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The role of Calisto/Clindor/Theogenes in Tony Kushner's adaptation of *The Illusion* by Pierre Corneille a production thesis in acting

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**THE ROLE OF CALISTO/CLINDOR/THEOGENES
IN TONY KUSHNER'S ADAPTATION OF *THE ILLUSION*
BY PIERRE CORNEILLE
A PRODUCTION THESIS IN ACTING**

A Thesis

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty
of the Louisiana State University and
Agricultural and Mechanical College
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Master of Fine Arts

in

The Department of Theatre

by
Preston E. Davis
B.A., Southern University, 2001
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ABSTRACT

The role of Calisto/Clindor/Theogenes in Tony Kushner's adaptation of The Illusion by Pierre Corneille was selected as a thesis project in the fall semester, 2004. This thesis is a written record of the actor's interpretation of the character. The thesis includes a Character Analysis, Four Column Score of the Role and Personal notes on the role.

INTRODUCTION

This thesis is a character study of Calisto/Clindor/Theogenes, a character in Tony Kushner's adaptation of Pierre Corneille's The Illusion.

When I first read this play I was struck by its humor. I was in Colorado at the time playing in Romeo and Juliet at the Colorado Shakespeare festival. When I read The Illusion I was impressed by the range that all the characters seemed to possess, especially the main lover, Calisto/Clindor/Theogenes. Shortly thereafter I contacted with the head of my program, John Dennis, to find out as much as I could about who was directing the play and what style/approach he was taking to the play. I was told that a man from Chicago named Steve Young was the director, and that from what he knew the man was blessed with a strange sense of humor, and was excited about the opportunity to do the play. Fast forward to October 3, 2004, the day of the audition. We had already been given the sides a couple days early to familiarize ourselves with the character in whom we were most interested. We were also told to be ready to read for other characters the director might want to see us read. So I had a decision to make because of the little time available to prepare. I could become familiar with all the male characters, or I could focus all of my attention on the character that I really wanted to play. Remembering my favorite quote, "your outlook determines your outcome," I decided not the play it safe, and go after the role I really wanted. So I came in to the audition almost completely off-book. A few weeks later I found out I was cast in the role.

This thesis is a documentation of the process which led to my characterization of Calisto/Clindor/Theogenes. It consists of a Character Analysis and Four Column Score for the role. The Character Analysis is designed to help the actor go deeper into the reality of the character by filling in as many of the blanks about the character as possible. The rest is pulled from the actor's imagination. The score is an outline or map that the actor creates and then revises again and again throughout the rehearsal process. It is made up of: choices about the character's wants and needs (Objective); choices about the way the character goes about getting what he wants (Actions and Tactics); and choices concerning things which stand in the way of achieving his objectives (Obstacles). Obstacles can be real or imagined, internal or external or physical, or emotional. This score also contains a column to catalogue images and focus. The score is a powerful tool. However, it is still the actor who must enter the reality, buy into the relationships and make himself available to experience all that is possible in the role. All references to the play are from Tony Kushner's adaptation of The Illusion by Pierre Corneille.

The Illusion was produced by LSU Theatre on November 19, 2004 through December 5, 2004 at the Reilly Theatre. The production was directed by Steven Young. The cast was, in alphabetical order: Preston Davis as Calisto/Clindor/Theogenes, Shawn Halliday as Matamore, Brace Harris as Pridamant, Eric Little as Amanuensis/Geronte, Tara MacMullen as Alcandre, Michelle McCoy as Melibea/Isabelle/Hippolyta, and Channey Tullos as Pleribo/Adraste/The Prince. Mellissa Miller was our stage manager.

CHARACTER ANALYSIS

In the first vignette before Calisto/Clindor/Theogenes ever speaks a word, the magician Alcandre says to the father, "I'll show you his life, just as he's lived it, since you cast him off." This leads me and the audience to believe that these three characters are all the same person seen at different points in his life. In the following paragraphs I will investigate the similarities in these characters.

In the first vision, which is totally Kushner's invention, he is a penniless young and altruistic swain smitten by love of a lady he worships from afar. "I'm the child of fortune, Elicia; the orphan child of fate. I was cast out; the wind blew me here on great brown wings and I always knew she'd rescue me; she had no choice but to love me." He is clearly swept up in the idea of romance, destiny and love.

In the second vision he is an egotistical manservant of his nobleman rival. He is secretly courting the nobleman's lady because of her wealth, while having sex with her maid. When talking to the maid he delivers this harsh but honest monologue, "My desire's all for you. But all you have to offer is desire. I do desire Isabelle, and also all that Isabelle affords: I'm tired of being poor. You have nothing, I have less than that. Two zeros equal zero. It's simple mathematics." The idea of love, though still important, has taken second place to money.

In the third vision, he is a philandering murderer who is married to the lady from the second vision. Age and a lost hope for true love have finally set in. He is pessimistic in every sense of the word. He now searches for the spark he had years ago.

I feel that the character's growth can be compared to a giant wave building up at sea, which thunders down the shore once it's reached its peak. A sudden gust of wind blows over the ocean transferring energy to the water, like Calisto leaving his father's house. The water starts gathering heading in the direction that the wind is blowing, but it is still not noticeable to the human eye. In the first vision, Calisto is silly and gushes with passion. The wave begins to pick up energy and starts to rise in height and weight. In the second vision Clindor is older, a little jaded, but still capable of romance. The wave has reached its limit and is headed towards shore. In the third vision, Theogenes is cynical, practical, modern, and harsh. In the end, just like the wave, he comes crashing down to a horrible death.

In all three visions, his overall goal was to get the girl. The only thing that changed was his approach and outlook on this goal. Waves are simply energy in transition, energy that is being carried away from its origin. Calisto/Clindor/Theogenes was carried away from his boyish, dream-like attitude about life, and the end result was his death.

In conclusion, I believe Calisto/Clindor/Theogenes can be compared to the mythical spanish character Don Juan, who is generally regarded as a symbol of libertinism. Regardless of the challenge or the goal, he finds the words to carry the day, but remains an empty figure lacking any compassion. Like Don Juan my character is undeniably intelligent and powerful, possessing verbal and social gifts, with a discerning

grasp of human nature. He advances from conquest to conquest with supreme self-confidence, all the while free of any concerns about the rightness or consequences of his actions. Like Don Juan fate cannot be avoided.

I. Analysis of the entire role

A. What your character says about himself:

1. "I was hungry."
2. "I'm freezing."
3. "I am a Melibea tree."
4. "I'll die out here."
5. "I was trying to be charming."
6. "I only look that way; inside, I bleed."
7. "I'm the child of fortune, Elicia; the orphan child of fate. I was cast out; the wind blew me here on great brown wings;"
8. "The sun is setting! Just for me! The moon is rising! Just for me! My happy heart's crawled up inside my mouth; it lies there like a frog, amphibiously glad to see the night descend, bubbling the name of my beloved: MMMMMMelibea. MMMMMMelibea. Heaven sparkles, mad with joy, the earth spins round an ache. I am its core, its point, its pearl- I want, therefore it spins.
9. "Calisto. Who loves Melibea more than he loves himself, or God, or the world, or all the world's riches."
10. "In my imagination and in my speeches I have slain a hundred gardeners!"
11. "No. I'm prophesying, sir, a gift I have.
12. "I can protect myself."
13. "I am the orphan-child of fate, the hero of an old romance."
14. "My fear's so great I think that I've already died, and then I wake up, to rehearse it all again.

15. "I learned the art of murder for your sake, and for your sake, I honed my skills and built a bloody fortune up in service to the prince to compensate you for your loss of wealth."
16. "My treason to the Prince embarrasses me"
17. "There's something in the danger and the treason I find attractive."
18. "You can find room for my insanity.
19. "But I've spent my life in love, and love is all I am; if I cease to love, I cease to be; I dream of love; I eat love, breathe love, bathe my tired heart in love, pronounce love over and over and over again till it sounds like a word from another language, a word I've lost the meaning for. My only hope's that time will wear me out; my flame will eat up all the air, and die.

B. What other characters say about your character:

1. Pridamant:

- a. "He seemed uncontrollable, wild, dangerous to me in all sorts of little ways. I loved him so much I wanted to strangle him. I wanted to snap his spine sometimes in a ferocious embrace. Everything about him seemed calculated to drive me to distraction, and did."
- b. "I can't stop thinking about him. I want to tell him I love him. I want to make him sick with guilt. I want to make him the heir to my fortune. He must be very poor..."
- c. "My son always frightens me. I want to speak to him."
- d. "She thinks he's an impostor. I remember how devious he could be—perhaps the new name is some kind of ruse!"
- e. "That's the look! See? In his eyes! The look that said danger to me. A thousand times since the day he ran away I asked myself, "Did I imagine that Look?" But there it is. It makes my blood run cold. I am glad to have seen this. His feral stare, like a wounded animal, dangerous, with teeth...What might he have done to me if I hadn't driven him out?"
- f. "Look at him go. It's wonderful! Thrust! Thrust! Thrust! Thrust! Parry, hah! I ... oh I must be careful not to get overexcited....Wow! What

technique he has, he fences like an aristocrat, elegant but not foppish, not affected, what a fighter he..."

- g. "Well, if the maids rich, my son's a fool not to choose her-the other one's a bit high-strung, and likely to be a spendthrift."

2. Melibea/Isabelle/Hippolyta:

- a. "You're silly and you're poor, Calisto. You make me nervous."
- b. "Your excessive. And strange."
- c. "You're an impostor. I'm sorry you're so miserable but it's not my fault."
- d. "Make sure that leper stays outside."
- e. "That fountain of dreadful metaphors! He frightens me! I hate him! I hate him! I hate him!"
- f. "He is Orpheus!"
- g. "Oh but he had. With a tongue of air, a quiet voice, that spoke truer, clearer, finer words than any she'd heard in all the endless vocalizing of a dozen braying lords. It did not brag, lie, flatter, or threaten, this quiet voice, but it sang a silent hymn of adoration only her heart could hear."
- h. "In all the worst moments of your life you make that little gesture and say "Oh God..." You are the filthiest liar I've ever met; you can't possibly believe that God would ever listen to you."
- i. "Forgiveness is for people who admit that they've transgressed. How can I forgive you when you swear you're guilty of nothing at all?"
- j. "Once a servant, always a servant; once false, then false forever."
- k. "You're not the Prince of Darkness or the Son of God. Just something wearily in-between hellbent on disappointing. You keep me around to forgive you your sins; with each indulgence fresh in your heart, you run out to muddy your soul again and then back again for more forgiveness."
- l. "Oh no. You'd understand, my love, if after all your talk of love you understood love at all."

3. Elicia/Lyse/Clarina:

- a. "Savage, barbaric, but not very bright! It's you, you fool, you lunatic, you lout, you're her persecutor, she aches for you."
- b. "You're alarming. Wild. How can she resist you? You have such pretty teeth. Each one like a little kernel of white corn."
- c. "The minute I saw him I said to myself 'I hate that man.' For one thing, he's so ugly." "Remarkably ugly. Warty like a squash. Greasy. Fat. The ugliest man I ever saw." "Ugly enough and incredibly stupid! A veritable clod of earth; an ox could outsmart him."
- d. "But he's a troll."
- e. "Sweet Calisto, your eyes are very dark."
- f. "He pretends to be a simple sort of servant, but he can talk like the Devil, beautiful words, and he scatters them freely, in every direction. He can make you forget where you stop and he begins, and after five minutes' conversation you find you're breathing in a tempo with him."
- g. "He thinks he's now a little god in the golden shrine of Isabelle's heart; I'll tip him out, this serving man, and watch him tumble down."
- h. "As much as I'd love to spoil his plan I'm still in love with this catlike man whose cruelty's all of an animal kind, a matter of muscle rather than mind, and though he deserves to be knocked down flat, there's nothing accomplished by killing the cat."
- i. "Do you think your anger will alter him? He's had a dozen affairs, and he'll have more, the more you show him how you're hurt the more he'll seek them out."

C. How does the actor resemble the character:

1. Outside:
 - a. Lean
 - b. Good hair
 - c. Tall
 - d. Handsome
 - e. Pretty smile
2. Inside:
 - a. Eloquent speaker

- b. Girl crazy
- c. Confused
- d. Have done crazy things to get a girl
- e. Have cheated on a girlfriend
- f. Extroverted

D. How does the actor differ from the character:

- 1. Outside:
 - a. I am more athletic
 - b. Character is from France, I'm from the US
 - c. Character wears a wig, I do not
 - d. Character never has facial hair, I have a beard
- 2. Inside:
 - a. Character has lots of patience
 - b. Character is cunning and deceitful
 - c. Character is not remorseful

E. Adjectives describing the character:

- 1. Outside:
 - a. Thin
 - b. Sharp
 - c. Organized
 - d. Seductive
 - e. Mesmerizing
- 2. Inside:
 - a. Well-intentioned
 - b. Tainted
 - c. Sly
 - d. Rebellious
 - e. Obscure
 - f. Passionate
 - g. Bruised
 - h. Frightened

F. List verbs for your character.

- a. Flirts
- b. Begs
- c. Distracts
- d. Complicates
- e. Struggles
- f. Searches

- g. Flees
- h. Loves

G. Major drive or goal in life:

1. What does he need to accomplish the most?

Calisto/Clindor/Theogenes needs to have a conquest. Near the end of the play he says “there’s something in the danger and the treason I find attractive.” This character needs to have something to fight for. It would seem that it’s all for the money, but in the end he reveals to Hippolyta that “love is all I am; if I cease to love, I cease to be,” which clearly indicates his true self.

2. How conscious is he of his true motives?

The character is mostly oblivious to his true motives. I believe he has been doing it for so long that it has become second nature. Hippolyta confronts him with these true emotions in the last vision. He has a kill-or-be-killed attitude about life, so to him it is strictly survival.

SCORE

TEXT	TACTIC	OBSTACLE	FOCUS/ IMAGE
<p>Pp 7-14 Objective: To touch her face Essential Action: To devil</p> <p>Alcandre: Life is still fresh to him. Full of wonders...</p> <p>Calisto: I have seen a most splendid vision.</p> <p>Pridamant: What's he talking about? Is he also a magician?</p> <p>Alcandre: He is frequently in love.</p> <p>Calisto: The vision's name is Melibea.</p> <p>Alcandre: That one there. Your son's great passion, his waking dream. If we retreat, the first phantasma can commence.</p> <p>Calisto: I was hungry; I trapped a hawk, a little wire snare snatched it by the red foot and I said "That's dinner." But it pleaded with me not to eat it, high heart and all, So I released it after making a pact: "I set you free; you find me other prey." And I let go and in a panic it tore madly away; I followed it; it led me here, to your garden, Melibea, more wonderful than freedom, or the air itself, where with the hungry eye of a hawk I am watching your every move. My love.</p> <p>Pridamant: At home he always told stories like that. When I could catch him I'd whip him for telling lies.</p> <p>Calisto: This garden gate encircles paradise; within, Melibea waits; if I touch the bars I can feel her heart beating, and I know, I know it's beating for me. Melibea, Melibea, open the door of your garden gate. It's cold out here, I'm freezing.</p> <p>Melibea: You can't come in.</p> <p>Calisto: I'm in already.</p> <p>Melibea: Only the sound of you—eventually your voice will give out.</p>	<p>To touch</p> <p>To showcase</p> <p>To massage</p> <p>To seduce</p>	<p>To make her listen to me.</p>	<p>F: Straight ahead blank stare</p> <p>I: The hawk</p> <p>F: Her</p>

TEXT	TACTIC	OBSTACLE	FOCUS/ IMAGE
Calisto: My voice in your garden; my words In your ears....	To seduce		I: My words reaching her pretty ears
Melibea: My fingers in my ears; I'm deaf to your prayers			
Calisto: My words will linger to they spy a chance, when your guard is lowered, to shower you with love. Your voice is honey, even your contempt is a sweet potent liquor I draw into my roots, then I sprout green leaves atop my head and blossom purple buds of desire for you. Out here, Melibea, look out here, don't you want to see such a miraculous plant? Come and shelter under me: I am a Melibea tree.		Not to lay it on too thick.	
Melibea: You're silly and you're poor, Calisto; I'm too busy for your games. You make me nervous. Please go away.			
Calisto: I'll climb the wall.	To jab		
Melibea: I'll call the gardener.		I want her to know I mean business, but I also don't want to frighten her.	
Calisto: And let his blood water the roses.... Let me in or I'll stab my eyes out.	To knockout		
Melibea: You're an impostor. I'm sorry you're so miserable but it's not my fault.			
Calisto: It is, it is.	To play possum		
Melibea: I'm done with you.			
Calisto: I'll die out here.		To not be seen	
Elicia: Let's have a look. Oh God, another one!			
Calisto: Another what?			F: Where Melibea went.
Elicia: They're dropping from the trees like the apples of autumn, just as wormy, most of them are, just as overripe.....			I: Beating all rivals
Calisto: If I have rivals I have to fight them.			

TEXT	TACTIC	OBSTACLE	FOCUS/ IMAGE
<p>Elicia: There's just one other round about today, well-bred, polite, a charming man.</p> <p>Calisto: I was trying to be charming. It didn't work. She hates me now.</p> <p>Elicia: Well....</p> <p>Calisto: She does, she does, she hates me now, I'll die, I will, I can't live without her.</p> <p>Elicia: You'll live for years to come.</p> <p>Calisto: I won't.</p> <p>Elicia: You will. You look perfectly healthy.</p> <p>Calisto: I only look that way; inside, I bleed.</p> <p>Elicia: And so does she.</p> <p>Calisto: She... suffers?</p> <p>Elicia: Dreadfully.</p> <p>Calisto: Because.....?</p> <p>Elicia: A man.</p> <p>Calisto: Who causes her pain?</p> <p>Elicia: Night and day.</p> <p>Calisto: Show me; I'll kill him; I'll tear out his heart and offer it up as a present to her, a savage token of my barbaric love!</p> <p>Elicia: She aches for you.</p> <p>Calisto: No.</p> <p>Elicia: Yes.</p>	<p>To implant</p> <p>To blast</p> <p>To hook</p>	<p>Baiting her without seeming too pathetic</p>	<p>F: Her</p>

TEXT	TACTIC	OBSTACLE	FOCUS/ IMAGE
<p>Elicia: You will be true to her, won't you? I have a heart.....</p> <p>Calisto: Attractively enshrined....</p> <p>Elicia: And I feel responsible since I've set her up.</p> <p>Calisto: My every thought is of Melibea. My eyes, my eyes are all for her—</p> <p>Elicia: Sweet Calisto, Your eyes are very dark.</p> <p>Calisto: Like my father's- deep, dark, there's nothing but love in them.</p> <p>Elicia: Poor little bird (She exits)</p> <p>Calisto: The sun is setting! Just for me! The moon is rising! Just for me! My happy hearts crawled up inside my mouth; It lies there like a frog, amphibiously glad to see the night descend, bubbling the name of my beloved: "MmMmMelibea. MmmMmMelibea. Heaven sparkles mad with joy, the earth spins round an ache. I am its core, its point, its pearl- I want, therefore it spins. Who are you?</p> <p>Pleribo: Who are you?</p> <p>Calisto: Calisto. Who loves Melibea more than he loves himself, or God, or the world, or all the worlds riches.</p> <p>Pleribo: Pleribo. Who loves Melibea more than that.</p> <p>Calisto: I love her so much that if she asked me to cut off my hand I'd do it.</p> <p>Pleribo: Well I love her so much that if she asked me to cut off one hand I'd cut them both off.</p> <p>Calisto: Well I love her so much that if she asked me to cut off both hands but she didn't really want me to I'd do it anyway.</p>	<p>To melt</p> <p>To brag</p> <p>To Investigate</p> <p>To challenge</p> <p>To counter attack</p>	<p>To get him out of the garden before Melibea comes back.</p>	<p>I: The world revolving around me</p>

TEXT	TACTIC	OBSTACLE	FOCUS/ IMAGE
<p>Pleribo: Well I'd do it too and I'd also cut off my feet.</p> <p>Calisto: Would you really do that?</p> <p>Pleribo: No. I mean not really. I mean, who would do something like that?</p> <p>Calisto: I would.</p> <p>Pleribo: This is a private garden. You'd better leave.</p> <p>Calisto: Make me.</p> <p>Pleribo: Uh, I forgot something inside.</p> <p>Calisto: No. If you love Melibea, fight for her.</p> <p>Pleribo: But I don't want to fight you.</p> <p>Calisto: You have to. We're rivals. (Calisto slaps Pleribo with glove across the face.)</p> <p>Pleribo: That really hurt! That really hurt! You... hurt me!</p> <p>Calisto: I did?</p> <p>Pleribo: Yes. I've never been hit before.</p> <p>Calisto: I could keep hitting you. And it would hurt more and more. But do you know what will make the pain completely unbearable? Melibea will come through that door soon. She'll see you beaten. It hurts to be hit. It will hurt much much more to be thoroughly humiliated in front of her. Don't you agree? So I'm going to turn my back, and you can leave. Better hurry, because I hear her coming down. If I turn around and your still there, it will be very unpleasant for you. Take my word for it.</p> <p>My first rival bested! It wasn't so hard; and well-timed, My Melibea of the moon is coming. I'll hide and await my cue.</p> <p>Calisto: Melibea.</p>	<p>To bait</p> <p>To test</p> <p>To pounce</p> <p>To peek-a-boo</p>	<p>I have to keep him from making a scene.</p>	<p>F: Pleribo's eye'</p> <p>I: Me sweeping her off her feet</p>

TEXT	TACTIC	OBSTACLE	FOCUS/ IMAGE
<p>Melibea: Calisto.</p> <p>Calisto: You aren't drawing away.</p> <p>Melibea: I can't.</p> <p>Calisto: Look! See that shadow flying?</p> <p>Melibea: An icicle through the heart.</p> <p>Calisto: Are you shivering?</p> <p>Melibea: It's cold.</p> <p>Calisto: Melibea. The source of fire is here in me. Put your hand on my heart.</p> <p>Melibea: It's like a burning coal! How strange, Calisto.</p> <p>Calisto: You are the answer to my every need. I'll keep you warm, you'll save me from burning; Both winter ice and blistering sun will ours to command. The winds will blow wild over our happiness.....</p> <p>Elicia: Pleribo's told your father! He's arming the gardeners with shovels and spades!</p> <p>Melibea: Calisto!</p> <p>Calisto: In my imagination and in my speeches I have slain a hundred gardeners! What are these real gardeners to the monstrous horticulturists I have vanquished?</p> <p>Elicia: For Melibea's sake, you have to flee from here!</p> <p>Calisto: I will return! Wait for me my own adored! With my great love for you....</p> <p>Pp 24-28 Objective: I want him to stay Essential Action: To pump</p>	<p>To soothe</p> <p>To paint</p> <p>To machine gun</p>	<p>To stay just long enough to prove my love.</p>	<p>F: Melibea's eye's</p> <p>I: Ice water in the desert.</p>

TEXT	TACTIC	OBSTACLE	FOCUS/ IMAGE
<p>Clindor: Your servant, Clindor.</p> <p>Pridamant: Clindor? This is my son, Calisto.</p> <p>Alcandre: You said his name wasn't Calisto. I wish you'd make up your mind.</p> <p>Clindor: Master, it amazes me, titan whose countenance is the world's greatest terror, you've scaled the loftiest pinnacles of glory, and still you dream of conquest. Do you never rest?</p> <p>Matamore: Never, slave, and now I must decide whose kingdom I should next acquire, the king of Crete's or the queen of Britain's?</p> <p>Clindor: Both are island kingdoms; you would need a navy of a thousand ships and ten thousand men to sail them.</p> <p>Matamore: And as for troops I need none, other than this mighty arm....</p> <p>Clindor: Mighty indeed!</p> <p>Matamore: Let Crete and Britain look to heaven: Matamore is near!</p> <p>Clindor: Oh let them live, great master, you have gold and land enough.</p> <p>Matamore: Half the planet.</p> <p>Clindor: More than half. I spoke before of conquests sweeter but more difficult to win...</p> <p>Matamore: My genius leaps pages ahead to grasp your meaning.</p> <p>Clindor: I bow before your protean brow.</p> <p>Matamore: But look: I can transform this mask of mars to something of transplendent, masculine yet gentle beauty.</p>	<p>To caress</p> <p>To challenge</p> <p>To minimize</p> <p>To Tom and Jerry</p> <p>To bow</p>	<p>He will leave if I don't flatter him enough.</p> <p>To keep him at bay, just long enough for Melibea to arrive.</p>	<p>F: Matamore</p>

TEXT	TACTIC	OBSTACLE	FOCUS/IMAGE
<p>Clindor: I spoke rashly. Perhaps we should retire instead.</p> <p>Pp 31-34 Objective: To have sex with her Essential Action: To divert</p> <p>Isabelle: He shows better sense in this than I'd have guessed him capable.</p> <p>Clindor: Kings and emperors, after all, would do no less.</p> <p>Matamore: Delamont!</p> <p>Clindor: Um, it's Clindor, sir.</p> <p>Matamore: I'm collecting my pithiest sayings in a book.</p> <p>Clindor: This one, sir, is full of pith.</p> <p>Matamore: Thank you. Read it back to me.</p> <p>Clindor: "An excess of sweetness is as disagreeable as a lack of bitter gall."</p> <p>Matamore: Delamont...</p> <p>Clindor: Clindor.</p> <p>Matamore: Write it down, Delamont, I'm off to shine my epigram.</p> <p>Clindor: It will take several years, I think, to make that saying shine.</p> <p>Isabelle: Then we shall have to amuse ourselves while he's away. Can you messenger of love, amuse me for as long as that?</p> <p>Clindor: For several years? Without a doubt.</p> <p>Isabelle: Begin, then, I need to be amused.</p>	<p>To pump</p> <p>To nine to five</p> <p>To tickle</p> <p>To engage</p>	<p>Keep myself in the mix.</p> <p>To seem sincere</p> <p>To remember that I'm still a servant.</p>	

TEXT	TACTIC	OBSTACLE	FOCUS/ IMAGE
<p>Clindor: I'll tell you a story.</p> <p>Isabelle: Is the story fact or fantasy?</p> <p>Clindor: Does it matter?</p> <p>Isabelle: Yes, I've heard too many fantasies today. Tell me something true.</p> <p>Clindor: Once there was a servant, without land or means or title, poor, an orphan, forced from his home by an unloving father; who found employment with a lunatic squire to act as his bootblack, his secretary and more. To deliver messages of love to beautiful lady.</p> <p>Isabelle: This is a sad story; I'm intrigued but not amused.</p> <p>Clindor: It gets sadder still. Can you guess what soon befell this poor young mercury?</p> <p>Isabelle: Tell me.</p> <p>Clindor: He went one day to deliver letter to the lady and unexpectedly delivered his heart instead.</p> <p>Isabelle: Did the lady accept it?</p> <p>Clindor: I've forgotten how it ends. Do you think she did?</p> <p>Isabelle: Yes I do.</p> <p>Clindor: Even though the messenger had never told her of his love before?</p> <p>Isabelle: It did not brag, lie, flatter, or threaten, this quiet voice, but it sang a silent hymn of adoration only her heart could hear.</p> <p>Clindor: And then what happened?</p> <p>Isabelle: I suppose they fell deeply, completely in love.</p>	<p>To tip toe</p> <p>To spew</p> <p>To confess</p> <p>To Tom and Jerry</p> <p>To push</p>	<p>Keep her interested.</p> <p>Relating the story to her, indirectly.</p> <p>Getting her to admit that she loves me too.</p>	<p>F: Her eye's</p> <p>F: Out towards the audience.</p> <p>F: Her eye's</p>

TEXT	TACTIC	OBSTACLE	FOCUS/ IMAGE
<p>Clindor: The story’s improving. Maybe it ends happily.</p> <p>Isabelle: Maybe. There’s a rival.</p> <p>Clindor: There always is a rival.</p> <p>Isabelle: And a father who forbids their love.</p> <p>Clindor: Fathers, too, have a habit of becoming the very nemeses of love.</p> <p>Isabelle: What hope for a good conclusion, then, with obstacles like these?</p> <p>Clindor: Obstacles are only obstacles until they’re overcome. In all such stories, the lovers exchange some token of their passion; Traditionally, it seems to me, a kiss....</p> <p>Pp 35-36 Objective: To leave without confrontation Essential Action: To pump</p> <p>Adraste: I can’t help but envy your fortune, boy. Isabelle, who flees when I approach, as though a sudden rainstorm had spoiled the day, was listening very carefully to you. One wonders what you have to say to her.</p> <p>Clindor: Only what my master Matamore would like me to convey.</p> <p>Adraste: I think it would be better if your master took his madness and its messenger somewhere else.</p> <p>Clindor: My master, sir, is harmless; he can’t compete with you.</p> <p>Adraste: It’s inexplicable that you should serve this monster of ego run amok; no poverty or need for gold could justify your servitude.</p> <p>Clindor: You’re rich, sir, and have never felt the need for gold; I respectfully suggest you have no idea what</p>	<p>To fragment</p> <p>To side-step</p> <p>To last gasp</p> <p>To down-play</p> <p>To dismiss</p> <p>To deflect</p>	<p>Not jumping the gun.</p> <p>My last chance to seal the deal.</p> <p>Showing my excitement from the kiss.</p>	<p>I: Myself buried under a stack of money.</p> <p>F: His chest.</p>

TEXT	TACTIC	OBSTACLE	FOCUS/ IMAGE
<p>Clindor: (continued) sorts of things poverty justifies.</p> <p>Adraste: I don't trust you; and respectfully request I never see you here again.</p> <p>Clindor: It's hardly fitting, my lord, for you to feel so threatened by a man of my low rank.</p> <p>Adraste: Your master's a pest, but he makes me laugh. You I don't find funny in the least. Climbers and pretenders never are.</p> <p>Clindor: Someday you'll be sorry you said that.</p> <p>Adraste: Are you threatening me?</p> <p>Clindor: No. I'm prophesying, sir, a gift I have. I take my leave, with your permission.</p> <p>Adraste: Granted instantly. And may swift winds blow you on your voyage hence.</p> <p>Pp 39-41 Objective: To keep her on my side Essential Action: To sex</p> <p>Lyse: Good morning, sir, did you sleep well last night?</p> <p>Clindor: Like a statue, Lyse. I didn't stir once; the sheets on the bed weren't even wrinkled....</p> <p>Lyse: Now isn't that odd? When I left your room, all of the linen was thoroughly mussed.</p> <p>Clindor: But after you'd gone, I smoothed everything over; like magic the bed looked like it hadn't been touched; and with your smell trapped on my hands and my sheets, I drifted off to the sweetest slumber.</p> <p>Lyse: I'm glad I helped you to a good night's sleep.</p> <p>Clindor: you have a letter. Is it for me?</p> <p>Lyse: No. It's addressed "To My One Faithful Love."</p>	<p>To stun</p> <p>To slap</p> <p>To crucify</p> <p>To worship</p> <p>To massage</p>	<p>Keeping my cool.</p> <p>Threatening him indirectly.</p> <p>Keep her thinking about the sex, and how happy we are together, not the fact that I'm two-timing her.</p>	<p>F: His eye's</p> <p>I: The sex we had earlier.</p> <p>F: Her lips</p>

TEXT	TACTIC	OBSTACLE	FOCUS/ IMAGE
<p>Lyse: (continued) And since it's from Isabelle, it can't be for you.</p> <p>Clindor: Are you angry?</p> <p>Lyse: Oh no. Not angry, darling Clindor; I've discovered a new feeling, one that has no name. My heart is full of it; If I could make a broth, with my heart as the meat stock and this feeling as the spice, one sip would curl your lips back from your pretty face and send you straight to hell. But I'm not angry.</p> <p>Clindor: I haven't been untrue to you.</p> <p>Lyse: Isabelle would be surprised to hear you say that. I'm a little taken aback myself.</p> <p>Clindor: I love you both equally.</p> <p>Lyse: Oh what nonsense.</p> <p>Clindor: I do, Lyse, I do. Equally, but differently.</p> <p>Lyse: Equally but differently. Her sparkling eyes, my dainty foot....</p> <p>Clindor: Your beauty, and her money.</p> <p>Lyse. I see. Well that's blunt.</p> <p>Clindor: I won't insult you by telling you stories. I could easily spend a century or two in bed with you. But...</p> <p>Lyse: But you can't live on that. Do as you intend to do: Go where the money is.</p> <p>Clindor: My desire's all for you. But all you have to offer is desire. I do desire Isabelle, and also all that Isabelle affords: I'm tired of being poor. You have nothing, I have less than that. Two zeroes equal zero. It's simple mathematics.</p> <p>Lyse: The worst thing is, your schemes make sense to.</p>	<p>To defuse</p> <p>To headline</p> <p>To eye-to-eye</p>	<p>Keep my cool.</p> <p>Downplay the whole thing. Make it very black and white.</p> <p>Laying down the law without disconnecting from our relationship.</p>	

TEXT	TACTIC	OBSTACLE	FOCUS/ IMAGE
<p>Clindor: Thunder more softly, I beg you, dread Goliath.</p> <p>Matamore: I have no need to shout. You know what you have done. A crime so ghastly I cannot bear to pronounce it.</p> <p>Clindor: I have stolen Isabelle.</p> <p>Matamore: Precisely. You have two choices: One: to be seized by the heels and flung straight through the celestial crystalline spheres into an abyss where the elemental fire will consume what parts of you remain unripped by broken crystal---</p> <p>Clindor: Sounds bad.</p> <p>Matamore: It is. Two: To be transformed by a spell I know into that lowliest of creatures, the naked Mole Rat, thereafter to be stepped on by my puissant boot after which your skin will be made into a little ratskin purse for Isabelle to wear, Embroidered with the words: Thus died Delamont, traitor to his lord.</p> <p>Clindor: Actually, there's a third choice.</p> <p>Matamore: There is?</p> <p>Clindor: Yes. I could beat you to a bloody pulp.</p> <p>Matamore: I see. And which of the three will you choose?</p> <p>Clindor: Guess.</p> <p>Matamore: Say you're sorry, promise to adjure the sight of Isabelle forever and we part as friends. Do you prefer that?</p> <p>Clindor: I'd prefer to throw you in the river.</p> <p>Matamore: I can't swim.</p> <p>Clindor: That's too bad.</p>	<p>To matter of fact</p> <p>To plant</p> <p>To power punch</p> <p>To disable</p>	<p>Try not to laugh.</p>	<p>F: On Isabelle.</p>

TEXT	TACTIC	OBSTACLE	FOCUS/ IMAGE
<p>Matamore: Let me be your father, then, if that's the role I'm meant to play. Pledge each other your vows. I stand, for one, as silent witness.</p> <p>Isabelle: And I, for once, obey you, father, and join my heart, Clindor, to yours.</p> <p>Clindor: Confirm that vowel by giving me</p> <p>Adraste: Your hand on hers, slave, is profanation. Your punishment, to lose that hand.</p> <p>Clindor: Her name upon your lips is even greater profanation; your punishment, to speak no more.</p> <p>Pp 63-65 Objective: To get out of jail Essential Action: To wallow</p> <p>Clindor: I'm thinking of my father. When they toss my trunk in the lime pit, and my astonished severed head in after it, will you, father, in your house, oblivious, half a world away, feel some correspondent shiver in your spine? When the sun and lime have bleached my bones, with your mouth, unexpectedly, inexplicably, go dry? I am the orphan-child of fate, the hero of an old romance..... I think this is the end of me. I can see the light grow green and the night recede, and the footsteps of the guards as they arrive at my door; I feel the irons on my wrist and feet, the weakness in my legs as we walk down corridors of stone, the chill of the early morning in the walled courtyard, the audience at attention, men my father's age, the hooded stranger with the hand on the handle of the axe and then....</p> <p>Pridamant: No...</p> <p>Clindor: My fear's so great I think that I've already died, and then I wake up, to rehearse it all again. Why, in the depths of this open-eyed nightmare do I cling to a vision of you, Isabelle? As though you can save me, by returning my love, as though, wrapped in your love, I can't be killed. I love you Isabelle. Oh pardon, spare, forgive, relent, I don't want to die.</p>	<p>To finalize</p> <p>To annihilate</p> <p>To pity party</p> <p>To self-mutilate</p> <p>To awaken</p>	<p>Not too dramatic too soon.</p>	<p>I: My father's face as they chop my head off.</p> <p>F: Out into the audience.</p> <p>I: A mirage in the desert</p>

TEXT	TACTIC	OBSTACLE	FOCUS/ IMAGE
<p>Isabelle: God should not forgive you, my breath, my soul, but beg your pardon for his villainy.</p> <p>Clindor: This must be some illusion, some tantalizing dream, or else some early torment sent to souls already damned...</p> <p>Isabelle: One more day apart from you and I'd have died; with this embrace we're both restored to life.</p> <p>Clindor: I'm not going to die?</p> <p>Lyse: Eventually you will, but not for years and years.</p> <p>Pp 70-77 Objective: To save my marriage Essential Action: To pound</p> <p>Theogenes: Rosine, my own adored, there's little time for pranks and teasing; our tryst today will have to be quick. My wife's sleep but she'll expect me home...</p> <p>Hippolyta: She knows where to expect you, Theogenes. And she's wide awake, though she seems to be having a very bad dream.</p> <p>Theogenes: Oh God....</p> <p>Hippolyta: You can't possibly believe that God would ever listen to you.</p> <p>Theogenes: You're mistaken, Hippolyta, I.....</p> <p>Hippolyta: And if you will not love me, and me alone, return me to my father. I'd rather bear his gloating and contempt and live alone and without love than drink this foul-tasting gall of yours.</p> <p>Theogenes: You know as well as I your father's doors are barred, you know his flinty heart won't melt, or else you'd have returned a hundred times before, if your threats mean anything at all. Go! Live on his doorstep! He may relent, although if he's a whit like his child he won't. Like her he has no talent for</p>	<p>To locate</p> <p>To divert</p> <p>To blast</p> <p>To tease</p>	<p>Must be quiet.</p> <p>Have to be quiet so my wife doesn't hear me.</p> <p>Play it off as a joke.</p>	

TEXT	TACTIC	OBSTACLE	FOCUS/ IMAGE
<p>Theogenes: (continued) forgiveness.</p> <p>Hippolyta: How can I forgive you when you swear you're guilty of nothing at all?</p> <p>Theogenes: And what have I done? Abducted you? I abducted you? That's a lie; you know Hippolyta you came willingly enough; your desire for me made you accomplice if not mastermind of your abduction; you're no victim. I learned the art of murder for your sake, and for your sake, I honed my skills and built a bloody fortune up in service to the Prince to compensate you for your loss of wealth.</p> <p>Hippolyta: Once a servant, always a servant; once false, then false forever.</p> <p>Theogenes: Oh that's exactly how you women think! One mistake and everything's ruined, one indiscretion means a thousand more; regardless of the uncountable kindness your husband may have shown, the liberty, the veneration, the indulgence of each weird request; a husband may be Christ-like in his sacrifice to you, but catch him with a mistress....</p> <p>Hippolyta: Or two. Or three, or... How many is it? I've lost count.</p> <p>Theogenes: And he becomes the Prince of Darkness in your eyes. Evil beyond all repair.</p> <p>Hippolyta: I'm tired of the subject of myself. Think of the Prince. Surely your benefactor deserves better from his favorite than this? Are you completely lacking in ordinary gratitude?</p> <p>Theogenes: My treason to the Prince embarrasses me, but to be honest, which I'm still capable of being, in spite of your opinion that I'm not, there's something in the danger and the treason I find attractive. If she wasn't the Prince's wife, I wouldn't want the Princess. Don't forget the circumstances under which our love first caught fire. Didn't that tell you anything about my tastes?</p>	<p>To machine gun</p> <p>To confess</p> <p>To redirect</p>	<p>I have to convince her that I love her with my heart and mind. But my body must remain free of restraints</p> <p>Make her feel guilty.</p> <p>Confess to a lesser crime.</p>	<p>F: Her face.</p> <p>I: All the other times I have done this.</p>

TEXT	TACTIC	OBSTACLE	FOCUS/ IMAGE
<p>Hippolyta: I wasn't seeing as clearly then...</p>	To beg	She has to believe me, or it's over.	I: Someone stabbing me.
<p>Theogenes: You think that fires dead. It still burns furiously. Feel...</p>			
<p>Hippolyta: No... (she touches it) The heat's still there, and still impressive; it's just a trick you learned somewhere and meaningless.</p>	To pity party		
<p>Theogenes: I love you. Allow me this betrayal. You can find room for my insanity.</p>			
<p>Hippolyta: When the Prince learns what you've been doing, what do you think will happen? This isn't a game; it's treason, a crime.</p>			
<p>Theogenes: I know; death threatens me for this; but I've spent my life in love, and love is all I am; if I cease to love, I cease to be; I dream of love; I eat love, breathe love, bathe my tired heart in love, pronounce love over and over again till it sounds like a word from another language, a word I've lost the meaning for. How much do you think life really matters to the creature I've become? My only hope's that time will wear me out; my flame will eat up all the air, and die.</p>	To pinpoint	Show her that love is all I have.	
<p>Hippolyta: Our lives and deaths are married. I don't ask you not to die, but know that when you die, I also die.</p>			
<p>Theogenes: You only think you will.</p>			
<p>Hippolyta: Oh no. You'd understand, my love, if after all your talk of love you understood love at all.</p>	To lay out		
<p>Theogenes: If our lives and deaths are bound together, and if, in dying, I would cause your death, it would also be the case, I suppose, that you, in living, force me, your friend, to live.</p>			
<p>Hippolyta: Careful logic, well-constructed. Your reasoning's impeccable. If you could only promise me...</p>	To hug		

TEXT	TACTIC	OBSTACLE	FOCUS/ IMAGE
<p>Theogenes: I do. I promise love forever, my single soul, complete, eternal, faithful...</p> <p>The Prince: Ah, Theogenes, there you are.</p> <p>Theogenes: Your Grace! Back sooner than you planned; did the weather turn your ship around?</p> <p>The Prince: A hurricane that blew up unexpectedly from the Windward Islands; and troubling news arrived from home.</p> <p>Hippolyta: I hope your wife, the Princess, is well.</p> <p>The Prince: Never better. The trouble's small a private matter, and easily dispensed with. I've been hunting.</p> <p>Theogenes: I thought I heard your hawk.</p> <p>The Prince: Mmmm. You probably did. A pity. This morning, at the hunt, an archer killed him accidentally. He served me very well, that hawk.</p> <p>Theogenes: That is a pity. Hawks are hard to train. (The Prince suddenly draws a knife and stabs Theogenes repeatedly.)</p>	<p>To divert</p>	<p>Act as if nothing has happened.</p> <p>Find out if the troubling news is me, by looking into his eyes</p> <p>Keep a cool head under this pressure</p>	<p>F: His eyes</p> <p>I: A black hawk flying for the last time.</p>

PERSONAL NOTES

The play opened with a Pay What You Can Preview on November 17, to a full house. I was amazed by the audience reactions from beginning to end. People laughed so hard they almost caused me to break character. Our hard work paid off. By opening night we already had a great review in circulation, and a campus-wide buzz begun. And even more surprising was the compliment I received from the reviewer from *The Advocate*, J.D. Ventura, “The effeminate ninny forgive this reference- that Chris Tucker attempted with little success in the silly sci-fi flick ‘The Fifth Element’ was mastered by Preston Davis with his pompous, androgynous and embarrassingly emasculated Calisto.” I felt completely comfortable with the work prior to this point, and now it was time to enjoy this beautiful play. We attacked the stage every night as if it was our last time, even when the audience wasn’t as vocal as we would have wanted them to be. The work seemed effortless once the lights went up and the first word was spoken. Now as I get ready to go off into the real world, I hope that I never forget one of my favorite lines in the show spoken by Clindor, “Obstacles are only obstacles until they’re overcome.”

VITA

Preston Eugene Davis was born August 1, 1980, in Los Angeles, California. He received his primary education at President Avenue Elementary, Harbor City, California. He received his secondary education at Carson High school, Carson, California. He received his Bachelor of Arts in Mass Communications from Southern University in December 2001, and will earn the degree of Master of Fine Arts from Louisiana State University in May of 2005.