

The Williams Project

Adapted from the writings of Tennessee Williams

By Clare Lopez

Directed by Patricia Troxel and Clare Lopez

**Note: This script was created for the PCPA Acting Conservatory Project in 2011. The script was structured to fit a cast of 13 players, 2 men and 11 women, structured around the plays and autobiographical work of the playwright Tennessee Williams. The piece runs approximately 90 min long. Casting intentionally utilized gender reversal for the purpose of teaching versatile acting techniques.*

CAST

Jordon Bridges

Stephanie Bull

Chelsea Chatput

Jess Chanliau

Paige Ivy

Kelly McGaw

Britney Simpson

Ross Murry

Aislynn Pernerman

Amanda Salmon

Ambre Shoneff

Jasmine Sim

Krysta Smith

Outline:

Biographical Section I: 1911-1953

Camino Real

LORD BYRON.....Paige Ivy, Amanda, Aislynn, Britney, Stephanie
ESMERALDA & KILROY:.....Jasmine & Krysta
MAGURITE & KILROY:.....Krysta & Jess

Personal Quotations from Williams

Biographical Section II 1953-1955

Cat on A Hot Tin Roof

MAGGIE:.....Britney, Ambre, Amanda, Kelly, Stephanie,
Paige, Jess, Chelsea, Aislynn, Jasmine
BRICK:Jordan, Ross

Poem: Testa Dell Efebo

Biographical Section III 1956-1977

Vieux Carré

MRS. WIRE & NURSIE:.....Britney & Stephanie
THE WRITER & NIGHTENGALE:Chelsea & Kelly
THE WRITER:Ross, Jess, Chelsea
JANE & TYE:.....Aislynn & Ross
THE WRITER:Kelly, Jasmine
JANE & The WRITERAmbre & Amanda
THE WRITER:.....Krysta, Ambre
THE WRITER & SKY:Paige & Jordan
THE WRITER..... Jordan

More Personal Quotes from Williams

Biographical Section IV 1978-1983

FINALE

**Note: This piece was structured linearly, so that each piece of writing appears 1st in the order of time that events occurred (such as when Williams move schools or jobs, or published a play), and 2nd in the chronological order of the play a scene/monologue appeared in*

Gesture Circle

JORDAN:

1911 “I was born in the Episcopal rectory of Columbus, Miss., an old town on the Tombigbee River which was so dignified and reserved that there was a saying...that you had to live there a whole year before a neighbor would smile at you on the street.... I was christened Thomas Lanier **Williams**. (ALL)

1912- 1913 – 1914 – 1915 – 1916- 1917- 1918- 1919- 1921

KELLY

(1922) “When I was about twelve, my father, a traveling salesman, was appointed to an office position in St. Louis and so we left the rectory and moved **north**.” (ALL)

1923 1924 1925 1926

JESS:

1927 “My sister and I spend nearly all our evenings together...We strolled about the business streets of University City... I’d usually follow her into her bedroom when we came home, to continue our warmly desultory chats.....Rose taught me to dance to the ..**Victrola**

1928

ROSS:

1929: I entered college during the great American depression and after a couple years I couldn’t afford to continue but had to drop out and take a clerical job in the shoe company that employed my father. The two years I spend in that corporation where indescribably torment to me as an individual but of immense value to me as a writer for they gave me firsthand knowledge of what it means to be a small wage earner in a hopelessly **routine job**...(ALL)

1930 1931 1932 1933 1934

AMBRE:

1935: One day, coming home from work, I collapsed and was removed to the hospital...I had suffered the heart attack that ended my career as a clerk –errand boy at the shoe company....

1936

AMANDA:

1937: Rose was sent away to the State Asylum in 1937. It’s not very pleasant to look back on that year and to know that Rose knew she was going, and to know, also, that I was not too kind to my sister. You see, for the first time in my life, I had become accepted by a group of young friends and my delighted relations with them preoccupied me to such an extent that I failed to properly observe the shadow falling on Rose..

BRITNEY:

1938 I. went back South to live with my grandparents in Memphis... Then I began to have a little success with my writing. I became self-sufficient. I put myself through two more years of college and got a B.A. degree at the University of Iowa

CHELSEA:

1939: Grand, God be with you. ; A chord breaking. 1000 miles away. Rose. Her head cut open.; A knife thrust in her brain. ; Me. Here. Smoking. ; My father, mean as a devil, snoring - 1000 miles away." "She was the best of us, do you understand?"

AISLYNN:

1940: *Battle of Angels* Closed on opening night

1941 1942 1943 1944

KRYSTA:

1945- *The Glass Menagerie*: New York Drama Critics' Circle Award for Best Play.

1946

PAIGE:

1947- *The Street Car Named Desire* A Pulitzer Prize

STEPHANIE:

1948: *Summer and Smoke* 102 performances

JASMINE:

In the early fall of 1948, I had a quite sudden and accidental and marvelous re-encounter with Frank Phillip Merlo.... 'Let's have a picnic at my pace' I suggested... Well that's how it began to work out. Frankie stayed over with Tennessee, on that magical carpet of a bed back of the submarine garden... I did not really fall in love with Frankie all at once. In fact at first I was hesitant to make it a permanent thing. I was too used to having freedom... I went to St. Louis to see Mother... it became unmistakable clear to me that my heart, too long accustomed to transitory attachments, had found in the young Sicilian a home at last. I sent him a wire from St. Louis ..I returned after midnight. There on the huge bed was little Frankie, sleeping. So began a relationship that lasted for fourteen years."

1949 – 1950

AISLYNN:

1951- *The Rose Tattoo*- Tony Award for Best Play.

1952

AMBRE

1953: *Camino Real: The Royal Road*", "I would like to admit to you quite frankly that I can't say with any personal conviction that I have written a good play, I only know that I have felt a release in this work which I wanted you to feel with me"

BLOCK 8 on the CAMINO REAL

PAIGE/ BYRON:

When Shelly's corpse was recovered from the sea..

--it was burned on the beach at Viareggio—I watched the spectacle from my carriage because the stench was revolting..Then it—fascinated me! I got out of my carriage. Went nearer, holding a handkerchief to my nostrils!—I saw the front of the skull had broken away in the flames, and there—

And there was the brain of Shelly, indistinguishable from a cooking stew!—boiling, bubbling, hissing! —in the blackening—cracked—pot—of his skull!

--Trelawney, his friend, Trelawney, through salt and oil and frankincense in the flames and finally almost intolerable stench—

(Abdulla giggles. Gutman slaps him)

--Was gone and burning was pure!—as a man's burning should be..

A man's burning *ought* to be pure!—not like mine (a crep suzette—burned in brandy)

Shelley's burning was finally very pure!

But the body, the corpse, spit open like a grilled pig!

AMANDA/ BYRON:

-And then Trelawney --as the ribs of the corpse unlocked -- reached into them as a baker reaches quickly into an oven! --And snatched out- as a baker would a biscuit! --the *heart* of Shelley! Snatched the heart of Shelley out of the blistering corpse!--Out of the purifying--blue-flame... And it was *over!*—I thought—I thought it was a disgusting thing to do, to snatch a man's heart from his body! What can one man do with another man's heart?

AISLYNN/ BYRON:

That's very true, Senor. But a poet's vocation, which used to be my vocation, is to influence the heart in a gentler fashion that you have made your mark on that loaf of bread. He ought to purify it and lift it above its ordinary level. For what is the heart but a sort of—

(He makes a high, groping gesture in the air.)

—A sort of—*instrument!*—that translates *noise* into *music*, chaos into—*order* . . .

*(Abdullah ducks almost to the earth in an effort to stifle his mirth.
Gutman coughs to cover his own amusement.)*

—*a mysterious order!*

(He raises his voice till it fills the plaza.)

—That was my vocation once upon a time, before it was obscured by vulgar plaudits!—Little by little it was lost among gondolas and palazzos!—masked balls, glittering salons, huge shadowy courts and torch-lit entrances!—

BRINTNEY/ BYRON

Baroque Facades, canopies and carpets, candelabra and gold plate among snowy damask, ladies with (their) throats as slender as flower-stems, bending and breathing toward me their fragrant breath-----Exposing their breast to me!

Whispering, half-smiling!- And everywhere marble, the visible grandeur of marble, pink and gray marble, veined and tinted as flayed corrupting flesh,- all these provided agreeable distractions from the rather frightening solitude of a poet. Oh, I wrote many cantos in Venice and Constantinople and in Ravenna and Rome, on all of those Latin and Levantine excursions that my twisted foot led me into- but I wonder about them a little, they seem to improve as the wine in the bottle- dwindles... *There is a passion for declivity in this world!*

And lately I've found myself listening to hired musicians behind a row of artificial palm trees- instead of the single- pure-stringed instrument of my heart... Well, then, it's time to leave here!

STEPHANIE:/ BYRON

There is a time for departure even when there's no certain place to go! I'm going to look for one, now. I'm sailing to Athens. At least I can look up at the Acropolis, I can stand at the foot of it and look up at broken columns on the crest of a hill - if not purity, at least its recollection. I can sit quietly looking for a long, long time in absolute silence, and possibly, yes, *still* possibly - The old pure music will come to me again. Of course on the other hand I may hear only the little noise of insects in the grass...But I am sailing to Athens! *Make Voyages!* - *Attempt them!* - there's nothing else...

BLOCK 12 on The Camino Real- pg 823 KRYSTA/JASMINE

ESMERALDA

What are you going to do?

KILROY

I 'm about to establish a beach-head on that sofa.

(He sits down)

How about—lifting your veil?

ESMERALDA

I can't lift it.

KILROY

Why not?

ESMERALDA

I promised Mother I wouldn't.

KILROY

I thought your mother was the broadminded type.

ESMERALDA

Oh, she is, but you know how mothers are. You can lift it for me, if you say pretty please.

KILROY

Aww—

ESMERALDA

Go on, say it! Say pretty please!

KILROY

No!

ESMERALDA

Why not?

KILROY

It's silly.

ESMERALDA

Then you can't lift my veil!

KILROY

Oh, all right. Pretty please.

ESMERALDA

Say it again!

KILROY

Pretty please.

ESMERALDA

Now say it once more like you mean it.

(HE jumps up. She grabs his hand)

Don't go away.

KILROY

You're making a fool out of me.

ESMERALDA

I was just teasing a little. Because you're so cute. Sit down again, please—*pretty* please!

(He falls on the couch)

KILROY

What is that wonderful perfume you've got on?

ESMERALDA

Guess!

KILROY

Chanel Number Five?

ESMERALDA

No.

KILROY

Tabu?

ESMERALDA

No.

KILROY

I give up.

ESMERALDA

It's *Noche en Acapulco*. I'm just dying to go to Acapulco. I wish that you would take me to Acapulco.

(He sits up)

What's the matter?

KILROY

You gypsies' daughters are invariable reminded of something without which you cannot do—just when it looks like everything has been fixed.

ESMERALDA

That isn't nice at all. I'm not the gold-digger type. Some girls see themselves in silver foxes. I only see myself in Acapulco!

KILROY

At Todd's Place?

ESMERALDA

Oh, no, at the Mirado! Watching those pretty boys drive of the Quebrada!

KILROY

Look again, Baby. Maybe you'll see yourself in Paramount Pictures or having a Singapore Sling at a Statler bar!

ESMERALDA

You're being sarcastic?

KILROY

Nope. Just realistic. All of you gypsies' daughters have hears of stone, and I'm not whistling "Dixie"! But just the same, the night before a man dies, he says, "Pretty please—will you let me lift your veil"—while the Street cleaners wait for him right outside the door!—Because to be warm for a little longer is life. And love?—that's a four-letter word which is sometimes no better than one you are see printed on fences by kids playing hooky from school!—Oh, well—what's the use of complaining? You gypsies' daughters have ears that only catch sounds like the snap of a gold cigarette case! Or, pretty please, Baby, —we're going to Acapulco!

ESMERALDA

Are we?

KILROY

See what I mean?

(To the audience)

Didn't I tell you?

(To Esmeralda)

Yes! In the morning!

ESMERALDA

Ohhhh! I'm dizzy with joy! My little heart is going pitty-pat!

KILROY

My big heart is going boom-boom! Can I lift your veil now?

ESMERALDA

If you will be gentle.

KILROY

I would not hurt a fly unless it had on leather mittens.

BLOCK 14 on the Camino Real pg 832 JESS/ KRYSTA

MARGUERITE:

Sit down with me please.

KILROY:

They're coming for me. The Gypsy told me I'm on top of their list. Thanks for. Taking my. Hand.

(Piping is heard)

MARGUERITE:

Thanks for taking mine.

(Piping)

KILROY:

Do me one more favor. Take out of my pocket a picture. My figures are. Stiff.

MARGUERITE:

This one?

KILROY:

My one. True. Woman.

MARGUERITE:

A silver-framed photo! Was she really so fair?

KILROY:

She was so fair and much fairer than they could tint that picture!

MARGUERITE:

Then you have been on the street when the street was royal.

KILROY:

Yeah... when the street was royal!

(Piping is heard. Kilroy rises)

MARGUERITE:

Don't get up, don't leave me! (logical move..?)

KILROY:

I want to be on my feet when the Streetcleaners come for me!

MARGUERITE:

Sit back down again and tell me about your girl.

(He sits)

KILROY:

Y'know what it is you miss most? When you're separated. From someone. You lived. With. And loved? It's waking up in the night! With that- warmness beside you!

MARGUERITE:

Yes, that *warmness* beside you!

KILROY:

Once you get used to that. *Warmness!* It's a hell of a lonely feeling to wake up without it! Specially in some dollar-a-night hotel room on Skid! A hot-water bottle won't do. And a stranger. Won't do. It has to be someone you're used to. And that you. KNOW LOVES you!

(Piping is heard)

Can you see them?

MARGUERITE:

I see no one but you.

KILROY:

I looked at my wife one night when she was sleeping and that was the night that the medics wouldn't okay me for no more fights... Well... My wife was sleeping with a smile like a child's. I kissed her. She didn't wake up. I took a pencil and paper. I wrote her. Good bye!

MARGUERITE:

That was the night she would have loved you the most!

KILROY:

Yeah. *That* night, but what about *after* that night? Oh. Lady... Why should a beautiful girl tie up with a broken-down champ?- The earth still turning and her obliged to turn with it, not out-of dark into light but out of light into dark? Naw, naw, naw, naw! - Washed up!- Finished!

(Piping)

... that ain't a word that a man can't look at... There ain't no words in the language a man can't look at... and know just what they mean. And be. And act. And *go!*

(He turns to the waiting Streetcleaners)

Come on!... Come on!... COME ON, YOU SONS OF BITCHES! KILROY IS HERE! HE'S READY!

Quote group A:

Caged bird's accept each other, but flight is what they long for."

"And so we talk to each other, write and wire to teach other, call each other short and long distance across land and sea, clasp hands with each other at meeting and at parting, fight each other and even destroy each other because of this always somewhat thwarted effort to break through walls to each other."

"Luxury is the wolf at the door and it's fangs are the vanities and conceits germinated by success. When an artist learn this, he knows where the danger is."

"The fountain is dry, but there's plenty to drink at the Siete Mares!"

When your candle burns low, you've got to believe that the last light shows you something (more) besides the progress of darkness"

Physical beauty is passing - a transitory possession - but beauty of the mind, richness of the spirit, tenderness of the heart...aren't taken away but grow! Increase with the years!"

(GRID off last 2)

KELLY:

1954 *Hard candy: A book of Stories*

STEPHANIE:

1955- "They have put Rose back in the asylum because she refused to remain with her companion who had slapped her three times for unspecified transgressions. This shocks me beyond endurance. ...I think my dear little sister deserves a crown in heaven, if there are crowns and heaven, for what she's had to suffer these eighteen years since committed"

KRYSTA:

Cat on a hot tin Roof

"The bird that I hope to catch in the net of this play is not the solution of one man's psychological problem. I'm trying to catch the true quality of experience in a group of people, that cloudy, flickering, evanescent—fiercely charged!—interplay of live human beings in the thundercloud of a common crisis."

CAT ON A HOT TIN ROOF

BRITNEY/MAGGIE

I'll tell you what they're up to, boy of mine!- They're up to cutting you out of your father's estate, and- Now we know that Big Daddy'd dyin' of- *cancer*...

Yep, got th' report just now...it didn't surprise me, Baby...

I recognized the symptoms soon's we got here last spring and I'm willin' to bet you that Brother Man and his wife were pretty sure of it, too. That more than likely explains (reason) why their usual summer migration to the coolness of the Great Smokes was passed up to this summer in favor of- hustlin' down here ev'ry whipstitch with their whole screamin' tribe! And why so many allusions have been made to Rainbow Hill lately. You know what Rainbow Hill is? Place that's famous for treatin' alcoholics an' dope fiends in the movies!

AMBRE/MAGGIE:

No, and you don't take dope. Otherwise you're a perfect candidate for Rainbow Hill, Baby, and that's where they aim to ship you—over my dead body! Yep, over my dead body they'll ship you there, but nothing would please them better. Then Brother Man could get a-hold of the purse strings and dole out remittances to us, maybe get power-of-attorney and sign checks for us and cut off our credit whenever, wherever he wanted! Son-of-a-bitch!-- How'd you like that, Baby?—Well, you've been doin' just about ev'rything in your power to bring it about, you've just been doin' ev'rything you can think of to aid and abet them in this scheme of theirs! Quittin' work, devoting yourself to the occupation of drinkin'!—Breakin' your ankle last night on the high school athletic field: doin' what? Jumpin' hurdles? At two or three in the morning? Just fantastic! Got it in the paper. Clarksdale Register carried a nice little item about it, human interest story about a well-known former athlete stagin' a one-man track meet on the Glorious Hill High School athletic field last night, but was slightly out of condition and didn't clear the first hurdle! Brother Man Gooper claims he exercised his influence t' keep it from goin' out over AP or UP or every goddam "P."

AMANDA/ MAGGIE:

But, Brick? You still have one big advantage! Big daddy dotes on you, honey. And he can't stand Brother Man and Brother Man's wife, that monster of fertility, Mae; she's downright odious to him! Know how I know? By the little expressions that flicker over his face when that woman is holding fo'th on one of her choice topics such as—how she refused twilight sleep!—when the twins were delivered! Because she feels motherhood's an experience that a woman ought to experience fully!—in order to fully appreciate the wonder and beauty of it! HAH! —and how she made Brother Man come in an' stand beside her in the delivery room so he would not miss out on the “wonder and beauty” of it either!—producin' those no-neck monsters...”

KELLY/ MAGGIE:

—Big Daddy shares my attitude toward those two! As for me, well – I give him a laugh now and then and he tolerates me. In fact! – I sometimes suspect that Big Daddy harbors a little unconscious “lech” for me. . . . Way he always drops his eyes down my body when I’m talkin’ to him, drops his eyes to my boobs an’ licks his old chops! Ha ha!

Did anyone ever tell you that you’re an ass-aching Puritan, Brick?

I think it’s mighty fine that that ole fellow, on the doorstep of death, still takes in my shape with what I think is deserved appreciation!

And you wanna know something else? Big Daddy didn’t know how many little Maes and Goopers had been produced! “How many kids have you got?” he asked at the table, just like Brother Man and his wife were new acquaintances to him! Big Mama said he was jokin’, but that ole boy wasn’t jokin’, Lord, no!

And when they infawmed him that they had five already and were turning out number six! – the news seemed to come as a sort of unpleasant surprise . . .

STEPHANIE/ MAGGIE:

Yes, you should of been at that supper-table, baby. Y’know, Big Daddy bless his ole sweet soul, he”s the dearest ole thing in the world, but he does hunch over his food as if he preferred not to notice anything else. Well Mae an’ Gooper were side by side at the table, direckly across from Big Daddy, watchin’ his face like hawks while they jawed an’ jabbered about the cuteness an’ brilliance of th’ no-neck monsters! And the no-nech monsters were ranged around the table, some in high chairs so on th’ Books of Knowledge, all in fancy little paper caps in honor of Big Daddy’s birthday, and all through dinner, well, I want you to know that Brother Man an’ his partner never once, for one moment, stopped exchanging pokes an’ pinches an’ kicks an’ signs an’ signals! - Why, they were like a couple of cardsharps fleecing a sucker. - Even Big Mama, bless her ole sweet soul, she isn’t th’ quickest an’ brightest thing in the world, she finally noticed, at last, an’ said to Gooper, "Gooper, what are you an’ Mae makin’ all these signs at each other about?" - I swear t’ goodness, I nearly choked on my chicken!

PAIGE/ MAGGIE:

....Y’know---your brother Gooper still cherishes the illusion he took a giant step up on the social ladder when he married Miss Mae Flynn of the Memphis Flynnns.

But I have a piece of Spanish news for Gooper. The Flynnns never had a thing in this would but money and they lost that, they were nothing at all but fairly successful climbers. Of course, Mae Flynn came out in Memphis eight years before I made my debut in Nashville, but I had friends at Ward-Belmont who came from Memphis and they used to come to see me and I used to go see them for Christmas and spring vacations, and so I know who rates an’ who doesn’t rate in Memphis society. Why, y’know ole Papa Flynn, he barely escaped doing time in the Federal pen for shady manipulations on th’ stock market when his chain stores crashed, and as for Mae having been a cotton carnival queen, as they remind us so often, lest we forget, well that’s one honor that I don’t envy her for!

JESS/ MAGGIE:

Sit on a brass throne on a tacky float an' ride down Mai Street, smilin', bowin', and blowin' kisses to all the trash on the street— Why, year before last, when Susan McPheeters was singled out fo' that honor, y'know what happened to her? Y'know what happened to poor little Susie McPheeters?

Somebody spit tobacco juice in her face. That's right, some old drunk leaned out of a window in the Hotel Gayoso an yelled, "Hey, Queen, hey, hey, there, Queenie!" Poor Susie looked up and flashed him a radiant smile and he shot out a squirt of tobacco juice right poor Susie's face.

CHELSEA/MAGGIE:

-Why are you looking at me like that? The way y' were lookin' at me just now, befo' I caught your eye in the mirror and you started t' whistle! I don't know how t' describe it but it froze my blood!- I've caught you looking' at me like that so often lately. What are you thinking' of when you look at me like that? What were you thinking'?

Don't you think I know that-? Don't you-? -think I know that-? That I've gone through this-*hideous!-transformation*, become- *hard! Frantic! -cruel!!*

That's what you've been observing in me lately. How could y' help but observe it? That's all right. I'm not- thin-skinned anymore, can't afford t' be thin-skinned anymore.

-But Brick? Brick? I was *goin'* t' say something: that I get- lonely. Very!
Living with someone you love can be lonelier- than living entirely *alone!*- if the one that y' love doesn't love you..."

AISLYNN/ MAGGIE:

Did you have a nice shower? Was the water cool?

But it made y' feel fresh, huh?

I know something would make y' feel *much* fresher!

An alcohol rub. Or cologne, a rub with cologne! You've kept in good shape.

I always thought drinkin' men lost their looks, but I was plainly mistaken.

You're the only drinkin' man I know that it never seems t' put fat on.

Well, sooner or later it's bound to soften you up. I was just beginning to soften up Skipper when-

I'm sorry. I never could keep my fingers off a sore--I wish you *would* lose your looks. If you did it would make the martyrdom of Saint Maggie a little more bearable. but no such goddam luck. I actually believe you've gotten better looking since you've gone on the bottle. Yeah, a person who didn't know you would think you'd never had a tense nerve in your body or a strained muscle.

Of course, you always had that detached quality as if you were playing a game without much concern over whether you won or lost, and now that you've lost the game, not lost but just quit playing, you have that rare sort of charm that usually only happens in very old or hopelessly sick people, the charm of the defeated.--you look so cool, so cool, so enviably cool.

JASMINE/ MAGGIE

They're playing croquet. The moon has appeared an it's white, just beginning to turn a little bit yellow..

You were a wonderful lover...

Such a wonderful person to go to bed with, and I think mostly because you were really indifferent to it. Isn't that right? Never had any anxiety about it, did it naturally, easily, slowly, with absolute confidence and perfect calm, more like opening a door for a lady or seating her at a table than giving expression to any longing for her. Your indifference made you wonderful at lovemaking—*strange?*—but true...

You know, if I thought you would never, never, *never* make love to me again—I would go downstairs to the kitchen and pick out the longest and sharpest knife I could find and stick it straight into my heart, I swear that I would!

But one thing I don't have is the charm of the defeated, my hat is still in the ring, and I am determined to win!

--What is the victory of a cat on a hot tin roof?—I wish I knew...

Just staying on it, I guess as long as she can...

(More croquet sounds)

Later tonight I'm going to tell you I love you an' maybe by that time you'll be drunk enough to believe me. Yes, they're playing croquet...

Big Daddy is dying of cancer...

What were you thinking of when I caught you looking at me like that? What were you thinking of Skipper?

(Brick takes up his crutch, rises)

Oh, excuse me, forgive me, but the laws of silence don't work!

No, laws of silence don't work...

(Brick cross to the bar, takes a quick drink, and rubs his head with a towel)

Laws of silence don't work...

When something is festering in your memory or your imagination, laws of silence don't work, it's just like shutting a door and locking it on a house on fire in hope of forgetting that the house is burning. But not facing a fire doesn't put it out. Silence about a thing just magnifies it. It grows and festers in silence, becomes malignant...

Get dressed, Brick.

JORDAN/ BRICK:

All right. You're asking for it, Big Daddy. We're finally going to have the real true talk you wanted. It's too late to stop it, now, we got to carry it through and cover every subject.

(He hobbles back to the liquor cabinet.)

Uh-huh. *(He opens the ice bucket and picks up the silver tongs with slow admiration of their frosty brightness.)*

Maggie declares that Skipper and I went into pro-football after we left "Ole Miss" because we were scared to grow up . . .

(He moves downstage with the shuffle and clop of a cripple on a crutch. As Margaret did when her speech became "recitative," he looks out into the house, commanding its attention by his direct, concentrated gaze -- a broken, "tragically elegant" figure telling simply as much as he knows of "the Truth":)

—Wanted to -- keep on tossing -- those long, long! -- high, high! -- passes that -- couldn't be intercepted except by time, the aerial attack that made us famous! And so we did, we did, we kept it up for one season, that aerial attack, we help it high! -- Yeah, but—

—that summer, Maggie, she laid the law down to me, said, Now or never, and so I married Maggie. . . .

She went on the road that fall with the Dixie Stars. Oh, she made a great show of being the world's best sport. She wore a -- wore a -- tall bearskin cap! A shako, they call it, a dyed moleskin coat, a moleskin coat dyed red! -- Cut up crazy! Rented hotel ballrooms for victory celebrations, wouldn't cancel them when it -- turned out -- defeat. . . .MAGGIE THE CAT! Ha ha!

ROSS/ BRICK:

—But Skipper, he had some fever which came back on him which the doctors couldn't explain, an' I got that injury-turned out to be just a shadow on th' X-ray plate, an' a touch of bursitis...

I lay in a hospital bed, watched out games on TV, saw Maggie on the bench next to Skipper when he was hauled out of the game for stumbles, fumbles!-burned me up the way she hung on his arm! Y'know I think that Maggie had always felt sort of left out because she and me never got any closer together than two people just get in bed, which is not much closer than two cats on a - fence humping...

So! She took this time to work on poor dumb Skipper. He was a less than average student at Ole Miss, you know that don't you?!- Poured in his mind the dirty, false idea that what we were, him an' me was a frustrated case of that ole pair of sisters that lived in this room, Jack Straw and Peter Ochello! He, poor Skipper, went to bed with Maggie to prove it wasn't true, an' when it didn't work out, he thought it *was* true!—Skipper broke in two like a rotten stick-nobody ever turned so fast to a lush-or died of it so quick...

—Now are you satisfied?

POEM: Testa dell Efebo

STEPHANIE:

Of Flora did his luster spring / And

BRITNEY:

gushing waters bathed him so / That trembling shells were struck

AMANDA:

and held / Until his turning let them go.

AMBRE:

Then gold he was when summer was;

PAIGE:

Unchangeable

CHELSEA:

this turning seemed /And the repose of sculpture

AISLYNN:

Told / How thinly gold his shoulder gleamed.

KELLY:

A cloud of birds awoke in him

JORDON:

When Virgo murmured half awake

KRYSTA:

Then Higher lifted birds and clouds

JES:

To break in fire as glasses break

JASMINE:

A lunatic with tranquil eyes

PAIGE:

He must have been when he had dimmed

GROUP1:

And that town burned

GROUP 2

wherein was turned

ROSS:

This slender copper cast of him.

ROSS:

1956- *Baby Doll*

JESS:

1957 *Orpheus Descending* 68 performances

BRITNEY:

I have not been able to write a decent line since last spring and I believe my writing career is finished. My writing career was my life. I failed at everything else in a spectacular way

PAIGE:

1958- *Suddenly Last Summer*

KELLY:

1959- *The Sweet bird of Youth* 375 performances

AISLYNN:

1960- *Period of Adjustment* 132 performances

AMANDA:

1961- *The Night of the Iguana*- Tony Award for Best Play

CHELSEA:

“Have I mentioned that Frankie was a chain-smoker? At least four packs a day. Then one day—just before his release or possibly just after the surgery—I called his doctors and was told that Frankie’s lung-cancer could not be operated upon. It was situated right alongside his heart and its condition was too advanced for surgery to be effective. So they had sewed him back up, just like that. ‘How long’ {six months}. I hung up and burst into tears. .. The cancer was spreading relentlessly, quickly, from organ to organ. He ate almost nothing and his weight dropped under a hundred...his doctors said ‘All we can do (now) is see where it hits him next’... As long as Frankie was well, I was happy. He had a gift for creating a life and, when he ceased to be alive, I couldn’t create a life for myself. So I went into a seven year depression.”

1962 1963

KRYSTA:

1964- *The milk train doesn’t stop here anymore* 69 performances

JASMINE:

1965- *Mutilated*

1966 1967

JORDAN:

1968-*The Seven descendants of Myrtle*, 29 performances

AMANDA:

Will Mr. Merriweather Return from Memphis?

JESS:

1969-*In the Bar of a Tokyo Hotel* 25 performances

AISLYNN:

1970 “Nobody, nobody who loves life as much as I do, after my seven long years in limbo, is about to kick off now with the new, deeply sensuous pleasure that I take in every moment of living. I would fight like a tiger for my life, now, having totally recovered from my submission to an unconscious death-wish that obsessed me, possessed me since the loss of the Horse [Frank] who gave me life while he lived” 1971, 1972

PAIGE:

1973- *Outcry*: 12 performances,

AMBRE:

Small Craft Warnings

1974

AMANDA:

1975- *Memoirs*

BRITNEY:

1976- *The Eccentricities of a Nightingale* 24 performances;

The Red Devil Battery Sign ,

This is (an entertainment)

JES:

1977- *Vieux Carré* Broadway: 5 performances

KELLY:

You know, I heard some doctor say on the radio that people die of loneliness....They do. Die of it, it kills ‘em. Oh, that’s not the cause that’s put on the death warrant, but that’s the true cause. I tell you, there’s so much loneliness in this house that you can hear it. Set still and you can hear it: a sort of awful – soft – groaning in all the walls.”

Vieux Carre- Part One, Scene One; pg. 829-830 BRITNEY & STEPHANIE

MRS. WIRE:

- Nursie! Nursie- where's my pillows?

(NURSIE is spotlighted on a slightly higher level, looking up fearfully at something. She Screams.)

Hey, what the hell is going on in there!

NURSIE:

A bat, a bat's in the kitchen!

MRS. WIRE:

Bat? I never seen a bat nowhere on these premises, Nursie.

NURSIE:

Why, Mizz Wire, I swear it was a bull bat up there in the kitchen. You tell me no bats, why, they's a pack of bats that hang upside down from that ole banana tree in the courtyard from dark till daybreak, when they all scream at once and fly up like a- explosion of- damned souls out of a graveyard.

MRS. WIRE:

If such a thing was true-

NURSIE:

As God's word is true!

MRS. WIRE:

I repeat, if such a thing was true- which it isn't- an' you go tawkin' about it with you big black mouth, why it could ruin the reputation of this rooming house which is the only respectable rooming house in the Quarter. Now where's my pillows, Nursie?

NURSIE:

Shit...

MRS. WIRE:

What you say?

NURSIE:

I said shoot...faw shit. You'd see they're on the cot if you had a light bulb in this hall. What you got against light? First this God said on the first day of creation was, "Let there be light."

MRS. WIRE:

You hear him say that?

NURSIE:

You never read the scriptures.

MRS. WIRE:

Why should I bother to read ‘em with you quotin’ ‘em to me like a female preacher. Book say this, say that, makes me sick of the book. Where’s my flashlight Nursie?

NURSIE:

‘Sunder the pillows. (*She stumbles on a heavy knapsack.*) Lawd! What that there?

MRS. WIRE:

Some crazy young man come here wantin’ a room. I told him I had no vacancies for Bourbon Street bums. He dropped that sack on the floor and said he’d pick it up tomorrow, which he won’t unless he pays fifty cents for storage...

NURSIE:

It’s got something written on it that shines in the dark.

MRS. WIRE:

“Sky”- say that’s his name. Carry it on upstairs with you, Nursie.

NURSIE:

Mizz Wire, I can’t hardly get myself up them steps no more, you know that.

MRS. WIRE:

Shoot.

NURSIE:

Mizz Wire, I think I oughta inform you I’m thinkin’ of retirin’.

MRS. WIRE:

Retirin’ to what, Nursie? The banana tree in the courtyard with the bats you got in your head?

NURSIE:

They’s lots of folks my age, black an’ white, that’s called bag people. They just wander round with paper bags that hold ev’rything they possess or they can collect. Nights they sleep on doorsteps: spend days on boxes on corners of Canal Street with a tin cup. They get along: they live- long as intended to by the Lord.

MRS. WIRE:

You place is with me, Nursie.

NURSIE:

I can’t please you no more. You keep callin’ Nursie, Nursie, do this, do that, with all these stairs in the house and my failin’ eyesight. No Ma’am, it’s time for me to retire

PART I Scene 2: Kelly/ Chelsea: 838

NIGHTINGALE:

What were you crying about? Some particular sorrow or . . . for the human condition.

WRITER:

Some . . . particular sorrow. My closest relative died last month.

NIGHTINGALE:

Your mother?

WRITER:

The mother of my mother, Grand. She died after a long illness just before I left home, and at night I remember . . .

NIGHTINGALE:

Well, losses must be accepted and survived. how strange it is that we've occupied these adjoining rooms for about three weeks now and have just barely said hello to each other when passing on the stairs. You have interesting eyes.

WRITER:

In what way do you mean?

NIGHTINGALE:

Isn't the pupil of the left one a little bit lighter?

WRITER:

(yes). . . I'm afraid I'm . . . developing a – cataract in that eye.

NIGHTINGALE:

That's not possible for a kid.

WRITER:

I am twenty-eight.

NIGHTINGALE:

What I meant is, your face is still youthful as your vulnerable nature, they go – together. Of course, I'd see an oculist if you suspect there's a cataract.

WRITER:

(yes) I plan to when I . . . if I . . . can ever afford to . . . the vision in that eye's getting cloudy.

NIGHTINGALE:

Don't wait till you can afford to. Go straight away and don't receive the bill.

WRITER:

I couldn't do that.

NIGHTINGALE:

Don't be so honest in this dishonest world. Shit, the witch don't sleep in her bedroom you know.

WRITER:

Yes, I noticed she is sleeping on a cot in the hall now.

NIGHTINGALE:

When I came in now she sprang up and hollered out, "Who?" And I answer her with a hoot owl imitation, "Hoo, Hooo, Hooooo." Why, the lady is all three furies in one. A single man needs visitors at night. Necessary as bread, as blood in the body. Why, there's a saying, "Better to live with your worst enemy than to live alone."

WRITER:

Yes, loneliness is an – affliction.

NIGHTINGALE:

Well, now you have a friend here.

WRITER:

Thanks.

NIGHTINGALE:

Of course we're in a madhouse. I wouldn't tolerate the conditions here if the season wasn't so slow that – my financial condition is (little) difficult right now. I don't like insults and *la vie solitaire* – with bedbugs bleeding me like leeches . . . but now we know each other, the plywood partition between us has been dissolved, no more just hellos. So tonight you were crying in here alone. What of it? Don't we all? Have a cigarette.

WRITER:

Thanks.

I won't smoke it now, I'll save it till morning. I like a cigarette when I sit down to work. There's – a lot of human material – in the Quarter for a writer . . .

NIGHTINGALE:

I used to hear you typing. Where's your typewriter?

WRITER:

I, uh, hocked it.

NIGHTINGALE:

That's what I figured. Wha'd you get for it?

WRITER:

Ten dollars. It was a secondhand Underwood portable. I'm worried about just how I'll redeem it.

NIGHTINGALE:

Excuse my curiosity, I mean concern. It's sympathetic . . . Smoke a cigarette now and have another for mawnin'. You're not managing right. Need advice and . . . company in this sad ole house. I'm happy to give both if accepted.

WRITER:

. . . I appreciate . . . both.

NIGHTINGALE:

You don't seem experienced yet . . . kid, are you . . . excuse my blunt approach . . . but are you . . . ?

WRITER:

Oh . . . I'm not sure I know . . . I . . .

NIGHTINGALE:

Ain't come out completely, as we put it?

WRITER:

Completely, no, just one – experience.

NIGHTINGALE:

Tell me about that one experience.

WRITER:

I'm not sure I want to discuss it.

NIGHTINGALE:

That's no way to begin a confidential friendship.

PART 1 SCENE 2 pg 843

ROSS/ WRITER:

(The dim light goes completely out. A passage of blues piano is heard. It is an hour later. There is a spotlight on the writer as narrator, smoking at the foot of the cot, the sheet drawn about him like a toga)

When I was alone in the room, the visitor having retreated beyond the plywood partition between his cubicle and mine, which was chalk white that turned ash-gray at night, not just he but everything visible was gone except for the lighter gray of the alcove with its window over Toulouse Street. An apparition came to me with the hypnotic effect of the painter's sandman special. It was in the form of an elderly female saint, of course. She materialized soundlessly.

JESS/WRITER:

Her eyes fixed on me with a gentle questioning look which I came to remember as having belonged to my grandmother during her sieges of illness, when I used to go to her room and sit by her bed and want, so much, to say something or to put my hand over hers, but could do neither, knowing that if I did, I'd betray my feelings with tears that would trouble her more than her illness... Now it was she who stood next to my bed for a while.

CHELSEA/WRITER:

And as I drifted toward sleep, I wondered if she'd witnessed the encounter between the painter and me and what her attitude was toward such- perversions? Of longing?

(The sound of stifled coughing is heard across the plywood partition.)

Nothing about her gave me any sign. The weightless hands clasping each other so loosely, the cool and believing gray eyes in the faint pearly face were as immobile as statuary. I felt that she neither blamed nor approved the encounter. No. Wait. She...seemed to lift one hand very, very slightly before my eyes closed with sleep.

PART 1 SCENE 3 AISLYNN and ROSS

JANE:

Why did you do that?

TYE:

Do what?

JANE:

You know what, and the boy knew what you meant by it. Why did you want to hurt him with the implication that he was in a class with a common, a predatory transvestite?

TYE:

Look Jane . . . You say you was brought up on high ground, good elevation, but you come in here, you bring in here and expose me to a litter queer, and . . .

JANE:

Does everyone with civilized behavior, good manners, seem to be a queer to you?

TYE:

. . . Was it good manners the way he looked at me, Babe?

JANE (*voice rising*):

Was it good manners for you to stand in front of him rubbing your—groin the way you did?

TYE:

I wanted you to notice his reaction.

JANE:

He was just embarrassed.

TYE:

You got a lot to learn about life in the Quarter.

JANE:

I think that he's a serious person that I can talk to, and I need some one to talk to!
(*Pause*)

TYE:

You can't talk to *me* huh (babe)?

JANE:

With you working all night at a Bourbon Street strip-joint and sleeping nearly all day? Involving yourself with all the underworld elements of this corrupt city . . .

TYE:

'Sthat all I do? Just that? I never pleasure you, babe?

(Fade in piano blues. She draws a breath and moves as if half asleep behind Tye's chair.)

JANE:

Yes, you—pleasure me, Tye.

TYE:

I try to do my best to, Babe. Sometimes I wonder why a girl—

JANE:

Not a girl, Tye. A woman.

TYE:

—How did—why did—you get yourself mixed up with me?

JANE:

A sudden change of circumstances removed me from—how shall I put it so you'd understand?

TYE:

Just—say.

JANE:

What I'd thought was myself. So I quit my former connections, I came down here to— *(She stops short.)* Well, to make an adjustment to— *(Pause)* We met by chance on Royal Street when a deluge of rain backed me into a doorway? Didn't know you were behind me until you put your hand on my hip and I turned to say, "Stop that!" but didn't because you were something I'd never encountered before—faintly innocent—boy's eyes. Smiling. Said to myself, "Why not, with nothing to lose!" Of course you pleasure me, Tye! —I'd been alone so long . . .

(She touches his throat with trembling fingers. He leans sensually back against her. She runs her hand down his chest.)

Silk on silk is—lovely . . . regardless of the danger.

(As the light on this area dims, typing begins offstage. The dim-out is completed.)

PART I SCENE 4

KELLY/ WRITER:

Panicky! Yes! Gentleman? My folks say so. I wonder.

I've noticed I do have some troublesome little scruples in my nature that may cause difficulties in my . . . negotiated – truce with – life. Oh – there's a price for things, that's something I've learned in the Viex Carre. For everything that you purchase in this marketplace you pay out of *here!* And the cash which is the stuff you use in your work can be overdrawn, depleted, like a reservoir going dry in a long season of drought . . .

PART 1 SCENE 5

JASMINE/WRITER

I think there has been some deterioration in your condition and you ought to face it! A man has got to face everything sometime and call it by its turn name, not to try to escape it by— cowardly!—evasion—go have your lungs x-rayed and don't receive the doctor's bill when it's sent! But go there quick, have the disease stated clearly! Don't, don't call it a cold anymore or a touch of the flu!

PART 1 SCENE 6: AMANDA/ AMBRE

JANE:

Yes? Who's there?

WRITER:

Uh, me, from across the hall, I brought in a letter for you—it was getting rained on.

JANE:

Oh, one moment, please.

(She throws a robe over her panties and bra and opens the door.)

A letter for me?

WRITER:

The mail gets wet when it rains since the lid's come off the mailbox.

(His look irresistibly takes in the figure of Tye. Jane tears the letter open and gasps softly. She looks slowly up, with a stunned expression, at the young writer.)

JANE:

Would you care for some coffee?

WRITER:

Thanks, no, I just take it in the morning.

JANE:

Then please have a drink with me. I need a drink. Please, please come in. (Jane is speaking hysterically but abruptly controls it.) Excuse me—would you pour the drinks—I can't. I...

WRITER (crossing to the cabinet):

Will you have...

JANE:

Bourbon. Three fingers.

WRITER:

With?

JANE:

Nothing, nothing.

(The writer glances again at Tye as he pours the bourbon.)

Nothing...

JANE

(The writer crosses to her with the drink.)

Nothing. And you?

WRITER:

Nothing, thanks. I have to retype the manuscripts soaked in the rain.

JANE:

Manuscripts, you said? Oh, yes, you're a writer. I knew, it just slipped my mind. The manuscripts were returned? Does that mean rejection?—Rejection is always so painful.

WRITER *(with shy pride)*:

This time instead of a printed slip there was this personal signed note...

JANE:

Encouraging-that. Oh, my glass is weeping—an Italian expression. Would you play barman again? Please? (She doesn't know where to put the letter, which he keeps glancing at.)

WRITER:

Yes, I am encouraged. He says, "This one doesn't quite make it but try us again." Story magazine—they print William Saroyan, you know!

JANE:

It takes a good while to get established in a creative field.

WRITER:

And meanwhile you've got to survive.

JANE:

I was lucky, but the luck didn't hold.

(She is taking little sips of the straight bourbon.)

WRITER:

You're—upset by that—letter? I noticed it came from—isn't Ochsner's a clinic?

JANE:

Yes, actually, I am, I was. It concerns a relative rather—critically ill there.

WRITER

Someone close to you?

JANE:

Yes. Quite close, although lately I hardly recognize the lady at all anymore...

(Tye stirs on the bed; the writer irresistibly glances at him.)

Pull the sheet over him. I think he unconsciously displays himself like that as if posing for a painter of sensual inclinations. Wasted on me. I just illustrate fashions for ladies.

WRITER:

Jane, what was the letter, wasn't it about you?

JANE:

Let's just say it was a sort of personal, signed rejection slip, too.

PART 1 SCENE 7: Writer

KRYSTA/ WRITER:

The basement of the building had been leased by Mrs. Wire to a fashionable youngish photographer, one T. Hamilton Biggs, a very effete man he was, who had somehow acquired a perfect Oxnard accent in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. He made a good living in New Orleans out of artfully lighted photos of debutantes and society matrons in the Garden District, but for his personal amusement – he also photographed, more realistically, some of the many young drifters to be found along the streets of Vieux Carre.

AMBRE:

Nickels and dimes. –Mrs. Wire? Do you think I really intended to lose you that case? Other witnesses had testified I was in the kitchen when you poured those kettles of water through the floor. And the judge knew I could see with at least one eye. I was on the witness stand under oath, couldn't perjure myself. I did try not to answer directly. I *didn't* answer correctly. All I said was—

PART II SCENE 8 JORDAN/PAIGE

A Spotlight focuses on the writer working at his dilapidated typewriter in his gabled room in the attic.

WRITER

Instinct, it must have been (*he starts typing*) directed me here, to the Vieux Carre of New Orleans, down country as a—river flows no plan. I couldn't have consciously, deliberately, selected a better place than here to discover—to encounter—my true nature. Exposition! Shit!

(He springs up and kicks at the worn, wobbly table. A lean gangling young man, whose charming but irresponsible nature is apparent in his genial grin, appears at the entrance of the writer's cubical)

SKY

Having trouble?

WRITER

Even the typewriter objected to those goddamn lines. The ribbon stuck. Won't reverse.

SKY

Let me look at it.

(he enters the cubical).

Oh, my name is Schuyler but they call me Sky.

WRITER

The owner of the knapsack with "SKY" printed on it, that was that—was deposited here last winter sometime?

SKY (*working on the typewriter*)

Right. Landlady won't surrender it to me for less than twenty-five bucks, which is more than I can pay. Yeah, you see—I'm a fugitive from—legal wedlock in Tampa, Florida, with the prettiest little bitsy piece of it you ever did see. There, now, the ribbon's reversing, it slipped out of the slots like I slipped out of matrimony in Tampa—couldn't you see that?

WRITER

I don't think there's a room in this building where you could be certain it was night of day and I've...

SKY

Something wrong with that eye.

WRITER

Operation. For a cataract. Just waiting till it heals.—Are you staying here?

SKY

Just for a day or two while I look into spots for a jazz musician in the Quarter.

WRITER

There's several jazz combos just around the corner on Bourbon Street.

SKY

Yeah, I know, but they're black and not anxious to work with a honky. So, I'll probably drive on West.

WRITER

How far West?

SKY

The Coast. Is there a toilet up here? I gotta piss.

WRITER

I know a girl across the hall with a bathroom, but she's probably sleeping.

SKY

With the angels wetting the roof, would it matter if I did, too?

WRITER

Go ahead.

(Sky leaps onto the alcove and pisses upstage out of the window)

Why'd you decide not to marry?

SKY

Suddenly realized I wasn't ready to settle. The girl, she had a passion for pink, but she extended it out of the bounds in the love nest she'd picked out for us. Pink, pink, pink. So I cut out before daybreak.

WRITER

Without a word to the girl?

SKY

A note, "Not ready. Be back." Wonder if she believed it, or if I did. That was Christmas week. I asked permission to leave my knapsack here with the landlady, overnight. She said, "For fifty cents." Extortionary, but I accepted the deal. However was unavoidably detained like they say. Returned last night for my gear and goddamn, this landlady here refuses to surrender it to me except for twenty-five bucks. Crazy witch!

PG 861 Part II, SCENE 10

JORDAN/ WRITER

In my own cubicle, I wasn't sure if Grand had entered with me or not. I couldn't distinguish her from a – diffusion of light through the low running cloud. I thought I saw her, but her image was much fainter than it had ever been before, and I suspected that it would fade more and more as the storm of my father's blood obliterated the tenderness of Grand's. I began to pack my belongings. I was about to make a panicky departure to nowhere I could imagine . . . The West Coast? With Sky?

Quote group B:

- 1) In a place where so many are lonely, it would be inexcusably selfish to be lonely alone
- 2) "A high station in life is earned by the gallantry with which appalling experiences are survived with grace"
- 3) "'There are no 'good' or 'bad' people. Some are a little better or a little worse, but all are activated more by misunderstanding than malice. A blindness to what is going on in each other's hearts... nobody sees anybody truly but all through the flaws of their own egos....'"
- 4) : All good art is an indiscretion
- 5) "Life is an unanswered question, but let's still believe in the dignity and importance of the question."
- 6) God, but I was ignorant when I came here! This place has been- I ought to pay you -tuition"

JASMINE:

1980- *Clothes for a Summer Hotel* 14 performances

1981

JORDAN:

1982- *A House Not Meant To Stand* Chicago 40 performances.

PAIGE:

1983- New York Times August 14th, 1983 New York City's Chief Medical Examiner said yesterday that the playwright Tennessee Williams was apparently trying to ingest barbiturates when he choked to death on a plastic bottle cap last February. The Medical Examiner, Dr. Elliot M. Gross, said that chemical tests of tissue samples taken from the 71-year-old playwright's body disclosed the presence of the barbiturate secobarbital in his system when he died. "The cause of death was asphyxia," said Dr. Gross. "But apparently the overcap was being used to take the barbiturates." Mr. Williams's body was discovered in his two-room suite at the Hotel Elysee...last Feb. 25, by his secretary, John Uecker.

FINALE

KELLY:

They're disappearing behind me.

ROSS:

Going.

KRYSTA:

People you've known in places

STEPHANIE:

do that:

AMBRE:

they go

BRITNEY:

when you go.

JORDAN:

The earth seems to swallow them up,

AISLYNN:

the walls absorb them

JASMINE:

like moisture,

JES:

remain with you

CHELSEA:

only as ghosts;

PAIGE:

their voices are echoes,

AMANDA:

fading but

ALL:

remembered.

Source Work from the writings of Tennessee Williams:

Poem: "Testa dell Efebo"

Cat On a Hot Tin Roof

Camino Real

Vieux Carré

Five o'clock angel : letters of Tennessee Williams to Maria St. Just,

Conversations With Tennessee Williams

Where I live: selected essays by Tennessee Williams

Memoirs