XI - 79 - 3. A Play About China

T. 85 pages of another version of various segments of the play.

PROLOGUE BEFORE ACT I.

(A little old man with an experienced air about him, xxxxxx comes on the stage before the curtain and stands near the left wing. He is perhaps 60, with a pleasant, wrinkled and amused face. He is poor, and wears a long faded coat buttomed at the neck and down the side. A twisted black cloth serves as a belt and a flute is caught in it. He wears a round black silk skull-cap, much the worse for wear, and his xxxxx cotton cloth shoes show much walking. A little drum is slung over his shoulder, on a long piece of cloth. He comes out, bows with polite dignity to the audience)

~~My humble name is Chang. . . Chang Fu-liang. Chang. . . (he makes marks with his finger on the palm of his hand and holds it up to audience) this Chang. I am a native of Hupeh, my age is 60,~~

My humble name is Chang. . . (he traces something on the palm of one hand with the finger of the other and holds it up to the audience to see) . . this Chang. Chang Fu-liang. I am a native of Hupeh and a story teller by profession. On New Years Day I was in Fanchang, on the Han River, and remained for the celebrations, telling many tales in the tea houses and in the streets. ~~xxxxxxxxx~~ At night there were great celebrations, with dancing tigers and dragons, and many drums, ~~xxxxxxxxxxxx~~ and a wandering troup of players acted plays of the ~~xxxxxx~~ ancient days. They played of ~~the~~ renowned heroes of the "Three Kingdoms" and ~~the~~ illustrious ones from our "One Hundred and One Heroes."

The wandering players worked ~~xxxxxxxxx~~ for the coppers they earned, but more people came to hear my tales of the ~~xxxx~~ present war.

I did not always tell tales of the present war. I have "modernized" myself because of what the soldiers and the students in the Anti-Japanese Theatre ~~talked with me~~ said. They spoke to me, saying:

"Old ~~xxxxxx~~ Countryman, the people are like the wild grass that cannot be destroyed, but will sprout with each spring breeze. This is the spring of the people's power," they said to this lowly person, "so tell us no more tales of the feudal past. If you do we will by-pass you."

The ~~soldiers and students~~ have learned many new words, ~~many~~ ideas not heard before by me. They said to me: "All ~~xxxxxxxx~~ countrymen must sacrifice for ~~the~~ the country, now that the Japanese dwarfs are everywhere.

"Modernize yourself, learn to sacrifice yourself, "for the way of self-sacrifice is the road to glory."

I watched the Student Anti-Japanese Theatres and learned their foreign ways. Like them, I turned to observe men of the present,-- men of swift courage whose hearts are filled with wrath against the enemy and against the oppressors of the people. Now everyone comes to hear me. Some cry "good", "good", sometimes, and once I saw tears roll down the cheeks of a poor man. But once an evil man said to me: "Old Story Teller, leave this city of Fanchang on the Han. Go before the dawn breaks."

Thus I left before the dawn and came up here to the front to tell tales to the soldiers and observe great men and small men fighting the enemy. This humble person will now tell you a story of a great battle. It is a harsh tale about the mighty General Wang, whose heart was filled with the memory of a great wrong committed by himself in ignorance. Once, near this village, I saw him weep. He had two friends, One was the young and illustrious Chou with the bitter tongue, and the other the sad-hearted Wu of gentle speech. Both friends were worthy prove the virtues of friendship.

Of the two women, this humble person knows only what he heard and saw. The wife of the gentle Wu despised, but practiced, virtue. The foreign woman, like all foreigners, was ugly, but the brave and illustrious Chou was blind to this simple fact. Once, down by the river, they sat under a tree and talked in a harsh foreign language of which I could understand nothing.

You shout not believe that I sympathize with the infamous General Li or the treacherous Colonel Chen, nor would it be honorable or polite of you to interrupt when this humble person tells of them.

You have paid your coppers to hear this tale, and may it please you, ~~even in its harshness~~.

It took place in the fourth moon of the 29th year of our Republic, ~~right~~ here on the battlefield of Central China. . . . . .

(Curtain rises. The Old Story Teller steps back and disappears in the wing.)

unless I saw them myself.

General Wang: (rising wearily) So you shall. The guerrillas brought them in today. (To Col. Wu) Take them to question the captives. . . . Col. Chen, do you speak Japanese?

Col. Chen: (startled) Japanese. . . I. . I? No!

General Wang: (staring at him, amazed) Then Col. Wu can interpret for you when you speak with the captives--he speaks the language.

Col. Chen: I see.

Tai-ying: I know. (bowing slightly) I am his son, Wang Tai-ying. You. . . like Chinese poetry?

Frances: It is filled with sadness. . . loneliness. . . frustration. Officials are always in exile. . . generals at war in the western marches. . . and women who love them weeping in lonely towers. Sad. . . but very beautiful.

Tai-ying: Today, women also go to war. (he pulls a chair for her before the charcoal brazier and another for himself opposite) Won't you sit down Miss Frances? That's your name, isn't it?

Frances: My family name is Stone. . . but everyone uses Frances.

Tai-ying: Ah yes,. . . foreigners do everything backward.

Frances: Lin Yung told you my name of course.

Tai-ying: More than your name.

Frances: She also told me about you.

Tai-ying: Only my strong points, I hope.

Frances: Yes. . . she and Col. Wu are your good friends.

Tai-ying: We welcome you here, Miss Frances. Our life is without any comforts or conveniences. . . we appreciate you all the more because of this.

Frances: Everyone says that to me. You are all very kind.

Tai-ying: Should we be otherwise, considering that you have crossed deep rivers and high mountains to help care for our wounded. I admire your spirit more than I can say.

Frances: (embarrassed) If you think that of me, what then shall I think of you who have fought on the battlefield since the war began? Or of the millions of your soldiers who have been killed?

Tai-ying: That is only our duty. We belong to the nation.

Frances: It is also only my duty to care for your wounded. . . considering . . . when I think that your enemy gets is supplies from my country.

Tai-ying: (standing up) Why do they do it? Why?

Frances: (standing up, moving ~~xxxxx~~x away, speaking bitterly) Money. . . money. . . greed! They say. . . to keep the peace.

Tai-ying: They are cutting their own throats!

Frances: We ~~w~~were in China know that. . . but to my people China is only a country far away, at war with another Oriental country. If they only could live through one air-raid. . . see the dead and wounded!

Tai-ying: They can read. . . your countrymen are literate.

Frances: In part. And what do they read?

Tai-ying: They may learn too late.

Frances: Do you really think so?

Tai-ying: I once studied in Japan. Their leaders speak and write openly of their plans to drive America from the Pacific. Their Tanaka Memorial is a public document. . . their blue-print for the conquest of ~~xxxxx~~ Asia. . .to drive white-man imperialism from Asia.

Frances: Lin Yung gave me that document to read. It is the dream of an idiot!

Tai-ying: Don't underestimate them. We don't. Have you ever talked with Japanese prisoners of war?

Tried ~~with~~ today with

Frances: those here in your headquarters. They refused to talk with me.

~~Tai-ying: Do you know why?~~

~~Frances:~~ Perhaps because I am a woman. They despise women.

Tai-ying: ~~Because~~ you are white. . . ~~an American. They have been taught,~~ ~~and~~ they believe, ~~that~~ they have a divine mission to free Asia from white-man imperialism. ~~That is one of the reasons they fight so fiercely.~~ They have a cause. . . or think they have.

Frances: A poor cause.

Tai-ying: A good cause! A good cause/in the hands of the wrong people but distorted--and

Frances: But we are not imperialists! . . ~~we Americans.~~

Tai-ying: You may not be. But if you were a Chinese. . . have you been treated as we have been treated for a hundred years--~~like horses and oxen--you would feel as we feel.~~

~~Frances: Yes, I suppose I would.~~

~~Tai-ying:~~ Can you realize what it feels like to be called a "Chinaman". . a "native". . . a "heathen". . . to be treated like a dog in your own country?

Frances: Oh, our sins are many. . . many. . . but the common people of my country are kind ~~people.~~ . . they are friends of China.

Tai-ying: ~~(dragging a chair for her up to the charcoal brazier, and taking one for himself across from her)~~ That is good news. How powerful are they. . . I mean, how do they influence the policy of your government toward us ~~today?~~ (hesitating, but with deep sincerity) ~~Frances~~ Pardon me if I speak gruffly. But we here. . . you and I and ~~xxxx

Tai-ying: What have you done this? We Chinese have no political rights. . . we fight for democracy for ourselves because we want to put enlightened men in our government and control the policy of our country. But you Americans. . . you have political rights. . . but you have surrendered to men who love only money. Why? Why?

Frances: I do not know. We have a great history, a revolutionary history. . . but we have forgotten. Perhaps we are too comfortable.

Tai-ying: Is every American comfortable? Or only a few? Who. . . what. . . has made you forget your own history?

Frances: I have not thought much of such things. When I came to China five years ago, I thought still less. I only wanted to do good. I still want to do good.

Tai-ying: That is a noble aspiration. We thank you. But to be good is not enough. Not individually, I mean. You are a Christian, aren't you? Were you a missionary?

Frances: When I came to China I came as a missionary nurse. This seemed to me a great calling and I was filled with the passion to do good. But when the war began, I left my mission hospital and went with Dr. Lin. Now I merely try to be a Christian.

Tai-ying: Is that very difficult?

Frances: Yes. Very.

Tai-ying: I talked with a missionary once. He called me a heathen. . . and all our sickness and disease said this war is punishment for our sins. (Frances stands up suddenly) He said God was punishing us. (He stands up) I respect good and just people. . . pardon me if I am gruff--but I think it's a poor God that manifests himself through war, sickness and disease. I should think it would be a great burden on the mind to believe that men are born in sin, instead of born good--as we Chinese believe.

Frances: Your China has changed many of my ideas. Only bigots believe this war xxxxxxxx is God's punishment for your sins. The sins of my country are many. . . but we do not believe such foolishness.

Tai-ying: (urgently) Tell me. . .how can we arouse your people to the danger of this war. . . to us and to them? You must know. . . you have studied in college. . . you must have observed everything, read books of every kind. . . . thought of this problem.

Frances: (humbly) I know less than you think. I wasted much time in college, and afterwards. My mind staggers before the problems of this war--and the policy of my country toward xxxxxxxxxx Japan. xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx I feel ashamed. . . . and responsible.

Tai-ying: Respensible, yes. . . every individual must feel responsible. But you cannot feel ashamed! You are helping us!

Frances: It seems so little. . . just to bind up wounds, give injections. . it is not enough.

Tai-ying: My division will be here tomorrow--will you speak to them. . . about the American people. . . what they think and know about our war?

Frances: (appalled) I've never done such a thing in my life!

Tai-ying: Then you can start here. . . our soldiers need knowledge of every kind. All of us who are educated must give of our knowledge to them.

Frances: I should not know what to say.

Tai-ying: (pacing the stage) We will help you. . . . (halting before the map) What were you looking at this map for?

Frances: (startled) How do you know I was looking at that. . .

Tai-ying: You didn't see me when I first came in.

Frances: I was trying to find Hankow. . . and the way to get to Hankow.

Tai-ying: But Hankow is in the hands of the enemy!

Frances: Yes. . . but I have some American friends there. . . . consular officials, young missionaries. . . good people. Dr. Lin and I were talking. . . I think they would help us.

Tai-ying: How could they help us?

Frances: With medicine, perhaps. It takes weeks to get anything from Chungking. We heard that the Japanese are sending re-enforcements to this front. We will need medicine. We've used up most of our supplies. . . all our morphine for one thing. How far is Hankow from here?

Tai-ying: Five hundred li marching distance . . . less than two hundred miles by your reckoning.

Frances: What if a messenger. . . in plain clothes. . . should go to Hankow to deliver letters from me to my friends. . . would it take him long?

Tai-ying: (tracing on the map, upper center) We are right here. (His finger moves in a big movement to the south and east) The Jap defence positions are all along this mountain range. (pointing toward the east, or right) The guerrillas come/and go through the Jap lines all the time. I hear they have connections in Hankow. (estimating to himself) With good horses. . . and down the Han by boat. . . a messenger might reach Hankow in two or three days. . . and be back in a week or ten days. . . at most two weeks.

Frances: It would/take three months to get medicine from Chungking.

Tai-ying: Have you talked with my father about this?

Frances: Not yet. That's why I'm waiting here. Dr. Lin ought to have come by now. . . we wanted to talk with him together. Ask him to send a reliable messenger.

Tai-ying: Are your friends reliable?

Frances: Yes . . . but I don't know how brave they would be if the

messenger were captured..... and betrayed. (worried) I'm certain yes. . . yes. . . my friends simply must help. . . it's purely humanitarian. I'm asking only that.

Tai-ying: (watching her curiously) Humanitarian? Just where does humanitarianism begin and end?

Frances: (staring at him) To me, it means all that is non-violent. My work is to ~~xxxxxx~~ heal wounds, care for the sick--all that suffers.

Tai-ying: (grimly) So! I was just thinking. . . thinking. . . ~~(she stops writing and listens)~~ I was wondering if your friends would be willing to send us reports of Japanese troops movements. . . their equipment, supplies, routes of travel and. . .

Frances: (standing up) But that. . . why that would mean--~~xxxxxx~~ violence. . .~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~ helping military action.

Tai-ying: Yes. Helping us here. If we knew more of enemy movements we would have fewer wounded. Yes. . . helping military action!

Frances: But I can't do that!

Tai-ying: Why not?

Frances: Can't you see. . . ~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx

Tai-ying: It was wrong of us to permit it! We should have fought them from the beginning. . . then we would not have sacrificed so many lives as we have since. Your country also believes in appeasement. . . just as we did. It sells war materials to our enemy. . . to keep the peace. . .the bombs we get on our heads here are made from the scrap metal from your country--all for the sake of peace! Every gallon of gasoline your country sells the Japanese may mean peace for you--but the blood of at least one of our people!

Frances: (miserably) Oh I know it's all wrong. . .I know. . I know! But we will never have peace if we accept war . . . and help it!

Tai-ying: I also hate war! I've heard the cries of our wounded on the battlefield! . . (his voice trembles) I could not help them! Yes! But we Chinese know the price of peace! For a hundred years we've lived in poverty and despair--peace with foreign imperialism stronger than we were! Peace! In one famine or one flood, we lost more lives than we have lost in four years of war! Have you ever thought of the lives that are sacrificed to poverty. . . of sickness and disease. (bitterly) Yes, we also want peace. . . but not the peace of slavery. . . we've had enough of poverty and sickness and ignorance! (violently) The years of bitter frustration. . . the creeping palaysis before this war began! . . years of peace! . . of reconciliation! Appeasement of aggressors! Better to die. . . better than our whole nation die than to live like dogs, held in contempt but the well-fed nations of the earth! (Frances has backed away from him. He pauses and turns slowly to her, speaking quietly) Humanitarianism--what is it? Where does it begin and where end?

Frances: To take human life is a sin. To help take it is a sin.

Tai-ying: No! No! Better to take the lives of evil men than to sacrifice the lives of good men. You are a Christian--you believe in eternal life. . . of the bliss to come! Why do Christians then fear death? If you fear, it means you do not really believe your philosophy! You merely preach it. . . for others. For subject peoples! I . . . and all my people. . . want a good life on this earth, not in a hypothetical hereafter! (turning away) All right. . . I withdraw my request--that your friends send us reports of enemy troops movements. To save our lives.

Frances: (sitting heavily at end of table, taking up her pen slowly) I know too little. . . I no longer know what is right and what wrong! (she begins to write)

Tai-ying: What are you doing, Frances? (hesitating) Pardon--Dr. Lin said that was your name.

Frances: I will write my friends. . . to send you the reports you wish--if they do not think it wrong. . . and are not afraid. I will tell them what you said--to save our dear lives.

Tai-ying: Wait. . . there is plenty of time. My father has not even agreed.

Frances: (writing) It is better to let him have my letters and the medical lists all at one time.

Tai-ying: There is no hurry. We could talk. . . I haven't talked with a woman since the war began. (She continues writing, he watches her curiously, restlessly) We must discuss all things while you are here. Stop writing. . . talk with me! (she pays no attention, but continues writing) Dr. Lin says you are twenty-seven..... and not married. You are old enough to be married.

Frances: So are you.

Tai-ying: I am marries. At least I think I am. (she stop writing, listens) My wife is in the north. . . dead, a hostage. . . or with the guerrillas. (nervously) Or in a Japanese

Army brothel! Alive or dead. . . better dead. Peace? Yes, we could have peace! The enemy's peace. (Frances begins writing again)

(The door opens on the right and Little Tiger comes in which tea bowls and his big black kettle. He looks solemnly at Frances, then grins at Tai-ying)

Little Tiger: Salute, General!

Tai-ying: Salute, soldier! What are you doing here?

Little Tiger: I've brought the foreigner some tea. I'm her orderly now. Col. Wu says I have to take care of her. It's very important.

Tai-ying: (rubbing Little Tiger's head) The next person that goes to Chungking. . . you go along! You're going to school!

Little Tiger: (placing his things on the table, standing like a little soldier) Yes, Sir. But you promised me. . .

Tai-ying: I said you had to study.

Little Tiger: I study each day. . . very hard. I can read two whole books.

Tai-ying: That's not enough. You must know everything.

Little Tiger: I want to be like you, and fight the Japanese. (miserably) I don't want to go to no rich boy's school. You promised. . .

Tai-ying: You won't go to a rich boy's school. . . it is a poor boy's school. Col. Wu's son is there. . . he will be your friend. Now listen, Little Tiger: if you want to be like me, you must study for many years. Then you can come back and fight the Japanese. (The child lowers his head sadly)

Little Tiger: Yes, Sir. But. . .

Tai-ying: Do you want to be my son?

Little Tiger: I <u>am</u> your son, Sir.

Tai-ying: (consoling him) You are my son. What is the duty of a son? To worship the spirit of his ancestors. You must study. . . and live. . . not stay here and maybe die in an air-raid. Then you can worship the spirits of your father and mother. . . and my spirit --

Little Tiger: (turning from him to prepare the tea) Aw, you won't die! Not ever! You can kill ten thousand enemy. They can't kill you!

Tai-ying: But suppose I did--who would sweep my tomb worship my spirit if not you, my son? I have no other son but you!

Little Tiger: I will if you want me to. . . but I'm scientific!

Tai-ying: (startled) You're what? (Frances watches them)

Little Tiger: Lao Tso says. . .

Tai-ying: Lao Tso? Now who's Lao Tso?

Little Tiger: Lao Tso is our best guard. The Japanese devils shot in him the leg, . . . he's got a very big scar. . . but he don't care. Lao Tso believes in science . . . like me.

Tai-ying: Oh, I see!

Little Tiger: He's very scientific. He says there ain't no god--or nothing. He don't believe in charms or in our eight characters of destiny. I don't either. If we win the war we'll have a good fate. Our eight characters can't make us have a good fate if we lose the war. We don't believe in apirits or anything. . . but maybe we ought to burn paper money on the graves of our ancestors. It won't do no harm!

Tai-ying: I see! Now, if you want to be a good scientist, you've go to go to school. Science is more than not believing in charms and spirits. It means. . . well it means making bombs and hand-grenades and guns. . . and airplanes.

Little Tiger: Airplanes? Can I make an airplane if I go to school?

Tai-ying: It might take a little time. You could do it.

Little Tiger: Then I'll go. If you promise.

(Little Tiger places a bowl of tea before Frances, bends over and curiously watches her write)

Miss Frances. . . when you write you make little snakes all over

the paper. Can anyone read them?

Frances: A lot of people can read my little snakes. You'll learn how too--if you go to school.

Little Tiger: (bracing himself on his elbows on the table, watching her) What do the little snakes say?

Frances: I'm writing to some friends. .. Americans. I'm asking them to send us some medicine here so we can take care of the wounded soldiers.

Little Tiger: I'll bet they'll send a lot.

Frances: I don't know. Maybe not.

Little Tiger: Why not--do they hate us?

Frances: (trying to write) Not that. . . some of them just don't like the war.

Little Tiger: Are they Fascists?

Frances: My friends are not.

Little Tiger: Fascists are rich men! xxxxxxxxxxxxx Lao Tso says all foreigners are rich and live in big houses. Are you rich?

Frances: (Trying to write) No.

Little Tiger: Have you got any sons?

Frances: No. I'd like to have one--like you. I'm certain xxx he'd ask just as many questions xxx as you do.

Little Tiger: xx If you had a son like me would he be a doctor like you?

Frances: I'm not a doctor.

Little Tiger: You're a doctor second-class! Are all doctors xxxxxxxxx scientfic like Lao Tso and me?

Frances: (laughing) Some are. . .some just pretend. They love money.

Little Tiger: It's not right to love money or fear death.

Frances: (signing her letter, giving her papers to Tai-ying) Well--here it is. . . Plead my case with General Wang. (She and Tai-ying stand in silence, looking at each other)

Tai-ying: Is it against. . . your principles?

Little Tiger: (looking at first one and then the other) What's principles?

Frances: (turning to him, buttoning up his coat, taking a comb from her breast pocket, combing his hair) A principle. . . it's something you believe in. Now a scientist must keep his boat neat. . . and comb his hair. (she lifts his face to her) Where did you get this scar on your face and neck?

(Little Tiger suddenly draws away from her and goes to Tai-ying, standing humbly and sadly by his side)

Tai-ying: You'd better run along. Miss Frances and I have some work to do.

Little Tiger: Yes, Sir. (He takes the kettel and xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx xxxxxxxxxxxx exits right, looking back) Salute, General!

Tai-ying: Salute, scientist! (turning to Frances as the child exits) That scar on his face is the work of the Japanese. They burned his village. . . killed his father and mother. The child was injured. . . burned. (He begins reading her letter)

Frances: Oh!

(The door on the right opens and General Wang and General Li come in, followed by Col. Wu and Dr. Lin. There is a general greeting. Tai-ying moves to the far left and xxxxxxxxxx continues reading the letter)

General Wang: Miss Stone. . . you haven't met General Li yet. . . General Li commands one of the armies on this front.

Frances: General Li! (she salutes)

General Li: (very formal) I've heard about you Miss Stone! Most unusual to have a foreign lady at the front.

Frances: Dr. Lin brought me. . . I'm glad to be here.

General Li: I hope your health can stand life here. Our food is poor.

Frances: My health is excellent. The food agrees with me.

(Tai-ying goes to General Wang, takes him aside, and begins talking in an undertone about the letter.)

(An orderly comes in from the left, goes to Col. Wu)

Orderly: Shall we bring in the supper now, Sir?

Col. Wu: Yes. . .

(The orderly begins to clear the papers from the table, then exits left)

Frances: (To Dr. Lin) Shouldn't we be going?

Dr. Lin: No. . . they've asked me to stay.

General Li: Well, I'll be on my way. . .

Col. Wu: Please stay. . . have a bite with us, General Li.

Dr. Lin: Yes, why don't you, General Li?

General Li: Col. Chen is expecting me.

Col. Wu: Telephone him. . . you may as well eat here.

General Li: (hesitating) Well. . .

Col. Wu! I'll telephone for you.

General Li: I'd better do it myself. Thanks. (Col. Wu and he go to door. He passes out, Col. Wu shuts the door and remains)

Tai-ying: (watching them) He's staying?

Col. Wu: Yes.

Tai-ying: Was that necessary?

Col. Wu: It's only polite! . . . after a few months here he'll change.

(Two orderlies come on from left, carrying three bowls of food, ~~rice bowls~~, chop sticks, a pot of tea and some cups, arrange it on the table)

(To Dr. Lin)

Frances: /I've been waiting here . . . . didn't know you were with General Wang.

Dr. Lin: I just came. You haven't talked with him yet, have you?

Frances: No. . .

Dr. Lin: Did you talk with Tai-ying?

Frances: Yes. . . he's got our letter. He likes the idea.

Dr. Lin: Then it's settled!

(An orderly enters from left, goes to Col. Wu)

Orderly: Do you want the supper brought in now, Sir?

Col. Wu: Yes. . . bring it in.

(The orderly clears the table of papers, exists left)

Frances: (To Dr. Lin) Shall we go? I haven't had a chance to talk with General Wang. Have you?

Dr. Lin: We're going to have supper here. I haven't had time to say a word to him--you were to do that.

General Li: (formally) I'll be on my way. . . .

Col. Wu: Why don't you stay and have a bite. . . we have plenty for all.

General Li: Col. Chen will be expecting me for supper.

Col. Wu: Telephone him. . . . I'll do that if you wish.

General Wang: You're welcome to stay, General Li. . .

General Li: (glancing at Frances, hesitating) Well. . . I. . . One has to eat some place. . . (To Col. Wu) I'll have to telephone.

Col. Wu: Shall I do it for you?

General Li: (Going with Wu to door, right) No. . . I'd better do it.(exits)

Tai-ying: (who has been watching) So he's staying? Was that necessary?

General Wang: We're not barbarians!

Tai-ying: He seems to think so. I'm sick of his lectures on the decay of our ancient virtues. He seems to think everyone below forty-five is going to the dogs.

Col. Wu: That's because he's forty-five.

Dr. Lin: Sometimes I think everyone over forty-five ought to be shot.

General Wang: That sounds a little extreme. I'm over forty-five!

Dr. Lin: (laughing) Of course there'd be exceptions. We might ~~make it~~

(General Li enters from right)

General Li: Well, that's settled.

General Wang: (To all) Sit down! Sit down! There's not much here. But. . .

(One orderly ~~xxxxx~~ exists left and returns with heaped rice bowls for each. The other pours tea)

General Li: (politely to Frances) Do you like our food, Miss Stone?

Frances: Very much, General Li.

Dr. Lin: She's used to it. . . ~~xxxx

shoot everyone old enough to have a beard!

Frances: Some of my best friends have beards.

Dr. Lin: Aw, they're foreigners.

Tai-ying: One of my regimental commanders has a moustache. . . he's only thirty. Your theory is all wrong, Lin Yung. You'll have to hold your fire. (To Col. Wu) Do you know about this matter? (He waves the letter at him) . . . about sending someone through the Jap lines to buy medicine in Hankow?

Col. Wu: Lin Yung was telling me. (He goes to them)

Dr. Lin: I thought you said you hadn't talked with the Old Man.

Frances: I didn't. I talked with. . . with. . .

Dr. Lin: Oh,. . . Tai-ying? You may as well call him that--we all do.

Frances: Yes. I was sitting here for hours waiting for you!

Dr. Lin: I was on the way. . . I met Yeh-tze. . . you know how it is. . . we've got so much to talk about.

Frances: I like that! I was just sitting here, bored stiff.

Dr. Lin: Bored--with Tai-ying around?

Frances: (embarrassed) He's very opinionated.

Dr. Lin: Of course. . . we're fighting the war. . . for opinions. You've got opinions too. . . though I'm sure you'll never agree with Tai-ying. I mean--all your ideas about humanitarianism. . . taking life. . .reconciliation of peoples. You'll never agree with his ideas on such subjects.

Frances: Never!

Tai-ying: (crossing to the two women; to Frances)Well, we're going to try. We have a good man. . . he could leave within a few hours. But this letter (giving a page to Frances) will have to be written on cloth--so it can be sewed in

his clothing. (Dr. Lin takes the letter from Frances and reads it)
If the Japs should get that, it would mean death to the messenger, and farewell to your friends.

(General Li enters from left. Two orderlies come in from right with a pot of tea, cups, some small plates and chopsticks, which they arrange on the table, ~~The orderly goes out, the other remains, pouring tea.~~ Everyone but the two women turn to General Li)

General Li: Well, that's settled.

Dr. Lin: (in a low tone to Frances) I knew nothing about this. . . you, Frances, ask your friends to send us military reports about the Japs?

Frances: (offhand) Why not?

Dr. Lin: (watching her) This is your handwriting. . . but Tai-ying's idea!

Frances: What's wrong with it?

Dr. Lin: You've always said you'd only care for the wounded.. . do nothing to help the war.

Frances: That letter will prevent the Japanese from killing and wounding so many of our men! (hesitating) Sometimes I think it would be better to. . . to. . . prevent wounds than to cure them.

Dr. Lin: I've always told you that. . .ah. . .uh-huh! (she gives the letter back to Frances) So that's it!

Frances: What are you talking about?

Dr. Lin: He's a convincing man, Frances. But don't forget. . . he's married.

Frances: (shocked) Lin Yung! How can you think of such things! I know he's married. I don't care even if he's got concubines.

Dr. Lin: Frances! Then you'll have to know he's down on Christians.

Frances: I don't blame him. All our talk about sin and redemption . . . it seems to me a great burden on the mind. It's better to know that people are born good.

Dr. Lin: What's come over you?

Frances: I've just been thinking. . .

General Wang: (to all) Please sit down. . . sit down! (he sits at end of table. Tai-ying sits on one side of Frances, General Li on the other. Col. Wu moves about the table, pouring tea)

General Li: (To Frances) How do you like Chinese food, Miss Stone?

Frances: Very much, Sir.

Dr. Lin: She's used to it, General Li. There's no difference between white rice and yellow rice. . . before long she'll be a Chinese.

Col. Wu: A British poet once wrote that east is west and west is west and never shall they meet. . . despite that. . . here we are!

Tai-ying: All Kipling's ideas are jingle-jangle imperialism. It's fortunate that some British poets thought otherwise.

Old Donkey Driver: (wisely) Oh, all kinds of people. Tall people, short people, thin people, fat people. High noses, low noses. Black eyes, brown eyes, blue eyes, gray eyes, green eyes.

Barber: Green eyes? You're lying!

Old Donkey Driver: It's the truth. Some have got black hair, pale hair like this foreigner, brown hair, red hair. . .

Barber: Now you've gone too far! Red hair and green eyes! Haih-h-h! Red hair and green eyes and four feet! (street roars with laughter.)

(A man in strange military uniform comes on stage from right but can't get past the donkey. He is a tall young man in a faded, light-blue jacket, black cotton trousers, and he wears green cloth puttees from the ankle to the knee. Cloth shoes and a regulation blue-gray soldier's cap with a white sun insignia. He is Captain Lo, a guerrilla commander.)

Captain Lo: (To Old Donkey Driver) Hey, ~~old~~ countryman, you're blocking traffic. I can't get through.

Old Donkey Driver: Then crawl under like everybody else. Who do you think you are, anyway?

Capt. Lo: I'm from the guerrillas--going to ~~xxxxx~~ General Wang's headquarters.

Old Donkey Driver: Hai-h-h-h! A guerrilla! Wait, I'll get my donkey out of the way. My first born is a guerrilla. Maybe you know him. (Old Donkey Driver pushes his donkey over by sheer physical force).

(The noise of the street stops suddenly as five students come on stage from left. The first, a man, has a little drum which he is tapping. The students all wear weather-worn, dishevelled military uniforms and soldier's caps. After the first student comes a second carrying a standard rolled up. After him two girl students, their hair cut but showing beneath their cap brims. One girl carries a flute, one a ~~xxxxhixx~~ hu-chin , or Chinese violin. A man student, very thin and pale, follows. He is dressed in bedraggled black and carries a pair of hollow bamboo castanets with which he keeps time.
Students stop. The one with the banner unrolls it and holds the standard while a girl takes the end of the cloth and holds it out. Across it are the words: "Students' Anti-Japanese Resistance Theatre."

Soldier: Hay, students, give us a dance!

Student in black: Countrymen! We'll give a show down at the drum tower at seven tonight. Tell everybody to come.

Crowd: Give the show now!

Student with drum: (rolling the drum to get attention) Countrymen, we've walked fifty li today. We've not eaten. We'll give the show tonight. But we'll sing you the news of the war. Sit down!

(Crowd murmurs, applaus, shouts "hao! hao!" Some sit, some stand. Old Donkey Driver and Capt. Lo stand to right. Frances and Lin ~~Hsu~~ Sung turn around to watch.)

Student in black: (rolling his castanettes to keep time) This is the story of the war. (Girl student with flute plays melody and student sings;

Look at the battle of Liukuochao,
The ancient bridge was ten spans high.
On July 7th the enemy struck
Our northern soldiers fought and died.
Students in chorus) Ega-yoh, ega ai-yoh,
Out northern soldiers fought and died!

General Wang on a bicycle,
Escaped the enemy's shot and shell
He fought them here, he fought them there,
The enemy's gizzards burst with gall.
Students: Ega-yoh, ega ai-yoh,
The enemy's gizzards burst with gall. (People laugh)

Look at the battle of Pinghsinkwan,
Our Eighth Route Army, fierce and free,
Slew three thousand enemy dwarfs,
Its fame now reaches the seven seas.
Students: Ega-yoh, ega ai-yoh!
Its name now reaches the seven seas.

Look at the battle of far Shanghai,
Our Doomed Batallion, pledged to death,
Willing to fight to the very last man,
In the big warehouse of Shanghai.
Students: Ega yoh, ega ai-yoh!
In the big warehouse of Shanghai.

Now look at the battle of brave Nanking,
With many big camps and many brave men,
Chiang Kai-shek like a burning flame,
Daily reviewed the many big troops.
Students: Ega-yoh, ega ai-yoh!
Daily reviewed the many big troops. (People ~~sing~~ join with students)

Just look at the battle of Taierchwang,
The Kwangsi General, Li Chung-rhen,
Slew ten thousand enemy ghosts,
Men without souls, men without souls
Students and)Ega-yoh, ega ai-yoh!
people sing.)Men without souls, men without souls.

Now came the battle of triple Wuhan,
We built a wall of flesh and blood,
The soulless traitor, Wang Ching-we i,
Sold his soul to the enemy dwarfs.
Students and)Ega-yoh, ega ai-yoh!
people)Sold his soul to the enemy dwarfs.

The war spreads far, the nights grow dark,
Sorrow has come to every home.
But every man stands in his place,
Rather to die than live a slave.
Students and) Ega-yoh! Ega ai-yoh!
people)Rather to die than live a slave.

(Shouts of "hao!hao!" and "sing it again!" (tsai lai, egoh!) from audience. Student with banner rolls it up again. Student with drum rolls the drum; students turn and march off stage)

Student in black: Drum tower tonight, seven o'clock. Tell everybody!

Lin Seng: (walking over to Capt. Lo) I heard you say you were going to Headquarters. How far is it?

Capt. Lo: ~~Two miles.~~ Half an hour

Kuo-hwa: (going up to them) Not so far! (To Lin Seng) I'll show you. Are you the foreign journalists? Everybody said you were coming.

Lin Seng: One of us is foreigner--the lady there. We telephoned from rear headquarters two nights ago?

Capt. Lo: Is that two days away?

Lin Seng: Only one. But there was a battle and we stopped to help with the wounded. (To Kuo-hwa) Is General Wang expecting us?

Kuo-hwa: General Wang's at the front--but he'll come back tonight. Come on--I'll show you.

Frances: (with carriers, going over to ~~Km~~ group). Little ~~Pilion,~~ soldier, what's your name?

Kuo-hwa: Kuo-hwa! I'm not a soldier--just an orderly.

Frances: But an orderly is also a soldier!

Crowd: Give the show now!

Student with drum: (rolling the drum to get attention) Countrymen, we've walked fifty li today. We've not eaten. We'll give the show tonight. But we'll sing you the news of the war. [redacted]

(Crowd murmurs, applauds, shouts "hao! hao!" Some sit, some stand. Old Donkey Driver [redacted] stands up right. Frances and Lin Zhan [redacted] turn around to watch.)

Student in black: (Clapping [redacted] his castanettes to keep time) This is the story of the war. (Girl student with flute plays melody and student sings;

Look at the battle of Liukuochao,
The ancient bridge was ten spans high.
On July 7th the enemy struck
Our northern soldiers fought and died.
Students in chorus) Ega-yoh, ega ai-yoh,
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General Wang on a bicycle,
Escaped the enemy's shot and shell
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With many big camps and many brave men,
Chiang Kai-shek like a burning flame,
Daily reviewed the many big troops.
Students: Ega-yoh, ega ai-yoh!
Daily reviewed the many big troops.

(People [redacted] sing with students.

Just look at the battle of Taierchwang,
The Kwangsi General, Li Chung-rhen,
Slew ten thousand enemy ghosts,
Men without souls, men without souls
Students and)Ega-yoh, ega ai-yoh!
people sing.)Men without souls, men without souls.

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The war spreads far, the nights grow dark,
Sorrow has come to every home.
But every man stands in his place,
Rather to die than live a slave.
Students and) Ega-yoh! Ega ai-yoh!
people)Rather to die than live a slave.

(Shouts of "hao!hao!" and "sing it again!" (Tsai lai, egoh!) from audience. Student with banner rolls it up again. Student with drum rolls the drum; students turn and march off stage)

Student in black: Drum tower tonight, seven o'clock. Tell everybody!

Lin Seng: (walking over to Capt. Lo) I heard you say you were going to Headquarters. How far is it?

Capt. Lo: Two miles.

Kuo-hwa: (Going up to Lin Seng) Are you the foreign doctor that everybody said was coming?

Lin Seng: The lady there is foreign. But she's not a doctor. I'm a Chinese, can't you see!. We telephoned from rear headquarters two nights ago?

Capt. Lo: Is that two days away?

Lin Seng: Only one. But there was a battle and we stopped to help with the wounded. (To Kuo-hwa) Is General Wang expecting us?

Kuo-hwa: General Wang's at the front, but he'll come back tonight. Come on. I'll show you General Wang's headquarters - but he ain't there.

Frances: (With carriers, going over to group). Hello little soldier, what's your name?

Kuo-hwa: Hello.... I'm not a soldier- I'm an orderly.

Frances: What's your name? But an orderly is also a soldier!

(General Wang Shih-pu, General Li, Major-General Chou Tien-ying, and Col. Wu Yeh-tze are around the table under the tree, before General Wang's Fueld Headquarters. The double-door of the main building in back is open. Down the side of the door are the Chinese words for "Field Headquarters. The table under the tree, about which the men sit or stand, is covered with a variety of things--presuably a flat military map among others; piles of papers; a few paper-bound books, some half folded, some turned down on their faces as if someone had been reading. A Chinese stone slab for ink is on the table, with a Chinese brush. General Wang is bending over the military map, bracing himself with his arms, and talking with General Li who still remains seated. Major-General Chou is just ~~xi~~ standing up as the scene opens, holding some papers in his hand. Col. Wu, General Wang's Chief-of-staff, stands a little in the background, without a cap. The tops of a folded book protrude from one of his pockets and he holds some papers in one hand. In the background are two armed guards, parading back and forth off right. One of the guards is studying a small pocket manual, memorizing Chinese words, sometimes halting to ask the other guard something.)

General Wang: It's settled, then, General Li.

General Li: (rising) I've said all I have to say. So long as you are commander-in-chief of this front, I have no choice but to carry out your orders!

General Wang: (watching him thoughtfully) Never before has any officer ~~xxxxxxxx~~ under my command inferred that I might save my own army at the expense of another.

General Li: (coldly polite). I don't infer that. The Japs have thrown re-enforcements against that division. It can't hold.

General Wang: I can only repeat: As soon as Major-General Chou's division comes up, it will relieve yours entirely and you can withdraw it to the rear for rest and reorganization.

General Li: ~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~ General Chou's division might be too late. I don't understand the delay.

Chou: There has been a delay. Even now ~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~ ~~xxxxxxx~~ we are not fully equipped. And my troops are nearly all new recruits--they had to be ~~xxxxxxxxx~~ trained.

General Wang: You can't forget, ~~xxxx~~ General Li, that General Chou's division has been wiped out four times since the war began. Most of his men are new. The delay is ~~xxxxxxxxxx~~ not his because he

hesitates. Surely none of us can forget that he was one of the first men to fire at the Japanese at Marco Polo bridge.

Chou(protesting): That's not the point.. . .

General Li: (ignoring Chou, staring at General Wang coldly) ~~xxxxx~~ I don't forget any man who did not waver when the war began!

(General Wang stiffens as if struck across the face.

Chou: (stepping forward) If my division comes up tomorrow night, we can relief General Li's division. But they ought to have one night's sleep.

General Wang: (turning to General Li again) It's impossible to withdraw any of General Fang's troops from their present positions. They have their own tasks--and they've had heavy losses. The most we can hope for is that our cavalry regiment which we sent to the rear two days ago, will re-enforce the guerrillas and prevent the Japs from sending up any more fresh troops.

General Li: It's useless to depend on the guerrillas. Some of my troops hold positions bordering guerrilla territory. The guerrillas don't fight. They're Communists. They merely stir up the people; and recently they've begun inciting them to democracy.

Col. Wu: Inciting to democracy!

General Li: Yes--they're inciting the people to elect their own officials. They don't fight.

General Wang: Captain Lo brought in another batch of Japanese prisoners yesterday--they got them in battle.

General Li: Captain Lo, I believe, is a Communist.

General Wang: (turning to Col. Wu) Is Lo a Communist?

Col. Wu: I haven't the least idea what his political beliefs are. Nor his religious beliefs. (ironically) I don't even know if he's married. All I know is reports from our cavalry regiment that the guerrillas are tearing out bridges, destroying roads, and fighting.

Chou: If they bring in prisoners, its decisive. The Japs don't easily surrender.

General Wang: These Kuomintang-Communist quarrells are matters in which we at the front can take no part. We must judge men by their actions. I myself don't want to see Chinese quarrelling or fighting each other.

General Li: In these days, every Chinese is compelled to be a politician. We're not strong enough to depend on military might alone.

General Wang: It's my job to defeat the Japs, and to help any army or guerrilla detachment that helps.

General Li: The Communists will exploit that attitude. For me, there's only one country, one party, one leader. I had that slogan painted across walls through the province where I was Governor.

Chou: Hitler had the same thing done in Germany.

General Li: And He's made Germany a powerful nation that can't be exploited by other nations. He crushed the Communists and Socialists and unified the country.

Chou: ~~xxxxxxxxxxxx~~ So has Japan. And both Germany and Japan have invaded other countries.

General Li: The Japanese are only a temporary annoyance. They are only a skin disease. But the Communists are a disease of the heart.

General Wang: (walking to right of stage impatiently) It doesn't matter what the problems are before us, we always end in ~~xxxxxxx~~ politics. I suppose it's hopeless to expect anything else.

General Li: Not until the country is unified.

Col. Wu: Well, many people don't want to be unified under the slogan of one country, one party, one leader. They want ~~xxxxxxxx~~ democrat rights.

General Li: The Communists hide behind democratic rights. Democrats are only the outer defence line of the Communists.

Chou: Well, I'm ~~xxx~~ a democrat. It's not an outer defence line for anyone. But if, by study and thought, I became convinced that the Communists offer the only solution for all our country's problems, then I'll be a Communist. The same holds true for the Kuomintang. The Kuomintang holds power, but it hasn't solved our social problems at all.

Wu: Quite to the contrary. If we had a democratic government, there would be enough public criticism to ~~xxxx~~ root out corruption, hoarding, inefficiency, and the countless other social evils of the country. Until we do, ~~xxxxxxx~~ I even doubt if we can win the final victory over the Japs. ~~xx~~ We've got enough military courage; but we seem to be political cowards.

General Li: My dear Colonel Wu, you can't expect our Government to change horses in the middle of the stream.

Chou: Why not? We've changed a dozen military horses in a dozen streams since the war began.

General Li: We could do that because our social system remained unchanged, firm as a rock.

Col. Wu: (quietly, deadly serious): That's where you're wrong. The people are so burdened by poverty that they can't lift their heads to fight the Japs. Some of them see little difference between us and the Japs. Our conscription system is unjust--the rich can still buy their way out of military service. The Japs study all our weaknesses and use them against us.

General Li: And the guerrillas over there are fishing in troubled waters!

Chou: Why should the waters be troubled? It's our fault if they are.

General Li: Well, I'm old-fashioned. I read none of the "new thought". (picking up a book and turning it over) I must still stick to the Classics.

General Wang: (Turning to stare at the distant mountains from which the sound of guns come) Sometimes I wonder whom we regard as the real enemy--the Japs or ourselves.

Guard: (On stage, back, right) Halt!

Lin Seng: (from off stage) We're just passing by.

Guard: There's a conference here. Pass elsewhere!

General Wang:(Turning to the guard) Who's that?

Guard: The journalists, Sir.

Col. Wu: They can pass through here--we're finished.

General Li: (gathering up a few papers, folding them neatly and placing them in his pocket. Dusts his hands elegantly, adjusts his belt and steps from behind the table in all his glory) Oh, the journalists!

(Frances Stone and Lin Sheng come on stage right).

Lin Seng: I'm sorry--but we were just passing by.

Col. Wu: Come in! I think you know everyone here except General Li. Miss Stone, Mr. Lin--allow me. . . .

General Li: (posing for the press) We have already had the pleasure. They interviewed me this morning. And insisted on taking my picture in many poses. Very amusing.
(Frances and Lin bow to all).

General Wang: So you have met already met--foreign journalists are quick on the trigger.

General Li: Let us say--most enterprising and courageous.

Frances: Not courageous--merely curious. . . historically speaking. General Wang, we hope you are going to find time for us at last. . . And you--Major-General Chou. . .

General Li: (still posing for the press) With your permission (turning to all with a bow) I shall take my departure. A tremendous amount of work remains to be done. There is no time for talk! (Salutes with a flourish and goes heroically off stage left. The sound of horses' hoofs heard, riding swiftly).

(Frances and Lin Seng look at each other and laugh)

Frances: (To Lin) God! How Hollywood would love him! . . . (glancing at Col. Wu, who has overheard her remark) Oh--I beg your pardon. . . I'm sorry I said that.

Col. Wu: (going up to them) So you interviewed him this morning?

Frances: (laughing and turning away) Yes. (restraining her laughter)

Lin: We were there a long time. . . He told us that there are so many traitors in the country--because they haven't studied the Classics. (General Wang stiffens and steps toward them). Frances is really ~~xxxforeign!xxShe~~ too foreign! She replied that most of the leading traitors of the country are classical scholars. (General Chou laughs) But General Li informed her that foreigners cannot understand the Chinese soul.

Col. Wu: He must be influenced by foreigners or he wouldn't talk about our soul. Foreign missionaries are always concerned with out souls--but foreign business men only with picking our pockets.

Chou: Poor pickings, if you ask me! (To Frances) What else, besides the Chinese soul, did you and General Li talk about?

Frances: (taking a note-book from her pocket and running through ~~it)x~~ it) ~~xxxding)x~~ Well, he asked me ~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~ if I wanted to take his picture. He had his horse brought--and I took his picture. He looked very handsome--the wind caught his cap and he was looking toward the mountains over there.

Chou: (ironically) "The spirit of China!"

(General Wang makes a gesture of protest and moves to the table, turns to listen)

Frances: (going up to General Wang) He told us this front is shaky. . .

General Wang: Oh--perhaps you misunderstood!

Lin Seng: No! But he told us that he intends to clear up this front and drive the Japs back to the sea.

Chou: Ding Hao! Excellent!

General Wang: (seriously) You must have misunderstood!

Frances: (diplomatically) Yes, perhaps we did! General Wang, we should really like to continue ~~xxxxx~~ our interview when you have time.

General Wang: (formally) Perhaps tomorrow morning--Col. Wu can arrange it.

Lin Seng: (To General Wang) Would it be possible, also, for us to have a talk with the traitor here in headquarters?

General Wang: (starting, then turning to Col. Wu) We can talk about this later, I believe. (To Lin) Col. Wu will inform you later. (Frances and Lin turn to each other, as if not understanding)

Lin Seng: We were just returning to our rooms. . . (to all) don't let us disturb you now. (He and Frances seem confused, then bow to all and turn to go.)

~~xxxxxx~~ Frances: (as they pass off stage left) Now what's wrong? What have we done?

Chou: I tell you--General Li is a blow-bag!

General Wang: Why should he talk to a foreigner like that!

Chou: Publicity!

General Wang: Perhaps a few weeks on this front will change all that.

Chou: Not he. He never changes. It's easier to change the course of rivers and mountains than to change a man's character. Furthermore, he's too old.

General Wang: He's younger than I was when I ~~xxxxxxx~~ changed--at the age of fifty.

Chou: You had it in you to change--not he.

General Wang: Give the man a chance!

Chou: I will--but I'm not going to depend on it. He's got so many empty spaces in his mind that a whole Japanese Army could march through one of them. As soon as my division comes up, I'm going to

move up to the front. So I have work to do. (Waves his hand informally and goes off right, back.)

(Col. Wu walks over to table)

General Wang: How did the journalists find out about the traitor?

Col. Wu: I told them. Why shouldn't they talk with him--or with anyone else; or see anything they wish? The lid's off civilization and there's no good denying or hiding anything, Old Wang.

General Wang: I trust no foreigner. This is not their country and we can't expect them to understand our weaknesses.

Col. Wu: They know our weaknesses--the Japs see to that! They and the foreigners who help them. But this foreign woman is a friend of my closest friends, and of my wife. She would not be helping us at the front if she didn't understand us and want to help us. Race or nationality doesn't amount to much anymore. Class interests seem to be forming lines around the globe. That's why American business men can arm our enemy, while ~~xxxxxxxxxxxxx~~ other Americans oppose them and sympathize with us.

General Wang: (bitterly) Perhaps I'm too old.. . . I don't see that at all--though you and Chou seem to. And the younger generation. But ~~xxxxxxxxxxxx~~ our younger generation speaks almost another language--I don't understand them--and they have never understood or trusted me. . . . (pacing back and forth morosely) Did you notice what happened when the foreign woman asked ~~xxxxxx~~ asked to continue her interview with me?. . . . Lin Seng immediately said: "And we'd also like to talk with the traitor here in headquarters?" Why did they think of the two things at the same time!

Col. Wu: Old Wang! That was purely accidental! Lin Seng asked me the same question. ~~Wxx~~ You've proved yourself on a hundred battlefields since the war began, and the Generalissimo appointed you to be commander-in-chief of this front. Your soldiers turst you enough to die for you, we honor you, and the nation never

questions you!

General Wang: But the Japs dare send an agent to me to propose surrender to save our Army--and myself! They still think that, having wavered in the past, I will do it again. . . . If I only had my life to live over again--and could choose my own circumstances. It was easy for men like Chou and you--born into poor intellectual families. . . inspired to study. . . forced to use your minds to earn a living. . . teachers of the new generation. (Bitterly) And I, born under the Ching Dynasty, in a military family, . . trained in Confucian virtues--formalism, obedience to my superiors!

Col. Wu: Old Wang! You and I have been friends for years--and I take the place of the son you have never had. But even if I were your own son, I would have nothing to do with you if I distrusted you. Were you my own father and were capable of treason, I would kill you with my own hands. Knowing you incapable of treason or of the slightest wavering, I will stand by you to the end of our lives. Chou thinks the same as I. General Fang the same. Your soldiers likewise. Millions the same. When will you learn to trust us?

General Wang: You comfort me--but it is personal. My past is dark and confused, and there seems to be a theory throughout the world that if you have done something once, you may do it again. Even the Japanese, still living in the period of Genghiz Khan, believe that--or they would never have dared send a traitor to me, expecting me to receive and protect him--and send him back with my answer.

Col. Wu: The Japanese? Does it matter what they think or do? They even say that we continue fighting because we are so ignorant that we don't know we've been defeated! They say we are so ignorant of scientific warfare that we place our guns where they can't find them to destroy, and that our guerrillas fight in an

ungentlemanly manner! Why, they've just invited the guerrillas to surrender to them also--though not one of them has ever wavered. This invitation failing, they challenged them to come out in the daytime and fight like men--stand up and be mowed down by Jap artillery! . . Old Wang--have they not also invited Generalissimo Chiang to surrender time without number? Has he done so? Only degenerates like Wang Ching-wei and his lice surrender!

General Wang: My heart grows lighter when we talk like this. But the shadow of the past still hovers over this front. Over there (pointing to mountain range from which the roar of guns sounds) are Chinese soldiers--fighting with the Japanese against us! Not many, but enough to cast a shadow over the country. And some of them are northern soldiers . . . . could it be that some of them are once men whom I commanded?

Col. Wu: No--they're Manchurians--helpless creatures whose families are held as hostages in case they surrender!

General Wang: Who knows? Have you yet talked with the new captives brought in yesterday?

Col. Wu: No--that is the duty of the rear headquarters. We'll transfer the puppet captives to rear headquarters tomorrow night. But they are Manchurian soldiers. And as for this traitor here--you will give your answer to the Japanese before the day is finished --he will be shot. What more can you do? You do your duty. . .

General Wang: When is a man's duty to his country completed? I know that mine will not be done until I have washed out the very memory of my past. How else can I face my ancestors--or leave a memory of which future generations can be proud?

CURTAIN

SCENE II

(Same scene as Scene I. Frances Stone is standing at the table under the tree, talking with a guard who has leaned his rifle on the table. A khaki-colored blanket is lying on the table and the soldier is strapping his pack up and shouldering it once more. A second guard, patrolling before building in back, watches them and takes part in their talk.)

Frances: (lifting a part of the blanket) I simply can't take such a present from you. You had to risk your life in battle to get it--and you need it!

Guard: (shouldering his pack, now without a blanket, and speaking laconically): Aw, I'll get another one before winter comes. We're always capturing these Jap blankets. Even if I don't get one someplace, I'll get one from the quartermaster.

Second guard: Sure! A lot of fellers around here have blankets like that.

Frances: (contemplatively) I might raffle it off--and get money to buy medicine for your Army. . . I will! But tell me of the battle in which you captured it. I'll write a story about it.

Guard: (picking up some stones from earth) It wasn't hardly a battle. . .(placing stones on table) Here was the village, see?. . . And here, three miles away, was a garrison of the devils. See? Just as Lao Tso (indicating other guards) and I went into the village to get some news, who should come--but three Jap soldiers. . . lookin' for chickens for their supper I suppose. They always take anything they want from the people.

Lao Tso: (grinning) When a guy told us the devils were comin', we go inside a door and waited. . . .

Guard: And when the devils began chasin' chickens, we watched. One Jap was leanin' down. . . like this. . . and caught a chicken by the legs; and they others kept runnin' about.

Lao-Tso: So we let 'em have it --got 'em right in the guts.

Guard: (laughing) An' did they holler. . . . E.e.e.e.e.e.e! But we only got two. . . before we could budge all the people ran out and landed right on top of all three of the devils. (Guard picks up his rifle and shoulder it. Smiles at Frances) That's the story of the battle.

Frances: (nonplussed) So? But what did you do with the Japanese?

Guard: (laconically) We buried 'em--deep--sos the Japs couldn't get the bodies and burn them and send the ashes back to Tokyo to become heroes. We put sod over the place.

Frances: Did you kill them before you buried them?

Lao Tso: They were pretty dead. (The guards smile at her.)

Frances: But is that all there is to the story?

Guard: (To Lao Tso) Do you remember anything else, Lao Tso?

Lao Tso: (thinking hard). Can't say as I do. Unless you mean that guy--you know--the traitor that came next day.

Guard: Aw, sure! Now I remember! Said he was an interpreter for the Japs and wanted to protect the village. . .wanted the people to tell him all about xx 'em.

Frances: And did they?

Guard: Nah! Just looked dumb and said: "What xxxxxxx Japs?"

Frances: (writing busily in her note-book on table) Then what?

Guard: Nothin'. We just buried that buy too! The devils never did find any of 'em.

Frances: (standing up in amazement) Is that all?

Guard: (To Lao Tso) Do you remember anything else, Lao Tso?

Lao Tso: Can't say as I do. . . . Except that we got three good xx rifles and blankets and a lot of things like that from their packs.

Frances: (sits down at table and starts to write, but grasps her forehead in xxxxxxxxxxx confusion. Kao Hwa comes on stage at back and starts past xxxxx Lao Tso into the building behind).

Lao Tso: Beat it, little devil, beat it!

Kuo Hwa: Aw! I want to see the traitor!

Lao Tso: (picking up a twig from ground and picking his teeth) General Wang can do withour your expert advice today.

Kuo Hwa: (scowling) Everybody says "beat it" to me! General Chou says "run along--no time today". It's because I'm little. When I grow up I'll have my Japanese pistol an'. . . .

Lao Tso: I'll bet you were tellin' General Chou how to place his division on the front. . . .

Kuo Hwa: (still scowling). No! I just wanted to read to him. He said if I learned to read good, sometime he'd give me a captured Japanese pistol!

First Guard: (grinning) A pistol! You ain't big enough to xxxxxx big enough to lift a pistol!

Lao Tso: Now beat it, General! The traitor's being court martialled xxd an' you can put daisies on his grave tomorrow.

(Kuo Hwa meanders slowly toward the table and Frances).

Frances: (To guard) Suppose I just ask you a few more questions--you know--like we were talking about before we got to the blanket.

Guard: Sure! Fire!

Frances: Let me see--where were we?

Lao Tso: You'd asked him how much he'd learned to read an' write since he joined the Army,xxdxxxx an' he said he could read the Army paper.

Guard: Naw! That was long before. . . She xxxxxxxxxxxxx was just sayin' that the world was round, xxdx an' not plains or mountains, like around here.

Frances: Well, the world is round--anyway, a little oblong!

Guard: Well, what of it?

Frances: (nonplussed) Well, I suppose it doesn't matter! (taking a pocket knife from her pocket) But let's go on. . . here's my knife (dropping it) now, what makes it fall to the earth?

Guard: (laughing) Did you expect it to go straight up--or hang in the air?

Frances: Don't you see--it falls because of the law of gravity. That's a scientific principle.

Lao Tso: (interested) Is that a fact! Is that what writers ~~xxxxxxxxxx~~ write about?

Frances: (nonplussed again) Sometimes. . . . Now, let's see-- (To Guard) Which countries are the friends of China and which are its enemies?

Guard: (To Lao Tso) Do you know Lao Tso?

Lao Tso: Well. . . our enemies are the Japs. . . then there's. . .

Guard: Germany and Italy--they're all Fascists. We're against the Fascists.

Frances: And friendly countries?

Guard: Well-l-l-l, there's America and England and France--they're sort of friends.

Lao Tso: Sort of! But they sell guns to the enemy to make money.

Frances: (writing in her note book) What is Fascism?

Guards: They want war--and they try to conquer countries smaller ~~xx~~ or weaker than themselves--like the Japs try to conquer us. But they can't do it!

Lao Tso: The Fascist countries all have big landlords and capitalists who own everything.

Frances: (writing in her note-book) What's the difference between Fascist countries and democratic countries?

Guard: Not much! You'd better look out!

Frances: (Sits down suddenly and hard on bench and drops her pen). Well!

Guard: (Concerned) Got any more questions?

Frances: Maybe tomorrow--not today. . . . Thank you again for the blanket.

Guard: (going back to patrol before building in back). It's all

right. Maybe we can go out an' get you another if you want it.. . . how'd you like a Japanese kimono--you know, one of them fine things the women wear. Maybe we could get you one.. . . . I know a guy. . .

Frances: No--what would I do with a kimono!

Guard: I just thought if you wanted one. . . .

(Frances sits at table, shakes her head furiously as if to shake away something, and begins to write. Kuo Hwa comes up and watches ~~xxxx~~ around her shoulder.)

Kuo Hwa: Miss Frances--when you write, you make little snakes all over the page!

Frances: (turning about, ~~xxxxxx~~ then taking her note-book and turning a page and showing him) Is that a little snake?

Kuo Hwa: Oh-h-h-h! That a little boy! He looks like me!

Frances: I've named him Kuo Hwa. ~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~

Kuo Hwa: Then you have to put a pistol in my hand!

(Guards in back ~~xxxxxxx~~ laugh and come nearer to see. Frances sketches in book).

Frances: How's that for a pistol?

Kuo Hwa: Then you have to draw me on a horse, for when I grow up I'm going to be in the cavalry, and General Chou's going to give me a captured Japanese pistol. General Chou's adopted me!

Guard: You mean you've adopted him!

Kuo Hwa: You leave me alone! ~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~ You think because you're seventeen. . .

Guard: I'm eighteen! You're only ten!

Kuo Hwa! I'm not--I'm eleven! (Turnins to Frances and looks at her note-book) What do all the little snakes say, Miss Frances?

Frances: If I read to you what they say, will you read to me from that book you keep in your pocket?

Kuo Hwa: (happily) Yes! (he crawls over and sits by her on bench)

Frances: (reading) In the 26th year of the Chinese Republic, in far away north China, there once lived a poor peasant named Shen.

The peasant and his wife had two sons, one old enough to be in the Army, one a little of eight whose name was Kuo Hwa. (Kuo Hwa watches her in fascination, guards come close and listen). Then the Japanese invasion began and the Japanese killed the peasant and his wife, and the elder son was killed in battle. (Kuo Hwa shrinks. Frances puts her armd him and draws him close to her) So Kuo Hwa was a war orphan, and he followed the Army. A young officer, Colonel Chou, adopted him and made him an orderly in headquarters.

Lao Tso: (grinning) He wasn't much of an orderly, if you ask me!

Kuo Hwa: You keep out of my story!

Frances (reading) Then Colonel Chou gave Kuo Hwa a book and told a student without one arm to teach him to read and write.

Guard: That must be Li--he's got only one arm; he's an adjutant around here.

Frances: So Kuo Hwa learned to read and write as time went on; and he learned all about the rains and the snow, and the ~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~ winds and he learned to find his way at night by the stars. He gave the stars names of his own. He learned everything about lice--about red lice and white lice that kill men in winter time.

Lao Tso: He knows a lot about lice, all right--he's got 'em all the time!

Kuo Hwa: I get lice only in winter time, but you've got 'em all the time! (Guards laugh)

Frances: (reading) By the time that Kuo Hwa was 11, he was with the Army fighting on the Central China front and there I met him. The Army was in a mountain range.(She turns a page and Kuo Hwa and the guards lean over the book and stare)

Guard: (turning around to look at mountains in back and ~~xxxxxx~~ right. Lao Tso and Kuo Hwa also turn, then look at book again). It's a purty good picture. You draw good!

Kuo Hwa: Why don't you put in a moon, Miss Frances?

Lao Tso: Because the moon's a traitor, silly! If it shines, Jap bombers can come. So if you draw a moon, then you've got to draw a Jap bombers.

Guard: But she could make it ugly--with a Jap face and a long black cigar stuck between big teeth. Japs look like tigers smokin'

cigars.

Kuo Hwa: I don't want no bomber in my story! . . . What else does it say, Miss Frances?

Frances: That's as far as I've got. Now you read to me from your book.

Kuo Hwa: I won't if these guards keep stickin' around!

Guard: We don't want to hear you read! You're nothin' but a kid. (Guards walk back and begin patrolling before building, going off stage right, watching the mountain range beyond from which the sound of perpetual bombing comes.)

Kuo Hwa: (taking a small manual from his pocket and opening it). It's my old book, Miss Frances! I know all this.

Frances: I don't--so read to me from the very beginning.

Kuo Hwa: (pointing with his finger as he reads) Human being. I am a human being. You are a human being. He is a human being. We are human beings. . . They are. . .

Frances: What's that line across the bottom of the page?

Kuo Hwa: That's just something to talk about. Mr. Li says it develops my mind. (reading) It says: "Why are there distinctions between human beings on this earth?

Frances: Well, why are there?

Kuo Hwa: Because some are rich and some are poor. Don't you understand? You see, the peasant is poor and he grows rice. The landlord xx is rich and he takes the rice and eats it. So they hate each other. Then, foreigners are rich and Chinese poor, and foreigners hate us and sell xxxxx bombs to our enemy to kill us with--they're imperialists!

Frances: Who taught you all this?

Kuo Hwa: Mr. Li and everybody. Everybody knows that! (drawing away from Frances) Are you a foreign imperialist, Miss Frances?

(He gets up from bench and moves to end of table, sadly)

Frances: (pleadingly) No, Kuo Hwa--I'm not. Really I'm not.

Kuo Hwa: (Smiling) Then it's all right!

Guard: (pointing off stage right) Look, Lao Tso--they're bringin' out the wounded!

Lao Tso: (watching) Heh-h-h! There's a lot of 'em today--and some are comin' this way. (cursing) Rape their mothers!

(Frances and Kuo Hwa turn, cross stage and look off stage right.)

Guard: They bring 'em out each day--when it begins to drow a little dark--so's the Japs can't bomb 'em.

Kuo Hwa: (To Frances) Sometimes the devils machine-gun 'em if they come when its light.

Lao Tso: Now, silly, that's why I told you not to draw no moon in that picture! Even if it's only a picture!

(A line of stretchers, made of bamboo with rope or cord beneath, come on stage from right and cross. The last two stretchers do not cross, but stop as if waiting for those ahead of them. On the stretchers lie men, some on their sides, some staring at the skies. None have covering, save two or three, draped with captured Japanese overcoasts. Japanese flags or helmets hang from some of the stretchers. Some wounded moan. The two last stretchers are different from the others. One is a wooden door, with ropes swung beneath and over the single long carrying pole above. The last is a bamboo cot, turned upside side, with a man lying inside, his feet hanging over the end. The carriers are civilians, poorly dressed, without hate; wearing straw sandals.)
Last carrier (to his partner): They're restin! (lowering the stretchers) Give us boiled water!

(Kuo Hwa and one Guard go off stage quickly, back. Kuo Hwa comes running back with a big black kettel of water. Behind him comes the guard, without water, but followed by two peasant women with kettels and rice bowls. The two women pass off stage left, as if to give water to the others. Kuo Hwa stops near the stretchers. The carriers take drinking cups from the stretchers and Kuo Hwa gives them water. The carriers take a cup each and move to the tree, squat and drink. Kuo Hwa and Frances take rice bowls which Kuo Hwa has brought. Frances goes to the first wounded furthest to left. He lifts himself painfully by one arm and takes the bowl himself, motioning behind him. He does not look up at Frances).

First wounded: (peremptorily motioning to the last wounded man) Help

him--they shot him through the chest.

(Frances goes to wounded nearest left of stage. Kuo Hwa pours water in a bowl and hands it to her as she kneels to lift the man. He sits up painfully by himself and takes the water. Motions to Frances, without seeing her, to go to the other wounded man).

First wounded man: I don't need help. Help him--he's finished. They got him through the chest.

(Frances and Kup Hwa go quickly to the last wounded man. Frances kneels, takes cup of water, but is unable to give it to the man. Lin Seng and General Chou come on stage from right, start into building, then turn and go slowly up to Frances).

Lin Seng: Frances--can't the others ~~xxixxxx~~ do this? (Staring about) Col. Wu told us to come at this time to talk to the traitor. Frances pays no attention)

Frances: Somebody bring me a spoon. . .

First wounded man: (obsessed with his own bitterness) I heard a Jap shouting--in Chinese. . . there were traitors over there. . . Chinese traitors shot us...and he's finished!

Severely wounded man: (groaning) No. . it's only the pain . . (

Frances: (Without looking up, she reaches up with one hand and shakes the arm of General Chou) Go get me a spoon--at once!

(Chou and a guard turn and go toward building in back. Guard runs inside and soon comes out with a spoon. Chou takes it and returns to Frances).

Severely wounded man: A little thing. . . .

Lin Seng: Frances, where are your morphine tablets--I'll bring them.

Frances: (hesitating, her hand going to her right breast pocket). I' ve used them all up--on others--back there. . .don't you remember. . .

Severely wounded man: (crying out) Mother! Mother!

Frances: (bending over him) Yes my son!

Severely wounded man: (wildly) It's such a little thing--it's for . . . my. . . country.

Frances: (Hastily taking a small piece of paper from her breast pocket and unfolding it; speaking harshly) I lied! I kept a ~~xxxxxxxx~~ morphine tablet for myself (her voice breaking) . . in case. . . I

Chou: (as if ordering her) These men will get care at the next

dressing station. /

Frances: There's no morphine on this entire front! Give me the spoon! (reaches up and takes it from his hand)

Lin: There are too many of them, ~~Xxxxxxxx~~ Frances! Don't give it!

Frances: (to Chou) Lift his head a little! (Chou kneels and obeys and Frances gives the tablet and spoons of water) . . More. . . more. . . That's it. . . the pain will soon go!

Severely wounded man: (In a weary voice) Thank you--foreigner. . good. . . foreigner.

First wounded man: (straining to see Frances) Foreigner?

Lin: (going to first wounded) Yes--a friend. An American.

First wounded: American? ~~Xxisnt~~ They give the enemy guns to kill us with! Friend? (he spits) They have done this. Without them. . .

(Frances starts as if struck with a lash across face, starts to stand up. The severely wounded man makes a convulsive movement and she kneels by its side again.)

Severely wounded man: (grasping Frances' hand and crying out) ~~Xxxxxx~~ ~~Xxxxxx~~ Ma! Ma!

Frances: (slipping one arm under the man's neck) I'm here,my son.

(The wounded man makes a convulsive movement then lies still. Frances feels the artery in his neck, then opens his jacket and reveals a broad bloody bandage around his chest. She lowers her head and listens, then slowly sits up, takes her arm away and closes the man's eyes).

Frances: (In a dead voice) He's dead. (She stands up, Chou standing up with her. Chou takes her hand in his quickly, then drops it and walks away fiercely to right of stage.)

(From the building in back appears an armed guard, and back of him General Wang. ~~Xxxx~~ General Wang looks about in surprise, then walks over toward Frances)

General Wang: What's all this?

Lin Song: ~~Xxx~~ A man just died.

General Wang: Why are they here--why weren't they taken to the dressing station?

Frances: (dully) They stopped for water and I gave ~~xx~~ water.

General Wang: It can't be helped--this. . . four thousand this past month. . . it can't be helped.

Frances: Millions in the past three years--it could be helped!

General Wang: Come inside, Miss Frances. . . . And I thank you for your compassion for my people.

Frances: (bitterly) And I ask you for forgiveness for mine. (Chou turns quickly at her words and watches).

First wounded man: (As if complaining to himself) I heard them as plain as day. . . Chinese voices.

General Wang: (turning to the wounded man) You heard what?

First wounded man: Chinese. . . talking behind the enemy defences. . then a Japanese voice shouted in Chinese--I heard it as plain as day: (imitating high, sharp staccato of a Japanese voice) "Go on--shoot! Shoot, or i'll give this to you in the back!". . . Then they shot. . (his voice half-weeping with hate) Chinese shot us--and he's dead!"

General Wang: (motioning to guards) Boys! Help the carriers get these men to the dressing station at once. (Guards help carriers lift stretchers to their shoulders, then go off stage left as if to help ~~xxxxxx~~ others. They all leave stage.)

Frances: I'll go along--I can help a little---at least that!

General Wang: (calling after her) Miss Frances--wait! You asked to talk with the traitor we have here. This is your last chance--he'll be here in a moment.

Frances: A traitor, you said? Oh yes. . .I remember. No--I don't want to see him. (Turning and leaving stage left) I can help a little. (Kuo Hwa runs after her. General Chou crosses to left and watches them go.)

General Wang: (To Chou). She can't endure the death of one man. But I thought she had helped with hundreds. . . .

Chou: (Without turning) It's infinitely more important than that.

(Col. Wu comes out of building in back and steps to the side. Past him, from inside, come five men, four of them armed guards, and the fifth a prisoner in a long blue silk gown, leather shoes, and a felt hat which falls off his head when two of the guards jerk him forward. The prisoner's arms are bound behind him with ropes and the two ends of the rope are held by two of the guards.)

General Wang: (To Col. Wu): He's not wanted now. Take him off.

Traitor (Panting and struggling) No! No! Don't shoot me! . . .

I'm only a messenger. . . I came openly like a gentleman. . . to save

lives. . . your life.

General Wang: My life. . . to be saved by a traitor!

Traitor: (struggling as guards force him off stage to right) Traitor?

You who licked Japanese boots for years. . . you. . . you!!

(One of the guards springs back, unslings his rifle to shoot. Col. Wu knocks the rife up)

Col. Wu: Not here!

(The guards and traitor leave, Col. Wu walks to extreme right of stage and watches them go. General Wang stands in the center of stage, like an image in stone. From mountains beyond come the dull roar of cannon and through it the faint cry of the traitor, "you!" followed by a volley of rifle shots. General Wang still stands, staring before him.)

General Wang: (in a whisper to himself) You . . who. . .

CURTAIN

(STREET SCENE BEFORE CURTAIN BEFORE ACT II. A young soldier in the blue-gray uniform of other soldiers, without belt, stands near one end of stage, his arms folded across his breast. Across from him, near center of stage, stands the little Old Donkey Driver with his donkey loaded with hay. Old Donkey Driver has his hands folded behind him as always, a little switch held in one hand. The two men are gossipping amiably).

OLD DONKEY DRIVER: As I was telling my neighbor, the war's not so bad. The soldiers bring a lot of news and give us good advice. So advise me.

Soldier: I don't know nothin' to advise you about. Ask me something.

Old Donkey Driver: Advise me about women. You know--the new women who've arisen.

Soldier: They seem all right to me.

Old Donkey Driver: I mean the women who've joined Associations and things. They talk. Men grow weary and horses exhausted. Now my daughter. Should she join the Student Resistance Theatre and get on a stage and sing in public?

Soldier: They sing pretty good. I advise you to let her join.

Old Donkey Driver: She's already joined. You'd never think she had a father. Then my old woman--should she join the Women's Anti-Japanese Association?

Soldier: I advise you to let her join.

Old Donkey Driver: She's already joined. Now she says she'll put me in jail if I oppress her.

Soldier: Don't worry. There ain't no jail here. But don't oppress h er.

Old Donkey Driver: My neighbor oppressed his wife. He told her not to join the Association. She joined. So he got her down on the ground and was just giving her a good hammering when she turned her head and bit him right here (indicating inside of the thigh). Then the Association arrested him and locked him up in their house. Now advise me.

Soldier: Now you got me all mixed up! It's good for women to learn to fight, of course, but. . .

Old Donkey Driver: But they ought to fight the Japanese... that's just what I told my neighbor. But my first-born came home--he's a guerrilla--and he says all this is just "New China". Now what's that?

Soldier: That's everything,--associations, theatres, democracy, science . . . everything. When the war's over we'll have a New China.

Old Donkey Driver: What will it be like then?

Soldier: Well, every man will have work and there won't be no beggars. Men who grow rice will have rice to eat and men who weave cloth will have cloth to wear. Everybody can study and it con't cost a copper.

Old Donkey Driver: You mean our fate will change?

Soldier: There ain't no such thing as fate; that's just in your mind.

Old Donkey Driver: What about the gods?

Soldier: If they don't like it, they know what they can do.

Old Donkey Driver: But we'll still have to keep old earth god and his wife to guard the harvests!

Soldier: They don't exist--they're just in your mind!

Old Donkey Driver: Ai-yoh! . . . Now what's thing democracy?

Soldier: It means we'll kick out corrupt officials and raise our hands in public and elect our own officials. We'll elect honest men who don't love money or have bad habits and who ain't afraid to fight the devils. We'll elect women too.

Old Donkey Driver: Ai-yoh!

Soldier: But now we must fight harder--every kind of fighting--front fighting, mobile fighting, guerrilla fighting. (Old Donkey Driver nods approvingly) We myst blow our bridges and tear up roads so the devils can't use them. (Old man nods vigorously) We must sneak into Japanese garrisons and learn their secrets and bring them back

to the Army.

Old Donkey Driver: ~~xx~~ Tell me how and I'll do it tomorrow.

Soldier: You have to be trained first. But now we must all learn to read and write if we don't know how; give up the gods; cut off long finger nails. . .

Old Donkey Driver: Now you're going too far--we might have bad luck.

Soldier: That's all in your mind. You can fight the devils better if you have short finger nails.

Old Donkey Driver: I'll cut mine off tonight. . . But advise me (The sound of a tapping drum and singing comes fitfully from the distance) again. Have the Generals arisen too, the same as the women?

Soldier: Why do you get me all mixed up again?

Old Donkey Driver: Because a General gave me a dollar yesterday. He said he didn't want no interest.

Soldier: Which General?

Old Donkey Driver: Name's Li--he's very stylish. Fine long cape and rides a fine horse.

Soldier: He ain't no good. But you can take his dollar. Did you hear the story about his officers?

Old Donkey Driver: Tell me and I'll tell my neighbor.

Soldier: Well, two officers of his Army were talking. One asked the other: "Would you rather be in the infantry or in the cavalry?" "I'd rather be in the infantry" said the other guy. ~~xxxxxxx~~ "Why?" asked the first guy. "Because", said the other guy, "when I start runnin' I don't want no horse interferin' with me."

Old Donkey Driver: (trembling with merriment.) Tell it again!

(The tapping drum and singing comes closer and the five students of the Resistance Theatre enter, with flute, Chinese violin, and little drum. Their banner is flying. They are followed by villagers and soldiers, marching.)

Student: Come down to the drum tower--we're going to teach everybody ~~xxxxx~~ some new foreign songs to march to. The foreign woman taught us.

Soldier: I can't go. I'm movin' up to fight tonight. Have to get back to camp.

Student: Which is your Division?

Soldier: General Chou's iron division.

Student: Oh! Then we'll sing you a song right here--a farewell.

(Old Donkey Driver nods approvingly) Student "orchestra" of flute, violin, and drum, take up position. The people stand ready to sing. The student xxxxx stands aside, raises his arms.)

Student: (counting) Ee. . . er. . . san. . . (Students and people sing, in Chinese, the Victory Chorus from Beethoven's Ninth Symphony.)

(Have Liu Liang-moh, of United China Relief, translate the words of the Victory Chorus from English into Chinese)

Arise! Arise! You common people,
Millions of people throughout the world.
Tomorrow dawns the day of xx freedom,
Dawn of the people's sovereignty.
When the enemy's defeated,
Motherland emancipated,
Victory shines everywhere.
Arise! Arise! you common people,
Millions of people throughout the world.

(With the last strains of the song, the students and people salute the soldier and march off, singing.)

Soldier: (looking after them) That's New China! Salute, countryman!

(he turns and goes off stage)

Old Donkey Driver: (saluting awkwardly, as if for first time, then ambling off stage, humming, then singing in a high voice) Millions of people throughout the world. (nods his head proudly, at himself, for his achievements.)

ACT I I.

SCENE I

(Same scene as Act. I. Time--next day, early evening. Two young guards on stage, one patrolling in back, one off stage, back and forth. One is reading a small pocket manual, halting now and then to consult the other about something in it. The same table is under the tree, with benches, and two benches are near center of stage. A soldier-orderly, about the same age as the guards--16 or so--comes on stage with small plates, cho-sticks, small porcelain wine-cups, and places them about the table. Kuo Hwa follows him, carrying two candles and a small porcelain pot of wine. Places wine pot on table, lights candles and lets the tallow fall onto table as a cement into which he sticks the ends of the candles.)

Soldier-orderly: It's not dark enough yet--blow out the candles! . . Stop wastin' the Army's money!

Kuo Hwa: (blows out candles) Everybody orders me around! Its only because I'm little. When I grow up. . . .

Orderly: What'll you do when you grow up?

Kuo Hwa: Everything--like the officers! I'll look at maps, read books, write with a brush, ride a horse and fight in the cavalry.

Orderly: I bet you'd just eat all the time.

(A guard comes on stage from left carrying a packing which, which he sets on a bench in center of stage. Looks at the two boys, then bends down and tears thin boards off the case and looks in. Takes out some flat boxes of cigarettes and examines them. Lights one and smokes it with satisfaction.)

Kuo Hwa: (To orderly) Well, I'd eat sometimes of course. Then I'd eat a farewell dinner, like this one to General Chou, and talk a lot. Then when it's midnight I'd get on my horse and ride to the front and fight--like General Chou. . . . But I'd eat first. Eat and t alk.

Olderly: (saluting him mockingly) Salute, General Chou!

(Kuo Hwa laughs and sits at head of table and takes up an empty wine cup and toasts orderly)

Kuo Hwa: Sit down and eat, General Wang!

Orderly: (looking around cautiously at the building in back, then

slipping onto the bench at other end of table. Lifting an empty wine cup)

Orderly: (imitating General Wang's manner) Major-General Chou--I hope you kill ten thousand devils tonight! (The guard watches, grinning)

Kuo Hwa: I'll kill twenty thousand! But eat, General Wang! The food's inferior." (They pretend to eat with chop-sticks.)

Orderly: I've never had such good food! Did you have it sent from Chungking?

Kuo Hwa: No--from Hongkong! By airplane. I've got an airplane now.

(Guard from center of stage walks over, opens box of cigarettes, bows ceremoniously and, taking out first one cigarette and then ~~xxxx~~ ~~xxxxxx~~ another, offers them to them. Ceremoniously lights the cigarettes).

Guard: Have a cigarette, General Chou. . . . and you, General Wang. I captured them from a Japanese truck. They are from his Sacred Nibs, the Emperor of Japan. (Kuo Hwa and the Orderly smoke ~~xxxxxx~~ importantly, choking from the smoke).

Kuo Hwa: (choking) Set down, Colonel Wu. . . (choking) the food's infer. . . .

Orderly: (listening toward building) Sh-h-h-h-h! (he springs up and begins to busy himself with the table. Kuo Hwa springs up, drops cigarette and crushes it with his heel. Guard goes back to center of stage, crushing cigarette with his fingers and slipping it in his pocket. From building in back come/Major-General Chou (without his cap) ~~xxxxxxx~~ and Captain Lo, in conversation. Orderly hurries and Kuo Hwa ~~xxx~~ off stage left.)

Captain Lo: No, I can't stay for Your farewell dinner. . . must reach our guerrilla headquarters by dawn. It's hard going through the mountains on these dark nights, even if you know the paths.

Chou: We're glad enough for the darkness. I wish we knew just how many Jap re-enforcements got through.

Capt. Lo: I talked with one of your cavalry officers before I left. We estimated that. . . at least one full division got through by

one route or another. . . maybe more. That's not counting the river route --some got through that way.

Chou: Even one division's too much--counting their equipment.

Capt. Lo: From tomorrow night we'll be hanging onto their tails harder than ever. If we could only get our hands on some dynamite, we could take out the big bridges. . .

General Wang: (coming out of building in back, sealing a letter as he comes) Yes. . . dynamite--and everything else. We need everything. We've got six xxx artillery pieces, but three are silent because we can't get xx enough shells up.

Chou: If we could get the new road finished, trucks could come up.

General Wang: If! And if gasoline were not liquid gold. We'll have to depend on men and mules.

Capt. Lo: (To General Wang) We know you're doing all you can, Sir. Over there we can take out only little bridges--some we can burn. But the enemy sends up repair gangs, and rounds up the people and forces them to help repair the roads and bridges. They shoot any xxxx man who won't help just as if he were a chicken.

General Wang: Yes!. . . . (giving Lo the letter) Here's the letter for our cavalry headquarters. Don't lose contact with them.

Capt. Lo: We work together--it's not your troops that trouble us--it's General Li's.

General Wang: I'll investigate that tonight before I go up to the front.

Capt. Lo: We've been having trouble with his men for only the past month. The soldiers and young officers are still friendly. But they're all getting orders from higher up.

General Wang: Not from me, they aren't! So long as I'm commander of this front, Chinese will not fight Chinese.

Capt. Lo: I don't know who got the idea that we've no right to exist. We're Chinese. Only guerrilla troops can fight over there. . .

because we travel light and keep on the move. . then the people are with us--and with your cavalry regiment, too. . . But they're afraid of General Li's Army. I have to tell you that, Sir!

General Wang: I think we can change that. If things ease up on this front for a week or so, I'll try to come over there to see things for myself.

Captain Lo: That would help a lot--we'll be hoping for that.

Soldier: (stepping up and saluting) Here are the cigarettes, Sir!

Capt. Lo: (Turning to the case, then to Chou and Wang) Oh yes-- I told you how we got a truck load of them. These (taking out a flat box) are labelled "Reward" and inside (opening a box) you'll see that they are presents from the Jap Emperor to his troops. Try them. . (General Wang and Chou each take a cigarette and look at it).

General Wang: Have you heard that the Japs are putting poison in cigarettes--just so we can capture them?

Captain Lo: Yes, of course. . . But we can trust anything we have to fight for--and we had to fight for these. (he lights their cigarettes.)

Chou: (laughing a little) Cigarettes from his Sacred Majesty, the Emperor of Japan--(with hatred) to his murderers and rapers in China! (Turning to the case and lifting out two boxes and thrusting them in his pocket) I'll take these up with me tonight.

Captain Lo: Well, (thrusting General Wang's letter in his pocket) I must be on the road. . . Tell the two journalists that I'll be back in two weeks. Then I hope they can go back with me--it would be a great thing for our guerrillas to know that people outside care enough about us to pay us a visit.

Chou: They'll be here any minute if you want to wait. . . They're talking to my troops now. They have kept arguing with me--they want to go up to the front with us tonight.

General Wang: I've already told them that it's absolutely impossible until we know how things are shaping up on this front. I don't intend to have any journalists killed on this front--least of all a foreigner. . . and a woman at that.

Capt. Lo: She doesn't seem to like being treated like a woman--says she's got a job to do like any man, and like any Chinese.

General Wang: That's all very well--in theory.

Capt. Lo: Well, until two weeks from now. Commander-in-chief, Major-General Chou--salute! (he salutes, turns and goes rapidly off left.)

General Wang: We may as well telephone General Li right now--I'll have him come over tonight.

Chou: If you don't mind--not for the dinner. We would only argue. And he'd be quoting the classics and talking Fascism.

(General Wang goes into building in back just as the voices of Frances and Lin Seng are heard off right laughing and talking.)

Frances' voice: I feel as if I'd been in a bee-hive--they simply swarmed about me, asking a million questions! (They come on stage)

Lin: (going happily toward Chou). Well, we're back at last. They made Frances talk for two solid hours, and me for one. I recited one of my patriotic poems. They liked it.

Chou: Well, I want to tell you that it's a great thing to have you at the front. . . we get news after its three week's late--no radios at all--so you (to Frances) seem like the first swallow of spring to us.

Frances: Oh, if I only were!

Lin: Listen, General Chou: if I could just fight once in battle, I think I could begin an epic poem. . . don't laugh. . .I'd write a poem about your division from the time the war began down to the present time!

Chou: That would not be easy--this division of mine has been wiped

our four different times since the war began. There are no more a dozen men in its ranks who could tell you you of the way it fought.

Frances: Then you--and they--must find time to tell us the whole story! If only we could go with you tonight! We can stand it if you can.

Lin: And we haven't come to the front to sit crocheting around the edges!

Chou: General Wang says you'll have to wait for a week at least. I've argued with him--I myself was once an intellectual and know what it means for you--but he's responsible for this front.

Frances: Oh, I know! We're journalists, we're writers--and I'm a damned foreigner too precious to stop a bullet!

Chou: Really, Frances--I must call you that--you put many a Chinese man to shame!

Frances: And you--whom do you put to shame?

Chou: It's my business--we have to fight. But writers must live and tell how and why we fight.

Frances: If you only know how difficult it is just to look on--and think and think. . . and to be afraid because you can't fight. . .

Lin: That's it--I know that if I could fight even once, a gun in my hands, I'd never fear anything again--a rifle absorbs fear.

Chou: (To Frances) I admire your courage more than I can say. . .

Frances: Oh, nonsense! I'm not courageous--I'm merely trying to become courageous.

Lin: Then you've got to remember that no one was born with a gun in his hands. . . we all have got to learn how. . . . you had to start somewhere. . . you used to be only a college professor.

Chou: My young friend, I studied in a military academy--I've years of experience.

Lin: You still belong on a university platform!

Chou: I hope that's a compliment--not a condemnation. But we sometimes have no choice--I felt that, if I'd followed my inclinations, there would be no universities left at all for future generations. I know your problems, Lin, but at present you could do no more than stop a bullet--and we have millions to do that. So you must use your sword as a pen, and you, Frances, xxxx turn your typewriter into a machine-gun. Wait here for a week, then come up--and Captain Lo wants to take you to his guerrillas after another two weeks.

(General Wang comes out of building in back, followed by Col. Wu)

Chou: Is General Li coming over?

General Wang: Later. (To guard) Take those cigarettes inside.. No, wait (to others) have some Jap cigarettes).

Chou (as they take a box each) As a reward from the Japanese Emperor.

(Guard carries cigarettes in building in back.)

Col. Wu: Well, we may as well eat. [redacted] Guard! (Guard from back comes over) Tell them we're ready for dinner. (Guard goes off stage, [redacted] left. Col. Wu lights candles on table as it grows darker and all sit down, General Wang at one end of table, Chou at the other. Col. Wu pours wine in the wine-cups)

Col. Wu: We can get no wine except bei-gar up here--and it's hardly wine. More like vodka.

Frances: I like it--it's a dangerous drink. Its a sort of challenge to one.

(Orderly comes in with a big plate covered with appetizers. Place it on centerx of table and goes out)

General Wang: (morosely lifting wine-cup) Friends--to the final victory!

(Everyone stands, wine-cups held before him in silence for a moment)

All: To the final victory. (They drain their cups, then turn them to each other to show that not a drop remains. Then sit down. Col. Wu fills the cups again.)

Lin (As they all begin at once to eat, taking food from ~~xxxx~~ plate in center of table) General Wang, Frances and I accept--with deep regret--your oder that we must remain here in headquarters for another week.

General Wang: You must wait. I'll perhaps return tomorrow night. After a week we'll know just how things stand. I can't allow a foreign friend to be in certain danger.

Frances: If only my own country were as considerate of China as you all are of me! I wish I were a Chinese, then I'd. . .

Chou: You are--almost. Anyway, you belong to us. (Lifting his wine-cup to her) Gam-bei--drain it to the last drop! (Laughing they drink and show their empty cups to each other. Col. Wu fills the cups again).

General Wang: Miss Frances, I was reading an article today--the paper was a month old, but still valuable. The article thought that America might renew its trade agreement with Japan if Japan begins buying its oil from the Dutch East Indies. Do you think this might cause ~~xxxxxx~~ America to renew the trade agreement.

Frances: Your guess would be as good as mine.

Col. Wu: And there's a real possibility that Japan may really take the Dutch East Indies. They are moving steadily southward through Indo-China. . . they've bought up some of the leaders of ~~xxix~~ Thailand. And Burma.

General Wang: I've been thinking that now that the European War has started, American business men can make money enough by selling war materials to Europe instead of to Japan--so perhaps they might not renew their Japanese trade agreement. That will help us.

Frances: I should be glad for your sake--but we seem to have the political morals of money-changers. I assure you that not all Americans are like that, General Wang:

Chou: And I wonder just how many Americans are different--and how

effective.

Frances: And I wish that I could assure you all that my people are informed, aware--and a torch in the darkness that refuses to ~~xxxxxx~~ be extinguished--as our own Jefferson once was. I hate to see the foreign policy of my country dependent upon financial ~~xxxxxxx~~ considerations!

Chou: I often think about such things--~~xxx~~ then I eat bitterness. We human beings are still so afraid of life that we pile up fortunes--some do--thinking they will ensure ourselves and our children against want and fear. . . .men seek security but. . .

Frances: ~~xxxx~~ . . . but create nothing but insecurity, want and fear. . and this will continue until. . . .

Chou: (continuing her sentence) . . . until we have learned enough to create a human society in which there is no security for. . .

Frances: (continuing his sentence) . . . for any man!

Chou: Perhaps Dr. Sun Yat-sen's Three People's Principles might achieve that end if. . .

Frances: (continuing his sentence. . . if they were really carried out with dauntless courage.

(Lin Seng bends over to General Wang and Col. Wu, ~~xxxxxx~~ and they lift their wine-cups and talk in a low voice. Chou and Frances sit looking at each other in silence.)

Chou: (In a low voice to Frances, lifting his wine-cup) You know my thoughts. . . (slowly she lifts her cup. But they do not drink. Set their cups down, staring at their plates.)

(Orderly brings in a bowl of food and takes away the ~~xxxxxx~~ other. Kuo Hwa brings in another small pitcher of wine and takes out the other.)

General Wang: (To Lin) Yes, you are right. Our greatest gains since the war are the growth of national consciousness--and battlefield education. (Morosely) Before the war, everything was unclear--some people did not know which way to go. Now we know.

Lin: And our people have become organized and our administrative organs reformed.

Col. Wu: (bitterly) Yes, quite often we sit around like this--boasting of our progress. But if we're honest, we'll know that we still have a long way to go. We haven't taken the first step toward democracy. . . and we try to console ourselves because the enemy still sits in that range over there--instead of where we sit! Tomorrow we may have to retreat again--and call it a victory because they have killed only ten thousand more of us!

General Wang: You're too pessimistic. We are progressing. . .

Col. Wu: Under what banners? We at the front are expected merely to fight. We will fight--but we want the security that w e're fighting for a progressive, democratic future--not for Fascism.

General Wang: Fascism? What is Fascism, definitely.

Col. Wu: It wears many masks.

Chou: Frances, do you think that America, England and France, really wish us Chinese to be victorious and strong? Aren't the British afraid of the effects of our victory on the people of India, the French afraid of the people of Indo-China, the Dutch afraid. . . (Orderly brings in another bowl of food and takes away the old) Try to forget tonight that you are an American--we are human beings together here tonight.

Frances: I agree with you--but still I have hopes that if the common people only were informed, they would wish only for your total victory --with all its consequences on subjected peoples.

General Wang: It's doubtful if America wants Japan to be victorious. . I read a book by an American military man about a year ago. . .

Chou: Perhaps America, like the other great powers, merely hope that both Japan and China will be so weakened by the war that we both can be easily exploited after wards.

Frances: (Springing up, walking about, then returning to table. Chou stands up) Oh, what shall we do to stop it! What more can we do? Everything I do seems no more than a tin whistle shrieking in a typhoon.

Chou: You can tell the world what we think--what we fight for. We here can only go on fighting.

General Wang: (Standing) Miss Frances, it gives us comfort that even one foreigner shares our hopes.

Col. Wu: (standing slowly lifting his wine-cups) And our convictions. National boundaries are vanishing indeed. (Lin stands, and the others take their wine-cups) Tien-ying, when you go to the front tonight, you will have a new assurance--that there are foreign friends who feel and think as you do--as we all do.

Chou: To that friendship--to the last drop. (They drink and show their cups.)

(They gather about Frances on center of stage)

Chou: Frances, what did you tell my troops today?

Frances: Much of what we have said here tonight. I kept thinking: "If I were going out to fight and perhaps die, or lie wounded on this dreary battlefield, what would I wish to hear most." So I tried to fill them with courage--I told them that they are the advance guard of subjected peoples--pioneers in the world struggle against Fascism; and that they must fight to the death for themselves and hundreds of millions!

Lin: (filling their wine-cups) Come--more wine.

Frances: If I drink more I will talk still more.

Col. Wu: Drink--Old Wang and Tien-ying must soon leave us. (They drink.)

Chou: Tell me, Frances, what would you say if you spoke the truth about us--the truth without glamor.

Frances: You might laugh. . . it would sound sentimental. . .but since I came to the front, a great peace has fallen upon my heart. . .

peace and an infinite feeling of security--as if my spirit had come home to rest at last.. . .You military men at the front have taught me a human love and a oneness of purpose--a love deeper and more lasting by far than any other kind of love; far more than love between man and woman. Dare I say it--it reconciles me to the idea of death. . . xxxxxxx

Chou: . . . yet it could be realized in life, perhaps xxxxx in some

(General Wang and Lin turn to talk, and Col. Wu joins them)

distant future. Love between man and woman might also change. Did you ever hear of a General who was gone to war for eighteen years, and returned to find his wife living in the deepest poverty--but still faithful to him.

Frances: And the General--was he faithful to his wife all those years?

(Frances and Chou laugh suddenly)

Chou: Tell me, Frances, what would a modern woman do?

Frances: Tell me, Tien-ying, what do modern General do?

Lin: (To General Wang) Oh I shall really write a poem--a great one, some day. You may not believe I can--but I shall.

General Wang: You have drunk a little too much, my young friend. True poetry must be wrung from the blood of life.

Lin: And who prevents me from learning about the blood of life?

General Wang: Just a week longer--you can wait!

Col. Wu: But when you write your poem, remember--no moons, no flutes, --but the sound of xxxxxxx cannon.

Lin: I will find a way--(sadly) and if not, then hack newspaper reports of so and so many battles, and give statistics of the men killed in battle.

General Wang: Recite one of your xxx poems for us.xxxx

Lin: No--no! I can't even remember one--they are so trivial. But I could recite an old xxxxx elegy of patriotism. It's too sad for this evening.

All: Come on! Recite it! (They all sit down to listen, Lin remains standing).

Lin: (reciting)

The driving rain has subsided, and I lean against the parapet with irrepressible resentment.

With uplifted eyes I sigh to heaven and vent my vehement passion for vengeance.

Until I achieve my aim, my merit and reputation of thirty years standing are as but dust and sand; but on my eight-thousand mile journey I shall have the clouds and the moon as my companions.

(General Wang slowly arises, as if stunned.)

I must not tarry; my head will soon be gray when regrets will be too late.

The disgrace of the year Ching Hang is still not washed away. When can a loyal subject's desire for vengeance be satisfied.

(General Wang turns and goes into building in back)

Compelling is my passion to go on a war-chariot and trod the pass of the Lo Han mountains. Fain would I. . . .

Col. Wu: Stop, Lin!

Lin: (looks about in confusion) Why? Where is General Wang? Why. . . .

Col. Wu: Why did you choose such a poem to recite to him?

Lin: But I didn't intend. . . . No. . (where is here). . . I will find him--and apologize. (Goes quickly into building in back.

(Clatter of horses hoofs. They stop and General Li comes on stage, his cape flying.)

General Li: (like the wrath of God) A feast--tonight?

Col. Wu: We have just finished dinner.

General Li: When are you leaving, General Chou?

Chou: Very soon, now--I'll be going within a few minutes.

General Li: Is General Wang inside?

Col. Wu: He's expecting you. Come--I'll go with you. (The two of them go inside building in back).

(France and Chou are alone on the darkenng stage. Silence. They watch the two men disappear in back. From a distance comes the faint tapping of wood on hollow bamboo--a wierd sound)

Frances: He came like the cold hand of death.

(The tapping on hollow bamboo sounds again--a night watchman telling the hours. Chou glances at his wrist watch).

Chou: There is little time left--I still have much to do. This, then is farewell. . . .I thought. . . there seemed so much to say. . . . something you and I must have talked about...long ago, somewhere . . . xxxxxxx sometime. . . like a half-forgotten melody.

Frances: No. We xxxxxxxxx have but recently met. And you . . . may never return.

Chou: Would it matter so very much, to you, if I did not?

Frances: I fear that . . . and I should be a lonely wanderer again.

Chou: Knowing this, would you respect me if I hesitated?

Frances: No. Nor myself--if I remained here tonight instead of going with you. Tell me--is it true that you will face heavy xxxxx enemy re-enforcements--fully armed; and that you have little?

Chou: We have our flesh and blood; and we have our faith. Not all who go to the front die. I have fought since the war began--I shall return here. And you will wait here until I return.

Frances: The ancient lot of woman--to wait. And if you do not return?

Chou: Then you must leave here and tell of our faith. I know I shall live on/in your memory--in your words and actions. But I shall return. Until then. . . . (Chou steps up to her, takes a ring from his finger, takes her left hand and places the ring on her ring finger.)

Frances: Jade--the precious jade!

Chou: Of little xxxxxxx value, as values go in this world. But to us a symbol of hope and faith.

Frances: Yes, a symbol of hope and faith. You will return.

Or I shall come to the battlefield. (He clasps both her hands). I refuse to be a love-lorn lady weeping in a lonely tower for a General who goes to war for eighteen years.

Chou: (Laughing, slapping her face gently) So that is what modern women do! (Seriously) And if the General does not return at all--the woman will not grieve, but will gather up all the weapons at her command and continue the struggle . . . and your weapon is the typewriter. . . and your voice--your voice which I shall carry in my heart until I return.

Frances: (Saluting him mockingly) At your command, my General!

Chou: (laughing and grabbing her hand) I also command you. . .

(Guard's voice off stage right, mingled with tramping of a horses' hoofs.)

Guard: Whoah! You beast!

Guard's voice: (further back off stage right) Password!

Guard with horse: Victory! (Chou stands back and turns)

Guard's voice: Pass!

Guard with horse: Pass yourself, you ass.

Guard's voice: What are you up to?

Guard with horse: Coming for General Chou. (He comes on stage from right and goes quickly toward building in back.)

Chou: (To Frances) Wait for me--I will return.

Frances: I'll wait--one week.

Chou: (crossing stage to guard) Guard--I'm here.

Guard: (turning in doorway) Your horse is waiting, Sir!

Chou: I'll be ready in a moment. (Chou goes inside building. Guard walks to right edge of stage and talks to guard off stage.)

Guard on stage: There's no moon tonight.

Guard off stage: You're lucky. . . . Send me back a Jap general. .

Guard on stage: Sure--anything to please a friend.

(General Chou returns from inside building, carrying his cap. Guard goes before him off stage. Chou stops at edge of stage and turns. He and Frances stand silently, ~~xxxx

said--except that, so long as I command this front, Chinese are not going to fight Chinese.

General Li: (with a grand gesture) Salute, General Wang! (Strides off stage right and is heard riding away.)

General Wang: God deliverus from politicians! . . . (Turning to Col. Wu) Now, what is it about these prisoners?

Col. Wu: They asked to talk with you--and you ordered them brought here.

General Wang: (To guard) Where are they?

Guard: Just here, Sir.

General Wang: I have only a few minutes. Bring them here.

(Guard salutes and goes off stage) Some more Manchurians, I suppose. . . poor devils.

(Guard returns with two others and with a group of 5 Chinese soldiers in Japanese uniforms. The arms of the prisoners are roped behind them and [illegible] the two guards hold the ends of each rope. General Wang stands with his hands on his hips, head forward, staring at the prisoners.)

General Wang: Well--what have you mean to say? You're Chinese in Japanese uniform!

First captive: We couldn't help being with the Japs, Sir. . . We were forced. . .

General Wang: No one can force you against your will--the most they can do is shoot you.

Second Captive: But they hold our families as hostages, Sir. If we don't obey orders they will shoot our families.

First Captive: We tried not to hit anyone when we fought, Sir--we always shot high, Sir.

General Wang: You're not Manchurians. . . How many of you fellows are there over there?

First captive: We used to be a batallion. . . But after Major

Liang was killed. . .

Col. Wu: Major Liang?

Second Captive: Yes Sir. He tried to escape and the Japs shot him and twenty others.

General Wang: Major Liang? Which Major Liang. . . .

First captive: Your Major Liang, Sir- - - -We were your soldiers before the war, Sir. . . Major Liang was our commander. . . .Then we heard you surrendered, so we surrendered. . . and the Japs sent us here and there. . .

Second captive: They always told us you were their friend, Sir.

Third captive: How could we know, Sir. . . nobody told us anything.

Fifth captive: We don't want these clothes we got on--give us Chinese uniforms--take us back in your Army. . . .

All the captives: Take us back. . . we didn't know. . .how could we know.

(Col. Wu steps over to General Wang, who has suddenly stiffened like a statue. Says something to him; General Wang nods but does not speak. Col. Wu goes back to guards.)

Col. Wu: Unrope them--take them back to barracks. I'll see them tomorrow.

(Murmur of voices as guards unrope ~~xxxx~~ the prisoners. First captive, unroped, takes off his Japanese cap and throws it on the earth.)

Col. Wu: /Return to barracks--I've no time tonight./ (Prisoners salute and go off right with guards. Murmur of voices, ~~xxx~~x sound of someone laughing harshly. . . a curse. Voices die away.Col. Wu stands watching then, then turns his head toward General Wang but does not move. General Wang stands in same place, as if stunned. The stage grows darker, and voices begin to come from every side. General Wang turns his head to first one and then the other, listening, as if haunted.)

Voices,(faintly murmuring,)of puppet soldiers: We didn't know, Sir. . Nobody told us anything. . . . Your Major Liang, Sir. . .we were your soldiers before the war. . .

Traitor's screaming voice, (faintly) You who licked Japanese boots..

Puppet voices: . . . So we surrendered. . . when you surrendered we surrendered . . . we didn't know, Sir.

Lin Seng's voice: (reciting poetry) The xxixxx disgrace of the year Ching Hang is still not washed away, When can a. . . . .

General Li's voice: (sharp and cold) In these days, every man must be a politician (ironical laughter).

Puppet xxix voices: They always told us you were their friend, Sir. . . . . we didn't know (voices die away like a sigh)

Col. Wu: (Going up to General Wang) Chou will be waiting--soon it will be midnight!

General Wang: Did you hear?

Col. Wu: (matter of fact voice) Hear what?

General Wang: Voices. (staring before him) I heard voices!

Col. Wu: (matter-of-fact, turning to off stage right) They've gone--it was the prisoners and the guards. (glancing at his watch) Chou will be waiting. . .

CURTAIN

CURTAIN SCENE BEFORE ACT III

(Townspeople and soldiers sit or squat before the curtain, listening intently to the Student's "Anti-Japanese Resistance". The girl student with the flute is ~~xxxxxx~~ playing the ancient melody "Building of the Great Wall" and the student in black is singing the new words to it.

Voice from crowd: Sing again!

Crowd: (applauding in unison) Tsai lai e-goh! Tsai lai e-goh!

Student in black: Then, altogether: "The Volunteer Marching Song. "

Crowd: (standing) All right! Fine!

Student in black: Afterwards, we'll march to the drum tower. We'll teach everybody to sing.

Crowd: Go ahead!

(Student taps drum lustily and the crowd sings the Volunteer Marching Song, marching off state left as the last lines ~~xxx~~ begin.)

Arise, you who refuse to be bond slaves,
With our flesh and blood we will build a new Great Wall,
China's masses have met the day of danger,
Indignation fills the hearts of all our countrymen,
Arise! Arise! Arise!
Millions of hearts with one mind,
Brave the enemy's gunfire,
March on!
Brave the enemy's gunfire,
March on!
Brave the enemy's gunfire,
March on! March on! March on. . . on. . . on. . .

(Note: This song in both English and Chinese, can be learned from a record made by Paul Robeson.)

Crowd marches off stage.

A C T I I I

SCENE I

(Time: The next night at midnight. Place: front-line trenches. The black outline of a low hill covered with brush and a few trees rise from the stage. Front stage is very dark, but figures clearly distinguishable. A ditch-like trench, zig-zag, runs along front of stage, with silhouettes of Chinese soldiers (without steel helmets) in them. The outline of a huge pile of stones on right. Behind this are three soldiers. From off stage left and right are heard occasional burst of machine-gun fire and the crack of rifles; something like the tubercular rattle of a trench mortar.)

First soldier (In trench) Sh-h-h-h-h! Don't talk so loud. . .

Second soldier (in low voice, from ~~xxhx~~ pile of boulders) Aw, they can't hear--even if they do, they won't shoot. . . . not unless that Jap officer is there tonight.

First soldier: Well, he may be there.

Third soldier: If he ain't--~~xxyhx~~ we can surround the hill~~xxdx~~ and capture the whole damned position--and all the puppets with it.

Fifth soldier: Well, I wish the Captain would give the word. . .

(There is a rustling and the sound of low voices from off stage left. One voice seems to be the low, heavy, morose voice of General Wang.)

First soldier: That's him--the commander-in-chief. . . I know his voice. He goes everywhere.

Second soldier: Have we got to stand at attention.

Fourth soldier: No, fool! Keep down!

Second soldier: What's he comin' for?

Fourth soldier: (laughing low) To find a little peace and rest. (laughter) They say it's a fact!

First soldier: He's just seein' that everything's all right--now that Jap re-enforcements have come up.

Fourth soldier: It's my bet that he's tryin' to buck us up. . . an' show he ain't askin' us to do something's he afraid to do.

First soldier: He don't set on his ass in the rear while we fight--not he.

Fifth soldier: The Japs have thrown in some new men over there--on the right.

First soldier: Well, so have we--Chou's division's come up--over there - - - beyond.

Fourth soldier: If you're askin' me. . . it ain't the job of a commander-in-chief to come up like this--right in the front trenches. If he's killed, where'll we be?

Fifth soldier: Sure--then old blow-bags might be commander.

Fourth soldier: Rot! General Fang would be the new commander. Old blow-bags will die of diorrhea if anyone so much as shoots toward him.

First soldier: (voices off left) Shut up--they're here.

(Two Chinese soldiers, tommy-guns silhouetted, come along trench, followed by General Wang, another officer, and two more soldier s with tommy-guns.)

Officer: One enemy position is above--up there.

General Wang: What's their strength?

Officer: Perhaps a batallion--they're puppets. Unless some new Japs have been thrown in.

General Wang: (moving along ditch) How's everything, boys?

Low voices: OK. We're waitin'.

General Wang: Teach the enemy that one Chinese is worth a dozen Japs!

First soldier: Sure! But maybe there's no Japs up there. Just traitors.

Second soldier: New Jap positions off right, Sir.

General Wang: Are you certain this is a puppet position?

First soldier: Yes, Sir. If you crawl up the hill another hundred feet, you can hear their voices--and sometimes they smoke. One of them talked with us once. . . But that was once when the Jap officers was away.

General Wang: What did he say?

Second soldier: We didn't give him no chance to say anything. We just called him a dirty ~~xxxxxxx~~x traitor and fired.

General Wang: (To officer) I'm going to try to get closer.

First soldier: Better not, Sir.

General Wang: (to soldiers with tommy-guns) Come along, boys--go easy. (General Wang and the guards crawl out of the trench and begin creeping up hill, General Wand crouching, the others on their knees. The officer crawls behind ~~xxxxx~~x them. There is a rustle in the trenches and from the pile of boulders, and soldiers take up position to fire. A few seconds pass.)

Voice out of the darkness above: Countrymen. . . come no further. . . (General Wang falls to his hands and knees. Others fall flat, guns ready) . . . go back. . . we have orders to use poison gas.

General Wang: Countrymen--Chinese must not fight Chinese.

Voice: Mayo banfa! (the voice is filled with melancholy) There is no other way.

General Wang: (In an urgent voice) Countrymen--come over to us. Come now! We will protect you.

Another voice, (a little to the ~~xxxx~~ left, out of the darkness above) Too late.

General Wang: No, now! Or we will fight--take your position--we can wipe you out.

Voice: Sh-h-h-h-h! There're some Japs above. . . with poison gas. (urgently) Go back. . . go left, not right. . . new Jap position on right. . . they've got heavy guns.

General Wang: (Standing up, staring into darkness) Countrymen--I hear your voices--you are northerners--like us. Come down to us!

Voice from left: Too late--our families will be killed--the Japs hold our families--as hostages.

Voice from left: (voice now coming more faintly, from further back)

Too late!

Soldier with tommy-gun: (in a fierce whisper) Traitors! Traitors!

Voice from above:(further away) Not traitors. . . we were betrayed.

Go back (voice grows fainter) go left- - - - not right (dies away)

General Wang: Betrayed! . . . Who betrayed you! . . .

(No reply comes. Wind through trees above.)

General Wang: (desperately) Who. . . who betrayed!

(No sound but the wind through the trees. Two soldiers with tommy-guns raise their hands and pull General Wang to earth. They lie, waiting, in total silence.)

Faint voice:(far away, left, half whisper) Too late. . .

CURTAIN

ACT III. Scene II.

(Scene: Same as Act I and II. Time: two days later. Building in back half-destroyed. Other buildings in ruins. Tree in foreground still stands. One big branch is broken, but still hangs. Its leaves stripped off. Table covered with a variety of papers, books, and a Red Cross kit. Beneath it is a wooden case with a Red Cross sign on the side. Benches scattered about. The roar of artillery comes from off stage right, with occasional cautious hammering of machine-guns. Now and then sound of bombers, with engines roaring. Then rapid dropping of bombs, falling with a thud. Two bandeliers of cartridges hang across a bench.

As the scene opens, soldiers and civilians pass across stage from left to right, carrying small, heavy ammunition cases from ropes at the end of carrying poles. A line of stretchers, followed by a wounded man walking, his arm in a sling, move across stage back, going from right to left. The stretcher-bearers run in a dog-trot, panting and sweating. One carrier (civilian) wears a Japanese steel helmet with a hole torn out of one side. The wounded man on his stretcher has a rifle balanced on the stretcher. The hand goes limp as they cross stage and the rifle clatters to earth.)

Wounded man: My gun. . . my gun. . . get my gun. . . (carriers pay no attention, go swiftly off stage left).

(General Wang, Col. Wu, and General Li, come on stage from right. General Wang is wounded in the left arm, which hangs limply. He grips it. Kuo-Hwa follows the group on stage, looking back fearfully. Two guards with tommy-guns follow and stand on stage, looking right. General Li has field glasses hung from his neck.)

Col. Wu: (To Kuo Hwa) Kuo Hwa--run--bring the doctor. (Kuo Hwa listens, then speeds off stage left without a word)

General Wang: It's not serious--I can feel. . . a little bandage will do.

General Li: This is totally impossible! We must move back. It's suicide to stay here. . . . We can't hold this front.

General Wang: We can--General Fang's troops will come up soon. (to Col. Wu) Did the messengers return?

Col. Wu: We've heard nothing. Perhaps they didn't get through.

General Wang: Then send another--a civilian this time.

Col. Wu (going quickly to table and writing a note)

General Wang: Place my seal on it! Make him memorize it.

Col. Wu: Guard! (Soldier with tommy-gun turns) No--not you. . . where's Shih-fu? (A guard runs on stage from right and goes to Col. Wu) Go to the village. . . find the leader of the

Anto-Japanese Association--his name's Han--or find his xxxxxxxxx brother. Send one or the other with this message to General Fang--the same as with the other messengers. . . Have Han memorize this also.

(Kuo Hwa comes on stage from left, followed by Frances and Lin Seng. They go up to General Wang and begin talking in a low tone, examining his arm. Then Frances goes to Red Cross case beneath table and takes out a bottle of medicine, some bandages, and a pair of scissors. Lin helps her.)

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Guard: (To Col. Wu) I understand everything, Sir--just like before. Shall I take a horse for Han?

Col. Wu: Yes--and if he can find any telephone line anywhere, he shall use it and try to find General Fang.

Frances: (bending over the Red Cross case) There's almost nothing left. (To Lin) Have General Wang sit over here. (Lin crosses and comes back with General Wang. General Li watches off right, Col. Wu watches the guard go with the message, then returns to General xxxx Wang. Frances cuts General Wang's left sleeve to shoulder and she and Lin examine it. Lin hands her a swab and holds the bottle of medicine while she dresses the wound. He takes a small roll of paper, breaks the roll, and hands xxxxx the enclosed bandage to her. She binds the wound. Lin makes a crude arm sling of a broad strip of bandage cloth, and hangs General Wang's arm in it.)

General Li: (Watching off stage right through his field glasses.) They're falling back.

(Col. Wu goes to Li, who gives him the field glasses. Col. Wu watches, turning the glasses over the battle field. Returns them to General Li and goes off stage right, rapidly, followed slowly by General Li.)

Frances: (To General Wang) Is it more comfortable now?

General Wang: Yes--it will be all right. (Standing up)

Frances: Is there any word from General Chou's division?

General Wang: (going with Frances and Lin to right of stage, watching)

They're falling back slowly. . . . (Turning to Lin) Why didn't the doctor come to take care of my arm)

Lin: He was hit in the last raid--not seriously. Only in the leg. He can't walk, but he's still ~~xxxkingx~~ working.

(The sound of a shell cracking through the air overhead. They listen. The shell lands off to the left--far away.)

General Wang: That's somewhere around the village.

General Li: (Coming swiftly on stage from right) At least our headquarters must move back. This is suicide. The whole mountain range is in confusion. . . My own Army's scattered- - - I've lost contact.

General Wang: Who's fault is that?

General Li: (haughtily) And you've lost contact with General Fang.

General Wang: He'll be coming.

General Li: He may be a thousand li from here.

General Wang: No he's not.

(Another line of stretchers and walking wounded pass across stage back, going left. Machineguns sound nearer, hammering steadily. Rifle shots)

General Li: I consider it suicide to stay here!

General Wang: Then get out as best you can. I'll tell Col. Wu the same. And you (to Lin and Frances) . . both of you. . . had better go now with General Wang; he has horses.

Frances: (watching the wounded pass) No. . . there are still wounde d men to be taken care of. . . (turning, staring off stage right) I will not go--Chou's division is still fighting. . . (Frances turns and goes off stage left, following the wounded).

Lin: I don't intend to get out. (He crosses to center of stage and picks up the rifle the wounded man dropped. Goes to bench and takes ~~xxxxxx~~ a bandelier of cartridges and straps it around his shoulder.) ~~[illegible]~~ No. . . this is my country. . . (he runs off stage right)

(Col. Wu and a messenger come on stage. Wu is reading a note, then gives it to General Wang).

Col. Wu: Well, that's that! Maybe Chou can manage it. I doubt it. He can't counter-encircle more than a regiment at most.

General Li: It's suicide!

General Wang: (listening to a shell burst far in left) General Li, you're no use at all around here! You still have a chance to get out. If you wait--it may be too late.

General Li: It's sheer suicide! (He walks swiftly off left and the sound of a horse is heard, running furiously, off left.

Col. Wu: (Turning to watch) At that rate, I'll reach Tibet before night fall.

General Wang: You're wrong --someone will shoot him first.

(Wounded cross stage again. Three walking wounded, with rifles, follow, walking slowly and painfully.)

First wounded: (To General Wang and Col. Wu) They say our commander is wounded. . .

General Wang: Which commander?

First wounded: I can't carry this rifle any further. (Col. Wu goes over and takes it. Unstraps belt of cartridge from man and straps it about his own waist) Maybe it wasn't Chou--maybe they meant you. (Looking at General Wang; wounded man drags on off stage.)

Second wounded: (Indicating General Wang) If he can stay, we can. I've still got my two arms. I won't go any further. (The two wounded men turn about and stare at battlefield from which they have come, then hobble painfully back, off stage right. Just as they leave, General Wang starts and walks off stage right. Returns in few seconds, following three panting soldiers carrying Major-General Chou's prostrate body. They stumble across stage and place it on the table, on top of paper and books. Chou has no cap and his face is clearly revealed. Col. Wu and General Wang bend over him, examining him.)

General Wang: Is he dead?

Col. Wu: Yes! (There is a furious burst of fighting off stage right, then the sound of machine-guns and rifles from off left, far away.)

General Wang: (Listening to fighting from left) Can it be they've reached they village--they've surrounded us! Where's Frances? Find her--and you get out as best you can.

(Frances and Kuo Hwa come running from ~~xxxxxx~~ left).

Frances: Some have reached the village. . . (burst of firing from right) They're everywhere!/ Two soldiers back on stage from right, one kneeling to fire, the other throws up his hands, and falls. His rifle falls. General Wang draws his pistol ~~xxxxxxxx~~ with his right hand and struggles to release safety catch. Kuo Hwa runs up and helps him, then takes hold of his coat. Frances rushes to the dead soldier, examines him) ~~xxxxx~~

Frances: Dead! (She bends over and picks up his rifle and drags it to him. Rips his cartridge belt from him and straps it about her waist. The other soldier, kneeling, stands up and moves back across stage and gets behind tree. He drags Frances with him. Col. Wu gets behind General Chou's body on table, pulling General Wang with him. Kuo-hwa follows and crouches.)

(Voices shouting from off stage. The high staccato accent of a Japanese voice is heard:)

Jap. voice: Advance! Fire! (A babble of voices. Chinese soldiers in Jap. uniform appear from left and right. A burst of firing sends General Wang reeling. He falls to earth and lies still. Chinese puppet soldiers swarm over stage. Frances and soldier back off left. A puppet soldiers springs on Wu and grabs his rifle.)

Jap. officer (striding on stage from right, a pistol in his hand. Stares quickly about, goes to General Wang. Bends down quickly, searches his pockets, bringing out cards and papers.) (Sucking in his breath) So-h-h-h-h! A General! General Wang Shih-pu! Al last--General Wang Shih-pu! (Kicks body of General Wang).

A puppet soldier: So-h-h-h-h! (He lifts his rifle and fires. The Japanese staggers and falls across body of General Wang, his pistol clattering on the earth. There is a dead silence.) Rape your mother!

Second puppet soldier: Well, we've done it! Now what!

First puppet soldier: (goes over to Jap officer and lugs him off the body of General Eang as if he were the carcass of a dog). Now what? (Stares about him) Where's the Chinese Army! Come--find the Chinese Army! (Puppet soldiers begin milling about stage)

Puppet soldier: Which direction?

Second puppet soldier: There's a Chinese soldier (running to Col. Wu) Guide us to the Chinese Army.

Third puppet: Quick--to the Chinese Army.

Civilian (crouching as he runs on stage from left.) General Wang! General Wang! (Sees puppet soldiers and turns to run. A puppet soldier grabs him.)

Puppet soldier: Show us the Chinese Army. We want to join the Chinese Army!

Col. Wu: (Coming quickly from behind table) We'll find the Chinese Army! We are the Chinese Army!

Civilian: Col. Wu! Col. Wu! (puppet releases him and he runs to Col. Wu) General Fang's division has reached the village! It's fighting. It's coming! The Japs are retreating this way!

(Lin Seng with Chinese soldiers, some of them wounded but with rifles come quickly on stage from right. Lin has a streak of blood running down his cheek.)

Col. Wu: (As sound of firing comes from off left) Come to the river bed --we'll get the Japs in the rear. This way. (Col. Wu, carrying his wife, runs off stage left. The puppets, Chinese soldiers, Lin Seng, and the wounded, stream after him.)

Voices: To the river bed! To the river bed!

Civilian: Rape their mothers! A gun. (He dashes off stage right and comes running back with a rifle, dragging a cartridge belt after him. Runs across stage left).

(Frances voice is heard off stage left)

Frances: Kuo Hwa! Kuo Hwa! (Frances runs on stage from left, dragging her rifles. Looks about. Kuo Hwa runs from behind table, where he has been crouching. Stops dead still before the dead Japanese, his eyes on the Japanese pistol.)

Kuo Hwa: My Japanese pistol! (Dashes for it, grabs it and tears off stage, left)

Frances: (Staring at General Wang's body) General Wang! (She drops her rifle and kneels. Tears open his jacket, listens to his heart). Dead! (She sits up, takes the rifle again and stands. Firing begins off stage right. Frances starts toward it, going past the table. Sees the body of General Chou lying dead on it. Her rifle falls from her hand with a clatter and she stands as she was, her left hand with the jade ring held out.

Frances: Tien-ying. . . you did return . . . you kept your promise. . . you did return!

CURTAIN