

Synopsis

DISK ONE: The Setup

1. Prelude (1:51)
2. Scene 1: Monday, late morning in mid-December. Jim's New York office (16:36)
3. Interlude 1 (1:58)
4. Scene 2: Wednesday evening. Jim's office / Sandy's Geneva hotel room (9:42)
5. Interlude 2: *Nightmare* (1:46)
6. Scene 3: Thursday morning. Jim's study / Sandy's hotel room (12:30)

Total duration: (44:23)

DISK TWO: The Payoff

1. Interlude 3 (1:26)
2. Scene 4: Friday evening. An upscale New York bar (8:41)
3. Scene 4 part 2 "Jim, dear, have you ever been in Cleveland?" (12:34)
4. Interlude 4 (1:58)
5. Scene 5: The following Monday morning. Jim's office (7:13)
6. Scene 5 part 2: "And you betrayed me." (10:44)

Total duration: (42:37)

The first production of *Fraternity of Deceit* ran from March 5 through March 15, 1998, at the Eden Arcade Theater on West 44th Street in New York. This album was recorded from July 19 through July 24, 1999, at the Fifth House Studio in Brooklyn. It was engineered, edited, and mastered by David Avidor.

SPECIAL THANKS TO Mark Wolff, Florence Neal, Jeffrey Johnson, Aniko Kaiser, Bridget Tierney, Maria Yefimova, Berda Gilmore, Teri Slotkin, Margaret Neill, Colleen Davis, Doug Sherman, Maggie Wells, Claire Kowalski, and Peter N.C. Davies.

Author's note

I founded the Postindustrial Players in 1995. We're a small band of singers, instrumentalists, and theater artists dedicated to the development of a repertoire of intimate sung dramas which combine the impact of live theater with the clarity of film close-ups, and the liveliness of the musical avant-garde with the suaveness of American pop classics. It's not an exaggeration to say that we're trying to foment a modest revolution in music theater:

- a revolution of clarity, where every word and nuance sung or spoken is easily comprehensible.
- a revolution of synergy, where text and music take full account of the innovations of modern music and drama without indulging the avant-garde penchants for information overload, opacity, and over-reliance on technology.
- a revolution of tradition, where passionate, non-ironic comedy and tragedy are offered as an antidote to the gratuitous parody and winking sarcasm of much film, television, and literature.
- a revolution of scale, which delights in subtleties of language, melody, and gesture which would be lost in an opera house or Broadway theater.
- a revolution of perception, which uses, but doesn't abuse, the audience's tremendous talent for channel surfing and following simultaneous streams of information.

After a year of rehearsing and previews, we made our debut in 1996 at the downtown New York performance loft Roulette with a fully staged production of my 1995 collaboration with Kier Peters, *Still in Love*. Critic and WFMU-FM DJ Kenny Goldsmith's reaction to the premiere was particularly gratifying: "... cool yet blistering ... all imaginable boundaries collapse as terms of psychic warfare are drawn, leaving the listener to sift through the rubble of passionate postmodern love." I wouldn't say that we lust for a steady diet of unalloyed praise, but an occasional response like that does make it easier to stay the path in the absence of commercial success. Oh, yes, and by the way — the original cast recording of *Still in Love* was released on Equilibrium in 1997 (**Equilibrium EQ 6**).

In March of 1998 the Players premiered *Fraternity of Deceit*, the second installment in a trilogy of chamber music dramas slated for completion in the year 2000. Here the scene shifts to the modern workplace, with its airtight offices, harried pace, and daily grind of petty ethical compromise. As with *Still in Love*, the Players' goal in *Fraternity* is to explore both the tragic and the comic sides of banal existence and to sift for rhetorical gems in the clichés of everyday speech. The devil is in the details, to which I would add: Tragedy often lurks in the details. There may indeed be no heroes left at the turn of this century, but the low-key tragedy which attends urban life, work, and love seems all the more poignant for its rank commonness. The Postindustrial Players are searching for a way to sing of that tragedy without succumbing to nostalgia for the tried and true procedures of the musical and operatic stage. And yet we realize that we still have much to learn from those traditions.

— Michael Kowalski
August, 1999

Director's note

"Truth?" said Pilate, "what is that?"

— John 18:37

It is said there are three kinds of secret truths: ones we hide from others, ones we hide from ourselves, and ones known only by The Other, The Truth.

Fraternity of Deceit presents a variety of behaviors familiar to big city dwellers of the late twentieth century: the dissembling, the phoniness, the bullying, the stealthy guile, the bluster, the feigned loyalty, the inadvertent collusion with those whose politics we vehemently oppose, and the clumsy attempts at kindness hidden behind rigidly codified male bonding rituals. It may seem clichéd to cite the harried pace and unrelenting tension of the metropolis as defining factors in our culture of narcissism, but it's hard to deny that the post-Cold War triumph of corporate capitalism has made it harder for individuals to maintain their moral compass. Ever faster cashflows and relentless transformations in the nature of work have begotten the technological man, a person strangely devoid of memory or sensual experience, perhaps even unaware of their absence, but not yet dead to desire or conscience. Non-commercial institutions, the family, traditions of social welfare, the practice of medicine, and the practice of art have all gone through an almost dreamlike decay in America, their very intentions parsed and deconstructed. It's not clear what values beyond those of the marketplace will shape the future.

Fraternity of Deceit presents the archetypal milieu of the struggle to define those values. It turns out to be a rather banal milieu, complete with a love triangle no less tawdry for its comic triviality. How will the individuals on each side of the triangle respond to the challenges ahead? With what newly-formed combination of values? What price would there be to pay for just muddling through with the old, familiar compromises intact?

— Jeffrey Johnson
adapted from the director's note
to the premiere, March, 1998



Fraternity of Deceit

a chamber music drama in five scenes

The book and score of *Fraternity of Deceit* are dedicated to Maurice G. Bley, founder and director of the Hamburg (N.Y.) Little Theatre, and a critical, devoted lover of opera since the days of Melchior and Flagstad.

CAST

JIM (low baritone)	a senior executive in a large New York corporation	Peter Stewart
SANDY (high baritone)	a junior executive in Jim's department	Gregory Purnhagen
LINDA (soprano)	Jim's wife, an architect	Karen Grahn
BOB (spoken)	Jim's counterpart in London	Michael Kowalski
MALE AND FEMALE VOICES (spoken)	Other executives in Jim's department	Francesca Vanasco Michael Kowalski

The action occurs over a period of seven days, in the present.

DISK ONE: The Setup

Prelude (band 1)

Scene 1 (band 2)

Monday morning in Jim's office. Jim and Sandy are in the midst of an informal conference. The office is rather Spartan, but it is clear that Jim is the boss.

JIM Wednesday.

SANDY Sorry about Friday.

JIM Forget Friday. It was unprofessional.

SANDY That little brat of a receptionist has an attitude. I won't beg for the men's room key!

JIM You're my loose cannon, amigo. Just make sure you're pointed away from me when you pop off.

SANDY No problem. I know you take the flak. You're the white knight who protects the unruly serfs.

JIM The options trading system — we've got to hit a home run.

SANDY I'm working on the budget.

JIM That's not enough.

SANDY Wednesday?

JIM Dog and pony time.

SANDY We've got nothing to show.

JIM Knock their socks off in Geneva. We need credibility.

SANDY We need time. About a month. I'll give you something they can't poke holes through.

JIM Show them what we've got. Show them what we're going to have. Make it real.

SANDY What's the deal? Aren't you flying over in two weeks?

JIM This is your big chance.

SANDY Geneva on Wednesday?

JIM Survival.

SANDY Yours or mine?

JIM The department. All ten of us.

SANDY Why me? I'm a techie, not a finance type.

JIM We crash and burn together. I'm being hammered by Treasury. Do you want that meeting instead?

SANDY Do I get to sit next to Alexis? Forget I said that. (*scans the room*) Where's the microphone?

JIM I want solid stuff. If you have to lie, do it with facts.

SANDY So I'll make new slides.

JIM And the Frankman . . .

SANDY François?

JIM We need him.

SANDY But he hates your guts!

JIM With François in our corner, we can count on Zurich.

SANDY The system's just a toy, a fragile, costly toy. No one even knows what it does.

JIM The Frankman collects toys. If he gets one, Zurich wants one, and we're in. (*pointing to a sheaf of papers*) And we ride for a year if I double these figures.

JIM You learn fast. That's good.

SANDY I'm not sure.

JIM What?

SANDY I can't act.
 JIM You're acting now with me.
 SANDY If you saw me at home you'd fire me.
 JIM You've got a certain style. I can't place it, but it will charm them in Europe.
 SANDY Look, my French is rusty, my socks are dirty, and I have Christmas shopping to do.
 JIM My first wife used to take care of that stuff.
 SANDY I can't imagine why she quit.
 JIM In any event . . .
 SANDY It's disgusting, . . .
 JIM You always exaggerate.
 SANDY . . . having to embezzle a budget!
 JIM For someone who can't act, you certainly like to dramatize things.
 SANDY People are too messy. That's why I'm a techie. Machines are clean, but people sweat.
 JIM People stink is what you mean. You're riffing, man, you're surfing. The wave's about to break.
 SANDY So why send me? Why trust me? Assuming you do.
 JIM I like your work, amigo.
 SANDY Plus I've got an attitude.
 JIM A style!
 SANDY It's too expensive.
 JIM I agree it's too expensive.
 SANDY It's dirty. Who said that money's pure? A yuppie with a yacht.
 JIM. So don't direct the cash, and where does it flow? To Geneva, to the paté and burgundy account.
 SANDY Which doesn't change the scam. I'm making a pitch for a Trojan Horse.
 JIM You're the one obsessed with money. Better lighten up.
 SANDY Tell that to your broker.
 JIM Remember the Assistant Treasurer? Sy?
 JIM Seymour, with the tie.
 SANDY He always tucked it in.
 JIM Did you ever figure out just what he was laughing about?
 SANDY I can still hear him cackling over the phone. I used to think he was nuts. That was before.
 JIM Before you figured out we're all lunatics. But that's not the same as nuts, is it?
 SANDY I think he only had one suit, double-breasted chocolate-brown.
 JIM Yeah, I can see him now, laughing all the way to the bank. By the way, how much did that tie set you back?
 SANDY OK, rub it in!
 JIM Lighten up!
 SANDY It's too hectic.
 JIM You missed your morning coffee.
 SANDY Can you believe it? I used to be easy-going.
 JIM You ought to work out. Calms the nerves. You're getting a wee bit pudgy.
 SANDY The crush of people on the stairs ruins my day before it starts.
 JIM I catch the train at six A.M. What of it?
 SANDY Who needs the friggin' system?
 JIM Your mother's pension.
 SANDY It's a bomb.
 JIM Ride the wave, amigo!

SANDY That system is a weapon.
 JIM Man, you're surfen' again. Better watch out. You're too old.

SANDY Who needs an option? What's an option? A promise to buy? A promise to sell? What, tell me what?

JIM You'd be terrific in talk radio. It's a damn good thing I know you're joking.

SANDY What's a promise worth on the open market?

JIM *(to himself)* But I could get into this.

SANDY I don't know.

JIM Good!

SANDY It's a casino.

JIM So let's play the game.

SANDY You mean like Bugsy, down in Vegas? We never met!

JIM They deal the cards. You play your hand. Most of the time you have to bluff.

SANDY But I liked the "Golden Nugget". I liked the neon dollar bills.

JIM If the action isn't on the level, either you fold . . .

SANDY They don't have any clocks.

JIM . . . or keep on playing . . .

SANDY Right.

JIM . . . with an expanded rulebook.

SANDY Wrong! I'm not that stupid.

JIM You come on like a straight, but I see you're not averse to a little speculation.

SANDY Just don't ask me to lie. It's habit-forming, and it won't look good on my resumé.

JIM "Lie" is a very strong word. Merely speak the truth strategically.

You do it every day.

SANDY Tell me about it. Judy hates me. Ann hates me. Jessica hates me.

JIM And then there's the budget.

SANDY Don't remind me.

JIM The numbers . . .

SANDY Which make me nervous.

JIM . . . will be well-cooked.

SANDY Just as I feared.

JIM This will give credence . . .

SANDY I don't like your drift.

JIM . . . to an otherwise worthwhile project . . .

SANDY I feel it coming.

JIM . . . which could never be funded on its own terms.

SANDY Baloney!

JIM You remember Tommy?

SANDY Seymour's boss? Yeah, he was smooth.

JIM Smooth right down to his shorts. Twelve hundred bucks for a dozen English cotton.

SANDY Since when are you going through Tommy's shorts? He's a member of the board!

JIM Who has an assistant. Who hates his guts. Who files his trip reports. Who's very easily offended.

SANDY And you believe that crap? It's scum from the secretarial pool.

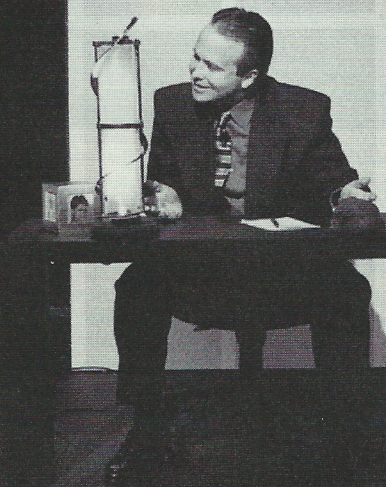
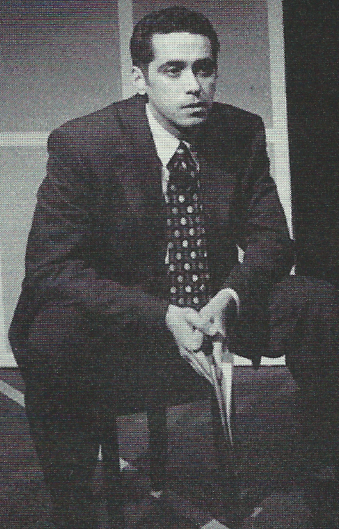
JIM You're right. The working class have no class.

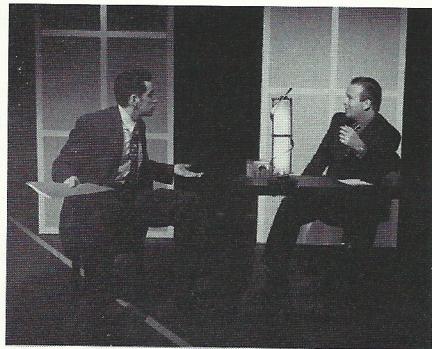
SANDY You said that, not me!

JIM Agreed.

SANDY Don't trap me.

JIM I inflated the numbers to make a point.





SANDY Is this a joke? What's it supposed to prove?

JIM Everybody knows that Geneva is tough. Don't make it impossible. Don't tie yourself in knots.

SANDY *(staring off into space)* It doesn't much matter what the shorts really cost. There must have been a justification.

JIM What are you staring at now? You trackin' me, boy?

SANDY I think I see your point.

JIM Just in time.

SANDY How so?

JIM I'm worried.

SANDY Don't be. I was just on a roll.

JIM So I can count on you to keep it simple? Keep it friendly?

SANDY We scored points in the meeting last week. You were pleased, or was I wrong?

JIM That was good. That was good. Why do you think I want you to go?

SANDY I figured I had to earn my bonus. In any event . . .

JIM I'd like to go myself . . .

SANDY You just got back.

JIM . . . but . . .

SANDY How do you manage the hours?

JIM . . . I cut a deal at home.

SANDY The holidays must be fun when you've got a couple of kids.

JIM I promised Linda, three trips a month, max. You, on the other hand, you're by yourself. You've got it made.

SANDY That's right, forever single. When I'm gone, at the rate I'm going, who's gonna notice?

JIM You'll get a big sendoff from all your ex-girlfriends.

SANDY There's really not that many.

JIM You're very modest.

SANDY Alright.



JIM Then we're on?

SANDY Who knows? It might be fun.

JIM That's exactly what I wanted to hear. Keep it loose.

SANDY But what's the bottom line, in black and white? What constitutes a win?

JIM No black, no white, agreed? François has got to understand the deal, but not perfectly.

SANDY So I show him the slides, I show him the budget . . .

JIM You listen to him first.

SANDY I get it.

JIM You sure?

SANDY It's common sense, more or less.

JIM And when it's over . . .

SANDY How in the hell do I punch this through in a day-and-a-half?

JIM . . . there's a little bistro in Lausanne. Great winelist, good place for celebrations.

SANDY How far is that from Geneva? I hate to drive in Europe.

JIM So let him drive. Just don't be taken for a ride. The Frankman eats Americans for breakfast.

SANDY That sounds like the voice of experience.

JIM It's cultural. He won't be played for a fool by someone who doesn't speak French.

SANDY But . . .

JIM He can be convinced.

SANDY . . . so I should play it straight . . .

JIM Basically.

SANDY . . . except where necessary.

JIM Let me get you lunch.

SANDY Like you said, "Funny business . . ."

JIM " . . . lure people into that calm . . ."

SANDY " . . . yank their pants down and turn out the lights."

JIM Right. Turn out the lights, amigo, but stop quoting me out of context.

(They exit.)

Interlude 1 (band 3)

Scene 2 (band 4)

Wednesday, 7:30 P.M., EST., or 1:30 A.M. in Geneva. Sandy has just arrived in his hotel room in Geneva, only a little worse for the wear for having spent a long night on the town. He phones Jim, who is still working in his office.

SANDY I knew I'd catch you in the office. It must be after one. What a dinner!

JIM It's seven-thirty.

SANDY You didn't tell me. He's young. But his boss, the ferocious guy from Pakistan . . .

JIM He's Lebanese.

SANDY I'm glad I didn't have to deal with him. Aside from that, it's going pretty well.

JIM Fill me in.

SANDY Your directions were good. I didn't get lost. François arrived an hour late for the meeting. "Tied up." That's what he said. "Quarterly audit." There's no such thing as a "quarterly audit", is there? He seemed to take me for a fool. But then, ten minutes into my spiel . . .

JIM I can guess, he interrupted.

SANDY He started reading my mind. It was incredible. They want to roll the damn thing out next month. That's crazy! I must have oversold it. But then, we had to break for lunch. How do they stay so thin? I lost track of the courses. Just when I thought it was over, someone suggested a glass of port. I couldn't help but think of the time—it was kind of sad to see you coming out, all alone, from that salad bar. All wilted, part of the plastic knife and fork brigade. At least over here you get some dessert, and conversation which has nothing to do with business. It was fun until I folded my napkin. Is that some kind of breach of etiquette?

JIM You blew it.

SANDY The afternoon was wasted. François disappeared. We'll talk about the budget in the morning, after I've shaken out the cobwebs. He gave me two young chaperones, Lucky Pierre and Mack the Knife (something like that). Euro-trash. Boy, can they drink! Sometimes it seems like it's going too well.

JIM So watch your back.

SANDY Why do I always have pizza for lunch?

JIM This must be a lousy connection.

SANDY Really? Can't you hear me? You sound like you're right next door.

JIM Skip it. What were you saying?

SANDY Who is Siegfried?

JIM Never heard of him. What does he do?

SANDY He's a singer. Or a character in an opera.

JIM What did they feed you for dinner?

SANDY I really like their style.

JIM The first time I went I got sick. How much cheese did you eat?

SANDY They name the machines after singers. Can you believe it?

JIM That's cute.

SANDY But you never mentioned the guy in the saffron robes.

JIM Who in the hell . . . ?

SANDY He shaves his head. Must be a monk.

JIM That's terrific. So what?

SANDY So the Frankman says he's better than a machine. He never enters . . .

JIM Why are you telling me this?

SANDY He never enters a single bad trade.

JIM I should have known. You're just like them.

SANDY Are you implying . . . ?

JIM That you're a little bit eccentric? No offense!

SANDY It's not just eccentricity.

JIM You're right. It's nuts for you to broadcast that a Buddhist monk can whip our butts.

SANDY That's not what I was doing.

JIM Are you sure?

SANDY Damn sure. I was far too distracted by the Frankman's young assistant.

JIM Not the Belladonna?

SANDY She sat across the table for the whole damn meeting.

JIM Listen, cool it. She's married.

SANDY I couldn't stand it. I ended up staring out the window.

JIM Away from François? What did he think?

SANDY You know what I like? Those dark blue shirts with the cufflinks.

JIM You can get them over here.

SANDY Yeah, made to order!

JIM Off the rack.

SANDY Not for me. Not until I get a raise.

JIM Why do you think I sent you on this trip, good buddy?

SANDY I know I sound distracted. It's jet lag.

JIM I've heard of it.

SANDY Those pills you recommended don't seem to work for me.

JIM You're not supposed to drink any alcohol.

SANDY Not on the plane, of course. But I had to be polite today at lunch.

JIM Right. Just don't bend over backwards being polite, OK?

SANDY Come on! Give me some credit!

JIM I'm trusting you. I'm not about to trust François.

SANDY Have you ever met his wife?

JIM No, have you? I hear she puts up shopping malls.

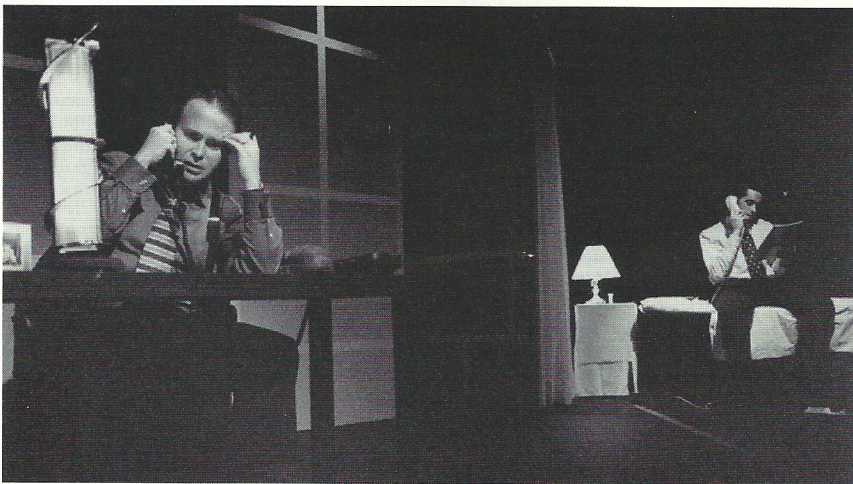
SANDY I thought she was an architect.

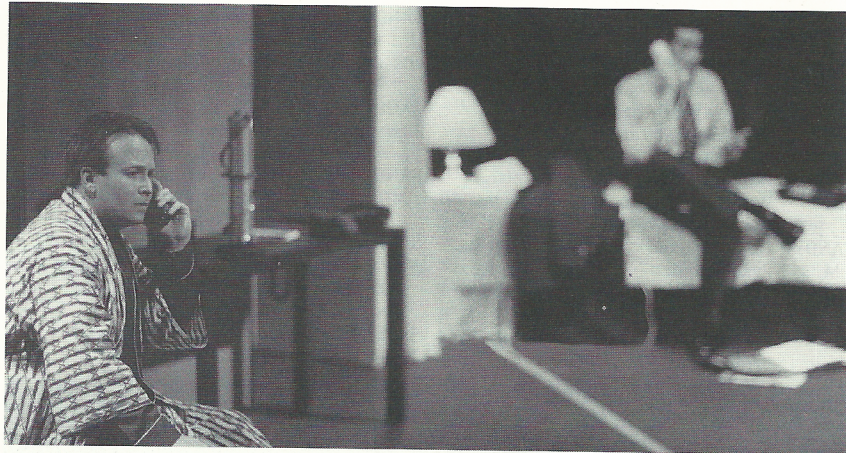
JIM You seem to know. But check out those malls. You'll be amazed.

SANDY They're not like ours.

JIM What about the Rue du Rhône?

SANDY In the center? That's pricey.





SANDY It's good to hear a voice from home,
compris, entendu?

JIM You sound like a native.

SANDY I feel like a tourist. I love the hotel.

JIM It comes with the job.

SANDY Now I know why you travel so much,
you dirty old man.

JIM There's something else I wanted to
mention before . . .

SANDY The service is great!

JIM . . . if the Frankman starts to laugh too
much, we're in trouble.

SANDY I haven't noticed. He's very discreet.

JIM And don't forget . . .

SANDY He's very gracious.

JIM . . . get some sleep!

SANDY At first I hated his guts. He's a little

bit like you, but remarkably uncorrupt
for a politician. No offense. But let
me check my notes again before I call
it a night. Ciao, amigo! (*hangs up*)

Interlude 2: *Nightmare* (band 5)

Scene 3 (band 6)

Thursday, 2:30 A.M., EST, or 8:30 A.M. in Geneva
Jim is at home, not quite settled into bed. He
phones Sandy, who has showered and is getting
ready to leave for his second meeting with
François.

JIM I knew I'd catch you in bed. I hope
you're alone. Wait! No, I don't want to

know. At this point, I need reassurance. Are you ready for the face-off? I just took a shower.

SANDY
JIM

That's a start. Now give me some perspective. Are we finished? Are we screwed? Did they hang you out to dry? Are we a cliché? Do they think they can manage without us? Linda said my eyebrow twitched all night. The Frankman's not so tough.

SANDY
JIM

Oh, no? Then who did all the talking? He's training you. He tells you when to bark and where to pee. Don't get me wrong, amigo. He's tried to pull the same routine on every rookie. I didn't think you'd fall for it. He's pretty obvious.
That's true.

SANDY
JIM

Hindsight is precious, and very expensive. Thank god we've got a little time. This morning will be crucial. François is arrogant. You bought that knowledge, so why not use it? He's got to have the biggest cannon. Voila, we exceed his wildest dreams. We play up to his vanity!

SANDY
JIM

Gotcha! Sounds good to me. Yeah, but for chrissake make him pay for it. Like I paid for it last night over dinner at ten. My wife hates to wait. She's just like me. She doesn't want to hear pathetic stories. Fine! But just in case, a word of warning: Don't go to the john at eight P.M. They lock the doors behind you. You have to call Security. They laugh, of course. You miss your train. Very funny. The

train leaves on time when you're late. In fifteen years I went from being a prodigy to the oldest fart in the whole damn firm. But the guy from Security doesn't know that. He saw the size of my office. No window. So, in case you ever wondered why I like you, if it matters, it's because you never show me all your cards. So I suspect you've got a life outside of the job. That's good. That's why you're in Geneva. It's a matter of style.

SANDY
JIM

Thanks.
So put that private life of yours to work!

SANDY
JIM

What do you mean?
But tell me first, were you as wasted as you sounded last night on the phone? Here's a tip: Water down your wine when no one's looking. You're my man. I'm on the sidelines. The holidays are murder. I'm hammered. Yesterday I finally bought some gifts. How 'bout you? Are you ready? Do you have plans?

SANDY
JIM

I'm OK.
Don't you usually see your folks? Where are they? Ohio? Where they grow all the potatoes?

SANDY
JIM

No. That's Idaho. I'm afraid I'm not your man.

SANDY
JIM

That's not what you said last night. I'm not a huckster. I'm not a finance man.

JIM

They're not the same. Look, don't worry about the numbers. The fundamentals are sound. It's simple. You've

got to make them think they want our system. Your system, your baby!

SANDY We're way beyond that.

JIM No, you're not! Not until they ante up.

SANDY You don't seem to get it.

JIM Then set me straight.

SANDY Every time I promise you the sky, I get hurt, you get pissed, and we lose more credibility. My promises are nothing but a pack of lies.

JIM You're honest with me. That's what counts.

SANDY So the buck stops here?

JIM You like to make excuses.

SANDY I'm speaking from the heart.

JIM I know. When I was seventeen, I suffered through a pimple-popping crush on a flaming Irish redhead. I think I invented a thousand-and-one excuses for not calling her up.

SANDY That doesn't sound like you.

JIM She ended up with a nerd.

SANDY It doesn't make sense.

JIM You love this project, amigo. Don't wait for a nerd to take it away.

SANDY "Love" is a pretty strong word. But it's true, I would get a kick out of having the chance to put this project to bed.

JIM That's the bottom line.

SANDY But I need six months. You know that's true.

JIM When facts collide, improvise.

SANDY I don't see the point.

JIM Sandy, the streets are cold. I don't know about you, but I don't care to sell myself in interviews. Hawking the

goddamn system should be easy by comparison.

SANDY I don't see the danger.

JIM You don't?

SANDY No one ever gets fired these days. Nobody wants a lawsuit.

JIM But whole departments are freeze-dried in a minute.

SANDY Boss, you gotta be kidding! They love us upstairs. We're heroes. We're the experts. We work the weekends. The whole team puts in ten-hour days. It's crazy. You're right. The more I think about it, the more I see your point.

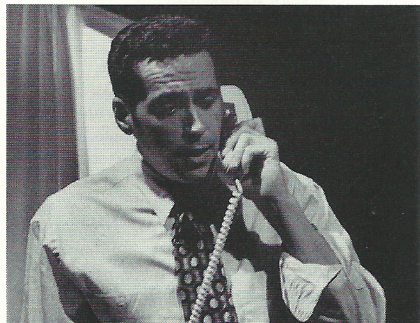
JIM We have funding for three more months.

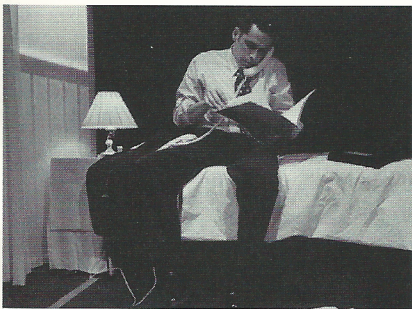
SANDY I wish you had come along.

JIM In March we man the lifeboats.

SANDY In that case I'm out of my depth.

JIM Baloney! You're too old to be a techie. That's for teenagers. Why do you think you blow your stack at secretaries? You're frustrated, man!





SANDY It's making funny noises again.
 JIM . . . and don't forget to . . .
 SANDY What? Keep an eye on the clock?
 JIM It's a shame you won't have time to see Lausanne. That restaurant is really cute, and I know the owner. We could have impressed the Frankman.
 SANDY I guess I'll have to impress him on my own.
 JIM Sell him the Brooklyn Bridge, my boy!
 SANDY How about just the blueprints?
 JIM Even better. See you soon.
 JIM &
 SANDY We'll celebrate.

(Sandy hangs up)

DISK TWO: The Payoff

Interlude 3 (band 1)

Scene 4 (band 2)

Friday evening. Office Christmas party at an upscale New York bar. Jim and Linda are in the midst of a private conversation.

LINDA Guess what I found behind the washing machine? A mushroom the size of a cantaloupe.
 JIM In other words, it's time to clean the cellar.
 LINDA Don't you remember my company picnic? Jody was so excited. He said he found an atomic mushroom.
 JIM I thought he took it to school.
 LINDA They made him take it home when it

SANDY I didn't think it showed.
 JIM You paid your dues. You want respect.
 SANDY You make me sound pretty crass.
 JIM My friend, you're much too sensitive.
 SANDY I know.
 JIM And one more thing . . .
 SANDY We'll have to cut this short.
 JIM . . . don't let this eat you up . . .
 SANDY It won't. There isn't time.
 JIM The Frankman asked for you. He says you're clean. I'm damaged goods. Knocked around too much, I guess. Well, that's life, isn't it?
 SANDY Christ, you should have warned me.
 JIM Why? You think too much already.
 SANDY Even so, you should have told me.
 JIM Yeah, maybe you're right. I'll fill you in next week.
 SANDY OK, Jim, I've gotta run. I'm meeting them for breakfast. Don't worry! And thanks for the pep talk. I didn't know I needed it. Any parting shots?
 JIM Relax and go with your gut . . .



JIM started to stink.
And you thought it was my dirty socks.

LINDA I admit I was fooled.

JIM The damn thing's probably poisonous.

LINDA It might come in handy. We've made enough enemies between the two of us.

JIM What's going on? You're being coy.

LINDA Greenberg got the results of the tests. All of my symptoms are psychosomatic.

JIM In other words . . .

LINDA Nobody's blaming you, dear. Your self-absorption is total, but in this case completely irrelevant.

JIM You're too kind.

LINDA That's what Greenberg said. I'm trying to do too much.

JIM Being a martyr should not have to be a full-time job.

LINDA You're gonna pay for that, my boy, you're gonna pay!

JIM I hate to say I told you so.

LINDA What? Hire more help? It's bad enough the kids don't have a father.

JIM That's cruel.

LINDA I'm sorry. It seemed that way last week. And the week before, and the week before . . .

JIM You made your point!

LINDA Nine to twelve, remember? Those hours belong to me and to my work.

JIM How's the Elmwood Mall?

LINDA They wanted the drawings last week. I told you that.

JIM You did. December is crazy.

LINDA How many days are you taking off?

JIM Three, I hope. That'll make five, with the weekend.

LINDA I can't believe my ears. Maybe I'll finish the sketches.

JIM I promise.

LINDA Before the kids get too old, it would be nice to spend a holiday with my parents.

JIM Just what I need!

LINDA Montevideo's not so far for a guy who flies to Singapore.

JIM I need some rest.

LINDA What do you have against South America?

JIM Why did they ever move back?

LINDA Since you've never been there, how could you possibly know?

JIM This is a lousy time to travel.

LINDA I've never heard you make up so many lame excuses.

JIM My Spanish is atrocious.
LINDA Anything new on the budget crunch?
Is your alter ego back from Geneva?
JIM Sandy? He was supposed to call from the airport.
LINDA And you know damn well that everyone down there speaks English, at least in my family.
JIM Alright, then, we're going!
LINDA But why did you send someone else? I thought Geneva was do or die.
JIM It was. I've been working on alternative funding right here in New York.
LINDA When will you know for sure?
JIM I have to check the plumbing.
LINDA Don't worry. I'll keep my trap shut. I know the drill.
JIM Hold the fort, then, will you?

(He exits.)

(Sandy enters, in business attire, but a little rumpled.)

LINDA He's been checking the plumbing every twenty minutes. *(to Sandy)* Isn't that a danger signal?
SANDY I'm sorry?
LINDA We haven't met. I'm Jimmy's wife, Linda.
SANDY Hi, I'm Sanford.
LINDA As in Sandy, straight from Geneva?
SANDY We took the scenic route.
LINDA I like your cologne.
SANDY That's Foo-Foo Water.
LINDA That's baby talk, or am I mistaken?
SANDY You are.

LINDA In any event, I might suggest that you're using a little too much.
SANDY Really? I can't smell a thing.
LINDA Try a different cologne for a change.
SANDY I wanted to freshen up . . .
LINDA You're clearly incapable of judging . . .
SANDY . . . after fourteen hours in transit.
LINDA . . . how it smells to the rest of us.
SANDY Is it really that bad?
LINDA Don't worry. I'm teasing. How was Geneva?
SANDY Very political.
LINDA Spoken like a diplomat. It's clear that you don't want to spill any beans to the boss's wife.
SANDY What I meant to say was . . .
LINDA You're tired. Be careful. Don't drink too much.
SANDY Just one! *(He helps himself to a drink.)*
LINDA Jimmy says you're the soul of the project.
SANDY And what do you do?
LINDA Aside from having two kids?
SANDY It's getting very hard to ask . . .
LINDA I used to design for offices, but now it's mostly malls.
SANDY That's incredible!
LINDA Yes, incredible. My dealings with the contractors are absolutely incredible.
SANDY You're the second one in three days.
LINDA What? You lost me. You really should have gone straight home.
SANDY Do you know François?
LINDA No, but I met his wife.
SANDY At a conference? You're colleagues!
LINDA Not really. She's more of an architect.

SANDY So you know Jeanine, but not François. Jimmy knows François, but not Jeanine.

LINDA Just what were you up to in Switzerland?

SANDY Haute cuisine, interrupted by the occasional meeting.

LINDA Right. I understand. But please don't say that to Jimmy.

SANDY He knows.

LINDA You trust his sense of humor more than I do.

SANDY It's congenital.

LINDA Where are you from?

SANDY Cleveland. Don't laugh!

LINDA Why would I?

SANDY Ever since the river went up in flames . . .

LINDA That's ancient history. You're too sensitive.

SANDY I was afraid you'd say that.

(band 3)

(Jim returns and acknowledges Sandy with a discreet fraternal gesture.)

LINDA Jim, dear, have you ever been in Cleveland?

JIM Of course. Nice town. Good museum.

SANDY I didn't think you cared!

JIM And damn fine saloons.

SANDY I know. I lived upstairs.

LINDA It must have been awfully noisy.

SANDY Not really. But I couldn't abide the smell.

LINDA That surprises me.

JIM Stale cigarettes?

LINDA That's one thing I hate about Montevideo.

SANDY Really? What's it like? I've always wanted to see the pampas.

JIM It's Uruguay, amigo. You can see the pampas in downstate Illinois.

SANDY Jim, I've gotta talk to you. I'm nervous.

JIM You should have called.

LINDA He was delayed.

JIM There are phones on the plane.

LINDA You're boring me, both of you!

SANDY That options trading system of ours is woefully underdesigned.

LINDA Didn't you use a big enough napkin?

SANDY That's about the size of it. Half the design gets done in the john.

LINDA *(to Jim)* I forbid you to talk about business.

JIM *(to Sandy)* She's right. She knows what's good for me.

SANDY *(helping himself to a second drink)* I think I'll have a nightcap.

JIM *(to Sandy)* What do you think of the Harborfront Towers?

SANDY The façades are very eccentric.

LINDA Neo-fascist, with a hint of the Gothic.

SANDY One thing for sure—from the inside, it would be hard to tell them apart.

LINDA That's where I come in.

JIM She's a genius.

LINDA I could be, if I had time.

SANDY You know what impresses me?

JIM Yes. The hospitality of the Swiss.

SANDY All of my colleagues have brilliantly talented spouses.



- JIM You ought to settle down, my friend.
 LINDA You ought to change your cologne.
 JIM *(to Sandy)* Pay attention.
 LINDA *(to Sandy)* Strong women tend to be difficult.
 SANDY How did you two ever meet?
 LINDA What? Does he seem a bit old for me?
 JIM *(to Linda)* Sandy's afraid that I don't have a life. He thinks I was hatched in a meeting.
 LINDA *(to Sandy)* According to his mom, he was right on time.
 JIM I wanted to be a painter.
 SANDY How far did you get?
 JIM I'm working on the garage.
 SANDY You should have kept it up.
 LINDA *(to Sandy)* I bet you live alone.
 SANDY Yeah, but I have a nice place. It's big enough for two.
 LINDA *(to Sandy)* We met at the Picasso retrospective.
 JIM Still a source of raging debate.
 LINDA You don't understand the Spanish connection.
 SANDY *(pointing to the other guests)* This could be an opening!
 JIM Office parties remind me more of Mardi Gras.
 SANDY That's not fair! We're just getting pleasantly tipsy.
 JIM It's very sobering to meet the face behind the mask.
 LINDA *(to Sandy)* Watch out! He's getting dangerous.
 JIM I'm merely being a good host.
 LINDA *(to Sandy)* He says you make him laugh.
- SANDY That's news to me. I'm relieved.
 LINDA Aren't you the guy with the foam rubber sledgehammer?
 SANDY I whip it out of the drawer from time to time, to drive home a point.
 LINDA *(to one of the invisible revelers)* I rifled through Jim's desk one afternoon. I found fifty pairs of disposable chopsticks.
 MALE If they're clean, why not use them in the fireplace?
 JIM *(to the MALE)* I never get home in time.
 FEMALE You don't need a reason for saving. I must have hundreds of old rubber bands.
 SANDY *(to the crowd)* And then there's Charlie's thirteen jars of mustard!
 JIM Right. Everyone thought he was joking, but the letter of resignation was a masterpiece.
 FEMALE Is it really true that he's bartending on a cruise ship?
 SANDY He resigned on April Fool's Day, what do you think?
 MALE Sounds like he's having a lot more fun than we are.
 LINDA Maybe so. Have you ever been a waiter?
 SANDY Wasn't he engaged to Alexis? The one with the Smurf Ball?
 FEMALE That was just a rumor he liked to encourage.
 LINDA *(to Jim)* I thought you told me Sandy was chasing her.
 MALE We saw them playing Smurf Ball in the corridor every Friday.

LINDA *(to no one in particular)* Now I know why I work at home.

MALE Did you ever see her cubicle? She really moved in.

SANDY In contrast to a guy.

FEMALE Chauvinist pig! I resent your implication.

JIM Let him explain!

SANDY A guy's cubicle looks like a campsite. He doesn't move in until he's promoted.

MALE A woman, on the other hand, moves in right away.

JIM It's not until she's promoted . . .

FEMALE . . . that she starts to act like a man?

LINDA That's too pat.

JIM Don't blame me. The theory came from Al, the shoeshine man.

MALE He bops from desk to desk. He's been in every cubicle.

LINDA I'd be careful with this guy.

FEMALE She's right. Don't get him started on orgone boxes.

SANDY What's that?

LINDA A chamber for concentrating sexual energy.

SANDY *(to Linda)* My problem's not concentration. It's dissipation.

LINDA Sounds like you spend a lot of time reading the mail.

JIM Sandy writes a wicked memo.

SANDY I try to tell the truth.

JIM He's a poet of the poison pen.

SANDY But half the time, it blows up in my face.

LINDA When I want to fob someone off, I tell them more than they wanted to know.

SANDY How does that work? I always get interrupted.

LINDA You have an active boss.

JIM A boss, by definition . . .

LINDA . . . is someone who can interrupt you.

SANDY Ever notice? The boss wears better shoes.

JIM Italian shoes are cheaper than Italian suits.

SANDY Somebody told me the company has a bomb shelter.

JIM Of course, in the Catskills.

LINDA For comedians.

JIM For the computers.

LINDA I doubt whether it holds more than fifty human beings.

SANDY That leaves me out.

LINDA If you're bucking for a promotion, work for your boss's boss.

JIM *(to Linda)* Did you hear the news?

LINDA What? Your C.E.O. losing fifteen bil?

JIM In bad foreign debt.

SANDY What else is new?

JIM The Group of Forty, my boy.

SANDY Never heard of it.

LINDA It's a cutout for the CIA and Federal Reserve.

SANDY And all I wanted to do was buy some deutschmarks for my pension!

FEMALE Then watch out for the tax man.

JIM He'll think you're playing footsie.

LINDA "If the President does it, it's not illegal."

MALE That's good! Did you make it up?

JIM Richard Millhouse Nixon.

LINDA *(to Jim)* At least he was tragic.

Some of these folks are pathetic.

MALE I think I'll split before the floor show.
I'm not really into Diana Ross.

SANDY You're wrong! The impersonators
were last year.

FEMALE No, that's impossible! Last year was
bowling in Greenwich Village.

JIM *(to the group)* Sorry to disappoint
you all.

SANDY What Jimmy means to say is, this year
the party's on him.

MALE You mean that we no longer rate a
corporate blowout?

JIM Budgets are very tight, amigo.

FEMALE I think we owe Jimmy a toast!

LINDA *(to Jim)* She's somewhat to the left
of tipsy.

JIM *(to Linda)* Funny, isn't it? You can
tell who has somebody waiting for
them at home. *(He exits.)*

FEMALE Here's wishing you all a happy
Fourth of July!

LINDA Three cheers for Martha Washington.

MALE Whoa! Let's not drag politics into this
party!

SANDY *(to Linda)* I've got to talk to Jim.

LINDA It's the weekend. Give him a break.

SANDY I envy Jim. You take good care of him.

Interlude 4 (band 4)

Scene 5 (band 5)

*Monday morning, the following week. Jim has
been waiting in his office to debrief Sandy. Sandy
enters, carrying a bulging sheaf of notes from the
trip.*

SANDY Jim?

JIM We've been hosed.

SANDY Who gave you that impression?

JIM Tell me your side of the story. Why
weren't you prepared?

SANDY Prepared? You're joking! I didn't get
an hour's sleep rehearsing for that
song and dance.

JIM Don't pull my chain. You took a vaca-
tion, and who's left holding the bag?
I'll be damned if I'm going over there
just to clean up your mess!

SANDY Give me a break! None of this makes
any sense.

JIM On that we agree, amigo.

SANDY What did I do?

JIM You tell me.

SANDY I think it's OK!

JIM I'm listening. Set me straight. Show
me where I'm wrong.

SANDY François saw the demo. He wants
the system now, for free.

JIM Who gave him the idea that we're
ready to roll ahead without funding?

SANDY So far as I can tell that was Bobby, at
the meeting in London.

JIM I doubt it. Bobby plays it close to the
vest.

SANDY So you're accusing me of . . .

JIM Nothing in particular.

SANDY . . . lying?

JIM Tell me more.

SANDY I didn't have a chance.

JIM It was your meeting, not true? It was
your product, not true?

SANDY It was their turf. They hijacked the
meeting. They stole the ball.



JIM They kicked your tush. I've heard it before. But you were supposed to be my Golden Boy.

SANDY I showed them the budget. They didn't bat an eyelash.

JIM That's not what I heard.

SANDY From whom?

JIM From Bobby.

SANDY He wasn't there.

JIM He stayed on the case.

SANDY So what did he say? Where did I mess up?

JIM François was waiting to be convinced, if not by you, then by his own people.

SANDY When was that supposed to happen?

JIM We spent half the day eating lunch!

JIM Would you like to hear any more about your trip, amigo?

SANDY No thanks. It's beginning to look like I wandered into a swamp.

JIM Yeah, without your hipboots.

SANDY So I goofed!

JIM Right. But you didn't tell me yet.

SANDY Tell you what?

JIM Why you didn't prepare. What was your fallback plan?

SANDY I had alternate sets of numbers ready in case he raised any questions.

JIM François didn't raise any questions, did he? No, he just filled in the blanks.

SANDY It stank to high heaven, cooking the books three times over.

JIM You're singing a very different tune today.

SANDY What do you mean?

JIM On Thursday . . .

SANDY Yeah, I know.

JIM . . . you wanted to play the game.

SANDY The way you described it, it could have been fun. But that was before I realized . . .

JIM Realized what? That you weren't gonna have the opening move? When the Frankman moved first . . .

SANDY I started to improvise. I tried to pin him down, but he said there was nothing to talk about.

JIM The dealing starts when somebody says there's nothing more to talk about.

SANDY How was I supposed to know that . . .

JIM What did you say?

SANDY How was I . . .

JIM Wrong! That's unacceptable!

SANDY But who in the hell could have guessed that . . .

JIM You didn't know? That's the only thing you've done so far which is totally unforgivable.

SANDY I crammed fifteen pounds of notes and slides into this briefcase. I knew what I had to say!

JIM As far as I can tell, you never got the damn thing open. Was there trouble with the lock?

SANDY There's very little point in defending myself when you get it in your head . . .

JIM That we've been screwed?

SANDY Don't exaggerate.

JIM Torpedoed?!

SANDY Lighten up!

JIM OK. What really happened Wednesday night?

SANDY They took me out for dinner! I told you on the phone.

JIM And what about Wednesday in Lausanne? What happened to the tête-à-tête? What happened to François?

SANDY It wasn't in the cards. He put me in the care of two assistants. Then he ducked out.

JIM We had an understanding. How could you let him slip away?

SANDY He seemed a bit suspicious.

JIM Suspicious of what?

SANDY The rush.

JIM I see. He really out maneuvered you.

SANDY He said he had a skiing date.

JIM Guess what? He doesn't ski. You're the kind of sucker who takes the receptionist at her word when she says, "The boss is in a meeting." Did you mention our friends in Zurich? How they're ready to bid on this project?

SANDY You know that's not true. They're waiting for a sign from London or Geneva.

JIM You still haven't figured it out, that's obvious.

SANDY No, apparently not.

JIM Credibility!

SANDY That's what I thought.

JIM No, you did not. You're not trackin' me, boy.

SANDY Then what does it mean to keep it "simple and friendly"?

JIM Just this: If Geneva wants it, Zurich wants it. If Zurich wants it, Geneva

wants it. If they both want it, that's credibility.

SANDY Sounds like a shellgame to me. No offense, but I didn't sign on for doubletalk. I'm a techie.

JIM That's painfully clear. I should have flown over myself.

SANDY I did the best I could.

JIM I trusted you . . .

SANDY Thanks.

(band 6)

JIM . . . and you betrayed me.

SANDY I'm no good at reading your mind!

JIM You don't need to be clairvoyant. Just listen, think, and act fast.

SANDY Listen to what? To your ten-word memos? Your veiled threats? Your cryptic instructions?

JIM You want me to spell it out? Alright, you can kiss the bonus good-bye.

SANDY And yours, too? That's why you're pissed, isn't it?

JIM Believe that if you want.

SANDY I blew it!

JIM Big time.

SANDY So what should I do?

JIM Not a word to Geneva.

SANDY But the Frankman expects to hear from us after the holidays.

JIM Who gave you that authority? Did I give you that authority? You don't set agendas!

SANDY Take it easy, Jim! It's just a couple of weeks. You can pick up where I left off.



JIM Too late, amigo. You weren't reading between the lines.

SANDY No one gave me permission.

JIM That's ten bonuses.

SANDY How so?

JIM We're being flushed.

SANDY You didn't make that explicit.

JIM The department . . .

SANDY That's your department.

JIM And what about your colleagues?

SANDY I told you it wouldn't play!

JIM I recall that you agreed.

SANDY The Trojan Horse idea, it stinks!

JIM I see.

SANDY It's your fault.

JIM You could have warned me.

SANDY I might have won the Frankman over with a straight presentation.

JIM He'd have to be a fool. We're asking megabucks for a lousy demonstration.

SANDY Give him a break. He's realistic.

Maybe I could talk him into paying for the . . .

JIM No! He's a snake. It's clear I give him a lot more credit than you ever did.

SANDY I swear, François was on the brink.

JIM Yeah, when was that? Before the trip?

SANDY Damn right!

JIM I heard a different story.

SANDY You're accusing me of . . .

JIM Not knowing who you're talking to. It's far worse than lying.

SANDY Sure, what would I know? I just build the damn systems. I just write the demos.

JIM Watch out you don't pop a button. If I hadn't gone to bat for this bunch of misfits every month . . .

SANDY Is that so? Just what have you done for this group in practical terms, O Exalted One?

JIM Sir, nobody talks to me that way, not in my office.

SANDY Sorry! It was out of line.

JIM Damn right!

SANDY Look, I said I'm sorry!

JIM You gotta stop mouthing off!

SANDY What would you have done in my place?

JIM You've gotta stop abusing secretaries. You gotta start arriving on time for early meetings.

SANDY I'm talking about François. What would you have done any different?

JIM And you have to stop playing footsie with married women!

SANDY What are you talking about?

JIM I saw you on Friday with . . .

SANDY You! You!

JIM I beg your pardon?

SANDY You're the loose cannon on this leaky boat.

JIM Friend, I'm getting hammered. I need results. I don't want you playing footsie.

SANDY Sure, you get a toothache, stub your toe, fight with your wife, then come in here and pick a fight.

JIM At six, seven, eight, nine o'clock! When do you get home? I dine at ten.

SANDY You want a medal because you never see your kids?

JIM That was uncalled for, Sanford!

SANDY Yeah, probably so.

JIM No!

SANDY Look, I really am . . .

JIM No! You're not really sorry.

SANDY Fine. Have it your way. In any event we could . . .

JIM Why did you wait? Haven't you heard of damage control? We could have talked it over on Saturday.

SANDY Jimmy, give me a break. I was bushed. The return flight was diverted to Boston.

JIM Serves you right, amigo! Now you know how I feel after every trip.

SANDY I think you're getting a kick out of this.

JIM What of it?

SANDY Sadist!

JIM Repeat that, please?

SANDY I bet you torture defenseless animals. Is that how you spent your childhood?

JIM Three strikes and you're out, Sanford:

incompetent, foulmouthed, and nuts!

SANDY Oh yeah? Then better stop hiring losers, coach. You said I was the best in the business.

JIM Hear me, smartass, and hear me well: You'll never work in this business again.

SANDY It's hard to imagine living with you. Who beats who?

JIM I've never slugged anyone yet.

SANDY I'm reporting you.

JIM What?!

SANDY You abuse her!

JIM *(picks up the phone)* Could you get me Security?

SANDY Murderer!

JIM Take a walk! *(puts back the receiver)*

SANDY Barbarian! You strangle the spirit! *(edging closer to Jim)*

JIM Don't lean on the desk.

SANDY I'm talking about the soul!

JIM A figment of your flatulent ego.

(Sandy exits violently, leaving his notes behind. The phone rings.)

LINDA Jimmy, it's Linda. Don't forget that we . . .

JIM Sadist, my ass! Prissy little snob.

LINDA You OK, Jimmy? Should I call back?

JIM He should be castrated, but he doesn't have any . . .

LINDA Let me guess. Geneva fell through. You could have gone. Don't blame me.

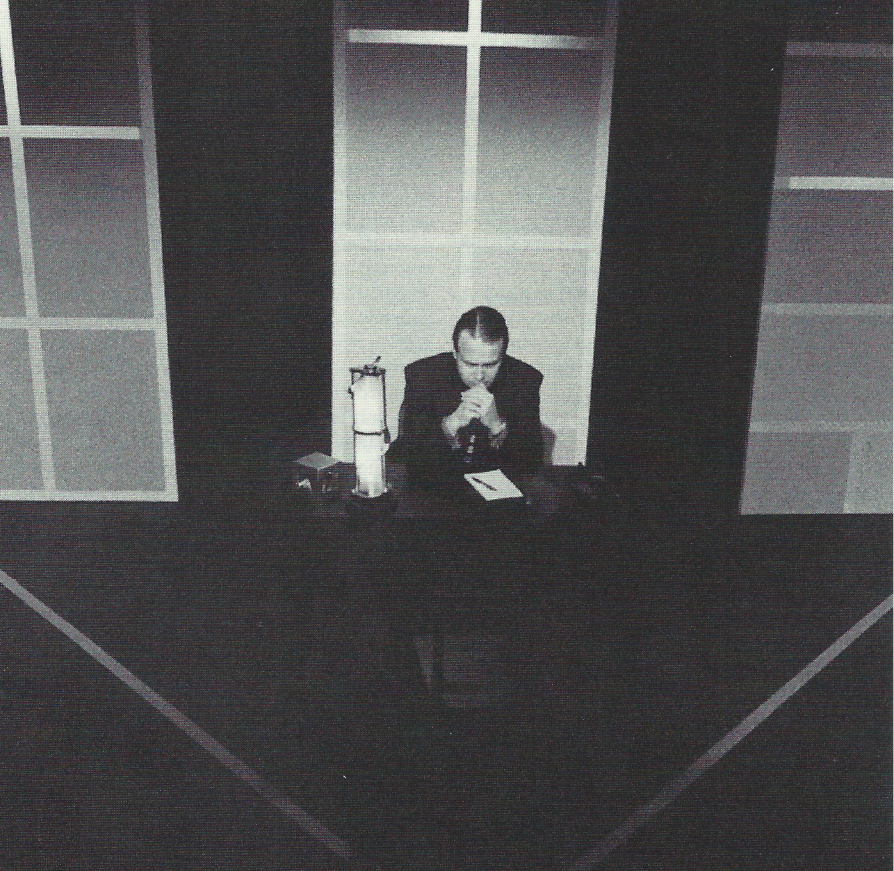
JIM I need a minute or two.

LINDA Call me back.

(He hangs up and immediately dials another number.)

- JIM Bob, it's Jimmy. Don't forget that you promised . . .
- BOB *(played by the offstage MALE VOICE from Scene 4)* Jim, it's too late.
- JIM Don't worry, amigo. I owe you an apology.
- BOB Look, Jim, it's not your fault.
- JIM I know I let you down. He wasn't ready for prime time.
- BOB The Frankman wasn't listening, in any event.
- JIM Good for us!
- BOB You're always a step ahead of me, boss.
- JIM We get another shot!
- BOB François spotted the ripoff factor long before Sandy arrived.
- JIM Don't underestimate my charm.
- BOB I haven't yet. But their accountants made hash out of our numbers.
- JIM The fundamentals are sound. Do we agree?
- BOB Yes, we agree.
- JIM Then set up another powwow with François' people.
- BOB Right after the holidays.
- JIM I'll rework the numbers on the train . . .
- BOB Sounds fine to me!
- JIM . . . and catch tomorrow's early flight. That gives us Wednesday to prepare.
- BOB Don't forget that Wednesday is a holiday.
- JIM You're not married. We have to hit a home run. Wednesday is good.

(hangs up)



David Avidor has engineered recordings for The Arditti Quartet, John "Jellybean" Benitez, John Cage, George Crumb, Fred Frith, Jerry Harrison, David Murray, and Pauline Oliveros. In 1997 he recorded, mixed, and edited the Postindustrial Players' debut album, *Still in Love*, on Equilibrium CDs. He also designs and engineers sound for HBO, MTV, NBC, NBA Entertainment, and Universal/USA Television. He has composed music for dance, incidental music for radio and television, and has a large catalog of compositions in both popular and experimental idioms which he may someday find the time to record.

Soprano **Karen Grahn's** roles include Silberklang in Mozart's *The Impresario* at the Brooklyn Academy of Music, Ghita in Martin y Soler's *Una Cosa Rara* at the Vineyard Theatre, the First Witch in David Clenney's *La Contessa di Vampiri* at the Kennedy Center, and supporting roles in John Adams' *Nixon in China* and *The Death of Klinghoffer*. She has appeared with Musica Sacra at Carnegie Hall and has recorded with Musica Sacra and composer Meredith Monk. Karen has appeared as a recitalist in her native Minnesota, in New York, Italy, Greece, and France. In 1996 she created the soprano lead in Michael Kowalski and Kier Peters' *Still in Love* for the Postindustrial Players.

Composer and librettist **Michael Kowalski** was born in Buffalo, New York, in 1950. He began his musical studies at age seven with his father, a popular lounge pianist in upstate New York. He continued his studies in theory and piano with Richard Warren and Allen Giles, worked in Buffalo as a modern dance accompanist and church organist, and began his composing career at age 17 with a percussion score for a local production of *Oedipus Rex*. He studied piano, music theory, computer science, and linguistics at the Oberlin Conservatory, the University of Iowa, and the University of Illinois. He studied composition with Richard Hervig, Peter Lewis, Herbert Brün, Ben Johnston, and Salvatore Martirano. In 1976 he was a Crofts Fellow in Composition at Tanglewood, where he worked with the French composer Betsy Jolas. Kowalski's professional honors include a grant from the Buffalo Foundation, a University Fellowship from the University of Illinois, and residencies from the Millay Colony for the Arts, Meet the Composer, Art Awareness, and Yaddo. His musical, text, and movement pieces have been performed throughout Europe, North America, and Japan. His work is available on the Einstein and Equilibrium labels and is published by Smith Publications/Sonic Arts Editions and M. Baker Publications.

Baritone **Gregory Purnhagen** has worked extensively with Philip Glass, most recently as a member of the vocal quartet in *Monsters of Grace*. He also created the role of La Bête for the world premiere tour of *La Belle et la Bête* and was a featured performer in the 1992 revival of *Einstein on the Beach*. In the Spring of 2000 he created the role of Troubador Rory Boy in Fred Ho's jazz opera *Night Vision*. As a soloist he has appeared with Musica Sacra, Consort Musick, Goliard, and the Locrian Ensemble. In 1996 he created the baritone lead in Michael Kowalski and Kier Peters' *Still in Love* for the Postindustrial Players.

Peter Stewart's "rich, communicative baritone" (New York *Times*) has been featured at the Santa Fe Opera, the Kennedy Center, the Library of Congress, the Madeira Bach Festival, the Lake George Opera Festival, Opera Roanoke, and the Manchester Opera. He has also toured extensively with Philip Glass, for whom he performed major roles in *Monsters of Grace*, *La Belle et la Bête*, and *Einstein on the Beach*. In addition to his work with Glass, Peter has created roles in recent operas by Gavin Bryars and Robert Wilson, Julius Hemphill, Hans Werner Henze, Fred Ho, Harry Partch, and Anthony Braxton. In 1990 Peter made his solo recital debut at Alice Tully Hall, where he premiered a song cycle written for him by Lee Hoiby, which was subsequently released on

a CRI recording as "Continual Conversation with a Silent Man". Balancing the very new with the very old, he toured and recorded with the early music groups Concert Royal, The Waverly Consort, and the 1999 Grammy nominee Pomerium. Peter is on the faculty of the New York University Tisch Center for the Arts, and in 1999 he joined the faculty of the Spoleto Vocal Arts Symposium in Italy.

Francesca Vanasco studied cello and chamber music with Benar Heifetz at the Manhattan School of Music and Eugene Lehner, Paul Zukovsky, and William Kroll at Tanglewood. Her work as soloist and principal cellist with the Orquestra Sinfonica de Maracaibo in Venezuela inspired her to found the critically acclaimed Alborado Latino, Chamber Ensemble for Latin American Music. She has toured internationally and has recorded on the Polygram, Nonesuch, Musical Heritage Society, and Albany labels. In addition to her work with the Postindustrial Players, Ms. Vanasco collaborates in music theater projects both as musician and lyricist with her composer husband, Thad Wheeler.

Fraternity of Deceit

Music and text by Michael Kowalski

a chamber
music drama
in five scenes

Original production by the **Postindustrial Players.**

Directed by **Jeffrey Johnson.**

Musical direction by **Michael Kowalski.**

Scenic design by **Florence Neal.**

Costumes by **Laura Drawbaugh.**

Lighting by **Janet D. Clancy.**

Audio design by **David Avidor.**

Production stage manager, **Mary-Susan Gregson.**

JIM • baritone • a senior executive in a large New York corporation .. **Peter Stewart**

SANDY • baritone • a junior executive in Jim's department **Gregory Purnhagen**

LINDA • soprano • Jim's wife, an architect **Karen Grahn**

Cello **Francesca Vanasco**

Synthesizer **Michael Kowalski**

Prelude • Monday, late morning in mid-December. Jim's New York office. • Interlude •
Wednesday evening. Jim's office / Sandy's Geneva hotel room. • Interlude • Thursday
morning. Jim's study / Sandy's hotel room. • Interlude • Friday evening. An upscale
New York bar. • Interlude • The following Monday morning. Jim's office.

Album produced by: Postindustrial Productions, Inc. Executive producer: **Michael Udow.**

Liner notes: Michael Kowalski, Jeffrey Johnson. Album design: FAN Graphics.

Equilibrium logo: Rita Blitt. Photography: Barbara Mensch.



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