

VI: THE SACRED DUMP



Margaret Von Biesen

COYOTE (Darrell Larson), left, is in the "right knee" listening posture, while TRICKSTER (Norbert Weisser), wearing his Buffalo headdress, holds the "pelvis" listening posture, on *The Sacred Dump* set.



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COYOTE listens to TRICKSTER as Coyote's father and SPIDER WOMAN (Christine Avila) as the Gargoyle in *The Sacred Dump*.

THE SCENE: Some twenty-five yards wide by seventy yards deep of open space. Extreme upstage right is a kind of ramp which has no useful function and reminds us of nothing. COYOTE makes his entrance on it. Up left is a round object which could be a meteorite — the “planet.” There are other objects — as well as sources of light — that look like nothing we’ve ever seen. Poles fifty feet high, holes in the ground, fissures. Center stage, about thirty yards from the Audience, is the Germ God, some six feet in diameter and twelve feet high. Down right from the Germ God is what appears to be the carcass of an American Buffalo. Down left from the Germ God, about ten yards up from the Audience, is SPIDER WOMAN’s spot high in a tree or tree-like structure. She is in the center of an enormous web, the lines of which extend in every direction.

A strange sound in the space, reminiscent of the “The Singing of Insects” in Coyote V: Listening to Old Nana. A long wait as the sound builds in intensity and volume. It is interrupted suddenly by the eerie, chilling, and yet poignant cry of a huge wounded ant, whom we do not see. The sound of the insects begins to fade, and then, gradually, SPIDER WOMAN’s face appears high up in her perch:

SPIDER WOMAN: I am Gogyeng Sowuuti! *(She smiles.)* Some of you I know by your names! Some I know by — your actions! Others I know by your thoughts! But all of you I know by your nature! *(Fiercely)* It was me who brought you here to this place! ME! *(Smiles)* You can come out now, child! *(Pause. Gently)* Come out!

(CLOWN appears from within the Germ God.)

SPIDER WOMAN: Come down!

(CLOWN races downstage to the Audience.)

SPIDER WOMAN: Remember, child, my instructions to you concerning the Fourth World?

(CLOWN mischievously shakes her head “No.”)

SPIDER WOMAN: It was not all beautiful and easy like the previous ones. It had height and depth, heat and cold, beauty and barrenness.

(CLOWN shakes her head “Yes.”)

SPIDER WOMAN: What was this world called?

CLOWN: (*Half-signing*) World com-pete!

SPIDER WOMAN: Good! World complete! It had everything to choose from! But it was up to the people to help carry out the Plan of Creation!

CLOWN: (*Half-signing*) There are no song birds here! There are no little creatures who mean no harm!

SPIDER WOMAN: There are no song birds here. There are no little creatures who mean no harm. Things are very abnormal here. (*Sighs*) I'll tell you what happened— the Third World failed. It was flooded. I had to save the people who were not yet shifty-eyed, sly, cynical, lying sonsofbitches! It was ME who saved them!

CLOWN: I know that already! I know all that already!

SPIDER WOMAN: Oh, so you know that already. Well, then talk!

CLOWN AND SPIDER WOMAN: (*CLOWN half-signs*) The people forgot why they were here and that Taiowa was their father! We had to move to a higher world! The sun turned red! The air got thick! The earth cracked! The buildings fell down! We heard footsteps in the sky! (*CLOWN is trying to act all this out.*) We thought we could escape up there through a hole in the sky. We'll build a bamboo ladder and send a bird up there to talk to whoever is walking around up there. A bird climbed up and flew through the hole in the sky — and came back! He spoke to Massauwu, God of the Dead, who lives on the other side! He says — it's okay! We can come up there and live! But we have to try and be — real human beings! The Fire Clan goes up first and reaches the hole in the sky! The other clans follow! But there are Evil Ones among us! We kick down the ladder, so no more can come up! We are in the Fourth World! (*Pause*)

CLOWN: The Fourth World! The Fourth World! Come on — I have a job to do here!

SPIDER WOMAN: Hold your horses! I know you have a job to do! I gave it to you! So, in the Fourth World, they went to Massauwu

and asked him to be their leader. "No thanks," he says, "You go your way and I'll go mine." (*Laughs*) He came over to me one time while we were resting on one of the rungs of the Solar System. "Gogyeng Sowuuti," he said to me, "I know you are working for Earth Mother, and have to do your job, but those people you saved, they are carrying bad germs in them." "What germs?" I asked him. "The germ of fear; the germ of greed; the germ of too much thinking. They'll forget why they are alive and try to have power over the Spirit. They won't be able to see reality. You'll have plenty trouble. This world will be poisoned, and the Spirit withdrawn." He knew what he was talking about. He advised me to keep on friendly terms with the Germ God, Muyingwa.

CLOWN: He's my friend!

SPIDERWOMAN: It's true. He likes you very much. (*CLOWN beams*) He'll come in handy later, when we start all over again with a new Code. (*Laughs*) The Fourth World, the World Complete, was punished and destroyed.

CLOWN: (*Of the Audience*) Are there strange creatures in this place?

SPIDERWOMAN: Yes, but don't be afraid. They're only imaginary creatures now. They're ghosts. They're not real anymore. They just imagine each other being there.

CLOWN: What happens when they die?

SPIDERWOMAN: When they die, they don't join the Spirit World; they go into crevices in the ground and become poisonous gases.

CLOWN: Ugh!

SPIDERWOMAN: You see, Child, it's a very interesting thing. The Fourth World looks like it's still there. (*Laughs*) Intact. They don't realize that the Spirit has been taken out of it.

CLOWN: What can we do?

SPIDERWOMAN: Do? Wait, I'll come down!

CLOWN: Oh!

SPIDER WOMAN: (*Chanting, as she makes her spidery descent*) Oh! Many stones! Many people together! They stored their goods and armed themselves! Water in the canyons! Oh! The cities! The towns! The great Kivas! The fire signals! The shine/shine! The screaming of the Cloud People! (*She hits the ground, taking the Warrior's posture*) HUUUU! I, Gogyeng Sowuuti, saw and heard these things!

(*Now, as she speaks the following, she takes the series of postures indicated by OLD NANA in Coyote V.*)

SPIDER WOMAN: The people thought they had it all coming to them, just because they happened to get born. They didn't listen to their good spirits. The water was poisoned. The air was poisoned. The earth was poisoned. And when the Hard Punishment came — some tried to escape through a hole in the sky! They didn't make it. They fell into everlasting silence. One of those was... Coyote! Some tried to escape through a hole in the ground! They didn't make it. They got burned alive! And one of those was... Trickster! Many others! They locked themselves up! They crawled into cellars and burrows and rooms! It was each one for himself! None of them made it either. They had become — DERANGED INSECTS!

(*SPIDER WOMAN and CLOWN scream "The Singing of the Insects" keening sound from Coyote V, CLOWN taking a posture of supplication... SPIDER WOMAN stops and goes to her*)

SPIDER WOMAN: (*Gently*) Don't worry, they're all part of the chemical soup now. (*Laughs*) While you... you're here with me.

CLOWN: I think someone else is around here too!

SPIDER WOMAN: Right! Coyote/Trickster is around here! I just experienced his presence. Now we have to call him out as a witness.

CLOWN: They won't come out! They're scared!

SPIDER WOMAN: I know they're scared.

CLOWN: They won't come out!

SPIDER WOMAN: They'll come out if we arouse their curiosity. The one thing they can't resist is women and curiosity... We'll make a

big hullabaloo.

CLOWN: *(Half-signing)* Boo!

SPIDER WOMAN: Hullabaloo.

CLOWN: Boo!

SPIDER WOMAN: Say it. Hullababoo. Never mind. This is what you do—you hand these instruments out to some of these imaginary kids here. Then, when I give you the signal, start those kids waving them in the air. Then Coyote/Trickster will come out.

CLOWN: *(Hands out the instruments to kids in the Audience.)* Okay!

SPIDER WOMAN: Wait! I have to get back up my tree! If they see me here, they won't come out!

CLOWN: Right! *(SPIDER WOMAN climbs back into her tree.)*

SPIDER WOMAN: Okay! Start... Now!

(CLOWN conducts the kids waving the instruments. The sound is like the humming of strange insects. A few beats, then COYOTE howls, off. CLOWN intensifies her efforts. Another howl, and a groan from TRICKSTER. TRICKSTER is down right, in the body of the dead buffalo. COYOTE scampers out onto the ramp up right, stops, howls. CLOWN chases the kids back into the Audience. TRICKSTER groans and stands, shaking off the buffalo, but keeping his headdress. COYOTE leaps from the ramp, bounding high into the air. They move about the space, quickly taking the series of postures given them by OLD NANA in Coyote V, until finally meeting each other in front of the Germ God.)

COYOTE: Buffalo-Head!

(He scampers to TRICKSTER and hugs him. TRICKSTER, confused, decides too late to respond. Now both are embarrassed. COYOTE retreats.)

TRICKSTER: Coyote!

(Suddenly they become aware of themselves in the strange environment and

are stunned, frozen to the spot. They look fearfully around. They look at the Audience. They look at each other again. They try to run — but CLOWN knocks on her wooden block, holding them in place.)

FIRST EXCHANGE

SPIDER WOMAN: Coyote — you need something?

COYOTE: Yes. I need to give my pain room to stretch...

TRICKSTER: I didn't have a bag for it. You need the right vessel. Like a net that you could hold it in, or a bag. A vessel...

COYOTE: Pain is the vessel, and you hold on to it in order to float...?

(They try to run, but CLOWN knocks.)

SECOND EXCHANGE

SPIDER WOMAN: Tell us one thing that happens a lot.

COYOTE AND TRICKSTER: I hang myself up in an embarrassing situation, and then later I say...

COYOTE: I did that on purpose, for the other person's benefit.

TRICKSTER: No way you can get caught, you tell yourself shit like that.

(They try to run— CLOWN knocks.)

THIRD EXCHANGE

SPIDER WOMAN: What were you doing out there?

COYOTE: I was looking for a woman who had no problems! I never found one!

SPIDER WOMAN: That's not enough.

TRICKSTER: I was dancing. I was dancing. I was dancing. That's

what I was doing. Dancing. Something disturbed me. Dancing. I don't remember. Something disturbed me. Small. Like a fly. I shoulda just stomped on it. Squashed it. It was nothing! Nothing!

(He flings away his headdress in disgust. They try to run. CLOWN knocks.)

FOURTH EXCHANGE

SPIDER WOMAN: What did you have?

COYOTE: We always had someone to dance with.

TRICKSTER: You could never step without stumbling!

COYOTE: We always had quarters for the juke box.

TRICKSTER: You could never fly without falling!

COYOTE: We always had cups of coffee.

TRICKSTER: You could never fart without hurting!

COYOTE: We always had clean sheets on our beds.

TRICKSTER: You could never eat without ripping your throat!

COYOTE: We always had great sex.

TRICKSTER: You could never have sex without catching a disease!

COYOTE: The maitre d' always seated you.

TRICKSTER: You could never laugh without crying!

COYOTE: We always had plenty tears.

TRICKSTER: You could never swim without drowning! It was a hell of a place! *(Pause)*

COYOTE: I have nothing. *(Pause)*

(Again they try to run — CLOWN knocks.)

FIFTH EXCHANGE

SPIDER WOMAN: Where were you going?

COYOTE: I was on my way. I forgot where I was going. I forgot why. I forgot my starting point. I couldn't remember. I was lost.

TRICKSTER: How could this be happening? How could this be happening to me?

COYOTE: It doesn't matter. It doesn't matter which way I go. I could go THIS way.

TRICKSTER: I could go THAT way.

COYOTE: It doesn't matter. I could keep right on going. *(Pause)* The Fourth World is round.

(They try to run — CLOWN knocks.)

SIXTH EXCHANGE

SPIDER WOMAN: What was there?

TRICKSTER: There used to be a mountain, and another mountain, and trees, and birds singing, and a bunch of cars in the parking lot. *(Pause)* And then there was a light. And fog came down on the mountain. *(Pause)* Then it all went away.

(They try to run for the last time — CLOWN knocks.)

SEVENTH EXCHANGE

COYOTE: Everybody knows how to run. Everyone knows how to feel sorry.

(CLOWN spits. TRICKSTER becomes entranced with the spit.)

COYOTE: Animals know when it's cold. That's all I know. Therefore, I am an animal. *(CLOWN knocks)* It's like we're all out on the

street. *(Pause)* I thought everything was all right... but the sidewalk blew up.

(CLOWN knocks.)

EIGHTH EXCHANGE

SPIDER WOMAN: What comes here?

TRICKSTER: *(Waking)* The lost moments come here. This is where we keep them. That's why it glows. *(Pause)* We don't really bring THAT moment here, we bring THIS moment here.

COYOTE: My father sits all alone in a room.

(CLOWN strikes the bell.)

NINTH EXCHANGE

SPIDER WOMAN: What happened to the Fourth World?

COYOTE: We had to get out!

TRICKSTER: We were all huddled!

COYOTE: Strangers grabbed my tail!

TRICKSTER: In a creek bed! But we couldn't breathe!

COYOTE: I had to lead them out!

TRICKSTER: Licking our wounds!

COYOTE: I had to jump very high!

TRICKSTER: Then the rain came! Felt like hot fire coming down!
Burning our coats! Stinking flesh, rotting bones!

COYOTE: Insects!

TRICKSTER: Stinking flesh!

COYOTE: I'll kill them all!

TRICKSTER I'm not through yet! I've got plans! We few survivors!

COYOTE: I smelled it coming!

TRICKSTER: Walk our squashed bones! Our empty eye-sockets!

COYOTE: They grabbed my tail!

TRICKSTER: I was a little bee, dying, covered with dust...

COYOTE: I threw a rope through the hole in the sky!

TRICKSTER: There was talking, then everything stopped. And then I remembered.

COYOTE: Then the rope broke and they tumbled down!

TRICKSTER: And then I forgot.

COYOTE: Like rain.

(CLOWN knocks.)

TENTH EXCHANGE

TRICKSTER: There's a big hole in the ground that I know. You can travel through it to the center of the Earth, but you have no control over where you're going. It just swallows you — like a seed, like a germ.

ELEVENTH EXCHANGE

COYOTE: One day I will learn how to roll my own cigarettes. In the meantime, I have to smoke Lucky Strikes, and smoke every single one of them very fast. *(To TRICKSTER)* This morning I was on a planet all alone, a perfectly smooth copper planet. I could run around it in less than ten minutes. And there are no flies there.

SPIDER WOMAN: That's not enough.

TRICKSTER I don't want to talk anymore! (*CLOWN knocks.*) As I think it, it turns into nothing! (*CLOWN knocks.*) I have to learn how to speak faster than I think! (*CLOWN knocks.*) I have to learn to speak as I think! (*CLOWN knocks.*) I have to learn how to speak!

(*CLOWN knocks.*)

TWELFTH EXCHANGE

SPIDER WOMAN: And before thought?

COYOTE: Before I became a human being, I, Coyote, was all creatures. First-born I was!

TRICKSTER: Everything around me was trying to eat me. Everything around me is trying to eat me to this day!

COYOTE: It was all in the seed of my Father, Taiowa, and I evolved into something really fantastic — I could fly!

TRICKSTER: I was an eating machine, like all the others —

COYOTE: At first I could only glide... And then I lost weight... And then I... I could fish! I could dive into the water, to the bottom, for food!

TRICKSTER: Feathers need careful maintenance! Jays and crows are particularly addicted to angry ants — they eat the other insects!

COYOTE: My arms had a feeling of lightness. My heart was empty and my belly was full. My head was a pair of eyes. I could see the inside of things by their nature, by their powers and colors!

TRICKSTER: A reptile, hitting the ground, avoiding a stall and a crash, its wings beating the heavy air...!

COYOTE: It's a simple question of flight control. Oh! I had a beak that could suck nectar!

TRICKSTER: Everything is alive! When it gets murdered, it stinks! I knew all these odors by their nature, by their powers and flavors!

(CLOWN gets the kids to start waving their instruments again, accompanying COYOTE/TRICKSTER's frenzy, and using her own instrument to help sustain and build it, moves behind them upstage center and pushes them downstage toward the Audience.)

COYOTE: I sing my song! It penetrates all thickets! And not only that — I will mate with my own! So all you rivals, you better answer me!

TRICKSTER: I rutted! I was in heat! I would fuck anything that moved!

COYOTE: I am a fine thing! I display myself! I am spectacular! I am a bird of paradise!

TRICKSTER: My wife's friends, my friends' wives, my daughters, my daughter's friends, my sisters, my sisters' friends, the beasts in the field and their shepherds! *(Stops and bellows like a buffalo in heat.)*

COYOTE: My life is devoted to dancing! I am Coyote! All creatures of paradise, I am them all! I must be beautiful! And here is the climax of my performance! *(He is all puffed up.)*

(CLOWN stops the music. TRICKSTER cums and is exhausted. An awkward silence. COYOTE and TRICKSTER subside.)

THIRTEENTH EXCHANGE

SPIDER WOMAN: And now?

(COYOTE walks away. TRICKSTER tries to recover his poise.)

TRICKSTER: There's a very thin line drawn from that point to here. And you try to keep it, but it gets thinner as you come down... it stays there...

COYOTE: Once it's happened, it's gone. It doesn't matter where you look. You have to look up, you have to look down. Once it's happened, it's gone.

TRICKSTER: You're connected, very thin, thinning out into just between my fingers, like so...

COYOTE: While it's happening, it's gone. Happening is gone.

TRICKSTER: You can't really trust your left side. It always wants to add something.

COYOTE: It happens to everyone. All we have is what we remember. We do what we know how to do. All we know how to do is die.

(CLOWN knocks.)

FOURTEENTH EXCHANGE

SPIDER WOMAN: How are you?

(They hesitate. CLOWN knocks.)

TRICKSTER: I'm talking and it don't sound right. I'm saying things for no reason. I don't mean it. I'm just saying things. It comes out harshly. Then I fall silent, stiff. I'm dead. People are embarrassed. They think I'm strange. Then someone makes a joke. I laugh like a corpse. Ha ha ha.

(CLOWN knocks.)

COYOTE: I'm very sorry. I surrender... I'm very ashamed. I meant it, but I'm still ashamed.

TRICKSTER: I don't talk right. The owls and the crows talk better than me. The sparrows talk better than me.

COYOTE: When I became a human being, I fell out of the womb of a woman. I had been implanted there. I fell out of a hole in the sky into the body of a woman, like a seed. I was an egg in the body of a woman. This woman, my mother, was also once an egg/seed. This was the beginning of a transformation — from egg/seed, to female, to grotesque. It had all been prepared, in time, by the poison in the shell of the seed.

TRICKSTER: I don't walk right. The beetles walk better than me, the four-leggeds walk better than me. The wounded dogs walk better than me!

COYOTE: When I was a child everything was familiar to me and had power. The air had power, the earth had power, the sky had power. The power was the Spirit in all things and I knew it personally — me, Coyote!

(CLOWN knocks.)

FIFTEENTH EXCHANGE

SPIDER WOMAN: And then?

(COYOTE tries to speak, cannot.)

SPIDER WOMAN: And then?

COYOTE: In the twilight of the Fourth World, Taiowa withdrew the Spirit. I was on my own.

SIXTEENTH EXCHANGE

SPIDER WOMAN: What are you?

COYOTE AND TRICKSTER: I am the living tip of the long line of the dead, like the head of a worm, the long line of the dead...

(CLOWN knocks. TRICKSTER sits at the foot of SPIDER WOMAN's tree. COYOTE kneels.)

SEVENTEENTH EXCHANGE

SPIDER WOMAN: Who brought you?

COYOTE: My father.

TRICKSTER: *(As COYOTE's father)* Coyote?

COYOTE: Hi, Dad.

TRICKSTER: You look the same.

COYOTE: You look the same.

TRICKSTER: You know what's happening to me?

COYOTE: Yes.

TRICKSTER: Yeah... They all come to me now. Now they all come.
It's very dramatic.

COYOTE: Me, too. I've come, too.

TRICKSTER: I got it coming to me. People, money, whatever. I got
it now.

COYOTE: You got it.

TRICKSTER: Your sisters and brothers, your aunts and uncles,
they're all coming to see me now.

COYOTE: What else?

TRICKSTER: I took care of my car. It's in the shop this minute. It's
a Caddie. Right front tire bald on one side. Alignment's off. An
imperfection. I'm taking care of it. Pay the man later, if he'll wait.
(Pause) I got the right number for you, finally?

COYOTE: What number?

TRICKSTER: 396-9216. Area code 213.

COYOTE: That's it.

TRICKSTER: Same number? That's the number?

COYOTE: That's my number.

TRICKSTER: That's the one I have!

COYOTE: You've had the right number.

TRICKSTER: Holy shit.! All these years!

COYOTE: That's the number.

TRICKSTER: I thought you moved!

easy. First with violence, then with coldness, and then with crazy indifference. And then she was ready. My mother was ready.

TRICKSTER: She never rolled over and put out! She never gave! Your mother had nothing to give but vengeance! She was already dead! *(Pause)* And me? Your father?

COYOTE: *(To TRICKSTER)* She beat me at dawn and she beat me at twilight.

TRICKSTER: So what?

COYOTE: She used a coal shovel.

TRICKSTER: Big deal!

COYOTE: *(To Audience)* She was trying to beat the strength out of Coyote, but she was making him mad at the same time. *(Pause)* This was in the twilight of the Fourth World.

TRICKSTER: And me? I was dead, too. Finished. I would fuck anything that moved. Anything female. I suppose the animal was alive. *(Pause)* She never put her arms around me with affection. She never eased my way. No help. And she was unclean. Unclean. I'd kill her, but what would be the point?

COYOTE: I took the coal shovel from her hands. I said, "You do that again, and I'll kill you." She never did it again. I was on my own. Time passed. She could no longer function. They had to put her away.

SPIDER WOMAN: *(As COYOTE's mother)* Coyote, don't sign the papers! Don't let them give me treatments! Your father wants to kill me!

TRICKSTER: I couldn't sign the papers. I was illegal myself. Incompetent, a jailbird! *(Shrieks as CROW)* An animal! *(Pause)* They never asked me about it! They ganged up on me! They were out to get me! They put me in prison! They wouldn't take MY word for it! They took everybody else's word but mine!

COYOTE: I went on a long journey and I signed the papers. They

gave her shocks. (*The tree shakes.*) And again. (*The tree shakes.*) And again. (*The tree shakes.*) They calmed her down. I felt guilty. They said it was all for the best. But she had been the source of terrific pain... And she taught me the alphabet, in English, when I was small.

SPIDER WOMAN: I'm already dead. All three of my natures. Dead, almost from the beginning. Now I chew my pills, my chemical cud. Time passes. The government takes care of me. They owe me, for all I have suffered. The failures of men.

COYOTE: The Gargoyle was completed.

SPIDER WOMAN: Ah. Ah.

NINETEENTH EXCHANGE

TRICKSTER: (*Standing, as though seeing*) There are strange creatures in the dark, under the sea.

COYOTE: No one is going anywhere. No one is coming from anywhere.

TRICKSTER: They don't use oxygen, these creatures.

COYOTE: Everything has already happened.

TRICKSTER: They are like worms.

COYOTE: All I see is movement. Nothing else is happening.

TRICKSTER: They eat sulphur. They breathe nitrogen.

COYOTE: It's a diagram!

TRICKSTER: They live near the fire in the center of the Earth.

COYOTE: I am nothing at all!

TRICKSTER: Earthmother is making life under the sea, in the dark...

(*The ANT cries out, off. TRICKSTER takes his protective posture. The ANT cries again. TRICKSTER looks off into the darkness.*)

SPIDER WOMAN: There is a wounded insect around here. She is hurt bad. She needs help.

TRICKSTER: Yeah?

SPIDER WOMAN: Yeah. Only you can do it, Buffalo-Head. You have to find that ant and give her a helping hand.

TRICKSTER: Me? No.!

SPIDER WOMAN: Yeah, you. You have to fulfill your mission. You have to bring that ant over to the Germ God. She is material for a new world. Then maybe the waterfall will come to earth.

COYOTE: You'd better do it.

TRICKSTER: No. You do it.

COYOTE: I wasn't asked to do it.

SPIDER WOMAN: He's got something else to do.

COYOTE: Oh? What's that?

(The ANT cries out, off.)

SPIDER WOMAN: Buffalo-Head, you go and find that ant!

TRICKSTER: Wait a minute! I have a few more things to say here!

COYOTE: I thought you didn't want to talk anymore.

TRICKSTER: That was before!

SPIDER WOMAN: Say what you have to say and get moving! *(The ANT cries out.)* Hurry!

COYOTE: What do you want to talk about?

TRICKSTER: I forgot.

COYOTE: Come on!

TRICKSTER: Kissing! What is this thing about kissing? Does it spread germs? Do you like kissing? I don't know if I like kissing or not anymore. I'm confused about it. What do you think? (*CLOWN starts throwing dirt at him.*) All right! I remember now! It's a story! There was this false preacher who spread a lot of lies. I want this on the record! He was part of bringing the Fourth World down. But he didn't know it. Or maybe he did, but he wouldn't admit it! He was talking about missionaries, spread all over the world, places where they couldn't fly flags! So, they sat on beds! And they stroked their flags! He was selling sex! And he wouldn't cop to it! He couldn't cop to the fact that he was talking about sex! He was a liar! He brought the Fourth World down!

SPIDER WOMAN: Okay. Thank you very much.

TRICKSTER: He had a lot of money that sonofabitch! He had built a palace made of glass! I saw him on TV last Sunday, that fucking liar! I just wanted this on the record! All right, I'll go and find that ant now, and give her helping hand. (*He wanders upstage, muttering to himself.*)

TWENTIETH EXCHANGE

SPIDER WOMAN: What did you bring me?

COYOTE: Nothing.

SPIDER WOMAN: What did you bring me?

COYOTE: Myself.

SPIDERWOMAN: That's not enough. You must bring me acceptance, as you would the living dead. I gave you life.

COYOTE: I am Coyote!

SPIDER WOMAN: It's you who wants vengeance now. To deny me. To rebuff me.

COYOTE: I'll send you money. Soon as I get a job.

SPIDER WOMAN: I'll take it! I need it! Send money!

COYOTE: I am Coyote!

SPIDER WOMAN: You are nothing. You have nothing, not even money. You're not even intelligent. Muyingwa, the Germ God, has more intelligence than you. Massauwu, the God of the Dead, has more power than you. Even the Owl talks better than you. Even the Beetle walks better than you.

(TRICKSTER, distracted by the fallen "planet" up left, takes a left turn, goes to the planet and stares at it, entranced.)

COYOTE: *(To SPIDER WOMAN)* What do I have to do?

(TRICKSTER, cracking up, pisses on the planet. CLOWN is mortified and the others amazed. TRICKSTER, still laughing, starts back downstage.)

TRICKSTER: Did you see what I did? There were millions of little beings running around on that planet! They were weird—screaming and yelling and carrying on! I pissed on 'em! Ha!

(The ANT screams, off. TRICKSTER, seeing it for the first time, stops. The ANT cries out. TRICKSTER girds himself and goes off toward the sound.)

TWENTY-FIRST EXCHANGE

COYOTE: What do I have to do?

SPIDER WOMAN: *(As the GARGOYLE)* You must come near to me.

COYOTE: I can't come near you. Your odor is offensive to me. Your face is offensive to me. You live in filth. You are the dead alive.

SPIDER WOMAN: Come near to me.

COYOTE: I saw how you knocked on the neighbor's door: "You see! You see, woman! It's my son! My son is here! My son has come to honor me!"

SPIDER WOMAN: What's wrong with that?

COYOTE: I did not come to honor you. How could I honor you?

SPIDER WOMAN: I gave you life. Come and pick me up. Pick me up and carry me. Come on.

COYOTE: I can't!

(CLOWN knocks.)

CLOWN: Pick her up! *(Points to the Germ God)*

SPIDER WOMAN: Come on. Bend a little. Bend your back. Stretch your pain. *(Laughs)* Give it up.

COYOTE: HUUU!

SPIDER WOMAN: That's right! A warrior! A warrior has flexibility!

COYOTE: Don't kiss me.

SPIDER WOMAN: I won't kiss you.

COYOTE: Please don't kiss me.

SPIDER WOMAN: I won't kiss you. I'll turn my face away.

COYOTE: *(Struggling)* All right then.

(CLOWN strikes the bell.)

COYOTE: I'll pick you up. I can't stand you, but I'll pick you up. You gave me life.

SPIDER WOMAN: Good, then. Come and carry me. Take me to the Germ God, Muyingwa. I won't kiss you.

COYOTE: I'll come and pick you up. I'll carry you to the Germ God. You gave me life.

(SPIDER WOMAN mounts COYOTE's back, facing away from him. Slowly, COYOTE carries her toward the Germ God. CLOWN, walking backwards, accompanies them, striking the bell softly.)

SPIDER WOMAN: *(As the GARGOYLE)* The insects! I heard them buzzing in the mountains — very strong — talking to me — And then the light went out of me — One breath, that's all it takes, to go

down — And then you come up on the other side — sweet — ah ah ah — A man with a bandanna — and no hair — coming to greet me.

CLOWN: The world didn't need anymore height; it already had height. The world didn't need anymore depth; it already had depth. The world didn't need anymore time; it already had time. The world didn't need to be made more complete; it was already complete. The world didn't need to be made more beautiful; it was already beautiful.

(As they enter the Germ God, TRICKSTER appears carrying the wounded ANT on his back. The ANT is man-sized and cries out repeatedly. The Germ God dims up slowly. TRICKSTER and the ANT are the last to enter.)

(The Germ God becomes brightly lit. Music of Tibetan Bells.)

(Blackout.)

END