

Fontbonne University

Writing Samples

M.A. Theatre Studies

Courses Fall Semester 2019

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Currently Attending Courses

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This Portfolio

The following writing samples are real assignments Melissa Trepa completed during her graduate studies from Fontbonne University. Material ranges from production reviews, scripts for various scenes, responses for discussion, and one act pieces during her first semester at Fontbonne.

Trepa chose the following writing samples because they reflect her ability from her coursework from a variety of skillsets from creative to analytical skills. This reflects two courses, Storytelling, and Staging Literature which focus on adaptation, performance, and analysis of text. She hopes these materials are helpful, however, reminds viewers that the pieces do not reflect all Trepa's studies at Fontbonne, but merely represent a sample of what she studied. She hopes you enjoy, thank you.

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Chapter Six Analysis of Stories: Storytelling, P.186

“The Key to My Father” by Harlan Coben Analysis

This piece articulates the life of a young boy’s father through the eyes of the narrator and son. Beginning with vivid description on his father’s character, the reader sees the character development through the bias lens of the son, who claims his dad is “uncool”, “out of shape”, and “hopelessly unhip”, but that he loved him, and describes enduring moments of their life between father and son. This description shifts in the seventh paragraph when the son described his father’s hard job and sleeping habits. The narration goes into dialogue between father and son that increases rising action, before shifting to an experience with his dad on a business trip and his cardiac arrest in the climax, which ultimately led to his death that led to the resolution.

During this in-scene moment with his father, the son narrating describes the desperation his mother and him felt to get to his dad at the news of his chest pains and arrived right when his father ended up dying while in surgery. In the final paragraphs the son goes into a reflective state, describing the funeral and who he blamed for his father’s death. The final few paragraphs depict the boy speaking with the doctor, hearing about his dad’s final words, where the title of the piece is elevated, since his father left a key for his wife and son to get into his room when he went to the hospital, which was left in his clothes for his son to find.

This piece tackles a third person narrator who also happens to be related to the character he is narrating for, and the son uses his youthful perspective to reveal both indirect and direct discourse in the piece to evoke a devastating story of a son’s love of his father, growth in understanding his father’s character and humanity, and experience losing him to a heart attack. The piece uses direct discourse with the dialogue with his dad in his sleeplessness, when he calls from his conference, and the doctor at the end when telling the narrator about his father’s last words. The indirect discourse is in between the lines developed by this author. By creating a description of his father, which transitions to the expression of his poor health, to his episode at his last work conference, and the aftermath of his death, the audience gets a full perspective of who this boy’s father was, not only from his perspective, but as the son reflects on who his dad was to create a full developed round character, both who was uncool to his son, but impeccably loving and hard working.

His son mentions both positive and negative traits about his dad, which foreshadow his death, and also create a full character for the audience. The scene is set in shifts of time. The opening is a son reflecting on his dad’s style and nerdiness, set at their home, then shifts to the baseball field in a moment of memory, to the son’s Bar Mitzva, to a scene of his dad and him at Seymour’s lunch restaurant on Livingston Avenue, to their home at night when he wakes from sleep, to a scene with him in the airport to his flight for his work trip, to Tampa where his father’s heart attack happened, and the setting shifts back after they reach the hospital to the funeral at the gravesite to in their home on the phone with the doctor. The story is impeccably compelling and beautifully described for a tale of death of a loved one that all audience members can universally relate to, while also specifically individualizing the tale for a more compelling story from the eyes and heart of a broken son.

Chapter Two and Three Staging Literature: Exercise p. 49-50

Exercise 49:

***Jazz Fantasia* by Carl Sandburg, an orchestration of rhythmic adaptation**

Indicate how the poem could use its rhythm and rhythmic choices in a performance setting and how an orchestration might take place with the text's intentions of rhythm in mind.

Cast/Characters:

Note the cast can be done with just a narrator or all individual parts, there is room for more artistic expression if done with larger cast but there is room for flexibility.

NARRATOR

SAXOPHONE

TROMBONE

MOAN

JAZZMEN: (including) DRUMS, TRAPS, BANJOES, HORNS

STEAMBOAT

Rest of Cast:

DANCERS (3+)- (MODERN DANCE) these dancers will emulate the action that the text articulates as the narrator and cast members speak, there is a dance amongst them, a struggle, then excitement with leaps, piroettes, and elongated movements to represent the long notes of the jazz and sharper movement to articulate the faster paced moments indicated in the script and background instrumentals.

BAND: *music which accompanies the narration which is played quietly enough to hear the speakers within the cast, it includes all the instruments noted in the script. They play in the pit or off stage nearby.*

Jazz Fantasia Staged

Stage lights rise to a scene of the cast on either side of center stage, NARRATOR, SAXOPHONE, TROMBONE, MOAN, and STEAMBOAT stand on stage right, while the JAZZMEN stand stage left-center. Meanwhile, upstage center, are three DANCERS. The CAST wears mute color tones, and the DANCERS remain in all black. As the NARRATOR narrates the CAST lifts a scarf of an individual color with an individual movement when their name and instrument are mentioned or spoken themselves, while the dancers and band play alongside the narration. The focus is on the dancers and music, but the sidelines remain the voice of the piece.

Jazz Fantasia

NARRATOR

Drum on your drums, batter on your banjos,

SAXOPHONE

sob on the long cool winding saxophones.

NARRATOR

Go to it, O jazzmen.

TROMBONE

Sling your knuckles on the bottoms of the happy
tin pans, let your trombones ooze, and go husha-
husha-hush with the slippery sand-paper.

MOAN

Moan like an autumn wind high in the lonesome treetops,
moan soft like you wanted somebody terrible, cry like a
racing car slipping away from a motorcycle cop, bang-bang!

JAZZMEN (*together*)

You jazzmen, bang altogether drums, traps, banjos, horns,
tin cans —

NARRATOR

make two people fight on the top of a stairway
and scratch each other's eyes in a clinch tumbling down
the stairs.

STEAMBOAT

Can the rough stuff . . . now a Mississippi steamboat pushes
up the night river with a hoo-hoo-hoo-oo . . .

NARRATOR

and the green
lanterns calling to the high soft stars . . . a red moon rides
on the humps of the low river hills . . . go to it, O jazzmen.

End Scene

Chamber Theater, Adaptation of Bluets

CHARACTERS:

- NARRATOR 1: Author/Maggie Nelson, self-reflecting-AKA, “BLUETS”
- NARRATOR 2: Author Maggie Nelson speaking to audience- AKA, “LIGHT”

NOTE: All other characters are sources which are mentioned in the text but never appear as physical characters, they are simply implied. The naming of the two narrators, both of which are Maggie Nelson the author, were chosen to help clarify any confusion of which narrator was who and to impose intentions since I have decided to make a bifurcated casting.

BLUETS is called bluets because she is the narrator who remains documenting in the entries on the topic of the color blue in all its facets as she also paints a portrait to clarify LIGHT’S thoughts which remain a constant searching for answers. LIGHT acts as the reflective character, speaking to the audience in their dialogue directly, where LIGHT often shares the most insightful and provocative truths, while BLUETS reflects on the entries themselves for contemplation. The two narrators work together to create a stream of consciousness but remain as one person, the author.

Bluets by Maggie Nelson

A Chamber Script Adaptation

Scene 1

Act I:

BLUETS begins on stage next to LIGHT, where BLUETS is standing near a chair and table off center slightly to stage left, On the table is a painters’ pallet, a few books, and in BLUETS hand, is a paintbrush dipped in blue paint. In her other hand, a recorder. Center stage there is an easel and blank white canvas. Next to BLUETS stands LIGHT. LIGHT is off center slightly, leaning on the desk in thought.

AT RISE:

BLUETS and LIGHT are aware of one another but focus on their

perspective places throughout the performance but BLUETS and LIGHT work as a team to tackle the thoughts they explore. BLUETS speaks, but LIGHT makes eye contact with the audience in more reflective thought. Lights fade up on center stage. The click of the recorder BLUETS holds cues for the scene to begin.

BLUETS

Click. Entry one. Suppose I were to begin by saying that I had fallen in love with a color. Suppose I were to speak this as though it were a confession; suppose I shredded napkins as we spoke. It Began Slowly. An appreciation, an affinity.

LIGHT picks up the painters' pallet on the desk and hands it to BLUETS. BLUETS sets her recorder down on the desk, which is still on and takes the pallet. She dips her paintbrush in it as she speaks, where she then proceeds to move toward the canvas and easel which stands center stage and puts a drop of dark blue in the center.

LIGHT

Then, one day, it became more serious.

LIGHT puts the pallet back onto the desk and smears a bit of paint between her fingers with fascination and confusion as she says this.

BLUETS

Then (looking into an empty teacup, its bottom stained with thin brown excrement coiled into the shape of a sea horse)-

LIGHT

it became somehow personal.

LIGHT takes the paint she has smeared from her fingers and

proceeds to dip a bit of the paint onto her shirt, near where her heart is. She smears the remaining on the painting like leftovers, disregarding the paintbrush completely in BLUETS hand. BLUETS retrieves the recorder again. The “click” sound indicate the start of a new entry.

BLUETS

Click. Entry two. And so, I fell in love with a color-in this case, the color blue-

BLUETS begins to paint a large dark-blue shade onto the canvas, which appears like a dark cloud and abstract, she puts the recorder in her back pocket for safe keeping while she does this. LIGHT admires her work on her shirt and looks at the glob on the canvas BLUETS has created.

LIGHT

-as if falling under a spell, a spell I fought to stay under and get out from under, in turns.

LIGHT proceeds to spin with BLUETS during this line, twirling in the open hand BLUETS has while BLUETS uses the other to paint, as if LIGHT is catching a dizzy spell. When the twirling has finished, LIGHT stumbles and hands BLUETS another shade to pick from the painters pallet. BLUETS pulls the recorder back out. They both look at the unfinished painting before beginning again.

BLUETS

Click. Entry eight. Do not, however, make the mistake of thinking that all desire is yearning. “We love to contemplate blue, not because it advances to us, but because it draws us after it?” wrote Goethe, and perhaps he is right.

LIGHT

But I am not interested in longing to live in a world which I already have. I don’t want to yearn for blue things, and God forbid for any “blueness”.

LIGHT looks at the canvas and her chest at the blue which is occupied here in this place with irony.

LIGHT/BLUETTES (To audience)

Above all, I want to stop missing you.

LIGHT looks at BLUETS who seems distressed and puts a hand on her shoulder. Making a decision, LIGHT puts the pallet back onto the desk and picks up a book titled “The Deepest Blue”, she skims it as BLUETS paints a heavy blue which is just a shade lighter than the shade before, rich but fragile. BLUETS pauses to take a moment to think, pulling out the recorder again to speak.

BLUETS

Click. Entry eighty-five. One afternoon in 2006, at a bookstore in Los Angeles. I pick up a book called *The Deepest Blue*. Having expected a chromatic treatise, I am embarrassed when I see the subtitle: *How women Face and Overcome Depression*. I quickly return it to its shelf. Eight months later, I order the book online.

Entry eighty-six.

LIGHT

The implication of the title is that men get blue, but women get the deepest blue.

LIGHT touches her mark on her shirt, examines her fingers, her blued fingerprints, then glances at

BLUETS who has begun working on the painting again. LIGHT puts the book back on the desk that is in her hands and crosses to center stage, feeling far away.

BLUETS

Another form of aggrandizement, to be sure-one which brings to mind a night I spent in the emergency room in Brooklyn years ago

LIGHT

-some mystery ailment, a burning in my lower left side- a woman wailing in the waiting room about having gas from fried chicken-a young doctor inside asked me to rate my pain on a scale of 1 to 10-I was flummoxed, I felt as though I shouldn't be there at all-I said "6"-he said to the nurse, Write down "8", since women always underestimate their pain. Men always say "11", he said.

LIGHT picks up another book, searching it as BLUETS begins the outline of a profile of some kind in a fury, using a slightly lighter shade of blue, still deep and meaningful, not yet a light enough shade to match any of the sky's colors during the day at given time.

BLUETS

I didn't believe him, but I supposed he might know.

Click. Entry Eighty-Seven. "Great suffering, joy, exertion, is not for (woman); her life should flow by more quietly, trivially, gently than the man's without being essentially happier or unhappier," wrote Schopenhauer.

LIGHT stops reading from her spot in her book, marking it with a finger, and looks up at BLUETS, they share a laugh.

LIGHT

What women, one would like to ask, did he know? At any rate, would it matter if it were-so?

BLUETS

Click. Entry eighty-eight. Like many self-help books, *The Deepest Blue* is full of horrifyingly simplistic language and some admittedly good advice

LIGHT puts the book down which she had been reading back at the desk and hands BLUETS the pallet again to pick a new lighter shaded blue color.

LIGHT

Somehow the women in the book all learn to say: That's my depression talking. It's not "me."

BLUETS

Click. Entry Eighty-nine. As if we could scrape the color off the iris and still see.

BLUETS paints the subtle details of what looks like eyes to the painting, which begins to look like an image of a man or portrait, although the image is still far too abstract to know or care quite yet. LIGHT leaning on the desk points at a spot for BLUETS to fix, she does.

Click. Entry number one hundred and fifty-three. I've read that children pretty much prefer red hands down to all other colors; the shift into liking cooler tones-such as blue-happens as they grow older.

LIGHT glances at the painters' pallet covered in various blues.

LIGHT

Nowadays half the adults in the western world say that blue is their favorite color.

LIGHT moves from the canvas towards the desk. BLUETS takes a step back to admire her work so far.

BLUETS

In their international survey of the “Most wanted Painting”, the Russian émigré team Vitaly Komar and Alex Melamid discovered that country after country- from China to Finland to Germany to the United States to Russia to Kenya to Turkey- most wanted a blue landscape, with slight variances (a ballerina here, a moose there, and so on). The only exception was Holland, which for inscrutable reasons, wanted a murky, rainbow-hued abstraction.

BLUETS tilts her glasses to get a better look at what she is looking at on the canvas, she has the recorder in hand.

BLUETS

Click. Entry number one hundred and fifty-four. It is tempting to derive some kind of maturity narrative here;

LIGHT puts down the pallet reluctantly.

LIGHT

Eventually we sober up and grow out of our rash love of intensity (i.e. red); eventually we learn to love more subtle things with more subtlety, etc. etc.

BLUETS

But my love for blue has never felt to me like a maturing, or a refinement, or a settling. For the fact is that one can maintain a chromophile recklessness well into adulthood.

BLUETS looks at the desk, she pauses where she speaks; thinking.

LIGHT

Joan Mitchell, for one, customarily chose her pigments for their intensity, rather than their durability- a choice that, as many painters know, an in time bring ones’ paintings to a sorry state of decay.

Is writing spared this phenomenon?

LIGHT picks up a copy of “Bluets by Maggie Nelson” and opens it.

BLUETS

Click. Entry number one hundred and fifty-five. It does not really bother me that half the adults in the western world also love blue, or that every dozen years or so someone feels compelled to write a book about it.

LIGHT

I feel confident in my specificity and relocation to it to share. Besides, it must be admitted that if blue is anything on this earth, it is abundant.

BLUETS looks up at the sky for a moment, before recording again.

BLUETS

Click. Entry number one hundred and fifty-six. “Why is the sky blue?”

LIGHT moves to center stage slightly and looks up at the sky, pondering the thought.

LIGHT

- A fair enough question, and one I have learned the answer to several times. Yet every time I try to explain it to someone or remember it myself, it eludes me. Now I like to remember the question alone, as it reminds me that my mind is essentially a sieve, that I am mortal.

BLUETS pauses for a moment considering the question. And begins painting again, this time the sky, it is an afternoon shade of blue, not bright but not grim.

BLUETS

Click. Entry number one hundred and fifty-seven. The part I do remember: that the blue of the sky depends on the darkness of empty space behind it.

LIGHT sees the image of the sky BLUETS has painted and moves to the desk to pick up a scientific book they've read before. She searches for the right page and finds it,

LIGHT

As one optics journal put it, “The color of any planetary atmosphere viewed against the black of space and illuminated by a sun like star will also be blue.”

BLUETS

In which case blue is something of an ecstatic accident produced by void and fire.

*LIGHT puts back the book,
and opens another, this time
it's the bible.*

Click. Entry one hundred and fifty-eight. God is truth; truth is light; God is light, etc.;

LIGHT

...the chain of syllogisms goes on and on.

BLUETS

See John 1:5: "And the light shineth in darkness; and darkness comprehended it not" As if darkness too, had a mind.

BLUETS

Click. Entry number one hundred and fifty-nine. A good many have figured God as light, but good many have also figured him as darkness.

*LIGHT snaps the bible closed
and puts it on the desk, she
goes back to center. BLUETS
has now completed the
outline details of a person
and the colors of the sky, all
in shades of blue. BLUETS
records again.*

BLUETS

Click. Entry two hundred and thirty-two.

BLUETS/LIGHT (To audience)

Perhaps, in time, I will also stop missing you.

BLUETS

Click. Entry two hundred and thirty-three. The future is unknowable, for some, God's means of suturing us in, or to the present moment.

LIGHT

For others, it is the mark of malevolence, a sure sign that our entire existence is best understood as a sort of joke or mistake.

LIGHT begins to mime as if listening to a song, she sways slightly. BLUETS clicks-open the recording for a moment to play Emmylou Harris. It plays for a moment as BLUETS continues to paint, then LIGHT stops her, consolingly, as if to not let her get lost in the song for too long. BLUETS switches out the tape and begins her recording again.

BLUETS

Click. Entry Two hundred and thirty-five. “One thing they don’t tell you ‘bout the blues when you got’em, you keep on fallin’ ‘cause there ain’t no bottom,” sings Emmylou Harris,

LIGHT

and she may be right. Perhaps it would help to be told that there is no bottom, save, as they say, wherever and whenever you stop digging. You have to stand there, spade in hand, cold whiskey sweat beaded on your brow, eyes misshapen and wild, some sorry-ass grave digger grown bone-tired of the trade. You have to stand there in the dirty rut you dug, alone in the darkness, in all its pulsing quiet, surrounded by the scandal of corpses.

BLUETS/LIGHT (To audience)

Click. Entry two hundred and thirty-eight. I want you to know, if you ever read this, there was a time when I would rather have had you by my side than any of these words;

LIGHT gestures to the blue on the painters’ pallet and her clothes, she picks up another piece of material from the desk.

BLUETS/LIGHT (To audience)

I would have had you by my side than all the blue in the world.

BLUETS

Click. Entry two hundred and thirty-nine. But now you are talking as if love were a consolation. Simone Weil warned otherwise. “Love is not consolation,” she wrote

*LIGHT looks at BLUETS
starting into her blue eyes.*

LIGHT

“It is light”.

*LIGHT and BLUETS move to
reveal the finished painting.
It is of a profile of a man,
presumably the man LIGHT
and BLUETS have been
referencing although, no one
knows for sure and knowing
is not the point. The finished
canvas contains an array of
different shades of blue, and
the final layer is the lightest
of them all.*

BLUETS

Click. Entry two hundred and forty. All right then, let me try to rephrase.

LIGHT

When I was alive, I aimed to be a student not of longing but of light.

*End Scene. Lights fade to
black.*

Final Script Adaptation of Bluets by Melissa Trepá

Staging Literature Fall 2019, Fontbonne University

CHARACTERS:

- NARRATOR 1: Author/Maggie Nelson, self-reflecting-AKA, “BLUETS”
- NARRATOR 2: Author/Maggie Nelson, truth-speaking, directed to the audience- AKA, “LIGHT”

NOTE: All other characters are sources which are mentioned in the text but never appear as physical characters, they are simply implied individuals. The naming of the two narrators, both of which are Maggie Nelson the author, were chosen to help clarify any confusion of which narrator was speaking. This was also chosen to impose intentions of character development, since this piece is using a bifurcated casting.

- *BLUETS is called bluets because she is the narrator who remains in search for answers, a detective of sorts, in the depths of the color blue and all its meanings. This character remains the dominant one documenting and recording the entries on the topic of the color blue in all its facets as she also paints a portrait to clarify LIGHT’S thoughts.*
- *LIGHT in contrast, is the part of this singular narrator (bifurcated) who comes to reflective and insightful conclusions and insights to the searched ideas BLUETS develops.*
- *LIGHT acts as the reflective character, speaking to the audience in their dialogue directly, where LIGHT often shares the most provocative truths, while BLUETS reflects on the entries themselves for contemplation. The two narrators work together to create a stream of consciousness but remain as one person, the author and narrator.*

PROPS

- A Painters pallet with a variety of shades of blue acrylic paint
- A white canvas, a generous size for an audience, and an easel to hold it on
- A clear tarp to protect the stage floor from paint
- Several books and papers to lay on a desk scattered
- Books: *The Deepest Blue*, p.4, Old big scholarly book *quote on Schopenhauer* p.6., *clinical psych quote* p.8-*psych book*, “*Bluets by Maggie Nelson*” p.12, *optics journal quote*-p.13 use same book as Schopenhauer, *the bible* p.14
- A chair and a table (*representing a desk*)
- A tape recorder, small enough for a pocket to hold (*a phone can also substitute*)
- A paint brush, medium in size, visible for an audience
- A cup of water and a towel (to clean the paintbrush between paint colors)

- A finished painting to unveil at the end of the performance (placed behind the blank canvas)

Bluets by Maggie Nelson

A Final Project Script Adaptation

Scene 1

BLUETS begins on stage next to LIGHT, where BLUETS is standing near a chair and table off center slightly to stage left. On the table is a painters' pallet, a few books, and in BLUETS hand, is a paintbrush dipped in blue paint. In her other hand, a recorder. Center stage there is an easel and blank white canvas. Next to BLUETS stands LIGHT. LIGHT is off center slightly, leaning on the desk in thought.

AT RISE:

BLUETS and LIGHT are aware of one another but focus on their perspective places throughout the performance but BLUETS and LIGHT work as a team to tackle the thoughts they explore. BLUETS speaks, but LIGHT makes eye contact with the audience in more reflective thought. Lights fade up on center stage. The click of the recorder BLUETS holds cues for the scene to begin.

BLUETS

Click. Entry one. Suppose I were to begin by saying that I had fallen in love with a color. Suppose I were to speak this as though it were a confession; suppose I shredded napkins as we spoke. It Began Slowly. An appreciation, an affinity.

LIGHT picks up the painters' pallet on the desk and hands it to BLUETS. BLUETS sets her recorder down on the desk (which is still on) and takes the pallet. She dips her paintbrush in it as she speaks, where she then

proceeds to move toward the canvas and easel which stands center stage and puts a drop of dark blue in the center.

LIGHT

Then, one day, it became more serious.

LIGHT puts the pallet back onto the desk and smears a bit of paint between her fingers with fascination and confusion.

BLUETS

Then (looking into an empty teacup, its bottom stained with thin brown excrement coiled into the shape of a sea horse)-

LIGHT

it became somehow personal.

LIGHT takes the paint she has smeared from her fingers and proceeds to dip a bit onto her shirt, near where her heart is. She smears the remaining on the painting like leftovers, disregarding the paintbrush completely in BLUETS hand. BLUETS retrieves the recorder again.

BLUETS

Click. Entry two. And so, I fell in love with a color-in this case, the color blue-

BLUETS begins to paint a large dark-blue shade onto the canvas, which appears like a dark cloud and abstract, she puts the recorder in her back pocket for safe keeping while she does this. LIGHT admires her work on her own shirt and looks at the glob on the canvas BLUETS has created.

LIGHT

-as if falling under a spell, a spell I fought to stay under and get out from under, in turns.

LIGHT proceeds to spin hand in hand with BLUETS, almost dancing. LIGHT loses her footing as if LIGHT is catching a dizzy spell as the two twirl. When the twirling has finished, LIGHT stumbles and hands BLUETS another shade to pick from the painters pallet. BLUETS pulls the recorder back out. They both look at the unfinished painting before beginning again.

BLUETS

Click. Entry eight. Do not, however, make the mistake of thinking that all desire is yearning. “We love to contemplate blue, not because it advances to us, but because it draws us after it?” wrote Goethe, and perhaps he is right.

LIGHT

But I am not interested in longing to live in a world which I already have. I don’t want to yearn for blue things, and God forbid for any “blueness”.

LIGHT looks at the canvas and her chest where the blue is, ironically.

LIGHT/BLUETTES (To audience)

Above all, I want to stop missing you.

LIGHT looks at BLUETS who seems distressed and puts a hand on her shoulder. Making a decision, LIGHT puts the pallet back onto the desk and picks up a book titled “The Deepest Blue”, she skims it as BLUETS paints a heavy blue shade onto the canvas, which is slightly a shade lighter than the shade before, rich but fragile. BLUETS pauses to take a moment to think, pulling out the recorder again to speak.

BLUETS

Click. Entry eighty-five. One afternoon in 2006, at a bookstore in Los Angeles. I pick up a book called *The Deepest Blue*. Having expected a chromatic treatise, I am embarrassed when I see the subtitle: *How women Face and Overcome Depression*. I quickly return it to its shelf. Eight months later, I order the book online.

Entry eighty-six.

LIGHT

The implication of the title is that men get blue, but women get the deepest blue.

LIGHT touches her mark on her shirt, examining her fingers, her blued fingerprints, and then glances at BLUETS, who has begun working on the painting again. LIGHT puts the book back on the desk that is in her hands and crosses to center stage, feeling far away.

BLUETS

Another form of aggrandizement, to be sure-one which brings to mind a night I spent in the emergency room in Brooklyn years ago

LIGHT

-some mystery ailment, a burning in my lower left side- a woman wailing in the waiting room about having gas from fried chicken-a young doctor inside asked me to rate my pain on a scale of 1 to 10-I was flummoxed, I felt as though I shouldn't be there at all-I said "6"-he said to the nurse, Write down "8", since women always underestimate their pain. Men always say "11", he said.

LIGHT picks up another book, searching it as BLUETS begins the outline of a profile of some kind in a fury, using a slightly lighter shade of blue, still deep and meaningful, not yet a light enough shade to match any of the sky's colors during the day at given time.

BLUETS

I didn't believe him, but I supposed he might know.

Click. Entry Eighty-Seven. "Great suffering, joy, exertion, is not for (woman); her life should flow by more quietly, trivially, gently than the man's without being essentially happier or unhappier," wrote Schopenhauer.

LIGHT stops reading from her spot in her book, marking it with a finger, and looks up at BLUETS, they share a laugh.

LIGHT

What women, one would like to ask, did he know? At any rate, would it matter if it were-so?

BLUETS

Click. Entry eighty-eight. Like many self-help books, The Deepest Blue is full of horrifyingly simplistic language and some admittedly good advice

LIGHT puts the book down which she had been reading and puts it back at the desk. LIGHT then hands BLUETS the pallet again to pick a new lighter shaded blue color.

LIGHT

Somehow the women in the book all learn to say: That's my depression talking. It's not "me."

BLUETS

Click. Entry Eighty-nine. As if we could scrape the color off the iris and still see.

BLUETS paints the subtle details of what looks like eyes onto the painting, which begins to look like an image of a man or portrait, although the image is still too abstract to know or care quite yet. LIGHT leaning on the desk points at a spot for BLUETS to fix, she does.

BLUETS

Click. Entry ninety. Last night I wept in a way I haven't wept before for some time. I wept until I aged myself. I watched it happen in the mirror.

BLUETS lays her hand down from where she was painting for a moment, and shares into LIGHTS eyes. They face each other, like a mirror. LIGHT takes a bit of blue off the painting and paints BLUETS cheek like a teardrop. They remain facing each other.

LIGHT

I watched the lines arrive around my eyes. Like engraved sunbursts; it was like watching flowers open in time-lapse on a windowsill. The tears not only aged my face, they also changed its texture, turned the skin of my cheeks into putty. I recognized this as a rite of decadence, but I did not know how to stop it.

BLUETS

Click. Entry ninety-one. Blue eye, archaic; "a blueness or dark circle around the eye, from weeping or other cause."

BLUETS turns away from LIGHT, she wipes at the paint on her cheek. LIGHT dips her head down slightly, feeling dismissed.

Click. Entry ninety-two. Eventually I confess to a friend some details about my weeping-it's intensity, its frequency. She says, kindly, she thinks-

LIGHT

we sometimes weep in front of a mirror not to inflame self-pity, but because we want to feel witnessed in our despair. Can a reflection be a witness? Can one pass oneself the sponge wet with vinegar from a reed?

LIGHT steps forward a bit speaking to the audience here. She pauses in thought at her questions and picks up a book from the desk, flipping to a specific page. BLUETS is back to painting now, adding in various shades of blue to

the beginning of her abstract portrait. There is dark colors of blue next to light ones, BLUETS remains holding her recorder then putting in her pocket as she paints again, never turning it off in case of another thought.

BLUETS

Click. Entry ninety-three.” At first glance, it seems strange to think that innocuous, inborn behavior such as crying could be dysfunctional or symptomatic,” writes one clinical psychologist.

LIGHT spots her page in the book and looks up at the audience.

LIGHT

But this psychologist insists we must face the fact that some crying is simply “maladaptive, dysfunctional, or immature.”

BLUETS hands LIGHT her paint brush and pallet, and sets her recorder down for a moment, to see her canvas so far from a better point of view, after a moment she is moving again. She hurriedly grabs her recorder and the paintbrush and goes to the canvas and begins painting in a rushed array of strokes around the portrait, dipping into many shades of blue, navy, sky blue, and colors in between.

BLUETS

Click. Entry ninety-four. Well then, it is as you please.

LIGHT takes the paintbrush from BLUETS hands and begins hurriedly painting

herself, then pauses, realizing what she has done, and hands the paintbrush back to BLUETS again.

LIGHT

This is the dysfunction talking. This is the disease talking.

BLUETS and LIGHT face the audience now, looking back at the painting subtly.

LIGHT/BLUETS

This is how much I miss you talking. This is the deepest blue talking, talking, always talking to you.

LIGHT and BLUETS break eye contact with the audience and glance at the painting again, now with more intention, leaning and crouching at different angles to decide the next stroke to make next.

BLUETS

Click. Entry ninety-eight. Vincent van Gough, whose depression, some say, was likely related to temporal lobe epilepsy, famously, saw and painted the world in almost unbearably vivid colors. After his nearly unsuccessful attempt to take his life by shooting himself in the gut, when asked why he should not be saved he famously replied,

LIGHT

“The sadness will last forever”

(Pause) LIGHT turns back to the audience.

I imagine he was right.

BLUETS

Click. Entry one hundred sixteen.

LIGHT/BLUETS again face the audience, this time they're hands are free of

objects and they hold onto each other's hands, as if to protect one another from the words they speak.

BLUETS/LIGHT

One of the last times you came to see me, you were wearing a pale blue button-down shirt, short sleeved. "I wore this for you" you said.

BLUETS faces LIGHT now, holding both hands together, where the two both recall the event, speaking as if to one another and someone else at the exact same time.

BLUETS

We slept together for six hours straight that afternoon, which does not seem precisely possible but that is what the clock said. We killed the time.

LIGHT

He was on his way to a sea side town, a town of much blue, where he would be spending a week with the other women he is with, the woman he is with now.

BLUETS

"I am in love with you both in completely different ways", he said.

LIGHT

It seemed unwise to contemplate this statement any further.

LIGHT breaks the handholding and BLUETS and LIGHT go back to the painting. LIGHT hands BLUETS the paintbrush, she is holding the pallet. BLUETS dips into a new shade, where the image of the painting now is a clear image of a man, a portrait not clearly defined but defined enough. BLUETS paints a pale blue button down onto the portrait on the canvas.

BLUETS clicks her recorder once again after a moment, to record a thought.

BLUETS

Click. Entry one hundred and twenty-two.

LIGHT

Truth, to surround it with figures and colors so it can be seen, wrote Joubert, calmly professing a heresy.

BLUETS

Click. Entry number one hundred and fifty-three. I've read that children pretty much prefer red hands down to all other colors; the shift into liking cooler tones-such as blue-happens as they grow older.

LIGHT glances at the painters' pallet covered in various blues.

LIGHT

Nowadays half the adults in the western world say that blue is their favorite color.

LIGHT moves from the canvas towards the desk. BLUETS takes a step back to admire her work so far.

BLUETS

In their international survey of the "Most wanted Painting", the Russian émigré team Vitaly Komar and Alex Melamid discovered that country after country- from China to Finland to Germany to the United States to Russia to Kenya to Turkey- most wanted a blue landscape, with slight variances (a ballerina here, a moose there, and so on). The only exception was Holland, which for inscrutable reasons, wanted a murky, rainbow-hued abstraction.

BLUETS tilts her glasses to get a better look at what she is looking at on the canvas, she has the recorder in hand.

BLUETS

Click. Entry number one hundred and fifty-four. It is tempting to derive some kind of maturity narrative here;

*LIGHT puts down
the pallet reluctantly.*

LIGHT

Eventually we sober up and grow out of our rash love of intensity (i.e. red); eventually we learn to love more subtle things with more subtlety, etc. etc.

BLUETS

But my love for blue has never felt to me like a maturing, or a refinement, or a settling. For the fact is that one can maintain a chromophile recklessness well into adulthood.

*BLUETS looks at the desk,
she pauses where she speaks;
thinking.*

LIGHT

Joan Mitchell, for one, customarily chose her pigments for their intensity, rather than their durability- a choice that, as many painters know, an in time bring ones' paintings to a sorry state of decay.

Is writing spared this phenomenon?

*LIGHT picks up a copy of
"Bluets by Maggie Nelson"
and opens it.*

BLUETS

Click. Entry number one hundred and fifty-five. It does not really bother me that half the adults in the western world also love blue, or that every dozen years or so someone feels compelled to write a book about it.

LIGHT

I feel confident in my specificity and relocation to it to share. Besides, it must be admitted that if blue is anything on this earth, it is abundant.

*BLUETS looks up at the sky
for a moment, before
recording again.*

BLUETS

Click. Entry number one hundred and fifty-six. "Why is the sky blue?"

LIGHT moves to center stage slightly and looks up at the sky, pondering the thought.

LIGHT

- A fair enough question, and one I have learned the answer to several times. Yet every time I try to explain it to someone or remember it myself, it eludes me. Now I like to remember the question alone, as it reminds me that my mind is essentially a sieve, that I am mortal.

BLUETS pauses for a moment considering the question. And begins painting again, this time the sky, it is an afternoon shade of blue, not bright but not grim.

BLUETS

Click. Entry number one hundred and fifty-seven. The part I do remember: that the blue of the sky depends on the darkness of empty space behind it.

LIGHT sees the image of the sky BLUETS has painted and moves to the desk to pick up a scholarly book they've read before. She searches for the right page and finds it,

LIGHT

As one optics journal put it, "The color of any planetary atmosphere viewed against the black of space and illuminated by a sun like star will also be blue."

BLUETS

In which case blue is something of an ecstatic accident produced by void and fire.

LIGHT puts back the book, and opens another, this time it's the bible.

Click. Entry one hundred and fifty-eight. God is truth; truth is light; God is light, etc.;

LIGHT

...the chain of syllogisms goes on and on.

BLUETS

See John 1:5: “And the light shineth in darkness; and darkness comprehended it not” As if darkness too, had a mind.

BLUETS

Click. Entry number one hundred and fifty-nine. A good many have figured God as light, but good many have also figured him as darkness.

LIGHT snaps the bible closed and puts it on the desk, she goes back to center. BLUETS has now completed the major details of the portrait-man and the colors of the sky, all in shades of blue. BLUETS records again.

BLUETS

Click. Entry two hundred and thirty-two.

BLUETS/LIGHT (To audience)

Perhaps, in time, I will also stop missing you.

BLUETS

Click. Entry two hundred and thirty-three. The future is unknowable, for some, God’s means of suturing us in, or to the present moment.

LIGHT

For others, it is the mark of malevolence, a sure sign that our entire existence is best understood as a sort of joke or mistake.

LIGHT begins to sway as if listening to a song, she moves only slightly, she hums a song. BLUETS clicks-open the recording for a moment to play Emmylou Harris. It plays for a moment as BLUETS continues to paint, then LIGHT stops her, consolingly, as if to not let her get lost in the song for

too long. BLUETS switches out the tape and begins her recording again.

BLUETS

Click. Entry Two hundred and thirty-five. “One thing they don’t tell you ‘bout the blues when you got’em, you keep on fallin’ ‘cause there ain’t no bottom,” sings Emmylou Harris,

LIGHT

and she may be right. Perhaps it would help to be told that there is no bottom, save, as they say, wherever and whenever you stop digging. You have to stand there, spade in hand, cold whiskey sweat beaded on your brow, eyes misshapen and wild, some sorry-ass grave digger grown bone-tired of the trade. You have to stand there in the dirty rut you dug, alone in the darkness, in all its pulsing quiet, surrounded by the scandal of corpses.

BLUETS/LIGHT (*To audience*)

Click. Entry two hundred and thirty-eight. I want you to know, if you ever read this, there was a time when I would rather have had you by my side than any of these words;

LIGHT gestures to the blue on the painters’ pallet and her clothes, she picks up another piece of material from the desk.

BLUETS/LIGHT (*To audience*)

I would have had you by my side than all the blue in the world.

BLUETS

Click. Entry two hundred and thirty-nine. But now you are talking as if love were a consolation. Simone Weil warned otherwise. “Love is not consolation,” she wrote

LIGHT looks at BLUETS starting into her blue eyes.

LIGHT

“It is light”.

LIGHT and BLUETS move to reveal the finished painting. It is of a man, presumably the man LIGHT and BLUETS

*have been referencing to-
although, no one knows for
sure and knowing is not the
point. The finished canvas
contains an array of different
shades of blue, and the final
layer is the lightest of them
all.*

BLUETS

Click. Entry two hundred and forty. All right then, let me try to rephrase.

LIGHT

When I was alive, I aimed to be a student not of longing but of light.

*End Scene. Lights fade to
black.*

Performance Prose Piece 2

A look at *Bluets* by Maggie Nelson for Performance

Choosing my Prose:

Bluets by Maggie Nelson is a collection of meditative prose put into one book, almost like a collection of poetry. She analyzes the meaning of the color blue in a variety of contexts from social, economic, to religious, relationship, and mood-based analysis. She references a variety of writers, scholars, and other artists, who have influenced this interpretation, and it is for this reason I felt this material would make a great piece for the stage. Contemplating life's larger meanings through the metaphor of a color, can provide insightful revelations and connect to a diverse audience as they relate to different aspects of this exploration. I found as I picked and cut my script of this material, that the actual performance would be challenging compared to more traditional forms of prose or narrative, however, that was also what drew me to pick this piece. I picked it, because lyric writing is very impactful to readers, since it requires the audiences' involvement to draw their own conclusions alongside the narrator, which felt important to an audience as well. It gives the audience the chance to search for the answers with the narrator, with no intent to be right or wrong, only to explore the story and find what matters to them. I think that is how all art is impactful, which is why I chose this piece. Theatre matters.

Piece for Performance: P. 60-62

153. I've read that children pretty much prefer red hands down to all other colors; the shift into liking cooler tones-such as blue-happens as they grow older. Nowadays half the adults in the western world say that blue is their favorite color. In their international survey of the "Most wanted Painting", the Russian émigré team Vitaly Komar and Alex Melamid discovered that country after country- from China to Finland to Germany to the United States to Russia to Kenya to Turkey- most wanted a blue landscape, with slight variances (a ballerina here, a moose there, and so on). The only exception was Holland, which for inscrutable reasons, wanted a murky, rainbow-hued abstraction.

154. It is tempting to derive some kind of maturity narrative here; eventually we sober up and grow out of our rash love of intensity (i.e. red); eventually we learn to love more subtle things with more subtlety, etc. etc. But my love for blue has never felt to me like a maturing, or a refinement, or a *settling*. For the fact is that one can maintain a chromophile recklessness well into adulthood. Joan Mitchell, for one, customarily chose her pigments for their intensity, rather than their durability- a choice that, as many painters know, an in time bring ones' paintings to a sorry state of decay. (Is writing spared this phenomenon?)

155. It does not really bother me that half the adults in the western world also love blue, or that every dozen years or so someone feels compelled to write a book about it. I feel confident in my specificity and relocation to it to share. Besides, it must be admitted that if blue is anything on this earth it is *abundant*.

156. “Why is the sky blue?”- A fair enough question, and one I have learned the answer to several times. Yet every time I try to explain it to someone or remember it myself, it eludes me. Now I like to remember the question alone, as it reminds me that my mind is essentially a sieve, that I am mortal.

Analysis:

1. Who is telling the story? To Whom? How will you show this in your performance?

Maggie Nelson, the writer who is analyzing the meaning of the color blue, is telling the story. She is the narrator, the muse, and the character who asks the tough questions about what it means to be human, using the color blue as a metaphor to explore her ideas. I will take on the role of Narrator, who represents Maggie as a writer in this particular scene. The audience is my readers as a result. Maggie speaks to a larger audience, not just literary and artistic scholars, although these are some of her intended audience, but also the general public who reads, to think about our humanity, and what it means to create meaning, and in this case that is in reference to the significance of the color blue. I will use the audience as a sounding board for my ideas, by my use of pausing, pace, and a few props to articulate this idea. I will also wear blue in my performance to articulate these ideas.

2. Exactly what is going on here? Summarize the plot and comment on any sections that cause performance challenges.

Maggie Nelson is a curious author who goes on a meditative research analysis on the meaning of the color blue in all its contexts, referencing scholars, and other artists to explore her point about how blue impacts our humanity and what defines us as human. She uses blue as the lens to help her audience to reflect on how we as people define our humanity. The way Maggie Nelson does this is by numbering her thoughts into her collective prose and talking about the forms of the color blue and how people are impacted by the color, including herself. She alludes to a lot of studies and artists, and in the particular scene being performed, she is contemplating why people favor the color itself, so I will use painting props and a notebook as a way to evoke her meditative state, and the audience will represent her brain, reflecting on the thoughts she narrates out loud. The challenge will be to not remain in any given time or place, and for the audience to be on board with the lyric freedom this piece is exploring.

3. What people (characters) live in this story? What do we know about them (demographic information as well as motives or reasons for being in “the story”)? How will you show this in your performance?

Maggie Nelson is an author, so she references other authors, painters, and artists to expand on her points about the color blue and its meaning to people. These referenced people are the other characters in this narrative. However, like a research study, Nelson uses her lyric style in the form of research to introduce these characters, rather than

speaking directly to them. She references of them, but not directly. To show the other characters in the performance, I will, as the narrator playing Nelson, allude to them as well as the text describes, by looking out and above the audience, to show my reflective state, when speaking. The reason they are in the story is to add credibility to Nelson's analysis on what blue really means to people. So other characters really matter for the story just not in a direct way.

4. What are they saying to each other? How will you show this in the differences in characters as they speak?

When Nelson references another author or painter, she is using their expertise to explain how people interact with the color blue on a regular basis, outside her own experiences. She speaks to them by using their knowledge to better understand her own meditative thoughts. She never directly speaks to the other characters, so the audience will have to represent that interactive component, drawing their own conclusions as they reflect on what the narrator says as she speaks and references the other characters. To show the other characters existence, however, I will vary my rhythm in performance, and where I land my eyes on the audience to reflect the different characters as the narrator. I will use inflation in my voice for quoted lines in the narrative for variety as well.

5. Where is all of this taking place? How will you show this in your performance?

This is taking place in no particular location. As a reader, I interpreted this space to be open, maybe the authors writing room in her home, with a desk and a chair, and a notebook or painters' pallet nearby, by a window. Where she can mediate on all the conclusions she arrives at while going on the journey with the audience about the color blue. It is not specified, but in the performance this space will be a room in the author's home, where she ponders her analysis. I will show this by using a chair, several props like a painting pallet, and a notebook, to reflect the space. But I will leave it minimalistic for the audience to draw their own conclusions as well.

Staging Literature Ch. 4 and 5

Exercises 117:2, and 125

Exercise 117: *Determine social role to define the narrator's relationship with the characters. Stage these passages so that the narrator's relationship with the characters with the audience is clarified. (#2)*

2. "A Clean, Well-Lighted Place" by Ernest Hemingway

Original text:

"The Waiter took the brandy bottle and another saucer from the counter inside the café and marched out to the old man's table. He put down the saucer and poured the glass full of brandy. "You should have killed yourself last week," he said to the deaf man. The old man motioned with his finger. "A little more," he said. The waiter poured on into the glass so that the brandy slopped-over and ran down the stem into the top saucer of the pile. "Thank you", the old man said. The waiter took the bottle back inside the café. He sat down at the table with his colleague again."

Narration choice

Moral Narrator: I adapted my narrator to be a counselor, consoling the waiter for what he said to the deaf man in the scene depicted. I created a new narrative unrelated to the original narration that the waiter confesses his awful comment to his counselor, and feels bad about it, because he said it right before the deaf man was killed in my fictional adaption. I format the narrative so that the waiter had misunderstood the deaf man as an offender instead of a bystander in a fatal car accident that had initiated the waiter's choice to tell the deaf man to kill himself at the diner, which he now regrets saying. The moral arch being to treat others respectfully, never tell them to kill themselves, and to never assume a person's actions or background. And to reach out to therapists if you are troubled or hurting.

CAST

NARRATOR- A counselor acting as narrator who provides a moral perspective to the events of a waiter and a deaf man.

DEAF MAN- a man in his eighties, who is predominantly deaf and an alcoholic

WAITER- man who waits on the deaf man at his diner, who also speaks with the counselor about his troubles and actions

Act I Scene 1

SETTING:

Somewhere in the Midwest at the end of summer in the evening, the NARRATOR and the WAITER are in a dimly lit room, with a chair, couch, and a lamp downstage right. Off stage left slightly sits a booth.

The WAITER is still in his work uniform and apron, he seems distressed. The NARRATOR wears slacks and a comfortable sweater and glasses, he holds a notebook and pen in his hand, he seems inquisitive but calm.

AT RISE:

A Spotlight transcends onto NARRATOR who is sitting in the chair which cheats out slightly to the audience. NARRATOR directs the audience in this moment, as a moral voice. Upstage slightly sits the WAITER who is frozen on the couch, head bowed. As NARRATOR speaks, DEAF MAN enters the stage, he wears jeans and a t-shirt, and uses a cane. Downstage left sits a booth where DEAF MAN sits down.

NARRATOR

Yesterday, an old man killed himself, and last week a woman and her two children died in a drunk driving accident. This made me a busy man. I'm not one to share my own opinions but it made me nervous to be so busy. Two tragedies in one small town, leaves for a lot of appointments for me. Today, I had a man I had never seen come in unexpectedly. I had one hour open, so I let him in so we could talk.

The spotlights fades, and the lights illuminate to the scene on the couch, while the booth is dim. The WAITER lifts up his head from his frozen position and speaks with the NARRATOR, who directs his dialogue to the WAITER.

NARRATOR

So, sir, what brings you in today, how can I help you?

WAITER

I don't know if you can.

NARRATOR

Well, I can try. Just start from the beginning, what is bothering you exactly?

WAITER

Well, it all began a few days ago, while I was working at the diner. I am new in town, and I was really starting to get to know the people here, you know, and there was this girl and her kids...

NARRATOR

Go on...

WAITER

Well, I was falling for the woman, if I am being honest, but I never had the guts to tell her. Then I hear about that drunk driving accident, and I just...

NARRATOR

It's okay, you can tell me, what is it?

WAITER

I made a huge mistake.

NARRATOR and WAITER get up from their seats and move to the booth on stage right, where DEAF MAN is seated. NARRATOR moves off to stage right slightly standing, and another spotlight appears when he speaks. As he speaks, WAITER and DEAF MAN act out the scene in silence.

NARRATOR

It was then that this waiter, began to paint me the full picture. As he describes it, the waiter took the brandy bottle and another saucer from the counter inside the café and marched out to the old man's table. He put down the saucer and poured the glass full of brandy.

WAITER

(to DEAF MAN)

You should have killed yourself last week.

NARRATOR

The old man motioned with his finger

DEAF MAN

A little more

NARRATOR

“a little more,” he said. Then, the waiter poured on into the glass so that the brandy slopped-over and ran down the stem into the top saucer of the pile.

DEAF MAN

Thank you

NARRATOR

The waiter took the bottle back inside the café. He sat down at the table with his colleague again.

The scene transitions again, the DEAF MAN exits stage right as the lights fade to black on the booth, while the WAITER and NARRATOR resume their seats at the therapy session on the couch and chair.

NARRATOR

So why did you say that?

WAITER

I thought he had something to do with my girl and her kids' deaths. He is a drunk, and it was a drunk driving accident, so I just assumed he couldn't hear me, but now...

NARRATOR

The man is dead.

WAITER

Yes.

NARRATOR

And do you know why he died?

WAITER

He killed himself, and it's, it's all my fault! It must've been, he must've heard me!

NARRATOR

No, it's not your fault. People kill themselves for a lot of reasons, you didn't know what his demons were.

WAITER

I thought I did, but now I lost my poor Julia, and now this! What have I done!

NARRATOR

You didn't kill him, the war did, long before you came here. He was a Vet with a lot of troubles. Your mistake was assuming he killed three people you cared about without even asking what really happened. And telling a deaf man with hearing aids he should kill himself didn't help.

WAITER

You know what happened? What happened, please, tell me.

NARRATOR

As someone very involved with people's inner lives, I cannot share all that I have learned, because it breaks certain confidentiality codes I have sworn to protect, but I will say this. Julie and her girls were on the highway when they died, but that man, Mr. Wilson, he was at home.

WAITER

What have I done!

NARRATOR

You acted out of emotion. In the future, when you are hurting, don't let it out on guests at the diner, maybe stop on in here. Actually, I wish old Doug would've stopped more here too than he did. Talking to someone can really help. I hope this helped you today.

WAITER

It did, it really did.

NARRATOR

Good. You know, I can't change the past, or fix the broken, only the broken can get help to fix themselves. But I am always here to listen, so the voices of people who are hurting don't go unheard.

WAITER

Thank you.

Lights, End Scene.

“The Rope” By Katherine Anne Porter

Exercise 125: *Here is a passage from the story, The Rope by Katherine Anne Porter. Decide how you would divide the lines, stage your finished product*

Original text: p. 125

A first-person narrative text:

On the third day after they moved to the country, he came walking back from the village carrying a basket of groceries and a twenty-four-yard coil of rope. She came out to meet him, wiping her hands on the green smock. Her hair was tumbled, her nose was scarlet with sunburn; he told her that already she looked like a born country woman. His gray flannel shirt stuck to him, his heavy shoes were dusty. She assured him he looked like a rural character in a play.

Had he brought the coffee? She had been waiting all day long for coffee. They had forgot it when they ordered at the store the first day.

Gosh, no, he hadn't. Lord, now he'd have to go back. Yes, he would if it killed him. He thought, though, he had everything else. She reminded him it was only because he didn't drink coffee himself. If he did he would remember it quick enough. Suppose they ran out of cigarettes? Then she saw the rope. What was that for? Well, he thought it might do to hang clothes on, or something. Naturally, she asked him if he thought they were going to run a laundry? They already had a fifty-foot-line hanging right before his eyes. Why hadn't he noticed it, really? It was a blot on the landscape to her.

“The Rope” First Person Adaptation

Melissa Trepa

CAST

WOMAN- Wife who is frustrated by her husband's forgetfulness.

MAN- a husband to the woman who is forgetful of her needs when out shopping.

Act I **Scene 1**

SETTING:

Somewhere in the countryside, walking back from the village in rural America.

AT RISE:

Curtains rise onto a spotlight which transcends onto MAN and WOMAN who stand center upstage. MAN carries a basket of groceries and a twenty-four-yard coil of rope. MAN wears a gray flannel shirt stuck to him, his heavy shoes dusty. WOMAN comes out to meet him, wiping her hands on the green smock that she wears. WOMAN's hair is tumbled, and her nose was scarlet with sunburn.

MAN

You already look like a born country woman.

WOMAN

You look like a rural character in a play, yourself. Did you bring the coffee?

WOMAN

(to audience)

I've been waiting all day long for coffee. My husband and I had forgot it when we ordered at the store the first day.

MAN

Gosh, no, I didn't. Lord, now I'll have to go back. Yes, I will go if it kills me, my dear. I did remember everything else, though.

WOMAN

You know you only forgot because you don't drink coffee yourself. If you did, you would remember it quick enough. Suppose they ran out of cigarettes?

Then WOMAN see's the rope.

WOMAN

What was that for?

MAN

Well, I thought it might do to hang clothes on, or something.

WOMAN

Naturally, I asked my husband if he thought they were going to run a laundry? We already had a fifty-foot-line hanging right before his eyes. Why hadn't he noticed it, really? It was a blot on the landscape to me.

End Scene.

Exercise 17:

Adaptations of Poems:

“Richard Cory” by Edwin Arlington Robinson, “Because I Could Not Stop for Death” by Emily Dickinson, “Death Be Not Proud” by John Donne, and “Do Not Go Gentle Into That Good Night” by Dylan Thomas.

With these poems I created both an Expanded Program Compiled Script and College Compiled Script, seen below.

The Original Poems are as follows:

Richard Cory

Whenever Richard Cory went down town,
We people on the pavement looked at him:
He was a gentleman from sole to crown,
Clean favored, and imperially slim.

And he was always quietly arrayed,
And he was always human when he talked;
But still he fluttered pulses when he said,
"Good-morning," and he glittered when he walked.

And he was rich—yes, richer than a king—
And admirably schooled in every grace:
In fine, we thought that he was everything
To make us wish that we were in his place.

So on we worked, and waited for the light,
And went without the meat, and cursed the bread;
And Richard Cory, one calm summer night,
Went home and put a bullet through his head.

Because I Could Not Stop for Death

Because I could not stop for Death –
He kindly stopped for me –
The Carriage held but just Ourselves –
And Immortality.

We slowly drove – He knew no haste
And I had put away
My labor and my leisure too,
For His Civility –

We passed the School, where Children strove
 At Recess – in the Ring –
 We passed the Fields of Gazing Grain –
 We passed the Setting Sun –

Or rather – He passed Us –
 The Dews drew quivering and Chill –
 For only Gossamer, my Gown –
 My Tippet – only Tulle –

We paused before a House that seemed
 A Swelling of the Ground –
 The Roof was scarcely visible –
 The Cornice – in the Ground –

Since then – 'tis Centuries – and yet
 Feels shorter than the Day
 I first surmised the Horses' Heads
 Were toward Eternity –

Death Be Not Proud

Death, be not proud, though some have called thee
 Mighty and dreadful, for thou art not so;
 For those whom thou think'st thou dost overthrow
 Die not, poor Death, nor yet canst thou kill me.
 From rest and sleep, which but thy pictures be,
 Much pleasure; then from thee much more must flow,
 And soonest our best men with thee do go,
 Rest of their bones, and soul's delivery.
 Thou art slave to fate, chance, kings, and desperate men,
 And dost with poison, war, and sickness dwell,
 And poppy or charms can make us sleep as well
 And better than thy stroke; why swell'st thou then?
 One short sleep past, we wake eternally
 And death shall be no more; Death, thou shalt die.

Do Not Go Gentle into That Good Night

Do not go gentle into that good night,
 Old age should burn and rave at close of day;
 Rage, rage against the dying of the light.

Though wise men at their end know dark is right,
 Because their words had forked no lightning they
 Do not go gentle into that good night.

Good men, the last wave by, crying how bright
Their frail deeds might have danced in a green bay,
Rage, rage against the dying of the light.

Wild men who caught and sang the sun in flight,
And learn, too late, they grieved it on its way,
Do not go gentle into that good night.

Grave men, near death, who see with blinding sight
Blind eyes could blaze like meteors and be gay,
Rage, rage against the dying of the light.

And you, my father, there on the sad height,
Curse, bless, me now with your fierce tears, I pray.
Do not go gentle into that good night.
Rage, rage against the dying of the light.

Expanded Program Compiled Script (Using all Four Poems)

Characters:

DEATH- a symbol for death, dressed in cloak and black clothing, any race/age

RICHARD CORY- young clean-cut man in mid-30's, wears khaki pants and pastel polo attire.

NARRATOR- Man or woman in mid-30's in plain attire, represents the average person

Death of Perfection-a writing exercise

For the Expanded script I chose to alternate between the poems, Richard uses *Do Not Go Gentle* as a representation of his true agony and suicidal thoughts, and as a warning about the pain of depression, the narrator as a naïve onlooker to Richard's life who doesn't understand Richard's true agony as he perceives him as perfect using the poem *Richard Cory*. Death uses both the *Death be not proud* and *Because I could not stop death*, to represent the inevitability of death we all face as perfection dies to the narrator as Richard dies alongside the narrative.

NARRATOR is seen next to DEATH, who look onto RICHARD on stage who remains center. NARRATOR and DEATH observe RICHARD, but RICHARD does not see anyone, they all perform as if alone together.

Narrator

Whenever Richard Cory went down town,

We people on the pavement looked at him:

He was a gentleman from sole to crown,
Clean favored, and imperially slim.

Richard

Do not go gentle into that good night,
Old age should burn and rave at close of day;
Rage, rage against the dying of the light.

Though wise men at their end know dark is right,
Because their words had forked no lightning they
Do not go gentle into that good night.

Death

Death, be not proud, though some have called thee
Mighty and dreadful, for thou art not so;
For those whom thou think'st thou dost overthrow
Die not, poor Death, nor yet canst thou kill me.

Because I could not stop for Death –
 He kindly stopped for me –
 The Carriage held but just Ourselves –
 And Immortality.

Narrator

And he was always quietly arrayed,
 And he was always human when he talked;
 But still he fluttered pulses when he said,
 "Good-morning," and he glittered when he walked.

Richard

Good men, the last wave by, crying how bright
 Their frail deeds might have danced in a green bay,
 Rage, rage against the dying of the light.

Wild men who caught and sang the sun in flight,
 And learn, too late, they grieved it on its way,
 Do not go gentle into that good night.

Death

From rest and sleep, which but thy pictures be,
 Much pleasure; then from thee much more must flow,
 And soonest our best men with thee do go,
 Rest of their bones, and soul's delivery.

We slowly drove – He knew no haste
 And I had put away
 My labor and my leisure too,
 For His Civility –

Narrator

And he was rich—yes, richer than a king—
 And admirably schooled in every grace:
 In fine, we thought that he was everything
 To make us wish that we were in his place.

Richard

Grave men, near death, who see with blinding sight
 Blind eyes could blaze like meteors and be gay,
 Rage, rage against the dying of the light.

And you, my father, there on the sad height,
 Curse, bless, me now with your fierce tears, I pray.
 Do not go gentle into that good night.
 Rage, rage against the dying of the light.

Death

Thou art slave to fate, chance, kings, and desperate men,
 And dost with poison, war, and sickness dwell,
 And poppy or charms can make us sleep as well
 And better than thy stroke; why swell'st thou then?

We passed the School, where Children strove
 At Recess – in the Ring –
 We passed the Fields of Gazing Grain –
 We passed the Setting Sun –

Narrator

So on we worked, and waited for the light,
 And went without the meat, and cursed the bread;
 And Richard Cory, one calm summer night,
 Went home and put a bullet through his head.

Death

One short sleep past, we wake eternally
 And death shall be no more; Death, thou shalt die.

Or rather – He passed Us –
 The Dews drew quivering and Chill –
 For only Gossamer, my Gown –
 My Tippet – only Tulle –

We paused before a House that seemed
 A Swelling of the Ground –
 The Roof was scarcely visible –
 The Cornice – in the Ground –

Since then – 'tis Centuries – and yet
 Feels shorter than the Day
 I first surmised the Horses' Heads
 Were toward Eternity –

Curtain.

Collage Compiled Script: (Using all Four Poems)

Characters:

DEATH- a symbol for death, dressed in cloak and black clothing, any race/age

RICHARD CORY- young clean-cut man in mid-30's, wears khaki pants and pastel polo attire.

NARRATOR- Man or woman in mid-30's in plain attire, represents the average person

“Toward Eternity” a writing exercise

For the Collage script I chose to alternate between the poems again, just more cohesively. Richard does so using *Do Not Go Gentle* as a representation of his true agony and suicidal thoughts, and as a warning about the pain of depression, the narrator as a naïve onlooker to Richard's life who doesn't understand death using the poem *Richard Cory*, and death narrating his intentions in *Death be not proud*, as if speaking in the third person since death is not a human being to represent the inevitability of death, and the final poem I chose to have Richard use as a monologue as he goes to commit suicide, again speaking on the truth against the realities of death, using *Because I could not stop death*, the poem. .

NARRATOR is seen next to DEATH, who look onto RICHARD on stage who remains center. NARRATOR and DEATH observe RICHARD, but RICHARD does not see anyone, they all perform as if alone together.

Narrator

Whenever Richard Cory went down town,
We people on the pavement looked at him:
He was a gentleman from sole to crown,
Clean favored, and imperially slim.

Richard

Do not go gentle into that good night,
Old age should burn and rave at close of day;
Rage, rage against the dying of the light.

Though wise men at their end know dark is right,
Because their words had forked no lightning they
Do not go gentle into that good night.

Death

Death, be not proud, though some have called thee
 Mighty and dreadful, for thou art not so;
 For those whom thou think'st thou dost overthrow
 Die not, poor Death, nor yet canst thou kill me.

Narrator

And he was always quietly arrayed,
 And he was always human when he talked;
 But still he fluttered pulses when he said,
 "Good-morning," and he glittered when he walked.

Richard

Good men, the last wave by, crying how bright
 Their frail deeds might have danced in a green bay,
 Rage, rage against the dying of the light.

Wild men who caught and sang the sun in flight,
 And learn, too late, they grieved it on its way,
 Do not go gentle into that good night.

Death

From rest and sleep, which but thy pictures be,
 Much pleasure; then from thee much more must flow,
 And soonest our best men with thee do go,
 Rest of their bones, and soul's delivery.

Narrator

And he was rich—yes, richer than a king—
 And admirably schooled in every grace:
 In fine, we thought that he was everything
 To make us wish that we were in his place.

Richard

Grave men, near death, who see with blinding sight
 Blind eyes could blaze like meteors and be gay,
 Rage, rage against the dying of the light.

And you, my father, there on the sad height,
 Curse, bless, me now with your fierce tears, I pray.
 Do not go gentle into that good night.
 Rage, rage against the dying of the light.

Death

Thou art slave to fate, chance, kings, and desperate men,

And dost with poison, war, and sickness dwell,
 And poppy or charms can make us sleep as well
 And better than thy stroke; why swell'st thou then?

Narrator

So on we worked, and waited for the light,
 And went without the meat, and cursed the bread;
 And Richard Cory, one calm summer night,
 Went home and put a bullet through his head.

Death

One short sleep past, we wake eternally
 And death shall be no more; Death, thou shalt die.

Richard

Because I could not stop for Death –
 He kindly stopped for me –
 The Carriage held but just Ourselves –
 And Immortality.

We slowly drove – He knew no haste
 And I had put away
 My labor and my leisure too,
 For His Civility –

We passed the School, where Children strove
 At Recess – in the Ring –
 We passed the Fields of Gazing Grain –
 We passed the Setting Sun –

Or rather – He passed Us –
 The Dews drew quivering and Chill –
 For only Gossamer, my Gown –
 My Tippet – only Tulle –

We paused before a House that seemed
 A Swelling of the Ground –
 The Roof was scarcely visible –
 The Cornice – in the Ground –

Since then – 'tis Centuries – and yet
 Feels shorter than the Day
 I first surmised the Horses' Heads
 Were toward Eternity –

Exercise 22:

Original scene from the textbook: “Third Prize” by A.E. Coppard

“Mr. Robins intimidated that he could well understand such desires. Miss Margery retorted that then he was understanding much more than was good for him. Mr. Robins thought not, he hoped not. Miss Margery indicated that he could hope for much more than he was likely to get. Mr. Robins replied that, he would do that, and double it. And he asserted, with all respect, that had he but happily been in that train he too might have, etc. and so on. Whereupon Miss Margery snapped, would he? and Mr. Robins felt bound to say Sure!”

Adapting the Third Prize scene of chamber theatre.

Below is my adaptation.

Characters

- Narrator/George (Present), George (Past), and Margery

Chamber Theatre Adaptation 1 from “The Third Prize” by A. E. Coppard

NARRATOR is seen dressed as GEORGE, but downstage left, GEORGE and MISS MARGERY are seen center stage, seated next to one another. NARRATOR addresses the audience from stage left.

Narrator

Mr. Robins intimidated that he could well understand such desires to Miss Margery.

Miss Margery

See NARRATOR off center stage, downstage, GEORGE sits by MARGERY, MARGERY hears “GEORGE’s comment” and gives a retorted response.

You are understanding much more than what’s good for you!

Narrator

Mr. Robins thought not,

GEORGE, hearing MISS MARGERY, responds from his seat beside her.

George

I hope not.

Miss Margery

You can hope for much more than you are likely to get.

Narrator

Mr. Robins replied that, he would do that, and double it.

And he asserted, with all respect, that had he but-

*GEORGE, responding to MISS MARGERY,
interjects the NARRATOR.*

George

-happily, been in that train I too might have....

Miss Margery

*MISS MARGERY, angry, snaps, cutting GEORGE
OFF-*

Would you?

George

Sure!

Curtain.

Finale.

Exercise 28:

Staging a personal story. Below is my personal piece which I have adapted from narrative to the script format for performance.

Narrative Story

The day I got my first pet Kitten

I remember the day I got my first cat like it was yesterday. I just woke up on Saturday morning unbeknownst to me what the day lay ahead. Pillows and sheets and a baseball bat lay scattered in the upstairs hallway by my parents' bedroom on the floor across from my room. I asked where dad had gone and mom replied, "Away". We got in the car and I asked my mom where we were going, she said "Away". We arrived at Dairy Queen for an impromptu treat. My twin sister and I picked out two twisted swirl soft serve cones, my mother didn't order anything. I noticed she looked tired, there was a bruise on her eye. We sat at a booth and my sister asked why we were getting ice cream, and mom replied, "because you both deserve it". Then she said, "Your father and I are getting a divorce, but now we can get a cat."

Script

Characters

MOTHER- "Julie" (mom)- a mother, young, early thirties, seemingly tired, exhausted

MELISSA- (Me)- a girl, aged 8, young, pig-tails, innocent

MELANIE-(My twin sister)- a girl, twin to MELISSA, young, age 8, also wearing pig-tails, innocent, clothes the same just different colors than MELISSA

NARRATOR- MELISSA, but much older, early 20's, she is dressed in business casual clothes, clean cut, and acts in a professional demeanor

Short Piece –

New Kitten

By Melissa Trepá

SCENE 1 opens to a simple stage. A table that works as a makeshift bed lies on stage left, scattered pillow and blankets and a bat all lie on the ground off stage right. MELISSA and MELANIE open scene sharing their bed, sleeping. MOTHER enters wearing a coat and holds a small suitcase, her clothing underneath is unmatching, her hair uncombed, and her eye is bruised. MOTHER wakes MELANIE and MELISSA up. NARRATOR is scene side stage left viewing the room as she speaks.

NARRATOR

I remember the day I got my first cat like it was yesterday. I just woke up on a regular old Saturday morning unbeknownst to me or my twin sister what the day had ahead for us. It doesn't seem like 16 years ago now, but on that Saturday after our deep long sleep the night before, we both could feel that something was happening today. We woke up and the air just felt different.

MELISSA

Mama, what happened to the house?

MOTHER

Nothing sweetheart.

MELISSA

Where's daddy?

MOM

Away.

MELISSA

Where are we going?

MOTHER

Away.

MELANIE and MELISSA get out of bed and put on coats from off stage left and come back on stage. MOTHER takes their hand and takes them off stage right. The girls pause at the scattered mess as they cross the stage upstage. They re-enter only after NARRATOR'S monologue.

NARRATOR

After we woke up, Mom took us on a day of adventure. Everything felt like such a mystery.

Mom not telling us a single detail about what the day was about to bring or what she had planned, ready to surprise us.

Scene change, MELANIE and MELISSA exist during monologue. During the monologue, the stage remains empty, only after does the scene become Dairy Queen.

NARRATOR

When we got Frisky, she was grey with green eyes, as she is now, but back then only the size of my eight-year-old palm, not so fat as she is now that her fur overlaps against the window sill. She was the quietest kitten in the entire shelter, just rubbing softly against the bars of her cage

with her soft cheeks. Waiting patiently for nothing to commence. “This one”, I said to my sister and mother, this one. Now, I look at her in the hallway as she limps from room to room, her tired arthritic limbs struggling to carry her to her next destination. But I always am sure to find her eyes. She always looks at me with those eyes, those eyes that say, thank you.

Entering from off stage right into what is now a makeshift Dairy Queen. The bed is now a table or “booth”, the scattered items have been discarded during the scene change. MELANIE and MELISSA enter still holding MOTHER’S hands.

MELISSA

What are we doing here mama?

MOTHER

We are going to have a little treat.

MELISSA

Why?

MOTHER

Because you two deserve it.

Exiting off stage right to grab two ice cream cones, MOTHER, comes back and sits with MELANIE and MELISSA at the booth.

NARRATOR

Mom seemed tired, I noticed now how bruised her eye was, how old she suddenly looked. I knew it was a special day, though, because we never got ice cream without a reason.

MELANIE

Mama why are we having a treat today?

MOTHER

Well, because you deserve it. And your father and I are getting a divorce.

MELANIE/MELISSA

What?

MOTHER

But now we can finally get a cat!

END SCENE

Personal Narrative: "A New Kitten"

By **Melissa Trepa**

(This script was prepared by Melissa as an assignment for a masters' course for staging literature at Fontbonne University. It is a personal narrative which details the events that occurred the day Melissa's parents broke up, and the day she found out she would get her first pet. The main character is bifurcated as the NARRATOR and MELISSA for clarity in the scene.)

Dramatis Personae

NARRATOR: Melissa Trepa, age 23. Although she is more objective now than when she was a child, she recalls her past as she remembers it from her younger self. However, Melissa is able to pull away from her memories to assess the situations from her past in ways her younger self cannot. She is the director of this scene, and this story is her memories as she recalls them.

MELISSA: Melissa Duffin, age 7 from the past. Before the name change, the step-dad, and everything else in between. Melissa recall's everything in real time as life has just changed for her drastically, forever.

MELANIE: Melanie Duffin, age 7, Melissa's sister and twin. She experiences the scene from the past in real time but as a witness to the experiences Melissa experienced through her perspective, not as her own experiences. Just through how Melissa remembers it.

MOTHER: Julie Severtson, Mother of twins, MELISSA and MELANIE, age 32. She is strong but doesn't know it yet. She feels she is in a fragile state, afraid, and protective of her girls. She is feeling events in real time as they occurred through the perspective of her daughter Melissa by her memory of the event. This is from Melissa's perspective of her mother, not her own view of herself.

SETTING: 2003 suburban Midwest, an Iowan town, a house, a Dairy Queen, it is early fall on a weekend. The narrator is talking to a counselor, but the audience does not know this nor needs to know.

.....

SCENE 1 opens to a simple stage. A table that works as a makeshift bed lies on stage left, while a scattered pillow, blankets, and a bat all lye on the ground off stage right. The table is set up as a bed at the start of the scene. MELISSA and MELANIE open the scene and are sharing their bed, sleeping. MOTHER enters

wearing a coat and holds a small suitcase, her clothing underneath does not match, her hair is uncombed, and her right eye is bruised. MOTHER waits by the bed as MELANIE and MELISSA wake up. NARRATOR stands to the side on stage left viewing the room and the scene as she speaks.

NARRATOR

I remember the day I got my first cat like it was yesterday. I had just woken up. It felt like any ordinary Saturday morning. Unbeknownst to me or my twin sister, however, the day would be anything but ordinary for the both of us. It doesn't seem like 16 years ago now, but on that Saturday after a long well rested night, we both could feel that something was about to happen that day. We woke up and the air just felt...

MELISSA

-different. Doesn't it just feel different today?

MELANIE

What do you mean it feels *different* today?

MELISSA

I don't know, today just feels like a special day.

MELANIE

Oh, okay. I guess I know what you mean.

MELISSA and MELANIE notice MOTHER standing by their door, with her suitcase. She is lingering by their bed. MELANIE and MELISSA begin to notice the mess of the room now that they've awoken.

MELISSA

Oh, hi mama!

MOTHER

Hi sweetheart.

MELANIE

Mama, what happened? What's all over the floor?

MOTHER

Nothing sweetheart.

MELISSA

Where's daddy?

MOM

Away.

MELISSA notices the suitcase her mother holds, and points to it.

MELISSA

Where are we going?

MOTHER

Away.

MELANIE and MELISSA get out of bed and put on coats from off stage left and come back on stage. MOTHER takes their hand and takes them off stage right. The girls pause at the scattered mess as they cross the stage upstage. They re-enter only after NARRATOR'S monologue.

NARRATOR

After we woke up, Mom took us on a day of adventure. Everything felt like such a mystery. Mom not telling us a single detail about what the day was about to bring or what she had planned. All I knew was that she was ready to surprise us.

Scene change, MELANIE and MELISSA exist during the next monologue. During the monologue, the stage remains empty, only after it ends does the scene becomes a Dairy Queen.

NARRATOR

When we got Frisky, she was grey with green eyes, as she is now, but back then she was only the size of my seven-year-old palm. And not so fat as she is now that her fur overlaps against the window sill when she slumps down to sit. She was the quietest kitten in the entire shelter when we got her, just rubbing softly against the bars of her cage with her soft cheeks. Waiting patiently for nothing, but there was something about her. There was something glimmering in her eyes. “This one”, I said to my sister and mother, this one. Now, I look at her in the hallway as she limps from room to room in her old age, her tired arthritic limbs struggling to carry her to her next destination. And I wonder where the time has gone. But I always remember to find her eyes when I look at her. She always looks at me with those eyes, those eyes that say, thank you. And I remember what her eyes said the day we picked her out. They said, thank you for choosing me. For saving me.

Entering from off stage right into what is now a makeshift Dairy Queen. The bed is now a table or “booth”, the scattered items have been discarded during the scene change. MELANIE and MELISSA enter still holding MOTHER’S hands.

MELISSA

What are we doing here mama?

MOTHER

We are going to have a little treat.

MELISSA

Why?

MOTHER

Because you two deserve it.

Exiting off stage right to grab two ice cream cones, MOTHER, comes back and sits with MELANIE and MELISSA at the booth.

NARRATOR

Mom seemed tired, I had just noticed now how bruised her eye was, how old she suddenly looked. I knew it was a special day, though, because we never got ice cream without a reason.

MELANIE

Mama why are we having a treat today?

MOTHER

Well, because you deserve it. And I have some important news.

MELANIE/MELISSA

What? What is it?

MOTHER

Daddy and I are getting a divorce. We're not going to live together anymore.

MELANIE/MELISSA

What?

MOTHER

...but now we can finally get a cat!

The scene changes, this time there is just MOTHER, MELANIE, and MELISSA upstage center, they are all sitting on a bed, a different than the first, it has different sheets on it. MELISSA is holding the grey cat. They are all gathered on the bed admiring the kitten.

NARRATOR

I remember just how much I loved that cat. Not only because she was cute and purred so sweetly. But because she was the sign, I needed to believe we were truly safe once and for all. Dad was allergic to cats. I looked at Friskey after we named her for her youthful spunk and said-

MELISSA

She's perfect! Thank you mom!!

MELANIE

I love her cute little nose, and her soft fur!

MOTHER

I'm glad you both like her.

MELISSA

So, when's daddy coming home mama?

MOTHER

Honey, I thought I told you...daddy isn't coming home, I'm your home now.

MELANIE

Does that mean we can play with Frisky wherever we want?

MELISSA

Does it mean there won't be loud noises or yelling anymore?

MOTHER

Girls I don't know what it means. What I do know is that this kitten is now ours and we will keep her safe. And I will always do whatever I can to keep you two safe, I promise.

NARRATOR

And I would forever carry those words with me. When my dad tried to give my mother a reason to be afraid and stopped by the house uninvited to teach her a lesson, I remembered her promise to keep us safe. When dad turned on us next, Melanie and I, and took his anger out on us every other weekend and Wednesday, I thought of the hours as they ticked so slowly until we would be dropped off safe again. When my step-dad and his Hawaiian shirt and mouth full of dad jokes greeted us with a cherry hello for the first time two years later. I remembered what my mother had promised. And she kept her word. And always will.

END SCENE

Staging Reader's Theatre Workshop

Let Evening Come by Jane Kenyon

This poem can be adapted for a script following the analysis and interpretation of the text.

Let Evening Come by Jane Kenyon

Let the light of late afternoon
shine through chinks in the barn, moving
up the bales as the sun moves down.

Let the cricket take up chafing
as a woman takes up her needles
and her yarn. Let evening come.

Let dew collect on the hoe abandoned
in long grass. Let the stars appear
and the moon disclose her silver horn.

Let the fox go back to its sandy den.
Let the wind die down. Let the shed
go black inside. Let evening come.

To the bottle in the ditch, to the scoop
in the oats, to air in the lung
let evening come.

Let it come, as it will, and don't
be afraid. God does not leave us
comfortless, so let evening come.

Analysis

This poem is free verse with enjambment, no particular rhyme scheme, but strong alliteration, metaphor, and use of anaphora. In this piece the anaphora works on multiple levels, one to articulate a plea to the speaker's audience, a command, and a request. While the other is to signify the significance of the experience the poem immerses the reader in. There are six stanza's for instance, all starting with "let" which mimic biblical parallels to the bible, where God created the world in six days, resting on the seventh day. The poem is six stanzas, and the death is revealed fully in the final line, when rest comes, mimicking this reference. In addition, the repetition adds emphasis in other ways.

The repetition increases the importance and significance of the commands as they are listed which adds to the shift in the final two stanza's when this breaks away. There are various motifs which parallel the piece including elements of light and dark, which foil the concept of life and death which is being discussed beneath the surface of the imagery being described by the

speaker. This imagery of course being a barn and farm, winding down from evening into the night, where life winds down and death must come. There is use of apostrophe, or rather speaking to someone who isn't addressed, by the narrator of the poem, but it is clearly someone close to the reader speaking, as they request for them to "let" evening come. And ask for death, as only a person in a close relationship with the speaker might be.

The phrases which repeat themselves are the use of anaphora when saying, "let", the two stanzas which end with "let evening come", as well as at the final stanza when "let evening come" is rephrased. There is also a heavy use of diction in this piece, with placement of words next to each other which force articulation when pronounced, adding emphasis to their meaning. For example, the very first line, when stating, "let the light of late evening shine through chimes of the barn, moving.", the "l" sound is very prevalent. Personifying the moon, the cricket, and wind, all add to the winding down of the setting as well as ending of life that is being intentionally symbolized in the piece as well.

In the poem Jane Kenyon captures the conflict between the nostalgia and the comforts of life in her imagery and the anxiety of death as it becomes clear that this is what the piece is truly about rather than just the day turning from evening into night as it more literally is described. The pastoral and farming imagery contradict from the typically obstructive images, like needles, crickets, chafing, the fox, etc. to add to this tension of death and life. The use of consonance is also key as it helps heighten the impact of the repetition in the anaphora being used in the poem which adds to the discovery for the reader to let go as the speaker comes to terms with death themselves. The repletion of vowel sounds and alliteration, also bring a physicality to the piece mimicking the conflict the narrator has with facing death and to the speaker the narrator is addressing. The conclusion of the piece ends in the final stanza with "God does not leave us comfortless, so let evening come," leaving the tensions behind alongside the peace that this line signifies as a result of its truthful presence in the end.

Understanding Terms

The denotative aspects of the piece include, the narrator as the main character, the narrator's topic, which is literally about the day winding down into the evening, a pastoral setting on a farm ending its day and getting quiet and dark for the night.

The connotative aspects of the piece include: the light shining on the barn compared to the shed going black inside, the dew collecting on the hoe abandoned in long grass, to the winds dying down, the use of "let evening come" as a tool to signify the release of life and acceptance of death, and the final stanza as it is articulated that "let evening come, as it will, and don't be afraid", referencing God, indicating the true end of life. The poem's structure mimicking the creation of life and day of rest, where the rest is to follow the final stanza of the poem as death comes using six stanza's and the phrase "let" as reference.

The anaphora being used as agency for the narrator to articulate the slow rising action to the acceptance of death, where this acceptance is made in the second to final stanza, stating "to the bottle in the ditch, to the scoop of the oats, to the air in the lung, let evening come", as if to mean, the inevitability of death must be accepted, where the resolution is found in the final

stanza. In addition, the animals and objects mentioned, contrast each other in their jarring description to parallel the struggle and conflict of the narrator with the reality of life and its nostalgia with the truth of death's impending end in its anxiety.

The Persona is of the narrator who appears to be the person dying who must accept their end, who simultaneously is convincing their audience of this acceptance as well. They are nostalgic, dramatic, but rightfully so, in mourning the impending death, and are in denial of it as they say goodbye to the day and let evening come slowly with each stanza.

The Locus is not specified but it can be read that it is dusk, evening, sunset, almost night, as the imagery reflects this, it is some place near a farm, maybe the Midwest, maybe summer, as images of grass and crickets and fox are described as well.

The Climax appears to be in line 12 the 4th stanza down before the structural shift, because the "let evening come" is read differently than in the second stanza, when the speaker recognizes they aren't talking about evening but are facing the truth that it is death that they must accept has come. Especially with the line about the shed becoming black, which contrasts the light of the barn in the first stanza, the narrator has come to the conclusion that death must truly come. The final stanzas help to articulate this acceptance and reassure the audience and narrator that they will not be comfortless with God, confirming the inevitable.

The Organization of the poem repeats phrases for emphasis like "let" at the start of every stanza, and "let evening come" at the end of stanza 2 and 4. The prepositions of "to" which shift the format of the organization in stanza five also act as the shift from the climax towards the resolution and revelations taking place in the piece. In addition, the parallels of light and dark occur in the piece from the first stanza with the sun's light to the moon and stars in the fourth stanza, as well as the shed and barn imagery in the first and fourth stanza's as well. The rising action paralleled the winding down of the setting from the first to fourth stanza's, then the seemingly insignificant prepositions and imagery of ditch, oat, and lung help to transition to the revelation and resolution regarding the acceptance of death in the final stanza as God is mentioned and the repeated phrase is rephrased for impact.

Script Readers Theatre/ Storytelling

Let Evening Come

CAST

NARRATOR

DANCERS: (double casting)

- BARN/SUN
- CRICKET/WOMAN

- HOE/STARS/MOON
- FOX/WIND/SHED
- BOTTLE/OATS/AIR

Act I
Scene 1

SETTING:

We are in a pastoral setting somewhere in the Midwest at the end of summer in the evening, as the day nears its end and the sunset is in full bloom to night's awakening. There is a farm, animals, tall grass, and fields all around although they are only indicated by the NARRATOR and DANCER's movements in performance.

DANCERS wear shades and hues of grey, with each dancer darkening in shade the farther into the stanza of the script they go, where BARN/SUN is almost white than grey and BOTTLE/OATS/AIR remains the deepest shade of grey, or almost completely black. NARRATOR wears a white top and solid black pants. Colors shades indicate life, and death, the darker the shade, the closer to death the symbol becomes.

AT RISE:

Curtains rise onto a dimly lit stage, where a spotlight transcends onto NARRATOR off downstage left. The backdrop behind upstage is of an image of a sunset which remains constant throughout the performance. On the stage beside NARRATOR are all the DANCERS, who are seen scattered on Stage Right and Center Stage in contrast of the spotlight where the NARRATOR stands, with each dancer posed using various levels, from the ground, to standing, and crouching positions, etc.

Movement of the DANCERS only begins once NARRATOR begins to speak and only

amongst the dancer being described by NARRATOR, all others remain frozen in their poses. Movements of dance are abstract, modern, and mimic the texts imagery and description. The scene begins once NARRATOR addresses the offstage focus above the audience and speaks.

NARRATOR

Let the light of late afternoon shine through chinks in the barn, moving up the bales as the sun moves down.

BARN/SUN is seen stretching and looking upward from a squatting position, then slowly bending over toward the ground after SUN moves down.

NARRATOR

Let the cricket take up chafing as a woman takes up her needles and her yarn. Let evening come.

CRICKET/WOMAN is seen from a laying down position chafing imaginary grass then sitting crisscross as CRICKET/WOMAN mimes using a needle and thread using yarn. At the end of this motion CRICKET/WOMAN goes frozen at the final line, "Let evening come."

NARRATOR

Let dew collect on the hoe abandoned in long grass. Let the stars appear and the moon disclose her silver horn.

HOE/STARS/MOON is seen standing at a slant, which transitions into a leap across the stage as STARS and MOON are indicated.

NARRATOR

Let the fox go back to its sandy den. Let the wind die down. Let the shed go black inside. Let evening come.

FOX/WIND/SHED is seen on hands and knees slowly crawling into a curled position

as FOX before standing and falling slowly as WIND, before laying down entirely as SHED, then going frozen at the line, "Let evening come."

NARRATOR

To the bottle in the ditch, to the scoop in the oats, to air in the lung let evening come.

BOTTLE/OATS/AIR is seen on the ground on their back, before rolling as BOTTLE and mimicking a scooping motion as they move off the floor, before then transitioning to a standing position then a leap as AIR until offstage. Once offstage, remaining DANCER'S follow BOTTLE/OATS/AIR offstage in freestyle leaps, twirls, and slow glides into the wings from their frozen positions. NARRATOR remains the final character left onstage under the spotlight.

NARRATOR

Let it come, as it will, and don't be afraid. God does not leave us comfortless, so let evening come.

Lights fade to black. End Scene.

Poetry Work Analysis and Performance

Storytelling**Poetry Selection:**

-Anne Waldman, "Makeup on Empty Space" from *Helping the Dreamer: Selected Poems, 1966-1988*. Copyright © 1989 by Anne Waldman. Reprinted with the permission of Coffee House Press, Minneapolis, www.coffeehousepress.com.

Source: *Helping the Dreamer: Selected Poems 1966-1988* (Coffee House Press, 1989)

Makeup on Empty Space**By Anne Waldman**

I am putting makeup on empty space
 all patinas convening on empty space
 rouge blushing on empty space
 I am putting makeup on empty space
 pasting eyelashes on empty space
 painting the eyebrows of empty space
 piling creams on empty space
 painting the phenomenal world
 I am hanging ornaments on empty space
 gold clips, lacquer combs, plastic hairpins on empty space
 I am sticking wire pins into empty space
 I pour words over empty space, enthrall the empty space
 packing, stuffing jamming empty space
 spinning necklaces around empty space
 Fancy this, imagine this: painting the phenomenal world
 bangles on wrists
 pendants hung on empty space
 I am putting my memory into empty space
 undressing you
 hanging the wrinkled clothes on a nail
 hanging the green coat on a nail
 dancing in the evening it ended with dancing in the evening
 I am still thinking about putting makeup on empty space
 I want to scare you: the hanging night, the drifting night,
 the moaning night, daughter of troubled sleep I want to scare you
 you
 I bind as far as cold day goes
 I bind the power of 20 husky men
 I bind the seductive colorful women, all of them
 I bind the massive rock
 I bind the hanging night, the drifting night, the
 moaning night, daughter of troubled sleep
 I am binding my debts, I magnetize the phone bill

bind the root of my pointed tongue
I cup my hands in water, splash water on empty space
water drunk by empty space
Look what thoughts will do Look what words will do
from nothing to the face
from nothing to the root of the tongue
from nothing to speaking of empty space
I bind the ash tree
I bind the yew
I bind the willow
I bind uranium
I bind the uneconomical unrenewable energy of uranium
dash uranium to empty space
I bind the color red I seduce the color red to empty space
I put the sunset in empty space
I take the blue of his eyes and make an offering to empty space
renewable blue
I take the green of everything coming to life, it grows &
climbs into empty space
I put the white of the snow at the foot of empty space
I clasp the yellow of the cat's eyes sitting in the
black space I clasp them to my heart, empty space
I want the brown of this floor to rise up into empty space
Take the floor apart to find the brown,
bind it up again under spell of empty space
I want to take this old wall apart I am rich in my mind thinking
of this, I am thinking of putting makeup on empty space
Everything crumbles around empty space
the thin dry weed crumbles, the milkweed is blown into empty space
I bind the stars reflected in your eye
from nothing to these typing fingers
from nothing to the legs of the elk
from nothing to the neck of the deer
from nothing to porcelain teeth
from nothing to the fine stand of pine in the forest
I kept it going when I put the water on
when I let the water run
sweeping together in empty space
There is a better way to say empty space
Turn yourself inside out and you might disappear
you have a new definition in empty space
What I like about impermanence is the clash
of my big body with empty space
I am putting the floor back together again
I am rebuilding the wall
I am slapping mortar on bricks

I am fastening the machine together with delicate wire
There is no eternal thread, maybe there is thread of pure gold
I am starting to sing inside about the empty space
there is some new detail every time
I am taping the picture I love so well on the wall:
moonless black night beyond country-plaid curtains
everything illuminated out of empty space
I hang the black linen dress on my body
the hanging night, the drifting night, the moaning night
daughter of troubled sleep
This occurs to me
I hang up a mirror to catch stars, everything occurs to me out in the
night in my skull of empty space
I go outside in starry ice
I build up the house again in memory of empty space
This occurs to me about empty space
that it is nevered to be mentioned again
Fancy this
imagine this
painting the phenomenal world
there's talk of dressing the body with strange adornments
to remind you of a vow to empty space
there's talk of the discourse in your mind like a silkworm
I wish to venture into a not-chiseled place
I pour sand on the ground
Objects and vehicles emerge from the fog
the canyon is dangerous tonight
suddenly there are warning lights
The patrol is helpful in the manner of guiding
there is talk of slowing down
there is talk of a feminine deity
I bind her with a briar
I bind with the tooth of a tiger
I bind with my quartz crystal
I magnetize the worlds
I cover myself with jewels
I drink amrita
there is some new detail
there is a spangle on her shoe
there is a stud on her boot
the tires are studded for the difficult climb
I put my hands to my face
I am putting makeup on empty space
I wanted to scare you with the night that scared me
the drifting night, the moaning night
Someone was always intruding to make you forget empty space

you put it all on
 you paint your nails
 you put on scarves
 all the time adorning empty space
 Whatever-your-name-is I tell you “empty space”
 with your fictions with dancing come around to it
 with your funny way of singing come around to it
 with your smiling come to it
 with your enormous retinue & accumulation come around to it
 with your extras come round to it
 with your good fortune, with your lazy fortune come round to it
 when you look most like a bird, that is the time to come around to it
 when you are cheating, come to it
 when you are in your anguished head
 when you are not sensible
 when you are insisting on the
 praise from many tongues
 It begins with the root of the tongue
 it begins with the root of the heart
 there is a spinal cord of wind
 singing & moaning in empty space

Poetry Selection and Analysis

I chose this poem because Anne Waldman is a great feminist writer and this piece is also not only long in length but longing in meaning that I have always been drawn to. I was first introduced to the poem in a poetry class in college, but we read it amongst the other assignments we were reading never having a chance to talk about her or her work in class specifically. So, I thought I'd do so now. I thought this was a fitting piece, because it takes a look at feminist viewpoints from a truly revolutionary time in the second wave of feminism when this was published, as well as the poetic choices that are being made, it felt current and relatable to me. The poem is essentially about what it means to fill the voids of empty space in our lives, and the viewpoints of who we are ourselves. That true fulfillment is not vain or artificial and must come from within in order to bind together the threads of life that make meaning out of life. It feels particularly feministic, because of her clear independence, and use of the metaphor of makeup. It also feels like a making up to oneself, as Anne articulates this sense of coming to a resolution of the mistakes that she's made which has led her to realize that emptiness comes from oneself as much as it leaves oneself.

Analysis

What type of poem is it?

It is a lyric poem with dramatic tendencies, so a lyric dramatic, if this is a term. The reason for this is the poem follows a structure but not a true conventional one and allows free verse and enjambment to carry the text to its final meaning. The context is a series of commands and suggestions, with the narrator alluding to other characters but never solidifying their true identities. The ambiguity allows for a powerful analysis, but it creates a piece which is hard to capture clearly at times as well, leaving it a lyric poem. However, it is dramatic because the core conflicts are visible, the narrator is creating the binds which connect and disconnect to the female identity to the expectations set upon women and there is a first-person character present. The antagonistic force is the status quo of society and the limitations it presents for women in the piece. This drives the poem to its final line, wrestling with these expectations.

Does it use conventional or free verse?

It uses free verse. However, there is structure to the poem in a poetic context, using alliteration, enjambment, repetition, and abundant anaphora in the piece as well as adjectives and listings of description to evoke its message.

How does it use poetic language such as allusions, figures of speech like simile, metaphor, analogy, and sensory appeals?

The poem predominately uses allusions and figures of speech to evoke a larger analogy about society. There are almost no similes, but an abundant amount of metaphors. The sensory appeals are prevalent as well. The adjectives used to describe the action placed on an empty space evokes a dominant first-person narrator who manipulates her text throughout the poem as she becomes a dynamic character to her audience.

How does it use poetic structure?

The poem uses anaphora and follows an unconventional stanza structure with lines continuing to the next through enjambment. There appears to be no separate stanzas, just one long singular stanza, which evokes urgency and passion, however, the patterns of the lines which use different phrases in repetition help to separate specific moments of the poem.

Stanza, sentences?

It is one long stanza, but sentences using anaphora create separation between moments. For instance, it starts with, "I am putting makeup on empty space", which follows a listing of adjectives on how the speaker does this. Then the action to empty space becomes varied. I am hanging ornaments on empty space, I am sticking wire pins into empty space, I pour words over empty space. I am putting my memory into empty space, etc. then there is a shift to I want to scare you, which is followed by a series of metaphors on how the narrator will bind a variety of things, repeating "I bind", then the next shift is to "from nothing" phrases, then the phrase, There is a better way to say empty space, which shifts the language to; I am putting the floor back together again, I am rebuilding the wall, I am slapping mortar on bricks, I am fastening the machine together with delicate wire, There is no eternal thread, maybe there is thread of pure gold, I am starting to sing inside about the empty space, which leads into a rebuilding of metaphors on what empty space can be. The next shift goes into repetitions of binding again,

then the phrase, I wanted to scare you with the night that scared me, the drifting night, the moaning night, which is repeated before listing, with-your/ when-you statements before completing the piece with, it-begins statements then the final two lines, there is a spinal cord of wind, singing & moaning in empty space.

Kind of meter (foot/stress/beat) does it use?

It does not use traditional metered rhyme schemes as a free verse poem.

Kind of meter (foot/stress) does it use?

It does not use traditional rhyme scheme as a free verse poem.

Kind of rhyme structure does it use?

The rhyme structure is unconventional as a lyric free verse poem. There is some assonance, and a few AB rhyme schemes but nothing consistent due to the use of enjambment at play in the piece.

Does it use tone color? (Onomatopoeia, alliteration, assonance, consonance)

There is an abundant tone color usage here. There is alliteration and some assonance and consonance. There is no use of onomatopoeia, but abundant descriptive adjectives and the personification of empty space in the poem.

Storytelling Chapter 9 and 10 poetry
Melissa Trepa

Tuesday: Present your performance since sick last class. Also, Read Ch. 9/10 for class on Poetry, pick a poem to at the end of Ch. 9 to work on during class. For Thursday, respond to the questions on p. 298 from the first poetry performance piece.

1. Poem: p. 277, *Hospital Window* by James Dickey.

P.298 responses from When Evening Comes

- ***Did you let the poet lead the way? Yes, I would say I did. I tried to interpret the material for performance, by understanding the decisions the poet made line by line.***
- ***Was your audience responsive to what the poet meant and especially to how it was meant? Yes, I felt I had enough movement and tone inflection to indicate meaning.***
- ***Did you use your empathic response fully, so the audience responded empathically as well? I would say I did, after interpreting the metaphor to be about death and not just evening coming. This helped me use the metaphor in my performance through action and rhythm.***
- ***Did you carefully preserve the unity of the poem? Did you keep all the other intrinsic factors working fully within? I would say I did keep all the factors for the unity, I was careful to pause on important shifts when the climax happens to when the piece ends on God not leaving us comfortless, so that these choices remained meaningful in a wholistic way.***
- ***Was the persona clear? Locus? Yes, the persona was a person on a farm, warning about death. The locus was on a farm at evening, as the day winded down.***
- ***Did you take advantage of sound patterns? Did you use the poems rhythm, or did it use you? Did you clarify the relationship between the lines and the cadences? I did try to pace my performance to match the rhythms of the piece and to clarify lines and cadences by matching them to my movements.***
- ***Did you demonstrate the interaction of rhyme and tone color? I would say I was most strong on tone color over rhyme but I reiterated the patterns from the text when I performed so it still rhymed.***
- ***Did you spend time introducing it than performing it? No, I did not.***
- ***Were you able to blend aspects from previous chapters that are applicable to this section and keep them in their relationship to the “whole” poem? Yes, I tried to remember character motivations and eye contact and all the details that make a good performance.***
- ***Did your audience hear the poem as a totality? Poems are like people who change over time, as we get to learn more about them? I think the poem was heard to completion. The audience learns the meaning the narrator has for the farm and for life, as she lets it all go to accept death. The audience learns to accept it with her, by the end.***

- ***How did the poem change as you rehearsed? How has it changed since performing?*** *The persona was more defined as I rehearsed, at first it just felt like someone who was accepting their death, but as I practiced it also felt like I was telling my loved ones to accept it too. Since performing I realize I physically showed the winding down of the day quite literally and could've cut back on a movement or two to do more reflective work in the performance.*
- ***What problems still plague you as the performer, what progress have you made defining them or solving them?*** *My biggest problem as a performer, was deciding if I was projecting enough and deciding if I was moving too much or too little since poetry is reliant on reflective choices, but I didn't just want to stand and recite the piece. I think I made the right choice to show the animals leaving and the night coming as the poem describes, however, I think I could have paused a bit more on a few moments to really push the lines powerful lines a bit more if I did this again in the future.*

Storytelling

Ch. 5 Analysis of *From Women's Dairies of the Westward Journey* p.150

Style

The style uses a narrative voice in first person, directing the conversation to other characters in the scene presumably. The description fades as the dairy entries continue in the story giving more meaning through the audience's critical thinking than through explicit text. The text is descriptive heavy as the narrator gives facts about the scenes happening as well as assumptions with words like "likewise" and "intending".

The author here, Jane Gould Tortillot wants readers to read between the lines to understand the larger arch of the story here. The main core of the entries being a perspective of women traveling west, which includes bias against Indians, their roles as women during this time, and the conditions at play for this period of history which are shown through the narrative with each description on each entry. The structure was harder to directly find cores for, because a lot of it was intrinsic to the reader than spoken outwardly, however, it is clear this story speaks about struggles of conflict between different human beings in an unjust society of the past, as there are still unjust realities we see play out today.

Word Choice

In the first entry the main core of the sentence appears to be in the third entry when mentioning the stories of Indians depredations, where the first paragraph is used as a tool for introducing the setting and obtaining characterization of the narrator and associated characters mentioned. On the July 11th post, the core of the sentence structure is noted when saying, "The child was injured quite seriously", providing context to the strain the trip entailed on the characters, where the entries on 20-22 were more informative to the larger narrative as details were pieced together for the reader, especially when direct details about the men's work were described in-scene by the author. However, It gets more to the core in the rising action by the time entry on July 26 comes into the story.

Annie McMillen is an important character because she acts as the catalyst for sincere context in the story for the reader as she is described as slow and holding the travelers behind. She represents the pacing of time in the story as well as from the perspective of the narrative arch as the travelers go west, as it was experienced in the early years of colonization and migration. That first line, "Annie McMillen had lagged behind, walking, when we stopped" helps to jump into the struggles of the group to keep her at their pace, the detail of the creek helps articulate the struggle the mules had in the water and continues to add depth to the conflict the travelers face.

The entry on July 28 has its root structure in the first sentence and the last, to indicate the realities of the trauma of their journey, when mentioning the size of the group camping and the fact some were barred. The details in the center add emotional structure to the piece when the

mother and child are mentioned, but do not need to be in the core of the paragraph to articulate the struggle at hand. The core here then would be “Came past a camp of thirty-six wagons who have been camped for some time here in the mountains. They made a good picket fence around the grave.”

On the final page of the story, the entries become more harrowing and seemingly impactful. The core sentence refers to the female experience of this journey, as often is forgotten in dairies and history books which speaks to the core of the story which is about the women traveling as the title indicates. “We passed by the train I have just spoken of. She lived twenty-four hours, she gave birth to a child a short before she died. The child was barried with her. She leaves a little two-year-old girl and a husband.”

August 10th post is the longest and assumingly the climax of the journey being described before the resolution comes on August 12th. The post speaks about their location, which is crucial to the arch of the story as they reach a location. The true narrative speaks about the fatality of travel and the relationship to the Indians in which the people oppose into their territory. The core then is found in the third sentence with the sentence as follows. “In a short time, the word came back that a train six miles on had been attacked by the Indians, and some killed and that was cause enough for the arming.”

The next paragraph goes into the rivers traveled and the arming. This paragraph explains how the Indians had hurt characters including Mr. Bull, and describes what they stole and damaged. The truth here is even with this being true, there was harm being done to Indians during this time, that is unspoken of in this narrative lens. The line that is most striking is the listing that occurs about the wrongdoings of the Indians by the narrator. Which all do highlight the struggle of traveling west entails even from a bias lens. The core of the final entry being, “We learned that a train of eleven wagons had been plundered of all that was in them and the teams taken ad the men killed.”

The details about the Captain and family are also important because they are family to the narrator and provide a specific perspective by the travelers, so this too is a core to the narrative. It goes, “The Captain had a daughter shot and wounded severely. One of those killed was Capt. Kennedy was severely wounded. Capt. Hunter of Iowa City train was killed likewise by an Indian. We camped near Snake River. Capt. Adam’s daughter died this morning from the effects of her wound. Poor father and mother lost one son and one daughter, all of his teams, clothing, and four thousand dollars. Is left dependent on the bounty of strangers.”

The entries of the travelers and pilgrims compared to the images with the Indians help to reveal foil characterizations, conflict tensions, and the overall story’s intent to shed light on these differences of these people for the impact it made on history as we know it today and the tensions about differences that we as a society still struggle to overcome.

The core in total reads as follows which can be structured into a script for performance purposes. Although it could be condensed further if analyzed again, I’m sure.

1. "We hear many stories of Indians depredations, but do not feel frightened yet..."
2. "There was a child run over by a wagon, the child was injured quite seriously, he said he thought it would get better"
3. "Annie McMillen had lagged behind, walking, when we stopped"
4. "Came past a camp of thirty-six wagons who have been camped for some time here in the mountains. They made a good picket fence around the grave."
5. "We passed by the train I have just spoken of. She lived twenty-four hours, she gave birth to a child a short before she died. The child was barried with her. She leaves a little two-year-old girl and a husband."
6. "In a short time, the word came back that a train six miles on had been attacked by the Indians, and some killed and that was cause enough for the arming."
7. "We learned that a train of eleven wagons had been plundered of all that was in them and the teams taken ad the men narrative."
8. "The Captain ha d a daughter shot and wounded severely. One of those killed was Capt. Kennedy was severely wounded."
9. "Capt. Hunter of Iowa City train was killed likewise by an Indian. We camped near Snake River. Capt. Adam's daughter died this morning from the effects of her wound.
10. "Poor father and mother lost one son and one daughter, all of his teams, clothing, and four thousand dollars. Is left dependent on the bounty of strangers."