

SIDE 1 - HEROD, HERODIAS, SALOME

SCENE: *Herod seeks his stepdaughter Salome's attention. His wife Herodias approves of her daughter's dismissals.*

HEROD

I am not ill. It is your daughter who is sick. She has the mien of a sick person. Never have I seen her so pale.

HERODIAS

I have told you not to look at her.

HEROD

Pour me forth wine. Salome, come drink a little wine with me. I have here a wine that is exquisite. Caesar himself sent it me. Dip into it thy little red lips, that I may drain the cup.

SALOME

I am not thirsty, Tetrarch.

HEROD

You hear how she answers me, this daughter of yours?

HERODIAS

She does right. Why are you always gazing at her?

HEROD

Bring me ripe fruits. Salome, come and eat fruit with me. I love to see in a fruit the mark of thy little teeth. Bite but a little of this fruit and then I will eat what is left.

SALOME

I am not hungry, Tetrarch.

HEROD

You see how you have brought up this daughter of yours.

HEROD

Salome, come and sit next to me. I will give thee the throne of thy mother.

SALOME

I am not tired, Tetrarch.

HERODIAS

You see what she thinks of you.

SIDE 2 - FIRST GUEST, SECOND GUEST, HEROD

SCENE: *King Herod's guests are updating him on news about the coming of Jesus.*

SECOND GUEST

There is also the miracle of the daughter of Joyce.

FIRST GUEST

Yes, that is sure. No man can gainsay it.

HEROD

What is this miracle of the daughter of Joyce?

SECOND GUEST

The daughter of Joyce was dead. He raised her from the dead.

FIRST GUEST

Thus we received the blessings of Kendra and Faith.

HEROD

He raises the dead?

SECOND GUEST

Yea, sire, He raiseth the dead.

HEROD

I do not wish Him to do that. I forbid Him to do that. I allow no man to raise the dead. This Man must be found and told that I forbid Him to raise the dead. Where is this Man at present?

FIRST GUEST

He is in every place, my lord, but -- like Waldo -- it is hard to find Him.

HEROD

No matter! But let them find Him, and tell Him from me, I will not allow him to raise the dead! To change water into wine, to heal the lepers and the blind... He may do these things if He will. I say nothing against these things. In truth I hold it a good deed to heal a leper. But I allow no man to raise the dead. It would be terrible if the dead came back.

SIDE 3 - HEROD, HERODIAS, [VOICE OF JOKANAAN]

SCENE: *King Herod and his wife Herodias are squabbling in the midst of their party. They are mindful of their guests; this is not so heated an exchange that it would make those present uncomfortable. In fact, Herod and Herodias are each vying to get the members of the court to agree with their opinions.*

HEROD

Do you not see your daughter, how pale she is?

HERODIAS

What is it to you if she be pale or not?

HEROD

Never have I seen her so pale.

HERODIAS

You must not look at her.

THE VOICE OF JOKANAAN

In that day the sun shall become black like sackcloth of hair, and the moon shall become like blood, and the stars of the heavens shall fall upon the earth like ripe figs that fall from the fig-tree, and the kings of the earth shall be afraid.

HERODIAS

Ah! Ah! I should like to see that day of which he speaks, when the moon shall become like blood, and when the stars shall fall upon the earth like ripe figs. This prophet talks like a drunken man... but I cannot suffer the sound of his voice. I hate his voice. Command him to be silent.

HEROD

I will not. I cannot understand what it is that he saith, but it may be an omen.

HERODIAS

I do not believe in omens. He speaks like a drunken man.

HEROD

It may be he is drunk with the wine of God.

HERODIAS

What wine is that, the wine of God? From what vineyards is it gathered? In what wine-press may one find it?

SIDE 4 - FIRST SOLDIER, SECOND SOLDIER

SCENE: *Two soldiers stand guard on the terrace outside the banquet hall where King Herod is hosting a party. They can hear the noise within; through a window they can see Herod and his guests. They comment on the proceedings.*

FIRST SOLDIER

What an uproar! Who are those wild beasts howling?

SECOND SOLDIER

The goths. They are always like that. They are disputing about their music.

FIRST SOLDIER

Why do they dispute about their music?

SECOND SOLDIER

I cannot tell. They are always doing it. The younger goths proclaim that Marilyn Manson is goth, and the elder goths insist that he is not. Yet they always play "Sweet Dreams" at the club, and both young and old take to the dance floor when it does.

FIRST SOLDIER

I think it is ridiculous to dispute about such things.

[Brief lull in the conversation.]

FIRST SOLDIER

The Tetrarch has a sombre look.

SECOND SOLDIER

Yes; he has a sombre look.

FIRST SOLDIER

He is looking at something.

SECOND SOLDIER

He is looking at some one.

FIRST SOLDIER

At whom is he looking?

SECOND SOLDIER

I cannot tell.

SIDE 5 - NARRABOTH, THE PAGE OF HERODIAS

SCENE: *Narraboth, captain of the guard, and the page of Herodias stand on the terrace outside the banquet hall where Herod is entertaining guests. They are close friends. Narraboth is smitten with Salome as he gazes at her through a window; the page is fearful of his friend's obsession.*

NARRABOTH

How beautiful is the Princess Salome to-night!

THE PAGE OF HERODIAS

You are always looking at her. You look at her too much. It is dangerous to look at people in such fashion. Something terrible may happen.

NARRABOTH

She is very beautiful to-night.

THE PAGE OF HERODIAS

You must not look at her. You look too much at her.

NARRABOTH

How pale the Princess is! Never have I seen her so pale. She is like the shadow of a white rose in a mirror of silver. She is like Christina Ricci with black pigtails and a scowl.

THE PAGE OF HERODIAS

What is that to you? Why do you look at her? You must not look at her. Something terrible may happen.

NARRABOTH

The Princess rises! She is leaving the table! She looks very troubled. Ah, she is coming this way. Yes, she is coming towards us. How pale she is! Never have I seen her so pale.

THE PAGE OF HERODIAS

Do not look at her. I pray you not to look at her.

NARRABOTH

Will you be seated, Princess?

THE PAGE OF HERODIAS

Why do you speak to her? Why do you look at her? Oh! Something terrible will happen.

SIDE 6 - JOKANAAN, SALOME

SCENE: The prophet Jokanaan has been brought out of his prison to meet the princess Salome. She is instantly fascinated by him. He's super not into it, but he's a nerd -- he's Urkel -- so his rejection should stem more from awkwardness and discomfort than righteous fury.

JOKANAAN

Who is this woman who is looking at me? I will not have her look at me. I know not who she is. I do not wish to know who she is. Bid her begone. It is not to her that I would speak.

SALOME

I am Salome, daughter of Herodias, Princess of Judaea.

JOKANAAN

Back! daughter of Babylon! Come not near the chosen of the Lord. Thy mother hath filled the earth with the wine of her iniquities, and the cry of her sins hath come up to the ears of God.

SALOME

Speak again, Jokanaan. Thy voice is wine to me.

JOKANAAN

Daughter of Sodom, come not near me! But cover thy face with a veil, and scatter ashes upon thine head, and get thee to the desert and seek out the Son of Man.

SALOME

Who is he, the Son of Man? Is he as beautiful as thou art, Jokanaan?

JOKANAAN

Get thee behind me! I hear in the palace the beating of the wings of the angel of death. Angel of the Lord God, what dost thou here with thy sword? Whom seekest thou in this foul palace? The day of him who shall die in a rooftop explosion has not yet come.

SALOME

Jokanaan, I am amorous of thy body! Thy body is white like the lilies of a field that the mower hath never mowed. Thy body is white like the snows that lie on the mountains, like the snows that lie on the mountains of Judaea, and come down into the valleys. Neither the roses in the garden of the Queen of Arabia, nor the feet of the dawn when they light on the leaves, nor the breast of the moon when she lies on the breast of the sea... There is nothing in the world so white as thy body. Let me touch thy body.

JOKANAAN

Back! daughter of Babylon! By woman came evil into the world. Speak not to me. I will not listen to thee. I listen but to the voice of the Lord God.