

Almost Siberia

by

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Present

Lovely – in her early thirties – all dressed up in her power suit

Diane - Lovely's sister, late twenties – style like street hip

Hugo – thirties, stiff &/or harried- in a white lab coat/ tie – he does NOT have an accent

various characters that must be played by one actor

The days in the hospital vary; freezing cold, burning up hot – according to central climate control.

Scene One an office
no need to build it
Speech starts in the dark

Lovely. Deprivation, exile, Russia, with nothing but what they could carry on their backs . Oh the tundra. Spend a winter there. That's when living starts - Potatoes - out of dirt, mushrooms - dirt, fish, lake, grub and LIVE LIKE THAT, - Yes we will get *all* of that. It's fire and ice baby. (hangs up) Sentimental bastard.

Diane. Wow Lovely, I never saw your office before, it's so cool. Look at that view.

Lovely. That skinny girl undressing on the 6th floor?

Diane. No, really, thanks for calling. I just don't -

Lovely. That's enough. You're my sister. I probably owe you. From the last project. Do I?

Diane. Well that one check bounced but...

Lovely. What took you so long?

Diane. I had to stop at the Y for a shower.

Lovely. Diane...

Diane. Yes?

Lovely. Do you know what the fastest growing demographic of our time is?

Diane. Chinatown.

Lovely. Old people. Do you know what old people are interested in?

Diane. Bingo?

Lovely. Themselves! Every last bloody one of them wants to be immortalized. Tick tock. Are you ready?

Diane. You betcha baby.

Lovely. It's a total gimme. Pack the camera case. Missouri.

Diane. Missouri?

Lovely. Loves company. Here we come.

Diane. Missouri!

Scene two Hospital corridor - Day One

Closed doors with charts on them. One has a red light above it.

wheelchairs, gurneys, deathly old people & sick people being carted back and forth by Hugo. Lovely checks charts while she talks.

Lovely ... nobody has any feeling anymore for how hard life used to be. You agree?....Yeah....Everybody's soft! You know that Paul Simon song? Soft in the middle? Everybody's so fucking soft! We should all be deprived - exiled. rotten potatoes wild mushrooms and fucking fish, you know drop a hook into a frozen lake, Hey you, excuse me, Doctor.

Hugo. (whirls) How did you know my name?

Diane. The coat...?

Hugo. Stand aside! Don't block the aisles!

Lovely. Okay... we're looking for a Mr....uhh....Djugvashivlli (she mangles his name each time)

Diane. Djvugshili. (another mangle)

Lovely. The old Russian guy. He's a patient here.

Hugo. Never heard of him. (he exits with his cargo)

Lovely. Stupid bastard.

Diane. What a strange little hospital this is. Everyone is so sick. And what is that swamp out there?

Lovely. Oh tundra. Who knows.

Diane. Well it smells.

Lovely. Put the camera on me for a minute. (in a fake Russian accent)
Siberia, 50 hours from Moscow, a vast expanse of frozen tundra,

Diane. Larger than Canada.

Lovely. A land where deprivation and riches co-exist, side by side. Where the mighty tiger is threatened to extinction. And the ghosts of 2 million exiles hover over the pristine and polluted plains.

Diane. Pristine *and* polluted?

Lovely. Are you a literalist? This is cinema verite.

Diane. And this is Missouri and co-exist side by side, is redundant.

Lovely. Okay, listen to this: From Exile to Eternity.

Diane. I'm sorry...what?

Lovely. The title of my doc – From Exile to Eternity. (pause) Remind me, the next time I decide to confide in you, to share creative germs, remind me that it's a really shitty idea.

Diane. Creative germs?

Lovely. Germinations!

Diane. No, I just...

Lovely. The soul. The destruction of the soul...it's when you stop feeling.

Diane. Stop feeling what?

Lovely. Anything.

Diane. I hate it when people stop feeling

Lovely. Compassion. Compassion is the grease.

Diane. And money.

Lovely. Soul soul soul means...what does it mean? You have one, you tell me.

Diane. It's one of those words,...I never really got...

Lovely. The definition of soul...okay... the force the essence uhhhh... the water. Yes the water that waters your belief in your own existence. It's the water.

Diane. Wow.

Lovely. You like?

Diane. I'm still thinking about it.

Lovely. Did you know that water feels? They've done experiments. It gets all freaked out and sad when it hears Heavy Metal or the word Hitler.

Diane. How long do you think this will take?

Lovely. To make a 5 minute video? 5 minutes.

Diane. Cause I gotta get back and get my nails done.

Lovely. It must be so reassuring to have something to believe in.

Diane . Other than the ozone you mean?

Lovely. Yes other than the ozone.

Hugo enters pushing a gurney with someone on it, his feet are sticking out.

Hugo. Careful! Stand aside! Don't touch!

Gurney: (groan)

Hugo. We've had enough of your noise.

Gurney. (groan)

Hugo. Anymore of that & you know what.

Diane. Is that him?

Lovely. (peers close) Mr. Djhugasvili?

Hugo. Get away! Step back.

Diane. Is that him?

Lovely. (reads chart) Wally Bildo. Dammit.

Gurney groans.

Lovely. Where are the doctors & nurses around here?

Hugo. I am the health care professional. You have a requisition?

Lovely. This patient seems to be in pain.

Hugo. I would imagine.

(pause)

Diane. Can we get any lattés from the cafeteria?

Hugo. Who are you?

Diane. I'm Diane and this is Lovely. We are also professionals in our field.
Give him the resumes Lovely.

Gurney . My feet. My feet.

Hugo. Shut up, you.

Lovely. What's wrong with him?

Hugo. Penile implant.

Lovely. Look, Buster, we've been waiting here for 10 minutes. We have a plane to catch in an hour. Where is Mr. Djughasshilivi.

Hugo. Who?

Lovely. Don't make me say it again.

*Gurney groans. Hugo pulls a plug that seems to be attached to him. A short alarm.
Then silence.*

Hugo. What were you saying?

(pause)

Diane. We're doing a video on Mr. Djugvilli for the family.

Hugo. Jug villy?

Lovely. Not just a video. Something autre.

Hugo. Autre?

Diane. Panache.

Lovely. Perhaps you saw the work we did on the glue kids in the playground?

Diane. I thought gas.

Lovely. Glue.

Diane. Dazzled the independent world.

Hugo. I'm afraid I am not familiar with the independent world.

Diane. Ummm is this guy on the gurney gone now?

Hugo. It would appear.

Lovely. Wow, missed it. (pause) Look I want this to be a mutually agreeable experience young man.

Diane. Don't worry sweetheart, she calls everyone that.

the red light over Mr. Djvugashvili's door blinks

Hugo. Excuse me. (he goes in)

Lovely. Jesus Christ.

Diane. He is so gorgeous.

Lovely. Are you kidding? He's a total Nazi!

Diane. Liam Neeson but shorter.

Lovely. We are in a professional environment here!

Diane. Twice removed.

Lovely. Once. Once removed.

Diane. Oh back off.

Lovely. You can't be serious. Suddenly the whole project feels compromised. Don't you realize what's at stake here?

Diane. Well, yeah, 700 bucks but...

Lovely. You are so about the money.

Diane. And you're not?

Lovely. Well, for some of us...there are other values, I wouldn't say higher, but other. Other values.

Diane. Of course it's not totally about the money. But it's always *about* the money, even if there *is* no money involved. Then it's quite about the money. But when money is involved, then it's also about the money. It's intrinsic.

Lovely. This materialism thing you're on. I would ask myself, are these the values you want to raise a child with?

Diane. Oh that was low.

Lovely. Well.

Diane. I just think he's gorgeous.

Lovely. Besides he's much more a young John Malkovich.

Diane. The Ogre!

Hugo returns.

Lovely. That's him isn't it. How do we get in there?

Diane. Bottom line.

Lovely. With our equipment.

Hugo. Sensitive. Difficult.

Lovely. Give him our resumes Diane. (a DVD)

Diane. See?

Lovely. What's your name, Doctor?

Hugo. I am Hugo.

Lovely. Ah Hugo. Do you know that even as we speak people are rewriting history? Denying wars, murders, whole holocausts. It's very important that we get in there

Diane. And record Mr. Djguhas vills story.

Hugo. Oh pretty dull beans.

Lovely. Of course it's dull beans! But we're talking about a survivor here! Deprivation!

Diane. I bet you've never even been to Russia.

Hugo. Oh, once. Patricia.

Lovely. Who's Patricia?

Hugo. How do you know Patricia?

Lovely. I don't.

Hugo. But that was before.

Lovely. Before what?

Hugo taps his ring finger.

Lovely. Before you got married?

Hugo signals no, no, tapping his finger.

Lovely. I don't follow.

Hugo. FINANCIER.

Lovely. Financier? Handles your money?

Hugo. NO, OTHER THINGS.

Lovely. Oh! Fiancee!

Hugo. Just so. Engaged.

Diane. I heard this really crazy story that rape is legal in Russia...they drink...they beat their wives.

Hugo. You cannot understand Russia with the mind. Russia just is.

Lovely. Not *every* day of course. What Diane is saying is we have standards. But in their world...

Hugo exits.

Lovely. You have a really stupid habit, Diane, of saying whatever comes into your mind. Rape. I want you to stop. Filter. Put a filter on. Try. Try to not be stupid.

Diane. You don't believe in male chauvinism?

Lovely. The notion of male chauvinism was concocted...

Diane. Con cocted...

Lovely. In modern society...As a way of explaining - why men who have been deprived of ... war

Diane. Kill each other on the soccer field.

Lovely. Exactly! ...& even must learn to *cook* and exhibit *table manners* and show gratitude, and even converse... all these things, that have nothing to do with survival. This puts man at a disadvantage, -- his normal instincts that formerly kept the human race alive, are now being used against him - accusations of: aggression! chauvinism! Tyranny!

Diane. Darling be careful - you cannot buck hysteria.

Lovely. Male chauvinism as a concept, an ideological concept was invented when the word was invented. The word gave it life. You get it?

Diane. So you're okay with male chauvinism.

Lovely. No I'm saying the word gave it life. Like I could invent a word right now, a word like...

Diane. Kulak.

Lovely. Kulak. And it means... it means when ... oh I don't know...something...loving your car more than you love your wife, or your kid. And maybe some people do that, you know a shiny little beemer on one hand and a pasty lumpy nag of a wife on the other, well nobody thinks a damn thing about it, except when the word comes, then the issue, the cause is created. Oh he's a kulak and people frown and cluck, they want to change you, cure you, punish you for being a kulak. But

Diane. Yeah like your MGB

Lovely. Pain in the ass though to keep it going.

Diane. You had the sports car, what did I get?

Lovely. The nose job.

Diane. Oh the nose job, thanks Dad.

Lovely. You can still blow it.

enter Hugo w/ a plate of food.

Hugo. Here. Taste this.

Diane. What is it?

Hugo. Chicken fracas.

she tastes it

Diane. Not bad.

Lovely. Are you crazy?

Diane. What?

Hugo takes the food into the red light room.

Lovely. You know how many calories in that breadding?

Diane. Oh really.

Lovely. This is a hospital.

Diane. So?

Lovely. You don't eat chicken in hospitals.

Diane. But I'm hungry.

Lovely. It's a hospital! Check the equipment and I'll call in.

Lovely gets her cell phone out. Tries to make a call. Fails.

Lovely. And great. Of course. We're out of range. Typical.

Diane's cell phone rings. Lovely grabs hers...Wrong phone.

Lovely. Hello? Hello? Who is this? I ...I can't hear you...Speak up!

Diane. Hello? ... Who? Oh. The National Post. ... that was 2 months ago, I don't remember the details... we're into uncharterable territory right now... you'll see... fire and ice. (hangs up) Fucking media.

Lovely. Your cell phone works.

Diane. Apparently.

Lovely. How come, how come yours works and mine doesn't?

Diane. Have you paid your bill yet?

Lovely. YES. Have you?

Diane. No, but I'm on a new plan.

Hugo comes back, his hair & clothing are completely dishevelled.

Hugo. Rectify! (pause) What does it mean?!

Diane. Mean? What does rectify mean? Well...

Hugo. Not you. The smart one.

Lovely. It means...fix a mistake.

Hugo. Not a disease?

Lovely. Disease? Good god.

he goes back into the room

Diane. The smart one.

Lovely. You know I really considered, came very close to doing this whole project alone.

Diane. Alone? Without the subject?

Lovely. Without the *assistant*.

Diane. What assistant?

Lovely. YOU

Diane. I'm your sister! I'm not an assistant. I am exactly one half of the creative team here.

Lovely. There are no teams.

Diane. No teams? Then I better check my lipstick.

Lovely. But I realized that I had a chance here, to catapult not only one career, but two.

Diane. Empty pockets.

Lovely. Exactly.

Diane. Money is your best friend.

Lovely. Need I say more?

Diane. I guess you want gratitude now.

Lovely. I do not want gratitude. Gratitude is a sickness.¹

Diane. NO, *I have* to thank you. I was raised that way.

Lovely. You do not have to thank me.

Diane. Apparently I do.

Lovely. Well just don't!

Diane. Thanks. There. Was that so hard? Being at a low point.

Lovely. Well, me too for that matter. Me too.

Diane. Beyond low.

¹ attributed to Stalin

Lovely. Oh tell me about it! My bank account, is 6 grand over drawn. All my credit cards are maxed out. So this opportunity is – rather critical I would say. Oh, it can be so elusive, the good life – I was only reacting out of – okay, maybe a little bit of envy? – because I had the opportunity, I did have the opportunity of getting – well, I chose not to and sometimes I wonder did I make the right choice, so there is some understandable, bitterness; it doesn't matter, I And I feel really confident that we will get some footage here – knock their fucking socks off. And this is only the beginning, my girl, It's all so damn hard. We have to break free, break through on so many levels, those doors that refuse to open.

Diane. And I was so impressed working with you on those gas sniffers in the playground.

Lovely. Really? Because that was not actually all that well received.

Diane. I know. The Globe & Mail: immoral, irresponsible, heartless

Lovely. Well I didn't put the little sniffers there!

Diane. I'm on your side babe. Your job is not to *have* a heart, it is in fact to *not* have a heart. Anyone with a heart might have intervened, ruined the shot. Detachment. Bingo.

Lovely. (pause) Is the light meter plugged in?

enter Hugo from the room w/o the plate..

Hugo. Rectified.

Diane. Where's my chicken fracas?

Hugo. That was not your chicken fracas.

Diane. But I tasted it.

Hugo. For the poison.

Lovely. Hey Hugo, do you remember WW2? (she says this as it's written)

Hugo. W, W, 2?

Lovely. The war, man. The war.

Hugo. (pause) College graduate, correct?

Lovely. A few courses.

Hugo. I could have gone. I would have gone. But too many desiccations.

Lovely. Just answer the question.

Hugo. I remember W.W. 2. & 1. & 3!

Lovely. Who won?

(pause)

Hugo. We won. Or we should have.

Diane. Ask him something harder Lovely.

Lovely. Okay - by how much?

Hugo. I see.

Lovely. Do you see, finally?

Hugo. A beautiful paradox.

Diane. Tick tock.

Hugo. You know even if it were - oh some terrific dictator in there

Lovely. If only...

Hugo. Unless you were the subsequent of kin...

Lovely. Subsequent of kin, like...

Diane. As in...daughter or...

Lovely. Wife or ?

Hugo. Mother?

Diane. We are filmmakers! This must count for something!

Hugo. Nothing.

Lovely. But wait - we are!

Diane. What?

Lovely. I'm so dumb...I forgot. The next of kin. Tony's gone. Aunt Melva got run over by a bus. Cousin Frankie o'dee'd. It's us.

Diane. (catching on) Oh Daddy!

Lovely. Daddy's dead. It's Uncle!

Diane. Uncle!

Lovely. Joe. Uncle Joe.

Hugo. The worm squirms. So you two inquisitorials are the subsequent of kin?

Lovely. Inquisitorials?

Diane. That's us!

Hugo. I must wonder now what took you so long?

Lovely. Diane had to wash her hair.

Diane. I'm really nasty when my hair is dirty.

Hugo. I see a resemblance. Around the ears. (he looks at them) So. You are getting paid for this? For the last dying words from your very own subsequent of kin?

Lovely. I wonder if you could manage the phrase 'next of kin'...hmmm?

Diane. Anyway it's still art.

Lovely. Capische? And art without money is like

Diane. Sex without orgasm.

Hugo. And what makes you think your Uncle will expose to you?

Lovely. Oh we have ways to make people talk.

Diane. She's a kidder.

Hugo. Look at you. What life. You are such happy girls aren't you?

Lovely. Hey buddy - don't call us girls.

Diane. And don't - call us happy.

Hugo. May I see your papers?

(pause)

Lovely. What papers?

Hugo. Passport? Drivers License? Pulmonary Identification.

Lovely & Diane give him their drivers' licenses.

Hugo. Different names.

Lovely. I'm married.

Diane. Unfortunately.

Lovely. & she's not.

Diane. Fortunately.

Hugo. 129 pounds?

Lovely. Come on Hugo, get with the program.

Diane. We'll be quick as bunnies.

Lovely. There might even be a little something in it for you.

Hugo. You think because he's old, all the eggs are gone.

Diane. Yes, exactly. Pudding people.

Lovely. What eggs?

Hugo. Edges! And that there are no dangers! (pause) I'll see what I can accomplish.

Hugo exits.

Lovely. We are in!

Diane. Don't keep making him mad Lovely.

Lovely. What do you mean?

Diane. Don't correct his vocabulary. People hate that.

Lovely. It's like asking for a turnip & getting a carrot. Situations require exactitude.

Diane. Oh shut up. Have you got any deodorant?

Lovely. In my purse.

Diane. What is this?

Lovely. What? Are you in my props bag?

Diane. I was looking for the deodorant.

Lovely. Well, that's my props bag not my purse.

Diane. But what is it?

Lovely. What does it look like?

Diane. It looks like...what it is... . a pigeon.

Lovely. And?

Diane. I don't understand.

Lovely. What don't you understand.

Diane. I'm just...confused.

Lovely. Why?

Diane. It confuses me. I don't...I wonder...what...I mean...here – if you stand in my shoes for a minute, all the way out *here*. It seems we're a million miles from nowhere, and I'm ... closeted...secreted away. No one even knows where I am. Suddenly I find out there are no teams and you have a pigeon.

Lovely. It's a prop.

Diane. A prop?

Lovely. For the film.

Diane. How did you get it on the plane? There are regulations, I mean.

Lovely. It was in my checked baggage.

Diane Oh your checked baggage.

Lovely. Are you saying - you're not saying you're afraid of it?

Diane. It's not a question of ... fear.

Lovely. What then?

Diane. Well I don't have one. And you do. That seems lopsided. One sided.

Lovely. You don't trust me then. You think I might use it?

Diane. I didn't think along those lines, per se. I saw a pigeon. And I felt...vulnerable. That's the word.

Lovely. Even though I tell you , it's a prop.

Diane. For what? How is it a prop?

Lovely. For the film. The hook.

Diane. You have a hook?

Lovely. Of course.

Diane. So you must have a script? I thought – this was meant to be –
ad hoc. Spontaneous.

Lovely. I didn't say I had a script. I said I had a hook. An idea of a hook.
The pigeon, is flying in the air,

Diane. A bit too Hitchcock for me.

Lovely. I'm talking one pigeon, not a whole damn flock

Diane. Besides this pigeon is inert. this pigeon no fly no where.

Lovely. Okay, roosting. on a branch or a ledge and suddenly, out of
nowhere comes -

Diane. A gun

Lovely. A gun?

Diane. (takes a gun out of her purse)

Lovely. You have a gun.

Diane. I do.

Lovely. How did you get it on the plane?

Diane. Same way you got the pigeon.

Lovely. So you have bullets?

Diane. Yes I have bullets.

Lovely. I see.

Diane. Problem?

Lovely. No, no...so the gun goes off.

Diane. It goes off.

Lovely. And...then what.

Diane. We see birds.

Lovely. Birds.

Diane. Birds... birds flying. Flying south. The gun goes off and we see birds.

Lovely. And a bird drops!

Diane. Not a bird, your pigeon!

Lovely. So the hook is ... a hunter. Shooting pigeons?

Diane. No, wait! That's it. We hear a shot; we *expect* to see a bird drop. But we don't. The birds flap. They react, yes, they react, flap and swerve in the opposite direction and then we see...

Lovely. What?

Diane. Blood. (pause) on a face.

Lovely. Splattered blood, the splattered up blood, of Mr. Djugvillie.

Diane. No no, can't kill Mr. Djugvillie in the hook. It's an execution. Siberia-style.

Lovely. Yes. An execution, someone has been executed. (pause)

Diane. And we don't know who.

Lovely. It doesn't matter who. The tragedy of the nameless victim. Well?

Diane. I like it.

Lovely. I have goose pimples.

Diane. A bit complicated. To execute.

Lovely. Simple shot. A face without expression, staring down, droplets of fake blood, red dye and the blood tells the story.

Diane. Yes. So. The execution. Who is... the Victim again?

Lovely. Don't worry about the victim. It's not the victim's story. It's the executioner's.

Diane. I don't feel so good.

Lovely. What's the matter?

Diane. My stomach. That chicken.

Lovely. I told you.

Diane. I'm gonna puke.

Lovely. So puke.

(she does)

Lovely. (through the door) Mr. Djugasvili? Can you hear me?

(she pukes again)

Lovely. Mr. Uncle Joe, can you talk? I just want you to know that I am so much in awe of your life *force*. We both are. But me more. We are your nieces remember us? We used to sit on your lap. Let us in.

Diane. That's better.

Lovely. Wipe your mouth.

Diane. (wipes her mouth) I'm okay. Are you gonna hug?

Lovely. A stranger in catheters?

Diane. That's our uncle.

Lovely. No, he's not. Mr. Uncle Joe would you turn the red light on so we can come in?

Diane. Pretty please?

Lovely. Mr. Uncle Joe think of us as your immortality. (pause)
Nobody has feeling for how hard life used to be. Everybody's soft! We need to be reminded of the terrible things. We've got this great hook and now we just need a little cooperation from you. Money is at stake here, sweetheart.

Diane. Hellooo, Mr. Jug Villy. Anyone home?

Lovely. Are you trapped in there? Has that weird doctor got you trapped in there? Answer.

Hugo returns

Hugo. May I have your footwear?

Lovely. What?

Hugo. Your footwear.

Diane. Why?

Hugo. That word. You know it.

Diane. Security?

Hugo. EXACTLY.

Lovely. No you cannot have our foot wear. *Or* our shoes. These are fifty dollar Cloudwalkers. Worse than the bloody airport.

Diane. Security Lovely. Give him your shoes.

Lovely. The girl without a mind of her own.

Diane. You can't buck the machine Lovely. Here.

They remove their shoes and Hugo takes them.

Hugo. Still warm. As a summer day. But not for long.

Lovely. I want a receipt, Mister.

Hugo exits

Diane. (pause) Damn the floor is cold. Like a morgue in here.

Lovely pulls the pillow out from under the head of the body on the gurney. She puts her feet on it.

Diane. Lovely!

Lovely. He's not missing it. (pause)

Diane. Who did your feet?

Lovely. Madame Letitia, why?

Diane. Nice.

Lovely. We need some ground rules here. About my working methodology. three things. Detachment.

Diane. Easier than it sounds.

Lovely. Just pretend that you are in the movies. Sad and funny with overpriced popcorn.

Diane. What are you going to do w/ the money?

Lovely. Depends. My hair. You?

Diane. I need a new bathing suit.

(pause)

Lovely. How long have you had that gun Diane?

Diane. Not very.

Lovely. Your stomach okay now?

Diane. Yep. So detachment.

Lovely. Detachment.

Diane. Easy for you to say but that's someone's flesh and blood lying in there.

Lovely. Don't tell me flesh and blood. I know all about flesh and blood.

Diane. Do you? I never noticed you around when Mummy was getting her tits done. Talk about flesh and blood.

Lovely. My air miles card...

Diane. Now that's cold.

Lovely. Oh don't load it up with your own agenda. I hate it when people do that. It only means what it is.

Diane. Lovely, did you bring any mouthwash?

Lovely. We're looking for freedom. Of expression. And I, as director, if I stay - detached then our subject will have the freedom - to 'go there'. We can't all go there, you get me? This is not a freedom fest all over the place. Restraints apply.

enter Hugo doing something - slapping w/ a stick - a gurney patient's foot

Hugo. (to the gurney) Look at us. WE walk. Our legs tell our brains I am going for walk. But you. You. You lie there. Tired. Yesterday I had an epiphany. Listen! Your lungs are gasping for air, your legs are screaming, like being pulled along by a moving car - but I have discovered the way the mind can control the body - speed, energy - other categories of muscle or physical effort. And w/ my new epiphany I did it! Counting! Faster & faster! Why? I don't know exactly...but it worked. My counting controlled my body! The faster you count the faster your legs will move. left right ...left right...one and two and three and four and left, one, and *and*, right, two, left and *and* right...Count! Count! Walk! Faster!

Lovely. God almighty what are you doing Hugo?

Hugo. Stress test!

Diane is filming.

Diane. Could you step out of the frame please, Hugo? I love this, it's so real almost. Straight out of Deliverance.

Hugo. What is that smell?

Lovely. I don't know. It's Diane. Are you on the rag?

Diane. Are you?

Lovely. None of your business!

Diane. God it's cold in here, like the bloody Arctic. Can you turn the air conditioner off Hugo?

Hugo. Out of my control. The air conditioner is run by the central central...there is a word...

Lovely. Climate control?

Hugo. Yes! Climax control!

Diane. (to Lovely) Shut up.

Lovely. Lovely, climax control. Ummm....when is Mr. Djugavilis' gonna wake up & ding a ling on his little red light there?

Hugo. I am not at liberty to divulge.

the dog barks (the dog is guarding the hospital)

Lovely. (yelling after him) Because I do/

Hugo. Someone comes.

Hugo exits

Lovely. /have a 5 week plan here which is about to expire! (he's gone)
Not to mention we have a dead line.

Diane pulls a blanket off a patient & wraps herself up in it.

Diane. Dead line?

Lovely. He's 90 something years old, do the math.

Diane. I can't figure why people would pay to hear Mr Jug Villy's dying words. Like what's he gonna say?

Lovely. They don't pay for the words, they pay to relieve their guilty consciences. Remember the gravestone photographs? I made a killing.

Ping. The Red Light lights up.

Lovely. There we go. Lights Camera - Hugo! Hugo!

Hugo comes in with an old crone.

Old woman. They give you a check in the supermarket for a box of things what you used to pay 35 cents, now costs 65 cents. What can you do?

Lovely. Hey Hugo, look! The red light is on, let's get in there.

Hugo looks at the light.

Hugo. Ahhh. It is the moment in time.

Old woman. When they keep the money in packages, the mouse eats up the money. Now they keep the money in the register.

Lovely. Diane are you ready? Are you set up?

Hugo is meticulously combing his hair.

Diane. I'm getting set up, relax. I'm getting.

Lovely. Everybody's so fucking soft!

Diane. (singing) Rest of my life is so hard, where's my wife and family, who'll be my role models...

Old woman. The green beans, everything chopped up I throw it out my window to the dog.

Lovely. Diannnnne...

Diane. I'm moving as fast as I cannnnn.

Lovely. Where is the samovar?

Diane. What samovar?

Lovely. The Samovar. (pause) you didn't bring the samovar? We need atmosphere. We need a set.

Diane. Angels in the architecture...

Old woman. The dog comes every day. Morning and night. But every day a different dog! Everyday the dog from before dies!

Hugo. (to the Old woman) All this time he thought no one cared about the dog!

Lovely. (narrating) It is dry. An airless wind blows across the plain. In the distance tiny people, rags on their feet and their noses bitten, scarred from the cold, collapsed from syphilis. No one is smiling.

Diane. (helping) This is a truly terrible place.

Lovely. Little Josef! Do you not know me? They all scowl.

Diane. Roly poly little bat faced girl

Old woman.. Maybe he had 2000 dollar. So he lent twenty dollar for three months he'd get ten dollar more, he'd get thirty dollar.

Lovely. Monkeys. Monkey faces. Some one screams. Scarves flutter around their heads. Proud heads. And Uncle Joe's hands are tied behind his back Suddenly he is being lifted up, up onto a platform, a fire is lit. They are burning his body! Burning him alive! But unbelievably he escapes. Such are the terrors. And then a voice, the voice of his sister:

Old woman. Josef! Josef! Josef!

Lovely. Who the hell is this?

Hugo. The subsequent of -

Lovely. Shut up.

Hugo. *True* subsequent of kin!

Old woman. And she had to drive with a man what to drive the horses, she goes with four horses. And with four horses there was a man who takes care of them.

Lovely. Hold your bippy here baby.

Old woman. Only she wouldn't sit all alone in the back and go with the man, she takes me for a ride, I should sit near her. It was such a beautiful game, I was so independent when I went with that rich lady.

Hugo. The hypocrisy of the registry! You two, I will confound later. (to the woman) Step up! (into the red light room)

Diane. No way she's stepping up! *We* are stepping up! *We* are the next of kin!

Hugo. Step down! Are you suggesting this woman is an imposer?

Lovely. Total.

Hugo. Provide evidence!

Lovely. Well get her drivers license, like you did us.

Diane. Yeah.

Hugo. Yes of course. Old crone! Driver's License. Now!

Old woman. (bolting to the red light door) News from home Josef! Josef! - There are bluebirds.

Lovely. See? She doesn't have one.

Hugo. I will not suffer duplexity.

Lovely. Duplexity?

Hugo. THAT WORD FOR WHEN YOU ARE LYING.

Lovely. Oh that word.

Hugo. Not one iota of that word.

Lovely. Just get rid of her. We have a dead line here man.

Old woman. I'd only hold the money. I wouldn't eat up the money, you understand what I mean?

Diane. Shoo.

Old woman. (as Hugo grabs her around the neck) You want your daughter should go with a boyfriend. Only the boyfriend is no good. No good! So much beer, the beer has to be drank up. You know who drank the beer? The generals drank the beer, all the soldiers. In a uniform with a golden stick.

Hugo grabs ahold of the old crone by the throat and manhandles her, screaming, out the door.

Lovely. (a pause) So where was I?

Diane. The terrors he lived through.

Lovely. Of course, respecting, of course honouring of course acknowledging the sanctity of the umm the ummm....

Diane. Soul? Life? (pause) Bluebirds?

a pause

Lovely. You know that was very strange indeed.

Diane. What?

Lovely. That Old woman.

Diane. I didn't notice anything too weird.

Lovely. Oh.

the red light turns off

enter Hugo. Thank you. She has been taken care of. I am (he searches for the word)

Lovely. Grateful?

Hugo. NO.

Diane. Indebted?

Hugo. NEVER THAT. I AM I AM...

Lovely. Whatever. Let's get in there.

Hugo. He will signal.

Lovely. He just did.

Hugo. I do not see it.

Lovely. Well he did!

Hugo. And he will again.

Lovely. Don't you think your patient inside needs attending? He might be in pain.

Hugo. Pain. I would imagine. Though one can never truly *gauge*... (every time he nails a word, or thinks he has, he is in raptures w/ himself)

Diane. Gauge or no gauge...he might need to go to the bathroom.

Hugo. I do not enter w/o a signal.

Diane. He might be freezing to death, like I am!

Lovely. Who is your supervisor?

Hugo. Supervisor?

Lovely. You know.

Hugo. I am my own supervisor.

Lovely. Nice little operation you got going here. What is it - the Gulag Archipelago health care system?

Diane. Huh?

Lovely. Solzhenitsyn - the subtitles killed him.

Hugo. Would you like to put a complaint to the Central Committee?

Lovely. No. I don't want to put a complaint, I want to get my 5 minute movie made and get the hell out of here. I don't have all bloody day. By the way has it occurred to you that, that old man you have locked away in there, might be dead?

Diane. Not to mention the chicken fracas.

Hugo. Fricasee.

the red light comes on. Lovely rushes at the doorknob. But the light goes off, and the door knob is locked.

Lovely. Shit.

Hugo. See? Not dead. Not at all. Not even a little bit dead.

Diane. I mean, no really, how long do you expect us to wait. Honestly. Don't you have a key?

Lovely. Or are you of such minor significance?

Hugo. I have a key.

Diane. Liar. You don't even have a key.

Hugo. I have a key.

Lovely. Then go in there. Or are you afraid of something?

Hugo. What do you know about fear?

Lovely. Try us.

Hugo. My girls -

Lovely. We are not your girls –

Hugo. It would be beyond your sphere of condescension.

Diane. Spiders. Eating in a restaurant by myself. Getting fat.

Lovely. Wait a minute, I know where Hugo is coming from.

Diane. He's just getting all pompous on us cause he's got this shitty job. At least you *got* a pay check baby. I haven't had a pay check in 2 years.

Lovely. Diane, tell me everything you know about Siberia.

Diane. Siberia?

Lovely. Work with me here.

Diane. Well I saw the movie...but the movie took place in Amsterdam.

Hugo. Patricia!

Lovely. Spit. Don't think, just go.

Diane. Okay. It's in Russia.

Lovely. Yep yep yep come on come on

Diane. Umm, umm

LOVELY. Stop thinking! Let it come!

Diane. Communism, right? Cold, it's cold, a lot of prisoners there, ummm, guards, prisoners, mosquitoes, bugs, men in long wool coats

Lovely. Caves? Root cellars?

Diane. Sure, – rats, poverty, disease, ...

Lovely. I'm seeing, I'm seeing.... 5, 6 people all sharing the same filthy bed, I see sewage in the streets, syphilis, lust, treachery

Diane. Elves with darts...

Lovely. Elves with darts?

Diane. That is how disease is spread my sweetie. Elves with darts. Every Dark Age theorist knows this.

Lovely. Interrogations. Torture.

Diane. Rape. Executions. Bears -

Lovely. Or is it something else Hugo? Something less tangible? Your own insecurities? Your little vocabulary problem? Or maybe you are simply afraid of success? Come on. We're waiting. (pause) Once you've named your fear, you'll find that it disappears, poof, like an old Jew in the night.

Hugo. Siberia.

Lovely. There you go.

Hugo. And the summers, (pause) so short. The pretty blossoms growing 3 inches a day when the sun shines, just to reach bloom in time. But what a sun.

Lovely. Hugo, is the sun shining now?

Hugo unlocks the room and goes in.

pause

Diane. Good work baby. When is the plane again?

Lovely. Nine.

Diane. And we'll be done before then?

Lovely. How long do you think it takes to film a five minute short?

Diane. Five minutes.

Lovely. Okay, go shoot the opening sequence.

Diane. The pigeon?

Lovely. Yes the pigeon.

Diane. Outside?

Lovely. Of course outside.

Diane. By myself?

Lovely. Yes by yourself.

Diane. Why me? Why don't you do it?

Lovely. Because I'm in charge and I say, you.

Diane. Oh some democracy this is, you little fascist.

Lovely. Go!

Diane. Barefoot?

Lovely. There's plenty of tundra to walk around on.

Diane. You know I wasn't kidding when I said I was afraid of spiders. I am really really afraid of spiders. I don't know if I got that across. And not just spiders. Beetles, tics, snakes...

Lovely. Don't make me force you. Because I will.

Diane. Well I'm not 8 years old anymore. Bully.

Lovely. Let me tell you what we've got here.... not only do we have an obligation to future generations to keep the horrors of the past alive, to cultures that are going going gone....we have a very sweet little gimme.

Diane. ...future generations... god that makes me absolutely...

Lovely. You're ovulating again? Jesus Christ. No one believes in future generations Diane. Get that through your pretty little uterus.

Diane. You don't believe in future generations?

Lovely. When was the last time you read the Beijing Daily? Not to mention we can't even drink our own water.

Diane. So what's the point of the video?

Lovely. Other people seem to believe, so it's still a saleable commodity.

Diane. I might have to think about getting back to Bambi.

Lovely. Bambi is with the Golburghs this week.

Diane. Yes, but the Golburghs are off to Florida on Tuesday & I need to reschedule her. Besides I don't think you have enough action.

Lovely. Action? We have hardship deprivation. Punishment. Exile. Isn't that action enough? Even the words alone, should make you feel morally inferior.

Diane. Me? What about you?

Lovely. I already *know* I'm morally inferior.

Diane. And that gives you an edge?

Lovely. Yes. A small edge, but yes.

Diane. I'm getting really really hungry. Does Missouri do pizza?

Lovely. These people have been tested. Tested and proven strong. We've never been tested. And without the test there is no score. Doesn't that piss you off? If only there were an occasion to rise to! (beat) Is it warming up in here or is that my imagination?

Diane. It'll be a million degrees next.

Lovely. What are you looking for?

Diane peeking through the keyhole. Oh my god.

Lovely. What?

Diane. Hugo is crying.

Lovely. No way.

Diane. Yes way.

Lovely. Tears or noise?

Diane. Both.

Lovely. Let me see. (pushes her out of the way)

Diane. Remember Terms? – It's like that cancer scene – Uncle Joe is dying!

Lovely. Of course he's dying, he's 100 years old!

Diane. No wait! He's reviving! And he's pointing at himself, like this...binga binga binga (finger jabbing the belly).

Lovely. What's Hugo doing?

Diane. He's on his knees. Doing this begging/sobbing thing.

Lovely. Let me see. Oh boy. I wish I could get my camera on that.

Diane. Omar Sharif in Doctor Zhivago could take notes here.

Lovely. Okay. We don't have much time. You get out there and shoot the pigeon.

Diane. And you?

Lovely. Whatever it takes to get past that Nazi.

Diane. So you're gonna butter Hugo up?

Lovely. If I have to.

Diane. Maybe I should stay and butter him up.

Lovely. Cause you're the pretty one?

Diane. Oh my god. Are you jealous?

Lovely. Jealous? Your values are so screwed. You don't even have an apartment, let alone a life. You can't even kill yourself successfully! Why do you think I drag you along on my projects? Cause you're a brilliant filmographer?

Diane. I'm not a brilliant filmographer?

Lovely. As Hugo said, I'm the smart one.

Diane. You are evil.

Lovely. No such thing. There is only reality.

Diane. Maybe your detachment is getting in the way, Lovely.

sound of a dog barking

Lovely. Get out into that tundra you coward.

Diane. The dog.

Lovely. Stare him down!

Diane. & snakes &...

Lovely. Now!

Diane. I am not a fucking country girl, haven't you figured that out!

Lovely. GO!

Diane. I hate you! I hate you so much!

Hugo comes out of the room

Hugo. Are we warm now?

Diane. Cooking, in fact.

Hugo. You see I have some pull with the higher ups! Where are you going?

Diane. Into the tundra.

Hugo. Cease & resist.

Diane. What?

Hugo. Cease & resist. You go nowhere.

Lovely. She goes somewhere allrighty. She is going to shoot the pigeon.

Hugo. Shoot?

Lovely. We are filmographers, sometimes birds, yes birds are sacrificed.

Hugo. Actually no. *You* shoot.

Lovely. Moi? You are giving moi orders?

Hugo. I give. You take.

(pause)

Lovely. Well this is really beyond the pale. (pause) Say something Diane.

(pause)

Diane. We have a window of opportunity here Lovely...

Hugo. Which looks out onto a garden of opportunism...

Diane. Which grows into flowers...

Lovely. Shut the fuck up.

Hugo. Not to mention an obligation to keep the horrors alive.

Lovely. Okay. I don't know what your game is Hugo, but when I come back, you are opening that door and we are making our little film and then I will report you. To the authorities. This is not a hospital this is a bloody prison if you ask me.

Lovely exits w/ the pigeon.

Diane. Don't forget the gun Love. And look out for snakes! (to Hugo)
Thanks.

Hugo. Never thank! Gratitude is a sickness. Has anyone phoned for me?

Diane. Where is the phone?

Hugo. You have the phone, I have seen it.

Diane. Has anyone phoned for you on *my* phone?

Hugo. Why are you here?

Diane. Ummm, to make a movie of the old guy.

Hugo. No. Why are you here?

Diane. Well. To make a movie of the old guy.

Hugo. & yet you speak of phone calls for me on *your* phone. A conundrum, yes?

Diane. This is a job Mister Doctor. I mean you seem pretty happy w/ your shitty job. May I have the same opportunity? (pause) So when do we get in there?

Hugo. Ahh.

Diane. Or is there something wrong with him?

Hugo. A brain hemagogue.

Diane. Serious?

Hugo. Not at all.

a gunshot from outside – they both ignore it

Diane. How long have you worked here?

Hugo. Since the annexation.

Diane. Oh, the annexation.

Hugo. This is not my first enjoyment.

Diane. Of course not.

Hugo. Actor, teacher. What's the matter? You look frightened.

Diane.. Not at all, a little hungry.

Hugo. Perhaps you are frightened because of my accent.

Diane. Well you don't have an accent.

Hugo. That's awfully kind but...

Diane. But you don't.

Hugo. Actually I do.

Diane. No, you don't. Really.

Hugo. I DO.

Diane. Okay. I hear the tiniest little most insignificant / -

Hugo. In what phrase or terminology?!

Diane. No terminology. You're just maybe trying too hard.

Hugo. Denounce me now?

Diane. Of course not.

Hugo. Because I have tried my best. Not always good enough, but my best. And this job, this job is killing me.

Diane. So quit.

Hugo. I have a duty to humanity.

Diane. Look Doc. I'm hungry & my feet are cold & I gotta get back to Bambi &

Hugo. No.

Diane. No?

Hugo. You must never say that again.

Diane. (pause) Say what again?

Hugo. Hungry. There is no hunger here.

Diane. Why are you whispering?

Hugo. The walls. They are like paper. He hears everything.

Diane. But I *am* hungry. I don't care what he hears! I had one bagel for breakfast & that lousy bite of chicken & we've been stuck here for 3 hours!

Hugo clamps his hand over her mouth.

Hugo. Do you know the flower game?

Diane shakes her head no

Hugo. That's good. You want to keep it that way.

the red light goes on

Diane. The light is on.

Hugo gets a bottle of vodka out.

Hugo. You drink a toast with me?

Diane. The light.

Hugo. You drink a toast with me.

Diane. Don't you want to go -

Hugo. You drink a toast!

Diane. Okay. A toast. Straight?

Hugo. Drink!

Diane. Got any clamato?

Hugo drinks out of the bottle.

Hugo. Death (he drinks) to our enemies. (he hands her the bottle) Say it.

Diane. That's not very nice.

Hugo. Say it.

Diane. I don't want to say it.

Hugo. You SAY IT.

Diane. I don't have any enemies. (pause) Okay, death to our enemies. (she drinks)

the red light goes out

Dog barks.

A commotion at the door. A Russian soldier bursts in, red uniform, sabre, beard, the whole shooting match.

Hugo. Oh. What...

Russian. For the comrade!

Hugo. What?

Russian. I have a message. (he hands Hugo an envelope)

Hugo. I'll give it to him.

Russian. Trotsky is dead.

Hugo. Dead?

Russian. And a warning.

Hugo. A warning?

Russian. For you. From Patricia.

The soldier slaps Hugo across the face.

Diane. Hey.

Russian. What did you say?!

Diane. Nothing.... hey.

Russian. Who is she?

Hugo. A peasant. Does it matter?

Russian. She looks like a kulak.

Hugo. No! A peasant.

Russian grabs the bottle, drinks.

Russian. Death to the Enemy!

he leaves

Diane. That man just slapped you. He totally slapped you. For nothing.

Hugo. I must collect myself!

Hugo exits

enter Lovely – her face blood spattered –

Lovely. Okay. We got the opening. Gimme some babywipes Di. (Diane cleans her face)

Diane. Where did you get the fake blood from?

Lovely. This is not fake blood. That dog.

Diane. You killed it?

Lovely. This is my blood. The bastard bit me. And then some twenty year old film intern he has just learned the rule of three and now wants to foist it on me. I am thirty years old! I have *been* there! Jesus it's hot in here.

Diane. Did you get the footage?

Lovely. Of course I did. It's even better than the pigeon. Where is Hugo?

Diane. Collecting himself.

enter Hugo

Lovely. Hugo - are we collectivated now?

Hugo. Necessarily.

Lovely. (beat) Good. Cause we are ready to roll. Open Sesame.

Hugo. One or two notes first. Soso has a keen cinematic eye.

Lovely. Of course he does.

Hugo. And mortal standards to uphold. There will be no French kissing. None at all. Understood?

Lovely. Wait a minute here.

Hugo. Predicament?

Diane. Nope.

Hugo. Secondly, Soso will handle the props.

Lovely. Who?

Hugo. Soso. Your Uncle. He has a visard.

Lovely. Oh he has a visard does he. Now everybody has a visard! This is my film. My visard.

Hugo. A visard? And no vision?

Lovely. I have vision, baby.

Hugo. & Fortitude? Works two ways. Or are you hungry?

Lovely. I'm off carbs, thanks.

Diane. (to Hugo) I did not tell her!

Lovely. Tell 'her' what?

Hugo. Props. Hand them over. Pigeon, samovar, gun. Immediately! Or heads will roll.

Lovely. Oh heads will roll, yeah right. Look you can have the samovar and the gun. But I'm getting my money back on the pigeon. I never even used it; still has the price tag on it. And this is the deal Soosoo gets to handle the props and you get him sitting up, reading the Torah or something. Got it? Then we segue into the old stories, the war, the holocaust, Normandy whatever And don't tell me Spielberg did Normandy, Diane. I know Spielberg did Normandy, but Normandy is big enough for two movies.

Diane. Just give him the props Love.

Lovely. I'm making a deal here Di..

Diane. Take the props Hugo. Here.

Lovely. Unbelievable. I feel totally violated.

Hugo. I do not believe you can imagine how terribly anxious he is to have his story, his true story told.

Diane. Everybody wants their five minutes of fame.

Lovely. You know there are things going on here Hugo which I don't totally understand.

Diane. & things that we do understand.

Lovely. But which is which. That is the question.

Hugo. You wait here. You do not leave the premises.

Lovely. Hey. You got us at your mercy, baby. Besides we have 700 bucks at stake. Plane leaves in 2 hours Hugo, shake your bacon.

Hugo leaves.

end Day One

Day Two

Diane & Lovely are sleeping – one in a wheelchair – one on a gurney.

enter Hugo

Hugo. Wake up! Wake up! The birds are singing! Soon they will discontinue!

Diane. Oh my god, what time is it?

Hugo. Six oh two. Rise & face the day!

Lovely. The day.

Diane. We missed our plane!

Lovely. I need coffee.

Hugo. We are almost ready.

Lovely. Get the camera out Di.

Hugo. But one more thing.

Lovely. Get the samovar.

Hugo. When you enter that room, you will hear revelations of a delicate nature.

Lovely. Oh yeah right. Where's the pigeon? My hair! I'm a mess.

Hugo. Quiet. You must listen. And concentrate.

Lovely. Okay, we're concentrating. (beat) But don't make a meal of it.

Hugo. Uncle Joe is giving up to you some secrets of a very personal & potentially damaging nature. He will be candent, of course,

Lovely. White-hot. I like the sound of that.

Hugo. but... but! Have you established an atmosphere of intimacy? Have you demonstrated good will? What I mean is, in order for this communisation to work, there must be a give and take. He gives you take. He takes you give. You see?

Lovely. No.

Hugo. He has to determine you can be trusted. And in order for him to trust you... here, paper, for each of you, and ball point pen. Now you write words. Words intolerably personal, private, hush-hush, words that no one else has ever heard before, words so terrible that if the world knew, they would surely condemn you.

Lovely. What are you talking about?

Hugo. Prurient reciprocation! Sanguinary collateral! Bilateral vulnerability! twinverted extortion! Trust.

Lovely. I have no trust to divulge.

Hugo. Ah, Koba knew this would be your response. Therefore he suggests you each give up the very bad secret of your sister. You, hers; her, yours. This will be more easily accommodated. You will be able to judge w/o the clouded eyes of puerile interest. Here. Go.

he hands them paper and pen.

Lovely. No. This is absurd. I know nothing of my sister that I could possibly say that would cause her to be castigated world wide, unless, well, no nothing & I'm sure she -

but Diane has already started writing... Lovely watches her.

Lovely. I don't believe this.

Hugo. Munificence.

Diane continues to write till the page is full.

Lovely. I won't do it.

Diane. Do you have more paper?

Hugo hands her more paper.

Diane continues to write. She finishes, hands it to Hugo.

Hugo reads it, He points to a word that he can't read.

Diane. Tender.

He chuckles.

Diane. (smiles) Yeah? Oh one more thing.

He hands her another piece, she briefly writes, hands it back.

Hugo mock winces... Oooh.

Hugo finishes reading, folds it up, puts it in his pocket. Stares at Lovely.

Lovely picks up her paper, then pen. She studies the blank paper, etc... until finally she deliberately writes 1 or two short words. Hands it to Hugo.

*Hugo reads it, his head jerks up in shock, then he looks at Diane, hard.
Back to Lovely.*

Hugo. This changes everything.

He exits with the notes.

a long moment passes.

Lovely. Well that was interesting. (pause) You certainly had a lot to say about me.

Diane. Don't worry about it.

Lovely. Worry about what?

Diane. He wasn't going to leave us alone until we cooperated.

Lovely. I understand.

Diane. I want to go home.

Lovely. Good. Go home.

Diane. & you?

Lovely. I have a commitment here.

Diane. I know. The money.

Lovely. Not just the money. My professional reputation is at stake.

Diane. Oh come on.

Lovely. Yes, good, here. (looking thru her purse) I'll write you a check for your time, get a taxi, go home. Have a little valium party with Tim-

Diane. - Jesus Christ you don't even know what drugs I like -

Lovely. buy yourself another tattoo & I'll do this on my own.

Diane. Okay. (beat) It's not like you don't have a tripod.

Lovely. Actually I don't have a tripod. Someone forgot the tripod.

Diane. Me?

Lovely. (beat) What did you write about me?

Diane. Nothing.

Lovely. Two pages of nothing. (pause) Tender.

Diane folds up her gurney blanket, and starts to leave.

Lovely. You're not leaving me here you bitch.

Diane. Look at my nails! I cannot handle this.

Lovely. You're hungry that's all.

Diane. NO. I'm not hungry.

Lovely. You're always hungry.

Diane. I'm not. I'm never. Sssh.

Lovely. Give me your phone I'll order a pizza.

Diane. NO.

Lovely takes the phone...dials.

Lovely. Are you waiting for me to say I need you? Fine I need you! & I really hate you for making me say that. ...Hi. Big jumbo...what do you want Diane? ...artichokes, pineapple, ham...yeah yeah...hurry up. The hospital. What do you mean you don't --- bring it to the hospital! (hangs up) You wonder why people go out of business.

Hugo enters with drivers licenses.

Hugo. Miss Testosteroni...

Diane. Testudo!

Hugo. No, no, everything is fine. Some questions... Can you tell me where you were on the night of March 5, 1953?²

Diane. No. I wasn't even born then.

Hugo. Answer!

Lovely. We've had enough of this, buddy, my doctor.

Hugo. Is it possible you were travelling south down Highway 3, in a red Toyota at one hundred twenty kilometres an hour?

Diane. No, that's not possible.

Hugo. You want to reflect with more attentiveness?

Diane. I don't even own a red Toyota.

Hugo. How strange. We have confirmation of an outstanding speeding ticket.

² the day that Stalin died

Diane. But that's impossible.

Hugo. (turning to Lovely) And you. Is this you? (her license)

Lovely. Yeah.

Hugo. I lay a wager you were a real beauty once. (to Lovely)

Lovely. What do you mean 'once'?

Hugo. Beautiful as a lake, throwing furious challenges. But March came. March always comes. Shame.

Lovely. I want my shoes back. Look at my feet! They're filthy!

Diane. Love.

Lovely. No, I'm getting really pissed off here . Now give me my shoes.

(pause)

Hugo. Do you think I'm stupid?

Lovely. (pause) Okay forget the shoes.

Hugo. Because I don't know what rectify means? Do you think I don't know reckoning? Or what it takes to get ahead? The price!

Lovely. Is Mr. Jug villy vertical yet?

Hugo. You think I have no assignations,

Lovely. I would never think that.

Hugo. Like every man?

Lovely. I want to get in there.

Hugo. & dreams! Nightmares too! Or do you think I want to end my days tending to anasarca? (pause) hahaha. You don't know what that is, do you. Anasarca! Anasarca! AHA! AHA! DROPSY!

Lovely. Dropsy.

Hugo. Besides he is reading.

Lovely. Good. That 's a good shot. What's he reading?

Hugo. The Patricide.³

Lovely. Bad dad?

Hugo. Not every day of course.

Diane. A person should really get over that.

Hugo. By the way, are you of a certain religious denegation?

Lovely. (pause) Sometimes.

Hugo. And your uncle Koba?

Lovely. Well you tell me. (pause) You're the doctor.

Diane. Lovely that's not very nice to call someone a doctor in that tone of voice.

Lovely. (pause) Why do you ask?

Hugo. Why? Why? Always why. Because. There are warnings afoot.

Lovely. Warnings afoot.

Hugo. One foot. Two feet. Take note.

Lovely. I really find it odd that there are no other doctors here. Just you

Hugo.

Hugo. The machine makes its own momentum.

The Pizza boy comes

³ The Patricide by Alexander Kazbegi; a favourite book of Stalin's, from which he took the name of the main character, Koba.

He is a shuffling, drooling old man, with a grey beard, dressed in beggar rags. With trembling hands, he holds a box of pizza. Aside from all of that, he looks very much like the Russian soldier.

Hugo. Who authorized this? How did you get by the dog? Who are your ancestors?

Pizza boy. Pizza boy.

Hugo. What are you doing?

Pizza boy. Pizza.

Hugo. We never ordained a pizza.

Pizza boy. You ordained a pizza in my books.

Hugo. You have the wrong house.

Pizza boy. This is not a house, this is a hospital. I remember this place. The horrors.

Hugo. Well you have the wrong hospital!

Pizza boy. I never get the wrong hospital. I've been doing this all my life. I never got the wrong hospital yet.

Lovely. Okay Hugo, back off. I ordered the Pizza. Diane is hungry.

Diane. NO. I'm not hungry.

Hugo. Witness. She is not hungry.

Lovely. Witness this, she's hungry as a bear. And so am I.

Diane. They send people out like this? This is shocking! I feel so bad. I feel so horribly bad!

Lovely. Here. (she hands the Pizza boy her credit card)

Pizza boy. No good.

Lovely. How do you know it's no good.

Pizza boy. Expire.

Lovely. Not expire. Good till 02/03

Pizza boy. 03/02, not 02/ 03

Lovely. Year month!

Pizza. boy. Month year.

Lovely. I use it all the time.

Pizza boy. Me no take.

Lovely. You take.

pizza. Me no take.

Diane. Give him cash Lovely, stop torturing him.

Lovely. Fine fine fine. My last twenty. Here.

the Pizza boy drops to his knees and starts kissing her feet.

Lovely. Stop it! What the hell! (she kicks him away)

Diane. Lovely!

Lovely. I didn't kick him...I didn't kick him...I just, I can't stand, I really cannot stand I have never been able to stand having my feet kissed. What the hell kind of a place is this? Stand up!

the Pizza boy stands up.

Lovely. You got change for me? 3 bucks, 75 cents.

Pizza boy. Change? Change?! I beg of you!

Lovely. What - you think you're getting a tip after this performance?

he spits - a gunshot comes from out of nowhere, the Pizza boy drops.

Diane. Holy shit.

Hugo. Oh Death solves all problems.⁴

After a moment Diane takes back the twenty.

end Act One

⁴ quote attributed to Stalin

Act Two middle of the night between day two & three

The scene of Burning Thatches

dreamlike

Lovely. The corn.

Diane. I love corn. I love films about corn. I even love the word, corn.
Corn. I could say corn for a hundred years.

Lovely. Film the corn.

Diane. Beautiful farms.

Lovely. Film the farms.

Diane. Beautiful corn.

Lovely. Are those thatch those cottages?

Diane. Do you smell smoke?

Lovely. God, look at the donkey. Diane do you have the camera? Put it on
the donkey.

Diane. Where?

Lovely. There – tied to the burning thatch, pulling back on his rope. Jesus.

Diane. Hugo cut the donkey free

Hugo. It's too late, the fire's too hot

Lovely. Yes you can, you can, you must, do it!

Diane. Hugo stop the car! Get your big knife! Cut the rope!

Lovely. My god the knife is so dull, it will take forever,

Diane. Yes, it's cutting through! The donkey is free!

Lovely. But there is another rope tying his front legs together, and his jaw roped shut. He'll die if he runs into the forest like that... Hugo, keep sawing.

Diane. Hugo saw the donkey free!

Lovely. Don't cut the donkey!

Diane. Please don't cut the donkey.

Lovely. Push harder on the knife Hugo!

Diane. The donkey is free! Go Donkey! Run! Flee! Flee!

Hugo. Look. In the bottom of the second thatch

Lovely. Oh my god. The pigs. Help them.

Hugo. It is too late for the pigs,

Diane. All lined up 6 little pigs in a blanket, their heads pointing at us, little snouts, all burning and still alive the pigs swaying in the blazes.

Lovely. The horses ran free

Diane. We rescued the donkey.

Hugo. And the pigs perished.

Diane. A storm.

Hugo. Lovely. Exciting and calm at the same time. (caresses Lovely)

Diane. The rain. The torrential rain. Cascading, rushing, a deluge in the tundra.

Lovely. I was a beauty like that once. Two days ago. Beautiful as a surging lake, throwing challenges. Then Wednesday came. And that ballerina. You can't leave them alone, can you? The general's wives, the party secretaries, the actresses.

Hugo. There is only so much temptation I can resist.

Lovely. And meanwhile all your people, millions, starving to death.
Eating their own babies. Because of you. Your plan.

Hugo. Don't you talk to me about my people. My people love me! Drink a
toast – raise your glass, to my people!

Lovely. What next - rocks? Will you have me eating rocks! Like the others!

Hugo. Drink you baba! Ass like a box!

Lovely. You mean moi?

Hugo. How conventional you have become. Like a poor dog. Cowering.

Lovely. Leave it alone, can't you? Can't you leave it alone? For once in your
life.

Diane is crying hysterically.

Lovely: Shut up already.

Diane. (shuts up) So many mosquitoes.

Act Two Scene two Day three morning

Once again, it is early morning & they are camped out in the corridor.

Lovely wakes up first.

Lovely. What?

Diane. I didn't say anything.

Lovely. I thought you said...Bolshevik.

Diane. Bolshevik?

Lovely. You know, I think I need to give you a primer, just a primer,
some quick little pointers that you should know.

Diane. Well, please.

Lovely. Don't be insulted.

Diane. No, really. I want to hear your little primers.

Lovely. Karl Marx was German.

Diane. Says you.

Lovely. The Bolsheviks seized power under the leadership of Lenin.

Diane. History is not an exact science.

Lovely. Stalin was bad. A bad person.

Diane. Not every day.

Lovely. The cold war, the Iron Curtain, he enslaved, tortured, murdered millions of his own people, including Trotsky, a brilliant thinker.

Diane. But that's horrible.

Lovely. To be a mouse on the wall then. And all we get is Uncle Joe.

Diane. How was the gurney? Better than the wheelchair?

Lovely. So what do we know about Joe. Read it back to me.

Diane. Born in Georgia , the Russia one, December 21

Lovely. A Sagittarius...

Diane. His name Joe (finally settling on) Vicious Jug Villy.
The only child of a poor and struggling family. His father, a vicious cobbler, dies when he is 11.

Lovely. Oh irony of ironies. That explains the shoe thing.

Diane. He escapes from Siberia six times. And then his second wife dies mysteriously after a drunken party at the Kremlin. Either he killed her, or she killed herself.

Lovely. The Kremlin Letter! A fabulous flop. Lost 6 million bucks.

Diane. Kill tally: 20 million.

Lovely. Oh please.

Diane. The zero key must have gotten stuck.

Lovely. Okay, so let's say 20. Or 2.

Diane. Nasty.

Lovely. But considering all the wars and stuff... Hmmmm. And?

Diane. Incapable of empathy, indifferent to suffering, insecure, suspicious, a real "people person," your average Joe. Oh. And funny. That's it. (pause) How did you sleep?

Lovely. Lousy.

Diane. You know, I woke up last night and heard – I thought it was a dog barking, a little yappy dog barking – (imitating the sound) then I realized it was a woman sobbing. Did you hear that?

Lovely. It *was* a dog.

Diane. No it was a woman. Sobbing.

Lovely. (punching on her cellphone) It just seems so amusing and typical to me that your cell phone works and mine doesn't.

Diane. And a man, yelling 'get back in the car'. NOOOOO. Get back in the car! NOOOOOO.

Lovely. And to top everything off, we now have another 25 dollar cancellation fee for missing our flights.

Diane. The Pizza boy.

Lovely. I don't want to talk about the Pizza boy.

Diane. But...

Lovely. He's fine. Just a very bad flesh wound. It wasn't our fault.

Diane. I had the strangest epiphany this morning when I woke up. The weirdest sentence just popped into my head.

Lovely. Now I have to brush my teeth with a manual toothbrush. That's not even brushing.

Diane. Do you want to hear it?

Lovely. Do I have a choice?

Diane. For each of us, there is one waking scream of real horror.

Lovely. You don't do mornings well, do you.

Diane. & I am shallow. I just realized that. So shallow. A big fat vacuum waiting to be filled.

Lovely. You're white, middle class, heterosexual. Of course you're shallow.

Diane. (rummaging through the empty pizza box) When did you eat the crusts? There were crusts in here yesterday. And green peppers. When did you eat them? While I was sleeping?

Lovely. You hate crusts.

Diane. Not today I don't! You bitch.

Lovely tries the door, as always, it's locked.

Diane. We gotta wait for the red light.

Lovely. Maybe. Or maybe I have a plan.

Diane. What?

Lovely. Hugo has a key correct? He's got a key to the room, we saw it. He used it. We don't need a red light if we can get the –

enter Hugo w/ a tray, two tiny paper cups of water.

Hugo. Good morning. My erogenous girls are up early this morning. Any red lights yet?

Diane. Nothing.

Lovely. Look Hewg, that patient on the gurney is dead. And that one is dead...This is not good medicine.

Hugo. The death of one man is a tragedy. The death of two is a statistic.⁵

Lovely. All right. Enough with the mathematics my boy. There is a lovely, lonely man behind that door w/ a story to tell. He may not mean much to you but he means a helluva lot to anyone who cares to listen.

Hugo. But without a red light... water? Water? (he hands the tiny cups to them, they gulp)

Diane. Is there any more?

Hugo. No. So what did I interrupt?

Diane. Lovely was –

Lovely. Nothing.

Hugo. I heard you talking about a plan.

Diane. Umm...

Lovely. No

Hugo. And yet I manifestly heard you say – plan.

Lovely. I didn't say plan. Did you Diane?

Hugo. I heard it.

Lovely. Yes, okay plan. We were just saying – you see ... welll, you see the sprinkler watering that patch of yard. What do you notice?

Hugo. Long grass, overpaid workers.

⁵ quote attributed to Stalin: The death of one man is a tragedy. The death of millions is a statistic.

Lovely. The sprinkler is always going round... and the patch of yard is always square. Round and square. A bad plan that. That's all. That's what I said.

Hugo. (pause) Here, your gun back. Cannot have to any further extent accidents like that. You could throw a grape through that wall, let alone a bullet.

Lovely. Oh.

Diane. Shall I keep it?

Lovely. Actually I'll keep it. With the other props.

Diane. (pause) Well, I'm the technician,

Lovely. And I'm the director.

Diane. And I'm the assistant. And the gun is a prop.

Lovely. And I'm the director.

Diane. Does the director normally handle the props?

Lovely. You know we have to work together, we might as well make this as pleasant as possible.

Diane. I am as pleasant as possible.

Hugo. Then I will keep it, to resolve your small dilemma. (takes the gun)

the phone rings

Hugo. If that's for me, I am not here. Comprehend?!

Lovely. For you? -- Hello? Oh New York. How are you Yuri. – It's the grandson - ... I was just about to... oh things are going really, great... the deadline? No I'm not forgetting about the deadline...we just about nailed it. Yes, no...very artistic.. very professional, very real. Those expeditors you found... wow... nothing... I mean... wow. Yeah. Okay. I'll phone you from the airport tonight when we're done....I'm setting my watch. Things are going very well. Five minutes is only 300 seconds. We've got 8 already. ...ummmm.... did he ever have a farm? With donkeys and stuff? Never mind...Oh Really? (off phone) He's pleased w/ our progress! ... (to phone) Oh, you're kidding.

Vodka? (off phone) He's sending over a bottle of vodka as a perk! (to phone) No, terrific...a maybe a bottle of – oh I don't know – water? No, no, I'm kidding, of course. Oh I'm sure you do. .. No, it's -- (she hangs up) (to Hugo) Don't you think you better get that lawn mowed?

Hugo exits

Lovely. Yuri's got another 50 bucks on the table if we get in there before midnight tonight. Otherwise the game is off.

Scene Three – Party Scene

Laughter, Hugo is singing a Russian song.

*He is grandly drunk.
(& so is Diane, Lovely less so)*

Diane & Lovely work him – physically, verbally – Diane lounging on him & near him, trying to find the key. Hugo pushing her off, or allowing her caresses, but drinking, drinking, waxing maudlin & eloquent.

Hugo. OH Exiled to Siberia. What viscera are you getting?

Lovely. The tundra. A cold wind. A wooden shacks on stilts.

Hugo. Yes. Yes. So when this all starts to collapse...

Lovely. Men in bloody coats.

Hugo. I want you

Diane. Torture. Starvation.

Hugo. On your toes, alert... listening...recording... but not...imploding...or impugning

Diane. Or imposing.

Lovely. Deprivation

Hugo. Desolation!

Lovely. Determination.

Hugo. Desterilization.

Diane. Loneliness – Rape.

Lovely. She will insist on her little sex scene, this one.

Diane. Pregnancies. Babies.

Hugo. But simply bearing the wilderness.

Diane. We are sunk.

Hugo. Though there are trigger words –

Lovely. Shower? Train?

Hugo. Beat beat and beat again. ⁶

Lovely. How is your drink Hugo? It's not the best Russian vodka...

Hugo. Horse piss!

Lovely. But good enough I should think.

Diane. Are you okay?

Hugo. No, I'm not okay. Don't you hear that woman sobbing? Listen.
(everyone listens) SILENCE. I know, I know, because I was never asleep. The
flower game, in the bed next to mine.

Lovely. Let it go, let it go.

Diane. Guns n roses.

Hugo. Revolutions don't start with people like me. Revolutions are
handed down. From the powers that be! Always the same – vengeance,

⁶ attributed to Stalin when asked how he got a confession

vengeance! Everywhere! Never look back. People look back & they are sunk.
Ah but some of us, we have our uses.

(pause)

Lovely. Hugo, I'm sorry I was snappy, before. (another pause) I have perpetual jet lag. (another pause) I have studied certain things that might interest you. Botany ring a bell? (pause) you know what? I think you're very... brave to work here. All these germs. (Pause) it's a very small dream, really, as dreams go. But you know the nice thing about small dreams? They're attainable. (another pause) You know it's funny but... I think I see why we have come together here. Feel that. (her bicep) Huh?

Hugo. The Woman of steel.

Lovely. (to D) Have you found it or have you not?

Diane. I am trying but he's sitting on his pockets.

Hugo drinks some more vodka

Diane's phone rings again.

Diane . I thought *you* turned it off. (pause) I won't answer it.

Phone rings again.

Diane . Unless you want me to.

Lovely. Please. Be my guest.

Diane . You loser. You pecker head. Hello? ... Who? ... Oh. It's for Hugo.

Lovely. Hugo? Who is it?

Diane. Who is this? ... Patricia.

Lovely. What does she want?

Diane. What do you want?... Linoleum. ...

Lovely. How did she get this number?

Diane. Can you hold?

Lovely. You're not discussing the project are you?

Diane. No.

Lovely. This is confidential.

Diane. I know.

Lovely. What do you know?

Diane. I know it's confidential.

Lovely. As long as you know.

Diane. Anyway why is it fucking confidential?

Lovely. Because I said it was.

Diane. But why? Does this have anything to do w/ Walter? (to phone) Just keep holding Patricia. I can tell from the way you're evading eye contact that it has everything to do with Walter.

They look at each other.

Hugo. I had the linoleum all picked out. Did you know that linoleum is making a comeback?

Diane. You're pregnant again.

Lovely. Maybe a little.

Hugo. It's a completely 100% natural product made of linseed oil it lasts forever. 40 years. Sandstone.

Diane. & will you tell Walter this time?

Lovely. No. We have dogs!

Diane. Well if I can manage a child...

Lovely. You don't manage it, you rent yours out.

Diane. I don't rent her out. Lotta people can't have kids, they find her really cute.

Hugo. Are you swearing?

Diane. No.

Hugo. Someone said Bolshevik.

Diane. Bolshevik. What a sexy word. (she starts to kiss him & kisses him throughout Lovely's speech)

Lovely. Hugo. Do you uh, know, do you know. ... have you ever seen a motion picture? A film? A doc-u-drama? Hm? Because you don't seem to get the idea here, This is a - documentary about 'about' a man, a very very old man, who survived Siberia. Who was exiled to Siberia and survived. A man who met Trotsky, perhaps. Maybe even killed Trotsky. Who knows? Maybe even met Stalin - who is bursting exploding with the need to tell his story. His story of EXILE - PAIN - SUFFERING and finally REDEMPTION. And the point of the story is, maybe I should spell it out, the point of the story being that SUFFERING, SUFFERING, is the is the...natural order of human existence and we are ALL in Siberia, we are in Siberia, Siberia is in US. Our SOULS, so his SUFFERING is no greater than mine, let's say or hers because we have, we all have the same capacity for pain and we will fill it with a mosquito bite or a divorce, or in his case - SIBERIAN EXILE - and that's okay. It's okay, because we don't give a flying fuck about anyone else anyways! And and...

Diane. People get old they get... really self centered. Only think about themselves. I'm not gonna be like that when I'm old.

Lovely. They had it so easy! Hey, you want a piece of land! Help yourself! River frontage? Ocean frontage? No problem! Take! Take! Hungry! Grab a fish, there's a whole bay of 50 pound salmon just waiting to be caught - a little venison, maybe some buffalo. There's a herd, help yourself! How about gold. You want gold? Here, dig! Nowadays,

Diane. Sweetie.

Lovely. You're lucky to find 5 bucks of beer cans by the side of the road.
Which will maybe buy you one cup of latté. One cup.

Diane. We can't even drink our own water.

Hugo. The Pale of Settlement.

Lovely. What?

Hugo. The Pale of Settlement.

Lovely. Um, are you, is that a ... movie?... I don't think I saw it, the pale of
settlement.

Hugo. It's a place, that's all, a place in Russia.

Diane. Oh my god. That is so beautiful.

Diane continues kissing Hugo, while he suffers it stoically.

Lovely. (phone) Hi, Pats? Can he call you back? Sure you can hold but....

Hugo. (breaking free) A toast!

Diane. A toast!

Hugo. To Patricia in bubbles!

Diane. Patricia in bubbles.

Hugo. I'll always remember her that way.

Diane. When is the wedding?

Hugo. She won't get married till she loses ten pounds. Very very
frustrating.

Diane. What is she down to?

Hugo. 129.

Diane. Never mind. 8 more to go! Oh it would be lovely to eat.

Hugo. Patricia in bubbles!

Diane. But you never told her that did you.

Hugo. I didn't need to. It was obvious.

Diane. You should have said.

Hugo. Really?

Diane. Let's dance! Teach me that song! (she sings the Russian song)

Hugo. all the little naked flowers made to kneel in a circle, their heads touching,

Diane. You gotta get past that sweetie.

Hugo. You have no idea what being alone is. I have been alone ever since I was born. Maybe Patricia is right about me. I am full of delusions and grandeur. I will never move up. I will never be more than –

enter The Russian soldier

Diane. Hi! Look who's back! A toast!

Hugo. Comrade! (to Lovely) Pour him a drink!

Lovely pours

Hugo. Death to the enemies of the State!

Diane. Death to the President!

Hugo. Death to linoleum!

Lovely. Death to Martin!

Diane. Death to me!

they all drink

Russian soldier. You're under arrest.

Hugo. What? Who is?

Russian soldier. You are!

Hugo. Me? Why me?

Russian soldier. Orders!

Hugo. But why me?

Russian soldier. Why not you?

Hugo. That is no answer!

Russian soldier. Last night we fled from the bombs.

Hugo. I know I remember.

Russian soldier. Way up a mountain road. Narrow dirt - we stopped to talk to the villagers. Women kissing dirty babies. When we went to leave, the truck, had overheated. For no reason none.

Hugo. My erstwhile companion! You accuse?

Russian soldier. Then suddenly, a hole in the ground opened up, huge, cavernous. Looking down, into the tunnels in the earth, an orange glow, the earth was on fire, the flames were licking up. We ran and ran and ran.

Hugo. But the arrangements were prepared! I prepared them myself!

Russian soldier. (lights a match, holds it up to Hugo) Lick.

Hugo. Speak again!

Russian soldier. Lick.

Hugo. Lick?

Russian soldier. Lick, the thing that flames do.

Hugo. Comrade! I do not comprehend! Cigarette?!

Russian soldier. You cannot comprehend fire with the mind! Fire just is!
Confess it! Confess it!

Lovely. Patricia. (pause) Shall I tell her you'll phone her back?

Diane. Death to Patricia!

Lovely. (to phone) Fire and ice Patsy, fire and ice. Can he call you back?

Hugo. (yelling to Pat) Patricia! Patricia! Never open the door! NEVER
NEVER NEVER NEVER OPEN THE DOOR.

Lovely. Did you get that Pats? Oh. Patricia says "fuck you."

Hugo. (takes the phone) I My tiny sweetheart, my love cocoon, my
butterfly in progress ... she hung up.

Russian soldier. Confess it!

Hugo. It is devastation to idolatrize someone more than they idolatrize
you.

Russian soldier. Confess it!

Lovely. Patsy's only playing you Hugo. She'll come back.

Russian soldier. Confess!

Hugo. Too late! I will not have her! Dead to me! Dead dead dead

Russian soldier. Confess it!

Hugo. You first!

Hugo pulls the gun out, points it at the Russian soldier

The Russian soldier draws his sword.

Hugo, overwhelmed, drops his gun.

The Red light comes on with a ping

Russian soldier. Broken! (stabs himself, collapses)

end scene

Day Four - Morning

On the gurney lies the Russian soldier with the sword sticking out of his chest

Diane is on the gurney w/ him. ? (Or else they are on the floor)

Lovely in the wheelchair, waking. Needless to say they both look like hell warmed over.

Lovely. Shit. What day is it?

Diane. Oh god.

Lovely. Four days. Four days! Did you get the key?

Diane. The key?

Lovely. The key!

Diane. I forgot.

Lovely. You forgot?

Diane. I was drunk! Shoot me! (pause) The Russian soldier.

Lovely. I don't want to talk about the Russian soldier.

Diane. Just another very bad flesh wound?

Lovely. (beat) What did you write about me?

Diane. Are you still on about that?

Lovely. What , what did you write?

Diane. NOTHING.

Lovely. I can imagine. All that about refrigerators? The ozone? What what .
What is tender?!

Diane covers her ears.

Lovely. Am I bleeding?

Diane. What?

Lovely. AM I BLEEDING.

Diane. Where?

Lovely. My nose.

Diane. I don't see anything.

Lovely. Ears?

Diane. Nothing.

Lovely. It's always like that. You see nothing. It was Silver City wasn't it?

Diane. What happened at Silver City?

Lovely. The trimaran episode? The ponies? The razor blade thing?

Diane. Nothing!

Lovely. Get your laptop booted - hurry up.

Lovely pulls the plug from the body on the gurney.

Lovely. Google up Jug Villy.

Diane. How do you spell it?

Lovely. Jesus...D j h v u g u s - dammit - try Koba

Diane. Cocktail bar in Brighton

Lovely. Hurry before Hugo gets back.

Diane. Mountain bike, /vollgefederte

Lovely. /No no/

Diane. Koba The Patricide a heroic figure who avenged the death of his friends and fought the powers that oppressed him. Stalin's favourite character. - Hugo is really yanking our chain, isn't he?

Lovely. Gimme that thing. KOBA Corporation - quality plastic products for the / horticultural -

Diane. Wait! Koba TV the interzone where art is not crime, crime not art. ... the interzone. Koba TV. Yeah?

(pause)

Lovely. Maybe it is the Stalin connection.

Diane. Stalin?

Lovely. Josef Stalin. He laid in a bed behind a closed door for four days, and when they finally opened it, they found him dead. Poisoned, murdered, brain haemorrhage. No one knows. Everyone was afraid to open the door.

(they stare at the door)

Diane. You know what I think?

Lovely. You think I am afraid to open the door!

Diane. No, no...Hugo...

Lovely. Hugo? Has he gone too far? You want to turn him in. Report him. These bodies. The pizza boy. The old crone. The Russian Soldier. You think it's all simply over the top. Shameful.

Diane. Dreadful - however...

Lovely. Illegal.

Diane. Almost sad but ...

Lovely. I know you so well. But report Hugo & then what? He'll never let us in that room. This is the big one Di. The once in a lifetime. The moment when the door opens, & you w/ your hair, & me w/ my heart. My huge heart.

Diane. But Lovely....

Lovely. Lovely nothing! You report him & it ends. I won't let that happen. I will stop you. Whatever it takes. Stop you! Don't make me do what I would have to do to stop you.

Diane. I was thinking about the green peppers on the pizza. I was thinking about the crusts. I'm getting thin here.

the phone rings

Diane. What did you write about me Lovely?

Lovely. What do you mean?

Diane. It was so short. No more than one or two words. But I can't help but wonder --

Lovely. Answer your phone.

Diane answers it

Diane. Sweet. I can't talk right now. Fire and ice Bambi. Fire and ice. Kisses for mommy? (she hangs up) Things were so simple before. Just as awful, but at least simple.

*She picks up the gun, goes to the door, tries it, it opens, she goes in.
Lovely does not notice. She is banging on her cell phone.*

Lovely. I find it so amusing and typical that your phone works & mine doesn't.

enter Hugo w/a gurney. On the gurney is a very small child-size body covered fully by a blanket. Also, a pair of shoes.

Hugo. Your driver's license & your Cloudwalkers. Here. Take. Where is the other girl?

Lovely turns to see that Di is missing.

Lovely. Di?

Hugo. Where is she?

Lovely. I don't know - she was - (shift) Oh. She must be in the parking lot the other side of the tundra

Hugo shakes his head no.

Lovely. Shooting the pigeon. Where are you going? I know who's in there. Oh I know. You can't stop me now. Did you see the work we did on the glue kids?

Hugo. A beautiful paradox.

Lovely. Oh I get it, I see. No matter, how much I've suffered or gone through, it'll never be as much as you. Ergo, Hugo, I don't count. Ergo, Hugo, I am not worthy. Right?

Hugo. As you please. The first is always the hardest. (he starts to leave)

Lovely. You're caught in the machine baby. & I know about machines. The grinding! The noise! But I won't tell. I'm w/ you Hugo, I'm on your side.

Hugo. The glue kids. The work you did. The light. The soft music. Precious.

Lovely. I don't have to go to there to know what it's physically like. I could. If I wanted. & I will. One day. Build a fire, and LIVE LIKE THAT. (pause). I have compassion. Never say that. Never. I have more compassion... I could make you immortal. All that hardship ... (pause) you know, I woke up last night, and heard - I thought it was a dog barking, a little yappy dog barking - (imitating the sound) then I realized it was a woman sobbing. Did you hear that?

(Hugo turns to leave again)

Lovely. Hugo, what did Diane write about me? Those three pages. What did she say?

Hugo. Nothing. Go home.

Lovely. Three pages! She said something. Tell me. Tell me. You tell me!

Hugo. Please. Control yourself. It was a recipe. Your secret terrible recipe for borscht. Agh. Never put fish in borscht. tsk tsk tsk.

a gunshot
Lovely runs to the door, throws it open, rushes in. Returns.

Lovely. Where is she? ! There's no one in there. Where is Diane?

Hugo. Where is who?

Lovely. You know who, my sister. & Stalin.

Hugo. Stalin?

Lovely. Uncle Joe!

Hugo. Died. March 5, 1953.

Diane's phone rings

Hugo. May I? (he takes the phone) Who? For Diane? I am afraid this woman you speak of does not exist. Never did. (hangs up)

Lovely. You see... what I wrote about Diane ... I was only kidding, I mean you weren't going to stop until we wrote something, & she was writing to beat the band, so I had to, I had to write something, but I was kidding. I was only kidding! Where is she?!

Hugo. Tsk tsk tsk.

Lovely. But so what! The word gave it life, but so what. Every second is slipping away, we're losing the past. Because the impact of one is not compacted, or confounded, & there are millions.... goddammit. It is still the same, candles, heat, walking, waiting, you want to leave something behind, something that means you existed, that you are more than -

Hugo. a carrot, a kulak -

Lovely picks up her camera to video Hugo.

Hugo. Oh give it here. Give it. Give it here! (how strong does he get here? - until Lovely hands it over)

for the first time Lovely's phone rings.

Hugo. Answer.

Lovely's phone rings – it rings with the sound of a braying donkey - it brays & brays

end play