

America, part four, A Journey up the Mountain

Act I The Foundation

Scene I

The Collector

Black...lights slowly fade up...catching the Collector crawling from beneath a mound of earth into the light...fully upright he begins a perambulation about the performance space...winter solstice. the light hangs low in the sky. the collector is dressed in clothes taken off the racks of the Salvation Army—gloves, pullover hat, overcoat, mismatched sneakers, paper bags tied to ankles, no socks. he carries a long, pointed stick to pick up the trash scattered about the floor, and a burlap gunny sack tied and draped around his shoulder, into which he places his pickings. develop this methodically. pay attention to the details...

the Collector “to think...we’ve to eat...and such a variety of thoughts there are in one slice of bread. ‘an i ain’t talkin’ white...just as easy to assemble the letters of the alphabet into nonsense as a beautiful poem...same calories...indifferent as they are necessary to the spiritual values they nourish. ha!...humph! man is like a breath, hr id; his days, are likr a vaprous shadow...and tho there be little time, sustenance *is* still necessary.” (unwinds gunny sack, pulls out *seeds*—huge *eye teeth*, ten or more times their normal size—bends, and begins planting) “into this, this yielding, pliable, fecund, hallowed, holy, freshly plowed furrow i cast these, these six *eye teeth*, these, six visionary seeds, tes-ti-cles—may they autochthonously sprout molded with revelation, knowledge, and understanding; may they testify to that sense of what can be; may those who plant themselves upon this land serve as scions of this new place hitherto known as *Amerika*; may their footprints sink into the rich consanguinity withinnananan the soil of their vision.”

the collector carefully plants each seed, covers them with soil, waters them, and then resumes collecting the artifacts, paperwork (pages of the scripts) and garbage scattered about the performing space left behind from the other three parts of *America*, a place...eventually he bundles the stuff he has collected, and buries his bundles within the earth. as his work nears completion the lights begin to fade to **Blackout**.

Scene II

Luminous Ghosts

up, follow spot on the furrows where six human forms, one after the other, luminous ghosts, like breath, rise from the seeds planted within the earth...they are each wrapped in a cocoon of material, cloaked in a white hooded garment, eight feet tall. each ghost rises from their furrow and dances toward their partner. allow this scene to develop...Aci Rema steps forward.

Aci Rema “my name is Aci Rema. in the language of my tongue, this name means, i am here, Aci, place, my place; Rema, rhyme, rhythm, flowing, a stream. i am here, in the flow of this place. born amongst the original people, the Grandfather Nation, i learned the art of the shaman; i learned the work of the medicine man; i learned to observe nature; cultivate plants; respect life. i am here now in the flow of this place...i take this woman to be my wedded wife.

-Araminta takes her place next to Aci Rema-

Araminta “i am Araminta. i am a woman a de earth. i am de color a de earth. i am de rhythm a de earth. my peoples, all my people, far back as i recall, worked de land, worked de soil, worked

wit dey hands. dis man, Aci Rema, i take to be my husband. i will give birf to our son, and we shall call dis boy-man, A-dam.”

-they take a tantric asana which they either hold through the other’s speeches, or change and hold with each speech-

Massasoit “i am the one called Red Bellied Turtle—Massasoit, *he who holds his place in peace*. the land is our inheritance. diversity speaks for itself. my responsibility is to help white culture learn to become intimate with themselves, the land, and the people who live on the land. this is my truth...truth does not happen. you must water your children like you water a tree...i do take Sakakawea as my wedded wife.

-Anne H. takes her place next to Massasoit-

Anne H “an immigrant by the name of Anne H. came unto this land. her body contained a sensual, earthly woman, a free thinker, but it was not until she touched the soil of this place, this place called *America*, that she stripped herself bare of the binds, the bounds, the boundaries imposed upon her by the past. she became Sakakawea; she became Bird Woman; she became the wife of Red Bellied Turtle; she was able to bear a child, and this child is known as Esther, *Star in the Darkness*.”

-they take a tantric asana which they either hold through the other’s speeches, or change and hold with the next speech-

Ruth “my life became submerged with those who suffered not knowing how to live on the land. i suffered alongside them. i have been on a long healing journey. my pain was far too long denied and misunderstood. i did not always have the energy, nor the courage to examine it. i watched others to understand what i did not know. i moved from place to place. in the end, i discovered a place within, an affable terrain. the land since has been my map and my guide...i have taken a man called Ami to be my husband.”

-Ami takes his place next to Ruth-

Ami “the land has grown up around me. my plans, the sweat, the blood, the tears i have shed, are all a part of the land. it has succored me well. i would have been lost without it...i do take this woman Ruth, to be my wedded wife. together we shall plant our seed and he shall be known by the name, Elijah.”

-as Ruth and Ami take a tantric asana, begin fade...**Blackout**-

Scene III the Poet

focused spotlight slowly fades up on the now blind Poet sitting on his rock. the Collector quietly moves about the space, in and out of illumination, poking, picking, standing, silently reading. the *eye teeth* have vanished.

the Poet “after months and months, nine months of nurture, sustenance comes. in our harvest, growth; and with this growth, strength. we mature, we ripen. our eyes open and we begin to stand on our own two feet. we touch the earth, and the act of eating becomes an act of communion...creation.sustenance.shit.piss. our bodies, the land, an ancient eucharist.

“every seed sown how like a book. for each book doth preserve within its husk, the purest efficacy and extraction of the living intellect that breeds it. like books, seeds contain incredible potential. a seed becomes a body, a seed a tree; a seed becomes a man, a woman; a seed becomes you, becomes me; food for thought, excrement, renewal, the seeds of change—social action, a

collec-tive potential...et voila, le bib·li·o·the·ca. once again the doors to the library open. ha! perforce, we return.

“a collection of books await us. they sustain our quest for knowledge. they feed our minds, provide a sacrament. the library, the library forever green, ripe with potential, cedes its bounty to us, like the land. and like the soil, the library is a collection of who we are, where we’ve been, who we’ve become, our body of thoughts, ideas, feelings, emotions, dreams, our memories, all we hope for...and every book sown upon a shelf, cultivates a relationship betwixt every other volume, as the field of books evolves.

“from diverse and random pages of a catalogue, six seeds, consecrated with mythic potential, each in the shape of an *eye tooth*, are sown upon the ground. each seed germinates, and from each tree, a single cutting is grafted, writing itself into the xylem and phloem of its progeny. a copse soon stands upon a hillock brushed with the coppery tones of Thebes, a family of trees, their roots interconnected, begin to spread across the earth.

“winter is n’ary upon us. the freezing earth grows quiet, silent, attentive, reflective. t’is another beginning. the sun manages to muscle its way through an ovary of clouds hanging still in the gelid air. upon this rock i sit. i have long sat upon this rock. my eyes no longer see. pray, tell me, has the rock, *the Rock*, has *this Rock* become a stepping stone into community?”

-quick off spot. **Blackout**-

Scene IV

The Library

the breath of the past, the six luminous ghosts—Sakakawea, Massasoit, Araminta, Aci Rema, Ruth, Ami—scions of a place called AmeriKa, have gathered at the fringe of the theatre space, bearing holy rocks. a single narrow dim spot fades up on the Collector rummaging about.

the Collector “e-vo-lution progresses toward co-op-er-ation, consciously, and unconsciously, discovering new ways to build co-op-er-ative organizations (snickers) ways utterly self-interested.”

-laughter. spot off-

-quick up, lights on the six luminous ghosts wrapped in a cocoon, cloaked by a white hooded garment. they are eight feet tall. they are lined up like vertebrae. spot up on the Poet-

the Poet “they come bearing rocks, igneous rocks, the bedrock of the earth...before the world existed as we know it, when stardust transformed itself into the rocky earth’s crust we stand upon. after a long transformative history, this stardust became us. we are made of stardust...they come bearing a part of ourselves.”

-the six move, a dance, unfolding slowly and mysteriously, with elegance, proceeding toward the holy center of the performing circle where they each set their rock within the earth-

the Poet “their genetic material created us; ours creates the future. they have come bearing rocks to bestow upon the living...as we, the living, re-build our world.”

the Poet “may the winter of our lives become like a new spring, offering us a fresh start. the gifts they bear, shall be the foundation stones for a new library, the seeds of a community. igneous rock is the rock of fire, the fire of the imagination.”

-very slow fade on Poet to **Black**...

.....as he speaks the Collector performs a series of rituals: bundles the stuff he’s collected, and buries the bundles withinin the earth. at a certain point the Collector looks up from his work-

the Collector “the earth...and everything that inhabits the earth, is part of a single, conscious organism. the e-vo-lutionary process has been directed toward our acquiring sufficient understanding to know this—to know who we are, and act upon it.”

Scene V

Exit Theatre

the Collector begins herding the audience into groups, shooing them toward their place amongst the groups.

the Collector “it’s time to shit or get off the pisspot. we ain’t got all nite. go tell ‘em what they need to hear...who ‘ere goeth unto the mountain...and seeks there knowledge.”

-the Collector guides the audience out of the theatre into the enveloping darkness...the theatre is empty now but for the blind Poet who continues to sit on his rock, and the Collector wandering about...

Act II The Journey

Scene I

Rituals

as the audience leaves the theatre they are greeted by guides. each guide ushers twelve members of the audience to a discrete and separate location. when silence rises naturally amongst the groups, the guides address their flock:

1. my name is **Elijah**. one by one, the bones of those who’ve come before, turn to dust, consumed by the earth. it is left for me to become keeper of the flame. my youth witnessed a fiery personality. i was fierce, intense, passionate. my fire burned. in my old age i shall become an irrepressible light, a burning bush, which will not diminish consuming itself, but glow, ever present, warm, and illuminating.

my name is **Esther**. in the winter of my life, my bones become brittle. i am the matriarch. my husband is Elijah. our children and our children’s children and their children, who are yet to come, sit around us in silence. i shape change. i give it deep roots. i see beyond a moment of fire, to the world of action. in the face of terrible odds, i remain calm. i do not despair. my arms remain open. i serve those in need.

my name is **Eve**. i am a child born of parents who were born on this land. this land is our home. my roots sparkle. the snake slithers free. i worship the elements, the rocks, our language, for they are a beautiful garment. i shall become the wife of A-dam. his strength is his intelligent mind. mine is my body and the strength of its emotions. we have three children. they will bear the names Jack and Jill and Barbara E. this last, will abandon her family.

my name is **A-dam**. i am the red earth. i was taken from the soil. i was scooped by the hands of Aci Rema and Araminta, and shaped into a man. their bodies returned to the earth when i was still quite young. i was then raised by Esther and Elijah. my wife is their crazy daughter Eve. a rib shall be taken from me, for each of our children, who bear the names Jack and Jill and Barbara E. this last, abandoned her family.

my name is **Sarah**. i am the only child of Sue Happy and The Dandy. they were married after the *The Trial* which prosecuted the false patriarchs of America. i did not grow up on a reservation, though my mother did. i did not grow up in a city block back east where my father did. i grew up holding a traveling satchel in my hand. my husband is Abraham. we have three children. their

names will be Isaac, and the Man in the Flannel Shirt?

my name is **Abraham**. i came from another land. i was told to go forth from my native soil, and raise my tent here, in this land, a land of promise, where my generations will be many, where my tent will always remain open. i have done as i was told. i have taken a wife. her name is Sarah. after many years she will give birth to our children, Isaac, and the Man in Flannel Shirt.

Jack and Jill crawled up the hill
to find what they were seeking
Jack slid down and broke his crown
and Jill came tumbling after.

my name is **Jack**. i'm Jill's brother. i am the son of A-dam and Eve. my sister Barbara E. abandoned our family for the world of commerce. she joined her distant cousins, one of the many children of Abraham's siblings, in another land. i will become the husband of Leah Alma. my son will be named Ayho.

my name is **Jill**. i am Jack's sister. i am the daughter of A-dam and Eve. my sister Barbara E. abandoned our family to the world of commerce. she joined a circus. she left us and joined her distant cousins, one of the many children of Abraham's siblings, in another land. i will become the wife of Lincoln. my daughter is Rollo.

my name is **Lincoln**. i was not born in a log cabin. i will be born in the tent of Abraham. i have come from the loins of Rebecca. my father is Isaac. i will marry the daughter of Eve. her name is Jill. we shall have a daughter. Rollo will be her name. my life will be spent in politics. i will run for executive director of the New World Order. i would like to emancipate the Man in a Flannel Shirt from his curse. he was born to be banished to the desert by his unsatisfied mother.

mi nombre significa **Lea(h) mi Alma**. hatargoom shel shmee zeh Leeheeyot Moodah. (with slight accent) i have a slender neck. i will be likened to a gazelle. when it is appropriate i will become the daughter of Rebecca and Isaac. my mysterious brother Bush left our family enticed by commercial success. a boy will be delivered from the narrowness of my loins. my husband Jack and i will touch his head, and whisper the name, Ayho.

my name is **Rollo**. i am a dry stream bed waiting to be filled by the water that rushes below. i will take the man Ayho as my husband. his mother will be Leah Alma whose father is Abraham, the man who came from another land. my mother will be Jill whose father is A-dam whose father rose from this land. our marriage will bring together many people.

my name is **Ayho**. i am the son of Jack, the grandson of Abraham who came from a land thither. i will become the son of Leah Alma, the grandson of A-dam, whose roots stained the earth red. i will be born years from now and become the collective consciousness of my people. mine is the breath of Massasoit, Sakakawea, Aci Rema, Araminta, Ruth, Ami, and those whose bones lie in the elsewhere.