aimee kept all of the students busy. I helped Samantha finish her magic sheet and light plot. Kirsten Marshall, sophomore sound designer, finished her sound cue sheet.

Monday, April 19

Ian failed his French test. We found out around 10:00 a.m. This was helpful because
Drake Williams was in our fourth period Production class at 10:15, so he was able to begin rehearsing immediately. During seventh period when Ian has Theatre I, he agreed to come to rehearsal for the rest of this week and lead Drake around and feed him his lines. I think Ian has accepted this turn of events as the learning experience that it is, and is a better person for it. If only he had learned this tough life lesson earlier in the year or even earlier in this production process. I am totally confident that Drake will do a wonderful job. The run through today was very slow to accommodate Drake doing the blocking for the first time. The run did not end until 4:50, so I had the students put away the props and rehearsal skirts. I will begin tomorrow’s rehearsal with today’s notes.

Tuesday, April 20

I must be very tired. I laughed out loud for ten minutes at the stupid diarrhea joke Benny makes at Louise’s expense. The students are tired too. It was a very scatterbrained and unfocused run today. The cast seems to be sliding back to be with Drake instead of pulling him up to where they are. I hope they all get plenty of rest.

Wednesday, April 21

The run was MUCH better today. Great energy and they are playing and experimenting again. Justin (D.W. DeWitt) has been struggling a bit with character. He made a break through today. He came on in his last scene like a freight train and took over. It was really fun to watch.

Drake is off book for the first half of the show. Ian is still doing the honorable thing by showing up to rehearsal and leading Drake around. He is also “shadow feeding” him his lines in the scenes where he needs it. The light and sound cue sheets are being tinkered with daily. The wet tech should be fairly smooth on Saturday. The crew seems well prepared.

Thursday, April 22
Today I am a little worried about props and costume changes. We will not have actual props until Saturday because of the finance office. March and April are big spending months for all of the organizations at Dobie, so the Business Office has to ration the cash flow. We have pretty good rehearsal props for everything. I am worried about the number of quick costume changes this show requires. Luckily, we will have a week to rehearse them.

Friday, April 23

Half of the risers and seats are now in place. It seemed to make the rehearsal a little more formal since the black box now looks like a performance space. The pacing lagged today (run time was a full four minutes longer than yesterday), but the characters and relationships took a quantum leap forward. I got to take some detailed notes. That is always exciting a week from opening.

Saturday, April 24

Today was wet tech. From noon until about 1:05 the cast and crew set up, warmed up, and made some last minute adjustments and preparations. The wet tech lasted until about 5:15 with breaks. We spent about twenty-five minutes on the opening, and then everything else was relatively smooth. At the first break, the stage manager expressed concern about how things were going. This is her first time stage managing, so she was afraid she was doing it wrong since we had to do the opening cues so many times. I assured her that a slow start was par for the course on wet tech rehearsals. The lights and sound added so much depth! I was very pleased with how they looked and sounded. My friend Craig Mertens, who used to be a radio DJ, sent in recordings of the Narrator’s lines and they were fantastic!

Monday, April 26

This morning I found out that due to the TAKS (Texas Assessment of Knowledge and
Skills) testing this week we could not rehearse after 4:30 p.m. This is a horrible thing to find out the Monday of production week. Luckily, the show is running one hour and fifteen to twenty minutes, and rehearsals start at 3:00 p.m. My typed notes will be on the callboard tomorrow, and each student will have to sign by his or her name every time it appears by a note. This week I do not consider putting away set pieces, props, and costumes part of rehearsal time. Those things must all be taken care of after rehearsal and the stage manager will release the students once she is satisfied that all items are stored properly. Thank goodness this show is not a three-hour musical. I might have been fired.

Tuesday, April 27

Today's run went very well. Everything is coming together nicely. I did have a problem with the actors being to slow to get ready to start the dress rehearsal and for wandering into the house after Laura Gutierrez, the sophomore stage manager, had called them to places. Other than that, this dress rehearsal was very smooth. We are still using just a few rehearsal props, but that should no longer be the case tomorrow. The notes from today are posted again. Most of the cast and run crew stayed and initialed by their notes before leaving.

Wednesday, April 28

I was delighted to be able to take some very specific notes again today. We were not really at that point during production week for the first three shows this year. There were, of course, some glitches. For instance, at least one costume was left crumpled on the floor. Tomorrow there will be a check out sheet with the student in charge of costumes. Overall this is a group that is doing an excellent job of concentrating and using common sense to solve problems backstage and onstage. I am very proud of the work they have done, and I am looking forward to putting it in front of an audience. In spite of the best efforts of the TAKS test.
Thursday, April 29

I told the cast before we started today that I do not believe in the old adage of a bad dress rehearsal leading to a good performance. I think that a bad dress rehearsal is simply a sign of a bad dress rehearsal. Today went very smoothly. There were the odd miscues, but everyone stayed focused and in the world of the play. I am used to rehearsal periods that last a week or two longer than what we do here at Dobie, but this company is ready for an audience. I had several actors stay for about thirty minutes after the mandatory 4:30 release and work some specific moments. As I dismissed them, I told them that I was proud for this production to be my thesis and ready to show it off. Like Gene Hackman’s character in The Royal Tannenbaums, as I said it, it occurred to me that it was true.

Self Evaluation

The J. Frank Dobie High School Theatre Department’s production of Epic Proportions was a success as a production in educational theatre. The show highlighted the talents and worked the weaknesses of the students involved. The students are proud of the work they did, and there seems to be a general consensus that this was the most successful production of the season.

One of my goals for the actors was to improve vocal clarity. I think they made huge strides in this area. It helped that this was one of only two shows this year that did not require dialect work and that it was the only show that was in the black box. This allowed the student actors to concentrate on articulation, projection, and good vocal habits without having to fret about filling an auditorium with their voices.

The students also did an excellent job with characterization. I sacrificed precious rehearsal time to have the students write out character analysis work. This was the first
production in which they were required to do so. I think it paid off. Carla Parker, a valued
colleague who was an audience member, commented upon seeing the cast photo from the
production shots that she would have bet money there were twice as many students in the cast as
there actually were. They were successful in creating numerous distinct characters.

The comic timing of the show was strong. They did not always understand how to share
focus, but the final performance is evidence that they did understand the structure and pace of the
humor in the script. If I had it to do over again, I would work to put in even stronger variation in
the pace.

The cast and crew with one exception did an excellent job with time management and
discipline. There were absences, but they were valid. They did an excellent job of not asking to
miss rehearsals for concerts, birthdays, or other unacceptable conflicts. The only student who did
a poor job with time management and discipline did not miss rehearsals; he failed to manage
time to study for his academic classes. The cast and crew sacrificed a great deal of time to make
the production something special.
Epic Proportions
By Larry Coen and David Crane
Written Evaluation of David Crutcher Thesis Production
May 17, 2010

Epic Proportions, a play written by Larry Coen and David Crane, is a slapstick comedy set in the Arizona desert in the 1930's. It was presented at Dobie High School in Houston, Texas and was viewed on May 1, 2010.

The play opened on Broadway in 1999. It featured Jerry Zaks’ direction and Kristen Chenoweth in the leading role of Louise Goldman. The show was presented without intermission and encompassed 85 minutes and 93 performances.

This production was directed by David Crutcher in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in Theatre Production.

Presented in a classroom that doubles as a black box space, Epic Proportions featured a play-within-a-movie format, spoofing both screwball comedies and the Cecil B. DeMille biblical epics of the 1930's. It moved quickly from scene to scene and location to location, and ran approximately 90 minutes sans intermission. Featuring multiple scenes and locations, David smartly opted for a minimalist set, relying mostly upon creative staging, simple and mostly effective costumes, furniture, props, and area lighting to establish location.

With audience seating on about 2 ½ sides of the space, the staging was appropriate for this modified thrust configuration. David created a backstage and some additional entrances by utilizing the curtains (which track 360° if necessary) for the other 1½ sides. The curtains split in several places (center, left center, right center), which helped to expedite ingress and egress of characters, furniture, and props. In addition, there were entrances/exits through a door located in the down right vom as well as a door located behind the audience seating up left.

With twenty par cans, five fresnels and 4 scoops, student Samantha Castillo managed to create multiple environments, good coverage, and even establish time
of day. Costumes were period and character appropriate, props were serviceable, and the hair styles were well-researched and effective. The pre-show music appropriately consisted of music from *Ben Hur* and *The Ten Commandments*.

This was a comedy that depended on broad physical humor: sight gags, slapstick, lots of stage violence and pratfalls, overwrought film acting, etc.. Timing is everything in this brand of comedy, and the enthusiastic high school cast obviously enjoyed themselves in this scenery-eating style of acting. Their effectiveness in grasping the style, though ardent, was more miss than hit. This is to be expected of actors at this stage of development. David countered the cast’s unrefined comic skills with a lot of high jinks reminiscent of *The Three Stooges*.

Brothers Phil and Benny (played by Drake Williams and Gilbert Martinez, respectively) were well-cast and mostly believable. Eleonor Poka, featuring a delightful Swedish accent (she’s from Sweden), held her own throughout and possessed some good comic timing. Justin Thomas was an understated D.W. DeWitt, and Paris Nichols played a suitably self-absorbed, narcissistic Queen. The remaining twenty-four smaller roles were energetically enacted by four actors (Jose Cantu, Olivia Maslonka, Erik Olmos, Bryan Rodriguez).

Overall, there was an excellent group dynamic and energy. They worked well together, and obviously enjoyed the piece and playing off one another. However, focus was not always clear, as background characters periodically (but repeatedly) stole focus from the leads. Perhaps they might have been encouraged to adopt the less-is-more axiom, as more acting is on the whole not better acting. Also, some of the stage combat was borderline dangerous, and would probably not pass muster with George. However, other than a few cringes, I never felt at any time that the actors were in mortal danger.

David made strong use of the space. He bounced the action all around the stage, employed strong diagonals, compelling stage groupings, and a creative use of physical levels. The scene changes were quick and efficient, and the cues were called with a fair level of consistency and continuity. The pre-recorded narration was handled expertly by Craig Mertens. The curtain call was clean and energetic. A pre-show lighting problem was handled with aplomb by the director and TD (co-
worker Amy Small). It held up the show by a good ten minutes, but no one came unglued because of it and the show went on afterwards with nary a glitch.

David managed to create a winning production out of a skimpy script and a rather raw cast. He guided the production with a sure hand, and obviously created an esprit-de-corps that translated into an energetic, mostly amusing romp through Pompeii via Arizona.

Sincerely,

Michael J. Smith
Professor

CC Committee:
Christina Barrigan
George W. Bellah III
NONPROFESSIONAL LICENSE

5/6/2010

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R25
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R3220
Blue Wash 51
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Sub-masters

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Amber R01

Cyan R43600

N.C. Top Light

Cyan R43600

Amber R01

Dobie Black Box Magic Sheet
Lighting Designer: Samantha Castillo
Master Electrician/Director:
David Crutcher
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<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Egyptian 2</td>
<td>Egyptian Tunics</td>
<td>Erik O.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Egyptian 3</td>
<td>Egyptian Tunics</td>
<td>Jose C.</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Dancing Girl</td>
<td>Belly-dancer Outfit</td>
<td>Olivia M.</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Benny</td>
<td>Tunics</td>
<td>Gilbert M.</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Phil</td>
<td>Tunics</td>
<td>Ian L.</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Stagehand 1</td>
<td>Exit Omnious</td>
<td>Jose C.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Stagehand 2</td>
<td>Exit omnious</td>
<td>Erik O.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Stagehand 3</td>
<td>Exit omnious</td>
<td>Olivia M.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Queen</td>
<td>Cleopatra Clothes</td>
<td>Paris N.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Jack</td>
<td>Dress pants, Button down pants</td>
<td>Jose C.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Louise</td>
<td>Same pants, different shirt</td>
<td>Eleonor P.</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Guard 2</td>
<td>Tunics (helmet)</td>
<td>Jose C.</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Attendant</td>
<td>Tunics (many tunics)</td>
<td>Bryan R.</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>The Executioner</td>
<td>Black hood, with cape, enormous axe</td>
<td>Ian L.</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>Shel</td>
<td>Ash and Soot (same)</td>
<td>Erik O.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>Phil</td>
<td>Tunic</td>
<td>Ian L.</td>
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<td>Eleonor P.</td>
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<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>Benny</td>
<td>Shirt, pants</td>
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<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>Dewitt</td>
<td>Silk robe, pajamas, house slippers</td>
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<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>Louise</td>
<td>Egyptian Princess</td>
<td></td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>Queen</td>
<td>Same</td>
<td></td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>Benny</td>
<td>Tunic</td>
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<td>Tunic</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>Extra</td>
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<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>Phil</td>
<td>Director's Clothes</td>
<td></td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>Brady</td>
<td>1930s Clothes</td>
<td></td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>Cochette</td>
<td>Audrey Hepburn wear</td>
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<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>Costume Assistant</td>
<td>Dress pants, pink shirt</td>
<td></td>
<td>28</td>
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<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>Shel</td>
<td>Same</td>
<td></td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td>Louise</td>
<td>Dress, birthday hat</td>
<td></td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td>Brady</td>
<td>Same</td>
<td></td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td>Cochette</td>
<td>Same</td>
<td></td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td>Assistant</td>
<td>Same</td>
<td></td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td>Shel</td>
<td>Same</td>
<td></td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td>Benny</td>
<td>Dress shirt</td>
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</table>

Gilbert M.

Justin T.

Eleonor P.

Paris N.

Bryan R.

Ian L.

Jose C.

Olivia M.

Bryan R.

Erik O.

Eleonor P.

Jose C.

Olivia M.

Bryan R.

Erik O.

Gilbert M.
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Actor</th>
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<td>Bryan</td>
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<td>Black toga w/ belt</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>neckpiece</td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Erik</td>
<td>White toga w/ belt</td>
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<td>Neck piece</td>
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<td>Stagehand shirt</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jose</td>
<td>White toga w/ belt</td>
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<td>Red toga w/ belt</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Black cape</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>neckpiece</td>
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</tr>
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<td>Black pants</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yellow shirt</td>
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<td>Stagehand shirt</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Olivia</td>
<td>White toga</td>
<td></td>
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<td>Stagehand shirt</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Big skirt</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bra</td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Teal jacket</td>
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## Costume Check

**In/Out**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dress w/ jacket</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neckpiece</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Eleonor**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brown pants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blue top</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other top</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isis Top and Bottom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dress</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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**Justin**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pajamas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>robe</td>
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</tbody>
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**Paris**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Purple dress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gold cape</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neckpiece</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belt</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
DOBIE HS THEATRE DEPARTMENT AND THESPIAN TROUPE 1790 PRESENTS

A COMEDY BY LARRY COEN AND DAVID CRANE

EPIC PROPORTIONS

DOBIE HIGH SCHOOL BLACK BOX THEATRE

APRIL 30, MAY 1, 3, & 4TH @ 7:00 PM
MAY 2ND @ 3:00 PM
TICKETS $4 ADVANCE, $5 AT THE DOOR

FOR RESERVATIONS CALL 713-740-0370 EXT.04178
For those new to the theatre experience, here are some reminders on how to behave in a small theatre as well as an auditorium.

- No audience member is allowed backstage. It is for the cast and crew only.
- No Food or Drink in the audience.
- As the house lights dim, talking should stop.
- Please do not put your feet on the seat in front of you even if no one is sitting there, or rock back in your seat, or hang on the rails.
- Arms, legs, and personal items should be kept out of the aisle during the show.
- It is against the law, harmful to the actors, and disruptive to the rest of the audience to take pictures or videotape during the show.
- It is extremely disruptive to leave during the show. If you decide to leave, you will not be able to return to your seat until intermission or until after the show is over.
- If you wish to give cast members flowers, it is customary to wait until after the show and then you can meet with the actor in the hall.

**Upcoming Events:**

*May 6* – Officer Leadership Mtg, @ 2:45 p.m.  
*May 12* – New Officer Election Day @ 2:45 p.m.  
*May 14* – Production Class Auditions  
*May 28* – Banquet/Thespian Inductions @ 6:00
**Cast**

Conspirator #1, Jack, Roman General, Egyptian #3, Guard #2, Brady, Gladiator #1 .......... Jose Cantu

Conspirator #2, Shel, Extra #2, Egyptian #2, Guard #1, Executioner, Gladiator #3 ...... Erik Olmos

Conspirator #3, Extra #3, Egyptian Dancing Girl, Cochette ..................................... Olivia Maslonka

Octavium, Slavemaster, Extra #1, Egyptian #1, Queen's Attendant, Gladiator #2 .......... Bryan Rodriguez

Louise Goldman............................... Eleonor Poka

Benny Bennet................................. Gilbert Martinez*

Phil Bennet................................. Drake Williams*

The Queen..................................... Paris Nichols

D. W. DeWitt................................. Justin Thomas*

Narrated by Craig Mertens

**Production Staff**

Director ........................................... David F. Crutcher, Jr.
Technical Director .................. Aimee Small
Stage Manager ......................... Laura Gutierrez
Asst. Stage Manager ......... Brittney Staude*
Light Designer/Board Operator Samantha Castillo*
Sound Designer/Board Operator Kirsten Marshall*
Props Manager ...................... Katie Posey*
Costume/Hair/Makeup ........ Chelsea Graham
Publicity Manager ............. Elisa Gomez

**2009-2010 Officer Board**

President .................. Rebecca Reyes*
Vice President ........ Gilbert Martinez*
Secretary ........... Theresa Greene*
Business Manager ....... Chris Nickelson*
Publicity Manager ........ Samantha Castillo*
Historian .............. Kirsten Marshall*
Points Manager ........ Katie Posey*

**Special Thanks To:**
Rick Burford, Jane Dimico, Verna Anderson, Craig Mertens, Michael Smith, Christina Barrigan, and George Bella, III

This show serves as the director's thesis project. Upon completion of a successful oral defense of this production and coursework, Mr. Crutcher will be awarded a Master of Arts in Theatre Production from Central Washington University in Ellensburg, Washington.

*Denotes members of the International Thespian Society
Epic Proportions.