

Act One
Scene One

#1-Opening

① MUSIC BEGINS. LIGHTS UP on HALF A DOZEN smiling AMERICANS – "BYSTANDERS" who will reappear later in the show – waving cheerfully at what might be a passing parade, or motorcade. Lights fade on them, as MUSIC CHANGES ... and we find ourselves in a kind of limbo. Murky light, sinister and shadowy. Emerging from the shadows, a Shooting Gallery in a fairground. Flashing LIGHTS – red, white and blue. Dimly seen target figures, all men, dressed formally in various fashions from the last two hundred years, trundle by on a conveyor belt. A shelf of prizes, filled with the usual stuffed animals, small dolls and souvenirs, plus a sexy life-size doll, money, elaborate scrolled documents, books, newspapers with large but unreadable headlines, and fancy jars of colored liquid. American eagles and dusty Presidential seals range along the top border of the booth. A PROPRIETOR stands behind the counter, idly picking his teeth. CALLIOPE MUSIC. MUSIC CHANGES to a slow, disgruntled BEAT. A scruffy sullen laborer, LEON CZOLGOSZ, a man in his late twenties, shuffles in disconsolately, paring an apple or eating a sausage, looking at the ground.

PROPRIETOR

HEY, PAL – FEELIN' BLUE?
DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO?
HEY, PAL –

(CZOLGOSZ looks up)

I MEAN YOU –

YEAH. C'MERE AND KILL A PRESIDENT. ②

(PROPRIETOR reaches under the counter, pushes a button; a sign lights up: HIT THE "PREZ" AND WIN A PRIZE. CZOLGOSZ stops, shuffles over) –

③ NO JOB? CUPBOARD BARE?

ONE ROOM, NO ONE THERE?

HEY, PAL, DON'T DESPAIR –

YOU WANNA SHOOT A PRESIDENT?

(Puts a gun in CZOLGOSZ's hand)

C'MON AND SHOOT A PRESIDENT ...

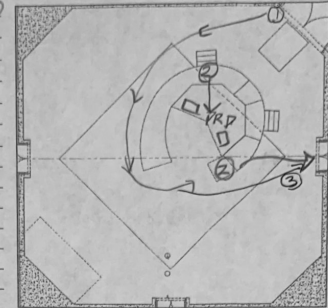
(CZOLGOSZ stares at the gun)

SOME GUYS

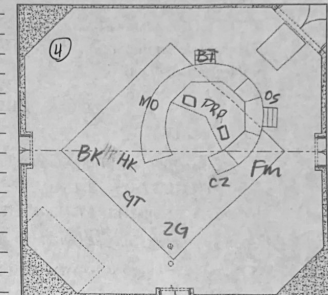
THINK THEY CAN'T BE WINNERS. ④

(Smiles, shakes his head)

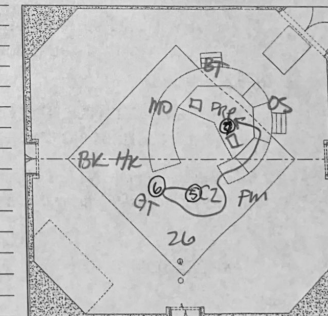
① ensemble ent BSR x DS ground ramp
② ensemble stop at bottom step
PRP ent BSR x T USR stair x to CS on platform



③ ensemble ex SL
④ CZ ent SL x to DSL, freezes
HK ent DSL x VS, freezes
BT ent DSL x to CS, freezes
ZG ent DSL x VS, freezes
PR ent DSL x VS, freezes
FM ent SL x SR, freezes
MD ent BSR x DSR, freezes
BT ent BSR x to SR stairs, freezes
OS ent BSL x DS, freezes



⑤ CZ vnt freezes
⑥ CZ x CS
⑦ CZ x DSL, up DS stairs



Scene Nine

Limbo. SAM BYCK trudges on, wearing his Santa Claus suit, carrying his picket sign and a beat-up shopping bag. HE sits down, maybe on a sidewalk bench or on a stoop, reaches in the shopping bag, takes out a can of Budweiser, opens it, and takes a big drink. HE then takes out a greasy sandwich, a portable tape recorder, and a bunch of tapes. HE shoves a tape in the tape recorder, takes a bite of sandwich, composes himself, and starts recording.

①
②③

BYCK

Hello, Mr. Bernstein? Lenny? How you doin'? My name is Sam Byck. We've never met. You're a world-renowned composer and conductor who travels the world over enjoying one success after another and I'm an out-of-work tire salesman, so I guess that's not surprising. But I hope you'll take a few minutes out of your busy schedule to listen to this tape which you just opened in the mail. If you can't listen to it now, maybe you can listen to it—

(HE sings)

TONIGHT, TONIGHT ...

(HE chuckles cheerfully)

I love that song! What a melody. And what a sentiment. "Tonight, tonight, I'll meet my love tonight ..." Where is she, Lenny? Gimme a hint.

(HE takes a drink of Budweiser and a big bite of the sandwich) ④

Lenny, you're a modest kind of guy, I know that. But you'll indulge me for a minute if I say something from the heart. You're a genius. Yes, you are! And you know why? You understand what people want. You have their ear. You make 'em listen, Lenny. No one listens. Are you listening?! No one listens ...

(HE takes another bite of sandwich) ⑤

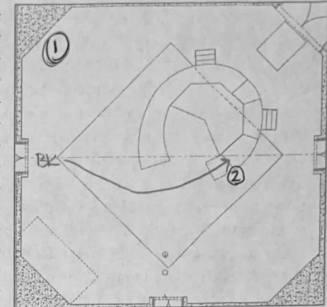
Well, if you're hearing this, I guess you're listening now, right? So with all due respect, deferring to your stature in the world of music, classical and semi-classical, I want to offer you a small piece of advice ... Hey, I know what you're thinking. Who the hell is Sam Byck with his fat ass and his tongue on rye to give a shit hot guy such as yourself advice? Well, Lenny, it's a fact that my unwillingness to compromise my principles and kiss ass like some people I could mention has cost me the so-called good life which others have enjoyed. So be it, Len. Fuck me, fuck you. But Lenny, listen. Listen to one small piece of advice from a true fan ... Forget the long-hair shit and write what you write best. Love songs. They're what we need! They're what the world needs! "Lonely Town!" "Maria!" Tender melodies to cherish for a lifetime! Timeless strains which linger in the memory and the heart! Love, Lenny! What the world needs now is love sweet love! Love makes the world go round!

(HE takes a slurp of beer) ⑥

① BK Ent DSR X SL to sit on 2nd step w/ shopping bag, picket sign

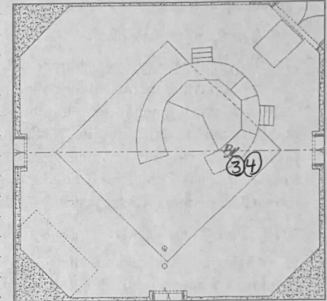
② BK unpacks bag, pulls out tape recorder, tape, bag, sandwich

③ opens beer
takes a bite of sandwich

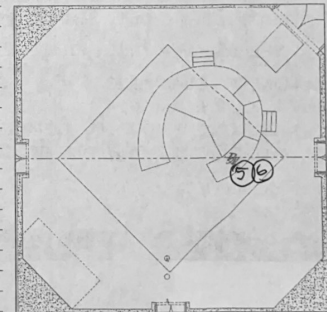


④ BK chinks from can, bite from sandwich

⑤ bite from sandwich



⑥ BK drinks from can



Scene Thirteen

Limbo. A GUNSHOT, and a YELP. LIGHTS UP on SARA JANE MOORE. SHE is standing, gun in hand, her purse over her arm, staring down at the inert form of a SMALL DOG which lies at her feet.

Shit! *(7)* MOORE
(SQUEAKY FROMME enters, looking nervously around)

Everything all set? FROMME

Yeah. Everything is great. MOORE

What's wrong? FROMME

I just shot my dog. MOORE

Your dog? You brought your dog to an assassination? FROMME

What was I supposed to do with him, leave him in the car? MOORE

You could've left him home! FROMME

And come back to find the couch all chewed up? No, thanks! MOORE

(u) I don't believe this! How could you do something so dumb! How could you — FROMME
 MOORE

(Picking up the DOG)

He's dead, all right? Let's drop it. *(7)*

(SHE shoves the DEAD DOG in her purse. A nine-year-old BOY enters)

BOY
 Mom! Hey, mom! I need another fifty cents!

FROMME
 You brought your kid?

① MO ent DSL w/
 X VS, sets down

② MO shoots dog

③ FM ent DSR X VS

④ FM X VS

⑤ Kira ent DSL X VS

