**CATHERINE, PIPPIN, THEO, LEADING PLAYER**

CATHERINE

When I first saw Pippin, he was lying on the side of the road. He didn't know where he was. And he

looked so exhausted and lost…ed… The man had obviously lost the will to live. So, the first thing I had to

do was get him interested in something. Something to restore his faith in life. Something like… Me.

(To Pippin) Well, I'm sure there are many things you’d like to know about me, aren't there?

PIPPIN

No.

CATHERINE

Good. My name is Catherine. I’m a widow. I have a son. I own this estate.

CATHERINE *(to the audience)*

God! What a challenge! I was determined to somehow pierce that dedicated apathy. Now…I've always

found that no man…no matter what his condition…can resist the charm of a growing boy. So, I sent my

son Theo to him… *(THEO enters carrying a DUCK)*

LEADING PLAYER

Enter Theo. A lovable boy and his lovable duck…

THEO *(Trying to wake PIPPIN up)*

Pippin…Pippin…say hello to my duck… *(HE pushes the duck into PIPPIN's face)*

PIPPIN

How do you do…

THEO

Guess his name.

PIPPIN

Augustus.

THEO

Wrong. His name's Otto. You're not very smart…

PIPPIN

I’m smart enough to know that a duck belongs in a pond and not in my bed!

THEO *(after a beat)*

Bite me! *(He stalks off as PIPPIN goes back to sleep)*

CATHERINE

Pippin, you have been lying in this bed for seven days now. What is the matter with you?

PIPPIN

It is nothing you could possibly understand.

CATHERINE

Well, try me. Give me a chance.

PIPPIN

All right, I will give you a chance. I have been searching and searching for something important and

fulfilling to do with my life, and I have tried everything I can think of, and I haven’t even come close. So I

am in utter, abject, complete despair.

CATHERINE *(After a beat)*

And that’s it?

PIPPIN

Yeah, that's it.

CATHERINE

Pippin, let me tell you something about despair.

I loved my husband very much. The years we spent together were the happiest years of my life. And

then one day he was struck by fever…

…and when his hand went cold in mine, I felt my life, too, was over. I was overcome by the deepest

despair. I took to my bed for five days. On the sixth day I got up. There were things to be done. An estate

to be run. A boy to raise.

*(PIPPIN reaches out and touches CATHERINE's hand. SHE looks at the hand for a long moment. Then, softly, to PIPPIN)*

Pippin, this is such a large estate. I'm all alone here and I can't do all this work by myself. Couldn't you

please help me…

LEADING PLAYER

Hold it! Hold it! You’re supposed to read the line “naggingly”.

CATHERINE

But he put his hand on my face. They don't usually do that.

LEADING PLAYER

I don’t care where he puts his hand. Read it naggingly! Listen. You’re almost too old for this role. So, you

better watch it. I’ve got my eye on you.

CATHERINE *(To PIPPIN, naggingly)*

Pippin, this is such a large estate. I’m all alone here and I can’t do all this work by my myself. Couldn’t

you please just help me!?

PIPPIN

All right! All right! *(HE starts to go)* Anything to shut you up …

CATHERINE *(To audience)*

Well, Pippin was finally out of bed and working…and slowly he became part of everything…part of our

everyday lives…

PIPPIN

How often do we do this?

LEADING PLAYER

Every day.

PIPPIN

Every day!?

LEADING PLAYER

Uh hunh.

PIPPIN

Every day. That’s exciting

CATHERINE

For a while, Pippin didn’t show much enthusiasm for the work…But as time went on…he showed no

enthusiasm at all.

PIPPIN

Keep up the good work, men. What? What are you looking at?

CATHERINE

Nothing…Oh Pippin, there is something. The roof on the chicken house has sprung a leak ... If you could

get to that tomorrow… And the field needs plowing, and the chimney needs bricks, and the pig sty is …

well, a sty. Thank you!

PIPPIN *(to the audience)*

I know that look? That's the look of a widow with a son and a large estate and nobody to sit at the head

of the table. But that’s not me. *(Calling after her)* You hear me? That’s not me! That’s it! I’m leaving! I’m

getting out!

CATHERINE *(To audience)*

And then Theo's duck got sick.

*(THEO enters and goes to PIPPIN. HE has the sick duck in his arms)*

THEO

Pippin…Pippin, Otto is sick.

PIPPIN

That's too bad, Theo. I'm sorry.

CATHERINE

Pippin, it's the first time he's come to you for help…

THEO

Could you look at him…please…

PIPPIN

Theo, I don't know anything about ducks…

CATHERINE

Please, Pippin…try…

PIPPIN

Alright. Let me have a look at him. *(HE takes the duck reluctantly and* *looks at it for a long moment)*

CATHERINE

Now say something hopeful…

PIPPIN *(Giving the duck back to THEO)*

This is a very sick duck, Theo. There's nothing I can do for him.

*(THEO starts to go away with the duck. HE is very sad.* PIPPIN looks after him)

Oh, Theo, wait a minute. Come here. Come and kneel down here next to me.

*(PIPPIN and THEO kneeling next to one another, pray)*

CATHERINE

It was like a painting. Man and boy and duck at prayer. They prayed all day. And then, just after sunset…

*(Light goes out on the duck)*

…the duck died.

PIPPIN

I'm sorry, Theo…

*(THEO obviously heartbroken, takes the duck in his arms and goes)*

Wait a minute, Theo. We can just go to the pond and get another duck.

*(But this has no effect. THEO is gone. PIPPIN turns to CATHERINE)*

Why did the goddamn duck have to die?

*(HE goes)*

CATHERINE

*(To audience)*

And then, an interesting thing happened. Theo plunged himself into monumental despair. While Pippin,

that Prince of Despair, dedicated himself to raising the boy's spirits…

*(THEO enters with his head way down looking very sad. PIPPIN enters following THEO and a little too*

*cheerful)*

PIPPIN

Hey, Theo, we're going out to thresh some grain right now and we need another good man.

*(THEO exits paying no attention)*

Another time, maybe… *(PIPPIN goes)*

CATHERINE

But Pippin showed remarkable persistence. When one thing failed he tried another.

*(PIPPIN comes on with a wooden flute he is finishing whittling.)*

PIPPIN

Hey, Theo. Look what I made for you! Listen to this --

*(He plays a little of “Corner of the Sky” on the flute as THEO comes down to listen. PIPPIN hands the flute*

*to THEO)*

If you want, I could teach you how to –

*(THEO breaks the flute and goes upstage to sulk. PIPPIN picks up the two pieces and goes off)*

CATHERINE (*To audience)*

Well, most men would have given up. But Pippin, with amazing perseverance, tried yet another way.

PIPPIN *(From offstage)*

Theo…hey, Theo… You are not gonna believe what I got for you.

*(PIPPIN enters with a small baby lamb)*

Okay, when I count to three you can turn around and look. One! Two! Three!

*(THEO turns around. Looks at the lamb, then at PIPPIN)*

THEO

That's not a duck, dumbass!

*(THEO stalks off)*