

UNTITLED (AMERICA)

(An American street. AMERICANS walk to and fro. To the right there is a ticket booth. Above the ticket booth, a sign reads: MUSIC HALL, JAZZ ORCHESTRA UNDER THE DIRECTION OF MASTER WOODLEG AND HIS WIFE, THE BARONESS VON DER KLUKEN. The street is cluttered with advertisements. A line of Americans forms in front of a ticket booth. FENOROV enters and begins to look around. The Americans are dressed in rags.)

FENOROV: So this is it... America!... What luck! America!... I can't believe it!... America... Hey, you!... You, over there!... Is this really America?

AMERICAN: Ies, Amerika.

FENOROV: And this city is Chicago?

AMERICAN: Ies, Chikaga.

FENOROV: And you are an American?

AMERICAN: Amerikin.

FENOROV: *(In a deep voice.)* I can't believe my eyes!... And those people over there? Americans, too?

AMERICAN: Amerikins.

FENOROV: *(In falsetto.)* Wow!... *(In a deep voice.)* Americans!... *(Looks around.)* So there must be, you know, billionaires around here?

AMERICAN: Too many billionaires to count.

FENOROV: So if you're all billionaires—I mean, Americans—why are you all dressed in these rags?

AMERICAN: Because of this so-called crisis, man.

FENOROV: *(In falsetto.)* Wow!

AMERICAN: What's true is true.

FENOROV: *(In a deep voice.)* Can you believe it!

AMERICAN: Who are you, anyway?

FENOROV: Fenorov is my last name, and my social class is Khrentsch.

AMERICAN: Ah! So then, parlez-vous français?

FENOROV: What?

AMERICAN: Parlez-vous the French?

FENOROV: (*In falsetto.*) What you say!

AMERICAN: I said: do you speak le French?

FENOROV: I can't do what I can't do. As for American—we can speak that as much as you want. Really! Now, if you don't mind, good sir, tell me what's happening here? What's this line for? What product is being given away?

AMERICAN: This line is a line for nothing interesting. Nothing is being given away. This is the line to buy tickets.

FENOROV: (*In a falsetto.*) Yippee!

AMERICAN: This is a music hall, man. There will be a jazz performance under the direction of the illustrious Master Woodleg and his famed wife, Baron von der Kluken's daughter.

FENOROV: (*In a deep voice.*) What luck! Thank you, thank you, thank you! I want a ticket! (*Gets in line.*)

(A long line of Americans dressed in torn, dirty clothing waits at the ticket booth of the music hall.)

FENOROV: Who's last in line here?

GUY: Where do you think you're going? Get in line!

FENOROV: I just asked where the line ends.

GUY: You got a thing for asking, huh?

FENOROV: (*Touching the elbow of GAL.*) Who's last?

GAL: Don't touch me! I'm standing behind this guy.

GUY: I'm not a guy! I'm the king of breath mints!

FENOROV: *(In falsetto.)* What luck!

GAL: Well whoop-de-doo, I'm the queen of dog hair.

FENOROV: *(In a deep voice.)* Fascinating!

GUY: Well I don't care who you are!

GAL: You are quite the conversationalist, breath mint!

GUY: Dog hair!

A CIRCUS NUMBER

(A fight ensues. QUEEN OF DOG HAIR is taking it out on THE KING OF BREATH MINTS. The other AMERICANS run around, yelling: "He's gonna beat her!" "She's gonna beat him!")

(The Music Hall doors open. The stage and the auditorium are visible. Ragged AMERICANS and FENOROV run inside and take their seats. All are shouting and yelling. Both the stage and the auditorium are visible. The hall becomes silent. The RING LEADER, dressed in circus clothing, enters.)

RING LEADER: Ladies and Gentlemen! We, being the Americans, know how to have fun! But how am I supposed to make you laugh, you animals? You've got chewing tobacco and your gum and all you do is spit!... Could anything make you laugh?... No way!... It's impossible!...

AMERICANS: *(In unison.)* Walla walla walla! Walla walla walla! Make us laugh!

RING LEADER: But how can I? Do I know how?

AMERICANS: Walla walla walla!

RING LEADER: Should I make funny faces?

AMERICANS: Faces! Faces!

(The RING LEADER makes faces. The AMERICANS laugh.)

AMERICANS: *(Laughing loudly.)* Ha ha ha!... Oh that's funny! Oh oh oh that's so funny!

RING LEADER: Are you entertained?

AMERICANS: Do it again! Again!

RING LEADER: That's enough, children! Now the Jazz Orchestra will perform under the direction of Master Woodleg...

AMERICANS: (*Laughing loudly.*) Bravo! Bravo! Whoopee! Hee-hee!

RING LEADER: And in the orchestra, the Baroness von der Klucken will perform with her lovely children!

(*Applause.*)

(*Exit RING LEADER. Curtain. FENOROV keeps talking in the audience.*)

FENOROV: What happens next?

KING OF BREATH MINTS: (*Jumping out of his seat.*) It's this guy again!

QUEEN OF DOG HAIR: Breath Mint again!

(*The KING sits down.*)

KING OF BREATH MINTS: (*Wringing his fists.*) Why I oughta!!

(*Curtain rises.*)

UNTITLED (THE BARON)

(The garden at the castle of the BARON VON DER BUNDER-HANGEL-HINGEL. There's a fence to the right of the castle, behind which is the dacha of the professor TATARINMAN. The BARON'S WIFE is sitting in an armchair and the BARON is standing in front of his WIFE. Roosters and hens walk across the garden and cluck from time to time.)

BARON: He's a professor?

WIFE: A professor.

BARON: His surname is Tatarinman?

WIFE: Tatarinman.

BARON: He bought that house?

WIFE: He bought it.

BARON: Near my house?

WIFE: Near your house.

BARON: In our county, do I, the Baron von der Bunder-Hangel-Hingel, occupy a superior position?

WIFE: A position.

BARON: And has this upstart, having bought himself a house near my house, made me a visit?

WIFE: He did.

BARON: What do you mean, he did?

WIFE: Ach, no, he didn't! He didn't!... Have a candy.

BARON: *(Taking a candy.)* Exactly! The devil didn't! That's it exactly! And I! I! Can I put up with this?

WIFE: Nope.

PUSHKIN AND GOGOL

(GOGOL falls onto the stage from behind the curtains and lies down.)

PUSHKIN: *(Walks on stage, trips over GOGOL and falls.)* Damn! Is that Gogol?

GOGOL: *(Standing up.)* This is so exhausting! He won't leave me alone. *(Walks away, trips over PUSHKIN and falls down.)* I tripped over Pushkin!

PUSHKIN: *(Standing up.)* There's no end to it! *(Walks away, trips over GOGOL and falls down.)* Damn! Gogol again!

GOGOL: *(Standing up.)* He's always in my way! *(Walks away, trips over PUSHKIN and falls down.)* This is so exhausting! I tripped over Pushkin again!

PUSHKIN: *(Standing up.)* How absurd! Nonsense! *(Walks away, trips over GOGOL and falls down.)* Over Gogol!

GOGOL: *(Standing up.)* What cruel mockery! What a sham! *(Walks away, trips over PUSHKIN and falls down.)* Pushkin again!

PUSHKIN: *(Standing up.)* Damn! Seriously, damn! *(Walks away, trips over GOGOL and falls down.)* Over Gogol!

GOGOL: *(Standing up.)* There's no escape! Literally none! *(Walks away, trips over PUSHKIN and falls down.)* Over Pushkin!

PUSHKIN: *(Standing up.)* Damn and damn again! *(Walks away, trips over GOGOL and falls down.)* Gogol!

GOGOL: *(Standing up.)* There's no way out! *(Walks off the stage.)*

(From behind the curtain, yells:)

Pushkin!

(Curtains.)

A FAILED PERFORMANCE

(PETRAKOV-GORBUNOV enters the stage. He tries to speak, but hiccups. He vomits. He exits.)

(Enter PRITYKIN.)

PRITYKIN: His honor, Petrakov-Gorbunov, will be... *(He vomits and runs away.)*

(Enter MAKAROV.)

MAKAROV: Pritykin... *(He vomits and runs away.)*

(Enter SERPUKHOV.)

SERPUKHOV: In order to... *(He vomits and runs away.)*

(Enter KUROVA.)

KUROVA: I should... *(He vomits and runs away.)*

(Enter LITTLE GIRL, running.)

LITTLE GIRL: Daddy wanted me to tell you that the theater is closed. Everyone is sick!

(Curtains.)

A DUET: DERBANTOVA AND KUKUSHIN-DERGUNOV

DERBANTOVA: *(Running through the garden and pointing her finger in different directions.)* Zhik! Zhik! Zhik!

KUKUSHIN-DERGUNOV: What's with you, Anna Pavlovna, are you batshit?

DERBANTOVA: Zhik! Zhik! Zhik!

KUKUSHIN-DERGUNOV: Anna Pavlovna.

DERBANTOVA: *(Suddenly standing still.)* Huh?

KUKUSHIN-DERGUNOV: I'm saying that you, Anna Pavlovna, have gone crazy.

DERBANTOVA: No.

KUKUSHIN-DERGUNOV: No what?

DERBANTOVA: I haven't gone crazy.

KUKUSHIN-DERGUNOV: How is that possible?

DERBANTOVA: Look at me, I'm not crazy!

KUKUSHIN-DERGUNOV: Strange.

DERBANTOVA: Very.

KUKUSHIN-DERGUNOV: *(After thinking carefully.)* Anna Pavlovna!

DERBANTOVA: Huh?

KUKUSHIN-DERGUNOV: Don't you see, Anna Pavlovna, you're not a kid anymore, and neither am I.

DERBANTOVA: I'm younger than you are.

KUKUSHIN-DERGUNOV: Well, yeah, of course you're younger!

DERBANTOVA: Well, it's the same thing!

KUKUSHIN-DERGUNOV: *(Turning and bowing to the audience.)* The

first act is now complete.

DERBANTOVA: Now, we'll begin the second act.

KUKUSHIN-DERGUNOV: Let's begin!

DERBANTOVA: (*Pointing her finger in different directions.*) Zhik! Zhik!
Zhik!

KUKUSHIN-DERGUNOV: You're too old to be clowning around,
Anna Pavlovna.

THE DIFFERENCE IN HEIGHT BETWEEN HUSBAND AND WIFE

HUSBAND: I whipped my daughter and now I'm going to beat my wife.

WIFE & DAUGHTER: *(From behind the door.)* Bababababababababab!
Hee haw hee haw hee haw hee haw hee haw!

HUSBAND: Ivan! Butler!!!! Ivan!

(Enter IVAN. IVAN has no hands.)

IVAN: Sir, at your service!

HUSBAND: Ivan! Where are your hands?

IVAN: During the great war, I lost them in the heat of battle!

ADAM AND EVE

A Vaudeville in Four Parts.

Admission is 30 rubles.

ACT ONE

ANTON ISAAKOVICH: I don't want to be Anton anymore. I want to be Adam. And you, Natalia, you will be Eve.

NATALIA BORISOVNA: (*Sitting on the fence and eating halva.*) Are you an idiot?

ANTON ISAAKOVICH: I'm not an idiot. I'm Adam, and you're Eve.

NATALIA BORISOVNA: (*Looks right and left.*) Uhh... I don't get it...

ANTON ISAAKOVICH: It's easy! Here, look, we'll stand on the table, and when someone comes in we'll say, "Allow us to introduce ourselves: We are Adam and Eve."

NATALIA BORISOVNA: You're insane. You're crazy!

ANTON ISAAKOVICH: (*Climbing on the table and pulling NATALIA BORISOVNA up by the hand.*) Look, we'll stand here and bow to anyone who comes.

NATALIA BORISOVNA: (*Climbing on the desk.*) But, why? Why!

ANTON ISAAKOVICH: Wait... did you hear that? Someone's coming. Get ready.

(SOMEONE knocks at the door.)

ANTON ISAAKOVICH: Come in!

(Enter WEISSBREM.)

ANTON ISAAKOVICH & NATALIA BORISOVNA: (*Bowing.*) Allow us to introduce ourselves: We are Adam and Eve!

(WEISSBREM is struck by lightning.)

(Curtains.)

ACT TWO

(Along the streets the people are jumping on three legs. From Moscow, a violent wind blows.)

(Curtains.)

ACT THREE

(ADAM ISAAKOVICH and EVE BORISOVNA fly across the Leningrad sky. The people fall to their knees and cry for mercy. ADAM ISAAKOVICH and EVE BORISOVNA politely smile.)

(Curtains.)

ACT FOUR: THE FINALE

(ADAM and EVE perch in a birch tree and sing.)

(Curtains.)