

2020
Oct 24 - Nov. 26, 2020
First revised: April 25, 2021

My Autobiography

10/24/20

b. 1

A-1

My Autobiography [① Some Guidance]

I was born ... (grew up ... attended school ...)

{^{my}
my} parents ...

None of this.

I am {an author} who ~~for~~ the past
(^{sixty}) years } ~~has spent the better part of the past 60 years~~ {has spent his days }

writing plays and (^{books} writing, books) of dramatic theory.

In the relation of these ^{two activities})

may be read the story of my life.



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p. 2

A-2
[out-3]

One rainy evening in December 1988
I attended a performance of Rosmersholm
at La Mama in New York.

Of ^(the) ~~the production~~ [itself] I remember nothing.
(But the program
(The program, however,) contained an article
that gave me what then seemed and still ^(seems to me) seems
the best idea for a play I ^(had) ~~had~~
~~had ever had..~~).

→ A-3

10/25/20

b. 3

A-3

"Broadway Takeover" by Robin Reif

(recounted) how directors go about coaching
a replacement actor into ~~taking over~~ ^{assuming} the role
of ~~this or her~~ ^{their} departed predecessor.

In the one-act play [which] this article
suggested [to me] the action would run as follows:

Small caps (OUT-4) A STG MGR would be shown ~~clinging~~ ^{guiding} a REPL ACTR
into ^{her new role} ~~taking over~~ the role she ^(will be) is stepping into.

A-4

But the ^(action) scene into which he is thus guiding her
(would itself be) a scene of guidance. And within
(this) scene of guidance the role she is being coached to assume

is that of ^{the guide} ~~the guide character~~
^{the character who does the guiding} ~~one doing~~

Playbill, Vol. 88, No. 12 (December 1988), pp. 15-23

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b. 4

A - 5
OUT - 57

Thus between the action of my

Small
acts

REPLY
ACTRESS - STG/MGR

play and the action of the

play into which my STG MGR would be coaching

my ACTRESS (^{this (letter)} which I shall henceforth ^{call} refer to as)

~~the~~ "the "inscene"), on ironic relation (must emerge would obtain - obtaining -
is along the he guides to his business)

In my play, the STG MGR

is guiding the ACTRESS (^{so into replacement} to replace) her

predecessor is the role. But since the ("inscene" role)

she is ^(being, thus) ~~thus being~~ coached ^{into} is itself that of

a (guide figure), every action she takes and

(line) she speaks to her partner in the ("inscene")

(will have must assume) the character of guidance

by her of him.

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p. 5

A-B
[out-6]

And since the role of "her partner" in the ("in scene")^(scene) is throughout being (^{involuntarily} ^{assumed} performed) by the STG MGR, within the [fiction of the] ("in scene")^(scene) the STG MGR, ^(portraying) as that other character, will throughout be ^(receiving) ^[at the receiving, end of] guidances from the very person whom he is supposedly taking over her role as guide. guiding into [her role [in] ^(as guide -) the scene)].

(1) Thus (this) play-to-be, tentatively entitled A Recasting, ^(was thus assuming) ^(thus rapidly by assumptions) had (thus) assumed the (character) of a ("war")^(clash) of guidances [^(either) with ^(one) of its characters ^(each of its) STG MGR guiding the other into (assuming) the role of guide].

→ out. 7

10/30/20

b. 6

A - 7
[cont.]

Stated thus, {this}, (idea), (premise) for a play

no doubt (rings a little
(comes across as somewhat) schematic.

TIAA

But clearly, all I ^{NEED DO} (needed) to give it life and specificity was (to come up with) a vivid

scene of guidance - something along the lines of

Edgar conducting Gloucester ^{Down cliff} (from the cliff edge at Dover) in ^{dark} bear

(or) Peer Gynt escorting his mother to the Great King.

(Front) — (into) which my REPLACEMENT ACTRESS

{① was being guided to assume } her role as guide.
② might assume
② was being guided. }

For months - years - I sought such an income and did not find it.

A-8
Cont-8]

To be sure, this was
 This (was, to be sure,) for from the first (time) (occasion)
 , to be sure, was
 in my playwriting (^{canon}) that some crucial specific
 { [had] long eluded me.
 { did not (at once) occur to me } By what
 particular "offense," in The Moment of the Wandering Jew,
 would my (as opposed to Shelley's or Goethe's)
Wandering Jew be set in motion? By what single
 line of inquiry (would) the (tumble) of (goeries)
 my Druth (lays before) my Rabbi, be replaced?
 What (^{key}) event or (^{train} sequence) of events might
 affect the great reversal promised by the title of Troy Wins?

In ^{tall} each of) these cases the needed specific
 (had taken) a while to ^(come through) ^(show up). But in the present
 instance, it was in 1988 that the need of an inscent
 of guidance first presented itself and in 2020 I was still looking.

A-9
[out-9]

Not that I simply drew a blank.

On the contrary, one after another

plausible {^{in scene} scene} of guidance for my

REPLACEMENT ACTRESS to ^{take} assume her {^{original} note } is

A-10
[out-9]

{came to mind. suggested itself}. She might be the guide

(through) a saint's shrine (who turns out to be the saint

herself), ~~through~~ the guide through ^{② the house of} a writer's
 a writer (of the present scene)
 (house) (home) (^{who turns out to be} [the] writer of the present scene) } , the guide of

~~a Eurydice who has moved from~~
 a late-Roman Emperor through the (ashes) of Troy

(who turns out to be the (spirit) of (Andromache) (Cassandra)) or

(possibly) a Eurydice who (would contest) (has usurped from) [her]

Orpheus the role of guide to the world below. Each of these
 seemed promising, none {inevitable
 stood head and shoulders above the rest.}

A-11
OUT-8;
bot. pencil
GWYN

Q-1

Perhaps [from (this difficulty)] I ought to have concluded that ^{my inscne} the (inscne) I sought was not
 (V after all) destined to be } X, after all, } a scene of guidance. But in fact
 I { only found myself } was only strengthened in
 { the conviction that this must be (so case). } .
 (C) ^{such it must be} (this) that conviction.

Q-2
Q-3 mid

For one thing, some of the greatest and strangest scenes in Western drama

(2) are scenes of guidance — (instances might be cited from)
 (1) have this character — scenes of guidance (are to be) found in }

The Bacchae Woyzeck, Faust II and Exit the King

(see also) the Lear and Peer Gynt episodes

cited above) — and what playwright would not be

ambitious to ^(contribute) add to this ^(canon) ?

N/A

p. 10

10/31/20
11/2/20

b. 10

VHA
P. 9

A-12

Q.2
Q.3
Q.4

What is more, in each of these classic scenes of guidance, the guided character, like my ^(is, as my) replacement actress, ^(conducts) (is) being ^(led) guided into assuming ^(conducts) his or her } role in a fiction.

A-13

The fiction into which Dionysus (guides) Pentheus ^(conducts) is that he ^(will share may) witness the ^(Bacchic orgies) rites of the Bacchae and ^(come home) return ^(unscathed). The fiction into which Edgar guides Gloucester is that Gloucester ^(has invited but at first solicits and has eluded but at length evades) at length ^(eludes) the suicidal promptings of a demon.

Faust I 6210-6305
6427-53
6550-58

Stuart Atkinson trans.

M. 134-5, 138-9

Norton Critical ed. of Faust M. 3285-3292, 156

GREENBERG trans.

M. 1622 & 50

The fiction (one of many) into which Goethe's Faust is guided by Mephistopheles is that of an underworld descent to the realm of "The Mothers."

Schechner ed
dd. 27-8

A-14

The "fire raging around the sky"

⁹ pointed out (by Woyzec to his friend Andres) establishes Andres
~~(brother)~~ ^{and} attention of ^{To} Andres by his friend Woyzec

{ as (witness to) } in the role of witness to } the Apocalypse.

Michael Meyer
Mr. 61-66

Peer Gynt guides his mother, Aase, through a fictional sleigh ride to the King's Feast. (In fact,

Aose is ^{(dying, the} ⁾ playing and the "sleigh" is her deathbed.)

And in Ionesco's Exit the King, the dying,

"enthronement" upon ~~the~~ ^{the throne of his} ^{the throne of his} death.

A - 15
[out-10]

(This very profusion
(This very multiplicity of [such]) of guidance scenes

ought to have (^{been} provided) a (^{tip-off} hint) as to

{ Why I was having such difficulty in (settling) upon one.
② the true nature of my difficulty in (coming up with) one. }

But the hint, when it came, came from quite (another) direction.

11/8/20

p. 12

A-16
Foot-11]

One day, for reasons bearing no relation to
(having no connection with)
(this) playwriting impasse, I happened to be
reading the ^{exchange} scene (III.ii) between King Henry
and Prince Hal that ^{lies at the heart} {is the turning point} of
Henry IV, Part One.

This scene (III.ii) contains no act of
literal guidance {along the lines of} ~~Dionysus~~
Dionysus bringing Pentheus among the
*(Bacchae)
*(Bacchants) or Edgar leading Gloucester
(along) the ^{very} edge of Dover cliff(s).

A₂-17 Yet its action, I could not but feel,
spoke to my dilemma. →

Act 1
[OUT-12]

First [King] Henry conducts Hal through his vision of Hal's (actions) (fill now thus far + THE SO to this point in moment) :

KING. For all the world

As thou art to this hour was Richard then
When I from France set foot at Ravensburgh.
And even as I was then is Percy now. (III.i.93-96)

Whereupon Hal, laying hold (of) their interaction

and reversing it ("Do not think so, you shall not find it so," l. 129)

takes Henry on a counter-tour of (these very) those same events:

HAL. Percy is but my factor, good my lord,
To engross up glorious deeds on my behalf;
And I will call him to so strict account
That he shall render every glory up. (III.i.147-50)

Here was just (the pattern) such a scene of clashing guidance,

with each character [in turn] assuming the role of
② the other's (as) the other

① guide, (that) I had been (seeking) for my STC MCR / ACTRESS play.

How came it that (an action) a scene to all appearances so
unrelated to (an action) many (abundant) one's?

{ (second) to catch such light on it?
(apparently) hold the key to it?
(or) had so much in common with it?
(could have)}

11/11/20

\$14

A-18
[out-13]

(Could there perhaps be }
Was there, perhaps, } some ^{recondite (parallel)}
} ^{occult} affinity
↓ ^(hidden)

between Shakespeare's (situation) and mine that
(accounted for) the parallel? For example, is
any actor the ("designated successor") to (their) director's
vision of (his) role — for which, however, ^{of the actor} (the or she)
is (inclined) to substitute a claim (for) succession
on grounds (all) his own?

A-19
[out-13]

But a moment's thought suggested that
any such ^{ search for a parallel unique to Shakespeare's scene and mine } parallel

was (bound to fail. }
(doomed to failure). Many, perhaps
① all (or at least, all two-person) }
② all — certainly all ~~two-person~~ } dramatic actions

(bear) the character of ^(warning) ^(clashing) ^(war) claims

to be, each, the true guide in a clash of guidances.

11/11/20

pr 15

he's an
ex-pastor
at times
1 pt-1

A - 20
[OUT-13]

The final encounters between Eliza and Higgins

in Pygmalion, between Nora and Torvald in

A Doll's House, between ^{Gorsuch, indeed, } ^{Pastor Rosmer and Rebekka/est} ^{Rebekka and Rosmer}

in Rosmersholm,

- {① the play whose [La MaMa] program
had first ^{intimated} my play to me ^{to} ^{me}
② the play in whose [La MaMa] program
I had ^{come upon} ^{first found} the germ of my ^{stalled} ^{black} ^{mine-play}
^{play} ^{first came upon})

L. Gollieën
Ibsen

REBEKKA: Is it you who go with me? Or is it I who go with you?
ROSMER: We shall never know the answer to that question, Rebekka.

A - 21
[OUT-14]

— each of these, and none more than ^(the others) ^(another) —

NHA
h.16

amounted to a <sup>(clash
skirmish
tussle
struggle)</sup> between claimants
{ to be each the others
{ to be each the other's true guide.

^{true guide for the others}

→ OUT. 14 STAY

11/14/20

p. 16

A-22

[OUT-14]



And suddenly it was clear to me why
none of the [specific] ideas I'd COME UP WITH
HIT ON
considered
HAD
entertained for a

{ "clash" } of guidances scene had emerged as the

inevitable right action (pr^{of}) my STORY/ACTRESS

SW. 11
c.p.s

play — or rather, why one after another such scene

(the gride ~~(through)~~^(to) the saint's shrine who turns out

to be the saint herself, the Eurydice who ~~vies~~^{contests}

with her Orpheus for the role of guide ~~(through)~~^(to)

the (underworld below), etc.) had so presented itself
presented itself as such

(but proved ^{at last,} ~~at the last,~~ only to prove, ^{in the end,}) no better than the rest.

A-23
[OUT-14]
↓

To be a ("clash") of guidances" is the nature of

any dramatic action, of dramatic action ~~for such~~^{itself} — and

hence implies ~~no~~ ^{action} more than ^{the next} ~~another~~.

NHA
p. 15

A-23
[OUT-14]

The "solution" I sought could only be

↓ {another} instance of the problem I <sup>(looked)
(hoped)
(dreamt)</sup> _{sought} to solve.

A-24
[OUT-15]

This was ^{not} from a happy ending.

→ As a playwright, I would ^(much) rather have had

(and ^(did eventually) did) have my "lost" play

than ^(this) clear understanding of why I

^(might not) _(did not) have it. Such, however, were not

the alternatives on offer. These were (:) simply

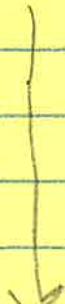
not to ^(find) my action ^(or) to _{achieve} ^(attain) _{have (achieved)} some

theoretical understanding of why I <sup>(had not found it)
(did not have it)
(was not to have it)
(might not have it)</sup>

A-25
[OUT-16]

(I ^(do) not necessarily ^(contend) _{maintain}) that

↓ the realization ^(at issue) _(in question) ^(was) _(is) of any great profundity ^(is) such a profound one ^(is)



11/14/20

b, 18

A ↓
- 25
[out-16]

perhaps to (pronounce) stage action a (clash) of

guidances is no more than to recognize
that drama { tends to involve conflicting viewpoints }
entails conflict }

— not exactly news from the front.

What interests me is less the absolute

value of the insight than how it came to me (:

not as the (oo^o) upshot of a course of critical

thinking but through, as, in response to,

a dilemma (within) playwriting.

A ↓
- 26
[out-16]

(I do not [by this] mean to (suggest))

Therefore

that ~~that~~ it is ~~on this~~ account, } deeper or

wiser or truer than an insight arrived at

{ along some other path, note: }

{ some other way, } e.g., simply by reading and thinking,

NHA -
p. 17

↓

A-26
[out-16] Here, for example, are {3/three} (other)
 {2/two} (alternative) models of of ("the scene"
 what a scene is) suggested to me
 not by any aspect of, or (difficulty) in, my own
 work but by ^{experience (?)}
^(my reading of) Kafka, Claude and Chekhov
^{reading} Kafka and Claude.

A-27
↓

<sup>small
circles</sup> → KAFKA, "Couriers" (Parable) We [are accustomed to]
 regard the messenger speech as a special (<sup>case
kind of</sup> type) of a
 dramatic scene (1) one where events too violent
 or [too] ^{elaborate} (extensive) to be (^{enacted} depicted) onstage are
 reported to those [whom] they concern by a [mere]
 courier whom they do not.

The following parable of Kafka's, however,
 suggests that the messenger (^{secret} speech) is ^{less} ~~not too~~ important → b. 2c

↓
[A-27]↓

- {① less the special case it appears than
 ② not so special a case as it appears, } is in fact }

the nature of any dramatic scene, of "the scene"
 as such:

KAFKA
 Parables
 p.175

IN DEPT

Couriers

INDENT

CUT

They were offered the choice between becoming kings or the couriers of kings. The way children would, they all wanted to be couriers. Therefore there are only couriers who worry about the world, shouting to each other since there are no kings — messages that have become meaningless. They would like to put an end to this miserable life of theirs but they dare not because of their oaths of service.

A-28

For Kafka here, every character in any

↓
 {Scene may be said to view him or herself)
 Scene views himself) as an envoy
 (a "courier") from his [or her]
 (the bearer of tidings)

region of the material, (who seeks seeking) only

↓
A-28
↓

to import the tidings he bears to [the] others,

But, {he [or she] } soon discovers, each of those others likewise {regards} {himself} {considers} (him or herself)

as a "courier," [i.e.,] a deliverer of tidings

of his ^{own}, and no mere recipient _{(own) to all the rest} to [all] the rest, and no mere recipient].).

(Thus ^{Any} any) dramatic scene is best understood

as a {messenger speech} {messenger scene}) in which every

character is at once courier and recipient, {no less

recipient) than courier.

↓
A-29

(Any reluctance I may have felt to ^{receive} _{draw} derive)

(my) model of the dramatic scene from a writer of

(^{prose} narrative) (^{prose} fiction) (^{disappeared} was dispelled) (^{upon my learning} when I learned) of

^{Covered}
SI.

JofAnne Akalitis's Bad News! I Was There..., a 2019

theatre production (with dialogue ^{whose} _(derived) drawn entirely from messenger speeches from ancient Greek and more recent plays.)

11/25/20

p. 2.2



(BOLD)

A-29

SMALL CAPS

(CLAUDEL), The Satin Slipper, Day ^{III}₁₈, Scene 1. As a

solitary worshipper prays to ^{each in turn} ~~one after another~~,

three saints — St. Nicholas, St. Boniface, St. Denis

of Athens — enter and assume, ^{each in turn,} ~~one after another,~~

their niche in the wall of the church where

she prays, until at ^(last) ^(length) the array of niches
is ^(complete) ~~(filled)~~.

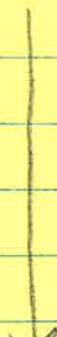
A-30



Any dramatic scene, ^(one might conclude) ^{(the implication is,} may be
(conceived as ^(every) such an array }
(thus conceived, i.e., as an array } of niched figures

in which ~~is~~ ^(by the end, each has) ~~each has, by the end~~ assumed

his or her ^(place) ~~niches~~ in the array.



A-30

These two models — the scene as clash
 ↓
 of couriers, the scene as ^{array}_{system} ^{ensemble}) of {^{filled}} {^{filling}}

niches — might seem to be in conflict (or at ~~best~~
 best unrelated), (did not both,) taken together,

so (^{clearly}
 plainly/^{manif/st}
 well/describe) the (^{action}
 structure) of, say,

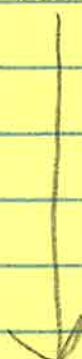
BOLD

SMALL CAPS

CHEKHOV's, The Three Sisters, Act II,

A-31 at once and in equal measure a clash of

"couriers" (Andrei vs Natasha, Irina vs
 Tushenbach, etc.) and {an array of slowly filling,
 niches ^{niched figures}
 of figures in "niches"} (Masha with Vershinin,
 Andrei with Tchekhov, etc.).



A-32

I (do not know) say) how well either of
 (these two) models of the dramatic scene —

- Kafka's crossing couriers, Claudio's filling
 niches — compares with the "clash of guidances"
 [that is, from that emerges from }
 emerging from } model(s) suggested to me by my own {experience }
 {work }
 as a playwright. {At no point have I sought }
 {My object was never }
 to {produce, propose, devise } some absolute best model [of the
 dramatic scene] nor even to rank the contenders
 [(which, for me at least, are not in contention)],

A-33c

{If, } in these autobiographical pages,

I have given special prominence to }
 I have laid special emphasis on } my own scene

of conflicting guidances, this is not {so much
 {or} even chiefly } because it emerges



11/26/20

p. 25



[A-³³
↓]

from my work as because it

{ offers
seems to me to offer } an image of my work

1 { overall
in its two aspects
[taken] as a whole }

^{LOCA}
A-34

The playwright guiding the theorist,
the theorist guiding the playwright — in the

relation of these two ^{scenes} { facts } of guidance

{ may be the end
may after all } be read the story of my life

{ Or so concludes }
{ which concludes } this autobiography.